Interactive comment on "Forecasters priorities for improving probabilistic flood forecasts" *by* F. Wetterhall et al.

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Preliminary remark:

In this review I strictly follow the idea of "Opinion Papers", that "are not peer reviewed in the traditional sense, but are discussed openly in HESSD so as to stimulate an open debate among peers on new ideas, views or perceptions in Hydrology".

Personal remarks:

The other reviewers made already several comments on how to improve this

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opinion paper. My personal opinion is that this manuscript is an interesting and most needed view on real life application of scientific knowledge. Wetterhall et al. show that scientific advance really cares somebody other than peers.

In recent years HESS has become a journal that guested several papers and special issues (see a list in Rossa et al., 2011; Table 2) demonstrating the advances in probabilistic rainfall-runoff modelling including both floods and low-flows. I personally reviewed some of these papers I think that this paper needs to be part of this collection of topical contributions in HESS.

The manuscripts demonstrates, that research is and can be steered by the needs of practitioners and is not only driven by the researcher own interest in finding the best score for evaluating a specific model chain or in realizing a novel pre- or post-processing algorithm yielding a statistically relevant improvement in runoff prediction in case of few idealized events (I like the begin of the introduction in this respect).

Wetterhall et al. give a fair insight on a community being interested in a specific model chain (EFAS-LISFLOOD) and try to sum up and interpret the results of two surveys. There are of course several other models being embedded into a community (e.g. FEWS or HBV), but I have here to praise the sincerity of the authors in communicating here their own experience and thoughts.

Back in 2007 I was able to follow of the efforts of Frick and Hegg (2011), that accompanied the MAP DPHASE project (Rotach et al., 2009) and was surprised on how difficult is to collect and analyse scientific information in social sciences. I am therefore not as critical as the other reviewers in evaluating the pragmatic way the authors choose to unlock information from their practitioners. Being this an opinion paper I can agree with their unconventional approach. Reviewer T. Wagener had himself a (most interesting) paper in 2007 in "Hydrological Processes" on "Taking

the pulse of Hydrology Education", here we have an example on "Taking the pulse" on end-users "priorities for improving probabilistic flood forecasts" that has similar informative content as the present paper.

Further issues:

A) The authors should make some general comparison to other (operational) model chains used by large communities (e.g. FEWS or HBV). Do the authors think that the priorities they identified are valid also for other model systems?

B) Page 2221: The sentence:

"This opinion paper was spawned from a group exercise at the 7th annual EFAS workshop which was held 12–13 June 2012 at the Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute (SMHI) in Norrkoping, Sweden, followed by an individual survey conducted via email to the work shop participants"

belongs in my opinion in the introduction to this opinion paper with some word on the importance for any developer of HEPS to have access to the end-user opinion (e.g. Frick and Hegg, 2011) for guiding future developments.

C) Table 2: The topic: "Improve physical model representation" (Q14) is ranked 10 in the supplementary material and 12th in Table 2. Or do I misinterpret both tables? For the other topics the link between Table 2 and the supplementary material works.

D) Table 2: I really don't fully catch the footnote on the 5 Krona. Does it mean that somebody in the audience needed small change and changed 5 "1 krona" pieces with 1 "5 krona" piece? Or that somebody really wanted to boost this topic and was

ready to put own money in it?

Best regards

Massimiliano Zappa, WSL, Switzerland, 29.05.2013

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