First of all we would like to reply that it is in our intention to appropriately cite the Vallianatos et al. (2015) publication in PCE, in the revised version of our manuscript.

We would also like to honestly mention that before submitting to NPG, our manuscript had been submitted to another journal (to the special issue "Studying Seismic Sources: Theory, Methods and Applications" of the journal "Physics and Chemistry of the Earth", PCE) on 28 June 2015, i.e., before Vallianatos et al. (2015) being available online (30 July 2015). After the editors of this special issue informed us that our intended publication was out of scope of the specific special issue, we submitted it to NPG without altering anything (including of course the references list) about the manuscript.

As a first comment and in order to avoid any misunderstanding, we would like to clarify that our study is fundamentally different from the Vallianatos et al (2015) published work. We really cannot accept the comment that we present "*the same topic, with the same methodology applied for the same earthquake event*", which we find it also unfair to our study presented in the present manuscript. Although there is a small common point regarding the use of the natural time (NT) analysis in both studies, the Vallianatos et al. (2015) apply the analysis only to the first main EQ event following the NT methodology and introducing only a new part (multiresolution wavelets) which is not of interest to our study, since it is not to our intention to focus to methodology issues. The fact that these two studies are profoundly different can already be evident to the reader by just comparing the two abstracts.

In more detail, we need to note that our work focuses on the study of the MHz fracture-induced electromagnetic emissions (EME) as a possible observable of the earthquake (EQ) preparation process and not only on the seismicity analysis as applied in Vallianatos et al. (2015). As a first step the critical, and tricritical, characteristics of the MHz EME signals recorded at two different stations before the two main EQ events are revealed using the method of critical fluctuations (MCF) and then the criticality is verified by means of the usual NT analysis method. The study of the seismicity in the wider area of Cephalonia, in terms of critical dynamics by means of the NT analysis method, is performed in the framework of the study of the possible seismotectonic origin of the MHz fracture-induced EME, as clarified in our work (for example, in the "Discussion - Conclusions" Section, we note: "*We note that, according to the view that seismicity and pre-EQ EM emissions should be "two sides of the same coin" concerning the earthquake generation process, the corresponding foreshock seismic activity, as another manifestation of the same complex system, should be at critical state as well, before the occurrence of a main event. We have shown that this really happens for both significant EQs we studied.*"

We can also mention some additional key differences between the two works, in order to clarify further our concern:

We apply the NT analysis method both on the MHz EME and the seismicity.

We don't use the combination of the method of Multiresolution Wavelet Analysis with NT on seismicity as in Vallianatos et al. (2015).

We don't apply the NT method on concentric circles around the epicenter of the EQ, as in previous studies of ours or in the Vallianatos et al. (2015), but instead, we study seismicity within specific areas, determined according to seismotectonic and earthquake hazard criteria. Specifically, we incorporated the seismic zones for our area of study proposed in

Vamvakaris et al. (2013), now published as Vamvakaris et al. (2016) and which reference we intend to update in our revised manuscript.

We study both main EQ events and not only the first one as in Vallianatos et al. (2015). We emphasize that we found criticality both in the MHz EME and the foreshock seismic activity before each one of these main events.