

Now there are two species, but what do we know about the otter *Lontra annectens* (Major, 1897): a review of the current knowledge and gaps to be addressed

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INTRODUCTION

The Mesoamerican otter (*Lontra annectens* Major, 1897) has recently been recognized as a distinct species, after previously being considered a subspecies of the neotropical otter (*L. longicaudis*). This taxonomic change necessitates a reassessment of its distribution, ecology, and conservation status, as the information previously attributed to *L. longicaudis* may not be entirely applicable to *L. annectens* and to determine its conservation status. It is also important to examine species occurrence records to identify regions where *L. annectens* has not been recorded and to establish an updated distribution range for the species.

OBJECTIVE

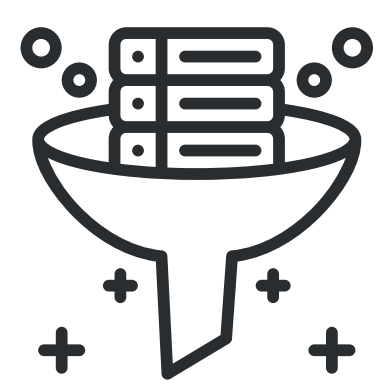
Conduct an exhaustive assessment of the current state of knowledge and existing records on the Mesoamerican otter (*Lontra annectens*) to identify information gaps and establish future strategies for its study and conservation.

METHOD

1) Search information.



Comprehensive reviews of databases and digital libraries (Google Scholar, ISI Web of Science, Scopus, Research Gate) for articles and other types of publications containing the keywords: neotropical otter, *Lontra longicaudis*, neotropical otter.



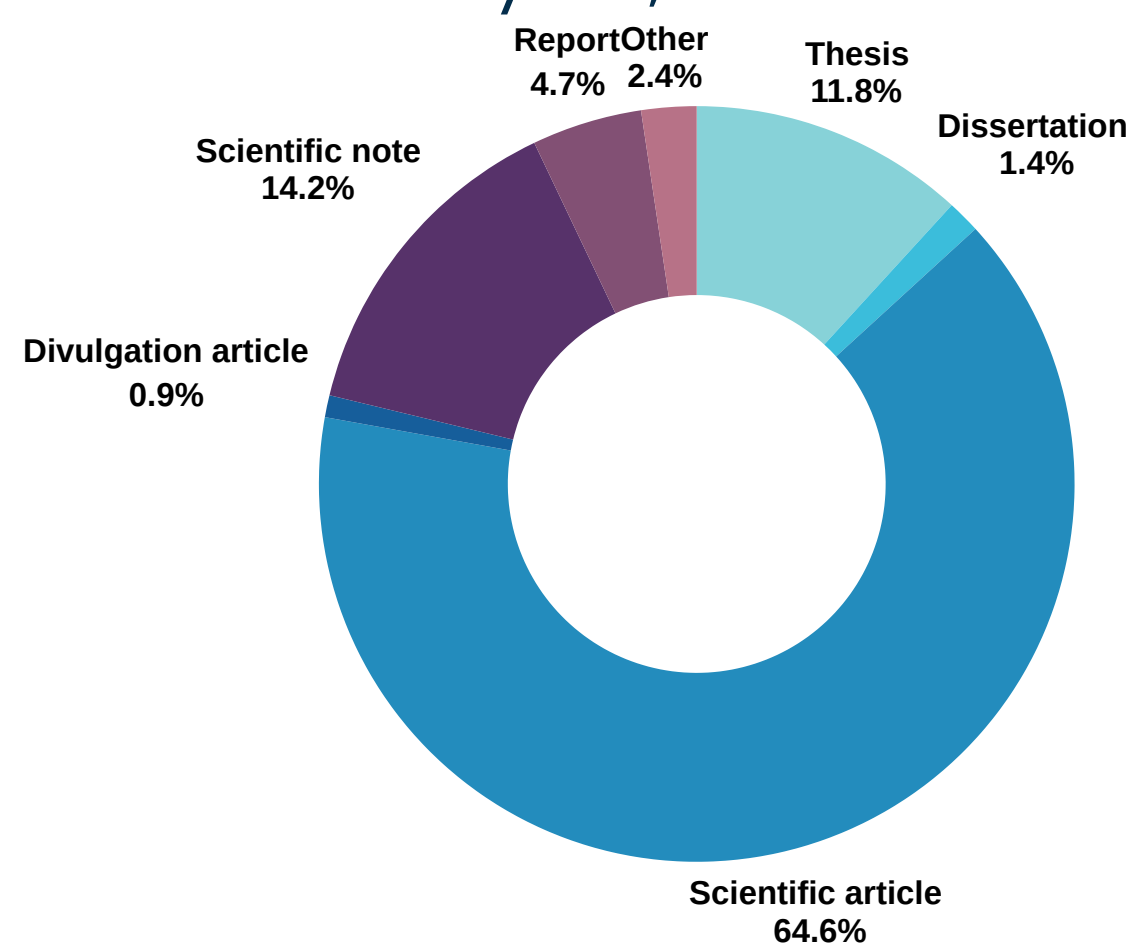
2) Filter and categorize information.

Study area, topic, subspecies, country



3) Review information.

212 studies analyzed, classified and quantified.

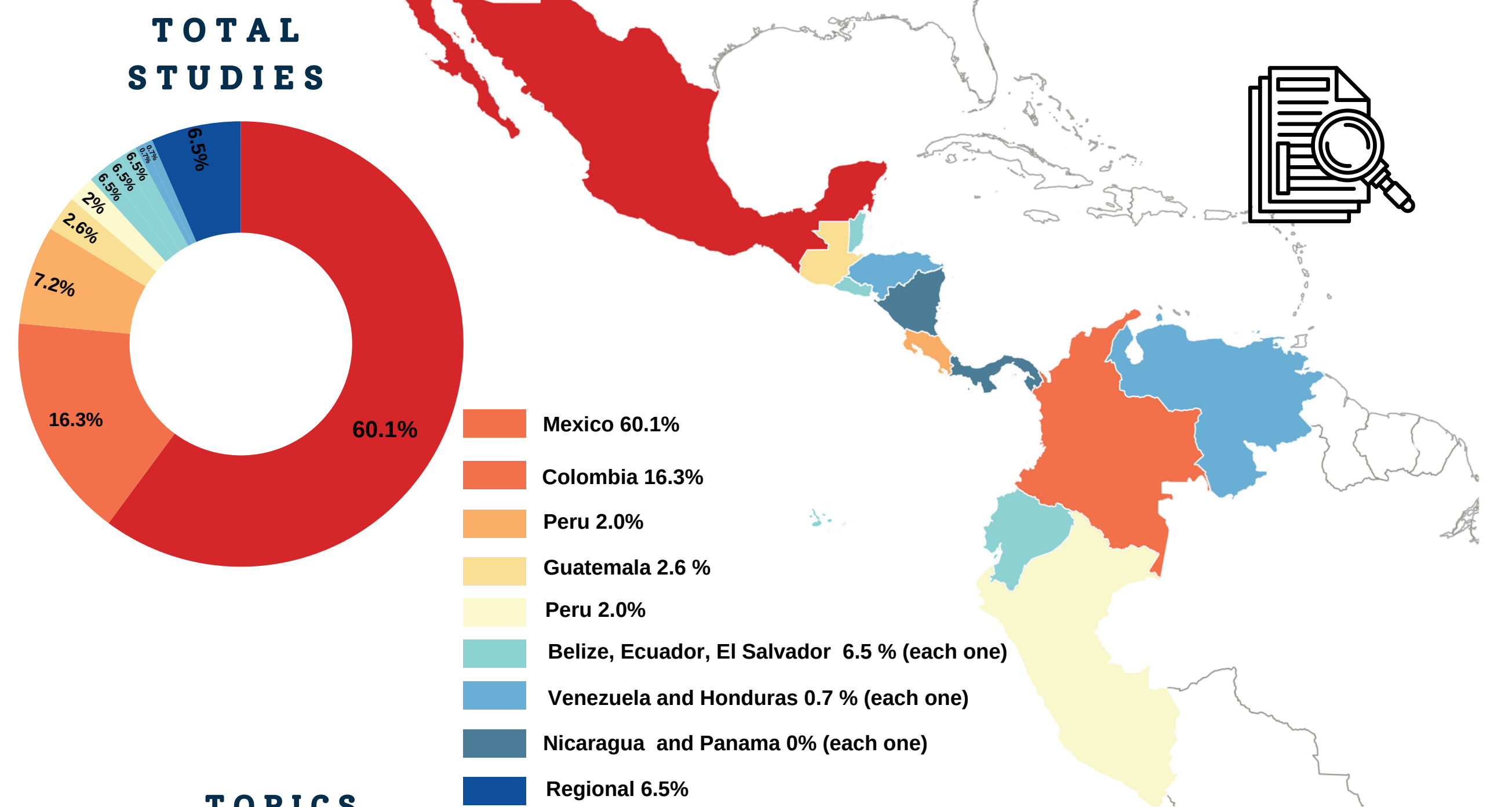


4) Search for presence records.

Comprehensive searches in databases and studies with geographical records of the species *L. longicaudis* and *L. annectens* in GBIF, MaNIS, iNaturalist, and specialized literature.

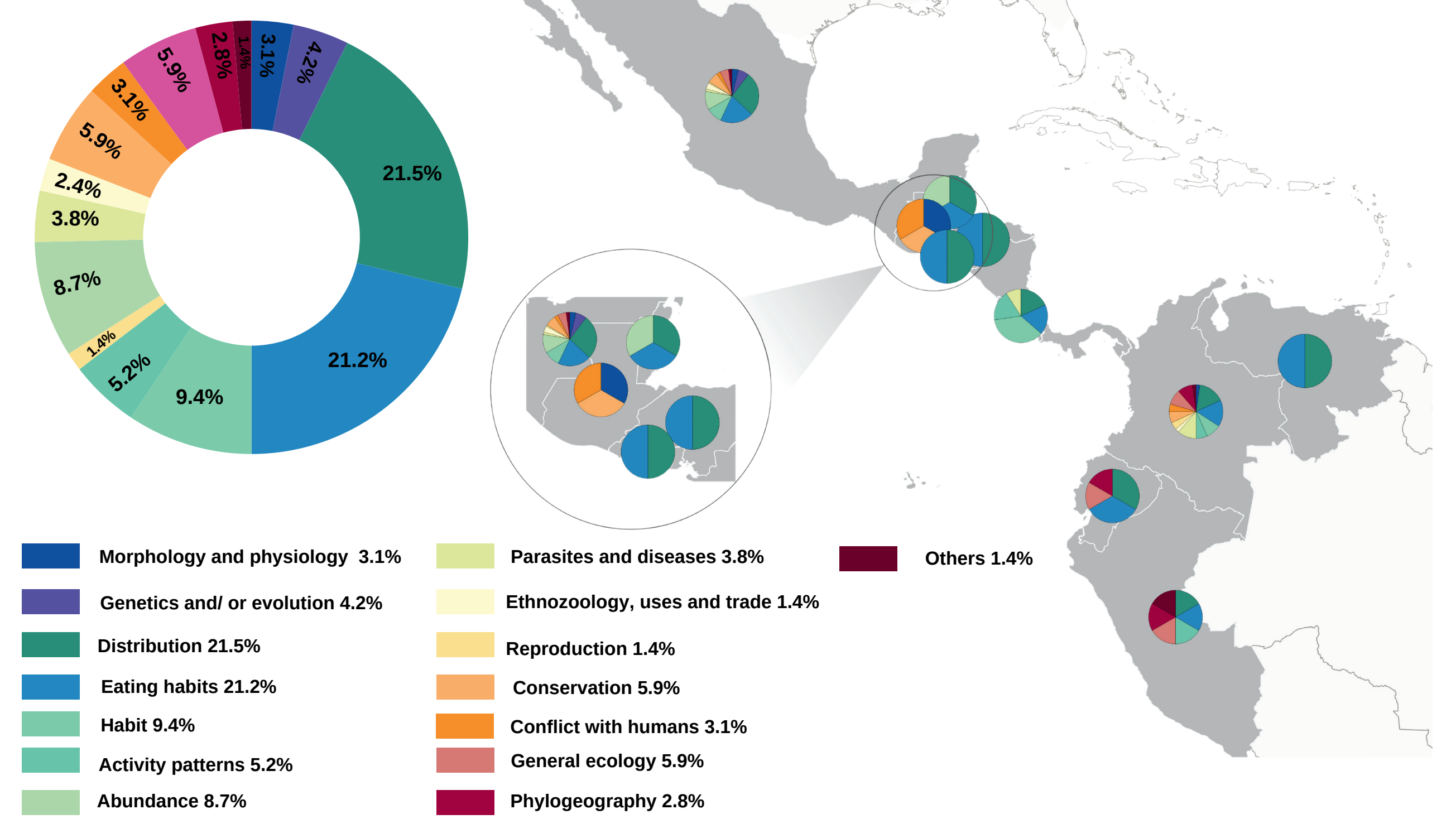
RESULTS

212 studies analyzed

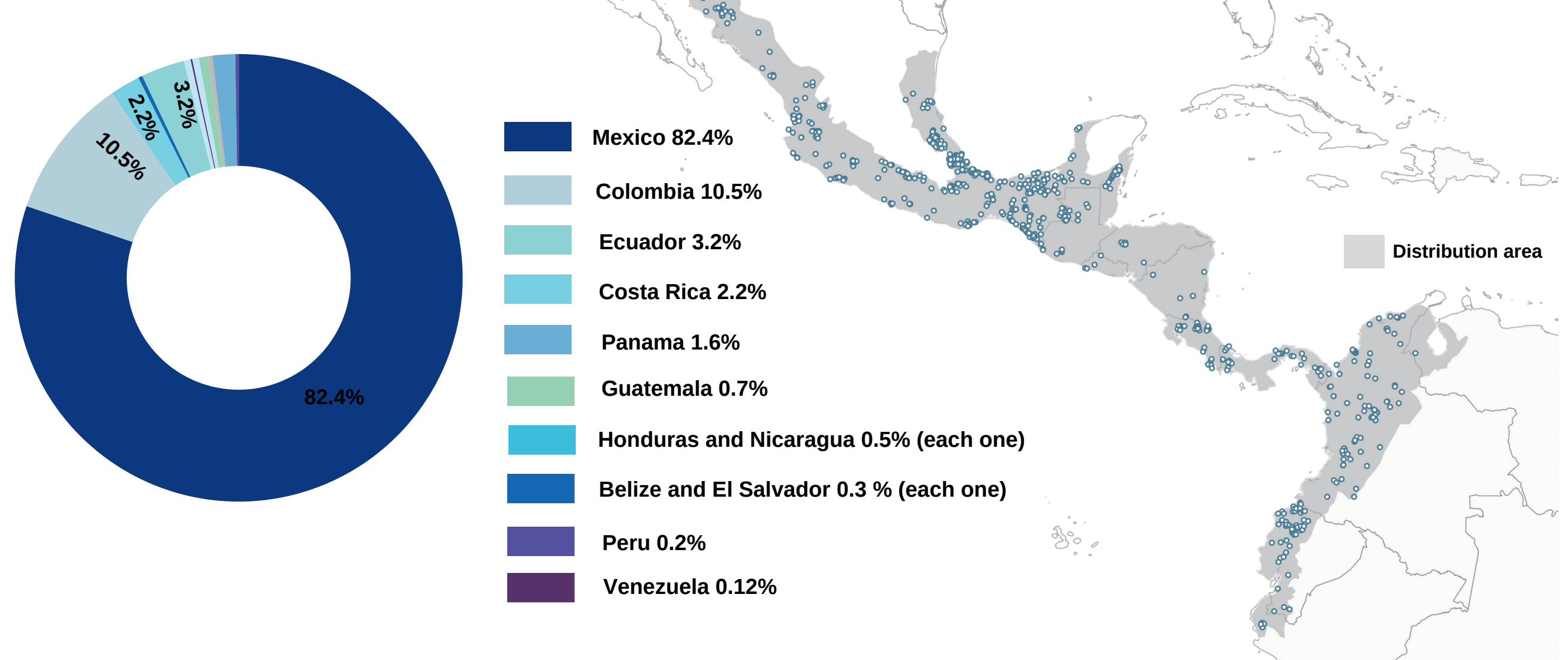


TOPICS DISTRIBUTION

Percentage of topics in Mexico and Central America



MESOAMERICAN OTTER RECORDS AND NEW DISTRIBUTION



CONCLUSION

The recognition of Mesoamerican otter, *L. annectens*, as an independent species highlights the need to generate detailed information on its ecology (habitat, genetics), abundance, conservation and threats status (human-wildlife conflict, pet trade, climate change). Conducting studies to fill these knowledge gaps will enable the design of effective strategies for the species' research and conservation, integrating local communities in the process.

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