

Dear Dr. Ibrom,

Please find enclosed the revised version of the manuscript: “Modelling interannual variation in the spring and autumn land surface phenology of the European forest” [MS No.: bg-2015-342].

The authors would like to thank you for taking the time to carefully read our revision and our reply to the referees. We have followed your recommendation and included a clarification in the text of the discussion to help readers understanding the difference when looking at relative fluctuations as compared to looking at exact absolute timing. The new version of the manuscript includes the following text:

“Our study focused on modelling the interannual variation in spring and autumn LSP and not on predicting the absolute dates of leaf phenology. We were, thus, modelling relative temporal measurements associated to the same location (pixel) to explore the potential overall drivers of changes in LSP across Europe. This means advances or delays in the LSP when considering the temporal average for that particular pixel (z-score). Understanding the drivers of interannual variation in LSP amidst background inter-annual variation is a critical aspect of global change science (de Beurs and Henebry, 2005; Zhao et al., 2013). To this end, the RF method is particularly pertinent, as it allows the assessment of the importance of the predictors (Figure 4)...”

Best wishes

Victor Rodriguez-Galiano