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Seven rules for researchers to increase their impact on the policy process

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Abstract. This paper addresses the question of how hydrologists and other researchers can contribute most to water management practice. It reviews the literature in the field of science and technology studies and research utilization and presents the results in the form of seven "rules" for researchers. These are (1) Reflect on the nature and possible roles of science and expertise; (2) Analyze the stakeholders and issues at stake; (3) Choose whom and what to serve; (4) Decide on your strategy; (5) Design the process to implement your strategy; (6) Communicate!; and (7) Consider your possibilities and limitations. A key notion in this paper is that research always involves selection and interpretation and that the selection and interpretations made in a specific case always reflect the values and preferences of those involved. Collaboration between researchers and the other stakeholders can increase the legitimacy and utilization of the research and can prevent the researchers' specific expertise from being lost.

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