



Forestry

# Developing and promoting market-based agroforestry and forest rehabilitation options for northwest Vietnam



## Overview

Nearly 3.5 million people from 30 ethnic groups live in northwest Vietnam, where rural poverty is rife and unsustainable farming practices are being widely practiced on steep mountainous lands.

Driven by lucrative markets for livestock feed, smallholder farmers mainly grow monoculture maize on steep terrain, resulting in severe soil erosion. The area under annual crops has increased over the years through the conversion of shifting cultivation areas and natural forests, leaving half of the remaining forest degraded.

The development of market-based agroforestry that enables farmers to diversify, reduce erosion and achieve higher incomes than from maize alone could go a long way to addressing the region's poverty, deforestation and land degradation challenges. Agroforestry is included in recent environmental policies, including the National Action Plan Framework for Adaptation and Mitigation of Climate Change of the Agriculture and Rural Development Sector (2008-2020). Integrating trees into agriculture contributes to the sustainability of production systems and increases their resilience, while rehabilitating degraded forests contributes to global REDD+ goals to which Vietnam is committed.

## KEY FACTS

**ACIAR Project No.** FST/2016/152

**Duration:** April 2017 to August 2021 (4 years)

**Target areas:** Vietnam

**Budget:** AU\$2,700,00

### Project leader

Nguyen La, World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF)

### Key partners

- Southern Cross University
- Vietnam Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
- Soils and Fertilizers Research Institute (SFRI)
- Northern Mountainous Agriculture and Forestry Science Institute (NOMAFSI)
- Tay Bac University

### ACIAR Research Program Manager

Dr Nora Devoe



## Research/Objective

**This project aims to develop and promote market-based agroforestry options to improve livelihoods and enhance forest and landscape management.**

### The specific objectives are to:

- Quantify and evaluate the performance of generic agroforestry options and tree species to underpin investment in promoting agroforestry.
- Understand the suitability of different agroforestry options in relation to different contexts and develop markets and policy to scale up adoption.
- Understand the ecological and economic values of degraded forests and co-develop appropriate forest rehabilitation methods with local communities to enhance them.
- Understand drivers of land use change and develop cross-sector planning approaches for landscapes, integrating forests and agroforestry land uses.
- Develop local capacity for agroforestry, forest rehabilitation and integrated landscape management.

## Expected scientific results

- Analysis of the interactions among components of multi-strata agroforestry practices (in terms of resource capture) and their long-term economic and ecological performance compared with simpler alternatives greatly enriching the growing body of agroforestry knowledge in the tropical world.
- Knowledge from participatory monitoring on the network of farmer demonstration trials enabling novel inference about the suitability of different agroforestry options over the range of contexts encountered in northwest Vietnam.
- Suitability maps for various agroforestry options in three provinces, incorporating social, cultural, ecological and market aspects.
- New knowledge on the economic and environmental benefits arising from alternative approaches to forest rehabilitation on degraded sites.
- Greater knowledge on scaling up approaches for agroforestry.
- Increased agroforestry research and teaching capacity by Tay Bac University lecturers, consequently helping to build the capacity of future agroforesters in the region.

## Expected outcomes

- Increased productivity, income and farming systems' resilience, resulting from adoption of appropriate agroforestry systems, components and practices by farmers.
- Increased research and extension capacity, resulting from formal and non-farm trainings, peer learning and mentoring, as well as capacity of women farmers to utilise agroforestry information.
- Better targeting of policy incentives and rural development interventions at province, district and/or commune levels, consequently stimulating agroforestry investments by farmers.
- Improved conditions of remnant natural forests, as a result of adoption of appropriate forest rehabilitation techniques by forest communities.
- Increased livelihood opportunities for farmers and forest people from agroforestry products and sustainable extraction of non-timber forest products.
- Improved capacity for integrated landscape planning by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and the Department of Natural Resources and Environment and other relevant stakeholders, leading to better programming of forest rehabilitation and agroforestation efforts in the focal provinces.

