

STEEPLAND HARVESTING PGP PROGRAMME

Summary Report for Q2 2014-15

This programme will realise substantial productivity gains for forestry through developing innovative harvesting technologies on steep country. Direct economic benefits of over \$100 million by 2020 are envisaged, as well as enhanced worker safety. The main achievements in this programme during the period 1 July to 30 September 2014 have been the completion of a mid-programme external review of the programme and the communication and extension of the following commercial developments to the forest industry: ClimbMAX steep slope harvester; HarvestNav on-board navigation application; CutoverCam hauler vision system; and Alpine Grapple carriage.

The report of the external reviewers of the PGP Harvesting programme was delivered to the Programme Steering Group on Fri 29th August 2014. This report is awaiting approval by MPI and FFR Board. Once approved a summary report will be loaded on the MPI & FFR websites.

Regarding extension to the forest industry of the commercial developments of the programme, the fourth ClimbMAX machine, which is now in commercial operation in Nelson, was the subject of an extensive report in the NZ Logger magazine in May 2014. The first trial of remote control of a commercial felling machine (a John Deere 909 feller buncher) received widespread coverage in the media in August and featured in the September issue of NZ Logger magazine. This initial trial was a world-first achievement in terms of remote control of a tracked feller buncher on steep terrain. The HarvestNav software application, which provides harvesting machine operators with information on terrain in the harvest block via a graphical display in the machine cab, also featured in the September issue of NZ Logger magazine.

Further development underway in the teleoperation project is to incorporate video and audio feedback (Stage 2) and then full teleoperation (beyond line-of-sight) of the feller buncher (Stage 3). This programme will continue to provide forest owners and contractors with solutions to improve productivity and reduce the exposure of workers to hazards on steep terrain.