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Tools and methods in participatory modeling

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Abstract: Choosing the right method and tool for the problem we face is always important in modeling, and especially so in participatory modeling (PM). Two years ago, in 2016, an IEMSS workshop was conducted where we came up with some recommendations on how to navigate among the many existing methods to make sure that the most appropriate ones are chosen in PM projects. As a result of these discussions, work was started on a position paper, which resulted in a systematic overview, assessment, and categorization of methods used in PM. In most of the cases, it seems that the prior experience and skills of the modelers had a dominant effect on the selection of the methods used. Based on expert opinion and a survey of modelers engaged in participatory processes, we offer practical guidelines for facilitating decisions about method selection at different stages of the participatory modeling process. Moreover, a web portal has been created (participatorymodeling.org), where methods can be presented, evaluated, and assessed. We expect that this can assist modelers and stakeholders in making appropriate choices of methods in different PM applications.

Keywords: Method selection, survey, web portal, method categorization