Ensemble Forecast Products - Optimal Use for the Market?
Response from social science

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EPS changes relationship between forecasters and recipients

Shifts responsibility for coping with forecast uncertainty onto forecast recipients

“You’re putting the onus on the people that receive that probabilistic warning to make a decision what to do with it themselves.” (FF, United Kingdom)

“EPS also means dumping responsibility onto forecast users. By forcing forecasters to provide deterministic predictions, the accountability remains entirely on the shoulders of forecasters. If a forecaster provides a probabilistic forecast, they give the import for the decision to forecasts users. ... Asking for a deterministic prediction is also a way for the person in charge of taking a decision to avoid decisional problems and blame.” (FF, France)

Is EPS more honest or an abdication of professional responsibility?
Professional competences and public safety

“we are the hydrologists and we are the ones that are responsible for this forecast ...[EPS] is not so good... because this is like putting the responsibility down to them and saying we have no idea, make what you want of the spaghetti plots. This shouldn't happen I think.” (FF, Germany)

“The Environment Agency is primarily concerned with issuing short-notice flood warnings, you know 2 hours, with as a high level of certainty about that as they can manage... so normally, unless they are absolutely certain that there is going to be a flood, there are not going to issue a warning, even if there is a fair chance of flooding. And this is because their primary customer for flood warnings is the general public. So they think that’s what they have to do…” (Meteorologist, United Kingdom)
“Before now we said yes or no, you are going to flood or not. If you say yes, they’re going to do something about it. If we say 40% chance, then it’s up to them what they do with it. To me, that’s where the Met Office have always coped better with things. In the Met Office, all their weather warnings always come out as probabilistic. So when it doesn’t happen, they *never have any complaints* because they always say we only said it was a 60% chance and so it hasn’t happened. In the Agency, our flood warning services have been built on yes, no and if we get it wrong, then that’s got higher consequences of the Met Office getting it wrong in producing a probabilistic forecast. So I think for our own reputation as well, to go to probabilistic forecasting would be quite useful because it almost gives us, not an excuse exactly, but it gives us a reason, it quantifies our uncertainty and it means we won’t necessarily get criticised as much.” (FF, United Kingdom)