The impact of SO₂ emissions reductions on US carbon uptake

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Aerosols impact climate via radiative forcing and biogeochemical cycling



Mahowald et al., 2011

Aerosol impact climate via radiative forcing and biogeochemical cycling



Image:hortidaily.com

Simulations show a large increase in ecosystem carbon uptake due to diffuse PAR



Mercado et al., 2009

Most aerosols over the United States are secondary aerosol from gas-phase emissions



Aerosol Optical Depth (AOD) has decreased over the eastern US





Data: NASA MISR

Visibility in Great Smoky Mountains 1990 vs 2010



Dr. Jenny Hand, CIRA

Testing photosynthesis responses to AOD in CLM



CAM4 with Bulk Aerosol Model (BAM) simulates decrease in AOD over US with EPA SO₂ emissions



Trend in AOD over eastern US comparable to observed trend from MISR



Diffuse solar radiation shows statistically significant increase over eastern US



CESM simulates a reduction of 0.5 Pg C per year



Photosynthesis in CLM4.5 decreases where diffuse solar radiation declines



Photosynthesis in CLM4.5 decreases where diffuse solar radiation declines



Can we evaluate CESM simulations?



Relative trend in GPP from upscaling observational constraints is ~4x weaker than CLM4.5



Longitude (deg)

CLM4.5 shows different sensitivity to diffuse light than FLUXNET sites with observational constraints



Discussion

CLM4.5 shows reduction in photosynthesis in response to SO2 emissions reductions, albeit a larger decrease than FLUXNET

Response of CLM4.5 to diffuse radiation reductions is significantly smaller than previously reported values



Continuing to develop an upscaling approach for observed sensitivities that accounts for errors on drivers