

Interactive comment on “Bed topography of Princess Elizabeth Land in East Antarctica” by Xiangbin Cui et al.

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This paper essentially provides to the community a new, detailed ice-thickness (and therefore subglacial topography) dataset for the last major data gap in Antarctica. Although the nuances of what constitutes a data gap can (and should!) be debated, this dataset certainly fills the last remaining “pole of ignorance” that was highlighted in Bedmap2 (Fretwell et al., 2013). As such, the product at the heart of this paper represents a highly anticipated and hugely valuable dataset; indeed, it epitomises what is to my mind the purpose of an ESSD paper, namely to fast-track dissemination of a much needed dataset to the wider community.

With regard to the paper itself, this is largely a straight-up presentation of the data to

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the community, not couched in terms of addressing a major scientific hypothesis or question, and not stressing any major new “discoveries”. In this context, I really don’t have many criticisms, although I have annotated into the paper itself (as a supplement) a number of minor remarks for the authors to consider. One issue is that I don’t think that nationalities/institutes/names of researchers involved in this or previous surveys need to appear so much in the main text of the manuscript – often affiliations and citations give this information anyway, and as international scientists working together I don’t see the need to over-stress our nationalities or identities. I think there are various tweaks to be made to some of the figures – certainly it would be helpful to implement a scheme of being able to label locations on all maps, rather than the reader forever scrolling back to Figure 1 to find places.

Overall I enjoyed the paper, and of course the figures, not to mention the data, are the real gems here. I have a huge appreciation for the level of effort that has gone into acquiring these data in the first place. Congratulations to all concerned and all who have supported this stunning effort.

Please also note the supplement to this comment:

<https://essd.copernicus.org/preprints/essd-2020-126/essd-2020-126-RC2-supplement.pdf>

Interactive comment on Earth Syst. Sci. Data Discuss., <https://doi.org/10.5194/essd-2020-126, 2020>.

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