Dear Editor of npj biodiversity,

We are pleased to send this comment for consideration in npj biodiversity.

There has been an increasing concern regarding improving Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). DEI statements are almost indispensable to any call for positions in research institutions, mainly in the Global North. Besides that, a growing number of studies have evidenced that there is still a long way toward a genuinely diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment in the research community. In this comment, we argue that while research institutions are improving at diversity and inclusion, a much better job must address equity, mainly regarding how Global North perceives and places academic knowledge produced by Global South. We based this argument mostly on recent empirical work published and some minor additional secondary data on citation bias and geographical markers (this study). Finally, as researchers from Global South and based on our personal experiences and a lot of discussions, we provided three practical actions that can be done to achieve a more equitable and overcome the neocolonial bias in academic expertise.

We believe that our comment suits npj biodiversity since we discuss a topic of immediate interest for any researcher or research institute. We delve into a series of papers published in Nature portfolio about related topics to DEI. However, in this comment, we focus on an aspect we considered complementary to those papers (academic manifestations of neocolonialism) and jeopardize DEI actions.

We attest not having any other manuscripts under consideration elsewhere.

Below we provide some suggestions on potential reviewers to this comment and a brief justification on why they are suitable for reviewing this article:

1 – Dr. Luisa Maria Diele-Viegas – Universidade Federal da Bahia – Dr. Diele-Viegas has an extensive record of articles and comments about bias in research, mainly related to gender.

2 – Dr. Adriana Romero-Olivares – University of New Mexico – Dr. Romero-Olivares has been working on diversity and inclusion aspects, mainly the ones related to differences and inequalities between Global North and South

On behalf of all co-authors

Gabriel Nakamura