

Bringing it all together: Science priorities for improved understanding of Earth system change and to support international climate policy.

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72 **Abstract.** We review how the international modelling community, encompassing Integrated Assessment models, global and
73 regional Earth system and climate models, and impact models, have worked together over the past few decades, to advance
74 understanding of Earth system change and its impacts on society and the environment, and thereby support international
75 climate policy. We go on to recommend a number of priority research areas for the coming decade, a timescale that
76 encompasses a number of newly starting international modelling activities, as well as the IPCC 7th Assessment Report
77 (AR7) and the 2nd UNFCCC Global Stocktake. Progress in these priority areas will significantly advance our understanding
78 of Earth system change and its impacts, increasing the quality and utility of science support to climate policy.
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80 We emphasize the need for continued improvement in our understanding of, and ability to simulate, the coupled Earth
81 system and the impacts of Earth system change. There is an urgent need to investigate plausible pathways and emission
82 scenarios that realize the Paris Climate Targets. For example, pathways that overshoot 1.5°C or 2°C global warming, before
83 returning to these levels at some later date. Earth System models need to be capable of thoroughly assessing such warming
84 overshoots, in particular, the efficacy of mitigation measures, such as negative CO₂ emissions, in reducing atmospheric CO₂
85 and driving global cooling. An improved assessment of the long-term consequences of stabilizing climate at 1.5°C or 2°C
86 above pre-industrial temperatures is also required. We recommend Earth system models run overshoot scenarios in CO₂-
87 emission mode, to more fully represent coupled climate - carbon cycle feedbacks and, wherever possible, interactively
88 simulate [other](#) key Earth system phenomena at risk of rapid change during overshoot. Regional downscaling and impact
89 models should use forcing data from these simulations, so impact and regional climate projections cover a more complete
90 range of potential responses to a warming overshoot. An accurate simulation of the observed, historical record remains a
91 fundamental requirement of models, as does accurate simulation of key metrics, such as the Effective Climate Sensitivity
92 and the Transient climate response to cumulative carbon emissions. For adaptation, a key demand is improved guidance on
93 potential changes in climate extremes and the modes of variability these extremes develop within. **Such improvements will**
94 **most likely be realized through a combination of increased model resolution, improvement of key model parameterizations,**
95 **combined with an enhanced representation of key important Earth system processes, combined with targeted use of new**
96 **Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) techniques.** We propose a deeper collaboration across
97 **modelling such efforts targeting enhanced process realism and coupling, increased model resolution, parameterization**
98 **improvement, and data-driven Machine Learning methods over the coming decade.**
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100 With respect to sampling future uncertainty, increased collaboration between approaches that emphasize large model
101 ensembles and those focussed on statistical emulation is required. We recommend an increased focus on High Impact Low
102 Likelihood (HILL) outcomes. In particular, the risk and consequences of exceeding critical tipping points during a warming
103 overshoot and the potential impacts arising from this. For a comprehensive assessment of the impacts of Earth system

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104 change, including impacts arising directly as a result of climate mitigation actions, it is important spatially detailed,
105 disaggregated information used to generate future scenarios in Integrated Assessment Models are available for use in impact
106 models. Conversely, methods need to be developed that enable potential societal responses to projected Earth system change
107 to be incorporated into scenario development.

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109 The new models, simulations, data, and scientific advances, proposed in this article will not be possible without long-term
110 development and maintenance of a robust, globally connected infrastructure ecosystem. This system must be easily
111 accessible and useable by modelling communities across the world, allowing the global research community to be fully
112 engaged in developing and delivering new scientific knowledge to support international climate policy.

113 1 Introduction

114 Given the rapidly developing climate crisis, and the negative consequences for planetary habitability and human well-being,
115 there is an increasing need for accurate, reliable, and actionable information encompassing the full spectrum of climate risk.
116 This information is required at global to local scales, near to long timescales, and needs to be tailored to inform critical
117 decision-making related to climate change mitigation and adaptation (e.g., in the context of UNFCCC negotiations, the UN
118 Global Stocktake, IPCC assessments, and the World Adaptation Science Program; WASP), as well as the growing needs of
119 climate service providers. Over the past few decades, coordinated by the World Climate Research Program (WCRP), the
120 international modelling community has worked together to contribute simulations, data and knowledge to support decision
121 making, in particular the cyclical IPCC Assessment Reports (AR). This has been achieved through a suite of interconnected
122 modelling projects and initiatives, with the most important of these listed in Table 1, along with project acronyms and
123 primary citations. Meehl (2023) discusses the synergistic interaction between climate science (particularly Global Climate
124 and Earth system modelling) and the IPCC over the past 4 decades.

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126 With a new IPCC AR cycle (AR7) beginning, it is timely to review how the international modelling community has
127 supported climate policy in the past, including earlier AR cycles, and ask what advances can be made in the overall quality
128 and availability of science to support policy needs. In addition, it is pertinent to review our current understanding of, and
129 ability to model, coupled Earth system change, as well as the societal and environmental impacts associated with this change
130 and ask whether plausible, safe pathways can be developed for the Earth system that avoid the worst impacts of this change.
131 Many of the international projects listed in Table 1, that provide the scientific knowledge on which IPCC reports are based,
132 are beginning new cycles. For example, CMIP7 is starting to take shape, likely running through to ~2030 *or beyond*. In this
133 paper we outline a number of areas we believe the international modelling community can significantly advance our
134 understanding of, and ability to simulate, past and future Earth system change, including the impacts of these changes.
135 Progress in the proposed areas will also allow an improved investigation of mitigation options for limiting long-term global
136 warming and its impacts to acceptable levels. Such developments will deliver enhanced scientific support to international
137 climate policy, during and beyond AR7. The advances we propose assume *the continued development, expansion,*
138 *maintenance, expansion* and *integration* of a robust and interconnected infrastructure ecosystem. Such an infrastructure has
139 underpinned past international modelling collaborations and is a fundamental requirement for realizing the ambitious goals
140 outlined here. The specific science, and science for policy, ambitions, as well as the necessary underpinning infrastructure,
141 are discussed in more detail in subsequent sections. Each proposed focus area can be summarized by the following key
142 goals:

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- **Provision of a coordinated, internally consistent set of simulations, data, and knowledge to support IPCC assessments and international climate policy.** The resulting data sets and knowledge should be based on the most recent and consistent set of Integrated Assessment Model (IAM) scenarios, global and regional Earth system model (ESM) projections and simulated societal and environmental impacts. With consideration of impacts arising [both](#) due to the projected Earth system change, and directly from any mitigation actions assumed in the IAM scenarios.
 - **Improving understanding and guidance on future Earth system change, allowable emissions, net-zero responses, and safe, long-term pathways for planet Earth.** Ensure global and regional ESMs, IAMs, and impact models include the required level of process realism, process interactions, and consistent forcing data to accurately simulate the response of the Earth system and human societies to future socio-economic, mitigation, emission, and land-use scenarios. Develop and analyse a range of future pathways that limit long-term global warming to less than 1.5 or 2°C above pre-industrial levels, while minimizing the negative impacts on society and the environment.
 - **Improving our understanding of, and ability to simulate key climate processes, climate variability, extreme events and regional impacts.** Ensure global and regional climate models (GCMs and RCMs) accurately represent key processes, couplings, modes of variability and feedbacks that underpin global to regional climate change. Use these models to deliver robust and detailed projections of regional climate change, including changes in extreme events. Ensure the socio-economic information used to develop IAM mitigation and scenario data is suitably disaggregated and combined with climate projection data to support national to regional scale impact assessment, adaptation planning and climate services.
 - **Increasing collaboration across approaches to further improve global and regional Earth system and climate models.** Ensure strong collaboration across efforts to; increase process realism and coupling in ESMs, increase model resolution and improve physical parameterizations [in climate models, and Machine Learning \(including ML\) hybrid-modelling approaches](#). Ensure [each of these development paths/approaches](#) are optimally combined to [support/deliver the best possible development of pathway for](#) the next generation of Earth system models.
 - **Improving model simulations of the observational record and key metrics of climate change.** Ensure improvement in the simulation and understanding of the observed, historical evolution of climate, particularly historical global and regional warming, encompassing the forcings, processes, and feedbacks that determine the rate and pattern of this warming. Improve our ability to constrain and simulate key climate change metrics, such as the Effective Climate Sensitivity (EffCS), Transient Climate Response (TCR), the Transient Climate Response to cumulative carbon Emissions (TCRE) and the Regional Warming to Global Warming ratio (RW/GW)
 - **Sampling and quantifying future uncertainty.** Develop and apply a hierarchy of models and methods to efficiently explore the range of uncertainty inherent in future Earth system change and its impacts. Ensure regional and national scale adaptation and mitigation is informed by a more complete sampling of the range of potential climate futures, including rare (high impact, low likelihood) outcomes, their local climate signature, and the potential consequences of these for society, the environment and climate policy.
 - **The underpinning technological infrastructure.** Further develop and maintain a robust, globally inter-connected infrastructure ecosystem to ensure efficient co-production and co-exploitation of internally consistent model simulations, via information, data and computational services that enable the rapid and reliable sharing of

requirements, knowledge, data, and analysis tools. Such sharing needs to be both within and across multiple modelling projects and user communities, as well as providing suitable support to policymakers, planners, climate services, and the wider international research [basecommunity](#).

Acronym	Initiative or project name	Website	Main themes	Citation
IAMC	Integrated Assessment Modelling Consortium	https://www.iamconsortium.org	Future socio-economic pathways, emission and land use scenarios	Moss et al., 2010
WCRP CMIP	Coupled Model Intercomparison Project	https://wcrp-cmip.org/	Earth system and Global Climate modelling	Eyring et al., 2016
ScenarioMIP	ScenarioMIP	https://wcrp-cmip.org/model-intercomparison-projects-mips/scenariomip/	Further develop IAM scenarios into emission, concentration and land-use scenarios for CMIP and CORDEX.	O'Neill et al., 2016
WCRP CORDEX	Coordinated Regional Downscaling Experiment	https://cordex.org	Regional climate downscaling	Giorgi et al., 2009
VIACS AB	Vulnerability, Impacts, Adaptation & Climate Services Advisory Board	https://viacsab.gerics.de/	Advisory body for linking CMIP and CORDEX to the impacts and climate services communities	Ruane et al., 2016
ISIMIP	Inter-Sectoral Impact Model Intercomparison Project	https://www.isimip.org	Global and regional impact modelling for multiple sectors	Frieler et al., 2017
ESGF	Earth System Grid Federation	https://esgf.lnl.gov/	Data curation and distribution system for CMIP and CORDEX	Balaji et al., 2018

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Table 1. Examples of the main international projects contributing to the provision of simulations, data and scientific knowledge to support climate policy, particularly IPCC assessment reports, including a main reference for each activity. CMIP and CORDEX are coordinated by the World Climate Research Program.

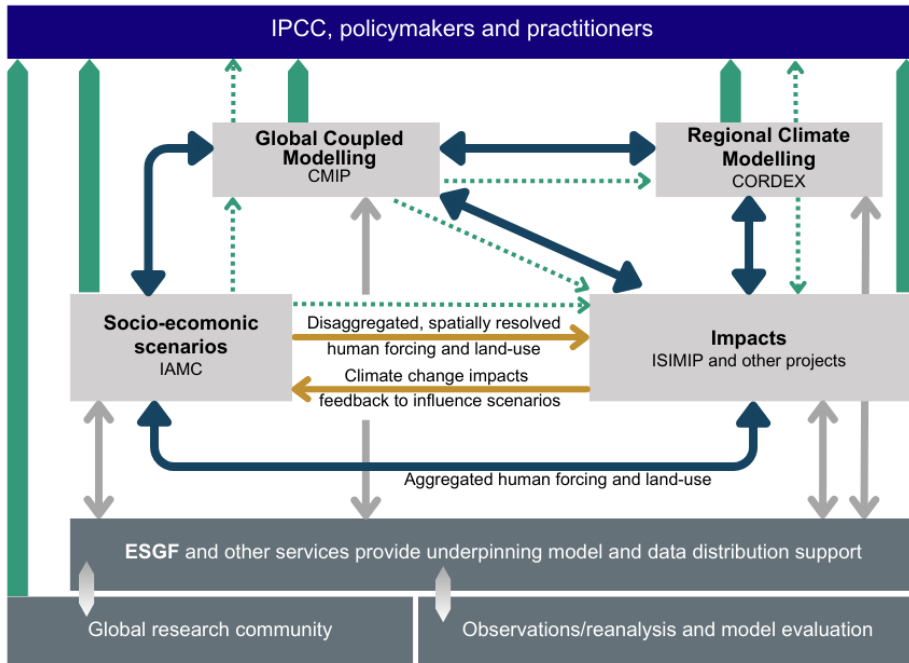
The recommendations in this paper summarize the opinions of a group of European scientists who have been engaged in, and in a number of cases helped lead, major international modelling exercises that have delivered into past IPCC assessment cycles. Examples include; earlier and the latest (7th) phase of CMIP (including leadership of numerous CMIP-MIPs; e.g. ScenarioMIP, C4MIP, HighResMIP, AerchemMIP), IAMC, CORDEX, and ISIMIP. Members of the group have also played a leading role designing and delivering the underpinning infrastructure required for such large, international modelling projects, in particular the Earth System Grid Federation (ESGF). While this perspective is therefore a European one, it is informed by many years of active involvement and collaboration in numerous international projects.

Over the past few years a number of papers offer important perspectives on future priorities for Earth system and climate modelling, focussing on: the benefits of increased model resolution (Sato et al. 2019, Palmer and Stevens 2019, Slingo et al. 2022), the role of AI and ML in model development (Bauer et al. 2023, Eyring et al. 2024b, Schneider et al. 2024), development of Digital Twins (Bauer et al. 2021, Hoffman et al. 2023, Bauer et al. 2024), priority areas for CMIP7 (Dunne et al. 2023, Sanderson et al. 2023), proposals for an operational approach to CMIP (Jakob et al. 2023, Stevens 2024), and future scenarios to support the IPCC process (Pirani et al. 2024). The recommendations we present here should be viewed in the light of these papers and summarize the views of a group of European scientists who have been engaged in, and in a number of cases led, major international modelling exercises that have delivered critical support to past IPCC assessment cycles. A similar perspective piece, from a number of U.S. climate modelling centres, has also recently been published (Mariotti et al. 2024). Our perspective aims to address the range of activities involved in delivering actionable scientific support to international and

213 national climate policy and therefore encompasses; IAM-based socio-economic, emission and land use scenarios, global and
214 regional Earth system and climate models, regional downscaling and calibration, projection ensembles and emulators,
215 uncertainty quantification, sectoral and environmental impact models, as well as the computational infrastructure necessary to
216 realise and disseminate this complex workflow.

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218 **2 Provision of a coordinated, internally consistent set of simulations, data, and knowledge to support IPCC**
219 **assessments and international climate policy.**

220 The process by which the aforementioned activities have, in the past, delivered data and knowledge into the science and
221 policy arenas is summarized in Fig. 1. IAMs develop a range of future global pathways, based on narratives for socio-
222 economic, political, and technological development, as well as climate policy. For methodological reasons these scenarios do
223 not (yet) consider the impacts of future climate change on human behaviour. The pathways are typically quantified in terms
224 of highly aggregated information on future population and economic development, energy and food system development,
225 and environmental consequences. For each pathway, marker anthropogenic emission and land-use scenarios are selected
226 (van Vuuren et al., 2011; O'Neill et al., 2016; Riahi et al., 2017). These scenarios are combined with observation-based
227 estimates for the historical past, resulting in a time series of emission and land use data covering ~1850 to 2100 (Hurtt et al.,
228 2011; Gidden et al., 2019). Using simple climate models (e.g. MAGICC; Meinshausen et al., 2011) and chemistry-climate
229 models (Lamarque et al., 2011), the emissions are converted into atmospheric concentration time series. The concentration
230 timeseries, along with the land-use scenarios, are used to “force” ESMS in CMIP to investigate potential changes in the Earth
231 system arising from each scenario. The ESMS deliver time-varying, spatially discrete estimates of the past and future
232 evolution of the Earth system, sampling the range of available emission and/or concentration scenarios (Tebaldi et al., 2021).
233 CMIP simulations are extensively used to inform policymaking addressing global climate change risks. They are also made
234 available to the international research community via the ESGF, where they are used to increase understanding of the Earth
235 system and Earth system change, and to highlight areas requiring further model improvement.



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Figure 1: A schematic illustration of how earlier rounds of IAMC, CMIP, CORDEX and impact modelling activities, such as ISIMIP, have worked together to develop and apply future socio-economic and emission scenarios (IAMC), increase the scientific understanding of, and ability to simulate the coupled Earth system (CMIP and CORDEX), and investigated the impacts of Earth system change on societies and the natural environment (ISIMIP etc). In the figure dark blue lines illustrate the main (generally two-way) exchanges of scientific knowledge between the different projects. Dotted green lines indicate the main (simulation) data transfer between projects, while grey lines show the main data exchanges outside of these projects (e.g. onto the ESGF for open use by the global research community or into regional or national data distribution sites). Thin orange lines illustrate the new exchanges proposed in Sect. 2 of this paper. Finally, the thick green lines illustrate the main knowledge and data exchange routes between the different projects, the global research community, and the IPCC assessment process, as well as with multiple policymakers, practitioners, and climate service providers around the world.

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CMIP simulations are used extensively as boundary forcing for regional downscaling (e.g. CORDEX) to generate climate information at spatial scales relevant for adaptation policy and climate services, as well as to drive impact model simulations (e.g. crop models in AgMIP (Ruane et al., 2017), fisheries and marine ecosystem models in FishMIP (Tittensor et al., 2018), and a range of impact models that contribute coordinated simulations to ISIMIP (Frieler et al., 2017), addressing impacts such as, biome changes, water resources, human health, energy systems and biodiversity). Regional downscaling follows two main pathways; (i) dynamical downscaling ~~generate~~generates high-resolution regional simulations consistent with the ESM boundary condition data (Ruti et al., 2016; Jacob et al., 2020; Teichmann et al., 2021) and (ii) empirical-statistical downscaling (including ML methods) combine observations and models to translate large-scale features simulated by the ESMs to high-resolution, local scale climate information (Gutiérrez et al., 2018; Lange, 2019; Karger et al., 2023). Impact models use both CMIP and CORDEX climate data, as well as socio-economic data and information on mitigation actions from the IAM scenarios (e.g. population distributions and land use patterns that include information on mitigation measures), as forcing to assess the societal and environmental impacts arising from the range of simulated futures (Frieler et al., 2017).

262 The combined outcome of this international effort are a set of simulations, data and resulting knowledge covering the past
263 ~175 and future ~100 years (and sometimes longer) that sample; (i) plausible future global socio-economic development
264 pathways, (ii) emission, concentration and land-use scenarios commensurate with these pathways, (iii) global and regional
265 Earth system changes associated with each future pathway and (iv) the societal and environmental impacts arising from the
266 simulated Earth system changes, as well as direct impacts associated with the socio-economic and/or mitigation measures
267 applied in the IAM scenarios.

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269 There are numerous challenges involved in running the number and variety of model simulations across this range of
270 activities, including cross-project and cross-model dependencies. As a consequence, to date it has not been possible to
271 develop a single, coordinated dataset of forcings, simulations and findings from all four activities (IAMs, CMIP, CORDEX,
272 impact modelling), based on a common set of socio-economic assumptions, scenarios, and driving data, within a single IPCC
273 Assessment cycle. This limitation reduces the overall consistency and utility of information entering the three IPCC working
274 groups (WGs). For example, Global (CMIP) and Regional (CORDEX) simulations are often out of sync, with CORDEX
275 RCMs using boundary data derived from an earlier phase of CMIP. A similar example holds for impact models that often
276 use a mix of global and regional forcing from different phases of CMIP and CORDEX. Furthermore, impact models forced
277 by CMIP/CORDEX climate data, do not include all the socio-economic and climate policy information that underpin the
278 driving IAM emission and land-use scenarios. This is particularly acute with respect to a number of direct human forcings.
279 These forcings are aggregated across multiple sectors and large spatial scales in the IAM scenarios, but need to be
280 disaggregated and harmonized with observed historical data, to more detailed spatial scales and individual sectors, to allow
281 an accurate estimate of their impact on society and the environment, in combination with the impacts due to Earth system
282 change (e.g. see *Direct Human Forcings*, as listed on Table 1, Frieler et al., 2024). An improved accounting of such direct
283 human forcings will be increasingly important as future scenario pathways include major (human) interventions likely
284 required to deliver the negative CO₂ emissions [required/necessary](#) to achieve the Paris Agreement targets. Such interventions
285 themselves can have important direct impacts on food production and biodiversity and therefore need to be accounted for in
286 impact assessments.

287
288 Partly for methodological reasons, the impacts of climate change (and the potential societal responses to these changes) have
289 not been included in IAM scenarios describing future socio-economic trajectories (i.e. Shared Socio-economic Pathways
290 (SSPs), O'Neill et al., 2020). As climate change is expected to have a considerable impact on society, it is important methods
291 are developed that allow these feedbacks to be included in future scenario development (Pirani et al., 2024). Ideally
292 information on the impacts of climate change would be fed back into the IAMs to iteratively generate new future socio-
293 economic and policy pathways that include the societal responses to both the applied climate mitigation measures and to the
294 impacts of climate change. For example, future land use will need to be adjusted to satisfy global food production, while
295 accounting for the impacts of climate change on crop yields and changes in available land resulting from any land-based
296 climate mitigation measures. These iterative adjustments to future socio-economic scenarios are one way to represent
297 societal adaptation to projected climate change. Given the tight timelines it will not be possible to fully develop such
298 iterative and interactive steps within the IPCC AR7 cycle. Nevertheless, we recommend urgently addressing this link as the
299 envisioned modification of workflows has the potential to significantly improve the overall [coherence/consistency](#) of future
300 scenarios, integrating important information across socio-economic, Earth system and impact projections.

301
302 The lack of consistency, of both data and knowledge entering IPCC and national climate change assessments, reduces its
303 overall utility and makes the interpretation of uncertainties across the various data sources a challenge. This can lead to
304 inconsistent data and knowledge being used to develop climate policy, with some data being more than 10 years old. We

305 believe the time is right to much more tightly link these key international activities, with more extensive and rapid sharing of
306 simulations, data, knowledge, tools, and personnel, moving such critical *science for policy* work towards an operational
307 footing. Such a change has been proposed earlier (e.g. Jakob et al., 2023; Stevens, 2024). We agree with these proposals but
308 stress the need for “operationalization” across the entire workflow involved in developing and delivering robust and useable
309 scientific knowledge. This includes; generation of IAM scenarios and associated forcing data, global and regional Earth
310 system model simulations based on these scenarios, impact model simulations, post-simulation evaluation and analysis,
311 uncertainty quantification, science to policy knowledge translation, and the technical infrastructure needed to support the
312 entire endeavour. To maximize the relevance and utility of the resulting science for policy, we further propose such
313 operational activities employ a co-development and co-exploitation approach, where a cross-section of intended users of the
314 science are involved throughout the process.

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316 Such developments require support across a number of international coordinating bodies, as well as mechanisms to
317 coordinate or pool the significant funding required, for what is inherently an international, multi-institutional and multi-
318 disciplinary endeavour. The building blocks for this do exist, represented by IAMC, CMIP, CORDEX, VIACS, ISIMIP and
319 the ESGF. To date, the bulk of the effort to realize these interconnected projects have been funded through short-term,
320 competitive research grants, with the availability and international coordination of this funding arising partly by chance and
321 often thanks to [commonshared](#) IPCC timelines (Meehl, 2023). While such a development requires significant effort, funding
322 and coordination, the long-term benefits for climate policy are potentially very significant. While moving the policy- and
323 service-oriented aspects of climate projections and impact assessment towards a more operational approach is important, we
324 stress the paramount importance of maintaining a strong science understanding, model improvement, and open data access,
325 approach across all these activities. This will help maintain global participation and ensure continual improvement in the
326 quality of data and knowledge entering the climate policy and service arenas. Fully achieving these goals on the timescale of
327 IPCC AR7 will not be possible. Nevertheless, a first step in this direction is under development as part of the planning for
328 CMIP7, which will operate a dual timescale approach. A set of CMIP7 Fast Track (FT) simulations, specifically intended to
329 support IPCC AR7, is under development. The CMIP7 FT aims for a small set of policy relevant experiments that can be
330 rapidly performed and made available for analysis by early 2027. In addition to the Fast Track, the bulk of CMIP7 will
331 operate on a slower timescale, roughly from 2025 to 2030, with individual science-oriented MIPs (Model Intercomparison
332 Projects) developing and realising a range of experiments and analyses to address outstanding questions and challenges in
333 Earth system modelling.

334
335 Starting to develop a more joined up and efficient workflow across projects, along with increased internal consistency of
336 data and knowledge emanating from these projects [to support IPCC](#), will be an important step towards a durable, more
337 operational approach to delivering scientific support to climate policy and climate services.

338 339 **3 Improving knowledge and guidance on future Earth system change, allowable emissions, net-zero responses,** 340 **and safe landing pathways for planet Earth.**

341 **3.1 The Paris Agreement: The risk of warming overshoot, allowable emissions, net-zero and negative emissions,** 342 **and Earth system feedbacks.**

343 The 2015 Paris Agreement (with an aim to limit long-term global warming to well below 2°C above pre-industrial
344 temperatures and pursue efforts to limit warming to 1.5°C; Riahi et al., 2021) focused the attention of policymakers and the
345 public onto the risks and consequences of exceeding these key targets. Partly in response to such policy needs, work
346 accelerated on quantifying allowable carbon emission budgets commensurate with the Paris goals (Millar et al., 2017; Rogelj

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347 et al., 2019; Lamboll et al., 2023). It became increasingly clear that to provide accurate guidance on such allowable budgets,
348 Earth system models needed to improve their representation of the carbon cycle and its interaction with physical climate
349 processes. In addition, further improvement was required in representing non-CO₂ climate forcers, such as methane, nitrous
350 oxide and aerosols. Focus also turned to the risk of triggering feedbacks that might push temperatures further from a given
351 target, once the target was exceeded, as well as on the risk of exceeding Earth system tipping points, with potentially major
352 regional impacts. Lastly, recognition that international policy would likely lead to the climate being stabilized at
353 temperatures warmer than pre-industrial or present-day, stimulated work to better quantify the long-term consequences
354 associated with such a stabilized warmer world (King et al., 2021).

355
356 Over the past decade significant progress has led to several ESMs now including a full representation of the carbon cycle,
357 interactively coupled to the physical climate (Arora et al., 2020). This progress has motivated calls for CMIP7 to more
358 strongly focus on CO₂-emission driven simulations, where a more complete representation of future climate – carbon cycle
359 feedbacks can occur (Sanderson et al., 2023). A number of ESMs are also incorporating and coupling other Earth system
360 processes required to properly investigate future emission pathways that realise the Paris Targets, as well as the
361 consequences of long-term stabilization. Developments include; nutrient limitation on terrestrial carbon uptake (Lawrence et
362 al., 2019; Wiltshire et al., 2021), interactive methane cycles with the ability to run in emission-mode for methane (Folberth et
363 al., 2022), interactive treatment of nitrogen and iron cycles (Dunne et al., 2020), interactive permafrost (Burke et al., 2020,
364 Schädel et al., 2024), interactive fires (Mezuman et al., 2020; Teixeira et al., 2021), full atmosphere chemistry (Gettelman et
365 al., 2019; Archibald et al., 2020) coupled to advanced aerosol models (Mulcahy et al., 2020), as well as interactive
366 Greenland and Antarctic ice sheets (Smith et al., 2021; Muntjewerf et al., 2021). Many of these developments, occurring
367 across several ESMs, have either recently entered use in [their-coupled model configurations](#), or are in an advanced stage of
368 development and planned for use in CMIP7. As a result, the Earth system modelling community, ~~collectively~~, are entering a
369 period where simulation of the full Earth system during overshoot, recovery, and long-term stabilization can deliver critical
370 new insights that are urgently required [by to inform](#) international climate policy.

371
372 An important focus for CMIP7 and ScenarioMIP (O'Neill et al., 2016; van Vuuren et al., 2023) therefore, ~~is will be~~
373 investigation of plausible emission scenarios and global warming pathways that successfully realize the Paris Agreement.
374 Key questions within this activity ~~encompass include~~: What is the feasibility of actually realizing the Paris targets? Whether a
375 temporary warming overshoot is inevitable? ~~And, if if~~ so, ~~of~~ what [rate and magnitude? Also of warming is likely to occur,](#)
376 [and how sensitive is the Earth system to such factors? Additionally](#), is it feasible to return to a target warming level on a
377 reasonable timescale once an overshoot has occurred (Bauer et al., 2023)? To provide robust policy guidance on the
378 plausibility and consequences of such pathways, several additional questions need to be addressed: Can accurate predictions
379 of carbon emission budgets (and budgets of other radiatively important greenhouse gases) be made that are commensurate
380 with different warming targets, with or without overshoot (Ramboll et al., 2023)? What is the role of anthropogenic aerosol
381 emissions with respect to future warming and achievability of the Paris targets (Jenkins et al., 2022, [Wang et al. 2023](#)) What
382 is the risk of amplifying feedbacks being triggered during overshoot (Melnikova et al., 2022), and is there a risk of exceeding
383 tipping point thresholds in the Earth system, society or the natural environment, during overshoot (Wunderling et al., 2023)?
384 If plausible negative emission pathways do exist, that return the Earth system to an acceptable temperature at an acceptable
385 rate, once overshoot has occurred, what will be the environmental consequences of following these pathways? Furthermore,
386 during the overshoot phase, if major changes or impacts (e.g. ecosystem degradation, population displacement, economic
387 damages) do occur, or tipping points are exceeded (either in society or the Earth system), are these changes reversible when
388 temperatures return back below a target level (Kim et al., 2022; Reed et al., 2023; Santana-Falcón et al., 2023) and how long
389 will such a recovery take (Albrich et al., 2020, Meier et al., 2012)?

390
391 Existing mitigation pathways that rely on negative CO₂ emissions assume a significant stimulation of terrestrial carbon
392 uptake through extensive modifications to land-use (Smith et al., 2016). How the carbon cycle will respond to these
393 interventions is not well quantified. Nor is the actual efficacy of these interventions in reducing temperatures (Schleussner et
394 al., 2023), or the ensuing impacts on the natural world, particularly biodiversity. A dominant part of the negative CO₂
395 emissions in present IAM scenarios is assumed to come from the AFOLU (agriculture, forestry and other land use) sector,
396 through large scale deployment of bioenergy with carbon capture and storage (BECCS). It is of the utmost importance
397 ESMS, with a comprehensive process-based representation of the carbon cycle, are used to assess the efficacy of such
398 AFOLU scenarios in terms of realized negative emissions and temperature response, accounting for interactions with the
399 natural carbon cycle and regional climate. Such major changes to the land surface will likely also lead to significant impacts
400 on water availability, biodiversity and a range of human activities (Séférian et al., 2018; Hof et al., 2018), both directly from
401 the change in land use and indirectly through induced changes in regional climates. Such potential impacts need to be
402 carefully assessed with impact models, with any negative impacts ~~balanced~~ **contrasted** against the positive impact of the
403 mitigation actions on global warming. New negative CO₂ emissions technologies that encompass marine-based CO₂ removal
404 (mCDR) are increasing in interest. Such approaches aim to increase marine carbon uptake through ocean alkalization
405 (Kwiatowski et al., 2023; Palmieri and Yool, 2024) or increase the storage of ocean carbon via marine afforestation (Bach et
406 al., 2021). These new approaches have the potential to reduce the demand on land-based CDR, reducing the impacts of these
407 techniques on ~~the~~ land. However, such ocean techniques can lead to negative consequences for marine ecosystems and
408 organisms, by altering marine nutrients cycles. It is important to emphasise that the full Earth system response to marine
409 CDR is as uncertain as its land counterpart. Uncertainties in its efficacy to remove and store CO₂ remain poorly quantified
410 and estimating the lifetime of CO₂ storage in the water column represents an additional challenge compared to the land-
411 based CDR, due to the complicating role of ocean circulation and potential redistribution of CO₂.

412
413 In addition to negative CO₂ emissions, Solar Radiation Management (SRM) has been proposed as an alternative (or
414 additional) route to limiting global warming to 1.5°C. While there remain concerns around the unintended consequences of
415 SRM (Bonou et al., 2023), as well as the long-term governance of such technology (Pasztor and Harrison, 2021), the
416 international SRM community recently designed a set of scenarios that allow investigation of both the efficacy and potential
417 climate impacts of such technology (MacMartin et al., 2022; Baur et al., 2023; Baur et al., 2024). The same community
418 ~~recently have~~ proposed an experiment protocol for the CMIP7 Fast Track (Visioni et al., 2024) that targets recovery of the
419 global mean surface temperature to 1.5°C threshold after overshoot. As the world continues to get closer to the 1.5°C
420 threshold, interest in SRM and geoengineering more broadly is likely to increase. The science community will be asked to
421 provide the best possible guidance on the efficacy of SRM, the potential climatic and ecological impacts of SRM, as well as
422 information on the scales (temporal, spatial and quantity) required for this technology to deliver long-term, safe climate
423 stabilization. Such work on climate ‘solutions’ including SRM should be organized under the WCRP Lighthouse Activity on
424 Climate Intervention, which brings together international research communities focussing on both CDR and SRM.

425
426
427 Finally, once an “acceptable” warming level is reached, it remains to be established whether the Earth system can be
428 stabilized, long-term at this level (Jones et al., 2019)? And, if so, what the consequences across the Earth system and for
429 society will be from such stabilization (King et al., 2021; Palazzo Corner et al., 2023)? All these questions have major
430 implications for international climate policy. Reliable answers are urgently needed. The international research community is
431 beginning to address such questions, and increasingly has the **modelling**-tools capable of providing answers. We believe the
432 new round of international modelling projects have the potential to make major advances towards delivering robust answers.

433

434 Past CMIP cycles, including the most recent phase CMIP6 (Eyring et al., 2016a), emphasized CO₂-concentration driven
435 simulations, where atmospheric CO₂ concentrations are prescribed and simulated carbon cycle – climate feedbacks cannot
436 influence atmospheric CO₂. This approach was taken largely for pragmatic and inclusivity reasons (i.e. there was only a
437 relatively small number of models with robust and stable coupled climate and carbon cycles). Thanks to efforts such as
438 C⁴MIP (Friedlingstein et al., 2006, Arora et al., 2020), this is no longer the case, with a significant number of ESMs now
439 including advanced carbon cycles coupled to their physical climate (Sanderson et al., 2023). Due to the small remaining
440 carbon budgets involved in realizing the Paris targets, and uncertainty in how the carbon cycle will respond to negative and
441 net zero emissions, it is imperative more ESMs in CMIP7 run in CO₂-emission mode, with full interaction between the
442 physical climate and carbon cycle, including prognostic atmospheric CO₂ (Sanderson et al., 2023; Gier et al., 2024). This
443 will support an improved assessment of feedbacks involving the physical climate and the carbon cycle, addressing
444 consequences for allowable future carbon emissions, the amount of negative emissions required after different overshoot to
445 achieve different stabilization [targets/goals](#), and the associated risks, impacts and potential for irreversible change across the
446 Earth system. Only through such a coupled, prognostic approach can anthropogenic CO₂ emission scenarios, intended to
447 realize key warming targets, be connected with the Earth system response and the impact of these [responses](#) on atmospheric
448 CO₂ and realized warming/cooling pathways.

449

450 We propose other important aspects of the coupled Earth system, at risk of rapid change, should also be run in a more
451 *coupled and prognostic* manner in CMIP7. Assessment of coupled interactions and risks across the entire Earth system,
452 including potential tipping point risks (Ritchie et al., 2021), is severely lacking in earlier IPCC Assessment Reports. Giving
453 greater emphasis to coupled and prognostic interactions across the Earth system (particularly those thought to play a major
454 role in determining the magnitude of future change) in an internally consistent framework will allow a more complete
455 assessment of Earth system change, beyond that focussed solely on the physical climate. In addition, we emphasize the need
456 to assess the impact of specific and targeted human actions (designed to mitigate future climate change or to adapt to
457 expected future change) on regional climate, as well as on other aspects of the coupled Earth system, including resilience of
458 the natural environment, biodiversity, and consequences for other human activities (e.g. food security, energy production or
459 air quality). The current scientific priorities with respect to such interactions, along with (in italics) the key phenomena,
460 feedbacks and consequences such coupled simulation would enable improved assessment of, are listed below:

461

- 462 (i) Water, vegetation and biogeochemical cycles of carbon, nitrogen, phosphorous; *improved estimates of vegetation*
463 *change, terrestrial carbon uptake, regional water cycles and ecosystem tipping risks.*
- 464
- 465 (ii) Climate, vegetation, and fire: *improved assessment of future fire risk and interactions with carbon uptake,*
466 *atmospheric composition and ecosystem tipping risks.*
- 467
- 468 (iii) Permafrost, climate, vegetation, and carbon: *stability of permafrost under warming and long-term warming*
469 *stabilization, carbon/methane release from thawing permafrost, ecosystem expansion into thawing permafrost zones.*
- 470
- 471 (iv) Climate, ice sheets, and sea level: *improved assessment of potentially irreversible loss of Antarctic and Greenland ice*
472 *mass and consequences for sea level rise, ocean circulation and ocean heat uptake.*
- 473
- 474 (v) Climate, atmospheric composition, and air quality: *internally consistent assessment of regional radiative forcing,*
475 *climate change and air quality.*

- 476
477 (vi) Ocean physics, biogeochemistry and ecosystems: *assessment of ocean warming, marine carbon uptake and long-term*
478 *storage, ocean acidification and impacts on marine ecosystems.*
479
480 (vii) Human-Earth System interaction: *assessment of the direct impact of human activities on the Earth system, regional*
481 *climate, society, and the environment. e.g. Mitigation actions designed to address air quality and/or climate change,*
482 *such as major land use change, nature-based solutions, climate interventions (geoengineering). Adaptation measures*
483 *designed to address regional to national scale climate risk.*
484
485 (vii) The interplay between global change, regional climate variability, changes in climate and weather extremes, and
486 resulting impacts across the Earth system.

487 **3.2 Regional Earth system change; assessing societal and environmental impacts.**

488 In addition to changing how global ESMs are run, we propose that regional downscaling (for example dynamical
489 downscaling or Regional Climate Modelling, as used in CORDEX) also advance their representation of key regional Earth
490 system processes (beyond the physical atmosphere-land system; Giorgi and Prein, 2022; Nabat et al., 2020; Sevault et al.,
491 2014). Here we refer to regional climate modelling or dynamical downscaling in the broadest sense, encompassing any
492 physics-based dynamical model targeting a fine-scale representation of the climate over a specific region of the world. This
493 includes limited-area models (LAM), variable-resolution GCMs (VRGCM) and, more recently, regional earth system
494 models, convection-permitting regional models, and two-way coupled systems. In addition, atmosphere-land only global
495 models are beginning to run for decadal timescales (and likely longer in the coming decade) and can be driven by sea surface
496 temperatures and sea ice derived from ESM projections, providing a global downscaling option for coupled ESM
497 projections. Whatever the technical choices used to perform such dynamical downscaling in future projection mode, forcings
498 from global ESMs and GCMs will ~~always~~ be required, either as lateral, surface, or inner model boundary condition data.
499 Similarly, we use the term statistical downscaling in a very broad sense, covering established statistical methods for
500 transferring simulated large-scale climate data to local scales, as well as the increasing range of machine learning (ML)
501 techniques, including recent deep learning applications (Gerges et al., 2023, Soares et al., 2024).
502

503 To better sample the uncertainty range of global projections, dynamical and statistical downscaling should preferentially use
504 CO₂ emission-driven ESMs as boundary forcing and employ an efficient (as automated as possible) method to select an ESM
505 ensemble for a given region and rapidly generate the required boundary condition data. The resulting combination of global
506 emission-driven ESMs, regional ESMs, and advanced statistical/ML-based downscaling, ~~all~~ running in a tightly linked
507 framework, will allow a more complete assessment of potential changes across the global and regional environment at scales
508 required by policymakers and planners. Given the rapid development of a diversity of dynamical, statistical and ML-based
509 methods to generate high-resolution regional data, it is important a common evaluation framework is developed that is
510 applicable across global to local scales (and across the implied model resolutions) as well as being agnostic to the methods
511 employed, so different downscaling approaches can be objectively evaluated against each other, region by region and
512 application by application.
513

514 We further recommend impact models use a coordinated, multi-model ensemble of (global and regional) simulation-data,
515 based on the CMIP7 CO₂-emission driven ESMs, that capture a representative fraction of the uncertainty space of global and
516 regional projections. In addition, impact models should aim to sample multiple members of individual ESMs, and the
517 downscaling of these ESMs, to better quantify the importance of internal (natural) variability in regional climate impacts.

518 Forcing impact models, either directly by global ESM output or by appropriately downscaled data, themselves driven by the
519 same ESM simulations, will ensure global consistency of the impact simulations and comparability of impacts resulting from
520 global and regionally downscaled forcing over the same region. In addition to coordinated forcing from ESM and
521 downscaled data, a more complete, disaggregated set of IAM scenario data describing socio-economic development and
522 potential mitigation or adaptation measures will ensure greater coherency between global and regional impact assessments
523 and the underpinning IAM, ESM and regional forcing data. The resulting global models and downscaling combinations can
524 [be also be](#) used to assess the efficacy and potential impacts associated with different regional climate change mitigation or
525 adaptation actions, offering scientific assessment of such proposed climate solutions.

526 **4 Improving our understanding of, and ability to model key climate processes, climate variability, extreme** 527 **events and regional impacts.**

528 **4.1 Improving key phenomena and couplings in global climate models.**

529 Some of the key uncertainties in Earth system model projections relate to errors in simulating important regional climate
530 processes and phenomena, including interactions across spatial scales and regions. For some of these phenomena, model
531 resolution has been shown to be a key factor. Hewitt et al. (2022) showed that increasing ocean model resolution, in
532 particular better resolving the ocean mesoscale, is important for accurately representing a number of key processes,
533 including; ocean eddies in the Southern Ocean and North Atlantic (*with implications for simulated marine heat and carbon*
534 *uptake, ice sheets and sea-level rise*), ocean deep water formation in the Labrador and Nordic Seas and on the Antarctic shelf
535 (*with implications for the global ocean overturning circulation and heat uptake*), the Atlantic Meridional Overturning
536 Circulation (*with implications for heat and carbon uptake, as well as regional climate*), ocean upwelling regions (*with*
537 *implications for marine carbon uptake, productivity and fisheries*). Increased resolution, in both the atmosphere and ocean, is
538 also important for simulating large-scale hydrological processes (Vanni re et al., 2019) (*with important implications for*
539 *regional water cycles, water availability and food security*), as well as modes of climate variability, such as the El Ni o
540 Southern Oscillation (ENSO) and associated teleconnections (*with implications for the rate of ocean heat uptake and*
541 *regional climate variability*). While increased model resolution (to better resolve the [ocean mesoscale](#) or the synoptic
542 [scale in the atmosphere](#)) is an important component of reducing several systematic biases in coupled models, it is
543 equally important to improve key parameterization schemes for processes that continue to be unresolved, even at horizontal
544 resolutions of ~10km/0.1  in coupled models. In particular, it is critical to ensure further improvement in parameterizations
545 at the heart of uncertainty in [the simulated Effective Climate Sensitivity \(EffCS\) and](#), Transient Climate Response (TCR)
546 ([Meehl et al., 2020](#)) and [aerosol-cloud forcing](#) (see Sect. 6 of this paper).

548 Upscale effects from many ~~of these~~ small-scale processes can be important. For example, oceanic mesoscale eddies tend to
549 drive atmospheric mesoscale storms in the extra tropics (Liu et al., 2021), while at larger scales the atmosphere can drive
550 ocean variability (Frankignoul, 1985). These effects are apparent only in coupled systems and their large-scale
551 consequences, such as the preferred location and orientation of the jet stream, mid-latitude storm tracks, and related air-sea
552 fluxes, can only be captured in large-domain models with mesoscale or better resolution (Seo et al., 2023). Furthermore,
553 couplings between the heat, water, and carbon cycles, means improving the representation (and parameterization) of physical
554 processes will deliver important benefits for simulating the carbon, and other biogeochemical, cycles. In addition to the
555 large-scale impacts, higher resolution models also offer an improved simulation of climate variability, in particular weather
556 extremes such as; tropical cyclones (Roberts et al., 2020), extreme precipitation (You et al., 2023), atmospheric rivers (Liang
557 and Yangyang, 2023), jet streams and atmospheric blocking (Schiemann et al., 2020) with consequences for the frequency
558 and location of extreme weather (Athanasiadis et al., 2022), which both depend on SST realism delivered by resolving the

559 ocean mesoscale. All these events have important impacts across the coupled Earth system, including upscale effects, e.g.
560 drying of the atmospheric column by tropical cyclones over the Maritime Continent, with impacts on ENSO (Scoccimarro et
561 al., 2021). Similarly, in the ocean increased resolution can improve the representation of important dynamical phenomena,
562 such as marine heatwaves (Plecha and Soares, 2020) the representation of bottom water formation (Heuzé, 2021) and mixed
563 layer eddies (Calvert et al., 2020).

564

565 Increasing model resolution alone does not guarantee improvement in all simulated metrics and leads to ~~important~~significant
566 challenges related to model spin-up, ~~model~~ equilibration, calibration, and uncertainty quantification. Simulation
567 improvements are often best realized through a combination of increased model resolution and targeted improvement to key
568 parameterization schemes. While the compute cost increases considerably as model resolution is increased, recent studies
569 suggest increased resolution can deliver important insights into some long-standing model biases, and perhaps reconcile
570 mismatches between simulated and observed historic trends. For example, Rackow et al. (2022) show that resolving the
571 ocean mesoscale improves the simulation of Antarctic sea-ice trends, Chang et al. (2023) illustrate increased realism in
572 ocean upwelling as model resolution is increased, and ongoing work suggests higher resolution simulations can better
573 capture recent observed trends in the Eastern Pacific that are not captured in CMIP6 models (Seager et al., 2022). Such
574 improvements will [increase confidence in future model projections and](#) have important implications for predicting future
575 extreme events, such as tropical cyclones, floods, droughts, and heatwaves.

576

577 There is strong evidence a coordinated set of simulations for CMIP7, with resolutions enhanced over those typically used
578 (e.g. 10-~~25~~20 km in the atmosphere and $\sim 0.1^\circ$ in the ocean), can deliver an improved simulation and understanding of key
579 regional climate processes and a more robust assessment of future changes in many of these processes, with benefits for
580 impact and adaptation planning. Chang et al. (2020) demonstrated that CMIP-length simulations, with an equilibrated
581 coupled model, are now possible at resolutions of ~ 10 -~~25~~20km/0.1°. Many groups produced simulations following the
582 CMIP6 HighResMIP protocol (Haarsma et al., 2016), though generally with very limited ensemble sizes. Given increased
583 model efficiency and available compute resources, CMIP7 provides an opportunity to further investigate the benefits of
584 increased coupled model resolution, alongside increased ensemble size, longer ~~simulations~~simulation length, methods for
585 improved model equilibration and initialization, and enhanced process realism. Given current structural limitations of
586 coupled climate models, of whatever resolution, sampling model diversity, through multi-model CMIP-style exercises,
587 remains critical for providing robust estimates of projection uncertainties and risks (see Section 7). This is particularly the
588 case with respect to regional climate change, where processes may be resolution-dependent (e.g. Moreno-Chamarro et al.,
589 2022) and therefore sensitive to biases common across lower resolution models. A diversity of enhanced resolution coupled
590 models thus needs to be promoted, but also optimized across the competing demands for delivering future projection data
591 that is of maximum quality and utility both for the science and policy communities.

592

593 **4.2 Increased model resolution from global to regional scales for regional impact assessment and adaptation.**

594 Like their global counterparts, Regional Climate Models have also increased in resolution, with a growing set of models now
595 running at convection-permitting resolutions (~ 1 -3km resolution; Ban et al., 2021; Hohenegger et al., 2023). In addition to
596 an improved simulation of the convective scale, high-resolution itself brings direct benefits, by delivering climate
597 information closer to impact and adaptation relevant scales and by better resolving local climate in regions of strong
598 orographic forcing, complex land-sea-lake structures, or heterogeneous land surface types. Moreover, explicitly resolving
599 convective events, including the self-organization and self-intensification of these events, brings physical grounding to
600 simulated precipitation extremes (Kendon et al., 2021; Caillaud et al., 2024), including the ability to evaluate models against

601 observations at common spatial scales (Caillaud et al., 2021). A growing set of regional projections, employing convection-
602 resolving models (Pichelli et al., 2021; Chapman et al., 2022; Kawase et al., 2023; Kendon et al., 2023), is shedding new
603 light on the interaction between future climate change and regional hydrological responses. Convective-scale regional
604 models can also be deployed for shorter, targeted purposes. For example, by focusing downscaling onto event sets where
605 such high regional resolution is expected to add value to coarser scale models, or by sub-selecting global projections that
606 allow a broad range of climate hazards, needed for robust adaptation, to be simulated regionally at high resolution.

607
608 While the combination of high-resolution coupled global climate models (~10-2520 km in the atmosphere and ~0.1° in the
609 ocean) and convection-permitting regional climate models (~1-3 km) are computationally demanding, the potential to
610 deliver radically new findings and policy support, at scales required by national and regional planners, means they are an
611 increasingly important input to national climate scenarios, adaptation planning, and climate services. This is particularly the
612 case with respect to risks associated with extreme weather events. In the next phase of CMIP and CORDEX, we propose a
613 significant emphasis be placed on increasing increased collaboration, as well as increased data and knowledge sharing,
614 between high-resolution global climate models, convection-resolving regional models, and statistical/ML-based
615 downscaling, with the goal of producing a coordinated ensemble of state-of-the-art, high-resolution global and regional
616 projections, downscaled by an ensemble of convection-resolving regional models, augmented by state of the art statistical
617 and ML-based downscaling. We further recommend the resulting high-resolution (global and regional) projection
618 data projections are used to feed a range of impact models (e.g. in ISIMIP, AgMIP and FishMIP). As the future impacts
619 felt by natural and human systems is not only dependent on climate change, but also on the direct human forcing of climate
620 arising from the underpinning scenarios themselves, it will be important to also represent these drivers at high spatial
621 resolution. The resulting set of climate change and impacts data will be of enormous value to national climate change impact
622 assessments, adaptation planning and climate services. To maximize the quality and consistency of this multi-scale, multi-
623 method data set, it is important systems are developed and employed to allow support careful evaluation of the cascade of
624 information across systems methods, scales, and regions, as well as from climate to impacts, highlighting both value-added
625 and consistency-lost across the entire chain.

627 4.3 Global Storm Resolving models and the path to global km-scale

628 Global models with grid spacing in the range 1-10km are often referred to as Global Storm Resolving Models (GSRMs, e.g.,
629 Hohenegger et al., 2020; Judt et al., 2020; Caldwell et al., 2021). GSRMs running at ~3-5km global resolution currently
630 achieve a throughput of ~0.5 simulated years per day (SYPD), with an aim to reach 1 SYPD in the coming years. GSRMs
631 originated within the international DYAMOND initiative (Stevens et al., 2021) and the GRSM community are currently
632 designing year-long experiment protocols (Takasuka et al., 2024, submitted). In addition, within the EU-sponsored
633 Destination Earth (DestinE; Wedi et al., 2022) two coupled GCMs have run a reduced HighResMIP experiment (for the
634 period 1990 to 2040) with grid spacing of 5km.

635
636 Examples of scientific highlights realised by GSRMs include; a realistic representation of the interannual frequency of
637 Tropical Cyclones (TC) in major basins, comprising a realistic distribution of all severity categories (Judt et al., 2020), as
638 well as realistic representation of the rate of TC intensification, possible as resolutions reach 3km or better. Recent
639 comparative studies among km-scale ocean models show large-scale features that affect the storm tracks and air-sea coupling
640 (e.g., Gulf Stream separation) are more consistent in these models than in coarser resolution ocean models. Internal
641 variability is also substantially larger in eddy-rich models (Chang et al., 2020; Jüling et al., 2021), including stronger SST
642 responses to AMOC variations. In terms of coupled phenomena, realistic representation of the North Atlantic storm track has
643 been shown to be sensitive to resolution of the ocean mesoscale, including instantaneous features (eddies) and climatological
644 features (western boundary currents) (Moreno Chamorro et al., 2022). Representation of the full spectrum of precipitation

645 processed by cyclones, including their frontal structures, organised convection, such as Mesoscale Convective Systems and
646 squall lines are generally more realistic as model resolution is increased (Vellinga et al., 2016).

648 Many of these achievements have been in the realm of convection-permitting Regional Climate Models (see section 4.2) for
649 the past ~5 years. GSRMs offer the additional value of being able to simulate upscale effects from small scales onto larger
650 scales, e.g. how the Hadley and Walker circulations are affected, including meridional transports of energy, as well as
651 implications for global teleconnections, mediated by atmospheric wave propagation. Many of these achievements were
652 realised thanks to the development of new dynamical cores, capable of reducing the total number of computations, by use of
653 uniformly spaced global grids, or by models running more efficiently through advanced numerical schemes in time and
654 space, and by exploiting multiple parallelisation paradigms on the latest supercomputers, including those equipped with
655 GPUs. With the advent of even more powerful new classes of GPU, such as the NVIDIA Hopper or AMD MI300 series,
656 completing a selection of typical CMIP6 experimental protocols at ~3km resolution, with a total turnaround of order of one
657 year, will soon be possible.

659 Data output and analysis constitutes a major challenge at these resolutions: output of order petabytes per day are
660 commonplace, and storing multiple ensemble members for centennial-scale simulations is not feasible. Multiple approaches
661 are being tested to alleviate this problem, such as performing the most data-intensive and multi-variate analyses while the
662 models are running, reduced data precision, or holding data on fast disks for very brief time periods to allow immediate
663 consumption by users. Other approaches include the use of hierarchical data layers, which can be output and handled in
664 parallel, with incremental expense, as exemplified by the HEALPIX standard.

665 An ambitious vision for addressing such data challenges, including co-design, co-production, and global access, is provided
666 in the Earth Virtualisation Engines concept (Stevens et al., 2024).

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667

668 5 Increasing collaboration across approaches to improve global and regional Earth system and climate models.

669 The accuracy of numerous simulated Earth system and biogeochemical phenomena strongly depends on the quality of
670 simulated physical climate drivers (Doney et al., 1999). Examples of such dependencies include, but are not limited to; (i)
671 vegetation growth/loss, terrestrial carbon uptake, and the simulated water cycle; (ii) wildfires and simulated precipitation,
672 soil moisture and winds; (iii) marine productivity and the dynamics of ocean upwelling, (iv) mass loss from marine ice
673 sheets and regional ocean circulation; (v) global ocean heat and carbon uptake, and representation of deep water formation,
674 (vi) regional air pollution and modes of atmospheric circulation. Conversely, in the real-world, carbon cycle – climate
675 feedbacks (as well as other Earth system feedbacks) change the fraction of anthropogenic CO₂ (and other gases, such as CH₄
676 or N₂O) that remain in the atmosphere to cause warming, and thereby influence/influencing the magnitude of physical climate
677 feedbacks (e.g. water vapour, lapse-rate, cloud or sea ice feedbacks). Furthermore, while an accurate simulation of the mean
678 climate (in time and space), as well as trends in this measure of climate, are extremely important, an accurate representation
679 of variability (in both time and space) of the underpinning physical climate can often be as important for simulating the Earth
680 system response to a changing climate. Such variability is also a critical driver of the impacts of climate change. Regional
681 climate variability, particularly the width of the distribution of such variability (i.e. the extreme tails of future climate
682 distributions), is generally better represented as resolution is increased, both in global and regional models (Wehner et al.,
683 2014; IPCC, Doblas-Reyes et al., 2021; Ban et al., 2021).

685 High-resolution coupled global climate models can be viewed as the physical core of the next generation of Earth system
686 models, offering an improved simulation of the driving physical climate, including climate variability and extreme events.
687 Collaboration across the development of high-resolution physical climate models, and Earth system models that emphasize

688 enhanced process-realism, needs to deepen both in CMIP7 (with respect to global models, Dunne et al., 2023) and CORDEX
689 (with respect to regional models). Such collaboration can benefit from, and feed into, ongoing efforts under the WCRP LHA
690 Explaining and Predicting Earth System Change (<https://www.wcrp-climate.org/epesc>), and offers an unprecedented
691 opportunity to bring advances from both areas together to support development of the next generation of Earth system
692 models. Such a meeting point between these two model development paths offers a unique testbed for assessing
693 technological advances (e.g. hybrid-resolution ESMs, Berthet et al., 2019; AI-based emulation approaches, Son et al., 2024),
694 as well as conceptual challenges in Earth system modelling (e.g. ~~in~~ quantifying and optimizing the benefits and trade-offs
695 between resolution, complexity and ensemble size). ~~Machine Learning (ML) has~~AI/ML-based approaches also have the
696 potential to ~~reduce long-standing systematic errors in ESMs and enhance~~improve model parameterizations, while potentially
697 ~~also increasing computational efficiency, enhancing~~ the overall projection capability of these models. ~~This needs to be~~
698 ~~further explored (Eyring et al., 2023a, 2024a), with increased sharing of methodologies and findings across ML-based, and~~
699 ~~more traditional (process-based) approaches, to model development; (Schneider et al., 2024), Increased collaboration and~~
700 ~~knowledge sharing across these efforts will~~can lead to a step change in our overall ability to provide robust climate
701 ~~information at scales that meets the needs for mitigation and adaptation across spatial and temporal scales~~decision-
702 ~~making~~(Eyring et al., 2023b, 2024b).

704 A number of initiatives are beginning to develop “Digital Twins of the Earth” (DTEs, [Bauer et al. 2021](#), [Hoffman et al.](#)
705 [2023](#)), (e.g. the WCRP Digital Earth LHA, <https://www.wcrp-climate.org/digital-earths>) targeting an optimal fusion of Earth
706 system modelling and observations, to deliver fit-for-purpose and actionable information to society. These approaches
707 combine forward modelling, data assimilation, and machine learning tools with user models designed to answer specific
708 questions. A number of (global and regional) DTEs are beginning to provide samples of km-scale information, with the
709 majority of DTEs to-date being atmosphere-land only models. For application to future climate change, such models
710 presently require sea surface and sea ice boundary condition data (or atmospheric boundary conditions) derived from
711 coupled ESM projections. As DTEs further develop to include other components of the Earth system (e.g. oceans,
712 cryosphere, carbon cycle etc) it will be important they are carefully evaluated against existing approaches to deliver high-
713 resolution future climate information (either via uninitialized projections or observation-initialised predictions). It will also
714 be important to document the uncertainties in DTE projections/predictions arising from different modelling choices, different
715 external forcings and emission scenarios, as well as from internal variability. This is particularly important with respect to
716 predicted or projected changes in future extreme weather events, which by definition are rare occurrences, with low
717 predictability.

719 Only a few efforts to date are trying to develop two key aspects of digital twins; linking inputs to observations and outputs to
720 human systems. In Europe, Destination Earth (<https://destination-earth.eu/>) experiments with weather and climate twins,
721 down to resolutions of 2.5 km, and aims to make its experimental design respond to user needs, so models store a minimal
722 amount of data, but are re-run on a regular basis, incorporating the latest data requests in each update. In the US, the
723 Department of Energy has tested combining physical models (e.g. the Energy Exascale Earth System Model, E3SM (Golaz
724 et al., 2022)) with human system models, including Integrated Assessment or Energy Grid models. In addition, ultra-high-
725 resolution global storm-resolving models (GSRMs, Stevens et al., 2019; Lee and Hohenegger, 2024) run at 1-5 km
726 resolution may provide further understanding and insights into biases, complementing CMIP7/CORDEX simulations. ~~While~~
727 ~~the approaches employed and timescales involved are somewhat different, Increased~~ sharing ~~across the range of~~
728 ~~methodologies, successes, and problem-solving across~~modelling communities will benefit all strands of work, improving our
729 combined ability to model the ~~coupled~~Earth system and deliver robust and actionable ~~climate~~ information to policymakers
730 and society.

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6 Improving model simulations of the observational record and key metrics of climate change

To increase confidence in future projections it is important models accurately reproduce the observed historical record. This requirement encompasses multiple variables and timescales, with long-term trends in global mean surface air temperature (GMSAT), including the forcings and feedbacks controlling these trends, of first order importance. In CMIP6 a number of ESMs exhibited EffCS values (of 5°C or greater) that are higher than the 5-95% range, as assessed by multiple lines of evidence (Sherwood et al., 2020). Some of these models also simulated global warming rates over recent decades (~1980 to 2014) greater than seen in observations (Tokarska et al., 2020), leading to suggestions these “hot models” were unrealistic and should be filtered out from climate impact assessments (Hausfather et al., 2022).

Cloud feedbacks are the largest contributor to uncertainty in EffCS. Perhaps surprisingly, CMIP6 ESMs with high EffCS often evaluate better against observations for present-day clouds than earlier or lower EffCS models (Bock and Lauer, 2024; Kuma et al., 2023), and also accurately reproduce recent trends in cloud-radiation when driven by observed sea surface temperatures (SSTs, e.g. Loeb et al., 2020). These ESMs also represent a number (though not all) cloud feedback processes more accurately than earlier models, particularly those related to mixed phase clouds over the Southern Ocean (Jiang et al., 2023). Nevertheless, studies continue to highlight problems across the majority of CMIP6 models with respect to Southern Ocean clouds (Schuddeboom and McDonald, 2021) and, in particular, low-level tropical marine clouds (Konsta et al., 2022), with observation-based constraints of the latter cloud type suggesting an EffCS closer to 3°C (Myers et al., 2021). It is therefore possible some high EffCS CMIP6 models improved one cloud feedback (e.g. mid-latitude, mixed phase clouds leading to a less negative cloud phase feedback) that exposed other feedback errors (e.g. too positive low-level, tropical marine cloud feedback) that previously compensated each other with respect to the total cloud feedback. Such one-sided improvement can result in an increased positive total cloud feedback and high EffCS. Continued improvement in the representation of cloud processes and feedbacks across all relevant cloud types, including exploitation of new observational data and analysis methods, will be crucial for better constraining EffCS in CMIP7 and improving the simulation of historical climate and rates of global warming.

While a number of high EffCS models in CMIP6 simulated too strong global warming over the period ~1980 to 2014, establishing a direct link between EffCS and historical warming is not straightforward. This is mainly due to the confounding role of aerosols, as well as the important role played by natural variability. In CMIP7 historical forcings are planned to be extended to 2022 (i.e. 8 years longer than in CMIP6). Recent studies [indicatesuggest](#) anthropogenic effective radiative forcing (ERF) has become more positive, by ~50%, between the decades 2000-2009 and 2010-2019, mainly due to a reduction in the negative aerosol ERF (Jenkins et al., 2022; Hodnebrog et al., 2024). This change has been accompanied by almost a doubling of the GMSAT warming trend between these two decades. Jenkins et al. (2022) suggest that while some of the increased GMSAT trend is very likely due to reduced aerosol cooling, long-term variability in ENSO may also contribute. Modelling studies by Wang et al. (2023) further suggest that decreasing aerosol emissions may outweigh decreasing CO₂ emissions in terms of their impact on warming and climate extremes during the path to global net-zero carbon emissions. Kang et al. (2023a, b) suggest the SST pattern observed in the Pacific between ~1979 and 2013, which induces a negative cloud feedback term (that is not captured in most coupled ESMs), is linked to cooling SST trends in the Southern Ocean over this period (also not captured in coupled ESMs). They suggest that as Southern Ocean SSTs begin to warm, the tropical Pacific SST pattern may decay, resulting in a more positive cloud feedback and potentially an increased rate of global warming. Understanding, and simulating [in-coupled-ESMs](#), the drivers of such SST trends, as well as their interaction with climate feedbacks and global warming, will be crucial to increase confidence in future projections.

773 Constraining future feedbacks and evaluating model processes controlling these feedbacks is a difficult challenge. Emergent
774 Constraints, which use a multi-model ensemble to identify relationships between observable Earth System variations and
775 projected future changes, are an attractive way to constrain future feedbacks based on observations (Hall et al., 2019; Nijssen
776 et al., 2020) and thereby reduce uncertainty in future projections. To date, assumed emergent relationships are often simple
777 linear regressions. Machine Learning techniques are a promising route for identifying multi-dimensional, non-linear
778 relationships between contemporary observables and the future state of the Earth System (Schlund et al., 2020) and may
779 therefore improve the constraints on future feedbacks and even allow an evaluation of model processes controlling these
780 feedbacks. An improved simulation of the historical past, combined with improved constraints on key feedbacks and the
781 processes controlling these feedbacks, will increase confidence in ESM projections and improve estimates of key climate
782 change metrics such as EffCS, TCR and TCRE with implications for estimates of allowable carbon emissions
783 ~~for~~commensurate with different policy targets.

784
785 Both global and Regional ESMs struggle to accurately represent observed regional climate trends, as underlined for Western
786 Europe by recent literature (Ribes et al., 2022; Schumacher et al., 2023; Vautard et al., 2023). This may be partly linked to
787 poor quality lateral and surface boundary conditions (e.g. most recently from CMIP6 ESMs), but may also be a result of
788 missing, or poorly represented, regional forcings and/or feedbacks in the RCMs themselves (Nabat et al., 2014; Boé et al.,
789 2020; Taranu et al., 2022, e.g. the representation of aerosol-climate interactions or the simulation of regional/coastal SST
790 trends). For RCMs, too short evaluation runs, and lack of adequate calibration strategies may also contribute to these
791 problems. Tackling such weaknesses, combined with development of an evaluation system applicable across the scales and
792 downscaling methods involved, will be important for increasing trust in high-resolution, regional ~~climate~~ projections that
793 ~~will be~~ used in numerous national climate scenarios and impact assessments.

794 **7 Sampling and quantifying future uncertainty**

795 Multi-model ensemble projections (MME), such as those from CMIP and CORDEX, sample a number of plausible IAM
796 emission and land-use scenarios. The MMEs often include a small number of ensemble members per individual model, each
797 sampling internal variability (as represented by that model). The MME approach, to a limited extent, also addresses
798 structural modelling uncertainty. The degree this aspect of uncertainty is sampled is ultimately constrained by the resolution
799 and process realism of the models involved, and by the degree of commonality of approaches to representing unresolved and
800 uncertain model processes (Merrifield et al., 2023).

801 **7.1 High Impact Low Likelihood (HILL) outcomes.**

802 While such MMEs sample a fraction of the uncertainty in future Earth system change, this sampling is far from complete,
803 particularly with respect to the extreme, low-likelihood end of potential Earth system change. Such responses are referred to
804 as HILL (High Impact, Low Likelihood) outcomes (Wood et al., 2023). While HILL outcomes have a low likelihood of
805 happening, there remains a small chance they will occur. One example would be if the Earth's equilibrium climate sensitivity
806 (ECS) turned out to be ~5°C. While this outcome is highly unlikely (IPCC AR6 quotes the *very likely range* (5-95%
807 probability) of ECS as between 2°C and 5°C; see Fig. 7.18, in IPCC, 2021, Ch7, Forster et al. 2021), if it did occur the impacts
808 on society would be extremely large.

809
810 HILL events may also occur at lower levels of warming (Armstrong-McKay, 2020) and impact numerous parts of the Earth
811 system across a range of regions and timescales. For example, a HILL event may be triggered if a threshold of Antarctic ice
812 loss is exceeded, which may then accelerate and become irreversible, with ~~important~~ consequences for sea level rise and

813 coastal communities (Garbe et al., 2020; Taherkhani et al., 2020). Similar, poorly quantified, and poorly understood, risks
814 exist for other potential Tipping Points in the Earth system, such as collapse of the Atlantic Meridional Overturning
815 Circulation (AMOC, Klose et al., 2023), dieback of the Amazon rainforest (Parry et al., 2022), or rapid permafrost thaw
816 (Turetsky et al., 2020). Tipping points also exist in the natural environment and in society and may be triggered at modest
817 levels of warming. Examples include climate driven species loss already occurring at today’s levels of global warming (e.g.
818 first species extinction attributed to climate change; IPCC 2023 SPM), mass mortality in coral reef ecosystems (Donner et
819 al., 2017; Hughes et al., 2018; Hughes et al., 2019), shift from kelp- to urchin-dominated coastal communities (Rogers-
820 Bennett and Catton, 2019; McPherson et al., 2021). HILL events, both in the natural Earth system and society are not only
821 sensitive to changes in the mean climate, but also to changes in climate variability. Increased inter-annual variability can
822 have major impacts on society and ecosystems (von Trentini et al., 2020). Systematic shifts, even in sub-seasonal climate can
823 significantly impact society (e.g. changes in the frequency distribution of hot summer days and nights, [and](#) human mortality;
824 Schär et al., 2004).

825
826 The signal of natural [internal](#) variability (in models expressed as internal variability across a model ensemble) increases in
827 importance, relative to the signal of human forced climate change, as spatial and temporal averaging scales decrease, and
828 projection timescales become shorter (Hawkins and Sutton, 2009). A consequence of this is that larger ensembles are
829 required to reliably detect a forced climate change signal from an extreme realization of natural variability. The shorter
830 duration and/or rarer the event, the larger the ensemble size likely required to be confident a (forced) signal is outside the
831 range of natural variability. This is important information for reliable and cost-effective adaptation to potential future climate
832 risks. Several groups have produced large ensembles covering the historical past and future (Olonscheck et al., 2023; Maher
833 et al., 2021; Deser et al., 2020), using 50 to 100 realizations, often started from different initial conditions taken from the
834 model’s pre-industrial simulation. Such large ensembles are ideal for detecting forced regional changes (as simulated by
835 [the](#) that particular model) from internal (natural) variability (also as simulated by the particular model). Due to the high
836 computational cost involved, to date such large ensembles are generally based on relatively low-resolution models that do
837 not carry the process complexity of full ESMs. This can limit their overall utility. For example, low resolution models
838 struggle to simulate intense weather events, such as tropical cyclones or extreme precipitation. As a result, their utility for
839 investigating changes in extreme weather is limited, although this limitation could be addressed, for specific regions at least,
840 by building ensembles consisting of both Global and Regional models run in tight coordination.

841
842 Recently, single model initial condition large ensembles (SMILEs) have been combined to form multi-model ensembles of
843 SMILEs (Lehner et al., 2020), increasing the sampled uncertainty beyond internal variability to also encompass (to some
844 degree) structural model uncertainty. Techniques have been developed to optimally combine individual SMILEs, with
845 different ensemble numbers, to produce an unbiased multi-model SMILE that [even](#) also considers present-day model
846 performance in its design (Merrifield et al., 2020). New Machine Learning techniques offer the potential for a more efficient
847 and comprehensive assessment of the future projection uncertainty space and can be used to guide, and in some cases realise,
848 the creation of large ensembles, including ones targeted onto extreme event risks (Eyring et al., [2023a2024a](#)).

849 **7.2 Internal variability, parameter uncertainty and model structural uncertainty.**

850 An additional approach for investigating modelling uncertainty is the Perturbed Parameter Ensemble (PPE) (Murphy et al.,
851 2007). In the PPE approach uncertain, often difficult to constrain, model parameters are varied within reasonable limits,
852 where possible constrained by observations (Booth et al., 2017). The resulting PPE members can be further filtered to retain
853 only skilful members in terms of present-day climate and/or historical trends (e.g., Sexton et al., 2021; Peatier et al., 2022).
854 Recent advances in model calibration (e.g., Hourdin et al., 2021, 2023) will be instrumental in better designing future

855 ~~PPEPPPEs~~. Using the PPE approach, it is sometimes possible to mimic key measures of future projection uncertainty (e.g. the
856 range of climate feedbacks and ECS in a CMIP MME) using only a single model (Collins et al., 2011). Applying the PPE
857 approach across multiple global and regional model systems allows probabilistic regional climate projections that sample a
858 significant fraction of [the future projection uncertainty](#) (Evi et al., 2021). Such approaches support [an](#) assessment of regional
859 impacts sampling uncertainty in the future driving global and regional climate, including changes in climate and weather
860 variability.

861
862 In addition to physically based models, advanced statistical methods such as emulators (Meinhausen et al., 2011; Leach et
863 al., 2021) and Machine-Learning (ML) (Watson-Parris, 2021; Eyring et al., ~~2023a~~2024a) are increasingly being used to more
864 fully, and rapidly, investigate uncertainty in future Earth system change. Emulators and ML methods can be trained either on
865 an individual model or an ensemble of historical and future projections made by ESMs (Beusch et al., 2020; Nath et al.,
866 2022) or RCMs (Doury et al., 2022, 2024) and used to investigate a large range of future emission and land-use scenarios, or
867 to focus on specific aspects of projection uncertainty (e.g. high ECS futures). ~~Observations~~[Process understanding and](#)
868 [observations](#) can also be brought into the emulation process, enabling the resulting emulators to mimic the behaviour of the
869 more complex ESMs ~~(Séférián et al. 2024)~~, while weighting this behaviour towards better performing models (Beusch et al.,
870 2020; Sanderson et al., 2017). Statistical emulation approaches are also used to assess the sensitivity of ESMs to uncertain
871 model parameters (expanding the PPE approach), both for parameterization development (Silva et al., 2021; Rasp et al.,
872 2018) and for developing and selecting ESMs that combine acceptable present-day performance with constraints on their
873 future response (e.g. constraining ECS to lie within a specified range (Peatier et al., 2022)). Emulators were used extensively
874 alongside global and regional projections in IPCC AR6 to deliver observation-constrained future projections (Nicholls et al.,
875 2022). Emulators and ML tools can enhance the provision of climate information (Pfleiderer et al., 2024) and support
876 interdisciplinary integration, allowing direct coupling to IAM scenarios and thus supporting cross-working group
877 collaboration in IPCC AR7 and beyond.

878 **7.3 Assessing uncertainty across all the steps in providing actionable climate information.**

879 The new round of international modelling projects presents an opportunity to bring together the range of approaches and
880 methods used to assess and quantify uncertainty across IAM models and scenarios, global and regional models (considering
881 internal model variability, parameter uncertainty and structural model differences), and impact models (both in terms of the
882 climate forcing used and uncertain [impact](#) model parameters). This collaboration should also extend to ~~work closely with~~
883 communities developing, improving and applying emulators and simple climate models (Séférián et al., 2024). Collaboration
884 across communities and activities will help increase the range of uncertainty space that can be analysed, and lead to a more
885 systematic and coordinated approach to uncertainty assessment across the full suite of modelling activities ~~that delivers~~
886 ~~science~~[delivering](#) knowledge and data to climate policy and ~~climate~~-services. We further recommend significant effort be
887 devoted to the communication of uncertainty and conversely, communication of what is expected to occur in the future, and
888 the level of certainty/confidence that can be attached to these outcomes, with the target audiences being climate change
889 policymakers, planners, and practitioners.

890
891 Going forwards, a key demand on the international modelling community, with respect to supporting IPCC AR7 and the
892 UNFCCC Global Stocktake, will be the development and analysis of realizable future pathways that limit global warming to
893 the targets of the Paris Agreement. These pathways are likely to include an overshoot of the warming targets and therefore
894 the need for negative CO₂ emissions (i.e. active removal of CO₂ from the atmosphere). How these negative emissions will be
895 realized in practice and what magnitude is feasible, remain open questions. A thorough analysis and quantification of the full
896 cascade of uncertainty associated with such pathways is an important demand on the science community. This analysis needs

897 to encompass uncertainty in; how the necessary negative CO₂ emissions will be realized (i.e. the mitigation actions
898 themselves), the response of the carbon cycle to decreasing atmospheric CO₂, the efficacy of any CO₂ removal in reducing
899 global temperatures, and the regional climate responses that may arise from such cooling pathways. In addition,
900 uncertainties in the (expected) reduction in the societal and environmental impacts of Earth system change, as global
901 warming is reduced, need to be assessed, and the impacts avoided compared to any impacts arising directly from the
902 mitigation actions themselves. Along the entirety of this chain of events and responses there is deep uncertainty. The science
903 community needs to analyse, quantify, and communicate this uncertainty as thoroughly and clearly as possible.

904
905 Robust climate adaptation requires information on the range of potential future changes (which represent the climate hazard
906 in risk decision frameworks). While ~~great strides have~~progress has been made in quantifying global and large-scale impacts
907 arising from ~~the~~ range of climate change drivers, this has only been partially successful with respect to translating ~~the range~~
908 ~~of~~ these impacts to the ~~local~~ scales needed to ~~assess climate impact and~~ develop local to national adaptation plans. CMIP7
909 offers an opportunity to more fully include and propagate the wider CO₂-emission driven uncertainties through to local-scale
910 climate information (as outlined in Sect. 3.2). An equally important dimension is the role natural variability plays in climate
911 change, especially on the timescale of the next 10 to 40 years (that frames many adaptation decisions). On these timescales
912 and at the local scale, natural variability typically dominates the forced climate change signal, for example for precipitation
913 and temperature. This information is ever more critical as society adapts to climate change in a mitigating world, where such
914 mitigation aims to limit the climate change signal. Large initial condition ensembles are a key tool for understanding and
915 quantifying the role natural variability plays. The expense (computational, data storage) of generating and sharing Lateral
916 Boundary Conditions (LBCs) required to drive Regional Climate models has limited the availability of LBC data, and hence
917 the potential for regional scale simulations (such as CORDEX) to sample the role of regional natural variability in the
918 context of the wider climate hazard space, at impact relevant scales. Commitments for new LBCs are often made before a
919 simulation's credibility can be assessed and before any understanding of where the realisation of variability plus feedbacks
920 places a particular simulation in the wider potential projection space. There will be value, therefore, in exploring iterative
921 approaches between ESM and regional modelling groups to identify optimal ESM simulations to be rerun for LBC
922 generation.

923
924 Statistical downscaling may provide the most effective route to link wider ESM projections to what they imply at the local
925 level (Gutiérrez et al., 2019), as these approaches are not restricted by the limited availability of LBCs. Emerging Neural
926 Network Machine Learning techniques trained on existing regional (RCM and Convection Permitting RCM (CPM))
927 simulations, are showing promise in capturing spatial and temporal climate change, at local scales, based on large scale
928 drivers simulated by ESMs (Baño-Medina et al., 2021; Doury et al., 2022). Whilst there is still work to be done (e.g.
929 achieving multi-variate coherence (González-Abad et al., 2023), transferability to other ESMs (Baño-Medina et al., 2024),
930 ~~and~~ building frameworks to verify ML downscaled results)), their emergence is likely to ~~represent a transformative change~~
931 ~~in~~transform how the science community provides local scale climate information, as they ~~enable~~allow the production of this
932 information to be determined by realisations that can inform on the range of local scale climate hazard (bottom up) rather
933 than the limited availability of ~~Earth system model~~ LBCs ~~by ESM modellers~~ (top down) ~~as is currently done~~. ML-based
934 downscaling therefore has the potential to translate coarse-scale Earth system model output directly to spatial scales of utility
935 for impact models, impact assessment and local adaptation planning (Eyring et al., 2023b,2024b). Such developments can be
936 transformative in other senses, too. For example, given adequate prior ESM to RCM/CPM training data, CMIP7 has the
937 potential to be downscaled almost as soon as the ESM simulations are completed, something which could help inform, for
938 the first time, IPCC AR7 with consistent global and regional projection data, and associated impact simulations (see Sect. 2).
939 Similarly, ML may offer ways to address the prohibitive storage costs of conventional high resolution local data by enabling

940 the availability of such data on demand based on large scale variables (which are much cheaper to store). Ultimately,
941 incorporating Machine Learning into the production of high-resolution regional climate information is likely to open further
942 benefits due to the flexibility such tools enable. For example, ML downscaling will be amenable to approaches that use
943 observations to bias correct the regional data, directly. Similarly, as insights from new modelling (e.g. resolving convective
944 scales, interactive atmosphere-shelf sea-wave models) come online, ~~similar~~ ML downscaling tools may be able to produce
945 new high resolution regional climate data reflecting these insights, if ~~the new~~ modelling experiments are designed to inform
946 the required ML training.

947 **8 The underpinning technological infrastructure**

948 The ambitious science and science for policy aims discussed in this paper cannot be realized without a state-of-the-art
949 underpinning computational and data infrastructure, supported by experienced personnel. Our recommendations require the
950 co-design of certain experiments, followed by the production, quality-control and sharing of numerous datasets from a
951 diverse range of modelling systems, between producers and a heterogenous set of consumers separated in time and space. An
952 aspiration for IPCC AR7, as described earlier, is to deliver a coordinated and coherent set of data from across the most recent
953 IAM scenarios, global [projections](#) (CMIP7) and regional [downscaling](#) (CORDEX-~~simulations~~), as well as impact model
954 results based on these scenarios and climate forcing. To achieve this will require more efficient and rapid sharing of both
955 requirements and data across all communities, including where feasible user communities. We therefore stress the need to
956 improve the underpinning infrastructure ecosystem that supports these [international](#) modelling efforts to enable the co-
957 development of suitable experiment protocols, followed by the production, evaluation, and exploitation of datasets, which
958 themselves can be used as input to other simulation workflows, with different production, validation, and exploitation cycles.
959 This will need to be realized for far more numerous and larger volume datasets, and across a broader and more disparate set
960 of requirements and communities than was previously the case.

961 CMIP6, like CMIP5, benefited from a globally coordinated data infrastructure, the Earth System Grid Federation (ESGF),
962 linked to a large array of other important and necessary services (Balaji et al., 2018). The CMIP6 ESGF is now more than a
963 decade old, largely not maintained and is therefore not fit for the scale of the challenge outlined above. The array of services
964 linked to the ESGF include: standards-based data, model and experiment descriptions; citation and errata services for
965 simulation data and derived products; and data quality control procedures (addressing the presence of required data,
966 standards compliance etc, not to be confused with procedures for assessing the scientific quality of the data). The data
967 infrastructure itself needs to support systematic (and efficient) simulation evaluation, and support replication of data from
968 source to “super-nodes” that can host large volumes of multi-model data and provide sufficient local computational resource
969 to allow analysis with minimal requirement for data movement (Eyring et al., 2016). Local computing services will need to
970 include both specific “well known” computational services such as those necessary to generate on-demand statistics, and
971 those necessary to support user-generated analysis pipelines that may include AI and ML techniques. To realize the
972 ambitions outlined in this paper, the volumes of data that will need to be hosted at such super-nodes will be significantly
973 larger than for CMIP6, and the services will need to be easier to navigate for a more heterogeneous community, extending
974 beyond the modellers and analysts of earlier CMIP cycles.

975
976
977 There are several activities underway that aim to address some of these requirements. Notable amongst these are the
978 development of reusable evaluation and analysis workflows such as ESMValTool (Eyring et al., 2020; Righi et al., 2020)
979 with the goal of fully integrating these into the CMIP publication workflow (Eyring et al., 2016b), the democratisation of the
980 use of cloud computing via Pangeo (Abernathy et al., 2021), the use of new data formats such as HealPix (Chang et al.,

981 2023), and the development of new technologies aimed at a future ESGF (Hoffman et al., 2022). However, there are also
982 significant areas where little or no development is underway. These include enhanced documentation, errata, and citation
983 services, many of which are relying on best efforts and need dedicated investment and effort in new techniques and modes of
984 deployment. Considerable work will be required to bring all of these strands together into a coherent system that can be
985 deployed and supported world-wide and sustained throughout the next IPCC cycle (and beyond).

986
987 This new ecosystem will need to support and coordinate efficient methods for data reduction and sharing, cross model
988 analysis and evaluation, with an emphasis on bringing together existing and new observational and reanalysis datasets,
989 models, emulators, and advanced analysis tools for rapid and in-depth analysis and exploitation. The new system will need to
990 interface with other major data holdings, for example those of the WCRP Lighthouse activities¹ (Flato et al., 2023), the
991 Destination Earth² data holdings, the existing ISIMIP data repository³, the Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S)⁴ and
992 new data holdings that may arise from the EVE (Earth Visualization Engines)⁵ initiative. It will need to conform to FAIR
993 (*Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable*) principles (Wilkinson et al., 2016) and meet the needs and requirements
994 arising not just from CMIP7, but from the range of communities involved in IAMC, CORDEX and VIACS/ISIMIP.
995 Critically, the system will need to be fully supported by dedicated data managers, capable of addressing community
996 questions pertaining to data quality, model and data documentation, as well as supporting users of embedded infrastructure
997 tools to facilitate the rapid use and reuse of data and tools across communities. It is this rapid use and reuse that will deliver
998 the internal consistency, across models and research communities, [that is](#) key to the transformative impact expected for
999 international climate policy from the science and modelling efforts proposed in this article.

1000 9 Summary and recommendations for the way forward

1001 Over the past three decades, internationally coordinated modelling projects have delivered a wealth of simulations, data, and
1002 scientific knowledge to support policy actions addressing climate change mitigation and adaptation. As a new round of these
1003 projects start up, and a ~~new~~-7th IPCC assessment cycle begins, we have reviewed how these projects ~~have~~ collectively
1004 ~~provided~~[have delivered](#) science support to international climate policy. We propose a number of science, technology and
1005 collaboration priorities that we believe these projects should jointly focus on over the coming decade. Progress in these areas
1006 will increase the quality and utility of science support to climate policy, while [also](#) increasing our understanding of Earth
1007 system change, including the impacts on society and the natural world, as well as our ability to [project](#)~~model~~ such future
1008 changes and the associated impacts.

1009
1010 One key proposal is for the involved modelling communities, spanning integrated assessment, scenario generation, global
1011 and regional Earth system modelling, [regional downscaling](#), and impacts modelling, to work much more closely together
1012 during the next round of projects, with an aim to deliver a coordinated set of scenarios, projections and impact assessments
1013 all based on the same underpinning socio-economic and mitigation scenarios and using the most up to date model
1014 configurations. This will significantly improve the quality and consistency of scientific knowledge available to the upcoming
1015 (AR7) and future IPCC assessments, as well as to the 5-yearly UNFCCC Global Stocktakes. Building on interactions
1016 developed over the past 5-10 years, and ~~the increasing suggestion that~~[proposals for](#) simulations supporting international
1017 climate policy [to](#) become more operational in structure, ~~we suggest~~ the time is right to actively develop a tighter and more

¹ <https://www.wcrp-climate.org/lha-overview>

² <https://destination-earth.eu/>

³ <https://data.isimip.org/>

⁴ <https://cds.climate.copernicus.eu/>

⁵ <https://eve4climate.org/>

1018 efficient set of links across the relevant modelling projects. ~~Fully realizing~~Realizing this ambition within the AR7 timeframe
1019 is likely not possible. Nevertheless, significant effort to achieve such internal consistency and efficient sharing of data,
1020 knowledge, and personnel, will lead to future workflows better suited to fully ~~realize~~realizing this ambition. In addition, we
1021 highlight the need for impact models to receive more detailed information (disaggregated, spatially and by sector) on the
1022 socio-economic assumptions underpinning the IAM scenarios. Conversely, increased effort is required to allow knowledge
1023 of projected future climate impacts, and the likely societal responses to these impacts, to be iteratively incorporated into the
1024 generation of emission and land-use scenarios. Thanks to CMIP5 and CMIP6 cycles, there is an increasing set of well-
1025 established links between IAM scenario production teams, Earth system modelling groups, CORDEX downscaling teams,
1026 and impact modellers, with the majority of the modelling in these activities using a common data infrastructure system.
1027 These established connections and shared infrastructure make the potential for a more efficient, inter-connected workflow
1028 across all these activities a real possibility in the coming years.

1029
1030 The programme of work we outline addresses numerous key knowledge gaps, several of which were highlighted in IPCC
1031 AR6 (IPCC, 2021). Given the increasing number of ESMs capable of running in CO₂-emission mode, including simulation
1032 of the coupled climate and carbon cycle, as well as a range of other Earth system phenomena, combined with an increasing
1033 number of coupled GCMs running for centennial timescales at ~10km resolution, we believe many of these knowledge gaps
1034 can be successfully addressed over the coming decade. Exploitation of CMIP6 was identified as limited in AR6, pointing to
1035 a need to support and better focus coordinated international modelling projects, including links between projects. Plausible
1036 overshoot scenarios that return to the Paris Climate targets by the end of the century or later (e.g. by 2130), were limited in
1037 CMIP6 and need to be a greater focus ~~of~~in CMIP7. To address this, it is crucial ESMs are extended to allow a more thorough
1038 assessment of the efficacy of proposed land and marine CO₂ removal techniques in reducing atmospheric CO₂ and driving
1039 global cooling, while accounting for potential Earth system feedbacks (IPCC 2021; Canadell et al., IPCC 2021). ESMs need
1040 to be capable of assessing both CO₂ and non-CO₂ feedbacks during overshoot (e.g. a changing efficiency of CO₂ uptake by
1041 natural reservoirs as CO₂ is removed from the atmosphere, or methane release into the atmosphere from wetlands or
1042 permafrost (Canadell et al., IPCC 2021)), as well as the potential for, and consequences of, rapid change in key Earth system
1043 components during overshoot, such as ice sheet loss or forest dieback (Canadell et al., IPCC 2021; Fox-Kemper et al., IPCC
1044 2021). In addition, interactions between CO₂ warming and trends in aerosol emissions need to be thoroughly assessed, so the
1045 impact of decreasing aerosol emissions on the near-term rate of global warming and achievability of the Paris targets can be
1046 better quantified. Such analysis needs to be complemented by analysis of the (societal and environmental) impacts of a
1047 warming overshoot, the degree of reversibility of these impacts once cooling to a target level is achieved, and the impacts
1048 resulting from long-term stabilization at a target warming level (assuming it is warmer than today). The majority of IAM
1049 scenarios, designed to realize the Paris Agreement, assume extensive deployment of land-based (and in a very limited
1050 number of cases, marine-based) atmospheric CO₂ removal technology. The direct impact of these mitigation actions on
1051 society and the environment needs to be assessed and contrasted with the impacts avoided from the resulting reduction in
1052 global warming. An additional set of approaches to limit the magnitude of future warming, referred to as geoengineering, are
1053 increasingly discussed in policy circles and the media. The most widely known being Solar Radiation Management (SRM;
1054 Lawrence et al., 2018; Visioni et al., 2023). While there remain concerns around the safety and governance of such actions, it
1055 is increasingly important the research community actively assesses the efficacy of these approaches, including the risks and
1056 potential consequences of deployment of this technology at the scales required. Projections beyond 2100 were not
1057 comprehensively covered in CMIP6 (Chen et al., IPCC 2021). This is important for understanding committed changes and
1058 the consequences of long-term stabilization at temperatures warmer than today. This is particularly acute with respect to sea-
1059 level rise (Fox-Kemper et al., IPCC 2021), with Antarctic and Greenland ice sheets representing the largest uncertainty in
1060 future sea-level projections. It is vital these systems are better modelled in CMIP7 and beyond.

1061
1062 More accurately simulating the observed, historical evolution of the climate system (i.e. reducing systematic model biases),
1063 including the representation of the forcings and feedbacks driving the observed warming, is crucial for increasing confidence
1064 in model projections and for maximizing the use observations in model improvement. Associated with this, we advocate the
1065 use of new approaches (for example, combining Machine Learning and Emergent Constraint techniques) to enable more
1066 extensive use of observations to constrain model projections and future feedbacks. A key requirement remains improved
1067 constraints on key metrics of Earth system sensitivity (e.g. EffCS, TCR, TCRE and the Regional to Global Warming ratio)
1068 and that models accurately simulate these metrics, ~~as well as including~~ the processes underpinning them.

1069
1070 Due to their exceptional impact, we highlight the need for improved knowledge of, and ability to simulate, extreme weather
1071 events, including potential future changes in such events. We further stress the importance of assessing the impact of
1072 extreme events on society and the environment, considering the level of uncertainty inherent in projections of such rare
1073 events. This requirement also extends to the modes of climate variability that extreme events develop within (including
1074 natural variations, future changes and extreme realizations of these modes). Looking towards the next generation of Earth
1075 system and climate models, we propose significantly increased collaboration across communities investigating enhanced
1076 Earth system process realism, those working on increased model resolution, and improved physical parameterizations, as
1077 well as groups working on ML-based hybrid modelling. Increased collaboration across these communities will optimize
1078 findings from each approach for development of the next generation of Earth system models. This recommendation holds
1079 equally for global and regional ~~modelling models~~, including collaboration between these ~~two~~ communities.

1080
1081 With respect to uncertainty, in future emission scenarios, in Earth system change, and in the impacts, we propose extensive
1082 collaboration across the range of approaches addressing these issues. Wherever possible work should assess, quantify, and
1083 emulate uncertainty as it propagates through the stages of IAM scenarios, ESM projections, regional downscaling, and
1084 impact simulations, so a more complete assessment of total uncertainty can be provided to policymakers. An additional
1085 consideration is to better quantify what can be predicted (~~i.e.~~ based on model predictions started from observed initial
1086 conditions) versus projected (~~i.e.~~ changes in future climate statistics relative to ~~simulated~~ past or present statistics ~~due to a set~~
1087 ~~of~~ ~~resulting from~~ external ~~forcings~~ ~~forcing~~). An important challenge in this area is to accurately quantify the level of
1088 predictability ~~at different time and spatial scales~~, for different variables and regions, ~~and at what lead times and spatial~~
1089 ~~scales~~. We highlight the need for improved modelling and assessment of ~~the risk and consequences of~~ potential future High
1090 Impact Low Likelihood (HILL) outcomes, with the possible exceedance of tipping points in the Earth system, ~~in~~ the
1091 environment, or ~~in~~ society, being of critical importance. Given there will always be some level of uncertainty in the future
1092 climate, it is important to focus on the communication of this uncertainty, or possibly more importantly, communication of
1093 what is expected in the future and with what level of confidence. This is a key area in the science-policy interface.

1094
1095 The transformative goals outlined in this paper require the support of a robust, efficient, and internationally connected
1096 infrastructure. While components of such an infrastructure exist, much work is needed to design, build, deliver and sustain
1097 an integrated system that meets the objectives outlined here, and maximises the benefits of existing initiatives and
1098 investments. The resulting infrastructure must exploit common tools and standards and be designed and delivered with both
1099 a long-term perspective and a well-trained workforce. It will need to handle increasing volumes of data, support the use of
1100 new techniques for data analysis (such as remote analysis of big data using ML and AI techniques), and facilitate the easy
1101 exchange of data, knowledge, and analysis tools. Without such an infrastructure, many of the aims outlined ~~herein this paper~~
1102 will not be met in a timely manner, if at all.

1104 Finally, to expand the reach and benefits of international modelling, including the uptake and use of model simulations, to a
1105 more ~~truly~~ global scale and thus deliver underpinning scientific support for global climate policy, there is an urgent need for
1106 increased involvement of Global South scientists. WCRP leads a number of important efforts in this area. These need to be
1107 ramped up significantly and put on a sound long-term footing. Given the global nature of the climate crisis, that the impacts
1108 are, and will continue to be, most strongly felt by Global South countries, a globally inclusive response is a necessity. This
1109 makes both scientific sense (to draw on local expertise for understanding and predicting local Earth system change and its
1110 impacts), as well as political sense (climate policy is generally better tailored to a specific country's needs if it is based on
1111 local expert advice that is accessible over the long-term). We (~~this~~ group of [European](#) scientists ~~all working in Europe~~)
1112 encourage our governments and funding agencies to provide sufficient, long-term support to further develop and maintain a
1113 strong and globally inclusive scientific collaboration over the coming decades.

1114 **Author contribution**

1115 All co-authors provided ideas and comments to the manuscript. CJ, HJ, SJ, BNL, RS, TK, KF, BS, BB, SS, DVV, HH, EOR,
1116 FA, MR, PF, PLV, VE and PC conceived and developed the original ideas and recommendations in the paper. CJ and HJ wrote
1117 the paper, with regular input from the 17 other people listed in the first 19 co-authors and periodic input from all other co-
1118 authors.

1119 **Competing interests**

1120 Two co-authors are on the ESD editorial board: Roland Seferian and Richard Betts.

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