

Interactive comment on “The pelagic microbial food web structure in Sanggou Bay, Yellow Sea: Spatial variation over four successive seasons” by X. Chen et al.

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First of all, the distinguished MFWs were about biomass. However, we also made cluster analyses based on environmental conditions and abundances of tintinnid community as a supplement for our results. The cluster analyses showed that MFW in inside and outside bay were different and so, whatever the season, and we artificially defined them as Inner Bay MFW, Outer Bay MFW and Spring MFW, Summer MFW, Autumn MFW, Winter MFW. This would make 8 distinct MFW characterising Sanggou Bay over 4 successive seasons.

However, the cluster analysis applied to the biomasses of all microbial groups over the four seasons revealed that the MFW observed in the inside bay at a given season

was that observed in the outside bay the previous season except that the progress from spring to summer was not obvious. Consequently there were only 4 distinct MFW characterising Sanggou Bay over 4 successive seasons. The situation could be summarised by the following table:

Sanggou Bay	spring	summer	autumn	winter
outside bay	MFW1	MFW3	MFW4	MFW1
inside bay	MFW1	MFW2	MFW3	MFW4

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