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3 **Biomass Burning Aerosols and the Low Visibility Events in Southeast Asia**

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30 **Abstract**

31 Fires including peatland burning in Southeast Asia have become a major
32 concern of general public as well as governments in the region. This is because that
33 aerosols emitted from such fires can cause persistent haze events under favorite
34 weather conditions in downwind locations, degrading visibility and causing human
35 health issues. In order to improve our understanding of the spatial-temporal
36 coverage and influence of biomass burning aerosols in Southeast Asia, we have used
37 surface visibility and particulate matter concentration observations, added by
38 decadal long (2002 to 2014) simulations using the Weather Research and
39 Forecasting (WRF) model with a fire aerosol module, driven by high-resolution
40 biomass burning emission inventories. We find that in the past decade, fire aerosols
41 are responsible for nearly all the events with very low visibility ($< 7\text{km}$), and a
42 substantial fraction of the low visibility events (visibility $< 10\text{ km}$) in the major
43 metropolitan areas of Southeast Asia: 38% in Bangkok, 35% in Kuala Lumpur, and
44 34% in Singapore. Biomass burnings in Mainland Southeast Asia account for the
45 largest contributor to total fire produced $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ in Bangkok (99.1%), while biomass
46 burning in Sumatra is the major contributor to fire produced $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ in Kuala Lumpur
47 (49%) and Singapore (41%). To examine the general situation across the region, we
48 have further defined and derived a new integrated metric for 50 cities of the
49 Association of Southeast Asian Nations, i.e., Haze Exposure Days (HEDs) that
50 measures the annual exposure days of these cities to low visibility ($< 10\text{ km}$) caused
51 by particulate matter pollution. It is shown that HEDs have increased steadily in the
52 past decade across cities with both high and low populations. Fire events are found



53 to be responsible for about half of the total HEDs. Therefore, our result suggests
54 that in order to improve the overall air quality in Southeast Asia, mitigation policies
55 targeting at both biomass and fossil fuel burning sources need to be put in effect.



56 1 Introduction

57 In recent decades, biomass burning has become frequent and widely spread
58 across the mainland of Southeast Asia to the islands of Sumatra and Borneo
59 (Langner et al., 2007; Carlson et al., 2012; Page et al., 2002; van der Werf et al.,
60 2010). Abundant particulate matters emitted from such fires cause the haze events
61 to occur in the downwind locations such as Singapore (Koe et al., 2001; Heil et al.,
62 2007; See et al., 2006), degrading visibility and threatening on human health
63 (Emmanuel, 2000; Kunii et al., 2002; Johnston et al., 2012; Mauderly and Chow,
64 2008). Besides causing air quality issues, fire aerosols contain rich carbonaceous
65 compounds such as black carbon (BC) (Fujii et al., 2014) and thus can reduce
66 sunlight through both absorption and scattering. Based on satellite data and
67 numerical simulations, Tosca et al. (2010) found that tropospheric heating from BC
68 absorption in the Maritime Continent (MC) is $20.5 \pm 9.3 \text{ W m}^{-2}$, and the reduction of
69 both surface net shortwave radiation and regional precipitation can be as high as
70 10% due to the direct and semi-direct effects of fire aerosols. Nevertheless, indirect
71 effects of fire aerosols are even more complicated due to various cloud types and
72 meteorological conditions in the MC (Sekiguchi et al., 2003; Lin et al., 2013; Wu et
73 al., 2013).

74 Majority of present day fires in Southeast Asia occurs due to human
75 interferences: oil palm plantation related land clearing, deforestation, and peatland
76 management, and burning of agriculture wastes (Dennis et al., 2005; Miriam et al.,
77 2015b). Certain policies and regulations regarding, e.g., migration also affect the
78 occurrence of burning events. For example, large fires have occurred since 1960s in



79 Sumatra; however, the first fire event in Kalimantan happened in the 1980s (Field et
80 al., 2009). Based on economic incentives and population growth in Southeast Asia,
81 future land-use management will play an important role in determining the
82 coverage of fires across the region (Carlson et al., 2012; Miriam et al., 2015a).

83 Besides human interventions, meteorological factors, such as rainfall, can also
84 influence fire initiation, intensity, and duration (Reid et al., 2012; Reid et al., 2015).
85 Reid et al. (2012) investigated relationships between fire hotspot appearance and
86 various climate variabilities as well as meteorological phenomena in different
87 temporal scales over the MC, including: (1) El Nino and Southern Oscillation (ENSO)
88 (Rasmusson and Wallace, 1983) and the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD)(Saji et al., 1999);
89 (2) Seasonal migration of the Inter-tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) and associated
90 Southeast Asia monsoons (Chang et al., 2005); (3) Intra-seasonal variabilities such
91 as Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO) (Madden and Julian, 1971) and the west
92 Sumatran low (Wu and Hsu, 2009); (4) Wave, mesoscale features, and tropical
93 cyclones; and (5) Convections. One interesting finding is that the influence of these
94 factors on fire events varies over different parts of the MC. For example, the fire
95 signal in a part of Kalimantan is strongly related to both the monsoons and ENSO. In
96 contrast, fire activity in Central Sumatra is not as closely tied to the monsoons and
97 ENSO but MJO signal.

98 Above climate variabilities or meteorological phenomena affect not only
99 biomass burning emissions but also fire aerosol transport (Reid et al., 2012).
100 Seasonal migration of the ITCZ and associated monsoonal circulation dominate
101 seasonal wind flows, whereas sea breeze, typhoon, or topography determine air



102 flow in smaller spatial scales or shorter temporal scales, all of them play significant
103 roles in determining the transport pathway of fire aerosols (Wang et al., 2013). For
104 example, during the intense haze episode of June 2013, the long lasting situation
105 with “very unhealthy” air pollution level in Singapore was actually caused by an
106 enhanced fire aerosol transport from Sumatra to West Malaysia owing to a tropical
107 storm located in South China Sea. Recently, using a global chemistry transport
108 model combining with a back-trajectory tracer model, Reddington et al. (2014)
109 attempted to attribute particulate pollutions in Singapore over a short time period
110 of 5 years to different burning sites in surrounding regions. The coarse 2.8-degree
111 resolution model used in the study, however, has left many open questions.

112 In this study, we aim to examine and quantify the impact of fire aerosols on the
113 visibility and air quality of Southeast Asia in the past decade. Analyses of
114 observational data and comprehensive regional model simulations have both been
115 performed in order to improve our understanding of this issue. We firstly describe
116 methodologies adopted in the study, followed by the results and findings from our
117 assessment of the fire aerosol on the degradation of visibility in several selected
118 cities and also in the great Southeast Asia. We then discuss the sensitivity of our
119 findings to the use of different meteorological datasets as well as fire emission
120 inventories. The last section summarizes and concludes our work.



121 2 Methodology

122 2.1 The model

123 In order to address the targeted science question, we have used the Weather
124 Research and Forecasting (WRF) model coupled with chemistry component (WRF-
125 Chem). The WRF model is a compressible, non-hydrostatic regional meteorology
126 model that uses the Arakawa C grid and terrain-following hydrostatic pressure
127 coordinates, and includes various dynamic cores and physical parameterizations for
128 different scientific purposes (Skamarock et al., 2008). The WRF-Chem model is a
129 version of the standard WRF with an additional interactively coupled model of
130 atmospheric chemistry. WRF-Chem simulates atmospheric evolutions of chemical
131 species including particulate matters concurrently with meteorological fields, using
132 the same grid structure, advection scheme, and physics schemes for sub-grid scale
133 transport as in the standard WRF model (Grell et al., 2005). In this study, we use
134 WRF-Chem version 3.6 with a modified chemistry tracer module instead of a full
135 chemistry package. This is for the purpose to focus on the fire aerosol life cycle as
136 the first step, without involving a much more complicated gaseous and aqueous
137 chemical processing calculations. This configuration also lowers the computational
138 burden substantially, and thus enables us to conduct long model integrations to
139 determine the contributions of fire aerosol to the degradation of air quality in the
140 region over the past decade. The numerical simulations are employed within a
141 model domain with a horizontal resolution of 36 km, including 432×148 horizontal
142 grid points (Fig. 1), and 31 vertically staggered layers based on a terrain-following
143 pressure coordinate system. The vertical layers are stretched with a higher



144 resolution near the surface (an average depth of ~30 m in the first model half layer).
145 Variables other than vertical velocity and geopotential are stored at the half model
146 layers. The time step is 180 seconds. The physics schemes included in the
147 simulations are listed in Table 1. The initial and boundary meteorological
148 conditions are taken from reanalysis meteorological dataset. In order to examine
149 the potential influence of different reanalysis products on simulation results, we
150 have used two such datasets: (1) the National Center for Environment Prediction
151 FiNaL (NCEP-FNL) reanalysis data (National Centers for Environmental Prediction,
152 2000), which has a spatial resolution of 1 degree and a temporal resolution of 6
153 hours; and (2) ERA-Interim, which is a global atmospheric reanalysis from
154 European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF) (European Centre
155 for Medium-Range Weather, 2009), providing 6-hourly atmospheric fields on sixty
156 pressure levels from surface to 0.1 hPa with a horizontal resolution of
157 approximately 80 km. Sea surface temperature is updated every 6 hours in both
158 NCEP-FNL and ERA-Interim. All simulations used four-dimensional data
159 assimilation (FDDA) to nudge NCEP-FNL or ERA-Interim temperature, water vapor,
160 and zonal and meridional wind speeds above the planetary boundary layer (PBL).
161 This approach has shown to provide realistic temperature, moisture, and wind fields
162 in a long simulation (Stauffer and Seaman, 1994).

163 In WRF-Chem, the sinks of PM_{2.5} particles include dry deposition and wet
164 scavenging calculated at every time step.



165 **2.2 Biomass burning emissions**

166 Two biomass burning emission inventories are used in this study to investigate
167 the sensitivity of modeled fire aerosol concentration to different emission
168 estimations. The first emission inventory is the Fire INventory from NCAR version
169 1.5 (FINNv1.5) (Wiedinmyer et al., 2011), which classifies burnings of extra tropical
170 forest, tropical forest (including peatland), savanna, and grassland. It is used in this
171 study to provide daily, 36 km resolution PM_{2.5} emissions. The second emission
172 inventory is the Global Fire Emission Database with version 4.1 with small fire
173 included (GFEDv4.1s) (van der Werf et al., 2010; Randerson et al., 2012; Giglio et al.,
174 2013). GFEDv4.1s provides PM_{2.5} emissions with the same spatiotemporal
175 resolution as FINNv1.5.

176 A plume rise algorithm for fire emissions was implemented in WRF-Chem by
177 Grell et al. (2011) to estimate fire injection height. This algorithm, however, often
178 derives an injection height for tropical peat fire that is too high comparing to the
179 estimated value based on remote sensing retrievals (Tosca et al., 2011). Therefore,
180 we have limited the plume injection height of peat fire within 700 m in this study
181 based on Tosca et al. (2011). This modification has clearly improved the modeled
182 surface PM_{2.5} concentration comparing to observations in Singapore.

183 In order to distinguish the spatial-temporal coverage and influence of biomass
184 burning aerosols from different regions in Southeast Asia and nearby northern
185 Australia, we have created five tracers to represent fire aerosols respectively from
186 Mainland Southeast Asia (s1), Sumatra and Java islands (s2), Borneo (s3), the rest of
187 the Maritime Continent (s4), and northern Australia (s5) as illustrated in Fig. 1. The



188 major fire season in Mainland Southeast Asia (s1) is from February to April. In
189 other four regions (s2-s5), it is from August to October.

190 Generally speaking, there are strong seasonal variations of fire emissions
191 coordinating with those of rainfall in all fire regions as shown in Fig. 2. Because
192 Mainland Southeast Asia (s1) and northern Australia (s5) are on the edge of
193 seasonal migration of the ITCZ, seasonal variations of rainfall in these two regions
194 are even more pronounced. Sumatra (s2), Borneo (s3), and the rest of the Maritime
195 Continent (s4) are all influenced by similar meteorological regimes, i.e., seasonal
196 migration of the ITCZ. However, the passage of MJO events adds more intra-season
197 variability of rainfall and fire emissions in these three regions. Therefore, the
198 seasonal variations of rainfall and fire emissions in s2, s3, and s4 are not as apparent
199 as in the s1 and s5 regions (Fig. 2b – d), owing to the influences of multiple scales of
200 precipitation features over these areas. Nevertheless, inter-seasonal variations of
201 rainfall and fire emissions are still highly correlated with each other in these three
202 regions (see additional discussion in Section 4).

203 2.3 Observational data and model derivation of visibility

204 The definition of “visibility” is the farthest distance at which one can see a large,
205 black object against a bright background at the horizon (Seinfeld and Pandis, 2006).
206 There are several factors to determine visibility, but in this study we mainly
207 consider the absorption and scattering of light by gases and particles excluding fog
208 or misty days. One of the most widely used equations, *Koschmeider equation*, is
209 given by

$$210 \quad VIS = 3.912 / b_{ext} \quad (1)$$



211 where VIS is visibility with a unit in meter and b_{ext} is the extinction coefficient with a
212 unit of m^{-1} . Visibility degradation is most readily observed from the impact of
213 particulate pollution besides fog. Based on Eq. (1), a maximum visibility under
214 absolutely dry and pollution-free air is about 296 km owing to Rayleigh scattering,
215 while a visibility on the order of 10 km is considered as a moderately to heavily
216 polluted air by particulate matters. Abnormal and persistent low visibility
217 situations are also referred to as “haze” events. Urban air pollutions such as fossil
218 fuel burning can cause low visibility and haze event to occur. Similarly, fire aerosols,
219 alone or mixed with other particulate pollutants, can degrade visibility and lead to
220 haze events too.

221 The observational data of visibility from the Global Surface Summary of the Day
222 (GSOD) (Smith et al., 2011) are used in our study, as derived from the Integrated
223 Surface Hourly (ISH) dataset and archived at the National Climatic Data Center
224 (NCDC). The daily visibility in the dataset is available from 1973 to present.

225 In order to compare with observations, we also calculate the visibility using
226 modeled fire aerosol data, based on the extinction coefficient of these aerosols as
227 functions of particle size (assuming a log-normal size distribution of accumulation
228 mode, with a standard deviation $\sigma = 2$), the complex refractive index of the particles,
229 and a wavelength of 550 nm of the incident light. As fire plumes contain both sulfur
230 compounds and carbonaceous aerosols, we assume the fire aerosols are aged
231 internal mixtures with black carbon as core and sulfate as shell (Kim et al., 2008).
232 We also consider hygroscopic growth of sulfate fraction of these mixed particles in
233 the calculation based on environmental relative humidity.



234 As mentioned above, a visibility of 10 km is considered as under moderately to
235 heavily particulate pollution so that this quantity is used as the threshold for
236 deriving the “low visibility day (VLD)” in our study. In analysis, we derived firstly
237 the low visibility days in every year for a given city using the GSOD visibility data.
238 Such day is identified when the daily averaged visibility in the observation site is
239 lower or equal to 10 km. Then, we derived the low visibility days in the same
240 procedure, but using modeled visibility data that were only influenced by fire
241 aerosols. Both the observed and modeled visibilities were then used to define the
242 fraction of low visibility days caused by fire aerosols. It is assumed that whenever
243 fire aerosol alone could cause a low visibility day to occur, such a day would be
244 attributed to fire aerosol caused LVD, regardless whether other coexisting
245 pollutants would have an intensity to cause low visibility or not. We have also used
246 a daily visibility of 7 km as the criterion to define the “very low visibility day
247 (VLVD)”. Such heavy haze events in the region are generally caused by severe fire
248 aerosol pollution, thus we use their occurrence specifically to evaluate the model
249 performance.

250 **2.4 Numerical simulations**

251 Our simulations cover a time period slightly longer than a decade from 2002 to
252 2014 based on availability of biomass burning emission estimations. The simulation
253 of each year started on 1 November of the previous year and lasted for 14 months.
254 The first two months are used for spin-up.

255 Three sets of decadal long simulations have been conducted. The first
256 simulation used reanalysis data of NCEP-FNL and fire emission inventory of



257 FINNv1.5. This simulation is hereafter referred to as FNL_FINN and discussed as the
258 base simulation. In order to examine the influence of different meteorological
259 inputs on fire aerosol life cycle, the second simulation was conducted using the
260 same FINNv1.5 fire emission inventory as in FNL_FINN but a different reanalysis
261 data of ERA_Interim, referring to as ERA_FINN. In addition, to investigate the
262 variability of fire aerosol concentration brought by the use of different estimations
263 of fire emissions, the third simulation, FNL_GFED, was driven by the same NCEP-
264 FNL meteorological input as in FNL_FINN but a different fire emission inventory, the
265 widely used GFEDv4.1s. Since the daily emission of GFEDv4.1s is only available
266 after 2003, the period of the FNL_GFED simulation is from 2003 to 2014.

267 Precipitation is one of the key factors in determining the transport and
268 scavenging of fire aerosols. WRF simulation driven by NCAR_FNL reanalysis data, or
269 the FNL_FINN run, produced a monthly mean precipitation of 6.81 ± 0.55 mm day⁻¹
270 over the modeled domain for the period from 2002 to 2014, very close to the value
271 of 6.29 ± 0.43 mm day⁻¹ produced in another simulation driven by ERA_Interim, or
272 the ERA_FINN run. Comparing to the monthly mean of 4.69 ± 0.38 mm day⁻¹ from the
273 satellite retrieved precipitation in the Tropical Rainfall Measuring Mission (TRMM)
274 3B43 (V7) dataset (Huffman et al., 2007), however, both results appear to be higher.
275 Based on the sensitivity tests for FDDA grid nudging, the wet bias in both
276 experiments mainly comes from water vapor nudging. Figure 3a - c are the
277 Hovmöller plot of daily TRMM, FNL_FINN, and ERA_FINN precipitation in 2006,
278 respectively. Comparing to the observations, both FNL_FINN and ERA_FINN have
279 produced more light rain events, and this appears to be the reason behind the model



280 precipitation bias. Despite the model overestimation in averaged total precipitation,
281 the temporal correlation of normalized rainfall anomaly between FNL_FINN
282 (ERA_FINN) and TRMM is 0.69 (0.90) and the spatial correlation is 0.86 (0.85)
283 during 2002-2014. The comparisons show that simulated rainfall generally agrees
284 with the observation in space and time, especial when ERA-Interim reanalysis is
285 used (i.e., in ERA_FINN).

286 **3 Assessment of the impact of fire aerosols on Southeast Asia visibility**

287 **3.1 Impact of fire aerosols on the visibility in four selected cities**

288 We first to focus our analysis on four selected cities in the region, Bangkok
289 (Thailand), Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), Singapore (Singapore), and Kuching
290 (Malaysia), all located close to the major Southeast fire sites ranging from the
291 mainland to the islands. Specifically, Bangkok is a smoke receptor city of the fire
292 events in the mainland of Southeast Asia (s1) while Kuala Lumpur and Singapore
293 are two cities frequently under the influence of Sumatra (s2) as well as Borneo fires
294 (s3). Kuching is in the coast area of Borneo so that directly affected by Borneo fire
295 events (s3).

296 The low visibility events in these four near-fire-site cities during the fire
297 seasons from 2002 to 2014, defined as days with daily averaged visibility lower or
298 equal to 10 km, or Low Visibility Days (LVDs), have been identified using the daily
299 GSOD visibility database and then compared with modeled results (Fig. 4). We find
300 that the model has reasonably captured the LVDs despite certain biases.
301 Specifically, for the Very Lower Visibility Days (VLVDs), here defined as events with



302 daily averaged visibility lower or equal to 7 km, the modeled and observed results
303 display a good correlation despite a model overestimate in visibility value or
304 underestimate in degrading visibility in certain events. In Southeast Asia, severe
305 haze events equivalent to the VLVDs in visibility degradation are largely caused by
306 fire aerosol pollutions. Assuming this is true, the performance of our model in
307 reproducing the major fire events is very good since only 10% or fewer VLVDs
308 observed in the past decade were not captured by the model (Table 2; Fig. 4). Note
309 that other than these VLVDs, for many LVDs fire aerosol might not be the only
310 reason responsible for the degradation of visibility.

311 In addition to the visibility data, we have also obtained the ground-based
312 observations of PM_{2.5} concentration in recent years from the National Environment
313 Agency (NEA) of Singapore. Figure 5a shows the comparison of time series of
314 observed and FNL_FINN simulated daily PM_{2.5} during 2013-2014. Note that the
315 observed PM_{2.5} level reflects the influences of both fire and non-fire aerosols,
316 whereas the modeled PM_{2.5} only includes the impact of fire aerosols. However,
317 model still predicted clearly high PM_{2.5} concentrations during most of the observed
318 haze events, especially in June 2013 and in spring and fall seasons of 2014
319 (highlighted green areas), though with underestimates in particle concentration of
320 up to 30-50%, likely due to the model resolution, a model overestimation of rainfall,
321 and the errors in emission inventory. Once again, the model has shown a solid
322 performance in capturing all the major known haze events caused by fire PM in
323 Singapore (Fig. 5b). Specifically to the observed VLVDs, we evidence that fire
324 aerosol is the main reason behind these events.



325 We find that the annual mean LVDs in Bangkok has increased from 46% in the
326 first 5-year period of the simulation duration (2002-2009) to 74% in the last 5-year
327 period (2010-2014), so does the LVDs caused by fire aerosols (Fig. 6a). Overall, fire
328 aerosols are responsible for more than one third of these LVDs (i.e. 38% in average;
329 Table 2). The largest source of fire aerosols affecting Bangkok is agriculture waste
330 and other biomass burning in s1 during the dry season of spring (Fig. 7a; Table 3).
331 During the fire season, abundant fire aerosols degrade visibility and even cause
332 VLVDs to occur (Fig. 6e). Ninety-eight percent of VLVDs in Bangkok occurred from
333 December to April. Based on our model results, 89% of VLVDs can be identified as
334 fire caused.

335 In Kuala Lumpur, the percentage of LVDs also gradually increases since 2006 to
336 reach a peak in 2011 and again in 2014 (Fig. 6b). During 2005-2010 the frequency
337 of total LVDs have increased 10-15% each year, mainly attributing to the pollution
338 sources other than fires. However, fire-caused LVDs are more evident after 2009.
339 Seasonal wise, there are two peaks of fire aerosol influence, one in February-March
340 and another in August (Fig. 6f), corresponding to the trans-boundary transport of
341 fire aerosols from Mainland Southeast Asia (s1) in the winter monsoon season and
342 from Sumatra (s2) in the summer monsoon season, respectively (Fig. 7b). Three
343 quarter of VLVDs are occurred in the summer monsoon season due to Sumatra fires.
344 Noted that in November and December the percentage of LVDs is over 50% and
345 dominated by the pollutants other than fire aerosols. These non-fire aerosols come
346 from either local sources or the areas further inland riding on the winter monsoon



347 circulation. Overall, fire pollution is responsible for 35% or a substantial fraction of
348 total low visibility events in Kuala Lumpur during 2002-2014 (Table 2).

349 The percentage of LVDs in Singapore has been rapidly increasing since 2012
350 (Fig. 6c). Except for 2014, this increase is mostly from anthropogenic pollution
351 other than fires, especially in 2012 and 2013. High percentage of LVDs in November
352 and December could be induced by aerosols from further inland of Mainland
353 Southeast Asia through long-range transport driven by the monsoon circulation
354 (Fig. 6g). Similar to Kuala Lumpur, there are two peaks of fire aerosol influence, one
355 in February-March and another in September-October (Fig. 6g). The trans-
356 boundary transported fire aerosols can come from both Sumatra (s2) and Borneo
357 (s3) in the summer monsoon season (Fig. 7c). Except for the severe haze events in
358 June 2013, VLVDs basically occur in September and October (i.e. 92%) due to both
359 Sumatra and Borneo fires. In general, 34% of LVDs in Singapore are caused by fire
360 aerosols in the FNL_FINN simulation and the rest by local and long-range
361 transported pollutants (Table 2). Fire aerosol is still the major reason for the
362 episodic severe haze conditions.

363 Because of its geographic location, Kuching is affected heavily by local fire
364 events during the fire season (Fig. 7d). Fire aerosols can often degrade the visibility
365 easily to lower than 7 km and even reach 2 km (Fig. 4d). The LVDs mainly occur in
366 August and September during the fire season (Fig. 6d and h). The frequency of LVDs
367 in Kuching is similar to Singapore; however, 25% of those LVDs are considered to be
368 VLVDs in Kuching while only 4% are in Singapore in comparison (Table 2).



369 3.2 Impact of fire aerosols on the visibility in the greater Southeast Asia

370 Air quality degradation caused by fires apparently occurs in regions beyond the
371 above-analyzed four cities. To examine such degradation in the greater Southeast
372 Asia, we have extended our analysis to cover 50 cities of the Association of
373 Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The impact of particulate pollution on the
374 greater Southeast Asia is measured by a metric of “Haze Exposure Day” (HED). HED
375 can be defined in a population weighted format for the 50 analyzed cities, indicating
376 the relative exposure of the populations in these cities to the low visibility events
377 caused by particulate pollution, thus calculated as:

$$378 \quad HED_{pw} = \sum_{i=1}^N C_{pw}(i), \quad (2)$$

379 here,

$$380 \quad C_{pw}(i) = \frac{pop(i) \cdot C(i)}{\sum_{i=1}^N pop(i)}, \quad (3)$$

381 where N equals to the total number of cities, or 50, i is the index for the 50 analyzed
382 cities, $C_{pw}(i)$ is the population-weighted fraction of the total Haze Exposure Days and
383 $pop(i)$ is the population for a given city, $C(i)$ represents the annual LVDs for that city
384 calculated from the GSOD dataset. Note that we assume that the population of each
385 city is constant throughout the analyzed period. Another assumption of HED_{pw} is
386 that everyone in a given city would equally expose to the particulate pollution. The
387 top four among the 50 cities that made the largest contributions to the HED_{pw} are
388 Jakarta, Bangkok, Hanoi, and Yangon, with population ranking of 1, 2, 4, and 5,
389 respectively (Fig. 8a).



390 In addition, HED can be also defined in an arithmetic mean format, assuming
391 each city weights equally regardless of its population. Its value hence emphasizes
392 on the relative exposure of each area within the analyzed region:

$$393 \quad HED_{ar} = \sum_{i=1}^N C(i)/N, \quad (4)$$

394 Apparently, both HED_{pw} and HED_{ar} can be also calculated using fire-caused LVDs
395 (here using the results of FNL_FINN) to define the absolute and relative
396 contributions of fire aerosols to the total low visibility events in the region. We will
397 label the fire-caused HED as $fHED_{pw}$ and $fHED_{ar}$ thereafter.

398 We find that both HED_{pw} and HED_{ar} increase rather steadily over the past
399 decade (Fig. 8b), demonstrating that the exposure to haze events either weighted by
400 population or not has become worse in the region. Generally speaking, the fire
401 aerosols are responsible for 40-60% of the total exposures to low visibility across
402 the region. In both measures, the increase of fire-caused HED (2.64 and 3.37 days
403 per year for population-weighted and arithmetic mean, respectively) is similar to
404 that of overall HED (2.61 and 3.59 days per year for population-weighted and
405 arithmetic mean, respectively) (Fig. 8b), suggesting that fire aerosol has taken the
406 major role in causing the degradation of air quality in Southeast Asia comparing to
407 the non-fire particulate pollution. The result that HED_{pw} is higher than HED_{ar} in
408 most of the years indicates that the particulate pollution is on average worse over
409 more populous cities than the others. Interestingly, the discrepancy of these two
410 variables, however, has become smaller in recent years and even reversed in 2014,
411 implying an equally worsening of haze event occurrence across from the smaller to
412 the bigger cities in terms of population in the region. The reason behind this result



413 could be a widely spread of fire events in the region, particularly causing acute haze
414 events in the cities with relatively low populations. Regarding the increase of fire-
415 caused HED, because biomass burning, especially peatland burning usually occurs in
416 the rural areas, higher fire emissions would extend low visibility condition to a
417 larger area regardless of its population. On the other hand, air pollution caused by
418 industrialization, urbanization, and other factors such as population growth
419 increases rapidly across the region so that even cities with lower population now
420 increasingly suffer from low visibility from fossil fuel burning and other sources of
421 particulate pollution. Therefore, the mitigation of air quality degradation needs to
422 consider both fire and non-fire sources.

423 3.3 The influence of wind and precipitation on fire aerosol life cycle

424 Seasonal migrations of the ITCZ and associated summer and winter monsoons
425 dominate seasonal wind flows that drive fire aerosol transport. Additionally, as
426 discussed previously, certain small scale or short-term phenomena such as sea
427 breeze, typhoon, and topography forced circulations also play important roles in
428 distributing fire aerosols. Nevertheless, we focus our discussions here on the
429 former.

430 February to April is the main fire season in Mainland Southeast Asia (s1). In the
431 FNL_FINN simulation, seasonal mean concentration of $PM_{2.5}$ within the planetary
432 boundary layer (PBL) can exceed $20 \mu\text{g m}^{-3}$ in this region. During this fire season,
433 the most common wind direction is from northeast to southwest across the region
434 (Fig. 9a). Fire aerosol plumes with concentration higher than $0.1 \mu\text{g m}^{-3}$ can
435 transport with the main wind westward as far as 7000 km from the burning sites.



436 In contrast, February to April is not the typical burning season in the islands. Low
437 fire emissions added by a lack of long-range transport of fire aerosols from the
438 mainland due to the seasonal circulation result in a low $PM_{2.5}$ level over these
439 regions (Fig. 9b - d).

440 Wet scavenging is a major factor to determine the lifetime and thus abundance
441 of suspended fire aerosols in the air. The effect of wet scavenging of fire aerosols is
442 reflected from the wet scavenging time calculated using the modeled results. The
443 wet scavenging time is a ratio of aerosol mass concentration and scavenging rate,
444 the latter is a function of precipitation rate. Thus, short scavenging time often
445 indicates high scavenging rate except for the sites with extremely low aerosol
446 concentration. During February-April, at the ITCZ's furthest southern extent, the
447 short scavenging time < 1 day around $10^{\circ}S$ shows a quick removal of fire aerosols by
448 heavy precipitation that has prevented the southward transport of aerosols (Fig. 9f).
449 Whereas, the long scavenging time (> 5 days) in the Western Pacific warm pool,
450 South China Sea, the Indochina peninsula, Bay of Bengal, and Arabian Sea leads to a
451 long suspending time of aerosols transported to these regions. During the same
452 season, over the islands of Sumatra and Borneo, the abundance along with the
453 likelihood of being transported to other places of fire aerosols, either emitted locally
454 or trans-boundary transported, are greatly limited by the high scavenging rate
455 (short scavenging time) over this regions (Fig. 9g and h). South China Sea is in a dry
456 condition during this time period, therefore, fire aerosols from the northern part of
457 Philippine can be transported to this region and stay longer than 5 days (Fig. 9i).



458 The months of August to October, when the ITCZ reaches its furthest northern
459 extent, mark the major fire season of Sumatra, Borneo and some other islands in the
460 Maritime Continent (Fig. 10b - d). Australia fires also mainly occur in this season
461 (Fig. 10e). Mean wind flows are from southeast to northwest in the Southern
462 Hemisphere, and turn to the northeast direction once pass the Equator. Within the
463 MC the seasonal variation of rainfall is small during this time, heavy precipitation
464 and thus short scavenging time (< 3 days) mostly exist along the MJO path (Fig. 10f -
465 i) (Wu and Hsu, 2009). The high scavenging rate in the regions close to the fire sites
466 in the islands shortens the transport distance of fire aerosol plumes with PM_{2.5}
467 concentration > 0.1 µg m⁻³ to less than 3000 km (Fig. 10b - d). Long scavenging time
468 (> 5 days) primarily exists in Banda Sea and northern Australia due to the ITCZ
469 location. Fire aerosols from Java Island (s2) (Fig. 10g), Papua New Guinea (s4) (Fig.
470 10i), and northern Australia (s5) (Fig. 10j) can thus suspend in the air for a
471 relatively long time over these regions.

472 The above-discussed seasonal features of precipitation and aerosol scavenging
473 strength help us to better understand the variability of haze occurrence and also to
474 identify the major source regions of fire aerosols influencing selected Southeast
475 Asian cities (Fig. 7). For example, the geographic location of Bangkok, which is
476 inside the s1 emission region, determines that about 99% fire aerosols is from
477 sources within the region from December to April (Fig. 7a and Table 3). Fire
478 aerosols from all the other burning sites stay at very low level even during the
479 burning seasons there due to circulation and precipitation scavenging. For Kuala
480 Lumpur and Singapore, over 90% of total fire aerosols reached both cities come



481 from Mainland Southeast Asia (s1) in January–April due to the dominant winter
482 monsoon circulation. During May–October, however, the major sources of fire
483 aerosols shift to Sumatra (s2) and Borneo (s3) aiding by northward wind (Fig. 10b
484 and c). The monthly variations of PM_{2.5} concentration in Kuala Lumpur and
485 Singapore also have a largely similar pattern (Fig. 8b and d). The annual mean
486 contribution of different emission regions in Kuala Lumpur are 43% from Mainland
487 Southeast Asia (s1), 49% from Sumatra (s2), 4% from Borneo (s3), 3% from the rest
488 of Maritime Continent (s4), and 0.4% from northern Australia (s5) in FINL_FINN
489 (Table 3). Similar to Kuala Lumpur, there are two peak seasons of the monthly low
490 visibility days contributed by fire aerosols in Singapore (Fig. 6g), well correlated
491 with modeled high fire PM_{2.5} concentration (Fig. 7c). The low visibility days in
492 March and April mainly are caused by fire aerosols from Mainland Southeast Asia
493 (s1) under southward wind pattern (Fig. 9a), and those in May to October are
494 affected by Sumatra (s2) first in May to June, and then by both s2 and s3 (Borneo)
495 during August to October due to north- or northwest-ward monsoonal circulation
496 (Fig. 10b and c; also Table 3). Kuching, similar to Bangkok, is strongly affected by
497 local fire aerosols (s3) during fire season (July – October). The annual mean
498 contribution from Borneo (s3) is 85% while only 7% from Mainland Southeast Asia
499 (s1) and 5% from Sumatra (s2) (Table 3).

500 Reddington et al. (2014) applied two different models, a 3D global chemical
501 transport model and a Lagrangian atmospheric transport model to examine the
502 long-term mean contributions of fire emissions to PM_{2.5} from different regions in
503 Southeast Asia. The contribution from Mainland Southeast Asia to the above-



504 discussed four selected cities was lower than our result during January-May, likely
505 due to their use of a different emission inventory and the coarse resolution of their
506 global model. FINNv1.5 dataset used in our study specifically provides higher PM_{2.5}
507 emissions from agriculture fires (the major fire type in Mainland Southeast Asia)
508 than GFED4.1s does, the latter is an updated version the dataset (GFEDv3) used in
509 Reddington et al. (2014) (Fig. 2). The detail comparison of FNL_FINN and
510 FNL_GFED will be discussed in the following section.

511 **4 Influence of different reanalysis datasets and emission inventories on** 512 **modeled fire aerosol abundance**

513 As discussed in the previous section, meteorological conditions, particularly
514 wind field and precipitation, could substantially influence the life cycle and
515 transport path of fire aerosols during the fire seasons; therefore, it is necessary to
516 examine any potential discrepancies in modeled particulate matter abundance
517 attributing to the use of different meteorological datasets.

518 In comparing the two of our simulations, one was driven by the NCAR_FNL (i.e.,
519 FNL_FINN), another by the ERA_Interim (i.e., ERA_FINN) meteorological input, we
520 find that the ERA_FINN run consistently produces less precipitation than FNL_FINN
521 run during the raining seasons over past decade (Fig. 2) (also see the comparison
522 results of both runs with observations in Section 2.4). Regarding fire aerosol life
523 cycle, less rainfall in ERA_FINN results in a weaker wet scavenging condition and
524 thus higher abundance of fire aerosol concentration than in FNL_FINN. We find that
525 annual mean concentration of fire PM_{2.5} produced in the ERA_FINN run in Bangkok,



526 Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, and Kuching is 8.8, 5.4, 3.4, and 7.9 $\mu\text{g m}^{-3}$, respectively,
527 clearly higher than the corresponding results of the FNL_FINN run of 8.0, 4.9, 3.0,
528 and 7.1 $\mu\text{g m}^{-3}$ (Table 3). In Mainland Southeast Asia, a twenty-one percent lower
529 rainfall in ERA_FINN causes the significantly different $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ concentration
530 comparing to FNL_FINN result in the fire season (February – April) (Fig. 2a and
531 11a). In Kuala Lumpur, the difference in fire $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ concentration between these two
532 runs mainly comes from Sumatra (s2) during June to September; however, in
533 Singapore and Kuching the concentration difference comes from both Sumatra (s2)
534 and Borneo (s3) in August to October (Fig. 11b - d and Table 3), all corresponding to
535 the discrepancy of rainfall between FNL_FINN and ERA_FINN in these regions (Fig.
536 2b and c).

537 The difference in aerosol scavenging between ERA_FINN and FNL_FINN extends
538 to a difference as high as 7% and 12% in the resulted LVDs of Bangkok and Kuching,
539 respectively, (Table 2), though its influence on the results of Kuala Lumpur and
540 Singapore is much smaller (3~4%). In general, fire $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ concentration in
541 ERA_FINN is about 10% higher than in FNL_FINN; however, the substantial impact
542 of fire aerosols on LVDs is more sensitive in places near the burning areas, i.e.,
543 Bangkok and Kuching. Interestingly, a mild increase of VLVDs in the ERA_FINN run
544 in Bangkok and Kuching (~1%) (Table 2) implies that the occurrence of severe haze
545 events is less affected by the rainfall difference in the burning areas.

546 In addition to meteorological inputs, differences various fire emission
547 estimations could also affect the modeled results. To examine such an influence, we
548 have compared two simulations with the same meteorological input but different



549 fire emission inventories, the FNL_FINN using FINNv1.5 and FNL_GFED using
550 GFEDv4.1s. The main differences between the two emission inventories appear
551 mostly in Mainland Southeast Asia (s1) and northern Australia (s5) (Fig. 2a and e;
552 Fig. 12a and e). For instance, the peak month of fire $PM_{2.5}$ concentration in Bangkok
553 shifts from March in FNL_FINN to January in FNL_GFED (Fig. 11a), owing to the
554 difference in temporal pattern between the two fire emission inventories (Fig. 2a).
555 Comparing to FINNv1.5, fire emissions in GFEDv4.1s over Mainland Southeast Asia
556 are more than 66% lower (Fig. 2a), and this results in a 40% lower fire $PM_{2.5}$ in
557 Bangkok (Fig. 11a and Table 3). The lower fire $PM_{2.5}$ concentration in FNL_GFED
558 actually produced a visibility that matches better with observation in Bangkok
559 comparing to the result of FNL_FINN (Fig. S1a).

560 The difference in monthly fire emissions over the islands between the two
561 emission inventories is small, with the fire emission in FINNv1.5 generally higher
562 than that in GFEDv4.1s (Fig. 2b – d). However, fire emissions in GFEDv4.1s are
563 much higher during the fire season in the dry years (i.e. 2004, 2006 and 2009) over
564 s2 and s3 (Fig. 12b and c), leading to a modeled mean $PM_{2.5}$ concentration by
565 FNL_GFED in Kuala Lumpur and Singapore that is higher than that by FNL_FINN
566 during the fire season (Fig. 11b and c). On the other hand, the higher $PM_{2.5}$
567 concentration simulated in FNL_GFED during the June 2013 severe haze event in
568 Kuala Lumpur and Singapore is due to the spatiotemporal distribution of fire spots
569 rather than absolute fire aerosol emissions. Based on our simulations, fire aerosols
570 from Sumatra (s2) are mainly responsible for the severe haze event in June 2013
571 (Fig. 7b – c and Fig. S2b – c). During this event, the total amount of fire emissions in



572 Sumatra (s2) is lower in GFEDv4.1s than FINNv1.5, however, distributed rather
573 more densely over a smaller area (Fig. 13c and d). As a result, under the same
574 meteorological condition, the simulated PM_{2.5} in the FNL_GFED simulation reaches
575 Singapore in a higher concentration that also matches better with observation than
576 the result of FNL_FINN (Fig. 13b). A similar result also appears in Kuching, where
577 the difference in modeled PM_{2.5} concentration between the two model runs is likely
578 related to the difference in spatial or temporal distributions rather than the mean
579 quantities of PM_{2.5} emissions since the latter are almost the same in both fire
580 emissions inventories.

581 The most evident difference between the two emission inventories occurs in
582 northern Australia, where FINNv1.5 suggests an almost negligible fire aerosol
583 emission comparing to GFEDv4.1s (Fig. 2e). Therefore, in the FNL_GFED simulation,
584 Australia fire aerosols play an important role in Singapore air quality, contributing
585 to about 22% modeled PM_{2.5} concentration in Singapore. In contrast, Australia fires
586 have nearly no effect on Singapore air quality in the FNL_FINN run (Table 3). Our
587 results raise the important issue of the sensitivity of modeled aerosol concentration
588 in downwind areas to the spatiotemporal distribution, besides the absolute
589 emission amount from the fire spots. A further study regarding this topic would be
590 much needed.

591 **5 Summary and Conclusions**

592 We have examined the extent of the biomass burning aerosol's impact on the air
593 quality of Southeast Asia in the past decade using visibility and surface PM_{2.5}



594 measurements along with the WRF model with a modified fire tracer module. The
595 model has shown a good performance in capturing 90% of the observed severe haze
596 events (visibility < 7 km) occurred in past decade in several cities close to the major
597 burning sites. Such events are known to be induced mainly by biomass burning. On
598 the more general cases of particulate pollution, our study suggests that fire aerosols
599 are responsible for a substantial fraction of the low visibility days (visibility < 10
600 km) in several cities: 38% in Bangkok, 35% in Kuala Lumpur, 34% in Singapore, and
601 32% in Kuching.

602 The life cycle and transport path, and thus spatial and temporal distributions of
603 fire aerosols are all influenced by meteorological conditions, especially the seasonal
604 precipitation distribution and atmospheric circulations. These impacts are well
605 reflected from the variations of abundance of fire aerosols in the selected cities in
606 analysis. In general, Mainland Southeast Asia is the major contributor during the
607 Northeast or winter monsoon season in Southeast Asia. In the Southwest or
608 summer monsoon season, most fire aerosols come from Sumatra and Borneo.
609 Specifically, fires in Mainland Southeast Asia are accounted for the largest
610 percentage of the total fire PM_{2.5} in Bangkok (99.2%), and fires from Sumatra are the
611 major contributor in Kuala Lumpur (51%) and Singapore (42%). Kuching receives
612 88% of fire aerosols from local Borneo fires.

613 By comparing the results from two modeled runs with the same fire emissions
614 but driven by different meteorological inputs, we have examined the potential
615 sensitivity of modeled results to meteorological datasets. The discrepancy in
616 modeling the low visibility events due to different meteorological datasets is clearly



617 evident, especially in the results of Bangkok and Kuching. However, using different
618 meteorological input datasets does not appear to have influenced the modeled very
619 low visibility events, or the severe haze events in the cities close to burning sites.

620 We have also examined the sensitivity of modeled results to the use of different
621 emission inventories. We find that significant discrepancies of fire emissions in
622 Mainland Southeast Asia and northern Australia between two emission inventories
623 used in the study have caused significant difference in modeled fire aerosol
624 concentration and visibility, particularly in Bangkok and Singapore. For instance,
625 the contribution to fire aerosol in Singapore from northern Australia changes from
626 nearly zero in the simulation driven by FINNv1.5 to about 22% in another
627 simulation driven by GFEDv4.1s. We have also identified the influence of the
628 discrepancy in spatiotemporal distribution rather than total emitted quantities from
629 the fire hotspots on modeled PM_{2.5} concentration. Further analysis on this direction
630 is much needed.

631 To further assess the impacts of fire events on the air quality of the great
632 Southeast Asia, we have defined and derived a metric of “Haze Exposure Days”
633 (HEDs), by integrating annual low visibility days of 50 cities of the Association of
634 Southeast Asian Nations and weighted by population or averaged arithmetically.
635 We find that a very large population of Southeast Asia has been exposed to relatively
636 persistent hazy condition. The top four cities in the HED ranking, Jakarta, Bangkok,
637 Hanoi, and Yangon, with a total population exceeding two millions, have
638 experienced more than 200 days per year of low visibility due to particulate
639 pollution over the past decade. Even worse is that the number of annual low



640 visibility days have been increasing steadily not only in high population cities but
641 also those with relatively low populations, suggesting a widely spread of particulate
642 pollutions into the great Southeast Asian region. Generally speaking, the fire
643 aerosols are found to be responsible for about half of the total exposures to low
644 visibility across the region. Our result suggests that in order to improve the air
645 quality in Southeast Asia, besides reducing or even prohibiting planned or
646 unplanned fires, mitigation policies targeting at pollution sources other than fires
647 need to be put in effect as well.

648

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661

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Table 1. WRF physics scheme configuration

Physics Processes	Scheme
microphysics	Morrison (2 moments) scheme
longwave radiation	rrtmg scheme
shortwave radiation	rrtmg scheme
surface-layer	MYNN surface layer
land surface	Unified Noah land-surface model
planetary boundary layer	MYNN 2.5 level TKE scheme
cumulus parameterization	Grell-Freitas ensemble scheme

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822 Table 2. Annual mean low visibility days (LVDs) and very low visibility days
 823 (VLVDs) per year, and the percentage contributions along with standard deviations
 824 of fire and non-fire (other) pollutions for total low visibility days in Bangkok, Kuala
 825 Lumpur, Singapore and Kuching during 2002-2014 (FNL_GFED is from 2003 to
 826 2014). Parentheses show the percentage of year.
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FNL_FINN	LVD per year (days)	Fire pollution contribution (%)	Other pollution contribution (%)
Bangkok, Thailand	211±49 (58±14%)	38±8	62±8
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	166±80 (45±22%)	35±18	65±18
Singapore, Singapore	92±84 (25±23%)	34±16	67±16
Kuching, Malaysia	95±54 (26±15%)	32±14	68±14
FNL_FINN	VLVD per year (days)	Fire pollution contribution (%)	Other pollution contribution (%)
Bangkok, Thailand	17±10 (5±3%)	89±19	11±19
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	18±18 (5±5%)	85±17	15±17
Singapore, Singapore	4±4 (1±1%)	92±32	8±32
Kuching, Malaysia	24±19 (7±5%)	94±12	6±12
ERA_FINN	VLD per year (days)	Fire pollution contribution (%)	Other pollution contribution (%)
Bangkok, Thailand	211±49 (58±14%)	45±8	55±8
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	166±80 (45±22%)	39±16	61±16
Singapore, Singapore	92±84 (25±23%)	37±18	63±18
Kuching, Malaysia	95±54 (26±15%)	44±17	56±17
ERA_FINN	VLVD per year (days)	Fire pollution contribution (%)	Other pollution contribution (%)
Bangkok, Thailand	17±10 (5±3%)	90±20	10±20
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	18±18 (5±5%)	90±18	10±18
Singapore, Singapore	4±4 (1±1%)	98±5	2±5
Kuching, Malaysia	24±19 (7±5%)	95±11	5±11
FNL_GFED	VLD per year (days)	Fire pollution contribution (%)	Other pollution contribution (%)
Bangkok, Thailand	215±50 (59±14%)	36±8	64±8
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	174±78 (48±21%)	28±17	72±17
Singapore, Singapore	96±87 (26±24%)	29±21	71±21
Kuching, Malaysia	95±57 (26±15%)	26±18	74±18
FNL_GFED	VLVD per year (days)	Fire pollution contribution (%)	Other pollution contribution (%)
Bangkok, Thailand	15±8 (4±2%)	90±19	10±19
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	18±18 (5±5%)	83±28	17±28
Singapore, Singapore	4±4 (1±1%)	89±37	11±37
Kuching, Malaysia	22±18 (6±5%)	89±28	11±28

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830 Table 3. Annual mean and standard deviation of fire $PM_{2.5}$ concentration ($\mu g m^{-3}$)
 831 contributed by each source region in Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, and
 832 Kuching during 2002-2014 (FNL_GFED is from 2003 to 2014). Parentheses show
 833 the fire aerosol fraction in total $PM_{2.5}$.

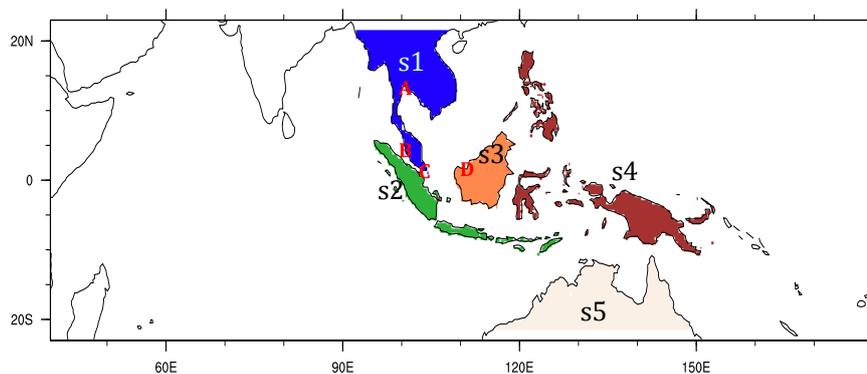
FNL FINN	s1	s2	s3	s4	s5
Bangkok	8.0±2.6 (99.1±0.5%)	0.0±0.0 (0.1±0.1%)	0.0±0.0 (0.1±0.1%)	0.0±0.0 (0.7±0.5%)	0.0±0.0 (0.0±0.0%)
Kuala Lumpur	2.1±1.2 (43.3±14.6%)	2.5±1.4 (49.3±14.3%)	0.2±0.1 (4.1±4.4%)	0.1±0.1 (2.9±2.6%)	0.0±0.0 (0.4±0.2%)
Singapore	1.0±0.7 (34.3±16.4%)	1.2±0.8 (40.7±15.3%)	0.5±0.4 (16.0±11.3%)	0.2±0.1 (6.7±4.2%)	0.1±0.0 (2.2±1.1%)
Kuching	0.4±0.4 (7.3±6.6%)	0.3±0.1 (4.6±2.4%)	6.3±3.2 (85.3±9.6%)	0.1±0.1 (2.3±2.3%)	0.0±0.0 (0.6±0.2%)
ERA FINN	s1	s2	s3	s4	s5
Bangkok	8.7±2.7 (99.1±0.4%)	0.0±0.0 (0.1±0.1%)	0.0±0.0 (0.1±0.1%)	0.1±0.0 (0.7±0.4%)	0.0±0.0 (0.0±0.0%)
Kuala Lumpur	2.1±1.2 (38.6±12.7%)	3.0±1.5 (53.7±11.9%)	0.2±0.2 (4.7±4.2%)	0.1±0.0 (2.6±2.1%)	0.0±0.0 (0.4±0.2%)
Singapore	1.0±0.6 (31.9±15.3%)	1.4±0.9 (40.4±13.1%)	0.7±0.6 (18.9±12.8%)	0.2±0.1 (6.8±3.7%)	0.1±0.0 (1.9±1.0%)
Kuching	0.5±0.4 (7.5±5.7%)	0.4±0.2 (5.9±3.9%)	6.9±3.8 (83.4±10.1%)	0.1±0.1 (2.7±2.9%)	0.0±0.0 (0.6±0.2%)
FNL GFED	s1	s2	s3	s4	s5
Bangkok	4.8±1.3 (99.6±0.2%)	0.0±0.0 (0.1±0.0%)	0.0±0.0 (0.1±0.1%)	0.0±0.0 (0.2±0.2%)	0.0±0.0 (0.1±0.0%)
Kuala Lumpur	1.3±0.6 (38.6±20.8%)	2.7±1.9 (53.8±21.1%)	0.1±0.2 (2.8±3.5%)	0.0±0.0 (0.8±0.8%)	0.1±0.1 (3.9±3.4%)
Singapore	0.3±0.2 (22.1±17.3%)	1.5±1.8 (40.2±23.6%)	0.4±0.5 (12.5±9.5%)	0.1±0.0 (2.9±2.4%)	0.4±0.2 (22.3±13.2%)
Kuching	0.1±0.1 (7.2±6.8%)	0.1±0.1 (4.3±3.2%)	3.2±3.2 (75.2±12.9%)	0.0±0.0 (1.7±2.7%)	0.3±0.2 (11.6±6.7%)

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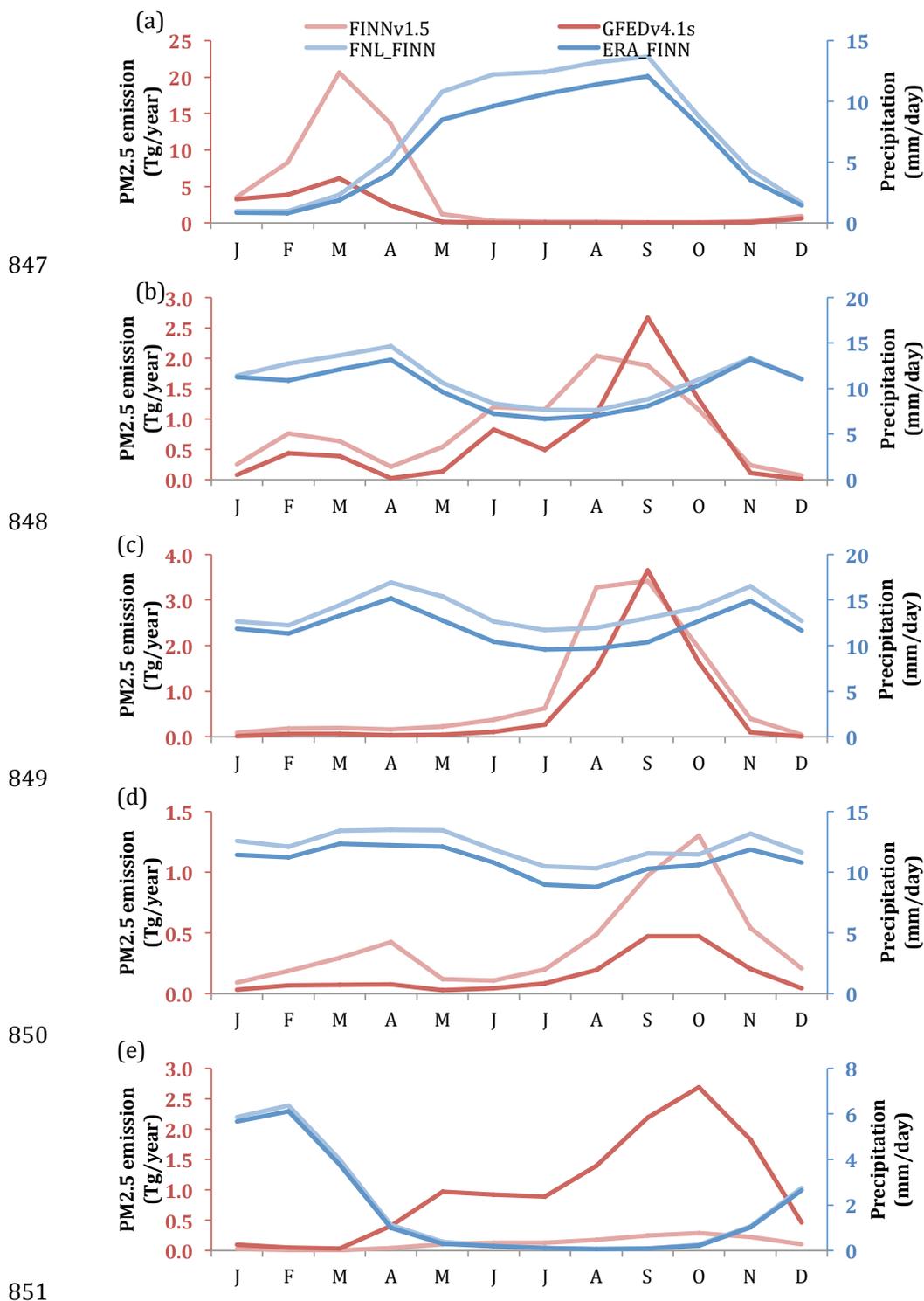
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840 Figure 1. Model domain used for simulations. Domain consists of 31 vertical levels,
841 each with 432×148 grid points with a horizontal resolution of 36 km. Five colored
842 fire source regions, labeled as s1, s2, s3, s4 and s5, represent Mainland Southeast
843 Asia, Sumatra and Java islands, Borneo, the rest of Maritime Continent, and northern
844 Australia, respectively. A, B, C and D indicate the location of four selected cities:
845 Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore and Kuching, respectively.
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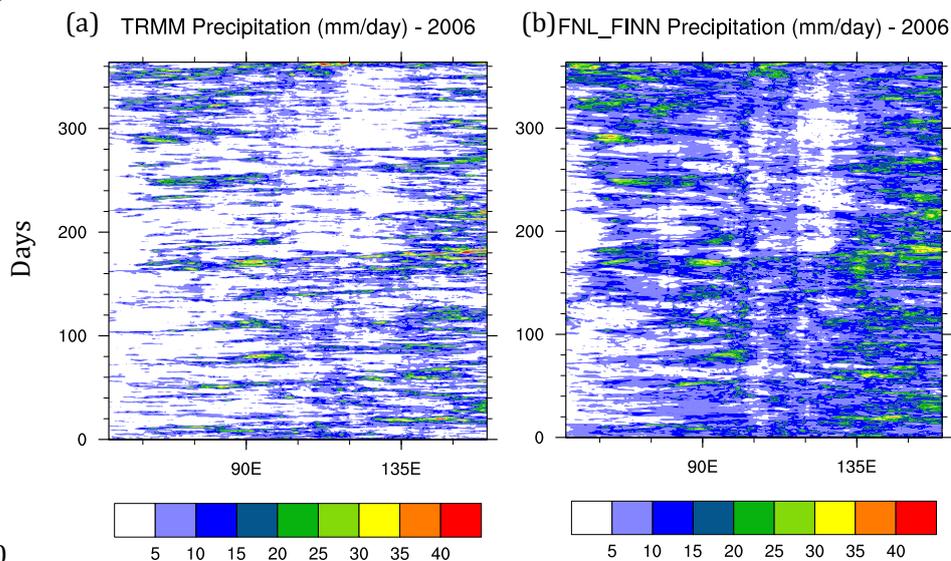




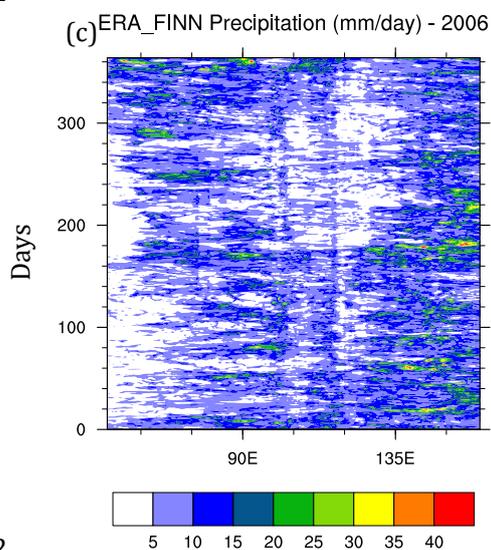
852 Figure 2. Monthly $PM_{2.5}$ emissions ($Tg\ year^{-1}$) in FINNv1.5 (red lines) and GFEDv4.1s
853 (pink lines). Also shown are precipitation rate ($mm\ day^{-1}$) simulated in FNL_FINN
854 (light blue lines) and ERA_FINN (blue lines). All data are averaged during 2002-
855 2014 for: (a) Mainland Southeast Asia (s1), (b) Sumatra and Java islands (s2), (c)
856 Borneo (s3), (d) the rest of the Maritime Continent (s4), and (e) northern Australia
857 (s5). Note that GFEDv4.1s $PM_{2.5}$ emission is averaged from 2003 to 2014.
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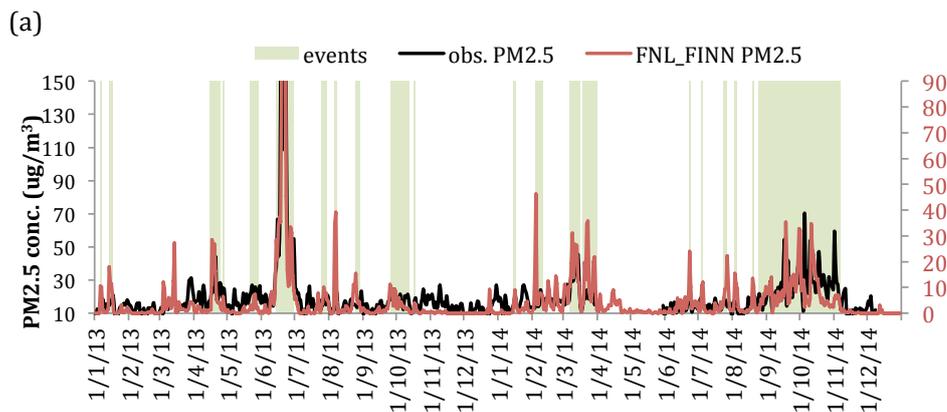
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864 Figure 3. Hovmöller (time vs. longitude) plot of daily precipitation in 2006 derived
865 from: (a) TRMM, (b) FNL_FINN, and (c) ERA_FINN. Latitude average is from 10°S to
866 10°N. Unit is mm day⁻¹.

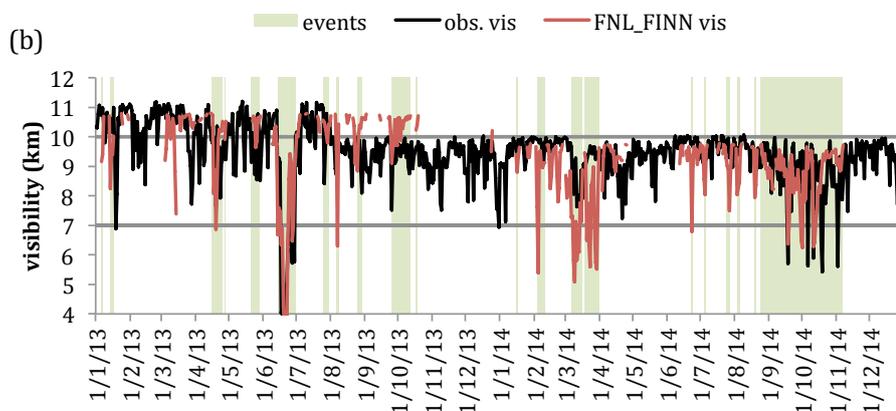
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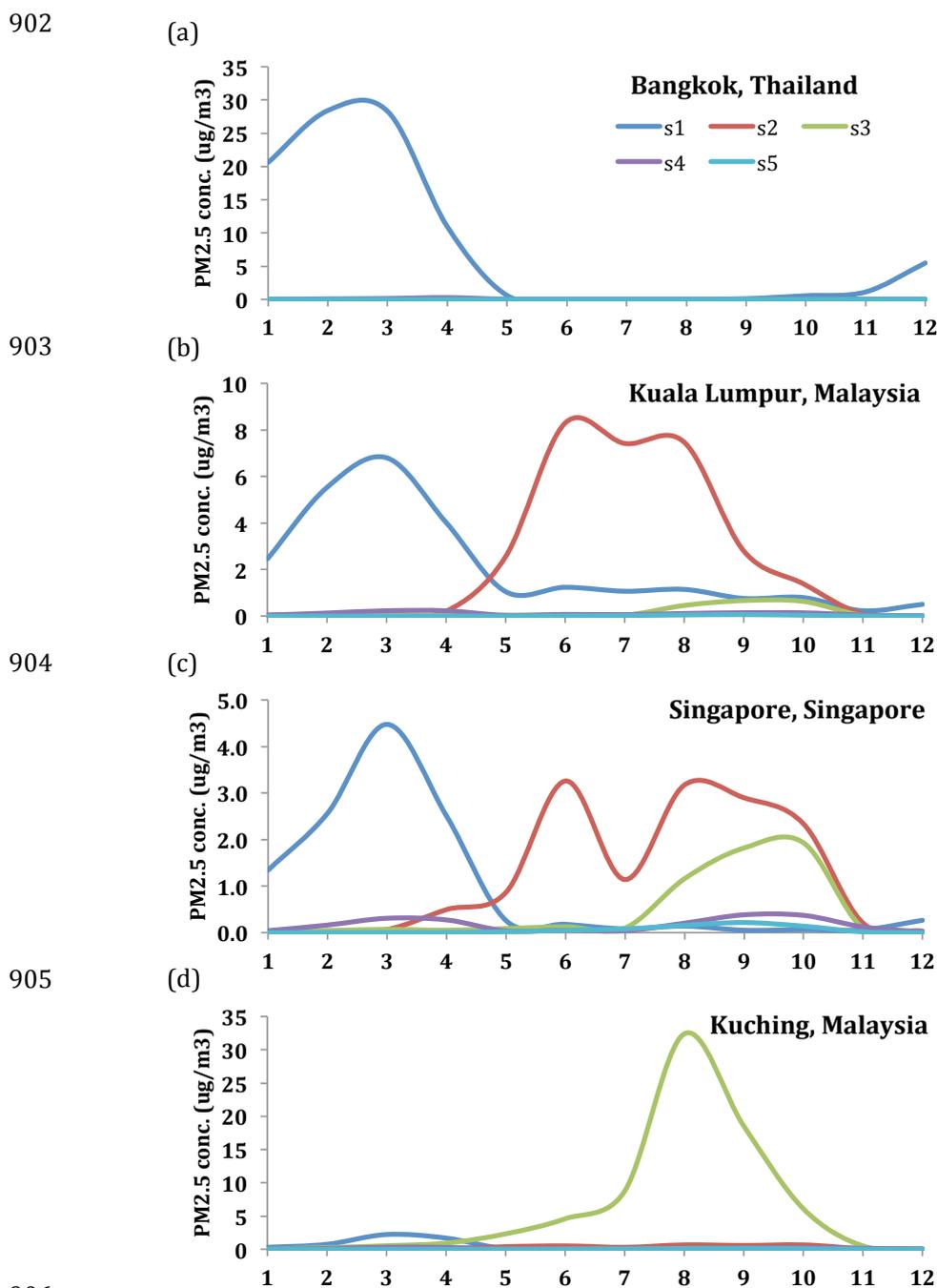
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Figure 5. (a) Time series of daily surface $PM_{2.5}$ from the ground-based observations (black line) and FNL_FINN simulated results (red line) in Singapore during 2013-2014. (b) Time series of daily visibility of GSOD observation (black line) and calculated result from FNL_FINN (red line) in Singapore during 2013-2014. Highlighted green areas are known haze events caused by fire aerosols. Two gray lines mark the visibility of 7 and 10 km, respectively.



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895 Figure 6. (a) – (d) The annual variation of the percentage of LVDs per year from
896 GSOD observational visibility in Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, and Kuching,
897 respectively. (e) – (h) The monthly variation of the percentage of LVDs from GSOD
898 observational visibility in Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, and Kuching,
899 respectively, averaged over 2002-2014.

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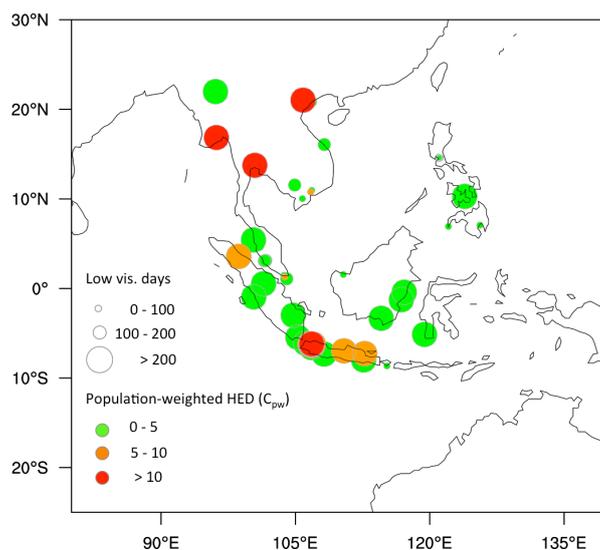


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907 Figure 7. The monthly variation of mean PM_{2.5} concentration from each emission
908 regions (s1 - s5) in (a) Bangkok, (b) Kuala Lumpur, (c) Singapore and (d) Kuching,
909 derived from FNL_FINN simulation and averaged over the period 2002-2014.



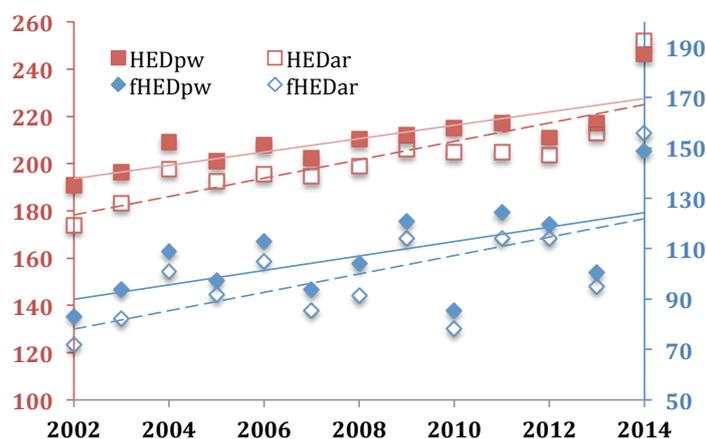
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(a)



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(b)



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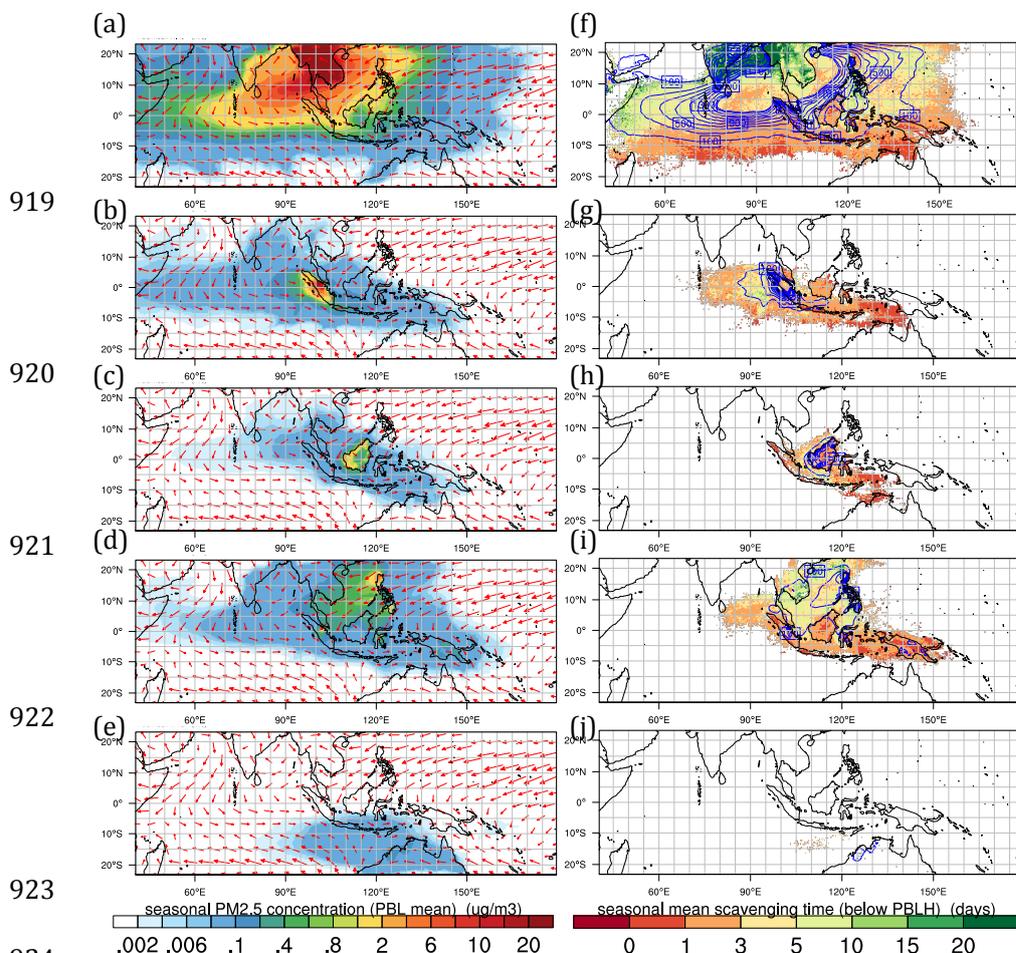
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Figure 8. (a) The mean low visibility days (circles) per year from 2002 to 2014 in 50 ASEAN cities and their population-weighted fraction in the total Haze Exposure Days (HED; colors). (b) Annual variation of population-weighted HED (HED_{pw}) and arithmetic mean HED (HED_{ar}). Fire-caused HED are labeled as $fhED_{pw}$ and $fhED_{ar}$. Units are in days.



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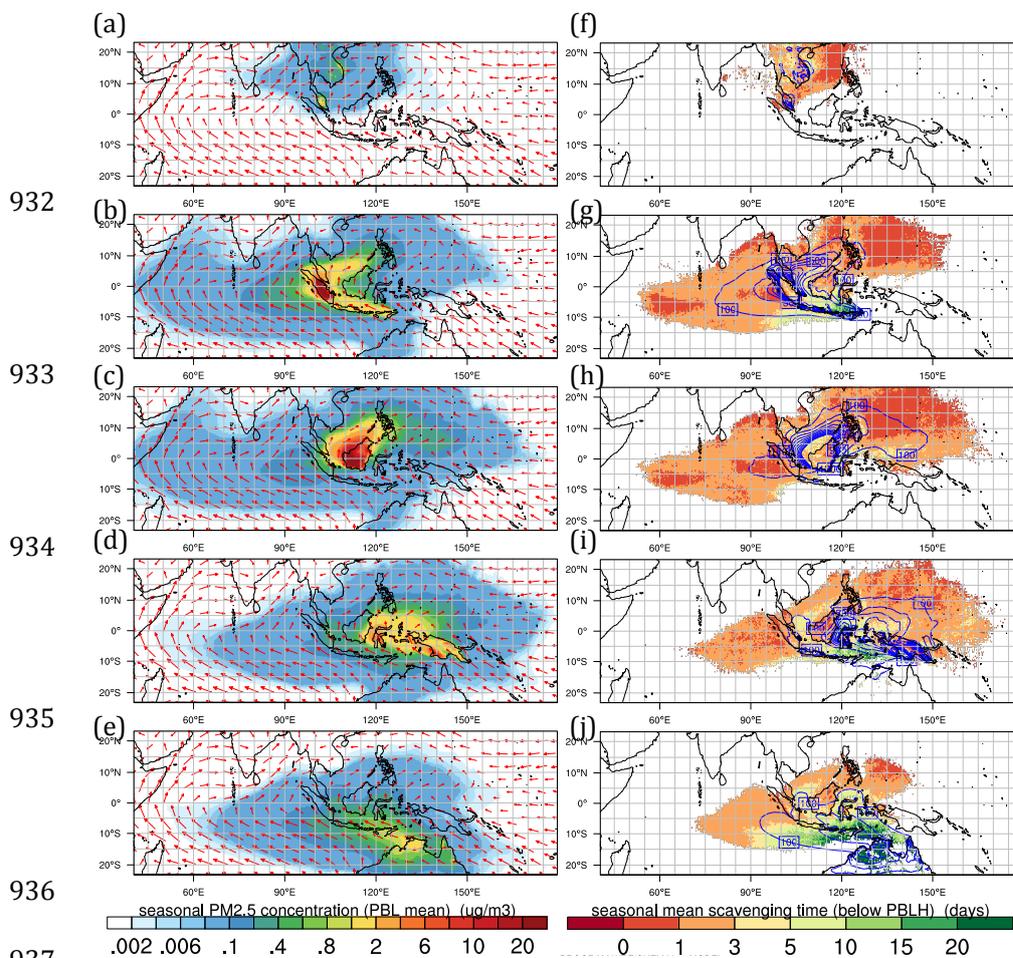
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Figure 9. (a)-(e) Seasonal mean PM_{2.5} concentration ($\mu\text{g m}^{-3}$) and wind within the PBL modeled in FNL_FINN during February to April, 2002 - 2014 in: Mainland Southeast Asia (s1), Sumatra and Java island (s2), Borneo (s3), the rest of the Maritime Continent (s4), and northern Australia (s5), respectively. (f)-(g) Same as (a)-(e) but for seasonal mean wet scavenging time (days; shaded) and column intergraded PM_{2.5} concentration ($\mu\text{g m}^{-2}$; contours) within the PBL height.



937 Figure 10. Same as Fig. 9 but during August to October, 2002 – 2014.

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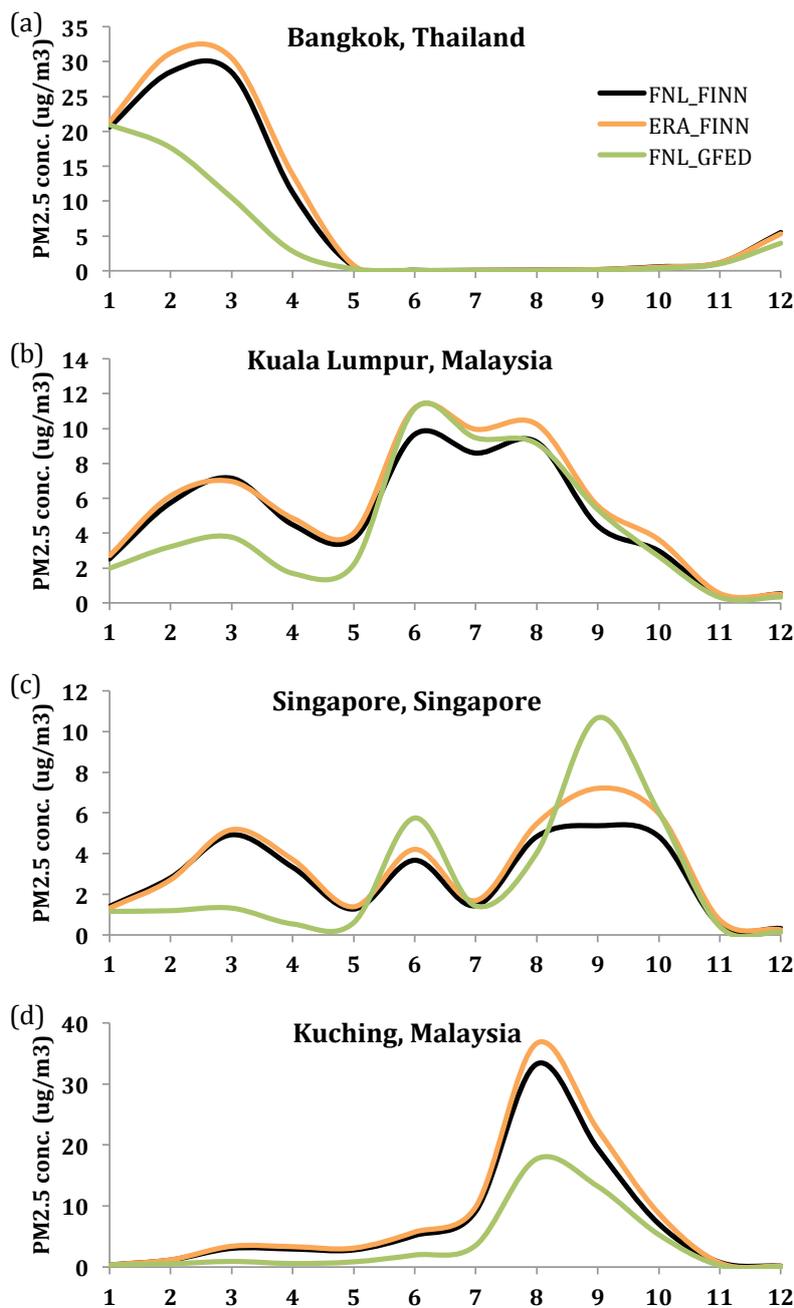


Figure 11. The monthly variation of mean PM_{2.5} concentration in FNL_FINN, ERA_FINN, and FNL_GFED in: (a) Bangkok, (b) Kuala Lumpur, (c) Singapore, and (d) Kuching over the period 2002-2014 (FNL_GFED is from 2003 to 2014).

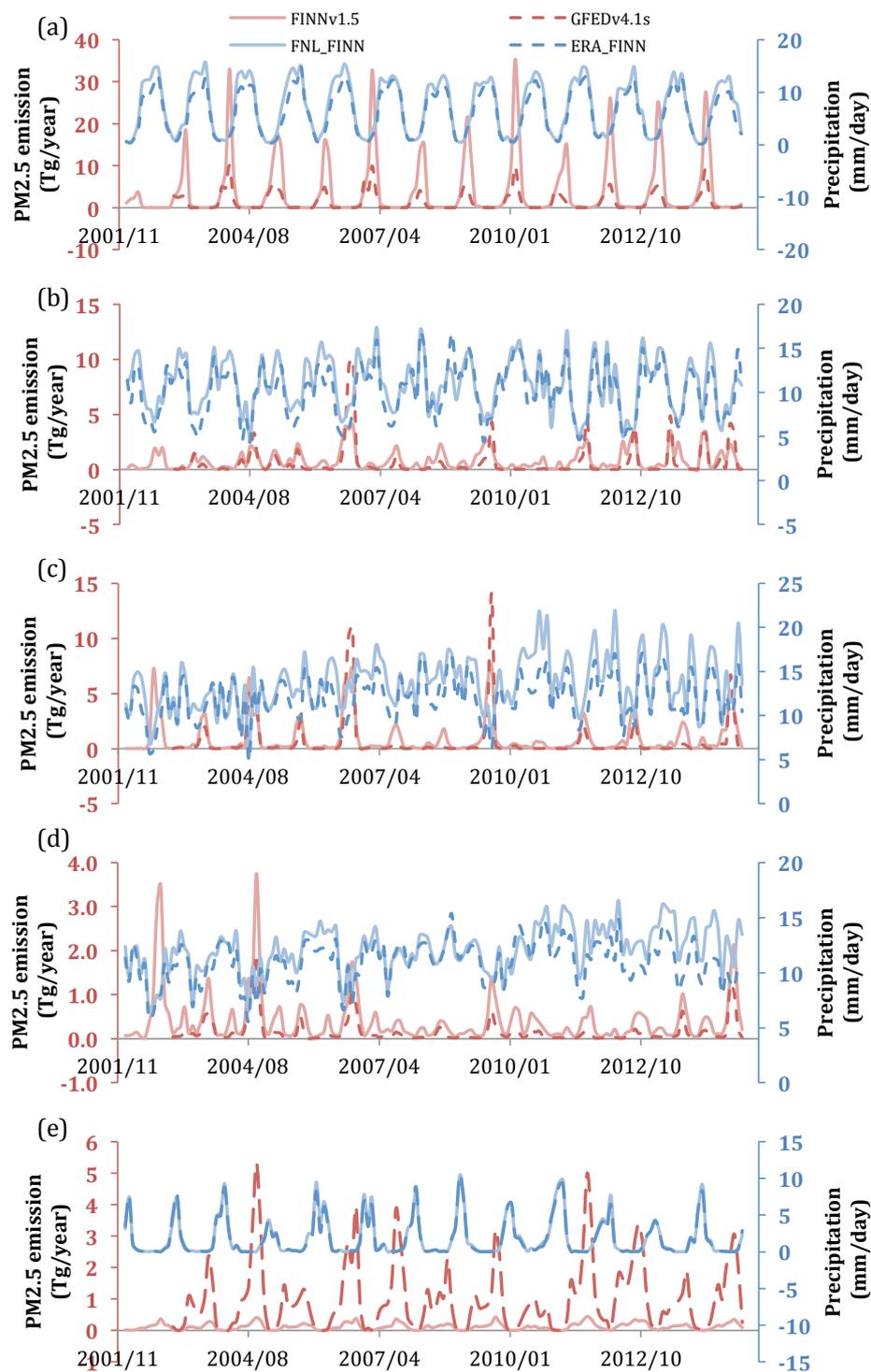




Figure 12. Temporal variation of monthly $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ emission (Tg year^{-1}) in FINNv1.5 (pink solid lines) and GFEDv4.1s (red dashed lines). Also shown are precipitation rates (mm day^{-1}) simulated in FNL_FINN (light blue solid lines) and ERA_FINN (blue dashed lines) during 2002-2014 in: (a) Mainland Southeast Asia (s1), (b) Sumatra (s2), (c) Borneo (s3), (d) the rest of the Maritime Continent (s4), and (e) northern Australia (s5).

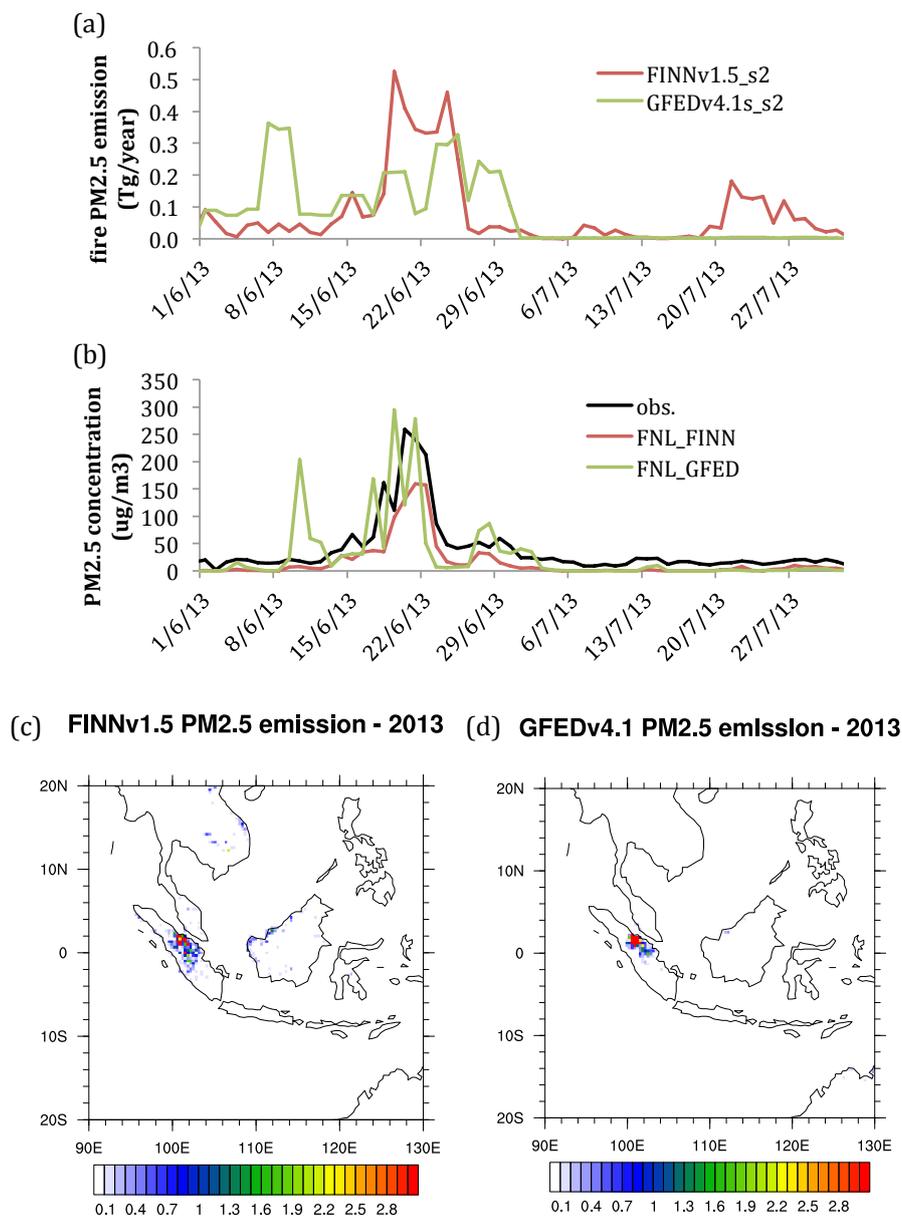


Figure 13. (a) Time series of daily mean PM_{2.5} emissions (Tg year⁻¹) in Sumatra (s2) from FINNv1.5 (red line) and GFEDv4.1s (green line). (b) Time series of daily mean PM_{2.5} concentration (µg m⁻³) in Singapore from observation (black line), and modeled results from FNL_FINN (red line) and FNL_GFED (green line). (c) Monthly mean PM_{2.5} emissions (Tg year⁻¹) from FINNv1.5 in June 2013. (d) same as (c) but from GFEDv4.1s.