



Supplement of

Exploring the impacts of unprecedented climate extremes on forest ecosystems: hypotheses to guide modeling and experimental studies

Jennifer A. Holm et al.

Correspondence to: Jennifer A. Holm (jaholm@lbl.gov)

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Figures:

Table S1. Terrestrial model full name, select characteristics, and associated references for the models listed throughout the manuscript.

| Model | Full Name | Type & Canopy | Dynamic Vegetation? | Plant Hydraulics? | References |
|-------------|---|----------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|
| CABLE | Community Atmosphere-Biosphere-Land Exchange | Big leaf; Single layer | No | No | Wang et al., (2011); |
| CABLE-POP | Community Atmosphere-Biosphere-Land Exchange - Population Orders Physiology | Cohort; Single layer | No | No | Haverd et al., (2018) |
| CLM5 | Community Land Model v5 | Big leaf; Single layer | No | Yes | Lawrence et al., (2019) |
| ED2-hydro | Ecosystem Demography v.2 - Hydro | Cohort; Multi-layer | Yes | Yes | Xu et al., (2016); Xu et al., (2021) |
| FATES | Functionally Assembled Terrestrial Ecosystem Simulator | Cohort; Multi-layer | Yes | No | Fisher et al., (2015) |
| FATES-HYDRO | Functionally Assembled Terrestrial Ecosystem Simulator - Hydro | Cohort; Multi-layer | Yes | Yes | Fang et al., (2022) |
| JSBACH4.0 | JSBACH v4 DGVM | Patch-tiling; Single layer | No | No | Nabel et al., (2020) |
| JULES | Joint UK Land Environment Simulator | Big leaf; Single layer | No | Yes | Eller et al., (2020) |
| LM3-PPA | Land Model v3 – Perfect Plasticity Approximation | Cohort; Multi-layer | Yes | No | Weng et al., (2015) |

| | | | | | |
|------------------|--|--------------------------------|-----|-----|---|
| LPJ-GUESS | Lund-Potsdam-Jena General Ecosystem Simulator | Cohort; Multi- layer | Yes | No | Smith et al., (2001); Smith et al., (2014) |
| Noah-MP- PHS | Noah- Multiparameterization - Plant Hydraulics Scheme | Big leaf; Single layer | No | Yes | Li et al., (2021) |
| ORCHIDEE | ORganizing Carbon and Hydrology in Dynamic Ecosystems | Big leaf; Single layer | Yes | No | Krinner et al., (2005); Druel et al., (2019) |
| SEIB- DGVM | Spatially Explicit Individual-Based Dynamic Global Vegetation Model | Individual; Multi- layer | Yes | No | Sato et al., (2007) |
| TFSv.1- Hydro | Trait Forest Simulator v1 - Hyrdo | Individual; Multi- layer | No | Yes | Christoffersen et al., 2016 |

Table S2. Description of simulation treatments of hypothetical droughts from a ‘baseline’ case (i.e., no drought treatment) to unprecedented climate extremes (UCEs). Varying drought intensity (precipitation removal) from 5% to 100% removal, in increments of 5%, over drought durations of either 1, 2, or 4 years in length. To explore climate change response, we repeated the drought treatments and increased temperature only (+2K over ambient), eCO₂ concentration to 600 ppm and 800 ppm, and increased temperature and eCO₂ (+2K 600 ppm; +2K 800 ppm) and compared to the reference simulation.

| | Drought Intensity | Drought Duration | Temperature (K) | CO ₂ (ppm) |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Baseline | 0% | 0 years | Ambient | Ambient |
| Drought Only (Reference) | 5% - 100% | 1 year | ---- | ---- |
| Drought Only (Reference) | 5% - 100% | 2 years | ---- | ---- |
| Drought Only (Reference) | 5% - 100% | 4 years | ---- | ---- |
| Drought + Temp. | 5% - 100% | 1 year | + 2K | ---- |
| Drought + Temp. | 5% - 100% | 2 years | + 2K | ---- |
| Drought + Temp. | 5% - 100% | 4 years | + 2K | ---- |
| Drought + CO ₂ | 5% - 100% | 1 year | ---- | + 200 ppm |
| Drought + CO ₂ | 5% - 100% | 2 years | ---- | + 200 ppm |
| Drought + CO ₂ | 5% - 100% | 4 years | ---- | + 200 ppm |
| Drought + CO ₂ | 5% - 100% | 1 year | ---- | + 400 ppm |
| Drought + CO ₂ | 5% - 100% | 2 years | ---- | + 400 ppm |
| Drought + CO ₂ | 5% - 100% | 4 years | ---- | + 400 ppm |
| Drought + Temp. + CO ₂ | 5% - 100% | 1 year | + 2K | + 400 ppm |
| Drought + Temp. + CO ₂ | 5% - 100% | 2 years | + 2K | + 400 ppm |
| Drought + Temp. + CO ₂ | 5% - 100% | 4 years | + 2K | + 400 ppm |

Table S3. Comparison of *in situ* observations and baseline model simulations from ED2 and LPJ-GUESS for the two example study sites, Palo Verde in Costa Rica (Kalacska et al., 2005; Xu et al., 2016) and EucFACE in Australia (Medlyn et al., 2016; Duursma et al., 2016). Mean and \pm standard deviation.

| | Palo Verde Costa Rica | EucFACE Australia |
|---|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Obs. Biomass (kgC m ⁻²) | 11.0 (5.2) | 12.7 (4.5) |
| ED2 Biomass (kgC m ⁻²) | 11.7 (0.3) | 5.6 (0.3) |
| LPJ-GUESS Biomass (kgC m ⁻²) | 10.4 (0.2) | 12.1 (0.2) |
| Obs. LAI (m ² m ⁻²) | 3.8 (1.06) | 1.7 (0.6) |
| ED2 LAI (m ² m ⁻²) | 3.3 (0.1) | 1.6 (0.2) |
| LPJ-GUESS LAI (m ² m ⁻²) | 4.5 (0.1) | 3.2 (1.3) |

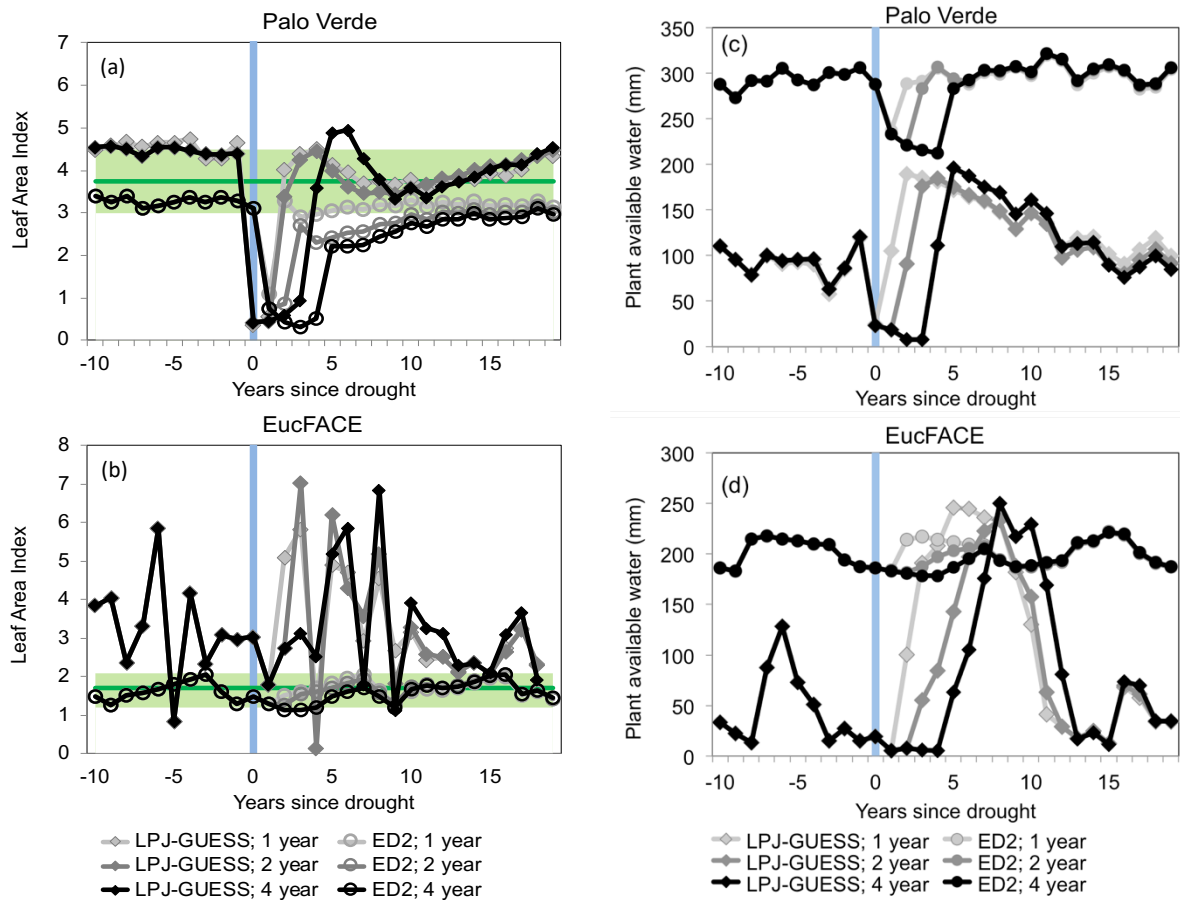


Figure S1. Change in leaf area index (LAI; m² m⁻²) (a-b) and annual plant available water (mm) (c-d) as a result of three drought durations events (1 year, 2 year, and 4 year durations) compared to the pre-drought period (i.e. negative years) and over a 20-year recovery period, for both the LPJ-GUESS and ED2 demography models at the Palo Verde site and EucFACE site. Shaded green area is the observed range in LAI from Kalacska et al., (2005) at Palo Verde and Duursma et al., (2016) at EucFACE. The modeled drought intensity at Palo Verde was 90% precipitation

removed, and 50% precipitation removed at EucFACE. Plant available water was calculated over a soil depth of 3 meters in ED2 and 2 meters in LPJ-GUESS.

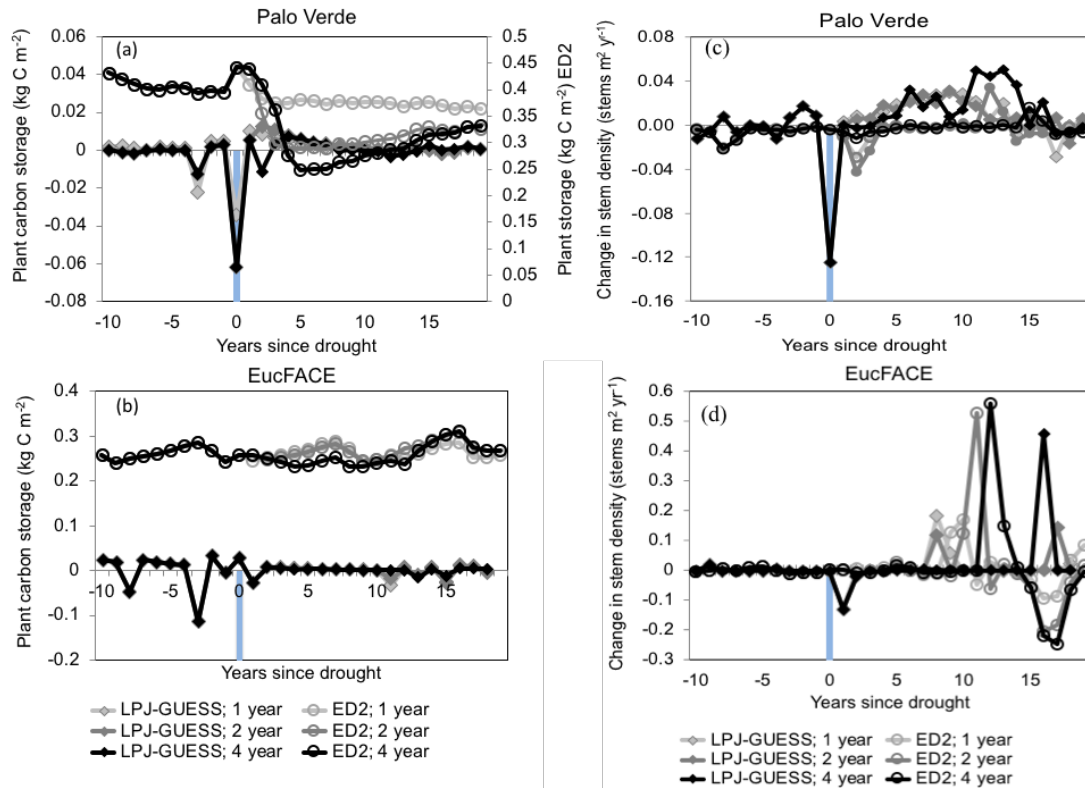


Figure S2. Change in plant carbohydrate storage (kg C m^{-2}) (a-b) and change in stem density ($\text{stems m}^2 \text{ yr}^{-1}$) (c-d) as a result of three drought durations events (1 year, 2 year, and 4 year durations) compared to the pre-drought period (i.e. negative years) and over a 20-year recovery period, for both the LPJ-GUESS and ED2 demography models at the Palo Verde site and EucFACE site. The modeled drought intensity at Palo Verde was 90% precipitation removed, and 50% precipitation removed at EucFACE.

Supplement Section S1:

Site Descriptions:

The Australian EucFACE site has a canopy coverage of 95% (830 trees ha⁻¹) of mature *Eucalyptus* (*E. tereticornis*) evergreen trees. The EucFACE site has a mean annual temperature of 17.3°C, receives an annual rainfall of 800 mm (Ellsworth et al., 2017), with total plant available soil water of 300 mm. The evergreen eucalypt trees are on average 22 m tall with a DBH of 21 cm and a stand-level LAI of 1.7 m² m⁻². The Costa Rican Palo Verde site has nutrient rich soils (Powers and Pérez-Aviles, 2013), stand basal area is 29.2 (± 8.1) m² ha, stem density of 64 (± 12) trees ha⁻¹, and a mean annual temperature of 25.1°C, and mean annual rainfall of 1440 mm, with a 5-month dry season. Multiple leaf phenological strategies co-occur, including evergreens, brevi-deciduous tree species, as well as deciduous species that drop their leaves during the dry season, leading to a strong seasonality in LAI ranging from 3 to 4.5, but can get as low as 1.2 m² m⁻² (Kalacska et al., 2005).

Meteorological data and initial conditions used to drive ED2 and LPJ-GUESS:

Necessary meteorological drivers for ED2 and LPJ-GUESS include incoming radiation (short-wave and long-wave), air temperature, humidity, and pressure, precipitation and wind speed at sub-daily scale. In-situ meteorological data for Palo Verde is only available since 2008. Using the short-term data as the control climate can lead to biases in ecosystem states and high-frequency cyclic ecosystem dynamics before applying UCEs. Therefore, we use re-analysis data (1970 to 2012) at 0.5 degree resolution from Princeton Global Forcing dataset (Sheffield et al., 2006), and was recycled repeatedly for the Palo Verde simulations.

In-situ meteorological data for EucFACE were obtained from a dataset previously compiled for a simulation study of the EucFACE experimental site (Medlyn et al., 2016). Daily time series of air temperature, precipitation, downward shortwave radiation and photosynthetically-active radiation for 1992-2011 were extracted from the 1 × 1° grid cell encapsulating the site from the Princeton Global Forcing data set (Sheffield et al., 2006). This 20-year time series was recycled repeatedly to force the simulations. For both sites, the baseline simulations were initialized as a near-bare-ground situation, with small amount of tree seedlings equally from each PFT. The baseline spin-up lasted for 100 years (ED2) or 780 years (LPJ-GUESS) using recycling natural climate variability as described above.

Model Validation:

Both models had similar biomass compared to observations at Palo Verde (10.4 - 11.7 vs. 11.0 kgC m⁻²), and at EucFACE biomass matched well in LPJ-GUESS (12.1 vs. 12.7 kgC m⁻²) but was low in ED2 (5.6 kgC m⁻²). Both models also had similar LAI to observations at Palo Verde (3.3 – 4.5 vs. 3.8 (± 1.06) m² m⁻²), and at EucFACE LAI matched well in ED2 (1.6 vs. 1.7 m² m⁻²), but was high for LPJ-GUESS (3.2 m² m⁻²). At EucFACE LAI ranged from 1.2 to 2.1 over a 28-month measurement period (Duursma et al., (2016), but LPJ-GUESS had very large fluctuations in annual LAI outside of these ranges (Fig. S1).

Review of Model Parameter Uncertainty:

As stated in the manuscript, a goal of this paper is to demonstrate how to use the two VDMs (ED2 and LPJ-GUESS) in order to help generate and test future hypotheses about UCEs. Therefore, we used the models and sites as conceptual “experimental” tools to investigate the given hypotheses and provide a road map for utilizing VDMs. Investigating parameter uncertainty and sensitivity was out of scope for this manuscript. These models are well documented and investigated VDMs, with many previous studies that have looked into parameter uncertainty. Below are a handful of select references (and quick summaries) that explore parameter sensitivities and model uncertainty (in addition to the main manuscripts that tested the two VDMs at the Palo Verde and EucFACE sites (Xu et al., 2016; Medlyn et al., 2016; Medvigy et al., 2019).

- LPJ-GUESS: “Projected forest carbon fluxes (for European forests) are most sensitive to photosynthesis-, water-, and mortality-related parameters, while predictive uncertainties are dominantly induced by environmental drivers and parameters related to water and mortality.” (Oberpriller et al., 2022)
- LPJ-GUESS: “The intrinsic quantum efficiency of CO₂ uptake (*alpha_C3*) and the photosynthesis scaling parameter (from leaf to canopy) (*alpha_a*) as the main contributors of sensitivity for net primary production (NPP) (about 50 %–60 % of the overall sensitivity, Zaehle et al., 2005; Pappas et al., 2013).”
- LPJ-GUESS: The foliage projective cover parameter is sensitivity for net primary production (NPP) (Jiang et al., 2012).
- ED2: After evaluating long-term successional dynamics for a North American Upper Midwest forest authors found that “two parameters related to plant–soil water conductance and growth respiration contributed most to uncertainty in predicted NPP, with both being unobservable empirical coefficients”. And “conclude that parameter uncertainty is more important than structural uncertainty, at least for ED-2.2” (Shiklomanov et al., 2020).
- ED2: See Viskari et al., (2019) for a review on the influence of specifically canopy radiation parameter uncertainty in ED2.

Supplement Section S2:

Additional knowledge gaps

With so many compounding interactions contributing to ecosystem resistance, impact, and recovery from droughts, there are still knowledge gaps in compounding processes like response to concurrent or repeated extremes, lag effects, or cascades. However, it is difficult for planned experiments to include multiple stressors and very extreme environmental conditions, thus making it challenging to assess all impacts and whether biological ecosystem components (e.g. plant-soil, plant-atmosphere, C:N, respiration-photosynthesis) will remain coupled under extreme conditions. Unfortunately, there is a lack of data on key characteristics and responses to UCEs, which greatly impacts our understanding and ability to predict ecosystem responses to such events. In addition to the general understanding of ecosystem responses to UCEs, we describe some issues which can lead to compounded and notable responses to UCEs.

Concurrent or repeated extremes: As the frequency of extreme climatic events increases, so does the likelihood of experiencing concurrent/combined or repeated extreme events. Combined drought extremes and heat resulted in amplified impacts in the model applications in this study supported by studies showing stronger impact of combined drought-heat extremes on leaf mortality and plant senescence (Dressen et al., 2014). However, the sensitivity of ecosystems to repeated or combined extremes as well as their ability to acclimate remains generally unclear.

Lag effects: Ecosystems must re-establish resilience following an extreme event, but the time needed for a system to do so is difficult to predict due to unanticipated lag effects of extreme events on ecosystem functioning. Previous drought exposure has been linked to long-term mortality of forest trees in the eastern US (Berdanier and Clark, 2016) and to decreased short-term leaf survival in response to additional extreme events (Dreesen et al., 2014) suggesting a time period following disturbance where forests are particularly susceptible to additional stressors. Also, transgenerational effects of drought on leaf stoichiometry (C:N) with direct consequences for ecosystem-level C storage has been detected in perennial plant seedlings (Walter et al., 2016). However, such lag effects are generally difficult to study and are therefore generally poorly understood.

Cascades: Despite our understanding that feedbacks among ecosystem components are likely to impact environmental functioning along multiple pathways and ultimately the terrestrial carbon cycle (Reichstein et al., 2013), empirical studies of cascades are rare (but see Jentsch et al., 2011 for plant-soil measurements). In particular, our ability to predict response thresholds is poor, and additional uncertainty in predicting ecosystem responses occurs because thresholds can be passed at any organizational level within an organism (e.g. leaf, individual, plant community levels; Frank et al., 2015; Gutschick and BassiriRad, 2003) and among organisms (e.g. different sensitivities of soil fungi vs. bacteria to different disturbances; Muhr et al., 2009).

Secondary disturbance: The combination of extreme events and secondary disturbances may increase the susceptibility of carbon loss from ecosystems (e.g., Hicke et al., 2016). For example, extreme droughts and heatwaves promote forest fires by increasing both fuel flammability and lightning strike frequency (Wendler et al., 2011). Substantial forest damage can also occur through phenological changes of forest vegetation or biotic pests or pathogens. Warm winters can weaken wintertime pest mortality and increase pest growth rates (Bale et al., 2002; Cornelissen, 2011), shifting insect phenologies and triggering outbreaks. Water-stressed trees are susceptible to foliar and woody damage from forest insect and pathogens (Jactel et al., 2012, Flowers and Gonzalez-Meler, 2015; Kolb et al., 2016), and combined drought-stress and insect outbreaks can cause massive forest die-off (Allen et al., 2010; Anderegg et al., 2015b) leading to unprecedented levels of tree mortality such as those recorded in western North America (Breshears et al., 2005; Raffa, 2008). Warm winters may advance the leaf-out of deciduous species (Parmesan and Yohe, 2003), increasing their susceptibility to secondary disturbances, such as frost-damage (Gu et al., 2011; Polgar and Primack, 2011). Studies have directly linked such coupled disturbances to a decrease in seasonal C accumulation and to shifts in the development of reproductive structures (Augspurger, 2009), but the global consequences of such phenological shifts and coupled-disturbances has not been quantified (?).

Thresholds: Large-scale ecosystem studies are costly and so rarely include gradients or multiple treatment levels (but see Kreyling et al., 2014). Therefore, our ability to detect and understand tipping points is still very limited. Models could play a significant role in identifying ‘zones of sensitivity’ that can be targeted in field experiments.

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