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Changes in tree species abundance in a Neotropical forest: impact of climate change

RICHARD CONDIT*, STEPHEN P. HUBBELL*† and ROBIN B. FOSTER*‡

* Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, Unit 0948, APO AA 34002-0948, USA; or Apartado 2072, Balboa, Ancón, Panamá

† Department of Ecology, Evolution and Behavior, Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey 08544, USA

‡ Department of Botany, Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, Illinois 60605, USA

ABSTRACT. The abundance of all tree and shrub species has been monitored for eight years in a 50 ha census plot in tropical moist forest in central Panama. Here we examine population trends of the 219 most numerous species in the plot, assessing the impact of a long-term drying trend. Population change was calculated as the mean rate of increase (or decrease) over eight years, considering either all stems ≥ 10 mm diameter at breast height (dbh) or just stems ≥ 100 mm dbh. For stems ≥ 100 mm, 40% of the species had mean growth rates <1% per year (either increasing or decreasing) and 12% had changes $\geq 5\%$ per year. For stems ≥ 100 mm, the figures were 38% and 8%.

Species that specialize on the slopes of the plot, a moist microhabitat relative to the plateau, suffered significantly more declines in abundance than species that did not prefer slopes (stems $\geq 10 \text{ mm dbh}$). This pattern was due entirely to species of small stature: 91% of treelets and shrubs that were slope-specialists declined in abundance, but just 19% of non-slope treelets and shrubs declined. Among larger trees, slope and non-slope species fared equally. For stems $\geq 100 \text{ mm dbh}$, the slope effect vanished because there were few shrubs and treelets with stems $\geq 100 \text{ mm dbh}$. Another edaphic guild of species, those occurring preferentially in a small swamp in the centre of the plot, were no more likely to decline in abundance than non-swamp species, regardless of growth form. Species that preferentially colonize canopy gaps in the plot were slightly more likely to decrease in abundance than non-colonizing species (only for stems $\geq 10 \text{ mm dbh}$, not $\geq 100 \text{ mm}$). Despite this overall trend, however, several colonizing species had the most rapidly increasing populations in the plot.

The impact of a 25-year drying trend and an associated increase in the severity of the 4-month dry season is having an obvious impact on the BCI forest. At least 16 species of shrubs and treelets with affinities for moist microhabitats are headed for extinction in the plot. Presumably, these species invaded the forest during a wetter period prior to 1966. A severe drought of 1983 that caused unusually high tree mortality contributed to this trend, and may also have been responsible for sharp increases in abundance of a few gap-colonizers because it temporarily opened the forest canopy. The BCI forest is remarkably sensitive to a subtle climatic shift, yet we do not know whether this is typical for tropical forests because no other large-scale censuses exist for comparison.

KEY WORDS: demography. population dynamics, tropical populations

INTRODUCTION

The myth that tropical climates provide a stable environment for tropical forest organisms has long been buried. We know that annual shifts in moisture availability can stress vegetation and limit the distribution of many species (Hartshorn 1992, Wright 1992). Now, thanks to long-term weather records kept by the Panama Canal Commission, we also know that the vegetation of Barro Colorado Island (BCI) must face supra-annual shifts in moisture availability (Windsor 1990, Windsor *et al.* 1990). Total precipitation at BCI underwent an abrupt decline around 1965, averaging 2740 mm prior to 1965 and 2430 mm since, paralleling a worldwide reduction in rainfall in the northern tropics (Bradley *et al.* 1987, Diaz *et al.* 1989). Moreover, associated with a strong El Niño event, the annual dry season of 1983 was unusually long and severe, causing elevated tree mortality (Condit *et al.* 1992b, Condit *et al.* 1995, Leigh *et al.* 1990). The 1983 drought and the long-term drop in rainfall are undoubtedly part of the same phenomenon, as the frequency of dry seasons (15 December to 15 April) receiving less than 100 mm of rain increased from once every 6.2 years prior to 1965 to once every 3.5 years since (Windsor 1990).

How does the composition of a tropical forest change when precipitation patterns shift? Unusual droughts and variation in rainfall are recognized more and more as important in tropical forests (Foster 1982a, Hartshorn 1992, Leigh et al. 1990, Woods 1989), but we know little about how populations of individual species change as a result. Certainly we know that past climate changes have led to shifts in species' distributions (Bush & Colinvaux 1990, Bush et al. 1990, Hamilton & Taylor 1991, Sukumar et al. 1993), and in temperate forests, detailed descriptions of range shifts that accompany past climate changes are so well documented (Davis 1981, Delcourt & Delcourt, 1987) that precise predictions on the impact of future climate scenarios can be made (Botkin & Nisbet 1992, Dale & Franklin 1989, Franklin et al. 1992, Overpeck et al. 1990, Pastor & Post 1988, Shugart & Smith 1992, Solomon 1986, Urban et al. 1993). The species-specific information behind these predictions is not available for most tropical forests. Only for the Luquillo forest in Puerto Rico has a species-specific model been used to predict the impact of climate change; O'Brien et al. (1992) assessed the potential impact of increasing hurricane frequency.

To gather information on many individual species of tropical trees in one community, we established a large-scale and long-term population survey of forest at Barro Colorado Island in Panama. In order to include substantive information on populations of many species, a large plot was mapped: 50 ha of forest, with all stems above 10 mm in diameter included (Condit 1995, Hubbell & Foster 1983). This dataset provides detailed information on change in forest composition and its relation to climate change. Similar large plots in natural forest are now being censused in India, Malaysia, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Puerto Rico, Ecuador, Cameroon and Zaïre (Condit 1995, Manokaran *et al.* 1992, Sukumar *et al.* 1992, Zimmerman *et al.* 1994), so we will soon be able to make a worldwide assessment on the lability of the species composition of tropical forests.

Here we provide population estimates for 313 species of tropical trees found in the 50 ha plot in Panama between 1982 and 1990. We address specific hypotheses about how the community is changing, in particular, how it might be affected by long-term reduction in rainfall (Condit *et al.* 1992b, Hubbell & Foster 1990a, 1992). First, we consider species whose distributions within the plot are associated with moist microhabitats: a seasonal swamp and the moderately sloping terrain that drops off from the plateau in the centre of the plot (Becker *et al.* 1988, Hubbell & Foster 1983, 1986a). These areas remain wet throughout most dry seasons because a basalt cap below the plateau accumulates water during the wet season and drains slowly into the swamp and slopes throughout the dry season. Our prediction is that species associated with the moist microsites should be especially sensitive to the overall drying trend and will have suffered disproportionate losses in population.

In addition, we consider population changes of species that preferentially colonize light gaps within the forest. There are two different predictions about colonizing species. First, Hubbell & Foster (1990a, 1992) suggested that the plot is undergoing a slow loss of weedy species, because the region just north of the plot (plus 2 ha within the plot) was cleared of forest about 90 years ago, and has since regrown. Colonizing species probably gained abundance within the old forest because of their large populations just outside, and are now declining. If this is the case, we should be able to detect disporportionate population declines among colonizing species. The second prediction on colonizers is just the opposite, and is based on the observation that the drought opened the forest canopy briefly during 1983 (Becker & Smith 1990). With more light reaching the ground, colonizing species should increase in abundance. Population changes of species preferring gaps can tell us which of the potentially opposing forces is more important.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study site

Barro Colorado (BCI) is a 1500 ha island that was a hilltop until the Panama Canal was finished in 1914. The island is part of the Barro Colorado Nature Monument and has been operated as a research reserve since 1923. It is entirely forested, most in old-growth forest with no signs of human disturbance for over 500 years: 48 ha of the 50 ha plot are in old-growth, with 2 ha in an area cleared until about 1900 as part of a French settlement. Temperatures are uniform year-round at BCI, but rainfall is seasonal, with almost none falling between mid-December and mid-April. Details on climate, flora and fauna can be found in Croat (1978) and Leigh *et al.* (1982).

Census

A 50 ha plot on the top of the island was fully censused in 1981–1983, 1985 and 1990 (Condit *et al.* 1992a,b, 1993a,b, Hubbell & Foster 1983, 1986a,b, 1987, 1990a,b, 1992); we refer to the first census, which lasted two years, as the 1982 census. All free-standing, woody stems ≥ 10 mm diameter at breast height (dbh) were identified, tagged and mapped. The diameter of each stem was measured at breast height (1.3 m) unless there were irregularities in the trunk there, in which case the measurement was taken at the nearest point downward where the stem was cylindrical. Dbhs of buttressed trees were taken above the buttresses. There were about 242,000 living stems in each census (Hubbell & Foster 1990a), and 305,875 stems over all three censuses; 28 have not been identified to species. A total of 313 species have been identified: 304, 306 and 303 in successive censuses. (Three new species have been added since Condit *et al.* 1992b, all rare plants that had been misidentified as more common species.) Included in the list of 313 is a single tree that appeared to be a hybrid between *Apeiba membranacea* and *A. tibourbou*, and two distinct varieties of *Swartzia simplex* (Croat 1978).

Analyses

Species included. Abundances for all 313 species are reported. Species' names match those from Croat (1978) and D'Arcy (1987), except for species which were discovered, or whose names have been changed, since. An Appendix lists all cases where names do not match those found in Croat (1978) or D'Arcy (1987), and allows any species listed here to be located in those floras or in our previous publications on the 50 ha plot. Authorities for all species can be found via these references.

Tests of hypotheses about changes in abundance included only those species that had at least 20 individuals ≥ 10 mm dbh in at least one of the censuses. We used this cutoff because large percentage changes in abundance of very rare species could be caused by minor, chance events. Four species of *Bactris* palms were also eliminated from analyses because we changed methods for counting individuals of these species. This left 219 species for analyses of all stems ≥ 10 mm dbh. Analyses were then repeated for changes in the number of individuals ≥ 100 mm dbh, including the 136 species that had at least 20 stems in at least one census. We included an analysis with this larger cutoff because many other studies of tropical forest use the 100 mm limit (Phillips & Gentry 1994, Phillips *et al.* 1994).

Species characteristics. We analysed changes in abundance as they correlated with three species characteristics – growth form, moisture preference and tendency to recruit into light gaps. Species were divided into four growth forms – large trees (≥ 20 m tall), mid-sized trees (10–20 m), treelets (4–10 m) and shrubs (1–4 m) – based on the maximum height attained at BCI (Hubbell & Foster 1986a). Moisture regime was defined using the slopes in the 50 ha plot, which have higher soil moisture content during the dry season than the plateau above them (Becker *et al.* 1988), and the swamp, which is flooded throughout the wet season and remains moist in the dry season (Hubbell & Foster 1986a).

Many species have distributions clearly demarcated by the slopes and the swamp (Hubbell & Foster 1986a), and we calculated the density of all species in the different habitats (unpublished data). We used the ratio of density on

the slopes (all 20 m \times 20 m quadrats inclined \geq 7°) to density on the lower part of the plateau (quadrats with slope $<7^{\circ}$ and elevation <152 m, excluding the swamp) as an index of 'slope-specialization', and the ratio of density in the swamp (all 20 m \times 20 m quadrats holding standing water through most of the wet season) to density on the lower plateau as an index for 'swampspecialization'. We considered 'slope-specialists' and 'swamp-specialists' species with ratios ≥ 1.5 ; this cutoff was chosen because chi-squared tests showed that nearly all higher ratios were significantly different from 1.0 (P < 0.01), while most below did not (unpublished data). This index was preferable to a definition based on statistical significance, because the latter is sensitive to sample size. Finally, as a 'colonizing index' for each species, we used the fraction of recruits in light gaps given in Welden et al. (1991): Hubbell & Foster (1986b) used a similar but not identical 'index of heliophily'. Colonizers were defined as those species with an index \geq 30; again, this corresponds roughly with a statistically significant preference for recruiting in gaps (Welden et al. 1991) but does not depend on sample size. Most colonizers are probably 'pioneers' as defined by Swaine & Whitmore (1988), but they emphasized seed germination characteristics, which we do not consider here. Species for which information was lacking were omitted from all analyses requiring that information. The slope and swamp indices were calculated for all but 27 of the very rare species, but the colonizing index was available for only the 156 species listed in Welden et al. (1991).

Statistical tests. In order to determine whether certain groups of species suffered disproportionate losses, the number of species that increased or decreased in abundance between 1982 and 1990 was tallied as a function of the four categorical variables. For statistical tests, a standard ANOVA was not possible because the design was unbalanced, with many empty cells. Instead, chi-squared tests were used on each of the variables: for example, a 2×2 contingency table for slope-specialization category and for population change provided a chi-squared statistic with one degree of freedom. To determine effects of each variable separately, we proceeded as follows. Swamp effect was assessed by contingency tables for swamp and non-swamp species; since swamp status was not associated with colonizing nor slope status, the latter two categories were simply ignored when swamp effect was tested. But slope and colonizing variables were associated – there were fewer slope-colonizer species than expected by chance – so we segregated species simultaneously by both categories. All tests were carried out on the four growth forms separately.

For each species, we calculated the annualized rate of population change (r) using a standard model of exponential population growth:

$$\mathbf{r} = \frac{ln \mathbf{N}_{t} - ln \mathbf{N}_{0}}{t}$$

where N_t and N_0 are population sizes at time t and time 0 and ln means the natural logarithm. The time interval, t, for each species was defined as the

arithmetic mean time elapsed between censuses for individuals of that species (based on the census data of each $20 \text{ m} \times 20 \text{ m}$ quadrat in the plot).

Earlier publications

Hubbell & Foster (1990a, 1992) described population changes based on the 1982–1985 interval, and Condit *et al.* (1992b) updated this with 1990 data, but this is the first presentation on abundance for all 313 species. Discrepancies between the numbers reported here and those from earlier reports are slight and are due solely to corrections of old errors. Since this is an on-going process, future reports might give figures slightly different from those reported here.

Access to data

We hope that the table of abundances for 313 species provided here will be useful for many future studies, and we will provide computer versions of the table to anyone interested. Please send us a diskette and indicate preferred formats.

RESULTS

Changes in abundance for stems $\geq 10 \text{ mm dbh}$

Of the 219 more common species considered here, 105 had increases in stem number between 1982 and 1990, 108 had decreases and six did not change. For all 313 species in the plot, 136 increased, 154 decreased and 23 did not change. As previously noted (Condit *et al.* 1992b, Hubbell & Foster 1990a, 1992), rare species – in this case the 94 having fewer than 20 stems in all censuses – suffered proportionally more declines than common species. Table 1 gives the abundance in all three censuses for all 313 species.

Many populations did not change by much (Figure 1). Of 219 species, 88 (40%) had population changes <1% per year between 1982 and 1990. But some species had dramatic changes in abundance: 27 species (12%) changed at rates more than 5% per year, 18 declining and nine increasing (Table 2). Some common species underwent substantial declines. *Poulsenia armata* fell from 3430 to 2126 stems, and *Acalypha diversifolia* from 1568 to 827. The most rapid rate of decline was *Piper aequale*, which had 219 stems in 1982 and 83 in 1990 (Table 2). On the other hand, the population of *Palicourea guianensis* rose from 377 to 1475 stems, while the much less common *Psychotria graciflora* had the biggest rate of increase, from 10 to 44 stems over eight years (Table 2). The mean rate of change for the 219 species was -0.29% per year, while the mean rate of absolute change was 2.25% (the mean of the absolute values of rates of change).

Changes in abundance for stems $\geq 100 \text{ mm dbh}$

The range of population change among larger stems was no different than for smaller (Figure 1B). Of the 136 species considered, 66 increased in abundance from 1982 to 1990, 61 decreased and seven stayed the same. Fifty-one

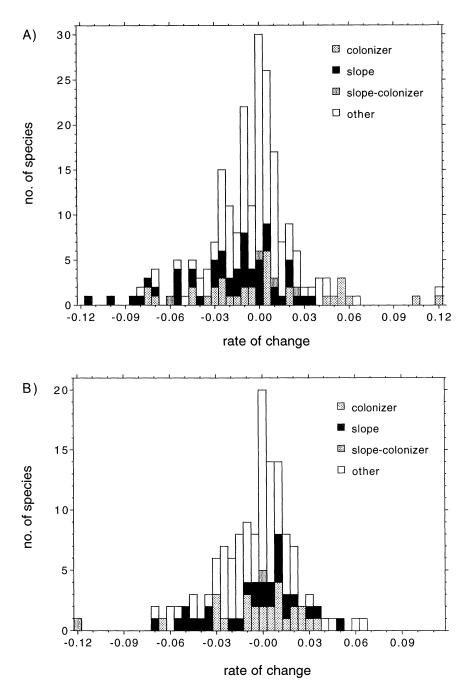


Figure 1. Distribution of population growth rates. The 'colonizer' category includes all colonizing species that were not slope-specialists, and the 'slope' category includes slope species that were non-colonizing; 'slope-colonizers' are the four specializing in both areas. 'Other' includes all species that were neither slope nor colonizing plus all species that were missing information on one or both categories. (A) Rate of change of populations of stems ≥ 10 mm dbh, including 219 species (see text). (B) Rate of change of populations of stems ≥ 100 mm dbh, including 136 species (see text).

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Bactris coloradonis U n n Palmae	40	18	9	-0.222	0	0	0	:

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			Codes			Stems	Stems ≥10 mm dbh	dbh	Rate	Stems	Stems ≥100 mm dbh	dbh	Rate
Species	5	υ	3	s	Family	1982	1985	1990	1982–1990	1982	1985	1990	1982-1990
Cupania latifolia	F	:	=	s	Sapindaceae	54	48	51	-0.006	8	6	10	0.025
Cupania rufescens	H	q	A	u	Sapindaceae	55	71	96	0.065	5	9	9	0.022
Cupania sylvatica	D	ц	u	u	Sapindaceae	962	1040	1146	0.020	28	30	41	0.045
Cyphomandra hartwegii	S	÷	u	n	Solanaceae	5	÷	3	-0.062	0	0	0	:
Dendropanax arboreus	μ	÷	u	u	Araliaceae	18	18	16	-0.013	11	11	11	0.000
Dendropanax stenodontus	μ	÷	ц	u	Araliaceae	159	144	121	-0.033	96	93	84	-0.016
Desmopsis panamensis	D	u	ц	u	Annonaceae	11735	12141	12167	0.004	17	15	12	-0.040
Diospyros artanthifolia	Χ	ц	ц	u	Ebenaceae	48	54	70	0.045	6	12	14	0.052
Dipteryx panamensis	Η	÷	ц	u	Leguminosae	56	52	53	-0.006	33	33	34	0.003
Drypetes standleyi	H	ц	ц	S	Euphorbiaceae	2173	2266	2279	0.005	196	227	262	0.031
Elaeis oleifera	Σ	÷	3	:	Palmae	22	21	21	-0.005	22	21	21	-0.005
Enterolobium schomburgkii	Ξ	:	u	n	Leguminosae	13	12	13	0.000	2	2	2	0.000
Erythrina costaricensis	D	:	п	S	Leguminosae	289	236	185	-0.052	47	46	30	-0.051
Erythroxylum macrophyllum	Σ	ц	п	u	Erythroxylaceae	327	308	300	-0.010	18	20	16	-0.013
Erythroxylum panamense	D	ü	3	u	Erythroxylaceae	104	105	111	0.007	0	0	0	:
Eugenia coloradensis	H	ц	u	u	Myrtaceae	803	840	832	0.004	78	62	83	0.007
Eugenia galalonensis	D	u	u	u	Myrtaceae	961	1157	1379	0.041	21	25	16	-0.031
Eugenia nesiotica	Μ	u	u	u	Myrtaceae	509	529	539	0.006	48	48	53	0.011
Eugenia oerstedeana	Σ	п	u	u	Myrtaceae	2088	2208	2346	0.013	133	140	159	0.020
Faramea occidentalis	D	u	ц	u	Rubiaceae	23460	25154	26912	0.016	1228	1402	1652	0.034
Ficus bullenei	:	÷	:	÷	Moraceae	1	1	1	0.000	Ι	1	1	0.000
Ficus citrifolia	Η	÷	ц	u	Moraceae	0	0	1	:	0	0	0	:
Ficus colubrinae	:	÷	u	u	Moraceae	1	1	1	0.000	1	1	-	0.000
Ficus costaricana	Η	÷	3	u	Moraceae	16	11	7	-0.090	ω	7	7	-0.014
Ficus insipida	Η	:	3	u	Moraceae	6	∞	7	-0.027	ŝ	3	33	0.000
Ficus maxima	H	:	3	S	Moraceae	11	11	10	-0.011	5	9	3	-0.059
Ficus obtusifulia	Η	÷	≥	u	Moraceae	12	10	8	-0.043	10	8	8	-0.023
Ficus pertusa	Η	:	ц	u	Moraceae	0	0	1	:	0	0	0	:
Ficus popenoei	Η	:	3	u	Moraceae	6	∞	7	-0.030	7	9	.C	-0.039
Ficus tonduzii	Σ	÷	u	S	Moraceae	99	61	45	-0.044	42	37	30	-0.039
Ficus trigonta	Η	:	u	S	Moraceae	ω	5	5	-0.050	9	4	5	-0.019
Ficus yoponensis	H	÷	u	u	Moraceae	9	9	9	0.000	9	9	9	0.000
Garcinia intermedia	Σ	u	ц	u	Guttiferae	3654	4023	4300	0.018	77	75	81	0.005
Garcinia madruno	Σ	u	u	u	Guttiferae	652	682	524	-0.025	23	26	24	
Genipa americana	H	÷	≥	u	Rubiaceae	16	88	84	-0.009	20	20	21	0.005
Geonoma interrupta	D	:	÷	:	Palmae	19	14	ŝ	-0.203	0	0	0	
Guapira standleyanum	L	÷	ц	u	Nyctaginaceae	230	208	191	-0.021	06	91	66	0.010

Table 1. (cont.)

$\begin{array}{c} 0.000\\ 0.001\\ -0.026\\ 0.002\\ 0.002\\ 0.002\\ 0.002\\ 0.003\\ 0.003\\ 0.012\\ 0.003\\ 0.013\\ 0.013\\ 0.013\\ 0.003\\ 0.003\\ 0.013\\ 0.002\\ 0.002\\ 0$
$\begin{smallmatrix} & & & & & & & & & & & & & & & & & & &$
$\begin{smallmatrix} & 1 \\ & 363 \\ & 363 \\ & 363 \\ & 363 \\ & 363 \\ & 364 \\ & 364 \\ & 256 \\ & 66 \\ & 66 \\ & 66 \\ & 66 \\ & 17 \\ & 230 \\ &$
$\begin{smallmatrix} & 10\\ & 10\\ & 10\\ & 28\\ & 28\\ & 28\\ & 28\\ & 28\\ & 28\\ & 28\\ & 28\\ & 28\\ & 28\\ & 26\\ & 28\\ & 26\\ & 28\\ & 26\\ & 28\\ & 26\\ & 28\\ & 26\\ & 28\\ & 26\\ & 26\\ & 28\\ & 26\\ & 26\\ & 28\\ & 26\\ & 26\\ & 28\\ & 26\\ & 26\\ & 28\\ & 26\\ & $
$\begin{array}{c} 0.014\\ -0.016\\ -0.006\\ -0.007\\ -0.007\\ -0.007\\ -0.007\\ -0.003\\ 0.012\\ 0.002\\ -0.003\\ 0.002\\ -0.003\\ -0.003\\ -0.003\\ -0.003\\ -0.003\\ -0.003\\ -0.003\\ 0.001\\ -0.003\\ 0.001\\ -0.003\\ 0.000\\ -0.003\\ 0.001\\ -0.003\\ 0.000\\ -0.003\\ 0.000\\ -0.003\\ 0.000\\ -0.003\\ 0.000\\ -0.003\\ 0.000\\ -0.003\\ 0.000\\$
$\begin{array}{c} 62\\ 62\\ 1378\\ 552\\ 369\\ 369\\ 369\\ 369\\ 366\\ 107\\ 107\\ 107\\ 107\\ 366\\ 369\\ 300\\ 300\\ 300\\ 300\\ 312\\ 11\\ 11\\ 11\\ 12\\ 20\\ 20\\ 232\\ 300\\ 300\\ 312\\ 312\\ 315\\ 315\\ 315\\ 315\\ 315\\ 315\\ 315\\ 315$
$\begin{array}{c} 5\\ 5\\ 1829\\ 1829\\ 1829\\ 1829\\ 1829\\ 1829\\ 1829\\ 100\\ 107\\ 182\\ 100\\ 107\\ 101\\ 101\\ 101\\ 101\\ 101\\ 101$
$\begin{array}{c} 55\\ 158\\ 158\\ 158\\ 158\\ 158\\ 158\\ 158\\ $
Meliaceae Meliaceae Meliaceae Sterculiaceae Sterculiaceae Rubiaceae Rubiaceae Malvaceae Malvaceae Malvaceae Chrysobalanaceae Chrysobalanaceae Euphorbiaceae Chrysobalanaceae Euphorbiaceae Leguminosae
HZ0HUZU0HZU0VHZHHHHHHHHHHHHZUZUZZ; 0ZUHHZZH
Guarea grandifolia Guarea guidonia Guarea sp. nov. Guatteria dumetorum Guazuma ulmifolia Guazuma ulmifolia Guazuma superba Hamelia osthera Hamelia parens Hampa appendiculata Heisteria acuminata Hirtella americana Hirtella americana Hirtella americana Hirtella americana Hirtella triandra Hura crepitas Inga fogifolia Inga goldmanii Inga goldmanii Inga goldmanii Inga mucuta Inga mucuta Inga ruziana Inga ruziana Inga sertata Inga unbellifera Inga unbellifera Inga interiata Inga sertata Inga sertatata Inga sertata Inga serta

		C	Codes			Stems	Stems ≥10 mm dbh	dbh	Rate	Stems	Stems ≥100 mm dbh	dbh	Rate
Species	IJ	σ	X	s	Family	1982	1985	1990	1982–1990	1982	1985	1990	1982-1990
Lindackeria laurina	M	:	∣≥	u	Flacourtiaceae	109	97	68	-0.023	85	78	69	-0.023
Lonchocarpus latifolia	T	Ö	u	u	Leguminosae	842	846	889	0.006	147	137	124	-0.020
Lopimia dasybetala	s	÷	÷	:	Malvaceae	1	1	0	:	0	0	0	:
Lozania pittieri	D	:	÷	:	Lacistemaceae	18	15	7	-0.117	3	2	0	:
Luehea seemannii	L	C	Ά	u	Tiliaceae	188	190	225	0.020	87	93	94	0.008
Lycianthes maxonii	s	:	÷	:	Solanaceae	l	-	0	:	0	0	0	:
Maclura tinctoria	H	÷	:	:	Moraceae	2	2	1	-0.086	0	1	1	:
Macrocnemum glabrescens	М	U	u	S	Rubiaceae	96	101	106	0.010	24	25	25	0.004
Malmea sp. nov.	М	u	ц	u	Annonaceae	276	320	372	0.035	14	15	17	0.023
Malpighia romeroana	S	u	u	u	Malpighiaceae	54	64	60	0.012	0	0	0	:
Maquira costaricana	Σ	u	ц	u	Moraceae	1418	1445	1503	0.006	223	200	176	-0.027
Margaritaria nobilis	D	÷	u	u	Euphorbiaceae	-	5	4	0.144	-	1	-	0.000
Marila laxiflora	Σ	÷	u	s	Guttiferae	22	26	22	0.000	10	11	11	0.010
Maytenus schippii	Σ	÷	ц	u	Celastraceae	82	82	88	0.008	20	19	20	0.000
Miconia affinis	D	C	u	u	Melastomataceae	371	394	439	0.020	4	2	6	0.098
Miconia argentea	Σ	c	\geq	u	Melastomataceae	531	678	902	0.062	45	50	56	0.025
Miconia elata	D	÷	u	u	Melastomataceae	34	31	30	-0.015	2	3	2	0.000
Miconia hondurensis	D	÷	≥	u	Melastomataceae	30	29	37	0.025	7	4	9	-0.018
Miconia impetiolaris	D	:	\geq	S	Melastomataceae	9	5	8	0.031	0	0	0	:
Miconia nervosa	s	Ö	ч	u	Melastomataceae	359	294	320	-0.014	0	0	0	:
Miconia prasina	D	÷	u	u	Melastomataceae	0	0	2	:	0	0	0	:
Mouriri myrtilloides	s	ц	ц	u	Melastomataceae	6948	7712	7618	0.011	0	1	0	:
Myrcia gatunensis	D	u	u	u	Myrtaceae	40	49	56	0.040	2	7	4	0.082
Myrospermum frutescens	Γ	÷	u	u	Leguminosae	28	24	23	-0.021	6	6	10	0.011
Nectandra cissiflora	Γ	u	u	u	Lauraceae	349	339	314	-0.013	23	20	27	0.019
Nectandra globosa	Σ	U	\geq	s	Lauraceae	117	113	119	0.001	12	10	13	0.00
Nectandra purpurea	Μ	ц	ц	u	Lauraceae	80	77	81	0.001	4	2	3	-0.035
Nectandra sp. nov. 1	H	÷	u	s	Lauraceae	6	6	9	-0.044	1	0	0	:
Nectandra sp. nov. 3	:	÷	÷	÷	Lauraceae	_	1	0	:	0	0	0	:
Neea amplifolia	S	ц	u	u	Nyctaginaceae	62	71	68	0.011	0	0	0	:
Ochroma pyramidale	Σ	÷	u	u	Bombacaceae	5	6	7	0.040	3	5	9	0.082
Ocotea cernua	Σ	u	u	u	Lauraceae	346	337	332	-0.004	24	28	26	0.009
Ocotea oblonga	۲	u	u	u	Lauraceae	215	184	190	-0.014	33	31	27	-0.022
Ocotea puberula	H	u	u	u	Lauraceae	269	243	222	-0.023	6	10	16	0.069
Ocotea whitei	Г	u	u	S	Lauraceae	1130	941	769	-0.042	167	170	176	0.005
Oenocarpus mapoura	Ζ	÷	ц	u	Palmae	1790	1712	1802	0.000	752	746	754	0.000
Olmedia aspera	D	u	ц	s	Moraceae	442	376	279	-0.051	50	42	33	-0.046

Table 1. (cont.)

0.0000 0.000 0.000 0.000 0.047 0.006 0.011 0.011	$\begin{array}{c} 0.000\\ 0.000\\ 0.000\\ 0.002\\ 0.003\\ 0.002\\ 0.000\\ 0.039\\ 0.000\\ 0.$	$\begin{array}{c} 0.023\\ -0.015\\ -0.005\\ -0.005\\ -0.002\\ 0.002\\ \cdots\\ 0.000\\ \cdots\\ \cdots\\$
-440020	$\begin{smallmatrix} & 0 \\ & 0 \\ & 0 \\ & 0 \\ & 1 \\ & 1 \\ & 1 \\ & 2 \\ & 2 \\ & 2 \\ & 2 \\ & 0 \\ & $	$192 \\ 292 \\ 573 \\ 600 \\ 000 $
- 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0	$\begin{smallmatrix} & 0 \\ & 0 \\ & 0 \\ & 0 \\ & 1 \\ & 1 \\ & 1 \\ & 2 \\ & $	170 31 31 309 353 353 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
	$\begin{smallmatrix} & 0 \\ & 0 \\ & 0 \\ & 0 \\ & 2 \\ & 2 \\ & 2 \\ & 2 \\ & 1 \\ & 1 \\ & 2 \\ & $	157 33 279 65 110 11 11 11 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
0.078 0.034 0.034 0.014 0.0165 -0.0165 -0.001 0.000 -0.001 -0.001 -0.000 -0.000	$\begin{array}{c} -0.099\\ -0.126\\ -0.152\\ 0.000\\ 0.000\\ -0.003\\ -0.003\\ -0.009\\ -0.009\\ 0.000\\ 0.009\\ 0.000\\ 0.000\\ 0.000\\ \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{c} 0.007\\ 0.007\\ 0.001\\ 0.005\\ 0.013\\ 0.016\\ 0.016\\ 0.016\\ 0.022\\ 0.020\\ 0.020\\ 0.017\\ 0.017\\ 0.017\\ 0.016\\ 0.000\\ 0.000\\ 0.000\end{array}$
2 71 1456 1475 1475 1475 273 273 273 273 87 60 60	53 3 68 1 1 1 266 1 1 2 1 2 2 2 2 2 2 3 3 3	1766 62 62 870 870 3029 3081 18 18 16 16 16 60 44 44
2 56 63 663 513 513 513 268 83 1177 1177 158 83 83713	65 3 117 169 169 157 157 157 157 880 880 830 830 833 833	1718 61 1408 860 860 860 145 15 12 11 17 77 77 5 5
$\begin{array}{c} 1 \\ 52 \\ 5377 \\ 568 \\ 568 \\ 268 \\ 268 \\ 268 \\ 268 \\ 219 \\ 107 \\ 1169 \\ 219 \\ 219 \\ 219 \\ 219 \\ 219 \\ 219 \\ 219 \\ 219 \\ 219 \\ 210 \\ $	$\begin{array}{c} 120\\ 9\\ 110\\ 180\\ 180\\ 170\\ 170\\ 255\\ 3430\\ 340\\ 3\end{array}$	1652 61 1356 913 913 2715 22 39 88 88 88 88 7 7
Leguminosae Leguminosae Leguminosae Leguminosae Ochnaceae Rubiaceae Rubiaceae Rubiaceae Lauraceae Simaroubaceae Piperaceae Piperaceae Piperaceae	Piperaceae Piperaceae Piperaceae Piperaceae Leguminosae Leguminosae Leguminosae Leguminosae Bombacaceae Bombacaceae Rubiaceae Moraceae Moraceae Sapotaceae	Sapotaccae Sapotaccae Burseraccae Burseraccae Burseraccae Burseraccae Burseraccae Burseraccae Burseraccae Rubiaccae Rubiaccae Rubiaccae Rubiaccae Rubiaccae Rubiaccae Rubiaccae
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HHHVVJHHUVJvv	H H H K H K H K H C N C N	v v v v v v v C H Z Z Z H Z H
Ormosia amazonica Ormosia arazonica Ormosia macrocalyx Ouratea lucens Palicourea guianensis Perebea xanthochynaa Pibera araquala Piper arboreum Piper arvilloanum Piper cordulatum	Piper culebranum Piper unberiale Piper perlasense Piper reticulatum Pithecellobium mufescens Platypodium elegans Platypodium elegans Potota guinte Pocotota guinte Pocotota guinte Poulsenia armata Poulsenia armata Pouteria fossicola	Pouteria reticulata Pouteria stipitata Prioria copaifera Protium costaricense Protium panamense Protium senticensthalianum Pseudobombax septenatum Psychotria brachitata Psychotria deflexa Psychotria deflexa Psychotria grachifikora Psychotria grachifikora Psychotria grachifikora

		Codes	les			Stems	≥10 mm dbh	dbh	Date	Stems	≥100 mm dbh	dbh	Data
Species	5	U U	3	s	Family	1982	1985	1990	1982–1990	1982	1985	1990	1982–1990
Psychotria grandis	n	u u	A A	s	Rubiaceae	104	97	81	-0.027	2	2	5	0.000
Psychotria horizontalis	S	n	I I	c	Rubiaceae	6168	6446	5920	-0.004	0	2	0	:
Psychotria limonensis	S	:		c	Rubiaceae	15	17	19	0.027	0	0	0	:
Psychotria marginata	S	n	-	u	Rubiaceae	582	691	696	0.021	0	0	0	:
Psychotria pittieri	S	:		s	Rubiaceae	÷	ŝ	ŝ	-0.031	0	0	0	÷
Psychotria racemosa	S	 I		u	Rubiaceae	Ι	2	2	0.086	0	0	0	:
Pterocarpus belizensis	H		1	ц	Leguminosae	6	ω	ŝ	-0.125	-	1	0	:
Pterocarpus rohrii	L	n	I	ц	Leguminosae	1577	1629	1705	0.009	136	103	88	-0.056
Quararibea asterolepis	L	n	1	с	Bombacaceae	2394	2379	2348	-0.002	703	694	669	0.000
Quassia amara	D	:	- -	ц	Simaroubaceae	155	151	147	-0.005	7	ω	8	0.014
Randia armata	D	u u	- -	u	Rubiaceae	1128	1155	1143	0.001	228	234	241	0.006
Randia formosa	D	:	C C	ц	Rubiaceae	4	4	4	0.000	0	0	0	:
Rinorea sylvatica	s	u u	c	ц	Violaceae	2571	2615	2596	0.001	-	0	0	:
Sapium aucuparium	Г	:	Ň	ц	Euphorbiaceae	47	41	40	-0.018	23	20	16	-0.040
Sapium sp. nov.	H	:	:	:	Euphorbiaceae	ŝ	ŝ	ŝ	0.000	3	ŝ	3	0.000
Scheelea zonensis	Μ	:	Ň	ц	Palmae	44	40	36	-0.023	44	40	36	-0.023
Schefflera morototoni	H	:	:	:	Araliaceae	1	1	0	:	Ι	-	0	:
Schizolobium parahybum	H	:	C	n	Leguminosae	13	13	16	0.026	Ι	1	-	0.000
Senna dariensis	S	с о	c	u	Leguminosae	205	138	116	-0.065	-	7	2	0.080
Simarouba amara	H	u l	-	u	Simaroubaceae	1240	1250	1292	0.004	247	255	269	0.010
Siparuna guianensis	Μ	:	с.	S	Monimiaceae	37	34	32	-0.018	16	15	15	-0.008
Siparuna pauciflora	D	u u	с.	S	Monimiaceae	431	354	316	-0.035	24	26	18	-0.033
Sloanea terniflora	H	n 1	- -	u	Elaeocarpaceae	601	591	575	-0.005	85	85	80	-0.006
Socratea exorrhiza	М	u u	c	ц	Palmae	812	737	684	-0.021	374	357	336	-0.013
Solanum arboreum	s	:	:	÷	Solanaceae	1	Ι	0	:	0	0	0	:
Solanum asperum	S	:	ž	ц	Solanaceae	0	0	4	:	0	0	0	:
Solanum hayesii	Σ	с С	c	s	Solanaceae	125	89	77	-0.058	40	25	13	-0.136
Solanum steyemarkii	s	:	c	u	Solanaceae	7	9	7	-0.145	0	0	0	:
Sorocea affinis	S	u	u	u	Moraceae	3302	3371	3302	0.000	47	44	30	-0.051
Spachea membranacea	D	:	c	n	Malpighiaceae	19	17	15	-0.028	8	8	7	-0.015
Spondias mombin	H	с С	A	n	Anacardiaceae	63	67	101	0.057	24	23	30	0.026
Spondias radlkoferi	H	с С	_ _	n	Anacardiaceae	192	164	202	0.006	55	56	57	0.004
Stemmadenia grandiflora	D	:	:	:	Apocynaceae	1	1	0	:		1	0	:
Sterculia apetala	H	:	X	n	Sterculiaceae	68	53	65	-0.005	25	24	27	0.008
Stylogyne standleyi	S	'n	X	u	Myrsinaceae	713	735	751	0.006		Ι	0	:
Swartzia simplex (var.	D	u n	c	u	Leguminosae	2255	2422	2574	0.015	198	203	212	0.007
grandiflora)													

Table 1. (cont.)

0.019	-0.048 -0.007	0.004	0.002	-0.038	0.000	0.007	:	0.012	-0.032	0.009	0.076	-0.004	-0.041	-0.047	0.006	-0.014	-0.135	0.016	-0.040	-0.022	0.019	:	0.000	0.010	-0.010	0.075	÷	:	0.011	0.054	:	0.000	0.036	-0.027	0.034	0.000	-0.018
123	30 28 71	303	88	o io	28	46	1	353	9,	13	c	, 48 48	15	2	80	1783	2	145	38	57	160	0	607	23	158	0	0	0	11	128	0	1	140	66	35	1	11
112	38 38 72	302	0 82	ი ი	28	42	0	323	- ;	÷	r	47	18	3	75	1902	4	127	48	56	148	0	588	20	163	ŝ	0	0	11	66	0	I	108	70	28	1	14
104	46 30 81	293	980	~ ~	28	43	0	318	ωġ	17	4 4	50	21	3	76	2022	9	125	54	69	136	0	607	21	174	1	0	1	10	79	0	I	103	83	26	1	13
0.006	-0.008 -0.004 0.000	0.011	0.006	0.008	-0.005	0.007	0.000	0.026	-0.039	c00.0-	0.017	-0.036	-0.051	-0.048	0.004	0.003	-0.154	-0.016	0.004	-0.069	0.002	0.240	-0.016	-0.010	-0.025	0.007	0.000	:	-0.022	0.027	:	-0.024	0.008	-0.031	-0.023	0.000	0.000
2857	175 73 318	1421	3095 809	673	59	98	1	4085	L :0	71	7	89	21	8	591	13298	2	319	325	85	787	17	2086	53	239	80	3	0	29	1044	0	149	237	227	170	Н	40
2821	178 74 300	1328	2980 819	638	09	06	Ι	3699	L 00	50	/6 8	у Уу	23	6	574	13166	4	342	323	113	785	5	2276	53	259	77	÷	0	29	916	1	169	252	238	212	1	41
2701	188 76 316	1287	2923 813	613 623	62	92	1	3253	10	22	10/	119	32	12	567	12927	7	371	312	153	771	2	2406	58	300	75	ŝ	Г	35	817		183	220	297	207	1	40
Leguminosae	Guttiferae Bignoniaceae Bignoniaceae	Apocynaceae	Leguminosae	Sapindaceae	Combretaceae	Combretaceae	Theaceae	Burseraceae	Flacourtiaceae	Sterculiaceae	Apocynaceae Ruhiaceae	Burseraceae	Ulmaceae	Acanthaceae	Meliaceae	Meliaceae	Tiliaceae	Polygonaceae	Moraceae	Staphyleaceae	Annonaceae	Urticaceae	Myristicaceae	Myristicaceae	Myristicaceae	Guttiferae	Guttiferae	Guttiferae	Vochysiaceae	Annonaceae	Flacourtiaceae	Flacourtiaceae	Rutaceae	Rutaceae	Rutaceae	Rutaceae	Flacourtiaceae
u	sп	= =	ц г	= ц	u	ц	u	u	ц	Ω	nu		: 4	u	u	u	u	u	S	u	S	S	u	S	S	u	:	:	u	S	÷	u	u	u	u	:	u
u	и и М	\$ 3	ц с	= =	A	u	u	u	Z	a i	33	5 5	ц	u	X	u	u	\geq	ц	п	u	u	u	u	u	\geq	÷	:	\geq	u	÷	u	ц	u	u	:	A
п	ц ; ч	= =	ц с	= =	:	÷	÷	ц	÷	÷	q	:	: :	÷	ц	ц	:	u	u	÷	ц	:	u	÷	÷	u	÷	÷	:	u	÷	u	U	U	Ö	:	÷
D	ннн	- [-	μï	Σ	Η	Η	D	Η	⊢;	⊃;	⊃≥	Ξ	Σ	D	Χ	μ	Ζ	Ζ	Σ	Η	Σ	s	Σ	H	Η	D	D	Σ	Τ	Σ	D	S	H	H	Μ	Σ	Μ
Swartzia simplex (var.	Symphonia globulifera Tabebuia guayacan Tabebuia yayacan	t avevua 10sea Tabernaemontana arborea	Tachigali versicolor Talisia manoca	Talisia princeps	Terminalia amazonica	Terminalia oblonga	Ternstroemia tepezapote	Tetragastris panamensis	Tetrathylacium johansensii	I heobroma cacao	I nevetta anouat Toconena hittieri	Trattinickinia ashera	Trema micrantha	Trichanthera gigantea	Trichilia pallida	Trichilia tuberculata	Trichospermum galeottii	Triplaris cumingiana	Trophis racemosa	Turpinia occidentalis	Unonopsis pittieri	Urera baccifera	Virola sebifera	Virola sp. nov.	Virola surinamensis	Vismia baccifera	Vismia billbergiana	Vismia macrophylla	Vochysia ferruginea	Xylopia macrantha	$Xylosma\ chloranthum$	Xylosma oligandrum	Zanthoxylum belizense	Zanthoxylum panamense	Zanthoxylum procerum	Zanthoxylum setulosum	Zuelania guidonia

					Popu	lation	Rate of	f population	change
Species	G	С	W	S	1982	1990	1982–1985	1985–1990	1982–1990
Piper aequale	s	n	n	s	219	83	-0.0984	-0.1223	-0.1131
Piper culebranum	S		W	S	120	53	-0.2036	-0.0391	-0.0992
Chamaedorea tepejilote	S		n	S	32	16	-0.1128	-0.0600	-0.0803
Cestrum megalophyllum	S		W	S	309	157	-0.0769	-0.0783	-0.0777
Hampea appendiculata	Μ		n	n	76	40	-0.1363	-0.0388	-0.0760
Acalypha diversifolia	S	С	W	n	1568	827	-0.0742	-0.0717	-0.0727
Acalyphya macrostachya	U	\mathbf{C}	n	n	80	45	-0.0626	-0.0762	-0.0714
Conostegia bracteata	S	n	W	S	391	209	-0.0931	-0.0563	-0.0711
Piper cordulatum	S	n	n	n	3149	1777	0.0545	-0.1407	-0.0693
Turpinia occidentalis	Т		n	n	153	85	-0.0937	-0.0539	-0.0690
Piper arboreum	U		n	S	107	60	-0.0798	-0.0624	-0.0690
Senna dariensis	S	S	n	n	205	116	-0.1171	-0.0328	-0.0657
Solanum hayesii	Μ	С	n	S	125	77	-0.1121	-0.0273	-0.0582
Poulsenia armata	Т	n	n	S	3430	2126	-0.0703	-0.0441	-0.0545
Piper perlasense	S	n	n	S	110	68	0.0162	-0.1029	-0.0529
Erythrina costaricana	U		n	S	289	185	-0.0622	-0.0464	-0.0525
Trema micrantha	М		n	n	32	21	-0.1167	-0.0172	-0.0519
Olmedia aspera	U	n	n	S	442	279	-0.0434	-0.0564	-0.0510
Chrysophyllum cainito	Т	С	W	n	70	109	0.0399	0.0579	0.0510
Chrysophyllum argenteum	Ť	Ĉ	n	n	423	683	0.0366	0.0681	0.0560
Spondias mombin	Т	Ċ	W	n	63	101	0.0207	0.0785	0.0575
Croton billbergianus	\hat{U}	Č	W	n	620	1012	-0.0005	0.0944	0.0590
Miconia argentea	M	Ğ	W	n	531	902	0.0764	0.0542	0.0626
Cupania refescens	Т	n	W	n	55	96	0.0775	0.0578	0.0654
Annona spraguei	Ñ	Ĉ	n	n	55	143	0.0680	0.1328	0.1082
Palicourea guianensis	S	č	w	n	377	1475	0.1861	0.1533	0.1654
Psychotria graciliflora	š		W	n	10	44	0.1231	0.2176	0.1853

Table 2. Species whose population of stems ≥ 10 mm changed at a rate $\geq 5\%$ per year. The four columns of species characteristics are the same as those given in Table 1 (growth form, colonizing, swamp and slope status). Species are ordered from those with the fastest shrinking populations to the fastest growing; the line separates growing from shrinking populations.

(38%) changed by <1% per year, and 11 (8%) changed by more than 5% per year (eight of the latter were declines and three increases). The fastest rate of change in the larger size class was *Inga acuminata*, which increased from 11 to 20 stems; a more common species increasing nearly as rapidly was *Xylopia macrantha*, whose population rose from 79 to 128 stems. The greatest decline was in *Solanum hayesii*, which had 40 stems in 1982 but just 13 in 1990. A more abundant species, *Pterocarpus rohrii*, fell from 136 to 83 stems. The mean rate of population change among 136 species in the large size class was -0.32%, and the mean rate of absolute change was 1.93%. These are not significantly different from rates for stems $\ge 10 \text{ mm}$ (t-test).

Within-species consistency in population change

Rates of change during 1982–1985 and 1985–1990 were consistent within species (Figure 2A; the correlation is highly significant: $r^2 = 0.266$, P<0.0001 for stems ≥ 10 mm dbh; $r^2 = 0.246$, P<0.0001 for stems ≥ 100 mm). There were

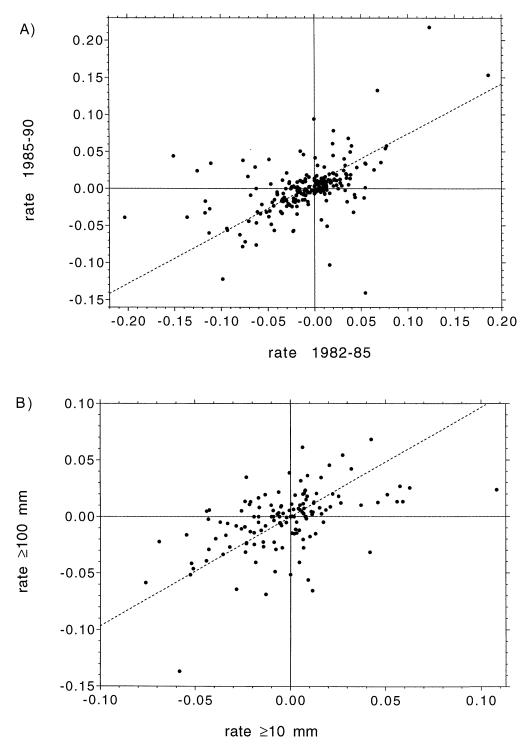


Figure 2. Scatter plots of population change, with one point plotted for each species. The dotted lines are diagonal regressions, shown only to indicate the direction of trends. (A) Population change for stems ≥ 10 mm dbh, plotting 1985–1990 rate vs 1982–1985; 219 species included. (B) Population change over 1982–1990, plotting rate for stems ≥ 100 mm dbh vs rate for stems ≥ 100 mm dbh; 136 species included.

Table 3. Numbers of species with increasing and decreasing populations, by colonizing status, slope status and growth form. 'Slope' means slope-specialists that were not colonizers, 'colonizer' means colonizing species that were not slope-specialists and 'neither' means species that were neither slope-specialists nor colonizers (unlike Figure 1, this latter category does not include species for which information was missing). The four slope-colonizer species are not included. Asterisks between the increasing and decreasing columns indicate a significant difference in the fraction of species increasing between a given group and the 'neither group' (** indicating P < 0.01 and * P < 0.05). The final column gives the mean rate of population change for each species group.

		N	lumt	er of populat	ions	
Growth form	Status	Increasing		Decreasing	No change	Mean rate of change
Large trees	Slope	5		6	0	-0.004 ± 0.030
0	Neither	15		7	0	0.005 ± 0.017
	Colonizer	8		8	0	0.003 ± 0.032
Mid-sized trees	Slope	5		3	0	0.008 ± 0.012
	Neither	17		11	0	0.001 ± 0.020
	Colonizer	4		4	0	0.018 ± 0.049
Understorey trees	Slope	1	**	6	0	-0.025 ± 0.016
,	Neither	19		2	0	0.016 ± 0.016
	Colonizer	3		2	0	-0.002 ± 0.049
Shrubs	Slope	0	*	4	0	-0.062 ± 0.043
	Neither	10		5	1	-0.004 ± 0.024
	Colonizer	1		3	0	0.003 ± 0.011
All species	Slope	11	**	19	0	-0.013 ± 0.033
	Neither	61		25	1	0.005 ± 0.020
	Colonizer	16	*	17	0	0.006 ± 0.050

cases, though, where populations increased dramatically prior to 1985 then declined afterwards, or vice versa. For example, *Piper cordulatum* increased from 3149 to 3713 stems, then declined to 1777 (Table 1). Rate of change was also fairly consistent between the two size classes ($r^2 = 0.265$, P < 0.0001 for the 1982–1990 rate), but again there were exceptions (Figure 2B). For example, *Trichilia tuberculata*, the most abundant large tree in the plot, suffered a rather considerable decline among stems ≥ 100 mm dbh, but its population ≥ 10 mm dbh increased (Table 1).

Population change as a function of species characteristics

Slope status. Slope status was clearly associated with a species' probability of declining in abundance. Excluding all colonizing species (in order to separate the effect of that variable) there were 30 slope-specialists, 19 declining in abundance and 11 increasing. Of 87 non-slope species, 25 declined and 61 increased (Table 3). Thus, 29% of non-slope but 63% of slope-species declined in abundance ($\chi^2 = 11.1$, df = 1, P<0.01). Sample sizes were augmented if colonizers were included, and the pattern remained: 63% of 52 slope species but 42% of 165 non-slope species declined in abundance.

The pattern did not hold for all growth forms, though, in fact the distinction between slope and non-slope species was due entirely to species of smaller stature – shrubs and treelets. Of this group, 91% of slope-species and only 19%

of non-slope species declined in abundance, with the difference statistically significant in both growth forms (Table 3). But in large and mid-sized trees, there was no such distinction, with 47% of slope and 36% of non-slope species declining in abundance and no significant difference in either growth form (Table 3).

Slope-specialists suffered the most impressive population declines. Of the 18 species declining more than 5% per year, 11 were slope-specialists (Figure 1A, Table 2). The four most rapid declines were slope-specialist shrubs (Table 2). Conversely, none of the nine species increasing more than 5% per year were slope-specialists (Table 2).

The poor performance of slope-specialists was not evident when considering stems above 100 mm dbh, because there were few treelets and shrubs included in this size class. For large and mid-sized trees, slope-specialists performed no worse than non-slope: six of 17 slope species decreased in abundance, whereas of non-slope species, 20 of 40 declined. Among treelets and shrubs, slope-specialists did suffer more declines than non-slope species (two out of three *vs* four out of 13) but the sample was far too small to evaluate statistically.

Colonizing species. Species designated as gap-colonizers performed somewhat worse than non-colonizing species, although not as poorly as slope species. Excluding slope-specialists (to isolate the effect of the colonization variable), 52% of 33 colonizing species and 29% of 87 non-colonizers declined in abundance ($\chi^2 = 5.3$, P<0.05, Table 3). Each of the four growth forms showed a comparable pattern, with colonizers doing slightly worse than non-colonizers, but none was statistically significant by itself (Table 3).

Despite the fact that colonizers on average performed poorly, they were overrepresented among rapidly increasing populations. Seven of the nine species increasing faster than 5% per year were colonizers, and only one was not (the other had an unknown colonization index). In contrast, of the 18 species decreasing faster than 5% per year, four were colonizers and six were not.

When considering abundance changes in stems $\geq 100 \text{ mm}$ dbh, there was no indication that colonizers performed differently than non-colonizers. Excluding slope-specialists, 10 of 25 colonizing species decreased in abundance, while 24 of 53 non-colonizers declined. The four growth forms did not differ.

Swamp status. Swamp status was unrelated to population change. Considering stems $\geq 10 \text{ mm}$ dbh, 26 of 51 swamp species declined in abundance (51%), whereas 78 of 167 non-swamp species declined (47%). For stems $\geq 100 \text{ mm}$ dbh, 10 of 26 swamp species (38%) and 51 of 110 non-swamp (46%) declined. Neither difference, nor any for individual growth forms, reached statistical significance. Like colonizing species, though, swamp-specialists were overrepresented among rapid increasers: seven of nine species increasing $\geq 5\%$ per year were swamp species, but only four of 18 species declining by $\geq 5\%$ per year were.

DISCUSSION

Nearly all shrubs and treelets that occur preferentially on the slopes of the 50 ha plot declined in abundance. We know the slopes around the side of the plateau are a wetter microhabitat during the dry season (Becker *et al.* 1988), and we assume that species more abundant there are less able to tolerate drought stress. We can support this assumption by casual observations on species distributions: some of the familiar slope-specialists at BCI – *Poulsenia armata*, *Olmedia aspera*, *Erythrina costaricana* and *Acalypha diversifolia* – are common along permanent streams in forests near BCI (there are no permanent streams on BCI). Further casual support comes from the genus *Piper*, which is particularly abundant in wet forests; five of its eight species in the 50 ha plot species are slope-specialists (all eight declined in abundance).

It seems certain that this group of shrubs and treelets that cannot tolerate long drought invaded the plateau forest at BCI during the wetter periods prior to 1966 but is now being eliminated by the increased severity of the dry season. It is possible that the extreme dry season of 1983 is solely responsible; alternatively, it may be a continuing problem caused by recurring severe dry seasons. We cannot distinguish between the two alternatives now, but future censuses will. If the only problem for drought-intolerant species was 1983, then populations should level off and perhaps even climb by 1995 or 2000, when the plot will be censused anew. We are certain, however, that dry season length and severity is the crucial edaphic variable affecting population success and limiting species' ranges at BCI (Wright 1992, Wright & van Schaik 1994). Reduction of rainfall during the wet season is probably inconsequential (at least for trees) since water is never limiting then.

Why have moisture-demanding trees of larger stature not suffered population declines as consistently as shrubs and treelets? We anticipated that they would, largely because of two prominent canopy trees and strong slope-specialists that suffered severe declines in abundance: Poulsenia armata and Ocotea whitei. But other slope-specialists in the canopy, such as Calophyllum longifolium, have healthy populations. We suggest the following hypothesis to account for this division and the general decline of shrubs and treelets. As adults, some trees, like Calophyllum, have longer roots than others, like Poulsenia, long enough to reach water below the slopes during the dry season, but not from the plateau (which is higher and thus further from the water table, see Wright & van Schaik 1994); Poulsenia thus suffered high mortality at all sizes during the 1983 El Niño drought, whereas *Calophyllum* did not. But both species have drought-sensitive seedlings, and are thus largely restricted to the wetter areas within the plot. Likewise, there are shrubs and treelets with drought-sensitive seedlings that are restricted to moist regions, but nearly all have short root systems as adults (Becker & Castillo 1990, Wright 1992) and suffer from long dry seasons at BCI. (Some shrubs have other drought-adaptations and are widespread in the plot.)

During moderate dry seasons, there is presumably enough water near the surface of the slopes for these drought-intolerant plants, and this allowed their spread into the plot prior to 1966, when dry seasons were less severe. The swamp may remain wet even during the most severe dry seasons, so that swamp-specialists can persist despite the drying trend.

Are the slope-specialists becoming extinct on BCI, or will they persist in locally wet sites? It appears not – all shrubs and treelets that declined throughout the plot declined on both the slopes and the plateau; in fact, most species had similar rates of change in both regions. Thus, it seems that there is a group of drought-intolerant species headed for extinction at BCI, at least 16 treelets and shrubs, and perhaps as many as 30–40 including the large, droughtsensitive trees like *Poulsenia* and *Ocotea whitei*. Howe (1990) has already predicted that *Virola surinamensis*, a large, slope-specialist tree, will go extinct on BCI due to its inability to tolerate long dry seasons. He based his conclusion on seedling survival data, not having seen the 1982–1990 population data which bears out his prediction – a decline from 300 to 239 stems.

Species which preferentially invade light gaps in the 50 ha plot – what we called colonizing species - had an almost bimodal distribution of population change. A few species had very rapid increases, but the rest did worse than average. Condit et al. (1992b) and Hubbell & Foster (1990a) have stated two different hypotheses about factors affecting the populations of gap-colonizers. One is that the more open canopy caused by drought-induced mortality in 1983 (Becker & Smith 1990) created more recruitment opportunities for species that demand light gaps, leading to a population burst in the 10 mm size class by 1985 or 1990. The other hypothesis is that the 50 ha plot is undergoing succession because the area just north of the plot (plus 2 ha within the plot) was cleared around the turn of the century but has matured since. Ruderal species abundant in the near-by farmland maintained high sink populations within the old forest because of the large number of seeds entering, but these populations are now declining. Both factors may in fact be at work at the same time. There are some colonizing species which can obviously maintain high populations within gaps of old forest (all seven of the rapidly rising species would be examples), but other species such as Apeiba tibourbou and Schefflera morototoni which are abundant only in large clearings may not persist in the old forest and are now in decline (indeed, the latter dropped out of the plot between 1982 and 1985).

An obvious concern with these conclusions is the method for identifying edaphic preferences of individual species. Some associations with topographic regions may be due to factors having nothing to do with moisture or light preference. Artefactual correlations weaken our power to detect effects of moisture preference, but the trends we did detect should be robust with respect to this error and ought to appear even stronger if species with accidental associations were segregated. We eventually hope to get physiological information on some species to define independently those that are drought-tolerant (Mulkey et al. 1994, Wright & van Schaik 1994).

The mean rate of absolute population change in the plot was 2.25% per year. a 20% increase or 16% decrease after eight years. About 10% of the populations in the plot are changing >5% per year (a 49% increase or 33% decrease over eight years). These seem like substantial rates for trees, which ought to have rather lethargic population trajectories due to their long life spans and slow growth (Condit et al. 1992b, Hubbell & Foster 1990a). Are such changes typical for tropical forests, or is BCI unusual because of the climatic shift taking place? In a study of 50 ha of dry forest in India, several tree and shrub species underwent severe declines in abundance - in just three years - due to elephant herbivory (R. Sukumar, unpublished data). Other studies in the tropics have been on much smaller areas with irregular censuses, and are very difficult to compare. For example, Manokaran & Kochummen (1987) documented some abrupt declines and increases in a 34-year record of tropical forest in Malaysia: Shorea parvifolia declined from 26 to 16 individuals in 16 years, and Dacryodes puberula from 14 to four in 34 years, both consistent declines of about 5% per year, but both are based on small samples. The empirical issue of stability in tree populations and community composition of tropical forests must be resolved by more large datasets, and large-scale plots are now under way at 11 sites in Africa, Asia and America (Condit 1995). Results from these will settle the matter.

These plots will offer a baseline for assessing the impact of global climate change on tropical forests. Long-term changes in precipitation can have tremendous effects on forests (Foster 1982a,b, Hartshorn 1992), and if Phillips & Gentry (1994) are correct, CO_2 -fertilization may be changing forest-wide dynamics. We see perhaps 10% of the species at BCI headed for extinction because of a 25-year decline in precipitation. Understanding and even anticipating climatic effects on tropical forests will be crucial for their long-range conservation.

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APPENDIX

The 48 species names that have been changed since the 50 ha plot was initiated in 1981 or which do not appear in Croat (1978). The current name is the one appearing in Table 1. The eight species listed as *sp. nov.* were newly discovered in the 50 ha plot and remain undescribed.

Current name	Name in D'Arcy (1987)	Name in Croat (1978)
Appunia seibertii	Appunia seibertii	not appearing
Ardisia guianensis	Ardisia guianensis	not appearing
Brosimum guinense	Brosimum guinense	not appearing
Chamaedorea tepejilote	Chamaedorea tepejilote	Chamaedorea wenlandiana
Chamguava schippii	Psidium anglohondurensis	Psidium anglohondurensis
Chrysochlamys eclipes	Tovomitopsis nicaraguensis	Tovomitopsis nicaraguensis
Chrysophyllum argenteum	Cynodendron panamense	Cynodendron panamense
Erythroxylum macrophyllum	Erthroxylum macrophyllum	not appearing
Garcinia intermedia	Garcinia intermedia	Rheedia edulis
Garcinia madruno	Garcinia madruno	Rheedia acuminata
Guarea grandifolia	Guarea grandifolia	Guarea multiflora
Guarea sp. nov.	not appearing	not appearing
Heisteria acuminata	Heisteria acuminata	Heisteria longipes
Hyeronima alcheornoides	Hyeronima laxiflora	Hyeronima laxiflora
Inga acuminata	not appearing	not appearing
Lonchocarpus latifolia	Lonchocarpus latifolia	Lonchocarpus pentaphyllus
Lopimia dasypetala	Lopimia dasypetala	Pavonia dasypetala
Maclura tinctoria	Chlorophora tinctoria	not appearing
Malmea sp. nov.	not appearing	Crematosperma sp.
Myrospermum frutescens	Myrospermum frutescens	not appearing
Nectandra purpurea	Nectandra purpurea	Nectandra purpurescens
Nectandra sp. nov. 1	not appearing	not appearing
Nectandra sp. nov. 3	not appearing	not appearing
Ocotea puberula	Ocotea puberula	Ocotea pyramidata
Ocotea whitei	Ocotea whitei	Ocotea skutchii
Oenocarpus mapoura	Oenocarpus mapoura	Oenocarpus panamanus
Ormosia amazonica	Ormosia amazonica	not appearing
Osmosia croatii	Ormosia coccinea	Ormosia coccinea
Phoebe cinnamomifolia	Phoebe cinnamomifolia	Phoebe mexicana
Pochota quinata	Bombacopsis quinata	Bombacopsis quinata
Pochota sessilis	Bombacopsis sessilis	Bombacopsis sessilis
Pourouma bicolor	Pourouma guianensis	Pourouma guianensis
Pouteria reticulata	Pouteria unilocularis	Pouteria unilocularis
Protium sp. nov.	not appearing	not appearing

Current name	Name in D'Arcy (1987)	Name in Croat (1978)
Psychotria graciflora	Psychotria graciflora	not appearing
Pterocarpus belizensis	Pterocarpus belizensis	not appearing
Sapium aucuparium	Sapium caudatum	both (now considered synonyms)
Sapium sp. nov.	not appearing	not appearing
Schefflera morototoni	Didymopanax morototoni	Didymopanax morototoni
Senna dariensis	Senna dariensis	Cassia fruticosa
Socratea exorrhiza	Socratea exorrhiza	Socratea durissima
Solanum steyemarkii	Solanum argenteum	Solanum argenteum
Terminalia oblonga	Terminalia oblonga	Terminalia chiriquensis
Trichilia pallida	Trichilia pallida	Trichilia montana
Trichilia tuberculata	Trichilia tuberculata	Trichilia cipo
Trichospermum galeottii	Trichospermum galeottii	Trichospermum mexicanum
Urera baccifera	Urera baccifera	not appering
Virola sp. nov.	not appearing	not appearing

APPENDIX 1. (cont.)

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