

1 **Non-native plant legacies: site-dependent effects on deadwood fungal community**  
2 **species and functions**

3

4 Baptiste J. Wijas<sup>1,2\*</sup>, Habacuc Flores-Moreno<sup>3</sup>, Steven D. Allison<sup>4,5</sup>, Lucas A. Cernusak<sup>6</sup>,  
5 Alexander W. Cheesman<sup>6</sup>, Jeff R. Powell<sup>7</sup>, Amy E. Zanne<sup>1</sup>

6 1. Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies, Millbrook, NY, USA

7 2. School of the Environment, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Qld, 4067 Australia

8 3. Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, Brisbane, QLD,  
9 Australia.

10 4. Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, University of California Irvine,  
11 Irvine, CA, 92697, USA

12 5. Department of Earth System Science, University of California Irvine, Irvine, CA,  
13 92697, USA

14 6. College of Science and Engineering, James Cook University, Cairns, 4878, QLD,  
15 Australia.

16 7. Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment, Western Sydney University, Richmond,  
17 NSW, 2753, Australia

18

19 \*Corresponding author: bwijas@gmail.com

20

21 **Summary**

22

23 1) The introduction of non-native species has consequences for ecosystem functions  
24 including deadwood decay. Non-native deadwood is a novel substrate for  
25 consumers, such as fungi, which drive large portions of carbon cycling, but their  
26 response to a novel substrate may depend on their local communities and  
27 surrounding environmental conditions.

28 2) We quantified decomposition rates, chemical composition and fungal communities of  
29 native and non-native deadwood across dry savanna and wet rainforest sites. We  
30 used six and five native angiosperm species in the rainforest and savanna,  
31 respectively as well as a non-native conifer in both.

32 3) Wood-dwelling fungal communities differed between sites and specific fungal clades  
33 showed different relative abundances in native versus non-native wood depending on  
34 the site. Non-native deadwood decayed slower than native deadwood with similar  
35 chemical properties in the rainforest but not in the savanna.

36 4) Our results suggest that depending on the environmental conditions in which non-  
37 native plants are introduced, the response of ecological communities and ecosystem

38 processes differ. Such effects could be further amplified as non-native introductions  
39 become invasive, including the spread of decay and disease, forms in which carbon  
40 and nutrients are released and/or function of important plant-fungal relationships.

41

42 **Key words:** Australia, deadwood, ecosystem function, fungi, invasions, non-native, *Pinus*,  
43 tropical

44

## 45 **Introduction**

46

47 The introduction of non-native plants has important repercussions for ecosystem functions,  
48 such as carbon (C) and nutrient cycling; decomposition of plant matter represents an  
49 important process of returning elements to the atmosphere or soil (Wijas *et al.*, 2024a).

50 Studies on leaf litter decomposition found that non-native plants usually have higher  
51 decomposition rates than their native counterparts (Liao *et al.*, 2008; Ehrenfeld, 2010). The  
52 main reason why non-native plants tend to have increased decomposition rates is via the  
53 ecological strategy favouring fast growth creating leaves with lower C:nitrogen (N) ratios that  
54 decompose faster than leaves from native species (Ehrenfeld, 2010). However, this  
55 response may be context dependent based on the non-native plant species introduced  
56 (Castro-Díez *et al.*, 2014). For instance, coniferous species, which are non-native to many  
57 ecosystems around the globe (Nuñez *et al.*, 2017), are known to have low-quality litter for  
58 decomposers (Weedon *et al.*, 2009; Pietsch *et al.*, 2014).

59

60 While most decomposition studies focus on leaf litter, woody stems are another large plant  
61 biomass investment that generally decomposes slower than leaf litter (Pietsch *et al.*, 2014).  
62 Deadwood represents ~10% of C stocks in forests (Pan *et al.*, 2024; Wijas *et al.*, 2024a),  
63 and there is still large uncertainty as to the main drivers of its decay rates (Wijas *et al.*,  
64 2024a). Three major components determine decay rates of wood: environmental conditions,  
65 wood construction including chemical properties, and decomposer communities (Wijas *et al.*,  
66 2024a). Depending on the wood construction, which typically varies among species, and the  
67 environment in which plants are introduced, there may be large variations in their impacts on  
68 the decomposer community affecting decomposition.

69

70 Globally, microbes, especially fungi, are the most widespread decomposers of deadwood,  
71 with many species coexisting and competing for resources in a given piece of deadwood  
72 (Maynard *et al.*, 2018; Lee *et al.*, 2019). There are many uncertainties in how fungal  
73 community composition affects decomposition rates. In laboratory inoculation studies with a  
74 single deadwood and different fungal species, decomposition rates depended on the initial

75 fungal species that colonized the wood (Fukami *et al.*, 2010; Fukasawa & Matsukura, 2021).  
76 In nature though, such relationships are hard to disentangle as deadwood chemistry and  
77 fungal communities interact to influence decay rates (Lee *et al.*, 2022; Huang *et al.*, 2022;  
78 Yang *et al.*, 2024). For instance, deadwood decomposition is faster with higher N,  
79 phosphorus (P), and pH (Weedon *et al.*, 2009; Freschet *et al.*, 2012), as well as lower lignin  
80 especially as guaiacyl versus syringyl (Law *et al.*, 2023). Such influences can be  
81 independent of the fungal community in the deadwood (Lee *et al.*, 2022; Yang *et al.*, 2024).  
82 Ultimately however, the environment may be the most important driver of decay as it  
83 determines decomposer decay efficiencies; for instance, increasing temperatures lead to  
84 higher decay rates of wood (Zanne *et al.*, 2022). As we explore the consequences of non-  
85 native plant decomposition on ecosystem processes such as deadwood decay, it is  
86 important to understand the relative roles of wood chemistry, fungal community composition  
87 and environment in these novel systems.

88

89 Fungi are a diverse group of organisms, but those involved directly in the decay process of  
90 deadwood are mostly found within the Basidiomycetes and especially within the class  
91 *Agaricomycetes* (Li *et al.*, 2022). Other groups of fungi (e.g., *Ascomycetes*) that are not  
92 decayers may be found within wood as well. Species-specific chemical properties and  
93 environmental conditions of deadwood determine the colonisation and survival of wood-  
94 dwelling fungi (Krah *et al.*, 2018b; Purahong *et al.*, 2018, 2024; Fukasawa, 2021; Lepinay *et al.*,  
95 2021; Brabcová *et al.*, 2022; Moll *et al.*, 2024). In particular, some fungi have host-  
96 specific adaptations to decay conifer over angiosperm wood (Krah *et al.*, 2018a). For  
97 instance, some classes of wood-decay fungi such as *Dacrymycetes* are more prone to  
98 decay conifers than angiosperms (Shirouzu *et al.*, 2012). Within the *Agaricomycetes*, fungi  
99 from the families *Boletaceae* or *Gloeophyllaceae* are specialized to decay conifer wood while  
100 fungi from the *Agaricales* are specialised to decay angiosperm wood (Krah *et al.*, 2018a).

101

102 Species in the conifer genus *Pinus* are frequently used in plantations due to their commercial  
103 importance for many wood-derived products. *Pinus*, which are native to the Northern  
104 hemisphere, are frequently planted across the tropics and Southern hemisphere where they  
105 often become invasive (Payn *et al.*, 2015; Nuñez *et al.*, 2017) across habitats from dry  
106 grassy woodlands to wet temperate forests (Williams & Wardle, 2007). *Pinus* spp. have  
107 wood with different chemical properties compared to angiosperms that dominate in tropical  
108 regions, including lignin made solely of guaiacyl (Ralph *et al.*, 2019) that native fungi may not  
109 be adapted to decay, hindering their colonization and survival (Faix *et al.*, 1985; Cabral  
110 Almada *et al.*, 2021). In comparison, the wood of angiosperms contains a combination of  
111 both syringyl and guaiacyl forms of lignin, the former being more easily degradable.

112  
113  
114  
115  
116  
117  
118  
119  
120  
121  
122  
123  
124  
125  
126  
127  
128  
129  
130  
131  
132  
133  
134  
135  
136  
137  
138  
139  
140  
141  
142  
143  
144  
145  
146  
147  
148

Law *et al.* (2023) analysed wood decay at two sites along a moisture availability gradient (a dry savanna and a wet rainforest) in the Australian tropics and showed that non-native *P. radiata* had lower pH, N, P and syringyl:guaiacyl ratios and higher C compared to most angiosperm species at both sites (Law *et al.*, 2023). Due to lower water availability in savannas compared with rainforests, there were also lower fungal-mediated decay rates of deadwood (Law *et al.*, 2023; Wijas *et al.*, 2024b). Their work however did not test for differences in the fungal communities carrying out wood decay. Although very little is known about biogeographical patterns of wood-dwelling fungi, based on knowledge from soil fungi, deadwood should contain a higher proportion of *Agaricomycetes* and a lower proportion of *Sordariomyces* in the savanna compared with the rainforest (Tedersoo *et al.*, 2014).

To understand the impact of a chemically novel non-native species on wood-dwelling fungal communities and deadwood decay rates, we extended the work of Law *et al.* (2023) to explore the role of wood-dwelling fungal communities in native versus non-native wood. For these studies, we ran an *in-situ* deadwood decay experiment with several native angiosperms and one non-native conifer (*Pinus radiata*) species over 3.5 years in savanna and rainforest ecosystems in tropical Australia. We hypothesized that *P. radiata* would harbour a different fungal community composition to deadwood from native angiosperm species, with for example more clades specialised for conifers. Law *et al.* (2023) found that on average *P. radiata* decayed slower than most native species although it was unclear whether it was due to their chemical composition. Here, we hypothesized that the chemical properties of deadwood from *P. radiata* compared with those from native species would explain their lower decay rates. Finally, we hypothesized that different wood-dwelling fungi would dominate in the two sites.

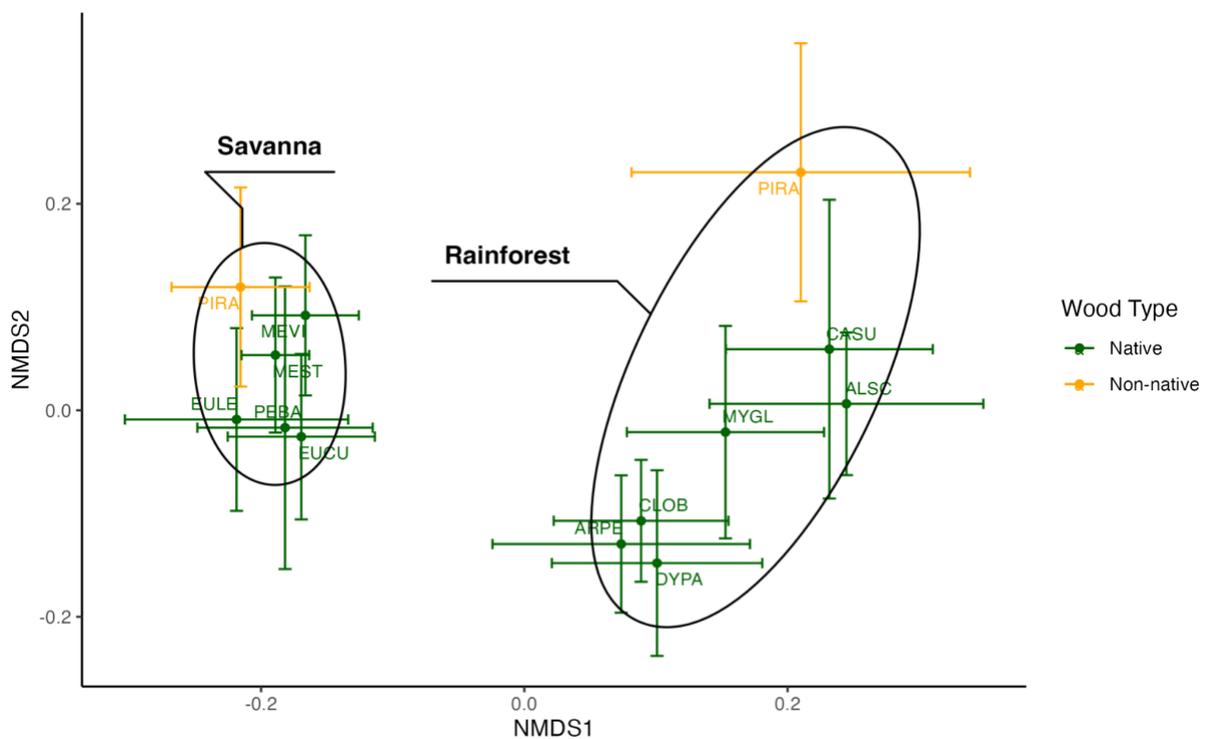
## Results

We found large variation in the composition of wood-dwelling fungal communities among deadwood from different species ( $Df_{93} = 11$ ,  $\chi^2 = 10.5$ ,  $F = 2.9$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ), (Figure 1). As expected, there was little overlap in fungal communities at the OTU level between native species and *P. radiata* based on pairwise comparisons (Table S1). However, differences in relative abundances of fungal classes and families between native and *P. radiata* deadwood were site-dependent (Figure S1 and S2). For instance, at the class level, the proportion of *Agaricomycetes* was higher in deadwood from native species compared with *P. radiata* in the savanna but not in the rainforest (Figure S1). The proportion of *Dacrymyces* was higher in deadwood from *P. radiata* compared with deadwood from native species in the

149 savanna. Contrary to our hypothesis, we did not find that conifer specialists within the  
 150 *Agaricomycetes* class, such as *Boletaceae* or *Gloeophyllaceae* were more common on  
 151 deadwood from *P. radiata* compared with native species (Figure S2).

152

153 In line with our hypothesis, deadwood in savanna had distinct fungal communities compared  
 154 to deadwood in rainforest ecosystems ( $Df_{93} = 1$ ,  $\chi^2 = 4.2$ ,  $F = 12.6$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ), (Figure 1,  
 155 Figure S3). We found that based on relative abundances, deadwood in the rainforest  
 156 contained more fungi belonging to *Ascomycota*, particularly with more *Sordariomycetes* and  
 157 *Eurotiomycetes* (Figure S3). However, we did not find differences in *Agaricomycetes*,  
 158 although within this class, fungi belonging to the order *Agaricales* were more common in the  
 159 rainforest while those belonging to the *Polyporales* were more common in savannas (Figure  
 160 S3).



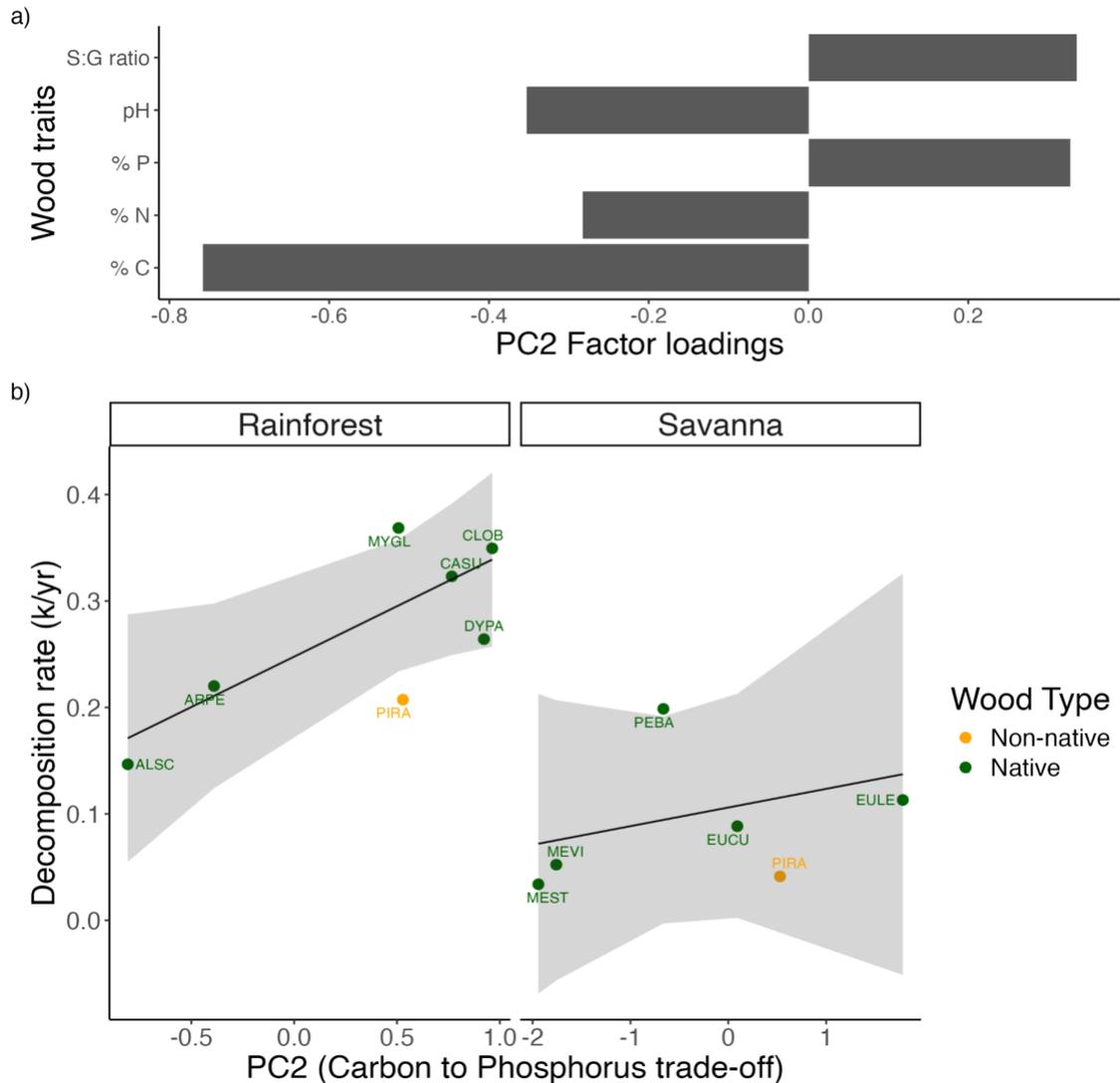
161

162 Figure 1 - Nonmetric multidimensional scaling of fungal communities using  
 163 presence/absence of OTUs found with deadwood among 5 and 6 native species (green) in a  
 164 savanna and rainforest, respectively, in addition to one non-native species (yellow). The  
 165 abbreviations for each species correspond to the following - ALSC: *Alstonia scholaris*,  
 166 ARPE: *Argyrodendron peralatum*, CASU: *Cardwelia sublimis*, CLOB: *Cleistanthus*  
 167 *oblongifolius*, DYPA: *Dysoxylum papuanum*, MYGL: *Myristica globosa*, EUCU: *Eucalyptus*  
 168 *cullenii*, EULE: *Eucalyptus chlorophylla*, MEST: *Melaleuca stenostachya*, MEVI: *Melaleuca*  
 169 *viridiflora*, PEBA: *Petalostigma banksii*, PIRA: *Pinus radiata*. The points represent the mean  
 170 value for each species with error bars representing standard deviations.

171

172 Contrary to our expectation, *P. radiata* decayed slower than deadwood of similar chemistry  
173 in the rainforest as can be seen by the location of *P. radiata* on the PC2 axis of chemical  
174 wood properties (Figure 2). For instance, *P. radiata* deadwood decayed at almost half the  
175 speed of MYGL although they had a similar PC2. An increase in PC2 (mostly driven by a  
176 decrease in C) led to an increase in decay rates in the rainforest (*Estimate* (PC2) = 0.09,  
177 *Std. Error* = 0.03, *t-value* = 3, *p-value* = 0.04) but not the savanna (*Estimate* (PC2) = 0.02,  
178 *Std. Error* = 0.02, *t-value* = -0.79, *p-value* = 0.49), (Figure 2a). The difference in decay rates  
179 between *P. radiata* and native deadwood was less pronounced in the savanna where decay  
180 rates were on average lower than rainforest (*Estimate* (Savanna) = -0.18, *Std. Error* = 0.05,  
181 *t-value* = -3.91, *p-value* = 0.003). There was no relationship between decay rates of  
182 deadwood and PC1 in the rainforest (*Estimate* (PC1) = -0.06, *Std. Error* = 0.05, *t-value* = -  
183 1.27, *p-value* = 0.27) and savanna (*Estimate* (PC1) = -0.02, *Std. Error* = 0.03, *t-value* = -  
184 0.684, *p-value* = 0.54).

185



186

187 Figure 2 - a) Factor loadings of different deadwood traits (S:G = syringyl:guaiacyl, P =  
 188 phosphorus, N = nitrogen, C = carbon) according to PC2 of deadwood chemical properties  
 189 as shown in Figure S4. b) Decay rates ( $\text{yr}^{-1}$ ) of deadwood from native (green) and non-native  
 190 (yellow) species against the PC2 axis of chemical properties.

191

## 192 Discussion

193 Our results give insight into the mechanisms driving non-native plant impacts on  
 194 ecosystems, as well as further implications as they become invasive. We found that the  
 195 chemical novelty of deadwood from a non-native species may have acted as a filter on  
 196 fungal community composition leading to different wood-dwelling fungal communities  
 197 compared to those in deadwood from native species. However, there was site dependency  
 198 in how fungal communities responded to the novel non-native substrates and how they  
 199 decayed in comparison to chemically similar native species. Together, our results highlight  
 200 the need to consider the broader environment in which non-native plants decompose,

201 especially regarding their chemical similarities with native species, to understand their  
202 repercussions on ecosystem communities and function.

203

204 *Pinus radiata* had a very different chemical composition compared with most native species  
205 at both sites, with a lower pH, syringyl:guaiacyl ratio, P and N as determined by PC1 of  
206 deadwood chemical properties (Figure S4). However, within PC2 chemical properties, which  
207 were mostly driven by C concentration, *P. radiata* deadwood had relatively similar chemical  
208 properties to native deadwood. The strong influence of PC2 rather than PC1 in determining  
209 decay rates in the rainforest site suggests that C content was the strongest driver of fungal  
210 decay capabilities in these ecosystems. These findings counter commonly assumed  
211 knowledge that nutrients are the main determinants of deadwood decay (Weedon *et al.*,  
212 2009; Hu *et al.*, 2018) and highlight the need to carry out more deadwood decay  
213 experiments in tropical rainforests which are underrepresented in global datasets. *P. radiata*  
214 deadwood decay was slower than would be expected according to its C content in  
215 rainforests suggesting that other unmeasured novel chemical attributes or their different  
216 fungal communities may be leading to these differences. These may include the presence of  
217 resinous terpenes, lower percentage of living parenchymatous cells and the microscopic  
218 distribution of lignin (Weedon *et al.*, 2009).

219

220 While overall fungal communities significantly differed between *P. radiata* and native  
221 deadwood, we did not find evidence that known conifer specialists were especially enriched  
222 in *P. radiata*. Surprisingly, we found that the conifer specialist *Gloeophyllaceae* dominated in  
223 native deadwood in the savanna although it was rarely found in *P. radiata*. The other conifer  
224 specialist, *Boletaceae*, was rare across our sites explaining why these may not have been  
225 found in *P. radiata* either. It is important to note that for most native deadwood species in the  
226 rainforest, there were around 50% of fungal OTUs unassigned to the family level within the  
227 *Agaricomycetes*. Most knowledge on wood-dwelling fungal communities emanates from  
228 temperate ecosystems in the Northern hemisphere (Li *et al.*, 2022) although many plant  
229 invasions occur in the Southern hemisphere. Our results highlight an important knowledge  
230 gap that needs to be overcome to improve our understanding of consequences of plant  
231 invasions on fungal communities in the Southern hemisphere.

232

233 Despite such knowledge gaps, wood-dwelling fungal communities overall clearly responded  
234 to non-native deadwood differently between sites. Further, *P. radiata* deadwood  
235 decomposed slower than that of chemically similar native species in the rainforest but not in  
236 the savanna. These results highlight site-based context dependency in our understanding of  
237 non-native species' impacts on ecosystem community composition and function. For

238 instance, a stark contrast in fungal composition between *P. radiata* and native wood across  
239 sites is the replacement of *Agaricomycetes* by *Dacrymecetes* in the savanna but not the  
240 rainforests. While it is known that *Dacrymycetes* are more efficient decayers of *Pinus* over  
241 angiosperms (Shirouzu *et al.*, 2012), the surrounding environment in which these are found  
242 may influence their ability to colonise the wood. The drier environmental conditions and poor  
243 nutrient qualities of soils in Australian savannas may have led to plants constructing wood  
244 with ecological strategies more similar to conifer wood compared with native species from  
245 nearby rainforests (Law *et al.*, 2023; Flores-Moreno *et al.*, 2024). The microbial communities  
246 in the drier savanna such as *Dacrymycetes* may therefore be better adapted than those in  
247 rainforests to consume *P. radiata* due to their coevolution with the chemically similar but  
248 phylogenetically distant native species (Cornelissen *et al.*, 2023). Such results can be  
249 extended to think about the effect of non-natives as they become invaders in novel sites. A  
250 study by Ulyshen *et al.*, (2020) found site-dependent effects of plant invasions with larger  
251 differences in decay rates between non-native and native deadwood in sites where invasive  
252 plants were dominant. Together, our findings highlight a critical need for context dependency  
253 to be incorporated in future study designs to understand the impact of non-natives and  
254 invaders on ecosystem functions at micro (microbial) to landscape scales (Catford *et al.*,  
255 2022).

256

## 257 **Materials and Methods**

258

### 259 *Wood decay experiment*

260

261 We set up our experiment in Far North Queensland, Australia, in a lowland rainforest at  
262 James Cook University's Daintree Rainforest Observatory (−16.1012°N, 145.4444°E) and in  
263 a dry savanna located in the Australia Wildlife Conservancy's Brooklyn Sanctuary  
264 (−16.5746°N, 144.9163°E). Mean temperatures were 24.4°C at the rainforest site and  
265 24.7°C at the savanna site during the study period (<https://power.larc.nasa.gov>). The  
266 rainforest receives over four times as much rainfall as the savanna (rainforest: 4250 mm/yr  
267 from 1989 to 2019, weather station 31012; savanna: 960 mm/yr from 1989 to 2020, weather  
268 station 31180, <https://www.bom.gov.au>). Both sites have distinct wet and dry seasons with  
269 80% and 94% of rain falling during November through April in the rainforest and savanna  
270 respectively. We note that while *P. radiata* is not currently invasive in our study sites, it and  
271 other species of *Pinus*, are common invaders in Australian ecosystems (Williams & Wardle,  
272 2007).

273

274 We collected native wood stem sections from 6 rainforest species and 5 savanna species  
275 (Law *et al.*, 2023). There was no overlap in native species between the two sites. More detail  
276 can be found in Law *et al.* (2023) about species selection and experimental methods. Briefly,  
277 for each native wood stem, we harvested live stems from at least three individuals per  
278 species (ranging between 5-9 cm diameter) to a length of ~10 cm. The species were  
279 selected based on the relative abundance at each site, phylogenetic breadth and availability  
280 of stems. In addition, we obtained non-native *Pinus radiata* timber from a lumberyard in  
281 Cairns, Australia and cut it into 9cm x 5cm x 5cm wood blocks.

282

283 All native stems and non-native blocks were wrapped in 280um polyethylene Lumite mesh  
284 bags (Bioquip) to prevent access from invertebrates such as termites (Wijas *et al.*, 2024b).  
285 Additional stems and blocks were set aside to collect samples for initial wood chemistry. We  
286 obtained the dry mass of non-native wood blocks before setting those out in the field by  
287 placing them in a drying oven at 105°C for 72h. To estimate the initial dry weight of each  
288 native stem on deployment, four other 'control' stems from the initial harvest of each species  
289 were weighed, dried at 105°C to constant mass, and reweighed. The dry weight of deployed  
290 stems was estimated by multiplying the fresh weight of the deployed stem by the mean  
291 fraction of dry weight calculated from control stems. The wood stems and blocks were  
292 placed out in June 2018. At each site, we set out 5 stations separated by 5m in which each  
293 wood block was separated by 15 cm to allow fungi to colonise the wood independently. We  
294 removed intact leaf litter from the ground before placing the blocks to assure that there was  
295 direct contact with the soil. In total, we deployed 5 stems or blocks for each species. Stems  
296 and blocks were allowed to decompose at each site until December 2021. After being  
297 collected, the wood blocks were brought back to the lab for processing.

298

299 To determine fungal community composition, we collected sawdust from each wood block  
300 following standard procedures (Powell *et al.*, 2021). The wood blocks were surface sterilised  
301 by submerging and rotating them first in 95% ethanol for 5 seconds, then in 0.5% sodium  
302 hypochlorite for 2 minutes and finally in 70% ethanol for 2 minutes after which they were air  
303 dried for >2 hours. Sawdust was obtained from >10 holes using a sterilised 3mm drill bit to a  
304 depth of 2.5 cm across all the surfaces of each stem and block. Sawdust was collected in  
305 tubes containing sterilised CTAB buffer. The tubes were stored at -80°C before further  
306 processing. After the sawdust was removed, the wood blocks and stems were dried at  
307 105°C for 72h and weighed to obtain a final mass value. We obtained decomposition rates  
308 for each species using mass loss through time and calculating k-values as detailed in Law *et*  
309 *al.* (2023).

310

311 *Initial chemistry*

312

313 To determine the initial chemistry of wood, we collected 5g of sawdust by homogenizing  
314 samples from 2 stems per species for native wood and 5 blocks for non-native wood using a  
315 6 mm drill bit. The chemical components we measured included C, N and P content in  
316 addition to pH and syringyl:guaiacyl ratios. The specific methodologies for each of these  
317 tests can be found in Law *et al.* (2023).

318

319 *Fungal community*

320

321 To characterise fungal communities for each wood stem and block, DNA was extracted from  
322 60 mg of sawdust using a modified CTAB DNA extraction protocol (Doyle & Doyle, 1987), as  
323 described in Powell *et al.* (2021). DNA samples were submitted to the Ramaciotti Centre for  
324 Genomics (University of New South Wales, Sydney, NSW, Australia). Fungal amplicons  
325 were generated using fITS7 (50-GTGARTCATCGAATCTTTG-30; (Ihrmark *et al.*, 2012)) and  
326 ITS4 (50-TCCTCCGCTTATT GATATGC-30; (White *et al.*, 1990)), purified using the  
327 Agencourt AMPure XP system (Beckman Coulter, Lane Cove, NSW, Australia), and genomic  
328 libraries were prepared with the use of the Nextera XT Index Kit (Illumina, San Diego,  
329 California, USA). Paired-end (2 x 251 bases) sequencing was performed on the Illumina  
330 MiSeq platform. To process the DNA sequencing data, we used the approach described by  
331 Bissett *et al.*, (2016) with a few modifications, as described in Nielsen *et al.*, (2024). Putative  
332 taxonomic identities for fungal OTUs were generated using BLAST (v.2.6.0, (Altschul *et al.*,  
333 1990)) to compare representative sequences for each OTU to a reference database of gene  
334 sequences and taxonomic annotations (UNITE version 8.3,  
335 sh\_general\_release\_dynamic\_s\_10.05.2021; (Abarenkov *et al.*, 2021)). Fungal ITS2  
336 sequences were extracted using ITSx ((Bengtsson-Palme *et al.*, 2013), v1.1.3) for use  
337 during BLAST.

338

339 *Analysis*

340

341 We characterised fungal communities using non metric multidimensional scaling (NMDS)  
342 through the '*vegan*' package in R (Oksanen *et al.*, 2001). We calculated Sorensen distance  
343 based on presence or absence of fungal OTUs in each wood block and excluded OTUs  
344 which were found in <3 wood blocks. We used a PERMANOVA (>9999 permutations) with  
345 species and site as explanatory variables and then tested for pairwise differences in fungal  
346 community composition across different species of deadwood at each site. To determine  
347 which class of fungi and which family of fungi within the Agaricomycetes were driving

348 differences in community composition, we calculated the proportion of OTU reads belonging  
349 to each class or family for each wood block. For each class or family, we used generalised  
350 linear mixed effects models with proportion of reads as a response variable against the  
351 native status of the wood, site and their interaction as explanatory variables and applied a  
352 quasibinomial distribution given the proportional nature of the response variable. We used  
353 species as a random variable given that repeated measures were carried out on each  
354 species. To compare differences in community composition of fungi across sites, we applied  
355 a Wilcoxon rank sum test comparing the median relative abundance of each taxon between  
356 each site using the package '*metacoder*' (Foster *et al.*, 2017). We visualized these findings  
357 using a heat map tree.

358

359 Similarly to Law *et al.* (2023), we used a principal components analysis to assess the  
360 difference in initial chemical properties of native and non-native wood species by  
361 incorporating each chemical property we measured. To determine the role of initial chemistry  
362 in driving decomposition rates, we used the first two principal components for each species  
363 and ran a linear model with each principal component axis as an explanatory variable  
364 against decomposition rate within each site separately. This was due to the overwhelming  
365 difference in decomposition rates across sites.

366

### 367 **Acknowledgements**

368 This research was funded by the US National Science Foundation, Ecosystem Studies  
369 Cluster, under awards DEB-1655759 and DEB-2149151 to A.E.Z. and DEB-1655340 to  
370 S.D.A., as well as UK NERC grant NE/K01613X/1 to Paul Eggleton who we thank for  
371 supporting the project. We thank the Australian Wildlife Conservancy and Daintree  
372 Rainforest Observatory of James Cook University for access to field sites. We also thank  
373 Darren Crayn, Rigel Jensen, and Andrew Thompson for help with species identification; Ana  
374 Palma, Emma Carmichael, Paula Gavarró, Gabby Hoban, Jessica Braden, Amy Smart, Xine  
375 Li, Baoli Fan, Xennephone Hadeen, Iftakharul Alam, Bethanie Hasse, Hannah Smart, Scott  
376 Nacko, Chris Siotis, Tom Swan, Bryan Johnstone and Sally Sheldon for help with field work,  
377 laboratory analyses and data processing; and Michelle Schiffer and the Cornwell and Wright  
378 laboratories for help with logistics.

379

### 380 **Competing interests**

381

382 We declare no competing interests.

383

### 384 **Author contributions**

385

386 B.J.W. drafted the manuscript and carried out the data analysis with input from all co-  
387 authors. H.F. and A.E.Z. set up the experiment. J.R.P led the fungal sequencing. B.J.W, H.F,  
388 A.W.C, L.A.C and A.E.Z collected the data. S.D.A., H.F., L.A.C, A.E.Z and A.W.C  
389 contributed to experimental design. All authors edited and approved the manuscript.

390

#### 391 **Data availability**

392

393 Data will be made available on Dryad upon acceptance.

394

#### 395 **References**

396

397 **Abarenkov K, Zirk A, Piirmann T, Pöhönen R, Ivanov F, Nilsson RH, Kõljalg U. 2021.**  
398 UNITE general FASTA release for Fungi 2.

399 **Altschul SF, Gish W, Miller W, Myers EW, Lipman DJ. 1990.** Basic local alignment search  
400 tool. *Journal of Molecular Biology* **215**: 403–410.

401 **Bengtsson-Palme J, Ryberg M, Hartmann M, Branco S, Wang Z, Godhe A, De Wit P,**  
402 **Sánchez-García M, Ebersberger I, de Sousa F, et al. 2013.** Improved software detection  
403 and extraction of ITS1 and ITS2 from ribosomal ITS sequences of fungi and other  
404 eukaryotes for analysis of environmental sequencing data. *Methods in Ecology and*  
405 *Evolution* **4**: 914–919.

406 **Bissett A, Fitzgerald A, Meintjes T, Mele PM, Reith F, Dennis PG, Breed MF, Brown B,**  
407 **Brown MV, Bruggner J, et al. 2016.** Introducing BASE: the Biomes of Australian Soil  
408 Environments soil microbial diversity database. *GigaScience* **5**: 21.

409 **Brabcová V, Tláskal V, Lepinay C, Zrůstová P, Eichlerová I, Štursová M, Müller J,**  
410 **Brandl R, Bässler C, Baldrian P. 2022.** Fungal Community Development in Decomposing  
411 Fine Deadwood Is Largely Affected by Microclimate. *Frontiers in Microbiology* **13**.

412 **Cabral Almada C, Montibus M, Ham-Pichavant F, Tapin-Lingua S, Labat G, Silva Perez**  
413 **DDA, Grelier S. 2021.** Growth inhibition of wood-decay fungi by lignin-related aromatic  
414 compounds. *European Journal of Wood and Wood Products* **79**: 1057–1065.

415 **Castro-Díez P, Godoy O, Alonso A, Gallardo A, Saldaña A. 2014.** What explains variation  
416 in the impacts of exotic plant invasions on the nitrogen cycle? A meta-analysis. *Ecology*  
417 *Letters* **17**: 1–12.

418 **Catford JA, Wilson JRU, Pyšek P, Hulme PE, Duncan RP. 2022.** Addressing context  
419 dependence in ecology. *Trends in Ecology & Evolution* **37**: 158–170.

420 **Cornelissen JHC, Cornwell WK, Freschet GT, Weedon JT, Berg MP, Zanne AE. 2023.**  
421 Coevolutionary legacies for plant decomposition. *Trends in Ecology & Evolution* **38**: 44–54.

422 **Doyle JJ, Doyle JL (Eds.). 1987.** A rapid DNA isolation procedure for small quantities of  
423 fresh leaf tissue. *PHYTOCHEMICAL BULLETIN* **19**: 11–15.

- 424 **Ehrenfeld JG. 2010.** Ecosystem Consequences of Biological Invasions. *Annual Review of*  
425 *Ecology, Evolution, and Systematics* **41**: 59–80.
- 426 **Faix O, Mozuch MD, Kirk TK. 1985.** Degradation of Gymnosperm (Guaiacyl) vs.  
427 Angiosperm (Syringyl/Guaiacyl) Lignins by *Phanerochaete chrysosporium*. **39**: 203–208.
- 428 **Flores-Moreno H, Yatsko AR, Cheesman AW, Allison SD, Cernusak LA, Cheney R,**  
429 **Clement RA, Cooper W, Eggleton P, Jensen R, et al. 2024.** Shifts in internal stem  
430 damage along a tropical precipitation gradient and implications for forest biomass estimation.  
431 *New Phytologist* **241**: 1047–1061.
- 432 **Foster ZSL, Sharpton TJ, Grünwald NJ. 2017.** Metacoder: An R package for visualization  
433 and manipulation of community taxonomic diversity data. *PLOS Computational Biology* **13**:  
434 e1005404.
- 435 **Freschet GT, Weedon JT, Aerts R, van Hal JR, Cornelissen JHC. 2012.** Interspecific  
436 differences in wood decay rates: insights from a new short-term method to study long-term  
437 wood decomposition. *Journal of Ecology* **100**: 161–170.
- 438 **Fukami T, Dickie IA, Paula Wilkie J, Paulus BC, Park D, Roberts A, Buchanan PK,**  
439 **Allen RB. 2010.** Assembly history dictates ecosystem functioning: evidence from wood  
440 decomposer communities. *Ecology Letters* **13**: 675–684.
- 441 **Fukasawa Y. 2021.** Ecological impacts of fungal wood decay types: A review of current  
442 knowledge and future research directions. *Ecological Research* **36**: 910–931.
- 443 **Fukasawa Y, Matsukura K. 2021.** Decay stages of wood and associated fungal  
444 communities characterise diversity–decomposition relationships. *Scientific Reports* **11**: 8972.
- 445 **Hu Z, Michaletz ST, Johnson DJ, McDowell NG, Huang Z, Zhou X, Xu C. 2018.** Traits  
446 drive global wood decomposition rates more than climate. *Global Change Biology* **24**: 5259–  
447 5269.
- 448 **Huang C, Wu X, Liu X, Fang Y, Liu L, Wu C. 2022.** Functional fungal communities  
449 dominate wood decomposition and are modified by wood traits in a subtropical forest.  
450 *Science of The Total Environment* **806**: 151377.
- 451 **Ihrmark K, Bödeker ITM, Cruz-Martinez K, Friberg H, Kubartova A, Schenck J, Strid Y,**  
452 **Stenlid J, Brandström-Durling M, Clemmensen KE, et al. 2012.** New primers to amplify  
453 the fungal ITS2 region – evaluation by 454-sequencing of artificial and natural communities.  
454 *FEMS Microbiology Ecology* **82**: 666–677.
- 455 **Krah F-S, Bässler C, Heibl C, Soghigian J, Schaefer H, Hibbett DS. 2018a.** Evolutionary  
456 dynamics of host specialization in wood-decay fungi. *BMC Evolutionary Biology* **18**: 119.
- 457 **Krah F-S, Seibold S, Brandl R, Baldrian P, Müller J, Bässler C. 2018b.** Independent  
458 effects of host and environment on the diversity of wood-inhabiting fungi. *Journal of Ecology*  
459 **106**: 1428–1442.
- 460 **Law S, Flores-Moreno H, Cheesman AW, Clement R, Rosenfield M, Yatsko A,**  
461 **Cernusak LA, Dalling JW, Canam T, Iqsayya IA, et al. 2023.** Wood traits explain microbial  
462 but not termite-driven decay in Australian tropical rainforest and savanna. *Journal of Ecology*  
463 **111**: 982–993.

- 464 **Lee MR, Powell JR, Oberle B, Cornwell WK, Lyons M, Rigg JL, Zanne AE. 2019.** Good  
465 neighbors aplenty: fungal endophytes rarely exhibit competitive exclusion patterns across a  
466 span of woody habitats. *Ecology* **100**: e02790.
- 467 **Lee M, Powell JR, Oberle B, Unda F, Mansfield SD, Dalrymple R, Rigg J, Cornwell WK,**  
468 **Zanne AE. 2022.** Initial wood trait variation overwhelms endophyte community effects for  
469 explaining decay trajectories. *Functional Ecology* **36**: 1243–1257.
- 470 **Lepinay C, Jiráská L, Tláškal V, Brabcová V, Vrška T, Baldrian P. 2021.** Successional  
471 Development of Fungal Communities Associated with Decomposing Deadwood in a Natural  
472 Mixed Temperate Forest. *Journal of Fungi* **7**: 412.
- 473 **Li T, Cui L, Song X, Cui X, Wei Y, Tang L, Mu Y, Xu Z. 2022.** Wood decay fungi: an  
474 analysis of worldwide research. *Journal of Soils and Sediments* **22**: 1688–1702.
- 475 **Liao C, Peng R, Luo Y, Zhou X, Wu X, Fang C, Chen J, Li B. 2008.** Altered ecosystem  
476 carbon and nitrogen cycles by plant invasion: a meta-analysis. *New Phytologist* **177**: 706–  
477 714.
- 478 **Maynard DS, Covey KR, Crowther TW, Sokol NW, Morrison EW, Frey SD, van Diepen**  
479 **LTA, Bradford MA. 2018.** Species associations overwhelm abiotic conditions to dictate the  
480 structure and function of wood-decay fungal communities. *Ecology* **99**: 801–811.
- 481 **Moll J, Bässler C, Buscot F, Hoppe B, Jehmlich N, Kellner H, Muszynski S, Noll M.**  
482 **2024.** Extrinsic rather than intrinsic factors determine microbial colonization of deadwood.  
483 *Soil Biology and Biochemistry* **199**: 109608.
- 484 **Nielsen UN, Bristol D, Blyton M, Delroy B, Powell JR. 2024.** Elevated CO enhances  
485 decomposition and modifies litter-associated fungal assemblages in a natural Eucalyptus  
486 woodland. *Functional Ecology* n/a.
- 487 **Núñez MA, Chiuffo MC, Torres A, Paul T, Dimarco RD, Raal P, Policelli N, Moyano J,**  
488 **García RA, van Wilgen BW, et al. 2017.** Ecology and management of invasive Pinaceae  
489 around the world: progress and challenges. *Biological Invasions* **19**: 3099–3120.
- 490 **Oksanen J, Simpson GL, Blanchet FG, Kindt R, Legendre P, Minchin PR, O'Hara RB,**  
491 **Solymos P, Stevens MHH, Szoecs E, et al. 2001.** vegan: Community Ecology Package. :  
492 2.6-6.1.
- 493 **Pan Y, Birdsey RA, Phillips OL, Houghton RA, Fang J, Kauppi PE, Keith H, Kurz WA,**  
494 **Ito A, Lewis SL, et al. 2024.** The enduring world forest carbon sink. *Nature* **631**: 563–569.
- 495 **Payn T, Carnus J-M, Freer-Smith P, Kimberley M, Kollert W, Liu S, Orazio C, Rodriguez**  
496 **L, Silva LN, Wingfield MJ. 2015.** Changes in planted forests and future global implications.  
497 *Forest Ecology and Management* **352**: 57–67.
- 498 **Pietsch KA, Ogle K, Cornelissen JHC, Cornwell WK, Bönisch G, Craine JM, Jackson**  
499 **BG, Kattge J, Peltzer DA, Penuelas J, et al. 2014.** Global relationship of wood and leaf  
500 litter decomposability: the role of functional traits within and across plant organs. *Global*  
501 *Ecology and Biogeography* **23**: 1046–1057.
- 502 **Powell JR, Blyton M, Oberle B, Powell GL, Rigg J, Young D, Zanne AE. 2021.** Extraction  
503 and Purification of DNA from Wood at Various Stages of Decay for Metabarcoding of Wood-  
504 Associated Fungi. In: Carvalhais LC, Dennis PG, eds. *The Plant Microbiome: Methods and*  
505 *Protocols*. New York, NY: Springer US, 113–122.

506 **Purahong W, Ji L, Wu Y-T. 2024.** Community Assembly Processes of Deadwood  
507 Mycobiome in a Tropical Forest Revealed by Long-Read Third-Generation Sequencing.  
508 *Microbial Ecology* **87**: 66.

509 **Purahong W, Wubet T, Lentendu G, Hoppe B, Jariyavidyanont K, Arnstadt T, Baber K,**  
510 **Otto P, Kellner H, Hofrichter M, et al. 2018.** Determinants of Deadwood-Inhabiting Fungal  
511 Communities in Temperate Forests: Molecular Evidence From a Large Scale Deadwood  
512 Decomposition Experiment. *Frontiers in Microbiology* **9**.

513 **Ralph J, Lapierre C, Boerjan W. 2019.** Lignin structure and its engineering. *Current*  
514 *Opinion in Biotechnology* **56**: 240–249.

515 **Shirouzu T, Hirose D, Tokumasu S. 2012.** Host tree-recurrence of wood-decaying  
516 Dacrymycetes. *Fungal Ecology* **5**: 562–570.

517 **Tedersoo L, Bahram M, Põlme S, Kõljalg U, Yorou NS, Wijesundera R, Ruiz LV, Vasco-**  
518 **Palacios AM, Thu PQ, Suija A, et al. 2014.** Global diversity and geography of soil fungi.  
519 *Science* **346**: 1256688.

520 **Ulyshen MD, Horn S, Brownie C, Strickland MS, Wurzbürger N, Zanne A. 2020.**  
521 Comparison of decay rates between native and non-native wood species in invaded forests  
522 of the southeastern U.S.: a rapid assessment. *Biological Invasions* **22**: 2619–2632.

523 **Weedon JT, Cornwell WK, Cornelissen JHC, Zanne AE, Wirth C, Coomes DA. 2009.**  
524 Global meta-analysis of wood decomposition rates: a role for trait variation among tree  
525 species? *Ecology Letters* **12**: 45–56.

526 **White TJ, Bruns T, Lee S, Taylor J. 1990.** Amplification and direct sequencing of fungal  
527 ribosomal RNA genes for phylogenetics. In: PCR Protocols: A Guide to Methods and  
528 Applications. Academic Press, Inc.

529 **Wijas BJ, Allison SD, Austin AT, Cornwell WK, Cornelissen JHC, Eggleton P, Fraver S,**  
530 **Ooi MKJ, Powell JR, Woodall CW, et al. 2024a.** The Role of Deadwood in the Carbon  
531 Cycle: Implications for Models, Forest Management, and Future Climates. *Annual Review of*  
532 *Ecology, Evolution, and Systematics*.

533 **Wijas BJ, Flores-Moreno H, Allison SD, Rodriguez LC, Cheesman AW, Cernusak LA,**  
534 **Clement R, Cornwell WK, Duan ES, Eggleton P, et al. 2024b.** Drivers of wood decay in  
535 tropical ecosystems: Termites versus microbes along spatial, temporal and experimental  
536 precipitation gradients. *Functional Ecology* **n/a**.

537 **Williams MC, Wardle GM. 2007.** *Pinus radiata* invasion in Australia: Identifying key  
538 knowledge gaps and research directions. *Austral Ecology* **32**: 721–739.

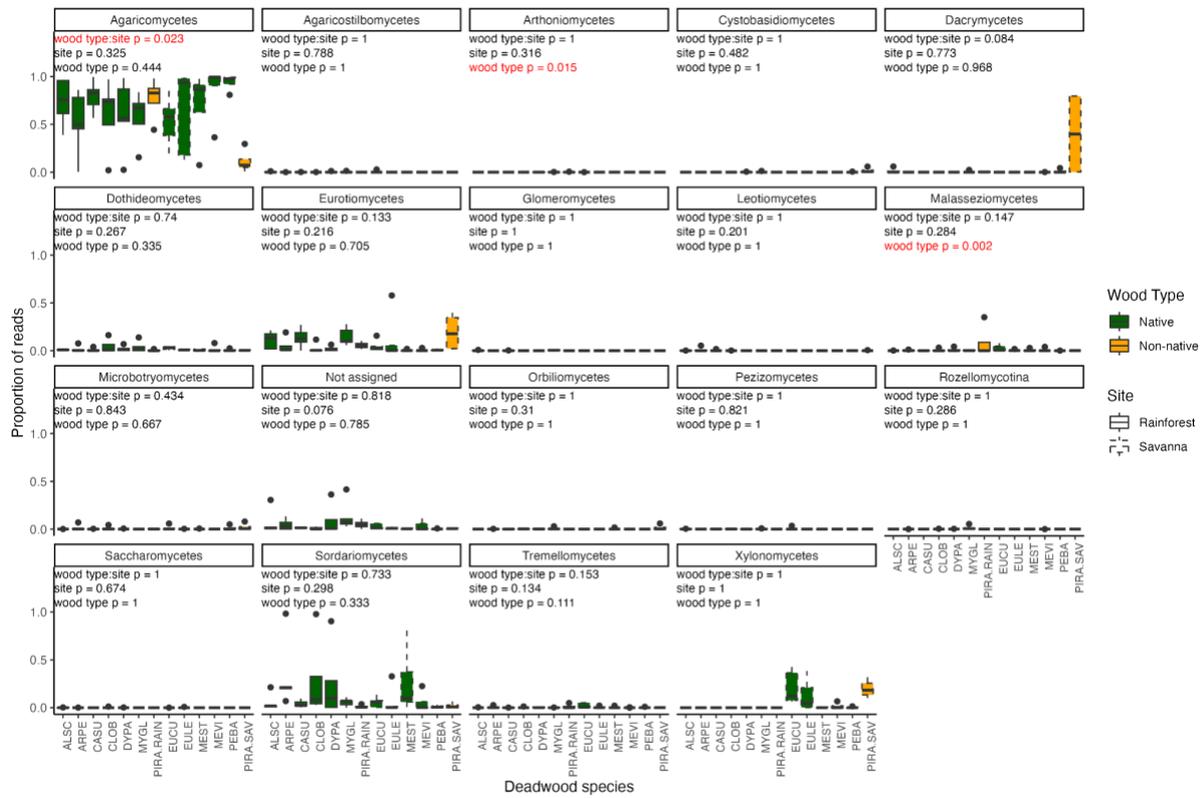
539 **Yang S, Poorter L, Sterck FJ, Cornelissen JHC, van Logtestijn RSP, Kuramae EE,**  
540 **Kowalchuk GA, Hefting MM, Goudzwaard L, Chang C, et al. 2024.** Stem decomposition  
541 of temperate tree species is determined by stem traits and fungal community composition  
542 during early stem decay. *Journal of Ecology* **n/a**.

543 **Zanne AE, Flores-Moreno H, Powell JR, Cornwell WK, Dalling JW, Austin AT, Classen**  
544 **AT, Eggleton P, Okada K, Parr CL, et al. 2022.** Termite sensitivity to temperature affects  
545 global wood decay rates. *Science* **377**: 1440–1444.

546  
547

548 Supplemental materials

549



550

551 Figure S1 - Proportion of OTU reads belonging to each class of fungi across deadwood from  
 552 native (green) and non-native (yellow) species in the rainforest (solid lines) and the savanna  
 553 (dashed lines). The text above the boxplots represents the p-value for each explanatory  
 554 variable from the linear mixed effects model with proportion of reads as a response variable  
 555 against wood type, site and their interaction. Species was used as a random variable. P-  
 556 values in red are significant (< 0.05).

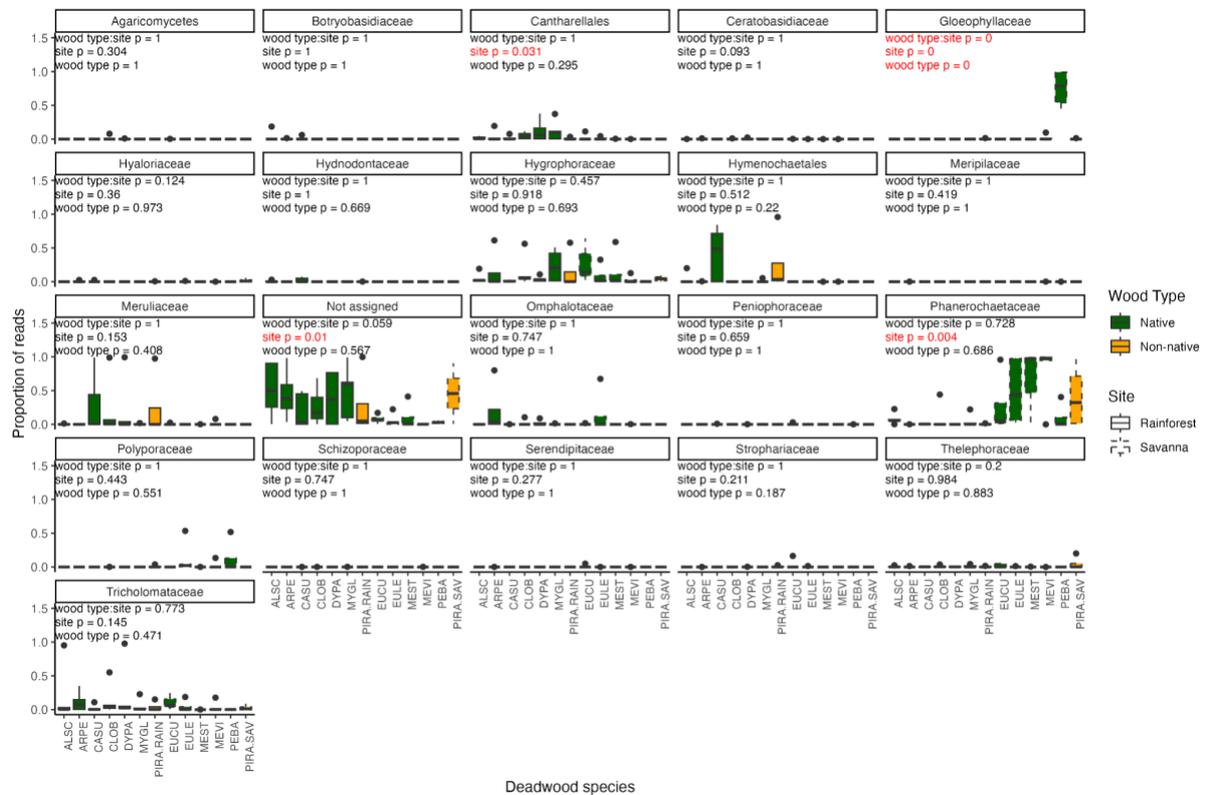
557

558

559

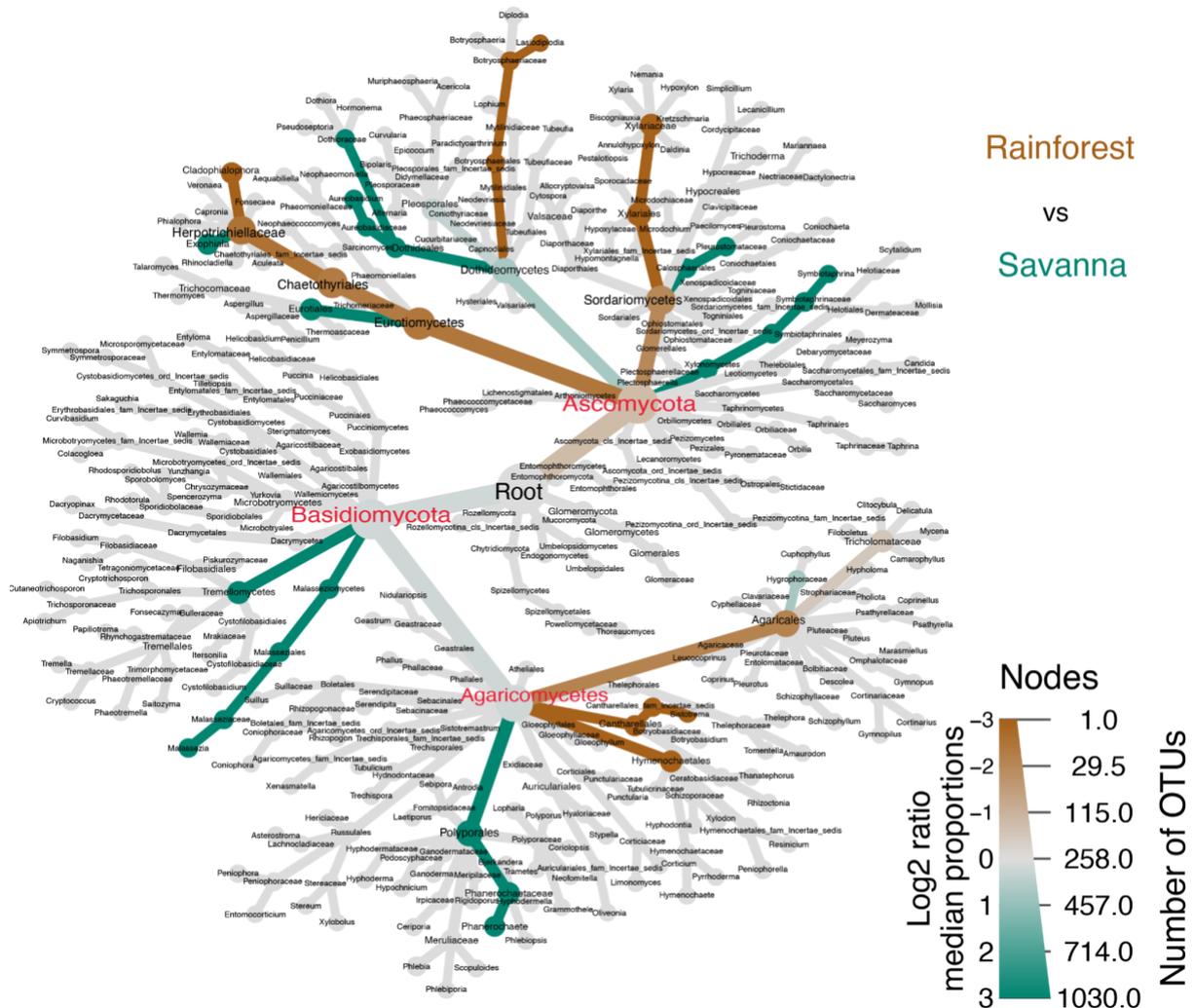
560

561



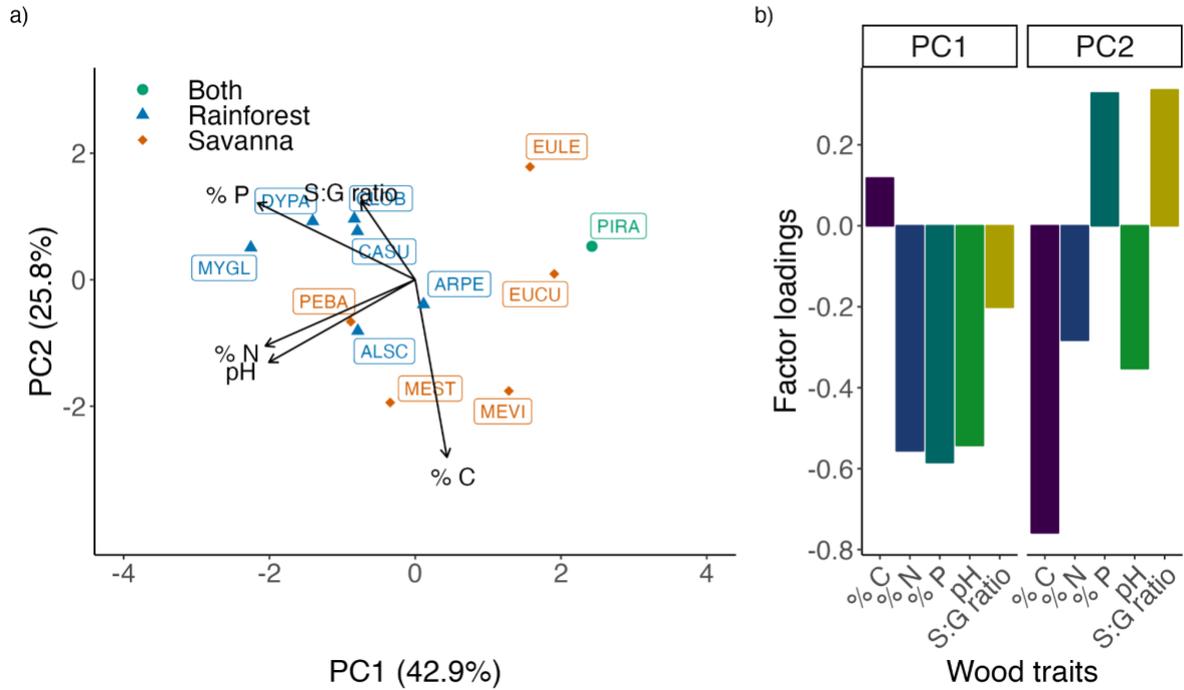
562  
563  
564  
565  
566  
567  
568  
569  
570  
571

Figure S2 - Proportion of OTU reads belonging to each family within the *Agaricomycetes* across deadwood from native (green) and non-native (yellow) species in the rainforest (solid lines) and the savanna (dashed lines). The text above the boxplots represents the p-value for each explanatory variable from the linear mixed effects model with proportion of reads as a response variable against wood type, site and their interaction. Species was used as a random variable. P-values in red are significant (< 0.05).



572  
573  
574  
575  
576  
577  
578  
579  
580

Figure S3 - Heat map tree representing differences in the relative abundance of fungi belonging to all taxa across sites with branches in brown representing those that are more common in the savanna and those in blue that are more common in the rainforest. The branch sizes represent the number of OTUs of each node.



581  
 582 Figure S4 - a) Principal components analysis of deadwood chemical properties based on  
 583 carbon (C), nitrogen (N) and phosphorus (P) content in addition to pH and syringyl to  
 584 guaiacyl ratios (S:G). Each point represents a native deadwood species from the savanna  
 585 (orange diamond), the rainforest (blue triangle) or a non-native species found in both (green  
 586 dot). Each species has its accompanying label (ALSC: *Alstonia scholaris*, ARPE:  
 587 *Argyrodendron peralatum*, CASU: *Cardwelia sublimis*, CLOB: *Cleistanthus oblongifolius*,  
 588 DYPA: *Dysoxylum papuanum*, MYGL: *Myristica globosa*, EUCU: *Eucalyptus cullenii*, EULE:  
 589 *Eucalyptus chlorophylla*, MEST: *Melaleuca stenostachya*, MEVI: *Melaleuca viridiflora*, PEBA:  
 590 *Petalostigma banksii*, PIRA: *Pinus radiata*). b) Factor loadings of the two principal  
 591 components.

592  
 593  
 594  
 595  
 596  
 597  
 598  
 599  
 600  
 601  
 602  
 603  
 604  
 605  
 606  
 607  
 608  
 609

610 Table S1 - Pairwise comparison of fungal communities (presence/absence) among wood  
 611 species. \* Comparisons with *P. radiata*.

<i>Site</i>	<i>Pairs</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>Sums Of Sqs</i>	<i>F.Model</i>	<i>R2</i>	<i>p-value</i>
Savanna	PIRA vs EUCU*	1	0.02	4.48	0.39	<b>0.02</b>
Savanna	PIRA vs EULE*	1	0.02	3.38	0.33	<b>0.04</b>
Savanna	PIRA vs MEST*	1	0.03	4.92	0.41	<b>0.01</b>
Savanna	PIRA vs MEVI*	1	0.02	2.95	0.30	<b>0.05</b>
Savanna	PIRA vs PEBA*	1	0.01	1.87	0.24	0.11
Savanna	EUCU vs EULE	1	0.00	0.53	0.06	0.93
Savanna	EUCU vs MEST	1	0.01	2.10	0.21	0.07
Savanna	EUCU vs MEVI	1	0.01	1.22	0.13	0.25
Savanna	EUCU vs PEBA	1	0.01	1.52	0.18	0.18
Savanna	EULE vs MEST	1	0.01	0.90	0.10	0.44
Savanna	EULE vs MEVI	1	0.00	0.62	0.07	0.60
Savanna	EULE vs PEBA	1	0.01	1.05	0.13	0.36
Savanna	MEST vs MEVI	1	0.00	0.70	0.08	0.66
Savanna	MEST vs PEBA	1	0.01	1.85	0.21	0.13
Savanna	MEVI vs PEBA	1	0.01	1.07	0.13	0.33
Rainforest	DYPA vs MYGL	1	0.01	2.65	0.25	<b>0.04</b>
Rainforest	DYPA vs CLOB	1	0.00	0.69	0.08	0.70
Rainforest	DYPA vs ALSC	1	0.01	3.62	0.31	<b>0.03</b>
Rainforest	DYPA vs ARPE	1	0.01	2.08	0.21	0.10
Rainforest	DYPA vs PIRA*	1	0.03	7.09	0.50	<b>0.03</b>
Rainforest	DYPA vs CASU	1	0.02	4.39	0.35	<b>0.03</b>
Rainforest	MYGL vs CLOB	1	0.01	2.46	0.24	<b>0.03</b>
Rainforest	MYGL vs ALSC	1	0.00	1.11	0.12	0.34
Rainforest	MYGL vs ARPE	1	0.01	2.91	0.27	<b>0.02</b>
Rainforest	MYGL vs PIRA*	1	0.02	5.29	0.43	<b>0.04</b>
Rainforest	MYGL vs CASU	1	0.00	1.11	0.12	0.37
Rainforest	CLOB vs ALSC	1	0.01	3.06	0.28	<b>0.01</b>
Rainforest	CLOB vs ARPE	1	0.01	2.02	0.20	0.06
Rainforest	CLOB vs PIRA*	1	0.03	7.53	0.52	<b>0.02</b>
Rainforest	CLOB vs CASU	1	0.02	4.01	0.33	<b>0.02</b>
Rainforest	ALSC vs ARPE	1	0.01	4.40	0.35	<b>0.01</b>
Rainforest	ALSC vs PIRA*	1	0.02	6.49	0.48	<b>0.01</b>
Rainforest	ALSC vs CASU	1	0.00	1.08	0.12	0.30
Rainforest	ARPE vs PIRA*	1	0.02	5.49	0.44	<b>0.01</b>
Rainforest	ARPE vs CASU	1	0.02	4.27	0.35	<b>0.02</b>
Rainforest	PIRA vs CASU*	1	0.02	4.76	0.40	<b>0.02</b>

612  
 613  
 614  
 615  
 616