

Interactive comment on “A 15 million-year long record of phenotypic evolution in the heavily calcified coccolithophore *Helicosphaera* and its biogeochemical implications” by Luka Šupraha and Jorijntje Henderiks

Anonymous Referee #2

Received and published: 18 March 2020

This morphometric study of the coccolithophore *Helicosphaera* is extremely interesting. It shows that different coccolithophore lineage adapted differently to the oceanographic changes that occurred in the Late Neogene: The morphological adaptation of *Helicosphaera* is different from that of *Reticulofenestra* and *Gephyrocapsa*. The first group modifies the size of the coccoliths but not their aspect ratio, whereas the second modifies both. Knowing that the aspect ratio is, in coccolithophores, a way to adapt their physiology to environment, this finding is important because it shows that different adaptative strategies are at play in this phytoplanktonic group. The paper is very

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well written, the data are abundant and of high quality. The figures are well designed. It is rare that I have to review a manuscript of that quality and with very little to say expect trying to replicate what is already written. My only surprise is to see a record of the percentage of *Florisphaera profunda* covering the last 15 Ma. In my experience *F. profunda* first evolved around 10 Ma. So what was counted between 15 and 10 Ma ? Can we show picture of a specimen ? I understand that this comment is not relevant to the main discussion of this manuscript. I congratulate the authors on their work because I have to stop wondering what constructive criticisms I could formulate.

Interactive comment on Biogeosciences Discuss., <https://doi.org/10.5194/bg-2019-472>, 2020.

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