

Fine-scale ecological and economic assessment of climate change on olive in the Mediterranean Basin reveals winners and losers

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The Mediterranean Basin is a climate and biodiversity hot spot, and climate change threatens agro-ecosystems such as olive, an ancient drought-tolerant crop of considerable ecological and socio-economic importance. Climate change will impact the interactions of olive and the obligate olive fruit fly (*Bactrocera oleae*), and alter the economics of olive culture across the Basin. We estimate the effects of climate change on the dynamics and interaction of olive and the fly using physiologically based demographic models in a geographic information system context as driven by daily climate change scenario weather. A regional climate model that includes fine-scale representation of the effects of topography and the influence of the Mediterranean Sea on regional climate was used to scale the global climate data. The system model for olive/olive fly was used as the production function in our economic analysis, replacing the commonly used production-damage control function. Climate warming will affect olive yield and fly infestation levels across the Basin, resulting in economic winners and losers at the local and regional scales. At the local scale, profitability of small olive farms in many marginal areas of Europe and elsewhere in the Basin will decrease, leading to increased abandonment. These marginal farms are critical to conserving soil, maintaining biodiversity, and reducing fire risk in these areas. Our fine-scale bioeconomic approach provides a realistic prototype for assessing climate change impacts in other Mediterranean agro-ecosystems facing extant and new invasive pests.

ecological impacts | economic impacts | species interactions | *Olea europaea* | desertification

The Mediterranean Basin is a climate change (1) and biodiversity (2) hot spot where substantial warming is predicted in the next few decades (3). A 2 °C increase in average temperature is a widely used metric for assessing risks associated with global warming and as a policy reference, and this level of warming will likely occur in the Basin between 2030 and 2060 (4) with unknown biological and economic impact on major crop systems. Small differences in average climate warming are predicted for the Basin by A1B and higher greenhouse-gases (GHG) forcing scenarios within the 2050 time horizon (5).

A major agro-ecosystem in the Basin is olive (*Olea europaea* L.), an ancient ubiquitous crop of considerable socioeconomic importance (6). A detailed review of methods used to assess the impact of weather and of climate change on the olive system is given in *SI Appendix*. Most of the crop is used to produce olive oil, with Basin countries producing 97% of the world supply (International Olive Council, www.internationaloliveoil.org). Olive is a long-lived drought-tolerant species limited by frost and high temperatures, and to a lesser extent by low soil fertility and soil water (7). Temperatures <−8.3 °C damage olive and limit its northward distribution, whereas annual rainfall <350 mm y^{−1} limits its distribution in arid regions. Commercial olive production occurs in areas with >500 mm rainfall y^{−1} (*SI Appendix*, Fig. S1). Climate models predict increased temperatures for the Mediterranean Basin in response to increasing [GHG], but only

a weak negative trend in precipitation and no trend in evaporation are predicted (8). Growth rates in some plants will increase with [CO₂] within their thermal and moisture limits (7, 9), but the response for olive is unknown.

Mainstream assessments of climate change impact on agricultural and other ecosystems have omitted trophic interactions (10). Here we include the effects of climate change on olive phenology, growth, and yield, and on the dynamics and impact of its obligate major pest, the olive fruit fly [*Bactrocera oleae* (Rossi)]. The thermal limits of olive and the fly differ and affect the trophic interactions (11) crucial to estimating the bioeconomic impact of climate change in olive across the Basin.

Previous assessments of climate change on heterothermic species have used ecological niche modeling (ENM) approaches that characterize climatically a species' geographic range based on observed aggregate weather data in areas of its recorded distribution (for olive, see, e.g., ref. 12). ENMs are often used to predict the distribution of the species in response to climate change (13) despite serious deficiencies including the inability to include trophic interactions (14). Moreover, the implicit mathematical and ecological assumptions of ENMs hinder biological interpretation of the results (15).

As an alternative we use mechanistic physiologically based demographic models (PBDMs) that explicitly capture the weather-driven biology of interacting species (e.g., ref. 16) and predict the geographic distribution and relative abundance of species across time and space independent of species distribution records using extant and climate change weather scenarios as drivers for the system. The explicit assumptions in PBDMs have heuristic

Significance

Inability to determine reliably the direction and magnitude of change in natural and agro-ecosystems due to climate change poses considerable challenge to their management. Olive is an ancient ubiquitous crop having considerable ecological and socioeconomic importance in the Mediterranean Basin. We assess the ecological and economic impact of projected 1.8 °C climate warming on olive and its obligate pest, the olive fly. This level of climate warming will have varying impact on olive yield and fly infestation levels across the Mediterranean Basin, and result in economic winners and losers. The analysis predicts areas of decreased profitability that will increase the risk of abandonment of small farms in marginal areas critical to soil and biodiversity conservation and to fire risk reduction.

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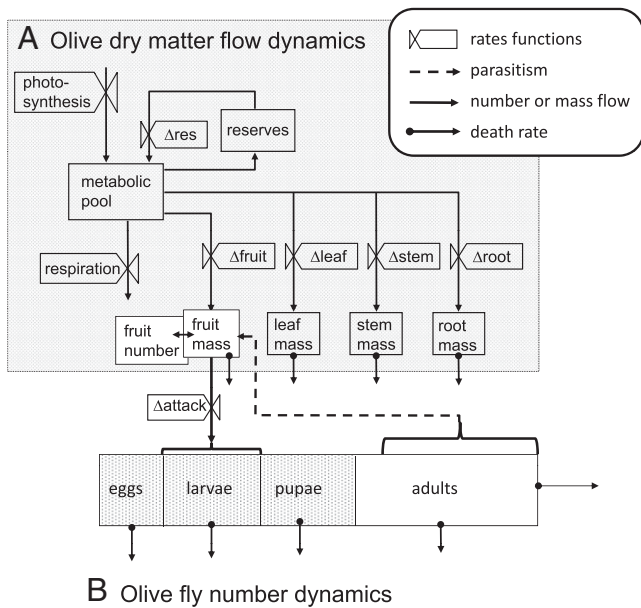


Fig. 1. Multitrophic biology of the olive/olive fly system. (A) Dry matter flow in olive and to olive fly, and (B) dynamics of olive fly number (see ref. 22).

value, and bridge the gap between long run field experiments used to study global change biology and the narrow methodological and conceptual bases of ENM approaches commonly used in macroecology (17, 18). These attributes are essential for assessing the bioeconomic consequences of climate warming on trophic interactions across large landscapes.

Linked PBDMs for olive and olive fly in a geographic information system (GIS) context (11) (Fig. 1 and *SI Appendix, Fig. S2*) are used to estimate the fine-scale ecological and economic impact of climate warming on olive yield and fly infestation across the Basin using baseline daily weather (scenario \bar{w}_0) simulated under observed [GHG], and the increasing [GHG] A1B emissions scenario ($\bar{w}_{+1.8}$) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) (*Materials and Methods* and *SI Appendix, SI Materials and Methods*).

Results

Distribution of Olive. The distribution of olive across the ecological zones of the Mediterranean Basin is illustrated in Fig. 2A with the area in each country planted to olive illustrated in *SI Appendix, Fig. S3* (FAOSTAT data, <http://faostat.fao.org/>). Inconsistencies were found between the different data sets used to develop a corrected distribution map for olive (see details on data sources in *SI Appendix, SI Materials and Methods*). For example, both Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations - Global Agro-Ecological Zones (FAO GAEZ) and M3-Crops data report a very small olive-growing area for the island of Sicily despite its 10% contribution to Italian production (ISTAT, www.istat.it/). The FAO GAEZ spatial data report olive throughout the Po valley in Northern Italy where olive is sparse and with posited yields higher than in the world-leading province of Andalucía, Spain. The distributions of olive in Sicily and the Po Valley were corrected using Corine satellite-based land cover and raw yield data from FAO Agro-MAPS. Furthermore, M3-Crops data show olive plantings in northern Egypt that FAO GAEZ does not report, and both FAO GAEZ and M3-Crops report olive in the central highlands of Turkey where it is largely absent (19).

Our distribution map for olive in the Mediterranean Basin shows that 75% of the cultivation falls within the subtropical dry forest ecological zone (Sdfz) defined by the presence of olive and *Quercus ilex* L (20), 16% falls within the subtropical steppe zone—a transitional zone that separates Sdfz from the Sahara

Desert, and the remaining 9% occurs in marginal ecological zones including colder temperate zones and subtropical mountain ranges, or in deserts under irrigation (Fig. 2B).

Simulation of Olive and Fly Dynamics. *Olive.* Using weather scenarios (\bar{w}_0 and $\bar{w}_{+1.8}$), the model predicts many aspects of olive and fly dynamics (11) (Fig. 3). As an example, the 10-y dynamics of olive fruit production and olive fly infestation rates are illustrated for Villacidro in the southern part of the island of Sardinia, Italy (latitude: 39.428°N; longitude: 8.881°E) during 1991–2000 (Fig. 3A) (21). The fruit and fly dynamics for 1991 are expanded in the stippled area in Fig. 3B–D to show the detailed weather-driven biology computed on a daily basis at all 995 locations across the Mediterranean Basin. The model predicts the dynamics of adult reproductive quiescence and populations (Fig. 3C) and of fly immature stage populations in attacked fruit (Fig. 3D).

Bloom date is a major factor determining season length and potential yield (7) that the model accurately captured for California, Italy, and Sardinia (11, 21) (*SI Appendix, SI Discussion*). The predictions for the Basin using \bar{w}_0 are consistent with field observations (22) (*SI Appendix, Fig. S4*), but using $\bar{w}_{+1.8}$, bloom dates are predicted to occur earlier across the Basin, being up to 18 d earlier in areas of the Iberian Peninsula, North Africa, and Greece (Fig. 4A). Mean flowering dates and SD for \bar{w}_0 and $\bar{w}_{+1.8}$ scenarios are summarized in *SI Appendix, Figs. S4 and S5*, respectively.

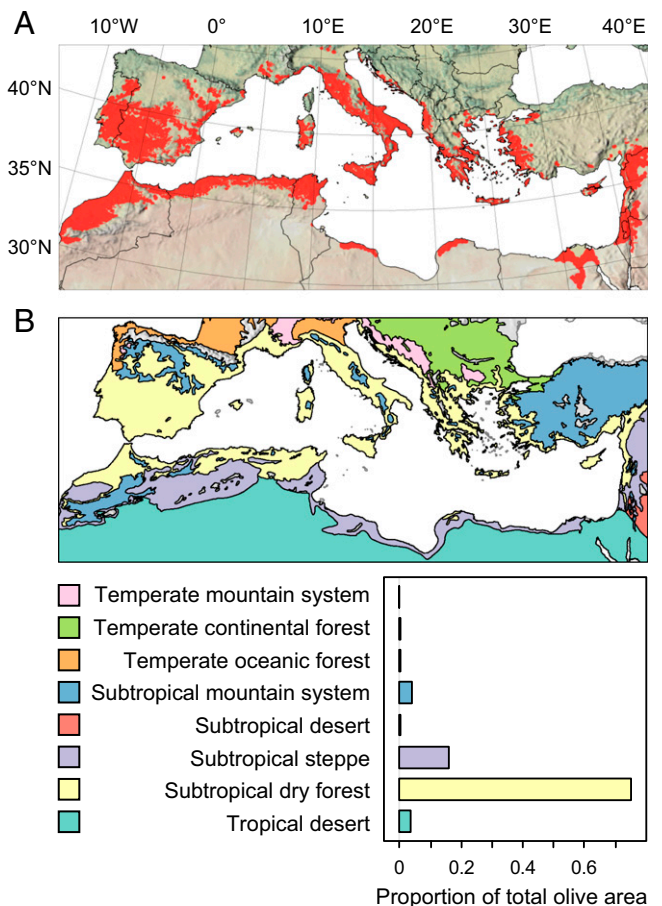


Fig. 2. Geographic distribution of olive as: (A) the observed distribution of olive in the Mediterranean Basin (red) superimposed on a shaded relief map with coloring based on satellite-derived land cover from Natural Earth (<http://www.naturalearthdata.com/>); and (B) map of FAO ecological zones (20) included in the domain of the analysis, with the histogram showing the proportion of the total olive area in A within the ecological zones. Color palette in B is from <http://colorbrewer2.org/>.

$$\Delta Y = Y_{obs} \cdot Y_{index} \quad [2]$$

Furthermore, because most of the olive harvest is used for oil production, ΔY is converted to liters of oil by multiplying by a country-specific factor (θ) based on FAO data for the year 2000 (<http://faostat.fao.org/>).

To compute the net change in profit ($\Delta \Pi$) (Eq. 3), we must include both the change in quality and price with changes in % infestation levels (l), and control costs.

$$\Delta \Pi = \theta \cdot \Delta Y \cdot \hat{p}_0(l) - \Delta n \cdot p_x \quad [3]$$

The price of oil (p_0) declines with l [i.e., $\hat{p}_0(l) = p_0 e^{-\alpha l}$], where $\alpha = 0.5$ decreases the price to 40% at $l = 100\%$ (42). The cost of pest control is $\Delta n \cdot p_x$, where p_x (50€ ha⁻¹) is the cost per application of insecticide (43), and Δn is the change in the number of applications with l . The number of applications at a location increases linearly from an infestation threshold of $l_{th} = 4\%$ (44) to a maximum $n = 7$ at $l_{max} = 85\%$ (45). The net change in the number of applications (Δn) (Eq. 4) is computed as a function of the net change in infestation level with climate warming (i.e., $\Delta l = l_{+1.8} - l_0$) (e.g., ref. 43).

$$\Delta n = 7 \cdot \left(\frac{\Delta l}{l_{max} - l_{th}} \right) \quad [4]$$

Note that if Δl is positive, $\Delta n \cdot p_x$ increases and $\hat{p}_0(l)$ decreases, and if negative the reverse occurs. Furthermore, key to understanding the results of

the analysis is that olive has a higher range of tolerance to temperature than olive fly (see figure 1 in ref. 11), and the price penalty on infested olives used for oil production is relatively low.

The model ignores changes in market-induced prices that may occur as a result of climate-driven spatial and temporal shifts in olive production. Currently, supply effects mostly occur at the country level, whereas the quality of oil remains an important determinant of oil price across the Basin (see http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/olive-oil/economic-analysis_en.pdf and *SI Appendix, SI Discussion*). Agricultural policy has influenced olive oil production and price across the Basin, and especially via substantial subsidies in the EU briefly outlined in *SI Appendix, SI Discussion*.

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