**In reference to our submitted MS. entitled “**Histopathological analysis of the liver of the catfish *Pimelodus maculatus* in a tropical eutrophized reservoir from southeastern Brazi”l

Dear Editor

Our article describes in details the natural conditions and changes of liver tissues of a widespread Neotropical fish. This is the first step to supply information that would be associated to changes in water quality. The use of fish species as biomarkers of environmental degradation in a main purpose of ecological studies related to environmental conservation. This is an original approach in the Neotropics. There are few studies on this subject in the South American body waters.

Although the fish liver have been commonly used as a Bioindicators of diffuse pollution through the Hepatosomatic Index (HSI = liver weight / fish weight), this index is not very accurate because of eventual influences of factors (e.g. sex, reproductive process, food availability) that can influence on the liver weight. The use of histological analysis is much more accurate to infer changes in the liver tissues caused by environmental disturbances. The next step will be the quantification of such changes and the application of some statistical tests to compare fish changes with environmental disturbances. In this case, we will have to obtain accurate data on the water quality and to quantify liver alterations. This study is the first step to reach this goal.

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