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Constrains and opportunities for agroforestry adoption in Northwest Vietnam

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Agroforestry offers an integrated approach that can curb land degradation and deforestation, while securing the livelihoods of rural households. As well acknowledge that, the adoption level normally based on the real needs and interests grounded in socio-cultural and economic factor's contexts.

With the aim to bring agroforestry research results to application in Northwest Vietnam. The research framework combined different activities, started by understanding local ethnic group's knowledge on tree-soil interaction, their perception, the challenges and interests from adopting agroforestry. The participatory approach was carried out to design agroforestry systems, in which local knowledge and scientific knowledge are combined. These established trials were evaluated to find out suitable options and spread through farm visits and training sections, following by equipping basic skill based on farmer's needs and interests. The research findings and farmer's feedback were used to advisory policy makers on promulgate the development programs.

The study showed that the farmer's specific social circumstances influence their aspiration and constraints for agroforestry intervention. Perceived challenges to adopting agroforestry systems are varied among ethnic groups. Seven systems have been evaluated as higher economic and environmental performance compared to current farmer practice. The farm visits and trainings on various aspects of agroforestry, as laying out contour lines, establishing nurseries, preparing seedlings and designing agroforestry farms, benefiting more than 2,000 individuals, including farmers, extension workers, district and commune staffs. Based on the suitability agroforestry systems and trees and local farmer's needs and interests, eight group nurseries have been established with approximately 100,000 seedlings produced for 15 different fruit and timber tree species. 150 Farmer Demonstration Trials and six agroforestry Exemplar Landscapes (50 ha each) have been established. The research results on benefit of planting forage grass strips and *Docynia indica* have been embedded in Resolution 15/2015/NQ-HDND of Yen Bai province, which have been increased the number of adopter over the wider area. The area of *D. indica* based agroforestry system was increased 2,248 ha in the Yen Bai's mountainous area in period 2016-2017 since resolution promulgated. The research results on *D. Indica* processing techniques was transferred to private sector to produce different processed products, guaranty the opportunities for producers and markets for local traditional products.

Agroforestry technology adoption required the understanding of cultural character, farming behavior, challenge and interest of local people. Therefore, it is not one-size-fit-all process. It required to develop a strategy on research, ensure the research results are mainstreamed on the development policy in order to build resilient livelihoods and ensure future environment benefits.

Keywords: Agroforestry systems, Farmer demonstration trials, Exemplar landscapes, Policy, Adoption.