

Interactive comment on “The seven rules for hydrologists and other researchers wanting to contribute to the water management practice” by E. Mostert and G. T. Raadgever

Anonymous Referee #3

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The authors suggest seven rules to be followed by researchers to increase the impact of their research on water management practice. Overall the paper achieves what it aims for; to provide food for thought and reflection for researchers interested to improve the impact of their research on policy. However, the rules entail also a certain danger to undermine the role of science as neutral party in a policy process that is not supporting any vested interests.

The latter danger applies in particular to the rules; chose strategy and design process to implement strategy;. The authors are right that researchers should be explicit about the choices they make and reflect on their own values; in

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particular since only by reflection researchers may realize that they have made implicit value laden choices. However, advocacy research to support the interest of a specific interest group should not be supported as explicit strategy by any researcher. In the long run this will undermine the credibility of science.

Trust in science – highlighted as important factor in science communication – does not only depend in science being “right or wrong” but also in science being impartial and reflexive about uncertainties.

The arguments given by the author to argue for collaborative research are valid beyond being pure preferences resulting from his individual interests. The emphasis on research being value laden and less objective than often portrayed is valuable. However, I do not agree that research is always subjective driven by individual (= personal) interests. If so – why should the voice of science (e.g. in the climate debate) be of any more significance than the voice of any other interest group? Science aims at least for shared practices that support to develop insights that go beyond situated, place-based knowledge shaped by individual interests and preferences – despite being constrained by the boundaries of scientific practice and disciplines. Here a more careful reflection would be useful.

Interactive comment on Hydrol. Earth Syst. Sci. Discuss., 5, 843, 2008.

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