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## AN EVALUATION OF SHORT TERM GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS FROM SOIL AND ATMOSPHERE EXCHANGE IN RESPONSE TO CONTROLLING EDAPHIC FACTORS OF EUCALYPTUS PLANTATION, GUJARAT, INDIA

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### Abstract

A considerable amount of atmospheric GHG is produced and consumed through soil processes. Soils provide the largest terrestrial store for carbon (C) as well as the largest atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> sources through autotrophic and heterotrophic organisms. Soils are also the greatest source (~60%) of CH<sub>4</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O through microbially mediated processes of methanogenesis, nitrification and denitrification. Short term CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O gas fluxes from soil under a Eucalyptus plantation in central Gujarat, Western India were measured for three month duration (February to April, 2013) at fifteen days interval using closed static chamber technique and gas chromatography method. Simultaneously soils were analyzed at 0.0-10, 10-20, and 20-30 cm depth for pH, conductivity, organic carbon, nitrogen, phosphate, sulphate to correlate with gas emissions. The results showed that the soil in our study was a sink of atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O which the flux varied from -65.27 to 14.6, -0.005 to 0.07 and -0.03 to 0.33 mg m<sup>-2</sup> h<sup>-1</sup> respectively. CO<sub>2</sub> emissions were found maximum as compared to other two gases. Variations in soil N<sub>2</sub>O emissions could be primarily explained by litter C:N ratio and soil total N stock. Differences in soil CH<sub>4</sub> uptake could be mostly attributed to the soil CO<sub>2</sub> flux and water filled pore space (WFPS). Soil C:N ratio could largely account for variations in soil CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. A strong positive relationship existed between CH<sub>4</sub> flux and soil temperature. The N<sub>2</sub>O flux correlated with WFPS and the global warming potential of N<sub>2</sub>O is highest compared to other two principal gases.

Keywords: greenhouse gases, fluxes, eucalyptus plantation, global warming potential, soil nutrients

## Introduction

Gas exchange between soils and the atmosphere is an important contributing factor to global climate change due to increasing release of greenhouse gases (GHG). The most important individual GHG is CO<sub>2</sub>, but substantial contributions to global warming are also made by CH<sub>4</sub>, and N<sub>2</sub>O. Soils can store and release considerable quantities of carbon through natural processes including litter deposition, decomposition and root respiration. Whereas, forest soils and wetland sediments have been identified as a significant sinks for atmospheric CH<sub>4</sub>, about 3–9% of the global atmospheric CH<sub>4</sub> sinks. Soils have also been identified to be significant sources for N trace gases, accounting for 60% of the total annual N<sub>2</sub>O emissions. (Nirmal kumar et al., 2012). In the present study an attempt has been made to investigate the concentration, fluxes, emissions, global warming potential of important greenhouse gases like CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O in relation to edaphic factors of *Eucalyptus grandis* plantation, in Gujarat, India.

The enhanced production and reduced consumption of naturally occurring greenhouse gases (GHGs) such as carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O) and methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), are responsible for approximately 90% of the global warming and climate change phenomenon (Solomon et al., 2007). Among them the most important individual greenhouse gas is carbon dioxide, but substantial contributions to global warming are also made by methane and nitrous oxide. Soils can store and release considerable quantities of carbon through natural processes including litter deposition, decomposition, microbial and root respiration (Drewitt et al., 2002). Although the atmospheric CH<sub>4</sub> concentration (1.8 ppmv) is much less than that of CO<sub>2</sub> (370 ppmv), however, CH<sub>4</sub> is 23 times more effective per molecule as a greenhouse gas than CO<sub>2</sub> in a period of 100 years (Ramaswamy et al., 2001). The CH<sub>4</sub> increase accounts for 20% of the increased greenhouse effect potential of the atmosphere. Likewise, N<sub>2</sub>O is a long half-life gas in atmosphere that is 296 times as effective as CO<sub>2</sub> in a period of 100 years as a greenhouse gas and accounts for about 6% of the Greenhouse Effect (Ramaswamy et al., 2001).

Afforestation and reforestation can greatly affect soil GHG fluxes by changing key physical and chemical properties that influence soil nutrient and C cycling and microbial activity (Merino et al., 2004; Kelliher et al., 2006). Tree species are considered to alter soil physical (e.g. moisture and temperature), chemical and biological processes through their root system, crown structure, foliage, leaf structure and litter quality (Ullah et al., 2008). Plantations are becoming a key component of the world's forest resources and playing vital and prominent role in context of overall sustainable forest management. The root systems of plants change the physical, chemical and biological properties of the soil in the zone of contact (Gobran, Gleegg, 1996). The microzones of rhizosphere soil and soil root surface are different from the soil in general by the amount of available nutrients, organic matter, pH, composition of microorganisms and other indicators (Larisa Afanasyeva and Nina Kozhevnikova., 2014). Well-designed, multi-purpose plantations can reduce pressure on natural forests, and restore some ecological services provided by natural forests and mitigate climate change through direct C sequestration (Paquette and Messier 2010). Moreover, Nirmal Kumar and Shailendra Vijol (2008, 2009) examined CH<sub>4</sub> emission in relation to organic carbon, sulphate, and phosphate contents of wetlands and two rice

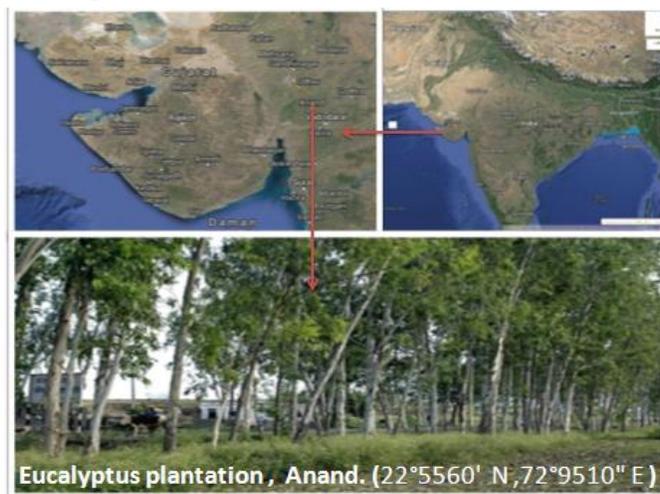
fields of central Gujarat, India. Dissolved methane fluctuations in relation to hydrochemical parameters in Tapi estuary, Gulf of Cambay, India was investigated by Nirmal Kumar et al., (2010).

## Materials and Methods

### Study site

This study was carried out in a Eucalyptus plantation, situated at 22°556' N latitude, and 72°95" E longitude in Anand, Central Gujarat, Western India (Fig. 1). The total area of plantation is 8093.8 m<sup>2</sup> and dominated by *Eucalyptus grandis*. Soil under the plantation is sandy loam and litter layer was normally about 2 to 3 cm; humus layer was about 1-2 cm. Meteorological data from Anand Agriculture University, Anand revealed the mean annual maximum and minimum temperature is 42 °C and 26 °C respectively. The mean annual precipitation is 900 mm; mostly occur in monsoon season (July to October). The average relative air humidity is about 30 %.

### Soil CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O measurement



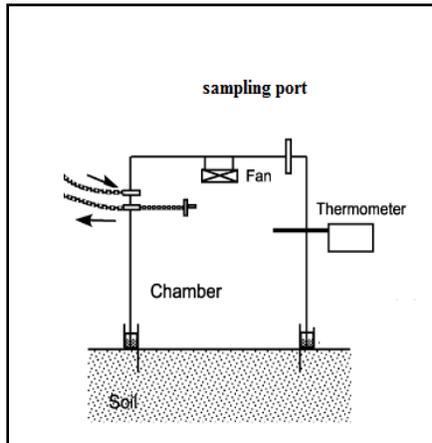
**Figure 1. Study area shows the Eucalyptus plantation in Anand, Gujarat, Western India**

Soil CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O gas concentrations were measured using the static chamber and gas chromatography techniques. Static chamber was established in plot and fabricated with non-reactive materials PVC (Brechet et al. 2009).

Chambers with the size of 100 cm-diameter ring were anchored 5 cm into soil. During flux measurement 25-cm-high chamber top was attached to the ring and a fan (about 8 cm in diameter) was installed on the top wall of each chamber to ensure proper mixing of the air when collected (Mo et al. 2008) (Fig. 2).

Air was sampled from chamber between 11:00 to 2:00 h at each sampling date because of maximum GHGs emission measured in this period. Concentrations of soil CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O were measured 15 days interval during the experimental period from February to April, 2013 because of the emissions of GHGs from soil – atmospheric interchange would higher due to

moderate climatic conditions as compared to other months of the year (Tang et al. 2006 and Warner et al 2007).



a. Design of Sampler



b. Mixing Fan fixing in Sampler



c. On-Site Fixing of Sampler



d. Withdraw of Gases by Syringe

## STATIC CHAMBER GHG SAMPLING METHOD



e. Injecting Gases into Vial

**Figure 2. On-Site Soil-Atmosphere Exchange of GHG Emission by Static chamber sampling method**

Gas samples were collected with 100 ml plastic syringes attached with three-way stopcock at 0, 60, 120 and 180 min intervals after chamber closure and collected samples over the atmospheric pressure in to glass vials of 30 ml with butyl rubber stoppers which had been evacuated beforehand. The first 100 ml gas was abandoned, because it might contain the gas taken at the latest sampling.  $N_2O$ ,  $CH_4$  and  $CO_2$  concentrations in the samples were analyzed within 48 h using gas chromatography (Perkin Elmer Auto system Gas Chromatograph). The gas chromatography was equipped with an electron capture detector ECD for  $N_2O$  analysis and a flame ionization detector (FID) for  $CH_4$  and  $CO_2$  analysis. Gas fluxes are calculated from linear

$$F = \rho \frac{V}{A} \frac{P}{P_0} \frac{T_0}{T} \frac{dC_t}{dt}$$

regressions of concentrations inside the chambers against the closure time according to the following equation:

where,  $F$  is CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O gas flux (mg/m<sup>2</sup>/h),  $\rho$  is gas density at the test temperature (mg/m<sup>3</sup>),  $V$  is chamber volume available (m<sup>3</sup>),  $A$  is bottom area of the chamber (m<sup>2</sup>),  $P$  is atmospheric pressure in the field (hPa),  $P_0$  is atmospheric pressure under standard conditions (hPa),  $T_0$  is absolute air temperature under standard conditions (25°C),  $T$  is absolute air temperature in chamber at the time of sampling (°C),  $C_t$  is concentration of mixed volume ratios of gases in chamber at time  $t$  (10<sup>-6</sup>).

*GHGs emission (t/year) measured by following equation*

GHGs (CH<sub>4</sub>, CO<sub>2</sub>, N<sub>2</sub>O) emission (t/year) = Area of land (m<sup>2</sup>) × Average daily CH<sub>4</sub>, CO<sub>2</sub>, N<sub>2</sub>O Emission rate Mg/m<sup>2</sup>/year × Conversion factor t/mg (10<sup>-9</sup>) × Molecular/ Atomic ratio (Global Environment Division, 1998) .

Global warming potential calculated by GHGs (CH<sub>4</sub>, CO<sub>2</sub>, N<sub>2</sub>O) emission multiplied by global warming potential for hundred years of CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub>, and N<sub>2</sub>O is 1, 21 and 310 respectively.

The Greenhouse Gas budget provides an estimate of the net budget of CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub>, and N<sub>2</sub>O based on the Global Warming Potential (GWP) of each gas. GWP is the contribution that a gas makes to the greenhouse effect according to its capacity to absorb radiation and its residence time in the atmosphere. Each mean day budget of each gas was calculated from the below given formula and expressed in terms of ‘carbon dioxide equivalents’ (CO<sub>2</sub> eq):

$$CO_{2eq} = (N_2O \times 310) + (CH_4 \times 21) + (CO_2 \times 1)$$

*Micro-environmental data measurements*

Air temperature at 1.5 m above ground was measured simultaneously. Soil temperature and moisture at 5 cm below soil surface were monitored at each chamber. Soil temperature was measured using a digital thermometer. Soil moisture was measured by gravimetric method. Soil moisture values were converted in to water filled pore space (WFPS) by the following formula:

$$WFPS[\%] = \frac{Vol[\%]}{1 - \frac{bd[g\ cm^{-3}]}{2.65[g\ cm^{-3}]}}$$

Where  $bd$  is bulk density,  $Vol$  is volumetric water content and 2.65 is density of quartz.

*Soil sampling and measurements*

Soil samples collected at different depth 0-10, 11-20 and 21-30 cm. A total of six soil cores collected using an 8 cm diameter stainless steel core in each plot. Soil samples were air dried at room temperature (25 °C), then were passes through 2 mm mesh sieve to remove coarse living roots and gravel and ground with a mill before chemical analysis. Meanwhile soils samples were measured for bulk density.

Soil was analyzed for total organic C by Walkley and Black method. Total nitrogen (N) was analyzed using Kjeldahl method. Available phosphorus was estimated by phosphomolybdic blue colorimetric method; sulphate by turbidimetric method and nitrate by colorimetric method using phenol disulphonic acid. Soil pH was measured in a 1 mol L<sup>-1</sup>KCl solution using a glass electrode. Conductivity was measured by potentiometric method and particle density was estimated by gravimetric method. APHA, (1993) and Maiti, (2003) standard books were followed for all the above parameters.

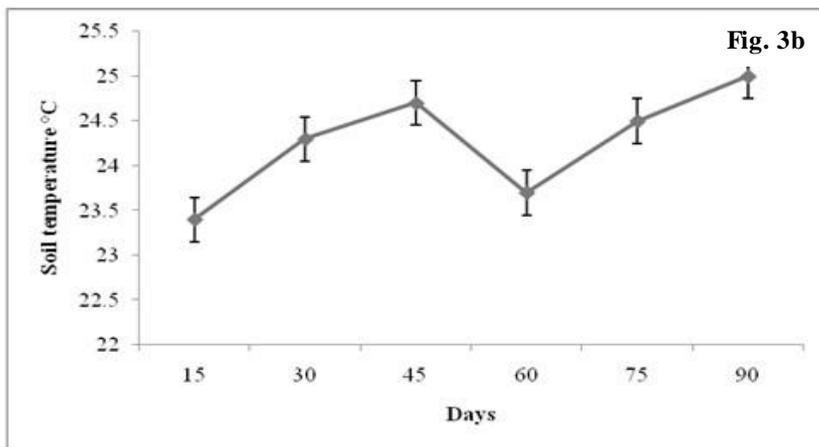
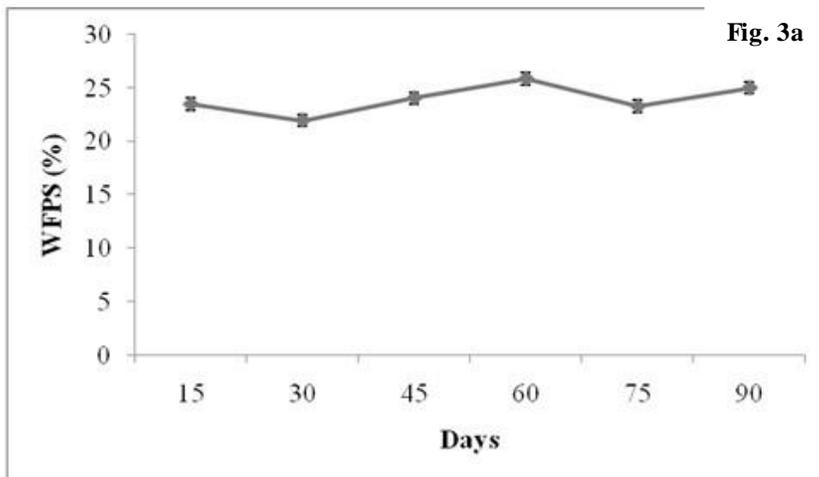
#### *Statistical analysis*

In order to examine the relationship between soil parameters and the measured CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O gas fluxes, correlation and linear regression analysis was performed using Sigma Plot 11.0 statistical analysis software.

## **Results and Discussion**

#### *Climatic conditions*

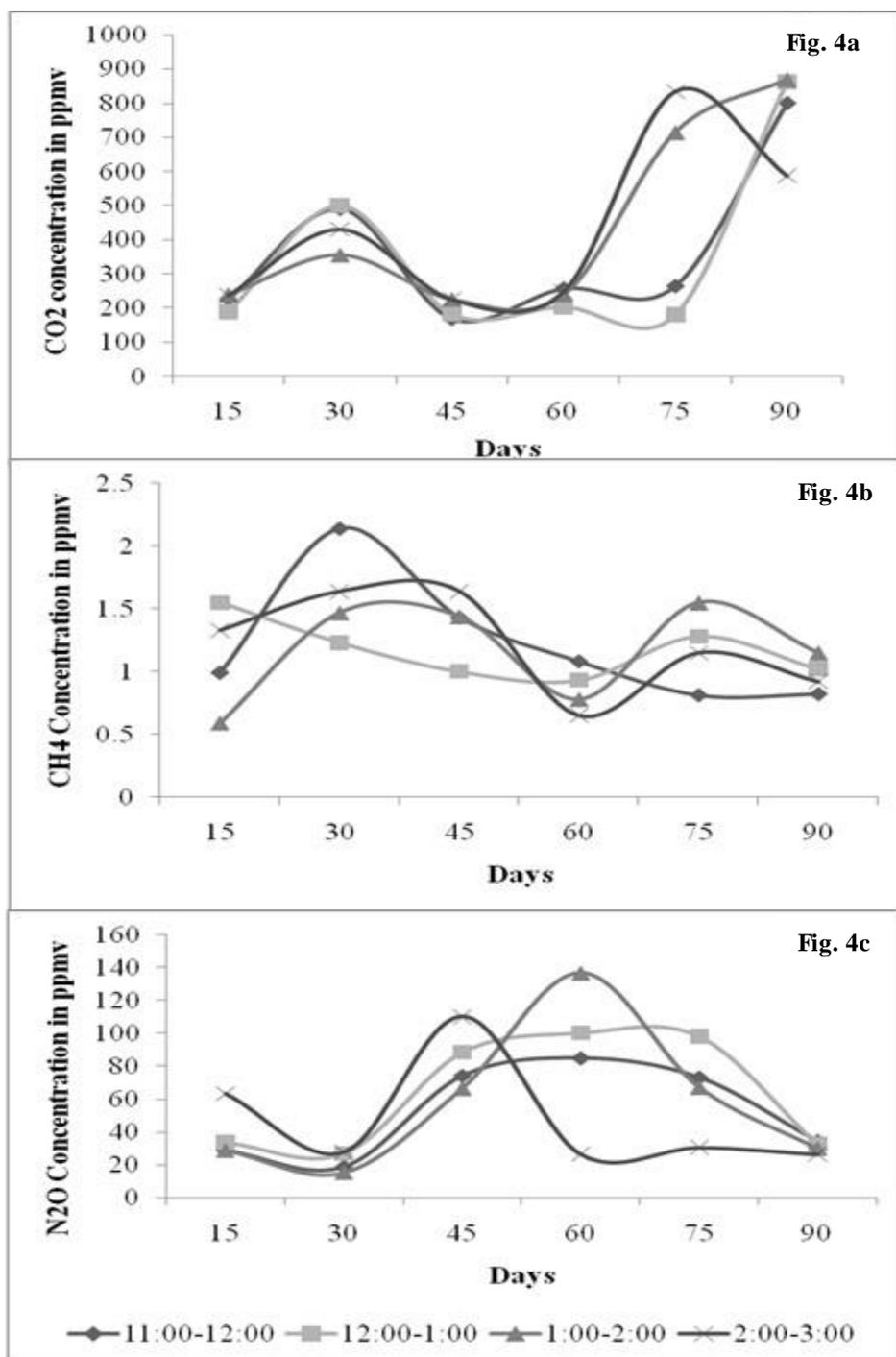
Soil temperature and WFPS exhibited the monthly variation in Eucalyptus plantation. The sampling period in February 2013 was a particularly cool-dry season and in April 2013 was a hot-humid season in this study (Fig. 3)



**Figure 3(a & b). Seasonal patterns of soil water filled pore space, WFPS (a) and soil temperature (b) measured in the Eucalyptus plantations carried out from February to April, 2013 at every 15 day intervals. Error bars indicate standard error (n=6)**

#### *GHGs concentration, flux and emission*

Soil CO<sub>2</sub> concentration fluctuated from 190 to 869.5 ppmv in times and days interval during the experiment for February- April, 2013. The maximum concentration was found during 12:00 to 1:00 period. Fluctuations in CO<sub>2</sub> concentration was observed in all the subsequent intervals, perhaps it was due to hot humid temperature (Fig. 4a). CH<sub>4</sub> concentration ranged from 0.59 to 2.14 ppmv with the highest value reported in noon period. (Fig.4b). Similarly N<sub>2</sub>O concentration observed between 15.29 to 136.69 ppmv with the maximum during 1:00 to 2:00 period. The fluctuation was noticed pretty clear and distinct as the time interval increased (Fig 4c). Statistical significant differences were set with P values < 0.05 between the times and days interval of GHGs concentrations.



**Figure 4 (a, b, c) GHGs concentration in Eucalyptus plantation in times and days interval a. CO<sub>2</sub>, b. CH<sub>4</sub>, c. N<sub>2</sub>O, carried out from February to April,2013 at every 15 day intervals**

Soil CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O fluxes varied from -65.27 to 14.6, -0.005 to 0.07 and -0.03 to 0.33 mg m<sup>-2</sup> h<sup>-1</sup> respectively (Fig 5 a, b & c). Highest value of the CO<sub>2</sub> flux was registered in fifth interval specifically during 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. (Fig. 5a). The greater value of methane

concentration was registered during the second trip between 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. The CH<sub>4</sub> flux fluctuates diurnally and uptake was recorded maximum in fourth interval (Fig. 5b). The maximum value of N<sub>2</sub>O flux was observed during the third and fourth trip between 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. N<sub>2</sub>O flux reduces at 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. but observed in all intervals. The soil is consuming atmospheric N<sub>2</sub>O maximum in third interval during 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. (Fig. 5c).

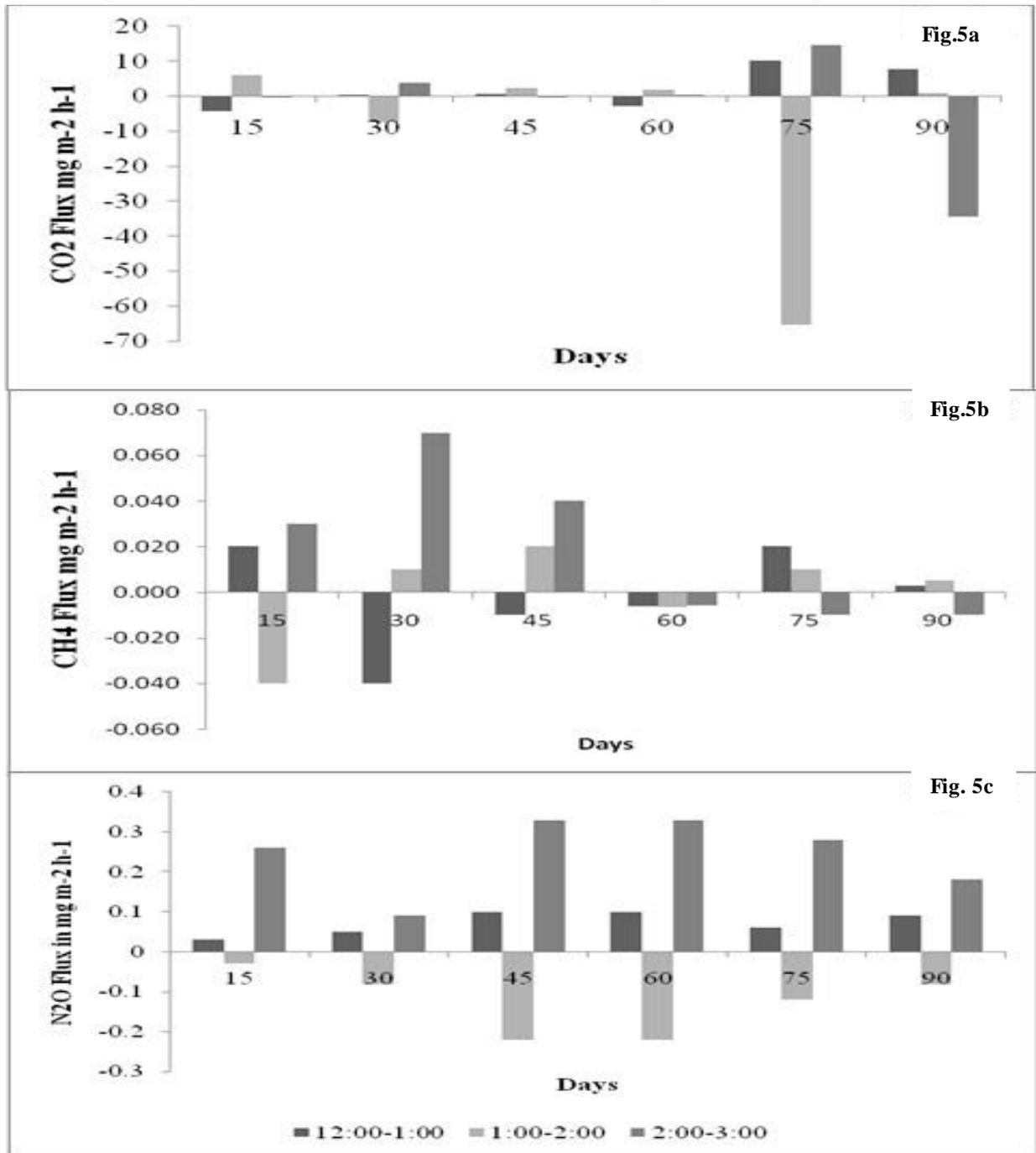
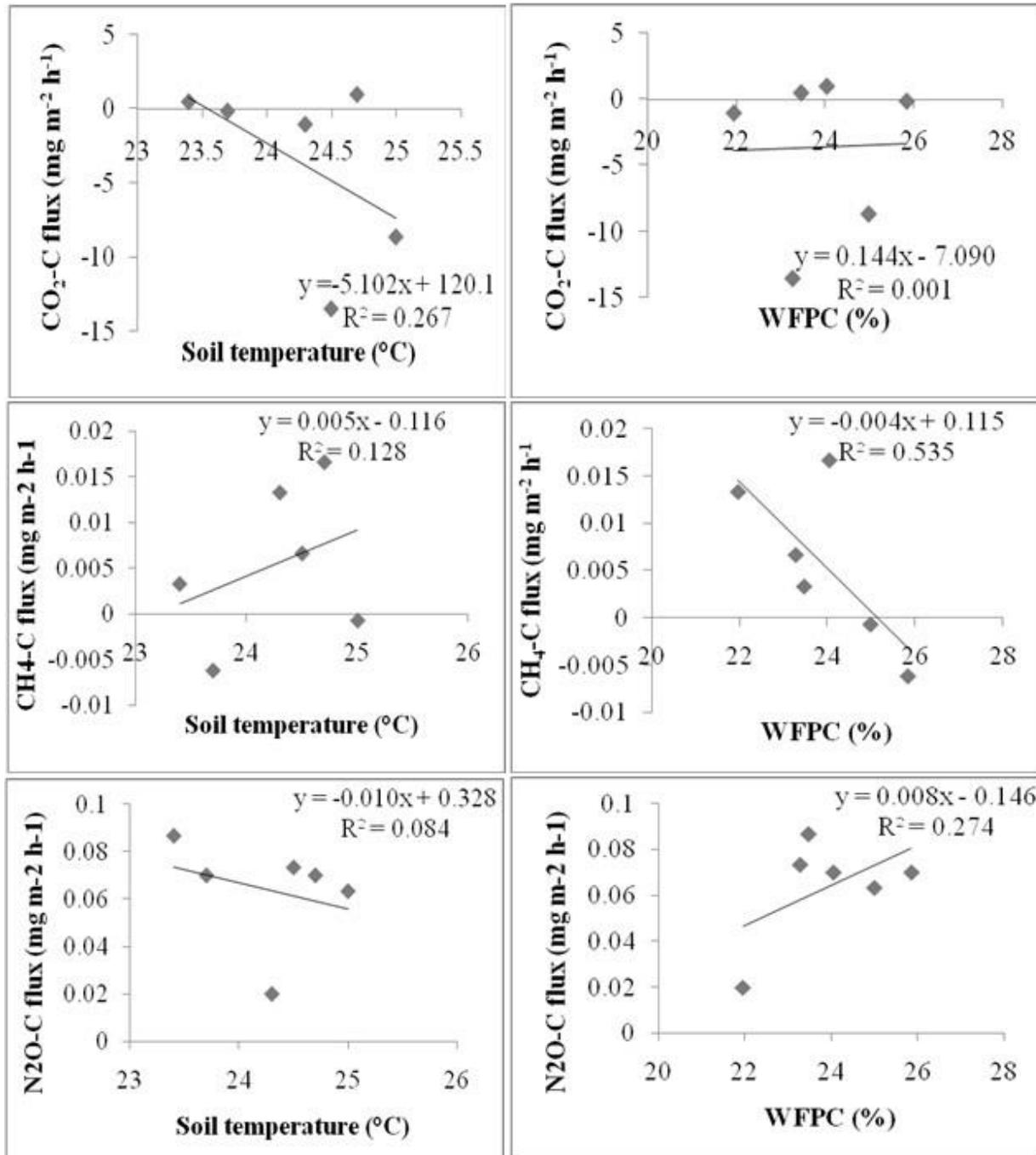


Figure 5 (a,b,c) GHGs flux in Eucalyptus plantation in times and days interval a. CO<sub>2</sub>, b. CH<sub>4</sub>, c. N<sub>2</sub>O, carried out from February to April, 2013 at every 15 day intervals

The negative values of GHGs flux indicate the consumption of gas by the soil while positive results indicate GHGs release through the soil. Soil CO<sub>2</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O flux positively related to WFPS, whereas CH<sub>4</sub> flux positively related to soil temperature. CH<sub>4</sub> uptake reduced with increased WFPS in plantation (Fig. 6).



**Figure 6. Relationships between soil N<sub>2</sub>O, CH<sub>4</sub>, and CO<sub>2</sub> fluxes, and soil temperature and soil water filled pore space (WFPS) in the Eucalyptus plantation carried out from February to April, 2013**

CO<sub>2</sub> emissions were found maximum when compared to other gases CH<sub>4</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O (Fig. 7). On the other side, the global warming potential is greater to N<sub>2</sub>O as compared with CO<sub>2</sub> and CH<sub>4</sub> (Fig. 8), whereas CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent is higher during third trip than other trips but negative CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent registered during second trip (fig. 9).

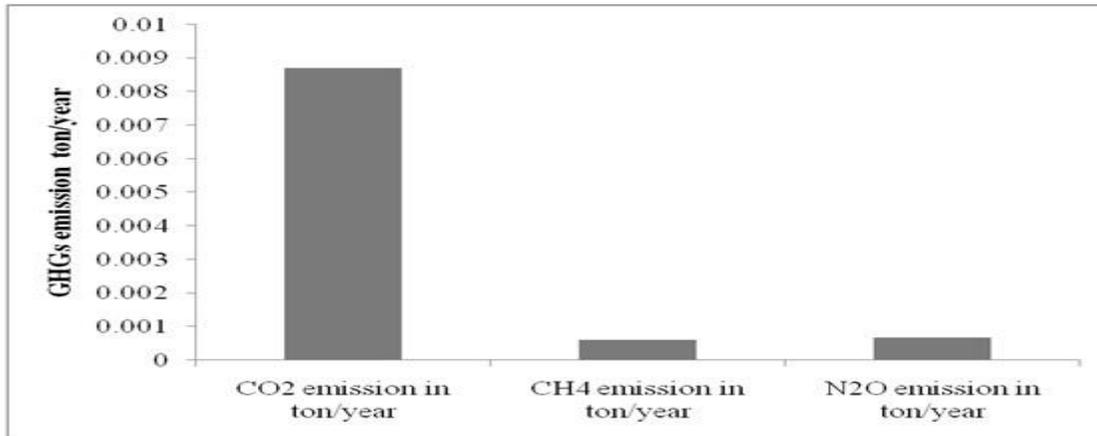


Figure 7. GHGs emission (ton/year) in Eucalyptus Plantation

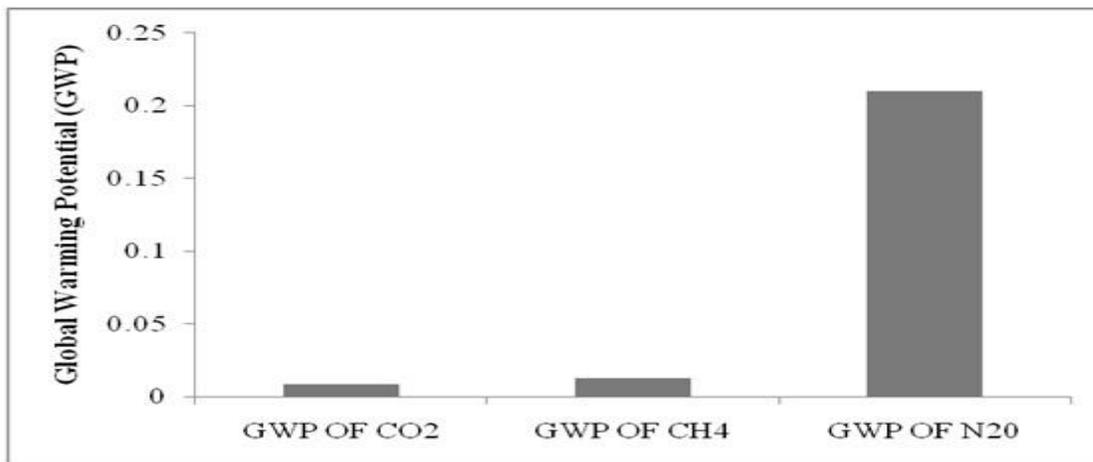


Figure 8. Global Warming Potential (GWP) in Eucalyptus Plantation

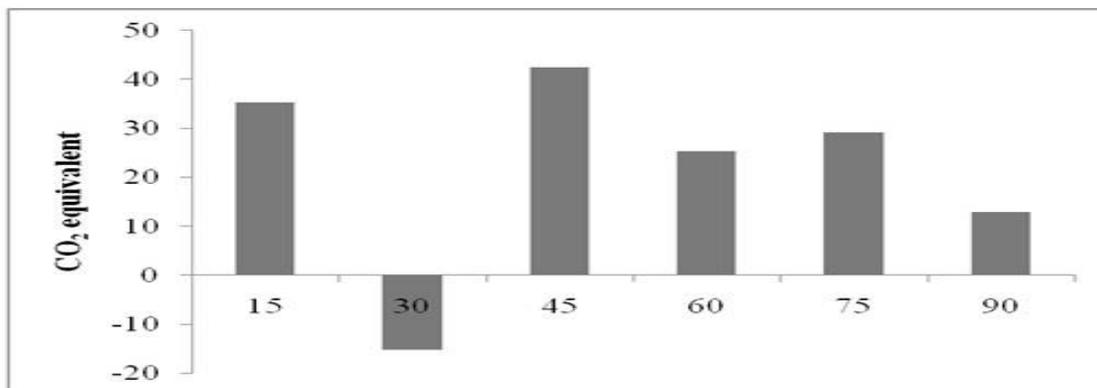


Figure 9. GHGs budget in Eucalyptus Plantation carried out from February to April, 2013 at every 15 day intervals

GHG flux correlated with edaphic factors of soil was shown in Table 1. Soil C: N ratio negatively correlated with CO<sub>2</sub> and CH<sub>4</sub> flux but positively correlated with N<sub>2</sub>O flux. WFPS was positively correlated with CO<sub>2</sub> and CH<sub>4</sub> flux and negatively correlated with N<sub>2</sub>O flux. Similar results also substantiated by Liu et al. (2008) from soils of different land-use types in a hilly area of South China.

**Table 1. Correlation between GHG flux and edaphic factor of soil in Eucalyptus Plantation**

*Table 1 Correlation between GHG flux and edaphic factor of soil in Eucalyptus Plantation*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Soil bulk density	1	0.16	0.86*	0.89*	-0.09	-0.86*	-0.67	-0.93*	-0.78	-0.66	0.23	-0.64	0.04*	0.17	-0.37
Soil conductivity		1	0.12	-0.01	0.79*	0.09	0.82*	-0.03	0.16	0.76*	-0.60	-0.43	-0.09	0.94*	-0.48
Soil WFPC			1	0.97*	-0.34	0.86*	-0.57	0.83*	0.95*	0.63*	0.21	-0.33	0.12*	0.25*	0.12*
Soil Particle Density				1	-0.44	0.87*	-0.47	0.82*	0.97*	-0.56	0.42	-0.38	-0.01	0.07	-0.13
Soil pH					1	0.31	-0.54	0.12	0.60	-0.36	-0.76	-0.36	0.11	0.67	-0.47
Soil organic C						1	0.37	0.95*	0.84*	0.33	-0.29	0.19	0.38*	0.03*	0.37*
Soil total N							1	0.53	0.30	0.95*	0.38*	0.73	0.04*	0.79*	0.45*
Soil C:N								1	0.75*	0.45	-0.12	0.41	0.38*	0.12*	0.35*
NH <sub>4</sub> <sup>+</sup> -N content									1	0.41	-0.46	0.18	-0.04	0.02	0.007
NO <sub>3</sub> <sup>-</sup> -N content										1	0.21	0.74	0.25	-0.72	0.30
Soil total sulphate											1	0.02	-0.49	-0.69	0.001
Soil available P												1	0.41*	-0.23	0.21*
CO <sub>2</sub> Flux													1	0.16*	-0.08
CH <sub>4</sub> Flux														1	-0.39
N <sub>2</sub> O Flux															1

\* P < 0.005

### *Soil-atmosphere CO<sub>2</sub> exchange*

The soil CO<sub>2</sub> mean emission rate of 19.54 mg C m<sup>-2</sup> h<sup>-1</sup> measured in present study is similar to that measured in temperate forests (Wang et al. 2006), subtropical forests (Tang et al. 2006), and tropical rain forests (Sotta et al. 2004). Soil CO<sub>2</sub> annual mean emission was lower than in broadleaf plantations (between 56.38 and 72.15 mg C m<sup>-2</sup>h<sup>-1</sup>), as observed by Livesley et al. (2009) in coniferous broadleaf forest/plantations. Soil CO<sub>2</sub> emission, could be the result of soil respiration generates mainly from autotrophic (root) and heterotrophic microbial activity (Janssens et al. 2001). The differences in the magnitude of mean soil CO<sub>2</sub> emissions might be explained by differences in litter C:N ratio (Epron et al. 2006). Numerous studies emphasized that soil C:N ratio, as a good indicator of substrate quality, was an important factor regulating microbial activity and thus influencing litter decomposition (Hättenschwiler et al. 2005). The soil C:N ratio in the Eucalyptus plantation was higher in 0-10 cm depth (Table 2), indicating high microbial activity and thus heterotrophic respiration may be lower in the 11-20 and 21-30 cm depth. The temporal variations in soil CO<sub>2</sub> emissions influenced by soil temperature and moisture (Figs. 4 and 5), indicating that soil temperature and moisture exert the significant effects on the temporal variations of soil CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Our results are also supported by the previous studies in tropical forests carried out by Bhatiya et al. (2004).

### *Soil-atmosphere CH<sub>4</sub> exchange*

CH<sub>4</sub> measurements indicated a consistent net soil consumption of CH<sub>4</sub> (i.e. negative CH<sub>4</sub> flux) in plantation (Fig.5b). The highest soil CH<sub>4</sub> uptake rate of -40.12 μg C m<sup>-2</sup>h<sup>-1</sup> measured is similar to that measured in other forests like Eastern Amazonia, European Beech and Norway Spruce and South Eastern Australia (Borken and Beese 2006; Fest et al. 2009), but less than that measured in more productive natural forest systems (Merino et al. 2004; Werner et al. 2007). Soil-atmosphere CH<sub>4</sub> exchange is the result of simultaneously occurring production and consumption processes controlled by CH<sub>4</sub>- producing methanogens operating at anaerobic conditions and CH<sub>4</sub>-consuming methanotrophs in soils that depends on oxygen as a terminal electron acceptor (Topp and Pattey, 1997). Activity and population size of these microbes are dependent on a multitude of soil factors like soil temperature, moisture, pH, substrate availability, and aeration of soil profile (Reay and Nedwell, 2004; Werner et al. 2007). Thus, these parameters were performed in a multiple linear regression analysis to access the importance of different factors for explaining the variations in soil CH<sub>4</sub> uptake in the plantation.(Table 3).The temporal variations in soil CH<sub>4</sub> fluxes displayed dependency on soil WFPS (Figs. 4 and 5) but negatively related to soil moisture. Similar observations were also made by Castro et al. (2000); Verchot et al. (2000). Moreover, CH<sub>4</sub> uptake is dominated by aeration of the soil profile (Khalil and Baggs, 2005).

**Table 2. Physico-chemical properties of the soils (0–30 cm depth) in Eucalyptus Plantation (n=6)**

Parameters	Depth		
	0-10	10-20	20-30
Soil bulk density (g cm <sup>-3</sup> )	0.82±0.01	0.88±0.01	0.91±0.02
Soil conductivity (μ mho /cm)	1.09±0.03	1.15±0.02	1.14±0.04
Soil WFPC (%)	21.96±1.03	23.47±1.13	25.84±1.08
Soil Particle Density	2.15±0.08	3.48±0.12	5.07±0.06
Soil pH	7.16±0.02	7.21±0.01	7.11±0.01
Soil organic C (Mg ha <sup>-1</sup> )	44.93±0.54	32.54±0.48	27.22±0.59
Soil total N (Mg ha <sup>-1</sup> )	3.79±0.09	3.21±0.04	2.99±0.08
Soil C:N	11.85±0.5	10.14±0.4	9.10±0.7
NH <sub>4</sub> <sup>+</sup> -N content (mg kg <sup>-1</sup> )	5.20±0.05	4.84±0.13	4.12±0.18
NO <sub>3</sub> <sup>-</sup> -N content (mg kg <sup>-1</sup> )	2.34±0.03	1.87±0.09	1.51±0.01
Soil total sulphate (mg kg <sup>-1</sup> )	1.25±0.01	1.28±0.07	1.31±0.03
Soil available phosphorus (mg kg <sup>-1</sup> )	0.12±0.02	0.09±0.01	0.08±0.01

**Table 3. Results of multiple linear regression analysis of biogeochemical parameters and annual mean GHG flux in Eucalyptus Plantation (n=6)**

Parameters	Models
	CO <sub>2</sub> flux (mg C m <sup>-2</sup> h <sup>-1</sup> ) (Y <sub>1</sub> )
Soil C:N ratio (X <sub>1</sub> )	Y <sub>1</sub> = -40.726 + 3.969 X <sub>1</sub> , R <sup>2</sup> = 0.551, P < 0.001
	CH <sub>4</sub> Flux (mg C m <sup>-2</sup> h <sup>-1</sup> ) (Y <sub>2</sub> )
Mean CO <sub>2</sub> flux (mg C m <sup>-2</sup> h <sup>-1</sup> ) (X <sub>2</sub> )	Y <sub>2</sub> = 0.0091 X <sub>2</sub> + 0.171 X <sub>3</sub> - 4.04, R <sub>2</sub> = 0.826, P < 0.01

Mean WFPS (%) ( $X_3$ )

$N_2O$  ( $mg\ N\ m^{-2}\ h^{-1}$ ) ( $Y_3$ )

Soil C:N ratio ( $X_4$ )

$$Y_3 = -0.0096 X_4 + 0.051 X_5 + 0.01. R^2 = 0.466, P < 0.001$$

Soil total N ( $Mg\ ha^{-1}$ ) ( $X_5$ )

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### *Soil-atmosphere $N_2O$ exchange*

The mean soil  $N_2O$  emission  $1.52\ mg\ N\ m^{-2}h^{-1}$  measured in plantation which agrees with the estimates from other forest studies (Castaldi et al. 2006; Livesley et al. 2009), but is less than that measured in some moist tropical or boreal forests (Hall et al. 2004; Werner et al. 2007). Moreover, our results revealed the soil  $N_2O$  emission is predominantly controlled by soil pH (Stevens et al. 1997), soil moisture (Merino et al. 2004), soil C and N stocks (Li et al. 2005), soil inorganic N contents (Merino et al. 2004) and C:N ratio of litter and soil (Werner et al. 2007). The  $N_2O$  flux in forest soils has been shown to correlate with gross nitrification rates (Ambus et al. 2006) and soil C:N ratio, as that greatly determines soil nitrification activity (Erickson et al. 2002). The importance of soil  $N_2O$  emissions among the plantations is in agreement with previous observations by Regina et al. (1996) in boreal soils and Zhang et al. (2008a) in subtropical forests. The temporal variations in soil  $N_2O$  emissions were attributed to those in soil temperature and moisture (Figs. 4, and 5). Similar results were reported in other subtropical forests (Tang et al. 2006; Liu et al. 2008). It has been reported that  $N_2O$  production by nitrification and denitrification could increase strongly with the increasing soil temperature and moisture in temperate forests (Borken and Beese 2006) and subtropical forests (Tang et al. 2006; Liu et al. 2008).

### *Global Warming potential (GWP)*

The overall balance between the net exchange of  $CO_2$ ,  $CH_4$ , and  $N_2O$  constitutes the net global warming potential (GWP) of any terrestrial ecosystem. Storage of atmospheric  $CO_2$  into stable organic carbon pools in the soil can sequester  $CO_2$ . The results reveal that global warming potential of  $N_2O$  is highest compared to other two principal gases. However, the negligible portion of GWP was encountered for methane (Fig. 8). Adviento et al., (2007) also found similar result of global warming potential.

### *GHG budget*

Greenhouse gas budget was calculated in terms of  $CO_2$  equivalent. Total budget of the study time was found  $129.9\ CO_2$  equivalents. Maximum budget was found in the third interval and minimum budget was found in second interval, which was very negligible (Fig 9). Among all the three gases,  $N_2O$  is the largest contributor to the global atmospheric greenhouse gas budget mainly via microbial process of nitrification and denitrification (Werner et al. 2007).

## Conclusion

In this study we estimated short term diurnal CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O fluxes and interrelationships with the edaphic factors such as temperature and WFPS through simple linear regression statistical analysis. The study confirmed that soil temperature was an important factor influencing soil CH<sub>4</sub> flux while WFPS was identified as a key factor regulating CO<sub>2</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O emission.

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