

Emerging New Climate Extremes Over Europe

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Emerging new climate extremes over Europe

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Abstract

Human society and natural systems are intrinsically adapted to the local climate mean and variability. Therefore, changes relative to the local expected variability are highly relevant for assessing impact and planning for adaptation as the climate changes. We analyse the emerging climate signal relative to the diagnosed internal variability (signal-to-noise ratio, S/N) of a set of recently published climate indices over Europe. We calculate the signal-to-noise ratio with respect to a recent baseline (1951-1983) which relates to recent societal experience. In this framework, we find that during the 2000-2016 period, many areas of Europe already experienced significant changes in climate extremes, even when compared to this recent period which is within living memory. In particular, the S/N of extreme temperatures is larger than 1 and 2 over 34% and 4% of Europe, respectively. We also find that about 15% of Europe is experiencing more intense winter precipitation events, while in summer, 7% of Europe is experiencing stronger drought-inducing conditions.

1. Introduction

Climate change is a global phenomenon, but its impacts differ regionally and seasonally. Societal and natural systems are intrinsically adapted to the local climate in which they are embedded, its mean value and the typical variability range. Exposed to the same mean change, systems adapted to larger variability are usually more resilient than systems that have evolved in more stable climates. For example, for the same temperature increase, tropical ecosystems are generally more vulnerable than extratropical ones, which are adapted to the larger variability of the midlatitudes (Dillon et al. 2010; Mahlstein et al. 2011; Frame et al. 2017; Harrington et al. 2016). Therefore, from an impact point of view, it may not be the absolute change but the change relative to the background variability that is especially relevant (Deutsch et al. 2008; Beaumont et al. 2011). A way to quantify this relation

36 is by analysing the signal-to-noise ratio (S/N), where the signal (S) is a measure of the mean change
37 of some climate metric respect to a baseline ("the past experience"), and the noise (N) is a
38 representative measure of the variability. The concept of S/N is closely related to the concept of Time
39 of Emergence (ToE) of climate signals (e.g., *Christensen et al.* 2007; *Giorgi and Bi* 2009; *Hawkins*
40 *and Sutton* 2012; *Maraun* 2013). ToE is the year in which a climate signal emerges from the
41 background variability and is estimated by determining the date on which the S/N ratio permanently
42 crosses a certain threshold. A different perspective is to focus on the S/N value itself on a particular
43 date and try to answer the question: "How familiar or unfamiliar is the current climate in a particular
44 region with respect to the past experience?". In this context, *Frame et al.* (2017) describe how the
45 climate changes with respect to past experience using the terms 'unusual' (S/N>1), 'unfamiliar' (S/N
46 > 2) and 'unknown' (S/N > 3). Using these categories, *Hawkins et al.* (2020) calculate the S/N of
47 changes in temperature and precipitation observations and show that many regions are already
48 experiencing a climate that would be unknown by late 19th century standards. Over Europe, changes
49 in temperature and temperature extremes have been detected and attributed partially to anthropogenic
50 influences both in models (e.g., *King et al.* 2015) and observations (*Mahlstein et al.* 2012). *Zhang et*
51 *al.* (2007) analyses changes in precipitation averaged over latitudinal bands and found that a positive
52 change over northern hemisphere high latitudes is attributable to anthropogenic forcing. *Maraun*
53 (2013) analyses a multi-model ensemble of regional climate projections and found that in northern
54 Europe, positive winter trends in mean and heavy precipitation, and in southwestern and southeastern
55 Europe, summer trends in mean precipitation will emerge within the next few decades. Most of these
56 studies investigate if the trends can be attributed to anthropogenic greenhouse gas forcing, and
57 therefore they use a pre-industrial baseline period. However, due to the lack of high-resolution and
58 homogeneous observational data on pre-industrial times, these studies are based on model data or
59 limit the analysis to a few climate metrics with a relatively coarse spatial resolution. To circumvent
60 this issue, here we analyse how impact-related climate indices have changed in Europe with respect
61 to a more recent baseline (1951-1983). Using a more recent baseline allows us to analyse more climate
62 metrics that are derived from high-quality, high-resolution observational data. The reported changes
63 cannot be directly attributed to anthropogenic forcing. However, we argue that these results are
64 relevant for adaptation planning since they relate with current societal experience, including personal
65 (memory) or practical/technical (most of the European infrastructure has been built after 1950,
66 partially because of the destruction associated with World War II).

67 **2. Methods and data**

68
69 As in *Hawkins et al.* (2020), we estimate the S/N by regressing local climate variations onto
70 GMST (global mean surface temperature) change

71
$$L(t) = \alpha G(t) + \beta,$$

72 where $L(t)$ is the observed local change of some climate metric, $G(t)$ is a smoothed version of GMSTs
73 for the period 1951-2016, and α and β are the parameters of the linear model. We limit the analysis
74 to the period 1951-2016 since this is the period available for the impact-related indices (see
75 description of the indices below).

76 $G(t)$ is calculated by using monthly-mean near-surface temperature anomalies from the
77 interpolated (gap-filled) HadCRUT4 dataset (Cowtan *et al.* 2014) smoothed with a 15-year running
78 mean (Fig.1). The conclusions are insensitive to whether the smoothing parameter is slightly larger
79 or smaller. The 'signal' of global temperature change (Δ GMST) is defined as the value of the
80 smoothed GMST in 2016 minus smoothed GMST in 1951 (Δ GMST \sim 0.62 K), the component of
81 local climate change explained by GMST (S) is αG , and the 'noise' (N) is defined as the standard
82 deviation of the residuals ($L - \alpha G$). This framework assumes that αG is a good representation of the
83 forced component of the local change. This assumption has been shown to be quite accurate in several
84 studies (e.g., Sutton *et al.* 2015). The statistical significance of the linear regression coefficients is
85 estimated using a two-tailed Student's t-test with adjusted p-values to avoid the overestimation
86 associated with multiple testing (Wilks 2016). The p-value adjustment is performed following the
87 false discovery rate test suggested by Wilks (2016). We calculate the percentage of area with a S/N
88 over a certain threshold by adding the surface area of the grid points with a statistically significant
89 S/N above the threshold divided by the total area covered by the data.

90 We estimate the S/N for a set of impact-related indices selected based on their importance
91 for both physical and human environments (see Table 1). The indices analysed are a subset of a new
92 gridded dataset developed in the framework of the ERA4CS INDECIS project (European Union
93 Grant 690462). The indices are available at a 0.25° resolution for the whole of Europe and cover the
94 period 1950-2017. The indices characterise different aspects of the frequency, intensity and duration
95 of extreme events. They are derived from a broad set of climate variables from the European Climate
96 Assessment & Dataset (ECA&D) E-OBS version v17.0e gridded dataset
97 (<https://www.ecad.eu/download/ensembles/ensembles.php>) and the ERA5 dataset
98 (<https://www.ecmwf.int/en/forecasts/datasets/reanalysis-datasets/era5>), including surface air
99 temperature and precipitation (from E-OBS) and relative humidity, wind speed, cloudiness and solar
100 radiation from ERA5 (Castro *et al.* 2020). We tested the sensitivity of our results to the use of the E-
101 OBS version v21.0e by calculating the S/N of temperature and total precipitation with this later E-
102 OBS version. For temperature and precipitation, the S/N derived from both versions are virtually
103 identical for the overlapping period and regions (see Figure S1 and S2). Since the indices are derived
104 from temperature and precipitation data from the E-OBS dataset, we do not expect any significant
105 change of our results to a future update of the indices database to the latest E-OBS versions.

106 **3. Results**

107

108 **3.1 S/N of temperature-based indices**

109

110 **3.1.1 Seasonal mean temperatures**

111

112 Figure 2 shows the surface temperature (T_s) signal, noise and S/N over Europe for different
113 seasonal means. In winter (December, January, February: DJF), the spatial pattern of the signal and
114 noise is characterised by a gradient from the south-west (SW) to north-east (NE) with the largest
115 values over Belarus, western Russia and Scandinavia (Fig. 2a, b). The winter T_s signal is above 1°C
116 over all Europe and up to 3°C in Scandinavia and NE Europe. Interestingly, some regional features
117 depart from the main pattern; in particular, large signals are also observed in the southern Alpine
118 region and southern Italy, where the signals are above 3.5°C . The S/N is larger than 1 over 26% of
119 Europe (Fig. 2c), indicating that a substantial portion of Europe is experiencing unusually warm
120 winter temperatures compared with the 1951-1983 period.

121 During springtime (March, April, May: MAM), the spatial pattern of the signal and the noise
122 resembles that of winter (Fig.2d,e). The magnitude of the signal is similar to winter, but the noise is
123 about half of the size over central and northern Europe. The smaller noise increases the magnitude of
124 S/N over these areas (Fig.2f). Overall, the S/N of spring temperatures is larger than 1 and 2 over 82%
125 and 3% of Europe, respectively.

126 In summer (June, July, August: JJA), the largest signals are observed over southern Europe
127 (about 1.5°C), with some areas of southern France, Italy and Spain exhibiting values larger than 2°C
128 (Fig.2g). In contrast, the signal is smaller over Scandinavia and the UK (about 1°C). The spatial
129 pattern of the noise is remarkably homogeneous, and the values are the smallest of the year (Fig.
130 2d,e). The S/N is larger than 1 over most continental Europe and larger than 2 over large patches of
131 southern Europe and Iberia (Fig.2f). In contrast, the signal has still not "emerged" ($S/N < 1$) in
132 Scandinavia. Overall, the S/N of summer temperatures is larger than 1 and 2 over 50% and 19% of
133 Europe, respectively.

134 Finally, during autumn (September, October, November: SON), the signal is the smallest of
135 the year and does not have a distinctive spatial pattern (Fig.2j). The noise is larger than in summer,
136 with the largest values over Scandinavia and NE Europe (Fig. 2k). The S/N appears to be dominated
137 by the pattern of the noise, showing S/N values above one over the western half of Europe and
138 generally $S/N < 1$ over NE Europe and Scandinavia (Fig.2l). Overall, the S/N of autumn temperatures
139 is larger than 1 over 45% of Europe.

140 3.1.2 Extreme temperature indices

141

142 Heatwaves are a natural phenomenon often associated with persistent anticyclonic
143 circulation anomalies (e.g., *Trenberth et al.* 2012). However, heatwaves are becoming more intense
144 and occurring more frequently due to anthropogenic global warming (e.g., *Meehl and*
145 *Tebaldi* 2004; *Perkins et al.* 2012). Heatwaves are among the most dangerous of natural hazards.
146 From 1998 to 2017, it is estimated more than 166,000 people died due to heatwaves associated heat
147 stress (<https://www.who.int/health-topics/heatwaves>), including more than 70,000 who died during
148 the 2003 heatwave in Europe (*Robine et al.*, 2008). Here, we analyse the S/N of the following extreme
149 temperatures climate indices described in Table 1: warm days (WD), warm nights (WN), very warm
150 days (VWD), warm spell duration (WSD) and the number of days with maximum $T_s > 32$ degrees
151 Celsius (D32). These indices are related to the probability of heatwave occurrence and with the impact
152 of heat on public health. We focus our attention on the summer season (JJA) since it is the season
153 where heat impacts are more relevant.

154 The S/N of WD is above 1 in most of Europe except over Scandinavia and the UK (Fig.
155 3a). S/N values above 2 are observed across southern Europe, especially over the Iberian Peninsula,
156 covering about 9% of Europe territory.

157 Understanding the changes in WN is very important for public health planning since humans
158 need cooler night temperatures to recover. High night temperatures have a substantial contribution to
159 the final death toll of a heatwave (*Trigo et al.* 2005). The S/N of WN (Fig. 3b) is generally larger than
160 for WD, and its distribution is less homogenous. This asymmetry between daytime and nocturnal
161 temperature trends has been observed in several studies and has been attributed primarily to an
162 increase in cloud cover (e.g., *Henderson-Sellers* 1992; *Dessens and Bücher* 1995; *Kaas and*
163 *Frich* 1995; *Dai et al.* 1999). The highest WN S/N values are found in southern Spain, Italy, the
164 southern Alpine region and eastern Europe. Overall, the S/N of WN is larger than 1 over 51% and
165 larger than 2 and 3 over 20% and 3% of Europe, respectively.

166 The S/N of VWD is smaller than for WD. It exceeds 1 over central Europe and the Iberian
167 Peninsula, covering about 30% of Europe territory (Fig. 3c).

168 By construction, the above temperature-related indices describe changes relative to the local
169 climatology. Therefore, the spatial differences in their S/N can be interpreted as a geographically
170 differentiated response to forcing. Overall, the results suggest that the areas more exposed to Atlantic
171 air advection such as NW Europe, Scandinavia and the UK have smaller S/N values. This might be
172 explained by the fact that air temperature change due to global warming is smaller over the oceans
173 than over land (e.g., *Sutton* 2007), so the transport of relatively cool marine air tempers the pace of
174 the warming in comparison to more continental areas.

175 Fig. 3d show the S/N of D32. D32 is based on a fixed threshold and can be directly related
176 to health concerns. The S/N of D32 is above 1 over large areas of continental Europe except over the
177 mountainous areas of the Alps, the Pyrenees and the Sierra Nevada, where the higher altitudes
178 maintain lower maximum temperatures, and over the NW coast of France, Scandinavia and the UK.
179 Over the Iberian Peninsula, the S/N values are larger, above 2 in central Spain and low-level locations
180 such as the Ebro Depression. Overall, the S/N of D32 is larger than 1 and 2 over 34 % and 4% of
181 Europe, respectively.

182 The indices analysed above show evidence of a general tendency towards warmer days and
183 nights, which increase the probability of heat-related impacts. However, it is not only the peak
184 temperatures but also the persistence of the heat waves which is relevant. To analyse changes in the
185 persistence of hot events, we show in Fig. 3e the S/N of the WSD index. The S/N of the WSD exhibits
186 a NE tilted meridional dipole with values larger than 1 over southern Europe and below 1 over the
187 rest of Europe. Overall, 19% of Europe exhibits S/N ratios of WSD larger than 1.

188

189 **3.2 S/N of precipitation-based indices**

190

191 **3.2.1 Seasonal total rainfall**

192

193 In winter, the spatial pattern of the Total Precipitation (TP) signal is characterised by a west-
194 east tilted meridional dipole, with positive values over northern Europe, especially over western
195 Scandinavia and Scotland and generally negative values in southern Europe, particularly over Spain
196 and Portugal (Fig. 4a). An exception to this large-scale pattern is the Alpine region, which exhibits a
197 significant positive signal as in northern Europe. In spring, the spatial pattern of the signal resembles
198 that of winter, but the magnitudes of both positive and negative signals are smaller and generally not
199 statistically significant (Fig. 4d). In summer, the spatial pattern is also similar to winter and spring,
200 but the magnitudes are about half the values in winter (Fig. 4g). Finally, in autumn, the signal does
201 not show the distinctive west-east dipole pattern, and the magnitudes are small (Fig. 4j). The noise
202 pattern in winter, spring and autumn shows the higher values over the Atlantic facing areas of the
203 continent and over the land area around the Gulf of Genova (Fig. 4b,e,k). This pattern is reminiscent
204 of the first mode of variability of the Atlantic storm track (e.g., *Rogers 1997; Pinto et al. 2009*). In
205 summer, the spatial pattern of the noise is more homogeneous (Fig. 4h). The S/N in winter is larger
206 than one and statistically significant only over some parts of Scandinavia, Scotland and the Baltic
207 countries, covering about 13% of Europe. Simultaneously, a tiny area with S/N smaller than -1,
208 denoting the emergence of unusually low precipitation totals, is observed over northwest Italy in
209 winter and spring (Fig. 4c,f). In summer and autumn, virtually all Europe (>99%) exhibits a S/N
210 smaller than one (Fig. 4i,l).

3.2.2 Flood-related indices

Floods have different character depending on the geographical area, antecedent soil moisture, snowmelt, and the triggering meteorological situation (e.g., *Whitfield* 2012; *Arheimer et al.* 2017; *Wasko & Sharma* 2017). For example, on the Mediterranean coast and in Alpine regions, flooding often occurs in the form of flash floods, which are extreme events of short duration (typically a few hours) usually related to intense convective precipitation (*Maddox et al.* 1979; *Marchi et al.* 2010; *Llasat et al.* 2016). In Central Europe, floods are often related to persistent wet periods (e.g., *Muchan et al.* 2015; *Pfleiderer et al.* 2019) that saturate the soil and lead to overflow. In the first case, the precipitation intensity is the most relevant meteorological factor, while in the second is the compound effects of the total amount of precipitation, evapotranspiration and the duration of the wet period, which are more relevant (*Berghuijs et al.* 2019). Here we analyse hydroclimatic indices relevant for both types of events. In particular, we investigate the S/N of the percentage of the total precipitation due to intense raining episodes (R95p) and the maximum 1-day precipitation (Rx1d), both related to the likelihood of flash floods (*Acquaotta et al.* 2019). Finally, we analysed the S/N of the maximum 5-day consecutive precipitation (Rx5d) and the longest wet period (LWP), which are related to the likelihood of large flooding events.

In winter, the R95p signal is positive over most of Europe, although negative values are also observed over northern Italy and west Ukraine (Figure not shown). In 2016, R95p amounts were about 5% larger in central Europe and up to 20% larger in some areas of Scandinavia, Scotland and the eastern Alps compared with the 1951-1983 period. However, the magnitude of the R95p noise is comparable with that of the signal and therefore, the S/N is generally below one except over Scandinavia and Scotland, where the S/N is larger than 1 and above 2 in some locations (Fig. 5a). Overall, 15% of Europe is experiencing unusually intense winter precipitation. In spring, summer and autumn, the signal, noise, and S/N's spatial pattern are similar to that in winter. However, the S/N magnitudes are smaller than one virtually everywhere (not shown). In winter, the S/N of Rx1 is larger than 1 and 2 over Scandinavia, the Baltic countries and Scotland (Fig.5b). Overall, about 14% of Europe is experiencing unusually large amounts of winter daily accumulated precipitation. In spring, summer and autumn, Rx1d S/N values are all well below one (not shown). Finally, the winter S/N of RX5d is very similar to that of R95p. It is smaller than 1 over most of Europe except over some areas of Scandinavia, Scotland, north of Poland and the Baltic countries (Fig. 5c). In winter, 15% of Europe currently experiences unusually large amounts of five-days accumulated precipitation. As for the other two extreme precipitation indices, the S/N values of RX5d are well below 1 for the other seasons (not shown).

245 Finally, we have also analysed the S/N of LWP (not shown). In all seasons, the S/N is mostly
246 smaller than 1 overall in Europe, suggesting that the persistence of the precipitation events has not
247 changed significantly during the last decades.

248

249 **3.3 Drought-related indices**

250 The main drivers of hydrological droughts are lack of precipitation, soil moisture deficits
251 and high evapotranspiration, the latter directly linked to high temperatures sustained over an extensive
252 period (*Seneviratne et al.* 2012). Here we analyse the S/N of the standardised precipitation-
253 evapotranspiration index calculated at a 3-month time scale (SPEI3). The SPEI3 index is widely used
254 to characterise the changes in drought associated with climate change (*Serrano et al.* 2009), and it
255 can be interpreted as the number of standard deviations by which the observed anomaly deviates from
256 the long-term mean. We also calculate the S/N of the reference evapotranspiration index (ETO) and
257 the standard precipitation index (SPI3) to help interpret the results. Finally, the S/N of the Longest
258 Dry Period (LDP) is also calculated. The SPEI3 and ETO indices are only available from 1979 to
259 2017 since the ETO is derived from the ERA5 reanalysis, which covers the period 1979-2020.
260 Therefore, the baseline used for these two indices is 1980-1997 instead of 1951-1983 we used for the
261 rest of the indices. We show results only for summer since this is the only season with significant
262 changes.

263 In summer, the S/N of SPEI3 depicts a distinct spatial pattern, with negative S/N values
264 (increased drought probability) over the Iberian Peninsula and eastern Europe ($S/N < -2$) and positive
265 values (reduced drought probability) in some parts of Scandinavia and Scotland ($S/N > 1$) (Fig.6a).
266 However, only a small fraction of values in the south of the Iberian Peninsula and eastern Europe are
267 statistically significantly different from zero. Figure 6c suggests that the summer drying in southern
268 and southeastern Europe is dominated by a substantial increase in ETO, which shows S/N values
269 larger than 1 over most Continental Europe and larger than 2 and 3 over Spain and southeastern
270 Europe. In contrast, the SPEI3 S/N increase over Scotland and Scandinavia appears to be driven by
271 the positive changes in SPI3 (increased precipitation) over these areas. Overall, 27%, 16%, and 5%
272 of Europe show S/N values of ETO above 1, 2 and 3. However, changes in drought probability relative
273 to the 1951-1983 period have not yet emerged (not shown). Finally, the LDP S/N values are well
274 under one everywhere in all seasons (figure not shown).

275

276

277

277 **4. Conclusions**

278 The S/N ratio of observed surface temperatures, precipitation and a set of impact-related
279 climate indices associated with flooding, drought and extreme temperature have been investigated for

280 the period 1951-2016 to evaluate how changes in climate metrics of direct relevance to society are
281 emerging above the envelope of recent societal experience (1951-1983).

282 We have shown evidence that large parts of Europe are experiencing more severe climate
283 extremes. Figure 7 illustrates schematically the most relevant summer and winter changes. Table 2
284 shows the percentage of European territory where the S/N of different climate indices cross a certain
285 threshold. The results indicate that summer episodes of extreme daily maximum temperatures have
286 become more frequent over more than 55% of Europe. The changes in extreme (warm) night
287 temperatures are even more extensive, with more than 74% of the European territory showing an
288 emerging signal. S/N values above 1 in D32 (days with maximum temperature above 32°C) are also
289 observed over large parts of Continental Europe, and S/N values above 2 are shown in the Iberian
290 Peninsula. These results indicate that millions of people are currently experiencing unfamiliarly high
291 temperatures, even compared to the recent past.

292 The flood-related climate indices analysis shows that the noise of precipitation and extreme
293 precipitation time series is high, and over about 90% of Europe, the signal has not yet emerged in any
294 season. However, some northern Europe areas, Scandinavia and Scotland, show the emergence of
295 stronger winter precipitation events during winter.

296 Similarly to the flood-related indices, we found that the drought signal has only emerged
297 over some reduced areas of southeastern Europe and the Iberia Peninsula driven by large increases in
298 the levels of potential evapotranspiration, which is much higher than in our baseline period (1951-
299 1983) over most continental Europe.

300 Our analysis shows an earlier emergence and larger S/N ratios of temperature and
301 precipitation extremes than found in other studies that used an earlier baseline period (e.g., *King et*
302 *al.* 2015; *Maraun* (2013); *Mahlstein et al.* (2012); *Zhang et al.* (2007)). It is important to note that
303 1950-1970 was a relatively cool period due to anthropogenic aerosol, and therefore the magnitude of
304 the signals is potentially amplified when using our baseline period.

305 The analysis of the observed S/N ratio of climate indicators with respect to a recent baseline
306 provides useful and easily distillable information to many socio-economic sectors. The methodology
307 used in this manuscript can be applied to more sector-specific indicators such as heat stress indicators,
308 agricultural indicators (e.g., length of the growing season), snow days and snowmelt for ski tourism,
309 to enumerate a few. To achieve such aims, it is necessary to continue monitoring the European climate
310 and these indices operationally.

311

312

313

314 **Declarations**

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319 **Conflicts of interest/Competing interests**

320 The authors have no conflicts or competing interests.

321 **Availability of data and material**

322 The data is freely available at the following repositories: Indices: <http://indecis.eu/> EOBS:
323 <https://www.ecad.eu/download/ensembles/ensembles.php>.

324 **Code availability**

325 The code is available upon request.

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Table 1. Definitions of the indices used in this study. The abbreviations and definitions follow Castro et al. 2020.

Index Code	Index Name	Description	Units	Reference
Rx1d	Maximum one-day precipitation	Highest precipitation amount in one-day period	mm/month	Klein Tank AMG et al. 2009
Rx5d	Maximum consecutive 5-day precipitation	Highest precipitation amount in five-day period	mm/month	Klein Tank AMG et al. 2009
R95tot	R95t	Precipitation due to very wet days (> 95th percentile) divided by total precipitation	%	Klein Tank AMG et al. 2009
LWP	Longest wet period	Maximum length of consecutive wet days (RR* \geq 1)	days/ month	Klein Tank AMG, ZwiersFW, Zhang X. 2009
LDP	Longest dry period	Maximum length of consecutive dry days (RR<1)	days/month	Gregory J. McCabe, et al, 2010
SPEI3	SPEI3	Standardised precipitation-evapotranspiration index calculated at 3-month time scale	Standardised units	Vicente-Serrano et al. 2010
SPI3	SPI3	Standardised precipitation index calculated at 3-month time scale	Standardised units	McKee, T. B et al. 1993
ETO	Reference Evapotranspiration	If data available using Fao-56 Penman-Monteith, if not using the Hargreaves & Samani method.	mm/month	Chiew, F.H.S et al. 1995
WD	Warm days	Total numbers of days with TX** higher than the 90th percentile	days/month	Klein Tank AMG, Zwiers FW, Zhang X. 2009
WN	Warms nights	Total numbers of days with TN*** higher than the 90th	days/month	Klein Tank AMG, Zwiers FW, Zhang

		percentile		X. 2009
D32	Temperature sums above 32°C(duration)	Number of days with TX \geq 32°C	days/month	Klein Tank AMG, Zwiers FW, Zhang X. 2009
WSD	Warm spell duration	Count of days with at least 6 consecutive days when TX > 90thpercentile	Days/season	Klein Tank AMG, Zwiers FW, Zhang X. 2009

486 *RR Daily precipitation, ** TN: Minimum daily temperature, *** TX: Maximum daily temperature.

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Table 2: Percentage of the total European area with S/N values of the indicated indices over a specific threshold (only statistically significant values are used to calculate the area).

INDICES DJF	1 \geq SN < 2	2 \geq SN < 3	3 \geq SN < 4
Ts	26 %	~ 0 %	~ 0 %
RT	13 %	0 %	~ 0 %
Rx1d	7 %	7 %	~ 0 %
Rx5d	15 %	0 %	~ 0 %
R95	15 %	0 %	~ 0 %
INDICES JJA	1 \geq SN < 2	2 \geq SN < 3	3 \geq SN < 4
Ts	50 %	19 %	1 %
WD	44 %	9 %	~ 0 %
WN	51 %	20 %	3 %
VWD	30 %	~ 0 %	~ 0 %
D32	34 %	4 %	~ 0 %
WSD	19 %	~ 0 %	~ 0 %
SPEI3	3 %	4 %	~ 0 %
SPI3	~ 0 %	~ 0 %	~ 0 %
ETO	27 %	16 %	5 %

490

Figures

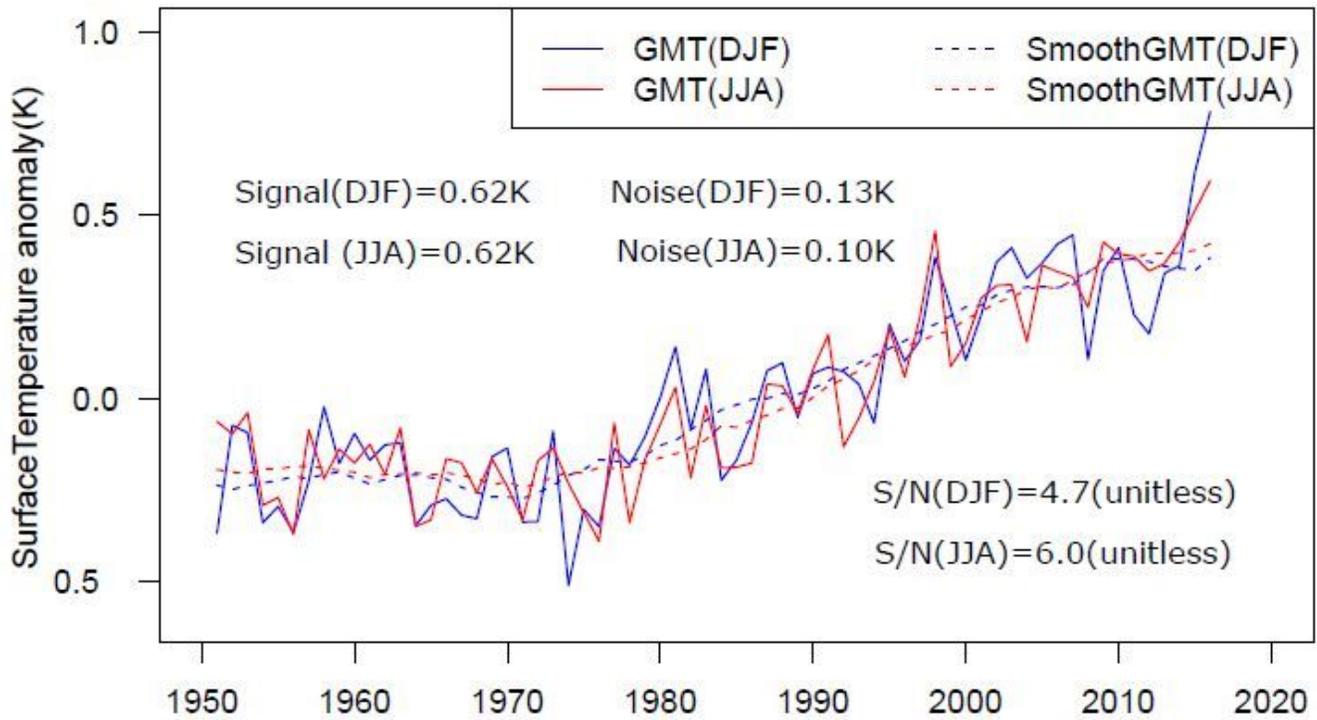


Figure 1

Winter (blue) and summer (red) global mean temperature (GMT) anomaly for the period 1951-2016. The dash lines are running means of the GMT with a time window of 15 years.

Surface temperatures

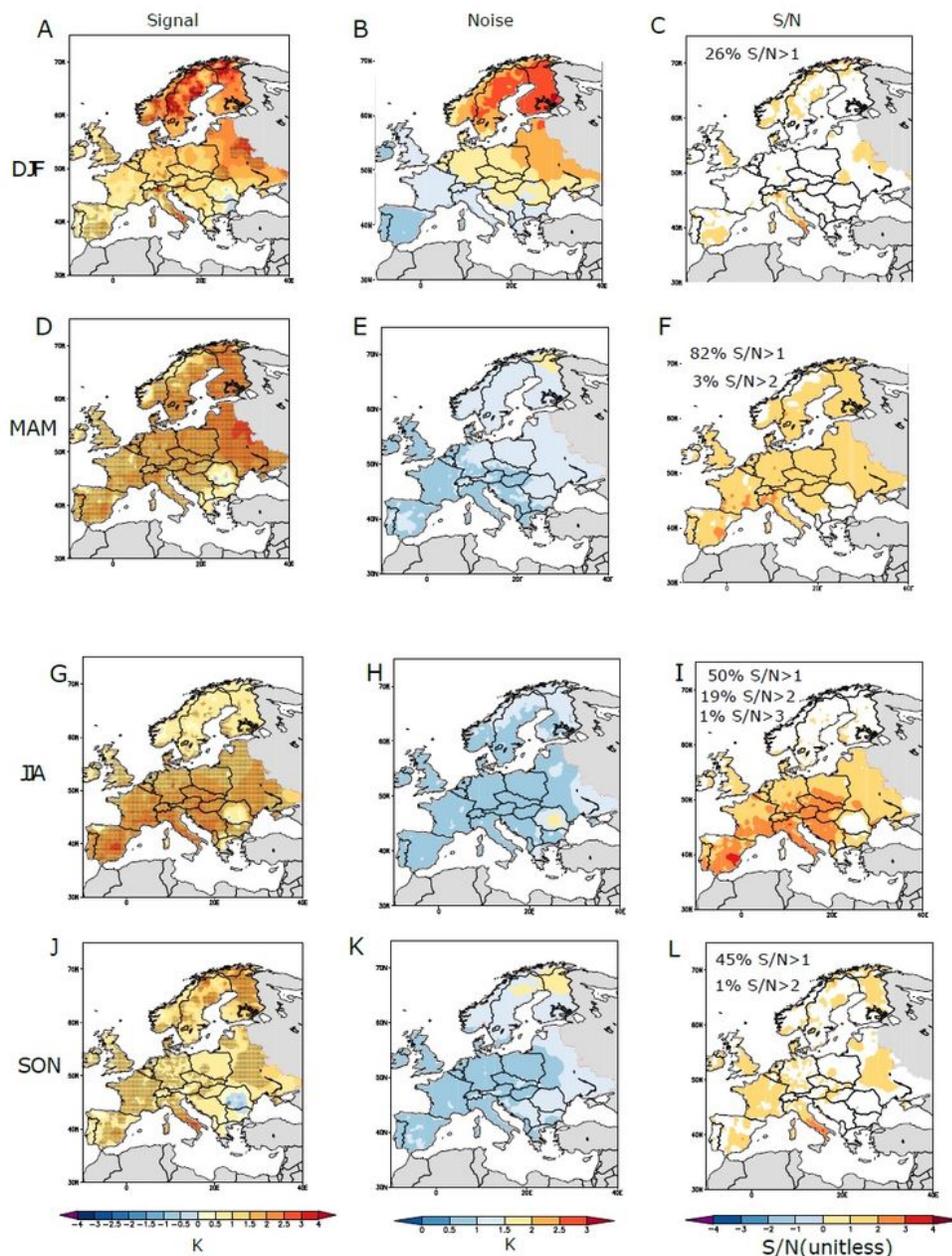


Figure 2

Signal (K), noise (K) and signal-to-noise (unitless) of seasonally averaged surface temperature anomalies (1951-2016) in the EObs V17 dataset. Grey regions indicate a lack of sufficient data. Stippling in the signal plots (left column) indicates signal values statistically significantly different from zero. Only S/N values statistically significantly from zero are shown (right column). Note: The designations employed and the presentation of the material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever

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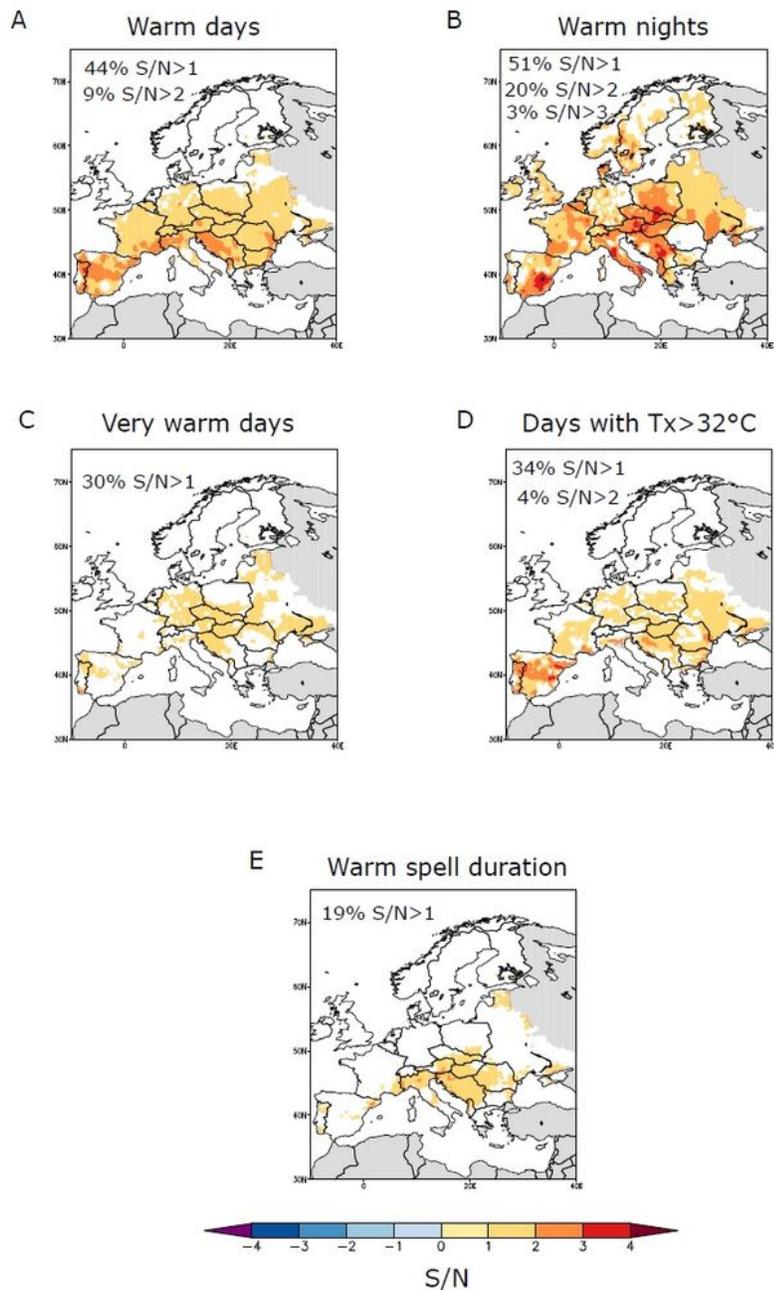


Figure 3

Signal-to-noise ratio (S/N) of summer (JJA) mean extreme temperature climate indices. Grey regions indicate a lack of sufficient data. Only values statistically significantly different from zero are shown.

Note: The designations employed and the presentation of the material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of Research Square concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. This map has been provided by the authors.

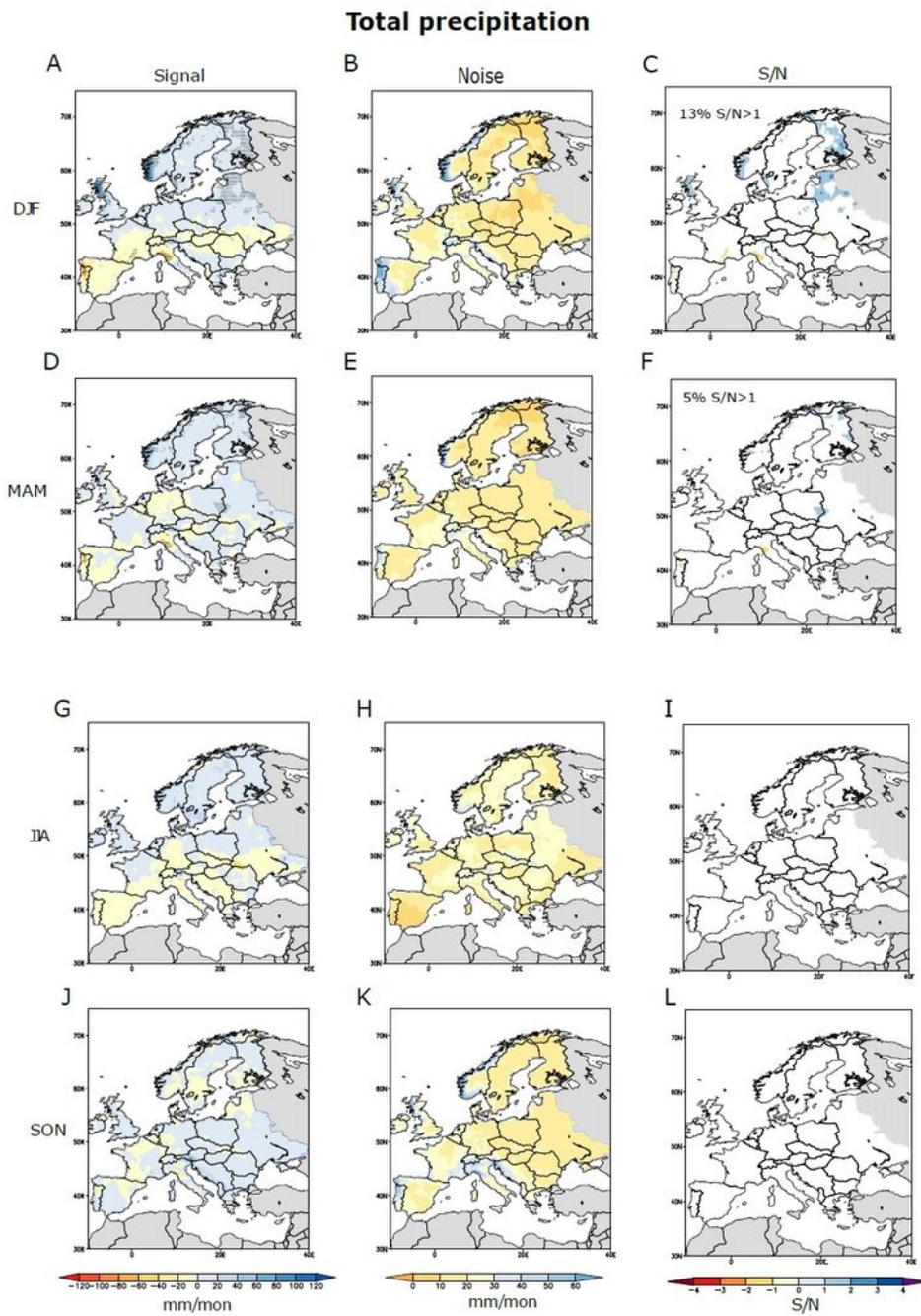


Figure 4

As in figure 2 but for total precipitation anomalies. Note: The designations employed and the presentation of the material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of Research Square concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. This map has been provided by the authors.

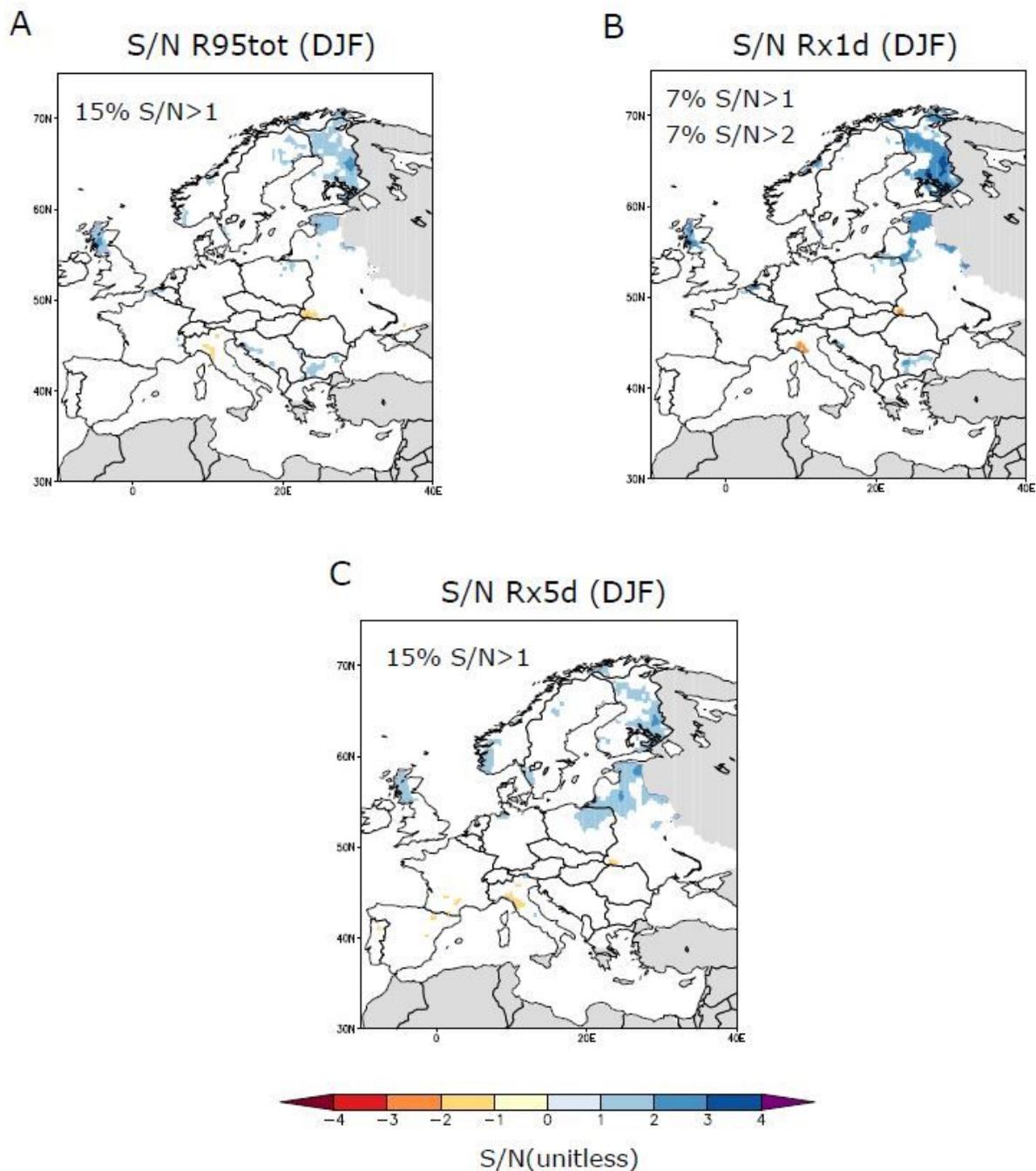


Figure 5

Signal-to-noise ratio (S/N) of winter extreme precipitation indices. Grey regions indicate a lack of sufficient data. Only values statistically significantly different from zero are shown. Note: The designations employed and the presentation of the material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of Research Square concerning the legal status of any country,

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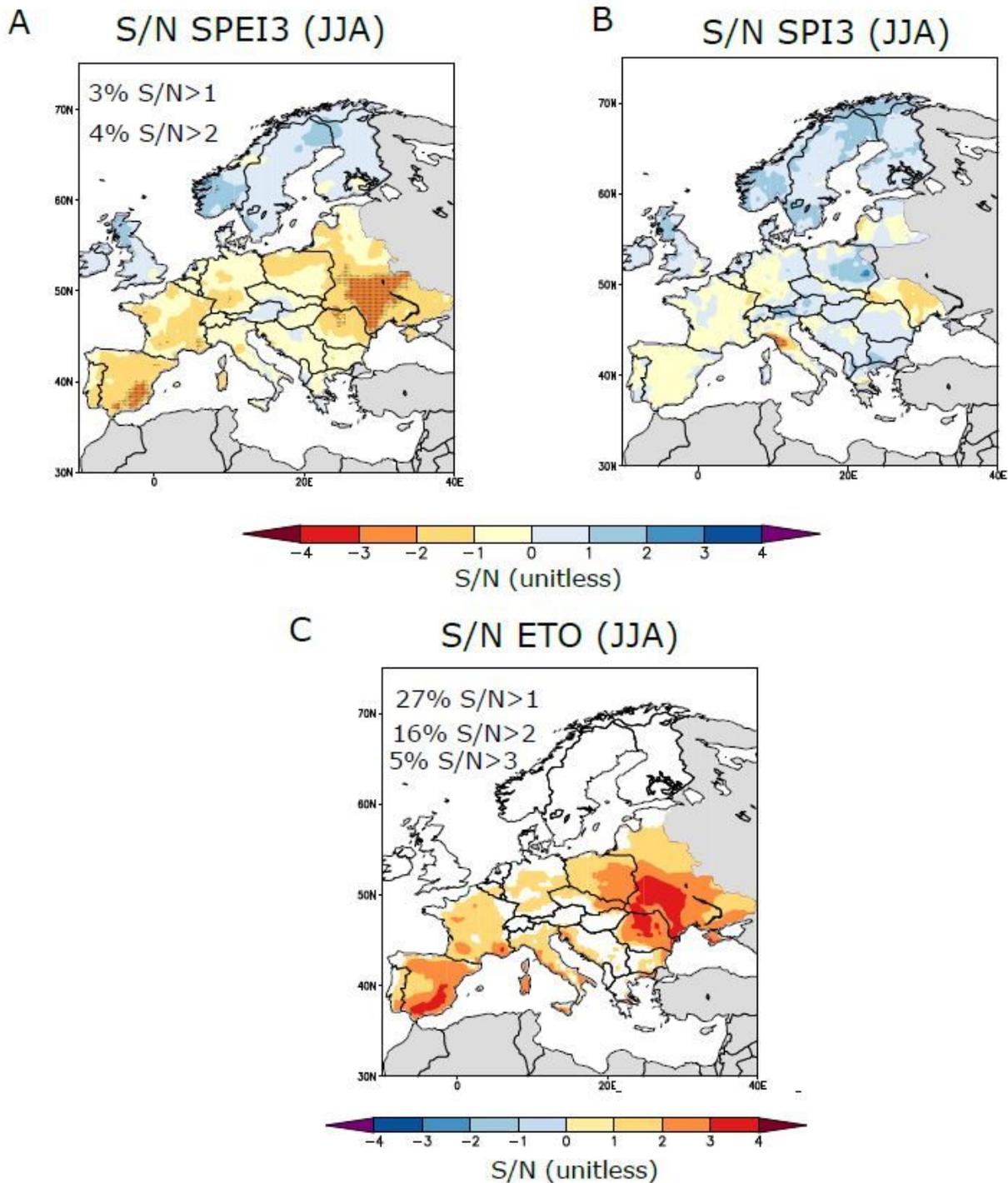


Figure 6

Signal-to-noise ratio (S/N) of summer drought-related indices. Grey regions indicate a lack of sufficient data. Stippling in figures (A) and (B) indicate values statistically significantly different from zero. In figure (C), only values statistically significantly different from zero are shown. Note: The designations employed and the presentation of the material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of Research Square concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its

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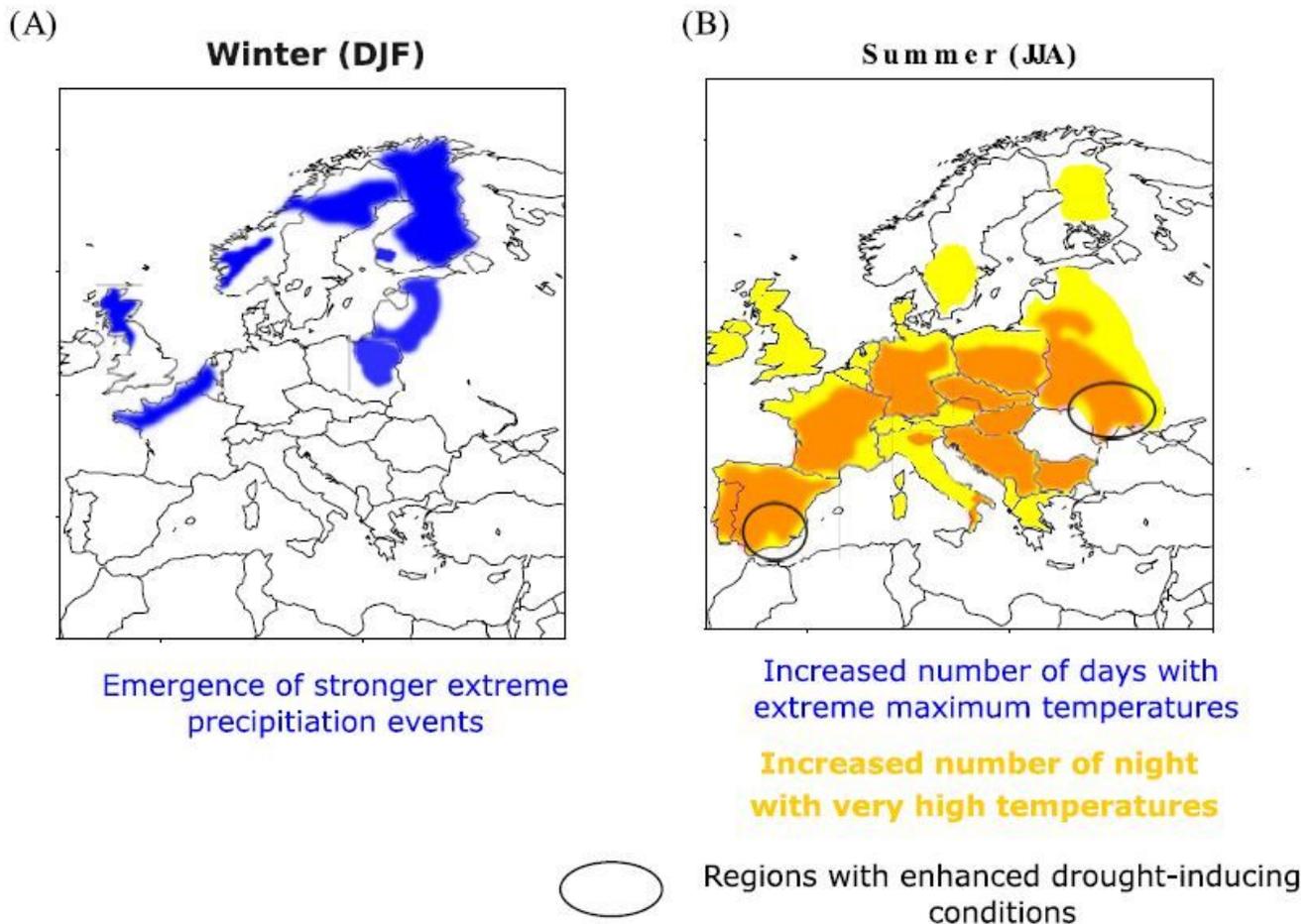


Figure 7

please see the manuscript file for the full caption Note: The designations employed and the presentation of the material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of Research Square concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. This map has been provided by the authors.

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