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Title:

Comments: Dear Amanda Milburn,

I find the lack of fungi in the forest management plan severely lacking (as well as worldwide; only representing about 2% of global conservation priorities). This kingdom of life is what builds forests; without them, we wouldn't have soils or vascular plants. By excluding an entire kingdom of life (only by listing them as "other forest product") is doing a disservice to their ecological roles. Much of the carbon of the forest is stored in mycorrhizae and not trees or other plants. These mycorrhizae also allow plants to access nutrients that would otherwise be inaccessible to them. Fungi are also important since they are the primary decomposer of all life; without fungi, we would be buried amongst dead and non-decaying organisms. Back to the soil formation, members of the Glomeraceae family produce the glycoprotein glomalin that "glom" together soil particles, preventing soil compaction. This is all said without mentioning any of their cultural uses (both by the human and non-human world).

Humans have been cultivating fungi for thousands of years --- dating back to ancient China. It hasn't been until recently that fungi outside the genus *Agaricus* (mainly *Agaricus bisporus*) were cultivated for Western consumption. Many fungi are resistant to cultivation such as the genus *Morchella* (with some exceptions) and the genus *Boletus*. Because of this, people will go into our forests to forage for these elusive fungi. However, with changing climates and fire regimes, the growth patterns of these fungi are becoming more erratic.

In total, forests would not exist without fungi, thus marking their integration into management plans key to the survival of these delicate ecosystems in the rapidly changing world that we are now living in. My last key example are brown rot fungi: they are key to retaining soil moisture throughout arid environments like those found in the Northern Rockies.

Remember: without fungi, there would be no flora or fauna for us to enjoy.

Thank you for your time,
Nyx Turner