Spatio-temporal modeling of urban extreme rainfall events at high resolution

KIT Seminar — May 19, 2026

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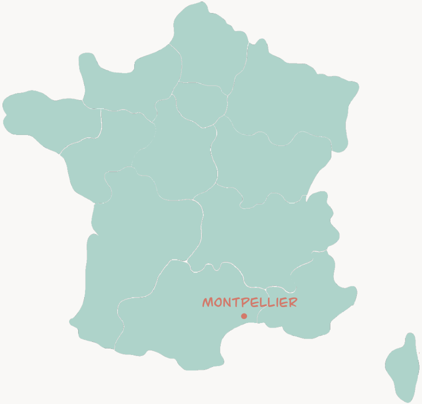
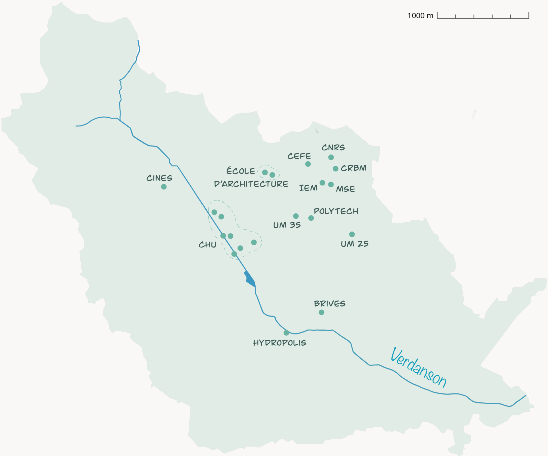
Floods in Montpellier, August 2015 and December 2025 (*Midi Libre*)

- Mediterranean events, localized rainfall
- Urban area, flood risks



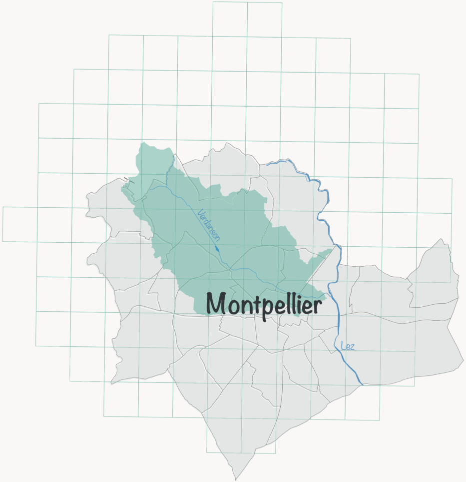
Rain gauge network - OMSEV[1]



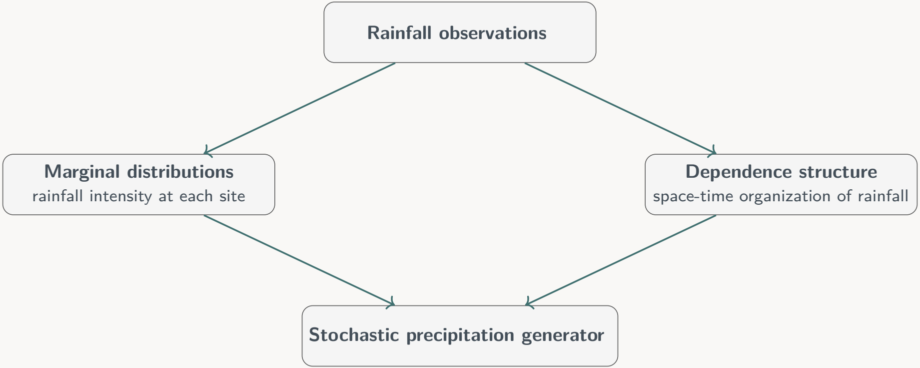
- **Study area:** Verdanson water catchment
- **Source:** Urban observatory of HydroScience Montpellier (HSM)[2]
- **Time period:** [Sept.2019, Jan.2025[
- **Temporal resolution:** 5 minutes
- **Spatial resolution:** 77 m to 2259 m

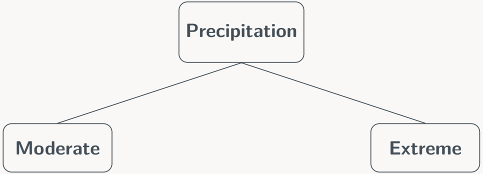
$\mathcal{S} = \{\textbf{20 rain gauges}\} \subset \mathbb{R}^2$ and $\mathcal{T} \subset \mathbb{R}_+$

[1] Observ. Montpellierain et au Sud de l'Eau dans la Ville
[2] Finaud-Guyot et al., 2023

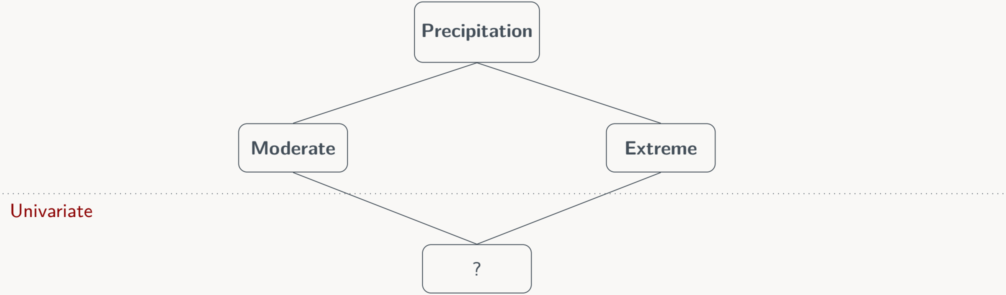


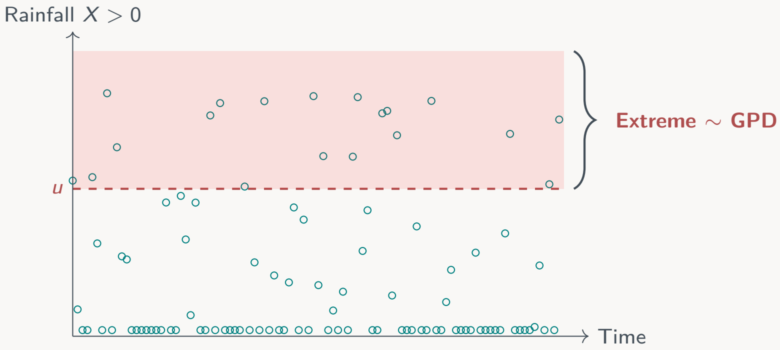
- **Source:** COMEPHORE, Météo France
- **Time period:** $[1997, 2025]$
- **Temporal resolution:** Every hour
- **Spatial resolution:** 1 km^2


Rainfall observations
Marginal distributions
rainfall intensity at each site
Dependence structure
space-time organization of rainfall
Stochastic precipitation generator



Univariate


Precipitation
Moderate
Extreme
Univariate
?

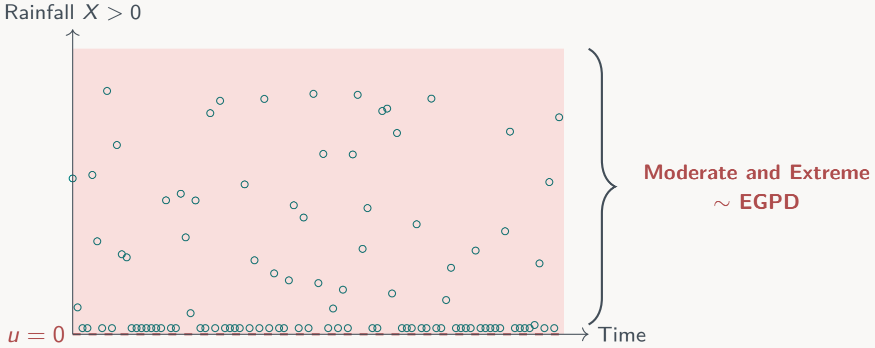


- **Generalized Pareto Distribution (GPD)**[1]

$$X \mid X > u \sim \underbrace{H_\xi}_{\mathrm{GPD}(\xi,\sigma,u)} \text{ with } \xi \in \mathbb{R},\ \sigma > 0.$$

ξ: shape (tail behavior), σ: scale, u: threshold

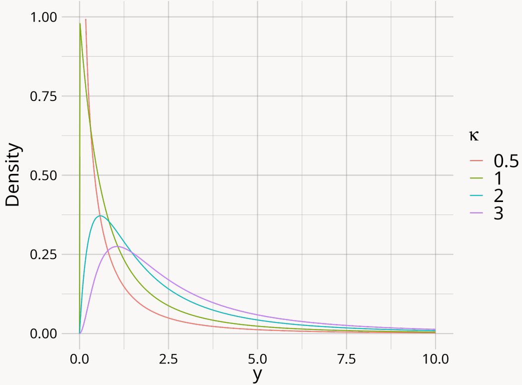
[1] Pickands III, 1975



- **E**xtended **G**eneralized **P**areto **D**istribution (**EGPD**)[2]

$$X \sim \underbrace{G(H_\xi)}_{\text{EGPD}(\xi,\sigma,\kappa)} \text{ with } G(x) = x^\kappa,\ \kappa > 0$$

[2] Naveau et al., 2016



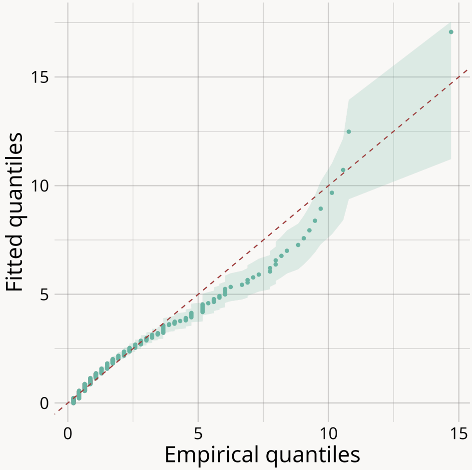
$\sigma = 1,\ \xi = 0.5$

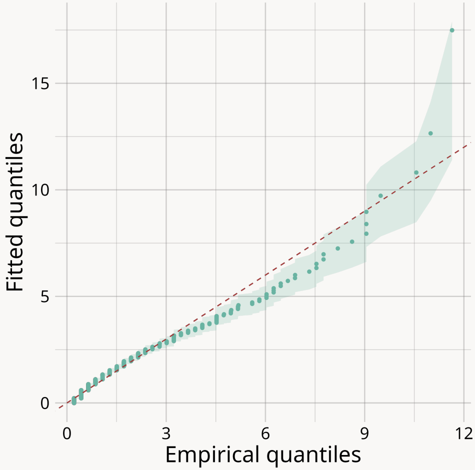
Extended Generalized Pareto Distribution

$$F(x) = G\left(H_\xi\left(\frac{x}{\sigma}\right)\right),$$

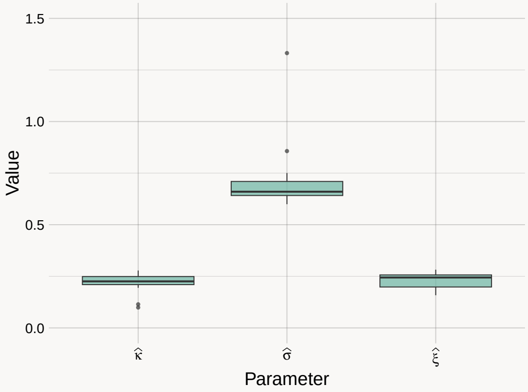
where $G(x) = x^\kappa$, $\kappa > 0$

- κ: controls the bulk of the distribution
- Models **moderate and extreme** precipitation
- Avoids a threshold choice



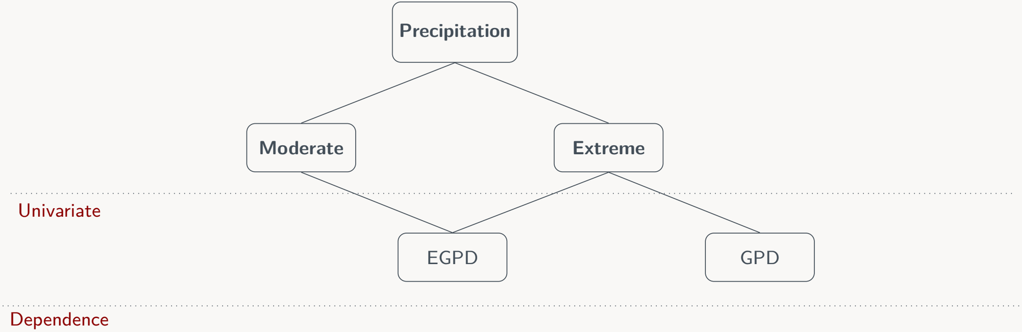


EGPD fitting for two rain gauges, CRBM (left) and UM (right) with left-censoring and 95% CI



Estimated parameters across rain gauges

- $\widehat{\xi} \approx 0.25$: extreme rainfall tail
- $\widehat{\kappa} \approx 0.25$: convective rainfall
- $\widehat{\sigma} \approx 0.6$: short-duration scale


Precipitation
Moderate
Extreme
Univariate
EGPD
GPD
Dependence

Rainfall random field: $\boldsymbol{X} = \{X_{\boldsymbol{s},t},\ (\boldsymbol{s}, t) \in \mathcal{S} \times \mathcal{T}\}$

Let $\Lambda_{\mathcal{S}} \subset \mathbb{R}_+^2$ and $\Lambda_{\mathcal{T}} \subset \mathbb{R}_+$ be sets of spatial and temporal lags respectively.

Rainfall random field: $\boldsymbol{X} = \{X_{\boldsymbol{s},t},\ (\boldsymbol{s},t) \in \mathcal{S} \times \mathcal{T}\}$

Let $\Lambda_{\mathcal{S}} \subset \mathbb{R}_+^2$ and $\Lambda_{\mathcal{T}} \subset \mathbb{R}_+$ be sets of spatial and temporal lags respectively.

Variogram (Matheron, 1963)

$$\gamma(\boldsymbol{h},\tau) = \frac{1}{2}\mathrm{Var}(X_{\boldsymbol{s},t} - X_{\boldsymbol{s}+\boldsymbol{h},t+\tau})$$

- Quantifies variability
- Higher $\gamma(\boldsymbol{h},\tau) \rightarrow$ weaker dependence

$\boldsymbol{h} \in \Lambda_{\mathcal{S}},\ \tau \in \Lambda_{\mathcal{T}}$

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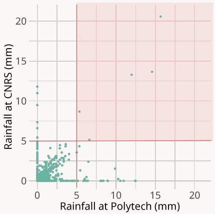
Extremogram (Davis and Mikosch, 2009)

$$\chi(\boldsymbol{h}, \tau) = \lim_{q \to 1} \mathbb{P}(X^*_{\boldsymbol{s},t} > q \mid X^*_{\boldsymbol{s}+\boldsymbol{h},t+\tau} > q)$$

- Measures tail dependence
- Higher $\chi(\boldsymbol{h}, \tau) \rightarrow$ stronger dependence

$\boldsymbol{h} \in \Lambda_{\mathcal{S}}$, $\tau \in \Lambda_{\mathcal{T}}$, $X^*_{\boldsymbol{s},t}$ uniform margins.

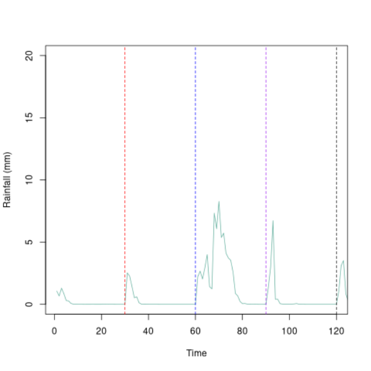


Definition (De Fondeville and Davison, 2018)

For all $\boldsymbol{s} \in \mathcal{S}$ and $t \in \mathcal{T}$, a risk function $r(\boldsymbol{X}) = X_{\boldsymbol{s}_0, t_0}$,

$$u^{-1} X_{\boldsymbol{s},t} \mid X_{\boldsymbol{s}_0,t_0} > u \xrightarrow{d} Y_{\boldsymbol{s},t} \quad \text{with} \quad Y_{\boldsymbol{s},t} = R e^{W_{\boldsymbol{s},t} - W_{\boldsymbol{s}_0,t_0} - \gamma(\boldsymbol{s}-\boldsymbol{s}_0, t-t_0)},$$

where $(\boldsymbol{s}_0, t_0)$ is a space-time location, u is a high threshold, $R \sim \text{Pareto}(1)$, $W_{\boldsymbol{s},t}$ is a Gaussian process.



- r-extremogram

$$\chi_r(\boldsymbol{h}, \tau) = \lim_{q \to 1} \mathbb{P}(X^*_{\boldsymbol{s}_0+\boldsymbol{h}, t_0+\tau} > q \mid X^*_{\boldsymbol{s}_0,t_0} > q)$$

- Brown-Resnick dependence structure

Spatio-temporal extremogram with a Brown-Resnick dependence

Let $\boldsymbol{h} \in \Lambda_{\mathcal{S}}$ and $\tau \in \Lambda_{\mathcal{T}}$. We have

$$\chi(\boldsymbol{h}, \tau) = 2\left(1 - \phi\left(\sqrt{\frac{1}{2}\gamma(\boldsymbol{h}, \tau)}\right)\right)$$

with ϕ the std normal c.d.f. and γ the variogram of $\boldsymbol{W}$.

Spatio-temporal extremogram with a Brown-Resnick dependence

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with ϕ the std normal c.d.f. and γ the variogram of $\boldsymbol{W}$.

Separable model: Fractional Brownian motion with additive separability.

$$\frac{\gamma(\boldsymbol{h}, \tau)}{2} = \beta_1 \|\boldsymbol{h}\|^{\alpha_1} + \beta_2 |\tau|^{\alpha_2}$$

with $0 < \alpha_1, \alpha_2 \leq 2$, $\beta_1, \beta_2 > 0$ (Buhl et al., 2019).

Case of additive separability: $\frac{\gamma(\boldsymbol{h},\tau)}{2} = \beta_1 \|\boldsymbol{h}\|^{\alpha_1} + \beta_2 |\tau|^{\alpha_2},\ \ 0 < \alpha_1, \alpha_2 \leq 2\,,\ \beta_1, \beta_2 > 0$

Spatio-temporal

$$\chi(\boldsymbol{h},\tau) = 2\left(1 - \phi\left(\sqrt{\tfrac{1}{2}\gamma(\boldsymbol{h},\tau)}\right)\right)$$

Transformation:

$$\zeta(\chi) = 2\log\left(\phi^{-1}\left(1 - \tfrac{1}{2}\chi\right)\right)$$

Spatial

$$\zeta\left(\chi(\boldsymbol{h},0)\right) = \log\beta_1 + \alpha_1 \log\|\boldsymbol{h}\|\ ,\ \ \boldsymbol{h} \in \Lambda_{\mathcal{S}}$$

Temporal

$$\zeta\left(\chi(0,\tau)\right) = \log\beta_2 + \alpha_2 \log\tau\ ,\ \ \tau \in \Lambda_{\mathcal{T}}$$

Estimation of the separable variogram parameters

Case of additive separability: $\frac{\gamma(\boldsymbol{h},\tau)}{2} = \beta_1 \|\boldsymbol{h}\|^{\alpha_1} + \beta_2 |\tau|^{\alpha_2}, \quad 0 < \alpha_1, \alpha_2 \leq 2\,, \; \beta_1, \beta_2 > 0$

Spatio-temporal

$$\chi(\boldsymbol{h},\tau) = 2\left(1 - \phi\left(\sqrt{\tfrac{1}{2}\gamma(\boldsymbol{h},\tau)}\right)\right)$$

Transformation:

$$\zeta(\chi) = 2 \log\left(\phi^{-1}\left(1 - \tfrac{1}{2}\chi\right)\right)$$

Spatial

$$\eta\left(\chi(\boldsymbol{h},0)\right) := c_1 + \alpha_1 x_h\,, \quad \boldsymbol{h} \in \Lambda_{\mathcal{S}}$$

Temporal

$$\eta\left(\chi(0,\tau)\right) := c_2 + \alpha_2 x_\tau\,, \quad \tau \in \Lambda_{\mathcal{T}}$$

Weighted Least Squares Estimation (WLSE)

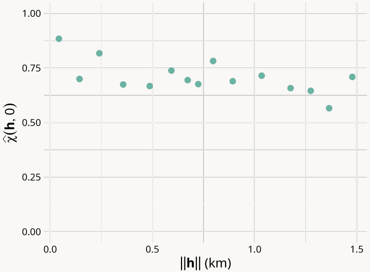
$$\begin{pmatrix} \widehat{c_i} \\ \widehat{\alpha_i} \end{pmatrix} = \operatorname{argmin}_{c_i,\alpha_i} \sum_x w_x \left(\zeta\left(\hat{\chi}\right) - (c_i + \alpha_i x)\right)^2$$

Empirical spatial extremogram

For a fixed $t \in \mathcal{T}$ and q a high quantile,

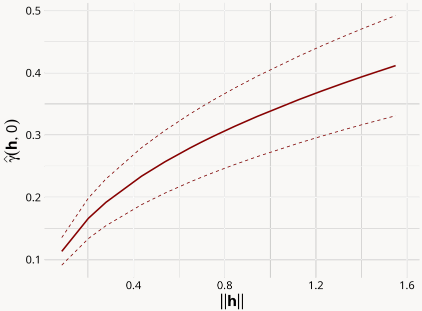
$$\widehat{\chi}_q^{(t)}(\boldsymbol{h}, 0) = \frac{\frac{1}{|N_{\boldsymbol{h}}|} \sum_{i,j \,|\, (\boldsymbol{s}_i, \boldsymbol{s}_j) \in N_{\boldsymbol{h}}} \mathbb{1}_{\{X^*_{\boldsymbol{s}_i,t} > q, X^*_{\boldsymbol{s}_j,t} > q\}}}{\frac{1}{|\mathcal{S}|} \sum_{i=1}^{|\mathcal{S}|} \mathbb{1}_{\{X^*_{\boldsymbol{s}_i,t} > q\}}},$$

where $C_{\boldsymbol{h}}$ are equifrequent distance classes and $N_{\boldsymbol{h}} = \left\{ (\boldsymbol{s}_i, \boldsymbol{s}_j) \in \mathcal{S}^2 \;\middle|\; \|\boldsymbol{s}_i - \boldsymbol{s}_j\| \in C_{\boldsymbol{h}} \right\}$.



Transformation and WLSE

$\Longrightarrow$

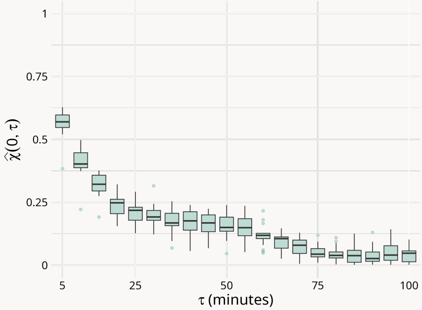


Spatial variogram $\widehat{\gamma}(\boldsymbol{h}, 0) = 2\widehat{\beta}_1 \|\boldsymbol{h}\|^{\widehat{\alpha}_1}$

Empirical temporal extremogram

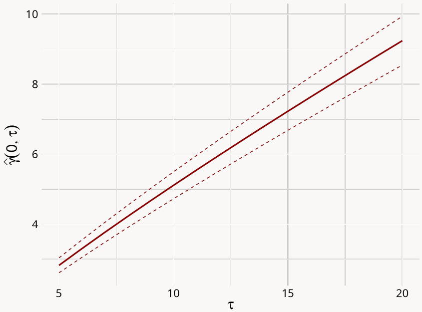
For a location $\boldsymbol{s} \in \mathcal{S}$, a high quantile q and $t_k \in \{t_1, \ldots, t_T\}$,

$$\widehat{\chi}_q^{(\boldsymbol{s})}(\boldsymbol{0}, \tau) = \frac{\frac{1}{T-\tau} \sum_{k=1}^{T-\tau} \mathbb{1}_{\{X^*_{\boldsymbol{s},t_k} > q,\, X^*_{\boldsymbol{s},t_k+\tau} > q\}}}{\frac{1}{T} \sum_{k=1}^{T} \mathbb{1}_{\{X^*_{\boldsymbol{s},t_k} > q\}}}$$



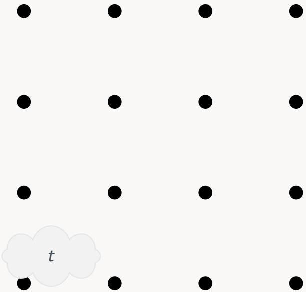
Transformation and WLSE

$\Longrightarrow$

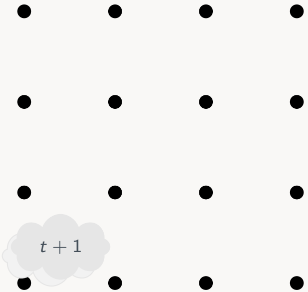


Temporal variogram $\widehat{\gamma}(\boldsymbol{0}, \tau) = 2\widehat{\beta}_2 |\tau|^{\widehat{\alpha}_2}$

Separable model



Separable model



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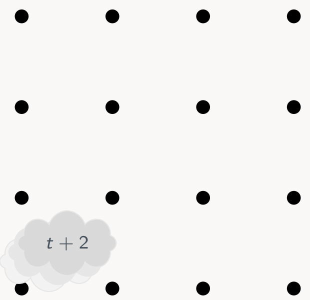
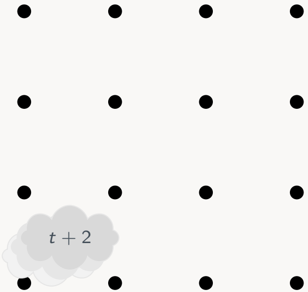
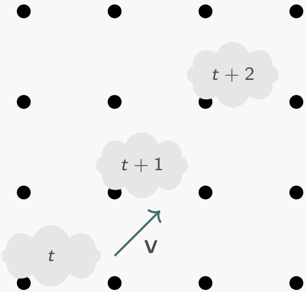


Separable model



Non-separable model



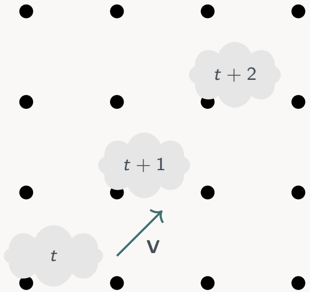
Towards more realistic modeling: introduce advection $\boldsymbol{V}$ to relax separability

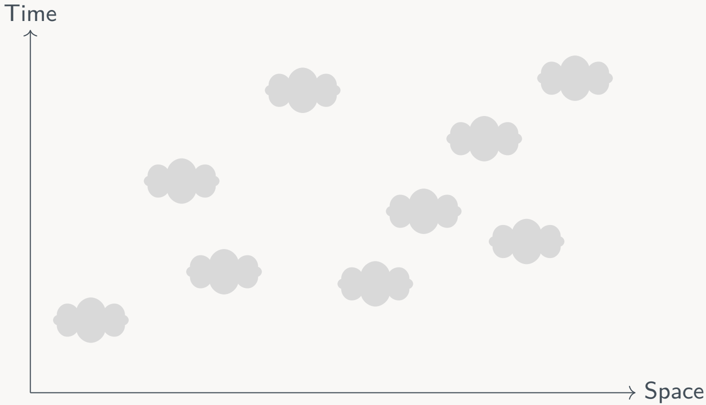
$$\gamma_L(\boldsymbol{h}, \tau) = \gamma(\boldsymbol{h} - \tau \boldsymbol{V}, \tau)$$

$$\Rightarrow \quad \frac{1}{2}\gamma_L(\boldsymbol{h}, \tau) = \beta_1 \|\boldsymbol{h} - \tau \boldsymbol{V}\|^{\alpha_1} + \beta_2 |\tau|^{\alpha_2}$$

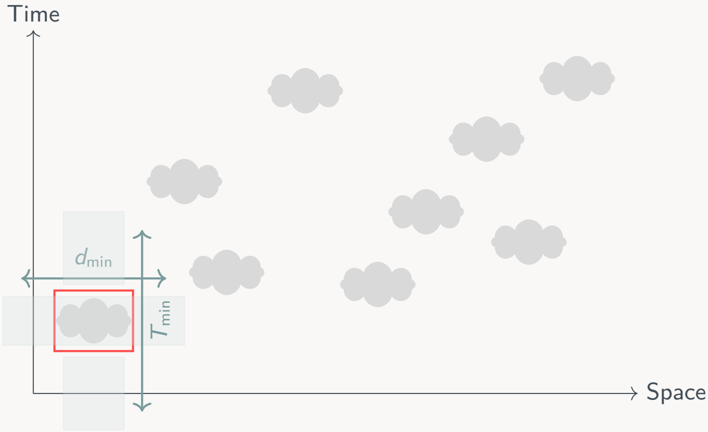
- Parameters: $\boldsymbol{\Theta} = (\beta_1, \beta_2, \alpha_1, \alpha_2, \boldsymbol{V})$

Non-separable model





Extreme episodes:
Each episode is characterized by $(\mathbf{s}_0, t_0)$ for which $X_{\mathbf{s}_0, t_0} > u$

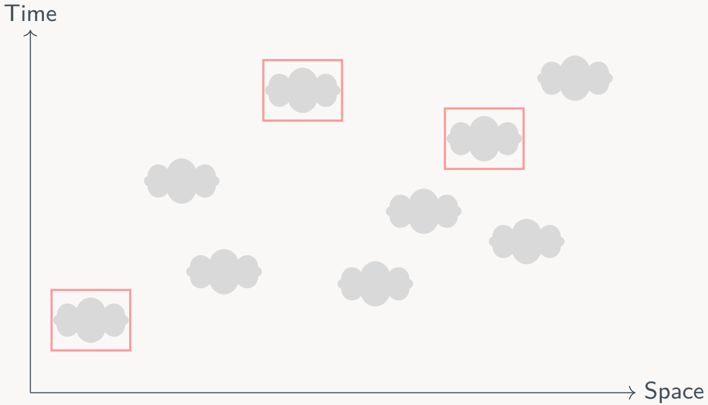


Episode selection:

Only episodes separated by
- spatial distance $\geq d_{\text{min}}$

OR
- temporal gap $\geq T_{\text{min}}$

$\Rightarrow$ reduces dependence between selected episodes $\in \mathcal{E}$.



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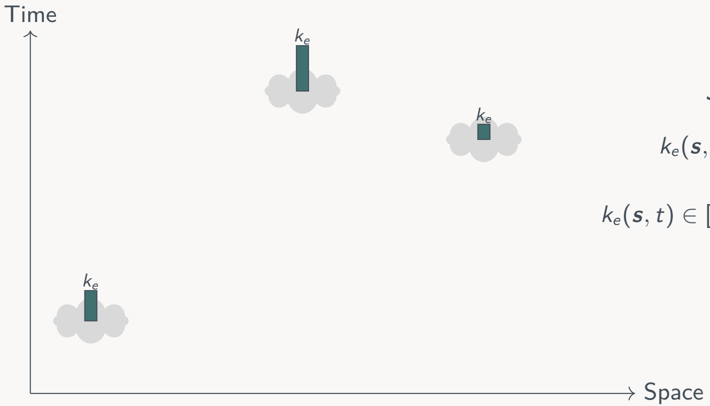
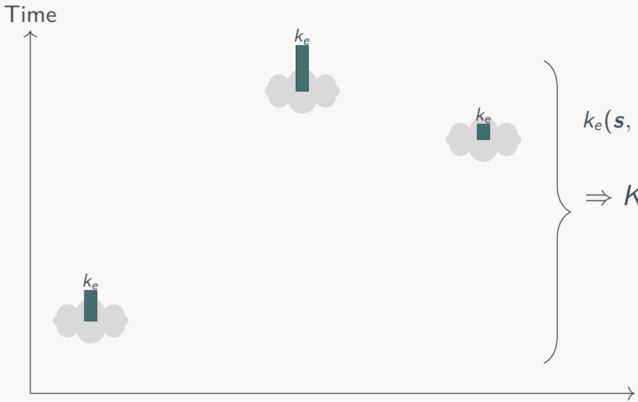


Joint exceedances

$$k_e(\boldsymbol{s}, t) = \mathbb{1}_{\{X_{\boldsymbol{s}_0,t_0} > u,\ X_{\boldsymbol{s},t} > u\}},$$
with $(\boldsymbol{s}, t) \in \mathcal{N}(\boldsymbol{h}, \tau)$

$$k_e(\boldsymbol{s}, t) \in [0, 1] \sim \text{Bernoulli}(\chi_r(h, \tau; \Theta))$$

with $\mathcal{N}(\boldsymbol{h}, \tau) = \{(\boldsymbol{s}, t) \in \mathcal{S} \times \mathcal{T} \mid \|\boldsymbol{s} - \boldsymbol{s}_0\| = \|\boldsymbol{h}\|, |t - t_0| = \tau\}$



Total joint exceedances:

$$k_e(\boldsymbol{s}, t) \in [0, 1] \sim \text{Bernoulli}(\chi_r(h, \tau; \Theta))$$

$$\Rightarrow K_{\boldsymbol{h},\tau} = \sum_{e \in \mathcal{E}} \sum_{(\boldsymbol{s},t) \in \mathcal{N}(\boldsymbol{h},\tau)} k_e(\boldsymbol{s}, t)$$

Bernoulli contributions

with $\mathcal{N}(\boldsymbol{h}, \tau) = \{(\boldsymbol{s}, t) \in \mathcal{S} \times \mathcal{T} \mid \|\boldsymbol{s} - \boldsymbol{s}_0\| = \|\boldsymbol{h}\|, |t - t_0| = \tau\}$

Bernoulli contributions (large u):

$$k_e(\boldsymbol{s}, t) = \mathbf{1}_{\{X_{\boldsymbol{s}_0, t_0} > u,\ X_{\boldsymbol{s}, t} > u\}}, \qquad (\boldsymbol{s}, t) \in \mathcal{N}(\boldsymbol{h}, \tau),$$

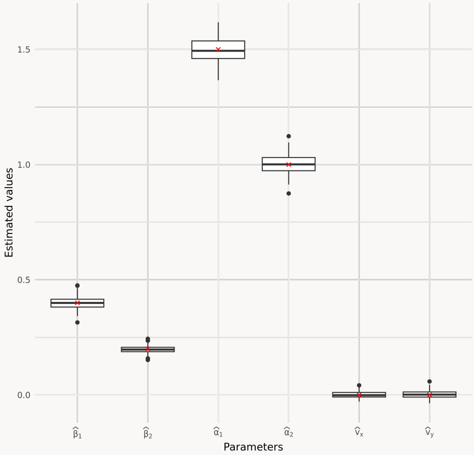
each treated as

$$k_e(\boldsymbol{s}, t) \sim \mathrm{Bernoulli}\big(\chi_r(h, \tau; \Theta)\big).$$

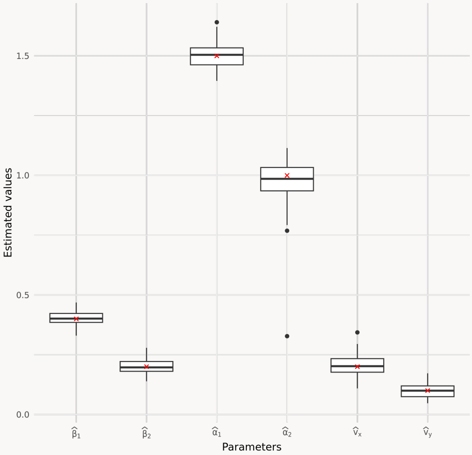
Composite log-likelihood

$$\ell_C(\Theta) \propto \sum_{e \in \mathcal{E}} \sum_{(\boldsymbol{h}, \tau) \in \Lambda_{\mathcal{S}} \times \Lambda_{\mathcal{T}}} \sum_{(\boldsymbol{s}, t) \in \mathcal{N}(\boldsymbol{h}, \tau)} k_e(\boldsymbol{s}, t) \log \chi_r(h, \tau; \Theta) + (1 - k_e(\boldsymbol{s}, t)) \log(1 - \chi_r(h, \tau; \Theta)).$$

- Optimization via maximization of $\ell_C(\Theta)$
- Initial parameters: from WLSE of the separable model (i.e., $\boldsymbol{V} = \mathbf{0}$)



Without advection



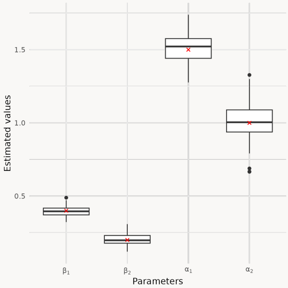
With advection

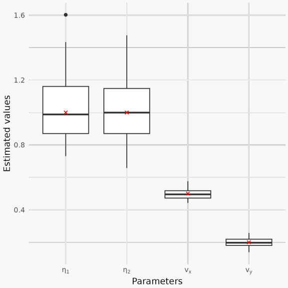
50 simulations, 500 replicates, 25 sites, 30 time steps

Episode-wise advection to global model

$$\mathbf{V}^{\text{emp}} = \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{V}^{(1)} \\ \mathbf{V}^{(2)} \\ \vdots \\ \mathbf{V}^{(N)} \end{bmatrix} \in \mathbb{R}^{N \times 2} \xrightarrow{\text{global model}} \underbrace{\mathbf{V}^{\text{final}} = \eta_1 \left\| \mathbf{V}^{\text{emp}} \right\|^{\eta_2} \frac{\mathbf{V}^{\text{emp}}}{\left\| \mathbf{V}^{\text{emp}} \right\|}, \ \eta_1 > 0, \eta_2 > 0}_{\text{transformation} \Rightarrow \eta \text{ to estimate}}$$

one component = one episode





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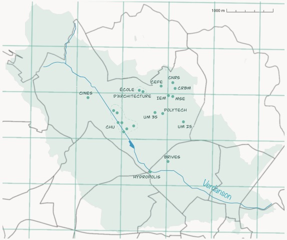
one component = one episode

Parameters: $\mathbf{\Theta} = (\beta_1, \beta_2, \alpha_1, \alpha_2, \eta_1, \eta_2)$

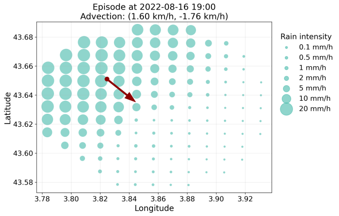
Challenge:
OMSEV data $\Rightarrow$ limited information for advection

Approach:
Fusion COMEPHORE–OMSEV $\rightarrow$ more reliable advection

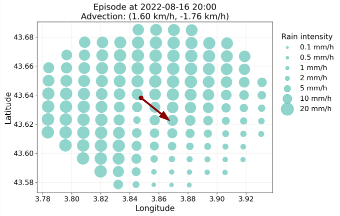


COMEPHORE pixels
Météo France

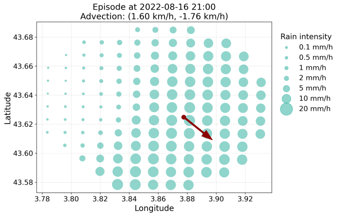
For one episode, we have:



$t_0 - 1$



t_0

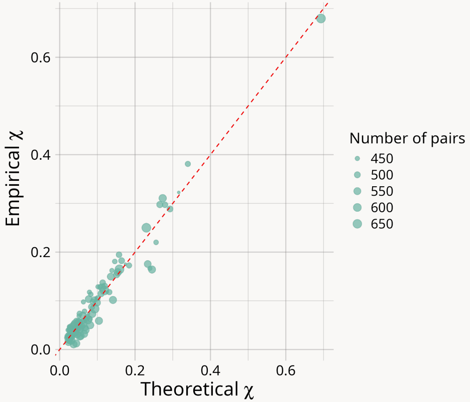


$t_0 + 1$

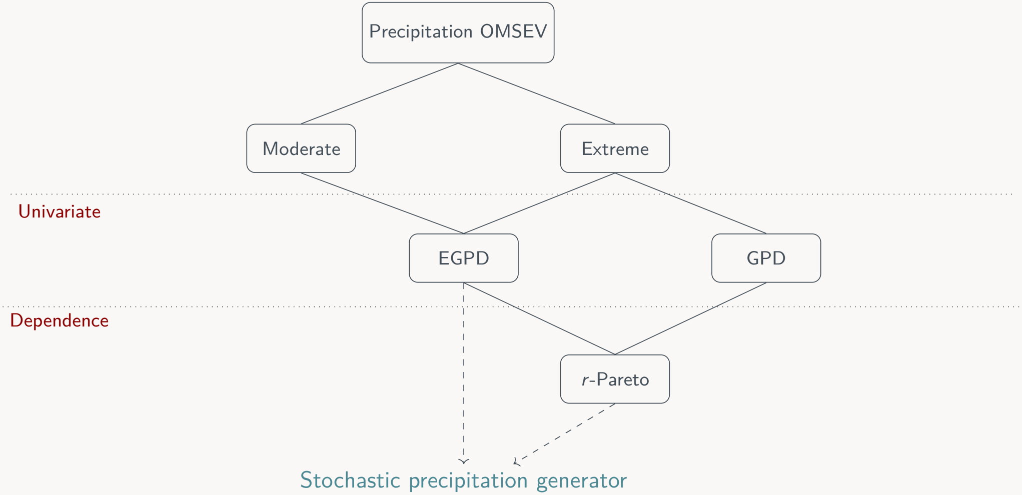
$\boldsymbol{V}^{\text{emp}}$ is estimated from **rain storm barycenter displacement** within a time window.

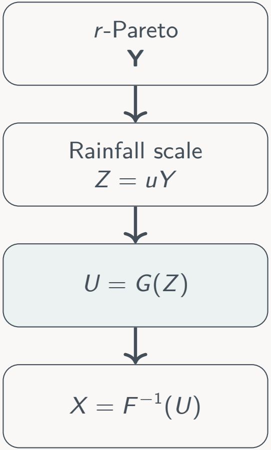
Optimization on COMEPHORE episodes $\Rightarrow \widehat{\eta}_1 = 3.896$ and $\widehat{\eta}_2 = 2.221$.

Parameter estimates over $|\mathcal{E}| = 333$ episodes
$\widehat{\eta}_1 = 3.896$ and $\widehat{\eta}_2 = 2.221$ fixed (COMEPHORE)



	m/5 min
$\widehat{\beta}_1$	0.231 [0.047, 1.060]
$\widehat{\beta}_2$	0.807 [0.368, 1.655]
$\widehat{\alpha}_1$	0.250 [0.064, 0.436]
$\widehat{\alpha}_2$	0.666 [0.469, 0.863]


Precipitation OMSEV
Moderate
Extreme
Univariate
EGPD
GPD
Dependence
r-Pareto
Stochastic precipitation generator



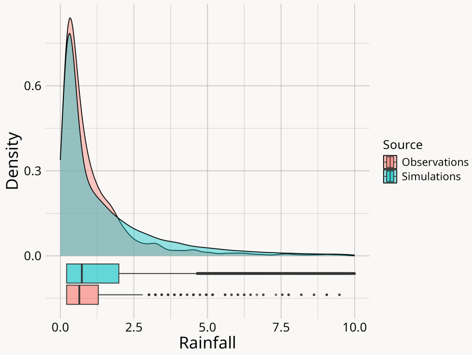
Marginals: zero and EGPD

$$F(x) = \begin{cases} 0, & x < 0, \\ p_0, & x = 0, \\ p_0 + (1 - p_0) F_{\mathrm{EGPD}}(x), & x > 0. \end{cases}$$

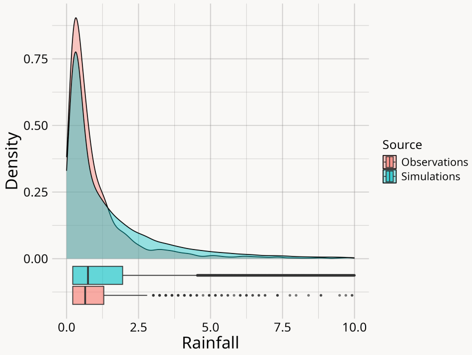
Role of G:

- maps to unit interval
- introduces mass at zero
- preserves Pareto tail

100 simulations by episode



UM density

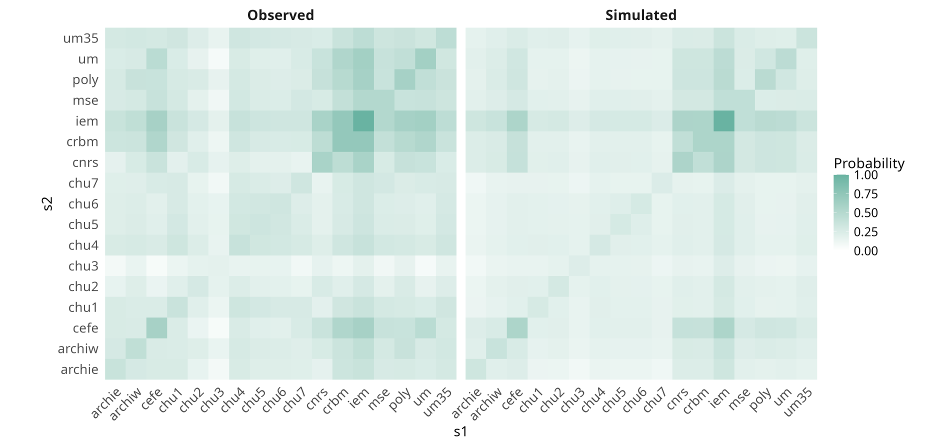


IEM density

Comparison of marginal distributions (above-zero rainfall)

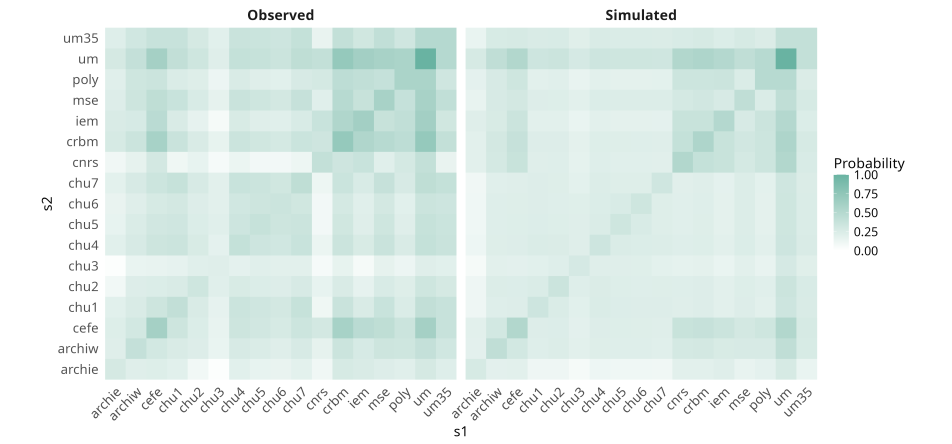
Dependence validation of simulated precipitation

100 simulations by episode

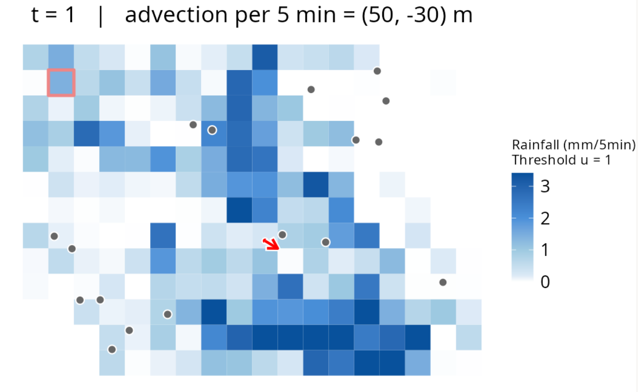


$$\mathbb{P}(X_{s_1} > u, X_{s_2} > u | X_{\text{IEM}} > u)$$

100 simulations by episode

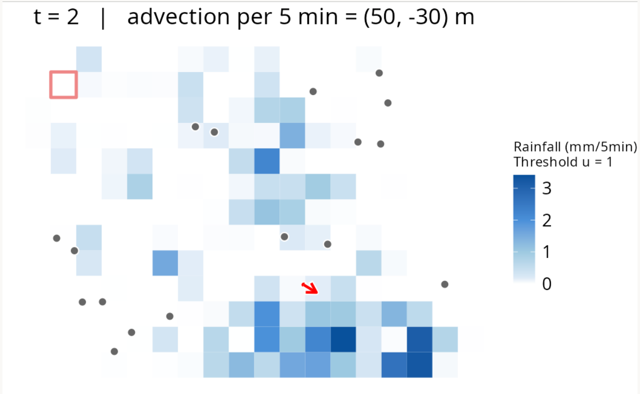


$$\mathbb{P}(X_{s_1} > u, X_{s_2} > u | X_{\mathrm{UM}} > u)$$



Over the OMSEV network area

- Spatial resolution: 100 m $\times$ 100 m
- Temporal resolution: 5 min
- Stochastic rainfall simulation



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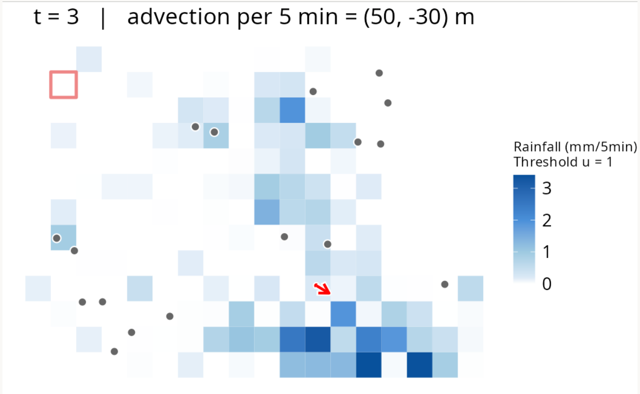

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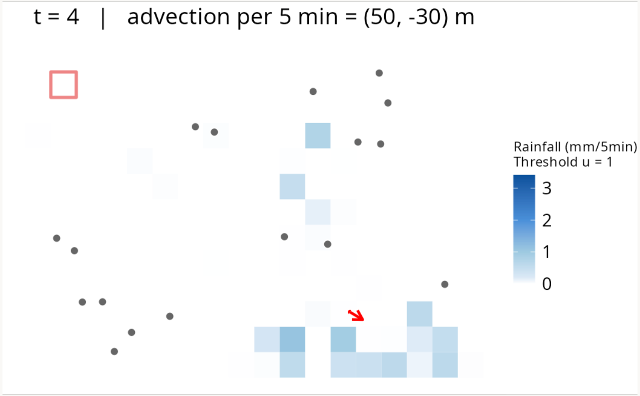
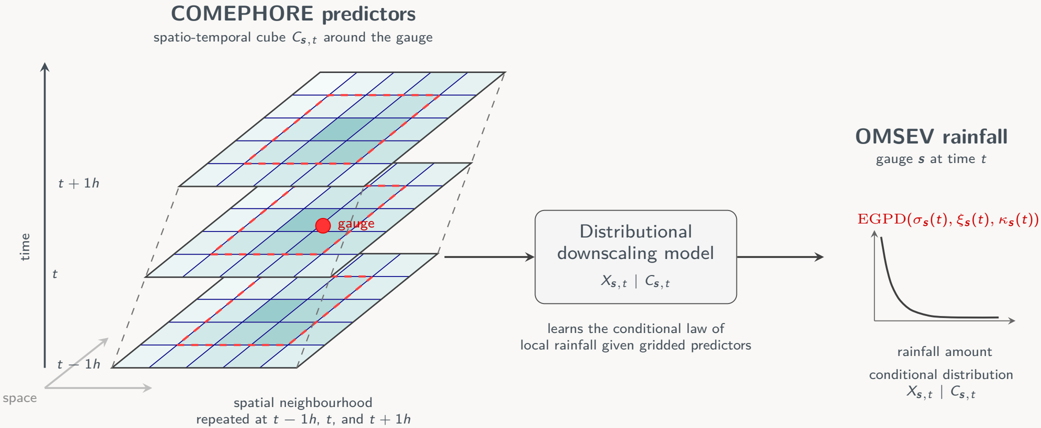
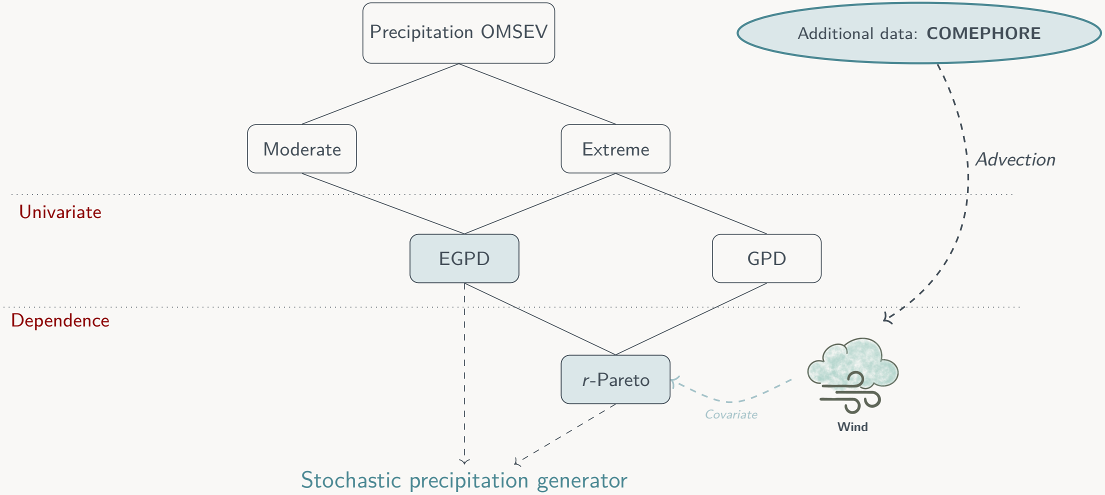


Over the OMSEV network area

- Spatial resolution: 100 m × 100 m
- Temporal resolution: 5 min
- Stochastic rainfall simulation

Statistical downscaling




Precipitation OMSEV
Additional data: **COMEPHORE**
Moderate
Extreme
Advection
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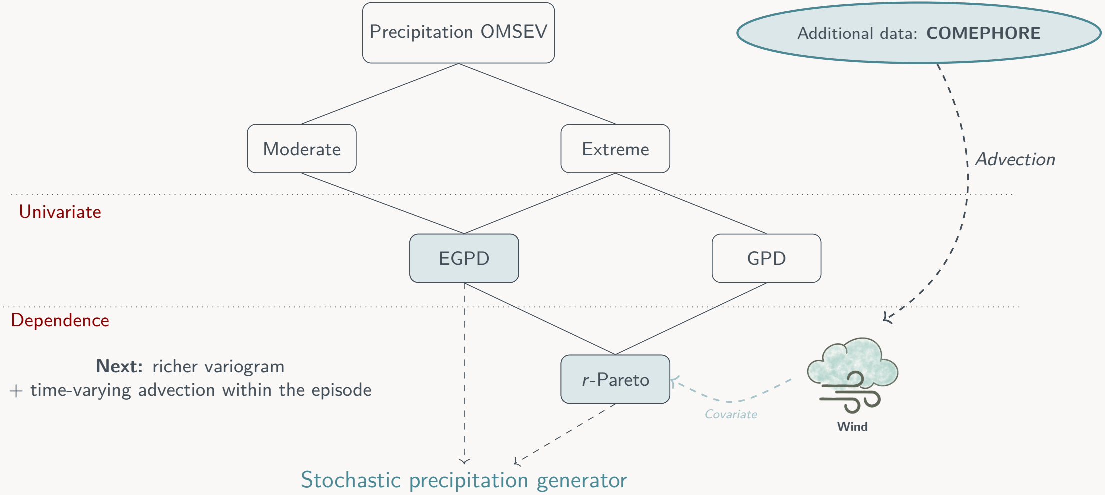
Covariate
Wind
Stochastic precipitation generator



Next: richer variogram
+ time-varying advection within the episode

References

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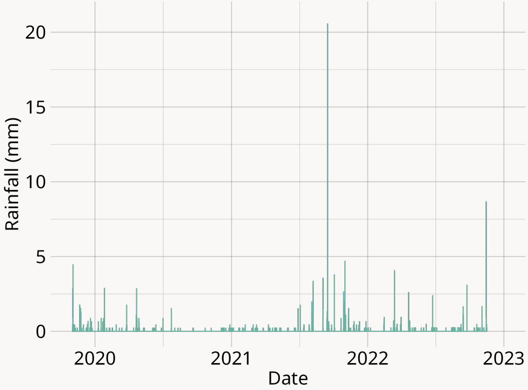
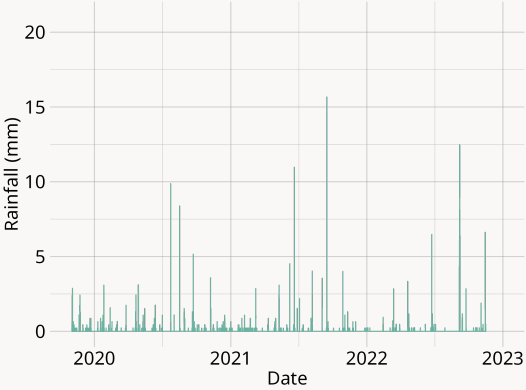
Pickands III, J. (1975).Statistical inference using extreme order statistics. *the Annals of Statistics*, 119–131.

Rainfall data - OMSEV





Rainfall amounts on CNRS and Polytech rain gauges

Generalized Pareto Distribution → **Extended GPD**[1]

$$\overline{H}_\xi\left(\frac{x-u}{\sigma}\right) = \begin{cases} \left(1+\xi\frac{x-u}{\sigma}\right)_+^{-1/\xi} & \text{if } \xi \neq 0\,, \\ e^{-\frac{x-u}{\sigma}} & \text{if } \xi = 0\,, \end{cases}$$

where $a_+ = \max(a, 0)$, $\sigma > 0$, $x - u > 0$

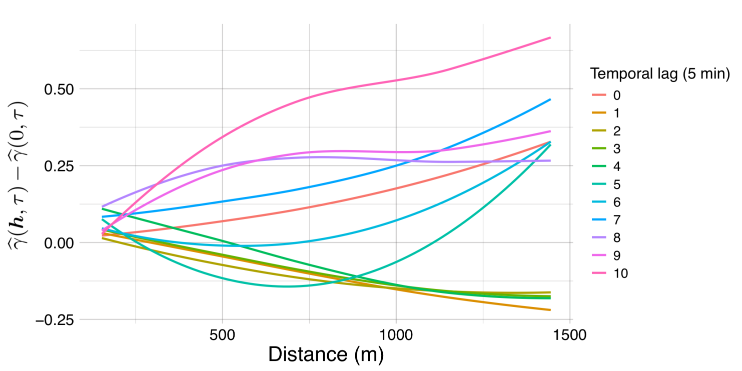
- Models extreme precipitation
- Depends on a threshold choice

$$F(x) = G\left(H_\xi\left(\frac{x}{\sigma}\right)\right),$$

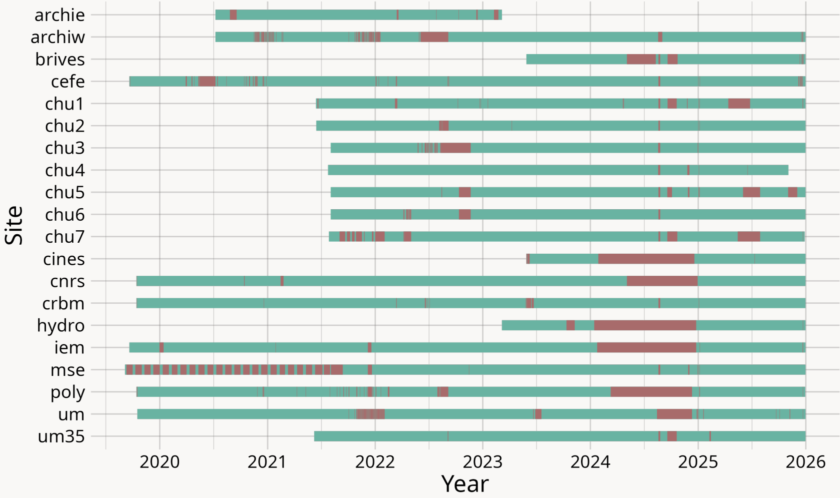
where $G(x) = x^\kappa$, $\kappa > 0$

- Models **moderate and extreme** precipitation
- Avoids a threshold choice

[1] Naveau et al., 2016

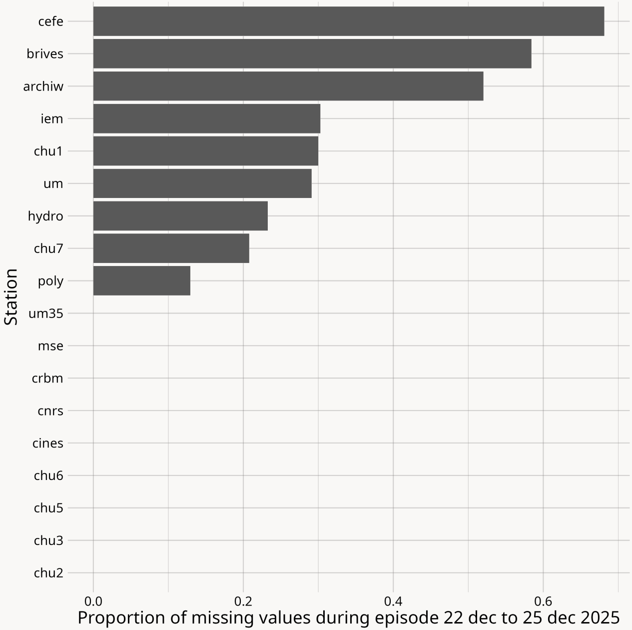


Empirical difference between the spatio-temporal variogram $\gamma(\boldsymbol{h}, \tau)$ and the only temporal variogram on OMSEV data

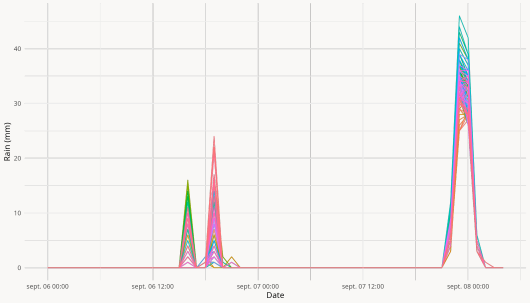


Missing values according to site activation periods (OMSEV dataset)

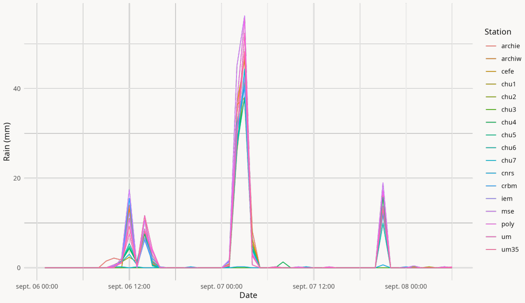
Data issue: missing values



COMEPHORE (radar)



OMSEV (gauges)



Mismatch between radar and gauge data