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Scientific Partnership - a new level of collaboration between environmental scientists and IT specialists

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ICT technologies play an increasing role in almost every aspect of the environmental sciences. The adaption of the new technologies, however, consumes an increasing amount of scientist's time, which they could better spend on their actual research. Not adapting new technologies will lead to biased research, since many researchers are not familiar with the possibilities and methods available through modern technology. This dilemma can only be resolved by close collaboration and scientific partnership between researchers and IT experts. In contrast to traditional IT service provision, IT experts have to understand the scientific problems and methods of the scientists in order to help them to select and adapt suitable services. Furthermore, a sound partnership helps towards good scientific practice, since the IT experts can ensure the reproducibility of the research by professionalizing workflows and applying FAIR data principles. We elaborate on this dilemma with examples from an IT center's perspective, and sketch a path towards unbiased research and the development of new IT services that are tailored for the scientific community.