



1 **Global streamflow and flood response to stratospheric aerosol geoengineering**

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12 **Abstract:**

13 Flood risk is projected to increase under projections of future warming climates due to
14 an enhanced hydrological cycle. Solar geoengineering is known to reduce precipitation
15 and slowdown the hydrological cycle, and may be therefore be expected to offset
16 increased flood risk. We examine this hypothesis using streamflow and river discharge
17 responses to the representative concentration pathway RCP4.5 and Geoengineering
18 Model Intercomparison Project (GeoMIP) G4 experiments. We also calculate changes
19 in 30, 50, 100-year flood return periods relative to the historical (1960-1999) period
20 under the RCP4.5 and G4 scenarios. Similar spatial patterns are produced for each
21 return period, although those under G4 are closer to historical values than under RCP4.5.
22 Under G4 generally lower streamflows are produced on the western sides of Eurasia
23 and North America, with higher flows on their eastern sides. In the southern hemisphere
24 northern parts of the land masses have lower streamflow under G4, and southern parts



25 increases relative to RCP4.5. So in general solar geoengineering does appear to reduce
26 flood risk in most regions, but the relative effects are largely determined by this large
27 scale geographic pattern. Both streamflow and return period show increased drying of
28 the Amazon under both RCP4.5 and G4 scenarios, with more drying under G4.

29 **1. Introduction**

30 Floods cause considerable damage every year (UNISDR, 2013) that increases with
31 economic development and rate of climate change (Ward et al., 2017). Generally,
32 people and assets exposed to extreme hydrology disasters, including flooding, increase
33 under global warming (Alfieri et al., 2017; Arnell and Gosling, 2013; Tanoue et al.,
34 2016; Ward et al., 2013). Previous studies have shown that flood risk co-varies with
35 runoff and streamflow (Arnell and Gosling, 2013; Hirabayashi et al., 2013; Hirabayashi
36 et al., 2008). Hirabayashi et al. (2013) analyzed CMIP5 projections for the RCP4.5 and
37 RCP8.5 scenarios (Meinshausen et al., 2011), and found shortened return periods for
38 floods, especially in Southeast Asia, India and eastern Africa, especially under the
39 RCP8.5 scenario.

40

41 Koirala et al. (2014) analyzed the changes in streamflow conditions, that is high flow
42 (Q_5), low flow (Q_{95}) and mean flow (Q_m) under different RCP scenarios. Under the
43 RCP8.5 scenario, high flow increases at high latitudes, Asia and central Africa, while
44 mean and low flows decrease in Europe, western parts of North and central America.
45 Streamflow indicators under RCP4.5 show similar, but muted, spatial pattern as RCP8.5.



46

47 Other studies also show similar results with other hydrologic indicators and under other
48 future scenarios. For example, Arnell and Gosling, (2013) used a global scale daily
49 water balance hydrologic model (Mac-PDM.09; Gosling et al., 2010), forced by 21
50 climate CMIP3 models and analyzed 10-year and 100-year return period of maximum
51 daily flood under various scenarios. They found that the uncertainty in projecting river
52 streamflow is dominated by across-model differences rather than driven by the climate
53 scenario. Dankers et al. (2014) used 30-year return period of 5-day average peak flows
54 to study the changing patterns of flood hazard under the RCP8.5 scenario. They used
55 nine global hydrology models, together with five coupled climate models from CMIP5
56 and showed that simulated increases in flood risk occur in Siberia, Southeast Asia and
57 India, while decreases occur in northern and eastern Europe, and northwestern North
58 America. Flood frequency also decreased where the streamflow is dominated by spring
59 snow melt.

60

61 River flood models such as CaMa-Flood (Yamazaki et al., 2011) are important tools for
62 simulating flood hazard. These models have been combined with high resolution digital
63 elevation models, flow direction maps (e.g. HYDRO1k and HydroSHEDS; Lehner et
64 al., 2008), and hydrological models. The high-resolution models have contributed to
65 better simulation of river discharge (Yamazaki et al., 2009; Yamazaki et al., 2013 and
66 Mateo et al., 2017). Trigg et al., (2016) showed that six global river flood models
67 reproduced the flood patterns of large rivers satisfactorily. Inter-model variability in



68 forcing from earth system models (ESM) are the major source of uncertainty in
69 modeling the river discharge (Vano et al., 2014; Winsemius, 2013; Mateo et al., 2017),
70 although the model ability to handle complex channels (e.g. deltas and floodplains) also
71 has an important impact on simulation realism.

72

73 Solar Radiation Management (SRM) is geoengineering designed to reduce the amount
74 of sunlight incident on the surface. Stratospheric aerosol injection is one SRM method
75 inspired by volcanic eruptions, that utilizes the aerosol direct effect to scatter incoming
76 solar radiation. Under the Geoengineering Model Intercomparison Project (GeoMIP;
77 Robock et al., 2011; Kravitz et al., 2011, 2012, 2013a), G4 experiment a constant 5Tg
78 per year of SO₂ is introduced into the lower tropical stratosphere of climate models
79 during the period of 2020-2069, while greenhouse gas forcing is defined by the RCP4.5
80 scenario. Indirect, potentially undesirable, side-effects of the injected sulfur aerosol
81 include changing ice particle distributions in the upper-troposphere, and the distribution
82 of ozone and water vapor in stratospheric (Vioni et al., 2017). The direct radiative
83 effects mainly result in the sharp reduction of TOA net radiative flux with a significant
84 drop in global surface temperature, and concomitant decrease in global precipitation
85 (Yu et al., 2015). The decline of precipitation under SRM is mainly due to increasing
86 atmospheric static stability, together with a reduction of latent heat flux from the land
87 surface to the atmosphere (Bala et al., 2008; Kravitz et al., 2013b; Tilmes et al., 2013).
88 Both the reduction of latent heat flux and precipitation result a slow-down of the global
89 hydrological cycle (Niemeier et al., 2013; Kalidindi et al., 2014; Ferraro and Griffiths,



90 2016).

91

92 The spatial pattern of runoff roughly follows that of precipitation. Previous studies have
93 shown that under RCP4.5, precipitation would decrease over southern Africa, the
94 Amazon Basin and central America, and runoff follows these patterns. Over dry
95 continental interiors relatively large evaporation means that runoff does not follow
96 precipitation (Dai, 2016). SRM affects both precipitation and evaporation and hence
97 global patterns of runoff and thence streamflow. The risk of drought in dry regions
98 under SRM appears to be reduced (Curry et al., 2014; Keith and Irvine, 2016; Ji et al.
99 2018). While many studies have looked at the impact of geoengineering on the
100 hydrologic cycle, none has specifically considered the potential changes of river flow
101 and flood frequency.

102

103 We investigate the potential scenario of streamflow using annual mean and extreme
104 daily discharge, and changes in the pattern of flooding using flood return period.
105 Section 2 describes the models and methods used in this study; section 3 presents the
106 results of projected streamflow and return period under the G4 and RCP4.5 simulations.
107 Finally, section 4 provides a discussion of results and implications of this study.

108 **2. Data and Methods**

109 **2.1 GeoMIP experiments**

110 To analyze the potential changes of flood under stratospheric sulfate injection



111 geoen지니어ing, we compare the streamflow patterns under the RCP4.5 and G4
 112 scenarios. Six models were used here (Table 1). We analyze the streamflow patterns
 113 changes during the period 2030-2069 from each of model's G4 and RCP4.5 simulations.
 114 The historical simulation during the period 1960-1999 is used as the reference for the
 115 return period analysis. We used the same 40 years of G4 as Ji et al. (2018) used to
 116 analyze extreme temperatures and precipitations.

117

118 In addition to the five ESM that provide the three simulation experiments in Table 1,
 119 we utilize the GEOSCCM model that couples the Goddard Earth Observing System,
 120 version 5 (GEO-5) (Rienecker et al., 2011) and a stratospheric chemistry module
 121 (Pawson et al., 2008), but which has no historical simulation, and is only used for
 122 streamflow simulations. The RCP4.5 and G4 experiments from GEOSCCM are forced
 123 with sea surface temperature (SST) and sea ice concentrations simulated by the
 124 Community Earth System Model (CESM; Gent et al., 2011). The single MIROC-ESM-
 125 CHEM realization of the historical experiment is used as the reference in return period
 126 calculations for all its realizations of the RCP4.5 and G4 experiments.

127

128 Table 1: GeoMIP models and experiments used in this study.

<i>Model</i>	<i>Resolution</i> (lon × lat, level)	<i>Historical</i>	<i>RCP4.5</i>	<i>G4</i>
<i>BNU-ESM (Ji et al., 2014)</i>	128 × 64, L26	1	1	1
<i>CanESM2 (Arora et al., 2011; Chylek et al., 2011)</i>	128 × 64, L35	3	3	3
<i>GEOSCCM (Oman et al., 2011; Rienecker et al. 2008)</i>	144 × 91, L72	×	3	3
<i>MIROC-ESM (Watanabe et al., 2011)</i>	128 × 64, L80	1	1	1
<i>MIROC-ESM-CHEM (Watanabe et al., 2011)</i>	128 × 64, L80	1	3	3
<i>NorESM1-E (Bentsen et al. 2013, Tjiputra et al. 2013)</i>	144 × 96, L26	1	1	1

129



130 **2.2 The river routing model**

131 The river routing model used here is the Catchment-based Macro-scale Floodplain
132 Model (CaMa-Flood; Yamazaki et al., 2011). The CaMa-Flood uses a local inertial flow
133 equation (Bates et al., 2010; Yamazaki et al., 2014a) to integrate runoff along a high-
134 resolution river map (HydroSHEDS; Yamazaki et al., 2013). Sub-grid characteristics
135 such as slope, river length, river channel width, river channel depth were parameterized
136 in each grid box by using the innovative up-scaling method, FLOW (Mateo et al., 2017;
137 Yamazaki et al., 2014b; Zhao et al., 2017). In addition, the CaMa-Flood implements
138 channel bifurcation and accounts for floodplain storage and backwater effects, which
139 are not represented in most global hydrological models (Zhao et al., 2017). CaMa-Flood
140 is able to reproduce relatively realistic flow patterns in complex river regions such as
141 deltas (Ikeuchi et al., 2015; Yamazaki et al., 2011, 2013) this makes it a well evaluated
142 model in hydrological research (Emerton et al., 2017; Ikeuchi et al., 2017; Suzuki et al.,
143 2017; Yamazaki et al., 2017; Zsótér et al., 2016).

144

145 We use only the daily runoff outputs from climate models to drive CaMa-Flood v3.6.2
146 which calculates the river discharge along the global river network. The spatial
147 resolution of CaMa-Flood was set to 0.25° (~25km at mid-latitude), and an adaptive
148 time step approach was applied in simulation. In order to conserve the input runoff mass,
149 an area-weighted averaging method was used in CaMa-Flood to distribute the coarse
150 input runoff to the fine resolution hydrological model. This down-scaling method is
151 available in the latest version of CaMa-Flood (Mateo et al., (2017). CaMa-Flood



152 performs a 1-year spin-up before simulating 40-year river discharge in our historical,
153 RCP4.5 and G4 experiments. The runoff and river discharge from Antarctica and
154 Greenland are not included in CaMa-Flood simulations. For each streamflow level,
155 cells with less than 0.01 mm/day are excluded from the analysis.

156 **2.3 Indicators of streamflow**

157 We analyze the streamflow change under RCP4.5 and G4 scenarios using three
158 streamflow indicators during 2030-2069, that is annual daily mean flow (Q_m), and
159 extreme high or low flow (Q_5 , Q_{95} : streamflow exceeded 5% or 95% of a year). Q_m , Q_5
160 and Q_{95} are averaged over 40 years for each model, respectively, then averaged between
161 models to get the multi-model mean response under different scenarios. We compared
162 the multi-model mean and multi-model median responses of the six models used in this
163 study, and found no obvious difference between the two averages.

164

165 We employ the two-sample Mann-Whitney U (MW-U) test to measure the significance
166 of streamflow differences between G4 and RCP4.5. The MW-U test is a non-parametric
167 test which does not need the assumption of normal probability distributions. We use a
168 bootstrap resampling method (Ward et al., 2016), with the MW-U test to increase
169 sample size and to minimize the effects of outliers that can arise from the relatively
170 short study period (Koirala et al., 2014). Specifically, we first apply the MW-U test to
171 the G4 and RCP4.5 raw annual mean daily runoff data for each model to get the value
172 of the rank sum statistical value, U_0 . We generate 1000 random paired series of 40-



173 year data from RCP4.5 and G4. Then the MW-U test was applied to each sample pair
174 of generated data to get a series of statistical values: U_j , $j = 1, 2 \dots 1000$. The rank of
175 U_0 is then used to calculate the non-exceedance probability (Cunnane, 1978):

$$176 \quad p_0 = \frac{R_0 - 0.4}{N_b + 0.2}$$

177 Where p_0 is the non-exceedance probability and R_0 is the rank of U_0 . N_b is the
178 number of the bootstrap samples. Finally, a non-exceedance probability less than 0.025
179 (or greater than 0.975) indicates a significant increase (or decrease) from RCP4.5 to G4,
180 respectively.

181 **2.4 Changes in flood frequency**

182 The return period of a flood event is as an indicator of flood frequency (e.g. Dankers et
183 al., 2014; Ward et al., 2017). The N-year return period indicates the probability of flood
184 exceeding a given level in any given year of $1/N$. For each model, we choose the
185 historical period of 1960-1999 as a reference for the return period calculation based on
186 the annual maximum daily river discharge, then analyze the return period change under
187 RCP4.5 and G4 scenarios during the period of 2030-2069. In this study, we choose the
188 30, 50 and 100-year return period levels of river flow at each grid cell to study the
189 change of flood probability. To estimate the return period, the time series of annual
190 maximum daily discharge for historical, RCP4.5 and G4 from each ESM are first
191 arranged in ascending order and then fitted to a Gumbel probability distribution. The
192 Gumbel distribution was used as a statistic of extreme flood events in previous research
193 (e.g. Hirabayashi et al., 2013; Ward et al., 2014) Using the Gumbel distribution, the



194 cumulative distribution function, $F(x)$, of river discharge (x) can be expressed as

$$195 \quad F(x) = e^{-e^{-\frac{x-b}{a}}}$$

196 where the two parameters a (scale) and b (location) are the parameters of Gumbel

197 distribution (Gumbel, 1941). The parameters are estimated using an L-moments based

198 approach (Rasmussen et al., 2003), where

$$199 \quad L_1 = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N X_i$$

$$200 \quad L_2 = \frac{2}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N \frac{i-1}{N-1} X_i - L_1$$

201 and X_i is the annual maximum daily river discharge and is sorted in ascending order

202 and N is the number of sample years, then:

$$203 \quad a = \frac{L_2}{\ln 2}$$

$$204 \quad b = L_1 - ac$$

205 where $c = 0.57721$ is Euler's constant. Changes in return period under geoengineering

206 are expressed as differences G4 - RCP4.5 relative to the corresponding historical level.

207 **3. Results**

208 **3.1 Projected changes in streamflow**

209 Figure 1 shows the relative changes of three characteristic indicators of streamflow,

210 while Figure 2 presents the degree of across-model agreement. Figures S1-S6 show the

211 results for each of the models listed in Table 1. In Fig. 1, positive values mean G4

212 streamflow is larger than RCP4.5 levels. Generally, decreases of the mean streamflow

213 (Q_m) occur at high northern latitudes such as Siberia, Northern Europe and the Arctic



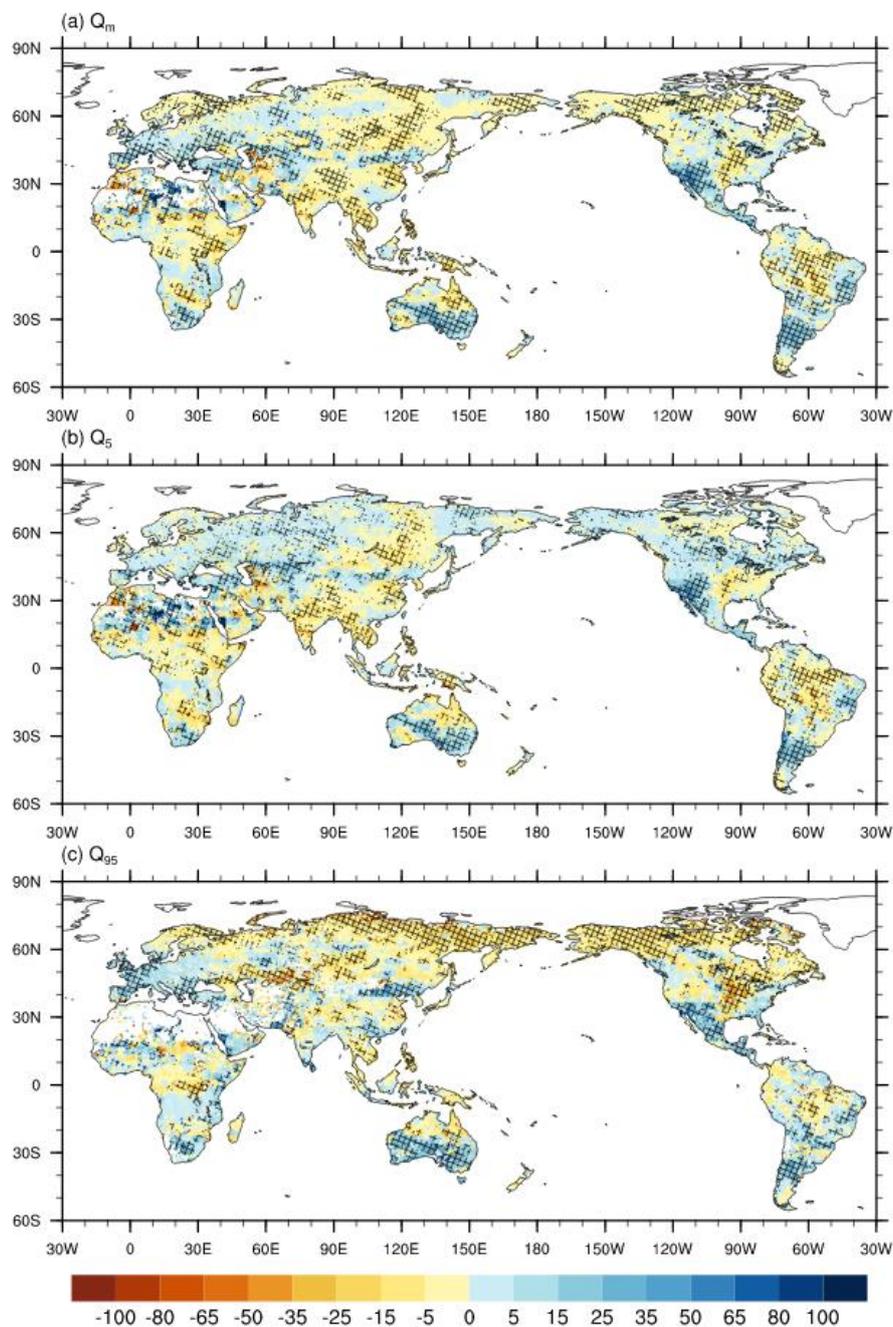
214 Ocean coast of North America, along with Southeast Asia, middle and southern Africa.
215 Increases appear in Western Europe, central Asia, southwestern North America and
216 central America (Fig. 1a). Significant changes are generally distributed around the
217 globe. Based on the ensemble response of the six models analyzed here, 57% of global
218 continental grid cells excluding Greenland, Antarctica and masked cells show decreases
219 in Q_m under G4 compared with RCP4.5, and about 43% of grid cells show increases.
220 Figure 2 showing areas with robust agreement between models allows the primary
221 regions affected to be seen more clearly. Globally, only 4.0% of grid cells exhibit robust
222 decreases and 4.4% increases under G4 (Fig. 2 a). Despite the few grid cells with robust
223 agreement between models, the general patterns are similar for the mean changes in Fig.
224 1a. Consistent decreases occur at high northern latitudes and in Papua New Guinea and
225 the semi-arid region south of the Sahara desert. Increases are mainly in the southern
226 hemisphere but also parts of Western Europe, and the southwestern USA. The
227 GEOSCCM (Fig. S3) and MIROC-ESM (Fig. S4) contradict the ensemble in having
228 larger areas with increases in Q_m under G4 than RCP4.5.
229
230 Figures 1b and 2b show that under G4, 55% of unmasked grid cells are projected to
231 increase their high flow Q_5 levels under G4. Europe, western North America, Central
232 Asia and central Australia show increases in Q_5 under G4 compared with RCP4.5.
233 Differences at the 95% significance level are distributed fairly similarly as for Q_m in
234 Figure 1a. The Amazon Basin shows decreases in both high flow and Q_m and the
235 southwestern USA shows increases in both. Globally, 4% of land cells show robust



236 increases and 2% show decreases under G4 (Fig. 2b). Robust increases generally are
237 confined to the extra-tropics, while decreases are mainly, but not only, in the tropics.
238 The projections of Q_5 from CanESM2 under G4 show largest differences in spatial
239 pattern from the ensemble mean (Fig. S2) and it is the only model with more decreases
240 than increases in Q_5 under G4. Though high flow levels usually lead to flood events
241 (Ward et al., 2016), changes in flood levels do not necessarily translate into increases
242 in flood frequency. We elaborate further on flood return period in section 3.2.

243

244 Low flow (Q_{95} , in Figs. 1c and 2c) has a noisier spatial pattern than those for mean and
245 high flow. Low flow shows a relatively uniform decrease around the globe. 44% of
246 unmasked global land cells show increases in Q_{95} under G4. Despite the generally
247 noisier pattern, the regions with differences significant at the 95% level are more
248 defined for Q_{95} than either Q_m or Q_5 . The high northern latitudes become drier under
249 G4, the southern high latitudes wetter. Robust increases cover about 2% of global land
250 grid cells, mainly in Europe and South America. Robust decreases appear mainly in
251 northern high-latitude regions, central Africa and northern Asia, and occupy about 6%
252 of global land grid cells. Projections by NorESM1-E (Fig. S6) and GEOSCCM (Fig.
253 S3) show different patterns from the ensemble mean (Fig. 1c) with bigger areas showing
254 increases than decreases in Q_{95} under G4.

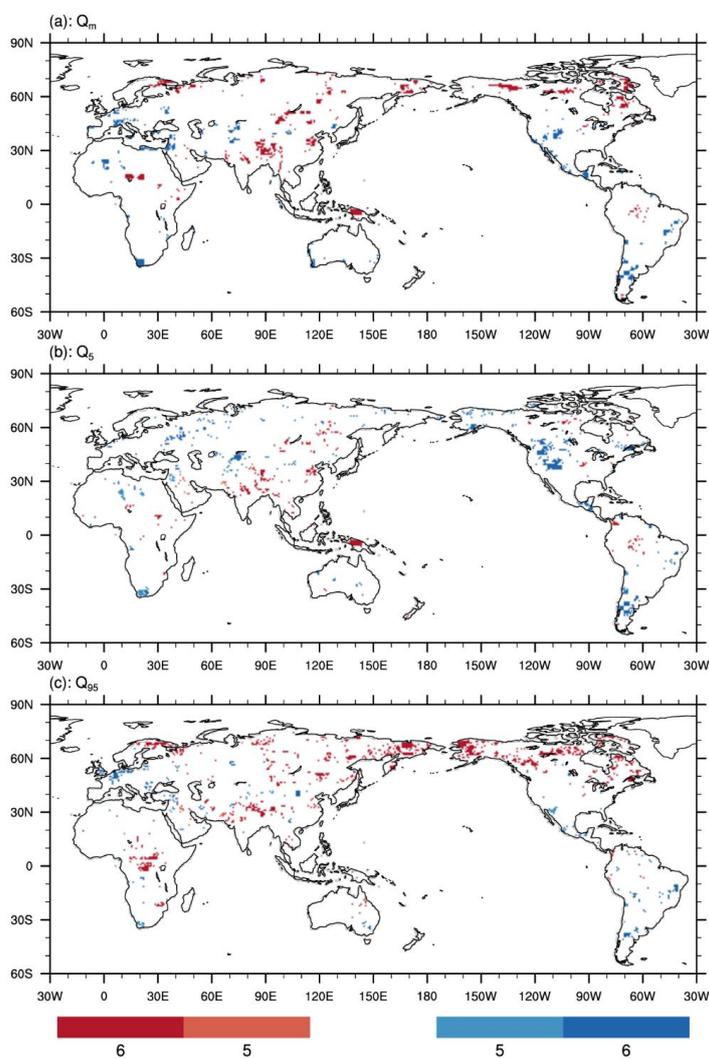


255

256 Figure 1: Relative difference of three streamflow indicators between G4 (2030-2069)
 257 and RCP4.5 (2030-2069), as percentages of the mean of G4 and RCP4.5: $100\% \times$
 258 $2(G4 - RCP4.5) / (G4 + RCP4.5)$. Top, long-term mean flow (Q_m); Middle, high flow
 259 (Q_5); Bottom, low flow (Q_{95}). For each streamflow level, cells with less than 0.01



260 mm/day are masked out. Hashed areas indicate locations where the streamflow changes
 261 are significant at the 95% level.
 262

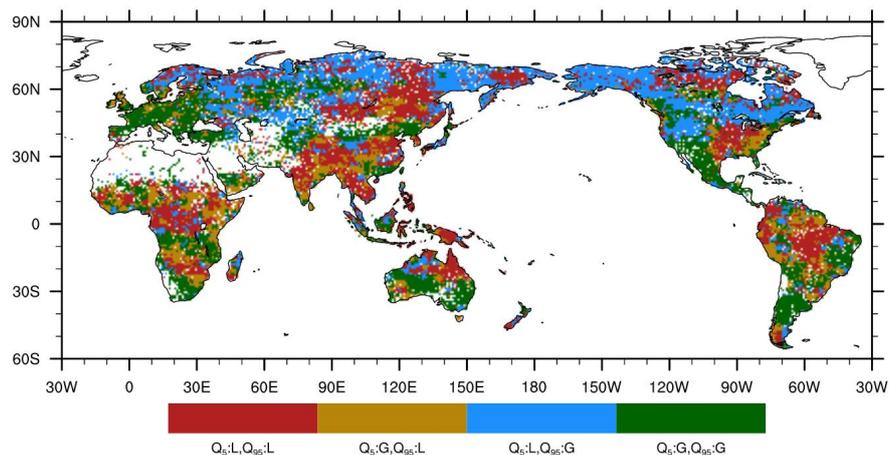


263
 264 Figure 2: Number of model agreeing in sign (red means $G4 - RCP4.5 < 0$, blue means
 265 $G4 - RCP4.5 > 0$) of streamflow indicator changes. Top, Q_m ; Middle, Q_5 ; Bottom, Q_{95} .
 266 Shaded grid cells indicate a relatively robust response (more than 4 models show same
 267 change direction).

268



269 Some of the regions show contrasting responses under G4 for high and low streamflow.
270 Figure 3 shows regions where both high and low flow decrease under G4 cover about
271 29% of grids cells, mainly in eastern and southeastern Asia, central Africa, and Amazon
272 Basin, together with central and eastern Siberia. In 16% of the cells high flows are
273 projected to increase while low flows decrease, mainly in the remaining parts of south
274 Asia, central Africa and South America. Increased high flow and simultaneous decrease
275 in low flow suggests the potential for increased flood and drought frequencies. In 27%
276 of global cells, high flows decrease and low flows increase, which suggests these would
277 see a decline in streamflow extremes, and are mainly at northern mid- and high-latitudes.
278 Areas with both increased high and low flow also cover 27% of the land surface, mainly
279 in Europe, central America and the southern hemisphere mid latitudes. Perhaps the
280 clearest overall pattern is the generally lower streamflow under G4 on the western sides
281 of the large continents of Eurasia and North America, with higher flows on their eastern
282 sides. In the southern hemisphere the pattern is meridional with northern parts of the
283 land masses having lower streamflow under G4, and southern parts increases.
284



285

286

287

288 Figure 3: The ensemble mean differences (G4 - RCP4.5) of high and low streamflows. Color bar is
289 defined such that grids where G4 is less than RCP4.5 for both Q5&Q95 is in red; Q5&Q95 greater
290 in G4 than RCP4.5 is in green. Q5 greater in G4 and Q95 greater in RCP4.5 in yellow and vice versa
291 in blue. Grid cells with Q_{95} less than 0.01 mm/day were masked.

292 3.2 Projected changes in return period

293 Changes in flooding between RCP4.5 and G4 scenarios are measured by the changes
294 in the return period of particular river discharge magnitude. Previous studies have also
295 used 30-year return period as a relatively modest indicator of flood frequency (Dankers
296 et al., 2014). We choose both the same flooding frequency indicator and also the more
297 extreme 50 or 100-year return levels. The discharge for each model's 30, 50 and 100-
298 year return periods in the simulated historical period define the reference magnitudes
299 at each grid cell. The return period of discharge corresponding to those levels are then
300 found under the RCP4.5 and G4 scenarios. Dry regions, defined as mean annual
301 streamflow during the historical period (1960-1999) less than 0.01 mm/day, are masked.
302 The 40-year time series of the historical period (1960-1999) and 40-year future



303 projections (2030-2069) then are fitted to the Gumbel probability distribution for each
304 grid cell.

305

306 Figure 4a and 4b show the global distribution of multi-model ensemble median return
307 period of the historical 30-year return level, under the RCP4.5 and G4 scenarios. Figs.
308 S7 and S8 show the relevant patterns for 50 and 100-year return periods. The elongation
309 of return period in some regions (such as central Asia and the Amazon basin) indicates
310 relatively less frequent flooding events compared with the past. Very close to half the
311 grid cells (49%) show increases in return period under RCP4.5 scenario, while the other
312 half experience decreases. Increases of return period are mainly in Asia and eastern
313 Africa while decreases occur in Europe and North America. Our results agree with
314 similar previous studies (e.g., Hirabayashi et al., 2013) for RCP4.5. Under the
315 stratospheric aerosol injection G4 experiment the spatial pattern is very similar as
316 RCP4.5, with similar large differences from the historical levels.

317

318 Figure 4c shows the difference of return period between the G4 and RCP4.5 scenarios.
319 A negative value means a shorter return period under G4 than RCP4.5, which indicates
320 an increase of flood frequency under G4. Decreasing flood frequency appears in India,
321 China, Siberia, parts of the Amazon basin, and northern Australia. Increasing flood
322 frequencies are projected mainly in Europe, the southwestern USA and much of
323 Australia. The regions which are projected to experience an increased flood frequency
324 under the RCP4.5 scenario (Fig. 4a; Dankers et al., 2014; Hirabayashi et al., 2013)

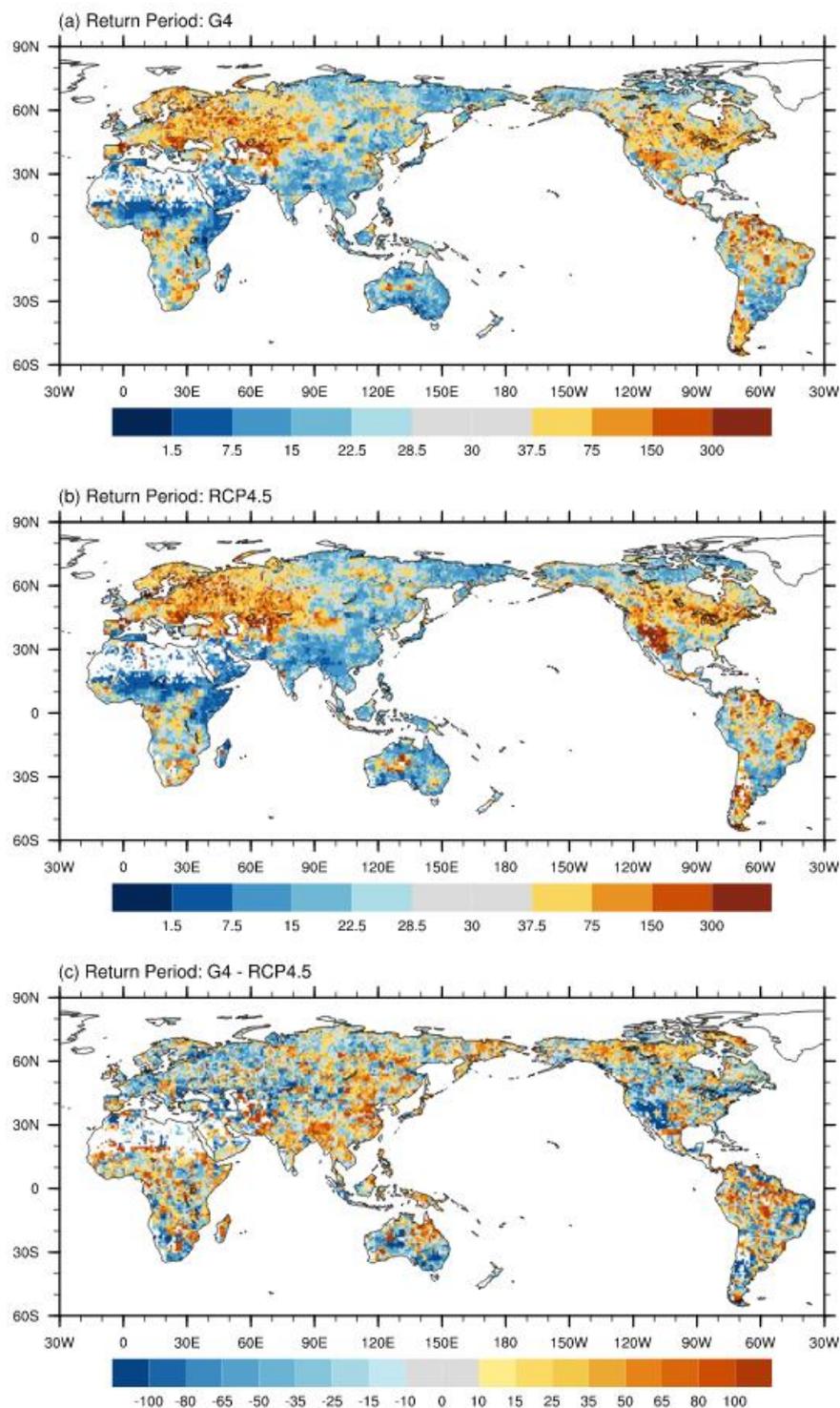


325 would experience a consistent decline of the flood frequency under G4, such as
326 southern and southeastern Asia. In general, the G4 return periods are less changed from
327 the historical levels than under RCP4.5.

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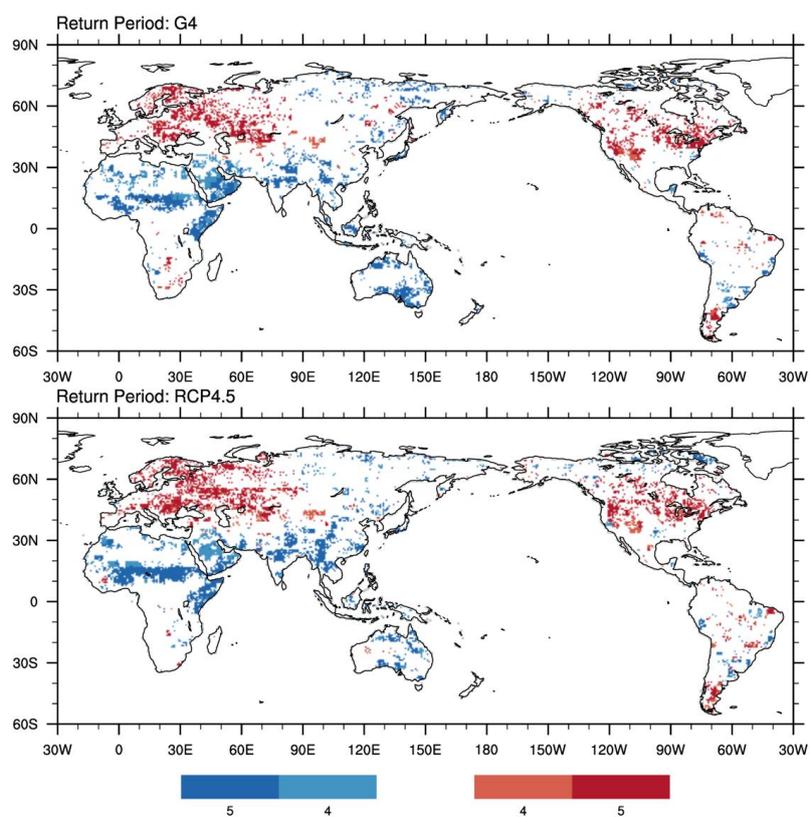
329 Figure 5 shows the regions of robust agreement between models in changes of 30-year
330 return period under RCP4.5 and G4. Slightly fewer grid cells show robust responses
331 under G4 than RCP4.5. As with Fig. 4 there is close agreement in spatial pattern of
332 return period under the RCP4.5 and G4 scenarios. The spatial pattern of the changes in
333 50 and 100-year return levels shown in Figs. S7 and S8 are similar to those for the 30-
334 year return level (Fig. 4), while the spread between two different return period levels is
335 slightly different from the 30-year levels. These results suggest a consistent changing
336 pattern of flood frequency as defined by the three return levels, but with different
337 magnitudes of differences between RCP4.5 and G4, with G4 being closer to the
338 historical levels.

339





341 Figure 4: Multi-model ensemble median of return periods for discharge which correspond to 30-
342 year return period in the historical simulation (1960-1999) under (a) G4, (b) RCP4.5 scenarios and
343 (c) the relative difference of G4 and RCP4.5, as percentages of mean of return periods: $100\% \times$
344 $2(G4 - RCP4.5) / (G4 + RCP4.5)$. Grid cells in extremely dry regions, i.e. $Q_m < 0.01$ mm/day were
345 masked out.
346



347
348 Figure 5: The number of models agreeing on the sign of change in 30-year return period under G4
349 (top panel) and RCP4.5 (bottom panel). Blue colors indicate decreases and red increases relative to
350 the historical simulation.



351

352 **4. Discussion and Conclusions**

353 We analyzed the streamflow response under the stratospheric aerosol injection
354 geoengineering, G4, and the RCP4.5 scenario using the daily total runoff from six
355 climate models that participated in GeoMIP. We investigated the mean change patterns
356 of mean and extreme high and low streamflow and analyzed the global flood frequency
357 change in terms of return period. There is pattern of generally lower streamflow under
358 G4 on the western sides of the large continents of Eurasia and North America, with
359 higher flows on their eastern sides. In the southern hemisphere the pattern is meridional
360 with northern parts of the land masses having lower streamflow under G4, and southern
361 parts increases.

362

363 These streamflow changes under G4 contrast with the pattern under RCP4.5 (Koirala
364 et al., 2014). For example, in southeastern Asia and India, both high flows and low
365 flows are projected to increase under the RCP4.5 scenario, while both of them would
366 decrease under G4. In contrast, Spain, Italy and Greece are projected to have decreases
367 in both high and low flow under RCP4.5, while the projected streamflow shows
368 increases under G4. However, in the Amazon basin, the streamflow decreases in both
369 high and low flow under both RCP4.5 and G4 relative to the historical period. In Siberia
370 both high and low streamflow increases under RCP4.5 relative to historical, while the
371 pattern is mixed under G4. This means that geoengineering offsets the impact



372 introduced by anthropogenic climate warming in some regions, while in other regions
373 such as the Amazon basin and Siberia, geoengineering further enhances the decreasing
374 trend of streamflow under the RCP4.5 scenario. The pattern seen is suggestive of the
375 role of large scale circulation patterns, westerly flows over the northern hemisphere
376 continents and the Asian monsoon systems, with relative increases in mid-latitude storm
377 systems and decreases in monsoons under G4 compared with RCP4.5; similar
378 mechanisms may also account for the north-south pattern seen in Australia and South
379 America. Monsoonal indicators do decrease under the much more extreme G1
380 experiment that is designed to offset quadrupled CO₂ levels (Tilmes et al., 2013).

381

382 We investigated the change of flooding corresponding to the magnitudes of the
383 historical 30, 50 and 100-year return period levels; the flooding frequencies change
384 dramatically from historical levels under both RCP4.5 and G4, but show similar spatial
385 patterns. The projected return period pattern under RCP4.5 scenario agrees well with
386 previous studies, such as Dankers et al., (2014) and Hirabayashi et al., (2013). Generally,
387 stratospheric aerosol injection geoengineering relieves flood stress especially for
388 Southeast Asia, and in turn increases the probability of flooding in the southwestern
389 USA and much of Australia – which are of course drought-prone places that might
390 benefit from increased flooding. The Amazon Basin shows a relatively elongation of
391 flood return period, while Europe shows shortening of return period under G4, and this
392 was also implicit in streamflow character in these regions.

393



394 Previous studies (Dankers et al., 2014; Hirabayashi et al., 2008) have noted that the
395 flood frequency for rivers at high latitude (e.g. Alaska and Siberia) decrease under
396 global warming even in areas where the frequency, intensity of precipitation, or both,
397 are projected to increase. The annual hydrograph of these rivers is dominated by snow
398 melt, so changes of peak flow reflect the balance between length and temperature of
399 winter season, and the total amount of winter precipitation. Under the G4 experiment,
400 some recent studies (Jones et al., 2018; Sonntag et al., 2018) have pointed out that the
401 increased P–E (difference between precipitation and evaporation) in northern Asia
402 caused by global warming could be partly counteracted by solar geoengineering. On
403 the other hand, compared with the RCP4.5 scenario, the SRM process reduces polar
404 temperatures (Berdahl et al., 2014). The balance among precipitation, evaporation and
405 temperature accounts for the complex spatial pattern of streamflow and flood frequency
406 at northern high-latitudes under G4, that has been previously been related to soil
407 moisture content (Dagon and Schrag, 2017).

408

409 The relatively dry pattern of streamflow in the Amazon basin under G4 is notable and
410 consistent with changes in P–E (e.g. Jones et al., 2018). This drying pattern would lead
411 to a decline of the Amazon tropical rainforest (Boisier et al., 2015). Amazon basin
412 drying is complicated by factors including the movement of Intertropical Convergence
413 Zone (ITCZ) under geoengineering (Smyth et al., 2017; Guo et al., 2018); changes in
414 SST reflecting changes in frequency of El Niño Southern Oscillation (Harris et al., 2008;
415 Jiménez-Muñoz et al., 2016), although there is no evidence of changes occurring under



416 SRM (Gabriel and Robock, 2015); and changes carbon cycle feedbacks (Chadwick et
417 al., 2017; Halladay and Good, 2017), which would certainly affected by changes in
418 diffuse radiation under SRM (Bala et al., 2008).

419

420 Limitations exist in our study. Model internal variability may be larger than across-
421 model spread in eastern and southeastern Asia (Yu et al., 2016). We assume that
422 systematic model bias relative to observations can be corrected by subtracting historical
423 simulations, and thus that model bias does not change with future climate scenario. We
424 ignore the effects of changing river routes and river network silt-up over time (Chezik
425 et al., 2017), which would impact local runoff and streamflow. The CaMa-Flood river
426 routing model also does not consider anthropogenic effects on rivers (e.g. dams), so the
427 results presented here are for a hypothetical natural condition.

428

429 Changes in flooding are strongly connected with the economic cost of damage due to
430 climate change and sea level rise (Jevrejeva et al., 2016, Hinckel et al., 2014) and
431 thorough studies should be made for further policy and decision making, especially
432 applied to high value economic or ecological entities. This may be done in the
433 framework of specific impact models applied to local cities or regions, and would hence
434 benefit from local knowledge, especially in the developing world where resources for
435 adaptation measures are scarce. Linkages between the developing world climate
436 impacts researchers and the GeoMIP community will be encouraged and funded by the
437 DECIMALS project (Rahman et al., 2018).



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444

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