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“Management of land use systems for enhanced food security:  
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## Assessing Land Use Diversity Within Subsistence Production to Achieve Food Security in Northern Vietnam

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### Abstract

According to the World Bank, Vietnam is considered as one of the success stories among the developing economies because it has reduced its poverty rate from 58% in 1993 to 14.5% in 2008. Within this achievement, agriculture was an important sector with 22% and 52% contributions to the country's GDP and employment, respectively. Despite the improvement in the prevalence of poverty, its rate among the rural populations, especially those living in the country's upland areas is still high. Since reunification, the communist state has attempted to integrate the northern upland into modernising development programs to increase food security. Nevertheless, the ethnic minorities, who live mainly in the upland regions, have remained relatively autonomous in economic production and adopted diverse subsistence production systems among the groups in combination with cash crop production. This study assesses the contribution of land use diversity within subsistence production to food security in northern Vietnam where the level of food insecurity is relatively higher than in the southern part of the country. The main research question is whether having a diverse system of different subsistence activities helps to improve food security? The analysis is carried out using the ordinary least squares method and the data are collected from a survey of 300 households in 2007 in the rural district of Yen Chau in Vietnam. The choice of independent variables in the regression analysis is based on the conceptual model of rural household food security such as credit, food expenditure, income, as well as characteristics of the research area in social and political capital. In summary, this paper examines whether different type of activities within subsistence production – especially fish and paddy farming – has an impact on achieving food security.

**Keywords:** Fish, food security, paddy, subsistence farming, Vietnam