

Interactive comment on “A global database of soil respiration data” by B. Bond-Lamberty and A. Thomson

Anonymous Referee #3

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This manuscript presents a new soil respiration database which is built from literature data and made available for the public. The authors have to be commended for this initiative and an open access journal is also the right outlet. The manuscript focuses on the database itself and some general relations which can be seen as plausibility checks, while apparently key scientific questions are addressed in a Nature publication (cited as in press). Hence this work is more on the descriptive side, but that is fine given the purpose of presenting a new data set.

However given this main purpose, the database should be described more rigorously. For example, the variables in the database should be stated and described and the publications from where the data are extracted be cited. Moreover, the authors should be explicit about how variables were extracted and/or derived (conversions, interpola-

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tions etc.), because this meta-information (which may be implicit in the authors mind when doing analysis) is crucial when such database is used by other scientists, who might even not be experts in soil respiration. It is also of crucial importance for further analysis or model evaluation, which data are independent and which are derived, possibly involving some assumptions. With this added information the value of the effort will more than double.

As a minor point I am wondering why in Figure 4, the dependent variable (Rs) is on the x-axis.

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