



Barriers to the exchange of hydrometeorological data across Europe – results from a survey and implications for data policy

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A survey has been conducted to understand what are the perceived barriers to the free exchange of hydrometeorological data across Europe. A total of 127 questionnaires were received of which 61 were completed by data providers and 66 by data users in 32 European countries with a total 631 entries (i.e. assessments of barriers affecting one data type) in the questionnaires. The responses have been analysed in terms of what barriers are perceived to exist, whether there are differences between research, industry and administration, between the West and East of Europe, and between different data types. The responses suggest that the most important barriers are of economic nature. The majority of the data users think there exist economic barriers to the free exchange of the data (significant at the 0.01% level) while the data providers give mixed results. Out of the types of institutions, the research institutions give the most significant response of the existence of economic barriers, followed by industry and administration. For the East European countries economic barriers are considered a much more serious problem than for the West. Out of the data types surveyed, precipitation and geospatial data are considered to be the most critical in terms of costs. The differences between the perceptions of data providers and data users depend strongly on the type of barrier. The differences are smallest for legal barriers (such as licensing of data), followed by the economic barriers and are largest for the practical barriers. Conflict of interest is another potential barrier examined in the survey.