

1 Soil microbial diversity and network complexity promote phosphorus
2 transformation – A case of long-term mixed plantations of *Eucalyptus* and
3 nitrogen-fixing tree species

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19 ¹ These authors contributed equally to this work.

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28 **Abstract**

29 Increased nitrogen (N) availability influences soil phosphorus (P) cycling
30 through multiple pathways. Soil microorganisms are essential facilitating a wide
31 range of ecosystem functions. However, the impact of mixed plantations of
32 *Eucalyptus* and N-fixing tree species affect P transformation and microbiota
33 interactions remains unknown. Therefore, we conducted a 17-year field experiment
34 comparing pure *Eucalyptus* plantations (PPs) and mixed plantations (MPs) with
35 *Eucalyptus* and N-fixing tree species to assess their effects of soil P transformation,
36 using data collected from two soil layers (0-10 cm and 10-20 cm). The results showed
37 that α -diversity indices (ACE and Chao1 and Shannon indices) were significantly
38 higher in MPs than in PPs for both bacteria and fungi. Furthermore, MPs exhibited
39 significantly higher relative abundances of bacterial phyla *Proteobacteria* (0–10 cm),
40 *Verrucomicrobia*, and *Rokubacteria*, as well as fungal phyla *Mortierllomycota*,
41 *Mucoromycota*, and *Rozellomycota*. Conversely, MPs showed lower abundances of
42 the bacterial phyla *Chloroflexi*, *Actinobacteria*, and *Planctomycetes* and fungal
43 phylum *Ascomycota*. Gene copy numbers of functional genes were also elevated in
44 MPs, including 16S rRNA, internal transcribed spacer (ITS), N functional genes [*nifH*
45 (0–10 cm), *AOB-amoA*, *narG*, *nirS*, and *nosZ* (0–10 cm)], and P functional genes
46 [*phoC*, *phoD* (0–10 cm), *BPP*, and *pqqC*]. The findings indicated that MPs can
47 enhance soil microbial diversity, network complexity, and the relative abundance of
48 functional genes which involved N- and P- transformation by optimizing soil nutrient
49 levels and pH, thereby facilitating P transformation. Therefore, MPs of *Eucalyptus*

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106 and N-fixing tree species may represent a promising forest management strategy to
107 improve ecosystem P benefits.

108

109 **Keywords:** Co-occurrence network; functional gene; mixed plantation; N-fixing
110 species; phosphorous transformation

111

1. Introduction

Phosphorus (P) a vital macronutrient for plant and microbial growth (Turner et al., 2018), while the availability of P serves as a key indicator of soil fertility and quality (Peng et al., 2021). In most ecosystems particularly in tropical and subtropical forests, P bioavailable in soil is often limited due to intense weathering and the presence of aluminium (Al) ions and free iron (Fe) (Soltangheisi et al., 2019; Du et al., 2020). Therefore, these P reserves cannot be accessed directly by plants (Fan et al., 2019). However, plants and microorganisms have developed various strategies for access P from inorganic (Pi) and organic (Po) reservoirs and rendering it available for biological processes (including, e.g., assimilation by phosphate-solubilizing microorganisms and mineralization of enzymes) (Lu et al., 2022). Consequently, it is crucial to implement strategies for the sustainable management of soil P to enhance its utilization by plants, preserve soil quality, and mitigate the risk of P loss.

Soil microorganisms serve as both a reservoir and a source of phosphate ions, significantly influencing the availability of P. In addition, microorganisms play a role in maintaining soil functions such as nutrient cycling, biological activity, and plant growth, all of which are crucial for sustaining soil quality and fertility (Bünemann et al., 2008; Zhou et al., 2018; Sun et al., 2022). Microorganisms facilitate the P transformation by participating in the processes of P mineralization, solubilization, and cycling, converting P into bioavailable forms for plant uptake (Pastore et al., 2020). Specifically, the mineralization of Po is facilitated by the extracellular presence of phosphatases, which are mainly produced principally by soil microorganisms (Nannipieri et al., 2012). It is thus of both extracellular acid (ACP) and alkaline (ALP)

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191 phosphatase activities are commonly used as the indicators to assess the
 192 mineralization of P_o to bioavailable P_i (Luo et al., 2019). Furthermore, P
 193 transformation is influenced by the α -diversity, structure, and composition of soil
 194 microbial communities, with pH being considered a key determinant in shaping
 195 microbial diversity and community composition (Jin et al., 2019). Microbiome
 196 co-occurrence networks are prevalently employed to scrutinize the interrelationships
 197 within microbial communities, and network attributes (e.g., the mean degree, edge
 198 quantity, and node amount) can be utilized to appraise the reciprocal ties among these
 199 communities and their reactions to modifications in cultivation paradigms (Faust,
 200 2021; Qiu et al., 2021). Microbial network analysis can uncover the complex
 201 interactions between microorganisms, such as competition, cooperation, and
 202 antagonism, while also shedding light on important ecological processes and
 203 functional relationships that are not fully captured by microbial diversity analysis
 204 alone. For instance, it can reveal processes like the transformation and cycling of key
 205 soil nutrients (e.g., P and N), which are often overlooked in traditional diversity
 206 assessments (Yao et al., 2024). Thus, gaining insight into the relationship between
 207 microbial diversity, microbial network complexity, and the transformation and cycling
 208 of P is crucial for improving soil functions and enhancing soil fertility.
 209 The studies on genes involved in P cycling also emphasizes the contribution of
 210 microbes in enhancing plant P uptake and efficiency (Dai et al., 2020). The P cycle
 211 cluster includes genes that stimulate the mineralization of P_o (e.g., *phoD*, *phoC*, and
 212 *BPP*) (Cao et al., 2022; Khan et al., 2023) and solubilization of P_i (e.g., *pqqC*) (Meyer

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245 et al., 2011). The genes *phoD/phoC* encode phosphatases, which are capable of
 246 mineralizing Po compounds into Pi (Fraser et al., 2015). N is a fundamental element
 247 for plant growth and development, typically coupled with P in biogeochemical cycles.
 248 The N cycle group consists of genes responsible for microbially driven nitrification
 249 (e.g. AOB-*amoA*), N fixation (e.g. *nifH*), and denitrification (e.g. *nirS*). Improved
 250 interaction networks among soil microbial functional groups contribute to increasing
 251 nutrient availability and enhancing the nutrient acquisition of host plants (Shi et al.,
 252 2020; Qin et al., 2024). In addition, given that both N and P are essential elements for
 253 microorganisms, an increase in N content can influence soil pH, which subsequently
 254 alters the composition of soil microbial communities and impacts the abundance of
 255 phosphatase-coding genes (*phoC* and *phoD*) (Widdig et al., 2020). Furthermore, the
 256 presence of N-fixing plants also affects P uptake by enhancing litter decomposition
 257 rates and the release of organic acids from microbial biomass, thereby accelerating
 258 nutrient cycling and improving soil fertility (Li et al., 2021). Therefore, studying the
 259 coupling of N and P cycling in soil is crucial for understanding of the diversity and
 260 mechanisms of microbially driven biogeochemical cycles.
 261 *Eucalyptus* is characterized by their straight trunks, well-developed horizontal root
 262 systems, and high adaptability. They are prevalent in subtropical and tropical regions,
 263 where they have significant economic and ecological value (Zhang and Wang, 2021).
 264 However, monocultures and short-term rotation management of *Eucalyptus* plantation
 265 have led to soil degradation, reductions in soil nutrient effectiveness (e.g., the
 266 availability of nutrients such as N, and P, in forms that can be absorbed and utilized by
 267 plants), and soil microbial function and diversity, as well as other adverse ecological

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302 effects. Mixed-species forests exert a strong positive impact on soil fertility and
 303 nutrient cycling by regulating the microbiome, including its diversity and structure
 304 (Pereira et al., 2019, Li et al., 2024). Recently, incorporating N-fixing trees species
 305 such as *Acacia* as a substitute for N fertilization has become widely acknowledged, as
 306 one of the most effective silvicultural practices for enhancing tree N uptake, and
 307 woody production in *Eucalyptus* plantations (Koutika and Mareschal, 2017; Epihov et
 308 al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2023). In addition, mixing with N-fixing tree species improves
 309 N availability, P accumulation, microbial diversity, and forms a more complex and
 310 interconnected microbial network compared to pure plantations (Li et al., 2022; He et
 311 al., 2024; Yao et al., 2021). However, the effects of mixing N-fixing and non-N-fixing
 312 tree species on the complexity of microbial networks in soil N and P cycles show no
 313 significant difference. Extensive studies have explored the influence of mixed-species
 314 afforestation on soil fertility, nutrient cycling, and microbial diversity in *Eucalyptus*
 315 plantations, highlighting the potential benefits of incorporating N-fixing tree species
 316 (Yao et al., 2024; Ye et al., 2024). Nevertheless, the effects of mixing N-fixing trees
 317 species on regulating the correlations between microbial diversity and network of P
 318 transformation, is still poorly understood. Phosphomonoesterase (e.g., ACP)
 319 mineralization is an essential strategy for P transformation (Luo et al., 2019; Yu et al.,
 320 2022; Wang et al., 2023), so we employed soil ACP activity to analyse the dynamics
 321 of P transformation. Here, we aimed to (1) compare the variations in the structure,
 322 diversity, and stability of soil microbial communities after mixing *Eucalyptus* with
 323 N-fixing tree species, and (2) elucidate the mechanisms through which fungal and
 324 bacterial communities, along with genes associated with N and P transformation
 325 processes, regulate P transformation. We hypothesized that (1) mixed-species
 326 plantations of *Eucalyptus* and N-fixing tree species would alter the composition of

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删除了: Planting *Eucalyptus* in a mixture with other trees has been demonstrated to enhance nutrient cycling efficiency, soil fertility, and overall productivity (Koutika and Mareschal, 2017; Epihov et al., 2021). *Acacia* are widely planted in South China because they require less or no fewer exogenous N from the soil, due to their N-fixing capacity (Räsänen et al., 2001). Mixed plantations that include N-fixing trees such as *Acacia* can significantly boost productivity and enhance organic carbon sequestration, thereby improving soil fertility and contributing to climate change mitigation (Marron and Epron, 2019; Zhang et al., 2023). Nevertheless,

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355 soil microbial communities and improve microbial community diversity and network
356 complexity in the soil; (2) introduction of N-fixing tree species may cause imbalance
357 in soil properties (e.g., SOC, pH and so on), microbial diversity and networks
358 complexity, and related functional genes which co-regulated the P transformation with
359 differential roles. Our findings will provide more new insights into sustainable
360 management practices for plantations.

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361 2. Materials and methods

362 2.1. Site description

363 The study was conducted in the Shaoping Experimental Field at the
364 Experimental Center for Tropical Forestry, which is affiliated with the Chinese
365 Academy of Forestry (106°56'E, 22°03'N). The area has a subtropical climate, with
366 approximately 1,400 mm of rainfall annually and maintaining an average yearly
367 temperature of 21.2°C. The landscape is characterized by low mountains and hills
368 along with acidic red soil. Forests in this area are primarily composed of
369 commercially managed plantations, as either pure or mixed stands.

370 2.2. Plot design and sampling

371 In this study, the pure (monoculture) *Eucalyptus urophylla* plantations (PPs) and
372 adjacent mixed plantations (MPs) of *Eucalyptus urophylla* and *Acacia mangium*
373 (N-fixing tree species) were established in 2004 on the logging tracks of *Pinus*
374 *massoniana* plantations that were established in 1977. The MPs were planted at a 1:1
375 mixing ratio with inter-row planting, consisting of one row of *Eucalyptus urophylla*
376 and one row of *Acacia mangium*. In the first two consecutive years post-planting, both
377 plantations were subjected to a similar stand management regime, which included
378 practices such as weed control and fertilization, subsequently allowing them to
379 proceed with their natural stand development. The experimental design is described in

删除了: after the long-term mixed planting of *Eucalyptus* and N-fixing tree species remains unclear. We put forward the hypothesized that (1) introducing N-fixing tree species into *Eucalyptus* plantation mixing would alter the composition of soil microbial communities and increase microbial diversity and network complexity in the soil; (2) the soil P transformation driven by N-fixing tree species tree species mixing may be positively regulated by microbial diversity and network complexity. (1) the diversity and composition of soil microorganisms would be changed in the mixed plantations, that (2) mixed plantations intensify the response to the beneficial impacts of N-fixing tree, thereby strengthening the correlation between the genes associated with N and P cycling, and that (3) N-fixing tree would lead to higher diversity and network complexity in mixed plantations. Our findings will provide more new insights into sustainable management practices for plantations.

删除了: The primary aims of this study (1) were to evaluate the changes in the structure, diversity, and stability of soil microbial communities after mixing *Eucalyptus* with N-fixing tree species, and (2) to elucidate the mechanisms through which bacterial and fungal communities, along with genes involved in associated with N and P cycling processes, regulate P transformation.

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411 the study conducted by Huang et al. (2017). In 2021, taking into account the
412 differences in plantation layout and topography, five 20 m × 20 m sample plots were
413 randomly established in each stand (PPs and MPs), ensuring that adjacent plots
414 maintained at a distance greater than 200 m to mitigate edge effects. The diameter at
415 breast height, height, and stand density of every tree within each plot were assessed.
416 Detailed information on the plantations is provided in Table S1.

417 Soil samples were carried out in early August 2021. Soil samples were gathered
418 from eight different points within each plot, located at 5 m intervals from the center,
419 along angles of 0°, 45°, 90°, 135°, 180°, 225°, 270°, and 315°. Previous studies only
420 examine a single soil layer (usually the upper 0–10 cm). More study on the P
421 transformation and mechanisms underlying soil microbial and biochemical
422 interactions in different soil layers is needed to determine whether the variation of P
423 cycle is dependent on depth. Therefore, soil samples in our study were obtained from
424 the depth intervals of 0–10 cm and 10–20 cm following the removal of extraneous
425 materials such as little stones, and dead leaves. Eight undisturbed samples from each
426 soil layer were amalgamated into a composite sample and transported to the
427 laboratory on ice. Each composite sample was partitioned into two aliquots: one
428 designated for the analysis of physicochemical properties, and the other reserved for
429 genomic DNA extraction.

430 2.3. Soil properties and soil enzyme activity

431 Soil pH was measured using a 1:2.5 soil-to-water ratio method, and soil organic
432 carbon (SOC) was quantified using the K₂Cr₂O₇-H₂SO₄ oxidation method. The total
433 nitrogen (TN) content of soil was determined using an Auto Analyzer III in an extract
434 obtained by digestion of the sample with H₂SO₄ and a catalyst (CuSO₄:H₂SO₄=10:1).

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443 The levels of nitrate N (NO_3^- -N) and ammonia N (NH_4^+ -N) were determined by CaCl_2
444 extraction, followed by quantitative analysis using an AutoAnalyzer III (Tsiknia et al.,
445 2014). Total P (TP) was quantified using the molybdenum blue colorimetric method
446 following extraction of the samples with HClO_4 - H_2SO_4 (Murphy and Riley, 1962),
447 N and P metabolised by soil extracellular enzyme activity (EEA), e.g.,
448 β -1,4-N-acetylglucosaminidase (NAG) and leucine aminopeptidase (LAP) activity are
449 involved in N acquisition and acid phosphomonoesterase, is associated with P
450 mineralization, were quantified in a fluorescence assay conducted in a 96-well
451 microplate (Yan et al., 2022). Soil EEA was calculated from the fluorescence readings
452 of the enzyme after its reaction with the appropriate substrate. The assay was
453 conducted using 200 μL of a soil suspension prepared by weighing 1.25 g of fresh soil
454 to which sodium acetate buffer (pH 4.5) was added, and stirred for 1 min to ensure
455 consistent extraction conditions and effective solubilization of the soil constituents.
456 Eight replicates per sample were tested. The samples were incubated in darkness at
457 25°C for 3 h, after which the reaction was terminated by adding NaOH. Fluorescence
458 was then immediately measured within the wavelength range of 365–450 nm by using
459 a fluorescence microplate reader. Information on the substrates of the three EEA can
460 be found in Table S2.

461 2.4. Soil DNA extraction and sequencing

462 Microbial genomic DNA was obtained from soil samples utilizing the PowerSoil
463 DNA isolation kit (MN NucleoSpin 96 Soi) for subsequent analysis and
464 measurements. The primers employed were 338F_v and 806R_v for the amplification of

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477 the V3–V4 hypervariable region of the 16S rRNA gene (Mori et al., 2014; Parada et
478 al., 2016), while ITS1F and ITS2R, were employed to amplify the ITS1 region of
479 fungal rRNA gene loci (Adams et al., 2013; Dong et al., 2021) (Table S3). Sequencing
480 data were processed by filtering the raw reads using Trimmomatic v0.33, removing
481 the primers using Cutadapt v1.9.1, assembling the clean reads by overlap with
482 Usearch v10, and removing chimeras with UCHIME v4.2 to ensure data validity.
483 After the removal of potential chimeras, 1,600,678 and 1,550,033 high-quality
484 bacterial and fungal reads were obtained, respectively.

485 The genetic potential of the soil microorganisms was assessed by real-time
486 fluorescence quantitative PCR (qPCR) to quantitatively determine the gene copy
487 numbers of bacteria (16S rRNA) and fungi (ITS). The genetic potential of N cycling
488 processes was evaluated based on the abundance of functional genes involved in
489 nitrogen fixation (*nifH*), nitrification (AOB-*amoA*), and denitrification (*narG*, *nirS*,
490 *nirK*, and *nosZ*). Similarly, the genetic potential of P cycling processes was assessed
491 using the abundance of functional genes involved in organic phosphorus hydrolysis
492 (*phoC*, *phoD*, *BPP*) and Pi hydrolysis (*pqqC*). These functional genes are
493 well-established biomarkers of the biochemical pathways essential for nutrient
494 cycling in various ecosystems. The qPCR amplification efficiencies ranged from 90%
495 to 110%. The primers and references for the functional genes are reported in Table S3.

496 2.5. Network construction

497 Networks for bacteria and fungi were constructed by dividing the 20 samples
498 into four groups, consisting of two soil layers for PPs and MPs, respectively. First,

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512 sample operational taxonomic units (OTUs) were filtered, discarding those that
513 appeared in fewer than three samples within each group (3 out of 5 replicates) (Hu et
514 al., 2023). OTUs with a relative abundance exceeding 1% in the bacterial and fungal
515 communities were selected for further correlation analysis (Fan et al., 2018). The
516 network was built according to thresholds of [Pearson](#) correlation coefficient > 0.6 and
517 $P < 0.05$, assessed using the *Hmisc* package in R v4.0.5. We adjusted the P values
518 according to the Hochberg false discovery rate test (Benjamini et al., 2006), with a
519 cut-off of adjusted $P < 0.05$. Network properties were computed utilizing the *igraph* R
520 package, and visualized using Gephi (<https://gephi.org/>). In all figures, bacterial and
521 fungal phyla exhibiting a relative abundance greater than 1% within the network are
522 represented by distinct colors.

523 Keystone species were identified by utilizing the connectivity within modules (Z_i)
524 and between modules (P_i). Microorganisms were classified into four categories
525 depending on intra-module degree (Z -score) and participation coefficient (C -score)
526 thresholds, into network hubs, module hubs, connectors, and peripherals (Poudel et al.,
527 2016). Network hubs refer to nodes with a high degree of connectivity both globally
528 and within individual modules; module hubs are nodes with significant connectivity
529 restricted to a single module; connectors are nodes that facilitate strong connections
530 between different modules, and peripheral nodes are those with few connections to
531 other nodes (Poudel et al., 2016). Network hubs, module hubs, and connectors occupy
532 critical positions within the network and are classified as keystone topological
533 features. These characteristics are essential for sustaining the stability of microbial

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541 communities (Delmas et al., 2019). Consequently, OTUs associated with these nodes
542 were designated as keystone species.

543 2.6. Data analyses

544 Microbial diversity (Shannon index) and richness (Chao1 and ACE), which were
545 both calculated using phyloseq with default setting by Mothur (v 1.30.2) software

546 (Schloss et al., 2009). Soil physicochemical properties, microbial community indices,
547 such as the ACE and Shannon and Chao1 indices, as well as functional genes and
548 enzyme activity, were analyzed in independent samples t-tests using SPSS v24.0. This
549 statistical approach was applied to evaluate differences attributable to stand type
550 (monoculture or mixed). Differences in soil microorganisms across stand types and
551 soil layers were analyzed using non-metric multidimensional scaling (NMDS) with

552 Bray–Curtis dissimilarity and analysis of similarity (ANOSIM), implemented using
553 the *vegan* package in R (Oksanen et al., 2013; Knowles et al., 2019). Random forest

554 analysis based on Pearson correlation analysis and the best multiple regression model
555 was used to evaluate the contributions of soil properties, microbial characteristics, and

556 functional genes involved in the N and P cycles to the variation in nitrogen and
557 phosphorus transformation enzyme activities, and to identify the major predictors

558 based on their importance. Computation and visualization were carried out in R
559 software (Jiao et al., 2020). Correlation analysis and visualization of soil properties,

560 microbial characteristics, and functional genes related to N and P cycling were
561 performed in Origin 2024. A redundancy analysis (RDA) was employed to explore

562 the multivariate associations between soil physicochemical characteristics and

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删除了: Pearson correlation coefficients were used to analyze the relationships among soil characteristics, microbial characteristics, genes associated with N and P cycling, N and P transformation, with the results visualized in a heat map generated in Origin 2024. Random forest analysis based on

573 microorganisms. The most important soil physicochemical properties affecting
 574 bacterial and fungal phyla were identified in the RDA and visualized using CANOCO
 575 v5. A partial least squares path model (PLS-PM) was constructed using R software to
 576 assess the direct and indirect effects of mixed planting of *Eucalyptus* and *Acacia* on P
 577 transformation. A PLS-PM can reveal causal connections between observed and latent
 578 variables, and its superiority for small sample sizes has been demonstrated in
 579 simulation studies, in which path modeling estimation was shown to be reliable
 580 (Monecke and Leisch, 2012; Sanchez, 2013). The goodness-of-fit statistic was used to
 581 assess the adequacy of the PLS-PM fit, with a value > 0.7 indicating good model fit
 582 (Henseler and Sarstedt, 2013).

583 3. Results

584 3.1. Soil properties

585 Significant ($P < 0.05$) higher of SOC, TN, NO_3^- -N, C:P, N:P, and pH were
 586 determined in both two investigated soil layers in MPs than those in PPs (Table 1);
 587 however, TP (10–20 cm) was significantly lower in MPs than in PPs ($P < 0.05$, Table
 588 1).

589 **Table 1** Soil physicochemical properties in both 0–10 cm and 10–20 cm soil layers in PPs and
 590 MPs.

Soil physicochemical properties	Stand type	0–10 cm			10–20 cm		
		M±SE	t	P	M±SE	t	P
SOC	PP	12.98±0.90b	-5.790	$P < 0.001$	10.31±0.79b	-4.189	$P < 0.001$
	MP	21.18±1.10a			14.45±0.59a		
TN	PP	1.15±0.04b	-6.658	$P < 0.001$	0.83±0.02b	-5.551	$P < 0.001$

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<u>NH₄⁺-N</u>	MP	2.17±0.15a			1.33±0.09a		
	PP	18.92±1.49a			13.84±0.83a		
<u>NO₃⁻-N</u>	MP	15.14±2.25a	1.402	<u>P < 0.001</u>	11.71±0.44a	2.262	<u>P = 0.001</u>
	PP	4.86±0.06b	-13.372	<u>P = 0.198</u>	3.05±0.05b	-33.443	<u>P = 0.054</u>
TP	MP	13.90±0.67a			5.39±0.05a		
	PP	0.31±0.02a	0.520	<u>P < 0.001</u>	0.32±0.03a	3.458	<u>P < 0.001</u>
C:N	MP	0.30±0.02a			0.22±0.01b		
	PP	11.38±0.96a	1.497	<u>P = 0.167</u>	12.37±0.89a	1.182	<u>P = 0.009</u>
C:P	MP	9.82±0.39a			10.98±0.76a		
	PP	42.04±3.18b	-4.887	<u>P = 0.173</u>	32.73±2.47b	-8.865	<u>P = 0.271</u>
N:P	MP	72.75±5.35a			64.63±2.62a		
	PP	3.74±0.25b	-7.173	<u>P = 0.001</u>	2.67±0.17b	-6.093	<u>P < 0.001</u>
pH	MP	7.37±0.44a			6.00±0.52a		
	PP	4.28±0.04b	-6.970	<u>P < 0.001</u>	4.21±0.05b	-5.824	<u>P < 0.001</u>
	MP	5.09±0.11a			5.04±0.13a		

602 SOC: Soil Organic Carbon; TN: Total Nitrogen; NH₄⁺-N: Ammonium Nitrogen; NO₃⁻-N: Nitrate Nitrogen;
603 TP: Total Phosphorus; C:N: Carbon: Nitrogen ratio; C:P: Carbon: Phosphorus ratio; N:P: Nitrogen: Phosphorus
604 ratio; pH: Soil pH Value; Value = Mean ± Standard Error. Different lowercase letters in the table represent
605 significant differences between PPs and MPs (P < 0.05), the same below.

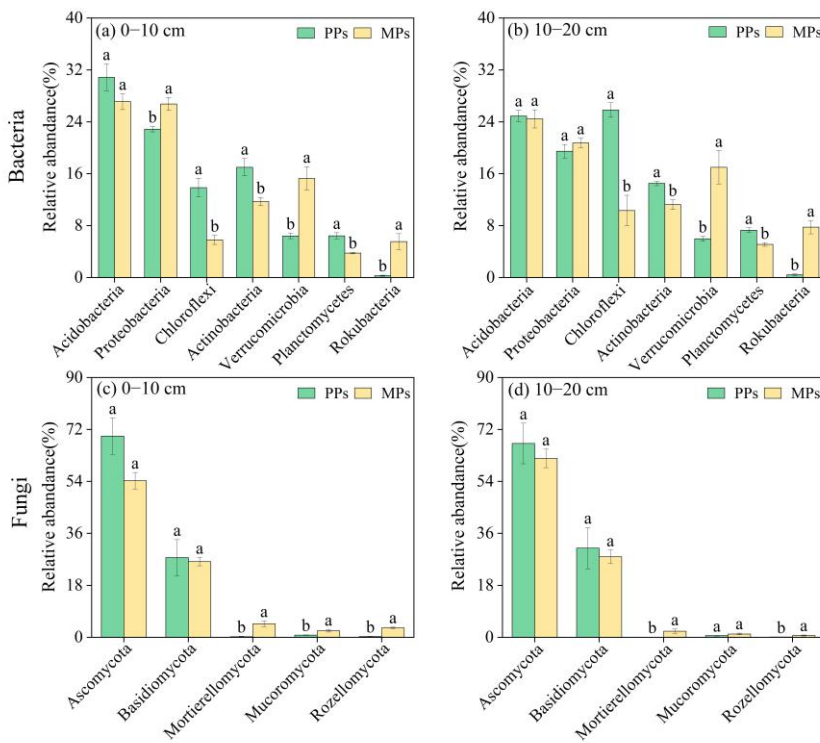
606 3.2. Bacterial and fungal community diversity and composition

607 In both soil layers, the bacterial ACE (0–10 cm: t = -5.164, P = 0.001; 10-20 cm:
608 t = -7.305, P < 0.001), Chao1 (0–10 cm: t = -5.039, P = 0.001; 10-20 cm: t = -6.387, P
609 < 0.001), and Shannon (0–10 cm: t = -3.478, P = 0.008; 10-20 cm: t = -3.772, P <
610 0.005) indices of α -diversity were significantly higher in MPs than in PPs (Fig. 1a–c).
611 Fungal Shannon (t = -3659, P = 0.006) index in the 0–10 cm was also significantly
612 higher in MPs than in PPs (Fig. 1f). The composition of bacterial and fungal
613 community exhibited significant differences between the two plantation types and soil
614 layers, except for the fungal communities in PPs, which did not differ between the

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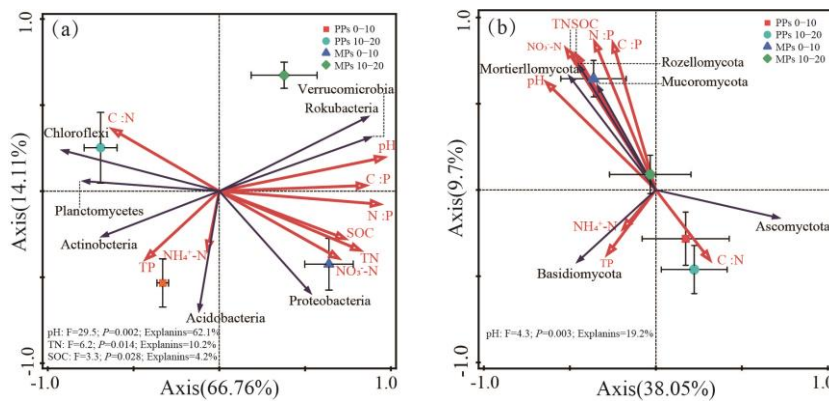
652 MPs were *Ascomycota* (63.25%), *Basidiomycota* (28.14%), *Mortierellomycota*
 653 (1.77%), *Mucoromycota* (1.18%), and *Rozellomycota* (1.06%), which represented
 654 95.40% of the total fungal community (Figs. 2c, d and S2b). The introduction of
 655 N-fixing tree species resulted in changes in the relative abundance and composition of
 656 these microbial communities, although these changes were not always statistically
 657 significant (Fig. 2).



658
 659 **Fig. 2** Abundance difference of (a-b) bacterial and (c-d) fungal and based on relative abundance >
 660 1% at phylum level.

661 We used redundancy analysis (RDA) to identify the soil physicochemical
 662 factors influencing the variation of dominant microbial phyla, and employed

663 significant variables ($P < 0.05$) to determine the major regulating factor. The first two
 664 RDA axes explained 66.76% and 14.11% of the total variation in bacterial
 665 communities, with pH, TN, and SOC ($P < 0.05$) as the major drivers (Fig. 3a). For the
 666 fungal communities, the first two RDA axes explained 38.05% and 9.7% of the total
 667 variation, with pH ($P < 0.05$) as the major regulating factor (Fig. 3b).



668
 669 **Fig. 3** RDA plot showing significant factors affecting bacterial (a) and fungal (b) communities.

670 3.3. Microbial network complexity and stability

671 Microbial species with an average abundance of at least 1% in the 0–10 and
 672 10–20 cm of PPs and MPs were selected for network analysis. Significant differences
 673 in microbial network structure were found between PPs and MPs in both soil layers
 674 (Fig. 4a, b). In the bacterial and fungal networks, there were significantly more nodes
 675 in MPs than in PPs (Table 2). Therefore, compared to PPs, MPs significantly
 676 stimulated the complexity of the co-occurrence network, particularly in the 0–10 cm,
 677 Positive correlations (bacterial networks: ranging = 0.665–0.712, fungal networks:
 678 ranging = 0.754–0.849) were determined for both PPs and MPs (Table 2). Compared
 679 with PPs, the average path lengths in MPs were shorter (except for the fungal network

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686 in the 10–20 cm) and the network diameter was smaller (except for the bacterial
 687 network in the 10–20 cm) and had a higher average degree for both the bacterial and
 688 the fungal networks in both soil layers (Table 2).

689 The Zi–Pi plot showed that network hubs were absent from the bacterial and
 690 fungal networks, with keystone species instead concentrated in connectors and
 691 module hubs (Fig. 4c, d). Bacterial keystone OTUs were primarily found in the top
 692 three phyla, *Proteobacteria*, *Acidobacteriota*, and *Actinobacteriota* (Fig. 4c). Fungal
 693 keystone OTUs were likewise concentrated in the top three phyla, *Ascomycota*,
 694 *Basidiomycota*, and *Mucoromycota* (Fig. 4d).

695 **Table 2** Co-occurrence network parameters of bacterial and fungal community at OTU level

Species type	Soil layer (cm)	Stand type	Number of nodes	Number of edges	positive edges	negative edges	Average path length	Network diameter	Average degree
Bacteria	0–10	PPs	529	2498	1661	837	13.58	38	9.4
		MPs	667	7930	5403	2527	7.79	26	23.6
	10–20	PPs	447	2509	1786	723	9.41	27	11.2
		MPs	581	6342	4257	2085	8.51	30	21.8
Fungi	0–10	PPs	298	642	484	158	6.47	22	4.3
		MPs	344	859	722	137	5.80	20	4.9
	10–20	PPs	260	511	421	90	3.00	12	3.9
		MPs	304	779	661	118	5.04	15	5.1

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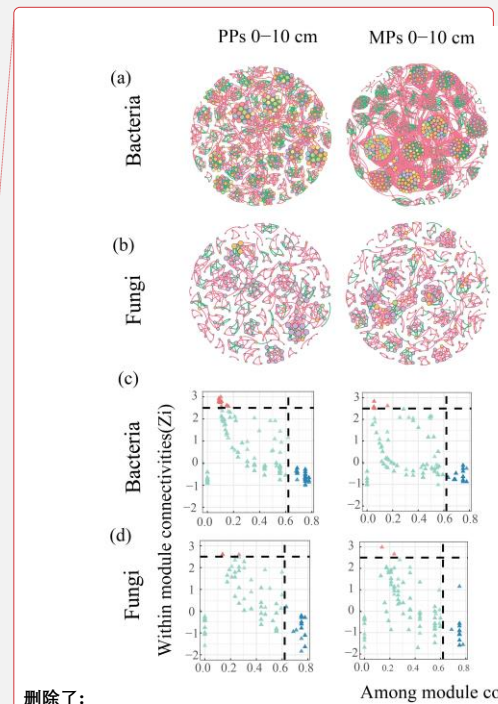
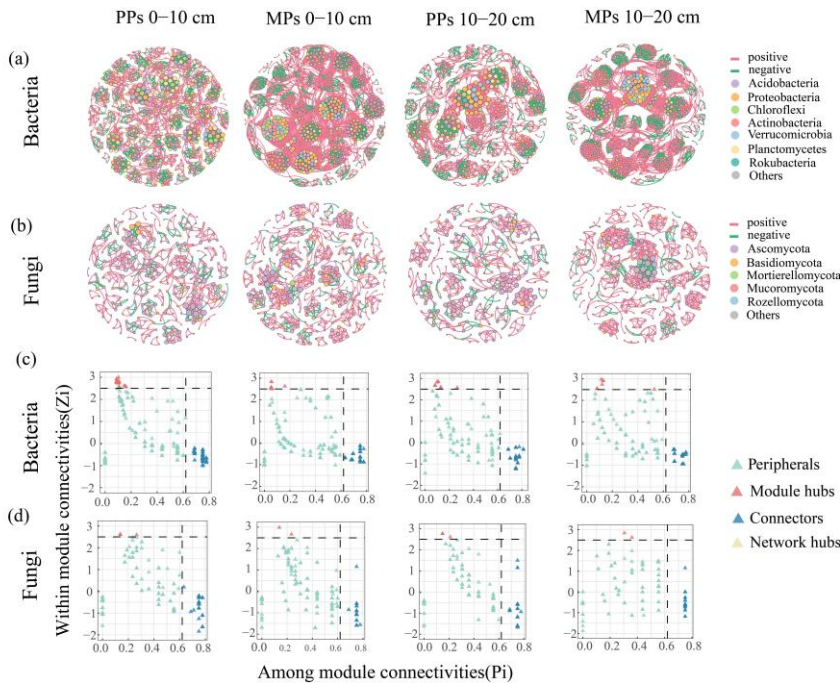
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Fig. 4 Co-occurrence network characteristics of (a) bacterial and (b) fungal communities. The node color represents the phyla with relative abundance greater than 1%, and the node size represents the degree. The Zi-Pi plot (c-d) predicts keystone OTUs in (c) bacterial and (d) fungal networks.

3.4. Microbial functional genes involved in N and P transformation and enzyme activity

Introducing *Acacia mangium* into the *Eucalyptus urophylla* plantation increased the abundances of functional genes involved in N and P transformation (Figs. 5 and 6). Specifically, the abundances of the N₂-related functional genes *nifH* ($t = -4.218$, $P = 0.003$), AOB-*amoA* ($t = -3.648$, $P = 0.003$), *narG* ($t = -2.518$, $P = 0.036$), *nirS* ($t = -3.876$, $P = 0.005$), and *nosZ* ($t = -2.613$, $P = 0.031$) in the 0–10 cm and of

717 AOB-*amoA* ($t = -2.466, P = 0.039$), *narG* ($t = -2.482, P = 0.038$), and *nirS* ($t = -4.477,$
718 $P = 0.002$) in the 10–20 cm, were significantly higher in MPs than in PPs (Fig. 5a–f).

719 The abundances of the P functional genes *phoC* (0–10 cm: $t = -4.316, P = 0.003$;
720 10–20 cm: $t = -4.177, P = 0.003$), *phoD* (0–10 cm: $t = -2.906, P = 0.020$), *BPP* (0–10
721 cm: $t = -6.373, P < 0.001$; 10–20 cm: $t = -2.956, P = 0.018$), and *pqqC* (0–10 cm: $t =$
722 $-3.746, P = 0.006$; 10–20 cm: $t = -4.403, P = 0.002$) in both soil layers were
723 significantly higher in MPs than in PPs, with the exception of *phoD* in the 10–20, (Fig.

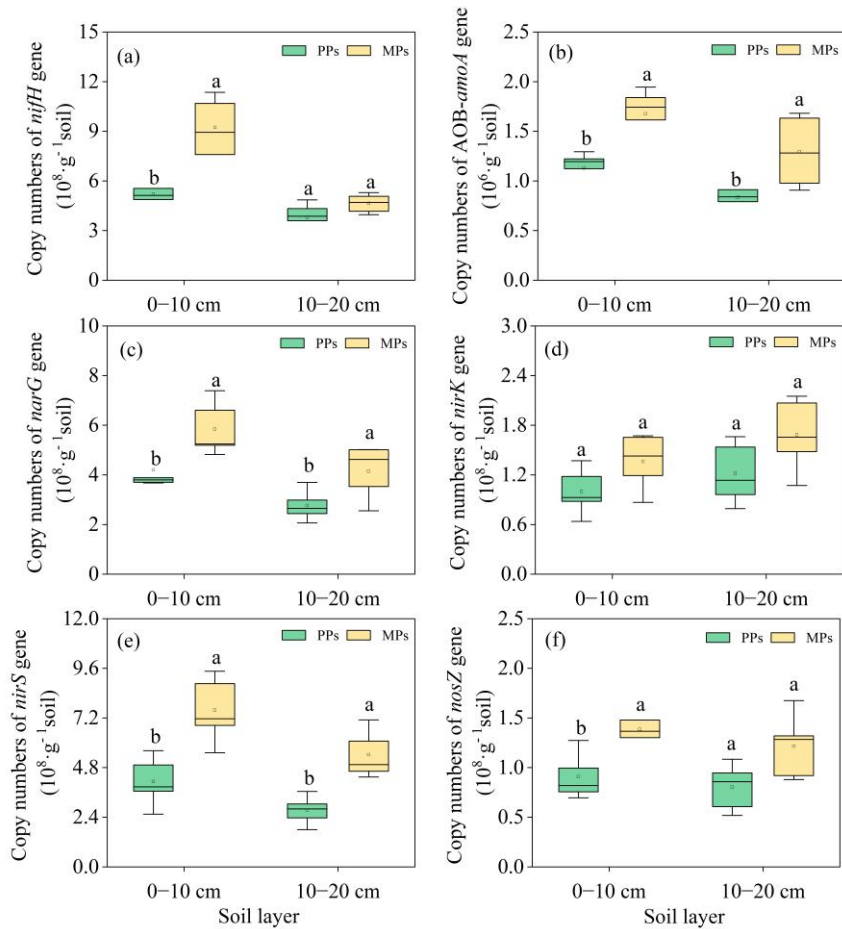
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730 **Fig. 5** Comparison of the abundance of functional genes involved in nitrogen fixation (*nifH*) (a),
 731 nitrification (*AOB-amoA*) (b), and denitrification [*narG* (c), *nirK* (d), *nirS* (e), and *nosZ* (f)] in two
 732 soil layers in PPs and MPs.

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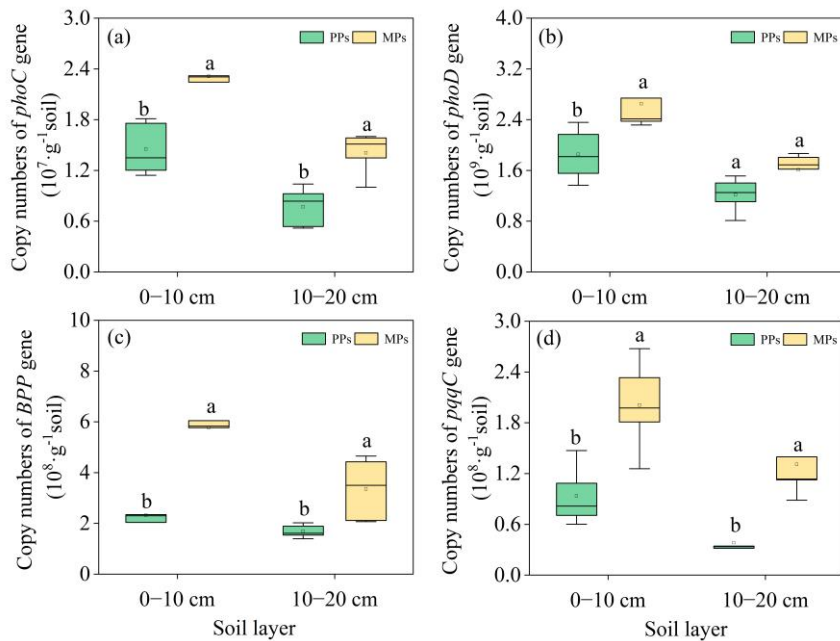
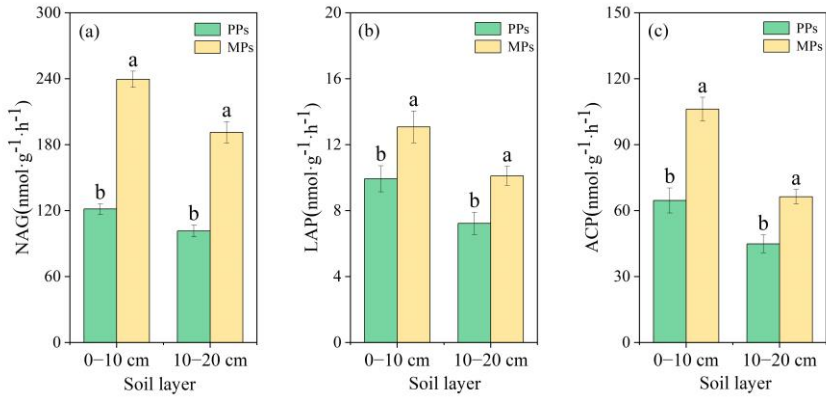


Fig. 6 Comparison of the abundance of functional genes involved in Po hydrolysis [*phoC* (a), *phoD* (b), *BPP* (c) and Pi hydrolysis (*pqqC*) (d)] in two layers in PPs and MPs.

The EEA analysis results showed that NAG ($t = -13.435$, $P < 0.001$), LAP ($t = -2.528$, $P = 0.035$), and ACP ($t = -5.291$, $P = 0.001$) in the 0–10 cm were significantly higher in MPs than in PPs, by 97.31%, 31.72%, and 64.35% respectively (Fig. 7). In the 10–20 cm, NAG ($t = -13.435$, $P < 0.001$), LAP ($t = -3.239$, $P = 0.012$), and ACP ($t = -4.102$, $P = 0.003$) were also significantly higher in MPs than in PPs, by 24.02%, 88.54%, 39.83%, and 47.72%, respectively (Fig. 7). The qPCR results showed significantly higher levels of 16S rRNA (0–10 cm: $t = -7.258$, $P < 0.001$; 10–20 cm: $t = -4.489$, $P = 0.002$) and ITS (0–10 cm: $t = -10.262$, $P < 0.001$; 10–20 cm: $t = -5.391$, $P = 0.001$) in MPs than in PPs (Fig. S3).

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Fig.7 Comparisons extracellular soil enzyme activity of (a) β -1,4-N-acetylglucosaminidase for chitin degradation (NAG); (b) Leucine aminopeptidase for protein degradation, (LAP); and (c) Acid phosphatase for catalyzing the hydrolysis of phosphate monoesters, ACP in two soil layers in PPs and MPs.

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761 3.5. Integrating variation in microbial diversity and network complexity with P
762 transformation

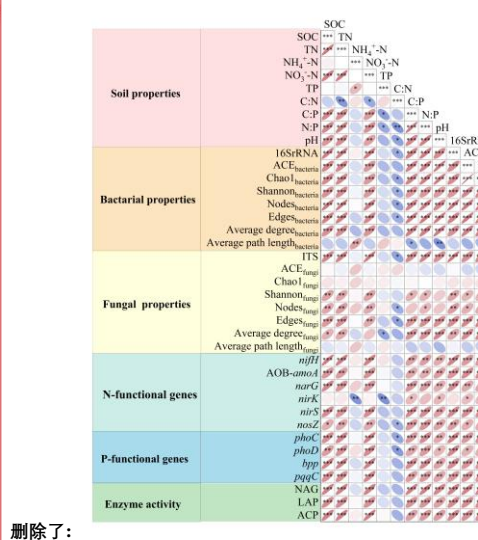
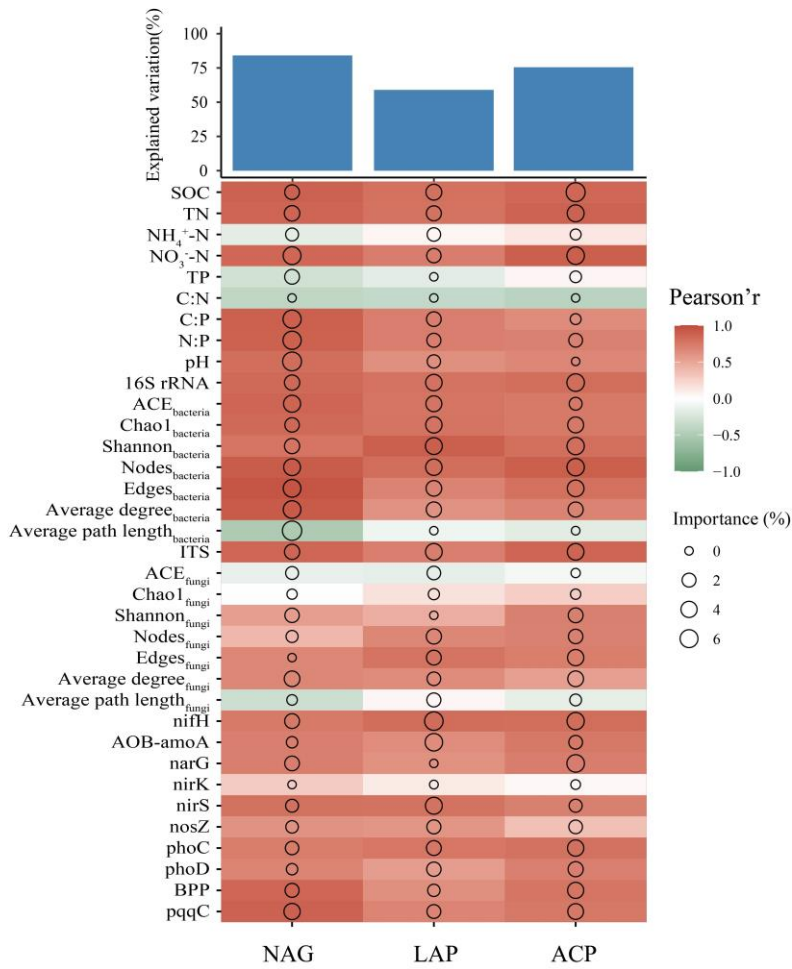
763 The random forest analysis results showed that NAG, LAP, and ACP activities
764 were explained by soil properties, microbial characteristics, and functional genes
765 involved in the N and P cycles to 84.09%, 58.95%, and 75.51%, respectively (Fig. 8).

766 The results showed significant positive correlations for NAG, LAP, and ACP with
767 SOC, TN, NO₃⁻-N, C:P, N:P, and pH; for the three enzymes with 16S rRNA,
768 ACE_{bacteria}, Chao1_{bacteria}, Shannon_{bacteria}, nodes_{bacteria}, edges_{bacteria}, and average
769 degree_{bacteria} ($P < 0.05$); for NAG, LAP, and ACP with ITS, Shannon_{fungi}, edges_{fungi},
770 and average degree_{fungi}; for LAP and ACP with nodes_{fungi}; for NAG, LAP, and ACP
771 with *nifH*, *AOB-amoA*, *narG*, and *nirS*; for NAG and LAP with *nosZ*; and for NAG,
772 LAP, and ACP with *phoC*, *phoD*, *BPP*, and *pqqC* (all $P < 0.05$). In addition, NAG was

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782 significantly negatively correlated with average path length_{bacteria} ($P < 0.05$), Soil
 783 physicochemical properties (SOC, TN, NO₃-N), bacterial community diversity and
 784 network complexity, as well as functional genes involved in the N (*nifH*) and P (*phoC*)
 785 cycles are strong positive predictors of the variation in EEA.

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 787 **Fig. 8** The potential biological contributions of soil properties, microbial influences, and
 788 functional genes related to N and P cycling to the activity of N and P transformation enzymes. The
 789 size of the circles represents the importance of the variables, and the color indicates the Pearson

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792 correlation.

793 According to the PLS-PM analysis results (Fig. 9a), soil properties, bacterial and

794 fungal properties, N and P functional genes, and N transformation strongly impacted P

795 transformation, together accounting for 0.782 of the variance, with a high goodness of

796 fit. N transformation and P functional genes (*phoC*, *phoD*, and *BPP*) had a strong

797 direct influence on P transformation, with path coefficients of 0.283 and 0.605,

798 respectively ($P < 0.01$). The diversity and complexity of the network also had

799 favorable effects on N and P functional genes, exerting a substantial influence on P

800 transformation. The overall influence of each factor on P transformation in soil

801 followed the order: soil properties > P functional genes > bacterial properties > N

802 functional genes > fungal properties > N transformation (Fig. 9b). Overall, the

803 mixture of *Eucalyptus* with N-fixing tree species directly induces alterations in soil

804 properties, which subsequently influence soil microbial characteristics, functional

805 genes involved in N and P cycling, as well as P transformation, ultimately regulating P

806 transformation.

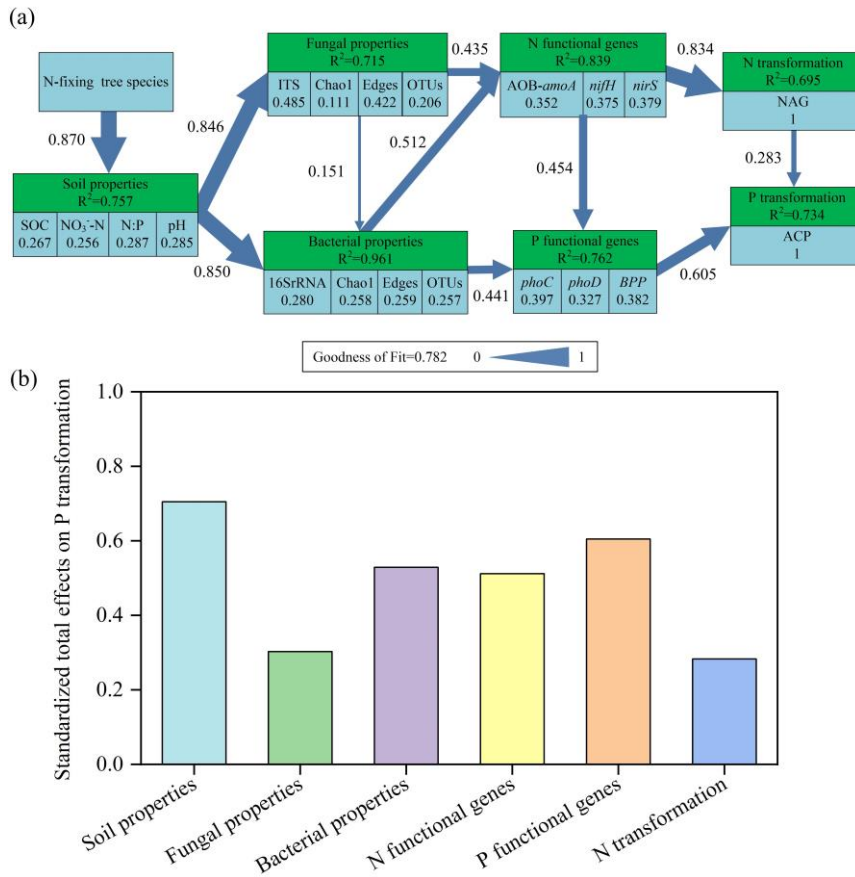
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 814 **Fig. 9 (a)** Path model describing the control pathways of P transformation (ACP activity), and (b)
 815 Standardized total effects (including both direct and indirect effects) on P transformation derived
 816 from PLS-PM. The light blue in (a) represents the observation variable, the light green represents
 817 the latent variable, the number under the observation variable represents the contribution weight of
 818 the observation variable to the latent variable, the number and the width of the arrow on the arrow
 819 represent the standardized path coefficient between the latent variables, and R^2 represents the
 820 explanation rate of the model to the latent variable.

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834 **4. Discussion**

835 *4.1 Soil microbial diversity and network response in a mixed plantation of Eucalyptus*
836 *and N-fixing tree species*

837 The mixed planting of *Eucalyptus* with N-fixing species significantly impacted
838 the soil microbial community structure, increasing microbial diversity and network
839 complexity. With methodological advances that enable more comprehensive
840 understanding of soil microbial diversity and network, we know that soil
841 microorganisms are not only involved in nutrient (e.g., N and P) transformations but
842 also shape the soil habitat by multiple biophysical and biogeochemical processes
843 (Philippot et al., 2024). In our study, the combination of *Eucalyptus* and N-fixing
844 *Acacia mangium* enhanced soil nutrient content and altered the stoichiometric ratios
845 of C, N, and P (Table 1). Mixed plantations with N-fixing tree species have higher
846 litter quantity and quality, which enhances nutrient retention and acquisition capacity
847 (Huang et al., 2014), stimulates microbial growth, and promotes microbial
848 aggregation and metabolism, thereby increasing microbial diversity, (Guo et al., 2019)
849 (Figs. 1 and S1). These findings align with those of a previous study, which
850 demonstrated that the incorporation of *Eucalyptus* with N-fixing tree species
851 increased the abundance and diversity of microorganisms, while also revealing
852 variability in community structure across different stands (Li et al., 2023). The
853 composition and diversity of soil microbial communities are primarily driven by
854 C:N:P ratios (Delgado-Baquerizo et al., 2017). The availability of essential nutrients
855 such as N, P, and Fe are controlled by the soil C supply, while the lower C:N ratio in

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删除了: In our study, *Eucalyptus* mixed with N-fixing *Acacia mangium* resulted in increased SOC, TN, and NO_3^- -N content as well as soil C : P and N : P ratios, while decreasing the soil C : N ratio. Soil properties are key in influencing the composition of microbial communities, which serves as a vital indicator of soil health (Xia et al., 2020). The presence of N-fixing tree species leads to an increase in litter production, resulting in higher exogenous nutrient inputs (Huang et al., 2014; Zhang et al., 2022), which enhance bacterial and fungal α -diversity (Guo et al., 2019). ...

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876 mixed plantations promotes the formation of various C components, thereby
877 increasing SOC input, which subsequently influences the structure of the microbial
878 communities and their co-occurrence patterns (Yuste et al., 2011; Qiu et al., 2021).
879 Interestingly, in this study, the TP content in MPs was significantly lower than that in
880 PPs (Table 1), which may be a result of increased plant uptake due to higher biomass.
881 Additionally, the high soil N content in MPs with N-fixing tree species may positively
882 influence plant growth, potentially stimulating P uptake (Li et al., 2016). In
883 subtropical regions, characterized by high temperatures and heavy rainfall, P leaching
884 is substantial; however, the introduction of N-fixing tree species increases N content,
885 which may shift the limitation from N to P in MPs. In this context, plants are likely to
886 recycle P more efficiently (See et al., 2015; Lang et al., 2016). Therefore, P returned
887 to the soil through decomposition would be reduced.

888 In natural habitats, soil microbial communities form intricate arrays and robustly
889 structured networks that allow adaptation to shifting environments (de Vries et al.,
890 2018). The complexity and diversity of microbial communities in soil are fundamental
891 to ecosystem persistence and resilience, as they both reinforce ecological functions
892 and offer a robust defense against external disruptions (Guo et al., 2021). The
893 complexity of the topological structure and connectivity between nodes influence the
894 overall stability of microbial networks and their resilience to environmental
895 disturbances (Yuan et al., 2021). The overwhelming predominance of positive over
896 negative correlations indicated microbial adaptation to similar ecological niches
897 through co-operation (Gao et al., 2022). Networks characterized by higher

898 connectivity and larger numbers of interrelationships are better equipped to withstand
899 environmental changes, thereby preserving the functional stability of the ecosystem
900 (Cornell et al., 2023). Our study showed that N-fixing tree species mixed plantations
901 increased the complexity of bacterial and fungal networks (Fig. 4), as demonstrated
902 by a higher number of nodes and edges, with positive associations predominating over
903 negative ones, indicating stronger interactions between microorganisms (Ma et al.,
904 2020; Niraula, 2021). Random forest analysis, also revealed a robust positive
905 association between the number of nodes and the diversity of fungal and bacterial
906 species expressing enzymes responsible for N and P transformation (Fig. 8). These
907 results align with our hypothesis, suggesting that *Eucalyptus* mixed with N-fixing tree
908 species increases the complexity of microbial networks (Guo and Gong, 2024). The
909 relative abundances of *Proteobacteria*, *Rokubacteria*, and *Verrucomicrobia* in the
910 bacterial community were also higher in MPs than in PPs (particularly in the 0–10
911 cm), as were the relative abundances of *Mortierllomycota*, *Mucoromycota*, and
912 *Rozellomycota* in the fungal community. Several edaphic factors collectively
913 influenced the structure of both communities, among which pH was the most
914 important (Fig. 3a, b). These findings are in line with earlier research, which
915 demonstrated that soil pH was a key determinant in shaping the structure and
916 composition of microbial communities (Siciliano et al., 2014; Cheng et al., 2020).
917 According to our Zi–Pi plots, the keystone species of the bacterial community were
918 members of phyla *Proteobacteria*, *Acidobacteriota*, and *Actinobacteria*, and those of
919 the fungal community belonged to *Ascomycota*, *Basidiomycota*, and *Mucoromycota*.

删除了: Our study showed more complex bacterial and fungal networks in MPs than in PPs (Fig. 4), demonstrated by the higher number of nodes and edges and the predominance of positive over negative associations, which suggested stronger competition between microorganisms in MPs (Ma et al., 2020; Niraula, 2021)....

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删除了: *Verrucomicrobia*

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删除了: *Verrucomicrobia* is associated with N fixation (Wertz et al., 2012) and serves as an indicator of chemical changes associated with increased soil fertility (Navarrete et al., 2015). ...

936 The ability of leguminous plant species to establish symbiotic associations with root
 937 nodule bacteria, commonly referred to as rhizobia, is well established (e.g., Stougaard,
 938 2000; Yang et al., 2022). The phylum *Proteobacteria* is an extensive and significant
 939 phylum, which includes gram-negative bacteria such as rhizobia. The N-fixing ability
 940 of rhizobia in the phylum *Actinobacteria* is a key contributor to maintaining the
 941 complexity and stability of microbial networks (Sprent and Platzmann, 2001; Fu et al.,
 942 2022). Among fungi, *Ascomycota* is the dominant phylum in soil worldwide (Egidi et
 943 al., 2019). In the present study, the relative abundance of Ascomycetes showed
 944 dominance in both PPs and MPs, but the relative abundance diminished in MPs.
 945 Although keystone taxa may not always abundant, they play a vital role in shaping
 946 microbial communities and maintaining their ecological functions, through specific
 947 regulatory pathways that affect community structure and function (Banerjee et al.,
 948 2018; Liu et al., 2022). For example, a prior study demonstrated that keystone taxa
 949 played a critical role in increasing the complexity of microbial networks, enhancing
 950 plant health and biomass, and promoting the hydrolysis of organophosphorus
 951 compounds through enzymatic activity (Qiao et al., 2024; Zeng et al., 2024).

952 *4.2 Association of microbial diversity and networks with P transformation and key*
 953 *environmental drivers*

954 Our study showed that the abundance of functional genes related to N and P
 955 cycles significantly increases after intercropping with N-fixing tree *species*, which
 956 supports our second hypothesis (Fig. 5 and 6). In contrast to this finding, Qin et al.
 957 (2024) reported that although planting N-fixing tree *species* with *Eucalyptus* enhanced

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删除了: *Proteobacteria* and *Actinobacteria* include N-fixing for plants (Sprent and Platzmann, 2001) and both are critical contributors to maintaining the complexity and stability of microbial networks (Fu et al., 2022)....

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删除了: P is crucial for maintaining plant health and ecological balance in terrestrial ecosystems (Du et al., 2020). Soil microorganisms possess numerous different genes involved in N and P transformation, which enable them to regulate N and P cycling by synthesizing and secreting extracellular enzymes (Dai et al., 2020). ...

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975 the complexity and stability of N and P functional gene networks, it reduced the
976 abundances of these genes. This discrepancy can be explained by shifts in soil
977 microbial communities related to N and P cycles, which consequently affect the
978 microbial functions that respond to environmental changes (Graham et al., 2016;
979 Zhang et al., 2021). A previous study also found that the microbial community
980 associated with a mixed plantation of *Eurograndis* and *Amangium* differed from that
981 associated with monocultures of either species, attributable to positive effects of the
982 mixture on soil P and nitrate levels, which enhanced the abundances of N and P
983 functional genes (Rachid et al., 2013).

984 Biological N fixation is a fundamental ecosystem process that involves the
985 conversion of atmospheric N into a form usable by plants, which, facilitated by a
986 highly diverse group of microorganisms, significantly enhances soil fertility and
987 promoting plant growth (Burns and Hardy, 2012; Soumare et al., 2020). All N-fixing
988 microorganisms carry functional *nifH* genes that encode a component of nitrogenase
989 and act as markers of the abundance and diversity of N-fixing microorganisms across
990 various environmental contexts (Wang et al., 2018). Our results indicate that the
991 relative abundance of P functional genes was significantly higher after the
992 introduction of N-fixing tree species compared to pure *Eucalyptus* plantations (Fig. 6).

993 Both *phoC* and *phoD* are functional genes that encode phosphatase activity needed for
994 P solubilization and mineralization and are thus critically involved in promoting soil P
995 availability (Tian et al., 2021; Cao et al., 2022). The P cycling gene *pqqC*, which
996 encodes the P_v-mobilizing enzyme pyrroloquinoline quinone synthase, is a marker of

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删除了: Furthermore, our results suggested high abundances of the P functional genes *phoC*, *BPP*, and *ppqC* in both soil layers and significantly higher abundance of *phoD* in the 0–10 cm soil layer in MPs than in PPs....

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1003 phosphate-mobilizing bacteria (Meyer et al., 2011). The predominant bacteria
1004 containing *phoD* and *pqqC* are primarily members of the *Actinobacteria* and
1005 *Proteobacteria* (Tan et al., 2013; Hu et al., 2018), whose community structure was
1006 shown to remain unchanged with an increase in soil P pools (Ragot et al., 2015). In
1007 line with our results, a higher abundance and diversity of *phoD*-, *phoC*-, and
1008 *pqqC*-bearing soil microorganisms; higher abundances of these genes in soil were
1009 correlated with higher soil SOC and TN contents (Luo et al., 2019; Cao et al., 2022).
1010 Our study also identified significantly positive correlations between most N and P
1011 functional genes and 16S rRNA as well as the ACE, Chao1, and Shannon indexes in
1012 bacterial communities, whereas a significant positive correlation was determined only
1013 between the ITS region and the Shannon index in fungal communities (Fig. S4). This
1014 variation can be attributed to the significant positive impact that high levels of
1015 available nutrients have on the development of bacterial communities in the soil
1016 (Ming et al., 2016).

1017 The significant positive correlations detected for the N enzymes NAG and
1018 LAP with *AOB-amoA*, *nifH*, and the denitrification genes *nirS*, *nosZ*, and *narG*
1019 determined in our study suggest that, after the introduction of N-fixing tree species,
1020 the microbial community facilitated soil N transformation by increasing the
1021 abundance of N cycling genes. Both random forest analysis and PLS-PM analyses
1022 indicated that P transformation reflected the interaction of biological and
1023 non-biological factors in ecological processes influenced by the introduction of
1024 N-fixing tree species (Figs. 8 and 9). Complex interactions between bacteria, fungi,

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1038 and P cycle genes have been shown to promote microbial community stability while
1039 facilitating P transformation processes (Liu et al., 2024). *Eucalyptus* mixed with
1040 N-fixing tree species also increased soil TN and the NH₄⁺-N content, which increased
1041 ACP activity and thus soil Po mineralization. The higher soil pH in MPs than in PPs
1042 was likely driven by exchange interactions involving Fe/Al hydroxide minerals and
1043 functional groups (Table 1), which enhanced the conversion of potentially labile Pi
1044 into plant available P via competitive adsorption (Hinsinger, 2001; Kang et al., 2021).

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1045 Together, these results indicate that forest management practices that
1046 *Eucalyptus* mixed with N-fixing tree species will improve soil physicochemical
1047 properties, microbial community diversity, and correlations between microbial N and
1048 P cycling genes, thereby promoting soil P transformation.

1049 5. Conclusions

1050 This study suggests the benefits of incorporating mixed N-fixing tree species
1051 with *Eucalyptus*, specifically highlighting their positive effects on P transformation.
1052 The presence of *Acacia* was shown to alter soil physicochemical properties, improved
1053 soil bacterial and fungal community diversity, network complexity, and the abundance
1054 of N and P cycling functional genes, ultimately driving P transformation. Increases in
1055 soil nutrient content, particularly SOC, TN, and NO₃⁻-N, as well as the increase in pH
1056 that occurred in MPs influenced soil microbial diversity. PLS-PM analysis revealed
1057 that mixed plantations have significantly enhanced correlations between P
1058 transformation and microbial functional genes that mediate N and P cycling. Our
1059 findings offer fresh insights into the predictive capacity of potential shifts in the

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1066 belowground microbial communities for soil functionality within mixed plantation

1067 ecosystems involving N-fixing tree [species](#) and *Eucalyptus*.

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1508 **Data availability**

1509 The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the
1510 corresponding author, [Xueman Huang], upon reasonable request.

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1512 **Author contributions**

1513 JL, XH, and YY conceived and designed of the study. JL, XH, YY, and WZ
1514 processed and analyzed data acquisition of field experiments. JL, WZ, YL, HH, HM,
1515 and QH conducted the fieldwork. JL and WZ performed laboratory analysis. JL
1516 completed the analysis of the data and prepared the original draft of the manuscript,
1517 XH, YY, YW, and AM helped to review and edit the manuscript. All the authors gave
1518 approval for the final manuscript.

1519

1520 **Declaration of Interest Statement**

1521 The authors declared that they have no conflicts of interest to this work. We

1522 declare that we do not have any commercial or associative interest that represents a

1523 conflict of interest in connection with the work submitted.

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