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# On the decadal increase in the tropical mean outgoing longwave radiation for the period 1984-2000

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Abstract. In the present paper, we have calculated the outgoing longwave radiation at the top of the atmosphere (OLR at TOA) using a deterministic radiation transfer model, cloud data from ISCCP-D, and atmospheric temperature and humidity data from NCEP/NCAR reanalysis, for the seventeen-year period 1984-2000. We constructed anomaly time-series of the OLR at TOA, as well as of all of the key input climatological data, averaged in the tropical region between 20°N and 20°S. We compared the anomaly time-series of the model calculated OLR at TOA with that obtained from the ERBE S-10N (WFOV NF edition 2) non-scanner measurements. The model results display very similar seasonal and inter-annual variability as the ERBS data, and indicate a decadal increase of OLR at TOA of

 $1.9\pm0.2$ Wm<sup>-2</sup>/decade, which is lower than that displayed by the ERBS timeseries ( $3.5\pm0.3$ Wm<sup>-2</sup>). Analysis of the inter-annual and long-term variability of the various parameters determining the OLR at TOA, showed that the most important contribution to the observed trend comes from a decrease in high-level cloud cover over the period 1984-2000, followed by an apparent drying of the upper troposphere and a decrease in low-level cloudiness. Opposite but small trends are introduced by a decrease in lowlevel cloud top pressure, an apparent cooling of the lower stratosphere (at the 50mbar level) and a small decadal increase in mid-level cloud cover.

■ Final Revised Paper (PDF, 2470 KB) ■ Discussion Paper (ACPD)

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