1 **Cover page**

2 **Running title:**

3 Soil conditions affect belowground allocation in trees

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5 **Corresponding author:**

6 Martin Lukac

7 NERC Centre for Population Biology

8 Division of Biology

9 Imperial College London

10 Silwood Park Campus

11 Ascot

12 SL5 7PY

13 UK

14

15 Tel. +44 207 5942482

16 Fax +44 1344 873173

17 Email: m.lukac@imperial.ac.uk

18

19 **Belowground allometric relations in Norway spruce are affected by**

20 **soil waterlogging.**

21 Bohdan Konôpka[1], Jozef Pajtík[1], Martin Lukac[2]

22

23 [1]*National Forest Centre, Forest Research Institute Zvolen, T.G. Masaryka 22, 960 01*

24 *Zvolen, Slovak Republic.*

25 [2]*NERC Centre for Population Biology, Division of Biology, Imperial College London,*

26 *Silwood Park Campus, Ascot, SL5 7PY, UK.*

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29 **Abstract**

30

31 An increasing importance is assigned to the estimation and verification of carbon

32 stocks in forests. Forestry practice has several long-established and reliable methods

33 for the assessment of aboveground biomass; however we still miss accurate predictors

34 of belowground biomass. A major windthrow event exposing the coarse root systems

35 of Norway spruce trees allowed us to assess the effects of contrasting soil stone and

36 water content on belowground allocation. Increasing stone content decreases

37 root/shoot ratio, while soil waterlogging leads to an increase in this ratio. We

38 constructed allometric relationships for belowground biomass prediction and were

39 able to show that only soil waterlogging significantly impacts model parameters. We

40 showed that diameter at breast height is a reliable predictor of belowground biomass

41 and, once site-specific parameters have been developed, it is possible to accurately

42 estimate belowground biomass in Norway spruce.

43

44 **Key words:** belowground stump, coarse roots, *Picea abies*, soil stoniness, water-

45 logging

Introduction

48   In terms of quantitative estimations of tree compartments, substantial interest of

49   forestry research and practice was traditionally paid to the stem and its taper because

50   of the importance of timber production (KOZLOWSKI & PALLARDY, 1997). Alongside

51   the wood producers' interest in timber, tree physiologists and forest ecologists were

52   interested in branches and mainly foliage (KONÔPKA *et al.*, 2000). Thus, while

53   aboveground parts of trees have often been surveyed, information on below-ground

54   compartments is less abundant. Lack of quantitative and qualitative parameters

55   describing tree root systems has been mainly caused by the enormous time and labor

56   demands involved in their excavation and, to some extent, an underrating of their

57   significance (DANJON & REUBENS, 2008).

58   The root systems are important for tree anchorage, water and nutrients absorption

59   from the soil, as a location for storing carbohydrate reserves and synthesizing growth

60   hormones (KOZLOWSKI & PALLARDY, 1997). To ensuring all above-mentioned

61   functions, trees must transfer a considerable proportion of assimilated carbohydrates

62   into the root systems. As BRUNNER AND GODBOLD (2007) pointed out, estimation and

63   modeling of belowground structures of trees and forests is particularly important for

64   the calculation of carbon stock and its changes, as well as for understanding and

65   predicting ecosystem functioning.

66   To avoid arduous work related to the excavation of root system, allometric

67   relations based predominantly on diameter at breast height (DBH) or biomass

68   expansion factors based on stem volume have been used by a number of authors

69   (GREEN *et al.*, 2007; WIRTH *et al.*, 2004; ZIANIS *et al.*, 2005). KRANKINA AND

70   HARMON (1995), LAIHO AND PRESCOTT (1999) and TOBIN *et al.* (2007a) all provide

71   examples of cases where this approach was used for the calculation of belowground

72   necromass as part for carbon stock calculations. The fundamental issue when using

73   these equation and factors is whether such species-specific models constructed for

74   trees grown under particular conditions are applicable for individuals existing in

75   different climate and soils (TOBIN *et al.*, 2007b). For instance, Bolte (2004) in their

76   study concluded that the relationship between DBH and coarse root biomass was

77   significantly modified by climatic and soil conditions, but less strongly in Norway

78   spruce (*Picea abies*) than in European beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) stands.

79   SCHMIDT-VOGT (1977) wrote that the development of Norway spruce root system

80   appeared to be optimal on deeply developed soils of coarse to medium textures, the

81   species was also well adapted to grow on rock debris, as well as in the neighborhood

82   of raised bogs in the uplands. Thus, a relatively large range of soil conditions may

83   modify Norway spruce root system formation and growth. Several root system types

84   can be determined and classified according to the root system architecture (KÖSTLER

85   *et al.*, 1968). Norway spruce has often been categorised as a "surface-rooter"

86   (STRASBURGER, 1983) or having a "plate-like" root system (STOKES *et al.*, 2007). This

87   rooting habit is thought to be involved in stability and resistance weaknesses of

88   Norway spruce in comparison with other species (e.g. vulnerability to windthrow,

89   drought). For instance, KONÔPKA AND ŽILINEC (1999) compared root systems of

90   Norway spruce and silver fir, two conifer species with very similar aboveground

91   compartment allocation. While the root proportions of these two species in dystric

92   cambisol did not differ, the maximum rooting depth was significantly larger in fir. On

93   the other hand, PUHE (2003) in his review argues that several studies confirm no

94   particular disadvantage of Norway spruce in terms of stability in respect to other tree

95   species. Vertical root distribution of spruce can be considerably modified by inter-

96   specific competition with beech (SCHMID & KAZDA, 2002), but has been shown not to

97   change in the presence of other tree species (KALLIOKOSKI, 2009).

98   Many studies investigate changes of the root/shoot ratio, considering it the

99   simplest indicator of the relative biomass allocation between below- and above-

100   ground compartments. A decrease of the ratio is generally associated with increasing

101   soil moisture (KRAMER & KOZLOWSKI, 1979) and with increasing soil fertility

102   (WARING & SCHLESINGER, 1985). On the other hand, the ratio tends to increase in

103   stress conditions (PUHE, 2003). There is a considerable knowledge concerning shoot

104   and root growth under contrasting soil moisture and nutrient levels, but the knowledge

105   on biomass allocation in soils with varying stoniness (stones and boulders) content are

106   rare. Similarly, comparative studies between tree stands grown on well-drained and

107   water-logged sites are lacking at the present. Very often, soil stoniness and contrasting

108   soil water conditions are omitted in tree biomass partitioning models (see for instance

109   (BARTELINK, 1998).

110   To address the lack of information in this area, we utilized a major windthrow

111   event which took place in the Tatra Mountains (Slovakia) on 19th November 2004,

112   exposing a large amount of Norway spruce coarse root systems. The objectives of this

113   study were: (1) to construct allometric relationships between stem parameters and

114   below-ground compartment mass of Norway spruce and (2) to evaluate the effects of

115   soil conditions, particularly soil stone content and water-logging, on the relative size

116   of stem, stump and roots as well as on vertical coarse root distribution

117

118   **Materials and methods**

119   *Locations and sites*

All measurements were conducted in four uneven-aged Norway spruce stands in the High Tatra Mountains (northern Slovakia). The altitude of the stands ranged between 897 and 1171 m above sea level. The climate is characterised by low average temperatures (annual mean of 5.8 °C) and ample precipitation (750 mm annually). Mean January temperature is -5.0 °C and the snow cover lasts approximately 114 days a year, while the summers are relatively mild with the mean of 14.7°C in July (data are from the nearest meteorological station in Stara Lesna, 49° 09' N, 20° 17' E). The prevailing bedrock is granodiorite.

We selected plots with decreasing stoniness: Koprova dolina (stand 1; coordinates: 49° 09' 20" N, 19° 57' 58" E), Nad Podbanskym (stand 2; coordinates: 49° 08' 24" N, 19° 55' 47" E), Horny Smokovec (stand 3; coordinates: 49° 08' 40" N, 20° 14' 30" E). In addition, we included another stand of similar stoniness to stand 2, but with different water regime: Kezmarske zlaby (stand 4; coordinates: 49° 11' 32" N, 20° 18' 14" E). Soil stoniness was estimated by exposing and describing five soil profiles at each study plot according to (FAO, 1998). Average stoniness of the whole profile was estimated, rather than that of each horizon, since soil stone content is fairly well distributed due to the post-glacial origin of these soils. The soil of stand 4 was considered different from the other stands due to the presence of a stagnic horizon, suggesting water saturation for long periods. The main soil characteristics of all stands are shown in Table 1.

The stand ages were: Koprova dolina – 107 years, Nad Podbanskym – 65 years, Horny Smokovec – 60 years, Kezmarske zlaby – 53 years. All selected stands were partly damaged by the windstorm of 19th November, 2004. The highest intensity of wind damage was recorded within the stand Kezmarske zlaby with approximately 90% of individuals heavily damaged, while the lowest intensity was recorded in stand

145   Koprova dolina approx. 35%. All stands originated as either planted or naturally

146   regenerated clumps of spruce trees, which was therefore the dominant species in the

147   canopy of all stands.

148

149   *Sampling and measurements*

150   During the summer of 2005, a total of 47 wind-uprooted spruce trees were randomly

151   selected for stem and belowground compartment measurements. First, the branches

152   were cut from the stem and the tree height was measured using a tape. Diameter

153   measurements using calipers (two diameters perpendicular to one another) were taken

154   from all sampled trees at the following positions: tree base (ground level, D0H), 20

155   (D20H) and 130 cm (DBH) from the base, and also every 100 cm from the base to the

156   top of the tree. A summary of measured stem parameters can be found in Table 2.

157   The position of the ground level was identified on each stem and the trees were

158   then cut and separated into above- and belowground parts. Soil and stones still

159   attached to the root systems exposed by windthrow were cleaned with the help of

160   spades, picks and chisels. The original depth allocation of 0-30 cm, 30-60 cm and

161   over 60 cm was marked out on all the roots. The exposed root plate were undisturbed

162   by the windthrow, enabling a fairly accurate estimation of original root depth. Broken

163   roots still in the soil were paired up with fresh root injuries on the exposed part of the

164   root system, excavated manually and tagged. All roots under the diameter of 1 cm

165   were cut off by secateurs and disposed of. Then, roots in each depth category were

166   separated from the stump cylinder and classified into the following diameter classes:

167   1.0-2.5 cm, 2.6-5.0 cm, 5.1-7.5 cm and so on until the maximum diameter of 30 cm.

168   All of these observations were carried out on the exposed half of the root system,

169   created by an imaginary horizontal plane drawn through the centre of the stump. As

the trees were mostly uprooted by northern, north-western and western wind, measured halves of the roots systems were always oriented to the north and the west of each stump. The prevailing wind direction and the direction of the windthrow were identical in all four compared stands, thus minimizing the error due to uneven root system development (DANJON et al., 2005; TAMASI et al., 2005).

At this point it is important to mention the existing inconsistency in terms of terminology and non-uniform specification of root system segments existing in the literature (TOBIN et al., 2007a). The term "belowground biomass" is generally well defined and used to identify the belowground part of the stump and all roots. On the other hand, the meaning of "roots" and especially "root system" is not always uniform in the literature because of a facultative consideration of the stump. Definition of "coarse roots" is also not consistent, since different authors specify various diameters as the threshold between fine and coarse roots. The values most often used are 0.2 cm (e.g. BOLTE et al. (2004), 0.5 cm (e.g CURIEL YUSTE (2004) or 1.0 cm (e.g. FINER et al. (1997). In this paper, the term "below-ground biomass" is used to describe the belowground part of the stump plus coarse roots with a minimum diameter of 1.0 cm.

A measurement of the diameter and length of all root segments was taken as they were removed from each depth class (0-30, 30-60 and 60+ cm). The diameter of the belowground portion of the stump was established at its top, middle and bottom. The volume of all root and stem segments was then calculated according to an equation for a frustum of a cone:

$$V = \pi/3 * l * (r_1^2 + r_1 * r_2 + r_2^2) \tag{1}$$

where:

l – root or stem segment length

r – root or stem radius at the top (r_1) and bottom (r_2) end of a segment.

195   The total volume of stems and roots was then calculated by summing up the

196   volumes of all stem and root segments. The volume of the below-ground portion of

197   the stump was expressed by Newton's formula:

198        $V = \pi * l * (r_1^2 + r_2^2 + 4r_3^2) / 6$ (2)

199   where:

200   l – stump length

201   r – stump radius in top (r_1), bottom (r_2) and middle (r_3) part of the stump.

202   *Biomass equations*

203   We tested two equations in order to develop a suitable model for belowground

204   biomass prediction, and to test whether site conditions alter the model parameters.

205   First, equation (3), presented by FINER (1989) and LAIHO AND FINER (1996) among

206   others, was used with D20H and DBH to predict coarse root and total belowground

207   biomass of spruce trees at every site.

208        $Biomass = B1*X^{B2}$ (3)

209   Subsequently, an equation (4) recently introduced by PETERSSON AND STAHL

210   (2006) was tested for goodness of fit with D20H and DBH. This equation is meant to

211   take into account the fact that root biomass is not zero when DBH or D20H have zero

212   value.

213        $Biomass = e^{(B0+B1*X)}$ (4)

214   Stem height and stem volume were also tested for their fitness as predictors of

215   belowground biomass, a range of functions was tested including linear, exponential

216   and polynomial equations.

217   *Analysis and statistics*

218   We constructed separate models for belowground biomass prediction for each stand.

219   Resulting coefficients were then compared using extra sum-of-squares F test to test

220 for influence of soil conditions on belowground biomass prediction. Model fitting and

221 statistical comparisons were done in SigmaStat 3.0 (Systat, California, USA) and

222 GraphPad Prism 5 (GraphPad Software Inc., USA). All significances are reported at

223 $P<0.05$.

224

225 **Results**

226 Initial comparison of measured stem characteristics revealed that stand 1 (Koprova

227 dolina) was different from all other stands. This was the case for diameter at 20 cm

228 ($P<0.002$), DBH ($P<0.002$), stem height ($P<0.007$) and stem volume ($P<0.001$). The

229 remaining three stands did not differ in any of these parameters (Table 2). Similarly,

230 belowground biomass was higher in Koprova dolina compared to the other three

231 locations ($P<0.003$). The root/shoot ratio of sampled trees was also affected by the

232 site conditions, stand 1 having significantly lower root/shoot ratio than stand 3 (Horny

233 Smokovec, $P<0.001$) and stand 4 (Kezmarske zlaby, $P=0.005$, Figure 1).

234 Using our observations of above- and belowground biomass we constructed

235 biomass equations linking root and total belowground biomass to aboveground

236 parameters. In general, both D20H and DBH are considered to be reasonably good

237 predictors of coarse root biomass (e.g. TOBIN *et al.* (2007b). The estimated values of

238 parameters from equations (3) and (4) are detailed in Table 3. Both equations fit the

239 data reasonably well, however equation (3) appears to be more accurate in predicting

240 coarse root and total belowground biomass than equation (4).

241 To evaluate the effects of soil conditions, particularly soil stoniness and water-

242 logging on the relationship between aboveground parameters and belowground

243 biomass, we carried out a comparison of models resulting from our observations

244 (Figures 2 and 3). There was no significant difference between the models due to the

245   stone content of the soil. Stand 1 (Koprova dolina) was only nearly significantly

246   different from stand 3 (Horny Smokovec) when D20H was used to predict total

247   belowground biomass (P=0.0650 and P=0.0652 for equations (3) and (4)

248   respectively). However, we observed a very strong effect of soil water logging on

249   model coefficients. The models for stand 4 (Kezmarske zlaby) with very high water

250   table differed from all other stands regardless of which stem diameter or equation was

251   used to predict belowground biomass (P<0.008). For this reason, Table 3 reports the

252   regression coefficients for stands 1, 2 and 3 pooled together and for stand 4

253   separately.

254   Since stand 1 (Koprova dolina) was so different from the other three stands, to

255   assess the effect of soil conditions on coarse root and belowground stump biomass we

256   compared the relative sizes of biomass pools. Coarse root/stem biomass ratio was

257   inversely related to the stone content in the soil. Coarse root biomass in the very stony

258   soil of stand 1 did amount to 17% of stem biomass, while in stand 2 this increased to

259   23% (P=0.056) and in least stony stand 3 to 26% (P=0.002). Similarly, high stone

260   content negatively impacted on the volume of the belowground portion of the stump

261   relative to the stem volume. Stand 3 had the highest ratio of 10%, significantly

262   different from stand 2 (6%, P<0.001) and stand 1 (5%, P<0.001). The ratio between

263   belowground stump and coarse root volume was also reduced by high stone content

264   (P=0.0211).

265   When comparing the root depth allocation in stands 1, 2 and 3, we did not

266   observe any difference in the proportion of the root system in the 0-30cm soil depth

267   (P=0.210) or 30-60cm depth (P=0.365). In the over 60 cm soil layer, a larger

268   proportion of the root system was found in stand 1 with the highest stone content

269   (Koprova dolina, 16%) than in stand 3 with the lowest stone content (Horny

270 Smokovec, 7%, *P*=0.015, Figure 4). We did not include stand 4 (Kezmarske zlaby) in

271 this comparison, since 100% of coarse spruce roots in this water-logged location were

272 found in the 0-30cm soil layer.

273

274 **Discussion**

275 *Soil stoniness*

276 The results show that a high proportion of boulders decreases the ratio between

277 the belowground root system and the stem (root/shoot ratio), restricts the size of the

278 belowground stump and increases the proportion of roots in the deepest soil horizons.

279 Our results have to be interpreted with caution, mainly because stand 1 is somewhat

280 older than the remaining stands. This should not have a significant influence on our

281 observation, since the root/shoot ratio changes rapidly in young trees, but stabilizes

282 fairly soon and does not change in mature trees (JOHNSON *et al.*, 2003; PAJTIK *et al.*,

283 2008). Mechanical resistance and limited space within a soil profile with high boulder

284 content do therefore influence biomass partitioning, as well as vertical root

285 distribution in spruce trees. We attribute the increase in the coarse root biomass

286 volume compared to the stump volume to the fact that the roots are more flexible in

287 using the available space between the stones than the stump. Downwardly directed

288 roots can deflect to horizontal growth along the surface of mechanical barriers, but

289 turn back downwards if they encounter a cavity (DEXTER, 1986).

290 Our field observations also reveal (data not shown) that the stone content

291 interferes with coarse root growth and alters not only the direction of growth, but also

292 induces structural changes, such as root/stump ratio or root branching pattern. Greater

293 presence of boulders in the soil places restrictions on root growth and functioning at

294 depths where they are normally found. In order to explore a sufficient volume of soil,

spruce root systems in very stony soil had to extend into deeper soil horizons. This observation has potential bearing on the parameterization of biomass-partitioning models, carbohydrate cost of tree root system development and estimates of C storage in forest soil, a perspective that however still needs to be fully explored. Further studies in stands of comparable age need to be carried out, since it has been shown that vertical distributions of coarse roots may change with stand age (KALLIOKOSKI *et al.*, 2008). Root quantity, vertical distribution and morphological features are likely to be important for water and nutrient acquisition. Reduced root extension can result in low nutrient-uptake and increase susceptibility to water deficiency (PUHE, 2003). CANADELL *et al.* (1996) in his review pointed out the importance of deep roots, particularly for ecosystem water fluxes, as well as for carbon and nutrient cycling.

Waterlogging

Waterlogged conditions increased the root/shoot ratio but, at the same time, drastically diminished root system depth and reduced the size of belowground stump relative to the stem. We expect the high value of this indicator to be linked to the limited root depth in the soil and consequently to lower nutrient availability. This view is supported by TOBIN *et al.* (2007b) who posit that trees growing on wet sites may need larger root systems for oxygen and nutrient uptake, or simply for anchorage.

Waterlogged soils are generally characterised by a lack of oxygen and high levels of CO_2 and ethylene (ARMSTRONG, 1982), creating conditions which explain decreased rooting depth and the existence of extremely shallow spruce root systems. Superficial root systems in waterlogged soils have been reported by a variety of authors (KONÔPKA, 2002; PYATT, 1966). At our site, spruce coarse root systems consisted of an extremely dense tangle, part of which was formed by root necromass, similar to those reported by COUTTS (1989). He stated that a zone of periodic death

and re-growth of roots (shaving brush roots) was often established in waterlogged

soils since the positive geotropism of downward growing roots is never altered and

seasonal fluctuations of water table kill off any new roots. Our results which indicate

an increase in root/shoot ratio on a waterlogged soil are also in agreement with those

of RAY AND NICOLL (1998), who indicated an increase of root biomass with

decreasing total rooting depth. TOBIN *et al.* (2007b) stated that a positive feedback

relationship might exist between root biomass quantity and anchorage; further

biomass being required to support more extensively ramifying surface roots.

Allometric relations in contrasting soil conditions

Using the measurements in the Tatra Mountains, we have constructed allometric

relations for belowground biomass prediction. We have compared two models

(equation 3 and 4) available in the literature, finding no difference between the

models regarding the effects of soil conditions on belowground biomass prediction.

Perhaps surprisingly, given the response of biomass allocation ratios to increasing soil

stoniness, there was no significant difference between the models fitted to the data

from the sites with well-draining soil. All observations from stands 1, 2 and 3 were

well captured with just a single model (Table 3). Waterlogging, on the other hand, had

a strong impact on the model parameters, suggesting that it is this soil condition that

has to be considered when constructing generalized belowground biomass allometric

relations. Allometric relations are often thought to be modified by climatic or soil

conditions (BOLTE *et al.*, 2004; WIRTH *et al.*, 2004). In our case, waterlogging did

increase the belowground biomass relative to the stem.

Both stem diameters measured in this study, 20 and 130 cm above ground level

(D20H and DBH, respectively), proved to be suitable parameters for estimates of

belowground biomass. However, at the waterlogged site, we observed the formation

345   of large buttresses (as evidenced by the largest base shape ratio at this site, Table 2).

346   Since the depth penetration of the stump was severely limited at this site, larger

347   buttresses have probably developed to aid stability and resulted in uneven thickening

348   of the stem base. As a result, cross-sections of stem bases at this site were irregular,

349   resulting in higher variability of D20H values in comparison to DBH. Model fits

350   based on DBH show higher coefficient of determination than those based on D20H at

351   the waterlogged site (such differences were less clear in the other sites). Thus, DBH

352   should be preferred to D20H as a predictor of belowground biomass at waterlogged

353   sites.

354   *Soil conditions and tree anchorage*

355   There are several important aspects worth considering in terms of tree resistance to

356   uprooting and stand stability. Stokes (2002) stated that tree anchorage is mainly

357   affected by root/shoot ratio, vertical root distribution, radial symmetry, as well as the

358   spread and the shape of lateral roots, the latter demonstrated by NICOLL AND RAY

359   (1996) and RUEL *et al.* (2003). Coutts (1989) noted that roots could be categorised

360   into three principal groups: taproots, lateral roots and sinkers. Taproots, and especially

361   sinkers, are believed to be the most important for anchoring (DANJON *et al.*, 2005),

362   while the proportions of the particular type of roots can be considerably modified due

363   to mechanical barriers or water-logging.

364   Theoretically, tree anchorage should improve with higher values of root/shoot

365   (alternatively root/stem) ratio, root/belowground biomass ratio (discriminating the

366   stump which is less important for tree anchorage than roots) and especially with

367   increasing proportion of roots in deeper soil layers. However, it seems that for

368   accurate evaluation of tree anchorage, the root system parameters must be combined

369   with the soil property data (see also DUPUY *et al.* (2005). For instance, high root/shoot

370 ratio and high root/belowground biomass ratio could indicate good spruce anchorage

371 at our waterlogged site. However, the stand at this site was completely uprooted by

372 the windstorm. ROTTMANN (1989) stated that waterlogging worsens the coherence of

373 soil and the root-soil friction, a confluence of which drastically lowers root anchorage.

374 At the other extreme, low root/shoot ratio at our boulder site, on its own, would

375 indicate low tree anchorage. However, a large part of this stand was left undamaged,

376 many trees were broken at the stem rather than uprooted. We assume that the roots

377 ingrown between stones were difficult to pull out from the soil and consequently did

378 reinforce anchorage.

379

380 **Conclusion**

381 A severe windthrow event in forests dominated by Norway spruce has allowed us

382 to assess the effect of soil conditions on coarse root and belowground stump biomass

383 allocation. Increasing stone content of the soil had a negative influence on root/shoot

384 ratio, while soil waterlogging resulted in the predomination of roots at the expense of

385 shoots. We have shown that it is possible to construct reliable models predicting

386 belowground biomass. DBH proved to be a stable and accurate predictor variable,

387 across all site and soil conditions, however model coefficients have to be site specific,

388 especially if they are to be applied to sites with contrasting soil water conditions.

389

395   ("Vulnerability of forest ecosystems destabilized by wind to the impact of some

396   disturbance factors" APVV-0612-07 project).

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Table 1. Soil characteristics of the experimental plots

Stand name and number	Soil type	Type of stones	Proportion of stones[#]	Water regime
Koprova dolina (1)	humic podzol	boulder	65%*	well drained
Nad Podbanskym (2)	cambic podzol	stony	45%*	well drained
Horny Smokovec (3)	haplic cambisol	moderate stony	25%*	well drained
Kezmarske zlaby (4)	stagnic pseudogley	stony	40%**	water-logged

Notes: # - on volumetric base

   * - at soil depth 0-100 cm

   ** - at soil depth 0-30 cm (conforms with maximum rooting depth)

Table 2. Aboveground parameters of trees selected for root system measurements (D20H denotes stem diameter at 20 cm from the ground level, DBH is diameter at breast height, i.e. 130 cm from the ground level).

Stand name and number	Number of trees	Height (cm) [A]	D20H (cm) [B]	DBH (cm) [C]	Slenderness ratio [A/C]	Base shape ratio [B/C]
Koprova dolina (1)	11	2450	40.7	33.3	74	1.22
Nad Podbanskym (2)	10	1790	25.6	20.6	87	1.24
Horny Smokovec (3)	12	1650	22.8	19.5	85	1.17
Kezmarske zlaby (4)	14	1400	20.5	16.0	88	1.28

Table 3. Regression coefficients B0, B1, B2, their standard errors (S.E.), p-value (P), degrees of freedom (DF), coefficient of determination (R^2), for equations (3) and (4) predicting coarse root and total belowground biomass from DBH and D20H respectively. Stands 1- 3 (Koprova dolina, Nad Podbanskym and Horny Smokovec) were estimated together since their separate model fits were not significantly different.

Equation	Model	Stands	B0 (SE) P	B1 (SE) P	B2 (SE) P	DF	R^2
(3)	DBH – Coarse roots	1-3		0.000254 (0.0000933) 0.010	1.812 (0.101) <0.001	32	0.937
		4		0.0000316 (0.0000401) 0.446	2.638 (0.385) <0.001	13	0.931
	DBH – Belowground biomass	1-3		0.000258 (0.000102) 0.016	1.892 (0.108) <0.001	32	0.934
		4		0.0000349 (0.0000353) 0.343	2.657 (0.314) <0.001	13	0.953
	D20H – Coarse roots	1-3		0.0000615 (0.0000393) 0.127	2.105 (0.169) <0.001	32	0.905
		4		0.000207 (0.000254) 0.431	1.876 (0.341) <0.001	13	0.867
	D20H – Belowground biomass	1-3		0.0000486 (0.0000337) 0.160	2.247 (0.181) <0.001	32	0.906
		4		0.000225 (0.000242) 0.369	1.898 (0.298) <0.001	13	0.897
(4)	DBH – Coarse roots	1-3	-3.900 (0.146) <0.001	0.0557 (0.00358) <0.001		32	0.897
		4	-5.075 (0.495) <0.001	0.126 (0.0193) <0.001		13	0.901
	DBH – Belowground biomass	1-3	-3.668 (0.154) <0.001	0.0575 (0.00376) <0.001		32	0.896
		4	-4.938 (0.419) <0.001	0.127 (0.0164) <0.001		13	0.927
	D20H – Coarse roots	1-3	-4.338 (0.196) <0.001	0.0579 (0.00426) <0.001		32	0.899
		4	-4.246 (0.467) <0.001	0.0677 (0.0133) <0.001		13	0.795
	D20H – Belowground biomass	1-3	-4.163 (0.205) <0.001	0.0608 (0.00442) <0.001		32	0.904
		4	-4.112 (0.423) <0.001	0.0685 (0.0120) <0.001		13	0.828

Figure 1. Ratio of belowground biomass volume to stem volume in Koprova dolina (1), Nad Podbanskym (2), Horny Smokovec (3) and Kezmarske zlaby (4) [±SE], letters denote significant difference at *P*<0.05.

**Figure 2**. Coarse root volume and belowground biomass volume prediction curves based on equation (3).
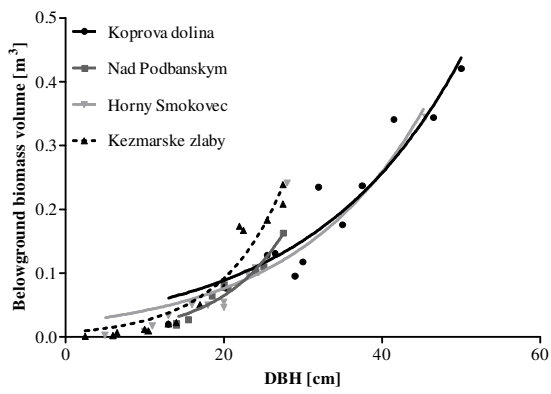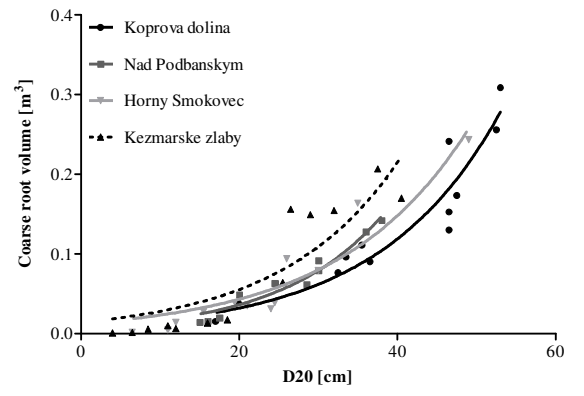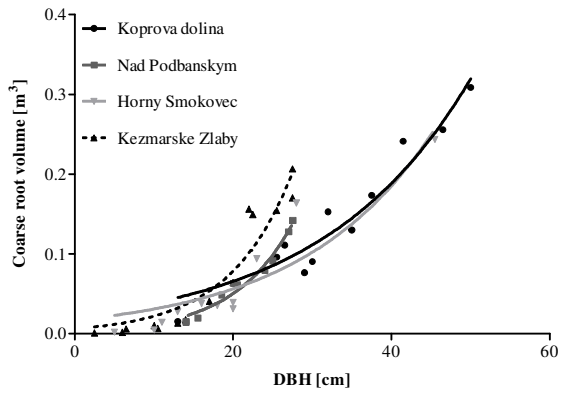
Figure 3. Coarse root volume and belowground biomass volume prediction curves based on equation (4).
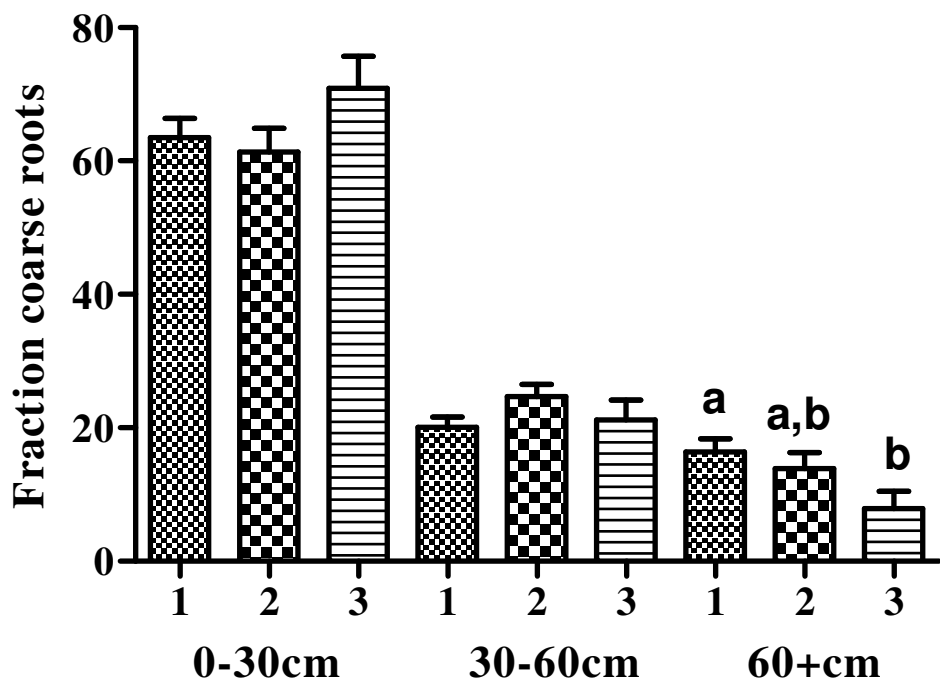
Figure 4. Proportion of coarse root volume in different soil depths in Koprova dolina (1), Nad Podbanskym (2) and Horny Smokovec (3) stands [%], letters denote significant difference at *P*<0.05.

Root/shoot ratio
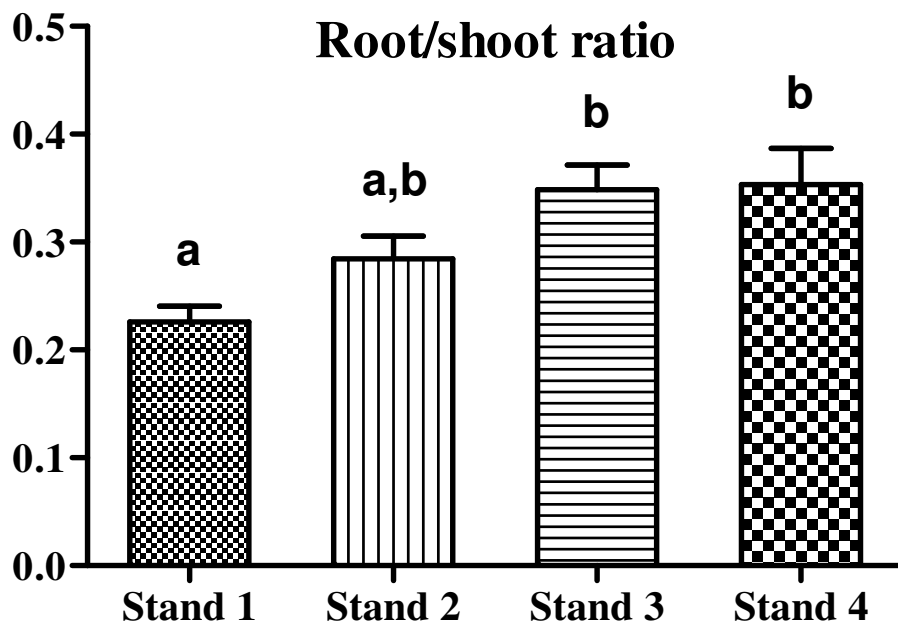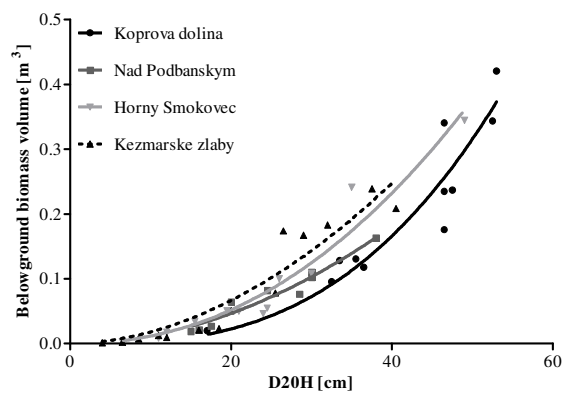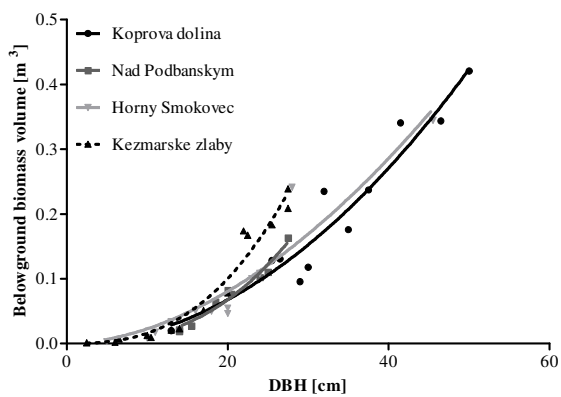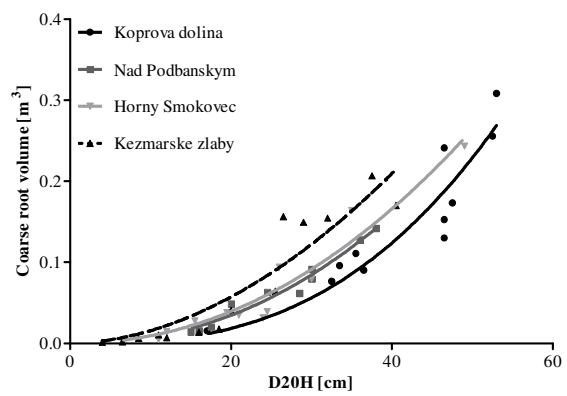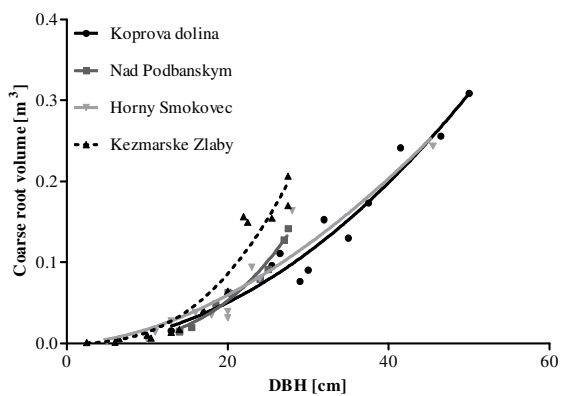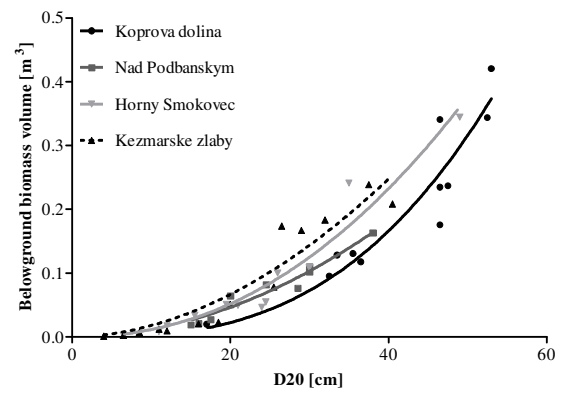
Authors' addresses:

B. Konopka and J. Pajtik

NÁRODNÉ LESNÍCKE CENTRUM
T. G. Masaryka 22
960 92 Zvolen
Slovakia

Tel.: +421 45 532 03 16
Fax: +421 45 531 41 92

M. Lukac

NERC Centre for Population Biology
Division of Biology
Imperial College London
Silwood Park Campus
Ascot
SL5 7PY
UK

Tel. +44 207 5942482
Fax +44 1344 873173