

¹ Drought indices of water demand and supply, soil moisture, vegetation, and
² its impact on LULCC in continental Chile

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⁴ **Abstract**

Human-induced greenhouse gas emissions have increased the frequency and/or intensity of weather and climate extremes. Central Chile has been affected by a persistent drought which is impacting the hydrological system and vegetation development. The region has been the focus of research studies due to the diminishing water supply, this persistent period of water scarcity has been defined as a “mega drought”. Nevertheless, our results evidence that the water deficit has expanded beyond. Our goal is to analyze the impact of drought, measured by drought indices of water supply/demand and vegetation status, in the LULCC (land use land cover change) over continental Chile. For the analysis, continental Chile was divided into five zones according to a latitudinal gradient: “Norte Grande”, “Norte Chico”, “Zona Central”, “Zona Sur”, and “Zona Austral”. We used monthly climatic re-analysis variables for precipitation, temperature and soil moisture for 1981-2023 from ERA5-Land; and MODIS (Moderate-Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer) product MCD12Q1 for land cover for 2001-2021, and the NDVI vegetation index from product MOD13A2 collection 6.1 for 2000-2023, both from collection 6.1. We estimated atmospheric evaporative demand (AED) by combining the Hargreaves-Samani equation with the ERA5-Land temperature. We derived the drought indices SPI (Standardized Precipitation Index), SPEI (Standardized Precipitation Evapotranspiration Index), EDDI (Evaporative Demand Drought Index), SSI (standardized anomaly of cumulative soil moisture), and the zcNDVI (standardized anomaly of cumulative NDVI). These indices were calculated for time scales of 1, 3, 6, 12, 24, and 36 months, except for zcNDVI (1, 3, and 6 months). We analyzed the temporal correlation of SPI, SPEI, EDDI, and SSI with zcNDVI to have insights into the impact of water supply and demand on vegetation. Our results showed that LULCC had an increasing trend of 412 [km²yr⁻¹] of forest expansion in the “Zona Sur”, together with a decreasing trend of 24 [km²yr⁻¹] of cropland contraction in the “Zona Central” meanwhile the “Zona Sur” showed an increase of 31 [km²yr⁻¹], and a contraction of 80 [km²yr⁻¹] of bare soil in the “Zona Austral”. The EDDI was the less correlated index for the five macro zones and the five types of land cover, showing that the temperature in Chile has little impact on vegetation. Higher r-squared values, between 0.5 and 0.8, were obtained at “Norte Chico” and “Zona Central” for the land cover types of savanna, shrubland, grassland, and croplands for the indices SPEI and SSI at time scales of 12 and 24 months. The forest type reaches a r-squared of ~0.5 for SSI of 12 months. The results indicate that the “Norte Chico” and “Zona Central” are the most sensitive regions to water supply deficits longer than a year, potentially explained by a low capacity of water storage in those zones that should be further investigated.

⁵ **Keywords:** drought, land cover change, satellite

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¹This is the first author footnote.

6 **1. Introduction**

7 The sixth assessment report (AR6) of the IPCC [1] indicates that human-induced greenhouse gas emissions
8 have increased the frequency and/or intensity of some weather and climate extremes, and the evidence has
9 been strengthened since AR5 [2]. There is high confidence that increasing global warming can expand the
10 land area affected by increasing drought frequency and severity [3]. Furthermore, drought increases tree
11 mortality and triggers changes in land cover and, consequently, land use, thus impacting ecosystems [4].
12 Nevertheless, there is a lack of understanding of how the alteration in water supply and demand is affecting
13 land cover transformations.

14 Precipitation is the primary driver of drought and is intensified by temperature [5]. Drought impacts soil
15 moisture, hydrological regimes, and vegetation productivity. Initially, drought was commonly classified as
16 meteorological, hydrological, and agricultural [6]. Lately, [7] and [8] have given an updated definition of
17 drought for the Anthropocene, suggesting that it should be considered the feedback of humans' decisions
18 and activities that drives the anthropogenic drought. Even though it has been argued that those definitions
19 do not fully address the ecological dimensions of drought. [4] proposed the ecological drought definition as
20 "*an episodic deficit in water availability that drives ecosystems beyond thresholds of vulnerability, impacts*
21 *ecosystem services, and triggers feedback in natural and/or human systems*". Moreover, many ecological
22 studies have misinterpreted how to characterize drought, for example, sometimes considering "dry" conditions
23 as "drought" [9]. On the other hand, the AR6 [1] states that even if global warming is stabilized at
24 1.5°–2°C, many parts of the world will be impacted by more severe agricultural and ecological droughts.
25 Then, there is a challenge in conducting drought research, especially to evaluate its impact on ecosystems.

26 Chile has been facing a persistent rainfall deficit for more than a decade [10], which has impacted vegetation
27 development [11] and the hydrological system [12]. Current drought conditions have affected crop
28 productivity [13, 14], forest development [15, 16], forest fire occurrence [17], land cover change [18], water
29 supply in watersheds [19], and have had economic impacts [20]. In 2019–2020, the drought severity reached
30 an extreme condition in Central Chile (30–34°S) not seen for at least 40 years, and the evidence indicates
31 that the impact is transversal to the land cover classes of forest, grassland, and cropland [11]. The prolonged
32 lack of precipitation in Central Chile is producing changes in ecosystem dynamics that must be studied.

33 For the spatiotemporal assessment of drought impact (i.e., by water supply and demand) on land cover
34 changes, we need climatic reliable variables such as precipitation, temperature, soil moisture, land cover, and
35 vegetation status. For developing countries like Chile, the weather networks present several disadvantages,
36 such as gaps, a short history, and low-quality data. Reanalysis data, as the ERA5-Land (ERA5L) [21]
37 provides hourly climatic information (precipitation, temperature, and soil moisture) without gaps since
38 1950 with global extension. ERA5L has already been used for drought assessment using the Standardized
39 Precipitation-Evapotranspiration Index (SPEI) [22] and for flash drought [23] by analyzing soil moisture
40 and evapotranspiration. On the other hand, satellite remote sensing [24, 25] is the primary method to
41 evaluate how drought impacts vegetation dynamics. Vegetation drought indices (VDI) are commonly used
42 as proxies of productivity [26, 27], which can be derived from the MODIS (Moderate-Resolution Imaging
43 Spectroradiometer). Besides, land use and land cover (LULC) change can be driven by drought [28, 29]. To
44 analyze these changes, multiple LULC products exist [30], one of those that provides time series since 2001
45 is the MCD12Q1 [31] from MODIS. The variation in water supply and demand is finally reflected in the
46 total water storage (TWS). The TWS can be retrieved by the Gravity Recovery and Climate Experiment
47 (GRACE), which allows analyzing water availability changes at coarse resolution [32, 33]. We can use climatic
48 reanalysis (ERA5L) and vegetation data (MODIS) to derive drought indices of supply (i.e., precipitation)
49 and demand (i.e., temperature) and thus evaluate the impact of drought on LULC changes. Further, the
50 TWS can be assessed with regard to the changes in water supply and demand to gain insight into the impact
51 on water storage.

52 To evaluate meteorological drought (i.e., water supply), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO;
53 [34]) recommends the Standardized Precipitation Index (SPI; [35]), a multiscalar drought index that allows
54 to monitor precipitation deficits from short- to long-term. Following the same approach, [36] incorporates

55 into the SPI the effect of temperature through the use of potential evapotranspiration, thus proposing the
56 SPEI (Standardized Precipitation Evapotranspiration Index). Similarly, to evaluate solely the evaporative
57 demand driven by temperature, [37] and [38] came up with the Evaporative Demand Drought Index (EDDI).
58 For vegetation, in a similar manner as the SPI, SPEI and EDDI; [14] proposed the zcNDVI, a standardized
59 anomaly of the cumulative Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI), which could be accumulated
60 over the growing season or any period (e.g., months), resulting in a multiscale drought index. For soil
61 moisture, several drought indices exist, such as the Soil Moisture Deficit Index (SDMI) a normalized index
62 [39] and the Soil Moisture Agricultural Drought Index (SMADI) [40] which is a normalized index using
63 vegetation, land surface temperature, and a vegetation condition index (VCI, [41]). From TWS, we can
64 estimate the standardized terrestrial water storage index (STI) [42], a standardized anomaly that follows
65 the methodology of the SPI, SPEI, EDDI, and zcNDVI. Thereby, we have drought indices for water supply,
66 demand, and storage, which can help to make a comprehensive assessment of drought.

67 In this research, we present the raster dataset DDS4Chl, which provides climate variables and drought
68 indices of water demand and supply and vegetation productivity for continental Chile since 1981 at a monthly
69 frequency. Those were gathered from the earth observation products ERA5-Land and MODIS. Then, we
70 used DDS4Chl to analyze the impact of drought on different types of land cover classes in continental Chile.
71 The specific objectives of the study are: i) to analyze the trend on multi-scalar drought indices for water
72 demand and supply, soil moisture, and vegetation productivity for 1981–2023/2001–2023; ii) to evaluate
73 LULC change for 2001–2021 and its relation to drought indices; iii) to analyze the relationship of a proxy of
74 vegetation productivity (zcNDVI) with drought indices of water demand and supply and soil moisture; and
75 iv) to assess if the observed changes in the drought indices are linked to TWS.

76 2. Study area

77 Continetal Chile has a diverse climate condition from north to south and east to west [43] (Figure 1), which
78 determines its great ecosystem diversity (Figure 2). The Andes Mountains are a main factor in latitudinal
79 variation [44]. To describe the climate and ecosystem of Chile, we use the Koppen-Geiger release by [45] and
80 the landcover type persistance of 80% of times for 2001–2022, from the IGBP classification scheme [31] (see
81 Section 3.4). “Norte Grande” and “Norte Chico” predominate in an arid desert climate with hot (Bwh) and
82 cold (Bwk) temperatures. At the south of “Norte Chico,” the climate changes to an arid steppe with cold
83 temperatures (Bsk). Mainly, the land is barren, with a minor surface of vegetation types such as shrubland
84 and grassland. In the zones “Centro” and the north half of “Sur,” the main climate is Mediterranean, with
85 warmer to hot summers (Csa and Csb). In “Centro,” there is a major proportion (~50%) of chilean matorral
86 (shrubland and savanna, [18]), followed by grassland (~16%), forest (8%), and croplands (5%). The south
87 part of “Centro” and the north part of “Austral” are dominated by an Oceanic climate (Cfb). Those zones
88 are high in forest and grassland. The southern part of the country has a tundra climate, and in Patagonia,
89 it is a cold semi-arid area with an extended surface of grassland.

90 3. Materials and Methods

91 3.1. Software and packages used

92 For the downloading, processing, and analysis of the spatio-temporal data, we used the open source software
93 for statistical computing and graphics, R [46]. For downloading ERA5-Land, we used the `fcmwfr` package
94 [47]. For processing raster data, we used `terra` [48] and `stars` [49]. For managing vectorial data, we
95 used `sf` [50]. For the calculation of AED, we used `SPEI` [51].

96 3.2. Data

97 3.2.1. Earth observation data

98 For water supply and demand variables, we used ERA5-Land [21], a reanalys dataset that provides the
99 evolution of land variables since 1950. It has a spatial resolution of 0.1°, hourly frequency, and global

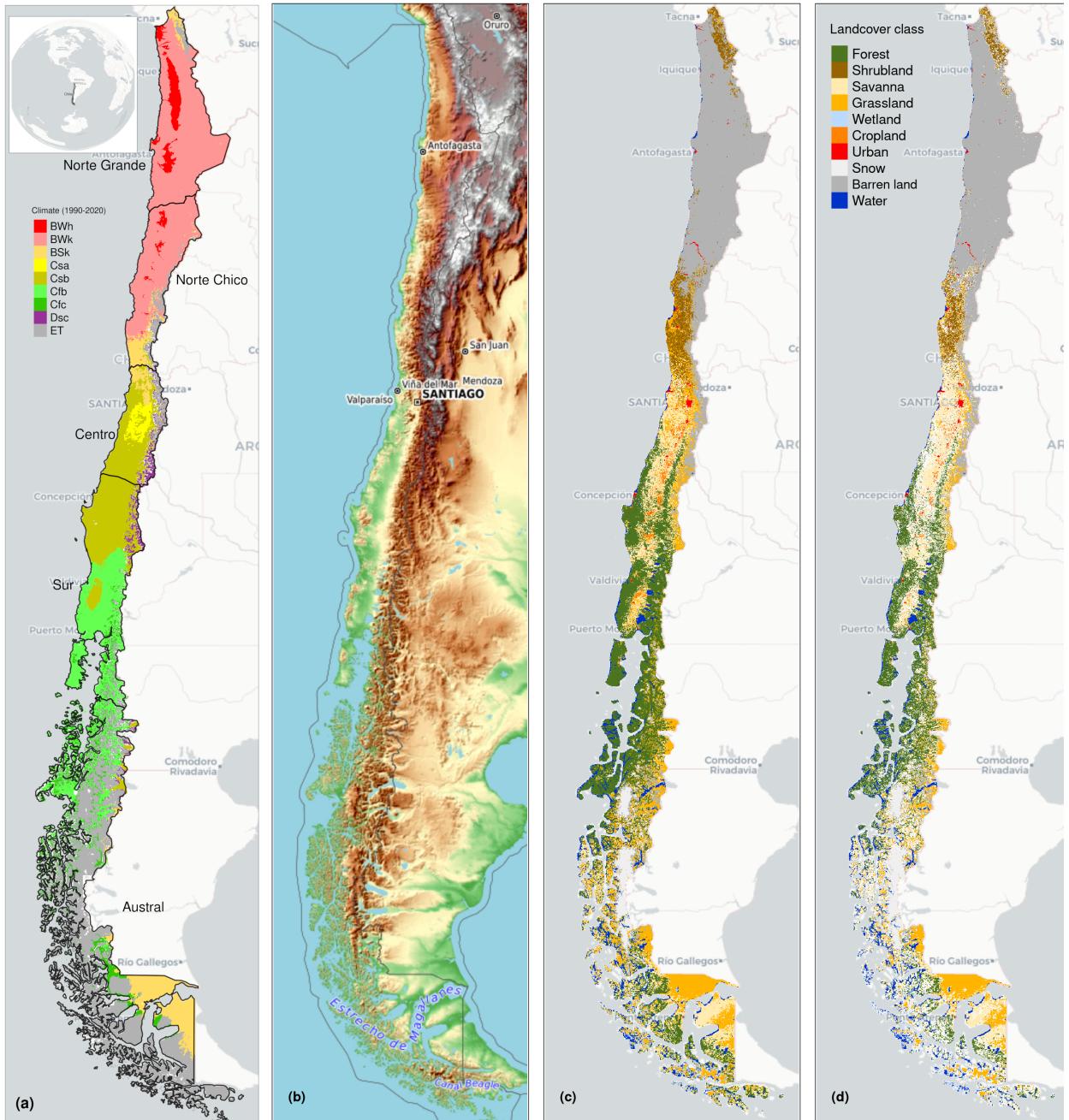


Figure 1: (a) Chile with the Koppen-Geiger climate classes and the five macrozones “Norte Grande”, “Norte Chico”, “Centro”, “Sur”, and “Austral”. (b) Topography reference map. (c) Land cover classes for 2022. (d) Persistent land cover classes ($> 80\%$) for 2001-2022

coverage. We selected the variables for total precipitation, 2 meter temperature maximum and minimum, and volumetric soil water layers between 0 and 100cm of depth (layer 1 to layer 3). The data was downloaded using the Copernicus Climate Data Store (CDS) Application Program Interface (API) implemented in `{ecmfwr}` [47].

To derive a proxy of vegetation productivity, we used the product MOD13A3 collection 6.1 from MODIS

[52]. It provides vegetation indices (NDVI and EVI) at 1km of spatial resolution and monthly frequency. The MOD13A3.061 and MCD12Q1.061 were retrieved from the online Data Pool, courtesy of the NASA EOSDIS Land Processes Distributed Active Archive Center (LP DAAC), USGS Earth Resources Observation and Science (EROS) Center, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, <https://lpdaac.usgs.gov/tools/data-pool/>.

Table 1: Description of the earth observation data used

Product	Sub-product	Variable	Spatial Resolution	Period	Units	Short Name
ERA5-Land		Precipitation	0.1°	1981-2023	mm	P
		Maximum temperature			°C	T_{max}
		Minimum temperature			°C	T_{min}
		Volumetric Soil Water Content at 1m			m³/m³	SM
ERA5-Land*	MOD13A3.061	Atmospheric Evaporative Demand	0.1°	1981-2023	mm	AED
MODIS		Normalized Difference Vegetation Index	1 km	2000-2023		NDVI
		Landcover IGBP scheme		2001-2022		Landcover

*Derived from ERA5-Land with Eq. 1.

3.2.2. *in-situ* data

3.3. Drought Indices

We derived the drought indices of water supply and demand, soil moisture from the ERA5-Land dataset, and vegetation from the MODIS product, all at monthly frequency.

For the indices EDDI and SPEI that use water demand, first we have to calculate the AED. For this, we used the method of Hargreaves [53]:

$$AED = 0.0023 \cdot Ra \cdot (T + 17.8) \cdot (T_{max} - T_{min})^{0.5} \quad (1)$$

where Ra ($MJ\ m^2\ day^{-1}$) is extraterrestrial radiation; T , T_{max} , and T_{min} are mean, maximum, and minimum temperature ($^{\circ}C$). We calculate the centroid coordinates per pixel and use the latitude to estimate Ra .

To evaluate water demand, we chose the EDDI [37, 38] index, which uses the AED. For supply, we used the index recommended by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) for monitoring drought, the SPI [35]. We calculated the SPEI, which used a balance between P and AED , in this case, an auxiliary variable $D = P - AED$ is used. In this study, we used the SSI (standardized soil moisture index at 1 m) [54, 55], which uses SM. Finally, for the proxy of productivity, $zcNDVI$, we used the NDVI. Before using the NDVI, it was smoothed following the procedure described in [14] and [13].

All the indices are multi-scalar and were calculated for time scales of 1, 3, 6, 12, 24, and 36 months, except for $zcNDVI$, which was calculated for 6 months. The goal is to be able to evaluate short- and long-term droughts in water demand and supply and soil moisture. This is particularly important for central Chile because it has suffered from a prolonged decrease in precipitation for more than 12 years [56, 12, 10].

To calculate the drought indices, first we must calculate the accumulation of the variable. In this case, for generalization purposes, we will use V , referring to P , AED , D , $NDVI$, and SM (Table 1). We cumulated each V over the time series of n values, and for the time scales s :

$$A_{si} = \sum_{i=n-s-i+2}^{n-i+1} V_i \quad \forall i \geq n - s + 1 \quad (2)$$

131 It corresponds to a moving window (convolution) that sums the variable for s starting for the last month
 132 n until the month, which could sum for s months ($n-s+1$). Once the variable is cumulated over time for
 133 the scale s , we used a nonparametric approach following [37] to derive the drought indices. Thus, the
 134 empirically derived probabilities are obtained through an inverse normal approximation [57]. Then, we
 135 used the empirical Tukey plotting position [58] over A_i to derive the $P(A_i)$ probabilities across a period of
 136 interest:

$$P(A_i) = \frac{i - 0.33}{n + 0.33} \quad (3)$$

137 The drought indices SPI , $SPEI$, $EDDI$, SSI , and $zcNDVI$ are obtained following the inverse normal
 138 approximation:

$$DI(A_i) = W - \frac{C_0 + C_1 \cdot W + c_2 \cdot W^2}{1 + d_1 \cdot W + d_2 \cdot W^2 + d_3 \cdot W^3} \quad (4)$$

139 DI is referring to the drought index calculated for the variable V . The values for the constants are:
 140 $C_0 = 2.515517$, $C_1 = 0.802853$, $C_2 = 0.010328$, $d_1 = 1.432788$, $d_2 = 0.189269$, and $d_3 = 0.001308$. For
 141 $P(A) \leq 0.5$, $W = \sqrt{-2 \cdot \ln(P(A_i))}$, and for $P(A_i) > 0.5$, replace $P(A_i)$ with $1 - P(A_i)$ and reverse the sign
 142 of $DI(A_i)$.

143 3.4. LULC change for 2001-2022 and its relation with water supply and demand, and soil moisture

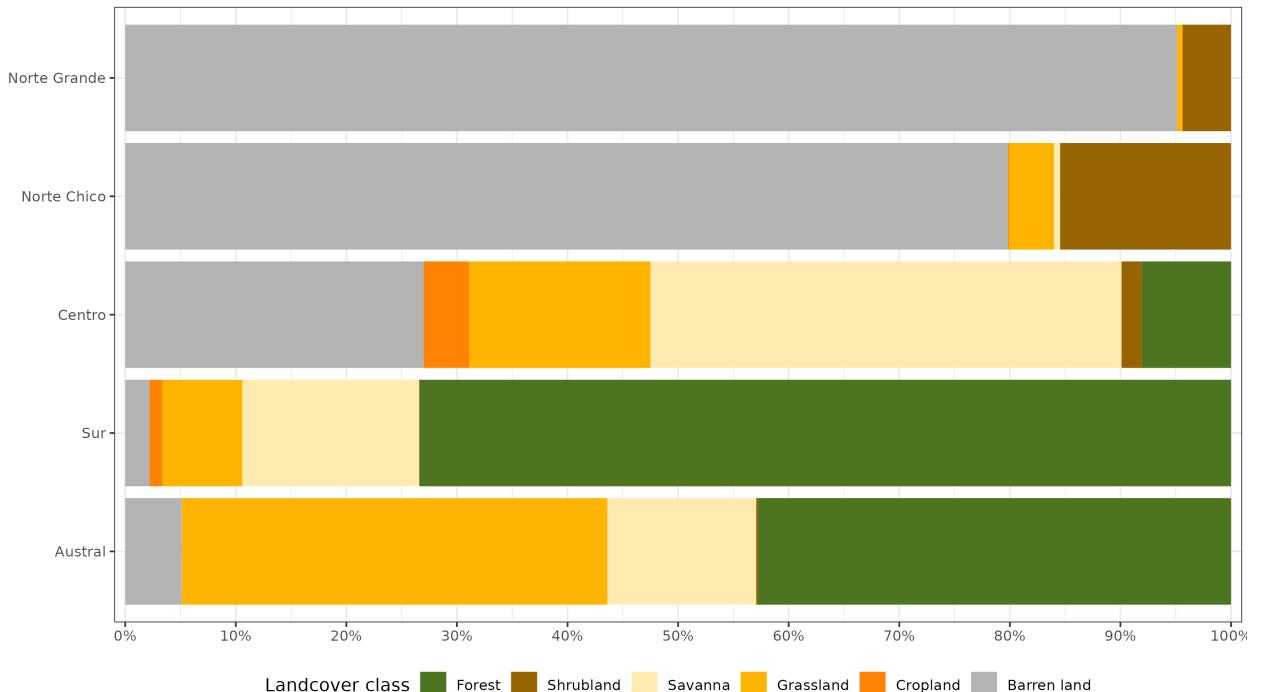


Figure 2: Proportion of land cover class from the persistent land cover for 2001-2022 (>80%) per macrozone

144 To analyze the LULCC, we use the IGBP scheme from the MCD12Q1 collection 6.1 from MODIS. This
 145 product has a yearly frequency from 2001 to 2022. The IGBP defines 17 classes; from these, we regrouped
 146 into ten macroclasses for forest, shrublands, savannas, grasslands, wetlands, croplands, urban, snow and
 147 ice, barren, and water bodies. To validate the IGBP MODIS, we compare the macroclasses with the ones

148 of a more detailed landcover map made by [59] for Chile for the years 2013–2014 (LCChile). The later has
149 a spatial resolution of 30 m and three levels of defined classes; from those, we used level 1, which fits with
150 the macroclasses derived from the IGBP MODIS. We chose the years 2013 and 2014 from MODIS IGBP
151 because the LCChile was made with data acquired in 2013 and 2014. We resampled LCChile to the spatial
152 resolution of the IGBP MODIS using the nearest neighbor method. Then, we took a random sample of
153 1000 points within continental Chile and extracted the classes that fell within each point for LCCHILE,
154 IGP2013, and IGP2014. Finally, we applied a confusion matrix and estimated the accuracy and F1 score
155 as metrics of performance. The validation of IGP2013 and IGP2014 with LCChile reached similar metrics
156 of performance, having an accuracy of 0.82 and a F1 score of 0.66 (see SS1).

157 Later, with the goal of analyzing vegetation areas less affected by landcover change, we calculated a raster
158 mask for IGBP MODIS considering the classes that remain for more than 80% of the years (2001–2022),
159 which allows us to identify the areas with no landcover change for the macroclasses. Figure 2 shows the
160 summary of the proportion of surface per landcover class and macrozone, derived from the mask over
161 continental Chile.

162 Further, we calculated the surface occupied per landcover class into the five macrozones (“Norte Grande”
163 to “Austral”) per year. After that, we calculated the trend’s change in surface; we used the Sen’ slope [60]
164 based on Mann-Kendall [61]. This way, we obtain a matrix of trends of 5 x 5 (macrozones x landcover).

165 We will explore if the trend in landcover classess is associated to trend of the drought indices. For this
166 we will use the regularizations techniques of Lasso [62] and Ridge regression [63]. Also, we will test random
167 forest for this purpose [64].

168 3.5. Trend of drought indices for water demand and supply, soil moisture, and vegetation productivity

169 To estimate if there are significant positive or negative trends for the drought indices, we used the non-
170 parametric test of Mann-Kendall [61]. To determine the magnitude of the trend, we used Sen’s slope [60].
171 One of the advantages of applying this methodology is that the Sen’s slope is not affected by outliers as
172 regular regression does. We applied both to the six time scales from 1981 to 2023 (monthly frequency) and
173 the indices SPI, EDDI, SPEI, and SSI. In the case of zcNDVI (six months) was for 2000 to 2023. Thus,
174 we have 31 trends. Also, we extracted the trend aggregated by macrozone and landcover class, obtaining a
175 table of 31x5x5 (drought indices trends x macrozone x landcover class). We will use this data in Section 3.4
176 to analyze if there is a strong relationship between the trends of drought indices and land cover surface
177 within continental Chile.

178 For zcNDVI, we want to remove the effect of the Andes’s mountain and mask out trends that were at an
179 elevation above 1500m because there is scarce vegetation.

180 [65] made a global analysis of the drought’s severity trend using SPI, SPEI, and the Standardized Evap-
181 otranspiration Deficit Index (SEDI; [66]) to evaluate AED. They indicate that the increase in hydrological
182 drought has been due to anthropogenic effects rather than climate change. This is because the global in-
183 crease in AED did not explain the change in the spatial pattern of the hydrological drought. Also, they state
184 that “*the increase in hydrological droughts has been primarily observed in regions with high water demand*
185 *and land cover change*”. We will contrast this hypothesis with what is occurring in Chile. To achieve this,
186 we will use the landcover class type that remains more than 80% of types for 2001–2022 to evaluate the
187 trend on zcNDVI and use this as a mask where there are low changes.

188 3.6. Impact for water supply and demand, and soil moisture in vegetation productivity within landcover types

189 The aim of this section is to analyze the drought indices of water demand and supply and soil moisture
190 against vegetation to address: i) if short- or long-term time scales are most important in impacting vegetation
191 through Chile; and ii) the strength of the correlation for the variable and the time scale. Then, we will
192 summarize for each landcover class and macrozone. Thus, we will be able to advance in understanding how
193 climate is affecting vegetation, considering the impact on the five macroclasses: forest, cropland, grassland,
194 savanna, and shrubland.

195 To assess how water demand and supply and soil moisture are related to vegetation productivity (zcNDVI),
 196 we analyze the linear correlation between the indices SPI, SPEI, EDDI, and SSI for 1, 3, 6, 12, 24, and 36-
 197 month time scales against zcNDVI. We followed a similar approach to that used by [67] when using the SPI
 198 for meteorological drought against the cumulative FAPAR (Fraction of Absorbed Photosynthetically Active
 199 Radiation) as a proxy for vegetation productivity. We made a pixel-to-pixel linear correlation analysis per
 200 index. First, we calculate the Pearson coefficient of correlation for the six time scales and let the time scale
 201 that reaches the maximum correlation be significant ($p < 0.05$). Then, we extracted the Pearson correlation
 202 value corresponding to the time scales that reached the maximum value. Thus, we derived two raster maps
 203 per index, the first with the time scales and the second with the correlation value.

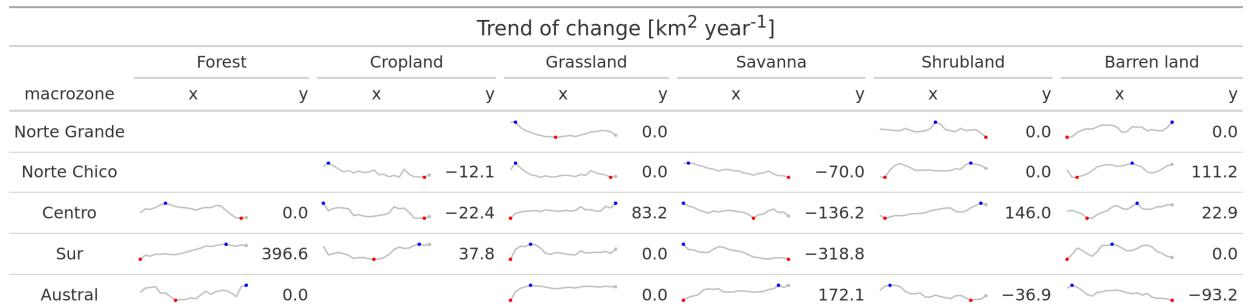
204 *3.7. Validation of ERA5-Land variables*

205 **4. Results**

206 *4.1. LULC change for 2001-2022 and its relation with water supply and demand, and soil moisture*

207 Figure 3 and ?? show that the macrozones with major LULCC for 2001-2022 were “Centro”, “Sur”, and
 208 “Austral” with 36%, 31%, and 34%, respectively. The “Norte Chico” shows an increase in barrend land of
 209 $111 \text{ km}^2 \text{year}^{-1}$ and a reduction in the class savanna $-70 \text{ km}^2 \text{year}^{-1}$. In the “Centro” and “Sur” there are
 210 changes in the chilean matorral, with an important reduction in savanna (-136 to $-318 \text{ km}^2 \text{yr}^{-1}$), and an
 211 increase in shrubland and grassland. Showing a change for more dense vegetation types. It appears to be a
 212 change from the surface occupied by cropland from the “Centro” to the “Sur.” Also, there is a high increase
 213 in forest ($397 \text{ Km}^2 \text{yr}^{-1}$) in the “Sur,” replacing the savanna lost.

Table 2: The value of Sen’s slope trend next to the time-series plot of surface per landcover class (IGBP MCD12Q1.016) for 2001–2022 through Central Chile. Values of zero indicate that there was not a significant trend. Red dots on the plots indicate the maximum and minimum values of surface.



214 *4.2. Trend of drought indices for water demand and supply, soil moisture, and vegetation productivity*

215 Regarding vegetation productivity aggregated through the macrozones in the five landcover macroclasses.
 216 In “Norte Grande” there is a increase trend of 0.02 (z-index) per decade, related with types of grassland
 217 and shrubland. There is a negative trend in “Norte Chico” with -0.04 and “Centro” with -0.02 per decade.
 218 In the “Norte Chico,” savanna (-0.05) has the lowest trend, and the rest of the types are around -0.04. In
 219 “Centro,” shrubland reaches -0.06, followed by grassland with -0.05, and croplands and savanna have ~ -0.01
 220 per decade. This could be associated either with a reduction in vegetation surface, a decrease in biomass,
 221 or browning [68]. Vegetation reached its lowest values since the year 2019, reaching an extreme condition
 222 in early 2020 and 2022 in the “Centro” (Mega Drought). The “Sur” and “Austral” show a positive trend of
 223 around 0.016 per decade (Figure 3). The area most affected by a negative trend in vegetation seems to be
 224 associated with the Chilean matorral [18], despite the croplands being as severely impacted by drought as
 225 native vegetation does in “Norte Chico.”.

226 Analyzing the water supply in the macrozones “norte chico,” “central,” and “sur,” the SPI shows a decreasing
 227 trend that increases at longer time scales due to the prolonged reduction in precipitation. It reaches a

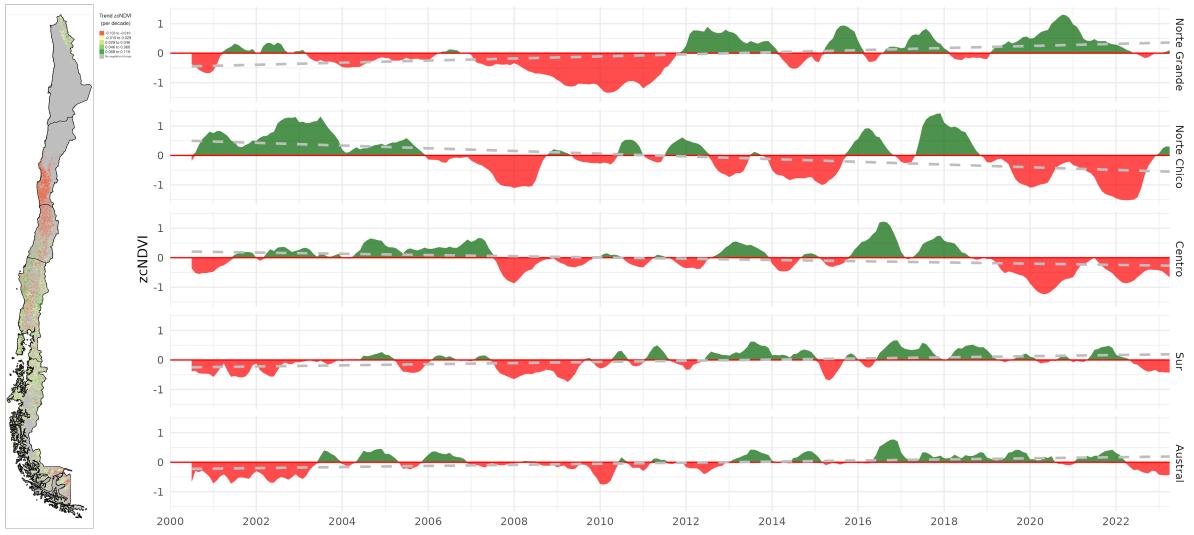
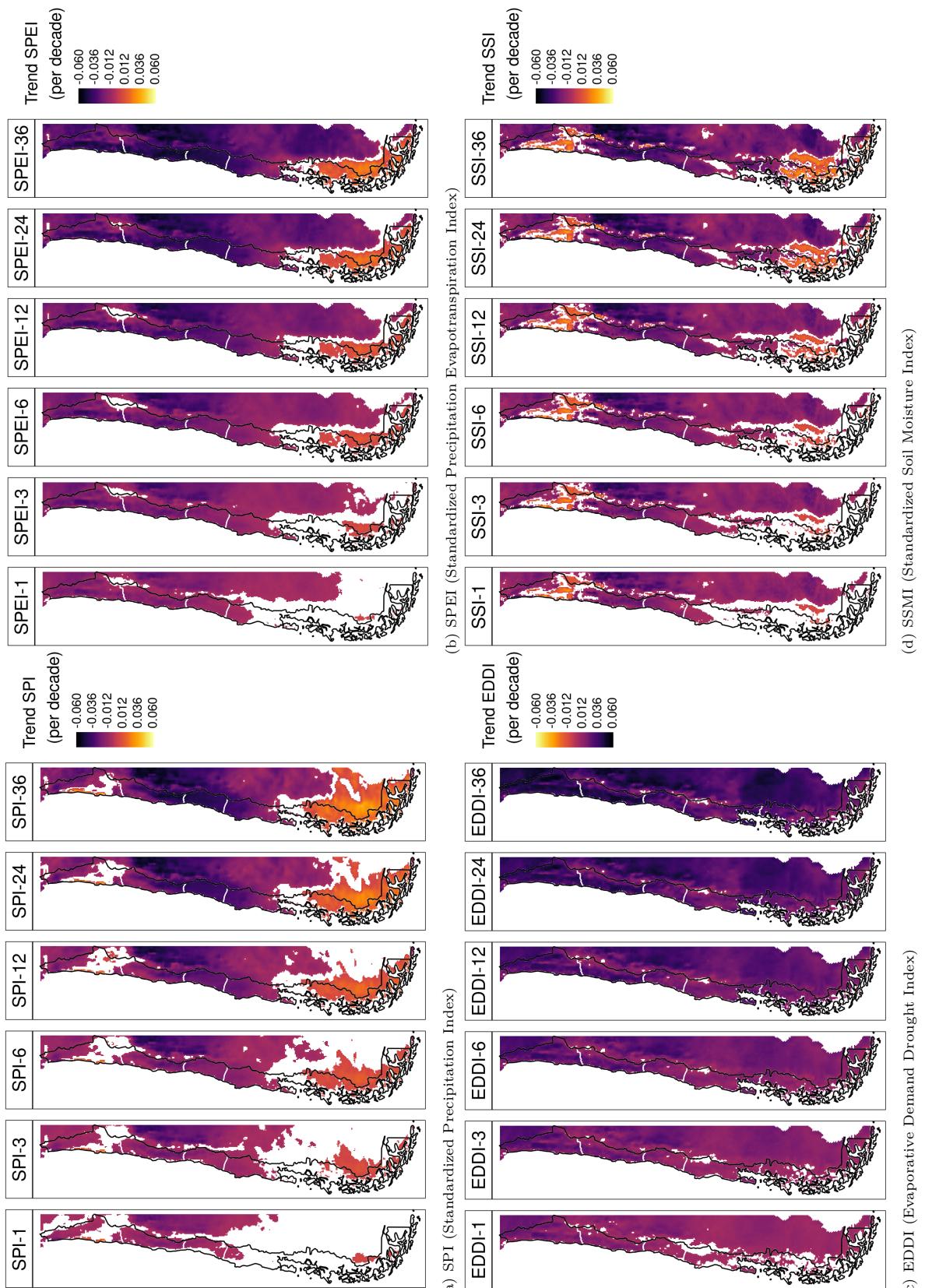


Figure 3: (a) Map of the linear trend of the index zcNDVI-6 for 2001–2023. Greener colors indicate a positive trend; redder colors correspond to a negative trend and a decrease in vegetation productivity. Grey colors indicate either no vegetation or a change in landcover type for 2001–2022. (b) Temporal variation of zcNDVI-6 aggregated at macrozone level within continental Chile. Each horizontal panel corresponds to a macrozone from ‘Norte Grande’ to ‘Austral’.

228 trend of -0.056 (z-score) per decade (Figure 4) for time scales of 36 months. In the case of water demand,
 229 we analyze the EDDI. It shows a positive trend, caused by an increase in AED. The trend on EDDI reaches
 230 a maximum of 0.053 per decade in the macrozones “norte grande” and “norte chico” (?@fig-trendEDDI).
 231 The behavior is similar to SPI, having close trends with opposite signs. Nevertheless, the spatial patterns
 232 are different. The maximum trend for SPI-36 is in “norte chico” and “zona central.” For EDDI-36, the
 233 maximum trend is from “norte grande” to “zona central.”



(c) EDDI (Evaporative Demand Drought Index)

(d) SSMI (Standardized Soil Moisture Index)

Figure 4: Linear trend of the drought index (*) at time scales of 1, 3, 6, 12, 24, and 36 months for 1981-2023

234 The correlation between zcNDVI-6 and drought indices shows that time scales higher than six months
 235 are predominant over continental Chile in explaining vegetation variability (Figure 5). Pearson correlations
 236 between 0.6 and 0.9 are concentrated in the “norte chico” and “zona central” for SPI and SPEI. Soil moisture
 237 reached a correlation of 0.6–0.9 that extended north and south with respect to SPI.

238 *4.3. Impact for water supply and demand, and soil moisture in vegetation productivity*

Table 3

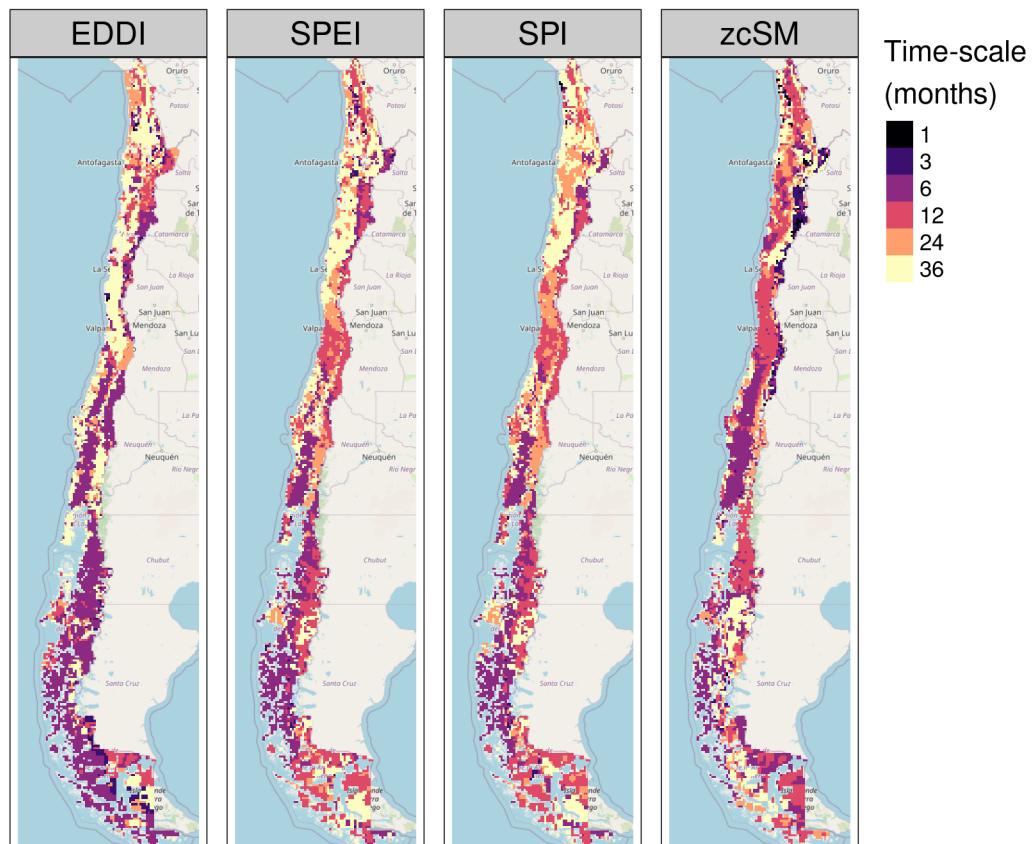
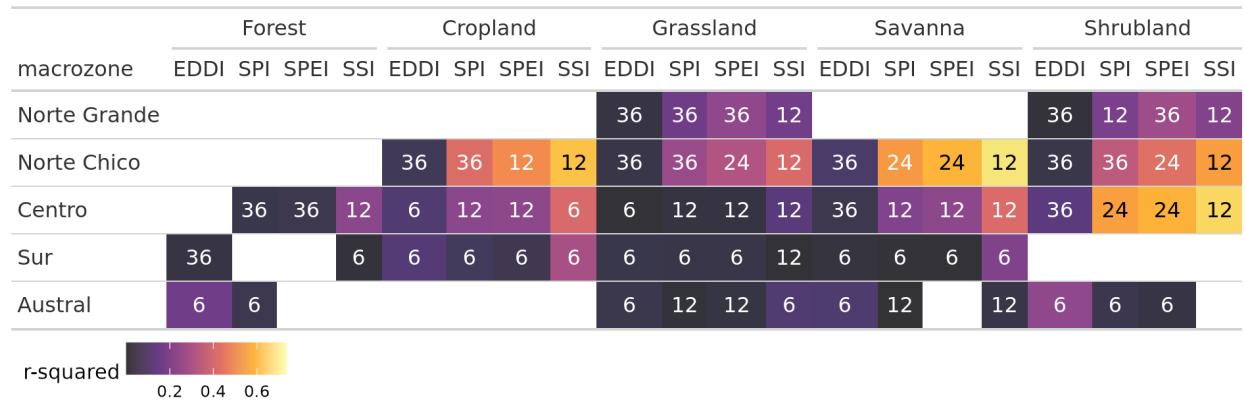


Figure 5: Time scales per drought index that reach the maximum coefficient of determination

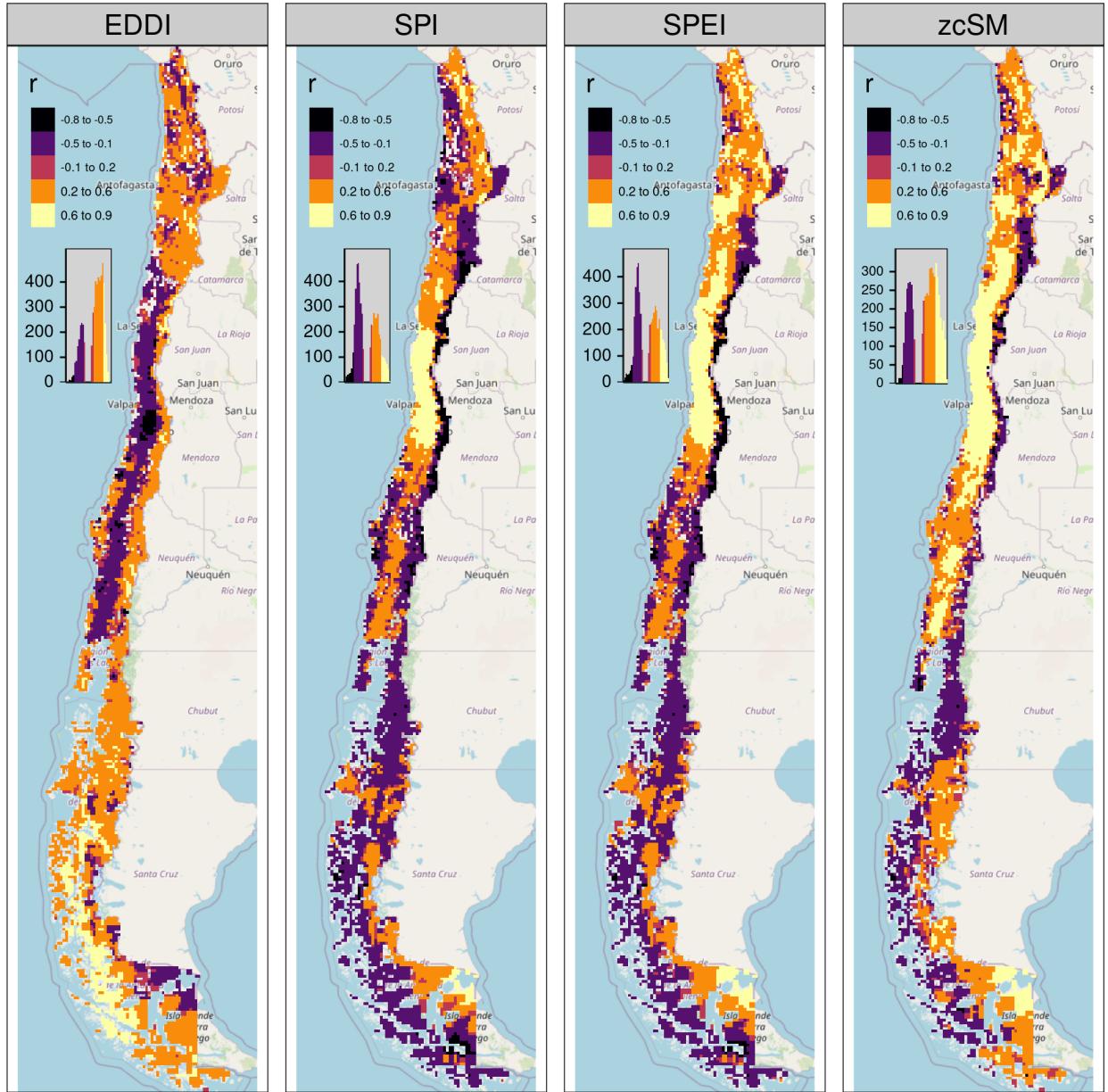


Figure 6: Pearson correlation value for the time scales and drought index that reach the maximum coefficient of determination

239 4.4. Validation of ERA5-Land variables

240 **5. Discussion**

241 **6. Conclusion**

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