

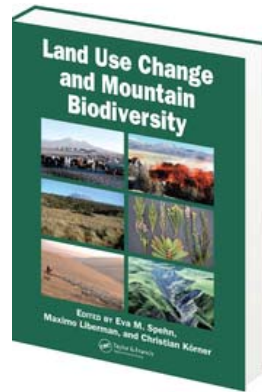
Land use change and mountain biodiversity

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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.

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