Multi-year observations reveal a larger than expected autumn respiration signal across northeast Eurasia

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Abstract. Site-level observations have shown pervasive cold season CO_2 release across Arctic and boreal ecosystems, impacting annual carbon budgets. Still, the seasonality of CO_2 emissions are poorly quantified across much of the high latitudes due to the sparse coverage of site-level observations. Space-based observations provide the opportunity to fill some observational

5 gaps for studying these high latitude ecosystems, particularly across poorly sampled regions of Eurasia. Here, we show that data-driven net ecosystem exchange (NEE) from atmospheric CO_2 observations implies strong summer uptake followed by strong autumn release of CO_2 over the entire cold northeastern region of Eurasia during the 2015–2019 study period. Combining data-driven NEE with satellite-based estimates of gross primary production (GPP), we show that this seasonality implies less summer heterotrophic respiration (R_h) and greater autumn R_h than would be expected given an exponential relationship

10 between respiration and surface temperature. Furthermore, we show that this seasonality of NEE and R_h over northeastern

Eurasia is not captured by the TRENDY v8 ensemble of dynamic global vegetation models (DGVMs), which estimate that only 52% of annual R_h occurs during Aug-Apr, while the data-driven estimate suggests 64–70% of annual R_h occurs over this period. We explain this seasonal shift in R_h by respiration from soils at depth during the zero curtain period, when sub-surface soils remain unfrozen up to several months after the surface has frozen. Additional impacts of physical processes related to freeze-thaw dynamics may contribute to the seasonality of R_h. This study confirms a significant and spatially extensive early cold season CO_2 efflux in the permafrost rich region of northeast Eurasia, and suggests that autumn R_h from subsurface soils in the northern high latitudes is not well captured by current DGVMs.

1 Introduction

Boreal and Arctic ecosystems hold vast quantities of soil carbon and play an important role in the global carbon cycle (Schuur et al., 2015). These ecosystems are also experiencing the most rapid climate change (Overland et al., 2018), driving major changes in the carbon cycle, including: greening trends (Park et al., 2016), permafrost thaw (Schuur et al., 2015; Turetsky et al., 2019, 2020), and increased fire frequency and intensity (Veraverbeke et al., 2017, 2021). Yet, the impact of these changes on the carbon budget of the region remains uncertain (Schuur et al., 2015; McGuire et al., 2018; Miner et al., 2022). In part, this is due to sparse site level observations in boreal and Arctic ecosystems, while the limited available observations of high latitude ecosystems are providing surprises.

A meta-analysis of Arctic and boreal site-level flux measurements from the literature found pervasive CO_2 release during the cold season (Natali et al., 2019), such that the cold season is not a dormant period but strongly impacts annual carbon budgets (Zimov et al., 1993; Björkman et al., 2010; Natali et al., 2019). Particularly strong releases of CO_2 have been observed during the early cold season (Commane et al., 2017; Mastepanov et al., 2013; Jeong et al., 2018). This has been linked to the "zero-curtain effect", wherein the air and surface temperatures drop below 0 °C but deeper soils remain unfrozen for an extended period due to latent heat release (Outcalt et al., 1990; Romanovsky and Osterkamp, 2000; Hinkel et al., 2001; Zona et al., 2016). The result is an "active layer" of unfrozen soil that can persist for months, resulting in greater respiration than would be expected based on air temperature. Both aircraft (Commane et al., 2017) and site-level (Mastepanov et al., 2013; Jeong et al., 2018) measurements have found substantial CO_2 release during the zero-curtain period over Alaska (Sep–Dec) that is not well captured by our current generation of Earth System Models (Commane et al., 2017). Similarly, CO_2 mole fractions enhancements within soils have been observed during the zero-curtain period (Wilkman et al., 2021; Raz-Yaseef et al., 2017). Mechanistically, both biological and physical processes likely contribute to the enhanced early cold season CO_2 release. Physically, freezing forces dissolved CO_2 out of solution (Bing et al., 2015), which may then be released through mechanical channels and fissures in the soil that form during freezing (Mastepanov et al., 2013; Pirk et al., 2015; Wilkman et al., 2021). Enhanced CO_2 effluxes (release to the atmosphere) have also been observed during the spring thaw (Raz-Yaseef et al., 2017; Arndt et al., 2020). This spring signal has been linked to a delayed release of CO_2 production from the previous early cold season (Raz-Yaseef et al., 2017), while a rapid warming and introduction of oxygen during snow melt has also been proposed as a contributor to this signal (Arndt et al., 2020). Finally, observed CO_2 effluxes during the middle of the cold season

(Natali et al., 2019) have been mechanistically linked to microbial respiration that persists at subzero bulk soil temperatures

45 (Rivkina et al., 2000; Panikov et al., 2006; McMahon et al., 2009; Drotz et al., 2010), with a possible additional contribution from the diffusion of stored CO_2 that is produced during the non-frozen season (Natali et al., 2019).

Still, the full spatial extent and magnitude of cold season CO_2 release is not well characterized due to sparsity of site-level observations, particularly over much of north Eurasia. Here, we employ a "top-down" approach to estimate the seasonal cycle of data-driven carbon fluxes using space-based observations during the period 2015–2019. This approach complements

50 previous site-level analyses by providing CO_2 flux constraints on large continental-scale regions. We utilize these data to investigate carbon cycle dynamics over three large regions within Eurasia (Fig. 1), which are defined based on the east-west temperature gradient (see Sec. 2.1), with the coldest region in the east and warmest region in the west. We further compare the observationally-constrained seasonality of CO_2 fluxes to a suite of dynamic global vegetation models (DGVMs) from the TRENDY ensemble (Sitch et al., 2015) version 8 as used in the Global Carbon Budget 2019 (Friedlingstein et al., 2019)

55 (Sec. 3.1). Our study addresses two main questions: (1) Do large-scale observational constraints support enhanced CO_2 effluxes during the shoulder seasons at high-latitudes? And if so, (2) what are the underlying mechanisms driving this behaviour?

We first examine the seasonality of net ecosystem exchange (NEE) constrained by atmospheric inversions of retrieved column-averaged dry-air mole fractions of CO_2 (X_{CO_2}) from the Orbiting Carbon Observatory 2 (OCO-2) (Crisp et al., 2017; Eldering et al., 2017) and by flask and in situ CO_2 measurements (Sec. 2.2). Monthly NEE is obtained from version 9 of the

60 OCO-2 Model Inter-comparison Project (OCO-2 MIPv9) (Peiro et al., 2021). In addition, we perform a set of three higher temporal resolution inversions using the CAMS, TM5-4DVar and CMS-Flux inversion systems to examine sub-monthly variability in CO_2 fluxes.

We then look to decompose NEE into component fluxes to better understand the processes driving the seasonality of NEE. In particular, we decompose the data-driven NEE fluxes into net primary production (NPP) and heterotrophic respiration (R_h):

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$$NEE = R_h - NPP. \qquad (1)$$

To do this, we utilize four data-driven gross primary production (GPP) products: FLUXCOM (Jung et al., 2020), FluxSat (Joiner and Yoshida, 2020), the Vegetation Photosynthesis Model (VPM) (Zhang et al., 2017), and the Global OCO-2-based SIF product (GOSIF) (Li and Xiao, 2019). These datasets utilize MODIS reflectances, OCO-2 solar induced fluorescence

70 and reanalysis data to infer GPP, and thus provide an ensemble of global estimates of GPP to inform its uncertainty. NPP is estimated from GPP using the carbon use efficiency (CUE) from the TRENDY models (Sec. 2.4) using the relationship:

$$NPP = CUE \times GPP. \qquad (2)$$

We then combine the data-driven estimates of NEE and NPP to recover a data-driven seasonal cycle of R_h (Sec. 2.5).

We perform this analysis at two temporal resolutions. First, we leverage the large ensembles from TRENDY and the OCO-2

75 MIPv9 that provide fluxes at monthly temporal resolution (Sec. 3.1). However, because phenological changes can be significant on shorter timescales (e.g., weekly, Parazoo et al. (2018a)), we perform a second analysis at 14 day resolution using
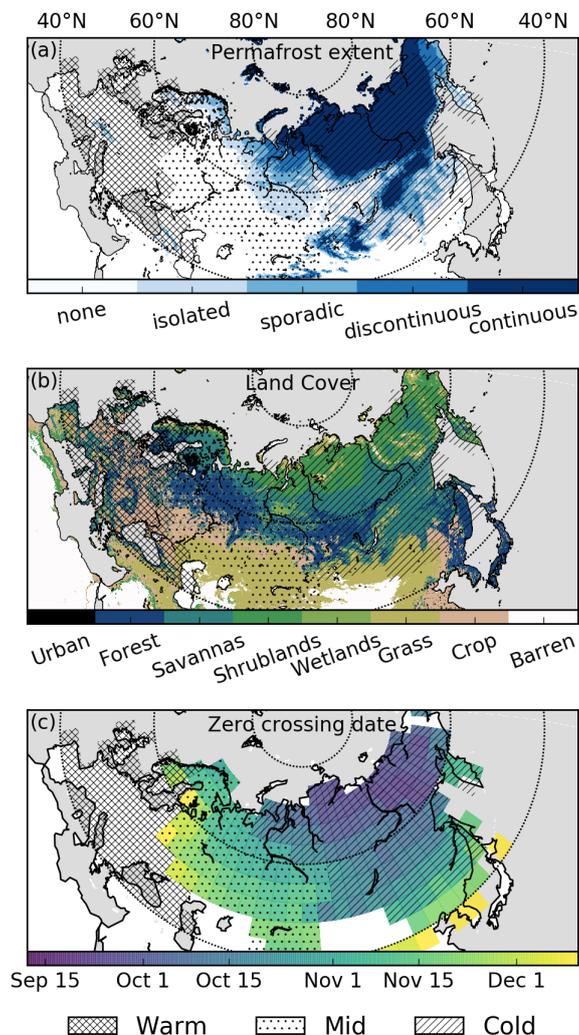
Figure 1. (a) Permafrost extent over 2000-2016 (Obu et al., 2019; Obu et al., 2018) (b) MODIS IGBP (MOD12C1 v6) land cover for urban areas, forest (tree cover >60% and height>2 m), savanna (tree cover 10–60% and height>2 m), shrublands (woody perennials cover >10% and height<2m), grasslands, croplands, and barren land. (c) zero-crossing date (date when the mean soil temperature drops below 0 °C) for the top 0.5 m of soil from the MERRA-2 Land dataset at $4° \times 5°$ spatial resolution. Gridcells with no shading do not have a zero-crossing date. Three regions are shown by different hatching patterns. The "Warm" (cross hatching) region does not have a zero-crossing date, the "Mid" (dots) region has a zero-crossing date after Oct 27, and the "Cold" (diagonal hatching) region has a zero-crossing date before Oct 27. Note that some adjustments from these definition are made so that the regions are contiguous. The Warm, Mid, and Cold regions have land areas of 5.66×10^6 km, 8.66×10^6 km, and 12.65×10^6 km, respectively.

three inversion analyses that optimize weekly or 14 day NEE fluxes (Sec. 3.2). For these 14 day fluxes, we further examine

mechanistic explanations for data-model differences in R_h using a range of models (Sec. 3.3). Finally, Sec. 4 provides a discussion of the results and Sec. 5 summarizes the conclusions.

80 2 Data and methods

2.1 Environmental data and region definitions

We utilize MERRA-2 Land soil temperature data (Reichle et al., 2011, 2017; Gelaro et al., 2017) to define three large regions within Eurasia (Fig. 1). These data were downloaded from the Goddard Earth Sciences Data and Information Services Center at monthly temporal resolution and $4° \times 5°$ spatial resolution (regridded from model horizontal resolution of $\sim$50 km). Three

85 regions are defined based on the date at which the top 0.5 m of MERRA-2 Land soil temperature falls below $0°C$, referred to as the "zero-crossing date", for a mean seasonal cycle averaged over four years (2015, 2016, 2018 and 2019). The "Cold" region has a zero-crossing date before Oct 27, the "Mid" region has a zero-crossing date after Oct 27, and the "Warm" region does not have a zero-crossing date. This date was chosen as a cutoff to create two similarly sized Mid and Cold regions. Some adjustments from these definitions are made so that the regions are contiguous. We aggregate the CO_2 fluxes described below

90 to these regions by (1) interpolating the Warm, Mid and Cold regions from $4° \times 5°$ spatial resolution to the grid of the CO_2 flux datasets (both GPP and NEE), and (2) calculate the area weighted net fluxes over the regions. We also obtain the downward shortwave flux from the MERRA-2 Land dataset.

Several datasets are also used for supplementary evaluation of the MERRA-2 Land soil temperature seasonality (Text S2). For that analysis, we use ERA5-Land reanalysis soil temperature data (Munoz Sabater, 2019), generated using Copernicus

95 Climate Change Service Information 2020. We also examined monthly soil temperature from seven models from the Coupled Model Intercomparison Project Phase 6 (CMIP6) (Eyring et al., 2016) for the historical and Shared Socioeconomic Pathway 585 (ssp585) simulations, which is the highest emission scenario. The CMIP6 simulations were included to compare with MERRA-2 simulated soil temperature over 2010–2019, and to examine possible trends in soil temperature under a high emission scenario. The model runs are: CanESM5 (r1i1p2f1), MIROC ES2L (r1i1p1f2), ACCESS EMS1 (r1i1p1f1), MRI ESM2 0

100 (historical r1i1p1f1, ssp585 r1i2p1f1), CNRM ESM2 1 (r1i1p1f2), E3SM 1 1 (r1i1p1f1), and UKESM1 0 LL (r4i1p1f2). These models were chosen because they participated in the Coupled Climate–Carbon Cycle Model Intercomparison (C_4MIP) (Jones et al., 2016). Finally, we compare the MERRA-2 Land soil temperature to borehole soil temperature measurements over the period 1998–2020, which were downloaded from the Global Terrestrial Network for Permafrost (GTN-P) borehole database (http://gtnpdatabase.org/boreholes).

105 2.2 Atmospheric flux inversions

The OCO-2 Model Inter-comparison Project (OCO-2 MIP) provides standardized experimental set-ups for assimilating atmospheric CO_2 to estimate net biosphere exchange (NBE), defined as

$$NBE = NEE + BB, \tag{3}$$

where BB is biomass burning, across a range of inversion systems. Version 9 of the OCO-2 MIP (MIPv9, (Peiro et al., 2021)),
110   provides ensembles of nine inversion systems that assimilated a standardized set of in situ and flask CO_2 measurements for one
experiment (referred to as "IS") and OCO-2 ACOS b9 land nadir and land glint retrievals for a second experiment (referred to
as "LNLG"). We estimate NEE fluxes from MIPv9 NBE fluxes by removing biomass burning emissions from the Global Fire
Emissions Database version 4 (GFED4.1s) (van der Werf et al., 2017). GFED4.1s provides estimates of biomass burning using
MODIS burned area (Giglio et al., 2013), thermal anomalies, and surface reflectance observations (Randerson et al., 2012).
115   Note that biomass burning is a relatively small contribution to NBE over the regions examined here during the study period
(2015–2019) (Fig. S1). The NEE fluxes produced by each ensemble member over northern Eurasia are shown in Fig. S2.

To examine variability in fluxes at the sub-monthly time step, we examine three other inversion NEE estimates that optimize
sub-monthly NEE fluxes: TM5-4DVAR$_{14day}$ LNLGIS, CAMS$_{14day}$ LNLGIS, and CMS-Flux$_{14day}$ LNLGIS. These inversions
assimilated both in situ and flask CO_2 in addition to OCO-2 ACOS b10 land nadir and land glint retrievals (we refer to this
120   experiment as LNLGIS). Note that the ACOS b10 retrievals are updated from the b9 retrievals employed in MIPv9. The prior
and posterior NEE fluxes produced by each ensemble member are shown in Fig. S3, and the inversion set-ups are described
below.

TM5-4DVAR is a variational inversion framework based on the TM5 atmospheric tracer transport model (Meirink et al.,
2008; Basu et al., 2013). The TM5-4DVAR$_{14day}$ LNLGIS inversion assimilated 10 s averages of OCO-2 ACOS b10 land nadir
125   and land glint measurements concurrently with in situ measurements to optimize weekly NEE and ocean fluxes. The OCO-2
10 s averages were constructed analogous to the b9 10 s averages assimilated by models in MIPv9 (Peiro et al., 2021). The
in situ measurements assimilated were updated from Peiro et al. (2021), specifically ObsPack NRT 5.0 was replaced by NRT
5.2. The flux inversion set-up was identical to the set-up of "TM5-4DVAR" in Peiro et al. (2021), except (i) the inversion
was run from 2014-06-01 to 2021-02-01 (instead of 2014-09-01 to 2019-06-01 in Peiro et al. (2021)), (ii) ECMWF ERA5
130   meteorology was used to drive the model instead of ERA Interim, (iii) a $1° \times 1°$ transport grid over North America was nested
inside the global $3° \times 2°$ grid to take advantage of the higher in situ data density, and (iv) prior CO_2 fluxes were constructed
following Weir et al. (2021).

The CAMS$_{14day}$ LNLGIS inversion utilizes the CAMS greenhouse gases inversion system (Chevallier et al., 2005, 2010;
Chevallier, 2013), and assimilates OCO-2 land nadir and land glint X_{CO_2} 10 s averages and in situ CO_2 measurements concur-
135   rently. A variational system is employed to optimize day-time and night-time NEE at 8-day temporal resolution of $1.875° \times$
$3.75°$ model grid. Tracer transport is performed using the Laboratoirede Météorologie Dynamique (LMDz) general circulation
model version LMDz6A (Remaud et al., 2018). These data were downloaded from https://atmosphere.copernicus.eu/. Note
that CAMS reports NBE - as explained earlier, we estimate NEE using GFED4.1s biomass burning emissions, as was done for
the MIPv9.

140   The CMS-Flux$_{14day}$ LNLGIS flux inversions are performed using the set-up of Byrne et al. (2020b), which uses the Carbon
Monitoring System-Flux (CMS-Flux) inversion system that has been developed under the NASA Carbon Monitoring System
Flux project (https://cmsflux.jpl.nasa.gov) (Henze et al., 2007; Liu et al., 2014). These flux inversions optimize 14-day NEE
and ocean fluxes by assimilating OCO-2 ACOS b10 land nadir and land glint "buddy" super-obs concurrently with in situ and

flask measurements from version 6.0 of the GLOBALVIEW plus package (Masarie et al., 2014; Schuldt et al., 2020). OCO-2
145 "buddy" super-obs are obtained by averaging individual soundings into super-obs at $0.5° \times 0.5°$ spatial resolution (within the
same orbit) following Liu et al. (2017). We assimilate surface-based in situ and flask measurements between 11 AM and 4 PM
local time. These data were also pre-filtered to remove observations that were not well simulated by the model (based on a
posterior data-model χ^2 mismatches greater than three for a preliminary flux inversion). For these inversions, ODIAC fossil
fuel emissions (Oda and Maksyutov, 2011; Oda et al., 2018) and GFED 4.1s biomass burning emissions (van der Werf et al.,
150 2017), including small fires (Randerson et al., 2012), are prescribed but not optimized.

2.3 Dynamic global vegetation models (DGVMs)

We use CO_2 flux estimates from an ensemble of 15 dynamic global vegetation models (DGVMs) from TRENDY v8 (Sitch
et al., 2015). We utilize fluxes simulated by the CABLE-POP, CLASS-CTEM, CLM5.0, DLEM, ISAM, ISBA-CTRIP, JS-
BACH, JULES, LPJ, LPX-Bern, OCN, ORCHIDEE, ORCHIDEE-CNP, SDGVM and VISIT DGVMs. We exclude LPJ-
155 GUESS because monthly output on R_h was not available. We utilize monthly GPP, autotrophic respiration (R_a) and R_h fluxes
from the "S3" experiment that employs time-varying CO_2, climate and land use forcing data. We further calculate NPP from
the simulated GPP and R_a data ($NPP = GPP - R_a$) at the models native resolution. The NEE, NPP, and R_h fluxes produced
by each ensemble member are shown in Fig. S4 for the same three year period as the data-driven estimates (2015, 2016, and
2018).

160   We also utilize TRENDY v8 model output to estimate an ensemble of Carbon Use Efficiency ($CUE = NPP/GPP$) from
each DGVM. CUE can become negative during the winter and spring, when GPP is approximately zero but R_a is non-zero.
However, we limit CUE values to a range between zero and one. These CUE estimates are then employed to estimate data-
driven NPP estimates from the data-driven GPP data (see Sec. 2.4). Figure S5 shows the CUE estimates derived from the
TRENDY v8 models.

165 ## 2.4 GPP datasets and NPP estimates

We utilize four data-driven GPP estimates in this analysis: FluxSat, FLUXCOM, VPM, and GOSIF. These datasets differ in
inputs and approach.

FluxSat Version 2 (Joiner and Yoshida, 2020) estimates GPP based on Nadir BRDF-Adjusted Reflectances (NBAR) from
the MODerate-resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer (MODIS) MYD43D product (Schaaf et al., 2002). The GPP estimates
170 are calibrated with the FLUXNET2015 GPP derived from eddy covariance flux measurements at Tier 1 sites (Pastorello et al.,
2020).

FLUXCOM upscales CO_2 fluxes from flux tower observations using a variety of machine learning methods and forcing
datasets (Jung et al., 2020). We examine the ensemble mean of the nine remote sensing (RS) learning algorithms.

VPM is a light use efficiency model that estimates GPP globally using MODIS surface reflectances and NCEP Reanalysis-2
175 PAR and temperature data (Xiao et al., 2004; Zhang et al., 2017). The native spatiotemporal resolution of the dataset is 500-m

and 8-days. VPM has been shown to agree well with FLUXNET eddy covariance site-level data (Zhang et al., 2017) and with TROPOMI SIF at the global scale (Doughty et al., 2021).

The GOSIF GPP product estimates GPP based on OCO-2 SIF, MODIS EVI, and reanalysis data from MERRA-2 (Li and Xiao, 2019). To generate GPP estimates, first, 8 day globally gridded $0.05° \times 0.05°$ SIF is estimated from the input data using machine-learning algorithms. GOSIF GPP is then estimated from the GOSIF SIF estimates using eight SIF-GPP relationships with different forms (universal and biome-specific, with and without intercept). In this analysis we utilize the mean GPP estimate across the eight SIF-GPP estimates.

These four data-driven GPP estimates are shown in Fig. S6. For this analysis, we estimate NPP from these data using the CUE from the TRENDY models. We perform this calculation differently for the monthly analysis and biweekly analysis. For the monthly analysis, we calculate 60 NPP seasonal cycles for each possible combination of the four GPP and 15 CUE seasonal cycles. We then calculate the median as our best estimate and interquartile range as a metric of uncertainty. For the biweekly analysis, we calculate the best estimate using the median GPP and CUE seasonal cycles, and calculate the uncertainty using the full range of GPP estimates and interquartile range of CUE estimates. This is done differently to match the NEE analysis, which leverages the larger ensemble from the MIPv9 to examine the median and interquartile spread for the monthly analysis, but employs the full range for the smaller biweekly ensemble of three models.

2.5 Data-driven R_h estimates

We calculate the seasonal cycle of R_h by combining the data-driven estimates of NPP and NEE,

$$R_h = NEE + NPP. \tag{4}$$

We perform this calculation differently for the monthly analysis and biweekly analysis. For the monthly OCO-2 MIPv9 IS- and LNLG-based estimates, we calculate 540 R_h seasonal cycles by combining the nine data-driven IS or LNLG NEE estimates with the 60 NPP estimates. We then take the median and interquartile spread as the best estimate and uncertainty. For the biweekly analysis, we calculate the best estimate of R_h from the best (median) estimates of NPP and NEE. We then take the uncertainty to be the full range of R_h estimates calculated from the three biweekly NEE estimates and the NPP range.

2.6 Soil carbon decomposition model

We use the soil carbon decomposition model developed in Yi et al. (2015, 2020) to simulate the contribution of soil at different depths to total R_h and NEE fluxes. The soil decomposition model uses multiple litter and SOC pools to characterize the progressive decomposition of fresh litter to more recalcitrant materials, which include three litterfall pools, three SOC pools with relatively fast turnover rates, and a deep SOC pool with slow turnover rates. The litterfall carbon inputs were first allocated to the three litterfall pools depending on the substrate quality of litterfall component and then transferred to the SOC pools through progressive decomposition. We then model the profile of the carbon pools through accounting for the vertical carbon transport (Yi et al., 2020). A constant diffusivity rate was assigned to permafrost ($5.0 \; cm^2 \, yr^{-1}$) and non-permafrost ($2.0 \; cm^2 \, yr^{-1}$) regions within the top 1 m soil, and then linearly decreased to 0 at the 3 m below surface (Koven et al., 2013). The boundary

conditions at the soil surface were set as the carbon input rate to the three surface litterfall pools. A zero-flux was assigned at the bottom of the soil carbon pool, which was set as 3 m. This accounts for the upper permafrost layer, while carbon in deeper

210 layers (e.g., 3-10 m) is largely insulated from climate variability and ignored in this study. The decomposition rate (day^{-1}) for each carbon pool was derived as the product of a theoretical maximum rate constant and dimensionless multipliers for soil temperature and liquid water content constraints (Yi et al., 2015) to decomposition indicated by the MERRA2 soil temperature data. For simplicity, the soil saturation was assumed as 1.0 when soil temperature is above 0 °C, while the maximum liquid soil water fraction was used for below freezing (Schaefer and Jafarov, 2016).

215   2.7   FLUXNET data and processing

We examine 15 high latitude FLUXNET2015 sites to confirm the seasonality of carbon fluxes inferred from the atmospheric CO_2 and remote sensing datasets. These sites are listed in table S1. For this, we utilize monthly data with the quality flag greater than 0.75. We calculate NPP and R_h for each site from the NEE and GPP datasets by applying the CUE from the TRENDY DGVMs at the gridcell containing the FLUXNET site.

220   3   Results

3.1   Differences between data-driven and DGVM carbon fluxes

We first examine the mean seasonal cycle of monthly NEE from the MIPv9 inversions and TRENDY v8 DGVMs over the three north Eurasian regions (mean over 2015, 2016, and 2018; 2017 is excluded due to an OCO-2 data gap). The objective of this initial analysis is to identify the seasonal features of NEE over northern Eurasia, and identify how the data-driven and

225 simulated estimates differ. The spread among the TRENDY v8 models is large and encompasses the data-driven estimates (Fig. S4). Thus, to identify data-model differences, we focus on differences in the ensemble median estimates and adopt the interquartile spread across MIPv9 and TRENDY to quantify uncertainty in this estimate.

   Figure 2(a-c) shows the NEE fluxes for the MIPv9 and TRENDY DGVMs for three regions over Eurasia. The two OCO-2 MIPv9 ensembles (IS and LNLG) generally show close agreement and coherent differences from the TRENDY models (and

230 prior NEE estimates, Fig. S2). The largest differences between the IS and LNLG ensembles occur over the Cold region, where the IS ensemble suggests increased uptake during July and somewhat increased release during October. Still, the coherent differences between the data-driven fluxes (both IS and LNLG) relative to the TRENDY ensemble gives us increased confidence that these inversions are precisely capturing the seasonality of NEE. The comparatively good agreement between the IS and LNLG inversions (relative to TRENDY) also suggests that artifacts related to observational coverage (Byrne et al., 2017; Basu

235 et al., 2018) and data/model biases (Schuh et al., 2019) do not strongly impact the results. Although, we note that both datasets have spatial and seasonal gaps over northern Eurasia (e.g., Fig. S8–S9) as discussed in Sec. 4.2. The accuracy of the MIPv9 fluxes is supported through an evaluation of the posterior CO_2 fields against independent atmospheric CO_2 measurements by
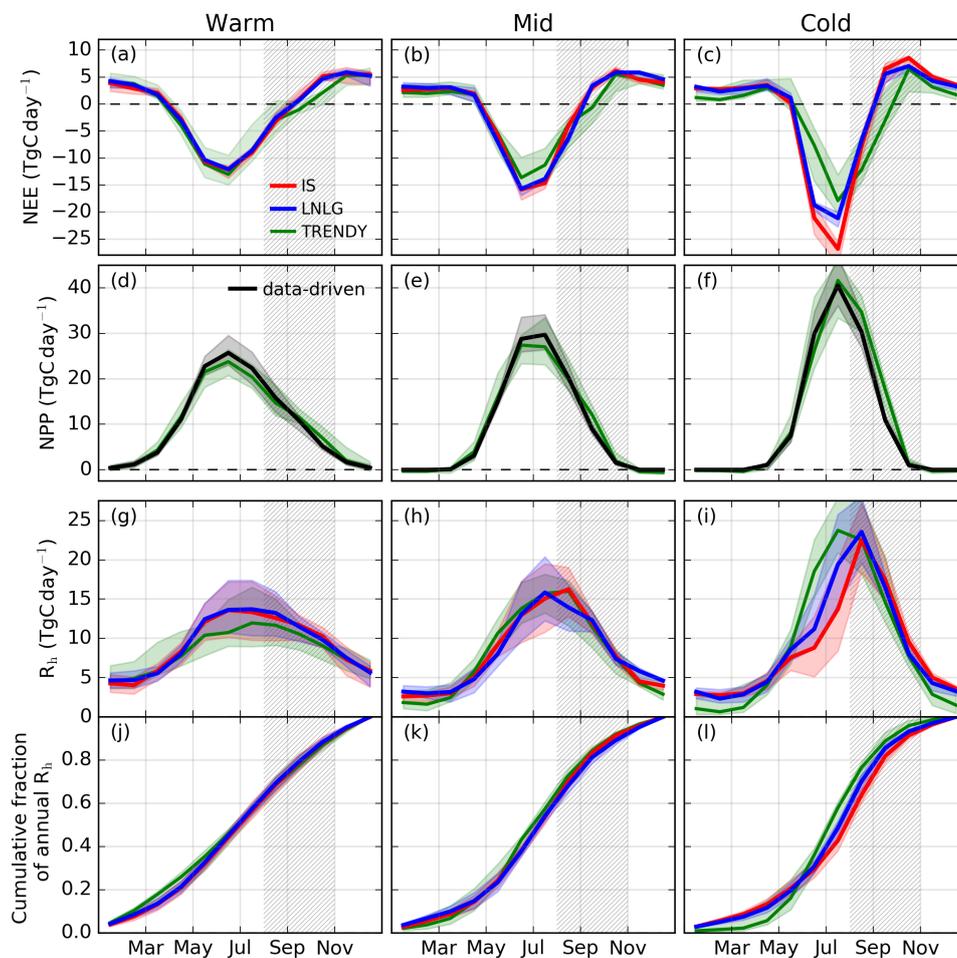
Figure 2. Monthly carbon cycle fluxes (average of 2015, 2016 and 2018; 2017 is excluded due to an OCO-2 data gap). (a-c) Median (solid line) and interquartile range (shaded area) of NEE for the ensemble of IS (red) and LNLG (blue) OCO-2 MIPv9 and for the TRENDY ensemble (green). (d-f) NPP for the TRENDY ensemble (green) and estimated from data-driven GPP (black). (g-i) R_h simulated by the TRENDY ensemble (green) and calculated from combining the data-driven GPP with the IS (red) and LNLG (blue) OCO-2 MIPv9 NEE constraints. (j-l) Cumulative fraction of R_h over the growing season. Figure S7 shows these fluxes per unit area.

Peiro et al. (2021), and a supplementary comparisons of the CMS-Flux$_{14day}$ inversions with aircraft data over Alaska (Text. S1, Fig. S10–S11).

240   Comparing the MIPv9 and TRENDY NEE estimates, good agreement is found for the Warm and Mid regions, while larger differences are found for the Cold region. In the Warm and Mid regions, systematic differences exceed the interquartile range during Sep–Oct, when the TRENDY models suggest a weaker efflux of CO_2 to the atmosphere (2.19–2.47 $TgC\,day^{-1}$). The TRENDY models also tend to show weaker uptake by land during June–July in the Mid region (2.32–2.77 $TgC\,day^{-1}$). For

the Cold region, the TRENDY models produce weaker carbon uptake during June–July (7.17–11.21 $\mathrm{TgC\,day^{-1}}$) but stronger
245 uptake (or reduced efflux) during Aug–Oct (4.86–5.33 $\mathrm{TgC\,day^{-1}}$). This large amplitude of the NEE seasonal cycle contributes
to the large seasonality in $\mathrm{X_{CO_2}}$ observed over eastern Eurasia (Jacobs et al., 2021).

To further investigate the causes of differences in NEE between the TRENDY and MIPv9 ensembles, we separately examine
NPP and $\mathrm{R_h}$. The data-driven NPP and TRENDY NPP are shown in Fig. 2(d-f). The seasonality in NPP between the data-driven
and TRENDY estimates show good agreement for all regions. In the Mid and Warm regions, the TRENDY model median tends
250 to be lower than the data-driven estimates during Jun-Jul (1.94–2.01 $\mathrm{TgC\,day^{-1}}$). However, the largest differences are for the
Cold region, where the TRENDY ensemble median shows increased NPP during Aug–Sep (5.64 $\mathrm{TgC\,day^{-1}}$). This largely
accounts for the lower NEE during Aug-Sep (86-95%). Thus, despite previously reported deficiencies in model representation
of photosynthesis over high latitudes (Rogers et al., 2017, 2019), we find that TRENDY NPP largely capture the data-driven
seasonality and do not drive NEE differences against the data-driven seasonal cycle.

255 Finally, we compare TRENDY $\mathrm{R_h}$ to data-driven $\mathrm{R_h}$ (Fig. 2(g-i)). In the Warm region, the TRENDY model median $\mathrm{R_h}$ is
lower than the data-driven estimates during May–Sep (2.28–2.47 $\mathrm{TgC\,day^{-1}}$), but the seasonality is similar. In the Mid region,
the data-driven and TRENDY $\mathrm{R_h}$ seasonal cycles show good agreement throughout the growing season. The largest differences
between data-driven and TRENDY $\mathrm{R_h}$ seasonal cycles are found for the Cold region. The TRENDY model median shows
increased $\mathrm{R_h}$ during May–Jul (4.05–7.07 $\mathrm{TgC\,day^{-1}}$) but show reduced $\mathrm{R_h}$ during the rest of the year (1.37–1.69 $\mathrm{TgC\,day^{-1}}$).
260 As a result, the seasonality of data-driven $\mathrm{R_h}$ is shifted later in the year relative to TRENDY ensemble. This can be seen in
the cumulative fraction of annual $\mathrm{R_h}$, which quantifies the fraction of total $\mathrm{R_h}$ released as the season progresses (Fig. 2(j-l)).
The percentage of total annual Rh released during May-Jul is 48% for the TRENDY ensemble median but 36% (30%) for the
LNLG (IS) data-driven $\mathrm{R_h}$ ensemble median.

We independently confirm a shift in the seasonality of data-driven $\mathrm{R_h}$ relative to TRENDY for 15 high latitude FLUXNET
265 sites (Fig. S12). Due to the sparsity of FLUXNET sites over northeastern Eurasia, we include sites outside of the "Cold" domain
but that have early zero-crossing dates (estimated by a mean October air temperature less than 2 °C). The observed median $\mathrm{R_h}$
peaks across these sites during September, in agreement with the data-driven $\mathrm{R_h}$ seasonality. In contrast, the TRENDY median
$\mathrm{R_h}$ peak occurs during July (consistent with the regional scale analysis). This phase shift is also evident in the cumulative
fraction of annual $\mathrm{R_h}$, which shows that the percentage of total annual Rh released during May-Jul is 46% for the TRENDY
270 ensemble median but 35% for the FLUXNET-based ensemble median.

Overall, these results indicate good agreement between the TRENDY ensemble and data-driven estimates for the Warm and
Mid regions, but show marked differences over the Cold region. In particular, we find that the data-driven estimates suggest
a seasonal redistribution of $\mathrm{R_h}$ with a reduction during May-Jul but an increase for the remainder of the year. Further, these
results show that differences in $\mathrm{R_h}$ largely account for the differences between the data-driven and TRENDY NEE fluxes over
275 the Cold region, except in Aug-Sep when NPP differences are large. In the remaining sections, we will characterize the data-
driven seasonal cycle of NEE, NPP, and $\mathrm{R_h}$ at a higher (biweekly) temporal resolution and investigate mechanistic explanations
for the data-model differences found over the Cold region.

3.2 Data-driven biweekly CO$_2$ fluxes

We now investigate the data-driven seasonal cycle of NEE, NPP, and R$_h$ with biweekly (14 day) temporal resolution. This
280 higher resolution better resolves temporal changes in CO$_2$ fluxes throughout the growing season, particularly during the shoul-
der seasons, when week-to-week changes in CO$_2$ fluxes are large (Parazoo et al., 2018a). For this analysis, we utilize a set of
three flux inversions that assimilate both in situ and OCO-2 land nadir and glint data (ACOS v10) to estimate sub-monthly CO$_2$
fluxes (TM5-4DVAR$_{14day}$, CAMS$_{14day}$, and CMS-Flux$_{14day}$; individual model fluxes shown in Fig. S3). These inversions give
similar NEE seasonality to the MIPv9 monthly fluxes (e.g., Fig S10) and have seasonality similar to the OCO-2 MIPv9 LNLG
285 inversions for the Cold region. For NPP, we utilize the same datasets as Sec. 3.1 but at 14-day temporal resolution. We examine
the ensemble medians for a best estimate and take the full range of model estimates as an illustration of the uncertainty.

Figure 3 shows the four-year-mean (2015, 2016, 2018, and 2019; 2017 is excluded due to an OCO-2 data gap in summer)
seasonal cycle of NEE, NPP, and R$_h$ for the three regions of Eurasia. NEE largely tracks the inverted seasonality of NPP,
although peak NPP is slightly delayed relative to peak drawdown in NEE (by 0–2 weeks). Both NEE and NPP generally follow
290 the seasonal cycle of insolation, but are somewhat delayed in the Mid and Cold regions, likely due to temperature limitation
(Liu et al., 2020). Peak R$_h$ is found to be delayed relative to peak NPP by 0–8 weeks. For the Warm and Mid regions, R$_h$
follows the seasonal cycle of surface temperature, with 48% and 51% of the annual total R$_h$ occurring after the peak in surface
temperature, respectively. In contrast, the Cold region shows a substantial delay relative to surface temperature, with 63% of
the total R$_h$ occurring after the peak in surface temperature. The median R$_h$ seasonal cycle is also found to have a double peak
295 in this Cold region: a smaller peak of 9.8 $\mathrm{TgC\,day^{-1}}$ occurs during late May followed by a larger peak of 21.5 $\mathrm{TgC\,day^{-1}}$ at
the beginning of September. This May peak roughly aligns with the spring thaw and positive zero-crossing at the beginning of
May. A potential mechanistic explanation for a spring pulse of R$_h$ could be due to thawing soils that release CO$_2$ that has been
trapped within subsurface soil layers over the winter (see Sec. 4). However, the signal from this first peak is small relative to
the uncertainties.

3.3 Mechanistic drivers of late-season R$_h$

Data-driven R$_h$ for the Cold region indicates a delayed peak relative to surface temperature and the TRENDY model median.
Here we examine possible mechanistic explanation for this late season peak in R$_h$ using models. We investigate two factors that
could potentially contribute to the delay in R$_h$: (1) Seasonal variations in the labile carbon pool. Leaf and fine root litter carbon
pools tend to increase over the growing season as carbon is sequestered through photosynthesis (Randerson et al., 1996). Thus,
305 increased substrate availability in the autumn relative to the spring will act to shift the seasonal cycle of R$_h$ later in the year.
(2) R$_h$ from subsurface soil layers that have a delayed seasonal cycle driven by a lag in soil temperature. Heating and cooling
at the surface slowly diffuses through the soil column resulting in a lagged seasonal cycle of temperature with depth (Parazoo
et al., 2018b). Figure 4(a-c) shows the seasonal cycle in soil temperature from the MERRA-2 Land dataset. The phase shift in
soil temperature seasonality with depth can be up to several months, and is largest for the colder regions. Note that we verify
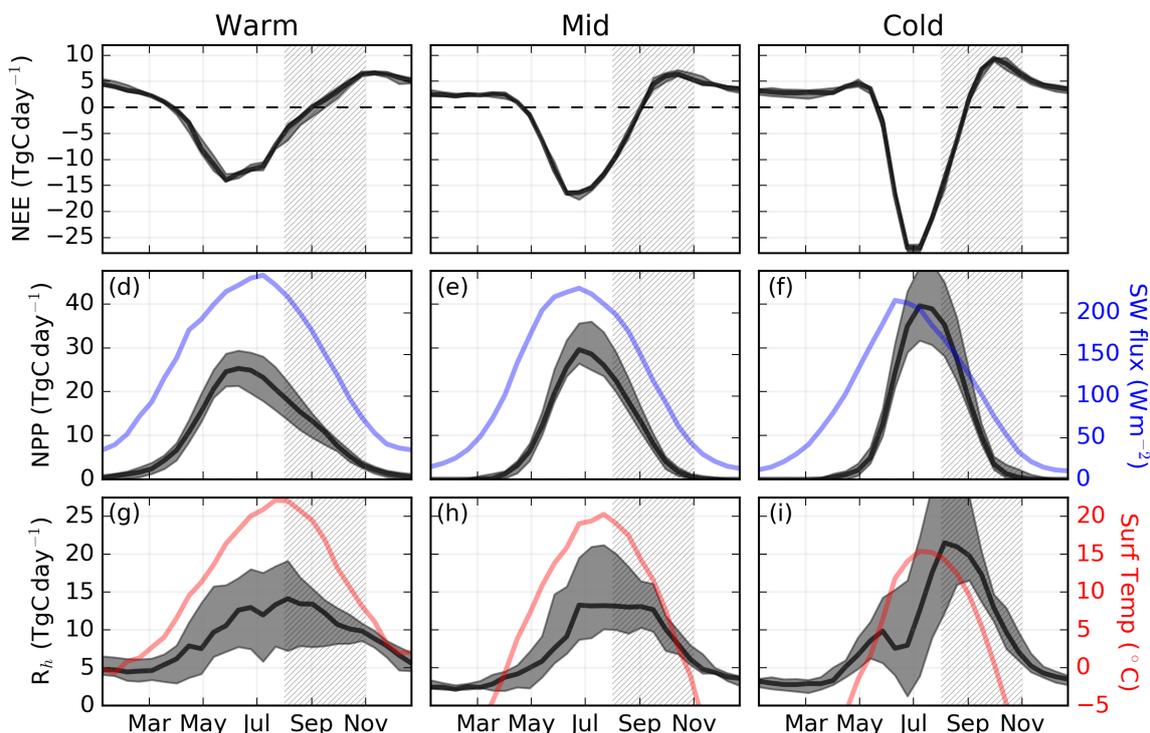
Figure 3. Data-driven four-year-mean (2015, 2016, 2018, and 2019) 14-day NEE, NPP, and Rh. (a-c) Median and ensemble spread of NEE for the CMS-Flux$_{14\text{day}}$, TM4-4DVar$_{14\text{day}}$, and CAMS$_{14\text{day}}$ flux inversions. (d-f) Median and ensemble spread for the data-driven NPP. MERRA-2 Land net downward shortwave flux over land is shown in blue. (g-i) Ensemble estimate of R$_h$ = NEE + NPP estimated from the three NEE and GPP estimates. MERRA-2 Land surface temperature is shown in red.

310   the fidelity of the MERRA-2 Land soil temperature against borehole measurements and against simulated soil temperature from ERA-5 reanalysis and the CMIP6 models (see Text. S2, Fig. S13–S14).

To test the impact of these factors, we consider a single layer model that represents R$_h$ using a exponential relationship with temperature:

$$\mathrm{R_h} = \alpha e^{\beta \mathrm{T}}, \tag{5}$$

315   where α represents the labile carbon pool size, β is a constant, and T is the temperature of the carbon pool. To investigate the impact of seasonal and vertical variations in labile carbon, we consider three cases:

  1. The carbon pool is constant in time and the surface temperature (T$_{\text{surf}}$) drives R$_h$,

  2. The carbon pool is constant in time and the average top meter soil temperature (T$_{1\text{m}}$) drives R$_h$,
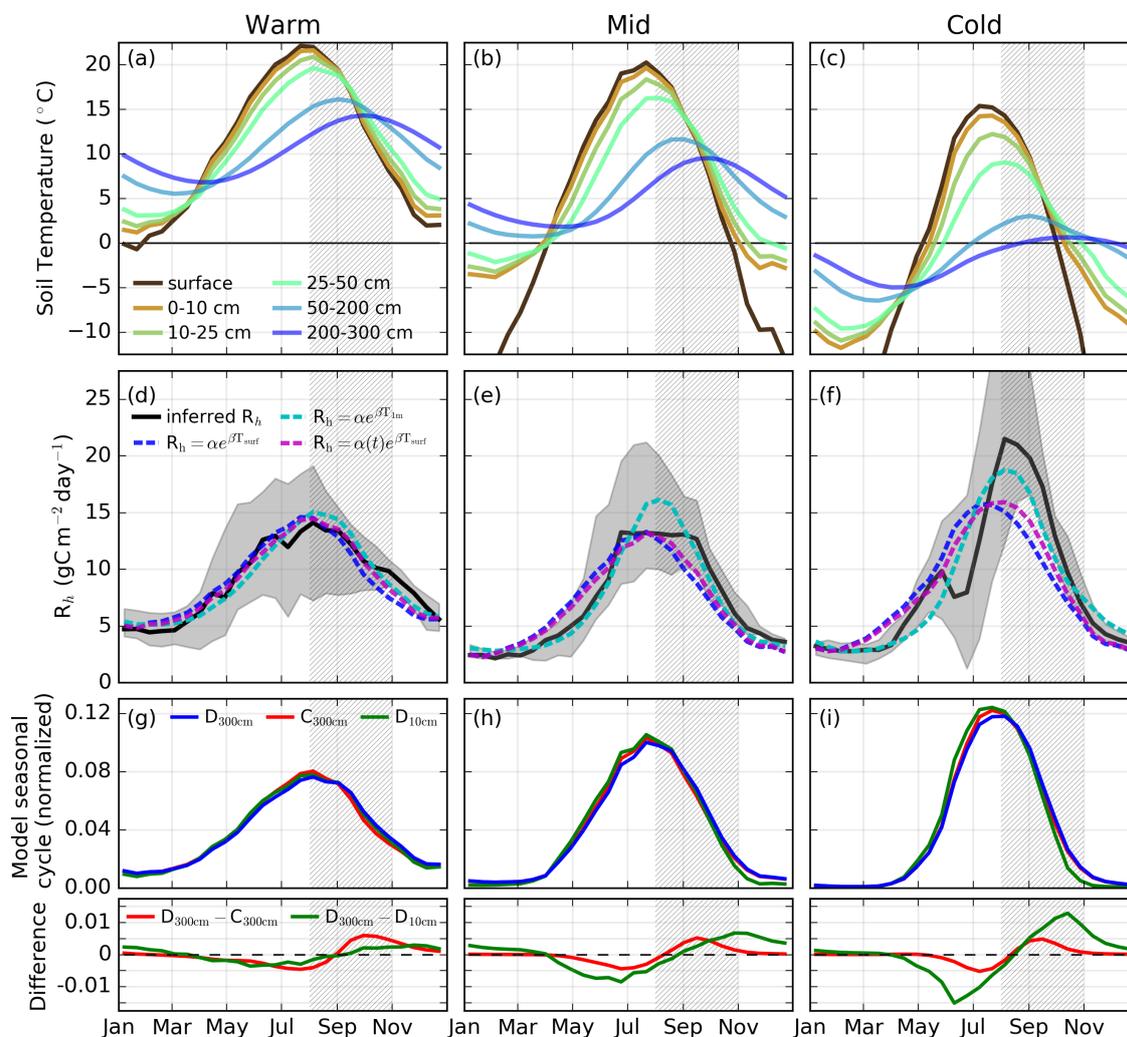
Figure 4. Impact of temporal and vertical variations in carbon pools on R_h. (a-c) MERRA-2 Land soil temperature over five intervals for the (a) Warm, (b) Mid, and (c) Cold regions. (d-e) Median and range in inferred 14-day R_h with fits for single-layer R_h models that employ (navy dash) T_{surf} dependence and no seasonal variations in the carbon pool, (cyan dash) T_{1m} dependence and no seasonal variations in the carbon pool and (magenta dash) T_{surf} dependence and seasonal variations in the carbon pool. (g-i, top) Normalized seasonal cycle of R_h simulated for D_{300cm} (dynamic carbon pool over 0-300 cm depth), C_{300cm} (constant carbon pool over 0-300 cm depth), D_{10cm} (dynamic carbon pool over 0-10 cm depth) and (g-i, bottom) the difference in simulated R_h.

3. The carbon pool is dynamic in time ($\alpha = f(t)$, described in the Appendix) and the T_{surf} drives R_h. We assume seasonal variations in the carbon pool are within $\pm 15\%$ of the mean ($\gamma = 0.15$, Fig. S15 shows the seasonal variation in the labile carbon pool).

Figure 4(d-f) shows linear regressions for each one-layer model against the median biweekly estimate of R_h. In each case, the parameters α and β are optimized (note linear regressions are performed on $\ln(R_h) = \ln(\alpha) + \beta T$). For the Warm region, all models are able to fit the data well (R^2=0.89–0.94). Similarly, all models are able to largely capture the seasonal cycle in

325   the Mid region (R^2=0.84–0.92), although the model driven by T_{1m} appears to better capture the shoulder seasons. The models diverge the most for the Cold region. The model driven by T_{surf} with a constant carbon pool gives the poorest performance ($R^2 = 0.65$), as the driving temperature data peaks too early to capture the seasonality of R_h. The model with a dynamic carbon pool performs somewhat better as the peak in model R_h is delayed relative to surface temperature. Still, the model driven by T_{1m} performs the best ($R^2 = 0.88$), and best captures the delayed R_h seasonality relative to surface temperature. This analysis

330   demonstrates that the seasonality of R_h in the Warm and Mid regions are reasonably explained by seasonal variations in T_{surf}, but that inclusion of seasonal variations in the labile carbon pool and the impact of soil temperature with depth still improve the seasonal fit. However, for the Cold region, the seasonality of R_h is not well captured by T_{surf} and additional factors, particularly the impact soil temperature with depth, are required to explain the delayed seasonality of R_h over the Cold region.

   We further investigate these mechanisms using a soil carbon decomposition model that can resolve seasonal and vertical

335   variations in carbon pools (Sec. 2.6). We examine the seasonality of the R_h simulated down to a depth of 300 cm using a constant carbon pool (C_{300cm}), simulated within the top 10 cm of soil using a dynamic carbon pool (D_{10cm}), and simulated to a depth of 300 cm using a dynamic carbon pool (D_{300cm}). We compare these seasonal cycles after normalizing by the annual total R_h. Figure 4(g-i) shows that incorporating seasonal and vertical variations in the carbon pool results in a phase shift in R_h to later in the year, consistent with the one-layer model results. The simulated impact of these factors is found to be quite

340   small, possibly due to underestimation of the impact of seasonal and vertical variations in the carbon pools on R_h in the model. Still, these model simulations can inform the R_h tendencies of these carbon pool variations. Comparing the regions, the impact of seasonal variations in the labile carbon pool are quite similar, with reduced R_h in the summer and increased R_h during the autumn relative to a constant carbon pool. In contrast, the impact of vertically resolved R_h shows differences between the regions, with a small impact for the Warm region but a comparatively large impact for the Cold region. The larger impact over

345   the Cold region is likely due to larger carbon pools at depth (Fig. S16), with a possible contribution from regional differences in the thermal gradient with depth (Fig. 4). Similarly, we find that the fractional contribution of subsurface soils to total R_h has larger seasonal variation over the Cold region (Fig. S17). Thus, these results support a substantial contribution of subsurface soil R_h, and suggests that an underestimation of this quantity by the DGVMs could explain the data-model differences.

4 Discussion

350   ### 4.1 Implications

Over the cold northeastern region of Eurasia, our data-driven R_h seasonal cycle allocates 64–70% of annual CO_2 emissions to outside of the summer (August - April) compared to only 52% of annual R_h emissions allocated by the TRENDY DVGMs to this period. The reason that the TRENDY models do not capture this seasonality is unclear. A plausible explanation is that the TRENDY models do not capture the contribution of subsurface layers to R_h, especially during the zero curtain period.

355 This is clearly the case for the subset of TRENDY models that drive R_h with air temperature. However, it is unclear if this is an important factor for models with more sophisticated soil modules. Surprisingly, a preliminary analysis did not find a relationship between model complexity and agreement with the data-driven estimate. The drivers of differences from the data-driven estimate may differ between models, and be impacted by the interplay of litterfall phenology, R_h formulation (Peylin et al., 2005), and number of soil layers, among other factors. Some potential areas of focus for improving models may be

360 gleaned from recent studies. Seiler et al. (2021) suggest that the TRENDY models may systematically underestimate soil organic carbon at high latitudes, which could contribute to an underestimate of subsurface R_h across the models. Endsley et al. (2021) found a similarly phased bias in simulated R_h by the Terrestrial Carbon Flux (TCF) model against flux tower R_h to that reported here. They show that this bias could be largely mitigated by adding seasonally varying litterfall phenology, an O_2 diffusion limitation on R_h and a vertically resolved soil decomposition model, suggesting these may be foci for model

365 improvements.

Differences between the data-driven and TRENDY R_h seasonal cycles suggest that DGVMs may be deficient in simulating the response of permafrost rich ecosystems to climate change, particularly in terms of subsurface R_h. Improving DGVM skill in these ecosystems is critical given the rapid northern high latitude warming and lengthening of the zero curtain period (Euskirchen et al., 2017; Parazoo et al., 2018b; Chen et al., 2021). The rapid changes in northern Eurasia are illustrated in

370 Fig. 5, which shows the number of months per year that soil temperatures are greater than 0 °C as simulated by a set of CMIP6 models. Soils in the permafrost-rich Cold region are undergoing the most dramatic lengthening of the unfrozen period, particularly at depth (50–200 cm). Under scenario ssp585 (highest emission scenario), these soils are predicted to go from ~5 months per year with a monthly mean soil temperature above 0 °C during the 20th century to ~11 months per year by 2100. The impact is largest for the Cold region at depth because of the reduced seasonality relative to the surface, such that a

375 warming of ~7 °C shifts nearly the entire seasonal cycle above 0 °C at a depth of 50–200 cm (Fig. S18). Such warming would drive the widespread formation of talik, a subsurface layer of perennial thawed soil (Parazoo et al., 2018b), and further enhance R_h at depth.

R_h from sub-surface layers may already be increasing substantially in permafrost regions. Examining the 41 year record of CO_2 at Barrow tower, Commane et al. (2017) find that early cold NEE efflux (Oct-Dec) has increased 73.4%±10.8% over

380 the 1975–2015 period. The standard CAMS IS inversion product similarly suggests an increase in the Sep-Oct NEE efflux of ~80% over Siberia for the 2013–2017 period relative to the 1980–1984 period (see Fig. S20 of Lin et al. (2020)). In agreement, Hu et al. (2021) identified a strong increase (~10%) in Aug–Oct R_h over the North America Arctic-boreal region between 1979–1988 and 2010–2019 based on measurements of atmospheric CO_2 and carbonyl sulphide.

4.2 Limitations

385 Atmospheric CO_2 measurements are relatively sparse over Northern Eurasia (Byrne et al., 2017). In situ and flask CO_2 measurements are spatially sparse over Mid and Cold regions (Fig. S9), with only a handful of sites assimilated over Russia as part of Japan-Russia Siberian Tall Tower Inland Observation Network (JR-STATION) of nine tower sites (Sasakawa et al., 2010, 2013). The OCO-2 coverage is seasonally variable (Fig. S8). Due to the fact that X_{CO_2} retrievals are performed on re-
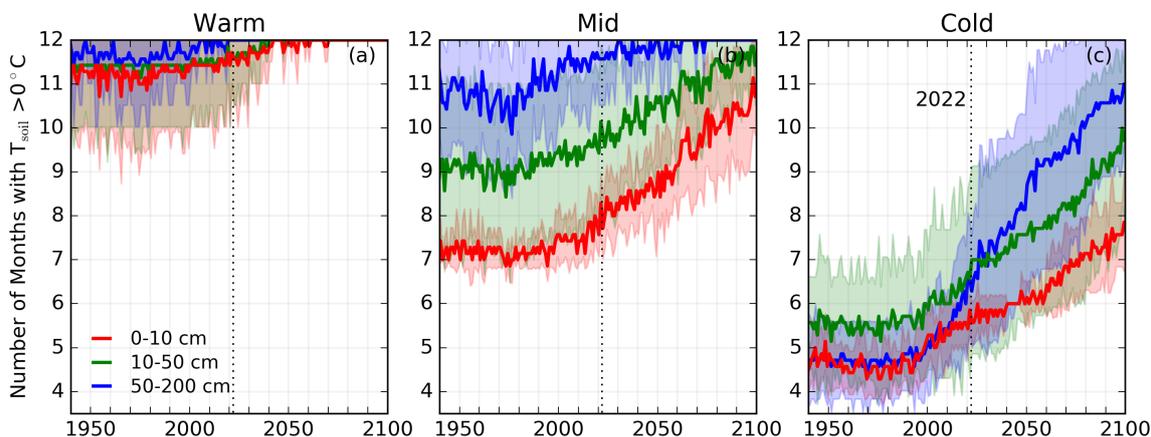
Figure 5. Number of months per year with monthly mean soil temperatures above 0 °C at depths of 0–10 cm (red), 10–50 cm (green), and 50–200 cm (blue) simulated by seven CMIP6 models under ssp585 for the (a) Warm, (b) Mid, and (c) Cold regions. The solid lines show the model mean and shading shows ±1 standard deviation.

flected sunlight, the coverage across Eurasia is quite good during the growing season (May-Sep). However, low signal and the
inability to perform retrievals over snow limits the data coverage during the shoulder seasons and winter, resulting in few X_{CO_2}
retrievals across the Mid and Cold regions during Nov-Feb. Ongoing research to both improve X_{CO_2} quality control filtering
at high latitudes (Jacobs et al., 2020; Mendonca et al., 2021) and in retrievals X_{CO_2} over snow and ice surfaces (Mikkonen
et al., 2021) may reduce these data gaps in the future. Despite this sparsity of measurements, we find that the LNLG and IS
flux inversions show consistent differences from the TRENDY and prior fluxes. Furthermore, these data show good agree-
ment with withheld in site data (Peiro et al., 2021) and independent aircraft measurements over Alaska (Fig S11). Thus, we
believe the results presented here to be robust despite data gaps. Still, this sparsity of data leads to some limitations. There are
few sources of independent CO_2 measurements over the Mid and Cold regions to evaluate the inversion posterior CO_2 fields
against. Independent measurements (possibly aircraft campaigns) would provide a valuable additional data set for validation.
Similarly, increasing the number of year-round eddy-covariance sites across the Mid and Cold regions would provide a valuable
independent dataset to compare against flux inversion estimated NEE. For example, Byrne et al. (2020a) were able to confirm
top-down estimate of east-west differences in NEE interannual variability across North America against the dense network of
eddy-covariance sites.

We also note that there are challenges in estimating data-driven GPP during the shoulder season due to reduced reflected
radiance and snow cover, which impacts the spectral features of the vegetation canopy. Poor quality data, such as snowy and
noisy samples, contributes to uncertainty in the timing of shoulder seasons (Wang et al., 2017; Zhang, 2015). In this analysis,
we attempted to mitigate this issue though the use of an ensemble of data-driven GPP estimates, but we acknowledge that
remaining biases may be present.

Furthermore, the partitioning of NEE into NPP and R_h could be biased if CUE estimates were seasonally biased. We employed TRENDY model CUE to translate data-driven constraints on NEE and GPP into estimates of NPP and R_h. Thus,
410 systematic errors across the TRENDY ensemble in CUE could impact conclusions about the relative contributions of errors in NPP and R_h. A potential source of bias in CUE could be due to an underestimate of the impact of inhibition of leaf respiration by light (Wehr et al., 2016; Byrne et al., 2018; Keenan et al., 2019; Oikawa et al., 2017). This would result in greater CUE and NPP during June-July relative to the rest of the year, shifting the inferred R_h seasonal cycle earlier, with R_h increased during June-July but decreased elsewhere (Byrne et al., 2018). However, the magnitude of this impact on the ecosystem scale is
415 uncertain, making accounting for this phenomena challenging. Recently, Endsley et al. (2021) found that the inhibition of leaf respiration by light to have a relatively modest impact on the seasonality of NPP and R_h, suggesting that the results presented here are robust.

There are also remaining challenges in relating the inferred fluxes to underlying processes. Space-based flux constraints do not discriminate between biological and physical processes driving carbon cycle fluxes. It is currently unclear whether the
420 substantial cold season CO_2 effluxes across permafrost regions are driven primarily by biological activity or physical processes (Natali et al., 2019; Arndt et al., 2020; Raz-Yaseef et al., 2017). Yet, isolating the primary driver of these fluxes is critical for inferring the sensitivity of R_h to climate change. If the cold season R_h comes from the metabolism of old permafrost carbon, then $^{14}CO_2$ measurements could help differentiate biological from physical CO_2 production.

5   Conclusions

425 Space-based and in situ atmospheric CO_2 measurements revealed strong summer uptake and early cold season release of CO_2 over the cold northeastern Eurasia region, implying a late summer peak in R_h with substantial early cold season respiration. Based on model simulations of R_h, we suggested that this seasonality is driven by a large contribution of subsurface soils to the total R_h. These results are consistent with site-level observations identifying substantial CO_2 release in permafrost regions outside the growing season (Natali et al., 2019), and in particular, reported spikes in early cold season respiration associated
430 with the zero curtain period in Arctic ecosystems (Commane et al., 2017; Jeong et al., 2018).

The data-driven seasonality of R_h over the Cold region was generally not captured by the TRENDY DGVMs, which showed greater R_h during May-Jul and lower R_h during the rest of the year. The underlying cause of this discrepancy is unclear, but may be linked to an underestimate of the contribution of sub-surface soils to total R_h. Given the rapid warming of permafrost soils (Euskirchen et al., 2017; Chen et al., 2021), talik formation (Parazoo et al., 2018b), and increasing early cold season CO_2
435 effluxes (Commane et al., 2017; Lin et al., 2020; Hu et al., 2021), improving DGVM simulations in permafrost regions should be a focus of future studies.

This analysis demonstrates the utility of space-based observations for studying carbon cycle dynamics at high latitudes, where in situ measurements are sparse. Although currently limited by a short observing record (2014 - present), the estimates of NEE inferred from the OCO-2 X_{CO_2} retrievals suggest that these data will provide a powerful tool for detecting change in
440 seasonal cycle of NEE across northern Eurasia.

Data availability. TRENDY v8 data were downloaded from trendy-v8@trendy.ex.ac.uk. OCO-2 MIPv9 fluxes were downloaded from https://gml.noaa.gov/ccgg/OCO2_v9mip/. GFED data were downloaded from https://www.globalfiredata.org/. GFAS data were downloaded from https://apps.ecmwf.int/datasets/. We downloaded version 10 of the ACOS OCO-2 lite files from the CO_2 Virtual Science Data Environment (https://CO_2.jpl.nasa.gov/). OCO-2 data were produced by the OCO-2 project at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, California Institute of Technology, and obtained from the OCO-2 data archive maintained at the NASA Goddard Earth Science Data and Information Services Center. FluxSat data were downloaded from https://avdc.gsfc.nasa.gov/pub/tmp/FluxSat_GPP/. The GOSIF data product is available at http://data.globalecology.unh.edu/. ERA5-Land data are obtained from the Climate Data Store (https://cds.climate.copernicus.eu).

Appendix A: Appendix 1

We estimate seasonal variations in labile carbon by estimating a litterfall flux of carbon. Litterfall is assumed to be a fraction of NPP, following Randerson et al. (1996) (Fig. S15), and in steady state on annual timescales:

$$\text{Litterfall}(t) = f_{\text{NPP}}(t) \cdot \text{NPP}(t) \cdot \int_0^{365} \frac{R_h(t)}{f_{\text{NPP}}(t) \cdot \text{NPP}(t)} \, dt, figure \tag{A1}$$

where t is the day of the year and f_{NPP} is the frac NPP that is converted to litterfall. The seasonal variation in the labile carbon pool (ΔC_{pool}) is defined as the difference in flux between litterfall and Rh:

$$\Delta C_{\text{pool}}(t) = \int_0^t \left(\text{Litterfall}(t) - R_h(t) \right) dt \tag{A2}$$

Finally, we assume a fractional variation in the total carbon pool amount, γ, and calculate $\alpha(t)$:

$$\alpha(t) = \left(\frac{C_{\text{pool}}(t)}{\max(|C_{\text{pool}}(t)|)} \gamma + 1 \right) \alpha_0, \tag{A3}$$

where α_0 is the mean carbon pool size, and is optimized in the regression in Sec. 3.3.

Author contributions. BB, JL, YY, AC, KWB, NCP, DC, and CEM conceived of the study. BB, JL, YY, AC, and SB designed the experiments. YY performed the soil carbon decomposition model runs. BB, SB and FC performed inversions for this study. BB performed the analysis and prepared the manuscript with contributions from all co-authors.

Competing interests. no competing interests are present

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