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Please incorporate all changes recommended below by Dr. Shurin.  In addition, my assistant and I have reviewed your paper for formatting issues, particularly regarding the figures and request the following changes listed below:  Specific formatting:  Figure Legends: -Please add a title to the figure legend page (“Figure Legends” in bolded font) -Change figure legend headers from “Figure 1:” to “Fig. 1.”. Keep in bolded font   -Remove punctuation at the end of all figure legends - Add samples sizes where applicable. This can be done parenthetically (e.g. “N=20”)  Figures: -Figures are published in color for the online version of Oecologia and in grey-scale for the print version. If you wish to print in color, please discuss printing fees with our production team when they contact you. If not, please ensure all figures and corresponding legends are legible in both scales. -Add x-axis label to Figure 2 -Add y-axis label to Figure 3 -Collapse y-axes labels into a single, centered label in Figure 4. -Collapse y- and x-axes labels into a single, centered label for Figures 6-7.  Electronic Supplementary Material (ESM): -Add a title page similar to that of the main document. ESM is published online, independent of the manuscript.  In addition, please review our two author instruction files for proper manuscript formatting: “Manuscript Guidelines” and “Artwork instructions”.  To access these pdf files, go to Springer’s home page for Oecologia (<http://www.springer.com/life+sciences/ecology/journal/442>) and find each file listed under “For Authors and Editors”; they appear beneath the generic “Instructions for authors” link.  We will return manuscripts that do not follow these guidelines.  When you have made these corrections, send an electronic copy of the corrected figures and legends directly to me at [oecologia@fiu.edu](mailto:oecologia@fiu.edu), preferably as a pdf(s).  I will check them over to see if further changes need to be made.  After receiving confirmation that you have incorporated all of the recommended changes, please upload the final version as a Revision to Editorial Manager at <https://oeco.editorialmanager.com/>.   Please let me know if you have any questions about your manuscript.  Be sure to include the manuscript number (OECO-D-18-00256R1) in all inquiries.  I look forward to seeing your manuscript published in Oecologia.  Sincerely,  Joel Trexler   Editor in Chief,Aquatic Ecology Oecologia    Comments to Authors from Handling Editor:   Dear Dr. Shelton,  I have read your revised version of your manuscript.   I have only one remaining concern regarding your interpretation of the non-linear relationship between kelps and urchins.  Once you have clarified the following points, your paper should be acceptable for publication in Oecologia.   I do not understand your explanation for why you consider hysteresis resulting from non-linear functional response of urchins to kelp to be an unlikely explanation for your results (L450-452).  You say: “However, such a nonlinear functional response of grazers to kelp would have to occur at grazer densities below those generally associated with shifts to non-kelp dominated states (Filbee-Dexter and Scheibling 2014), which seems unlikely.”  This statement makes no sense because the functional response describes the feeding rate of grazers as a function of prey density, not grazer density.  Do you mean numeric response?  What are the values of grazer density where you shift to “non-kelp dominated states” and how do they compare to the densities in your study?  It seems that if you’re going to make a quantitative argument, you need to provide numbers.  Instead it seems to me that your next sentence (L452):  “Instead, we suggest that forces acting at relatively small spatial scales and unrelated to otter or grazer abundance drive kelp abundance and community structure once the effects of sea otters have cascaded through the community.”  Is exactly consistent with what Ling et al argue, that once kelps get abundant enough, grazers can no longer control them (due to mechanisms like modification of the physical environment or size dependent herbivory) and so other factors than herbivory control their abundance, for instance oceanography, and kelps become decoupled from urchins.  I also did not understand your argument in your cover letter that: “We note here that it is entirely possible to get the patterns outlined in the Ling et al. paper with time-invariant linear functional responses between kelp and urchins and a small amount of stochasticity.” Stochasticity in what?  Is there a reference to back this up?  I don’t understand this argument at all.   L482, do you mean “the sea urchin fishery ON kelp variability”?   If you can clarify your arguments on these points, the paper should be suitable for publication.  Thank you for submitting your work to Oecologia.   Sincerely, Jonathan Shurin   |  |  | | --- | --- | | https://ssl.gstatic.com/ui/v1/icons/mail/no_photo.png | Click here to Reply or Forward |   Using 40.12 GB  [Program Policies](https://www.google.com/gmail/about/policy/)  Powered by  [Google](https://www.google.com/" \t "_blank)  Last account activity: 35 minutes ago  Details |  |  | |