

**ABOVEGROUND BIOMASS ALLOMETRIC EQUATIONS AND  
FUELWOOD PROPERTIES OF SIX SPECIES GROWN IN ETHIOPIA**

**By**

**WOLDEYOHANES FANTU**

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,  
in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**March 2005**

To my wife, Meselech Mettete and  
Children, Brooke and Nephtalem

Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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**Chairman: Associate Professor Ahmad Ainuddin Nuruddin, Ph.D.**

**Faculty: Forestry**

In Ethiopia, plantations of fast growing species are being established to increase the supply of wood; especially for the biomass fuel consumption. In order to better inventory the supply of biomass, allometric equations and fuel properties need to be determined. The objectives of this study were i) to develop regression equations of tree component from six species ii) to determine fuel properties and fuel value index (FVI) of the six tree species and iii) to compare combustion characteristics of tree component of the six species using thermogravimetric analysis (TGA).

The selected exotic species were *Eucalyptus globulus*, *Eucalyptus grandis* and *Eucalyptus saligna*; and the indigenous were *Acacia abyssinica*, *Acacia seyal* and *Acacia tortilis*. For each species, 24 sample trees (20 for regression and four for validation test) were randomly selected from respective forest stands located in central, western and southern part of Ethiopia.

Biometrical data were obtained by felling representative trees stratified into diameter at breast height (DBH) classes. The ANOVA and prediction equations were analyzed by using base-10 log-transformed dry weights (kg) of aboveground

biomass (AGB) components and their corresponding log-transformed DBH, squared diameter at breast height (DBH<sup>2</sup>), and DBH<sup>2</sup>\*height (H). For data analysis, Microsoft Excel 2002 and SPSS 11.5 were used. To determine fuelwood properties of components of the six tree species such as moisture content (MC), basic density (D), volatile matter (VM), fixed carbon (FC), ash (As), gross heat value (GHV) and combustion characteristics, experimental samples were collected by random sampling method. All the test samples were replicated three times. These studies were conducted at the Faculty of Forestry, Universiti Putra Malaysia.

The allometric equation with DBH<sup>2</sup> as predictor variable showed better results (higher R<sup>2</sup> and lower SE) than other growth parameters. The improvement in R<sup>2</sup> and SE was very little when H was included as predictor variable (up to 6 and 2.5% respectively). Since DBH can easily be measured with higher accuracy and provided better estimates, it was recommended as an adequate growth parameter for AGB estimation.

The GHV of stem wood and branch component did not show significant variation (p>0.05) between species. For foliage biomass the variation between species was highly significant (p<0.001). It was observed that, GHV alone does not indicate the merits of desirable fuelwood qualities; therefore, FVI was calculated considering GHV, MC, D and As. The results revealed that FVI constitutes an adequate criterion for selecting and ranking fuelwood species. The species investigated in current study were ranked according to FVI in descending order of desirable fuelwood properties; i.e. *E.globulus*, *E.grandis*, *E.saligna*, *A. tortilis*, *A.seyal* and *A. abyssinica*.

Results from TGA showed that stem wood and branch components in all species exhibited to have similar burning profile; and comparable burning characteristics. Generally, ignition temperature of burning samples increased with increasing volatile matter content. It was also observed that ignition requirement for foliage biomass was lower compared to stem wood and branch component.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**PERSAMAAN ALLOMETRIC BIOJISIM ATAS TANAH DAN SIFAT  
BAHAN API BAGI ENAM SPESIES DI ETHIOPIA**

**Oleh**

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Di Ethiopia, penanaman species cepat tumbuh telah dimulakan bertujuan untuk meningkatkan bekalan kayu; terutamanya penggunaan bahan api biojisim. Bagi menentukan inventori bekalan biojisim yang terbaik, persamaan 'allometric' dan sifat bahan api perlu ditentukan terlebih dahulu. Objektif kajian ini adalah i) untuk membentuk model regresi komponen bagi enam spesies kayu ii) untuk menentukan sifat bahan api dan indeks nilai bahan api (FVI) bagi enam spesies dan iii) untuk membandingkan ciri-ciri pembakaran komponen bagi enam spesies kayu dengan menggunakan analisis 'thermogravimetrik' (TGA).

Spesies eksotik yang telah dipilih adalah *E.globulus*, *E.grandis* dan *E. saligna*; dan spesies tempatan adalah *A. abyssinica*, *A.seyal* dan *A.tortilis*. Bagi setiap spesies, 24 sampel pokok (20 untuk regresi dan empat untuk ujian validasi) dipilih secara rawak dari pada kawasan hutan di bahagian tengah, barat dan selatan Ethiopia.

Data biometrik diperolehi dari pokok yang ditebang mengikut pengelasan perepang paras dada (DBH). ANOVA dan persamaan yang diramalkan dianalisa

menggunakan “Base-10 log-transformed” berat kering (kg) komponen pokok dan perkaitan “log-transformed” diameter paras dada (DBH), diameter paras dada kuasa dua ( $DBH^2$ ) dan  $DBH^2 * H$ . Bagi menganalisis data, Microsoft Excel 2002 and SPSS 11.5 telah digunakan. Untuk menentukan sifat bahan api setiap komponen bagi enam spesies seperti kandungan lembapan (MC), ketumpatan asas (D), bahan volatil meruap (VM), karbon tetap (FC), abu kayu (As), nilai kepanasan kasar (GHV) dan ciri-ciri pembakaran, sampel-sampel percubaan telah dikutip dengan kaedah persampelan secara rawak. Kesemua sampel ujian direplikasi sebanyak tiga kali. Kajian ini telah dijalankan di Universiti Putra Malaysia.

Persamaan ‘allometric’ dengan kuasadua DBH sebagai pembolehubah ramalan menunjukkan keputusan lebih baik di mana ( $R^2$  yang tinggi dan SE yang rendah) daripada parameter tumbesaran yang lain. Pembaikan dalam  $R^2$  dan SE adalah terlalu kecil apabila H dimasukkan sebagai pembolehubah ramalan (sehingga 6 dan 2.5%). Memandangkan DBH mudah diukur dengan ketepatan yang tinggi dan memberikan anggaran yang baik, maka adalah disyorkan ianya dijadikan parameter tumbesaran kepada penganggaran AGB.

GHV komponen batang dan dahan berkayu tidak menunjukkan variasi yang signifikan ( $p > 0.05$ ) diantara spesies. Bagi variasi biojisim daun diantara spesies adalah sangat signifikan ( $p < 0.001$ ). Melalui pemerhatian, jika hanya GHV sahaja yang digunakan ia tidak menunjukkan merit kualiti bahan api yang menarik; justeru itu, FVI telah diukur dengan mengambilkira GHV, MC, D dan As. Keputusan menunjukkan bahawa FVI mempunyai criteria yang mencukupi dalam memilih dan menyusun bahan api spesies. Spesies yang telah dikaji dalam kajian semasa disusun

mengikuti FVI dalam susunan menurun bagi ciri-ciri bahan api yang menarik iaitu *E. globulus*, *E. grandis*, *E. saligna*, *A. tortilis*, *A. seyal* dan *A. abyssinica*.

Keputusan daripada TGA menunjukkan komponen batang dan dahan kayu dalam kesemua spesies yang diuji mempunyai profil dan ciri-ciri pembakaran yang sama. Secara amnya, suhu penyalaan bagi pembakaran sampel-sampel akan meningkat apabila terjadi peningkatan kandungan bahan mudah meruap. Ia juga diperhatikan bahawa keperluan penyalaan bagi biojisim daun adalah rendah berbanding dengan komponen batang dan dahan kayu.



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I certify that an Examination Committee met on March 3, 2005 to conduct final examination of Woldeyohanes Fantu Ewnetu on his Doctor of Philosophy thesis entitled “Aboveground Biomass Allometric Equations and Fuelwood Properties of Six Species Grown in Ethiopia” in accordance with Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Act 1980 and Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Regulations 1981. The Committee recommends that the candidate be awarded the relevant degree. Members of the Examination Committee are as follows:

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## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that the thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations which have duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at UPM or other institutions.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
DEDICATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ABSTRAK	vi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ix
APPROVAL	x
DECLARATION	xii
LIST OF TABLES	xvi
LIST OF FIGURES	xix
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xxiv
 <b>CHAPTER</b>	
<b>1 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Forest Resources and Vegetation of Ethiopia	1
1.2 Loss of Forest Resources in Ethiopia	4
1.3 Plantation Forest	6
1.4 Fuelwood: Source for Energy Supply	6
1.5 Introduction of Fuelwood Tree Species in Ethiopia	9
1.6 Research Problems	10
1.6.1 Lack of Appropriate Regression Models for Indirect Estimation of AGB Components of Selected Tree Species	10
1.6.2 Lack of Objective Unit of Measurement of Fuelwood Properties	12
1.7 Objectives	13
1.7.1 General Objective	13
1.7.2 Specific Objectives	13
1.8 Hypothesis	14
1.9 Organization of the thesis	14
 <b>2 LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	 <b>16</b>
2.1 Estimation of Aboveground Biomass of Trees	16
2.1.1 Background	16
2.1.2 Factors Influencing Biomass Production	19
2.1.2.1 Photosynthesis	19
2.1.2.2 Climate	20
2.1.2.3 Site	21
2.1.2.4 Silvicultural Practices	22
2.1.3 Importance of Biomass Studies	24
2.1.4 Methods for Determining Tree Biomass	26
2.1.5 Determining Sample Plot Size	31
2.1.6 Determining Sample Size for Detailed measurements	32

	2.1.7	Choice of Regression Equations and Predictor Variables	33
2.2		Fuel Characteristics of Woody Species	38
	2.2.1	Factors Affecting Heat Value of Woody Biomass	39
		2.2.1.1 Moisture Content	39
		2.2.1.2 Chemical Composition of Woody Biomass	41
		2.2.1.3 Basic Density	44
	2.2.2	Calorific Value of Woody Species	47
2.3		Compositional Analysis by Thermogravimetry	53
	2.3.1	Thermal Regimes of Wood Mass Loss	55
	2.3.2	Stages of Combustion	56
	2.3.3	Thermogravimetry of Wood	58
	2.3.4	Features of Burning Profile	64
	2.3.5	Factors Affecting Combustion Peaks	66
<b>3</b>		<b>MATERIALS AND METHODS</b>	<b>68</b>
	3.1	Materials	68
	3.1.1	Justification for Selection of the Species	68
		3.1.1.1 <i>Eucalyptus globulus</i>	68
		3.1.1.2 <i>Eucalyptus saligna</i>	69
		3.1.1.3 <i>Eucalyptus grandis</i>	69
		3.1.1.4 <i>Acacia</i> species	70
	3.1.2	Description of <i>Eucalyptus globulus</i>	71
	3.1.3	Description of the Study Area of <i>Eucalyptus globulus</i>	73
	3.1.4	Description of <i>Eucalyptus saligna</i>	77
	3.1.5	Description of the Study Area of <i>Eucalyptus saligna</i>	78
	3.1.6	Description of <i>Eucalyptus grandis</i>	81
	3.1.7	Description of the Study Area of <i>Eucalyptus grandis</i>	83
	3.1.8	Description of <i>Acacia abyssinica</i>	83
	3.1.9	Description of the Study Area of <i>Acacia abyssinica</i>	85
	3.1.10	Description of <i>Acacia seyal</i>	87
	3.1.11	Description of Study Area of <i>Acacia seyal</i>	89
	3.1.12	Description of <i>Acacia tortilis</i>	91
	3.1.13	Description of the Study Area of <i>Acacia tortilis</i>	93
	3.2	Methodology	94
	3.2.1	Sampling Design	94
	3.2.2	Field Measurement	97
	3.2.3	Collection of Sub-samples to Determine Oven-dry Weight	99
	3.2.4	Collection of Sub-samples to Determine Physico-chemical Properties	107
	3.3	Data Analysis	107
	3.3.1	Estimation of Aboveground Biomass	107
	3.3.2	Correction of Log - log Transformed Equations	114
	3.3.3	Validation of Prediction Model	119
	3.3.4	Physico-chemical Properties of Selected Tree Species	153
		3.3.4.1 Moisture Content	153
		3.3.4.2 Basic Density	154
		3.3.4.3 Ash Content	155

	3.3.4.4 Gross Heat Value	157
	3.3.4.5 Fuel Value Index	159
	3.3.5 Compositional Analysis by Thermogravimetry	160
<b>4</b>	<b>RESULTS AND DISCUSSION</b>	<b>163</b>
4.1	Selection of Regression Equations	163
	4.1.1 <i>Eucalyptus globulus</i>	163
	4.1.2 <i>Eucalyptus grandis</i>	164
	4.1.3 <i>Eucalyptus saligna</i>	164
	4.1.4 <i>Acacia abyssinica</i>	164
	4.1.5 <i>Acacia tortilis</i>	164
4.2	Biomass Distribution	165
	4.2.1 <i>Eucalyptus globulus</i>	165
	4.2.2 <i>Eucalyptus grandis</i>	167
	4.2.3 <i>Eucalyptus saligna</i>	169
	4.2.4 <i>Acacia abyssinica</i>	172
	4.2.5 <i>Acacia seyal</i>	174
	4.2.6 <i>Acacia tortilis</i>	176
4.3	Allometric Relationship of AGB Components	178
	4.3.1 <i>Eucalyptus globulus</i>	179
	4.3.2 <i>Eucalyptus grandis</i>	185
	4.3.3 <i>Eucalyptus saligna</i>	188
	4.3.4 <i>Acacia abyssinica</i>	191
	4.3.5 <i>Acacia seyal</i>	192
	4.3.6 <i>Acacia tortilis</i>	193
4.4	Influence of Sample Size on the Accuracy of Regression Equations	196
4.5	Physico-chemical Properties of Selected Tree Species	206
	4.5.1 Moisture Content	207
	4.5.2 Basic Density	211
	4.5.3 Ash Content	213
	4.5.4 Gross Heat Value	216
	4.5.5 Volatile matter and Fixed Carbon	220
	4.5.6 Fuel Value Index	224
4.6	Compositional Analysis by Thermogravimetry	226
<b>5</b>	<b>CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>245</b>
5.1	Regression Models for Estimating Aboveground Biomass and Components of Selected Trees	245
5.2	Fuelwood Characteristics	248
5.3	Compositional Analysis by Thermogravimetry	249
	REFERENCES	251
	APPENDICES	283
	BIODATA OF THE AUTHOR	342