



Contribution ID: 31

Type: **not specified**

The new very-high-resolution EC-Earth 4 climate demonstrator

Tuesday, 21 September 2021 08:20 (20 minutes)

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Recent studies have established that the typical atmospheric and oceanic resolutions used for the CMIP5 coordinated exercise, i.e., around 40km-150km globally, are limiting factors to correctly reproduce the climate mean state and variability. In the framework of the ESiWACE project, the Barcelona Supercomputing Center (BSC) developed a coupled version of the EC-Earth 3 climate model at a groundbreaking horizontal resolution of about 15km in each climate system component. In the atmosphere, the horizontal domain was based on a spectral truncation of the atmospheric model (IFS) at T1279 (15 km) together with 91 vertical levels. The ocean component (NEMO) ran on the ORCA12 tripolar (cartesian) grid at a horizontal resolution of about 1/12° (16 km), with 75 vertical levels.

This very-high-resolution (VHR) configuration was used in the Glob15km project to run a 50-year spinup from which one historical and one control simulation of 50 years each were started, following the HighResMIP protocol from CMIP6. These experiments are currently being used to identify the improvements in process representation with respect to coarser resolution and to pin down physical and dynamical reasons behind these differences induced by resolution change.

The VHR coupled configuration was a great benchmark to reveal the most critical scalability problems of the EC-Earth 3 model. Within the ESiWACE2 project, those issues have been tackled to allow operational climate predictions at more than 1 SYPD with production-mode configurations. The new Tco639-ORCA12 configuration is based on the EC-Earth 4 model, made up of OpenIFS cycle 43r3 and NEMO 4, and uses a cubic octahedral grid in the atmosphere. In this version of EC-Earth, both the atmospheric and the oceanic component output diagnostics through the asynchronous XIOS servers, contributing to reduce the I/O overhead and improving scalability, which will be evaluated at one of the forthcoming pre-exascale EuroHPC systems.

Primary authors: CASTRILLO, Miguel (BSC-CNS); Mr MONTANÉ PINTO, Gilbert (Barcelona Supercomputing Center); Mr PALOMAS, Sergi (BSC-CNS); Dr ARSOUZE, Thomas (BSC-CNS); SERRADELL MARONDA, Kim (Barcelona Supercomputing Center); Dr ACOSTA COBOS, Mario (BSC); Ms AYAN, Iria (BSC-CNS); Mr TINTÓ, Oriol (BSC-CNS); PARONUZZI TICCO, Stella Valentina (Barcelona Supercomputing Center)

Presenter: CASTRILLO, Miguel (BSC-CNS)

Session Classification: Session 3

Track Classification: 19th Workshop on high performance computing in meteorology