Comment on gmd-2022-239

David Ham

The HiWaQ software archive referenced by this manuscript contains substantial amounts of code copied from mHM version 5 (https://git.ufz.de/mhm/mhm, tag 5.5). mHM is licensed under the GPL version 3.0.

The software archive breaches the terms of the GPL and academic good practice through a combination of:

- changing and removing author and institution names in copyright headers and in the program output;
- removing version histories; and
- failing to include notices stating that changes have been made.

The failure to correctly attribute the origin of much of the code is compounded by not mentioning in locations such as the README file the inclusion of substantial mHM code in the archive.

The archive and manuscript claim to present a separate model which can be coupled with mHM. Instead, the archive contains a modified mHM code base which also contains the water quality features claimed as the substance of HiWaQ and of the manuscript. From an academic practice perspective, the reader or user of that code base will be seriously misled as to the origin and authorship of much of the code. From the perspective of licence compliance, the provisions of the GPL which are designed to give authorship credit have been substantially breached.

For this reason, it is not appropriate for the peer review of this manuscript to continue.