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Evolution of Moisture Transport Patterns in the North Atlantic in different Climate scenarios

Masterarbeit

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vorgelegt von

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ABSTRACT

The distribution and variability of precipitation in Europe are significantly influenced by moisture transport over the north(east)ern Atlantic. The objective of my master thesis is to analyze the evolution of moisture transport patterns in various future climate scenarios. The foundation of this research lies in the MPI-GE, the Max Planck Institute Grand Ensemble Dataset, comprising an ensemble of 100 members for different RCP (climate) scenarios up until 2100. Each member provides multiple fields of relevant climate data. A challenge will be the visualization of uncertainty stemming from 100 different simulations, which will not be straightforward.

To quantify moisture transport, an integrated water vapor transport (a combination of wind and specific moisture) scalar/vector field will be generated from the MPI-GE. Windowed Empirical Orthogonal Functions (EOFs) will be used to extract spatial-temporal patterns and simplify the data, making it easier to evaluate pattern evolution over time.

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION AND MOTIVATION	1
1.1	Motivation	1
1.2	Climate and Climate Research	1
1.3	Research Questions and Thesis Structure	3
2	BASICS	5
2.1	(Uncertain) Fields	5
2.2	Empirical Orthogonal Functions	5
3	MPI GE CMIP6	7
4	RELATED WORK	9
4.1	Uncertainty Visualisation	9
4.2	Moisture Transport	9
4.3	Pattern analysis	11
5	METHODOLOGY	13
5.1	Overview	13
5.2	Preprocessing	13
6	RESULTS	15
7	CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE WORK	17
7.1	Conclusions	17
7.2	Future Work	17
	ACRONYMS	19
	GLOSSARY	21
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	23

1 INTRODUCTION AND MOTIVATION

1.1 MOTIVATION

Since the discovery (and further confirmation) of the greenhouse effect in the years from 1824 to 1900 [5, 6] humans came a long way of fighting the consequences of the increased greenhouse gas concentration in earth's atmosphere. In 1972 Sawyer summarized the knowledge and predicted quite accurately the warming at the end of the century [18] Especially the last decades the climate crisis gained more and more attention, leading to the creation of multiple international organizations and institutions (e.g. the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 1988).

In 2019 more than 11,000 scientists from around the world released a declaration [17], calling governments from around the world to action. The mid and long-term consequences are manifold and go far beyond the general rising of the worlds' average temperature (see Figure 1.1), e.g. shifts in circulation systems like the North Atlantic Oscillation (NAO) [23], which in turn also have varying consequences. Understanding what consequences may lay ahead of us is a crucial step in tackling these challenges, and this thesis aims to follow up on the research of Vietinghoff et al., trying to evaluate in a similar manner the systemic changes of moisture transport patterns in Europe and the northern Atlantic.

1.2 CLIMATE AND CLIMATE RESEARCH

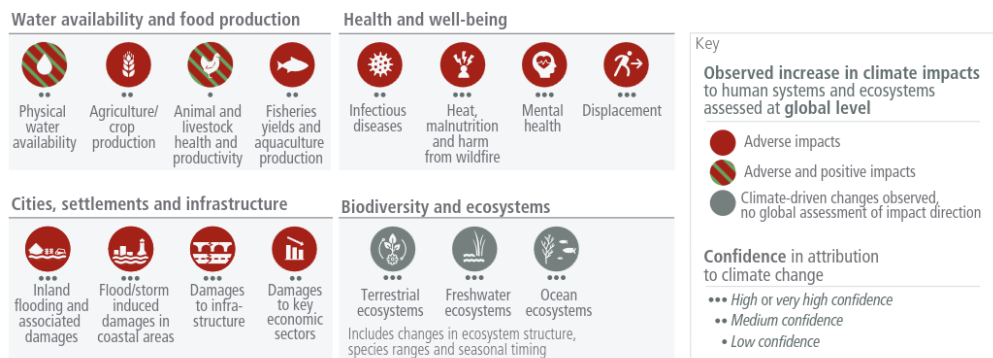
This section should give an introduction to the current state of climate research. Therefore it should explain what the current way of future climate predictions is (Coupled Models), how they work, and It should explain some part of the politics, who is involed in what and what the backroud of the most important projects (CMIP, ScenarioMIP ...). It should be explained that the data used is the one that the highest council of fighting climate change uses for its report.

- 1.

IPCC and the Coupled Model Intercomparison Project (CMIP)

1 Introduction and Motivation

a) Observed widespread and substantial impacts and related losses and damages attributed to climate change



b) Impacts are driven by changes in multiple physical climate conditions, which are increasingly attributed to human influence

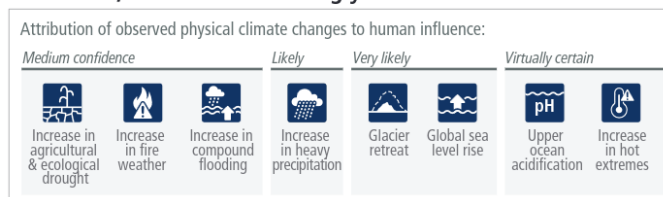


Figure 1.1: Impact of Climate Change for Humans, taken from [9]

The reason for the endorsement of the IPCC by the UN General Assembly 1988 was to prepare comprehensive reviews and report about the current state of scientific knowledge and research. Since then there were six assessment cycles and six reports were published, condensing the research of the scientific community. Figure 1.1 is a graphic from the latest report for policy makers from 2023 [9], displaying the probable consequences for humans in climate change. A main source for such figures in the reports are so-called Global Coupled Models (GCM), trying to model the state and evolution of certain fields of earth data. They consist of multiple Models, each representing a major part of Earth's complex climate system (like atmosphere, hydrosphere, etc.), also allowing to model the dynamic interactions between these parts. In the mid 90s the Coupled Model Intercomparison Project (CMIP) was brought to life, with the aim of streamlining results of GCMs and making them comparable. CMIP provides the outer structure, amongst others what kind of simulations to produce (e.g. preindustrial control simulations, future scenarios etc.), what kinds of fields should be generated, what kind of resolutions to provide and also how these results should be serialized. Since then the results of CMIP played an increasingly major part in the reports of the IPCC [22], and are now even called "... one

back up with sources and better writing

of the foundational elements of climate science” [4]. CMIP is currently in its 6th phase, corresponding to the recently finished 6th Assessment Report of the IPCC [9].

The North Atlantic Oscillation

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND THESIS STRUCTURE

Structure:

1. **Preliminaries:** explain what climate simulations are, what cmip(6) is and its relation to the IPCC reports and what that means for the global fight against the climate crisis. This chapter should prepare the reader to understand all the related work in Chapter 4.
2. **Problem Analysis:** explain what I want to do using the CMIP6 simulations: Describe what the general plan is: Visualization of the moisture transport in Europe with the help. Also define what the goals of the visualizations are: Visualize different scenarios for comparison, visualize uncertainties of different members, visualize evolution over time, also try combining those. Here should be a graphic that explains the workflow that transforms a simulation into some nice pictures
3. **Related Work:** Show what efforts have already been done regarding analysis of moisture transport, future and past. Maybe preparing a comparison table would be good.
4. **Realization:** Describe in a step by step way what measures had been taken.
5. **Evaluation:** A little bit unsure how far I (as a CS person) can evaluate this, have to come up with a concept
6. **Conclusion:** Same as step before, but there will be something to write about after everything else is written

2 BASICS

This section should explain the basic math to understand the aforementioned topics, not that much needed but still needs to be there.

2.1 (UNCERTAIN) FIELDS

2.2 EMPIRICAL ORTHOGONAL FUNCTIONS

3 MPI GE CMIP6

The Max Planck Institute Grand Ensemble CMIP6 (MPI GE CMIP6) is a Single-model initial-condition large ensemble (in short: SMILE) [14]. This means that a single model was run with different initial conditions but the same external forcings (e.g. greenhouse gasses) multiple times (\Rightarrow ensemble). This makes it possible to separate the internal variability from the responses to the external forcing, enabling researchers to better quantify the consequences of climate change (for example) . Additionally it makes the research of extreme weather phenomena (e.g. droughts, floods etc.) more robust in spite of their rare occurrences [11]. As described in Section 1.2, Coupled models

The dataset chosen for this project is the *Max Planck Institute Grand Ensemble CMIP6* (from now on MPI-GE CMIP6), presented by Olonscheck et al. [14]. The reasons for choosing this dataset are manifold:

1. It uses the latest (6th) phase of the Coupled Model Intercomparison Project (CMIP6)
2. Compared to its predecessor (MPI-GE [12]) it provides high frequency output (6 hour intervals vs. monthly means), which enables taking short-lived weather events and structures (e.g. atmospheric rivers) into account which would be lost in the calculation of the mean
- 3.

This section should explain what datasets are available and why I chose the MPI-GE CMIP6 [14]

Maybe but the comparison table from [14] here and expand it a bit.

4 RELATED WORK

This section outlines the current state-of-the-art in the main parts of this thesis explained in Section 1.3: Quantifying Moisture (Transport), extracting spatio-temporal patterns, tracking their change over time and visualizing the uncertain results in the end.

4.1 UNCERTAINTY VISUALISATION

4.2 MOISTURE TRANSPORT

To computationally extract any spatio-temporal patterns of moisture (transport), it first needs to be quantified in any way. The variable from the MPI GE CMIP6 used for this task is the *specific humidity*, which has no unit and is a float value between 0.0 and 1.0, denoting the percentage of water in the air at a specific gridpoint. The vast majority of literature regarding moisture transport use some form of vertically integrated humidity and the variants will be explained in the following section. A popular usage of these quantifications was to find a filamentary weather structure called “Atmospheric Rivers”¹, a prominent way of water vapor transportation in the extratropic regions [7].

The most straightforward way of quantifying moisture is **Vertically Integrated Water Vapor (IWV)** [2, 7, 13, 19, 25], which is essentially the vertical integral of the specific humidity q over the pressure levels p from earth’s surface P_s to some upper limit in the atmosphere:

$$IWV = \frac{1}{g} \int_0^{P_s} q \, dp \quad (4.1)$$

Similar to Equation 4.1, Zhu and Newell proposed in [26] a way of moisture transport by vertically integrating over the different pressure levels the zonal (along latitude lines) and meridional (along longitude lines) fluxes \overline{pu} and \overline{pv} . It became known by the name Vertical Integrated Moisture Transport (IVT) and has the unit $\frac{kg}{ms}$. Here u and v stand for the zonal

¹earlier or alternative name: “Tropospheric Rivers”

4 Related Work

and meridional components of the horizontal wind vector. It became a popular metric for finding atmospheric rivers [7], sometimes alongside IWV [3].

$$IVT = \frac{1}{g} \int_0^{P_s} q \begin{pmatrix} u \\ v \end{pmatrix} dp \quad (4.2)$$

While Equation 4.2 yields a vector field, the euclidian norm of said vector field

$$\|IVT\| = \frac{1}{g} \sqrt{\left(\int_0^{P_s} qu \, dp\right)^2 + \left(\int_0^{P_s} qv \, dp\right)^2} \quad (4.3)$$

is also a popular choice in detecting atmospheric rivers [16, 21] and other use cases [1].

An example of using this method can be found in [1] with many more references why this method is working well for these kinds of approaches.

Also, this paper lists some other methods of moisture transportation which are also used

The IVT is also part of the atmospheric moisture budget [24] (and similar in [20]) given by

$$\frac{1}{g} \frac{\delta}{\delta t} \int_0^{P_s} q \, dp = -\nabla \cdot \frac{1}{g} \int_0^{P_s} q \begin{pmatrix} u \\ v \end{pmatrix} dp + E - P$$

With E being the total evaporation and P the precipitation. Yang et al. showed in their report [24] the directions of moisture flux and its evolution in the last three decades. The analysis was done for all continental borders based on the big ERA5 reanalysis. The metrics used for this analysis were mostly the evaporation E , precipitation P and the moisture transport convergence $VIMC = \frac{1}{g} \int_0^{P_s} \nabla \cdot q \begin{pmatrix} u \\ v \end{pmatrix} dp$ from Equation 4.2.

There are also some other notable other algorithms, namely stable oxygen isotope investigation [10] and langragian backwards trajectories [25], but both rather look for the origin of the water vapor instead of its destination and are therefor out of scope for this thesis.

USAGES OF IVT AND DIFFERENCES

In [15] they used a vector field of the IVT: $\int_{p_{low}}^{p_{max}} qV dp$, where p is the pressure level, q is the humidity and V the horizontal vector.

In [21] they used a scalar field based on the euclidian norm of the vector field used by [15].

In [1] they also used the euclidian norm on a similar field like [15] to measure the impact of ENSO on south-chinese weather.

Furthermore, they evaluated the correlation between the moisture transport and the precipitation variability, which correlate to a significant extent.

This section should explain atmospheric rivers, but since we don't know if they are even relevant so i write it in the end.

I don't know where to put this, maybe it should go into the preliminaries

4.3 PATTERN ANALYSIS

Explain some usages of EOF in data, but extremely important: Explain what [1] did since its quite similar.

See [8] for a big overview of EOF in atmospheric science.

See [1] for a similar approach as we plan it, except it only focuses on the past. They

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 OVERVIEW

Explain what I want to do using the CMIP6 simulations: Describe what the general plan is: Visualisation of the moisture transport in Europe with the help . Also define what the goals of the visualisations are: Visualize different scenarios for comparison, visualize uncertainties of different members, visualize evolution over time, also try combining those. Here should be a graphic that explains the workflow that transforms a simulation into some nice pictures

5.2 PREPROCESSING

The goal of this step is to generate an IVT field (see Chapter 4) from the MPI GE CMIP6 (see Chapter 3). The steps to complete this task are quite straight forward:

1. Load four different fields for each time period in each member in each szenario: Specific humidity hus , eastward horizontal wind ua , northward horizontal wind va and surface pressure ps . Here the geographical box around the area of interest is cut out: Europe and the North Atlantic (Longitude: $-90 \rightarrow 40$, Latitude: $20 \rightarrow 80$, based on [23])
2. For each geographical gridpoint (lon, lat) and timestep: Calculate the integrals of the product of wind components and specific humidity over the vertical pressure levels $\frac{1}{g} \int_{ps}^0 hus * ua$ and $\frac{1}{g} \int_{ps}^0 hus * va$, with g being the gravitational acceleration ($9.806 \frac{m}{s}$)
3. Save the results for each time period in each member in each szenario in a NetCDF file for the further steps.

The calculations were performed on the high performance computing cluster¹ of the German Climate Calculations Center (DKRZ), due to the MPI GE CMIP6 is saved there and downloading the data would take a lot of time. This also result in the goal of this step

¹<https://docs.dkrz.de/doc/levante/>

5 Methodology

to minimize the hours on the HPC system since they get billed by the time using nodes. Although these steps seem easy, due to the large sizes of the datasets and other issues many challenges were met. In the following those will be explained with regard to the step they occurred in.

1. Data Loading

- cutting out geobox
- slow IO → started using dask+xarray

2. Vertical integration

- calculate hybrid sigma pressure levels for each gridpoint and timestep to get the x values for integration
- describe my idea of testing the integration

6 RESULTS

7 CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE WORK

7.1 CONCLUSIONS

7.2 FUTURE WORK

ACRONYMS

PCA	Principal component analysis
SNF	Smith normal form
TDA	Topological data analysis

GLOSSARY

\LaTeX	A document preparation system
\mathbb{R}	The set of real numbers

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