

Comments to the author:

Dear Authors,

Thank you for the latest set of updates to your manuscript. I have some additional minor suggestions for improving the graphical presentation of the results, before accepting your study for publication in Earth System Dynamics.

Author response:

We thank the editor for providing these additional suggestions to improve the overall presentation of our work. We have incorporated all your suggestions in the revised documents and provide responses to each specific suggestion in the following.

Thank you also for efficiently handling the review of our manuscript.

- Fig. 5 You could add labels “residual correlation” and “RPSS” to the two panels

Author response:

Done. Thank you.

- Supplement: Text S1 appears in the middle of the document, please move to the top.

Author response:

We moved the Table S1 at the top of the supplementary materials so that the text S1 is exclusively followed by the relevant figures discussed in this text, i.e. the structure of the Supplement is now: (i) Supplementary Table, (ii) Supplementary Figures quoted in the manuscript text, (iii) Supplementary text to discuss observations-related uncertainties, including the figures relevant for this supplementary text.

- Fig. S3 I understand that you tried to arrange this is the same format as the other figures, but having four maps per row makes the resulting figure very small and difficult to read without needing to zoom in on the single panels. Is there the possibility of changing the layout to have maximum three maps per row (e.g. by arranging them vertically, as you did in Fig. S6)?

Author response:

The Figure S3 is now split into two Figures (one for Residual Correlation and one for RPSS) with panels arranged vertically as suggested. We keep the comparisons between the Best30 and DCPD in a row for each forecast period to easily facilitate the direct comparisons between the two predictions for the common forecast periods.

As for further reducing the number of SI figures/removing some of the sensitivity tests, I leave this to your discretion.

Author response:

We are grateful to the editor for supporting the option of keeping/removing the SI figures. We prefer keeping the figures showing RPSS as well. As outlined in our previous response, we believe

the different skill metrics are complementary, and some readers may be interested in seeing the spatial details of the results summarized in the main text figure 5.