

Review of: "A Review of the Drawdown Zone in African Reservoirs: Current Knowledge, Understudied Areas and Recommendations for Future Research"

Tiziana Di Lorenzo¹

¹ Italian National Research Council

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

Dear Editor,

I have completed the revision of the manuscript titled "A Review of the Drawdown Zone in African Reservoirs: Current Knowledge, Understudied Areas and Recommendations for Future Research". The aim of the paper is to provide a comprehensive review of the ecological significance of drawdown zones in African reservoirs. Such a review is of interest because it provides valuable information for the management and conservation of African reservoirs. Moreover, with climate change increasingly impacting hydrological patterns, including rainfall variability and drought frequency, understanding the ecological significance of drawdown zones becomes even more critical.

The paper is well-organized and flows logically. I acknowledge clarity in the presentation of ideas in the introduction and methods. However, I have some perplexities about the results and discussion sections. The introduction clearly highlights that drawdowns, both natural and artificial, play crucial roles in ecosystem functions and biodiversity conservation. It emphasizes the importance of understanding the impacts of drawdowns on littoral zones, which are biodiversity hotspots and vital for nutrient exchange and habitat provision. The review aims are well-explained at the end of the introduction. I much appreciated the methodology, which is mediated from meta-analysis and well-explained in the PRISMA chart. After screening, 81 items were used.

However, I evaluate that the content of the results and discussion does not align with the stated aims of the review and objectives as I expected. I feel like the discussion of drawdown zones in African reservoirs does not remain the central focus throughout the manuscript. This is because I could not find a dataset containing the references to the studies that the author extracted from the literature, and I could not read where those studies were located and which water bodies were investigated. There is a Figure A1, which, however, is not mentioned in the text. I highly encourage the author to provide the dataset in the Supplementary File or in an online repository because it can be overly useful for future research. I also encourage the author to explain Figure A1. Should we assume that the lakes depicted in Figure A1 are the ones under consideration in the review paper? If this is indeed the case, clarity is lacking, and I urge the author to strengthen the relevance of African water bodies by explicitly mentioning them in the manuscript. This would enhance the significance of the review in the context of Africa and its unique hydrological systems.

I think that the author has reviewed ecological concepts related to the drawdown zone; however, I spotted a gap in studies

concerning meiofaunal taxa. I suggest expanding on this aspect due to the many ecosystem services that meiofauna provide to littoral zones.

I respectfully suggest publication following minor revisions.