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Detection of fine scale niche assembly in a tropical forest through analysis of indirect environmental variables

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Highlights

Niche assembly processes may play a role in very local scale community structuring.
We found evidences of this role for a scale finer than that considered elsewhere.
Influence of the environmental variables varied between species functional groups.
Non-pioneer species were mainly affected by elevation, a proxy for soil properties.
Pioneer species responded to tallest tree height, a proxy for canopy disturbance.

Abstract

Topographic or forest structural variables have been called indirect environmental variables in forest ecology studies. We tested the hypothesis that relative elevation and

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