

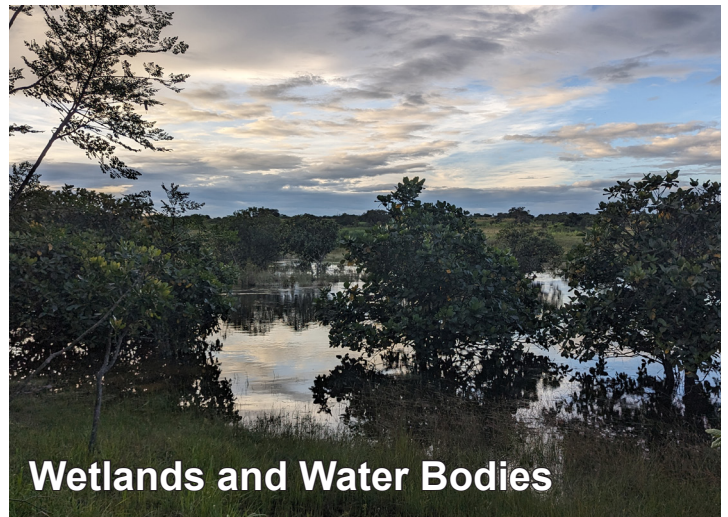


Grasslands

Western Zambia Habitat Types



**Human-modified and
Transitional Habitats**



Wetlands and Water Bodies



**Forests and
Savannah Woodlands**

Western Zambia Habitat Types

BRI Internal Use

This document is organized hierarchically. The numbered categories (e.g., 1, 2) represent broader habitat types, while the lettered subcategories (e.g., 1a, 1b) describe more specific vegetation formations within those types. This allows flexibility in use: technical staff with botany expertise can work at the specific subcategory level, while others can use the broader categories for general classification.

1. Forests and Savannah Woodlands

1a. Miombo Savannah Woodland

Medium-height woodland (about 15–21 m) with two layers of trees and an open to semi-closed canopy. The top layer is dominated by *Brachystegia* (miombo), *Isoberlinia*, *Marquesia*, and *Julbernardia* species, with a dense grassy ground layer. Common on upland plateaus with moderate rainfall. This is a typical moist savanna and supports a wide variety of birds and mammals. Most miombo today is regrowth following past clearing for cultivation.

1b. Mopane Savannah Woodland

Low (6–18 m), single-layered woodland dominated by *Colophospermum mopane* (mopane tree), which has distinctive butterfly-shaped leaves. Found in hot, low-lying areas with heavy clay soils. Trees are spaced widely over a grassy understory. Scattered trees from munga woodland, such as acacias, baobabs (*Adansonia*), *Combretum*, *Kirkia*, and *Lannea*, are sometimes present. This is a classic dry savanna type.

1c. Munga Savannah Woodland

Open woodland or park-like savanna with scattered *Acacia* (now *Vachellia/Senegalia*), *Combretum*, and *Terminalia* trees up to 18 m tall. Can have one or two tree layers, often with a thicket of deciduous or semi-deciduous shrubs underneath and a dense grass cover. Found in valleys, plains, and along floodplain edges. *Combretum–Terminalia* types dominate higher, well-drained sites; *Acacia* types dominate lower, poorly drained areas. This is typically a drier savanna type.

1d. Baikiaea Savannah Woodland

Two-layered woodland (9–18 m) dominated by *Baikiaea plurijuga* (Zambezi teak) and *Pterocarpus antunesii*. Found on deep sandy Kalahari soils or Karroo sands. The canopy can be fairly closed or more open with grassy patches. A lower layer of shrubs and vines (3–6 m) is common. In some areas, a dwarf form occurs with a canopy only 1.3–3 m tall. Falls within the dry savanna zone.

1e. *Cryptosepalum* Dry Evergreen Forest

Dense, evergreen forest dominated by *Cryptosepalum* species and *Guibourtia coleosperma* (false mopane). Found on Kalahari sands in lower rainfall areas. Has a closed canopy, very little grass, and only a few tree species. Fire-resistant and quite different from surrounding woodlands. When disturbed, it often shifts toward miombo or Kalahari woodland.

1f. Kalahari Savannah Woodland

Mixed woodland with a generally open canopy up to 24 m tall, growing on Kalahari sands. Usually forms after *Baikiaea* or *Cryptosepalum* forest has been degraded. Common trees include *Burkea africana*, *Combretum collinum*, *Terminalia sericea*, *Guibourtia coleosperma*, and *Parinari curatellifolia*. The canopy can be dense or open depending on disturbance, but a grassy ground layer is typical. Widespread across western Zambia. This is a widespread dry savanna type across western Zambia.

1g. Riparian Forest or Riverine Woodland

Tall (up to 21 m), three-layered forest growing along permanent rivers and streams. Dominant trees include *Diospyros*, *Khaya* (African mahogany), *Parinari*, and *Syzygium* (waterberries). More evergreen in the north and more deciduous in the south. These areas are cooler and moister than surrounding habitats and are important for many bird and insect species.

2. Grasslands

2a. Floodplain Grassland

Seasonally flooded grassland along major rivers such as the Zambezi. Dominated by tall grasses and sedges, with little or no tree cover. Flooded during the rains, then grazed in the dry season.

2b. Dambo (Seasonally Wet Grassland)

Grassy, seasonally waterlogged valleys or headwater wetlands. Usually treeless, with scattered trees or shrubs around the edges. Wettest during the rains, drying out in the dry season.

3. Wetlands and Water Bodies

3a. Permanent Swamp or Papyrus Wetland

Permanently wet areas with thick growth of papyrus (*Cyperus papyrus*), sedges, or

floating plants. Found in oxbow lakes, flood basins, and slow-moving rivers.

3b. River or Stream Channel

The active watercourse of a river or stream, either permanent or seasonal. Includes sandy, braided channels or narrow forested streams.

4. Human-modified and Transitional Habitats

4a. Cultivated Land or Old Field

Land currently used for farming or abandoned after cultivation. Vegetation may be crops, grasses, shrubs, or early-stage natural regrowth. Structure and species depend on past land use.

4b. Urban or Settlement Area

Built-up areas including towns, villages, roadsides, and homesteads. Often contain gardens, planted trees, exotic species, and remnants of natural vegetation.

4c. Plantation Forest

Land planted with fast-growing exotic or native trees, often for timber or fuelwood. Common species include *Eucalyptus*, *Pinus*, and *Gmelina*. Usually established on previously degraded land. While less diverse than natural forest, they can provide habitat for some wildlife, especially when near natural vegetation.