

**Decision Letter (PAN-19-05-070)**

**From:** editorial@people-and-nature.org

**To:** lortie@yorku.ca

**CC:**

**Subject:** People and Nature - Decision on Manuscript ID PAN-19-05-070

**Body:** 23-Jun-2019

PAN-19-05-070 Simple principles for engineering reproducible solutions to environmental management challenges.

Dear christopher lortie,

I have now received the reviewers' reports and a recommendation from the Associate Editor who handled the review process. Copies of their reports are included below. Based on their evaluations, I regret to inform you that we are unable to publish your paper in People and Nature in its current form.

However, we would be willing to consider a new manuscript which takes into consideration the feedback you have received.

The associate editor's comments provide a good summary of the concerns. In essence the paper comes across as rather simplistic in its assumption of a linear 'knowledge deficit' model. Both the AE and one of the reviewers provide valuable advice on how to improve the manuscript.

Please note that resubmitting your manuscript does not guarantee eventual acceptance, and that your resubmission may be subject to re-review before a decision is rendered.

Once you have made the suggested changes, go to <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/pan-besjournals> and login to your Author Centre. Click on "Manuscripts with Decisions," and then click on "Create a Resubmission" located next to the manuscript number. Then, follow the steps for resubmitting your manuscript.

Because we are trying to facilitate timely publication of manuscripts submitted to People and Nature, your new manuscript should be uploaded within 4 months. The deadline for your resubmission is 21-Oct-2019. If it is not possible for you to submit your manuscript by that date, please get in touch with the editorial office, otherwise we will consider your paper as a completely new submission.

I look forward to your resubmission.

Sincerely,

Professor Rosemary Hails  
Lead Editor, People and Nature

Reply to:  
Alice Plane  
People and Nature Editorial Office  
[editorial@people-and-nature.org](mailto:editorial@people-and-nature.org)

Associate Editor Comments to Author:  
Associate Editor  
Comments for the authors:

Whilst I agree there is a need to improve evidence-informed (rather than evidence-based) decisions around environmental management, I found this paper quite disconnected to the current literature on the science-practice interface. As remarked by reviewer 1, I would strongly recommend that the authors rewrite their paper in light of the wealth of information on topics such as (co) production of scientific knowledge, evidence based decision making, STS, and social studies of science. A specific example is in Point 3, which completely ignores the debates around the information deficit model. Because of this disconnect with the literature, many of the points made by the author appear poorly informed.

I also strongly support the suggestion of reviewer 1 of requesting the authors to clarify the understanding of "management" – as it is presented, this is incredibly broad and therefore makes all the points made difficult to evaluate.

Finally, I completely agree with the insightful comment from reviewer 2 that the document, ironically, is opaque, hard to read, full of jargon, and does not provide clear practical guidelines on how to implement their suggestions in practice (either in terms of the scientists picking up these guidelines, or practitioners receiving them).

I would therefore recommend that in order for this manuscript to be accepted, the authors need to 1) demonstrate a much more robust understanding of the current literature on (co) production of scientific knowledge, evidence based decision making, STS, and social studies of science – and how their guidelines add to this existing literature; 2) demonstrate how their guidelines should be translated into actions that can be implemented by scientists and managers; and 3) provide clear and easy text that follows their aims, namely facilitating the link between science and practice.

Reviewer(s)' Comments to Author:  
Reviewer: 1

Comments to the Corresponding Author

Very important issue. I'd recommend to include the more recent debates on (co) production on scientific knowledge and clarify the understanding of "management" in order to link the paper better to ongoing debates on evidence based decision making, STS, and social studies of science

Reviewer: 2

Comments to the Corresponding Author

I applaud the effort to facilitate evidence-based management decisions; it is incredibly important that all stakeholders can access, understand, and use the scientific knowledge generated by scientists. I think the authors do an admirable job of providing guiding principles to achieve this goal.

Ironically, however, I think the authors undermine this goal by creating a document that is extremely difficult to read. I don't want to come down too hard on the authors, because there is a lot of good in their manuscript, but I found many passages that were impenetrable. I recommend that the authors critically edit their document with the goal of producing clear, simple, and direct message. For example, "(lines 9-11)...generate meaningful leverage points or opportunities to induce change in coupled natural-human systems." This leaves me wondering what "meaningful leverage points" are and what a "coupled natural-human system" is. Another example: "(line 163)...decisioning for natural resources." Surely, this can be made more clear.

Fat-trimming will also include deleting superfluous text (e.g. "(line 20...vast pool of" can be deleted at no cost) and by making the text more active (e.g. "(line 29)...how to make your..." can be replaced by "making"). I'm not going to go through the entire manuscript but suffice it to say that there are several spots that can (and should) be edited for clarity.

**Date Sent:** 23-Jun-2019

**File 1:** - [Review for Simple Principles.pdf](#)

Files attached

[Review for Simple Principles.pdf](#)