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# A Lagrangian perspective on tropical anvil cloud lifecycle in present and future climate

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## Key Points:

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- E3SM is able to reproduce many features of the observed albedo-OLR histogram representing anvil cloud decay.
- Three dimensional air parcel trajectories reveal anvil cloud lifetime of 15 hours in both present and future warmer climate.
- Thick anvil clouds contain more ice and have a larger optical depth in a warmer climate, while thin anvil clouds do not change substantially.

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**Abstract**

The evolution of tropical anvil clouds from their origin in deep convective cores to their slow decay determines the climatic effects of clouds in tropical convective regions. Despite the relevance of anvil clouds for climate and responses of clouds to global warming, processes dominating their evolution are not well understood. Currently available observational data reveal instantaneous snapshots of anvil cloud properties, but cannot provide a process-based perspective on anvil evolution. We therefore conduct simulations with the high resolution version of the Exascale Earth System Model in which we track mesoscale convective systems over the Tropical Western Pacific and compute trajectories that follow air parcels detrained from peaks of convective activity. With this approach we gain new insight into the anvil cloud evolution both in present day and future climate.

Comparison with geostationary satellite data shows that the model is able to simulate maritime mesoscale convective systems reasonably well. Trajectory results indicate that anvil cloud lifetime is about 15 hours with no significant change in a warmer climate. The anvil ice water content is larger in a warmer climate due to a larger source of ice by detrainment and larger depositional growth leading to a more negative net cloud radiative effect along detrained trajectories. However, the increases in sources are counteracted by increases in sinks of ice, particularly snow formation and sedimentation. Furthermore, we find that the mean anvil cloud feedback along trajectories is positive and consistent with results from more traditional cloud feedback calculation methods.

**Plain Language Summary**

Clouds can have both a cooling and warming effect on climate. Storm clouds in the tropics preferentially cool the climate as they reflect a large fraction of sunlight back to space. Remains of storm clouds, also known as anvil clouds due to their typical shape, reside at very high altitudes and can persist for many hours after the initial intense rain events and extend over vast regions. They keep part of the terrestrial radiation within the atmosphere and therefore warm the climate, similarly to greenhouse gases. The transition from a very reflective storm cloud to a thin anvil cloud is not yet well understood despite playing an important role for tropical climate. We study such transitions with the help of climate model simulations in which we follow anvil clouds from their origin in storm clouds as they develop into thin anvil clouds and eventually disappear. The climate model allows us to study this process both in present-day as well as a warmer future climate. We find that in a warmer climate the storm clouds contain more ice and reflect more sunlight, which leads to more cooling, while the thin anvil clouds do not change much with warming.

**1 Introduction**

Tropical cloud radiative effects (CRE) are in deep convective regions determined by the relative proportions of thick, freshly detrained anvil clouds, and the thin anvils they evolve into. For thick anvil clouds, shortwave (SW) effects prevail over longwave (LW) effects, leading to a net climatic cooling effect. In contrast, LW effects prevail for thin anvil clouds with cloud optical depth (COD) smaller than 4, leading to a net warming effect (Kubar et al., 2007; Berry & Mace, 2014; Hartmann & Berry, 2017). Thick anvils occur adjacent to deep convective towers and form a reflective cold cloud shield. While most of the detrained ice that forms fresh anvils is removed from the atmosphere within a few hours, thinning anvil clouds persist for much longer, often extending for hundreds of kilometers beyond the areas of active convection (Mapes & Houze, 1993; Mace et al., 2006; Protopapadaki et al., 2017). Any response of anvil cloud properties (e.g. occurrence, extent, or lifetime) to global warming could therefore lead to a significant radiative feedback.

64 The tropical troposphere is to first order controlled by an interplay between radia-  
 65 tive cooling from the emission of thermal radiation by water vapor and latent heating  
 66 in convective updrafts. The peak of convective detrainment therefore occurs just below  
 67 the altitude where the radiative cooling becomes inefficient, at a temperature of about  
 68 220 K. This relation will not change in a warmer climate with anvil clouds shifting to  
 69 higher altitudes while remaining at a "fixed" temperature as proposed by the "fixed anvil  
 70 temperature" (FAT) hypothesis (Hartmann & Larson, 2002). FAT has since been refined  
 71 to take into account small cloud temperature changes associated with the presence of  
 72 ozone, well-mixed greenhouse gases or changes in relative humidity (Zelinka & Hartmann,  
 73 2010; Harrop & Hartmann, 2012). It has been confirmed by cloud resolving model (CRM)  
 74 and general circulation model (GCM) studies (Kuang & Hartmann, 2007; Har-  
 75 rop & Hartmann, 2016; Hartmann et al., 2019; Boucher et al., 2013; Zelinka et al., 2016),  
 76 and satellite observations (Zhou et al., 2014; Marvel et al., 2015; Norris et al., 2016; Mace  
 77 & Berry, 2017).

78 Several modeling studies showed a decrease in high cloud fraction with increased  
 79 sea surface temperatures (SSTs) (Tompkins & Craig, 1999; Zelinka & Hartmann, 2010;  
 80 Khairoutdinov & Emanuel, 2013). Bony et al. (2016) proposed a thermodynamic mech-  
 81 anism connecting the decrease in cloud fraction to increases in static stability. The mech-  
 82 anism involves FAT, static stability, and the reduction of convective outflow (and thus  
 83 anvil cloud fraction) in a warmer world. The upper tropospheric static stability is bound  
 84 to the moist adiabatic lapse rate. As the troposphere expands vertically, the decrease  
 85 in pressure leads to an increased saturation specific humidity at a fixed temperature, which  
 86 consequently warms the upper troposphere and increases its static stability (Zelinka &  
 87 Hartmann, 2010; Hartmann et al., 2020). Consequently, based on the FAT hypothesis,  
 88 a higher stability leads to a smaller convective detrainment, reducing the anvil cloud frac-  
 89 tion and therefore limiting the tropical high cloud positive feedback.

90 Despite the arguments above that high cloud fraction should decrease in a warmer  
 91 Earth, preliminary results from the Radiative-Convective Equilibrium Modeling Inter-  
 92 comparison Project show a large spread of modeled responses to increases in SSTs (Wing  
 93 et al., 2019) including anvil cloud fraction changes. Moreover, various versions of the NICAM  
 94 global and limited area CRM that represent convective cloud processes using fewer pa-  
 95 rameterizations than GCMs (and thus may be more realistic) show an increase in tropi-  
 96 cal high clouds with global warming (Satoh et al., 2011; Tsushima et al., 2015; Ohno  
 97 et al., 2019). If the mechanism proposed by Bony et al. (2016) is present, an increase in  
 98 high cloud fraction with warming simulated by some models implies that additional un-  
 99 known feedbacks should play an important role. High clouds fraction increases with warm-  
 100 ing were shown to be connected to changes in deposition and ice crystal sedimentation,  
 101 which were in turn driven by increases in upper tropospheric environmental relative hu-  
 102 midity and radiative heating within cloudy parcels (Ohno & Satoh, 2018). Many of these  
 103 processes are represented crudely in today's models, and Ohno et al. (2019) addition-  
 104 ally pointed out the important role of turbulent mixing, which strongly depends on ver-  
 105 tical grid spacing.

106 Several observational studies show that tropical outgoing longwave radiation (OLR)  
 107 increases with surface warming more than predicted by the Planck response to warm-  
 108 ing (Lindzen & Choi, 2011; Choi et al., 2017). Lindzen et al. (2001) proposed a contro-  
 109 versial hypothesis based on geostationary satellite observations, stating that the cover-  
 110 age of anvil clouds in the tropics will decrease with warming due to increased precipi-  
 111 tation efficiency and consequent decreased convective detrainment, allowing a higher OLR.  
 112 They named it the "Iris effect", after the iris of the human eye, which expands in con-  
 113 ditions of weak light to let more light pass, similarly to the putative tropical OLR re-  
 114 sponse to the surface temperature in letting more OLR out in a warmer climate by re-  
 115 ducing the high cloud cover. The Iris effect was proposed as a negative climate feedback,  
 116 counteracting the greenhouse gas warming effect. The work was soon criticized for method-  
 117 ological reasons and lack of a clear physical mechanism (e.g. Fu et al. (2002); Hartmann  
 118 and Michelsen (2002)). However, the idea has recently gained more interest following the

119 modeling study of Mauritsen and Stevens (2015) that implemented a temperature-dependent  
 120 convective autoconversion rate, which resulted in a decreased climate sensitivity.

121 Hence, our understanding of tropical high clouds and the responses of their amount  
 122 and optical depth to global warming are highly uncertain (Sherwood et al., 2020), some-  
 123 times leading to diametrically different conclusions. The role of specific microphysical  
 124 processes, their interaction with radiation, and their changes due to surface warming and  
 125 greenhouse gas increase are still unclear. This study’s goal is to provide a better under-  
 126 standing of some of the processes controlling anvil cloud decay and their responses to  
 127 global warming with the help of a Lagrangian approach in which we track air parcels de-  
 128 trained from regions of active deep convection. We show that the Lagrangian approach  
 129 can, coupled to a high resolution model that is skillful in simulations of relevant climatic  
 130 processes, reveal a process based view on the evolution of high clouds and their responses  
 131 to global warming that is complementary to the standard climate model analysis.

### 132 1.1 Lagrangian perspective on anvil evolution

133 Atmospheric models can be separated into two categories based on their treatment  
 134 of fields’ evolution related to the wind flow. Eulerian models treat the field evolution as  
 135 a function of fixed space coordinates and time. In contrast, Lagrangian models describe  
 136 fields following particles or air parcels along the flow. The Lagrangian perspective is par-  
 137 ticularly useful for studies of dynamic, quickly changing phenomena, giving a natural per-  
 138 spective on air parcel evolution. Lagrangian tracking of detrained clouds and water vapor  
 139 has provided new insights into the lifecycle of tropical high clouds. For example, stud-  
 140 ies by Salathé and Hartmann (1997) and Soden (1998) highlighted the importance of the  
 141 warming by large scale subsidence in decreasing the relative humidity of air masses de-  
 142 trained by deep convection. Soden et al. (2004) in addition showed that convection moist-  
 143 ens the upper troposphere primarily by direct detrainment of water vapor, not through  
 144 evaporation of anvil clouds. Luo and Rossow (2004) found that about 50% of tropical  
 145 cirrus clouds originate from deep convection. Mace et al. (2006) used a combination of  
 146 ground-based radar data with satellite feature tracking to show that tropical anvil cloud  
 147 systems are long-lived with lifetimes of about 12 hours. Gehlot and Quaas (2012) were  
 148 the first to apply a similar tracking method on GCM model output to verify the model  
 149 against observations and look at the changes in anvil cloud lifecycle in a simulation with  
 150 increased SSTs. The Lagrangian analysis suggested that a combination of increased cloud  
 151 fraction and cloud altitude was the driving force behind a positive cloud feedback, de-  
 152 spite increases in cloud albedo. Jensen et al. (2018) followed trajectories of ice crystals  
 153 detrained from a midlatitude thunderstorm driven by a CRM simulation. They simu-  
 154 lated the first 3 hours of the microphysical evolution of detrained ice crystals and showed  
 155 the large importance of gravitational settling and depositional growth for the anvil evo-  
 156 lution. So far, three-dimensional Lagrangian tracking has never been applied to stud-  
 157 ies focusing on deep convective outflow and the transition between deep cumulus to thick  
 158 and thin anvil clouds. The tracking of detrained air parcels allows us to determine the  
 159 lifetime of anvil clouds and estimate sources and sinks of ice during the cloud evolution  
 160 and their changes with global warming.

161 The study focuses on the region between 130°-180°E and 20°S-20°N, which we call  
 162 Tropical Western Pacific (TWP) and is typical of regions with warm and uniform SST  
 163 and frequent deep convection. Only anvil clouds that originate from maritime deep con-  
 164 vective cores are considered as the continental/island deep convection is controlled by  
 165 different processes and is less important for the tropical radiation balance. Section 2 in-  
 166 troduces the satellite and model data used and describes the details of the used MCS  
 167 tracking and air parcel tracking methods. Section 3.1 briefly assesses the model perfor-  
 168 mance in the TWP. The Lagrangian perspective on the simulated anvil cloud evolution  
 169 in present climate is presented in Section 3.2. Mean climate responses to warming are  
 170 presented in Section 4.1, followed by a description of mesoscale convective systems’ (MCS)  
 171 responses to global warming in Section 4.2. Finally, Section 4.3 presents changes of anvil

172 properties along detrained trajectories due to global warming and their radiative impli-  
173 cations. A discussion on the implications and limitations of the model simulations is pro-  
174 vided in Section 5. Conclusions are given in Section 6.

## 175 2 Methods

### 176 2.1 Model

177 We use the Exascale Earth System model (E3SM), a new GCM developed by the  
178 US Department of Energy (J. Golaz et al., 2019). The model consists of interacting com-  
179 ponents simulating atmosphere, land surface, ocean, sea ice and rivers. The atmospheric  
180 component of E3SM (Rasch et al., 2019) is a descendant of the CAM5 model (Neale et  
181 al., 2012), including new ways of coding, improved model performance, increased reso-  
182 lution, and numerous additional physical parameterizations related to clouds and aerosols.  
183 The model uses a spectral finite element dynamical core (Dennis et al., 2012) with 72  
184 vertical layers. The upper tropospheric resolution of about 500 m is significantly higher  
185 than most state-of-art GCMs, and allows for a more realistic representation of upper tro-  
186 pospheric clouds. E3SM performs well compared to other CMIP5 models (J. Golaz et  
187 al., 2019), despite known model biases (Xie et al., 2018; Y. Zhang et al., 2019). In par-  
188 ticular, the model underpredicts clouds in the tropical warm pool area by about 10-20%,  
189 which was found to be related to the increase of the vertical resolution from 30 to 72 lay-  
190 ers (Xie et al., 2018).

191 We use the high resolution (about  $0.25^\circ$ ) version of the model (Caldwell et al., 2019),  
192 in which the large tropical MCS are better resolved. E3SM uses a convective parame-  
193 terization by G. J. Zhang and McFarlane (1995) with the dilute plume closure by Neale  
194 et al. (2008). Turbulence, shallow convection and cloud macrophysics are simulated by  
195 the third order turbulence closure Cloud Layers Unified By Binormals (CLUBB) param-  
196 eterization (J.-C. Golaz et al., 2002; Larson & Golaz, 2005). The model uses an updated  
197 version of Morrison and Gettelman (2008)’s scheme for stratiform cloud microphysics  
198 (Gettelman & Morrison, 2015) and is coupled with the RRTMG radiative transfer model  
199 (Mlawer et al., 1997; Iacono et al., 2008). The COSP version 1.4 satellite simulator (Bodas-  
200 Salcedo et al., 2011) is run in parallel to the model. The atmospheric component of the  
201 model was coupled with the land model only, using prescribed SSTs.

### 202 2.2 Simulations

203 We perform two simulations representing present day climate (REF, climREF, see  
204 also in Table 1) and two simulations representing a possible warmer future climate state  
205 (4K, clim4K). SSTs and sea ice extent were prescribed using a monthly present-day cli-  
206 matology (simulations REF, climREF) based on the Smith/Reynolds EOF dataset (Hurrell  
207 et al., 2008). Simulations 4K and clim4K use the same SST pattern assuming a uniform  
208 4K warming. The simulations used for calculation of the mean climatic properties and  
209 cloud feedbacks with monthly output frequency (climREF and clim4K) were run for only  
210 3 years due to the large computational expense.

211 The simulations REF, NUDGE, and 4K, used for both MCS tracking and trajec-  
212 tory calculations last 3 months (Jun 1 - Aug 31) with a 7 day spin-up period (May 24  
213 - May 30) that is not considered in the analysis (Table 1). Because many fields were archived  
214 hourly for subsequent analysis, longer simulations were not possible due to storage space  
215 limitations. The NUDGE simulation uses a linear interpolation nudging technique de-  
216 veloped by Sun et al. (2019). The model horizontal wind fields were nudged at every model  
217 timestep to an interpolated value based on 6 hourly ERA-Interim reanalysis data (Dee  
218 et al., 2011), with a relaxation timescale of 6 hours. The simulation NUDGE uses monthly  
219 mean SSTs for the months of June-August 2016 from the same dataset for a better com-  
220 parison with MCS observations from the same period.

**Table 1.** A list of performed simulations.

Simulation	Length	Output frequency	Description
NUDGE	3 months	1 hour	winds nudged to reanalysis data, SSTs from 2016
REF	3 months	1 hour	free running experiment with climatologic SSTs
4K	3 months	1 hour	same as REF but with SSTs increased by 4K
climREF	3 years	1 month	same as REF, but initialized in January
clim4K	3 years	1 month	same as 4K, but initialized in January

221 In addition we estimate cloud feedbacks based on Zelinka et al. (2016), which uses  
 222 cloud radiative kernels (Zelinka et al., 2012a) and output from the ISCCP satellite sim-  
 223 ulator (Klein & Jakob, 1999; Webb et al., 2001) separated into cloud top pressure and  
 224 COD bins. The feedback calculation allows one to separately account for the contribu-  
 225 tion of changes in cloud altitude, cloud amount, and cloud optical depth to the total cloud  
 226 feedback. We calculate both the cloud feedback of all clouds as well as the cloud feed-  
 227 back for clouds with cloud top pressures smaller than 440 hPa.

### 228 2.3 CERES satellite data

229 We use the CERES-derived top-of-atmosphere radiative fluxes (Wielicki et al., 1996)  
 230 from the CALIPSO-CloudSat-CERES-MODIS (CCCM) data set (Kato et al., 2011) for  
 231 the months of June-August 2007–2010 in the TWP (20°S to 20°N, 130 to 180°E). The  
 232 horizontal resolution of CERES pixel data is approximately 30 km. To avoid problems  
 233 at large solar zenith angles, we limit the analysis to CERES pixels for which the solar  
 234 zenith angle and the CERES viewing angle zenith are smaller than 40°. Given that the  
 235 data in the CCCM data set are collocated with the CloudSat-CALIPSO radar-lidar mea-  
 236 surements, that limits the observations to the 1.30 pm (afternoon) overpass of the A-  
 237 Train satellite constellation.

### 238 2.4 Geostationary satellite data

239 We use the Himawari-8 geostationary satellite observations (Bessho et al., 2016)  
 240 of brightness temperature (BT) at the infrared channel (11.2  $\mu\text{m}$ ) between 1 June - 31  
 241 August 2016. The downloaded Himawari data product only includes every fourth pixel  
 242 and scan line, making the effective horizontal resolution about 8 km at nadir and 12 km  
 243 at the edge of the study domain. These data were subsequently regridded to 0.25° (about  
 244 25 km) to match the model output. Regridded pixels were computed by averaging the  
 245 native grid pixels within the new grid boundaries. The datasets' temporal resolution of  
 246 1 hour allows individual MCS to be tracked throughout their lifecycle.

### 247 2.5 Lagrangian methods

248 Our work largely relies on two distinct tracking methods: MCS tracking, based on  
 249 Himawari BT measurements, and the three dimensional air parcel tracking, based on the  
 250 resolved model wind fields. The MCS tracking follows the parent deep convective sys-  
 251 tem throughout all stages of its evolution, from the convective initiation to its decay, pro-  
 252 viding a good overview of the convective processes and the adjacent thick anvil clouds,  
 253 while missing the decaying thin anvil clouds.

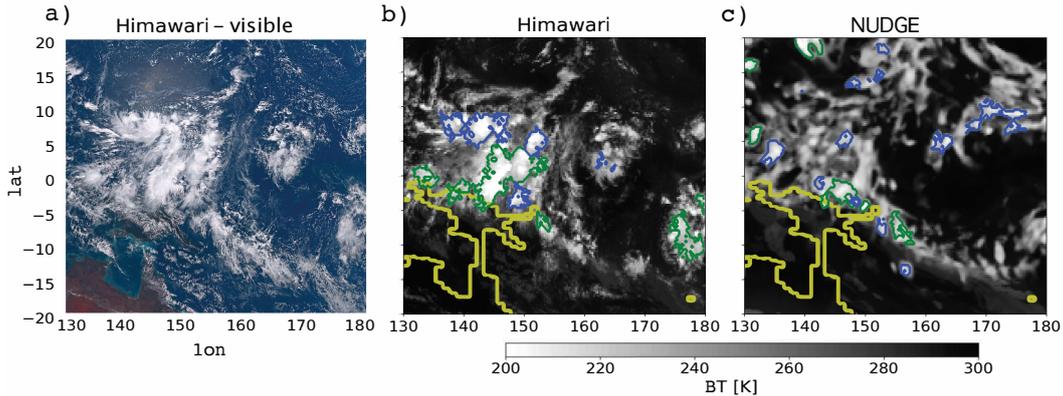
254 In contrast, the air parcel tracking follows cloudy parcels as they leave the MCS  
 255 region and become thin cirrus. It is initialized at the point of maximum MCS activity

256 as determined by the MCS tracking algorithm. Air parcel tracking provides an estimate  
 257 of the decay timescale of an anvil cloud, following its evolution from a fresh thick anvil  
 258 to a thin cirrus cloud, and provides a detailed understanding of the evolution of cloud  
 259 processes. A more detailed description of each tracking mechanism, their strengths, and  
 260 weaknesses can be found in the subsections 2.5.1 and 2.5.2. The animation of a 2 week  
 261 long segment of the simulation provides an intuitive view of both tracking mechanisms  
 262 (Movie S1).

263 **2.5.1 MCS tracking**

264 We apply an MCS tracking algorithm to the  $11.2 \mu\text{m}$  BT measurements from the  
 265 Himawari and to the  $10.5 \mu\text{m}$  simulated BT retrieval using the COSP satellite simula-  
 266 tor. The small difference in the BT wavelength of the two channels does not affect our  
 267 findings. Both Himawari and E3SM data are tracked in 1 hour intervals, enabling an ac-  
 268 curate MCS tracking. The tracking algorithm is based on Fiolleau and Roca (2013) and  
 269 is described in detail in Wall et al. (2018). It consists of two steps:

- 270 1. Detection step: The cold core is detected based on the BT threshold (between 200  
 271 and 214 K depending on the specific case - see Tab. 2). The cold core must cover  
 272 at least 17 pixels and last for at least 2 hours to be considered by the algorithm.
- 273 2. Spreading step: The cold cloud shield is incrementally increased from the BT thresh-  
 274 old to the warm limit in both space and time (ranging between 235 and 240 K as  
 275 listed in Tab. 2).



**Figure 1.** A snapshot of the region of interest for July 2 at 2.00 UTC. (a) visible Himawari satellite image; (b) the equivalent BT measurement; (c) the NUDGE model simulation at the same timestep. Blue contours represent tracked MCSs, green contours represent MCSs that are tracked but removed from the analysis as they touch the edge of the domain or land. Yellow contours represent boundaries of land masses.

276 The tracking algorithm is able to track MCS throughout their lifecycle, from the  
 277 growth to the decay stage (Wall et al., 2018). However, once the clouds become optically  
 278 thinner, the BT signal of cold clouds is mixed with the signal from warmer, lower lying  
 279 levels. The algorithm reliably tracks upper tropospheric clouds to the warm BT limit  
 280 of 235-240 K, which corresponds to a COD of about 3-10. The tracking algorithm there-  
 281 fore cannot account for the thin anvil clouds that spread beyond the region detected by  
 282 the cloud mask. The altitude of cloud top does not change by more than 1 km within  
 283 the tracked region as suggested by the Fig. 6a and confirmed in other studies (Bouniol  
 284 et al., 2016; Sokol & Hartmann, n.d.). An example of the cold cloud shield output of the

285 tracking algorithm is shown in Fig. 1 b and c. The blue and green contours outline the  
 286 limits of the detected cold cloud shield which we take as the MCS boundaries. The green  
 287 contoured MCSs are removed from the analysis as they either cross land at some point  
 288 in their lifetime or touch the domain boundaries. The MCS lifetime is defined as the time  
 289 between the first and last detection of an MCS based on the cold cloud shield. No merge  
 290 or split events are allowed, as the algorithm partitions the cold cloud shield on the ba-  
 291 sis of proximity to the cold cores.

292 We use two separate ways of setting the BT threshold for tracking the MCS. The  
 293 first method relies on fixed BT thresholds of 210 K for cold core detection and 240 K  
 294 for the warmest contours that are tracked as part of the cold cloud shield (see Wall et  
 295 al. (2018) for details). However, fixed BT thresholds propagate mean climatic errors into  
 296 the object-oriented MCS tracking analysis. Those errors will be discussed below in the  
 297 evaluation of BT PDFs in Fig. 3. The work by Rempel et al. (2017) and Senf et al. (2018)  
 298 suggests that it can also be useful to apply a BT correction before the object-based MCS  
 299 tracking analysis, so we therefore also use a prescribed lower and upper BT percentile  
 300 to define the cold cloud shield used to track the detection and spread of cold cloud shield  
 301 area instead of a fixed BT limit. A percentile-based metric also helps estimating the im-  
 302 pacts of global warming driven changes of MCS properties and the anvil cloud evolution,  
 303 as described in Sections 4.2 and 4.3. Similar percentile based comparison metrics are fre-  
 304 quently used in studies of extreme precipitation responses to global warming (Fischer  
 305 & Knutti, 2015, 2016; Pendergrass & Knutti, 2018).

306 We chose the 0.4 and 8.15 BT percentiles as the cold core detection limit and the  
 307 upper BT limit, which correspond to the BT values of 200 K and 235 K in the full res-  
 308 olution Himawari dataset for consistency with the work by Wall et al. (2018). The cho-  
 309 sen lower percentile limit corresponds to a BT of 201.4 K in the regridded Himawari dataset  
 310 used in this analysis, to 210 K in the nudged, and 213.5 K in the free running E3SM model  
 311 simulation as stated in Table 2. The reasons for the large modeled BT bias are described  
 312 in Section 3.1.2.

### 313 *2.5.2 Lagrangian analysis of anvil clouds*

314 **1. Determination of trajectory starting locations:** High frequency (1 hour)  
 315 model output from June 1 to August 31 from simulations REF and 4K is used for cal-  
 316 culating forward trajectories. The forward trajectory calculation is designed to moni-  
 317 tor and capture the decay of anvil clouds from their early thick stage until dissipation  
 318 as thin cirrus. Monitoring starts at the peak of MCS convective activity, defined as the  
 319 point in the MCS evolution when the detected cold cloud shield occupies the largest area  
 320 (Roca et al., 2017). At this point the model columns covered by the cold cloud shield  
 321 (blue contours in Fig. 1) are selected to determine the right vertical launch level for the  
 322 trajectories. The vertical launch level is chosen to be the first model level from the model  
 323 top downward to have an ice water content (IWC) larger than  $3 \cdot 10^{-5} \text{ kg kg}^{-1}$  and a de-  
 324 trainment tendency from the parameterized convective updrafts larger than  $10^{-9} \text{ kg kg}^{-1}$   
 325  $\text{s}^{-1}$ . Launch levels are limited to temperatures colder than  $-35^\circ\text{C}$ , as the study is focused  
 326 on cold portions of anvil clouds.

327 **2. Trajectory calculation:** Trajectories are computed in a post processing step  
 328 with the Lagrangian Analysis Tool (LAGRANTO) (Wernli & Davies, 1997; Sprenger &  
 329 Wernli, 2015). Trajectories are computed forward in time for 40 hours. Microphysical  
 330 and radiative quantities are traced by identifying the value of those quantities from an  
 331 archived model dataset followed by a bilinear interpolation of the neighboring grid val-  
 332 ues in the horizontal dimension (latitude, longitude) and a linear interpolation in the ver-  
 333 tical dimension (model level) (Sprenger & Wernli, 2015). This tracking uses resolved three  
 334 dimensional wind fields that allows us to track the changing microphysical and radia-  
 335 tive properties after detrainment. The analysis neglects snow particles due to their larger

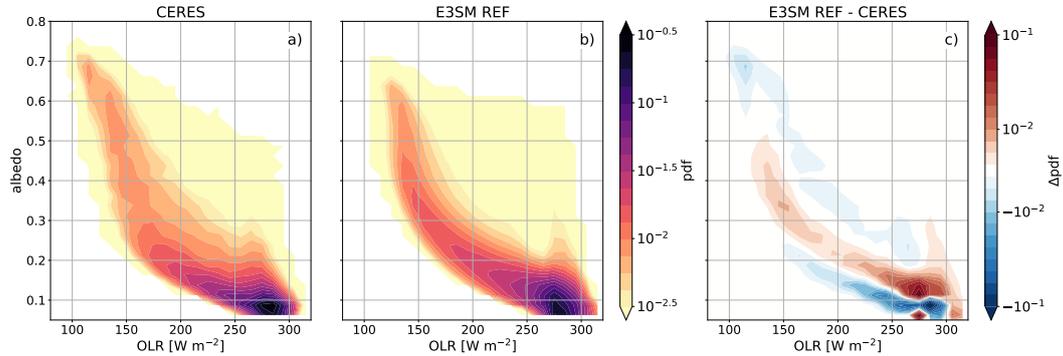
336 sedimentation velocity that leads to a rapid removal from the atmosphere and therefore  
 337 a smaller climatic influence compared to the longer lived detrained ice crystals.

338 In a second post processing step we remove the trajectories that encountered a sub-  
 339 sequent significant episode of detrained ice (i.e. detrainment larger than  $0.3 \cdot 10^{-9} \text{ kg kg}^{-1}$   
 340  $\text{s}^{-1}$ ) after the initial 4 hours of the development. This allows us to study cloud decay  
 341 of anvils that are not influenced by new occurrence of convection. The additional cri-  
 342 terion reduces the number of selected trajectories by 35%, from a total number of 190000  
 343 to about 125000, while not affecting the main conclusions of our study. We define a tra-  
 344 jectory as containing "ice cloud" if the local cloud fraction (output field CLOUD) ex-  
 345 ceeds 10% and at the same time IWC exceeds  $0.1 \text{ mg kg}^{-1}$ . The IWC limit was chosen  
 346 to be close to the minimum detection limit by CALIOP lidar, roughly corresponding to  
 347 COD of 0.01 (Avery et al., 2012). The anvil cloud lifetime is defined as the point in time  
 348 when the fraction of trajectories containing cloud decreases below 50%. Note that the  
 349 total column cloud fraction could still be large as air parcels containing ice can be de-  
 350 detrained from multiple levels below and above the tracked one. Due to lateral mixing the  
 351 cloud properties along trajectories in the later stage of anvil evolution represent a mix  
 352 of air from anvil and non-anvil air masses. We omit the radiatively active and prognos-  
 353 tic snow from the trajectory analysis due to its larger sedimentation velocity compared  
 354 to cloud ice (X. Zhao et al., 2017) and storage space limitations. The vertical compo-  
 355 nent of the trajectory calculation does not include the convective mass flux term as that  
 356 contribution is small compared to the grid box average updraft velocity.

### 357 3 Results - present climate

#### 358 3.1 Model evaluation

##### 359 3.1.1 Mean climate in the Tropical Western Pacific

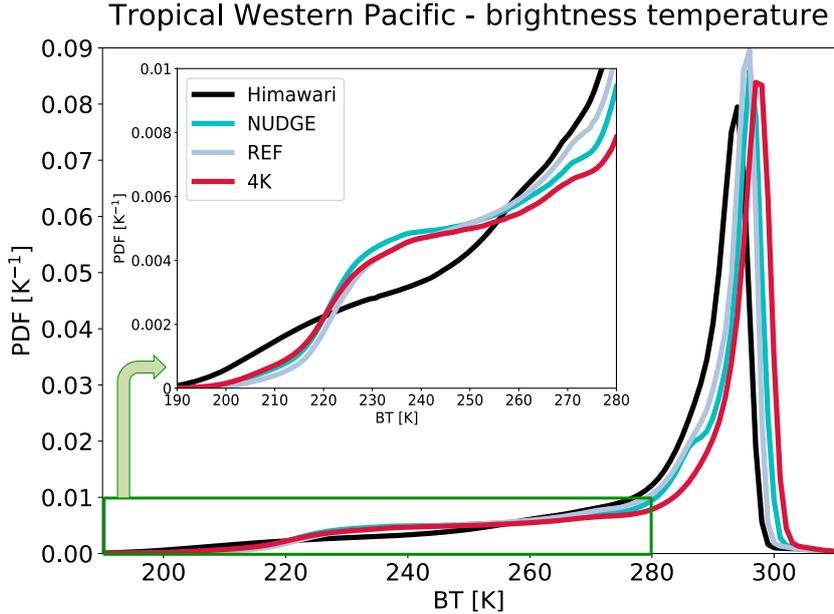


**Figure 2.** Albedo-OLR histogram for the Tropical Western Pacific from 4 years of CERES radiative flux observations for months June-August (a), the equivalent from the REF model simulation (b), and the anomalies between the two (c).

360 Figure 2 shows the probability density function (PDF) of OLR-albedo pairings ob-  
 361 served by CERES for the months of June-August, similarly to Fig. 2 in Hartmann and  
 362 Berry (2017), and the equivalent fields simulated by the model. The model output is lim-  
 363 ited to grid boxes with insolation values exceeding  $1000 \text{ W m}^{-2}$ , which approximately  
 364 corresponds to the zenith angle limit of  $40^\circ$  used to filter the CERES data. The general  
 365 shape of the histogram describes the evolution of anvil clouds: their lifecycle begins in  
 366 very reflective deep convective cores at low OLR and high albedo values. The detrained  
 367 anvil clouds gradually thin, decrease their albedo, and allow more OLR to escape to space  
 368 until reaching the modal point of the distribution at albedo values of about 0.08 and OLR

369 of 270-290  $\text{W m}^{-2}$  which corresponds to nearly clear sky conditions. The model is able  
 370 to reproduce the general shape of the distribution and therefore anvil decay remarkably  
 371 well, with the exception of the missing highest albedo and lowest OLR points and a mi-  
 372 nor albedo overestimation at OLR values between 200 and 300  $\text{W m}^{-2}$ . E3SM there-  
 373 fore shows good skill in simulating the process of anvil thinning, that is on one hand cru-  
 374 cial for the radiative balance of tropical deep convective regions, while on the other hand  
 375 traditionally challenging for GCMs to correctly simulate (Wall & Hartmann, 2018).

376 **3.1.2 Mesoscale convective systems**



**Figure 3.** BT histogram for the Tropical Western Pacific in JJA 2016 from Himawari observations and model simulations.

377 Figure 3 shows the PDF of BT in the Tropical Western Pacific region observed by  
 378 Himawari and modeled by E3SM with the help of a satellite simulator. We focus for now  
 379 on the NUDGE and REF simulations and refer back to the figures to examine climate  
 380 change effects in the 4K simulation only in Section 4. The Himawari distribution sharply  
 381 peaks at about 295 K, while the nudged and free running model simulations show a peak  
 382 at a few K warmer temperatures. This BT peak corresponds to clear sky regions, clear  
 383 sky regions with thin cirrus clouds, or regions covered by low clouds. The simulated warm  
 384 bias in BT peak is likely caused by the underprediction of thin low clouds (Y. Zhang et  
 385 al., 2019). The observed and simulated distributions are negatively skewed with a long  
 386 tail extending down to 190 K. BT values colder than 240 K correspond to cold cloud tops;  
 387 we define such gridboxes as cold cloud fraction. These BT values include deep convective  
 388 cores and anvil clouds of visible COD greater than about 5, and do not include thin  
 389 anvil cloud and other in-situ formed cirrus clouds. E3SM simulates a cold cloud fraction  
 390 of 9.7% in the nudged simulation (NUDGE) and 8.5% in the free running simulation (REF).  
 391 This is close to the observed value of 9.8%. The model substantially underestimates the  
 392 occurrence frequencies of BT colder than 220 K (represented by the highest albedo and  
 393 lowest OLR values in Fig. 2), and overestimates BT in the range between 225 and 250  
 394 K. This is a signal of a too low (and consequently too warm) cloud top, caused by a deep  
 395 convective detrainment level bias and the underestimation of the strongest overshoot-

**Table 2.** Tracked MCS properties. The numbers represent mean values with the respective standard deviations. The median values are in brackets.

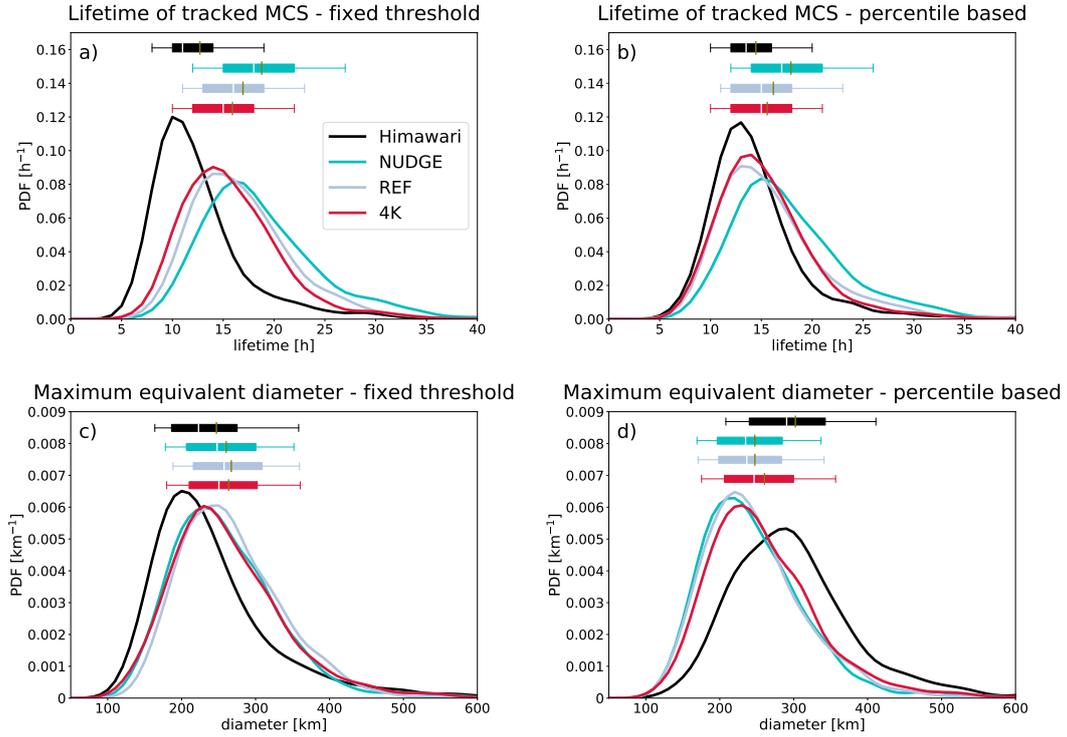
	<b>Himawari</b>	<b>NUDGE</b>	<b>REF</b>	<b>4K</b>
<b>1. Fixed BT</b>				
<i>BT limit [K]</i>	210-240	210-240	210-240	210-240
<i>MCS number</i>	1762	1243	853	1354
<i>Lifetime [h]</i>	12.7±5.4 (11)	18.8±6.1 (18)	16.9±5.4 (16)	15.9±5.4 (15)
<i>Equiv. diameter [km]</i>	247±97 (223)	260±75 (248)	267±68 (257)	264±81 (250)
<b>2. Percentile based BT</b>				
<i>BT limit [K]</i>	201.4-238.1	209.9-236.7	213.5-239.3	209.0-237.3
<i>MCS number</i>	794	1234	1285	1178
<i>Lifetime [h]</i>	14.5±5.0 (13.5)	17.9±6.0 (17.0)	16.2±6.0 (15.0)	15.6±5.4 (15.0)
<i>Equiv. diameter [km]</i>	302±90 (290)	247±73 (235)	248±69 (237)	260±80 (246)

ing convective cores, as already noted by Y. Zhang et al. (2019). The bias, which existed in the predecessor model CAM5 (Wang & Zhang, 2018), has not been solved in the E3SM model, in spite of increased vertical resolution and efforts to address the bias through tuning (Xie et al., 2018). Qualitatively the biases are also visible by comparing BT snapshots in panels b and c in Fig. 1. Moreover, despite efforts to evaluate the fields at the same nominal resolution, the model lacks the fine structures observed by Himawari. This is not surprising, as the effective model resolution is about 3-4 times larger than a single gridbox cell for the spectral element dynamical core used here.

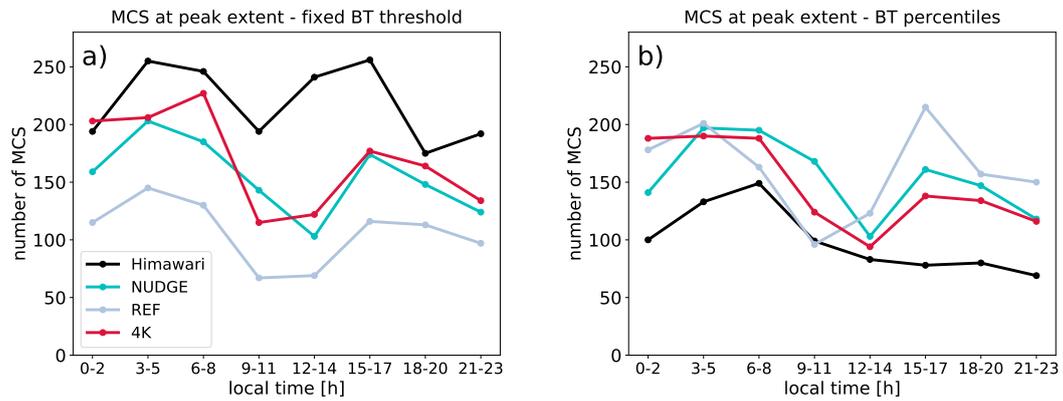
When MCS are defined using fixed BT thresholds, the model underestimates the number of MCS and overestimates their lifetime (Table 2 and Fig. 4 a,c), while simulating MCS of comparable size. The maximum MCS equivalent diameter is close to 250 km in both Himawari and E3SM. The MCS mean lifetime from Himawari observations is found to be 12.7 hours, which is comparable to Wall et al. (2018). The simulated MCS are more persistent, with average lifetimes of 19 hours (NUDGE) and 17 hours (REF). The excessive lifetime of the model clouds can at least in part be attributed to a series of parameterization choices made in the development of the atmospheric component of E3SM (Rasch et al., 2019). The effective radius of ice crystals detrained from deep convection was set to 12  $\mu\text{m}$ , which is smaller compared to observations (Van Diedenhoven et al., 2016), in order to increase the amount of cloud ice in the atmosphere (Xie et al., 2018). This choice, in conjunction with a decision to use the Meyers et al. (1992) ice nucleation parameterization (known to produce unrealistically high nucleation rates) in the high resolution version of E3SM (Caldwell et al., 2019) produces too many ice crystals that consequently remain small during vapor deposition. Finally, as mentioned in the previous subsection, the effective model resolution is larger than its nominal resolution. Regriding the Himawari observations to  $0.5^\circ$  and  $1^\circ$  increases the MCS lifetime for 1 and 2 hours, respectively, explaining part of the model bias.

Results using the percentile based masking give a different perspective on simulated MCSs: in this case the model overestimates the MCS number but underestimates the cold cloud shield area, with a comparable MCS lifetime (Fig. 4 b,d). This is expected, as the percentile-based BT MCS detection threshold of 201.4 K for Himawari observations is significantly lower than 209-213.5 K for the model simulations. MCS with colder BT indicate a stronger convective activity with higher and colder cloud tops. The higher

428 convective activity is also connected to a longer MCS lifetime and larger MCS cold cloud  
 429 shield area (Machado et al., 1998; Protopapadaki et al., 2017; Strandgren, 2018).



**Figure 4.** Lifetime and maximum diameter distribution of tracked MCS. The boxplot area is shaded between the 25th and 75th percentiles, while its whiskers represent the 10th and 90th percentiles. The olive lines represent the mean values of the distributions.



**Figure 5.** Diurnal cycle of peak MCS extent for (a) the fixed BT threshold and (b) the percentile based BT threshold.

430 Figure 5 shows the diurnal cycle of the number of MCS at peak extent in each of  
 431 the 3-hourly bins. The peak MCS extent was previously shown to correlate with the peak  
 432 in convective activity and with the lowest BT that is achieved in the course of an MCS  
 433 lifecycle (Roca et al., 2017). When using a BT threshold of 210 K for the detection of

434 cold cores, the observations show a double peak in MCS activity: the first peak occurs  
 435 in early morning hours (3-5 local time), the second peak occurs in the afternoon hours  
 436 (15-17 local time). However, when using the colder percentile-based BT threshold for  
 437 the detection of cold convective cores, the afternoon peak disappears. This result is con-  
 438 sistent with Nesbitt and Zipser (2003) that showed an early morning peak in MCS ac-  
 439 tivity, followed by a weaker afternoon peak of warmer BT features representing weaker  
 440 deep convection. The model simulates a similar double peak in MCS activity when us-  
 441 ing the fixed 210 K cold core detection threshold in both the REF and NUDGE simu-  
 442 lation. The percentile based model results still show the secondary afternoon peak, which  
 443 is not surprising, given that the percentile based cold core detection threshold does not  
 444 change much from a fixed threshold of 210 K.

445 In summary, the model can reproduce the simulated cold cloud fraction despite some  
 446 biases in the simulation of MCS evolution, which originate from the underestimation of  
 447 the coldest BT. The performance of the model in simulating large tropical MCS is sat-  
 448 isfactory, given the use of convective parameterization and a resolution of  $0.25^\circ \times 0.25^\circ$ ,  
 449 which is barely able to dynamically resolve MCS. For a more extended evaluation of E3SM  
 450 using traditional evaluation metrics, the reader is referred to Xie et al. (2018); Y. Zhang  
 451 et al. (2019); Rasch et al. (2019); Caldwell et al. (2019).

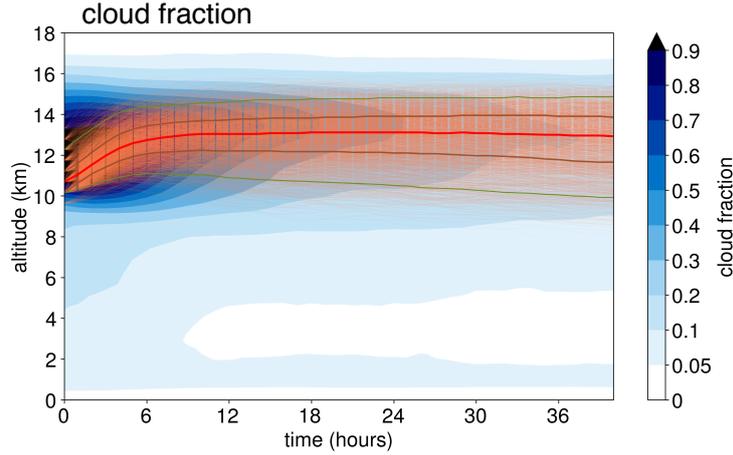
### 452 3.2 A Lagrangian perspective on anvil cloud evolution

453 Figure 6 displays the cloud fraction in the vertical column at the trajectory loca-  
 454 tion following air parcels from the tops of deep convective clouds. The trajectory launch-  
 455 ing points occur at different altitudes, ranging from 10 to 13 km, with a median eleva-  
 456 tion of about 11 km. The trajectories start in regions of active convection with resolved  
 457 vertical winds that are strong enough to loft the detrained air parcels and ice for about  
 458 2 km within the first 5-8 hours after the trajectory is initialized. After the initial ascent  
 459 the trajectories remain at roughly constant altitude. The trajectories follow the upper  
 460 tropospheric peak in cloud fraction that represents gradually thinner anvil clouds. The  
 461 convective scheme is not only detraining condensed water but also vapor, which enhances  
 462 the humidity in the detrained layers for at least 40 h after the initial convective event.  
 463 The relative humidity with respect to ice on average exceeds 100% near areas of active  
 464 detrainment, and is maintained at values beyond 70% in the MCS outflow in the trop-  
 465 ical tropopause layer between 14 and 17 km altitude (not shown). The increased rela-  
 466 tive humidity in the convective outflow layer offers an alternative explanation for an anvil  
 467 cloud fraction maximum near the trajectory altitude, given the dependence of the cloud  
 468 fraction scheme to the total humidity that includes specific humidity contributions from  
 469 both vapor and ice condensate (Gettelman et al., 2010).

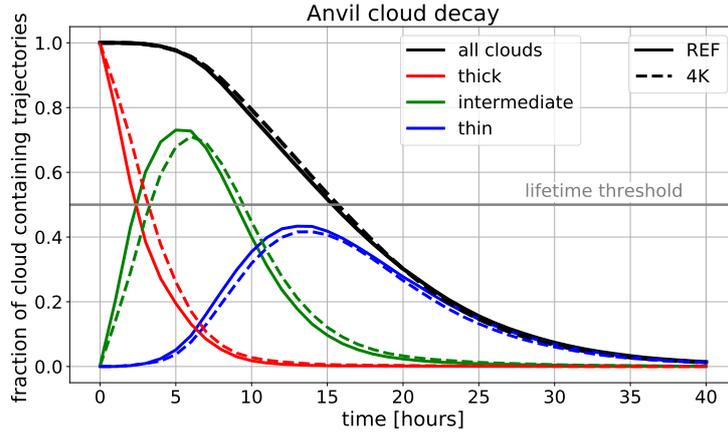
470 Figure 7 shows the gradually decreasing fraction of cloud-containing trajectories,  
 471 reaching 50% about 15 hours after detrainment. We separate the anvil evolution in three  
 472 stages: thick ( $IWC > 30 \text{ mg kg}^{-1}$ ), intermediate ( $30 \text{ mg kg}^{-1} > IWC > 3 \text{ mg kg}^{-1}$ ),  
 473 and thin ( $IWC < 3 \text{ mg kg}^{-1}$ ). Thick anvils quickly decay within the first 3-4 hours, in-  
 474 termediately thick anvils dominate the cloud distribution between hour 4-10, and thin  
 475 anvil clouds are dominant about 10 hours after the trajectories are initialized. A cloud  
 476 decay sensitivity test that considers all calculated trajectories, including those that en-  
 477 counter significant detrainment events after the first 4 hours of the evolution is shown  
 478 in Fig. S1. A sensitivity study using different minimum IWC and cloud fraction limits  
 479 can be found in the supplement in Fig. S2 and is described in Text S1.

#### 480 3.2.1 Lagrangian anvil cloud ice mass balance

481 We present the dominant sources and sinks of ice during the evolution of the anvil  
 482 cloud from its thick (hour 0-4) to thin stage (hour 10 and beyond) using trajectories. The  
 483 trajectories start at locations with IWC median values of about  $55 \text{ mg kg}^{-1}$ , decreas-  
 484 ing to below  $5 \text{ mg kg}^{-1}$  over the course of the first 10 hours of the cloud evolution (Fig.



**Figure 6.** Altitude of a random sample of 5000 trajectories (in orange) as a function of time after the launch of trajectories. Plotted in the background is the mean cloud fraction in columns containing trajectories. The red line represents the median trajectory altitude, the brown lines the 25th and 75th percentile values, the green lines 5th and 95th percentile values.

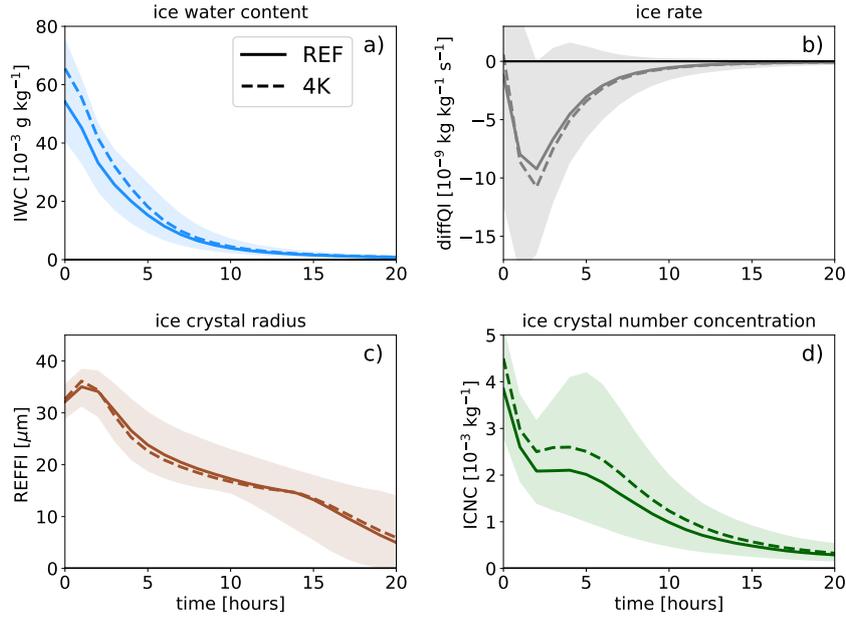


**Figure 7.** Fraction of trajectories that are containing a cloud for REF and 4K simulations (in black), divided into thin ( $IWC < 3 \text{ mg kg}^{-1}$ ), intermediate ( $30 \text{ mg kg}^{-1} > IWC > 3 \text{ mg kg}^{-1}$ ), and thick ( $IWC > 30 \text{ mg kg}^{-1}$ ) categories (in red, green, and blue, respectively). The sum of the three cloud categories is equal to the "all clouds" line.

485 8a). The median in-cloud ice crystal number decreases with evolution from about 4000  
 486  $\text{g}^{-1}$  (or about  $800 \text{ L}^{-1}$  at the detrainment level) to  $1000 \text{ g}^{-1}$  (Fig. 8d). The ice crystal  
 487 number subsequently decreases to about  $300 \text{ g}^{-1}$  (approximately  $60 \text{ L}^{-1}$ ) at hour 20. The  
 488 ice crystals initially grow slightly from  $32$  to  $35 \mu\text{m}$ , and rapidly decrease in size until  
 489 reaching a plateau at  $15$ - $20 \mu\text{m}$  between hour 5 and 15 of the evolution, after which the  
 490 size decreases again, reaching about  $5 \mu\text{m}$  at hour 20 (Fig. 8c).

491 The net water vapor deposition (which includes both growth by deposition and shrink-  
 492 ing by sublimation) is the dominant source of ice over the whole anvil cloud lifetime (Fig.  
 493 9). The net deposition is particularly large initially as most of the trajectories are su-  
 494 persaturated with respect to ice, supporting ice crystal growth (not shown). The direct  
 495 detrainment of ice mass (with an assumed effective ice radius of  $12 \mu\text{m}$ ) from the con-

Ice properties in detrained trajectories

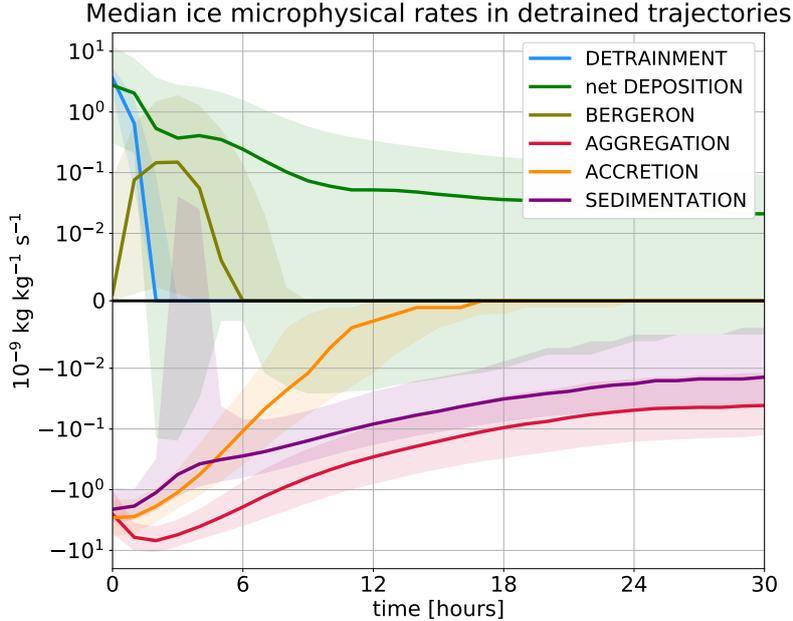


**Figure 8.** Median in-cloud ice water content (IWC) (a), ice rate (diffQI) (b), in-cloud ice crystal effective radius (REFFI) (c), and in-cloud ice crystal number concentration (ICNC) (d) in detrained trajectories. diffQI is defined as the sum of all ice sources and sinks of ice plotted separately in Fig. 9. Shaded area represents the spread between the 25th and 75th percentile values for REF.

496 vective cores represented by the convective parameterization is an important source of  
 497 ice in the first 2 hours of the anvil evolution, indicating the presence of active deep con-  
 498 vection. Despite focusing on trajectories at temperatures colder or near the homogeneous  
 499 freezing temperature of water, the growth of ice crystals at the expense of water droplets  
 500 (Bergeron-Findeisen process) cannot be fully neglected in the first 5 hours of the evo-  
 501 lution as some of the trajectories experience temperatures near  $-35^{\circ}\text{C}$  where part of the  
 502 detrained condensate is in liquid form. Finally, the contribution of new ice crystal nu-  
 503 cleation to the ice mass tendency is generally negligible and is therefore omitted from  
 504 Fig. 9. On the other hand, snow formation via ice crystal aggregation is the dominant  
 505 sink of ice throughout the full lifecycle of anvil clouds. Aggregation moves ice crystals  
 506 that cross the temperature dependent threshold size to snow and therefore increases with  
 507 the growth of ice crystals. Accretion is the removal of ice crystals by collisions with snowflakes  
 508 and is an important sink of ice in the precipitating stage of the anvil cloud, i.e. in the  
 509 first 5 hours of the anvil evolution, after which it becomes negligible, due to absence of  
 510 snow particles in thin anvil clouds. Interestingly, ice crystal sedimentation is only of sec-  
 511 ondary importance compared to aggregation even in the thin anvil stage, beyond hour  
 512 10 of the trajectories.

513 **3.2.2 Radiative evolution**

514 Anvil ice microphysical properties are tightly related to the radiative effects and  
 515 climatic effects of anvil clouds. Freshly detrained thick anvil clouds that contain large  
 516 IWC are very reflective to visible radiation and have therefore a large shortwave cloud  
 517 radiative effect (SWCRE). They also effectively prevent LW radiation from escaping to



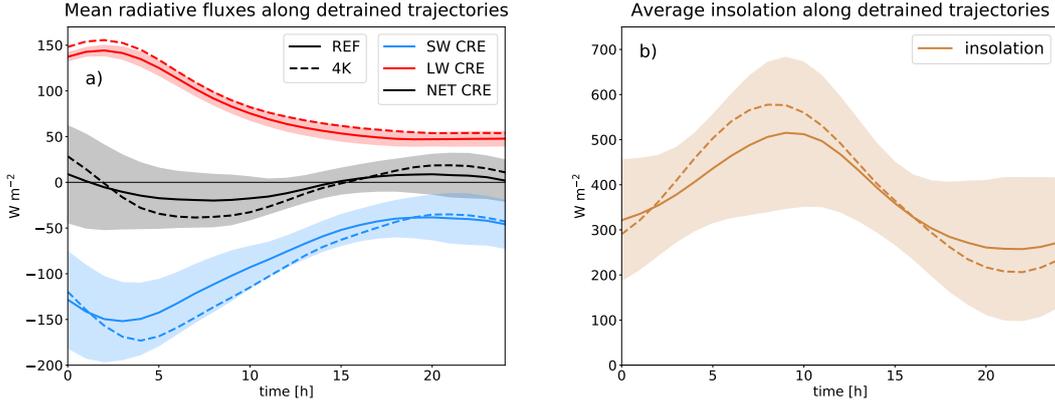
**Figure 9.** Lagrangian mass budget along trajectories containing ice cloud during the first 30 hours of evolution from the REF simulation. The shaded area represents the spread between the 25th and 75th percentile values.

518 space from lower lying, warmer layers of the atmosphere, resulting in a large LWCRE.  
 519 Interestingly, the averaged radiative effects along the trajectories start with a positive  
 520 net CRE, which gradually decreases in the first 5 hours of the anvil evolution (Fig. 10a),  
 521 despite decreasing IWC, ice crystal number, and consequently cloud albedo. This can  
 522 be explained by the average insolation that the tracked clouds receive over the course  
 523 of their lifetime (Fig. 10b). The mean insolation starts at values of about  $300 \text{ W m}^{-2}$ ,  
 524 increasing to  $500 \text{ W m}^{-2}$  at hour 10. The peak in MCS activity, where trajectories start,  
 525 on average occurs during early morning hours just before sunrise (Fig. 5b). Within a few  
 526 hours, most of the trajectories are exposed to higher insolation values near mid day, lead-  
 527 ing therefore to a larger SWCRE causing the net CRE to shift to negative values (Fig.  
 528 10a,b). At this point both SWCRE and LWCRE start decaying significantly. The av-  
 529 eraged CRE along trajectories for 24 hours of cloud evolution exceed values of  $80 \text{ W m}^{-2}$   
 530 in terms of LWCRE and SWCRE, with a small negative net CRE term (Tab. 3). These  
 531 results are not very sensitive to the trajectory selection criterion, as shown by comput-  
 532 ing radiative fluxes along all computed trajectories (Tab. S1).

## 533 4 Results - future climate

### 534 4.1 Mean climate responses to warming

535 We first evaluate mean climate responses to warming for the Tropical Western Pa-  
 536 cific. The model simulates a 40% increase in precipitable water and a 20% increase in  
 537 liquid water path for the clim4K simulation (not shown) with very little change in re-  
 538 lative humidity (Fig. 11f). IWC increases significantly with global warming (Fig. 11g)  
 539 at all temperatures, particularly in the 230 to 250 K range and is discussed in Section  
 540 5.1. Interestingly, cloud liquid decreases in the boundary layer but increases near the melt-  
 541 ing layer, possibly due to increased melting of ice (Fig. 11d). The peak in anvil cloud  
 542 amount remains at temperatures between 220 and 212 K in both simulations (Fig 11a).



**Figure 10.** (a) CRE along detrained trajectories for the two simulations. Shaded area represent one standard deviation for REF. (b) Mean insolation values along tracked trajectories for the two simulations. Shaded area represent one standard deviation for REF.

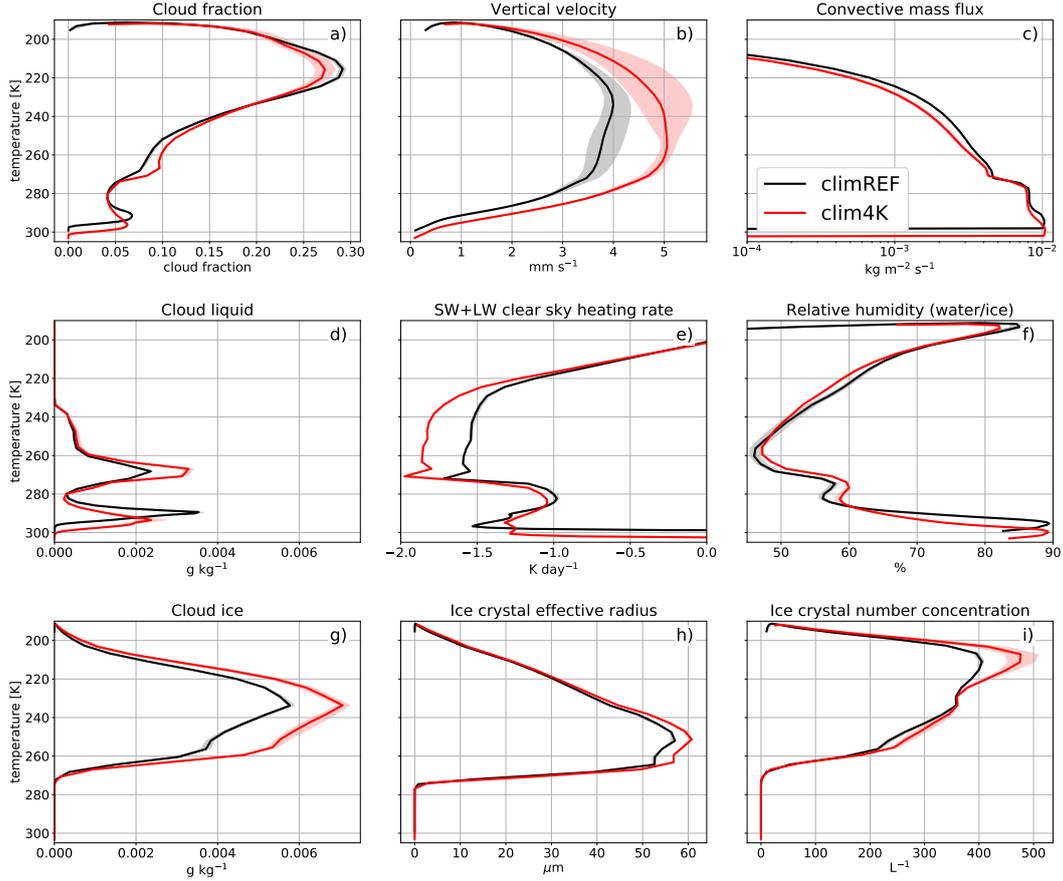
543 The anvil cloud fraction decreases with warming, which is consistent with a decrease in  
 544 the upward mass flux by the convective scheme (Fig. 11c). In contrast to the convective  
 545 mass flux, the resolved mean vertical velocity increases in the global warming simu-  
 546 lation (Fig. 11b). This is due to an increase in fully convective grid boxes (intense storms  
 547 with resolved circulation features), as suggested by the increase in relative importance  
 548 of large scale precipitation (not shown). The upper tropospheric ice crystal effective radi-  
 549 us does not change with warming (Fig. 11h), while the ice crystal number concentra-  
 550 tion significantly increases in the uppermost troposphere (Fig. 11i).

551 The domain-mean COD, dominated particularly by changes in high clouds, increases  
 552 by 8% in the clim4K simulation. The changes in ice clouds lead to a small and negative  
 553 net CRE change of about  $2 \text{ W m}^{-2}$ . The cloud feedback decomposition using Zelinka  
 554 et al. (2016) method shows a strong positive feedback attributed to the increase in cloud  
 555 altitude (Fig. 12a). However, the aforementioned increases in COD lead to a negative  
 556 feedback that counteracts about half of the altitude feedback.

557 Figure 12b shows the decomposition of cloud feedback for high clouds ( $<440 \text{ hPa}$ )  
 558 only. The net feedback is near zero, despite large SW and LW components. In the case  
 559 of high clouds, the positive altitude feedback is fully counteracted by the negative op-  
 560 tical depth feedback. The cloud amount feedback has significant SW and LW compo-  
 561 nents that are nearly equal in size. The increased COD does not lead only to a strong  
 562 SW feedback, but also to a significant positive LW feedback. This is expected due to near  
 563 neutral net CRE of anvil clouds where an increase in COD would also lead to a signif-  
 564 icant increase in LWCRE (Berry and Mace (2014); Hartmann and Berry (2017) and also  
 565 Fig. 10). Additional discussion on the computed cloud feedbacks and the associated changes  
 566 in ISCCP cloud histograms, on which the cloud feedback calculation is based, is given  
 567 in Text S2.

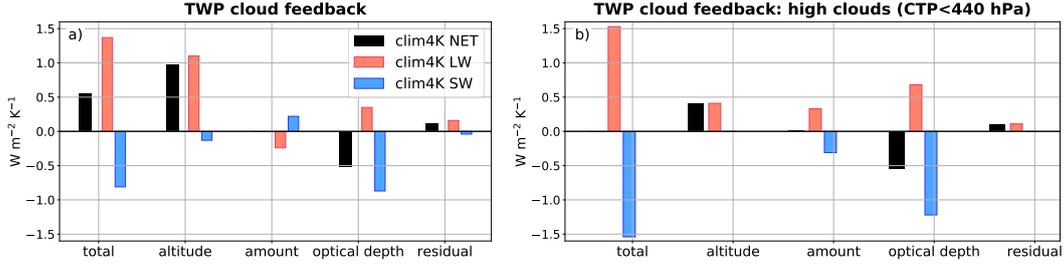
568 **4.2 MCS responses**

569 The cold cloud shield representing very thick and moderately thick high clouds in-  
 570 creases from 8.5% (REF) to 9.4% (4K) which is expected from the increase in vertical  
 571 velocity, domain average cloud ice (Fig. 11b,d) and the negative high cloud optical depth  
 572 feedback (Fig. 12b). This should be distinguished from the small decrease in total model-  
 573 simulated high cloud fraction (Fig. 11a) as the decrease in very frequent thin high clouds  
 574 dominates over the increase in thicker high cloud shields. If MCS are tracked by using  
 575 fixed BT thresholds of 210 and 240 K, the number of MCS increases by 60% in the 4K



**Figure 11.** Domain-averaged cloud fraction (a), vertical velocity (b), convective mass flux from the convective parameterization (c), cloud liquid (d), clear sky heating rates (e), the relative humidity with respect to water (for  $T > 273$  K), ice (for  $T < 253$  K), or a mixture between the two (for  $273 > T > 253$  K) (f), cloud ice (g), in-cloud ice crystal effective radius (h), and in-cloud ice crystal number concentration (i). The quantities are plotted in function of temperature between the surface and approximately the tropopause level. Shaded areas cover the space between all 3 annually averaged values for each of the simulations.

576 simulation in spite of no change in their lifetime (Tab. 2). The simulated increase in MCS  
 577 number is consistent with studies of MCS responses to global warming over the conti-  
 578 nental United States (Prein et al., 2017; Dittenbach & Giorgi, 2012). On the other hand,  
 579 a percentile-based MCS selection criteria does not indicate a much higher MCS  
 580 number in the 4K simulation. The maximum MCS extent and lifetime remain approx-  
 581 imately the same between REF and 4K simulations with both MCS selection methods.  
 582 The tracked MCS show increases in precipitation, which is expected given the increase  
 583 in precipitable water under global warming (not shown). Moreover, a warmer climate  
 584 increases the saturation deficit of the tropical atmosphere, leading to a larger buoyancy  
 585 of deep convection and consequently an increase in convective available potential energy  
 586 (CAPE) (Seeley & Romps, 2015). The BT-based detection limits do not allow for a good  
 587 estimate of changes to the evolution and thinning of anvil clouds. In order to study such  
 588 changes we return to an analysis along trajectories.



**Figure 12.** (a) Total net cloud feedback decomposition for the Tropical Western Pacific (TWP) using the Zelinka et al. (2012a) method. (b) Same but for high clouds only (defined as all clouds with a cloud top pressure (CTP) < 440 hPa), showing also the LW (red) and SW (blue) cloud feedback components, using a modified version of Zelinka et al. (2016) method. 440 hPa corresponds to an altitude of about 6.7 km and temperature of about 260 K in the TWP.

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### 4.3 Cloud and radiative responses to warming along detrained trajectories

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#### 4.3.1 Responses of anvil cloud lifetime and cloud properties

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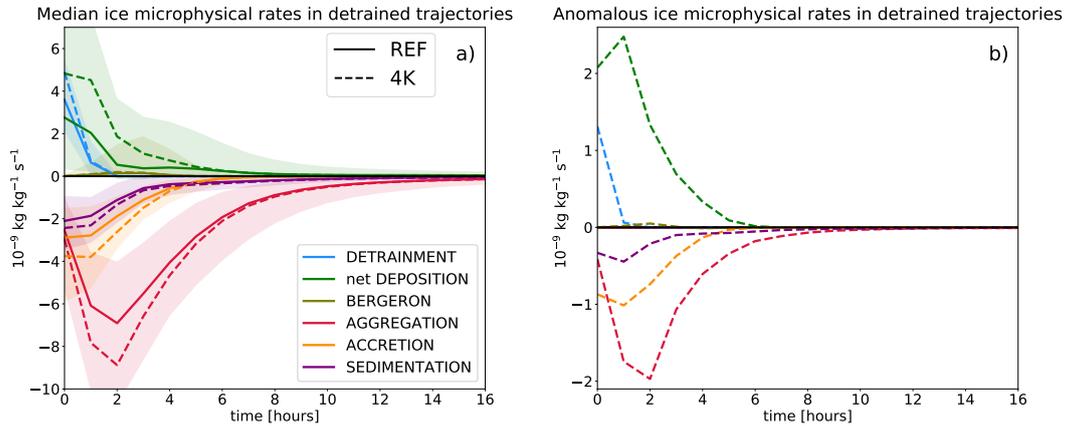
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**Figure 13.** (a) Median sources and sinks of ice in the two simulations. Shaded area represents the spread between the 25th and 75th percentile values for REF. (b) Anomalies of median values of source and sinks of ice with respect to REF.

601

602

The microphysical process rate evolution shows a different behavior between the early and late stage of anvil evolution (Fig. 13):

- 603 • in the early stage of anvil evolution (hour 0-6) both sources and sinks of ice in-
- 604 crease in amplitude with respect to REF
- 605 • in the late stage of anvil evolution (from hour 7 onward) sources and sinks of ice
- 606 are similar with respect to REF.

607 The trajectories indicate that the 4K simulation starts at larger IWC values, which  
 608 is a result of tendencies before the start of the trajectory calculation, most likely due to  
 609 increases in detrainment of ice and vapor by the deep convective scheme. This finding  
 610 is reinforced by a 40% increase in detrainment of ice and a 80-100% increase in the net  
 611 deposition flux (Fig. 13) in the initial two trajectory timesteps, that are representative  
 612 of regions of active convection. A large part of the changes in microphysical process rates  
 613 is in the early anvil stage attributed to the 20% higher initial value of ice water content.  
 614 In addition, specific humidity near the deep convective detrainment level increases as the  
 615 anvil cloud peak shifts to higher altitudes at lower air densities, while remaining at the  
 616 roughly constant temperature (not shown). This decrease of the average detrainment level  
 617 pressure from about 235 to about 200 hPa leads to a 5-10% increase in the deposition  
 618 flux based on a temperature and pressure dependent depositional growth equation (Lohmann  
 619 et al., 2016), which explains part of the deposition tendency increase. Moreover, a larger  
 620 static stability near detrainment level in a warmer world may decrease the mixing of de-  
 621 trained air parcels with environmental air, therefore additionally increasing the IWC in  
 622 the early stage of anvil cloud development.

623 The rate of loss of atmospheric ice increases proportionally with the increase in IWC  
 624 to first order, which results in only a small increase in thick anvil cloud lifetime in a warmer  
 625 world (Fig. 7). Ice crystal aggregation transfers the larger crystals to snow when they  
 626 cross a temperature dependent ice crystal effective radius threshold, which spans between  
 627 100 - 125  $\mu\text{m}$  for the relevant range of temperatures. Since the trajectories invariably  
 628 originate near convective events, the initial ice crystal radii are close to the prescribed  
 629 ice crystal effective radius detrained from the convective parameterization which is set  
 630 to a constant value of 12  $\mu\text{m}$ , leaving little opportunity for early changes by aggregation  
 631 between the control and warming runs. The aggregation rate increases by about 20-30%  
 632 between hours 1-5 of the anvil development, probably due to a general increase in IWC.  
 633 This is also the likely cause of an increase in both accretion and sedimentation tenden-  
 634 cies. In the late stage of anvil evolution the net deposition slightly decreases compared  
 635 to REF. This may be connected with a 10% decrease in ice crystal effective radius (Fig.  
 636 8) leading to a 20% decrease in surface area available for deposition, given no simulated  
 637 change in relative humidity and comparable IWC between REF and the warming sim-  
 638 ulation (Fig. 11f).

#### 639 ***4.3.2 Radiative responses and climatic implications***

640 The increase in IWC and ice crystal number with warming leads to a larger SWCRE  
 641 as shown in Fig. 10a. At the same time clouds become more opaque to LW radiation,  
 642 resulting in an increased LWCRE. The average net CRE for the whole lifecycle of tracked  
 643 anvil clouds is slightly more negative (Tab. 3), partially due to increases in COD, con-  
 644 sistent with the domain average increases in COD (see Section 4.1). In addition, net CRE  
 645 is more negative also due to an increase in mean anvil cloud insolation between hour 3  
 646 and 11 of cloud development. This is caused by a small shift in the diurnal cycle of MCS  
 647 (Fig. 10b) that peaks at a later hour in the 4K simulation (Fig. 5). The insolation-driven  
 648 changes in SWCRE are partially compensated by the insolation anomalies of the oppo-  
 649 site sign at the late stage of the anvil cloud development (after hour 13). However, at  
 650 that point in the lifecycle, the anvil clouds are not as reflective as in their initial stage,  
 651 leading only to a minor modulation of the incoming SW radiative flux. In summary, the  
 652 increases in SWCRE dominate over increases in LWCRE and lead to a more negative  
 653 net CRE balance over the course of the anvil cloud lifecycle (Tab. 3 and Fig. 10a). This  
 654 negative CRE anomaly is consistent with the domain-averaged negative high cloud op-

**Table 3.** Mean changes in cloud radiative effects (CRE) along trajectories averaged during the first 24 h. The SWCRE is in the last column calculated using a constant insolation value of 390  $\text{W m}^{-2}$  instead of the model simulated insolation.

	REF	4K-REF	4K-REF ConstInsol
LW CRE [ $\text{W m}^{-2}$ ]	81.0	8.2	4.3
SW CRE [ $\text{W m}^{-2}$ ]	-85.4	-10.3	-4.1
NET CRE [ $\text{W m}^{-2}$ ]	-4.4	-2.2	0.2
NET feedback [ $\text{W m}^{-2} \text{K}^{-1}$ ]	/	0.5	1.0

655 tical depth feedback (Fig. 12) and an increased insolation due to a small shift in the MCS  
 656 diurnal cycle (Figs. 10b and 5b).

## 657 5 Discussion

### 658 5.1 Changes in upper tropospheric ice properties

#### 659 5.1.1 Ice water content increase

660 The deep convective detrainment, represented by the G. J. Zhang and McFarlane  
 661 (1995) convective scheme, is proportional to the cloud water and convective mass flux  
 662 at the base of the cloud. The cloud base convective mass flux is in turn proportional to  
 663 the rate of consumption of convective available potential energy (CAPE), which is ex-  
 664 pected to increase in a warmer climate (Seeley & Romps, 2015; Singh et al., 2017). The  
 665 cloud liquid increases in a warmer climate due to the increased saturation specific hu-  
 666 midity. Both of these factors will, due to the approximately constant temperature at the  
 667 level of deep convective detrainment, lead to a larger upper tropospheric ice water con-  
 668 tent due to increases of both detrainment of water vapor and ice. Moreover, the deep  
 669 convective scheme assumes proportionality between the cloud condensate and the con-  
 670 densate removed by precipitation, leading to an additional reason for the increase of the  
 671 detrained condensate with warming. Other deep convective parameterizations often use  
 672 a fixed condensed water threshold, which determines the amount of condensate that is  
 673 removed by precipitation. Such scheme may respond differently to global warming, pos-  
 674 sibly leading to no enhancement in detrainment. However, despite the importance of the  
 675 formulation of convective precipitation formation for climate sensitivity (M. Zhao, 2014;  
 676 M. Zhao et al., 2016), it is currently not possible to determine which of the two descrip-  
 677 tions of precipitation production is more realistic.

678 Moreover, a recent study by Hartmann et al. (2020) provides a fundamental phys-  
 679 ical argument in favor of the simulated increased of cloud ice. In a warmer climate, the  
 680 troposphere expands and lifts the main emission level to lower pressure levels. Assum-  
 681 ing a constant temperature and relative humidity at the emission level, the water vapor  
 682 cooling rate increases with decreasing pressure levels, leading to a more top heavy ra-  
 683 diative cooling profile, similarly to what is simulated by the E3SM model (Fig. 11e). As  
 684 the climate in the tracking region can be to a large degree approximated by radiative  
 685 convective equilibrium, the additional radiative cooling must be compensated by increases  
 686 in latent heating (Jakob et al., 2019). The increase in cloud ice provides this additional  
 687 heat (Fig. 11g).

688 **5.1.2 Changes in ice crystal effective radius and ice crystal number con-**  
 689 **centration**

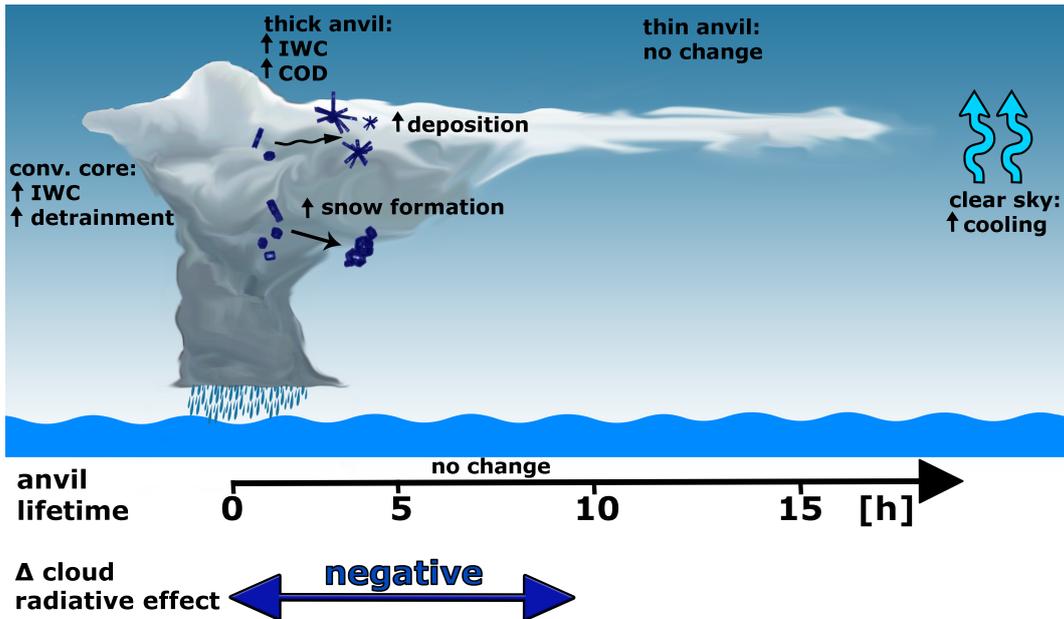
690 The upper tropospheric ice crystal effective radius was previously found to be de-  
 691 creasing with temperature and altitude (Hong & Liu, 2015; Kahn et al., 2018; Krämer  
 692 et al., 2020), which was associated with the strong temperature dependence of the va-  
 693 por deposition that limits ice crystal growth (van Diedenhoven et al., 2020). The model  
 694 is able to reproduce this behaviour (Fig. 11h), together with the observed decrease in  
 695 ice crystal effective radius at temperatures warmer than 250 K (van Diedenhoven et al.,  
 696 2020). Note that the warmer end of the considered temperatures is dominated by snow,  
 697 which is not included in our analysis.

698 The simulated upper tropospheric ice crystal effective radii do not change signif-  
 699 icantly in a warmer climate (Figs. 11h and 8c), which is probably due to the near con-  
 700 stant temperature of deep convective detrainment level (Hartmann & Larson, 2002). More-  
 701 over, the possible change of radii with warming is limited by the model assumption of  
 702 a constant ice crystal effective radius size of 12  $\mu\text{m}$  at detrainment, due to the very sim-  
 703 ple, 1-moment convective microphysics. This is in contrast with the observed change in  
 704 cloud top ice crystal effective radius between 2002 and 2016 by the Atmospheric Infrared  
 705 Sounder observations (Kahn et al., 2018) and a recent GCM modelling study (Zhu  
 706 & Poulsen, 2019), both showing an increase in ice crystal size.

707 Given the increase in ice mass detrained by deep convection but an assumed con-  
 708 stant detrainment particle size, the model is bound to simulate a higher number of de-  
 709 trained ice crystals, which is a possible reason for the observed ice crystal number con-  
 710 centration increase both in domain average (Fig. 11i) and along the tracked trajec-  
 711 tories (Fig. 8d). The basic thermodynamics of climate change can, however, lead both to  
 712 an increase in CAPE and updraft velocities in tropical MCS (e.g. Seeley and Romps  
 713 (2015); Singh et al. (2017)) and an increase in upper tropospheric static stability (Zelinka  
 714 & Hartmann, 2010; Bony et al., 2016). The first effect may due to stronger deep con-  
 715 vective updrafts on one hand lead to a larger number of smaller newly nucleated ice crys-  
 716 tals and on the other hand provide additional support to carry larger ice crystals towards  
 717 the cloud top. In addition, the increase in static stability implies a decrease in turbu-  
 718 lence and the associated updrafts, possibly leading to a smaller number of in-situ nucle-  
 719 ated ice crystals that can grow to larger size. It is currently not clear which of the pro-  
 720 posed effects may dominate the changes in microphysical properties of anvil clouds and  
 721 what could be the climatic role of such changes.

722 **5.2 Implications for tropical high cloud feedbacks**

723 Figure 14 summarizes the main findings of the previous section. The IWC in thick  
 724 anvils increases due to increased detrainment tendency from deep convective cores and  
 725 increased deposition flux. The increase in vapor deposition may also be connected to in-  
 726 creased detrainment as the detraining air is assumed to be saturated. This leads to an  
 727 increased COD and a negative net CRE anomaly in the early stage of the anvil life-  
 728 cycle. The changes are smaller in aged thin anvil clouds, as the sinks of ice, particularly  
 729 snow formation, becomes more efficient in removing the excess IWC. At this point we  
 730 take a step further to transform the net CRE values of Table 3 into climate feedbacks  
 731 by dividing the change in net CRE along trajectories by the increase in globally aver-  
 732 aged surface temperatures and adding a derived cloud masking correction term, as ex-  
 733 plained in Appendix A. The computed climate feedback along detrained trajectories is  
 734 small and positive for the 4K simulation and consistent with the results of the 3 year long  
 735 clim4K simulation (Fig. 12a) as well as with the literature finding a robust positive trop-  
 736 ical cloud feedback (Zelinka & Hartmann, 2010; Zelinka et al., 2012b, 2013; Boucher et  
 737 al., 2013) with the dominant cloud altitude LW feedback component due to a 1-1.5 km  
 738 increase in high cloud altitude.



**Figure 14.** Summary sketch highlighting major changes with global warming. The increase in cloud altitude is omitted from the sketch.

739 Our simulations reveal in addition an increase in precipitable water and large-scale  
 740 updraft velocities with global warming that lead to increasing condensed water content  
 741 at temperatures below freezing, despite a counteracting decrease in the convective mass  
 742 flux. The anvil cloud peak stays at approximately the same temperature level consistent  
 743 with the FAT theory (Hartmann & Larson, 2002). When clouds shift in altitude, they  
 744 shift to an environment with higher static stability, which according to Bony et al. (2016)  
 745 implies a decreased convective detrainment and a decrease in anvil cloud fraction. In our  
 746 simulations anvil cloud fraction decreases, but domain-averaged cloud ice content increases,  
 747 leading to a larger optical depth of remaining anvil clouds and a negative optical depth  
 748 feedback.

749 We also observed increases in ice removal rates with warming (Fig. 13) due to an  
 750 increase in anvil cloud precipitation efficiency by ice crystal aggregation and accretion  
 751 of ice crystals by snow. However, most of this increase in precipitation (snow) forma-  
 752 tion is due to a higher IWC at the starting points of anvil trajectories near the main de-  
 753 trainment level. Moreover, it is not only the sinks but also the sources of ice that increase,  
 754 in particular the net deposition flux, leading to no change in anvil cloud lifetime nor any  
 755 substantial shifts of the proportion of thick vs. thin anvil clouds (Fig. 7). The simulated  
 756 changes in anvil clouds are therefore different from the microphysical Iris hypothesis and  
 757 its negative anvil cloud feedback proposed by Lindzen et al. (2001).

### 758 5.3 Potential changes of anvil cloud diurnal cycle and the associated ra- 759 diative impacts

760 The average local time of peak cold cloud shield area of tracked MCS shifts from  
 761 about midnight in REF simulation to 4 am in the 4K simulation, because more MCS peak  
 762 in the morning hours (Fig. 5). This increases the SWCRE and leads to an additional  
 763 negative (diurnal) cloud feedback component that cannot be evaluated with the cloud  
 764 feedback decomposition method used here, because the ISCCP simulator, which it is based  
 765 on, represents daytime average cloud fraction computed from 3-hourly instantaneous snap-

shots in sunlit gridboxes, meaning that it is in current form not suitable for studying variations in the diurnal cycle of clouds. We additionally compute CRE by assuming diurnally averaged insolation of  $390 \text{ W m}^{-2}$ , representative of the domain mean insolation during the months June-August in the tracking region, which increases the net CRE budget by  $2.4 \text{ W m}^{-2}$ , implying a  $0.5 \text{ W m}^{-2} \text{ K}^{-1}$  larger net cloud feedback (Tab. 3). In other words, the more negative SWCRE balance when using model calculated insolation instead of its diurnal average leads to a negative diurnal cycle component of cloud feedback of  $0.5 \text{ W m}^{-2} \text{ K}^{-1}$ , confirming the role of changes in insolation presented in Section 4.3.2. The magnitude of the diurnal cycle component of the cloud feedback is comparable to the net cloud feedback for the TWP region, so feedbacks associated with the diurnal cycle could be substantial and are worth investigating in future studies.

#### 5.4 Study limitations

The goal of this study is to provide a better understanding of the anvil cloud evolution in present and future warmer climate by using an intuitive, ice crystal following Lagrangian perspective. Models are currently the only possible way to provide such insights into cloud lifecycles due to limitations in in-situ and satellite observational data. While the method applied indeed provides valuable insights into the behavior of the model, the reader should be aware of its possible limitations as outlined below.

##### 5.4.1 Statistical robustness and study region

The core part of the study (MCS tracking and trajectory analysis) relies on a 3 month simulation following a 7 day spin up period. 92 simulated days are enough to represent part of the tropical intraseasonal variability at the synoptic timescale with disturbances of sizes of about 1000 km and timescales of 1-10 days encompassing typical convectively coupled equatorial waves (Kiladis et al., 2009). The length of the simulation is not long enough to encompass a whole possible cycle of the Madden-Julian oscillation with a typical period of 30-70 days. However, while this may influence the number of tracked MCS, it is not expected to have a large impact on the anvil cloud lifecycle itself. The anvil decay is primarily driven by processes that operate on a fast timescale like microphysics and radiation, and we have sampled many occurrences of the anvil decay process. Interannual variability, e.g. ENSO, could be an issue, but the simulations use prescribed SST, which prevents the model drift into a different ENSO phase allowing for a better comparison between the simulations. Nevertheless, the simulations used for computing mean climatic values in the region of interest in Section 4.1 are run for only 3 years, which is not enough for computing reliable climatologies. The short simulations therefore introduce uncertainties in CRE and cloud feedback calculations, and suggest an interannual variability in mean June-August net CRE of about  $0.5 \text{ W m}^{-2}$  in the tracking region, computed from the 3 years of available model output, which is smaller than the magnitude of the net CRE anomalies listed in Table 3. The qualitative features of the analysis are therefore probably quite robust, while the uncertainty in the quantitative amplitude may be considerable.

Our study focuses on changes in only one of the tropical regions of frequent deep convection. However, as shown by Fig. S4, changes in the tracking region (Fig. 11) are in all plotted quantities but one (vertical velocity) consistent with the zonally averaged responses, giving more weight to our results.

##### 5.4.2 Trajectory calculation

We use an offline method for calculating trajectories from model resolved large-scale motions. The E3SM model time step is set to 15 minutes while the output time step is archived at 1 hour intervals because of storage space limitations. E3SM therefore evolves on timescales that are shorter than resolved from the archived data (4 updates of veloc-

ity and microphysical fields are performed online within the archival time interval), which introduces minor biases in trajectory calculations. A study by Miltenberger et al. (2013) based on a regional weather prediction model shows only minor horizontal and vertical biases in the offline trajectory calculation when comparing offline calculated trajectories using 1-hourly model output with the online calculated trajectories for the model resolution of 14 km with the model timestep of 40 s.

### 5.4.3 Simulated interaction of convective and large-scale cloud processes

A large part of the presented results strongly depends on the way E3SM simulates deep convection with the help of a modified version of the G. J. Zhang and McFarlane (1995) convective scheme, described in Xie et al. (2018). The scheme is meant to reduce CAPE over the course of a timescale that can be tuned. The model was found to underestimate BT of the strongest convective events, and at the same time overestimate the frequency of intermediate BT. These biases indicate a too shallow convective cloud top layer and/or a too small convective mass flux above about 10 km altitude which is consistent with findings by Y. Zhang et al. (2019) and Xie et al. (2018). This may be caused by a too large convective entrainment (Wang & Zhang, 2018) and/or a low mid tropospheric humidity bias (Xie et al., 2018). Moreover, convection is typically found to be shallower in models with higher vertical resolution (like E3SM) compared to those with coarser resolution (e.g. CESM) as a higher vertical resolution can lead to stronger vertical gradients in humidity, heating, and static stability (Rasch et al., 2019).

The deep convective scheme uses a simple thermodynamical treatment of clouds, with a temperature dependent partitioning of detrained condensate between liquid and ice. Besides condensate it also detrains vapor, leading to a moistening of the upper troposphere. The convective microphysics is very simplified and only 1-moment in contrast to the 2-moment stratiform cloud microphysical scheme. The convective part of the code therefore does not explicitly calculate ice crystal radii, while the 2-moment stratiform cloud microphysics requires a mass and size or number of detrained ice particles. The convective scheme provides this information in an arbitrary way - the detrained ice crystal effective radius is a tunable parameter, set to 12  $\mu\text{m}$  in the model version used here. This is inconsistent with observational evidence, which shows that the ice particle size in convective cores decreases with altitude (Van Diedenhoven et al., 2016; van Diedenhoven et al., 2020) and may therefore lead to an underestimation of the lifetime of the detrained ice crystals at the convective cloud tops and overestimation at lower levels. Nevertheless, despite the use of parametrized convection and its associated problems, we found E3SM to reproduce the observed albedo-OLR histogram in the tracking region remarkably well and to simulate MCS in a reliable way compared to geostationary observations of tropical maritime convection.

## 6 Conclusions

Tropical net CRE is determined by anvil clouds at various stages of evolution. In this study we first used a cold cloud tracking algorithm to follow the evolution of MCS in the Tropical Western Pacific. The MCS simulated by E3SM were compared with the observed MCS from 3 months of Himawari geostationary satellite data. The comparison showed that the model is, despite some deficiencies, able to reproduce many features of the observed albedo-OLR pairings representing anvil cloud decay as well as MCS and their diurnal cycle. We find that cloud ice amount increases on a warmer Earth, which leads to a negative cloud optical depth feedback. However, the net cloud feedback is positive due to the dominant positive cloud altitude feedback.

In a second analysis step, we diagnosed anvil properties following trajectories launched from gridboxes with active convection at the peak of the MCS lifecycle in the E3SM simulations. These trajectories follow air parcels from the top of deep convective clouds throughout the evolution of the anvil clouds, from their initial thick to final thin stage. We use

866 the trajectories to estimate the anvil cloud lifetime, which was found to be about 15 hours.  
 867 The anvil properties and their CRE initially evolve very quickly, with the thick anvil stage  
 868 lasting only about 2-4 hours, despite a supporting dynamical forcing in the form of the  
 869 strong updraft velocity. The anvil gradually continues to decay with decreasing IWC and  
 870 ice crystal number concentration, resulting in decreases of both SWCRE and LWCRE.  
 871 The dominant source of ice mass is ice crystal growth by deposition, while the dominant  
 872 sinks are snow formation by ice crystal aggregation (ice is converted to snow when cross-  
 873 ing the aggregation cutoff size) and in the first 5 hours of evolution also accretion (ice  
 874 is removed when scavenged by falling snow). Sedimentation of ice crystals plays only a  
 875 secondary role.

876 We evaluated changing anvil cloud properties using present day SSTs, and SSTs  
 877 incremented by a uniform 4K increase to identify changes that might occur in anvils with  
 878 global warming. Figure 14 represents a summary of the main simulated changes in clouds.  
 879 In general, we observe an increase in COD for thick high clouds due to an increase in  
 880 detrained IWC and vapor. Ice mass sources and sinks increase, leaving the anvil cloud  
 881 lifetime roughly unchanged. Changes to anvil microphysics lead to more negative SWCRE  
 882 in the thick and intermediately thick anvil cloud stage in the first 10 hours of anvil cloud  
 883 evolution. The changes in the thin anvil stage are small, which leads to a net negative  
 884 CRE response along the full anvil lifecycle.

885 The estimation of cloud feedbacks along trajectories indicated a feedback of about  
 886  $0.5 \text{ W m}^{-2} \text{ K}^{-1}$ . This result is consistent with the mean climate feedback computed with  
 887 the help of radiative kernels in which the positive altitude feedback dominates over a smaller  
 888 contribution due to the COD increase. The feedback may also have a negative compo-  
 889 nent due to a shift in peak deep convective activity occurring at a later time in the morn-  
 890 ing, leading to more reflected SW radiation.

891 Our study shows how a Lagrangian approach can provide an in-depth and more  
 892 intuitive perspective on anvil cloud evolution and its changes with global warming. Our  
 893 approach is complementary to the standard global or regionally averaged climate feed-  
 894 back decompositions. In particular, it offers the following advantages over the standard  
 895 mean climate perspective:

- 896 • It gives a direct estimation of cloud lifetimes
- 897 • It offers an intuitive perspective on microphysical processes that control anvil evo-  
 898 lution and radiative properties. It also allows computing Lagrangian mass bud-  
 899 gets
- 900 • It provides a straightforward and unbiased way of separating cloud responses based  
 901 on cloud development stage

902 Such Lagrangian approaches are needed if we want to fully understand the mech-  
 903 anisms of the anvil cloud lifecycle and how they respond to global warming. A Lagrangian,  
 904 air parcel or hydrometer following approach can provide new insights into the evolution  
 905 of cloud and other climate processes. The use of Lagrangian methods in high resolution  
 906 models is still limited and should be made a priority, particularly by the implementa-  
 907 tion of online trajectory modules (Miltenberger et al., 2013). Follow-up studies using La-  
 908 grangian methods could consider extending their simulations from months to years to  
 909 better control noise due to natural variability. An increased statistical significance of the  
 910 tracked features would for example open up new opportunities for studying potential ra-  
 911 diative feedbacks caused by changes in the diurnal cycle of clouds, which currently can-  
 912 not be captured by cloud feedback decomposition methods.

**Table A1.** 3 year JJA average net cloud radiative effects (CRE) anomalies with respect to reference simulation, net cloud feedback calculated by using Zelinka et al. (2012a) radiative kernels for Tropical Western Pacific. The adjustment term is computed as a difference between the cloud feedback and normalized CRE value.

	<b>clim4K</b>
$\Delta$ NET CRE [ $\text{W m}^{-2}$ ]	-2.03
$\Delta$ temperature [K]	4.31
$\frac{\Delta \text{NETCRE}}{\Delta \text{temperature}}$ [ $\text{W m}^{-2} \text{K}^{-1}$ ]	-0.47
calculated feedback [ $\text{W m}^{-2} \text{K}^{-1}$ ]	0.52
estimated CRE adjustment [ $\text{W m}^{-2} \text{K}^{-1}$ ]	0.99

## Appendix A Cloud feedback estimation from changes in net CRE along detrained trajectories

CRE are defined as a difference between all-sky and clear sky radiative fluxes. A change in CRE between the reference and a warmer climate is not equivalent to the change in cloud feedbacks, although the patterns of change generally resemble each other (e.g. Fig. 11 in Soden et al. (2008)). While cloud feedbacks refer only to the radiative effects of changes in cloud properties with warming, CRE are defined as a difference between full and clear sky radiative fluxes and therefore depends both on changes in clouds and their radiative properties as well as changes in clear sky radiation. In simulations with increased SSTs the atmospheric opacity increases mainly due to increased water vapor concentrations. This effect is stronger in clear sky regions and thus leads to a more negative CRE response compared with cloud feedbacks (Ceppi et al., 2017).

An accurate way of estimating cloud masking adjustments is to use technically challenging partial radiative perturbation methods (Colman, 2003; Soden et al., 2004), which goes beyond the scope of our work. We therefore estimate a cloud masking correction term by using the difference between the computed CRE values for months June-August in the 3-year long simulation (row 1 in Table A1), normalized by the change in global surface temperature in the respective simulation (row 2 in Table A1), and the cloud feedback calculations with the help of radiative kernels (Zelinka et al., 2012a) (row 4 in Table A1). The derived cloud masking agrees well with the masking terms computed from offline radiative calculations with a series of GCMs (Soden et al., 2008; Zelinka et al., 2013; Yoshimori et al., 2020).

## Appendix B Calculation of ice crystal effective radius

The ice size distribution is represented by a gamma function as

$$\Phi(D) = N_0 D \exp^{-\lambda D} \quad (\text{B1})$$

where  $D$  is the diameter,  $N_0$  the intercept parameter, and  $\lambda$  is the slope parameter that is defined as:

$$\lambda = \left[ \frac{\pi \rho N}{q} \right]^{-\frac{1}{3}} \quad (\text{B2})$$

where  $\rho$  is the assumed bulk ice density of  $500 \text{ kg m}^{-3}$ ,  $q$  is the ice mass mixing ratio, and  $N$  is the ice number concentration.

941 The effective radius is defined as the ratio of the third and second moments of the  
942 ice distribution, which can be expressed as

$$r_e = \frac{3\rho}{2\lambda\rho_i} \quad (\text{B3})$$

943  $\rho_i$  is the bulk density of pure ice ( $917 \text{ kg m}^{-3}$ ). More details on the assumed ice distri-  
944 bution can be found in Morrison and Gettelman (2008).

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