Understanding land-surface-atmosphere coupling in observations and models

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Land-surface-atmosphere interaction

- Many interdependent processes
  - surface energy balance
  - shortwave and longwave fluxes
  - night-time boundary layer
  - role of water in the surface energy partition
  - vector methods
  - coupling between surface, boundary layer, precipitation
  - evaporation-precipitation feedback.
  - partition of moisture convergence into TCWV, cloud & precipitation
  - ratio of diabatic terms: cloud forcing to precipitation

- Adapted from papers of past 10-15 years
- *Many, many people have contributed*
- Reflect my idiosyncrasies; and many aspects of the ECMWF model
- Now apply to MERRA for insight into a different model system

References

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  http://adv-model-earth-syst-discuss.org/index.php/JAMES-D/article/view/10/8

Themes

- Evaluating models with field data
- FIFE (grassland);
- BOREAS/BERMS (boreal forest)
- GEWEX (river basins)
- ERA-40 river basin & grid-point comparisons
- Diurnal, daily mean, annual cycle
- *Land-surface climate*
- *Precipitation, evaporation, dynamics*
- *Cloud radiative impacts*

  - ***Talk is mostly Figures: text has details***

Surface Energy Balance

$$R_{net} = SW_{net} + LW_{net} = H + \lambda E + G$$

- the split between surface processes and atmospheric processes
- the split between SW and LW processes
- the partition between clear-sky and cloud processes in the atmosphere
- the partition of the surface R_{net} into H and λE, which is controlled largely by the availability of water for evaporation and by vegetation

Clouds & Surface SW_{net}

$$SW_{net} = SW_{down} - SW_{up} = (1 - \alpha_{surf})(1 - \alpha_{cloud})\ SW_{down}(clear)$$

- ***surface albedo***

$$\alpha_{surf} = SW_{up} / SW_{down}$$

- ***effective cloud albedo***

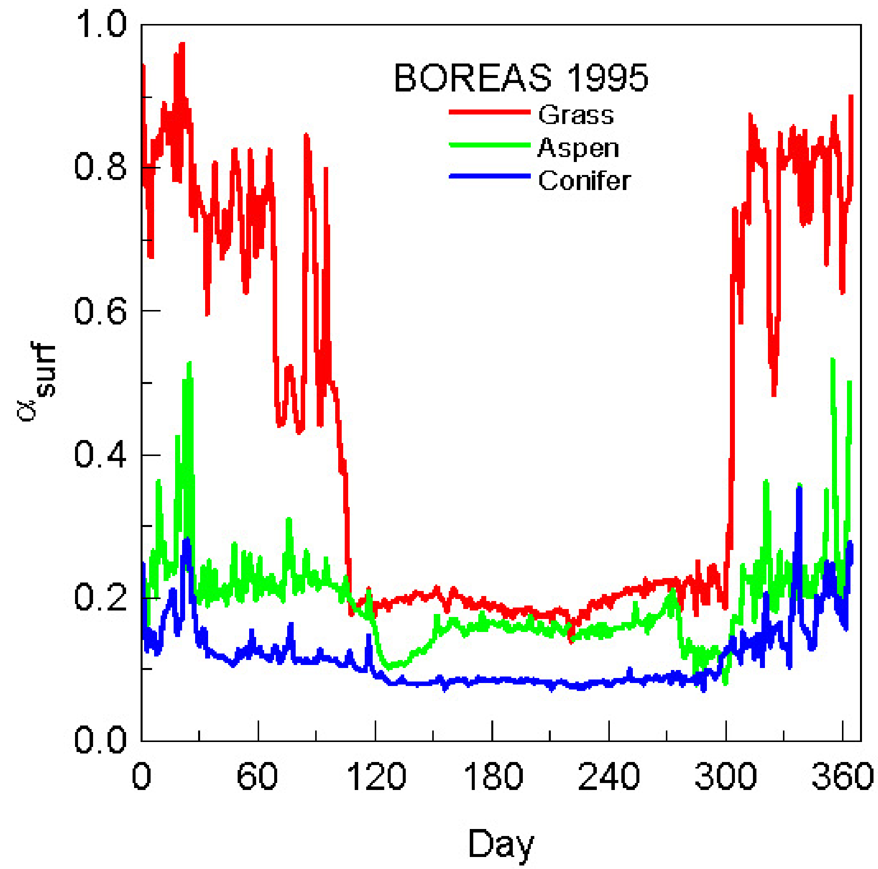
  - scaled surface **short-wave cloud forcing, SWCF**

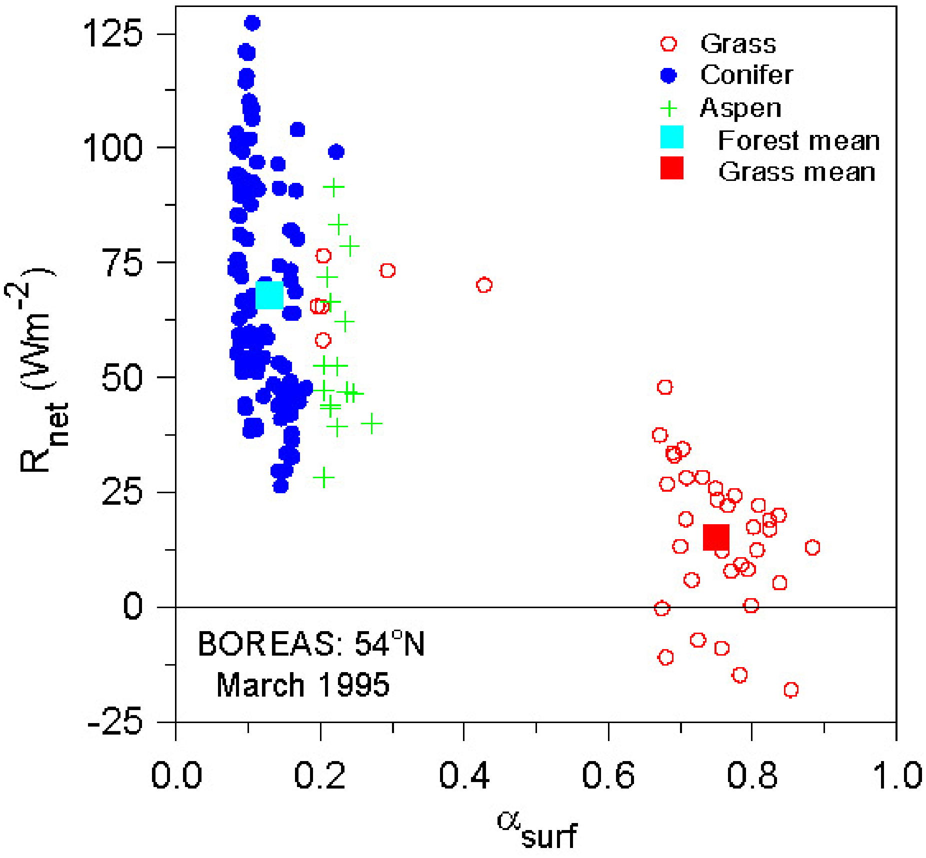
$$SWCF = SW_{down} - SW_{down}(clear)$$

$$\boldsymbol{\alpha_{cloud} = - SWCF / SW_{down}(clear)}$$

[Betts and Viterbo, 2005; Betts, 2007]

Surface albedo



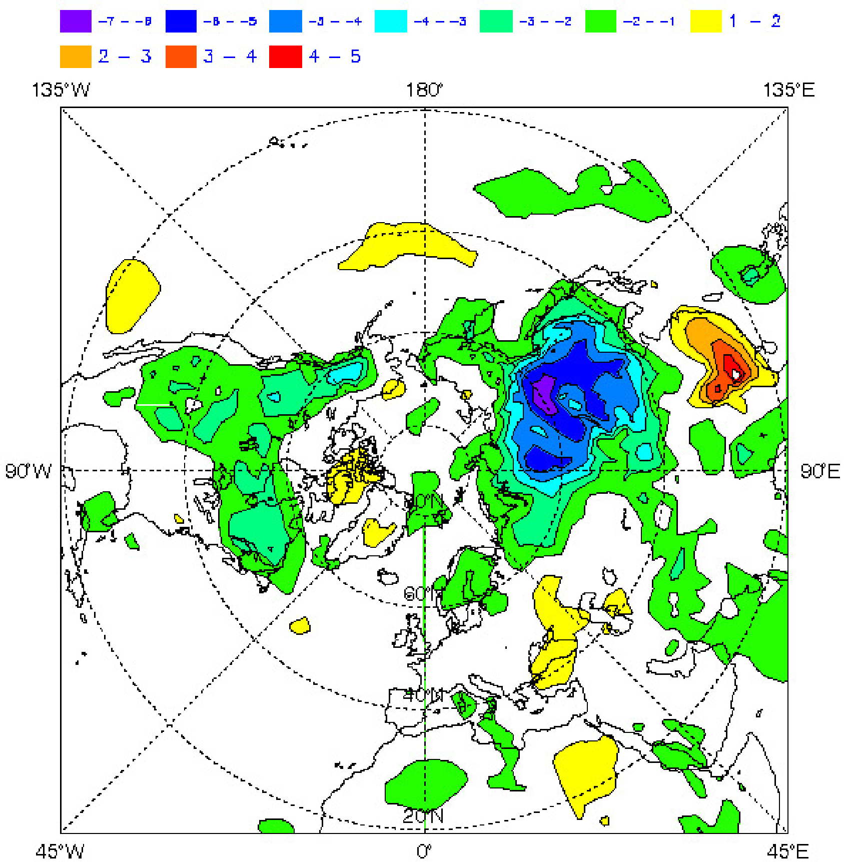


- Impact of landscape differences (forest/grass) on R_{net} are large in spring

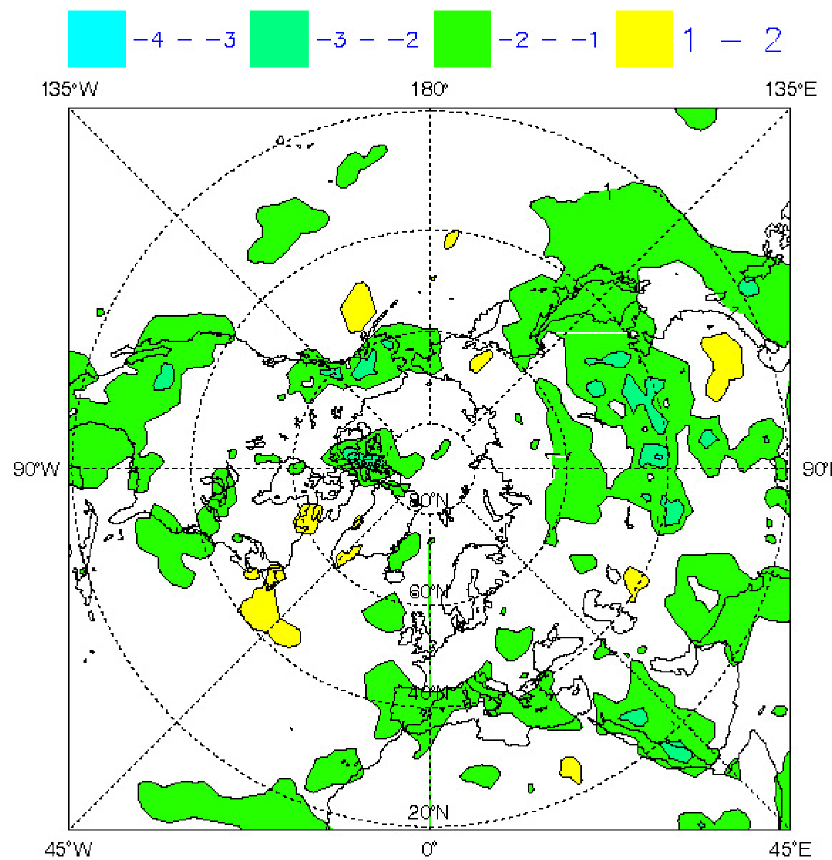
Impact of reducing boreal forest

α_{surf} from 0.8 to 0.2 (snow)

March-April 1996 850 hPa T day 5 error



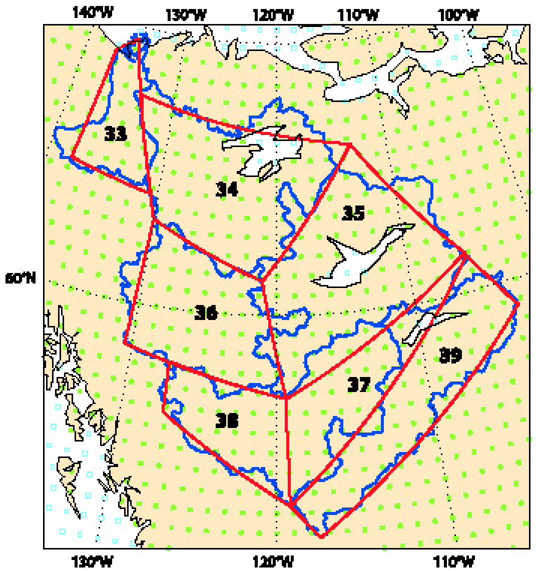
March-April 1997 850 hPa T day 5 error

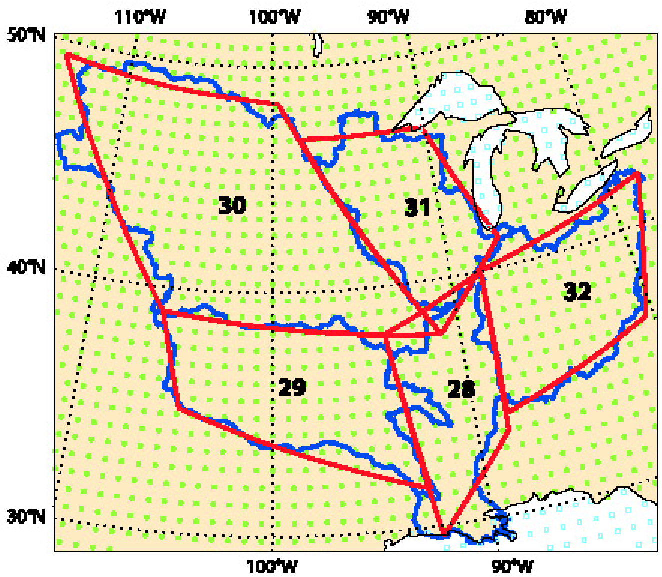


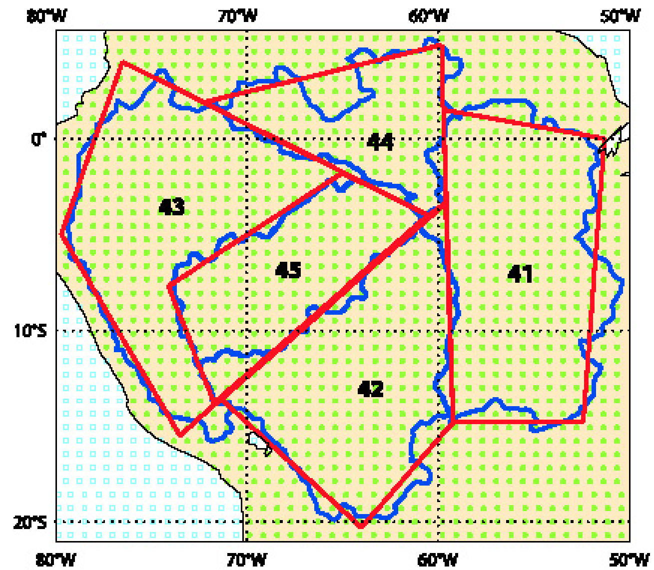
- Large systematic bias reduction; NH forecast skill improved

River basin archive

ERA-40, ERA-Interim [and MERRA]



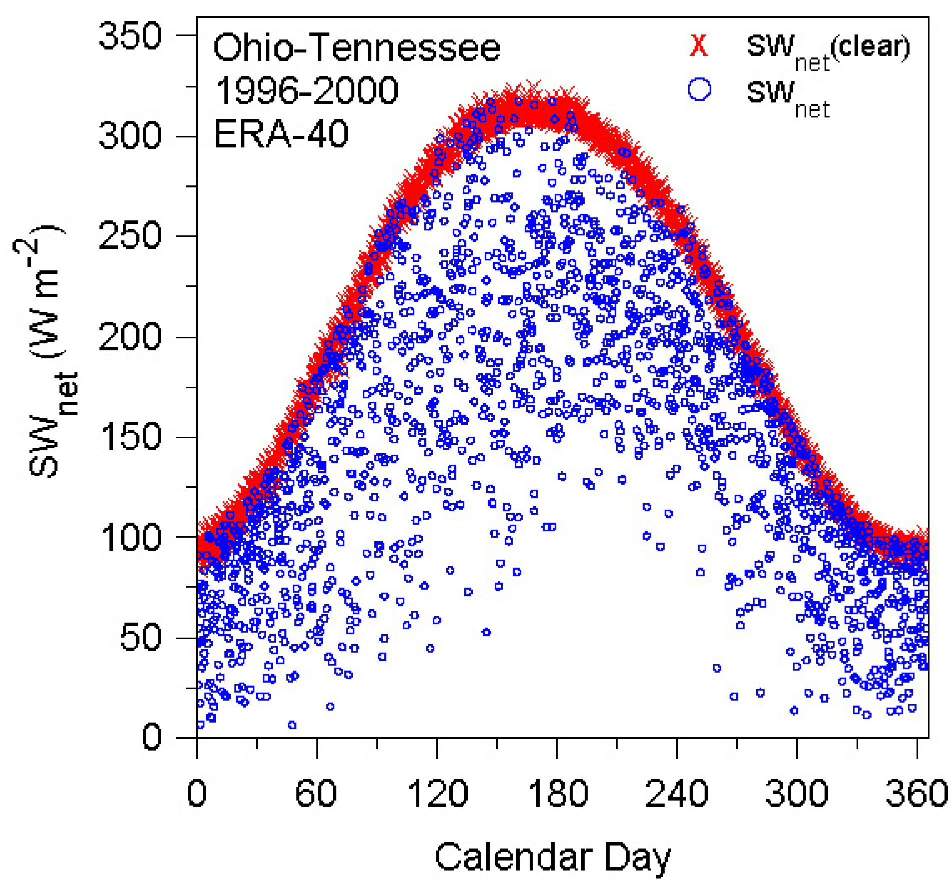


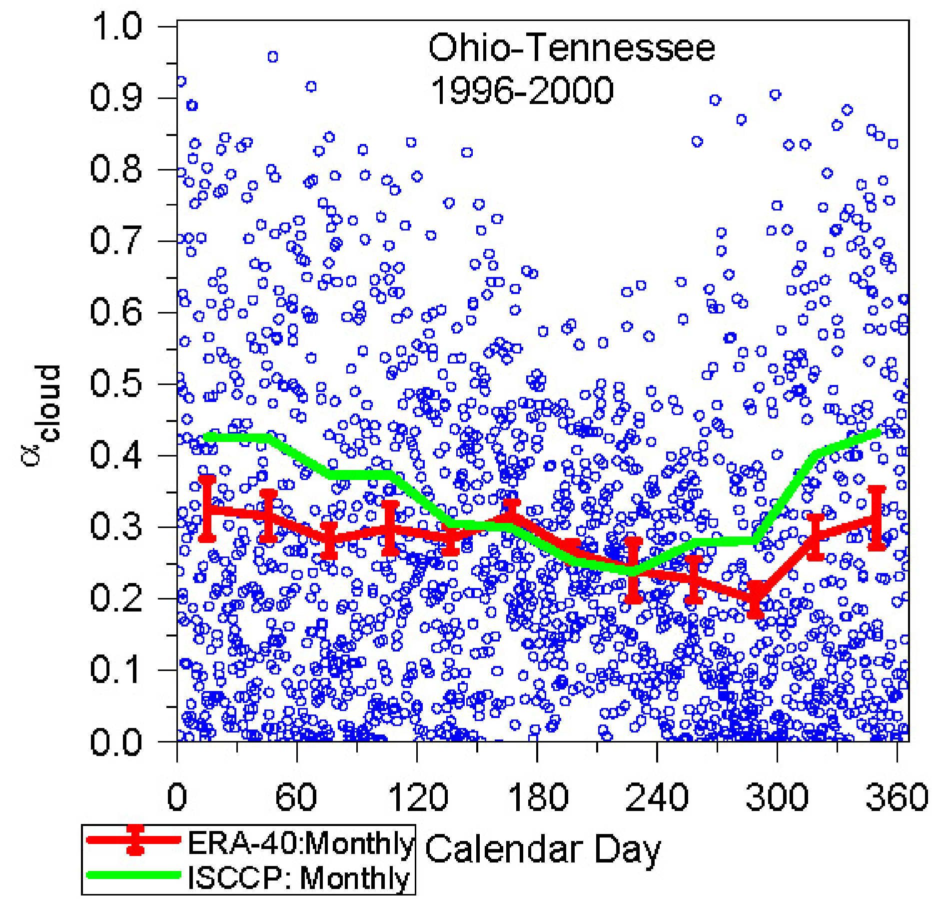


Mackenzie **Mississippi** **Amazon**

Evaluation on river basin scale, starting from **hourly archive**

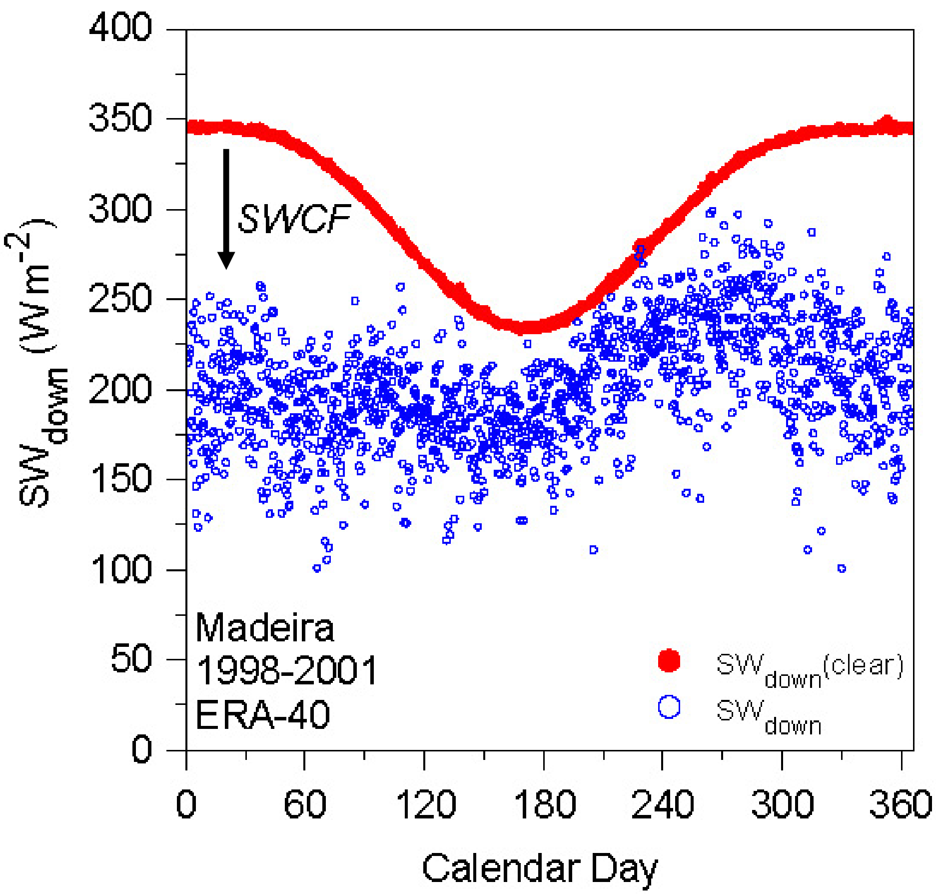
“Cloud albedo”

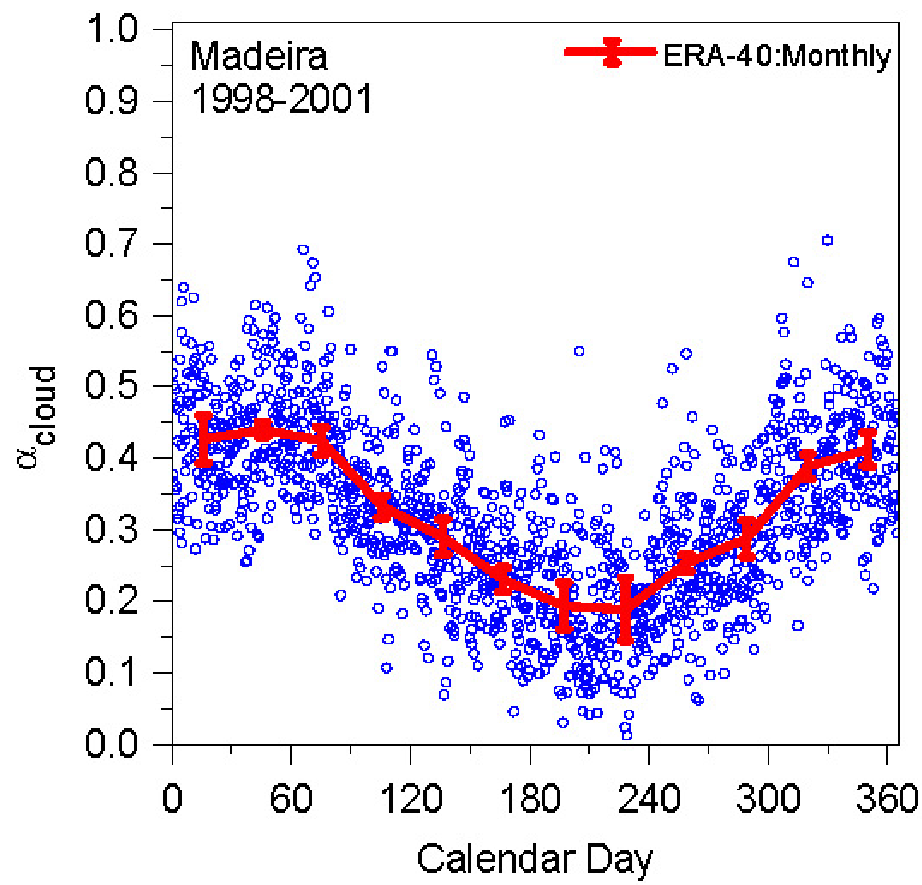




- Transformation of SWCF to α_{cloud}
- Large variability: 10% low bias in winter

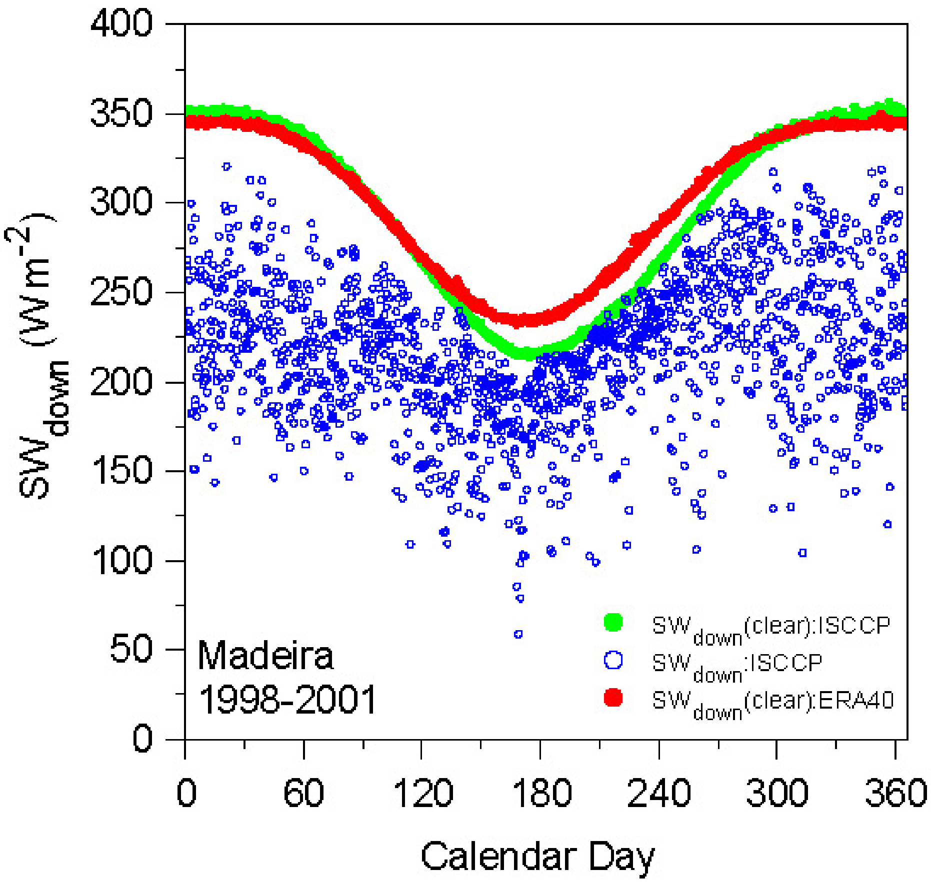
Cloud albedo: ERA-40 data

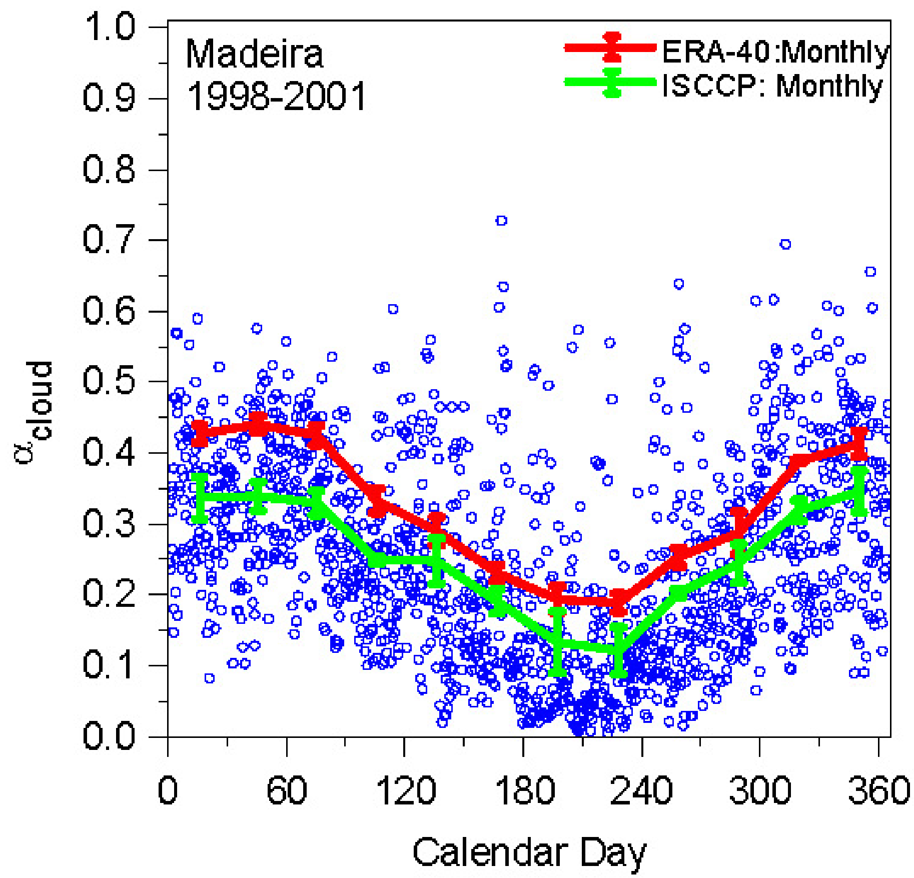




- Transformation of SWCF to α_{cloud}
- Seasonal cycle OK: small daily variability: biased???

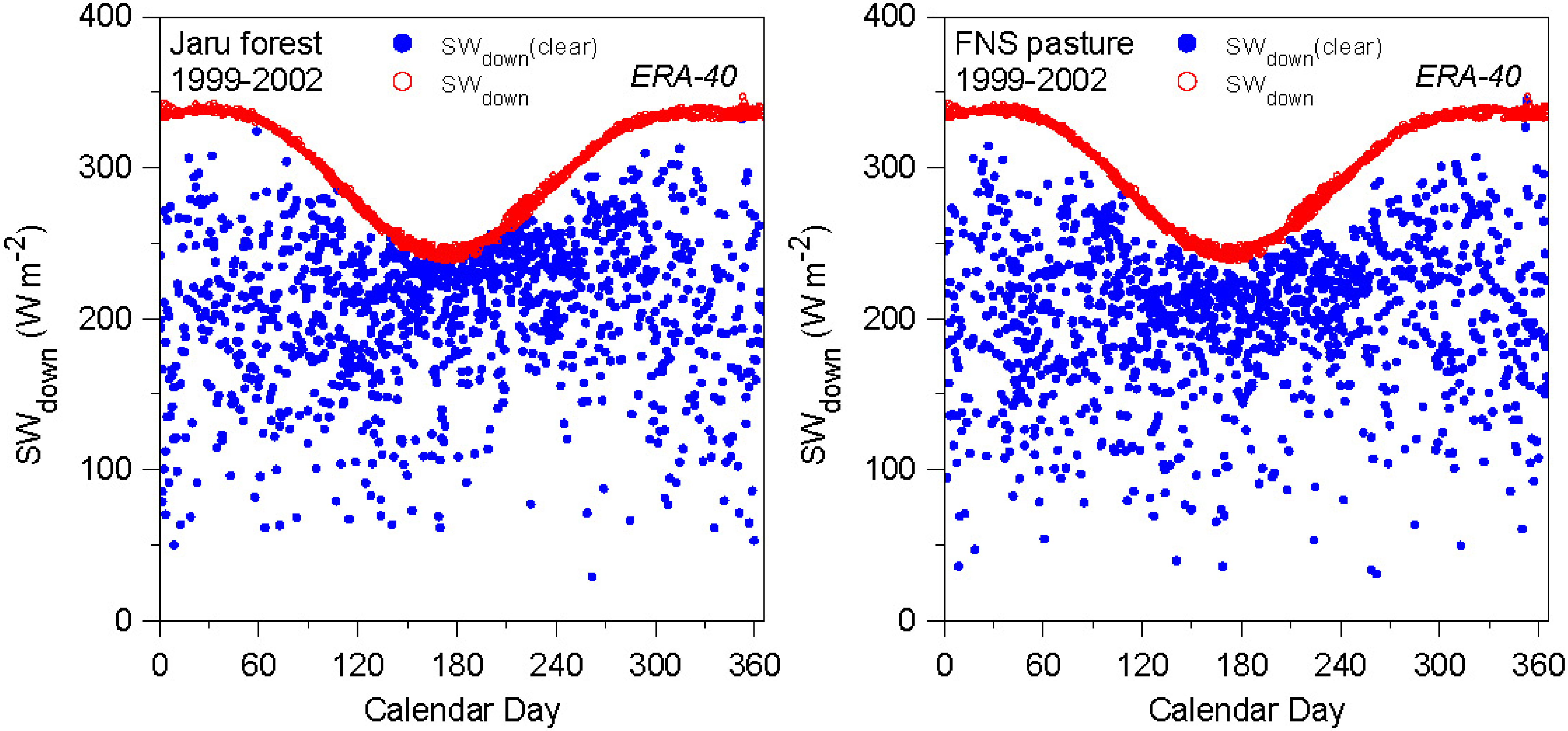
Cloud albedo: ISCCP data





- Different clear-sky flux: Aerosol differences
- ERA-40 systematic high bias in α_{cloud} ≈ +7%
- ISCCP has more daily variability

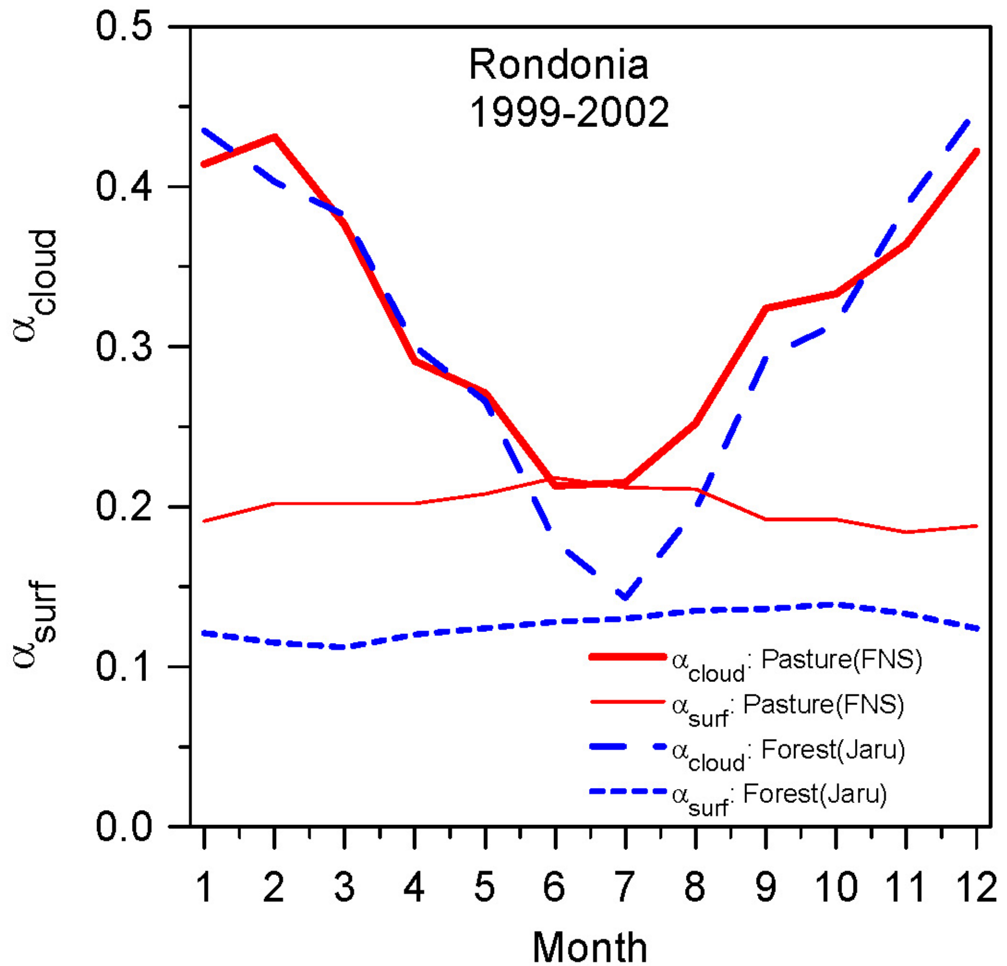
Rondonia forest & pasture : SWCF



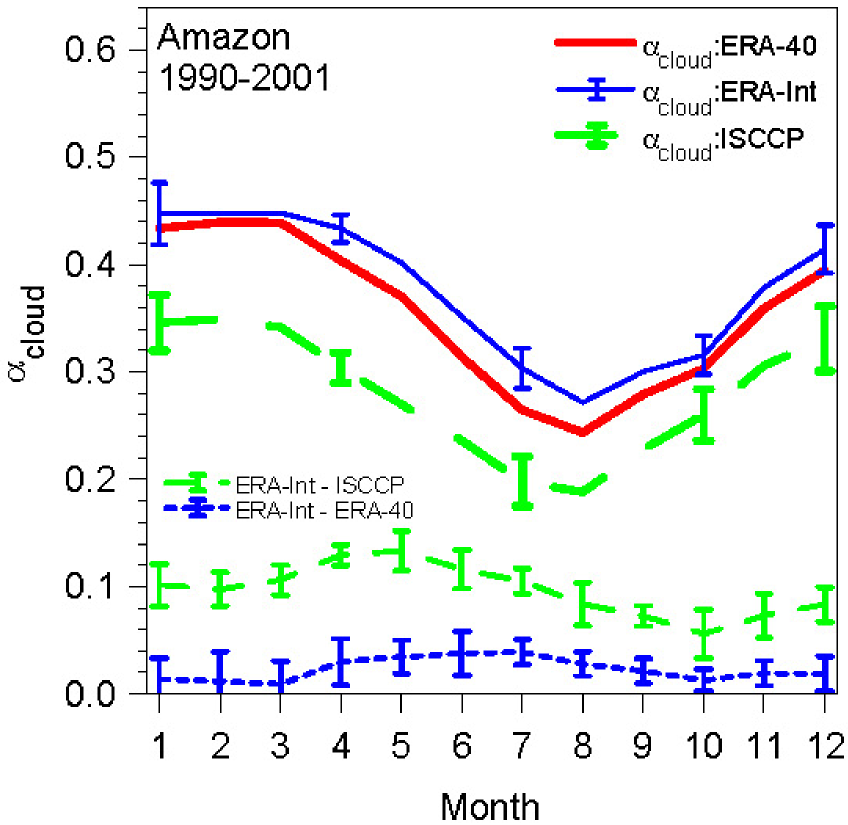
- More dry season cloud over pasture
- Aerosol ‘gap’ in September burning season

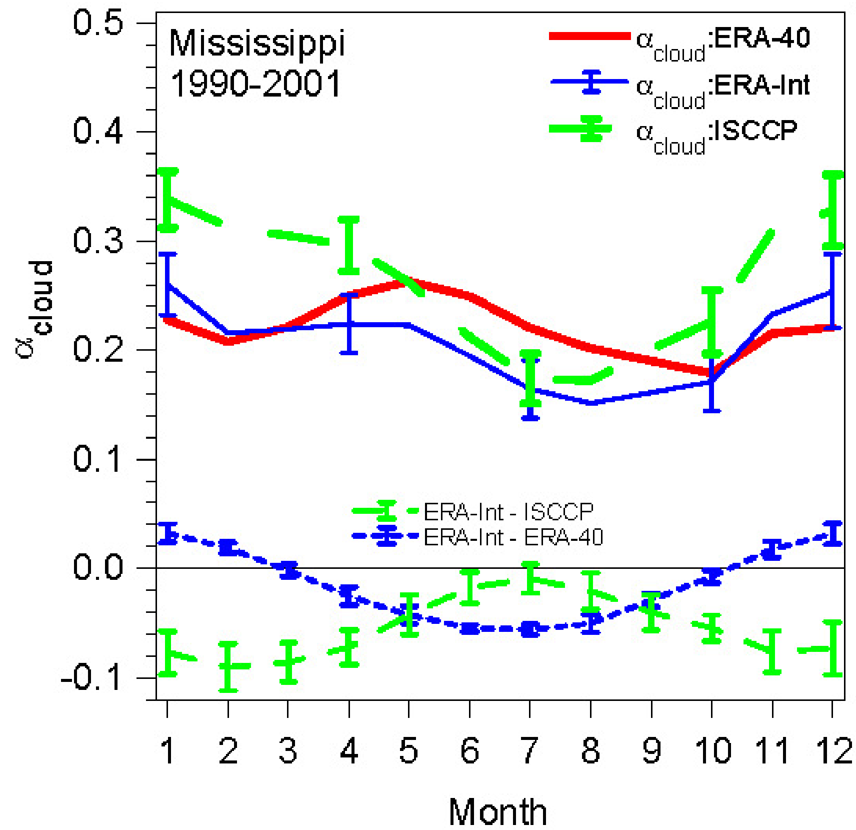
Energy balance: forest and pasture

- In July, pasture has 8% higher surface albedo and 7% more cloud
- Pasture LW_{net} is greater (surface warmer, BL drier)
- Pasture $R_{net} \approx 15\%$ less than forest



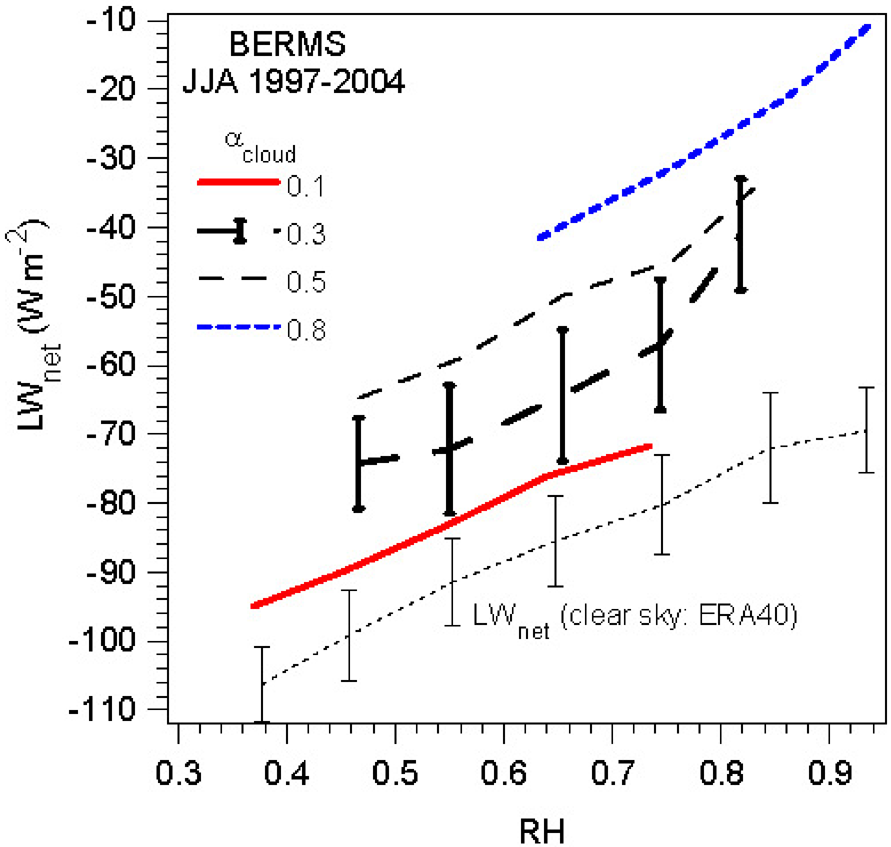
Tropics *vs*. mid-latitudes

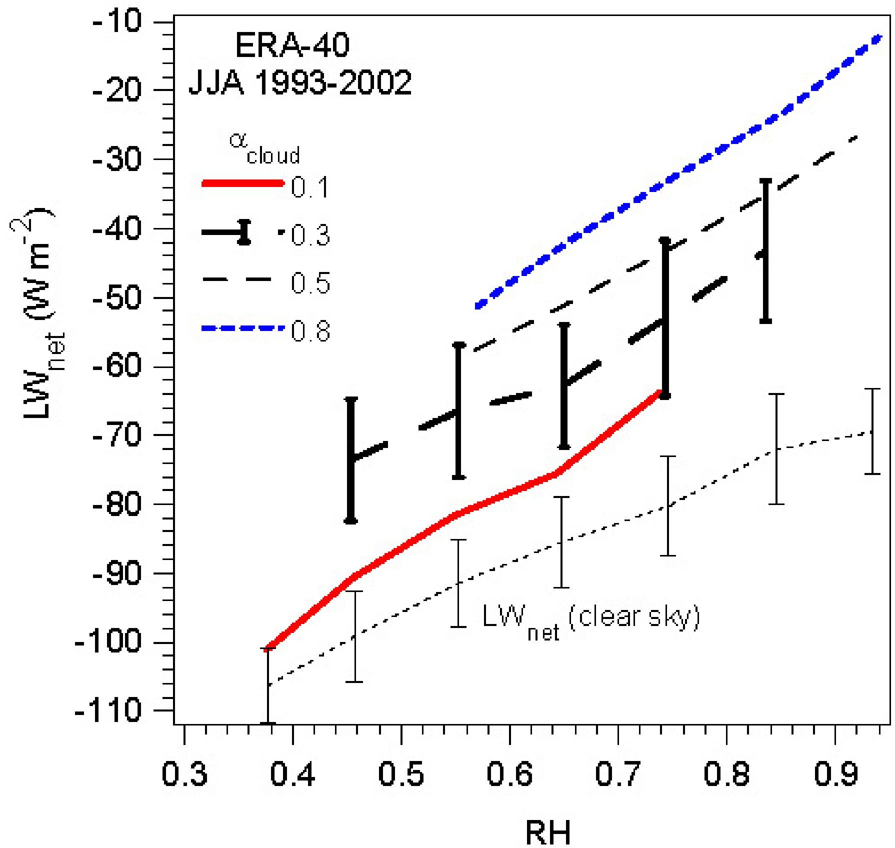




- Amazon: reanalyses α_{cloud} biased high
- Mississippi: different bias signature

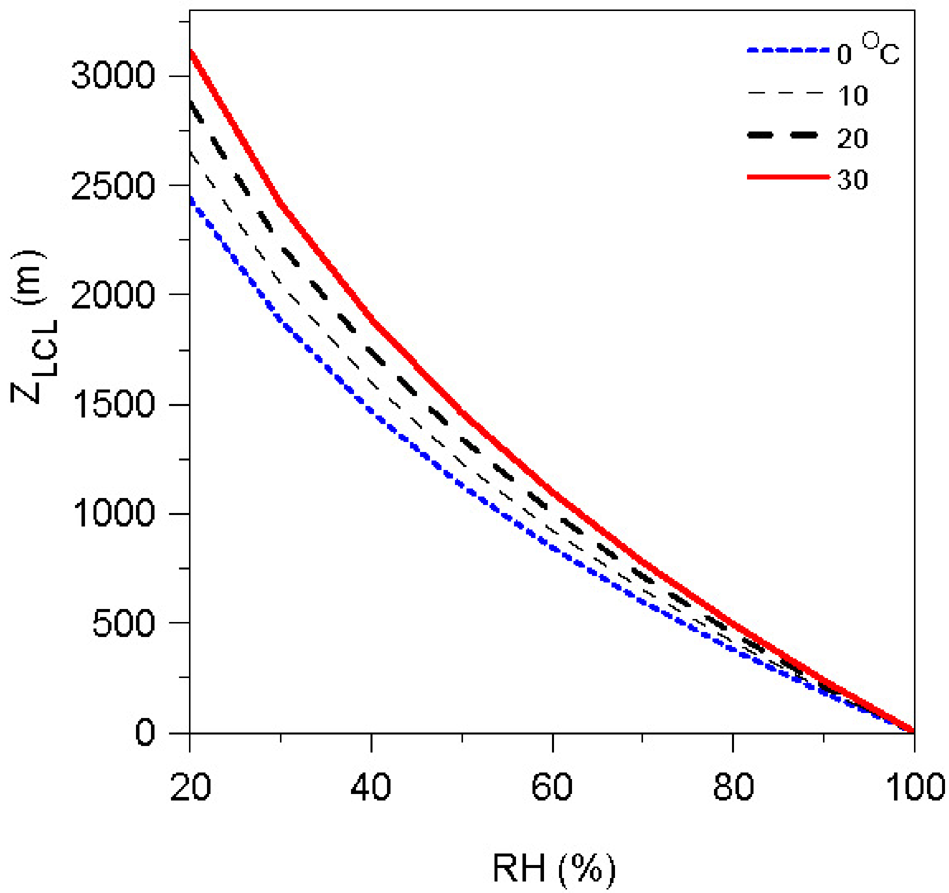
Surface LW_{net}

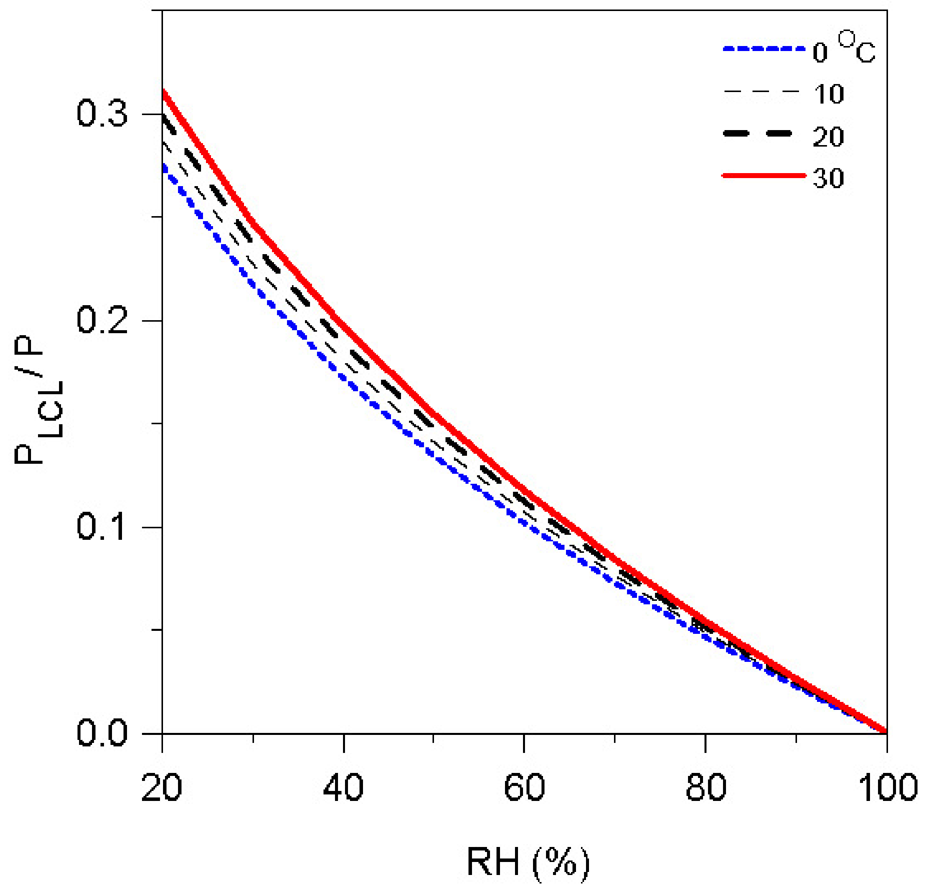




- Point comparison: stratified by RH/LCL & α_{cloud}
- Quasilinear clear-sky and cloud greenhouse effects
- Amazon similar

Aside: Relation of RH to LCL





- Z_{LCL} is fn(T) but not p

P_{LCL}/p is weak fn(T)

Coupling of LW_{net} with diurnal temperature range and NBL

Define

$DTR = T_{max} - T_{min}$

Scale by 24h mean LW_{net}

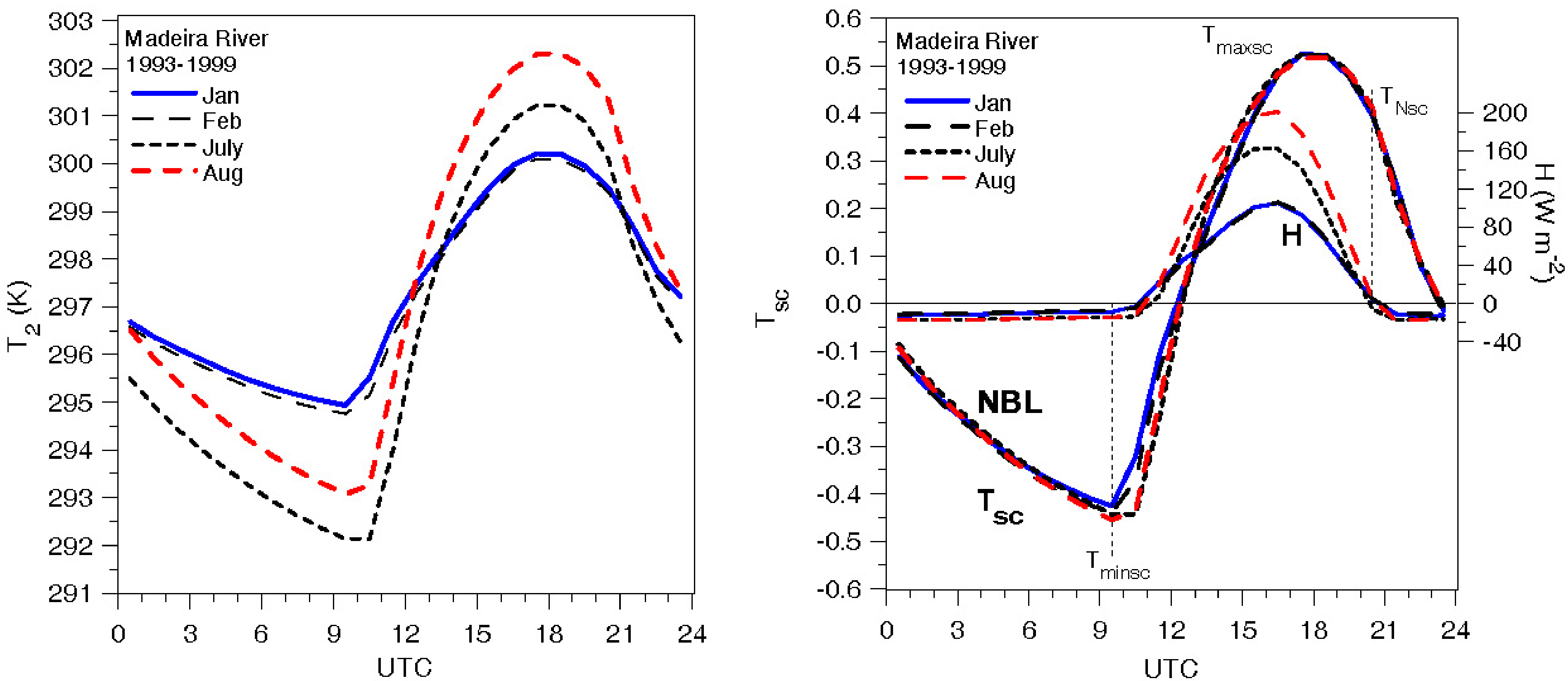
$\Delta T_R = -\lambda_0 LW_{net24}$ where $\lambda_0 = 1/(4\sigma T^3)$

$T_{sc} = (T_2 - T_{24}) /)T_R$

$DTR_{sc} = T_{maxsc} - T_{minsc} \approx 1$ (Amazon)

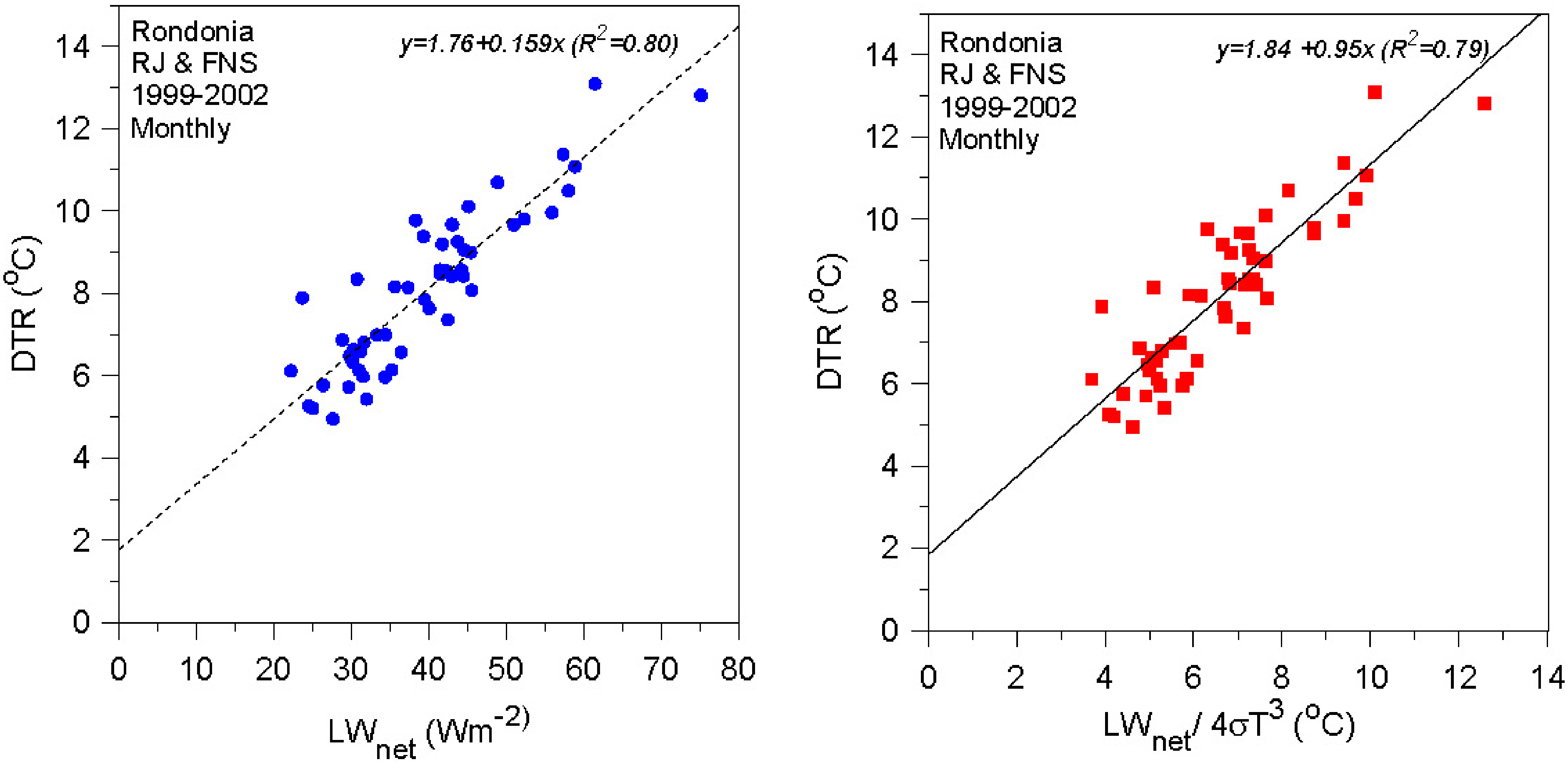
[Betts, JGR, 2006]

Mean diurnal cycle Madeira river



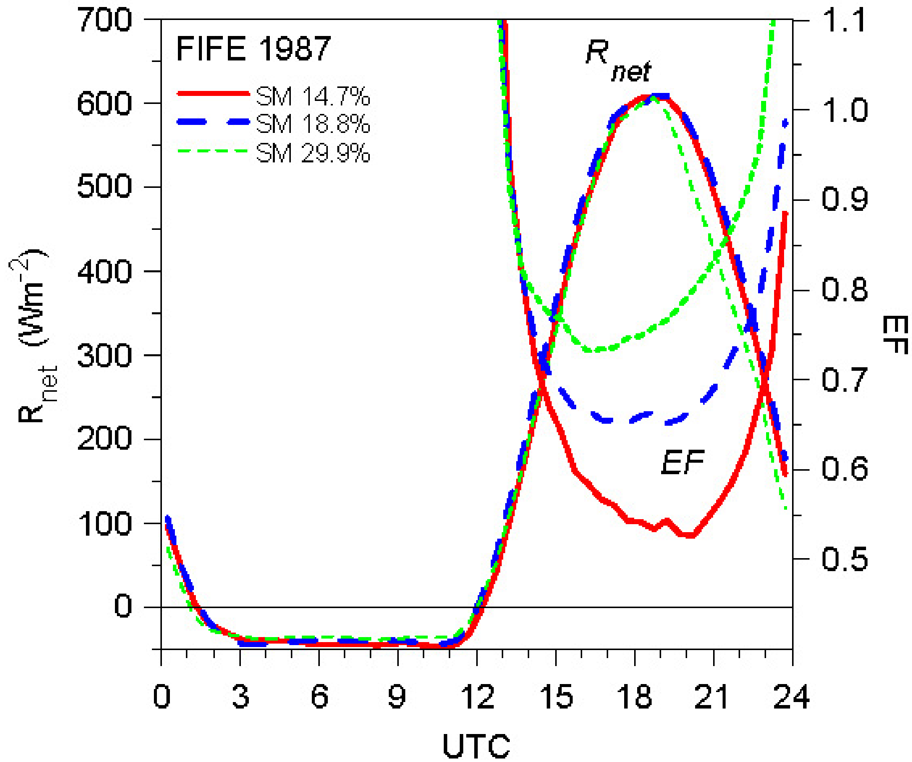
- DTR doubles in dry season (with LW_{net})
- $DTR_{sc} \approx 1$
- $\Delta T_{Nsc} = T_{Nsc} - T_{minsc} \approx 0.9\ DTR_{sc}$

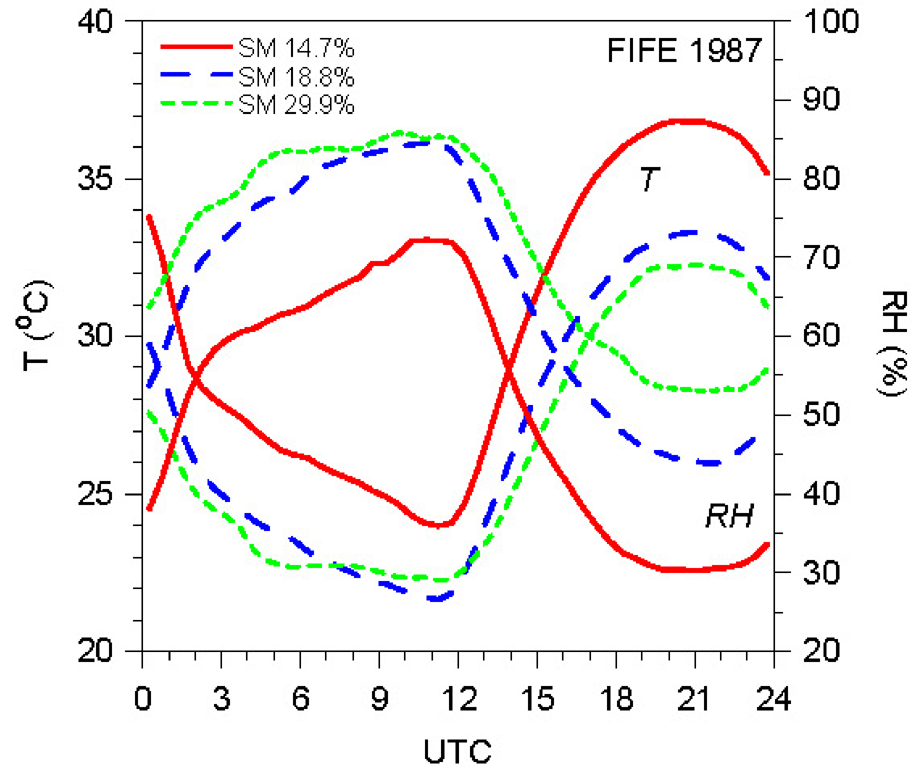
LW_{net} and DTR – monthly mean data



- Mean LW_{net} and DTR correlated *[Betts: JGR, 2006]*
- *What about aerosols?*

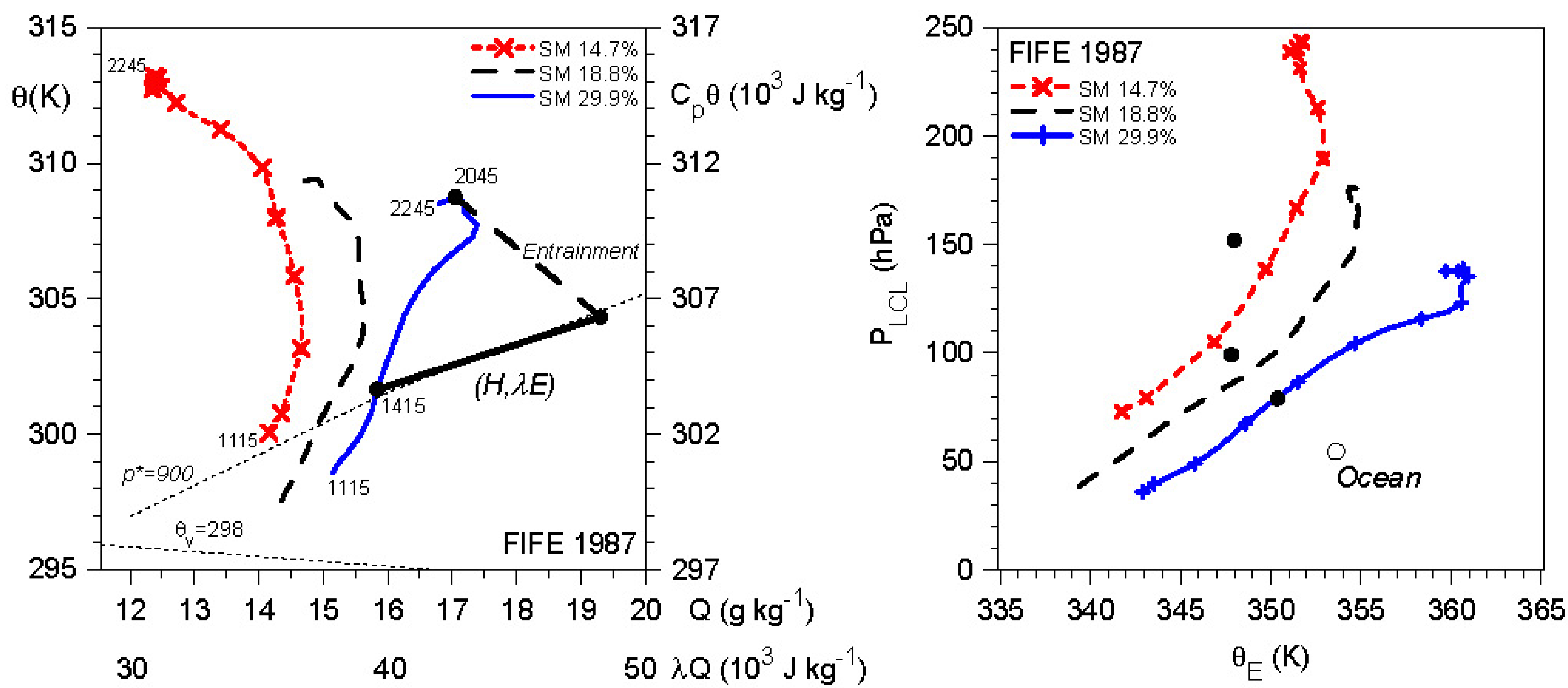
Water availability & the surface energy partition





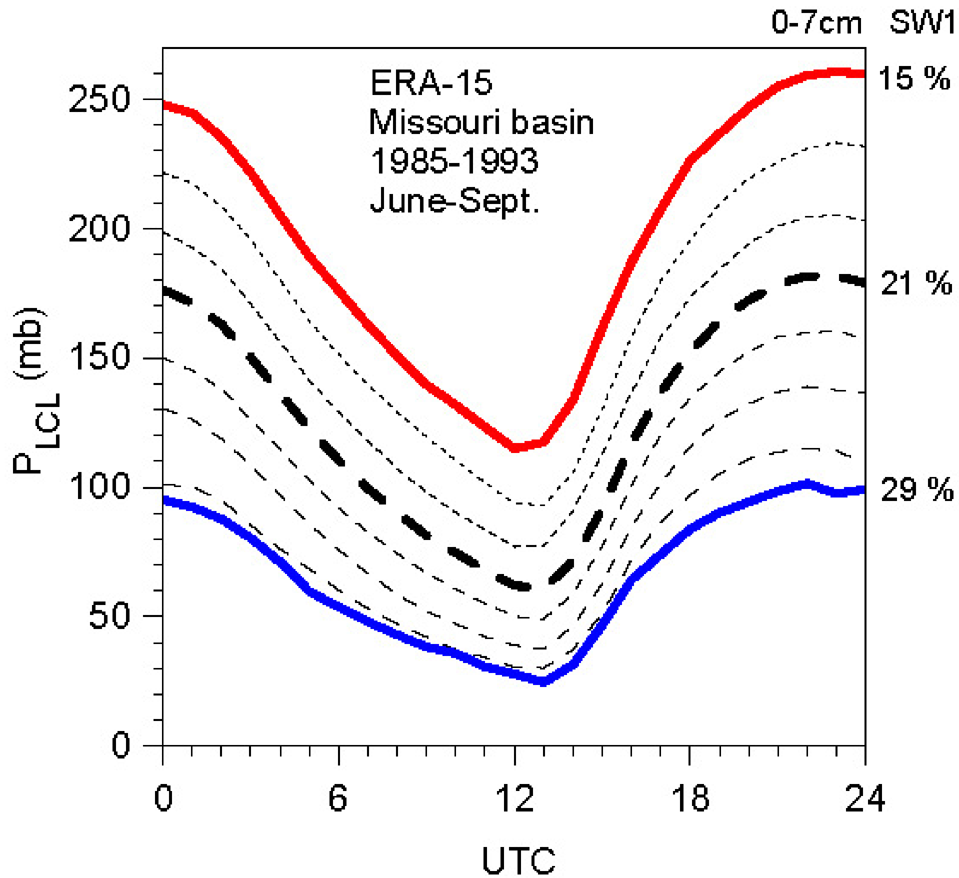
- FIFE grassland: partitioned by soil moisture
  - July & August; little cloud
- Evaporative fraction: EF = λE/(λE+H)

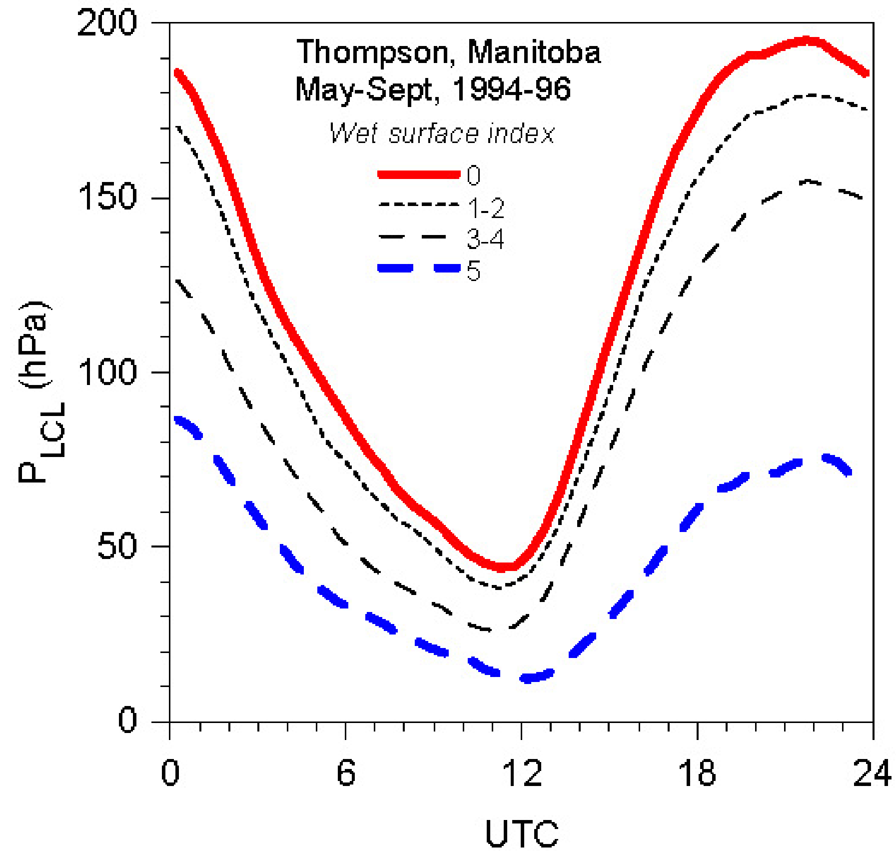
Diurnal cycle on vector diagrams



- $\Delta\boldsymbol{\xi}_{\mathbf{m}}/\Delta t = (\mathbf{F}_s - \mathbf{F}_i)/\ \rho\Delta Z_i$ where $\Delta\boldsymbol{\xi}_{\mathbf{m}} \mathbf{=} \Delta(C_p\theta, \lambda Q)_m$
- $(H, \lambda E) = \Omega\ \Delta(C_p\theta, \lambda Q)$ where $\Omega = \rho\Delta Z_i/\Delta t$

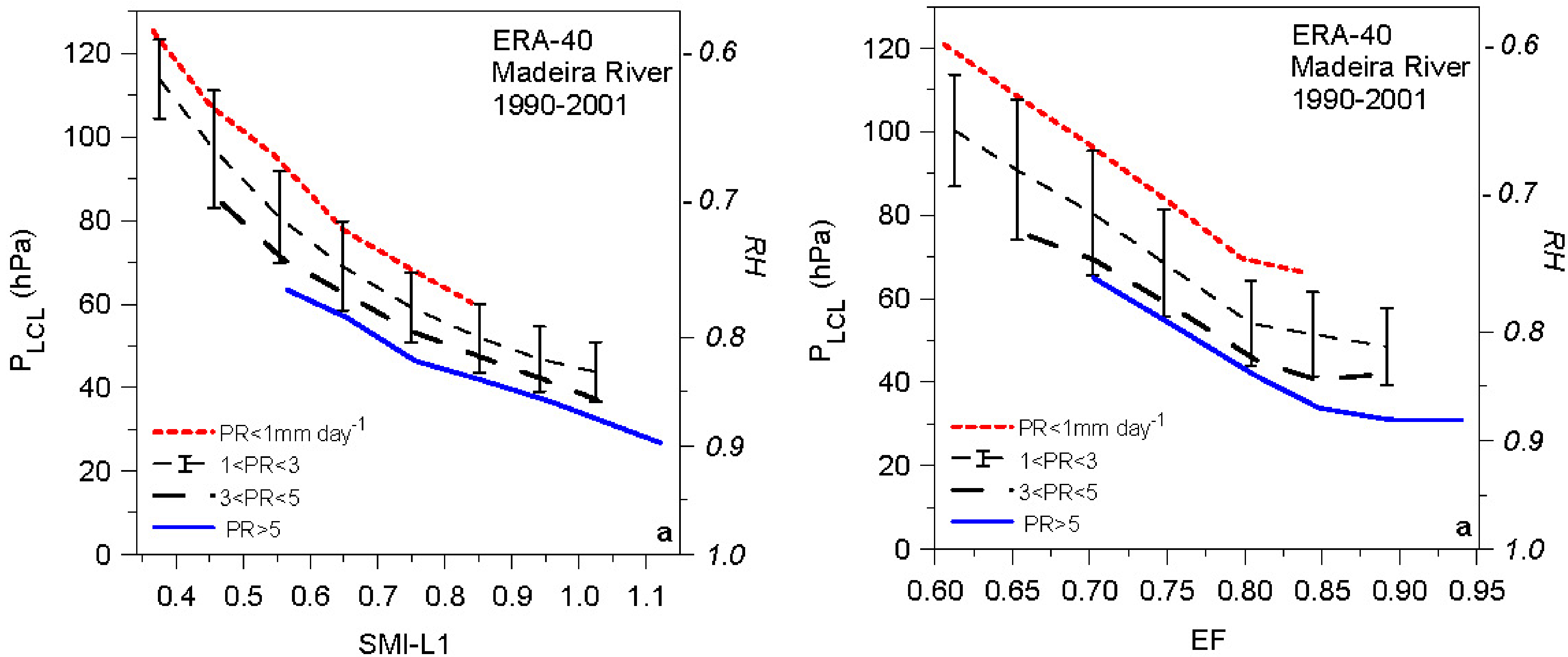
Water availability, Evaporation and LCL





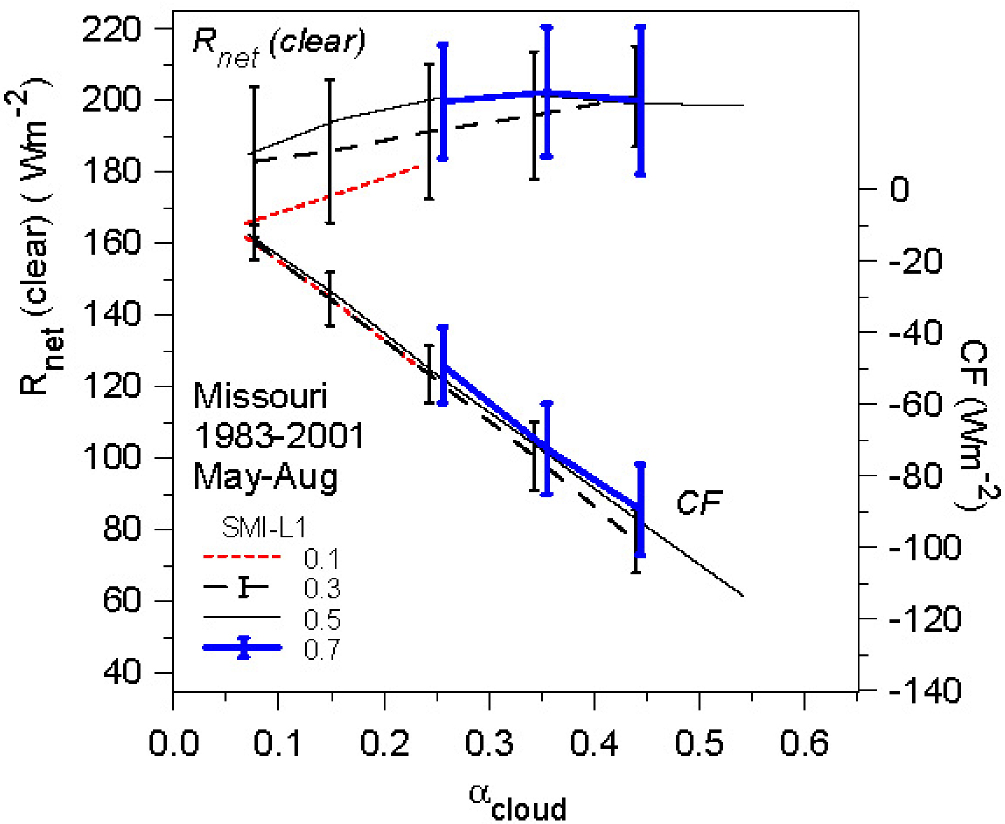
- ERA-15: SW-L1 Boreal forest & moss
- Resistance to evaporation gives RH drop and LCL rise

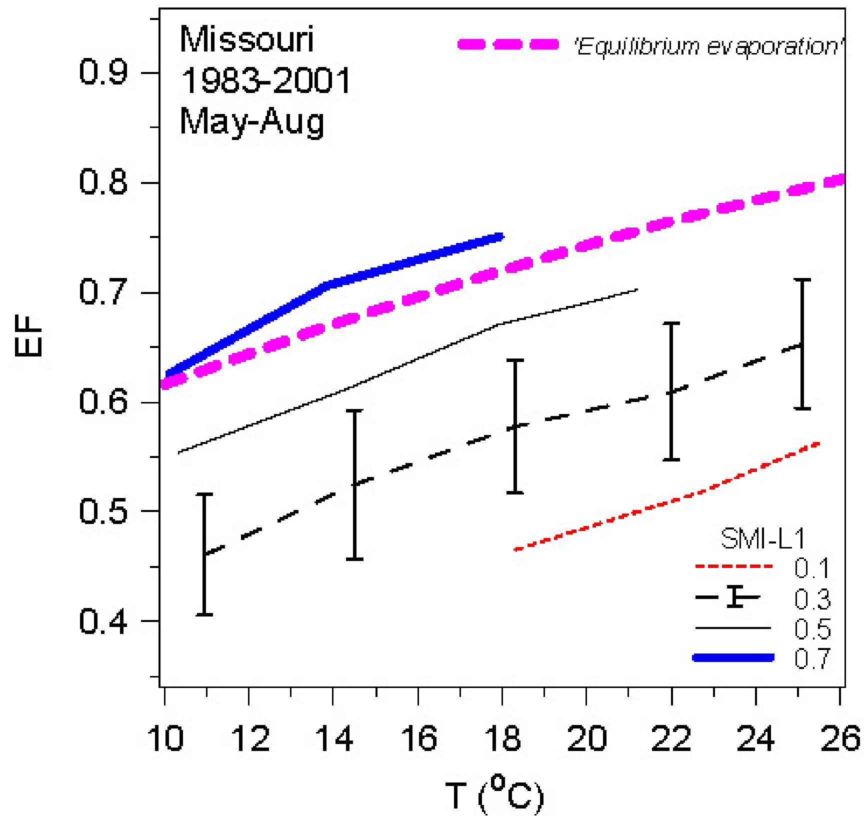
Land-surface-BL Coupling



- SMI-L1 = (SM- 0.171)/(0.323-0.171)
- P_{LCL} stratified by Precip. & SMI-L1 or EF
- Highly coupled system: only P_{LCL} *observable*

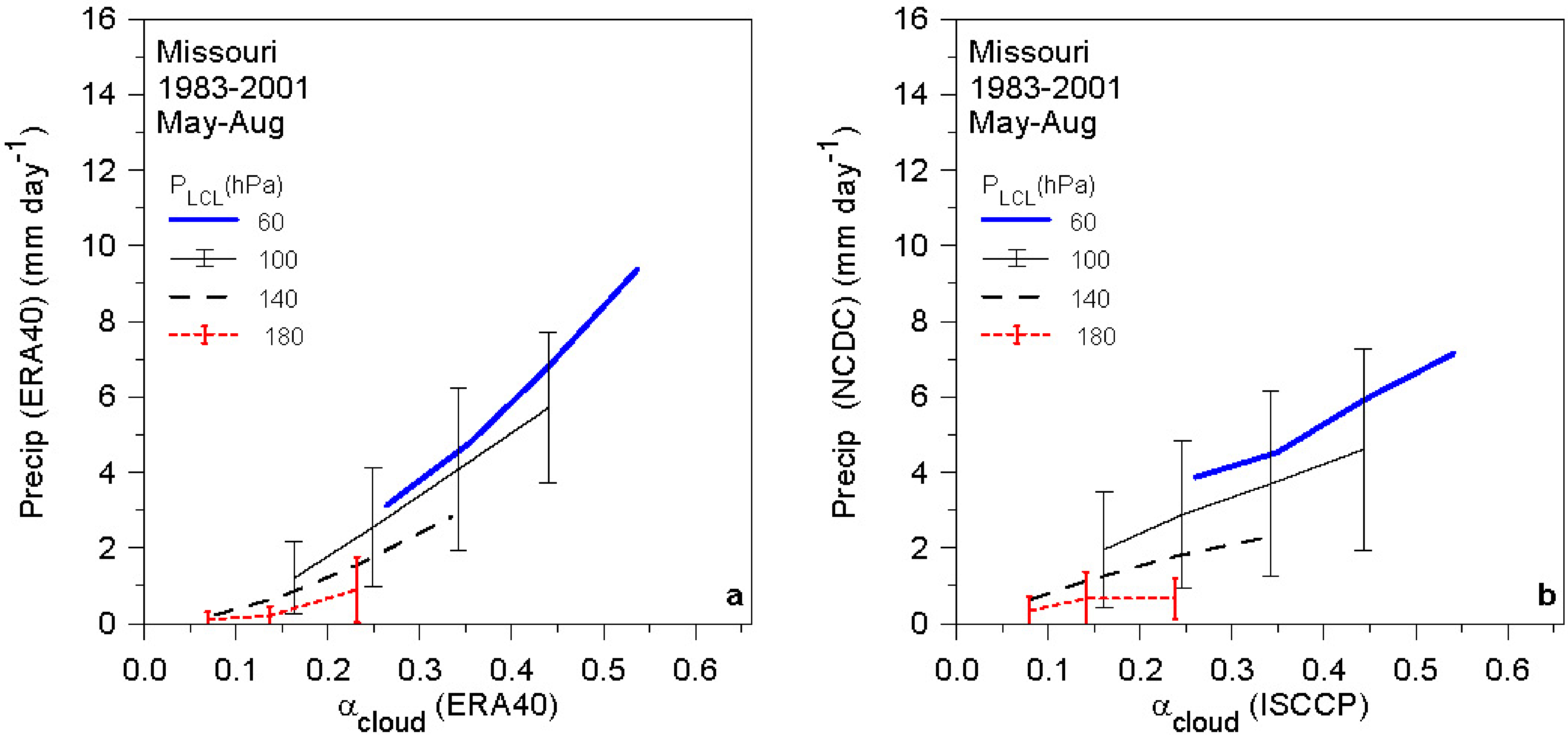
Separating cloud and surface controls on the SEB and EF





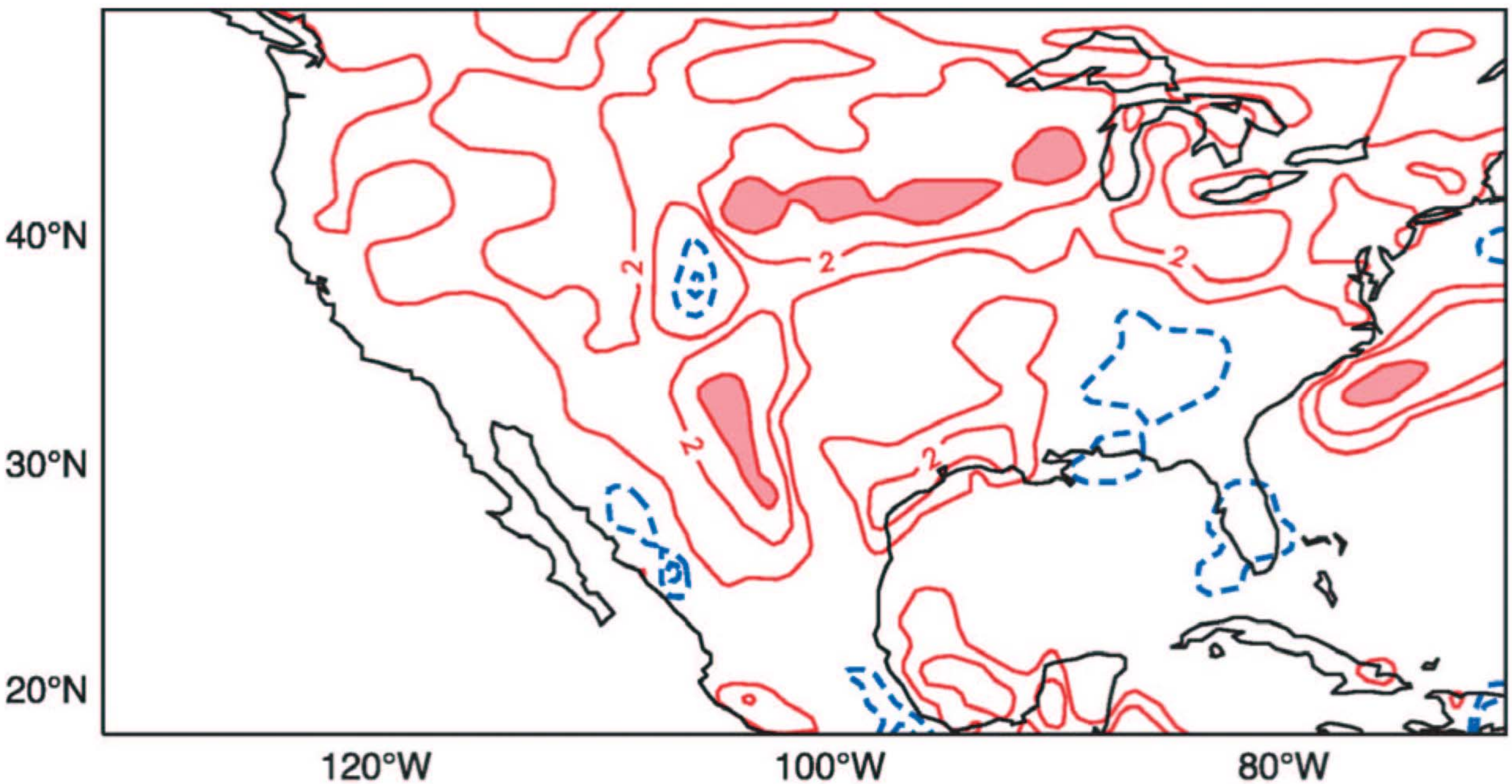
- R_{net} depends on cloud cover
- EF depends on T and soil moisture

Cloud forcing to Precipitation



- SWCF/precip less in ERA-40 (0.48) than *observed (0.74)*
- Cloud radiative & diabatic forcing *comparable*
- *And closely coupled on all timescales in atmosphere*

Evaporation-precipitation feedback



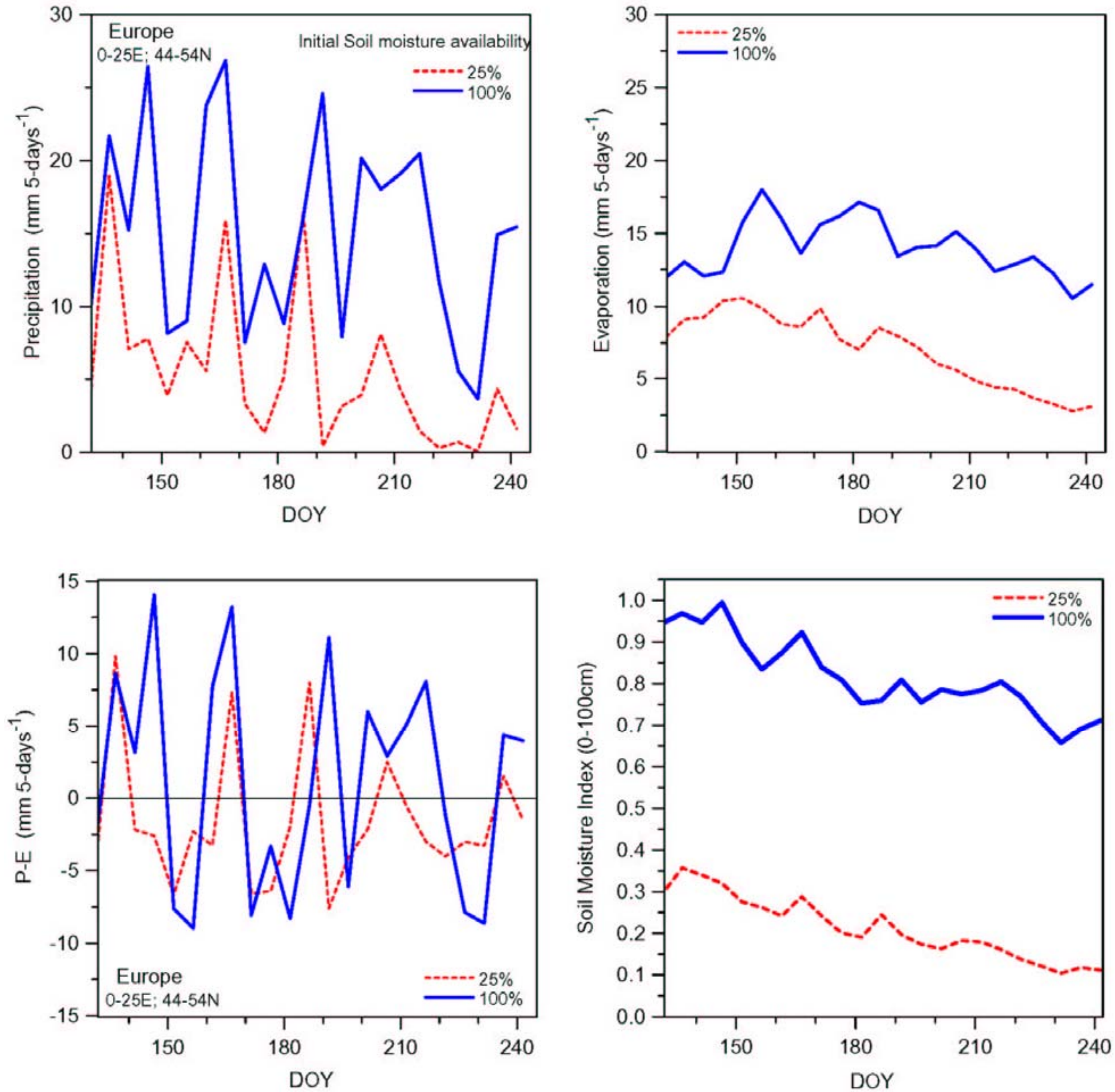
- Difference in monthly forecast precip. (July 1993) starting with wet and dry soils

[Beljaars et al. 1996]

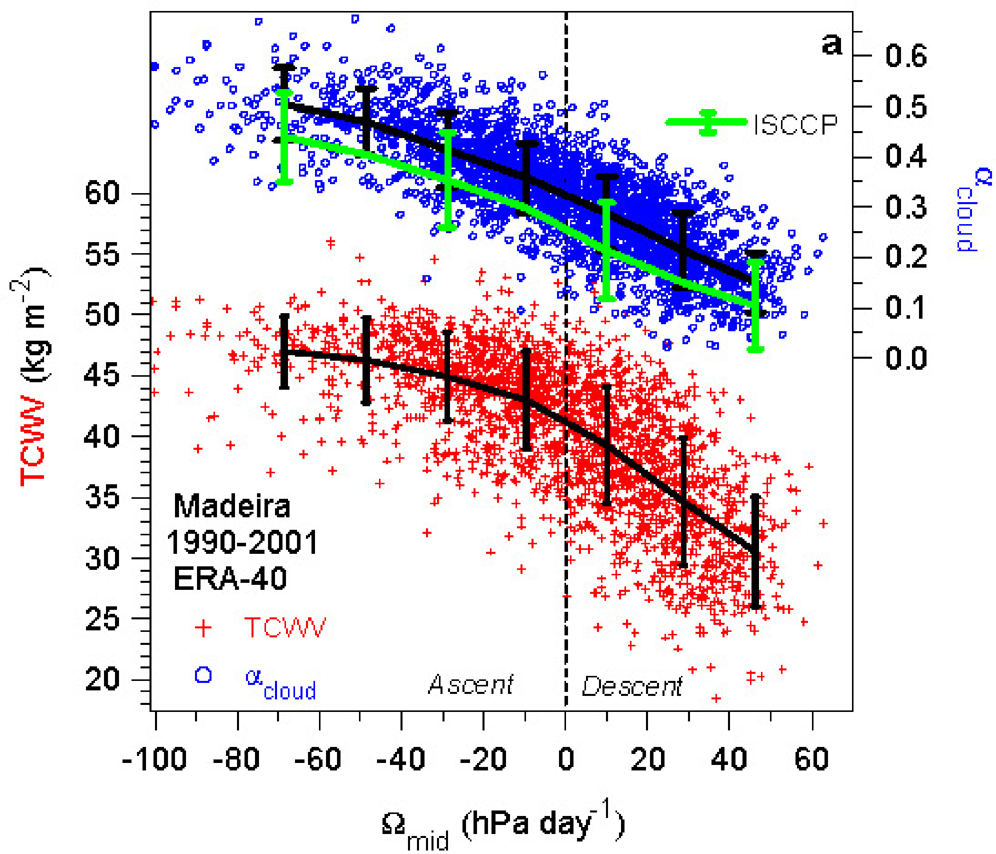
Evaporation-precipitation feedback in ERA-40

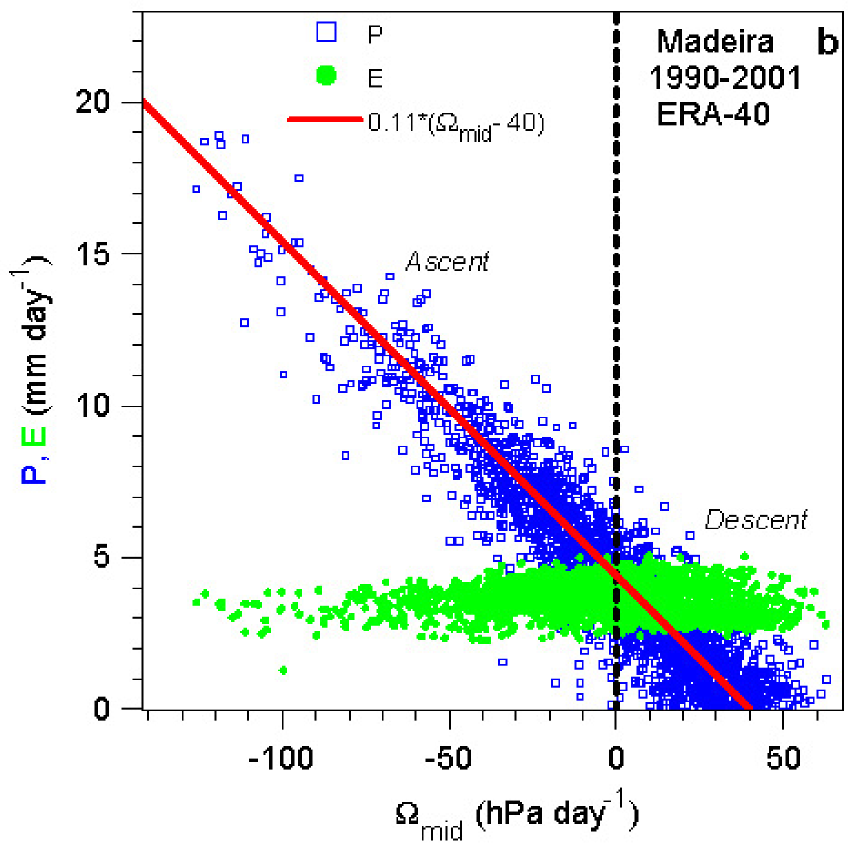
- Two 120-day FX from May 1, 1987, initialized with wet and dry soils
- Memory lasts all summer
- E and P fall with dry soil
- E-P changes little; variability drops

[Betts 2004]



Precipitation and cloud coupling to vertical motion *in ERA-40 reanalysis*





- Partition of *moisture convergence* into
  TCWV, α_{cloud}, and precipitation
- Note high bias of α_{cloud} from ISCCP; while precip. generally low

Summary/Philosophy

- Look for relationships and information in the coupling of processes/ observables
- Models have only limited value without deep understanding of the coupling of processes
- Observations important for evaluation & to suggest processes that are simply missing
- Every model cycle needs analysis of relationships, diurnal, daily mean and seasonal, for both wet and dry seasons (or disturbed/suppressed conditions) against observations for tropical and mid-latitude climate regimes
- A challenge: but tractable as both global, regional and point time-series datasets improve