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Journal Name:	Asian Journal of Geographical Research
Manuscript Number:	Ms_AJGR_124747
Title of the Manuscript:	INFLUENCE OF FOREST PLANTATION ESTABLISHMENT SCHEMES ON COMMUNITY LIVELIHOODS: A CASE OF MAKUTANO FOREST KERICHO COUNTY KENYA
Type of the Article	

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PART 1: Review Comments

Compulsory REVISION comments	Reviewer's comment	Author's Feedback <i>(Please correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here)</i>
<p>Please write a few sentences regarding the importance of this manuscript for the scientific community. Why do you like (or dislike) this manuscript? A minimum of 3-4 sentences may be required for this part.</p>	<p>This manuscript addresses a critical issue in forest management and community livelihoods, particularly in the context of Kenya's Plantation Establishment and Livelihood Improvement Scheme (PELIS). Its findings provide valuable insights into how forest plantation initiatives can simultaneously support local economies and promote sustainable practices, which is essential for both environmental conservation and poverty alleviation. I appreciate the manuscript's empirical approach, as it combines quantitative and qualitative data to highlight the relationship between forest management and community well-being.</p>	
<p>Is the title of the article suitable? (If not please suggest an alternative title)</p>	<p>The title of the article is suitable</p>	
<p>Is the abstract of the article comprehensive? Do you suggest the addition (or deletion) of some points in this section? Please write your suggestions here.</p>	<p>The abstract effectively presents the key aspects of the study, including the problem of forest exploitation, Kenya's PELIS program, and the influence of forest plantation schemes on community livelihoods. However, I suggest the following revisions to make the abstract more concise and focused:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The global context of deforestation is important, but it can be simplified to quickly shift focus onto Kenya's specific challenges and the PELIS program. This will keep the abstract succinct while still highlighting the global relevance. 2. Rather than explaining general forest plantation methods, it would be more impactful to dive directly into the Kenyan context and the objectives of PELIS, especially as the study is centered around this policy. 	
<p>Are subsections and structure of the manuscript appropriate?</p>	<p>It is appropriate.</p>	
<p>Please write a few sentences regarding the scientific correctness of this manuscript. Why do you think that this manuscript is scientifically robust and technically sound? A minimum of 3-4 sentences may be required for this part.</p>	<p>Introduction section:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Introduction provides a thorough overview of the global and local importance of forests, focusing on their critical role in sustaining livelihoods, especially for communities living near forest areas. The discussion of forest degradation and the need for forest plantation schemes is well-supported by relevant statistics and sources, particularly regarding the challenges faced by African countries in maintaining forest cover. However, the section could be improved by streamlining some of the historical data and providing more focus on the research gap and objectives. • While the introduction implies a research gap by discussing the unique circumstances of the Makutano community, it does not clearly articulate what is lacking in the existing literature regarding PELIS and its impact on community livelihoods. A more explicit statement regarding the specific challenges faced by the community or how previous studies have not fully addressed these issues would strengthen this section. • In third paragraph, the statistics on forest cover loss in Africa from Musyimi (2018) could be cross-checked and updated with data from the FAO global forest resources assessment report to provide a more recent perspective on forest management trends. Additionally, when mentioning the DRC, the author should expand this abbreviation to Democratic Republic of the Congo the first time it is used and include DRC in parentheses for clarity. • While PELIS has shown promise in improving livelihoods, recent critiques have pointed to issues such as illegal land extension, resource mismanagement, and conflicts between environmental sustainability and immediate economic gains (Kagombe and Gitonga, 2005). Incorporating more recent research on these challenges could 	

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	<p>strengthen this section.</p> <p><u>Methodology section:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The explanation of the sampling process could be clearer, especially the transition from the target population to the actual sample size.• The target population size is stated as 1719 initially, but later the paragraph mentions a total target population of 1725. This inconsistency could cause confusion and should be corrected. Besides, table 1 can actually be removed since the author covered that information in the Table 2.• The paragraph provides two methods for calculating sample size—proportional allocation and the Nassium formula—but the relationship between these methods is unclear. It's important to clarify why both methods are mentioned, and which one was ultimately used. <p><u>Results section:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The presentation of respondents' demographic data, such as gender, education, age, and source of income, is well-structured. However, the author should provide more context on why these characteristics are significant to the study. For instance, the gender balance could be linked to participation in specific forest management activities, while the educational levels could further explore how literacy impacts understanding of Participatory Forest Management (PFM) policies.• The regression analysis on the frequency of meeting attendance and involvement in decision-making is a valuable addition, but the study could delve deeper into the barriers to participation. For example, why do certain groups attend meetings less frequently? Understanding the social or logistical barriers would provide a more holistic view of community involvement.• Please ensure that each table is consistently numbered and referenced within the text for easier navigation. <p><u>Discussion Section:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Discussion section offers valuable insights but tends to repeat points already presented in the Results section. To improve, the author should focus on synthesizing and analyzing the findings rather than restating them. Emphasizing the significance of the results in the context of existing literature would enhance depth.• While the section mentions the positive influence of forest land cultivation and products on livelihoods, it could elaborate on why these findings matter for community development or forest management policies. Discussing the potential long-term benefits or challenges would enrich the discussion.• The findings of the economic impact of forest product use on household income and the relationship between the size of land allocated and income earned are especially insightful. Therefore, the author could also discuss whether these findings are consistent with other studies on PELIS or similar programs, which would strengthen the argument for the benefits of forest plantations.• When mentioning activities like bee-keeping and tree nursery establishment, the author could explore barriers to participation based on previous research, offering strategies to increase involvement and highlighting the economic potential these activities present.• Overall, minimizing redundancy and adopting a more analytical approach would strengthen the discussion and provide a clearer narrative. <p><u>Conclusion Section</u></p> <p>The Conclusion effectively summarizes the key findings of the study regarding the influence of forest plantation establishment schemes on community livelihoods in Makutano Forest, Kericho County. However, the conclusion ends somewhat abruptly; the author could consider mentioning future research directions to explore unresolved issues or emerging challenges.</p>	
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<p>Are the references sufficient and recent? If you have suggestions of additional references, please mention them in the review form.</p>	<p>Authors are highly encouraged to incorporate recent references, particularly when supporting or arguing their findings.</p>	
<p><u>Minor</u> REVISION comments</p> <p>Is the language/English quality of the article suitable for scholarly communications?</p>	<p>The language quality can be improved in some areas for scholarly communication.</p>	
<p><u>Optional/General</u> comments</p>		

PART 2:

	<p>Reviewer's comment</p>	<p>Author's comment <i>(if agreed with reviewer, correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here)</i></p>
<p>Are there ethical issues in this manuscript?</p>	<p><i>(If yes, Kindly please write down the ethical issues here in details)</i></p>	

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