Reviewer 2 page and lines		
6 4-6 However, restoration of degraded lands is more than the recovery of soil ability to support vegetation. This is always true but particularly in contaminated soils of dryland mining areas (Toktar M., Lo Papa G., F.E. Kozybayeva F.E., Dazzi (2016) - Ecological restoration in contaminated soils of Kokdzhon phosphate mining area (Zhambyl region, Kazakhstan). Ecological Engineering. 86, 1-4. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ecoleng.2015.09.080).	yes	references included
10 4-6 In addition to biomass production, restoration which can vary noticeably inside the same climatic region. This is particularly true in transitional eco-zones, such as in the Mediterranean biogeographical region that is characterized by a notable pedodiversity (Ibáñez et al., 2013) and where lands at high and low risk of desertification (Ibáñez J.J., Zinck J.A., Dazzi C. (2013) - Soil geography and diversity of the European biogeographical regions. Geoderma 192, pp.142–153. . DOI: 10.1016/j.geoderma.2012.07.024)	Yes	references included
10 10 It could be useful to add a footnote to define the soil moisture control section.	Yes	OK done
13 15 The same reference was reported two lines before.	Yes	OK done
17 20-22 Overall, in undisturbed soils, a clear stratification occurs, with larger SOC concentrations in shallower than that in deeper layers. In disturbed soils the SOC stratification becomes blurred (Fig. 5), except for some particular cases of hyperarid anthropogenic soils (Camilli B., Dell'Abate M.T., Mocali S., Fabiani A., Dazzi C. 2016 - Evolution of organic carbon pools and microbial diversity in hyperarid anthropogenic soils. Journal of Arid Environments 124, 318-331. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jaridenv.2015.09.003)	yes	references included
19 18-19 The analysis of the soil-extracted nucleic acid sequences (DNA and RNA) provides a powerful tool for the characterization of the entire microbial community. It was successfully used even in hypersaline soils of dry areas (Canfora et al., 2014; Canfora et al., 2015). Canfora L., Bacci G., Pinzari F., Lo Papa G., Dazzi C., Benedetti A. (2014) – Salinity and bacterial diversity : to what extent does the concentration of salt affect the bacterial community in a saline soil? PLoS ONE 9(9) ; e106662. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0106662 Canfora L., Lo Papa G., Vittori Antisari L., Bazan G., Dazzi C., Benedetti A. (2015) - Spatial microbial community structure and biodiversity analysis in "extreme" hypersaline soils of a	yes	references included

semiarid Mediterranean area. Applied Soil Ecology ; ISSN: 09291393; DOI: 10.1016/j.apsoil.2015.04.014		
39 Fig 1 Fig. 1 needs an accurate description in the caption	yes	We agree. The caption now explains the content of the figure. New caption The strategies available to enhance degraded ecosystem services form a continuum of options. These can be broadly classified either as prevention, mitigation, and restoration if regarded from an ecosystem perspective, or sustainable land management, rehabilitation, and reclamation if focus is on recovering productivity to support livelihoods. Different indicators and gradients define transitions among categories, e.g., active ecological restoration actions are best suited when the ecosystem natural recovery potential is lost or strongly reduced.
43 Fig 5 What about y-axis?	no	The different units for the different variables presented in the graph, make it rather complicated to provide a scale for the Y-axis. Therefore, this axis has to be perceived as qualitatively rather than quantitatively.