



Tropentag, September 19-21, 2012, Göttingen -  
Kassel/Witzenhausen

“Resilience of agricultural systems against crises”

## Livelihood of Local People and Dependence on Forest Resources: A Case Study in Son Lang Commune Located in Ha Nung State Forestry Company, Vietnam

DUC LE<sup>1</sup>, HANG NGUYEN<sup>2</sup>, JÜRGEN PRETZSCH<sup>1</sup>, HUY BAO<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Technische Universität Dresden, Institute of International Forestry and Forest Products, Tropical Forestry, Germany*

<sup>2</sup>*Forest Science Institute of Vietnam, Tropical Forest Research Centre, Vietnam*

<sup>3</sup>*Tay Nguyen University, Faculty of Agriculture & Forestry, Department of Forest Resources & Environment Management, Vietnam*

### Abstract

The local people in the State Forest Enterprises (SFEs) in Vietnam have been traditionally dependent on the forests for their livelihood and their living habits have become closely integrated with the forest. Since SFEs began to manage the forests for timber extraction in 1954, changes in forest policies have had an impact on the livelihood of local people, and they have come into conflict with the SFEs over their traditional right of forest use and the laws of forest management and protection.

This research was conducted to determine the extent of dependence on forest resources by local households and the level of cooperation between the SFEs and the local people. A household survey was conducted in eight villages in the forest area managed by Ha Nung State Forestry Company (SFC, previously called as SFE) in Son Lang commune, K'Bang district, Gia Lai province. Eighty households were chosen by systematic sampling for survey and interview.

Research findings indicate that the migrant Kinh (also called as Vietnamese) people have a higher annual income (approximately 2.7 times) than that of the indigenous Bahna people. The main source of income for the Kinh is from coffee (66%), whereas the Bahna people are more dependent on forest (44%) and less upon coffee (31%). Other agriculture and animal husbandry represent minor sources of income for both groups.

Most of the local people, especially the Bahna, desire greater involvement in the SFC forest management, but local people were not considered in forest planning by the Ha Nung SFC as participatory, and complaints over lands, forest use, and benefits have been frequently registered. The research shows potential impacts of land use on forest patterns, and examines conflicts and cooperation in forest management practices in the case study region. Recommendations are given for better forest management of the Ha Nung SFC with greater involvement of the local people.

**Keywords:** Forest dependence, income source, local people, state forest enterprise, sustainable forest management