

Interactive comment on “Values in water management” by Erik Mostert

Anonymous Referee #1

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This can be a useful addition to the growing field of socio-hydrology. I learned a lot about "values" and how to measure it from this paper. However, I remain unsatisfied with the paper as it is constituted now. There are three major concerns that I have:

1. Firstly, I do not know under what category it is submitted. It is clearly not a research article, and in my opinion it is neither a vision paper or review article. It comes across as a "tutorial" on values. It definitely serves an educational purpose, especially for non-social scientists (engineers, hydrologists), who come across values for the first time and have to deal with it in their socio-hydrologic analysis or modeling. At the very least, the presentation can be modified for it to come across as a review article.
2. Secondly, in the early part of the paper, while introducing the VBN theory, the author mentions suggests that it is "not a complete theory of values. What is missing is proper attention for the social origin and character of values and for social mechanisms

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such as enforcement", and that "... in this paper a more comprehensive theory of values in water management will be developed". Unfortunately, such a theory was not developed or presented (at least I did not detect in this tutorial style presentation). The paper would benefit a lot more if all that literature review/tutorial would be organized to present a more comprehensive or generalized version of VBN theory.

3. The discussion on measurements is very useful to socio-hydrology practitioners, having all these methods presented in one place. However, it would have been nice to embellish the discussion with some real examples from published socio-hydrological studies, and how socio-hydrologists adapted and improvised to generate proxies that they could be used in socio-hydrology. This too will help overcome the tutorial style of presentation in the current version of the paper.

For example, I want to mention an article published in WRR, which used the Q methodology to measure values in relation to flooding in India. (Leong, C. 2018. The role of narratives in socio-hydrological models of flood behaviors. *Water Resour. Res.*, 54, 3100–3121, doi: 10.1002/2017WR022036). When I first read that paper I did not understand the Q methodology, but this tutorial helped me to understand it better in hindsight. This is why using real life examples to illustrate a point or a method is likely to be much more insightful.

Overall, I like the paper and want it published eventually, but request that it undergo some restructuring to address the concerns I have raised above.

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