

**Environmental soil quality index and indicators for a coal mining soil” by R. E. Masto et al. Anonymous Referee #1 Received and published: 7 March 2015**

	Reviewer’s Comments	Author Response
1	General comments The manuscript is well structured and written. The material and methods used are properly described and appropriate for the aim of the study.	<i>Thank you very much for the valuable comments/ suggestions and a word of appreciation.</i>
2	Specific comments Introduction The novelty of the work is not well emphasized at the end of the introduction. It should be mentioned not just that there are limited number of studies on soil quality indices involving soil contaminants, also limited about mine soils. In fact, it could be included a reference about a published study of a SQI in mine soils.	<i>Yes, we agree with the Learned Reviewer. In the revised manuscript we would certainly cite specific SQI studies in mine spoil and focus on the novel features of the present study.</i>
3	Materials and methods Information about the sampling sites is poor. First, it should be <u>indicated the distance of the sampled sites to the mines</u> . It is just said “near” to the mines (pag. 620, line 21). Second, it must be explained the <u>soil use of the sampled points</u> (forest, agricultural, no-specific use).	<i>Site details of each sampling points along with a map depicting each sampling points would be incorporated in the revised manuscript.</i>
4	Technical comments Pag 619, line 25: put comma after “soil”. Pag 620, line 5: include some references about studies dealing with soil quality indexes for agricultural sites or microbiological. Page 121, line 18: avoid the use of the term “heavy metal”. The IUPAC recommends instead metals, trace metals, trace elements or just metals	<i>All these technical comments would be addressed in the revised manuscript.</i>