Review of: "Reef Fish in the Vitória-Trindade Seamount Chain of the Southwestern Atlantic: Biogeographical Corridors and Impact of Fishing"

Reviewer 1

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

This is an interesting study and dataset and is clearly worth publishing. However, there is at this moment still a lot of work necessary in order to publish the manuscript. The entire manuscript needs restructuring, more recent literature should be added, and the aims of the study should be clearly defined and addressed throughout the manuscript, presented correctly in the Results, and discussed in more detail.

Throughout the manuscript, it remains a little unclear what exactly the aim of the study was. At the beginning, the study aims were named as identifying coral reef fish communities, their distribution patterns, and giving implications for biogeographic provinces and fishing pressure.

The fishing pressure is the only aim that is introduced and discussed in some detail; all other points are very superficially mentioned, and it remains unclear if the authors are discussing biogeography, distribution patterns of single species or communities, how communities were identified and differentiated from biogeographic provinces or ecoregions, just to mention some errors. I think this is a very interesting dataset and study, but it clearly needs some fundamental restructuring, and I suggest to reduce the study aims and address a lower number of aims with more precision. This affects the introduction, the methodological description and statistical methods, the presentation of results, reworking figures, and discussing the findings with literature and other studies conducted in this region. Please see the attached PDF document with some more details and comments. Also, redo the statistical approach and add some justification measures for the clusters built and why. I also would not use the DCA analysis as the resulting patterns are hard to interpret as this analysis detaches eigenvalues from the data points shown. The presented clustering method is a much better method, and in any case, both analyses show the same result. But still, the statistics need some more details in the methods section as well as providing some more details in the results.