

Supporting Information for “Interpreting Differences in Radiative Feedbacks from Aerosols Versus Greenhouse Gases”

Pietro Salvi¹, Paulo Ceppi¹, Jonathan M. Gregory^{2,3}

¹Department of Physics & Grantham Institute, Imperial College London, London, UK

²National Centre for Atmospheric Science, University of Reading, Reading, UK

³Met Office Hadley Centre, Exeter, UK

Contents of this file

1. Tables S1 to S2
2. Figures S1 to S2

Table S1. Experiment names and details for the CMIP6 experiments used in this paper. The “piClim” prefix denotes fixed-SST experiments, while the rest are coupled atmosphere-ocean experiments. piClim-control is an AGCM experiment with SSTs and sea ice climatologies taken from piControl. The fourth column includes three prescribed-SST experiments: piClim-histall, piClim-histGHG and piClim-histaer.

	piClim-control	hist-GHG & hist-aer	historical	piClim-histxxx
CanESM5	r1i1p2f1	r[1-10]i1p2f1	r[1-10]i1p2f1	r1i1p2f1
GISS-E2-1-G	r1i1p1f1	r[1-5]i1p1f1	r[1-10]i1p1f1	r1i1p1f1
HadGEM3-GC31-LL	r1i1p1f3	r[1-4]i1p1f3	r[1-5]i1p1f3	r[1-3]i1p1f3
IPSL-CM6A-LR	r1i1p1f1	r[1-10]i1p1f1	r[1-10]i1p1f1	r1i1p1f1
MIROC6	r1i1p1f1	r[1-3]i1p1f1	r[1-10]i1p1f1	r[1-3]i1p1f1
NorESM2-LM	r1i1p1f1	r[1-3]i1p1f1	r[1-3]i1p1f1	r1i1p1f1

Table S2. All-sky radiative feedback parameter (α), CRE (α_{CRE}), and clear-sky radiative feedback parameters (α_{CS}) for each model and the multi-model mean, to 2 d.p. Also shown is the estimated error from variance in the historical variants ($\sigma_{\text{historical}}$).

	hist-aer	hist-GHG	historical	$\sigma_{\text{historical}}$
CanESM5	0.75	0.80	0.87	0.02
GISS-E2-1-G	1.45	1.69	1.71	0.02
HadGEM3-GC31-LL	1.09	0.98	1.00	0.08
IPSL-CM6A-LR	0.96	1.31	1.22	0.02
MIROC6	1.86	1.78	1.68	0.04
NorESM2-LM	0.95	2.24	1.90	0.04
MMM	1.14	1.37	1.46	0.02

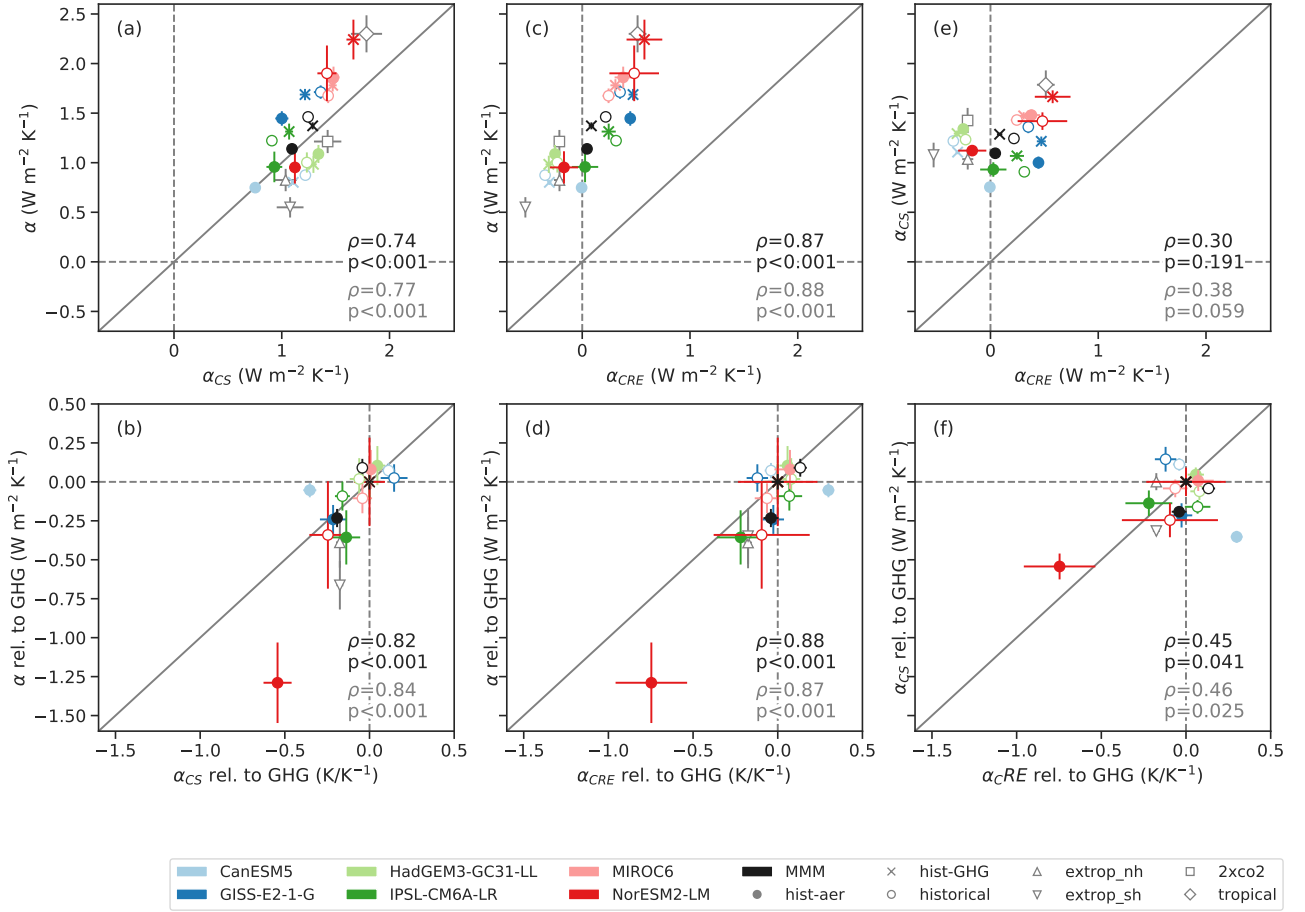


Figure S1. A similar plot as Fig. 2 in the main text, comparing the all-sky radiative feedback parameter (α) to CRE (α_{CRE}) and clear-sky radiative feedback parameters (α_{CS}) for each model and the multi-model mean. Values are shown as absolutes (*top row*) and as the difference from hist-GHG values (*bottom row*). All panels contain a 1:1 line (*solid grey*)

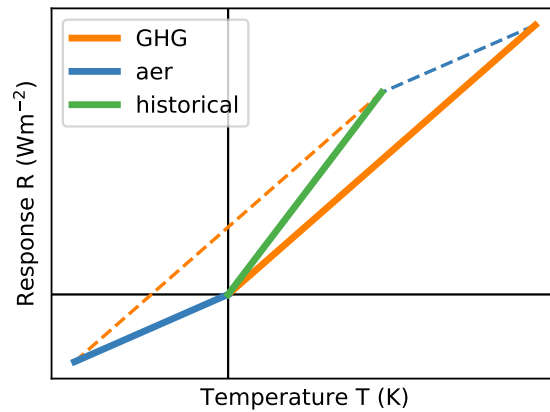


Figure S2. A geometric explanation of why the historical all-forcing feedbacks do not lie between the historical aerosol and historical GHG feedbacks. If the all historical is roughly a linear combination of the historical aerosol (*blue*) and historical GHG (*orange*) results, and the historical aerosol induces a negative temperature change with negative forcing unlike the positive forcing and temperature change from GHGs, then the all historical feedbacks parameter (the gradient of the *green* line) will be more positive than the hist-GHG feedback parameter.

Appendix A Why $\frac{\Delta X_{hist}}{\Delta \bar{T}_{hist}} - \frac{\Delta X_{GHG}}{\Delta \bar{T}_{GHG}}$ anti-correlates well with $\frac{\Delta X_{aer}}{\Delta \bar{T}_{aer}} - \frac{\Delta X_{GHG}}{\Delta \bar{T}_{GHG}}$

We expect that the results from the historical case can be approximated as a sum of hist-GHG and hist-aer cases:

$$\Delta X_{hist} \approx \Delta X_{GHG} + \Delta X_{aer} \quad (A1)$$

$$\Delta \bar{T}_{hist} \approx \Delta \bar{T}_{GHG} + \Delta \bar{T}_{aer} \quad (A2)$$

Given that the global average surface air temperature changes $\Delta \bar{T}$ are, by definition, constants in latitude and longitude, we can relate $\Delta \bar{T}_{GHG}$ and $\Delta \bar{T}_{aer}$ by some function of time a :

$$\Delta \bar{T}_{aer} = a \cdot \Delta \bar{T}_{GHG} \quad (A3)$$

This allows us to rewrite the expression, for the difference between feedbacks in the historical case and the GHG case, in the following way:

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\Delta X_{hist}}{\Delta \bar{T}_{hist}} - \frac{\Delta X_{GHG}}{\Delta \bar{T}_{GHG}} &= \frac{\Delta X_{GHG} + \Delta X_{aer}}{\Delta \bar{T}_{GHG} + \Delta \bar{T}_{aer}} - \frac{\Delta X_{GHG}}{\Delta \bar{T}_{GHG}} \\ &= \frac{\Delta X_{GHG}}{\Delta \bar{T}_{GHG} + \Delta \bar{T}_{aer}} + \frac{\Delta X_{aer}}{\Delta \bar{T}_{GHG} + \Delta \bar{T}_{aer}} - \frac{\Delta X_{GHG}}{\Delta \bar{T}_{GHG}} \\ &= \frac{\Delta X_{GHG}}{(a+1) \cdot \Delta \bar{T}_{GHG}} + \frac{\Delta X_{aer}}{(\frac{1}{a} + 1) \cdot \Delta \bar{T}_{aer}} - \frac{\Delta X_{GHG}}{\Delta \bar{T}_{GHG}} \\ &= \frac{\Delta X_{GHG}}{(a+1) \cdot \Delta \bar{T}_{GHG}} + \frac{a \cdot \Delta X_{aer}}{(a+1) \cdot \Delta \bar{T}_{aer}} - \frac{\Delta X_{GHG}}{\Delta \bar{T}_{GHG}} \\ &= \frac{a \cdot \Delta X_{aer}}{(a+1) \Delta \bar{T}_{aer}} - \frac{a \cdot \Delta X_{GHG}}{(a+1) \cdot \Delta \bar{T}_{GHG}} \\ &= \frac{a}{(a+1)} \left(\frac{\Delta X_{aer}}{\Delta \bar{T}_{aer}} - \frac{\Delta X_{GHG}}{\Delta \bar{T}_{GHG}} \right) \end{aligned}$$

We expect that $a < 0$ for all points in time, since we expect aerosol to reduce surface air temperatures where GHGs increase surface air temperatures. We also generally expect that $|a| < 1$ since the historical case gives rising temperatures i.e. the aerosol forcing does not outweigh the GHG forcing. As such, we expect that $\frac{a}{a+1} < 0$ to provide the observed anti-correlation.