Dear Martin,

Many thanks for your helpful comments on our recent submission to *New Phytologist* (NPH-MS-2024-46044, “Nitrogen demand, availability, and acquisition strategy control plant responses to elevated CO2 at different scales”). I have been going through your feedback and the feedback from the first and third reviewers and find them very helpful for improving the paper framing. However, after a conversation with the co-authors (cc’ed), I wanted to bring some concerns about the second reviewer’s general comments to your attention, as we strongly suspect that they were created by an AI-generation tool.

We suspect that general comments were created by an AI-generation tool for a few reasons. First, the general comments are generic and can be applied to just about any paper, but more importantly are binned into obscure categories that often occurs when an AI text generator is asked to summarize a paper. I asked ChatGPT to summarize the abstract of one of my existing papers (DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1093/jxb/erab253>) and found quite similar verbiage when I asked it to evaluate the paper using the subcategories provided of the second reviewer. For example, the second reviewer provided a comment that “the results are presented in a clear and structured manner, with statistical analyses robustly supporting the findings” and ChatGPT provided a similar “”

The language is eloquently worded and is not consistent with the line comments

First, the general comments are generic and can be applied to just about any paper, but more importantly are binned into obscure categories that often occurs when an AI text generator is asked to summarize a paper. I asked ChatGPT to provide a summary of one of my existing papers and found similar verbiage when I asked it to evaluate the paper using the subcategories of the second reviewer. One concern

and it is quite bizarre to see our full names included in the review as this is not relevant to the review.

Finally, the sentence structure of the line comments are quite

There is no mention anywhere in the review about our main findings, and according to the review the main finding is that it “offer[s] insightful contributions to the discourse on plant adaptation strategies in the face of climatic changes”. The major comments are binned into categories as so often occurs when an AI text generator is used to summarize a paper.

The major comments are eloquently written, yet do not offer use any guidance on how to proceed with addressing these apparent major changes. This is particularly due to the fact that many of the major comments contradict themselves. For example, “the discussion adeptly connects the study's findings with broader ecological and evolutionary theories” is abruptly followed with “Yet, a more thorough comparison with conflicting or supporting studies would enrich the narrative, offering a broader perspective on the study's implications within the current scientific discourse”. These s

While I understand that there are limitations in this approach, I have also run the general comments into several AI bot-detector. All language detectors have flagged this text as being highly likely that they were generated through an AI tool. I have attached photos of a few of these results.

Of course, I cannot prove without reasonable doubt that this review was done using AI-generative text. However, evidence is suggesting that the majority of the review was

My coauthors and I are proud of our work and understandably have strong concerns that our unpublished work has been placed into a language learning algorithm without our consent and have strong concerns that this has undermined the review decision and peer review process.

Many of the verbiage in the main comments of the review were circular and could be applied to any paper, and some of the colloquialisms used in the review made me suspect that the review was done by an AI-generative bot. Out of suspicion, I ran the review through several AI bot-detectors, and found that many detectors flagged the entire general comments section as having strong likelihood of being AI-generated text. If true, I have strong concerns that our unpublished work has been placed into a language learning algorithm without our consent.

, but at a closer look from the comments from the second reviewer, I am unsure whether the reviews were relevant to our paper. Many of the verbiage in the main comments of the review were circular and could be applied to any paper, and some of the colloquialisms used in the review made me suspect that the review was done by an AI-generative bot. Out of suspicion, I ran the review through several AI bot-detectors, and found that many detectors flagged the entire general comments section as having strong likelihood of being AI-generated text. If true, I have strong concerns that our unpublished work has been placed into a language learning algorithm without our consent.

To be clear, I am not writing to request that the review decision be reconsidered as we agree with many of your comments and those of the two other reviewers. After conversations with my coauthors, we agreed that it would be a good idea to bring this to your attention as we feel that this approach to reviewing is not acceptable and not up to standard of *New Phytologist*. If there is a more appropriate channel to direct these concerns, please let me know.

Many thanks for your time and again for your helpful review.

Best,

Evan A. Perkowski, Ph.D.

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*On behalf of coauthors Ezinwanne Ezekannagha and Nicholas G. Smith*