



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**



Module 2

Climate Models

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- Specifications of climate models:
 - a) Spatial resolution of GCMs and techniques to downscale GCMs
 - b) Retrieving climate models from ESGF and COPERNICUS
 - c) Understanding the nomenclature of climate models (CORDEX)
 - d) Bias correction
 - e) Selection of climate models for impact assessments



Downscaling

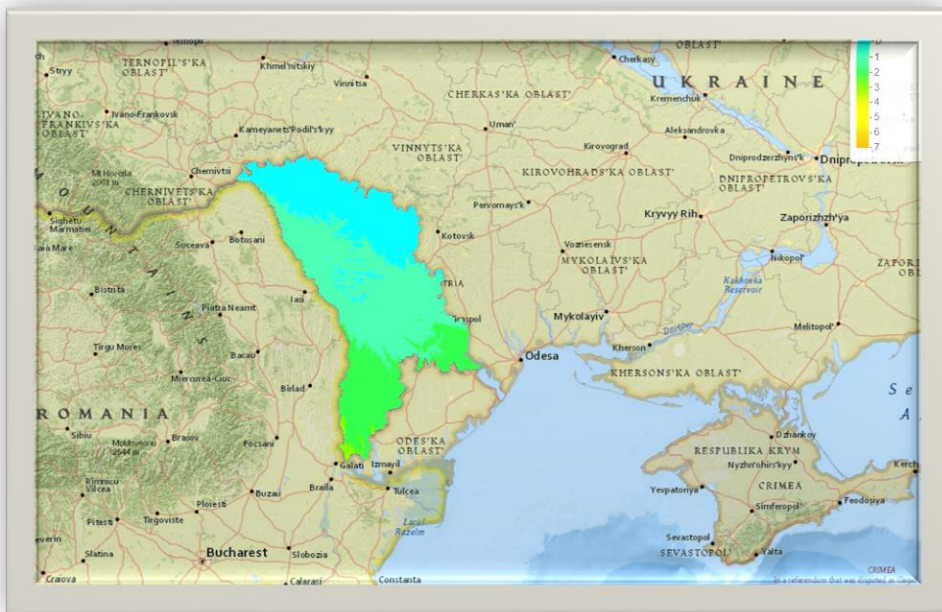
- Most GCMs have a spatial resolution of 100 km or more
- They do not capture well regional dynamics and are often unsuitable for country-level assessments

- GCMs can be downscaled with two main different techniques:
 - [Statistical downscaling](#): creating the linkages between large-scale atmospheric variables and observed data. These statistical relationships are then applied to future projections to tailor climate data to a specific point of interest (stational level information but computationally efficient)
 - Dynamical downscaling: a regional model (RCM) uses boundary conditions driven by the GCM. Computationally intensive (gridded product but need supercomputers)

Other approaches-CHELSA

- CHELSA (Climatologies at High resolution for the Earth's Land Surface Areas) downscale climate models at 1 km resolution for temperature and precipitation. It does so considering elevation and wind direction.
- CHELSA provides a high-resolution version of W5E5 and can be applied to GCM and CORDEX models (requires good understanding of programming)

1981-2010



2071-2100



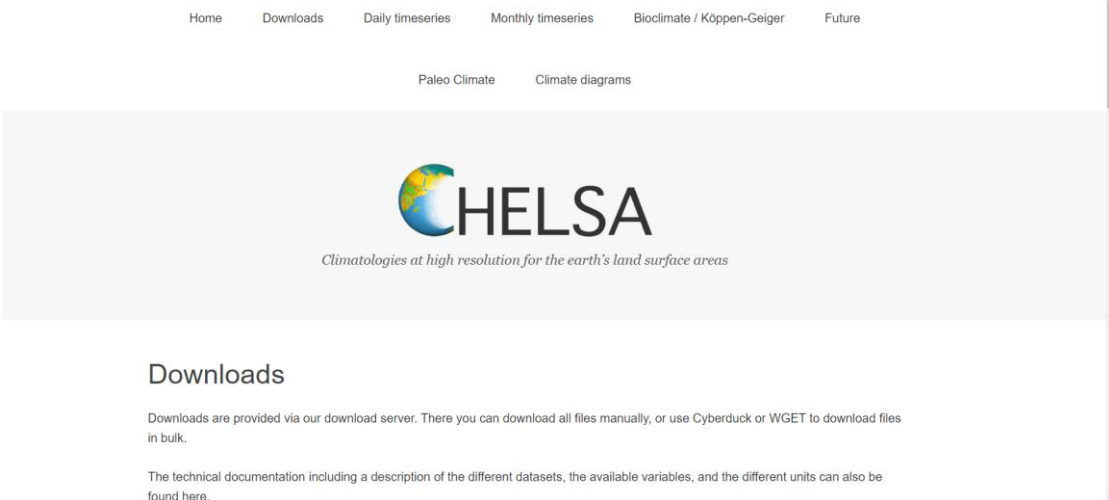
Average maximum temperature in January for W5E5 (left) and RCP8.5 GCM MPI-esm1 (right).



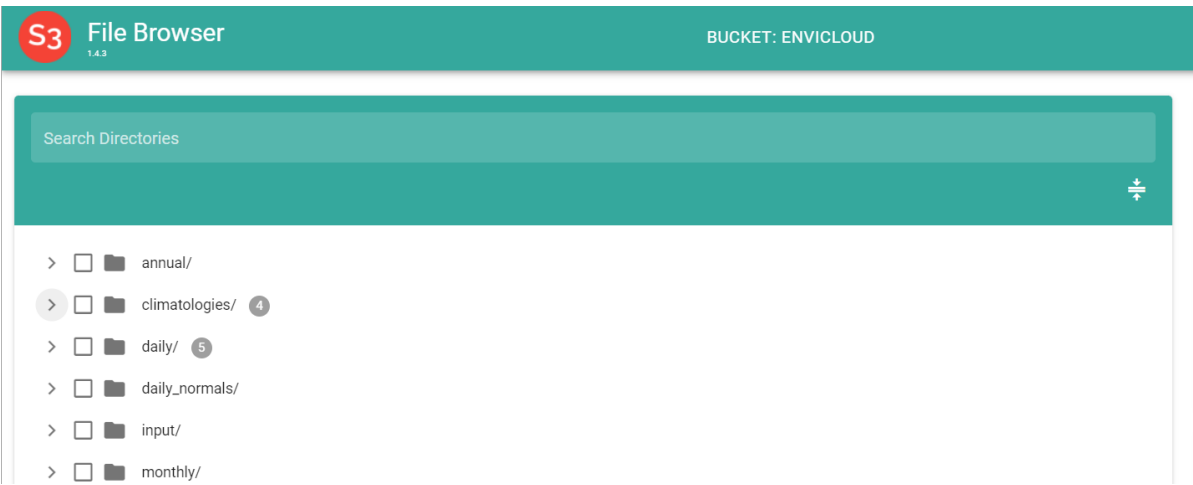
How to access CHELSA data?

CHELSA website (<https://chelsa-climate.org/downloads/>)

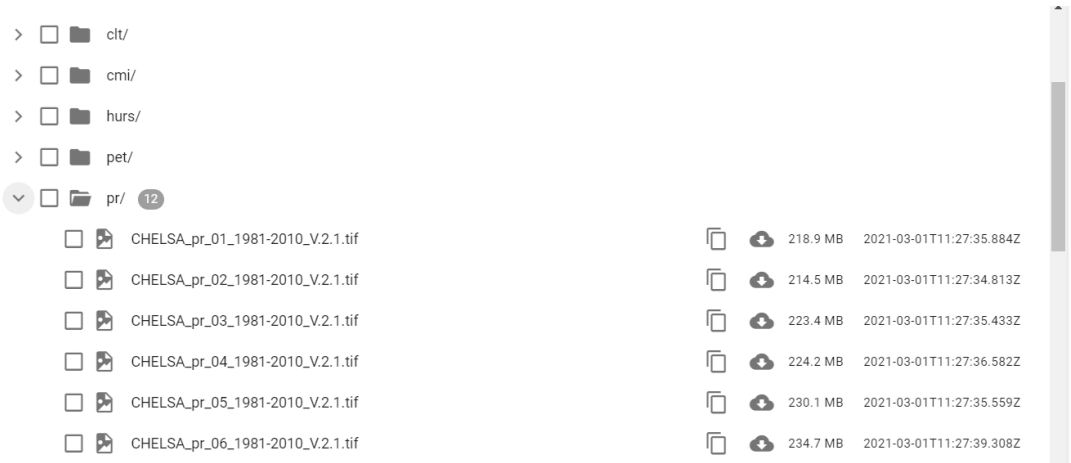
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Accessing CORDEX data from ESGF

- ESGF (Earth System Grid Federation) nodes contain CMIP5, CMIP6, CORDEX, and CORDEX-CORE simulations and others (e.g ISIMIP impact models).
- Very good for downloading a lot of data but not very user friendly.
- No visualization possible
- [Excellent tutorial](#)



Accessing CORDEX data from ESGF

1

[link](#)

Project

Product

Institute

Model

Experiment

Experiment Family

Time Frequency

Realm

CMIP Table

Ensemble

Variable

Variable Long Name

CF Standard Name

Driving Model

Datanode

CORDEX

Domain

RCM Model

Downscaling realisation

Enter Text:

?

Search

Reset

Display

10

results per page

[More Search Options]

☐ Show All Replicas

☐ Show All Versions

☐ Search Local Node Only (Including All Replicas)

The search returned 0 results.

2

Project

Product

Institute

Model

Experiment

Experiment Family

Time Frequency

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CMIP Table

Ensemble

Variable

Variable Long Name

CF Standard Name

Driving Model

Datanode

CORDEX

Domain

☒ AFR-22 (5582)

RCM Model

Downscaling realisation

SPECS

Start Date

Enter Text:

?

Search

Reset

Display

10

results per page

[More Search Options]

☐ Show All Replicas

☐ Show All Versions

☐ Search Local Node Only (Including All Replicas)

Search Constraints: **✖** AFR-22

Total Number of Results: 5582
-1- 2 3 4 5 6 Next >>
Please login to add search results to your Data Cart
Expert Users: you may display the search URL and return results as XML or return results as JSON

1. cordex.output.AFR-22.ICTP.MOHC-HadGEM2-ES.historical.r1i1p1.RegCM4-7.v0.6hr.zmla

Data Node: esgf-ictp.hpc.cineca.it

Version: 20190502

Total Number of Files (for all variables): 36

Full Dataset Services: [Show Metadata] [List Files] [THREDDS Catalog] [WGET Script]

2. cordex.output.AFR-22.ICTP.MOHC-HadGEM2-ES.historical.r1i1p1.RegCM4-7.v0.day.cih

Data Node: esgf-ictp.hpc.cineca.it

Version: 20190502

Total Number of Files (for all variables): 36

Full Dataset Services: [Show Metadata] [List Files] [THREDDS Catalog] [WGET Script]

3. cordex.output.AFR-22.ICTP.MOHC-HadGEM2-ES.historical.r1i1p1.RegCM4-7.v0.day.clivi

Data Node: esgf-ictp.hpc.cineca.it

Version: 20190502

Total Number of Files (for all variables): 36

Full Dataset Services: [Show Metadata] [List Files] [THREDDS Catalog] [WGET Script]

4. cordex.output.AFR-22.ICTP.MOHC-HadGEM2-ES.historical.r1i1p1.RegCM4-7.v0.day.cll

Data Node: esgf-ictp.hpc.cineca.it

Version: 20190502

Total Number of Files (for all variables): 36

Full Dataset Services: [Show Metadata] [List Files] [THREDDS Catalog] [WGET Script]

5. cordex.output.AFR-22.ICTP.MOHC-HadGEM2-ES.historical.r1i1p1.RegCM4-7.v0.day.clm

Data Node: esgf-ictp.hpc.cineca.it

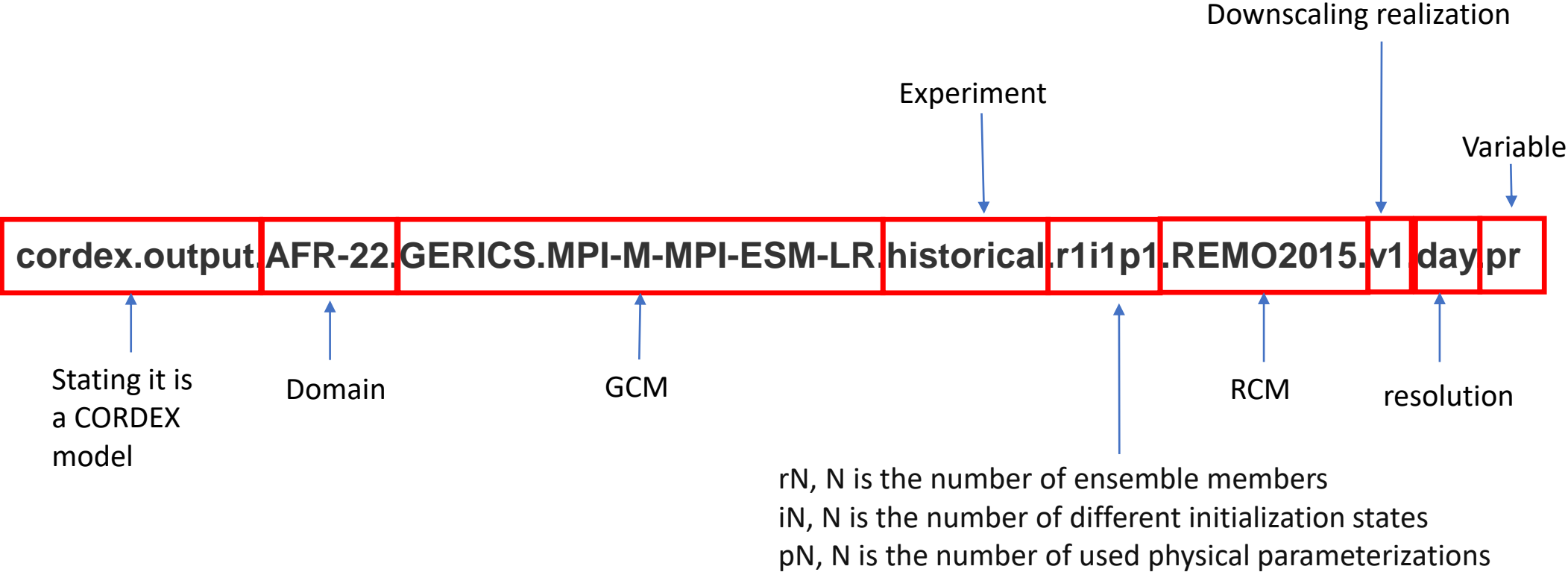
Version: 20190502

Total Number of Files (for all variables): 36

The rest in real-time. Follow this [tutorial](#) when needed



CORDEX models name





Accessing CORDEX data from COPERNICUS

- COPERNICUS is more user-friendly than ESGF.
- It contains tools to visualize climate and ocean data.
- Very well documented.
- Not all simulations are available.
- Excellent repository for satellite-based observations.
- For large volume of downloads, basic experience in programming is required.
- [Link to user friendly applications](#)



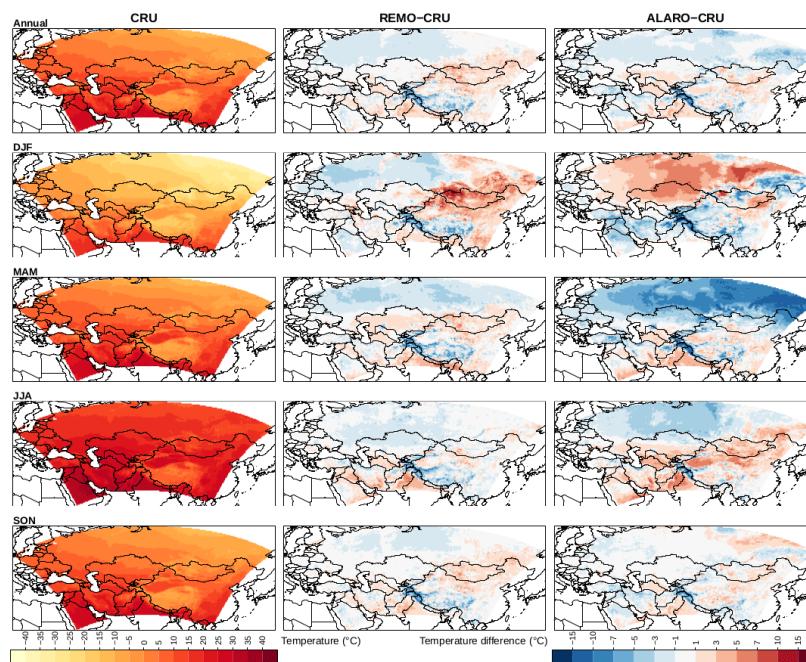
Accessing CORDEX data from COPERNICUS

The screenshot shows the Copernicus Data Store interface. At the top, there are logos for the European Union, Copernicus, ECMWF, and the Climate Change Service. A 'Login/register' button is in the top right. Below the logos is a navigation bar with links: Home, Search, Datasets, Applications, Toolbox, Support, and Live. The main content area is titled 'Search results'. A message in orange text states: 'On Wednesday 30th of November (10:00 UTC - 12:00 UTC) the service will be partially discontinued for urgent maintenance. Users may still be able to submit requests, but they will be executed only after the session has ended. All running requests will be re-queued. Thank you.' Below this is a search bar with the text 'Search dataset' and a magnifying glass icon. To the right of the search bar are tabs: 'All', 'Applications', 'Datasets' (which is highlighted with a red box), and 'Providers'. Under the 'Datasets' tab, there are two search results. The first result is titled 'Seasonal reforecasts of river discharge and related data from the Global Flood Awareness System'. It has a 'Dataset' tag and a description: 'This dataset provides a gridded modelled time series of river discharge forced with seasonal range meteorological reforecasts. The data is a consistent representation of a key hydrological variable across the global domain, and is a product of the Global Flood Awareness System (GloFAS). It is accompanied by an ancillary file for interpretation that provides the upstream area (see the related varia...'. To the right of the text is a world map showing river discharge. The second result is titled 'Reforecasts of river discharge and related data by the Global Flood Awareness System'.

- [Same link as before but instead of applications we look at dataset](#)
- The rest in real time

Bias correction

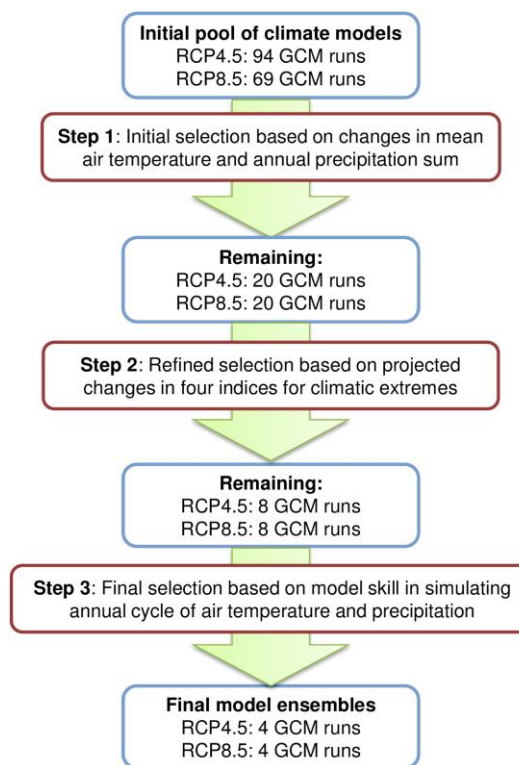
- Usually climate models are not perfect representation of the reality
- Often, needs bias adjustment. Bias correction is performed by learning the difference between the historical simulation run of the models and observational dataset. The “difference” is applied to the projections to correct the model.



Left column: mean air temperature (°C) at 2 m height over the CAS-CORDEX domain based on the observational CRU dataset for the 1980–2017 period on an annual level and for winter (DJF), spring (MAM), summer (JJA), and autumn (SON). Middle columns: difference in mean temperature between models and CRU. [Top et al., 2021](#)

How many models?

- Debated topic, many different ways for selecting climate models.
- When using CORDEX-CORE, we are limited to the number of models available (6 simulations but three GCMs)
- If we are conducting an impact assessment on a large scale (continental level), we can follow the envelope approach.





Take home messages

- Many different portals for accessing climate models. ESGF is the most comprehensive one
- Prons and cons of data portals (accessibility, catalogue
- For impact assessments, use more than one model. For small scales assessments, prioritize high spatial resolution climate models first

Thank you!

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