



Alpine Treeline Ecotone—from Structure and Function to Ecosystem Services

Guest Editors:

Dr. Jesús Julio Camarero

Dr. Yafeng Wang

Dr. Jinniu Wang

Dr. Yang Yang

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Message from the Guest Editors

Alpine treeline ecotone as a sensitive monitor of environmental change has aroused increasing attention in recent decades. However, our understanding of the patterns, processes, function and ecological services of alpine treeline ecotones and their underlying drivers are still limited. Classic and novel research from different perspectives is urgently needed to resolve these uncertainties and enhance our understanding of treeline ecosystems. Multidisciplinary contributions related to treeline ecotones (e.g., from the subalpine forests or alpine grassland) are welcome. Topics include, but are not confined to, the following:

- Alpine vegetation composition, structure, and patterns;
- Dynamics of alpine plant life;
- Adaptation and evolution of alpine plant life;
- Treeline changes (e.g., tree growth, recruitment, and range shifts);
- Grasses and soil microbiota across the treeline ecotone;
- Biogeochemical cycles from subalpine forest to alpine grassland;
- Multiple services provided by treeline ecosystems;
- Livelihoods of mountainous people near, at, and beyond the treeline;
- Challenges and threats to the functions of treeline ecosystems and management practices.





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Prof. Dr. Cate Macinnis-Ng

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Prof. Dr. Giacomo Alessandro Gerosa

Department of Mathematics and Physics, Catholic University of Brescia, I-25121 Brescia, Italy

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Contact Us

Forests Editorial Office
MDPI, St. Alban-Anlage 66
4052 Basel, Switzerland

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