Characterization of thermal seasons and their projections in extratropical northern and southern hemisphere domains through the analysis of annual daily temperatures cycle as seen from regional climate model ensembles

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1. OBJECTIVE

Here we present a method to analyse the four thermal seasons based on the study of the function of the annual cycle of mean daily temperature and its first derivative at any extratropical location. With the aim to demonstrate the global applicability of the proposed method, southern South America and Europe domains are chosen.

2. METHOD


The method was adapted from Buinterwerf et al. 2015 (Nature Clim. Change, vol 5, issue 4, 364-368).

1 to 2: Spring-to-Summer warming
2 to 3: Summer-to-Autumn cooling
3 to 4: Autumn-to-Winter cooling
4 to 1: Winter-to-Spring warming

3. RESULTS

The four warming/cooling periods of thermal seasons are clearly distinguishable along the year lasting around 90 days.

The spatial patterns of the days of occurrence of maximum and minimum of f’(Tmean) are more homogenous than the metrics related with intermediate thermal seasons (FIG. 2 & 3). This fact also can be extracted from the grouping of points in the polar diagrams (FIG. 4).

These results are in agreement with López-Franca et al. (2013; Theor. Appl. Climatol., 114(3-4), 635-642.) for Iberian Peninsula where a method based on local percentile thresholds of temperature was proposed.

4. CURRENT ONGOING WORK

- The proposed methodology will be applied to ensembles of RCMs. This would allow us to see their capability to reproduce the observational behaviour obtained by the reanalysis. Then, the projected changes of these models on regional scales for future climate conditions seem to be another challenging focus of this work.
- Among the many features that could be studied based on the proposed method, one quite interesting could be the temporal trends. It would allow to identify how climate change could to modify subperiods on the thermal annual cycle in a homogeneous or heterogeneous way in time and space.
- As the proposed method is based on Buinterwerf et al. 2015, who determines the growing season from satellite data, the study of relation with phenological features is also another promising future focus of this work.