



HAL
open science

A simple method based on routine observations to nowcast down-valley

Gert-Jan Duine, Thierry Hedde, Pierre Roubin, Pierre Durand

► **To cite this version:**

Gert-Jan Duine, Thierry Hedde, Pierre Roubin, Pierre Durand. A simple method based on routine observations to nowcast down-valley. *Journal of Applied Meteorology and Climatology*, 2016, 55 (7), pp.1497-1511. 10.1175/JAMC-D-15-0274.1 . cea-02382814

HAL Id: cea-02382814

<https://cea.hal.science/cea-02382814>

Submitted on 27 Nov 2019

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

1 **A simple method based on routine observations to nowcast down-valley**
2 **flows in shallow, narrow valleys**

3 Gert-Jan Duine*

4 *Laboratoire d'Aérodologie, University of Toulouse, CNRS, France*

5 *Laboratoire de Modélisation des Transferts dans l'Environnement, CEA Cadarache, France*

6 Thierry Hedde

7 *Laboratoire de Modélisation des Transferts dans l'Environnement, CEA Cadarache, France*

8 Pierre Roubin

9 *Laboratoire de Modélisation des Transferts dans l'Environnement, CEA Cadarache, France*

10 Pierre Durand

11 *Laboratoire d'Aérodologie, University of Toulouse, CNRS, France*

12 *Corresponding author address: Laboratoire d'Aérodologie, University of Toulouse, 14 Av. Edouard
13 Belin, Toulouse, France.

14 E-mail: gertjan.duine@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

15 A simple relation to diagnose the existence of a thermally driven down-
16 valley wind in a shallow (100 m deep) and narrow (1 - 2 km wide) valley
17 based on routine weather measurements has been determined. The relation is
18 based on a method which has been derived from a forecast verification princi-
19 ple. It consists in optimizing a threshold of permanently measured quantities
20 to nowcast the Cadarache (southeastern France) down-valley wind. Three pa-
21 rameters permanently observed at a 110-m high tower have been examined:
22 the vertical temperature difference (between 110 m and 2 m), the wind speed
23 at 110 m and a bulk Richardson number. The thresholds are optimized thanks
24 to the wind observations obtained within the valley during the field experi-
25 ment KASCADE, which was conducted in the winter of 2013. The highest
26 predictability (correct nowcasting ratio of 0.91) was found for the temperature
27 difference at a threshold value of 1.5°C (or 2.6°C for potential temperature).
28 The applicability of the method to other heights (2 and 30 m) and to sum-
29 mer conditions is also demonstrated. This allowed a reconstruction of the
30 climatology of the down-valley wind which demonstrates that the wind exists
31 throughout the year, and is strongly linked to nighttime duration. This thresh-
32 old technique will allow to forecast the subgrid-scale down-valley wind from
33 operational numerical weather coarse grid simulations by means of statistical
34 downscaling.

35 **1. Introduction**

36 Under clear skies and weak synoptic forcing, stable stratification develops during the night. Due
37 to surface radiative heat loss, the air layer close to the ground becomes denser than the layer above
38 (Stull 1988). Over sloping terrain a horizontal temperature gradient forms and the air will start to
39 flow downslope as a consequence of negative buoyancy (Manins and Sawford 1979; Haiden and
40 Whiteman 2005). The valley and drainage winds appearing on scales from meters (Mahrt et al.
41 2001) to tens of kilometers (Jiménez and Cuxart 2014) have been studied all over the globe (Barry
42 2013). The down-valley flows are mostly independent of above-valley wind conditions (Whiteman
43 and Doran 1993), especially in narrow valleys. They have been documented in climatological
44 studies for valley systems at different scales (Stewart et al. 2002), or categorized as a combination
45 of several parameters, such as net radiation, cooling rate and a temperature difference (Gudiksen
46 1989; Amanatidis et al. 1992).

47 Local measurements and observational analyses of down-valley flows remain necessary due to
48 distinct valley geometries and their influences on the flow pattern (Atkinson 1995; Sheridan et al.
49 2014), especially under stable stratification conditions where pollutant concentration can be high-
50 est due to weak dilution. Methods to analyze and predict the down-valley flow characteristics by
51 means of observations have been developed to a large extent, in the form of a radiation Richardson
52 number (Mahrt et al. 2001) or a temperature difference on the vertical (Amanatidis et al. 1992).
53 Drainage depths are determined by means of ambient wind conditions (Barr and Orgill 1989) or
54 with a combination of ridge top wind speed and strength and depth of the inversion (Horst and
55 Doran 1986). However, the studies devoted to predict the down-valley flows are mostly based on
56 observations which are rarely available on a routine basis.

57 The KASCADE-campaign has been conducted in southeastern France during the winter of 2013
58 and revealed the dominant existence of a down-valley flow in a shallow and narrow valley, the
59 Cadarache Valley (CV - Duine et al. 2015). This Cadarache down-valley (CDV) wind has been
60 characterized as a thermally driven wind. It occurs mostly during stable stratification periods and
61 is restricted to the valley depth, which is around 100 m. Many facilities of the Cadarache site,
62 one of the research centers of the Commissariat à l’Energie Atomique et aux Energies Alternatives
63 (CEA), lay in the CV, and could potentially emit pollutants in the atmosphere. No measurements
64 are available on a routine basis at the height and location of this CDV wind, but its conditions of
65 existence are to be known for risk management purposes.

66 Consequently, a methodology has been developed using a dichotomous forecast verification
67 principle (Wilks 2011) to optimize a threshold, enabling to nowcast the down-valley flow pres-
68 ence or absence. As within narrow valleys local meteorology and cold pools can be dominant and
69 do not always reflect the regional meteorology, this method could be generally applied, although
70 its performance highly depends on the valley geometry. To verify the method, a combination of
71 permanent and temporary measurements has been used. From the permanently installed 110 m
72 tower, three potential quantities to nowcast the down-valley flow are available: a vertical tempera-
73 ture difference (between the top of the tower and 2 m), the wind speed at the top of the tower and
74 a combination of the previous two data in the form of a bulk Richardson number. For validation, a
75 temporarily installed mast in the valley is used, equipped with sonic anemometers at three levels
76 from which the CDV wind can be characterized. This 30-m high tower has been deployed during
77 the KASCADE campaign and enabled continuous observations of the valley winds in the CV. The
78 computed thresholds are evaluated at the three several levels and for different seasons.

79 The paper is organized as follows. In Sects. 2a and 2b the measurement strategy and the general
80 wind behavior in the CV observed during the KASCADE-campaign are explained. The method-

81 ology to optimize the threshold is presented in Sect. 2c and the candidates for down-valley wind
82 predictors are introduced in Sect. 2d. Results for the optimized thresholds are given in Sect. 3. The
83 choice for the best predictor, its applicability to different heights of the CDV wind and to seasons
84 other than winter is discussed in Sect. 4. Applications of this threshold methodology including a
85 5-year climatology are given in Sect. 5, and final conclusions and perspectives are given in Sect.
86 6.

87 **2. Site, observations and methodology**

88 *a. Valley description and measurement set-up*

89 The CV constitutes the main part of the Cadarache site (Fig. 1). The valley axis is indicated
90 by the red arrow pointing downslope. Its length is around 6 km until it meets the Durance Valley
91 which is much larger and oriented almost perpendicularly to the CV. The CV is shallow (100 m)
92 and narrow (1 - 2 km), which leads to an aspect ratio (valley depth to its width) of 0.04. The
93 average slope along the valley bottom is 1.2° , whereas the slope of the sidewalls is estimated at
94 around 6° . The land use in the valley is a mixture of deciduous forest, grass, buildings and artificial
95 surfaces, but grass dominates in the valley bottom and deciduous forest on the sidewalls.

96 Two measurement towers deployed during KASCADE are used in this study: the permanently
97 installed 110-m high tower at La Grande Bastide (GBA) and the 30-m flux tower (M30), installed
98 for the campaign duration only. Both towers are situated on the axis of the CV, the GBA near to
99 the lower end, and the M30 halfway of the valley length. The GBA-tower is only equipped with
100 sensors at its top and bottom: wind and temperature are measured at 110 m, and temperature at
101 screen level (2 m). The top level of the GBA-tower is situated above the CV sidewalls and therefore
102 does not experience the inside-CV processes. M30 was instrumented with sonic anemometers at

103 heights of 2, 10 and 30 m. A full list of the other M30-sensors, and other details and results of the
104 campaign can be found in Duine et al. (2015).

105 *b. Wind behavior in the Cadarache Valley*

106 The flow within a valley has been related to the above-valley wind conditions by Whiteman
107 and Doran (1993) who classified this relationship into four types: thermally driven, downward
108 momentum transport, forced channeling and pressure driven channeling. These relationships are
109 indicated by the lines in Figs. 2a to 2c, after adaptation to the CV orientation, i.e. SE for down-
110 valley winds and NW for up-valley winds. The behavior of our observations with respect to this
111 theoretical framework is presented in Fig. 3, which shows the wind direction measured within the
112 CV at 10 m from the M30 tower and above the valley at 110 m from the GBA tower. Figure
113 3a shows the occurrences of the wind direction at 110 m, with a classification of the wind origin
114 on the mesoscale. The three lower pictures show inside valley (M30) against above-valley wind
115 directions (GBA). They all show the same data but are further classified with respect to a threshold
116 defined either on the wind speed at 110 m at GBA U_{110m} (Fig. 3b), or the atmospheric stratification
117 as characterized by the temperature difference ΔT between 110 and 2 m at GBA (Fig. 3c), or a
118 bulk Richardson number Ri_B (Fig. 3d):

$$119 \quad Ri_B = \frac{g \cdot (\Delta T + \Gamma_d \Delta z) \cdot \Delta z}{T_{110m} \cdot (\Delta U)^2} \quad (1)$$

120 with g being the gravitational acceleration of 9.81 m s^{-2} and Γ_d the dry adiabatic lapse rate
121 of 9.8 K km^{-1} for potential temperature calculation. Δz corresponds to the height difference
122 between the temperature measurements. The usage of Ri_B to our purpose is further detailed in
123 Sect. 2d. The classifications used in the figure are used as a first step in the analysis to describe the
important features of the valley adapted to the theoretical framework presented in Fig. 2. The fixed

124 thresholds are arbitrarily chosen and relatively simple, i.e. an arbitrary wind speed threshold, stable
125 vs. unstable conditions and turbulent vs. laminar regime. Picking up the theoretical framework of
126 Whiteman and Doran (1993) from Fig. 2 and the combination with our measurements (Fig. 3),
127 enables to determine under which conditions the CDV wind develops.

128 The first group given in Whiteman and Doran (1993) classification of valley winds is a thermally
129 driven flow, which has an upslope direction during the day, and a downslope direction in the
130 night. This theoretical relationship is indicated in Fig. 2a. Typically, the thermally driven flow is
131 fully independent of above-valley wind conditions. It is especially observed during weak synoptic
132 forcing in combination with clear skies. Relatively narrow valleys like the CV favor the existence
133 of thermally driven flows during such conditions. Figure 3 reveals that during low wind speed
134 conditions (Fig. 3b) or stable periods (Fig. 3c and Fig. 3d) there is a high preference for a down-
135 valley flow within the CV, as a higher density of blue dots can be observed in the CDV direction.
136 The up-valley channeled wind, i.e. NW wind, presents a much more scattered direction than the
137 CDV wind. There are two possible reasons for that: firstly, the orography SE to the M30 location
138 resembles a well-defined valley, whereas NW flows experience a more complex area, composed
139 of the Durance and Cadarache valleys and local hills, before arriving at the M30 site (see Fig.
140 1); secondly, up-valley, northwesterly winds are generally observed either during high wind speed
141 events such as a Mistral, or during neutral to moderately stable situations, i.e. conditions with
142 sufficient vertical transfer of momentum to imprint the above-valley wind direction into the CV.

143 Another origin for valley winds is identified by Whiteman and Doran (1993) as downward mo-
144 mentum transport. For this relationship, the flow within the valley is totally dependent on the
145 above-valley wind. The theoretical relationship is indicated by the diagonal line in Fig. 2a. It is
146 favored by a wide valley (Whiteman and Doran 1993) and can be mostly observed during unstable
147 and neutral conditions. Such situations are highlighted by the red dots for either high wind speeds

148 (Fig. 3b) or unstable conditions (Figs. 3c and 3d). In the CV, downward momentum transport oc-
149 curs mostly for SE and NW upper winds, as the highest occurrences are found in these quadrants.
150 The westerly directions are mostly measured during daytime, when instability is causing upslope
151 anabatic flows, and/or during Mistral events which have west to northwest directions in the region.
152 The SE-directions are typically observed during cloudy or precipitation events (Duine et al. 2015).
153 Note that the latter conditions cause a direction which is intermingled with the CDV wind, but can
154 be very well distinguished by means of the colors (e.g. red crosses on Fig. 3d).

155 Two other relationships are indicated by Whiteman and Doran (1993) as forced channeling and
156 pressure driven channeling. Forced channeling (Fig. 2b) is favored during unstable and neutral
157 conditions within narrow valleys (Weber and Kaufmann 1998) while pressure driven channeling
158 (Fig. 2c) typically occurs when moderately stable conditions are dominant in wide and shallow
159 valleys (Carrera et al. 2009). Based on the figures, as the typical relation for forced or pressure-
160 driven channeling are not visible, we conclude that these relationships are non-dominant mecha-
161 nisms for a CDV wind to develop.

162 Thus, it is clear that the CDV wind mainly develops during stable conditions and low wind
163 speeds. Although the GBA-tower does not provide wind measurement inside the CV, Fig. 3 reveals
164 the plausibility of a relationship between the GBA-tower measurements and the occurrence of the
165 CDV wind. The objective is now to find an optimal threshold under which the CDV wind can be
166 inferred from GBA-observations only and without any wind measurement in the valley.

167 *c. Procedure for threshold optimization*

168 To optimize a threshold based on the GBA observations, we use a procedure that defines a quality
169 index based on contingency table values. The method is used for verification of non-probabilistic
170 forecasts of bilateral events (Wilks 2011). The principle relies on dichotomous predictors, so by

171 using a threshold on GBA observations we define a bilateral predictor with which we can nowcast
172 the CDV wind. In our case, the bilateral event is the CDV wind presence or absence. The threshold
173 candidates coming from GBA observations are introduced in the next section.

174 We define the contingency table (Table 1). The letters a to d in the table are the count of
175 occurrences for each couple of events, i.e. CDV wind observed or no CDV wind observed vs.
176 CDV wind nowcasted or no CDV wind nowcasted. The thermally driven CDV wind is diagnosed
177 from M30 observations when the wind direction is in the range $[90 - 180^\circ]$. A sensitivity study
178 to restrict the down-valley wind to smaller direction ranges, e.g. between 110° and 160° , did not
179 influence the final results. The letters in the contingency table are described as follows:

- 180 a) Correct nowcast or hit: A CDV wind is nowcasted and has been observed at M30.
- 181 b) False alarm: a CDV wind is nowcasted but has not been observed.
- 182 c) Missed nowcast: a CDV wind is not nowcasted, but has been observed.
- 183 d) Correct rejection: a CDV wind is neither nowcasted nor observed.

184 To find the optimal threshold for the predictor criteria given in Table 1 we use the combined
185 counts of the contingency table values by applying two different tests (Wilks 2011)

$$PC = \frac{a + d}{a + b + c + d} \quad (2)$$

$$bias = \frac{a + b}{a + c} \quad (3)$$

186 where the "Proportion Correct" PC represents the fraction of the total number of events n (n
187 $= a + b + c + d$) for which the threshold correctly classified an event (a) or non-event (d). To
188 optimize the PC , a and d should be as high as possible, and b and c as low as possible. It is a
189 ratio ranging from 0 to 1, the higher the value for PC , the better the threshold-value for a given

190 criterion. The *bias* is used to evaluate the balance between the number of nowcasted CDV wind
191 events to the number of observed CDV wind events. It is expressed as overnowcasting (>1) or
192 undernowcasting (<1) of the event and should therefore be as close to 1 as possible. Equations 2
193 and 3 are the framework for choosing an optimized threshold.

194 All data of the winter of 2013 collected during the KASCADE continuous measurement period
195 are used, i.e. from 13 December 2012 to 16 March 2013. The values are 30-minute averaged. A
196 minimum threshold of 0.5 m s^{-1} is applied to wind speed because for lower wind speeds the wind
197 direction is ill-defined. All values inside the SE-SE quadrant are discarded because this quadrant
198 is blurred with two types of conditions: the stable conditions which favor a thermally driven CDV
199 wind on the one hand and the cloudy weather and precipitation events which typically occur under
200 southeasterly winds (Duine et al. 2015) on the other hand.

201 *d. Threshold candidates*

202 The purpose is to find which measured quantity at GBA can be best used to nowcast the CDV
203 wind. The threshold optimization procedure (see Sect. 2c) is applied to quantities derived from
204 the GBA available measurements:

205 1) a vertical temperature difference $\Delta T = T_{110m} - T_{2m}$

206 2) the wind speed at 110 m U_{110m}

207 3) a combination of ΔT and U_{110m} in the form of a bulk Richardson number Ri_B (see Eq. 1).

208 The Richardson number is a good indicator for stability, as it relates wind speed to buoyancy and
209 is classically used to assess stability inside air masses. It has been used before as a predictor for
210 shallow drainage flows (Mahrt et al. 2001), with the addition of longwave radiation, which defines
211 a radiation Richardson number. Unfortunately, there are no routine observations of net longwave
212 radiation, thus we must rely on wind speed and a vertical temperature difference only.

213 Note that we have adapted the classical Ri_B to the availability of observations: humidity mea-
214 surements at the GBA-site are only available at 2 m. Thus, we cannot determine a virtual temper-
215 ature T_v at 110 m so we must base ourselves on the difference in absolute temperature T alone.
216 The influence of neglecting the humidity variation in Eq. 1 has been checked by tethered balloon
217 measurements which were deployed at location M30 (Fig. 1) during the KASCADE-campaign
218 and showed little difference between the use of T vs. T_v : a relative error of around 2% on Ri_B
219 is determined. The Ri_B increment used for optimization was taken as 0.1 and so in the range of
220 interest for Ri_B (i.e. -1 to 5) the moisture-related error is lower than this increment and therefore
221 does not affect the result. Furthermore, wind speed observations are only available at the height
222 of 110 m. Consequently, we will assume that $U(2m) = 0$, so that $\Delta U \sim U_{110m}$. This assumption
223 is probably not a major source of error, because a study of the GBA site characteristics, based on
224 wind profiles from a SODAR and two measurement stations at the Cadarache site, has shown that
225 the roughness length z_0 is 1.03 m and the zero-plane displacement height is of the order of 5 m.
226 The 2-m level is therefore in the local roughness sub-layer, whereas the 110-m level observations
227 are representative of a much larger area.

228 3. Results

229 a. Threshold ΔT_T

230 The contingency table values of PC and $bias$, as defined in Table 1 and in Eqs. 2 and 3, are
231 presented in Figs. 4a and 4b for the temperature difference ΔT varying in the range -3 to 9°C by
232 increments of 0.1°C. The optimized values are given in Table 2.

233 A maximum score of 0.91 for PC is obtained for the temperature difference threshold $\Delta T_T = 1.5^\circ\text{C}$
234 (vertical dashed line in both pictures). The value of ΔT_T represents the best separation value for

235 which a thermally driven CDV wind (i.e. not thermally driven) is nowcasted when $\Delta T > \Delta T_T$ or
236 a non-CDV wind is nowcasted if $\Delta T < \Delta T_T$. The high value for PC at ΔT_T reflects the relevance
237 of the criterion and the threshold chosen. It further indicates that ΔT_T is a good candidate for this
238 procedure. This is emphasized by the small but relatively high peak of the PC curve. This threshold
239 is a rather safe one, as PC drops quickly when the value is set at higher or lower temperature
240 differences. The skill of the optimum threshold is further reflected in the *bias* of 1.03, which is
241 very close to 1, the optimal value. The ratio of missed events $b + c$ is 0.09, see Sect. 4a for more
242 details.

243 The value of 1.5°C corresponds to a potential temperature difference of approximately 2.6°C .
244 This quite high value confirms that the wind inside CV is primarily thermally driven and can be
245 linked to very stable situations.

246 *b. Threshold U_T*

247 The second criterion under investigation to nowcast the CDV wind is based on the wind speed
248 at 110 m. The same procedure is followed as for ΔT_T (Sect. 3a) with increments of 0.1 m s^{-1} in
249 the range 0.5 m s^{-1} to the maximum observed wind speed. The results are shown in Fig. 5 and
250 Table 2.

251 We find an optimal threshold for U_T at 4.0 m s^{-1} , with a PC of 0.72. This is the highest score
252 at which a separation can be made to nowcast either a thermally driven CDV wind ($U < U_T$) or
253 a non-CDV wind ($U > U_T$). The maximum value for PC based on U_{110m} is lower than based on
254 ΔT_T . It indicates that a threshold based on wind speed is not as good as when using ΔT_T as a CDV
255 wind predictor. The respective higher and lower counts for false alarm b and correct rejection d
256 (Table 2) point out why the skill is lower for U_T than for ΔT_T . Besides, at the optimal threshold,
257 the false alarm value b is 4 times higher than the missed value c . This indicates that a CDV

258 wind is nowcasted too leniently, which is also reflected in the *bias*-value of 1.43, translating as
259 an overforecast of the event. Note also that the peak for *PC* is flatter than for ΔT_T , which means
260 that using U_T alone as a predictor for the CDV wind is not an indisputable method. Overall, the
261 wind speed at 110 m does play a role in the existence of a CDV wind, but is not as relevant as the
262 vertical temperature difference.

263 *c. Threshold Ri_{B_T}*

264 The last quantity we check is the bulk Richardson number Ri_B (Eq. 1). The results are shown in
265 Fig. 6 and Table 2. A *PC*-score of 0.86 is found at the threshold $Ri_{B_T} = 0.8$. The corresponding
266 *PC*-value of 0.86 is high, but still lower than for ΔT_T . It is remarkable that the *PC*-value sharply
267 rises when passing the zero-line of Ri_B , confirming the fact that the CDV wind is indeed strongly
268 related to stability. The values of *PC* at the right side of the peak are relatively high with respect
269 to the peak value itself, which is an extra indication that the *Ri*-criterion may work less good. At
270 the threshold-value of Ri_B , the number of false alarms *b* is twice as large as missed classifications
271 *c* (Table 2). Therefore, the optimal threshold Ri_{B_T} of 0.8 results in some overnowcasting of the
272 CDV wind, as is also indicated by the quite high value of the *bias* (1.15).

273 The value of $Ri_{B_T} = 0.8$ is a little lower than the threshold value of 1.0 which theoretically
274 marks the transition from turbulent to non-turbulent regime in stable conditions. It is difficult to
275 ascertain whether the difference between these two values is significant, because the height range
276 in which Ri_B is computed is quite large (108 m), and the uncertainty on *Ri*-estimates through a
277 'bulk' assumption increases with the thickness of the layer, especially close to the surface where
278 the vertical gradients are the highest (Stull 1988). Furthermore, another reason of the lesser success
279 for Ri_{B_T} than for ΔT_T may lie in the hysteresis behavior of critical *Ri*-thresholds, i.e. different

280 values when passing from laminar to turbulent regime or vice versa (McTaggart-Cowan and Zadra
281 2014). In this study, both transitions are mixed, and so could lower the score.

282 4. Discussion

283 a. Choice of the predictor

284 The temperature difference threshold proved to be the best predictor of CDV winds. The *PC*-
285 value of 0.91, which is close to, but somewhat lower than 1, means that some events are badly
286 nowcasted. In this section we try to find out for which types of conditions the ΔT_T -criterion fails.

287 Figures 7a and 7b illustrate the performance of the temperature threshold to nowcast the CDV
288 wind: in Fig. 7a, only the data for which the condition is valid ($\Delta T > 1.5^\circ\text{C}$) are shown. The
289 result is compared to the actually observed winds at 10 m in the CV. The data falling outside the
290 CV direction ($135^\circ \pm 45^\circ$), i.e. for which the nowcast fails, are plotted on the gray-shaded areas,
291 whereas the successful data fall in the white area. On the contrary, in Fig. 7b the data for which
292 the condition is not valid are plotted. The gray and white area are thus reversed with respect to Fig.
293 7a, with the exception of the CDV wind conditions inside as well as above the CV. This is because,
294 in this case, the observed wind with a SE-direction at 10 m is due to the momentum transfer from
295 the above-valley wind (see Fig. 2 and Fig. 3d), and not to the stability conditions. Furthermore,
296 the data are sorted according to the hour of the day. In Figs. 7c and 7d, the same plots are shown
297 as in Figs. 7a and 7b, but the data are sorted according to the wind speed at 110 m. During the
298 period of measurement, sunsets were in the range 05:40 and 07:02 UTC, and sunrises between
299 16:00 and 17:48 UTC.

300 By applying ΔT_T of 1.5°C we miss 9% of the thermally driven CDV wind events and the non-
301 CDV wind events. The false alarms (i.e. $\Delta T_T > 1.5^\circ\text{C}$ and no CDV wind observed) have to

302 be analyzed according to the wind speed: wind speeds higher than 4 m s^{-1} occur mainly in the
303 NW-NW quadrant and are found during nighttime periods. These valley winds are related to
304 downward momentum transport where turbulent motions are transported downwards (hence, Fig.
305 2). As such they oppose the onset of stability and so the formation of a CDV wind. Wind speeds
306 lower than $< 4 \text{ m s}^{-1}$ are mostly observed during the morning and evening transitions. Here stable
307 stratification has already developed on the GBA-site close to the surface, but the down-valley wind
308 at M30 has not set yet (during evening transition), or the stability at GBA is still present, but the
309 down-valley jet has already been eroded (morning transition). To conclude, for a thermally driven
310 CDV wind nowcast, one should be careful at applying the threshold when the wind speed at GBA
311 is higher than 4 m s^{-1} and accompanied by a northwesterly direction.

312 On the other hand, missed nowcasts occur primarily during low wind speed conditions at 110 m
313 (i.e. $< 4 \text{ m s}^{-1}$) and, although these misses have been observed throughout the full 24-hour period
314 of the day, they are mostly frequent during the sunrise transition period.

315 *b. Wind prediction at other heights*

316 The tethered balloon observations during the KASCADE campaign have shown that the CDV
317 wind can frequently grow up to a height of 50 m (Duine et al. 2015). In addition to the 10 m height,
318 sonic anemometers were also installed at 2 and 30 m so the validity of the threshold can also be
319 checked at these heights. This is done by applying the same procedure as for the 10 m CDV wind.
320 At the 2 m level however, due to equipment malfunctioning, the dataset is 3 weeks shorter.

321 At 2 m comparable values for *PC* (0.91) and *bias* (1.04) are found, but for a slightly higher ΔT -
322 value of 1.6°C (Fig. 8 and Table 3). At 30 m the optimal score for *PC* is also shifted to a ΔT -value
323 of 1.6°C , but with a score of 0.87 and a *bias* of 1.04. However, due to the flatness of the *PC* peak,
324 we can consider the threshold on ΔT is identical for the three heights.

325 *c. Summer conditions*

326 A mobile 2-m wind mast has been installed in the CV from 18 July to 25 September 2014
327 on M30 site so we can check the validity of the ΔT threshold at 2 m (1.6°C) during summer
328 conditions.

329 The results (Table 3) show that the CDV wind can be forecasted in summer as well and confirms
330 the general applicability of the index. Interestingly, in spite of approximately the same sample size
331 (2002 observations during summer vs. 1946 during winter) the number of *a* (good hits) events
332 occurred half as often as in winter. In summer, this event is mostly replaced by correctly rejected
333 events (*d*: non-CDV wind and $\Delta T < 1.6^{\circ}\text{C}$) and sometimes by false alarms (*b*). Therefore, the
334 high value of *PC* comes from a high number of up-valley winds being correctly classified ($\Delta T <$
335 1.6°C). Note that more than 72% of the values are below the threshold in summer, whereas this is
336 58% for winter conditions (ratio $(c+d)/n$). Non-thermally driven CDV wind observations $((b+d)/n)$
337 are less frequent in winter (59%) than in summer (78%). A connection to the respective length of
338 day and night for valley winds is worth considering (Giovannini et al. 2015) and could be checked
339 on a year-long sample in the next section.

340 **5. Climatology of ΔT_T**

341 The previous sections have shown the general applicability of the vertical temperature difference
342 at GBA to nowcast the CDV wind by means of the GBA-tower observations with a relatively low
343 uncertainty. The GBA-tower has been installed for many years already and a long-term dataset is
344 available.

345 We apply the ΔT_T threshold of 1.5°C to obtain a climatology for thermally driven CDV wind
346 occurrences at 10 m, for the years 2007 to 2011. Figure 9 shows monthly statistics on CDV wind
347 and non-CDV wind occurrences. During the winter months, values of ΔT favoring a CDV wind

348 are present almost half of the time and shows that the CDV wind is a dominant wind in winter.
349 The occurrence diminishes gradually to a minimum in June, where conditions favoring thermally
350 driven downslope winds are present during a third of the time. Consequently, the occurrence of
351 this wind is strongly related to the length of the night which confirms the conclusion of Sect. 4c.

352 The occurrences of the temperature threshold for the KASCADE period (December 2012 -
353 March 2013) are also shown in Fig. 9. Note that the measurement period for KASCADE in
354 December and March has been approximately only half of the month. Against the climatology
355 reconstructed for 2007 - 2011, the months of December and February in particular show a higher
356 occurrence of the CDV wind, whereas in January and in March the occurrences of non-CDV winds
357 have been particularly higher.

358 **6. Conclusions & perspectives**

359 A forecast verification principle has been used in a methodology that determines an optimum
360 threshold to nowcast a down-valley wind in a minimally-instrumented shallow valley. The method
361 is able to identify the best performing quantity to nowcast the down-valley winds. The best predic-
362 tor, a vertical temperature difference, has been tested for different valley wind heights and seasons.
363 Consequently, it can be used as a nowcasting tool for the thermally driven down-valley flow but
364 also to reconstruct the valley climatology, and it can serve as a tool for statistical downscaling in
365 operational forecasting.

366 To carry out the threshold optimization, temporary observations of the down-valley wind were
367 combined with measurements of a permanently installed 110-m high tower. The observations
368 were taken from the KASCADE-dataset, a field experiment conducted in the winter of 2013 at
369 the Cadarache site in southeastern France. Cadarache, one of the research centers of the CEA,
370 lays along the shallow and narrow (100 m deep, 2 km wide) CV and comprises several facilities

371 whose operation requires an assessment of atmospheric release dispersion. As in the CV itself no
372 real-time monitoring is available to fully capture the dominant CDV wind, the method presented
373 has been developed to take advantage of the existing instrumentation.

374 Three quantities have been tested to identify the most reliable predictor; a vertical temperature
375 difference ΔT , a wind speed above the valley walls U_{110m} and a bulk Richardson number Ri_B . For
376 a down-valley wind occurrence at 10 m, the ΔT came out as the best predictor index at a threshold
377 value ΔT_T of 1.5°C , achieving a PC of 0.91. It defeats the Ri_B threshold of 0.8 ($PC=0.86$) and
378 U_{110m} -threshold of 4.0 m s^{-1} ($PC=0.72$), and confirms that the CDV wind is primarily thermally
379 driven. Explanations why ΔT_T performs better than Ri_{BT} in predicting a drainage wind are the
380 large bulk of measurements at the GBA-tower (108 m) and the hysteresis behavior of Ri . However,
381 the applicability of the found optimal threshold is not fully exclusive and needs some caution. For
382 example, when $\Delta T < \Delta T_T$ under weak wind situations, CDV winds could be present. Furthermore,
383 situations when $\Delta T > \Delta T_T$ with high wind speeds during nighttime, or low wind speed conditions
384 around the sunset and sunrise transitions needs caution as well.

385 In addition to the 10 m wind nowcast, ΔT_T has been optimized for 2 and 30 m CDV winds.
386 Similar values were found for the temperature difference: 1.6°C , with high values for PC of 0.91
387 and 0.87, respectively. A comparison with available measurements at 2 m in the summer of 2014
388 confirmed the found threshold value at this height, and so approved the general applicability of this
389 threshold throughout the year. By means of the long-lasting availability of temperature measure-
390 ments at the GBA-tower, a 5-year climatology could be made based on the found threshold, and
391 revealed the existence of the thermally driven CDV wind throughout the year. Its occurrence is
392 largely dependent on the night length. It further showed the relative importance of strong stability
393 during the December and February months of the KASCADE-campaign.

394 Finding that a high-score nowcasting can be achieved through the use of only three routinely
395 accessible parameters is of great practical importance for impact assessment and local risk man-
396 agement of pollutant dispersion. Moreover, daily operational forecasts are necessary for sanitary
397 and safety purposes. However, the current operational forecasts are calculated with meteorologi-
398 cal models on a relatively coarse grid (i.e. 1 - 3 km) which do not resolve the small valleys as the
399 CV and so do not meet the requirement to forecast thermally driven down-valley winds at such
400 small scales. In this instance, the identification of the vertical temperature difference as a thresh-
401 old to nowcast the down-valley wind opens perspectives to forecast it by completing dynamical
402 simulations with the statistical downscaling illustrated by this method.

403 *Acknowledgments.* This work has been funded by the CEA in the form of a PhD-grant and the
404 financing of the KASCADE-campaign. Laboratoire d'Aérodologie are acknowledged for the provi-
405 sion of measurement material during the campaign.

406 **References**

407 Amanatidis, G., K. Papadopoulos, J. Bartzis, and C. Helmis, 1992: Evidence of katabatic flows
408 deduced from a 84 m meteorological tower in Athens, Greece. *Bound.-Lay. Meteorol.*, **58 (1-2)**,
409 117–132.

410 Atkinson, B., 1995: Orographic and stability effects on valley-side drainage flows. *Bound.-Lay.*
411 *Meteorol.*, **75 (4)**, 403–428.

412 Barr, S., and M. M. Orgill, 1989: Influence of external meteorology on nocturnal valley drainage
413 winds. *J. Appl. Meteorol.*, **28 (6)**, 497–517.

414 Barry, R. G., 2013: *Mountain weather and climate, 3rd edition*. Cambridge University Press, 506
415 pp.

- 416 Carrera, M. L., J. R. Gyakum, and C. A. Lin, 2009: Observational study of wind channeling within
417 the St. Lawrence River Valley. *J. Appl. Meteorol. Clim.*, **48** (11), 2341–2361.
- 418 Duine, G.-J., T. Hedde, P. Roubin, P. Durand, M. Lothon, F. Lohou, P. Augustin, and M. Four-
419 mentin, 2015: Valley-driven flows in stable stratification - Observations in a complex orography
420 area during the KASCADE field experiment. *submitted to Q. J. Roy. Meteor. Soc.*
- 421 Giovannini, L., L. Laiti, D. Zardi, and M. de Franceschi, 2015: Climatological characteristics of
422 the Ora del Garda wind in the Alps. *Int. J. Climatol.*, doi:10.1002/joc.4270.
- 423 Gudiksen, P. H., 1989: Categorization of nocturnal drainage flows within the Brush Creek Valley
424 and the variability of sigma theta in complex terrain. *J. Appl. Meteorol.*, **28** (6), 489–495.
- 425 Haiden, T., and C. D. Whiteman, 2005: Katabatic flow mechanisms on a low-angle slope. *J. Appl.*
426 *Meteorol.*, **44** (1), 113–126.
- 427 Horst, T., and J. Doran, 1986: Nocturnal drainage flow on simple slopes. *Bound.-Lay. Meteorol.*,
428 **34** (3), 263–286.
- 429 Jiménez, M. A., and J. Cuxart, 2014: A study of the nocturnal flows generated in the north side of
430 the Pyrenees. *Atmos. Res.*, **145**, 244–254.
- 431 Mahrt, L., D. Vickers, R. Nakamura, M. Soler, J. Sun, S. Burns, and D. Lenschow, 2001: Shallow
432 drainage flows. *Bound.-Lay. Meteorol.*, **101** (2), 243–260.
- 433 Manins, P., and B. Sawford, 1979: A model of katabatic winds. *J. Atmos. Sci.*, **36** (4), 619–630.
- 434 McTaggart-Cowan, R., and A. Zadra, 2014: Representing Richardson Number Hysteresis in the
435 NWP Boundary Layer. *Mon. Wea. Rev.*, **143** (4), 1232–1258.

- 436 Sheridan, P., S. Vosper, and A. Brown, 2014: Characteristics of cold pools observed in narrow
437 valleys and dependence on external conditions. *Q. J. Roy. Meteor. Soc.*, **140 (679)**, 715–728.
- 438 Stewart, J. Q., C. D. Whiteman, W. J. Steenburgh, and X. Bian, 2002: A climatological study of
439 thermally driven wind systems of the US Intermountain West. *B. Am. Meteorol. Soc.*, **83 (5)**,
440 699–708.
- 441 Stull, R. B., 1988: *An Introduction to Boundary Layer Meteorology*. Kluwer Academic Publishers,
442 666 pp.
- 443 Weber, R. O., and P. Kaufmann, 1998: Relationship of synoptic winds and complex terrain flows
444 during the MISTRAL field experiment. *J. Appl. Meteorol.*, **37 (11)**, 1486–1496.
- 445 Whiteman, C. D., and J. C. Doran, 1993: The relationship between overlying synoptic-scale flows
446 and winds within a valley. *J. Appl. Meteorol.*, **32 (11)**, 1669–1682.
- 447 Wilks, D. S., 2011: *Statistical methods in the Atmospheric Sciences*, Vol. 100. Academic press,
448 676 pp.

449 **LIST OF TABLES**

450 **Table 1.** Contingency table for verification of CDV wind occurrence. See text for the
451 criteria used. 23

452 **Table 2.** Optimized threshold values and contingency table values for the candidate cri-
453 terions. 24

454 **Table 3.** *PC*, *bias* values, and contingency table of ΔT criterion for three different
455 heights in winter and at 2 m in summer. 25

TABLE 1. Contingency table for verification of CDV wind occurrence. See text for the criteria used.

		Wind observations (M30)	
		CDV wind	No CDV wind
Criterion (GBA): $\Delta T, U_{110m}$ or Ri_B	Satisfied	a	b
	Not satisfied	c	d

TABLE 2. Optimized threshold values and contingency table values for the candidate criterions.

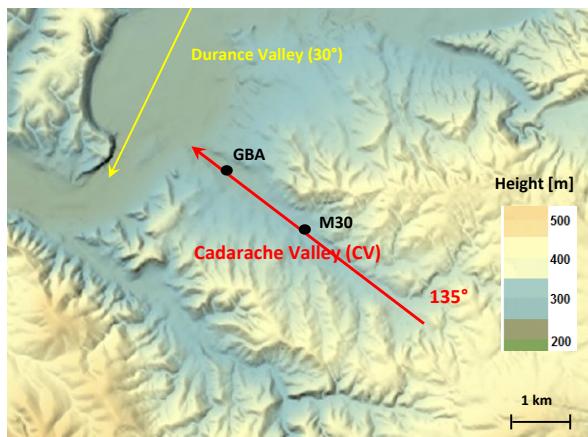
<i>Type</i>	ΔT	U_{110m}	Ri_B
Threshold unit	[°C]	[m s ⁻¹]	[-]
Height [m]	10	10	10
Season	winter	winter	winter
Threshold	1.5	4.0	0.8
PC	0.91	0.72	0.86
Bias	1.03	1.43	1.15
a	1011	993	1029
b	141	601	273
c	109	144	108
d	1401	961	1289
n	2662	2699	2699

456 TABLE 3. *PC*, *bias* values, and contingency table of ΔT criterion for three different heights in winter and at 2
 457 m in summer.

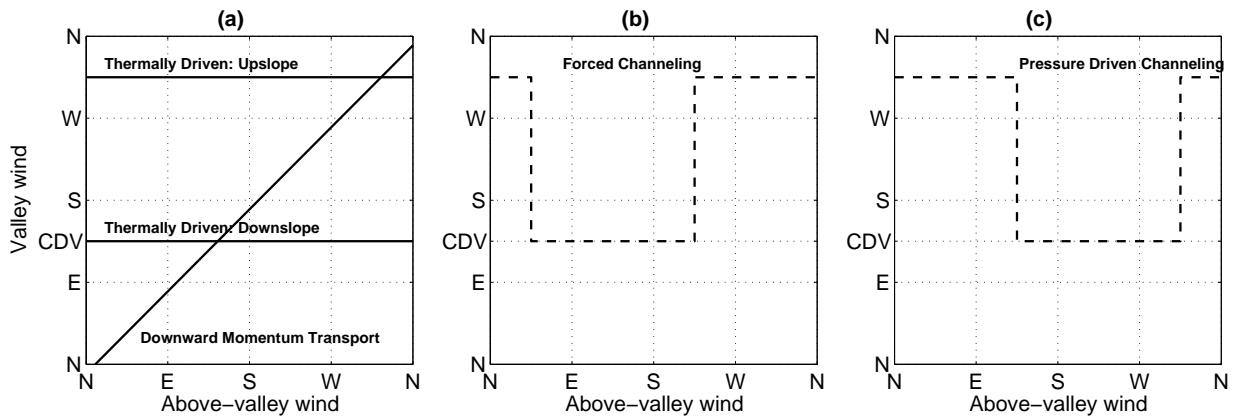
Height [m]	10	30	2	2
Season	winter	winter	winter	summer
Threshold [°C]	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.6
PC	0.91	0.87	0.91	0.87
Bias	1.03	1.12	1.04	1.27
a	1011	926	708	372
b	141	250	104	185
c	109	120	76	67
d	1401	1513	1058	1378
n	2662	2809	1946	2002

LIST OF FIGURES

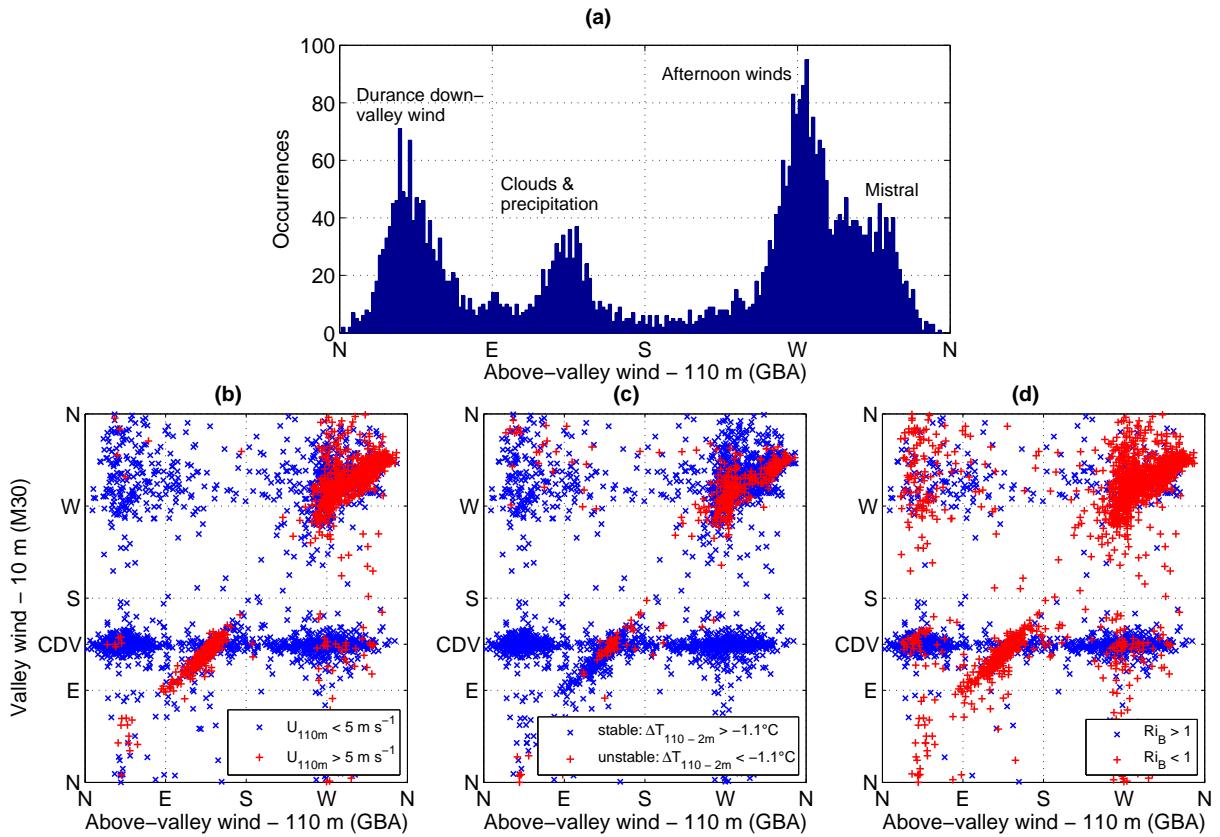
458		
459	Fig. 1.	The Cadarache Valley (CV) and the middle Durance Valley. The red line indicates the CV axis orientation and length. The downslope directions of the bottom of the two valleys are marked by the arrow heads. The 110-m high tower La Grande Bastide (GBA) and the 30-m high tower M30 are both on the axis of the CV. Source: Geoportail.gouv.fr (IGN). 27
460		
461		
462		
463	Fig. 2.	Inside-valley wind direction against above-valley wind direction according to Whiteman and Doran (1993), adapted to the CV. The direction for the Cadarache down-valley (CDV) is indicated on the y-axis. The different configurations are split in three diagrams (a, b and c) for a better legibility. 28
464		
465		
466		
467	Fig. 3.	(a) Above-CV wind direction occurrence measured at 110 m, and (b) to (d): wind direction in the CV at 10 m against the above-valley wind direction at 110 m, divided into two classes according to threshold values (defined in the text). Data is from 13 December 2012 to 16 March 2013. 29
468		
469		
470		
471	Fig. 4.	(a) Contingency table values for the different events as defined in Table 1, calculated for the ΔT criterion and (b) values of PC (blue line, left scale) and $bias$ (green line, right scale). The vertical dashed lines indicate the threshold value for which the best score is obtained. Data from 13 December 2012 to 16 March 2013. 30
472		
473		
474		
475	Fig. 5.	Same as Fig. 4b but for a criterion based on 110 m wind speed measurements at GBA. The optimal threshold is found at 4.0 m s^{-1} . Data from 13 December 2012 to 16 March 2013. 31
476		
477	Fig. 6.	Same as Fig. 4b but for an optimization by means of a bulk Richardson number. The optimal threshold is found at 0.8. Data from 13 December 2012 to 16 March 2013. 32
478		
479	Fig. 7.	Relation between wind directions inside (10 m) and above (110 m) the valley, according to whether ΔT_T exceeds (left diagrams) or is below (right diagrams) the optimal threshold of 1.5°C . In the two upper diagrams (a and b), the plots are sorted according to the hours (UTC) and in the two lower diagrams (c and d) according to the wind speed observed at 110 m. White and gray backgrounds denote good and bad nowcast, respectively. The color scales on the right textboxes are also valid for the corresponding left diagram. Data from 13 December 2012 to 16 March 2013. 33
480		
481		
482		
483		
484		
485		
486	Fig. 8.	Same as Fig. 4 but for the other two measurement heights, 2 m (in black) and 30 m (in red). For comparison, the 10 m result from Fig. 4 is also reproduced. Data from 13 December 2012 to 16 March 2013 (30 m and 10 m) and to 23 February 2013 (2 m). 34
487		
488		
489	Fig. 9.	Monthly climatology of ΔT_T for the years 2007-2011 (clim) and the period of KASCADE (KCD), the latter from December 2012 to March 2013. 35
490		



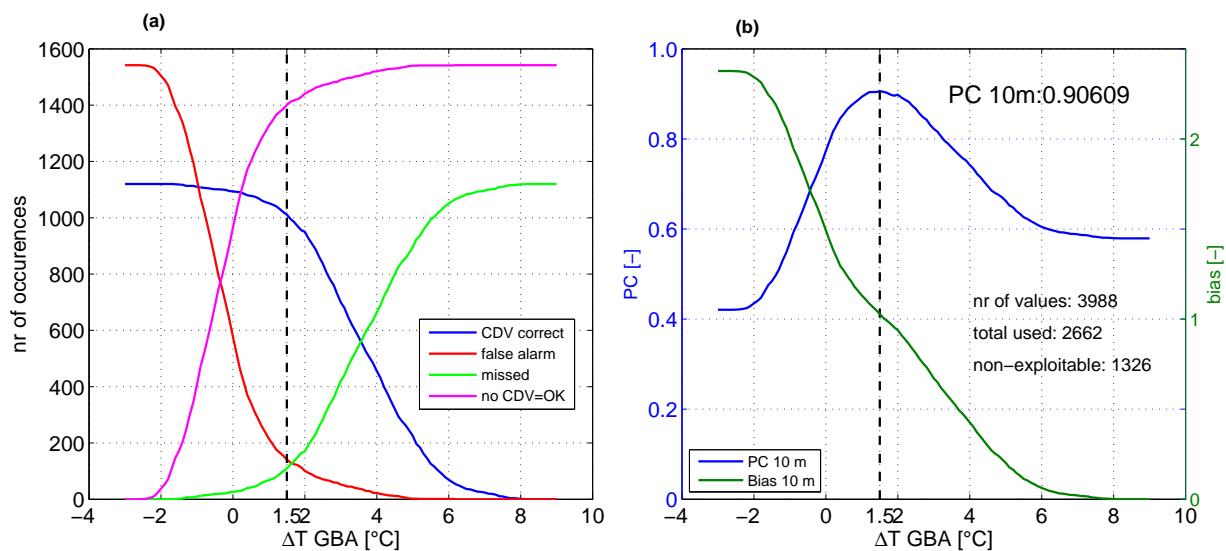
491 FIG. 1. The Cadarache Valley (CV) and the middle Durance Valley. The red line indicates the CV axis
492 orientation and length. The downslope directions of the bottom of the two valleys are marked by the arrow
493 heads. The 110-m high tower La Grande Bastide (GBA) and the 30-m high tower M30 are both on the axis of
494 the CV. Source: Geoportail.gouv.fr (IGN).



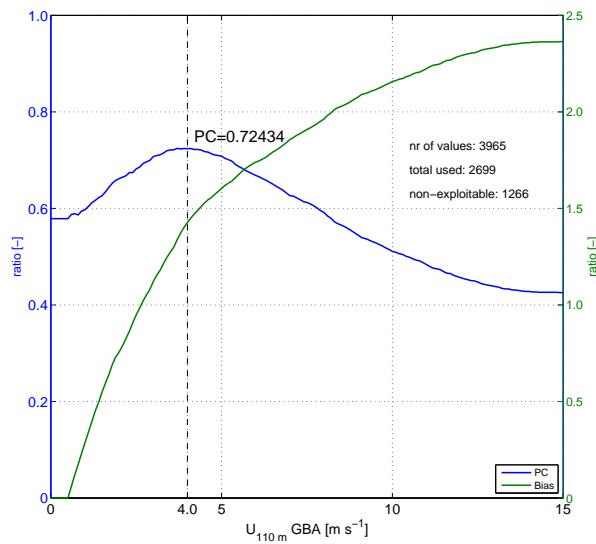
495 FIG. 2. Inside-valley wind direction against above-valley wind direction according to Whiteman and Doran
 496 (1993), adapted to the CV. The direction for the Cadarache down-valley (CDV) is indicated on the y-axis. The
 497 different configurations are split in three diagrams (a, b and c) for a better legibility.



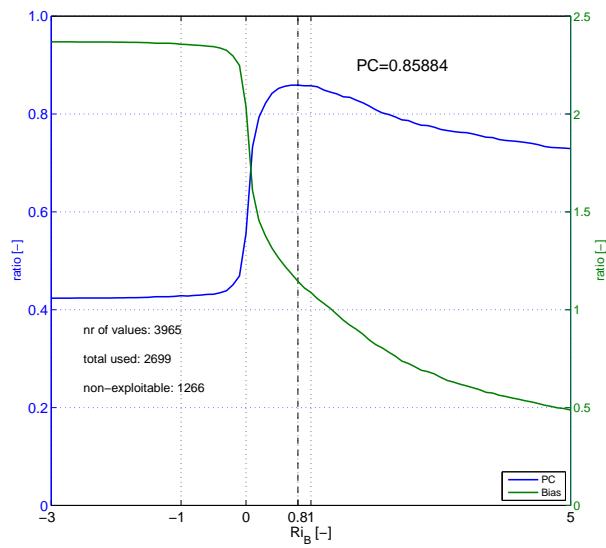
498 FIG. 3. (a) Above-CV wind direction occurrence measured at 110 m, and (b) to (d): wind direction in the CV
 499 at 10 m against the above-valley wind direction at 110 m, divided into two classes according to threshold values
 500 (defined in the text). Data is from 13 December 2012 to 16 March 2013.



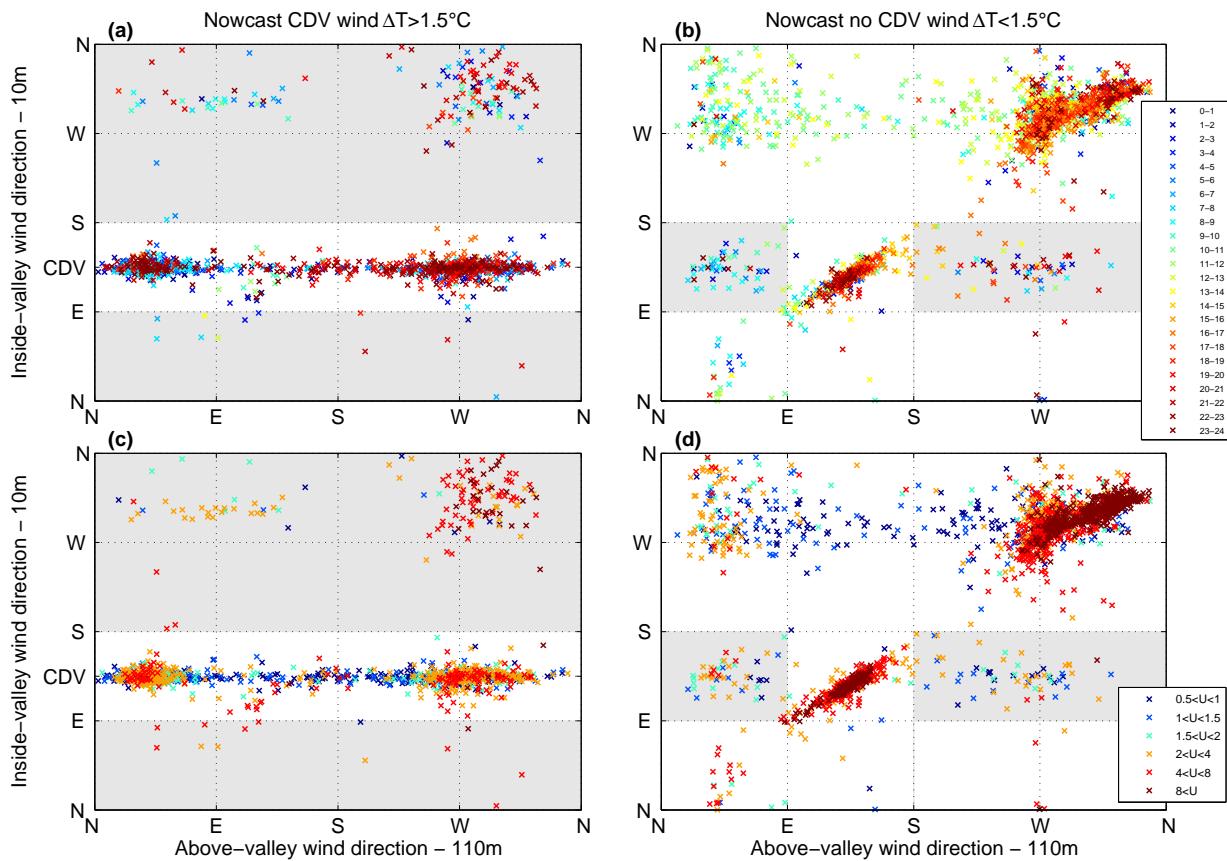
501 FIG. 4. (a) Contingency table values for the different events as defined in Table 1, calculated for the ΔT
 502 criterion and (b) values of PC (blue line, left scale) and $bias$ (green line, right scale). The vertical dashed lines
 503 indicate the threshold value for which the best score is obtained. Data from 13 December 2012 to 16 March
 504 2013.



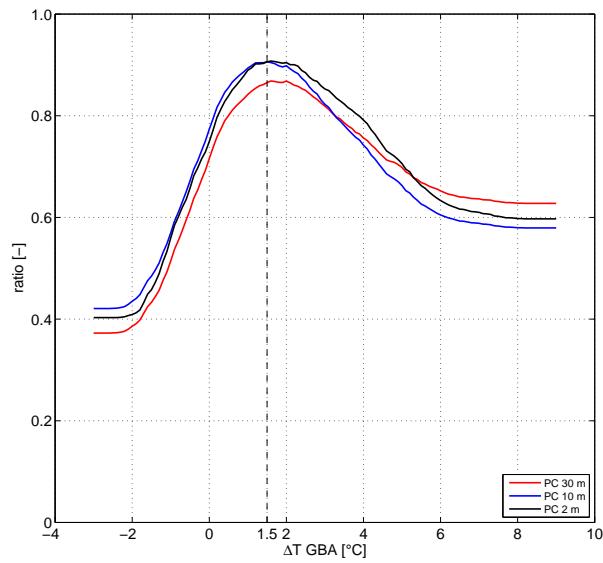
505 FIG. 5. Same as Fig. 4b but for a criterion based on 110 m wind speed measurements at GBA. The optimal
 506 threshold is found at 4.0 m s^{-1} . Data from 13 December 2012 to 16 March 2013.



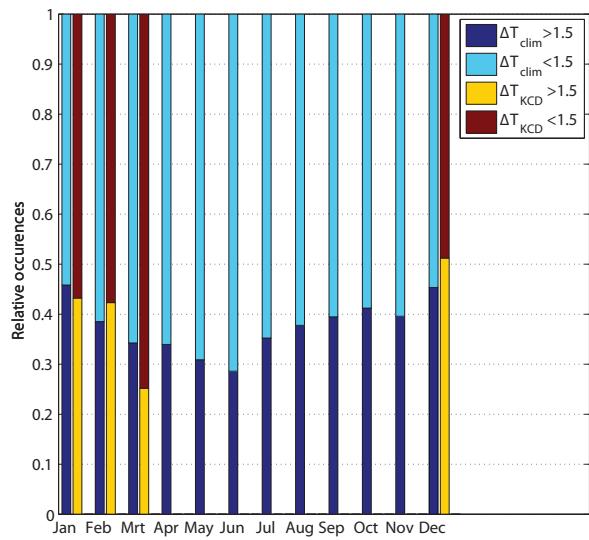
507 FIG. 6. Same as Fig. 4b but for an optimization by means of a bulk Richardson number. The optimal threshold
 508 is found at 0.8. Data from 13 December 2012 to 16 March 2013.



509 FIG. 7. Relation between wind directions inside (10 m) and above (110 m) the valley, according to whether
 510 ΔT_T exceeds (left diagrams) or is below (right diagrams) the optimal threshold of 1.5°C . In the two upper
 511 diagrams (a and b), the plots are sorted according to the hours (UTC) and in the two lower diagrams (c and d)
 512 according to the wind speed observed at 110 m. White and gray backgrounds denote good and bad nowcast,
 513 respectively. The color scales on the right textboxes are also valid for the corresponding left diagram. Data from
 514 13 December 2012 to 16 March 2013.



515 FIG. 8. Same as Fig. 4 but for the other two measurement heights, 2 m (in black) and 30 m (in red). For
 516 comparison, the 10 m result from Fig. 4 is also reproduced. Data from 13 December 2012 to 16 March 2013
 517 (30 m and 10 m) and to 23 February 2013 (2 m).



518 FIG. 9. Monthly climatology of ΔT_T for the years 2007-2011 (clim) and the period of KASCADE (KCD), the
 519 latter from December 2012 to March 2013.