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Hydrology and Earth System Sciences Discussions

Interactive comment on "Multi-model comparison of a major flood in the groundwater-fed basin of the Somme River (France)" *by* F. Habets et al.

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Overall, the paper has received excellent comments from 4 reviewers, which the authors should individually respond, and in the process improve the presentation of their manuscript. Most of the comments are about presentation, which should be relatively easy to handle. Overall, the reviewers are supportive of eventual publication of a revised manuscript.

As editor, I feel that the authors can and should go beyond addressing the detailed comments of the reviewers. The phenomenon that they are trying to model - groundwater dominated floods - is a very interesting one. The authors have approached the problem from a multi-model comparative approach, and the reviewers have also

approached it in the same manner, and the analysis and discussion have a certain "beauty contest" flavor. In my opinion what is missing is a synthesis of the results of the various model applications. What actually happens during these flood events? Is there some consensus about it? If not, why not? One cannot take the "blind men and the elephant" attitude to it. I like to see some answers that go beyond how well each model does or does not. Could not one come up with a conceptual model of what happens on the basis of a top-down, data based study that provides some illumination of the dominant processes at work?

I would like a thorough revision of the manuscript that brings out these hydrological issues, rather than merely reporting on just the model inter-comparisons. I look forward to reading a revised manuscript.

Interactive comment on Hydrol. Earth Syst. Sci. Discuss., 6, 6135, 2009.