

Figure 9. Tasseled Cap Wetness TCW 2019.

Table 5
TCW 2016-2019.

Lakes	TCW 2016		TCW 2019	
	High	Low	High	Low
Borith	3.79	-1.23	3.82	-1.39
Phander	4.29	-1.62	4.59	-1.79
Upper Kachura	3.31	-1.21	4.23	-1.39
Satpara	5.21	-1.65	8.89	-3.31
Rama	1.59	-8.89	4.41	-1.37

rainfall and temperature. Wetlands serve as crucial water storage areas and play a vital role in flood prevention.

3.1. Rainfall

In the northern areas of Pakistan, the ratio of rainfall is notably higher than in other regions [43–46]. Fig. 3 illustrates the rainfall pattern of the study area in 2016 and 2019. Comparing the two years, it is evident that the maximum recorded rainfall in 2019 was 11,513 mm, compared to 8,913 mm in 2016. Additionally, the minimum recorded rainfall in 2019 was 523 mm, which is higher than the rainfall of 409 mm in 2016. The study area experienced varying amounts of rainfall in the selected wetlands between 2016 and 2019, as presented in Table 2. Table 2 shows the amount of rainfall in all lakes, with a larger ratio of rainfall in 2019 compared to 2016. However, rainfall in Borith Lake was lower in 2019 (2,673 mm) than in 2016 (3,646 mm). These findings emphasize the importance of understanding the relationship between

wetlands and rainfall patterns for effective wetland conservation and restoration efforts. Proper management and conservation of wetlands can help maintain their biodiversity and ecological functions, benefiting both the environment and the human communities that depend on them [47–49].

3.2. Land Surface Temperature (LST)

The results presented in Fig. 4 display the (LST) of the study area in Gilgit Baltistan (GB) for the years 2016 and 2019, focusing on the areas where the selected wetlands are located. LST represents the surface temperature of the Earth's features and is influenced by climate change, making it one of the contributing factors to global warming. LST has a significant impact on the ecosystems of wetlands, affecting the flora and fauna species residing in these ponds, lakes, and wetland areas [50]. The LST data for the study area indicates an overall decrease in the highest temperature recorded in 2019 compared to 2016. The highest temperature in 2016 was measured at 30.65°C, showing a decrease of approximately 0.5°C in 2019, with a temperature of 30.01°C. On the other hand, the lowest temperature recorded in 2016 was -17.20°C, and this increased by about -5°C in 2019, reaching a temperature of -17.79°C. Table 3 presents the LST values of the selected wetlands for both 2016 and 2019. In general, the LST values show a decrease in all wetlands, indicating a changing weather pattern in the study area. This decrease in LST could have implications for the wetland ecosystems, affecting the behavior and distribution of flora and fauna species within these habitats [51]. The observed changes in LST highlight the importance of monitoring temperature trends in wetland areas, as they can

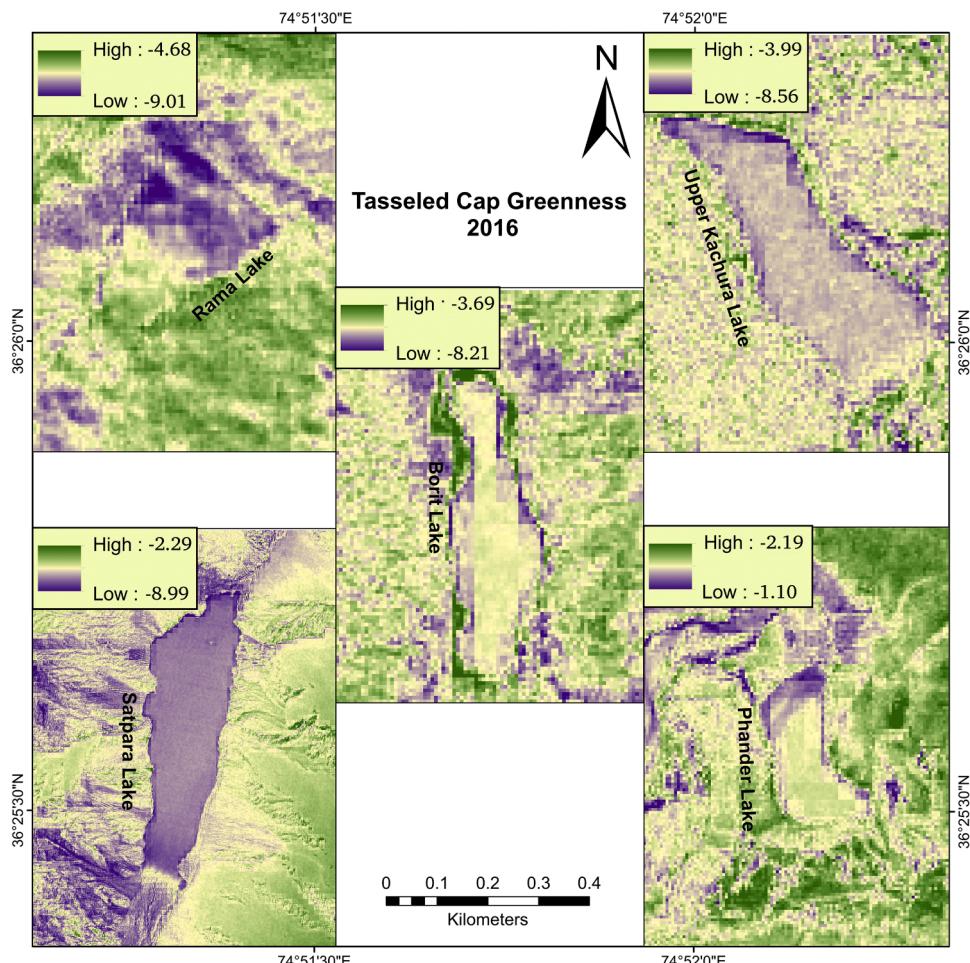


Figure 10. Tasseled Cap Greenness 2016.

have significant ecological implications. Understanding these temperature variations can help researchers and policymakers make informed decisions about wetland conservation and management to ensure the sustainability and health of these critical ecosystems in the face of climate change [52].

3.3. Digital Elevation Model (DEM)

In Fig. 5, the DEM was produced using the ASTER satellite product with a resolution of 10 meters (spatial), providing detailed elevation information for the study area. The acquired DEM data underwent a series of processing steps to enhance its accuracy and utility.

The following procedure was adopted to process the acquired DEM data:

- Filling depression spots: Depression spots in the DEM were filled to ensure smooth and continuous flow of water across the terrain.
- Flow direction: The flow direction of water across the landscape was determined based on the elevation data, establishing the paths that water would naturally follow.
- Flow accumulation: The accumulated flow at each cell of the DEM was calculated, indicating areas with higher water flow and potential stream locations.
- Stream network: Using the flow accumulation values, a detailed drainage network system was obtained, revealing the interconnected streams and rivers in the study area.
- Watershed boundaries identification: Based on the stream network and flow accumulation, the boundaries of watersheds were

identified. Watersheds are tracts of land where all of the water drains to a single point, such as a river or a lake.

- The detail of the fine drainage network system was developed further by estimating the stream network based on the flow accumulation data. A stream to feature technique was also used to extract detailed stream features from the processed data.

By following this sequence of steps, the researchers were able to derive a comprehensive and accurate representation of the drainage system and watershed boundaries in the study area. This information is essential for understanding the flow of water and the hydrological characteristics of the landscape, aiding in various environmental and water resource management applications.

3.4. Landuse Landcover (LULC)

To increase classification accuracy in the large study area, the researchers separated it into five distinct sections: Borith, Phandar, Uper Kachura, Satpara, and Rama Lake, as illustrated in Figs. 6 and 7. These wetlands are very important for Waterfowl Habitat, emphasising their ecological importance. Aside from classifying the research area as wetland, the region's Land Use Land Cover (LULC) types were classified into four key groups: soil, snow, water, and vegetation. The LULC forms were classified using supervised classification approaches, which rely on the identification of training samples. These training samples were found using Google Earth imagery and field surveys, resulting in accurate classification findings [53]. The researchers were able to collect more exact information about the wetlands and their surrounding land

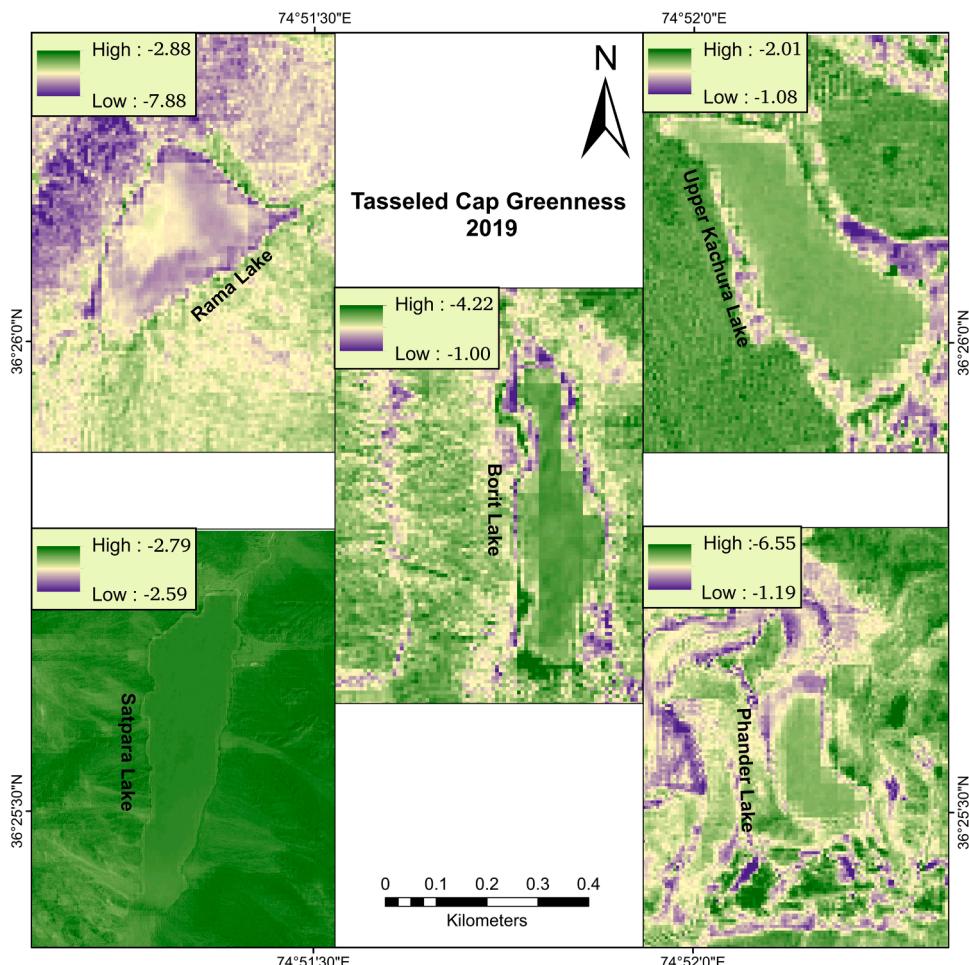


Figure 11. Tasseled Cap Greenness 2019.

Table 6
TCG 2016-2019.

Lakes	TCG 2016		TCG 2019	
	High	Low	High	Low
Borith	-3.69	-8.21	-4.22	-1.00
Phander	-2.19	-1.10	-6.55	-1.19
Upper Kachura	-3.99	-8.56	-2.01	-1.08
Satpara	-2.29	-8.99	-2.79	-2.59
Rama	-4.68	-9.01	-2.88	-7.88

cover types by separating the study area into sections and correctly identifying the LULC forms. This precise classification is required for a variety of environmental studies, conservation efforts, and land management methods in the studied region.

Table 4 presents the land use classification results for all the images in the study, comparing the years 2016 and 2019. The land use classification shows the distribution of different land cover types in the vicinity of the lakes. In 2016, the foremost areas of all lakes were covered with soil, but the percentage of soil coverage varied for each lake. For instance, in 2016, Borith Lake had 85.5% soil coverage, Phander Lake had 76%, Upper Kachura Lake had 72%, Satpara Lake had 31.2%, and Rama Lake had no soil coverage. In 2019, significant changes in soil coverage were observed. Except for Satpara Lake, all the other lakes had 0% soil coverage, indicating a soil has clearly changed distribution from 2016 to 2019. Similarly, the distribution of other land cover classes like vegetation and water also exhibited noticeable changes between 2016 and 2019. In 2016, vegetation occupied varying percentages for

different lakes (3.9%, 22.9%, 21.7%, 28.6%, and 69.3%), and water covered 4.1%, 1.7%, 7.5%, 27.6%, and 4.8% for each lake, respectively. In 2019, the percentage of vegetation decreased significantly in all lakes (87.7%, 77.2%, 59.5%, 81.6%, and 62.8%), indicating a reduction in vegetation coverage. Additionally, water coverage also exhibited changes, with some lakes experiencing a decrease (5.8%, 16.7%, 30.9%, 1.9%) and Satpara Lake showing an increase (28.3%) in water coverage. These changes in land-use and landcover demonstrate significant transformations in the study area over the course of the three-year period, highlighting the importance of monitoring and understanding the dynamics of these ecosystems for effective conservation and management measures [54]. The accuracy of the LULC supervised classification was assessed using standard procedures. A stratified random sample of 500 points was generated and labeled based on visual interpretation of high-resolution satellite imagery. Error matrices were constructed to compare the classification results to these reference points [55]. The overall accuracy was 82% with a Kappa coefficient of 0.78, indicating a good level of agreement. The user's accuracies for the individual classes ranged from 78% to 91%, while the producer's accuracies varied between 81% to 89%. Water bodies had the highest accuracy, followed by vegetation and soil. The relatively high accuracies can be attributed to the representative training data used in the supervised classification. However, some confusion existed between bare soil and built-up areas. While the classification accuracy was satisfactory, future work could potentially improve results by using larger training data, incorporating topographic data, and applying post-classification refinements [13].

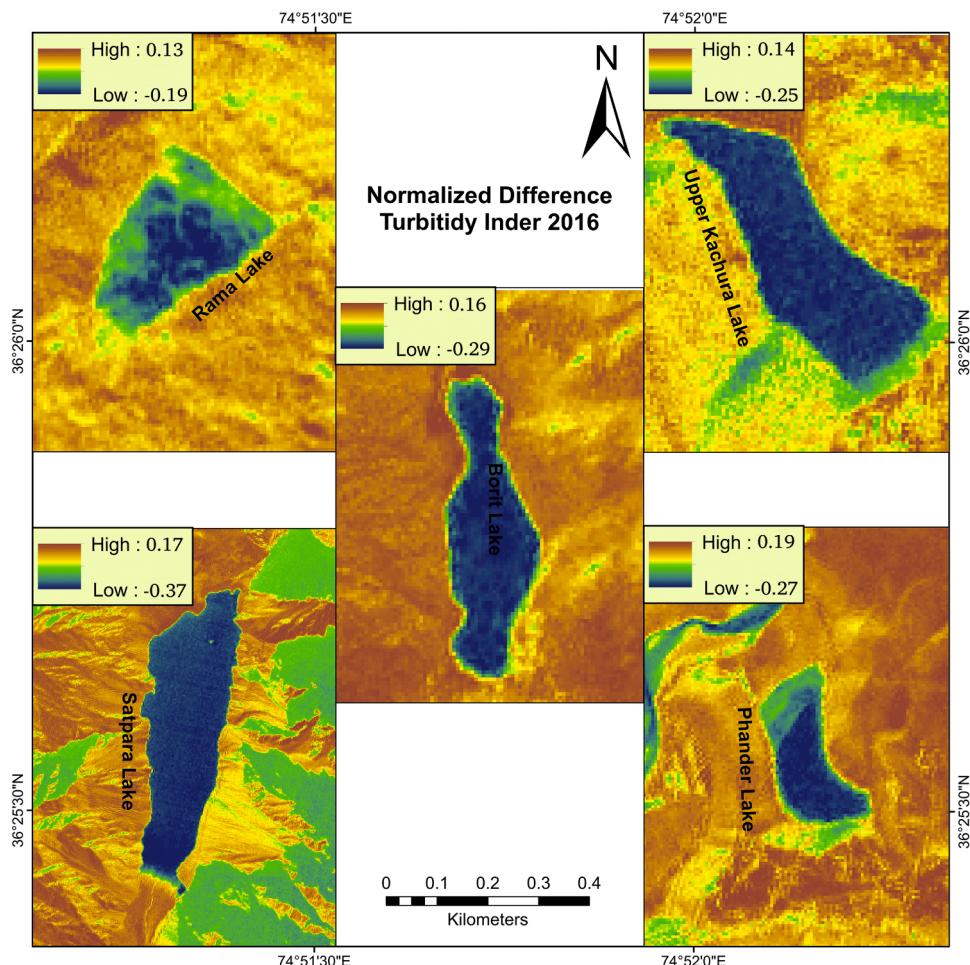


Figure 12. Normalized Difference Turbidity Index (NDTI) 2016.

3.5. Tasseled Cap Wetness (TCW)

Wetlands are home to diverse ecosystems, showcasing unique flora and fauna. They provide multidimensional services that have significance in both natural and commercial perspectives, contributing to natural cycles and the economy [56] (Figs. 8, 9, and Table 5). The analysis of all lakes, reveals the wetness levels in the study area. In both 2016 and 2019, Satpara Lake exhibited the highest wetness values, represented by blue shades in the images. The wetness values for Satpara Lake were 5.21 in 2016 and increased to 8.89 in 2019. For the other lakes, the highest wetness values in 2016 were 3.79 for Borith Lake, 4.29 for Phander Lake, 3.31 for Upper Kachura Lake, and 1.59 for Rama Lake. In 2019, these values changed to 3.82, 4.59, 4.23, and 4.41, respectively. Conversely, the lowest areas for wetness, represented by red shades in both 2016 and 2019, were observed in all lakes. These wetness patterns provide valuable information about the hydrological characteristics of the lakes and the overall wetland ecosystem dynamics. Understanding the wetness variations in wetlands can help researchers and policy-makers assess the health of these critical ecosystems and implement appropriate conservation and management strategies to safeguard their ecological value and contributions to the environment and economy [57].

3.6. Tasseled Cap Greenness (TCG)

The (TCG) assessment was performed on all of the lakes chosen, and the results revealed varying levels of greenness. These variations in greenness values are directly linked to the growth of microorganisms in

the wetland ecosystem (Figs. 10 and 11). In 2016, Borith Lake had the highest TCG value of -3.69 and the lowest value of -8.21. However, in 2019, the highest TCG value for Borith Lake was -4.22, and the lowest value was -1.00, indicating a change in greenness between 2016 and 2019. Similarly, Lakes had TCG values of -2.19, -3.99, -2.29, and -4.68, respectively, as the highest greenness values in 2016. In 2019, these values changed to -6.55, -2.01, -2.79, and -2.88, respectively. Furthermore, the lowest greenness values also showed variations between 2016 and 2019. For example, Phander Lake had a lowest TCG value of -1.10 in 2016, which changed to -1.19 in 2019. Upper Kachura, Satpara, and Rama had lowest values of -8.56, -8.99, and -9.01 in 2016, respectively. In 2019, these values changed to -1.08, -2.59, and -7.88, respectively. These changes in greenness values are visually represented in the images, where green areas indicate the highest levels of greenness, while purple shades highlight the lowest zones of greenness. Understanding the variations in greenness is essential for assessing the health and productivity of wetland ecosystems. Changes in greenness can indicate shifts in the growth of vegetation and microorganisms, which have ecological implications for the wetlands and the organisms that depend on them. The study's focus was on wetland dynamics, but similar machine learning techniques could be applied to crop type mapping [58]. Monitoring these changes can aid in better management and conservation strategies to preserve the biodiversity and functionality of these valuable ecosystems [59,60] (Table 6).

3.7. Normalized Difference Turbidity Index (NDTI)

The Turbidity Index analysis provided information about the water

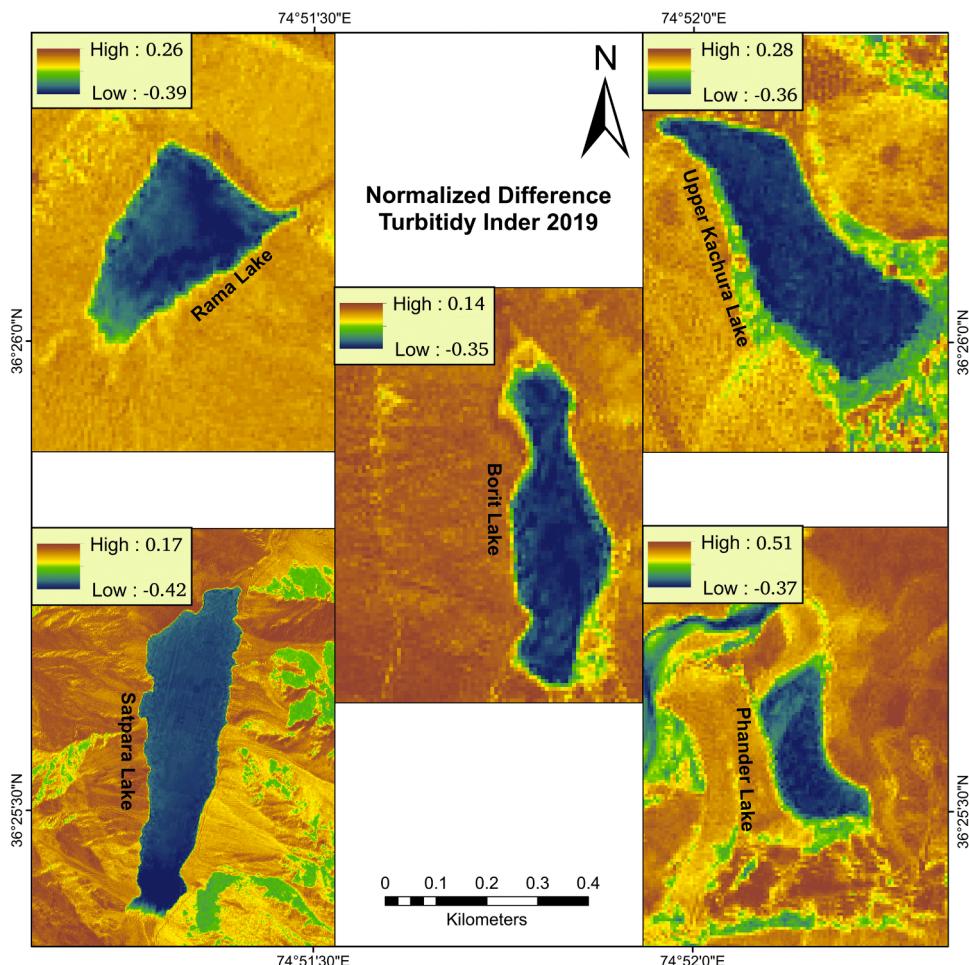


Figure 13. Normalized Difference Turbidity Index (NDTI) 2019.

Table 7
NDTI of 2016-2019.

Lakes	2016		2019	
	High	Low	High	Low
Borith	0.16	-0.29	0.14	-0.35
Phander	0.19	-0.27	0.51	-0.37
Upper Kachura	0.14	-0.25	0.28	-0.36
Satpara	0.17	-0.37	0.17	-0.42
Rama	0.13	-0.19	0.26	-0.39

quality in the selected lakes (Figs. 12 and 13). In the images for 2016 and 2019, the orange shade represented the highest turbidity levels, while the blue color indicated low turbidity levels. Overall, the lakes showed generally low turbidity. In 2016, the highest turbidity values for Borith, Phander, Upper Kachura, Satpara, and Rama Lake were 0.16, 0.19, 0.14, 0.17, and 0.13, respectively. However, in 2019, these values changed to 0.14, 0.51, 0.28, 0.17, and 0.26, respectively, indicating a change in turbidity levels between the two years. Similarly, the lowest turbidity values also exhibited changes from 2016 to 2019. In 2016, the lowest turbidity values were -0.29, -0.27, -0.25, -0.37, and -0.19 for all Lake, respectively. In 2019, these values changed to -0.35, -0.37, -0.36, -0.42, and -0.39, respectively. Turbidity is a critical parameter for assessing water quality, as it reflects the amount of suspended particles in the water. Changes in turbidity levels can have implications for water clarity, aquatic habitat, and the overall health of the wetland ecosystem. Researchers and politicians can get insights into the environmental state of the lakes by monitoring turbidity levels and making informed

judgements about water quality management and conservation activities (Table 7).

3.8. Change Detection (CD)

The purpose of identifying changes in land use is to understand the transformations that have occurred in the past and to determine how land use has evolved over time. This analysis provides valuable insights into the rate and nature of land use changes. For the change detection analysis in this study, spatially strong data from GE images of the lakes were utilized to compare the conditions in 2016 and 2019 (Fig. 14 a-e). The boundary in green represented the lake area in 2016, while the red boundary represented the lake boundaries in 2019. Furthermore, the water area was highlighted with a blue shade in 2016 and a yellow colour in 2019, highlighting the changes visually. In 2016, the percentage of water area in each lake was as follows: Phander 20.79%, Borith 22.73%, Upper Kachura 23.03%, Satpara 23.01%, and Rama 24.63%. The total area of each lake was recorded as 29.89%, 28.09%, 27.88%, 29.12%, and 26.10%, respectively. In 2019, slight changes were observed in both the boundary of the lake and the percentage of water area. For instance, in 2019 [65,66], Phander Lake had 30.10% of the total area, Borith Lake had 29.40%, Upper Kachura Lake had 29.13%, Satpara Lake had 28.82%, and Rama Lake had 27.20% of the area. The percentage of water area also changed in 2019, becoming 22.10%, 23.40%, 24.56%, 22.43%, and 25.01%, respectively. These results demonstrate the alterations that have occurred in the lake boundaries and water percentages over the three-year period. Understanding these changes is crucial for monitoring the health of the

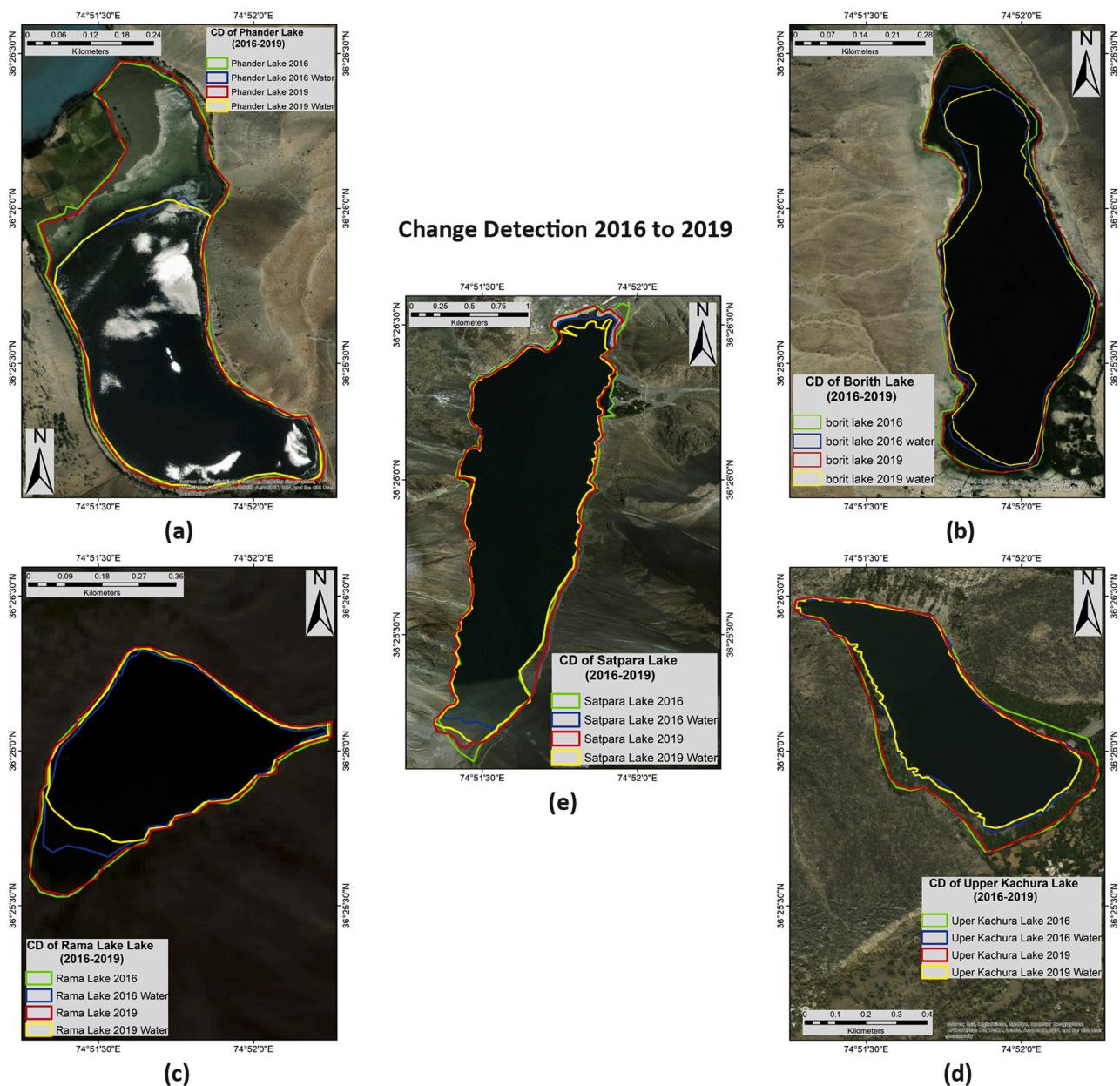


Figure 14. (a) Change Detection of Phander Lake 2016 and 2019, (b). Change Detection of Borith Lake 2016 and 2019, (c). Change Detection of Rama Lake 2016 and 2019, (d). Change Detection of Upper Kachura Lake 2016 and 2019 and (e). Change Detection of Satpara Lake 2016 and 2019.

Table 8
Change Detection of Lakes 2016-2019.

Lakes	2016		2019	
	Water	Area Sq.km	Water	Area Sq. Km
Borith	22.73	28.09	23.40	29.40
Phander	20.79	29.89	22.10	30.10
Upper Kachura	23.01	29.12	22.43	28.82
Satpara	24.63	26.10	25.01	27.20
Rama	23.03	27.88	24.56	29.13

wetland ecosystems and for making informed decisions regarding their conservation and management [61–64] (Table 8).

4. Conclusions

The study aimed to identify neglected wetlands in Pakistan using

remote sensing techniques and to analyze their dynamics over a period of 2016-2019. The study identified several neglected wetlands in Pakistan that have been subject to various human-induced changes. The analysis showed that wetlands in Pakistan are highly vulnerable to human activities, such as land-use changes and urbanization, which have a significant impact on their distribution and change. The study highlights the potential of remote sensing techniques for identifying and monitoring neglected wetlands in Pakistan. Remote sensing data proved to be a valuable tool for mapping wetland change and analyzing the factors influencing wetland dynamics. The findings of this study can guide policymakers and stakeholders in making informed decisions related to wetland conservation and management in Pakistan. The study's wetland conservation and management strategies are tailored to the specific needs and challenges of neglected wetlands in Pakistan and could contribute to improving wetland management and conservation in the country. In conclusion, this study provides a comprehensive understanding of wetland dynamics in Pakistan, particularly neglected

wetlands. The study contributes towards achieving the sustainable development goals by providing valuable information for preserving these ecosystems, which are essential for maintaining biodiversity, regulating climate, and supporting the livelihoods of local communities. The study also highlights the need for continued monitoring and conservation efforts to protect Pakistan's wetlands from further degradation and loss. Our investigation found that the wetlands' dynamics have changed between 2016 and 2019. Some wetlands changed negatively, while others changed positively, most likely as a result of climate change and increased human-induced activities that directly or indirectly impact the wetland ecology.

Author Contributions

RWA and HS: Conceptualization; methodology; software; RWA, SP, HS, AQ, DR, FM and KJ: validation, formal analysis; investigation; HS: resources; data curation; RWA, KJ, BA, SA, WAH and SP; writing—original draft preparation.; writing—review and editing; visualization, RWA.; supervision, HS; project administration, HS.; funding acquisition, HS. All authors contributed equally.

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Ethical Approval

Not applicable.

Consent to Participate

Not applicable.

Consent to Publish

Not applicable.

Availability of data and materials

data available upon request to correspondanng author.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Data availability

Data will be made available on request.

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