Response to Editor Report:

Comments to the Author:
page 10 line 9 remind the reader what the b term means. The statement in brackets in line 7 is easily missed.

The words ‘vegetation type’ have been substituted for b here and later in section 3.4 to aid the reader. The term b does not now appear in the text without that explanation.

page 10 line 27: It would be easier to follow here (and in similar places), if you referred to the b term by what it stands for

As for the point above – we now routinely adopt ‘vegetation type’ in the text in place of b.

page 12 line 6: If there are theoretical grounds, then please do provide an appropriate reference or explain this theory here (first solution preferred).

A further reference supplied to Buckley et al. (2002) – those authors provide a mathematical framework (expressed in area terms) for optimising water and nitrogen use within the leaf and canopy.

page 14 line 7: check reference

The cross-reference to Table S6 is confirmed. That table presents comparative model output with traits expressed per unit leaf dried mass.

page 14 line 7: remove “.” after versus

Full stop now removed.

page 14: re-label 4.5 to 5.

Conclusions now promoted to font type ‘Heading 1’ and numbering changed to 5 (now in sequence with Discussion etc.).