

# Modulation of Tropical Convection-circulation Interaction by Aerosol Indirect Effects in a Global Convection-permitting Model

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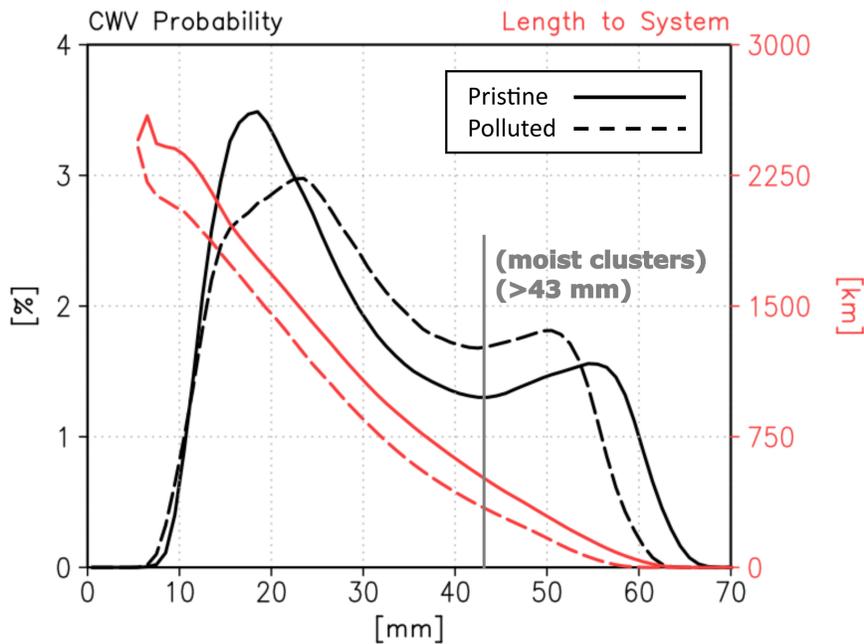
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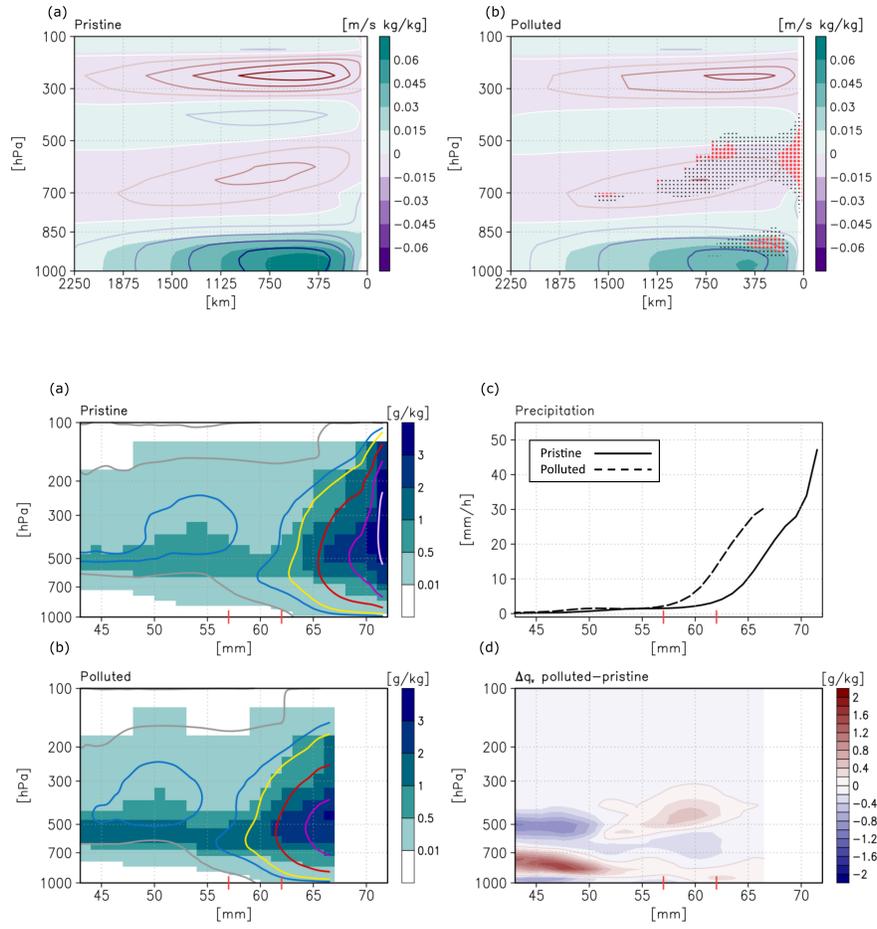
<sup>3</sup>Penn State

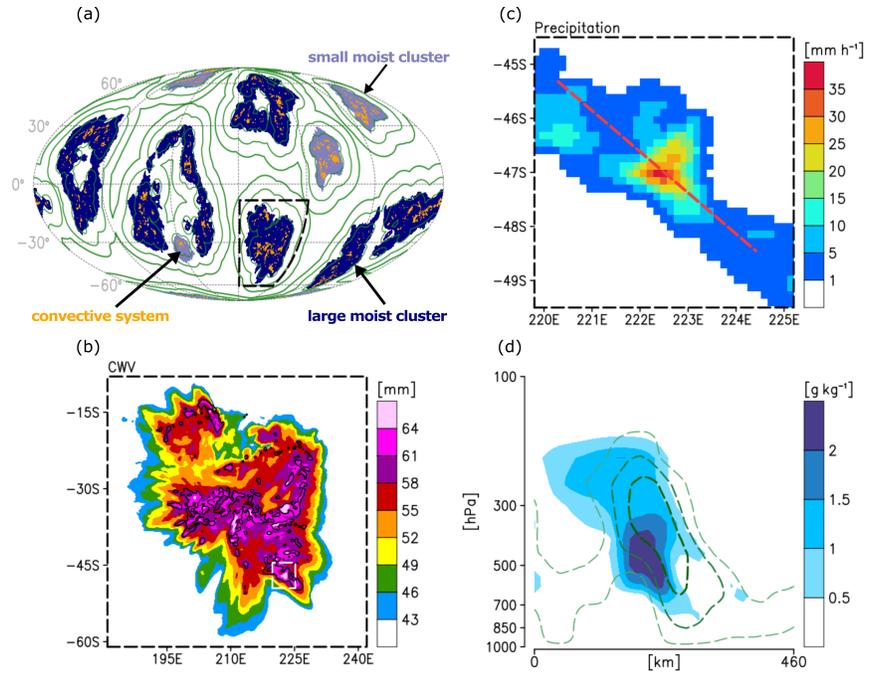
March 6, 2023

## Abstract

Observations suggest tropical convection intensifies when aerosol concentrations enhance, but quantitative estimations of this effect remain highly uncertain. Leading theories for explaining the intensification are based on the dynamical response of convection to changes in cloud microphysics independently from possible changes in the environment. Here, we provide a new perspective on aerosol indirect effects on tropical convection by using a global convection-permitting model that realistically simulates convection-circulation interaction. Simulations of radiative-convective equilibrium show that pollution facilitates the development of deep convection in a drier environment, but cloud condensates are more likely to be exported from moist clusters to dry areas, impeding the large-scale moisture-convection feedback and limiting the intensity of maximum precipitation (30 vs. 47 mm h<sup>-1</sup>). Our results emphasize the importance of allowing atmospheric phenomena to evolve continuously across spatial and temporal scales in simulations when investigating the response of tropical convection to changes in cloud microphysics.







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## Key Points:

- Simulations of the global convection-permitting model provide a new perspective on aerosol indirect effects.
- Pollution facilitates the development of deep convection in a drier environment.
- The response of large-scale circulation to pollution limits the intensity of maximum precipitation.

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## Abstract

Observations suggest tropical convection intensifies when aerosol concentrations enhance, but quantitative estimations of this effect remain highly uncertain. Leading theories for explaining the intensification are based on the dynamical response of convection to changes in cloud microphysics independently from possible changes in the environment. Here, we provide a new perspective on aerosol indirect effects on tropical convection by using a global convection-permitting model that realistically simulates convection-circulation interaction. Simulations of radiative-convective equilibrium show that pollution facilitates the development of deep convection in a drier environment, but cloud condensates are more likely to be exported from moist clusters to dry areas, impeding the large-scale moisture-convection feedback and limiting the intensity of maximum precipitation (30 vs. 47 mm h<sup>-1</sup>). Our results emphasize the importance of allowing atmospheric phenomena to evolve continuously across spatial and temporal scales in simulations when investigating the response of tropical convection to changes in cloud microphysics.

## Plain Language Summary

How does air pollution affect thunderstorm intensity over the tropical ocean? Past studies have proposed different opinions but generally neglect the interplay between the development of thunderstorms and the long-range movement of air that redistributes the Earth's thermal energy and moisture. Here, we address this question by investigating results from numerical experiments in which the global domain is used to simulate the response of individual thunderstorms and large-scale air motion to pollution. Our results show that tropical thunderstorms with given moisture are more vigorous under the polluted scenario. However, pollution makes the thunderstorms keep less moisture in their surroundings, limiting the maximum intensity of thunderstorms and weakening the large-scale air motion that supplies moisture to thunderstorms. Our results suggest that the interplay between the development of thunderstorms and the long-range movement of air is crucial in determining the effects of pollution in the tropical atmosphere.

## 1 Introduction

Deep convective clouds (DCCs) play a critical role in the global climate system via their role in the Earth's energy budget (Arakawa, 2004; Hartmann et al., 2001). They can aggregate into organized convective systems that span hundreds to a thousand kilometers (Houze, 2004) and contribute significantly to tropical rainfall (Chen et al., 2021; Houze et al., 2015; Nesbitt et al., 2006; Tao & Chern, 2017; Yuan & Houze, 2010). Observations suggest that updrafts of tropical DCCs can be invigorated by enhanced aerosol concentrations that arise from human activities and natural sources (Andreae et al., 2004; Koren et al., 2008; Niu & Li, 2012; Pan et al., 2021; Storer et al., 2014). By acting as cloud condensate nuclei (CCN) or ice nuclei (IN), aerosols change cloud properties by influencing cloud microphysics and dynamics, meanwhile influencing cloud-radiation feedbacks (i.e., aerosol indirect effects (AIEs); see reviews of Fan et al. (2016) and Tao et al. (2012)). A deeper understanding of AIEs on tropical DCCs and organized convective systems could improve the prediction of extreme precipitation events in global weather and climate models. However, the underlying mechanisms of how the updrafts are invigorated remain elusive and are often debated (Fan et al., 2018; Fan & Khain, 2021; W. W. Grabowski & Morrison, 2020, 2021; Igel & van den Heever, 2021). A particular challenge of understanding AIEs using observations is that the observed aerosol concentrations in the environments of DCCs often covary with other meteorological factors, such as convective available potential energy and vertical wind shear (W. W. Grabowski, 2018; Nishant & Sherwood, 2017; Varble, 2018), and the influences of meteorological and aerosol variability are difficult to disentangle from one another. Further, there is evidence from simulations that AIEs on DCCs vary as a function of meteorological conditions such as shear

64 and humidity (Fan et al., 2009; van den Heever & Cotton, 2007; Khain et al., 2008; Ko-  
65 ren et al., 2010; Z. Lebo, 2018), which further complicates our ability to isolate the aerosol  
66 effects from other meteorological processes. AIEs are underrepresented in global climate  
67 models because of these knowledge gaps, which contributes to considerable uncertainty  
68 in estimating human climate forcing (Forster et al., 2021).

69 To investigate the aerosol indirect effects on DCCs that interact with their surround-  
70 ing environment, Abbott and Cronin (2021) carried out simulations using a small do-  
71 main ( $128 \times 128 \text{ km}^2$ ) three-dimension cloud-resolving model (3-D CRM) with parame-  
72 terized large-scale dynamics under the weak temperature gradient (WTG) approxima-  
73 tion (Sobel et al., 2001). Abbott and Cronin (2021) suggested that enhanced CCN con-  
74 centrations produce clouds that mix more condensed water into the surrounding air. This  
75 enhances the environment favorably for subsequent convection by moistening the free  
76 troposphere and reducing the deleterious effects of entrainment. The humidity-entrainment  
77 mechanism they proposed is distinct from past work, which linked stronger updrafts with  
78 latent heat released by cloud condensation (Fan et al., 2018) or freezing (Rosenfeld et  
79 al., 2008) independently from possible changes in the environment. Anber et al. (2019)  
80 also used a small domain ( $192 \times 192 \text{ km}^2$ ) 3-D CRM with parameterized large-scale dy-  
81 namics to carry out simulations with different number concentrations of CCN but found  
82 a contrasting result. In their simulations, convection and mean precipitation get weaker  
83 when the CCN concentration increases. They suggested that the changes are associated  
84 with the modulation of coupling between convective processes and large-scale motions  
85 that overall reduces surface enthalpy fluxes.

86 Using a large domain ( $10000 \text{ km}$ ) two-dimension CRM configured in radiative-convective  
87 equilibrium (RCE; Manabe & Strickler, 1964), van den Heever et al. (2011) found a weak  
88 response of the large-scale organization of convection and the domain-averaged precip-  
89 itation to enhanced CCN concentrations. They suggested that AIEs on the three trop-  
90 ical cloud modes are opposite in sign, offsetting each other, thus producing a weak domain-  
91 wide response. In contrast, a more recent study by Beydoun and Hoose (2019) that used  
92 a large channel-shaped domain ( $2000 \times 120 \text{ km}^2$ ) 3-D CRM found a comparatively large  
93 decrease in domain-averaged precipitation in their RCE simulations with enhanced CCN  
94 concentrations. They suggested that enhanced CCN concentrations lead to the weak-  
95 ened large-scale organization of convection, increased midlevel and upper-level clouds,  
96 decreased radiative cooling, and decreased domain-averaged precipitation.

97 The difference in the above findings is likely influenced by the representation of large-  
98 scale dynamics and the geometry of the simulation domain, which could modulate convection-  
99 circulation interaction hence affect the overall AIEs. For example, a horizontal scale of  
100 the model domain larger than  $5000 \text{ km}$  was suggested to be large enough to represent  
101 the natural scale of large-scale organization of convection (Matsugishi & Satoh, 2022;  
102 Patrizio & Randall, 2019; Yanase et al., 2022). Advances in computational resources have  
103 allowed for global model simulations that explicitly simulate deep convection (Stevens  
104 et al., 2019). These global convection-permitting models have been applied to investi-  
105 gate how clouds and convective processes couple to large-scale circulation and determine  
106 cloud feedbacks and climate sensitivity (Wing et al., 2020). However, how is the coupling  
107 of DCCs and large-scale circulations affected by enhanced aerosol concentrations has not  
108 been fully understood.

109 This study aims to investigate the modulation of tropical convection-circulation in-  
110 teraction by AIEs in global simulations that simultaneously resolve the dynamical re-  
111 sponse of convection to changes in cloud microphysics and allow large-scale circulations  
112 to naturally develop since the horizontal scale is not artificially constrained by the do-  
113 main size or shape. The modulation of tropical convection-circulation interaction by AIEs  
114 is demonstrated by analyzing the responses of moisture distribution, convection struc-  
115 tures, and large-scale circulation to pollution. Section 2 introduces more details about

116 the model and the experiment design. Section 3 describes the results, and the summary  
 117 and discussion are presented in section 4.

## 118 2 Model Description and Experiment Design

119 We use the Central Weather Bureau Global Forecast System (CWBGFS; Su et al.,  
 120 2021a, 2021b; SU et al., 2022), which is a global convection-permitting model run at the  
 121 horizontal resolution of 15 km, to carry out our experiments. Deep convection in the CW-  
 122 BGFS is represented by the unified relaxed Arakawa-Schubert scheme (URAS; Su et al.,  
 123 2021b) in which the representation transitions from the parameterization to the explicit  
 124 simulation as the diagnosed convective updraft fraction increases (Arakawa & Wu, 2013;  
 125 Wu & Arakawa, 2014). Hence, the CWBGFS with the URAS can explicitly but efficiently  
 126 simulate deep convection and convection-circulation interaction on the global scale. This  
 127 model partially resolve circulations in organized convective systems and reproduce the  
 128 observed feature of convective systems that stronger extreme precipitation occurs in hor-  
 129 izontally larger systems (Hamada et al., 2014; SU et al., 2022).

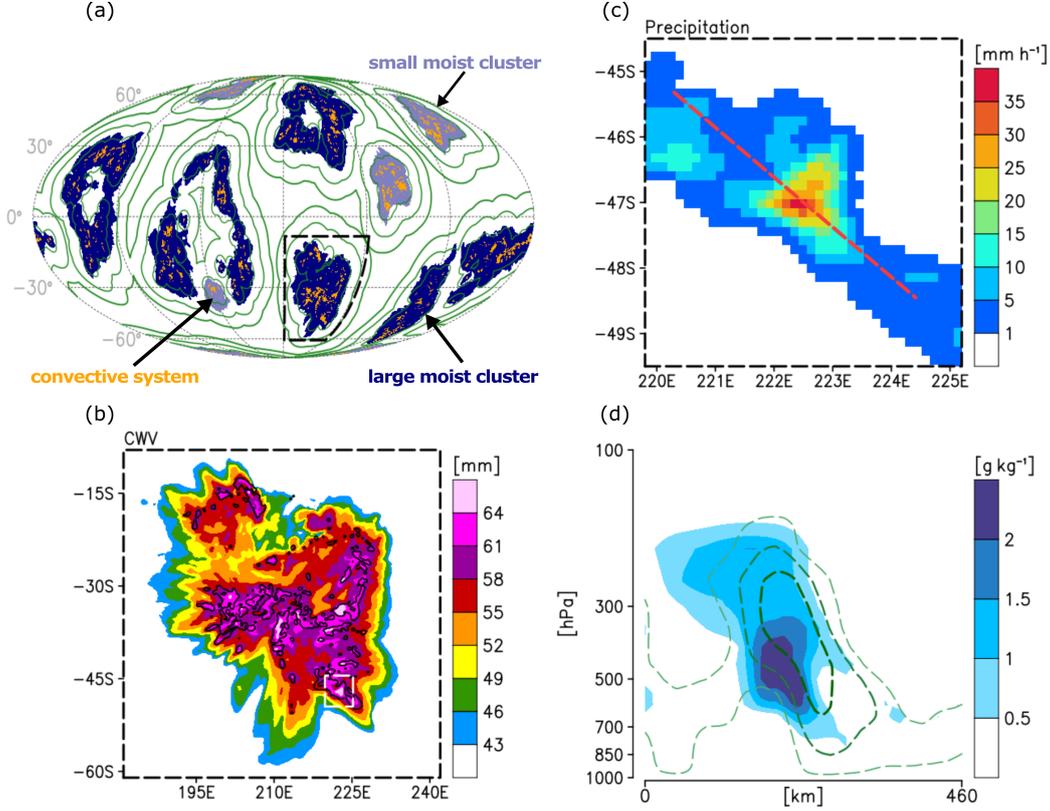
130 The CWBGFS uses the two-moment Predicted Particle Properties bulk microphysics  
 131 scheme (P3; Morrison & Milbrandt, 2015) to represent cloud microphysical processes,  
 132 including cloud-aerosol interaction. The aerosol concentration prescribed in P3 is fixed  
 133 throughout the integration and acts as CCN. Cloud-aerosol interaction is not included  
 134 in the URAS. In our simulations, the averaged percentage of precipitation produced by  
 135 explicitly simulated convection is more than 93 % over precipitation events stronger than  
 136 5 mm h<sup>-1</sup>, indicating that most of the cloud-aerosol interactions associated with deep con-  
 137 vection are resolved. The rest of the descriptions regarding physics suites and the dy-  
 138 namic core of the CWBGFS can be found in Su et al. (2021a).

139 Two idealized non-rotating aqua-planet simulations configured in RCE are carried  
 140 out. Simulations in RCE have been extensively used to investigate feedback among clouds,  
 141 environmental moisture, radiation, and precipitation (Bretherton et al., 2005; Coppin  
 142 & Bony, 2015; Cronin & Wing, 2017; Emanuel et al., 2014; Holloway & Woolnough, 2016;  
 143 Pendergrass et al., 2016; Popke et al., 2013; Singh & O’Gorman, 2013, 2015; Wing & Emanuel,  
 144 2014; Wing et al., 2020), and therefore provide an ideal experimental setting to study  
 145 AIEs. Under certain circumstances, convection in RCE spontaneously self-organizes into  
 146 one or more moist ascending clusters surrounded by dry subsiding convection-free ar-  
 147 eas in simulations configured in non-rotating RCE (convective self-aggregation (CSA);  
 148 C. Muller et al., 2022; Wing et al., 2017). We note that CSA occurs in the simulations  
 149 of van den Heever et al. (2011) and Beydoun and Hoose (2019).

150 The simulations are initialized with an analytic sounding (Wing et al., 2018) that  
 151 approximates the moist tropical sounding of Dunion (2011), and the initial horizontal  
 152 winds are set to zero. The initial surface pressure of all grid columns is 1014.8 hPa. The  
 153 incoming solar radiation (409.6 W m<sup>-2</sup>), the sea surface temperature (300 K), and the  
 154 surface albedo (0.07) are spatially uniform and constant in time. The simulations are  
 155 run for 120 days, and the random perturbation of temperature from 0.1 to 0.02 K is added  
 156 to the five lowest model levels in the first 20 days to speed up convection initiation. The  
 157 only difference between the two simulations is the prescribed spatially uniform aerosol  
 158 number mixing ratio set in P3. They are set at  $3 \times 10^8$  kg<sup>-1</sup> and  $3 \times 10^{10}$  kg<sup>-1</sup>, represent-  
 159 ing the pristine and polluted scenarios, respectively. The scenarios here are referred to  
 160 the marine environment (Andreae, 2009) and the urban environment (Chang et al., 2021)  
 161 and are used to evaluate the upper bound of AIEs on convection-circulation interaction.  
 162 In the following section, 30 days of hourly output (days 90 to 120) are analyzed when  
 163 the simulation is in an RCE state.

164 The overall results of the pristine run are showcased in Fig. 1, demonstrating that  
 165 our simulations resemble the global model simulations in the RCE model intercompar-

166 ison project (Wing et al., 2018, 2020), in which convection self-organizing into multiple  
 167 moist clusters (Fig. 1a). Fig. 1b shows the spatial distribution of column water vapor  
 168 (CWV) of a moist cluster, indicating high heterogeneity that is coupled to spatial convec-  
 169 tion structures. Precipitation stronger than  $30 \text{ mm h}^{-1}$  (Fig. 1c) is found in a convec-  
 170 tive system with intense resolved updrafts ( $>1 \text{ m s}^{-1}$ ) (Fig. 1d). Fig. 1 with more detail  
 171 will be introduced in the following section.

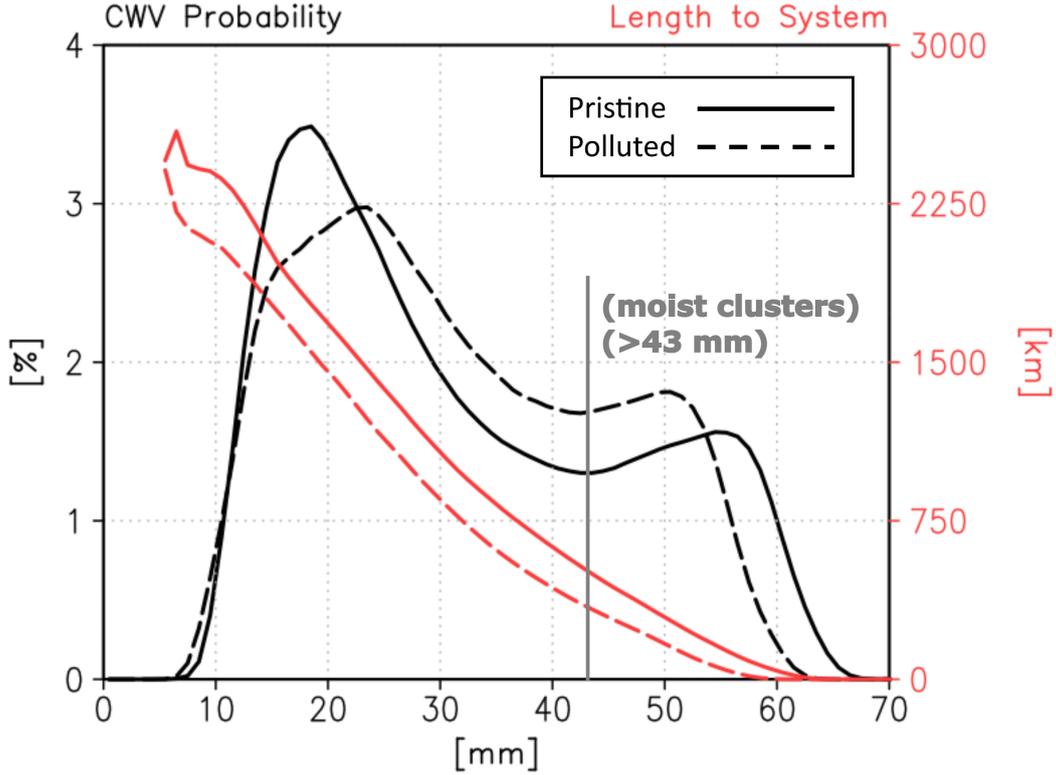


**Figure 1.** A snapshot of moist clusters smaller (light blue shaded) and larger (navy shaded) than 1000 km of horizontal scale, convective systems (orange shaded), and distance to the nearest convective system (green contours of 375, 1125, 1875 km) of the pristine run on day 106.5 (a). Column water vapor (mm) and convective systems (black contours) in a moist cluster (b), which the domain is demonstrated by the black dashed lines in (a). Precipitation intensity ( $\text{mm h}^{-1}$ ) of a convective system (c), which the domain is demonstrated by the white dashed lines in (b). The vertical profiles of mixed-phase cloud condensates (shaded) and vertical velocity (green contours of 0.1, 0.5,  $1 \text{ m s}^{-1}$ ) (d) along the red dashed line in (c). See the context for the definition of moist clusters and convective systems. The horizontal scale is determined by the square root of the cluster’s horizontal area.

172 **3 Results**

173 We start from demonstrating the response of moisture probability distribution to  
 174 enhanced CCN concentrations. In both runs, the distribution of CWV is bimodal (Fig.  
 175 2). The bimodality suggests the presence of an aggregated state (Arnold & Randall, 2015;  
 176 Tsai & Wu, 2017) which is maintained by large-scale circulation. The difference between  
 177 the two local maxima of the bimodality is smaller in the polluted run, suggesting AIEs

178 drive columns away from both moist and dry equilibria in the pristine run. We use the  
 179 CWV value that corresponds to the smallest value along the curve in Fig. 2 between the  
 180 local maxima at dry and moist CWV values as the threshold to define moist clusters (i.e.,  
 181 43 mm in both runs). The difference in area coverage percentage of moist clusters in the  
 182 global domain between the two runs is less than 3 %. The moist clusters in the polluted  
 183 run are notably drier than that in the pristine run. Further, the number of moist clusters  
 184 in the polluted run is 23 % more than that in the pristine run. Sixty-five percent  
 185 of moist clusters are smaller than 1000 km of horizontal scale in the polluted run, and  
 186 there are 45 % of them in the pristine run.



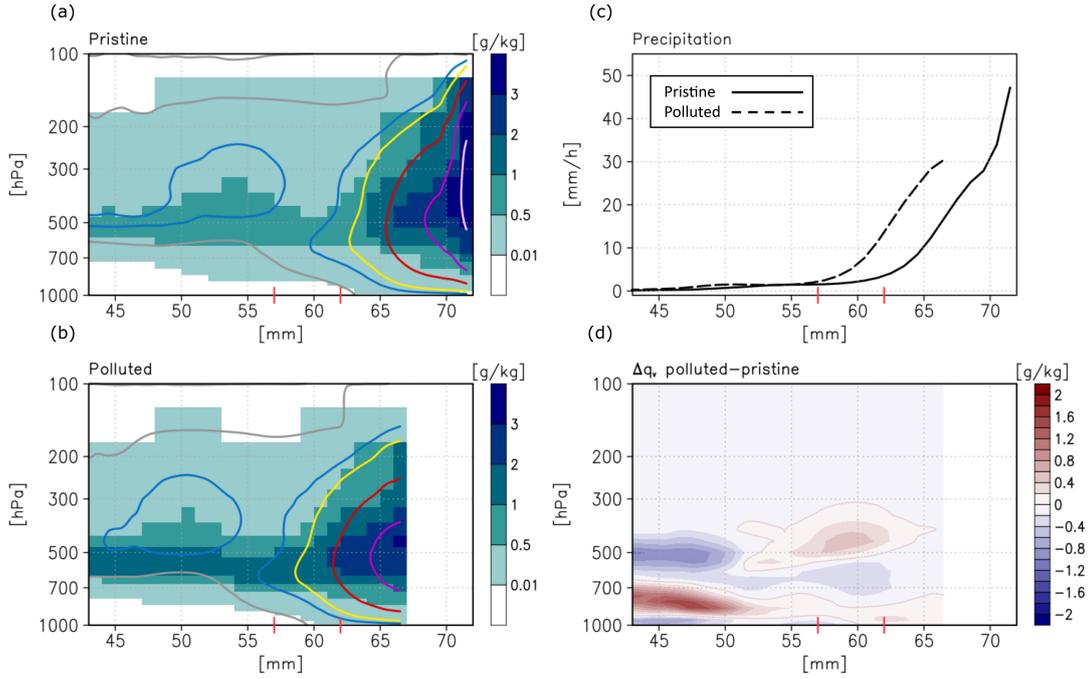
**Figure 2.** Probability distribution of column water vapor (black) and distance to the nearest convective system conditional sampled by column water vapor (red) from days 90 to 120. The gray line labels 43 mm of column water vapor, which is set as the criteria for defining a moist cluster.

187 We evaluate AIEs by first identifying the updraft regions of convective systems as  
 188 laterally connected columns of vertical velocity  $>0.1 \text{ m s}^{-1}$  in any level between 700 to  
 189 400 hPa (Fig. 1a-b). A critical characteristic of tropical deep moist convection is the rapid  
 190 intensification of precipitation once CWV has exceeded a critical value, which character-  
 191 izes the effect of water vapor on the buoyancy of clouds through entrainment (Bretherton  
 192 et al., 2004; Neelin et al., 2009; Peters & Neelin, 2006). Hence, we investigate the influ-  
 193 ence of pollution on this precipitation-CWV dependency. Analyses among all updraft  
 194 regions with a given CWV indicate that both of our simulations mimic the precipitation-  
 195 CWV dependency seen in nature, with a rapid increase in mixed-phase cloud condensate,  
 196 updraft intensity (Fig. 3a-b), and precipitation (Fig. 3c) occurring in both simu-  
 197 lations above a certain threshold in CWV. However, a distinct difference of the polluted  
 198 run from the pristine one is that the threshold CWV which heralds the increase in con-

199 vective intensity occurs at a lower CWV value (57 mm) than it does in the pristine run  
200 (62 mm).

201 Fig. 3a-b show that the vertical profiles to the right of the CWV thresholds resem-  
202 ble the convection structures of deep convection at the developing and mature stage, and  
203 the profiles to the left resemble deep convection at the dissipating stage, in which mixed-  
204 phase cloud condensates concentrate at mid-level free atmosphere beneath which weak  
205 downdrafts due to water loading take place. In the dissipating stage, moisture in the pol-  
206 luted run is more heavily distributed over the mid-to-low free atmosphere (Fig. 3d). The  
207 water vapor mixing ratio there is  $1.5 \text{ g kg}^{-1}$  more than that in the pristine run. The dif-  
208 ference may be caused by the stronger evaporation of raindrops as we found there is more  
209 mass but nearly the same number of falling raindrops beneath clouds in the polluted run  
210 leading to two times stronger surface precipitation (figure not shown). These raindrops  
211 could be from the melting of graupel and hail since the warm-rain process is suppressed  
212 due to pollution.

213 Past studies have shown that humidity in the lower free atmosphere is critical to  
214 the onset of tropical deep convection (Derbyshire et al., 2004; Holloway & Neelin, 2009,  
215 2010; Schiro et al., 2016; Tompkins, 2001). The enhanced moisture in the lower free at-  
216 mosphere increases the buoyancy of entraining plumes, leading to an increased chance  
217 of deep convection. The signal of the exceeding moisture in the mid-to-low free atmo-  
218 sphere in the polluted run extends to the CWV regimes of developing and mature con-  
219 vection (Fig. 3d), in which the increase in moisture in the mid-to-high atmosphere re-  
220 flects the prevalence of convection (Fig. 3a-b). The modulated moisture distribution, orig-  
221 inating from the response of dissipating stage of convection to changes in cloud micro-  
222 physics, enhances conditional instability, potentially contributing to the development of  
223 subsequent convection. Further investigations on the mechanism will be carried out in  
224 the future.

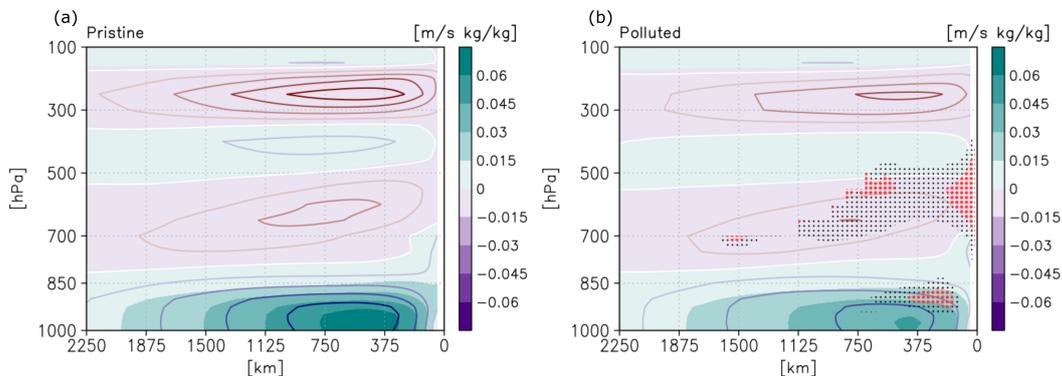


**Figure 3.** Mass mixing ratio of cloud water and cloud ice (shaded) and vertical velocity (contours at 0, 0.1, 0.2, 0.5, 1, 2  $\text{m s}^{-1}$ ) within the updraft regions of convective systems conditional sampled by column water vapor of the pristine (a) and the polluted (b) run from days 90 to 120. Precipitation intensity of the two runs (c) and the difference of water vapor mixing ratio (polluted run minus the pristine run) (d) sampled by the same method. The red dotted line in (d) shows the contour of  $0 \text{ g kg}^{-1}$ . The red sticks along the x-axis show the CWV value of 57 and 62 mm

225 However, the highest CWV environment over the updraft regions ( $>67 \text{ mm}$ ) in the  
 226 pristine run is absent in the polluted run (Fig. 3). The polluted run has notably drier  
 227 moist clusters (Fig. 2), leading to the weaker maximum intensity of updraft and precipi-  
 228 tation ( $30 \text{ vs. } 47 \text{ mm h}^{-1}$ ). As the moisture distribution is maintained by large-scale cir-  
 229 culation, we investigate the influence of pollution on large-scale circulation by sorting  
 230 the distance to the nearest convective system and projecting horizontal winds in the di-  
 231 rection pointing to the nearest system (green contours in Fig. 1a). Large-scale circula-  
 232 tion has often been visualized with a streamfunction in moisture space when analyzing  
 233 self-aggregated runs to RCE (Arnold & Putman, 2018; Bretherton et al., 2005; Holloway  
 234 & Woolnough, 2016; C. Muller & Bony, 2015; C. J. Muller & Held, 2012). The stream-  
 235 function analyzed in past studies is designed to investigate the energy transport between  
 236 dry areas and moist clusters but it does not represent circulation in physical space. It  
 237 is natural to analyze large-scale circulation in physical space when using a global convec-  
 238 tion-permitting model with an appropriate choice of the source of momentum and energy trans-  
 239 port. The result shows that both runs exhibit typical structures of tropical circulation,  
 240 including low-level inflow, mid-level outflow, and deep convection outflow (Johnson et  
 241 al., 1999), but every component of the circulation is weaker in the polluted run (Fig. 4).

242 We trace the cause of the weaker large-scale circulation down to the influence of  
 243 pollution on the geographical distribution of convective systems (i.e., updraft regions).  
 244 In the polluted run, convective systems develop geographically closer to the meander-  
 245 ing margin (i.e.,  $43 \text{ mm}$ ) of moist clusters, because CWV increases monotonically from  
 246 dry areas toward moist clusters (Fig. 1b), and convection strength enhances more rapidly

247 as CWV increases in the polluted run (Fig. 3b). Fig. 2 shows that the average distance  
 248 from the edges of moist clusters to the nearest convective system in the pristine run is  
 249 1.5 times longer than that in the polluted run. Meanwhile, inhibiting the warm-rain pro-  
 250 cess by pollution could increase the mid-level static stability as a result of a latent heat-  
 251 ing dipole associated with the freezing water and melting ice above and below the freez-  
 252 ing level. Previous studies suggested that an increase in mid-level static stability pro-  
 253 motes detrainment (Johnson et al., 1999; Patrizio & Randall, 2019; Posselt et al., 2008,  
 254 2012). Overall, cloud condensates in the polluted run are more likely to be exported from  
 255 moist clusters to dry areas rather than stay in moist clusters and then re-evaporate. The  
 256 export of clouds impedes the moisture-convective feedback in which moistening environ-  
 257 ment by convection plays a key role in favoring subsequent development of convection  
 258 (W. Grabowski & Moncrieff, 2004; Holloway & Neelin, 2009). The above inference is sup-  
 259 ported by Fig. 4b, which shows that the exceeding cloud condensates in the polluted run  
 260 coincide with the mid-level outflow of the large-scale circulation.



**Figure 4.** Water vapor flux (shaded) and horizontal winds (contours from  $-4$  to  $4$   $\text{m s}^{-1}$  with an interval of  $1$   $\text{m s}^{-1}$  using a color scale from maroon to white to navy) projected to the direction of pointing to the nearest convective system in the pristine (a) and the polluted (b) run from days 90 to 120. Positive values are vectors toward the system. The black and red dots in (b) show where the ratio of cloud water mixing ratio in the polluted run over the pristine one larger than 1 and 2, respectively

## 261 4 Summary and Discussion

262 This study investigates the response of tropical convection-circulation interaction  
 263 to enhanced CCN concentrations using non-rotating RCE simulations of a global convection-  
 264 permitting model run at 15 km horizontal resolution. Deep convection in the model is  
 265 represented in a way that the explicit simulation of convection seeds cloud-aerosol in-  
 266 teraction and is responsible for strong precipitation events. The simulations allow for the  
 267 large-scale organization of convection realistically inducing circulation without artificial  
 268 constraints of scale separation assumption, domain size, or domain shape. The novel find-  
 269 ing in this study is that pollution facilitates the development of deep convection in a drier  
 270 environment, while the response of large-scale circulation limits the intensity of maxi-  
 271 mum precipitation. Our results emphasize the importance of allowing atmospheric phe-  
 272 nomena to evolve continuously across spatial and temporal scales in simulations when  
 273 investigating the response of tropical convection to changes in cloud microphysics.

274 Connecting our result to the existing driving and maintaining mechanisms of CSA  
 275 could inspire future investigation on the response of global warming to varied CCN con-

276 concentrations since CSA is known to modulate climate sensitivity (Cronin & Wing, 2017).  
 277 The possible connections include:

- 278 1. The export of mid-level cloud condensates could weaken the radiatively driven sub-  
 279 sidence over the dry areas that drives CSA (Beydoun & Hoose, 2019; Bretherton  
 280 et al., 2005; C. J. Muller & Held, 2012; Wing & Emanuel, 2014; Holloway & Wool-  
 281 nough, 2016).
- 282 2. The response of cold pool dynamics to cloud microphysics has received consider-  
 283 able attention in the literature (Z. J. Lebo & Morrison, 2014; Seigel et al., 2013;  
 284 Storer et al., 2014; Su et al., 2020; Tao et al., 2007; van den Heever & Cotton, 2007).  
 285 Cold pools associated with the closer-to-edge convective systems in the polluted  
 286 run could mix low-level dry areas and moist clusters more effectively, weakening  
 287 the CSA (Jeevanjee & Romps, 2013; C. Muller & Bony, 2015).

288 Past studies (Arnold & Randall, 2015; Khairoutdinov & Emanuel, 2018) indicated  
 289 that the large-scale organization of convection (i.e., CSA) in non-rotating RCE simula-  
 290 tions and MJO-like (i.e., Madden-Julian Oscillation; Madden & Julian, 1971) disturbance  
 291 in rotating RCE simulations share the same driving mechanism (i.e., cloud-radiation feed-  
 292 backs) in which AIEs can be critical. One of the characteristics of MJO propagation is  
 293 that MJOs suffer from a barrier effect when it propagates over the Maritime Continent  
 294 (MC) (Kim et al., 2014; Zhang & Ling, 2017). The development of convective systems  
 295 over the water in the MC region plays a crucial role in carrying the MJO signal through  
 296 the MC (Ling et al., 2019). Around the globe, MC is a major source of different types  
 297 of aerosol (Reid et al., 2012; Salinas et al., 2013; Shpund et al., 2019). The modulation  
 298 of the size of moist clusters and the geographical distribution of convective systems by  
 299 enhanced CCN concentrations potentially provides a new perspective on the existing MJO  
 300 theories (Jiang et al., 2020; Zhang, 2013). A possible approach for the investigation is  
 301 to evaluate sub-seasonal hindcasts of an active MJO event with different aerosol emis-  
 302 sion scenarios.

## 303 5 Open Research

304 The model output data of a temporal snapshot, the Fortran program that computes  
 305 vertical atmospheric profiles conditional sampled by column water vapor and the distance  
 306 to the nearest convective system, and the GrADS plotting scripts in this study are avail-  
 307 able at <https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.22149617.v1>.

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Figure 1.

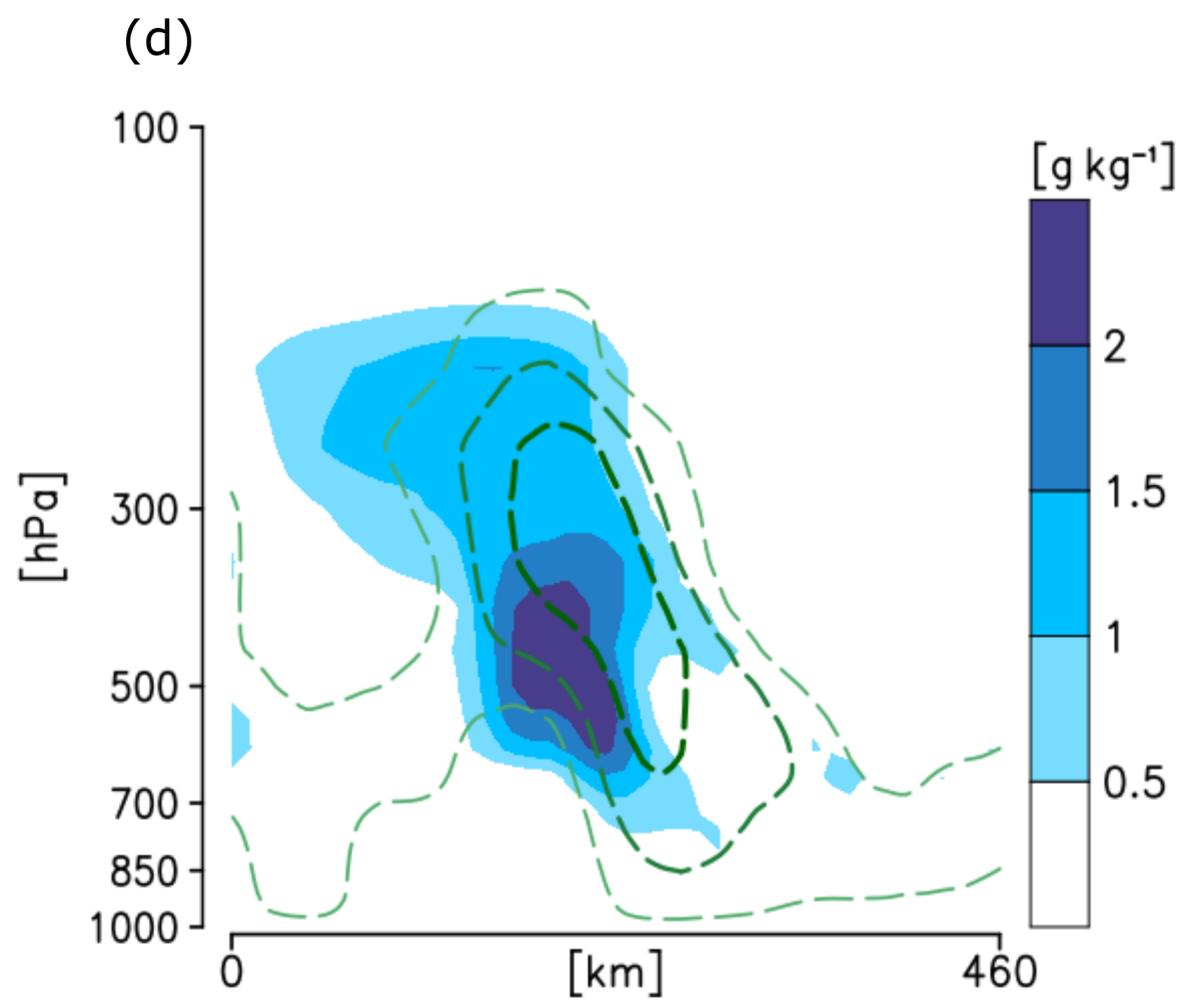
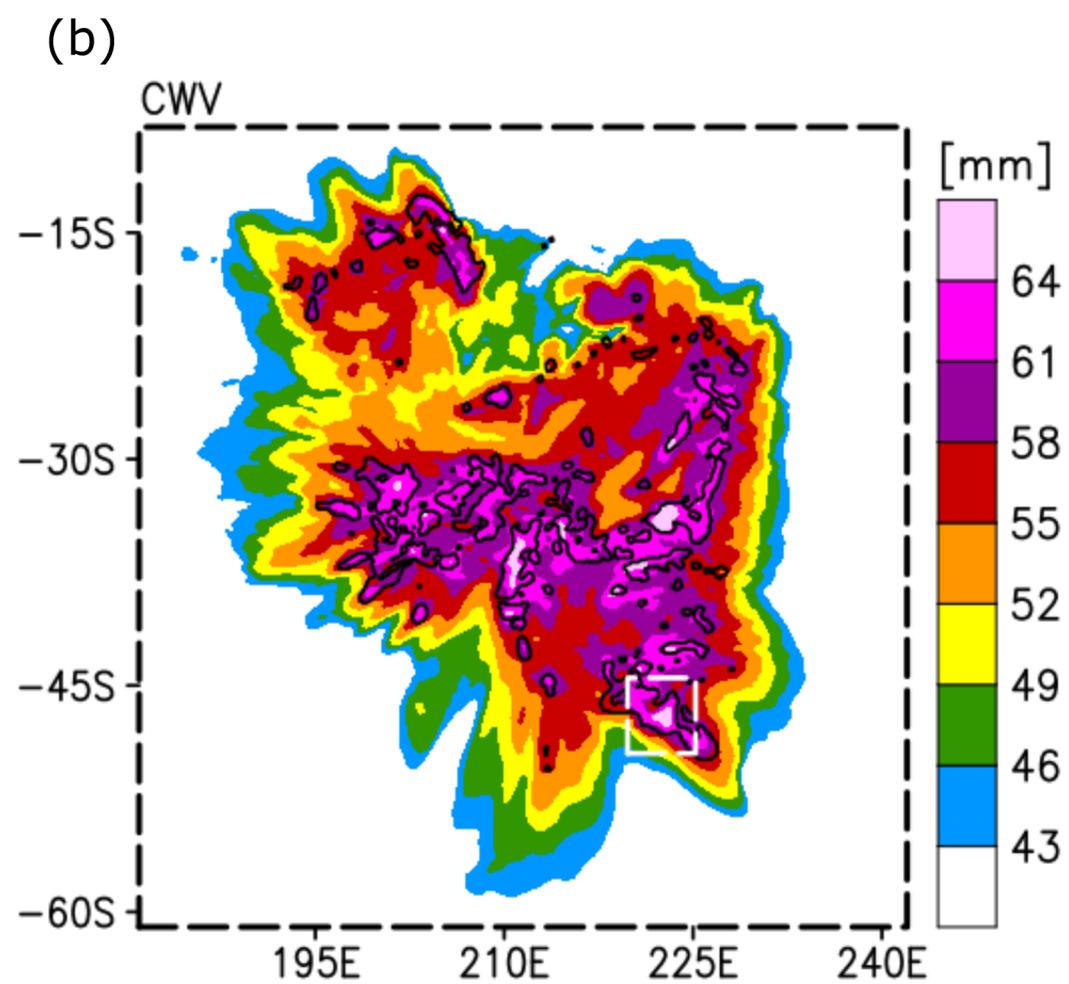
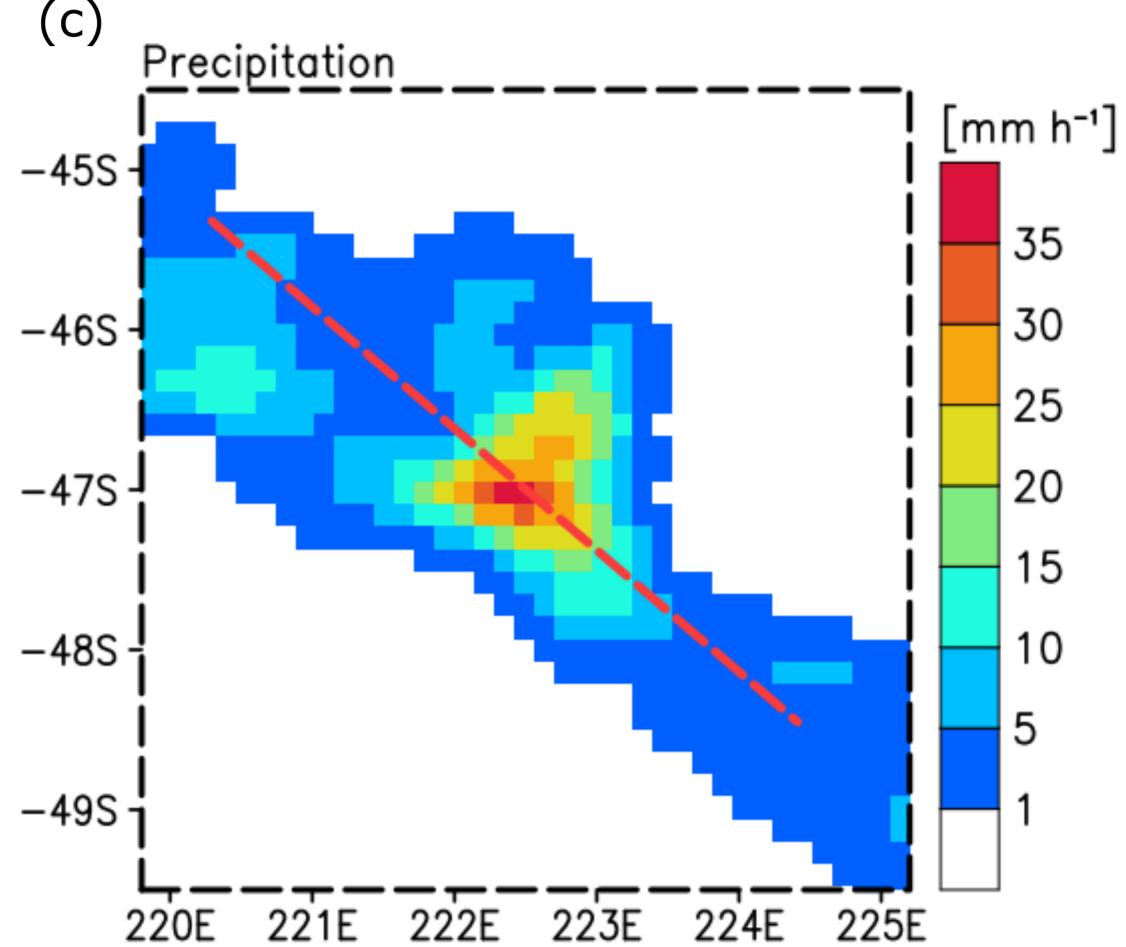
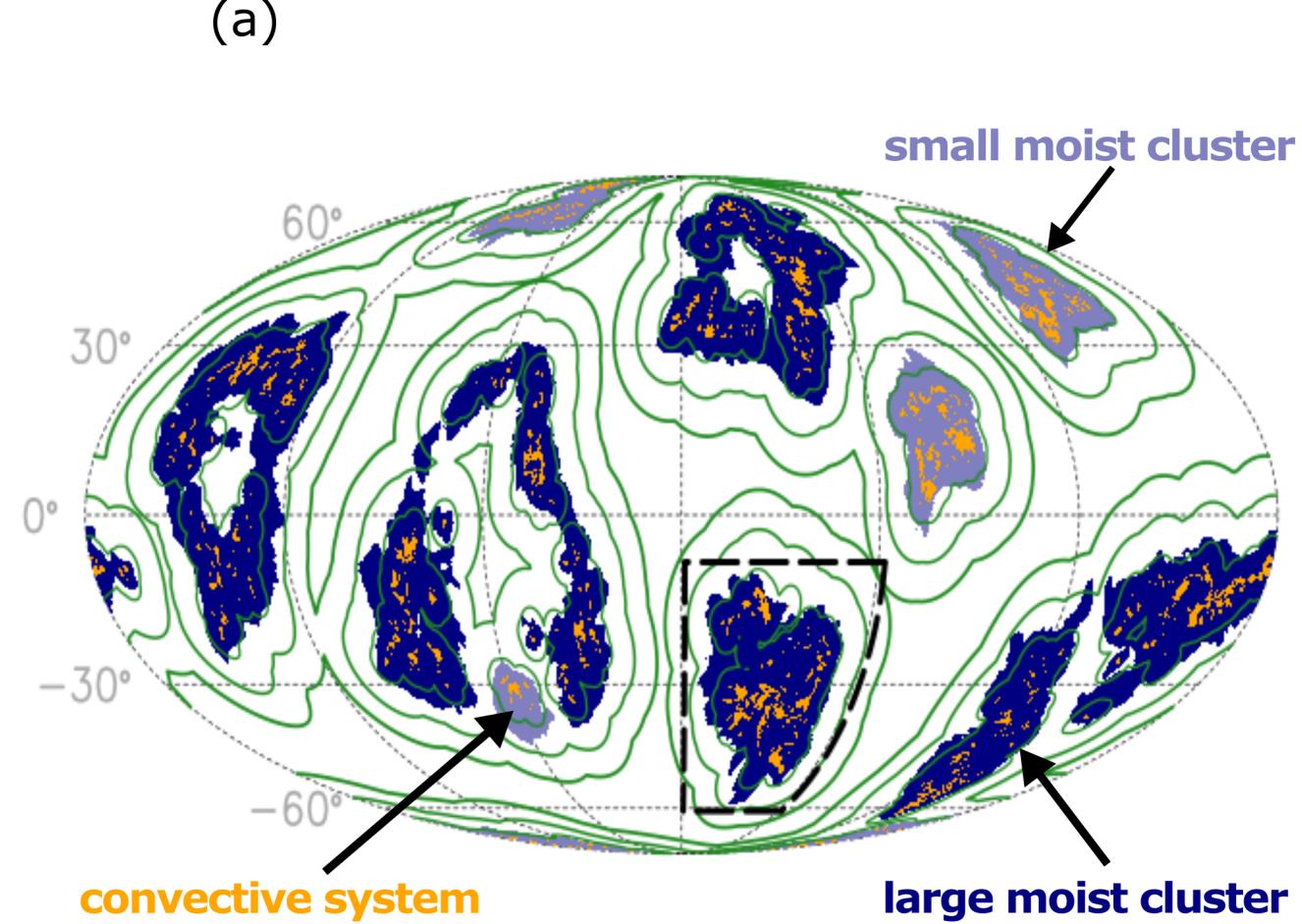


Figure 2.

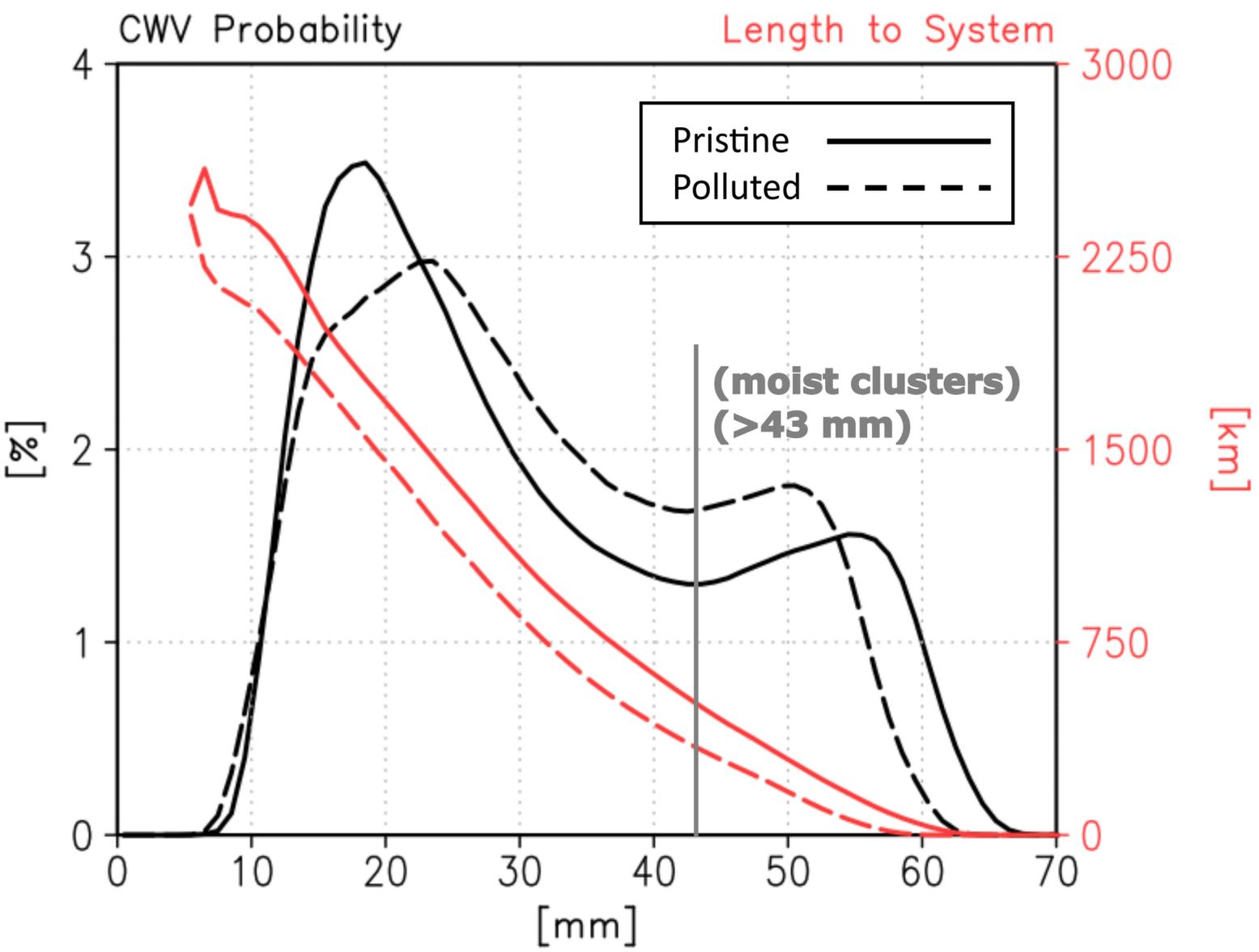


Figure 3.

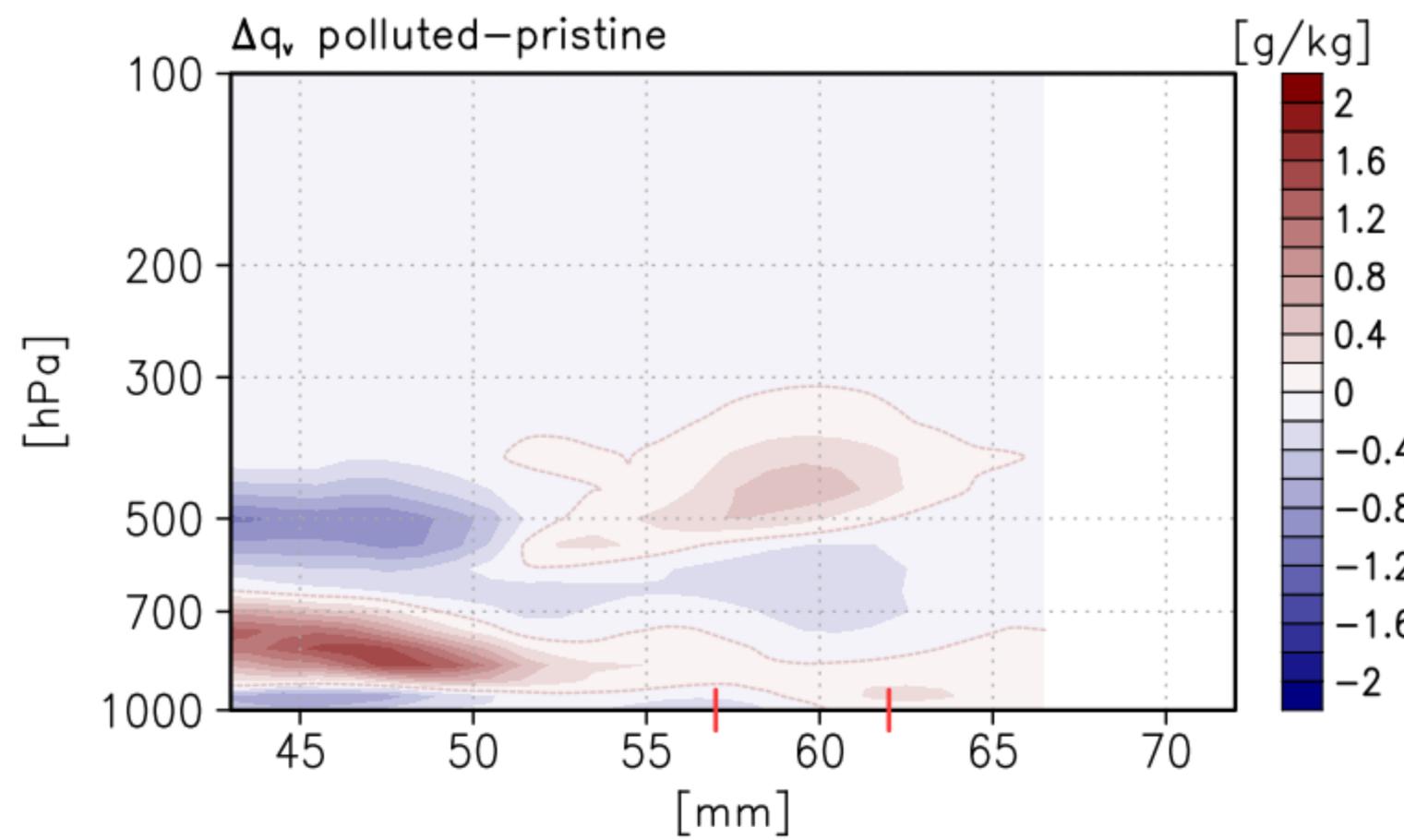
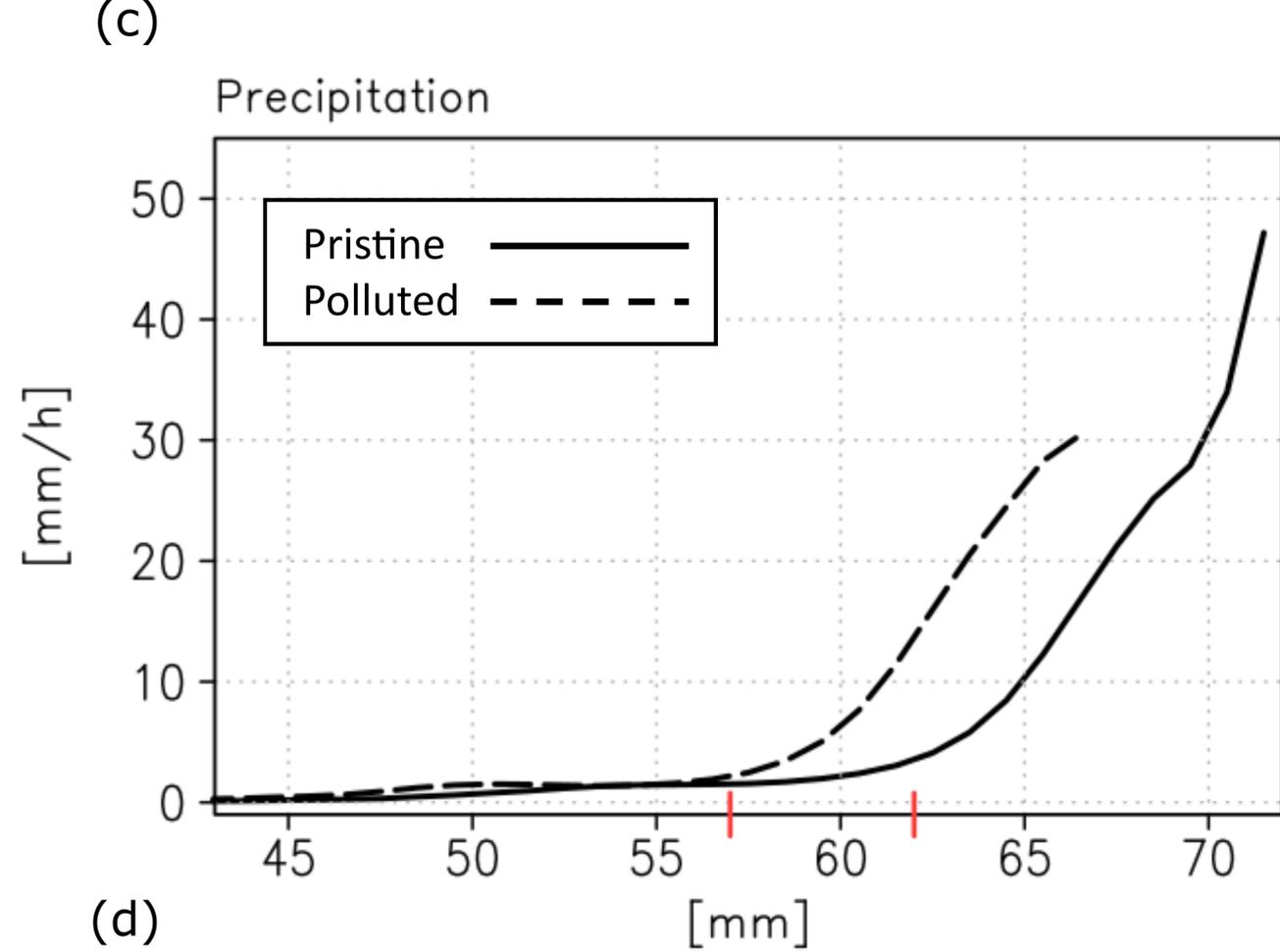
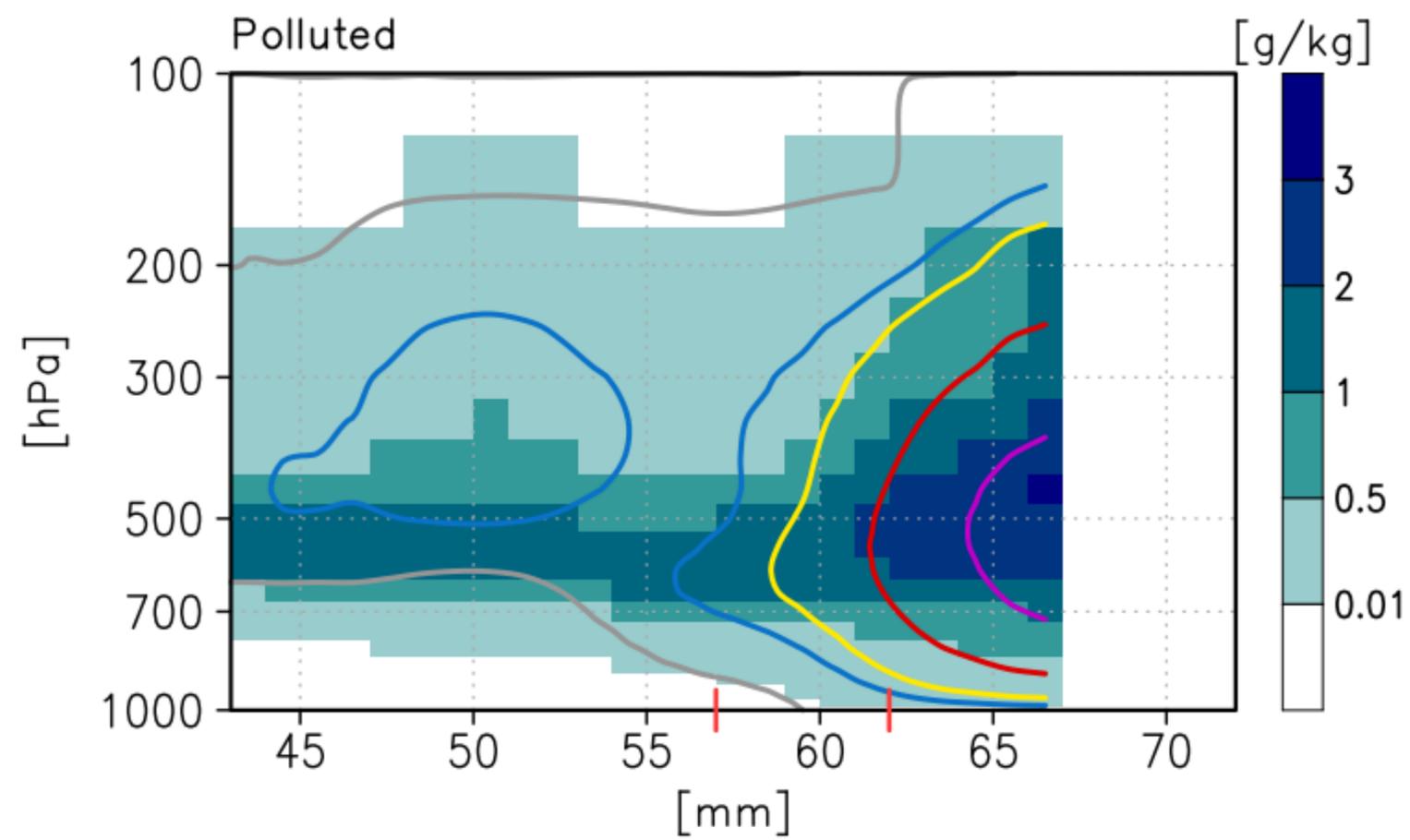
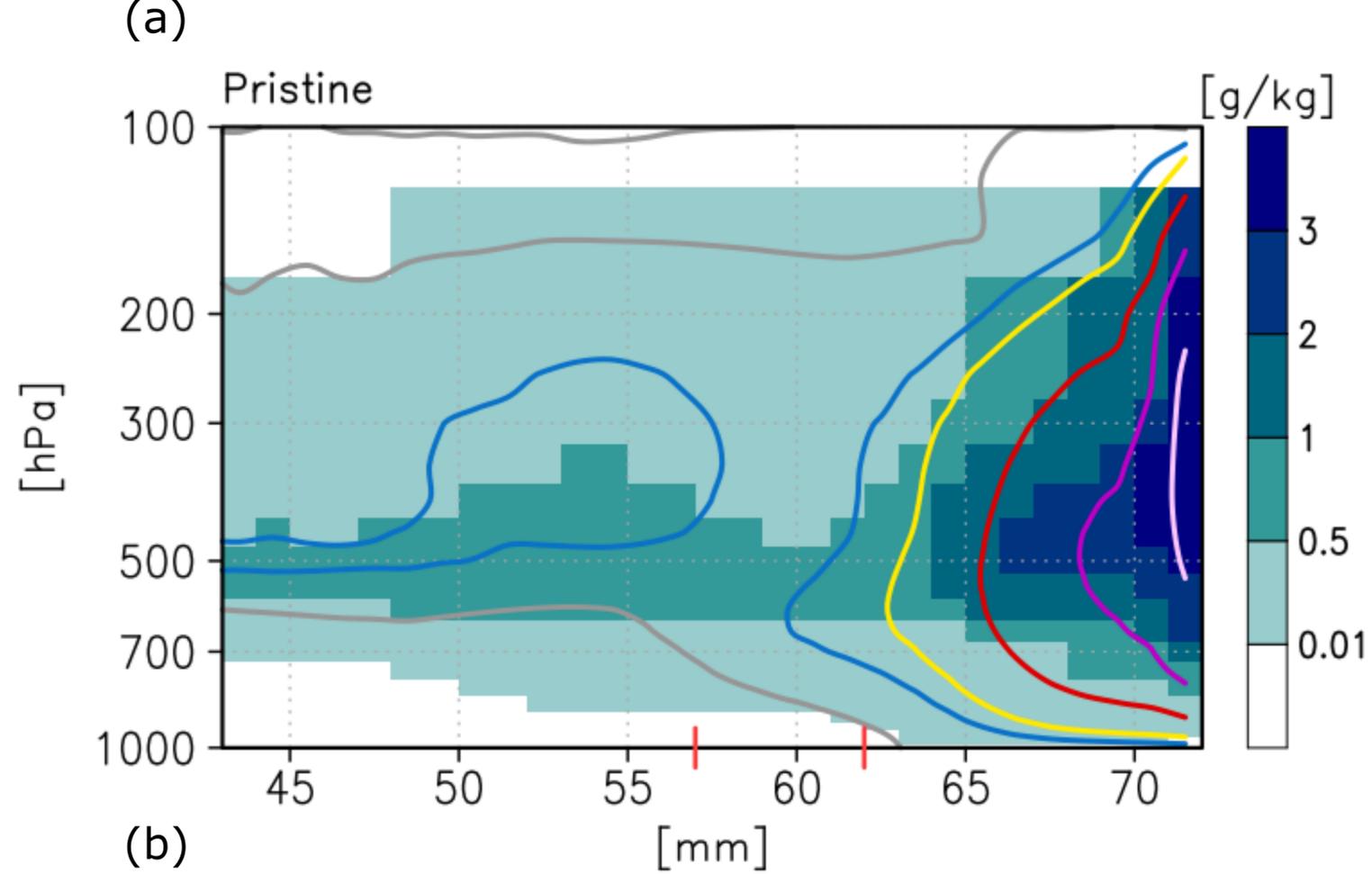
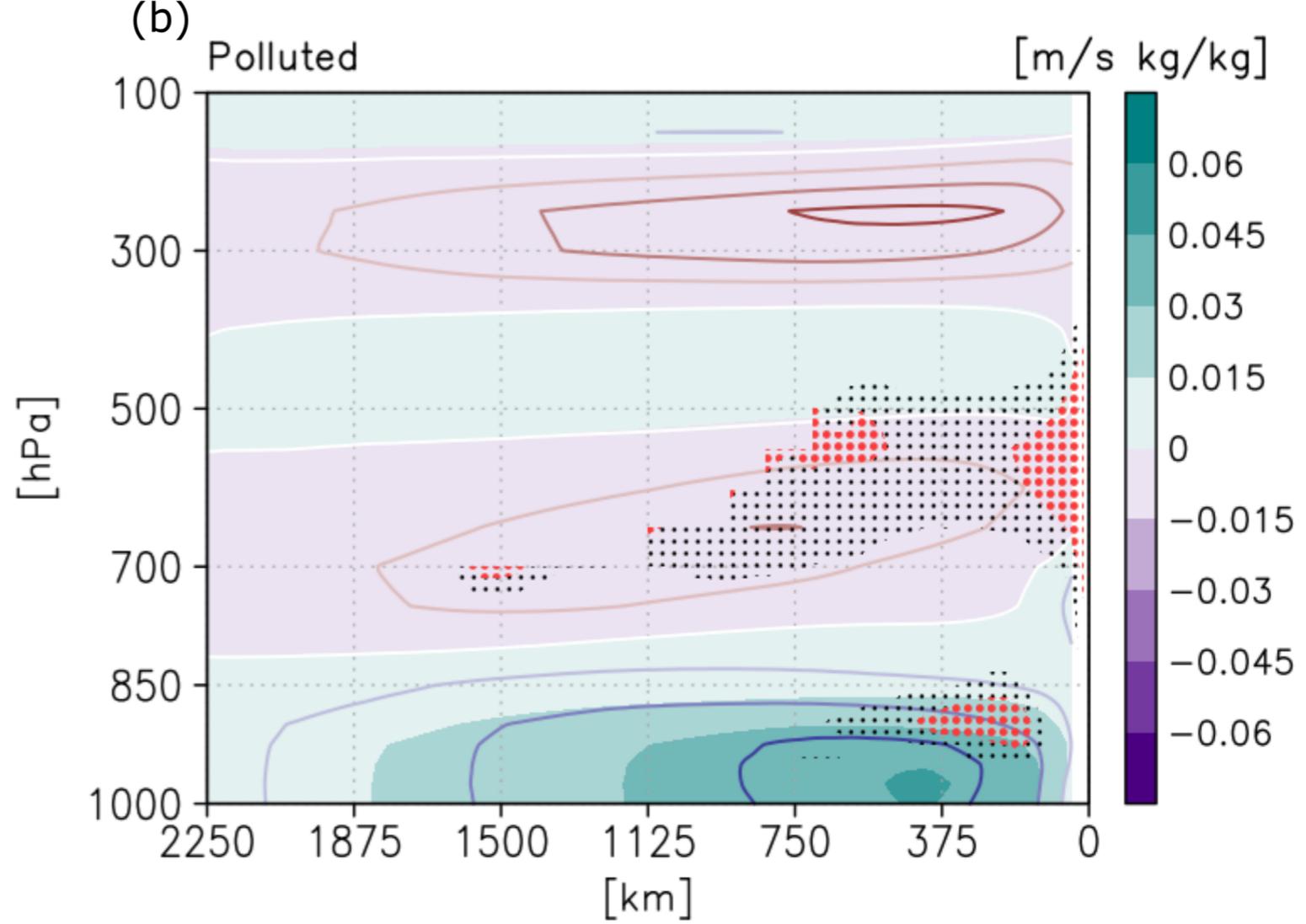
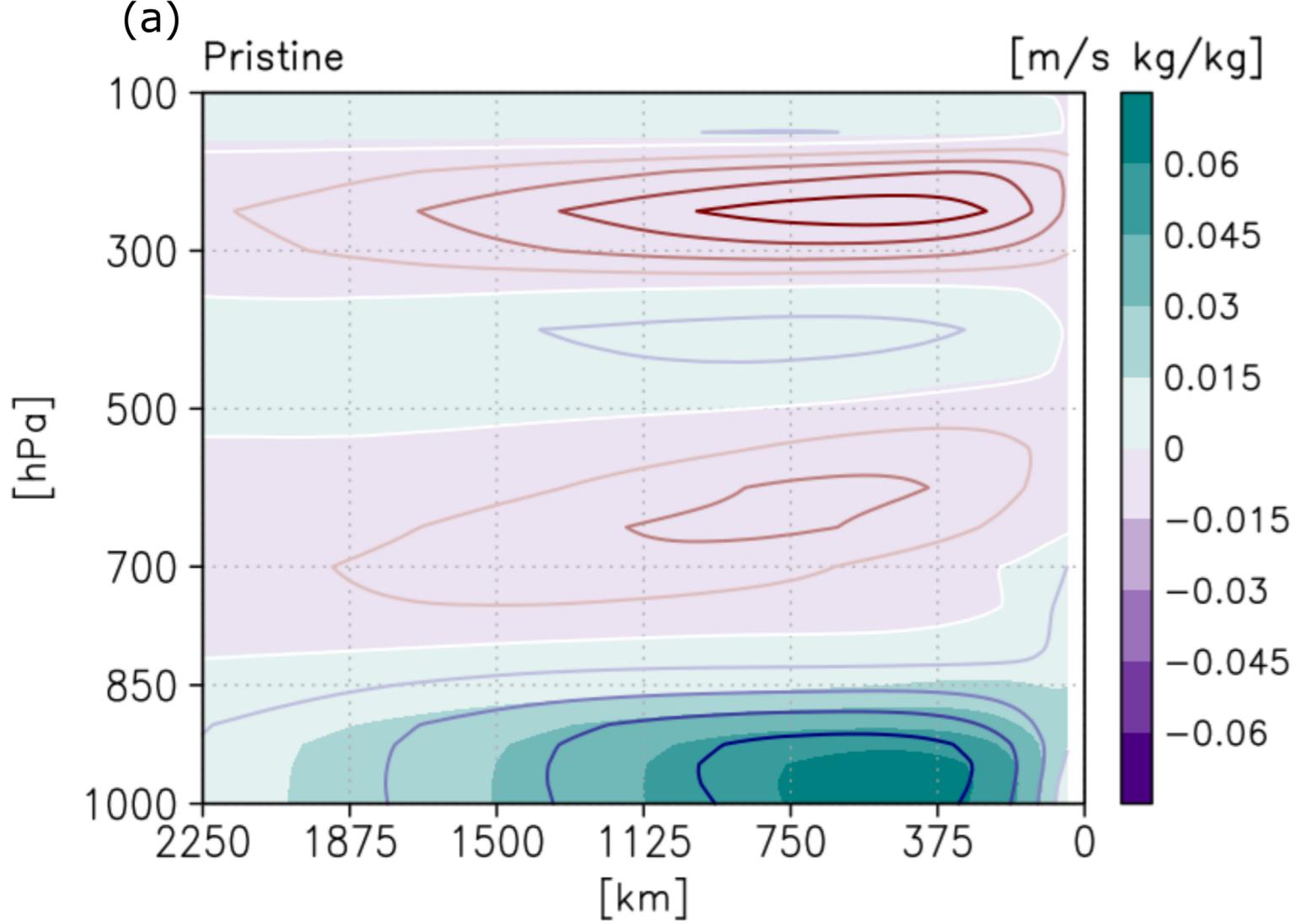


Figure 4.



1                   **Modulation of Tropical Convection-circulation**  
2                   **Interaction by Aerosol Indirect Effects in a Global**  
3                   **Convection-permitting Model**

4                   **Chun-Yian Su<sup>1,2</sup>, Chien-Ming Wu<sup>2</sup>, Wei-Ting Chen<sup>2</sup>, and John M. Peters<sup>1</sup>**

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8                   **Key Points:**

- 9                   • Simulations of the global convection-permitting model provide a new perspective  
10                  on aerosol indirect effects.  
11                  • Pollution facilitates the development of deep convection in a drier environment.  
12                  • The response of large-scale circulation to pollution limits the intensity of maxi-  
13                  mum precipitation.

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**Abstract**

Observations suggest tropical convection intensifies when aerosol concentrations enhance, but quantitative estimations of this effect remain highly uncertain. Leading theories for explaining the intensification are based on the dynamical response of convection to changes in cloud microphysics independently from possible changes in the environment. Here, we provide a new perspective on aerosol indirect effects on tropical convection by using a global convection-permitting model that realistically simulates convection-circulation interaction. Simulations of radiative-convective equilibrium show that pollution facilitates the development of deep convection in a drier environment, but cloud condensates are more likely to be exported from moist clusters to dry areas, impeding the large-scale moisture-convection feedback and limiting the intensity of maximum precipitation (30 vs. 47 mm h<sup>-1</sup>). Our results emphasize the importance of allowing atmospheric phenomena to evolve continuously across spatial and temporal scales in simulations when investigating the response of tropical convection to changes in cloud microphysics.

**Plain Language Summary**

How does air pollution affect thunderstorm intensity over the tropical ocean? Past studies have proposed different opinions but generally neglect the interplay between the development of thunderstorms and the long-range movement of air that redistributes the Earth's thermal energy and moisture. Here, we address this question by investigating results from numerical experiments in which the global domain is used to simulate the response of individual thunderstorms and large-scale air motion to pollution. Our results show that tropical thunderstorms with given moisture are more vigorous under the polluted scenario. However, pollution makes the thunderstorms keep less moisture in their surroundings, limiting the maximum intensity of thunderstorms and weakening the large-scale air motion that supplies moisture to thunderstorms. Our results suggest that the interplay between the development of thunderstorms and the long-range movement of air is crucial in determining the effects of pollution in the tropical atmosphere.

**1 Introduction**

Deep convective clouds (DCCs) play a critical role in the global climate system via their role in the Earth's energy budget (Arakawa, 2004; Hartmann et al., 2001). They can aggregate into organized convective systems that span hundreds to a thousand kilometers (Houze, 2004) and contribute significantly to tropical rainfall (Chen et al., 2021; Houze et al., 2015; Nesbitt et al., 2006; Tao & Chern, 2017; Yuan & Houze, 2010). Observations suggest that updrafts of tropical DCCs can be invigorated by enhanced aerosol concentrations that arise from human activities and natural sources (Andreae et al., 2004; Koren et al., 2008; Niu & Li, 2012; Pan et al., 2021; Storer et al., 2014). By acting as cloud condensate nuclei (CCN) or ice nuclei (IN), aerosols change cloud properties by influencing cloud microphysics and dynamics, meanwhile influencing cloud-radiation feedbacks (i.e., aerosol indirect effects (AIEs); see reviews of Fan et al. (2016) and Tao et al. (2012)). A deeper understanding of AIEs on tropical DCCs and organized convective systems could improve the prediction of extreme precipitation events in global weather and climate models. However, the underlying mechanisms of how the updrafts are invigorated remain elusive and are often debated (Fan et al., 2018; Fan & Khain, 2021; W. W. Grabowski & Morrison, 2020, 2021; Igel & van den Heever, 2021). A particular challenge of understanding AIEs using observations is that the observed aerosol concentrations in the environments of DCCs often covary with other meteorological factors, such as convective available potential energy and vertical wind shear (W. W. Grabowski, 2018; Nishant & Sherwood, 2017; Varble, 2018), and the influences of meteorological and aerosol variability are difficult to disentangle from one another. Further, there is evidence from simulations that AIEs on DCCs vary as a function of meteorological conditions such as shear

64 and humidity (Fan et al., 2009; van den Heever & Cotton, 2007; Khain et al., 2008; Ko-  
65 ren et al., 2010; Z. Lebo, 2018), which further complicates our ability to isolate the aerosol  
66 effects from other meteorological processes. AIEs are underrepresented in global climate  
67 models because of these knowledge gaps, which contributes to considerable uncertainty  
68 in estimating human climate forcing (Forster et al., 2021).

69 To investigate the aerosol indirect effects on DCCs that interact with their surround-  
70 ing environment, Abbott and Cronin (2021) carried out simulations using a small do-  
71 main ( $128 \times 128 \text{ km}^2$ ) three-dimension cloud-resolving model (3-D CRM) with parame-  
72 terized large-scale dynamics under the weak temperature gradient (WTG) approxima-  
73 tion (Sobel et al., 2001). Abbott and Cronin (2021) suggested that enhanced CCN con-  
74 centrations produce clouds that mix more condensed water into the surrounding air. This  
75 enhances the environment favorably for subsequent convection by moistening the free  
76 troposphere and reducing the deleterious effects of entrainment. The humidity-entrainment  
77 mechanism they proposed is distinct from past work, which linked stronger updrafts with  
78 latent heat released by cloud condensation (Fan et al., 2018) or freezing (Rosenfeld et  
79 al., 2008) independently from possible changes in the environment. Anber et al. (2019)  
80 also used a small domain ( $192 \times 192 \text{ km}^2$ ) 3-D CRM with parameterized large-scale dy-  
81 namics to carry out simulations with different number concentrations of CCN but found  
82 a contrasting result. In their simulations, convection and mean precipitation get weaker  
83 when the CCN concentration increases. They suggested that the changes are associated  
84 with the modulation of coupling between convective processes and large-scale motions  
85 that overall reduces surface enthalpy fluxes.

86 Using a large domain ( $10000 \text{ km}$ ) two-dimension CRM configured in radiative-convective  
87 equilibrium (RCE; Manabe & Strickler, 1964), van den Heever et al. (2011) found a weak  
88 response of the large-scale organization of convection and the domain-averaged precip-  
89 itation to enhanced CCN concentrations. They suggested that AIEs on the three trop-  
90 ical cloud modes are opposite in sign, offsetting each other, thus producing a weak domain-  
91 wide response. In contrast, a more recent study by Beydoun and Hoose (2019) that used  
92 a large channel-shaped domain ( $2000 \times 120 \text{ km}^2$ ) 3-D CRM found a comparatively large  
93 decrease in domain-averaged precipitation in their RCE simulations with enhanced CCN  
94 concentrations. They suggested that enhanced CCN concentrations lead to the weak-  
95 ened large-scale organization of convection, increased midlevel and upper-level clouds,  
96 decreased radiative cooling, and decreased domain-averaged precipitation.

97 The difference in the above findings is likely influenced by the representation of large-  
98 scale dynamics and the geometry of the simulation domain, which could modulate convection-  
99 circulation interaction hence affect the overall AIEs. For example, a horizontal scale of  
100 the model domain larger than  $5000 \text{ km}$  was suggested to be large enough to represent  
101 the natural scale of large-scale organization of convection (Matsugishi & Satoh, 2022;  
102 Patrizio & Randall, 2019; Yanase et al., 2022). Advances in computational resources have  
103 allowed for global model simulations that explicitly simulate deep convection (Stevens  
104 et al., 2019). These global convection-permitting models have been applied to investi-  
105 gate how clouds and convective processes couple to large-scale circulation and determine  
106 cloud feedbacks and climate sensitivity (Wing et al., 2020). However, how is the coupling  
107 of DCCs and large-scale circulations affected by enhanced aerosol concentrations has not  
108 been fully understood.

109 This study aims to investigate the modulation of tropical convection-circulation in-  
110 teraction by AIEs in global simulations that simultaneously resolve the dynamical re-  
111 sponse of convection to changes in cloud microphysics and allow large-scale circulations  
112 to naturally develop since the horizontal scale is not artificially constrained by the do-  
113 main size or shape. The modulation of tropical convection-circulation interaction by AIEs  
114 is demonstrated by analyzing the responses of moisture distribution, convection struc-  
115 tures, and large-scale circulation to pollution. Section 2 introduces more details about

116 the model and the experiment design. Section 3 describes the results, and the summary  
 117 and discussion are presented in section 4.

## 118 2 Model Description and Experiment Design

119 We use the Central Weather Bureau Global Forecast System (CWBGFS; Su et al.,  
 120 2021a, 2021b; SU et al., 2022), which is a global convection-permitting model run at the  
 121 horizontal resolution of 15 km, to carry out our experiments. Deep convection in the CW-  
 122 BGFS is represented by the unified relaxed Arakawa-Schubert scheme (URAS; Su et al.,  
 123 2021b) in which the representation transitions from the parameterization to the explicit  
 124 simulation as the diagnosed convective updraft fraction increases (Arakawa & Wu, 2013;  
 125 Wu & Arakawa, 2014). Hence, the CWBGFS with the URAS can explicitly but efficiently  
 126 simulate deep convection and convection-circulation interaction on the global scale. This  
 127 model partially resolve circulations in organized convective systems and reproduce the  
 128 observed feature of convective systems that stronger extreme precipitation occurs in hor-  
 129 izontally larger systems (Hamada et al., 2014; SU et al., 2022).

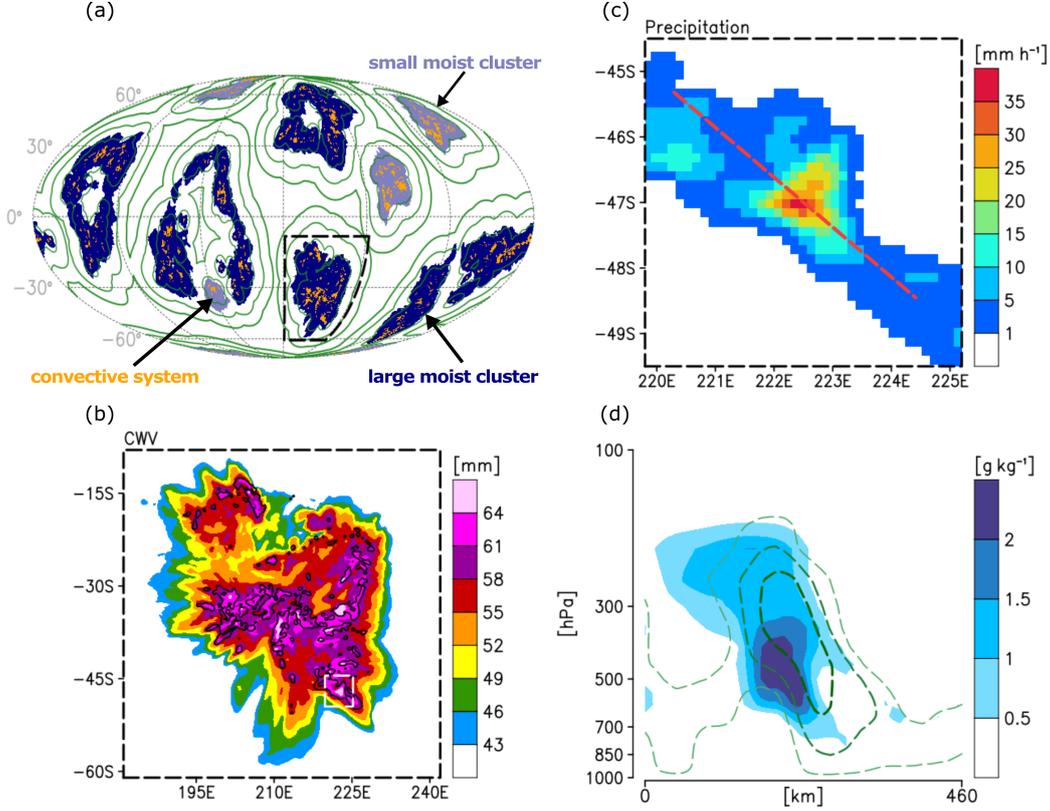
130 The CWBGFS uses the two-moment Predicted Particle Properties bulk microphysics  
 131 scheme (P3; Morrison & Milbrandt, 2015) to represent cloud microphysical processes,  
 132 including cloud-aerosol interaction. The aerosol concentration prescribed in P3 is fixed  
 133 throughout the integration and acts as CCN. Cloud-aerosol interaction is not included  
 134 in the URAS. In our simulations, the averaged percentage of precipitation produced by  
 135 explicitly simulated convection is more than 93 % over precipitation events stronger than  
 136 5 mm h<sup>-1</sup>, indicating that most of the cloud-aerosol interactions associated with deep con-  
 137 vection are resolved. The rest of the descriptions regarding physics suites and the dy-  
 138 namic core of the CWBGFS can be found in Su et al. (2021a).

139 Two idealized non-rotating aqua-planet simulations configured in RCE are carried  
 140 out. Simulations in RCE have been extensively used to investigate feedback among clouds,  
 141 environmental moisture, radiation, and precipitation (Bretherton et al., 2005; Coppin  
 142 & Bony, 2015; Cronin & Wing, 2017; Emanuel et al., 2014; Holloway & Woolnough, 2016;  
 143 Pendergrass et al., 2016; Popke et al., 2013; Singh & O’Gorman, 2013, 2015; Wing & Emanuel,  
 144 2014; Wing et al., 2020), and therefore provide an ideal experimental setting to study  
 145 AIEs. Under certain circumstances, convection in RCE spontaneously self-organizes into  
 146 one or more moist ascending clusters surrounded by dry subsiding convection-free ar-  
 147 eas in simulations configured in non-rotating RCE (convective self-aggregation (CSA);  
 148 C. Muller et al., 2022; Wing et al., 2017). We note that CSA occurs in the simulations  
 149 of van den Heever et al. (2011) and Beydoun and Hoose (2019).

150 The simulations are initialized with an analytic sounding (Wing et al., 2018) that  
 151 approximates the moist tropical sounding of Dunion (2011), and the initial horizontal  
 152 winds are set to zero. The initial surface pressure of all grid columns is 1014.8 hPa. The  
 153 incoming solar radiation (409.6 W m<sup>-2</sup>), the sea surface temperature (300 K), and the  
 154 surface albedo (0.07) are spatially uniform and constant in time. The simulations are  
 155 run for 120 days, and the random perturbation of temperature from 0.1 to 0.02 K is added  
 156 to the five lowest model levels in the first 20 days to speed up convection initiation. The  
 157 only difference between the two simulations is the prescribed spatially uniform aerosol  
 158 number mixing ratio set in P3. They are set at  $3 \times 10^8$  kg<sup>-1</sup> and  $3 \times 10^{10}$  kg<sup>-1</sup>, represent-  
 159 ing the pristine and polluted scenarios, respectively. The scenarios here are referred to  
 160 the marine environment (Andreae, 2009) and the urban environment (Chang et al., 2021)  
 161 and are used to evaluate the upper bound of AIEs on convection-circulation interaction.  
 162 In the following section, 30 days of hourly output (days 90 to 120) are analyzed when  
 163 the simulation is in an RCE state.

164 The overall results of the pristine run are showcased in Fig. 1, demonstrating that  
 165 our simulations resemble the global model simulations in the RCE model intercompar-

166 ison project (Wing et al., 2018, 2020), in which convection self-organizing into multiple  
 167 moist clusters (Fig. 1a). Fig. 1b shows the spatial distribution of column water vapor  
 168 (CWV) of a moist cluster, indicating high heterogeneity that is coupled to spatial convec-  
 169 tion structures. Precipitation stronger than  $30 \text{ mm h}^{-1}$  (Fig. 1c) is found in a convec-  
 170 tive system with intense resolved updrafts ( $>1 \text{ m s}^{-1}$ ) (Fig. 1d). Fig. 1 with more detail  
 171 will be introduced in the following section.

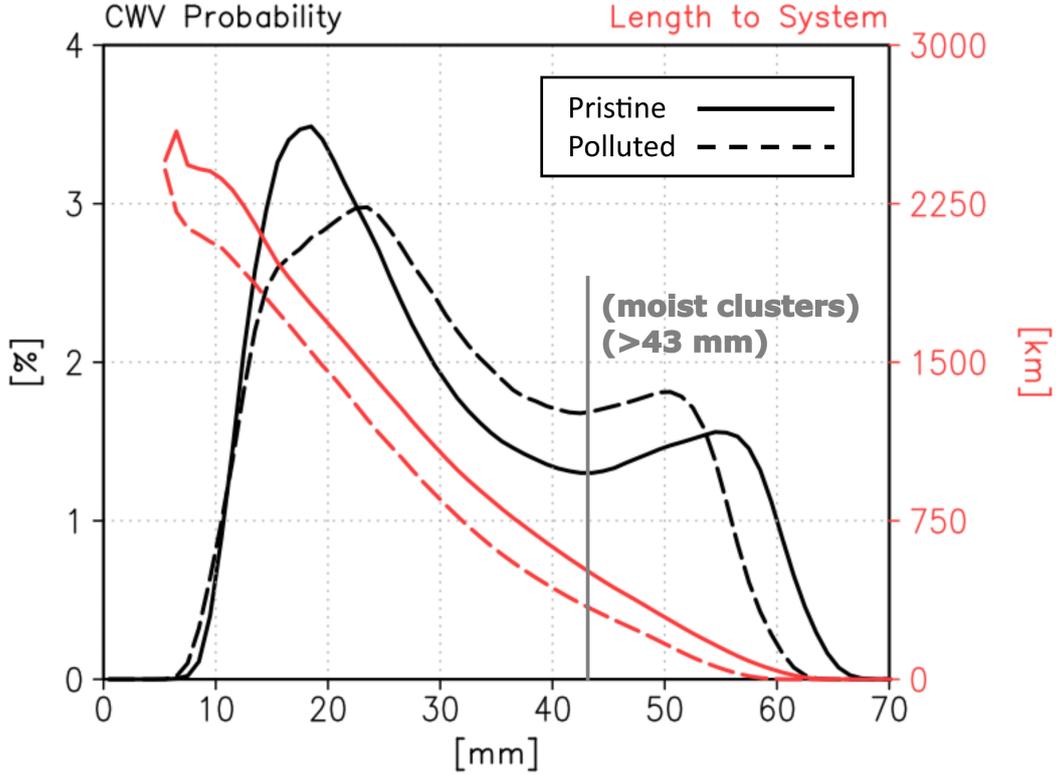


**Figure 1.** A snapshot of moist clusters smaller (light blue shaded) and larger (navy shaded) than 1000 km of horizontal scale, convective systems (orange shaded), and distance to the nearest convective system (green contours of 375, 1125, 1875 km) of the pristine run on day 106.5 (a). Column water vapor (mm) and convective systems (black contours) in a moist cluster (b), which the domain is demonstrated by the black dashed lines in (a). Precipitation intensity ( $\text{mm h}^{-1}$ ) of a convective system (c), which the domain is demonstrated by the white dashed lines in (b). The vertical profiles of mixed-phase cloud condensates (shaded) and vertical velocity (green contours of 0.1, 0.5,  $1 \text{ m s}^{-1}$ ) (d) along the red dashed line in (c). See the context for the definition of moist clusters and convective systems. The horizontal scale is determined by the square root of the cluster’s horizontal area.

### 3 Results

We start from demonstrating the response of moisture probability distribution to enhanced CCN concentrations. In both runs, the distribution of CWV is bimodal (Fig. 2). The bimodality suggests the presence of an aggregated state (Arnold & Randall, 2015; Tsai & Wu, 2017) which is maintained by large-scale circulation. The difference between the two local maxima of the bimodality is smaller in the polluted run, suggesting AIEs

178 drive columns away from both moist and dry equilibria in the pristine run. We use the  
 179 CWV value that corresponds to the smallest value along the curve in Fig. 2 between the  
 180 local maxima at dry and moist CWV values as the threshold to define moist clusters (i.e.,  
 181 43 mm in both runs). The difference in area coverage percentage of moist clusters in the  
 182 global domain between the two runs is less than 3 %. The moist clusters in the polluted  
 183 run are notably drier than that in the pristine run. Further, the number of moist clusters  
 184 in the polluted run is 23 % more than that in the pristine run. Sixty-five percent  
 185 of moist clusters are smaller than 1000 km of horizontal scale in the polluted run, and  
 186 there are 45 % of them in the pristine run.



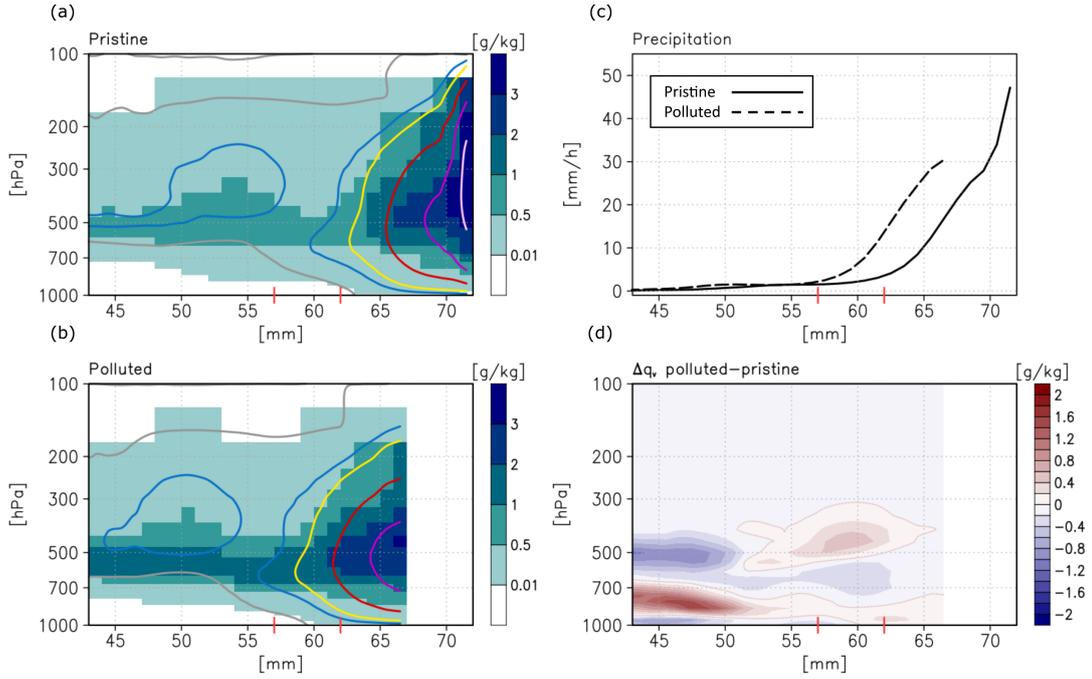
**Figure 2.** Probability distribution of column water vapor (black) and distance to the nearest convective system conditional sampled by column water vapor (red) from days 90 to 120. The gray line labels 43 mm of column water vapor, which is set as the criteria for defining a moist cluster.

187 We evaluate AIEs by first identifying the updraft regions of convective systems as  
 188 laterally connected columns of vertical velocity  $>0.1 \text{ m s}^{-1}$  in any level between 700 to  
 189 400 hPa (Fig. 1a-b). A critical characteristic of tropical deep moist convection is the rapid  
 190 intensification of precipitation once CWV has exceeded a critical value, which character-  
 191 izes the effect of water vapor on the buoyancy of clouds through entrainment (Bretherton  
 192 et al., 2004; Neelin et al., 2009; Peters & Neelin, 2006). Hence, we investigate the influ-  
 193 ence of pollution on this precipitation-CWV dependency. Analyses among all updraft  
 194 regions with a given CWV indicate that both of our simulations mimic the precipitation-  
 195 CWV dependency seen in nature, with a rapid increase in mixed-phase cloud condensate,  
 196 updraft intensity (Fig. 3a-b), and precipitation (Fig. 3c) occurring in both simu-  
 197 lations above a certain threshold in CWV. However, a distinct difference of the polluted  
 198 run from the pristine one is that the threshold CWV which heralds the increase in con-

199 vective intensity occurs at a lower CWV value (57 mm) than it does in the pristine run  
200 (62 mm).

201 Fig. 3a-b show that the vertical profiles to the right of the CWV thresholds resem-  
202 ble the convection structures of deep convection at the developing and mature stage, and  
203 the profiles to the left resemble deep convection at the dissipating stage, in which mixed-  
204 phase cloud condensates concentrate at mid-level free atmosphere beneath which weak  
205 downdrafts due to water loading take place. In the dissipating stage, moisture in the pol-  
206 luted run is more heavily distributed over the mid-to-low free atmosphere (Fig. 3d). The  
207 water vapor mixing ratio there is  $1.5 \text{ g kg}^{-1}$  more than that in the pristine run. The dif-  
208 ference may be caused by the stronger evaporation of raindrops as we found there is more  
209 mass but nearly the same number of falling raindrops beneath clouds in the polluted run  
210 leading to two times stronger surface precipitation (figure not shown). These raindrops  
211 could be from the melting of graupel and hail since the warm-rain process is suppressed  
212 due to pollution.

213 Past studies have shown that humidity in the lower free atmosphere is critical to  
214 the onset of tropical deep convection (Derbyshire et al., 2004; Holloway & Neelin, 2009,  
215 2010; Schiro et al., 2016; Tompkins, 2001). The enhanced moisture in the lower free at-  
216 mosphere increases the buoyancy of entraining plumes, leading to an increased chance  
217 of deep convection. The signal of the exceeding moisture in the mid-to-low free atmo-  
218 sphere in the polluted run extends to the CWV regimes of developing and mature con-  
219 vection (Fig. 3d), in which the increase in moisture in the mid-to-high atmosphere re-  
220 flects the prevalence of convection (Fig. 3a-b). The modulated moisture distribution, orig-  
221 inating from the response of dissipating stage of convection to changes in cloud micro-  
222 physics, enhances conditional instability, potentially contributing to the development of  
223 subsequent convection. Further investigations on the mechanism will be carried out in  
224 the future.

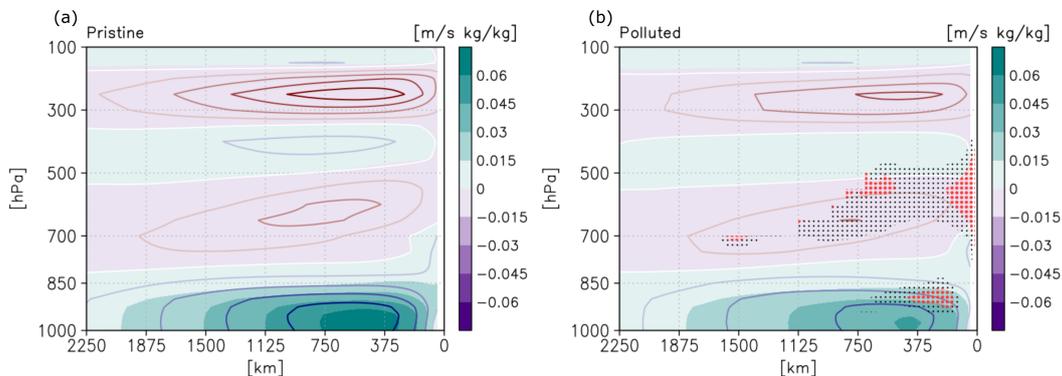


**Figure 3.** Mass mixing ratio of cloud water and cloud ice (shaded) and vertical velocity (contours at 0, 0.1, 0.2, 0.5, 1, 2  $\text{m s}^{-1}$ ) within the updraft regions of convective systems conditional sampled by column water vapor of the pristine (a) and the polluted (b) run from days 90 to 120. Precipitation intensity of the two runs (c) and the difference of water vapor mixing ratio (polluted run minus the pristine run) (d) sampled by the same method. The red dotted line in (d) shows the contour of 0  $\text{g kg}^{-1}$ . The red sticks along the x-axis show the CWV value of 57 and 62 mm

225 However, the highest CWV environment over the updraft regions ( $>67$  mm) in the  
 226 pristine run is absent in the polluted run (Fig. 3). The polluted run has notably drier  
 227 moist clusters (Fig. 2), leading to the weaker maximum intensity of updraft and precipi-  
 228 tation (30 vs. 47  $\text{mm h}^{-1}$ ). As the moisture distribution is maintained by large-scale cir-  
 229 culation, we investigate the influence of pollution on large-scale circulation by sorting  
 230 the distance to the nearest convective system and projecting horizontal winds in the di-  
 231 rection pointing to the nearest system (green contours in Fig. 1a). Large-scale circula-  
 232 tion has often been visualized with a streamfunction in moisture space when analyzing  
 233 self-aggregated runs to RCE (Arnold & Putman, 2018; Bretherton et al., 2005; Holloway  
 234 & Woolnough, 2016; C. Muller & Bony, 2015; C. J. Muller & Held, 2012). The stream-  
 235 function analyzed in past studies is designed to investigate the energy transport between  
 236 dry areas and moist clusters but it does not represent circulation in physical space. It  
 237 is natural to analyze large-scale circulation in physical space when using a global convec-  
 238 tion-permitting model with an appropriate choice of the source of momentum and energy trans-  
 239 port. The result shows that both runs exhibit typical structures of tropical circulation,  
 240 including low-level inflow, mid-level outflow, and deep convection outflow (Johnson et  
 241 al., 1999), but every component of the circulation is weaker in the polluted run (Fig. 4).

242 We trace the cause of the weaker large-scale circulation down to the influence of  
 243 pollution on the geographical distribution of convective systems (i.e., updraft regions).  
 244 In the polluted run, convective systems develop geographically closer to the meander-  
 245 ing margin (i.e., 43 mm) of moist clusters, because CWV increases monotonically from  
 246 dry areas toward moist clusters (Fig. 1b), and convection strength enhances more rapidly

247 as CWV increases in the polluted run (Fig. 3b). Fig. 2 shows that the average distance  
 248 from the edges of moist clusters to the nearest convective system in the pristine run is  
 249 1.5 times longer than that in the polluted run. Meanwhile, inhibiting the warm-rain pro-  
 250 cess by pollution could increase the mid-level static stability as a result of a latent heat-  
 251 ing dipole associated with the freezing water and melting ice above and below the freez-  
 252 ing level. Previous studies suggested that an increase in mid-level static stability pro-  
 253 motes detrainment (Johnson et al., 1999; Patrizio & Randall, 2019; Posselt et al., 2008,  
 254 2012). Overall, cloud condensates in the polluted run are more likely to be exported from  
 255 moist clusters to dry areas rather than stay in moist clusters and then re-evaporate. The  
 256 export of clouds impedes the moisture-convective feedback in which moistening environ-  
 257 ment by convection plays a key role in favoring subsequent development of convection  
 258 (W. Grabowski & Moncrieff, 2004; Holloway & Neelin, 2009). The above inference is sup-  
 259 ported by Fig. 4b, which shows that the exceeding cloud condensates in the polluted run  
 260 coincide with the mid-level outflow of the large-scale circulation.



**Figure 4.** Water vapor flux (shaded) and horizontal winds (contours from  $-4$  to  $4$   $\text{m s}^{-1}$  with an interval of  $1$   $\text{m s}^{-1}$  using a color scale from maroon to white to navy) projected to the direction of pointing to the nearest convective system in the pristine (a) and the polluted (b) run from days 90 to 120. Positive values are vectors toward the system. The black and red dots in (b) show where the ratio of cloud water mixing ratio in the polluted run over the pristine one larger than 1 and 2, respectively

## 261 4 Summary and Discussion

262 This study investigates the response of tropical convection-circulation interaction  
 263 to enhanced CCN concentrations using non-rotating RCE simulations of a global convection-  
 264 permitting model run at  $15$  km horizontal resolution. Deep convection in the model is  
 265 represented in a way that the explicit simulation of convection seeds cloud-aerosol in-  
 266 teraction and is responsible for strong precipitation events. The simulations allow for the  
 267 large-scale organization of convection realistically inducing circulation without artificial  
 268 constraints of scale separation assumption, domain size, or domain shape. The novel find-  
 269 ing in this study is that pollution facilitates the development of deep convection in a drier  
 270 environment, while the response of large-scale circulation limits the intensity of maxi-  
 271 mum precipitation. Our results emphasize the importance of allowing atmospheric phe-  
 272 nomena to evolve continuously across spatial and temporal scales in simulations when  
 273 investigating the response of tropical convection to changes in cloud microphysics.

274 Connecting our result to the existing driving and maintaining mechanisms of CSA  
 275 could inspire future investigation on the response of global warming to varied CCN con-

276 concentrations since CSA is known to modulate climate sensitivity (Cronin & Wing, 2017).  
 277 The possible connections include:

- 278 1. The export of mid-level cloud condensates could weaken the radiatively driven sub-  
 279 sidence over the dry areas that drives CSA (Beydoun & Hoose, 2019; Bretherton  
 280 et al., 2005; C. J. Muller & Held, 2012; Wing & Emanuel, 2014; Holloway & Wool-  
 281 nough, 2016).
- 282 2. The response of cold pool dynamics to cloud microphysics has received consider-  
 283 able attention in the literature (Z. J. Lebo & Morrison, 2014; Seigel et al., 2013;  
 284 Storer et al., 2014; Su et al., 2020; Tao et al., 2007; van den Heever & Cotton, 2007).  
 285 Cold pools associated with the closer-to-edge convective systems in the polluted  
 286 run could mix low-level dry areas and moist clusters more effectively, weakening  
 287 the CSA (Jeevanjee & Romps, 2013; C. Muller & Bony, 2015).

288 Past studies (Arnold & Randall, 2015; Khairoutdinov & Emanuel, 2018) indicated  
 289 that the large-scale organization of convection (i.e., CSA) in non-rotating RCE simula-  
 290 tions and MJO-like (i.e., Madden-Julian Oscillation; Madden & Julian, 1971) disturbance  
 291 in rotating RCE simulations share the same driving mechanism (i.e., cloud-radiation feed-  
 292 backs) in which AIEs can be critical. One of the characteristics of MJO propagation is  
 293 that MJOs suffer from a barrier effect when it propagates over the Maritime Continent  
 294 (MC) (Kim et al., 2014; Zhang & Ling, 2017). The development of convective systems  
 295 over the water in the MC region plays a crucial role in carrying the MJO signal through  
 296 the MC (Ling et al., 2019). Around the globe, MC is a major source of different types  
 297 of aerosol (Reid et al., 2012; Salinas et al., 2013; Shpund et al., 2019). The modulation  
 298 of the size of moist clusters and the geographical distribution of convective systems by  
 299 enhanced CCN concentrations potentially provides a new perspective on the existing MJO  
 300 theories (Jiang et al., 2020; Zhang, 2013). A possible approach for the investigation is  
 301 to evaluate sub-seasonal hindcasts of an active MJO event with different aerosol emis-  
 302 sion scenarios.

## 303 5 Open Research

304 The model output data of a temporal snapshot, the Fortran program that computes  
 305 vertical atmospheric profiles conditional sampled by column water vapor and the distance  
 306 to the nearest convective system, and the GrADS plotting scripts in this study are avail-  
 307 able at <https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.22149617.v1>.

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