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Examining the Interactions of Climate Change and Disturbance Agents on Patterns of Change in Forest Ecosystems

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Message from the Guest Editor

Over the past few decades, with the steady march of climate change, scientists have observed forest disturbance agents impacting ecosystems in ways that are beyond the historical range. Climate change is clearly influencing the frequency and intensity of many disturbance agents to a point where forest ecosystems may be unable to recover quickly enough and may be driven to an alternate state. Examples where such state shifts may already have started include North American pine forests that have been killed in unprecedented rates by massive bark beetle infestations, and wildfires consuming Australian eucalyptus forests with sizes and intensities well beyond historical ranges. How resilient are different types of forest ecosystems to accelerating and intensifying patterns of change? How is climate change influencing different types of biotic and abiotic disturbance agents? What might these alternate states of forest ecosystems look like and what are the implications for the ecosystem services that they have historically provided?

We invite authors to submit papers to this Special Issue, employing different types of research tools to investigate these important questions.

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