

# 1 Response to Reviewer

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3 The revised manuscript by Mutz et al. is a clear improvement over its predecessor, but does not sufficiently address  
4 substantial comments that I made on the last version of the manuscript. I have given more thought to specific  
5 suggestions on how to rectify this. Some of these issues are major, and I have therefore suggested "Major Revisions",  
6 though I believe that Mutz et al. may be able to complete them in short order. I will, therefore, also keep this short and  
7 to the point. Once these major issues are resolved, I will be happy to review the revised manuscript thoroughly.

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9 The primary items of concern are:

- 10 1. A title that is not representative of the article content
- 11 2. A lack of clarity from the abstract and introduction on what the authors actually do.

12

13 We thank Andrew Wickert for the review of the revised manuscript, and for the concise and clear communication of  
14 concerns and suggestions. We hope that we managed to address these concerns adequately. Below, we describe how we  
15 addressed these concerns.

16

17 In short, the authors must communicate up-front something along the lines of:

18 "Motivated by the need to better understand climate impacts on the denudation of orogens, we model paleoclimate at 4  
19 time slices, and qualitatively compare how changes in temperature and precipitation may impact fluvial and/or hillslope  
20 erosion."

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22 After the description of the scientific background to this study in the introduction, we included a slightly modified  
23 version of the suggested sentence to begin to describe our work. We modified the sentence to be as precise as possible  
24 in our communication of what we attempt in the study (line 85): "*Motivated by the need to better understand climate  
25 impacts on Earth surface processes, especially the denudation of orogens, we model palaeoclimate for four time slices  
26 in the Late Cenozoic, use descriptive statistics to identify the extent of different regional climates, quantify changes in  
27 temperature and precipitation, and discuss the potential impacts on fluvial and/or hillslope erosion.*"

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29 Title:

30 "Where is Late Cenozoic climate change most likely to impact denudation?"

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32 The authors do not answer this question. There are two issues to address here. The former can be addressed in the text.  
33 The latter will require a change in scope or title.

- 34 1. The text does not answer this question in regards to fluvial and hillslope erosion. The discussion provides some ideas  
35 on how changes in P and T may impact erosion rates in different regions, but offer no concrete proposals or answers.
- 36 2. The authors state that glacial erosion is beyond the scope of their study. There is no way to discuss late Cenozoic  
37 erosion (let alone climate change and erosion) without considering glacial erosion.

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39 I would suggest a title that relates more closely to the authors' work, as a modeling study intended to provide  
40 environmental conditions that may impact fluvial and/or hillslope erosion. Such a title will be less broad in scope, but  
41 may be more powerful in precision.

42

43 We agree with Andrew Wickert and modified the title to more precisely describe our work. We have changed the title to  
44 "*Estimates of Late Cenozoic climate change relevant to Earth surface processes in tectonically active orogens*". We  
45 included "at active orogens" to better communicate the regional focus of our work. Since the intention of this study is  
46 also to provide a GCM-simulation framework for studies investigating a variety of surface processes, we decided to add  
47 "relevant to Earth surface processes". This way, the title does not promise to answer questions pertaining to all types of  
48 erosional processes, but instead explains that the work presented here, specifically the simulation themselves, provides a  
49 basis for more in-depth studies of a variety of surface processes. For example, since our original submission of the  
50 manuscript, the GCM simulation framework has been used to investigate vegetation response to differences in  
51 palaeoclimate (Werner et al., in review).

52 We also modified part of the introduction (line 111) in order to not create false expectations, and communicate more  
53 clearly what is to be expected in the manuscript.

54

55 Abstract:

- 56 1. Do you discuss vegetation gradients in the results of your work? In other words, is it worth including here?  
57 Otherwise, the abstract is clear.

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59 While we believe our simulations are of benefit to the vegetation modelling community, as is demonstrated by the study  
60 mentioned above, we do not discuss this much in our manuscript. We therefore omitted "vegetation gradients" in the  
61 abstract.

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63 Introduction:  
64 It is not clear in the introduction how you will link your model results to landscape evolution. Making clear the focus on  
65 the model and its inspiration (landscape evolution), along with the limited scope of the actual application to landscape  
66 evolution you provide here, will help the readers see the paper for what it is.  
67

68 We now clarify in the introduction (line 102) that our GCM output may directly be used as boundary conditions for  
69 vegetation and landscape evolution models, such as LPJ-GUESS and Landlab respectively, to bridge the gap between  
70 palaeoclimate change and quantitative estimates for Earth surface system responses.  
71

72 One specific point: you mention glacial erosion in the introduction as being important, but then note in line 434 that you  
73 will not address it. Up until this point, the reader may reasonably think that you are going to discuss glacial erosion, as it  
74 is a dominant process in the late Cenozoic.  
75

76 We now clarify in the introduction (line 109) that merited discussion of glacial erosion is beyond the scope of our study  
77 to avoid readers looking for such discussion in our manuscript.  
78

79  
80 References:

81 Werner, C., Schmid, M., Ehlers, T. A., Fuentes-Espoz, J. P., Steinkamp, J., Forrest, M., Liakka, J., Maldonado, A.,  
82 and Hickler, T.: Effect of changing vegetation on denudation (part 1): Predicted vegetation composition and  
83 cover over the last 21 thousand years along the Coastal Cordillera of Chile, Earth Surf. Dynam. Discuss.,  
84 <https://doi.org/10.5194/esurf-2018-14>, in review, 2018.  
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126 **List of Relevant Changes**

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128 In accordance with suggestions made by the reviewer, major changes have been made to the title and parts of the  
129 introduction. Minor changes have been made to the abstract and acknowledgements..

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187 Estimates of Late Cenozoic climate change relevant to Earth  
188 surface processes in tectonically active orogens

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195

196 **Abstract**

197 | The denudation history of active orogens is often interpreted in the context of modern climate **and-vegetation** gradients.  
198 Here we address the validity of this approach and ask the question: what are the spatial and temporal variations in  
199 palaeoclimate for a latitudinally diverse range of active orogens? We do this using high-resolution (T159, ca. 80 x 80  
200 km at the equator) palaeoclimate simulations from the ECHAM5 global Atmospheric General Circulation Model and a  
201 statistical cluster analysis of climate over different orogens (Andes, Himalaya, SE Alaska, Pacific NW USA). Time  
202 periods and boundary conditions considered include the Pliocene (PLIO, ~3 Ma), the Last Glacial Maximum (LGM,  
203 ~21 ka), Mid Holocene (MH, ~6 ka) and Pre-Industrial (PI, reference year 1850). The regional simulated climates of  
204 each orogen are described by means of cluster analyses based on the variability of precipitation, 2m air temperature, the  
205 intra-annual amplitude of these values, and monsoonal wind speeds where appropriate. Results indicate the largest  
206 differences to the PI climate existed for the LGM and PLIO climates in the form of widespread cooling and reduced  
207 precipitation in the LGM and warming and enhanced precipitation during the PLIO. The LGM climate shows the largest  
208 deviation in annual precipitation from the PI climate, and shows enhanced precipitation in the temperate Andes, and  
209 coastal regions for both SE Alaska and the US Pacific Northwest . Furthermore, LGM precipitation is reduced in the  
210 western Himalayas and enhanced in the eastern Himalayas, resulting in a shift of the wettest regional climates eastward  
211 along the orogen. The cluster-analysis results also suggest more climatic variability across latitudes east of the Andes in  
212 the PLIO climate than in other time-slice experiments conducted here. Taken together, these results highlight significant  
213 changes in Late Cenozoic regional climatology over the last ~3 Ma. Comparison of simulated climate with proxy-based  
214 reconstructions for the MH and LGM reveal satisfactory to good performance of the model in reproducing precipitation  
215 changes, although in some cases discrepancies between neighbouring proxy observations highlight contradictions  
216 between proxy observations themselves. Finally, we document regions where the largest magnitudes of Late Cenozoic

217 changes in precipitation and temperature occur and offer the highest potential for future observational studies that  
218 quantify the impact of climate change on denudation and weathering rates.

219

220 **Keywords:** Cenozoic climate, ECHAM5, Last Glacial Maximum, Mid-Holocene, Pliocene, cluster analysis, Himalaya,  
221 Tibet, Andes, Alaska, Cascadia

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## 223 1. Introduction

224 Interpretation of orogen denudation histories in the context of climate and tectonic interactions is often hampered  
225 by a paucity of terrestrial palaeoclimate proxy data needed to reconstruct spatial variations in palaeoclimate. While it is  
226 self-evident that palaeoclimate changes could influence palaeodenudation rates, it is not always self-evident what the  
227 magnitude of climate change over different geologic time scales is, or what geographic locations offer the greatest  
228 potential to investigate palaeoclimate impacts on denudation. Palaeoclimate reconstructions are particularly beneficial  
229 when denudation rates are determined using geo- and thermo-chronology techniques that integrate over timescales of  
230  $10^3$ - $10^{6+}$  years (e.g. cosmogenic radionuclides or low-temperature thermochronology) [e.g., Kirchner et al., 2001;  
231 Schaller et al., 2002; Bookhagen et al., 2005; Moon et al., 2011; Thiede and Ehlers, 2013; Lease and Ehlers, 2013].  
232 However, few studies using denudation rate determination methods that integrate over longer timescales have access to  
233 information about past climate conditions that could influence these palaeo-denudation rates. Palaeoclimate modelling  
234 offers an alternative approach to sparsely available proxy data for understanding the spatial and temporal variations in  
235 precipitation and temperature in response to changes in orography [e.g. Takahashi and Battisti, 2007a, b; Insel et al.,  
236 2010; Feng et al., 2013] and global climate change events [e.g. Salzmann, 2011; Jeffery et al., 2013]. In this study, we  
237 characterise the climate at different times in the Late Cenozoic, and the magnitude of climate change for a range of  
238 active orogens. Our emphasis is on identifying changes in climate parameters relevant to weathering and catchment  
239 denudation to illustrate the potential importance of various global climate change events on surface processes.

240 Previous studies of orogen-scale climate change provide insight into how different tectonic or global climate  
241 change events influence regional climate change. For example, sensitivity experiments demonstrated significant  
242 changes in regional and global climate in response to landmass distribution and topography of the Andes, including  
243 changes in moisture transport, the north-south asymmetry of the Intertropical Convergence Zone [e.g. Takahashi and  
244 Battisti, 2007a, ; Insel et al., 2010] and (tropical) precipitation [Maroon et al., 2015, ; 2016]. Another example is the  
245 regional and global climate changes induced by the Tibetan Plateau surface uplift due to its role as a physical obstacle to  
246 circulation [Raymo and Ruddiman, 1992; Kutzbach et al., 1993; Thomas, 1997; Böhner, 2006; Molnar et al., 2010;  
247 Boos and Kuang, 2010]. The role of tectonic uplift in long term regional and global climate change remains a focus of

248 research and continues to be assessed with geologic datasets [e.g. Dettman et al., 2003; Caves et al., 2017; Kent-  
249 Corson et al., 2006; Lechler et al., 2013; Lechler and Niemi, 2011; Licht et al., 2016; Methner et al.,  
250 2016; Mulch et al., 2015, 2008; Pingel et al., 2016] and climate modelling [e.g. Kutzbach et al., 1989; Kutzbach  
251 et al., 1993; Zhisheng, 2001; Bohner, 2006; Takahashi and Battisti, 2007a; Ehlers and Poulsen, 2009; Insel et al., 2010;  
252 Boos and Kuang, 2010]. Conversely, climate influences tectonic processes through erosion [e.g. Molnar and England,  
253 1990; Whipple et al., 1999; Montgomery et al., 2001; Willett et al., 2006; Whipple, 2009]. Quaternary climate change  
254 between glacial and interglacial conditions [e.g. Braconnot et al., 2007; Harrison et al., 2013] resulted in not only the  
255 growth and decay of glaciers and glacial erosion [e.g. Yanites and Ehlers, 2012; Herman et al., 2013; Valla et al., 2011]  
256 but also global changes in precipitation and temperature [e.g. Otto-Bliesner et al., 2006; Li et al., 2017] that could  
257 influence catchment denudation in non-glaciated environments [e.g. Schaller and Ehlers, 2006; Glotzbach et al., 2013;  
258 Marshall et al., 2015]. These dynamics highlight the importance of investigating how much climate has changed over  
259 orogens that are the focus of studies of climate-tectonic interactions and their impact on erosion.

260 Despite recognition by previous studies that climate change events relevant to orogen denudation are prevalent  
261 throughout the Late Cenozoic, few studies have critically evaluated how different climate change events may, or may  
262 not, have affected the orogen climatology, weathering and erosion. Furthermore, recent controversy exists concerning  
263 the spatial and temporal scales over which geologic and geochemical observations can record climate-driven changes in  
264 weathering and erosion [e.g. Whipple, 2009; von Blanckenburg et al., 2015; Braun, 2016]. For example, the previous  
265 studies highlight that although palaeoclimate impacts on denudation rates are evident in some regions and measurable  
266 with some approaches, they are not always present (or detectable) and the spatial and temporal scale of climate change  
267 influences our ability to record climate sensitive denudation histories. This study contributes to our understanding of  
268 the interactions between climate, weathering, and erosion by bridging the gap between the palaeoclimatology and  
269 surface processes communities by documenting the magnitude and distribution of climate change over tectonically  
270 active orogens.

271 Motivated by the need to better understand climate impacts on Earth surface processes, especially the denudation  
272 of orogens, we model palaeoclimate for four time slices in the Late Cenozoic, use descriptive statistics to identify the  
273 extent of different regional climates, quantify changes in temperature and precipitation, and discuss the potential  
274 impacts on fluvial and/or hillslope erosion. In this study, we employ the ECHAM5 global Atmospheric General  
275 Circulation Model and document climate and climate change for time slices ranging between the Pliocene (PLIO, ~3  
276 Ma) to pre-industrial (PI) times for the St. Elias Range of South East Alaska, the US Pacific Northwest (Olympic and  
277 Cascade Range), western South America (Andes) and South Asia (incl. parts of Central- and East Asia). Our approach is  
278 two-fold and includes:

279 1. An empirical characterisation of palaeo-climates in these regions based on the covariance and spatial

280 clustering of monthly precipitation and temperature, the monthly change in precipitation and temperature magnitude,  
281 and wind speeds where appropriate.

282 2. Identification of changes in annual mean precipitation and temperature in selected regions for four time  
283 periods: (PLIO, Last Glacial Maximum (LGM), the Mid-Holocene (MH) and PI) and subsequent validation of the  
284 simulated precipitation changes for MH and LGM.

285 Our focus is on documenting climate and climate change in different locations with the intent of informing past and  
286 ongoing palaeodenudation studies of these regions. The results presented here also provide a means for future work to  
287 formulate testable hypotheses and investigations into whether or not regions of large palaeoclimate change produced a  
288 measurable signal in denudation rates or other Earth surface processes. More specifically, different aspects of the  
289 simulated palaeoclimate may be used as boundary conditions for vegetation and landscape evolution models, such as  
290 LPJ-GUESS and Landlab, to bridge the gap between climate change and quantitative estimates for Earth surface system  
291 responses. In this study, we intentionally refrain from applying predicted palaeoclimate changes to predict denudation  
292 rate changes. Such a prediction is beyond the scope of this study because a convincing (and meaningful) calculation of  
293 climate-driven transients in fluvial erosion (e.g. via the kinematic wave equation), variations in frost cracking intensity,  
294 or changes in hillslope sediment production and transport at the large regional scales considered here is not tractable  
295 within a single manuscript, and instead is the focus of our ongoing work. Merited discussion of climatically induced  
296 changes in glacial erosion, as is important in the Cenozoic, is also beyond the scope of this study. Instead, our emphasis  
297 lies on providing and describing a consistently setup GCM simulation framework for future investigations of Earth  
298 surface processes, and to identify regions in which Late Cenozoic climate changes potentially have a significant impact  
299 on fluvial and hillslope erosion, addressing the first question we are confronted with in our own research into denudation  
300 rate studies around world, namely—where is Late Cenozoic climate change most likely to impact denudation?

301

## 302 **2. Methods: Climate modelling and cluster analyses for climate characterisation**

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### 304 **2.1 ECHAM5 simulations**

305 The global Atmospheric General Circulation Model ECHAM5 [Roeckner et al., 2003] has been developed at the  
306 Max Planck Institute for Meteorology and is based on the spectral weather forecast model of the ECMWF [Simmons et  
307 al., 1989]. In the context of palaeoclimate applications, the model has been used mostly at lower resolution (T31, ca.  
308 3.75°x3.75°; T63, ca. 1.9°x1.9° in case of Feng et al. [2016] and T106 in the case of Li et al. [2016] and Feng and  
309 Poulsen [2016]). The performed studies are not limited to the last millenium [e.g. Jungclaus et al., 2010] but also  
310 include research in the field of both warmer and colder climates, at orbital [e.g. Gong et al., 2013; Lohmann et al., 2013;  
311 Pfeiffer and Lohmann, 2016; Zhang et al., 2013a; Zhang et al., 2014; Wei and Lohmann, 2012] and tectonic time scales

312 [e.g. Knorr et al., 2011; Stepanek and Lohmann, 2012], and under anthropogenic influence [Gierz et al., 2015].

313 Here, the ECHAM5 simulations were conducted at a T159 spatial resolution (horizontal grid size ca. 80 km x 80  
314 km at the equator) with 31 vertical levels (between the surface and 10hPa). This high model resolution is admittedly not  
315 required for all of the climatological questions investigated in this study, and it should be noted that the skill of GCM's  
316 in predicting orographic precipitation remains limited at this scale [e.g. Meehl et al. 2007]. However, simulations were  
317 conducted at this resolution so that future work can apply the results in combination with different dynamical and  
318 statistical downscaling methods to quantify changes at large catchment to orogen scales. The output frequency is  
319 relatively high (1 day) to enhance the usefulness of our simulations as input for landscape evolution and other models  
320 that may benefit from daily input. The simulations were conducted for five different time periods: present-day (PD), PI,  
321 MH, LGM and PLIO.

322 A PD simulation (not shown here) was used to establish confidence in the model performance before conducting  
323 palaeosimulations and has been compared with the following observation-based datasets: European Centre for Medium-  
324 Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF) re-analyses [ERA40, Uppala et al., 2005], National Centers for Environmental  
325 Prediction and National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCEP/NCAR) re-analyses [Kalnay et al., 1996; Kistler et  
326 al., 2001], NCEP Regional Reanalysis (NARR) [Mesinger et al., 2006], the Climate Research Unit (CRU) TS3.21  
327 dataset [Harris et al., 2013], High Asia Refined Analysis (HAR30) [Maussion et al., 2014] and the University of  
328 Delaware dataset (UDEL v3.01) [Legates et al., 1990]. (See Mutz et al. [2016] for a detailed comparison with a lower  
329 resolution model).

330 The PI climate simulation is an ECHAM5 experiment with PI (reference year 1850) boundary conditions. Sea  
331 Surface Temperatures (SST) and Sea Ice Concentration (SIC) are derived from transient coupled ocean-atmosphere  
332 simulations [Lorenz and Lohmann, 2004; Dietrich et al., 2013]. Following Dietrich et al. [2013], greenhouse gas  
333 (GHG) concentrations (CO<sub>2</sub>: 280 ppm) are taken from ice core based reconstructions of CO<sub>2</sub> [Etheridge et al., 1996],  
334 CH<sub>4</sub> [Etheridge et al., 1998] and N<sub>2</sub>O [Sowers et al., 2003]. Sea surface boundary conditions for MH originate from a  
335 transient, low-resolution, coupled atmosphere-ocean simulation of the mid (6 ka) Holocene [Wei and Lohmann, 2012;  
336 Lohmann et al, 2013], where the GHG concentrations (CO<sub>2</sub>: 280 ppm) are taken from ice core reconstructions of  
337 GHG's by Etheridge et al. [1996], Etheridge et al. [1998] and Sowers et al. [2003]. GHG's concentrations for the LGM  
338 (CO<sub>2</sub>: 185 ppm) have been prescribed following Otto-Bliesner et al. [2006]. Orbital parameters for MH and LGM are  
339 set according to Dietrich et al. [2013] and Otto-Bliesner et al. [2006], respectively. LGM land-sea distribution and ice  
340 sheet extent and thickness are set based on the PMIP III (Palaeoclimate Modelling Intercomparison Project, phase 3)  
341 guidelines (elaborated on by Abe-Ouchi et al [2015]). Following Schäfer-Neth and Paul [2003], SST and SIC for the  
342 LGM are based on GLAMAP [Sarnthein et al. 2003] and CLIMAP [CLIMAP project members, 1981] reconstructions  
343 for the Atlantic and Pacific/Indian Ocean, respectively. Global MH and LGM vegetation are based on maps of plant



344 functional types by the BIOME 6000 / Palaeovegetation Mapping Project [Prentice et al., 2000; Harrison et al., 2001;  
345 Bigelow et al., 2003; Pickett et al., 2004] and model predictions by Arnold et al. [2009]. Boundary conditions for the  
346 PLIO simulation, including GHG concentrations (CO<sub>2</sub>: 405), orbital parameters and surface conditions (SST, SIC, sea  
347 land mask, topography and ice cover) are taken from the PRISM (Pliocene Research, Interpretation and Synoptic  
348 Mapping) project [Haywood et al., 2010; Sohl et al., 2009; Dowsett et al., 2010], specifically PRISM3D. The PLIO  
349 vegetation boundary condition was created by converting the PRISM vegetation reconstruction to the JSBACH plant  
350 functional types as described by Stepanek and Lohmann [2012], but the built-in land surface scheme was used

351 SST reconstructions can be used as an interface between oceans and atmosphere [e.g. Li et al. 2016] instead of  
352 conducting the computationally more expensive fully coupled Atmosphere-Ocean GCM experiments. While the use of  
353 SST climatologies comes at the cost of capturing decadal-scale variability, and the results are ultimately biased towards  
354 the SST reconstructions the model is forced with, the simulated climate more quickly reaches an equilibrium state and  
355 the means of atmospheric variables used in this study do not change significantly after the relatively short spin-up  
356 period. The palaeoclimate simulations (PI, MH, LGM, PLIO) using ECHAM5 are therefore carried out for 17 model  
357 years, of which the first two years are used for model spin up. The monthly long-term averages (multi-year means for  
358 individual months) for precipitation, temperature, as well as precipitation and temperature amplitude, i.e. the mean  
359 difference between the hottest and coldest months, have been calculated from the following 15 model years for the  
360 analysis presented below.

361 For further comparison between the simulations, the investigated regions were subdivided (Fig. 1). Western  
362 South America was subdivided into four regions: parts of tropical South America (80°-60° W, 23.5°-5° S), temperate  
363 South America (80°-60° W, 50°-23.5° S), tropical Andes (80°-60° W, 23.5°-5° S; high-pass filtered), i.e. most of the  
364 Peruvian Andes, Bolivian Andes and northernmost Chilean Andes, and temperate Andes (80°-60° W, 50°-23.5° S, high-  
365 pass filtered). South Asia was subdivided into three regions: tropical South Asia (40°-120°E, 0°-23.5°N), temperate  
366 South Asia (40°-120°E, 23.5°-60°N), and high altitude South Asia (40°-120°E, 0°-60°N; high-pass filtered).

367 Our approach of using a single GCM (ECHAM5) for our analysis is motivated by, and differs from, previous  
368 studies where inter-model variability exists from the use of different GCMs due to different parameterisations in each  
369 model. The variability in previous inter-model GCM comparisons exists despite the use of the same forcings [e.g. see  
370 results highlighted in IPCC AR5]. Similarities identified between these palaeoclimate simulations conducted with  
371 different GCMs using similar boundary conditions can establish confidence in the models when in agreement with  
372 proxy reconstructions. However, differences identified in inter-model GCM comparisons highlight biases by all or  
373 specific GCMs, or reveal sensitivities to one changed parameter, such as model resolution. Given these limitations of  
374 GCM modelling, we present in this study a comparison of a suite of ECHAM5 simulations to proxy-based  
375 reconstructions (where possible) and, to a lesser degree, comment on general agreement or disagreement of our

376 ECHAM5 results with other modelling studies. A detailed inter-model comparison of our results with other GCMs is  
377 beyond the scope of this study, and better suited for a different study in a journal with a different focus and audience.  
378 Rather, by using the same GCM and identical resolution for the time slice experiments, we reduce the number of  
379 parameters (or model parameterisations) varying between simulations and thereby remove potential sources of error or  
380 uncertainty that would otherwise have to be considered when comparing output from different models with different  
381 parameterisations of processes, model resolution, and in some cases model forcings (boundary conditions).  
382 Nevertheless, the reader is advised to use these model results with the GCM's shortcoming and uncertainties in  
383 boundary condition reconstructions in mind. For example, precipitation results may require dynamical or statistical  
384 downscaling to increase accuracy where higher resolution precipitation fields are required. Furthermore, readers are  
385 advised to familiarise themselves with the palaeogeography reconstruction initiatives and associated uncertainties. For  
386 example, while Pliocene ice sheet volume can be estimated, big uncertainties pertaining to their locations remain  
387 [Haywood et al. 2010].

388

## 389 **2.2 Cluster analysis to document temporal and spatial changes in climatology**

390 The aim of the clustering approach is to group climate model surface grid boxes together based on similarities in  
391 climate. Cluster analyses are statistical tools that allow elements (i) to be grouped by similarities in the elements'  
392 attributes. In this study, those elements are spatial units, the elements' attributes are values from different climatic  
393 variables, and the measure of similarity is given by a statistical distance. The four basic variables used as climatic  
394 attributes of these spatial elements are: near-surface (2m) air temperature, seasonal 2m air temperature amplitude,  
395 precipitation rate, and seasonal precipitation rate amplitude. Since monsoonal winds are a dominant feature of the  
396 climate in the South Asia region, near surface (10m) speeds of u-wind and v-wind (zonal and meridional wind  
397 components, respectively) during the monsoon season (July) and outside the monsoon season (January) are included as  
398 additional variables in our analysis of that region. Similarly, u-wind and v-wind speeds during (January) and outside  
399 (July) the monsoon season in South America are added to the list of considered variables to take into account the South  
400 American Monsoon System (SASM) in the cluster analysis for this region. The long-term monthly means of those  
401 variables are used in a hierarchical clustering method, followed by a non-hierarchical k-means correction with  
402 randomised re-groupment [Mutz et al., 2016; Wilks, 2011; Paeth, 2004; Bahrenberg et al., 1992].

403 The hierarchical part of the clustering procedure starts with as many clusters as there are elements ( $n_i$ ), then  
404 iteratively combines the most similar clusters to form a new cluster using centroids for the linkage procedure for  
405 clusters containing multiple elements. The procedure is continued until the desired number of clusters ( $k$ ) is reached.  
406 One disadvantage of a pure hierarchical approach is that elements cannot be re-categorised once they are assigned to a  
407 cluster, even though the addition of new elements to existing clusters changes the clusters' defining attributes and could

408 warrant a re-categorisation of elements. We address this problem by implementation of a (non-hierarchical) k-means  
409 clustering correction [e.g. Paeth, 2004]. Elements are re-categorized based on the multivariate centroids determined by  
410 the hierarchical cluster analysis in order to minimize the sum of deviations from the cluster centroids. The Mahalanobis  
411 distance [e.g. Wilks, 2011] is used as a measure of similarity or distance between the cluster centroids, since it is a  
412 statistical distance and thus not sensitive to different variable units. The Mahalanobis distance also accounts for possible  
413 multi-collinearity between variables.

414         The end results of the cluster analyses are subdivisions of the climate in the investigated regions into  $k$   
415 subdomains or clusters based on multiple climate variables. The region-specific  $k$  has to be prescribed before the  
416 analyses. A large  $k$  may result in redundant additional clusters describing very similar climates, thereby defeating the  
417 purpose of the analysis to identify and describe the dominant, distinctly different climates in the region and their  
418 geographical coverage. Since it is not possible to know a priori the ideal number of clusters,  $k$  was varied between 3 and  
419 10 for each region and the results presented below identify the optimal number of visibly distinctly different clusters  
420 from the analysis. Optimal  $k$  was determined by assessing the distinctiveness and similarities between the climate  
421 clusters in the systematic process of increasing  $k$  from 3 to 10. Once an increase in  $k$  no longer resulted in the addition  
422 of another cluster that was climatologically distinctly different from the others, and instead resulted in at least two  
423 similar clusters,  $k$  of the previous iteration was chosen as the optimal  $k$  for the region.

424         The cluster analysis ultimately results in a description of the geographical extent of a climate (cluster)  
425 characterised by a certain combination of mean values for each of the variables associated with the climate. For  
426 example, climate cluster 1 may be the most tropical climate in a region and thus be characterised by a high precipitation  
427 values, high temperature values and low seasonal temperature amplitude. Each of the results (consisting of the  
428 geographical extent of climates and mean vectors describing the climate) can be viewed as an optimal classification for  
429 the specific region and time. It serves primarily as a means for providing an overview of the climate in each of the  
430 regions at different times, reduces dimensionality of the raw simulation output, and identify regions of climatic  
431 homogeneity that is difficult to notice by viewing simple maps of each climate variable. Its synoptic purpose is similar  
432 to that of the widely known Köppen-Geiger classification scheme [Peel et al., 2007], but we allow for optimal  
433 classification rather than prescribe classes, and our selection of variables is more restricted and made in accordance with  
434 the focus of this study.

435

### 436 **3. Results**

437         Results from our analysis are first presented for general changes in global temperature and precipitation for the  
438 different time slices (Fig. 2, 3), which is then followed by an analysis of changes in the climatology of selected orogens.  
439 A more detailed description of temperature and precipitation changes in our selected orogens is presented in subsequent

440 subsections (Fig. 4 and following). All differences in climatology are expressed relative to the PI control run. Changes  
441 relative to the PI rather than PD conditions are presented to avoid interpreting an anthropogenic bias in the results and  
442 focusing instead on pre-anthropogenic variations in climate. For brevity, near-surface (2m) air temperature and total  
443 precipitation rate are referred to as temperature and precipitation.

444

### 445 **3.1 Global differences in mean annual temperature**

446 This section describes the differences between simulated MH, LGM, and PLIO annual mean temperature anom-  
447 alies with respect to PI shown in Fig. 2b, and PI temperature absolute values shown in Fig. 2a. Most temperature differ-  
448 ences between the PI and MH climate are within  $-1^{\circ}\text{C}$  to  $1^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Exceptions to this are the Hudson Bay, Weddell Sea and  
449 Ross Sea regions which experience warming of  $1-3^{\circ}\text{C}$ ,  $1-5^{\circ}\text{C}$  and  $1-9^{\circ}\text{C}$  respectively. Continental warming is mostly re-  
450 stricted to low-altitude South America, Finland, western Russia, the Arabian Peninsula ( $1-3^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) and subtropical north  
451 Africa ( $1-5^{\circ}\text{C}$ ). Simulation results show that LGM and PLIO annual mean temperature deviate from the PI means the  
452 most. The global PLIO warming and LGM cooling trends are mostly uniform in direction, but the magnitude varies re-  
453 gionally. The strongest LGM cooling is concentrated in regions where the greatest change in ice extent occurs (as indic-  
454 ated on Fig. 2), i.e. Canada, Greenland, the North Atlantic, Northern Europe and Antarctica. Central Alaska shows no  
455 temperature changes, whereas coastal South Alaska experiences cooling of  $\leq 9^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Cooling in the US Pacific northwest  
456 is uniform and between  $11$  and  $13^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Most of high-altitude South America experiences mild cooling of  $1-3^{\circ}\text{C}$ ,  $3-5^{\circ}\text{C}$  in  
457 the central Andes and  $\leq 9^{\circ}\text{C}$  in the south. Along the Himalayan orogen, LGM temperature values are  $5-7^{\circ}\text{C}$  below PI  
458 values. Much of central Asia and the Tibetan plateau cools by  $3-5^{\circ}\text{C}$ , and most of India, low-altitude China and south-  
459 east Asia by  $1-3^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

460 In the PLIO climate, parts of Antarctica, Greenland and the Greenland Sea experience the greatest temperature  
461 increase ( $\leq 19^{\circ}\text{C}$ ). Most of southern Alaska warms by  $1-5^{\circ}\text{C}$  and  $\leq 9^{\circ}\text{C}$  near McCarthy, Alaska. The US Pacific northw-  
462 est warms by  $1-5^{\circ}\text{C}$ . The strongest warming in South America is concentrated at the Pacific west coast and the Andes  
463 ( $1-9^{\circ}\text{C}$ ), specifically between Lima and Chiclayo, and along the Chilean-Argentinian Andes south of Bolivia ( $\leq 9^{\circ}\text{C}$ ).  
464 Parts of low-altitude South America to the immediate east of the Andes experience cooling of  $1-5^{\circ}\text{C}$ . The Himalayan  
465 orogen warms by  $3-9^{\circ}\text{C}$ , whereas Myanmar, Bangladesh, Nepal, northern India and northeast Pakistan cool by  $1-9^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

466

### 467 **3.2 Global differences in mean annual precipitation**

468 Notable differences occur between simulated MH, LGM, PLIO annual mean precipitation anomalies with re-  
469 spect to PI shown in Fig. 3b, and the PI precipitation absolute values shown in Fig. 3a. Of these, MH precipitation devi-  
470 ates the least from PI values. The differences between MH and PI precipitation on land appear to be largest in northern  
471 tropical Africa (increase  $\leq 1200$  mm/a) and along the Himalayan orogen (increase  $\leq 2000$  mm/a) and in central Indian

472 states (decrease)  $\leq 500$ mm. The biggest differences in western South America are precipitation increases in central Chile  
473 between Santiago and Puerto Montt. The LGM climate shows the largest deviation in annual precipitation from the PI  
474 climate, and precipitation on land mostly decreases. Exceptions are increases in precipitation rates in North American  
475 coastal regions, especially in coastal South Alaska ( $\leq 2300$  mm/a) and the US Pacific Northwest ( $\leq 1700$  mm/a). Further  
476 exceptions are precipitation increases in low-altitude regions immediately east of the Peruvian Andes ( $\leq 1800$  mm/a),  
477 central Bolivia ( $\leq 1000$  mm/a), most of Chile ( $\leq 1000$  mm/a) and northeast India ( $\leq 1900$  mm/a). Regions of notable pre-  
478 cipitation decrease are northern Brazil ( $\leq 1700$  mm/a), southernmost Chile and Argentina ( $\leq 1900$  mm/a), coastal south  
479 Peru ( $\leq 700$  mm/a), central India ( $\leq 2300$  mm/a) and Nepal ( $\leq 1600$  mm/a).

480 Most of the precipitation on land in the PLIO climate is higher than those in the PI climate. Precipitation is en-  
481 hanced by ca. 100-200 mm/a in most of the Atacama desert, by  $\leq 1700$  mm/a south of the Himalayan orogen and by  
482  $\leq 1400$  mm/a in tropical South America. Precipitation significantly decreases in central Peru ( $\leq 2600$ mm), southernmost  
483 Chile ( $\leq 2600$ mm) and from eastern Nepal to northernmost northeast India ( $\leq 2500$ mm).

484

### 485 **3.3 Palaeoclimate characterisation from the cluster analysis and changes in regional climatology**

486 In addition to the above described global changes, the PLIO to PI regional climatology changes substantially in  
487 the four investigated regions of: South Asia (section 3.3.1), the Andes (section 3.3.2), South Alaska (section 3.3.3) and  
488 the Cascade Range (section 3.3.4). Each climate cluster defines separate distinct climate that is characterized by the  
489 mean values of the different climate variables used in the analysis. The clusters are calculated by taking the arithmetic  
490 means of all the values (climatic means) calculated for the grid boxes within each region. The regional climates are  
491 referred to by their cluster number  $C_1, C_2, \dots, C_k$ , where  $k$  is the number of clusters specified for the region. The clusters  
492 for specific palaeoclimates are mentioned in the text as  $C_{i(t)}$ , where  $i$  corresponds to the cluster number ( $i=1, \dots, k$ ) and  $t$   
493 to the simulation time period ( $t=PI, MH, LGM, PLIO$ ). The descriptions first highlight the similarities and then the  
494 differences in regional climate. The cluster means of seasonal near-surface temperature amplitude and seasonal  
495 precipitation amplitude are referred to as temperature and precipitation amplitude. The median, 25<sup>th</sup> percentile, 75<sup>th</sup>  
496 percentile, minimum and maximum values for annual mean precipitation are referred to as  $P_{md}, P_{25}, P_{75}, P_{min}$  and  $P_{max}$   
497 respectively. Likewise, the same statistics for temperature are referred to as  $T_{md}, T_{25}, T_{75}, T_{min}$  and  $T_{max}$ . These are  
498 presented as boxplots of climate variables in different time periods. When the character of a climate cluster is described  
499 as “high”, “moderate” and “low”, the climatic attribute’s values are described relative to the value range of the specific  
500 region in time, thus high PLIO precipitation rates may be higher than high LGM precipitation rates. The character is  
501 presented a raster plots, to allow compact visual representation of it. The actual mean values for each variable in every  
502 time-slice and region-specific cluster are included in tables in the supplementary material.

503

### 504 3.3.1 Climate change and palaeoclimate characterisation in South Asia, Central- and East Asia

505 This section describes the regional climatology of the four investigated Cenozoic time slices and how  
506 precipitation and temperature changes from PLIO to PI times in tropical, temperate and high altitude regions. LGM and  
507 PLIO simulations show the largest simulated temperature and precipitation deviations (Fig. 4b) from PI temperature and  
508 precipitation (Fig. 4a) in the South Asia region. LGM temperatures are 1-7°C below PI temperatures and the direction  
509 of deviation is uniform across the study region. PLIO temperature is mostly above PI temperatures by 1-7°C. The  
510 cooling of 3-5°C in the region immediately south of the Himalayan orogen represents one of the few exceptions.  
511 Deviations of MH precipitation from PI precipitation in the region are greatest along the eastern Himalayan orogeny,  
512 which experiences an increase in precipitation ( $\leq 2000$  mm/a). The same region experiences a notable decrease in  
513 precipitation in the LGM simulation, which is consistent in direction with the prevailing precipitation trend on land  
514 during the LGM. PLIO precipitation on land is typically higher than PI precipitation.

515 Annual means of precipitation and temperature spatially averaged for the regional subdivisions and the different  
516 time slice simulations have been compared. The value range  $P_{25}$  to  $P_{75}$  of precipitation is higher for tropical South Asia  
517 than for temperate and high altitude South Asia (Fig. 5 a-c). The LGM values for  $P_{25}$ ,  $P_{md}$  and  $P_{75}$  are lower than for the  
518 other time slice simulations, most visibly for tropical South Asia (ca. 100 mm/a). The temperature range (both  $T_{75}-T_{25}$   
519 and  $T_{max}-T_{min}$ ) is smallest in the hot (ca. 21°C) tropical South Asia, wider in the high altitude (ca. -8°C) South Asia, and  
520 widest in the temperate (ca. 2°C) South Asia region (Fig. 5 d-f).  $T_{md}$ ,  $T_{25}$  and  $T_{75}$  values for the LGM are ca. 1°C, 1-2°C  
521 and 2°C below PI and MH temperatures in tropical, temperate and high altitude South Asia respectively, whereas the  
522 same temperature statistics for the PLIO simulation are ca. 1°C above PI and MH values in all regional subdivisions  
523 (Fig. 5 d-f). With respect to PI and MH values, precipitation and temperature are generally lower in the LGM and higher  
524 in the PLIO in tropical, temperate and high altitude South Asia.

525 In all time periods, the wettest climate cluster  $C_1$  covers an area along the southeastern Himalayan orogen (Fig. 6  
526 a-d) and is defined by the highest precipitation amplitude (dark blue, Fig. 6 e-h).  $C_{5(PI)}$ ,  $C_{3(MH)}$ ,  $C_{4(LGM)}$  and  $C_{5(PLIO)}$  are  
527 characterized by (dark blue, Fig. 6e-h) the highest temperatures, u-wind and v-wind speeds during the summer monsoon  
528 in their respective time periods, whereas  $C_{4(PI)}$ ,  $C_{5(MH)}$ , and  $C_{6(LGM)}$  are defined by low temperatures and highest  
529 temperature amplitude, u-wind and v-wind speeds outside the monsoon season (in January) in their respective time  
530 periods (Fig. 6 e-h). The latter 3 climate classes cover much of the more continental, northern landmass in their  
531 respective time periods and represents a cooler climate affected more by seasonal temperature fluctuations (Fig. 6 a-d).  
532 The two wettest climate clusters  $C_1$  and  $C_2$  are more restricted to the eastern end of the Himalayan orogen in the LGM  
533 than during other times, indicating that the LGM precipitation distribution over the South Asia landmass is more  
534 concentrated in this region than in other time slice experiments.

535

### 536 3.3.2 Climate change and palaeoclimate characterisation in the Andes, Western South America

537 This section describes the cluster analysis based regional climatology of the four investigated Late Cenozoic  
538 time slices and illustrates how precipitation and temperature changes from PLIO to PI in tropical and temperate low-  
539 and high altitude (i.e. Andes) regions in western South America (Fig. 7-9).

540 LGM and PLIO simulations show the largest simulated deviations (Fig. 7b) from PI temperature and  
541 precipitation (Fig. 7a) in western South America. The direction of LGM temperature deviations from PI temperatures is  
542 negative and uniform across the region. LGM temperatures are typically 1-3°C below PI temperatures across the region,  
543 and 1-7°C below PI values in the Peruvian Andes, which also experience the strongest and most widespread increase in  
544 precipitation during the LGM ( $\leq 1800$  mm/a). Other regions, such as much of the northern Andes and tropical South  
545 America, experience a decrease of precipitation in the same experiment. PLIO temperature is mostly elevated above PI  
546 temperatures by 1-5°C. The Peruvian Andes experience a decrease in precipitation ( $\leq 2600$ mm), while the northern  
547 Andes are wetter in the PLIO simulation compared to the PI control simulation.

548 PI, MH, LGM and PLIO precipitation and temperature means for regional subdivisions have been compared.  
549 The  $P_{25}$  to  $P_{75}$  range is smallest for the relatively dry temperate Andes and largest for tropical South America and the  
550 tropical Andes (Fig. 8 a-d).  $P_{max}$  is lowest in the PLIO in all four regional subdivisions even though  $P_{md}$ ,  $P_{25}$  and  $P_{75}$  in  
551 the PLIO simulation are similar to the same statistics calculated for PI and MH time slices.  $P_{md}$ ,  $P_{25}$  and  $P_{75}$  for the LGM  
552 are ca. 50 mm/a lower in tropical South America and ca. 50 mm/a higher in the temperate Andes. Average PLIO  
553 temperatures are slightly warmer and LGM temperatures are slightly colder than PI and MH temperatures in tropical  
554 and temperate South America (Fig. 8 e and f). These differences are more pronounced in the Andes, however.  $T_{md}$ ,  $T_{25}$   
555 and  $T_{75}$  are ca. 5°C higher in the PLIO climate than in PI and MH climates in both temperate and tropical Andes,  
556 whereas the same temperatures for the LGM are ca. 2-4°C below PI and MH values (Fig. 8 g and h).

557 For the LGM, the model computes drier-than-PI conditions in tropical South America and tropical Andes,  
558 enhanced precipitation in the temperate Andes, and a decrease in temperature that is most pronounced in the Andes. For  
559 the PLIO, the model predicts precipitation similar to PI, but with lower precipitation maxima. PLIO temperatures  
560 generally increase from PI temperatures, and this increase is most pronounced in the Andes.

561 The climate variability in the region is described by six different clusters (Fig. 9 a-d), which have similar  
562 attributes in all time periods. The wettest climate  $C_1$  is also defined by moderate to high precipitation amplitudes, low  
563 temperatures and moderate to high u-wind speeds in summer and winter in all time periods (dark blue, Fig. 9 e-h).  $C_{2(PI)}$ ,  
564  $C_{2(MH)}$ ,  $C_{3(LGM)}$  and  $C_{2(PLIO)}$  are characterized by high temperatures and low seasonal temperature amplitude (dark blue,  
565 Fig. 9 e-h), geographically cover the north of the investigated region, and represent a more tropical climate.  $C_{5(PI)}$ ,  
566  $C_{5(MH)}$ ,  $C_{6(LGM)}$  and  $C_{6(PLIO)}$  are defined by low precipitation and precipitation amplitude, high temperature amplitude and  
567 high u-wind speeds in winter (Fig. 9 e-h), cover the low-altitude south of the investigated region (Fig. 9 a-d) and

568 represent dry, extra-tropical climates with more pronounced seasonality. In the PLIO simulation, the lower-altitude east  
569 of the region has four distinct climates, whereas the analysis for the other time slice experiments only yield three  
570 distinct climates for the same region.

571

### 572 **3.3.3 Climate change and palaeoclimate characterisation in the St. Elias Range, Southeast Alaska**

573 This section describes the changes in climate and the results from the cluster analysis for South Alaska (Fig. 10-12). As  
574 is the case for the other study areas, LGM and PLIO simulations show the largest simulated deviations (Fig. 10b) from  
575 PI temperature and precipitation (Fig. 10a). The sign of LGM temperature deviations from PI temperatures is negative  
576 and uniform across the region. LGM temperatures are typically 1-9°C below PI temperatures, with the east of the study  
577 area experiencing largest cooling. PLIO temperatures are typically 1-5°C above PI temperatures and the warming is  
578 uniform for the region. In comparison to the PI simulation, LGM precipitation is lower on land, but higher ( $\leq 2300\text{mm}$ )  
579 in much of the coastal regions of South Alaska. Annual PLIO precipitation is mostly higher ( $\leq 800\text{mm}$ ) than for PI.

580  $P_{\text{md}}$ ,  $P_{25}$ ,  $P_{75}$ ,  $P_{\text{min}}$  and  $P_{\text{max}}$  for South Alaskan mean annual precipitation do not differ much between PI, MH and  
581 PLIO climates, while  $P_{\text{md}}$ ,  $P_{25}$ ,  $P_{75}$  and  $P_{\text{min}}$  decrease by ca. 20-40 mm/a and  $P_{\text{max}}$  increases during the LGM (Fig. 11a).  
582 The Alaskan PLIO climate is distinguished from the PI and MH climates by its higher (ca. 2°C) regional temperature  
583 means,  $T_{25}$ ,  $T_{75}$  and  $T_{\text{md}}$  (Fig. 11b). Mean annual temperatures,  $T_{25}$ ,  $T_{75}$ ,  $T_{\text{min}}$  and  $T_{\text{max}}$  are lower in the LGM than in any  
584 other considered time period (Fig. 11b), and about 3-5°C lower than during the PI and MH.

585 Distinct climates are present in the PLIO to PI simulations for Southeast Alaska. Climate cluster  $C_1$  is always  
586 geographically restricted to coastal southeast Alaska (Fig. 12 a-d) and characterized by the highest precipitation,  
587 precipitation amplitude, temperature, and by relatively low temperature amplitude (dark blue, Fig. 12 e-h). Climate  $C_2$  is  
588 characterized by moderate to low precipitation, precipitation amplitude, temperature, and by low temperature amplitude.  
589  $C_2$  is either restricted to coastal southeast Alaska (in MH and LGM climates) or coastal southern Alaska (in PI and PLIO  
590 climates). Climate  $C_3$  is described by low precipitation, precipitation amplitude, temperature, and moderate temperature  
591 amplitude in all simulations. It covers coastal western Alaska and separates climate  $C_1$  and  $C_2$  from the northern  $C_4$   
592 climate. Climate  $C_4$  is distinguished by the highest mean temperature amplitude, by low temperature and precipitation  
593 amplitude, and by lowest precipitation.

594 The geographical ranges of PI climates  $C_1$ -  $C_4$  and PLIO climates  $C_1$ -  $C_4$  are similar.  $C_{1(\text{PI/PLIO})}$  and  $C_{2(\text{PI/PLIO})}$  spread  
595 over a larger area than  $C_{1(\text{MH/LGM})}$  and  $C_{2(\text{MH/LGM})}$ .  $C_{2(\text{PI/PLIO})}$  are not restricted to coastal southeast Alaska, but also cover the  
596 coastal southwest of Alaska. The main difference in characterization between PI and PLIO climates  $C_1$ -  $C_4$  lies in the  
597 greater difference (towards lower values) in precipitation, precipitation amplitude and temperature from  $C_{1(\text{PLIO})}$  to  
598  $C_{2(\text{PLIO})}$  compared to the relatively moderate decrease in those means from  $C_{1(\text{PI})}$  to  $C_{2(\text{PI})}$ .

599



### 600 3.3.4 Climate change and palaeoclimate characterisation in the Cascade Range, US Pacific Northwest

601 This section describes the character of regional climatology in the US Pacific Northwest and its change over time  
602 (Fig. 13-15). The region experiences cooling of typically 9-11°C on land during the LGM, and warming of 1-5°C  
603 during the PLIO (Fig. 13b) when compared to PI temperatures (Fig. 13a). LGM precipitation increases over water,  
604 decreases on land by  $\leq 800$  mm/a in the North and in the vicinity of Seattle and increases on land by  $\leq 1400$  mm/a on  
605 Vancouver Island, around Portland and the Olympic Mountains, whereas PLIO precipitation does not deviate much  
606 from PI values over water and varies in the direction of deviation on land. MH temperature and precipitation deviation  
607 from PI values are negligible.

608  $P_{md}$ ,  $P_{25}$ ,  $P_{75}$ ,  $P_{min}$  and  $P_{max}$  for the Cascade Range do not notably differ between the four time periods (Fig. 14a).  
609 The LGM range of precipitation values is slightly larger than that of the PI and MH with slightly increased  $P_{md}$ , while  
610 the respective range is smaller for simulation PLIO. The  $T_{md}$ ,  $T_{25}$ ,  $T_{75}$  and  $T_{max}$  values for the PLIO climate are ca. 2°C  
611 higher than those values for PI and MH (Fig. 14b). All temperature statistics for the LGM are notably (ca. 13°C) below  
612 their analogues in the other time periods (Fig. 14b).

613 PI, LGM and PLIO clusters are similar in both their geographical patterns (Fig. 15 a, c, d) and their  
614 characterization by mean values (Fig. 15 e, g, h).  $C_1$  is the wettest cluster and shows the highest amplitude in  
615 precipitation. The common characteristics of the  $C_2$  cluster are moderate to high precipitation and precipitation  
616 amplitude.  $C_4$  is characterized by the lowest precipitation and precipitation amplitudes, and the highest temperature  
617 amplitudes. Regions assigned to clusters  $C_1$  and  $C_2$  are in proximity to the coast, whereas  $C_4$  is geographically restricted  
618 to more continental settings.

619 In the PI and LGM climates, the wettest cluster  $C_1$  is also characterized by high temperatures (Fig 10 e, g).  
620 However, virtually no grid boxes were assigned to  $C_{1(LGM)}$ .  $C_{1(MH)}$  differs from other climate state's  $C_1$  clusters in that it is  
621 also described by moderate to high near surface temperature and temperature amplitude (Fig 10 f), and in that it is  
622 geographically less restricted and, covering much of Vancouver Island and the continental coastline north of it (Fig 10  
623 b). Near surface temperatures are highest for  $C_2$  in PI, LGM and PLIO climates (Fig 10 e, g, h) and low for  $C_{2(MH)}$  (Fig  
624 10 f).  $C_{2(MH)}$  is also geographically more restricted than  $C_2$  clusters in PI, LGM and PLIO climates (Fig 10 a-d).  $C_{2(PI)}$ ,  
625  $C_{2(MH)}$  and  $C_{2(LGM)}$  have a low temperature amplitude (Fig 10 e-g), whereas  $C_{2(PLIO)}$  is characterized by a moderate  
626 temperature amplitude (Fig 10 h).

627

## 628 4. Discussion

629 In the following, we synthesise our results and compare to previous studies that investigate the effects of  
630 temperature and precipitation change on erosion. Since our results do not warrant merited discussion of subglacial  
631 processes without additional work that is beyond the scope of this study, we instead advise caution in interpreting the

632 presented precipitation and temperature results in an erosional context where the regions are covered with ice. For  
633 convenience, ice cover is indicated on figures 2,3,47,10 and 13, and a summary of ice cover used as boundary  
634 conditions for the different time slice experiments is included in the supplemental material. Where possible, we relate  
635 the magnitude of climate change predicted in each geographical study area with terrestrial proxy data.

636

#### 637 **4.1 Synthesis of temperature changes**

638

##### 639 **4.1.1 Temperature changes and implications for weathering and erosion**

640 Changes in temperature can affect physical weathering due to temperature-induced changes in periglacial  
641 processes and promote frost cracking and frost creep [e.g., Matsuoka, 2001; Schaller et al., 2002; Matsuoka and  
642 Murton, 2008; Delunel et al., 2010; Andersen et al., 2015; Marshall et al., 2015], and also biotic weathering and erosion  
643 [e.g. Moulton et al., 1998; Banfield et al., 1999; Dietrich and Perron, 2006]. Quantifying and understanding past  
644 changes in temperature is thus vital for our understanding of denudation histories. In the following, we highlight regions  
645 in the world where future observational studies might be able to document significant warming or cooling that would  
646 influence temperature related changes in physical and chemical weathering over the last ~3 Ma.

647 Simulated MH temperatures show little deviation (typically  $< 1^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) from PI temperatures in the investigated  
648 regions (Fig. 2b), suggesting little difference in MH temperature-related weathering. The LGM experiences widespread  
649 cooling, which is accentuated at the poles. , increasin the equator-to-pole pressure gradient and consequently  
650 strengthens global atmospheric circulation. Despite this global trend, cooling in coastal South Alaska is higher ( $\leq 9^{\circ}\text{C}$ )  
651 than in central Alaska ( $0\pm 1^{\circ}\text{C}$ ). The larger temperature difference in South Alaska geographically coincides with ice  
652 cover (Fig. 10b), and should thus be interpreted in context of a different erosional regime. Cooling in most of the lower-  
653 latitude regions in South America and central to southeast Asia is relatively mild. The greatest temperature differences  
654 in South America are observed for western Patagonia, which was mostly covered by glaciers. The Tibetan plateau  
655 experiences more cooling ( $3\text{-}5^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) than adjacent low-altitude regions ( $1\text{-}3^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) during the LGM.

656 The PLIO simulation is generally warmer, and temperature differences are accentuated warming at the poles.  
657 Warming in simulation PLIO is greatest in parts of Canada, Greenland and Antarctica (up to  $19^{\circ}\text{C}$ ), which  
658 geographically coincides with the presence of ice in the PI reference simulation and thus may be attributed to  
659 differences in ice cover. It should therefore also be regarded as areas in which process domain shifted from glacial to  
660 non-glacial. The warming in simulation PLIO in South Alaska and the US Pacific northwest is mostly uniform and in  
661 the range of  $1\text{-}5^{\circ}\text{C}$ . As before, changes in ice cover reveal that the greatest warming may be associated with the absence  
662 of glaciers relative to the PI simulation. Warming in South America is concentrated at the Pacific west coast and the  
663 Andes between Lima and Chiclayo, and along the Chilean-Argentinian Andes south of Bolivia ( $\leq 9^{\circ}\text{C}$ ).

664 Overall, annual mean temperatures in the MH simulation show little deviation from PI values. The more  
665 significant temperature deviations of the colder LGM and of the warmer PLIO simulations are accentuated at the poles  
666 leading to higher and lower equator-to-pole temperature gradients respectively. The largest temperature-related changes  
667 (relative to PI conditions) in weathering and subsequent erosion, in many cases through a shift in the process domain  
668 from glacial to non-glacial or vice versa, are therefore to be expected in the LGM and PLIO climates.

669

#### 670 **4.1.2 Temperature comparison to other studies**

671 LGM cooling is accentuated at the poles, thus increases the equator-to-pole pressure gradient and consequently  
672 strengthens global atmospheric circulation, and is in general agreement with studies such as Otto-Bliesner et al. [2006]  
673 and Braconnot et al. [2007]. The PLIO simulation shows little to no warming in the tropics and accentuated warming at  
674 the poles, as do findings of Salzmann et al. [2011] and Robinson [2009] and Ballantyne [2010] respectively. This would  
675 reduce the equator-to-pole sea and land surface temperature gradient, as also reported by Dowsett et al. [2010], and also  
676 weaken global atmospheric circulation. Agreement with proxy-based reconstructions, as is the case of the relatively  
677 little warming in lower latitudes, is not surprising given that sea surface temperature reconstructions (derived from  
678 previous coarse resolution coupled ocean-atmosphere models) are prescribed in this uncoupled atmosphere simulation.  
679 It should be noted that coupled ocean-atmosphere simulations do predict more low-latitude warming [e.g. Stepanek and  
680 Lohmann 2012; Zhang et al. 2013b]. The PLIO warming in parts of Canada and Greenland (up to 19°C) and consistent  
681 with values based on multi-proxy studies [Ballantyne et al., 2010]. Due to a scarcity of palaeobotanical proxies in  
682 Antarctica, reconstruction-based temperature and ice-sheet extent estimates for a PLIO climate have high uncertainties  
683 [Salzmann et al., 2011], making model validation difficult. Furthermore, controversy about relatively little warming in  
684 the south polar regions compared to the north polar regions remains [e.g. Hillenbrand and Fütterer, 2002; Wilson et al.,  
685 2002]. Mid-latitude PLIO warming is mostly in the 1-3°C range with notable exceptions of cooling in the northern  
686 tropics of Africa and on the Indian subcontinent, especially south of the Himalayan orogen.

687

#### 688 **4.2 Synthesis of precipitation changes**

689

##### 690 **4.2.1 Precipitation and implications for weathering and erosion**

691 Changes in precipitation affects erosion through river incision, sediment transport, and erosion due to extreme  
692 precipitation events and storms [e.g. Whipple and Tucker, 1999; Hobbey et al., 2010]. Furthermore, vegetation type and  
693 cover also co-evolve with variations in precipitation and with changes in geomorphology [e.g. Marston 2010; Roering  
694 et al., 2010]. These vegetation changes in turn modify hillslope erosion by increasing root mass and canopy cover, and  
695 decreasing water-induced erosion via surface runoff [e.g. Gyssels et al., 2005]. Therefore, understanding and

696 quantifying changes in precipitation in different palaeoclimates is necessary for a more complete reconstruction of  
697 orogen denudation histories. A synthesis of predicted precipitation changes is provided below, and highlights regions  
698 where changes in river discharge and hillslope processes might be impacted by climate change over the last ~3 Ma.

699 Most of North Africa is notably wetter during the MH, which is characteristic of the African Humid Period  
700 [Sarnthein 1978]. This pluvial regional expression of the Holocene Climatic Optimum is attributed to sudden changes in  
701 the strength of the African monsoon caused by orbital-induced changes in summer insolation [e.g. deMenocal et al.  
702 2000]. Southern Africa is characterised by a wetter climate to the east and drier climate to the west of the approximate  
703 location of the Congo Air Boundary (CAB), the migration of which has previously been cited as a cause for  
704 precipitation changes in East Africa [e.g. Juninger et al. 2014]. In contrast, simulated MH precipitation rates show little  
705 deviation from the PI in most of the investigated regions, suggesting little difference in MH precipitation-related  
706 erosion. The Himalayan orogen is an exception and shows a precipitation increase of up to 2000 mm/a. The climate's  
707 enhanced erosion potential, that could result from such a climatic change, should be taken into consideration when  
708 palaeo-erosion rates estimated from the geological record in this area are interpreted [e.g. Bookhagen et al., 2005].  
709 Specifically, higher precipitation rates (along with differences in other rainfall-event parameters) could increase the  
710 probability of mass movement events on hillslopes, especially where hillslopes are close to the angle of failure [e.g.  
711 Montgomery, 2001], and modify fluxes to increase shear stresses exerted on river beds and increase stream capacity to  
712 enhance erosion on river beds (e.g. by abrasion).

713 Most precipitation on land is decreased during the LGM due to large-scale cooling and decreased evaporation  
714 over the tropics, resulting in an overall decrease in inland moisture transport [e.g., Braconnot et al. 2007]. North  
715 America, south of the continental ice sheets, is an exception and experiences increases in precipitation. For example, the  
716 investigated US Pacific Northwest and the southeastern coast of Alaska experience experience strongly enhanced  
717 precipitation of  $\leq 1700$  mm/a and  $\leq 2300$  mm/a, respectively. These changes geographically coincide with differences in  
718 ice extent. An increase in precipitation in these regions may have had direct consequences on the glaciers' mass balance  
719 and equilibrium line altitudes, where the glaciers' effectiveness in erosion is highest [e.g. Egholm et al., 2009; Yanites  
720 and Ehlers, 2012]. The differences in the direction of precipitation changes, and accompanying changes in ice cover  
721 would likely result in more regionally differentiated variations in precipitation-specific erosional processes in the St.  
722 Elias Range rather than causing systematic offsets for the LGM. Although precipitation is significantly reduced along  
723 much of the Himalayan orogen ( $\leq 1600$  mm/a), , northeast India experiences strongly enhanced precipitation ( $\leq 1900$   
724 mm/a). This could have large implications for studies of uplift and erosion at orogen syntaxes, where highly localized  
725 and extreme denudation has been documented [e.g. Koons et al., 2013; Bendick and Ehlers, 2014].

726 Overall, the PLIO climate is wetter than the PI climate, in particular in the (northern) mid-latitudes, and possibly  
727 related to a northward shift of the northern Hadley cell boundary that is ultimately the result of a reduced equator-to-

728 pole temperature gradient [e.g. Haywood et al. 2000, 2013; Dowsett et al. 2010]. Most of the PLIO precipitation over  
729 land increases, esp. at the Himalayan orogen by  $\leq 1400$  mm/a, and decreases from eastern Nepal to Namcha Barwa  
730 ( $\leq 2500$  mm/a). Most of the Atacama Desert experiences an increase in precipitation by 100-200 mm/a, which may have  
731 to be considered in erosion and uplift history reconstructions for the Andes. A significant increase ( $\sim 2000$  mm/a) in  
732 precipitation from simulation PLIO to modern conditions is simulated for the eastern margin of the Andean Plateau in  
733 Peru and for northern Bolivia. This is consistent with recent findings of a pulse of canyon incision in these locations in  
734 the last  $\sim 3$  Ma [Lease and Ehlers, 2013].

735 Overall, the simulated MH precipitation varies least from PI precipitation. The LGM is generally drier than the  
736 PI simulation, even though pockets of a wetter-than-PI climate do exist, such as much of coastal North America. Extra-  
737 tropical increased precipitation of the PLIO simulation and decreased precipitation of the LGM climate may be the  
738 result of decreased and increased equator-to-pole temperature gradients, respectively.

739

#### 740 **4.2.2 Precipitation comparison to other studies**

741 The large scale LGM precipitation decrease on land, related to cooling and decreased evaporation over the  
742 tropics, and greatly reduced precipitation along much of the Himalayan orogeny, is consistent with previous studies by,  
743 (for example) Braconnot et al. [2007]. The large scale PLIO precipitation increase due to a reduced equator-to-pole  
744 temperature gradient, has previously been pointed out by e.g. Haywood et al. [2000, 2013] and Dowsett et al. [2010]. A  
745 reduction of this gradient by ca.  $5^{\circ}\text{C}$  is indeed present in the PLIO simulation of this study (Fig. 2b). This precipitation  
746 increase over land agrees well with simulations performed at a lower spatial model resolution [cf. Stepanek and  
747 Lohmann, 2012]. Section 4.4 includes a more in-depth discussion of how simulated MH and LGM precipitation  
748 differences compare with proxy-based reconstructions in South Asia and South America.

749

#### 750 **4.3 Trends in Late Cenozoic changes in regional climatology**

751 This section describes the major changes in regional climatology and highlights their possible implications on  
752 erosion rates.

753

##### 754 *Himalaya-Tibet, South Asia*

755 In South Asia, cluster-analysis based categorization and description of climates (Fig. 6) remains similar  
756 throughout time. However, the two wettest climates ( $C_1$  and  $C_2$ ) are geographically more restricted to the eastern  
757 Himalayan orogen in the LGM simulation. Even though precipitation over the South Asia region is generally lower, this  
758 shift indicates that rainfall on land is more concentrated in this region and that the westward drying gradient along the  
759 orogen is more accentuated than during other time periods investigated here. While there is limited confidence in the

760 global Atmospheric General Circulation Model's abilities to accurately represent meso-scale precipitation patterns [e.g.  
761 Cohen 1990], the simulation warrants careful consideration of possible, geographically non-uniform offsets in  
762 precipitation in investigations of denudation and uplift histories.

763 MH precipitation and temperature in tropical, temperate and high-altitude South Asia is similar to PI  
764 precipitation and temperature, whereas LGM precipitation and temperatures are generally lower (by ca. 100 mm/a and  
765 1-2°C respectively), possibly reducing precipitation-driven erosion and enhancing frost-driven erosion in areas pushed  
766 into a near-zero temperature range during the LGM.

767

#### 768 *Andes, South America*

769 Clusters in South America (Fig. 9), which are somewhat reminiscent of the Köppen and Geiger classification  
770 [Kraus, 2001], remain mostly the same over the last 3 Ma. In the PLIO simulation, the lower-altitude east of the region  
771 is characterized by four distinct climates, which suggests enhanced latitudinal variability in the PLIO climate compared  
772 to PI with respect temperature and precipitation.

773 The largest temperature deviations from PI values are derived for the PLIO simulation in the (tropical and  
774 temperate) Andes, where temperatures exceed PI values by 5°C. On the other hand, LGM temperatures in the Andes are  
775 ca. 2-4°C below PI values in the same region (Fig 7 g and h). In the LGM simulation, tropical South America  
776 experiences ca. 50 mm/a less precipitation, the temperate Andes receive ca. 50 mm/a more precipitation than in PI and  
777 MH simulations. These latitude-specific differences in precipitation changes ought to be considered in attempts to  
778 reconstruct precipitation-specific palaeoerosion rates in the Andes on top of longitudinal climate gradients highlighted  
779 by, e.g., Montgomery et al. [2001].

780

#### 781 *St. Elias Range, South Alaska*

782 South Alaska is subdivided into two wetter and warmer clusters in the south, and two drier, colder clusters in the  
783 north. The latter are characterised by increased seasonal temperature variability due to being located at higher latitudes  
784 (Fig. 12). The different equator-to-pole temperature gradients for LGM and PLIO may affect the intensity of the Pacific  
785 North American Teleconnection (PNA) [Barnston and Livzey, 1987], which has significant influence on temperatures  
786 and precipitation, especially in southeast Alaska, and may in turn result in changes in regional precipitation and  
787 temperature patterns and thus on glacier mass balance. Changes in the Pacific Decadal Oscillation, which is related to  
788 the PNA pattern, has previously been connected to differences in Late Holocene precipitation [Barron and Anderson,  
789 2011]. While this climate cluster pattern appears to be a robust feature for the considered climate states, and hence over  
790 the recent geologic history, the LGM sets itself apart from PI and MH climates by generally lower precipitation (20-40  
791 mm) and lower temperatures (3-5°C, Fig. 10, 11), which may favour frost driven weathering during glacial climate

792 states [e.g. Andersen et al., 2015; Marshall et al. 2015] in unglaciated areas, whereas glacial processes would have  
793 dominated most of this region as it was covered by ice. Simulation PLIO is distinguished by temperatures that exceed  
794 PI and MH conditions by ca. 2°C, and by larger temperature and precipitation value ranges, possibly modifying  
795 temperature- and precipitation-dependent erosional processes in the region of South Alaska.

796

#### 797 *Cascade Range, US Pacific Northwest*

798 In all time slices, the geographic climate patterns, based on the cluster analysis (Fig. 15), represents an increase  
799 in the degree of continentality from the wetter coastal climates to the further inland located climates with greater  
800 seasonal temperature amplitude and lower precipitation and precipitation amplitude (Fig 15 e-h). The most notable  
801 difference between the time slices is the strong cooling during the LGM, when temperatures are ca. 13°C (Fig. 13, 14)  
802 below those of other time periods. Given that the entire investigated region was covered by ice (Fig 13), we can assume  
803 a shift to glacially dominated processes.

804

#### 805 **4.4 Comparison of simulated and observed precipitation differences**

806 The predicted precipitation differences reported in this study were compared with observed (proxy record)  
807 palaeoprecipitation change. Proxy based precipitation reconstructions for the MH and LGM are presented for South  
808 Asia and South America for the purpose of assessing ECHAM5 model performance, and for identifying inconsistencies  
809 between neighbouring proxy data. Due to the repeated glaciations, detailed terrestrial proxy records for the time slices  
810 investigated here are not available, to the best of our knowledge, for the Alaskan and Pacific NW USA studies.  
811 Although marine records and records of glacier extent are available in these regions, the results from them do not  
812 explicitly provide estimates of wetter/drier, or colder/warmer conditions that can be spatially compared to the  
813 simulation estimates. For these two areas with no available records, the ECHAM5 predicted results therefore provide  
814 predictions from which future studies can formulate testable hypotheses to evaluate.

815 The palaeoclimate changes in terrestrial proxy records compiled here are reported as “wetter than today”, “drier  
816 than today” or “the same as today” for each of the study locations, and plotted on top of the simulation-based difference  
817 maps as upward facing blue triangles, downward facing red triangles and grey circles respectively (Fig. 16, 17). The  
818 numbers listed next to those indicators are the ID numbers assigned to the studies compiled for this comparison and are  
819 associated with a citation provided in the figure captions.

820 In South Asia, 14/26 results from local studies agree with the model predicted precipitation changes for the MH.  
821 The model seems able to reproduce the predominantly wetter conditions on much of the Tibetan plateau, but predicts  
822 slightly drier conditions north of Chengdu, which is not reflected in local reconstructions. The modest mismatch  
823 between ECHAM5 predicted and proxy-based MH climate change in south Asia was also documented by Li et al.,

824 [2017], whose simulations were conducted at a coarser (T106) resolution. Despite these model-proxy differences, we  
825 note that there are significant discrepancies between the proxy data themselves in neighbouring locations in the MH,  
826 highlighting caution in relying solely upon these data for regional palaeoclimate reconstructions. These differences  
827 could result from either poor age-constraints in the reported values, or systematic errors in the transfer functions used to  
828 convert proxy measurements to palaeoclimate conditions. The widespread drier conditions on the Tibetan Plateau and  
829 immediately north of Laos are confirmed by 7/7 of the palaeoprecipitation reconstructions. 23/39 of the reconstructed  
830 precipitation changes agree with model predictions for South America during the MH. The model predicted wetter  
831 conditions in the central Atacama desert, as well as the drier conditions northwest of Santiago are confirmed by most of  
832 the reconstructions. The wetter conditions in southernmost Peru and the border to Bolivia and Chile cannot be  
833 confirmed by local studies. 11/17 of the precipitation reconstructions for the LGM are in agreement with model  
834 predictions. These include wetter conditions in most of Chile. The most notable disagreement can be seen in northeast  
835 Chile at the border to Argentina and Bolivia, where model predicted wetter conditions are not confirmed by reported  
836 reconstructions from local sites.

837 Model performance is, in general, higher for the LGM than for the MH and overall satisfactory given that it  
838 cannot be expected to resolve sub-grid scale differences in reported palaeoprecipitation reconstructions. However, as  
839 mentioned above, it should be noted that some locations (MH of south Asia, and MH of norther Chile) discrepancies  
840 exist between neighbouring proxy samples and highlight the need for caution in how these data are interpreted. Other  
841 potential sources of error resulting in disagreement of simulated and proxy-based precipitation estimates are the model's  
842 shortcomings in simulating orographic precipitation at higher resolutions, and uncertainties in palaeoclimate  
843 reconstructions at the local sites. In summary, although some differences are evident in both the model-proxy data  
844 comparison and between neighbouring proxy data themselves, the above comparison highlights an overall good  
845 agreement between the model and data for the south Asia and South American study areas. Thus, although future  
846 advances in GCM model parameterisations and new or improved palaeoclimate proxy techniques are likely, the  
847 palaeoclimate changes documented here are found to be in general robust and provide a useful framework for future  
848 studies investigating how these predicted changes in palaeoclimate impact denudation.

849

#### 850 **4.5 Conclusions**

851 We present a statistical cluster-analysis-based description of the geographic coverage of possible distinct  
852 regional expressions of climates from four different time slices (Fig. 6, 9, 12, 15). These are determined with respect to  
853 a selection of variables that characterize the climate of the region and may be relevant to weathering and erosional  
854 processes. While the geographic distribution of climate remains similar throughout time (as indicated by results of four  
855 different climate states representative for the climate of the last 3 Ma), results for the PLIO simulation suggests more



856 climatic variability east of the Andes (with respect to near-surface temperature, seasonal temperature amplitude,  
857 precipitation, seasonal precipitation amplitude and seasonal u-wind and v-wind speeds). Furthermore, the wetter  
858 climates in the South Asia region retreat eastward along the Himalayan orogen for the LGM simulation, this is due to  
859 decreased precipitation along the western part of the orogen and enhanced precipitation on the eastern end, possibly  
860 signifying more localised high erosion rates.

861 Most global trends of the high-resolution LGM and PLIO simulations conducted here are in general agreement  
862 with previous studies [Otto-Bliesner et al., 2006; Braconnot et al., 2007; Wei and Lohmann, 2012; Lohmann et al.,  
863 2013; Zhang et al., 2013b, 2014; Stepanek and Lohmann, 2012]. The MH does not deviate notably from the PI, the  
864 LGM is relatively dry and cool, while the PLIO is comparably wet and warm. While the simulated regional changes in  
865 temperature and precipitation usually agree with the sign (or direction) of the simulated global changes, there are  
866 region-specific differences in the magnitude and direction. For example, the LGM precipitation of the Tropical Andes  
867 does not deviate significantly from PI precipitation, whereas LGM precipitation in the Temperate Andes is enhanced.

868 Comparisons to local, proxy-based reconstructions of MH and LGM precipitation in South Asia and South  
869 America reveal satisfactory performance of the model in simulating the reported differences. The model performs better  
870 for the LGM than the MH. We note however that compilations of proxy data such as we present here, also identify  
871 inconsistencies between neighbouring proxy data themselves, warranting caution in the extent to which both proxy data  
872 and palaeoclimate models are interpreted for MH climate change in south Asia, and western South America.

873 The changes in regional climatology presented here are manifested, in part, by small to large magnitude changes  
874 in fluvial and hillslope relevant parameters such as precipitation and temperature. For the regions investigated here we  
875 find that precipitation differences between the PI, MH, LGM, and PLIO are in many areas around +/- 200-600 mm/yr,  
876 and locally can reach maximums of +/- 1000-2000 mm/yr (Figs. 4, 7, 10, 13). In areas where significant precipitation  
877 increases are accompanied by changes in ice extent, such as parts of southern Alaska during the LGM, we would expect  
878 a shift in the erosional regime to glacier dominated processes. Temperature differences between these same time periods  
879 are around 1-4 °C in many places, but reach maximum values of 8-10 °C. Many of these maxima in the temperature  
880 differences geographically coincide with changes in ice sheet extent and must therefore be interpreted as part of a  
881 different erosional process domains. However, we also observe large temperature differences (~5°C) in unglaciated  
882 areas that would be affected by hillslope, frost cracking, and fluvial processes. The magnitude of these differences are  
883 not trivial, and will likely impact fluvial and hillslope erosion and sediment transport, as well as biotic and abiotic  
884 weathering. The regions of large magnitude changes in precipitation and temperature documented here (Figs. 4, 7, 10,  
885 13) offer the highest potential for future observational studies interested in quantifying the impact of climate change on  
886 denudation and weathering rates.

887

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889 The model simulations presented in this study are freely available to interested persons by contacting S. Mutz or T.  
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899

900

901 **Figure Captions**

902

903 **Figure 1** Topography for regions (a) tropical South Asia, (b) temperate South Asia, (c) high altitude South Asia, (d)  
904 temperate South America, (e) tropical South America, (f) temperate Andes, (g) tropical Andes, SE Alaska and Casca-  
905 dia.

906 **Figure 2** Global PI annual mean near-surface temperatures (a), and deviations of MH, LGM and PLIO annual mean  
907 near-surface temperatures from PI values (b). Units are °C and insignificant ( $p < 99\%$ ) differences (as determined by  
908 a t-test) are greyed out.

909 **Figure 3** Global PI annual mean precipitation (a), and deviations of MH, LGM and PLIO annual mean near-surface  
910 temperatures from PI values (b). Units are mm/yr.

911 **Figure 4** PI annual mean near-surface temperatures (a), and deviations of MH, LGM and PLIO annual mean near-sur-  
912 face temperatures from PI values (b) for the South Asia region. Insignificant ( $p < 99\%$ ) differences (as determined  
913 by a t-test) are greyed out.

914 **Figure 5** PI, MH, LGM and PLIO annual mean precipitation in (a) tropical South Asia, (b) temperate South Asia, and  
915 (c) high-altitude South Asia; PI, MH, LGM and PLIO annual mean temperatures in (d) tropical South Asia, (e) tem-

916 perate South Asia, and (f) high-altitude South Asia. For each time slice, the minimum, lower 25<sup>th</sup> percentile, median,  
917 upper 75<sup>th</sup> percentile and maximum are plotted.

918 **Figure 6** Geographical coverage and characterization of climate classes C<sub>1</sub>- C<sub>6</sub> based on cluster-analysis of 8 variables  
919 (near surface temperature, seasonal near surface temperature amplitude, total precipitation, seasonal precipitation  
920 amplitude, u-wind in January and July, v-wind in January and July) in the South Asia region. The geographical cov-  
921 erage of the climates C<sub>1</sub>- C<sub>6</sub> is shown on the left for PI (a), MH (b), LGM (c) and PLIO (d); the complementary,  
922 time-slice specific characterization of C<sub>1</sub>- C<sub>6</sub> for PI (e), MH (f), LGM (g) and PLIO (h) is shown on the right.

923 **Figure 7** PI annual mean near-surface temperatures (a), and deviations of MH, LGM and PLIO annual mean near-sur-  
924 face temperatures from PI values (b) for western South America. Insignificant (p < 99%) differences (as determined  
925 by a t-test) are greyed out.

926 **Figure 8** PI, MH, LGM and PLIO annual mean precipitation in (a) tropical South America, (b) temperate South Amer-  
927 ica, (c) tropical Andes, and (d) temperate Andes; PI, MH, LGM and PLIO annual mean temperatures in (e) tropical  
928 South America, (f) temperate South America, (g) tropical Andes, and (h) temperate Andes. For each time slice, the  
929 minimum, lower 25<sup>th</sup> percentile, median, upper 75<sup>th</sup> percentile and maximum are plotted.

930 **Figure 9** Geographical coverage and characterization of climate classes C<sub>1</sub>- C<sub>6</sub> based on cluster-analysis of 8 variables  
931 (near surface temperature, seasonal near surface temperature amplitude, precipitation, seasonal precipitation amp-  
932 litude, u-wind in January and July, v-wind in January and July) in western South America. The geographical cover-  
933 age of the climates C<sub>1</sub>- C<sub>6</sub> is shown on the left for PI (a), MH (b), LGM (c) and PLIO (d); the complementary, time-  
934 slice specific characterization of C<sub>1</sub>- C<sub>6</sub> for PI (e), MH (f), LGM (g) and PLIO (h) is shown on the right.

935 **Figure 10** PI annual mean near-surface temperatures (a), and deviations of MH, LGM and PLIO annual mean near-sur-  
936 face temperatures from PI values (b) for the South Alaska region. Insignificant (p < 99%) differences (as determined  
937 by a t-test) are greyed out.

938 **Figure 11** PI, MH, LGM and PLIO annual mean precipitation (a), and mean annual temperatures (b) in South Alaska.  
939 For each time slice, the minimum, lower 25<sup>th</sup> percentile, median, upper 75<sup>th</sup> percentile and maximum are plotted.

940 **Figure 12** Geographical coverage of climate classes C<sub>1</sub>- C<sub>4</sub> based on cluster-analysis of 4 variables (near surface tem-  
941 perature, seasonal near surface temperature amplitude, total precipitation, seasonal total precipitation amplitude) in  
942 southern Alaska. The geographical coverage of the climates C<sub>1</sub>- C<sub>4</sub> is shown on the left for PI (a), MH (b), LGM (c)

943 and PLIO (d); the complementary, time-slice specific characterization of C<sub>1</sub>- C<sub>6</sub> for PI (e), MH (f), LGM (g) and  
944 PLIO (h) is shown on the right.

945 **Figure 13** PI annual mean near-surface temperatures (a), and deviations of MH, LGM and PLIO annual mean near-sur-  
946 face temperatures from PI values (b) for the US Pacific Northwest. Insignificant ( $p < 99\%$ ) differences (as determ-  
947 ined by a t-test) are greyed out.

948 **Figure 14** PI, MH, LGM and PLIO annual mean precipitation (a), and annual mean temperatures (b) in the Cascades,  
949 US Pacific Northwest. For each time slice, the minimum, lower 25<sup>th</sup> percentile, median, upper 75<sup>th</sup> percentile and  
950 maximum are plotted.

951 **Figure 15** Geographical coverage and characterization of climate classes C<sub>1</sub>- C<sub>4</sub> based on cluster-analysis of 4 variables  
952 (near surface temperature, seasonal near surface temperature amplitude, total precipitation, seasonal total precipita-  
953 tion amplitude) in the Cascades, US Pacific Northwest. The geographical coverage of the climates C<sub>1</sub>- C<sub>4</sub> is shown  
954 on the left for PI (a), MH (b), LGM (c) and PLIO (d); the complementary, time-slice specific characterization of C<sub>1</sub>-  
955 C<sub>6</sub> for PI (e), MH (f), LGM (g) and PLIO (h) is shown on the right.

956 **Figure 16** Simulated annual mean precipitation deviations of MH (left) and LGM (right) from PI values in South Asia,  
957 and temporally corresponding proxy-based reconstructions, indicating wetter (upward facing blue triangles), drier  
958 (downward facing red triangles) or similar (grey circles) conditions in comparison with modern climate. MH proxy-  
959 based precipitation differences are taken from Mügler et al. (2010) (66), Wischnewski et al. (2011) (67), Mischke et  
960 al. (2008), Wischnewski et al. (2011), Herzsuh et al. (2009) (68), Yanhong et al. (2006) (69), Morrill et al. (2006)  
961 (70), Wang et al. (2002) (71), Wuennemann et al. (2006) (72), Zhang et al. (2011), Morinaga et al. (1993),  
962 Kashiwaya et al. (1995) (73), Shen et al. (2005) (74), Liu et al. (2014) (75), Herzsuh et al. (2006) (76), Zhang and  
963 Mischke (2009) (77), Nishimura et al. (2014) (78), Yu and Lai (2014) (79), Gasse et al. (1991) (80), Van Campo et  
964 al. (1996) (81), Demske et al. (2009) (82), Kramer et al. (2010) (83), Herzsuh et al. (2006) (84), Hodell et al.  
965 (1999)(85), Hodell et al. (1999) (86), Shen et al. (2006) (87), Tang et al. (2000) (88), Tang et al. (2000) (89), Zhou et  
966 al. (2002) (90), Liu et al. (1998) (91), Asashi (2010)(92), Kotila et al. (2009) (93), Kotila et al. (2000) (94), Wang et  
967 al. (2002) (95), Hu et al. (2014) (96), Hodell et al. (1999) (97), Hodell et al. (1999) (98).

968 **Figure 17** Simulated annual mean precipitation deviations of MH (left) and LGM (right) from PI values in South Amer-  
969 ica, and temporally corresponding proxy-based reconstructions, indicating wetter (upward facing blue triangles),  
970 drier (downward facing red triangles) or similar (grey circles) conditions in comparison with modern climate. MH

971 proxy-based precipitation differences are taken from Bird et al. (2011) (1), Hansen et al (1994) (2), Hansen et al  
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