

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

Pavel Samec¹

¹ Mendel University of Agriculture and Forestry

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The manuscript „Ecological diversity, structure and exploitation of rattan stands according to a disturbance gradient around the Nkoltang forest, Estuary province of Gabon“ by Ephrem Nzengue was focused on the comparison between variously disturbed rattan communities. The importance of the study is based on the observation of risks associated with the management of highly-used trees in tropical conditions. However, the study will require many improvements under major revision:

1. The term „ecological diversity“ should be changed to „species diversity“ in the whole article, including the title. Ecological diversity comprises the sum of vegetation type richness and geodiversity, while you focused only on species abundance.
2. The abstract would be improved with one introductory sentence about the problem statement (e.g., ecological significance or trade importance).
3. The term „Southern Asia“ used in the first sentence of the introduction should be replaced by „tropical Asia and Africa“.
4. The second introductory paragraph should better start with „South-Asian Indonesia“ instead of „Indonesia, one of the countries in Southeast Asia“.
5. The working thesis, including the aims of the work, should be written only in one paragraph. The working thesis should be defined generally without any relation to a specific area.
6. The presentation of the study area should contain a description of the objective reasons for the selection of Gabon (e.g., ecological significance, trade importance, biodiversity?).
7. The subchapter about the choice of study sites needs addition. What processes caused environmental disturbances in the stands?
8. The term „secondary type mature forest“ would be better shortened to „secondary mature forest“.
9. Distances between national parks or cities and study sites should be presented generally without specification by walk or foot. Please, write only the direct kilometers from geographically important points.
10. The specification of the stand disturbance levels should be presented through the same classification in the whole study. Do you prefer a highly disturbed habitat or a very disturbed habitat? Habitat or environment? According to my opinion, I prefer the use of a gradient between undisturbed habitat, moderately disturbed habitat, and very disturbed

habitat in all sections and all tables and graphs.

11. The data analysis and processing are not written enough. Please consider changing the subchapter title to „Statistical Analysis“. This section does not contain any descriptions toward diversity, composition, distribution, etc. Please, write clearly about the calculations of particular variables and then write about the statistical processing from normality tests, exploratory analysis, and comparisons.
12. What is the formulation of the null hypothesis? Please add.
13. The discussion should be free of broad sentences. For example, what information was provided on the distribution, exploitation pressure, etc.?
14. The first discussion sentence should inform mainly about the confirmation or decline of the working thesis (questions).