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REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-56168

Title: Evaluating the Consequences of Land Cover Change for Ecosystem Service Provisioning in the Fragile Landscape of the Ratuwa River, Nepal

Recommendation:

Accept as it is .....

Accept after minor revision.....

Accept after major revision .....

Do not accept (*Reasons below*) .....

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality	x			
Techn. Quality	x			
Clarity	x			
Significance		x		

Reviewer Name: Dr. Hari Prashad Joshi

Detailed Reviewer's Report

This manuscript presents a compelling and methodologically robust evaluation of land cover change impacts on ecosystem services in Nepal's Ratuwa River basin, integrating Landsat time-series analysis (1995-2023), InVEST modeling, and household surveys. The study addresses a critical geographical gap by focusing on the understudied Churia region and provides clear evidence of substantial dense forest loss (42.8%) with cascading effects on water yield (+18%), sediment export (+41%), and carbon storage (-22%). The triangulation of biophysical modeling with community perceptions (85% reporting forest decline, 90% experiencing irrigation siltation) is a particular strength, grounding abstract ES metrics in lived livelihood impacts. However, several minor revisions are necessary: (1) Table 1 requires numerical values—currently displaying placeholder formatting (e.g., "125.698.371.8"); (2) the manuscript contains minor typographical errors (e.g., "Ratuwu"/"Ratuwa" inconsistency, missing spaces in "servicesis" and "patterndense"); (3) the methodology should briefly clarify how InVEST parameterization addressed the region's erodible Churia geology specifically; (4) the discussion would benefit from explicit acknowledgment that climate variability was not isolated from LULCC effects; and (5) the conclusion could more concretely link specific land cover trajectories to NCCP intervention zones. These revisions are straightforward and do not alter the paper's substantial contributions. I recommend minor revision.