

Dear Editor,

We sincerely appreciate your significant input on this manuscript.

We acknowledge the limitations of this study, and one of that is, lack of belowground measurements. Therefore, we emphasized this aspect in Materials and Methods section (Lines 125-127 in the revised manuscript), mentioning the reason and clarification of the lack of measurements).

*“Due to 124 destructive and intensive sampling required for belowground biomass quantification, such measurements could 125 not be undertaken. Therefore, all plant biomass estimates in this study are explicitly based on aboveground 126 components only.”* (Lines 125-127 in the revised manuscript)

Also, following your suggestions, we included a short discussion on what valuable support could have been made by incorporating belowground biomass data (Lines 283-286 in the revised manuscript).

*“It should be noted that belowground biomass was not directly measured in this study, which may have influenced estimates of biopore-related parameters. Direct belowground measurements would allow disentangling root-biomass–driven biopore formation from species-interaction effects, and would further clarify the contribution of belowground biomass to SOC accrual and the independent role of biopores.”* (Lines 283-286 in the revised manuscript)

Moreover, we provided numerical datasets used in the main figures in the Supplementary Information (Tables S2 and S3) to enhance data accessibility. We hope that this revised manuscript meets the high standards of your journal.

Thank you again for considering our manuscript for publication in SOIL.

Sincerely,

Kyungmin Kim