November 16th, 2021

Dear Editor,

We have attached a new version of our manuscript. We thank the editor and the reviewer for the new comments. We have carefully addressed all of them in the revised manuscript and detailed our changes below. We hope that you will find our manuscript suitable for publication now.

Sincerely yours,

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Response to Reviewer

"… Under Introduction please revise line 35. Microzooplankton do not perform vertical migration to drive carbon export and they do not produce fast sinking fecal pellets. Also, nutrient cycling is not restricted to mixotroph. This sentence is quite misleading for understanding the ecological roles of microzooplankton."

Response: Agree. We have rewritten the sentence as "Microzooplankton are generally the dominant herbivores in the marine ecosystem (Calbet and Landry, 2004), regulating not only primary productivity <u>but also carbon transfer within the pelagic food webs</u> (Steinberg and Landry, 2017)".

Response to Editor

1. L18–19: a nanophytoplankton-dominated community
Response: Done.

2. L67: chlorophyll-a (Chl-a). The "a" should be italic.
Response: Done.

3. L81: The chlorophyll-a can be replaced by Chl-a.
Response: Done.

4. L87: Whatman GF/F filter
Response: We have added "Whatman" to the revised text.

5. L100 and hereafter: Use en dash, not hyphen, for ranges (e.g., 20–200 µm).
Response: Done. Typos have been corrected throughout the text.

6. L117 and hereafter: Use mL, not ml.
Response: Done. We changed ml to mL throughout the text.

7. L132 and hereafter: Not l-1, but L-1. The "-1" should be superscript.
Response: Done.

8. Fig. 2B: I consider the unit of salinity (‰) should be removed (i.e., no unit), because the salinity was determined with a conductivity sensor. Additionally, please use "m3 s-1" for the unit of flow rate in the y-axis.
Response: Done. Fig. 2 has been revised according to the suggestions.