



SDI Review Form 1.6

Journal Name:	<u>British Journal of Applied Science & Technology</u>
Manuscript Number:	2014_BJAST_12906
Title of the Manuscript:	IMPACTS OF LAND USE CHANGES ON BIODIVERSITY IN THE MOUNT CAMEROON REGION
Type of the Article	

General guideline for Peer Review process:

This journal's peer review policy states that **NO** manuscript should be rejected only on the basis of '**lack of Novelty**', provided the manuscript is scientifically robust and technically sound.

To know the complete guideline for Peer Review process, reviewers are requested to visit this link:

(<http://www.sciencedomain.org/page.php?id=sdi-general-editorial-policy#Peer-Review-Guideline>)



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PART 1: Review Comments

	Reviewer's comment	Author's comments (if agreed with reviewer, correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here)
Compulsory REVISION comments	The introduction section is difficult to follow and succumbs to poor organization. For example, the paragraphs are not tightly linked with any thesis statement and there is a general lack of topic sentences. Lines 127-128, I am not familiar with the politics of land use and land cover change in the region. In remote sensing, we are often representing continuous land covers in discrete, thematic classes. A problem that arises in this instance is whether marginal land covers are obscured by the choice of thematic resolution by the researcher. See: Frewer, T. and Chan, S. 2014. "GIS and the 'Usual Suspects'-[Mis] understanding Land Use Change in Cambodia." <i>Human Ecology</i> 42(2):267-281. For example, in section 4.3, the authors discuss modification of the understorey as a significant factor of biodiversity loss, but the Landsat data and the thematic resolution did not allow for the remote sensing of this activity. Please defend why you chose the five classes. Line 130, were the sampled farms stratified randomly by elevation or vegetation zones described earlier? Line 217-218, the accuracy assessment with the ground truth data should be reported in an error matrix table with user's and producer's accuracies reported for each class and overall accuracy (77.5%). Line 303, please discuss in more detail the possible sources of error and represent those errors as producer's and user's	This correction has been addressed in lines 1121 – 126 as suggested by another reviewer They were sampled based on both factors, see line 128 and 129 The results have been arranged as proposed by another reviewer, see lines 42 - 48



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	accuracies. Please discuss what types of crops and agriculture is undertaken in the region. Did the authors obtain approval by a supervisory ethics research board or similar body overseeing research on human subjects?	The types of crops and agriculture systems are in lines 42 – 48 In Cameroon the law requires that we seek informed consent for questionnaires and this was done. Ethical clearance is only needed when collecting samples from humans, not information
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Minor REVISION comments	A careful proofreading of the manuscript is required. For example, line 39 should read "...the driving forces..." Also, check lines 45, 67, 87, 124, 129 Be consistent with journal standards for reporting numbers. There are many instances where the authors switch between 10000, 10,000 and 10.000 formats. When citing the literature, the authors should use the following convention: "According to Authors and colleagues (#), ..." Please correct at lines 45, 46, 55, 63, 67, 70, 95, 98, 114, 128 and many others. Line 59, it is more appropriate to say "humanity" than "Man". Line 57, describe which tropical forest #12 was conducted in. Line 87, metres above sea level (m.a.s.l.) is the preferred indication of elevation. Line 89-90, is this mean annual temperature or a specific month? Line 98-99, should read, "...determined by elevation..." and other places. Replace "altitude" with "elevation". Line 113 should read, "...was derived from..." Line 121 should read, "...classified maps derived from..." Change "gotten" to "derived" in many other places. Line 120; please report the error of the GPS device in metres. Were the points randomly sampled?	The correction has been done, see line 39. All corrections and formatting has been done The corrections have been done and the figures consistent All the citations have been corrected as demanded The word has been replaced, see line 62 This has been included, see line 61 The correction has been effected, see line 90 This has been specified, see line 93 The replacement has been done throughout the manuscript This correction has been done and the section modified as proposed by another reviewer, see lines 121 – 126 We could not obtain the error of the device and the points were sampled randomly based on different land uses
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	Please be consistent with significant figures. For percentages, 10.0% is adequate. For basal area, round to the nearest tenth. For land cover changes, the resolution of the sensor is approximately 0.1 ha, so figures below one-tenth should not be reported. Line 368, “man-made” should read “anthropogenic”. Capitalize “Landsat” throughout. Colours in Table 1 should be incorporated into the appropriate figures and not listed in a table. Was “savannah” classified? Figure 2 does not add anything to the manuscript. Plate 1 should read “...images of Landsat scenes...” A5 should read “N° plots species present”.	All the corrections based on significant figures have been done in the manuscript This has been done, see line 319 This has been done throughout the manuscript The table has been removed. We did not lay much emphasis on Savannah vegetation since our prime interest was on forest cover, settlement and farm lands This figure has been removed This has been corrected, since plate 1
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<u>Optional/General</u> comments	Overall, the research is very interesting. However, a lack of a proofreading and clear organization detracts from the results. Significant copy editing is required before this research can be considered for publication. The message of the manuscript is particularly obscured in the discussion and conclusion sections. The abstract is well-written and the interpretation of the research should really highlight the main findings described in the abstract. For example, use of the forests by residents for fuel wood collection receives only secondary attention in the manuscript, but is featured as a main point in the conclusion of the abstract. Similarly, illegal logging is never discussed in the text. Generally, I would recommend that the authors focus more on land use changes as a primary factor of biodiversity loss (which was quantified by the research) rather than increasing population (which was not quantified by the research). Almost every sentence in the discussion/conclusions should somehow link back to this thesis. The farm survey and remote sensing methods are the only techniques that I am qualified to comment on. The methods for both were appropriate and scientifically sound. The manuscript cites quite a bit of “grey literature” that is not peer-reviewed. Most other references are to obscure journals. Why not cite more of the relevant peer-reviewed literature? ethical issues:- Research on human subjects.	The manuscript has been proof read and all corrections proposed considered The discussion section has been improved, see lines 233 – 330 Fuel wood collection and illegal logging has been included, see lines 196 – 198 and 203 – 211 respectively The topic has been changed to address this and the link considered, see new topic, line 1 This has been considered and adjusted In Cameroon the law requires that we seek informed consent for questionnaires and this was done. Ethical clearance is only needed when collecting samples from humans, not information
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