

EUMETNET/ECSN optional programme:

'European Climate Assessment & Dataset (ECA&D)'

Algorithm Theoretical Basis Document (ATBD)

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1 Project description

1.1 Objectives

The European Climate Assessment & Dataset project (ECA&D) started in 2003 as the follow-up to ECA (for which KNMI was responsible member since 1998). Between 2003 and 2008 the project has been partially funded by EUMETNET. From 2009 onwards, KNMI has committed itself to fund ECA&D. ECA&D has now obtained the status of Regional Climate Centre (RCC) for high resolution observation data in WMO Region VI (Europe and the Middle East).

The objective of ECA&D is to analyze the temperature and precipitation climate of WMO region VI, with special focus on trends in climatic extremes observed at meteorological stations. For this purpose, a dataset of 20th-century daily surface air temperature and precipitation series has been compiled (Klein Tank et al. 2002a) and tested for homogeneity (Wijngaard et al. 2003).

To enable periodic assessments of climate change on a European scale, a sustainable system for data gathering, archiving, quality control, analysis and dissemination has been realized. Data gathering refers to long-term daily resolution climatic time series from meteorological stations throughout Europe and the Mediterranean provided by contributing parties (mostly National Meteorological Services (NMSs)) from over 40 countries. Most series cover at least the period 1946–now. Archiving refers to transformation of the series to standardized formats and storage in a centralized relational database system. Quality control uses fixed procedures to check the data and attach quality and homogeneity flags. Analysis refers to the calculation of (extremes) indices according to internationally agreed procedures specified by the CCL/CLIVAR/JCOMM Expert Team on Climate Change Detection and Indices (ETCCDI, <http://www.clivar.org/organization/etccdi/etccdi.php>). Finally, dissemination refers to making available both the daily data (including quality flags) and the indices results to users through a dedicated website.

Recently, the necessary steps have been completed for an improved operational ECA&D system as the first implementation of a Regional Climate Centre (RCC) functionality for high resolution observational data and extremes indices in WMO Region VI. This implies that the system has been made more sustainable/transparent and has been embedded into KNMI's information infrastructure. This ensures ongoing support, guarantees well-performing up-and-running services and documentation, backup- and maintenance procedures.

1.2 Users

Because of its daily resolution, the ECA dataset enables a variety of climate studies, including detailed analyses of changes in the occurrence of extremes in relation to changes in the mean. Web statistics, personal contacts and references in numerous publications, advice reports and applications show that ECA&D serves many users. Also the ECA&D report "Climate of Europe, assessment of observed daily temperature and precipitation extremes" (Klein Tank et al. 2002b) and its successor "Towards an operational system for assessing observed changes in climate extremes" (van Engelen et al. 2008) have received much praise. The project is widely recognized as an example of KNMIs leading European role in the area of climate data exchange and research. For example, the EU-FP6 project MILLENNIUM uses a subset of long-term climate series for paleo studies.

1.3 Requirements

1. Not all countries will be able to submit their contribution in a standardized format at regular time intervals. Therefore, the continuation of individual treatment of each participant is crucial for success. This implies that dedicated solutions should be developed for each data provider, with the level of automation dependent on the technical and manpower possibilities of the respective participants.
2. The data come with different use permissions. We are allowed to redistribute some series to the general public, whereas others are only for index calculation and use in the calculation of the gridded data products. The system should allow for different permission flags.
3. Since there is always a time lag between the most recent data contributed by participants and the present date, the observations from SYNOP messages for the same or nearby stations that are transmitted through the Global Telecommunication System (GTS) should temporarily be used to fill the gap. Once the 'official' series are available from the data providers in participating countries, the temporary SYNOP data should be replaced. Regular updates, using SYNOP data and readily available participant data (see § 2.1) are on a monthly basis. Requesting updates from all data participants is done on a less frequent basis. Each update of the daily data will be followed by a recalculation of quality control scores, indices, climatology, trends and homogeneity. This is followed by a calculations of provisional gridded datafiles for precipitation and daily maximum, minimum and averaged temperature for the past month.
4. The minimum set of metadata for each series, which is required to judge the quality and representativeness of the observations, is de-

scribed in Aguilar et al. (2003). Metadata information is important since not all station observations conform closely to the recommendations of instrumentation, exposure and siting which are given in the WMO-CIMO Guide. Moreover, the recommendations have changed over time. The minimum set of metadata should be stored along with the data series. Some of these metadata are used in the blending process.

5. The system should adopt and comply with (inter)nationally agreed standards as much as possible. This refers both to data format and database standards as well as metadata description standards.
6. A subset of the stations with ECA&D series is part of the GCOS Surface Network (GSN). For some of these stations, the daily series are collated and archived also at the WMO World Data Center A in Asheville (U.S.A.). Discrepancies between the series in ECA&D and those in GSN should be carefully monitored. Data series in GSN that are not part of ECA&D will be copied. (Camuffo & Jones (Eds.) 2002).
7. The ECA&D website, as a dissemination tool for data and indices results, should be easily accessible and flexible for many users. Researchers and operational climatologists have very different requirements. The possibility of different interfaces should be explored ranging from bulk download to customizable queries through the data and indices results. Also the output formats on screen and print should be flexible providing reports in different layouts. The daily data should be available to users in different stages of processing. This means that the 'raw' data files (as received from the participants, including explanatory e-mails) as well as the reformatted and quality-controlled data should be stored.
8. The European Environment Agency (EEA) relies on the extremes indices for its European state of the environment reports, which are issued at regular intervals and aim to support sustainable development (EEA-JRC-WHO 2008). Contacts with responsible authors at EEA have learned that they would prefer using up-to-date information also for their annual assessments in particular with respect to index anomaly maps for individual years.
9. The existence of copies of (subsets of the) ECA dataset elsewhere on the Internet in reformatted files should be discouraged. Already, STARDEX (<http://www.cru.uea.ac.uk/projects/stardex/>), GDCN (<http://lwf.ncdc.noaa.gov/oa/climate/research/gdcn/gdcn.html>) and the Climate Explorer (<http://climexp.knmi.nl/>) extracted and published copies of the entire dataset. The problem is that these ad-hoc copies often stay without regular updates. To improve this situ-

ation, specific agreements with responsible persons should be reached so that the required subsets are delivered straight from the ECA&D source or provided at the ECA&D website.

10. In several WMO working groups, KNMI has indicated its willingness to offer help to other continents, in particular Africa and South America to run similar projects as ECA&D. Part of this capacity building will consist of infrastructure (web) issues. KNMI is also involved in an Indonesia project where ECA&D will provide the infrastructure for analysis and distribution of data. In addition, there is the intention to use the ECA&D system of presenting index results for worldwide indices collected by the ETCCDI. To be prepared for these future requests, the developed system should keep into account such extensions.
11. The developed web interface should run easily on workstations and Internet PCs typically used in participating countries. This means that also lower capacity PCs (e.g. using MS Windows 95 on 386 processor PCs with 8 Mb ram and 800x600 screen resolution with 256 colors and 56k modem) should be able to use the interface without difficulties. All popular web browsers should be supported (MS Internet Explorer, Netscape Navigator, Mozilla, Opera, Lynx). Performance of the system should meet minimum standards. For all parts of the user interface maximum waiting time (assuming optimum Internet speed and advanced PCs or workstations) should at maximum be in the order of 3 to 5 seconds.
12. Operational guarantees for the system outside the KNMI firewall, which has the website and database running, are on a 8/5 basis. Bringing the system up and running again at the next working day is satisfactory, provided that the archived data are in no danger. User access monitoring facilities should be used to count the number of hits and to determine user preferences. This information is to be used primarily for further improvements of the system.
13. The technical solutions should benefit from the routine backup- and maintenance procedures KNMI employs. Optimal use should be made of KNMI information systems and infrastructure to ensure ongoing support and to guarantee up-and-running services from the ECA database and website and to ensure restoring data, with no loss. Regular and reliable backup procedures should be maintained. On the other hand, changes in the KNMI infrastructure should not negatively affect the results of the ECA&D project.

1.4 Infrastructure and software

At the moment, two dedicated ECA&D systems are in use: the develop & test environment and the operational system (outside the firewall). All procedures are run on a developer platform and the results are copied to the operational platform. The operating system is Linux. The web-server is Apache. A functional controller, which is embedded within KNMI's ICT infrastructure, permanently monitors the performance of the operational system using the open source software Nagios (<http://www.nagios.org>). A MySQL database is used to store the data and corresponding metadata. Most of the software used to update the database are written in Bash, Fortran and C code. More details about the infrastructure can be found in the internal document about the ECA&D infrastructure.

1.5 Data flow

The necessary steps in data processing are:

1. New data import
2. Quality control
3. Blending
4. Indices calculation
5. Climatology calculation
6. Trend calculation
7. Homogeneity analysis
8. E-OBS gridded dataset
9. Website

For each step, the main method is described in the sections below.

2 New data import

2.1 Design rules

Participant data comes in various file formats. Importing this data into the database tables is entirely done by hand, running relevant scripts to do the conversions. The conversions differ for each data source. Dependent on the permissions granted by the data providers, data series can either be: public or non-public. Non-public data are only used in the calculation of the trends, indices and the gridded datasets, while the public data are published on the

web as well. Most station series are updated irregularly, each time after the data providers are contacted.

A few stations are updated on a monthly basis. The stations in Norway and Slovenia are updated via the data they provide on their websites. For Dutch stations, a link is made with the Dutch meteorological database. Luxembourg Airport is updated via monthly emails send by the data provider of that station. Data for stations in Germany and Czech Republic are provided every month by FTP.

The data provided by the participants is always received with some delay. It is not possible for all of the participants to deliver (near) real time data, because of validation and verification. To update each series at the time that participant data has not yet arrived, SYNOP messages are used. The source for these synoptical data is the ECMWF MARS-archive (see <http://www.ecmwf.int/services/archive/>). This archive is a complete and consistent representation of SYNOP messages distributed over the GTS. Synoptical data is retrieved from the MARS-archive only for WMO-Region VI and countries in North Africa. For technical reasons, this is translated to be all land stations that fit in the rectangle 90N/40W and 10N/80E. Data retrieval is restricted to the reports of the main hours 00, 06, 12 and 18 UT.

Daily minimum and maximum temperatures are reported at 6 UT and 18 UT respectively, and refer to the 12-hour periods preceding these points in time. These values therefore do not cover a full 24-hour period. The impact of this mismatch and issues related to the quality of the synoptical data is currently under investigation.

Daily values for the following 9 elements are derived from the SYNOP messages:

Daily maximum temperature TX In the synoptical report of 18 UT, the daily maximum temperature is given for that day. This daily maximum temperature is the highest temperature recorded between 06 UT and 18 UT (according to WMO specifications).

Daily minimum temperature TN In the synoptical report of 06 UT, the daily minimum temperature is given for that day. This daily minimum temperature is the lowest temperature recorded between 18 UT (previous day) and 06 UT (according to WMO specifications).

Daily mean temperature TG If the daily maximum temperature (TX) and the daily minimum temperature (TN) is known, mean daily temperature is calculated as $TG=(TX-TN)/2$. This combines the TX reading of 18 UT and that of TN of 6 UT of the current day.

Daily mean sea level pressure PP Whenever sea level pressure data is available at 00, 06, 12 and/or 18 UT, daily mean sea level pressure is calculated as the average of the available values.

Daily precipitation amount RR Whenever synoptical 12-hourly precipitation data is available at 06 and 18 UT, daily precipitation is calculated as the sum of RR of 18UT of the current day and RR of 6 UT of the next day.

Daily mean snow depth SD Whenever synoptical snow depth data is available at 00, 06, 12 and/or 18 UT, daily mean snow depth is calculated as the average snow depth of the available values.

Daily mean cloud cover CC Whenever synoptical cloud cover data is available at 00, 06, 12 and/or 18 UT, mean daily cloud cover is calculated as the average of the available values. This value in percent is converted to octas by $\text{ROUND}((\text{cloud cover_in_percents}/100)*8)$.

Sunshine duration SS Whenever synoptical sunshine duration is available (in minutes) at 00, 06, 12 and/or 18 UT, daily sunshine duration is calculated as the summation of the available values.

Daily mean humidity HU Whenever synoptical humidity data is available (in percents) at 00, 06, 12 and 18 UT, daily mean humidity is calculated as the mean of the available values.

Daily mean wind speed FG Whenever synoptical wind speed data is available (in m/s) at 00, 06, 12 and 18 UT, daily mean wind speed is calculated as the mean of the available values.

Daily maximum wind gust FX Whenever synoptical wind gust data is available (in m/s) at 00, 06, 12 and 18 UT, daily maximum wind gust is taken as the maximum of the available values.

Wind direction DD Whenever synoptical wind direction data is available (in degrees) at 12 UT, that value is taken as the wind direction.

2.2 Current implementation

Within the ECA&D relational database, various types of tables are distinguished: core tables that hold the unique raw data, working tables that hold temporarily stored data and so-called derived tables that hold derived data calculated according to the rules specified in the remainder of this document. Derived data is updated by running the various processes. It is necessary to store these derived data for better performance of subsequent procedures and/or the website. Data for different elements *xx* are stored in separate tables. Based on the use permissions that participants have given to their data, two different targets are distinguished. Likewise, tables have extensions for the targets: public and mixed. *Mixed* indicates public data combined with non-public data. The data in the *mixed* tables are used for indices, trends and gridding, while only the data in *public* are available for

download on the website. Data in the *public* tables are a subset of those in the *mixed* tables.

The SYNOP messages from the ECMWF MARS-archive are downloaded on a monthly basis. The data archive comes in a BUFR-format, a WMO defined format for irregular spaced point data. To process this BUFR-formatted archive, the ECMWF BUFRDC subroutines are used. These subroutines expand the BUFR-file into ASCII-readable data, which is processed further. The subroutines extract only the data required, i.e. TX, TN, PP, RR, SD, CC, HU and SS, corresponding respectively with BUFR-fields: 12014 (maximum temperature at 2 m, past 12 hours), 12015 (minimum temperature at 2 m, past 12 hours), 10051 (pressure reduced to mean sea level), 13022 (total precipitation past 12 hours), 13013 (total snow depth), 20010 (cloud cover (total)), 13003 (relative humidity), 14031 (total sunshine), 11011 (wind direction), 11012 (wind speed), 11041 (wind gust).

After extraction into a ASCII-formatted file, every TX, TN, PP, RR, SD, CC, HU, SS, FG, FX and DD (and the calculated TG) of a synoptical station is stored in a temporary table. When the complete ASCII-file is processed, another process reads this temporary table and determines the daily values. Details about the programs that do this, can be found in an accompanying internal document.

3 Quality control

3.1 Design rules

Quality control (QC) procedures flag each individual observation in a series. Separate QC procedures are performed for the station series (non-blended) and the blended series. Three QC flags are currently implemented:

- Flag=0: 'valid'
- Flag=1: 'suspect'
- Flag=9: 'missing'

The following conditions apply for each element.

daily precipitation amount RR:

... must be equal or exceed 0 mm

... must be less than 300.0 mm
... must not be repetitive (i.e. exactly the same amount) for 10 days in a row if amount larger than 1.0 mm
... must not be repetitive (i.e. exactly the same amount) for 5 days in a row if amount larger than 5.0 mm
... dry periods receive flag = 1 (suspect), if the amount of dry days lies outside a 14-bivariate standard deviation

daily mean surface air pressure PP:

... must exceed 900.0 hPa
... must be less than 1080.0 hPa
... must not be repetitive (i.e. exactly the same) for 5 days in a row

daily maximum temperature TX:

... must exceed -90.0 °C
... must be less than 60.0 °C
... must exceed or equal daily minimum temperature (if exists)
... must exceed or equal daily mean temperature (if exists)
... must not be repetitive (i.e. exactly the same) for 5 days in a row
... must be less than the long term average daily maximum temperature for that calendar day + 5 times standard deviation (calculated for a 5 day window centered on each calendar day over the whole period)
... must exceed the long term average daily maximum temperature for that calendar day - 5 times standard deviation (calculated for a 5 day window centered on each calendar day over the whole period)

Daily minimum temperature TN:

... must exceed -90.0 °C
... must be less than 60.0 °C
... must be less or equal to daily maximum temperature (if exists)
... must be less or equal to daily mean temperature (if exists)
... must not be repetitive (i.e. exactly the same) for 5 days in a row
... must be less than the long term average daily minimum temperature for that calendar day + 5 times standard deviation (calculated for a 5 day window centered on each calendar day over the whole period)
... must exceed the long term average daily minimum temperature for that calendar day - 5 times standard deviation (calculated for a 5 day window centered on each calendar day over the whole period)

Daily mean temperature TG:

... must exceed -90.0 °C
... must be less than 60.0 °C
... must exceed or equal daily minimum temperature (if exists)
... must be less or equal to daily maximum temperature (if exists)
... must not be repetitive (i.e. exactly the same) for 5 days in a row
... must be less than the long term average daily mean temperature for that

calendar day + 5 times standard deviation (calculated for a 5 day window centered on each calendar day over the whole period)
... must exceed the long term average daily mean temperature for that calendar day - 5 times standard deviation (calculated for a 5 day window centered on each calendar day over the whole period)

Daily snow depth SD:

... must exceed or equal 0.0 cm
... must be less than 300.0 cm if station elevation is less or equal to 400 m
... must be less than 800.0 cm if station elevation is between 400 m and 2000 m
... must be less than 1500.0 cm if station elevation is equal to or more than 2000 m

Daily cloud cover CC:

... must exceed or equal 0
... must be less than or equal 8

Daily humidity HU:

... must exceed or equal 0.0%
... must be less than or equal to 100.0%

Daily sunshine duration SS:

... must exceed or equal 0.0 h
... must be less than 24.0 h

Daily mean wind speed FG:

... must exceed or equal 0.0 m/s
... must be less than or equal to 46 m/s
... must not be repetitive (i.e. exactly the same value) for 6 days in a row if value larger or equal to 2.0 m/s

Daily maximum wind gust FX:

... must exceed or equal 0.0 m/s
... must be less than or equal to 76 m/s
... must not be repetitive (i.e. exactly the same value) for 5 days in a row if value larger or equal to 4.0 m/s

Daily mean wind direction DD:

... must exceed or equal 0.0 degrees
... must be less than or equal to 360 degrees
... must not be repetitive (i.e. exactly the same value) for 6 days in a row if value larger than 0.5 degrees

The default QC flag is 0 ('valid'). If one of the conditions above is not met: a QC flag of 1 ('suspect') is assigned. If data is missing: QC=9 ('missing'). The conditions are tested in an automated procedure, but a manual intervention is possible for non-blended series and the manual QC

flag will be propagated to the blended series. For instance, precipitation extremes flagged 'suspect' are overruled if supplementary evidence exists (e.g. from radar images or weather charts) that the particular extreme is plausible.

If for a calendar day 10 or more samples exist, then the long-term average or standard deviation is calculated for that day. In order to adjust the day-to-day variability associated with the sampling, the long-term averages are smoothed. The (smoothed) long-term average is only calculated if the total number of days present is 25 or more. If a calendar day does not meet these requirements (e.g. for a leap day), the quality checks associated with long term averages are not performed for that day.

4 Blending

4.1 Design rules

The procedure to calculate the optimal combination of ECA station and nearby station (which can be an ECA station or a synoptical station) has the following steps (applying spherical trigonometry):

1. Convert LAT and LON into decimal degrees. E.g. for station De Bilt this yields

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Latitude: } 52:06\text{N} \quad \text{LAT}_{\text{ECA}} &= 52+6/60 = 52.10 \\ \text{Longitude: } 05:11\text{E} \quad \text{LON}_{\text{ECA}} &= 5+11/60 = 5.18 \end{aligned}$$

2. For every other station, also convert LAT and LON into decimal degrees

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Latitude: } \text{HH}_{\text{LA}}:\text{MM}_{\text{LA}} \quad \text{LAT}_{\text{OTHER}} &= \text{HH}_{\text{LA}}+\text{MM}_{\text{LA}}/60 \\ \text{Longitude: } \text{HH}_{\text{LO}}:\text{MM}_{\text{LO}} \quad \text{LON}_{\text{OTHER}} &= \text{HH}_{\text{LO}}+\text{MM}_{\text{LO}}/60 \end{aligned}$$

If Latitude on southern hemisphere: $\text{LAT}_{\text{OTHER}} = -1 \cdot \text{LAT}_{\text{OTHER}}$

If Longitude on western hemisphere: $\text{LON}_{\text{OTHER}} = -1 \cdot \text{LON}_{\text{OTHER}}$

3. Find a combination ECA-OTHER station by minimizing the distance (here in km):

$$\text{distance} = \text{radius_earth} \times \text{ARCCOS}(\text{SIN}(\text{atan} \cdot \text{LAT}_{\text{ECA}}) \times \text{SIN}(\text{atan} \cdot \text{LAT}_{\text{OTHER}}) + \text{COS}(\text{atan} \cdot \text{LAT}_{\text{ECA}}) \times \text{COS}(\text{atan} \cdot \text{LAT}_{\text{OTHER}}) \times \text{COS}(\text{atan} \cdot (\text{LON}_{\text{OTHER}} - \text{LON}_{\text{ECA}})))$$

where: $\text{radius_earth} = 6378.137$ kilometers, and $\text{atan} = \text{ARCTAN}(1)/45$

Substituting for De Bilt, with LAT/LON from WMO synoptical or ECA-stations yields:

$$\text{distance} = \text{radius_earth} \times \text{ARCCOS}(\text{SIN}(\text{atan} \cdot 52.10) \times \text{SIN}(\text{atan} \cdot \text{LAT}_{\text{OTHER}}) + \text{COS}(\text{atan} \cdot 52.10) \times \text{COS}(\text{atan} \cdot \text{LAT}_{\text{OTHER}}) \times \text{COS}(\text{atan} \cdot (\text{LON}_{\text{OTHER}} - 5.18)))$$

Repeat distance for every OTHER station, keeping LAT_{ECA} and LON_{ECA} fixed (in the example above, for De Bilt). The OTHER station with lowest distance is the station that is nearest to De Bilt (in this example). Only data from stations that are no more than 25 km away from the original ECA-station, is used.

4. As a last step, the difference in elevation of the ECA station and OTHER station is considered. Only data from stations located within 50 m height difference is taken into account.

Next, the blended series are constructed. Suppose we have a station series from 1900 until 2002, with missing data between 1930 and 1935 and also after 2002. Now that we know what other stations are nearby we are considering the data from these stations to 'infill' the gaps or data values that are flagged as suspect during QC (as illustrated in the figure below; see also Sect. 3).

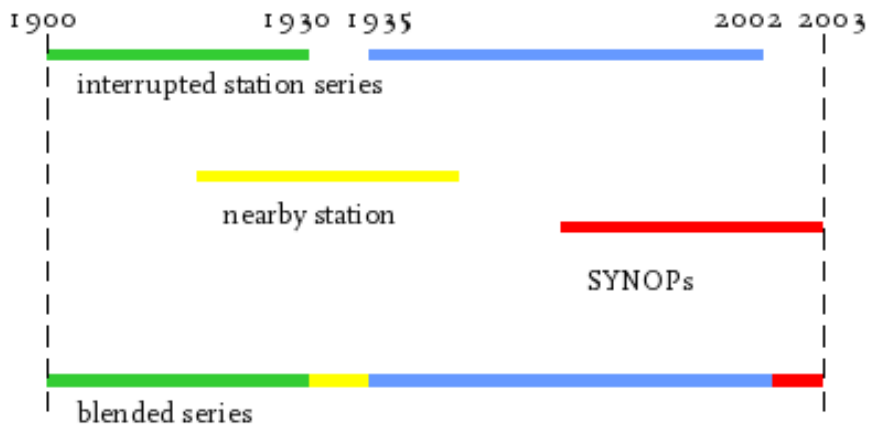


Figure 1: Blending figure

The logic that is applied when constructing the blended series is as follows. First, valid data from nearby ECA stations is taken to 'infill' the gaps, i.e. days with $qc=1$ or missing data. If no valid data from nearby ECA stations is available, valid data from nearby synoptical stations is taken to

'infill' the gaps. If there is less than 10 years difference between the year of the last date of the series and the current date, the series are extended with synop data from nearby synoptical stations as well. More details about the blending process can be found in the accompanying internal document.

5 Indices calculation

5.1 Design rules

Indices are calculated for the *mixed* blended series only and over a time span which is as long as the record allows. For an index to be calculated for a particular year, at least 362 days with valid daily data must exist. For an index to be calculated for a half-year period, at least 181 days with valid daily data must exist. For an index to be calculated for a seasonal period, at least 86 days with valid daily data must exist. For an index to be calculated for a monthly period, at least 25 days with valid daily data must exist. Indices results are stored in the database only if a series contains at least 10 years of valid data.

A total of 60 indices are calculated on the basis of the blended daily series for the categories Cold, Drought, Heat, Pressure, Rain, Snow, Sunshine, Temperature, Humidity, Cloudiness and Compound. The acronyms are: GD4, GSL*, CFD, FD*, HD17, ID*, CSDI*, TG10p, TN10p*, TX10p*, TXn*, TNn*, CDD*, SPI6, SPI3, PET, SU*, TR*, WSDI*, TG90p, TN90p*, TX90p*, TXx*, TNx*, CSU, PP, RR*, RR1, SDII*, CWD*, R10mm*, R20mm*, RX1day*, RX5day*, R75p, R75pTOT, R95p, R95pTOT*, R99p, R99pTOT*, SD, SD1, SD5cm, SD50cm, SSp, SS, TG, TN, TX, DTR*, ETR, vDTR, RH, CC, CC2, CC6, CD, CW, WD, WW. Those with * are part of the ETCCDI list of 27 worldwide indices available from <http://cccma.seos.uvic.ca/ETCCDI/indices.shtml>.

The exact definition of each index is given in the next sections. Each index is calculated as annual, winter half-year (ONDJFM), summer half-year (AMJJAS), winter (DJF), spring (MAM), summer (JJA), autumn (SON) and monthly values.

5.2 Calculation of percentiles

Zhang et al. (2005) brought to the attention that percentiles, calculated on the basis of data from a 'base'-period of the record, and subsequently applied to data from the 'out-of-base' period, will introduce inhomogeneities in the resulting exceedance series. The inhomogeneities are strongest for high percentiles and for data with strong auto correlation.

In their article, they offer an alternative way to calculate percentiles when they are applied to the base-period. This method of calculating percentiles is adopted by ECA&D. This procedure is: (Zhang et al. 2005, §4)

1. The 30-yr base period is divided into one ‘out of base’ year, the year for which exceedance is to be estimated, and a ‘base period’ consisting of the remaining 29 yr from which the thresholds would be estimated.
2. A 30-yr block of data is constructed by using the 29-yr base period dataset and adding an additional year of data from the base period (replicating one year in the base period). This constructed 30-yr block is used to estimate thresholds.
3. The out-of-base year is then compared with these thresholds, and the exceedance rate for the out-of-base year is obtained.
4. Steps 2 and 3 are repeated an additional 28 times, by repeating each of the remaining 28 in-base years in turn to construct the 30-yr block.
5. The final index for the out-of-base year is obtained by averaging the 29 estimates obtained from steps 2, 3 and 4.

5.3 Smoothing of indices

Next to the actual index values, smoothed index values are provided based on the application of a LOWESS (locally weighted scatterplot smoothing) smoother. This smoother fits simple models to localized subsets of the data to build up a function that describes the deterministic part of the variation in the data, point by point.

The code is based on routines provided by W. S. Cleveland (Bell Laboratories, Murray Hill NJ).

The smoother span f gives the proportion of points in the plot which influence the smooth at each value. The value of f is set to:

$$f = \frac{30}{\text{length of record in years}}.$$

This gives higher values for f when the length of the series is short, giving more smoothness.

The number of ‘robustifying’ iterations which should be performed is set to 3.

The parameter δ is used to speed up computation: instead of computing the local polynomial fit at each data point it is not computed for points within δ of the last computed point, and linear interpolation is used to fill in the fitted values for the skipped points. This parameter is set to 1/100th of the range of the input data, which is generally regarded as a standard value.

5.3.1 Cloudiness indices

CC

- *Mean of daily cloud cover (oktas)*

Let CC_{ij} be the daily cloud cover at day i of period j . Then mean values in period j are given by:

$$CC_j = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^I CC_{ij}}{I}$$

CC2

- *Mostly sunny days (cloud cover ≤ 2 oktas) (days)*

Let CC_{ij} be the daily cloud cover at day i of period j . Then counted is the number of days where:

$$CC_{ij} \leq 2 \text{ oktas}$$

CC6

- *Mostly cloudy days (cloud cover ≥ 6 oktas) (days)*

Let CC_{ij} be the daily cloud cover at day i of period j . Then counted is the number of days where:

$$CC_{ij} \geq 6 \text{ oktas}$$

5.3.2 Cold indices

GD4

- *Growing degree days (sum of $TG > 4$ °C) (°C)*

Let TG_{ij} be the daily mean temperature at day i of period j . Then the growing degree days are:

$$GD4_j = \sum_{i=1}^I (TG_{ij} - 4 \mid TG_{ij} > 4 \text{ °C})$$

GSL

- *Growing season length (days)*

Let TG_{ij} be the mean temperature at day i of period j . Then counted is the number of days between the first occurrence of at least 6 consecutive days with:

$$TG_{ij} > 5 \text{ °C}$$

and the first occurrence after 1 July of at least 6 consecutive days with:

$$TG_{ij} < 5 \text{ °C}$$

CFD

- *Maximum number of consecutive frost days ($TN < 0^\circ C$) (days)*

Let TN_{ij} be the daily minimum temperature at day i of period j . Then counted is the largest number of consecutive days where:

$$TN_{ij} < 0^\circ C$$

FD

- *Frost days ($TN < 0^\circ C$) (days)*

Let TN_{ij} be the daily minimum temperature at day i of period j . Then counted is the number of days where:

$$TN_{ij} < 0^\circ C$$

HD17

- *Heating degree days (sum of $17^\circ C - TG$) ($^\circ C$)*

Let TG_{ij} be the daily mean temperature at day i of period j . Then the heating degree days are:

$$HD17_j = \sum_{i=1}^I (17^\circ C - TG_{ij})$$

ID

- *Ice days ($TX < 0^\circ C$) (days)*

Let TX_{ij} be the daily maximum temperature at day i of period j . Then counted is the number of days where:

$$TX_{ij} < 0^\circ C$$

CSDI

- *Cold-spell duration index (days)*

Let TN_{ij} be the daily minimum temperature at day i of period j and let TN_{in10} be the calendar day 10th percentile calculated for a 5-day window centred on each calendar day in the 1961–1990 period. Then counted is the number of days per period where, in intervals of at least 6 consecutive days:

$$TN_{ij} < TN_{in10}$$

TG10p

- *Days with $TG < 10\text{th percentile of daily mean temperature (cold days)}$ (days)*

Let TG_{ij} be the daily mean temperature at day i of period j and let $TG_{in}10$ be the calendar day 10th percentile calculated for a 5-day window centred on each calendar day in the 1961–1990 period. Then counted is the number of days where:

$$TG_{ij} < TG_{in}10$$

TN10p

- *Days with $TN < 10\text{th percentile of daily minimum temperature (cold nights)}$ (days)*

Let TN_{ij} be the daily minimum temperature at day i of period j and let $TN_{in}10$ be the calendar day 10th percentile calculated for a 5-day window centred on each calendar day in the 1961–1990 period. Then counted is the number of days where:

$$TN_{ij} < TN_{in}10$$

TX10p

- *Days with $TX < 10\text{th percentile of daily maximum temperature (cold day-times)}$ (days)*

Let TX_{ij} be the daily maximum temperature at day i of period j and let $TX_{in}10$ be the calendar day 10th percentile calculated for a 5-day window centred on each calendar day in the 1961–1990 period. Then counted is the number of days where:

$$TX_{ij} < TX_{in}10$$

TXn

- *Minimum value of daily maximum temperature ($^{\circ} C$)*

Let TX_{ij} be the daily maximum temperature on day i of period j . Then the minimum daily maximum temperature for period j is:

$$TXn_j = \min(TX_{ij})$$

TNn

- *Minimum value of daily minimum temperature ($^{\circ}$ C)*

Let TN_{ij} be the daily minimum temperature on day i of period j . Then the minimum daily minimum temperature for period j is:

$$TNn_j = \min(TN_{ij})$$

5.3.3 Compound indices

The indices CD, CW, WD, and WW are based on Beniston (2009).

CD

- *Days with $TG < 25$ th percentile and $RR < 25$ th percentile (cold/dry)*

Let TG_{ij} be the daily mean temperature at day i of period j and let TG_{in25} be the calendar day 25th percentile calculated for a 5-day window centred on each calendar day in the 1961–1990 period. Let RR_{wj} be the daily precipitation amount at wet day w ($RR \geq 1.0$ mm) of period j and let RR_{wn25} be the 25th percentile of precipitation at wet days in the 1961–1990 period. Then counted is the number of days where:

$$TG_{ij} < TG_{in25} \quad \text{and} \quad RR_{wj} < RR_{wn25}$$

CW

- *Days with $TG < 25$ th percentile and $RR > 75$ th percentile (cold/wet)*

Let TG_{ij} be the daily mean temperature at day i of period j and let TG_{in25} be the calendar day 25th percentile calculated for a 5-day window centred on each calendar day in the 1961–1990 period. Let RR_{wj} be the daily precipitation amount at wet day w ($RR \geq 1.0$ mm) of period j and let RR_{wn75} be the 75th percentile of precipitation at wet days in the 1961–1990 period. Then counted is the number of days where:

$$TG_{ij} < TG_{in25} \quad \text{and} \quad RR_{wj} > RR_{wn75}$$

WD

- *Days with $TG > 75$ th percentile and $RR < 25$ th percentile (warm/dry)*

Let TG_{ij} be the daily mean temperature at day i of period j and let TG_{in75} be the calendar day 75th percentile calculated for a 5-day window centred on each calendar day in the 1961–1990 period. Let RR_{wj} be the daily precipitation amount at wet day w ($RR \geq 1.0$ mm) of period j and let

RR_{wn25} be the 25th percentile of precipitation at wet days in the 1961–1990 period. Then counted is the number of days where:

$$TG_{ij} > TG_{in75} \quad \text{and} \quad RR_{wj} < RR_{wn25}$$

WW

- *Days with $TG > 75\text{th percentile}$ and $RR > 75\text{th percentile}$ (warm/wet)*

Let TG_{ij} be the daily mean temperature at day i of period j and let TG_{in75} be the calendar day 75th percentile calculated for a 5-day window centred on each calendar day in the 1961–1990 period. Let RR_{wj} be the daily precipitation amount at wet day w ($RR \geq 1.0$ mm) of period j and let RR_{wn75} be the 75th percentile of precipitation at wet days in the 1961–1990 period. Then counted is the number of days where:

$$TG_{ij} > TG_{in75} \quad \text{and} \quad RR_{wj} > RR_{wn75}$$

5.3.4 Drought indices

CDD

- *Maximum number of consecutive dry days ($RR < 1$ mm) (days)*

Let RR_{ij} be the daily precipitation amount for day i of period j . Then counted is the largest number of consecutive days where:

$$RR_{ij} < 1 \text{ mm}$$

SPI6

- *6-Month Standardized Precipitation Index*

SPI is a probability index based on precipitation. It is designed to be a spatially invariant indicator of drought. SPI6 refers to precipitation in the previous 6-month period (+ indicates wet; - indices dry).

See for details and the algorithm: Guttman (1999).

SPI3

- *3-Month Standardized Precipitation Index*

SPI is a probability index based on precipitation. It is designed to be a spatially invariant indicator of drought. SPI3 refers to precipitation in the previous 3-month period (+ indicates wet; - indices dry).

See for details and the algorithm: Guttman (1999).

PET

- *Potential EvapoTranspiration*

PET is an index which gives the FAO-endorsed potential evapotranspiration as calculated by the Penman-Monteith parametrization. Here reference crop evapotranspiration is a measure for potential evapotranspiration. Reference crop evaporation is defined as the rate of evaporation from an idealized grass reference crop with a fixed crop height of 0.12 m, an albedo of 0.23, and a surface resistance of 70 s m^{-1} . In terms of its evaporation rate, such a crop closely resembles the reference crop of an extensive surface of short green grass cover of uniform height, actively growing, completely shading the ground, and not short of water.

The equation used for estimating the reference crop evaporation is based on the Penman-Monteith approach;

$$ET_0 = \frac{0.408\Delta(R_n - G) + \gamma \frac{900}{T+273} U_2 (e_a - e_d)}{\Delta + \gamma(1 + 0.34U_2)}$$

where

ET_0 : reference crop evapotranspiration

R_n : net radiation at crop surface (using ECA&D elements: sunshine duration and cloud cover)

G : soil heat flux (using ECA&D element: daily averaged temperature)

T : daily averaged temperature

U_2 : daily averaged windspeed at 2 m height (using ECA&D element: daily averaged wind speed at 10 m)

$(e_a - e_d)$: vapour pressure deficit (using ECA&D elements: relative humidity and daily averaged temperature)

Δ : slope vapour pressure (using ECA&D element: daily averaged temperature)

γ : psychrometric constant (using ECA&D element: daily averaged sea-level pressure)

900 : coefficient for the reference crop

0.34 : wind coefficient for the reference crop

This equation is referred to as the FAO Penman-Monteith equation. See Allen et al. (1994b) and Allen et al. (1994a) for details.

5.3.5 Heat indices

SU

- *Summer days ($TX > 25^\circ \text{C}$) (days)*

Let TX_{ij} be the daily maximum temperature at day i of period j . Then counted is the number of days where:

$$TX_{ij} > 25^\circ \text{C}$$

TR

- *Tropical nights ($TN > 20^\circ C$) (days)*

Let TN_{ij} be the daily minimum temperature at day i of period j . Then counted is the number of days where:

$$TN_{ij} > 20^\circ C$$

WSDI

- *Warm-spell duration index (days)*

Let TX_{ij} be the daily maximum temperature at day i of period j and let TX_{in90} be the calendar day 90th percentile calculated for a 5-day window centred on each calendar day in the 1961–1990 period. Then counted is the number of days per period where, in intervals of at least 6 consecutive days:

$$TX_{ij} > TX_{in90}$$

TG90p

- *Days with $TG > 90$ th percentile of daily mean temperature (warm days) (days)*

Let TG_{ij} be the daily mean temperature at day i of period j and let TG_{in90} be the calendar day 90th percentile calculated for a 5-day window centred on each calendar day in the 1961–1990 period. Then counted is the number of days where:

$$TG_{ij} > TG_{in90}$$

TN90p

- *Days with $TN > 90$ th percentile of daily minimum temperature (warm nights) (days)*

Let TN_{ij} be the daily minimum temperature at day i of period j and let TN_{in90} be the calendar day 90th percentile calculated for a 5-day window centred on each calendar day in the 1961–1990 period. Then counted is the number of days where:

$$TN_{ij} > TN_{in90}$$

TX90p

- *Days with TX > 90th percentile of daily maximum temperature (warm day-times) (days)*

Let TX_{ij} be the daily maximum temperature at day i of period j and let TX_{in90} be the calendar day 90th percentile calculated for a 5-day window centred on each calendar day in the 1961–1990 period. Then counted is the number of days where:

$$TX_{ij} > TX_{in90}$$

TXx

- *Maximum value of daily maximum temperature ($^{\circ}$ C)*

Let TX_{ij} be the daily maximum temperature on day i of period j . Then the maximum daily maximum temperature for period j is:

$$TXn_j = \max(TX_{ij})$$

TNx

- *Maximum value of daily minimum temperature ($^{\circ}$ C)*

Let TN_{ij} be the daily minimum temperature on day i of period j . Then the maximum daily minimum temperature for period j is:

$$TNn_j = \max(TN_{ij})$$

CSU

- *Maximum number of consecutive summer days ($TX > 25^{\circ}$ C) (days)*

Let TX_{ij} be the daily maximum temperature for day i of period j . Then counted is the largest number of consecutive days where:

$$TX_{ij} > 25^{\circ}\text{C}$$

5.3.6 Humidity index

RH

- *Mean of daily relative humidity (%)*

Let HU_{ij} be the daily relative humidity at day i of period j . Then mean values in period j are given by:

$$RH_j = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^I HU_{ij}}{I}$$

5.3.7 Pressure index

PP

- *Mean of daily sea level pressure (hPa)*

Let PP_{ij} be the daily sea level pressure at day i of period j . Then mean values in period j are given by:

$$PP_j = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^I PP_{ij}}{I}$$

5.3.8 Rain indices

RR

- *Precipitation sum (mm)*

Let RR_{ij} be the daily precipitation amount for day i of period j . Then sum values are give by:

$$RR_j = \sum_{i=1}^I RR_{ij}$$

RR1

- *Wet days ($RR \geq 1$ mm) (days)*

Let RR_{ij} be the daily precipitation amount for day i of period j . Then counted is the number of days where:

$$RR_{ij} \geq 1 \text{ mm}$$

SDII

- *Simple daily intensity index (mm/wet day)*

Let RR_{wj} be the daily precipitation amount for wet day w ($RR \geq 1.0$ mm) of period j . Then the mean precipitation amount of wet days is given by:

$$SDII_j = \frac{\sum_{w=1}^W RR_{wj}}{W}$$

CWD

- *Maximum number of consecutive wet days ($RR \geq 1$ mm) (days)*

Let RR_{ij} be the daily precipitation amount for day i of period j . Then counted is the largest number of consecutive days where:

$$RR_{ij} \geq 1 \text{ mm}$$

R10mm

- *Heavy precipitation days (precipitation ≥ 10 mm) (days)*

Let RR_{ij} be the daily precipitation amount for day i of period j . Then counted is the number of days where:

$$RR_{ij} \geq 10 \text{ mm}$$

R20mm

- *Very heavy precipitation days (precipitation ≥ 20 mm) (days)*

Let RR_{ij} be the daily precipitation amount for day i of period j . Then counted is the number of days where:

$$RR_{ij} \geq 20 \text{ mm}$$

RX1day

- *Highest 1-day precipitation amount (mm)*

Let RR_{ij} be the daily precipitation amount for day i of period j . Then maximum 1-day values for period j are:

$$RX1day_j = \max(RR_{ij})$$

RX5day

- *Highest 5-day precipitation amount (mm)*

Let RR_{kj} be the precipitation amount for the five-day interval k of period j , where k is defined by the last day. Then maximum 5-day values for period j are:

$$RX5day_j = \max(RR_{kj})$$

R75p

- *Days with $RR > 75$ th percentile of daily amounts (moderate wet days) (days)*

Let RR_{wj} be the daily precipitation amount at wet day w ($RR \geq 1.0$ mm) of period j and let RR_{wn75} be the 75th percentile of precipitation at wet days in the 1961–1990 period. Then counted is the number of days where:

$$RR_{wj} > RR_{wn75}$$

R75pTOT

- *Precipitation fraction due to moderate wet days (> 75th percentile) (%)*

Let RR_j be the sum of daily precipitation amount for period j and let RR_{wj} be the daily precipitation amount at wet day w ($RR \geq 1.0$ mm) of period j and RR_{wn75} the 75th percentile of precipitation at wet days in the 1961–1990 period. Then $R75pTOT_j$ is determined as:

$$R75pTOT_j = 100 \times \frac{\sum_{w=1}^W RR_{wj}, \text{ where } RR_{wj} > RR_{wn75}}{RR_j}$$

R95p

- *Days with $RR > 95$ th percentile of daily amounts (very wet days) (days)*

Let RR_{wj} be the daily precipitation amount at wet day w ($RR \geq 1.0$ mm) of period j and let RR_{wn95} be the 95th percentile of precipitation at wet days in the 1961–1990 period. Then counted is the number of days where:

$$RR_{wj} > RR_{wn95}$$

R95pTOT

- *Precipitation fraction due to very wet days (> 95th percentile) (%)*

Let RR_j be the sum of daily precipitation amount for period j and let RR_{wj} be the daily precipitation amount at wet day w ($RR \geq 1.0$ mm) of period j and RR_{wn95} the 95th percentile of precipitation at wet days in the 1961–1990 period. Then $R95pTOT_j$ is determined as:

$$R95pTOT_j = 100 \times \frac{\sum_{w=1}^W RR_{wj}, \text{ where } RR_{wj} > RR_{wn95}}{RR_j}$$

R99p

- *Days with $RR > 99$ th percentile of daily amounts (extremely wet days) (days)*

Let RR_{wj} be the daily precipitation amount at wet day w ($RR \geq 1.0$ mm) of period j and let RR_{wn99} be the 99th percentile of precipitation at wet days in the 1961–1990 period. Then counted is the number of days where:

$$RR_{wj} > RR_{wn99}$$

R99pTOT

- *Precipitation fraction due to extremely wet days (> 99th percentile) (%)*

Let RR_j be the sum of daily precipitation amount for period j and let RR_{wj} be the daily precipitation amount at wet day w ($RR \geq 1.0$ mm) of period j and RR_{wn99} the 99th percentile of precipitation at wet days in the 1961–1990 period. Then $R99pTOT_j$ is determined as:

$$R99pTOT_j = 100 \times \frac{\sum_{w=1}^W RR_{wj}, \text{ where } RR_{wj} > RR_{wn99}}{RR_j}$$

5.3.9 Snow indices

SD

- *Mean of daily snow depth (cm)*

Let SD_{ij} be the daily snow depth at day i of period j . Then mean value of period j is given by:

$$SD_j = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^I SD_{ij}}{I}$$

SD1

- *Snow days ($SD \geq 1$ cm) (days)*

Let SD_{ij} be the daily snow depth for day i of period j . Then counted is the number of days where:

$$SD_{ij} \geq 1 \text{ cm}$$

SD5cm

- *Number of days with $SD \geq 5$ cm (days)*

Let SD_{ij} be the daily snow depth for day i of period j . Then counted is the number of days where:

$$SD_{ij} \geq 5 \text{ cm}$$

SD50cm

- *Number of days with $SD \geq 50$ cm (days)*

Let SD_{ij} be the daily snow depth for day i of period j . Then counted is the number of days where:

$$SD_{ij} \geq 50 \text{ cm}$$

5.3.10 Sunshine indices

SS

- *Sunshine duration (hours)*

Let SS_{ij} be the daily sunshine duration for day i of period j . Then sum values are given by:

$$SS_j = \sum_{i=1}^I SS_{ij}$$

SSp

- *Sunshine duration fraction with respect to daylength (%)*

Let SS_{ij} be the daily sunshine duration amount for day i of period j and SS_{ij}^{\max} the maximum daylight hours for day i of period j . Sum values in period j are given by:

$$SS_j = \sum_{i=1}^I SS_{ij} \text{ and } SS_j^{\max} = \sum_{i=1}^I SS_{ij}^{\max}.$$

The index is then given by

$$Sp_j = \frac{SS_j}{SS_j^{\max}} \times 100\%$$

The maximum daylight hours are calculated based on theory given in Allen et al. (1994a). The yearday j for month M and day D can be determined by

$$j = \text{int} \left(275 \frac{M}{9} - 30 + D \right) - 2 \quad (1)$$

which is from (Allen et al. 1994a, eq. 1.26), provided that: if $M < 3$, then $j = j + 2$ and if leap year and $M > 2$, then $j = j + 1$.

Given the yearday, the maximum daylight hours N [h] can be calculated using (Allen et al. 1994a, eq. 1.34)

$$N = \frac{24}{\pi} \omega_s \quad (2)$$

where ω_s is the sunset hour angle [rad]. This can be calculated by (Allen et al. 1994a, eq. 1.23)

$$\omega_s = \arccos(-\tan \phi \tan \delta), \quad (3)$$

where δ is the solar declination [rad] (Allen et al. 1994a, eq. 1.25)

$$\delta = 0.409 \sin \left(\frac{2\pi}{365} j - 1.39 \right) \quad (4)$$

and ϕ the latitude [rad] of the station (negative for southern hemisphere).

5.3.11 Temperature indices

TG

- *Mean of daily mean temperature ($^{\circ}C$)*

Let TG_{ij} be the mean temperature at day i of period j . Then mean values in period j are given by:

$$TG_j = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^I TG_{ij}}{I}$$

TN

- *Mean of daily minimum temperature ($^{\circ}C$)*

Let TN_{ij} be the minimum temperature at day i of period j . Then mean values in period j are given by:

$$TN_j = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^I TN_{ij}}{I}$$

TX

- *Mean of daily maximum temperature ($^{\circ}C$)*

Let TX_{ij} be the maximum temperature at day i of period j . Then mean values in period j are given by:

$$TX_j = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^I TX_{ij}}{I}$$

DTR

- *Mean of diurnal temperature range ($^{\circ}C$)*

Let TX_{ij} and TN_{ij} be the daily maximum and minimum temperature at day i of period j . Then the mean diurnal temperature range in period j is:

$$DTR_j = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^I (TX_{ij} - TN_{ij})}{I}$$

ETR

- *Intra-period extreme temperature range ($^{\circ}C$)*

Let TX_{ij} and TN_{ij} be the daily maximum and minimum temperature at day i of period j . Then the extreme temperature range in period j is:

$$ETR_j = \max(TX_{ij}) - \min(TN_{ij})$$

vDTR

- Mean absolute day-to-day difference in DTR ($^{\circ}C$)

Let TX_{ij} and TN_{ij} be the daily maximum and minimum temperature at day i of period j . Then calculated is the absolute day-to-day differences in period j :

$$vDTR_j = \frac{\sum_{i=2}^I |(TX_{ij} - TN_{ij}) - (TX_{i-1,j} - TN_{i-1,j})|}{I}$$

6 Climatology calculations

6.1 Design rules

Climatologies for all indices described in Sect. 5.1 are calculated. Normal periods used in ECA&D are 1961-1990 and 1971-2000. A climatological value for a particular index and a particular station is calculated if at least 80% of the data are available.

These climatologies are used in the ‘indices of extremes’ webpages. Both anomalies of an index, for a particular year and season, can be plotted with respect to the 1961-1990 climatology, and maps of the 1961-1990 and 1971-2000 climatologies can be plotted.

7 Trend calculation

7.1 Design rules

A trend is calculated for each of the indices and for each of the aggregation periods for which the indices are calculated. Of all values considered in a period, at least 80% of them must contain valid index data (i.e., not missing) for the trend to be calculated. For example, when calculating a trend for the period 1901–2006, at least 80% of this period (i.e. 85 years) must contain a valid value of the index.

Calculation of the trend value is done by a least squares estimate of a simple linear regression. The regression is performed by routine e02adf Numerical Algorithms Group (NAG, <http://www.nag.co.uk/>), where all points have equal weight. Data points with ‘missing’ values are not part of the inputdata for this routine. The routine calculates a least-squares polynomial approximation of degree 0 and 1, using Chebyshev polynomials as the basis. Subsequent evaluation of the Chebyshev-series representation of the polynomial approximation are carried out using NAG’s e02aef routine. These routines give a value for the intercept a_0 and a value of the slope a_1 :

$$\mathbf{y}_i = a_0 + a_1\mathbf{x}_i + \mathbf{e}_i,$$

with \mathbf{e}_i a residual.

This follows (von Storch & Zwiers 1999, §8.3.8). To test the null hypothesis that the slope a_1 has a value of 0 against the hypothesis that the slope is distinguishable from 0, we calculated

$$t = \frac{a}{(\sigma_E/\sqrt{S_{XX}})}.$$

This value is then compared against critical values from the t -distribution with $n - 2$ degrees of freedom. Here

$$\sigma_E^2 = \frac{1}{n-2} \sum_{i=1}^N (\mathbf{y}_i - a_0 - a_1 \mathbf{x}_i)^2$$

is the squared sum of errors of the fit and

$$S_{XX} = \sum_{i=1}^N (\mathbf{x}_i - \bar{\mathbf{x}})^2.$$

Because we have fitted a linear model that depends upon only one factor, the t and F tests are equivalent. In fact: $F = t^2$, and the square of a t random variable with $n - 2$ degrees of freedom is distributed as $F(1, n - 2)$. We will use the F -statistic here, which is identical to a two-sided t -test. The F -statistic is calculated by

$$F = \frac{SSR}{\sigma_E^2},$$

where

$$SSR = \sum_{i=1}^N (a_0 + a_1 \mathbf{x}_i - \bar{\mathbf{y}})^2.$$

The t -test is not robust against departures from the independence assumption. In general, time series in climatology will be auto correlated. Under these circumstances, the t -test becomes too liberal and rejects the null-hypothesis too often. Having some auto correlation in a series actually decreases the number of degrees of freedom. To account for this, an estimate of the equivalent sample size is made (von Storch & Zwiers 1999, §6.6.8). The equivalent sample size is then:

$$n'_x = \frac{n_x}{1 + 2 \sum_{k=1}^{n_x-1} \left(1 - \frac{k}{n_x}\right) \rho_x(k)}$$

where $\rho_x(k)$ is the auto correlation function and n_x the number of degrees of freedom. Note the factor 2 in the denominator; it is missing in von Storch & Zwiers (1999, eq. 6.26) but should be there.

Given the number of degree of freedom and the t -value, a significance level can be calculated. This calculation makes use of the Numerical Recipes

function BETAI Press et al. (1989), for the calculation of the incomplete beta function.

For each of the indices described in § 5.1 the trend is calculated over the following periods:

1. 1901 – last year
2. 1950 – last year
3. 1961 – last year
4. 1976 – last year
5. 1901 – last year - 2
6. 1950 – last year - 2
7. 1961 – last year - 2
8. 1976 – last year - 2

8 Homogeneity analysis

8.1 Design rules

In any long time series, changes in routine observation practices may have introduced inhomogeneities of non-climatic origin that severely affect the extremes. Wijngaard et al. (2003) statistically tested the daily ECA series (1901–1999) of surface air temperature and precipitation with respect to homogeneity. Their methodology has been implemented in ECA&D. A two-step approach is followed. First, four homogeneity tests are applied to evaluate the daily series using three testing variables: (1) the annual mean of the diurnal temperature range DTR (= maximum temperature - minimum temperature), (2) the annual mean of the absolute day-to-day differences of the diurnal temperature range ν DTR and (3) the annual wet day count RR1 (threshold 1 mm). The use of derived annual variables avoids auto correlation problems with testing daily series. Second, the test results are condensed for each series into three classes: 'useful-doubtful-suspect'.

The four homogeneity tests are:

1. Standard Normal Homogeneity Test (SNH, Alexandersson (1986))
2. Buishand Range test (BHR, Buishand (1982))
3. Pettitt test (PET, Pettitt (1979))
4. Von Neumann Ratio test (VON, von Neumann (1941))

All four tests suppose under the null hypothesis that in the series of a testing variable, the values are independent with the same distribution. Under the alternative hypothesis the SNH, BHR and PET test assume that a step-wise shift in the mean (a break) is present. These three tests are capable to locate the year where a break is likely. The fourth test (VON) assumes under the alternative hypothesis that the series is not randomly distributed. This test does not give information on the year of the break. The calculus of each test is described below (from Wijngaard et al. 2003).

Y_i (i is the year from 1 to n) is the annual series to be tested, \bar{Y} is the mean and s the standard deviation.

8.1.1 Standard normal homogeneity test

Alexandersson (1986) describes a statistic $T(k)$ to compare the mean of the first k years of the record with that of the last $n - 1$ years:

$$T(k) = k\bar{z}_1^2 + (n - k)\bar{z}_2^2 \quad k = 1, \dots, n$$

where

$$\bar{z}_1 = \frac{1}{k} \frac{\sum_{i=1}^k (Y_i - \bar{Y})}{s} \quad \text{and} \quad \bar{z}_2 = \frac{1}{n - k} \frac{\sum_{i=k+1}^n (Y_i - \bar{Y})}{s}$$

If a break is located at the year K , then $T(k)$ reaches a maximum near the year $k = K$. The test statistic T_0 is defined as:

$$T_0 = \max(T(k)) \quad \text{for } 1 \leq k < n$$

The test has further been studied by Jarušková (1994). The relationship between her test statistic $T(n)$ and T_0 is:

$$T_0 = \frac{n(T(n))^2}{n - 2 + (T(n))^2}$$

The null hypothesis will be rejected if T_0 is above a certain level, which is dependent on the sample size. Critical values are given in Table 1.

Table 1: 1% critical values for the statistic T_0 of the single shift SNHT as a function of n (calculated from the simulations carried out by Jarušková (1994)) and the 5% critical value (Alexandersson 1986).

n	20	30	40	50	70	100
1%	9.56	10.45	11.01	11.38	11.89	12.32
5%	6.95	7.65	8.10	8.45	8.80	9.15

8.1.2 Buishand range test

In this test, the adjusted partial sums are defined as

$$S_0^* = 0 \quad \text{and} \quad S_k^* = \sum_{i=1}^k (Y_i - \bar{Y}) \quad k = 1, \dots, n$$

When a series is homogeneous the values of S_k^* will fluctuate around zero, because no systematic deviations of the Y_i values with respect to their mean will appear. If a break is present in year K , then S_k^* reaches a maximum (negative shift) or minimum (positive shift) near the year $k = K$. The significance of the shift can be tested with the 'rescaled adjusted range' R , which is the difference between the maximum and the minimum of the S_k^* values scaled by the sample standard deviation:

$$R = (\max S_k^* - \min S_k^*)/s \quad 0 \leq k \leq n \quad \text{for max and min separately}$$

Buishand (1982) gives critical values for R/\sqrt{n} (see Table 2).

Table 2: 1% and 5% critical values for R/\sqrt{n} of the Buishand range test as a function of n (Buishand 1982); the value of $n = 70$ is simulated.

n	20	30	40	50	70	100
1%	1.60	1.70	1.74	1.78	1.81	1.86
5%	1.43	1.50	1.53	1.55	1.59	1.62

8.1.3 Pettitt test

This test is a non-parametric rank test. The ranks r_1, \dots, r_n of the Y_1, \dots, Y_n are used to calculate the statistics:

$$X_k = 2 \sum_{i=1}^k r_i - k(n+1) \quad k = 1, \dots, n$$

If a break occurs in year E , then the statistic is maximal or minimal near the year $k = E$:

$$X_E = \max |X_k| \quad \text{for } 1 \leq k \leq n$$

The significance level is given by Pettitt (1979). Critical values for X_E are given in Table 3.

8.1.4 Von Neumann ratio

The von Neumann ratio N is defined as the ratio of the mean square successive (year to year) difference to the variance (von Neumann 1941):

$$N = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n-1} (Y_i - Y_{i+1})^2}{\sum_{i=1}^n (Y_i - \bar{Y})^2}$$

Table 3: 1% and 5% critical values for X_E of the Pettitt test as a function of n ; values are based on simulation.

n	20	30	40	50	70	100
1%	71	133	208	293	488	841
5%	57	107	167	235	393	677

When the sample is homogeneous the expected value is $N = 2$. If the sample contains a break, then the value of N tends to be lower than this expected value (Buishand 1981). If the sample has rapid variations in the mean, then values of N may rise above two (Bingham & Nelson 1981). This test gives no information about the location of the shift. Table 4 gives critical values for N .

Table 4: 1% and 5% critical values for N of the von Neumann ratio test as a function of n . For $n \leq 50$ these values are taken from Owen (1962); for $n = 70$ and $n = 100$ the critical values are based on the asymptotic normal distribution of N (Buishand 1981).

n	20	30	40	50	70	100
1%	1.04	1.20	1.29	1.36	1.45	1.54
5%	1.30	1.42	1.49	1.54	1.61	1.67

In ECA&D, test results are calculated for the following periods (identical to the trend periods):

1. 1901 – last year
2. 1950 – last year
3. 1961 – last year
4. 1976 – last year
5. 1901 – last year - 2
6. 1950 – last year - 2
7. 1961 – last year - 2
8. 1976 – last year - 2

Of all years considered in a period, at least 80% of them must contain valid data (i.e., not missing). Only temperature series and precipitation series are tested on homogeneity. Other elements, like sea level pressure are not tested. The test results are condensed into a single flag for each series according to:

- Class 1: 'useful' – 1 or 0 tests reject the null hypothesis at the 1% level
- Class 2: 'doubtful' – 2 tests reject the null hypothesis at the 1% level
- Class 3: 'suspect' – 3 or 4 tests reject the null hypothesis at the 1% level

For temperature, where two variables are tested, the two categories are calculated separately for each variable. If the results are different, the least favourable category is assigned to the temperature series of the station. If not all 4 individual tests can be calculated the flag is 'missing'. This means the homogeneity of the series in the considered period could not be determined.

On the website the trends in the climate change indices are only presented for series that are classified as 'useful' or 'doubtful' in the considered period.

For snow cover the index SD1 (number of snow days) was used for the homogeneity tests, and for relative humidity the index RH (mean of daily relative humidity), for sea level pressure the index PP (mean of daily sea level pressure), for cloud cover the index CC (mean of daily cloud cover), and for sunshine the index SS (mean of daily sunshine). For the indices CW, CD, WW, WD and PET the homogeneity results of the temperature series are used.

9 Return values

9.1 Design rules

"Extreme value theory" complements the "Indices of extremes" in order to evaluate the intensity and frequency of more rare events. Several indices have been chosen for which return values are calculated. A Gumbel distribution is fitted to the annual (or seasonal) maxima for 3 periods of 20 years. The parameters of the Gumbel distribution are derived through maximum-likelihood. The Anderson-Darling statistic is calculated and modified for small numbers using the modification from Stephens (1986), e.g. $(1 + 0.2/\sqrt{n})$. The critical values according to Table 4.17 of Stephens (1986) are used for determining the significance level of the results shown on the website.

10 Extreme events

10.1 Design rules

Extreme weather and climate events have significant impacts and are among the most serious challenges to society in coping with a changing climate.

According to the latest IPCC report, "confidence has increased that some extremes will become more frequent, more widespread and/or more intense during the 21st century". The website shows descriptions of recent extreme events on regional or European wide scale. Except for events that occurred in a specific year, also more general trends are included.

Each event is placed in the context of climate change. Appropriate anomaly maps, trend maps or other maps or figures are included in the descriptions. Note that single extreme events cannot be simply and directly attributed to anthropogenic climate change, as there is always a finite chance that the event in question might have occurred naturally. However, the odds may have shifted to make some of them more likely than in an unchanging climate (IPCC report, 2007)

11 E-OBS gridded dataset

11.1 Design rules

The E-OBS dataset is the gridded version of the ECA&D station data for precipitation, minimum, mean and maximum temperature using all the *mixed* blended series. Only the quality control flags 'valid' are taken into account, but no check is made to include the homogeneity results. E-OBS has 4 different versions: 2 grid resolutions x 2 grid flavours. Data is made available on a 0.25 and 0.5 degree regular lat-lon grid, as well as on a 0.22 and 0.44 degree rotated pole grid, with the north pole at 39.25N, 162W. They cover the area: 25N-75N x 40W-75E. Daily uncertainties and elevation files are made available as well. This dataset targets users of regional climate models and climate change analysis. Every year there will be a full update covering the period 1950 to last year. Additional, data from the current year will be made available through monthly updates.

The dataset is available as NetCDF files not only for the whole period, but also for 15 year chunks.

Users will need to register at least their e-mail address for a mailing list before they receive the location of website where to download the data.

For more information about the E-OBS gridded datasets we refer the reader to Haylock et al. (2008) and Hofstra et al. (2008).

12 Website

12.1 Design rules

The main categories of the website are:

1. Home: homepage that introduces the project and provides news items
2. FAQ: answers to several question about the project

3. Daily data: download of bulk and customized datasets based on interactive queries of the ECA database; the results of these queries range from PDF-documents of station metadata to zipped downloadable datasets
4. Indices of extremes: visualization of indices results through diagrams and maps using similar interactive selections as for daily data
5. Return values: visualization of return values based on a Gumbel distribution.
6. Extreme events: descriptions of extreme events that occurred somewhere in the European region
7. Project info: project information, publications based on ECA data and links to relevant external websites and related projects

The interactive web interface uses (pull down) menus that together build a query, including time period selection, station/country selection and element/index selection. Based on this query selections of daily data can be retrieved or indices/trends/anomaly plots or maps can be shown. The content of each pull down menu is linked to the choice made in another pull down menu. For instance if country selection is 'The Netherlands' only stations for that country are shown in the menu item station selection. There are no restrictions to the order of the selections. Because the website information is directly (on the fly) retrieved from the ECA database it is always up-to-date.

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