

Article details:

Geometry and scale in species-area relationships.

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Comments:

Pereira et al. publish this brief communication arising from an earlier paper by He and Hubbell {1} on species-area relationships (SARs) in ecology. Pereira et al. show that the rate of species loss with habitat destruction depends not only on the area of the region destroyed but also on the region's geometry. This paper clarifies confusion generated by the He and Hubbell paper, which erroneously claimed that a method of estimating species loss based on the endemics-area relationship (EAR) is always superior to one based on the SAR. This paper makes a clear and valid point. By clarifying that He and Hubbell's {1} conclusion is not generic and depends on the geometry of habitat destruction and scale of the SAR, this paper is important. The subsequent reply by He and Hubbell {2} does not address the issues with their original paper or the criticisms raised by Pereira et al. in a substantive way.

References:

{1} He and Hubbell, Nature 2011, 473:368-71 [PMID:21593870].

{2} He and Hubbell, Nature 2012, 482:E5-6 [<http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v482/n7386/full/nature10859.html> DOI:10.1038/nature10859].