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Solid Earth Discussions

Interactive comment on "The challenge and future of rocky desertification control in Karst areas in Southwest China" *by* J. Y. Zhang et al.

Anonymous Referee #1

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This manuscript examines the first part of a project implemented by the Chinese government in order to try to reduce the karst rocky desertification in the country. The structure of the paper does not follow the conventional structure for a scientific paper.

My feeling is that it is more an internal report of the project than a scientific paper. In order to publish it as a scientific paper, the data needs to be more accurately examined and compared with similar studies in other regions. No data about climate, soils, geomorphology, etc are shown, just a list of big general ideas.

I am not sure that Solid Earth is the appropriate journal for this manuscript. The paper could fit more within the scope of other journals with land degradation (e.g. Land Degradation and Development) as a short note, but in its present state I have serious concerns that it can stand alone as a single paper.

Section 1 This section does not clearly present the state-of-the-art in these topics. It is only focused in China, with no references to the works and efforts that are being done in similar areas with the same problems. For example, karst rocky desertification is widespread in many Mediterranean regions. Are processes and measures undertaken similar?

Section 2 General data is provided about the magnitude and areas affected in China, but the reader is lost if he/she is not used with China's geography. The paper would benefit from a map showing where the mentioned regions are. In addition, complementary information is needed to properly frame these areas: geomorphology, soils, vegetation, climate (temperatures, intensity/seasonality/amount of precipitations, etc). Non-Chinese readers may be also lost when referring to some programs such as the "Great Leap Forward", the "Work for Food Program" (page 5, line 12). What are the consequences of these initiatives?

Section 4 Page 11 - Climate change has severely affected some aspects of karst ecosystems, such as water resources (Loáiciga et al., 2000), This is an old general reference. In what way is affecting your study area?

Interactive comment on Solid Earth Discuss., 7, 3271, 2015.