

Monitoring the Precipitation Deficits with regard to the 2005 Drought in SW Europe

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During the period from November 2004 to July 2005 the Southwestern regions of Europe exhibited distinct precipitation deficits that led to severe droughts for instance in parts of Portugal, Central Spain and Southern France. Near real time observed 1.0° lat-long gridded precipitation data available from the First Guess product of the GPCC (Global Precipitation Climatology Centre) have been utilised to estimate precipitation anomalies for each individual month within the period under consideration. Additionally for selected regions time series of accumulated precipitation sums from November 2004 through July 2005 have been calculated and compared to accumulated series determined on the basis of respective monthly long-term (1961-1990) means. Monitoring results illustrate that precipitation sums have been below normal during all individual months over the southwestern part of the European continent. Time series of accumulated precipitation sums reflect the distinct accretion of precipitation deficits over the 9-month period most pronounced over Portugal leading to the disastrous drought in 2005.