

Interactive comment on “On deeper human dimensions in Earth system analysis and modelling” by Dieter Gerten et al.

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The paper identifies an important lacuna in the literature on earth system modelling and analysis, and proposes a brave approach for addressing it objectively, building on existing knowledge bases and techniques.

It is necessarily a risky enterprise given the potential for strongly emotional and subjective reactions from fervent adherents of particular beliefs, whether through challenging the global impact of their values, or fuelling a ‘blame game’ that may further sharpen the divisive polarisation we already see in national and international politics.

Nevertheless, the authors are correct in pointing out the risks of overlooking the impacts of the geographical distributions and strengths of different religious value sets on

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how human societies interact with environmental and climate change.

Of course, religion is not the only cultural determinant that influences the climate change relevant behaviours of social groups, and it would be good to see how to set the proposed research program into a wider socio-cultural context, which might ultimately provide a more comprehensive account of the complex trajectories we observe and wish to influence. My main concern is how these 'sacred cows' can be treated in a balanced and rational way with scientific integrity, without provoking a destructive backlash.

The text would benefit from some minor editing, as noted by the other referee.

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