

## Water use by Eucalypt Clones Growing at Kongowe, Kibaha, Tanzania

# <sup>1\*</sup>Pima, N.E., <sup>2</sup>Chamshama, S.A.O. and <sup>3</sup>Iddi, S.

<sup>1</sup>Tanzania Forestry Research Institute, P.O. Box 1854, Morogoro, Tanzania.
<sup>2</sup>Department of Forest Biology, Sokoine University of Agriculture, P.O Box 3010, Chuo Kikuu. Morogoro, Tanzania.
<sup>3</sup>Department of Wood Utilization, Sokoine University of Agriculture, P.O Box 3014, Chuo Kikuu. Morogoro, Tanzania.
\*Corresponding author, Email: nancypima@yahoo.com

### ABSTRACT

A study was carried out between April and October 2014 to investigate the amount of water used by Eucalypt clones grown at Kongowe, Tanzania. Sap flow sensors using heat pulse velocity were deployed across GC 167, GC 15 and GC 940 in wet and dry seasons. Data on water use were analysed using sap flow software. ANOVA was used to compare daily water use between clones and DMRT was used to separate means of daily water use between clones. Correlation was carried out to determine the influence of temperature on water use. Results revealed that GC 167, GC 15 and GC 940 had an average water use of 14. 7 and 5 L day<sup>-1</sup> respectively in the wet season. During the dry season, water use of 11, 9 and 8 L day<sup>-1</sup> was recorded for GC167, GC15 and GC940 respectively. Results further showed a strong positive correlation between daily tree water use and temperature. It is concluded that clone GC167 used high amount of water than GC15 and GC940 in the wet season as well as in dry season. It is important to identify where the studied clones should be placed in the landscape to produce the best environmental outcomes.

**Keywords:** Eucalypt clones, water use, Kongowe, Tanzania

#### **INTRODUCTION**

*Eucalyptus* is the most widely planted tree genus in the world, covering more than 22 million hectares (ha), with growth rates that can exceed 35 m<sup>3</sup>ha<sup>-1</sup>year<sup>-1</sup> (Nichols *et al.*,2010). These fast growing trees can be grown under a range of different climates for products that include pulp and paper, charcoal, fuel wood and solid wood products such as poles and timber

for construction and furniture. They contribute significantly to reducing the wide gap between demand and supply of wood in the shortest possible time (Oballa *et al.* 2009), hence reducing pressure on the few remaining natural forests.

Eucalypt clones were introduced in East African countries of Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda during the period 1997 to 2003 from Mondi South Africa. In Tanzania, clones were introduced in 2003 through Tanzania Forestry Research Institute (TAFORI) to test their adaptability in the Tanzanian environment before large scale planting. Experiments started in 2004 with hybrid clones of Eucalyptus grandis x E. camaldulensis (GC), E. grandis x E. urophylla (GU), and E. grandis x E. tereticornis (GT). These clones combine desired traits for the crossed species. E. grandis x E. camaldulensis (GC) combines good growth and drought tolerance, E. grandis x E. urophylla (GU) combines good growth and disease resistance while E. grandis x E. tereticornis(GT) combines good growth and rooting ability (Cupertino et al. 2011).

Eucalypts have been criticised in several countries for consuming excessive amounts of water (KFS 2009, Albaugh *et al.* 2013) and drying out the sub-soil, consequently lowering the water table (Srivastava *et al.* 2003). The worries have persisted up to now in tropical countries such as Ethiopia, Rwanda, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda (Nduwamungu *et al.* 2007). Observations inCentral India and in the foothill zone of the Himalayas indicate that in regions in which large areas of *E. tereticornis* plantations have been raised, the level of water in wells falls until the plantations are about 6-8 years in age, the culmination of mean annual



increment and thereafter reverts to the previous levels (Sunder 1993). In the case of older plantations of *E. globulus* in the Nilgiris (India), no adverse effects have been noticed on the hydrological cycle (Sunder 1993). Although there has been a number of scientific studies undertaken on water use by Eucalypts (Calder 1992, Calder 1999, Lima 2011), variation of species and environments means, generalised conclusions cannot be drawn.

Studies by Dye et al. (2004) in Brazil reported mean water use ranging from 30 to 64 L day<sup>-1</sup> in 1.5 – 7 year old stands of E. grandis × camaldulensis hybrid clones growing under high soil water availability, good soil type and high temperature and from 15 to  $34 \text{ L day}^{-1}$  for sites with poor soil condition. Sunder (1993) and Keitel and Adams (2009) reported water use ranging from 20 to 68 L day<sup>-1</sup> for E. camaldulensis and E. victrix. Water use by trees is driven by several environmental variables, including vapour pressure deficit, net radiation, wind speed and temperature and also the availability of soil water within the rooting zone (David et al. 1997). Morris et al. (2004) reported that the rate of water use by Eucalypts is highly variable responding to weather condition, species and hybrid type, soil type and depth, vegetative cover, tree growth stage, wood density and tree rooting depth. Other responses include age and diameter of the trees, leaf area and tree density (Dye et al. 1995). The impact of these variables on the amount of water transpired depends on tree leaf area and the stomatal behaviour of the species (White et al. 1999).

Studies by Calder *et al.* (1992) in India reported that Eucalypts used more water than crops but less than indigenous forest. The authors further reported that there is no evidence that proves that Eucalypts take more water than any other indigenous dry deciduous and exotic forest. Teshome (2009) in Ethiopia reported that Eucalypts do not consume more water than any tree species and crops; rather they are efficient in using moisture around roots and producing more biomass. However, because of their large size and more abundant leaves with greater leaf area, trees affect stream flow more severely than shorter vegetation when established close to rivers, lakes and estuaries (Lima 2011). High rates of productivity of Eucalypts are often associated with high rates of water use leading to concerns about reductions in vield from water supply catchments in Australia or where Eucalypt forests have replaced native vegetation of low stature in South Africa (Dye, 1996) and southern India (Calder et al. 1992). For this reason, nearly all commercial plantation programmes in South America have strict legal limits on how close to a water source they can plant trees (Lima 2011). The severity of problems associated with water availability appears to be greater in areas where the plantations are large in size and cover most of the catchment area or in places with seasonal rainfall. However, lack of adequate data in Tanzanian conditions to justify conclusive decisions on Eucalypts water use is a major constraint to solutions on Eucalypts planting. This study therefore aimed at investigating the amount of water used by Eucalypt clones growing at Kongowe, Kibaha, Tanzania. The information generated from this study will be used as a basis for making decisions on planting Eucalypt clones.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

## **Study Area Description**

This study was conducted at Kongowe, Kibaha, located within Ruvu North Forest Reserve in Pwani Region, approximately 60 km West of Dar es Salaam. The area lies between latitudes  $06^{0}42'39''S$  and longitudes  $38^{0}52'52''E$ . The altitude of the area is 104 m.a.s.l. The area receives bimodal rainfall pattern, with short rains falling between November and December and long rains between March and May. Mean annual rainfall is about 900 mm. Higher temperatures are common in January and February with mean monthly maximum up to  $33^{\circ}$ C and mean minimum of about  $18^{\circ}$ C(Msuya et al. 2003). The area has sandy soils. The soil pH of the area varies from 4.5 to 4.9 with soil organic carbon ranging from 0.68% to 1.7%. The natural vegetation surrounding the study



site is characterized as a semi deciduous open to partly closed woodland with evergreen thickets and riverine forests.

#### **Experimental Design**

The experiment was established by TAFORI in 2004 using Eucalypt hybrid clones from Mondi South Africa. Randomized Complete Block Design was used to set up this experiment with four replications and 12 treatments (Eucalypt clones) of which 10 were GCs of *E. grandis x* 

*E. camaldulensis*, 1 GT of *E. grandis x E. tereticornis* and 1 GU of *E. grandis x E. urophylla*. Each clone type was represented once in each block (Table 1). Each plot comprised 16 trees spaced at  $2.5 \times 2.5 \text{ m}$  in a 4 x 4 arrangement. The experiment has 2 guard rows planted to avoid edge effect. The experiment was fenced after planting to keep off small game and other intruders. Silvicultural management and previous growth assessments were carried out by TAFORI.

Table 1. Experimental design

Blocks					Eucaly	pt clon	es (Trea	tments	)			
<b>B4</b>	GC	GC	GC	GC	GC	GC	GT	GC	GU	GC	GC	GC
	940	14	10	167	581	584	529	796	608	15	785	514
<b>B3</b>	GC	GT	GC	GC	GC	GU	GC	GC	GC	GC	GC	GC
	14	529	796	584	15	608	514	785	10	167	940	581
<b>B2</b>	GC	GC	GU	GT	GC	GC	GC	GC	GC	GC	GC	GC
	785	15	608	529	581	940	10	14	514	796	584	167
B1	GC	GT	GC	GU	GC	GC	GC	GC	GC	GC	GC	GC
	10	529	581	608	514	785	14	167	584	940	796	15

#### Data Collection Sap flow measurement

Selection of clones for sap flow measurements were based on their growth performance in terms of survival, Dbh, height, basal area, volume and biomass production. In this case, GC 167, GC 940 and GC 15 were selected for measuring water use in two seasons (wet and dry season). Subjective sampling was applied to select three trees, one tree from each clone type for water use measurements (Cavaleri et al. 2014). Data were collected from 30<sup>th</sup> April and ended on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2014 in wet season while those for dry season were collected from 13<sup>th</sup> August and ended on 3<sup>nd</sup> October 2014. Heat pulse velocity (HPV) was used to estimate whole tree water use for Eucalypt clones. A pulse of heat is injected into the xylem and the velocity of its travel to a point further along the direction of flow is used to estimate sap flow velocity (Simpson 2000). Probes were inserted into holes drilled horizontally into the sapwood at a height of 1.3 m (Dye et al. 1996). The probes consisted of two thermistors, one

10 mm upstream and one 5 mm downstream from a heater at the center. The upper and lower thermistors were used to detect the convective and conductive heat fluxes respectively, after a short (0.5-1.5 seconds) heat pulse.Each thermistor contains two temperature sensors. facilitating simultaneous measurement of sap velocity at two different depths in the sapwood (Dye et al. 1996). Probes were coated with silicon vacuum grease before insertion to improve thermal contact with the xylem and to aid both installation and removal of needles.

HPV (cm h<sup>-1</sup>) were collected automatically every 30 minute intervals then averaged over 1 hour for each probe set (Swanson and Whitfield 1981) and stored in an electronic data logger before being downloaded to a computer. Then, sap velocity (V<sub>si</sub>) was calculated according to the procedures outlined in Swamson and Whitfield (1981). Sapwood area and width determined by were extracting а perpendicular core from each of the sample trees (Table 2).

Variables measured	Treatments					
	GC 167	GC 15	GC 940			
Dhb (cm)	24.5	21	19			
Bark thickness (mm)	12	6	6			
Sapwood depth (cm)	3.6	2.5	2.7			
Sapwood fresh weight (g)	0.271	0.266	0.200			
Sapwood dry weight (g)	0.237	0.226	0.182			
Sapwood volume (cm <sup>3</sup> )	0.481	0.451	0.358			
Sapwood area (cm <sup>2</sup> )	209.23	135.78	133.17			

Table 2. Parameters used for Eucalypt clones water use at Kongowe, Kibaha

Sapwood area  $(A_{sw})$  was then calculated using equation 1:

 $A_{sw} = \pi (r_{sw} +_{hw})^2 - \pi (r_{hw})^2.$  (1) Where

 $r_{sw}+_{hw}$  is the radial thickness of the sapwood plus the heartwood, and  $r_{hw}$  is the radial thickness of the heartwood (all in cm) (Cavaleri*et al.* 2014).

Therefore, Mean daily water use is calculated using equation 2: Water use  $(L \text{ day}^{-1}) = V_{si} \times A_{sw}$  .....(2)

#### Weather data collection

Rainfall and temperature were recorded daily at Kongowe weather station by using rain gauge and glass thermometer respectively. Daily rainfall, minimum and maximum temperatures data were used to plot graphs showing climate trends for two seasons (dry and wet).

#### Data Analysis

All statistical tests were performed using Sap flow tool software version 1.4 (SFT 2013). ANOVA was used to compare daily water use between clones. DMRT was used to separate means of daily water use between clones. Correlation was carried out to determine the influence of temperature on water use.

### RESULTS

### Water use

The mean daily water use of studied Eucalypt clones at Kongowe - Kibaha site is shown in Figures 1 and 3. Results revealed that the average water use for GC 167, GC 15 and GC 940 were 14 L day<sup>-1</sup>,7 L day<sup>-1</sup> and 5 L day<sup>-1</sup> respectively during wet season (Figure 1). During the measurement period, rainfall totaling 115.9 mm was recorded. During this period, daily minimum and maximum temperatures ranged from 23°C to 31°C (Figure 2). Rainfall amounting to 572.2 mm was recorded from 1st April to June 2014 leading to high soil water availability in May and June. During the dry season, clones GC 167, GC 15 and GC 940 consumed an average of 11 L day<sup>-1</sup>, 9 L day<sup>-1</sup>, and 8 L day<sup>-1</sup> respectively (Figure 3). Daily minimum and maximum temperatures recorded ranged from 24°C to 31°C (Figure 4) and no rainfall was recorded during the dry season.

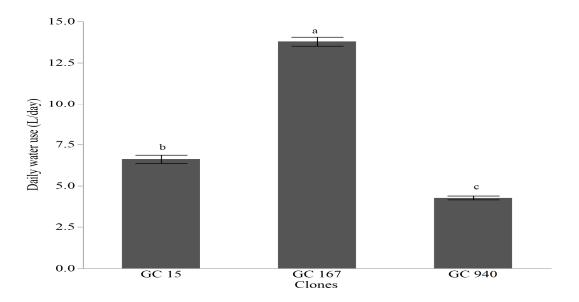


Figure 1: Daily water use of Eucalypt clones in wet season at Kongowe, Kibaha, Tanzania.

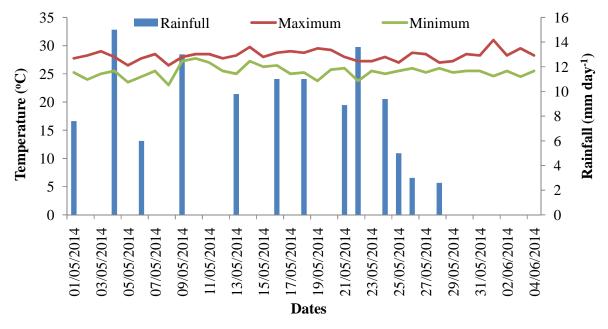


Figure 2: Rainfall and temperature data recorded in wet season at Kongowe, Kibaha, Tanzania.

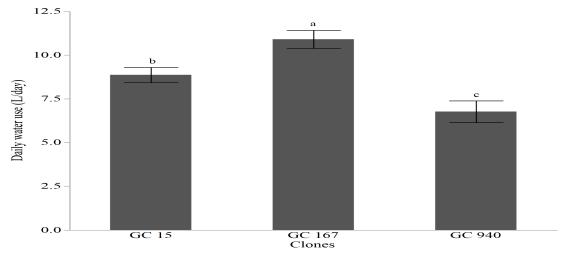


Figure 3: Daily water use of Eucalypt clones in dry season at Kongowe, Kibaha, Tanzania.

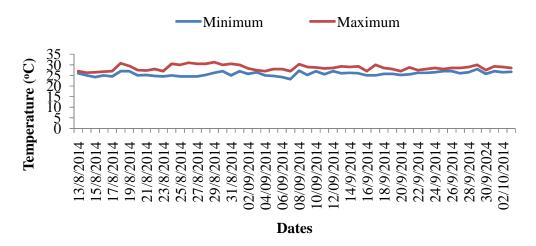


Figure 4: Temperature data recorded in dry season at Kongowe, Kibaha, Tanzania.

#### Influence of temperature on water use

Temperature had significant (p<0.05) correlation with amount of water used by Eucalypt clones (Figure 5). Results revealed that as temperature increased, the amount of water used increased with correction coefficient of 0.34. Figure 6

presents the trends of daily water use of Eucalypt clones in the dry season at Kongowe Kibaha. Results showed that tree water use increased with increasing temperature and soil moisture availability but decreased consistently as the dry season progressed (Figure 6).

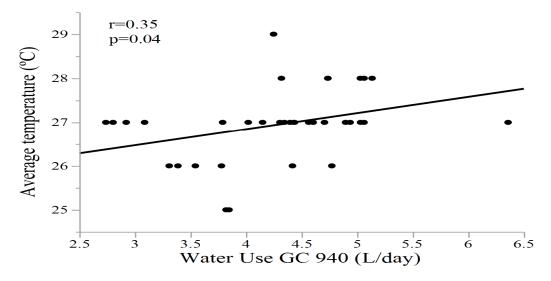


Figure 5: Influence of temperature on water use by Eucalypt clones at Kongowe, Tanzania

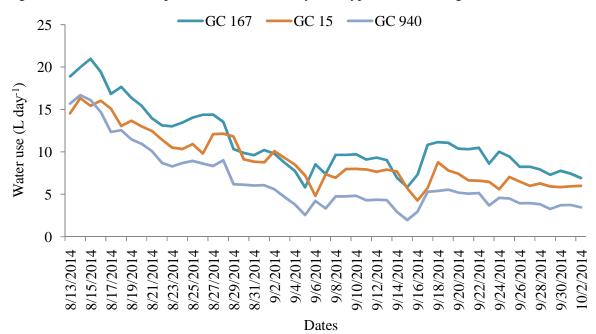


Figure 6: Daily water use trend of Eucalypt clones in dry season at Kongowe, Tanzania

#### DISCUSSION

GC 167 emerged as the clone with the highest water use in both wet and dry seasons than GC 15 and GC 940 although they were of the same age. This was probably a result of larger diameter of the studied tree and the greater sapwood area which transported larger amounts of water. This relationship was also observed in different tropical woody species (Meinzer *et al.* 2004) and a single-species *Acacia mangium* plantation (Cienciala *et al.* 2000). Simpson (2000) and Keitel and Adams

sapwood area and large diameter transported large amount of water than the smallest trees. Alcorn *et al.* (2013) found that smaller sapwood area, crown length and projected crown area of *E. pilularis* resulted in lower water use. A study by Gush (2011) reported that small trees used considerably less water than larger trees of the same species, and this was due to their relatively smaller leaf and sapwood conducting areas. Greater sapwood area would be expected to increase water use by increasing the conductance of the stand as a conduit for water from soil to

In addition, the high rates of water loss from large trees and older forests were likely a result of the influence of an enhanced "pool" of transpirational water in the upper soil layers caused by hydraulic lift (Dawson 1993). The hydraulically lifted water reservoir enabled large trees to use more potential transpirational water during daylight hours than small trees, leading to a greater total water flux. The high variation in water use implies that stem diameters determined the actual quantity of water taken up by trees as the transpiration flux and diameter are normally closely related to conducting wood area (Hatton et al. 1995).

Mean water use of Eucalypt clones studied were similar to values reported by Senelwa et al. (2009), Alcorn et al. (2013) and Fetene (2012) for Eucalypt clones, E. pilularis, E. cloeziana, E. globulus, Podocarpus falcatus, Croton macrostachys and Cupressus lusitanica from Kenya, Australia and Ethiopia. Weltzin et al. (2003) and Meinzer et al. (2007) reported that the availability of water to trees depends on the amount and timing of precipitation, the ability of the soil to store water and the tree's ability to access resident soil moisture which is dependent on rooting pattern and other root characteristics that affect the efficiency of water uptake. On the other hand, the results were relatively lower than the values reported by Sunder (1993) and Keitel and Adams (2009) ranging from 20 to 68 L day <sup>1</sup>for *E. camaldulensis* and *E. victrix* and for other woody tropical species (e.g. Meinzer et al. 2004; Andrade et al. 2005; Kagawa et al., 2009). Dye et al. (2004) reported mean daily water use in 1.5 - 7 year old stands of E. grandis  $\times$  E. camaldulensis hybrid clones ranging from 30 to 64 L day<sup>-1</sup> for trees growing under high soil water availability, good soil type and high temperature and from 15 to 34 L day<sup>-1</sup> for sites with poor soil condition. Licata et al. (2008) found that an introduced pine species (Pinus ponderosa) in Argentina used significantly more water than native cypress species (Austrocedrus chilensis). Vance et al. (2014) reported that Eucalypts' water use can be higher than non-irrigated agricultural crops, pasture and in some cases, native forests due to their rapid growth and high evapotranspiration rates.

Several factors might be contributing to low water use of studied clones compared to the values reported by Sunder (1993), Dye et al. (2004) and Keitel and Adams (2009). This could probably be a result of genetic differences and the environmental interaction as supported by Dye and Olbrich (1993). David et al. (1997) and Morris et al. (2004) reported that the rate of water use by Eucalypts is highly variable responding to weather conditions, species and hybrid type, soil type and depth, vegetative cover, tree growth stage, wood density and tree rooting depth. Others factors include soil water availability, age and diameter of the trees, leaf area and tree density. Morris et al. (2006) compared single species of E. camaldulensis on two sites with contrasting conditions in Australia and Pakistan and found about 3 times more water use by E. camaldulensis in Pakistan environments compared to that in Australia. Changes in water use are determined primarily by changes in climatic demand or by physiological responses to an increase in soil water availability or both (Calder 1992).

Results showed a strong positive correlation between daily tree water use and temperature. This relationship was also observed for other Eucalyptus species in Pakistan and Australia (Morris et al. 2006). The authors compared single species of E. camaldulensis on two sites in Australia and Pakistan. The Australia site was established in low temperature zone while the Pakistan site was established in high temperature zone. The authors found about 3 times more water use by E. camaldulensis in Pakistan environments compared to that in Australia. Calder (1992) reported that changes in water use are determined primarily by changes in climatic demand or by physiological responses to an increase in soil water availability or both. Gush (2011) concluded that seasonal variations in sap velocity are highly correlated to climatic stimuli such as changes in temperature and day length.

Tree water use increased with increasing temperature and soil moisture availability but decreased consistently as the dry season progressed. The decreasing trend in water use observed was probably a result of decreasing soil moisture around the rooting Low soil moisture decreased zone. transpiration as the leaf stomata closes to reduce the rate of water loss, such that the trees transpired more during the wet season than during the dry season (Knight 1999). Early closure of stomata as soil dries conserves soil water and could be advantageous if drought is prolonged (Sinclair and Muchow 2001). Stomata closure, either in response to increasing vapour pressure deficit or soil water deficit is one of the mechanisms trees use to avoid drought conditions (Schulze 1986, Dye et al. 2001). Closure of stomata to maintain leaf water potential above a critical threshold protects the xylem from damage by cavitation and embolism (Tyree and Sperry 1988).Baldocchi and Xu (2007) reported that under seasonal rainfall conditions with extended drought periods, trees have to cope with water shortage and they have developed strategies to adjust at structural, physiological and chemical levels.

A decline in water use with soil drying is a commonly observed phenomenon in trees including E. globulus, Podocarpus henkeli and Pinus radiata. David et al. (1997) found that water use of an E. globulus stand in Portugal decreased consistently as the dry season progressed. Gush et al. (2011) found water use for *Podocarpus henkeli* and *Pinus* radiata ranging between 10 and 20 L day<sup>-1</sup> and  $50 - 100 \text{ L} \text{ day}^{-1}$  during the summer, declining marginally to between 5 and 15 L day<sup>-1</sup> and 30 L day<sup>-1</sup> respectively in winter. In addition, Tectona grandis used less water during the dry season than during the wet season, which can be explained by the reduced number of leaves during the dry season (Kunert 2010). In contrast, trees

with the ability to take up soil water from deeper layers maintained or even increased rates of water use during dry periods (Meinzer et al. 1999, Knight 1999). For semi-deciduous species example, Anacardium excelsum, fully foliated during the dry season, had significantly higher water use rates during the dry season, possibly caused by a higher evaporative demand and due to the use of groundwater (Kunert 2010). According to Dye and Olbrich (1993), normal water use rates may decline during times of significant soil water deficit.

## CONCLUSION

The results indicated that Eucalypt clones studied used much less amount of water than other Eucalyptus species and other tree species reported elsewhere. GC 167 showed high water use than GC 15 and GC 940 in both seasons and reduced its water use during dry season, displaying a better control of its water use. Results further showed a strong positive correlation between daily tree water use and temperature of the study area. It is recommended that it is important to identify where the studied clones should be placed in landscape to produce the best the environmental outcomes. Further studies on water use efficiency of the studied Eucalypt clones need to be carried out. In this study, water use efficiency was not carried out due to time limitation. In order to assess water use efficiency, monitoring for water use and biomass production needs to be carried out for at least a year. This information will help to decide where these clones should be planted on the landscape to produce better outcomes.

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