

# Meta-analysis reveals that hydraulic traits explain cross-species patterns of drought-induced tree mortality across the globe

William R. L. Anderegg<sup>a,b,1</sup>, Tamir Klein<sup>c</sup>, Megan Bartlett<sup>d</sup>, Lawren Sack<sup>d</sup>, Adam F. A. Pellegrini<sup>b</sup>, Brendan Choat<sup>e</sup>, and Steven Jansen<sup>f</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Department of Biology, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT 84112; <sup>b</sup>Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ 08544; <sup>c</sup>Institute of Soil, Water, and Environmental Sciences, Agricultural Research Organization Volcani Center, 50250 Beit Dagan, Israel; <sup>d</sup>Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, University of California, Los Angeles, CA 90095; <sup>e</sup>Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment, Western Sydney University, Penrith, NSW 2751, Australia; and <sup>f</sup>Institute of Systematic Botany and Ecology, Ulm University, 89081 Ulm, Germany

Edited by William H. Schlesinger, Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies, Millbrook, NY, and approved March 3, 2016 (received for review December 30, 2015)

**Drought-induced tree mortality has been observed globally and is expected to increase under climate change scenarios, with large potential consequences for the terrestrial carbon sink. Predicting mortality across species is crucial for assessing the effects of climate extremes on forest community biodiversity, composition, and carbon sequestration. However, the physiological traits associated with elevated risk of mortality in diverse ecosystems remain unknown, although these traits could greatly improve understanding and prediction of tree mortality in forests. We performed a meta-analysis on species' mortality rates across 475 species from 33 studies around the globe to assess which traits determine a species' mortality risk. We found that species-specific mortality anomalies from community mortality rate in a given drought were associated with plant hydraulic traits. Across all species, mortality was best predicted by a low hydraulic safety margin—the difference between typical minimum xylem water potential and that causing xylem dysfunction—and xylem vulnerability to embolism. Angiosperms and gymnosperms experienced roughly equal mortality risks. Our results provide broad support for the hypothesis that hydraulic traits capture key mechanisms determining tree death and highlight that physiological traits can improve vegetation model prediction of tree mortality during climate extremes.**

meta-analysis | climate change | carbon cycle | climate extremes | biodiversity

**F**orests assimilate and sequester ~2.4 Pg carbon per year (1), equivalent to 25% of anthropogenic emissions, and provide manifold goods and services to society (2). Climate extremes, such as severe drought, could trigger abrupt and irreversible changes in Earth's forests (3, 4), which would have profound implications for their biodiversity, ecosystem services, and carbon storage (5). Episodes of widespread tree mortality in response to drought and/or heat stress have been observed across the globe in the past few decades (4). In addition, drought severity and frequency are projected to increase with temperature-driven rises in evaporative demand (6). There is fundamental concern that increased climate-induced mortality of trees (7) could offset carbon sinks currently yielded in old growth and regrowth forests alike (8).

Predicting plant demographic rates, such as mortality, using physiological traits is a central aim of ecology with critical importance for modeling climate change impacts and the carbon cycle (9). Drought-induced tree mortality has been particularly challenging to model and predict because of uncertainty in traits and mechanisms underlying the physiology of tree death (10, 11). Despite this uncertainty (12, 13), the failure of the plant vascular hydraulic transport system is considered to be a central pathway to mortality (7, 14–17). This failure happens through embolism of a tree's water transport elements by air bubbles during high xylem tensions induced by low soil moisture and/or high atmospheric evaporative demand during drought (14–16). The point at which individual species experience high levels of embolism is determined

by a suite of plant hydraulic, allometric, and stomatal traits. Identifying which unique plant traits predict mortality in diverse plant communities will be crucial toward unraveling the mechanisms of mortality and incorporating them into Earth system models to improve predictions of forests in a rapidly changing climate (11, 12).

We performed a meta-analysis of published studies that documented cross-species patterns in tree mortality in mixed forests, where multiple species coexist, after a severe drought and examined whether drought-related physiological traits can explain species' tree mortality anomalies. We analyzed 33 studies that observed tree mortality linked to drought and heat stress spanning >760,000 individual trees and 475 species across a range of biomes, including tropical rainforest, temperate deciduous and evergreen forests, boreal forests, and savanna woodlands (Fig. 1). For each study, we compiled the mortality rates for individual species after severe drought and calculated the species-specific deviations—which we term “mortality anomalies”—from the mean community-averaged tree mortality rate at each site (Fig. S1). For each species, we collected a number of physiological traits that have been hypothesized as important to predicting mortality from global trait databases (18, 19), analyzing both absolute trait values and relative values to the ecological community at each site. Specifically, we examined (i) wood density, (ii) maximum branch stem hydraulic conductivity, (iii) the water potentials at which 50% and 88% of hydraulic conductivity is lost because of embolism (P50 and P88, respectively), (iv) the hydraulic safety margin (HSM) between the

## Significance

**Predicting the impacts of climate extremes on plant communities is a central challenge in ecology. Physiological traits may improve prediction of drought impacts on forests globally. We perform a meta-analysis across 33 studies that span all forested biomes and find that, among the examined traits, hydraulic traits explain cross-species patterns in mortality from drought. Gymnosperm and angiosperm mortality was associated with different hydraulic traits, giving insight into the relative weights of different traits and mechanisms in mortality prediction. Our results provide a foundation for more mechanistic predictions of drought-induced tree mortality across Earth's diverse forests.**

Author contributions: W.R.L.A. and T.K. designed research; W.R.L.A. performed research; M.B., L.S., A.F.A.P., B.C., and S.J. contributed new reagents/analytic tools; W.R.L.A. analyzed data; and W.R.L.A. and T.K. wrote the paper with contributions from all authors.

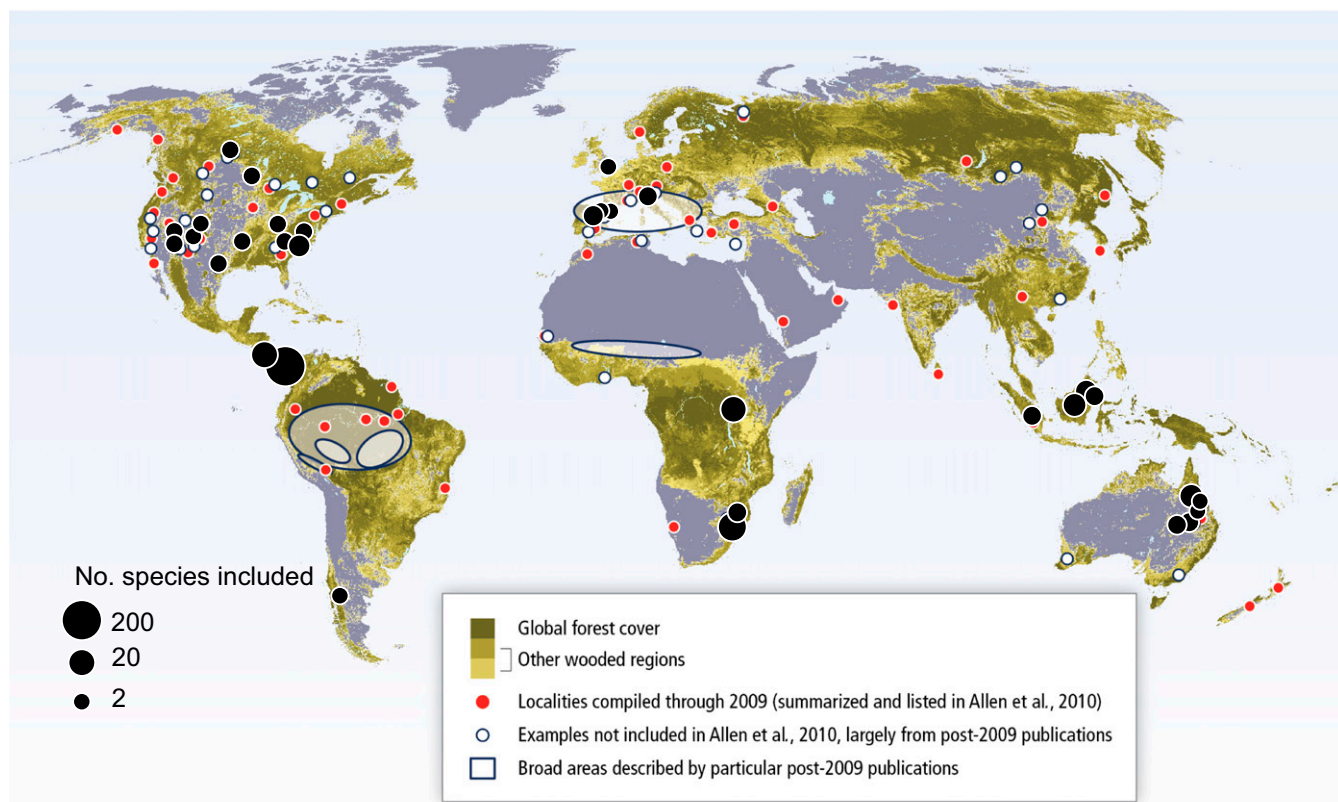
The authors declare no conflict of interest.

This article is a PNAS Direct Submission.

Data deposition: The data reported in this paper have been deposited in the Dryad Digital Repository ([dx.doi.org/10.5061/dryad.116j2](https://doi.org/10.5061/dryad.116j2)).

<sup>1</sup>To whom correspondence should be addressed. Email: [anderegg@utah.edu](mailto:anderegg@utah.edu).

This article contains supporting information online at [www.pnas.org/lookup/suppl/doi:10.1073/pnas.1525678113/-DCSupplemental](https://www.pnas.org/lookup/suppl/doi:10.1073/pnas.1525678113/-DCSupplemental).



**Fig. 1.** Drought- and heat-induced regional tree mortality events around the world. Black dots indicate the cross-species mortality rates examined here, with dot size proportional to the number of species reported ( $n = 475$  unique species). Red dots indicate pre-2009 mortality studies synthesized in the work by Allen et al. (4); white dots indicate the updated studies presented in ref. 73, and polygons are broad regions described by post-2009 studies.

typical minimum xylem water potential and P50 or P88, (v) the water potential at leaf turgor loss point, (vi) the water potential at 50% stomatal closure, (vii) maximum rooting depth, (viii) wood anatomy category (coniferous, diffuse-porous, or ring-porous xylem), (ix) angiosperm–gymnosperm, and (x) evergreen–deciduous leaf habit. We used multilevel mixed effects models, weighting mortality anomalies by study precision and including study as a random effect to account for site and drought characteristics, to examine which physiological traits influence which species will succumb to drought.

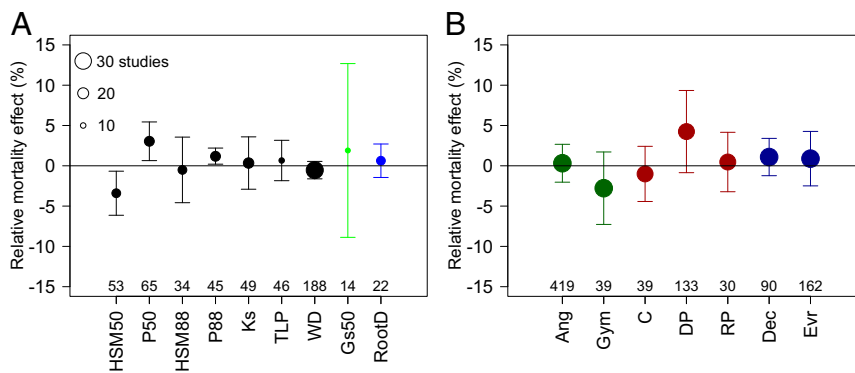
### Results and Discussion

We found that the HSM from P50, P50 itself, and P88 were the only significant predictors of cross-species patterns of mortality anomalies across all species combined ( $p_{\text{HSM50}} = 0.01$ ;  $p_{\text{P50}} = 0.04$ ;  $p_{\text{P88}} = 0.048$ ) (Fig. 2 and Table S1). A tree’s HSM integrates the “safety” of xylem to drought-induced embolism and some elements of stomatal response to leaf water potential, thereby capturing a number of key components in a plant’s integrated drought response (16, 18). Our results provide support for the hypothesis that the HSM is likely to be one of the most useful traits in predicting tree mortality across species within individual ecosystems. Critically, a global synthesis found that species’ HSMs were relatively small across a wide range of biomes (18), indicating vulnerability to drought, and our results tie this vulnerability directly to risk of mortality and extend the importance of HSMs in predicting relative vulnerability within communities. Species with less negative (closer to zero) P50 values, on average, experienced higher rates of mortality, consistent with the link of this trait to drought tolerance. Other hydraulic traits, including native branch conductivity, the water potential at leaf turgor loss point, and wood density, were not associated with cross-species patterns in mortality across all species (Fig. 2 and Table S1). Furthermore, maximum documented rooting

depth and stomatal traits alone were not associated with cross-species patterns in mortality (Fig. 2). Although these traits are known to strongly influence certain species’ abilities to tolerate drought (15, 20), they did not capture the strong species variation in responses within given communities, possibly because species-level mean trait values might miss intraspecific trait variation present at a given site.

Across all studies, angiosperms and gymnosperms were equally likely to die during a given drought (Fig. 2). We observed a moderate increase in mortality anomalies for diffuse-porous angiosperms, although only statistically significant in some cases (Table S1), and no difference in mortality anomalies between deciduous and evergreen species (Fig. 2). We found no support for the recently published predictions based on a very simple model using a steady-state equation of water transport (21), including that there should be higher mortality in gymnosperms, species with low specific hydraulic conductivity, or species with conservative stomatal responses. In our view, that model did not capture observed mortality patterns for at least three reasons. First, equations for water transport assuming constant conductivity are not likely to be applicable during severe drought. Second, that model’s assumption that low stomatal conductance will hasten mortality was problematic, because the opposite may, in fact, be true if stomatal closure increases the HSM (18), and third, we contend that models of mortality need to account for species’ or plant functional types’ differences in resistance to drought-induced embolism, such as P50 (22).

The specific hydraulic traits determining mortality anomalies differed across major plant lineages. Thus, considering angiosperms and gymnosperms separately showed that the HSM influenced mortality anomalies of gymnosperms but not angiosperms (Fig. 3). By contrast, low wood density was a significant predictor of mortality anomalies in angiosperms but not gymnosperms (Fig. 3). These different explanatory variables may



**Fig. 2.** Hydraulic traits predict mortality anomalies among species. (A) Effect size across all studies of change in mortality anomaly per unit change in z value of the predictive trait: hydraulic safety margin (HSM) from P50, P50, HSM from P88, P88, specific branch conductivity (Ks), water potential at leaf turgor loss point (TLP), wood density (WD), water potential at 50% of maximal stomatal conductance (Gs50), and maximum documented rooting depth (RootD). (B) Effect size across all studies of change in mortality anomaly between predictive categories: angiosperm (Ang), gymnosperm (Gym), conifer wood type (C), diffuse porous wood type (DP), ring porous wood type (RP), deciduous leaf habit (Dec), and evergreen leaf habit (Evr). Mortality anomaly (y axis) refers to the species-specific deviation in percentage of mortality (typically number of stems per year) relative to the mean community-averaged mortality in the same drought event. Thus, a negative anomaly of 5% indicates that a 1-SD increase in trait *x* in species *i* leads to a 5% lower mortality rate of species *i* relative to the plant community. Error bars are 95% confidence intervals. Colors highlight different groupings of traits. Numbers below indicate the number of species included.

be because of fundamentally different wood anatomy in angiosperms and gymnosperms, with the latter generally having more negative P50 values, more conservative stomatal responses, and larger HSMs (18, 23). The importance of HSM in gymnosperms suggests a critical role of stomatal response in gymnosperms for maintaining xylem water potentials above damaging levels. By contrast, wood density may be a valuable proxy for mortality risk among angiosperms in particular; as has been observed previously in tropical biomes (24), it provides general tolerance of stresses, likely because of correlations with other traits not captured here, such as defense traits and the ability to regrow xylem after embolism (25).

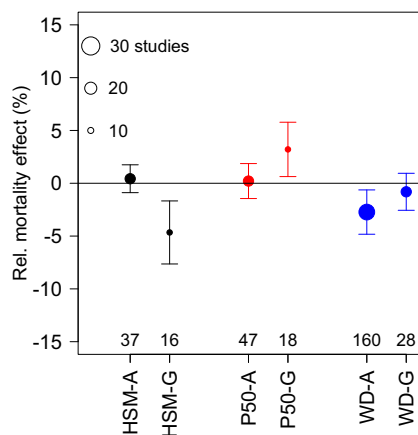
The contrasting importance of HSM and wood density in gymnosperms and angiosperms, respectively, is also consistent with other divergent aspects of their hydraulic architecture and life history. Thus, the relatively narrow, “safe” tracheids of the gymnosperm conducting system are thought to be unable to recover from water potentials close to their P50 values because of their limited amount of parenchyma in wood and their monopodial growth; conifers rarely show resprouting and refilling, and may have lethal water potentials around P50 (23, 26, 27). Angiosperms, however, are, on average, more susceptible to embolism (less negative P50 values and narrow safety margins), may quickly lose conductivity at relatively low levels of water stress, and are more likely to be able to recover from drought because of the potential for embolism refilling, resprouting from branch nodes below dead segmented tissues, and regrowth from a sympodial architecture. The higher amount of parenchyma in angiosperm wood (tissue fractions around 20–30%) could be linked to their higher storage capacity (e.g., for water and nonstructural carbohydrates), symplastic connectivity, and positive root pressure but also, various mechanisms related to defense and resilience to disturbance (23). The differential trait influences on mortality in angiosperms and gymnosperms may help guide mortality algorithms across plant functional types, because angiosperms and gymnosperms are often simulated as different plant functional types in global vegetation models.

Improved understanding of cross-species mortality patterns during drought will be critical to predicting the impacts of climate change on biodiverse ecosystems and whether drought could drive shifts in dominant tree species. Despite much recent research advancing our understanding, we still cannot predict which species will live or die in a given drought based on first principles. Our results highlight which traits and species’ attributes were

associated with mortality across a range of studies, but the proportion of explained variation was modest. The multitrait hydraulic statistical model explained ~27% of the variance in mortality rates (Fig. S2). Within studies of individual ecosystems with fewer potential confounding factors, however, the predictive power of the HSM has explained much higher amounts of variation in some cases ( $R^2 = 0.73$ ) (16). Some of the unexplained variation may be caused by our inability to include topoedaphic and plant community effects as well as other potentially useful traits because of lack of data. In particular, it would be valuable to examine the level and utility of carbon reserves during drought, which were related to mortality in some studies (28, 29) but not in others (14, 30). Currently, however, enormous methodological uncertainty with nonstructural carbohydrates measurements prohibits cross-study comparison (31). Although most of our analyses focused on species’ relative mortality anomalies compared with the overall community mortality rate within a study, drought intensity was marginally significantly correlated with overall absolute mortality rate within a study ( $F = 3.17$ ;  $df = 30$ ;  $P = 0.08$ ) (Fig. S3).

Interactions of drought effects with biotic agents and their feedbacks can also significantly change the demographic patterns of tree mortality, especially in cases where pathogens are host-specific. Although we examined only studies that identified drought as a critical driver of observed mortality rates, biotic agents were reported as present in 8% of species analyzed. In cases where major roles of biotic agents have been noted, such as in bark beetle attacks during drought in western North America, physiological traits concerning tree defenses, such as resin duct size and density, may be crucial to incorporate (32) as well as the effects of climate on insect populations.

Tree species drought responses are often affected by multiple and interacting traits (11, 12, 15). Although several of our traits, such as HSM, synthesize complex drought responses that involve integration of stomatal and hydraulic responses and although we analyzed the predictive capability of a multiple hydraulic trait model (Fig. S2), limited data overlap among traits necessitated conducting most of our meta-analyses on single-trait models, which are an oversimplification of drought responses. Several of the studies included here account for such interactions between traits and complex mortality mechanisms at a local scale and they corroborate our findings of the importance of the same hydraulic traits in these local events (14–16). Tree mortality studies at the global scale have been so far descriptive (4) or theoretical (20); thus, our approach shows the importance of synthesizing cross-species



**Fig. 3.** Hydraulic traits' influence on mortality differs between gymnosperms and angiosperms. Effect size across all studies of change in mortality anomalies per unit change in  $z$  value of the predictive trait in gymnosperms (G) and angiosperms (A) as a function of HSM, P50, and wood density (WD). Mortality anomaly ( $y$  axis) refers to the species-specific deviation in percentage of mortality (typically number of stems per year) relative to the mean community-averaged mortality in the same drought event. Thus, a negative anomaly of 5% indicates that a 1-SD increase in trait  $x$  in species  $i$  leads to a 5% lower mortality rate of species  $i$  relative to the plant community. Error bars are 95% confidence intervals. Numbers below indicate the number of species included. Rel., relative.

mortality rates of mature trees in situ, and it provides insights into how and why trees die in drought-affected forests across the globe and which species are at higher risk than others.

Our meta-analysis indicates that hydraulic traits are a promising avenue for modeling mortality and lend additional support to hydraulic mechanisms mediating die off. Simulations of the dynamics of plant water transport, conductivity, and drought-induced embolism are now possible at regional scales (7), although model validation is crucial and must also be conducted regionally, and appropriate validation datasets are relatively sparse. More measurements of rooting, stomatal, and defense traits during drought-induced mortality events will improve our understanding of how coordinated trait syndromes and their plasticity can influence demographic outcomes during climate extremes. Our study paves the way for multi-species prediction of drought impacts and better understanding of how climate change will alter Earth's forests in the 21st century.

## Methods

We performed a two-pronged search of the drought and tree mortality literature. First, we drew on references presented in several extensive peer-reviewed syntheses in the past 5 y that aimed to comprehensively document studies that reported drought-induced tree mortality at a regional scale (4, 8). Because these studies include literature up through 2015 and were global in nature, they likely include most of the available literature. We considered all references in these studies that met the criteria below. As a second prong, we performed multiple Google Scholar and Web of Science searches using permutations of keywords drought, forest, tree mortality, vegetation, and dieback. To be included in the meta-analysis, the study had to (i) present mortality rates, with drought having been attributed as a prominent or the dominant driver; (ii) indicate that no other major disturbance (e.g., fire or harvest) had occurred that could drive mortality; and (iii) present mortality rates for more than one species or genus. These searches led to the identification of 33 studies (15, 16, 33–63) that spanned 475 unique species and covered all vegetated continents (Fig. 1 and Table S2). Three studies presented mortality rates only at the genus level, and thus, we included those studies only for angiosperm–gymnosperm comparisons (Table S2). Although attribution of mortality to drought is not always straightforward, we included only studies that stated or showed that drought had driven elevated mortality rates of at least some species in the study. In our sample of studies, 31 of 33 studies focused on a single specific drought event, suggesting higher confidence that drought was the dominant signal in these studies.

We ran all analyses below with the full 33 studies and this subset of 31 studies, and all results were robust to which group was analyzed.

We compiled trait data for each species from the peer-reviewed literature and climate data for each study's location or geographic centroid if the study spanned a larger region. Hydraulic and stomatal traits came from recent cross-species syntheses (18, 19, 64, 65). P50 and P88 are defined as the water potentials at which a given species loses 50% and 88%, respectively, of hydraulic conductivity in a given tissue, and all of our analyses used stem measurements. We use the definition of HSM proposed in ref. 18, which is the minimum water potential observed in a given species minus either the P50 or P88 value. Wood density is commonly defined as the dry weight per unit volume of wet wood. Wood density was drawn from the Global Wood Density Database (66) and averaged where multiple values were present per species. Maximum rooting depth came from the TRY database (67). Use of global trait values for a given species at specific sites or regions presents challenges, and thus, we used the study-specific trait values for species, where they were presented in the original studies, to improve accuracy. The agreement of our findings about the central role of hydraulic traits in predicting cross-species mortality patterns with those of detailed site-specific studies across multiple biomes that measured traits on trees at those sites (15, 16, 68) indicates that our approach is reasonable. To estimate a common metric of drought stress across studies, we downloaded monthly precipitation data from 1901 to 2013 from the University of East Anglia Climatic Research Unit (CRU) dataset (69) and calculated the  $z$  scores of precipitation anomaly during the reported drought years in each study for each study's geographic location. We used the most negative precipitation anomaly observed during a 5-y window around the mortality-inciting drought year reported by the study, making sure that no part of this window occurred after the study publication date, as a metric of drought intensity for each study.

We calculated the mortality anomaly of species  $i$  in study  $j$  as the difference between the reported mortality rate of that species and the whole community-averaged mortality rate in the study (Fig. S1). This metric provides a simple and robust "effect size" for meta-analysis that encapsulates the relative risk of mortality that each species experienced during the drought in that plant community. The advantage of this approach is that it can provide a comparable metric across studies and also, account for "site effects" that differ across studies (Fig. S1). Mortality rates were typically reported as the annualized percentages of mortality (percentages of stems per year) during or immediately after the drought. We included only mortality rates for mature trees (typically diameter at breast height > 10 cm), and where mortality information was reported for multiple size classes, we used mortality rates for only the largest size class. We included only species that had >10 individuals, and the median number of individuals per species was 109. Following other recent rigorous meta-analyses (19), we constructed single-trait statistical models with linear mixed effects models that included study identity as a random effect. Mixed effects models were performed using the lmer function in the lme4 (70) package in R. Per standard meta-analysis methods, weighted species by the study's measurement precision were quantified as  $\log(N$  individuals of species  $i$ ), because SDs or SEs were not presented in almost all studies, and precision should be proportional to the number of individuals in a species, with a log required because of a log-normal distribution of abundances across species. Including study identity as a random effect allows the slope and intercept to vary within each study, thereby explicitly accounting for differences in drought and site characteristics and their impacts across studies.

To compare effect sizes among traits, we normalized trait values to  $z$  scores relative to all species. As an alternate approach, we normalized traits within each study (thus, relative mortality could be compared with relative trait values within a plant community) and found that this approach yielded nearly identical results. Number of individuals per species was not available for a small number of studies ( $n = 5$  studies), and those species were assigned the median number of individuals per species ( $n = 109$  individuals) across all other studies. Weighting had relatively little effect on models (Table S1), and thus, we present unweighted values in Figs. 2 and 3 and both sets of values in Table S1.  $P$  values for fixed effects of traits were calculated using the Kenward–Roger approximation. In some models, data were transformed by arctangent and cube root transformations to meet assumptions of normality. To assess angiosperm–gymnosperm differences, we performed hydraulic trait models on subsetted data of either angiosperms or gymnosperms using the same procedures as above. We did not, however, test all traits against angiosperms and gymnosperms separately because of sample size limitations. Thus, in the separate angiosperm and gymnosperm analyses, we tested only the HSM from P50, P50, and wood density traits, which had

enough sample size to make inferences and were suggested as important in the all-species analyses.

To assess the combined predictive capability of the three main hydraulic traits (HSM from P50, P50, and wood density), we used random forest regression, which avoids any problems with predictor variable collinearity, and included study identity and angiosperm–gymnosperm as covariates. The random forest algorithm produces multiple “trees,” with each tree based off of a subset of the data and predictor variables. The final “forest” is a combination of these model trees, with the percentage variance explained based off of out of bag predictions. We compared predicted values vs. observed mortality data to generate an estimate of the proportion of variance explained by hydraulic traits. We did not examine other combinations of traits, because relatively limited overlap of other (nonhydraulic) trait datasets would have led to low sample sizes, such that the models could not be fit reliably. Ultimately, species drought responses, of course, are a function of a large number of traits and their interactions, and thus, more drought trait data will be needed across a broader breadth of species to test multitrait models in the future. All statistical analyses were conducted in R (71) using the lme4 (70) and randomForest (72) packages. Data available from the Dryad Digital Repository ([dx.doi.org/10.5061/dryad.116j2](https://doi.org/10.5061/dryad.116j2)).

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.** We thank David Kolet-Mandrikov and Sophia Su for help in compilation of mortality and trait data and Craig Allen of United States Geological Survey and Nate McDowell of Los Alamos National Laboratory for fruitful discussions leading to this study. We thank all of the people who contributed data to the Xylem Functional Traits Database, which was initially compiled by a working group funded by the Australian Research Council through the Australia–New Zealand Research Network for Vegetation Function. The study has been supported by the TRY Initiative on Plant Traits (<https://www.try-db.org>); the TRY Initiative and Database is hosted, developed, and maintained by J. Kattge and G. Bönišch (Max Planck Institute for Biogeochemistry). TRY is currently supported by DIVERSITAS/Future Earth and the German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research. W.R.L.A. was supported, in part, by National Science Foundation Macrosystems Biology Grant DEB EF-1340270, National Science Foundation RAPID Grant DEB-1249256, and a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Climate and Global Change Postdoctoral Fellowship administered by the University Corporation of Atmospheric Research. T.K. was funded by Swiss National Fund Project FORCARB 31003A\_14753/1 and the Plant Fellows Program of the Zürich-Basel Plant Science Center through the European Union Framework Programme 7 Marie Curie Action. L.S. was supported by National Science Foundation Grant IOS-1147292. B.C. was supported by Australian Research Council Future Fellowship FT130101115. S.J. acknowledges financial support from the German Science Foundation.

1. Pan Y, et al. (2011) A large and persistent carbon sink in the world's forests. *Science* 333(6045):988–993.
2. Bonan GB (2008) Forests and climate change: Forcings, feedbacks, and the climate benefits of forests. *Science* 320(5882):1444–1449.
3. Cox PM, et al. (2004) Amazonian forest dieback under climate-carbon cycle projections for the 21st century. *Theor Appl Climatol* 78(1-3):137–156.
4. Allen CD, et al. (2010) A global overview of drought and heat-induced tree mortality reveals emerging climate change risks for forests. *For Ecol Manage* 259(4):660–648.
5. Anderegg WRL, Kane JM, Anderegg LDL (2013) Consequences of widespread tree mortality triggered by drought and temperature stress. *Nat Clim Chang* 3(1):30–36.
6. Dai A (2013) Increasing drought under global warming in observations and models. *Nat Clim Chang* 3(1):52–58.
7. Anderegg WRL, et al. (2015) Tree mortality predicted from drought-induced vascular damage. *Nat Geosci* 8(5):367–371.
8. Allen CD, Breshears DD, McDowell NG (2015) On underestimation of global vulnerability to tree mortality and forest die-off from hotter drought in the Anthropocene. *Ecosphere* 6(8):129.
9. Soudzilovskaia NA, et al. (2013) Functional traits predict relationship between plant abundance dynamic and long-term climate warming. *Proc Natl Acad Sci USA* 110(45):18180–18184.
10. Powell TL, et al. (2013) Confronting model predictions of carbon fluxes with measurements of Amazon forests subjected to experimental drought. *New Phytol* 200(2):350–365.
11. McDowell NG, et al. (2011) The interdependence of mechanisms underlying climate-driven vegetation mortality. *Trends Ecol Evol* 26(10):523–532.
12. Anderegg WRL, Berry JA, Field CB (2012) Linking definitions, mechanisms, and modeling of drought-induced tree death. *Trends Plant Sci* 17(12):693–700.
13. Hartmann H, Adams HD, Anderegg WR, Jansen S, Zeppel MJ (2015) Research frontiers in drought-induced tree mortality: Crossing scales and disciplines. *New Phytol* 205(3):965–969.
14. Anderegg WRL, et al. (2012) The roles of hydraulic and carbon stress in a widespread climate-induced forest die-off. *Proc Natl Acad Sci USA* 109(1):233–237.
15. Hoffmann WA, Marchin RM, Abit P, Lau OL (2011) Hydraulic failure and tree dieback are associated with high wood density in a temperate forest under extreme drought. *Glob Chang Biol* 17(8):2731–2742.
16. Nardini A, Battistuzzo M, Savi T (2013) Shoot desiccation and hydraulic failure in temperate woody angiosperms during an extreme summer drought. *New Phytol* 200(2):322–329.
17. Mitchell PJ, et al. (2013) Drought response strategies define the relative contributions of hydraulic dysfunction and carbohydrate depletion during tree mortality. *New Phytol* 197(3):862–872.
18. Choat B, et al. (2012) Global convergence in the vulnerability of forests to drought. *Nature* 491(7426):752–755.
19. Bartlett MK, Scoffoni C, Sack L (2012) The determinants of leaf turgor loss point and prediction of drought tolerance of species and biomes: A global meta-analysis. *Ecol Lett* 15(5):393–405.
20. Duursma RA, et al. (2011) Rooting depth explains [CO<sub>2</sub>] x drought interaction in *Eucalyptus saligna*. *Tree Physiol* 31(9):922–931.
21. McDowell NG, Allen CD (2015) Darcy's law predicts widespread forest mortality under climate warming. *Nat Clim Chang* 5(7):669–672.
22. Anderegg WR (2015) Spatial and temporal variation in plant hydraulic traits and their relevance for climate change impacts on vegetation. *New Phytol* 205(3):1008–1014.
23. Johnson DM, McCulloh KA, Woodruff DR, Meinzer FC (2012) Hydraulic safety margins and embolism reversal in stems and leaves: Why are conifers and angiosperms so different? *Plant Sci* 195:48–53.
24. Kraft NJB, Metz MR, Condit RS, Chave J (2010) The relationship between wood density and mortality in a global tropical forest data set. *New Phytol* 188(4):1124–1136.
25. Chave J, et al. (2009) Towards a worldwide wood economics spectrum. *Ecol Lett* 12(4):351–366.
26. Brodribb TJ, Cochard H (2009) Hydraulic failure defines the recovery and point of death in water-stressed conifers. *Plant Physiol* 149(1):575–584.
27. Choat B, Brodersen CR, McElrone AJ (2015) Synchrotron X-ray microtomography of xylem embolism in *Sequoia sempervirens* saplings during cycles of drought and recovery. *New Phytol* 205(3):1095–1105.
28. O'Brien MJ, Leuzinger S, Philipson CD, Tay J, Hector A (2014) Drought survival of tropical tree seedlings enhanced by non-structural carbohydrate levels. *Nat Clim Chang* 4(8):710–714.
29. Adams HD, et al. (2013) Nonstructural leaf carbohydrate dynamics of *Pinus edulis* during drought-induced tree mortality reveal role for carbon metabolism in mortality mechanism. *New Phytol* 197(4):1142–1151.
30. Klein T, Hoch G, Yakir D, Körner C (2014) Drought stress, growth and nonstructural carbohydrate dynamics of pine trees in a semi-arid forest. *Tree Physiol* 34(9):981–992.
31. Quentin AG, et al. (2015) Non-structural carbohydrates in woody plants compared among laboratories. *Tree Physiol* 35(11):1146–1165.
32. Kane JM, Kolb TE (2010) Importance of resin ducts in reducing ponderosa pine mortality from bark beetle attack. *Oecologia* 164(3):601–609.
33. Suarez ML, Kitzberger T (2008) Recruitment patterns following a severe drought: Long-term compositional shifts in Patagonian forests. *Can J For Res* 38(12):3002–3010.
34. Condit R, Hubbell SP, Foster RB (1995) Mortality rates of 205 neotropical tree and shrub species and the impact of a severe drought. *Ecol Monogr* 65(4):419–439.
35. Faber-Langendoen D, Tester JR (1993) Oak mortality in sand savannas following drought in east-central Minnesota. *Bull Torrey Bot Club* 120(3):248–256.
36. Gitlin AR, et al. (2006) Mortality gradients within and among dominant plant populations as barometers of ecosystem change during extreme drought. *Conserv Biol* 20(5):1477–1486.
37. Olano JM, Palmer MW (2003) Stand dynamics of an Appalachian old-growth forest during a severe drought episode. *For Ecol Manage* 174(1):139–148.
38. Stringer JW, Kimmerer TW, Overstreet JC, Dunn JP (1989) Oak mortality in eastern Kentucky. *South J Appl For* 13(2):86–91.
39. Kukowski KR, Schwinning S, Schwartz BF (2013) Hydraulic responses to extreme drought conditions in three co-dominant tree species in shallow soil over bedrock. *Oecologia* 171(4):819–830.
40. Floyd ML, et al. (2009) Relationship of stand characteristics to drought-induced mortality in three southwestern piñon-juniper woodlands. *Ecol Appl* 19(5):1223–1230.
41. Klos RJ, Wang GG, Bauerle WL, Rieck JR (2009) Drought impact on forest growth and mortality in the southeast USA: An analysis using Forest Health and Monitoring data. *Ecol Appl* 19(3):699–708.
42. Viljoen AJ (1995) The influence of the 1991/92 drought on the woody vegetation of the Kruger National Park. *Koedoe* 38(2):85–97.
43. O'connor TG (1998) Impact of sustained drought on a semi-arid *Colophospermum mopane* savanna. *Afr J Range Forage Sci* 15(3):83–91.
44. Lwanga JS (2003) Localized tree mortality following the drought of 1999 at Ngogo, Kibale National Park, Uganda. *Afr J Ecol* 41(2):194–196.
45. Van Nieuwstadt MG, Sheil D (2005) Drought, fire and tree survival in a Borneo rain forest, East Kalimantan, Indonesia. *J Ecol* 93(1):191–201.
46. Potts MD (2003) Drought in a Bornean everwet rain forest. *J Ecol* 91(3):467–474.
47. Nakagawa M, et al. (2000) Impact of severe drought associated with the 1997–1998 El Niño in a tropical forest in Sarawak. *J Trop Ecol* 16(03):355–367.
48. Newbery DM, Lingenfelder M (2009) Plurality of tree species responses to drought perturbation in Bornean tropical rain forest. *Plant Ecol* 201(1):147–167.
49. Fensham RJ (1998) The influence of cattle grazing on tree mortality after drought in savanna woodland in north Queensland. *Aust J Ecol* 23(4):405–407.
50. Fensham RJ, Holman JE (1999) Temporal and spatial patterns in drought-related tree dieback in Australian savanna. *J Appl Ecol* 36(6):1035–1050.
51. Rice KJ, Matzner SL, Byer W, Brown JR (2004) Patterns of tree dieback in Queensland, Australia: The importance of drought stress and the role of resistance to cavitation. *Oecologia* 139(2):190–198.

52. Fensham RJ, Fairfax RJ, Butler DW, Bowman D (2003) Effects of fire and drought in a tropical eucalypt savanna colonized by rain forest. *J Biogeogr* 30(9):1405–1414.
53. Martínez-Vilalta J, Piñol J (2002) Drought-induced mortality and hydraulic architecture in pine populations of the NE Iberian Peninsula. *For Ecol Manage* 161(1):247–256.
54. Gu L, Pallardy SG, Hosman KP, Sun Y (2015) Drought-influenced mortality of tree species with different predawn leaf water dynamics in a decade-long study of a central US forest. *Biogeosciences* 12(10):2831–2845.
55. Ganey JL, Vojta SC (2011) Tree mortality in drought-stressed mixed-conifer and ponderosa pine forests, Arizona, USA. *For Ecol Manage* 261(1):162–168.
56. Fensham RJ, Fraser J, MacDermott HJ, Finn J (2015) Dominant tree species are at risk from exaggerated drought under climate change. *Glob Chang Biol* 21(10):3777–3785.
57. Camarero JJ, Gazol A, Sangüesa-Barreda G, Oliva J, Vicente-Serrano SM (2015) To die or not to die: Early warnings of tree dieback in response to a severe drought. *J Ecol* 103(1):44–57.
58. Cavin L, Mountford EP, Peterken GF, Jump AS (2013) Extreme drought alters competitive dominance within and between tree species in a mixed forest stand. *Funct Ecol* 27(6):1424–1435.
59. Coll M, Peñuelas J, Ninyerola M, Pons X, Carnicer J (2013) Multivariate effect gradients driving forest demographic responses in the Iberian Peninsula. *For Ecol Manage* 303:195–209.
60. Anderegg WR, et al. (2015) Tree mortality from drought, insects, and their interactions in a changing climate. *New Phytol* 208(3):674–683.
61. Chazdon RL, Redondo Brenes A, Vilchez Alvarado B (2005) Effects of climate and stand age on annual tree dynamics in tropical second-growth rain forests. *Ecology* 86(7):1808–1815.
62. Fensham RJ, Fairfax RJ, Dwyer JM (2012) Potential aboveground biomass in drought-prone forest used for rangeland pastoralism. *Ecol Appl* 22(3):894–908.
63. Peng C, et al. (2011) A drought-induced pervasive increase in tree mortality across Canada's boreal forests. *Nat Clim Chang* 1(9):467–471.
64. Klein T (2014) The variability of stomatal sensitivity to leaf water potential across tree species indicates a continuum between isohydric and anisohydric behaviours. *Funct Ecol* 28(6):1313–1320.
65. Gleason SM, et al. (2015) Weak tradeoff between xylem safety and xylem-specific hydraulic efficiency across the world's woody plant species. *New Phytol* 209(1):123–136.
66. Zanne AE, et al. (2009) Data from: Towards a worldwide wood economics spectrum. Available at [dx.doi.org/10.5061/dryad.234](https://dx.doi.org/10.5061/dryad.234). Accessed March 17, 2016.
67. Kattge J, et al. (2011) TRY – a global database of plant traits. *Glob Chang Biol* 17(9):2905–2935.
68. Wright SJ, et al. (2010) Functional traits and the growth-mortality trade-off in tropical trees. *Ecology* 91(12):3664–3674.
69. Harris I, Jones P, Osborn T, Lister D (2014) Updated high-resolution grids of monthly climatic observations—the CRU TS3.10 Dataset. *Int J Climatol* 34(3):623–642.
70. Bates D, et al. (2014) Package “lme4.” R Founda Stat Comput Vienna. Available at <https://cran.r-project.org/web/packages/lme4/index.html>. Accessed March 16, 2015.
71. Team RC (2012) R: A Language and Environment for Statistical Computing (R Foundation for Statistical Computing). Available at [www.R-project.org](http://www.R-project.org). Accessed January 1, 2013.
72. Liaw A, Wiener M, Breiman L, Cutler A (2009) Package “randomForest.” Available at <https://cran.r-project.org/web/packages/randomForest/index.html>. Accessed December 12, 2009.
73. Settele J, et al. (2014) Terrestrial and inland water systems. Climate change 2014: Impacts, adaptation, and vulnerability. Part A: Global and sectoral aspects. *Proceedings of Working Group II to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*, eds Field CB, et al. (Cambridge Univ Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom), pp 271–359.