

Dear Editor,

Indeed, IBR hypothesis were not presented correctly in the last version of the MS. Thanks for this suggestion. In the new version, IBR hypotheses are introduced at the end of the introduction with the other main points of the methodology. All mentions of "hypothesis" were replaced as IBR-T, IBR-E... and italic was removed. The meaning of abbreviations was detailed in the method section.

Regards,

Julien Haran

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The methods and results are much clearer and understandable in this revision. However, the overall conceptual framework for the analysis needs to be strengthened. Specifically, it should be introduced as explicit hypotheses much earlier in the manuscript, in the range of lines 121-127.

These hypotheses obviously include Isolation by Distance (thereafter abbreviated as IBD) as a null hypothesis in relation to Isolation by Resistance (thereafter abbreviated as IBR). The three hypothesized IBR resistance mechanisms - Temperature (T), Elevation (E) which is primarily a proxy for temperature, and Pine Density (Pr as a resistance effect) plus Pc as a positive effect of Pine Corridors. The authors should consider whether it makes more sense to refer to E,T,Pr, and Pc as "hypotheses" or as specific mechanisms for the operation of Isolation by Resistance. In either case, they should be clearly and explicitly stated prior to the Methods section.

The abbreviations E, Pr, and T first appear (in italics) with no prior definition or description in line 377 (67% of the way through the manuscript) without ever having been described or identified as the specific mechanisms for which they are abbreviations. Subsequently these abbreviations appear (either singly or as subsets of (T,E,Pr,Pc) at least 14 additional times in the last third of the Ms. These mechanisms are clearly a major component of this study, and should not suddenly appear in abbreviated form 2/3 of the way through the manuscript.

I suggest using the convention IBR-T, IBR-E, and IBR-Pr when referring to these hypothesized mechanisms. IBR-Pc may require more explanation. It makes no difference whether the notations T,E, Pr, and Pc are presented in italics or in plain text, as long as the usage is consistent.