



Dresden University of Technology – Dept. Soil Science and Site Ecology  
Pienner Straße 19 • 01737 Tharandt, Germany

To the Editorial Board  
Copernicus Publications  
Journal Soil

Dear Editorial Team,

Thank you for the opportunity to publish our research results in SOIL. We will make the technical changes to improve the manuscript. We listed all of our responses below.

**Response letter**

Response to the technical corrections requested by the executive editor:

**MS No.: soil-2020-98**

Special Issue: Tropical biogeochemistry of soils in the Congo Basin and the African Great Lakes region

With the title:

**“Aluminous clay and pedogenic Fe oxides modulate aggregation and related carbon contents in soils of the humid tropics”**

## Response to the executive editor

**Executive editor (1):** *“Referee 2: “Line 201: how can the n for ‘high clay–high Fe’ under forest be 7 if only 6 plots from forests were used?”*

*Please make sure that your answer this comment is also implemented in its content in the paper. Make it clear for the reader where (and why) the number of observations differ in certain parts of your work. From your answer, I am not sure if you have implemented this already in the MS itself.”*

**Response:** To make it clear to the reader that the distribution of the six forests examined in four mineralogical combinations led to an unequal number of repetitions, we will add additional information in the method section. (Lines 162–164: “Using the threshold criterion for assigning the individual samples to a mineralogical combination resulted in an unequal number of repetitions for mineralogical combinations under forests ( $n = 3-7$ ) whereas those under cropland remained the same ( $n = 3$ ).”).

**Executive editor (2):** *“in line 335 you start now with a "summary". I find this a bit odd since you are in the middle of your results section still. I think your original way of writing "in summary" without creating a new subheader was better. But if you think this breaks the style of section 3.2 maybe you can find a way to implement those sentences in the paragraphs before to which they relate to.”*

**Response:** We will replace the subheading "summary" with the running text summary of this paragraph (Lines 276–278: “In summary, mineralogical combinations and land use significantly affected the aggregate size distribution of soils, despite quantitative relations to mineralogical proxies could not be observed for each aggregate class.”).

We would like to thank the executive editor for the constructive comments. We would also like to thank the entire editorial team for always being at our side during the publication process.

Sincerely yours,



Maximilian Kirsten