

Journal: BG

Title: Detecting climatically driven phylogenetic and morphological divergence among spruce species (*Picea*) worldwide

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Special Issue: Ecosystem processes and functioning across current and future dryness gradients in arid and semi-arid lands

### **General comments:**

The authors of the manuscript (bg-2016-465) addressed the reviewers' issues clearly and answered our questions well. The manuscript has been largely improved and reaches the standard of BG. Therefore, I decide a minor revision. However, although authors clearly showed point-by-point revisions on the basis of reviewers' and my comments by a marked-up copy of the revised manuscript, I would request authors to provide a point-by-point response list to each reviewer's and my comments, showing how and where the revisions are in the revised manuscript. In addition, I have more minor comments as listed below for authors to respond.

### **Specific comments:**

1. Line 13-14, what do you mean by 'at 31 nodes' and 'at 32 nodes'?
2. L16, add complete name of Dmax because it is mentioned first time.
3. Please add some new references published in year 2015 and 2016 in introduction and discussion.
4. Line 158-159, why you use P value less than 0.0016? I suggest a consistent significant level of 0.05 or 0.01 throughout text. Besides, I would like to have P value when you talk about statistical significance.
5. Line 160, rewrite ' $\alpha=0.05/31$  or  $32\approx 0.0016$ '.
6. L220-222, move this statement to discussion.
7. L225, use specific p value.
8. L228-248, keep verb tense consistent throughout text. Similarly, check the tense throughout text.
9. L297, associated with
10. L299, what is the first hypothesis? You may underscore in the introduction or brief it here. Authors did not test the so-called second hypothesis that authors mentioned in the introduction. Please test the second hypothesis.
11. L432, please specify the statement 'Our hypotheses are largely verified.....'. Which hypothesis you specifically referred to?