

#### Agroforestry: tree roots impact on soil microorganisms

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# Agroforestry: tree roots impact on soil microorganisms



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#### Background & aims

Agroforestry mixes annual culture or permanent pasture with permanent trees which is widely known to improve soil biodiversity, especially macro and micro fauna<sup>1</sup>, as compared to monoculture<sup>2</sup>. However, the specific role of fine tree roots on microbial community is still poorly known in field conditions<sup>3</sup>. Microorganism community (biomass, activity and Bacteria/Fungi ratio) is supposed to evolve with roots dynamic and morphological characteristics ("hot spots", "hot moments"<sup>4</sup>). We focussed here on the presence effect of fine tree roots on the microbial communities in an agroforest field, in France. We hypothesized that the microbial communities are influenced by the roots characteristics, but also by the soil past events (apex history, months with roots...).

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#### Methods & Analysis

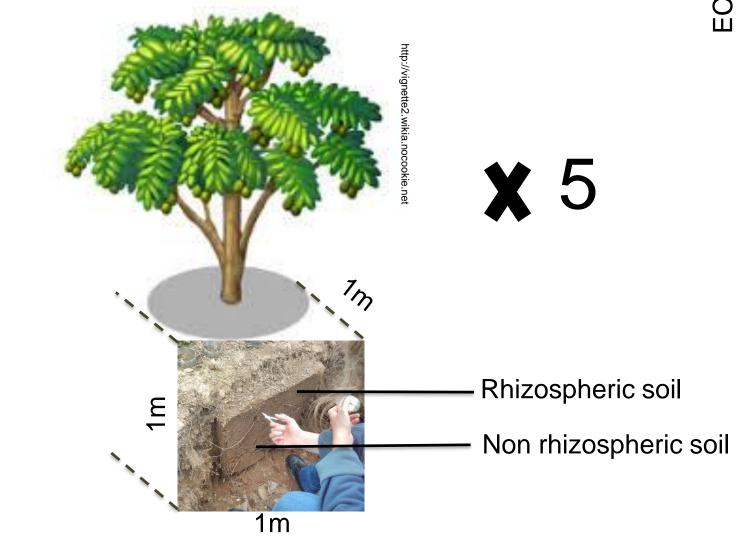
### Field site & Sampling

Continental climate

**∕**~~ 530m

Cantal region, France

Silty soil/5°-10° slope

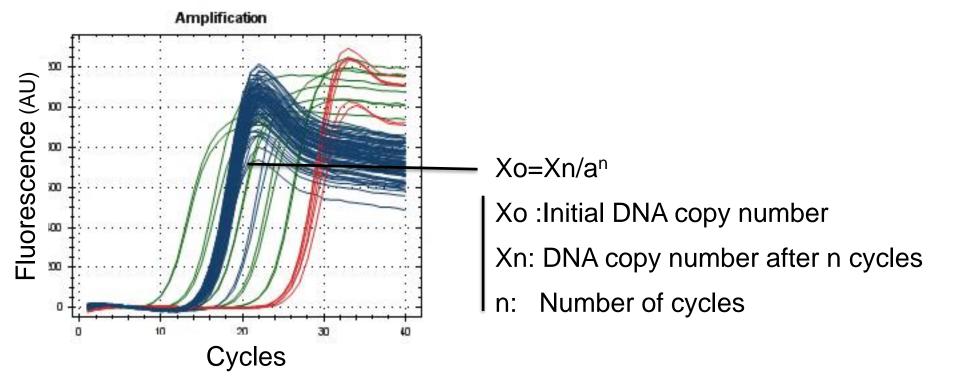


12 y/o Hybrid walnuts intercropped with permanent pasture

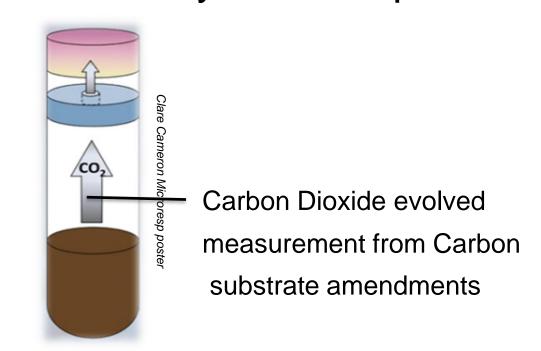
10 samples soil per tree (X5) in rhizospheric and non rhizospheric soil

#### Analysis

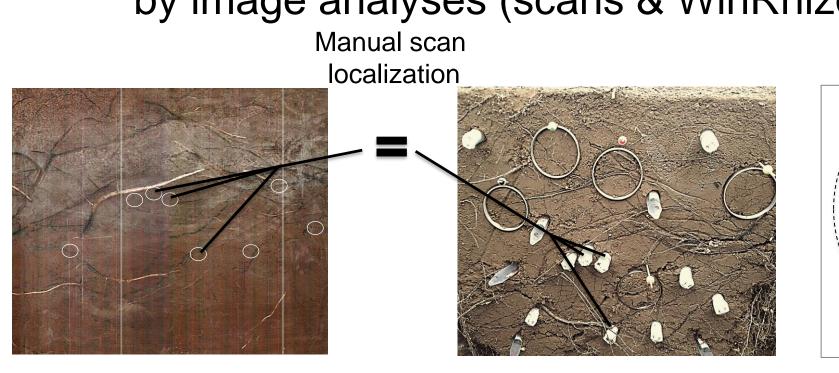
Relative quantification of bacteria (16S DNA) and fungi (18S DNA) by Real time PCR<sup>5</sup>



Microorganism substrate induced respiration SIR quantified by Microresp<sup>®</sup>6



Tree roots temporal dynamics and morphological characteristics determined by image analyses (scans & WinRhizo )



Monthly scan profile during 2 years By Epson perfection V370-4800dpi Charged Coupled device technology (From Sept 2014 to June 2016)

Sampling of 5mm<sup>3</sup> of unchanged soil in rhizospheric and non rhizospheric area (June 2016)

Diameter(D), Length(L) and Surface(S) roots measured by WinRhizo`

 $S=\pi^*D^*L$ 

**Total** 

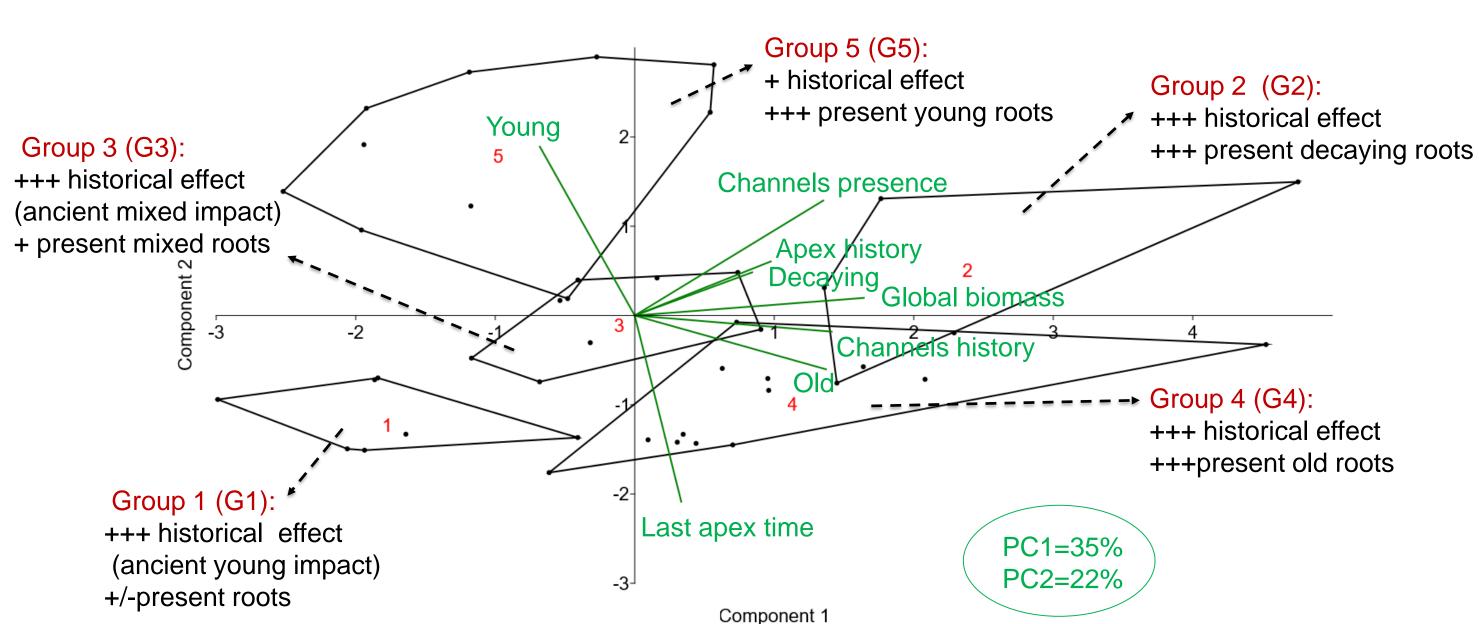
#### Results & Discussions

#### What about root biomass and microorganisms?

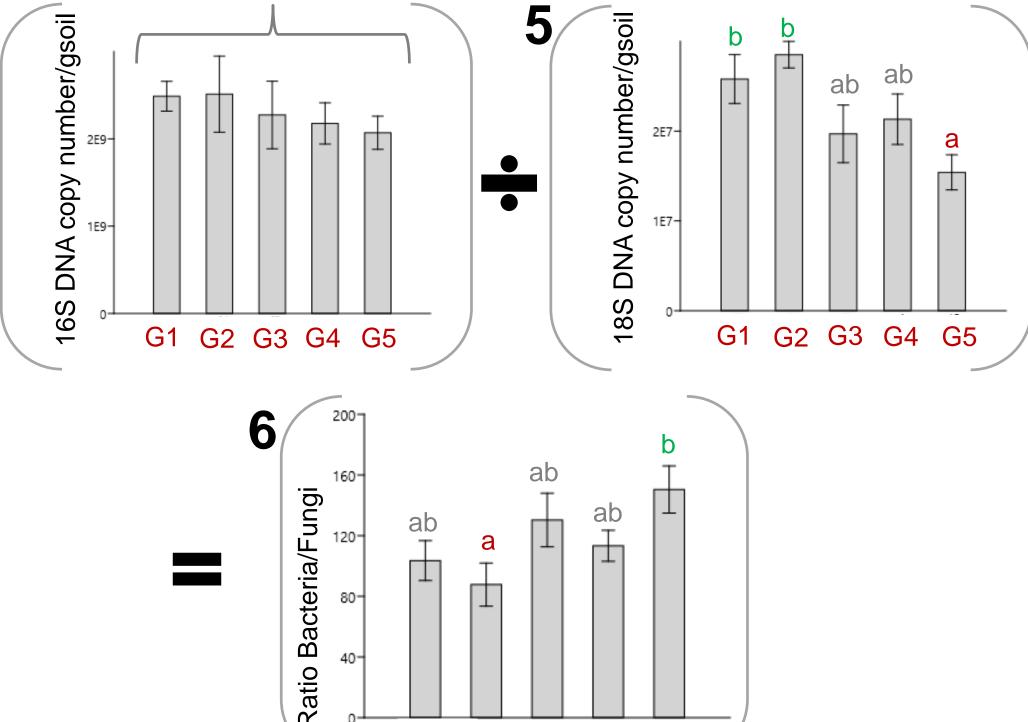
- Tree roots surface increased significantly microorganisms potential respiration.
- 2 Tree roots presence induced bacteria (16S DNA) and fungi (18S DNA) positive correlation or "synergism" as compared to its in non rhizospheric soil.

## And fine tree roots history impact?

Identification of groups of samples by cluster analysis followed by SIMPER analysis and visualisation by Principal Component Analysis



#### Potential respiration & root surface 16S & 18S correlation • p< 0.001 $\triangle$ p>0.05 • p=0.016 r = 0.65r=0.53 Rhizospheric soil coby △ Non rhizospheric soil 0.2 0.4 0.6 0.8 1.0 1.2 1.4 1.6 Root Surface (cm²) 18S DNA copy number/gsoil No effect



- <sup>3</sup> We highlighted 5 different groups according to historical and morphological roots variables.
- 4 16S (bacteria) DNA copy number is not significantly different between the 5 Groups.
- 5 18S (fungi) DNA copy number is significantly lower for Group 5 (young roots) than for Group 1 (ancient young roots effect) and Group 2 (decaying roots).
- than for Group 2 (decaying roots), which is related to its significantly different fungi relative quantity (18S).

#### Conclusion

Fine tree roots in agroforestry system impact microorganisms in soil by increasing their potential respiration and inducing a positive correlation between them. Permanent trees also significantly impact fungi relative quantity and bacteria/fungi ratio according to its roots morphology, roots age and especially roots past events.

## Perspective

6 Ratio 16S/18S is significantly higher for Group 5 (young roots) Further investigations are needed to understand the mechanisms of aggregate stability enrolling bacteria and fungi ratio near tree roots compare to herbaceous roots in agroforestry systems.

<sup>1</sup>Bender, S. Franz, Cameron Wagg, and Marcel G. A. van der Heijden. 2016. 'An Underground Revolution: Biodiversity and Soil Ecological Engineering for Agricultural Sustainability'. Trends in Ecology & Evolution. <sup>2</sup>Plassart, Pierre, Marthe Akpa Vinceslas, Christophe Gangneux, Anne Mercier, Sylvie Barray, and Karine Laval. 2008. 'Molecular and Functional Responses of Soil Microbial Communities under Grassland Restoration'. Agriculture, Ecosystems & Environment 127 (3-4): 286-93.

<sup>3</sup>Heijden, Marcel G. A. van der, and Cameron Wagg. 2012. 'Soil Microbial Diversity and Agro-Ecosystem Functioning'. Plant and Soil 363 (1-2): 1–5. <sup>4</sup>Kuzyakov, Yakov, and Evgenia Blagodatskaya. 2015. 'Microbial Hotspots and Hot Moments in Soil: Concept & Soil: Review'. Soil Biology and Biochemistry 83 (April): 184–99.

<sup>5</sup>Wong, M.L., and J.F. Medrano. 2005. Real-time PCR for mRNA quantitation. *Biotechniques* 39: 75. <sup>6</sup>Campbell, C. D., S. J. Chapman and al.. 2003. A Rapid Microtiter Plate Method To Measure Carbon Dioxide Evolved from Carbon Substrate Amendments so as To Determine the Physiological Profiles of Soil Microbial Communities by Using Whole Soil. Applied and Environmental Microbiology 69 (6): 3593-99.











