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Surviving in a changing world: key contributions of legacies from abiotic disturbances to the resilience of forest arthropod communities



Jérémy Cours^{1*}, Christophe Bouget¹, Alexandro B. Leverkus², Simon Thorn³, Nadia Barsoum⁴, Jakub Horák^{5,6}, Elodie Le Souchu⁷, Sylvain Pincebourde⁸, Aurélien Sallé⁷

¹ INRAE, UR EFNO, Domaine des Barres, F-45290 Nogent-sur-Vernisson, France

² Department of Ecology, University of Granada, Granada, Spain

³ Field Station Fabrikschleichach, Department of Animal Ecology and Tropical Biology, Julius-Maximilians-University Würzburg, Würzburg, Germany

⁴ Centre for Ecosystems, Society and Biosecurity, Forest Research, Alice Holt Lodge, Farnham, UK

⁵ Faculty of Science, University of Hradec Králové, 500 03 Hradec Králové, Czech Republic

⁶ Faculty of Forestry and Wood Sciences, Czech University of Life Sciences in Prague, 165 21 Prague, Czech Republic

⁷ Laboratoire de Biologie des Ligneux et des Grandes Cultures, INRAE, Université d'Orléans, F-45067 Orléans, France

⁸ Institut de Recherche sur la Biologie de l'Insecte, UMR 7261, CNRS, Université de Tours, F-37200 Tours, France

* Corresponding author: J. Cours, jeremy.cours.2@gmail.com

Background & objectives

Temperate forests are shaped by major abiotic disturbances such as droughts, windstorms or wildfires. These disturbances affect the composition, abundance and diversity of microhabitats and resources for forest organisms, and select specific behavioural and biological traits in their communities. These disturbance legacies ultimately shape post-disturbance communities by providing refugia for the organisms, from which colonization processes occur, but also novel environmental conditions and resources for survivors and new colonizers. We identified key disturbance legacies for forest arthropod communities and examined (i) how abiotic disturbances affect their diversity and availability, and (ii) how these legacies mediate the response of arthropods guilds to disturbance. We also highlight the contribution of pre-disturbance forest conditions and post-disturbance forest management

I. Key disturbance legacies of main abiotic natural disturbances

Disturbances involve pulses and collapses of critical trophic resources and changes in soil and microclimatic conditions. These changes are largely mediated by tree death/weakening and a subsequent canopy opening.

II. Disturbance regimes and their changes

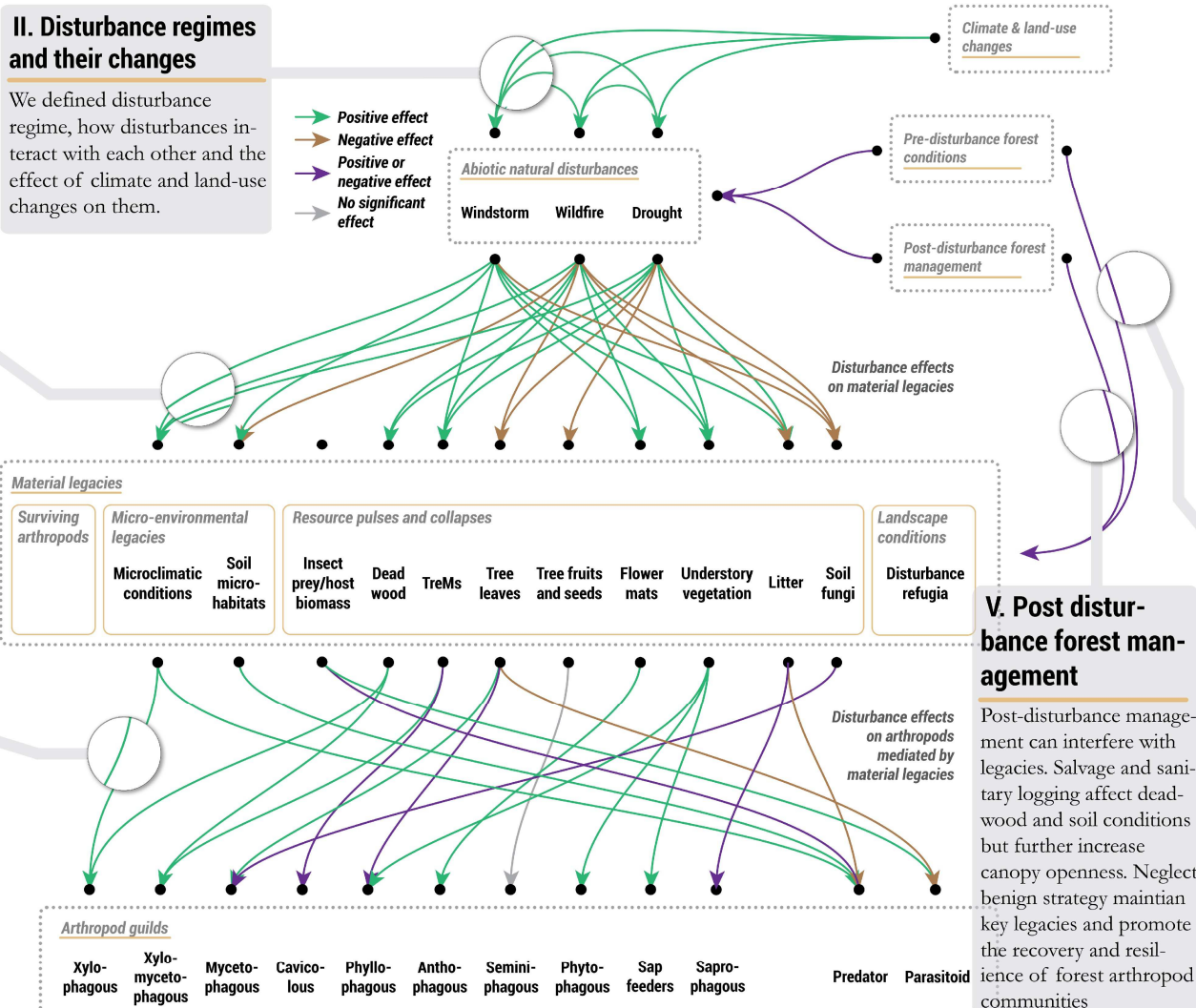
We defined disturbance regime, how disturbances interact with each other and the effect of climate and land-use changes on them.

III. Arthropod responses to disturbances through legacies

Arthropod responses are mediated by their ability to resist to effects of disturbances or to escape in refugia, and a later ability to recolonize disturbed areas. How survivors/colonizers thrive in post-disturbance conditions largely depend on their trophic/ecological guild.

IV. Pre-disturbance forest conditions

Management at stand and landscape levels mediate disturbance regimes and shape the amount of legacies and the distribution of disturbance refugia.



V. Post disturbance forest management

Post-disturbance management can interfere with legacies. Salvage and sanitary logging affect dead wood and soil conditions but further increase canopy openness. Neglect benign strategy maintain key legacies and promote the recovery and resilience of forest arthropod communities

Conclusion

Disturbance legacies are important for the post-disturbance development patterns of forest communities and, consequently, for forest resilience. Understanding which legacies are affected and how by ongoing global changes and how they ultimately affect biodiversity is of primary interest in analyzing changes in forest arthropod communities.