

Interactive comment on “Global assessment of land cover changes and rural-urban interface in Portugal” by Marj Tonini et al.

Anonymous Referee #1

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This paper focuses on an interesting topic, which is undoubtedly highly relevant (both for researchers and forest managers) in all European Mediterranean countries.

The manuscript is generally well structured. It can't be accepted, however, in its current version. It requires major revisions.

First of all, the manuscript requires a substantial grammatical revision. It is often incorrectly written and there are some major issues with English (verb tenses, vocabulary, etc.). This reviewer did not have time to review the style and grammatical aspects in detail. The authors should hire an English-proofreading expert in order to substantially improve the current text. Besides, many sentences are too vague, even confusing, and should be rewritten.

C1

All sections need to be substantially improved. (See detailed comments in the revised PDF file.)

The “Data and Methodology” section has to be completed. Several explanations appearing in the “Results” section have to be moved to the Methodology section. Many aspects need to be further explained and some methodological approaches have to be further justified. The characteristics and limitations of the various databases are not always well explained. In the case of the CORINE inventory, in particular, some of its limitations should have been commented (and slightly discussed in the discussion).

The “Discussion” is quite interesting, although some parts should be reduced and several relevant aspects are missing. The authors do not explain, for instance, which major habitats or plant communities correspond in Portugal to the CORINE classes that they cite throughout the manuscript. We miss this specific information (linking the broad CORINE classes to real habitats or vegetation types), which would have probably allowed to discuss other relevant issues that the paper is omitting (e.g. biodiversity, only briefly mentioned in the conclusions). The Portuguese legislation in relation to RUIs is not commented and this is a critical issue. The authors do not explain either which are the treatments usually implemented by Portuguese forest managers in RUIs and if these practices have changed in the last years due to RUI expansion and fire regime dynamics. Moreover, the discussion does not sufficiently connect the results of this research with Portuguese forest managers' needs and priorities. The authors could maybe propose some broad landscape management guidelines in relation to the objective of minimizing the risk of large intense fires under climate change.

Please also note the supplement to this comment:

<https://www.nat-hazards-earth-syst-sci-discuss.net/nhess-2017-359/nhess-2017-359-RC1-supplement.pdf>

C2

