

Interactive comment on “The Indus basin in the framework of current and future water resources management” by A. N. Laghari et al.

Anonymous Referee #2

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The paper is an attempt of a comprehensive literature review on all water management issues in the Indus River basin. In principle, such reviews are useful. The paper is also well written and attractively short for review type ones. The questions are - 1) whether this is of broad interest, 2) whether it is worth a peer-reviewed publication as it stands, 3) whether it is in the scope of the journal, and 4) whether it is not a repetition of the extensive work (and comprehensive reviews) done by others to date. On the first question the answer is probably yes, given that more and more attention is paid now to water management issues in developing world, and the importance of water issues in geopolitics, particularly with regard to such vulnerable countries like Pakistan, where over 140 mill people live from water resources of effectively one major river basin, which is already heavily over-exploited. On the second question the answer is most

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likely "no". Reviews like this hardly worth publishing in peer-reviewed journals. The paper is descriptive, quiet general, not analytical, and hardly can boast delivering any new messages at all. One would expect that such a paper (if trimmed a bit) could be a prelude for some research idea that will be explored, or at the very least - put forward, but alas... Overall it looks a bit s an introductory chapter of someone's PhD Thesis - and I god one! - but not sufficient for a highly technical peer-reviewed journal like HESS. On the third question - the answer is probably "no" too, see also just above. Perhaps it may suit a journal that is more policy oriented – like Water International, or Water Resources Development, but then the constraining comments above will also apply. As for the fourth question -the recently completed Basin Focal Project on Indus and Ganga- funded by Challenge Program on Water and Food –has effectively done this comprehensive review of water-related issues. The results of this and other Basin Focal Projects have recently been published in Water International - Basin by Basin. So, it is unclear what exactly this paper adds to the already exiting (and comprehensively compiled) knowledge on Indus. Finally, many statements in the paper are either basic or confusing, or both. Examples include the attempts to present glaciers contribution to Indus flow (which are quite unjustified and hardly worth repeating from paper to paper), or references to Australia as the only country where water restrictions are used as a drought management measure, very abbreviated references to water footprint and virtual water concepts (which themselves have many flaws), etc. etc. It is quite understandable that the authors are overwhelmed by the amount of new information that they have gone through and digested, but this is hardly a justification for peer-reviewed publishing.

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