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Advancements in the Dynamics of Forest Litter Decomposition

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Message from the Guest Editors

Forest litter decomposition is one of the cornerstones of ecosystems, crucial for nutrient cycling, soil health, and carbon sequestration. It serves as the natural recycling mechanism, converting organic matter back into essential nutrients that enrich the soil, thereby facilitating plant growth and maintaining forest health. Decomposition also regulates carbon flux, acting as a biological sink that either stores or releases carbon dioxide, thus influencing global climate patterns. In addition to these roles, litter decomposition is essential for water retention and quality, affecting both terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems within and beyond forest boundaries. Despite its foundational importance, there are certain gaps in our understanding of this complex process. Microbial communities are instrumental in breaking down organic matter, but the intricacies of their roles and interactions are still under investigation. This Special Issue aims to deepen our understanding of the diverse elements and processes that govern the decomposition of forest litter.

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