

Dear Dr. Cindy De Jonge,

Thank you for your guidance and invitation to revise our MS. All three reviewers have helped us improve our MS substantially. Our revisions are based on changes we proposed in our 'Reply to reviewers', and include several reiterations that the museum dust we report is intended to illustrate a general source of contamination.

One small issue should be mentioned. Reviewer 1, while providing very helpful commentary, noted that “Gibson et al. dated the oldest known red algae and not the advent of photosynthesis within eukaryotes, which must have evolved earlier in stem group archaeplastids”. We had assumed we were in error, but re-checking Gibson et al. (2018) confirms that those authors were indeed *estimating* the advent of photosynthesis within eukaryotes, as we had stated. Our original sentence “with the appearance of photosynthesizing eukaryotes estimated at 1.25 Ga (Gibson et al., 2018).” is therefore correct.

Regarding the figures, small edits have been made to the annotations on Figure 2. Figures 1 and 2 should be published at full page size (to preserve detail). The captions should be on facing pages. Figure 2 should be set in vector format, as supplied. Figure 3 should be published at full page width.

Please let us know if any further information is needed. We look forward to your final decision.

Yours truly,

Dr. Julia Gravendyck (for the authors).