

(1) Comments from Referee # 4 (Received and published: 1 April 2016)

The manuscript should be accepted as is. The length of the manuscript is somewhat excessive. The Table 2 is not needed.

(2) author's response

Thank you very much for your general assessment of this manuscript. Table 2 shows the correlation matrix between soils specific surface area (SSA) and the main general soil properties of the soil. This issue has been addressed in the Results and Discussion section, under subsection 3.1. We moved this Table to the Supplemental Digital Content.

(3) author's changes in manuscript

Table 2 from the initial manuscript appears now as Supplemental Digital Content (Table S2). Accordingly, subsection 3.1. was modified to indicate where the Table can be found.