

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

Dr Wetterhall

fredrik.wetterhall@ecmwf.int

Received and published: 20 June 2013

Thanks for the clarification regarding your question. In the questionnaire we are unfortunately a bit fuzzy. In the motivation to the priority we state: "A more skilful forecast will be a more useful forecast", meaning a skill improvement in the output that is used in the decision to issue a forecast. Examples are the Reliability or the Threat Score for a certain location. This would suggest that we are going for a "general improvement in skill".

On the other hand, we also describe the improvement in skill as "This would mean that a forecast for day 5 would become as skill-full as a forecast for day 4 with the present system", which sounds more like something you would expect from a headline score,

C2713

like the CRPSS, averaged over a large area. This rather suggests "an improvement in the general skill"

Given this I realise that the question was ill-posed and it is not clear what we were going for here, we will add a comment on this in a revised version.

The question of skill and how it is measured and disseminated is a very interesting discussion in itself and there are many ways of measuring it (also linking to Massimiliano's comment on "gut feeling"), and we will add more of it to the discussion part. Regarding EFAS we are already (and will extend) the calculation of some "headline scores" to monitor the improvement in the general skill. These scores are more to see the effect of model updates, new calibrations et cetera. We will also provide information to the users on more specific skills that are related to the performance at certain locations to build trust in the system. This will have to be an iterative process in dialogue with the forecasters to provide the just the right amount of information. You can easily drown in scores. Finally, the performance scores will also be used to diagnose where and under what circumstances the system performs poorly.

Interactive comment on Hydrol. Earth Syst. Sci. Discuss., 10, 2215, 2013.