During the discussion period of this manuscript, one of the referees, Dr. Tim Reichenau, wrote an outstandingly knowledgeable review which was precise, constructive, and very comprehensive. The review resulted in a significant contribution to the manuscript. In recognition of his contribution, he was asked to be added as a co-author by the authors.

As this step, however, did not happen before the final typesetting of the manuscript (i.e., after the manuscript had been accepted for a long time), it was not possible to reopen the review process and consult a new, independent referee. In this specific case, especially seeing the very late stage of including Dr. Reichenau as a co-author, I don’t have any concern that he had a conflict of interest when he acted as a referee.

Kirsten Elger