

Letter to the editor.

Thank you very much for leading the discussion of our opinion paper on "Modelling Catchments as Living Organisms" or "How to make our models more physically based", which raised quite some activity by the reviewers. We are very grateful for the time and effort spent by the reviewers and the editor on sharing their ideas and criticism and for providing us with suggestions for improvement.

We have taken the suggestions at heart and have addressed all issues that were raised in our replies on the discussion forum. In the discussion we promised to make adjustments to the paper and we have done so. The changes are not so much in the message, but rather in the way the message is conveyed. We have made major changes to the text, as can be seen from an attached file that compares the original and revised manuscript.

In particular we have:

1. shortened the abstract considerably (as was requested by the reviewers, and also shortened the text of the manuscript at several locations.
2. replaced too colloquial language and removed "sweeping" statements
3. removed the poster in supplementary material, which was useful in the discussion but not in the final paper. Instead two equations have been included in the paper, as requested.
4. emphasized in the conclusion that both "physically-based" and conceptual models have an important role to play in finding the physical laws between pattern formation, and in general removed sentences that "blame" the "physically-based" models or modellers.
5. added more relevant references, as suggested by the reviewers.
6. changed the title, which now clearly mentions that the paper refers to catchment scale hydrology.

I hope that these major revision are considered adequate.

Sincerely,
Hubert Savenije
Markus Hrachowitz