



FERNANDO ANTÔNIO SILVA PINTO

**EFEITOS ECOLÓGICOS DAS ESTRADAS NA
CONSERVAÇÃO DE ESPÉCIES NA AMÉRICA LATINA:
ESTADO DO CONHECIMENTO, DESAFIOS E
OPORTUNIDADES**

LAVRAS – MG

2019

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Tese apresentada à Universidade Federal de Lavras, como parte das exigências do Programa de Pós-Graduação em Ecologia Aplicada, área de concentração em Ecologia e Conservação de Recursos Naturais em Paisagens Fragmentadas e Agroecossistemas, para a obtenção do título de Doutor.

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LAVRAS – MG

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**ECOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF ROADS IN SPECIES CONSERVATION IN LATIN
AMERICA: CURRENT KNOWLEDGE, CHALLENGES, AND OPPORTUNITIES**

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APROVADA em 19 de fevereiro de 2019

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Ao biólogo e amigo Angelo Barbosa Monteiro (in memoriam).

Dedico

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Luke: Mas eu não consigo.

Yoda: Por isso fracassar você irá.

Guerra nas Estrelas: O Império Contra-Ataca (1980).

RESUMO

Estradas causam efeitos ecológicos adversos em muitas espécies de animais em todo o mundo principalmente pela fragmentação de habitats e pela mortalidade por atropelamento. Muito do conhecimento sobre tais efeitos vem de regiões temperadas, sobretudo em países do hemisfério norte, com realidades socioambientais particulares. Neste estudo, avaliamos os efeitos ecológicos das estradas em vertebrados terrestres na América Latina por meio de abordagens distintas. No primeiro artigo, empreendo um estudo de revisão sistemática de literatura para a América Latina, buscando acessar o atual estado de conhecimento sobre efeitos ecológicos das estradas, identificar a lacunas deste conhecimento, e, ao mesmo tempo propor uma agenda para futuras pesquisas. Após a revisão de aproximadamente 200 artigos, identificamos uma tendência no aumento das publicações na última década concentrada maioritariamente na América do Sul, com estudos a nível de indivíduos (mortalidade), focados principalmente em mamíferos. Poucos estudos buscaram entender os efeitos das estradas a nível de populações e genes, bem como avaliar medidas de mitigação de impactos. Recomendamos duas estratégias para pesquisas: 1) com foco em quantificar e entender como as espécies (indivíduos) interagem com as estradas bem como as implicações a nível populacional, e, 2) avaliações em escalas regionais e nacionais da vulnerabilidade das espécies auxiliando estrategicamente em tomadas de decisão para conservação. No segundo artigo, analiso os efeitos da fragmentação do habitat e da mortalidade por atropelamentos sobre populações do tamanduá-bandeira (*Myrmecophaga tridactyla*) no Brasil. Aplico um modelo populacional espacialmente-explícito para estimar a área mínima de mancha de habitat abaixo do qual as populações não são viáveis e a densidade máxima de estradas tolerada pela espécie. Os resultados revelaram valores mínimos de tamanho de habitat variando entre 247 e 498 km² e densidade máxima de estradas entre 0.21 e 0.55 km/km². Ademais, revelamos ainda, que entre 32 e 36% do total da área de distribuição do tamanduá-bandeira são inadequadas à sua persistência.

Palavras-chave: Tamanduá-bandeira. Fragmentação. Atropelamento. Persistência populacional. América Latina. Efeito das estradas. Revisão de literatura

ABSTRACT

Roads can cause adverse ecological effects for many animal species worldwide, mainly due to habitat fragmentation and mortality from collision with vehicles. Much of the knowledge about such effects come from temperate regions in countries of the northern hemisphere, with different socioenvironmental realities. In this study, we analyzed the ecological effects of roads on vertebrate species in Latin America over different approaches. In the first article, I carried out a systematic literature review in order to assess the current state of knowledge about the ecological effects of roads on vertebrates in Latin America, to identify gaps of knowledge and, then to propose an agenda for future research. After reviewing nearly 200 articles, we identified a trend in the increase of publications in the last decade concentrated mainly in South America, with studies at the individual level (mortality), focused mainly on mammals. Few studies tried to understand the effects on the population level and gene level, neither evaluation of mitigation measures. We recommended a two-speed approach to research: a first, focused on quantifying how species (individuals) interact with roads as well as their implications at the population level, and a second that assess the vulnerability of the species to the roads at regional or national scales. In the second paper, I analyzed the effects of habitat fragmentation and road-kills over giant-anteater (*Myrmecophaga tridactyla*) populations in Brazil. We use a spatially-explicit population model that reaches outputs approximations on minimum patch size and maximum road density required for giant anteater populations viability. The results showed that minimum patch size estimations varying between 247 and 498 km² and the maximum road densities between 0.21 and 0.55 km/km². Furthermore, we showed that unsuitable areas for the species persistence ranged between 32 to 36% of their range in Brazil.

Keywords: Giant anteater. Fragmentation. Road-kills. Population persistence. Latin America. Road effects. Literature review.

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PRIMEIRA PARTE

1 INTRODUÇÃO

Infraestruturas de transporte como estradas e ferrovias têm protagonismo histórico na sociedade humana moderna, ao conectar pessoas, serviços e mercados, além de serem estratégicas em contextos geopolíticos e econômicos (VAN DER REE; SMITH; GRILO, 2015). Componentes já integrados à paisagem moderna, as redes de estrada cobrem aproximadamente 21 milhões de quilômetros da superfície da Terra, com projeções para a construção de mais 4 milhões até 2050 (MEIJER et al., 2018) sobretudo em países em desenvolvimento como na Ásia (MAHMOUD et al., 2017), África (ASCENSÃO et al., 2018; SLOAN et al., 2018) e América do Sul (LAURANCE; BALMFORD, 2013; BAGER et al., 2015). Em particular, há um especial empenho por parte dos países da América do Sul em expandir e integrar seus modais de transporte, e fortalecer regionalmente o comércio de mercadorias e exportações (CONSEJO SURAMERICANO DE INFRAESTRUCTURA Y PLANEAMIENTO - COSIPLAN, 2017). Quase metade dos projetos do Conselho (46%) são voltados para ampliação e/ou melhoria de estradas, avançando dentre áreas já densamente povoadas, a áreas naturais remotas e pouco conhecidas e com interesse de conservação a nível mundial (AUBAD; ARAGÓN; RODRÍGUEZ, 2010; CARVALHO; MUSTIN, 2017). Pesquisas em ecologia de estradas mostram que tais infraestruturas trazem consigo efeitos ecológicos diversos, em geral prejudiciais à conservação da biodiversidade (LAURANCE, 2015).

De modo geral, os efeitos das estradas estão relacionados aos processos de fragmentação e degradação de habitats, destacados como importantes causadores de declínios e perda de espécies em todo o mundo (GIBBON et al., 2000; CROOKS et al., 2017). A fragmentação do habitat causada pela construção de uma estrada pode gerar efeitos adversos nas bordas de habitats (FUENTES-MONTEMAYOR et al., 2009; HADDAD et al., 2015), subdivisões e isolamento das populações (JAEGER, 2013), alterar o comportamento de animais (CHEN; KOPROWSKI, 2016) e reduzir a diversidade genética (BALKENHOL et al., 2013). Infraestruturas de transporte podem atuar como catalisadoras dos processos indiretos de fragmentação e degradação de habitats, posto que acelera efeitos resultantes da ação humana, dentre eles: desmatamentos, assentamentos ilegais e especulações de terras, (BOTTAZZI; DAO, 2013; BARBER et al., 2014; FEARNSIDE, 2015), além de efeitos diretos provenientes

do tráfego de veículos, como a poluição química, sonora e visual (ARÉVALO; NEWHARD, 2011; MAYNARD et al., 2016) e mortalidade por atropelamento (GALINA; MIHART, 2018; MAGIOLI et al., 2018).

O atropelamento de animais silvestres constitui uma das mais importantes ameaças à conservação de espécies nos dias de hoje (MUMME et al., 2000; FISCHER et al 2018). A perda de indivíduos por atropelamento pode resultar em mudanças na dinâmica e viabilidade de populações (BORDA-DE-ÁGUA; GRILO; PEREIRA, 2014), especialmente para espécies com baixa densidade populacional e potencial reprodutivo como mamíferos de médio e grande porte (RYTWINSKI; FAHRIG, 2015), podendo levar ao declínio dessas populações (BENÍTEZ-LÓPEZ; ALKEMADE; VERWEIJ, 2010). Adicionalmente, os atropelamentos podem causar prejuízos materiais além de sérios riscos a vida humana (HUIJISER et al., 2013), desta forma, é imperioso que se desenvolvam pesquisas no intuito de reduzir ou evitar a mortalidade por atropelamento tanto para garantir a segurança rodoviária quanto proteger as populações silvestres (GUNSON; TEIXEIRA, 2015; RYTWINSK et al., 2015).

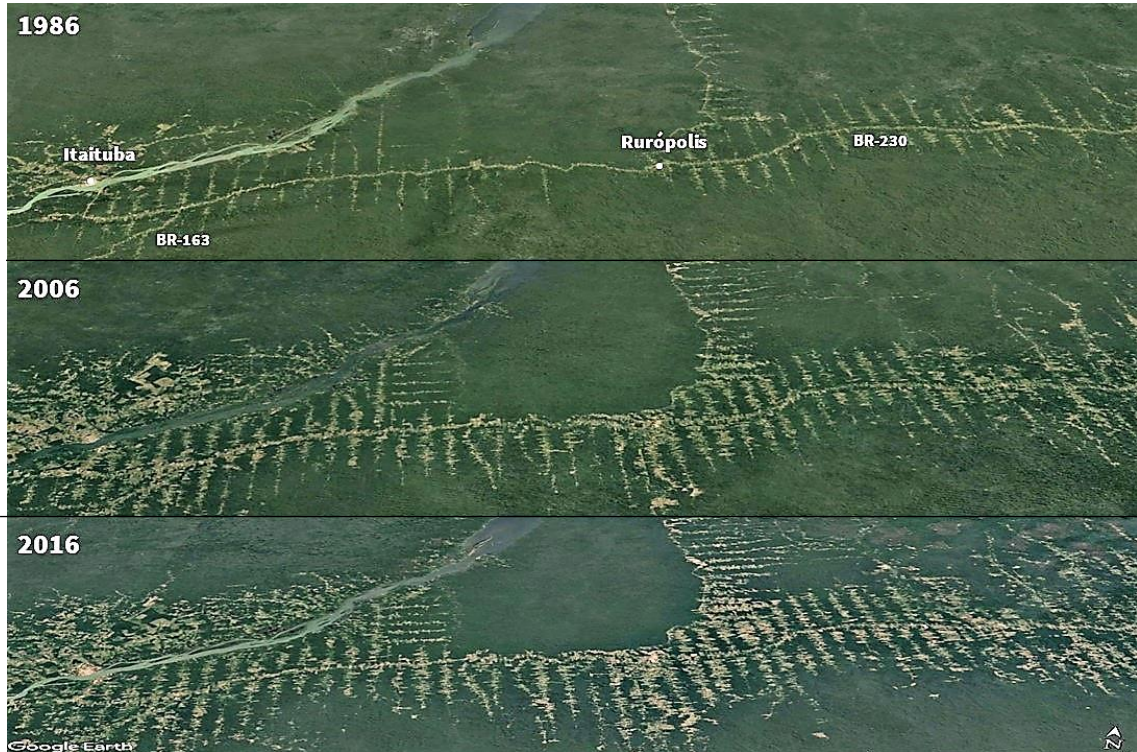
Entender como, onde, porque e quais espécies tendem a cruzar as estradas são questões essenciais e importantes nas tomadas de decisões (GRILO et al., 2012; RYTWINSKI; FAHRIG, 2012) e se mostra um campo de pesquisa florescente na América Latina (GONZÁLEZ-SUÁREZ; ZANCHETA; GRILO, 2018; ASSIS; GIACOMINI; RIBEIRO, 2019). Estudos recentes mostram que as espécies respondem de forma diferente a presença das estradas e ao tráfego, podendo causar efeito de repulsa em espécies de primatas, carnívoros, roedores e aves na América Central e do Sul (DEVELEY; STOUFFER, 2001; COLCHERO et al., 2011; ASCENSÃO et al., 2017; ASENSIO et al., 2017), podem ter efeitos mistos (repulsa e atração) na ocorrência de pequenos mamíferos (SALINAS; ARANDA, 2012; ROSA et al 2017) e até favorecer a presença de grandes herbívoros como os guanacos (*Lama guanicoe*) (CAPPA et al., 2017) e espécies invasoras na região sul da América do Sul (GANTCHOFF; BELANT, 2015).

Pesquisas em ecologia aplicada são essenciais para o conhecimento quali-quantitativo bem como para a identificação dos efeitos ecológicos advindos da ação humana (NUÑEZ et al., 2019), e ao mesmo tempo, fundamentais nos processos de tomadas de decisões e implementações de políticas públicas (LAURANCE, 2018). No caso particular da América Latina, há que se considerar o contexto histórico e geográfico da rede de estradas, distribuída

de forma heterogênea e onde cada região responde por suas particularidades. Enquanto altas densidades de estradas já existem em regiões específicas nas Américas Central e do Sul (MEIJER et al., 2018), novas redes se formarão em zonas remotas, limítrofes a áreas protegidas e terras indígenas, tendo implicações a nível ecológico, sociocultural e consequentemente levando a tomadas de decisões distintas (BARNI et al., 2012; ESPINOSA; BRANCH; CUEVA, 2014; LAURANCE; ARREA, 2017). Por exemplo, áreas sob influência da estrada transamazônica no estado do Pará (Figura 1), veem suas taxas de desmatamento se elevarem devido a grilagem e ocupação ilegal de terras quando há “rumores” sobre pavimentação da estrada (IMAZON, 2017). Segundo FEARNSIDE (2008), a relação entre estradas e desmatamento na Amazônia envolve uma imbricada trama com diferentes atores (ex. posseiros e grileiros de terras, mineradores e madeireiros, fazendeiros e latifundiários), cada um com seu papel e atuações distintas conforme a época e a região, sendo imprescindível um maior controle, fiscalização e adoção de políticas públicas por parte dos governos. Por outro lado, regiões no centro-sul da América do Sul e da América Central, contam com uma paisagem bastante fragmentada (FREITAS et al., 2013) requerendo ações e planejamentos distintos, focados principalmente na redução dos atropelamentos (CIOCHETI et al 2017; SECCO; ROSA; GONÇALVES, 2018) e na desfragmentação de habitats (GALINA; MIHART; CALVA, 2018).

O objetivo geral desta tese é avaliar os efeitos das estradas sobre espécies de vertebrados na América Latina através de abordagens científicas distintas. Para cumprir este objetivo, compilei toda a informação disponível na literatura científica sobre efeitos das estradas em vertebrados na América Latina por meio de uma revisão sistemática de literatura. O intuito foi caracterizar o atual estado de conhecimento sobre o tema, identificar lacunas de conhecimento e nortear futuras pesquisas (Artigo 1 – Submetido ao periódico *Conservation Biology*). Além disso, aplico um modelo populacional espacialmente-explícito no intuito de entender como os atropelamentos e a fragmentação de habitat afetam populações do tamanduá-bandeira (*Myrmecophaga tridactyla*) no Brasil (Artigo 2 – Publicado no periódico *Biological Conservation*).

Figura 1. Imagens de satélite em três momentos distintos da estrada transamazônica - BR-230 - em seu entroncamento com a BR-163 (Cuiabá – Santarém), região central do estado do Pará e da Amazônia Brasileira.



Fonte: GOOGLE, 2018

2 CONCLUSÃO GERAL

Esta tese traz resultados que vêm a contribuir para o entendimento dos efeitos das estradas na conservação de espécies na América Latina e em especial nas populações de tamanduá-bandeira no Brasil. Apresento o primeiro esforço de revisão sobre o estado de conhecimento dos efeitos ecológicos das estradas em vertebrados terrestres na América Latina. Estudo este, essencial na definição de lacunas de conhecimento, tanto no aspecto geográfico quanto taxonômico, fundamental para o direcionamento de pesquisas, planejamento e priorização de medidas de mitigação dos efeitos negativos das estradas sobre a biodiversidade.

Muitos estudos já existem sobre a quantificação de atropelamentos e identificação de seus padrões espaciais (COELHO et al., 2008; ASCENSÃO et al., 2017; GALLINA; MIHART, 2018), ainda assim, não é suficiente para conhecer o real impacto na viabilidade de populações. Uma vez que nem todas as espécies são vulneráveis à quantidade de atropelamentos (ex. CEIA-

HASSE et al., 2017), o uso de modelos populacionais espacialmente explícitos é uma estratégia valiosa no entendimento dos reais impactos das estradas, quer ao nível da perda e fragmentação do habitat quer ao nível da mortalidade adicional provocada por colisões com veículos. Estratégias para a conservação necessitam de modelos precisos para melhor definir prioridades de mitigação dos efeitos negativos. Desta forma, é necessário melhorar a veracidade dos modelos com parâmetros mais refinados sobre histórias de vida das espécies, além de um melhor conhecimento sobre o comportamento das espécies em relação a estradas. Nos parágrafos seguintes, apresento a conclusão geral desta tese, fragmentada conforme o *Estado do conhecimento, Desafios e Oportunidades*.

2.1 Estado do conhecimento

O conhecimento sobre os efeitos ecológicos das estradas na América Latina está distribuído de forma irregular entre os países, concentrado principalmente na América do Sul (89%), com destaque para o Brasil que conta com mais da metade do total de estudos (51%). Dentre as áreas de pesquisa, há um predomínio de estudos relativos a quantificação dos atropelamentos, direcionados principalmente para mamíferos de médio e grande porte. A Ecologia de Estradas apresenta-se como um campo de pesquisa promissor na América Latina, todavia, o conhecimento básico sobre os impactos ecológicos das estradas ainda é uma lacuna em diversos países e regiões do continente. A revisão sistemática de literatura empreendida no Artigo 1, indica uma total ausência de conhecimento em países da região do “Cone Sul” na América do Sul (ex. Paraguai e Uruguai), além de muitos outros na América Central e Caribe (ex. Nicarágua, Honduras, El Salvador, Cuba).

No Artigo 2, os resultados sugerem que as áreas críticas à viabilidade populacional do tamanduá-bandeira no Brasil podem variar entre 32-36% do total de sua área de distribuição. Os modelos indicaram ainda que a fragmentação de habitats tem um impacto importante na conservação do tamanduá e que aproximadamente 21% da quantidade de habitat favorável a presença da espécie está abaixo do tamanho mínimo estimado. Este estudo é a primeira tentativa de se avaliar as implicações da rede de estradas sobre populações do tamanduá-bandeira em escala nacional, e traz ainda informações básicas sobre pressões antrópicas, ao quantificar, por exemplo, classes de cobertura do solo e densidade de estradas em sua área de distribuição. Mostramos que as regiões centro-sul se encontram altamente fragmentadas e com maiores

densidades de rodovia, enquanto a região norte conta com importantes remanescentes contínuos de habitats.

2.2 Desafios

Projeções indicam um cenário de expansão da rede mundial de estradas lideradas principalmente por países em desenvolvimento, muitos destes, localizados na América Latina (MEIJER et al., 2018) e em regiões de valor mundial para conservação (LAURANCE; BALMFORD, 2013). Existem vários desafios para prevenir o impacto negativo das estradas dos quais destaco: 1) ampliar o conhecimento sobre os efeitos ecológicos das estradas na América Latina para além do Brasil; 2) investir em projetos de monitoramento antes e após a construção/ampliação das estradas (TAYLOR; GOLDINGWAY, 2014; CIOCHETI et al., 2017); 3) monitorar e controlar os efeitos indiretos associados as estradas (ex. desmatamentos, assentamentos ilegais, queimadas, tráfico e comércio ilegal de animais), principalmente em áreas de floresta contínua como na Bacia Amazônica e 4) analisar as vantagens e desvantagens socioeconômicas da construção de estradas em áreas de conservação e ter a opção de não construir, quando os custos ambientais excedem os ganhos socioeconômicos (LAURANCE, 2018).

Cerca de 25% das espécies de mamíferos encontram-se ameaçadas de extinção em todo o mundo (IUCN, 2019), principalmente devido à perda e fragmentação de seus habitats, além de impactos antrópicos diretos como as mortes por colisão com veículos. Dessa forma, estratégias que busquem acessar e quantificar os efeitos das estradas no declínio de populações são tarefas essenciais, e não menos desafiadoras, para a conservação de espécies. O tamanduá-bandeira é uma espécie classificada como Vulnerável de extinção (IUCN, 2019), endêmica e emblemática da América Latina, e vem sendo registrada há décadas em estudos de monitoramento de fauna atropelada no Brasil (FREITAS; JUSTINO; SETZ, 2014). Entender como populações do tamanduá respondem aos efeitos das estradas é essencial para os esforços de conservação da espécie. Aplico nesta tese, uma abordagem macroecológica como uma ferramenta para acessar os efeitos da fragmentação e dos atropelamentos na conservação da espécie. Nosso modelo vai além da quantificação de indivíduos atropelados nas estradas e pode ser encarado como um primeiro passo na seleção de áreas de risco para viabilidade do tamanduá-bandeira no Brasil (CEIA-HASSE et al., 2017), e como um direcionamento para

futuras investigações a escalas locais e regionais com diferentes cenários de rede de estradas e comportamento das espécies face às estradas (GRILO et al., 2019).

2.3 Oportunidades

No artigo 1, vimos que apesar da grande quantidade de estudos em ecologia de estradas, lacunas básicas de conhecimento ainda existem. Dada as dificuldades de financiamento de pesquisa em países em desenvolvimento como os da América Latina, os resultados apresentados nesta tese podem auxiliar no melhor direcionamento, ao focar em áreas específicas de pesquisa (ex. biodiversidade, mitigação) e grupos taxonômicos (ex. anfíbios, répteis). São necessárias pesquisas em biodiversidade que tentem analisar por exemplo como a diversidade e distribuição de espécies variam perto de diferentes tipos de rodovias (TORRES et al., 2016), além de estudos que quantifiquem o comportamento individual das espécies frente as estradas e ao tráfego (GRILO et al., 2012). Estudos que analisem padrões temporais e espaciais de atropelamentos serão essenciais para auxiliar nos esforços de mitigação além de serem importantes para aplicação de modelos de previsão de riscos de atropelamento em diferentes escalas espaciais. A lacuna de conhecimento em pesquisas de mitigação parece ser um reflexo de poucos projetos de mitigação de impactos viários sobre a vida silvestre na América Latina. As pesquisas em mitigação devem ser de longo prazo tornando-se base para o desenvolvimento de melhores práticas de manejo, sensíveis a diferentes contextos ecológicos, socioeconômicos e políticos (VAN DER GRIFT, 2005).

Estudos que busquem entender como as espécies interagem com as estradas, a influência das mesmas na estrutura e persistência de populações, tanto em escalas regionais quanto nacionais, se fazem essenciais para conhecer os mecanismos subjacentes aos impactos das estradas, e desta forma, aplicar as medidas mais adequadas para mitigar os efeitos negativos. Pesquisas que avaliem o comportamento animal, o fluxo gênico, a abundância relativa das espécies em diferentes paisagens fragmentadas por estradas, podem vir a ser uma importante estratégia para a validação dos modelos apresentados no Artigo 2. Mais pesquisas sobre biologia e ecologia populacional do tamanduá-bandeira em diferentes regiões do Brasil são essenciais. Destaca-se neste contexto, o projeto “Bandeiras e Rodovias” (www.tamanduabandeira.org/) que pretende contribuir com informação de base sobre a espécie, auxiliando dessa forma na capacidade de inferência de futuros modelos.

A formação de redes de coordenação de pesquisa ajudaria a desenvolver cooperativamente e disseminar soluções localmente apropriadas para problemas ambientais associados a rede de estradas na América Latina (PORTER, 2012). Para além das redes de pesquisadores, o desafio futuro deverá ser a criação de redes de cooperação com todas as instituições implicadas na construção de estradas com as agencias publicas e privadas de transportes, ONGs, agencias estatais de conservação, universidades e grupos de pesquisa para definir prioridades em termos de ações de forma a promover uma rede de cooperação ambientalmente sustentável. Iniciativas como essas já se iniciaram em países da América do Sul incluindo o Brasil (BAGER, 2017), Uruguai (www.ecobiouruguay.org.uy) e Colômbia (www.recosfa.com/), e que porventura, pode vir a ser o primeiro passo para a estruturação de uma rede eficaz de estudos, monitoramento dos impactos e mitigação dos efeitos negativo das estradas na biodiversidade.

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SEGUNDA PARTE – ARTIGOS

ARTIGO 1 -*EFFECTS OF ROADS ON VERTEBRATE SPECIES IN LATIN AMERICA*

(ARTIGO SUBMETIDO AO PERIÓDICO CONSERVATION BIOLOGY)

Effects of Roads on Vertebrate Species in Latin America

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Article Impact Statement: Our paper reviews the state of research and the main findings, identifies science needs and strategies to inform decision making of road projects in Latin America.

Running head: Road effects in Latin America.

Key words: biodiversity, fragmentation, habitat loss, Latin America, literature review, mitigation, road effects.

Word Count: 7,495.

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1 **Abstract**

2 Biodiversity in Latin America is at risk today due to habitat loss, land conversion into
3 agriculture and urban areas. The developing countries of South and Central America have
4 begun to invest heavily in new road construction, often with the support of international
5 development banks. Managing the environmental and social impacts of new infrastructure in
6 Latin America will be a challenge given the unprecedented scale of planned investments in the
7 next decade. Understanding the impacts of roads on wildlife communities in Latin America
8 will help inform road planning and mitigation measures. We reviewed 199 papers that showed
9 an increased trend in publications in the last decade with a geographic bias for South America;
10 Brazil accounted for more than a half of the studies. Mammals were the most studied group
11 followed by birds, reptiles and amphibians. Most studies focused on road mortality and at the
12 individual level. Despite a prevalence of studies describing the effects of roads on wildlife,
13 there were few studies evaluating road impacts at population and gene levels. We
14 recommend a two-speed approach to research: one that focuses on quantifying the
15 interaction of individuals towards roads and the implications on the population viability; and
16 a second consisting of regional or continental-scale analyses and modelling of road risks to
17 species and populations to inform road planning immediately. We see an urgent need to
18 employ rapid approaches predictive tools for difficult-to-sample or understudied species and
19 areas, and identify areas for connectivity and biodiversity conservation.

20

21

22 **1. Introduction**

23 Latin America is one the most biologically diverse regions in the world encompassing eight of
24 25 world hotspots for biodiversity conservation (Myers et al. 2000). Tropical ecosystems are
25 especially vulnerable to road impacts due to the ecological specialization of species living
26 within the complex, multi-layered architecture of tropical forests; and edge and barrier effects
27 are exceptionally pronounced for tropical species that are more prone to avoid forest edges
28 and clearings (Laurance et al. 2009). Furthermore, the extension of transportation
29 infrastructure, which facilitates human settlement and increased activity in frontier areas has
30 been identified as one of the primary causes of tropical deforestation (Geist & Lambin 2002).

31 South and Central America have begun to invest heavily in new road construction, often
32 with the support of international development banks (IDB 2017; CAF 2018). The Initiative for
33 Integration of Regional Infrastructure of South America (IIRSA) was initiated in 2004, signed
34 by 12 countries to build a continental-wide transportation system with many projects in
35 remote and roadless areas (COSIPLAN 2017). In 2014, there were 579 projects with an
36 investment of \$US 163 Bn. Ninety percent of IIRSA projects are transportation and half of
37 those are road infrastructure (COSIPLAN 2017).

38 In the Amazon basin like most tropical regions road projects have many indirect effects:
39 illegal colonization, deforestation, mining and illegal hunting (Fearnside & Graça 2006;
40 Laurance & Balmford 2013). The ambitious plans for IIRSA and other road building programs
41 in Latin America needs to be analyzed with caution since the knowledge on the negative
42 effects on wildlife in these areas are lacking. A qualitative and quantitative assessment of the
43 impacts of roads on wildlife in Latin America is critical to define science-based conservation
44 strategies to mitigate road expansion in the next decades.

45 Reviews of the effects of roads on wildlife have largely been from developed nations and
46 temperate areas (Trombulak & Frissell 2007; Taylor & Goldingay 2010; Kociolek et al. 2011).
47 The impacts of roads are often qualitatively and quantitatively different in tropical regions
48 than in other ecosystem types (Laurance et al. 2009). Therefore, understanding these impacts,
49 or the lack of, will help to guide road planning and mitigation measures more suitable for the
50 Latin America context. We reviewed existing research on the effects of roads on wildlife in
51 Latin America and identified critical research gaps of knowledge and define future directions
52 for research.

53

54 **2. Methods**

55 **2.1 Literature search and research effort on road ecology**

56 Our review is based on peer-reviewed publications obtained from database searches of Web
57 of Science, Google Scholar, Scopus, Science Direct and contacting colleagues in Latin America.
58 Our search covered geography, taxa, and common terms related to roads (paved, unpaved,

59 traffic, transport, motorway, highway, vehicle). We conducted searches in English, Spanish
60 and Portuguese (Supporting Information) .

61 Publications were then classified by research area and sub-topics (Supporting
62 Information), geography, taxonomic group (amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals), level
63 of biological organization (gene, individual, population and ecosystem) (Noss 1990), and type
64 of roads (1-2 lanes unpaved, 1-2 lanes paved, and highways >2 lanes). Our search revealed
65 relative and not absolute measures of activity among research areas and sub-topics. The same
66 publication could be assigned to more than one research area and/or sub-topic.

67 **2.2 Effects of roads on habitat and wildlife vertebrates**

68 Road effects were examined among four research areas (habitat, biodiversity, mortality,
69 mitigation) with associated sub-topics (Supporting Information). Habitat consisted of studies
70 on the effects of roads on species habitat, interpreted as habitat loss and fragmentation from
71 road construction, the opening of new areas for human settlements and deforestation rates.
72 Biodiversity consisted of the effect of roads (single roads or road networks) and traffic on
73 species richness, composition, abundance and behaviour. Mortality examined road-kill
74 occurrence, road-kill rates and spatial/temporal patterns. Mitigation comprised studies that
75 evaluated or recommended mitigation measures.

76 We categorized the main effects of roads, negative, positive, neutral or contrasting
77 effects, for taxonomic group and by species. We identified gaps in research to help identify
78 future research needs by intersecting research areas and sub-topics with taxonomic groups
79 displayed as a heat map/table.

80 **3. Results**

81 We found a total of 199 studies presenting road effects on wildlife vertebrates in Latin America
82 (see Supporting Information). The majority of studies were from South America (89%), of
83 which more than a half of studies (51.5%) were conducted in Brazil (n=103), followed by
84 Argentina (n=23), Colombia (n=17), Bolivia (n=15) and Ecuador (n=12). Only 11% of the studies
85 were from Central America: Mexico (n=10), Costa Rica (n=10) and Panama (n=3; Figure 1).
86 There is only one study that covered all Latin American countries related to a global analysis

87 of carnivore exposure to roads (Ceia-Hasse et al. 2017; Figure 1). The number of studies has
88 grown since 1990, with a peak in 2013 and slight decline to near 20 studies per year
89 (Supporting Information). Over half of the studies for any given year focused on mortality
90 effects of roads.

91 **3.1 Research effort on road ecology**

92 Studies covered a wide range of taxa, including 61 studies on mammals (30%), 23 on birds
93 (11%), 17 on reptiles (8%) and 7 on amphibians (3.5%). The remaining wildlife studies were
94 multi-taxon (n=61; 30%). A total of 30 studies (15%) documented landscape level effects such
95 as habitat loss due roads, deforestations patterns, land use changes and increased in human
96 access. Two-thirds of studies were at the individual level (65%), followed by
97 community/ecosystems (27%), populations (8%) and genes (1%). More than half of the studies
98 were conducted on 2 lane paved roads (64%), 26% on unpaved roads and only 10% on
99 highways.

100 Of the research areas (sub-topics) exploring road effects on wildlife, 58 studies addressed
101 road effects on biodiversity (20% species richness, 49% abundance, 31% species behavior), 35
102 the effects on species habitat, and 110 on mortality (79% species composition, 21% spatial
103 and temporal patterns). Mitigation measures were the focus of 15 studies (56%
104 recommendations, 44% evaluating effectiveness).

105 Brazil was the only country with studies in all research areas (Figure 2a). Habitat studies
106 were concentrated mainly in countries on the Amazon Basin, while biodiversity studies were
107 distributed throughout South American countries (Figure 1). The heat map revealed a
108 preponderance of mortality studies, comprising nearly half (48%) of all studies, especially for
109 medium-large mammals and reptiles (Figure 2b). Few studies evaluated road effects on
110 amphibians in Latin America (Figure 2b)

111 **3.2 Main effects of roads on habitat and wildlife**

112 **3.2.1 Habitat**

113 We found 35 papers related to habitat loss and fragmentation due to roads with the great
114 majority of the studies (95%) having negative effects (Supporting Information). Most of the

115 documented effects were related to an increase in deforestation rates and adverse effects
116 due accessibility like an increase in hunting pressure (Espinosa et al. 2014), illegal logging
117 (Freitas et al. 2013), establishment of human settlements (Bilsborrow et al. 2004; Mertens et
118 al. 2004) and land conversions (Soares-Filho et al. 2004; Bottazzi & Dao 2013).

119 Nearly 95% of all deforestation in Brazilian Amazon occurred within 5.5 km of roads with
120 lower deforestation rates near protected areas (Barber et al. 2014). In fact, Barni et al. (2012)
121 showed that the availability of roads and the presence of human settlements were strongly
122 related to deforestation rates and a subsequent study showed an increase in illegal activities
123 (logging, hunting) due to the increased accessibility on protected areas in Amazon basin
124 (Kauano et al. 2017). Similar relationship between road network and deforestation,
125 fragmentation and land conversions for agriculture was found in Brazilian Atlantic Forest and
126 Cerrado (e.g. Freitas et al. 2010; Casella & Filho 2013) and in Bolivian Amazon (Locklin & Haack
127 2003; Forrest et al. 2008; Tejada et al. 2016).

128 In the Ecuadorian Amazon the establishment of roads by oil companies since the 1990s
129 imposed changes in social aspects for traditional people (Franzen 2006). Among these
130 changes, one of the most important was the emergence of a wild meat market and the
131 increase in settlements along roads, that reduced birds and mammals diversity due hunting
132 pressure on Yasuní Biosphere Reserve (Suárez et al. 2009, 2013). Rates of bushmeat extraction
133 and trade were higher closer to markets than further away. Hunters located closer to markets
134 concentrated their effort on large-bodied species (Espinosa et al. 2014). Nevertheless,
135 because oil roads are controlled for public access, deforestation rates were higher on public-
136 access non-oil roads, and a 1% increase in public roads would result in a 22% increase in
137 agricultural conversion (Baynard et al. 2013).

138 **3.2.2 Biodiversity**

139 **3.2.2.1 Species richness**

140 Changes in species richness and composition in response to roads were covered in 15 studies
141 of which 56% were related to bird communities, 17% mammals and amphibian communities,
142 and 5% on reptiles. The effects on species richness varied among taxon; half were found to be
143 negative with roughly a quarter positive (28%) or were neutral (22%; Supporting Information).

144 Forest bird communities in Brazilian Amazon were affected in species composition and
145 richness where roads were present and effects of human access (logging, fire, hunting, traffic
146 disturbance, edge effects) were greater than habitat loss (Ahmed et al. 2014). Forest bird
147 richness in the Colombian Andes decreased in areas with high access and disturbance (Aubad
148 et al. 2010). Similarly in the Ecuadorian Amazon reduced bird and mammal richness resulted
149 from illegal trade and bushmeat market access from industry roads (Suarez et al. 2013).

150 Roads had mainly negative effects on the species composition for amphibians in Colombia
151 (Vargas-Salinas 2011) and Ecuador (Withworth et al. 2015). Contrasting effects were found for
152 birds. New habitats created on road edges reduced species richness of savannah and
153 understory birds (Silva et al., 2017, Withworth et al. 2015), while there was no effect on
154 community diversity of birds in a range of habitats (Astudillo et al. 2014, Avalos & Bermúdez,
155 2016, Bager & Rosa 2012; Supporting Information).

156 Roads had no effect on medium-large mammal community diversity (Di Bitetti et al.
157 2013). However, new habitats created on road edges and low-volume unpaved roads had
158 positive effects and increased species richness in diverse terrestrial vertebrate communities
159 (Vargas-Salinas et al. 2009, Weyland et al. 2014, Di Bitetti et al. 2014).

160 **3.2.2.2 Species abundance**

161 The effects of roads on species abundance was addressed in 36 studies: 41% on mammals,
162 28% birds, 14% and 11% reptiles and amphibians, respectively (Figure 2b). Effects varied
163 among taxon and species groups; more than half were negative effects (60%), 24% neutral
164 and 16% positive (Table 1).

165 Habitat degradation from the creation of coastal roads reduced population densities of
166 sand-dune lizards in Brazil and Argentina (Rocha et al. 2009; Vega et al. 2000). Changes in bird
167 abundance close to roads was best explained by traffic noise (Arévalo & Newhard 2011), and
168 habitat alterations along road edges (Astudillo et al. 2014; Silva et al. 2017).

169 There was a negative relationship between increases in road density and population
170 density of Morelet's Crocodile (*Crocodylus moreletii*) in Mexican wetlands (González-Trujillo
171 et al. 2014). Similar decreases in species abundance near roads occurred for bromeliad

172 amphibians in Ecuadorian Amazon (McCracken & Forstner 2014), for amphibians and reptiles
173 in a lowland Amazonian rainforests of Ecuador (Maynard et al. 2016), and for pumas (*Puma*
174 *concolor*) in the Argentinian Chaco (Quiroga et al. 2016). High hunting pressure, deforestation
175 and others human activities associated with roads and access explained declines in primates
176 numbers in Peruvian Amazon and French Guiana (Aquino & Charpentier 2014; Thoisy et al.
177 2010) and among Andean bears (*Tremarctos ornatus*) in Ecuador and Venezuela (Peralvo et
178 al. 2005; Sánchez-Mercado et al. 2008). There were contrasting effects of roads on carnivore
179 species abundance in fragmented landscapes in Central Chile. The responses were species-
180 specific as Chilean cats preferred habitats far from roads and close to large habitat patches,
181 while Andean foxes preferred open habitats close to roads and scarcely used forests in a
182 fragmented landscape (Acosta-Jamett & Simonetti 2004).

183 Mixed responses to roads were reported for wild boar (*Sus scrofa*) in different parts of
184 Argentina. Occurrence was higher close to roads, using roads for travel through forest patches
185 (Gantchoff & Belant 2015), while occurrence was higher with distance from roads (Cuevas et
186 al. 2013). Some species were found more abundant close to roads. Similarly, abundance of
187 European hares (*Lepus europaeus*) benefited from human settlements and associated roads
188 (Gantchoff & Belant 2015).

189 **3.2.2.3 Species behavior**

190 Wildlife may avoid roads and thus restrict access to important habitat patches (Chen &
191 Koprowski 2016). This is especially true for forest-dependent species such as understory birds
192 that are specialized for forest-interior conditions, strongly avoid forest edges and unable to
193 narrow forest clearings (Develey & Stouffer 2001; Laurance et al. 2004). Spider monkeys
194 (*Ateles sp*) crossed roads where canopy gaps were smallest (Asensio et al. 2017). Jaguars
195 (*Panthera onca*) in Mexico's Mayan forest avoided crossing highways and rarely crossed paved
196 roads (Colchero et al. 2011).

197 Traffic effects on species behavior is mainly negative (Supporting Information). Bromeliad
198 frogs (*Andinobates bombetes*) avoided vocalizing during periods of high traffic noise levels
199 (Vargas-Salinas 2013). Andean condors (*Vultur gryphus*) changed habitat use and feeding
200 behavior due to roads and traffic, feeding in patches distant from roads (Speziale et al. 2008).

201 Traffic-related effects had significant impacts on an endemic montane toad
202 (*Melanophryniscus* sp.), limiting their ability to cross roads and increasing habitat isolation
203 (Cairo & Zalba 2007).

204 Negative effects were also found for small mammals (Supporting Information). Montane
205 akodon rodent (*Akodon montensis*) avoided crossing forest edges near dirt or paved roads
206 compared to roadless edges (Ascensão et al. 2017b). Roads were found to limit seed dispersal
207 by small mammal communities (Lambert et al. 2014). Species-specific responses of small
208 mammals to road edges revealed contrasting effects: ground-dwelling species were attracted
209 to road edges, while arboreal species avoided road edges (Rosa et al. 2017). Two endemic
210 rodents from Cozumel Island showed significant and contrasting changes in population
211 parameters (age structure and gender) between forest interior and edge habitats near roads
212 (Fuentes-Montemayor et al. 2009). A neutral effect was found for a rodent species in an
213 agricultural landscape in Argentina, where there was no genetic differentiation, suggesting
214 gene flow was occurring across the road (Chiappero et al. 2016).

215 Roads can lead to positive or neutral effects for guanacos (*Lama guanicoe*). Apparently,
216 roads had no negative but potentially positive effects on this species. Guanacos perceive the
217 roadside vegetation as safer in landscapes dominated by open areas to decrease the detection
218 by predators (Marino & Johnson 2012; Cappa et al. 2017).

219 **3.2.3 Mortality**

220 Road mortality represented more than half (n=110) of the studies in Latin America. Most (79%)
221 focused on species composition, less on spatial patterns of mortality. Half of the studies (n=52)
222 analysed the composition of multiple vertebrate taxa; the other half a single taxon level.
223 Mammal studies predominated with 77% (n=88), of which 30% (n=32) were for a single
224 mammal species (Figure 2 b).

225 Nearly 700 species (n=673) were recorded as road-kill on roads in Latin America. Among
226 vertebrates, birds and reptiles showed the highest richness with 235 and 231 species,
227 respectively; followed by mammals (n=155) and amphibians (n=52) (Supporting Information).
228 Estimates of road-kill rates by species were provided in 73% (n=67) of the studies (Supporting
229 Information). Amphibians had high mean road-kill rate (\pm SD) with 5.03 (\pm 22.5) ind./km/year,

230 followed by reptiles with 0.317 (± 1.012) ind./km/year, mammals 0.166 ind./km/year (± 0.5)
231 and birds 0.130 (± 0.39). Mortality studies (33%) identified 28 species listed as Threatened
232 (IUCN 2018), 16 classified as Near Threatened, 10 as Vulnerable and two as Endangered
233 (Supporting Information). The majority of threatened species were mammals (n=19), followed
234 by birds (n=6), reptiles (n=2) and amphibians (n=1).

235 Five studies analysed the implications of road mortality on population viability. Long-term
236 persistence of giant anteaters in a protected area surrounded by high-volume roads in central
237 Brazil was threatened when mortality rates surpassed 5% of the population, as in other
238 protected areas in Brazilian Cerrado (Diniz & Brito 2013, 2015). Road mortality was predicted
239 to impact jaguar population persistence in Atlantic forests in southern Brazil, causing an 80%
240 reduction of metapopulation and 45% of extant population within 100 years (Cullen et al.
241 2016). High mortality rates among juvenile lava lizards (*Microlophus albemarlensis*) in the
242 Galapagos Islands seriously threatened the populations' long term chance of survival (Tanner
243 et al. 2007). In a global analysis of carnivore exposure to roads, long-term population
244 persistence of four felid species and one canid from Latin America were threatened by roads
245 (Ceia-Hasse et al. 2017). The study found critical areas for species persistence, particularly
246 south-central Mexico and southeast Brazil.

247 **3.2.3.1 Spatial and temporal patterns**

248 Twenty-five studies documented spatial and/or temporal patterns of road-related mortality.
249 Amphibian road-kills were related to traffic volume, presence of water bodies near roads and
250 wet seasons in southern Brazil (Coelho et al. 2012). Traffic volume was associated with road-
251 kills incidences among reptiles in Amazon (Maschio et al. 2016), while in southern Brazil
252 mortality was positively associated with proximity to rice plantations (Gonçalves et al. 2017).
253 Reptile road-kills increased during wet seasons in different regions of Brazil (Santos et al. 2011;
254 Costa et al. 2015; Gonçalves et al. 2017; Miranda et al. 2017). Increasing traffic volume
255 explained road-kill occurrence of rufous-legged-owl (*Strix rufipes*) and bats (Ojeda et al. 2015;
256 Secco et al. 2017). The proximity to rivers and riparian habitats were positively associated with
257 road-kills of medium-large mammals in different roads in Brazil (Bueno et al. 2013, 2015;

258 Freitas et al. 2015; Ascensão et al. 2017a). Road-kills were found to peak in the dry season for
259 vertebrate species (Melo & Santos-Filho 2007; Cuyckens et al. 2016).

260 **3.2.4 Mitigation**

261 Only 7% (n=15) of studies provided recommendations for mitigation (n=11) or evaluated their
262 effectiveness (n=4). Seven specifically focused on mitigation strategies for mammals, two for
263 amphibians, while five included a multi-taxon approach. Recommendations focused on
264 reducing the number of road-kill (Bager & Rosa 2010; Coelho et al. 2012; Araya-Gamboa &
265 Salom-Pérez 2015; Mata et al. 2016; Ascensão et al. 2017a) and increasing road permeability
266 for individual movements (Colchero et al. 2011).

267 Two studies evaluated mitigation by quantifying road-kill rates before and after
268 underpass and fencing were installed (Bager & Fontoura 2013; Ciocheti et al. 2017), while
269 Costa et al. (2017) used a spatial analysis to evaluate the efficacy of underpasses in promoting
270 connectivity between landscapes. They showed that underpasses failed to mitigate road-kill
271 rates and the barrier effect of roads. In contrast, a rope bridge made for arboreal species
272 showed positive results in restoring movements and connectivity (Teixeira et al. 2013).

273 **4. Research gaps and future directions for research**

274 **4.1 Knowledge gaps**

275 Our review is the first we are aware of from tropical regions and developing nations. The road
276 network in Latin America is expected to increase exponentially (Sanchez 2015, Meijer et al.
277 2018). Although there were a growing number of papers documenting road effects in Latin
278 America our review revealed some striking patterns.

279 Firstly, there was a clear geographic imbalance in the distribution of papers, the majority
280 of published work from South America and a glaring deficit from Central American countries.
281 It is not clear what might explain the disproportionate number of papers. Brazil is the largest
282 and most populated country in Latin America, with a long history of biodiversity conservation
283 research, including infrastructure impacts (Reid & Souza 2005; Fearnside 2006). Secondly,
284 although we know roads and traffic can fragment and degrade habitats, limiting gene flow
285 within populations, few Latin papers analyzed road effects at gene or population level

286 (Chiappero et al. 2016; Cullen et al. 2016). The population-level consequences of roads has
287 received little attention elsewhere as the majority of studies up until now have focused at the
288 individual level and single factors, e.g., mortality, population fragmentation (Bennett 2017).
289 Last, we discovered a discrepancy among research areas. Our heat map showed that the
290 number of papers dealing with mortality (primarily among medium and large-sized mammals)
291 greatly exceeds the number of papers in nearly all other research areas. Because road-kills are
292 the most conspicuous effect of roads, mortality studies are the first step into assessing
293 impacts, plus they are low-cost and relatively easy to conduct. Recently, researchers have
294 begun considering how these same impacts can spur evolutionary changes in organisms
295 (Brady & Richardson 2017).

296

297 **4.2 Future directions for research**

298 Road ecology is an emerging field of research in Latin America and for the most part the basic
299 science regarding road effects on wildlife communities is still lacking. To adequately quantify
300 the environmental trade-offs for transportation infrastructure expansion projects, basic
301 scientific knowledge is needed to quantify impacts at the landscape level and to increase
302 understanding of the multiple and cumulative effects roads have on threatened ecosystems.
303 There are few research efforts in Latin America addressing the ecological effects of roads and
304 developing science-based solutions for mitigation and best management practices (Teixeira et
305 al. 2016). Herein we describe some recommendations per research area:

306 **Habitat.** Few studies directly assessed the thresholds of road density with species
307 densities and distributions. At a local scale, some carnivore species establish in areas below a
308 road density threshold of 0.6 km/km² (Frair et al. 2008). At a large scale, assessments of the
309 exposure of terrestrial vertebrates to roads using an integrated modelling framework can be
310 applied at different spatial scales (e.g. Row et al. 2007; Ceia-Hasse et al. 2017). This framework
311 can help assess the effects of developing road networks and inform prioritization schemes for
312 road building, identify areas for conservation, and species requiring particular mitigation and
313 restoration measures.

314 **Biodiversity.** Studies analysing how species diversity and distribution varies near road
315 types should be conducted in different ecosystems. Future studies should also focus on

316 understanding individual behavior toward road types (e.g. Grilo et al. 2012). Corridors are
317 important conservation tools to keep wildlife populations viable over the long term, however,
318 roads are rarely part of the conservation equation, and only one paper addressed connectivity
319 (Colchero et al. 2011). Quantifying the interactions of species with roads will provide
320 information on demographic and genetic connectivity, research rarely addressed in Latin
321 America (Bischof et al. 2016). In the tropics, plant-animal mutualisms such as seed dispersal
322 are vital for ecosystem functioning (Wright 2002). A huge body of knowledge has been
323 accumulated on the ecology of those interactions at population level (Dennis et al. 2007). It
324 will be important to know how changes in keystone species abundance and distribution from
325 roads affect ecological processes (Corlett 2017).

326 **Mortality.** Further studies are needed to understand the spatial and temporal drivers of
327 wildlife-vehicle collisions to make predictions on road-kill risk. A database was recently
328 compiled of geo-referenced road-kill data in Brazil (Grilo et al. 2018) and can serve as example
329 for other Latin American nations to follow. Empirical estimates of road mortality in Latin
330 America show that some species are more likely to be killed than others, but to what extent
331 this variation can be explained and predicted using intrinsic species characteristics coupled
332 with spatial and temporal factors still remains poorly understood (Gonzalez-Suarez et al.
333 2018). It is also crucial to evaluate the effect of road-kills on population abundance and
334 persistence (e.g. Beaudry et al. 2008). The road-kill rates estimated in the literature combined
335 with the knowledge of population density and the use of population models can provide
336 insights on the viability of populations in roaded landscapes.

337 **Mitigation.** Designing potential solutions and mitigation is context-sensitive to different
338 ecological, socioeconomic and policy environments (Van der Ree et al. 2015). Current lack of
339 mitigation research is an artefact of few mitigation projects in Latin America. Mitigation
340 research should be long-term to account for ecological variability (Hughes et al 2017) and will
341 be the basis for developing context-sensitive best management practices (van der Grift 2005).
342 As more roads are mitigated results of research efficacy can be shared among colleagues
343 working with similar taxa in similar environments. Formation of research coordination
344 networks would help cooperatively develop and disseminate locally appropriate solutions to
345 environmental problems caused by roads in Latin America (Porter 2012, Soler 2014).

346 **Conclusions**

347 Study of the impacts of roads is an emerging research field in Latin America. Research on the
348 impact of roads has never been more urgent or pressing. We suggest a two-speed strategy be
349 used to address the science and decision-making needs to keep up with the fast pace of road
350 building in Latin America (Laurance & Arrea 2017). Local scale research should continue to
351 better understand species, population and ecosystem impacts of roads, in concert with larger,
352 continental-scale analyses and modelling road risks to species and populations to inform road
353 planning immediately. There is a glaring need for research into the ecological effects of roads
354 on wildlife vertebrates in Latin America. Given the lack of research funding in developing
355 nations like those of Latin America, our review can serve to help focus limited research funds
356 on specific research areas, taxonomic groups and ecosystems. This is critically important today
357 given transportation infrastructure development is currently outpacing the research and
358 science needed to inform the burgeoning number of projects, so they are designed with
359 minimal impacts to wildlife communities and biodiversity conservation.

360 **Supporting Information**

361 A list of reviewed studies (Appendix S1), documented effects of roads on wildlife communities
362 in Latin America (Appendix S2), summary of road-kill rates for each species and by each study
363 in Latin America (Appendix S3), systematic quantitative literature review and definition of
364 research areas and sub-topics (Appendix S4), temporal patterns of published studies
365 (Appendix S5), top 20 species with the higher mean of road-kill rates separated by amphibians
366 (Appendix S6), reptiles (Appendix S7), birds (Appendix S8), and mammals (Appendix S9) are
367 available on line. The authors are solely responsible for the content and functionality of these
368 materials. Queries (other than absence of the material) should be directed to the
369 corresponding author.

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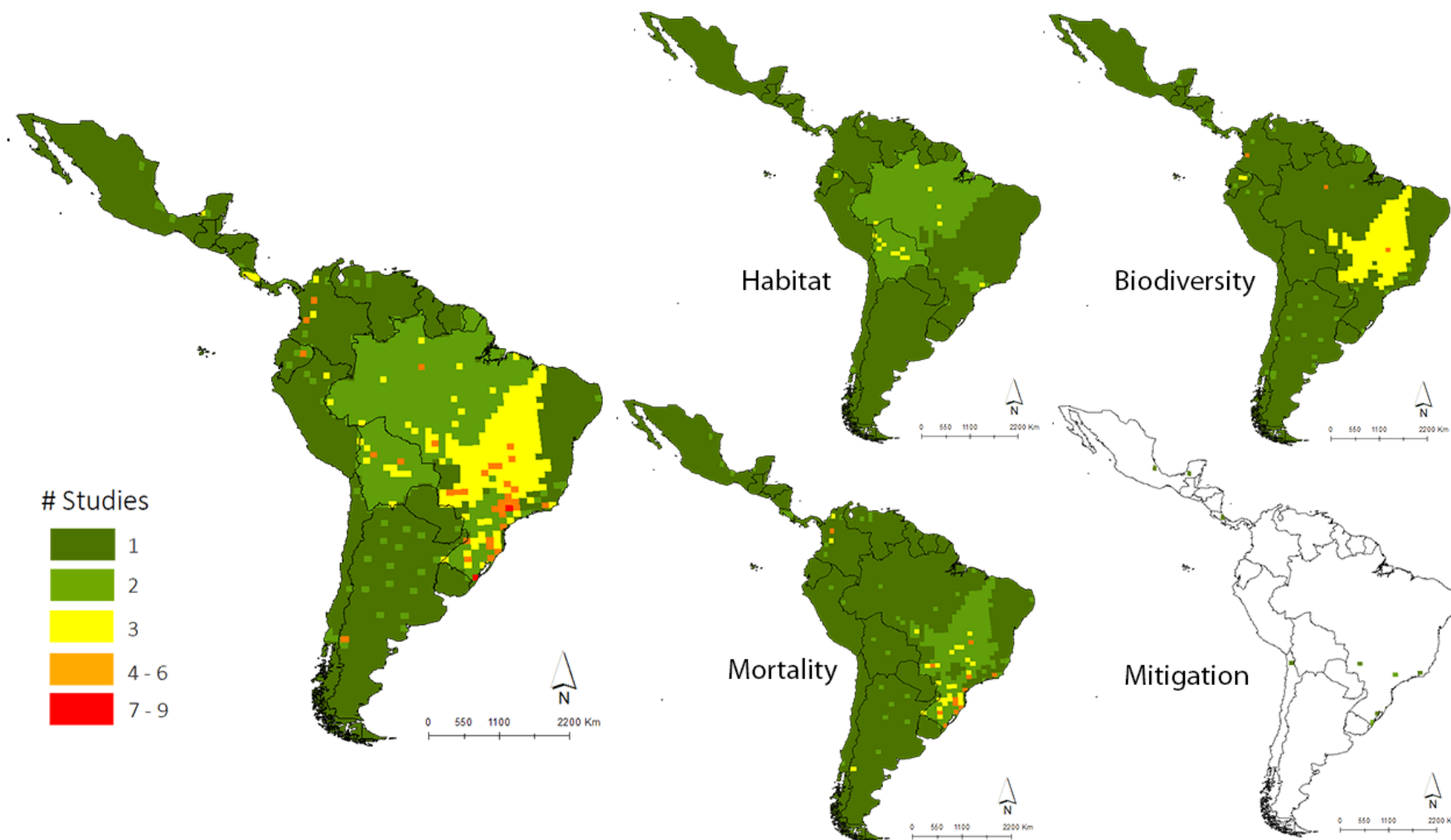


Figure 1. Number of studies reporting road effects on wildlife vertebrates in Latin America per 100 x 100 km grid cell. Maps show the geographic distribution of all studies (left) and by research areas.

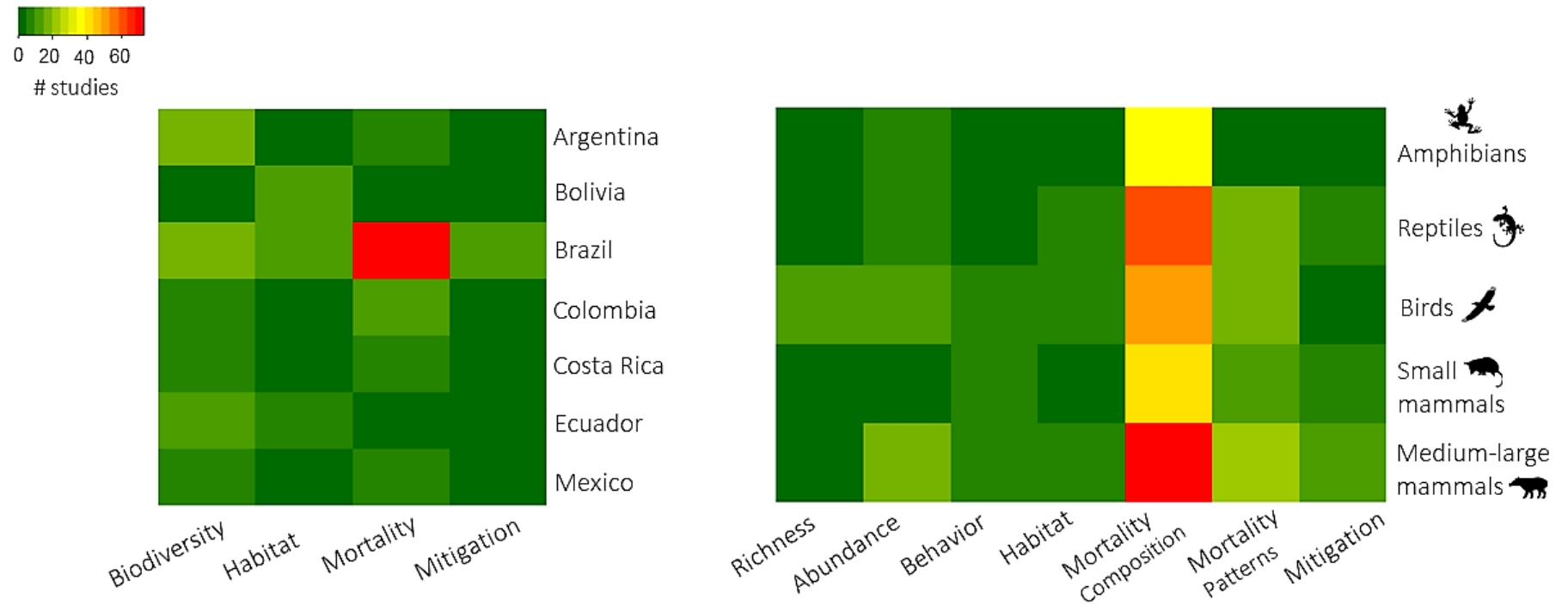


Figure 2 – a) Number of studies regarding research areas and Latin American countries (countries that account for > 10 studies). b) Number of studies regarding research areas (sub-topics) and taxon. Color scale indicates the number of studies, hotter colors represent large number of studies.

Appendix S1 - A list of reviewed studies:

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Appendix S2. Documented effects of roads on wildlife by group of species or by species in Latin America on habitat loss and fragmentation and also biodiversity (richness, abundance and behavior). Negative effects (red), neutral effects (yellow), contrasting effects (blue) and positive effects (green), no information (white).

Species group or species	Habitat		Biodiversity		Reference
	Loss/Frag	Richness	Abundance	Behavior	
Amphibians					
Amphibian community					Vargas-Salinas et al. (2011), Witworth et al. (2015)
					Silva et al. (2006), Vargas-Salinas & Baca (2009)
Anura					
<i>Andinobates bombetes</i> **					Vargas-Salinas & Amézquita (2013)
<i>Melanophryniscus</i> sp					Cairo & Zalba (2007)
Bromeliad species					McCracken & Forstner (2014)
Forest species					Maynard et al. (2016)
					Fredericksen (2004)
Reptiles					
Snakes and lizards community					Vargas-Salinas et al. (2011), Vargas-Salinas et al (2009)
					Maynard et al. (2016)
Testudines					
<i>Chelonoidis denticulate</i> **					Espinosa et al. (2014), Suárez et al. (2009)
<i>Podocnemis unifilis</i> **					Suárez et al. (2009)
Squamata					
<i>Liolaemus lutzae</i> **					Rocha et al. (2009)
<i>Liolaemus multimaculatus</i> ***					Vega et al. (2000)
<i>Liolaemus gracilis</i>					Vega et al. (2000)
Crocodylia					
<i>Crocodylus moreletii</i>					González-Trujillo et al. (2014)
<i>Caiman crocodylus</i> ,					Suárez et al. (2009)
<i>Melanosuchus niger</i>					Suárez et al. (2009)
Birds					
Birds community					Silva et al. (2017)
					Bager & Rosa (2012)
					Malizia et al. (1998)
					Weyland et al. (2014), Whitworth et al. (2015)
Cathartiformes					
<i>Vultur gryphus</i> *					Speziale et al. (2008)
Galliformes					

Species group or species	Habitat		Biodiversity		Reference
	Loss/Frag	Richness	Abundance	Behavior	
<i>Crax alector**</i>					Thoisy et al. (2010)
<i>Mitu salvini</i>					Espinosa et al. (2014), Suárez et al. (2009)
<i>Ortalis guttata</i>					Suárez et al. (2009)
<i>Penelope jacquacu</i>					Espinosa et al. (2014), Suárez et al. (2009)
<i>Penelope marail</i>					Thoisy et al. (2010)
<i>Pipile cumanensis</i>					Espinosa et al. (2014)
<i>Pipile pipile****</i>					Suárez et al. (2009)
Gruiformes					
<i>Psophia crepitans</i>					Thoisy et al. (2010)
Struthioniformes					
<i>Crypturellus sp</i>					Suárez et al. (2009)
<i>Tinamus major*</i>					Suárez et al. (2009), Thoisy et al. (2010)
Passeriformes					
<i>Chamaeza campanisona</i>					Oliveira Jr et al. (2011)
<i>Conopophaga lineata</i>					Oliveira Jr et al. (2011)
<i>Corydospiza alaudina</i>					Muñoz-Sáez et al. (2017)
<i>Curaeus curaeus</i>					Muñoz-Sáez et al. (2017)
<i>Pyriglena leucoptera</i>					Oliveira Jr et al. (2011)
<i>Spinus barbatus</i>					Muñoz-Sáez et al. (2017)
<i>Tachycineta meyeri</i>					Muñoz-Sáez et al. (2017)
Piciformes					
<i>Pteroglossus castanotis</i>					Suárez et al. (2009)
Psittaciformes					
<i>Ara ararauna</i>					Suárez et al. (2009)
Forest birds					Ahmed et al. (2014), Aubad et al. (2010),
					Arévalo & Newhard (2011)
					Felton et al. (2008), Suárez et al. (2013), Thiollay (1999)
Grasslands birds					Avalos & Bermúdez (2016)
Understory mixed-species flocks					Astudillo et al. (2014)
Understory birds					Develey & Stouffer (2001)
Mammals					
Mammals community					Laurance et al. (2004)
					Suarez et al. (2013)
					Di Bitetti et al. (2013)

Species group or species	Habitat		Biodiversity		Reference
	Loss/Frag	Richness	Abundance	Behavior	
					Di Bitetti et al. (2014)
Primates community					Aquino et al. (2014)
Small mammals community					Lambert et al. (2014)
Carnivora					
<i>Conepatus chinga</i>					Caruso et al. (2016)
<i>Leopardus geoffroyi</i>					Caruso et al. (2016)
<i>Lycalopex gymnocercus</i>					Caruso et al. (2016)
<i>Oncifelis guigna</i>					Acosta-Jamet & Simonetti (2004)
<i>Pseudalopex culpaeus</i>					Acosta-Jamet & Simonetti (2004)
<i>Puma concolor</i>					Caruso et al. (2016), Quiroga et al. (2016)
<i>Panthera onca*</i>					Colchero et al. (2011)
<i>Tremarctos ornatus</i>					Peralvo et al. (2005), Sánchez-Mercado et al. (2008)
Cetartiodactyla					
<i>Lama guanicoe</i>					Cappa et al. (2017)
<i>Lama guanicoe</i>					Marino et al. (2012)
<i>Mazama americana</i>					Thoisy et al. (2010), Suárez et al. (2009), Espinosa et al. (2014)
<i>Mazama gouazoubira</i>					Thoisy et al. (2010)
<i>Mazama nemorivaga</i>					Espinosa et al. (2014)
<i>Pecari tajacu</i>					Suárez et al. (2009), Espinosa et al. (2014)
<i>Pecari tajacu</i>					Thoisy et al. (2010)
<i>Sus scrofa</i>					Gantchoff & Belant (2015)
<i>Sus scrofa</i>					Cuevas et al (2013)
<i>Tayassu pecari**</i>					Suárez et al. (2009), Espinosa et al. (2014)
Cingulata					
<i>Dasypus novemcinctus</i>					Suárez et al. (2009)
Didelphimorphia					
<i>Marmosa robinsoni</i>					Vargas-Salinas & Aranda (2012)
<i>Marmosops incanus</i>					Rosa et al (2017)
Lagomorpha					
<i>Lepus europaeus</i>					Gantchoff & Belant (2015)
Perissodactyla					
<i>Tapirus terrestris**</i>					Suárez et al. (2009), Espinosa et al. (2014)
Primates					
<i>Alouatta seniculus</i>					Espinosa et al. (2014)

Species group or species	Habitat		Biodiversity		Reference
	Loss/Frag	Richness	Abundance	Behavior	
<i>Alouatta seniculus</i>					Thoisy et al. (2010)
<i>Ateles belzebuth</i> ***					Suárez et al. (2009), Espinosa et al. (2014)
<i>Ateles geoffroyi</i> ***					Ascensio et al. (2017)
<i>Ateles paniscus</i> **					Thoisy et al. (2010)
<i>Cebus apella</i>					Thoisy et al. (2010)
<i>Cebus olivaceus</i>					Thoisy et al. (2010)
<i>Lagothrix poeppigii</i> **					Suárez et al. (2009), Espinosa et al. (2014)
<i>Pithecia pithecia</i>					Thoisy et al. (2010)
<i>Saguinus midas</i>					Thoisy et al. (2010)
Rodentia					
<i>Akodon montensis</i>					Ascensão et al. (2017)
<i>Akodon sp,</i>					Rosa et al (2017)
<i>Calomys venustus</i>					Chiappero et al. (2016)
<i>Cerradomys subflavus</i>					Rosa et al (2017)
<i>Cuniculus paca</i>					Suárez et al. (2009), Espinosa et al. (2014)
<i>Dasyprocta agouti</i>					Thoisy et al. (2010)
<i>Dasyprocta fuliginosa</i>					Suárez et al. (2009), Espinosa et al. (2014)
<i>Handleyomys alfaroi</i>					Vargas-Salinas & Aranda (2012)
<i>Hydrochaerus hydrochaeris</i>					Suárez et al. (2009)
<i>Melanomys caliginosus</i>					Vargas-Salinas & Aranda (2012)
<i>Oryzomys couesi,</i>					Fuentes-Montemayor et al. (2009)
<i>Reithrodontomys spectabilis</i>					Fuentes-Montemayor et al. (2009)
<i>Rhipidomys latimanus</i>					Vargas-Salinas & Aranda (2012)
<i>Rhipidomys sp,</i>					Rosa et al (2017)

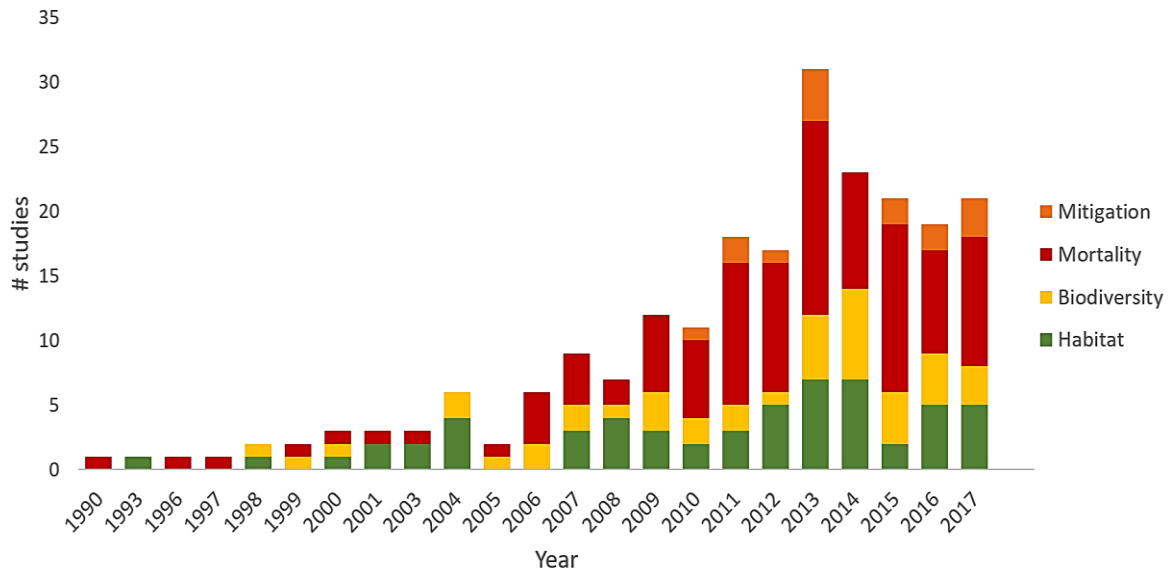
Legend: Threatened species according to IUCN Status: *Near Threatened, **Vulnerable, ***Endangered, ****Critically Endangered.

Appendix S4 – Systematic quantitative literature review and definition of research areas and sub-topics.

We searched published research through the following search engines and databases: Web of Science, Scopus and Science Direct. Our search comprised three groups of information: geographic (on the 21 countries in Latin America, from northern Mexico to southern Patagonia), wildlife vertebrates (amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals), and common terms related to roads. We made the searches for each Latin America country using the following key search words in English, Spanish and Portuguese: (Latin America country) AND (wildlife* OR vertebrates* OR amphibians* OR reptiles* OR birds* OR aves OR mammals) AND (roads* OR vehicle* OR traffic* OR highways* OR motorway* OR unpaved* OR roadkill* OR transport* OR mitigation*). We restricted our search to these categories because preliminary searches showed that adding other journal categories greatly increased the number of irrelevant papers. We also searched the grey literature through Google Scholar and by contacting road ecology researchers in Latin America using the references found in publications (Plataforma Lattes a database of researchers in Brazil <http://lattes.cnpq.br>). To limit the studies to those assessing the ecological effects of roads on wildlife, we first screened studies by reading titles and abstracts and excluded studies that did not match these criteria. Each research study was classified according to their research area and sub-topic, according to the following table:

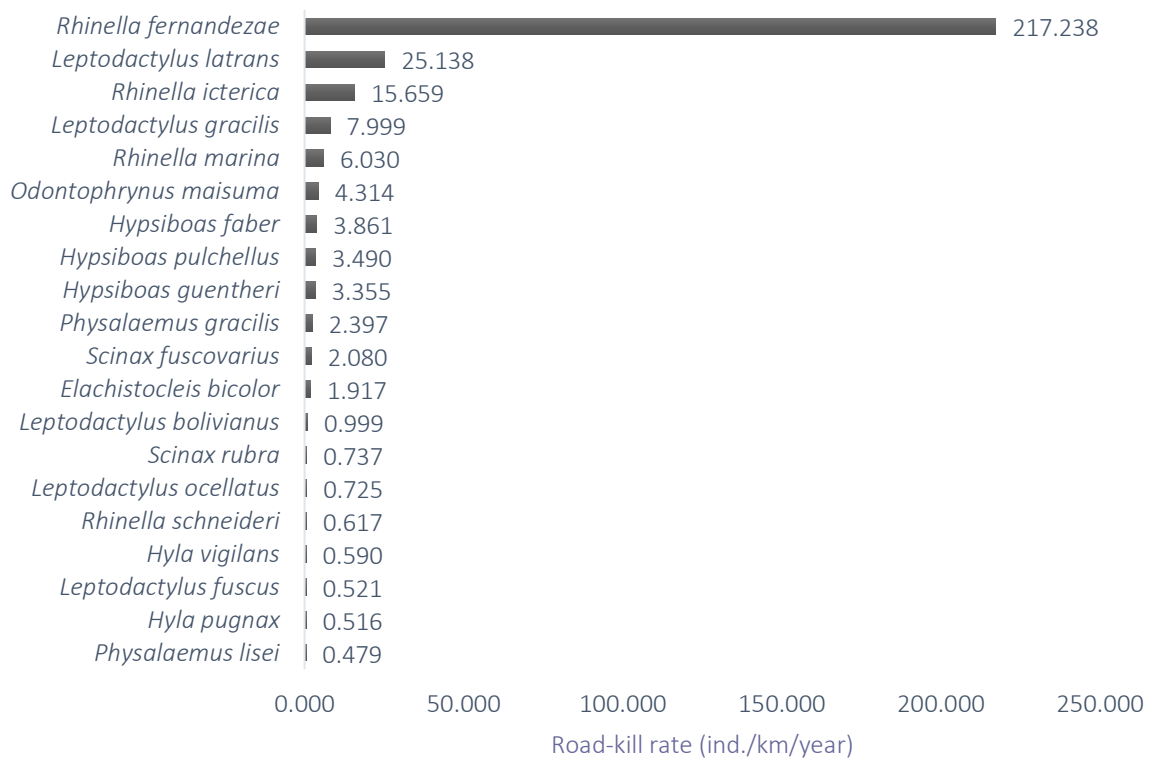
Research area	Sub-topic	Definition
Habitat	Loss and fragmentation	The effects of road construction, implications of roads on urban sprawl and landscape fragmentation.
Biodiversity	Richness	The effects of road networks on species composition and diversity
	Abundance	The effects of roads on species abundance and density,
	Species behaviour	The effect of traffic, noise and light on species behavior, individual movements (barrier effect).
Mortality	Composition	Number of species and road-kill rates by species
	Spatial/temporal patterns	Evaluation of distribution and aggregation of road-kills and factors that promote road-kill risk
Mitigation	Recommendations	Proposed types of mitigation measures
	Effectiveness	Analysis of efficacy of mitigation measures

Appendix S5. Temporal patterns of published studies



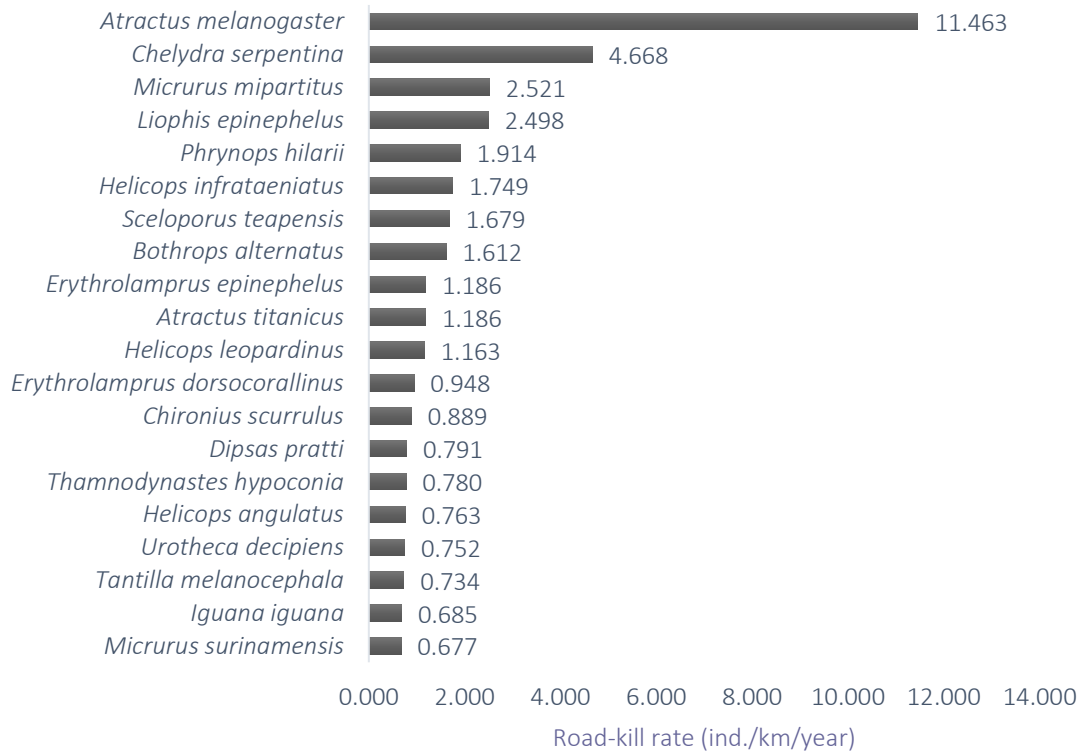
Appendix S5. Number of published studies per year regarding research topics from 1990 until 2017 in Latin America countries.

Appendix S6. Summary of amphibians road-kill rates in Latin America



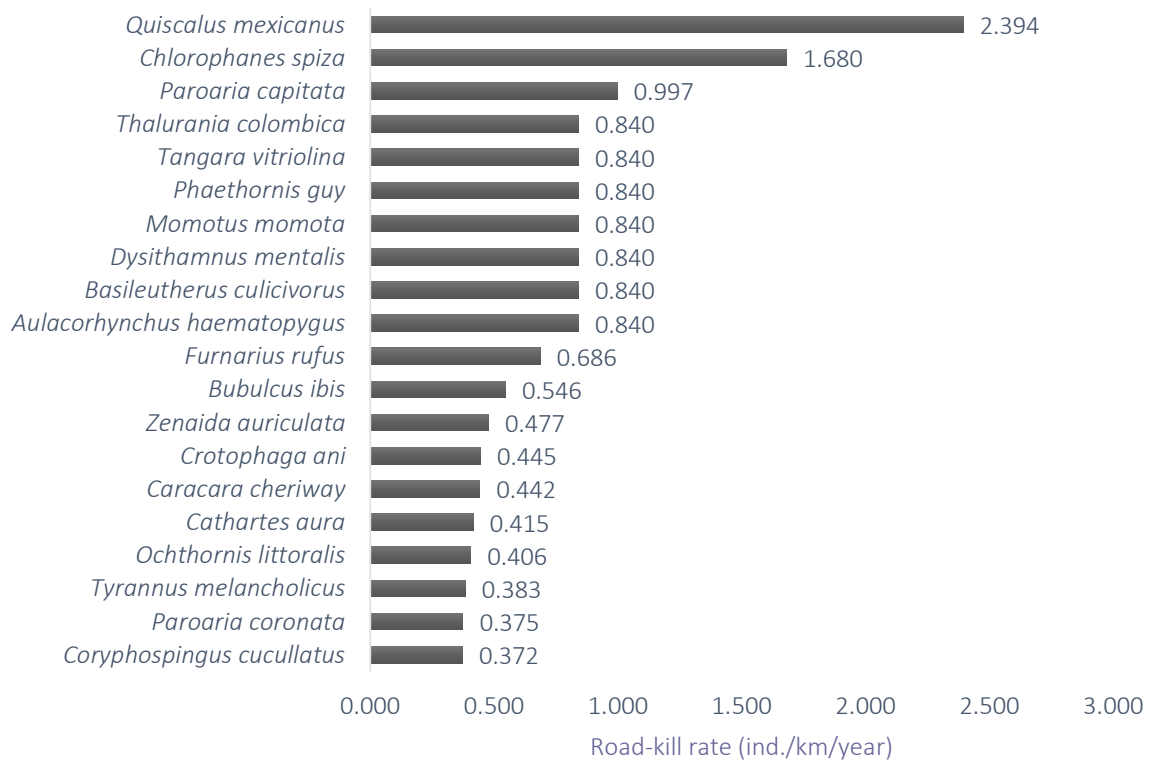
Appendix S6. Top 20 amphibians species with the higher mean of road-kill rates

Appendix S7. Summary of reptiles road-kill rates in Latin America.



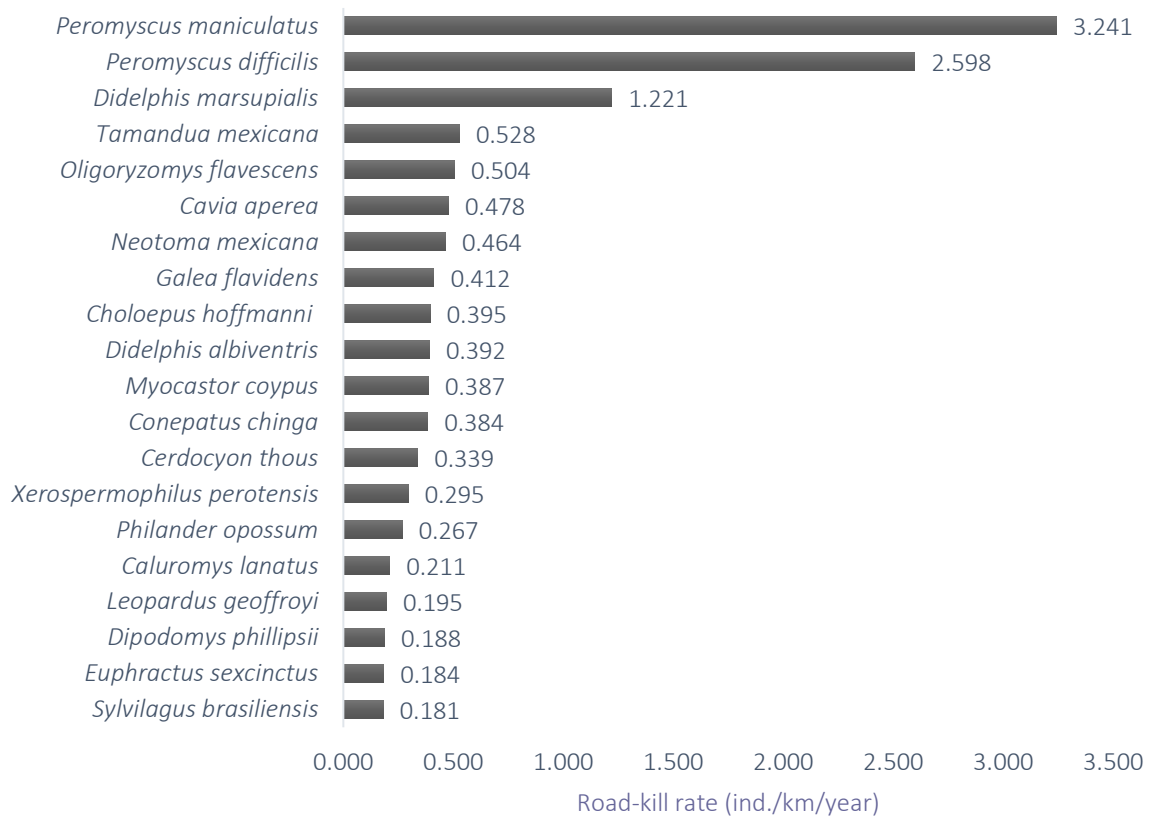
Appendix S7. Top 20 reptiles species with the higher mean of road-kill rates

Appendix S8. Summary of birds road-kill rates in Latin America.



Appendix S8. Top 20 birds species with the higher mean of road-kill rates

Appendix S9. Summary of mammals road-kill rates.



Appendix S9. Top 20 birds species with the higher mean of road-kill rates

ARTIGO 2– GIANT ANTEATER (*Myrmecophaga tridactyla*) CONSERVATION IN BRAZIL: ANALYSING THE RELATIVE EFFECTS OF FRAGMENTATION AND MORTALITY DUE TO ROADS.



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Giant anteater (*Myrmecophaga tridactyla*) conservation in Brazil: Analysing the relative effects of fragmentation and mortality due to roads

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ABSTRACT

Road networks can have serious ecological consequences for many species, mainly through habitat fragmentation and mortality due to collisions with vehicles. One example of a species impacted by roads is the giant anteater (*Myrmecophaga tridactyla*), currently listed as Vulnerable by IUCN. Here we analysed the relative effect of fragmentation and mortality due to roads on giant anteater populations and show the critical areas for their persistence in Brazil. We estimated minimum patch size and maximum road density to evaluate the impact of the road network and observed road-kills on this species. We explored different scenarios by varying values of dispersal capacity to estimate the minimum patch size, and also of population densities to estimate maximum road density for giant anteater persistence. Our findings indicated that the minimum patch size can be from 498 to 247 km² and the maximum road density can vary between 0.21 and 0.55 km/km² in pessimist and optimistic scenarios, respectively. In Brazil, habitat fragmentation seemed to have a major impact over giant anteater populations. Habitat fragmentation due to roads seemed to have a more negative effect than mortality due to collisions with vehicles. Critical areas for the species persistence can represent 32% of its range in the optimistic scenario with 18% of suitable patches below the minimum size and 0.1% above the maximum road density. This study provides insights and implications for road networks on giant anteater populations in Brazil and guidance on road density and patch size thresholds for land managers and road agencies charged with planning ecologically sustainable roads in Brazil.

1. Introduction

Habitat fragmentation constitutes a serious threat for mammals worldwide (Crooks et al., 2017) as 27% of mammals are at risk of extinction, and 40% of those at risk due to habitat loss (Schipper et al., 2008). Road networks are one of the primary anthropogenic contributors to habitat loss and fragmentation, and have been highlighted as primary drivers of biodiversity decline and species extinction (Rands et al., 2010; Crooks et al., 2017). Fragmentation can create adverse edge effects on the boundaries of habitat patches (Haddad et al., 2015), decrease landscape connectivity (Cushman, 2006; Jackson and Fahrig, 2011), act as a barrier for animal movement and gene flow (Chen and Koprowski, 2016), and reduce genetic diversity (Balkenhol et al., 2013), all of which can lead to local declines of populations (Bender et al., 1998; Gibbon et al., 2000).

Mortality from collisions with vehicles is a major negative effect of

roads on wildlife (Mumme et al., 2000; Gibbs and Shriver, 2002). In general, high mobility species have higher chances of encountering roads compared to less mobile species, and thus, are more affected by road-related mortality (Rytwinski and Fahrig, 2012). The loss of individuals by road mortality can have a strong effect on population viability especially for species with low reproductive rates (Ferrerias et al., 2001; Haines et al., 2006; Medici and Desbiez, 2012; Diniz and Brito, 2013).

The importance of road networks to species ecology (e.g. reproduction, behaviour, habitat use) has motivated work on minimum road density estimation. For example, wolves (*Canis lupus*) and pumas (*Puma concolor*) do not maintain breeding groups in areas with road densities > 0.6 km/km² (Thiel, 1985; Van Dyke et al., 1986). Basille et al. (2013) observed that Eurasian lynx (*Lynx lynx*) in southern Norway avoided using areas with a road density > 0.41 km/km². While these studies provided a road density threshold that can influence the

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species ecology, they did not evaluate the impact of road density on population viability. In fact, few studies have taken this next step. A Canadian study found a positive relation between risk of extinction of birds and mammals and a road density $> 0.3 \text{ km/km}^2$ (Anderson et al., 2011). Further, Ceia-Hasse et al. (2017) identified road density thresholds above which carnivore species cannot persist, for example: puma (0.77 km/km^2), jaguar (*Panthera onca*, 0.14 km/km^2), Darwin's fox (*Lycalopex fulvipes*, 0.11 km/km^2).

Population viability analysis has been commonly used to evaluate the impact of human activities on wildlife populations (Beaudry et al., 2008; Brook et al., 2000; Row et al., 2007). Understanding the causes of population declines and ultimately processes contributing to extinction is particularly important to strategically focus actions on populations most at risk (Cardillo et al., 2005; Pereira et al., 2010). Spatially-explicit population models have been extensively used in conservation planning as they combine population dynamic with the spatial structure of landscapes (Ceia-Hasse et al., 2017; Schumaker et al., 2014). Assessing the relative role of habitat fragmentation and additional mortality due to collision with vehicles on population viability is crucial to provide guidance to road managers and help implement more effective mitigation measures.

One species considered particularly vulnerable to roads is the giant anteater, *Myrmecophaga tridactyla* (Miranda et al., 2014). Classified as a Vulnerable species, giant anteater populations show a current decrease trend with records of extinctions in Central America and in the southern parts of its range (IUCN, 2018). According to Freitas et al. (2014), the species exhibits road avoidance when traffic is > 2600 vehicles/day, potentially increasing habitat fragmentation effects and population isolation. Furthermore, road-kill studies regularly detect this species, with road-kill rates up to 0.19 ind/km/year (Fischer, 1997). Although road mortality events are well documented in the literature (de Carvalho et al., 2014; de Souza et al., 2015; Ascensão et al., 2017), little is known about how road networks affect the viability of giant anteater populations (Diniz and Brito, 2013, 2015). Assessing road network effects on persistence of giant anteater populations will inform transportation planning decisions by the Brazilian government as they expand national road networks over the next 20 years (DNIT, 2013; Bager et al., 2015).

In this study, we analysed the effects of habitat fragmentation and mortality due to roads on giant anteater populations in Brazil. We estimated the minimum habitat patch size and maximum road density required for giant anteater persistence under six scenarios. Four scenarios to estimate minimum patch size using all combinations between low and high dispersal capacity with roads as barriers and without roads, and two scenarios to estimate maximum road density thresholds using the minimum and maximum giant anteater population densities. Our findings will identify which of the two road effects are more important for giant anteater persistence, thereby providing road density and patch size thresholds for land managers and road agencies responsible for planning ecologically sustainable road networks in Brazil.

2. Material and methods

2.1. Study area

Our study area comprises the giant anteater range in Brazil (IUCN, 2014), which represents almost 90% (7.5 million km^2) of the entire Brazilian territory (Fig. 1). Forested areas encompass almost 65% (4.8 million km^2) of the study area, followed by open and sparse vegetated areas (shrubs and grasslands) with 17% (1.3 million km^2), croplands 14% (1.1 million km^2), water bodies 1.5% ($109,000 \text{ km}^2$), herbaceous vegetation (aquatic or regularly flooded) with 1% ($77,000 \text{ km}^2$), and urban areas with 0.5% ($30,000 \text{ km}^2$) (GLC (Global Land Cover Share) et al., 2014). The study area covers all of the Brazilian biomes except Pampas in the extreme south. The Amazon, Pantanal and Cerrado biomes are totally represented, while the Caatinga

and Atlantic forest are partially represented where the species is considered possibly extinct in southern portions of the latter biome (Miranda et al., 2014).

The study area encompasses nearly 35% (~ 70 million inhabitants) of the Brazilian human population, where the most populated region is the southeast (IBGE, 2017). The mean paved road density \pm SD in the giant anteater range is $0.02 \pm 0.07 \text{ km/km}^2$, with the highest value in the south-southeast portions ($0.05 \pm 0.07 \text{ km/km}^2$) and the lowest in the northern region ($0.004 \pm 0.03 \text{ km/km}^2$).

2.2. Model parameterization

To model the impact of road networks on giant anteater population persistence we followed the approach of Borda-de-Água et al. (2011). The authors used the reaction-diffusion equation proposed by Skellam (1951) (Appendix information A) to derive two simple formulas (Eqs. (1) and (2)) where the main forces driving population dynamics are dispersal and population growth. The Borda-de-Água et al. (2011) approach assumes that a population occurs in a landscape composed of suitable habitat surrounded by unsuitable areas (e.g. roads) acting as a “sink-habitat” and will not persist when it reaches to $1/e$ (0.36) of its original size in a time given by the relaxation time equation (Appendix information B). The model is parameterized with the following population features: growth rate in suitable habitat (r_1), dispersal variance (σ^2), and survival on roads specified by a (negative) growth rate (r_0). Model output includes predicted minimum patch size below which populations cannot persist (P_{\min}) and maximum road density above which populations cannot persist (D_{\max}).

$$P_{\min} = \pi^2(\sigma^2/r_1) \quad (1)$$

$$D_{\max} = r_1/(r_1 + |r_0|) \quad (2)$$

We estimated the three anteater population parameters using data from the literature (Table 1). We calculated intrinsic population growth rate (r_1) with a simplified version of the Euler equation (Pereira and Daily, 2006; Appendix information C), using the following parameters obtained from Miranda (2004): fecundity (b), the interval between litters (years), age at the first birth (years), and a constant mortality rate (μ). To estimate dispersal variance (i.e. dispersal capacity; σ^2), we used the following equation provided by Pereira and Daily (2006):

$$\sigma^2 = (6\sigma_m/1.18)^2 * \mu,$$

where (μ) is a constant mortality rate assumed as the inverse of lifespan (Table 1), and (σ_m) the median dispersal distance derived from the equation suggested by Bissonette and Adair (2008): $\sigma_m = 7 * (\sqrt{\text{HR}})$, where HR is the median of home-ranges (Table 1).

Population growth rate on roads (r_0) is an approximation of the proportion of the population killed on roads and is always expressed as a negative rate. It was obtained using data on giant anteater population density and estimates of road-kill rates using the following equation:

$$r_0 = (N_{\text{killed}}/D) * \text{year}^{-1},$$

where N_{killed} is the number of individuals road-killed/km/year, D is the giant anteater population density expressed by the number of individuals/ km^2 (Table 1) divided by the road width (we assumed all roads were 10 m wide). Only the highest road-kill rate was used to run the model (Table 1).

2.2.1. Minimum patch size estimation

Calculation of P_{\min} requires estimation of population growth rate in suitable habitat. Studies on giant anteater habitat use revealed that four land cover types are suitable habitat for the species for foraging, resting and/or reproduction behaviours (Fig. 1): 1) Grasslands; 2) shrubland areas; 3) herbaceous vegetation, aquatic or regularly flooded and 4) forested areas (Bertassoni et al., 2017; Braga, 2010; Camilo-Alves and Mourão, 2006; Medri and Mourão, 2005). We then identified those land

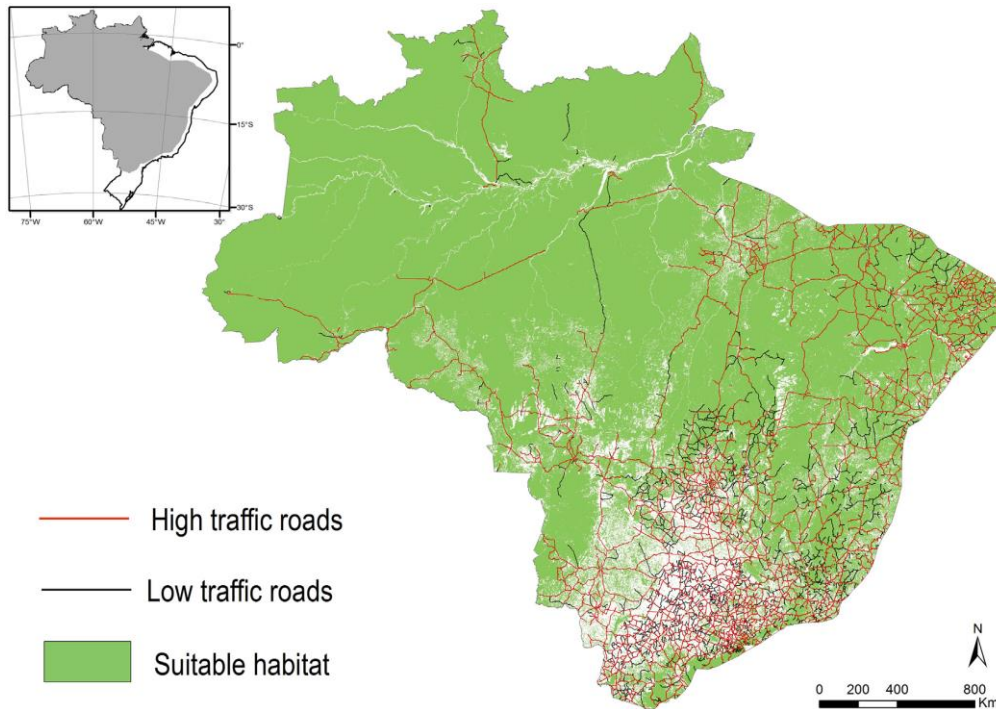


Fig. 1. Extent of suitable Giant anteater habitat in Brazil overlaid with high- and low-traffic volume roads.

cover types at the Global Land Cover spatial data with a resolution of 1×1 km (GLC (Global Land Cover Share) et al., 2014).

We used the Equation 1 (Eq. (1)) to estimate the minimum suitable habitat patch size (P_{min}) assuming: 1) an infinite carrying capacity ($k = \infty$), 2) considering explicitly the location of the roads, 3) exponential growth in suitable habitats and 4) that all individuals die when crossing a road ($r_0 = -\infty$) (Borda-de-Água et al., 2011; Appendix information A). The last assumption is supported by the fact that animals move at slow speed and by the observation of high road-kill rates (Fischer, 1997; Freitas et al., 2014).

2.2.2. Maximum road density estimation

The Equation 2 (Eq. (2)) was used to estimate maximum road

density (D_{max}) above which populations cannot persist, assuming 1) exponential population growth, 2) large dispersal ($\sigma^2 = \infty$), 3) ignoring the spatial location of the roads and considering only the road density, and 4) a large carrying capacity ($k = \infty$, so the term $1 - N(x, y, t) / K$ in the reaction-diffusion equation is not considered; Appendix information A) (Borda-de-Água et al., 2011).

For maximum road density, we created a grid square of 10×10 km² over the Brazilian giant anteater range and estimated the paved road density (km/km²) for each square (Open Street Map, Geofabrik, 2016). We then mapped the D_{max} values in each square of 10×10 km².

Table 1

Giant-anteater life history variables used for parameterization of minimum patch size (P_{min}) and maximum road density (D_{max}) models.

Parameters used to compute P_{min} and D_{max}	Life-history parameters ^a	Values	References
Population growth rate (r_1)	Fecundity (b)	0.5	Miranda (2004)
	Interval between litters (years)	0.7	Miranda (2004)
	Age at the first birth (years)	3	Miranda (2004)
	Constant mortality (μ)	0.04 (1/25)	Miranda (2004)
Dispersal variance (σ^2) ^b	Median home range size (km ² ; Min; Max) ^b	4.7; 9.5	Braga (2010), Medri (2002), Miranda (2004), Shaw et al. (1987) and Medri and Mourão (2005)
	Population growth rate on roads (r_0)	0.19	Fischer (1997)
	Population density (ind/km ² ; Min; Max)	0.15; 0.4	Desbiez and Medri (2010) and Miranda (2004)

^a Fecundity: the ratio of the number of female offspring regarding to the mean litter size (50% of mean litter size); litter interval: mean interval between litters; age at first birth: age at first reproductive event; mortality: constant mortality rate (inverse of mean lifespan (25 years)).

^b We estimated minimum and maximum dispersal variances (σ^2) for scenarios P1, P3 and P2, P4, respectively. We used the median of minimum and maximum home-range sizes found in the literature (varied between 2.7 and 11.9 km²). First, we calculated the median of all values found for giant anteater (8.11 km²) and then for the values below the median (2.74; 3.67; 5.7; 7.3 km²) we calculate the median of the minimum home range and for the values above the 8.11 km² (8.92; 9.1; 9.83; 11.9 km²) we calculated the median of the maximum home range.

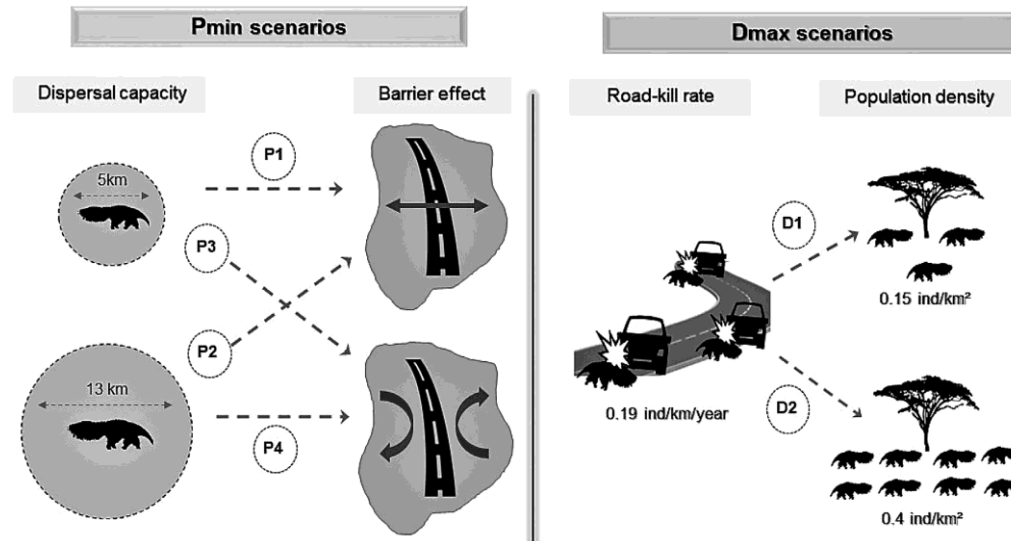


Fig. 2. Four scenarios to estimate minimum patch size (P_{\min}) (P_1 , P_2 , P_3 , P_4) and two scenarios to estimate Maximum Road Density (D_{\max}) (D_1 and D_2) for giant anteater.

2.3. Scenario development and critical areas

We examined the sensitivity of P_{\min} and D_{\max} to giant anteater life histories, behaviour, and model assumptions. To assess sensitivity of P_{\min} , we varied dispersal variance (σ^2) and barrier effect to create four scenarios: (P_1) limited dispersal capacity (4.7 km^2) and roads do not act as barriers, (P_2) high dispersal capacity (9.5 km^2) and roads are not barriers, (P_3) limited dispersal and roads are barriers, and (P_4) high dispersal and roads are barriers (Fig. 2). To simulate the no-barrier effect of roads (P_1 and P_2), we overlaid our estimated patch sizes with the giant anteater range, ignoring the presence of roads. To simulate roads as a barrier (P_3 and P_4), we intersected estimated patch size with high traffic roads (> 2600 vehicle/day, Freitas et al., 2014) and recalculated the area of each resulting patch in ArcGis. In the absence of official estimates of traffic intensity, we used Open Street Map (Geofabrik, 2016) and reclassified the “motorway”, “trunk” and “primary” roads as high traffic roads, and the “secondary” as low traffic roads (Fig. 1). To assess D_{\max} , we created two scenarios by combining the maximum road-kill rate (N_{killed} ; 0.19 ind./km/yr) with a low and high giant anteater population density estimate (D - 0.15 ind/km^2 and 0.4 ind/km^2 , respectively) (D_1 and D_2 scenarios, respectively) (Fig. 2).

We identified areas of low predicted population persistence (critical areas) by overlaying regions with values below the estimated minimum patch sizes (P_{\min}) and regions above the maximum road density (D_{\max}). We were specifically interested in two contrasting scenarios for critical areas: 1) an optimistic scenario that combines the better P_{\min} and D_{\max} scenarios ($P_1 + D_2$), and 2) a pessimistic scenario that combines the worst P_{\min} and D_{\max} ($P_4 + D_1$). We added unsuitable habitats at the sum of critical areas. Most of these areas are composed of anthropogenic landscapes representing poor quality habitats for species persistence (i.e. croplands, water bodies, and urban areas; see Section 2.1).

3. Results

3.1. Minimum patch size

Minimum patch size (P_{\min}) for giant anteater population persistence was 247 km^2 with minimum dispersal capacity and 498 km^2 with maximum dispersal capacity. Approximately 18% ($1.15 \text{ million km}^2$)

and 20% (1.3 million km^2) of suitable habitat was below the minimum patch size considering the scenarios without road barrier (P_1 and P_2 , respectively; Fig. A1). When we added roads as a barrier by splitting the patches (scenarios P_3 and P_4), 19% of suitable habitat (1.2 million km^2) and 21% ($1.35 \text{ million km}^2$) of the suitable habitats were below the minimum estimated patch size, respectively (Fig. A1). The fragmentation process due to roads as a barrier decreased the amount of suitable patches by 3% (~ 200 thousand km^2), considering the differences between P_1 and P_4 scenarios.

3.2. Maximum road density

Our results indicate that the maximum road density (D_{\max}) for giant anteater population persistence was 0.21 km/km^2 considering the lowest population density scenario (D_1), that represents 0.95% ($71,756 \text{ km}^2$) of the giant anteater range in Brazil. Considering the highest population density scenario (D_2), the maximum road density value was 0.55 km/km^2 , that represents 0.09% (6798 km^2) of the species range (Fig. A2). Most of the grid cells with D_{\max} are concentrated in southeast portion of the range (Fig. A2) with 5% of the cells having road density estimates above 0.21 km/km^2 followed by the South region with 3.5% with a road density above 0.21 km/km^2 .

3.3. Critical areas

The optimistic scenario ($P_1 + D_2$) showed that 32% of the giant anteater range in Brazil (2.4 million km^2) is under critical threats to their population's persistence, while 36% (2.7 million km^2) was critical considering the pessimistic scenario ($P_4 + D_1$) (Fig. 3). Other two combinations of critical areas (P_3 and D_2 ; P_2 and D_1 scenarios), showed that 33% (2.5 million km^2) and 34% (2.6 million km^2) of the species range is critical for persistence respectively (Figs. A3, A4). For all combinations, the central and southern species range was the most affected areas. This coincides with the highest human population density and predominantly agricultural areas on the Brazilian landscape. In particular, the southern region of the Cerrado biome is massively fragmented and scattered in small relatively undisturbed areas, unlike the northern region that contains extensive contiguous natural areas of Amazon and Cerrado biomes.

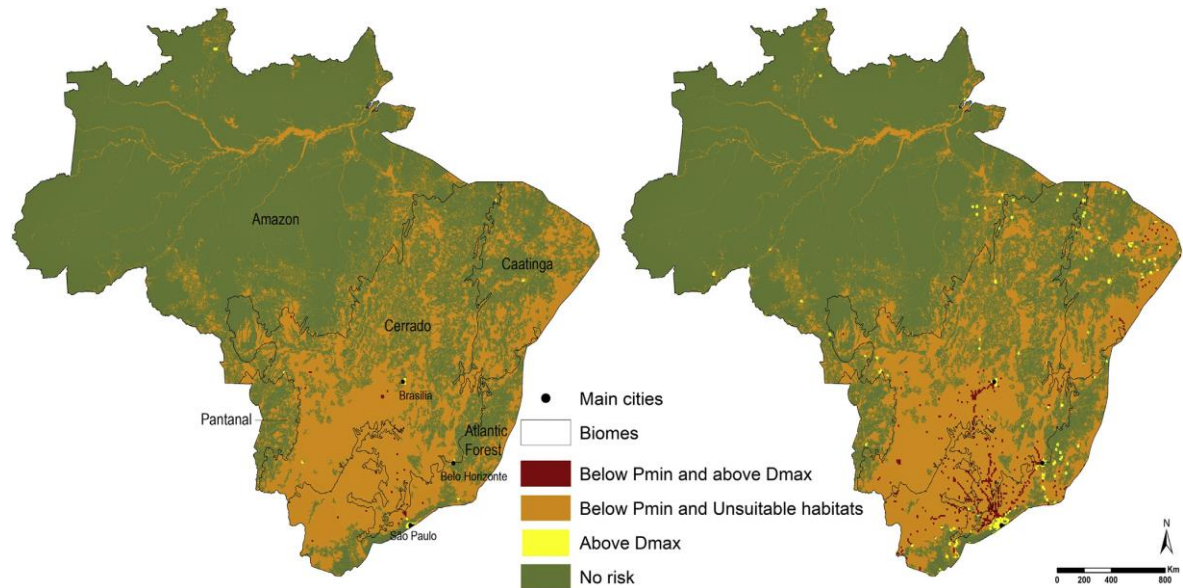


Fig. 3. Critical areas for giant anteater persistence considering the optimistic (left) and pessimistic scenario (right): P_{min} - minimum patch size; D_{max} - maximum road density; No risk - Suitable habitats above P_{min} and below D_{max} .

4. Discussion

Our findings show that habitat fragmentation has a greater impact on persistence of the giant anteater population in Brazil than the observed mortality due to vehicle collisions. Moreover, the effect of roads as a barrier to giant anteater movement, as shown by the modest change in P_{min} (200,000 km²), seems to be minimal compared to the actual habitat fragmentation due to other human activities. The large area requirements of giant anteaters and current low road density, which does not cause a high proportion of mortality may explain this finding. Our results show that there are few natural patches over 498 km² bisected by roads, suggesting that areas covered by the Brazilian road network are already strongly fragmented.

Giant anteaters are flagship species in the Cerrado. This biome harbours most of the giant anteater populations (Miranda et al., 2015) and is currently under serious threat due to habitat fragmentation. Around 46% of the native Cerrado vegetation was lost in the last 60 years (88 million ha), reaching a deforestation rate of 1% per year between 2002 and 2011 and is 2.5 times higher than in the Amazon (Strassburg et al., 2017). Studies showed that maintaining native closed vegetation is crucial for giant anteater habitat use and thermoregulation (Camilo-Alves and Mourão, 2006; Mourão and Medri, 2007) and females reduce their home ranges by avoiding using altered landscapes (e.g. roads and timber plantations) (Bertassoni et al., 2017). Although we did not find a high impact of roads on populations persistence, road network expansion in tropical regions is commonly associated with an increase in others human-related impacts, e.g. urban sprawl and settlements, deforestation, land conversions, hunting (Laurance and Arrea, 2017) that can exacerbate fragmentation effects of giant anteater populations, particularly in the Cerrado biome.

Habitat fragmentation due to anthropogenic impacts affects animal movements worldwide (Cosgrove et al., 2018), reducing one-third to one-half the extent of large-bodied mammals' movement in areas with higher human footprint (Tucker et al., 2018). The establishment of undisturbed natural areas (e.g. protected areas) are important for the conservation of threatened species (Rodrigues et al., 2004), and measures of habitat patch size, shape and connectivity are needed by

decision makers. Our study showed two values for the minimum patch size (247 and 498 km²) directly related to the species dispersal capacity according to the model of Borda-de-Água et al. (2011), which appears to be in line with other predicted values for large-bodied mammals in South America. For example, 116 km² for minimum patch size for northern muriqui (*Brachyteles hypoxanthus*) (Brito and De Viveiros Grelle, 2004), 230 km² for jaguars (Zanin et al., 2015), and 400 km² for carnivore species like the crab-eating fox, maned wolves (*Chrysocyon brachyurus*) and pumas (Ceia-Hasse et al., 2017). Despite the differences in the methods to estimate the minimum patch size, those species have similar demographic attributes such as late sexual maturity (e.g. nine years for northern muriqui females and three years for jaguars females) and small litter size (e.g. two cubs per brood for maned wolf and 2.7 for pumas).

The observed road-kills, per se, did not appear to impose serious risks for giant anteater persistence as only 1% of the Brazilian giant anteater range is above the maximum road density (0.21 km/km²). This fact may be explained by the low density of paved roads in the study area (0.02 ± 0.07 km/km²). However, the southeast region with its high road density may threaten the species persistence over the long-term. For example, São Paulo is the most populated and economically developed Brazilian state. Here, 13% of the giant anteater range has an average road density above 0.21 km/km². The species is classified regionally as Endangered in São Paulo state (Chiquito and Percequillo, 2009) where remnant Cerrado habitat represents only 1% of the original area and is currently surrounded by pastures, sugarcane fields and road networks (Durigan et al., 2007). Since the Brazilian government intends to increase the road network by adding 129,000 km in the next 20 years (DNIT, 2013; Teixeira et al., 2016) the new areas that exceed the maximum road density could seriously jeopardize giant anteaters persistence in the short or medium term.

Conservation opportunities occur mostly in the central-northern area that encompasses the Amazon Biome and some portions of Cerrado, and the western Pantanal. Most of these regions are roadless or undisturbed areas and still have a considerable amount of suitable patches for giant anteaters persistence according to our model. Undisturbed areas are important to maintain or increase the genetic

diversity (Miraldo et al., 2016), that has been observed more diverse to giant anteaters populations living in large protected areas (e.g. Canastra and Emas National Parks and Pantanal biome) when compared to fragmented areas (Clozato et al., 2017). The central and southern portion of the species range, that encompass mainly the Cerrado Biome and some portions of Atlantic Forest, is in more urgent need of conservation efforts as only 2% of the Cerrado is under legal protection (Klink and Machado, 2005). Conservation actions consist of increasing habitat connectivity (Diniz and Brito, 2015; Paviolo et al., 2016), protection of the remnant natural Cerrado habitats (Durigan et al., 2007) and creation of new protected areas.

This study is a first attempt to assess the implications of road networks on giant anteater populations at national scale. A similar approach has been used to assess global exposure of carnivores to roads using a spatially-explicit model and life-history traits (Ceia-Hasse et al., 2017). Demographic parameters were obtained exclusively from giant anteater studies avoiding generalizations using allometric relations (Pereira and Daily, 2006). Similarly, we classified suitable habitats based on the scientific literature rather than using just the species range. The effect of roads as barriers and road-related mortality on this species were analysed by exploring different scenarios of road-kill rates, population densities, dispersal capacity and road avoidance (Diniz and Brito, 2015, 2013). With this approach, we were able to make more precise and informed inferences regarding the limitations of the model.

Our results, however, should be interpreted with caution. For example, giant anteaters do not avoid low traffic volume roads (Freitas et al., 2014) and can use unpaved roads for dispersal (Vynne et al., 2011; Braga, 2010); we considered only paved roads in the model. Paved roads represent about 12% of the Brazilian road network (DNIT, 2013). With this model we may be underestimating the impact of roads on this species. On the other hand, we assumed the highest observed road-kill was constant over the entire study area and giant anteaters used the most suitable habitat. In this case, we may be overestimating the impact of roads on giant anteaters. Due to lack of information on population densities near roads, we used values from undisturbed areas (Desbiez and Medri, 2010; Miranda, 2004). Population densities can decrease near roads (e.g. Benítez-López et al., 2010; Torres et al., 2016), which can be another reason the impact of road networks in our study may be underestimated. Further, the demographic parameters used were the same over the species range, although studies indicated these can vary regionally (Medri, 2002; Miranda, 2004; Shaw et al., 1987) depending on the amount of suitable habitat available and level of fragmentation (Bertassoni et al., 2017; Desbiez and Medri, 2010; Braga, 2010).

The critical values for patch size and road density presented here can be useful for land managers and road planners charged with protected area conservation and minimizing transportation impacts. The minimum patch size presented in our model can be interpreted as a minimum reserve size to serve as a basis for creation of protected areas or increasing their size for giant anteater conservation. The location of critical areas can provide guidance for land managers to target efforts to promote wildlife corridors or stepping stones. Corridors and stepping stones can be a key strategy to maintain continuity between small habitat patches for giant anteater populations (Carvalho et al., 2009;

Vynne et al., 2011). This is important because currently protected areas, particularly on Cerrado biome, may not be large enough or effective in conserving and maintaining populations of large-bodied terrestrial mammals (Diniz and Brito, 2015; Eduardo et al., 2012). Moreover, the results presented here for the giant anteater are broadly informative about the risk for other threatened mammals that share similar life histories and high exposure to roads, such as maned wolf, puma (Ceia-Hasse et al., 2017), and Brazilian tapir (*Tapirus terrestris*) (Medici and Desbiez, 2012). Using critical road density threshold areas, transportation practitioners are then able identify where populations of giant anteaters would be impacted by future transportation infrastructure projects in Brazil, including the clearing of habitat for new roads and also prioritizing road segments for mitigation (Teixeira et al., 2016; Ciocheti et al., 2017). Future research on giant anteater life history parameters such as demography, habitat use, dispersal capacities and even road-kill rates will be valuable for refining and improving the model. This will be important for applying the model at a smaller, regional scale for informing transportation project planning and design. Studies that evaluate the genetic differentiation or gene flow (Balkenhol and Waits, 2009; Herrmann et al., 2017) on giant anteaters populations in roaded landscapes could also be an important means of validating the efficacy of our model.

5. Conclusions

Our results contribute to understanding the effects of the Brazilian road network on populations of giant anteater. We highlighted the negative effect of habitat fragmentation showing that large portions of giant anteater habitats are below the minimum patch size for sustaining viable populations. The proportion of areas above the maximum road density is low and concentrated on central-southern areas, which may increase given Brazil's ambitious plan to expand their transportation infrastructure network. The critical values for minimum patch size and maximum road density shown here can be important for transportation practitioners, land managers and decision makers responsible for mitigating transportation impacts and giant anteater conservation. It will also be useful for conservation non-governmental organizations to hold agencies accountable for using the best science available in planning transportation projects and protected areas in giant anteater range. Our framework can be applied at different spatial scales, e.g., examining regional differences in the role of road networks on giant anteater populations. We also encourage further research on the ecology and population biology of giant anteaters, which will help strengthen model inference capability.

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Appendix A. Reaction-diffusion equation

The population dynamics and dispersal given by (Skellam, 1951; Borda-de-Água et al., 2011):

$$\frac{\partial N(x,y,t)}{\partial t} = \begin{cases} \frac{\partial^2}{2} \nabla^2 N(x,y,t) + r1N(x,y,t) \left(1 - \frac{N(x,y,t)}{K}\right) & \text{if } (x,y) \notin \text{road} \\ \frac{\partial^2}{2} \nabla^2 N(x,y,t) + r0N(x,y,t) & \text{if } (x,y) \in \text{road} \end{cases}$$

where $N(x,y,t)$ is the population density on location (x,y) at time t , and K the carrying capacity; the symbol Δ^2 stands for $(\partial^2/\partial x^2 + \partial^2/\partial y^2)$. The first term on the right-hand side of the equation describes the changes in time and space of the density of a population on the basis of its dispersal

distance, assuming a Gaussian distribution. The second term on the top branch corresponds to logistic growth (outside roads) and n the bottom branch corresponds to population decay on roads (assumed by a negative growth rate where $r_0 < 0$) (Borda-de-Água et al., 2011). r_0 is interpreted here as an instantaneous mortality rate when an individual cross a road, measuring the loss of individuals from a specific population.

Appendix B. Relaxation time equation

We can determine the time to extinction of a population in a nonviable patch, that is, one with area, A , smaller than that of the minimum patch size, P_{\min} (Borda-de-Água et al., 2011). The relaxation time, t_{rel} , defined as the time a population takes to reach $1/e$ of its original size, because it obviates the need to define the density threshold below which the population is extinct, which can be different for different populations. Counting from the moment roads were built, $t = 0$, the time the population takes to reach $1/e$ of its original abundance is:

$$t_{rel} = \frac{1}{\frac{\delta^2}{2}k^2 - r_1},$$

$$\text{where } k^2 = \pi^2 / L^2 + \pi^2 / (\alpha L)^2.$$

Appendix C. Intrinsic population growth equation

The intrinsic population growth rate (r_1) follows the methodological approach made by Pereira and Daily (2006), that used a simplified version of Euler equation based on life history species-specific parameters that includes: Age at first breeding (β) (year); Inter-litter interval, (Δ) (year); Fecundity (b); and Constant mortality rate (μ). So, the implicit equation for (r_1) is then:

$$b \times \int_0^{\infty} \sum_{y=0}^{\infty} \delta(x - y\Delta - \beta) e^{-(r_1 + \mu)x} dx = 1,$$

where $\delta(x)$ is the birth pulse function, which has a value of $1/T$ for x between 0 and T and 0 elsewhere. This equation can be solved numerically to determine r_1 .

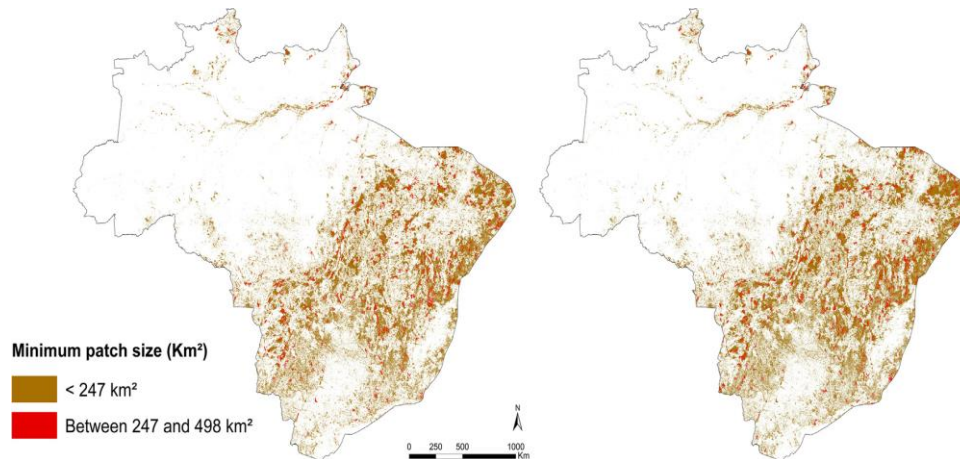


Fig. A1. Maps showing areas below the minimum patch size (P_{\min}) for each of the four scenarios. P_1 and P_2 scenarios (left) - Areas below 247 km^2 and areas between 247 and 498 km^2 (that represents the amount of area below the P_{\min} added by P_2 scenario) considering the low and high dispersal capacity respectively. P_3 and P_4 scenarios (right) - Areas below 247 km^2 and areas between 247 and 498 km^2 (that represents the amount of area below the P_{\min} added by P_4 scenario) considering the limited and high dispersal capacity when roads acting as a barrier.

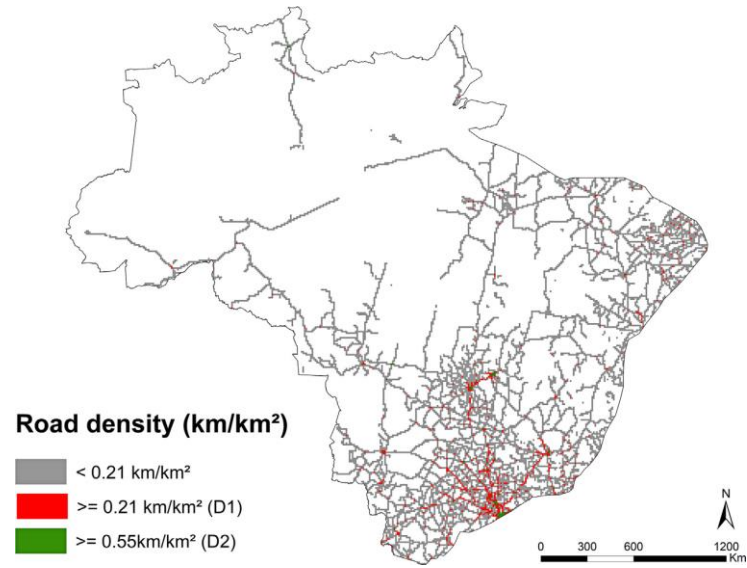


Fig. A2. Paved road density per 10 km × 10 km grid cell over Brazilian giant anteater range showing the results of the scenarios D1 and D2.

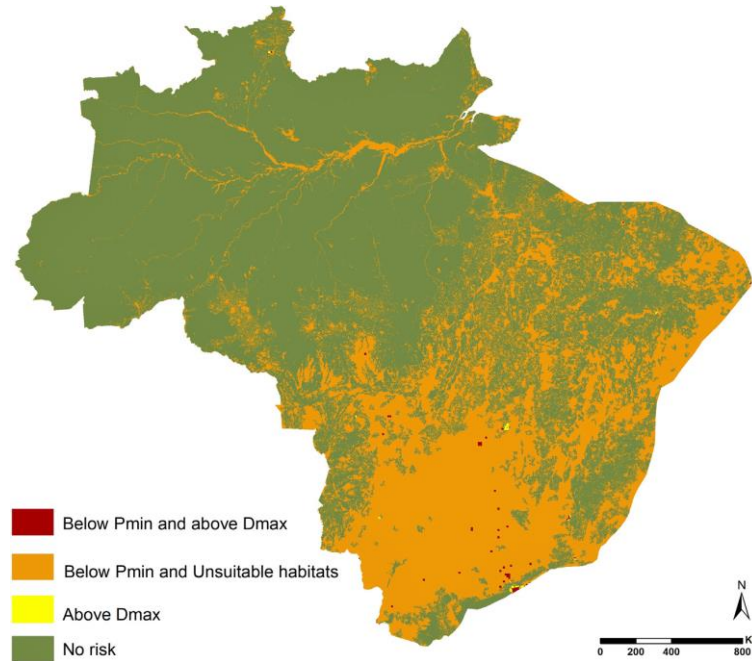


Fig. A3. Critical areas with combined D₂ and P₃ scenarios.

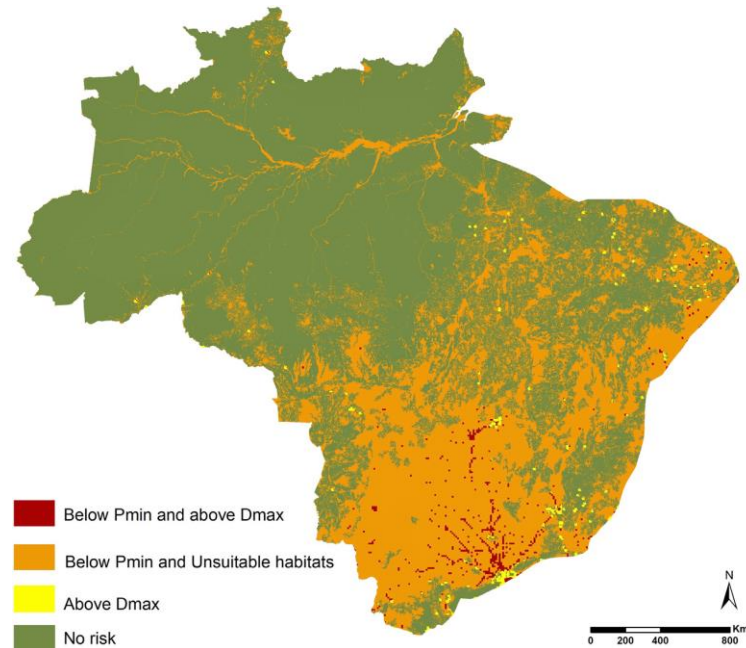


Fig. A4. Critical areas with combined D_1 and P_2 scenarios.

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