

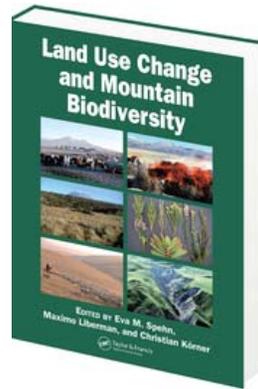
Land use change and mountain biodiversity

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Part of the worldwide biodiversity program DIVERSITAS, the Global Mountain Biodiversity Assessment (GMBA) assesses the biological richness of high-elevation biota. GMBA's focus includes the uppermost forest regions or their substitute rangeland vegetation, the treeline ecotone, and the alpine and nival belts. Providing more than description, the GMBA explains the causes of biological richness and how diversity changes over time. Because biodiversity changes often result from human land use, part of the GMBA agenda is the assessment of land use impacts. These assessments are critical in low-latitude regions, where land use pressure on upland biota is the greatest.

The chapters of *Land Use Change and Mountain Biodiversity* derive from a peer-review process that followed presentations offered at two GMBA workshops, one in Tanzania and the other in Bolivia. More than 50 researchers actively participated in these events, discussing information from all major mountain regions, with a particular focus on the Andes and on African mountains.

Table of Contents

High-Elevation Land Use, Biodiversity, and Ecosystem Functioning
Christian Körner, Gia Nakhutsrishvili, and Eva Spehn

Diversity of Afroalpine Vegetation and Ecology of Treeline Species in the Bale Mountains, Ethiopia, and the Influence of Fire
Masresha Fetene, Yoseph Assefa, Menassie Gashaw, Zerihun Woldu, and Erwin Beck

Is Afroalpine Plant Biodiversity Negatively Affected by High-Altitude Fires?
Karsten Wesche

The Impact of Fire on Diversity, Structure, and Composition of the Vegetation on Mt. Kilimanjaro
Andreas Hemp

Effects of Fire on the Diversity of Geometrid Moths on Mt. Kilimanjaro
Jan C. Axmacher, Ludger Scheuermann, Marion Schrumpf, Herbert V.M. Lyaruu, Konrad Fiedler, and Klaus Müller-Hohenstein

The Influence of Fire on Mountain Sclerophyllous Forests and Their Small-Mammal Communities in Madagascar
Bernardin P.N. Rasolonandrasana and Steven M. Goodman

Fire, Plant Species Richness, and Aerial Biomass Distribution in Mountain Grasslands of Northwest Argentina
Roxana Aragón, Julietta Carilla, and Luciana Cristóbal

The Biodiversity of the Columbian Páramo and Its Relation to Anthropogenic Impact
Orlando Rangel Churio

Grazing Impact on Vegetation Structure and Plant Species Richness in an Old-Field Succession of the Venezuelan Paramos
Lina Sarmiento

Vegetation and Grazing Patterns in Andean Environments: A Comparison of Pastoral Systems in Punas and Páramos
Marcelo Molinillo and Maximina Monasterio

Grazing Intensity, Plant Diversity, and Rangeland Conditions in the Southeastern Andes of Peru (Palccoyo, Cusco)
Jorge Alberto Bustamante Becerra

Importance of Carrying Capacity in Sustainable Management of Key High-Andean Puna Rangelands (Bofedales) in Ulla Ulla, Bolivia
Humberto Alzérreca, Jorge Laura, Freddy Loza, Demetrio Luna, and Jonny Ortega

Functional Diversity of Wetland Vegetation in the High-Andean Páramo, Venezuela
Zulimar Hernández and Maximina Monasterio

Millennia of Grazing History in Eastern Ladakh, India, Reflected in Rangeland Vegetation
Gopal S. Rawat and Bhupendra S. Adhikari

Alpine Grazing in the Snowy Mountains of Australia: Degradation and Stabilization of the Ecosystem
Ken Green, Roger B. Good, Stuart W. Johnston, and Lisa A. Simpson

Vegetation of the Pamir (Tajikistan): Land Use and Desertification Problems
Siegmar-W. Breckle and Walter Wucherer

Effects of Grazing on Biodiversity, Productivity, and Soil Erosion of Alpine Pastures in Tajik Mountains
Khukmatullo M. Akhmadov, Siegmar-W. Breckle, and Uta Breckle

Plant Species Diversity, Forest Structure, and Tree Regeneration in Subalpine Wood Pastures
Andrea C. Mayer, Veronika Stöckli, Christine Huovinen, and Michael Kreuzer

Patterns of Forest Recovery in Grazing Fields in the Subtropical Mountains of Northwest Argentina
Julieta Carilla, H. Ricardo Grau, and Agustina Malizia

Climatic and Anthropogenic Influences on the Dynamics of *Prosopis ferox* Forests in the Quebrada de Humahuaca, Jujuy, Argentina
Mariano Morales and Ricardo Villalba

Conservation of Biodiversity in the Maloti–Drakensberg Mountain Range
Terry M. Everson and Craig D. Morris

Effects of Anthropogenic Disturbances on Biodiversity: A Major Issue of Protected-Area Management in Nepal
Khadga Basnet

Agricultural Development and Biodiversity Conservation in the Páramo Environments of the Andes of Merida, Venezuela
Maximina Monasterio and Marcelo Molinillo

Multidimensional (Climatic, Biodiversity, Socioeconomic, and Agricultural) Context of Changes in Land Use in the Vilcanota Watershed, Peru
Stephan Halloy, Anton Seimon, Karina Yager, and Alfredo Tupayachi

Fire and Grazing — A Synthesis of Human Impacts on Highland Biodiversity
Eva M. Spehn, Maximo Liberman, and Christian Körner

The Moshi-La Paz Research Agenda on “Land Use Effects on Tropical and Subtropical Mountain Biodiversity”

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