

Interactive comment on “HESS Opinions “Crash tests for a standardized evaluation of hydrological models”” by V. Andréassian et al.

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COMMENT BY PROF. JENS-CHRISTIAN REFSGAARD, GEUS, DENMARK

The promotion of the four-level Klemes Crash Test (KCT) is very commendable. I fully support the ideas and the underlying philosophy.

There is one important limitation in the paper. Namely that you do not distinguish clearly between model codes and site-specific models. What you are discussing here is a KCT meant for model codes, i.e. model code verification according to the terminology of Refsgaard and Henriksen (2004). The main effort in our work (Refsgaard and Henriksen, 2004; and others) is on validation of site specific models. In my view

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you need both types of tests, and it is important to emphasise that a well tested model code is no guarantee for a proper model use. Or if we use the car analogy: Even a good car that has successfully passed all crash tests can be involved in an accident if the site-specific conditions - such as roads, weather, car maintenance or driver qualifications - are not adequate. This is not a critique of the need for KCT of model codes, but I think you should emphasise in the discussion/conclusion that a Klemes validation test of site-specific models is a second, and equally important, step.

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