Reaching the point of forest transition - the point at which deforestation ceases – can be achieved via one of many transition pathways (Lambin & Meyfroidt 2010). Research has however, shown that abandonment of agricultural land by local farmers (in favour of intensification elsewhere), small holder tree planting, and crisis narratives (e.g., flood prevention) are common drivers of forest transitions (Rudel et al. 2020).

Cassava is not a valuable crop, yet it was the third most designated crop for new ELCs during the study period (4.9% of new ELCs, Table S18). It is unclear what is driving the negative relationship between cassava and new ELCs after two years.