**Additional file 1| Literature sources and search strings used**

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| **Literature Source** | **Search string, keywords or methods used for literature search** |
| **Databases** | |
| **Archive of Tropical Forestry Inventory UK**  **(ATROFI UK)**  [**http://www.rdg.ac.uk/ssc/atrofi**](http://www.rdg.ac.uk/ssc/atrofi) | Keyword search for: Miombo, forest or carbon, Africa |
| **CAB Direct**  [**http://www.cabdirect.org/**](http://www.cabdirect.org/) | Search string: ab:(miombo OR woodland\* OR "Zambez\* phytoregion" OR brachystegia OR julbernardia OR isoberlinia OR savanna\* OR forest\* OR "standing stock" OR biomass) AND gl:(Zambia OR Angola OR Malawi OR "Democratic Republic of Congo" OR Mozambique OR Zimbabwe OR Tanzania OR "South Africa" OR Burundi OR "Belgian Congo" OR Zaire OR Rhodesia OR Nyasaland OR Tanganyika OR Africa) AND ab:(timber OR fire OR "forest product\*" OR "wood product\*" OR "natural resource\*" OR "land cover" OR "land use" OR "land tenure" OR "land degradation" OR swidden OR citimene OR chitimene OR "slash NEAR burn" OR fallow OR "shifting cultivation" OR grazing OR infrastruct\* OR mining OR migrat\* OR wildlife OR bushmeat OR fodder OR mushroom\* OR fuelwood OR woodfuel OR charcoal OR refugee OR log\* OR agroforestry OR disturb\* OR medicin\* OR "forest management" OR land management” OR "land polic\*" OR "forest polic\*" OR livelihood\* OR measure OR density OR livestock OR "management regime") AND ab:(emission\* OR vegetation OR wood\* OR biomass OR carbon OR stock\* OR flux\* OR "above ground" OR "below ground" OR "basal area" OR sequest\* OR accumulate\* OR model OR estimat\* OR ndvi\* OR recover\* OR "land use NEAR change" OR rootstock) AND yr:[1950 TO 2015] |
| **Web of Knowledge**  [**http://apps.webofknowledge.com/**](http://apps.webofknowledge.com/) | Search string: TOPIC: (miombo OR woodland\* OR "Zambez\* phytoregion" OR brachystegia OR julbernardia OR isoberlinia OR savanna\* OR forest\* OR "standing stock" OR biomass) AND TOPIC: (zambia OR angola OR malawi OR "Democratic Republic of Congo" OR mozambique OR zimbabwe OR tanzania OR "South Africa" OR burundi OR "Belgian Congo" OR zaire OR rhodesia OR nyasaland OR tanganyika OR africa) AND TOPIC: (timber OR fire OR "forest product\*" OR "wood product\*" OR "natural resource\*" OR "land cover" OR "land use" OR "land tenure" OR "land degradation" OR swidden OR citimene OR chitimene OR "slash AND burn" OR fallow OR "shifting cultivation" OR grazing OR infrastruct\* OR mining OR migrat\* OR wildlife OR bushmeat OR fodder OR mushroom\* OR fuelwood OR woodfuel OR charcoal OR refugee OR log\* OR agroforestry OR disturb\* OR medicin\* OR "forest management" OR "land management" OR "land polic\*" OR "forest polic\*" OR livelihood\* OR measure OR density OR livestock OR "management regime") AND TOPIC: (emission\* OR vegetation OR wood\* OR biomass OR carbon OR stock\* OR flux\* OR "above ground" OR "below ground" OR "basal area" OR sequest\* OR accumulate\* OR model OR estimat\* OR ndvi\* OR recover\* OR "land use change" OR rootstock) |
| **Scopus**  [**http://www.scopus.com/**](http://www.scopus.com/) | Search string: TITLE-ABS-KEY ( miombo  OR  woodland\* OR "Zambez\* phytoregion" OR brachystegia OR julbernardia OR isoberlinia OR savanna\* OR forest\* OR "standing stock" OR biomass) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY(zambia OR angola OR malawi OR "Democratic Republic of Congo" OR mozambique OR zimbabwe OR tanzania OR "South Africa" OR burundi OR "Belgian Congo" OR zaire OR rhodesia OR nyasaland OR tanganyika OR africa) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY(timber OR fire OR "forest product\*" OR "wood product\*" OR "natural resource\*" OR "land cover" OR "land use" OR "land tenure" OR "land degradation" OR swidden OR citimene OR chitimene OR "slash AND burn" OR fallow OR "shifting cultivation" OR grazing OR infrastruct\* OR mining OR migrat\* OR wildlife OR bushmeat OR fodder OR mushroom\* OR fuelwood OR woodfuel OR charcoal OR refugee OR log\* OR agroforestry OR disturb\* OR medicin\* OR "forest management" OR "land management" OR "land polic\*" OR "forest polic\*" OR livelihood\* OR measure OR density OR livestock OR "management regime") AND TITLE-ABS-KEY(emission\* OR vegetation OR wood\* OR biomass OR carbon OR stock\* OR flux\* OR "above ground" OR "below ground" OR "basal area" OR sequest\* OR accumulate\* OR model OR estimat\* OR ndvi\* OR recover\* OR "land use change" OR rootstock) |
| **Wiley Online**  [**http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/**](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/) | Search string: miombo (abstract) AND forest OR carbon OR "land use" (in abstract) |
| **JSTOR**  [**http://www.jstor.org/**](http://www.jstor.org/) | Search string: miombo OR woodlands AND biomass OR carbon OR "land use" AND Africa (after 1950) |
| **African Journals Online**  [**http://www.ajol.info/**](http://www.ajol.info/) | Search string: miombo AND ("land use" OR carbon OR biomass OR forest) |
| **Google Scholar**  [**http://scholar.google.com**](http://scholar.google.com/) | Search string: miombo woodland and (carbon or biomass) and "land use" |
| **African Forest Forum**  <http://www.afforum.org/> | Basic keyword search for: miombo; land use; woodland; savanna; biomass; carbon; brachystegia; julbernadia; isoberlinia |
| **FAO**  **-Global Forests Resources Assessment**  **-National Forest Monitoring and Assessment (NFMA) of the FAO**  [**Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA): 2005 and 2010 of FAO and its country reports http://www.fao.org/forestry/fra/en/**](http://www.fao.org/forestry/fra/en/) | Keyword search for: "miombo" and "land use" and (biomass or carbon) |
| **CIFOR**  <http://www.cifor.org/library/> | Search string: “miombo woodlands” and “land use” and (carbon or biomass)    \*Search limited to working and occasional papers or policy briefs because published reports included within CAB database |
| **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)**  <http://www.unep.org/> | Keyword search for: miombo; woodland; biomass; carbon and Africa. |
| **World Bank**  <http://www.worldbank.org/> | Search string: miombo AND (carbon OR biomass) |
| **Integrated Land Use Assessment Phase 1 & 2, Zambia**  <http://www.fao.org/forestry/17847/en/zmb/> | Searched publications with keyword 'miombo' |
| **National vegetation mapping project (VegRIS) Zimbabwe**  [http://www.forestry.co.zw](http://www.forestry.co.zw/) | Searched publications of related research departments |
| **Winrock International**  <http://www.winrock.org/> | Searched publications with keyword 'miombo' |
| **KEW Royal Botanic Gardens**  <http://www.kew.org/> | Searched publications with keyword 'miombo' |
| **Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ)**  http://www.giz.de/en/ | Scanned website for relevant publications containing ‘miombo’ or ‘carbon’ |
| **Multifunctional Agriculture: Harnessing Biodiversity for Sustainable Agricultural Production and Ecosystem Services (SAPES), Lund University**  <http://www.cec.lu.se/research/sapes> | Scanned website for relevant publications containing ‘miombo’ or ‘carbon’ |
| **Total Land Care – Malawi**  <http://www.totallandcare.org/> | Scanned website for relevant publications |
| **Conservation International**  [http://www.conservation.org/](http://www.conservation.org/Pages/default.aspx) | Scanned website for relevant publications containing ‘miombo’ or carbon’ |
| **World Wildlife Fund (WWF)**  <http://worldwildlife.org/> | Scanned the 'Africa' publications |
| **International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)**  <http://www.iucn.org/> | Scanned website for relevant publications containing ‘miombo’ or ‘carbon’ |
| **National Forestry Resources Monitoring and Assessment, Government of Tanzania (NA FORMA)**  <http://www.fao.org/forestry/17847/en/tza/> | Scanned website for relevant publications; saved ‘Main Results’ from NA FORMA |
| **African Soil Information Service (Afsis)**  <http://www.africasoils.net/> | Searched for publications with keywords: 'carbon storage', ‘land use’, ‘land degradation’, ‘remote sensing’ |
| **Universities and Government offices** | |
| **Climate Action Network International; ZERO**  <http://www.climatenetwork.org/profile/member/zero-regional-environment-organization> | Searched publications for keywords containing: “miombo” and “carbon or biomass” |