CLÉMENT VIGUIER

PHD THESIS

Contents

I

INTRODUCTION

1

OBJECTIVES

1.1 Generic framework for modelling of plant communities

1.2 Effect of phenotypic plasticity on plant community dynamics

INDIVIDUAL LEVEL
COMMUNITY RESPONSE
TO DROUGHT EVENT

2

Litterature review

2.1 Context: mountain grasslands and climate change

2.2 Diversity and coexistence

2.2.1 Effects of diversity

productivity
resistance ?
Ecosystem services and complementarity

2.2.2 Mechanisms for coexistence

main theories: niche, neutral, individual based. -> scale and dimension dependant.
chesson
Spatial and temporal variability
trade-off, strategy space, and variability.
in the end it's rarely direct interaction but capacity to respond to stress and interect interaction through resource pools.

2.3 global change and community dynamics: theory and empirical results

2.3.1 Intraspecific variability

frame of reference: deep traits vs shallow traits. definition of functional trait.
source of intra specific variability: genetic vs ontogeny vs plasticity (epigen)
effect on niche and interactions: effect on coexistence
-> plasticity a special form of ISV

2.3.2 Understanding phenotypic plasticity

adaaptive intraspecific variation
cost and limits

effect on coexistence and community

2.4 Existing modelling solutions/approaches to question global change effect on vegetation community

Message: modelling coexistence is a challenge because 1) do not know/understand all mechanisms, 2) challenging to incorporate enough mechanisms, 3) costly computation and data wise. -> need for more generic and complete (multiple mechanisms approaches.

2.4.1 Modelling vegetation - traits and strategies

traits & strategies
existing models: a gap to fill
coexistence processes

II

Modelling alpine grasslands

1

Generic model for plant community dynamics

Paper 1:

1.1 Introduction

1.2 Strategy space and allocation pools

Leaf economic spectrum + Shipley + Poorter

1.2.1 Allocation or anatomy: a choice to make

what is SLA and SRL: cost of exchange area: tissue density, tissue thickness. Poorter 2009, grace2017, Katabuchi 2017, de la riva 2016

1.3 Model overview

mechanism and stochasticity
5 types of allocation

PSEUDO-CODE AND ROUTINE ALLOCATION

1.4 Plasticity: between species memory and individual experience

1.4.1 Concepts

Genetic memory (see Sonia Sultan book for references). Selection and evolutionary processes.

MEMORY

There might be optimum. But not easy to compute, especially when you consider more complex cost and interactions. Depend on different efficiencies and equilibrium... Also, you may want to avoid efficient by risky strategies (if you wrong, or if there is a quick shift). Need for strategic traits to drive allocation more than memory. Ok but what happen with optimisation allocation ? -> need the strategy to be tightly linked to memory.
equilibrium, resource use, resource availability, condition estimation

EQUILIBRIUM AND EFFICIENCY
OPTIMUM, STRATEGY AND MEMORY

Important role of condition estimation. Perception mechanisms. (cost). Difference between plasticity and acclimation and epigenetics.

CONDITION ESTIMATION

1.4.2 Implementation

Why the use of a sampling method: complex effect of allocation and complex allocation system that is meant to be extended. Some results on the stability of phenotypes. How sampling method can drive the allocation.

1.4.3 comparison of different algorithms

full plasticity : freschet 2015 in poorter & Ryser 2015 the two sides of the performance/fitness: equilibrium and tissue efficiency
age vs biomass.

1.5 Parameter filtering and sensitivity analysis

Obj: give confidence in the model, demonstrate is able to reproduce simple growth pattern.
Obj2: have a beter idea of plasticity on growth. growth plastic and non plastic parameter filtering: can we distinguish species thanks to species specific parameters instead of shared parameters.
does plasticity make it easier ?
Impact of plasticity related parameters.

1.6 Community dynamics parametrisation

Obj: demonstrate that the model is able to reproduce community dynamics (as it was designed for).
Find parameters that allows coexistence (suggest plasticity should allow a diversity of strategy). SLA and height data. Phytosociology for 10m quadrats.

2

Model's properties and individuals response

(Related to the notions cited above, like performance decomposition)

2.1 Craft a trade-of and phenotypic map

Can memory be related to strategy and active/structural ratios in shoot and roots ?

2.2 Niche response

Obj1: understand how resource use mechanisms and allocation algorithms shape the environmental potential niche in the context of the model.
H1: strategy and memory affect niche in two ways if we suppose they are independent: shape and position. Strategy mostly affect shape (width and height) while memory (and so root:shoot ratio) affect mostly position.
H1': there is strong link between strategy and memory in the case of optimisation allocation that increase niche height and might reduce its width.
Obj2: understand the role of plasticity on the niche and if the effect in the same for all strategies/memories.
H2: the plasticity increase niche width but not height (as phenotype is optimum at the center of the niche where memory match the resource availability).

Stability and efficiency trade-off. Niche heigh and width and relationship with the strategy. How does plasticity affect that ? Does it increase the height and widen niches ? What does that mean for coexistence ?
Hopefully higher niche would go with unstable niche.

2.3 Transitivity and competition

1 vs 1 interactions
Is the resource competition transitive ? How does niche widening impact that, does plasticty change competition interaction. Is it related to the trait distance ? (don't think so)

3

THE EFFECT OF PHENOTYPIC PLASTICITY ON PLANT COMMUNITY DYNAMICS

Hypothesis on the cumulative effect on niche and interactions.

3.1 Individual resistance and resilience against drought events

Amplitude and length of the event :
- severity effect reduced by lower tau ?
- resistance versus resilience: H0: conservative strategy have higher resistance, H1 : low tau allows for re-equilibrium and increase resistance (low amplitude and long length. H2: high tau allow to avoid dead-end situation during short severe drought (high resilience)

3.2 Community response to drought event

coexistence effect vs resistance/resilience effect
uniform vs heterogenous (plasticity wise) community response H1:

III

EXTEND MOUNTGRASS

This section is meant to include thoughts and ideas on how to extend mountgrassbut that could not be included in the first versions of the model for various reasons. Despite not being included, these extensions are interesting from a scientific or technical point of view, and I hope these notes can be useful to anyone interested in mountgrassor individual based vegetation modelling.

0.3 Notes

0.3.1 On modelling

Frustration: often look obvious, at least it's just logical, there is what we put in...

Modelling approach, when not for prediction, what is it about ?

- building understanding
- weight mechanisms
- test hypothesis

1

INCLUDE NITROGEN: SOURCE OF TRADE-OFF

As seen previously in chapter , the emergence of trade-off in growth strategy in the actual framework actually rely on a strong genetic constraint over plant plasticity. Indeed, without plasticity cost and low reactivity there would be a high rate of phenotypic convergence of individuals from different species. This is explained by the existence of optimum carbon partitioning (for a given size) in a stable environment. The coexistence of different resource use strategies (exploitative vs conservative) is allowed only through temporal variations and non equilibrium state. This is quite common since a lot of models will predict rapid dominance of one entity in case of equilibrium (need references here).
Multiple questions arise from this observation: are the conclusions of this work still interesting in the understanding of the coexistence mechanisms? (I hope I did convince you in the dedicated part of this document, see .. for more details), is it possible to see coexistence of multiple strategies in a temporally stable environment? how can we produce trade-off by including only one more resource?

In the following paragraphs I try to answer these questions with theoretical arguments and suggestions on how to integrate them in MOUNTGRASS.

1.1 Stable coexistence: the need for a resource dependent tissue efficiency

Coexistence mechanisms are listed and detailed in the introduction of this thesis (see chapter **??**). Here I focus on the efficiency of tissues... Nitrogen based, why coexistence ? different phenotype correspond to different limiting resources and for different resource availabilities, different phenotype will optimize the return cost of tissues.Nitrogen also allow the model to have an extra dimension into strategy: WUE (local scale) versus NUE (global scale) (element of reflexion in Maire's thesis).
Its also can be related to

2

SPECIFIC RESISTANCE CARBON POOLS: DIVERSIFY STRATEGIES (AND MEMORY)

Original idea was to have specific carbon pools for different function, and weight the relative allocation based on gain projections.

3

Land-use: a important driver

3.1 Proto-model of management

Mapping, digestibility and selectivity (smoothing). Grazing and mowing. Height correction.

3.2 Individual and collective response

Response could be to grow thinner, more fragile leaves to go back on tracks (and take advantages of nutrients and lower competition) or grow bigger leaves and invest in predation resistance/avoidance.

3.3 Remaining questions

Calibration of herbivory pressure.

4

LOCAL ADAPTATION AND EPIGENETIC: BETWEEN SPECIES AND INDIVIDUAL MEMORY

5

Making it all fun

Making it fun to use, so that people use it. Making it pretty ?

5.1 Documentation and vignette

5.2 Fun and simple simulations

5.3 Theme and shiny ?