

# 1 Global catchment modelling using World-Wide HYPE 2 (WWH), open data and stepwise parameter estimation

3 Berit Arheimer<sup>1\*</sup>, Rafael Pimentel<sup>1,2</sup>, Kristina Isberg<sup>1</sup>, Louise Crochemore<sup>1</sup>, Jafet C.M. Andersson<sup>1</sup>,  
4 Abdulghani Hasan<sup>1,3</sup>, and Luis Pineda<sup>1,4</sup>

5 <sup>1</sup>Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute (SMHI), Folkborgsvägen 17, 60176 Norrköping,  
6 Sweden.

7 <sup>2</sup>University of Cordoba, Edif. Leonardo Da Vinci, Campus de Rabanales, 14071, Córdoba, Spain.

8 <sup>3</sup>Lund University Box 117, SE-221 00, Lund, Sweden.

9 <sup>4</sup>Proyecto Yachay, Hacienda San José, Urcuquí, Ecuador.

10 \*Corresponding author: Berit Arheimer ( [berit.arheimer@smhi.se](mailto:berit.arheimer@smhi.se) )  
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## 12 Abstract

13 Recent advancements in catchment hydrology (such as understanding hydrological processes,  
14 accessing new data sources, and refining methods for parameter constraints) make it possible to  
15 apply catchment models for ungauged basins over large domains. Here we present a cutting-edge  
16 case study applying catchment-modelling techniques at the global scale for the first time. The  
17 modelling procedure was challenging but doable and even the first model version show better  
18 performance than traditional gridded global models of river flow. We used the open-source code of  
19 the HYPE model and applied it for >130 000 catchments (with an average resolution of 1000 km<sup>2</sup>),  
20 delineated to cover the Earth's landmass (except Antarctica). The catchments were characterized  
21 using 20 open databases on physiographical variables, to account for spatial and temporal variability  
22 of the global freshwater resources, based on exchange with the atmosphere (e.g. precipitation and  
23 evapotranspiration) and related budgets in all compartments of the land (e.g. soil, rivers, lakes,  
24 glaciers, and floodplains), including water stocks, residence times, interfacial fluxes, and the  
25 pathways between various compartments. Global parameter values were estimated using a step-  
26 wise approach for groups of parameters regulating specific processes and catchment characteristics  
27 in representative gauged catchments. Daily time-series (> 10 years) from 5338 gauges of river flow  
28 across the globe were used for model evaluation (half for calibration and half for independent  
29 validation), resulting in a median monthly KGE of 0.4. However, the world-wide HYPE (WWH) model  
30 shows large variation in model performance, both between geographical domains and between  
31 various flow signatures. The model performs best in Eastern USA, Europe, South-East Asia, and  
32 Japan, as well as in parts of Russia, Canada, and South America. The model shows overall good  
33 potential to capture flow signatures of monthly high flows, spatial variability of high flows, duration  
34 of low flows and constancy of daily flow. Nevertheless, there remains large potential for model  
35 improvements and we suggest both redoing the calibration and reconsidering parts of the model  
36 structure for the next WWH version. The calibration cycle should be repeated a couple of times to  
37 find robust values under new fixed parameter conditions. For the next iteration, special focus will be  
38 given to precipitation, evapotranspiration, soil storage, and dynamics from hydrological features,  
39 such as lakes, reservoirs, glaciers, and floodplains. This first model version clearly indicates challenges  
40 in large scale modelling, usefulness of open data and current gaps in processes understanding. Parts

41 of the WWH can be shared with other modellers working at the regional scale to appreciate local  
42 knowledge, establish a critical mass of experts and improve the model in a collaborative manner.  
43 Setting up a global catchment model has to be a long-term commitment of continuous model  
44 refinements to achieve ~~successful and truly~~more useful results for water management.

45

## 46 **1. Introduction**

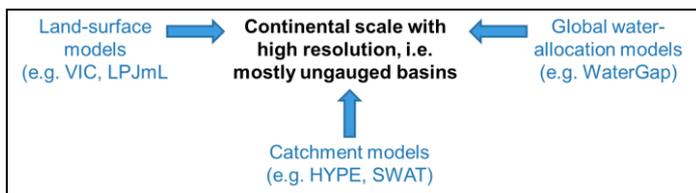
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48 Hydrological models are useful tools to better understand processes behind observation, to  
49 reconstruct past events and to predict future events, as well as to explore the impact of various  
50 scenarios of change in flow controlling factors, such as climate or human activities. Catchment  
51 models were traditionally often applied in small well-monitored rivers under pristine conditions, to  
52 understand mechanisms in flow generation (e.g. Bergström and Forsman, 1973; Beven and Kirby,  
53 1979; Lindström et al., 1997) or to support flow forecasts at warning services (e.g. Arheimer et al.,  
54 2011). However, a combination of societal requests and scientific initiatives has changed this context  
55 for catchment modelling recently. As catchment models are mimicking observation through  
56 calibration procedures, they have high credibility among practitioners and water managers. Hence,  
57 they are used operationally in many societal sectors, to provide for instance design values for  
58 infrastructure, water allocation schemes, navigation routes, flood warnings, environmental-status  
59 indices or optimal industrial-water use. Currently, all these users of catchment model outputs also  
60 face climate change and seek data and information to best implement climate adaptation for their  
61 specific business. Hence, catchment models are also used to estimate climate change impact.

62 The catchment research community has embraced this applied focus and, at the same time,  
63 expanded the geographical domain to multi-catchments. The applied focus is illustrated by the new  
64 decade of the International Association of Hydrological Sciences (IAHS) called “Panta Rhei”, which  
65 addresses change in hydrology and society (Montanari et al., 2013) and focuses on the human impact  
66 on the water cycle instead of traditional pristine conditions. The spatial expansion, on the other  
67 hand, is driven by accelerating advances in hydrological research as described by Archfield et al.  
68 (2015). For instance, comparative hydrology (Falkenmark and Chapman, 1989) or large sample  
69 hydrology (Gupta et al., 2014) show the potential to advance science by addressing a larger domain  
70 with multiple catchments than just exploring one single catchment at a time. Similarly, the previous  
71 scientific decade of IAHS “Predictions in Un-gauged Basins”, PUB (Hrachowitz et al., 2013; Bloeschl et  
72 al., 2013), resulted in methods to maintain the procedures typical for catchment modelling when  
73 parameters are transferred to areas without observed time-series of river flow, such as  
74 regionalization, parameter constraints, and Monte Carlo approaches for empirical quality control, to  
75 ensure that the process description is realistic and account for uncertainties. This opened up for  
76 catchment models to be tested and applied also at the continental scale (e.g. Pechlivanidis and  
77 Arheimer, 2015; Abbaspour et al., 2015; Donnelly et al., 2016), where normally other types of  
78 hydrological models were applied, using other modelling procedures and showing other advantages  
79 than the methods used by the catchment modelling community (see e.g. Archfield et al., 2015). Such  
80 large-scale models are for instance water allocation models (e.g. Arnell, 1999; Vörösmarty et al.,  
81 2000; Döll et al., 2003) or meteorological land-surface models (e.g. Liang et al., 1994; Woods et al.,

82 1998; Pitman, 2003; Lawrence et al., 2011) sometimes with more advanced routing schemes (e.g.  
83 Alferi et al., 2013). These more traditional global and continental modelling approaches can now be  
84 compared to hydrological catchment models in large-scale applications (Fig. 1).

85



86

87 **Figure 1.** Different modelling communities who can now start comparing their methods.

88

89 Other important factors, which nowadays allow catchment modelling at the global scale, are  
90 computational capacity and open global data sources. The methods for applying and evaluating  
91 catchment models are computationally heavy. The advances in application routines and evaluation  
92 frameworks, such as GLUE (Beven and Binley, 1992), DREAM (Laloy and Vrugt, 2012), or methods in  
93 the SAFE toolbox (Pianosi et al., 2015) have become possible due to the fact that the catchment  
94 models themselves are normally quick to run even on a personal computer. With increasing  
95 computational capacity, these methods are now possible to apply also in a multi-catchment  
96 approach for a large domain [\(i.e. nested catchment units instead of grids, and entire landmass  
97 coverage instead of isolated catchments\)](#). Most important for catchment modelling, however, is the  
98 recent explosion of open and readily available data sources globally, which makes it possible to  
99 delineate the catchment borders, find input data at relevant scale to set up the catchment models,  
100 and to assign time-series of observed flow at some catchment outlets. This enables the use of  
101 recognised methods in catchment modelling for parameter estimation and model evaluation, [as  
102 described in the following paragraphs. Using catchments instead of grids as a calculation unit also  
103 makes it possible to apply an ecosystem approach and account for spatial co-evolution of processes  
104 at the landscape scale \(e.g. Blöschl et al., 2013\). Model parameters can thus be linked to catchment  
105 state from interacting entities and not only to aggregation of separated building blocks of the  
106 catchment.](#)

107 In the early 1970's, model parameters were calibrated using a rather simple curve fitting towards  
108 observed time-series of river flow in a specific catchment outlet (e.g. Bergström and Forsman, 1973).  
109 Since then the methods for parameter estimation have become more sophisticated, especially when  
110 the objective is regionalisation across many catchments at large scale (e.g. Beck et al., 2016). Some  
111 common approaches use: (i) the same parameters based on geographic proximity (e.g. Merz and  
112 Blöschl, 2004; Oudin et al., 2008); (ii) regression models between parameter values and catchment  
113 characteristics (Hundecha and Bárdossy, 2004; Samaniego et al., 2010; Hundecha et al., 2016); (iii)  
114 simultaneous calibration in multiple representative catchments with similar climatic and/or  
115 physiographic characteristics (e.g. Arheimer and Brandt, 1998; Fernandez et al., 2000; Parajka et al.,  
116 2007). In this study, we apply a variety of the latter, using a stepwise approach (e.g. Strömqvist et al.,  
117 2012; Pechlivanidis and Arheimer, 2015; Donnelly et al, 2016; Andersson et al., 2017) trying to isolate  
118 hydrological processes and calibrate them separately against observed river flow in selected

119 representative basins across the entire globe, although, some hydrological features as large lakes and  
120 floodplains were calibrated individually.

121 The hypothesis tested in the present study states that, it is now possible and timely to apply  
122 catchment modelling techniques at the global scale. We address this hypothesis by applying a  
123 catchment model world-wide and then evaluating the results using statistical metrics for time-series  
124 and flow signatures. To our knowledge, this is the first time a catchment model was applied world-  
125 wide covering the entire globe with relatively high resolution, providing an average subbasin size  
126 of ~1000 km<sup>2</sup> (WWH version 1.3). Our specific objective is to provide a harmonized way to predict  
127 hydrological variables (especially river flow and the water balance) globally, which can also be shared  
128 for further refinement to assist in regional and local water management wherever hydrological  
129 models are currently lacking. To address this objective, we (i) compile open global data from >30  
130 sources, including for instance topography and river routing, meteorological forcing, physiographic  
131 land characteristics and in total some 20 000 time-series of river flow world-wide, (ii) apply the open-  
132 source code of the Hydrological Predictions for the Environment, HYPE model (Lindström et al.,  
133 2010), (iii) estimate model parameter values using a new stepwise calibration technique addressing  
134 the major hydrological processes and features world-wide, and (iv) compute metrics and flow  
135 signatures, and compare model performance with physiographic variables to judge model usefulness.  
136 We then pose the scientific question: How far can we reach in predicting river flow globally, using  
137 integrated catchment modelling, open global data and readily available time-series for calibration?

138

## 139 **2. The HYPE model**

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141 The development of the HYPE model development was initiated in 2002, primary to support the  
142 implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive in Sweden (Arheimer and Lindström, 2013). It  
143 was originally designed to estimate water quality status, but is now also used operationally at the  
144 Swedish hydrological warning service at SMHI for flood and drought forecasting (e.g. Pechlivanidis et  
145 al., 2014). The water and nutrient model is applied nationally for Sweden (Strömqvist et al., 2012),  
146 the Baltic Sea basin (Arheimer et al., 2012) and Europe (Donnelly et al., 2013). It also provides  
147 operational hydrological forecasts for Europe at short-term and seasonal scale and it has been  
148 subjected to several large-scale applications across the world, e.g. the Indian subcontinent  
149 (Pechlivanidis and Arheimer, 2015) and the Niger River (Andersson et al., 2017). One of the main  
150 drivers for HYPE applications has been climate-change impact assessments, for which its results have  
151 been compared to other models in selected catchments across the globe (Geflan et al., 2017; Gosling  
152 et al., 2017; Donnelly et al., 2017).

153 The HYPE model code (Lindström et al., 2010) represents a rather traditional integrated catchment  
154 model, describing major water pathways and fluxes in a catchment ensuring that the mass of water  
155 mass is conserved at each time step. Parameter values regulate the fluxes between water storages in  
156 the landscape and interaction with boundary condition of the atmosphere and deep ground water  
157 aquifers (see detailed model documentation at hypeweb.smhi.se). It is forced by precipitation and  
158 temperature at daily or hourly time-step, and start by calculating the water balance of Hydrological  
159 Response Units, which is the finest calculation unit in each catchment. In the WWH set-up, the HRUs

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160 were defined by land-cover, elevation and climate, without specific consideration to further  
161 definition of soil properties. This was guided by recent studies indicating that soil water storage and  
162 fluxes rather well related to vegetation type and climate conditions rather than soil properties (e.g.  
163 Troch et al., 2009; Gao et al., 2014). HYPE has maximum three layers of soil and these were all  
164 applied in the WWH, with a different hydrological response from each one for each HRU. The first  
165 layer corresponds to some 25 cm, the second to some 1-2 meters and the third can be deep also  
166 accounting for ground water. A specific routine can account for deep aquifers, but this was not  
167 applied in the WWH due to lack of local or regional information of aquifer behavior. HYPE has a snow  
168 routine to account for snow storage and melt, while a glacier routine accounts for ice storage and  
169 melt. Mass balances of glaciers were based on the observations provided in the Randolph Glacier  
170 Inventory (Arendt et al., 2015) and fixed separately in the model set-up.

171 There are a number of algorithms available to calculate potential evapotranspiration (PET) in HYPE.  
172 For the WWH we used the algorithms that had been judged most appropriate in previous HYPE  
173 applications, giving Jensen-Haise (Jensen and Haise, 1963) in temperate areas, modified Hargreaves  
174 (Hargreaves and Samani, 1982) in arid and equatorial areas, and Priestly Taylor (Priestly and Taylor,  
175 1972) in polar and snow /ice dominated areas. River flow is routed from upstream catchments to  
176 downstream along the river network, where lakes and reservoirs may dampen the flow according to  
177 a rating curve. A specific routine is used for floodplains to allow the formation of temporary lakes,  
178 which may be crucial especially in inland deltas (Andersson et al., 2017). Evaporation takes place  
179 from all water surfaces, including snow and canopy. The HYPE source code, documentation and user  
180 guidance are freely available at <http://hypecode.smhi.se/>.

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## 181 2.3. Data

### 183 2.3.1 Physiographic data

184 For catchment delineation and routing, topographical data is needed, but none of the hydrologically  
185 refined databases cover the entire land surface of Earth and therefore we had to merge several  
186 sources of information (Table 1). Most of the globe (from 60S to 80N) is covered by GWD-LR (Global  
187 Width Database of Large Rivers) 3 arc sec (Yamazaki et al. 2014), apart from the very northern part  
188 close to the Arctic Sea, for which HYDRO1K 30 arc sec (USGS) is used available. For Greenland, we  
189 used GIMP-DEM (Greenland Ice Mapping Project) 3 arc sec (Howat et al. 2014) and for Iceland the  
190 National data from the meteorological office. For the latter we merged the catchments to better fit  
191 the overall resolution, going from 27 000 catchments to 253. Each of the above datasets was used  
192 independently in the delineation.

193 Additional data was gathered to help with defining catchments as the delineation of catchments can  
194 be difficult in some environments. In flat areas we consulted previous mapping and hydrographical  
195 information of floodplains, prairies and deserts (Table 1). Karstic areas are unpredictable due to lack  
196 of subsurface information of underground channels crossing surface topography and thus needed to  
197 be defined and evaluated separately. Finally, flood risk areas (UNEP/GRID-Europe ; Table 1) were  
198 recognized as potentially important, enabling the use of model results in combination with hydraulic

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199 models, and thus also had to be identified so that model results can be extracted for such  
 200 applications.

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205  
 206 **Table 1.** Databases used for catchment delineation, routing and elevation in WWH version 1.3.

Type	Dataset/Link	Provider/Reference
Topography (Flow accumulation, flow direction, digital elevation, river width)	GWD-LR (3 arcsec) <a href="http://hydro.iis.u-tokyo.ac.jp/~yamada/GWD-LR/">http://hydro.iis.u-tokyo.ac.jp/~yamada/GWD-LR/</a> GIMP-DEM (3 arcsec) <a href="https://bpcrc.osu.edu/gdg/data/gimpdem">https://bpcrc.osu.edu/gdg/data/gimpdem</a> HYDRO1K (30 arcsec) <a href="https://lta.cr.usgs.gov/HYDRO1K">https://lta.cr.usgs.gov/HYDRO1K</a> SRTM (3 arcsec) <a href="https://lta.cr.usgs.gov/SRTM">https://lta.cr.usgs.gov/SRTM</a>	Yamazaki et al., 2014 Howat et al., 2015 United State Geological Survey – (USGS) USGS
Non-contributing areas in Canada	Areas of Non-Contributing Drainage (AAFC Watersheds Project – 2013) <a href="https://open.canada.ca/data/dataset/67c8352d-d362-43dc-9255-21e2b0cf466c">https://open.canada.ca/data/dataset/67c8352d-d362-43dc-9255-21e2b0cf466c</a>	Government Canada
Watershed delineation (Iceland)	IMO subbasins and main river basins <a href="http://en.vedur.is/hydrology/">http://en.vedur.is/hydrology/</a>	Icelandic Met Office (IMO)
Karst	World Map of Carbonate Rock Outcrops v3.0 <a href="http://digital.lib.usf.edu/SFS0055342/00001">http://digital.lib.usf.edu/SFS0055342/00001</a>	Ford (2006)
Global Flood Risk	Global estimated risk index for flood hazard <a href="http://ihp-wins.unesco.org/layers/geonode:fl1010irmt">http://ihp-wins.unesco.org/layers/geonode:fl1010irmt</a>	UNEP/GRID-Europe
Floodplains	Global Lake and Wetland Database (GLWD) <a href="https://www.worldwildlife.org/publications/global-lakes-and-wetlands-database-lakes-and-wetlands-grid-level-3">https://www.worldwildlife.org/publications/global-lakes-and-wetlands-database-lakes-and-wetlands-grid-level-3</a>	Lehner and Döll, 2004
Desert areas	World Land-Based Polygon Features <a href="https://geo.nyu.edu/catalog/stanford-bh326sc0899">https://geo.nyu.edu/catalog/stanford-bh326sc0899</a>	University of New York

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208 For catchment characteristics governing the hydrological processes in HYPE, the ESA CCI Landcover  
 209 version 1.6.1 epoch 2010 (300 m) was the baseline, but several other data sources were used to  
 210 adjust and add information to some hydrologically important features, such as glaciers, lakes,  
 211 reservoirs, irrigated crops, and climate zone (Table 2).

212

213 **Table 2.** Databases used to assign land cover, waterbodies and climate to catchments in WWH version 1.3.

Type	Dataset/Link	Provider/References
Land cover characteristics	ESA CCI Landcover v 1.6.1 epoch 2010 (300 m) <a href="https://www.esa-landcover-cci.org/?q=node/169">https://www.esa-landcover-cci.org/?q=node/169</a>	ESA Climate Change Initiative - Land Cover project

Glaciers	Randolph Glacier Inventory (RGI) v 5.0 <a href="https://www.glims.org/RGI/randolph50.html">https://www.glims.org/RGI/randolph50.html</a>	RGI Consortium	Ändrad fältkod
Greenland icesheet	Greenland Glacier Inventory	Rastner et al, 2012	
Lakes	ESA CCI-LC Waterbodies 150 m 2000 v 4.0 <a href="https://www.esa-landcover-cci.org/?q=node/169">https://www.esa-landcover-cci.org/?q=node/169</a>	ESA Climate Change Initiative - Land Cover project	Ändrad fältkod
Lakes	Global Lake and Wetland Database 1.1 (GLWD) <a href="https://www.worldwildlife.org/publications/global-lakes-and-wetlands-database-large-lake-polygons-level-1">https://www.worldwildlife.org/publications/global-lakes-and-wetlands-database-large-lake-polygons-level-1</a>	Lehner and Döll, 2004	Ändrad fältkod
Lake depths	Global Lake Database v2(GLDB) <a href="http://www.flake.igb-berlin.de/ep-data.shtml">http://www.flake.igb-berlin.de/ep-data.shtml</a>	Kourzeneva, 2010, Choulga, 2014	
Reservoirs and dams	Global Reservoir and Dam database v 1.1 (GRanD) <a href="http://www.gwsp.org/products/grand-database.html">http://www.gwsp.org/products/grand-database.html</a>	Lehner et al., 2011	Ändrad fältkod
Irrigation	GMIA v5.0 <a href="http://www.fao.org/nr/water/aquastat/irrigationmap/index10.stm">http://www.fao.org/nr/water/aquastat/irrigationmap/index10.stm</a>	Siebert et al., 2013	Ändrad fältkod
	MIRCA v1.1 <a href="http://www.uni-frankfurt.de/45218031/data_download">http://www.uni-frankfurt.de/45218031/data_download</a>	Portmann et al., 2010	Ändrad fältkod
Climate classification	Köppen-Geiger Climate classification, 1976-2000, v June 2006 <a href="http://koepfen-geiger.vu-wien.ac.at/">http://koepfen-geiger.vu-wien.ac.at/</a>	Kottek et al., 2006	Ändrad fältkod

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215 **2.23.2 Forcing Meteorological data**

216 The WWH model uses time-series of daily precipitation and temperature to make calculations on a  
217 daily time-step. All catchment models require initializations of the current state of the snow, soil and  
218 lake (and sometimes river) storages. At the global scale, a seamless dataset for several decades is  
219 necessary for consistent model forcing, to also cover hydrological features with large storage  
220 volumes. For WWH version 1.3 precipitation and temperature were achieved from the Hydrological  
221 Global Forcing Data (HydroGFD; Berg et al., 2018), which is an in-house product of SMHI that  
222 combines different climatological data products across the globe. This global dataset spans a long  
223 climatological period up to near-real-time and forecasts (from 1961 to 6 months ahead). The period  
224 used in this study, is primarily based on the global (50 km grid) re-analysis product ERA-interim (Dee  
225 et al., 2011) from ECMWF, which is further bias adjusted versus other products using observations,  
226 e.g. versions of CRU (Harris and Jones, 2014) and GPCC (Schneider et al, 2014). The HydroGFD  
227 dataset is produced using a method for bias adjustment, which is similar to the method by Weedon  
228 et al. (2014) but additionally uses updated climatological observations, and, for the near-real-time,  
229 interim products that apply similar methods. This means that it can run operationally in near-real-  
230 time. The dataset is continuously upgraded and in the present study, we used the HydroGFD version  
231 2.0.

232

233 **2.33.3 Observed river flow**

234 Catchment models need time-series of hydrological variables for parameter estimation and model  
235 evaluation. Metadata and [daily and monthly](#) time-series from gauging stations were collected from  
236 readily available open data sources globally (Table 3). In total, information from 21 704 gauging  
237 stations could be assigned to a catchment outlet. Of these, time-series could be downloaded for 11

238 369 while 10 336 could only assist with metadata, such as upstream area, river name, elevation or  
 239 natural of regulated flow. The time-series were screened for missing values, inconsistency, skewness,  
 240 trends, inhomogeneity, and outliers (Crochemore et al., [2019manuscript](#)). Only stations representing  
 241 the resolution of the model ( $\geq 1000 \text{ km}^2$ ) and with records of at least 10 consecutive years between  
 242 1981 and 2012 were considered for model evaluation. With these criteria, 5338 time-series were  
 243 finally used for evaluating model performance, of which 2863 represented completely independent  
 244 model validation and 2475 were also involved when estimating some of the model parameters.  
 245

246 **Table 3.** Databases used for time-series of water discharge and location of gauging station when estimating  
 247 parameters and evaluating the model performance of WWH version 1.3.

Data type	Short Name/Link	Coverage	Provider/References
Time-series + metadata	GRDC <a href="https://www.bafg.de/GRDC/EN/Home/homepage_node.html">https://www.bafg.de/GRDC/EN/Home/homepage_node.html</a>	Global	Global Runoff Data Center
"	EWA <a href="https://www.bafg.de/GRDC/EN/04_spcldt/bss/42_EWA/ewa.html">https://www.bafg.de/GRDC/EN/04_spcldt/bss/42_EWA/ewa.html</a>	Europe	GRDC – EURO-FRIEND-Water
"	Russian River data by Bodo, ds553.2 <a href="https://rda.ucar.edu/datasets/ds553.2/">https://rda.ucar.edu/datasets/ds553.2/</a>	Former Soviet Union	Bodo, 2000
"	R-ArcticNet v 4.0 <a href="http://www.r-arcticnet.sr.unh.edu/v4.0/index.html">http://www.r-arcticnet.sr.unh.edu/v4.0/index.html</a>	Arctic region	Pan-Arctic Project Consortium
"	RIVDIS v 1.1 <a href="https://daac.ornl.gov/RIVDIS/guides/rivdis_guide.html">https://daac.ornl.gov/RIVDIS/guides/rivdis_guide.html</a>	Global	Vörösmarty et al., 1998
"	USGS <a href="https://waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis/sw">https://waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis/sw</a>	USA	U.S. Geological Survey
"	HYDAT <a href="https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/water-overview/quantity/monitoring/survey/data-products-services/national-archive-hydat.html">https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/water-overview/quantity/monitoring/survey/data-products-services/national-archive-hydat.html</a>	Canada	Water Survey of Canada (WSC)
"	Chinese Hydrology Data Project <a href="https://depts.washington.edu/shuiwen/index.html">https://depts.washington.edu/shuiwen/index.html</a>	China	Henck et al., 2011
"	Spanish Water Authorities <a href="https://www.mapama.gob.es/es/ministerio/funciones-estructura/organizacion-organismos/organismos-publicos/confederaciones-hidrograficas/default.aspx">https://www.mapama.gob.es/es/ministerio/funciones-estructura/organizacion-organismos/organismos-publicos/confederaciones-hidrograficas/default.aspx</a>	Spain	Ecological Transition Ministry
"	WISKI <a href="https://vattenwebb.smhi.se/station/">https://vattenwebb.smhi.se/station/</a>	Sweden	Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute
Metadata	CLARIS-project <a href="http://www.claris-eu.org/">http://www.claris-eu.org/</a>	La Plata Basin	CLARIS LPB- project FP7 Grant agreement 212492
"	CWC handbook <a href="http://cwc.gov.in/main/webpages/publications.html">http://cwc.gov.in/main/webpages/publications.html</a>	India	Central Water commission (CWC)
"	SIEREM <a href="http://www.hydrosciences.fr/sierem/">http://www.hydrosciences.fr/sierem/</a>	Africa	Boyer et al., 2006
"	Regional data <a href="https://uia.org/s/or/en/1100058436">https://uia.org/s/or/en/1100058436</a>	Congo Basin	International Commission for Congo-Ubangui-Sangha Basin (CICOS)
"	National data <a href="http://www.bom.gov.au/water/hrs/">http://www.bom.gov.au/water/hrs/</a>	Australia	BOM (Bureau of Meteorology)

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“	Red Hidrometrica SNHN 2013 <a href="http://geo.gob.bo/geonetwork/srv/dut/catalog.search#/metadata/ff98cf17-f9a8-4a8d-b96c-bf623dd6b13b">http://geo.gob.bo/geonetwork/srv/dut/catalog.search#/metadata/ff98cf17-f9a8-4a8d-b96c-bf623dd6b13b</a>	Bolivia	Servicio Nacional de Hidrografía Naval
“	Estacoes Fluviometrica <a href="http://www.snirh.gov.br/hidroweb/">http://www.snirh.gov.br/hidroweb/</a>	Brazil	ANA (Agencia Nacional de Aguas)
“	Red Hidrometrica <a href="http://www.dga.cl/Paginas/default.aspx">http://www.dga.cl/Paginas/default.aspx</a>	Chile	DGA (Direccion General de Aguas)
“	Catalogo Nacional de Estaciones de Monitoreo Ambiental <a href="http://www.ideam.gov.co/geoportal">http://www.ideam.gov.co/geoportal</a>	Colombia	IDEAM (Instituto de Hidrologia, Meteorología y Estudios Ambientales)
“	Estaciones_Hidrologicas <a href="http://www.serviciometeorologico.gob.ec/geoinformacion-hidrometeorologica/">http://www.serviciometeorologico.gob.ec/geoinformacion-hidrometeorologica/</a>	Ecuador	INAMHI (Instituto Nacional de Meteorología e Hidrología)
“	National data <a href="http://www.senamhi.gob.pe/?p=0300">http://www.senamhi.gob.pe/?p=0300</a>	Peru	SENAMHI (Servicio Nacional de Meteorología e Hidrología del Peru)
“	National data <a href="http://www.inameh.gob.ve/web/">http://www.inameh.gob.ve/web/</a>	Venezuela	IGVSB (Instituto Geográfico de Venezuela Simon Bolivar)
“	Conabio 2008 <a href="http://www.conabio.gob.mx/informacion/metadata/gis/esthidgw.xml? httpcache=yes&amp;_xsl=/db/metadata/xsl/fgdc_html.xsl&amp;_indent=no">http://www.conabio.gob.mx/informacion/metadata/gis/esthidgw.xml? httpcache=yes&amp;_xsl=/db/metadata/xsl/fgdc_html.xsl&amp;_indent=no</a>	Mexico	Instituto Mexicano de Tecnología del Agua/CONABIO
“	Niger HYCOS <a href="http://nigerhycos.abn.ne/user-anon/htm/">http://nigerhycos.abn.ne/user-anon/htm/</a>	Niger river	World Hydrological Service System (WHYCOS)
“	National data <a href="https://www.dwa.gov.za/Hydrology/">https://www.dwa.gov.za/Hydrology/</a>	South Africa	Department Water & Sanitation, Republic of South Africa
“	National data <a href="http://publicutilities.govmu.org/English/Pages/Hydrology-Data-Book-2006---2010.aspx">http://publicutilities.govmu.org/English/Pages/Hydrology-Data-Book-2006---2010.aspx</a>	Mauritius	Mauritius Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities

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248

### 249 **3.4. Model setup**

250

251 The WWH is developed incrementally, and the current version 1.3 was based on previous versions,  
 252 where version 1.0 only included the most basic functions to run a HYPE model and was forced by  
 253 MSWEP (Beck et al., 2017) and CRU (Harris and Jones, 2014). Version 1.2 included distributed  
 254 geophysical and hydrographical features, and finally, version 1.3 (described below) included  
 255 estimated parameter values and was forced by the meteorological dataset Hydro-GFD, which also  
 256 provides operational forecasts at a 50 km grid (Berg et al., 2017). Dynamic catchment models need to  
 257 be initialised to account for adequate storage volumes, which may, for instance, dampen or supply  
 258 the river flow based on catchment memory (e.g. Iliopoulou et al., 2019). The WWH was initialized by  
 259 running for a 15-year warm-up period 1965-1980, which was judged to be enough for more than 90%  
 260 of the catchments [by checking the time it takes for runs initialized 20 years apart to converge](#).  
 261 ~~However, a longer~~Long initialization periods ~~are is~~ needed for large lakes with small catchments,  
 262 large glaciers, and sinks or rarely-contributing areas.

263 The current model runs at a Linux cluster (using nodes of 8 processors and 16 threads) with  
264 calculations in approximately 1 800 000 hydrological response units (HRUs) and 130 000 catchments  
265 covering the worlds land surface, except for Antarctica. The model runs in parallel in 32  
266 hydrologically-independent geographical domains with a run time of about 3 hours for 30-year daily  
267 simulations. The methods applied for modelling and evaluation mostly follow common procedures  
268 used by the catchment modelling community, as described below.

269

270

### 271 **3.14.1 Catchment delineation and characteristics**

272 Catchment borders were delineated using the World Hydrological Input Set-up Tool (WHIST;  
273 <http://hype.sourceforge.net/WHIST/>), software developed at SMHI that is linked to the Geographic  
274 Information System (GIS) Arc-GIS from ESRI. By defining force-points for catchment outlets in the  
275 resulting topographic database (c.f. Table 1) and criteria for minimum and maximum ranges in  
276 catchment size, the tool delineates catchments and the link (routing) between them. By adding  
277 information from other types of databases, WHIST also aggregates data or uses the nearest grid for  
278 assigning characteristics to each catchment. WHIST handles both gridded data and polygons, and was  
279 used to link all data described in Section 2, such as land-cover, river width, precipitation,  
280 temperature, and elevation, to each delineated catchment. WHIST then compiles the input data files  
281 to a format that can be read by the HYPE source code. The software runs automatically, but also has  
282 a visual interface for manual corrections and adjustments. It may also adjust the position of the  
283 gauging stations to match the river network of a specific topographic database.

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284 When setting up WWH, force-points for catchment delineation were defined according to:

- 285 • *Locations of gauging stations in the river network:* in total, catchments were defined for all  
286 21 704 gauging stations which had an upstream area greater than 1000 km<sup>2</sup> (except for data  
287 sparse regions (500 – 1000 km<sup>2</sup>). Their coordinates were corrected to fit with the river  
288 network of the topographic data, using WHIST and manually. Quality checks of catchment  
289 delineation were done towards station metadata and 88% of the estimated catchment areas  
290 were within +/-10% discrepancy towards metadata. These catchments were used in further  
291 analysis for parameter estimation or model evaluation; however, not all of these sites  
292 provided open access to time-series (see Section 2.3).
- 293
- 294 • *Outlets of large lakes/reservoirs:* New lake delineation was done to solve the spatial  
295 mismatch between data of the water bodies from various sources (c.f. Table 2). The centroid  
296 of the lakes included in GLWD and GRanD was used as initialization points for a Flood Fill  
297 algorithm, applied over the ESA CCI Water Bodies, followed by manual quality checks. The  
298 outlet location was defined using the maximum upstream area for each lake. In total, around  
299 13 000 lakes and 2500 reservoirs > 10 km<sup>2</sup> were identified globally. The new dataset was  
300 tested against detailed lake information for Sweden, which represents one of the most lake-  
301 dense regions globally. Merging data from the two databases and adjusting to the

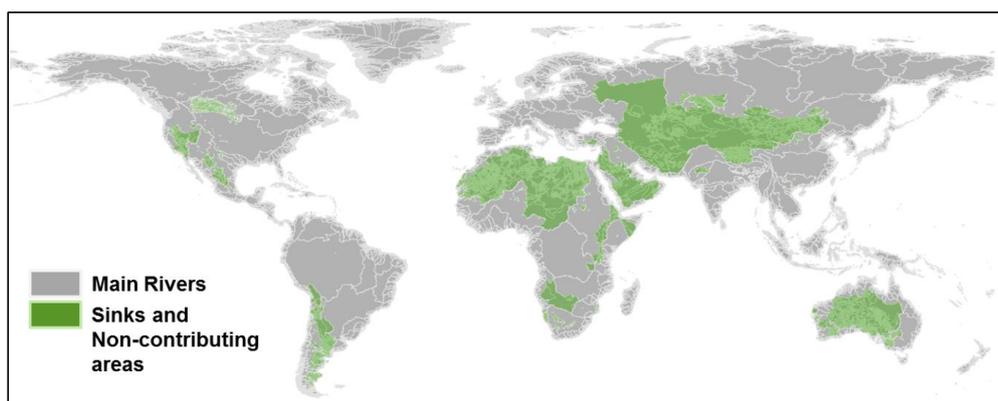
302 topographic data used was judged more realistic for the global hydrological modelling than  
303 only using one dataset.

304

- 305 • *Large cities and cities with high flood risk:* The UNEP/GRID-Europe database (Table 1) was  
306 used to define flood-prone areas for which the model may be useful in the future. The  
307 criteria for assigning a force point was city areas of  $> 100 \text{ km}^2$  (regardless of the risks on the  
308 UNEP scale) or city areas of  $10\text{-}100 \text{ km}^2$  with risk 3-5 and an upstream area  $> 1000 \text{ km}^2$ . This  
309 was only considered if there was no gauging station within 10 km from the city. This gave  
310 another 2 439 forcing points to the global model.
- 311 • *Catchment size:* the goal was to reach an average size of some  $1000 \text{ km}^2$ , for practical  
312 (computational) and scientific reasons, reflecting uncertainty in input data. Criteria in WHIST  
313 were set to reach maximum catchment size of  $3000 \text{ km}^2$  in general and  $500 \text{ km}^2$  in coastal  
314 areas with  $< 1000 \text{ m}$  elevation (to avoid crossing from one side to another of a narrow and  
315 high island or peninsula). Post-processing was then done for the largest lakes, deserts, and  
316 floodplains, following specific information on their character (see data sources in Table 2).  
317

318 Using this approach, the land surface of the Earth (i.e. 135 million  $\text{km}^2$  when excluding Antarctica)  
319 was divided into 131 296 catchments with an average size of  $1020 \text{ km}^2$ . Flat land areas of deserts and  
320 floodplains ended up with somewhat larger catchments, about  $4500 \text{ km}^2$  and  $3500 \text{ km}^2$ , respectively.  
321 Around 23.8% of the land surface did not drain to the sea but to sinks (Fig. 2), the largest single one  
322 being the Caspian Sea. This water was evaporated from water surfaces but also percolated [edding](#) to  
323 groundwater reservoirs. Moreover, several areas across the globe are of Karstic geology with wide  
324 underground channels, which does not follow the land-surface topography. Sinks within Karst areas  
325 according to the World Map of Carbonate Rock outcrops (Table 1) were linked to “best neighbour”  
326 and inserted to the river network. The Canadian prairie also encompasses a [large number](#) of sinks  
327 due to climate and topography, ~~and there existed, but here we could apply~~ a national dataset from  
328 Canada with well-defined noncontributing areas to adjust the routing in this area.

329



330

331 **Figure 2.** Major river basins and areas not contributing to river flow from land to the sea.

332

333 The land-cover data from ESA CCI LC v1.6 (Table 2) was used as the base-line for HRUs. It has 36  
334 classes and subclasses and three of these were adjusted using additional data to improve the quality;  
335 (1) by using glacier [delineated outlines from by the RGI v5 and comparing spatially the outlines of](#)  
336 [both sources](#), we avoided overestimation of the glacier area; (2) by using GMIA and MIRCA [in a data](#)  
337 [fusion algorithm to create a more robust new irrigation database](#), we added irrigation ~~where this~~  
338 information ~~where is was~~ missing and underestimated; (3) by combining several [sources of water](#)  
339 [bodies sources-see Table 2\)](#) and spatial analyses [\(e.g. a flood fill algorithm and geospatial tools\)](#) we  
340 differentiated one general class of waterbodies into four: large lakes, small lakes, rivers, and coastal  
341 sea, which makes more sense in catchment modelling. Five elevation zones were derived to  
342 differentiate land-cover classes with altitude (0-500 m, 500-1000 m, 1000-2000 m, 2000-4000 m and  
343 4000–8900 m) as the hydrological response may be very different at different altitude due to  
344 vegetation growth and soil properties. The land-cover at these elevations was thus treated as a  
345 specific HRU globally. In total, this resulted in 169 HRUs.

346 All catchments were characterized according to Köppen-Geiger (Table 2) to assign a PET algorithm  
347 (see section 3.2) but the characteristics did not include soil properties, which is common in  
348 catchment hydrology. The approach when setting up HYPE was to use the possibility to assign  
349 hydrologically active soil depth for the HRUs instead [\(see Section 2 on HYPE model\)](#), based on the  
350 variability in vegetation, climate and elevation they represent [as suggested by Troch et al. \(2009\) and](#)  
351 [Gao et al. \(2014\)](#). However, a few distinct soil properties were unavoidable beside the general soil to  
352 describe the hydrological processes; these were impermeable conditions of urban and rock  
353 environments, and infiltration under water and rice fields.

354

### 355 **3.2 The HYPE model**

356 ~~The HYPE model development was initiated in 2002, primary to support the implementation of the~~  
357 ~~EU Water Framework Directive in Sweden (Arheimer and Lindström, 2013). It was originally designed~~  
358 ~~to estimate water quality status, but is now also used operationally at the Swedish hydrological~~  
359 ~~warning service at SMHI for flood and drought forecasting (e.g. Pechlivanidis et al., 2014). The water~~  
360 ~~and nutrient model is applied nationally for Sweden (Strömqvist et al., 2012), the Baltic Sea basin~~  
361 ~~(Arheimer et al., 2012) and Europe (Donnelly et al., 2013). It also provides operational hydrological~~  
362 ~~forecasts for Europe at short term and seasonal scale and it has been subjected to several large scale~~  
363 ~~applications across the world, e.g. the Indian subcontinent (Pechlivanidis and Arheimer, 2015) and~~  
364 ~~the Niger River (Andersson et al., 2017). One of the main drivers for HYPE applications has been~~  
365 ~~climate change impact assessments, for which its results have been compared to other models in~~  
366 ~~selected catchments across the globe (Geflan et al., 2017; Gosling et al., 2017; Donnelly et al., 2017).~~

367 ~~The HYPE model code (Lindström et al., 2010) represents a rather traditional integrated catchment~~  
368 ~~model, describing major water pathways and fluxes in a catchment. It is forced by precipitation and~~  
369 ~~temperature at daily or hourly time step, and start by calculating the water balance of Hydrological~~  
370 ~~Response Units, which is the finest calculation unit in each catchment. In the WWII set up, the HRUs~~  
371 ~~were defined by land cover, elevation and climate, without specific consideration to further~~  
372 ~~definition of soil properties. This was guided by recent studies indicating that soil water storage and~~  
373 ~~fluxes rather relate to vegetation type and climate conditions than soil properties (e.g. Troch et al.,~~

2009; Gao et al., 2014). HYPE has maximum three layers of soil and these were all applied in the WWH, with a different hydrological response from each one for each HRU. The first layer corresponds to some 25 cm, the second to some 1–2 meters and the third can be deep also accounting for ground water. A specific routine can account for deep aquifers, but this was not applied in the WWH due to lack of local or regional information of aquifer behavior. HYPE has a snow routine to account for snow storage and melt, while a glacier routine account for ice storage and melt. Mass balances of glaciers were based on the observations provided in the Randolph Glacier Inventory (Arendt et al., 2015) and fixed separately in the model set up. There are a number of algorithms available to calculate potential evapotranspiration (PET) in HYPE. For the WWH we used the algorithms that had been judged most appropriate in previous HYPE applications, giving Jensen-Haise (Jensen and Haise, 1963) in temperate areas, modified Hargreaves (Hargreaves and Samani, 1982) in arid and equatorial areas, and Priestly-Taylor (Priestly and Taylor, 1972) in polar and snow/ice dominated areas. River flow is routed from upstream catchments to downstream along the river network, where lakes and reservoirs may dampen the flow according to a rating curve. A specific routine is used for floodplains to allow the formation of temporary lakes, which may be crucial especially in inland deltas (Andersson et al., 2017). Evaporation takes place from all water surfaces, including snow and canopy. The HYPE source code, documentation and user guidance are freely available at <http://hypecode.smhi.se/>.

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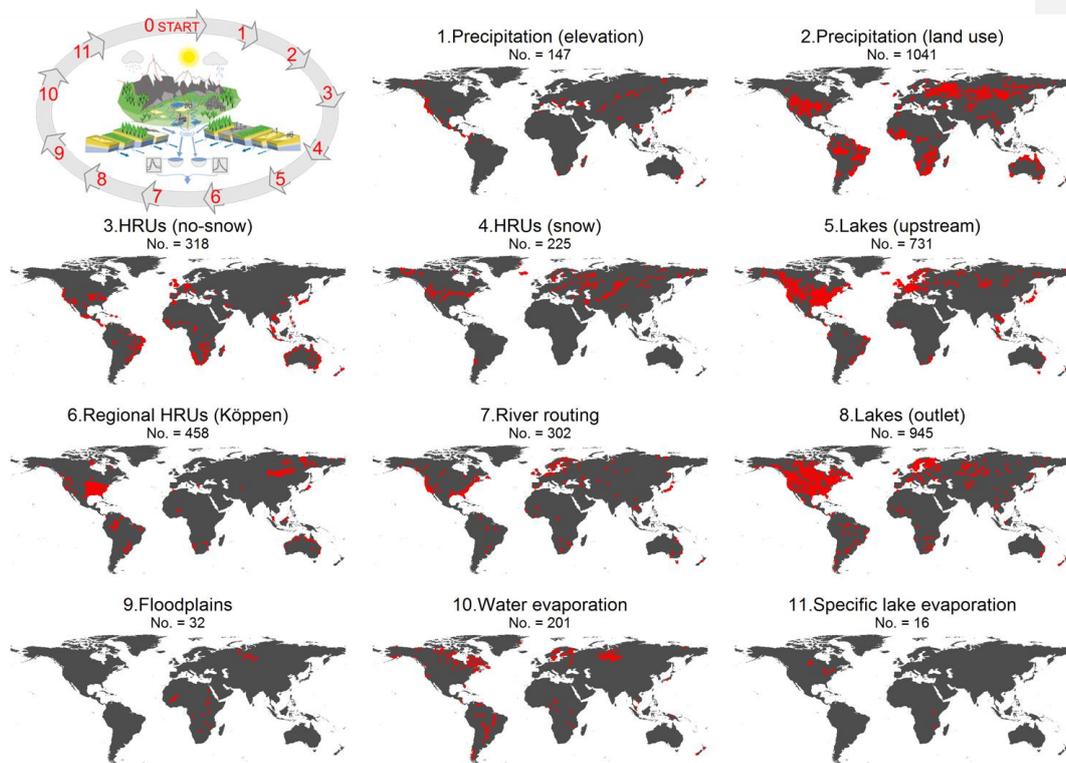
### 3.34.2 Step-wise parameter estimation

The method to assign parameter values for the global model domain aimed at finding (i) robust values also valid for ungauged basins, as well as (ii) reliable process description of dominating flow generation processes and water storage along the flow paths. The first aim was addressed by simultaneous calibration in multiple representative catchments world-wide. Spatial heterogeneity was accounted for by separate calibration of catchments representing different climate, elevation, and land-cover globally. The second aim was addressed by applying a step-wise approach following the HYPE process description along the flow paths, only calibrating a few parameters governing a specific process at a time (Arheimer and Lindström, 2013). The estimated parameter values were then applied wherever relevant in the whole geographical domain, i.e. world-wide.

Different catchments were selected globally to best represent each process calibrated (Fig. 3). [Processes were assumed to be linked to different physiographic characteristics \(Kuentz et al., 2017\) and catchments with gauging stations where these characteristics were most prominent in the upstream area were selected \(i.e. the representative gauged basin method\).](#) For HRUs, separate calibration was done for the snow-dominated areas (>10% of precipitation falling as snow), as the snow processes give such strong character to the runoff response and simultaneous calibration with catchments lacking snow may thus underestimate other flow-controlling processes. The HRUs based on the ESA CCI 1.6 data was aggregated from 36 classes into 10 (Table 4) for more efficient calibration and to ensure that some 50% of the gauged catchment selected was representing the appointed land-cover. Some local hydrological features such as large lakes and floodplains were calibrated individually. When evaluating the effect of this, we discovered some major bias for the

414 Great Lakes in North America and Malawi and Victoria lakes in Africa. Finally, we introduced the 11<sup>th</sup>  
415 step to calibrate the evaporation of these separately (Fig 3).

416



417

418 **Figure 3.** Number of gauging stations and their location that was used in each step of the stepwise parameter  
419 estimation procedure and evaluation against in-situ observations world-wide.

420

421 In total, 6519 river gauges were used in the calibration process, but normally only affecting few  
422 model parameters in the stepwise procedure. 1181 of these gauges did not meet the ambition to  
423 represent the average catchment resolution and 10 consecutive years between 1981 and 2012, but  
424 was still included in some step due to lack of data. Automatic calibration was applied for each subset  
425 of parameters and representative catchments in each step, using the Differential Evolution Markov  
426 Chain (DEMC) approach (Ter Braak, 2016) to obtain the optimum parameter value in each case. [The  
427 advantage of DEMC versus plain DE is both the possibility to get a probability-based uncertainty  
428 estimate of the global optimum and a better convergence towards it.](#) The DEMC requires several  
429 parameters to be fixed and the choice of these parameters was based on a compromise between  
430 convergence speed and the accuracy of the resulting parameter set. Global PET parameter values  
431 were fixed first, before starting the step-wise procedure, using the MODIS global evapotranspiration  
432 product (MOD16) by Mu et al., (2011) for parameter constraints. The parameter ranges were defined  
433 as the median and the 3<sup>rd</sup> quartile of the 10% best agreements between HYPE and MODIS in terms of  
434 RE. The first selection was done with 400 runs and then repeated for a second round. In addition, a  
435 priori parameters (Table 5) were set for glaciers and soils without calibration, taken from previous  
436 applications (e.g. Donnelly et al., 2016; MacDonald et al., 2018). The bare deserts soil was manually

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437 calibrated only using 4 stations in the Sahara desert. The area and volume of glaciers were evaluated  
 438 in 296 glaciers and soil parameters in some 30 catchments. The root zone storage of soils was further  
 439 calibrated in the parameter setting of each HRU (in step No 4 and 5).  
 440 While the calibration period was 1981-2012, it was always preceded by 15 years of initialization.  
 441 Different metrics were chosen as calibration criteria, depending on the character of the parameter  
 442 and how it influences the model. For instance, Relative Error (RE) was used as a metric in the  
 443 calibration of precipitation and PET parameters, since the aim was to correctly represent water  
 444 volumes. On the contrary, Correlation Coefficient (CC) was used when the timing was the main goal  
 445 (i.e. for river routing or dampening in lakes). If both water volume and timing were required, Kling-  
 446 Gupta Efficiency (KGE; Gupta et al., 2009) was used (i.e. for soil discharge from HRUs). Wherever  
 447 possible, calibration was made using a daily time-step, while overall model evaluation on the global  
 448 scale was made on a monthly time-step.

449

450 **Table 4.** Aggregated land covers used for HRUs, their representation in the upstream catchment and the  
 451 number of gauges available for each land cover when estimating parameter values of WWH v1.3.

HRU calibration	Aggregated Land cover from ESA CCI 1.6	Land cover	No. gauges (snow area)	No. gauges (no snow)
Bare	Bare areas	35%	7	32
	Consolidated bare areas			
	Unconsolidated bare areas			
Crop	Cropland, rain fed	50%	52	30
	Herbaceous cover			
	Tree or shrub cover			
	Cropland, irrigated or post-flooding irrigated Rice			
Grass	Grass	50%	-	1
Mosaic	Mosaic cropland (>50%) / natural vegetation (tree, shrub, herbaceous cover) (<50%)	50%	39	29
	Mosaic natural vegetation (tree, shrub, herbaceous cover) (>50%) / cropland (<50%)			
	Mosaic tree and shrub (>50%) / herbaceous cover (<50%)			
	Mosaic herbaceous cover (>50%) / tree and shrub (<50%)			
Shrub	Shrubland	50%	54	17
	Shrubland evergreen			
	Shrubland deciduous			
	Shrub or herbaceous cover, flooded, fresh/saline/brackish water			
Sparse	Lichens and mosses	35%	40	11
	Sparse vegetation (tree, shrub, herbaceous cover) (<15%)			
	Sparse shrub (<15%)			
	Sparse herbaceous cover (<15%)			
TreeBrDecMix	Tree cover, broadleaved, deciduous, closed to open (>15%)	50%	26	28
	Tree cover, broadleaved, deciduous, closed (>40%)			
	Tree cover, broadleaved, deciduous, open (15-40%)			
	Tree cover, mixed leaf type (broadleaved and needleleaved)			
TreeBrEvFlood	Tree cover, broadleaved, evergreen, closed to open (>15%)	50%	37	30

	Tree cover, flooded, fresh or brakish water			
	Tree cover, flooded, saline water			
TreeNeDec	Tree cover, needleleaved, deciduous, closed to open (>15%)	50%	46	-
	Tree cover, needleleaved, deciduous, closed (>40%)			
TreeNeEv	Tree cover, needleleaved, deciduous, open (15-40%)	50%	-	10
	Tree cover, needleleaved, evergreen, closed to open (>15%)			
	Tree cover, needleleaved, evergreen, closed (>40%)			
Urban	Tree cover, needleleaved, evergreen, open (15-40%)	50%	21	30

452

### 453 3.4.4.3 Model evaluation

454 The model was evaluated against independent observed river flow [by using remaning gauges](#), which  
455 ~~was were~~ not ~~used in~~ chosen for the calibration procedure. The agreement between modelled and  
456 observed time-series was evaluated using the statistical metric KGE and its components  $r$ ,  $\beta$  and  $\alpha$ ,  
457 which are directly linked with CC (Pearson Correlation Coefficient), RE (Relative Error) and RESD  
458 (Relative Error of Standard Deviation), respectively (Gupta et al., 2009). KGE is defined as:

$$459 \quad KGE = 1 - \sqrt{(r - 1)^2 + (\alpha - 1)^2 + (\beta - 1)^2} \quad (\text{Eq. 1})$$

460 where:

$$r = CC = \frac{cov(x_o, x_s)}{\sigma_s \sigma_o} \quad (\text{Eq. 2})$$

$$\beta = \frac{\mu_s}{\mu_o}; RE = (\beta - 1) \cdot 100 \quad (\text{Eq. 3})$$

$$\alpha = \frac{\sigma_s}{\sigma_o}; RESD = (\alpha - 1) \cdot 100 \quad (\text{Eq. 4})$$

461

462  $x$  represents the discharge time series,  $\mu$  the mean value of the discharge time series, and  $\sigma$  the  
463 standard deviation of the discharge time series. The sub-indexes  $o$  and  $s$  represent observed and  
464 simulated discharge time series, respectively. [Thus CC represents how well the model dynamics  
465 agree between observations and simulations, i.e. the timing of events but not the magnitude; RE  
466 represents the agreement in volume over time; RESD represents how well the model captures the  
467 amplitude of the hydrograph. KGE was chosen as performance metric to analysis all these aspects  
468 and because it has been found good in capturing both mean and extremes during calibration  
469 \(Mizukami et al., 2019\). We used the original version so that our results can easily be compared to  
470 other studies reported in the literature, even though non-standard variants may be more efficient  
471 \(e.g. Mathevet et al., 2006; Mizukami et al., 2019\).](#)

472

473 In addition, a number of flow signatures (Table 5) was calculated to explore which part of the  
474 hydrograph is well captured by the model. Flow signatures are used by the catchment modelling  
475 community to condense the hydrological information from time-series (Sivapalan, 2005) and the  
476 choice of flow signatures was guided by previous studies by Olden and Poff (2003) and Kuentz et al.

477 (2017). In this study, flow signatures were calculated at 5338 gauging stations globally, based on  
 478 catchment size and at least 10 years of continuous time-series (see section 2.3).

479 The model capability in capturing observed flow signatures was then related to upstream  
 480 physiographical and climatological factors, such as area, mean elevation, drainage density, land-  
 481 cover, climatic region or aridity index. Catchment modellers tend to study differences and similarities  
 482 in flow signatures as well as in catchment characteristics to improve understanding of hydrological  
 483 processes (e.g. Sawicz et al., 2014; Berghuijs et al., 2014; Pechlivanidis and Arheimer, 2015; Rice et  
 484 al., 2015). Linking catchment descriptors and model performance in hydrological response signatures  
 485 help the modeler to examine whether the process description and model structure are valid across  
 486 the landscape or if the regionalization of parameter values must be reconsidered for some parts of a  
 487 large domain. In addition, this exercise will guide the users to judge under which conditions the  
 488 model is reliable and thus of any use for decision making. In the present study, the physiographic  
 489 characteristics of catchments were all extracted from the input data files of the WWH version 1.3.  
 490 For each gauging station with calculated flow signatures, the catchment characteristics were  
 491 accumulated for all upstream catchments to account for any potential physiographical influence on  
 492 the flow signal at the observation site (Table 3). Gauging stations were grouped according to the  
 493 distribution of each physiographic characteristic and model performances in flow signature  
 494 representation were computed for each of these groups.

495

496 **Table 5.** Flow signatures (FS) from observed time-series and physiographic descriptors (T: topography; LC: Land  
 497 cover; C: climate) from databases in Section 2.1.

Variable name	Description	Range
skew (FS)	Skewness = mean/median of daily flows	[0.63 - 70000]
MeanQ (FS)	Mean specific flow in mm	[0 - 1024.41]
CVQ (FS)	Coef. of variation = standard deviation/mean of daily flows	[0.01 - 46.4]
BFI (FS)	Base Flow Index: 7-day minimum flow divided by mean annual daily flow averaged across years	[0 - 0.84]
Q5 (FS)	5 <sup>th</sup> percentile of daily specific flow in mm	[0 - 218.04]
HFD (FS)	High Flow Discharge: 10 <sup>th</sup> percentile of daily flow divided by median daily flow	[0 - 1]
Q95 (FS)	95 <sup>th</sup> percentile of daily specific flow in mm	[0 - 2654.81]
LowFr (FS)	Total number of low flow spells (threshold equal to 5 % of mean daily flow) divided by the record length	[0 - 1]
HighFrVar (FS)	Coef. of Variation in annual number of high flow occurrences (threshold 75 <sup>th</sup> percentile)	[0 - 5.48]
LowDurVar (FS)	Coef. of Variation in the annual mean duration of low flows (threshold 25 <sup>th</sup> percentile)	[0 - 3.78]
Mean30dMax (FS)	Mean annual 30-days maximum divided by median flow	[0 - 29.49]
Const (FS)	Constancy of daily flow (see Colwell, 1974)	[0.01 - 1]
RevVar (FS)	Coef. of variation in annual number of reversals (change in sign in the day-to-day change time series)	[0 - 5.48]
RBFlash (FS)	Richard-Baker flashiness: sum of absolute values of day-to-day changes in mean daily flow divided by the sum of all daily flows	[0 - 2]
RunoffCo (FS)	Runoff ratio: mean annual flow (in mm yr <sup>-1</sup> ) divided by mean annual precipitation	[0 - 1362.52]
ActET (FS)	Actual evapotranspiration: mean annual precipitation minus mean annual flow (in mm yr <sup>-1</sup> )	[-100 - 2660.03]
Area (T)	Total upstream area of catchment outlet in km <sup>2</sup>	[13.5 - 4671536.7]
meanElev (T)	Mean elevation of the catchment in m	[3.63 - 5046.16]
stdElev (T)	Standard deviation of the elevation of the catchment in m	[1.66 - 1595.89]
Meanslope (T)	Mean slope of the catchment	[0 - 224.24]
Drainage density (T)	Total length of all streams in the catchment divided by the area of the	[2.19 - 259798.14]

	catchment	
13 land cover variables (LC)	% of the catchment area covered by the following land cover types (see Table XX): Water, Urban, Snow & Ice, Bare, Crop, Mosaic, TreeBrEvFlood, TreeBrDecMix, TreeNeEv, TreeNeDec, Shurb, Grass and Sparse	[0 - 1]
Pmean (C)	Mean annual precipitation in mm yr <sup>-1</sup>	[51.5 - 5894.86]
SI.Precip (C)	Seasonality index for precipitation: $SI = \frac{1}{\bar{R}} \cdot \sum_{n=1}^{12} \left  \bar{x}_n - \frac{\bar{R}}{12} \right $	
	$\bar{x}_n$ : mean rainfall of month n; $\bar{R}$ : mean annual rainfall	[-16.93 - 31]
Tmean (C)	Mean annual temperature in degrees	[0.08 - 50.06]
AI (C)	Aridity Index: PET/P, where PET is the mean annual potential evapotranspiration and P the mean annual precipitation	[0.05 - 1.28]
5 Köppen regions (C)	% of the catchment area within the following Köppen regions: A (Tropical), B (Arid), C (Temperate), D (Cold-continental) and E (Polar)	[0 - 1]

498

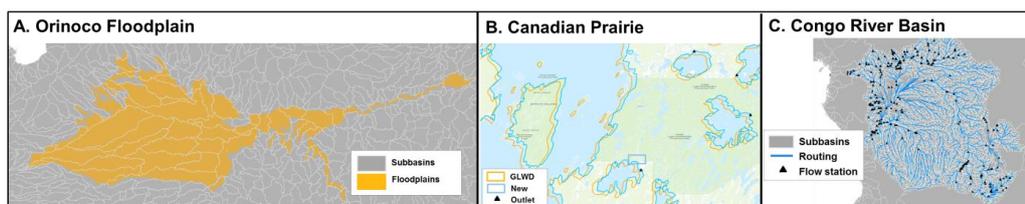
## 499 4.5. Results

500

### 501 4.5.1 Global river flow and general model performance

502 WWH version 1.3 **successfully** describes major hydrological features globally and important spatial  
503 variability in factors controlling the runoff mechanisms, although there is still room for improvements  
504 over the coming decade(s). The catchment modelling approach with careful consideration to  
505 hydrography, resulted in a new database with delineated hydrographical features (e.g. Fig. 4) of  
506 major importance for hydrological modelling. The merging of several data sources resulted in  
507 consistency between available information on water bodies, topographic data and the river network  
508 (e.g. for glaciers, floodplains, lakes, and gauging stations) so that this information can be used in  
509 catchment modelling and provide results of river flow at a resolution of some 1000 km<sup>2</sup> globally.

510



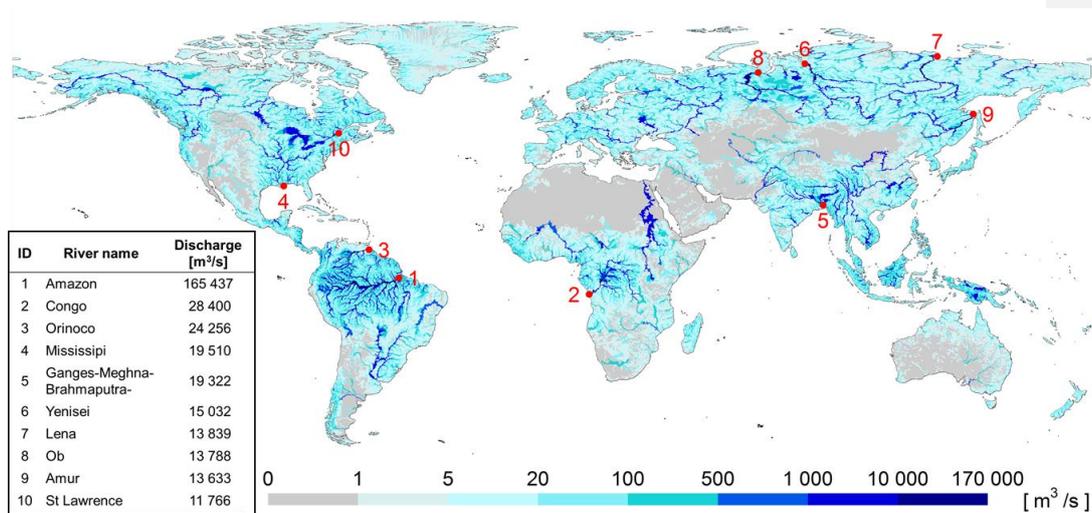
511

512 **Figure 4.** Some examples of WWH version 1.3 details in describing hydrography at local and regional scale from  
513 supporting GIS layers: A) subbasins of the Orinocco river defined as a connected floodplain; B) adjustment of  
514 lake areas (New) from merging several data sources (see Section 2.1 and 3.1) and the original GLWD in the  
515 Canadian Prairie; C) river routing and access to flow gauges in the Congo river basin.

516

517 The WWH version 1.3 resulted in a realistic spatial pattern of river flow world-wide, clearly  
518 identifying desert areas and the largest rivers (Fig. 5). Compared to other global estimates of average  
519 water flow in major rivers, HYPE gives results in the same order of magnitude, but of course,  
520 comparisons should be based on the same time period to account for natural variability due to

521 climate oscillations. The Amazon, Congo and Orinocco rivers came out as the three largest ones,  
 522 where the river flow of the Amazon river is almost 6 times larger than any other river. Compared to  
 523 recent estimates by Milliman and Farnsworth (2011), HYPE estimated a higher annual average of  
 524 river flow in Mississippi, St Lawrence, Amur, and Ob, but less in the rest of the top-ten largest rivers  
 525 of the world, especially relatively lower values were noted for Ganges-Bahamaputra. For World-Wide  
 526 HYPE, Yangtze river came out as No 11 and Mekong as No 12, and it should be noted that the river  
 527 flow to Río de la Plata was separated into Paraná River and Uruguay river (the former ranked as No  
 528 13 of the largest rivers).



529 **Figure 5.** Annual mean of river discharge across the globe for the period 1981-2015 estimated with the  
 530 catchment model WWH version 1.3 (on average 1020 km<sup>2</sup> resolution).  
 531

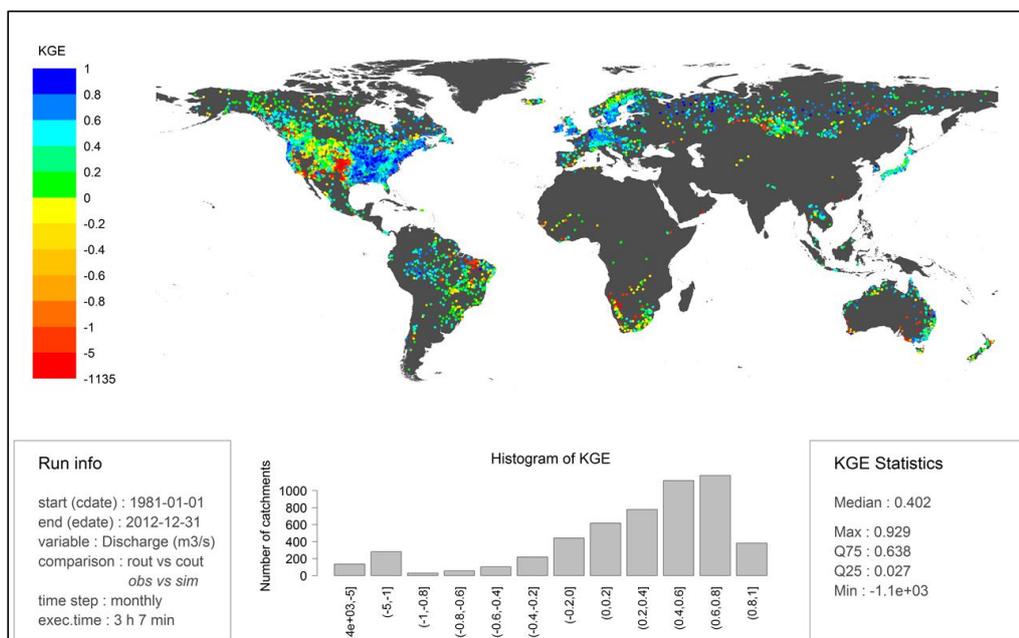
532

533 On average, for the whole globe and 5338 gauging stations with validated catchment areas and at  
 534 least ten years of data, the model performance was estimated to a median monthly KGE of 0.40 (Fig.  
 535 6). Model performance was surprisingly similar for the gauges used in parameter estimation and  
 536 independent ones, with median KGE of 0.41 (2475 stations) and 0.39 (2863 stations), respectively.  
 537 This indicates that the model results are robust and the same model performance can be assumed  
 538 also in ungauged basins. Catchment modellers would normally judge these results as poor, but  
 539 Given that global open input data was used for model setup and rough assumptions were made  
 540 when generalizing hydrological processes across the globe, the overall model performance meets the  
 541 expectations. Similar results were recently achieved when Beck et al. (2016) was testing a scheme for  
 542 global parameter regionalization world-wide; in an ensemble of ten global water allocation or land  
 543 surface models, the median performance of monthly KGE was found to be 0.22 using 1113 river  
 544 gauges for mesoscale catchments globally (median size 500 km<sup>2</sup>). The best median monthly KGE was  
 545 then 0.32 for catchment scale calibration of regionalized parameters, using a gridded HBV model  
 546 globally (Beck, 2016). Even though it is difficult to compare results when not using the same  
 547 validation sites or time-period and more concerted actions for model inter-comparison are needed at  
 548 this scale. Nevertheless, the catchment modelling approach of the present study seems to have  
 549 better performance than other gridded global modelling concepts of river flow.

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550 The red spots in Figure 6 indicate where the HYPE model fails, such as in the US mid-west (especially  
 551 Kansas to be precise), north-east of Brazil and parts of Africa, Australia and central Asia. When  
 552 decomposing the KGE, it was found that the correlation was in general fine. However, the relative  
 553 error in standard deviation was causing the main problems showing that the HYPE model does not  
 554 capture the variations of the hydrograph, and instead, generates a too even flow. The relative error  
 555 also seemed problematic, which indicates problems with the water balance. The model has severe  
 556 problems with dry regions and areas with large impact from human alteration and water  
 557 management, where the model underestimates the river flow. Such regions are known to be more  
 558 difficult for hydrological modelling in general (Bloeschl et al., 2013), but in addition, precipitation  
 559 data do not seem to fully capture the influence of topography and mountain ranges. The patterns in  
 560 model performance were further investigated in the analysis of model performance versus flow  
 561 signatures and physiographic factors (Section 4.3).

562



563  
 564 **Figure 6.** Model performance of WWH version 1.3 using the KGE metric of monthly values of  $\geq 10$  years in each  
 565 of the 5338 gauging sites for the period 1981-2012. Blue and green indicates that the model provides more  
 566 information than the long-term observed mean value.

567

568 **4.25.2 Global parameter values from step-wise calibration**

569 Both model performance in representative catchments and improvement achieved through  
 570 calibration varied a lot for each hydrological process considered in the step-wise parameter  
 571 estimation (Table 6). Although, a large number of river gauges was collected for parameter  
 572 estimation, only a few could be considered as representative with enough quality assurance. More

573 gauges in the calibration procedure would probably have given another result. Nevertheless, the  
 574 results show promising potential in applying the process descriptions of catchment models also at  
 575 the global scale.

576 In spite of the wide spread in geographical locations across the globe, a priori values were reasonable  
 577 for hydrological processes describing glaciers and soils. As shown in Table 6, the water balance (RE)  
 578 was improved considerably by first calibrating PET globally, and then precipitation vs altitude of  
 579 catchment and land-cover type. Simultaneous calibration of soil storage and discharge in HRUs  
 580 increased the KGE both in areas with and without snow by 0.1 on average. For calibration of river  
 581 routing and rating curves of lake outflows, the correlation coefficient was used to avoid erroneous  
 582 compensation of the water balance, as the parameters involved should only set the dynamics of flow  
 583 and not volume. Especially lake processes benefited from calibration. Less convincing was the  
 584 metrics from calibration of the floodplains, which were not always improved by the floodplain  
 585 routine applied. Overall, the results indicate that global parameters are to some extent possible for  
 586 describing hydrological processes world-wide, using a catchment model and globally available data of  
 587 physiographic characteristics to describe spatial variability. Nevertheless, the WWH v.1.3 model has  
 588 still considerable potential for improvements and to really make use of more advanced calibration  
 589 techniques, the water balance needs to be improved first as too much volume error makes the  
 590 tuning of dynamics difficult.

591

592 **Table 6.** Metrics of model performance before and after calibrating various hydrological processes  
 593 simultaneously at a number of selected river gauges, using the stepwise parameter-estimation procedure  
 594 globally. Parameter values and names in the HYPE model are given in Appendices.

Hydrological Process	No. gauges	Median value of metric(s)	
		Before	After
Potential Evapo-Transpiration (3 PET-algorithms: median of ranges constrained with MODIS)	0	RE: 11.5 %	RE: 0.5%
Glaciers (only evaluated vs mass balance data)	296	RE: 0.38% CC: 0.51	-
Soils (average, rock, urban, water, rice)	25	RE: -14.1% KGE: 0.2	
Bare soils in deserts (calibrated manually)	4	RE: 236.1%	RE: -18.9
1. Precipitation: catchment elevation	147	RE: -6.7%	RE: 4.4%
2. Precipitation: land-cover altitude	1041	RE: 24.3%	RE: 10.1%
3. HRUs in areas without snow	318	KGE: 0.16	KGE: 0.27
4. HRUs in areas with snow: ET, recession and active soil depth	225	KGE: 0.16	KGE: 0.24
5. Upstream lakes	731	CC: 0.71	CC: 0.72
6. Regionalised ET (in 12 Köppen climate regions)	458	KGE: 0.58	KGE: 0.62
7. River routing	302	CC: 0.70	CC: 0.71
8. Lake rating curve	945	CC: 0.50	CC: 0.59
9. Floodplains (partly calibrated manually)	32	KGE: -0.03	KGE: 0.03
10. Evaporation from water surface	201	RE: -20.7%	RE: -12.2%

595

596

### 4.35.3 Model evaluation against flow signatures

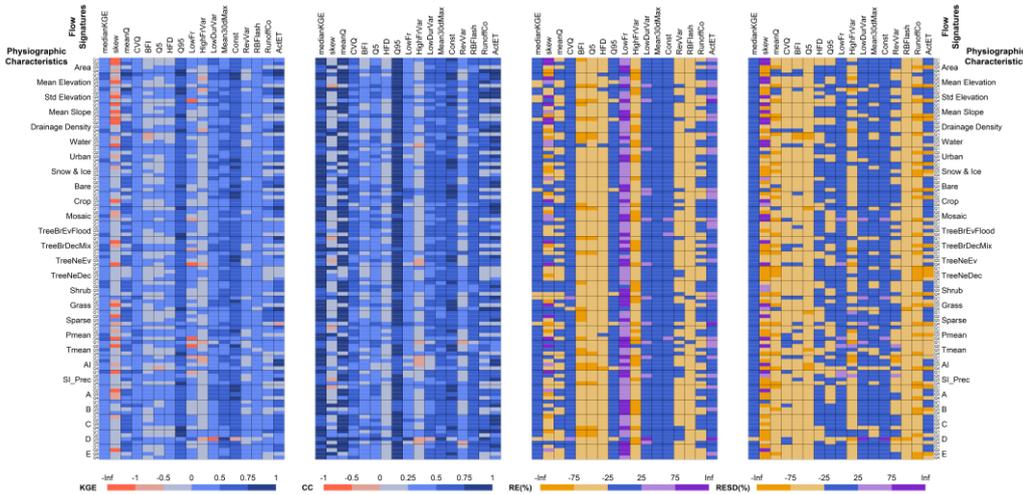
597 The WWH1.3 is more prone to success or failure in simulating specific flow signatures than to specific  
598 physiographic conditions, which is visualized by vertical rather than horizontal stripes in Figure 7. In  
599 general, the model shows reasonable KGE and CC for spatial variability of flow signatures across the  
600 globe (i.e. a lot of blue in the two panels to the left in Fig. 7). However, the RE and the standard  
601 deviation of the RE (RESD) are less convincing (i.e. the two panels to the right). This means that the  
602 model can capture the relative difference in flow signature and the spatial pattern globally, but not  
603 always the magnitudes, nor the spread between highest and lowest values. The relative errors are  
604 mostly due to underestimations, except for skewness, low flows and actual potential  
605 evapotranspiration; the two latter are always over-estimated when not within  $\pm 25\%$  bias. Overall,  
606 the model shows good potential to capture spatial variability of high flows (Q95), duration of low  
607 flows (LowDurVar), monthly high flows (Mean30dMax) and constancy of daily flows (Const). These  
608 results were found robust and independent of metrics or physiography.

609 The model shows most difficulties in capturing skewness in observed time-series (skew), the number  
610 of high flow occurrences (HighFrVar), and base flow as average (BFI), or absolute low flows (Q5).  
611 Short-term fluctuations (RevVar and RBFlash) are also rather difficult for the model to capture. Some  
612 results are not consistent between metrics; for coefficient of variation (CVQ) the RE was good while  
613 the RESD was poor. This indicates that the model does not capture the amplitude in variation  
614 between sites even if the bias is small. The opposite was found for high flow discharge (HFD) and  
615 low-flow spells (LowFr), i.e. poor performance in volumes but RESD showing that the variability is  
616 captured.

617 For the remaining flow signatures studied, it was interesting to note that the model performance  
618 could be linked to physiographic characteristics, indicating that the model structure and global  
619 parameters are valid for some environments but not for others. For instance, the volume of mean  
620 specific flow (RE of MeanQ) is especially difficult to capture in regions with needle-leaved, deciduous  
621 trees (TreeNeDec) and for medium and large flows in the Köppen region B (Arid), large flows in D  
622 (Cold-continental) and small flows in E (Polar). Moreover, the analysis shows that the model tends to  
623 fail with the mean flow in catchments with high elevation, high slope, small fraction water and urban  
624 land-cover, and little or much of snow and ice. This shows where efforts need to be taken to improve  
625 the model in its next version. For other water-balance indices, it was interesting to note that the ratio  
626 between precipitation and river flow (RunoffCo) show good results (RE  $\pm 25\%$ ) all over Köppen region  
627 C (Temperate) but otherwise is often underestimated for some parts of the quartile range of  
628 physiographic variables studied. On the contrary, precipitation minus flow (ActET) is over-estimated  
629 in parts of the quartile range, except for the good results in Köppen region C, needle-leaved,  
630 deciduous trees (TreeNeDec) and regions with snow and ice (i.e. where mean specific runoff failed).  
631 Figure 7 clearly shows the compensating errors between processes governing the runoff coefficient  
632 and actual evapotranspiration, with one being over-estimated when the other is underestimated for  
633 the same specific physiographic conditions. This indicates the need for recalibrating the HRUs of

634 WWH in its next version, but also reconsidering the initial parameters for evapotranspiration and the  
 635 quality of the precipitation grid and its linkage with the catchments.

636



637

638 **Figure 7.** Matrix showing the relation between model capacity to capture flow signatures (colors, where blue is  
 639 good and yellow/red/purple is poor performance) and physiography of catchments, divided into quartiles (Q1-  
 640 Q4) for characteristics of the total area upstream each gauging station with more than 10 years of continuous  
 641 data (5338 catchments). Description of flow signatures and physiographic characteristics are found in Table 4-5  
 642 and metrics used for model performance in Eq. 1-4.

643

## 644 5.6. Discussion

645

### 646 5.16.1 Potential for improvements

647 The results from evaluating model performance using several metrics, several thousand gauges and  
 648 numerous flow signatures, gave clear indication on regions where the model most urgently needs  
 649 improvements. A thorough analysis of spatial patterns would benefit from evaluation against  
 650 independent data of spatial patterns of hydrological variables, for instance from Earth Observations.  
 651 The In general, the WWH model has severe problems with dry regions and base flow conditions,  
 652 especially where the flow is sporadic (e.g. red areas in Fig. 5). The flow generating processes in such  
 653 areas are known to be se-are-difficult areas-to model (Bloeschl et al., 2013). For instance, most model  
 654 concepts, and also the WWH, have problems with the and they will need special analysis great plains  
 655 of US (e.g. Mizukami et al., 2017; Newman et al., 2017), where the terrain is complex with prairie  
 656 potholes, which are disconnected from the rivers, and precipitation comprise a major source of  
 657 hydrologic model error (e.g. Clark and Slater, 2006). Poor model performance were also found for  
 658 the tundra and deserts, but it should then be recognized that the parameters for these regions were

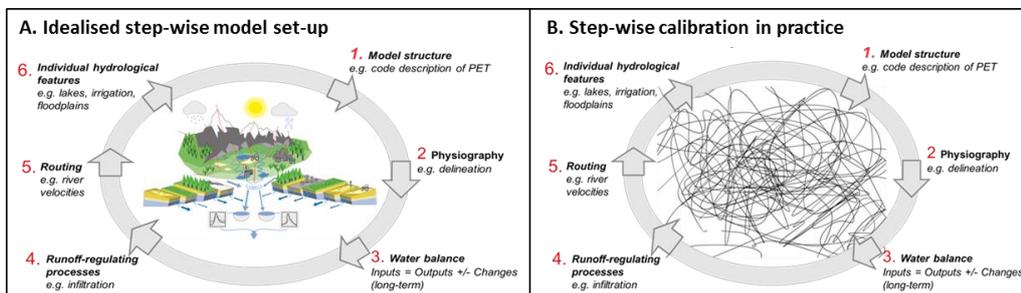
659 estimated using only four time-series for bare soils (Table 6); including more gauging stations would  
660 be a way to improve the model here. In large parts of Africa, however, model errors could be linked  
661 to the soil-runoff parameters and local calibration based on catchment similarities have already been  
662 found to improve the performance a lot in west Africa.

663 In the snow-dominated part of the globe, extensive hydropower regulation change the natural  
664 variability of river discharge (Déry et al., 2016; Arheimer et al., 2017) but the global databases miss  
665 out of all medium and small dams that may affect discharge along these river networks. A general  
666 problem with modelling river regulation is that reservoirs can have multi-purposes and must be  
667 examined individually to understand the regulation schemes applied. Such analyses have started and  
668 shown potential to improve the global model a lot as the poorest model results are often linked to  
669 river regulations. However, individual reservoir calibration will be very time-consuming, so instead,  
670 we suggest starting with improvements that can be undertaken relatively quickly and easily. These  
671 mainly focus on the overall water balance.

672 Firstly, the global water balance can be improved through re-calibration but some basic concepts  
673 need to be adjusted accordingly: (i) more careful analyses indicate that the choice of climate regions  
674 based on Köppens classification for applying the different PET algorithms was not optimal and needs  
675 some adjustments, (ii) linking the centroid of the catchments to the nearest precipitation grid seems  
676 to remove a lot of the spatial variation and instead an average of nearest grids should be tried.  
677 Secondly, the HRUs can be recalibrated and reconsidered, and we suggest (i) testing a calibration  
678 scheme based on regionalized parameters rather than global, using clustering based on  
679 physiographic similarities (e.g. Hundecha et al., 2016), (ii) including soil properties in the HRU  
680 concept again (as in the original version of HYPE, see Lindström et al., 2010) to account for spatial  
681 variability in soil-water discharge linked to porosity in addition to vegetation and elevation. Thirdly,  
682 the behavior of hydrological features, such as lakes, reservoirs, glaciers, and floodplains can be  
683 evaluated and calibrated separately, after categorizing them more carefully or from individual tuning.  
684 Finally, more observations can be included, both in-situ by adding more gauges to the system and  
685 from global Earth Observation products, for instance on water levels and storage. Hence, each step in  
686 Fig. 3 still has potential for model improvements.

687 The stepwise parameter-estimation approach should ideally be cycled a couple of times to find  
688 robust values under new fixed parameter conditions. However, as the model was carefully evaluated  
689 during the calibration, there were a lot of bug fixing, corrections and additional improvements  
690 resulting between the steps and time was rather spent on this than on several full-filled iterations.  
691 Therefore, the stepwise calibration was subjected to several re-takes and shifts between steps until it  
692 successfully- eventually could full-fill all the calibration steps in one entire sequence (Fig. 8). Hence,  
693 only one loop was done for parameter estimations in this study. The procedure was judged as very  
694 useful for the model to be potentially right for the right reason, but also very time-consuming.  
695 However, applying a catchment modeler's approach, this is inevitable for reliably integrated  
696 catchment modelling and both the step-wise calibration and iterative model corrections will continue  
697 with new model versions.

698



**Figure 8.** Discrepancy between the idealised procedure for step-wise calibration (A) and the numerous iterations between the steps that appear in reality (B), leading to overall model corrections.

Another important next step in model evaluation and improvement would be to initiate a concerted model inter-comparison study at the global scale with benchmarking (e.g. Newman et al., 2017), as we currently lack such studies for global hydrological models. Focus should then be on comparing model performance in general but also on input data and performance of specific hydrological processes to understand differences between various model concepts. The latter could be done by using the representative gauged basin approach, as in this study, to evaluate model performance for sites where flow is dominated by certain processes, or by analyzing specific parts of the hydrograph or flow signatures that represents time periods when specific processes dominate the flow generation. In addition to river gauges, other data sources should be used for model evaluation of spatial patterns, e.g. earth observations. Specific areas that are intensively managed and impacted by humans should also be distinguished and evaluated separately to better understanding process variability vs human impacts. Various sources of input data (from which errors may propagate) should also be evaluated to improve global hydrological modelling.

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### 5.26.2 Model usefulness

Catchment models are often applied by water managers and the usefulness is part of the concept. The analysis of WWH model performance shows that also this first version can to some extent be useful for water managers in several regions globally. For instance, long-term averages are rather reliable in Eastern USA, Europe, South-East Asia, Japan as well as most of Russia, Canada, and South America. Here the model could thus be used for e.g. analyzing shifts in water resources between different climate periods. For high flows, monthly values show good performance as well as the spatial pattern of relative values. This implies that the model could already be used for seasonal forecasting of recharge to hydropower reservoirs, for which these variables are often used. Accordingly, the model has been applied for producing water-related climate impact indicators and it is set-up operationally to provide monthly river-flow forecasts for 6 months ahead (<http://hypeweb.smhi.se/>).

Ändrad fältkod

In many areas, HYPE should still be considered as a scientific tool and cannot be used locally by water managers because of poor performance. However, the model provides a first platform for catchment modelling to be further refined and experimented with at the global, regional and local

732 scales. Parts of the model can be extracted (e.g. specific catchments or countries) and used as  
733 infrastructure, when starting the time-consuming process of setting up a catchment model. The  
734 model can then be improved for the selected catchments by exchanging the global input data with  
735 local data and knowledge, as well as parameters estimated to fit with local observations. Significant  
736 improvements in model performance from such a procedure have already been noted for West  
737 Africa (Andersson et al., 2017). In Sweden the operational HYPE model runs with national data and  
738 adjusted parameter values, providing an average daily NSE (Nash and Sutcliffe, 1970) of 0.83 for 222  
739 stations with  $\leq 5\%$  regulation and an average relative volume error of  $\pm 5\%$  for the period 1999–2008.  
740 For all gauging sites (some 400) with both regulated and unregulated rivers, the mean monthly NSE is  
741 0.80. The Swedish HYPE model has been improved incrementally during more than 10 years and has  
742 proven very useful in providing decision-support to society. It supports a national warning service  
743 with operational forecasting of floods and droughts (e.g. Pechlivanidis et al., 2014), and the water  
744 framework directive for measure plans to improve water quality (e.g. Arheimer and Pers, 2017;  
745 Arheimer et al., 2015). Moreover, it has been used in assessments of hydro-morphological impact  
746 (e.g. Arheimer and Lindström, 2014), climate-change impact analysis (e.g. Arheimer and Lindström,  
747 2015) and combined effects from multiple-drivers on water resources in a changing environment  
748 (e.g. Arheimer et al., 2017; Arheimer et al., 2018).

749 Thus, it is found very useful to have a national multi-catchment model to support society in water  
750 related issues. This should be encouraging for other countries who do not yet have a national model  
751 set-up and also for international river basin authorities searching for a more harmonized way to  
752 predict river flow across administrative borders. Using the WWH as a starting point would be a quick  
753 and low-cost alternative for getting started with more detailed catchment modelling for decision-  
754 support in water management. Parts of the model are therefore shared and can be requested at  
755 <http://hypecode.smhi.se/>. Using a common framework for catchment modelling by many research  
756 groups and practitioners will probably advance science as it enables a critical mass and better  
757 communication when sharing experiences. Only when using the same methods or data, there is full  
758 transparency in the research process so that scientific progress and failures can be clearly  
759 understood, shared and learnt from. The WWH could be one stepping stone in such a collaborative  
760 process between catchment modellers across the globe.

Ändrad fältkod

761

## 762 **6.7. Conclusions**

763

764 The catchment modelling approach applied (using the HYPE model, open global data and recent  
765 calibration techniques) resulted in better performance (median monthly KGE = 0.4) than what has  
766 been reported so far from more traditional gridded modelling of river flow at the global scale. Major  
767 variability in hydrological processes could be recognized world-wide using global parameters, as  
768 these were linked to physiographical variables to describe spatial variability and calibrated in a step-  
769 wise manner. Clearly, the community of catchment modellers can contribute to research also at the  
770 global scale nowadays with the numerous open data available and advanced processing facilities.

771 However, the WWH resulting from this first model version should be used with caution (especially in  
772 dry regions) as the performance may still be of low quality for local or regional applications in water  
773 management. Geographically, the model performs best in Eastern USA, Europe, South-East Asia and  
774 Japan, as well as parts of Russia, Canada, and South America. The model shows overall good  
775 potential to capture flow signatures of monthly high flows, spatial variability of high flows, duration  
776 of low flows and constancy of daily flow. Nevertheless, there remains large potential for model  
777 improvements and it is suggested both to redo the calibration and reconsider parts of the model  
778 structure for the next WWH version.

779 The step-wise calibration procedure was judged as very useful for the model to be potentially right  
780 for the right reason, but also very time-consuming. The calibration cycle is suggested to be repeated  
781 a couple of times to find robust values under new fixed parameter conditions, which is a long-term  
782 commitment of continuous model refinement. The model set-up will be released in new model  
783 versions during this incremental improvement. For the next version, special focus will be given to the  
784 water balance (i.e. precipitation and evapotranspiration), soil storage and dynamics from  
785 hydrological features, such as lakes, reservoirs, glaciers and floodplains.

786 The model will be shared by providing a piece of the world to modellers working at the regional scale  
787 to appreciate local knowledge, establish a critical mass of experts from different parts of the world  
788 and improve the model in a collaborative manner. The model can serve as a fast track to a model  
789 environment for users who do not have this ready at hands and in return the WWH can be improved  
790 from feedback on hydrological processes from local experts across the world. Potentially it will  
791 accelerate scientific advancement if more researchers start using the same tools and data, which  
792 makes it easier to be transparent when evaluating and comparing scientific results.

793

#### 794 **Code availability**

795 Hypecode.smhi.se

#### 796 **Data availability**

797 Hypeweb.smhi.se

798

#### 799 **Appendices**

800

801 The Table below show additional information to Table A1 regarding which HYPE parameters that  
802 were calibrated for each process during the model set-up and the range of resulting parameter  
803 values. Description of each parameter can be found in the HYPE wiki at <http://hypeweb.smhi.se/>.

804

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805 **Table A1.** Metrics and parameter values from the stepwise parameter-estimation globally. Parameter names  
 806 and values are given in the same order of appearance (columns 2 and 6).

Hydrological Process	HYPE parameters <a href="http://hypecode.smhi.se/">http://hypecode.smhi.se/</a>	No. gauges	Median value of metric(s)		Parameter value(s)
			Before	After	
Potential Evapo-Transpiration (3 PET-algorithms: median of ranges constrained with MODIS)	Jhtadd, jhtscale, kc2, kc3, kc4, krs, alb, alfapt	0	RE: 11.5 %	RE: 0.5%	5; 100; [0.7-1.7]; [0.15-1.7]; [0.8-1.6]; 0.16; [0.3-0.8]; 1.26
Glaciers (only evaluated vs mass balance data)	glacvexp, glacvcoef, glacvexp1, glacvcoef, glac2arlim, glacannmb, glacttmp, glaccmlt, glaccmrad, glaccmrefr, glacialb, fepotglac	296	RE: 0.38% CC: 0.51	-	1.38, 0.17 1.25, 12.88 25 000 000, 0, 0, 1.58, 0.19, 0.06, 0.35, 0 Ranges: [0.20 - 0.5]; [0.01 - 0.45]; [0.01 - 0.1]; [0.05 - 0.35]; [30 - 100]; [10 - 60]; [0.05 - 0.7]; [12 - 30]; [0.3 - 0.9]; [0.01 - 0.3]; [0.01 - 0.6]; [0.2 - 0.6] ; [0.01 - 0.5]
Soils (average, rock, urban, water, rice)	5 soils: rrcs1, rrcs2, rrcs3, trrcs, mperc1, mperc2, macerate, mactrinf, mactrsm, srrate, wcwp, wcfc, wcep	25	RE: -14.1% KGE: 0.2		0.6, 0.3, 0.0002, 0.15, 10, 0.1, 10, 0.8, 1, 0.01, 0.01, 0.0001, 0.0001, 0.3, 0.3, 0.0001, 0.03, 0.03, 0.0003
Bare soils in deserts (calibrated manually)	rrcs1, rrcs2, rrcs3, trrcs, mperc1, mperc2, wcwp1, macerate, mactrinf, mactrsm, sfrost, srrate, wcwp1, wcwp2, wcwp3, wcfc1, wcfc2, wcfc3, wcep1, wcep2, wcep3	4	RE: 236.1%	RE: -18.9	0.6, 0.3, 0.0002, 0.15, 10, 0.1, 10, 0.8, 1, 0.01, 0.01, 0.0001, 0.0001, 0.3, 0.3, 0.0001, 0.03, 0.03, 0.0003
1. Precipitation: catchment elevation	Pcelevth, Pcelevadd, Pcelevmax	147	RE: -6.7%	RE: 4.4%	500; 0.01; 0.7
2. Precipitation: land-cover altitude	5 elevation zones: pcluse	1041	RE: 24.3%	RE: 10.1%	0.05; 0.2; 0.25; 0.25; 0.35
3. HRUs in areas without snow	10 HRUs: kc2, kc3, kc4, alb, soilcorr, srrcs, soilcorr	318	KGE: 0.16	KGE: 0.27	Range: [0.90-1.54]; [0.40-1.77]; [0.20-1.90]; [0.20-0.80]; [1.00-10.55]; [0.03-0.50];

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4. HRUs in areas with snow: ET, recession and active soil depth	10 HRUs: ttmp, cmlt, cmrad, fscdist0, fepotsnow	225	KGE: 0.16	KGE: 0.24	Ranges: [-2.67-1.80]; [1.10-4.00]; [0.16-1.5]; [0.20-0.75]; [0.09-0.98]
5. Upstream lakes	llratk, ilratp	731	CC: 0.71	CC: 0.72	1.8; 1.4 (depth: 5 m; icatch: 0.3)
6. Regionalised ET (in 12 Köppen climate regions)	12 climates: cevpcorr	458	KGE: 0.58	KGE: 0.62	Ranges: [-0.43 – 0.38]
7. River routing	rivvel, damp	302	CC: 0.70	CC: 0.71	0.6; 1.0
8. Lake rating curve	888 Lakes: rate; exp (LakeData.txt)	945	CC: 0.50	CC: 0.59	Ranges: [0.001– 1013]; [1.002 – 3.0];
9. Floodplains (partly calibrated manually)	13 Floodplains: rclfp; rclpl; rcrfp; rcfpr (FloodData.txt)	32	KGE: -0.03	KGE: 0.03	Ranges: [0.05 – 0.99]; [0.15 – 0.90]; [0.05 – 0.99]; [0.15 – 0.90]
10. Evaporation from water surface	kc2 <sub>water</sub> , kc3 <sub>water</sub> , kc4 <sub>water</sub>	201	RE: -20.7%	RE: -12.2%	1.36; 0.65; 1.25
11. Specific lake evaporation	2 regions: cevpcorr	16	RE: 24.8%	RE: 4.8%	Ranges: [0.375-0.5]

807

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819 model is available at <http://hypecode.smhi.se/>.

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