XIVth STICS seminar, 17-19 March 2026, organized by ULiège-GxABT & INRAE

Impact of climate change on the main cash crop in Belgium

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https://inondations.wallonie.be/home/ruissellement/ruissellement-naturel-et-en-zone-rurale/ruissellement-erosion-et-coulees-de-boue.html

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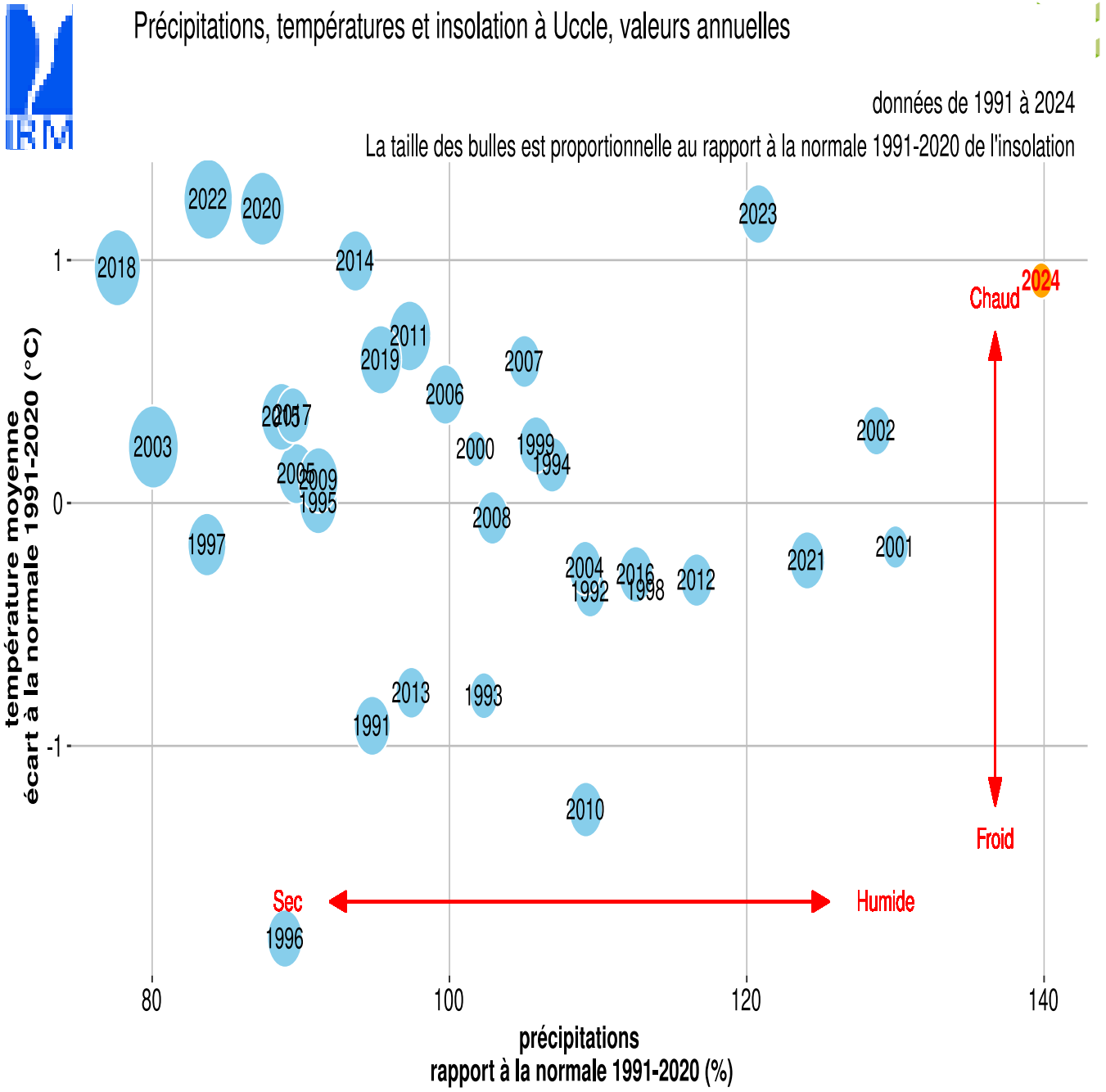
https://environnement.wallonie.be/home/gestion-environnementale/risques-climatiques.html

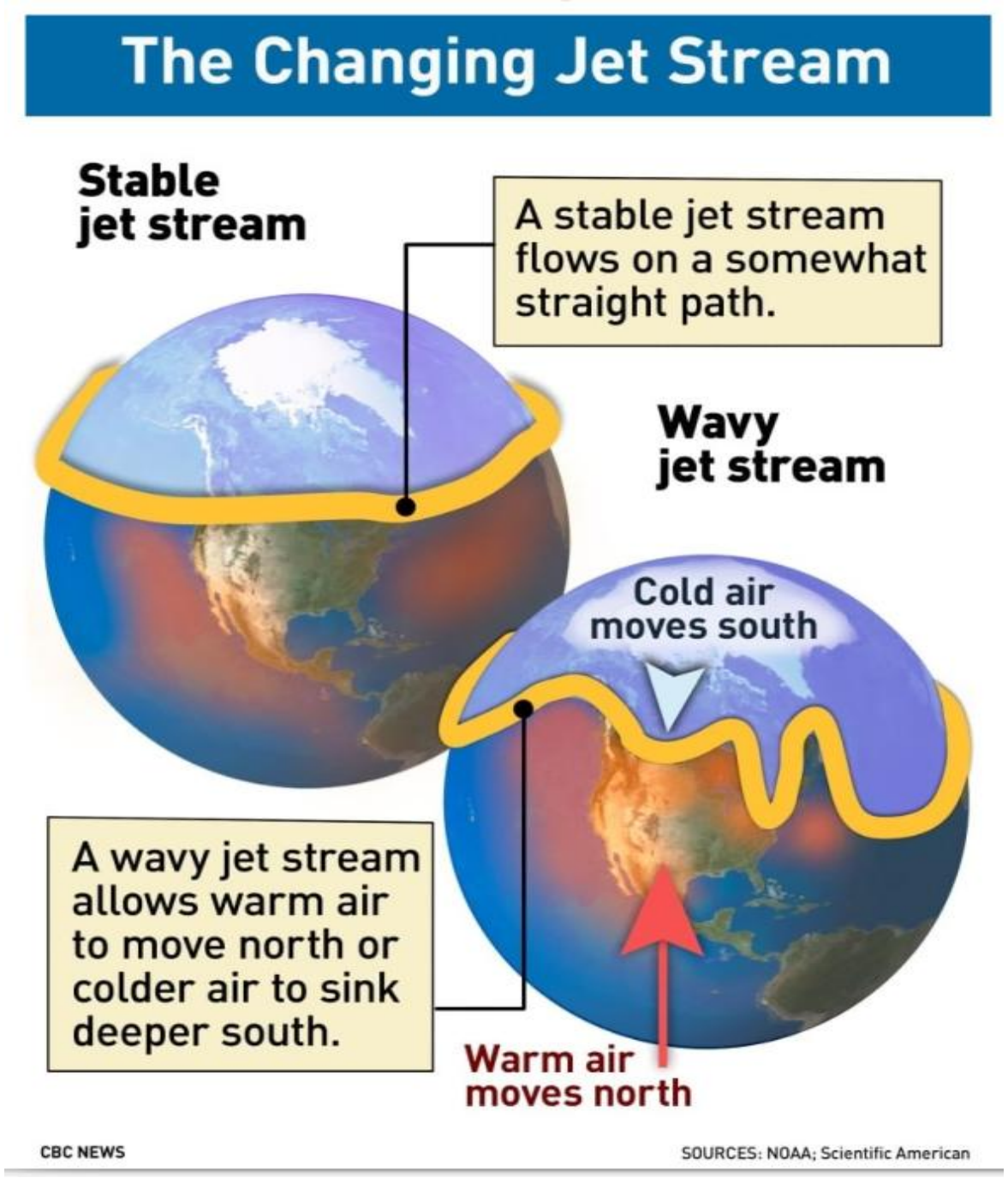
2020 drough year

2021 humid summer

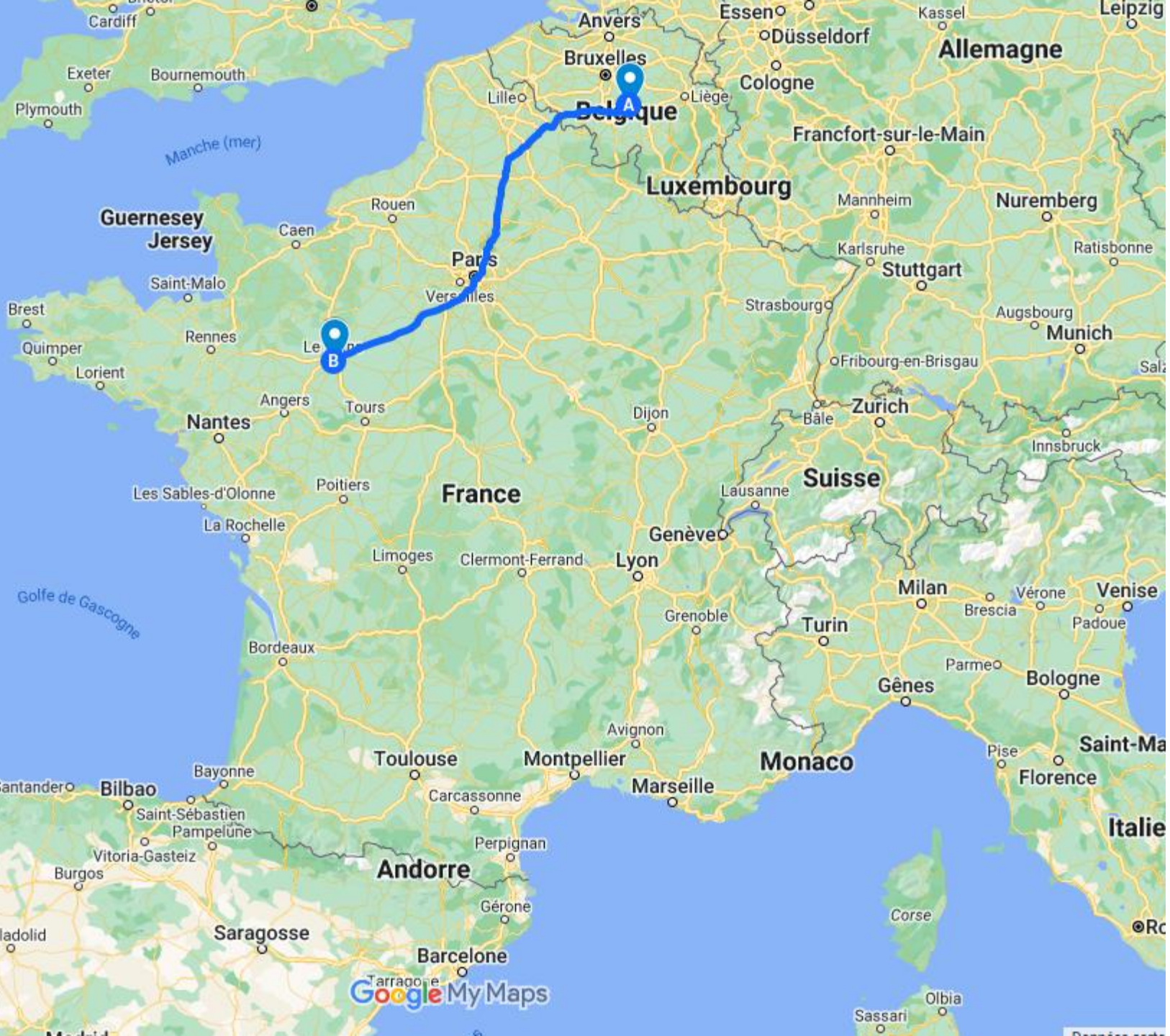
2022 drought year

2024 humid year



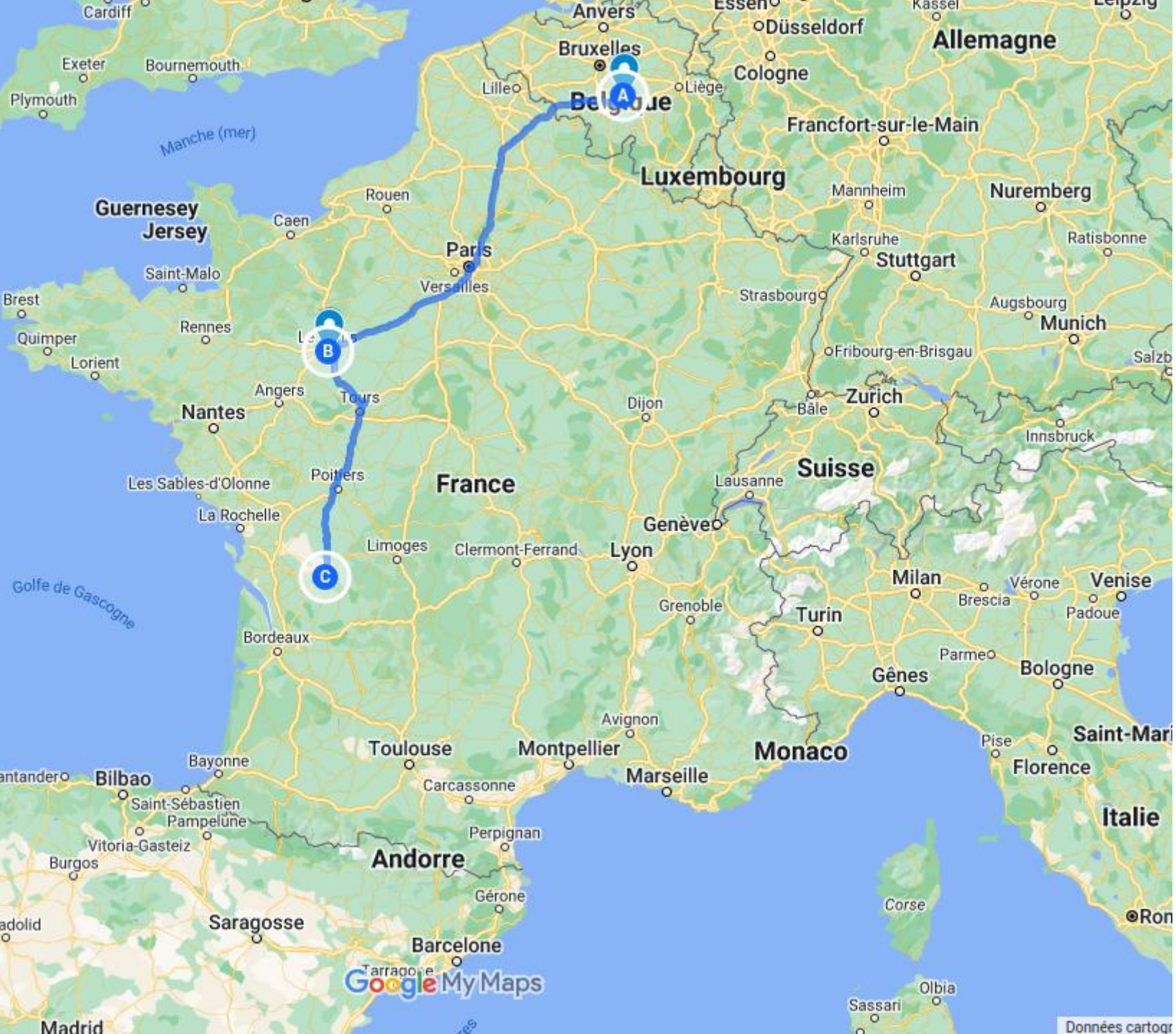


Why this contrast ?



In 2030 Gembloux will have the climate of Mans

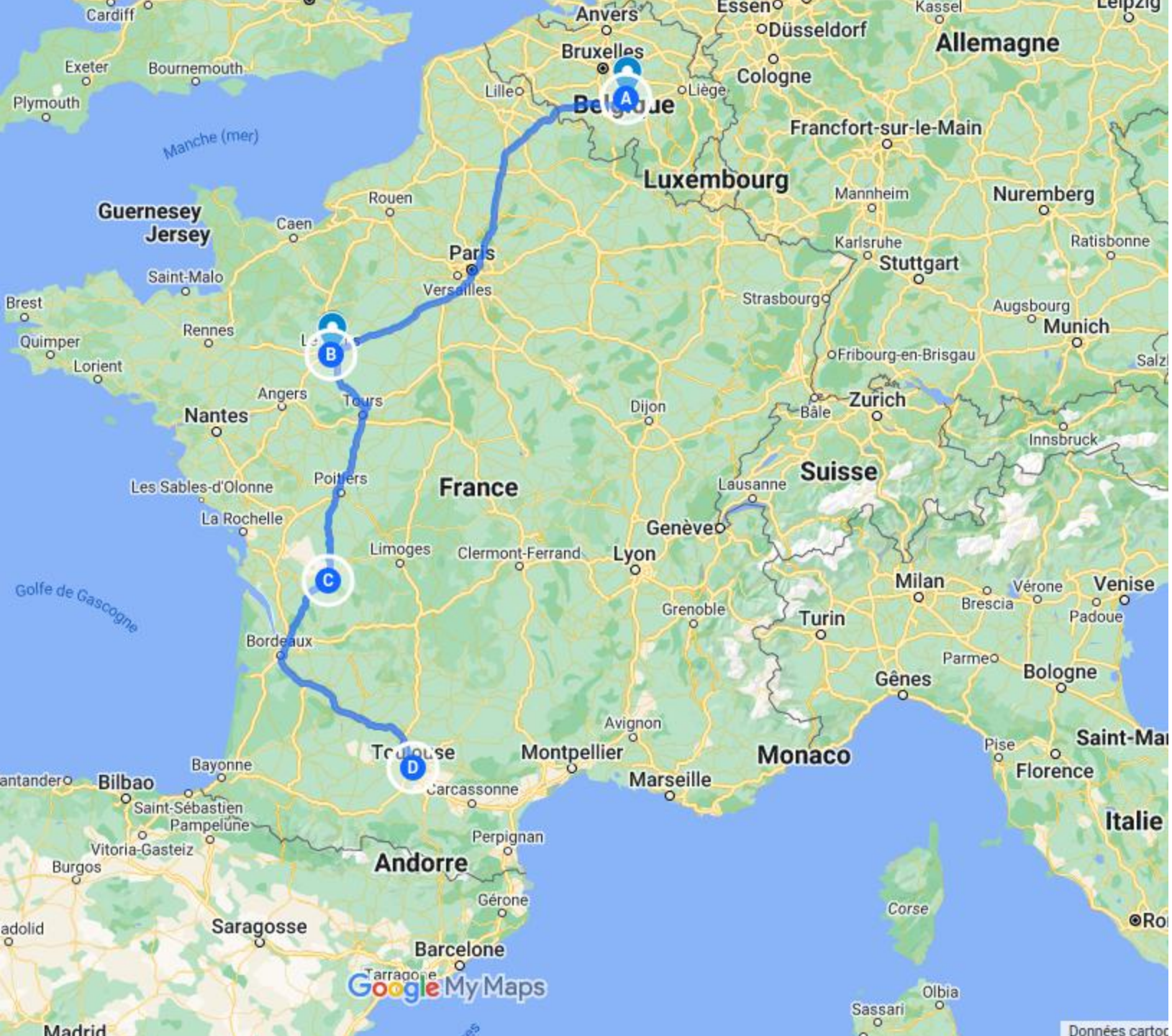
According to Xavier Fetweys (Climatologist Uliège)



In 2030 Gembloux will have the climate of Mans

In 2070 the climate of Angoulême

According to Xavier Fetweys (Climatologist Uliège)



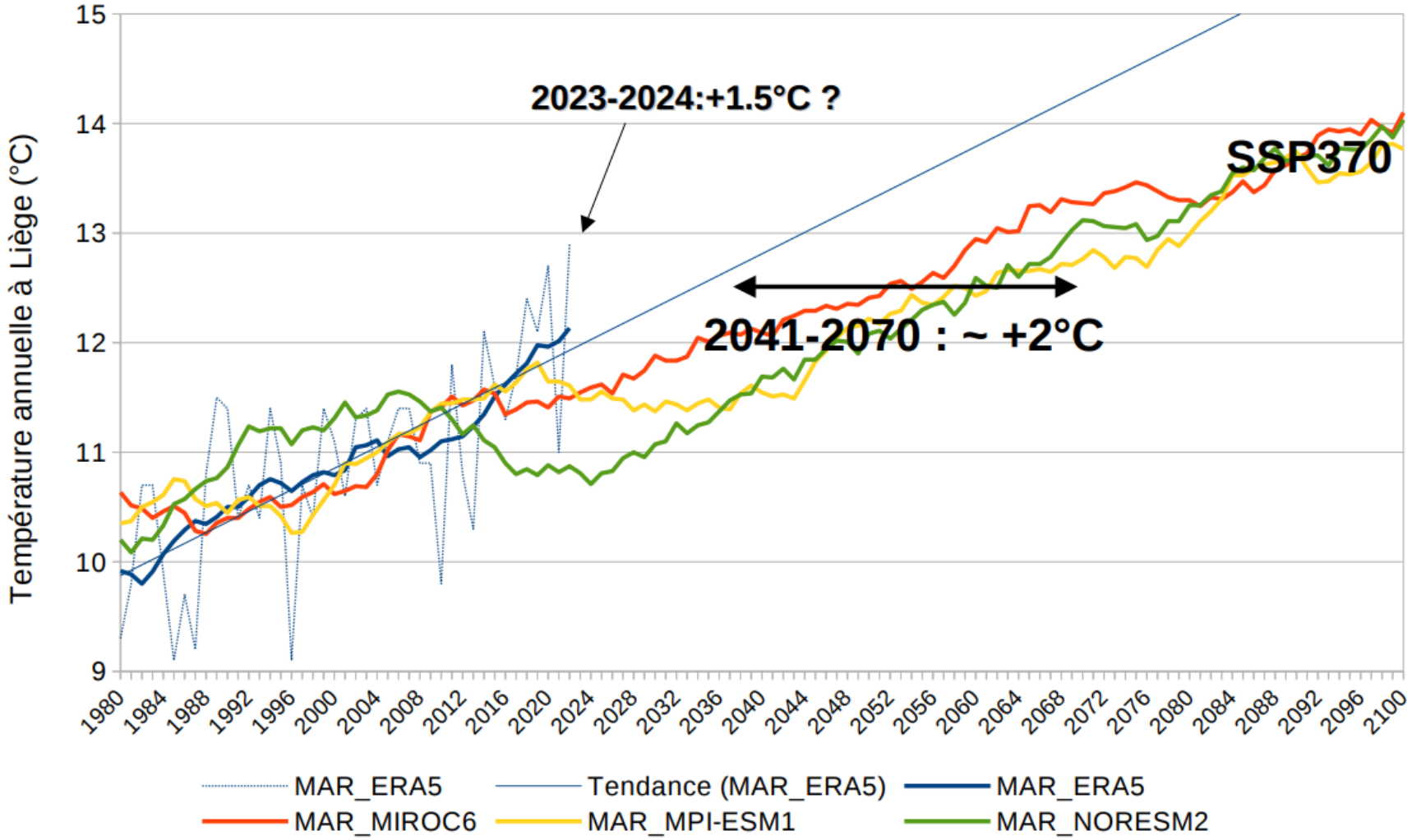
In 2030 Gembloux will have the climate of Mans

In 2070 the climate of Angoulême

In 2100 the temperature of Toulouse

According to Xavier Fetweys (Climatologist Uliège)

Where are we going?



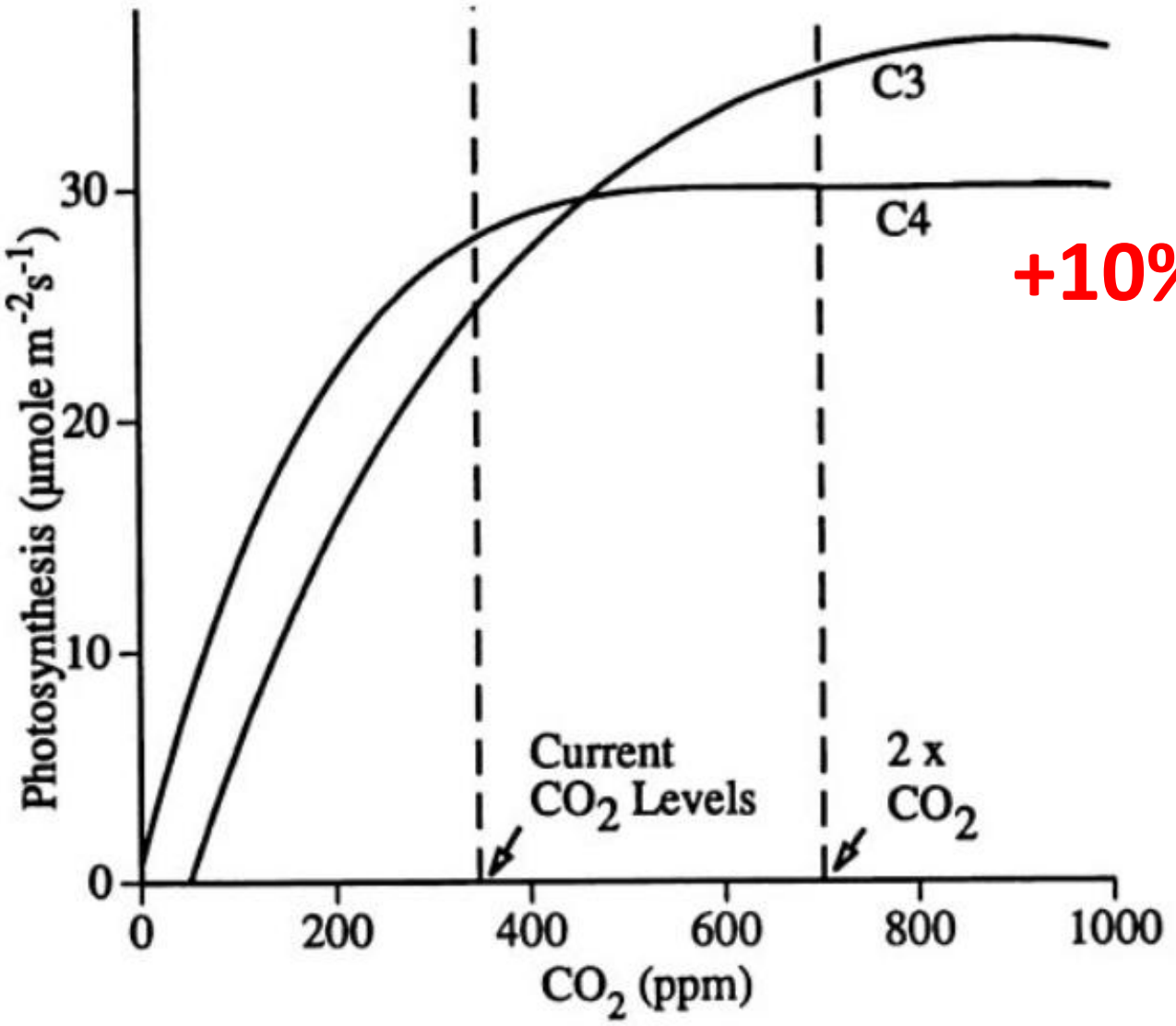
Different Global Circulation Model (GCM):

- CMCC
- MIROC
- MPI
- …

One direction!

Effect of CO2

Don’t forget the CO2 fertilizer effect !



Kaiser, 1997

Predicting the impact of climate change with crop models

Main inputs

Daily climatic conditions
- Solar radiation
- Temperature : minimum and maximum
- Rainfall
- Air humidity
- Wind speed
- CO_2 concentration

Management itinerary
- Sowing : date, depth & density
- Soil tillage
- Residue & organic matter restitution
- Irrigation & fertilization : date, amount & type
- Special techniques : pruning, cutting, …
- Harvest

Cultivated plants
- Species and cultivars
- Ecophysiological properties
- Initial status

Soil permanent and initial properties
- Soil depth
- Bulk density
- Water content at wilting point & field capacity
- Stone content
- Initial water and N contents
- Clay content, organic N, pH, $CaCO_3$, etc.
- …

STICS modules

Ecophysiology of aerial parts
- Phenological and aerial development
- Above- and belowground growth
- Yield elaboration

Crop microclimate
- Soil temperature
- Crop temperature

Plant, soil & management interactions
- Water demand and management
- Nitrogen demand, fixation and management
- Organic matter cycling and management

Soil – root interactions
- Root density profile
- Water balance
- Nitrogen balance
- Water, nitrogen and heat transfer

Main outputs

Plant development
- Phenological development
- Leaf area index
- Plant/tiller density
- …

Root system growth
- Root front growth
- Root density profile

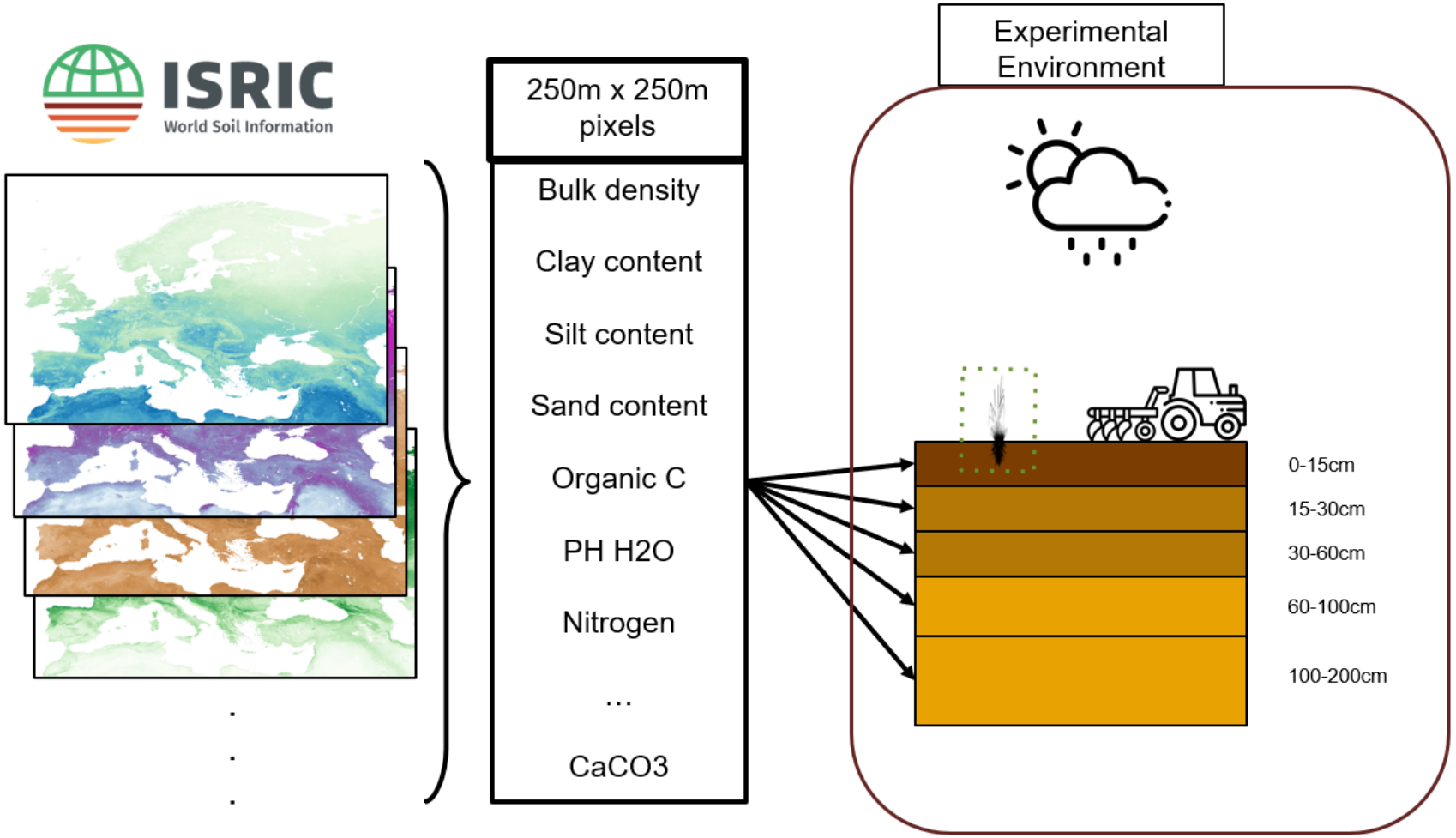
Aboveground growth
- Aboveground biomass & organs' repartition
- Yield components
- Yield quality (water, protein, oil, …)
- Plant N uptake & grain N content

Plant sensed stresses
- Water (deficit and anoxia) stress indices
- Nitrogen stress index
- Frost and high temperature stress indices

Soil water & nitrogen balances
- Soil water content, soil/mulch evaporation and plant transpiration
- Soil mineral N content, soil organic C and N content, soil CO_2 and N_2O emissions
- Water deep infiltration & N leaching

Soil structure
- Soil organic C and N dynamics
- Compaction and fragmentation

Predicting the impact of climate change with crop models

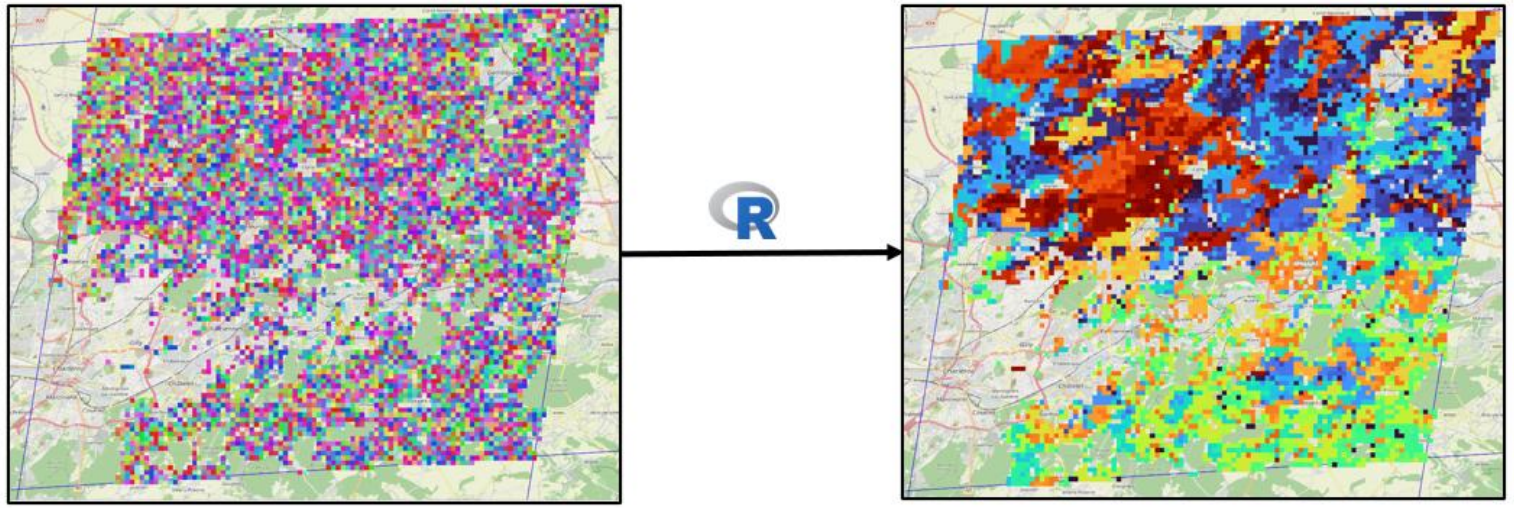


Soil data : 250*250m

Climate data : 5*5 km

Predicting the impact of climate change with crop models

Soil data : 250*250m
Climate data : 5*5 km
aggregation by similar soil within climatic tiles using unsupervised X-means clustering



Predicting the impact of climate change with crop models

5 crops studied :

- Winter wheat 
- Rapeseed 
- Sugar beet 
- Potato 
- Maize 

==> Calibrations of crop parameter file developed for Belgium by Delandmeter et al. (2023, 2024) and Lenoir (2024).

Predicting the impact of climate change with crop models

5 crops studied :

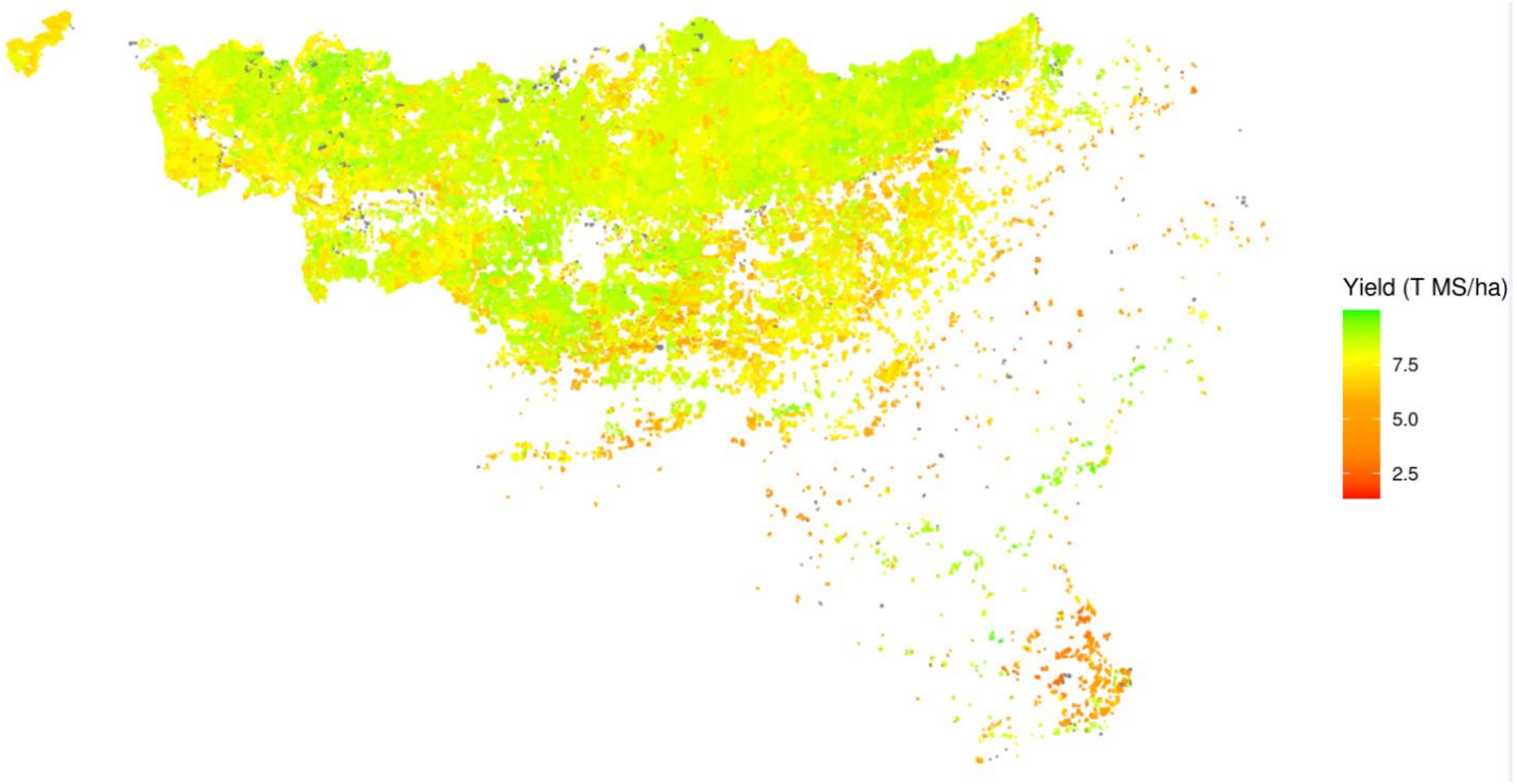
- Winter wheat 
- Rapeseed 
- Sugar beet 
- Potato 
- Maize 

3 GCMs and 3 global warming scenario's (+ the historical period 1980-2010)

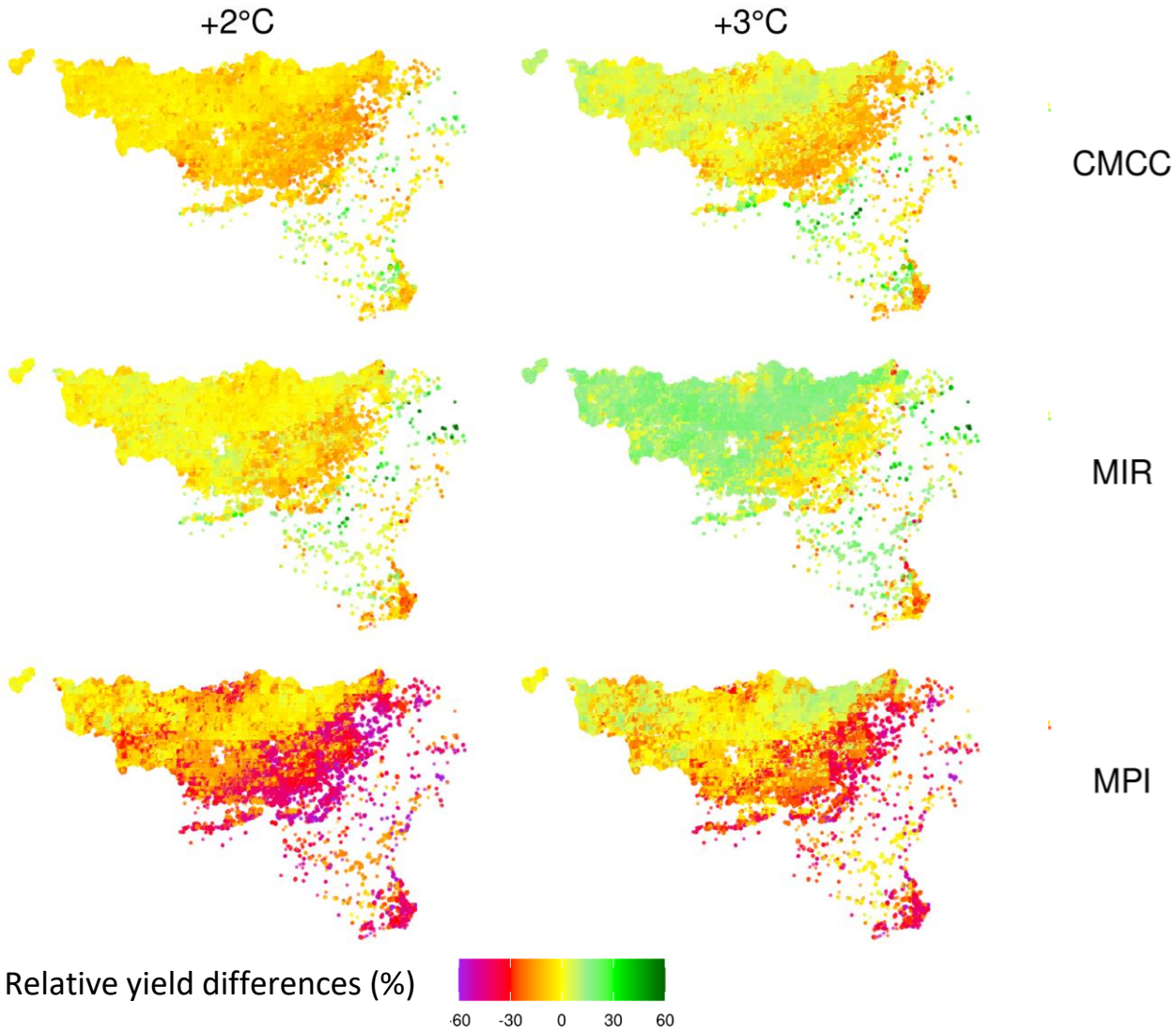
GCMs		*+2°C*	*+3°C*	*+4°C*
CMCC-CM2_SR5	**Years**	2024-2053	2048-2077	2060-2079
	[CO_2]	429	605	741
MIROC6	**Years**	2030-2065	2066-2095	2081-2100
	[CO_2]	545	722	1005
MPI-ESM1-2-HR	**Years**	2045-2074	2071-2100	2081-2100
	[CO_2]	592	757	1005

Winter wheat

Historical



Winter wheat

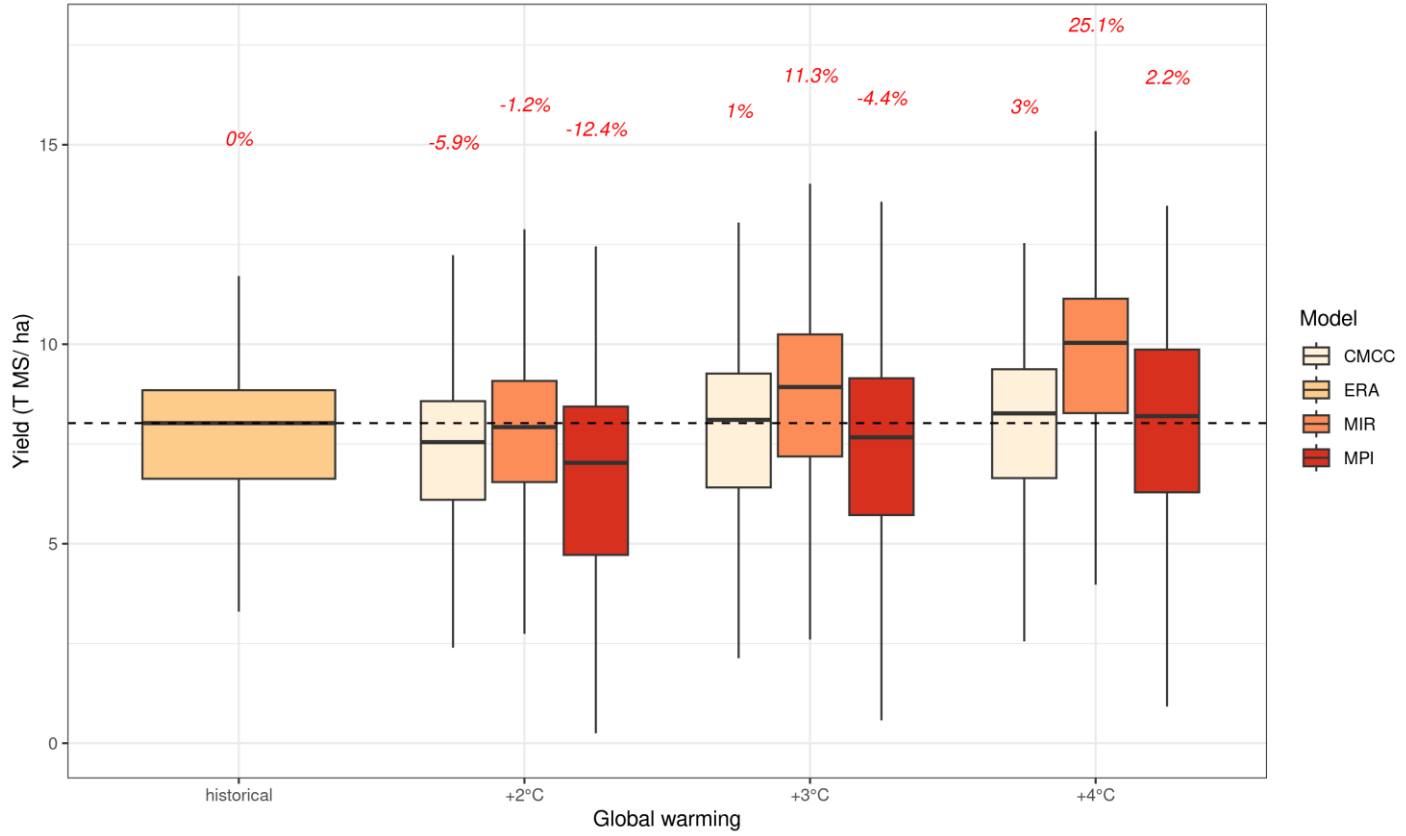


Spatial response is different

Winter wheat

Historical

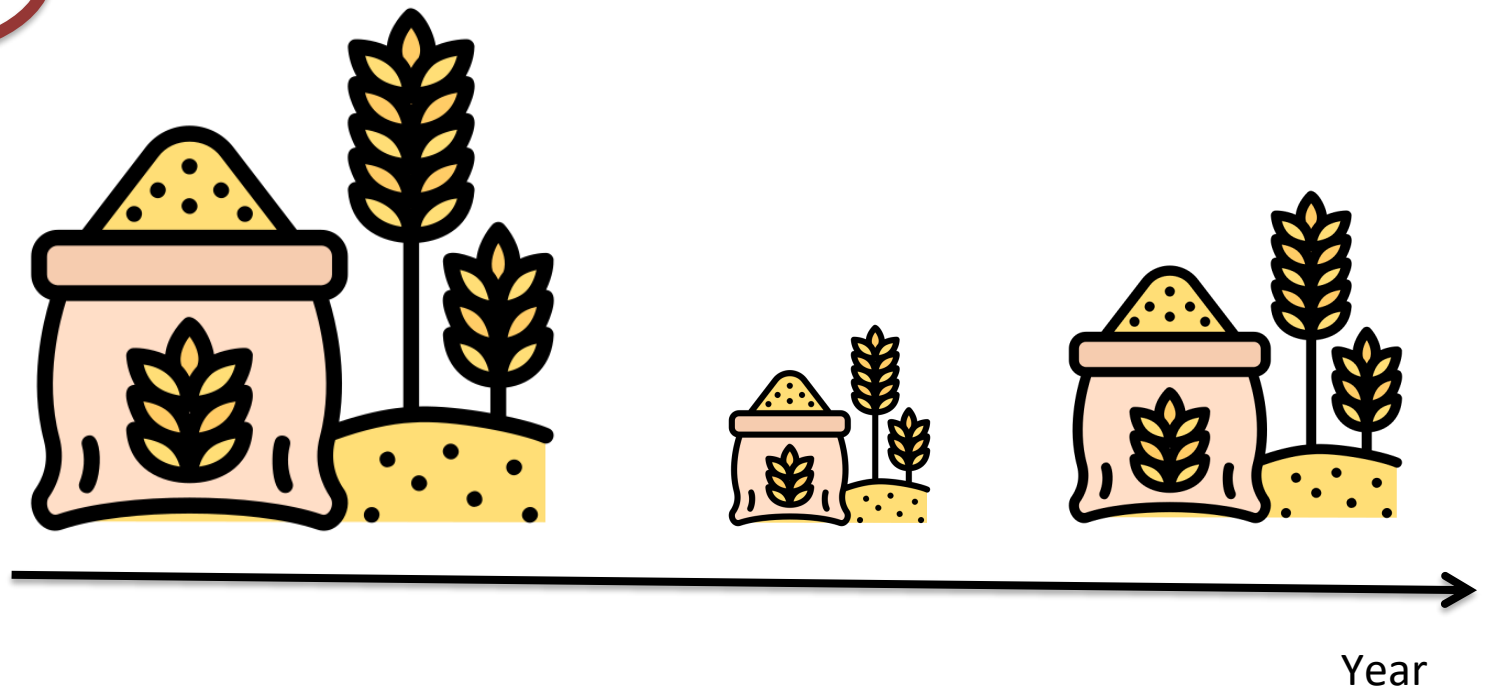
Under climate change



==>Yield at the short term will tend to decrease !

Winter wheat

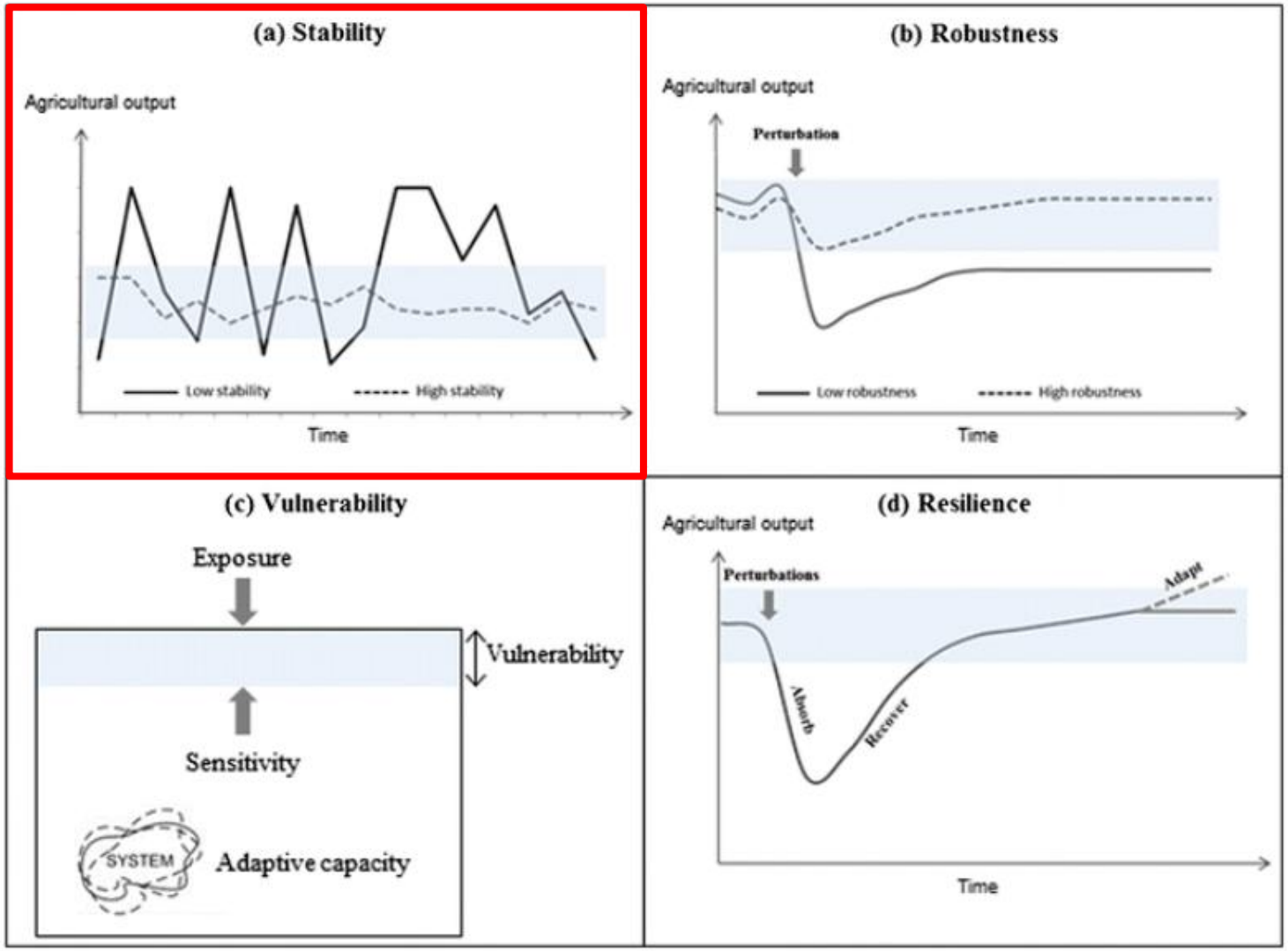
How does my yield fluctuate from year to year?



Median yield is not enough. Yield stability is also important for farmers.

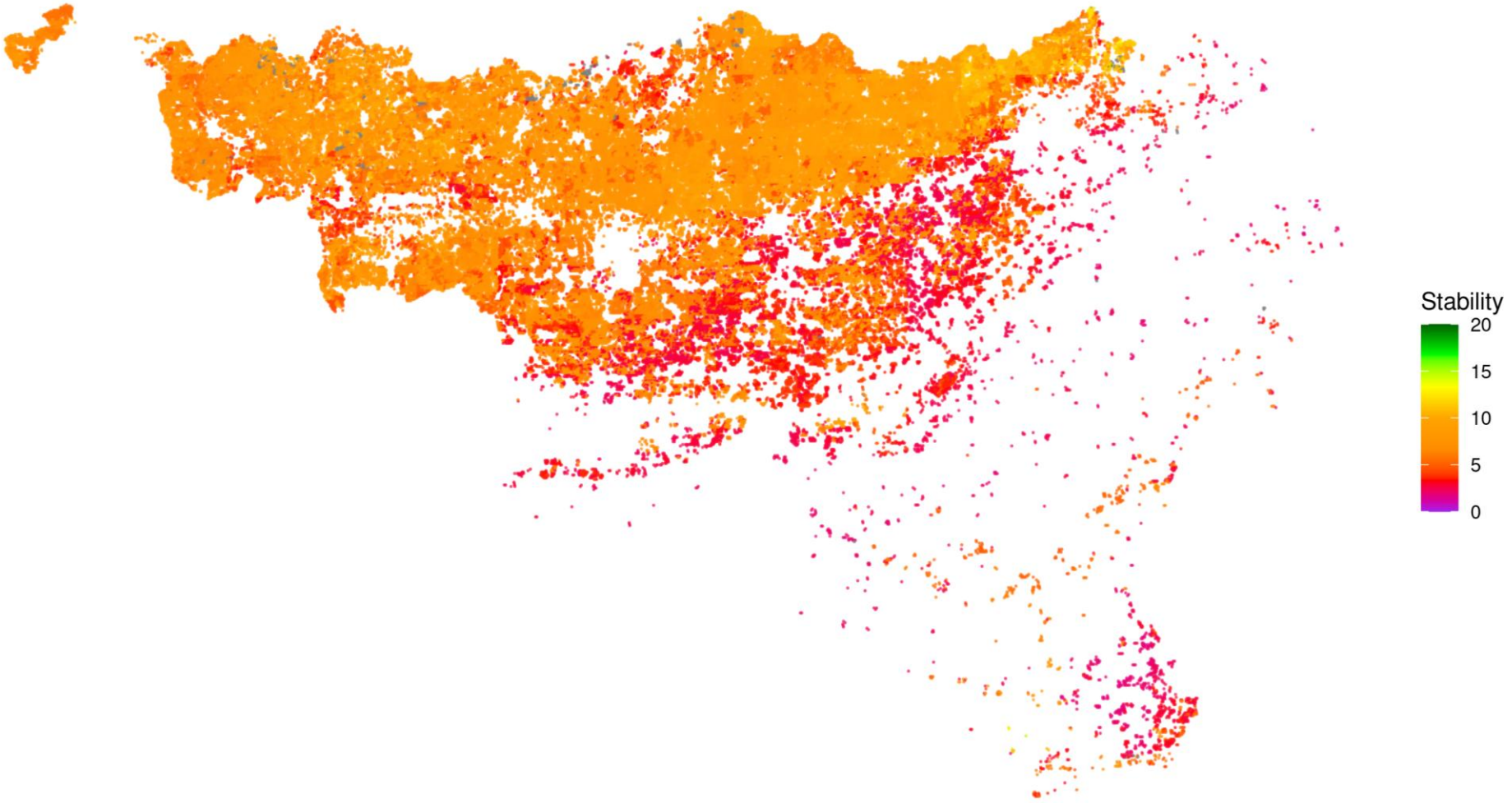
Stability

Stability = μ/σ

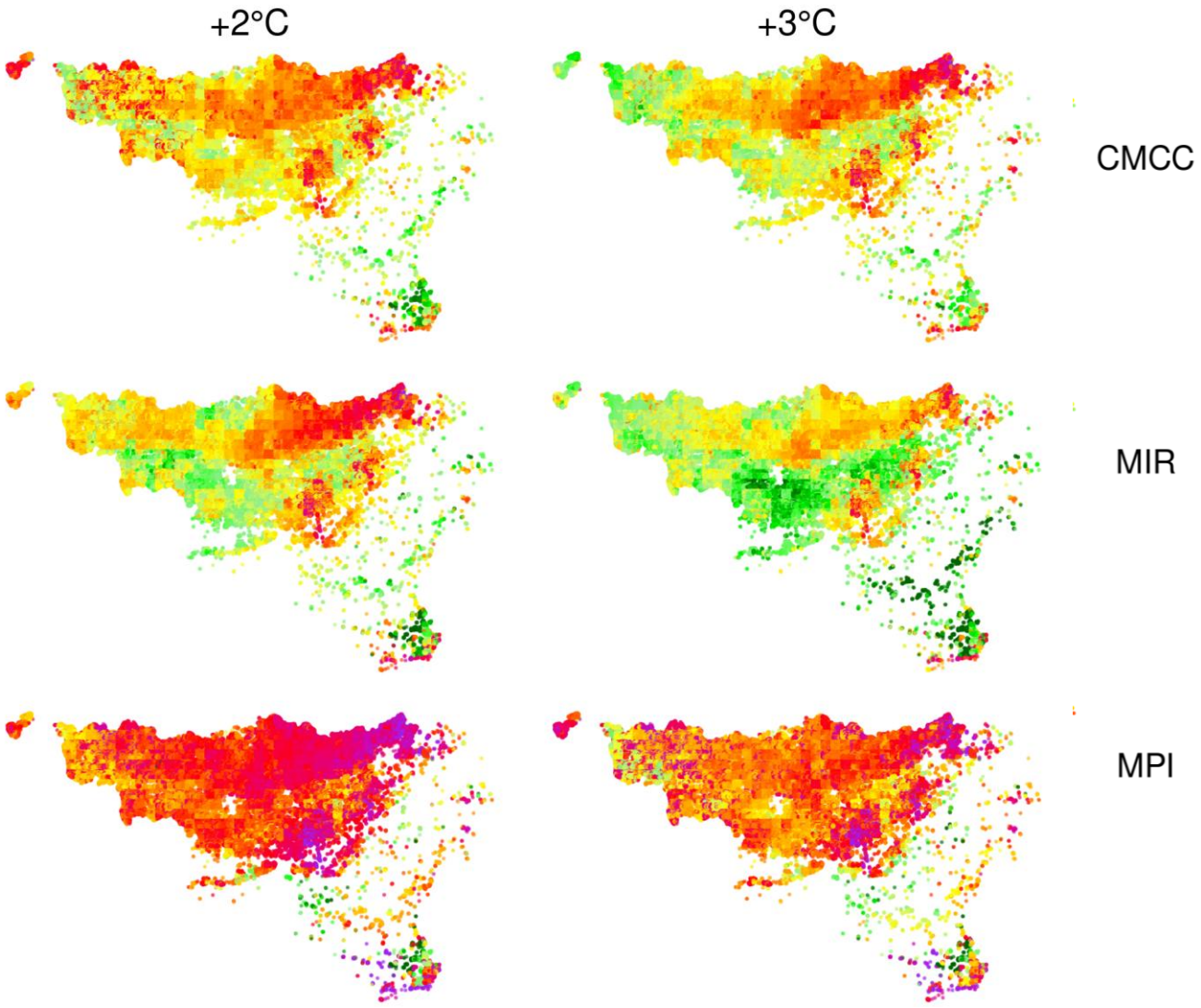


Urruty et al., 2016

Winter wheat



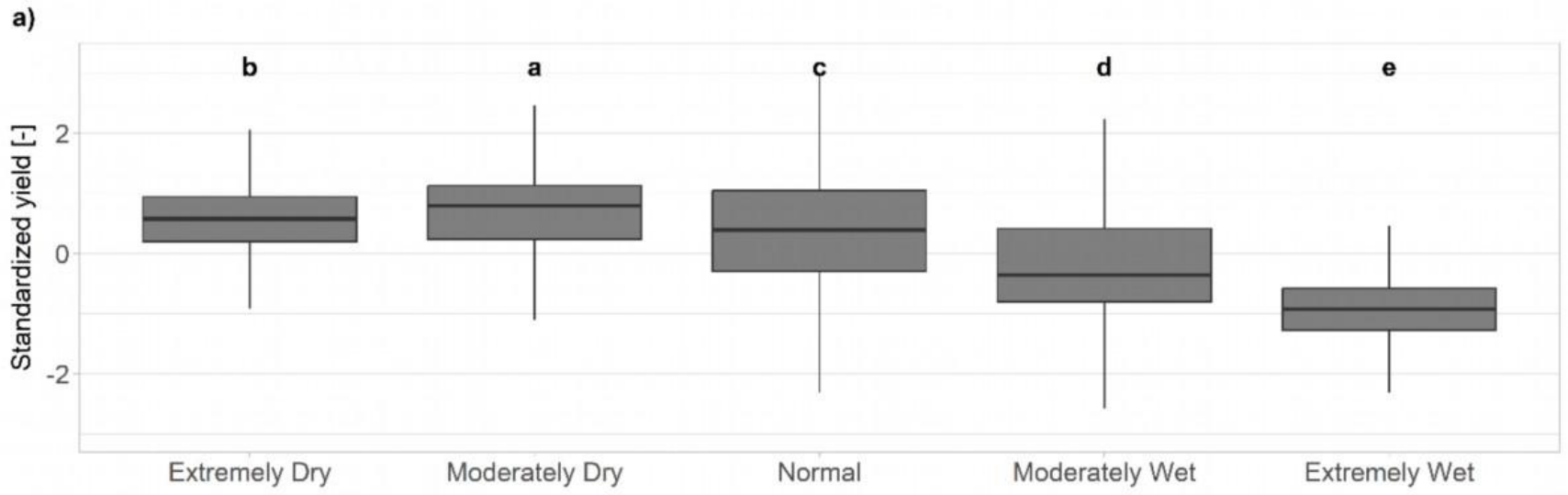
Winter wheat



In the north of Wallonia: decrease of the stability.

MPI GCM induces high unstability

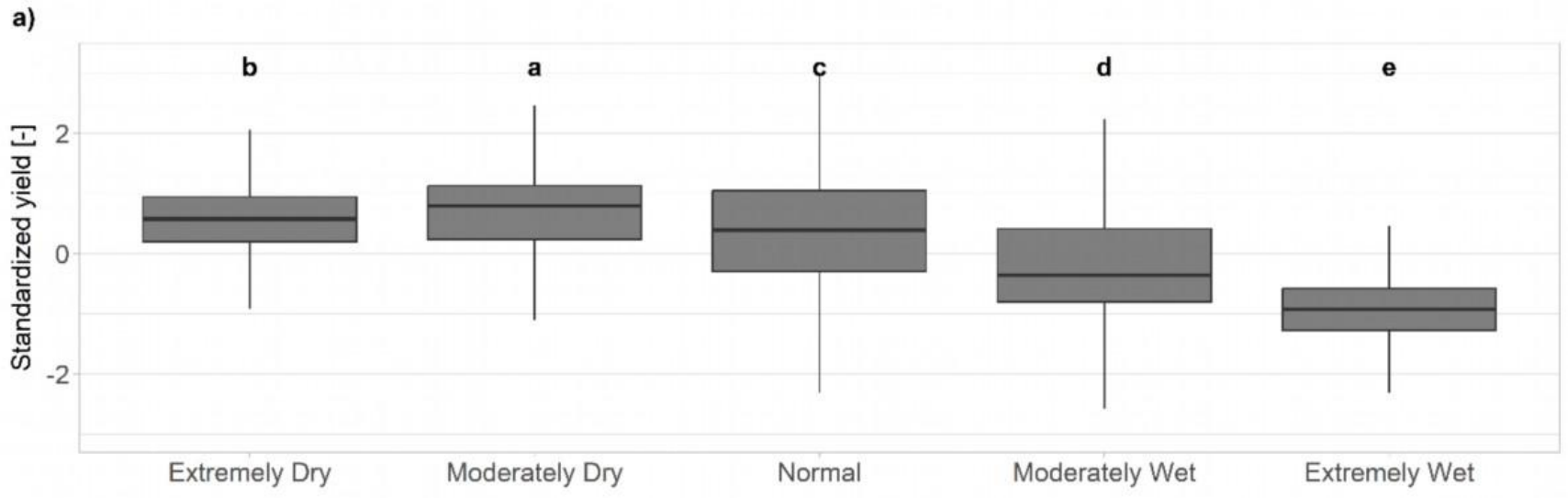
Winter wheat



Delandmeter et al. (2025)

/!\ Stress index
for the period March–May

Winter wheat

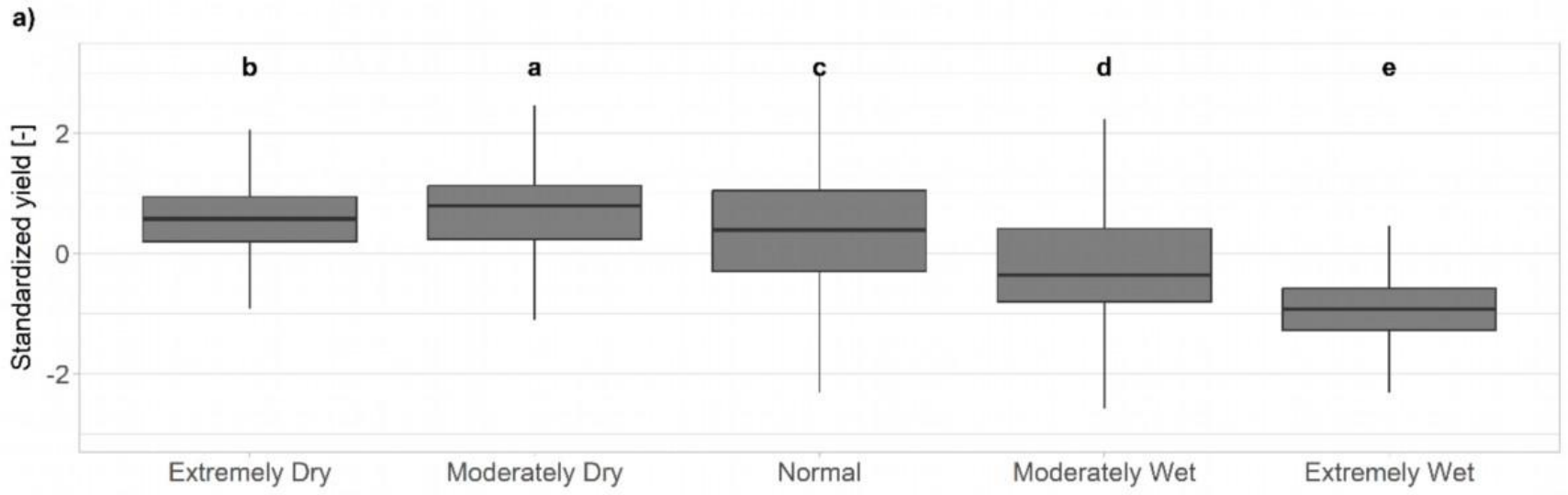


Delandmeter et al. (2025)

==> Wheat yields in the Walloon Region will suffer greater losses in **wet years** than in dry ones.

/!\ Stress index for the period March–May

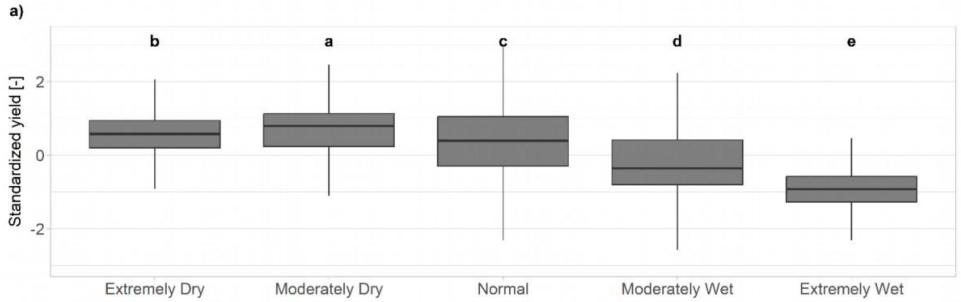
Winter wheat



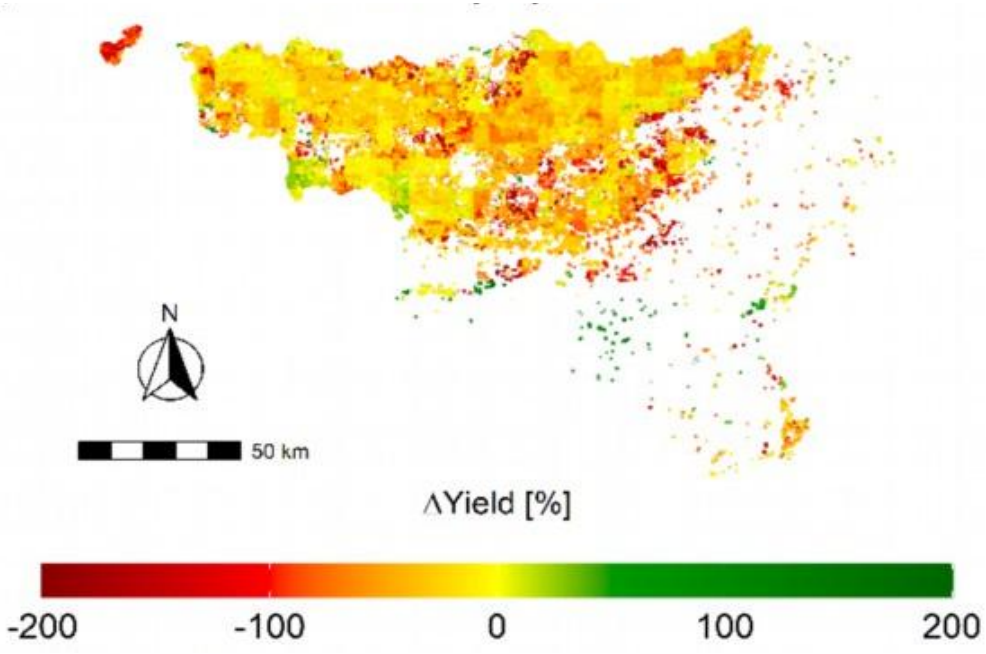
Delandmeter et al. (2025)

	Historical	+2°C	+3°C
Extremely dry	1/10	0.8/10	1.2/ 10
Moderaly dry	1/10	1.2/10	1.5/10
Moderaly wet	2/10	1.8/10	1.8/ 10
Extremely wet	0.5/10	2.3/10	1.7 /10

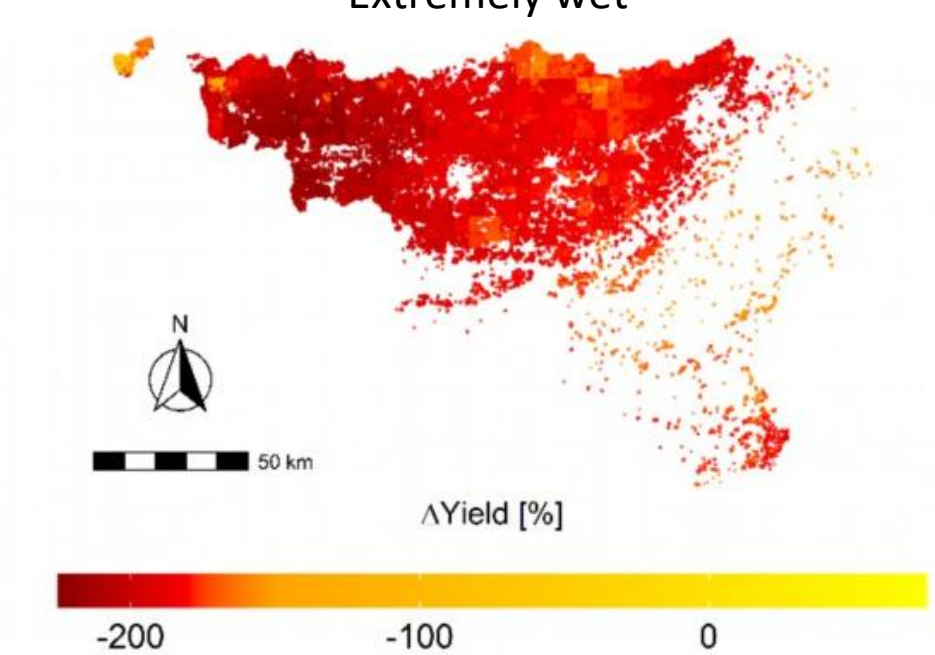
Winter wheat



Extremely dry

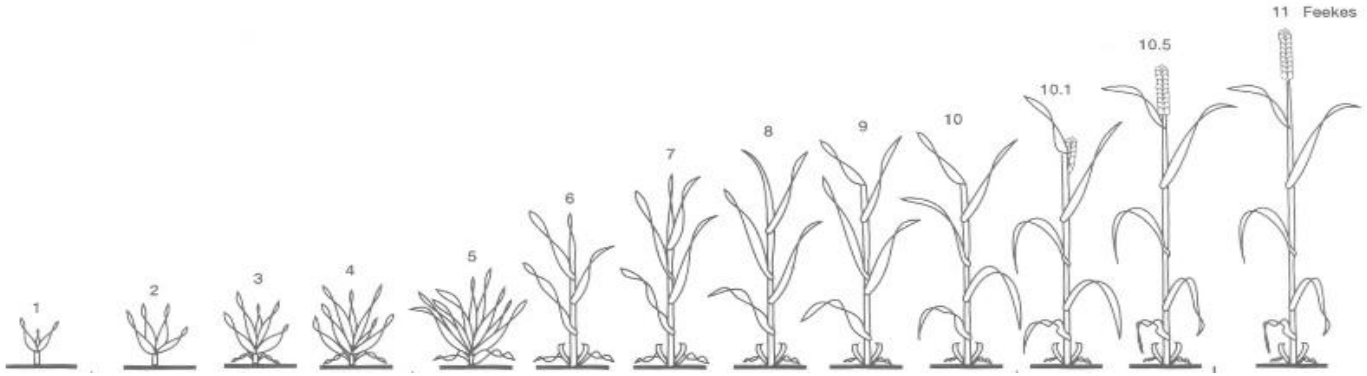


Extremely wet



Delandmeter et al. (2025)

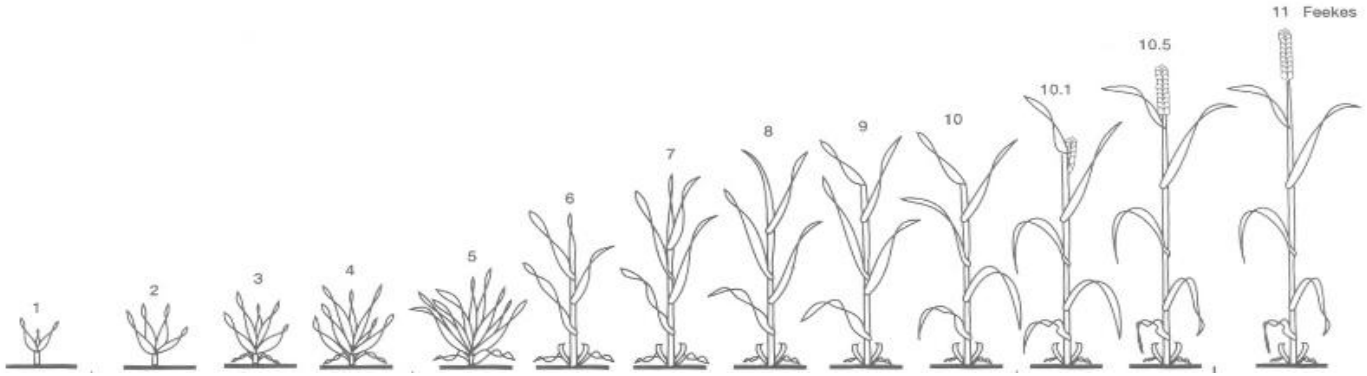
Winter wheat



https://www.yahoo.com/entertainment/speedy-gonzales-animated-movie-in-development-at-212251939.html?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2xlLmNvbS8&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAAEOaLuNrm3Ju-TY3sU-240_y5w8000g4CLeQlb1rhkUJPFEScr-SKVyiB71w6TwsaeflTEhyFDwbuOlpNlEegbCKLJ7qOXTMSZmChGpdqByAZmC1EgpfVNBj364ogqr3SZZYMEC05SpKXcmwNrIqPdjZMGesnUr1GDpe8HiD6Lyg

Physiological maturity
historical : 24 Juillet

Winter wheat



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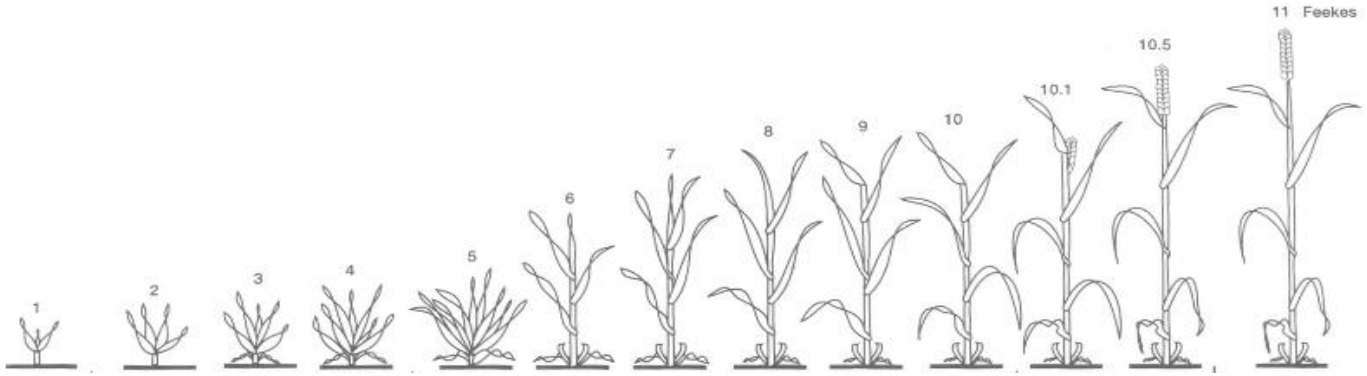
Physiological maturity
historical: 24 Juillet
+2°C :16 Juillet

– **8 days**

Winter wheat



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Physiological maturity

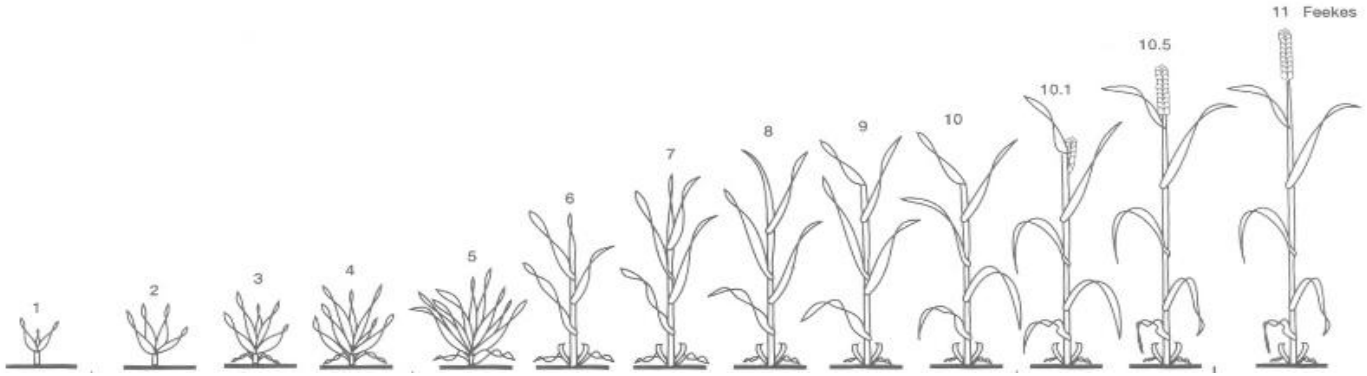
historical: 24 Juillet

+2°C :16 Juillet

+3°C :8 juillet

– **16 days**

Winter wheat



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Physiological maturity

historical: 24 Juillet

+2°C :16 Juillet

+3°C :8 juillet

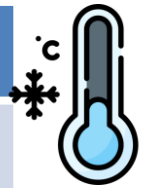
– **16 days**

==> Avoid a part of summer heat stress !

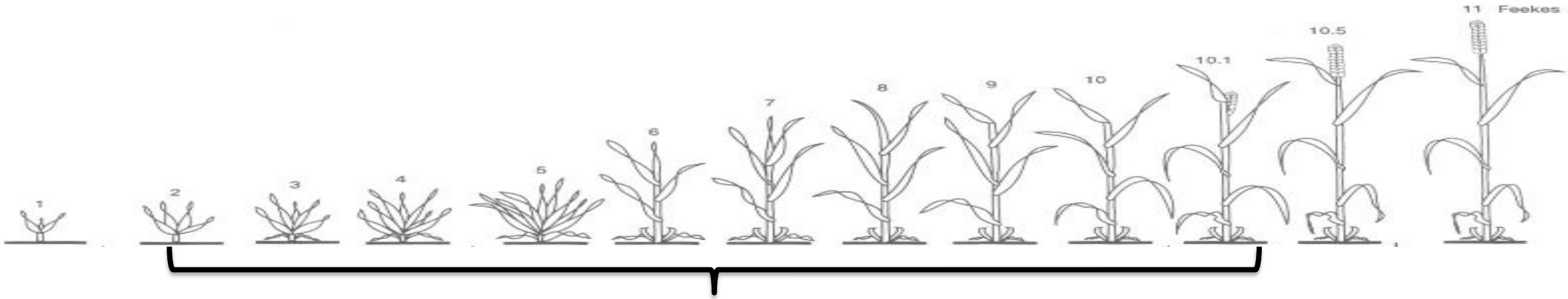
Winter wheat

juvenile stage

	+2°C	+3°C
Thermal stress	-28%	-41%
Water logging	≃	≃



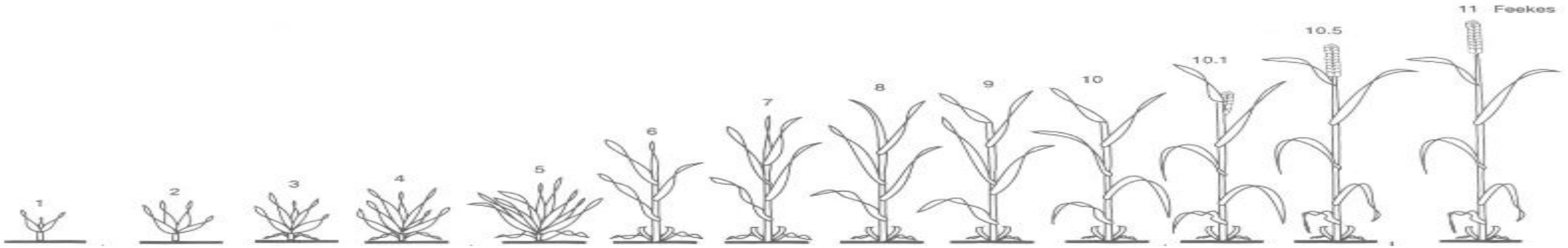
Winter wheat



	+2°C	+3°C
Thermal stress	2 out of the 3 GCMs ↘	2 out of the 3 GCMs ↘
Water logging	+460%	+470%

/ !\ Huge inter-annual variability

Winter wheat



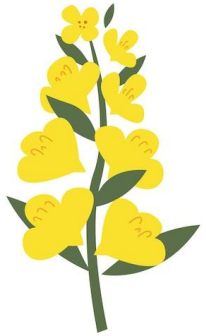
reproductive phase

	+2°C	+3°C
Thermal stress	+121%	+140%
Water logging	2 out of the 3 GCMs ↘	2 out of the 3 GCMs ↘
Water deficit	2 out of the 3 GCMs ↗	2 out of the 3 GCMs ↗

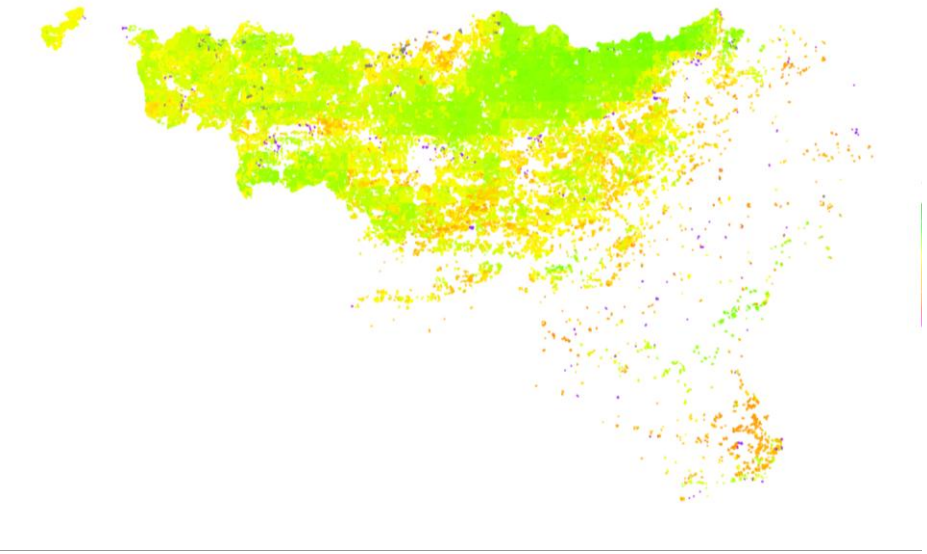
/ !\ Huge variability

And for the other crops ?

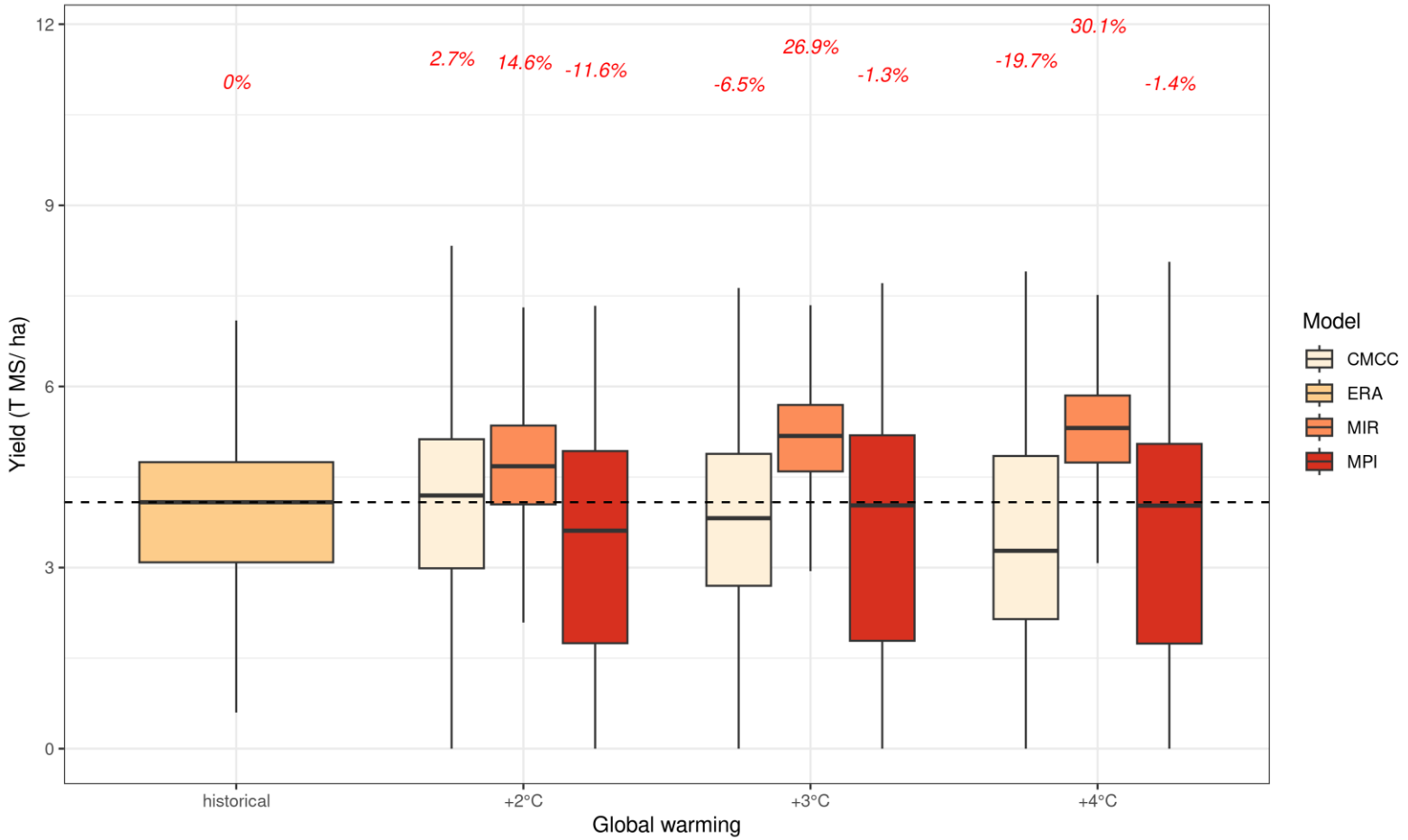
And for the other crops ?



Historical



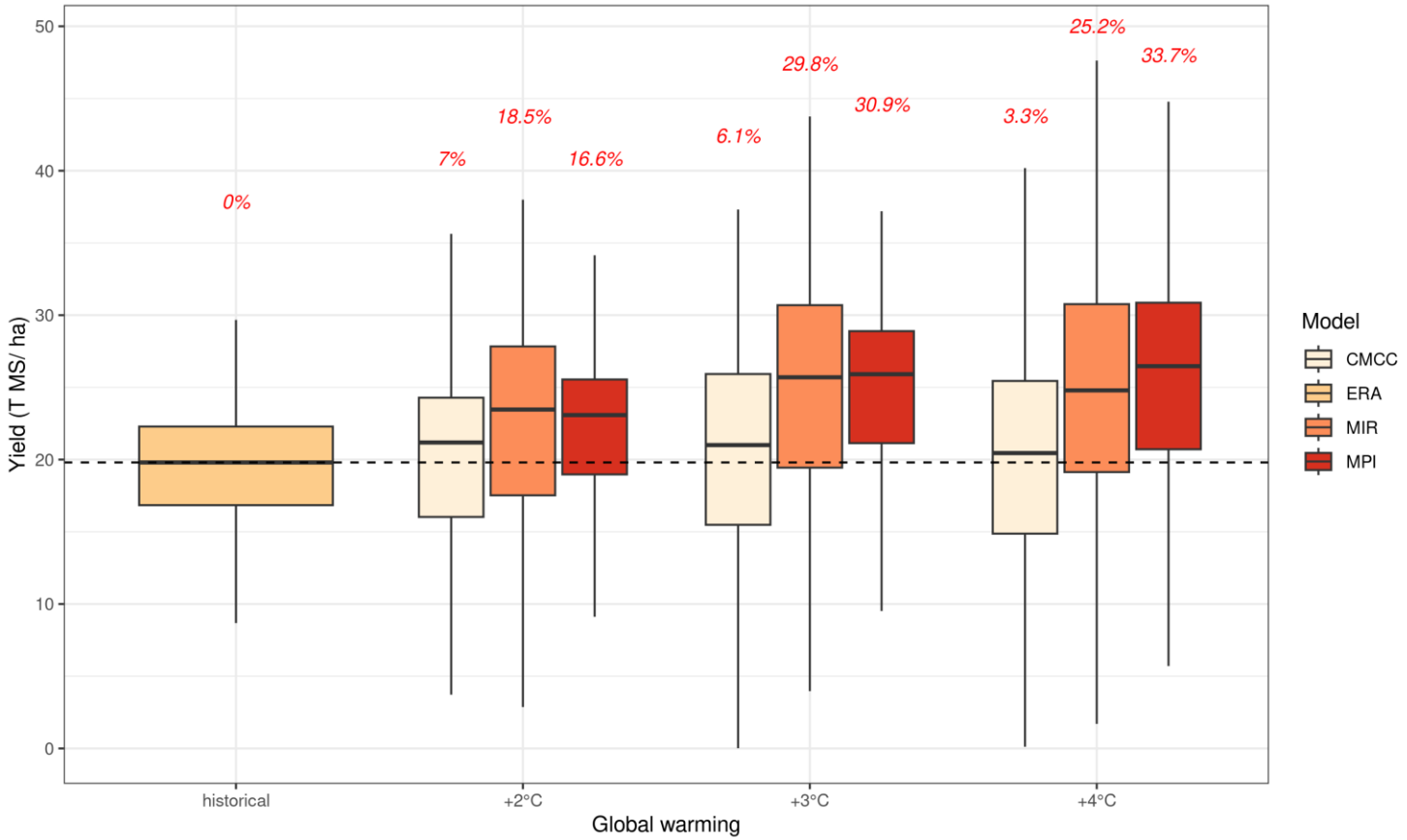
Climate change



And for the other crops ?

Historical

Climate change



And for the other crops?

	Global warming					
	+2°C			+3°C		
	CMCC	MIROC	MPI	CMCC	MIROC	MPI
Winter wheat	↘	↘	↘	≃	↗	↘
Rapeseed	≃	↗	↘	↘	↗	≃
Sugar beet	↗	↗	↗	↗	↗	↗
Potato	↘	↘	↘	↘	↗	↗
Maize	↘	↘	↗	↘	↘	↗

The response is inconsistent between crops.

Response depends on GCM

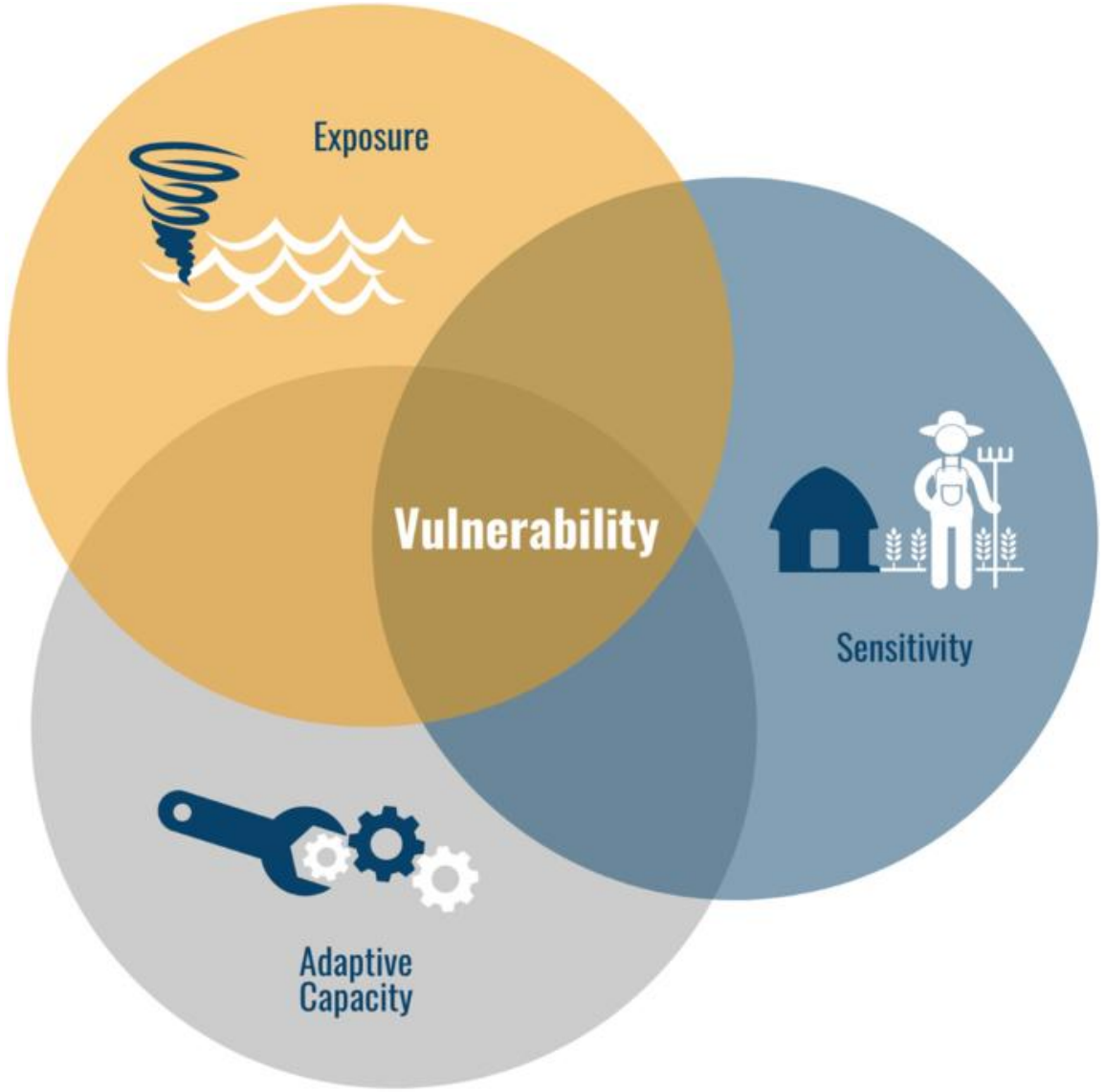
Under a +2°C warming scenario, most crops tend to show a decrease in mean yield.

/!\ Don’t forget the limitations of the predictions

Modelling

- First study assessing crop responses to climate change spatialized at the scale of Wallonia.
- Some hypothesis could be involve with scientific knowledge
- The results depend on the quality of calibration
- Reinitialised vs sequential simulation
- ==> Continued improvement

The next step ?

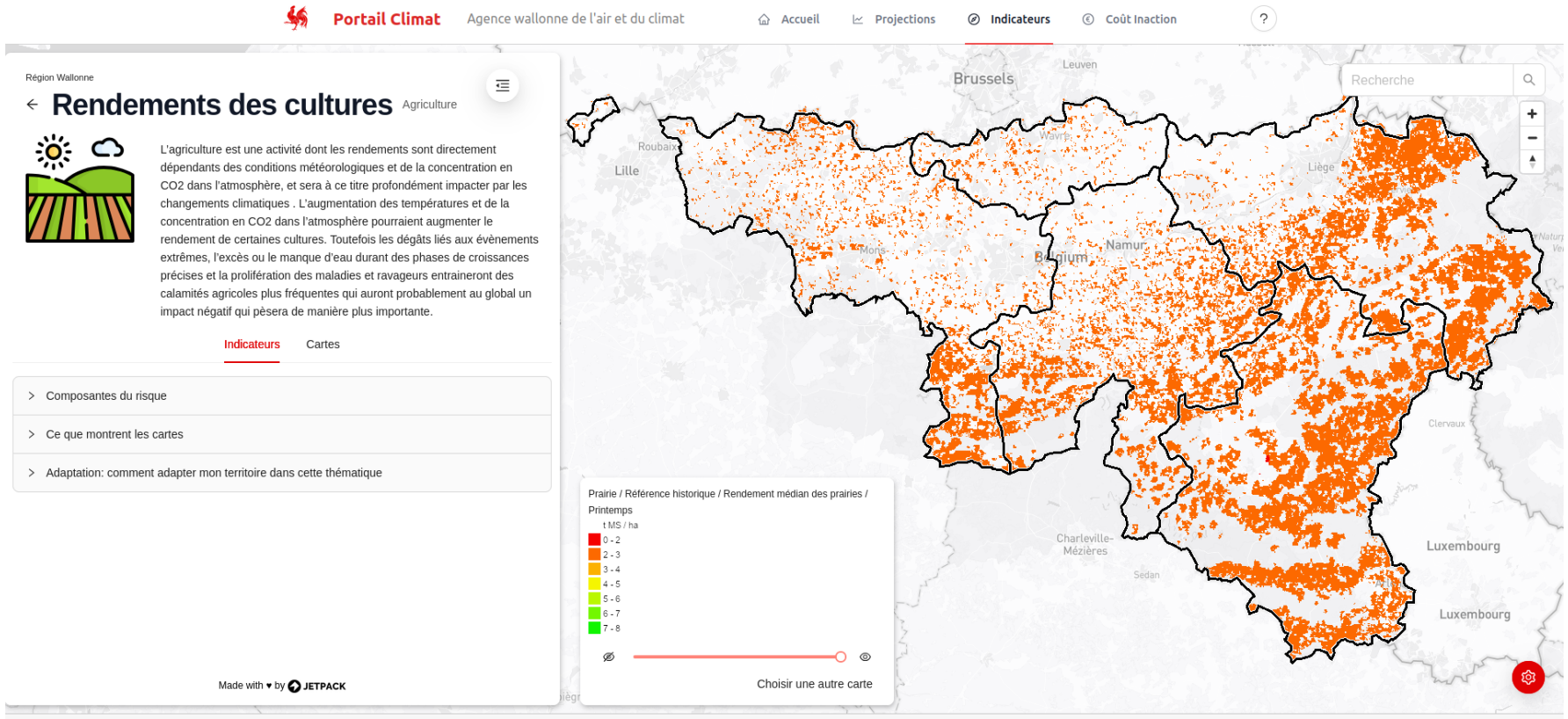


- Studying the changes of technical management (adaptability) to reduce the vulnerability of crop productions

Nawrotzki et al.,2023

For more informations

https://portailclimat-awac.be/indicateurs?location=R%C3%A9gion%20Wallonne&theme=agricultureRendement



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Thank you for your attention