

Dear author,

After a careful reading of the revised manuscript, I still share some of referee#2's concerns and consider that they were not properly addressed. In particular:

- “3) Improved figures are required” and “Pages 3965 and 3966, Figure 1 and 2: Figure panels are too small” :
 - Even if the figures have been changed to .pdf and can be zoomed on-line, it is not acceptable to have unreadable figures without zooming. The maximum number of panels should be 8 per page, as in figure 4.
 - On figures 1 and 2, nothing is specified about the significance and the meaning of the stippling.
 - Please include the definition of RMSESS and CRPSS in figure 4 captions
 - Full captions should be given for figures 5 and 6.
- “Page 3951, lines 4-5: when natural variability is small compared to the forced signal.”
 - In the revised version, you write “... when the response of SAT to the internal variability of the climate system is known to be small compared to the response to the signal associated with anthropogenic forcing, for example in the northern hemisphere during spring (MAM) and summer (JJA) and throughout the tropics at all times of year.” I do not see this is the case on figure 1 even when zooming.
- “Pages 3967 and 3968, Figures 3 and 4: For which period has this correlation been computed? Please provide this information in the figure caption. “
 - I think this is not addressed in the revised manuscript and it is important to do so.

Furthermore, I share the concern that it is difficult, and sometimes impossible, to appreciate many of the evidences presented in the figures. I may be missing something but in many places, it looks to me that what is presented as an evidence refers more to what should be observed given the literature than to what really appears on the figure, in particular:

- p.14” Much of the signal associated with PDO is captured by NINO3.4; additional skill is confined to the northern Pacific”: I do not see this is the case on figure 1 even when zooming.
- p.14 “Other areas of stronger correlation include small areas of central North America during summer, “ : I do not see this is the case on figure 1 even when zooming.
- P.15 “Unsurprisingly, including local SST (LSST) produces higher correlation than persistence over the oceans” : I do not see this is the case on figure 1 even when zooming.
- p.15 I do not see either on figure 1 that “LSST is clearly beneficial in coastal regions”
- p.15 “The relationship between antecedent precipitation (CPREC) and SAT is in general quite poor but correlation is around 0.4 in north- ern Europe during spring (MAM), “: I do not see this is the case on figure 1, I see that the correlation is 0.3 at most!
- p. 15 “The negative correlation during summer (JJA), significant over France,“ : I do not see this is the case on figure 1 even when zooming.
- p. 15 “For the IOD, correlations of around 0.5 exists in eastern Africa during autumn (SON) and winter (DJF) “: I do not see this is the case on figure 2 even when zooming; the correlation is 0.3 at most.
- p.16: “In Europe, significant negative correlation during summer (JJA)” : I do not see this is the case on figure 2 even when zooming

Also the following comments need to be more precise

- p. 14 “NINO3.4 shows the second strongest relationship with SAT” : this is true among “climate” predictors, i.e if you exclude PERS and LSST

- p.14 “not shown” should be added when discussing the correlation with the QBO
- p.15 “negative” should qualify correlation in “The correlation is also strong in parts of Australia and south-east Asia, in addition to southern Africa (MAM) and northern South America (DJF and MAM).
- p.15 “these regions are associated with low correlation at all times of the year”: this is OK but you should also mention that there is significant negative correlation in Northern Africa (all year) and significant positive correlation in Greenland and Northern Europe and Asia in MAM, SON and DJF
- p. 15 : “The strong lagged correlation exhibited between NINO3.4 and PREC in many parts of the world provides the most important basis for predictability”: this is OK but it should be mentioned that it is not stronger than CO2 and PERS.
- p.15: It should be mentioned that “Correlation patterns for the PDO “ are not shown.
- p. 16: “The most obvious of such correlation is during DJF in the mid- to high-latitudes of the northern hemisphere” : it seems to me that the correlation is even more obvious in MAM.
- p.18: “The addition of [...] and LSST [...] adds little value further from the coast. “ : for me, addition of LSST adds very little value everywhere, not only further from the coast.

Additional minor points:

- In the Abstract, replace “... private companies is dependent ...” by “... private companies and is dependent ...” or by “... private companies and depends ...”
- p.7, remove “at” in “The predictand time series x at may be ...”
- p.10, remove “the” in “to be passed to the the empirical forecast “