

ABSTRACT

Current models, applying equilibrium theory to reserve planning, all treat reserves as land-bridge islands. Recent evidence suggests that most forests in East Africa, especially montane ones, are more accurately regarded as oceanic-island analogues. Differences between the biotas of the two types of island are reviewed, with particular emphasis on species turnover and niche width, and their conservation implications discussed. Proximity to nearby areas of similar habitat, to provide sources of immigrants essential to maintain the positive component of the species turnover characteristic of oceanic islands, may prove to be the most important feature of such reserves.