

## Reviewer Report

**Title:** The sponge microbiome project

**Version:** Original Submission    **Date:** 5/9/2017

**Reviewer name:** Spyros Gkelis

### Reviewer Comments to Author:

This is a robust dataset for an increasingly important microbiome. The authors present their dataset and describe their data in a clear and concise way. Some minor (except the last one) issues that need to be clarified are: 1. How was the sponge sampling designed? Was it a random sampling of sponge species found in a certain habitat? 2. What about the unidentified sponge species? Isn't the unidentified species dataset an impediment in the sponge microbiome comparisons? 3. lines 132-133: "Sequences that failed to align were discarded". How many were those sequences id est what is the percentage of sequences used to produce the microbial taxonomic profile of marine sponge samples? 4. lines 209-211: "Raw sequence data were deposited in the European Nucleotide Archive (accession numbers: ERP020690). Quality-filtered, demultiplexed fastq files, Deblur and QIIME resulting OTU tables are available at Qiita database [16] (Study ID: 10793)". No results found for ERP020690 in ENA or Study ID: 10793 in Qiita? Why?

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### Quality of Written English

Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript: Acceptable

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