

## ***Interactive comment on “Open space suitability analysis for emergency shelter after an earthquake” by J. Anhorn and B. Khazai***

**Anonymous Referee #1**

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The topic of this article is certainly suitable for the NHESS journal. The issue of suitable open space for shelter after a natural disaster and in this case an earthquake is an important topic. This article uses Kathmandu as a case study.

The article has a logical flow and excellent informative and professional tables and figures. There is a very extensive set of citations integrated into the text which functionally serves as a literature review on various aspects of disasters and related science. However, it can be argued that for a science and not a review manuscript, there are too many citations. The citations are in a complete and consistent format.

The focus of the manuscript is the components and case study example of an Open Space Suitability Index (OSSI) to locate potential locations for emergency shelters after

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an earthquake. The manuscript is not a traditional research article in comparison of data or methods but one demonstration of the OSSI. The manuscript might have more interest if it included more case studies and/or changed some of the input parameters to ascertain how data variations would influence the outputs, a sensitivity study.

The difficulty with an index such as that proposed for open space evaluation is the availability of reliable data and thus extension to other locations. From that perspective more discussion of remote sensing as a data source might have been included. The authors do however introduce high spatial resolution imagery from QuickBird as an option. The OSSI index does serve a proactive function in providing local decision makers information upon which to establish policies or procedures.

As in almost any manuscript, there are still minor editorial issues. In addition, while it varies from journal to journal, this reviewer does not encourage the use of first person (we) or direct quotes in most scientific text. As a relatively minor point, the numbers in the first paragraph under section 5 do not seem correct. The first number should perhaps be 342 300?

In summary, this article is suitable for NHESS and is useful both for the extensive literature review and in providing a proactive tool for decision makers in preparation for a potential natural disaster.

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