

A forest day with IT in focus

When all the trees in a forest are of the same type and age, it's easy to get an overview and manage it for clearcutting. On the other hand, in a forest with a mix of different tree species, ages, and sizes, it can be a good complement to manage it with continuous cover forestry.

However, this kind of management is more difficult for the forest owner and therefore more expensive. "If the machine has to drive around the forest and look for the trees, the costs will rise immediately", says Magnus Bondesson, one of the participants in the meeting.

As interest in this form of forest management increases, there are technological developments that can help forest owners. Magnus Strandberg, who works as a forest consultant, talks about an app developed by the technology company Katam, whose services he currently uses.

"I make systematic flights over the forest using drones to make recordings. I also walk among the trees and record a sample of a representative stock with my phone. The images are then sent to Katam, who processes them, and then I use their app on my phone to get a map image. This contains information about the number of trees, their height, and a statistical selection of diameters. All in all, it gives very good data", says Magnus Strandberg.

According to Magnus, this is a good tool for anyone wanting to do selective felling of trees. "In the right forest, this works great for those who want to manage continuous cover forests. You can easily plan and mark routes for the harvester. It provides good help for timber buyers wanting to know how large the trees are, and it's a good support when making forestry plans. You get a hint about which stocks are of interest in a way that you wouldn't otherwise get today", says Magnus Strandberg and adds: "I'm very impressed with how easy it is."

Katam is a company that has kept up with the technology trend in clear-cut forestry. They offer increased forest growth through data-driven management.

"Simply put, our technology can see and understand the forest environment. With photos from above, we can quickly see the entire stand, count the trees, and get their height. With the camera at ground level, we see the rootstock volume. The two tools overlap each other and give a very good volume estimate. It's easy for a buyer to use the app to see what the timber and pulp outcome will be", mentions Anton Holmstrom from Katam.

According to Anton, Katam's technology creates an opportunity for a type of precision forestry where owners can adapt the management for each part of the stock. "If you have a feeling that your forest is better than average, then you benefit from measuring it accurately", he says.

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