Reducing Numerical Diffusion in Dynamical Coupling between Atmosphere and Ocean in Community Earth System Model (CESM), version 1.2.1

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November 24, 2022

Abstract

Climate models contain atmospheric and oceanic components that are coupled together to simulate the thermodynamic and dynamic processes during air-sea interactions. Community Earth System Model (CESM, version 1.2.1) is a state-of-the-art coupled model that is widely used and participates in Coupled Model Intercomparison Projects. Community Atmospheric Model (CAM), the atmospheric component of CESM, is based on the finite-volume dynamic core, which utilizes staggered Arakawa-D grids. However, the dynamics-physics (D-P) coupling in CAM causes the prognostic winds of the dynamic core be interpolated onto non-staggered locations, which affects the wind structure for computing the air-sea interaction and dynamical coupling. In this study we propose a new scheme that eliminates the extra interpolation during D-P coupling for the atmosphere-ocean interaction. By numerical experiments and comparative study of the new scheme, we show that it improves the simulated climatology in key regions including eastern-boundary upwelling regions and Southern Oceans. In turn, existing problems of the model, such as warm SST biases, are reduced. The new scheme contain code changes in CAM and the coupler, and they are provided as open-source files. Similar approaches can also be adopted in coupled models that utilize the atmospheric components with on staggered dynamics and physics, such as spectral-element method based CAM.

Reducing Numerical Diffusion in Dynamical Coupling between Atmosphere and Ocean in Community Earth System Model (CESM), version 1.2.1

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Key Points:

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10	• The dynamical coupling in CESM is improved to reduce the numerical diffusion
11	in dynamics-physics coupling in the atmospheric component.
12	• Improvements in SST are attained for upwelling regions and Southern Oceans, by
13	direct interpolation for atmospheric winds from dynamic core.
14	• The new scheme can be applied to other models with staggered dynamic core and
15	physics parameterization.

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16 Abstract

Climate models contain atmospheric and oceanic components that are coupled together 17 to simulate the thermodynamic and dynamic processes during air-sea interactions. Com-18 munity Earth System Model (CESM, version 1.2.1) is a state-of-the-art coupled model 19 that is widely used and participates in Coupled Model Intercomparison Projects. Com-20 munity Atmospheric Model (CAM), the atmospheric component of CESM, is based on 21 the finite-volume dynamic core, which utilizes staggered Arakawa-D grids. However, the 22 dynamics-physics (D-P) coupling in CAM causes the prognostic winds of the dynamic 23 core be interpolated onto non-staggered locations, which affects the wind structure for 24 computing the air-sea interaction and dynamical coupling. In this study we propose a 25 new scheme that eliminates the extra interpolation during D-P coupling for the atmosphere-26 ocean interaction. By numerical experiments and comparative study of the new scheme, 27 we show that it improves the simulated climatology in key regions including eastern-boundary 28 upwelling regions and Southern Oceans. In turn, existing problems of the model, such 20 as warm SST biases, are reduced. The new scheme contain code changes in CAM and 30 the coupler, and they are provided as open-source files. Similar approaches can also be 31 adopted in coupled models that utilize the atmospheric components with on staggered 32 dynamics and physics, such as spectral-element method based CAM. 33

³⁴ Plain Language Summary

Coupled models simulate air-sea interaction by coupling components models to-35 gether. However, in state-of-the-art models such as CESM, the atmospheric model con-36 tains dynamic core and physic parameterization that are not differentiated during air-37 sea interaction. We propose a new dynamical coupling scheme specific for Finite-Volume 38 version of the atmospheric component in CESM. Model biases in key regions are reduced 39 with the new scheme, including upwelling regions and sea ice modeling in the Southern 40 Oceans. The scheme can be applied to other models to better exploit the dynamic core's 41 capability by reducing the numerical diffusion during the dynamics-physics coupling for 42 air-sea interactions. 43

44 1 Introduction

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Background of AO coupling in climate models

Coupled models are indispensable tools for climate studies (Flato et al., 2013) and 46 key applications such as operational forecasts (Jia et al., 2015). State of the art coupled 47 models, including those participating in Coupled Model Intercomparison Projects (WCRP-48 CMIP, 2019, accessed 2019-Dec-31), usually consist of component models of atmospheric 49 general circulation models (AGCM) and oceanic general circulation models (OGCM). 50 Common to coupled models are also other components including land surface model, sea 51 ice model, biogeochemistry processes, etc. Due to the sheer complexity of these compo-52 nent models, they are usually: (1) developed independently, and (2) coupled together 53 in an on-line fashion. The dynamical and thermodynamical processes during air-sea in-54 teraction are usually carried out by flux couplers (Craig et al., 2012) through the com-55 putation of boundary processes and the exchange of momentum and tracer fluxes. Usu-56 ally, the atmospheric and oceanic components adopt different spatial discretization and 57 grids, and the sea ice component adopts the same grid as the oceanic component. There-58 fore, the flux coupler is also responsible for the spatial and temporal interpolation of fluxes 59 between the them. 60

\mathbf{CESM}

Community Earth System Model (CESM) is a state-of-the-art coupled climate model
 developed at National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR). It couples component
 models to carry out climate simulations, and it actively participates in Coupled Model
 Intercomparison Projects. In this study, we use CESM version 1.2.1 (Hurrell et al., 2013)

for analysis and model improvements. The major component models of CESM includes: 66 the Community Atmosphere Model version 4 (CAM4) (Neale et al., 2013), with a finite-67 volume (FV) dynamical core (Lin, 2004), the Parallel Ocean Program version 2 (POP2) 68 (Smith et al., 2010; Danabasoglu et al., 2012), Community Land Model version 4 (CLM4) 69 (Oleson et al., 2015) and Community Ice Code version 4 (CICE4) (Hunke & Lipscomb, 70 2008). The components are coupled by the flux coupler CPL7 (Craig et al., 2012). For 71 CESM version 1.2.1, CPL7 is in charge of the execution and time evolution of the com-72 ponent models, communicates interfacial states and fluxes between components and car-73 ries out mapping flux and other calculations. Due to the computational burden of high-74 resolution models, CESM based CMIP experiments are mainly based on 1° resolution 75 settings, which is typical among models participating in CMIP. 76

Grid staggering & Interpolation

In coupled models such as CESM, both the atmospheric and the ocean component 78 consist of dynamic core for resolvable fluid dynamics and physical parameterizations that 79 deal with unresolved processes. As is common in finite difference (or finite difference-80 finite volume) method based models, the dynamic core is constructed on structured grids, 81 with prognostic variables defined on staggered locations on the grid (Arakawa & Lamb, 82 1977). The grid staggering usually differentiates between velocities and state variables, 83 and it improves the effective spatial resolution of the dynamic core. Physics parameter-84 ization, on the contrary, are usually carried out on non-staggered grid locations. For ex-85 ample, CAM adopts Finite Volume dynamic core (Lin, 2004) with Arakawa-D grid stag-86 gering in the horizontal direction. CAM also contains a dynamic core based on spectral-87 element (SE) method (Dennis et al., 2005) which enables high-precision and flexible mod-88 eling (X. Huang et al., 2016). Recently, Herrington et al. (2019) introduced similar grid staggering between the SE dynamic core and a quasi-equal-area physics parameteriza-90 tion scheme. Therefore, the exists a general interpolation process between the dynam-91 ics and the parameterization in atmospheric models such as CAM. The coupling between 92 CAM and the oceanic and sea ice component in CESM is carried out for state variable, 93 fluxes, and atmospheric winds by separate processes. For the dynamic coupling (i.e., the 94 atmospheric winds), the process involving interpolations are shown in Figure 1. The in-95 terpolation of wind vectors from the FV dynamic core is carried out from D-points to 96 A-points $(U/V_AD \rightarrow U/V_AA)$. After the tendencies by the physics parameterizations 97 are added to the winds (through "Physics Run1"), the wind vectors on the A-points are 98 passed to the coupler, which carries out another interpolation process to map the winds 99 onto the oceanic component's grid. As is shown in Zarzycki et al. (2016), the interpo-100 lation grid during the dynamic coupling can play an important role in simulating key 101 phenomenon of tropical cyclones. 102

Paper outline

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In this paper we propose an improvement to the dynamic coupling process between 104 the atmospheric and the oceanic component in CESM. Since the prognostic variables of 105 atmospheric winds by the dynamic core of CAM-FV is defined on D-points of the Arakawa 106 grid, the interpolation process during the dynamics-physics transition inherently intro-107 duces numerical diffusion to the wind field and its structure. Potentially this downgrades 108 the effective resolution of wind fields for the oceanic component. The new coupling scheme 109 exploits the atmospheric winds from the dynamic core and the effects on winds from physics 110 schemes, by differentiating them during the dynamic coupling process. In the following 111 up part of the paper, in Section 2, we introduce the details of CESM and its component 112 models, and the design and implementation of the new coupling scheme. In Section 3, 113 we show the benefit of the new scheme through numerical experiments based on CMIP 114 and analysis of two typical regions for air-sea interaction. Further, Section 4 summarizes 115 the article, and provides discussion of potential application in future developments of cou-116 pled models including CESM. 117



Figure 1. Dynamical coupling of CAM-FV and POP in CESM.

¹¹⁸ 2 Atmosphere-ocean dynamical coupling in CESM

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2.1 CESM and atmosphere-ocean dynamic coupling

In this study we adopt NCAR CESM version 1.2.1, and use the atmospheric com-120 ponent CAM-FV (Lin, 2004), the oceanic component POP2 (Danabasoglu et al., 2012), 121 and the sea ice component of CICE version 4 (Hunke & Lipscomb, 2010). The dynamic 122 core of CAM-FV is based on the latitude-longitude grid, and carries out discretization 123 and numerical integration of the hydrostatic approximation of the atmospheric circula-124 tion with a finite-volume framework. In specific, the spatial discretization and prognos-125 tic variable layout of CAM-FV is on the Arakawa D-grid (Arakawa & Lamb, 1977), with 126 atmospheric winds located on the north/south (for U-wind) and east/west (for V-wind) 127 staggered locations. We use AD to denote the D-points of the D-grid of CAM-FV. Physics 128 parameterization schemes of CAM-FV include deep-shallow convection, clouds, gravity 129 wave drag, etc. These schemes, together with the dynamics-physics (D-P) coupling, are 130 carried on the A-grid, which denote as AA (Fig. 2.a). The D-P coupling involves inter-131 polation of prognostic wind velocities from Arakawa-D to Arakawa-A points at each time 132 step. After physical parameterization computation on A-grid, the tendencies to prog-133 nostic variables (including wind vectors) are added, and the final prognostic wind vari-134 ables, state variables and fluxes are passed to CPL7 for coupling. After coupling, the sec-135 ond half of the physics schemes and dynamic core computation are carried out, includ-136 ing: vertical diffusion, Rayleigh friction, gravity wave drag, etc. On the other hand, POP2 137 utilizes Arakawa-B grid and a general orthogonal global grid, which is different from the 138 Lat-Lon grid of CAM-FV. Therefore, the exchange of (tracer and momentum) fluxes, 139 the air-sea interaction, is carried out between CAM-FV and POP2 through an interpo-140 lation process. Specifically, the interpolated wind vector is targeted at the cell center lo-141 cations of the oceanic model's grid (denoted OA). For the coupling between CAM-FV 142 and CICE in polar regions, since in CESM CICE and POP2 utilize the same grid, the 143 interpolation and the inherent dynamical coupling between CAM-FV and CICE is the 144 same as that between CAM-FV and POP2. For CESM, various coupling variables are 145 treated differently: (1) for state variables, such as temperature, it is carried out with a 146 bi-linear interpolator; (2) for fluxes, such as sensible and latent heat, a conservative in-147

terpolator is adopted; (3) for the dynamical coupling, i.e., for atmospheric winds, a highorder interpolator based on local recovery based on patches is adopted.

A typical scenario of dynamical coupling between CAM-FV and POP2 (or CICE4 150 when ice is present) is illustrated in Fig. 2.a. State variables and tracers of CAM-FV 151 are located at the centers of the red cell (ATM-AA: red circle points) whereas the hor-152 izontal velocity U and V of the dynamic core are located at the south/north and west/east 153 edges of the cell (ATM-AD: red cross points), respectively. Centers of the cells (ATM-154 AA) are also where the physics parameterization is carried out, and in the model, they 155 cast the influence by adding a physical tendencies to the prognostic variables, including 156 surface winds. Before coupling to the ocean, the winds on the bottom level of CAM-FV 157 defined on the A-point contains two parts: (1) the winds interpolated from the dynamic 158 core, and (2) the physical tendency to the winds from the physical parameterization. Then, 159 these winds are passed to the coupler, which carries out the boundary layer computa-160 tion and passed to the ocean and sea ice components (Fig. 1 and 2.a). 161

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2.2 Improved coupling scheme

To remove extra interpolation of dynamic core to physical space and associated nu-163 merical diffusion, we try to decouple dynamics-physics process in CAM-FV as follows. 164 The improved atmosphere-ocean dynamical coupling scheme is shown in Figure 3. The 165 main changes are in CAM-FV and CPL7. In CAM-FV, the original interpolation of prog-166 nostic winds from ATM-AD grid to ATM-AA grid in first dynamics-physics coupling and 167 interpolation from ATM-AA grid to ATM-AD grid in second dynamics-physics couple 168 process are kept the same. The difference from the original scheme is that the addition 169 between prognostic winds U/V and physical tendencies $\Delta U/V$ is no longer applied. Mean-170 while the physical tendencies of wind on ATM-AA grid produced by physical parame-171 terization are also recorded, and together with wind vectors on ATM-AD grid they are 172 all passed to coupler. From the atmosphere-ocean coupling's perspective, CPL is respon-173 sible for two parts of work. First, U/V_{AD} and $\Delta U/V_{AA}$ are interpolated from atmosphere 174 ATM-AD grid and ATM-AA grid to ocean OCN-OA grid, respectively. Second, the in-175 terpolation results are added together to compute the final wind vectors on ocean OCN-176 OA grid. In short, when coupling wind vectors from atmosphere to ocean in original CAM-177 FV scheme, prognostic winds on ATM-AD grid are generally interpolated to ATM-AA 178 grid, then remapped to ocean OCN-OA (shown as Fig. 2.a). The new scheme, as shown 179 in Fig. 2.b with bilinear interpolator, eliminates the extra interpolation during D-P cou-180 pling within CAM-FV. Therefore, wind vectors are interpolated directly from ATM-AD 181 grid to OCN-OA grid without through ATM-AA grid. For the sake of simplicity, Fig. 182 2 demonstrate the scheme with bilinear interpolations. In CESM, patch recovery method 183 is utilized for mapping wind vectors, in which about 20 nearby vector points in CAM-184 FV are used for the interpolation to each ocean grid location. For the new scheme, since 185 U-wind and V-wind reside on different geophysical locations, two independent and dif-186 ferent interpolators are constructed with patch recovery method. 187

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2.3 Model configuration and implementation details

For CESM (version 1.2.1), we use standard configuration of CAM-FV with $0.9^{\circ} \times 1.25^{\circ}$ resolution (F09) and POP2/CICE4 with 1° nominal resolution (GX1V6) for implementation and test. For CAM-FV, the model contains 26 vertical levels. For POP2 and CICE, the model grid is a dipolar grid with the north pole shifted onto Greenland, and the grid has 60 vertical layers. This resolution configuration is also used by NCAR for CMIP experiments, including CMIP5 and CMIP6.

In order to support the new dynamic coupling scheme, modifications to the atmospheric component (CAM-FV) and coupler (CPL7) are made to the CESM codebase. In specific, the following changes are carried out. It is worth to note that the code changes



Figure 2. Schematics of atmosphere-ocean dynamical coupling scheme: (a) original scheme; (b) new scheme in which only the interpolation of winds from the dynamic core is shown. Bilinear interpolation is shown for the sake of simplicity.



Figure 3. Improved atmosphere-ocean dynamical coupling scheme in CESM.

Experiment	Atmosphere model	Ocean model	Description
F09	$\label{eq:CAM-FV} \left(0.9^{\circ} \times 1.25^{\circ} \right)$	POP (~ 1°)	Pre-Industrial Control run, initializes from steady state and integrates for 100 years
Mod_cp	CAM-FV $(0.9^{\circ} \times 1.25^{\circ})$	POP (~ 1°)	Same as F09, but with the new ATM-OCN dynamic coupling scheme.

Table 1. Model and experiments

are specific to CAM-FV, and not limited to this resolution configuration. Also, for the interpolation of $\Delta U/V$ from the ATM-AA grid to OCN-A grid, the original interpolators are still used.

- 1. In CAM-FV, new definitions of variables that record: (1) U/V_{AD} (on ATM-AD grid) and (2) $\Delta U/V$ (on ATM-AA grid);
 - 2. During coupling, the variables above are passed to CPL7;

3. In CPL7, two new interpolation operators are defined, in order to carry out the interpolation of U/V_{AD} onto the ocean's grid;

4. In CPL7, the codes are added for the interpolation of all the 4 variables (U/V_{AD}) and $\Delta U/V$ and the addition to produce the final atmospheric wind vector that is passed to the ocean component.

The code changes include in total 9 FORTRAN files and 4 configuration files in the existing codebase. They are provided in open-source format, as attachments to this article. The new interpolators for U/V_{AD} between FCAM-FV (F09) and POP2/CICE4 (G16) are also provided as standard interpolator data files. Furthermore, we carried out consistency tests of the implementation. The new scheme guarantees perfect restart, with the exemption of new restart states.

3 Experiments and evaluation

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Two comparative CESM experiments are carried out, as shown in Table 1. They 216 are both fully coupled simulations, based on pre-industrial (piControl) forcing in CMIP5 217 (Taylor et al., 2012). Under piControl, the climatic forcings are fixed at the level of year 218 1850, including greenhouse gases, ozone, aerosols and solar irradiance. This experiment 219 is usually used to evaluate and study the equilibrium state and climatology of the cou-220 pled model. For the two experiments in this study, the model configurations of both at-221 mospheric and oceanic components are aligned, with the only difference being the new 222 interpolation scheme. We use F09 to denote the experiment with the original scheme, 223 and Mop_cp the new one. The resolution and grid settings are F09 and G16 respectively, 224 which is typical of climate simulations. F09 and Mod_cp are typical piControl runs: the 225 model is initialized from a steady state, and integrated for 100 years under pre-industrial 226 forcings. in order to eliminate the effect of spin-up, we use the last 50 years of results 227 for analysis. 228

We mainly use three datasets for the validation of the simulation results. In order to align with the pre-industrial forcings, the climatologies for each dataset are adopted for further validations. The first dataset is the Sea Surface Temperature (SST) observational dataset in Hurrell et al. (2008). The data merges monthly mean Hadley Centre sea ice and SST dataset version 1 (HadISST1) and the National Oceanic and Atmo-



Figure 4. SST in Mod_cp (a) and comparison with climatological SST in Hurrell et al. (2008) (b). Difference between Mod_cp and climatology is shown in panel c, and that between Mod_cp and F09 in panel d. 50 years of simulation after spin-up is used to compute the statistical significant changes in SST in Mod_cp as compared with F09 (dotted in panel d).

spheric Administration weekly optimum interpolation SST version 2 (OISST V2). The 234 merged Hadley-OI SST and sea ice concentration data sets were specifically developed 235 as the surface forcing data for AMIP simulations of the CAM model. We use it as the 236 climatological record for comparison with pre-industrial runs with the original and the 237 new scheme in CESM. The second dataset is National Centers for Environmental Pre-238 diction (NCEP) Climate Forecast System Reanalysis (CFSR) (Saha et al., 2010). The 239 NCEP/CFSR is a global, high-resolution, fully-coupled ocean-atmosphere system with 240 coupled assimilation, and it provides the estimation of dynamics and thermodynamics 241 of both atmosphere and ocean. The horizontal resolution of the CFSR atmospheric com-242 ponent is about 38 km. Specifically, we use the monthly wind stress fields during 1979-243 2008 for the comparison of our experiments. Third, we use the monthly sea ice concen-244 tration (SIC) fields provided by National Snow and Ice Data Center (NSIDC), which are 245 produced from passive microwave satellite remote sensing by Scanning Multi-channel Mi-246 crowave Radiometer (SMMR) and Special Sensor Microwave Imager (SMMI) (Stroeve 247 & Meier, 2018). The monthly SIC fields from 1979 to 2000 are used to produce a clima-248 tological annual cycle of sea ice concentration. 249

Figure 4 shows the multi-year annual mean sea-surface temperature (SST) fields 250 of Mod_cp and the differences against climatology and F09. Overall, in Mod_cp, a rea-251 sonable global SST is attained. Compared with climatology, the most prominent SST 252 biases for Mod_cp is present in the following regions: (1) in Southern Oceans there is preva-253 lent cold bias; (2) in Western Boundary Currents (WBC) and their extensions, there is 254 cold and warm biases caused by the specific location path and separation of WBCs; (3) 255 in eastern boundary regions the warm biases manifest for both Pacific Ocean and At-256 lantic Ocean. These features in biases are in alignment with existing studies with CESM 257 (Gent et al., 2010). The new scheme simulates different climatology than the original 258

scheme (panel d), with prominent differences in the following regions. First, in the south-259 east basin of the Pacific and Atlantic Ocean, the new scheme simulates colder SST, which 260 compensates with the warm bias in these regions. Second, to contrast, the new scheme 261 simulates a warmer warm pool. Third, in the Northern Pacific, a see-saw pattern of SST 262 difference emerges, which is similar to both the observational Pacific Decadal Oscilla-263 tion (PDO) pattern and that simulated by CESM. This may be due to the limited length 264 of 50 years for fully analyze the PDO due to the long period of PDO and the ensuing 265 difference in PDO phases of these two simulations. Lastly, in the Southern Oceans, the 266 new scheme generally reduces the SST bias. 267

We further examine the effect of the new scheme on two regions with representa-268 tive dynamical coupling processes. They are: (1) Eastern Boundary Upwelling Systems 269 (EBUS), and (2) Southern Oceans (SO). EBUS are located at the eastern boundaries 270 of the tropical and subtropical oceans, and they are charactered by strong upwelling pro-271 cess driven by alongshore prevailing wind. Upwelling systems bring cold nutrient-rich 272 deep water to the ocean surface, leading to the formation of cooling and high biologi-273 cal productivity area. The physical process in EBUS is extremely sensible to alongshore 274 wind structure and strength. They are biologically productive marine regions, covering 275 less than 2% of the global ocean surface but providing 7% global marine primary pro-276 duction and almost 20% world's fish catches (Pauly & Christensen, 1995). There exists 277 characteristic wind pattern so-called wind drop-off in the zonal direction across the sea-278 land boundary. The meridional wind strength gradually increases when approaching land-279 sea boundary, then decreases abruptly at the proximity of land due to land-sea contrast 280 and land topography. The Southern Ocean is referred to the ocean from the coast of Antarc-281 tica to south of subtropical convergence (about $40^{\circ}S$). The Antarctic Circumpolar Current (ACC) circulates in the clockwise direction, from west to east around Antarctic, which 283 is the dominant circulation feature of SO. ACC is a coupled phenomenon, and it is mainly 284 driven by strong westerly winds in SO. Meanwhile, there exists easterly winds forcing 285 the ocean in a much narrower band around Antarctic coast. The clockwise westerlies in 286 mid latitude and narrow counterclockwise easterlies around near-Antarctic form merid-287 ional gradient of wind speed. Also, the sea ice cover in SO features a pronounced annual 288 cycle, of which the dynamic and thermodynamic processes are also driven by atmospheric 289 wind and oceanic response. Therefore, we further examine the simulation of these re-290 gions with the new scheme, and contrast with the original scheme. Section 3.1 and 3.2 291 includes the specific results for these two regions, respectively. 292

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3.1 Eastern boundary upwelling regions

There are four main EBUS systems in the globe, including California Current Sys-294 tem, Canary Current System, Humboldt Current System and Benguela Current System. 295 However, most coupled general circulation models (CGCMs) suffer from warm SST bi-296 ases in these systems and westward extension ocean areas (Richter & Xie, 2008; Zheng 297 et al., 2011; Wang et al., 2014; Xu, Chang, et al., 2014; Toniazzo & Woolnough, 2014; 298 Richter, 2015; J. Ma et al., 2019). CESM simulations also show large warm biases in EBUS 299 regions, especially in Southeast Pacific (SEP) and Southeast Atlantic (SEA). As shown 300 in Figure 5.a, there exists maximum warm SST bias up to 6 $^{\circ}C$ around 17.5 $^{\circ}S$ in SEA, 301 and over $2 \circ C$ in SEP alongshore region. 302

A large body of existing studies have been investigating the origin of these biases, and many models contain common problems, including CESM. Causes of bias mainly come from different dynamic and thermodynamic processes of ocean and atmosphere component. From the ocean's perspective, model resolution is regarded as one of the major limits. Wahl et al. (2011) concluded that underestimation of presentation of ocean upwelling system was caused by the low resolution of ocean models. Meanwhile, low resolution ocean model is reported to be unable to simulate the process of eddies that transport cold water from coast to the open ocean, resulting in warmer SST and larger bias



Figure 5. Sea Surface Temperature difference: (a) between CESM F09 and Hadley; (b) between Mod_cp and F09. Black dots indicate that the difference is statistically significant at 0.05 significance level.

in this region (Colbo & Weller, 2007). Xu, Li, et al. (2014) suggested oceanic origin of southeast tropical Atlantic bias make a significant contribution to warm bias. For example, the equator-ward Benguela current and poleward Angola current meet between $15 \, ^{\circ}S$ and $17 \, ^{\circ}S$ in southeast tropical Atlantic, forming the Angola-Benguela Font (ABF) (Mohrholz et al., 2001; Shannon et al., 1987). However, modeled ABF position is always located more southward due to the overshooting of Angola current, which has large contribution to warm bias here.

From the atmosphere's perspective, excessive solar radiation into the ocean due to 318 underestimation of stratocumulus decks is widely considered a major cause of SST warm 319 biases in EBUS (C.-C. Ma et al., 1996; B. Huang et al., 2007; Hu et al., 2008). However, 320 some other studies reveal complex cases within this general argument. First, the short-321 wave radiation errors were overcompensated for by larger errors of upward surface long-322 wave radiation and turbulent heat fluxes (De Szoeke et al., 2010; Xu, Chang, et al., 2014; 323 Toniazzo & Woolnough, 2014; Richter, 2015). Second, the solar radiation bias was too 324 small to generate such large SST biases (Large & Danabasoglu, 2006; Wahl et al., 2011). 325 The low cloud bias and stratocumulus-SST feedback only partially explain the bias, so 326 the coastal upwelling process may have more contribution to the SST bias especially close 327 to shore. Besides, coastal upwelling is extremely sensitive to the strength and structure 328 of alongshore wind. First, downwind coastal currents could be generated by alongshore 329 wind (Philander & Yoon, 1982). Second, Ekman offshore currents are generated when 330 nearshore prevailing wind is equatorward, then the deep cold water is upwelled to make 331 up of the divergence of nearshore surface water. Further, negative wind stress due to wind 332 drop-off structure is responsible for the Ekman pumping-driven upwelling. Last but not 333 least, Small et al. (2015) pointed out when negative wind stress is too broad, the Sver-334 drup balance prevails in EBUS, implying more southward transport of equatorial warm 335 water. 336

However, the simulated alongshore wind by CGCMs tends to be much weaker in 337 EBUS. Comparison of modeled wind stress of CESM and CFSR reanalysis is illustrated 338 in Fig. 6.a and b. It is evident that the wind stress shows more north wind bias nearshore, 339 which indicates that the north wind part of subtropical gyre is much smaller alongshore. 340 In particular, the maximum low-level jet deficiency is located at around 30 $^{\circ}S$ of SEP, 341 15 °S and 27.5 °S of SEA, where the maxima of observational wind stress cores are. The 342 results are also consistent with other existing modeling study of wind structures in these 343 regions. In Patricola and Chang (2017), the authors compared the structure and strength 344 of Benguela low-level coastal jet (LLCJ) from observations, reanalyses and atmospheric 345 model simulations. The conclusion was that the LLCJ is characterized by two near-shore 346 maxima of SEA region in finer resolution products and models, including satellite-based 347 SCOW and CCMP, atmospheric reanalyses such as CFSR, and regional climate model 348 simulation at 9, 27 and 81 km resolution. For comparison, modeled maximum wind stress 349 in CESM is far from coast, resulting in weaker upwelling response nearshore. Maximum 350 wind stress is located much closer to the coast at finer atmosphere component of Com-351 munity Climate System Model, leading to increase of coastal upwelling and reduction 352 of SST (Gent et al., 2010; Small et al., 2015). However, most atmosphere components 353 of CGCMs (e.g. those in CMIP5) have coarse resolution (coarser than about 2°), re-354 sulting in poor representation of wind stress and consequent ocean response. These warm 355 biases are also present in ocean general circulation models (OGCMs) forcing by prescribed 356 atmosphere. Not only the ocean systematic errors in ocean models, but also the qual-357 ity of forcing wind plays important role. Small et al. (2015) showed more realistic rep-358 resentation of upwelling system by adopting the 0.5 $^{\circ}$ atmosphere model wind structure 359 near the coast toward observations. To summarize, the structure of surface wind stress 360 and wind stress curl plays a critical role in coastal upwelling and SST pattern in EBUS. 361

The surface atmospheric wind structure and the ocean's response is inherently a dynamical coupling process. With the new coupling scheme, the warm bias is reduced



Figure 6. Wind stress bias of F09 relative to CFSR reanalysis: (a) Southeast Pacific region, (b) Southeast Atlantic region; Wind stress difference between Mod_cp and F09: (c) SEP region, (d) SEA region. Black dots indicate that the difference is statistically significant at 0.05 significance level.

by $5\% \sim 15\%$ in EBUS, compared with the original coupling scheme (Fig. 5.b). The at-364 tribution shows that the new scheme improves the simulation of wind structure and strength. 365 With the new scheme, the coastal low-level jet in these regions are improved in strength. 366 As shown in Fig. 6.c and d, the maximum wind stress is more equator-ward and closer 367 to the coast, bringing wind stress curl larger nearshore. The increased wind stress and 368 wind stress curl nearshore could bring more cold water reaching this region in horizon-369 tal and vertical direction, respectively. As a result, the ocean responds both dynamically 370 and thermodynamically. Fig. 7 shows the difference of ocean subsurface meridional and 371 vertical velocity between the new scheme and original one. Thereinto, meridional veloc-372 ity is averaged of 2.5 ° away from coast, from 35 °S to 5 °S. With the new scheme, more 373 cold subsurface water is transported towards the equator from the south (Fig. 7.a and 374 b). Vertical velocity is calculated at the latitude 30 °S of SEP and 17.5 °S of SEA, where 375 the maximum wind cores are located. As shown, more cold water are upwelled from deep 376 ocean to nearshore surface (Fig. 7.c and d). 377

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3.2 Effects on Southern Oceans and sea ice

The Southern Ocean occupies about 20% area of the world's ocean, if the region 379 is extended to the south of subtropical convergence. SO is charactered by the strongest 380 wind in the world (Wunsch, 1998) and large seasonal range of sea ice coverage (Cavalieri 381 & Parkinson, 2008; Thomas & Dieckmann, 2008). However, there are two major prob-382 lems in representation of the SO in CESM (version 1.2.1). Weijer et al. (2012) suggested the main characteristic of CCSM4 simulation was a significant cold bias with respect to 384 observations in the Antarctic surface waters. Second, the ice extent of CCSM4 is too ex-385 tensive throughout the year compared to satellite observations (Landrum et al., 2012). 386 Fig. 8.a shows the climatological mean SMMR/SMMI ice extent (black solid line) and 387 simulated ice area difference between new coupling scheme experiment and original one 388 in CESM. 389

Compared with the original coupling scheme, the new scheme shows reduction of 390 ice coverage, especially in the East Atlantic, Indian ocean and East Pacific at nearby $60^{\circ}S$ 391 latitude. As a result, sea surface temperature cold bias is reduced due to the disappear-392 ance of sea ice in these regions as a response (Fig. 8.b). With Mod_cp, both the circum-393 polar westerlies and easterly wind exist in a much narrower meridional band around Antarc-394 tic coast (Fig. 9.a). To the quantify the increase, area averaged zonal wind stress growth 395 rate is calculated in the westerlies region (62.5 $^{\circ}S \sim 50 \,^{\circ}S$) and easterlies area (about 1° band width around Antarctic). As shown in Tab. 2, westerlies of ocean component 397 increased by 2.94% in new coupling scheme, and easterlies increased by 1.65%. Mean-398 while, the most significant increase is present in Atlantic, Indian ocean and East Pacific 399 at about 60 $^{\circ}S$, which is also the area of largest sea ice extent decrease. The result im-400 plies the relationship between the increase of wind stress strength and the decrease of 401 sea ice extent. For further breakdown the contribution of new interpolation method to 402 the wind stress increase, the growth rate of atmosphere zonal wind at bottom level is 403 also calculated (shown as Fig. 9.b). The growth rate pattern of bottom zonal wind is 404 similar, but not as significant as that of zonal wind stress. The area averaged zonal west-405 erly wind of bottom level itself increases by 1.59%. The difference between growth rate 406 of westerly wind at bottom level and zonal westerly wind stress is attributed to new cou-407 pling process: where the modeled westerlies manifest, the interpolation contributes about 408 1.33% to the 2.94% increase in zonal ocean wind stress. Meanwhile, zonal easterly wind 409 at bottom level shows no intensification, which is contrary to the growth rate pattern 410 of ocean easterly wind stress. As a result, the growth rate of zonal wind at atmosphere 411 bottom level is negative, and interpolation process contributes 3.74% to the ocean zonal 412 wind stress. In all, the increase of zonal wind stress is mainly determined by the new in-413 terpolation process. As a response to the westerlies increase, mixed layer is deepened (Fig. 414 9.c). 415



Figure 7. Ocean response to wind stress and wind stress curl. The difference of meridional and vertical velocity between new dynamical coupling scheme and original one. Meridional velocity is averaged at the region of 2.5 degree away from coast in (a) Southeast Pacific, (b) Southeast Atlantic region; Vertical velocity-longitude cross-section is at the latitude (c) $30^{\circ}S$ of SEP region and (d) $17.5^{\circ}S$ of SEA region.



Figure 8. The difference of (a) sea ice area and (b) sea surface temperature between new dynamical coupling and original one. Black dots indicate that the difference is statistically significant at 0.05 significance level.

Index	Westerlies $(62.5^{\circ}S-50^{\circ}S)$	Easterlies (1° band north of Antarctic)
Zonal wind at ATM bottom level	1.59%	-2.01%
Zonal wind stress of ocean	2.94%	1.65%
Contribution of interpolation	1.33%	3.74%

 Table 2.
 Growth rate of wind in Southern Ocean.

The Antarctic Circumpolar Current is dominated by the circumpolar westerlies. 416 As a consequence, more sea ice tends to be transported to lower latitude. The evidence 417 in Fig. 10 shows the difference of zonal averaged ice volume tendency owing to dynam-418 ics and thermodynamics effects, comparing new dynamical coupling scheme with the orig-419 inal one. As shown, the ice decreases at higher latitude (south of about 70 $^{\circ}S$), and in-420 creases at lower latitude due to dynamic effect. Nevertheless, the ice melts due to higher 421 solar radiation and more available ocean heat at lower latitudes. As the overall effect of 422 dynamic and thermodynamic response, ice extent decreases both in higher and lower lat-423 itudes of Southern Ocean (illustrated as black solid line in Fig. 10). Meridional ice trans-424 port difference of two schemes provides evidence for above conclusion (purple marked 425 line in Fig. 10). The meridional transport south of 67.5 $^{\circ}S$ is most pronounced. How-426 ever, ice transport tendency north of 67.5 $^{\circ}S$ is in effect decreased, which is mainly due 427 to thermodynamic loss of the overall ice volume budget. 428

429 **4** Summary and discussion

Summary

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In this article we propose a new dynamical coupling scheme for CESM. By utilizing the dynamics-physics (D-P) coupling in the atmospheric component of CAM-FV, we reduce the numerical diffusion in the air-sea dynamical coupling by differentiate the contribution by the dynamic core and physics parameterizations. The new scheme helps to



Figure 9. Difference between Mod_cp and F09 for (a) ocean zonal wind stress, (b) zonal wind speed of atmosphere bottom level, and (c) mixed layer depth in SO. Black dots indicate that the difference is statistically significant at 0.05 significance level.



Figure 10. Zonal mean sea ice volume tendency difference between Mod_cp and F09 due to dynamics (blue bar), thermodynamics (red bar) and the combined effect (black solid line). The difference of sea ice area (orange marked line) and meridional ice transport (purple marked line) between Mod_cp and F09 is shown in the lower panel.

improve the wind structure for typical regions with dynamical coupling. Specifically, in 435 eastern upwelling regions in the eastern Pacific and Atlantic ocean, the wind and wind 436 drop-off is enhanced for the ocean, with For Southern Oceans where the atmosphere and 437 sea ice interaction is present, the new scheme promotes more meridional sea ice trans-438 port and results in more effective sea ice melt at lower latitudes. Consequently, the over-439 estimation of sea ice extent and negative bias in SST is reduced. On the computational 440 perspective, the new scheme only introduces extra variables during the coupling process, 441 and no extra computation is involved. Therefore, the new scheme doe not affect the sim-442 ulation speed of the model. 443

General applicability

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Atmospheric models all contain dynamic core, physics parameterizations, and D-445 P coupling, and many of them contain staggered grid settings (Lin, 2004; Herrington et 446 al., 2019). Therefore, the methodology proposed in this study can also be applied to other 447 CESM configurations or other coupled models. For example, the dynamic core of CAM-448 SE utilizes 4rd-order spectral-element algorithm and spatial discretization based on Gauss-449 Lobatto-Legendre (GLL) quadrature grid. In Herrington et al. (2019) the quasi-equal-450 area physics parameterization scheme is designed to accompany the CAM-SE dynamic 451 core, in order to reduce spurious numerical noises on the GLL grid. The scheme we pro-452 posed in this study can be applied accordingly as follows. The prognostic atmospheric 453 (U and V) winds from the SE dynamic core (both defined on collocating points on the GLL grid) and the physics tendencies of the winds (defined on the equal-area grid) can 455 be treated independently with a separate interpolation process. 456

Open-source usage

For the proposed scheme on coupling CAM-FV and POP2 (or CICE) in CESM (ver-458 sion 1.2.1), we provide the updated source files of the codebase on GitHub (download-459 able at: https://github.com/gongbell/Improved-A0-Coupling-in-CESM). A brief guide 460 is also provided at the site for code changes and incorporation in existing codebases. Be-461 sides, simple revisions of the code can be applied for adoptions in other versions of CESM. 462 For the 0.9° CAM-FV model (F09) and its coupling with the 1° POP2 (i.e., GX1V6), 463 we also provide the data files of the interpolators (from D-points on F09 grid to GX1V6 464 A-points). The interpolators are based on patch-recovery algorithm, and generated from 465 ESMF utilities (available at https://www.earthsystemcog.org/projects/esmf/). The 466 source files and associated interpolator data files have been subjected to long-term pre-467 industrial experiments and model restart tests for their validity. 468

Future work

In this study we have demonstrated that the new scheme attains model improve-470 ments in typical regions, by improving air-sea dynamical coupling and reducing known 471 model biases. Further, more systematic analysis is needed in future studies, in order to 472 evaluate its effect in simulating the global and regional climatology and climate variability. Especially, for the two regions as examined in this study, the following works are planned. 474 For EUBC regions, two aspects of the SST warm bias are noted. First, although the new 475 scheme attains certain reduction of the warm bias, the improvement is comparatively 476 small compared with high resolution, 0.5 $^{\circ}$ simulations in the atmospheric component 477 (J. Ma et al., 2019; Gent et al., 2010), although there is large increase in computational 478 479 overhead with these runs. Second, the simulation of stratocumulus cloud decks over the open ocean in SEP is not improved. Therefore, in order to overcome the SST biases in 480 EUBC regions, a more systematic solution is needed to improve both wind structure and 481 cloud simulations. For sea ice in both Southern Oceans and the Arctic, since the atmo-482 sphere is the main driver of the ice drift and kinematics, the effect of the new scheme 483 on sea ice circulation and response to climate change is planned as future work. 484

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to express sincere thanks to the editor and referees for the in-valuable efforts in helping improve the manuscript. This work is partially support by Na-tional Key R & D Program of China: [Grant Number 2017YFA0603902] and the National Science Foundation of China: [Grant Number 41575076]. This work is also partially sup-ported by Center for High Performance Computing and System Simulation, Pilot Na-tional Laboratory for Marine Science and Technology (Qingdao).

We gratefully acknowledge Hurrell et al. (2008)'s work of merging Hadley-OI sea surface temperature and sea-ice concentration (available at ftp://ftp.cgd.ucar.edu/ archive/SSTICE), NCEP CFSR group (available at https://rda.ucar.edu/datasets/ ds093.2/) and NSIDC (dataset at https://nsidc.org/data/nsidc-0192), for provid-ing public access to the observational and reanalysis data sets. The source code of the scheme is available at github.com at: https://github.com/gongbell/Improved-AO-Coupling -in-CESM.

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⁶⁴⁷ 4139–4164.

Figure1.



Figure2.





Figure3.

Figure4.

Mod_cp-OBS

SST(°C)

(C)

SST(°C)

Mod_cp-F09

(b)

SST(°C)

(d)

SST(°C)

Figure5.

Figure6.

Figure7.

(c) Mod_cp-F09

WVEL(30°S)

(d) Mod_cp-F09 $WVEL(17.5^{\circ}S)$

Figure8.

Figure9.

Figure10.

