

Review 'Water and Us: tales and hands-on laboratories to educate on sustainable and nonconflictual water resources management'

General comments:

- The authors describe an interesting, interactive method of involving high school students in learning more about the natural and anthropogenic water cycle. The paper describing the project and first iteration, with 200+ students, is well written, bar some linguistic issues (see specific comments). I recommend this manuscript for publication in Geoscience Communication with minor revisions.
- The prologue could use a more descriptive title, adding in whether it was used in the method as part of the storytelling emphasis, or is added in here as background information, considering it is placed before the introduction. As an illustration of the importance of water, and the effects of climate change in a specific region, it is very effective, but more context as to how it fits into the project would be useful.
- All in all, the methodology and project description are very sound. It is obvious the authors have put much thought into developing Water and Us, and its aims and set-up are compelling. As outlined below, section 4 needs work integrating the lessons learned into scientific context, but it is otherwise well-rounded.

Specific comments:

- L3: to contribute **to** advancing education
- L5: revolves instead of resolves
- L40: add 'a' before reality
- L45: 'precipitated' does not fit here. Depending on what the authors want to convey, use 'began' or other word
- L58: change 'by' to 'from'
- L62: would be good to have a more recent reference, to include scientific and societal development over the past 20 years
- Good recurring metaphor of the elephant – works very well here
- L71: add more recent reference, e.g. Immerzeel et al. (2020)
- L77: remains anchored in, not anchored to
- L82: the authors here take the words by Kirsten von Elverfeldt out of context, in my opinion, saying climate change is an implausible risk. Von Elverfeldt argues that climate change *seems* implausible to non-science aligned people, not that it is. That should be clarified.
- L84: change 'for example' to also
- L88: educating THE next
- L94: please define 'high school students', as it is an ambiguous term, and very dependent on the country. A definition of age and/or subject it is tied to (as many high school students have a set directional curriculum) would be good.
- L108: I'm assuming the authors mean role playing games, rather than role games?
- The second pillar could use more elaboration: e.g. which roles are played in the role playing games? Those of stakeholders, affected people, decision makers, or all three? Especially compared to the description of the other pillars, this seems very short and lacks necessary detail
- L125: intuition is a peculiar choice of words here. I would suggest 'builds on the premise'

- L136: archetype is, again, a word that doesn't quite fit. I would suggest 'case study' or simply 'example'.
- L141: parallels instead of parallelisms
- L141: concurrent is not the right word here, because these events happened at different points in time. I suggest omitting it
- L145: 'laboratory' in English refers to a building rather than an activity. Please revise
- L157: see comment L145
- L172: take part IN
- L174: 'may apparently be challenging' is strangely worded. Please revise. I suggest simply 'is challenging'
- L174: associate WITH
- L175: replace 'regards' with 'conveys'
- L188: remove 'are the'
- L191: 'hammer down' is not correct. I suggest 'in order to both integrate'
- L192: 'proximal' is not the correct word here. I suggest simply 'close'
- Section 2.5 is very clear and well-written, I am very impressed
- L222: inTO
- L238: replace 'it strikes' with 'it is striking'
- L238: add 'the' to IPCC
- L241: I'm not sure 'diffusion' is the right word here, as it implies randomness. I personally (but of course the authors can disagree) would prefer 'dissemination' or 'transfer'.
- L242: 'has been' is the wrong tense to use here, replace with 'were'
- L248: replace 'on' with 'in'
- L252: 'suggestive' is not the right word here. Please revise
- L266: replace 'in' with 'of'
- L268: 'youngsters' too colloquial
- L281: change 'make' to 'making'
- Overall, I find section 4 lacking depth, as it tries to very broadly cover the lessons learned, and the authors attempt to connect their personal findings to previously done research and its conclusions. An example is the 'breakdown of youngsters' by Kuthe et al. (2019), which is applied, then not further addresses in its methodology of application to the Water and Us students, the ratios within the groups, or how these categorizations are helpful, and what specific needs each group has. This could have been tied into the second part of the section very well, which speaks about audience priorities. The categorizations could be used as groups to address different priorities. Finally, when discussing the future integration of Water and Us into future national and European projects, it would be good to know whether this will still be located in Italy, or whether the project will expand. If the latter, this would require at least some brief communication of how the project will then be (as expressed L279-281) tailored to the geographic location and socioeconomic circumstance.
- L308: change 'to' to 'in'
- L314: at AN international
- Overall, conclusion is very short, but to the point, and I think it fits here.

References:

Immerzeel, W. W., Lutz, A. F., Andrade, M., Bahl, A., Biemans, H., Bolch, T., ... & Baillie, J. E. M. (2020). Importance and vulnerability of the world's water towers. *Nature*, 577(7790), 364-369.