

Interactive comment on “Defining the climatic signal in stream salinity trends using the Interdecadal Pacific Oscillation and its rate of change” by V. H. McNeil and M. E. Cox

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The paper deals with the issue of attributing long-term variability of groundwater levels in eastern Australia to the IPO index, and separating the influences of land-use change from those due to climate variability.

We have four review comments on this manuscript. The reviews are quite mixed. 1) All reviewers do point out that there is material that is novel or useful in this manuscript; 2) However, the presentation is considerably flawed and indeed rather sloppy, which the authors should definitely pick up in their revisions 3) The analysis is mostly qualitative

and must be made more rigorous; 4) Relevance of this paper to the subject matter of the special issue, i.e. "thresholds and pattern dynamics" is not brought out, and must be; 5) The reviewers also point to a number of substantive issues and questions on the analysis done, such as (i) the value of smoothed IPO variability, (ii) questionable use of the rate of change of IPO index, and (iii) decadal changes of the SOI not being utilized. These must be addressed.

In summary, while there is value in this paper, it requires substantial revisions to bring it to the level of quality suitable for publication in HESSD.

I therefore recommend substantial revisions of the manuscript - it will need to be peer-reviewed again to ensure that it satisfies some of the original reviewers. The authors must also explain the relevance of the paper to the special issue. I hope the authors will respond to the comments published in HESSD, by first publishing their comments in HESSD and then proceed to revise the manuscript.

I look forward to seeing further discussion in HESSD and also to receiving a revised manuscript subsequently.

Interactive comment on Hydrol. Earth Syst. Sci. Discuss., 3, 2963, 2006.

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Interactive Discussion

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