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# Mechanisms of the negative shortwave cloud feedback in mid to high latitudes

Paulo Ceppi\*, Dennis L. Hartmann,

*Department of Atmospheric Sciences, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington*

and Mark J. Webb

*Met Office Hadley Centre, Exeter, UK*

\*Corresponding author address: Paulo Ceppi, Department of Atmospheric Sciences, University of

Washington, Box 351640, Seattle, WA 98195.

E-mail: ceppi@atmos.washington.edu

## ABSTRACT

Increases in cloud optical depth and liquid water path (LWP) are robust features of global warming model simulations in high latitudes, yielding a negative shortwave cloud feedback, but the mechanisms are still uncertain. We assess the importance of microphysical processes for the negative optical depth feedback by perturbing temperature in the microphysics schemes of two aquaplanet models, both of which have separate prognostic equations for liquid water and ice. We find that most of the LWP increase with warming is caused by a suppression of ice microphysical processes in mixed-phase clouds, resulting in reduced conversion efficiencies of liquid water to ice and precipitation. Perturbing the temperature-dependent phase partitioning of convective condensate also yields a small LWP increase. Together, the perturbations in large-scale microphysics and convective condensate partitioning explain more than two-thirds of the LWP response relative to a reference case with increased SSTs, and capture all of the vertical structure of the liquid water response. In support of these findings, we show the existence of a very robust positive relationship between monthly-mean LWP and temperature in CMIP5 models and observations in mixed-phase cloud regions only. In models, the historical LWP sensitivity to temperature is a good predictor of the forced global warming response poleward of about  $45^\circ$ , although models appear to overestimate the LWP response to warming compared to observations. We conclude that in climate models, the suppression of ice-phase microphysical processes that deplete cloud liquid water is a key driver of the LWP increase with warming and of the associated negative shortwave cloud feedback.

## 33 1. Introduction

34 Despite continuing model improvement efforts, the cloud feedback remains the largest source  
35 of uncertainty in climate sensitivity estimates in global warming experiments (Soden et al. 2008;  
36 Boucher et al. 2013; Vial et al. 2013). Uncertainty in the cloud feedback is tied to the difficulty of  
37 representing complex, small-scale cloud processes in global climate models. For this reason, accu-  
38 rately portraying the cloud response to warming constitutes a major challenge in the development  
39 of future generations of climate models.

40 Most of the uncertainty in the cloud feedback is associated with the shortwave (SW) component  
41 (Soden and Vecchi 2011; Vial et al. 2013). Despite the large uncertainty, one of the few robust  
42 aspects of the SW cloud feedback predicted by climate models is a negative feedback occurring  
43 in mid to high latitudes. Unlike the positive subtropical SW cloud feedback predicted by most  
44 models, generally associated with a cloud amount decrease, the negative high-latitude feedback  
45 is mainly related to an optical thickening of the clouds, resulting in brighter and more reflective  
46 clouds (Zelinka et al. 2012; McCoy et al. 2014b; Gordon and Klein 2014).

47 In liquid and mixed-phase clouds, the primary control on cloud optical depth is the vertically-  
48 integrated cloud liquid water content, or liquid water path (LWP), which has been shown to be  
49 linearly related to cloud optical depth in observations (Stephens 1978). The ice water path (IWP)  
50 also contributes to the cloud optical depth, but its effect on shortwave radiation is typically smaller  
51 due to the larger size of ice crystals compared to liquid droplets (e.g., McCoy et al. 2014a) and  
52 because the ice content is typically smaller than the liquid water content. Extratropical LWP in-  
53 creases have been shown to be a robust response to global warming in climate model experiments  
54 (Senior and Mitchell 1993; Colman et al. 2001; Tsushima et al. 2006; Kodama et al. 2014; Gordon  
55 and Klein 2014), and are therefore likely the main driver of the negative optical depth feedback.

56 Understanding the mechanisms of the negative SW cloud feedback in mid to high latitudes there-  
57 fore requires explaining the associated LWP increases.

58 Various mechanisms have been proposed to explain the predicted LWP increase with warming  
59 in mid to high latitudes. On the one hand, it is natural to expect that liquid water should increase  
60 at the expense of ice in mixed-phase clouds as the climate warms (Tsushima et al. 2006; Zelinka  
61 et al. 2012; McCoy et al. 2014b; Gordon and Klein 2014). On the other hand, a LWP increase  
62 could also result from an increase in the temperature derivative of the moist adiabat with warming,  
63 causing enhanced condensation in updrafts (Betts and Harshvardhan 1987; Tselioudis et al. 1992;  
64 Gordon and Klein 2014). To further complicate the picture, changes in the hydrological cycle  
65 (Held and Soden 2006) and in atmospheric circulation (Barnes and Polvani 2013) may also impact  
66 the cloud liquid water content. The possible relevance, and relative importance, of these various  
67 processes is currently not well understood.

68 In this paper, we demonstrate that most of the cloud liquid water increase in mid to high lat-  
69 itudes in global warming experiments results from a decrease in the efficiency of the processes  
70 depleting cloud water. This is due to the suppression of ice-phase microphysical processes with  
71 warming, including not only the conversion of liquid water to ice (e.g. through the Wegener-  
72 Bergeron-Findeisen process), but also the conversion of cloud condensate to precipitation. The  
73 importance of these processes is shown by perturbing temperature in the cloud microphysics  
74 schemes of two state-of-the-art climate models, which are run in aquaplanet configuration. The  
75 temperature-dependent phase partitioning of detrained condensate from convection is also shown  
76 to contribute to the global warming response, although the effect is more modest. Finally, we  
77 show that LWP is very robustly linked to temperature in mixed-phase regions in both models and  
78 observations, providing further support to the conclusions drawn from our aquaplanet model ex-



79 periments. The strong observed relationship between LWP and temperature may provide a basis  
80 to constrain the negative optical depth feedback in climate models.

81 We begin by presenting the changes in SW radiation, LWP, and IWP predicted by CMIP5 models  
82 in the RCP8.5 21st-century scenario in section 2. We then describe the models and the experimen-  
83 tal setup used in this study in section 3, and present our model results in section 4. Evidence for  
84 a temperature–LWP relationship in models and observations is provided in section 5. We discuss  
85 and summarize our findings in section 6.

## 86 **2. Cloud-radiative response to global warming**

### 87 *a. Shortwave cloud feedbacks in CMIP5*

88 The multi-model mean SW cloud feedback in the RCP8.5 experiment is presented in Fig. 1a. In  
89 both hemispheres, the response features a meridional dipole, with a positive SW cloud feedback in  
90 the subtropics and lower midlatitudes ( $\sim 10^\circ$ – $45^\circ$ ), and a negative feedback poleward of about  $50^\circ$ .  
91 The dipolar structure is reasonably robust, since more than 75% of the models agree on the sign of  
92 the feedback on either lobe of the dipole, particularly in the Southern Hemisphere. (Note that the  
93 SW cloud feedback shown in Fig. 1a includes rapid adjustments and aerosol forcing (Sherwood  
94 et al. 2015); accounting for these effects would affect the magnitude of the cloud feedback, but is  
95 unlikely to change the overall meridional structure.)

96 The main focus of this paper will be on the negative SW cloud feedback at mid to high latitudes,  
97 which is associated with large increases in gridbox-mean liquid water path (LWP; Fig. 1b). The  
98 LWP increase poleward of  $\sim 45^\circ$  is a remarkably robust feature of the RCP8.5 simulations. The  
99 mean LWP response is substantial, amounting to an increase by roughly 10% per Kelvin relative  
100 to the historical multi-model mean value around  $60^\circ$ . The gridbox-mean ice water path (IWP)

101 response is smaller, and consists of a poleward shift of cloud ice around the midlatitudes. Because  
102 there is no compensating large decrease in IWP, total cloud water (liquid + ice) also increases in  
103 mid to high latitudes (not shown).

104 As discussed in the introduction, the cloud liquid water increase with warming is thought to  
105 be the main driver of the negative SW cloud feedback in high latitudes, by causing an optical  
106 thickening and brightening of the clouds (Tsushima et al. 2006; Zelinka et al. 2013; Gordon and  
107 Klein 2014; McCoy et al. 2014b). To understand the causes of the negative high-latitude feedback,  
108 it is therefore necessary to explain the mechanisms for the LWP increase.

#### 109 *b. Hypotheses for the negative extratropical cloud feedback*

110 Several hypotheses have been proposed in the literature to explain the negative extratropical  
111 cloud feedback. We list them below and briefly discuss some open questions associated with  
112 them.

113 1. Phase changes in mixed-phase clouds: In mid and high latitudes, clouds are commonly  
114 mixed-phase (Warren et al. 1988) since supercooled liquid water can exist at temperatures  
115 above  $-38^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Upon warming, we expect an increase in liquid water at the expense of ice  
116 in regions where mixed-phase clouds exist (Senior and Mitchell 1993; Tsushima et al. 2006;  
117 Choi et al. 2014). The transition to more liquid clouds may also yield an increase in total  
118 condensed water (liquid + ice), because liquid water droplets precipitate less efficiently than  
119 ice crystals (e.g., Senior and Mitchell 1993; Klein et al. 2009). The magnitude of the phase  
120 change effect in models and observations is still unclear, however, and is likely to depend on  
121 microphysical processes whose representation in climate models is difficult and uncertain.

122 2. Increases in adiabatic cloud water content: As temperature increases, the amount of water  
123 condensed in saturated updrafts also increases, assuming the rising air parcels are cooled  
124 moist-adiabatically (Somerville and Remer 1984; Betts and Harshvardhan 1987; Tselioudis  
125 et al. 1992; Gordon and Klein 2014). It has been suggested that the cloud liquid water in-  
126 creases at mid to high latitudes may reflect an increase in adiabatic cloud water content with  
127 warming, which theory predicts to increase more rapidly at lower temperatures (Betts and  
128 Harshvardhan 1987; Gordon and Klein 2014). However, changes in other processes that  
129 deplete cloud liquid water may also play an important role, such as phase changes to ice,  
130 conversion to precipitation, or mixing of the updrafts with the environment (Tselioudis et al.  
131 1992, 1998).

132 3. Poleward jet shifts: The dynamical response to global warming features a robust poleward  
133 shift of the jet streams and storm tracks, particularly in the Southern Hemisphere (Barnes  
134 and Polvani 2013). Several studies have proposed that storm track shifts may be associated  
135 with shifts in cloudiness, producing a dipole-like radiative anomaly (Bender et al. 2012; Grise  
136 et al. 2013; Boucher et al. 2013). However, more recent work has shown that the relation-  
137 ship between jet shifts and cloud-radiative properties is highly model-dependent (Grise and  
138 Polvani 2014; Ceppi and Hartmann 2015), and the dynamically-induced cloud response is  
139 both different in structure and much smaller in magnitude than the global warming response  
140 (Kay et al. 2014; Ceppi et al. 2014; Ceppi and Hartmann 2015), so that the poleward shift  
141 of the storm tracks is unlikely to be a dominant contribution to the negative optical depth  
142 feedback.

143 The aim of this paper is to test the importance of mechanism (1) for the global warming response  
144 of cloud water and the associated negative SW cloud feedback in climate models. In state-of-the-

art climate models, the conversion rates between cloud liquid water, cloud ice, and precipitating particles are governed by the cloud microphysics scheme, where they are parameterized as functions of variables such as temperature, moisture, and ice nucleating aerosols. The relative amounts of cloud liquid water and ice are also influenced by the detrainment of condensate from convection, since the partitioning of detrained condensate between liquid and ice phases is often a simple function of temperature in climate models. In the next section, we present a methodology to quantify the contribution of cloud microphysics and convective condensate partitioning to the cloud water response to warming.

### 3. Model description and experimental setup

We run two climate models in aquaplanet configuration with prescribed sea surface temperature (SST) lower boundary conditions and perpetual equinox insolation. The models are AM2.1, developed at the Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory (The GFDL Global Atmospheric Model Development Team 2004), and the Community Earth System Model (CESM) version 1.2.1, of which we use the atmospheric component CAM5 (Hurrell et al. 2013; Neale et al. 2012). We choose an aquaplanet configuration because it is the simplest setup in which the mechanisms described in this paper can be studied. The symmetric, seasonally-invariant boundary conditions also mean that meaningful results can be obtained with relatively short simulations. Following the aquaControl and aqua4K experiment protocol in CMIP5, we force our models with the Qobs SST profile (Neale and Hoskins 2001), and simulate the effects of global warming by applying a uniform 4 K SST increase. All experiments are run for a minimum of five years, after spinning up the model for a year, and all results presented in this paper are averages over both hemispheres. The models are run at a horizontal resolution of  $2^\circ$  latitude  $\times 2.5^\circ$  longitude (AM2.1) and  $1.9^\circ \times 2.5^\circ$  (CESM-CAM5), with 24 and 30 vertical levels, respectively.

168 To understand the cloud water response to global warming in our models, we design a set of  
169 experiments to isolate the effect of changes in cloud microphysical rates and in the phase parti-  
170 tioning of convective condensate with warming. As we will show, the main impact comes from  
171 the sensitivity of microphysical process rates to changes in temperature, affecting the size of the  
172 reservoirs of cloud liquid water and ice in mixed-phase regions. Below we describe the relevant  
173 model physics and the experimental design in more detail.

174 *a. Cloud microphysics schemes and partitioning of convective condensate*

175 Both models in this study include a prognostic bulk microphysics scheme with separate vari-  
176 ables for liquid water and ice, but they use different parameterizations. We summarize the main  
177 characteristics of each scheme here, and refer the reader to the cited literature for additional detail.  
178 The cloud microphysics in AM2.1 are single-moment (predicting liquid water and ice mixing ra-  
179 tios only) and are mainly based on Rotstayn (1997) and Rotstayn et al. (2000). The CESM-CAM5  
180 microphysics scheme, described in Morrison and Gettelman (2008) and Gettelman et al. (2010),  
181 predicts two moments of the particle size distribution (mixing ratios and number concentrations)  
182 for liquid water and ice separately. CESM-CAM5’s microphysics are more complex than those of  
183 AM2.1, including a much larger number of processes, particularly in the ice microphysics. Note  
184 that because both cloud microphysics schemes have separate prognostic equations for liquid water  
185 and ice, the fraction of total cloud water that is in the ice phase is not a simple, explicit function of  
186 temperature. Rather, the relative amounts of liquid and ice result from the net effect of competing  
187 source and sink terms for each phase, whose rates depend on local thermodynamic conditions,  
188 aerosol concentrations, and other variables.

189 It is worth emphasizing that the cloud microphysical parameterizations apply only to the strat-  
190 iform (large-scale) cloud schemes. The convection schemes use highly simplified microphysics

191 to calculate cloud condensate mixing ratios and convective precipitation rates. In both models  
192 used in this study, the partitioning of convective condensate into liquid and ice phases is based  
193 on a simple temperature threshold. In AM2.1, detrained convective condensate is assumed to be  
194 entirely liquid at temperatures higher than  $-40^{\circ}\text{C}$ . By contrast, in CESM-CAM5 the fraction of  
195 frozen condensate is a linear function of temperature, varying between 0 at  $-5^{\circ}\text{C}$  and 1 at  $-35^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

196 An important additional difference in the microphysics schemes between AM2.1 and CESM-  
197 CAM5 is in the treatment of snow. In AM2.1, cloud ice and snow are treated as a single species,  
198 whereas in CESM-CAM5 they are distinct. Snow in CESM-CAM5 is radiatively active, however  
199 (Neale et al. 2012), and is much more prevalent than cloud ice in midlatitudes, its vertically-  
200 integrated mass being roughly three times that of cloud ice at  $50^{\circ}$  (not shown). Due to this dif-  
201 ference in the treatment of snow, cloud ice mixing ratios appear to be considerably smaller in  
202 CESM-CAM5 compared to AM2.1. This difference should be kept in mind in the interpretation  
203 of our results, but does not affect the conclusions drawn in the paper.

204 Importantly, AM2.1 and CESM-CAM5 also differ in the role of aerosols for ice nucleation. In  
205 AM2.1, aerosol concentrations are prescribed, aerosol-cloud interactions are not represented, and  
206 ice nucleation is assumed to be homogeneous, occurring below  $-40^{\circ}\text{C}$  only. At temperatures  
207 below freezing, however, much of the newly-formed cloud liquid water is rapidly converted to ice  
208 through the Wegener-Bergeron-Findeisen (WBF) process (Wegener 1911; Bergeron 1935; Find-  
209 eisen 1938), for which a minimum cloud ice mixing ratio is always assumed to exist to trigger  
210 the process. By contrast, CESM-CAM5 has a *prognostic* aerosol scheme, and includes different  
211 types of ice-nucleating aerosols with varying activation temperatures, with heterogeneous nucle-  
212 ation possible below  $-5^{\circ}\text{C}$  (Neale et al. 2012). The aerosol sources in CESM-CAM5 are set  
213 by default to real-world conditions of year 2000, and include zonal and meridional asymmetries  
214 due to land-sea distribution and anthropogenic sources, inconsistent with the aquaplanet config-

uration. These inhomogeneities introduce an asymmetry in the LWP distribution, with Northern Hemisphere values about 25% larger compared to the Southern Hemisphere at 50°; there are no obvious asymmetries in IWP, however (not shown). While real-world aerosol sources are inconsistent with the aquaplanet configuration, they also make our results more comparable with more realistic CMIP5 experiments.

## *b. Experimental setup*

We perform a series of simulations to isolate the effects of changes in temperature on the cloud microphysical rates and on the phase partitioning of convective condensate, and quantify their impact on cloud liquid water and ice mixing ratios. The experiments are listed and described in Table 1, with additional details in Appendix A. Our goal here is to test the hypothesis that the direct effect of warming on microphysical rates can reproduce important aspects of the global warming response of cloud condensate, without directly perturbing other potentially relevant processes such as atmospheric circulation, moisture convergence, radiative heating rates, aerosol concentrations, or the temperature dependence of the moist adiabat. We test this idea by simply increasing temperature by 4 K in the relevant sections of the code<sup>1</sup>. Note that SSTs are kept at their control value in all of these experiments except SST+4K.

The temperature perturbation affects only those microphysical processes that involve the ice phase; the perturbed processes are listed in Tables A1–2 and discussed in Appendix A. Perturbing temperature can affect ice-phase microphysical processes in two ways. First, all processes producing (destroying) ice occur only below (above) a given temperature threshold, so increasing temperature modifies the spatial occurrence of those processes, as isotherms shift in space. Second,

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<sup>1</sup>Increasing temperature by 4 K at all atmospheric levels ignores the increase in static stability that occurs in the case where SSTs are increased, which produces stronger warming at upper levels. However, in mid and high latitudes most of the cloud water is found in the lower troposphere (as shown later in the paper), where the actual temperature increase is very close to 4 K.

in CESM-CAM5 a few ice-forming process rates are explicit functions of temperature. This includes processes such as heterogeneous freezing as well as ice multiplication via rime-splintering (Neale et al. 2012). It should be noted that the perturbed processes involve conversions between liquid water, ice, and precipitation (and subsequent melting/freezing of hydrometeors). Conversions between vapor and cloud condensate are generally not perturbed, with only two exceptions in CESM-CAM5, described in Appendix A.

## 4. Results

We begin by describing the aquaplanet model responses to a 4 K SST increase (the SST+4K experiment in Table 1). The SW cloud radiative effect (CRE) and LWP responses, shown in Fig. 2a–b, look qualitatively similar to the mean RCP8.5 response in CMIP5. The aquaplanet simulations capture the negative cloud feedback in mid to high latitudes, as well as the associated LWP increase. Relative to the control values, the LWP increase at  $50^\circ$  is about  $15\% \text{ K}^{-1}$  in CESM-CAM5 and  $20\% \text{ K}^{-1}$  in AM2.1, well in excess of the expected adiabatic water content increase (see e.g. Gordon and Klein 2014, Fig. 2b).

By contrast, the IWP responses are strikingly different poleward of  $40^\circ$  (Fig. 2c), with AM2.1 featuring an increase and CESM-CAM5 a decrease (this response remains qualitatively similar if snow is included in the CESM-CAM5 IWP). Finally, cloud amount (fractional coverage) tends to decrease in mid–high latitudes (Fig. 2d). Cloud amount changes also explain most of the SWCRE response equatorward of  $40^\circ$ , consistent with the findings of Zelinka et al. (2012) for CMIP3 models. In mid and high latitudes, the cloud amount and IWP responses likely also explain some of the differences in the SWCRE response between the models, particularly the weaker negative SW feedback in CESM-CAM5 compared to AM2.1. Despite these differences, the SWCRE re-



sponse poleward of  $40^\circ$  appears to be dominated by the LWP increase, consistent with the stronger radiative effect of liquid droplets compared to ice crystals, which have a larger effective radius.

While we show the cloud amount response in Fig. 2 for completeness, in the remainder of this paper we will focus on the cloud liquid water and ice responses and their relationship to microphysical processes and the partitioning of convective condensate. Although we only show gridbox-mean (as opposed to in-cloud) cloud condensate changes throughout the paper, we have verified that cloud amount changes cannot explain the cloud water changes shown in this paper; in other words, the LWP and IWP responses mainly result from changes in in-cloud mixing ratios, rather than from cloud amount changes. This is consistent with the occurrence of large LWP increases in midlatitudes despite weak decreases in cloud amount, as shown in Fig. 2.

#### *a. Cloud microphysics and partitioning of convective condensate*

Figure 3 shows the LWP and IWP responses in the PCond, Micro, and Micro+PCond experiments (cf. Table 1), and compares them with the SST+4K response. All results in this and subsequent figures are normalized by the temperature change, assuming a 4 K warming for the Micro and PCond experiments. We begin by discussing the PCond case (red dashed curves in Fig. 3). Increasing temperature by 4 K in the partitioning of convective condensate yields a relatively small LWP increase (Fig. 3a), although the response is about twice as large in CESM-CAM5 compared to AM2.1. The smaller response in AM2.1 can be related to the choice of temperature threshold for the phase partitioning, as explained in section 3a. The very low temperature threshold in AM2.1 means that only a small fraction of the detrained convective condensate can be converted to ice compared to CESM-CAM5, since little cloud water is available at the low threshold temperature in AM2.1; this results in a lower sensitivity to a temperature increase. In addition, the choice of a 30 K temperature ramp for the phase partitioning of convective condensate (as opposed to the

281 step function choice in AM2.1) means that a much wider range of temperatures can experience  
282 the effect of the 4 K warming in CESM-CAM5. However, part of the difference might also result  
283 from smaller convective detrainment rates in AM2.1 (typically by a factor of 2–4 in mid to high  
284 latitudes) compared to CESM-CAM5 (not shown).

285 The IWP response to the PCond perturbation is also modest in both models (Fig. 3b). Somewhat  
286 counterintuitively, IWP mostly *increases* in AM2.1 around the midlatitudes; we believe this is a  
287 result of the increased cloud liquid water mixing ratio, some of which is subsequently converted to  
288 ice through microphysical processes, rather than a direct response to the temperature perturbation.  
289 As will be shown later in this paper, in AM2.1 most of the cloud liquid water in mixed-phase  
290 clouds is converted to ice before precipitating.

291 The microphysical perturbations explain a much larger fraction of the LWP changes in both  
292 models (Fig. 3a, blue dotted curves). Around 50°, Micro produces about two-thirds of the SST+4K  
293 response in AM2.1, and close to half in CESM-CAM5. The LWP responses in Micro also capture  
294 the general latitude dependence of the SST+4K response remarkably well, peaking between 50°  
295 and 60°. In contrast, the IWP responses in Micro do not seem to bear much resemblance to the  
296 SST+4K response. However, we will show later in this section that key aspects of the vertical  
297 structure of the cloud ice response are indeed reproduced by the Micro experiments.

298 Applying the Micro and PCond forcings together (thick grey curves in Fig. 3) yields LWP  
299 changes that are even closer to the SST+4K response, generally explaining more than two-thirds of  
300 the response around the midlatitudes. For both LWP and IWP, the Micro and PCond perturbations  
301 are nearly additive. The resemblance between the Micro+PCond and SST+4K cloud liquid water  
302 responses is even more striking when considering the vertical structure of the cloud water mixing  
303 ratio changes (Fig. 4). In both models, most of the response occurs in a band upward and poleward  
304 of the freezing line (black curves in Fig. 4). The liquid water increase also occurs just upward and

305 poleward of the climatological distribution (grey contours in Fig. 4), resulting in a net increase  
306 and poleward expansion of the climatological LWP. The vertical structure and general temperature  
307 dependence of the cloud liquid water response to warming is very consistent with the results of  
308 Senior and Mitchell (1993), Tsushima et al. (2006), and Choi et al. (2014), all of whom also noted  
309 the coupling between the freezing isotherm and the cloud liquid water response. This coupling  
310 suggests an important control of temperature on microphysical process rates and the cloud liquid  
311 water reservoir, which we will further explore in the next section.

312 The vertical cross-sections of the cloud ice mixing ratio response (Fig. 5) also show that the  
313 Micro+PCond experiment does capture a significant part of the cloud ice response to warming. In  
314 AM2.1, a large cloud ice decrease occurs right above the freezing line, where ice production from  
315 liquid water is suppressed upon warming. However, the SST+4K experiment features an additional  
316 increase in cloud ice at higher altitudes that is mostly absent from Micro+PCond, explaining the  
317 discrepancy between the vertically-integrated responses shown in Fig. 3. In CESM-CAM5, there is  
318 no large ice response near the freezing line, consistent with the climatological cloud ice distribution  
319 being centered further poleward and away from the freezing isotherm compared to AM2.1 (grey  
320 contours in Fig. 5). (If snow and cloud ice are counted together as in AM2.1, however, a large  
321 decrease near the freezing line does appear, consistent with AM2.1.) While the Micro+PCond  
322 experiment does produce a decrease in cloud ice, it underestimates the response compared to  
323 SST+4K; much of this difference appears to result from different changes in cloud amount in the  
324 region of cloud ice decrease, since the in-cloud mixing ratios indicate a more consistent decrease  
325 in both experiments (not shown).

326 Taken together, the results presented in this section show that the cloud liquid water content of  
327 mixed-phase clouds is strongly controlled by the temperature dependence of microphysical pro-  
328 cess rates, and to a lesser degree by the temperature dependence of the partitioning of convective

condensate. This suggests that a large fraction of the global warming response of cloud liquid water can be attributed to the direct effect of warming on cloud microphysics, rather than other processes such as adiabatic increases in moisture content with warming, changes in moisture convergence, or changes in radiative heating rates, at least in the two models considered in this study. While important aspects of the cloud ice response are also explained by the microphysics and convective condensate partitioning perturbations, additional processes would need to be considered to capture the full global warming response of cloud ice in our two models. In the next section, we study the microphysical processes in more detail and explain how their temperature and moisture dependence controls the cloud liquid water content.

#### *b. Microphysical processes*

As discussed in section 3, the cloud microphysics schemes in AM2.1 and CESM-CAM5 are prognostic, so that the schemes calculate conversion rates between water vapor, cloud liquid water, cloud ice, and precipitation, based on physical parameterizations of the relevant processes. Thus, the liquid water and ice contents of clouds are ultimately determined by the relative efficiency of their respective sources and sinks. From this perspective, the response of cloud liquid water and ice to warming can be thought of as resulting from changes in the relative efficiencies of the corresponding source and sink terms.

The microphysical conversions are depicted schematically in Fig. 6, using the rates output directly by the model. The arrows in Fig. 6 point in the direction of the net vertically-integrated conversion rate at  $50^\circ$ , with the arrow thickness proportional to the conversion rate. The mean rates of individual conversion processes are also provided in Tables A1–2. (Note that the fluxes between vapor and condensate are dominated by large-scale condensation from the cloud *macro-physics* scheme, as well as condensate detrainment from convection, rather than by microphysical

processes.) The schematic shows that in both models, there is a net source of cloud liquid water from condensation, and net sinks from conversion of liquid water to ice and precipitation. However, the relative importance of the liquid water sinks differs greatly between the models: while in AM2.1 almost all of the liquid water is converted to ice before precipitating, in CESM-CAM5 most of the liquid water is directly converted to precipitation, with little net conversion to ice. The varying importance of the sources and sinks of cloud liquid water and ice suggest that the microphysical processes responsible for the cloud water response to warming may be different in the two models.

Part of the inter-model differences in Fig. 6 reflect different philosophies in the implementation of certain microphysical processes. For example, growth of ice crystals through the WBF process is treated as a flux from liquid to ice in AM2.1, while in CESM-CAM5 it may be treated as a flux from liquid to ice or vapor to ice, depending on the availability of liquid water in the grid box (see Gettelman et al. 2010). In reality, however, this is a multi-step process involving condensation, reevaporation, and deposition onto ice, but these multiple steps are represented in neither of the schemes. In addition, the conversion of liquid water to snow is treated as a precipitation-forming process in CESM-CAM5; in AM2.1, however, the same phenomenon would be described as a conversion of liquid water to ice, since no distinction is made between ice and snow inside clouds. This likely contributes to the fact that the overall conversion efficiency of liquid water to ice is much smaller in CESM-CAM5 than in AM2.1. In summary, it is important to keep in mind that differences in the fluxes in Fig. 6 partly result from somewhat arbitrary choices in the representation of the microphysics.

To gain additional insight into the mechanisms of the microphysical response to warming, we group the microphysical processes into three categories, and perturb temperature in each of them separately. We consider the WBF process ( $\text{Micro}_{\text{WBF}}$ ), thought to be one of the dominant mech-

376 anisms converting liquid water to ice in climate models (e.g., Storelvmo and Tan 2015); homo-  
 377 geneous and heterogeneous ice nucleation and freezing ( $\text{Micro}_{\text{nuc}+\text{frz}}$ ); and all precipitation pro-  
 378 cesses ( $\text{Microp}$ ). The latter category includes the conversion of cloud condensate to rain or snow,  
 379 as well as the subsequent freezing or melting of precipitating particles. The three experiments are  
 380 described in Table 1, and details of the processes involved in each experiment are provided in Ta-  
 381 bles A1–2. Together, these three experiments include all of the processes in Tables A1–2, except  
 382 for ice melting in CESM-CAM5 (MELTO in Table A2; we have verified this has no impact on the  
 383 results).

384 Figure 7 shows the separate contributions of  $\text{Micro}_{\text{WBF}}$ ,  $\text{Microp}$ , and  $\text{Micro}_{\text{nuc}+\text{frz}}$  to the LWP  
 385 response to warming. In both models,  $\text{Micro}_{\text{WBF}}$  is the largest contribution to the LWP increase,  
 386 explaining about half or more of the total Micro LWP response. This is consistent with the WBF  
 387 process being the dominant conversion mechanism from liquid water to ice (Tables A1–2). Upon  
 388 warming, the conversion efficiency of liquid water to ice is reduced, leading to an increase of the  
 389 liquid water reservoir until the net conversion rate of liquid water to ice is sufficiently large to  
 390 balance the source terms. In both models, the same perturbation leaves the IWP nearly unchanged  
 391 (Fig. 7b), because the increase in cloud liquid water balances the decreased conversion efficiency  
 392 of liquid water to ice.

393 The second largest impact on the LWP response comes from the precipitation processes, al-  
 394 though the impacts are different in the two models (orange dotted curves in Fig. 7). In AM2.1,  
 395  $\text{Microp}$  produces a substantial LWP increase, while also causing all of the IWP decrease seen in the  
 396 Micro experiment. The LWP increase results from riming being suppressed near the freezing line  
 397 upon warming<sup>2</sup>. The IWP decrease results from the fact that in the AM2.1 cloud microphysics,

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<sup>2</sup>For AM2.1, riming is included as a precipitation process in  $\text{Microp}$  since no distinction is made between ice and snow within the cloud. Also, changes in ice melting strongly affect the occurrence of the riming process, since it can only occur in the presence of cloud ice; it is therefore a

all melting cloud ice is assumed to convert to rain rather than cloud liquid water, so ice melting is regarded as a precipitation process here; the temperature increase thus forces the melting of ice in regions near the freezing line.

By contrast, in CESM-CAM5 the impact of precipitation processes on LWP is small (Fig. 7a, right). However, the vertically-integrated cloud water changes are somewhat misleading, since the precipitation processes in  $\text{Micro}_P$  explain most of the vertical structure of the cloud water changes shown in Fig. 4, including the weak decreases near and below the freezing line; the cloud water response in  $\text{Micro}_P$  thus consists of a vertical dipole (not shown). In addition, we have tested in supplementary experiments that the WBF and precipitation processes interact with each other to amplify the LWP response to warming. For instance, an experiment that includes perturbing both WBF and precipitation processes yields a LWP increase similar to the full Micro response (not shown), despite the fact that the sum of the  $\text{Micro}_{\text{WBF}}$  and  $\text{Micro}_P$  is smaller. Furthermore, the processes in  $\text{Micro}_P$  are the dominant contribution to the IWP response in the Micro experiment in CESM-CAM5 (Fig. 7b, right). Thus, the importance of the processes in  $\text{Micro}_P$  should not be underestimated, even if the LWP response appears small in CESM-CAM5.

Finally, the contributions of ice nucleation and freezing to the LWP and IWP responses are negligible in both models (purple dash-dotted curves in Fig. 7). This is consistent with the inefficiency of these processes in the control climate (Tables A1–2). Thus, the main finding of this section is that cloud liquid water increases with warming result mainly from the suppression of ice micro-physical processes that deplete liquid water by converting it to ice or precipitation. The resulting increase in condensed water with warming is consistent with the notion that clouds containing ice precipitate more efficiently (Senior and Mitchell 1993; Tsushima et al. 2006; Gordon and Klein

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sensible choice to combine ice melting and riming in one experiment (Table 1). We regard riming in AM2.1 as the equivalent to accretion of cloud liquid water by snow in CESM-CAM5 (Tables A1–2).

2014; Komurcu et al. 2014). This suggests that an accurate parameterization of ice growth and precipitation processes is crucial for the representation of the climatology and forced response of cloud water content in climate models.

## 5. Temperature–LWP relationship in CMIP5 models and observations

We have shown that the temperature dependence of microphysical process rates and of the phase partitioning of convective condensate explains most of the cloud liquid water increase in mid and high latitudes in two climate models, AM2.1 and CESM-CAM5. In this section, we present evidence supporting this conclusion in other climate models and observations. One key aspect of our results is that temperature alone controls most of the LWP changes in mixed-phase clouds. If this is generally the case in models and observations, then the following two hypotheses can be made:

1. Cloud liquid water and temperature are robustly positively correlated in mid to high latitudes.
2. The cloud liquid water response to unforced (e.g., seasonal) temperature variations is similar to the forced response.

While a dependence of LWP on temperature would also be expected if cloud liquid water increases adiabatically with warming, we will show that a robust temperature–LWP relationship exists only in mid to high latitudes in models and observations, coincident with the mixed-phase regime. Furthermore, the magnitude of this temperature–LWP relationship varies considerably among models, which cannot be ascribed to simple thermodynamic arguments such as the increase in adiabatic cloud water content. These results suggest an important role for microphysical ice-phase processes in the LWP response to warming.



441 We test our two hypotheses by calculating correlation and regression coefficients for monthly-  
442 mean temperature–LWP relationships in models and observations. The data include output from  
443 the historical experiments of 32 CMIP5 models (Table B1), as well as satellite LWP retrievals for  
444 1989–2008 (O’Dell et al. 2008) combined with reanalysis temperature from ERA-Interim (Dee  
445 et al. 2011). Since we do not remove the seasonal cycle from the data, most of the joint LWP  
446 and temperature variability reflects the annual cycle. For simplicity, we use temperature aver-  
447 aged between the 500–850 hPa levels, the layer containing the bulk of the cloud liquid water in  
448 most models (not shown), and average the data zonally before calculating the correlations and  
449 regressions. Because satellite LWP observations are only available over the oceans, we remove  
450 land grid points from the model data to ensure that the results are comparable between models  
451 and observations, but note that the model results are very similar if land areas are included (not  
452 shown).

453 In agreement with hypothesis (1), models and observations feature strong positive correlations  
454 between temperature and LWP in mid- and high-latitude regions in both hemispheres (Fig. 8a).  
455 The correlations are particularly high in the observations, peaking at 0.95 near 50°. The latitude  
456 beyond which the correlations become positive varies considerably among models, and may reflect  
457 differences in the meridional extent of mixed-phase regions. It should also be noted that the  
458 observations feature positive LWP–temperature correlations at lower latitudes than the majority  
459 of the models. Over the Southern Ocean poleward of 60° S, the LWP–temperature correlation  
460 becomes lower in observations than in models; it is unclear whether this reflects a different LWP–  
461 temperature relationship in the observations, or whether it is related to measurement errors, for  
462 example over sea ice regions.

463 Consistent with the positive correlation coefficients, all models (as well as the observations)  
464 produce a LWP increase around the midlatitudes for increasing lower-tropospheric temperature,

although there is substantial inter-model variability in the magnitude and meridional structure of the LWP regression coefficients (Fig. 8b). The strong positive LWP–temperature relationships are consistent with the results of Gordon and Klein (2014), who found positive condensed water path–temperature relationships in models for low clouds with cloud-top temperatures below freezing. Earlier studies based on in-situ observations also found similar relationships in cold clouds (Feigelson 1978; Gultepe and Isaac 1997). We believe that regions of positive regression and correlation coefficients correspond to regions where clouds are predominantly mixed-phase, and where LWP is therefore strongly influenced by temperature-dependent ice-phase microphysical processes.

Comparing models with observations, we note that models are in general agreement with the observed LWP–temperature relationship, especially in the Northern Hemisphere (Fig. 8b). However, many models largely overestimate the LWP increase with warming between 50° and 70° S; this may result from most models overestimating the effective glaciation temperature and underestimating the fraction of supercooled liquid, which is linked to a larger LWP response to warming (McCoy et al. 2015; Cesana et al. 2015). This implies that models may overestimate the contribution of microphysical processes to the LWP increase with warming. Additional research based on remotely-sensed data and in-situ observations will be needed to quantify the efficiency of ice-phase microphysical processes and their contribution to the cloud feedback in the real world. Nevertheless, a key result is that the observed LWP–temperature relationships support the idea of a negative SW cloud feedback in mid to high latitudes, driven by increases in cloud liquid water content. We further discuss this idea below.

The LWP response in RCP8.5 (normalized by the local warming in each model) looks remarkably similar to the regression coefficients (compare panels (b) and (c) in Fig. 8), both in terms of magnitude and meridional structure of the response. The relative order of the models is also

similar, so that models with more positive regression coefficients tend to produce a larger LWP increase with warming, and vice-versa. In relative terms, the multi-model mean LWP increase varies between about  $5\% \text{ K}^{-1}$  at  $50^\circ$  and  $15\% \text{ K}^{-1}$  at  $70^\circ \text{ N/S}$ ; these increases are therefore comparable to or larger than those expected from adiabatic theory (Betts and Harshvardhan 1987; Gordon and Klein 2014).

The good agreement between the LWP regression coefficients and forced responses across models is confirmed by plotting the two quantities against each other, averaged over  $45\text{--}70^\circ \text{ N/S}$  (Fig. 9); the values are well-correlated in both hemispheres (0.59 and 0.64 in the Northern and Southern Hemispheres, respectively). As expected, the two CMIP5 models that share the AM2.1 atmospheric component behave very similarly. Gordon and Klein (2014) found a similar time-scale invariance in the relationship between total cloud water content and temperature in a smaller set of climate models. This result provides hope that it may be possible to constrain the SW cloud feedback in mid to high latitudes using observed LWP–temperature relationships as validation targets for model cloud microphysics schemes. The results in Fig. 8b also suggest that the negative SW cloud feedback predicted by models may be too large, especially over the Southern Ocean. We will explore these ideas in future work.

## 6. Summary and conclusions

A robust feature of global warming model experiments is a negative shortwave cloud feedback in mid to high latitudes, driven by an optical thickening of the clouds associated with liquid water path (LWP) increases. We investigate the processes involved in the LWP response by perturbing temperature in the cloud microphysics schemes of two climate models in aquaplanet configuration, GFDL AM2.1 and CESM-CAM5, both of which have separate prognostic equations for liquid water and ice. We demonstrate that most of the LWP increase is a direct response to warming through

512 a decrease in the efficiency of liquid water sinks, resulting in a larger reservoir of cloud liquid wa-  
513 ter. This occurs because temperature-dependent ice-phase microphysical processes are suppressed  
514 upon warming, reducing the efficiency of precipitation and Wegener-Bergeron-Findeisen (WBF)  
515 conversion to ice, the two main microphysical sinks for liquid water. An additional smaller contri-  
516 bution to the LWP increase comes from the phase partitioning of detrained convective condensate,  
517 which is based on a simple temperature threshold in both models. Taken together, the microphysics  
518 and the partitioning of convective condensate explain about two-thirds of the LWP response to in-  
519 creasing SST in CESM-CAM5, and an even higher fraction in AM2.1.

520 While important aspects of the cloud ice response to warming are also reproduced in our ex-  
521 periments with perturbed microphysics, changes in ice water path (IWP) with increasing SST are  
522 not quantitatively predicted by increasing temperature in the cloud microphysics alone. Our two  
523 models also disagree on the IWP response to SST increase. This result is consistent with the IWP  
524 response being much less robust than the LWP response in RCP8.5 simulations of CMIP5 mod-  
525 els. However, the larger radiative impact of small liquid droplets (compared to relatively large ice  
526 crystals) means that the shortwave cloud feedback is primarily determined by the LWP response.

527 In support of the conclusion drawn from our model experiments, we show that a robust positive  
528 relationship between temperature and LWP exists in both models and observations. This positive  
529 relationship occurs only in mid and high latitudes, where mixed-phase clouds are expected to  
530 occur. Interestingly, the model-specific temperature–LWP relationships from the annual cycle are  
531 reflected in the different LWP responses to global warming, so the temperature dependence of  
532 LWP in mixed-phase regions appears to be largely time-scale invariant. This provides hope that  
533 observed relationships can provide a constraint on future LWP increases and on the associated  
534 shortwave cloud feedback.

535 Although models and observations all agree on LWP increasing with warming in mixed-phase  
536 cloud regions, most models appear to overestimate the LWP sensitivity to temperature compared  
537 with satellite observations. This may be because models overestimate the efficiency of ice-phase  
538 microphysical processes and do not maintain enough supercooled liquid in the historical climate.  
539 Additional work will therefore be necessary to confirm the relevance of cloud microphysics to the  
540 forced LWP response and the associated SW cloud feedback in the real world. The model biases  
541 in the LWP sensitivity to warming could imply an overly negative SW cloud feedback in high  
542 latitudes, with possible important implications for the representation of Arctic warming in models  
543 (Tselioudis et al. 1993).

544 Our results indicate that a fraction of the LWP response cannot be ascribed to a decrease in the  
545 efficiency of cloud liquid water sinks with warming. This is unsurprising, since it is to be expected  
546 that the liquid water *sources* might also respond to warming. Processes likely to also contribute to  
547 the LWP increase include

- 548 1. the increase in the temperature derivative of the moist adiabat, causing the adiabatic cloud  
549 water content to go up in saturated updrafts; and
- 550 2. the general increase in radiative cooling as the atmosphere becomes more emissive with  
551 warming, which must be balanced by enhanced latent heating and precipitation, at least on  
552 global scales.

553 Both of these effects would be expected to yield an enhanced rate of formation of cloud water as  
554 the atmosphere warms. Based on our results, however, changes in the liquid water sink terms exert  
555 a stronger control on the LWP response to warming, at least in our two models. While we noted  
556 that most models appear to overestimate the importance of microphysical processes in the LWP  
557 response to warming, the sensitivity of cloud water content to temperature in AM2.1 and CESM-

558 CAM5 is near or below average compared to other climate models, and close to observations  
559 (Fig. 9).

560 Atmospheric circulation changes could also affect cloud water content. However, a regression  
561 analysis of LWP and IWP on zonal-mean jet latitude indicated that this is unlikely to be a major  
562 effect in our two models (not shown), as the cloud water changes associated with jet variability are  
563 small. This appears consistent with previous work showing the much larger impact of thermody-  
564 namic effects on cloud-radiative properties compared to dynamical effects (Ceppi and Hartmann  
565 2015).

566 Our results suggest two important directions for future research. First, improved global-scale  
567 observations of cloud properties are needed to develop observational constraints on climate model  
568 behavior. For example, large uncertainties in cloud ice observations exist (e.g., Heymsfield et al.  
569 2008), making an accurate estimation of model biases difficult. Second, an improved representa-  
570 tion of ice-phase microphysical processes appears to be crucial to reduce the large model errors in  
571 both the present-day climatology and future response of condensed cloud water (Choi et al. 2014;  
572 Komurcu et al. 2014). In-situ measurements and laboratory experiments will likely be necessary  
573 to constrain the model climatologies and improve current parameterization schemes. Progress on  
574 those issues will ultimately contribute to reducing the uncertainty in the cloud feedback, and will  
575 alleviate pervasive climatological biases associated with midlatitude clouds (Hwang and Frierson  
576 2013; Ceppi et al. 2012).

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## APPENDIX A

### Description of the model experiments

To ensure future reproducibility of our results, we provide additional details on our experiments in this appendix. As described in section 3b, the perturbation consists of applying a uniform 4 K temperature increase at all atmospheric gridpoints in the cloud microphysics schemes of our two models, while the rest of the model physics as well as the dynamics modules experience the “real” temperature. Furthermore, the Wegener-Bergeron-Findeisen (WBF) mechanism (Wegener 1911; Bergeron 1935; Findeisen 1938), which converts cloud liquid water to ice or snow, also depends on the difference between saturation vapor pressure over liquid water ( $e_{sl}$ ) and over ice ( $e_{si}$ ), and this difference is directly related to temperature. For this process only, we perturb  $e_{sl}$  and  $e_{si}$  consistent with a 4 K warming, following the Clausius-Clapeyron relationship. Other temperature-dependent terms in the WBF process rate calculation (Rotstajn et al. 2000, Eqs. 2–5; Morrison and Gettelman 2008, Eq. 21) are also adjusted for a 4 K warming.

Tables A1 and A2 list the microphysical processes that are perturbed. In AM2.1, these processes are found in the `strat_cloud.f90` source file; in CESM-CAM5, the relevant source file is

604 `micro_mg1_0.F90`. All of the perturbed processes involve the ice phase, and can therefore occur  
605 only within specific temperature ranges. The overall effect of increasing temperature is therefore  
606 to suppress ice-forming processes (and allow ice-depleting processes) within certain temperature  
607 ranges.

608 Note that we generally do not perturb processes involving the vapor phase, except for two excep-  
609 tions described below. The rationale for this choice is that we wish to demonstrate the importance  
610 of the ice-phase processes that deplete cloud liquid water for the LWP response in mixed-phase  
611 regions, excluding contributions from changes in the sources of cloud condensate from vapor. The  
612 only exceptions to this rule are ice nucleation as well as WBF, both in CESM-CAM5 only. In the  
613 CESM-CAM5 implementation, the WBF process can form cloud ice at the expense of either liquid  
614 water or vapor, depending on the availability of cloud liquid water in the grid box (Gettelman et al.  
615 2010). Ice nucleation is included as a microphysical process in CESM-CAM5, and depends on  
616 both temperature and the presence of activated ice nuclei (Gettelman et al. 2010). In AM2.1, ho-  
617 mogeneous ice nucleation is implicitly treated in the large-scale condensation/deposition scheme  
618 rather than in the microphysics, and is therefore not included in our experiments; heterogeneous  
619 nucleation is not represented. We have verified that perturbing homogeneous nucleation has a  
620 negligible effect on the cloud liquid water and ice response to warming in AM2.1 (not shown).

621 For most of the microphysical processes, the temperature perturbation only affects the temper-  
622 ature threshold that controls the occurrence of the process. For example, the 4 K temperature in-  
623 crease suppresses the WBF process in regions where the “real” temperature is between 0 and  $-4$  K.  
624 In addition to the temperature thresholds that control the occurrence of ice-phase processes, how-  
625 ever, a few of the process rates are also explicit functions of temperature. In CESM-CAM5 (Table  
626 A2), these are all types of heterogeneous freezing (MNUCCCO, MNUCCTO, MNUCCRO). In  
627 AM2.1, the WBF process rate is also linearly dependent on temperature; however, this linear



function is an approximation to the dependence of saturation vapor pressure terms on temperature, as described above, so that perturbing temperature is equivalent to perturbing vapor pressures in the WBF process in CESM-CAM5.

In addition to the processes listed in Tables A1–2, the microphysics schemes include a temperature-dependent removal of excess supersaturation (also called adjustment in the AM2.1 code). Supersaturation may occur at the end of the microphysics scheme due to nonlinearity and numerical errors in calculating water vapor tendencies. Forced condensation/deposition is therefore applied to remove the excess water vapor, and the partitioning of the resulting condensate between liquid water and ice is the same as that used for the partitioning of detrained convective condensate in each of the models (see section 3a). While the temperature partitioning of the removal of excess supersaturation is not perturbed in our experiments, we have verified that the results are not sensitive to the inclusion of this process (not shown).

## APPENDIX B

### List of CMIP5 models and variables used in the paper

Table B1 lists the models and fields used in our analysis and shown in Figs. 1 and 8 of the paper. For all models, we use monthly-mean values and the first ensemble member only ('r1i1p1').

For reference, below we also describe the CMIP5 variables used in the analysis. For liquid and ice water paths, we use the variables *clwvi* (total condensed water path) and *clivi* (IWP), with LWP calculated as the difference between *clwvi* and *clivi*. Note that for several models, *clwvi* erroneously reports only LWP, instead of the sum of LWP and IWP, as described in the CMIP5 errata available under <http://cmip-pcmdi.llnl.gov/cmip5/errata/cmip5errata.html>. For those models, this results in negative LWP values when calculated as *clwvi* minus *clivi*. We identify those models based on the absolute minimum value of *clwvi* minus *clivi*, using a threshold of

651  $-1 \text{ g m}^{-2}$  for any gridpoint and month. (We use  $-1$  rather than  $0 \text{ g m}^{-2}$  because several mod-  
652 els have weakly negative minimum values for both LWP and IWP.) The models for which *clwvi*  
653 erroneously represents LWP based on our criterion are marked with an asterisk in Table B1.

654 The SW radiation fields mentioned in Table B1 include all variables required for the approximate  
655 partial radiative perturbation (APRP) calculation presented in Fig. 1a: these include *rsdt*, *rsut*,  
656 *rsutcs*, *rsds*, *rsdscs*, *rsus*, *rsuscs*, and *clt*. Finally, for surface and 850 hPa temperature we use *ts*  
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845 **LIST OF TABLES**

846 **Table 1.** List of experiments described in this paper. The following symbols are used:  
 847 PCond for the partitioning of convective condensate, Micro for microphysics,  
 848 P for precipitation, WBF for Wegener-Bergeron-Findeisen. . . . . 40

849 **Table A1.** Perturbed cloud microphysical processes in AM2.1. Processes are grouped  
 850 based on the species they involve, and sorted by decreasing importance in terms  
 851 of the mean, vertically-integrated rate at 50° in the control experiment (column  
 852 5); missing rates are denoted by a dash. The variable name refers to the name  
 853 of the output field. We omit all processes involving the vapor phase, which  
 854 are not perturbed in our experiments. See text in Appendix A1 for details.  
 855 A detailed description of the AM2.1 cloud microphysics is available under  
 856 [http://data1.gfdl.noaa.gov/~arl/pubrel/m/am2/src/atmos\\_param/strat\\_cloud/strat\\_cloud.tech.ps](http://data1.gfdl.noaa.gov/~arl/pubrel/m/am2/src/atmos_param/strat_cloud/strat_cloud.tech.ps).  
 857 41

858 **Table A2.** Perturbed cloud microphysical processes in CESM-CAM5. Symbols and def-  
 859 initions are as in Table A1. When available, the variable name refers to the  
 860 output field (uppercase), or the internally-stored variable in the code (lower-  
 861 case). Missing values are denoted by a dash. For details on the CESM-CAM5  
 862 cloud microphysics, see Morrison and Gettelman (2008) and Gettelman et al.  
 863 (2010). . . . . 42

864 **Table B1.** List of CMIP5 models used in Figs. 1 and 8. The historical and RCP8.5 periods  
 865 are 1980–1999 and 2080–2099, respectively. A cross (×) indicates that the  
 866 data were available at the time of writing. Models marked with an asterisk (\*)  
 867 reported condensed water path variables erroneously, as described in Appendix  
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 869 the third column are used in Fig. 1. . . . . 43

870 TABLE 1. List of experiments described in this paper. The following symbols are used: PCond for the  
871 partitioning of convective condensate, Micro for microphysics, P for precipitation, WBF for Wegener-Bergeron-  
872 Findeisen.

Experiment	Description	Processes involved (Tables A1–2)	
		AM2.1	CESM-CAM5
Micro <sub>WBF</sub>	perturb WBF process	WBF	WBF (liquid → ice and liquid → snow)
Micro <sub>p</sub>	perturb temperature-dependent microphysical processes involving precipitation	melting (ice → rain, snow → rain), riming	all processes in ice → snow, rain → snow, snow → rain, snow → snow, as well as accretion of liquid droplets by snow (PSACWSO)
Micro <sub>nucl+frz</sub>	perturb homogeneous & heterogeneous ice nucleation and homogeneous & heterogeneous freezing	homogeneous freezing	homogeneous nucleation, heterogeneous nucleation, homogeneous freezing, heterogeneous freezing (immersion & contact)
Micro	perturb all temperature-dependent microphysical processes	all processes in Tables A1–2	
PCond	perturb temperature threshold for partitioning of detrained convective condensate	detrainment of convective condensate to the grid-scale environment	
Micro+PCond	Micro and PCond perturbations together	all processes in Micro and PCond	
SST+4K	uniform 4 K SST increase	-	

873 Table A1. Perturbed cloud microphysical processes in AM2.1. Processes are grouped based on the species  
 874 they involve, and sorted by decreasing importance in terms of the mean, vertically-integrated rate at 50° in the  
 875 control experiment (column 5); missing rates are denoted by a dash. The variable name refers to the name of  
 876 the output field. We omit all processes involving the vapor phase, which are not perturbed in our experiments.  
 877 See text in Appendix A1 for details. A detailed description of the AM2.1 cloud microphysics is available under  
 878 [http://data1.gfdl.noaa.gov/~arl/pubrel/m/am2/src/atmos\\_param/strat\\_cloud/strat\\_cloud.tech.ps](http://data1.gfdl.noaa.gov/~arl/pubrel/m/am2/src/atmos_param/strat_cloud/strat_cloud.tech.ps).

879	Type	880	Process name	881	Variable name	882	Temperature range (°C)	883	Mean vertically-integrated
								884	rate at 50° (kg m <sup>-2</sup> d <sup>-1</sup> )
885	liquid → ice	886	WBF	887	qldt_berg	888	$T < 0$	889	1.30
910	890	891	riming	892	qldt_rime	893	$T < 0$	894	0.89
895		896	homogeneous freezing	897	qldt_freez	898	$T < -40$	899	0.00
900	ice → rain	901	ice melting	902	qldt_melt	903	$T > 0$	904	0.17
905	snow → rain	906	snow melting	907	snow_melt	908	$T > 0$	909	-

Table A2. Perturbed cloud microphysical processes in CESM-CAM5. Symbols and definitions are as in Table A1. When available, the variable name refers to the output field (uppercase), or the internally-stored variable in the code (lowercase). Missing values are denoted by a dash. For details on the CESM-CAM5 cloud microphysics, see Morrison and Gettelman (2008) and Gettelman et al. (2010).

Type	Process name	Variable name	Temperature range (°C)	Mean vertically-integrated rate at 50° (kg m <sup>-2</sup> d <sup>-1</sup> )
vapor → ice	homogeneous + heterogeneous ice nucleation	MNUCCDO	$T < -5$	0.00
liquid → ice	WBF	BERGO	$T < 0$	0.31
	immersion freezing	MNUCCCO	$T < -4$	0.00
	contact freezing	MNUCCTO	$T < -3$	0.00
	homogeneous freezing	HOMOO	$T < -40$	0.00
	rime-splintering	MSACWIO	$-8 < T < -3$	0.00
ice → liquid	melting	MELTO	$T > 0$	0.00
liquid → snow	WBF on snow	BERGSO	$T < 0$	0.26
	accretion by snow	PSACWSO	$T < 0$	0.25
ice → snow	autoconversion	PRCIO	$T < 0$	1.36
	accretion by snow	PRAIO	$T < 0$	0.05
rain → snow	accretion by snow	PRACSO	$T < 0$	0.68
	heterogeneous freezing of rain	MNUCCRO	$T < -4$	0.28
	homogeneous freezing of rain	-	$T < -5$	-
snow → rain	snow melting	-	$T > +2$	-
snow → snow	snow self-aggregation	nsagg	$T < 0$	-

1005 Table B1. List of CMIP5 models used in Figs. 1 and 8. The historical and RCP8.5 periods are 1980–1999  
1006 and 2080–2099, respectively. A cross (×) indicates that the data were available at the time of writing. Models  
1007 marked with an asterisk (\*) reported condensed water path variables erroneously, as described in Appendix B.  
1008 The models included in the second column are used in Fig. 8, while those in the third column are used in Fig. 1.

	Model name	LWP, IWP, and temperature	SW radiation fields
1	ACCESS1.0	×	×
2	ACCESS1.3	×	×
3	BCC-CSM1.1	×	×
4	BCC-CSM1.1(m)	×	×
5	CanESM2	×	×
6	*CCSM4	×	×
7	*CESM1-BGC	×	×
8	*CESM1-CAM5	×	×
9	*CMCC-CESM	×	
10	*CMCC-CM	×	
11	CNRM-CM5	×	×
12	CSIRO-Mk3.6.0	×	×
13	FGOALS-g2	×	
14	FIO-ESM	×	×
15	GFDL-CM3	×	×
16	GFDL-ESM2G	×	×
17	GFDL-ESM2M	×	×
18	GISS-E2-H	×	×
19	GISS-E2-R	×	×
20	HadGEM2-CC	×	×
21	INMCM4	×	×
22	*IPSL-CM5A-LR	×	×
23	*IPSL-CM5A-MR	×	×
24	*IPSL-CM5B-LR	×	×
25	MIROC5	×	×
26	*MIROC-ESM	×	×
27	*MIROC-ESM-CHEM	×	×
28	*MPI-ESM-LR	×	×
29	*MPI-ESM-MR	×	×
30	MRI-CGCM3	×	×
31	NorESM1-M	×	×
32	NorESM1-ME	×	×

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1054 Northern and Southern Hemisphere values are shown in red and blue, respectively. The re-  
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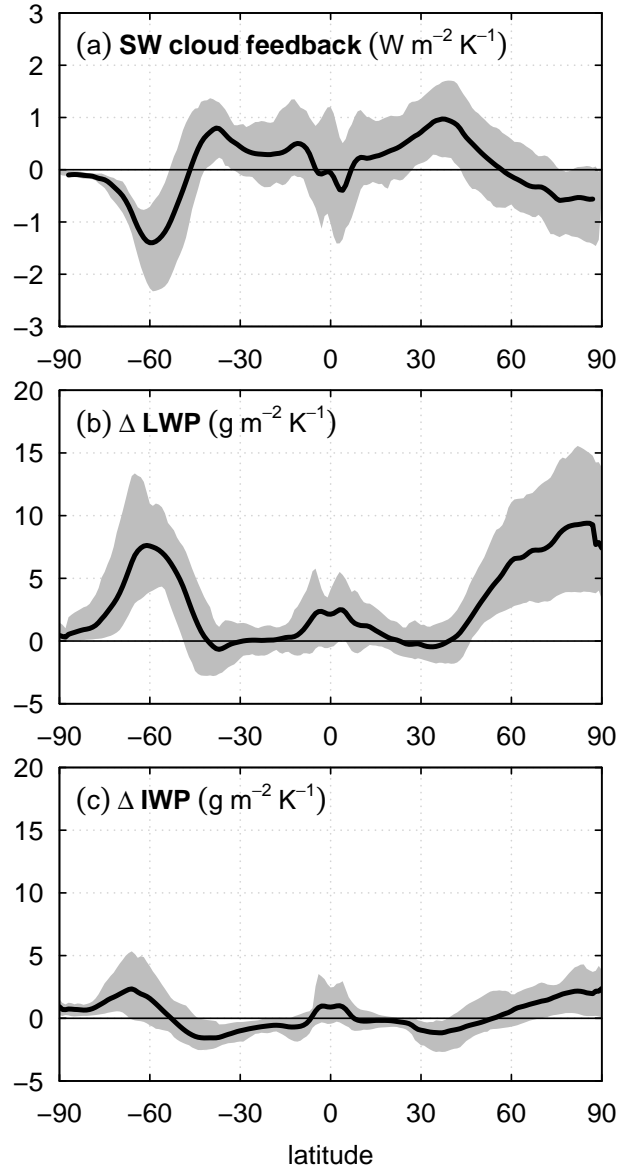


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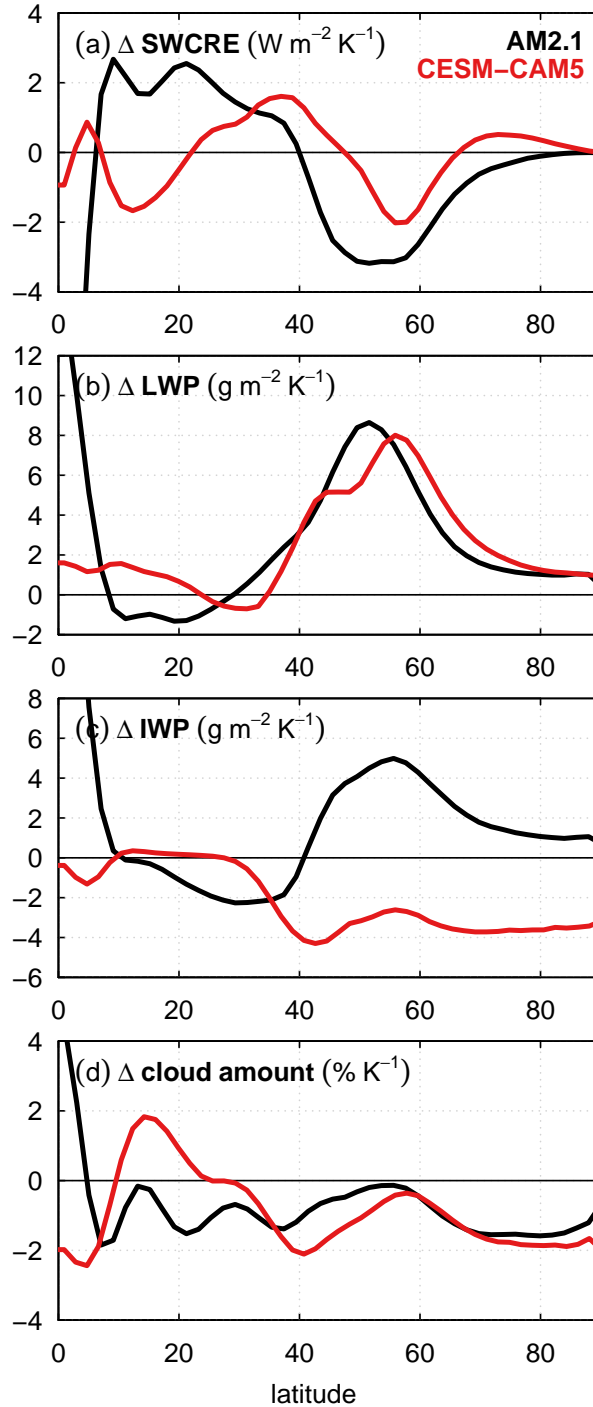


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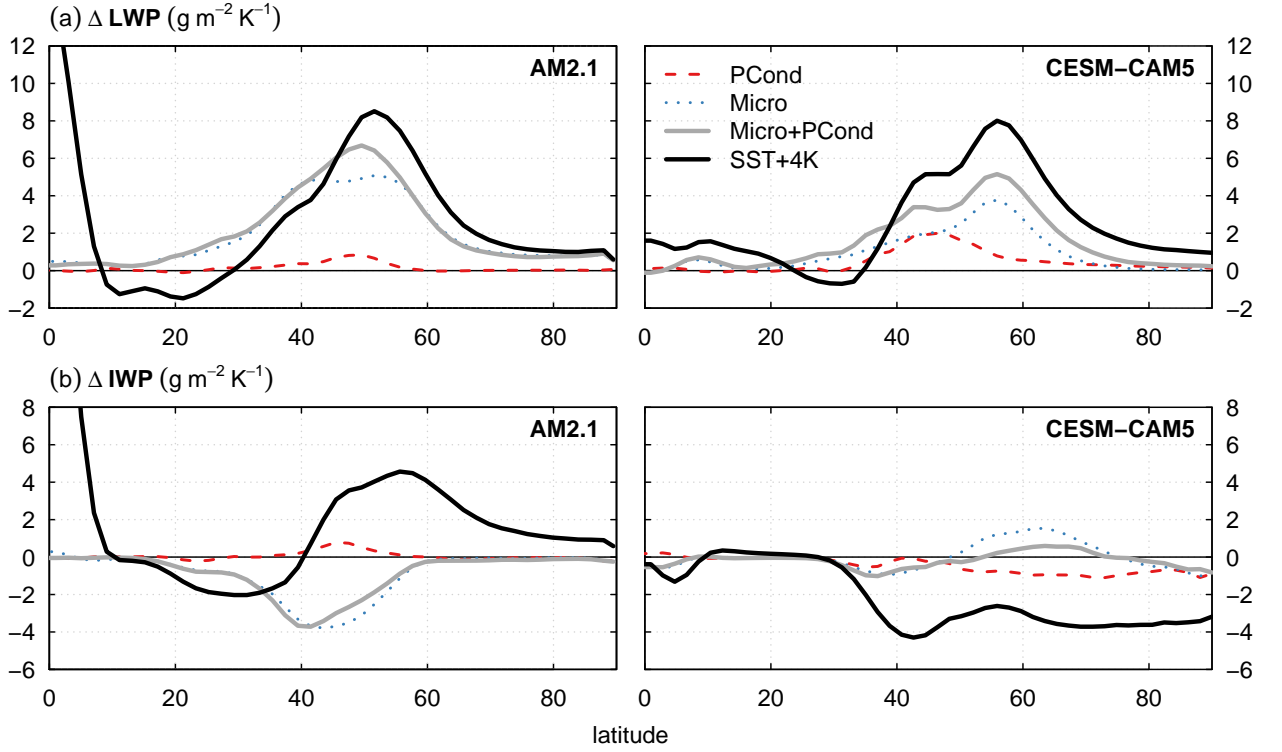


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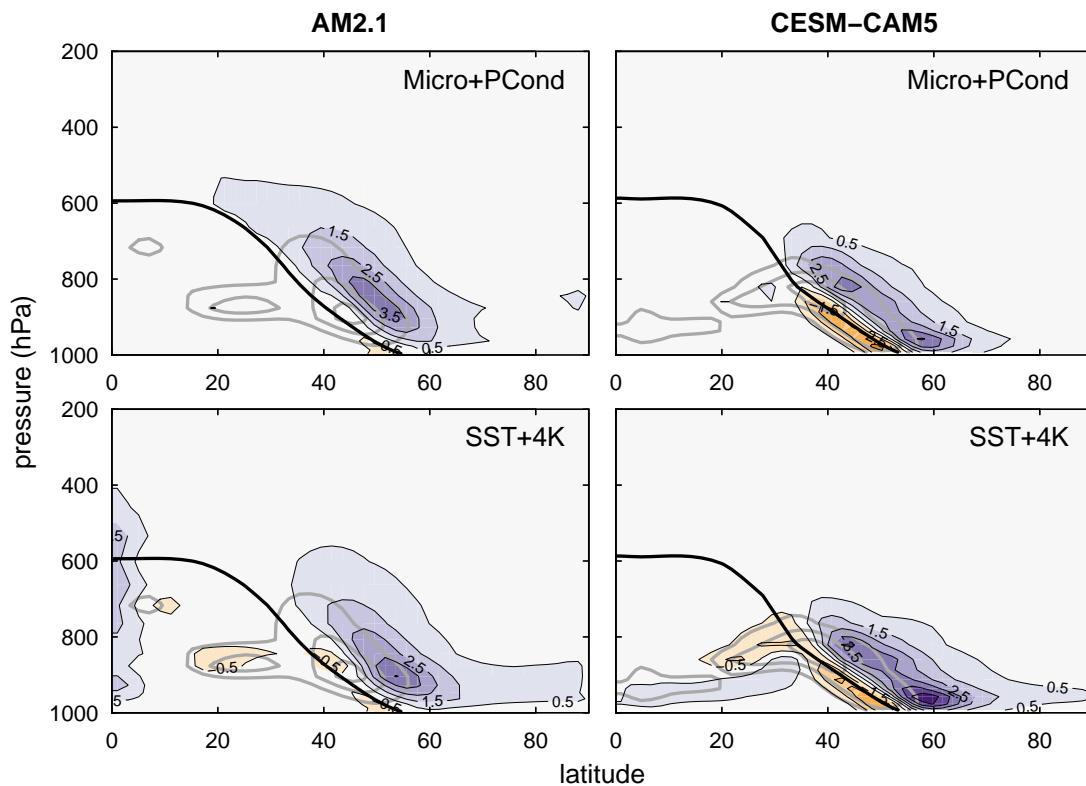


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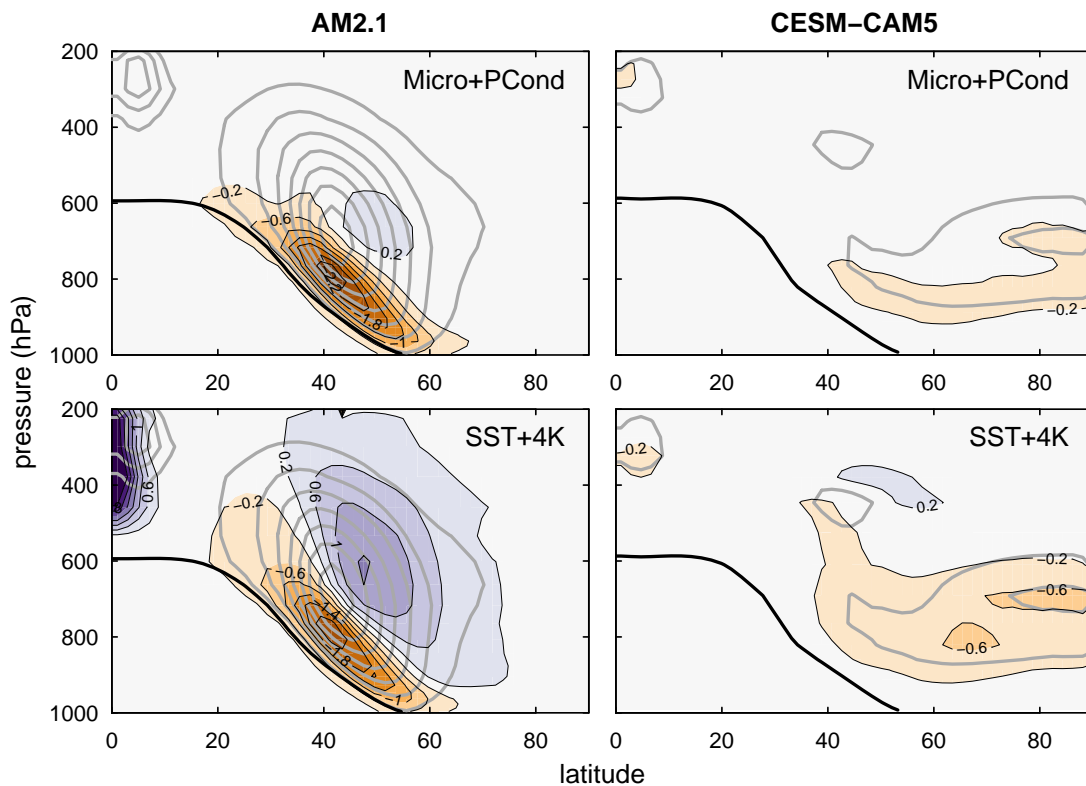


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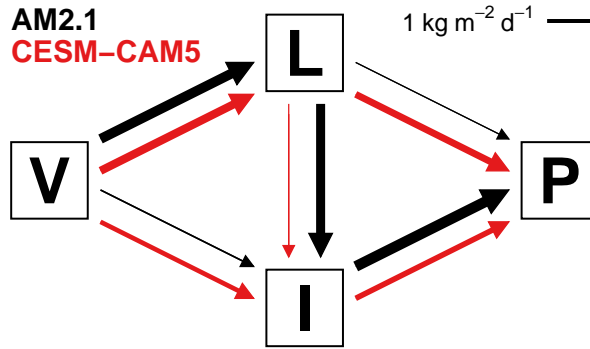


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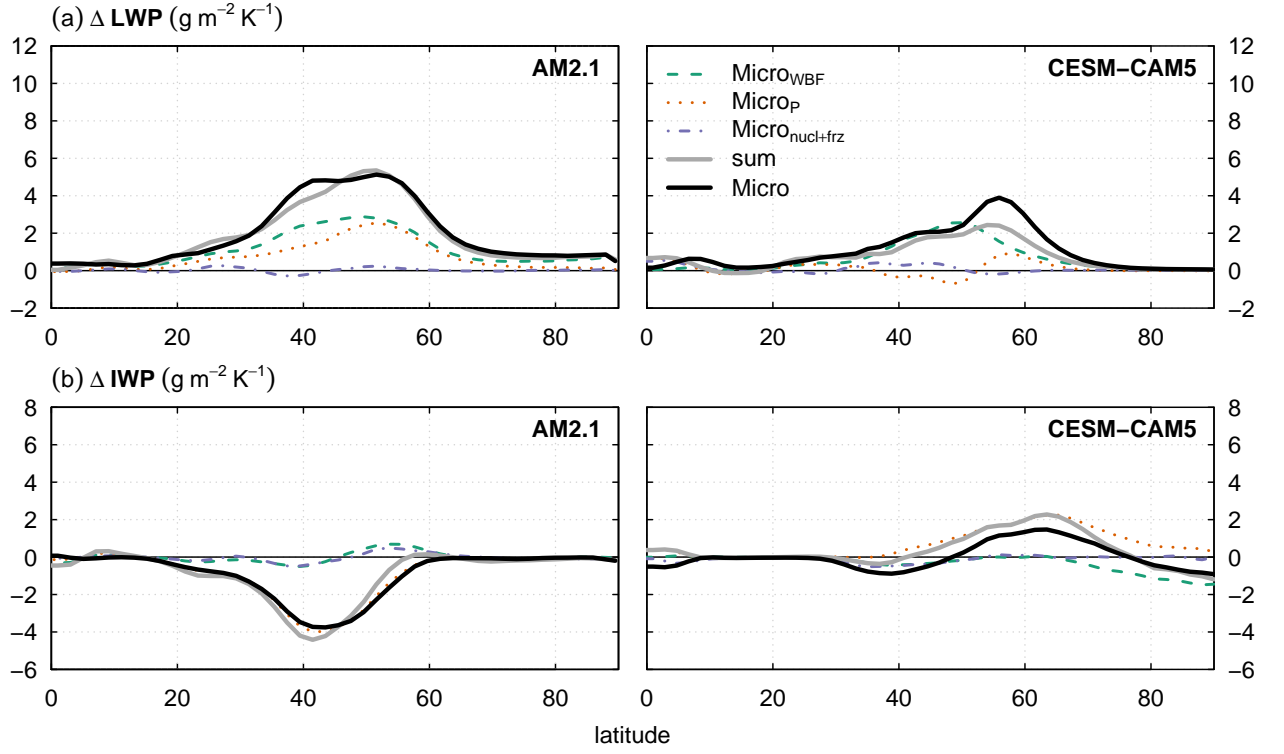


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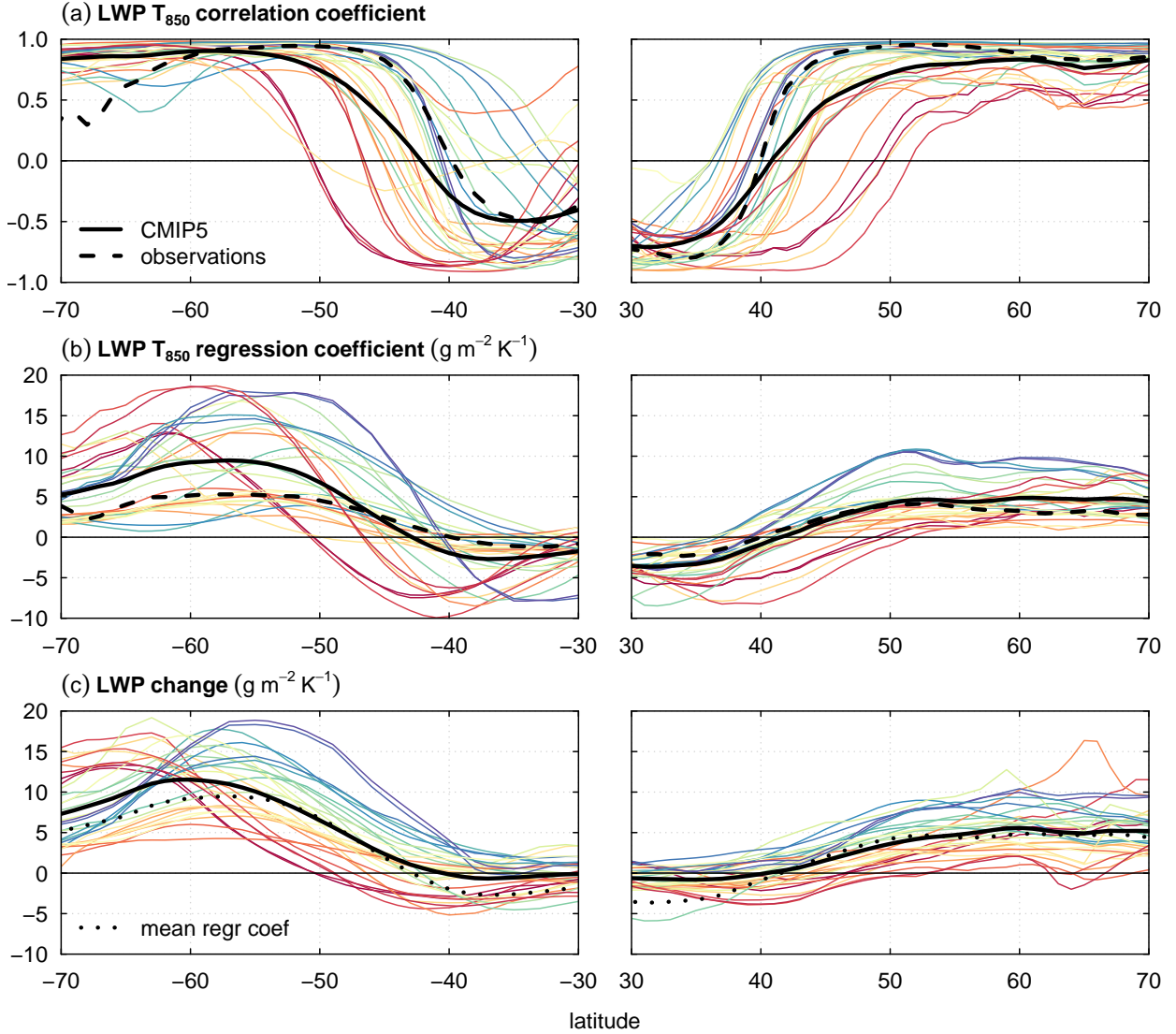


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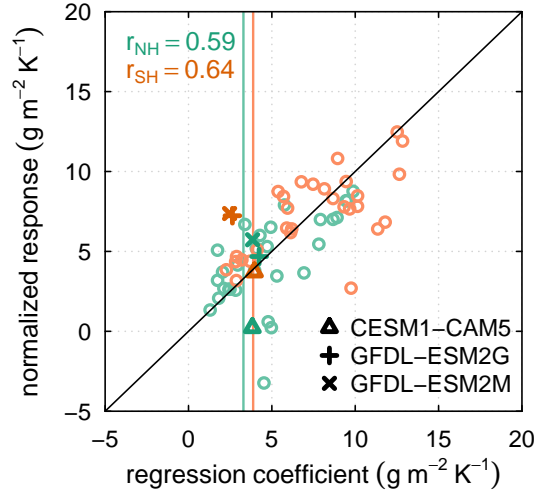


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