

## ***Interactive comment on “Rangeland degradation assessment: a new strategy based on indigenous ecological knowledge of pastoralists” by B. Behmanesh et al.***

### **Anonymous Referee #2**

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The authors carried out an assessment of land degradation indicators specifically designed for rangelands. The indicators were tested at two sites in NE-Iran at the border of a protected national park. Inside the park grazing was regulated while outside it was not. The novelty of the approach was that the authors did not do the assessment themselves but led pastoralists do the assessment on a 1-5 Likert Scale. The final analysis identified several indicators that are usable by the pastoralists themselves and which could be integrated into a Land Degradation Assessment Plan.

I like the study and it's concept. The text has still some flaws with regard to the English language, a professional check would be nice but is not absolutely required as the

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text is still readable. However, there is a severe problem with the statistics applied. The authors used a t-test on the Likert Scale data. This implies that the authors test whether the mean values of inside/outside plots are significantly different. Then they end up with a significant difference of 0.2 values on a scale from 1-5 leaving the question if this makes sense. It does not very much. The authors should have applied either a Wilcoxon signed rank test directly on the 1-5 values OR have applied a Chi-Square Test. I urge the authors to re-analyse the data with the Wilcoxon-test and then to rewrite the necessary parts.

Furthermore, the map in figure 1 should be redrawn (see comments in the pdf) and some photos of the area and the pastoralists could give the manuscript a more fresh look. right now it is pretty much only text.

Hence I suggest a "major revision".

For specific comments, see the attached PDF. I added comments / questions and suggestions in commentaries there.

Please also note the supplement to this comment:

<http://www.solid-earth-discuss.net/7/C1492/2015/sed-7-C1492-2015-supplement.pdf>

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Interactive comment on Solid Earth Discuss., 7, 2999, 2015.

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