

We are disappointed with the review. Below is an honest (and not very tactful) response to this review. The reviewer has the option to reply to this harsh response. The discussion period is not closed yet. We are submitting our response three days after the review was posted so the reviewer can respond.

The anonymous review of the rejection of our manuscript is as follows

“The present manuscript on studying sediment budget in the Lake Tana Watershed in Ethiopia was reviewed. The topic is attractive but does not fit to the context well. To me, the manuscript suffers from many deficiencies which discourage me to accept it. There was no comprehensive reviewing of literatures. No justification has been given on the necessity of the work while at least 5 very good paper written by Setegn et al. for the same area. The entire manuscript is very sparse and not connected to each others well. The study is mainly based on models which either need very complicated inputs or very sophisticated to be conceptualized for the study area. The rates given for soil erosion and sediment yield seem to me abnormal and even not corresponded with the data resulted from bathymetric studies. In overall, the present manuscript looks a general report which does not deserve publication in a scientific journal. I hope my comments and suggestions would help authors in their future works. Best Wishes.”

The response to the most blatant inaccuracies in this review follows.

Comment

The present manuscript on studying sediment budget in the Lake Tana Watershed in Ethiopia was reviewed.

Response

We noted that there were not any posted comments in the annotated manuscript after page 8 and very few (2-3 average per page) on the first eight pages. We as authors expect a bit more substance why our manuscript was rejected. At least indicate one analysis that is scientifically incorrect)

Comment

To me, the manuscript suffers from many deficiencies which discourage me to accept it.

Response

The only critical comment on the posted notes on the annotated manuscript was that the sediment measurement for the rating curves were not accurate. We are aware that the sediment rating curves are not accurate. We (Mogus et al) just wrote a paper about that and will likely be published in this journal, but the measurement itself are accurate.

If the reviewer has information to the contrary he/she should state the source. Since there were no comments given after page 8 and very few comments before we are not sure what the “many deficiencies” that are noted by the reviewer to reject the paper.

Comment

“No justification has been given on the necessity of the work while at least 5 very good paper written by Setegn et al. for the same area”

Response

We cite the paper in the manuscript by Setegn about the Lake Tana basin and that is about hydrology only. There is another paper by Setegn that estimates the sediment load in the Anjeni watershed that has a number of years with detailed hydrology and sediment data. Moreover, most of the papers of Setegn were based on the SWAT model that has not performed well for the Ethiopian highlands. Tilahun et al 2013 (cited in the manuscript) tested the PED model of the same Anjeni watershed and it performed better than the SWAT model with many fewer parameters.

In the manuscript we cite most papers that have been written on the hydrology of Lake Tana and some of the other tropical lakes. This paper present the sediment budget for a tropical lake.

Comment

“The rates given for soil erosion and sediment yield seem to me abnormal and even not corresponded with the data resulted from bathymetric studies”

Response

This remark makes us even more suspicious how much the reviewer has read of the manuscript since we used the bathymetric data in order to estimate the amount of sediment deposited in the lake. These amounts are in line with what we are predicting. The bathymetric data is described throughout the manuscript, but mostly after page 8 (that did not have posted notes in the annotated manuscript).

For example in the abstract we write (page line 24);

“Sediment retained in the lake is calculated from two bathymetric taken 15 years apart and the sediment leaving the lake is based on measured discharge and observed sediment concentrations”

Moreover the soil loss predictions of the model were validated with the data available. Since only a part of the Lake Tana basin was monitored the amount that reaches the lake has a large margin. Finally our rates are in agreement with other studies in the Ethiopian highlands. Where did this reviewer obtain his data to make this statement?

Comment

I hope my comments and suggestions would help authors in their future works

Response

No these comments were not helpful and there were not any suggestion made. As I indicated we are very much disappointed with this review.

Finally I would like to add that the reviewer writes on two occasions “to me...”. This indicates that it is a personal opinion and not based on any literature findings. So we are not sure how to take this rejection of the anonymous reviewer. However, we are sure that most scientific argument likely will not be accepted by this reviewer, because it is not how he/she personally thinks

We are just not very lucky with the reviewers for this paper. We thought that the first reviewer should have been “major revision” but not “a reject”. This reviewer suggest also a “reject” based on a ten line review. We frankly have given up. “Soil” must not be the right avenue for this type of paper.

We would like to add that our disappointment with the reviewers should not negatively reflect on the “Soil” journal. We really are very satisfied with the handling and fairness of the comments of the other manuscripts that we have submitted. The “Soil” journal is excellent and we as authors are disappointed that this paper has to be published elsewhere

With high regards

Tammo Steenhuis