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Assessing the Current Land Use Management and Crop Systems on the Sloping Land in Central Vietnam: A Representative Case Study of Thuy Bang Commune

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Abstract

Vietnam is an agricultural country. In recent years Vietnam has made significant improvements in agricultural productivity through the intensification of lowland rice production and the increased use of improved crop systems and new land use policies. The greatest potential for expansion of cropland is in the sloping areas of central Vietnam. But much of the central Vietnam is still underdeveloped. This region is characterised by widely variable soil types, many of which are of low fertility, prone to erosion and severe climate.

Main objective is to assess the existing land use management issues and to delineate the crop systems those are influencing to agricultural production and food security. A case study of about 2298 ha of Thuy Bang commune, Thua Thien Hue province has been selected to be stimulated through the incorporating of participatory rural appraisal, secondary data, farmer seminar and SWOT analysis. The study has found that farmers in the sloping areas are focusing on the planting of annual crops such as low rice, maize, peanut and cassava, beans, vegetables, sweet potato as well as perennial crops such as fruits trees, pepper and forestry trees. Many of these crops are cash crops that were expected to improve the incomes and living standards of sloping farmers. Different land use types identified: Winter-Spring rice + Summer-Autumn rice; Winter-Spring rice + fallow; Winter-Spring rice + beans; Winter-Spring peanut + cassava or maize; Winter-Spring sweet potato + cassava; Winter-Spring vegetables + Summer beans or peanut; Fruit trees + bean or peanut, forestry trees. The current land use management is still limited and lack of land information for local people, the land use issues for all purposes are the lack of precision planning. The major constraints are the poor cultural, educational and economics situation of the residents and the poor professional competence of the local land administration staffs. There is a need to change these tillages, crop residue management practices to reduce soil erosion rates, develop soil fertility and increase crop yield as well as better land use management policies.

Keywords: Central Vietnam, crop systems, land use management, land use types, sloping land