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1 2	Partial overlap of fungal communities associated with nettle and poplar roots when co-occurring at a trace metal contaminated site
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20 Summary

21 Stinging nettle (Urtica dioica L.) raises growing interest in phytomanagement because 22 it commonly grows under poplar Short Rotation Coppices (SRC) set up at trace-metal (TM) 23 contaminated sites and provides high-quality herbaceous fibres. The mycobiome of this nonmycorhizal plant and its capacity to adapt to TM-contaminated environments remains 24 25 unknown. This study aimed at characterizing the mycobiome associated with nettle and poplar 26 roots co-occurring at a TM-contaminated site. Plant root barcoding using the fungi-specific 27 ITS1F-ITS2 primers and Illumina MiSeq technology revealed that nettle and poplar had distinct 28 root fungal communities. The nettle mycobiome was dominated by Pezizomycetes from known 29 endophytic taxa and from the supposedly saprotrophic genus Kotlabaea (which was the most 30 abundant). Several ectomycorrhizal fungi such as Inocybe (Agaricomycetes) and Tuber 31 (Pezizomycetes) species were associated with the poplar roots. Most of the Pezizomycetes taxa 32 were present in the highly TM-contaminated area whereas Agaricomycetes tended to be 33 reduced. Despite being a known non-mycorrhizal plant, nettle was associated with a significant 34 proportion of ectomycorrhizal OTU (9.7%), suggesting some connexions between the poplar 35 and the nettle root mycobiomes. Finally, our study raised the interest in reconsidering the fungal 36 networking beyond known mycorrhizal interactions.

37

38 Keywords

Ectomycorrhizal fungi ; Environmental metabarcoding ; Fungal network ; Metal-enriched
sediments ; Phytomanagement ; Root-associated mycobiome ; *Urtica dioica* L..

41

42 **1. Introduction**

43 Phytomanagement is a remediation technique based on plant species to restore and 44 revalorize polluted sites while producing biomass (Cundy et al., 2016; Evangelou et al., 2015). 45 Fast-growing trees such as poplars (Populus sp.) allow the production of a high amount of 46 valuable plant biomass for renewable energy (Kidd et al., 2015; Pandey et al., 2016). At the 47 same time, trees limit the dispersal and risks of soil contaminants, while promoting the 48 spontaneous biodiversity (Parraga-Aguado et al., 2014). Recent approaches on the optimisation 49 of phytomanagement systems pointed out the importance of assemblages between crops and 50 spontaneous species (Parraga-Aguado et al., 2013) to ensure a more efficient and gentle 51 remediation (Boisson et al., 2016). The spontaneous vegetation biodiversity is generally 52 restricted by the soil physico-chemical properties, limiting the panel of species able to develop 53 and compete with the tolerant species (Macnair, 1987). Much less is known on how this plant 54 biodiversity is shaping its root microbiota in this context.

55 The stinging nettle (Urtica dioica L.) colonizes a vast diversity of nitrophilic 56 environments and particularly anthropogenic areas (Balabanova et al., 2015; Shams et al., 2010; 57 Viktorova et al., 2016). It has thus been frequently observed as a companion species in a wide 58 range of nitrogen-rich environments such as Salicaceous plantations at both natural (Cronk et 59 al., 2016) and anthropized sites (Yung et al., 2019). Nettle has recently raised growing interest 60 in the domain of phytomanagement because it (i) constitutes a new resource of high-quality 61 herbaceous fibres for the manufacture of biomaterials (Bacci et al., 2009; Di Virgilio et al., 62 2015; Jeannin et al., 2019, 2020), (ii) promotes the biodiversity of local entomofauna (James et 63 al., 2015; Perrin, 1975; Yung et al., 2019) and (iii) spontaneously grows in contaminated sites 64 (Murtic et al., 2019; Paukszto and Mirosławski, 2019; Viktorova et al., 2016).

65 The success of phytomanagement depends on the capacity of plants to colonize harsh 66 environments, which is partly related to their ability to interact with soil microorganisms, and 67 especially to establish symbiotic relationships with some of them. Among these 68 microorganisms, arbuscular mycorrhizal (AM) (Miransari, 2017), ectomycorrhizal (EM) (Gil-69 Martínez et al., 2018) fungi and Dark Septate Endophytes (DSE) (Deng and Cao, 2017) are 70 major drivers of plant growth and response to abiotic stress and phytopathogens (Otero-Blanca 71 et al., 2018; Selosse et al., 2004). The use of fungal inoculum has been described as a 72 phytoremediation enhancer by improving uptake and accumulation of trace metals (TM) by 73 plants in phytoextraction application or by limiting the translocation of TM from roots to shoots 74 during phytostabilisation (Berthelot et al., 2016a; Khan, 2005; Ma et al., 2019; Pepper et al., 75 2015). While the success of field inoculation is rather unpredictable (Gerhardt et al., 2017; 76 Selosse et al., 1998, 1999) due to various abiotic (e.g., sensitivity to TM) and biotic parameters 77 (e.g., competition with the local microbiome), the risks of failure may be mitigated by 78 considering indigenous strains, which may have developed a tolerance for TM (Wubs et al., 79 2016). Characterisation of *in-situ* plant-associated microbiome appears as an essential 80 preliminary step for identifying rhizospheric microorganisms that may actively participate to 81 phytomanagement processes.

82 In the temperate climate zone, poplars are among the few cultivated trees that form tripartite symbiotic associations with EM and AM fungi (Gehring et al., 2006; Teste et al., 83 84 2020). As symbiotic fungi play crucial roles in soil fertility, colonisation, plant nutrition, metal 85 uptake, accumulation or restriction in plants (Smith and Read, 2010; van der Heijden et al., 86 2015), poplar microbiome have been well studied in phytomanagement contexts (Durand et al., 87 2017; Foulon et al., 2016b; Schmidt et al., 2018; Vitali et al., 2019; Zappelini et al., 2015). 88 Recent studies highlighted the positive effects of EM and AM inoculation on poplar cultivars growing at a multi-contaminated site (Ciadamidaro et al., 2017; Phanthavongsa et al., 2017). 89 90 However, mycobiome associated with nettle have been barely studied in natural or 91 anthropogenic biota. A study combining *in-situ* and mesocosm approaches concluded that the 92 nettle rhizosphere was devoid of any mycorrhizal structures and revealed that the AM fungus 93 *Glomus mosseae* was not able to develop in the presence of nettle (Vierheilig et al., 1996). The 94 authors speculated that a rhizome protein called *Urtica dioica* agglutinin (UDA) with anti-95 fungal properties (Broekaert et al., 1989) could be involved in AM avoidance. In addition, this 96 inhibitory effect could even affect the mycobiome of neighbouring plants (Fontenla et al., 97 1999).

98 The present study aimed at characterizing, using Illumina Mi-seq sequencing, the 99 mycobiome associated with nettle and poplar roots co-occurring in an agrosystem set up on a 100 contaminated site, where two areas were clearly distinguished by their TM concentrations. We 101 hypothesised that poplar and nettle would harbour distinct root-associated fungal communities: 102 poplar mycobiome would be dominated by EM and AM fungi; at the opposite, nettle 103 communities would be composed of endophytic fungi (i.e. fungi colonizing root tissues 104 asymptomatically (Wilson, 1995)) with a low fungal diversity as described above. We further 105 hypothesised that the level of TM contamination would alter the root-associated mycobiomes 106 by reducing root fungal diversity and by increasing the diversity and abundance of TM-tolerant 107 fungi, as mentioned elsewhere (Giller et al., 2009; Zappelini et al., 2015).

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- 109 **2. Material and methods**
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2.1. Site description

111 The study site located at Fresnes-sur-Escaut (France, 50°25'47.9"N 3°35'07.8"E) is a 112 nettle-poplar agrosystem on a dredged sediment disposal site, contaminated with TM, that 113 operated between 1978 and 1989.

Approximately 200 000 m³ of silt and sand from the dredging of l'Escaut canal were deposited, resulting in heterogeneous contamination with As, Cd, Cu, Ni, Pb and Zn within the surface horizons (0-50 cm). The experimental site is divided into two areas differing by the level of TM: the low trace-metal (LTM) and the high trace-metal (HTM) areas. The HTM area 118 has mean soil concentrations of Zn (2231 mg/kg), Pb (425 mg/kg), Cu (108 mg/kg) and Cd (63 119 mg/kg), on average 20-, 9-, 4- and 100-fold higher than the LTM area, respectively 120 (Phanthavongsa et al., 2017). A phytomanagement field trial was implemented in 2011 on this 121 site (covering both areas) with plots of poplar Skado (*P. trichocarpa* \times *P. maximowiczii*) or 122 I214 (P. deltoides x P. nigra) as a short-rotation coppice (SRC; 2200 stems/ha). A detailed 123 description of the experimental design is provided in Ciadamidaro et al., (2017) and 124 Phanthavongsa et al., (2017). Five years after planting, the spontaneous herbaceous layer 125 evolved in the same way as that of another similar experiment set up in eastern France, with a 126 dominance of the stinging nettle under poplars with a coverage rate depending on the poplar 127 cultivar (Yung et al., 2019). In order to get rid of this variable and appreciate the contaminant 128 effect on the microbiomes associated with nettle and poplar roots, we selected only one plot for 129 each poplar cultivar (*i.e.* Skado or I214) for both the HTM and LTM areas, each of 504 m² (28m 130 x 18m), *i.e.* 4 plots in all. These plots are of sufficient size to allow for replicate collection.

131

2.2. Sample collection and preparation

132 The sampling was conducted in November 2016, consisting of root samples from the upper 20-cm layer of soil from 9 random poplars and 9 adjacent nettles for each of the four 133 134 studied plots. Comparisons between soil and poplar root mycobiomes were done and available 135 in our previous studies (Durand et al., 2017; Foulon et al., 2016b, 2016a). A total of three 136 pseudo-replicates of thin roots were sampled from each tree and mixed to obtain one composite 137 per poplar individual, whereas the entire root system of nettles was collected. For each plant, 138 the root samples were carefully sorted so as not to be mixed, the soil was carefully removed in 139 three successive baths in sterilized distilled-water, and the smallest roots were selected and 140 separated from larger roots by sampling them with a scalpel. The samples were freeze-dried 141 and stored at -20 °C before molecular analysis. Thus, we considered both the endophytic and 142 epiphytic fungi from the rhizoplane.

143 *2.3. Molecular method*

144 The environmental DNA from the roots was extracted with the PowerSoil DNA 145 isolation Kit following the manufacturer's instructions (MoBio Laboratories, Inc., Carlsbad, 146 CA, USA). The PCR was performed using the specific fungal primers ITS1F (5'-147 CTTGGTCATTTAGAGGAAGTAA-3') and ITS2 (5'-GCTGCGTTCTTCATCGATGC-3') 148 (Gardes and Bruns, 1993; White et al., 1990). We selected these primers to allow for 149 comparison with our previous dataset obtained on a similar plantation, at a different site 150 (Durand et al., 2017). These primers has also been found as one of the most competent in 151 uncovering the fungal diversity of plant root (Bainard et al., 2017; Huang et al., 2020). PCR 152 was performed in a reaction volume of 35 µL using 0.5 µM forward and reverse primer each, 153 200 µM dNTPs, 1 µL of Phire hot start II DNA polymerase (1 U/µl), 26.25 µL of 5X Phire 154 reaction buffer (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Inc. USA), 10 ng template DNA and sterilized water 155 to reach a final volume of 35 µl. The PCR conditions were 98 °C for 30 sec, followed by 25 156 cycles of 98°C for 5 sec, 57.2 °C for 5 sec and 72 °C for 15 sec, followed by a final extension 157 step at 72 °C for 1 min. These primers targeted a short portion of the fungal ITS region, resulting 158 in amplicons of small size (~300 bp), appropriated for Illumina sequencing. The DNA quality 159 and quantity were assessed by agarose gel electrophoresis using the ImageLab software (Bio-160 Rad, USA) and with a QubitTM dsDNA HS Assay Kit (Invitrogen, Carlsbad, CA, USA) using 161 the Qubit 4 fluorometer. The partial fungal ITS region (Wang et al., 2015) of 6 and 7 of nine 162 poplar and nettle samples (i.e. with the concentration of environmental DNA required) were 163 sequenced with the Illumina MiSeq platform (Microsynth AG, Switzerland).

164

2.4. Bioinformatic analysis

165 The sequence data were processed using Mothur (Schloss et al., 2009). First, all raw 166 read pairs were joined at the overlapping region to create consensus sequences. Then several 167 steps of filtering were performed, consisting in removing homopolymers, ambiguous sequences 168 and sequences with an inappropriate length (shorter than 220 bp and greater than 400 bp). The 169 18S RNA region amplified by the ITS1F primer (Toju et al., 2012) was removed by *in-silico* 170 PCR to target precisely the ITS1 region. After quality filtering, reads were then clustered into 171 OTUs using the swarm tools (Mahé et al., 2015) with a difference value of 1 and fastidious 172 option enable. The OTU clustering method has been repeatedly shown to be powerful for 173 recovering the richness and composition of the fungal community (Bell et al. 2014; Durand et 174 al., 2017; Foulon et al., 2016b; Huang et al. 2020; Nguyen et al., 2016). We removed singleton 175 OTUs to avoid technical artefacts and overestimation of the number of species (Tedersoo et al., 176 2010). The taxonomic assignment of OTUs was performed using the UNITE (Kõljalg et al., 177 2013) database by a naïve Bayesian approach (Wang et al., 2007). The presence of plant sequences was verified using the BLAST tool of the GenBank database and removed. Each 178 179 fungal OTU was further assigned to functional or morphological groups of fungi using 180 FUNguild (Nguyen et al., 2016). For each assignment, three confidence rankings (i.e., 181 "possible": suspected, "probable": fairly certain, "highly probable": absolutely certain) 182 referring to previously peer reviewed data were given. We only considered the functional and 183 morphological assignation with at least a "probable" confidence ranking. Finally, the guilds 184 related to a similar function were grouped to obtain a total of six main guilds, based on the 185 literature.

186

2.5. Data analysis

187 Alpha diversity indices (OTU richness, Chao estimation, Shannon diversity index, 188 inverse of the Simpson diversity index) were calculated using MOTHUR. Samples were 189 rarefied at 33 000 sequences, corresponding to the smallest number of sequences detected in a 190 sample. No sample was excluded. To verify that sequencing depth allowed covering most of 191 the fungal diversity of our root samples, Good's coverage was calculated as $C = [1 - (n / N)] \times$ 192 100 (%), where "n" is the number of OTUs, and "N" is the number of sequences (Good, 1953). 193 Statistical analyses were performed with R software v.3.6.1 (R Development Core 194 Team, 2019). All the considered variables were tested for their homoscedasticity (Bartlett or 195 Levene tests) and normal distribution (Shapiro-Wilk test) and compared using analysis of

196 variance (ANOVA) followed by a Tukey HSD test. Where necessary, data were "log" 197 transformed to improve normality. Data that did not fit a normal distribution after 198 transformation were analysed with non-parametrical tests (Kruskal-Wallis test by ranks). First 199 we calculated and drew rarefaction curves for each experimental condition of nettle and poplar, 200 using "rarecurve" function available in the R Vegan package. The shape of the curve is a graphic 201 display of the relative estimated species accumulation rates. All diversity and richness indices 202 and the mean number of OTUs were then compared between all experimental conditions and 203 plants through ANOVA followed by a Tukey HSD test.

204 To summarize differences in fungal OTU composition between the experimental 205 conditions for both the I214 and Skado plots, we used two-dimensional non-metric Multi-Dimensional Scaling (NMDS) plots based on Bray-Curtis dissimilarity matrix (k = 2) using the 206 207 metaMDS function of the R Vegan package. Permutational multivariate analyses of variance 208 (PERMANOVA) based on Bray-Curtis dissimilarity were applied to determine the potential 209 effects of the plant species (nettle vs poplar) and the level of contamination (LTM vs HTM) on 210 fungal communities for both I214 and Skado plots. To assess the influence of the studied factors 211 on the fungal classes, genera, EM fungal taxa and guilds, the experimental conditions were 212 compared using a Kruskal-Wallis test, followed by a post-hoc test with a Holm correction of 213 the p-value.

214 NMDS and PERMANOVA analyses were further performed on the EM fungal guilds.
215 For the whole fungal community and the six most abundant guilds taken individually, for nettle
216 and poplar, we tested the correlation and the overlapping between the OTU composition using
217 Mantel test (ade4 package) and by calculating the Morisita-Horn similaritity index (SpadeR
218 package), respectively. The relative abundances of EM fungal OTUs were represented by a
219 heatmap, from the pheatmap R package. Similarly, a hierarchical cluster analysis of the relative

220	abundances of EM fungal OTUs from the various experimental conditions was represented by
221	a dendrogram expressing the linkage between species and between the experimental conditions.

222

225

223 **3. Results**

224 **3.1.** Diversity of mycobiome associated with nettle and poplar roots

Illumina MiSeq sequencing of ITS1 amplicons obtained from 26 root samples of poplar
and 25 root samples of nettle generated a total of 3,481,223 non-chimeric fungal sequences.
The initial total number of sequences obtained per sample ranged from 33,615 to 140,409. The
sample with the lowest number of sequences was selected for subsampling, revealing a total
number of 1833 non-singleton OTUs for 1,683,000 fungal reads, and constituting our final
dataset.

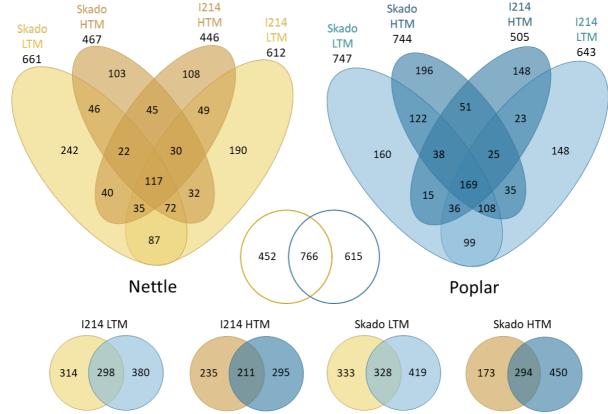
232 Table 1: Results of the Illumina MiSeq sequencing of ITS1 amplicons, including richness and diversity indices of the mycobiomes associated to I214 and Skado poplar roots, or to nettle 233 234 roots growing in the I214 or Skado plots, at low trace-metal (LTM) and the high trace-metal 235 (HTM) areas. Mean values and standard deviations (mean \pm SD) are provided for each experimental condition. The "total number of sequences" corresponds to datasets before 236 subsampling at 33,000 sequences, while the other parameters are calculated after subsampling. 237 238 Values designated with the same letters are not significantly different (Kruskal–Wallis test, P 239 < 0.05).

	NETTLE				POPLAR			
	LTM		HTM		LTM		HTM	
	I214	Skado	I214	Skado	I214	Skado	I214	Skado
Number of samples	6	6	6	7	6	7	6	7
Mean total number of sequences	52,264	73,778	68,434	70,185	69,479	63,116	55,243	61,067
Mean OTUs observed	175 ^{ab} (± 56)	168 ^{ab} (± 69)	122 ^b (± 23)	109 ^b (± 52)	178 ^{ab} (± 19)	196 ^a (± 30)	156 ^{ab} (± 38)	$204^{a}(\pm 43)$
Chao estimation	248° (± 56)	280 ^{bc} (± 61)	221° (± 25)	210° (± 64)	362 ^{ab} (± 31)	410 ^a (± 74)	232° (± 33)	358^{ab} (± 70)
Shannon index	$2.3^{ab}(\pm 0.8)$	$2.7^{a} (\pm 1.0)$	$2.2^{ab} (\pm 0.6)$	$1.4^{b}(\pm 1.0)$	$2.4^{ab} \ (\pm \ 0.5)$	$2.7^{a} (\pm 0.5)$	$2.9^{a} (\pm 0.7)$	$2.9^{a} (\pm 0.5)$
Inverse of Simpson diversity index	6.0 ^a (± 5.4)	8.9 ^a (± 6.1)	5.8 ^a (± 3.4)	3.1 ^a (± 2.8)	5.7 ^a (± 2.3)	7.7 ^a (± 5.3)	10.1 ^a (± 5.7)	8.9 ^a (± 6.1)

240

241 Rarefaction curves calculated for each experimental condition of nettle and poplar 242 tended to reach an asymptotic profile, suggesting that the sequencing depth was sufficient to cover the fungal diversity of our root samples. Additionally, the measured Good's coverage values were greater than 99% for each condition and in every sample, suggesting a representative sampling. Rarefaction curves for nettles clearly exhibited divergent trends in LTM vs. HTM areas. For a same number of reads on the asymptote, the HTM plots reached a number of OTUs reduced by approximately 30%, as compared to the LTM plots (Figure S1). Concerning poplar, the curve for the I214-HTM plot was clearly lower than those corresponding to the three other experimental conditions.

250 The total number of fungal OTUs was comparable for nettle (1218) and poplar (1321). 251 Among them, nettle and poplar shared 766 OTUs, representing 63% of the total number of 252 OTUs for nettle and 58% for poplar. The mean number of fungal OTUs associated with the 253 roots of nettle and poplar are detailed in Table 1 for each experimental condition. The highest 254 mean number of OTUs was obtained for Skado roots from the HTM area, whereas the lowest 255 was obtained for nettles within the same area, with a significant difference (P < 0.05). Only 256 7.1% and 7.5% of the total number of OTUs were shared between the four conditions for nettle 257 and poplar, respectively. Additionally, the percentage of OTUs specific to each condition 258 ranged between 8.5% and 19.9% for nettle and between 11.2% and 14.8% for poplar (Figure 259 1). For nettle, this number of specific OTUs was 2-fold higher in the LTM area (35.4%) 260 compared to the HTM area (17.3%), whereas it was comparable for poplar (23 vs 26%). 261 Depending on the experimental condition, nettle shared between 47.3% and 63.0% of their OTUs with poplar, while poplar shared between 39.5% and 44.0% of their OTUs with nettle 262 263 (Figure 1).



264

Figure 1: Venn diagrams showing the overlap of the fungal communities according to the poplar cultivar plot (I214 and Skado) and the level of TM in soil (LTM and HTM), for nettle (left) and poplar (right). These diagrams present the number of total (above the ellipses), specific (within non-intersected ellipses) and shared OTUs (intersected ellipses). The five couples of circles provide the total number of OTUs for nettle (left) and poplar (right) and the shared number (intersection) for the whole dataset (center) and for each experimental conditions (bottom).

273 While the obtained mean numbers of fungal OTUs were comparable between nettle and poplar, the estimated number of fungal OTUs (using the Chao model) showed a higher species 274 275 richness in poplar roots, except for the I214-HTM condition (Table 1). The species richness of 276 the HTM area was lower than the LTM area for nettle, while this tendency was only noticeable 277 for I214 poplars, as suggested by the rarefaction curves (Figure S1). For nettle, we collected an 278 average of 65% and 54% of the estimated number of OTUs (Chao estimation) for the LTM and 279 HTM areas, respectively, whereas we obtained 69% for HTM versus 48% for LTM for poplar. 280 Overall, when considering the individual diversity estimators related to poplar or nettle, no 281 apparent influence of the studied factors level of contamination was noticeable. However, 282 NMDS analysis revealed a clear clustering of fungal communities according to the plant species

283 (nettle vs poplar) and the level of contamination (LTM vs HTM) for the I214 and Skado plots 284 (Figure 2). Thus, while the fungal diversity did not seem to be significantly influenced by the experimental condition (Table 1), the fungal composition of nettle and poplar appeared 285 286 contrasted and affected by the level of TM contamination and the plant species (Figure 2). NMDS and PERMANOVA indicated substantial differences in the composition of fungal 287 288 communities between nettle and poplar (Figure 2), the plant species factor explaining 24% and 289 17% of the variance in the fungal community for I214 and Skado plots, respectively (P < 0.001; 290 Table S1). The level of TM had a significant effect on the fungal communities, both for nettle 291 grown under I214 (28%) and Skado (37%) and for poplar, although to a lesser extent (26% for 292 I214, and 16% for I214 Skado) (all P < 0.01; Figure 2, Table S1).

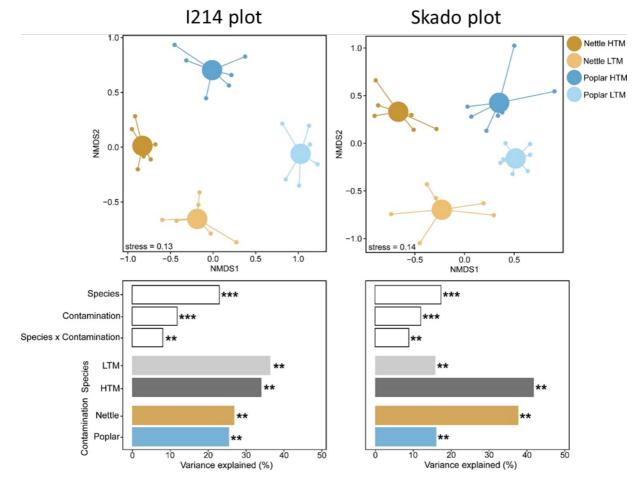


Figure 2: Non-parametric multidimensional scaling (NMDS) plot of fungal communities associated with nettles and poplars grown at LTM and HTM areas, for I214 (left) and Skado (right) plots, using the Bray Curtis dissimilarity measure. Small and large circles represent the individual samples and the centroids of the different temperatures, respectively. Results from a

293

298 *PERMANOVA* analysis for plant species ("species") and level of TM ("contamination") 299 factors and their interaction, and conducted separately by species (contamination effect) and 300 contamination (species effect) are provided under each NMDS, with the following legend: ***, 301 P < 0.001; **, P < 0.01; *P < 0.05. 302

303

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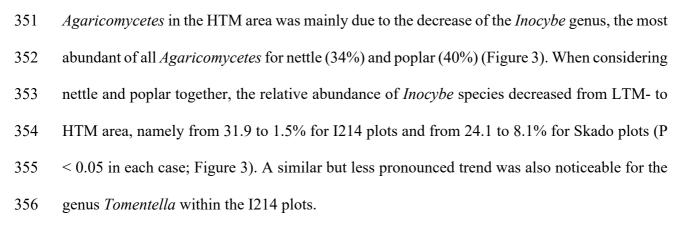
3.2. Taxonomic characterization of the mycobiome of nettle and poplar roots

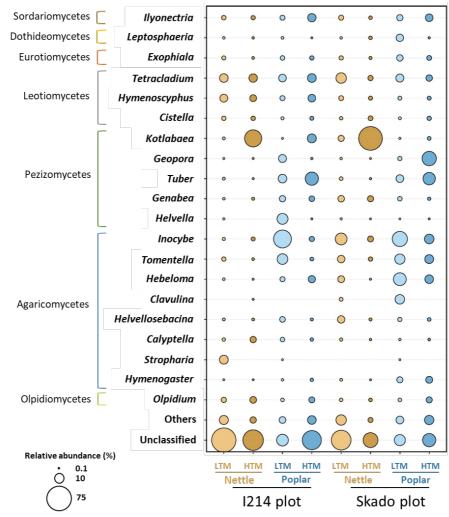
The fungal communities associated with roots of plants growing at the sediment disposal site studied were dominated by the phylum *Ascomycota* in nettle roots (84.5% of total relative abundance) whereas *Basidiomycota* (43.2%) and *Ascomycota* (52.3%) were more equally represented in poplar roots (the *Ascomycota/Basidiomycota* ratio was significantly higher for nettle than for poplar; P < 0.05).

310 Among all samples, we detected 29 and 28 distinct fungal classes for nettle and poplar, 311 respectively. Among them, the most abundant classes were Pezizomycetes, Agaricomycetes, 312 Leotiomycetes, Dothideomycetes, Sordariomycetes, Mortierellomycetes, Eurotiomycetes and 313 Olpidiomycetes (total relative abundance of each > 0.5%; Figure S2). For this study, Dothideomycetes and Leotiomycetes, as abundant classes, characterized the mycobiome of 314 315 nettle roots. In contrast, poplar roots were characterized by Agaricomycetes, representing 20-316 66% of all sequences, depending on the experimental condition (Figure S2). Pezizomycetes 317 were also well represented and similarly abundant in both plants.

318 For poplars, 79% of the fungal sequences were successfully assigned to a genus (73%) 319 for I214 vs 85% for Skado), whereas only 54% were successfully assigned for nettle (Figure 3). 320 The genus Kotlabaea was the most abundant genus associated in nettle roots (26.5% of the total 321 number of fungi associated with nettle), followed by three unknown genera belonging to 322 Helotiales (17.5%), Didymosphaeriaceae (8.7%) and Phaeosphaeriaceae (5.8%). The genera 323 Tetracladium (5.7%) and Hymenoscyphus (2.5%) were the most abundant nettle-associated 324 Leotiomycetes and were also present in poplar roots with comparable relative abundances 325 (Figure 3). For poplar, the most abundant genera were *Inocybe* (17.1% of the total number of fungi associated with poplar), *Tuber* (10.8%), *Hebeloma* (7.3%), *Tomentella* (6.9%) and *Geopora* (7.1%), the latter being almost absent in nettle roots (< 0.02%) (Figure 3). The genus *Olpidium* (*Olpidiomycetes*), accounting for 1.3% and 1.4% of the fungal sequences for nettle and poplar, respectively, was also well represented.

330 We detected significant differences in terms of fungal composition between the two 331 poplar cultivars. Tomentella, Geopora, Hymenogaster, Hebeloma and Clavulina were more 332 represented in roots of the Skado cultivar, while Helvella and Kotlabaea were mostly associated 333 with I214 cultivar (P < 0.05), but each of these trends were only significant for one of the two 334 considered areas (*i.e.*, LTM or HTM; P < 0.05; Figure 3, Table S2). Differences were also 335 noticed between mycobiomes of nettles grown in I214 plots (high density of nettle) and those 336 grown in Skado plots (low density of nettle). Inocybe, Genabea, Helvellosebacina and 337 *Hebeloma* were more abundant in roots of nettles grown in the Skado plot (P < 0.05), whereas 338 *Olpidium* and *Calyptella* were more abundant in the I214 plot (P < 0.05). These results were 339 significant for only one of the two considered areas (Figure 3, Table S2). Pezizomycetes were 340 significantly influenced by TM contamination : first, their relative abundance was significantly 341 higher at the HTM area for nettles, both the I214 (10% for LTM vs. 32% for HTM; P < 0.05) and Skado (7% vs. 68%; P < 0.05) plots. Second, the same trend was observed on poplar but 342 only statistically supported for the Skado cultivar, (6% vs. 41%; P < 0.05; Figure S2). Among 343 344 Pezizomycetes, the genus *Kotlabaea* significantly increased in the HTM area (for I214 plots: 345 0.1% vs. 31.7%; for Skado plots: 2.5% vs. 65.1%; P < 0.05; Figure 3). Similarly, the genus 346 Tuber was more represented in the poplar roots collected from the HTM area (for the I214 347 cultivar: 6.2 % vs. 17.6%; for the Skado cultivar 4.6% vs. 15.2%; P), however, the high 348 between-sample variability did not allow to statistically support this. Agaricomycetes associated 349 with both poplar and nettle were influenced by TM as their abundance was significantly reduced 350 in the HTM areas (P < 0.05), except for nettle in the I214 plots (Figure S2). This reduction of





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Figure 3: Relative abundance of the 20 most represented fungal genera (based on the taxonomic assignment of OTUs), belonging to 7 classes, according to the level of TM in soil (LTM and HTM) for nettle (orange bubbles) and poplar (blue bubbles) grown in the I214 or Skado plots. The classes with a relative abundance <0.5% have been gathered in the "others" group. For each genus, the related results from Kruskal–Wallis pairwise or Tukey HSD tests are provided in the Table S2.

364 365

3.3. Functional characterization of the mycobiome of nettle and poplar roots

366 Among the 1218 and 1321 fungal OTUs recorded in nettle and poplar roots (Figure 1), 367 70.4% and 83.1%, respectively, were successfully assigned to a functional guild with at least a 368 "probable" confidence ranking using FUNguild (Nguyen et al., 2016). This functional 369 assignment revealed a majority of saprotrophic fungi (from 18 to 69% depending on the 370 condition), followed by plant pathogens (6 - 15%) and EM fungi (1 - 30%) in the nettle roots 371 whereas EM fungi (26 - 75%), mainly represented by *Tomentella*, *Geopora*, *Hymenogaster*, 372 Hebeloma and Clavulina genera, were the most abundant guild in poplar roots (Figure 4). This 373 guild was significantly more abundant in roots of Skado poplar, compared to I214 poplar (63% 374 vs 26% for HTM area, P < 0.05; Figure 4). EM fungi were abundant on nettle roots and, for the 375 LTM area, even more on nettle grown with the Skado cultivar than on those grown with I214 376 (30% vs 2%; P < 0.05). Endophytes were poorly represented in the poplar roots in contrast to 377 nettle (0.1% vs. 9.2% of all sequences; P < 0.05; Figure 4). Twelve OTUs assigned to AM fungi 378 were found in nettle and poplar roots, accounting for less than 0.05% of all sequences (not 379 shown). Plant pathogenic fungi were equally represented in poplar and nettle roots, without any 380 influence of the studied factors (Figure 4).

381 Functional guild also revealed several differences between soil contamination levels. 382 Indeed, the relative abundance of nettle saprotrophs was higher in the HTM area (statistically 383 supported only for the Skado plots; P < 0.05) (Figure 4). This result was driven by *Kotlabaea*, 384 the most abundant genus within this guild (Figure 3): an unidentified species from this genus, accounting for 66% of all the saprotrophs associated with nettle, was indeed significantly more 385 386 present in the HTM areas (P < 0.001). EM fungi associated with poplar (particularly *Inocybe* 387 and Tuber) and nettle (particularly Inocybe) tended to decrease in the HTM area, which was 388 statistically supported for I214 plot in the case of poplar (75% vs 26%, P < 0.05) and for Skado 389 plot in the case of nettle (30% vs 6%; P < 0.05; Figure 4).

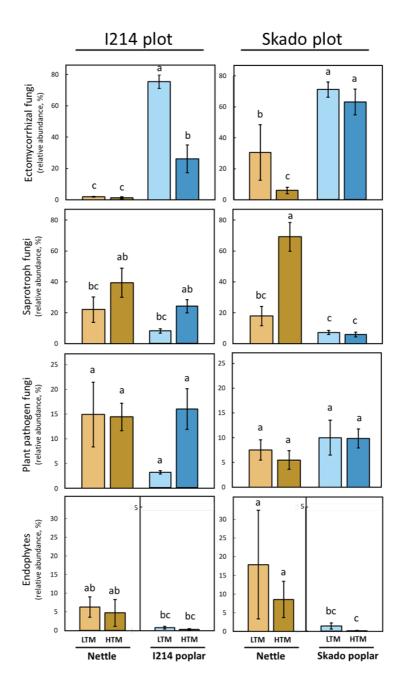


Figure 4: Relative abundance of the four most abundant fungal guilds associated with nettles and poplars grown at the LTM or HTM area, for I214 (left) and Skado (right) plots. Data are the means \pm SE (n = 6 or 7). For each class, bars designated with the same letter(s) are not significantly different (Kruskal–Wallis, P < 0.05).

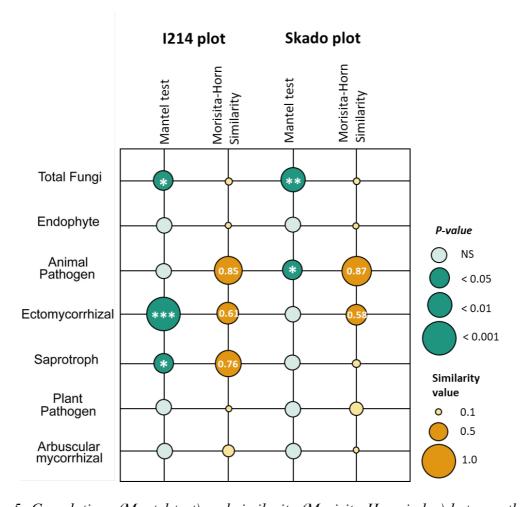
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3.4. Overlap of poplar and nettle microbial communities

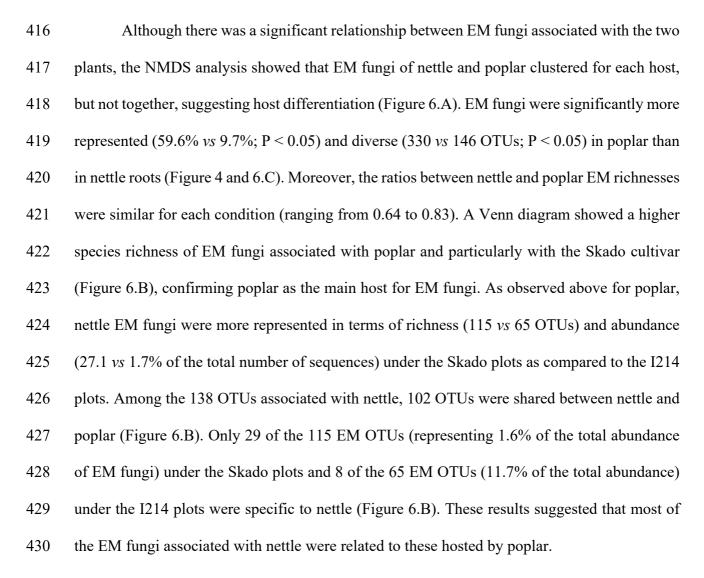
397 According to the Mantel test, nettle and poplar total fungal communities under I214 (P 398 < 0.05) or Skado (P < 0.01) plots were significantly correlated (Figure 5), while the 399 corresponding Morisita-Horn similarity index did not corroborate this result. However, 400 similarity indexes and Mantel tests converged for nettle and poplar root-associated animal 401 pathogenic fungi, EM fungi and saprotrophs that were significantly correlated (Mantel test, P < 402 (0.05) and overlapped (Morisita-Horn index < 0.5; Figure 5). Despite the low relative abundance 403 of EM fungi on nettle under I214 plots (Figure 4), nettle and poplar composition of EM fungi 404 were strongly correlated (P < 0.001, Figure 5) for I214, while it was not the case for Skado 405 plots. Interestingly, the saprotrophic guild of the two plant species were only correlated and 406 overlapped at I214 plots, where the most abundant genera Kotlabaea was driving the trend. 407 Consequently, these results suggested that nettle and poplar roots shared large part of their 408 fungal communities.

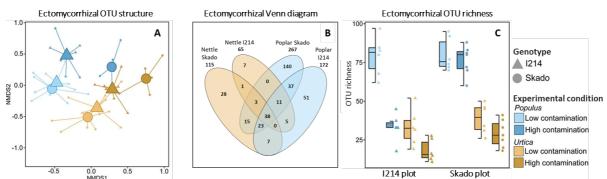


409

Figure 5: Correlations (Mantel test) and similarity (Morisita-Horn index) between the OTUs
composition of nettle and poplar, for the whole fungal community ("Total Fungi") and the six

- 412 most abundant guilds depending on the poplar cultivar plot. The size of the circles is
- 413 proportional to the P-value for the Mantel test and to the index value for Morisita-Horn. Two
- 414 communities with a Morisita-Horn index ≥ 0.5 are considered similar. P-value of the Mantel
- 415 tests are represented with the following legend***, P < 0.001; **, P < 0.01; *P < 0.01





431 431 Figure 6: (A) Non-metric multidimensional scaling (NMDS) analysis of the EM fungal guild
432 structure associated to poplar or nettle roots, (B) a Venn diagram based on EM OTUs and (C)
434 the EM OTU richness, depending on the plant species (poplar or nettle), the poplar cultivar
435 plot and the level of contamination (LTM and HTM).
436

40 -

437 According to a hierarchical cluster analysis of the relative abundances of EM fungal
438 OTUs , LTM poplars were mostly colonized by the EM *Inocybe rimosa, Tomentella sp.,*

439 Helvella elastica, Inocybe semifulva, Clavulina sp. and Hebeloma eburneum (Figure S3). The 440 EM OTUs Geopora cervina and Tuber rapaeodorum were abundant in roots of poplar grown 441 at the HTM area (Figure S3). Most of these taxa were poorly represented in the nettle roots, 442 except for *Inocybe rimosa*, which was the most abundant EM fungus in both plants (Figure S3). 443 Indeed, this species accounted for 4% of nettle sequences (95% from the Skado plots) and 444 12.3% of poplar sequences (52% from the Skado plots). Additionally, this species was more 445 abundant in roots of nettle grown with the Skado cultivar (P < 0.05), and when associated with 446 poplar, it was sensitive to the soil contamination (P < 0.05) (Figure S3).

447

448 **4. Discussion**

449

4.1. EM fungi dominated the poplar mycobiome

450 In this study, the mycobiome associated with poplar roots were clearly dominated by 451 several EM fungal species, such as the Agaricomycetes Inocybe rimosa, Tomentella sp., and 452 Hebeloma spp., and the Pezizomycetes Tuber rapeodorum and Geopora cervina. We also 453 detected the presence of AM fungi belonging to the *Rhizophagus* and *Glomus* genera, although with a rather low number of sequences (< 0.001%), partially due to the choice that was made 454 455 to target the ITS1 region, which is not the most adapted region for the study of Glomeromycota 456 (Beeck et al., 2014). The recorded EM fungal species are known fungal symbionts of poplar 457 (Podila et al., 2009) that improve plant health by enhancing resistance to diverse stresses like 458 drought, salinity, heavy metals and pathogens, etc. (van der Heijden et al., 2015). Particularly, 459 they facilitate the adaptation of plants to TE stress, promoting host growth and 460 phytomanagement of TM-contaminated soils (Gil-Martínez et al., 2018).

In a previous study on a Hg-enriched sediment disposal site, the same experimental design was set up in 2011. Durand et al. (2017) showed that EM fungi, and particularly the *Tuber* and *Geopora* genera also dominated the roots of Skado poplar at this site. These taxa seemed to be largely abundant in TM contaminated sites (Bonito et al., 2014; Guevara et al., 465 2013; Lacercat-Didier et al., 2016). Moreover, these EM fungi were not only related to the physico-chemical properties of these sites, but rather to the juvenil tree stage that promotes 466 467 some Pezizales (Geopora spp., Tuber spp.) or Agaricales (Inocybe spp.) (Foulon et al., 2016b; 468 Hrynkiewicz et al., 2010; Lacercat-Didier et al., 2016). Hebeloma or Inocybe species, which 469 were well represented at the studied site, are "early stage" fungi capable of colonizing roots of 470 trees established in virgin or disturbed habitats (Smith and Read, 2010). In our dataset, only 7% 471 of the variability were explained by the cultivar factor when performing a PERMANOVA on 472 the poplar dataset (data not shown), indicating that the mycobiomes of Skado and I214 roots 473 were comparable, consistently our previous results (Foulon et al., 2016a): in our previous work, 474 the mycobiome of eight poplar cultivars grown at a TM-contaminated site, exhibited slight differences, especially between I214 and Skado roots. Together with the present study, the only 475 476 discrepancy between the two communities concerned the Laccaria genus, only recorded under 477 the I214 cultivar in small abundance. This similarity between the two studies might be linked 478 to the similar TM composition of the two sites and the similar age of the poplar plantation (7-479 years in Foulon et al., (2016a) vs 6-years in the present study).

480

4.2. Saprotroph and endophytic fungi dominated the nettle root mycobiome

481 The overall fungal composition of nettle roots differed from that of poplar, despite their 482 co-occurrence. Most of the dominant species associated with nettles were only assigned to the 483 family or order level, reflecting a lack of information concerning the nettle mycobiome. 484 Dominant species on nettle roots were mostly endophytic or pathogenic fungi, such as 485 Tetracladium sp., Olpidium spp., or saprotroph belonging to the Helotiales and Pleosporales 486 orders as previously observed for the non-mycorrhizal plant Arabis alpina (Almario et al., 487 2017). The most abundant OTU was assigned to the Kotlabaea genus, accounting for more than 488 26% of all sequences. This species belongs to the Pyronemataceae, one of the largest family of 489 Pezizales traditionally considered saprotrophic, although the trophic strategies of most species 490 remain undocumented (Perry et al., 2007). Indeed, an increasing number of them are being identified as EM (Tedersoo et al., 2010). We classified *Kotlabaea* spp. as saprotrophic based
on (Tedersoo et al., 2014), but uncertainties remained. Overall, knowledge about taxonomy and
functional role of these root-associated fungi of nettle needs to be enriched by fungal isolation
and characterisation experiments, which has not yet been performed to our knowledge.

495 496

4.3. The degree of contamination differently affected the mycobiomes of poplar and nettle

497 According to a previous pedogeochemical characterization of the soils from the two 498 areas, Zn and Cd concentrations were the most contrasted parameters between the two areas 499 (Phanthavongsa et al., 2017). Other soil parameters were rather comparable, suggesting that the 500 level of TM is one of the main factor influencing the soil fungal communities.

A slight reduction of fungal diversity was noticed for plants grown at the most contaminated area (HTM), which is commonly observed (Bååth, 1989; Giller et al., 2009). Indeed, while certain fungal microorganisms can tolerate large concentrations of non-essential heavy metals (*e.g.* Al, As, Cd, Hg, Pb), plant mycobiome is generally affected (Gadd, 2010). Other studies showed that TM tended to reduce the amount of soil microbial biomass as well as the species richness, changing microbial structure in favor of tolerant taxa and modifying the soil functioning (Giller et al., 1998, 2009).

508 Some mycorrhizal fungi isolated from contaminated soils develop adaptations to 509 tolerate metals (Colpaert et al., 2011; Gonçalves et al., 2009), which make them particularly 510 suitable for phytomanagement applications. Indeed, plants inoculated with metal-tolerant EM 511 fungi (Adriaensen et al., 2005; Redon et al., 2009) or DSE (Likar and Regvar, 2013) showed 512 enhanced tolerance when compared to plants inoculated with non-tolerant strains. In our 513 observations, Agaricomycetes, and particularly the Inocybe and Tomentella genera, when 514 associated with nettle or poplar, were the most impacted by contamination. Although 515 significantly reduced, these two EM fungi were still well represented at the heavily 516 contaminated area on poplar roots. Additionally, the Inocybe genus has already been isolated

(Repáč, 1996), and successfully tested as an inoculum strain on coniferous trees (FloresRentería et al., 2018), which supports its interest in bioremediation applications. Their
usefulness and functional importance in nettle plantation deserves further analyses (see below).

In our study, members of the Pezizomycetes seemed to be the most tolerant fungi as the *Kotlabaea* genus associated with nettle and the *Tuber* genus, associated with poplars, were more represented in the area with the highest concentration of Cd, Zn, Cu and Pb. This increase of Perizomycetes related to soil contamination has already been detected in hydrocarboncontaminated soils (Bell et al., 2014; Tardif et al., 2016). Indeed, an untested possibility is that hydrocarbons are also present at our site because canals dredged sediments generally contain various contaminants (Besser et al., 1996; King et al., 2006).

527

4.4. A significant fraction of EM fungi were shared by poplar and nettle roots

Despite the noticeable differences mentioned above in terms of fungal composition 528 529 between nettle and poplar, our results suggested that their respective mycobiome could be 530 influenced by the other when co-occurring. More specifically, fungal taxa associated with 531 abundant plants seemed more likely to colonize neighbouring plants than if the later were alone. 532 Indeed, taxa characteristics of the nettle mycobiome (e.g. Helvella, Kotlabaea) where more 533 represented in the I214 plot where nettle covered up to 60% of the herbaceous layer, compared 534 to the Skado plot where nettle and other plants were rare. Similarly, an influence of Skado 535 poplar on the mycobiome of neighbouring nettles was possibly detected, since a significant part 536 (9.7%) of EM OTUs, which were characteristic of poplars mycobiomes, contributed to the 537 mycobiome of nettle roots, which might be surprising as this plant is a recognised non-538 mycorrhizal plant (Vierheilig et al., 1996). Nettle roots were carefully washed and sorted, 539 making contaminations by the adjacent soil or poplar roots unlikely. Yet their presence on the 540 rhizoplane or as true endophytes (*i.e.* with root penetration) deserves further investigations.

541 Indded, the ability of some EM fungi to colonize AM (and more generally non-EM)
542 plants has already been described for several clades based on molecular detection and direct

543 observations, mainly for Sebacinaceae (Selosse et al., 2009; Weiß et al., 2011) and Tuber spp. 544 (Gryndler et al., 2014; Schneider-Maunoury et al., 2018, 2020). In addition, some suspicion 545 exists, based on molecular detection only, for Thelephoraceae and Inocybaceae (Schneider-546 Maunoury et al., 2018, 2020), Pyronemataceae (Hansen et al., 2013) and Helotiales (Wang et 547 al., 2006). Such a dual, EM and endophytic interaction has been viewed as a persistence of the 548 evolutionary past of EM fungi, if they evolved from endophytic species: in the so-called 549 'waiting room hypothesis', endophytism is considered as a niche from which the tighter and 550 more elaborate mycorrhizal symbiosis can evolve (Schneider-Maunoury et al., 2018; Selosse et 551 al., 2009; van der Heijden et al., 2015). It was recently commentated that many fungi have more 552 complex niches (e.g., dual niches) than what is commonly agreed, which could be explained by 553 such evolutionary trajectories (Selosse et al., 2018, Thoen et al., 2020).

554 Recently, Taschen et al. (2020) demonstrated that Tuber melanosporum growth gains 555 benefit from the non-EM plants it colonizes, while it has a negative effect on them. 556 Additionally, the EM trees colonized by this fungus as ectomycorrhizal partners gain, at least 557 in terms of nitrogen content, from the interaction between truffles and non-EM plants. The 558 possibility of an overlooked interaction between EM- and AM- or non-mycorrhizal plants 559 growing close to host trees is further supported by the fact that connection and the exchange of 560 carbon between plant sharing the same belowground ectomycorrhizal network were 561 demonstrated for trees (Klein et al., 2016; Selosse et al., 2006), even when one of the plant was herbaceous (Selosse et al., 2009). The functional implications for plants of an extensive sharing 562 563 of non-mycorrhizal fungi remained unclear and highly dependant on the plant-fungus 564 association. In case they are beneficial, and this happens even for non-mycorrhizal endophytic 565 fungi such as dark septate endophytes in non-mycorrhizal plants (Liu et al., 2017; Yung et al., 566 2021), there may be mutual reinforcement of the two plant species by way of coordinated 567 responses to stresses, nutritional sharing, etc. Yet, the benefit can be asymmetric, or even relevant for one plant species only. Moreover, an intriguing possibility is pathogen spillover (Mordecai, 2011), *i.e.* one plant promotes the spread of pathogens that harm competitors more strongly than itself. In this context, further investigations are now necessary to conclude about the exact nature and functionality of this poplar-nettle EM sharing and its consequence for this agroforestry system.

573 Inocybe rimosa, the most abundant EM fungal species found on nettle roots, accounting 574 for approximately 4% of the total fungal sequences, is a major candidate for such studies. The 575 presence of *I. rimosa* is reported in TM-polluted soils (Huang et al., 2012; Krpata et al., 2009) 576 and, although its ability to colonize roots of non-EM plant has not been previously investigated, 577 Inocybaceae were already detected in some AM plants (Schneider-Maunoury et al., 2018). Any 578 facilitation mechanism through EM fungi could contribute to the dominance of nettles within 579 Salicaceous SRC in natural (Cronk et al., 2016) and contaminated sites (Yung et al., 2019). 580 However, further research about the mycobiome of nettle roots and particularly in the case of 581 co-cropping at phytomanagement sites, especially to assess morphological (e.g. by fluorescent 582 in-situ hybridization; Schneider-Maunoury et al., 2020) and functional evidence of interactions 583 with EM fungi, is now awaited. I. rimosa is present in the CBS Filamentous fungi and Yeast 584 Collection as CBS 210.55. It will be used in further experiments, for poplar x nettle experiments 585 to test its growth between the two plants and assess its positive or negative or no influence on 586 nettle.

As a conclusion, we taxonomically and functionnaly characterized the fungal microbiomes of a spontaneous species (*i.e.*, *Urtica dioica* L.) co-occuring with cultivated crops (*i.e.*, *Populus* spp.) at a phytomanaged area contaminated with TM. Our results suggested that nettle and poplar had distinct root-associated fungal communities, albeit sharing many common ectomycorrhizal fungi and particularly the genus *Inocybe*, which is surprising given the nonmycorrhizal status of nettle. These results suggest to reconsider the ecological niches of fungi.

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- 602

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