Interaction with users during the development of the KNMI'14 regional climate change scenarios

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Interaction with users during developing climate scenarios can be as important for their success as the methods and material used to develop them. Therefore, the description of the interaction with users deserves more attention in scientific literature. In this paper we describe the interaction with users during the development of the KNMI'14 climate scenarios and put this into the context of scientific literature. After a description of lessons learned from previous generations of climate scenarios, we describe the various activities to interact with users during the development of the KNMI'14 scenarios. The aim of this paper is to find out the strong points, and at which points it can be improved.

The aims of developing the KNMI'14 climate scenarios (a generic set of climate scenarios for a wide range of users) imply that the design and construction of the KNMI'14 climate scenarios were predominantly science-led. However, directly or indirectly the comments and requirements of the stakeholders influenced several of the climate scientists decisions. A general set of climate scenarios cannot ensure salience to all, yet, the stakeholder consultation did enhance the salience of the KNMI'14 scenarios, compared to the KNMI'06 scenarios. We feel that during the user interaction especially aspects related to the legitimacy can be further improved: making assumptions, roles, frames, expectations more explicit. For that bridge-builders are needed at both the sides of climate scientists and users. Climate scientists could use more input from the social and communication sciences for this, among others for better understanding of users requirements ('the questions behind the requests'), for recognizing implicit assumptions and frames, and for presenting the results of scientific research in a usable way. Improving legitimacy will increase the willingness of users to invest time in articulating their requirements, which in turn may increase the salience of the provided information.