**Interactive comment on** “Exploring the distance between nitrogen and phosphorus limitation in mesotrophic surface waters using a sensitive bioassay” *by* Enis Hrustic et al.

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I have read the manuscript in detail. I was peripherally involved in the Thingstad and Mantoura (2005) study and found it interesting and useful. This manuscript develops those ideas further and generalizes them to quantify the degree that a system is N or P limited. As such this work fills an important gap in the literature. I am happy to recommend publication and cannot recommend any changes to the manuscript as written. However I would be less than honest if I did not say that I got lost in the detail of exactly how the results are plotted and then interpreted. As far as I can see this is done well but I would defer to another reviewer if (s)he were more expertise in the mathematics of such biological measurements and finds either that the text does not
explain this part well enough or even that there were problems in the calculations as done. I simply don’t have the expertise to know.