

## Rebuttal to: “A bibliometric review on carbon cycling research during 1993–2013” by Zhi et al. (Environ Earth Sci 2015, 74(7): 6065–6075)

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**Abstract** A research paper’s contribution exists not only in its originality and creativity but also in its continuity and development for research that follows. The reference section can play a key role to researchers who are interested in a paper’s statement or who would like to follow the study or find useful information from the paper. This section is as important as the core of a paper; however, it was easily to be ignored by the author. This comment offered information for citing original idea of methods, figures, and tables which Zhi et al. (Environ Earth Sci 74(7):6065–6075, 2015) used. It is also suggested that an author not only must be creative but also must be careful while writing in order to publish more valuable and papers more worthy of reading.

**Keywords** Excel · Keywords · Frequency · Trends · Simulations · Double Y Axis

Recently, Zhi et al. (2015) published the paper entitled “A bibliometric review on carbon cycling research during 1993–2013.” In the Methods section, the authors noticed that full records were downloaded and organized into Microsoft Excel 2007 without any reference. This method was presented in 1997 (Katz and Hicks 1997). Again authors mentioned “Top 40 keywords (ranked by frequency) were selected and calculated for their relative percentage (%) using 5-year interval,” without any references. In fact, the concept and the method have already been presented by Ho and co-workers in 2008 (Xie et al. 2008; Li et al. 2009a, b; Mao et al. 2010).

Authors mentioned that “As shown in Fig. 1a, papers were published rarely every year before 1980 and subsequently increased markedly since 1990.” In SCI-EXPANDED, most abstract information cannot be found in the database before 1991. Thus, results and discussions about Fig. 1a (Zhi et al. 2015) are not appropriate. The idea of multiple trend simulations in Fig. 1b (Zhi et al. 2015) was reported by Ho and co-workers in the last decade (Chiu and Ho 2005; Xie et al. 2008; Zhang et al. 2009; Li et al. 2009a, b). In the case of Fig. 2b (Zhi et al. 2015), application of the double *Y* axis in a figure for publication trends of countries has been also published in 2010 (Ho et al. 2010; Wang et al. 2010).

In recent years, Ho and co-workers presented the distribution of words in the article title and abstract, author keywords, and *KeyWords Plus* in different periods to evaluate trends in research topics (Li et al. 2009a, b; Mao et al. 2010; Fu et al. 2013). The idea of Table 1 and related results and discussion have been reported in several research topics (Xie et al. 2008; Li et al. 2009a, b; Ho et al. 2010).

Citing the original paper not only respects the work of the authors who presented a novel research idea but would also focus on this idea, in detail, in the body of their paper (Ho 2014). In my view, Zhi et al. (2015) should have cited the original papers for their methods, tables, and figures and thereby provided greater accuracy and information details about the idea and the methods that they employed.

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