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Interactive comment on "Unexpected high abyssal ophiuroid diversity in polymetallic nodule fields of the Northeast Pacific Ocean, and implications for conservation" *by* Magdalini Christodoulou et al.

Anonymous Referee #3

Received and published: 2 January 2020

The paper presented by Christodoulou and collaborators is very interesting. The authors used different barcode approaches to reveal the high diversity of brittle stars in nodule fields. Additionally, composition assemblages were analysed, as well as the representativeness of the protected area APEI-3. This study highlights the need for designating new protected areas within the core of the CCZ to prevent further loss of biodiversity, as APEI3 is not reprentative of the high diversity of brittle stars associated to the nodule fields.

I have a few minor comments:

Line 80: I think you meant 'assessed' instead of 'accessed'. Line 219: 'abundance-

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based coverage' instead of 'abundance-base coverage' Line 412: 'UKSRL' is misspelled 'UKSL' Line 509: 'Baselga' is misspelled 'Balseaga'

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