

Interactive comment on “Phylogenetic support for the Tropical Niche Conservatism Hypothesis despite the absence of a clear latitudinal species richness gradient in Yunnan’s woody flora” by G. Tang et al.

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The interactive discussion has been closed now and the authors have already provided their responses to the reviewers’ comments. Based on the reviewers’ comments, there are three themes that re-appeared:

1. novelty of the study/hypothesis. Particularly reviewers 3 and 4 discuss this point and the discussion with reviewer 3 was quite unfriendly. I would like to strongly suggest to the authors, that if they decide to resubmit the manuscript, the added value of their

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study needs a more comprehensive and precise introduction. This should also be done in a less presumptuous way than done in their reply to reviewer 3 (personally I consider the points raised valid).

2. explanation on the analyses, potential biases and the need for control analyses. Particularly reviewers 1 and 2 touch upon those aspects. The reply of the authors (“we think that the results are reliable, “we are confident that...””) do need ascertainment with control analyses.

3. the use of APGII instead of APGIII. Three reviewers mention this point. I fully understand the practical complications of rerunning all analyses with APGIII as raised by the author and biases may be small. BUT, this is unknown. There is a very principal point attached to this matter: This journal would not publish work on an outdated DGVM version (core business of this journal), simply it does not reflect the state of the art even if changes may be minor. We want to publish state of the art insights to maintain our high quality standards. This also implies a state of the art tool kit.

Finally, I feel obliged to respond to one reply of the author (AC C1967): The fact that the paper was published as a discussion paper does not imply final publication in BG, although I would like to reconfirm that the topics fit the scope of the journal. The revision, based on the peer review process (!), will determine whether the paper will be published.

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