

Risks and impacts of environmental weeds to Vietnam's forests

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Summary In the past decades, the forests in Vietnam have been under increasing pressure from disturbance, which has increased the chance of invasion of both non-native and native weeds. However, impacts of weeds on the forests have received little attention in Vietnam. *Microstegium* spp. are aggressive invasive grasses; dense infestations may prevent forest regeneration. *Microstegium* impacts are most well-known in its non-native range in North America, but our preliminary observations suggest that it may also be a native invasive species threatening forests in Vietnam, where it may be especially problematic as forest regeneration features prominently in environmental management as well as socioeconomic development goals. With a view to determining the impacts of *Microstegium ciliatum* (Trin.) A.Camus to forest regeneration and developing management recommendations, the

study will conduct a three-year field experiment in Cuc Phuong, Vietnam's oldest national park, investigating the response of the woody species community to experimental removal of *Microstegium*. This presentation presents the experimental design and the results of the initial survey (May–June 2016). Invasion level of *Microstegium* and species abundance and composition of woody species (all size classes) in invaded plots under different canopy cover will be indicated. The relationship between invasion level and species abundance and composition, therefore, will also be evaluated.

Keywords Cuc Phuong National Park, environmental weeds, invasive species impacts, forest regeneration, *Microstegium*, species abundance, species richness, woody species.