Nat. Hazards Earth Syst. Sci. Discuss.,
https://doi.org/10.5194/nhess-2017-187-RC1, 2017

Natural Hazards and Earth System Sciences
Discussions

Interactive comment on "Developing drought impact functions for drought risk management" *by* Sophie Bachmair et al.

Anonymous Referee #1

Received and published: 31 July 2017

The authors propose an interesting approach to derive "drought impact functions" from text-based reports and assess the possibilities and limitations of transferring these into drought management. The presentation of the work is excellent, with clear objectives, easy to follow methodology and straightforward results. I consider the article should be accepted in its current form as it represents a novel contribution in the field of drought impacts assessment, very valuable for preparedness. My only concern is the limited applicability of the methodology in reality. As the authors acknowledge, a caveat of the impact functions is that they do not incorporate the dynamics of vulnerability. This is, they cannot capture the implementation of adaptation and preparedness measures usually adopted after (or during) a drought event. Therefore, any derived function would only be useful within a drought early warning system if no adaptation measures were

ever adopted, irrespective of the severity of the impacts. Moreover, assuming that the impact functions must be sector specific, the availability of data to derive impact functions must be strongly biased towards one of two sectors. How do the authors expect to cope with scarce data availability? How would the authors expect the impact function concept translates into water resources planning and management?

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