

General Comments:

The authors have addressed my previous comments. In particular the additional analysis testing how sensitive results are to the loss of CUE in mature trees was helpful for demonstrating the robustness of the results.

Thank you for reviewing our manuscript again and for your positive feedback. We are happy that the changes we implemented based on your helpful comments were suited to demonstrate the robustness of our results.

I have only a few minor comments at this stage:

1. Several times the authors mention that results will lead to new hypotheses or theory e.g. L 536 and L23. It would be useful to provide a few examples.

Thank you for pointing this out. These hypotheses refer to the results we presented in the paper (finally summarized in the “Conclusions” section), which could inspire further field studies, as pointed out in section 4.2 (“Outlook”). In the revised manuscript, we explicitly mention two main hypotheses for better clarity (see the end of the paper).

2. L339 - should that be mature trees?

Yes, this is correct. We have fixed this. Thank you!

Additional Note:

We noticed that our previous submissions were subject to an embarrassing glitch: we forgot to uncomment an abstract draft that we incautiously wrote directly under the “Conclusions” section. We have now deleted the additional text, which was only reiterating the contents of the paper.