

Interactive comment on “Biogeochemical climatology for the Southern Benguela Upwelling System, constructed from *in situ* monitoring data” by Stephanie de Villiers

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The paper discusses a biogeochemical climatology dataset that has not been discussed and published previously (as erroneously stated by the reviewer). Some of the original data used to construct the climatology had by discussed by Hutchings et al (2009), Lamont et al (2015) and Ismail et al (2015) – however, the climatology discussed in this paper is unique, new and different from the data discussed in these papers. The reviewer apparently did not realize the importance difference between a climatology and the primary datasets used to construct it. The ESSDD paper has been downloaded almost a 100 times and viewed 350 times since appearing 2 months ago,

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and I have received almost 20 requests for data access, all of which suggest that this climatology is considered very useful for this region, by quite a number of scientists, contrary to the views of the reviewer.

The paper is about a constructed climatology, not a presentation of primary datasets; detailed analytical methodologies pertaining to the primary datasets are described in the papers referenced. In my opinion, that is sufficient and also ensures that those papers and their authors will be credited accordingly. The paper does outline the data reduction processes followed, in detail. The latter includes calculation of and presentation of standard deviations, in graphical format as well as in the data text file.

Almost 20 people approached me for data access, as described on the PANGAEA website for data that is embargoed until publication, none of the individuals had similar complaints to the reviewer and all of them were comfortable identifying their identity.

I have approached PANGAEA in regards to updating the datafile, to include data for the two stations discussed in the paper, but that were not included in the original PANGAEA datafile. Data for all 12 stations will therefore be freely available to anybody - who consider this a useful dataset - upon publication.

The reviewer was free and welcome to contact me for data access, as described on the PANGAEA website. Unfortunately the reviewer preferred to remain anonymous. In contrast, the author is sharing data and attempting to publish it on a free open access platform. If people are only willing to voice their opinions about such efforts if they are allowed to remain anonymous, and also want to access such datasets on the condition that they be allowed to remain anonymous, then what is the point of open access, indeed ? How will such attitudes encourage data sharing and constructive scientific discussion? I informed the Editor that I would rather withdraw the manuscript than be forced to share data with anonymous reviewers prior to publication, since then the paper has been downloaded almost 100 times and the data has been widely shared. Clearly, the dataset is considered of value, by many people.

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The items listed in the “Minor comments” section can easily be attended to if the editor decides that this paper is publishable. My personal preference is for the “pretty” shaded color figures to remain as is, although I may be tempted to change the color shading to pink.

Interactive comment on Earth Syst. Sci. Data Discuss., <https://doi.org/10.5194/essd-2018-60>, 2018.