Dear Dr. Strong,

With this letter, please consider our paper "Likelihood analysis of presence-only data for species distribution modeling: Comment on MAXENT and an alternative" for publication in Ecology.

We would like to have our paper considered as a “Concepts and Synthesis” piece. Despite its length (27 pages including figures and references), with some material in an Appendix, it might be suitable as a “Report” given its technical focus, that it represents a substantial advance in the field of species distribution modeling and simultaneously serves to “overturn existing ideas". Specifically, we provide a critique of MAXENT, a method that has taken hold like wildfire in the field of distribution modeling. Presently, papers that use MAXENT for ad hoc inference are being produced at an extraordinarily rapid rate and, yet, the underlying methodology is poorly understood by its users, poorly motivated and explained by the developers, and, we believe, should not even have a role in scientific inquiry. Moreover, as we argue in our paper, one of the primary assertions in the MAXENT literature supporting the production of suitability indices – that “occurrence probability” is not identifiable from presence-only data – is *incorrect.* Our method produces estimates of occurrence probability from presence-only data, and allows ecologists to explicitly test hypotheses about species distribution. Because of the recent explosion of papers that use MAXENT, our paper is extremely timely.

Thank you for considering our manuscript for publication in Ecology.

Sincerely yours,

J. Andrew Royle