

**Reviewer 2, comment 1:**

Your explanation of the NDVI calculations that underlie figures 7-9 in the rebuttal are helpful, but the manuscript text and figures need to be improved to reflect this.

For the readers to also understand what you have done, you need to add a subsection to the Methods section (in between 2.3.3 and 2.3.4) in which you explain the different ways that you calculated NDVI anomalies (monthly, seasonal, yearly). The Results section 3.4 needs to be moved there and rephrased for clarity.

Currently it is unclear what you mean with "types of selections (such as "month selection" based on SPI-3, -6, and -12 (Fig.2 and S1); "year selection" based on both seasonal and annual SPI (Fig.S2); and "wet season of a specific year selection" based on smaller SPI values found during the wet season from Fig.S2a)." (lines 348-351).

Why would you call the seasonal SPI a "year" selection and not add a separate "seasonal" selection?

Would it not be clearer to use the word "timescale" instead of "selection" (so monthly timescale, seasonal timescale, yearly timescale)?

And for the "months", why have you chosen only the "months at the beginnings and endings of each of drought episodes"? This should be done for all months during the drought. Same for the years. You have included some of these in Supplementary Material. These need to be moved to the paper itself and expended to all events.

This is especially problematic, because the selection of the drought periods seems quite random. "The selection was based both on the SPI values for each of the regions from Fig. 2-4 (as marked with green rectangles in Fig. 2) and the SPI values averaged over the whole island (Fig. S1)". There is no formal explanation of the method for selecting these time periods. Please explain (in the Methods section) which SPI values over which accumulation period, spatial domain, and duration were taken as conditions to select the drought events.

In Section 3.4.1 you mention that it "is not appropriate to assess vegetation loss based on months' selection by referring to the starting and ending months of the drought episode". This is obvious and you should not have analysed the drought months in this way from the start. Please change the analysis to include all months during a drought event.

In the manuscript text, the use of the term monthM is confusing, since you did not include an equation in which that term was used. Please change to the formulation you use in the rebuttal.

It is unclear what is the difference between the seasonal analysis in the "year" type and the "wet season of a specific year" type. If you specify the seasonal time scale as a

separate approach and analyse all seasons in the selected year, there is no need anymore for a an analysis of the “wet season of a specific year”. And it is also unclear why there was no seasonal and yearly analysis for Event II.

**Reviewer 2, comment 2:**

This is interesting, but formulated in a very confusing way. For example it is unclear whether this dry season is before or after the wet season and what the SPI value of this dry season was. The discussion on the wet and dry season anomalies, which could possibly be related to changes in the timing of the rainfall onset is interesting and important. I would like the authors to show and discuss this more clearly. If the rainy season is shifted that low SPI values in a wet season month would be combined with high SPI values in a dry season month. What would help is a clear monthly and seasonal analysis of SPI and NDVI anomalies of all the months / seasons in a drought event, instead of a confusing explanation of a dry season NDVI anomaly in a year that was selected for its low SPI values during the wet season.

**Reviewer 2, comment 3:**

Thanks for rephrasing. I agree with the reviewer and I think there are some more instances where you need to be more careful in describing the patterns you see, for example not confusing events with trends. In lines 481-482 you write for example that “It has already been noticed from SPI analysis (Fig.2-5) that the occurrence of drought has recently become more frequent and intense”, but you have not done a trend analysis on SPI values. Instead you should write something like: “the latest years were characterised by a severe drought, which influenced the NDVI trend analysis.”

Please check the manuscript for statements like these and rephrase.