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# Global storm surge projections based on CMIP6 high-resolution climate models

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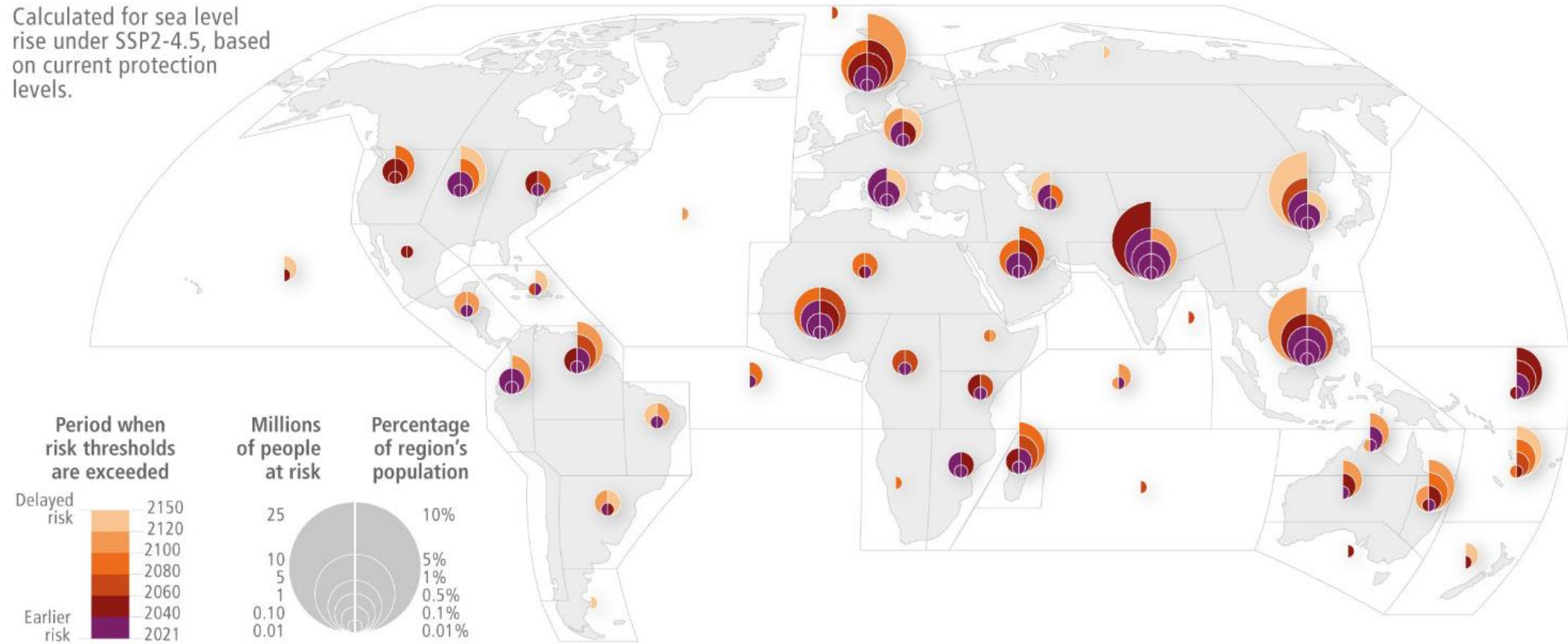


Coastal population  
increasingly  
at risk of flooding

NDII  
ADY  
TAMBORA

# Projected number of people at risk of a 100-yr coastal flood

Calculated for sea level rise under SSP2-4.5, based on current protection levels.



IPCC, 2022, WGII



## **Global Tide and Surge Model**

**Depth-averaged hydrodynamic model**

**Delft3D Flexible Mesh**

**2.5/1.25 km resolution at the coast**

## **Applications**

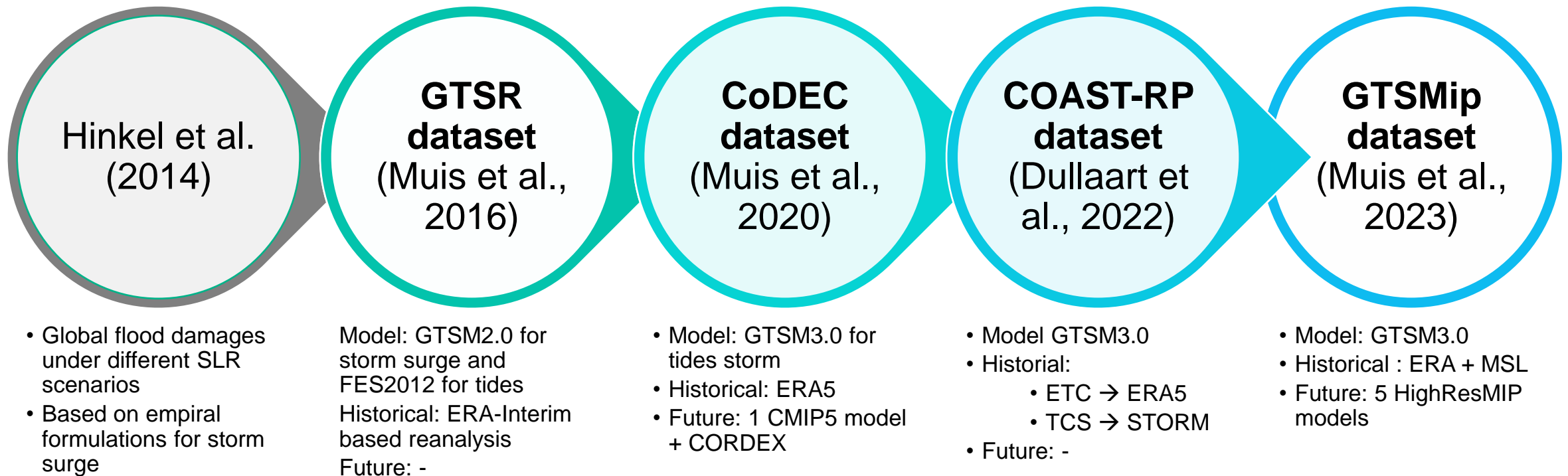
**Operational forecasting**

**Reanalysis of historical extremes**

**Future climate projections**

**Providing input data to coastal flood risk assessments**

# Significant advances in global modelling of extreme sea levels, and flood risk assessment



**Global risk studies only consider SLR changes**





# Innovations compared to previous datasets

Coverage extended to global

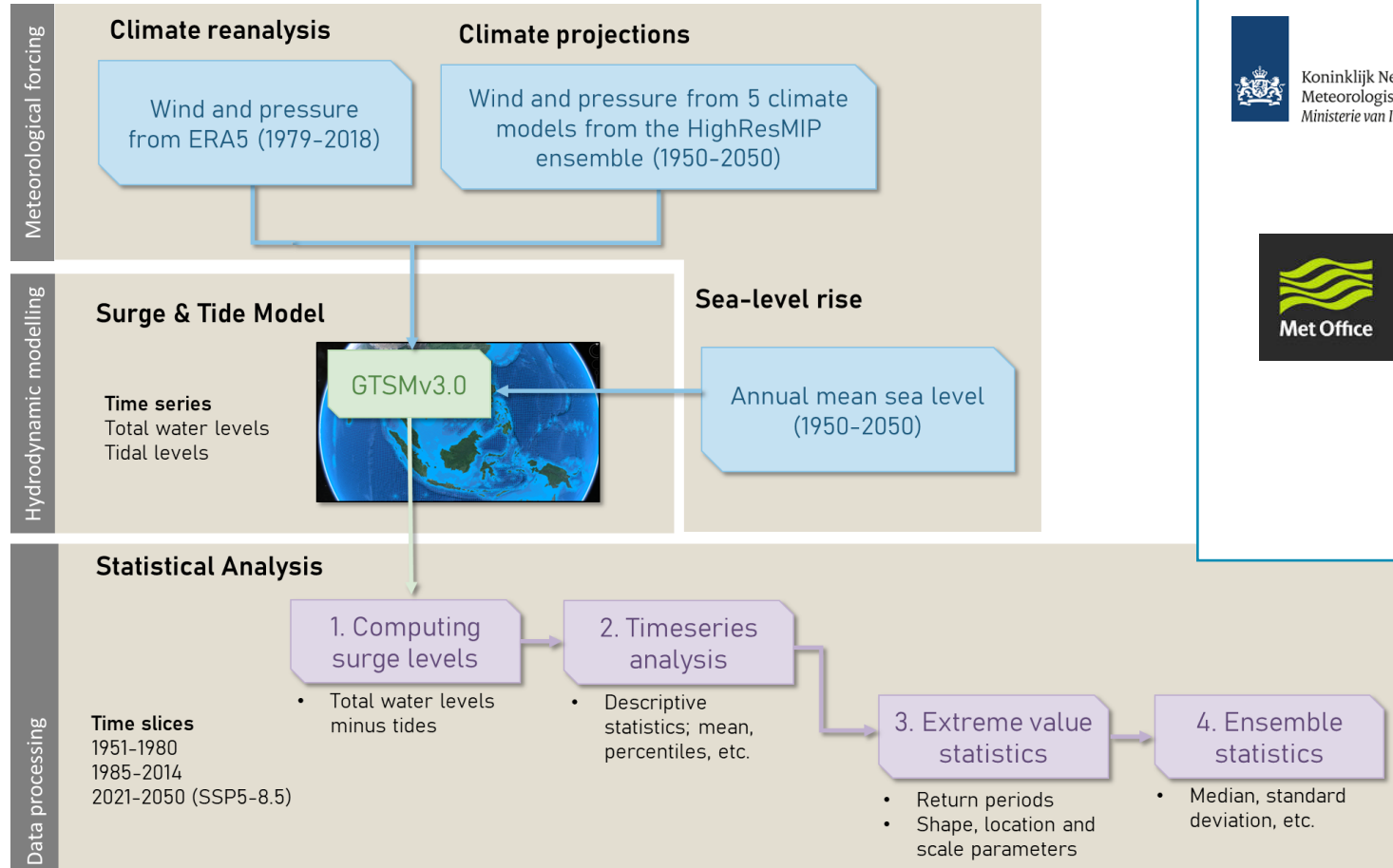
Use of high resolution climate models

Use of multi-model ensemble

Inclusion of interactions and mean sea level

Improved extreme value statistics

# Methodology



# HighResMIP projections

## CMIP6 HighResMIP simulations

Physical model only x 2 resolutions, simplified aerosol optical properties (MACv2-SP) recommended

**Atmosphere-land-only, 1950–2014 (→ 2050)**

Forced by observed SST and sea-ice and historic forcings (→ **projected**)

highresSST-present (→ **highresSST-future**)



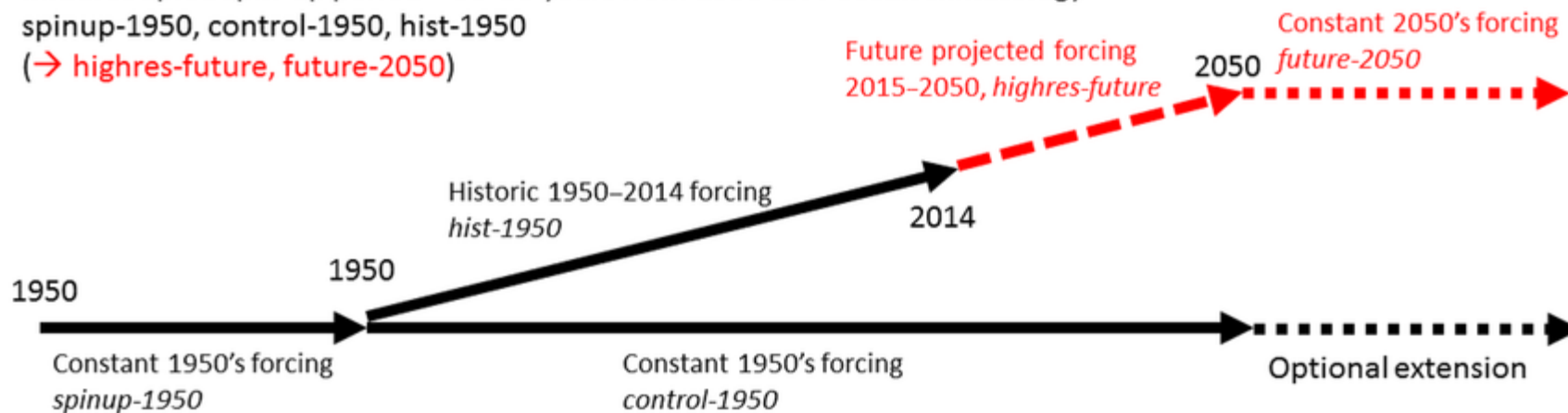
**Coupled climate, 1950–2014 (→ 2050)**

Forced by constant 1950 and historic forcings (→ **projected**)

Initial coupled spin-up period ~ 30–50 years from 1950 EN4 ocean climatology

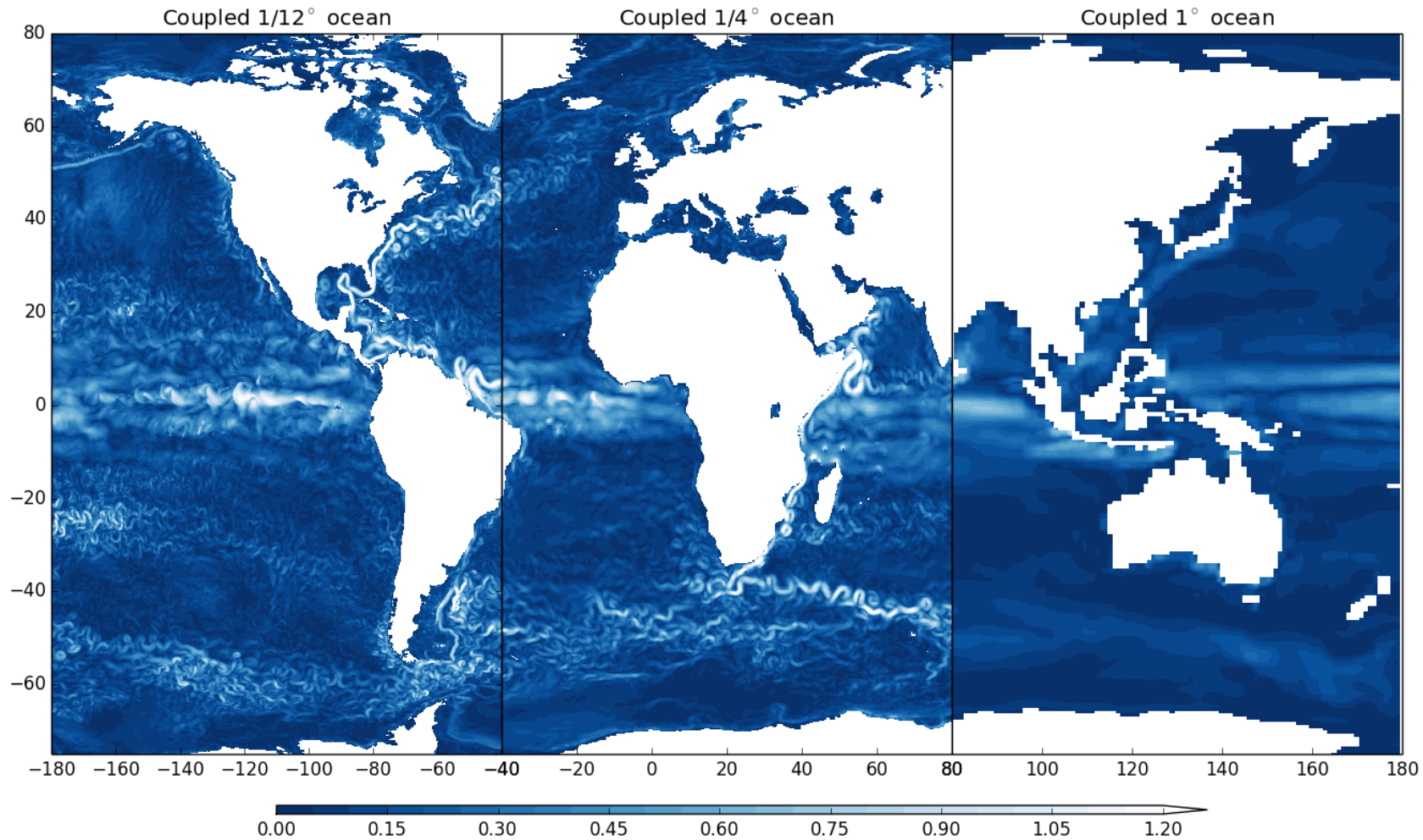
spinup-1950, control-1950, hist-1950

(→ **highres-future, future-2050**)





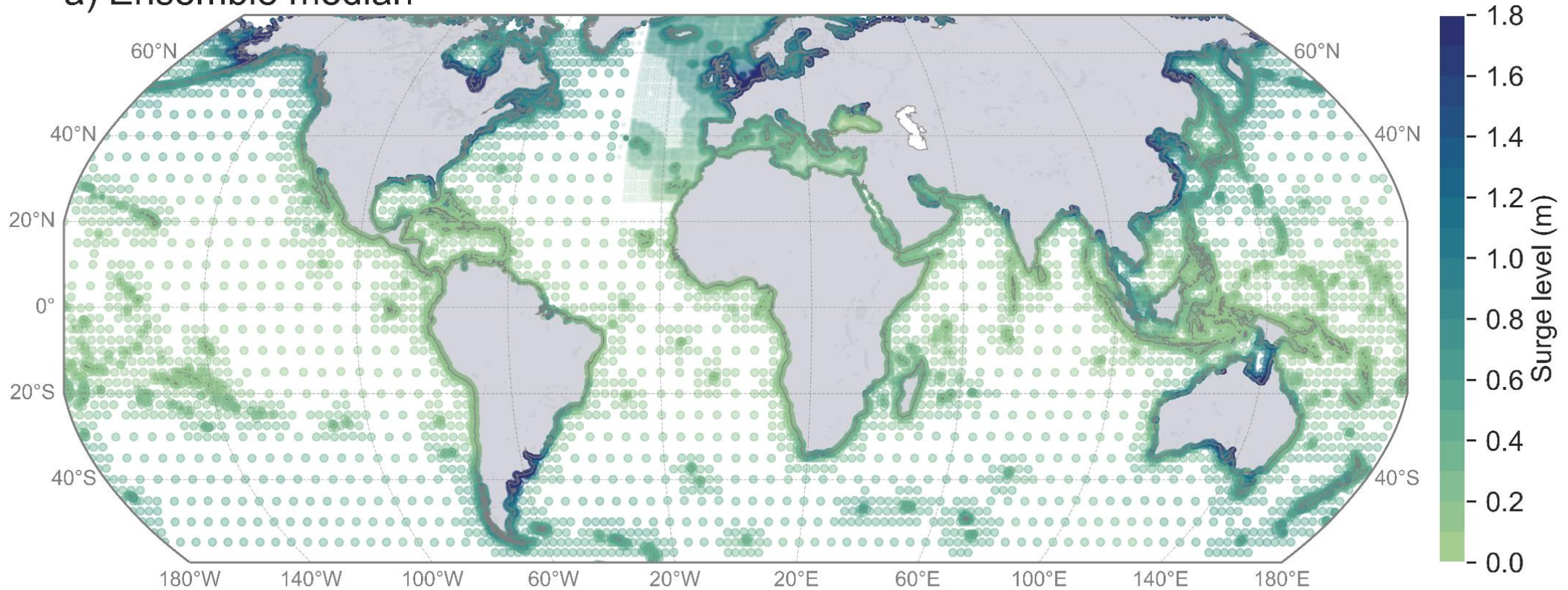
# Why use HighResMIP?



courtesy of Malcolm  
Roberts

# 10-yr water level for 1985-2014

a) Ensemble median



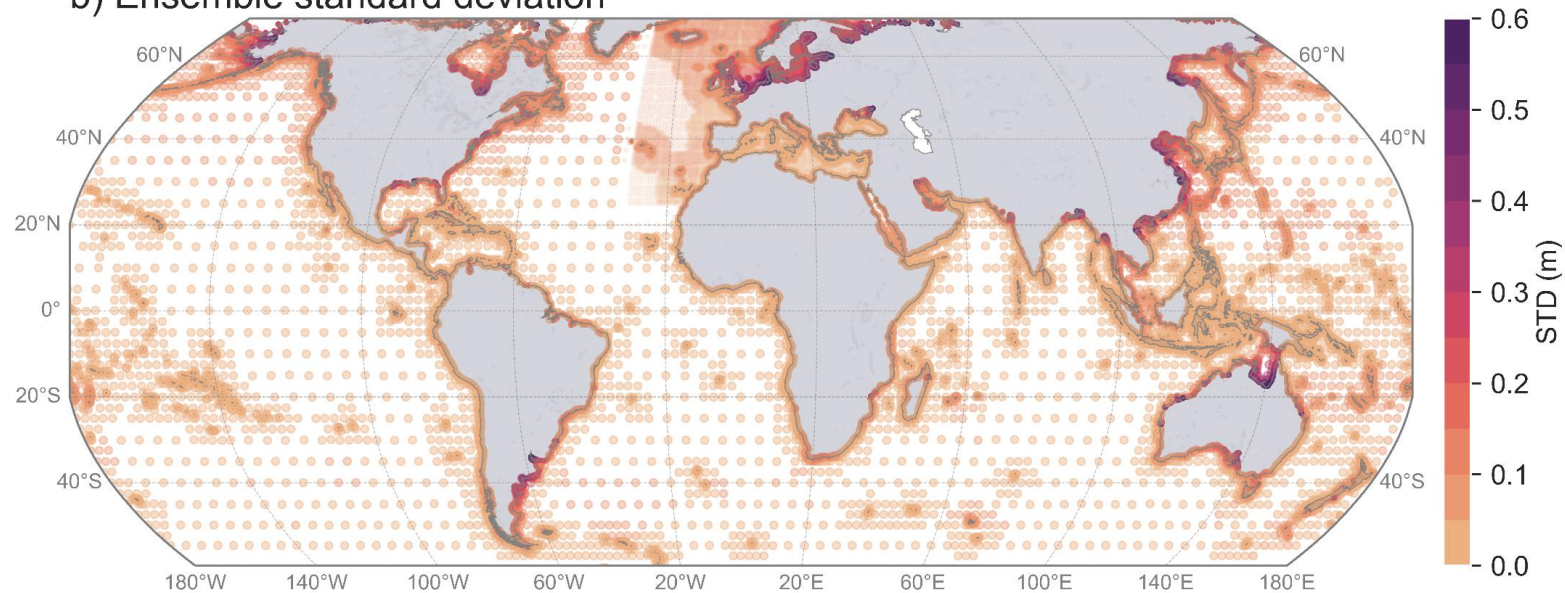


# Model performance against ERA5

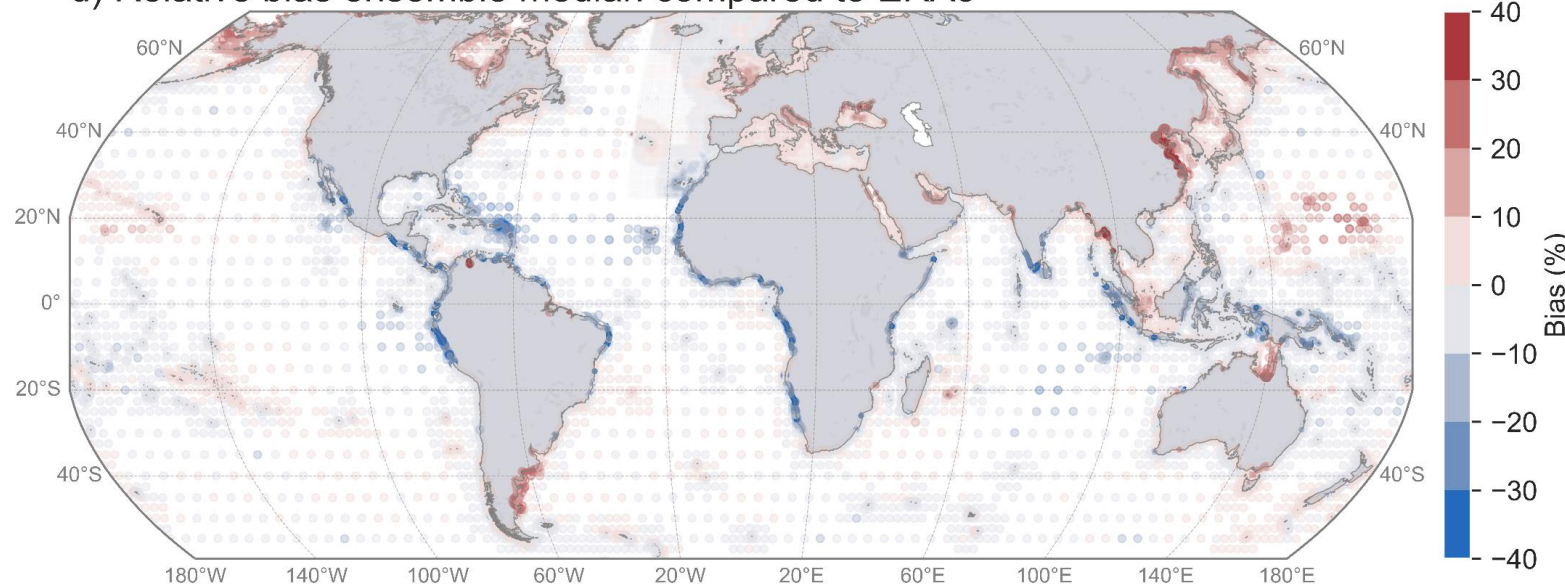
## Global statistics

Pearson corr.	0.986
Mean Bias (m)	0.06 (S.D. 0.13)
Mean Rel. Bias (%)	4.13 (S.D. 13.9)

b) Ensemble standard deviation

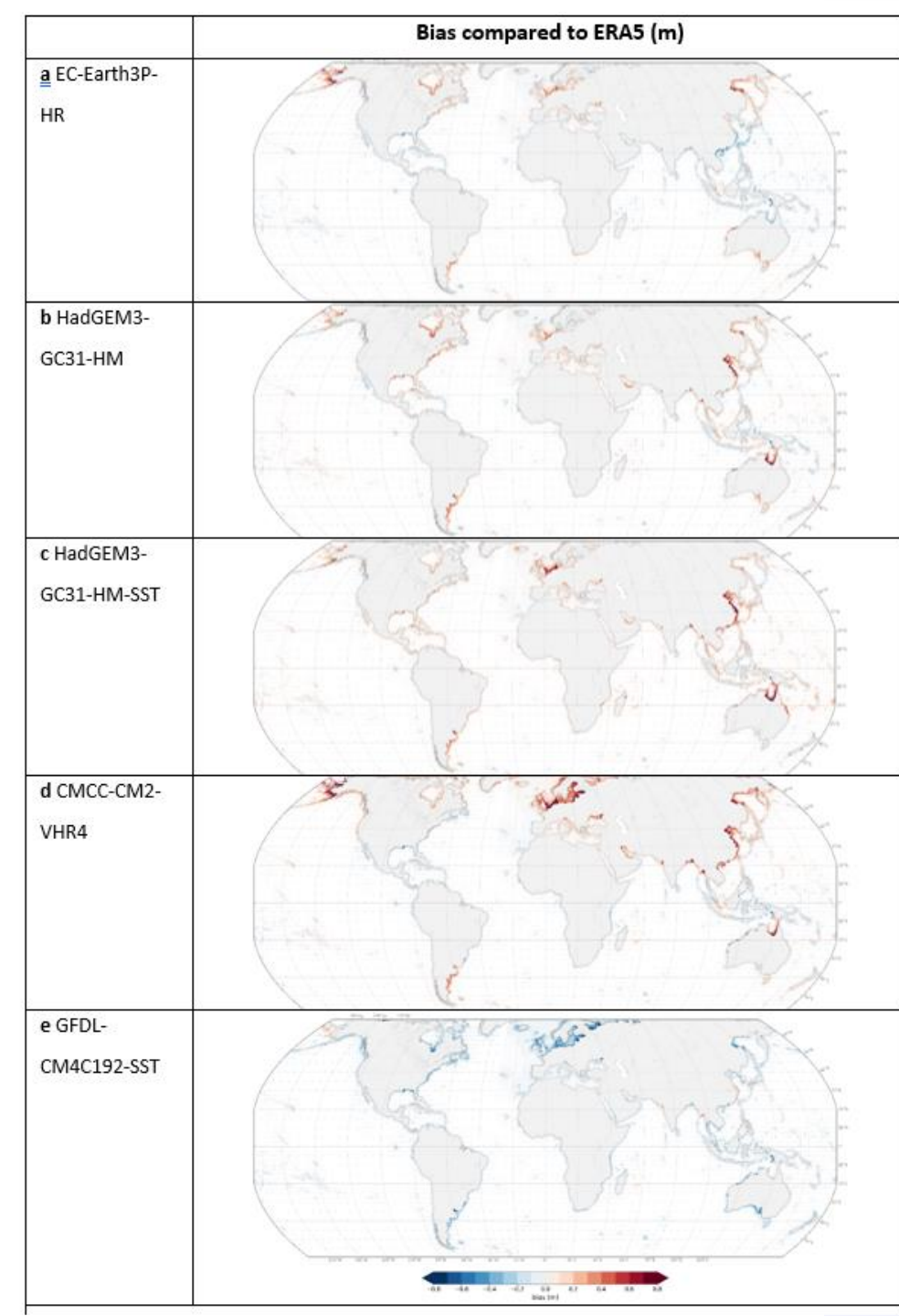


d) Relative bias ensemble median compared to ERA5



# Individual models show even larger spatial biases

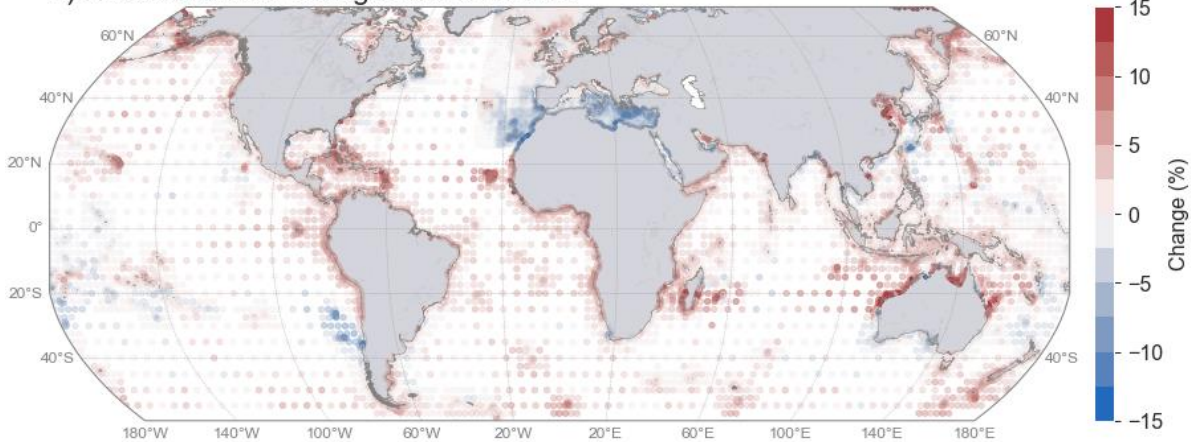
- Mostly positive at mid to high-latitudes and negative at low-latitudes
- Most profound near shelf areas
- Percentiles show the same biases



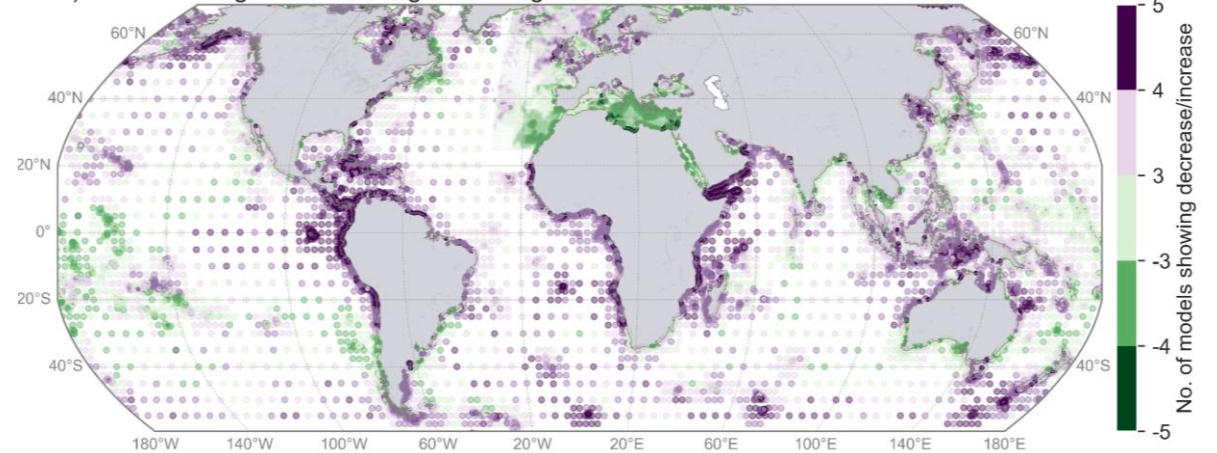


# Changes in the 10-year surge level (2021-2050 against 1951-1980)

d) Median relative change for 2021-2050



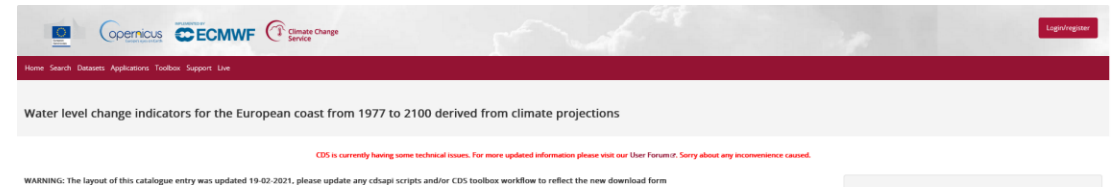
b) Intermodel agreement on sign of change for 2021-2050



# Openly available at the Climate Data Store



- **Timeseries** from 2050-2150
  - Mean sea level
  - Tides
  - Storm surges
  - Total water level
- **Statistical indicators** for 3 time slices
  - Return periods of total water levels and surges
  - Tidal levels
  - Individual models and ensemble statistics



## Earth's Future

### RESEARCH ARTICLE

10.1029/2023EF003479

#### Special Section:

CMIP6: Trends, Interactions, Evaluation, and Impacts

#### Key Points:

- Storm surge projections from 1950 to 2050 based on the Global Tide and Surge Model and a ~25 km-resolution High Resolution Model Intercomparison Project climate model ensemble
- Validation against ERA5 reanalysis (1985–2014) shows that the model performs well globally, but also reveals a clear spatial bias
- The median-ensemble change of the 1 in 10-year storm surge levels from 2021–2050 compared to 1951–1980 shows changes up to 0.1 m or 20%

#### Supporting Information:

Supporting Information may be found in the online version of this article.

## Global Projections of Storm Surges Using High-Resolution CMIP6 Climate Models

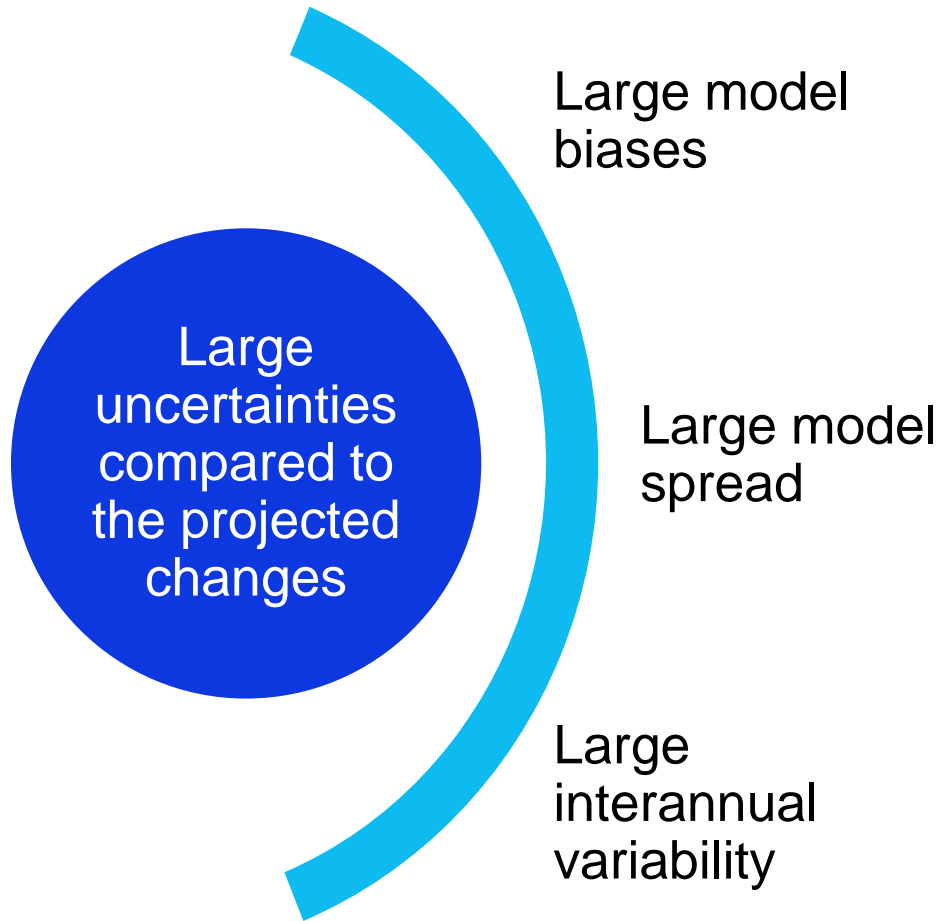
Sanne Muis<sup>1,2</sup>, Jeroen C. J. H. Aerts<sup>1,2</sup>, José A. Á. Antolínez<sup>3</sup>, Job C. Dullaart<sup>2</sup>, Trang Minh Duong<sup>1,4,5</sup>, Li Erikson<sup>6</sup>, Rein J. Haarsma<sup>7</sup>, Maialen Irazoqui Apecechea<sup>8</sup>, Matthias Mengel<sup>9</sup>, Dewi Le Bars<sup>7</sup>, Andrea O'Neill<sup>6</sup>, Roshanka Ranasinghe<sup>1,4,5</sup>, Malcolm J. Roberts<sup>10</sup>, Martin Verlaan<sup>1,3</sup>, Philip J. Ward<sup>1,2</sup>, and Kun Yan<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract** In the coming decades, coastal flooding will become more frequent due to sea-level rise and potential changes in storms. To produce global storm surge projections from 1950 to 2050, we force the Global Tide and Surge Model with a ~25-km resolution climate model ensemble from the Coupled Model Intercomparison Project Phase 6 High Resolution Model Intercomparison Project (HighResMIP). This is the first time that such a high-resolution ensemble is used to assess changes in future storm surges across the globe. We validate the present epoch (1985–2014) against the ERA5 climate reanalysis, which shows a good overall agreement. However, there is a clear spatial bias with generally a positive bias in coastal areas along semi-enclosed seas and negative bias in equatorial regions. Comparing the future epoch (2021–2050) against the historical epoch (1951–1980), we project ensemble-median changes up to 0.1 (or 20%) in the 1 in



# A leap forward compared to previous work, but many challenges



# Ways forward

- Enlarge ensemble
  - Extend ERA5 reanalysis back to 1950
  - Simulate additional HighResMIP models/members)
- Dive deeper
  - Quantify interannual and seasonal variability
  - Improve EVA and calculate trends
- Address the biases
  - Investigate mechanism driving the biases
  - Develop methods for bias correction
  - Collaborate closer with the climate community





# Next years

## **CHANCE** Climate cHange impActs on extreme sea levels iN Coastal watErs

- Funded by NWO (Dutch Research Council)
- Collaboration between VU Amsterdam and TU Delft
  - 1 PhD project on enhancing global projections of extreme sea levels
  - 1 PhD project on methods for downscaling global projections to the regional scale
  - 1 research assistant that will help with making all data/methods openly available



Sanne Muis (PI)



José Antolínez (co-PI)



Mia Pupić Vurilj (PhD1)



Ayoola Apolola (PhD2)

# Conclusions

- **New global dataset**
  - Multi-model projections of extreme sea levels
  - Big leap forward compared to previous work
  - Openly available at the CDS
- **Challenges and ways forward**
  - Good global performance, but large spatial bias
  - Surge level may in/decrease, but changes not fully understood
  - Further develop methods to reduce uncertainties
  - Downscaling to regional scales



Jonas Gratzer