An update of IPCC climate reference regions for subcontinental analysis of climate model data: Definition and aggregated datasets

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Abstract. Several sets of reference regions have been used in the literature for the regional synthesis of observed and modelled climate and climate change information. A popular example is the set of reference regions introduced in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Special Report on Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Adaptation (SREX). The SREX regions were slightly modified for the 5th Assessment Report of the IPCC and used for reporting sub-continental observed and projected changes over a reduced number (33) of climatologically consistent regions encompassing a representative number of grid boxes. These regions are intended to allow analysis of atmospheric data over broad land or ocean regions and have been used as the basis for several popular spatially-aggregated datasets, such as the seasonal mean temperature and precipitation in IPCC regions for CMIP5.

We present an updated version of the reference regions for the analysis of new observed and simulated datasets (including CMIP6) which offer an opportunity for refinement due to the higher atmospheric model resolution. As a result, the number of land and ocean regions is increased to 46 and 14 respectively, better representing consistent regional climate features. The paper describes the rationale for the definition of the new regions and analyses their homogeneity. The regions are defined as polygons and are provided as coordinates and shapefile together with companion R and Python notebooks to illustrate their use in practical problems (e.g. calculating regional averages). We also describe the generation of a new dataset with monthly temperature and precipitation, spatially aggregated in the new regions, currently for CMIP5 and CMIP6, to be extended to other datasets in the future (including observations). The use of these reference regions, dataset and code is illustrated through a worked example using scatter plots to offer guidance on the likely range of future climate change at the scale of the reference regions. The regions, datasets and code (R and Python notebooks) are freely available at the ATLAS GitHub repository; https://github.com/SantanderMetGroup/ATLAS, doi:10.5281/zenodo.3968318 (Iturbide et al., 2020).

KEY WORDS: *Regional climate change; Climatic regions; CMIP5; CMIP6; Climate change projections; Reproducibility*

Copyright statement. The reference regions and the aggregated datasets derived from CMIP5 described in this paper are made available in the ATLAS GitHub repository (https://github.com/SantanderMetGroup/ATLAS) under the Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY) 4.0 license, whereas the scripts and code are made available under the GNU General Public License (GPL) v3.0. Additional products included in the ATLAS GitHub comply with the licenses of the original datasets and are periodically updated (e.g. CMIP6 aggregated dataset).

1 Introduction

Different sets of climate reference regions have been proposed in the literature for the regional synthesis of observed and model-projected climate change information, and have been subsequently used in the different Assessment Reports of the IPCC. The Giorgi reference regions (originally 23 squared regions proposed in Giorgi and Francisco, 2000) were used in the third (AR3, Giorgi et al., 2001) and fourth (AR4, Christensen et al., 2007) IPCC Assessment reports. These regions were modified using more flexible polygons in the IPCC SREX special report (Seneviratne et al., 2012) and then slightly modified and extended to 33 regions (by including island states, the Arctic and Antarctica) for the fifth Assessment Report (AR5, van Oldenborgh et al., 2013), as shown in Figure 1a. The objective in these revisions was to improve the climatic consistency of the regions so they represent sub-continental areas of greater climatic coherency. This process typically resulted in a larger number of smaller regions, constrained by the relatively coarse resolution of the global models, since each region should encompass a sufficient number of gridboxes. The IPCC AR5 reference regions (http://www.ipcc-data.org/guidelines/pages/ar5_regions.html; last access: 30 July 2020) were developed for reporting sub-continental CMIP5 projections (with an average horizontal resolution greater than 2°) and were quickly adopted by the research community as a basis for regional analysis in a variety of applications (Bärring and Strandberg, 2018; Madakumbura et al., 2019). Moreover, these regions have been used to generate popular spatially aggregated datasets, such as the *seasonal mean temperature and precipitation in IPCC regions for CMIP5* (McSweeney et al., 2015), which provides ready-to-use information from the CMIP5 models, suitable for regional analysis of climate projections and their uncertainties. This dataset can be directly used by researchers and stakeholders for a variety of purposes, including assessing the internal variability, model and scenario uncertainty components (Hawkins and Sutton, 2009), or assisting in the comparison and selection of representative sub-ensembles for impact studies (e.g., Ruane and McDermid, 2017).

The increasing availability of CMIP6 multi-model simulations (O'Neill et al., 2016; NCC editorial, 2019) offers an opportunity to refine the AR5 reference regions —due to the higher atmospheric model resolution, typically around 1°— and also to produce ready-to-use aggregated regional information for the updated reference regions. This is a timely task due to the great interest of the research community in the higher sensitivity of some CMIP6 models and the potential implications for climate change studies (Forster et al., 2020). Here, we present the results of an initiative carried out during the last year to achieve this goal. First, we present the updated regions (referred to as updated IPCC WGI reference regions) and describe the rationale for the revision, which was guided by two basic principles: 1) climatic consistency and better representation of regional climate features and 2) representativeness of model results (sufficient number of model gridboxes per region). Climatic homogeneity is characterized in terms of mean temperature and precipitation considering Köppen-Geiger climatic regions (Rubel and Kottek, 2010), the annual cycle and projected changes of the reference regions. The resulting 46 land plus 14 ocean regions (see Figure 1b) are provided as coordinates (in csv format and as shapefile) with companion notebooks to illustrate their use in R and Python.

Second, we describe the monthly regional temperature and precipitation dataset obtained by spatially aggregating the model data over the reference regions (currently for CMIP5 and CMIP6, to be extended later to observations and additional datasets). Finally, the use of these reference regions, datasets and code is illustrated through a reproducible example which analyses the likely range of future temperature and precipitation changes that are expected for different European regions using scatter plots.

Section 2 presents the data and methods used in this work. Sec. 3 describes the reference regions and their rationale. The regionally aggregated CMIP5 dataset is presented in Section 4 and links are provided for additional aggregated datasets (e.g. CMIP6, which are periodically updated); a reproducible illustrative example is described in Sec. 5. Finally, conclusions and discussion are presented in Sec. 6.

2 Data and Methods

We use global gridded observations to characterize the regional climatological conditions at a sub-continental scale. In particular, we use CRU TS (version 4.03; Harris et al., 2014; Harris and Jones, 2020) providing monthly precipitation and temperature with a resolution of 0.5° over land for the period 1901-2017. Figure 2a-b shows the annual mean temperature and precipitation climatology for the period 1981-2010. CRU TS does not cover Antarctica, which is therefore infilled with an alternative dataset, namely the EWEMBI gridded observations (Lange, 2019). Figure 2c shows the Köppen-Geiger climatic regions (Rubel and Kottek, 2010) computed from these datasets. Quantifying the observational uncertainty is an increasing concern in climate studies, particularly for precipitation (Kotlarski et al., 2019). Therefore, we use two additional observational datasets for precipitation in some parts of this study: 1) Global Precipitation Climatology Centre (GPCC, v2018 used here; Schneider et al., 2011) providing monthly land precipitation values with 0.5° resolution for the period from 1891 to 2016, and 2) Global Precipitation Climatology Project (GPCP; Monthly Version 2.3 gridded, merged satellite/gauge precipitation; Huffman et al., 2009), providing monthly land and ocean precipitation values with a resolution of 2.5° for the period 1979-2018. We show results for the current WMO climatological standard normal period 1981–2010 (WMO, 2017).

Global model scenario data was downloaded for CMIP5 (Taylor et al., 2012)/CMIP6 (O'Neill et al., 2016) models for the historical (1850- 2005/1850-2014) and RCP2.6/SSP1-2.6, RCP4.5/SSP2-4.5 and RCP8.5/SSP5-8.5 future scenarios (2006-2100/2015-2100). Data for CMIP5 (curated version used for IPCC-AR5) was downloaded from the IPCC Data Distribution Center (https://www.ipcc-data.org/sim/gcm_monthly/AR5/ index.html; last accessed, 31 Dec 2019) and for CMIP6 was downloaded from the Earth System Grid Federation (ESGF, Balaji et al., 2018); a periodically updated inventory is available at the ATLAS GitHub repository (in the *AtlasHub-inventory* folder). All model data has been interpolated to common 2° (for CMIP5) and 1° (CMIP6) grids —separately for land and ocean gridboxes using conservative remapping (using CDO with the models and target land/sea masks; CDO, 2019),— which are typical model resolutions for CMIP5 and CMIP6 models, respectively. The common grids and land/sea masks are available in the ATLAS GitHub repository (in the *reference-grids* folder).

In this paper we illustrate the results using the curated CMIP5 dataset and refer to the ATLAS GitHub repository for similar results for CMIP6. Figure 2d-e shows the CMIP5 multi-model climate change signal for annual mean temperature (in absolute terms) and precipitation (relative, in %) for RCP8.5 2081-2100 (w.r.t. the modern climate baseline 1986-2005 used in AR5). This figure shows the typical spatial climate change patterns and is used to illustrate the consistency of the regional signals in the climate reference regions.

3 Reference Regions: Rationale and Definition

The Giorgi reference regions were originally defined with the goal to represent consistent climatic regimes and physiographic settings, while maintaining an appropriate size for model representation (thousands of kilometers, to contain several model gridboxes), using some subjectivity in the final selection (Giorgi and Francisco, 2000). Here, we are guided by the same basic principles to define the revised reference regions (see Figure 1b). Climatic homogeneity is characterized in terms of mean temperature and precipitation considering Köppen-Geiger climatic regions (see Figure 2) and also the annual precipitation cycle (Figures 3 and 4); in the later case, observational uncertainty is analysed using the three alternative datasets described in Sec. 2. Representativity of model results (sufficient number of gridboxes per region) is analysed at the end of this section in Figure 5.

3.1 Definition of new regions

In North America, the Polar Greenland-Iceland (GIC) region was divided in two, Northeastern North America (NEN) and Greenland/Iceland (GIC), to better accommodate the subarctic and Polar climates, respectively (Figure 2c). The eastern and central Northern America regions (ENA and CNA) are maintained mostly unaltered while the western part was reorganized to increase climate consistency. The new Northwestern region (NWN) includes mostly the subarctic regions, the modified western region (WNA) encompasses a variety of regional intermixed climates (semiarid, Mediterranean, and continental) which are difficult to further separate due to the complex orography, and the new North Central America (NCA) region includes the semiarid and arid climates of Northern Mexico, separating them from the tropical climates in southern Central America which constitute a new region (SCA). The Caribbean (CAR) region has been modified to fully include the Greater Antilles.

In South America, the old northwestern Amazonia region is divided into three subregions to separate the Northern South America (NSA) region from the western region (NWS) —which includes the northern Andes Mountains range, — and the South America Monsoon (SAM) region. These regions represent sub-continental areas of greater climatic coherency (Espinoza et al 2019), both in terms of climate and climate change signals (Figures 2c-e), and exhibit characteristic seasonal precipitation cycles (Figure 3), with a rainy season from October to March in SAM and no clear wet and dry seasons for NSA and NWS. The Northeastern region is maintained, but the name is changed to Northeastern South America (NES). The old southern South America region is divided in two, separating the northern (southeastern South America, SES) and southern (SAS) parts, the later encompassing the mostly cold desert climates exhibited in this region (see Figure 2c).

The three European reference regions NEU, CEU (renamed Western and Central Europe, WCE) and MED have been maintained unaltered since they encompass the main regional climates in Europe, from subarctic, to oceanic/continental and to Mediterranean. However, an additional region has been introduced in Eastern Europe (EEU), encompassing the continental climate on the western side of the Ural mountain range.

For Africa, the old WAF region has been divided in divided in two (WAF and CAF, see Figure 2b); although these regions have similar Köppen-Geiger climates (see Figure 2c), they have very different annual cycles (Figure 4) and therefore should be analysed independently (Diedhiou et al., 2018). A similar situation was found in the original EAF (Osima et al., 2018) which was also divided in two, a Northern subregion (NEAF) which includes the arid region of the Horn of Africa, and a Southern subregion (SEAF). These two regions also exhibit different precipitation seasonal cycles, with different timing of the annual maximum (see Figure 4). Moreover, the South Africa region SAF was also divided in two subregions with different rainfall regimes (Maúre et al., 2018), the western subregion (WSAF) including the arid regional climates, and the Eastern region (ESAF).

In the case of Asia, Northern Asia is subdivided in a Northern subarctic region (RAR), two regions for Western (WSB) and Eastern (ESB) Siberia and a region for the Russian far East (RFE). The original Western Asia region (WAS) is divided in two regions, Western central Asia (WCA) and the Arabian Peninsula (ARP), the later with an arid climate; these two sub-regions exhibit a distinct seasonal cycle (see Figure 4). The old Tibetan plateau (TIB) region is divided in two subregions, separating the highland climate of the Tibetan plateau in the South (TIB) from the northern arid subregion (Eastern Central Asia, ECA). The South Asia (SAS), East Asia (EAS) and Southeast Asia (SEA) are maintained unaltered (with the exception of adjustments caused by changes in neighboring regions).

Regarding Australasia, the Southern region (SAU) is now further south (better differentiating the rainfall climatology, Fig. 2c) and separated from the oceanic New Zealand (NZ). The Northern region is divided in three subregions to increase climatic consistency (CSIRO, 2015; see Figure 1b) separating the northern tropical region (NAU), the central arid region (CAU) and the subtropical east coast (EAU).

In contrast to the AR5 regions, those defined in this paper also include 14 oceanic regions (note that the Caribbean and Mediterranean and considered both land and ocean regions, defined considering the land and sea masks, respectively). Since these largely exclude the coastal zones (which are often included in the "land" regions), they are generally more suitable for the analysis of large-scale atmospheric data. Figure 2d and e demonstrates that in this respect the ocean regions are a good addition to the AR5 definitions even though they were not developed with the intention of defining ocean basin masks for zonal means used by oceanographers. However, we note that since the coastal regions can be defined by applying a land-sea mask to the land boxes, it is possible to combine regions to enable the more traditional ocean basin definitions used by oceanographers to be produced to a large extent (albeit not exactly).

3.2 Representativeness of model results

The higher atmospheric resolution of CMIP6 yields better model representation on the reference regions (more gridboxes per region) allowing a revision for better climatic consistency (e.g. dividing heterogeneous regions) while preserving model representativeness. Figure 5 illustrates this, displaying the number of gridboxes (only land gridboxes for land regions) in each of the AR5 (last column) and revised (first column) reference regions for the two reference grids (1° and 2°), as well as for the CMIP6 model grids (representing the multi-model mean of gribox numbers). This figure shows that the 1° grid provides a good reference for CMIP6. Moreover, it shows that the new reference regions are more representative than the AR5 ones due to the increase of model resolution (see Figures 5a and 5d, corresponding to the cases of CMIP6 data on the updated reference regions, and to CMIP5 data in the original AR5 regions, respectively). The regions with the smallest number of gridboxes correspond to three island regions: The Caribbean (CAR), New Zealand (NZ), and Madagascar (MDG), with around 20-60 gridboxes per region. Note that the updated regions are also suitable for the analysis of CMIP5 data (at 2° resolution, Fig. 5c) since all regions encompass over ten land gridboxes, with the exception of the three above-mentioned regions, where results should be interpreted with caution.

These updated regions are defined as polygons (the lines in Figure 1 are straight lines on a projected plane) and are provided as coordinates and shapefile at the ATLAS GitHub (*reference-regions* folder); the reference grids and land-sea masks can be found at the *reference-grids* folder. Moreover, companion R and Python notebooks are also available (*reference-regions/notebooks*) to illustrate their use in practical problems (e.g. calculating regional averages).

4 Regionally Aggregated CMIP Datasets

The seasonal mean temperature and precipitation in IPCC regions for CMIP5 McSweeney et al. (2015) is a popular dataset based on the IPCC AR5 reference regions, suitable for the regional analysis of climate projections and their uncertainties. Here we extended this idea to the new regions and model data and computed aggregated monthly results over the different reference regions (see Figure 1b) for all the CMIP5 model runs (and also the available CMIP6 ones), considering land only, sea only, and land-sea gridboxes (the land/sea masks are available in the ATLAS GitHub repository, *reference-grids*). Results are calculated for each model run and stored individually as a text-csv file, with regions in columns (including the global results in the last column) and dates (months) in rows; results for a single run are included directly in the ATLAS Github repository (*aggregated-datasets* folder), and links are provided to the general dataset (full ensemble with all runs) which allows for internal variability studies.

Whereas the aggregated CMIP5 dataset is final, results for CMIP6 will be regularly updated when new data becomes available at ESGF; these two datasets constitute alternative lines of evidence for climate change studies and the ATLAS initiative presented here allows facilitates intercomparison of results and consistency checks for the reference climatic regions. Note that although the aggregated data provides summary climate information for each sub-continental region which is useful for a broad spectrum of users, detailed climate information at local or regional scales (in each sub-continental region) would be required for further regional analysis.

5 Illustrative Case Study

To demonstrate a potential application of the reference regions and the associated regionally-averaged CMIP data (for temperature and precipitation), we show a simple case study illustrating the projected range of future temperature/precipitation change. This can provide useful context information for a variety of impact and adaptation studies. In particular, we use scatter plots to show the median, 10th, and 90th percentiles of the CMIP5 ensemble change. We focus on three illustrative European regions (NEU, WCE and MED) with opposite climate change signals for precipitation (see Figure 2e). The code and data needed to run this example (which can be extended to other regions, or combination of regions, and datasets, e.g. CMIP6) are all available at the ATLAS GitHub repository (*aggregated-datasets/scripts* folder) and can be run in a local R session accessing the GitHub data with no further requirements.

Figure 6 shows the projected changes in annual mean temperature and precipitation resulting from the script *scatterplots_TvsP.R*. In particular, results from RCP2.6, RCP4.5 and RCP8.5 scenarios for early (2021-2040), mid (2041-2060 and 2061-2080) and late (2081-2100) 21st century — relative to the 1986-2005 baseline period — for each of the three European subregions are displayed. This figure evidences an increase of temperature in all European domains —with similar warming in all regions for the different scenarios and future periods— and a consistent meridional gradient of changes in precipitation, with a clear precipitation increase in NEU, non-changing conditions in WCE (uncertainty range crossing the zero line), and reduced precipitation over MED. The same scripts can be applied to the currently available CMIP6 dataset by changing two parameters to check the consistency of these results for the updated models and scenarios.

Note that this illustrative example can be modified to serve different purposes. For instance, the same diagram can be adapted to display the individual model values (or to select the subset of models spanning the uncertainty range) in order to assist in the comparison and the selection of representative sub-ensembles for impact studies (e.g. Ruane and McDermid, 2017). The calculation of the regional aggregated values is time consuming (computed offline and results are provided in the GitHub repository); however, accessing the values and plotting the results is straightforward and the scripts provided run in a few seconds.

6 Conclusions and Discussion

A new set of 46 land plus 14 ocean regions is introduced in this work updating the previous set of IPCC AR5-WGI reference regions for the regional synthesis of model-projected climate change information (in particular for the new CMIP6 simulations). The new regions increase the climatic consistency of the previous ones —by rearranging and dividing regions exhibiting mixed regional climates— and have a suitable model representation (the minimum is in the range 20-60 model gridboxes for three particular island regions: the Caribbean, New Zealand and Madagascar. This revision was guided by the basic principles of climatic consistency and model representativeness, but there is of course some subjectivity in the final selection.

We also present a new dataset of monthly CMIP5/6 spatially aggregated information using the new reference regions and the available CMIP5 (from the IPCC-DDC) and CMIP6 data (from ESGF, as of 30 September 2019), and describe a worked-out example on how to use this dataset to inform regional climate change studies, in particular about the likely range of future temperature/precipitation changes for the different European reference regions using scatter plots.

7 Code and data availability

The present work is part of the climate change ATLAS initiative (which is aligned with IPCC AR6 activities). The definition of the regions, the code and the associated spatially-aggregated datasets are available at the GitHub ATLAS repository: https://github.com/SantanderMetGroup/ATLAS, doi:10.5281/zenodo.3968318 (Iturbide et al., 2020). The ATLAS project builds in the publicly available climate4R R framework (Iturbide et al., 2019) (available under the GNU General Public License v3.0) and provides additional functions which may be relevant for the users of the reference regions and aggregated datasets, such as the calculation of global warming levels, thus enhancing the functionalities presented in this work. The python notebook is based on the open source projects *regionmask* (Hauser, 2019) and xarray (Hoyer and Hamman, 2017), among others. The results for CMIP5 are based on the final curated dataset used for IPCC-AR5, but other datasets will be updated periodically when new data becomes available (e.g. CMIP6, still in progress).

Regarding the original datasets used in this work, all of them are publicly available from the local providers — CRU TS4.03 is distributed under the Open Database License, and EWEMBI and GPCCv2018 are distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License — and/or the Earth System Grid Federation (ESGF, Balaji et al., 2018) — CMIP5 and CMIP6. Moreover, for the sake of reproducibility some datasets have been also replicated at the Santander Climate Data Service which is transparently accessible from climate4R via the User Data

Gateway (registration is required to accept the terms of use of the original datasets; more information at http://meteo.unican.es/udg-wiki, last access: 30 July 2020).

Author contributions. Gutiérrez J.M. and Iturbide M. conceived the study and wrote the code and the manuscript; vandenHurk B.conceived the case study; Iturbide M. and Hauser M. implemented the R and Python companion notebooks; all authors contributed to the definition of the regions, to the discussion and revised the text and the results.

Competing interests. The authors declare that there is not any competing interest.

Acknowledgements

We acknowledge the World Climate Research Program's Working Group on Coupled Modelling, which is responsible for CMIP, and we thank the climate modeling groups (listed in the Atlas GitHub) for producing and making available their model output.
JMG and SH acknowledge support from the Spanish Government through the research and innovation programme (project ref. PID2019-111481RB-I00) and the María de Maeztu excellence programme (Ref. MdM-2017-0765). SHF acknowledges support from the Spanish Government through the María de Maeztu excellence programme (Ref. MDM-2017-0714), and by the Basque Government through the BERC 2018–2021 programme.
The authors are also grateful to anonymous reviewers who helped to improve the original manuscript.

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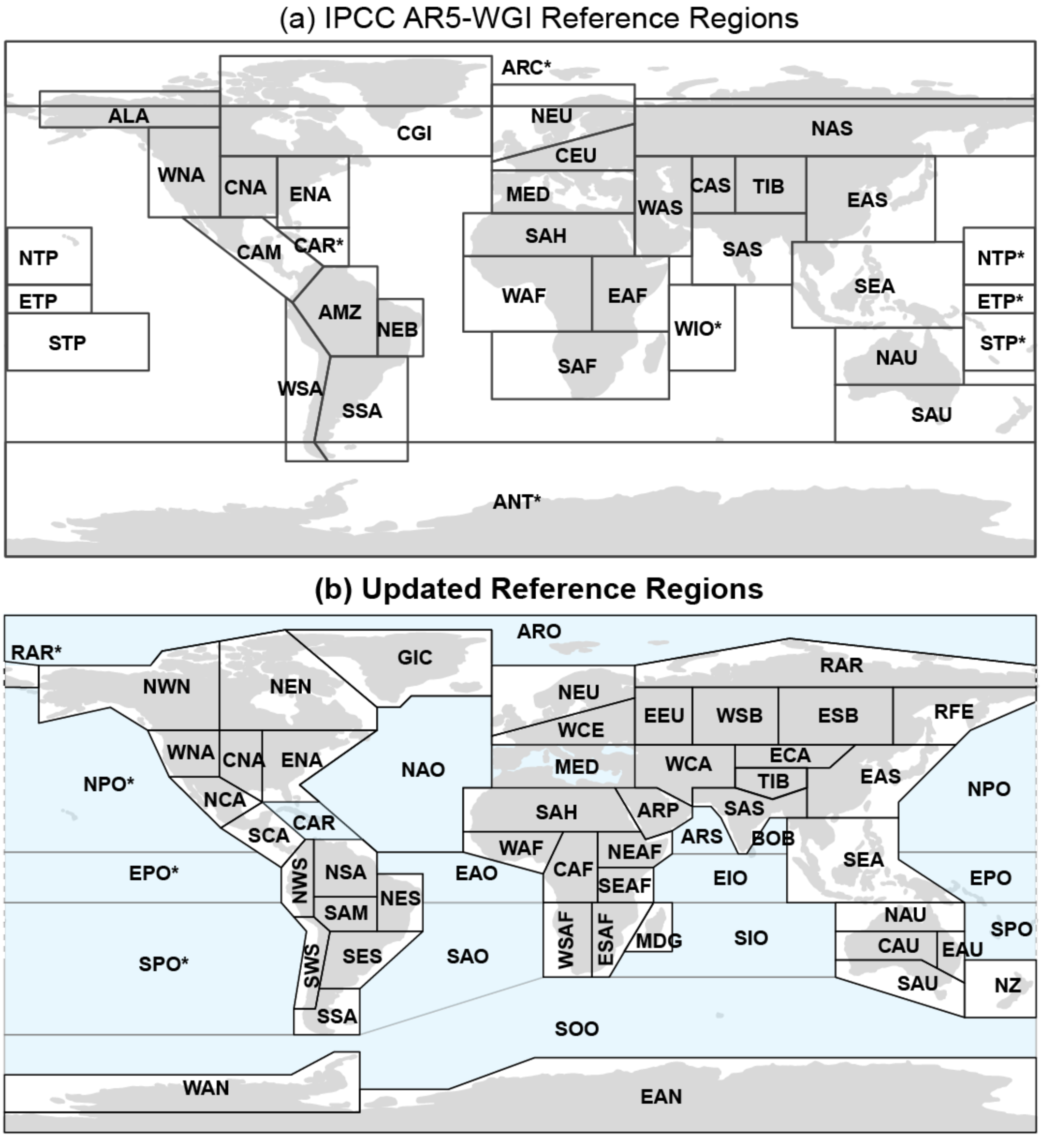
FIGURES



1	GIC	Greenland/Iceland	21	SAH	Sahara	40	NAU	N.Australia
2	NWN	N.W.North-America	22	WAF	Western-Africa	41	CAU	C.Australia
3	NEN	N.E.North-America	23	CAF	Central-Africa	42	EAU	E.Australia
4	WNA	W.North-America	24	NEAF	N.Eastern-Africa	43	SAU	S.Australia
5	CNA	C.North-America	25	SEAF	S.Eastern-Africa	44	NZ	New-Zealand
6	ENA	E.North-America	26	WSAF	W.Southern-Africa	45	EAN	E.Antarctica
7	NCA	N.Central-America	27	ESAF	E.Southern-Africa	46	WAN	W.Antarctica
8	SCA	S.Central-America	28	MDG	Madagascar	47	ARO	Arctic-Ocean
9	CAR	Caribbean	29	RAR	Russian-Arctic	48	NPO	N.Pacific-Ocean
10	NWS	N.W.South-America	30	WSB	W.Siberia	49	EPO	Equatorial.Pacific-Ocean
11	NSA	N.South-America	31	ESB	E.Siberia	50	SPO	S.Pacific-Ocean
12	NES	N.E.South-America	32	RFE	Russian-Far-East	51	NAO	N.Atlantic-Ocean
13	SAM	South-American-Monsoon	33	WCA	W.C.Asia	52	EAO	Equatorial.Atlantic-Ocean
14	SWS	S.W.South-America	34	ECA	E.C.Asia	53	SAO	S.Atlantic-Ocean
15	SES	S.E.South-America	35	TIB	Tibetan-Plateau	54	ARS	Arabian-Sea
16	SSA	S.South-America	36	EAS	E.Asia	55	BOB	Bay-of-Bengal
17	NEU	N.Europe	37	ARP	Arabian-Peninsula	56	EIO	Equatorial.Indic-Ocean
18	WCE	Western&Central-Europe	38	SAS	S.Asia	57	SIO	S.Indic-Ocean
19	EEU	E.Europe	39	SEA	S.E.Asia	58	SOO	Southern-Ocean
20	MED	Mediterranean						

Figure 1. Updated IPCC reference land (gray shading) and ocean (blue shading) regions; note that the Caribbean and the Mediterrean are considered both land and ocean regions (defined using the land and sea masks, respectively). Land masks are used to obtain land-only information for land regions (excluding the coastal white regions).

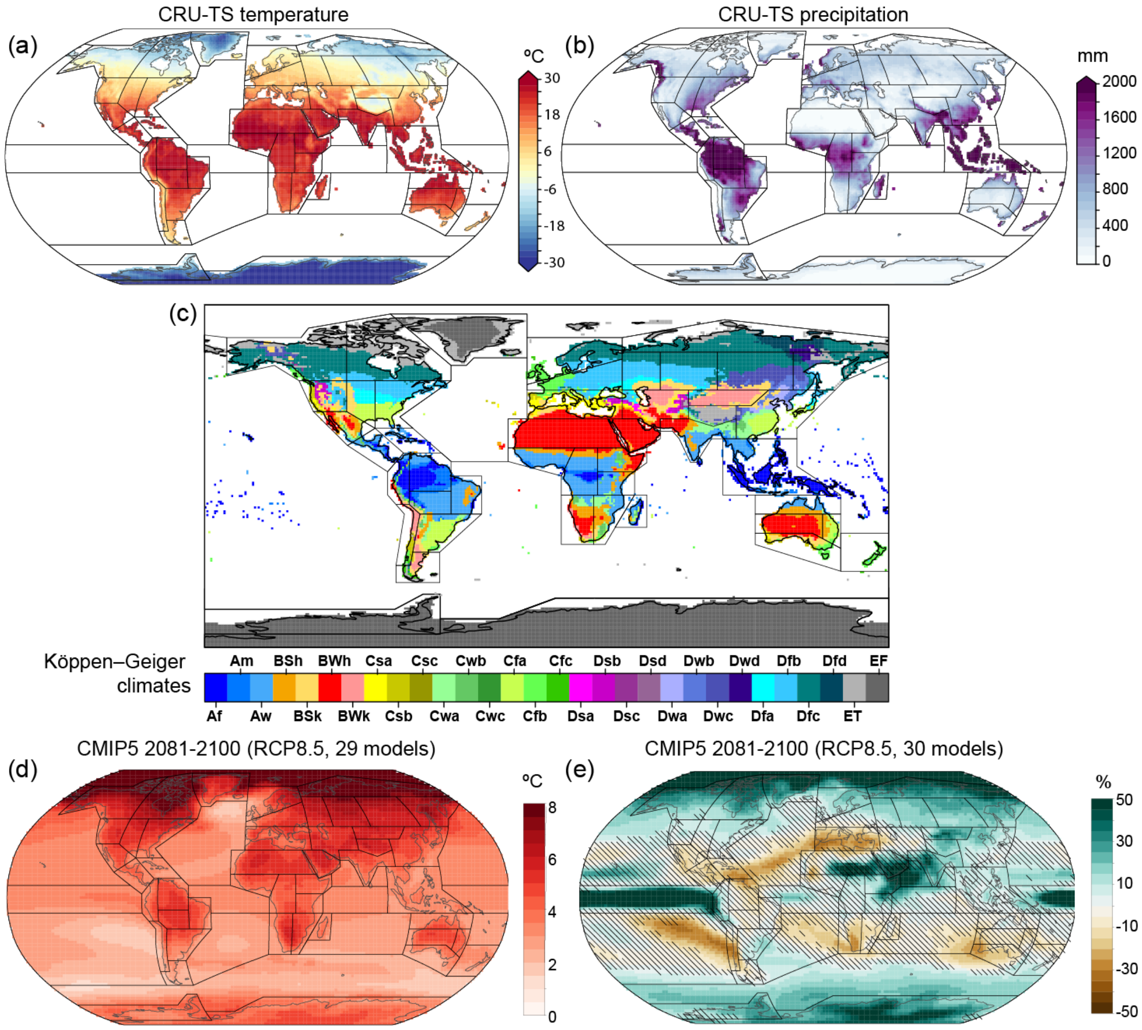


Figure 2. (a) Global mean temperature, (b) accumulated precipitation and (c) Köppen-Geiger climate classification from the CRU-TS dataset for the period 1981-2010 (data for Antarctica is filled with the EWEMBI dataset). This information is used to characterize the regional climate consistency of the reference regions (solid lines). (d,e) Climate change projections for temperature and precipitation, respectively, from the CMIP5 curated dataset for RCP8.5 2081-2100 w.r.t. the AR5 modern climate baseline 1986-2005. Hatching indicates weak (less than 80%) model agreement on the sign of the change.

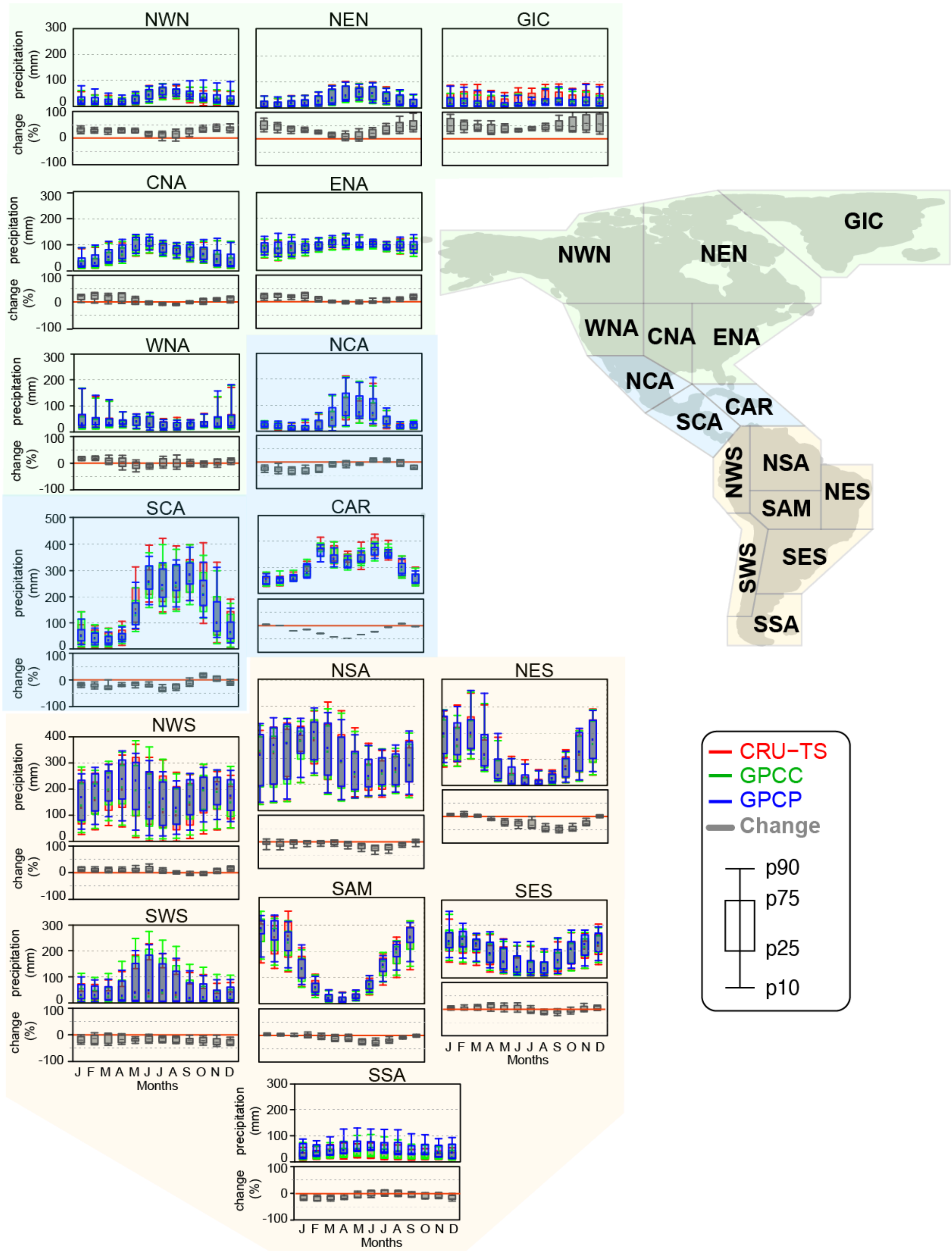


Figure 3. Observed annual cycle (1981-2010) for precipitation for the American reference regions from three different observational datasets (CRU-TS, GPCC, GPCP) and climate change signal (RCP8.5, 2081-2100 w.r.t. the AR5 modern climate baseline 1986-2005). The panel for each reference region shows the observed annual cycle (top, in monthly accumulated mm) and the monthly projected changes (bottom, in gray, as %); box and whiskers plots represent the spatial (gridbox) spread of monthly values over the region.

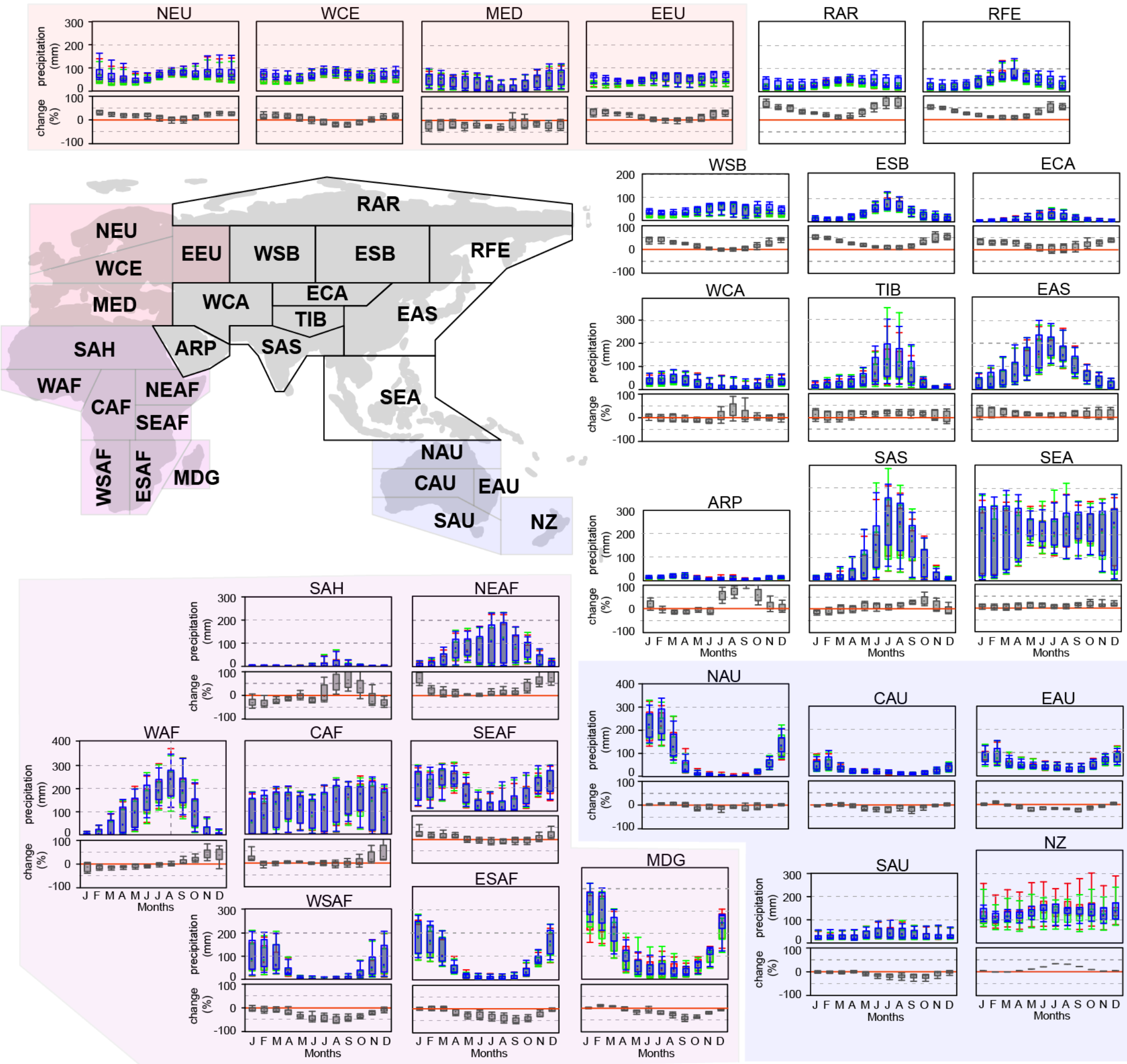


Figure 4. As figure 3 but for Europe, Asia and Australasia.

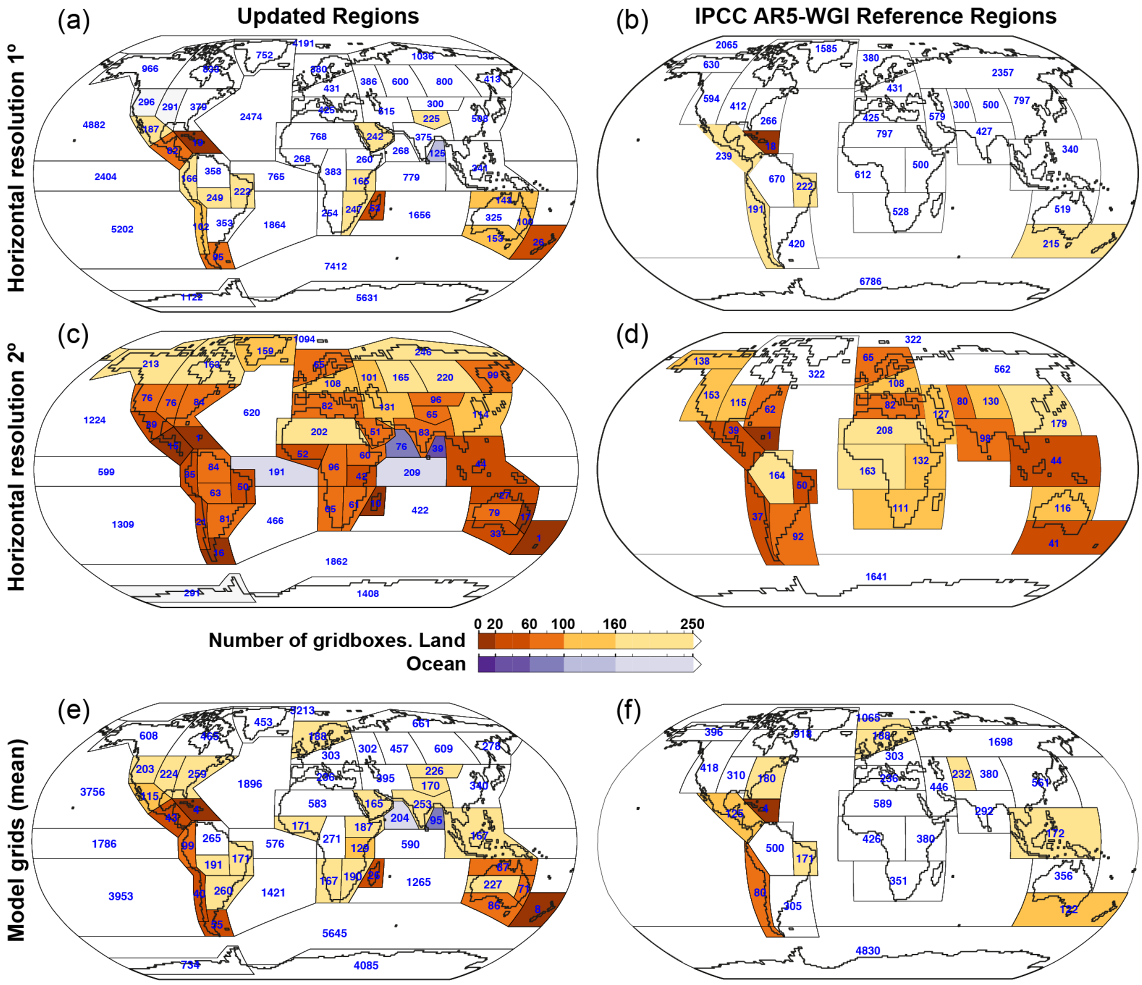


Figure 5. Number of gridboxes encompassed by the different reference regions for 1º (a,b) and 2º (c,d) resolution and for the CMIP6 model grids (e,f) –the multi-model mean is represented–, considering the updated (a,c,e) and the original AR5 (b,d,f) reference regions. Colors indicate regions with less than 250 gridboxes. The blue numbers in each of the regions show the number of gridboxes (only land gridboxes for land regions).

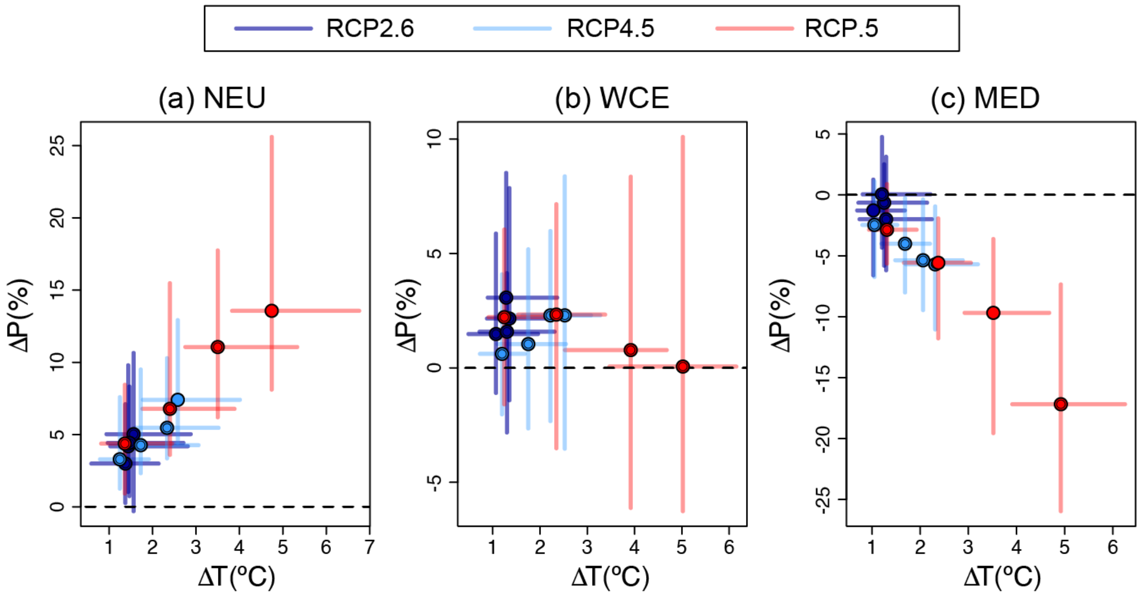


Figure 6. Illustrative example of the use of reference regions and aggregated CMIP5 datasets: Regional mean changes in annual mean temperature and precipitation for three European regions (NEU, WCE and MED) for four future periods (2021-2040, 2041-2060, 2061- 2080, 2081-2100), as obtained from CMIP5 projections. Changes are absolute for temperature and relative for precipitation. Horizontal and vertical error bars represent ±1 standard deviation from the mean calculated across the ensemble of included models. The script to generate this figure for all the 55 land and ocean regions (including the global region) from the ready-to-use aggregated CMIP5 datasets is available at the ATLAS GitHub, and can be adapted to produce similar results for alternative datasets (e.g. CMIP6).