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1 **A critical assessment on the short-term response of microbial relative composition in a**  
2 **mine tailings soil amended with biochar and manure compost**

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20 **Abstract:**

21 Phytomanagement of tailings requires the use of soil conditioners to favour plant establishment,  
22 but their benefits on soil microbial composition need to be assessed. The goal of this work was  
23 to evaluate the effect of two organic amendments, manure compost and biochar, on soil  
24 bacterial and fungal composition at metallic mine tailings. The addition of compost caused  
25 stronger effects in most of soil parameters and microbial composition than biochar, especially at  
26 the initial stage of the experiment. However, the higher dependence on labile organic carbon for  
27 some bacterial groups at the treatments containing compost determined their decay along time  
28 (*Flavobacteriales*, *Sphingobacteriales*) and the appearance of other taxa more dependent on  
29 recalcitrant organic matter (*Xanthomonadales*, *Myxococcales*). Biochar favoured bacterial  
30 decomposers (*Actinomycetales*) specialized in high lignin and other recalcitrant carbon  
31 compounds. Unlike bacteria, only a few fungal orders increased their relative abundances in the  
32 treatments containing compost (*Sordariales* and *Microascales*) while the rest showed a decrease  
33 or remained unaltered. The mix biochar-compost may result the best option to support a more  
34 diverse microbial population in terms of soil functionality that is able to decompose both labile  
35 and recalcitrant carbon compounds. This may favour the resilience of the system against  
36 environmental stressors.

37

38 **Keywords:**

39 *mine tailings; metals; phytostabilization; microbial composition; soil amendments*

## 40 **Introduction**

41 Mine tailings are wastes composed by the left-over of ore-processing activities and they  
42 are considered as the main responsible for environmental health impacts in former metallic  
43 mining areas (Conesa and Schulin, 2010). The bare areas of these tailings are usually impacted  
44 by wind and water erosion, which may spread metal(loid) enriched particles to their  
45 surroundings. Phytomanagement by phytostabilisation is considered a suitable alternative to  
46 decrease the environmental risks associated to mine tailings (Robinson et al., 2009). This  
47 technique consists of the generation of a stable vegetation cover at the tailings surfaces which  
48 decreases the erosion through the fixation of soil particles within plant rhizospheres (Mendez  
49 and Maier, 2008; Wong, 2003).

50 Soil conditions within tailings are unfavourable for plant growth (*e.g.* high metal(loid)  
51 concentrations, low fertility, high salinity). To overcome this issue, the addition of soil  
52 conditioners that ameliorate soil constraints are usually proposed (Clemente et al., 2010;  
53 Párraga-Aguado et al., 2015). Among the available options, those including organic  
54 amendments are highly appreciated because of their beneficial effects in soil fertility and  
55 metal(loid) mobility reduction (Clemente et al., 2010; Pardo et al., 2014a, 2014b). The final  
56 performance of these amendments depends on their nature, the rate of addition and the edaphic  
57 properties of the polluted soil. The combined use of organic amendments like compost and  
58 biochar has been suggested as an interesting option in mine tailings because of their  
59 complementarity: composts are known to provide readily available nutrients for plants; biochar  
60 is a type of organic material obtained by pyrolysis that shows high capacity to complex metals  
61 (because of its high specific surface area and negative sorption sites) and high stability to be  
62 degraded (due to its high content of recalcitrant organic carbon) (Rodríguez-Vila et al., 2017;  
63 Forján et al., 2018). Although there is a general acceptance of the benefits associated to the  
64 addition of organic amendments in tailings, recent works consider necessary to carry out a  
65 specific assessment to avoid any undesirable effects such as increases of metal(loid) available  
66 pools or negative impacts in plant ecological relationships (Martínez-Oró et al., 2019; Pardo et  
67 al., 2014a).

68           Recent works on the phytomanagement of mine tailings have pointed out the critical  
69    role of soil microbiology for the successful establishment of vegetation (Kolaříková et al., 2017;  
70    Sun et al., 2018). Soil microorganisms may interact with plants rhizospheres, acting like filters  
71    to decrease the phytotoxic effects of metal(loid)s and like supporters of C-N cycles, providing  
72    available nutrients for plant growth (Thavamani et al., 2017). The adverse edaphic conditions at  
73    tailings may restrict the native microbial composition to those tolerant or highly resistant groups  
74    but with limited soil functional capabilities (Risueño et al., 2020a). Nevertheless, and in spite of  
75    these limitations, those bacterial or fungal groups could play an important role in favouring the  
76    edaphic successional processes, which might support the establishment of a self-sustaining  
77    vegetation (Colin et al., 2019; Kolaříková et al., 2017; Sun et al., 2018). A key factor in these  
78    systems could be to accelerate these successional processes driven by soil microbiology through  
79    the application of organic amendments. The assessment of the effects of soil amendments is  
80    then critical, because the autochthonous microbiology of the tailings, already adapted to high  
81    metal(loid)s concentrations, salinity and low fertility conditions, might be negatively impacted  
82    by those microorganisms contained in the amendments or by the changes in soil conditions  
83    which the amendments might generate (Grandlic et al., 2008). In addition, it is important to  
84    assess whether the microbiome contained in the amendment is negative impacted by the edaphic  
85    conditions of the tailings or not.

86           The goal of this work was to assess the effect of the single application of two organic  
87    amendments, manure compost, as a source of labile carbon, and biochar, as a recalcitrant  
88    organic carbon material,, and their combination, in the soil bacterial and fungal composition  
89    within a metal enriched mine tailings soil. For that purpose, a dynamic mesocosm experiment  
90    was carried out comparing four different treatments: bulk tailings, bulk tailings + compost, bulk  
91    tailings + biochar and bulk tailings + compost + biochar. Soil parameters data (pH, electrical  
92    conductivity, dissolved organic carbon, dissolved nitrogen, water extractable ions and metals)  
93    and soil microbial composition data (bacteria and fungi) were collected and analysed at three  
94    different times from the beginning of the experiment: 1 month after, 3 months after and 6  
95    months after.

## 96 **Material and methods**

### 97 *Characterization of mine tailings soil and amendments (compost and biochar)*

98           The mine tailings substrate was taken at a former mine tailings disposal site located at  
99 the former Mining District of Cartagena-La Unión (southeast of Spain, 0-385 m a.s.l.; 37°37' N,  
100 0 ° 49' W– 37 ° 35'N, 0 ° 50' W, ~ 50 km<sup>2</sup>) (Figure SM1, Supplementary Material). Former  
101 mining activities focused on metallic sulphur minerals such as galena, pyrite or sphalerite. The  
102 local climate is semiarid, with annual rainfall of 250-300 mm, and average temperature of 18  
103 °C. Additional information on the environmental impacts of the mining activity in this area is  
104 available in Conesa and Schulin (2010). The amendments used in this study consisted of biochar  
105 (B) and composted manure (C). The biochar, acquired from *Proiniso S.A.* (Málaga, Spain),  
106 was produced from tree wood (a mix of pine, oak and eucalyptus) after pyrolyzation at 900 °C.  
107 The composted manure, provided by local farmers, consisted of a mixture of chicken, horse and  
108 sheep dung that was composted during three months in open air piles.

109           Mine tailings soil and amendments were sieved through a 2 mm mesh. Some of the  
110 properties of the tailings substrate and the two amendments are shown in Table SM1  
111 (Supplementary Material). Tailings substrate showed neutral pH (7.38), moderate electrical  
112 conductivity (2.07 dS m<sup>-1</sup>), mainly due to sulphate contribution (4130 mg kg<sup>-1</sup> water extractable  
113 SO<sub>4</sub><sup>2-</sup>), low values of organic matter (*e.g.* < 0.5 % total organic carbon) and high total metal  
114 concentrations (*e.g.* > 10 000 mg kg<sup>-1</sup> Zn, Mn and Pb). Compost showed alkaline pH (8.17),  
115 high electrical conductivity (9.75 dS m<sup>-1</sup>), mainly due to the contribution of chloride  
116 concentrations (~4500 mg kg<sup>-1</sup> water extractable Cl<sup>-</sup>), high total Ca (~ 22 %), K (~ 4 %), organic  
117 carbon (~ 25 %) and nitrogen (~ 2.5 %) concentrations, and some moderate total metal  
118 concentrations (*e.g.* 1255 mg kg<sup>-1</sup> Zn, 1295 mg kg<sup>-1</sup> Mn). Biochar was strongly alkaline (pH  
119 9.90), with moderate electrical conductivity (2.65 dS m<sup>-1</sup>), high total Ca (~7%), K (~1.8%) and  
120 organic carbon (~ 83 %) concentrations, low total nitrogen (0.70 %) and low total metal  
121 concentrations (*e.g.* 100 ± 1 mg kg<sup>-1</sup> Zn, < 10 mg kg<sup>-1</sup> Pb). When comparing both amendments,  
122 in terms of labile organic matter, the compost showed higher concentrations of dissolved  
123 organic carbon (4490 mg kg<sup>-1</sup> DOC) than the biochar (790 mg kg<sup>-1</sup> DOC). This difference also

124 occurred for the dissolved nitrogen concentration (1244 mg kg<sup>-1</sup> DN in the compost; 8.7 mg kg<sup>-1</sup>  
125 DN in the biochar).

### 126 ***Experimental set-up***

127 Four treatments were carried out: S, corresponded to the bulk tailings substrate; SC  
128 consisted of bulk tailings soil and 4% (weight) of compost; SB was composed by bulk tailings  
129 soil and 4% (weight) of biochar; and SCB was the treatment combining bulk tailings with 4% of  
130 biochar and 4% of compost. The elemental composition of each substrate treatment is available  
131 in Table SM2 (Supplementary Material). Plastic pots (13 cm diameter, 15 cm height), nine for  
132 each treatment, were filled with ~ 1.5 kg of treatment substrates and randomly distributed in a  
133 climate chamber with controlled temperature/light/humidity (23 °C during 16h light and 16 °C  
134 during 8h darkness; 60% constant relative humidity). Pots were watered approximately at half  
135 of field capacity throughout the experiment with distilled water. Soil samples were collected at  
136 three different points: after one month (T1 samples) from the beginning of the experiment, after  
137 three months (T3 samples) and after six months (T6 samples). At each sampling point, a  
138 composite soil sample each three pots (~ 12 g) was collected in a sterilized plastic cylinder,  
139 resulting in three composite soil samples per treatment and sampling time. An aliquot of each  
140 sample was stored at -20 °C for microbial analysis. The rest was used for soil parameters  
141 determination.

### 142 ***Soil parameters analyses***

143 For all samples, a 1:2.5 soil (g):water (ml) extraction was performed by shaking for 2  
144 hours. These extracts were filtered through nylon membrane 0.45 µm syringe filters (WICOM)  
145 and used for measuring pH, Electrical Conductivity (EC), water extractable ions (K<sup>+</sup>, Mg<sup>2+</sup>,  
146 Ca<sup>2+</sup>, Cl<sup>-</sup> and SO<sub>4</sub><sup>2-</sup>) by using an Ion Chromatographer (Metrohm), Dissolved Organic Carbon  
147 (DOC) and Dissolved Nitrogen (DN) by using a TOC-automatic analyser (TOC-VCSH  
148 Shimadzu) and metals (Cu, Mn, Pb, Zn) by using an ICP-MS (Agilent 7500A).

### 149 ***DNA extraction, PCR amplification and sequencing***

150 Microbial (bacteria and fungi) DNA was extracted from 0.25 g soil samples using the  
151 PowerSoil DNA Isolation Kit (MOBIO), according to the manufacturer's instructions. The

152 isolated DNA was quantified using a NanoDrop 2000 spectrophotometer. Library preparation  
153 and Illumina sequencing were carried out at the IPBLN Genomics Facility (CSIC, Granada,  
154 Spain). Raw sequence data in FASTQ format (16S and ITS2) were subjected to quality control  
155 analysis with FastQC software and prepared for taxonomic classification using the Mothur  
156 software (version 1.43.0) (Schloss et al., 2009) and following the standard operating protocol  
157 proposed by Kozich et al. (2013). Phyla (both bacteria and fungi) that showed > 5% abundance  
158 in at least one sampling and orders that showed > 3% in at least two samplings, were  
159 considered.

160 The relative abundance percentages at order level were used to calculate the Shannon-  
161 Weaver index ( $H'$ ) (Shannon and Weaver, 1963) as it follows:

$$162 \quad H'p = - \sum_{i=1}^S p_i \ln p_i$$

163 Where  $p_i$  is the relative frequency of the order “i” at each sample and S is the number of  
164 bacteria or fungi orders at each sample.

### 165 *Statistical analyses*

166 Statistical analyses were performed with the software IBM SPSS Statistics 24.  
167 Homogeneity of variances was tested using the Levene's test and data were transformed as  
168 needed to fit to a normal distribution. The ANOVA of repeated measures was performed in  
169 order to evaluate differences along time (within subject factor) and among treatments (between  
170 subject factor). Multiple comparisons with Bonferroni test were applied for evaluating the  
171 whole effect of the treatments while pairwise comparisons with Bonferroni test were performed  
172 at specific sampling times. The bacterial and fungal relative abundance percentages were  
173 analysed by Canonical Correspondence Analysis (CCA) for evaluating the relationship between  
174 soil fertility and microbiological groups. The CANOCO software for Windows v4.02 was used  
175 for CCA (Ter Braak and Smilauer, 1999).

## 176 **Results**

### 177 *Changes of edaphic parameters between treatments and samplings*



178           The evolution of the analysed soil parameters along the experiment is shown in Figure 1  
179 and Figure SM2. The *time* factor caused a significant effect in pH ( $p < 0.05$ ) but there was no  
180 effect of the treatments on pH variation along time (*time\*treatment* factor,  $p > 0.05$ ). Initially,  
181 the treatments without biochar, S and SC, showed lower pH values (pH  $\sim 7.7$ ,  $p < 0.05$ , Figure  
182 1A) than those measured at the biochar containing treatments, SB and SBC (pH  $\sim 7.9$ -8.0).  
183 However, after three months, all the treatments showed similar pH values (7.4-7.7,  $p > 0.05$ ). In  
184 contrast to pH values, the *time* or *time\*treatment* factors did not affect significantly the EC  
185 values ( $p > 0.05$ ). At T3 sampling point, treatments containing compost (SC and SCB) showed  
186 higher EC values ( $\sim 2.5$  dS  $m^{-1}$ ,  $p < 0.05$ , Figure 1B)) than the other two treatments (S and SB,  
187  $\sim 2.1$  dS  $m^{-1}$ ). Similarly to EC values, the water extractable  $K^+$ ,  $Ca^{2+}$  and  $SO_4^{2-}$  concentrations  
188 (Figure SM2 A, B and D) were not affected by the *time* or *time\*treatment* factors. All the  
189 treatments showed similar  $SO_4^{2-}$  and  $Ca^{2+}$  concentrations (4000-4300 mg  $kg^{-1}$   $SO_4^{2-}$  and  $\sim 2000$   
190 mg  $kg^{-1}$   $Ca^{2+}$ ), in contrast to  $K^+$ , whose concentrations were different among treatments (SBC  $>$   
191 SC  $>$  SB  $>$  S,  $p < 0.05$ ) at each sampling time. The  $Cl^-$  and  $Mg^{2+}$  concentrations showed a  
192 significant effect of the *time* factor but not of its interaction *time\*treatment*. The  $Cl^-$   
193 concentrations of the treatments without compost were below the detection limit (12 mg  $kg^{-1}$ )  
194 while those containing compost showed concentrations between 70-200 mg  $kg^{-1}$  (Figure  
195 SM2C). For  $Mg^{2+}$ , the concentrations in the treatments containing compost, SC and SCB, were  
196 at least 1.2-fold higher ( $p < 0.05$ ) than those obtained for the S and SB treatments (Figure  
197 SM2E). The *time* and *time\*treatment* factors showed a significant effect ( $p < 0.05$ ) on the DN  
198 and DOC parameters. At the three sampling points, the treatments containing compost (SC and  
199 SCB) showed higher DN and DOC concentrations ( $\sim 4$ -fold higher values,  $p < 0.05$ ) than the  
200 other two treatments (S and SB, Figure 1 C and D).

201           Lead water extractable concentrations were below the detection limit along the  
202 experiment for the four treatments ( $< 10$   $\mu g$   $kg^{-1}$ ). The *time* factor significantly affected ( $p <$   
203 0.05) the Cu, Mn and Zn concentrations. The effect of the interaction *time\*treatment* was only  
204 significant for Mn ( $p < 0.05$ ). For Cu (Figure 2A), the treatments containing compost (SC and  
205 SCB) showed at least 1.5-fold higher concentrations ( $p < 0.05$ ) than the other two treatments (S

206 and SB) except at the T6, where S and SB concentrations came closer to SC ( $p > 0.05$ ). After  
207 one month from the beginning of the experiment (T1 samples), the treatments S and SB showed  
208 significant lower Mn concentrations (at least 3-fold lower values,  $p < 0.05$ , Figure 2B) than  
209 those treatments containing compost (SC and SCB). These differences among treatments were  
210 not detected along the whole experiment (T3, T6,  $p > 0.05$ ), due to the decrease of Mn  
211 concentrations ( $p < 0.05$ ) in the treatments containing compost (SC and SCB). Regarding Zn  
212 (Figure 2C), the T1 samples, showed similar Zn concentrations 210-266  $\mu\text{g kg}^{-1}$  ( $p < 0.05$ ) in all  
213 the treatments. Nevertheless, at T3 and T6, Zn concentrations decreased significantly ( $p < 0.05$ )  
214 in the treatments containing biochar (SB and SBC, 100-120  $\mu\text{g kg}^{-1}$ ) in comparison to the other  
215 treatments (S and SC,  $\sim 200 \mu\text{g kg}^{-1}$ ).

#### 216 ***Shannon diversity index for bacteria and fungi***

217 The *time* and *time\*treatment* factors caused a significant effect ( $p < 0.05$ , ANOVA of  
218 repeated measures) in the values of the Shannon diversity index for the bacterial orders (Figure  
219 SM3A). At the initial sampling (T1), the diversity index of the SB treatment showed significant  
220 lower values ( $p < 0.05$ ) than the rest of the treatments (S, SC and SCB,  $p > 0.05$ ). However, the  
221 SB treatment showed a significant increase along the experiment reaching similar diversity  
222 values ( $p > 0.05$ ) to those obtained for the S treatment at the T6 samples. The treatments  
223 containing compost (SC and SCB) showed higher diversity ( $p < 0.05$ ) by the end of the  
224 experiment (T6 samples) than the other two treatments (S and SB) (Figure SM3).

225 In relation to fungi (Figure SM3B), the modifications of the Shannon index values were  
226 significantly affected by the *time* factor ( $p < 0.05$ , ANOVA of repeated measures) but not by the  
227 *time\*treatment* interaction ( $p > 0.05$ ). Unlike bacteria, fungal diversity did not show differences  
228 among treatments at any sampling time ( $p > 0.05$ ).

#### 229 ***Influence of treatments on bacterial composition***

230 Bacterial groups belonging to *Proteobacteria*, *Actinobacteria*, *Acidobacteria*,  
231 *Bacteroidetes*, *Planctomycetes* and *Gemmatimonadetes* phyla were the most abundant in our  
232 study (Figure 3). There was a significant effect of the *time* factor in the variations of relative  
233 abundance percentages for all the bacterial phyla ( $p < 0.05$ , ANOVA of repeated measures). In

234 addition, the interaction *time\*treatment* affected significantly almost all phyla relative  
235 abundances ( $p < 0.05$ ), with the exception of the *Actinobacteria* phylum ( $p > 0.05$ ).

236 The *Proteobacteria* phylum showed relative abundances higher than 20% across all the  
237 treatments and samplings (Figure 3A). The treatments with compost (SC and SCB) showed  
238 higher abundances ( $p < 0.05$ ) than the other two treatments without compost (S and SB). For  
239 each treatment, the percentages of *Proteobacteria* abundance at the T6 samples did not differ ( $p$   
240  $< 0.05$ ) from those obtained at the first sampling time (T1). The main orders which contribute to  
241 this phylum included *Rhizobiales* and *Sphingomonadales* (*Alphaproteobacteria* class),  
242 *Betaproteobacteria uncl.* and *Burkholderiales* (*Betaproteobacteria* class), *Myxococcales*  
243 (*Deltaproteobacteria* class) and *Pseudomonadales*, *Gammaproteobacteria uncl.* and  
244 *Xanthomonadales* orders (*Gammaproteobacteria* class) (Figure SM4). These orders showed a  
245 contrasting variation in their abundances along the experiment: while some orders did not vary  
246 their relative abundance (*e.g. Sphingomonadales* and *Rhizobiales*, Figure SM4A and C); other  
247 groups showed significant decreases or increases of relative abundances (*e.g. Pseudomonadales*  
248 and *Burkholderiales* and *e.g. Myxococcales*, respectively, Figure SM4B, H and E).

249 *Actinobacteria* was the only phylum in which no significant ( $p > 0.05$ ) interaction  
250 *time\*treatment* occurred. In contrast to what occurred for *Proteobacteria*, the treatments  
251 without the presence of compost (S and SB) showed higher relative abundance percentages of  
252 *Actinobacteria* (about double,  $p < 0.05$ ) than those treatments containing compost (SC and SCB,  
253 Figure 3B). Three main orders were recorded within this phylum: *Actinomycetales*, which  
254 decreased its abundance percentage ( $p < 0.05$ ) along the experiment in all treatments (Figure  
255 SM5B); *Acidimicrobiales*, which showed the opposite behaviour, a significant increase of  
256 relative abundance ( $p < 0.05$ ) along the experiment in all treatments (Figure SM5A); and  
257 *Solirubrobacterales*, which showed a significant increase ( $p < 0.05$ ) but only in two treatments,  
258 SC and SB (Figure SM5H).

259 For the *Acidobacteria* phylum, at the first sampling (T1), the treatments without  
260 compost (S and SB) showed higher relative abundances ( $p < 0.05$ ) than the other two treatments  
261 (SC and SCB, Figure 3C). Along the experiment (from T1 to T6) there was a significant

262 increase ( $p < 0.05$ ) of the abundance percentages in the three amended treatments (SC, SB and  
263 SCB), while the bulk tailing treatment (S) maintained similar data to those obtained at T1. For  
264 instance, SC showed three times higher abundance values in T6 in relation to T1. The main  
265 identified order corresponded to the *Gp7* (Figure SM5G).

266 In the case of the *Bacteroidetes* phylum, the treatments without compost, S and SB,  
267 showed lower relative abundance values (at least 10-fold lower,  $p < 0.05$ ) than the treatments  
268 containing compost (SC and SCB) along the whole experiment (Figure 3D). There was no  
269 variation in the relative abundance values throughout the experiment ( $p > 0.05$ ) in the two  
270 treatments without compost (S and SB). However, a significant decrease in the abundance  
271 percentages occurred in the two treatments containing compost (SC and SCB) from T1 to the  
272 final T6 samples ( $p < 0.05$ ). This tendency was similar for the three main bacterial orders  
273 (Figure SM5D, E and I) belonging to this phylum: *Sphingobacteriales*, *Flavobacteriales* and  
274 *Cytophagales*.

275 For the *Planctomycetes* phylum (Figure 3E), and its main contributing order  
276 *Planctomycetales* (Figure SM5F), the relative abundance in the treatments containing compost,  
277 SC and SCB, raised along with the experiment, from similar abundance data ( $p > 0.05$ ) to those  
278 obtained for the S treatment at T1 to 2-fold-higher percentages ( $p < 0.05$ ) than the treatments  
279 without compost, S and SB, at T6.

280 The *Gemmatimonadetes* phylum (Figure 3F), and its order *Gemmatimonadales* (Figure  
281 SM5C), showed significantly higher abundance percentages ( $p < 0.05$ ) in the treatments without  
282 compost (S and SB) than the other two treatments (SC and SCB). There was a significant  
283 increase in the relative abundance (about half higher,  $p < 0.05$ ) from T1 to T6 for the S, SC and  
284 SB treatments.

285 Results of the CCA for bacterial orders are shown in the Figure 4 and Tables SM3 and  
286 SM4. Data analyses resulted significant (Monte-Carlo test,  $p < 0.05$ ) and the first axis explained  
287 63.1 % of the variance (Table SM3). The positive side of the CCA1-axis was defined by  
288 increasing concentrations of DOC, DN, extractable elements ( $K^+$ , Cu and Mn) and EC values ( $r$   
289  $> 0.64$  for DN, DOC, EC,  $K^+$ , Cu and Cu). In contrast, the negative side of the CCA1-axis was

290 conditioned by lower values of the aforementioned parameters. In this way, the CCA1-axis  
291 (Figure 4) segregated the bacterial orders between those samples coming from the treatments  
292 containing compost, SC (rectangles) and SCB (stars), which were mostly depicted on the  
293 positive side of CCA1-axis, and those belonging to the treatments with no addition of compost,  
294 S (circles) and SB (diamonds), which were depicted on the negative side of the CCA1-axis.

295 The CCA2-axis (Figure 4 and Tables SM3 and SM4) was mainly defined by pH ( $r = -$   
296  $0.76$ ) and segregated the samples attending to the sampling time (T1, T3 and T6). For instance,  
297 all samples from T1 (white symbols) were depicted on the negative side of the CCA2-axis while  
298 the samples of T6 (black symbols) were depicted on the positive side of the CCA2-axis. This  
299 segregation was higher for the treatments containing compost (SC, SCB) and the single biochar  
300 (SB) treatment than for the bulk soil treatment (S).

### 301 ***Influence of treatments on fungal composition***

302 Fungal taxa belonging to the *Ascomycota*, *Basidiomycota* and *Chytridiomycota* phyla  
303 were detected in the four treatments (Figure 5). There was a significant effect of the *time* factor  
304 in the variations of relative abundance percentages for the *Basidiomycota* phyla ( $p < 0.05$ ,  
305 ANOVA of repeated measures) but not for the other two phyla. The interaction *time\*treatment*  
306 did not result significant for any phyla ( $p > 0.05$ , ANOVA of repeated measures).

307 The *Ascomycota* phylum showed relative abundances higher than 60 % in all treatments  
308 at every sampling time (Figure 5A). Significant differences among treatments occurred at the  
309 last sampling time (T6), when the SC treatment (~ 63 %) showed lower abundance ( $p < 0.05$ )  
310 than the treatments without compost (S and SB, ~ 80 % abundance). This was mainly due to the  
311 contribution of three orders, *Eurotiales*, *Pleosporales* and *Chaetothyriales*, which showed  
312 higher abundances in the treatments without compost (S and SB) than the other two treatments  
313 (SCB and SC, Figure SM6B, C and G). In contrast, the *Sordariomycetes uncl.*, *Sordariales* and  
314 *Microascales* orders, showed at least 2-fold higher relative abundances ( $p < 0.05$ ) at the  
315 treatments containing compost than the treatments without compost (S and SB, Figure SM6D, E

316 and H). The *Hypocreales* and *Ascomycota uncl.* orders did not show a clear pattern throughout  
317 the experiment (Figure SM6A and F).

318 The *Basidiomycota* phylum showed a decrease of relative abundances along time ( $p <$   
319  $0.05$ ) in the S, SC and SCB treatments (Figure 5B). By contrast, the abundance percentages of  
320 the SB treatment remained unaltered throughout the experiment and they were higher than the  
321 rest of the treatments ( $\sim 10\%$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) at the last sampling time (T6). The main orders  
322 identified within this phylum were *Agaricales* and *Thelephorales* (Figure SM6 I and J). The  
323 latter showed higher relative abundances in the S and SB treatments (around 5%) at the first  
324 sampling (T1) compared with the SC and SCB samples. However, they showed a sharp  
325 decreased (half of that value) along the experiment. As it occurred for the corresponding  
326 phylum data, both *Agaricales* and *Thelephorales* showed 2-fold higher relative abundance  
327 percentages ( $p < 0.05$ ) in the SB treatment than the rest of the treatments.

328 The *Chytridiomycota* phylum (Figure 5C) was only composed by the *Spizellomycetales*  
329 order (Figure SM6K). This fungal group did not show significant differences among treatments  
330 along the experiment ( $p > 0.05$ ).

331 Results of the CCA of fungal orders were significant (Monte-Carlo test,  $p < 0.05$ ) and  
332 the first axis explained 78.3 % of the variance (Figure 6 and Tables SM3 and SM4). The  
333 positive side of the CCA1-axis was mainly defined by increasing values of EC, fertility  
334 parameters ( $K^+$ , DOC and DN), and water extractable Cu concentrations (*e.g.*  $r = 0.90$  for EC  
335 and  $K^+$ ). The samples coming from the treatments containing compost, SC (rectangles) and SCB  
336 (stars), were mostly depicted on the positive side of CCA1-axis, and those belonging to the  
337 treatments without compost, S (circles) and SB (diamonds) were depicted on the negative side  
338 of the CCA1-axis.

339 On the other hand, the positive side of the CCA2-axis was mainly defined by high pH  
340 values ( $r = 0.78$ ) and to a lesser extent by increasing values of Mn concentrations ( $r = 0.39$ ),  
341 while the negative side was mainly conditioned by lower values of these two parameters. So, a

342 gradient was generated along the CCA2-axis, which segregated the samples from the amended  
343 treatments (SB-diamonds, SC-rectangles and SCB-stars) attending to the sampling times (T1,  
344 T3 and T6, Figure 6): the samples from T1 were depicted on the positive side of the CCA2-axis,  
345 while the corresponding T3 and T6 samples appeared consecutively on the negative side of the  
346 CCA2-axis. This segregation was not so evident for the samples of the bulk tailings treatment  
347 (circles).

## 348 **Discussion**

### 349 *Effects of amendments on soil parameters*

350 Soil microbial composition can be easily modified by the addition of amendments such  
351 as compost or biochar (Abujabhah et al., 2016). The extent of these changes depends on soil  
352 properties such as pH, moisture and especially, organic carbon (Asemaninejad et al., 2021;  
353 Zornoza et al., 2015). In our experiment, the addition of compost caused stronger effects in most  
354 of soil parameters than the biochar, especially in the SC treatment (Figure 1, 2 and SM2). This  
355 might be explained by the larger pool of readily available compounds released by the compost,  
356 especially at the T1. After this initial flush, there was a gradual decrease in the DOC and or  
357 extractable Mn and Zn concentrations, probably because the labile pools became shorter with  
358 the time (Parraga-Aguado et al., 2015). In contrast, the higher recalcitrant organic matter  
359 content (low labile pool and higher stability) and lower metal load of the biochar in relation to  
360 the compost conditioned lower modifications in those parameters at the SB treatment  
361 (Rodríguez-Vila et al., 2016; You et al., 2018). In the treatment combining biochar-compost,  
362 most of the studied parameters were mainly influenced by compost (e.g. DOC) and results  
363 differed from those at the single composted treatment in the DN (that was lower) and K<sup>+</sup> (that  
364 was higher) values. Lower DN concentrations in the combined biochar-compost treatment could  
365 be attributed to the retention of water-soluble nitrogen by biochar (Haider et al., 2016).

### 366 *Effects of amendments in bacterial composition*

367 In terms of phylum abundance, the compost caused a significant increase in the  
368 percentages of *Proteobacteria* and *Bacteroidetes* (Figure 3). Similar increases in the relative

369 abundance of these two phyla were also reported by Cao et al. (2020) in compost amended coal  
370 mining soils.

371 The controlled conditions of the growth chamber (temperature, light and humidity)  
372 might influence the relative abundances observed for several bacterial groups along the  
373 experiment. This could explain why several bacterial orders (Figures SM4 and SM5) showed  
374 similar trends in all treatments (including the bulk tailings, S). This was the case of  
375 *Myxococcales*, *Burkholderiales* and *Gammaproteobacteria uncl.* from the *Proteobacteria*  
376 phylum, *Acidimicrobiales* and *Actinomycetales* from the *Actinobacteria* phylum and  
377 *Gemmatimonadales* from the *Gemmatimonadetes* phylum.

378 In the initial T1 sampling, the presence of compost showed a stronger effect in soil  
379 microbial composition than the biochar. This was clearly shown in Figure 4, where the main  
380 gradient defined by the CCA1-axis segregated between samples with and without compost. The  
381 initial effect of biochar on the bacterial composition in the SB treatment was restricted to a  
382 lower number of bacterial orders than the compost, resulting also in a lower microbial diversity  
383 index (Figure SM3). The modifications of bacterial composition promoted by biochar are highly  
384 dependent on its type of raw materials and conditions of pyrolysis, which determine the final  
385 effects in soils (Abujabhah et al., 2016). In this case, the conditions of production of the biochar  
386 at high temperature (900 °C) generated a highly stable material with low carbon accessibility for  
387 microorganisms (You et al., 2018). The biochar only caused a significant increase of the relative  
388 abundance of the order *Actinomycetales*, belonging to the phylum *Actinobacteria*. This could be  
389 due to the specific ability of *Actinomycetales* taxa for degrading hard to decompose organic  
390 materials (Bhatti et al., 2017; Tian et al., 2014) and dealing with high concentrations of  
391 inorganic contaminants (Risueño et al., 2020a), which could have provided a competitive  
392 advantage in relation to the rest of bacteria.

393 Initially (at T1), the treatments containing compost showed a bacterial composition  
394 characterized by orders which are related to the degradation of organic matter (Figures 4, SM4  
395 and SM5), such as *Sphingobacteriales*, *Flavobacteriales* and *Cytophagales* from the  
396 *Bacteroidetes* phylum (Fierer et al., 2007), *Xanthomonadales*, *Pseudomonadales*,



397 *Burkholderiales* and *Gammaproteobacteria uncl* from the *Proteobacteria* phylum (Kersters et  
398 al., 2006; Tang et al., 2019) or *Planctomycetales* from the *Planctomycetes* phylum (Wiegand et  
399 al., 2018). However, some of these orders such as *Flavobacteriales*, *Sphingobacteriales*,  
400 *Pseudomonadales*, and *Burkholderiales* showed a decrease of their abundance percentages  
401 throughout the experiment. The reasons of this drop might include a toxic effect of the tailings  
402 edaphic properties (e.g. salinity, metals) and/or a correlation ( $r > 0.5$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) with the  
403 decreasing concentrations of dissolved organic carbon which serves as a source of energy.  
404 Several studies have shown the relevance of the dynamics of soil organic matter as a critical  
405 driver which determines the shifts in microbial composition during the reclamation of mining  
406 soils (Asemaninejad et al., 2021; Zornoza et al., 2015). For instance, most taxa included in the  
407 *Bacteroidetes* phylum are considered copiotrophic and their relative abundances are highly  
408 dependent of the availability of labile carbon (Fierer et al., 2007). In our study, the relative  
409 abundances of the orders belonging to the *Bacteroidetes* phylum, *Flavobacteriales*,  
410 *Sphingobacteriales* and *Cytophagales*, were positively correlated with the decreasing DOC  
411 concentrations ( $r > 0.8$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). In the case of the *Cytophagales* order, the decrease of the  
412 abundance percentages along the time was less sharp, probably because of its less dependence  
413 on labile organic matter and better adaptation to degrade more complex organic compounds  
414 (Kirchman, 2002; Reichenbach, 2006).

415         Several bacterial taxa maintained the initial increase of abundance percentages  
416 promoted by the compost addition, showing certain level of adaptation to the tailings properties  
417 and decreasing DOC concentrations throughout the experiment. This group includes the  
418 *Proteobacteria* orders belonging to the *Gammaproteobacteria* class, *Xanthomonadales*, and  
419 *Gammaproteobacteria uncl.*, which have been observed as representative of the microbiome in  
420 mature edaphic successional stages of reclaimed mine tailings (Colin et al., 2019). Some orders  
421 belonging to *Gammaproteobacteria* class are also known by their lithotrophic nature (Wakelin  
422 et al., 2012) and capacity for adaptation to extreme soil conditions such as low nutrient  
423 concentrations or high salinity, including barren tailing materials (Sun et al., 2018). The high  
424 abundances of these *Gammaproteobacteria* orders can be also supported by their well-known

425 capacity of dealing with high  $\text{SO}_4^{2-}$  soil concentrations (Edwardson and Hollibaugh, 2017;  
426 Shimkets et al., 2006) for what they showed a significant correlation ( $r > 0.6$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). The  
427 *Myxococcales* order belonging to the *Deltaproteobacteria* class showed a stability in its  
428 abundance percentages throughout the experiment. This can be explained by their ability to  
429 break down a high variety of organic compounds including those considered as hard to  
430 decompose (Shimkets et al., 2006) which could result in a lower dependence on labile organic  
431 matter (no significant correlation between abundance percentages and DOC). The  
432 *Planctomycetales* order (*Planctomycetes* phylum) showed higher abundances in the T6 than in  
433 the T1 samples of the treatments containing compost. This may be due to its lower competitive  
434 capacity within nutrient rich media (T1) (Burgess et al., 2020) and its ability to decompose more  
435 complex organic matter compounds (Probandt et al., 2017; Wiegand et al., 2018), as it was  
436 expected to occur by the end of the experiment, at T6.

437         The abundance of the *Proteobacteria* orders, *Rhizobiales* and *Sphingomonadales*, were  
438 unaffected by the amendments. The bacterial taxa belonging to the *Rhizobiales* order play an  
439 important role in the dynamics of N in the soil (e.g.  $\text{N}_2$  fixation) but their activity is strongly  
440 dependent on the presence of plants (Burgess et al., 2020). The *Sphingomonadales* order is also  
441 related to plant rhizospheres and has been previously reported as a plant growth promoting  
442 bacteria in extreme environmental conditions including mine tailings (Risueño et al., 2020b) or  
443 saline soils (Oliveira et al., 2014). That strong dependence on plant rhizospheres of these two  
444 orders may explain the no variation of their abundance percentages during the experiment.

445         A group of bacterial orders was negatively impacted by the addition of compost. These  
446 orders include oligotrophic bacteria whose abundance is favoured in extreme environments but  
447 negatively affected in nutrient rich systems, where fast-growing bacteria show a better  
448 competitive behaviour (Burgess et al., 2020). Similarly to what occurred at our experiment,  
449 Wang et al. (2017) showed a decrease in the relative abundance of *Gp7* when adding organic  
450 fertilizers into an orchard soil, while Burgess et al. (2020) observed a decrease of  
451 *Gemmatimonadales* abundance percentages after adding compost in a metal polluted soil.

452 Risueño et al. (2020a) reported *Acidimicrobiales* as one of the most abundant orders in bulk  
453 tailings areas but it was displaced by other organotrophic bacteria in the presence of vegetation.

#### 454 ***Effects of amendments in fungal composition***

455 Several studies on the reclamation of polluted sites have shown *Ascomycota* and  
456 *Basidiomycota* as the most abundant phyla in these systems (Bastida et al., 2017; Ma et al.,  
457 2013). The phylum *Ascomycota* is known to be the largest fungal group in ecosystems and  
458 includes from saprotrophs, necrotrophic or biotrophic parasites of plants and animals to  
459 endophytes or mutualistic symbionts (Webster and Weber, 2007). This wide range of life  
460 conditions for the taxa of this phylum allows their adaptation to several polluted environments  
461 such as mine impacted areas (Narendrula-Kotha and Nkongolo, 2017; Op De Beeck et al., 2015;  
462 Rosenfeld et al., 2018). On the other hand, the taxa belonging to the *Basidiomycota* phylum are  
463 more abundant in non-polluted areas or associated to vegetation in restored areas (Op De Beeck  
464 et al., 2015), probably because of their more specific lifestyles as ectomycorrhizal fungi or  
465 saprotrophs (Webster and Weber, 2007). In addition, the saprophytic fungal taxa of the  
466 *Basidiomycota* phylum are involved in the decomposition of recalcitrant organic materials  
467 which normally cannot be accessed by those taxa of the *Ascomycota* phylum (Lundell et al.,  
468 2010). Finally, the *Chytridiomycota* phylum was also identified although in lower abundance  
469 percentages (Figure 5C). The taxa from this phylum can also colonize a wide variety of  
470 environments, being considered the order identified in this study, *Spizellomycetales*, of  
471 saprotrophic behaviour (Webster and Weber, 2007).

472 Similar to what occurred with bacteria, the addition of compost showed a stronger effect  
473 on fungal relative abundance than the biochar. This was clearly shown in Figure 6, where the  
474 main gradient defined by the X-axis segregated the samples with and without compost.  
475 However, unlike bacteria, only a few orders showed an increase of the relative abundances in  
476 the treatments containing compost (*Sordariomycetes uncl.*, *Sordariales* and *Microascales*) while  
477 the rest showed a decrease (*Eurotiales*, *Pleosporales*, *Chaetothyriales* and *Telephorales*) or no  
478 clear effect (*Hypocreales*, *Ascomycota uncl.* *Agaricales* and *Spizellomycetales*). Similar to what

479 occurred in our experiment, Siles et al. (2014) reported an increase in the abundance  
480 percentages of *Sordariomycetes* uncl. and *Sordariales* and a decrease of *Eurotiales* and  
481 *Pleosporales* in a pot trial which used olive residues as an amendment. These authors explained  
482 the contrasting behaviour of these fungal orders by their response to specific compounds  
483 contained in the amendment, whether beneficial or toxic. In other fungal orders, such as the case  
484 of *Telephorales* the decrease in the abundance percentages due to compost could be related to a  
485 lower competitive behaviour in relation to other fungal taxa (Courty et al., 2010). This revealed  
486 the strong relationship between fungal groups and the characteristics of the C source, which can  
487 strongly shape fungal composition (Bastida et al., 2015, 2013). In addition, the treatments  
488 containing compost showed significant higher electrical conductivity (Figure 1B), which may  
489 have also a strong effect in selecting those salinity tolerant taxa (Zeng et al., 2020).

490 No significant effects of biochar on abundance percentages was found for any order.  
491 Several authors have reported no effects (Elzobair et al., 2016) or even a depletion of fungal  
492 activity (Warnock et al., 2010; Liao et al., 2016) after applying different types of biochar in  
493 agricultural soils. In spite on these results, other studies have determined substantial positive  
494 effects on the application of biochar on fungal growth (e.g. Abujabhah et al., 2016; Warnock et  
495 al., 2007). These discrepancy of results reveal the importance of the biochar properties (nature,  
496 C:N ratio, temperature during pyrolysis) in the final fungal taxa composition (Elzobair et al.,  
497 2016) along with the necessity of performing controlled comparative experiments to elucidate  
498 the feasibility of the organic amendments in the enhancement of microbiological activity.

## 499 **Conclusions**

500 The results derived from the application of two organic amendments, manure compost  
501 and biochar, and their combination revealed contrasting effects of each type of amendment on  
502 some edaphic parameters and in turn, on microbial composition. While the presence of compost  
503 determined the occurrence of microbial groups with strong dependence on labile carbon,  
504 biochar favoured decomposers specialized in high lignin or other recalcitrant carbon  
505 compounds. The combined treatment biochar-compost may result the best option to support a

506 more diverse microbial population in terms of soil functionality that is able to decompose both  
507 labile and recalcitrant carbon compounds. This may favour the resilience of the system against  
508 environmental stressors. These conditions may allow the development of some microbial groups  
509 which also play an important role on plant establishment. Future research should focus on  
510 evaluating how the microbial community resulted from amended tailings is able to fit within the  
511 rhizospheric microbiome of the plant species employed in the phytomanagement of these  
512 systems.

513

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521

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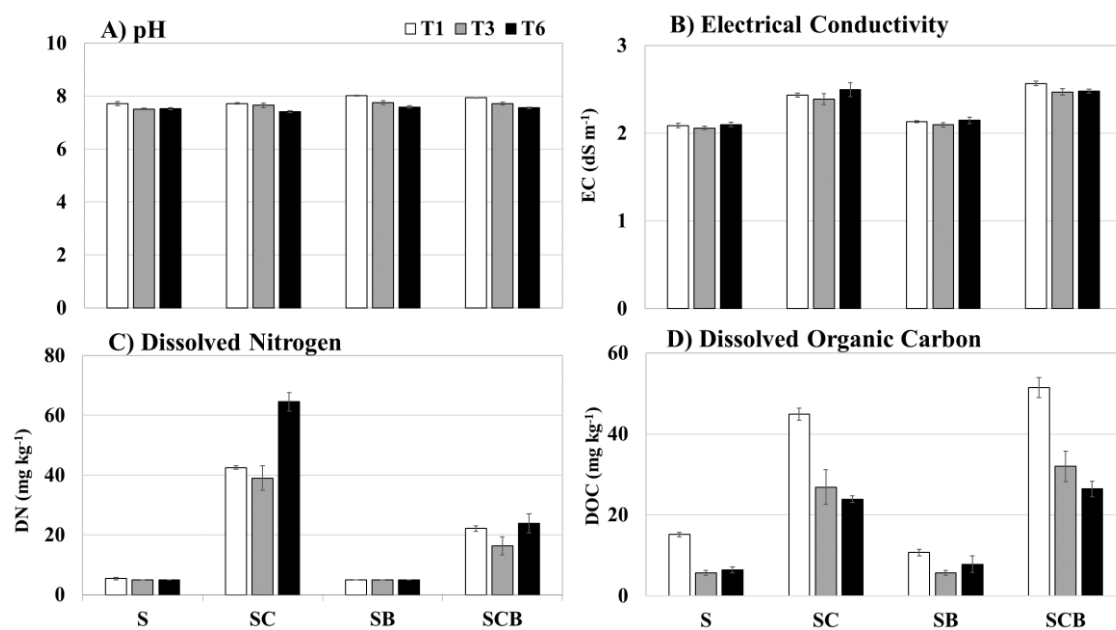
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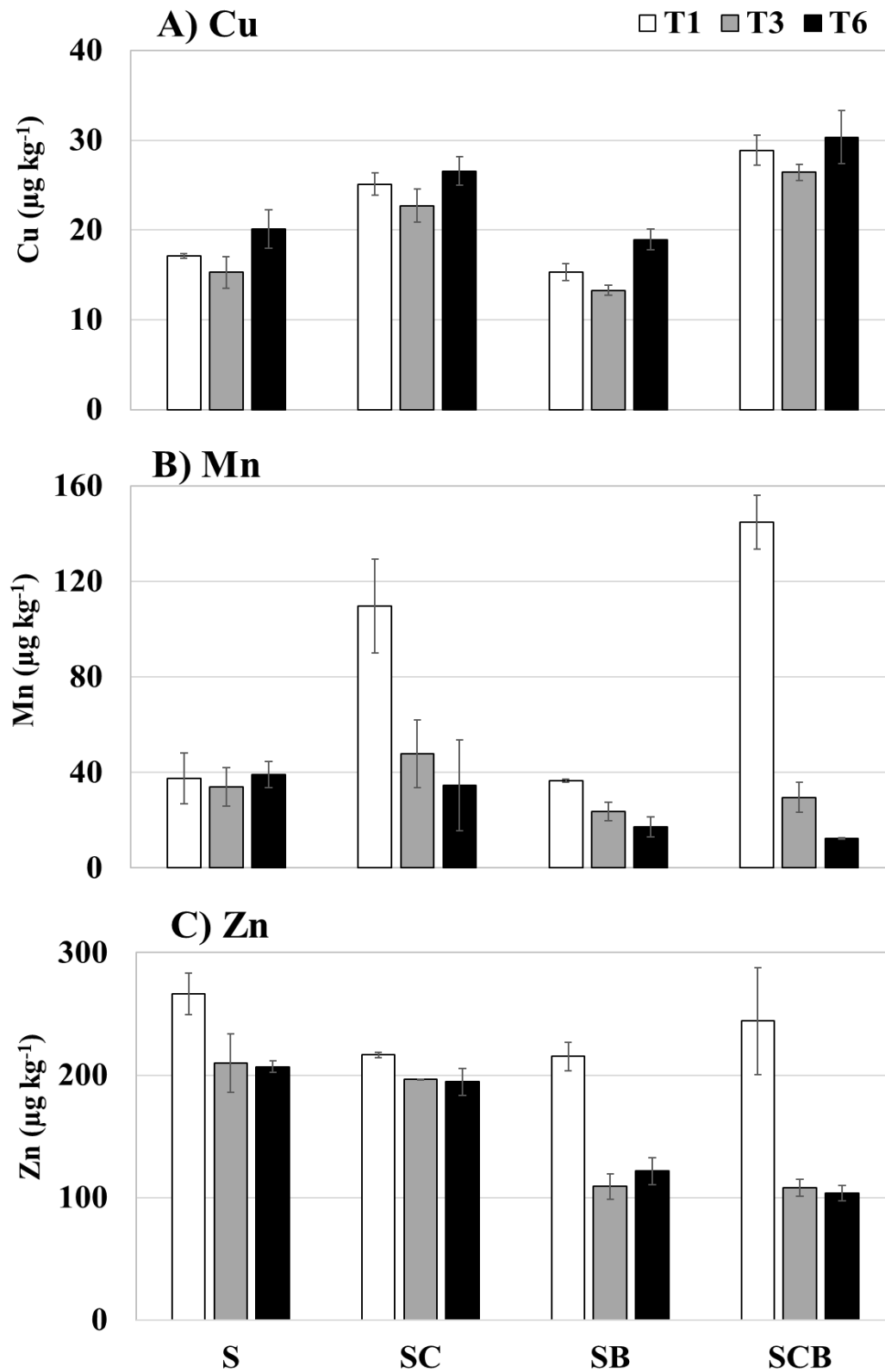
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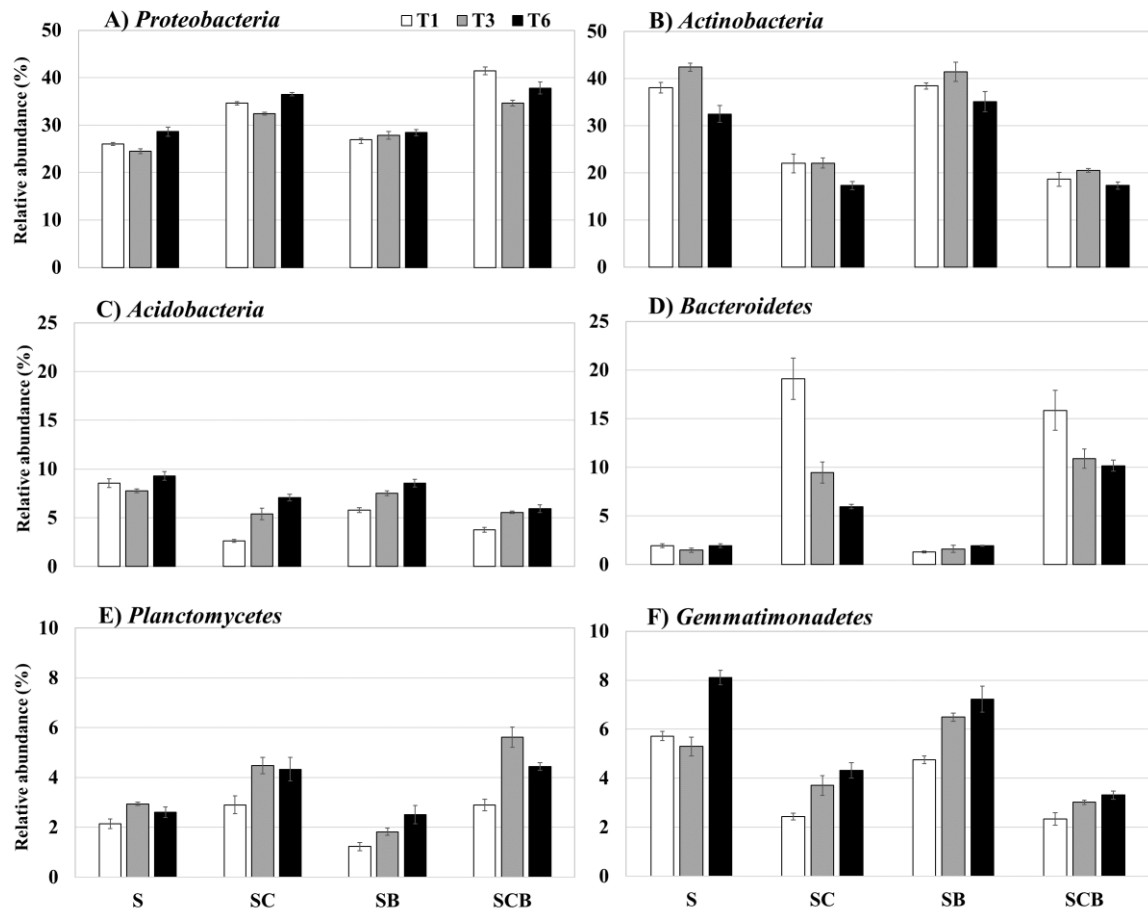
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**Figure 1:** Results of the edaphic parameters analysed in the 1:2.5 soil water extract in each treatment (S, SC, SB and SCB) at each sampling time (T1, T3 and T6): pH, electrical conductivity, dissolved nitrogen and dissolved organic carbon. Bars on columns indicate standard error (n=3). The treatments are: S, bulk tailings; SC, tailings + 4% compost; SB, tailings + 4% biochar; SCB, tailings + 4% compost + 4% biochar.

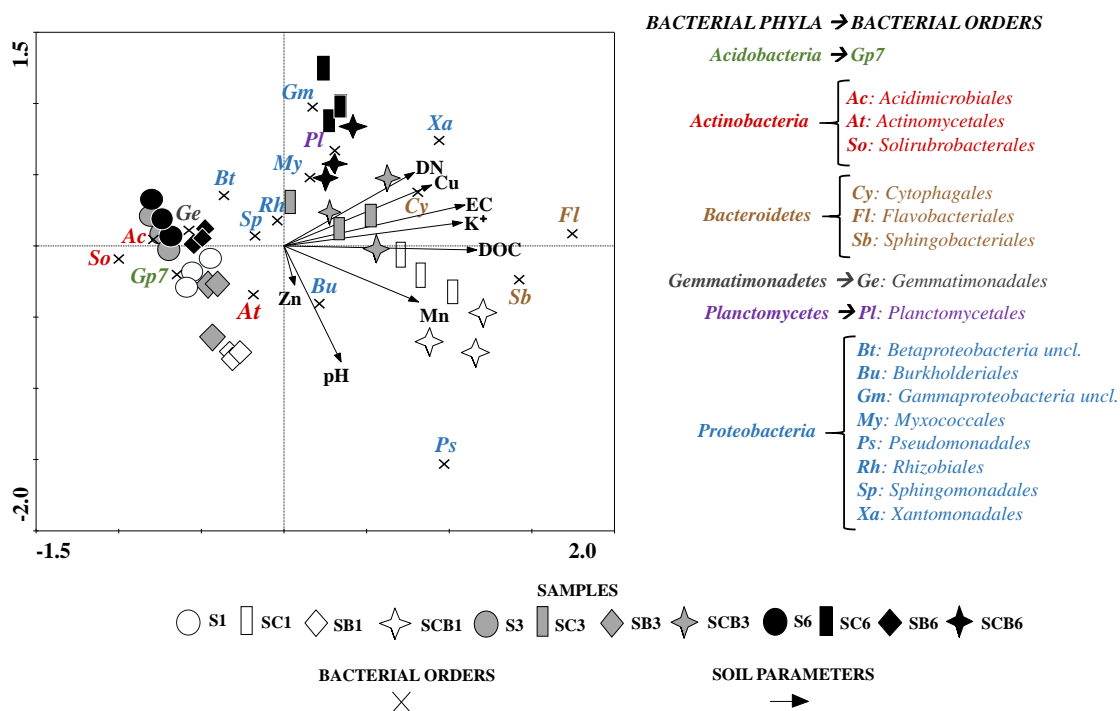


**Figure 2:** Metal concentrations (Cu, Mn and Zn) analysed in the 1:2.5 soil water extract in each treatment (S, SC, SB and SCB) at each sampling time (T1, T3 and T6). Bars on columns indicate standard error ( $n=3$ ). The treatments are: S, bulk tailings; SC, tailings + 4% compost; SB, tailings + 4% biochar; SCB, tailings + 4% compost + 4% biochar.

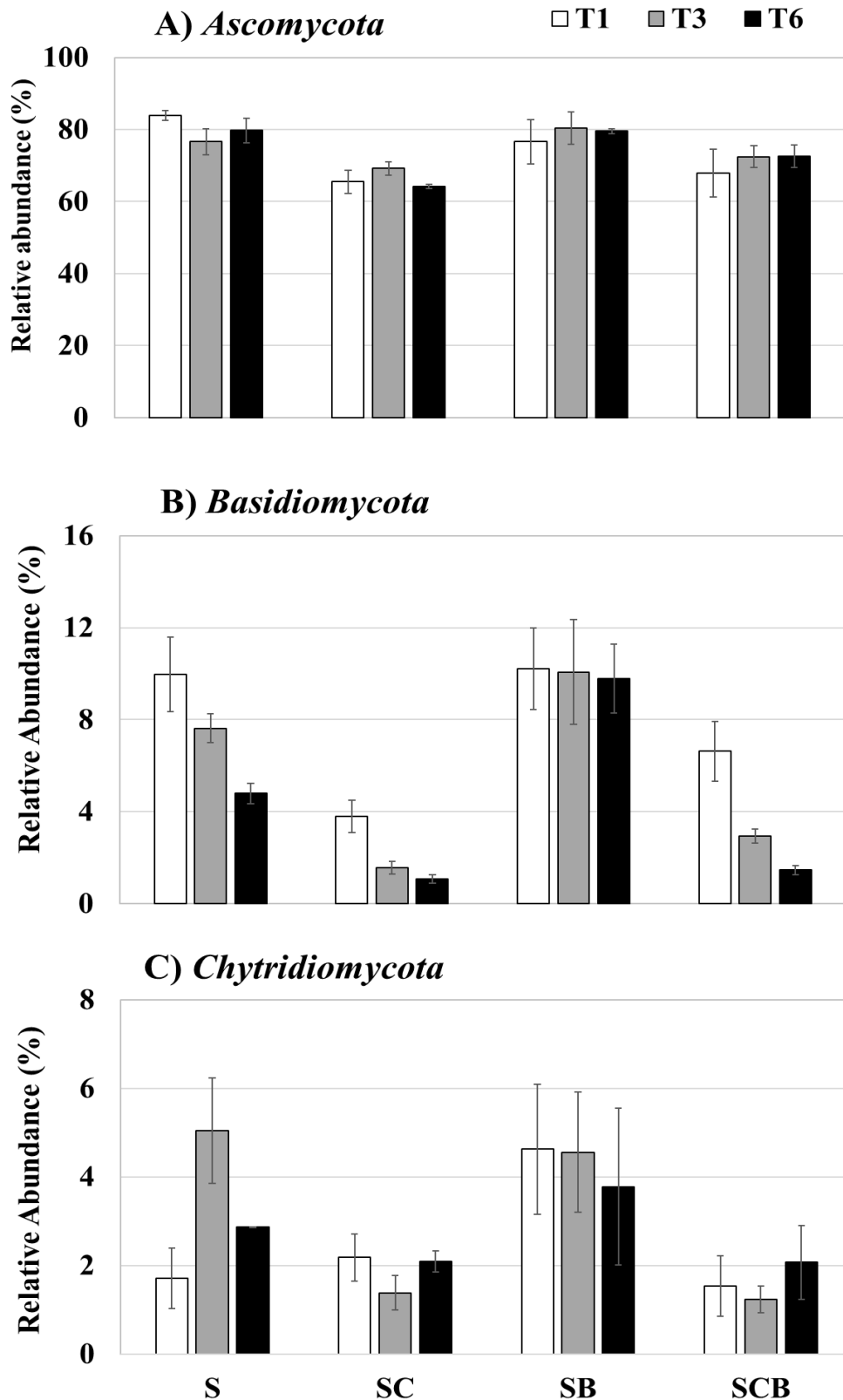


**Figure 3:** Relative abundance percentages of the six main phyla of bacteria (A-F) detected in each treatment (S, SC, SB and SCB) at each sampling time (T1, T3 and T6). Bars on columns indicate standard error (n=3). The treatments are: S, bulk tailings; SC, tailings + 4% compost; SB, tailings + 4% biochar; SCB, tailings + 4% compost + 4% biochar.

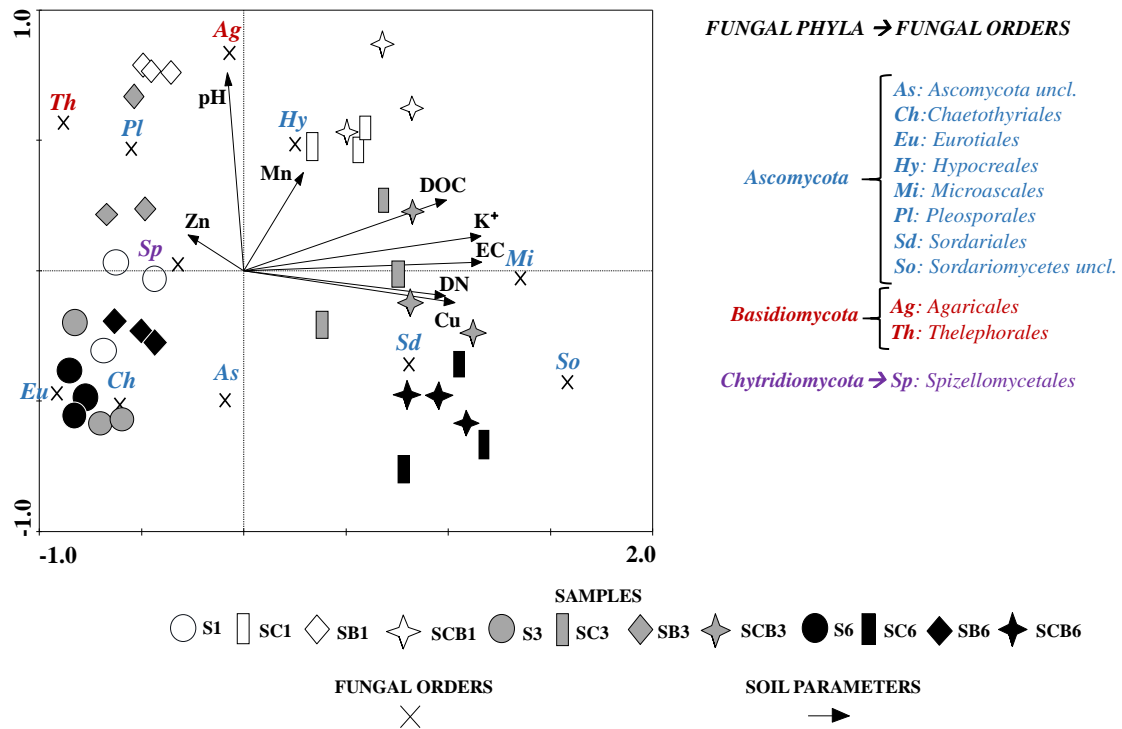




**Figure 4:** Ordination diagram obtained for the Canonical Correspondence Analysis (CCA) of the relative abundance percentages for bacterial orders and selected soil properties in each treatment (S, SC, SB and SCB) at each sampling time (T1, T3 and T6). Cu, Mn, Zn and  $K^+$  represent water extractable concentrations; “DOC” is Dissolved Organic Carbon concentration; “DN” is Dissolved Nitrogen concentration; “EC” and “pH” are Electrical Conductivity and pH, respectively. All soil parameters were analysed in the 1:2.5 soil:water extract ( $n=3$ ). Samples from the T1 are represented in white colour; samples from the T3 are represented in grey colour; samples from the T6 are represented in black colour. The treatments are: S, bulk tailings (circles); SC, tailings + 4% compost (rectangles); SB, tailings + 4% biochar (diamonds); SCB, tailings + 4% compost + 4% biochar (stars).



**Figure 5:** Relative abundance of the three main phyla of fungi (A, B and C) detected in each treatment (S, SC, SB and SCB) at each sampling time (T1, T3 and T6). Bars on columns indicate standard error (n=3). The treatments are: S, bulk tailings; SC, tailings + 4% compost; SB, tailings + 4% biochar; SCB, tailings + 4% compost + 4% biochar.



**Figure 6:** Ordination diagram obtained for the Canonical Correspondence Analysis (CCA) of the relative abundance percentages for fungal orders and selected soil properties in each treatment (S, SC, SB and SCB) at each sampling time (T1, T3 and T6). Cu, Mn, Zn and K<sup>+</sup> represent water extractable concentrations; “DOC” is Dissolved Organic Carbon concentration; “DN” is Dissolved Nitrogen concentration; “EC” and “pH” are Electrical Conductivity and pH, respectively. All soil parameters were analysed in the 1:2.5 soil:water extract (n=3). Samples from the T1 are represented in white colour; samples from the T3 are represented in grey colour; samples from the T6 are represented in black colour. The treatments are: S, bulk tailings (circles); SC, tailings + 4% compost (rectangles); SB, tailings + 4% biochar (diamonds); SCB, tailings + 4% compost + 4% biochar (stars).

Supplementary Material for:

**A critical assessment on the short-term response of microbial relative composition in a mine tailings soil amended with biochar and manure compost**

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This Supplementary Material includes, extended methods protocols, 6 Figures and 4 Tables

## **Extended protocols for DNA extraction, PCR amplification and sequencing**

Microbial (bacteria and fungi) DNA was extracted from 0.25g soil using the PowerSoil DNA Isolation Kit (MOBIO), according to the manufacturer's instructions. The isolated DNA was quantified using a NanoDrop 2000 spectrophotometer. Library preparation and Illumina sequencing were carried out at the IPBLN Genomics Facility (CSIC, Granada, Spain). Amplicon libraries targeting the 16S rRNA gene and ITS2 region were generated by a two-steps PCR strategy. Gene-specific amplification was performed in triplicate with 15ng of soil-extracted DNA in a final volume of 10  $\mu$ l. Gene specific primers, V3V4fw (5' CCTACGGGNGGCWGCAG 3'), V3V4rev (5' GACTACHVGGGTATCTAATCC 3'), ITS3\_KYO2-Fw (5' GATGAAGAACGYAGYRAA 3') and ITS4-Rev (5' TCCTCCGCTTATTGATATGC 3'), were designed with Nextera overhang adapters. Primers were used at a final concentration of 0.2  $\mu$ M. Reaction was performed with 1x KAPA HiFi Hot Start Ready Mix DNA polymerase (Roche Diagnostics, West Sussex, United Kingdom). Cycling conditions were 95°C for 3 min; 25 x (95°C for 30 s, 55°C for 30 s, 72°C for 30 s) and then 72°C for 5 min for 16S amplification and 95°C for 3 min; 27 x (95°C for 30 s, 47°C for 30 s, 72°C for 30 s) and then 72°C for 5 min for ITS2 amplification. Triplicates were pooled together and validated through visualization on a 1.8% (w/v) agarose gel. Amplicons were then purified using NucleoMag® NGS Clean-up and Size Select Kit (Macherey-Nagel, Düren, Germany). A second PCR step attached dual combinatorial indices and Illumina sequencing adapters using Nextera XT v2 index kit. Cycling conditions were 95°C for 3 min, 8 x (95°C for 30 s, 55°C for 30 s, 72°C for 30 s) and then 72°C for 5 min. Amplicon generation was validated again through visualization on a 1.8% (w/v) agarose gel and cleaned with NucleoMag® NGS Clean-up and Size Select Kit (Macherey-Nagel). Concentration was measured on the Qubit® fluorometer (Thermo). Amplicons were pooled in an equimolecular manner and final library mix was run on a Bioanalyzer HS DNA chip to verify quality and size distribution. The library pool was then diluted and denatured as recommended by Illumina MiSeq library preparation guide. The 300x2nt paired-end sequencing was conducted on a MiSeq sequencer.

### ***Bioinformatics and statistical analysis***

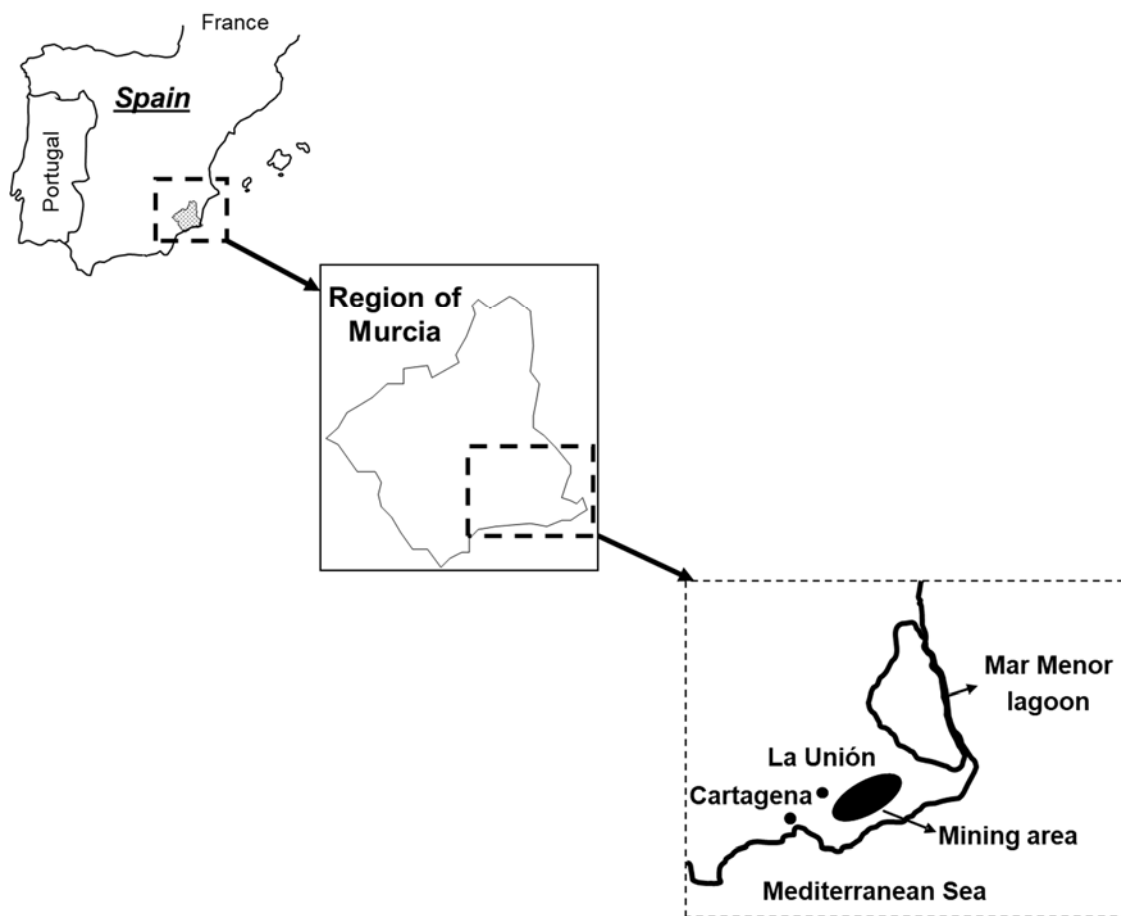
Raw sequence data in FASTQ format (16S and ITS2) were subjected to quality control analysis with FastQC software and prepared for taxonomic classification using the Mothur software (version 1.43.0) (Schloss et al., 2009) and following the standard operating protocol proposed by (Kozich et al., 2013). Overlapping pairs of sequence reads were merged into contigs. In addition, reads with ambiguous bases, duplicated contigs and homopolymers longer than 13 bp were removed. The VSEARCH algorithm (embedded in the Mothur framework) was used to remove chimeras and these were subsequently omitted. The resulting sequences were classified according to the taxonomy into the corresponding Operational Taxonomic Units at 97% similarity, besides using the reference trainset 16\_022016.pds from [https://mothur.org/wiki/RDP\\_reference\\_files](https://mothur.org/wiki/RDP_reference_files) for Bacteria and ITS sequences provided by the UNITE ITS database (version 7.2) at <https://unite.ut.ee/repository.php> for Fungi. Undesired lineages such as Plantae, Animalia, Protista, “unknown” and other were removed. The final sequences were then grouped into taxonomic groups (phylum, order, etc), using the phylotype command in Mothur, which relies upon reference taxonomic outlines to classify sequences to taxonomic bins (Schloss and Westcott, 2011). Relative abundances of different taxonomic levels of each bacterial and fungal group were calculated as the percentage from the total count of reads in each sample using the get.relabund command in Mothur. Taxa relative abundances for each study site were calculated by means of the three replicates of each treatment. Phyla (both bacteria and fungi) that showed >5% abundance in at least one sampling site and orders that showed >3% in at least two sampling sites, were considered.

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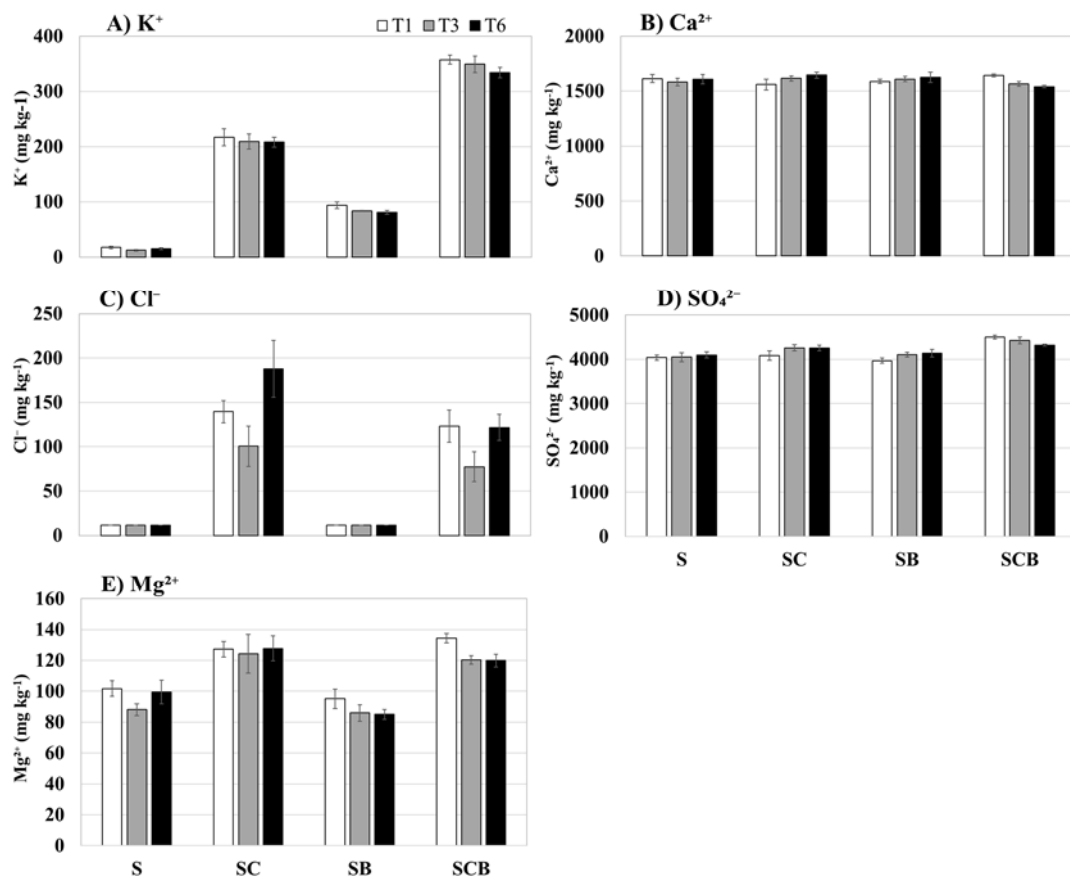
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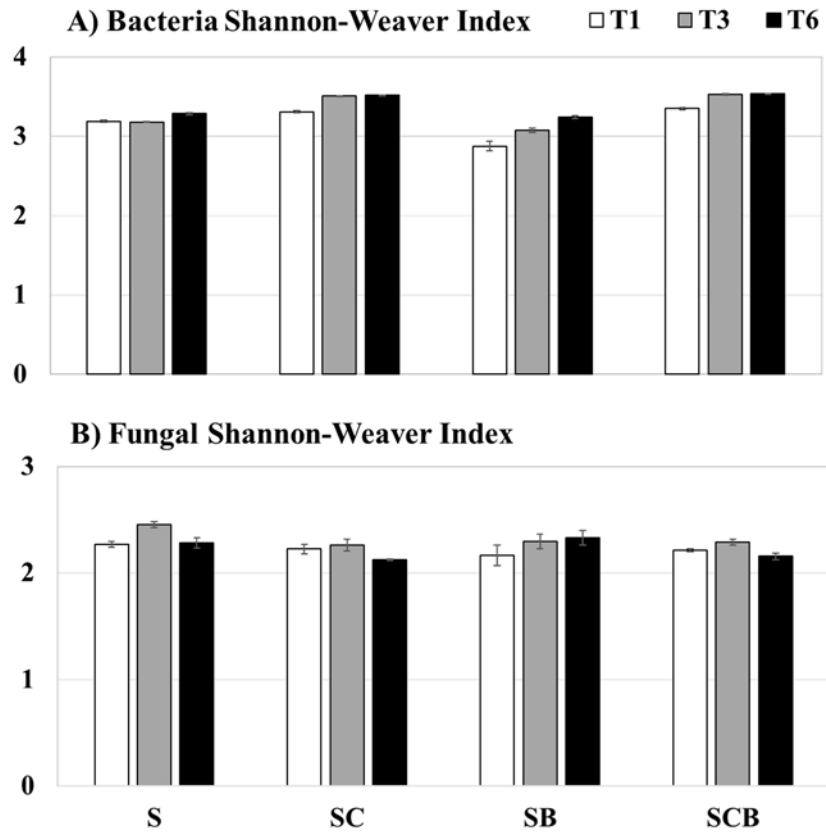


**Figure SM1-** Location of the studied area.

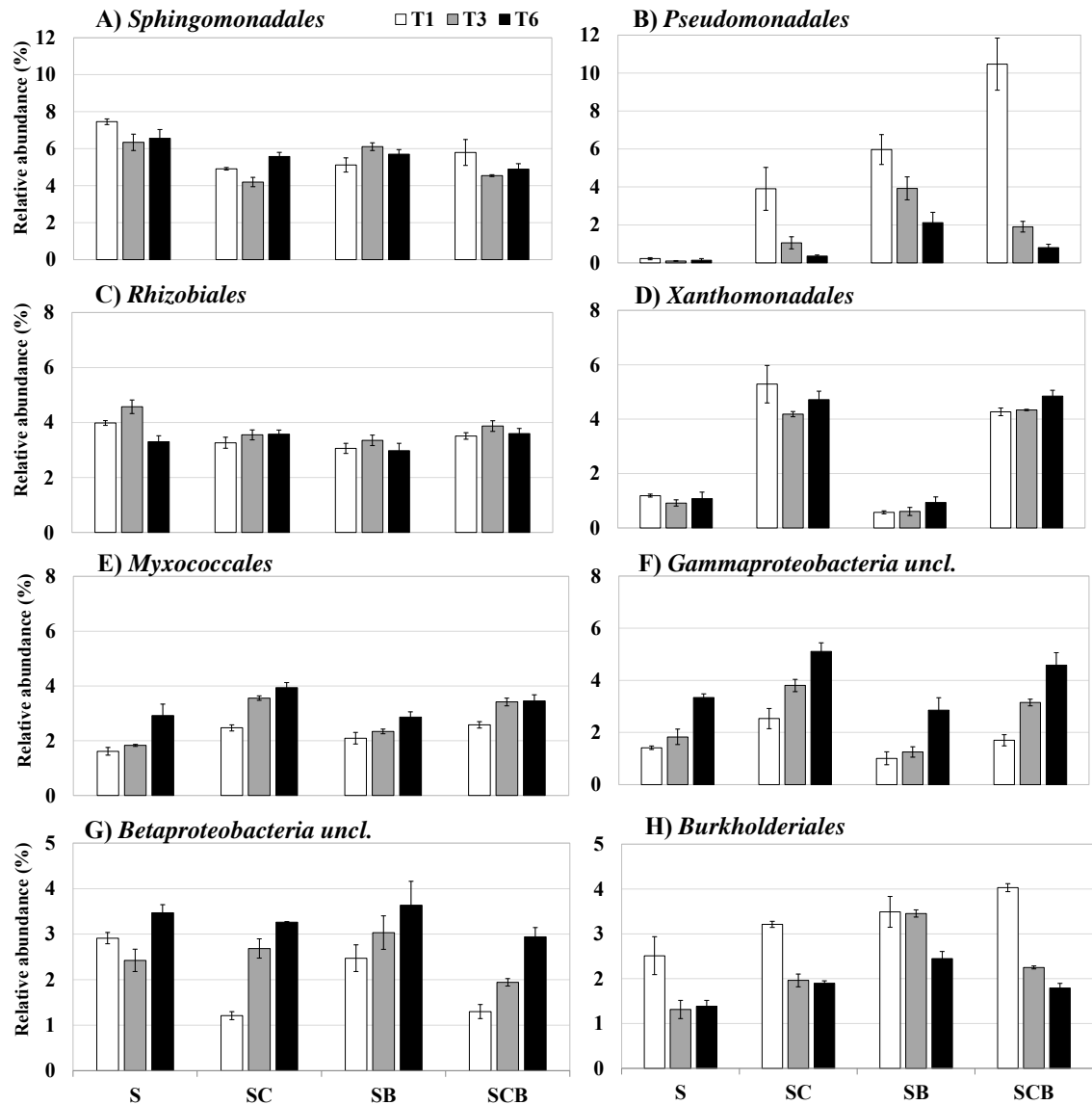




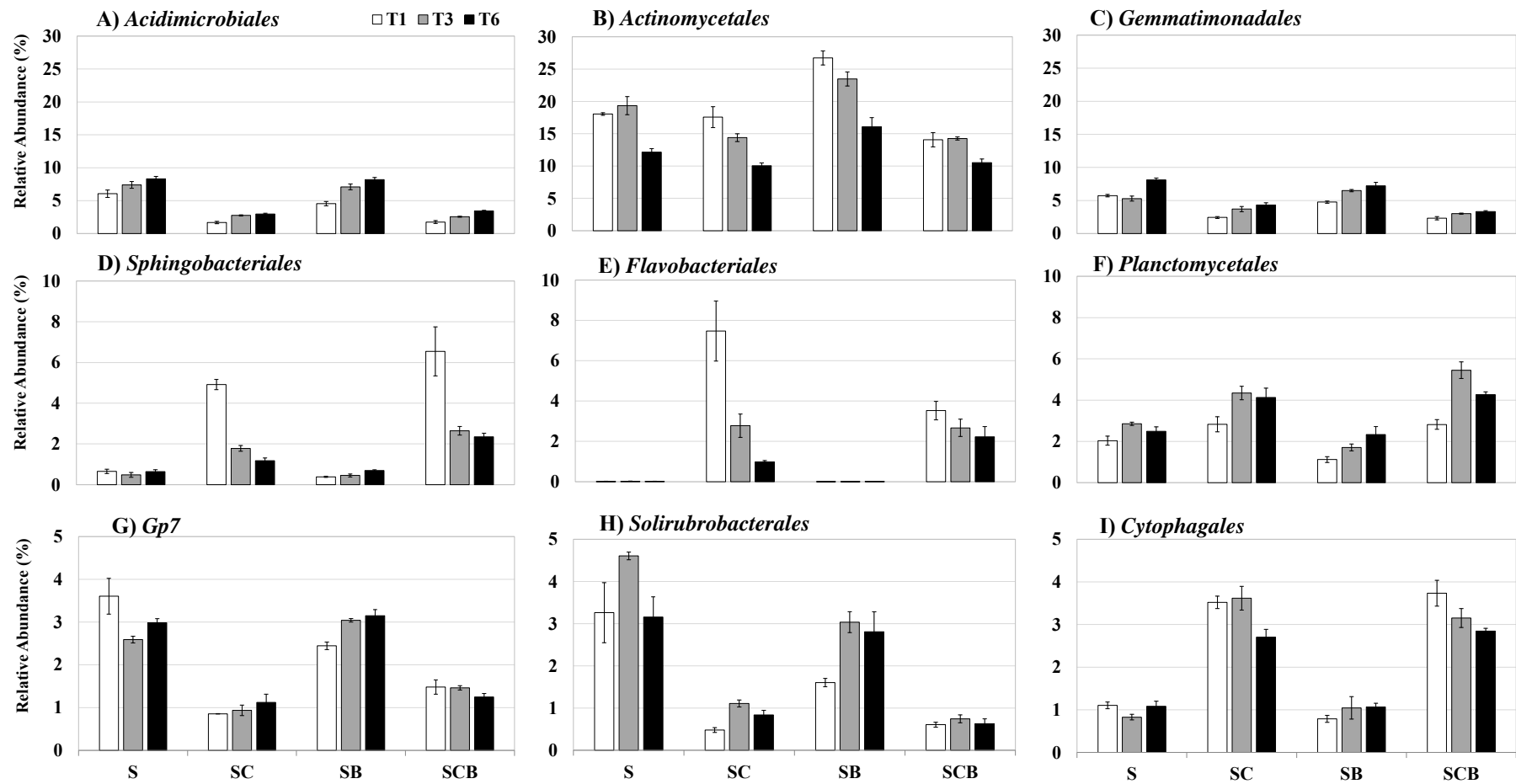
**Figure SM2-** Ion concentrations (K<sup>+</sup>, Ca<sup>2+</sup>, Cl<sup>-</sup>, SO<sub>4</sub><sup>2-</sup> and Mg<sup>2+</sup>) measured of the 1:2.5 soil:water extract at each treatment (S, SC, SB and SCB) and sampling time (T1, T3 and T6). Bars on columns indicate standard error (n=3). The treatments are: S, bulk tailings; SC, tailings + 4% compost; SB, tailings + 4% biochar; SCB, tailings + 4% compost + 4% biochar.



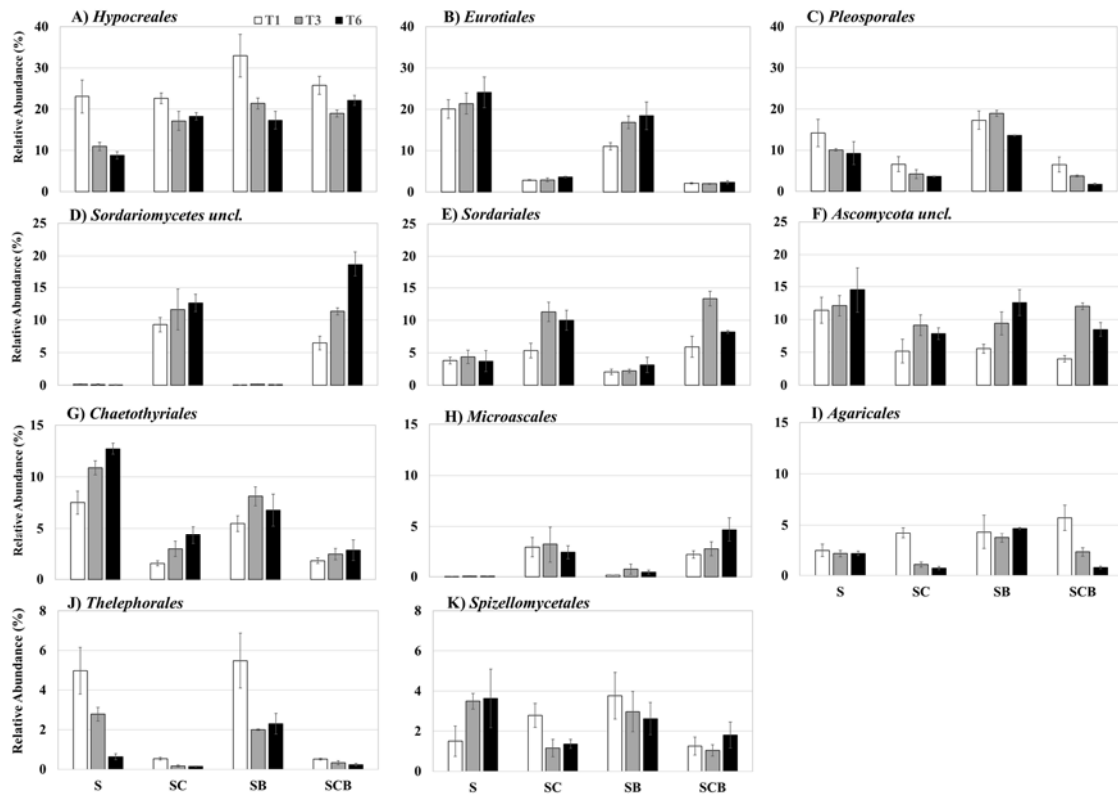
**Figure SM3-** Shannon-Weaver index for bacteria (A) and fungi (B) in each treatment (S, SC, SB and SCB) at each sampling time (T1, T3 and T6). Bars on columns indicate standard error (n=3). The treatments are: S, bulk tailings; SC, tailings + 4% compost; SB, tailings + 4% biochar; SCB, tailings + 4% compost + 4% biochar.



**Figure SM4-** Relative abundance of the main bacterial orders of *Proteobacteria* phylum (A-H) in each treatment (S, SC, SB and SCB) at each sampling time (T1, T3 and T6). Bars on columns indicate standard error (n=3). The treatments are: S, bulk tailings; SC, tailings + 4% compost; SB, tailings + 4% biochar; SCB, tailings + 4% compost + 4% biochar.



**Figure SM5-** Relative abundance of the main bacterial orders of *Actinobacteria* (A,B,H), *Acidobacteria* (G), *Bacteroidetes* (D,E,I), *Planctomycetes* (F) and *Gemmatimonadetes* (C) phyla in each treatment (S, SC, SB and SCB) at each sampling time (T1, T3 and T6). Bars on columns indicate standard error (n=3). The treatments are: S, bulk tailings; SC, tailings + 4% compost; SB, tailings + 4% biochar; SCB, tailings + 4% compost + 4% biochar.



**Figure SM6-** Relative abundance percentages of the main fungal orders of *Ascomycota* (A-H), *Basidiomycota* (I,J) and *Chytridiomycota* (K) phyla in each treatment (S, SC, SB and SCB) at each sampling time (T1, T3 and T6). Bars on columns indicate standard error (n=3). The treatments are: S, bulk tailings; SC, tailings + 4% compost; SB, tailings + 4% biochar; SCB, tailings + 4% compost + 4% biochar.

**Table SM1-** Results of initial characterization of the mine tailings soil and the two amendments used in this study (compost and biochar). pH, EC, DOC, DN and ions were determined in the 1:2.5 soil:water extract. Water extractable ions concentrations were determined by using an Ion Chromatographer (Metrohm), DOC and DN by using a TOC-automatic analyser (TOC-VCSH Shimadzu) and TOC and TN were determined in solid samples by a CHN 628 Leco analyser. Total metal(loid) concentrations were determined by X-ray fluorescence (Bruker S4 Pioneer). Data are average  $\pm$  standard error of 3 pseudo-replicates.

Soil parameters	Units	Mine Tailings	Compost	Biochar	
<b>pH</b>	-	7.38 $\pm$ <0.1	8.17 $\pm$ <0.1	9.90 $\pm$ <0.1	
<b>Electrical Conductivity (EC)</b>	dS m <sup>-1</sup>	2.07 $\pm$ <0.1	9.75 $\pm$ 0.11	2.65 $\pm$ <0.1	
<b>Total Organic Carbon (TOC)</b>	%	0.45 $\pm$ 0.01	25.80 $\pm$ 0.20	82.90 $\pm$ 0.04	
<b>Disolved Organic Carbon (DOC)</b>	mg kg <sup>-1</sup>	10.8 $\pm$ 0.5	4490 $\pm$ 153	790 $\pm$ 55	
<b>Total Nitrogen (TN)</b>	%	0.24	0.01	2.50 $\pm$ 0.01	
<b>Dissolved Nitrogen (DN)</b>	mg kg <sup>-1</sup>	<2.5	1244 $\pm$ 28	8.7 $\pm$ 0.2	
<b>Ions water extract</b>					
	Cl <sup>-</sup>	mg kg <sup>-1</sup>	14 $\pm$ 1	4537 $\pm$ 250	130 $\pm$ 10
	SO <sub>4</sub> <sup>2-</sup>		4130 $\pm$ 40	3711 $\pm$ 194	110 $\pm$ 6
	Ca <sup>2+</sup>		1613 $\pm$ 11	387 $\pm$ 38	190 $\pm$ 26
	K <sup>+</sup>		15 $\pm$ 2	6011 $\pm$ 169	4720 $\pm$ 270
	Mg <sup>2+</sup>		87 $\pm$ 5	175 $\pm$ 21	70 $\pm$ 17
	Na <sup>+</sup>		10 $\pm$ <1	1889 $\pm$ 50	230 $\pm$ 14
<b>Total elemental concentrations</b>					
	Ca	%	7.246 $\pm$ 0.132	22.538 $\pm$ 0.138	7.077 $\pm$ 0.074
	K		0.604 $\pm$ 0.011	4.360 $\pm$ 0.035	1.871 $\pm$ 0.018
	Mg		1.283 $\pm$ 0.043	1.333 $\pm$ 0.013	0.533 $\pm$ 0.003
	Na		0.102 $\pm$ 0.015	0.689 $\pm$ 0.013	0.071 $\pm$ 0.003
	P		0.037 $\pm$ 0.001	2.428 $\pm$ 0.015	0.143 $\pm$ <0.001
<b>Total metal(loid) concentrations</b>					
	Cu	mg kg <sup>-1</sup>	163 $\pm$ 6	331 $\pm$ 5	67 $\pm$ 1
	Mn		11973 $\pm$ 202	1295 $\pm$ 14	960 $\pm$ 13
	Pb		10041 $\pm$ 386	77 $\pm$ 6	<10
	Zn		14913 $\pm$ 409	1255 $\pm$ 16	100 $\pm$ 1

**Table SM2-** Elemental composition of the four treatments tested in the experiment. Total concentrations were determined by X-ray fluorescence (Bruker S4 Pioneer). Data are average  $\pm$  standard error of 3 repetitions. The treatments are: S, bulk tailings; SC, tailings + 4% compost; SB, tailings + 4% biochar; SCB, tailings + 4% compost + 4% biochar.

Parameter	Units		Treatment			
			S	SC	SB	SCB
<b>Total elemental concentrations</b>	Ca	%	7.246 $\pm$ 0.132	7.652 $\pm$ 0.075	6.822 $\pm$ 0.093	7.028 $\pm$ 0.095
	K		0.604 $\pm$ 0.011	0.615 $\pm$ 0.007	0.576 $\pm$ 0.008	0.628 $\pm$ 0.009
	Mg		1.283 $\pm$ 0.043	1.276 $\pm$ 0.031	1.359 $\pm$ 0.037	1.085 $\pm$ 0.009
	Na		0.102 $\pm$ 0.015	0.135 $\pm$ 0.011	0.112 $\pm$ 0.012	0.091 $\pm$ 0.005
	P		0.037 $\pm$ 0.001	0.119 $\pm$ 0.002	0.042 $\pm$ 0.001	0.139 $\pm$ 0.002
<b>Total metal(loid) concentrations</b>	Cu	mg kg <sup>-1</sup>	163 $\pm$ 6	164 $\pm$ 7	130 $\pm$ 5	145 $\pm$ 6
	Mn		11973 $\pm$ 202	11375 $\pm$ 102	10280 $\pm$ 121	10530 $\pm$ 145
	Pb		10041 $\pm$ 386	8998 $\pm$ 248	7861 $\pm$ 265	8229 $\pm$ 209
	Zn		14913 $\pm$ 409	13653 $\pm$ 269	11980 $\pm$ 296	12078 $\pm$ 271

**Table SM3-** Data of the Canonical Correspondence Analysis (CCA) including eigenvalues of the two first axis and cumulative percentage of variance of bacteria-soil and fungal-soil data interaction. The significance of the first canonical axis (Monte-Carlo test, p-value) is also provided.

Parameter evaluated	Axis	Eigenvalue	% cumulative variance	Significance
Bacterial orders	I	0.141	63.1	0.002
	II	0.060	89.7	
Fungal orders	I	0.261	78.3	0.002
	II	0.053	94.1	



**Table SM4-** Weighted correlation matrix for the first two species axes and environmental variables for bacterial and fungal orders.

<b>Soil parameters</b>	<b>Bacterial orders</b>		<b>Fungal orders</b>		
	<b>Species Ax1</b>	<b>Species Ax2</b>	<b>Species Ax1</b>	<b>Species Ax2</b>	
<b>pH</b>	0.28	-0.76	-0.06	0.78	
<b>Electrical Conductivity (EC)</b>	0.88	0.27	0.90	0.03	
<b>Dissolved Organic Carbon (DOC)</b>	0.94	-0.03	0.77	0.28	
<b>Dissolved Nitrogen (DN)</b>	0.64	0.48	0.76	-0.10	
<b>Water extractable K<sup>+</sup></b>	0.87	0.15	0.90	0.14	
<b>Water extractable metals</b>	<b>Cu</b>	0.72	0.40	0.80	-0.13
	<b>Mn</b>	0.66	-0.37	0.23	0.39
	<b>Zn</b>	0.05	-0.26	-0.21	0.14

**Credit Author Statement**

**Yolanda Risueño:** Methodology, Investigation, Visualization, Writing-Original Draft, Writing-Review and Editing

**César Petri:** Methodology, Writing-Original Draft, Writing- Review and Editing, Funding acquisition

**Héctor M. Conesa:** Conceptualization, Investigation, Writing-Original Draft, Writing- Review and Editing, Project administration, Funding acquisition

**Declaration of interests**

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

The authors declare the following financial interests/personal relationships which may be considered as potential competing interests: