

# Review of: "Ecological diversity, structure and exploitation of rattan stands according to a disturbance gradient around the Nkoltang forest, Estuary province of Gabon"

Adigla Appolinaire Wédjangnon<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> University of Parakou

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

This is my commentary on the manuscript titled ***‘Ecological diversity, structure, and exploitation of rattan stands according to a disturbance gradient around the Nkoltang forest, Estuary province of Gabon’*** to help improve it.

The manuscript presents the results of an assessment of the abundance; the species distribution, regeneration, and exploitation status of the different rattan species in three areas of the Nkoltang forest. The data were collected in three environments according to the disturbance level.

The results are quite interesting and potentially valuable for rattan stand management. However, the manuscript needs to be improved to represent a good fit for research work. The research question and hypotheses that should reveal the research's originality and innovation are lacking. Some words are used improperly and confuse readers. For example, environment vs. medium/media, mature and immature stems, diversity vs. species diversity or ecological diversity, etc. The introduction is too long. The authors have reported results from other studies in the introduction section. That is not recommended. They should synthesize key information from other studies. There are too many paragraphs, including one-sentence paragraphs, which should be merged. A paragraph in a paper must develop an idea, not just bring information. The manuscript should be restructured to meet the standard of a research paper. The following questions need to be answered to improve the methodology. How large is the area of the study forest? How large is the area of each environment? What is the sampling rate? The number of plots considered is not clear. Why did you choose one-hectare square plots?

The results also revealed a high level of pressure on rattan species in an undisturbed environment. When you consider an environment undisturbed and find a high level of pressure on one or more species growing there, that poses a problem and makes your choice of environment questionable. The environment that the authors have considered undisturbed is a secondary forest, meaning that such a forest was pressured in the past and then recovered. Therefore, it should not be considered undisturbed.

Please check the supplementary data for further comments.