SEASONALLY DRY DECIDUOUS FORESTS: DIVERSITY AND SOILS IN ARBOREAL COMMUNITIES

A. R. T. Nascimento, G. M. Araújo
Instituto de Biologia, Universidade Federal de Uberlândia (UFU), Brazil

J. M. Felfili
Departamento de Engenharia Florestal, Universidade de Brasília (UNB), Brazil

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Contents

1. Introduction
2. Ecology and Community Structure
3. Arboreal vegetation in seasonally dry tropical forests in Central Brazil
4. Soils and vegetation relationships
5. Final Remarks
Acknowledgements
Glossary
Bibliography
Biographical Sketches

Summary

This chapter presents a perspective of the diversity of tree species on the Seasonal Deciduous Forest in Central Brazil and its relation with the edaphic features. Seasonally dry deciduous tropical forests occur worldwide in hot seasonal climates occupying a smaller area than the rain forests. These forests have been intensively converted into pastures and croplands. In Central Brazil these forests grow on fertile soils, on patches of limestone outcrops within a savanna matrix, where mining is an additional threat. In the Cerrado domain they occur on eutrophic and mesotrophic soils but rarely are found on dystrophic soils. The dry forests, composed by valuable timber species are extremely vulnerable and need actions for conservation and sustainable management. The selective extraction of timber species elsewhere and the absence of sustainable management practices are selectively eroding the natural reserves of these species and can compromise the existence and conservation of these populations in these scattered communities in the Central Brazil. A large quantity of low density species is another constraint for conservation leading to the need of a conservation network including many sites.
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Biographical Sketches

André R. Terra Nascimento was born in Brazil in 1969 and obtained her BSc in Forestry (Federal University of Santa Maria, 1997), M.Sc. in Forestry - Silviculture (Federal University of Santa Maria, 2000) and Dr. in Ecology (University of Brasilia, 2005). In his earlier career he worked on the conservation and ecology of the Ombrophilous Moist forest and Tropical Seasonal Deciduous forest. He is a teacher of Ecology at the Federal University of Uberlândia in Minas Gerais state. He has published scientific articles and book chapters dealing with forest inventory, diversity and ecology patterns of tropical vegetation.

Gleim Monteiro de Araújo was born in Araguari, MG and obtained his BSc in Biology (Federal University of Uberlândia, 1977), M.Sc. in Ecology (Federal University of Brasilia, 1984) and Dr. in Ecology (University of Campinas, 1992). Since 1977 he carries out research and teaching and extension activities at the University of Uberlândia where he is currently a Professor. He has published scientific articles, book chapters and books dealing with forest and savanna inventory and community dynamics.

Jeanine Maria Felfili was born in Cuiabá, MT and obtained her BSc in Forestry (Federal University of Mato Grosso, 1980), M.Sc. in Forestry (Federal University of Viçosa, 1983), D.Phil. (University of Oxford. 1993). Since 1983 she carries out research and teaching and extension activities at the University of Brasilia where she is currently a Professor. She was head of the Forestry Department and coordinator of the Post-Graduate Program in Forestry at master and doctorate level. She is a researcher of the Nacional Research Council of Brazil (CNPq) level 1C. She has published scientific articles, book chapters and books dealing with forest inventory, community dynamics, conservation, restorations and phytogeographical patterns of vegetation.