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Title: Shrubs mediate forest start-up and patch dynamics in a semiarid landscape

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## ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT

### Shrubs mediate forest start-up and patch dynamics in a semiarid landscape

Running title: Plant interactions & forest dynamics

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#### **Highlights:**

- Plant-plant interactions drive forest patch initiation and dynamics
- Forest formation in this semiarid environment depend on fog water interception
- Baccharis vernalis shrubs facilitate tree establishment outside forest patches
- Facilitation-competition balance explains spatial pattern of the forest-shrub mosaic

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