

Enhancing The Forest Conservation Law Enforcement and Awareness Campaigns: An Effective Strategy to Save Fungi in Benin

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Introduction: Tropical forests promote the regulation of the greenhouse effect, the maintenance of major climatic balances, the satisfaction in the food and medicinal needs of local populations as well as the conservation of the planet's biodiversity (FAO 2019). These forests are also rich in biodiversity and present a wide fungal diversity but remain poorly explored and still contain many new fungal species (Crous et al. 2006, Aïgnon et al. 2021) while efforts to assess biodiversity in tropical Africa are weak and enough fungal species are threatened.

1. Improve law enforcement to curb the destruction of fungal habitats in Benin



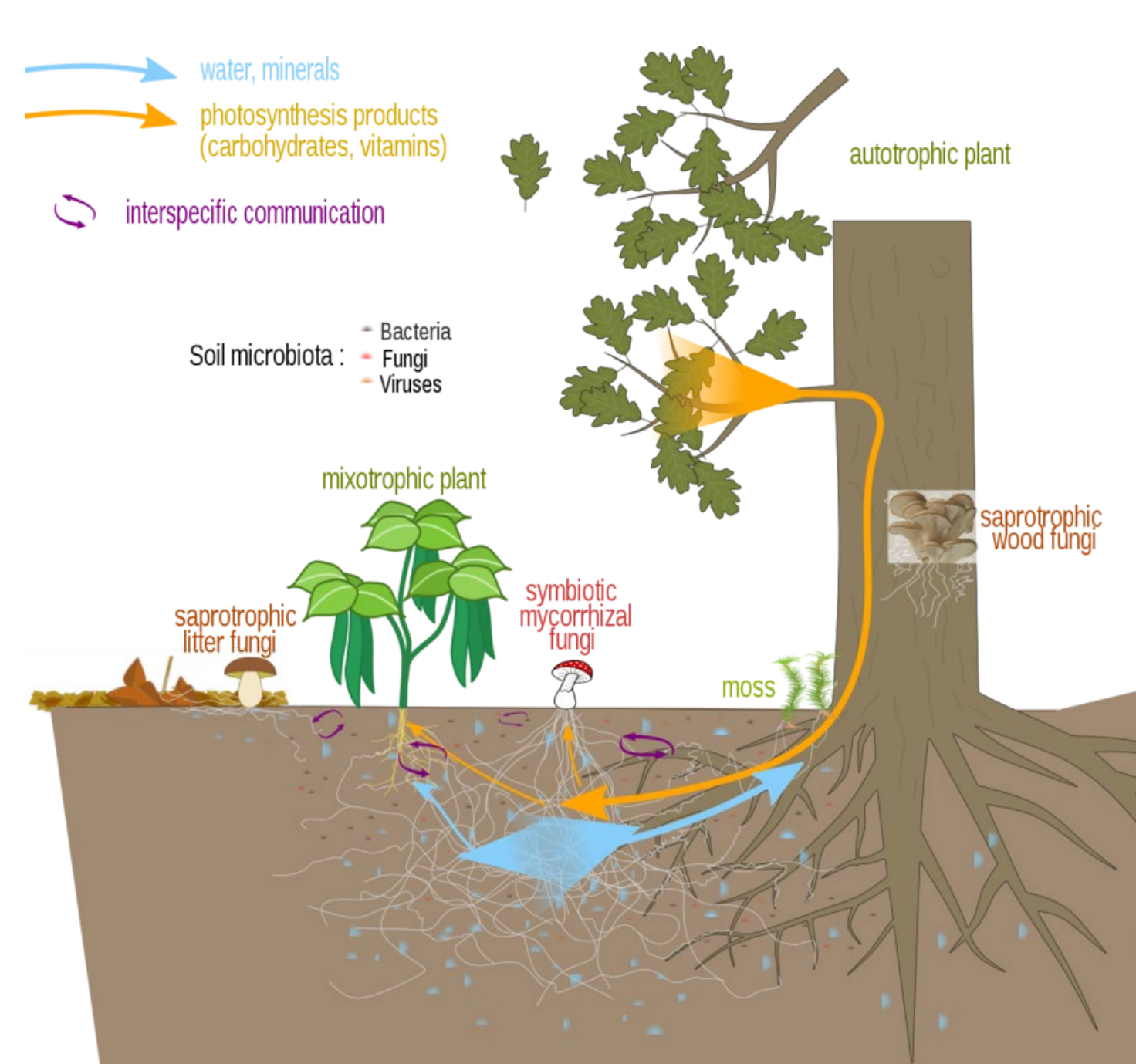
2. Contribute to the delimitation of fungal habitats with high diversity through installation of wild fungal warning signs to safeguard the fungi in Benin



3. Strengthen the knowledge of the local populations about conservation of fungal species through awareness campaigns and popularization of forest conservation law



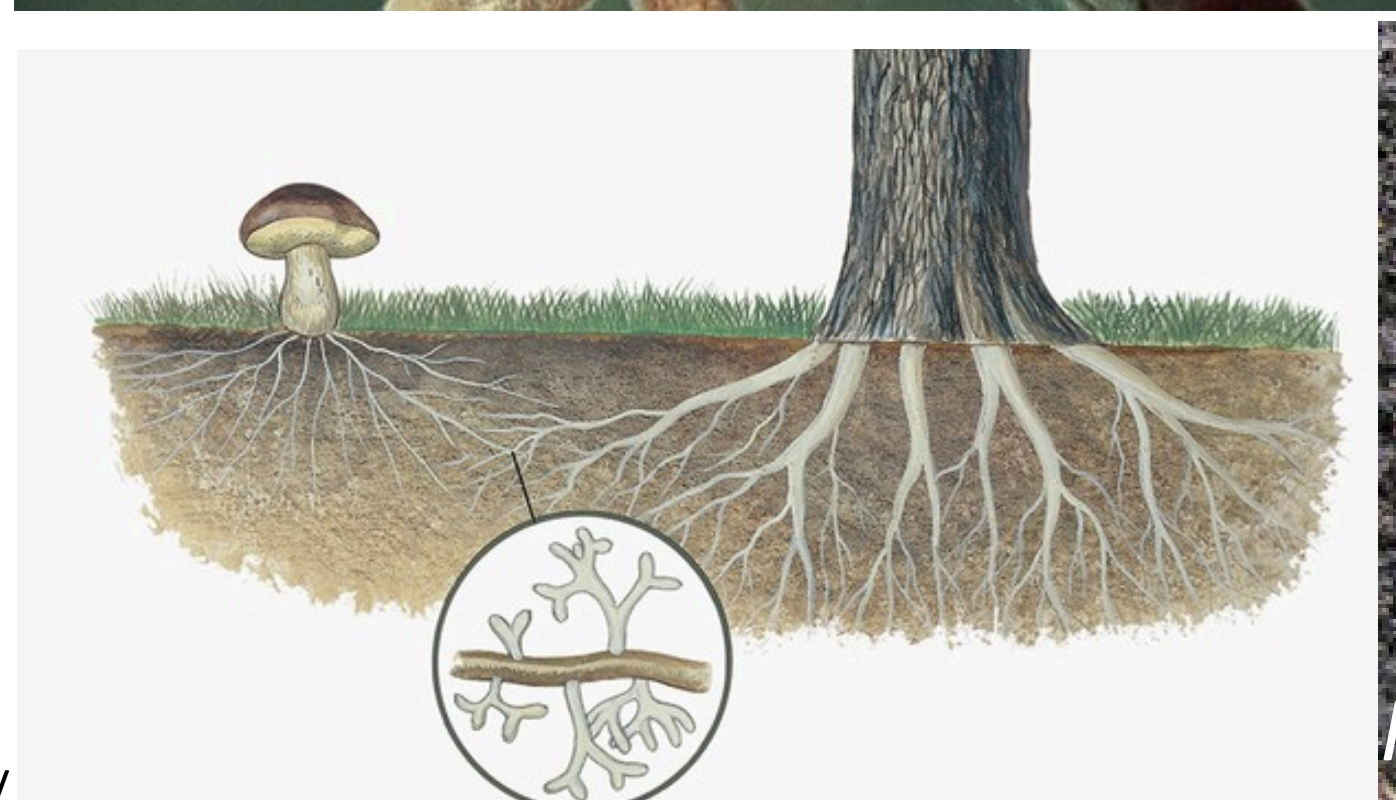
4. Convince the authorities to take into account the various threats to fungi and will be more open to their integration into development plans



Why protect the fungi?: Fungi play a major role in the forest, by breaking down organic matter and transforming it into humus. Saprotrophic species play the role of regulator of the ecosystem. Ectomycorrhizal fungi are associated with tree roots, live a symbiotic relationship with the plants. In this relationship, the tree supplies the fungi with sugars which in turn drain mineral salts for it. Fungi are therefore powerful players in mineral cycles in the forest. But sometimes also parasites dependent on living plants or other organisms.

Saprotrophic fungi Ectomycorrhizal fungi Parasitic fungi

Wild fungal warning signs



To avoid: Late fire, Intensive agriculture, Charcoal production with EcM tree, Illegal logging



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