Title: Climate-Driven Conflicts in Nigeria: Farmers' Strategies for Coping with Herders' Incursion on Crop Lands

Review

This manuscript makes an important contribution by examining how climate-driven conflicts between farmers and herders affect agriculture in Nigeria. The study is timely, relevant to policy, and backed by sound methods. However, I recommend minor revisions to address some specific issues noted below, and upon addressing these concerns, the manuscript will be suitable for publication.

Question: **Abstract:** The abstract outlines the main elements of the study. However, it is a bit lengthy and sometimes repeats points from the introduction. A shorter, more focused abstract would be more effective. It should emphasize the novelty of the work, briefly summarize the methodology, and highlight the key results with clear policy implications.

Response: We appreciate your insightful comment on the abstract. In line with the suggestion, we have revised the abstract to make it more concise and focused. The revised version avoids repetition of points from the introduction, briefly outlines the methodology, and highlights the key findings along with their policy implications. We believe this improves the clarity and impact of the abstract (page 1, lines 10-23).

Question: **Introduction:** The introduction provides useful background on farmer-herder conflicts and their connections to climate change, land scarcity, and weak governance. However, it repeats some ideas, which makes the section less clear. Structuring it into distinct parts - causes, impacts, and research gaps-would make it easier to follow. It should also clearly state how this study extends existing literature by focusing on coping strategies within a specific regional context.

Response: Thank you for this valuable feedback. We have carefully revised the introduction to address the concerns raised. The section has now been restructured (pages 2-3, lines 32-95).

Question: **Methodology:** The methodology is suitable and well described. The use of multistage sampling and factor analysis enhances the credibility of the results. However, the snowball

sampling method may introduce bias, and this limitation should be briefly acknowledged. It would also be beneficial to mention if the questionnaire was tested or validated before full deployment.

Response: Thank you for this constructive feedback. We have acknowledged the potential bias associated with the snowball sampling technique in the *Limitations and Future Research* section, noting that while the method may restrict representativeness, it was necessary due to the security-sensitive and hard-to-reach nature of the study population (page 24, lines 611-617)

Question: **Results and Discussion:** The results are clearly presented with well-structured tables, though standardizing formats like decimals and percentages would improve consistency. At times, the results are read more like a literature review, so separating findings from interpretation would enhance clarity. The discussion provides useful connections to farmer–herder conflicts, but could be enriched by broader regional comparisons and deeper analysis of why certain coping strategies fail. Highlighting the role of social networks and group farming in resilience would add further depth.

Response: Thank you for the thoughtful comments. The decimals and percentages have been standardized for consistency. While the Results and Discussion sections are presented together in line with the departmental format, efforts were made to better distinguish findings from interpretation. The discussion has been enriched with broader regional comparisons, deeper analysis of coping strategy failures, and a clearer emphasis on the role of social networks and group farming in resilience (page 8, line 238).

Question: **Recommendations and Conclusion:** The recommendations should focus on improved rural security, affordable protective measures, and stronger extension services. The conclusion restates the key points but is somewhat repetitive. It would be sharper if reduced to three messages: the conflicts threaten sustainable farming and food security, farmers rely mainly on small-scale and community-based coping strategies, and stronger institutional and policy support is urgently needed.

Response: Thank you very much for the feedback. We have revised the *Recommendations* section to focus more clearly on improving rural security, providing affordable protective measures, and

strengthening extension services. In addition, the *Conclusion* has been streamlined and sharpened to highlight three key messages (page 23, lines 588-609).