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Paper: “Diachronic Analysis of Land-Use and Forest-Cover Changes in the Irobo Classified Forest (Sikensi, Côte d’Ivoire)”

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Corresponding Author: Kadjo Raphaël Kobenan

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Peer review:

Reviewer 1: Mohamed Ait Ichou
Mohammed V University, Rabat, Morocco

Reviewer 2: Kevin Tiendrebeogo
Université Nazi Boni, Bobo-Dioulasso, Burkina Faso

Reviewer 3: Kpedenou Koffi Djagnikpo
Université de Lomé, Togo

Reviewer A:

Recommendation: Revisions Required

The TITLE is clear and it is adequate to the content of the article.

The title is clear, concise, and appropriate to the content of the manuscript. It accurately reflects the main focus of the study, namely the diachronic analysis of land-use and forest-cover changes in the Irobo Classified Forest in Sikensi, Côte d'Ivoire. No modification is required.

The ABSTRACT clearly presents objectives, methods, results, and conclusions.

The abstract clearly presents the main objectives, methods, key results, and conclusions of the study. It provides sufficient quantitative information on the changes in forest cover and agricultural land and briefly describes the remote sensing and GIS methods used. The main findings and their implications for forest monitoring and conservation are also clearly stated. No major modification is required, although minor language editing could further improve its readability.

There are a few grammatical errors and spelling mistakes in this article.

Yes. There are a few minor grammatical and spelling errors throughout the manuscript. However, these errors do not affect the overall understanding of the study. A careful proofreading and minor English-language editing are recommended before publication.

The study METHODS are explained clearly.

Yes. The methods are generally described clearly and provide sufficient information to understand the main steps of the study, including data acquisition, image preprocessing, sampling, supervised classification, validation, land-use change analysis, and forest-cover projection to 2050. However, a few methodological details could be clarified, particularly regarding the sampling procedure and the assumptions used for the 2050 projection. These are minor points that can be addressed during revision.

The results are clear and do not contain errors.

Yes. The results are generally clear, well organized, and consistent with the study objectives. The main changes in forest cover and cropland/fallow land are presented with clear quantitative figures and are supported by tables, maps, and field observations. The projected forest-cover results for 2050 are also clearly presented and appropriately described as a trend-based scenario rather than a certain prediction. Only minor clarifications may be useful regarding some methodological assumptions underlying the projected results.

The CONCLUSION or summary is accurate and supported by the content.

Yes. The conclusion is accurate and well supported by the results and discussion. It appropriately summarizes the main findings regarding the decline in forest cover, the expansion of cropland and fallow land, and the increasing spatial fragmentation of the remaining forest. The conclusion also presents the 2050 projection consistently with the results and appropriately emphasizes that it represents a trend-based scenario rather than a certain prediction. The recommendations concerning forest monitoring, conservation, and restoration are relevant and supported by the findings. Only minor language editing may be needed.

The list of REFERENCES is comprehensive and appropriate.

Yes. The reference list is comprehensive and appropriate for the scope of the study. It includes relevant literature on forest-cover change, deforestation, land-use dynamics, remote sensing, GIS, and the environmental context of Côte d'Ivoire. The references also include studies specifically related to the Irobo Classified Forest and comparable classified forests in Côte d'Ivoire and other tropical regions. A minor check of the formatting and consistency of the references according to the journal's guidelines is recommended.

Please rate the TITLE of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

5

Please rate the ABSTRACT of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

5

Please rate the LANGUAGE of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

4

Please rate the METHODS of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

4

Please rate the RESULTS of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

4

Please rate the CONCLUSION of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

5

Please rate the REFERENCES of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

4

Overall Recommendation!!!

Accepted, minor revision needed

Comments and Suggestions to the Author(s):

The manuscript addresses an important and relevant issue concerning the diachronic dynamics of land use and forest-cover change in the Irobo Classified Forest. The study is clearly structured, and the combination of Landsat imagery, remote sensing, GIS, Google Earth Engine, supervised classification, and field observations provides a suitable methodological framework for addressing the research objectives. The results are clearly presented and provide useful evidence of the substantial decline in forest cover and the expansion of agricultural areas between 1988 and 2026. The trend-based projection to 2050 also provides an interesting prospective perspective.

The manuscript is generally well written and the conclusions are consistent with the results. I

recommend publication after minor revisions. In particular, the authors are encouraged to: (1) clarify a few details concerning the sampling and validation procedures; (2) provide slightly more information on the parameters and assumptions used in the CART classification and the 2050 projection; (3) briefly justify the equal weighting used in the vulnerability index; (4) maintain cautious wording when referring to forest fragmentation, since no specific landscape fragmentation indices were calculated; and (5) conduct a final proofreading of the English language and check the formatting and consistency of the references according to the journal guidelines.

These are minor points and do not affect the overall quality or relevance of the study. Addressing them would improve the methodological transparency, readability, and reproducibility of the manuscript. Overall, I consider the manuscript suitable for publication after minor revision.

Reviewer C:
Recommendation: Accept Submission

The TITLE is clear and it is adequate to the content of the article.

"The title mentions the temporal dimension of the study, and the location is clearly specified. However, it does not highlight the type of analysis — "Land use"

The ABSTRACT clearly presents objectives, methods, results, and conclusions.

The Objectives, Methods, Results, and Conclusions structure is generally well respected, and the abstract is informative. However, the objective would benefit from being stated more explicitly and distinguished from the context, and the conclusion could be strengthened to go beyond a simple recommendation and assert the study's scientific contribution.

There are a few grammatical errors and spelling mistakes in this article.

The manuscript mainly contains typographical errors resulting from a mix of French and English conventions. A typographical clean-up is needed before publication to ensure the linguistic and numerical consistency of the document.

Inconsistent numerical separators: a mix of commas and decimal points, and the absence of a thousands separator in the text;
Residual tab indentation visible at the beginning of paragraphs (section 4.3 and Conclusion);
etc.

The study METHODS are explained clearly.

The method is detailed and reproducible.

The equations mentioned are images extracted by the tool. They will need to be generated to make them more visible in the text

The results are clear and do not contain errors.

The results are generally clear and well structured.

The "Water bodies" class, at 0.00 ha from 1988 to 2026, suggests that this class may be unnecessary in the nomenclature. A more in-depth discussion of the relevance of this class would be useful.

The CONCLUSION or summary is accurate and supported by the content.

The conclusion effectively synthesizes the objectives stated in the introduction. However, it remains closer to a general recommendation than to a more in-depth scientific perspective (methodological limitations, scope of the trend-based model, future research directions)

The list of REFERENCES is comprehensive and appropriate.

Bibliography relevant in substance, but requiring formal corrections (one uncited reference, three improperly formatted citations)

Please rate the TITLE of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

3

Please rate the ABSTRACT of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

4

Please rate the LANGUAGE of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

3

Please rate the METHODS of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

4

Please rate the RESULTS of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

4

Please rate the CONCLUSION of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

3

Please rate the REFERENCES of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

4

Overall Recommendation!!!

Accepted, minor revision needed

Comments and Suggestions to the Author(s):
