

The authors have addressed my concerns satisfactorily and substantially improved the clarity of the paper and focus of the discussion section particularly. I support its publication. There are a couple of small technical errors that need correction, but these are trivial to implement.

Ln 165: The other reviewer brought up the length of the V3/V4 fragment sequenced in the 16S rRNA analysis. The original paper listed the fragment as having a length of 490 bp. In their response to the other reviewer's comment, the authors mentioned that this was a mistake and that the actual length was 464 bp. This length has not been updated in the text, although the correct primer is now listed.

*The 490 bp number refers to the overall length of the V3-V4 regions, however the primers also require some space to attach in this region, which explains the difference between overall region length and amplicon length.*

Ln 376: Change "comprised" to "composed".

*Changed to 'constituted'*

Ln 383: Swap "prominent" and "particularly" in this sentence to improve readability.

*Changed as suggested.*