



SilvaCarbon is an interagency technical cooperation program of the United States Government to enhance the capacity of tropical forested countries to monitor, measure, and report carbon in their forests and other lands. There are currently 30 countries with active SilvaCarbon programs, including Vietnam.

SilvaCarbon has a strong focus on facilitating learning opportunities and investing in the human potential of participating countries. In 2020, SilvaCarbon initiated a mentorship pilot program to promote gender equality and address identified disparities in the number and roles of women engaged in SilvaCarbon forest and carbon monitoring activities.

The **SilvaCarbon Women in Forest Carbon Initiative**, led by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service, provides targeted professional development and networking opportunities to women mentors and mentees in SilvaCarbon countries. Initial pilot countries include Vietnam, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Cameroon.

Why Vietnam?

The Government of Vietnam has been an active SilvaCarbon partner since 2013. An analysis of over 100 SilvaCarbon training activities in Vietnam indicated that:

- ▶ Women are well represented in training on remote sensing and GHG inventory, but are under-represented in training on national forest inventory. Very few women representatives joined strategic planning meetings.

Gender equality in the forestry sector is an important priority for the Government of Vietnam, as part of its commitment to sustainable forest management, however:

- ▶ There is a prevailing view in Vietnam that forestry is a male profession. This limits women's opportunities for managerial, technical, and leadership skill development.

Women in Forest Carbon Initiative received support from the Vietnam Forest Inventory and Planning Institute and the Vietnam National University of Forestry, two key SilvaCarbon partners.

- ▶ Lessons learned from Vietnam are important for other SilvaCarbon countries.



The Women in Forest Carbon Initiative Vietnam team participated in a regional workshop on early warning systems for forest monitoring, organized under the umbrella of the Global Forest Observation Initiative, from Nov. 28–Dec 2, 2022 in Danang, Vietnam. Participants learned about the latest advances in using satellite data for forest monitoring and shared ideas and experiences with experts from all over the world.

Photo: Vo Viet Cuong, USDA Forest Service

U.S. Forest Service International Programs Office

The Global Programs unit fosters technical cooperation, innovation, and exchange focused on cross-cutting global challenges. Working closely with International Programs regional teams and numerous U.S. and international partners, the global team develops, implements, and supports programming spanning three key thematic areas: Climate Change, Illegal Logging, and International Visitors.



Mentorship Approach

The Women in Forest Carbon Initiative Vietnam cohort includes two mentees who are undergraduate students at Vietnam National University of Forestry, two Vietnam mentors who are mid-career forestry professionals from the Vietnam Forest Inventory and Planning Institute, and two mentors from the U.S. Forest Service. The team works with a designated coach that facilitates the process.

Technical Assignment

The Initiative prioritizes exposing participants to the technical aspects of assessing and reporting on carbon. In collaboration with Forest Inventory and Planning Institute, the mentees had a chance to contribute to a research study on allometric equations and biomass modeling for evergreen forests in the North Central region of Vietnam. The Women in Forest Carbon Initiative team joined the field work and supported the data analysis. They also attended regional SilvaCarbon events.

Tailored Professional Development Courses

The Vietnam mentees and mentors selected and prioritized professional development courses provided through the Women in Forest Carbon Initiative. Topics included English language, writing, presentation skills, creating videos with PowerPoint, managing conflict, virtual meeting facilitation, digital storytelling, giving and receiving feedback, designing blended learning, understanding results, and individual energy management.

Women in Forest Carbon Initiative Vietnam Team



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Being matched with mentors who are incredibly empathetic and experienced has allowed me to streamline my short-term and long-term visions, and develop and hone soft skills, which are essential to my personal and professional development.

—Tu Tran Thanh, mentee
Vietnam National University of Forestry

Highlights

- ▶ Research was completed on forest biomass modelling as a direct input to Vietnam's National Forest Inventory.
- ▶ A mentee graduated from Vietnam National University of Forestry with a bachelor's degree in natural resource management.
- ▶ Mentees and mentors gained technical knowledge through participation in regional SilvaCarbon training sessions.
- ▶ Mentees broadened their perspectives and interpersonal relationship skills by exchanging ideas and experiences with forestry professionals from other SilvaCarbon countries.

For more information about the Women in Forest Carbon Initiative Vietnam, contact:

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