

Dear Wang et al.,

Thank you for your continued efforts to finalize this manuscript. I agree with both reviewers that this manuscript is ready for publication, congratulations! I noticed two minor items that should be revised before the final proofs.

Thank you for your hard work revising this manuscript. I really appreciate your responsiveness to the reviewer feedback and my own. The manuscript has matured through the review process. I'm pleased to share this work in SOIL.

Elizabeth Bach,
Topical Editor

Response: Many thanks for your patience and suggestions. We are so glad that you and two reviewers are satisfied with the manuscript. It is our sincere hope that through continued revision, this work will be seen by a wider audience, as well as provoke SOIL readers to think about the distribution of biological soil crusts.

Line 228: "Permissions have been obtained from the relevant sources." – What are these sources? It's best practice to list them.

Response: In the revised manuscript, this sentence has been rephrased as "Permissions have been obtained from the relevant sources Porada et al., (2019) and Rodriguez-Caballero et al., (2018)." (lines 193~194)

Line 330: "Albert" – is this supposed to be "All be it"? I think this is just an autocorrect typo.

Response: Thanks for pointing out. In the revised manuscript, 'Albert' has been deleted "In addition, factors such as vascular plant cover, topography, and solar radiation also influence biocrust distribution, to a lesser extent than the factors mentioned above." (line 293~295)