

Review of: "Palm Oil Expansion and Subnational Food Security"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

This paper presents a thorough and insightful analysis of the impact of oil palm expansion on food security status at the provincial level in Indonesia. The researchers utilized a food security vulnerability map, employing standard indicators across the four dimensions of food security to categorize districts and provinces. Additionally, the study incorporated the extent of oil palm cultivation and other control variables, resulting in a comprehensive investigation of this critical issue. Nevertheless, I maintain a degree of scepticism concerning the methodology segment/ clarity. In light of this, I would like to offer some constructive suggestions to the author to enhance the methodology of the paper as follows:

Suggestions for Improvement:

1. **Data Source Validation:** While the paper cites various secondary data sources, it would be beneficial to provide additional information on the validity, reliability, and representativeness of these sources. Transparency in data selection and potential limitations will enhance the readers' confidence in the findings.
2. **Clear Explanation of Variables:** The paper mentions several independent variables used in the logistic regression model but lacks a clear explanation of their significance and relevance to food security. Providing a detailed rationale for selecting these variables and their theoretical connections to food security would enhance the readers' understanding.
3. **Accounting for Temporal Changes:** As the paper discusses food security status over the past two decades, it would be prudent to account for temporal changes and trends. Including time-series data or conducting trend analyses could help identify patterns and ascertain whether any observed changes are due to the expansion of palm oil cultivation.
4. **Discussion on Limitations:** Addressing the limitations of the methodology is essential for the paper's transparency and credibility where, it has only discussed about the time constraints. Acknowledging potential biases, sample size issues, or other constraints can help readers interpret the results more accurately.
5. **Comparison with Previous Studies:** In conclusion section, the paper could benefit from a discussion comparing its findings with previous studies focusing on food security in Indonesia or other countries. Identifying similarities and differences would contribute to the broader context of food security research.

I highly endorse the publication of the paper, considering the proposed improvements mentioned above. The suggested enhancements would undoubtedly strengthen the overall quality and impact of the research, making it a valuable contribution to the academic community.

