

We have included all of the minor comments and thank you.

Here is our response to Referee #2

Referee #2

There is one issue, which is not clear. Whereas in Fig. 1a 14 cyanocrusts were analyzed regarding distance and delta 15N, in Fig. 2a only 11 cyanocrusts were plotted. I wonder what has happened to the remaining samples.

Authors' response: Some of the DNA extracted for both biocrust types were tough to amplify. For clarity we now include the following text in the sentence starting line 211):

"...combination (2 biocrust types × 3 circular plots locations × 2 N forms × ≈ 1 – 5 biocrusts = 48). DNA from eight moss-dominated and four cyano-dominated biocrusts were difficult to amplify, especially one moss biocrust circular plot reducing the number of replicants from five to one."

We believe this appropriately resolves the issue and thanks for the help.