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“Development on the margin”

***Acacia mangium* and *Eucalyptus urophylla* in Northern Vietnam: Relationship Between Silvicultural Activity and Quality of Stand**

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Abstract

The Vietnamese government is currently carrying out a large scale “reforestation” programme (Five Million Hectare Reforestation Program). Smallholders plant a wide range of tree species where a large part of the planting taking place in Vietnam today concentrates on fast growing trees, aimed at producing raw material for the pulp and paper industry or woodchips. Nearly eight million people living in or near forest lands spend much of their time for their livelihood security. Poverty is fundamental problem in Vietnam, with 90 percent of the poor living in rural areas and with incidence of poverty being much higher in rural areas than in urban ones. Poverty in Vietnam will be mainly rural for the foreseeable future. For this reason, short- to medium-term poverty alleviation efforts will have to be heavily focused on forest resources and silviculture. In Phu Tho province, the most common fast growing exotic species planted are *Eucalyptus urophylla* and *Acacia mangium*. This paper sets out to determine the link between socio-economic characteristics of smallholders, silvicultural activity and the stand quality of *Acacia mangium* and *Eucalyptus urophylla* plantations in two independent case study communes in Phu Tho Province, Vietnam. Data was collected by interviewing the smallholders and conducting inventory of the stands and analysed with descriptive statistics, Mann-Whitney tests and Spearman correlations. *Acacia mangium* planters with larger areas carried out more silvicultural practices. Most of the farmers carried out the suggested silvicultural practices. Pruning had an effect on productivity in medium quality sites. As the improvement of stand quality is very important, more research is needed to analyse scheduled time, frequency and suitable methods for silviculture. This research recommends that smallholders be supported with (a) incentives for the plantation establishment, (b) education for smallholders in silvicultural techniques, (c) organisation and development activities for the wider market.

Keywords: *Acacia mangium*, *Eucalyptus urophylla*, Northern Vietnam, silvicultural activity, stand quality