

Interactive comment on “HESS Opinions: Science in today’s media landscape – challenges and lessons from hydrologists and journalists” by Stefanie R. Lutz et al.

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This is a clear and interesting opinion paper which introduces some important considerations about the interactions of scientists and the media. The authors provide some very interesting examples of pitfalls that we should avoid and some really helpful suggestions of how to improve science media communication.

I wonder if for some of these points to be communicated effectively the authors might follow their own advice a little more and find further visual and engaging materials to highlight their case? Often in science media we see bespoke figures, perhaps blending photos or cartoons or similar to communicate the main points quickly (fig 1 is a good

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start). Although an opinion article I see that this particular subject lends itself strongly to several accompanying figures.

Can you use actual examples e.g. of what an actual example of conflict narrative looks like (link?) - this would be much clearer for those who are new to this. The same with second opinions. There is a real chance to provide an important resources here for those considering undertaking this. In a similar way I also think that the 4 examples at the beginning could do with some further details - what is a minor exaggeration? What could you say for the drought example instead of what the journalists want you to say? Can you provide the example of good practice? If the media outlet ignored the request to retract, what on earth can we do as scientists? What damage limitation techniques can we draw on?

As you already point out it can be a scary prospect to start engaging with the media - perhaps you can make an even clearer list of recommendations/steps that someone new can take and point to other resources. I think the role of the press office at institutions, other bodies like the Science Media Centre and Research Council training courses are important and yet not wholly mentioned. Would you agree?

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