Reviewer's report

**Title:** Comparison of photographic and visual assessment of occlusal caries with histology as the reference standard

**Version:** 4  **Date:** 6 February 2012

**Reviewer:** Fausto Mendes

**Reviewer's report:**

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General comments:
Despite the answers provided by the authors, I still think that the great problem of the report is concerned the use of dental photographs in epidemiological surveys. In the present study, my understanding is that the teeth were individually photographed and only the occlusal surfaces were assessed. The examiners should clarify how this procedure could be carried out during an epidemiological survey. How many images should be performed for a full mouth examination? Would the occlusal view of the teeth be enough to diagnose all tooth surfaces? How long would the photographers take to record a full mouth? The authors want to extrapolate a situation evaluated in an in vitro setting to a more complicate situation (epidemiological survey).

Therefore, the present study is valid since it showed a good performance using photographic images instead of direct clinical examination, but the authors should be much careful in extrapolating the results obtained for the real life situation.

Minor comments:

Results:

The authors should indicate in the table 3 with asterisks the statistically significant differences between the examinations performed with visual and photographic method.

**Level of interest:** An article of limited interest

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

The reviewer does not have any conflict of interests.