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The role of “social calibration” in the verification of a hydrodynamic model of Cork Harbour

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In this study a number of two-dimensional hydrodynamic models of Cork Harbour have been used to simulate numerous eddies which are known to occur at different stages of the tide at a number of locations in the harbour and the area outside its mouth. Validation of results from hydrodynamic models such as these is usually achieved by making a comparison between recorded and modelled data of water level, current speed and direction. We have extended this to include “social calibration” by those groups of people who have personal experience, liability or knowledge of the phenomena. The pilots of the Port of Cork showed great interest in the results of the model confirming its realism in great detail. Both the modellers and stakeholders learn from the engagement with the model output, stimulating new insights for each other through the recognition of features in the animated results that may be called “emergent”.