

Dear Nature Communications editorial board,

Please find enclosed our final revisions in response to the second round of reviews for our manuscript NCOMMS-19-28516A, re-titled "Diverse interactions and ecosystem engineering can stabilize community assembly" by J.D. Yeakel, M.M. Pires, M.A.M. de Aguiar, J.L. O'Donnell, P.R. Guimaraes Jr., D. Gravel, T. Gross. We thank both Reviewers and the Editor for their extremely helpful comments and suggestions. We have integrated all suggested edits, which we outline below. We have also streamlined a short section in the Introduction that was unnecessarily dense and poorly worded and have shortened the abstract to be within the allowed word limit. We believe that these revisions improve the clarity of our submission. We are excited about the prospect of publishing this manuscript in Nature Communications and hope that these edits satisfy the reviewer queries. Please do not hesitate to contact us regarding any issue(s) that remain to be addressed.

Most sincerely,

Justin Yeakel  
Mathias Pires  
Marcus de Aguiar  
James O'Donnell  
Paulo Guimaraes Jr.,  
Dominique Gravel  
Thilo Gross

### **Responses to Editorial Requests**

- 1) We have made the requested change to the title
- 2) The corresponding author's email address has been displayed below affiliations
- 3) The abstract has been shortened to 164 words
- 4) We have removed italics and used quotation marks where appropriate
- 5) We have checked mathematical terms to match NatComm's preferred formatting
- 6) Equations are labeled sequentially
- 7) Equations are now referred to as 'Equation (1)', etc.
- 8) Methods are reported in the methods section
- 9) There are no subsections needed for the methods section
- 10) The acknowledgements conforms to NatComms style guidelines
- 11) There are no 3rd-party images used
- 12) Each figure legend has a title sentence
- 13) Titles are brief
- 14) The colour scales are defined in each figure
- 15) The use of symbols in figure legends is minimal; where they are used they are clearly defined
- 16) Error bars are defined in figures where they are used
- 17) The Supplementary Guidelines have been followed

18) 2-sentence editor's summary edits:

"The dynamics of ecological communities depends on interactions between species as well as those between species and their environment, however the effects of the latter are poorly understood. Here, Yeakel et al. reveal how species that modify their environment (ecosystem engineers) impact community dynamics and the risk of extinction."

19) Reporting guidelines: see point-by-point response

20) Relevant Twitter handles

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