Reviewer's report

Title: Epidemiological patterns of asbestos exposure and spatial clusters of incident cases of malignant mesothelioma from the Italian national registry

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Reviewer: Terry Brown

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The above manuscript describes the results of a well-designed and implemented study of spatial analysis of cases of malignant mesothelioma in Italy. The question posed is well-defined, and the methods are appropriate and well described. The data are sound, coming from the national registry. I only have a few comments:

1. Methods, 1st paragraph (line 152): What is meant by “threat them”. This sounds very drastic.

2. Methods: Exposure assessment. Is the method used to assess exposure been described in more detail elsewhere, as it is unclear in this manuscript? What distance does a case need to be living to an industrial facility to be classed as “environmental”?

3. Discussion, (line 352): Reference format [Rosyncuk 2006] or [40]?

4. Table 3: This is very large. Is it appropriate for one of this size to be published online within the final paper?

5. Results: Can the figures be separated into 1, 2, 3, 4, and then the clusters described separately for each one?