Response to comments from Reviewer #3

We thank reviewer #3 for his/her constructive and insight comments. We have addressed these comments in the revised manuscript. All our responses are in Italic Font.

This paper intends to provide a documentation for the latest version of the high-resolution Bejing Climate Center Climate System model (BCC-CSM2-HR). It consists of a succinct overview of what are new in each of the model components and an evaluation of the model performance using a broad set of climate metrics. The evaluation of the BCC-CSM2-HR is presented in parallel with that from a medium resolution model, BCC-CSM2-MR, which differs from the HR model not only in resolution, but also in core components. Improvements of the HR over MR are highlighted throughout the text. BCC-CSM2-MR is used to participate in CMIP6, while BCC-CSM2-HR participating in HiResMIP. The materials presented regarding the models and the simulation skills are expected to be useful for the users of the models and/or the simulated data, and thus suitable for a publication on GMD as an essential reference.

The manuscript however has much room to be improved. The manuscript apparently has writing contributions from different coauthors. The quality of the writing for different parts of the manuscript are quite different. There are many incomplete, inaccurate, inconsistent or unclear statements throughout the text. Many of them are pointed out in the specific comments below, which are not in the order of sereneness of concern, but in the order of their appearances in the originally submitted manuscript. Given the broad evaluation on various model features and climate phenomena, it is understandable coauthors contribute to different sections or subsections with their expertises, and the materials in general are appropriate for a model documentation paper like this. But lack of thorough review of the final writing seems evident

In addition to addressing the comments below to refine the writing, it is also suggested to provide a separate section to describe the observational data used in the evaluation and if any regriddings (for grid normalization) are involved. In the current form, the description for the reference data are scattered and very limited.

Response: Following your suggestion, we added a section "3.2 Data used for evaluations" to introduce all of the datasets and their details, and refine the writing for the context about the model description and results.

In addition, in order to test the rationality of historical simulations from 1950 to 2014, we added a subsection "4.1 Global mean surface air temperature variations from 1950 to 2014", and added a figure, so all the figures in the first version of manuscript are re-numbered.

Specific comments

Line 31, "participation to", use "participation in" instead.

Response: Modified.

Lines 45-45, "double ITCZ : :: is : :: disappeared", just use "disappears".

Response: Modified.

Line 65, remove 'but' *Response: Modified.*

Line 68, higher resolutions are not limited to 50; change "i.e." to "e.g.".

Response: Modified.

Line 76, just say "MJO" in the context should be sufficient to convey the same message concerning MJO. Do the authors have other emphasis implied for MJO in its representations in model?

Response: Modified. "the QBO, the MJO's representation" in line 79 of the revised version is changed to "the MJO"

Line 78, The meaning of "small-scale" here is very vague, and storms and TCs are not really small-scale. Suggest to change to "weather scale" or "small-scale processes associated with mid-latitude storms and tropical cyclones".

Response: Modified. That sentence is rewritten as "Some small-scale processes associated with mid-latitude storms and tropical cyclones, and ocean eddies also feedback on the simulated large-scale circulation, climate variability and extremes..." in line 84-86.

Line 92, change 'within' to 'with' or 'using'

Response: Modified.

Line 95, it is costly but certainly more than just a few research centers can perform it. Suggest to remove "and can be realized only at a few :: :..., or as a way to transition to the follow-up description, emphasize it with "::: costly effort but a growing number of research centers can exercise it.'

Response: Modified. That sentence is rewritten as "At present day, performing high-resolution climate simulations with model grid smaller than 50 km in the atmosphere and 0.25 oin the ocean is still a very costly effort but a growing number of research centers can exercise it..." in line 100-103.

Line 110, use consistent notation for the numbers in the same phrase, either with "2 weeks to 1 year" or "two weeks to one year".

Response: Modified.

Line 111-112, I think "the medium resolution version" is more suitable here than "the previous version of medium resolution". Both HR and MR model mentioned are for the same generation (BCC-CSM2) and the 'current' version does not seem to have an MR model that shares the same code base as the HR.

Response: Modified. That sentence is rewritten as "The purpose of this paper is to evaluate its performance by comparing it with the medium resolution version..." in line 117-119.

Line 123, to 'a' fine grid, just like describing the other grids.

Response: Modified.

Line 124, with an achievement to "deliver all of these model versions".

Response: Modified.

Line 125, suggest to put it as "four components – atmosphere, ocean, land and sea ice – interacting with each other".

Response: Modified.

Acronyms should be defined when first appeared e.g., AVIM, BCC-AGCM3, BCCAGCM, among others.

Response: Modified.

Figure 1, it should be useful to have a separate subplot for the thickness of the model layers in the lowest few kilometers; but it does not have to, given no emphasis on the description of layer thickness of the lower tropospheric levels.

Response: Following your suggestion, we added a subplot in Figure 1.

Lines 145 and 187, replace 'dynamic core' with 'dynamical core'.

Response: Modified.

Line 170, suggest to change to 'at different spatiotemporal scales and interactions between them'.

Response: Modified.

Line 189, to make it clear, please use 'grid spacing dependence'.

Response: Modified.

Line 202, suggest to change to '... at the top and the kth layers of the model, respectively'.

Response: Modified.

Line 168 and more in the text, suggest to use 'Spatially-varying' in place of 'spatially-variable'. Also change it in Table 1 for the HR column of the dynamical core.

Response: Modified.

Line 205, it should be useful to explain what the 'polar instabilities' here refer to and how it increases with damping coefficient near model top.

Line 209, The meaning of the sentence starting from "This is:::" is not clear. Does this properly convey the meaning: "This is possibly due to much more damping of the meridional waves,"?

Response: We rewritten this paragraph in line 207-221.

Line 231-232 on transporting entrained cloud water to its neighboring grids inside the model time step. Does it involve treatments other than what can be expected from typical process splitting? The description seems to imply that as it is said to be only in the HR model. Please elaborate, given that it appears to be a unique feature.

Response: Along with increasing resolution in BCC-AGCM3-HR, the detrained cloud water can be transported to its adjacent grid boxes, which is accomplished in the dynamical core. Part of the horizontally-transported cloud water is permitted to be transferred downward to lower troposphere and the amount of downward transferred water vapor is determined by the horizontally-transported convective cloud water increment with time. These modifications of the deep convection scheme are only used in BCC-CSM2-HR.

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Line 236, use in favor of instead.

Response: Modified.

Line 248, BLs, in general, readers should be able to know what it refers to. But as always, please expand it in the first use.

Response: Modified. BLs denotes boundary layers.

Line 255, 'svl' does not have 'vl' as subscript.

Response: Modified.

Line 248, some description should be helpful on how to detect the presence of inversion layer for determining which eddy diffusivity formulation would be used for a column, especially if the detection of inversion involves some special treatment.

Response: Our original meaning to present is "In the case of an entrainment layer, at the top of convective boundary layers (BLs), the diffusivity is parameterized with ...", not "In the case of an inversion layer at the top of convective". So, we rewrote that sentence.

Line 290, cite some references that use LTS=17.5K as a threshold criterion for BL stability to factually demonstrate the 'robustness' as written in the text. Furthermore, the Hack scheme is said to be applied to the whole atmosphere column previously. Please elaborate if it remains so after introducing this activation threshold, and if so, justify the use beyond boundary layers.

Response: We have rewritten the description as "In the light of its robustness, a new lower troposphere stability (LTS) criteria is introduced into the original Hack scheme in BCC-CSM2-HR, which is defined as The modified Hack scheme is activated only in the

decoupled BL regimes with LTS < 17.5 K below 700 hPa to remove adiabatically moist

instability, and the original Hack scheme (Hack, 1993) is still retained above 700 hPa to remove any local instability as long as the two adjacent model layers are moist adiabatically unstable.

Line 306-307, It appears that AVIM2.3 is mentioned abruptly. Is AVIM2.3 used in the HR model while AVIM2.2 in the MR version? Is the difference between v2.2 and v2.3, in sub-grid surface classification, to take advantage of the capability of the HR model? Last, provide a description for the grid configurations used by the land surface model – aware it is indicated in Table 1.

Table 1, please add references for CLM3, SISv1, SISv2.

Response: Modified the description in the context for Land surface model and be consistent to Table 1.

Lines 320-323, the text for the neutral diffusion scheme with constant diffusivity here to describe the MOM5 that is used in the HR model appears inconsistent with that in Table 1, which says neutral diffusion scheme is not used.

Response: We corrected the description as "MOM5 has a complete set of physical processes with advanced parameterization schemes. Effect of mesoscale eddies through the neutral diffusion scheme of Griffies et al. (1998) is not included in this work." in line 350-352 in the context and Table 1

Line 315, what does it mean by 'comforts of algorithm'?

Response: The correct expression should be "comforts of algorithm implementation". we rewrote that sentence as "The quasi-horizontal rescaled height coordinate, namely, z* vertical coordinate is employed to enhance flexibility of model applications, which allows the free surface to fluctuate to values as large as the local ocean depth" in line 343-346.

Lines near 318, please add some reference for tracer advection scheme MDPPM.

Response: Modified.

Line 336-337, add a reference for the Semtner's scheme.

Response: Modified.

Line 342, use plural for 'simulations'.

Response: Modified.

Line 343, suggest to remove 'from 1971 to 2000', which would otherwise give an incorrect initial impression that the simulations themselves are for that period only. It is clear enough at the beginning of the Results section and it is this period of the historical simulations that are analyzed for the paper.

Response: Yes, the medium-resolution simulation is a typical CMIP6 historical run, from 1850 to 2014, as defined by the CMIP framework. Our high-resolution simulation is however an ad hoc run, starting from 1950 and terminating in 2014. We rewrote that

sentence as "The principal simulation to be analyzed is the CMIP6 historical run (hereafter referred to as historical) with prescribed forcings from 1850 to 2014 for BCC-CSM2-MR and from 1950 to 2014 for BCC-CSM2-HR." in line 373-375.

Lines 371-372, Only see two models involved. Is 'three models' just a typo? Also, it is dubious to say making a 'right' intercomparison. A 'reasonable' intercomparison would sound more appropriate here. After all, the model components are quite different, so do the initialization procedure and the simulation period.

Response: We deleted the original expression and added "We choose the same period of 1950-2014 from both BCC-CSM2-MR and BCC-CSM2-HR historical simulations to evaluate their performance against observation-based or reanalysis data" in line 402-404.

Line 375-376, the meaning of the sentence is ambiguous. suggest to change to "...primary source of data for estimating Earth's energy balance."

Response: Modified.

Line 377 and related text: which version of CERES-EBAF data are being used? *Response: Modified. CERES-EBAF version 4.1 data are used.*

Lines 385-386, the text says "TOA LW and SW components in HR are much closer to CERES-EBAF than the MR". The numbers in Table 2 clearly says the opposite for almost all quantities with the exception of clear sky fluxes.

Lines 395-397 and Table 2. It is not true both the MR and HR have stronger LW cloud radiative forcing than CERES-EBAF data. Only the HR model does. The sentence as is also problematic. Rephrase to reflect that the HR model has near 2 W/m2 of additional warming effect (biases). SW cloud forcing for CERES-EBAF looks like from an earlier version of data. If using the latest version of CERES-EBAF (e.g., v4.1), the model-observation discrepancy could be much larger. Again, please indicate the version of CERES-EBAF data used, and try to use the latest version of data if not yet. Given the several inconsistencies between the text and the Table 2, I am not sure if the correct table is used in the manuscript.

Response: We apologize for the confusion. Values recorded in Table 2 were correct ones, but we did not update the corresponding text. We revised the inconsistent expressions and rewrote that paragraph in 513-531.

Lines 406-408, suggest to change to "::: new treatments for boundary layer processes", because there is a new scheme introduced, as well as new treatment to go with a scheme (Hack scheme) that is also used by MR. Also suggest to remove the 2nd part of the sentence, it could be perceived like the confinement of water vapor only occurs to the HR model over the eastern ocean basins. Moreover, simply attributing to the parameterization scheme could be an understatement because differences in both horizontal and vertical resolutions could also have an impact.

Response: Suggestions adopted. We rewrote that paragraph as "In mid-latitudes of both the hemispheres, the shortwave cloud radiative forcing from BCC-CSM2-HR is much closer to

CERES-EBAF than from BCC-CSM2-MR. But in low latitudes between 30 \ and 30 \ N, BCC-CSM2-HR simulates excessive cloud shortwave radiative forcing which mainly comes from evident biases over the eastern tropical Pacific and tropical Atlantic oceans (Figure 4). These biases are possibly attributable to new treatments for boundary layer processes." in line 536-542.

At the recent, we test the new model physics with the same horizontal and vertical resolutions to BCC-CSM2-MR, and find out the same biases of cloud shortwave radiative forcing occurred in BCC-CSM2-HR.

Though CIRA86 appears to indicate the data period is for 1986, it is still necessary to explicitly state the time span of the data, just like for the other data products.

Response: We rewrote the description for CIRA-86 as "CIRA-86 (available at https://catalogue.ceda.ac.uk/uuid/4996e5b2f53ce0b1f2072adadaeda262) includes a global climatology of zonal atmospheric temperature and velocity extending from pole to pole on a 5-degree latitude grid and 0-120 km approximately at 2 km vertical resolution. It is derived from a combination of satellite, radiosonde and ground-based measurements (Fleming et al., 1990)." in line 437-442.

Lines 416-421. It is unclear whether the first sentence is to describe the observed vertical structure or the model biases. It is more likely the former but then the wordings are not appropriate. The vertical structure is the well-known Earth's atmospheric stratification, from surface up, troposphere, stratosphere and part of mesosphere in the HR model. The cool layers span the transition from troposphere to stratosphere layer. The description in the text appears like casually picking a pair of cold/warm features without reference to the actual atmosphere. The 'cool layers' as used in the text, the center of which over broader latitudes reflect the location of tropopause, and it is not centered near 300 hPa. The layer centered at 1hPa cannot be 'too warm' by itself.. It marks the top of the stratosphere and the transition to mesosphere. I think the current description is oversimplified and not acceptable, other than that the HR model is capable of capturing the structure of upper stratosphere and the transition to mesosphere while the MR model cannot, and the reversal of polar stratosphere structure from DJF to JJA. The description for Figure 4 needs to be totally rewritten. Response: We apologize for the confusion and we rewrote that paragraph as "The observed vertical profile of atmospheric temperature shows a clear structure of stratification, with an evident seasonal transition. In DJF, it is characterized as cool layers over broader latitudes spanning the transition from troposphere to stratosphere over the Northern Hemisphere, and warm layers spanning from the top of the stratosphere to mesosphere over the Southern Hemisphere. Those different vertical structures in both hemispheres during DJF are almost reversed in JJA. BCC-CSM2-HR is capable of capturing the structure of upper stratosphere and the transition to mesosphere while BCC-CSM2-MR cannot." in line *549-557*.

Line 429, The description does not appear to separate well this tropical region of warm biases and the thicker layer of warm biases in broader lower stratosphere over the tropics and

mid-latitude. Note that the warm biases are still situated in lower stratosphere, not 'up per stratosphere'.

Response: Modified. We have rewritten the description.

Line 442-443, the reference to QBO here is purely speculative and without basis. These are biases in mean climatology, as a long term mean, even if the models have skill in simulating QBO, the signal would have been largely averaged out in long term mean. Suggest to remove this statement.

Response: Adopted

Fig 7, right panel for zonal mean precipitation over land? No words about it? HR should resolve better the precipitation features influenced by orography. If there is no intent to provide a description to highlight the improvements over land in HR, might as well not to include the Figure.

Response: Following your suggestion, we removed the right panel for zonal mean precipitation.

Huffman et al. 2019 for IMERG data and algorithm, please provide a URL for the reference. *Response: Modified.*

Also on IMERG data at line 475, while what is stated in Huffman et al. is that their algorithm can also be used to intercalibrate 'potentially other precipitation estimators', it sounds very odd that the available IMERG data product has combined 'potentially other precipitation estimators' – which would mean the source data for IMERG are not fully clear. The 'potential' apparently is for different context, Re-examine the IMERG document if such 'other' data are included and if so make it explicit. The description in the current form is not appropriate. *Response: Modified the description.*

Again on IMERG and Figure 8, though it can be assumed in such comparison, it should be explicitly stated that all data are rearranged to have the same grid resolution and time averaging interval. Don't see it in the text. Also, the Figure caption says the data are three hourly, but line 476 says hourly precipitation. Make them consistent.

Response: Modified the figure 9 captions.

Furthermore, the description for Figure 8 is less than accurate and over simplified, which could be misleading by following the text alone. The 1mm/hr and 10/hr cutoff may be about fine for the MR model, but substantially off for the HR model. The authors may start with just describing the comparison of MR with IMERG, then highlight the improvement of HR, instead of describing them in the same sentence with the same cutoff value. The last sentence in the paragraph is well suited.

Response: Paragraph rewritten.

Line 486-488, can the authors provide an explanation why selecting EN4 and CRU data as references? There could be many other choices. Some description on the benefit of selecting

these reference data should add credentials to the evaluation process.

Response: We added more descriptions about data used in section "3.2 Data used for evaluations" including CRU data. EN4 SST is replaced by HadISST in order to consistence to HadISST Sea ice data.

Line 495, it should help by explicitly referring to Fig. 3b in addition to the text regarding strong SW cloud radiative forcing.

Response: modified.

Figure 11, The plot should be for spatial distribution of sea ice concentration rather than overall sea ice extent. The description uses the correct term.

Response: modified.

Line 527, "mostly smaller"? It does not read well with "almost smaller", the meaning of which would also be ambiguous.

Response: modified.

Line 531, add 'by' to have "overestimated sea ice by about : : :".

Response: modified.

Paragraph starting line 542, TC criteria, please explain why using a relative vorticity criterion differing by 15 times for the HR and MR models, how sensitive are the results to this criterion and how it impacts the interpretation of the derived results.

Response: In the first version of the manuscript, the threshold of relative vorticity at 850 hPa to detect TC for BCC-CSM2-MR and BCC-CSM2-HR were wrongly set to different values, which created difficulties for our purpose of inter-comparison, although that practice was perfectly valid to detect TC in individual models. We unified now the threshold (to a unique value of 15×10^{-5} s⁻¹ in Figure 14). We also added some discussions on the influence of different thresholds: "If this threshold gets looser to 5×10^{-5} s⁻¹, the averaged total global TC numbers per year in BCC-CSM2-MR and BCC-CSM2-HR will enhance to 55.9 and 101.1, respectively" in line 684-686. The following figure shows the global distribution, but omitted in the main text of the revised manuscript.

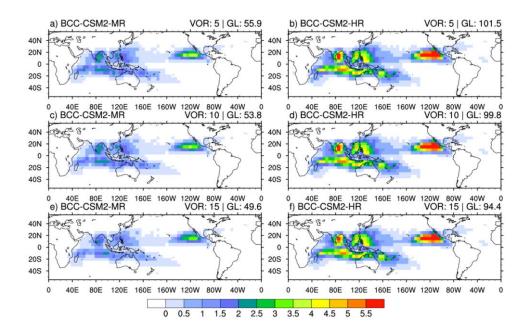


Figure S1. The global distribution of tropical cyclone (TC) densities (number per year) averaged for BCC-CSM2-MR (left column), and BCC-CSM2-HR (right column). The thresholds of the relative vorticity for tracking the TC are 5×10^{-5} s⁻¹, 10×10^{-5} s⁻¹, 15×10^{-5} s⁻¹, respectively. The value on the upper-right corner denotes the total number of global TCs on 5×5 grid box.

Line 542, Citing a single work of Murakami (2014) does not appear consistent with a plural form of 'previous studies'. Suggest to cite the works that first used the criteria that are listed in the paragraph.

Response: modified. We used the multiple criteria given in Murakami (2014) to detect TCs for 6-hour interval outputs: instantaneous values for BCC-CSM2-HR and accumulated ones for BCC-CSM2-MR.

Line 546, please elaborate how the air temperature deviation is defined or cite references that provide clear description for the calculations. The threshold of 0.8 K as the sum of the deviations at three levels also appears to be small, compared to thresholds used in the definitions of TC warm core in other TC trackers (e.g., the warm core criterion in GFDL TSTORMS tracker is at least 1K warmer than the surrounding local mean (Zhao et al., doi: 10.1175/2009JCLI3049.1) for an averaged temperature over a depth, not even a sum). *Response: We have rewritten the description as*

"We use the multiple criteria reported by Murakami (2014) to detect TCs with 6-hourly outputs from models (instantaneous values from BCC-CSM2-HR, but accumulated values from BCC-CSM2-MR). (1) The maximum of relative vorticity of a TC-like vortex at 850 hPa exceeds $15 \times 10^{-5} \, \text{s}^{-1}$ (a threshold that can vary from $1 \times 10^{-5} \, \text{s}^{-1}$ to $15 \times 10^{-5} \, \text{s}^{-1}$ in function of resolution (Murakami, 2014). (2) The warm-core above the TC-like vortex, which is presented as the sum of the air temperature deviations (subtracting the maximum temperature from the mean temperature within the TC-like vortex center for an area of $10 \times 10 \, \text{g}$ at 300, 500 and 700 hPa, exceeds $0.8 \, \text{K}$, a threshold falling in the range $0.6 \sim 1.0 \, \text{K}$

that are recommended in Murakami (2014); (3) The maximum wind speed at 850 hPa is higher than that at 300 hPa; (4) The maximum wind speed at 10 m within the TC-like vortex center for an area of 3 °×3 °grid is higher than 10 m s-1; (5) The genesis position of the TC-like vortex is over the ocean; (6) The duration of the TC-like vortex satisfied above conditions exceeds 48 hours." in line 476-490.

Lines 548-549: 'within the vortex center 3 deg x 3 deg grid box', suggest to change to "within the vortex center for an area of 3 deg x 3 deg'. Please also indicate which level of wind speed is concerned here.

Response: modified.

Line 556-559, the description of global annual mean TC numbers read like it is also higher in the MR model than IBTrACS, which is not true given the numbers in the text and Figure 13. Furthermore on the description for Figure 13, while the speculation of the factors that are possibly relevant for missing Atlantic TC are reasonable, would the authors offer some discussion if the different criteria used play a role?

Response: We added more discussion in the part "5. Summary and discussions" about insufficient TC activities in the North Atlantic.

Line 575 about models cannot capture weak storms with maximum wind speeds less than 10 m/s. The statement seems inconsistent. Even IBTrACS does not have it, while actually the MR model has some with max wind speed at or below 10m/s. The description should also indicate that max wind speeds in MR are consistently weaker which is understandable given coarser resolution.

Response: modified.

Line 580, the whole paragraph is to describe Figure 14 which is indicated at the beginning. Remove the redundant mentioning of Figure 14 at the end.

Response: Modified the caption of Figure 15.

Line 588, should be lag-latitude evolution for the right panels of Figure 15.

Response: Clarified.

Figure 16a, which observational/reanalysis data are used to create the observed MJO life cycle, or if it is adapted from a figure in another publication?

Response: Clarified

Line 619, use instead 'A good simulation of QBO::: '

Response: Modified.

Line 630, suggest to remove 'in amplitude'. The meaning of the sentence would remain intact. Amplitude typically would account for the extent of the oscillation between both phases.

Response: Modified.

Line 637-638, the description sounds like the authors have looked at the comparison of the parameterized convective gravity wave forcing, but the results are less than conclusive, is that so? Otherwise, without any concrete evidence or explanation, how to draw a statement that "::: seemed enhanced:::". A statement of the forcing could potentially be enhanced would be a better statement if all by speculation, but that should also need to be justified. *Response: Modified.*

Line 658 at the beginning of the 2nd sentence, suggest to change to "The phase locking (i.e., the peak variance):: "to inform even less familiar readers what the term refers to.

Response: Modified.

Line 666-667, suggest to change to "despite over extension into the Western Pacific". *Response: Modified.*

Line 667-671, after describing the observed expansion of influence to extra-tropics, it should be followed by the description of more equatorially/tropically confined in the models. The focus is not on observational analysis, after all. The descriptions for the models are clearly over-simplified, with a single statement that HR improves over MR. Moreover, for a plot like this and the description to compare models vs obs on both negative and positive correlation, it should be useful to denote in the plot where the correlations are statistically significant, otherwise some of the discussions could be simply irrelevant.

Response: modified the description. And add the correlations are statistically significant in Figure 20.

Line 681, use participating in Itemization. In the paragraph starting line 683, use 'First,.... Second, :::, Third:::.' instead.

Response: Modified.

Lines 702-703, the description would give an impression that the simulations are just for 30 years. Suggest to change to "historical simulations with fully coupled BCC-CSM2-MR and BCC-CSM2-HR are analyzed over a 30 year period from 1971 to 2000.".

Response: Modified.

Line 715, lower troposphere temperature biases are relatively small in both models, right? Indicate so.

Response: Rewritten it as "Temperature biases in the low- to mid-troposphere below 300 hPa in BCC-CSM2-HR are relatively small, within the range of -1K to 1K." in line 873-874.

Lines 719-720 "do not change at higher resolution" and "insensitive to atmospheric resolution" are apparently redundant.

Response: Rewritten it as "Although those prominent systematic biases in temperature and wind seem relatively insensitive to changes in atmospheric resolution..." in line 878-879.