

Interactive comment on “A 240 year History of Avalanche Risk in the Vosges Mountains from Nonconventional Sources” by Florie Giacona et al.

Anonymous Referee #2

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The paper presented by Giacona et al. deals with an interesting topic and even more addresses the approach to a region which has not been known so far for its avalanche activity. As such, the reconstruction presented is of high relevance, as these low-elevation mountain ranges, as the Vosges, are likely to be the first and most severely affected by climate change and could thus serve as examples/illustrations of what one needs to expect at higher altitudes. Also, the number of sources collected by the authors is impressive and shows the great ability of the team to cross natural and human science approaches, which is still rare.

The main weaknesses of the paper reside in the way it was written, and this for several reasons. First of all, and despite the fact that the authors acknowledge a native speaker for the proof-reading, the text is written in a rather poor English, and many technical words have been translated simply from French (such that they either have a different

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or no more meaning in English). The language will need to be polished substantially in a new version.

The style of the paper also seems awkward to a natural scientist as it uses footnotes (and even in large numbers), which is all but normal in natural sciences (by contrast to human sciences). This needs to be clarified as well.

Thirdly, the manuscript is fairly descriptive in the introduction and not very clear either in the abstract. Overall, the text needs to become much more concise and focused, and also much clearer in view of terminology. What is a nonconventional source (for me, natural or written archives are conventional indeed, but not sufficiently used)? Where do you address hazards, and where are you really addressing risks? This is used in a mixed way and needs clarification as well. What are risk historians? What is a geohistorical methodology/resources/approach? etc. (I could provide many more examples, but would like to suggest that the authors stick to the international literature when using definitions or terms.

The results will need to be presented in a much clearer, and more organized way. There is more in the data than you are showing so far. In the same line of thoughts, please make sure that you put your data into a larger context, the discussion is very much focused at the case-study site so far and introduces many new results rather than seeing them in a broader context.

In my opinion the paper can become a very nice and relevant piece, and certainly will be suitable for NHESS, but more work is needed to reach this goal, and I would be happy to see a new version on that interesting topic sometimes soon.

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