Understanding Hydrometeorology using global models

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ftp://members.aol.com/bettspapers/HortonBAMS1848.pdf

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Preamble

- Not a review talk
- Title is meant to be a paradox
- Simple models for understanding?
  Hydrometeorology is too complex
- Climate interactions of water
  [phase changes and radiation interactions]
  are central to climate
- Let us confront the challenge

Climate is both global and local

- Need coupled earth system models
- Need them locally to warn us of the first frost
  [local diurnal cycle in September]
- Improving our global models is central
- Global models can be used as tools to understand interacting processes
- Contrast our model world, which we dimly understand, and the real world, where we only understand fragments of a complex, living system.

What controls evapotranspiration?

- "Equilibrium evaporation".
  Raupach (BLM, 2000, QJRMS 2001)
- Models for the *growing daytime "dry BL"*
- Fascinating but simplified by ignoring some key real-world physics, which control evaporation for climate equilibrium.

What is this ignored physics?

- Cloud fields control cloud base, the surface net radiation, and dominate the cooling rate of the CBL

  [It is not the dry BL solutions that are relevant]

- Climate problem is a 24-hr mean problem, with a superimposed diurnal cycle

  [It is not just a growing daytime BL problem]

- First-order atmospheric constraints on evaporation. Global models with coupled cloud fields include these processes, so they can help us understand the coupling

Outline

a) Global scale feedbacks – seasonal forecasts

Idealized global soil moisture simulations
and evaporation-precipitation feedback over continents

b) Land-surface coupling at daily timescale
– 30 years of ERA40 river basin time-series

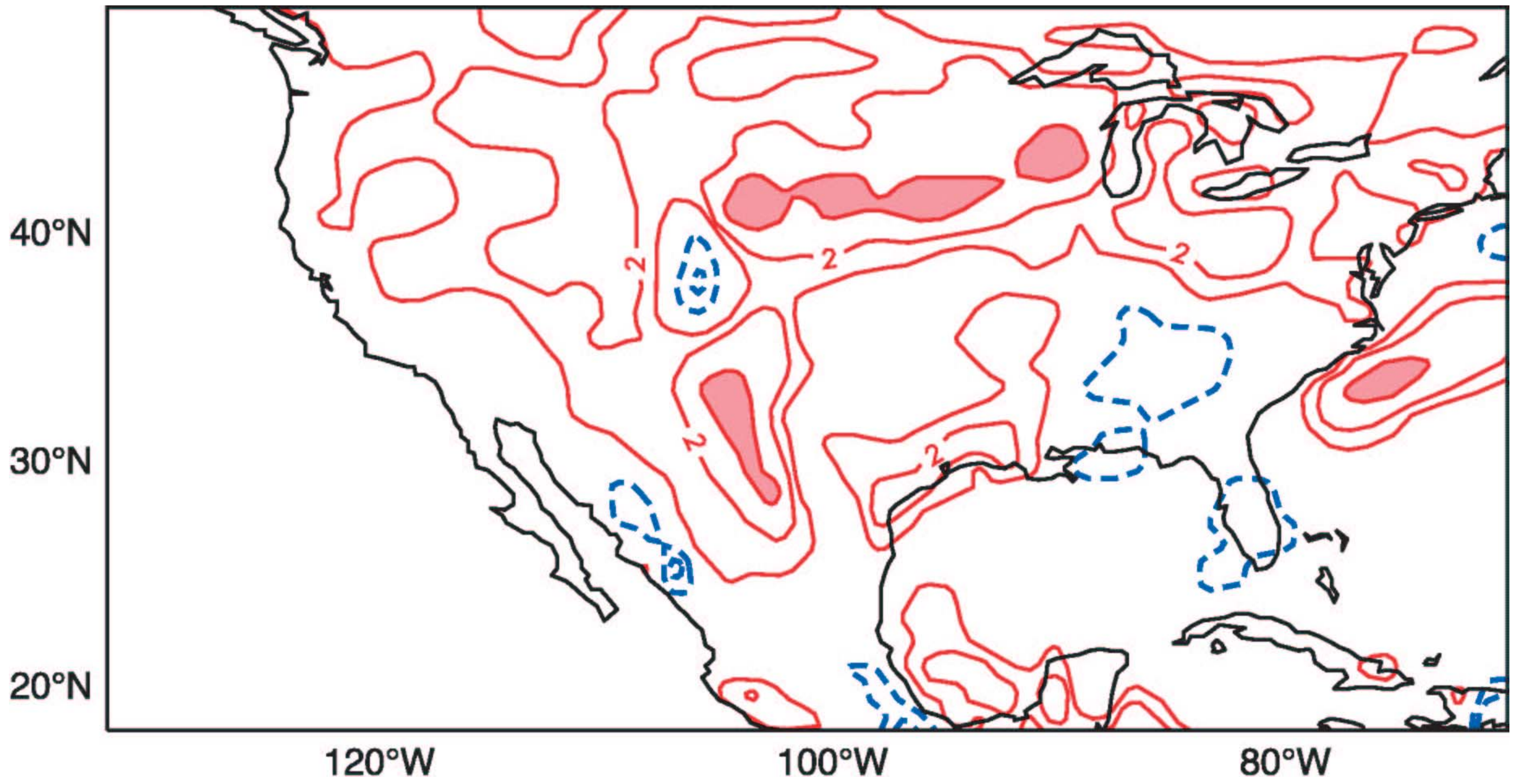
Coupling of soil moisture, cloud-base, cloud cover, radiation fields, sensible, latent heat; TCWV, precipitation and omega

a) Global scale feedbacks -

Idealized soil moisture simulations and evaporation-precipitation feedback

- Serendipity, and great flood on the Mississippi of July 1993
- Parallel ECMWF suite with a 4-layer soil model to better represent soil moisture memory
- Soil moisture sensitivity experiments for July, 1993

July 1993: wet-dry soil initialization



- Increase of monthly forecast precipitation: peaking at over 4 mm/day or >125 mm/month *[Beljaars et al. 1996]*

Seasonal forecasts with idealized soil moisture

- ERA40 model: 120-day forecasts at T-95 L60 from May 1, 1987 (DOY=121)
- Identical except

  a) Soil moisture initalized at 100% field capacity for vegetated areas

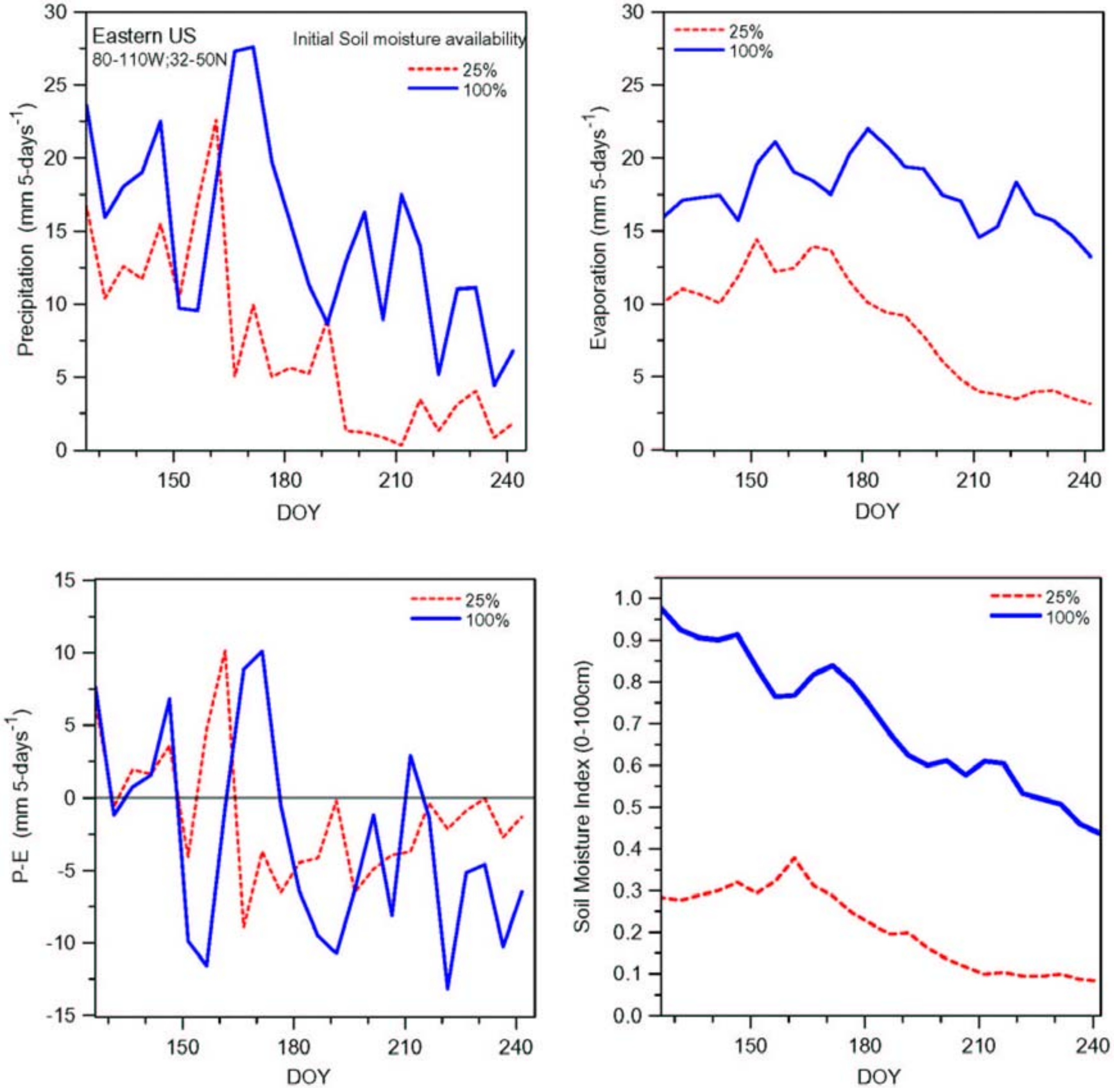
  b) Soil moisture initalized at 25%

-- Soil Moisture Index

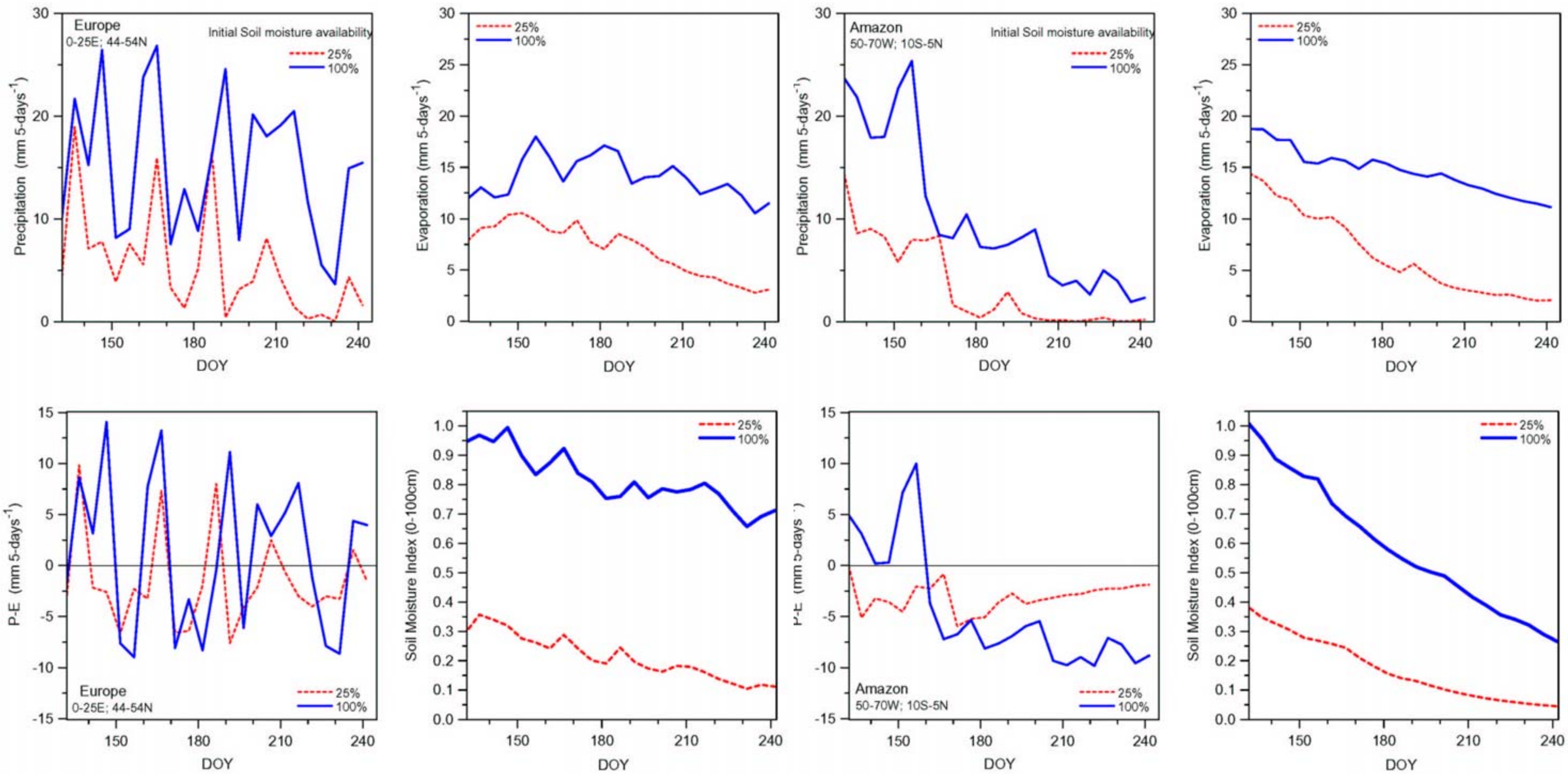
$0 < SMI < 1$ as $PWP < SM < FC$

P, E, P-E and SMI for Eastern US

- Reduction of SMI reduces precipitation, evaporation
- has little impact on P-E which averages to small values over summer
- Memory of soil moisture lasts all summer

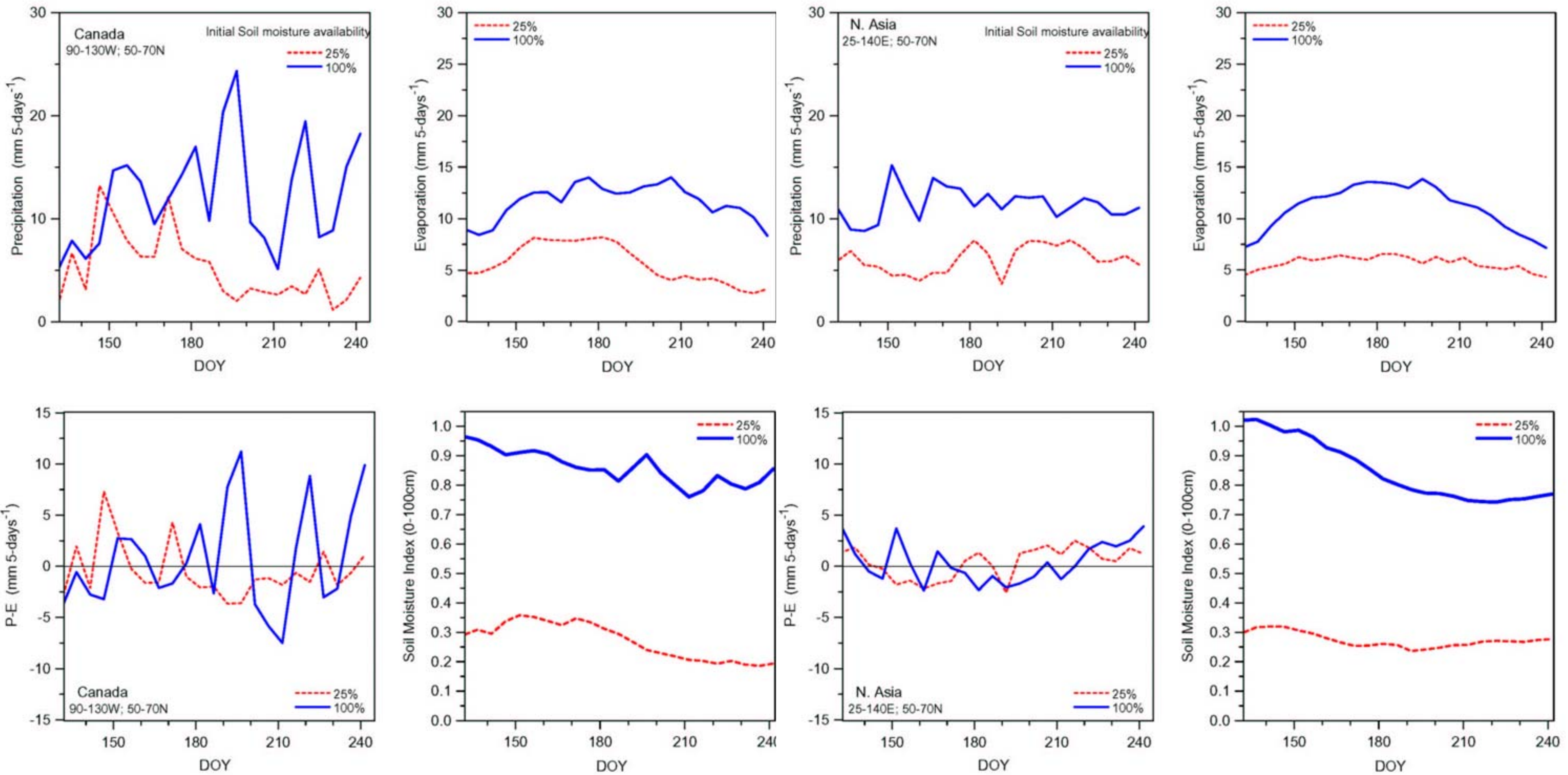


Europe   Amazon



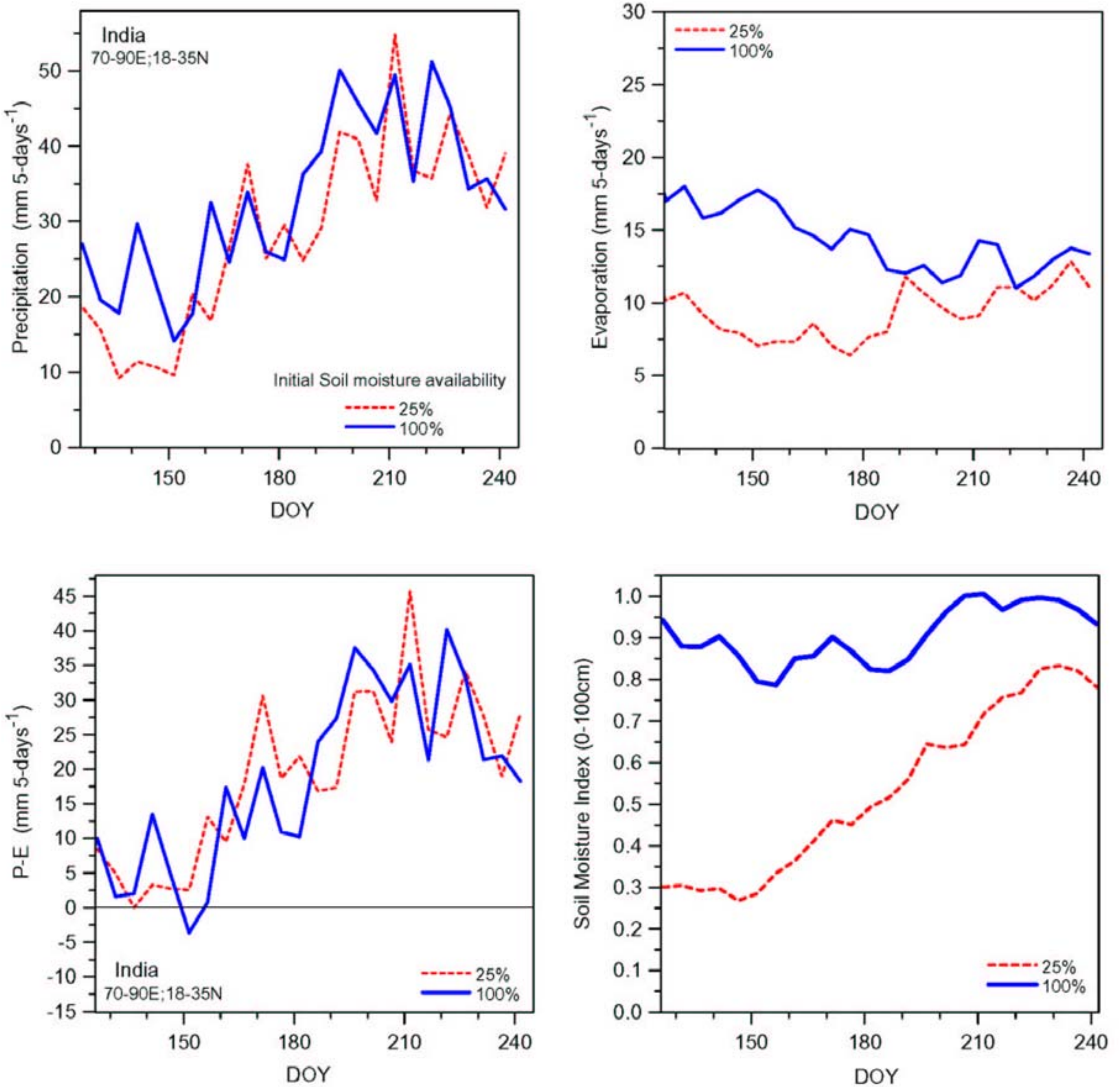
Canada

N. Asia



Monsoon India

Only in monsoon regions where P-E is large is memory of SMI reduced



Evaporation over land linked to precipitation: [away from monsoons]

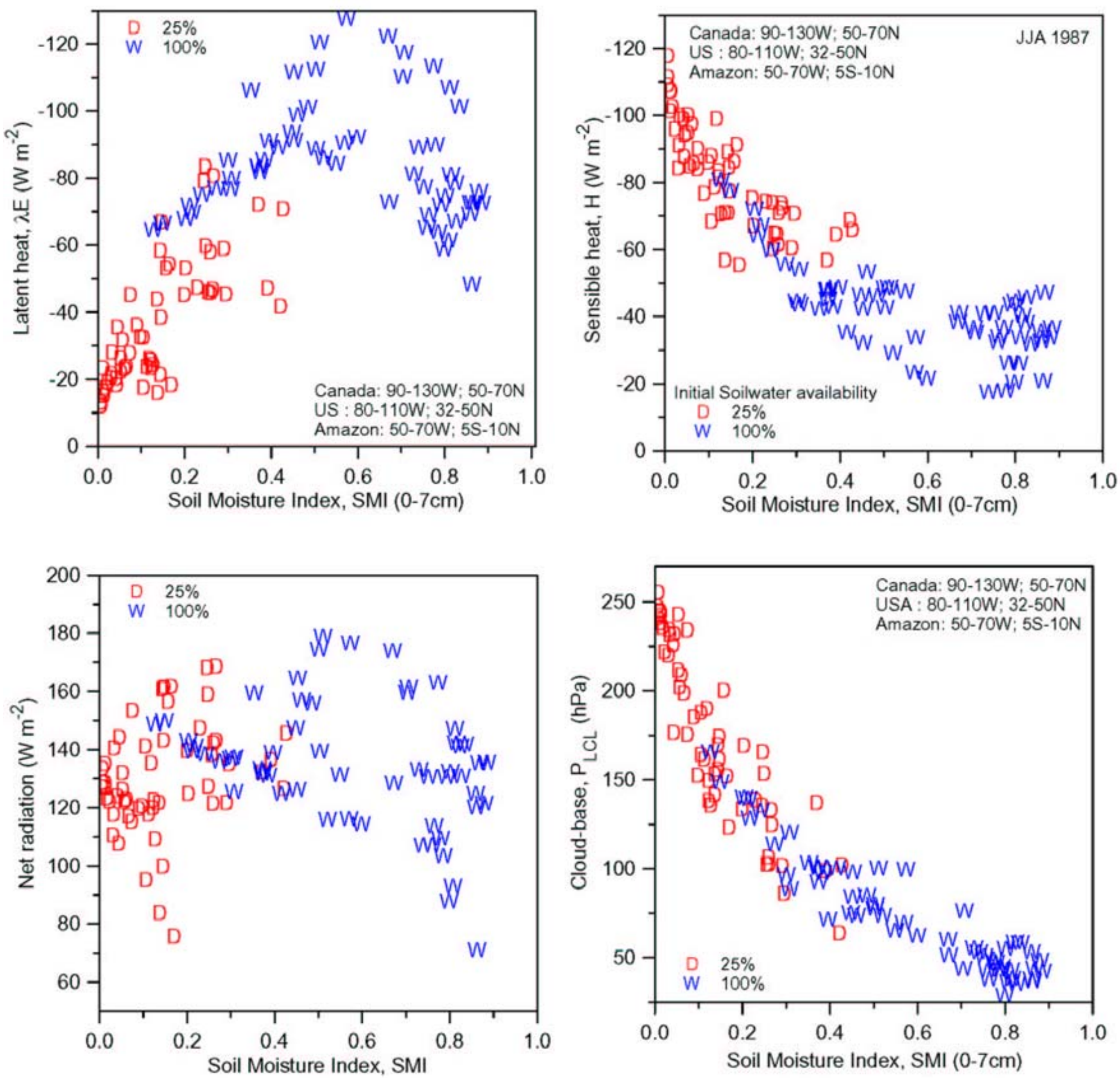
- So what controls evaporation?
- Not classic "equilibrium evaporation"
- Recast equilibrium evaporation as as a diurnally averaged problem, linked to cloud-base and cloud fields

[Betts, JHM 2000; Betts et al., JGR 2004, in press]

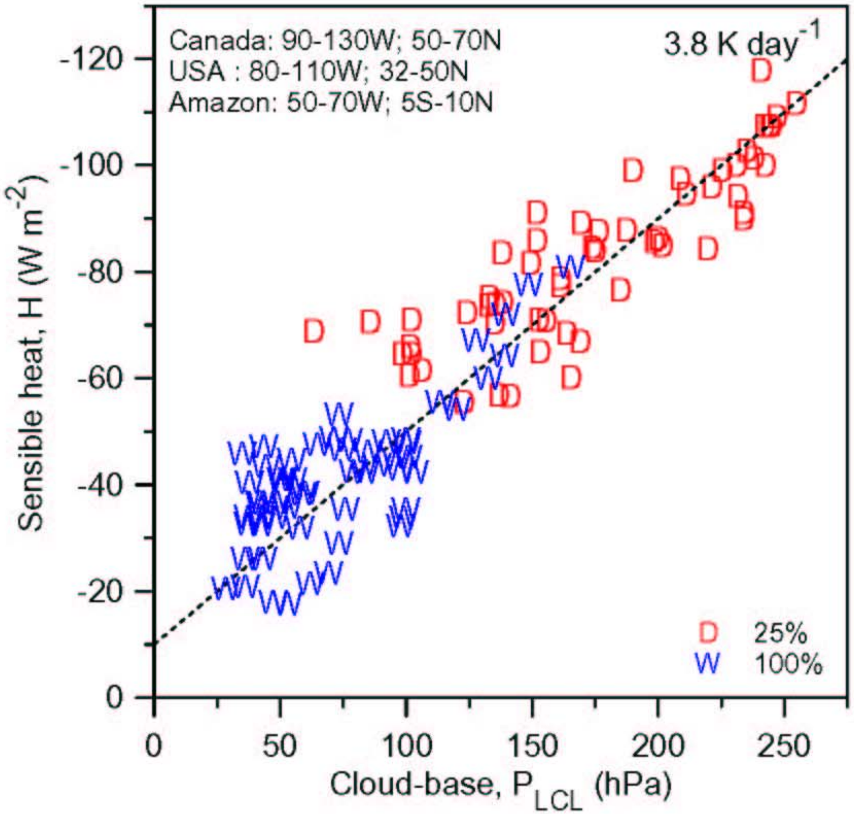
Surface energy balance, and ML "equilibrium"

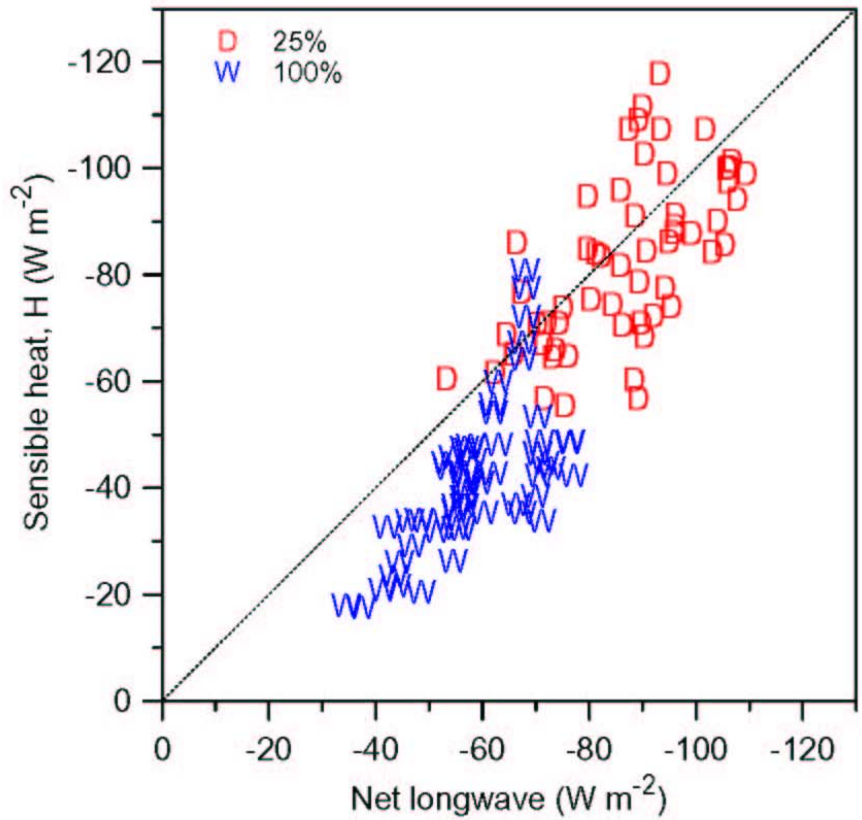
- **3 Americas regions**
- 5-day means:
  of wet and dry simulations

- Latent heat λE against SMI: weak relation: sensitive to R_{net}
- Sensible heat H against SMI: tight relation
- linked to dependence of depth to cloud-base on SMI



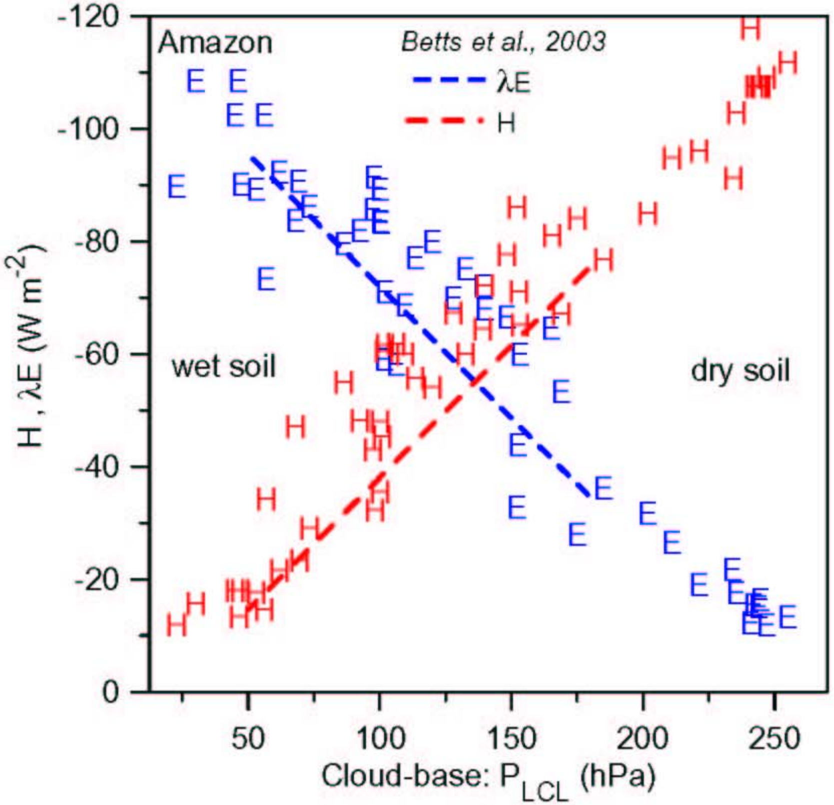
Sensible heat flux: H

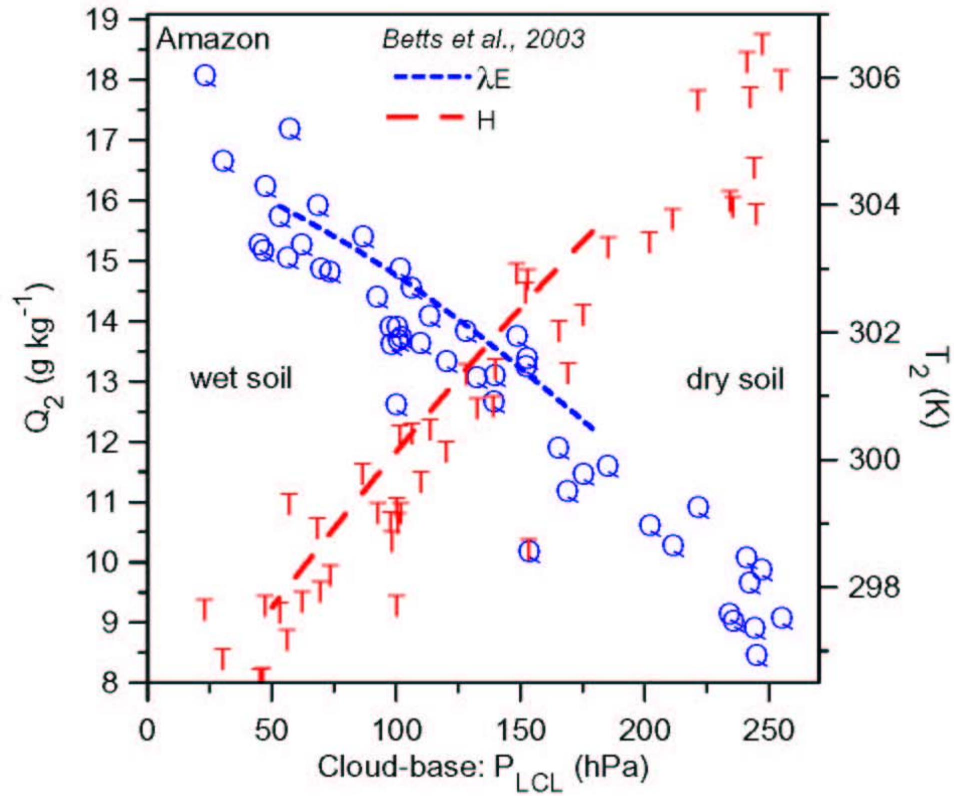




- H against P_{LCL} : linear with slope related to cooling processes in ML
- H is constrained by ML cooling, constrained by cloud-base
- Net long-wave has similar behavior: coupled to P_{LCL}

Amazon basin in more detail





- H , 8E quasi-linear with P_{LCL}: 2-m Q and T quasi-linear with P_{LCL}
- Over wetter soils, E increases; T decreases and Q increases in ML
- *New coupled state* has lower LCL, with cooler, moister ML; reduced H and larger E

Conclusions-1

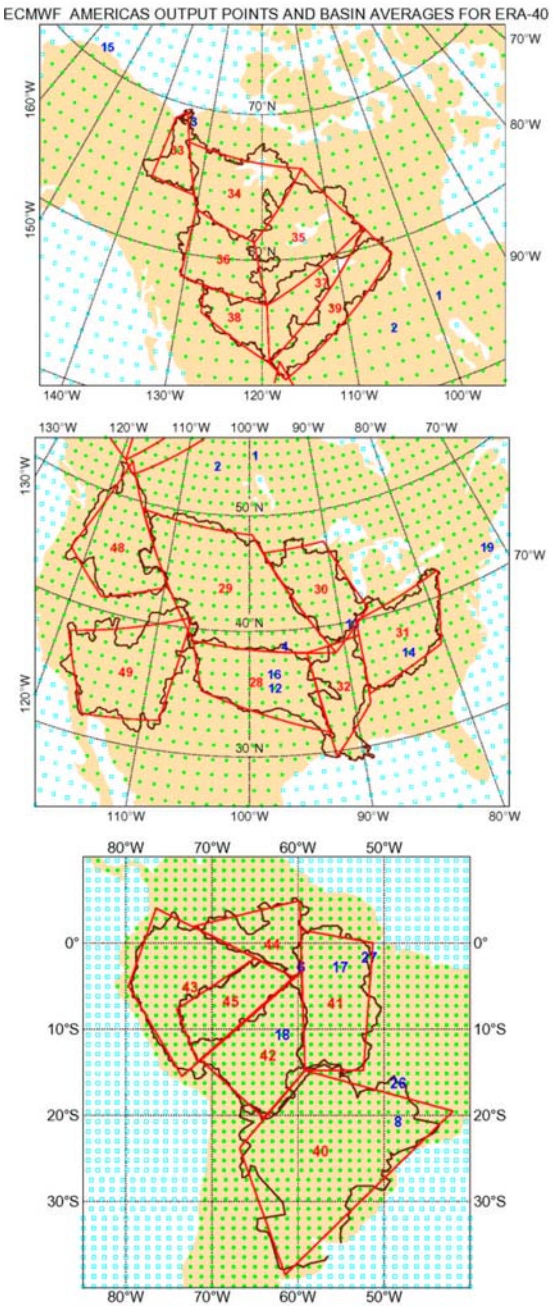
- Climate and climate change over land depends critically on getting evaporation-precipitation feed-back right
- ERA-40 model has large E, P feedback over continents *[Is it right?]*
- The change in surface energy budget over dry and wet soils is consistent with a shift of the mean sub-cloud layer equilibrium

b) ERA40 river basin budgets

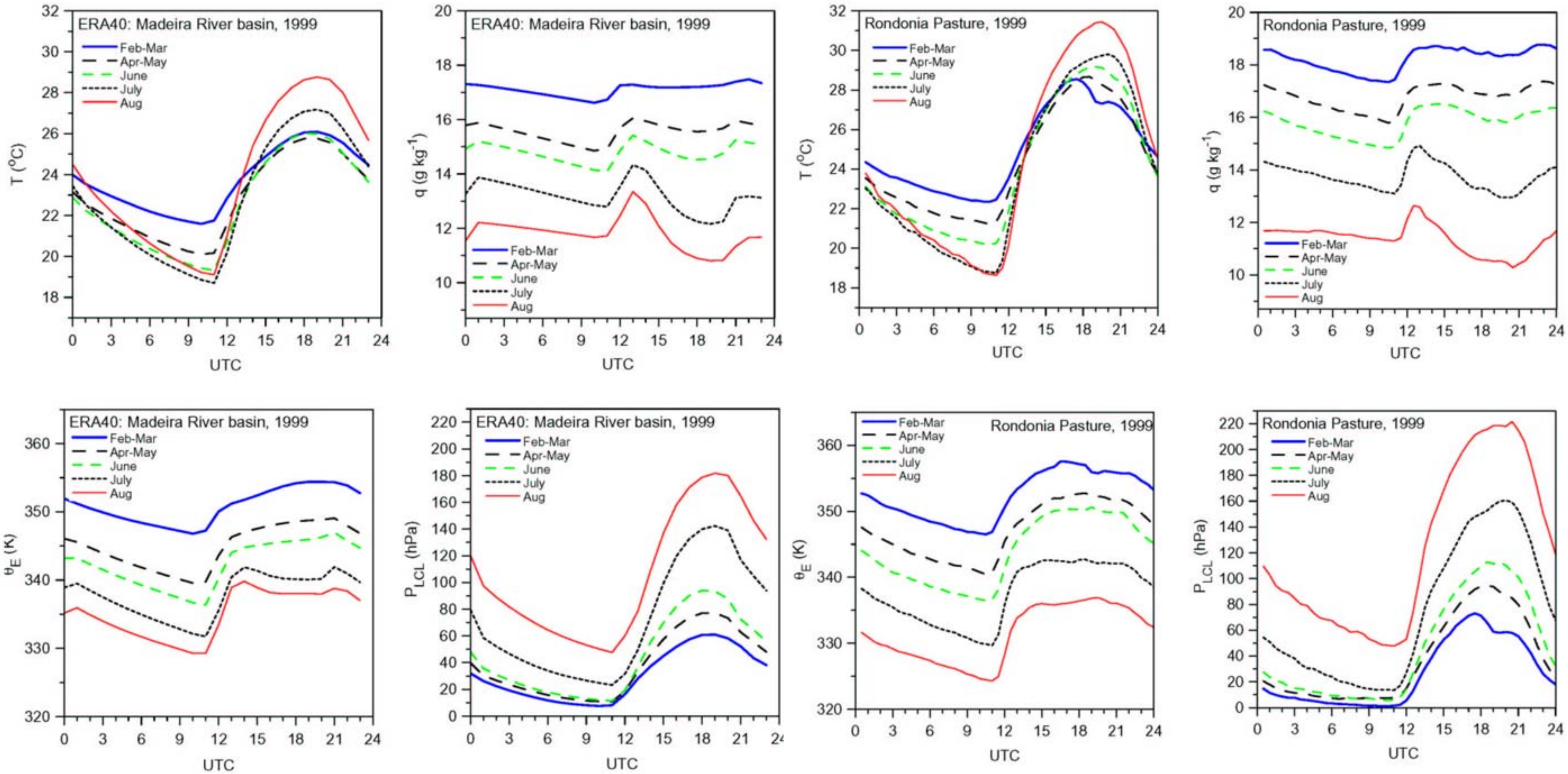
- **Basin averages: hourly archive**
- Daily averages:1972-2002 [11000 days]

- **Madeira : Amazon**
  Arkansas-Red : Mississippi
  Athabasca : Mackenzie

- *[ERA40 biases:see Betts et al. 2003a,b]*



ERA40 for Madeira River basin compared with LBA Rondonia pasture site: 1999



- Large seasonal change of diurnal amplitude
- ERA-40 basin ranges smaller than at pasture site

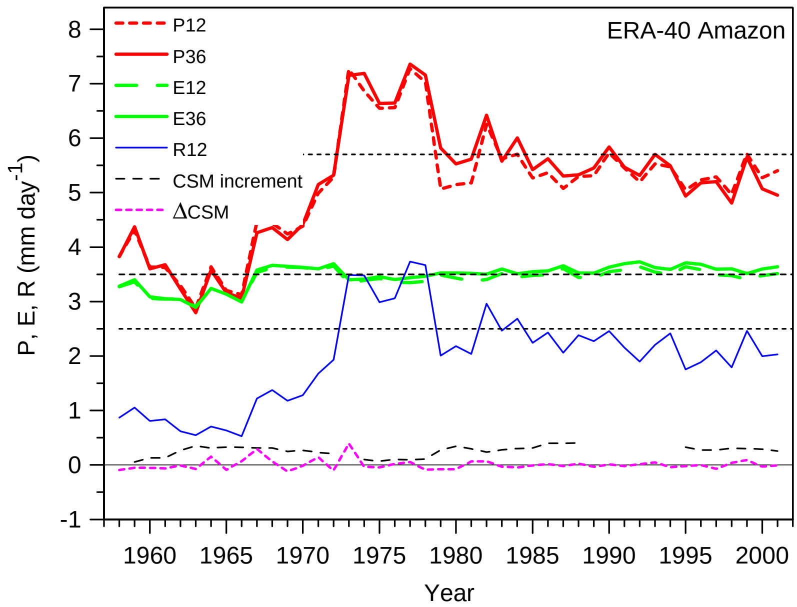
ERA40 Annual means 1957-2001

P: precipitation

E: evaporation

R: runoff

CSM: Column soil water

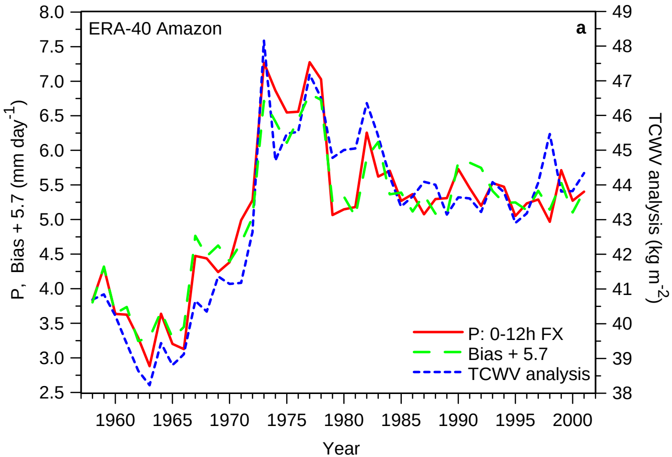


Annual means

TCWV: Total column water vapor

P: precipitation

P-bias from observations

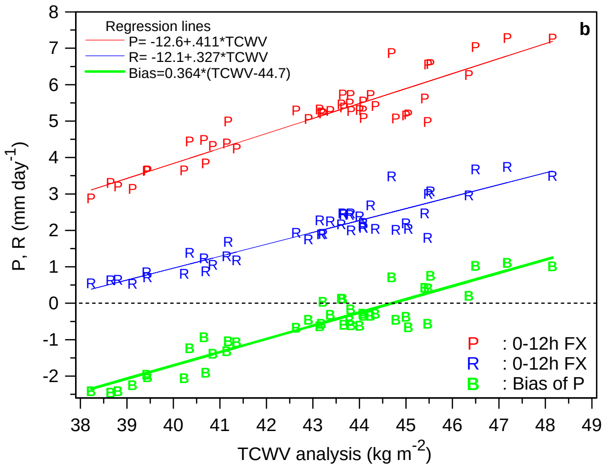


Regression on TCWV

P: precipitation

R: runoff

P-bias

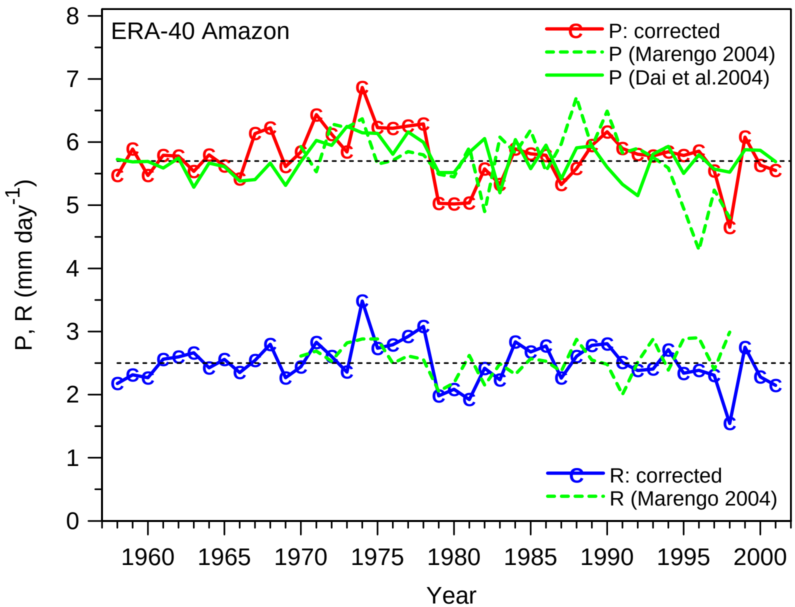


ERA40
Annual means corrected

Mean is ± 10%, but

Little signal in interannual variability

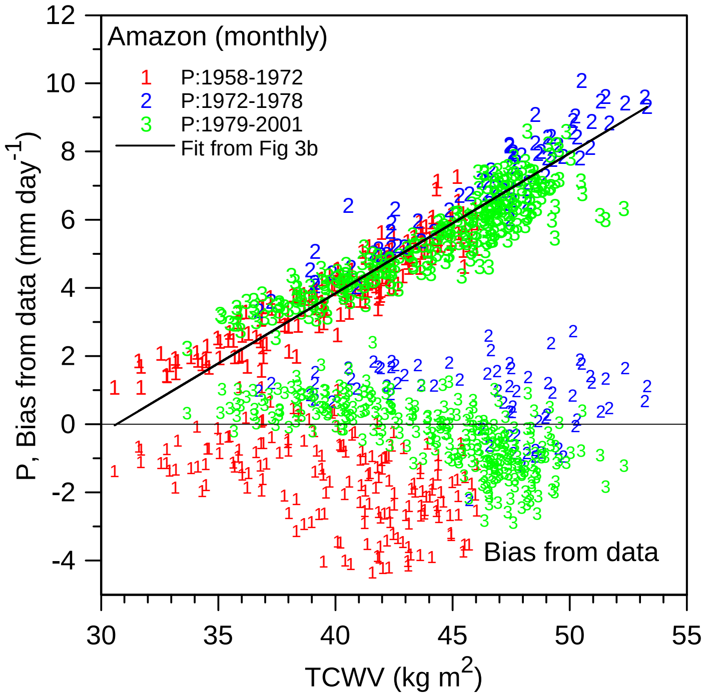
Data for P uncertain

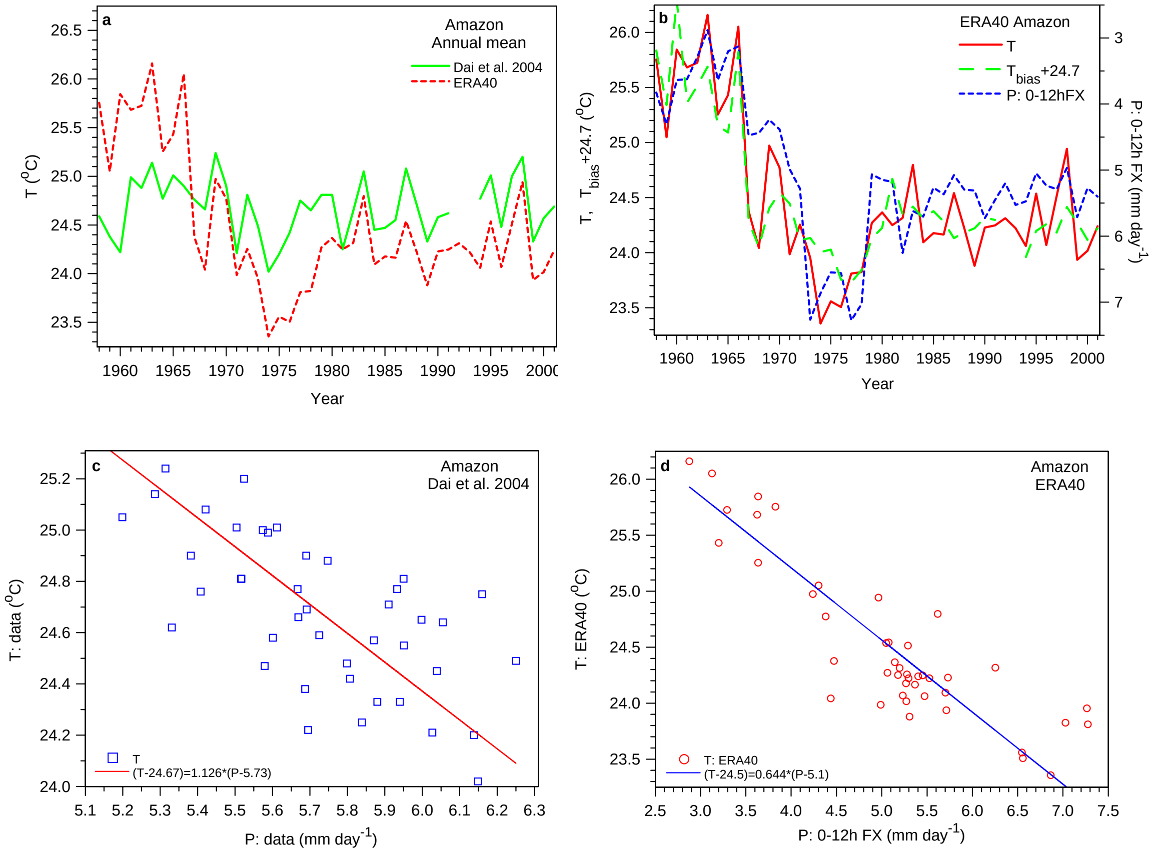


Monthly precipitation and P-bias from observations against TCWV

P against TCWV:
[similar to annual]

Bias against data
ERA40 is
wet in dry season
dry in wet season
[if P-data is correct]

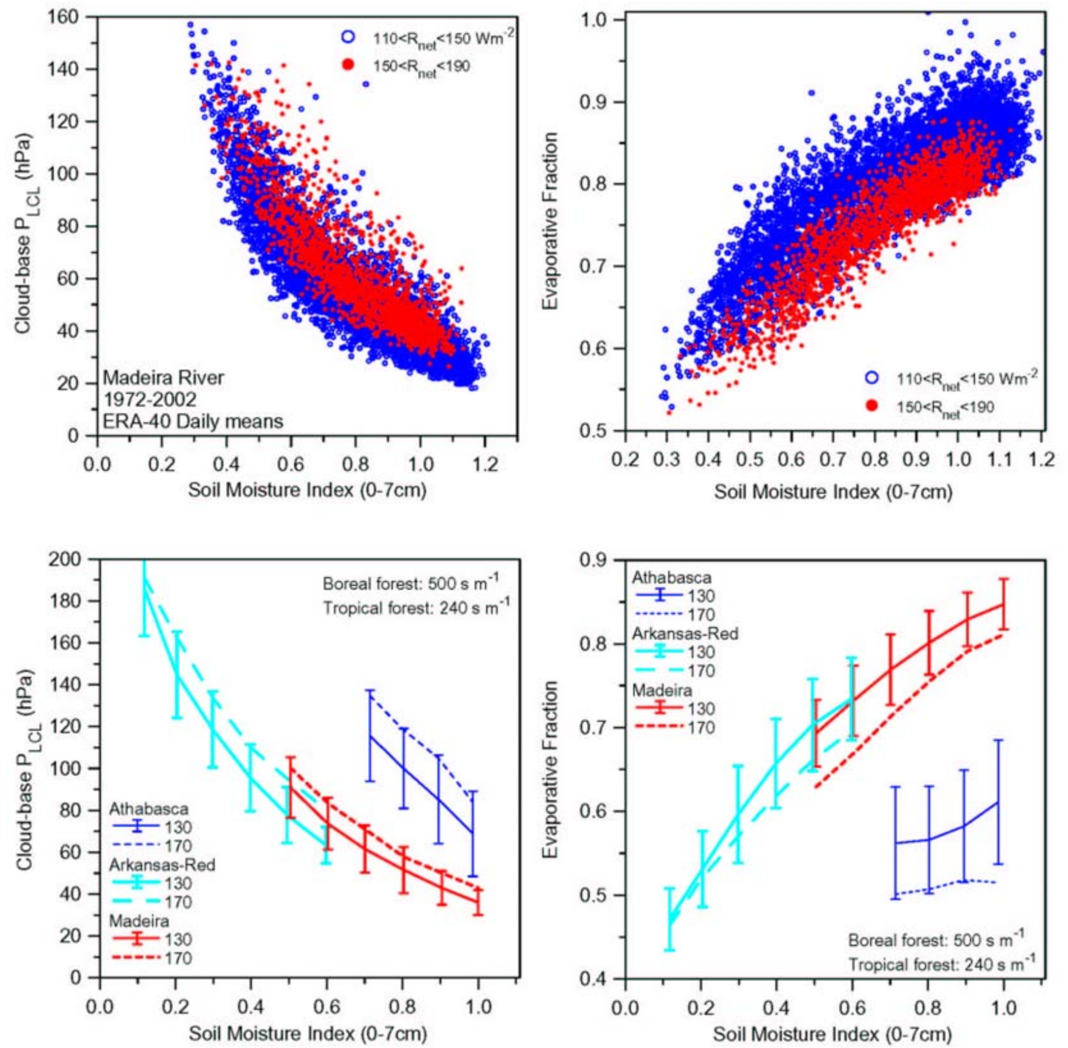




T control by precipitation

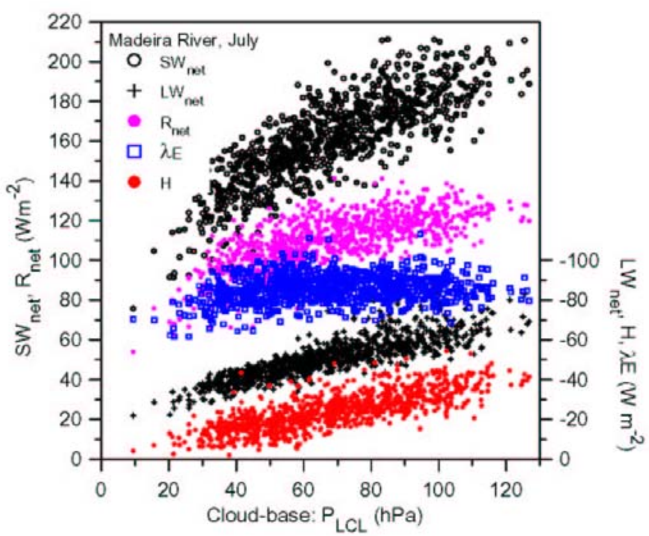
Coupling of soil moisture index, cloud-base height and Evaporative fraction

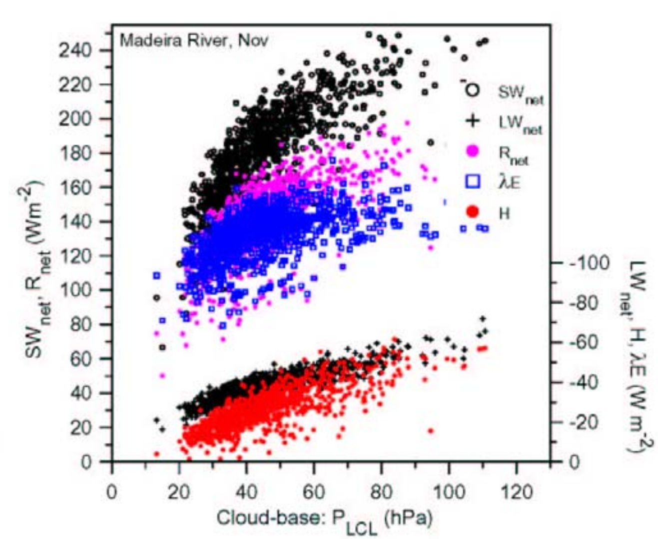
- Mean cloud-base height increases over drier soils and with larger surface R_{net}
- Evaporative fraction increases with soil moisture, and decreases with R_{net}
- 3 basins similar: with additional dependence on unstressed resistance



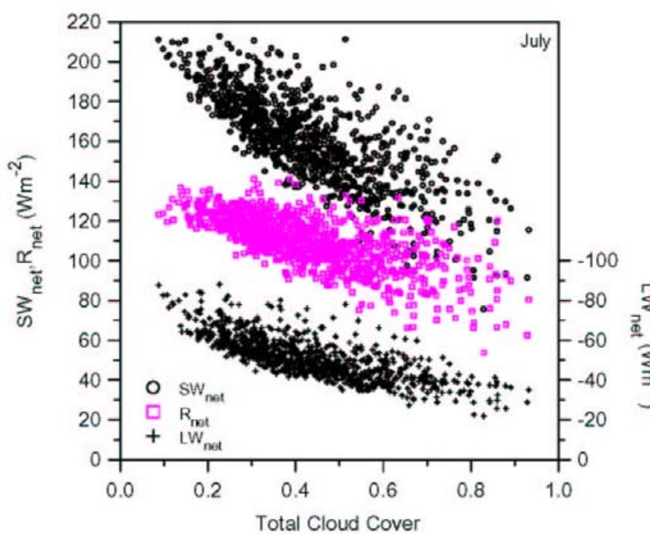
Madeira basin for July and November

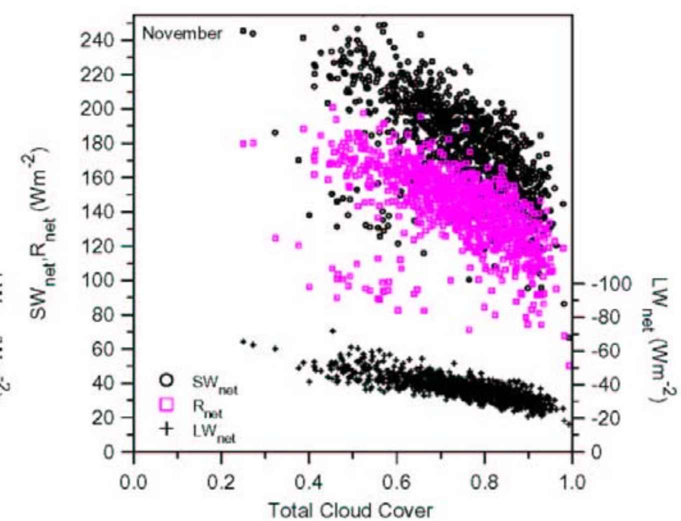
- July: dry season
- Nov: wet season





- Surface fluxes as function of cloud-base and cloud cover

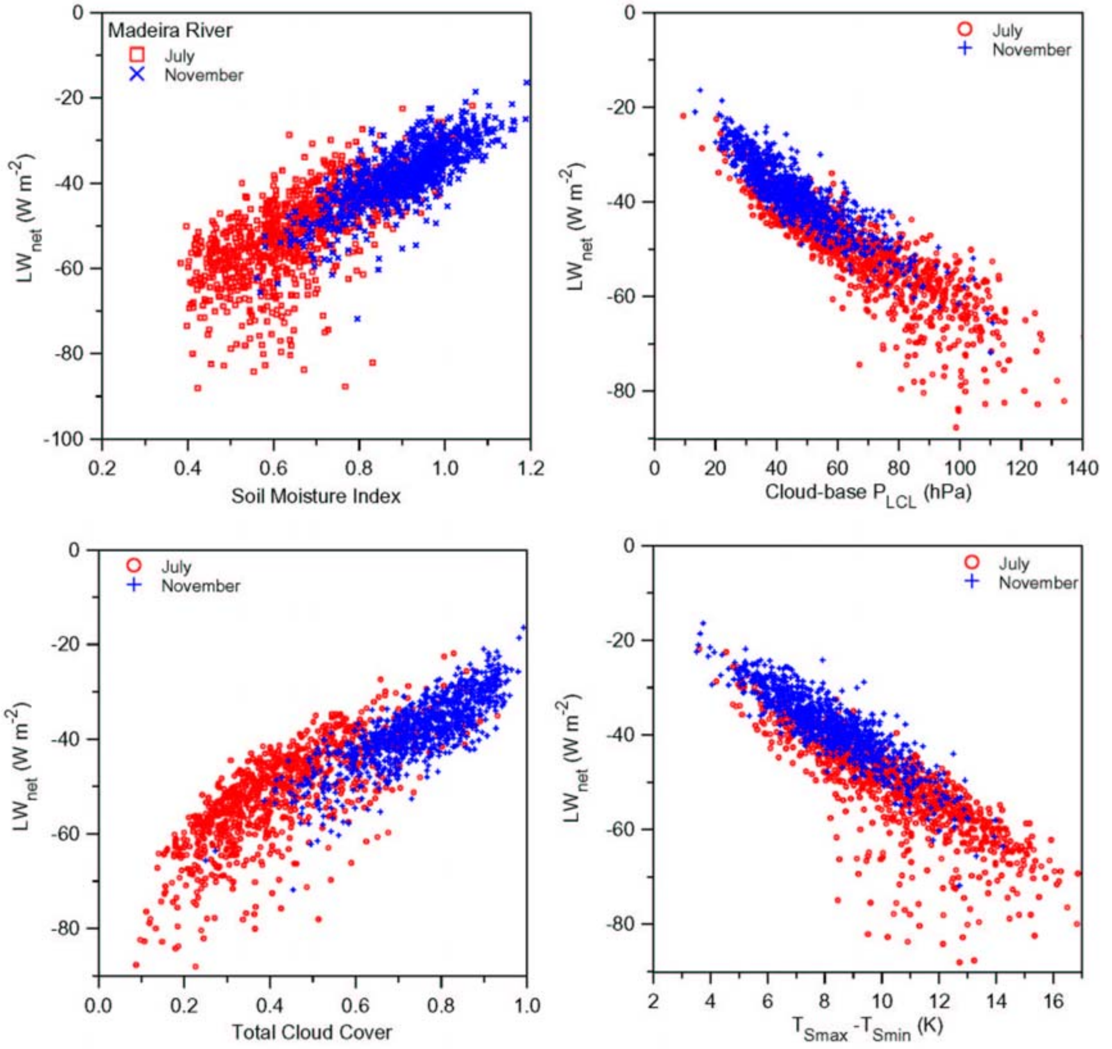




LW_{net} dependencies

- Soil moisture index
- Cloud-base
- Total cloud cover
- Diurnal range: T_s

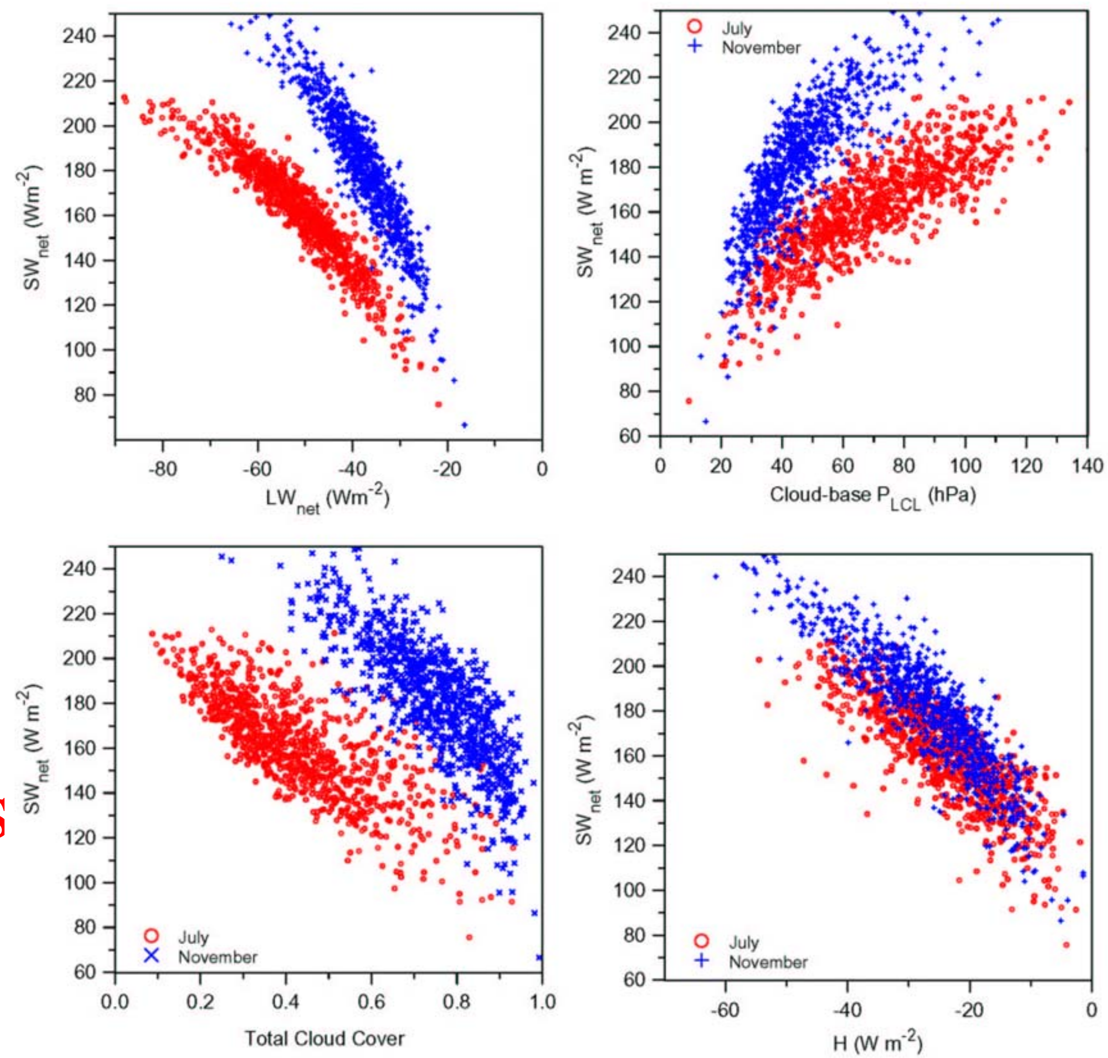
- 2 months merge to single quasi-linear distribution



SW_{net} dependencies

- Tight coupling to LW_{net}
- Cloud-base
- Total cloud cover
- Sensible heat flux H

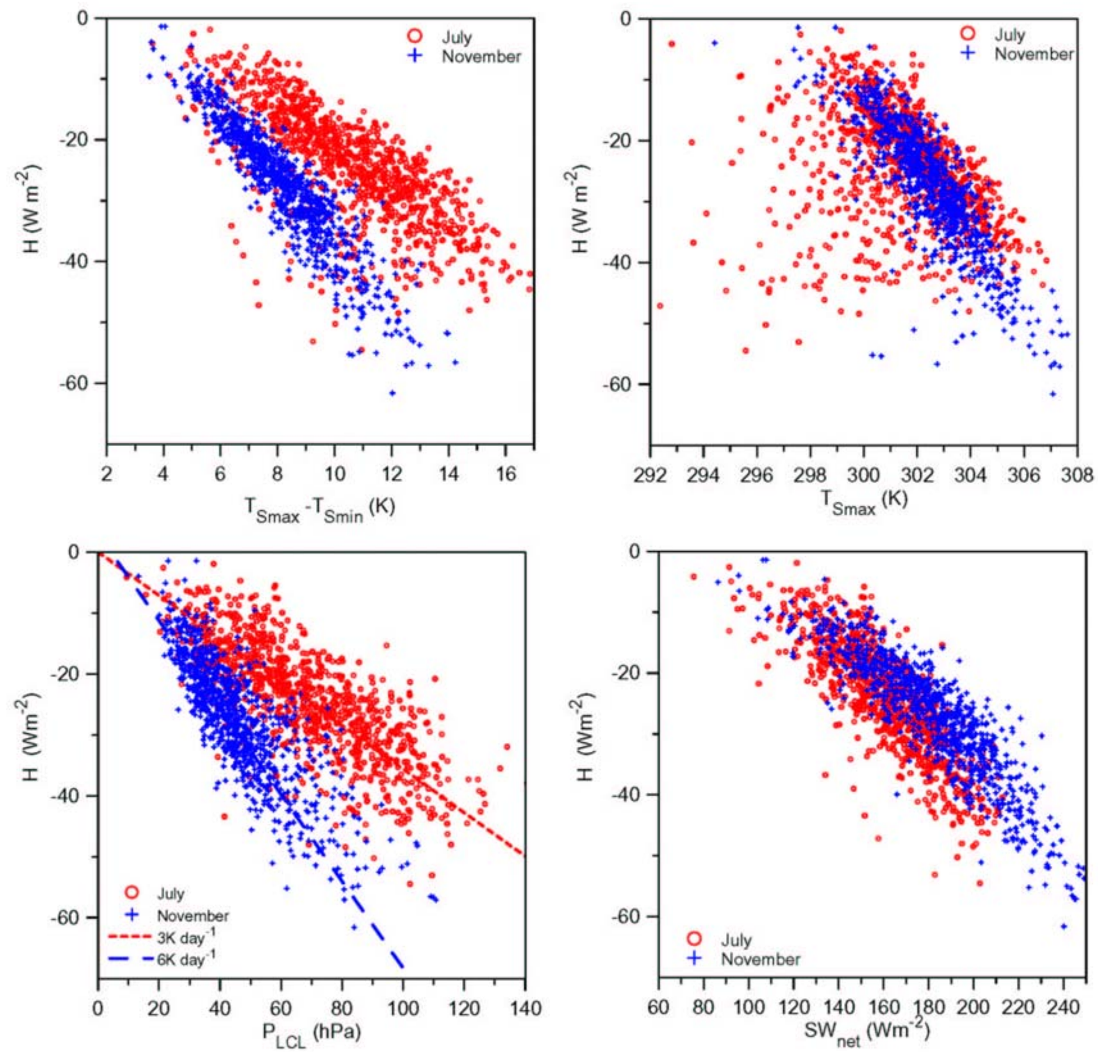
- Distinct distributions except for H



Sensible heat flux H

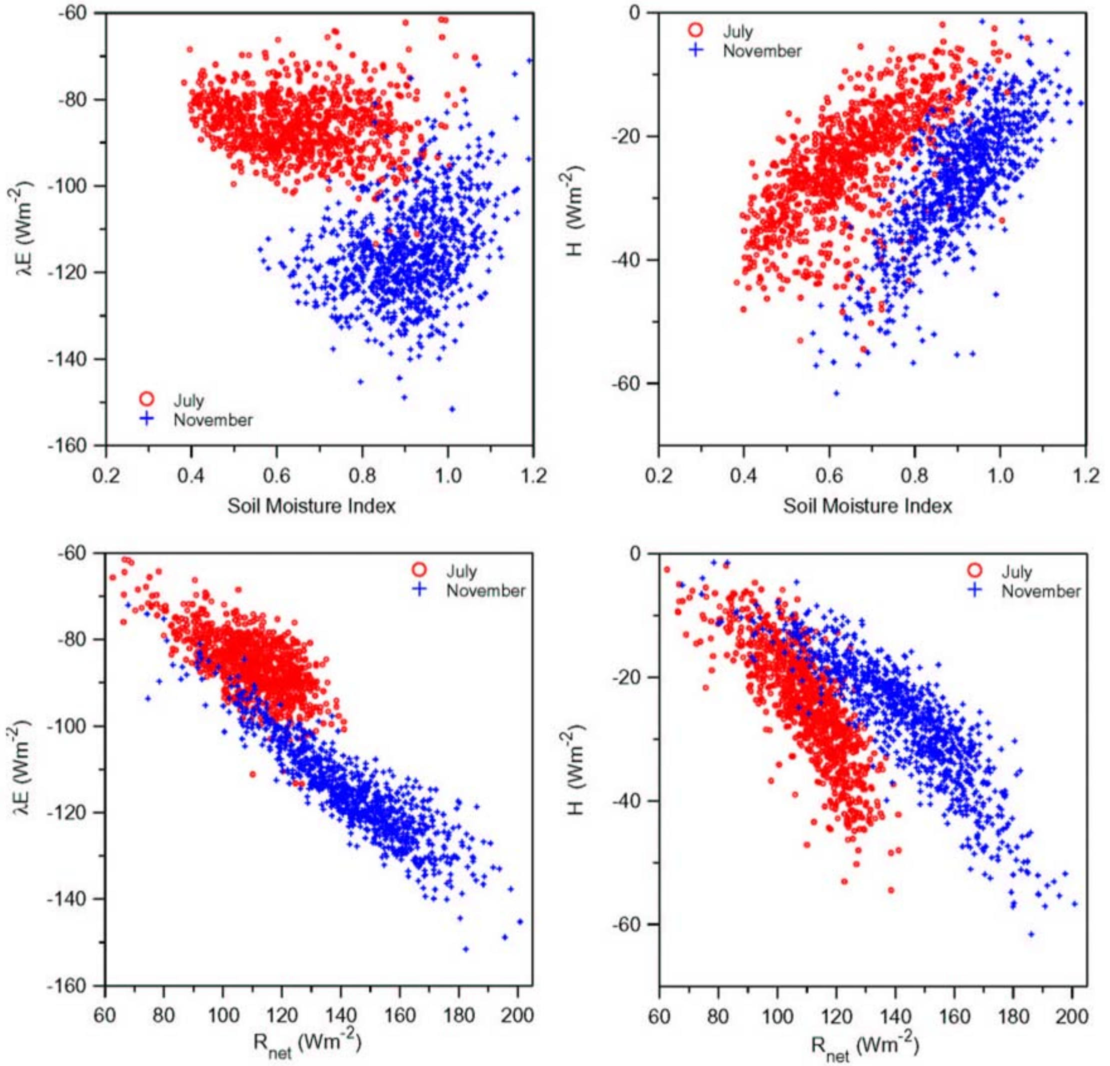
- Diurnal range: T_s
- Maximum T_s
- Cloud-base
- SW_{net}

- Distinct distributions except where coupled to SW_{net}
- Subcloud heating rates
- 3K/day in July
- 6K/day in November

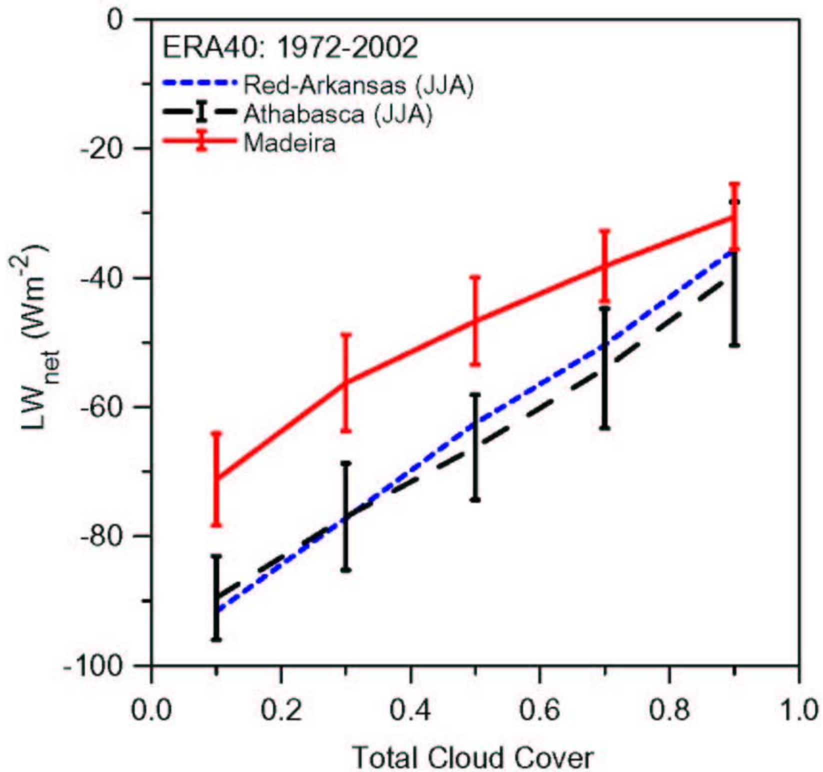


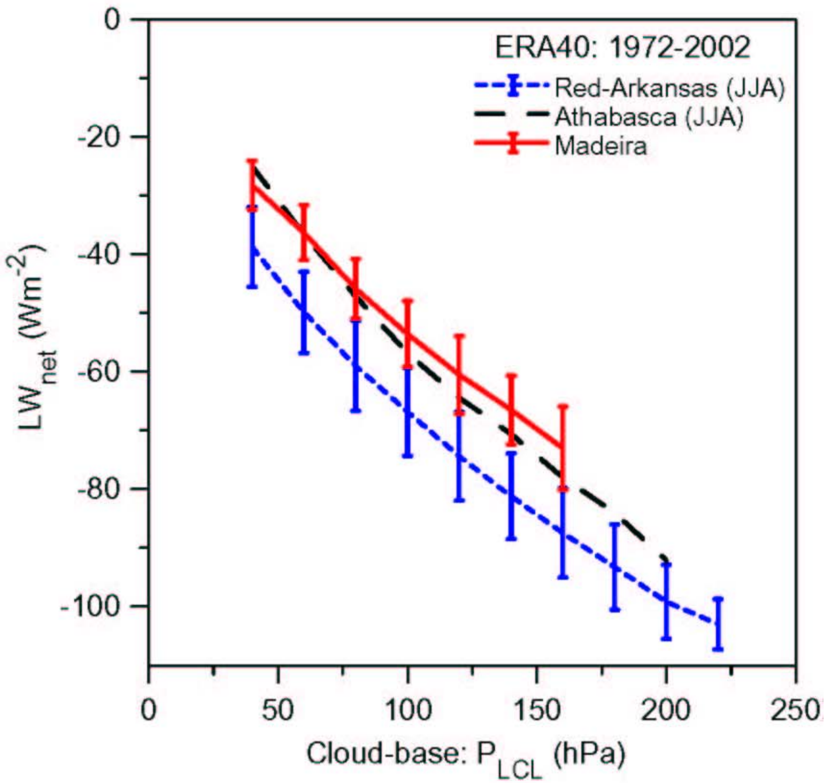
Latent heat flux λE and H

- Coupling of **H** to SMI through P_{LCL} stronger than coupling of **λE**
- λE has more variation with R_{net} in rainy season
- H splits into 2 branches as function of R_{net} [contrast SW_{net}]



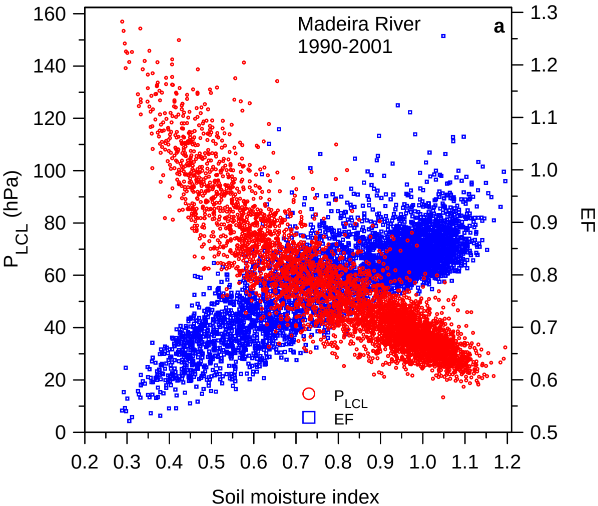
LW coupling for other basins

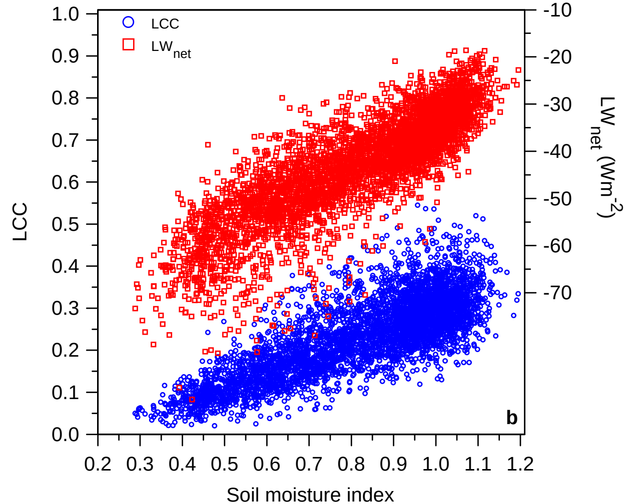




- LW_{net} tightly coupled to cloud cover and cloud-base
- Madeira has 50hPa lower cloud-base
- Red-Arkansas has 0.25 lower cloud cover

Surface-coupled physics



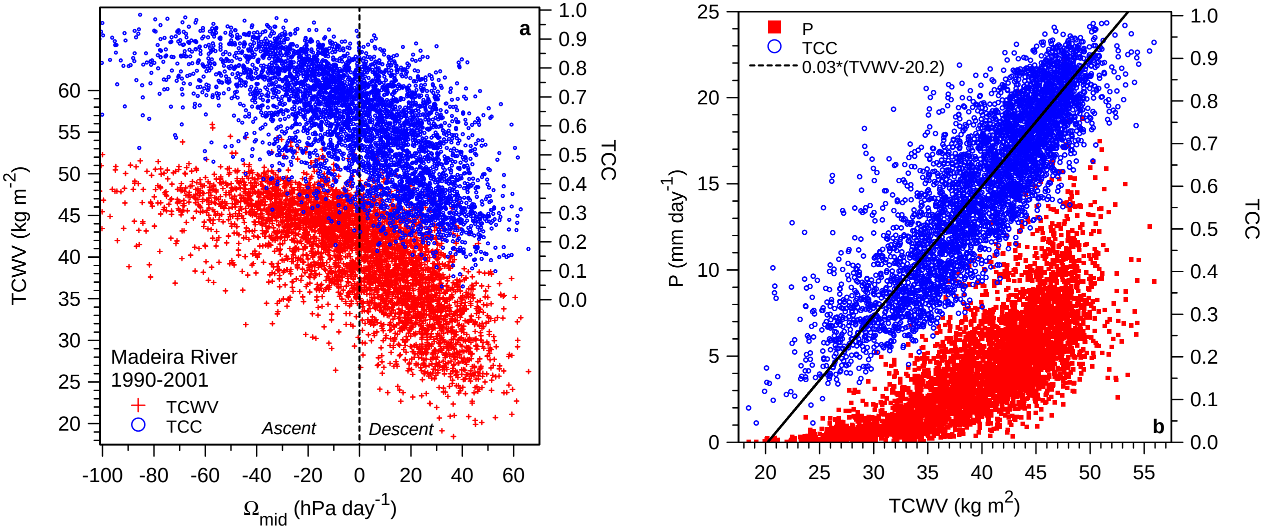


Daily Means (Madeira River)

Soil moisture index against
P_{LCL}: LCL of cloud-base
EF: Evaporative fraction

Soil moisture index against
LCC: Low cloud cover
LW_{net} : surface net longwave

Tropospheric-coupled physics



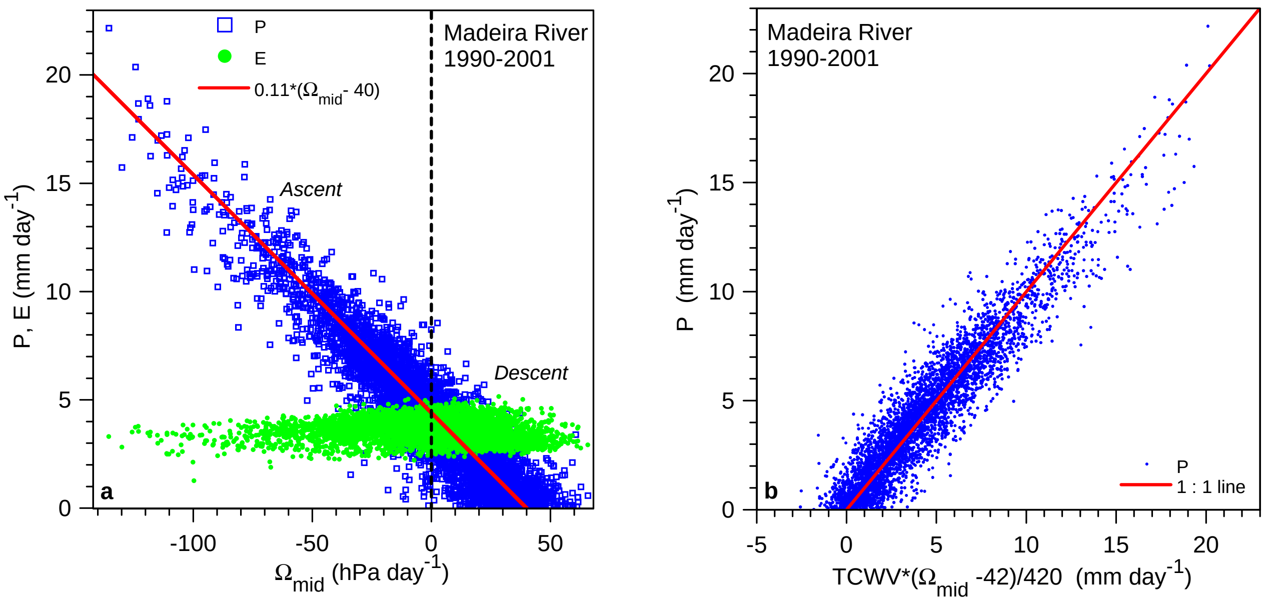
Daily means

Ω_{mid}: mid-tropospheric omega against TCWV and TCC

TCWV against Precipitation and TCC

[Linear regression]

Coupling of ascent with precipitation



Daily means

P and E against

Ω_{mid}: mid-tropospheric omega

Note P⇒0 at Ω_{mid} ~ 40hPa/day

"Moist circulation"
and precipitation

Conclusions-2

- Model data such as reanalyses can be used to understand coupling of processes
- Coupling of surface processes in ERA-40, though complex, is comprehensible.
- Soil moisture, cloud-base, cloud cover, the radiation fields and evaporative fraction are coupled quite tightly [sub-seasonally]
- Mid-tropospheric omega, TCWV and TCC coupled
  Mid-tropospheric omega and precipitation closely
  linked on daily time-scale

Conclusions-3

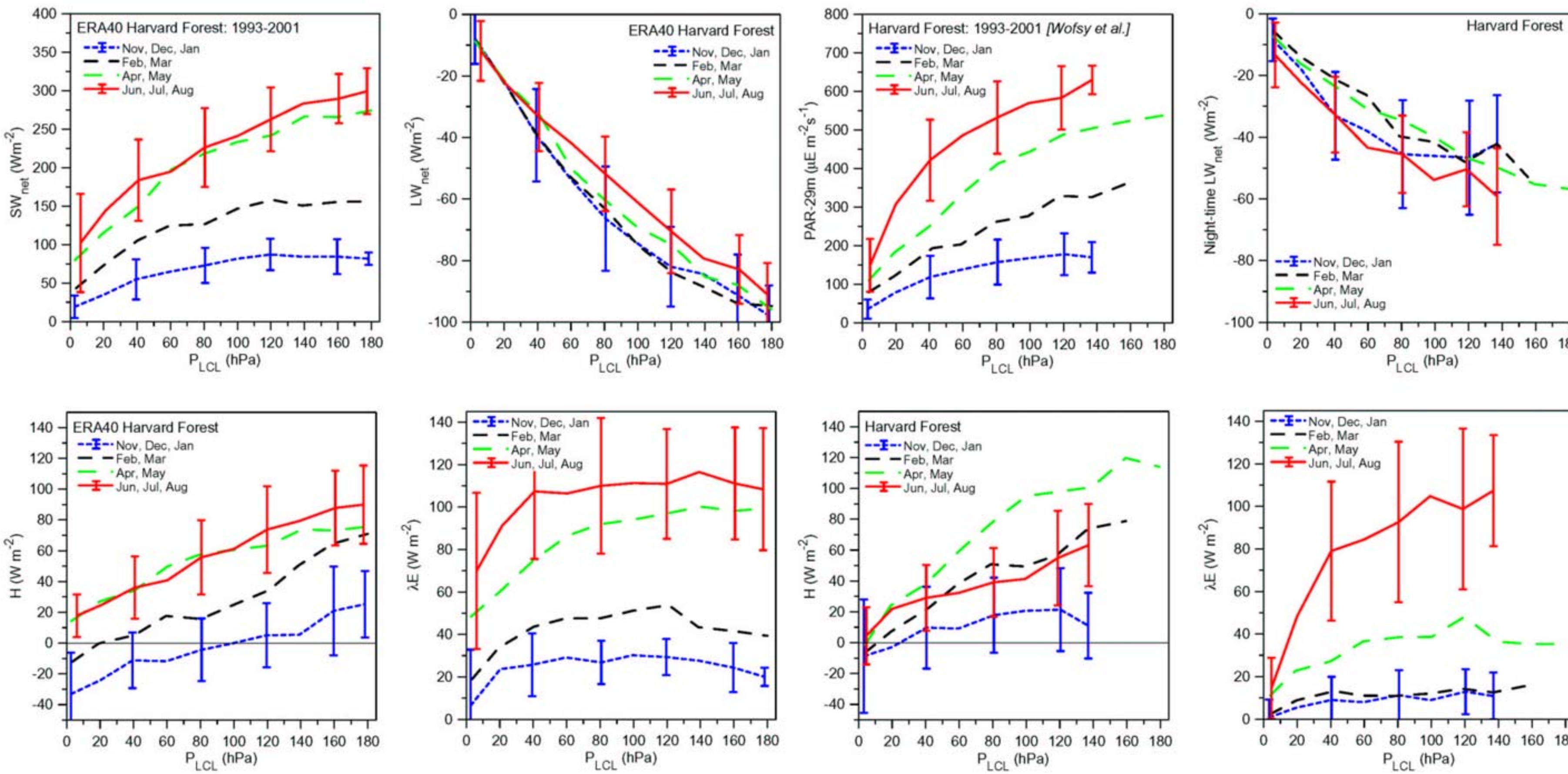
- Evaporation is controlled somewhat indirectly by the controls on net radiation and sensible heat flux
- The long-wave flux control by cloud-base height and cloud cover is particularly tight across all basins
- The sensible heat flux is coupled to cloud-base height, cooling processes in the sub-cloud layer, as well as directly to the shortwave flux [in ERA-40]

Conclusions-4

- Proposing a framework for analyzing model data for land-surface feedbacks
- Proposing analysis framework for comparing global models and climate observations

- *RH, cloud-base and cloud cover need to be measured with the radiation fields as **climate variables***
- *Climate modeling with interchangeable plug-in modules is fraught with peril, as the feedbacks change*

Comparisons with data



ERA-40 ‘point’

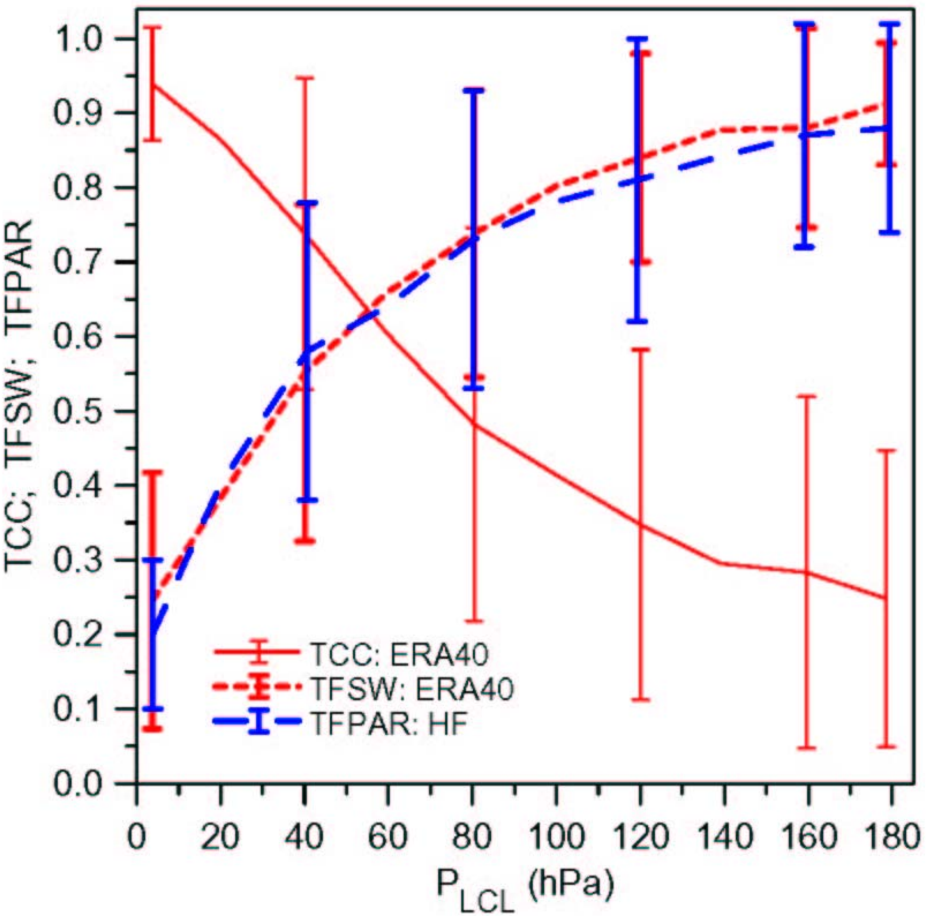
Harvard forest tower

SW-cloud coupling to P_{LCL}

-Total cloud cover: ERA40

-Transmitted fraction SW

-Transmitted fraction PAR



-compare LW coupling