



## *Editorial note to*

# **“Comment: Getting the Methodology Wrong for Analysing the Hydrological Changes in Watersheds”, Hydrol. Earth Syst. Sci. Discuss., hess-2018-187, 2018**

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This manuscript is a commentary on Penny et al. (2018) published in HESS. Within less than 2 days of posting in HESSD, it received a significant series of comments. Unfortunately, the discussion quickly escalated into an atmosphere that did not foster a critical, yet respectful, scientific debate. While emotions were running high on all sides, this development originated from the style and tone in which the comment by Nitin Bassi and co-authors was formulated. Even though we acknowledge that statements like “The authors ... have conveniently ignored a large body of peer-reviewed research”, “poor scholarship on the part of the authors”, and “Poor understanding of groundwater behavior” might, in some contexts, be regarded as harsh but still acceptable, we also realize that they might appear insulting and offensive.

We thus decided to stop the discussion and to reject the comment in its present form. This is intended to prevent a further escalation and to safeguard the discussion forum of HESS against a communication style that does not foster a critical and respectful scientific debate. Such a tenor and mood does not serve as a good example of a scientific debate, especially not for young and early career scientists, and it bears the risk of personal damage. Last but not least, this kind of debate cannot serve the authors themselves, because it prevents that the discussion is focused on the facts.

Nitin Bassi and co-authors are very welcome to re-submit a comment that focuses on the facts that might lead to a scientific improvement of the study of Penny et al. (2018) and ultimately improve the understanding of hydrological changes in the target watershed. Alternatively, they might opt to present a research paper on this issue. Naturally, either of these options should be formulated in a constructive tone, and arguments or scientific facts presented need to be justified on reproducible scientific grounds.

## **References**

Penny, G., Srinivasan, V., Dronova, I., Lele, S., and Thompson, S.: Spatial characterization of long-term hydrological change in the Arkavathy watershed adjacent to Bangalore, India, *Hydrol. Earth Syst. Sci.*, 22, 595–610, <https://doi.org/10.5194/hess-22-595-2018>, 2018.