

Interactive comment on “Zero net livelihood degradation – the quest for a multidimensional protocol to combat desertification” by M. H. Easdale

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SOIL Topical Editor Dear Dr. Fuensanta García-Orenes

I have now had the opportunity to consider the referees' comments on my manuscript (2015-71) entitled 'Zero Net Livelihood Degradation – The quest for a multidimensional protocol to combat desertification'. In general, I found the comments very useful for improving the manuscript. My specific responses to the comments and suggestions raised by the reviewers are developed below.

I hope you find this new version suitable for publication.

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Yours sincerely,

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Rev#1

Dear Topical editor, I found the paper of interest as is bringing a new idea to the arena of the science. In my opinion the paper needs some improvements and show more and much more clear the importance of the socio-economic issues on the Land Degradation processes Some comments attached in a pdf file But, my main concern is that the paper should be moved to the short communications or forum articles, as the topic is new, and there is only a research based in a review, and the author do not show even how they developed the review Just is a opinion paper with a interesting information I think the readers of SOIL must have available. Probably the paper should be redirected to the executive editor in charge of the forum articles or short communications as I think this will be better for the scientific community and for the impact of the paper and then for the author. My opinion is that the paper needs improvements but also that is an interesting topic that should be published in SOIL. Sincerely Artemi Cerdà.

Revision: Thank you very much for your comments. I also agree that the article is a short-communication (it was uploaded as such) or a forum article. With regards to the comments and modifications provided in the supplement file, I considered and added all the suggestions, included some new references to better support some ideas and information.

Rev#2

The author stated that the Zero Net Degradation would be achieved by a combination of sustainable land use practice plus the restoration of ecosystems. What do you mean with "restoration" and how could you value or rate the effects of a restoration project in the sense of ecosystem services. Shortly: do 100 ha of restored wetland correlate with 100 ha of degraded land, and what does it mean "restored"? I recommend that

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the ideas of how to value these recovered ecosystem services related to degraded drylands and dryland soils are more clearly and specific explained.

Revision: Thank you for this suggestion. Whereas I would agree with the conceptual and operative challenges about how ecosystem services should be restored in degraded land and what does this concept mean, this is not the focus of discussion of this article. There are many other challenges that would need much more contributions and definitions. I would say that many other scholars have already discussed this issue and a brief synthesis with the concomitant references is already included in the manuscript (pages 1164-1165; e.g. Stavi and Lal 2015, Grainger 2015, Chasek et al. 2015, Tal 2015). The focus of this article is to emphasize that the idea of a Land-Degradation-Neutral World is a partial concept if only land and soil degradation (and restoration) are taken into account. Hence, my message is oriented to include other (human) dimensions of the desertification problem from a social-ecological perspective. In particular, degradation neutral world should not be only related to land or ecosystem services and should include other livelihoods, even considering ecosystem services to be the main aspect that needs to be protected.

Please also note the supplement to this comment:

<http://www.soil-discuss.net/2/C785/2016/soild-2-C785-2016-supplement.pdf>

Interactive comment on SOIL Discuss., 2, 1161, 2015.