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# ***Interactive comment on “The nexus of oil, conflict, and climate change vulnerability of pastoral communities in Northwest Kenya” by J. Schilling et al.***

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## General Comments

1) The article is good in bringing out most of the issues that could be conflictive in relation to the development of oil in Turkana. It perhaps stresses the negatives and does not explore potential positives that much. On the latter, the article could benefit from addressing two issues: 1) the recent discovery of water in Turkana; 2) the ongoing process of Devolution in Kenya and how that is affecting/will affect Turkana.

On the discovery of water reservoirs in Turkana, the Sensitivity section of the article talks about the potentially negative effects of oil discoveries on water. Maybe there

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should be a line or two about the new reservoirs, this is a positive development. Linking the new oil and the water discoveries, would open up questions that the article could explore, or at least mention, such as: In the process of developing the infrastructure to produce the water: would there be room for thinking of adopting contingency measures for preventing oil spills from contaminating the water? Is anyone thinking about this?

On Devolution: Kenya is now trying to address many of the institutional failures which the article mentions. Turkana has been long forgotten by the government as the article rightly says. But Kenya is trying to address this issue through Devolution. In 2013-2014, the first year of the implementation of Devolution, Turkana received the third largest transfer of devolved funds from the central government. During the second year of Devolution, Turkana is expected to also be among the most benefited counties. This is because Devolution is aimed at making the system more equitable by benefitting counties which, like Turkana, have been historically forgotten. So the main issue now in Turkana is not so much if they have resources, but why aren't these being distributed more equitably among the population?. There is a problem with resource allocation, which is also trying to be addressed through Devolution and it is hoped will be improved throughout the years as Devolution is further perfected.

2) Perhaps the report could talk a bit about communication and transparency issues. It addresses the problem of high expectations among the Turkana population. They expect to get jobs from the oil industry. But the oil industry is not labor intensive. Has anyone told them this? Tullow says they have. Is the oil company the right stakeholder to inform the population about issues of such importance? What about the government? Tullow says they are very open and transparent: does this show from talking to Turkanas?

3) The article could benefit from including a discussion on two other sources of conflict related to oil: weapon proliferation and geopolitical differences. IN the first case, the Small Arms Survey has done some research on the proliferation of weapons Northern Turkana. On the geopolitical issue, Somalia shares its sea platform with Kenya

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and there are differences between the two countries on the location of deep water resources.

4) I have attached an article I wrote in 2013 that brings out some of these issues: Patricia I. VASQUEZ, "Kenya at a Crossroads: Hopes and Fears Concerning the Development of Oil and Gas Reserves", *International Development Policy | Revue internationale de politique de développement* [Online], 4.3 | 2013, Online since 12 November 2013, connection on 08 September 2015. URL : <http://poldev.revues.org/1646> ; DOI : 10.4000/poldev.1646

#### Specific Comments

5) On page 1175, there is a reference to "black smoke caused by oil extraction". But oil extraction has not yet started in Turkana. You may need to double check what this refers to.

6) The article links oil developments with "direct" employment in several parts (see page 1173). Again, I'd be cautious in making this linkage because the oil industry is not labor intensive. There are many indirect sources of labor.

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Interactive comment on *Earth Syst. Dynam. Discuss.*, 6, 1163, 2015.

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