

# Current conservation status and potential distribution under climate change of *Michelia lacei*, a Plant Species with Extremely Small Populations in Yunnan, China

YANG LIU†<sup>1,2</sup> , LEI CAI†<sup>1</sup> and WEIBANG SUN\*<sup>1</sup> 

**Abstract** *Michelia lacei* W.W. Smith, a magnolia species categorized as Endangered on the IUCN Red List, is subject to severe disturbance. We carried out field surveys and a review of literature records to present a detailed description of the current status of *M. lacei*. We then predicted the potential distribution of *M. lacei* under different climatic scenarios based on 60 occurrence records (53 recorded during our field surveys and 7 earlier records) and 19 bioclimatic variables from the WorldClim database. We selected 18 locations and four bioclimatic variables for model training. Temperature seasonality and annual temperature range were the most influential variables for predicting the potential distribution of the species. We used *MaxEnt* to model distribution under current climate conditions and four Shared Socioeconomic Pathway scenarios in four future time periods to determine the effects of future climate change on the habitat suitable for the species. We predict areas of moderately and highly suitable habitat will gradually decrease over time. We recommend increased in situ and ex situ conservation efforts to mitigate this habitat decline and protect populations of *M. lacei*.

**Keywords** China, climate change, conservation status, ex situ conservation, *MaxEnt*, maximum entropy model, *Michelia lacei*, Plant Species with Extremely Small Populations

The supplementary material for this article is available at [doi.org/10.1017/S0030605323001783](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0030605323001783)

## Introduction

Global climate change is one of the greatest challenges (Bellard et al., 2012; Franchini & Mannucci, 2015; Malhi et al., 2020). The annual growth rate of global greenhouse gas emissions during 2010–2019 was lower than that

during 2000–2009, but overall global carbon emissions are still increasing (IPCC, 2022). If current trends continue, we will face significant climatic, environmental and social risks (Fischer et al., 2013). Climate change affects the survival and distribution of species (Jiang, 2013; Mkala et al., 2022). Changes in global climate can cause the displacement or loss of suitable habitats for some threatened species, leading to a decrease in population numbers and the extinction of species (Cai et al., 2022; Iseli et al., 2023).

Potential distribution areas of species under different scenarios can be predicted using species distribution models (Klanderud & Birks, 2003; Qin et al., 2020; Cai et al., 2022). The most common models include the bioclimatic analysis and prediction system model (BIOCLIM; Busby, 1991), the maximum entropy model (*MaxEnt*; Phillips et al., 2006), the generalized linear model (Guisan et al., 2002), the genetic algorithm for rule-set prediction model (GARP; Sanchez-Flores, 2007) and the DOMAIN model (Carpenter et al., 1993). Although such models can produce species distribution maps, they are limited by the quality of data and so should be accompanied by field surveys to increase the accuracy of predictions (Abdelal et al., 2019; Mkala et al., 2022).

Compared to other species distribution models, *MaxEnt* is considered to have a relatively high predictive accuracy for species with small sample sizes, small geographical ranges and limited environmental tolerance (Phillips & Dudik, 2008), and has been widely used to predict the ranges of rare and threatened species with few distribution data and narrow distributions (Hernandez et al., 2006; Liu et al., 2022). Predicting the potential distributions of threatened species can help scientists and policymakers understand the effects of environmental change on species survival and can inform the planning of appropriate strategies to reduce the risk of extinction (Lawler et al., 2009; Kamilar & Beaudrot, 2013).

*Michelia lacei* W.W. Smith is an evergreen tree in the Magnoliaceae family, categorized as a Plant Species with Extremely Small Populations because of its narrow distribution, small number of individuals, the continuing impact of anthropogenic disturbance across its habitat and its high risk of extinction (Sun et al., 2019a, 2019b). The species was categorized as Critically Endangered on the China Species Red List in 2004 (Wang & Xie, 2004), but was re-categorized as Endangered in 2015 following additional field

†Contributed equally

\*Corresponding author: [wbsun@mail.kib.ac.cn](mailto:wbsun@mail.kib.ac.cn)

<sup>1</sup>Yunnan Key Laboratory for Integrative Conservation of Plant Species with Extremely Small Populations, and Key Laboratory for Plant Diversity and Biogeography of East Asia, Kunming Institute of Botany, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Kunming, Yunnan, China

<sup>2</sup>University of Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing, China

Received 27 May 2023. Revision requested 7 September 2023.

Accepted 13 November 2023.

surveys and the discovery of several new populations in China (Rivers & Wheeler, 2015; Rivers et al., 2016; Cai et al., 2017). Although genomic data can contribute to the knowledge and conservation of this threatened species at the genetic level (Cai et al., 2024; Liu et al., 2024), it is also crucial to understand the threats it faces and its conservation status and potential distribution under current and future climate scenarios. Here we summarize the conservation status of *M. lacei* in China, predict its potential distribution under current and future climate scenarios and discuss strategies for its conservation and management, especially with respect to the impacts of climate change.

## Study area

Yunnan Province in south-west China covers an area of 394,100 km<sup>2</sup>, 4% of the total area of the country. *Michelia lacei* is mainly distributed in Yunnan Province, but is also found in northern Viet Nam and Myanmar. It is native to subtropical monsoon evergreen broad-leaved forests at altitudes of 1,000–1,800 m (Liu, 2002; Xia et al., 2008). Since 2014, we have extensively surveyed Yunnan Province every 12-months, finding a small number of *M. lacei* populations in south-east Yunnan (Fig. 1). In the field, *Parakmeria yunnanensis* Hu, *Cornus hongkongensis tonkinensis* (W.P. Fang) Q.Y. Xiang, *Magnolia balansae* (A.DC.) Dandy, *Vernicia fordii* (Hemsl.) Airy Shaw and *Alsophila costularis* Baker are the main species associated with *M. lacei*.

## Methods

Investigation of conservation status and species distribution data

To gain a comprehensive understanding of the current conservation status of *M. lacei* in China, in September 2022 we

asked local forestry bureaus and residents near its known distribution sites if they had seen any individuals of *M. lacei*, and, if so, how many. We subsequently surveyed all locations in which the plant had been seen or recorded in the wild. For each individual located, we measured its height and diameter at breast height. Where height was < 1.3 m or diameter at breast height was < 2 cm we recorded the plant as a seedling (Tang et al., 2011; Han et al., 2019; Tao et al., 2020). We documented geographical coordinates (using a GPS), fruiting status (yes/no), growth status (i.e. whether or not we observed pests and diseases, as these can destroy plant tissue, impacting development), companion species and whether the plant was in a protected area. We calculated and recorded the extent of occurrence and area of occupancy of *M. lacei* in China using the package *ConR* (Dauby et al., 2017) in *R 4.0.3* (R Core Team, 2020).

In addition to our field surveys, in October 2022 we examined literature and herbarium records (FRPS, 2019; CNKI, 2023; CVH, 2023; POWO, 2023). In total, we obtained 60 records for *M. lacei* in China (53 from our surveys and seven earlier records). We mapped these data using *ArcGIS 10.8* (Esri, USA), retaining only one record per km<sup>2</sup> to eliminate spatial bias (Rather et al., 2021; Mkala et al., 2022), resulting in 18 locations of *M. lacei* for further analysis. We also investigated the ex situ conservation of *M. lacei* in Chinese botanical gardens by collating information on the institutions where it is cultivated, and data such as the growth, flowering and fruiting status of cultivated plants.

## Bioclimatic variables

To predict the potential present and future distribution of *M. lacei*, we used the 19 bioclimatic variables, with a resolution of 2.5 arcminutes, provided by WorldClim 2.1 (Fick & Hijmans, 2017). We used mean climate data

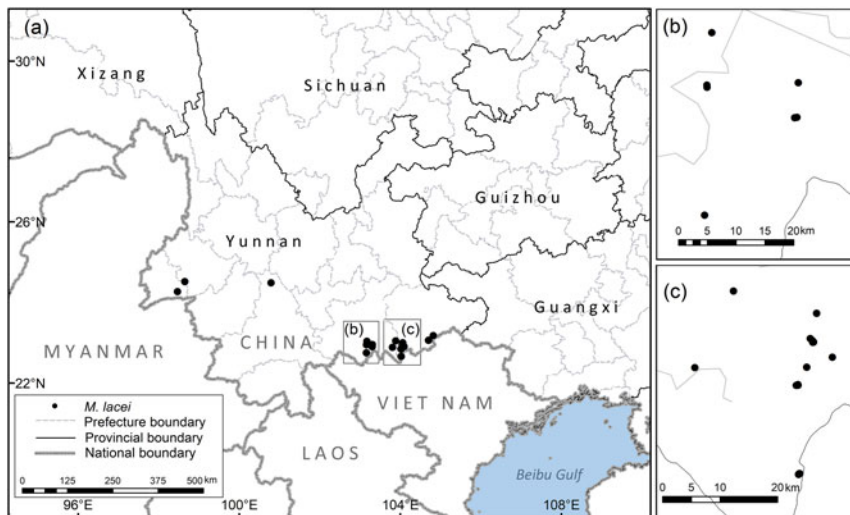


FIG. 1 Locations of *Michelia lacei* individuals recorded during this study.

for 1970–2000 to predict current distribution and for 2021–2040, 2041–2060, 2061–2080 and 2081–2100 to predict future distribution. Shared Socioeconomic Pathways can be used to generate different climate change scenarios to assess the impacts of policies and actions on future climate change (Weng et al., 2020). We modelled each time period using four Pathways (SSP126, SSP245, SSP370, SSP585) under the second-generation Earth system model of the Centre National de Recherches Météorologiques (CNRM-ESM 2-1; Fick & Hijmans, 2017). We chose this model, which was developed for the sixth phase of the Coupled Model Intercomparison Project, because in a number of experiments it has shown a more significant response to the external environment than other models as it includes interactive Earth system components such as the carbon cycle, aerosols and atmospheric chemistry (Seferian et al., 2019). The four Shared Socioeconomic Pathways represent the net radiative forcings at the end of 2100 (2.6, 4.5, 7.0 and 8.5 W/m<sup>2</sup>) and simulate global warming trends in the absence of climate policy intervention. As the forcing value increases, so does the radiative capacity, representing higher levels of greenhouse gas emissions that therefore have a stronger impact on environmental changes (Fick & Hijmans, 2017; O'Neill et al., 2017; Riahi et al., 2017).

To reduce analytical interference from strong correlations between the bioclimatic variables, we extracted the 19 bioclimatic variables for each of the 18 locations of *M. lacei*. We ran correlation analyses of these data in R, and we analysed the contributions of the 19 bioclimatic variables to the species distribution using *MaxEnt* 3.4.3 (Phillips et al., 2006). When screening bioclimatic variables we first retained that with the largest contribution, and then removed variables that had a correlation of  $r > 0.8$  with the variable retained, and then retained the remaining variables. We repeated this step until no more variables could be removed. Finally, we used the remaining variables to predict the potential distribution area of *M. lacei* (Dormann et al., 2013; Yi et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2018).

### Model description

We divided the species location information into two subsets and used 75% of the location information as training data to build the distribution model. We used the remaining 25% to validate the model, with 10 repetitions and the replicate run type set to bootstrap (Efron, 1979; Khanal et al., 2022; Soilhi et al., 2022). We set the output format to cloglog, which estimates the probability of presence between 0 and 1, as recent studies have suggested that cloglog has greater theoretical support than one of the alternative output formats, logistic (Phillips et al., 2017). We left the remaining parameters as the *MaxEnt* 3.4.3 defaults (Phillips & Dudik, 2008). To demonstrate the reliability of the generated model, we calculated the area under the curve (AUC)

of the receiver operating characteristic curve (ROC). The AUC value is related to the accuracy of the model, and the closer the AUC value is to 1, the better the test data fit the model (Swets, 1988; Coban et al., 2020).

### Suitable habitat classification and distribution changes

We used *SDM\_Toolbox 2.5* (Brown et al., 2017) in *ArcGIS* to convert the resulting *MaxEnt* ASCII format files to raster files, and created a map of the potential distribution of *M. lacei*. Cloglog values range from 0 to 1, with 1 being areas most suitable for the species. We then used the Reclassify (Spatial Analyst) tool in *ArcGIS* (Brown et al., 2017) to categorize habitat into four grades based on previous studies of native Chinese species: unsuitable areas (0–0.05), areas of low suitability (0.06–0.33), moderately suitable areas (0.34–0.66) and highly suitable areas (0.67–1.00; He & Zhou, 2011; Gong et al., 2022). Finally, we calculated the area and proportion of each habitat suitability class using *ArcGIS*.

To analyse changes in potential distribution over time, we examined only those areas with suitable habitat (i.e. with a cloglog value  $> 0.05$ ). We used *SDM\_Toolbox* to compare potential distribution in each future period with the current potential area of distribution (Brown et al., 2017), identifying areas that will become more suitable, less suitable or will be unchanged. We viewed this output in *ArcGIS* and graded habitat as: –1 (the future habitat is more suitable than it is at present), 0 (the habitat is suitable neither in the future nor at present), 1 (the habitat is suitable during both periods) or 2 (the habitat is suitable at present but will not be suitable in the future; Mkala et al., 2022).

## Results

### Population status survey

During our surveys we recorded 10 populations and 53 individuals of *M. lacei*, comprising 50 mature individuals and three seedlings in five counties. Seven individuals were found in Daweishan National Nature Reserve, the remainder were outside protected areas, in villages, along roadsides, on farmland and elsewhere. The extent of occurrence and area of occupancy of *M. lacei* in China are 3,881 km<sup>2</sup> and 52 km<sup>2</sup>, respectively.

The height of 90% of the *M. lacei* individuals was 6–30 m (Fig. 2a); 85% had a diameter at breast height of 11–90 cm (Fig. 2b). One tree had a diameter at breast height of 192 cm, which is the largest *M. lacei* individual on record (Plate 1a).

Five institutions run ex situ conservation programmes for *M. lacei* in China: Kunming Botanical Garden, South China Botanical Garden, Wuhan Botanic Garden, Guilin Botanical Garden and Fairy Lake Botanical Garden (Xian

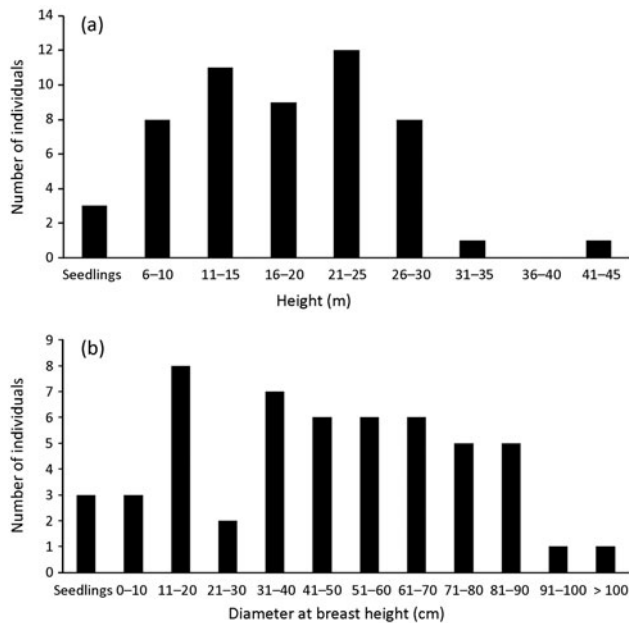


FIG. 2 The (a) height and (b) diameter at breast height of all 53 individuals of *M. lacei* found during our surveys in China.

Hu; Sun et al., 2019a, 2019b; Linsky & Sun, 2022). In 1987, Kunming Botanical Garden planted 12 *M. lacei* individuals, all of which have grown into trees > 10 m tall and are in good condition. Four have flowered, and two have also fruited.

#### Model performance and the importance of environmental variables

The AUC values of the ROC curve were > 0.9 in all predicted future periods, indicating that the simulation of the area potentially suitable for *M. lacei* is credible (Phillips



PLATE 1 (a) The largest *Michelia lacei* individual on record, found during our surveys in Yunnan Province, China, in 2022, and (b) flower bud, (c) flower and (d) fruit.

et al., 2006). Following examination of the correlation coefficients and the contributions of the 19 bioclimatic variables, we selected four to predict the potential distribution of the species (Fig. 3): temperature seasonality (Bio\_4), minimum temperature of coldest month (Bio\_6), temperature annual range (Bio\_7) and precipitation of wettest month (Bio\_13). In the *MaxEnt* simulation the two highest-contributing factors were Bio\_4 (57.1%) and Bio\_7 (19.1%), which together accounted for 76.2% of the total contribution (Table 1).

#### Potential distribution under current and future climate conditions

In addition to the known current distribution in Yunnan, our model suggests areas of suitable habitat in Xizang, Sichuan, Guizhou, Guangxi, Guangdong, Fujian, Taiwan and Hainan (Fig. 4a). However, during our literature searches, we found no record of *M. lacei* in China beyond Yunnan Province. Within Yunnan, predicted suitable habitat under current conditions is mainly in the west and south-east (Fig. 4b). In western Yunnan, the moderately and highly suitable areas are predominantly in Dehong, and in south-eastern Yunnan these areas are predominantly in Wenshan and Honghe. Of the potentially suitable habitat in Yunnan, 59% ( $19.38 \times 10^5$  km<sup>2</sup>) had only low suitability, 33% ( $10.87 \times 10^5$  km<sup>2</sup>) was moderately suitable and 8% ( $2.70 \times 10^5$  km<sup>2</sup>) was highly suitable. Of the total habitat in Yunnan Province, 16% is unsuitable for *M. lacei* ( $6.46 \times 10^5$  km<sup>2</sup>; Table 2).

For each future period we predicted habitat suitability in Yunnan for the four Shared Socioeconomic Pathways (Fig. 5; Table 2). The largest areas of unsuitable and low suitability habitat were both predicted under the worst-case scenario (SSP585), with unsuitable habitat of  $8.66 \times 10^5$  km<sup>2</sup> predicted during 2061–2080, and low suitability habitat of  $28.06 \times 10^5$  km<sup>2</sup> predicted during 2081–2100. We predicted areas of moderately and highly suitable habitat to be greatest under the SSP126 scenario during 2041–2060, at  $18.05 \times 10^5$  and  $2.81 \times 10^5$  km<sup>2</sup>, respectively.

Figure 6 shows the changes in the future potential distribution of *M. lacei* compared to that under current conditions, showing areas of expansion, areas with no change in suitability (the areas are suitable neither in the future nor at present), areas of stability (the areas are suitable during both periods) and areas of contraction. The highest increase in area of suitable habitat is  $1.58 \times 10^5$  km<sup>2</sup> under SSP585 during 2081–2100. Under the SSP585 scenario during 2061–2080 the area suitable for *M. lacei* decreased by  $2.62 \times 10^5$  km<sup>2</sup> compared to the present. Based on current and future climate data, we predict that as climate conditions change in the future an increasingly large area will be transformed into habitat with low suitability for *M. lacei*.

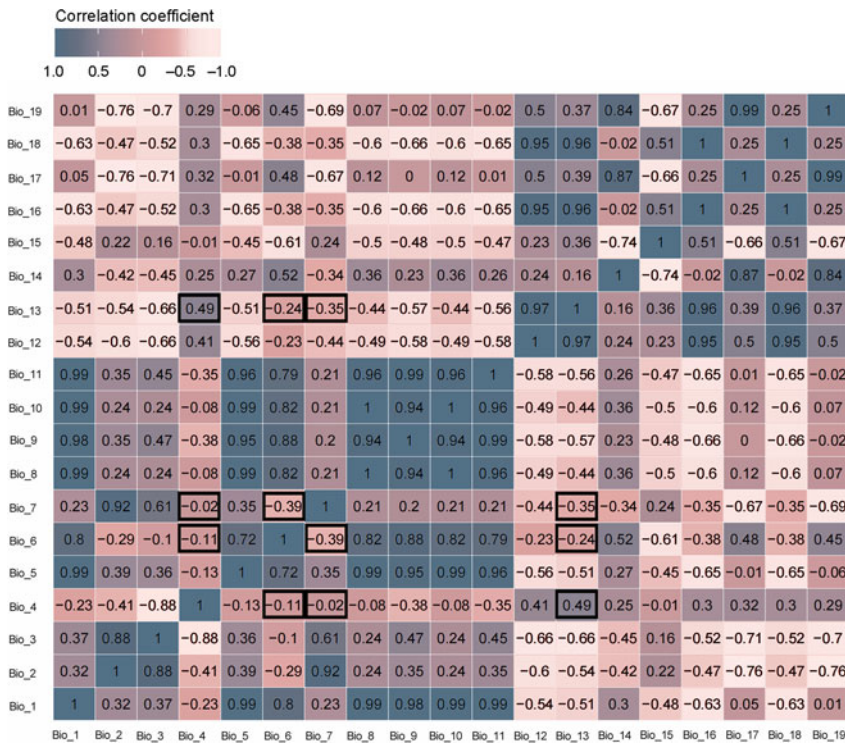


FIG. 3 Pearson’s correlation analysis of the 19 bioclimatic variables from WorldClim 2.1 (Fick & Hijmans, 2017). Black outlined boxes indicate the correlation coefficients between the four bioclimatic variables used for modelling (Bio\_4, Bio\_6, Bio\_7 and Bio\_13; Table 1), after screening. Correlation coefficients range between  $-1$  and  $1$ . (Readers of the printed journal are referred to the online article for a colour version of this figure.)

TABLE 1 Bioclimatic variables downloaded from WorldClim 2.1 (Fick & Hijmans, 2017) used for modelling and their per cent contributions to the assessment of the distribution of *Michelia lacei* (Fig. 3).

Bioclimatic variable	Code	Contribution (%)
Temperature seasonality	Bio_4	57.1
Minimum temperature of coldest month	Bio_6	12.3
Temperature annual range	Bio_7	19.1
Precipitation of wettest month	Bio_13	11.5

In summary, our modelling predicts that areas of moderately and highly suitable habitat for *M. lacei* will gradually shrink in west and south-east Yunnan. Areas of suitable habitat will also decline in central Yunnan.

**Discussion**

Modelling performance and the influence of the variables

Reliable distribution data are crucial for accurately predicting species’ potential distribution (Phillips & Dudik, 2008; Chen et al., 2012). Modelling location data for 60 individuals of *M. lacei*, the AUC values calculated with *MaxEnt* were all  $> 0.9$ , indicating that the simulation prediction is accurate (Swets, 1988). Previous studies have found precipitation and temperature to be important factors influencing the distribution of species (Shi et al., 2020; Rather et al., 2022). In this study, we found that temperature had a greater influence on predicting the potential range of *M. lacei* than precipitation. In addition to the significant influence of climatic and topographic variables on the distribution of species, soil

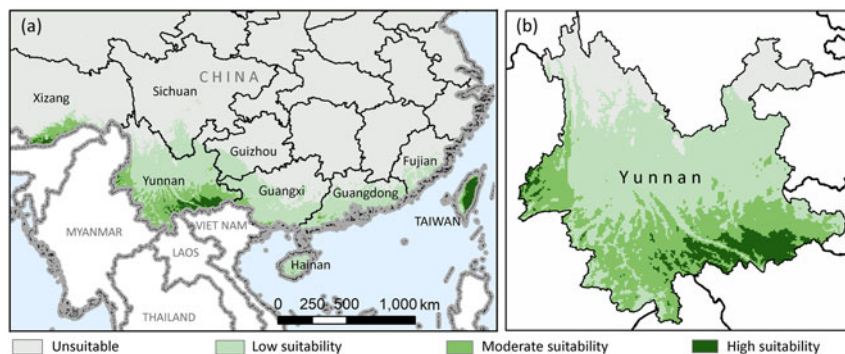


FIG. 4 The current potential distribution of suitable habitat for *M. lacei* (a) in China and (b) in Yunnan Province.

TABLE 2 Predicted areas of *M. lacei* habitat in Yunnan Province, China, for future time periods under four Shared Socioeconomic Pathway global warming scenarios (SSP126, SSP245, SSP370 and SSP585), compared with the current potential distribution of the species.

Climate scenario	Time period	Unsuitable ( $\times 10^5$ km <sup>2</sup> )	Low suitability ( $\times 10^5$ km <sup>2</sup> )	Moderately suitable ( $\times 10^5$ km <sup>2</sup> )	Highly suitable ( $\times 10^5$ km <sup>2</sup> )
Current	1970–2000	6.46	19.38	10.87	2.70
SSP126	2021–2040	6.87	21.43	8.81	2.30
	2041–2060	5.09	13.46	18.05	2.81
	2061–2080	5.85	20.29	11.55	1.72
	2081–2100	5.23	19.36	13.21	1.62
SSP245	2021–2040	7.18	23.27	7.67	1.29
	2041–2060	5.25	16.23	15.49	2.44
	2061–2080	5.49	26.39	6.82	0.71
	2081–2100	6.54	27.15	5.09	0.63
SSP370	2021–2040	5.20	17.45	14.61	2.16
	2041–2060	5.77	21.83	10.32	1.48
	2061–2080	5.66	22.97	9.84	0.95
	2081–2100	7.09	27.44	4.52	0.36
SSP585	2021–2040	6.63	24.15	7.39	1.23
	2041–2060	6.85	25.87	5.91	0.78
	2061–2080	8.66	27.03	3.45	0.27
	2081–2100	6.60	28.06	4.40	0.34

and hydrogeological variables also play important roles, and we plan to investigate the roles of these variables on the distribution of *M. lacei* in future studies. The current distribution of the species is relatively small compared with the potential area of suitable habitat, and these findings should be taken into account in future field surveys and potential reintroductions of this species.

Predicted habitat suitability for *M. lacei* under current climate conditions

Current predicted suitable habitat for *M. lacei* in China is primarily in the southern provinces. We only surveyed in Yunnan, but we did not find any literature records of the species in China beyond this province. Suitable area

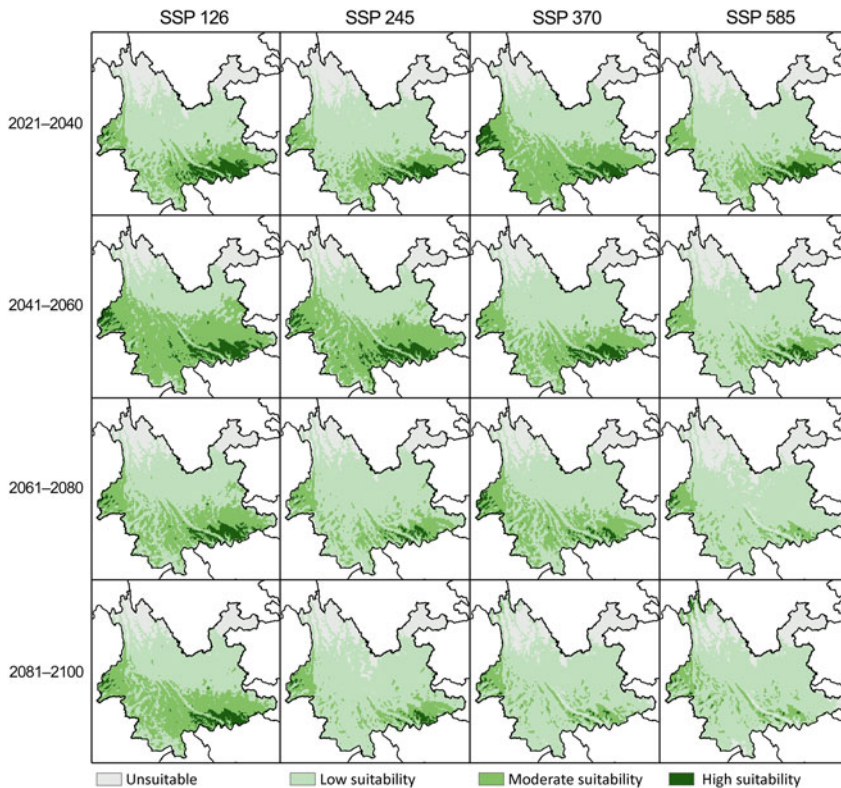


FIG. 5 Predicted future areas of *M. lacei* habitat in Yunnan Province, China, with different levels of suitability under different Shared Socioeconomic Pathways (SSP) climate scenarios.

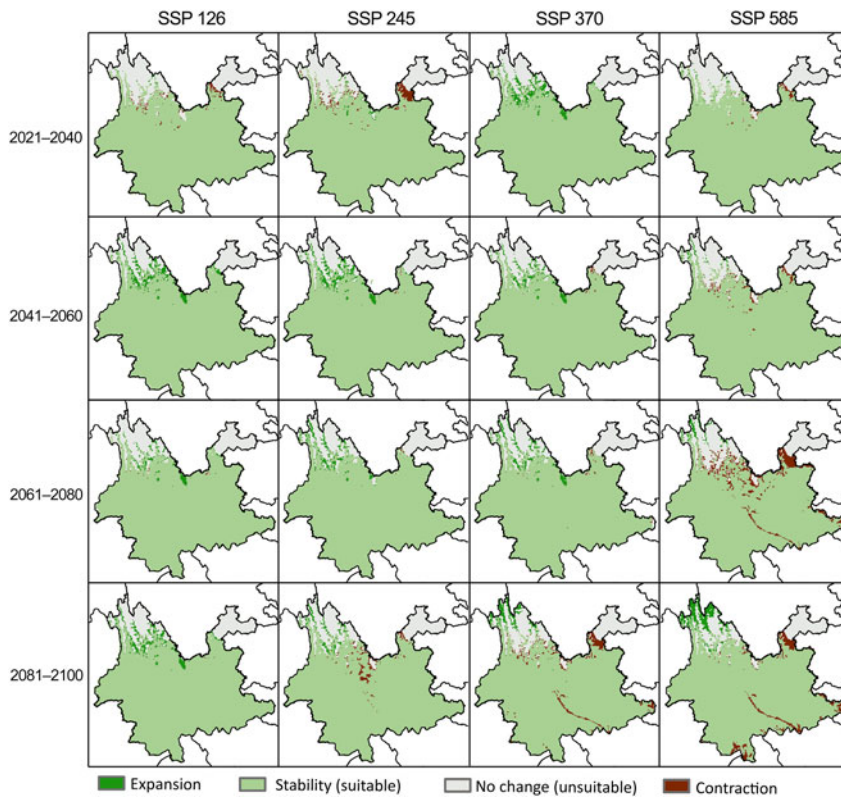


FIG. 6 Changes in future habitat suitability for *Michelia lacei* relative to current habitat suitability in Yunnan Province, China, under different Shared Socioeconomic Pathways. Expansion indicates that the future habitat is more suitable than it is at present, no change (unsuitable) indicates that the habitat is suitable neither in the future nor at present, stability (suitable) indicates that the habitat is suitable both now and in the future, and contraction indicates that the habitat is suitable at present but will not be suitable in the future. (Readers of the printed journal are referred to the online article for a colour version of this figure.)

predicted using species distribution models is often wider than the actual distribution range of a species (Cai et al., 2022; Yan & Zhang, 2022). When determining the distribution of threatened plant species, additional factors such as pollinator numbers, self-breeding, seed dispersal, community competition, habitat destruction, reduced population and habitat fragmentation need to be taken into account. These, amongst other factors, all have a greater impact on the distribution of highly threatened species than on those less threatened (Chen, 2017).

#### Changes in habitat suitability under future climate change scenarios

Based on our modelling, we predict the distribution of *M. lacei* will gradually decrease in the future, with the highly suitable habitat shrinking in size as the climate warms. This is consistent with previous research on the distribution patterns of threatened species in south-eastern Yunnan (Cai, 2020). In the four future periods we modelled, highly and moderately suitable areas were predicted to become areas of low suitability as temperatures change. In particular, the moderately suitable areas in Xishuangbanna were predicted to decline to almost zero. Under the worst-case scenario (pathway SSP585 during 2061–2080), the moderately and highly suitable habitats were predicted to be restricted to Dehong in western Yunnan, with a few small patches in Honghe and Wenshan in south-eastern Yunnan. In general,

rising temperatures will promote the migration of plant populations into boreal forests (Boisvert-Marsh & de Blois, 2021; Behera et al., 2023). Such increases in temperature are likely to be accompanied by the movement of mountain plants to higher elevations. As a Plant Species with Extremely Small Populations, the migratory ability of *M. lacei* is limited compared to other, more widespread species, and its suitable habitat is gradually being reduced.

#### Protection and management of *M. lacei*

Some of the *M. lacei* individuals we recorded are growing in fengshui forests, preserved by local communities from nearby villages who believe the forests can bring prosperity and good fortune (Coggins & Minor, 2018). Two large individuals growing near a village have been listed as ancient trees by the local forestry bureau, and some individuals are located in a nature reserve, providing some level of protection. However, we found most individuals growing near roadsides, fields or riverbanks, with no protective measures. These individuals are at high risk of being cut down or otherwise destroyed. We found only three seedlings during our field studies, and can infer from this that wild populations are struggling to reproduce naturally. We found these seedlings in a vegetable field, by a roadside and in farmland where black cardomom *Amomum tsaoko* was being cultivated. During our 2022 surveys of wild *M. lacei* populations we found only four adult plants that had fruited.

## Conclusion

We predicted suitable habitat for *M. lacei* under current and future climate conditions and found that areas suitable for this species will decline. Furthermore, *M. lacei* populations face significant threats from anthropogenic interference, among other factors. In addition to existing local protection, further appropriate conservation measures are needed for *M. lacei*. In situ conservation should focus on areas where the habitat of this species is predicted to remain stable in the future, by establishing conservation sites. We have achieved germ-free germination and seed propagation of *M. lacei* by collecting fruits from wild habitats and botanic gardens, but these methods are currently still being developed. Collection of fruits from the various *M. lacei* populations should continue and their seedlings should be grown for ex situ or near situ (i.e. establishment of populations at sites near wild populations; Sun et al., 2021; 2024) conservation.

**Author contributions** Field surveys: all authors; data analysis: YL, LC; writing, revision: all authors.

**Acknowledgements** We thank Zhiling Dao, Liewen Lin, Bo Xiao, Zhiyong Yu and Zongli Liang for their help in the field; Yuhang Liu for her guidance on the use of *MaxEnt*; and Detuan Liu for providing valuable comments. This research was supported by the Science and Technology Basic Resources Investigation Program of China (Grant No. 2017FY100100), the NSFC (National Natural Science Foundation of China; Grant No. 32101407), the NSFC–Yunnan Joint Fund (Grant No. U1302262) and Yunnan Provincial Science and Technology Talent and Platform Plan (202305AM070005).

**Conflicts of interest** None.

**Ethical standards** This research abided by the *Oryx* guidelines on ethical standards.

**Data availability** All species distribution data and bioclimatic variables have been described in the Supplementary Material.

## References

- ABDELAAL, M., FOIS, M., FENU, G. & BACCHETTA, G. (2019) Using MaxEnt modelling to predict the potential distribution of the endemic plant *Rosa arabica* Crep. in Egypt. *Ecological Informatics*, 50, 68–75.
- BEHERA, M.D., KELLNER, J.R., KENDRICK, J. & SAX, D.F. (2023) High-velocity upward shifts in vegetation are ubiquitous in mountains of western North America. *PLOS Climate*, 2, e0000071.
- BELLARD, C., BERTELSMIEIER, C., LEADLEY, P., THUILLER, W. & COURCHAMP, F. (2012) Impacts of climate change on the future of biodiversity. *Ecology Letter*, 15, 365–377.
- BOISVERT-MARSH, L. & DE BLOIS, S. (2021) Unravelling potential northward migration pathways for tree species under climate change. *Journal of Biogeography*, 48, 1088–1100.
- BROWN, J.L., BENNETT, J.R. & FRENCH, C.M. (2017) *SDMtoolbox 2.0*: the next generation Python-based GIS toolkit for landscape genetic, biogeographic and species distribution model analyses. *PeerJ*, 5, e4095.
- BUSBY, J.R. (1991) BIOCLIM: a bioclimate analysis and prediction system. *Plant Protection Quarter*, 6, 8–9.
- CAI, L. (2020) *Historical Changes, Seed Dispersal and Seedling Establishment of the Typical Plant species with Extremely Small Populations (PSESP) in Southeast Yunnan China*. Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing, China.
- CAI, L., DAO, Z.L. & SUN, W.B. (2017) Urgent protection is required for *Michelia lacei* (Magnoliaceae) in Yunnan, China. *Oryx*, 51, 203–203.
- CAI, C.N., ZHANG, X.Y., ZHA, J.J., LI, J. & LI, J.M. (2022) Predicting climate change impacts on the rare and Endangered *Horsfieldia tetratepala* in China. *Forests*, 13, 1051.
- CAI, L., LIU, D.T., YANG, F.M., ZHANG R.G., YUN Q.Z., DAO, Z.L. et al. (2024) The chromosome-scale genome of *Magnolia sinica* (Magnoliaceae) provides insights into the conservation of plant species with extremely small populations (PSESP). *GigaScience*, 13, giad110.
- CARPENTER, G., GILLISON, A.N. & WINTER, J. (1993) DOMAIN: a flexible modeling procedure for mapping potential distributions of plants and animals. *Biodiversity and Conservation*, 2, 667–680.
- CHEN, X., LEI, Y., ZHANG, X. & JIA, H. (2012) Effects of sample sizes on accuracy and stability of maximum entropy model in predicting species distribution. *Scientia Silvae Sinicae*, 48, 53–59.
- CHEN, Y. (2017) *Conservation Biology of Manglietiastrum sinicum Law (Magnoliaceae), a Plant Species with Extremely Small Populations*. Kunming Institute of Botany, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing, China.
- CNKI (2023) *China National Knowledge Infrastructure*. [cnki.net](http://cnki.net) [accessed 13 September 2023].
- COBAN, H.O., ORUCU, O.K. & ARSLAN, E.S. (2020) MaxEnt modeling for predicting the current and future potential geographical distribution of *Quercus libani* Olivier. *Sustainability*, 12, 2671.
- COGGINS, C. & MINOR, J. (2018) Fengshui forests as a socio-natural reservoir in the face of climate change and environmental transformation. *Asia Pacific Perspectives*, 15, 4–29.
- CVH (2023) *Chinese Virtual Herbarium*. [cvh.ac.cn](http://cvh.ac.cn) [accessed 13 September 2023].
- DAUBY, G., STÉVART, T., DROISSART, V., COSIAUX, A., DEBLAUWE, V., SIMO-DROISSART, M. et al. (2017) *ConR*: An R package to assist large-scale multispecies preliminary conservation assessments using distribution data. *Ecology and Evolution*, 2017, 1–12.
- DORMANN, C.F., ELITH, J., BACHER, S., BUCHMANN, C., CARL, G., CARRE, G. et al. (2013) Collinearity: a review of methods to deal with it and a simulation study evaluating their performance. *Ecography*, 36, 27–46.
- EFRON, B. (1979) Bootstrap methods: another look at the jackknife. *Annals of Statistics*, 7, 1–26.
- FICK, S.E. & HIJMANS, R.J. (2017) WorldClim 2: new 1km spatial resolution climate surfaces for global land areas. *International Journal of Climatology*, 37, 4302–4315.
- FISCHER, E.M., BEYERLE, U. & KNUTTI, R. (2013) Robust spatially aggregated projections of climate extremes. *Nature Climate Change*, 3, 1033–1038.
- FRANCHINI, M. & MANNUCCI, P.M. (2015) Impact on human health of climate changes. *European Journal of Internal Medicine*, 26, 1–5.
- FRPS (2019) *Flora Reipublicae Popularis Sinicae*. [iplant.cn/frps](http://iplant.cn/frps) [accessed 13 September 2023].
- GONG, L.J., LI, X.F., WU, S. & JIANG, L.Q. (2022) Prediction of potential distribution of soybean in the frigid region in China with MaxEnt modeling. *Ecological Informatics*, 72, 101834.
- GUISAN, A., EDWARDS, T.C. & HASTIE, T. (2002) Generalized linear and generalized additive models in studies of species distributions: setting the scene. *Ecological Modelling*, 157, 89–100.
- HAN, C.Y., TAO, L.D. & SUN, W.B. (2019) Distribution and conservation status of *Magnolia ovoidea* (Magnoliaceae): a Critically Endangered species in Yunnan, China. *Oryx*, 54, 466–469.



- HE, Q. & ZHOU, G. (2011) Climatic suitability of potential summer maize planting zones in China. *Acta Geographica Sinica*, 66, 1443–1450.
- HERNANDEZ, P.A., GRAHAM, C.H., MASTER, L.L. & ALBERT, D.L. (2006) The effect of sample size and species characteristics on performance of different species distribution modeling methods. *Ecography*, 29, 773–785.
- IPCC (2022) Climate Change 2023: Synthesis Report. In: *Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* (eds H. Lee & J. Romero). IPCC, Geneva, Switzerland. [ipcc.ch/assessment-report/ar6](https://www.ipcc.ch/assessment-report/ar6) [accessed 22 May 2023].
- ISELI, E., CHISHOLM, C., LENOIR, J., HAIDER, S., SEIPEL, T., BARROS, A. et al. (2023) Rapid upwards spread of non-native plants in mountains across continents. *Nature Ecology and Evolution*, 7, 405–413.
- JIANG, Z. (2013) Challenges and innovative development of land degradation control under global change. *World Forestry Research*, 26, 1–4.
- KAMILAR, J.M. & BEAUDROT, L. (2013) Understanding primate communities: recent developments and future directions. *Evolution Anthropology*, 22, 174–185.
- KHANAL, S., TIMILSINA, R., BEHROOZIAN, M., PETERSON, A.T., POUDEL, M., ALWAR, M.S.S. et al. (2022) Potential impact of climate change on the distribution and conservation status of *Pterocarpus marsupium*, a near threatened south Asian medicinal tree species. *Ecological Informatics*, 70, 101722.
- KLANDERUD, K. & BIRKS, H.J.B. (2003) Recent increases in species richness and shifts in altitudinal distributions of Norwegian mountain plants. *Holocene*, 13, 1–6.
- LAWLER, J.J., SHAFER, S.L., WHITE, D., KAREIVA, P., MAURER, E.P., BLAUSTEIN, A.R. & BARTLEIN, P.J. (2009) Projected climate-induced faunal change in the Western Hemisphere. *Ecology*, 90, 588–597.
- LINSKY, J. & SUN, W.B. (2022) *Magnolia lacei* (W.W.Sm.) Figlar. In *Global Conservation Gap Analysis of Magnolia* (eds J. Linsky, D. Crowley, E. Beckman Bruns & E.E.D. Coffey), pp. 122–126. Atlanta Botanical Garden, Atlanta, Georgia, USA.
- LIU, D.T., YANG, J.B., CHEN, S.Y. & SUN, W.B. (2022) Potential distribution of threatened maples in China under climate change: implications for conservation. *Global Ecology and Conservation*, 40, e02337.
- LIU, Y., CAI L., SUN W.B. (2024) Transcriptome data analysis provides insights into the conservation of *Michelia lacei*, a plant species with extremely small populations distributed in Yunnan Province, China. *BMC plant biology*, 24, 200.
- LIU, Y.H. (2002) *Magnolias of China*, Volume 6. The Science and Technology Press, Beijing, China.
- MALHI, Y., FRANKLIN, J., SEDDON, N., SOLAN, M., TURNER, M.G., FIELD, C.B. & KNOWLTON, N. (2020) Climate change and ecosystems: threats, opportunities and solutions. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*, 375, 20190104.
- MKALA, E.M., MUTINDA, E.S., WANGA, V.O., OULOU, M.A., OLUOCH, W.A., NZEI, J. et al. (2022) Modeling impacts of climate change on the potential distribution of three endemic *Aloe* species Critically Endangered in East Africa. *Ecological Informatics*, 71, 101765.
- O'NEILL, B.C., KRIEGLER, E., EBI, K.L., KEMP-BENEDICT, E., RIAHI, K., ROTHMAN, D.S. et al. (2017) The roads ahead: narratives for shared socioeconomic pathways describing world futures in the 21st century. *Global Environmental Change – Human and Policy Dimensions*, 42, 169–180.
- PHILLIPS, S.J. & DUDIK, M. (2008) Modeling of species distributions with MaxEnt: new extensions and a comprehensive evaluation. *Ecography*, 31, 161–175.
- PHILLIPS, S.J., ANDERSON, R.P. & SCHAPIRE, R.E. (2006) Maximum entropy modeling of species geographic distributions. *Ecological Modelling*, 190, 231–259.
- PHILLIPS, S.J., ANDERSON, R.P., DUDIK, M., SCHAPIRE, R.E. & BLAIR, M.E. (2017) Opening the black box: an open-source release of MaxEnt. *Ecography*, 40, 887–893.
- POWO (2023) *Plants of the World Online*. [powo.science.kew.org](https://powo.science.kew.org) [accessed 13 September 2023].
- QIN, A.L., JIN, K., BATSAIKHAN, M.E., NYAMJAV, J., LI, G.L., LI, J. et al. (2020) Predicting the current and future suitable habitats of the main dietary plants of the Gobi bear using MaxEnt modeling. *Global Ecology and Conservation*, 22, e01032.
- R CORE TEAM (2020) *R: A Language and Environment for Statistical Computing*. R Foundation for Statistical Computing, Vienna, Austria. [r-project.org](https://www.R-project.org) [accessed July 2024].
- RATHER, Z.A., AHMAD, R., DAR, A.R., DAR, T.U. & KHUROO, A.A. (2021) Predicting shifts in distribution range and niche breadth of plant species in contrasting arid environments under climate change. *Environmental Monitoring and Assessment*, 193, 427.
- RATHER, Z.A., AHMAD, R., DAR, T.U.H. & KHUROO, A.A. (2022) Ensemble modelling enables identification of suitable sites for habitat restoration of threatened biodiversity under climate change: a case study of Himalayan *Trillium*. *Ecological Engineering*, 176, 106534.
- RIAHI, K., VAN VUUREN, D.P., KRIEGLER, E., EDMONDS, J., O'NEILL, B.C., FUJIMORI, S. et al. (2017) The Shared Socioeconomic Pathways and their energy, land use, and greenhouse gas emissions implications: an overview. *Global Environmental Change*, 42, 153–168.
- RIVERS, M.C. & WHEELER, L. (2015) *Magnolia lacei*. In *The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2015*. [dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2015-2.RLTS.T193957A2292193.en](https://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2015-2.RLTS.T193957A2292193.en).
- RIVERS, M., BEECH, E. & MURPHY, L. (2016) *The Red List of Magnoliaceae-Revised and Extended*. Botanic Gardens Conservation International, Richmond, UK.
- SANCHEZ-FLORES, E. (2007) GARP modeling of natural and human factors affecting the potential distribution of the invasives *Schismus arabicus* and *Brassica tournefortii* in 'El Pinacate y Gran Desierto de Altar' Biosphere Reserve. *Ecological Modelling*, 204, 457–474.
- SEFERIAN, R., NABAT, P., MICHOU, M., SAINT-MARTIN, D., VOLDRE, A., COLIN, J. et al. (2019) Evaluation of CNRM Earth System Model, CNRM-ESM2-1: role of earth system processes in present-day and future climate. *Journal of Advances in Modeling Earth Systems*, 11, 4182–4227.
- SHI, P.J., PREISLER, H.K., QUINN, B.K., ZHAO, J., HUANG, W.W., ROLL, A. et al. (2020) Precipitation is the most crucial factor determining the distribution of moso bamboo in mainland China. *Global Ecology and Conservation*, 22, e00924.
- SOILHI, Z., SAYARI, N., BENALOUACHE, N. & MEKKI, M. (2022) Predicting current and future distributions of *Mentha pulegium* L. in Tunisia under climate change conditions, using the MaxEnt model. *Ecological Informatics*, 68, 101533.
- SUN, W.B., MA, Y.P. & BLACKMORE, S. (2019a) How a new conservation action concept has accelerated plant conservation in China. *Trends in Plant Science*, 24, 4–6.
- SUN, W.B., YANG, J. & DAO, Z.L. (2019b) *Study and Conservation of Plant Species with Extremely Small Populations (PSESP) in Yunnan Province, China*. The Science Press, Beijing, China.
- SUN, W.B., LIU, D. & ZHANG, P. (2021) Conservation research of plant species with extremely small populations (PSESP): Progress and future direction. *Guihaia*, 41, 1605–1617. [In Chinese]
- SUN, W.B., MA, Y.P. & CORLETT, R.T. (2024) Plant species with extremely small populations conservation program: achieving Kunming–Montreal global biodiversity targets. *Trends in Plant Science*, 29, 827–830.
- SWETS, J.A. (1988) Measuring the accuracy of diagnostic systems. *Science*, 240, 1285–1293.

- TANG, C.Q., HE, L.Y., GAO, Z.R., ZHAO, X.F., SUN, W.B. & OHSAWA, M. (2011) Habitat fragmentation, degradation, and population status of endangered *Michelia coriacea* in southeastern Yunnan, China. *Mountain Research and Development*, 31, 343–350.
- TAO, L., HAN, C., SONG, K. & SUN, W. (2020) A tree species with an extremely small population: recategorizing the Critically Endangered *Acer yangbiense*. *Oryx*, 54, 474–477.
- WANG, S. & XIE, Y. (2004) *China Species Red List*. Higher Education Press, Beijing, China.
- WANG, R., LI, Q., HE, S. & LIU, Y. (2018) Potential distribution of *Actinidia chinensis* in China and its predicted response to climate change. *Chinese Journal of Eco-Agriculture*, 26, 27–37.
- WENG, Y.W., CAI, W.J. & WANG, C. (2020) The application and future directions of the Shared Socioeconomic Pathways (SSPs). *Climate Change Research*, 16, 215–222.
- XIA, N.H., LAW, Y.W. & NOOTEBOOM, H.P. (2008) *Flora of China (Magnoliaceae)*, volume 7. Missouri Botanical Garden Press, St. Louis, USA, and Science Press, Beijing, China.
- YAN, G. & ZHANG, G.F. (2022) Predicting the potential distribution of Endangered *Parrotia subaequalis* in China. *Forests*, 13, 1595.
- YI, Y.J., CHENG, X., YANG, Z.F. & ZHANG, S.H. (2016) MaxEnt modeling for predicting the potential distribution of Endangered medicinal plant (*H. riparia* Lour) in Yunnan, China. *Ecological Engineering*, 92, 260–269.