

Interactive comment on “System for Automated Geoscientific Analyses (SAGA) v. 2.1.4” by O. Conrad et al.

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Specific Comments While the paper’s description of software history, structure and philosophy and the general overview of its capabilities is very welcome, I feel that the review of SAGA applications in section 3 could be substantially shortened. To showcase the diversity of applications in which SAGA has been used, perhaps one or two (page-filling) tables and a brief textual summary would prove more useful.

Answer: we will follow your suggestion and add a table that gives an overview to the references categorized by the addressed research fields; this coincides also with the suggestion of referee 2 to provide a ‘visualization of the fields’, which currently make use of SAGA. We also agree that section 3 looks a bit lengthy, especially when compared to the following sections. However, we refrain from

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shortening its content substantially. Since the software SAGA evolved within scientific projects and as also highlighted by referee 2 the development was largely driven by science. Therefore, we think the science behind is an important aspect of SAGA and the various studies better reflect the wide scope and applicability than just a presentation of the functionality.

Other aspects, however, that would add to the relevance of this paper, are currently missing. In particular, a general comparison of SAGA’s capabilities and features to other commercial as well as open-source GIS would give the reader a better idea as to what to expect from this software, and it would help to situate SAGA within the open-source GIS ecosystem. This could again partly be presented in tabular form, and/or it could involve references in the text to comparable (or not so comparable) features in well-known software, e.g. SAGA tool chains seem to be similar to ArcGIS Model-Builder, and Python geoprocessing in ArcGIS is comparable to Python or R scripting with SAGA (is it?). These comparisons would (likely) reveal sets of GIS functions that are currently not available in SAGA tools (e.g. address geocoding or vehicle routing?), inspiring the reader to consider contributing to SAGA development.

we will add a subsection to give a comparison with other GIS software and also to outline interrelations between SAGA and the ‘GIS ecosystem’. Referee 2 made a similar suggestion. The focus will be kept on open source GIS, due to the fact that - apart from ArcGIS - we have neither access nor much experience with commercial GIS.

additional comments in supplement PDF file

Please also note the supplement to this comment:

<http://www.geosci-model-dev-discuss.net/8/C862/2015/gmdd-8-C862-2015-supplement.pdf>