

Interactive comment on “Progress in DGVMs: a comment on “Impacts of trait variation through observed trait–climate relationships on performance of an Earth system model: a conceptual analysis” by Verheijen et al. (2013)” by S. I. Higgins et al.

Anonymous Referee #2

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This manuscript comments on the publication by Verheijen et al. (2013, BG) which describes an extension of an existing vegetation model to incorporate variations in plant traits. The main purpose of the comment is to react to some descriptions and criticisms in Verheijen et al. regarding previously published models on a similar topic by Scheiter et al. (2013) and Pavlick et al. (2013).

I think this comment deserves publication. Verheijen et al. (2013) criticized the ap-

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proaches by Scheiter et al. (2013) and Pavlick et al. (2013) and presented their work as being more novel than it probably is. Ideally, when such criticism is made in a manuscript, the editor of the manuscript should have checked with those being criticized for the appropriateness of the text, but this was apparently not the case. This is unfortunate, because we now have a discussion about overstating novelty and technical clarifications that does not add much insight and could have easily been avoided. Yet to give Scheiter et al. the opportunity to react to these points, I recommend publication.

The comment would be better if the authors take a more conciliatory tone in the text. It would also be really nice if the authors could add a little text at the end in which they provide a short synthesis on such trait-based approaches. I think this would add to the value of this comment.

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