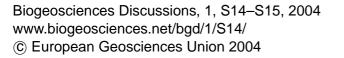
S14

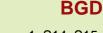


Interactive comment on "A field-based method for simultaneous measurements of the ¹⁸O and ¹³C of soil CO₂ efflux" by B. Mortazavi et al.

Anonymous Referee #1

Received and published: 1 July 2004

This paper is interesting, technically sound, and well-written. However, I believe it poses a fundamental question for the editors of a fledgling journal. Is this journal going to deal with papers that are primarily methodological? My own reading of a strongly discussion-oriented, interdisciplinary journal is that this is the wrong place for such a paper. In my own notes, before I recognized that the paper was primarily methodological, here is what I said: (introductory few sentences) I am of the school that credit should be given where it is due. It is my impression that papers by Bill Schlesinger and his colleagues (e.g., Raich and Schlesinger, 1992 Tellus) set the stage for our knowledge of the importance of soil respiration in the global carbon balance, and deserve citation. I realize that the citations given concern 180 in CO₂, not bulk CO₂. However, the isotopes are a tool to answer the larger question, not an end in themselves. So to recap, I would urge presentation of the importance of soil C respiration with a general reference, and then go to the isotope-based references to resolve things better. (conclusions) I think there is a make-or-break issue here for this paper, with respect to BGD. As couched, the conclusions make a case for a new and very useful method. However,



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those conclusions are not put into a meaningful larger context. In effect, both my concerns about the introduction and my concerns about the conclusions are "bookends" of the same problem. I believe the paper can, and should, be published more or less in this form. I also believe that the authors can, and probably will, write an accompanying paper that lays out the broader scientific implications of this research.

Interactive comment on Biogeosciences Discussions, 1, 1, 2004.

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