

The role of bioclimatic features, landscape configuration and historical land use in the invasion of an Asian tree in subtropical Argentina

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1 **Abstract**

2 **Context:** Knowing which factors determine the spread of plant invaders is a relevant issue in
3 global ecology. Cultural landscapes both influence and are affected by exotic species. Although
4 bioclimatic boundaries, seed sources and landscape configuration all control the invasion
5 process, they have been mostly studied separately and independently from their distant drivers.

6 **Objectives:** We followed a multiscale approach to describe the invasion dynamics of the Asian
7 tree (*Ligustrum lucidum*) in subtropical NW Argentina cultural landscapes by: (1) identifying
8 the potential bioclimatic area of invasion, (2) mapping the currently invaded area in peri-urban
9 focal sectors, and (3) quantitatively describing the landscape-scale patterns of invasion in
10 relation to environmental and cultural variables.

11 **Method:** Niche models were used to map potential invasion area, remote sensing, GIS and
12 field surveys to map patterns of invasion and their association to landscape and environmental
13 variables.

14 **Results:** Climate suitability to *L. lucidum* extends over important ranges of the studied area,
15 but currently invaded areas are mostly restricted to clusters around the main cities. The
16 historical and demographic features of cities (e.g., date foundation, population) are important in
17 predicting invaded forest location and spread. At local scale, invasion is associated to
18 abandoned fields nearby urban centers, roads and rivers.

19 **Conclusions:** The invasion patterns of *L. lucidum* reflect the combined effect of historical
20 socioeconomic connections between Asia and America, as well as the local cultural landscape
21 history and configuration. Teleconnected cultural landscapes need to be explored as a
22 theoretical framework for the study of biological invasions in the Anthropocene.

23

24 **Keywords:** Invasive species; *Ligustrum lucidum*; Species distribution; Telecoupled cultural
25 landscapes.

26

27 **Introduction**

28 Species invasions can become a distinctive feature of newly created cultural landscapes,
29 as they change from a mostly wild to mostly anthropogenic one (Sadori et al. 2010). Most of
30 the arrivals of exotic species into their new ranges appear to result from intentional or
31 accidental exchanges between distant regions via different pathways, depending on
32 sociocultural factors (Hulme et al. 2008; Hulme 2009). Once introduced, their establishment
33 and spread result from the complex interaction between new habitat and species characteristics.
34 Successful invasions that spread into natural systems are the result of the cultural landscape
35 construction that includes the biocultural dimension: a physically, culturally, and historically
36 determined environment. Humans have been transporting plants species among regions for
37 millennia. These interchanges were extremely important among Asia, Europe and Africa along
38 the silk route, as well as between Europe and America after Columbus, and they have had
39 unprecedented magnitude and complexity across the globe in recent decades (Hulme 2009).
40 Purpose driven exchanges include, for example, species with agricultural, medicinal or
41 ornamental value. However, some of these species are able to spread into natural and
42 seminatural ecosystems affecting ecological functions and biodiversity (Vitousek et al. 1996;
43 Bellard et al. 2013) as an unplanned, and frequently undesirable, side effect of the cultural
44 landscape construction.

45 Cities are a particularly important feature of the cultural landscapes, regulating the
46 multiple connections and flows between people and ecosystems that strongly affect species
47 invasion. Cities act as attraction centers for the introduction of desirable and undesirable
48 species and then as sources of propagules for the peri-urban environment (Altson and
49 Richardson 2006; Botham et al. 2009; Wang et al. 2011). For example, gardening, urban
50 forestry or horticulture regulate the location of seed sources, increase the propagule pressure
51 and reduce the probability of invasion failure by temporally protecting potential invaders from
52 unsuitable environmental conditions until they adapt to local conditions (Mack 2000; Pyšek

53 and Richardson 2010; Hulme 2011; Pergl et al. 2016). Recent studies found that human
54 population and wealth (Pyšek et al. 2010, Decker et al. 2012), as well as the historical legacy
55 (Essl et al. 2011) are strong predictors of a wide range of invasive species distribution.
56 Therefore, it is expected that cities and anthropogenic peri-urban landscapes play a key role in
57 the introduction and spread of invasive species.

58 The capacity of a particular species to colonize areas depends on the interaction among
59 propagule availability, dispersal capacity, population growth potential, and landscape
60 heterogeneity (Vilá et al. 2008; O'Reilly-Nugent et al. 2016). In this sense, biological (e.g.
61 intrinsic species attributes, life history traits) (Grotkopp and Rejmánek 2007; Leishman et al.
62 2007; Peñuelas et al. 2010) and environmental factors (climate, topography, hydrology) are
63 important drivers that interact with human activities and determine the geographical extent of
64 plant invaders in their novel distribution range (Rejmánek and Richardson 1996; Thuiller et al.
65 2006). For example, human disturbances can regulate resource availability (e.g. light, soil
66 nutrients), affecting ecosystem invasibility and often enhancing the competitive availability of
67 invasive species (Karalius and Alpert 2010; Standish et al. 2008). Furthermore, changes in
68 landscape configuration (e.g. replacing forests by grasslands, increased of roads, etc) can affect
69 dispersal barriers and corridors and thus, the spread pattern (Miller et al. 2015). This results in
70 higher invasion rates in fragmented landscapes than in continuous and unconnected areas (Vilá
71 and Ibañez 2011). When the cultural landscape construction results in strongly modified
72 environmental conditions, they can overwhelm the influence of climate and natural physical
73 environment (e.g. soils, hydrology or topography) (Chiron et al. 2009; Sharma et al. 2010;
74 Fuentes et al. 2015). Cities and peri-urban areas are characterized by distinctively intensive
75 features of the cultural landscape. In addition to present-day landscape configuration, invasions
76 are often associated with the historical changes in land-use (Mosher et al. 2009; Vilá and
77 Ibañez 2011). Although biophysical factors and their interaction with city dynamic can be very

78 relevant to understand biological invasion processes as side effects of cultural landscape
79 development, they have been largely explored separately.

80 The cultural landscape construction in the subtropical humid forest of northwest
81 Argentina, Yungas ecoregion, experienced a major change with the Spanish arrival in the
82 region in the 16th century. As a result of the territory reconfiguration implemented during
83 colonial times, the main productive activities and population shifted from the highlands in the
84 Pre-Hispanic and early Hispanic period, to the forested humid flatlands of the foothills. Much
85 of the lowland and lower montane forests with flat topography were deforested for agriculture
86 and grazing, and the main urban centers were located nearby. These areas include the three
87 province capital cities of the region: San Miguel de Tucumán, Salta, and San Salvador de Jujuy,
88 with approximately 900,000, 600,000 and 300,000 inhabitants, respectively (INDEC 2010).
89 During the past decades, several montane areas near these urban centers experienced
90 abandonment or disintensification of agriculture and livestock grazing, which resulted in the
91 expansion of secondary forests (Grau et al. 2008; Gutiérrez-Angonese and Grau 2014). Parts of
92 these new forests are dominated by exotic tree species. A large proportion of them are
93 originally from SW Asia, including *Ligustrum lucidum* W. T. Aiton (Oleaceae), the most
94 aggressive and fast growing tree species in this area (Grau and Aragón 2000; Aragón and
95 Morales 2003; Easdale et al. 2007). *Ligustrum lucidum* was possibly introduced primarily for
96 urban shade, gardening, living fences and windbreaks. One of the first records in Argentina
97 dates to c.1900 (Montti et al. 2016). The extent of *L. lucidum* forests and the drivers of the
98 invasion are still not well documented. Here, we follow a multiscale approach to explore the
99 dynamics of this invasion into cultural landscapes in NW Argentina, with particular emphasis
100 on the role of cities and distant connections between native and novel ranges of distribution of
101 this species. Specifically in this study, we pursued the following objectives: 1) to identify the
102 potential area of invasion by *L. Lucidum* in the Yungas ecoregion of Argentina using ecological
103 niche distribution models; 2) to map, quantify and describe current invaded area in this

104 ecoregion by using satellite images in three peri-urban focal zones; and 3) to quantitatively
105 describe the spatial and temporal patterns of *L. lucidum* forest invasion at local scale, linking
106 environmental and cultural landscape features in the largest peri-urban sector of the region: San
107 Miguel de Tucumán and Sierra de San Javier.

108

109 **2. Methodology**

110 *2.1. Studied species*

111 *Ligustrum lucidum* or Chinese glossy privet is an evergreen tree native of the south of
112 the Yangtze River in China, where it grows in different climates and soil types between 0 to
113 2900 m.a.s.l, in full sunlight, as well as in shaded understory (Chang et al. 1996). *L. lucidum*
114 has been extensively cultivated for different purposes (e.g., traditional medicine, culturing
115 wax-insects to obtain white wax, furniture) for a long time in China. Because of its particular
116 functional traits (eg. fast growth rate, tolerance to air pollution), it is regarded as a great
117 landscaping plant and it is used extensively as an ornamental in streets and gardens around the
118 world (Guilhermetti et al. 2013). But it is also considered a successful global invader outside
119 its native range (Panetta 2000; Aslan et al. 2012; Montti et al. 2016).

120 *2.2. Study area*

121 Our study focuses on Yungas ecoregion, the humid native forests of northwestern
122 Argentina (-22.25°S to -27.95°S, -64.22° to -65.65°W) (Fig. 1a). The climate is subtropical with
123 a monsoon regime of precipitation (dry winters, rainy summers) (Brown et al. 2001).
124 Temperature and precipitation are controlled by topography; the average annual temperature is
125 high in the eastern piedmont (20°C) and decreases with elevation. Precipitation exceeds 1100
126 mm per year (Bianchi 1981), 78% concentrated in the months of November to March.
127 Additional supply of water, particularly during the dry season, comes from fog or horizontal
128 rain (Hunzinger 1997). The native humid forest that *L. lucidum* replaces has a high proportion

129 of evergreen and semi-deciduous tree species, with *Ocotea porphyria*, *Blepharocalyx*
130 *salicifolius*, *Pisonia ambigua* and *Cedrela lilloi*, as dominant tree species (Grau et al. 2010;
131 Brown et al. 2001; Blundo et al. 2012). For the purpose of this study, three spatial scales of
132 analysis were considered: I) Regional: including all Yungas distribution in Argentina, c. 5.2
133 million ha; II) Sub-regional: three pre-selected focal zones or sectors where invasion was
134 notorious covering 408,500 ha aprox. and III) Local: that include the most affected sector by
135 the invasion, near to 120,000 ha, the peri-urban region of San Miguel de Tucumán (Fig. 1a).

136 2.3. Potential distribution of *Ligustrum lucidum* at regional scale

137 We generated a potential distribution map at regional scale based on recently observed
138 presence records, climatic variables and maximum entropy algorithm implemented in Maxent
139 3.3.1 (Phillips et al. 2006). This map represents the distribution of suitable climatic conditions
140 for *L. lucidum* in our study area. Maxent has proven to produce more reliable results than other
141 comparable methods such as Bioclim, Domain or Garp (Wisz et al. 2008). This reliability has
142 been confirmed by its high capacity to predict novel presence for not so well-known species
143 (Pearson et al. 2007) and to predict the outcome of introductions of invasive species outside the
144 native range (Ficetola et al. 2007; Rödder et al. 2008; Rödder and Lötters 2009). We initially
145 considered 127 presence records of *L. lucidum* collected from fieldwork (50%), national
146 herbarium specimen data examined by the authors (35%) and well as other records reported in
147 the literature throughout the study area (15%). Obviously erroneous occurrence points (e.g.
148 coordinates outside the studied area under which they had been listed) and duplications
149 resulting from the merger of records from the different sources were removed. In the case of
150 invasive species, most records tend to be collected where high densities of people and
151 researchers occurs. This sampling bias may influence the prediction of the model. Therefore,
152 we removed randomly presence records that were geographically close together trying not to

153 leave records in adjacent cells. As a result, not all presence records collected were used in
154 model calibration (60 presences records).

155 First, we obtained an initial set of 10 models setting Maxent with hinge and quadratic
156 features and cross-validation, using 90% of presence data to fit the model and the remaining
157 10% for model validation given the small number of presence points. In addition, we
158 disaggregated potentially clustered/repeated presence records by randomly selecting one per
159 grid cell. In order to characterize the “background” of environment available to the species, we
160 restricted the area only to the study region (Merow et al. 2013). This initial set was used to
161 identify variables with minimal or no contribution to overall model taking into account the
162 predictive efficacy using the jackknife test of variable importance, variable response curves
163 and percent contribution of each variable in the model. Only environmental variables with
164 relatively low collinearity (i.e., Pearson correlation values lower than 0.7 considering only the
165 cells with presence data) and greater biological significance were selected. The average
166 training gain values of selected variables were examined once again and the variables showing
167 the lowest decrease in gain values when omitted from the full model were removed. These
168 variables correspond to a subset of 19 climatic variables from the WorldClim database
169 (<http://www.worldclim.org/>; Hijmans et al., 2005), that were projected at a 30 arc second
170 (approximately 1 km²) spatial resolution.

171 The model’s performance was evaluated using the area under the receiver operating
172 characteristic curve (AUC). An AUC value of 0.5 indicates that the performance of the model
173 is no better than random, while values closer to 1.0 indicate better model performance (Phillips
174 et al. 2006). To obtain a model we ran Maxent with 100 replicate using the reduced set of
175 variables and the same setting. Then the 10 models with greatest AUC values were selected and
176 averaged to obtain the final model. Finally, to generate a binary prediction of occurrence it was
177 necessary to choose a threshold. Because no single procedure is recommended to select

178 thresholds, we used a *maximum training sensitivity plus logistic threshold* to cut-off. This
179 criterion has been described as the most objective to identify optimal habitats when only
180 presence data are available (Liu C et al. 2013). Pixels with a value higher than the selected
181 threshold were considered presence data, meaning that they harbored the appropriate climate
182 conditions for the species. We used ArcGis 10.1 and Spatial Analysis tool to construct the final
183 model.

184 2.4. Current distribution of *Ligustrum lucidum* forest at sub-regional scale

185 To evaluate and quantify the current distribution of *L. lucidum* forests we surveyed the
186 whole Yungas ecoregion in Argentina and identified three focal zones where invasion was
187 notorious (i.e. where several hectares of monodominant forest are present). These sectors
188 included the peri-urban landscapes around the most important cities, centered in the localities
189 of Yala (Jujuy province), San Lorenzo (Salta province) and Sierra de San Javier (Tucumán
190 province). These study sectors were included in two subsets of Landsat TM images: scene path
191 231/row 77 for Yala and San Lorenzo and scenes path 231/row 78 and 79 (mosaic) for Sierra
192 de San Javier. Four images were selected for each sector corresponding to January, July,
193 August and December 2010 to maximize potential differences in phenology between native
194 and exotic forest. Images were almost cloudless; the remaining few clouds (less than 10% in
195 two images in one date) were masked. Landsat image proved an excellent alternative at low
196 cost to mapping spread of *L. lucidum* forests and was previously used by Hoyos et al. (2010)
197 and Gavier-Pizarro et al. (2012) in more seasonal forests of Argentina at higher latitude. The
198 images have 30 x 30 m spatial resolution and were orthorectified and georeferenced using GPS
199 points obtained in the field (geopositional error <10 m) and converted to the official coordinate
200 system of Argentina (Gauss-Krüger POSGAR94 System, zone 3). The six multispectral bands
201 of the Landsat images were combined into a single multi-temporal stack with resulting 24
202 bands for each study area. The stack of bands also included the NDVI (Normalized Difference

203 Vegetation Index) and the hill shade image, obtained from the DEM (digital elevation model)
204 resampled to match the spatial resolution to a 30 x 30 m pixel, which allows modelling the
205 shadows caused by the topography. As a result, final stacked images included 26 layers of
206 information: 24 multispectral bands+ NDVI+hill shade. Images were obtained from the
207 *Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas Espaciais* (INPE, <http://www.dgi.inpe.br/CDSR/>). Lastly,
208 multi-temporal images for the three sites were clipped to cover the interest sectors leaving a
209 surface of 106,183 ha for Yala and San Lorenzo sector, and 248,305 ha for Sierra de San Javier.

210 Land cover maps were derived using the non-parametric classifier Support Vector
211 Machine (SVM) (Hsu et al. 2007). SVM defines a hyperplane that separates points
212 corresponding to two different classes in a multidimensional space (Foody and Mathur 2004;
213 Huang et al. 2002). In our case, land cover was classified into five classes: 1-Forest (including
214 Yungas and dry forest, but also a small proportion of tree plantations), 2-*L. lucidum* forest, 3-
215 Urban, 4-Water, and 5-Others (agriculture, grassland, mix agriculture, citrus and perennials
216 plantation, cleared, roads and bare soil). *L. lucidum* forests differ substantially in structural and
217 physical characteristics from native forest (Grau et al. 2010). *L. lucidum* canopies are evergreen
218 and closed, resulting in higher absorption in the visible domain and higher reflection in the
219 near-infrared domain and thus present high NDVI (Zamora Nazca et al. 2014). During
220 fieldwork in 2010, we identified training areas used to parameterize a SVM classifier. This
221 methodological approach was previously used to classify our study species in other region of
222 Argentina by Gavier-Pizarro et al. (2012).

223 2.5. *Ligustrum lucidum* relationship invasion with environment and land-cover changes at sub- 224 regional and local scale

225 Based on the current distribution map of the *L. lucidum* forests in the three focal sectors
226 (section 2.4) the landscape structure of these invaded stands was analyzed using the
227 FRAGSTATS software (McGarigal and Marks 1995) at sub-regional scale. The selection of

228 metrics was based on their ability to characterize various aspects of fragmentation such as:
229 class area (sum the area of all fragments per class), mean patch size (an index of
230 fragmentation), number of patches (an indicator of several ecological processes and landscape
231 heterogeneity), total edge length (indicator of patch complexity), average nearest-neighbor
232 distance and mean proximity index. Additional information on these metrics and detailed
233 mathematical description can be found in McGarigal and Cushman (2002). In addition, we
234 used ArcGis 10.1 and Spatial Analysis tool to compute descriptive statistics and explore the
235 relationship between geographic distribution of *L. lucidum* forest patches and variables such as
236 slope, elevation, temperature, precipitation and distance to roads, rivers and urban areas. We
237 also explored the relationship between *L. lucidum* forests per sector (SSJ, SJ and Y), population
238 and cities' features as time of foundation and size by fitting linear regression. Population data
239 was extracted from official data of Censo Nacional de Población, Hogares y Viviendas 2010.
240 INDEC-Instituto Geográfico Nacional (IGN, <http://www.sig.indec.gov.ar/censo2010/>).
241 Additionally, to enrich the discussion we combined *Ligustrum* sub-regional map and urban data
242 with the data from Córdoba city extracted from Gavier-Pizarro et al. (2012) where *L. lucidum*
243 invasion has been reported.

244 To analyze the influence of past land-uses on forest invasion and to assess the invasion
245 rate we worked at local scale in Sierra de San Javier (SSJ) and San Miguel de Tucumán city,
246 the most affected sector by the invasion. San Miguel de Tucumán is the largest political,
247 economic and cultural urban center in NW Argentina. For this analysis, we used an additional
248 set of land cover history data that we combined with our *L. lucidum* forests areas for 2010. The
249 series of land cover maps previously made for SSJ by Gutiérrez-Angonese and Grau (2014)
250 and Gutiérrez-Angonese (2015) were derived from Landsat MSS and TM images (30 x 30 m of
251 spatial resolution) from 1972 to 2010, selecting early-spring cloud-free images with a temporal
252 frequency of four to five years (1972, 1977, 1981, 1986, 1992, 1996, 2001, 2006 and 2010).
253 All Landsat images were image-to-image spatially co-registered and atmospherically corrected

254 using DOS method (Song et al 2001). Images were classified by applying the machine learning
255 algorithm Random Forest (Breiman 2001), using the Random Forest Package (Liaw and
256 Wiener 2002) in the R statistical Software (R Development Core Team, 2014). For this map
257 land cover was classified into seven categories 1-Montane forest (SMF) that we called here
258 Yungas forest, 2-Dry forest or “Chaco” (DF), 3-Montane grassland (MG), 4-Anthropogenic
259 grassland and shrubland (AG), 5-Sugar cane (SC), 6-Citrus plantations (CP) and 7-High-to-
260 medium density urban areas (UR). Final accuracy estimation OOB (out of bag) ranges from
261 8.8-12.6% of error in TM scenes and 12.9-18.8% in MSS scenes (Gutiérrez-Angonese and
262 Grau 2014). To combine our data with the land cover history, we used our map of invaded
263 areas by *L. lucidum* in 2010 as a reference. The set of data from Gutiérrez-Angonese and Grau
264 (2014) and Gutiérrez-Angonese (2015) was used to estimate the temporal trajectory of the
265 invasion and the previous land cover for the areas that end being *L. lucidum* forests in 2010. In
266 the Gutiérrez-Angonese and Grau (2014) and Gutiérrez-Angonese (2015) data, different land
267 covers were discriminated (see above), but *L. lucidum* forests were not discriminated from
268 native forest (Yungas). Therefore, the map of *L. lucidum* forests in 2010 was used as a mask to
269 extract the information from the history land cover maps and the invasion rate was estimated
270 assuming that the class “SMF” in the Gutiérrez-Angonese and Grau data corresponds to *L.*
271 *lucidum* forests.

272 Additionally, to investigate the factors that were associated with past invasion patterns
273 of *L. lucidum*, we performed a multiple logistic regression using the presence of *L. lucidum*
274 forests in 2010 as a binary dependent variable, and two sets of independent environmental and
275 land use variables derived from the map of 1972 (Eastman, 2016) (Table 2). A stratified sample
276 (selecting 10% of the pixels) was applied to reduce the inherent spatial autocorrelation of
277 spatial data (i.e. locations close to each other exhibit more similar values than those further
278 apart). Model fit was evaluated through the pseudo- R^2 coefficient, ranging from 0 to 1 (values
279 greater than 0.2 means a good fit, Eastman 2016), representing the percentage of variance

280 explained in non-linear functions. Additionally, the contribution of each independent variable
281 to explain the probability of occurrence of *L. lucidum* forests in 2010 was assessed by
282 obtaining the standardized coefficients (b') of each variable, which allows comparing variables
283 with one another, regardless of the unit of measurement for each variable. Standard coefficients
284 were quantified using the formula proposed by Lesschen et al. (2005). The higher the 'b' value
285 the more the corresponding variable contributes to explain the presence of *Ligustrum* forests in
286 its current location.

287

288 **3. Results**

289 The model of potential *L. lucidum* distribution at regional scale (Fig. 1b) had a good
290 overall accuracy with an AUC of 0.82 for independent data. Four variables were used in the
291 setting of final model of the predictive map with different relative contribution: Bio 14:
292 Precipitation of the driest month (56%), Bio 1: Annual mean temperature (25%), Bio12:
293 Annual precipitation (12%) and Bio 6: Minimum temperature of the coldest month (7 %). The
294 spatial model generated only by these environmental variables suggests that the study area
295 presents a high climatic suitability, almost overlapping in some part with the distribution of
296 Yungas ecoregion in Argentina (Fig. 1b). This is not surprising, given that *L. lucidum* tolerate a
297 wide range of environmental conditions (Chang et al. 1996).

298 Despite its wide potential distribution range, *L. lucidum* forest patches were limited in
299 2010 to three “hotspots” of invasion in the peri-urban areas of the largest cities (Fig. 2). The *L.*
300 *lucidum* forests covered approximately 700 ha in 2010, that represents 0.22% of the total forest
301 area (324,000 ha) in these three sectors and was distributed in several patches (relatively
302 discrete forest areas) with mean patch size of < 0.6 ha (Table 1). Although the mean patch size
303 was small, a high proportion of the invaded forests were distributed in large patches (between 2
304 to 38 ha, that represent more than 50% of the total invaded area). Sierra de San Javier in
305 Tucumán has the largest area of *L. lucidum* forests, and Yala the smallest one. The spatial and

306 spectral resolution of the Landsat TM images (30 m) did not allow us to detect young or mixed
307 forest of *L. lucidum*, and only monodominant-invaded forest was detected, mapped and
308 analyzed. Landscape indices appear related to the size of the total invaded area per sector. We
309 observed an increase in mean patch size and a decrease in distance to nearest-neighbor from Y
310 to SSJ (less to more invaded areas; Table 1); indicating a process of forest patch coalescence
311 (inverse of fragmentation) as the area of *L. lucidum* forests increases.

312 At sub-regional scale, the current *L. lucidum* forests were located between 15-19 °C
313 mean annual temperature and 600-900 annual precipitation and in areas with gentle slopes (Fig
314 3a, b, c). However, a particular distribution pattern was observed when considering elevation:
315 *L. lucidum* forests were concentrated in two distinct altitudinal ranges: low elevation foothills
316 (around 500 m.a.s.l) and mountain ridges and slopes (between 1000 and 1500 m.a.s.l) (Fig. 3
317 d). Additionally, *L. lucidum* forest patches were less common as distance to roads and rivers
318 increase (Fig. 3 e, f). Along the three sectors, a sturdy relationship with variables associated to
319 cities was observed: *L. lucidum* forests extent appeared to be influenced by different urban
320 features such as age of city foundation, size, urban population and population density of the
321 three more important cities located in the Yungas. This relationship holds when the data for the
322 city of Córdoba is included (Fig. 4).

323 At local scale, patches of *L. lucidum* forest were distributed in seven clusters around
324 San Miguel de Tucumán city and Sierra de San Javier, mostly located at the top and bottom of
325 the mountain range (Fig. 3d and Fig. 5). The distribution of *L. lucidum* forests cover in 2010
326 and the land-cover changes observed since 1972, indicate that the species doubled its area
327 during this period from 306 to 620 ha. The invasion process apparently varied in intensity
328 through time, with two main expansion pulses, during 1986-1992 and after 2001 (Fig. 6 a). The
329 expansion occurred mainly over citrus plantation (CP, 43%, Fig 6 b) located at the foothills.
330 Other anthropic uses such as agricultural grasslands (AG) or sugar cane (SC) were
331 comparatively less invaded by *L. lucidum* forests, representing 8 and 11 % of net changes

332 respectively. Among natural ecosystems *L. lucidum* expansion occurred mainly over montane
333 grassland (MG, approximately 34%) distributed at the top of SSJ.

334 At local scale, precipitation and elevation were the best environmental predictors to
335 explain the presence of *L. lucidum* forests. In addition, at this spatial scale there was also a
336 negative relationship between new *L. lucidum* forests and slope (Pseudo- $R^2=0.66$, Table 2).
337 However, according to the logistic regression analysis, land cover variables were better
338 predictors than environmental factors to explain the presence of *L. lucidum* forests in Sierra de
339 San Javier, (Table 2, b' coefficient). Among these variables, distance to *L. lucidum* forests in
340 1972 was the variable that better explained the probability of occurrence of *Ligustrum* forests
341 in 2010. Many patches were close to the initial foci of invasion, irrespectively of whether these
342 patches were previously occupied by other uses, showing that this species' spread involves a
343 spatial "contagious" pattern. In addition, the invasion was enhanced in areas near to roads, CP,
344 DF, SC and UR, land covers mainly distributed in the piedmont of SSJ, and away from MG or
345 AG (located at the top of SSJ) during the 1970s (Table 2).

346

347 **Discussion**

348 At the classical ecological or landscape scales, controls of plant succession can be
349 categorized in three main groups of factors: i) site availability, ii) differential species
350 performance and iii) species availability (Pickett et al. 1987). Exotic plant invasions can be
351 considered a particular component of plant succession, in which species availability plays a key
352 role, and in turn, is regulated by mechanisms that operate at global scale and are dependent on
353 socio-political variables in addition to biophysical ones. Thus, understanding plant invasion
354 and its effects in framing emerging cultural landscapes, depends on the co-occurrence of
355 factors that operate a different spatial scales, from global to local and that includes: i) suitable
356 environmental and climatic conditions, ii) human induced conditions/cultural landscape, and
357 iii) human propagule introduction, "pressure"; and a posteriori landscape scale dispersal. In this

358 study, we explored these different components as controls of the invasion of the Asian tree *L.*
359 *Lucidum* in the Argentinian Yungas ecoregion. Cities are a prominent and increasingly
360 important cultural feature of landscapes and regions, since they regulate economic and political
361 activities and concentrate human population that in turn has influential decisions over
362 ecosystems. Our study point out the potential role of cities as key controls of the interaction
363 between invasive species availability (largely anthropogenic) and landscape characteristics that
364 control colonization and dispersal.

365 *Suitable environmental and climatic conditions*

366 The influence of environmental variables in invasive species distribution is well known
367 (e.g. Gormley et al. 2011; Xu 2015). The results of our niche modelling (Fig. 1b) suggested
368 that Yungas ecoregion in NW Argentina (mainly in Tucumán province) has suitable climatic
369 conditions for the expansion of this species. *Ligustrum lucidum* forests current distribution,
370 however, only occupies a minor and aggregated portion of this potential range, despite the
371 species has been present in the region for more than a century. This could reflect the "lag
372 phase" in biological invasions (Aikio et al. 2010). Although our understanding of causality is
373 still limited, dispersal barriers coupled with the original location of seed sources rather than
374 climatic conditions appear to be the main restriction to a widespread distribution. In its native
375 range, *L. lucidum* experiences more extreme climatic conditions than in subtropical Argentina
376 (from wet-warm to temperate) and grows up to 2500 m.a.s.l (Chang et al.1996). As a result,
377 and according with niche conservatism (Peterson 2003; Thuiller et al. 2005), it is possible
378 that this species presents advantageous adaptations to diverse environmental conditions.
379 Furthermore, it has been documented that exotic species can broaden their native-range
380 ecological niche during the process of invasion (e.g. Broennimann et al. 2007; Fitzpatrick et al.
381 2012; Essl et al. 2009). If this is the case of *L. lucidum*, we could expect major expansions of
382 the current distribution area into the Argentinian Yungas, but also in other ecosystems such as

383 dry forest or natural grasslands. The potential capacity of *L. lucidum* to invade places under
384 different and contrasting environmental and vegetation conditions is supported by examples of
385 invasions in other places of Argentina including sectors of dry forest in Córdoba (Gavier-
386 Pizarro et al. 2012), grasslands in Buenos Aires (Ghersa et al. 2002) and riparian forest in Entre
387 Rios (Torresin et al. 2013). In this work, we only sampled a subset of *L. lucidum*'s large
388 geographic range. Thus, other environmental and climatic predictors may be important to
389 explain the distribution at bigger scale studies (i.e. country, continental or global).

390 *Human induced conditions/cultural landscape*

391 We identified three hotspots of invasion in the Argentinian Yungas, with Sierra de San
392 Javier as the one experiencing the most advanced invasion (with more than 600 ha of
393 homogeneous monodominant *L. lucidum* forest) and Yala the least. Although this represents
394 only 0.22% of the studied Yungas forest cover, there are many potential sources of invasion
395 along this ecoregion. Landsat images provided an excellent data source to map *L. lucidum*
396 invasion in dry seasonal forests (Hoyos et al. 2010; Gavier- Pizarro et al. 2012), but in partially
397 evergreen mountain ecosystems, it showed limitations for mapping young or mixed stands,
398 which could not be reliably discriminated from native forests. Previous works using remote
399 sensing in Sierra de San Javier showed the same limitation (Grau et al. 2008). In addition,
400 small patches (<0.5 ha), even those highly dominated by *L. lucidum* were not detected due to
401 the medium-spatial resolution of Landsat images. However, based on our extensive field
402 knowledge, we are confident that our map captures the main patterns of *L. lucidum* invasion,
403 showing the largest invaded forest patches.

404 In Sierra de San Javier particularly, citrus plantations (in the foothills) and grasslands
405 (mainly distributed close to the mountain top) were the land cover types over which *Ligustrum*
406 forests expanded more aggressively. Expansion occurred at a higher rate between 1986 and
407 1992 and after 2001 (Fig. 6). During the 1940s, a small touristic village was developed in

408 Sierra de San Javier, and in 1948 the National Government, legally expropriated nearly 10,000
409 hectares to create a university project and a Natural Reserve. As a consequence, 36 private
410 owners abandoned their agricultural land. However, the development failed to materialize; this
411 history of land use may have produced the initial introduction of seed sources and availability
412 of potentially colonized fields. Then, during 1973 through a Resolution of the National
413 University of Tucumán, the Biological Park Sierra de San Javier, a protected area that belonged
414 to the University was created, and many areas were abandoned (Gutiérrez-Angonese and Grau
415 2014), creating opportunities for the second pulse of invasion. Although we do not have strong
416 evidence to link directly the first and second pulses of invasion, our interpretation of the
417 observed pattern is that political conservation decisions taken several years before invasion
418 pulse could have unintentionally promoted the spread of *L. lucidum* by creating adequate local
419 environmental conditions and encouraging the abandonment of agriculture and grazing fields.
420 A similar pattern was found in another area by Gavier-Pizarro et al. (2012). In addition to
421 formal conservation practices, the combination of abandonment of marginal agriculture and the
422 expansion of sub-urban residential areas after the rapid economic growth during the beginning
423 of the 21st century may have favored the second expansion pulse.

424 *Ligustrum lucidum* monodominant forests close to peri-urban areas of large urban
425 centers, present a strong spatial association with roads and rivers and with urban areas of larger
426 size and higher population density (Fig. 3 and 4, Table 1). Roads and rivers often act as
427 corridors along which invasive species can spread (Wang R et al. 2011) and cities as reservoir
428 of seed sources. Large urban areas of the Yungas ecoregion, appeared to have favored *L.*
429 *lucidum* invasion likely by hosting large seed sources since the species is intensively used for
430 urban forestry and vegetated fences near recently disturbed areas (e.g. in association to urban
431 development), or recently abandoned agriculture lands (as agriculture becomes non-
432 competitive in comparison to urban land uses) (Davis et al. 2000; Theoharides and Dukes
433 2007; Hufbauer et al. 2012). Importantly, the relationship between *L. lucidum* invaded area and

434 cities size is consistent with the scaling attribute of cities (Bettencourt 2013), that explains
435 several properties of urban systems considering variables such as green areas, transport
436 infrastructure, human interaction, among others. This pattern is more evident if we combine
437 our data with the *L. lucidum* cover around Córdoba city described by Gavier-Pizarro et al.,
438 (2012) (see Fig. 4). This relationship confirms that *L. lucidum* responds to the scaling rule
439 proposed for city systems and could be considered as a side effect linked with the urban centers
440 dynamics and functioning. It is also worth noting that even though *L. lucidum* showed strong
441 association with peri-urban forest transition and land abandonment, and that the urban areas
442 grew during the last decades, the expansion of new forest has slowed down in recent times
443 (Gutiérrez-Angonese 2015); probably because newly abandoned agriculture areas are
444 becoming scarce. However, our results should be considered a conservative estimate of the
445 present invaded forests. Recent field data shows that *L. lucidum* is expanding into mature
446 native forest (Malizia et al. in press), revealing that invasion could occur by other ways unable
447 to be detected by standard remote sensing methods.

448 *Propagule pressure and dispersal*

449 Our results suggest that humans and their activities are the main control of landscape
450 features influencing *L. lucidum* distribution pattern. Urban areas play an important role as *L.*
451 *lucidum* propagule sources, and roads and rivers enhance dispersion and increase propagule
452 pressure into sites suitable for invasion, such as abandoned fields. The invasion across the
453 cultural landscape followed a contagious pattern, with a strong decrease of invasion probability
454 with distance from pre-existing *Ligustrum* stands. Consistently, previous studies suggested this
455 pattern also could be consequence of propagule pressure conditions and seed dispersal
456 mechanism at a micro local scale (Aragón and Morales 2003; Powell et al. unpublished work).
457 In others words, urban and peri-urban areas present a relatively high abundance of *L. lucidum*
458 as a result of widespread cultivation by humans in gardens and streets, and the availability of

459 invasion prone sites. *L. lucidum* invasion into areas nearby seed sources, can later achieve
460 persistence by two mechanisms. First, this species has a high growth rate and effective
461 vegetative reproduction (Grau and Aragón 2000; Aragón and Groom 2003), which helps
462 competitively displacing native species (Malizia et al. in press). Second, *L. lucidum* produces
463 massive fruit crops that fall and germinate underneath the parental tree (Aragón and Groom
464 2003). In addition, *L. lucidum* produces fruits during the winter (when native fruit offer is
465 scarce) and its seeds are frequently eaten and dispersed by birds (Aragón and Groom 2003).
466 *Turdus rufiventris* a medium-sized passerine, which is the most abundant fruit-eating bird
467 species in the southern Argentinian Yungas, disperses seeds beyond canopy proximity, using
468 native trees or abandoned citrus plantations as perches (Blendinger et al 2012; Ayup et al.
469 2014). Also as Powell et al. (unpublished work) confirmed recently, seeds dispersed by birds
470 presented different spatial patterns depending on their handling technique and the tree density
471 influenced the number of seeds and their dispersal distance. The combination and relative
472 contribution of these factors to control invasion spread needs to be better understood in order to
473 refine models of invasion and develop future scenarios.

474 *Telecoupled cultural landscapes as a modifier of site and species availability to explain the L.*
475 *lucidum invasion*

476 Several studies described the biological traits that confer advantages to *L. lucidum* over
477 the native species (Aragón and Groom 2003; Aragón and Morales 2003; Tecco et al. 2006;
478 Easdale et al. 2007; Ferreras et al. 2008). Here, we showed that, human activities are also key
479 factors controlling its expansion in Argentinian Yungas. As different studies revealed, human-
480 assisted propagule movements and disturbances related to the development of cultural
481 landscapes could be more important in shaping the invasion process than the invasive species'
482 traits themselves (Chytrý et al. 2008a, b). This suggests that tree invasion should be tackled
483 from a multidisciplinary focus that includes the human dimension view and the dynamic

484 processes associated with it (i.e., social, economic, geographic, historic and landscape
485 ecology), in order to develop a comprehensive theoretical framework on how these factors
486 operate during the invasion process at different stages and spatio-temporal scales.

487 Based in our multiscale analysis we argue that invasions have a strong interaction with
488 “telecoupled cultural landscapes”. The concept of “telecouplings” has been recently developed
489 to study the links between distant socio-environmental systems and the environmental
490 modifications related with distant drivers (Liu J et al. 2013). The concept is used to study land
491 use change processes (e.g., Gasparri and le Polain 2014) and urban-rural interactions (Deines et
492 al. 2016); it was proposed as potentially important to explain species invasions (Liu J et al.
493 2013). In the telecoupling frame, cities are crucial elements to articulate the interaction
494 between the telecoupled systems (Seto et al. 2012). Cities concentrate the main fluxes of
495 information, energy and materials, as well as the most powerful decisions. Therefore cities and
496 peri-urban zones are particularly prone to result into “telecoupled cultural landscapes” where
497 invasive plants such as *L. lucidum* could play the role of incorporating biological features from
498 distant locations and creating novel ecosystems. In this scenario, peri-urban areas are expected
499 to be the first ones affected.

500 Under this framework, to better understand why *L. lucidum* became a successful
501 invasive species in Argentina it is advisable to consider the long and intermittent telecouplings
502 operating between China and Americas, and particularly Argentina. Since the 1600’s,
503 sociocultural and economic telecoupling between Asia and the Americas has been intensive,
504 especially related with the interchange of natural resources. For example, American silver
505 enhanced Chinese economy particularly on final of Ming and beginning of Qing Dynasties
506 (Flynn and Giráldez 2002; Flynn et al. 2003); and American crops species (maize, potato,
507 sweet potato) helped mitigating human famine and changed human population dynamic
508 (mainly in eighteenth century). In addition, sugar cane from SE Asia influenced socioeconomic
509 organization and food habits in America (Mann 2006). Nowadays, both areas continue with

510 some relationships that not only favor international trade of material resources (i.e. China is the
511 main soybean importer from Argentina), but also important flows of people, information and
512 cultural aspects (as garden diversity composition, type of food, natural medicine, etc). Three of
513 the cities described here, in which the surrounds are being invaded by *L. lucidum* forests (Salta,
514 San Miguel de Tucumán and Córdoba), have more than 1% of their population composed by
515 Asian people (INDEC 2010). Also, these cities and San Salvador de Jujuy, were important
516 nodes of the trade route known as the “Hispanic American china silk route” used to commerce
517 different goods from Asia during the colonial times (Bonialian 2014). Essl et al. (2011)
518 emphasizes that the impact of human activities and socio economy legacy on species invasion
519 can often exhibit a considerable time lag. For these reasons, we argue that historical flows and
520 connections between native (China) and novel ranges (Argentina) need to be studied as
521 relevant drivers of cultural landscape change and *L. lucidum* invasion.

522

523 **Conclusions**

524 Two main conclusions emerge from this study: First, a multiscale approach is necessary
525 to explain invasive species distributions. Second, the interaction at multiple-scale between
526 biophysical variables and factors involved in the development of cultural landscapes is crucial
527 to explain invasive species success. As a corollary, we suggest that a better developed inclusion
528 of cultural aspects into the theory of invasion is a priority.

529 Our results suggest that at regional scale, Yungas ecoregion of NW Argentina presents
530 climatic conditions adequate for *L. lucidum* expansion. However, for the invasion to develop it
531 is necessary the co-occurrence of other factors. In the studied area invaded ranges are clustered
532 around the regional major cities and according to scale rules (i.e., the bigger the city, the larger
533 the invaded area), thus suggesting that major urban centers in the Yungas ecoregion could
534 create particular conditions in their surrounding areas that increase invasibility. The
535 mechanisms that explain the relationship between cities size and *L. lucidum* invaded area are

536 still unclear and need more research; but the contagious pattern of invasion suggests that
537 propagule pressure and biological mechanisms (as seed dispersion and vegetative reproduction)
538 can play a key role. Although we only evaluated recent historical factors of land use change in
539 relation to trees invasion, we suggest that understanding the longer-term historical legacy of
540 socioeconomic teleconnections between Asia and the Americas may provide useful insights for
541 the development of a framework of teleconnected cultural landscapes, a potentially important
542 concept for the geographical socioecology of the Anthropocene.

543

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799 *Ligustrum lucidum*, en la dinámica hídrica de las Yungas del noroeste Argentino.
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802 **Tables**

803 **Table 1.** Spatial patterns of *L. lucidum* forests (LF) and other land-cover classes around three
 804 study areas in NW Argentina at sub-regional scale (**Y**: Yala; **SL**: San Lorenzo and **SSJ**: Sierra
 805 de San Javier).

| Variables | Y | SL | SSJ |
|---|----------|-----------|------------|
| <i>Land-cover class</i> (ha) | | | |
| Total study area | 104,801 | 103,591 | 246,732 |
| Urban | 4,796 | 5,260 | 8,333 |
| Forest (F) | 85,301 | 75,842 | 162,901 |
| <i>L. lucidum</i> forest (LF) | 11 | 36 | 667 |
| Other | 14,693 | 25,134 | 76,130 |
| <i>Spatial analysis of L. lucidum forests</i> | | | |
| Rate of LF/F (%) | 0.01 | 0.03 | 0.3 |
| Number of LF patches | 82 | 238 | 1053 |
| Mean patch size (ha) | 0.13 | 0.15 | 0.63 |
| Total border/total area (m) | 0.11 | 0.10 | 0.05 |
| Average nearest-neighbor distance (m) | 1099 | 462 | 231 |
| Mean proximity index | 0.34 | 0.82 | 11.4 |

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809 **Table 2.** Results of multiple logistic regression at local scale
 810 (Dependent variable= Presence of *L. lucidum* forests in 2010; Independent variables=
 811 environmental condition and distance to different land cover in 1972)

| Variables | b' | mean | sd |
|---|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| Intercept | -3.97 | | |
| Environmental Variables | | | |
| Elevation (m.a.s.l.) | 5.99 | 781.2 | 383.20 |
| Mean annual precipitation (mm from <i>WorldClim</i>) | 2.00 | 923.0 | 94.25 |
| Slope (%; 100% = 45°) | -1.88 | 17.5 | 23.18 |
| Aspect (°) | 0.13 | 121.9 | 100.09 |
| Land use/cover Variables | | | |
| Distance to rivers (m) | -0.77 | 1198 | 1054.71 |
| Distance to roads (m) | -6.21 | 1247 | 1277.46 |
| Distance to areas with <i>L. lucidum</i> in 1972 (m) | -182 | 3218 | 2619.89 |
| Distance to Montane grassland (m) | 7.67 | 4299 | 5204.82 |
| Distance to urban areas in 1972 (m) | -2.21 | 6895 | 5950.52 |
| Distance to Sugar cane (m) | -2.38 | 861 | 1252.18 |
| Distance to Citrus plantations (m) | -5.06 | 639 | 1062.34 |
| Distance to Dry forest (m) | -3.36 | 1831 | 2350.33 |
| Distance to Anthropogenic grassland (m) | 2.31 | 2835 | 3849.53 |

812 b' (Standard coefficient) represent the contribution of each independent variable to explain the
813 probability of occurrence of the dependent variable and was calculated according to Lesschen
814 et al. (2005). Pseudo-R² = 1 indicates a perfect fit. Pseudo-R² greater than 0.2 is considered a
815 relatively good fit.

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833 **Figure Captions**

834 **Figure 1:** a) Location of the study area in Argentina at three different scales: (I) regional, (II)
835 sub-regional and (III) local, b) Original Yungas ecoregion (native forest) and map of potential
836 *L. lucidum* distribution in NW Argentina.

837 **Figure 2.** *Ligustrum lucidum* forests current distribution and different land covers at sub-
838 regional scale. ■ Water† (lakes, lagoons, dams and rivers), ■ Urban (cities, roads and others
839 built-up areas), ■ Forest (native perennial and deciduous forests and tree plantations), ■ *L.*
840 *lucidum* forests (mono-specific and mature secondary forest). ■ Others (all other cover types
841 (i.e. extensive agriculture, grassland, mix agriculture, citrus and perennials plantation, sugar
842 cane crops, cleared, roads and bare soil). † This class was considered as “other” in most of the
843 analyses, figures, and tables. Black circles show areas with *L. lucidum* forests.

844

845 **Figure 3.** *Ligustrum lucidum* forests (ha) and environmental or distance variables in the three
846 peri-urban areas of NW Argentina (Y: Yala, SL: San Lorenzo, SSJ: Sierra de San Javier) at sub-
847 regional scale.

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849 **Figure 4.** Relationship between urban features and *Ligustrum lucidum* forests by in the three
850 peri-urban areas of NW Argentina (Y: Yala, SL: San Lorenzo, SSJ: Sierra de San Javier) and
851 Córdoba city (Cba). Data presented was transformed to natural logarithm (LN) in all cases.
852 Data for Córdoba was obtained from Gavier-Pizarro et al 2012. Population data was extracted
853 from official data of INDEC. Censo Nacional de Población, Hogares y Viviendas 2010.
854 Instituto Geográfico Nacional (IGN). 2010. <http://www.sig.indec.gov.ar/censo2010/>.

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856 **Figure 5.** Land cover type spatial distribution in 2010 at local scale. Black circles highlight
857 areas that present *Ligustrum lucidum* forests. The small maps in the lower left corner shows the
858 location of Tucumán province in Argentina and the location of surveyed area at local scale
859 inside the province.

860

861 **Fig. 6.** Local scale study in Sierra de San Javier (Tucumán). a) Area invaded by *Ligustrum*
862 *lucidum* in each date during the period 1972-2010. b) Area of land cover classes replaced by *L.*
863 *lucidum* forests during the period 1972-2010. The values express the relative percentage of
864 each land cover over the total invaded area during the period. MG: mountain grassland, CP:
865 citrus plantations, AG: anthropogenic grassland, DF: dry forest and SC: sugar cane

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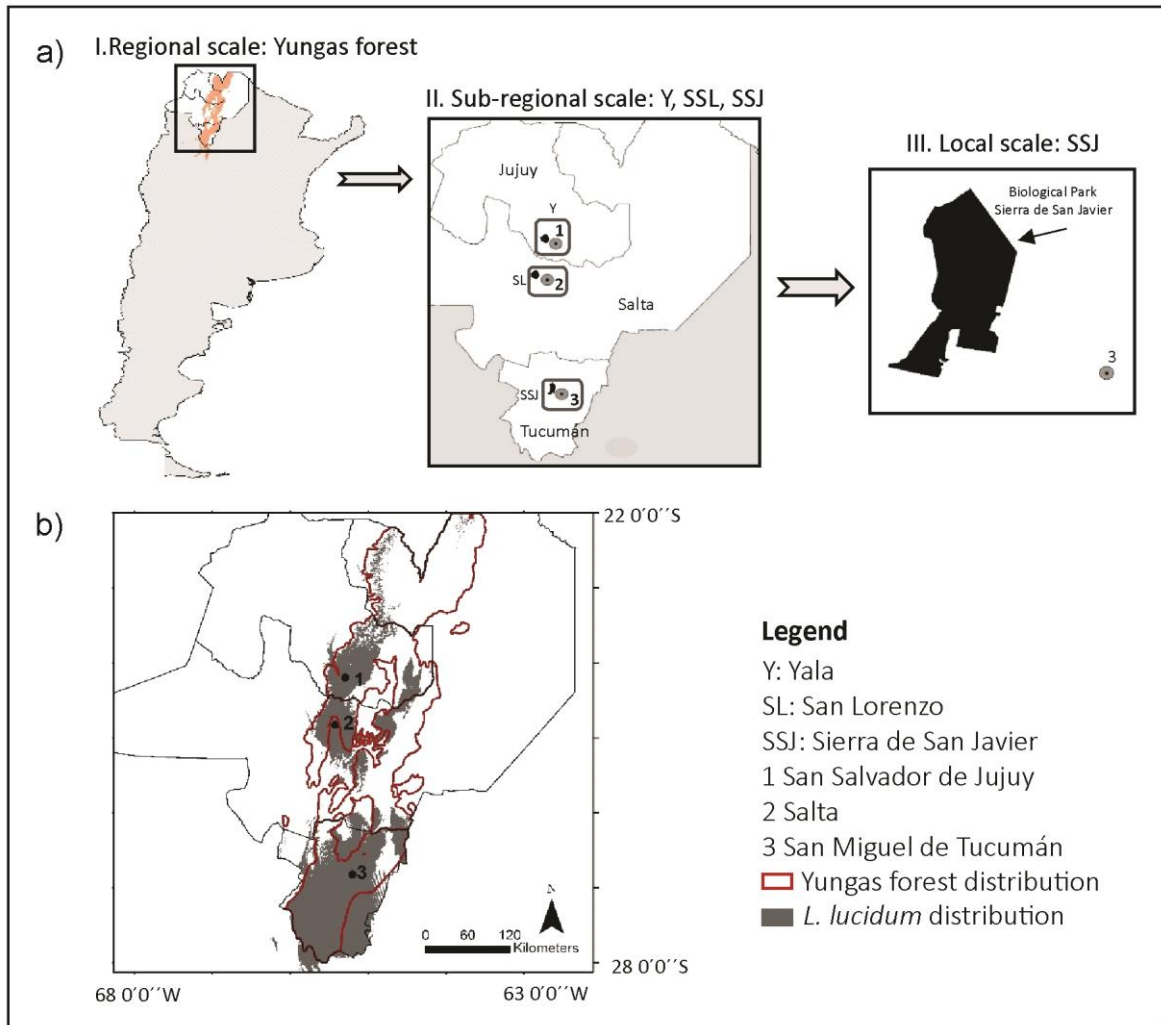
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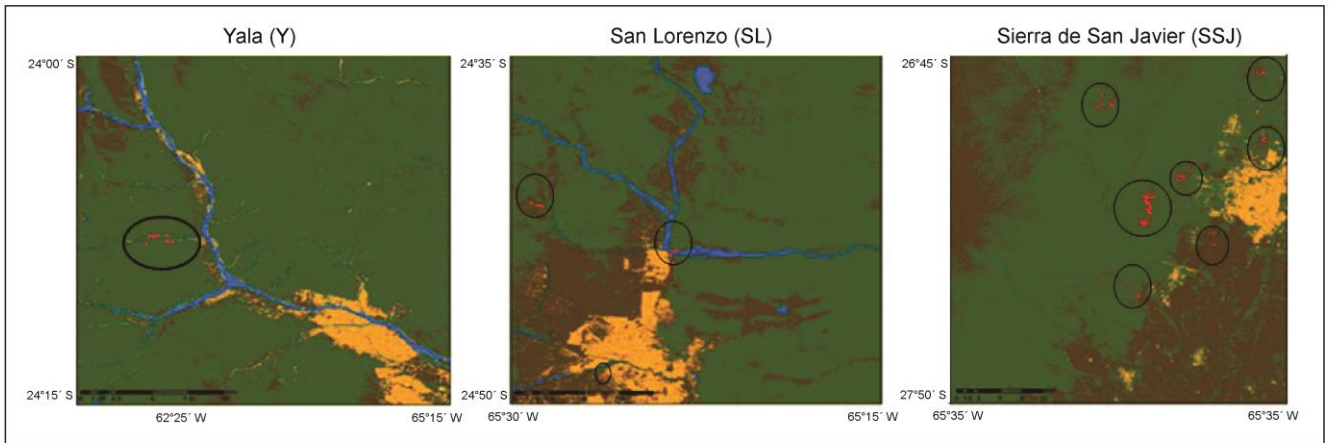
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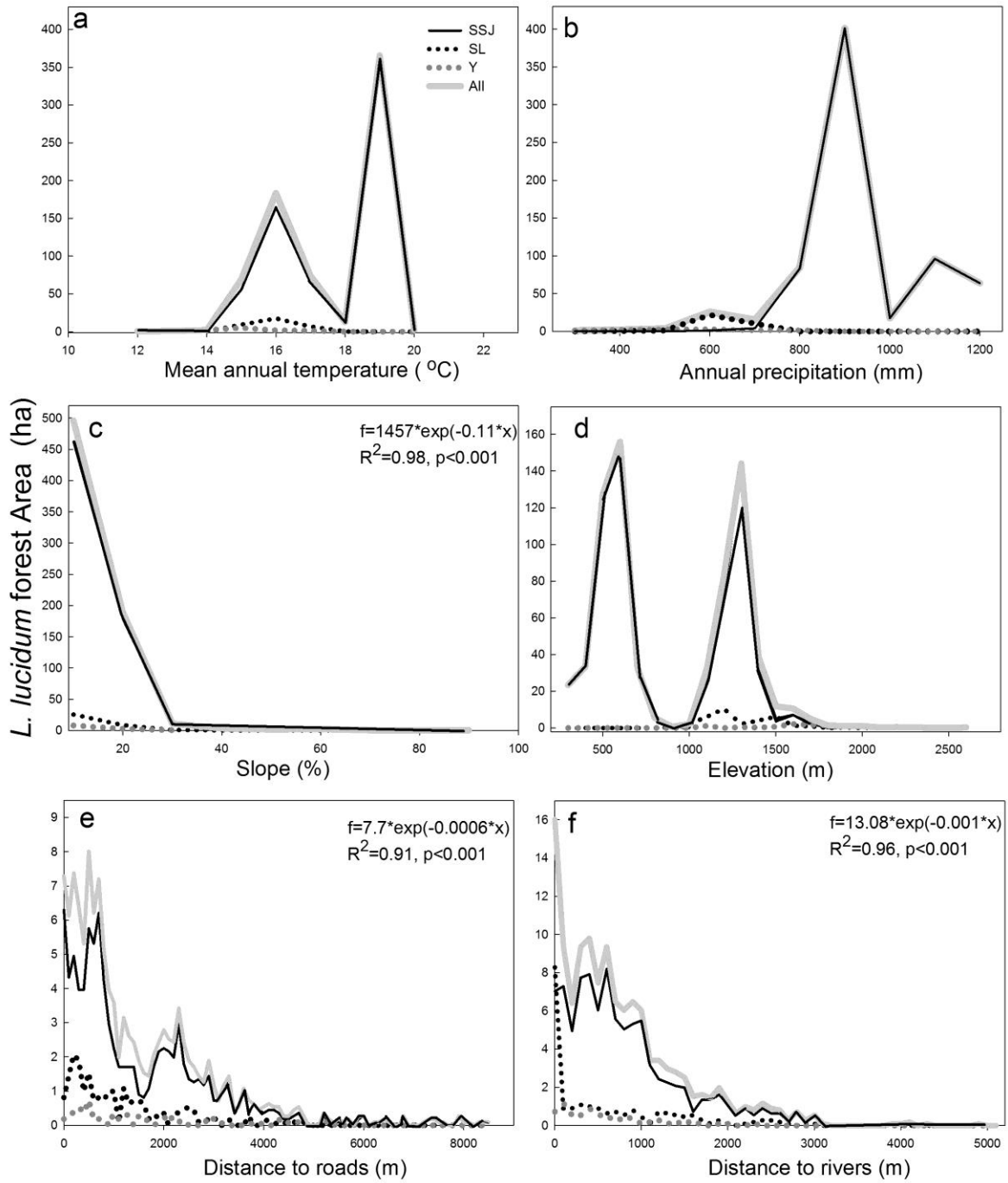
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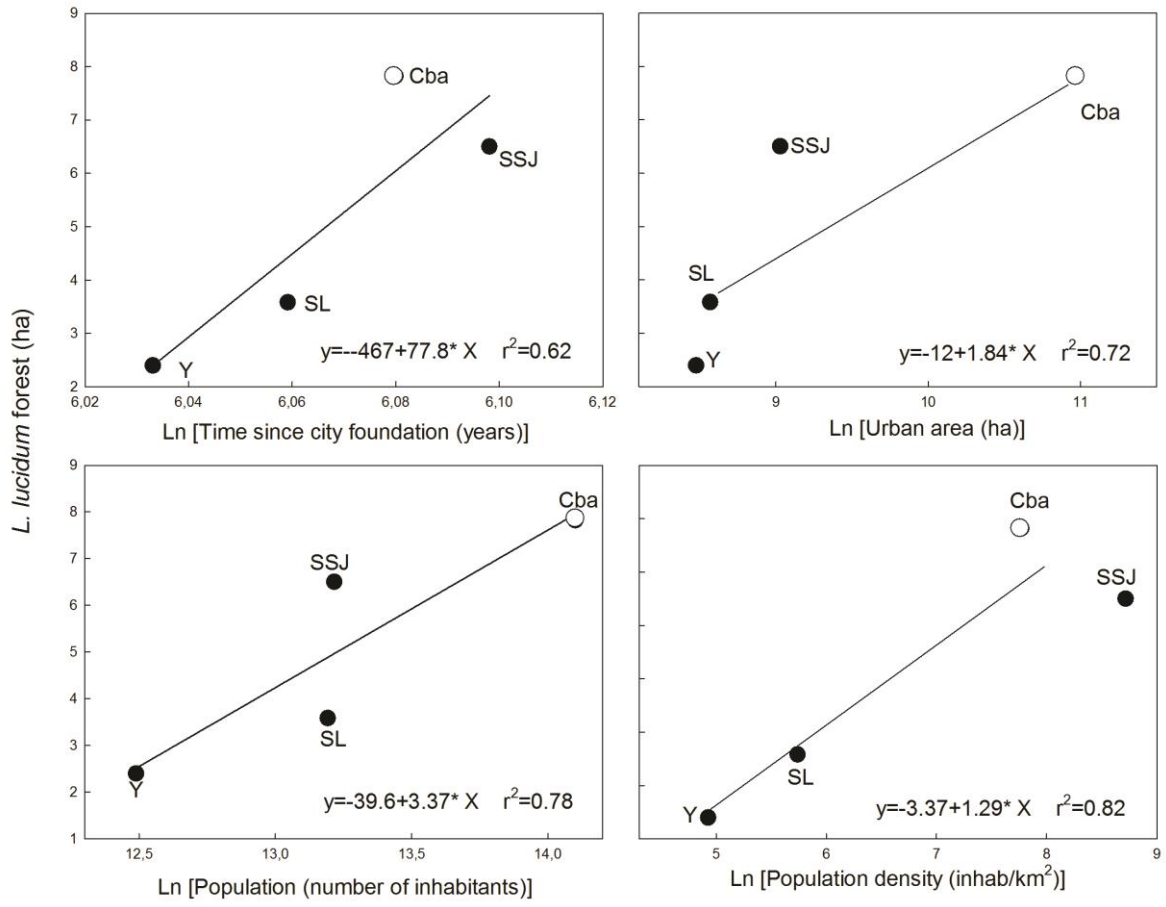


881 Figure 2.



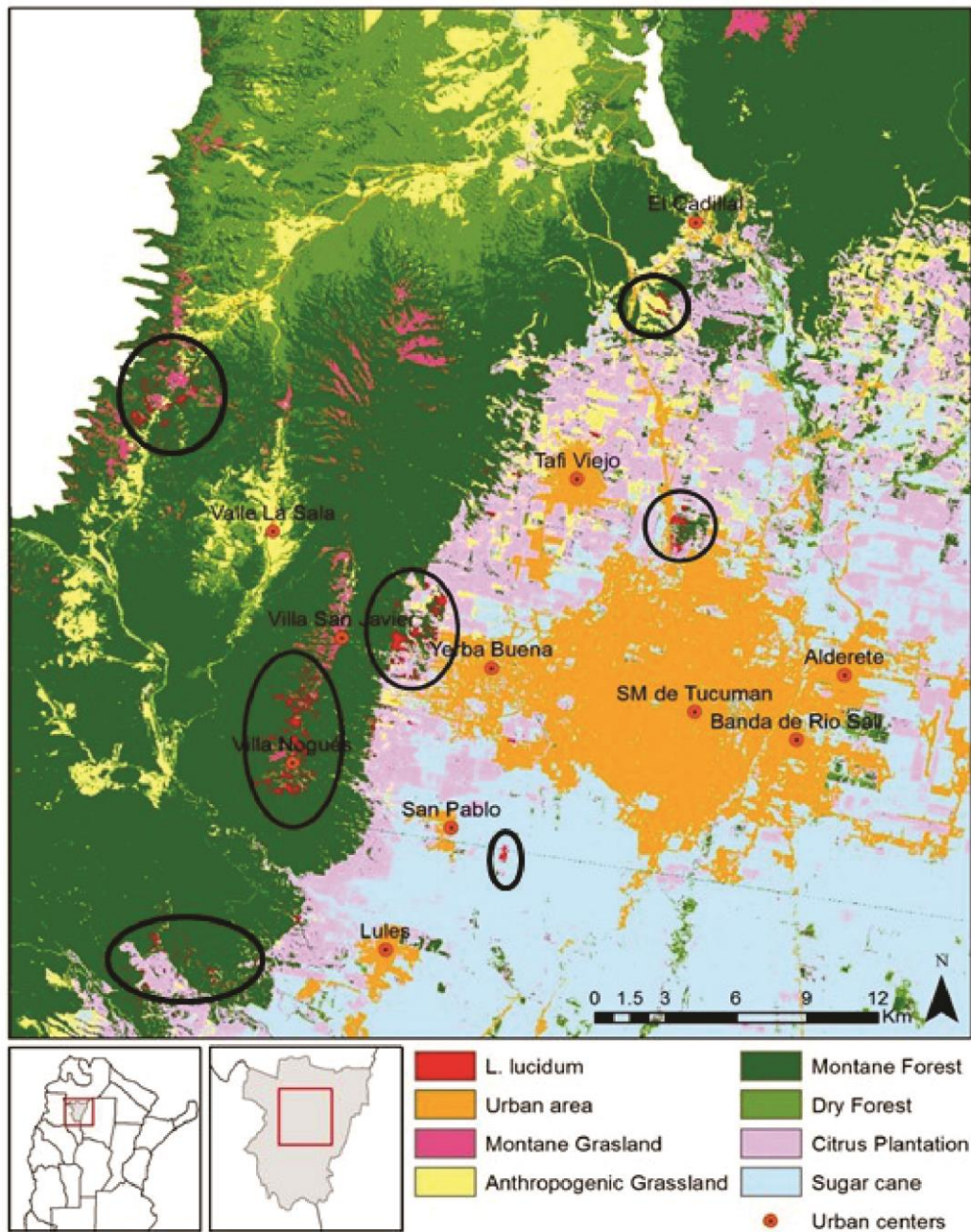
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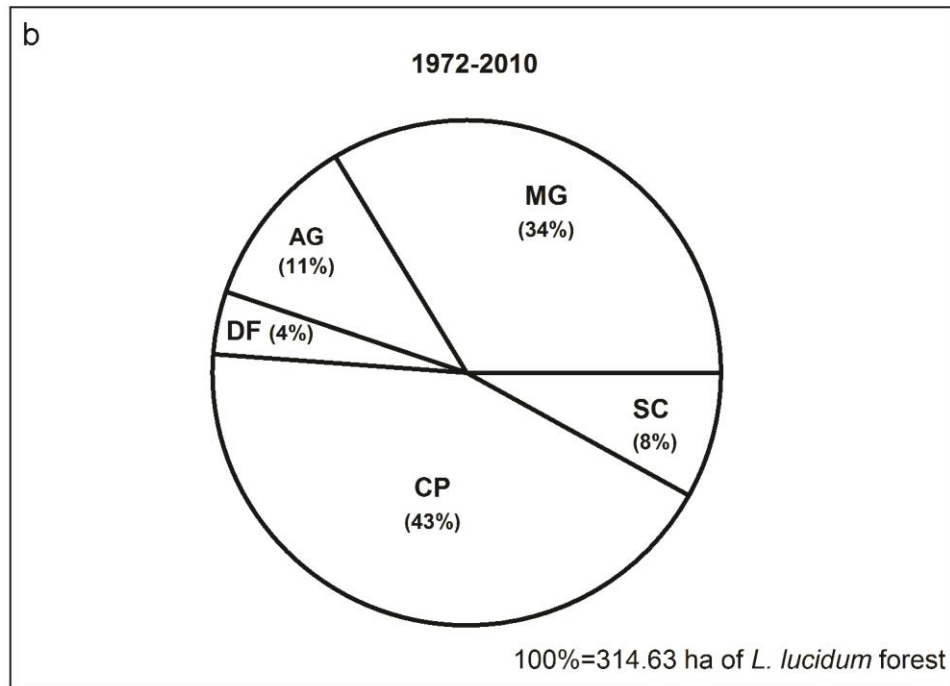
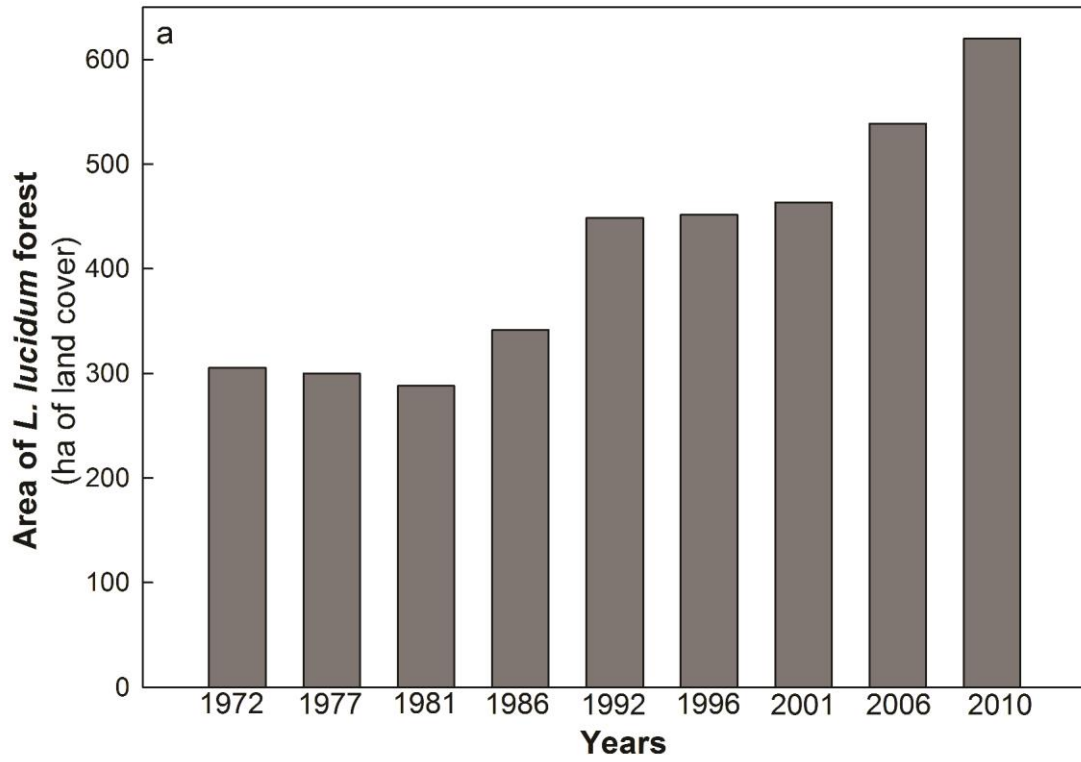




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892 Appendices

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894 Appendix 1. Area (ha) of different land cover categories at different past date for total area invaded by
895 *L lucidum* (LF) at 2006. DF: Dry forest or “Chaco forest”, MG: Montane grassland, AG: Anthropogenic
896 grassland and shrubland, SC: Sugar cane, CP: Citrus plantations, UR: High-to-medium density urban
897 areas.

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| | 1972 | 1977 | 1981 | 1986 | 1992 | 1996 | 2001 | 2006 |
|-----------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| UR | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| MG | 106,02 | 105,39 | 55,98 | 47,52 | 27,45 | 13,86 | 25,29 | 12,87 |
| AG | 35,1 | 29,25 | 27,72 | 11,43 | 8,82 | 8,01 | 20,07 | 10,98 |
| LF | 305,37 | 299,88 | 288 | 341,37 | 448,56 | 451,35 | 463,32 | 538,83 |
| DF | 12,69 | 11,79 | 39,96 | 1,35 | 1,98 | 1,8 | 4,59 | 4,86 |
| CP | 135,72 | 136,8 | 179,28 | 199,44 | 125,73 | 137,16 | 99 | 50,4 |
| SC | 25,47 | 37,26 | 29,43 | 19,26 | 7,83 | 8,19 | 8,1 | 2,43 |

899 * values expressed in hectares.

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902 Appendix 2. Results of the invaded area expressed as a percentage of the initial area of each land cover category, to represent the magnitude of
 903 changes relative to the spatial extension of each land cover in the study area. LF= *L. lucidum* forests. SMF: Subtropical montane forest, DF: Dry
 904 forest or “Chaco forest”, MG: Montane grassland, AG: Anthropogenic grassland and shrubland, SC: Sugar cane, CP: Citrus plantations, UR: High-
 905 to-medium density urban areas.

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| | 1972 (ha) | LF (ha) | LF (%) | 1977 (ha) | LF (ha) | LF (%) | 1981 (ha) | LF (ha) | LF (%) | 1986 (ha) | LF (ha) | LF (%) | 1992 (ha) | LF (ha) | LF (%) |
|----------------|-----------|---------|--------|-----------|---------|--------|-----------|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------|-----------|---------|---------|
| UR | 3619,08 | 0 | 0,00 | 4884,4 | 0 | 0 | 5865,5 | 0 | 0 | 7263,9 | 0 | 0 | 7758,45 | 0 | 0 |
| MG | 5682,42 | 106,02 | 1,87 | 6226,1 | 105,39 | 1,6927 | 3985,1 | 55,98 | 1,4047 | 4146,57 | 47,52 | 1,14601 | 3723,03 | 27,45 | 0,7373 |
| AG | 6389,46 | 35,1 | 0,55 | 10559 | 29,25 | 0,277 | 10236 | 27,72 | 0,2708 | 10187,64 | 11,43 | 0,11219 | 12286,9 | 8,82 | 0,07178 |
| SMF | 45043,2 | 305,37 | 0,68 | 61863 | 299,88 | 0,4847 | 63759 | 288 | 0,4517 | 63525,78 | 341,37 | 0,53737 | 65033,6 | 448,56 | 0,68974 |
| DF | 5877,81 | 12,69 | 0,22 | 22858 | 11,79 | 0,0516 | 23043 | 39,96 | 0,1734 | 20275,74 | 1,35 | 0,00666 | 19141,1 | 1,98 | 0,01034 |
| CP | 15709,86 | 135,72 | 0,86 | 19183 | 136,8 | 0,7131 | 25924 | 179,28 | 0,6915 | 23889,33 | 199,44 | 0,83485 | 24669,3 | 125,73 | 0,50966 |
| SC | 36303,3 | 25,47 | 0,07 | 59384 | 37,26 | 0,0627 | 52144 | 29,43 | 0,0564 | 55668,78 | 19,26 | 0,0346 | 52345,4 | 7,83 | 0,01496 |
| Others* | 52189,65 | 73,26 | 0,14 | 97686 | 78,3 | 0,0802 | 91289 | 97,11 | 0,1064 | 93396,06 | 32,04 | 0,03431 | 91531,9 | 18,63 | 0,02035 |

907

| | 1996 (ha) | LF (ha) | LF (%) | 2001 (ha) | LF (ha) | LF (%) | 2006 (ha) | LF (ha) | LF (%) |
|----------------|-----------|---------|----------|-----------|---------|----------|-----------|---------|----------|
| UR | 9044,28 | 0 | 0 | 10866,87 | 0 | 0 | 13983,84 | 0 | 0 |
| MG | 3380,94 | 13,86 | 0,409945 | 3192,75 | 25,29 | 0,792107 | 3326,31 | 12,87 | 0,386915 |
| AG | 10536,12 | 8,01 | 0,076024 | 11522,07 | 20,07 | 0,174187 | 12343,23 | 10,98 | 0,088956 |
| SMF | 64682,1 | 451,35 | 0,697797 | 65372,94 | 463,32 | 0,708734 | 67127,31 | 538,83 | 0,802699 |
| DF | 19408,32 | 1,8 | 0,009274 | 21561,66 | 4,59 | 0,021288 | 22085,19 | 4,86 | 0,022006 |
| CP | 22187,16 | 137,16 | 0,618195 | 24420,24 | 99 | 0,405401 | 29573,55 | 50,4 | 0,170423 |
| SC | 55718,82 | 8,19 | 0,014699 | 48021,21 | 8,1 | 0,016868 | 36518,31 | 2,43 | 0,006654 |
| Others* | 94707,54 | 18 | 0,019006 | 91971,81 | 32,76 | 0,03562 | 84930,57 | 18,27 | 0,021512 |

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* “Others” includes the sum of UR, DF, AG and SC