

## Article

# Diversity and structure of an arid woodland in southwest Angola, with comparison to the wider miombo ecoregion

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**Abstract:** Seasonally dry woodlands are the dominant land cover across southern Africa. They are biodiverse, structurally complex and important for ecosystem service provision. Species composition and structure vary across the region producing a diverse array of woodland types. The woodlands of the Huíla plateau in southwest Angola represent the extreme southwestern extent of the miombo ecoregion and are markedly drier than other woodlands within this ecoregion. They remain understudied however, compared to woodlands further east in the miombo ecoregion. We aimed to elucidate further the tree diversity found within southwestern Angolan woodlands by conducting a plot-based study in Bicuar National Park, comparing tree species composition and woodland structure with similar plots in Tanzania, Mozambique, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. We found Bicuar National Park had comparatively low tree species diversity, but contained 27 tree species not found in other plots. Plots in Bicuar had low basal area, excepting plots dominated by *Baikiaea plurijuga*. In a comparison of plots in intact vegetation with areas previously disturbed by shifting-cultivation agriculture, we found species diversity was marginally higher in disturbed plots. Bicuar National Park remains an important woodland refuge in Angola, with an uncommon mosaic of woodland types within a small area. While we highlight wide variation in species composition and woodland structure across the miombo ecoregion, plot-based studies with more dense sampling across the ecoregion are clearly needed to more broadly understand regional variation in vegetation diversity, composition and structure.

**Keywords:** Woodland, Miombo, Savanna, Diversity, Disturbance, Baikiaea

## 1. Introduction

Tropical woodlands extend over 12 countries in central and southern Africa, with an estimated area of ~3.7 million km<sup>2</sup> [1–3]. Within this, miombo woodlands are the dominant vegetation type, characterised by trees of the *Brachystegia*, *Julbernardia* and *Isoberlinia* genera, all within the Fabaceae family, subfamily Detarioideae [4–6]. These genera are seldom found as dominant species outside miombo woodlands, and while their contribution to the biomass of miombo woodlands is substantial, it varies throughout the region [5]. Across the range of southern African woodlands, variation in climate, edaphic factors, disturbance regimes and biogeography maintain a diverse array of woodland

types in terms of both species composition and physiognomy [7–9]. Many of these woodlands have a flammable grassy understory and thus are also considered as a form of savanna [10].

The miombo ecoregion extends across the continent in a wide band that reaches north into Kenya and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and south into the northeast of South Africa (Figure 1a). Miombo woodlands are defined both by their tree diversity and by their structure of a grassy herbaceous understorey with an often sparse tree canopy. In archetypical miombo woodlands, species of the genera *Brachystegia*, *Julbernardia* and *Isoberlinia* generally hold the most biomass, forming a mostly open woodland canopy. Distinct from dry tropical forests, miombo woodlands generally maintain a grassy understorey dominated by grass species utilizing the C<sub>4</sub> carbon fixation pathway [11]. Miombo woodlands are heavily structured by seasonal fire and herbivory, with fire particularly often preventing the creation of a closed tree canopy which would naturally occur in the absence of these disturbances [12,13]. Within the miombo ecoregion, other woodland types exist, notably, woodlands dominated by *Baikiaea plurijuga* or *Colophospermum mopane* [5].

Southern African woodlands are structurally complex but species poor in the tree layer compared to dry tropical forests which exist at similar latitudes [14,15]. These woodlands contain many endemic tree species however, and support a highly diverse woodland understorey, with an estimated 8500 species of vascular plants [16]. Miombo woodlands provide ecosystem service provision for an estimated 150 million people [17]. Additionally miombo woodlands hold ~18-24 Pg C in woody biomass and soil organic carbon, which is comparable to that held in the rainforests of the Congo basin (~30 Pg C) [18]. As woodland resource extraction and conversion to agricultural land accelerates due to growing human populations, the conservation of miombo woodlands as a biodiverse and unique ecosystem has become a growing concern. Despite their importance however, dry tropical woodlands remain understudied compared to wet forests across the globe [19].

Over the previous two decades, the limited ecological research in southern African woodlands has been concentrated in the central and eastern parts of the miombo region, notably in southern Tanzania, Mozambique, Malawi, Zimbabwe and Zambia. The southwestern extent of miombo woodlands, which is found entirely within Angola has received considerably less attention [20]. Partly this is due to diminished research capacity during the Angolan civil war following the country's independence, which took place officially between 1975 and 2002, but with sporadic localised periods of civil unrest until around 2012 [21]. While botanical surveys of woodlands in this region are more plentiful [20,22], joint studies of woodland species composition and physical structure remain scarce. This is despite the value of these studies in helping to estimate woodland net primary productivity, carbon sequestration potential, and studies of community assembly. To properly understand spatial variation in woodland species composition and physical structure across the miombo ecoregion, it is necessary to fill understudied gaps. In this study we aim to address one such gap in southwest Angola, and place it in context with other woodlands across the miombo ecoregion.

The miombo woodlands of southwest Angola are found in their most intact form in Bicuar National Park and to a lesser extent in the adjacent Mupa National Park, on the Huíla plateau [23]. Both of these national parks have been protected to varying extents since 1938 [20]. These woodlands exist in much drier conditions than other miombo woodlands, precipitation diminishes rapidly within the Huíla plateau towards the Angolan coast and the Namib desert (Figure 1a). The vegetation of the Huíla plateau holds many endemic species, around 83 endemic Fabaceae species [24] and the most endemic plant species of any part of Angola [25]. Linder [26] and Droissart *et al.* [27] both identify the western portion of the Huíla plateau as a centre of tropical African endemism.

Much of the historic miombo woodland area in southwest Angola surrounding the Bicuar and Mupa National Parks has been deforested in recent years, with a clear increase in deforestation activity since the end of the civil war owing to an increase in rural population and agricultural activity [20,28]. The western extent of miombo woodlands found within Bicuar National Park plateau are therefore of great importance for conservation as a refuge for wildlife and endemic plant species [20].

77 It is important to focus not only on the biodiversity of undisturbed woodland areas but also  
78 previously disturbed land in order to properly assess the biodiversity and woodland structure of the  
79 Park. Woodland disturbance through shifting cultivation practices produces novel habitats which  
80 are not necessarily of lower conservation value [29,30]. Since Bicuar National Park's rejuvenation  
81 following the reinforcement of park boundaries after the civil war, many areas of woodland that were  
82 previously heavily grazed, farmed via shifting cultivation techniques, and used for timber extraction  
83 have been allowed to re-establish and are now protected from further human resource extraction. This  
84 presents a unique opportunity to compare the species composition of these disturbed areas with areas  
85 of nearby woodland that have not been farmed in living memory.

86 In this study we present results of the tree diversity and woodland structure of miombo woodlands  
87 found at the far western extent of miombo woodlands in Bicuar National Park, Huíla province, Angola.  
88 Our study utilised recently installed biodiversity monitoring plots set up within the Park in 2018 and  
89 2019. We compare the tree diversity and woodland structure of Bicuar National Park with biodiversity  
90 monitoring plots previously established in other areas of miombo woodland across the miombo  
91 ecoregion which use a common plot biodiversity census methodology. In addition, we take advantage  
92 of a unique opportunity to compare the tree species composition of areas of abandoned and now  
93 protected farmland that have begun to re-establish as woodland. Specifically, this study aims to:

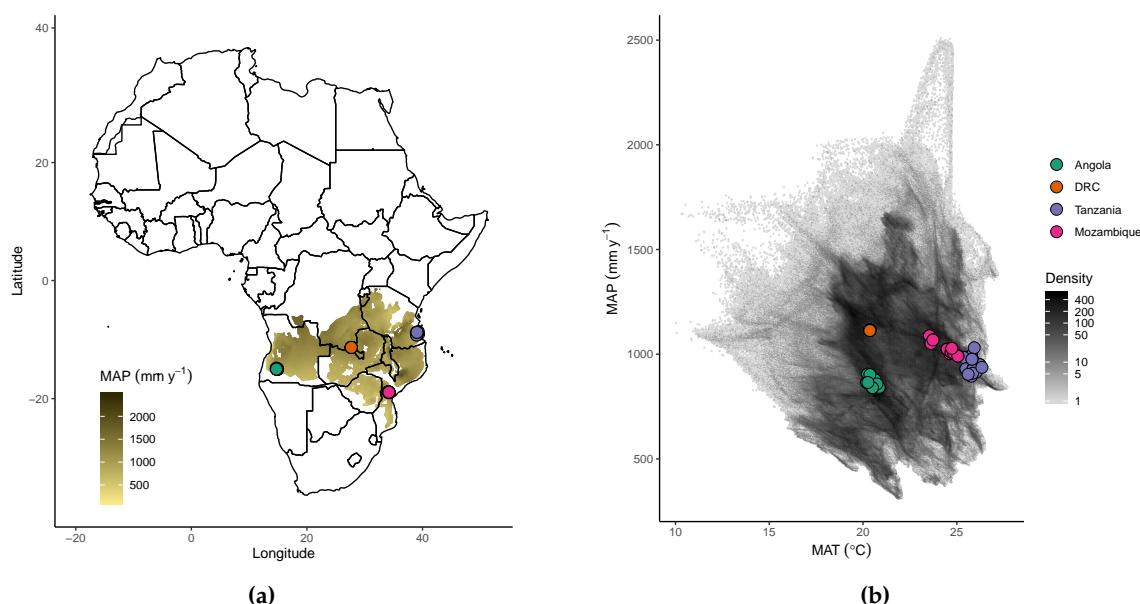
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- 95 1. Describe the tree species diversity and structure of woodlands in Bicuar National Park, and  
96 compare this composition with other woodlands across the miombo eco-region
- 97 2. Explore the role of environmental factors in driving changes in tree species composition across  
98 the miombo ecoregion
- 99 3. Describe variation in tree species composition and woodland structure between disturbed and  
100 undisturbed woodland patches within Bicuar National Park

## 101 2. Materials and Methods

### 102 2.1. Study area

103 We chose three areas of miombo woodland across the miombo ecoregion to compare with those  
104 in Bicuar National Park, Angola ( $S15.1^{\circ}$ ,  $E14.8^{\circ}$ ). The three sites were Gorongosa District in central  
105 Mozambique ( $S19.0^{\circ}$ ,  $E34.2^{\circ}$ ) [31], Kilwa District in southern Tanzania ( $S9.0^{\circ}$ ,  $E39.0^{\circ}$ ) [32], and the  
106 Mikembo Natural Reserve in Katanga, southern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) ( $S11.5^{\circ}$ ,  $E27.7^{\circ}$ )  
107 [33]. Within each of these woodland sites, multiple one hectare square plots had been installed  
108 previously to monitor biodiversity and biomass dynamics. In Katanga, a larger 10 ha plot was  
109 subdivided into ten 1 ha plots for this study. We used these previous censuses, collected between  
110 2010 and 2019, to estimate tree biodiversity and woodland structure. Sites range in Mean Annual  
111 Precipitation (MAP) from 864 mm  $y^{-1}$  in Bicuar to 1115 mm  $y^{-1}$  in Katanga. Mean Annual Temperature  
112 ranges from ~20.5 °C in Bicuar and Katanga to ~25.8 °C in Kilwa (Figure 1b, Table 1).



**Figure 1.** Locations of plots used in this study, by (a) geographic location with respect to the distribution of miombo woodland vegetation (shaded brown according to mean annual precipitation) [1], and (b) showing the plot locations compared to the climate space of the miombo ecoregion estimated using the WorldClim dataset over the Miombo woodland vegetation extent with a pixel size of 30 arc seconds ( $0.86 \text{ km}^2$  at the equator) [34]. Note that the density colour scale is log-transformed for visual clarity.

**Table 1.** Description of each group of plots used in the analysis. MAT = Mean Annual Temperature, MAP = Mean Annual Precipitation, CWD = Climatic Water Deficit, DD = Decimal Degrees.

Plot group	MAT (°C)	MAP (mm y <sup>-1</sup> )	CWD (mm y <sup>-1</sup> )	Latitude (DD)	Longitude (DD)	N plots	N species
Bicuar NP	20.5	864	-815	-15.12	14.81	15	49
DRC	20.4	1115	-762	-11.49	27.67	12	89
Mozambique	24.4	1029	-662	-18.95	34.16	15	162
Tanzania	25.8	956	-754	-9.05	39.05	22	248

113 Bicuar National Park covers an area of ~7900 km<sup>2</sup>, established as a hunting reserve in 1938,  
 114 and later as a national park in 1964 (Figure 2). While fauna populations in the Park were severely  
 115 damaged by the Angolan civil war, the interior of the Park remains as a largely intact mosaic of miombo  
 116 woodland, Baikiaea-Burkea woodland, shrub/thicket vegetation and seasonally flooded grassland.  
 117 Encroachment of agriculture and grazing, particularly along the northwest and western boundaries of  
 118 the Park, has led to a fragmented park boundary with patches of diminished thicket and woodland in  
 119 areas of previously farmed land that have been protected since park boundaries were re-established  
 120 following the end of the civil war.

121 Plots in Tanzania were located predominantly within or near the Mtarure Forest Reserve,  
 122 administrated by the Tanzania Forest Service and protected from human incursion since their  
 123 installation. Plots were established between 2010 and 2011 in grassy savanna/woodland areas, with  
 124 plots located along the road network with a 1 km buffer from the road. Plots in Mozambique were  
 125 established in 2004, in areas of miombo woodland that had been previously used for agriculture but  
 126 since left fallow, and areas of undisturbed miombo woodland, located along the road network, with all  
 127 plots >250 m from the road. Plots in DRC were established in 2009 and located within a larger 800 ha  
 128 miombo woodland reserve, which consists of undisturbed miombo woodlands. All plots were located  
 129 quasi-randomly, with consideration to accessibility for future woodland censuses.

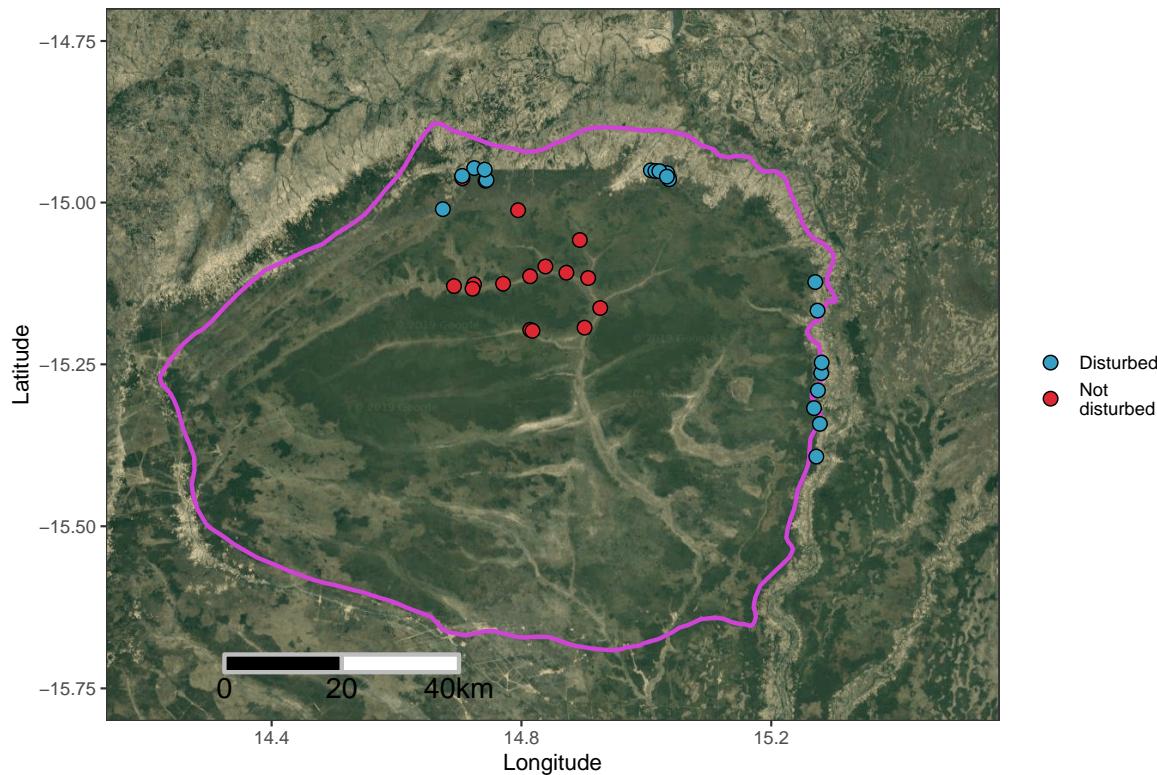
130 2.2. Plot data collection

131 We sampled 15 one hectare plots in Bicuar National Park and collated data from a total of 64 one  
132 hectare plots across the miombo ecoregion within four sites. [Figure 1a](#) and [Table 1](#) show the locations  
133 and general description of each site, respectively. Plots in Bicuar were situated at least 500 m from the  
134 edge of a woodland patch to prevent edge effects which may have altered tree species composition.

135 Within each plot, every tree stem  $\geq 5$  cm stem diameter was recorded, except in the DRC plots,  
136 where only stems  $\geq 10$  cm stem diameter were recorded. For each tree stem the species and stem  
137 diameter were recorded. Tree species were identified using local botanists at each site and taxonomy  
138 was later checked against the African Plant Database [35]. ~~In all sites Palgrave and various other~~  
139 ~~texts were used as a guide for species identification in the field~~ At all sites, we used Palgrave [36],  
140 along with other texts, to identify tree species. Specimens that could not be identified in the field, or  
141 subsequently at herbaria, were described as morphospecies. All tree species within the Bicuar National  
142 Park plots were identified. Tree coppicing due to fire, herbivory, and human actions is common in  
143 miombo woodlands, therefore, for trees with multiple stems, each stem  $\geq 5$  cm stem diameter was  
144 recorded, while the parent tree was also recorded for diversity analyses described below.

145 Stem diameter was recorded at 1.3 m from the ground along the stem (diameter at breast height,  
146 DBH) as per convention using a diameter tape measure [37]. Where stem abnormalities were present  
147 at 1.3 m from the ground, which precluded the accurate estimation of stem diameter at 1.3 m, the  
148 stem diameter was recorded at the nearest 10 cm increment above 1.3 m without significant stem  
149 abnormalities [37]. To ensure consistency among stem diameter values recorded at different heights,  
150 when the stem diameter was recorded at a height other than 1.3 m the stem diameter at 1.3 m was  
151 estimated from the recorded stem diameter using a cubic polynomial equation which adjusts for tree  
152 stem taper. This equation was calibrated on 100 stems measured at multiple heights in Niassa Province,  
153 Mozambique ([Appendix A](#)). Stems below 10 cm stem diameter were not measured in the DRC plots.  
154 We therefore estimated the number of 5-10 cm stems in each these plots by extrapolating a linear  
155 regression of log stem abundance across the available stem diameter classes.

156 In addition to the one hectare plots across the miombo ecoregion, we compared the tree  
157 biodiversity of undisturbed areas of miombo woodland in Bicuar National Park with areas of disturbed  
158 woodland around the edge of the Park that had been previously farmed via shifting cultivation  
159 methods, and had since been abandoned and reclaimed within the Park boundaries [Figure 2](#). We  
160 identified areas previously farmed with the help of park rangers and local residents who identified  
161 these areas from memory. We conducted 20 plot surveys of woodland diversity and structure in these  
162 areas with 20x50 m (0.1 ha) plots, and compared their diversity and structure with 20x50 m subsamples  
163 of the 15 one hectare plots within the Park interior. Like the one hectare plots, within these smaller  
164 20x50 m plots we recorded the species and stem diameter of every tree stem  $\geq 5$  cm stem diameter.



**Figure 2.** Location of plots in Bicuar National Park, southwest Angola. The Park boundary is shown as a pink outline, according to UNEP-WCMC and IUCN [38]. One hectare undisturbed plots are shown as red points, while disturbed 20x50 m (0.1 hectare) plots are shown as blue points. The map background is a true colour composite satellite image generated using the Google Maps Static Maps API in the `ggmap` R package [39].

### 165 2.3. Climatic data

166 The WorldClim dataset [34] was used to gather data on plot-level climatic conditions. We  
 167 estimated Mean Annual Precipitation (MAP) as the mean of total annual precipitation values between  
 168 1970 and 2000, and Mean Annual Temperature (MAT) as the mean of mean annual temperatures  
 169 between 1970 and 2000. The seasonality of temperature (MAT SD) was calculated as the standard  
 170 deviation of monthly temperature per year, respectively. We estimated Climatic Water Deficit (CWD)  
 171 for each plot according to [40], as the sum of the difference between monthly rainfall and monthly  
 172 evapotranspiration when the difference is negative, using the dataset available at [http://ups-tlse.fr/pantropical\\_allometry.htm](http://ups-tlse.fr/pantropical_allometry.htm), which uses data from the WorldClim dataset 1970–2000.

### 174 2.4. Data analysis

175 We calculated the basal area of each stem ( $g_i$ ) using:

$$g_i = \pi \times (d_i/2)^2 \quad (1)$$

176 Where  $d_i$  is the estimated stem diameter of stem  $i$  at 1.3 m having accounted for tree taper. We  
 177 then calculated the total basal area of each plot as the sum of each stem's basal area. For the DRC plots  
 178 which lacked 5–10 cm stems, we estimated basal area in this stem diameter class from our extrapolation  
 179 of stem abundance in the 5–10 cm diameter class, assuming a mean stem diameter of 7.5 cm.

180 All diversity measures were calculated on individual tree-level data, rather than stem-level data,  
 181 to avoid artificial inflation of abundance for those species which readily coppice. We calculated the  
 182 alpha diversity of each plot using both the tree species richness of trees with stems  $\geq 5$  cm diameter,  
 183 and the Shannon-Wiener index ( $H'$ ) (Equation 2), using the vegan package in R [41]:

$$H' = - \sum_{i=1}^S p_i \ln p_i \quad (2)$$

184  
 185 Where  $S$  is the total number of species in the plot,  $p_i$  is the proportional abundance of the  $i$ th  
 186 species and  $\ln$  is the natural logarithm.

187 We calculated the pairwise beta diversity among sites using the Sørensen coefficient ( $S_S$ )  
 188 (Equation 3) [42]:

$$S_S = \frac{2a}{2a + b + c} \quad (3)$$

189  
 190 Where  $a$  is the number of species shared between two sites,  $b$  is the number of species unique to  
 191 site 1 and  $c$  is the number of species unique to site 2. We calculated  $S_S$  for each pairwise combination  
 192 of sites using aggregated species composition data from all plots in each site. The value of  $S_S$ , which  
 193 ranges between zero and one, was multiplied by 100 to give a “percentage similarity” between  
 194 communities in species composition.

195 We estimated abundance evenness for each plot using the Shannon equitability index ( $E_{H'}$ ) [43]  
 196 which is the ratio of  $H'$  to the log transformed species richness.

197 We analysed the difference in alpha diversity measures and woodland structural variables among  
 198 groups of plots using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistical models, with a null hypothesis that  
 199 there was no difference among the mean values of groups of plots. Post-hoc Tukey’s HSD tests were  
 200 used to investigate the degree to which pairwise combinations of plot groups differed in each case.

201 We used Non-metric Multidimensional Scaling (NMDS) to assess the variation in species  
 202 composition among one hectare plots, and also between disturbed and undisturbed 20x50 m plots  
 203 within Bicuar National Park, using the vegan R package. The number of dimensions for NMDS was  
 204 minimised while ensuring the stress value of the NMDS fit was  $\leq 0.1$ . NMDS analyses were run with  
 205 500 random restarts to ensure a global solution was reached. We used Bray-Curtis dissimilarity as the  
 206 optimal measure of ecological distance [44]. We fit plot-level estimates of MAP, MAT, the seasonality  
 207 of MAT and CWD to the first two axes of the resulting ordination using the envfit function in the  
 208 vegan R package to investigate how these environmental factors influenced the grouping of species  
 209 composition among plots. All analyses were conducted in R version 3.6.1 [45].

### 210 3. Results

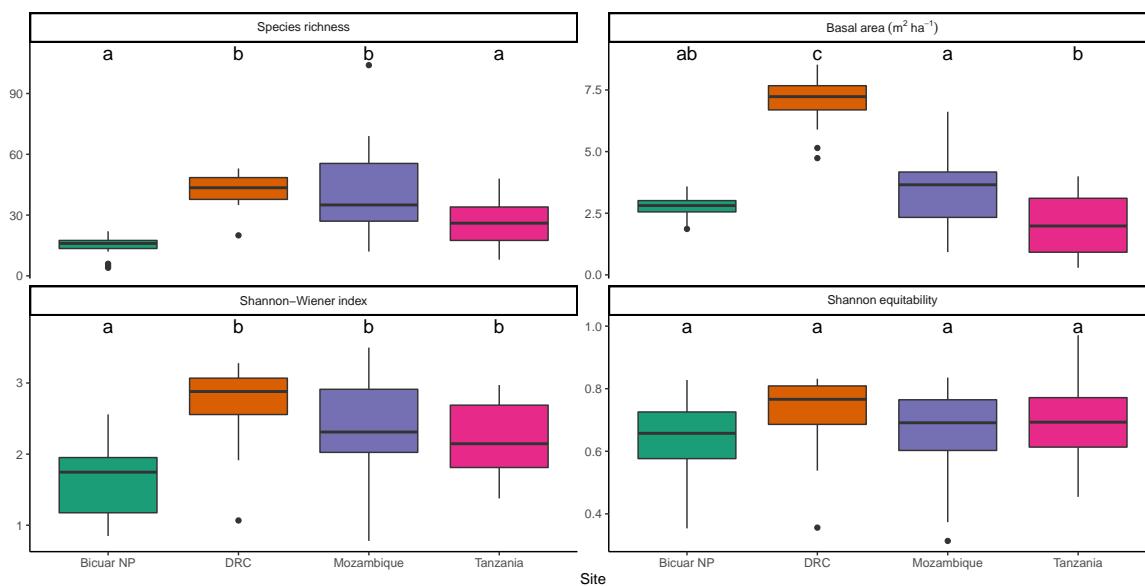
#### 211 3.1. Alpha diversity

212 In Bicuar National Park we measured a total of 6565 trees within the one hectare plots, and across  
 213 the four sites, a total of 25525 trees were sampled. Trees in Bicuar National Park belonged to 48 species  
 214 within 18 families. Across all four sites we recorded 468 species from 43 families. The most diverse  
 215 family within each site and among all plots was Fabaceae with 61 species. We encountered 27 tree  
 216 species in Bicuar National Park which were not found in the other miombo woodland plots (Table 2).  
 217 The most common of these unique species were *Brachystegia tamarindoides* ( $n = 576$ ), *Baikiaea plurijuga*  
 218 ( $n = 331$ ) and *Baphia massaiensis* ( $n = 303$ ). Four species unique to Bicuar National Park within this  
 219 dataset only had one individual recorded: *Elachyptera parvifolia*, *Entandrophragma spicatum*, *Oldfieldia*  
 220 *dactylophylla*, *Peltophorum africanum*.

**Table 2.** Species found in one hectare plots in Bicuar National Park. Stem diameter and basal area are the mean of all stems with the standard error of the mean in parentheses. Number of stems per hectare is mean of the number of stems in all one hectare plots where stems of that species are present with the standard error of the mean in parentheses. Species found only in Bicuar National Park are marked in bold text with an asterisk.

Family	Species	Stem diam. (cm)	Basal area (m <sup>2</sup> ha <sup>-1</sup> )	N stems	N stems ha <sup>-1</sup>
Fabaceae	<i>Albizia antunesiana</i>	9.1(2.03)	0.07(0.040)	40	8(4.81)
Fabaceae	* <i>Baikiae plurijuga</i>	28.9(0.75)	1.72(0.570)	331	55.2(17.83)
Fabaceae	* <i>Baphia bequaertii</i>	7.4(0.36)	0.08(0.050)	127	31.8(18.14)
Fabaceae	* <i>Baphia massaiensis</i>	6.6(0.17)	0.05(0.020)	303	30.3(11.20)
Fabaceae	<i>Bobgunnia madagascariensis</i>	7.8(0.91)	0.04(0.020)	32	10.7(9.67)
Fabaceae	* <i>Brachystegia glaucescens</i>	12.9(0.48)	1.14(0.430)	576	115.2(72.67)
Fabaceae	<i>Brachystegia spiciformis</i>	11.4(0.52)	0.74(0.430)	326	81.5(46.56)
Phyllanthaceae	* <i>Bridelia mollis</i>	5.7(0.31)	0.02(NA)	23	23(NA)
Fabaceae	<i>Burkea africana</i>	8.5(0.33)	0.39(0.120)	863	71.9(19.11)
Combretaceae	<i>Combretum apiculatum</i>	7.6(0.45)	0.06(0.040)	60	30(15.00)
Combretaceae	<i>Combretum celastroides</i>	5.6(0.34)	<0.01(0.000)	7	3.5(2.50)
Combretaceae	<i>Combretum collinum</i>	6.3(0.09)	0.07(0.020)	609	50.8(20.48)
Combretaceae	* <i>Combretum hereroense</i>	6.7(0.26)	0.02(0.010)	73	12.2(5.69)
Combretaceae	* <i>Combretum psidioides</i>	7.4(0.43)	0.01(0.010)	33	6.6(4.17)
Combretaceae	<i>Combretum zeyheri</i>	6.3(0.35)	0.01(0.000)	61	10.2(3.03)
Euphorbiaceae	* <i>Croton gratissimus</i>	6.1(1.55)	<0.01(NA)	4	4(NA)
Ebenaceae	* <i>Diospyros batocana</i>	8.4(2.14)	<0.01(0.000)	2	1(0.00)
Ebenaceae	* <i>Diospyros kirkii</i>	9.3(1.64)	0.03(NA)	11	11(NA)
Apocynaceae	<i>Diplorhynchus condylocarpon</i>	8.2(0.52)	0.08(0.060)	174	19.3(7.57)
Malvaceae	* <i>Dombeya rotundifolia</i>	5.5(0.19)	<0.01(NA)	2	2(NA)
Celastraceae	* <i>Elachyptera parvifolia</i>	7.3(NA)	<0.01(NA)	1	1(NA)
Meliaceae	* <i>Entandrophragma spicatum</i>	14.6(NA)	<0.01(NA)	1	1(NA)
Fabaceae	<i>Erythrophleum africanum</i>	9.0(0.84)	0.10(0.040)	128	18.3(6.82)
Rubiaceae	* <i>Gardenia volkensii</i>	5.6(1.15)	<0.01(0.000)	5	2.5(1.50)
Fabaceae	* <i>Guibourtia coleosperma</i>	7.2(1.00)	0.02(0.010)	31	6.2(3.54)
Phyllanthaceae	<i>Hymenocardia acida</i>	5.9(1.25)	<0.01(NA)	6	6(NA)
Fabaceae	<i>Julbernardia paniculata</i>	10.1(0.21)	0.92(0.200)	1624	162.4(50.60)
Fabaceae	* <i>Lonchocarpus nelsii</i>	13.4(0.88)	0.15(0.030)	165	15(2.77)
Dipterocarpaceae	* <i>Monotes angolensis</i>	7.4(0.83)	<0.01(0.000)	2	1(0.00)
Ochnaceae	* <i>Ochna pulchra</i>	6.5(0.80)	0.01(0.000)	26	8.7(3.76)
Picrodendraceae	* <i>Oldfieldia dactylophylla</i>	8.5(NA)	<0.01(NA)	1	1(NA)
Fabaceae	* <i>Peltophorum africanum</i>	11.5(NA)	<0.01(NA)	1	1(NA)
Fabaceae	<i>Pericopsis angolensis</i>	8.4(0.61)	0.06(0.020)	97	12.1(5.08)
Phyllanthaceae	<i>Pseudolachnostylis maprouneifolia</i>	6.7(0.45)	0.03(0.010)	84	9.3(3.00)
Combretaceae	* <i>Pteleopsis anisoptera</i>	6.8(0.46)	0.07(0.020)	81	20.2(15.11)
Fabaceae	<i>Pterocarpus angolensis</i>	13.0(0.61)	0.15(0.100)	102	17(8.65)
Fabaceae	* <i>Pterocarpus lucens</i>	6.9(0.94)	<0.01(NA)	4	4(NA)
Rubiaceae	* <i>Rothmannia engleriana</i>	6.8(0.66)	<0.01(0.000)	5	1.7(0.67)
Euphorbiaceae	* <i>Schinziophyton rautanenii</i>	8.0(2.82)	<0.01(NA)	3	3(NA)
Polygalaceae	<i>Securidaca longepedunculata</i>	7.3(1.12)	<0.01(0.010)	4	2(1.00)
Loganiaceae	<i>Strychnos cocculoides</i>	10.4(1.17)	0.03(0.020)	19	6.3(3.53)
Loganiaceae	* <i>Strychnos pungens</i>	6.1(0.48)	<0.01(0.000)	18	3.6(0.93)
Loganiaceae	<i>Strychnos spinosa</i>	6.8(0.36)	0.02(0.010)	97	9.7(4.07)
Combretaceae	* <i>Terminalia brachystemma</i>	6.5(0.21)	0.04(0.020)	174	29(12.04)
Combretaceae	<i>Terminalia sericea</i>	7.1(0.28)	0.06(0.030)	214	23.8(12.18)
Ximeniaceae	<i>Ximenia americana</i>	6.1(0.53)	<0.01(0.000)	7	1.8(0.25)
Sapindaceae	<i>Zantha africana</i>	9.4(1.12)	0.01(NA)	6	6(NA)
Rhamnaceae	* <i>Ziziphus abyssinica</i>	5.9(1.13)	<0.01(NA)	2	2(NA)

Alpha diversity in Bicuar National Park was low compared to other sites (Figure 3). Mean  $H'$  across plots in Bicuar National Park was  $1.6 \pm 0.13$ . An ANOVA showed a significant difference in  $H'$  among sites ( $F(3,60) = 7.54$ ,  $p < 0.01$ , Table 3), and a post-hoc Tukey's test showed that  $H'$  in plots in Bicuar National Park was significantly different from those in DRC ( $H' = 2.7 \pm 0.19$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), Mozambique ( $H' = 2.4 \pm 0.2$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and Tanzania ( $H' = 2.2 \pm 0.11$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Variation in  $H'$  is large within Bicuar National Park, with  $H'$  ranging from 0.85 to 2.56, but this was a similar range to other sites. In contrast, the range of species richness within Bicuar National Park was much lower than other sites, suggesting that the wide range in  $H'$  was caused by variation in abundance evenness.



**Figure 3.** Variation of alpha diversity estimates and basal area among sites. Boxes bound the 1st and 3rd quartiles, with the median within the box. Whiskers represent 1.5 times the interquartile range plus or minus the 1st and 3rd quartiles, respectively. Values found beyond the whiskers are shown individually as points. Letter labels above each box refer to groupings from post-hoc Tukey's tests on the ANOVA of each diversity/structure variable. Sites sharing a letter do not differ significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ).

229

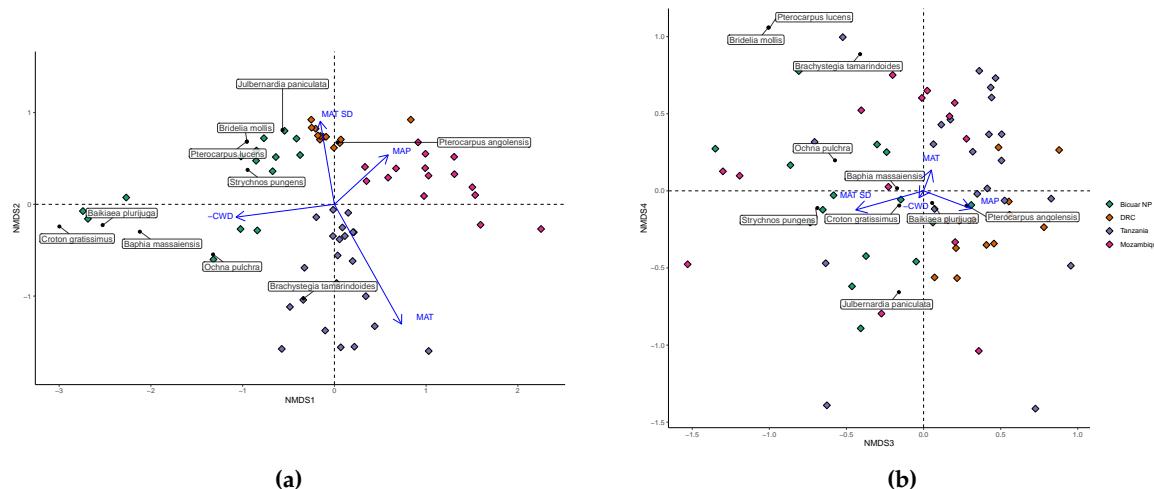
### 230 3.2. Beta diversity

The NMDS of plot species composition among one hectare plots was run with four dimensions. The stress value was 0.10. Plot diversity in Bicuar National Park formed three distinct groups within axes 1 and 2 of the NMDS ordination. Bicuar plots 9, 13, and 15 were characterised by high abundances of *Baikiaea plurijuga*, *Baphia massaiensis* and *Croton gratissimus*, according to species scores from the NMDS. Bicuar plots 4, 11, and 12 were characterised by *Brachystegia tamarindoides*, and *Ochna pulchra*. The third group consisting of the remaining seven plots surprisingly had a species composition most similar to that of plots in the DRC group according to the NMDS, sharing the core miombo species of *Julbernardia paniculata* and *Pterocarpus angolensis*. This group of plots in Bicuar National Park was further characterised by the abundance of *Pterocarpus lucens*, *Strychnos pungens* and *Bridelia mollis* however, which were not present in the DRC plots. All environmental factors fitted to the NMDS ordination correlated significantly with the grouping of plots (Figure 4a). MAT explained the most variation in plot position on the first two NMDS axes ( $R^2 = 0.75$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), followed by CWD ( $R^2 = 0.54$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), the seasonality of MAT ( $R^2 = 0.46$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and MAP ( $R^2 = 0.4$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Variation in MAP explained much of the difference among plots in Bicuar National Park versus those in Tanzania and Mozambique. Axes 3 and 4 showed a greater degree of overlap in species composition among

**Table 3.** Results of ANOVA tests for alpha diversity metrics and plot basal area, among the four sites. Mean values for each site with standard errors in parentheses are shown. Asterisks indicate the p-value of individual sites in each ANOVA (\*\*<0.001, \*\*<0.01, \*<0.05, .<0.1).

	Dependent variable:			
	Species richness	Basal area	Shannon ( $H'$ )	Shannon equit. ( $E_H$ )
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
DRC	27.920*** (5.538)	4.175*** (0.452)	1.055*** (0.236)	0.080 (0.053)
Tanzania	12.440** (4.788)	-0.721* (0.391)	0.605*** (0.204)	0.064 (0.046)
Mozambique	27.930*** (5.221)	0.653 (0.427)	0.792*** (0.223)	0.028 (0.050)
Constant	14.330*** (3.692)	2.778*** (0.302)	1.617*** (0.158)	0.631*** (0.035)
Observations	64	64	64	64
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.363	0.691	0.237	0.003
Residual Std. Error (df = 60)	14.300	1.168	0.611	0.137
F Statistic (df = 3; 60)	12.980***	48.040***	7.537***	1.000

246 plot groups, with plots from Bicuar National Park similar to a select few plots in both Tanzania and  
 247 Mozambique (Figure 4b). Axis 3 distinguished plots in Bicuar NP from those in DRC, while plots  
 248 from all geographic area overlapped in their distribution across Axis 4. Axes 3 and 4 largely reflected  
 249 distribution patterns of less abundant species and not the dominant species in the vegetation.



**Figure 4.** Environmental factors fitted to axes 1 and 2 (a), 3 and 4 (b) of the NMDS ordination of species composition of one hectare plots, showing the variation in plot species composition within and among sites. Diamonds are plot scores coloured by site. The lengths of arrows indicating environmental factor fits to the first two ordination axes are scaled by  $R^2$ . Arrows point in the direction of increasing values of that environmental factor. Note that Climatic Water Deficit (CWD) is expressed in more intuitively as the negative inverse of CWD, thus larger values indicate higher levels of CWD.

250 The pairwise Sørensen coefficient of percentage similarity ( $S_S$ ) showed that the species  
 251 composition of plots in Bicuar National Park had low similarity with other sites in the study, sharing

<sup>252</sup> few species with other sites (**Table 4**). Similar to the NMDS, these results show that plots in Bicuar  
<sup>253</sup> National Park are most similar to those found in DRC.

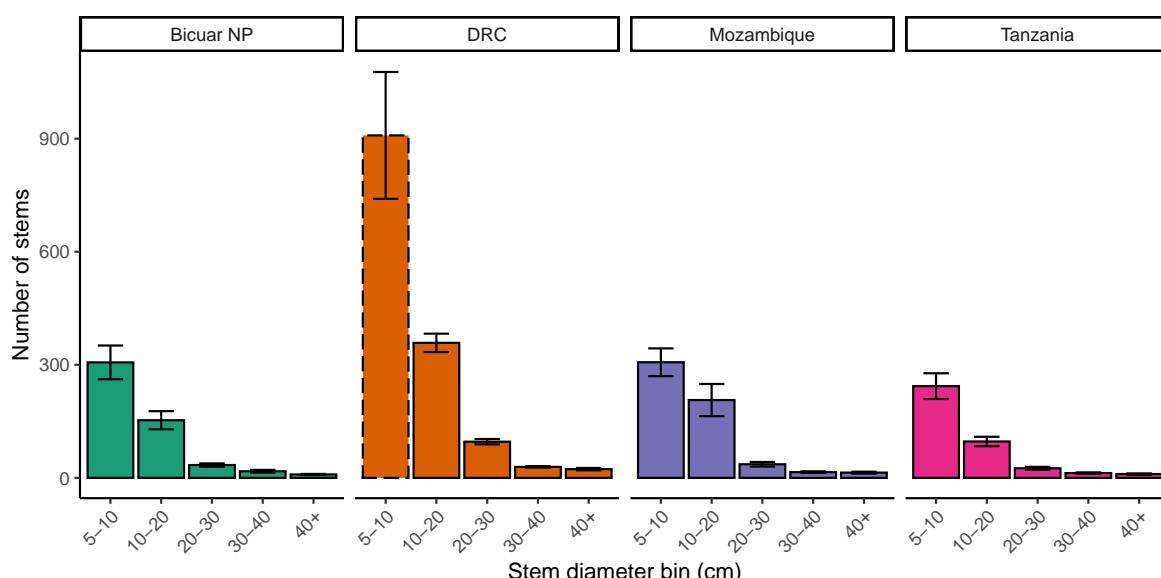
**Table 4.** Pairwise beta diversity comparison of plot groups measured by the Sørensen coefficient ( $S_S$ ) of percentage similarity of aggregated plot level data from each of the four sites. Values in parentheses are the number of species unique to each site in each comparison.

Site 1	Site 2	$S_S$	Shared species
Bicuar NP(34)	DRC(74)	20.6	14
Bicuar NP(34)	Tanzania(147)	13.4	14
Bicuar NP(37)	Mozambique(236)	7.5	11
DRC(64)	Tanzania(137)	19.3	24
DRC(69)	Mozambique(228)	11.3	19
Tanzania(139)	Mozambique(225)	10.8	22

### <sup>254</sup> 3.3. Woodland structure

<sup>255</sup> Mean basal area of plots in Bicuar National Park was  $2.78 \pm 0.122 \text{ m}^2 \text{ ha}^{-1}$ , ranging from  $1.86$  to  
<sup>256</sup>  $8.53 \text{ m}^2 \text{ ha}^{-1}$  (**Figure 3**). An ANOVA showed a significant difference in basal area among sites ( $F(3,60)$   
<sup>257</sup>  $= 48.04$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), and a post-hoc Tukey's test showed that basal area in Bicuar National Park was  
<sup>258</sup> significantly lower than plots in DRC ( $\text{BA} = 6.95 \pm 0.327 \text{ m}^2 \text{ ha}^{-1}$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), but there were no significant  
<sup>259</sup> differences between Bicuar and Mozambique ( $\text{BA} = 3.43 \pm 0.409 \text{ m}^2 \text{ ha}^{-1}$ ,  $p = 0.43$ ) or Tanzania ( $\text{BA}$   
<sup>260</sup>  $= 2.06 \pm 0.253 \text{ m}^2 \text{ ha}^{-1}$ ,  $p = 0.26$ ) (**Figure 3**). Additionally, Bicuar plots had less variation in basal area  
<sup>261</sup> among plots than other sites. Plots in Bicuar with the highest basal area were dominated by *Baikiaea*  
<sup>262</sup> *plurijuga* and *Baphia massaiensis* (Plots 9, 13, and 15).

<sup>263</sup> The stem diameter abundance distribution in Bicuar National Park was comparable with other  
<sup>264</sup> sites (**Figure 5**), albeit with fewer stems in each class. The slope of log mean stem size distribution  
<sup>265</sup> among diameter bins was  $-0.92 \pm 0.067$  in Bicuar National Park,  $-0.99 \pm 0.067$  in DRC,  $-0.89 \pm 0.065$  in  
<sup>266</sup> Tanzania, and  $-0.87 \pm 0.075$  in Mozambique.

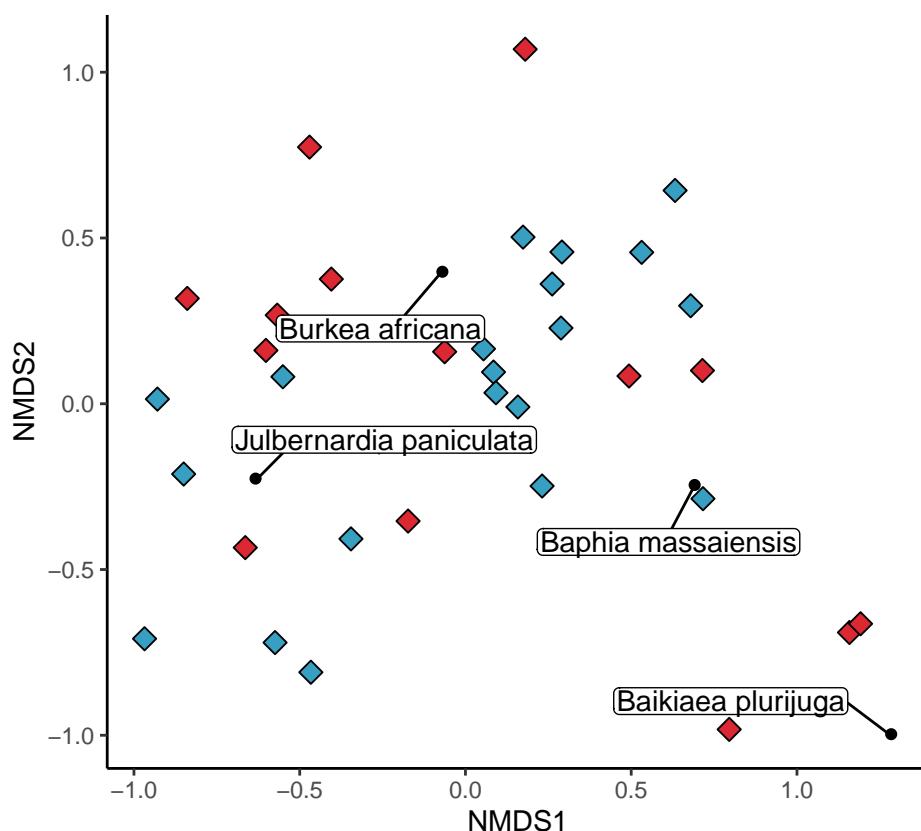


**Figure 5.** Ranked variation between plots in stem number within each site, with bars according to stem diameter class. Error bars are the mean  $\pm 1$  standard error. The dashed bar for the DRC 5-10 cm stem diameter class indicates that these measurements were estimated by extrapolating a linear regression of log stem abundance across the available stem diameter classes for DRC.

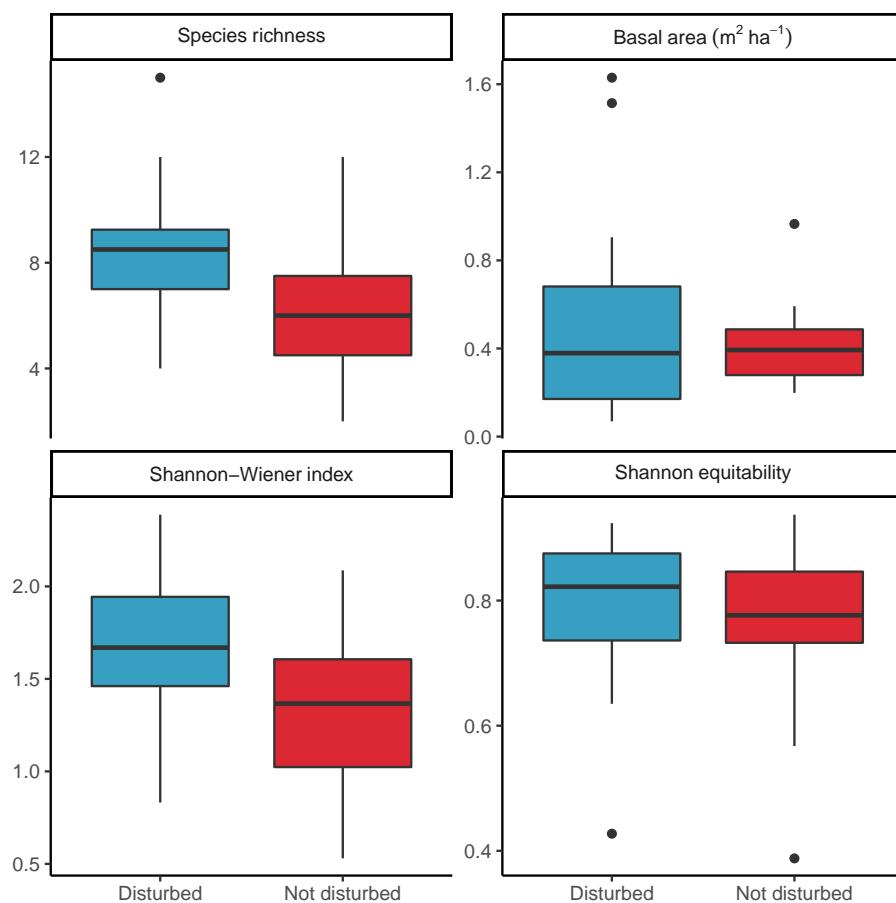
267 3.4. Effect of disturbance via shifting cultivation on diversity within Bicuar National Park

268 There was a clear difference in the species composition of previously farmed disturbed woodland  
269 plots and undisturbed woodland plots, but with some overlap ([Figure 6](#)). Notably, Plots 4 and 7 in  
270 putatively undisturbed woodland have a species composition more resembling the disturbed plots.  
271 These two plots were dominated by *Brachystegia tamarindoides* and *Burkea africana*, with *B. africana* being  
272 a species which occurred frequently as a pioneer in the disturbed plots. The undisturbed plots 15, 13,  
273 and 9 represent distinct outliers in the NMDS. These three plots were dominated by *Baikiaea plurijuga*  
274 which was not encountered in the disturbed plots. The most common species in the disturbed plots  
275 was *Baphia massaiensis* ( $n = 158$ ), with a mean stem diameter of  $6.1 \pm 1.87$  cm, while in the undisturbed  
276 plots the most common species was *Julbernardia paniculata* ( $n = 125$ ), with a mean stem diameter of  
277  $11.8 \pm 7.24$  cm. Mean alpha diversity was marginally higher in disturbed plots ( $H' = 1.7 \pm 0.08$ ) than in  
278 undisturbed plots ( $H' = 1.3 \pm 0.14$ ) and an ANOVA showed that there was a significant difference in  
279  $H'$  between the two plot types ( $F(1,33) = 5.91$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) ([Figure 7](#), [Table 5](#)). Mean plot species richness  
280 was also lower in undisturbed plots ( $6.4 \pm 0.86$ ) than disturbed plots ( $8.7 \pm 0.53$ ). Mean  $E_{H'}$  was  $0.8 \pm 0$   
281 in disturbed plots and  $0.7 \pm 0.04$  in undisturbed plots but there was no significant difference between  
282 disturbed and undisturbed plots according to an ANOVA ( $F(1,33) = 1.54$ ,  $p = 0.22$ ). 11 species were  
283 found only in the disturbed plots and not in the undisturbed plots. The most common of these were  
284 *Combretum celastroides* ( $n = 30$ ), *Acacia reficiens* ( $n = 14$ ), and *Gardenia ternifolia* ( $n = 11$ ). 7 were found  
285 only in undisturbed plots, the most common being *Brachystegia spiciformis* ( $n = 61$ ), *Baikiaea plurijuga* ( $n$   
286 = 43) and *Combretum apiculatum* ( $n = 9$ ). Mean basal area was higher in undisturbed plots ( $0.5 \pm 0.07 \text{ m}^2 \text{ ha}^{-1}$ )  
287 than disturbed plots ( $0.5 \pm 0.1 \text{ m}^2 \text{ ha}^{-1}$ ).

288 Mean stem density was higher in disturbed plots ( $900 \pm 338.36 \text{ stems ha}^{-1}$ ) than undisturbed plots  
289 ( $520.3 \pm 220.22 \text{ stems ha}^{-1}$ ). The stem diameter abundance distribution in disturbed plots showed  
290 that many more stems were from the 5-10 cm diameter class in disturbed plots, while the disturbed  
291 plots had fewer stems in the 10-20 cm size class. Both disturbed and undisturbed plots had a similar  
292 abundance of stems in larger stem diameter classes ([Figure 8](#)). Multi-stemmed trees in disturbed plots  
293 tended to have a greater number of stems per tree ( $3.4 \pm 2.35$ ) than multi-stemmed trees in undisturbed  
294 plots ( $2.4 \pm 0.8$ ).



**Figure 6.** NMDS ordination of species composition of 20x50 m (0.1 ha) plots showing plot scores as coloured diamonds located in disturbed (blue) and undisturbed (red) areas of woodland in Bicuar National Park.

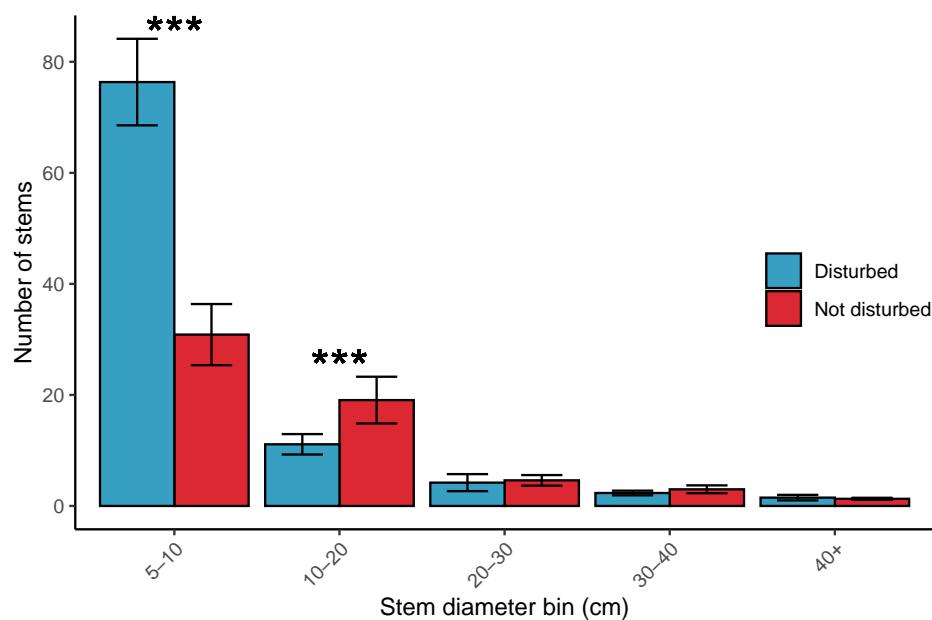


**Figure 7.** The variation in diversity and woodland structure between disturbed and undisturbed 20×50 m (0.1 ha) plots in Bicuar National Park. Boxes bound the 1st and 3rd quartiles, with the median within the box. Whiskers represent 1.5 times the interquartile range plus or minus the 1st and 3rd quartiles, respectively. Values found beyond the whiskers are shown individually as points.

295

**Table 5.** Results of ANOVA tests for alpha diversity metrics and plot basal area, between disturbed and undisturbed plots in Bicuar National Park. Mean values for each group of plots with standard errors in parentheses are shown. Asterisks indicate the p-value of individual sites in each ANOVA (\*\*<0.001, \*\*<0.01, \*<0.05, .<0.1).

	Dependent variable:			
	Species richness	Basal area	Shannon ( $H'$ )	Shannon equit. ( $E_H$ )
Disturbed	2.450*** (0.859)	0.098 (0.122)	0.372** (0.140)	0.035 (0.045)
Constant	6.200*** (0.650)	0.416*** (0.092)	1.311*** (0.106)	0.756*** (0.034)
Observations	35	35	35	35
R <sup>2</sup>	0.198	0.019	0.176	0.018
Residual Std. Error (df = 33)	2.516	0.357	0.410	0.131
F Statistic (df = 1; 33)	8.126***	0.639	7.040**	0.617



**Figure 8.** Ranked variation between disturbed and undisturbed plots in stem number, with bars according to stem diameter class. Error bars are the mean  $\pm$  1 standard error. Asterisks above pairs of bars refer to the p-values of Poisson general linear models which tested whether disturbed and undisturbed plots differ in the number of stems for different stem diameter classes ( $^{***}<0.001$ ,  $^{**}<0.01$ ,  $^{*}<0.05$ ,  $.<0.1$ ).

#### 296 4. Discussion

##### 297 4.1. Comparison of Bicuar National Park with other woodlands across the miombo ecoregion

298 We compared the tree species diversity and woodland structure of arid woodlands in Bicuar  
 299 National Park in southwest Angola with three other woodland sites across the miombo ecoregion. Our  
 300 results show that Bicuar National Park is distinct in both woodland structure and species composition  
 301 from these other woodlands. Notably, plots in Bicuar National Park contained 27 tree species which did  
 302 not occur at other sites. This lends support for the Huíla Plateau as an important area for conservation  
 303 of southern African woodland landscapes. The woodlands in Bicuar National Park were of low tree  
 304 basal area, with few large trees except in plots dominated by *Baikiaea plurijuga*. Many other studies  
 305 have drawn a relationship between water availability and basal area [46,47], and our study supports  
 306 this, with Bicuar National Park being the most arid of the four sites considered in our study. The  
 307 NMDS of species composition also suggests that plots in Bicuar National Park are influenced by aridity.  
 308 While there are more arid woodlands within southern Africa, with Mopane woodlands for example  
 309 often being particularly dry, these plots in Bicuar National park represent particularly dry miombo  
 310 woodlands.

##### 311 4.2. Delineation of woodland types within Bicuar National Park

312 Within Bicuar National Park, three distinct woodland types were identified. The first, dominated  
 313 by *Baikiaea plurijuga* and *Baphia massaiensis* represents the Baikiaea woodland type commonly found  
 314 to the south of the miombo ecoregion [48]. This is supported by Chisingui *et al.* [23] who also found  
 315 Baikiaea woodlands as a distinct woodland type in the Park. *B. plurijuga* has been identified as an  
 316 important species for conservation, being attractive for selective logging due to its large stature [49,50].  
 317 The woodlands created by *B. plurijuga* are also an important habitat for elephants (*Loxodonta africana*)  
 318 [51,52], with Bicuar National Park and Mupa National Park being key refugia for this animal in the  
 319 Huíla plateau region. The second woodland type, dominated by *Brachystegia tamarindoides* and *Ochna*

320 *pulchra* represents a form of small stature woodland with a shrubby understorey and sparse canopy  
321 trees, which commonly occurs as a result of repeated disturbance by fire, or poor soil structure [53].  
322 The remaining plots resemble the more archetypical miombo woodland with *Julbernardia paniculata*,  
323 though with a number of species not seen in plots further to the east in the miombo ecoregion such as  
324 *Strychnos pungens*. This mosaic of woodland types makes Bicuar National Park a valuable reservoir of  
325 diversity and strengthens the case for the Park being a key conservation asset within the Huíla plateau  
326 and the larger southern African region. While there are regional boundaries between Baikiaeae and  
327 miombo woodlands [1], within Bicuar National Park it is likely that the mosaic of woodland types has  
328 been created by a combination of soil water capacity and disturbance history. Bicuar has a distinct  
329 landscape of wide shallow grassy valleys surrounded by woodland on higher ground (Figure 2). On  
330 some of these high points the soil is particularly sandy, resembling the Kalahari sand soils found  
331 further east and south [20], and these areas coincide with the presence of Baikiaeae woodlands [5].  
332 High levels of disturbance by fire in these Baikiaeae patches may additionally prevent a transition to an  
333 alternative woodland type via the control of sapling growth.

334 4.3. Comparison of disturbed and undisturbed woodland plots

335 Previously disturbed woodlands around the edge of Bicuar National Park were found to share  
336 many species with undisturbed plots in the Park, but with some additional species which did not  
337 occur in the undisturbed plots. They also lacked notable archetypical miombo species which tend to  
338 form larger canopy trees such as *Brachystegia spiciformis* and contained very few *Julbernardia paniculata*,  
339 leading to a distinct woodland composition. The species diversity of these disturbed patches was  
340 higher on average than was found in the undisturbed plots, a result which has been corroborated by  
341 other studies in miombo woodlands [54–56]. Other studies have shown a peak in species richness  
342 during woodland regrowth as pioneer species take advantage of a low competition environment, while  
343 some later stage woodland species remain as residuals that survived the original disturbance [30,57].  
344 Gonçalves *et al.* [30] particularly, notes the dominance of *Pericopsis angolensis* and *Combretum* spp. as  
345 light-demanding pioneer species, which were found to be abundant in the disturbed plots here. This  
346 suggests that reclamation of previously farmed and abandoned land for landscape conservation in this  
347 ecological context is a valuable management strategy.

348 In disturbed plots near the edge of the Park, there was a lack of species which tend to grow to  
349 large canopy trees, possibly due to them being repeatedly felled for timber prior to reclamation by the  
350 Park, or due to them being unable to recruit into a more open, shrubby woodland. Despite this lack of  
351 canopy forming tree species, some disturbed plots had a greater basal area than undisturbed plots,  
352 possibly due to high levels of coppicing in these plots or a divergent fire history. Indeed, mean stem  
353 density was higher in undisturbed plots. This can lead to species that would otherwise remain small  
354 producing a much larger basal area as they grow multiple stems under high disturbance conditions  
355 [58]. The most common species in the disturbed plots were *Combretum psidoides*, *Combretum collinum*  
356 and *Terminalia sericea*, members of the Combretaceae family, all of which more commonly remain as  
357 smaller multi-stemmed trees in disturbed woodlands, rather than growing to larger canopy trees [59].  
358 This result could be considered at odds with other studies which report lower woody biomass in plots  
359 that have experienced harvesting (e.g. Muvengwi *et al.* 60). It is important to consider however that  
360 our study took place in plots that were measured after farming had been abandoned for at least 7 years,  
361 with time for regeneration to occur. It is possible that over time tree basal area will decrease as coppiced  
362 shrubby trees are replaced by core miombo species in the transition back to miombo woodland [30].  
363 Indeed, other studies in miombo woodlands across the ecoregion have reported substantial recovery  
364 within seven years, with high levels of biomass accumulation in previously diturbed plots [30,61].  
365 Bicuar National Park offers a valuable case study to track woodland regeneration in real-time over the  
366 next decade in these previously farmed and now protected woodland plots, which could improve our  
367 understanding of this potential post-disturbance peak in basal area.

368 In conclusion, the woodlands of Bicuar National Park represent an important woodland refuge  
369 at the far western extent of the miombo ecoregion. These woodlands, both those disturbed by  
370 previous farming activity and those which remain undisturbed, possess a number of species not found  
371 commonly in other miombo woodland plots around the region. They may also house important genetic  
372 variation for widespread species, representing populations adapted to more arid conditions. Our study  
373 highlights the variation in species composition across the miombo ecoregion and underlines the need  
374 for studies which incorporate plot data from multiple locations to reach generalisable conclusions  
375 about the region as a whole. Additionally, the installation of 15 one hectare woodland monitoring  
376 plots and a further twenty 20x50 m plots in previously farmed and now protected land offer a valuable  
377 natural laboratory to further explore the dynamics of dry miombo woodlands of the Huíla plateau.  
378 Bicuar National Park should be considered a key conservation asset within the Huíla plateau and  
379 within the miombo ecoregion as a whole, as a successfully protected example of an arid woodland  
380 mosaic.

381 **Author Contributions:** Investigation and project administration was conducted by J.L.G., F.M.G., J.J.T. and A.V.T.  
382 (Bicuar National Park), C.M.R. (Tanzania, Mozambique), J.I.M. and M.N.S. (DRC). The study was conceived  
383 by J.L.G. and K.G.D.. Data curation, methodology, formal analysis and writing—original draft preparation was  
384 conducted by J.L.G.. All authors contributed to writing—review and editing.

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394 Bicuar National Park.

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396 study; in the collection, analyses, or interpretation of data; in the writing of the manuscript, or in the decision to  
397 publish the results.

## 398 Abbreviations

399 The following abbreviations are used in this manuscript:

400 ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
DD	Decimal Degrees
MAP	Mean Annual Precipitation
401 MAT	Mean Annual Temperature
MAT SD	Standard Deviation of Mean Annual Temperature (Seasonality)
NMDS	Non-metric Multidimensional Scaling
NP	National Park

## 402 Appendix A. Estimation of stem diameter at 1.3 m via tree taper

```

403
404 1 ##' @author Casey M. Ryan
405 2 ##' @return d130, the estimated diameter at a POM of 1.3 m (in cm).
406 3 ##' @param d_in the diameter measured at the POM (in cm)
407 4 ##' @param POM the height of the POM (in m)
408 5 ##' @details The adjustment based on tree taper model developed as part of
409 6 ##' the ACES project (Abrupt Changes in Ecosystem Services
410 7 ##' https://miomboaces.wordpress.com/), using data from the miombo of Niassa.
411 8 ##' The model is a cubic polynomial, with three equations for different sized stems.
412 9 ##' @section Warning: POMs >1.7 m are not adjusted.
413 10 POMadj <- function(d_in, POM) {
414 11   stopifnot(is.numeric(d_in),
415 12     is.numeric(POM),
416 13     POM >= 0,
417 14     sum(is.na(POM))==0,
418 15     length(POM) == length(d_in))
419 16   if (any(POM > 1.7))
420 17     warning("POMs >1.7 m are outside the calibration data, no correction applied")
421 18   NAS <- is.na(d_in)
422 19   d_in_clean <- d_in[!NAS]
423 20   POM_clean <- POM[!NAS]
424 21   # define the size class edges:
425 22   edges <- c(5.0, 15.8, 26.6, 37.4)
426 23   sm <- d_in_clean < edges[2]
427 24   med <- d_in_clean >= edges[2] & d_in_clean < edges[3]
428 25   lg <- d_in_clean >= edges[3]
429 26
430 27   # compute predictions for delta_d, for all size classes
431 28   delta_d <- data.frame(
432 29     # if small:
433 30     small = 3.4678+-5.2428 *
434 31       POM_clean + 2.9401 *
435 32       POM_clean^2+-0.7141 *
436 33       POM_clean^3,
437 34     # if med
438 35     med = 4.918+-8.819 *
439 36       POM_clean + 6.367 *
440 37       POM_clean^2+-1.871 *
441 38       POM_clean^3,
442 39     # if large
443 40     large = 9.474+-18.257 *
444 41       POM_clean + 12.873 *
445 42       POM_clean^2+-3.325 *
446 43       POM_clean^3
447 44   )
448 45   # index into the right size class
449 46   dd <- NA_real_
450 47   dd[sm] <- delta_d$small[sm]
451 48   dd[med] <- delta_d$med[med]
452 49   dd[lg] <- delta_d$large[lg]
453 50   dd[POM_clean > 1.7] <- 0 # to avoid extrapolation mess
454 51
455 52   # add NAs back in
456 53   d130 <- NA
457 54   d130[NAS] <- NA
458 55   d130[!NAS] <- d_in_clean - dd
459 56
460 57   if (any(d130[!NAS] < 0))
461 58     warning("Negative d130 estimated, replaced with NA")
462 59   d130[d130 <= 0 & !is.na(d130)] <- NA
463 60   return(d130)
464 61 }
465 62

```

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