



MINISTERIO  
DE ECONOMÍA  
Y COMPETITIVIDAD



INSTITUTO PIRENAICO DE ECOLOGIA  
NIF: Q2818002D

Dear Editor Dr. Etienne Berthier,

We are pleased to submit a new revised version of our manuscript originally entitled: “Recent accelerated wastage of the Monte Perdido Glacier in the Spanish Pyrenees” and now entitled “Thinning of the Monte Perdido Glacier in the Spanish Pyrenees since 1981”.

- In response to your last message and following your recommendation we have sent the manuscript to a professional editing service, to ensure the quality of the grammar and minimize the possibility of appearing typographical errors. This revised version of our manuscript has been reviewed by the English Manager Service ([www.sciencemanager.com](http://www.sciencemanager.com)), who has edited our manuscripts for the past 15 years. Therefore, we really hope that the paper is acceptable after passing this professional checking. In addition, we have tried to be consistent in the use of the terminology and the way to present the numbers. According to your suggestion, we have used the term “thinning” to make reference to the loss of ice volume, and the wording “surface elevation change” to the process measured by comparing DEMs and Terrestrial laser Scanning data; therefore, in the captions and legends of Figures 5, 6 and 7, we use the term “Surface elevation changes (meters)”. As mentioned before, we indicated to the English Manager Service to indicate the “+” or “-” sign before the numbers.
- Regarding the use of different units, this last revised version clearly states what they provide. Along the whole manuscript, but particularly in the abstract, we systematically indicate if numbers make reference to “surface elevation change” or “glacier-wide mass balance”.
- Moreover, we have carefully checked the numbers and re-calculated the operations, to ensure that they are right. We are now confident that we have reached this purpose, as well as we have checked that the time periods are properly depicted in this new revised version.
- We have also checked carefully all the cited articles and the references in both ways, the consistency between both lists, and that they follow the journal’s style.

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Once again, thanks for managing our manuscript.

Sincerely,

Juan-Ignacio López-Moreno and co-authors.

Pyrenean Institute of Ecology, CSIC.

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1 ~~RECENT ACCELERATED WASTAGE~~THINNING OF THE MONTE  
2 PERDIDO GLACIER IN THE SPANISH PYRENEES SINCE 1981

Definición de estilo: Normal: Fuente: (Predeterminado) +Cuerpo (Calibri)

Definición de estilo: Encabezado

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17  
Con formato: Justificado

## Abstract

This paper analyzes the evolution of the Monte Perdido Glacier, the third largest glacier ~~of~~in the Pyrenees, from 1981 to the present. We assessed the evolution of the glacier's surface area by ~~use~~analysis of aerial photographs from 1981, 1999, and 2006, and changes in ice volume by geodetic methods with digital elevation models (DEMs) generated from topographic maps (1981 and 1999), airborne LIDAR (2010) and terrestrial laser scanning (TLS, 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014) ~~data~~. We interpreted the changes in the glacier based on climate data from nearby meteorological stations. The results indicate ~~an accelerated~~that the degradation of this glacier accelerated after 1999, ~~with a~~. The rate of ice surface loss ~~that~~ was almost three times greater ~~from~~during 1999 to 2006 than ~~for~~during earlier periods, ~~and~~. Moreover, the rate of glacier thinning was 1.85 times faster ~~rate of glacier volume loss from~~during 1999 to 2010 (the ice depth ~~decreased by~~rate of surface elevation change =  $-8.98 \pm 1.80$  m, glacier-wide mass balance =  $-0.7273 \pm 0.14$  m w.e.  $\text{yr}^{-1}$ ) ~~compared to~~than during 1981 to 1999 (the ice depth ~~decreased~~rate of surface elevation change =  $-8.35 \pm 2.12$  m, glacier-wide mass balance =  $-0.3942 \pm 0.10$  m w.e.  $\text{yr}^{-1}$ ). ~~This loss of glacial~~From 2011 to 2014, ice ~~has~~thinning continued at a lower rate from 2011 to 2014 (the glacier depth decreased by slower rate (rate of surface elevation change =  $-1.93 \pm 0.4$  m,  $\text{yr}^{-1}$ , glacier-wide mass balance =  $-0.58 \pm 0.36$  m w.e.  $\text{yr}^{-1}$ ). ~~These data indicated that~~ $\text{yr}^{-1}$ ). This deceleration in ice thinning compared to the previous 17 years can be attributed, at least in part, to two consecutive ~~markedly anomalous~~anomalously wet winters and cool summers (2012-13 and 2013-14) ~~resulted in a deceleration in wastage compared to previous 17 years, but were~~, counteracted ~~by~~to some degree the ~~dramatic shrinkage~~intense thinning that occurred during the dry and warm ~~period of~~2011-2012. ~~Local~~period. However, local climatic changes observed during the study period ~~seem~~do not ~~sufficiently~~seem

1 | ~~sufficient to~~ explain the acceleration in ~~wastage rate~~ice thinning of this glacier, because  
2 | precipitation and air temperature did not exhibit statistically significant trends during  
3 | the ~~studied~~study period. ~~The~~Rather, the accelerated degradation of this glacier in recent  
4 | years can be explained by ~~the~~a strong disequilibrium between the glacier and the current  
5 | climate, and ~~probably~~likely by other factors affecting the energy balance (i.e. ~~g.~~heat  
6 | increased albedo in spring) and feedback mechanisms (i.e. ~~g. heat~~ emitted ~~heat~~ from  
7 | ~~recent ice free bedrocks~~recently exposed bedrock and debris covered areas).

8 | **Keywords:** Glacier shrinkage, glacier thinning, climate evolution, geodetic methods,  
9 | terrestrial laser scanner (TLS), Pyrenees

## 11 | 1 Introduction

12 | Most glaciers worldwide have undergone intense retreat since the  
13 | ~~eminaton~~culmination of the Little Ice Age (LIA)), believed to have been in the mid-  
14 | 19th century, as indicated by measurements of ice surface area and volume (Vincent et  
15 | al., 2013; Marshall, 2014; Marzeion et al., 2014 and 2015; Zemp et al., 2014). This  
16 | trend has apparently accelerated in the last three decades (Serrano et al., 2011; Mernild  
17 | et al., 2013; Carturan et al. 2013a; Gardent et al., 2014; López-Moreno et al., 2014).  
18 | ~~Thus,~~ Marshall (2014) and Zemp et al. (2015) noted that loss of global glacier mass  
19 | during the early 21<sup>st</sup> century exceeded that of any other decade studied. Several studies  
20 | have examined this phenomenon in Europe. In the French Alps, glacier shrinkage has  
21 | accelerated since the 1960s, mainly in the 2000s (Gardent et al., 2014). In the Ötztal  
22 | Alps (Austria), ~~Abermann et al. (2009) calculated~~ the loss of glacier area was calculated  
23 | to be -0.4% per year from 1969 to 1997 and -0.9% per year from 1997 to 2006.  
24 | (Abermann et al., 2009). In the Central Italian Alps, ~~Scotti et al. (2014) compared~~ the

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1 ~~period of 1860-1990 with 1990-2007 and reported an approximately 10-fold greater~~  
2 average annual decrease ~~of~~ glacier area was found to be approximately 10-fold greater  
3 ~~during the more recent period. Carturan et al. (2013b) also reported that 1990-2007 than~~  
4 during 1860-1990 (Scotti et al., 2014), while the rate of ice mass loss in the long-term  
5 monitored Careser Glacier (Italian Alps) during ~~the period~~ 1981-2006 ( $-1.3$  meter of  
6 water equivalent per year; hereafter m w.e.  $\text{yr}^{-1}$ ) was about twice that for the period ~~of~~  
7 1933-~~to~~ 1959 ( $-0.7$  m w.e.  $\text{yr}^{-1}$ ) ~~(Carturan et al., 2013b)~~. Over ~~the same a similar~~  
8 period (1980-2010), ~~Fischer et al. (2015) the rate of ice mass loss~~ calculated ~~a very~~  
9 ~~similar rate of ice mass loss~~ for the Swiss Alps (~~was~~  $-0.65$  m w.e.  $\text{yr}^{-1}$ ) ~~that (Fischer et~~  
10 al., 2015), which clearly exceeds the values presented by Huss et al. (2010) for the same  
11 region over the 20th century (close to  $-0.25$  m w.e.  $\text{yr}^{-1}$ ). In the Sierra Nevada of  
12 southern Spain, the Veleta Glacier, which formed during the LIA, evolved into a rock  
13 glacier during the mid-20th century and has suffered marked degradation during the last  
14 two decades (Gómez-Ortiz et al., 2014).

15 The glaciers in the Pyrenees ~~host some of, which are among~~ the southernmost glaciers  
16 ~~of~~ Europe; (Grünwald and Scheithauer, 2010), have also undergone significant  
17 retreat ~~(Grünwald and Scheithauer, 2010)~~. In 2005, these glaciers had ~~an a total~~ area of  
18 495 hectares (González-Trueba et al., 2008) ~~and in 2008 they~~, but this had ~~a total area~~  
19 ~~of decreased to~~ 321 hectares by 2008 (René, 2013). Since 1880, the different massifs  
20 have had variable reductions in area covered by ice, with a 59% reduction in the  
21 Vignemale Massif and an 84% reduction in the Posets-Llardana Massif (Gellatly et al.,  
22 1995; René, 2013). A total of 111 glaciers ~~have~~ disappeared in the Pyrenees from 1880  
23 to 2005, and only 31 actual glaciers (with ice motion) remain. There has been a rapid  
24 glacial recession since the 1990s, and many of these glaciers face imminent extinction.  
25 Chueca et al. (2005 and 2008) reported that the rates of glacial shrinkage during the last

1 two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century were similar to  
2 those observed from 1860 to 1900, immediately after the end of the LIA. A similar  
3 conclusion has been reached by Marti et al. (2015) for the Ossoue Glacier (French  
4 Pyrenees).

5 Most studies agree that global warming is responsible for the observed glacier shrinkage  
6 and the recent acceleration of this shrinkage- and glacier thinning. The air temperature  
7 increase has been particularly strong since the 1970s in most mountain ranges of the  
8 world (Haeberli and Beniston, 1998; Beniston et al., 2003; Nogués-Bravo et al., 2008;  
9 Gardent et al., 2014). Global warming has increased the equilibrium line altitudes  
10 (ELAs) and reduced the accumulation area ratios (AARs) of glaciers, ~~so~~such that most  
11 glaciers are not in equilibrium with current climate (Mernild et al., 2013) and many ~~of~~  
12 ~~them~~ cannot survive/persist for much longer (Pelto, 2010). In the case of the Pyrenees,  
13 the annual air temperature has increased by a minimum of 0.9°C since the  
14 ~~end~~culmination of the LIA (Dessens and Bücher, ~~1998~~1995; Feulliet and Mercier,  
15 2012). More recently, Deaux et al., (2014) reported an increase of 0.2°C decade<sup>-1</sup> for the  
16 ~~period between~~ 1951-~~and~~-2010 period. This air temperature increase explains the ~255  
17 m increase in the elevation of the ELA of the glaciers of the Maladeta Massif since the  
18 ~~end~~culmination of the LIA, which is currently close to 2950 m a.s.l. (Chueca et al.,  
19 2005). The decreased accumulation of snow, and the increase ~~on~~in air temperature  
20 during the ablation season are thought to be the principal causes of recent glacier  
21 decline ~~in~~on the southern (Spanish) side of the Pyrenees (Chueca et al., 2005).

22 Glaciers are very good indicators of climate change due to their high sensitivity to  
23 anomalies in precipitation and air temperature (Carrivick and Brewer, 2004; Fischer et  
24 al., 2015). However, it is not always easy to establish a direct relation between annual  
25 fluctuations of climate and the changes in the area and mass of a particular glacier. This

1 | ~~is~~ is difficult because only glaciers of small size respond rapidly to changes in annual  
2 | snowfall and snow/ice melt, whereas mid-sized and large glaciers respond much more  
3 | slowly (Marshall, 2014). Moreover, very small glaciers may develop and evolve for  
4 | reasons unrelated to the regional long-term, monthly or seasonal climatic evolution,  
5 | such as, for example avalanches, wind drifting~~drift~~ and new rock exposures~~exposure~~. In  
6 | the case of shrinking glaciers, the latter can be a key driver of glacier thinning (Chueca  
7 | ~~et al.~~and Julián, 2004; Serrano et al., 2011; Carturan et al., 2013c). Local topography  
8 | also has a considerable effect on the development of ice bodies, and can cause notable  
9 | variations in the ELAs of different glaciers in the same region (Reinwarth and Escher-  
10 | Vetter, 1999; Carrivick and Brewer, 2004; López-Moreno et al., 2006). Moreover, many  
11 | studies of recent changes in glaciers examined the evolution of ~~the area of glaciated~~  
12 | ~~surfaces or~~ glacier surface areas or lengths. These parameters respond to climate  
13 | fluctuations, ~~although this~~but their relationship to climate is also affected by geometric  
14 | ~~adjustments~~factors (Haerberli, 1995; Carturan et al., 2013a). Thus, direct mass-balance  
15 | estimations or geodetic methods that determine changes in ice volume provide better  
16 | information on the relationship between changes in glacier ~~changes characteristics~~ and  
17 | ~~climatic~~ changes in climate (Chueca et al., 2007; Cogley, 2009; Fischer et al., 2015). In  
18 | the Pyrenees, ~~there are very~~only a few ~~estimations~~estimates of ice volume loss have  
19 | been published (Del Río et al., 2014; Sanjosé et al., 2014; Marti et al., 2015),  
20 | ~~although~~whereas there is abundant research ~~has examined~~on recent changes ~~of~~in  
21 | glaciated surface areas (Chueca et al., 2005; López-Moreno et al., 2006; González-  
22 | Trueba et al., 2008). Annual estimates of glacier mass fluctuations based on the  
23 | glaciological method ~~were~~have only been performed on the Maladeta Glacier (Spanish  
24 | Pyrenees) and on the Ossoue Glacier (French Pyrenees), ~~and these indicated~~with the  
25 | findings indicating a mean glacier thinning wasof -14 m during the last 20 years ~~on~~for

1 | the Maladeta Glacier, and -22 m ~~en~~for the Ossoue Glacier (Arenillas et al., 2008; René,  
2 | 2013; Marti et al., 2015). Other studies in the Spanish Pyrenees compared digital  
3 | elevation models (DEMs) derived from topographic maps ~~off~~from 1981 and 1999 in the  
4 | Maladeta Massif (Chueca et al., 2008) and the Monte Perdido Glacier (Julián and  
5 | Chueca, 2007), ~~and reported losses~~reporting rates of loss (glacier-wide mass balance) of  
6 | -0.36 m w.e. yr<sup>-1</sup> and ~~of~~ -0.39 m w.e. yr<sup>-1</sup>, respectively.

7 | This paper focuses on the recent evolution of the Monte Perdido Glacier, the third  
8 | largest glacier in the Pyrenees. We document changes in the glacier surface area from  
9 | 1981 to 2006 and provide updated information on ~~volumetrie~~surface elevation changes  
10 | by comparing DEMs derived from topographic maps ~~off~~from 1981 and 1999 (Julian and  
11 | Chueca, 2007), a new DEM obtained in 2010 from Airborne LIDAR, and four  
12 | successive ~~Terrestrial Laser Scanning~~terrestrial laser scanning (TLS) surveys that were  
13 | performed during the autumns of 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014. We examined these data  
14 | in connection with data on precipitation, snow depth, and air temperature since 1983  
15 | from the closest meteorological station. ~~Identification of, and three longer air~~  
16 | temperature and precipitation records (1955-2013) from neighboring stations.  
17 | Identifying changes during recent years in this region is particularly important because  
18 | in the 21st century snowfall accumulation has been higher and the air temperatures  
19 | slightly cooler than in the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This shift is associated  
20 | ~~to~~with a persistently positive North Atlantic Oscillation index ~~in~~during the beginning of  
21 | the 21st century (Vicente-Serrano et al., 2010; Buisan et al., 2015). ~~Thus, the most~~The  
22 | recent response of ~~the~~ remnant ice bodies to this climatic anomaly is as yet unknown.  
23 | Moreover, the availability of annual TLS data in recent years permits detailed  
24 | examination of the relationship between changes in climate and glaciers.

25

1 **2 Study area and review of ~~the~~ previous research on the Monte Perdido**  
2 **~~glacier~~ Glacier**

3 ~~The Monte Perdido Glacier (42°40'50"N 0°02'15"E~~ The Monte Perdido Glacier  
4 (42°40'50"N 0°02'15"E) is located in the Ordesa and Monte Perdido National Park  
5 (OMPNP) in the Central Spanish Pyrenees (Figure 1). The ice masses are north-facing,  
6 lie on structural flats beneath the main summit of the Monte Perdido Peak (3355 m),  
7 and are surrounded by vertical cliffs of 500-800 m in height (García-Ruiz and Martí-  
8 Bono, 2002). At the base of the cliffs, the Cinca River flows directly from the glacier  
9 and the surrounding slopes, and has created a longitudinal west-east basin called the  
10 Marboré Cirque (5.8 km<sup>2</sup>).

11 ~~Researchers~~ Scientists have studied glaciers in the Marboré Cirque since the mid-19th  
12 century (Schrader, 1874), and many subsequent studies examined the status and extent  
13 ~~and made descriptions of the status~~ of the ice masses and ~~the~~ moraine features ~~of the~~  
14 ~~moraines~~ deposited during the LIA (Gómez de Llarena, 1936; Hernández-Pacheco and  
15 Vidal Box, 1946; Boyé, 1952). More recent studies have established the  
16 ~~location~~ locations of moraines to deduce the dynamics and extent of LIA glaciers  
17 (Nicolás, 1981 and 1986; Martínez de Pisón and Arenillas, 1988; García Ruiz and Martí  
18 Bono, 2002; Martín Moreno, 2004) and have analyzed environmental changes during  
19 the Holocene through the study of sediments in Marboré Lake (Oliva-Urcia et al., 2013)  
20 and by dating of Holocene morainic deposits (García-Ruiz et al., 2014).

21 The map of Schrader (1874), numerous old photographs, and the location of the LIA  
22 moraines (García Ruiz and Martí Bono, 2002) indicate a unique glacier at the foot of  
23 the large north-facing wall of the Monte Perdido Massif (Monte Perdido, Cilindro and  
24 Marboré peaks) (Figure 1). The map of Schrader (1874) distinguishes the Cilindro-

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1 | Marboré Glacier, with three small ice tongues that joined ~~it~~at the headwall, from the  
2 | Monte Perdido Glacier, which was divided into three stepped ice masses connected by  
3 | serac falls until the mid-20th century. The glacier that existed at the lowest elevation  
4 | was fed by snow and ice avalanches from the intermediate glacier, but disappeared  
5 | afterduring the 1970s (~~Nicolas~~Nicolás, 1986; García-Ruiz et al., 2014). The two  
6 | remaining glacier bodies, which are currently unconnected, are referred to this paper as  
7 | the upper and lower Monte Perdido Glaciers. The glacier beneath the Cilindro and  
8 | Marboré peaks has transformed into three small and isolated ice patches (García-Ruiz et  
9 | al., 2014). It is noteworthy that Hernández-Pacheco and Vidal Box (1946) previously  
10 | estimated a maximum ice thickness of 52 m for the upper glacier and 73 m for the lower  
11 | glacier. In 2008, 82% of the ice cover present at the end of the LIA had already  
12 | disappeared. The upper and lower ice bodies have mean elevations of 3110 m and 2885  
13 | m (Julián and Chueca, 2007). Despite the high elevation of the upper glacier, snow  
14 | accumulation is limited due to the minimal avalanche activity above the glacier and its  
15 | marked steepness ( $\approx 40^\circ$ ).

16 | ~~There has not been a~~No direct observation has been made of the current location of the  
17 | ELA in the upper Cinca valley, but studies at the end of the 20th and beginning of the  
18 | 21st century placed it at about 2800 m in the Gállego Valley, west of the OMPNP  
19 | (López-Moreno, 2000), and at about 2950 m in the Maladeta Massif, east of the  
20 | OMPNP (Chueca et al., 2005). The mean annual air temperature at the closest  
21 | meteorological station (Góriz at 2250 m a.s.l., 2.7 km from the glacier) is 5.03°C,  
22 | although this station is on the south-facing slope of the Monte Perdido Massif.  
23 | Assuming a lapse rate of 0.55°C to 0.65°C every 100 m, the annual 0°C isotherm should  
24 | be roughly at 2950 to 3150 m a.s.l. The climate in this region can be defined as high-  
25 | mountain Mediterranean. Precipitation as snow can fall on the glacier at any time of

1 year, but most snow accumulation is from November to May, and most ablation is from  
2 June to September.

3

### 4 **3 Data and methods**

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#### 5 **3.1. Comparison of DEMs**

6 Digital elevation models (DEMs) from different dates can be used to calculate surface  
7 elevation changes ~~in glacier ice volume~~. This technique is well established for the study  
8 of glaciers in mountainous areas (Favey et al., 2002), and we have previously applied it  
9 in several studies of the Pyrenees (Chueca et al., 2004, 2007; Julián and Chueca, 2007).

10 Thus, we used three DEMs to estimate the surface elevation changes ~~in ice volume~~ in  
11 the Monte Perdido Glacier. Two DEMs (1981 and 1999) were derived from topographic  
12 maps and one (2010) was from airborne LIDAR measurements. All three DEMs ~~have~~  
13 ~~and had a~~ cell size of 2x2 m, and they were used in the context of a geographic  
14 information system (GIS), working under the European Datum ED50 (UTM projection,  
15 zone 30).

16 The 1981 DEM was obtained from the cartography published by the Spanish *Instituto*  
17 *Geográfico Nacional* (IGN) (Sheet 146-IV, Monte Perdido; Topographic National Map  
18 Series, scale 1:25000). This map was published in 1997 and its cartographic restitution  
19 was based on a photogrammetric flight in September 1981. The 1999 DEM was also  
20 derived from cartography published by the IGN (Sheet 146-IV, Monte Perdido;  
21 Topographic National Map Series MTN25, scale 1:25000). It was published in 2006  
22 and its cartographic restitution was based on a photogrammetric flight in September  
23 1999. The 2010 DEM was obtained from an airborne LIDAR flight (MDT05-LIDAR)

1 | made by the IGN in September ~~of~~ 2010 in the context of the National Plan for Aerial  
2 | Orthophotography (NPAO).

3 | The ~~Root Mean Squared Error~~root mean squared error (RMSE) ~~for~~in elevation ~~accuracy~~  
4 | calculated by- the IGN for their digital cartographic products at 1:25000 scale is  $\pm 1.5$  m  
5 | and  $\pm 0.2$  m for their LIDAR derived DEMs. To verify these accuracies, we ~~made a~~  
6 | ~~comparison of~~compared 2010-1999, 2010-1981 and 1999-1981 pairs of DEMs in areas  
7 | of ice-free terrain ~~placed~~situated near the studied glaciers. The results showed good  
8 | agreement with the accuracy indicated by the IGN in almost all areas, although larger  
9 | vertical errors were identified in several sectors ~~of~~with very steep terrain (~~with slope~~  
10 | ~~values usually~~slopes  $> 65^\circ$  in most cases) located in the Monte Perdido glacial cirque  
11 | (sharp-edged crests and abrupt cliffs linked to the geological and structural disposition  
12 | of the area). In those sectors, differences between the DEMs reached 10-15 m. As both  
13 | the Upper and Lower Monte Perdido glaciers are placed well outside those areas and  
14 | have smoother topographical surfaces, it ~~might be~~was assumed that the altimetric data  
15 | provided by the IGN has an appropriate consistency over the glaciated terrain.

16 | The combined vertical RMSE for DEM differences was  $< 2.5$  m for 1999 minus 1981,  
17 | and  $< 2.0$  m for 2010 minus 1999. In the latter case it must be noted that different  
18 | geodetic methods (~~photogrammetrical~~photogrammetric and airborne LIDAR) were used  
19 | in the comparison and that this ~~fact could alter~~may affect the accuracy of the surface  
20 | elevation changes (Rolstad ~~and others,~~et al., 2009). In any case, both these errors were  
21 | considered precise enough for ~~our~~the purposes of the present work as the ~~ice-~~  
22 | ~~depth~~surface elevation changes obtained in our analysis were generally much  
23 | ~~higher~~greater than these ~~values~~errors. The estimation of ~~ice volumes~~surface elevation  
24 | changes was performed in ArcGIS comparing, by cut and fill procedures, pairs of  
25 | glacier surface DEMs (1981-1999 and 1999-2010). The glacial perimeters associated

1 with each DEM date were retrieved from aerial photographs (1981: *Pirineos Sur* Flight,  
2 September 1981, scale of 1:30000, black and white; 1999: *Gobierno de Aragón* Flight,  
3 September 1999, scale of 1:20000, color). There were no high quality flights for 2010,  
4 so 2006 aerial photographs were used (PNOA2006 Flight, August 2006, scale of  
5 1:5000, color). The 1999 and 2006 photographs were already orthorectified, but we had  
6 to correct the geometry and georeference the aerial survey of 1981 by use of the  
7 georeferencing module of ArcGIS. The reference for the control points was from the  
8 orthophotos and DEM data from 1999. The horizontal RMSE accuracy of the set of  
9 control points ranged from 2.1 to 4.7 m, and was considered sufficiently precise for our  
10 study. The maximum horizontal error was used to calculate the uncertainty ~~of~~  
11 glacierized in the glaciated areas and their temporal changes. This uncertainty was  
12 calculated using the *buffer* tool in ArcGIS. This tool allowed ~~quantifying~~  
13 quantification  
14 of the area of the polygon generated with the maximum horizontal error around the  
15 perimeter of the glacier. A resampling procedure using cubic convolution was used to  
16 generate the final rectified images.

16 The most recent estimates of the evolution of the glacier were from annual TLS surveys.  
17 LIDAR technology has developed rapidly in recent years, and terrestrial and airborne  
18 LIDAR have been used in diverse geomorphology studies, including monitoring  
19 changes in the volume of glaciers (Schwalbe et al. 2008, Carturan et al., 2013b). The  
20 device ~~used~~employed in the present study is a long-range TLS (RIEGL LPM-321) that  
21 uses time-of-flight technology to measure the time between the emission and detection  
22 of a light pulse to produce a three-dimensional point cloud from real topography. The  
23 TLS used in this study employed light pulses at 905 nm (near-infrared), which is ideal  
24 for acquiring data from snow and ice cover (Prokop, 2008; Grünewald et al., 2010; Egli

1 et al., 2011), a minimum angular step of 0.0188°, a laser beam divergence of 0.0468°,  
2 and a maximum working distance of 6000 m.

3 When TLS is used for long distances, various sources of error must be considered,  
4 ~~namely in particular~~ the instability of the device and errors from georeferencing the ~~point~~  
5 ~~of clouds of points~~ (Reshetyuk, 2006). We used an almost frontal view of the glacier  
6 (~~same as similar to the view used~~ for the photos shown in Figure 4) with minimal  
7 shadow zones in the glacier and a scanning distance of 1500 to 2500 m. We also used  
8 indirect registration, also called target-based registration (Revuelto et al., 2014), so that  
9 scans from different dates (September of 2011 to 2014) could be compared. Indirect  
10 registration uses fixed reference points (targets) that are located in the study area.

11 ~~44~~ Eleven reflective targets of known shape and ~~dimension dimensions~~ (cylinders of  
12 10x10 cm for ~~those targets~~ located closer than 200 ~~meters m~~, and ~~squares of~~ 50x50 cm  
13 ~~squares~~ for longer distances) were placed at ~~the~~ reference points on rocks ~~at a~~  
14 ~~distance situated 200 to 500 m~~ from the scan station ~~of 10 to 500 m~~. Using standard  
15 topographic methods, we obtained accurate global coordinates for the targets by use of a  
16 differential global positioning system (DGPS) with post-processing. The global  
17 coordinates were acquired in the UTM 30 coordinate system in the ETRS89 datum. The  
18 final precision for the set of target coordinates was  $\pm 0.05$  m in planimetry and  $\pm 0.10$  m  
19 in altimetry. A total of 65 reference points around the ice bodies (identifiable sections of  
20 rocks and cliffs) were used to assess measurement accuracy. Ninety percent of the  
21 reference points had an error ~~lower of less~~ than 0.40 m. ~~Such Thus~~ 40 cm ~~of error~~ was  
22 ~~considered taken~~ as the uncertainty (error bars) ~~to when calculating~~ the ~~calculated~~ ice  
23 ~~depth thinning~~ and mass loss rates. The conversion of mean ~~ice surface~~ elevation change  
24 to annual mass budget ~~rates rate~~ was ~~done performed by~~ applying a mean density of 900  
25  $\text{kg m}^{-3}$  (Chueca et al., 2007; Marti et al., 2015). ~~The assumption Use~~ of this value

1 | ~~neglects~~assumes the ~~existence~~absence of firm, ~~with~~which has a lower density. This  
2 | ~~is~~assumption was mostly ~~true~~valid at the end of the study period, but ~~probably~~unlikely  
3 | ~~some firm was present during~~ the early ~~eighties~~this assumption is not completely true  
4 | ~~and firm areas existed (i.e. according to 1980s (Figure 3A))~~suggests the presence of  
5 | firm. Unfortunately, ~~the~~a lack of additional information forced us to adopt this  
6 | generalization ~~that, which~~ may ~~slightly overestimate~~have led to a slight overestimation  
7 | of the mass loss rate for 1981–1999.

### 9 | 3.2 Climatic data

10 | The Spanish Meteorological ~~Office~~Agency (AEMET) provided climatic data from the  
11 | Góriz manual weather station, located at 2250 m a.s.l. on the southern slope of the  
12 | Monte Perdido Massif. The absence of changes in instrumentation and observation  
13 | practices in the meteorological station since 1983, and the proximity of the  
14 | meteorological station to the glacier (2.7 km), ~~suggests~~suggest that ~~the station~~  
15 | accurately ~~records~~recorded the climate variability over the glacier. The climatic record  
16 | consists of daily data of air temperature, precipitation, and snow depth. From these data,  
17 | we derived annual series of maximum and minimum air temperatures for the main  
18 | periods of snow accumulation (November-May) and ablation (June-September),  
19 | precipitation during the accumulation season, and maximum snow depth in April  
20 | (generally the time of maximum snowpack at this meteorological station). The lack of  
21 | detailed meteorological or mass balance data over the glacier made it necessary to  
22 | define the accumulation and the ablation seasons in a subjective manner based on our  
23 | experience. We are aware that May and October are transitional months between  
24 | accumulation and ablation conditions depending on specific annual conditions...

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1 However, we set these periods because June and November are the months when  
2 ablation and accumulation respectively become generally evident over the surface of the  
3 glacier. The statistical significance of the linear climate trends was assessed ~~by using~~  
4 non-parametric correlation coefficient of Mann-~~Kendalls~~Kendall's tau-b (Kendall and  
5 Gibbons, 1990). Results obtained for Góriz were contrasted with those from three other  
6 observatories (see Figure 1) with precipitation (Pineta, Aragnouet and Canfranc), and  
7 air temperature (Mediano, Aragnouet and Canfranc) data for ~~the period~~ 1983-~~and~~ 2013,  
8 and also for 1955-2013. The non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test (Fay and Proschan,  
9 2010) was used to detect statistically significant differences in the medians of  
10 precipitation and air temperature when the ~~periods~~ 1983-1999 and 2000-2010 ~~are periods~~  
11 were compared.

12

## 13 **4. Results**

### 14 **4.1. Climatic evolution and variability from 1983 to 2014**

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15 Figure 2 illustrates the high interannual variability of climate at Góriz station since  
16 1983. The average maximum air temperatures at Góriz during the snow accumulation  
17 and ablation seasons ~~had showed~~ no significant trends, with tau-b values close to 0  
18 (~~Figs~~Figures 2a and 2b). The range between the highest and lowest average seasonal  
19 anomalies during the study period exceeded 3°C and 4°C during the accumulation and  
20 ablation periods, respectively, for maximum and minimum air temperatures. The  
21 average minimum air temperatures ~~had exhibited~~ very weak increases in both seasons,  
22 but these were not statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). The interannual air temperature  
23 range was larger for the accumulation period (~5°C) than for the ablation period  
24 (~2.5°C). Table 1 shows that the evolution of air temperature at Góriz is in line with that

1 observed at the three other meteorological stations (Mediano, Aragnouet and Canfranc).  
2 ~~They do not exhibit~~No statistically significant trends were observed for maximum or  
3 minimum air temperature during the ~~period~~ 1983-2013. ~~On period. When maximum and~~  
4 minimum air temperature data were considered on a monthly basis, the four  
5 ~~analysed~~analyzed observatories ~~only~~ exhibited ~~a~~ statistically significant increases only  
6 in May and June; ~~and statistically significant decreases of maximum and minimum~~  
7 ~~temperature only~~ in November and December. The Mann-Whitney test did not reveal  
8 statistically significant differences in the medians of the series for the accumulation and  
9 ablation seasons at any observatory when the periods 1983-1999 and 2000-2010 were  
10 compared.

11 Precipitation at Góriz during the accumulation period also exhibited strong interannual  
12 variability, with a range of ~~~~~approximately 600 mm to 1500 mm (Fig. 2e). The trend  
13 line ~~had~~showed a slight increase, but this was not statistically significant. Similarly,  
14 maximum snow accumulation during April varied from less than 50 cm to 250 cm, and  
15 there was no evident trend during the study period (Fig. 2f). Monthly trend analysis  
16 (Table 1) ~~only~~ found a significant increase ~~of~~in precipitation at Góriz only during May,  
17 and near zero tau-b coefficients for ~~the most of the other~~ months. Very similar results ~~are~~  
18 ~~found~~were obtained for the other three analyzed stations (Pineta, Aragnouet and  
19 Canfranc); ~~with no statistically significant trends for the accumulation and ablation~~  
20 periods. ~~Only~~Significant increases in precipitation were observed at Aragnouet ~~showed~~  
21 ~~a statistically significant increase~~only in May, and at Pineta only in March. No  
22 statistically significant differences in the median ~~of~~ precipitation during the  
23 accumulation and ablation seasons of the 1983-1999 and 2000-2010 periods were found  
24 at any of the analyzed meteorological stations.

1 ~~In addition,~~ Figure 3 shows the interannual evolution of air temperature and  
2 precipitation series for a longer time ~~slice~~period (1955-2013). ~~They~~The data illustrate  
3 that the climate observed during the main ~~studied~~study period (1983-2013) is not  
4 necessarily representative of the longer climate series. Thus, the 1955-2013 period  
5 ~~exhibits~~exhibited statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) warming during the ablation period,  
6 and the accumulation exhibited positive tau-b values but did not reach statistical  
7 significance. Precipitation during the accumulation period did not exhibit statistically  
8 significant trends during the period 1955-2013 in any of the three analyzed  
9 observatories analyzed.

10 Figure 2 also shows that 2011-2014, the ~~last three years~~period for which ~~we have~~-TLS  
11 measurements of annual glacier evolution, ~~had~~ were available, showed extremely  
12 variable conditions. ~~Thus, mid~~Mid-September 2011 to mid-September 2012 was one of  
13 the warmest recorded years (especially during the ablation period, which was in the 96th  
14 and 74th percentiles for maximum and minimum air temperature, respectively) and with  
15 a rather dry accumulation period (27th percentile). The period of 2012 to 2013 had an  
16 accumulation period that was more humid than average (59th percentile) and the coolest  
17 recorded summer (1st and 18<sup>th</sup> percentiles for maximum and minimum air temperatures  
18 respectively), and the accumulation period of 2013 to 2014 was very wet (78<sup>th</sup>  
19 percentile) and slightly cooler than average ~~respectively~~, with air temperatures around  
20 or below the average (22th and 48th percentiles for maximum and minimum  
21 temperature, respectively) during the ablation monthsperiod.

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## 23 4.2 Glacier evolution from 1981 to 2010

1 | Figure 4 shows ~~two~~ photographs of the ~~glacier~~ Monte Perdido Glacier taken in late  
2 | summer ~~of~~in 1981 and 2011. A simple visual assessment shows the ~~fast~~degree of  
3 | degradation of the glacier during this 30 year period. In 1981, the upper and lower  
4 | glaciers were no longer united (they became disconnected between 1973 and 1978), and  
5 | they exhibited a convex surface and ~~a~~-significant ice depth with noticeable seracs  
6 | hanging from the ~~edge~~edges of the cliffs. Both ice bodies were heavily crevassed, with  
7 | evidence of ice motion over the whole glacier. The photograph ~~of~~from 2011 shows that  
8 | the two ice bodies are further separated, as well as showing a dramatic reduction in ice  
9 | thickness, ~~manifested by~~evident in the concave surface, the disappearance of almost all  
10 | seracs, and the retreat of ice from the edges of the cliffs. Crevasses are only  
11 | ~~evident~~observed in the eastern part of the lower glacier, indicating that the motion of the  
12 | glacier has slowed or stopped in most of ~~these~~the two ice bodies. Moreover, there are  
13 | rocky outcrops in the middle of the lower glacier and areas that are partially covered by  
14 | debris deposits presumably originating from ~~several~~ crevasses ~~or~~and rock falls in the  
15 | upper ~~areas~~glacier.

16 | Table 2 shows the surface area of the ice in 1981, 1999, and 2006. From 1981 to 1999  
17 | the glacier ~~lost~~ losses were  $-4.5 \pm 0.1950 \pm 1.27$  ha (~~a change of~~  $-1.550 \pm 0.0652$  ha in the  
18 | upper glacier and  $-3.0 \pm 0.1300 \pm 1.21$  ha in the lower glacier), corresponding to an overall  
19 | rate of  $-0.25 \pm 0.0107$  ha yr<sup>-1</sup>. From 1999 to 2006, the glacier losses were  $-$   
20 |  $5.4 \pm 0.2440 \pm 1.20$  ha (~~a change of~~  $-2.00 \pm 0.0946$  ha in the upper glacier and  $-$   
21 |  $3.4 \pm 0.1540 \pm 1.16$  ha in the lower glacier), corresponding to an overall rate of  $-$   
22 |  $0.77 \pm 0.2317$  ha yr<sup>-1</sup>, more than three times the rate of the previous 18 years.

23 | Comparison of the elevation of the glacier's surfaces derived from the DEMs (1981 to  
24 | 1999 vs. 1999 to 2010) also indicates an acceleration of glacier ~~wastage~~thinning over  
25 | time (Figure 5). During the 1981-1999 period, the ice ~~thickness decreased by an average~~

1 ~~of thinning was~~  $-6.20 \pm 2.12$  m in the upper glacier and  $-8.79 \pm 2.12$  m in the lower glacier  
2 ( $-8.35 \pm 2.12$  m overall); thus, the mean ~~rates~~ of glacier thinning ~~was were~~  $-0.34 \pm 0.11$   
3 m ~~yr<sup>-1</sup>~~ and  $-0.48 \pm 0.11$  m yr<sup>-1</sup> ( $-0.46 \pm 0.11$  m yr<sup>-1</sup> overall, or  $-0.3942 \pm 0.410$  m w.e. yr<sup>-1</sup>)  
4 ~~as a glacier-wide mass balance~~, respectively. Moreover, the changes in glacier  
5 ~~thickness had spatial heterogeneity. elevation surface were not spatially homogeneous.~~  
6 No ~~sectors~~ ~~sector~~ of either glacier ~~had~~ ~~showed~~ increased ~~thicknesses~~ ~~thickness~~, but some  
7 small areas of the lower glacier ~~remained rather stationary~~ ~~showed only minor thinning~~,  
8 with declines in thickness ~~of~~ less than 5 m. The largest losses of glacier thickness were  
9 in the lower elevations and western regions of the upper and lower glaciers, with  
10 decreases that exceeded 25 m and 35 m, respectively. During the 1999-2010 period, the  
11 thinning was  $-7.95 \pm 1.8$  m in the upper glacier and  $-9.13 \pm 1.8$  m in the lower glacier ( $-$   
12  $8.98 \pm 1.880$  m overall); corresponding to rates of  $-0.72 \pm 0.16$  m ~~yr<sup>-1</sup>~~ and  $-0.8183 \pm 0.16$  m  
13 yr<sup>-1</sup> ( $-0.882 \pm 0.16$  m yr<sup>-1</sup> overall, or  $-0.7273 \pm 0.14$  m w.e. yr<sup>-1</sup>), respectively. The spatial  
14 pattern of thinning resembled the pattern from 1981-1999, but areas of noticeable  
15 glacier losses ~~are were~~ also ~~found~~ ~~observed further~~ eastward. The smallest decreases ~~are~~  
16 ~~found were observed~~ in the higher elevation parts of the lower glacier and ~~the proximal~~  
17 ~~area of the~~ upper glacier, probably due to ~~most~~ ~~more~~ effective shading of these areas,  
18 and the greatest decreases ~~were observed~~ in the ~~distal~~ ~~lower reaches~~ and central-eastern  
19 parts of both ice bodies.

#### 20 **4.3. Evolution of the Monte Perdido Glacier from 2011 to 2014 from TLS** 21 **measurements**

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22 Figure 6 shows the differences in glacier ~~depth~~ ~~surface elevation~~ between consecutive  
23 annual scans (September 2011-12, September 2012-13, and September 2013-14) and  
24 the total change from 2011 to 2014. Figure 7 shows the frequency distribution of ~~ice~~  
25 ~~depth~~ ~~change in surface elevation~~ measured over the glacier for these periods.

1 The period of mid-September 2011 to mid-September 2012 was very dry during the  
2 accumulation period and very warm during the ablation period. These conditions led to  
3 dramatic glacier thinning, with an average decrease of  $-2.110 \pm 0.440$  m ( $-2.08 \pm 0.440$  m  
4 in the upper glacier and  $-2.12 \pm 0.440$  m in the lower glacier). Ice thinning affected  
5 almost the entire glacier (~~the accumulation area ratio, AAR, was~~  $\approx 3.5\%$ ), and was  
6 particularly intense in the western sectors of the upper and lower glaciers, where ~~losses~~  
7 ~~were more than  $4 \pm 0.4$  m. thinning exceeded four meters.~~ The few scattered points  
8 indicating depth increases in the middle of the lower glacier ~~are likely to be derive~~  
9 ~~rising of the ice surface due to~~ motion of ~~the~~ existing crevasses.

10 Conditions were very different from 2012 to 2013, with a rather wet accumulation  
11 period and very cool ablation period. These conditions led to changes that contrasted  
12 sharply with those of the previous year, in that large areas of the glacier ~~had showed~~  
13 increased ~~ice thickness surface elevation~~. Most of these increases did not exceed  
14  $1.5 \pm 0.4$  m meters, and most were in the highest elevation areas of both ice bodies.  
15 Nonetheless, during this year, large areas remained stable (AAR ~~was~~  $\approx 54\%$ ) and some  
16 areas even exhibited noticeable ice ~~losses thinning~~ (more than  $-1.5 - 2 \pm 0.4$  m in the upper  
17 and lower glaciers). Despite the excellent conditions for glacier development from 2012  
18 to 2013, the average increase ~~of in~~ glacier ~~thickness surface elevation~~ was only  
19  $+0.3424 \pm 0.440$  m ( $+0.3222 \pm 0.440$  m in the upper glacier and  $+0.3828 \pm 0.440$  m in the  
20 lower ~~glaciers glacier~~). Very similar conditions occurred in 2013-2014, with very wet  
21 accumulation months and below average air temperature during the ablation period.  
22 Again, ~~there were~~ large areas ~~with exhibited~~ moderate increases in ~~thickness surface~~  
23 ~~elevation~~ (AAR was 41%, sometimes exceeding ~~3 m three meters~~), although there were  
24 still areas ~~with that showed~~ significant ice loss, with an average ~~depth decrease thinning~~

1 of  $-0.07 \pm 0.440$  m ( $-0.08 \pm 0.440$  m in the upper glacier and  $-0.07 \pm 0.440$  m in the lower  
2 glacier).

3 The overall result of a very negative year (2011-2012) for glacier development followed  
4 by two years (2012-2013 and 2013-2014) of ~~anomalous~~ positive conditions led to a net  
5 average ~~ice loss~~ thinning of  $-1.93 \pm 0.440$  m ( $-0.58 \pm 0.36$  m w.e.  $\text{yr}^{-1}$  ~~as glacier-wide mass~~  
6 ~~balance~~), with some regions experiencing ~~losses greater than  $6 \pm 0.4$  m~~ thinning that  
7 ~~exceeded six meters~~. Only the areas of the eastern part of the lower glacier that were at  
8 high elevations (around the bergschrund) exhibited some surface elevation gain during  
9 this period (~~accumulation area ratio, AAR,~~ for the three years was 16%), and this was  
10 typically less than  ~~$+2 \pm 0.4$  m~~ 1.5 meters. Interestingly, the areas with greatest and  
11 lowest ~~ice loss~~ thinning during 1981-2010 were similar to those with the  
12 greatest and lowest ~~ice loss~~ thinning during 2011-2014, indicating a consistent  
13 spatial pattern of glacier shrinkage over time.

## 15 **5. Discussion and conclusions**

16 The results of this study indicate that the recent evolution of the Monte Perdido Glacier  
17 was similar to that of many other glaciers worldwide (Marshall, 2014; Vincent et al.,  
18 2013), especially those in Europe (Gardent et al., 2014; Abermann et al., 2009; Scotti et  
19 al., 2014; Marti et al., 2015) where glacier shrinkage ~~after~~ has been occurring since the  
20 culmination of the LIA and has clearly accelerated ~~after~~ since 2000. More specifically,  
21 the annual loss of area of the Monte Perdido Glacier was near three- times greater  
22 ~~from during~~ 1999 ~~to~~ 2006 ~~compared to the~~ than 1981-1999 ~~period,~~ and the glacier  
23 thinning from 1999 to 2010 was almost double that observed ~~observed~~ from 1981 to  
24 1999. Acceleration in glacier ~~shrinkage~~ thinning has also ~~been~~ also reported for the

1 | Ossoue Glacier (French Pyrenees), where the mass balance during the period 2001-2013  
2 | ( $-1.45 \text{ m w.e. yr}^{-1}$ ) ~~is~~was almost 50% greater compared to ~~the period that during~~ 1983-  
3 | 2014 ( $-1 \text{ m w.e. yr}^{-1}$ ), (Marti et al., 2015). Climatic analyses suggest that the recent  
4 | acceleration in the ~~wastage~~thinning of the Monte Perdido Glacier cannot be ~~only~~  
5 | explained solely by an intensification of climate warming or by a decline ~~of~~in snow  
6 | accumulation. Climate data (1983-2014) of a nearby meteorological station, and three  
7 | other Pyrenean meteorological stations, ~~suggests~~suggest that during most of the year air  
8 | temperature has not exhibited statistically significant trends. The Mann-Whitney test did  
9 | not reveal ~~statistical~~statistically significant differences in air temperature when the  
10 | period 1983-1999 was compared to ~~1999~~2000-2010. Precipitation in the four analyzed  
11 | stations during the accumulation period and maximum annual snow depth at Góriz were  
12 | also stationary or slightly increased. Previous studies of the Pyrenees and surrounding  
13 | areas showed that air temperature ~~has~~increased significantly ~~warmed~~ throughout the 20<sup>th</sup>  
14 | century, especially after the relatively cold period from the 1960s to the mid-1970s  
15 | (López-Moreno et al., 2008; El Kenawy et al., 2012; Deaux et al., 2014). ~~Such changes~~  
16 | ~~have been also~~Similar trends were detected in the three air temperature series analyzed  
17 | for this study ~~during~~covering the ~~period~~-1955-2013 period. At the same time, there was  
18 | a regional significant decline ~~of~~in snow accumulation from mid-March to late-  
19 | April/early-May from 1950 to 2000 in the Pyrenees (López-Moreno, 2005). ~~These~~The  
20 | trends during this period of decreasing precipitation and milder air temperatures during  
21 | winter and early spring ~~were~~can be related to changes in the North Atlantic Oscillation  
22 | (NAO) index ~~during this period~~ (López-Moreno et al., 2008). ~~Most~~More recent studies  
23 | that used updated databases (including data of the 21<sup>st</sup> century) confirmed that a shift  
24 | towards more negative NAO has affected the recent evolution of air temperature and  
25 | precipitation over the Pyrenees. ~~Thus~~Thus, for the period (1983 to 2013, which does

1 ~~not include the effects of the cold and wet period of the 1960s to 1970s~~, no temporal  
2 trends of either variable are found near Monte Perdido ~~since the 1980s, when the study~~  
3 ~~period starts in the 1980s and the effect of the cold and wet period of the 1960s to 1970s~~  
4 ~~is removed~~. Vicente-Serrano et al. (2010) found that the increased occurrence of very  
5 wet winters during the 2000s was associated with frequent strong negative NAO  
6 winters. In agreement, Buisan et al. (2015) ~~indicated~~reported that for the period ~~of~~ 1980  
7 ~~to~~ 2013 the overall number of snow days in the Pyrenees remained stationary and even  
8 slightly increased in some locations. In a ~~most~~more recent study, Buisan et al. (under  
9 review) ~~has reported~~observed stationary behavior or slight increases in snow water  
10 equivalent for the period 1985-2015 in the central Spanish Pyrenees. The findings of  
11 Macias et al. (2014) support the view that southern Europe and some other regions of  
12 the world have undergone clear moderations of the warming trends that were  
13 ~~reported~~recorded at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Nonetheless, it is necessary to bear in  
14 mind that the longest climatic records or dendroclimatological reconstructions for the  
15 Pyrenees still point ~~out~~to the period considered in this study (1980-2014) as a very  
16 strong positive anomaly of air temperature and a dry period compared to the period  
17 since the end of the LIA (Bünten et al., 2008; Deaux et al., 2014; Marti et al., 2015).  
18 More research is needed to fully assess the implications of the air temperature increase  
19 detected in May and June ~~in~~ at the four analyzed meteorological stations. This  
20 ~~change~~warming could lead to less snow accumulation at the end of the accumulation  
21 season and a longer ablation period, and an early rise of albedo that may ~~be~~  
22 ~~affecting~~affect the mass and energy balance of the glacier (Qu et al., 2014). Another  
23 ~~hypothesis~~factor that should be considered in future research is ~~to consider~~ the effect of  
24 ~~increasing~~ increases in the slope of the ~~glaciers, glacier~~ due to ~~higher~~ thickness  
25 ~~loss~~greater thinning in the ~~distal parts~~lower reaches. Increasing ~~slopes~~ are ~~slope~~ is

1 | expected to affect snow accumulation on the ~~glaciers~~glacier and might constitute  
2 | another feedback mechanism ~~to explain~~underlying the recent evolution of the glacier.

3 | The glacier-wide mass lossbalance rates presented in this study for ~~the different periods~~  
4 | 1980-1999 and 1999-2010 ( $-0.3942 \pm 0.1$  and  $-0.7273 \pm 0.14$  m w.e.  $\text{yr}^{-1}$  ~~for 1980-1999~~  
5 | ~~and 1999-2010 periods~~, respectively) are similar to ~~the~~those reported by Chueca et al.,  
6 | (2007) and Marti et al. (2015) for the Maladeta massif ( $-0.36$  m w.e.  $\text{yr}^{-1}$  for ~~the~~1981-  
7 | 1999 ~~period~~, and  $-0.7$  m w.e.  $\text{yr}^{-1}$  for ~~the~~ 1991-2013). The most recent mass balance  
8 | values obtained for the Monte Perdido Glacier are more similar to those reported for  
9 | glaciers in the Swiss Alps (Fischer et al., 2015), or for the best preserved glaciers in  
10 | some areas of the Italian Alps (Carturan et al., ~~2013 a~~;2013a), but are lower than those  
11 | of the fastest retreating glaciers in the Alps (Carturan et al., 2013b) or that reported for  
12 | the Ossoue Glacier (French Pyrenees,  $-1.45$  m w.e.  $\text{yr}^{-1}$  ~~for the 1983~~for1983-2014). The  
13 | smaller rates of mass loss on the Spanish side of the Pyrenees than on the French side  
14 | may be explained by the location of the remnant ice bodies on the Southern side of the  
15 | range, confined to the most elevated and the least exposed locations in their respective  
16 | cirques (López-Moreno et al., 2006). In contrast, the ~~Ossoue~~Ossoue glacier has  
17 | maintained a considerable glacier tongue ~~on~~with an eastward slope. In this context, the  
18 | only explanation for the rapid degradation of the Monte Perdido Glacier after 1999 is  
19 | that the progressive warming observed since the end of the LIA was responsible for a  
20 | dramatic reduction in the ~~accumulation area ratio (AAR)~~,AAR, and most of this glacier  
21 | is below the current ELA (at 3050 m a.s.l. during the three-year period 2011-2014,  
22 | Figure ~~6D~~). This leads6). Such a reduction in AAR would lead to a clearan imbalance  
23 | that ~~is very~~would likely ~~to~~be exacerbated by negative feedbacks. Because of this  
24 | imbalance, the glacier ~~cannot~~is not able to recover ice losses during periods with  
25 | favorable conditions (high accumulation and/or little ablation in the frame of the 1983-

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1 2014 period). This hypothesis is strongly supported by our detailed TLS measurements  
2 from the last four years. In particular, these TLS data showed that two consecutive  
3 anomalously positive years (2012/13 and 2013/14), ~~compared to a period with~~  
4 ~~unfavourable conditions for the glaciers,~~ did not allow ~~recovery of the glacier to recover~~  
5 the losses from a negative year (2011/12). Thus the glacier thinning during this three  
6 ~~years-year~~ period was  $-1.93 \pm 0.4$  m ( $-0.58 \pm 0.36$  m w.e. yr<sup>-1</sup>), ~~roughly~~ ~~approximately~~ one-  
7 ~~fourth~~ ~~quarter~~ of the loss ~~from during~~ 1981 ~~to~~ 1999, and ~~from during~~ 1999 ~~to~~ 2010. The  
8 ~~accumulation area ratio~~ AAR for ~~the~~ 2011-2014 ~~period~~ was 16%, and during a warm  
9 and dry year the ~~loss of ice thickness~~ thinning affects almost the whole glacier  
10 (~~AAR < 4%~~ = 3.5%), indicating ~~that there is not the lack of~~ a persistent accumulation  
11 zone. Pelto (2010) observed that this is a symptom of a glacier that cannot survive.  
12 There can be years with mass gain, but ~~there is~~ mass loss ~~occurs~~ in most years and ~~the~~  
13 retained snowpack ~~of good of positive~~ years is lost in ~~bad years, then in fact~~  
14 ~~negative years, such that~~ there is no cumulative accumulation. Thus, the behavior  
15 observed for the Monte Perdido ~~glacier~~ Glacier during the ~~studied~~ study period is very  
16 likely explained by very negative mass balance ~~in some years that may, as can~~ be  
17 ~~identified~~ ~~seen~~ in Figure 2. ~~Thus, years with very high~~ ~~For example, air~~ temperatures  
18 ~~occurred after 2000 (were very high in 2003, 2005 and 2012),~~ and in ~~2005 and 2012~~  
19 ~~they were also characterized~~ ~~the latter two years the high air temperatures were~~  
20 ~~accompanied~~ by low winter precipitation. The ~~feedbacks~~ ~~feedback~~ from decreased  
21 albedo and increasing ~~glacier~~ slope ~~of the glaciers~~ may also ~~be playing~~ ~~have played~~ a key  
22 role in the recent acceleration of ~~the~~ glacier ~~wastage~~. ~~Obviously, this indicates~~ ~~thinning~~.  
23 ~~Together, these findings indicate~~ that the future of the Monte Perdido Glacier is  
24 seriously threatened, even under stationary climatic conditions. A ground-penetrating  
25 radar (GPR) survey of the lower glacier in 2010 reported a maximum ice depth close to

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1 30 m in the westernmost part of the lower glacier (unpublished report), suggesting that  
2 large areas of this glacier may ~~even~~ disappear within the next few years. This process  
3 may be accelerated by negative ~~feedbacks such as~~ feedback associated with the recent  
4 rise of rocky outcrops in the middle of the glacier and the thin cover of debris, both of  
5 which may accelerate glacier ablation by decreasing the albedo and increasing the  
6 emissivity of long-wave radiation. The highly consistent spatial pattern of ice  
7 ~~losses~~ thinning in the last 30 years suggests that the westernmost part of this glacier will  
8 disappear first; the easternmost part will survive longer as a small residual ice mass  
9 because of greater snow accumulation during positive years and a lower rate of  
10 degradation. When the glacier is restricted to this smaller area, it is likely that its rate of  
11 shrinkage will decrease, as observed for other Pyrenean glaciers (López-Moreno et al.,  
12 2006).

13 The future long-term monitoring of the Monte Perdido Glacier ~~is likely to~~ should  
14 provide important information on the year-to-year response of its mass balance to ~~to~~ a  
15 ~~wide~~ variety of climatic conditions, and will allow detailed analysis of the role of  
16 positive and negative feedbacks in this much ~~–~~ deteriorated glacier. Thus, ~~study of~~ this  
17 glacier may serve as a model for studies of the evolution of glaciers in other regions of  
18 the world that have similar characteristics ~~now and in the future~~.

19

## 20 Acknowledgements

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22 *de nieve en la montaña española, y su respuesta a la variabilidad y cambio climatico*”  
23 (IBERNIEVE-Ministry of Economy and Competitivity), and “*El glaciar de Monte*  
24 *Perdido: estudio de su dinámica actual y procesos criosféricos asociados como*

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1 *indicadores de procesos de cambio global*” (MAGRAMA 844/2013). The authors are  
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4 National Park during our field campaigns.

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1 **Figure captions**

2 **Figure 1.** Monte Perdido study area and extent of ice cover at the ~~end~~culmination of the  
3 Little Ice Age (according to the map of Schrader [1874]) and in 2008. Red ~~square~~  
4 ~~marks~~squares ~~mark~~ the scanning positions, numbered points indicate the  
5 ~~position~~positions of the fixed targets used for georeferencing and merging the different  
6 clouds of points. Red circles in the right panel inform of the location of the analyzed  
7 meteorological stations.

8 **Figure 2.** Interannual fluctuations and overall trends (straight lines) of minimum and  
9 maximum air temperatures during the accumulation and ablation periods, precipitation  
10 during the accumulation period, and maximum snow depth during April based on data  
11 from the ~~Geriz~~Góriz meteorological station (1983 to 2014). Boxplots at the right of  
12 each panel show the interannual variability during the ~~most recent~~last 3 years of the  
13 study period (2011/12, 2012/13, and 2013/14) when terrestrial laser scanning  
14 measurements were available. Box: 25th and 75th percentiles, bars: 10th and 90th  
15 percentiles, dots: 5th and 95th percentiles, black line: median, red line: average.

16 **Figure 3.** Interannual fluctuations of minimum and maximum air temperatures during  
17 the accumulation and ablation periods and precipitation during the accumulation period  
18 at the ~~stations of~~ Aragnouet, Canfranc, Mediano (only air temperature) and Pineta (only  
19 precipitation) ~~during the period 1955~~stations for 1955-2013. Numbers give the Tau-b  
20 values ~~off~~ the trends. Asterisks indicate statistically significant trends ( $\ll(p < 0.05)$ )

21 **Figure 4.** Photographs of the Monte Perdido Glacier during ~~the~~ late summer ~~of~~in 1981  
22 and 2011.

1 | **Figure 5.** ~~Changes in glacier~~Surface elevation change in the upper and lower Monte  
2 | Perdido Glacier from 1981 to 1999 and from 1999 to 2010 based on comparison of  
3 | DEMs.

4 | **Figure 6.** ~~Changes in glacier~~Surface elevation change based in the upper and lower  
5 | Monte Perdido Glacier based on terrestrial laser scanning from September of 2011 to  
6 | 2012 (Fig. 5A), 2012 to 2013 (Fig 5B), 2013 to 2014 (Fig. 5C), and 2011 to 2014 (Fig.  
7 | 5D).

8 | **Figure 7.** ~~Changes in glacier~~Surface elevation changes over the whole glacier, lower  
9 | glacier, and upper glacier for the same 4 time periods examined in Figure 5. Box: 25th  
10 | and 75th percentiles, black line: median, red line: average, bars: 10th and 90th  
11 | percentiles, dots: 5th and 95th percentiles.

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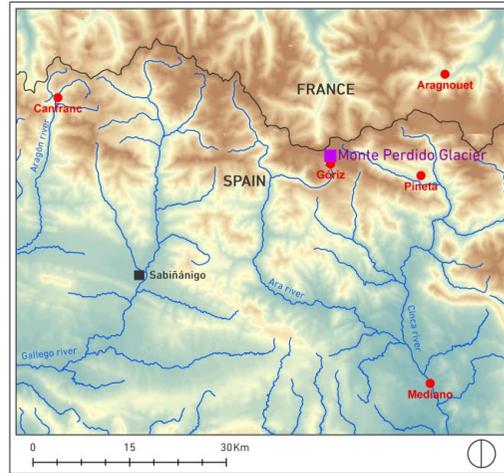
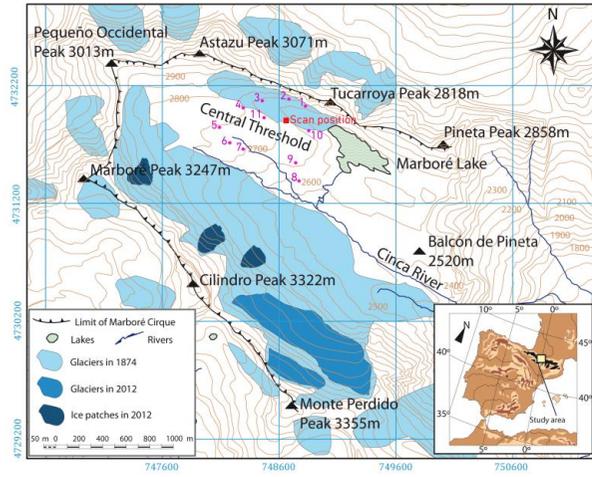
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**Table 2.** Surface area (ha), losschange of surface area (ha), and annual rate of surface area loss (ha yr<sup>-1</sup>) of the Monte Perdido Glacier.

	Surface Area			<u>LossChange</u> of Surface Area	
	1981	1999	2006	1981-1999	1999-2006
Upper glacier (ha)	8.30±0.27	6.80±0.25	4.80±0.21	-1.50±0.52	-2.00±0.46
Lower glacier (ha)	40.10±0.59	37.10±0.62	33.70±0.54	-3.00±1.21	-3.40±1.16
Entire glacier (ha)	48.40±0.65	43.90±0.62	38.50±0.58	-4.50±1.27	-5.40±1.20
Entire glacier (ha yr <sup>-1</sup> )				-0.25±0.07	-0.77±0.17

Tabla con formato

- Con formato: Inglés (Estados Unidos)
- Con formato: Izquierda
- Con formato: Inglés (Estados Unidos)
- Con formato: Inglés (Estados Unidos)



Con formato

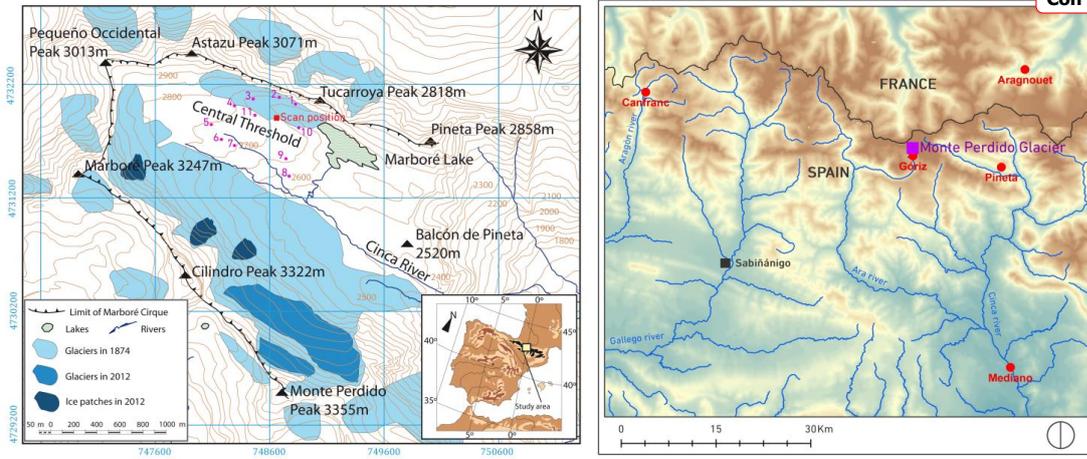
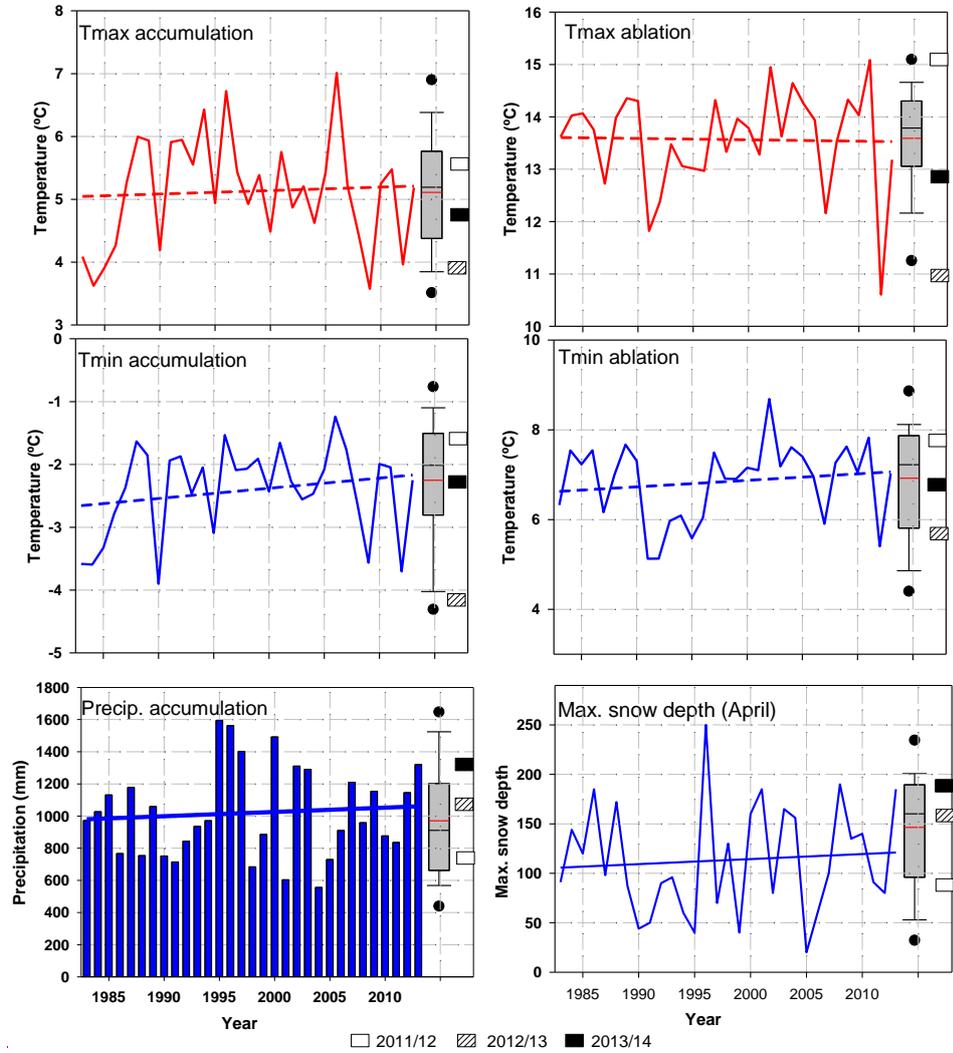


Figure 1.



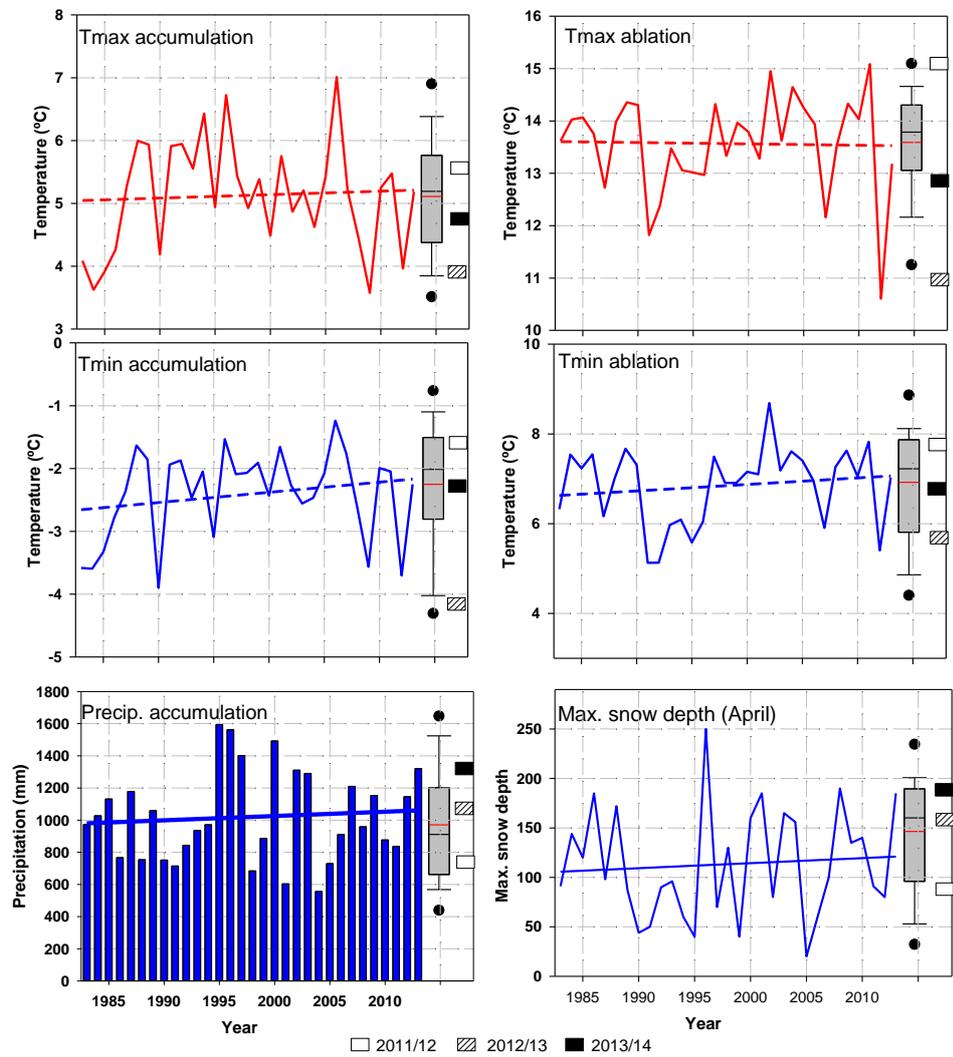
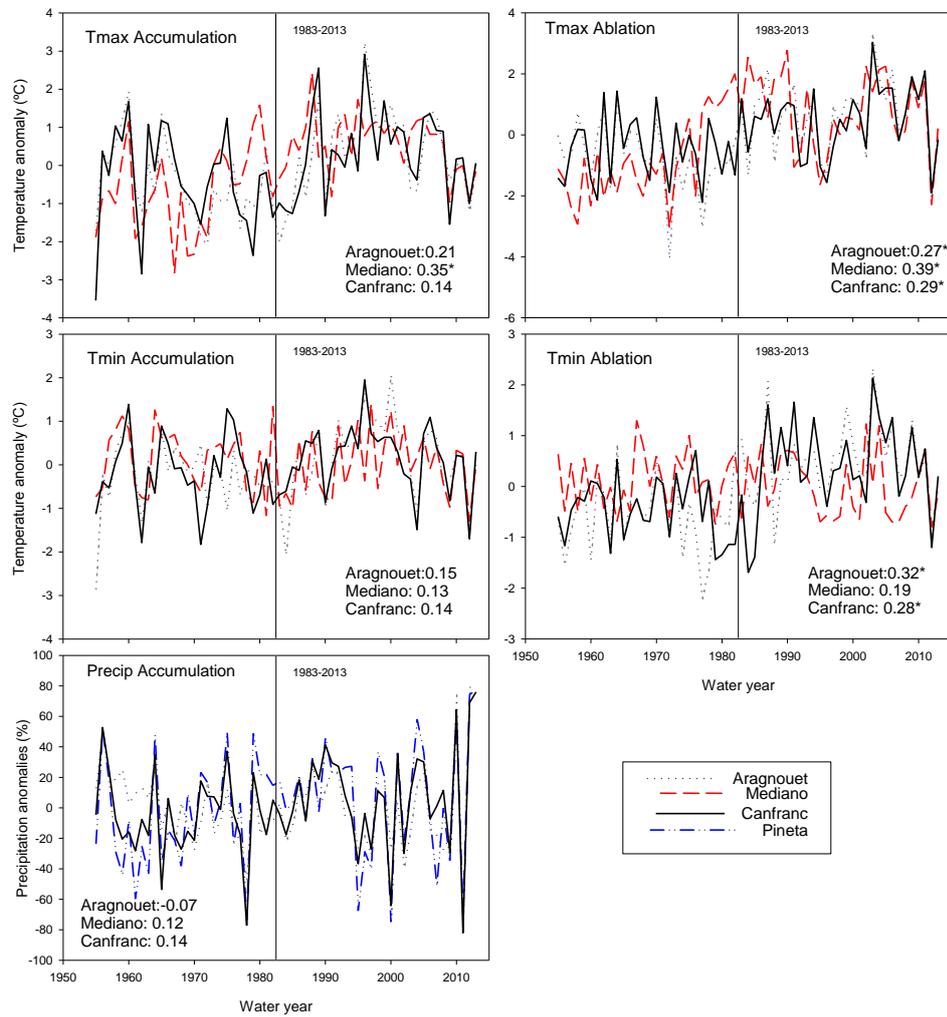
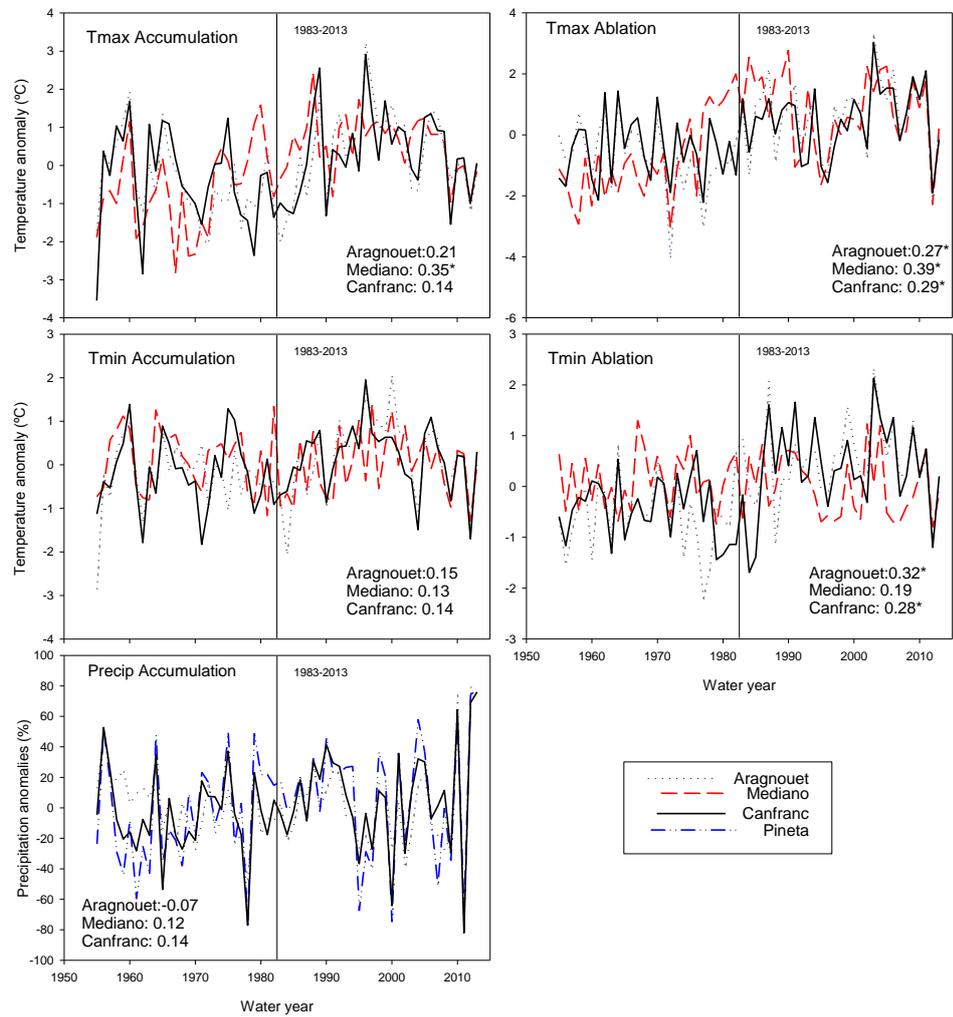


Figure 2.





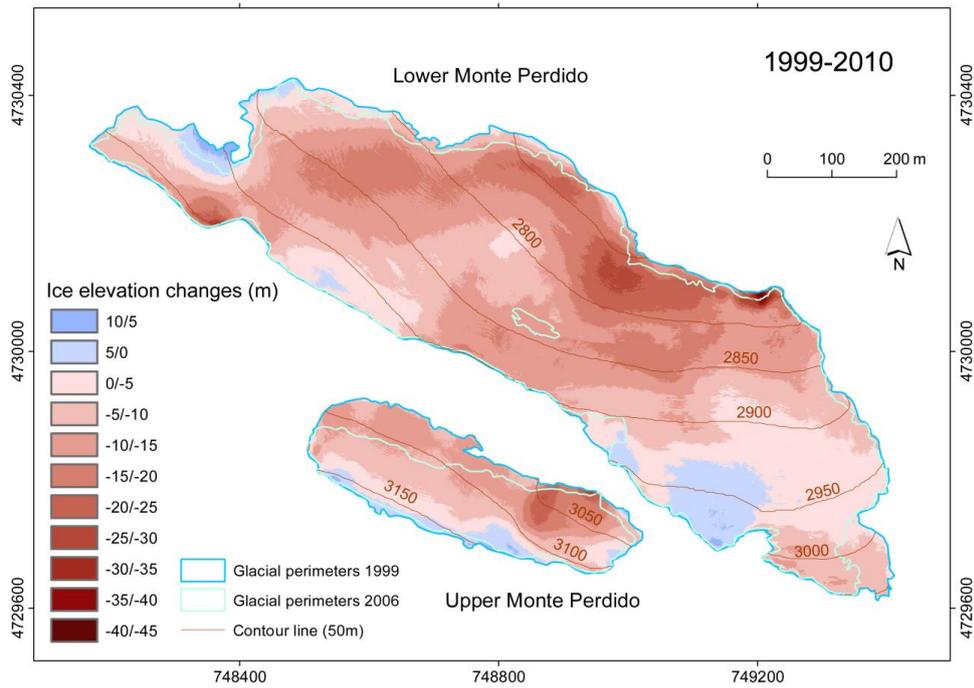
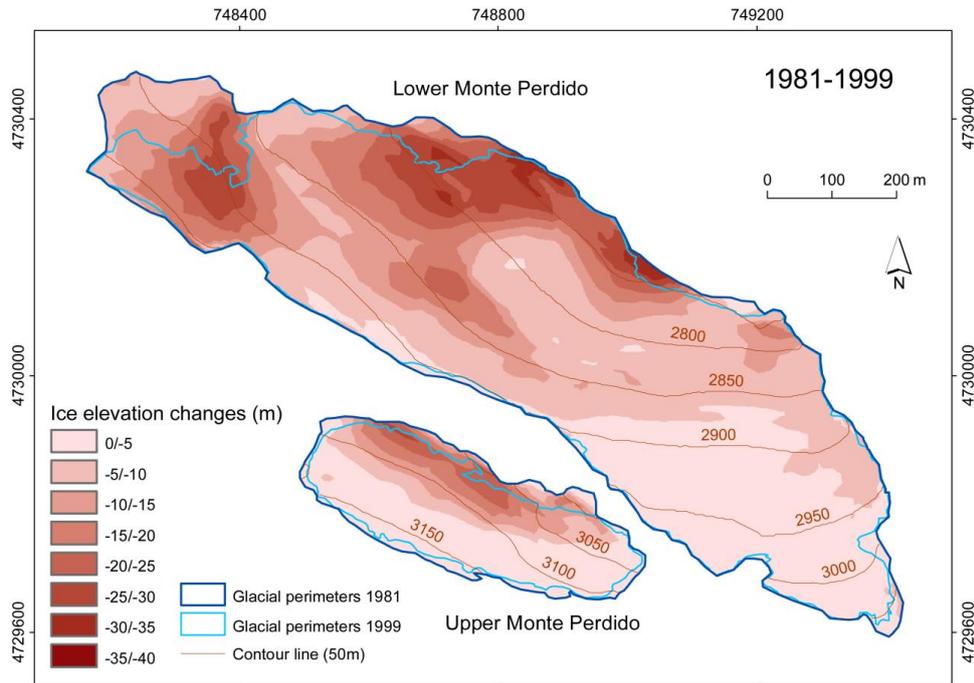
**Figure 3.**

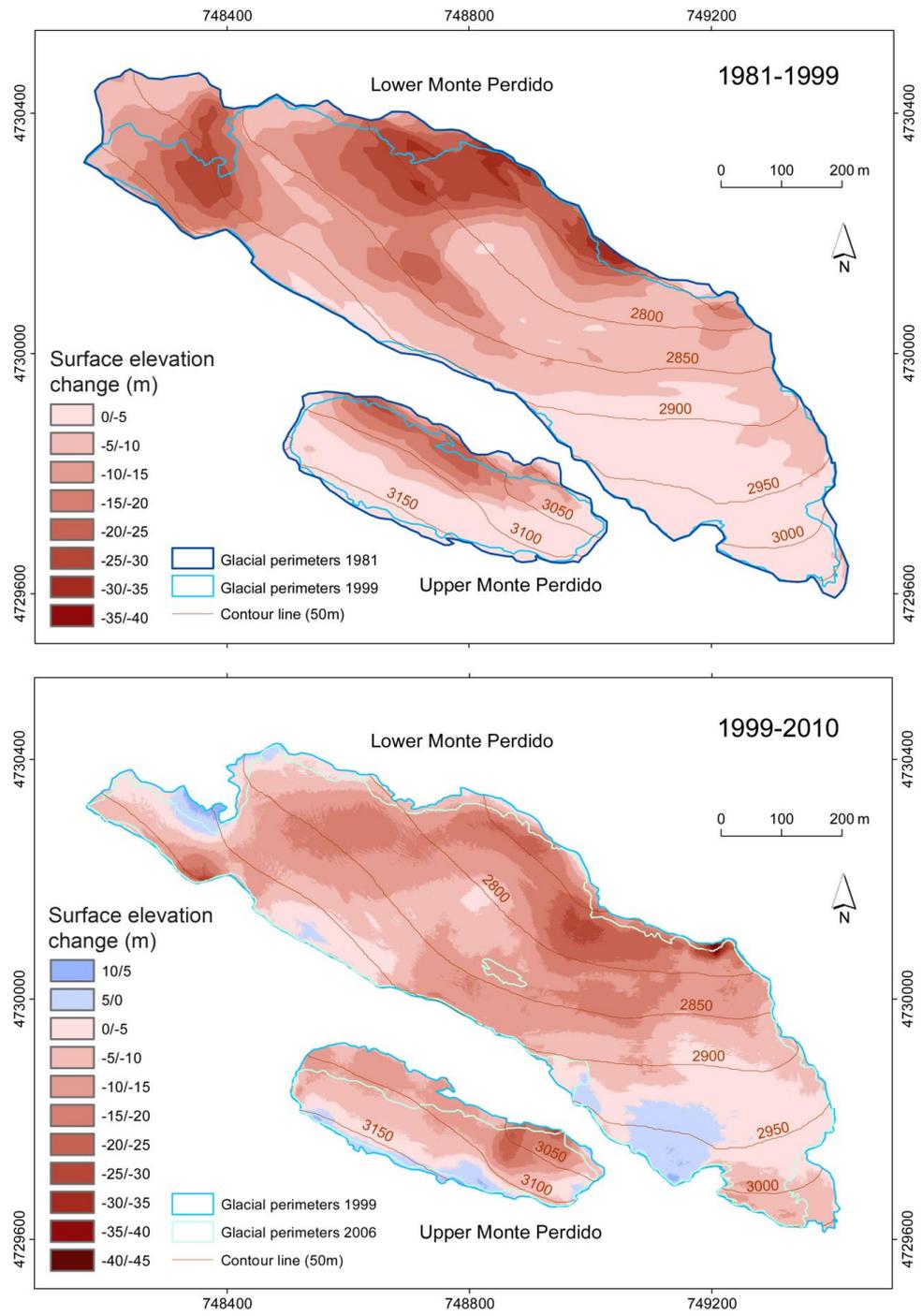




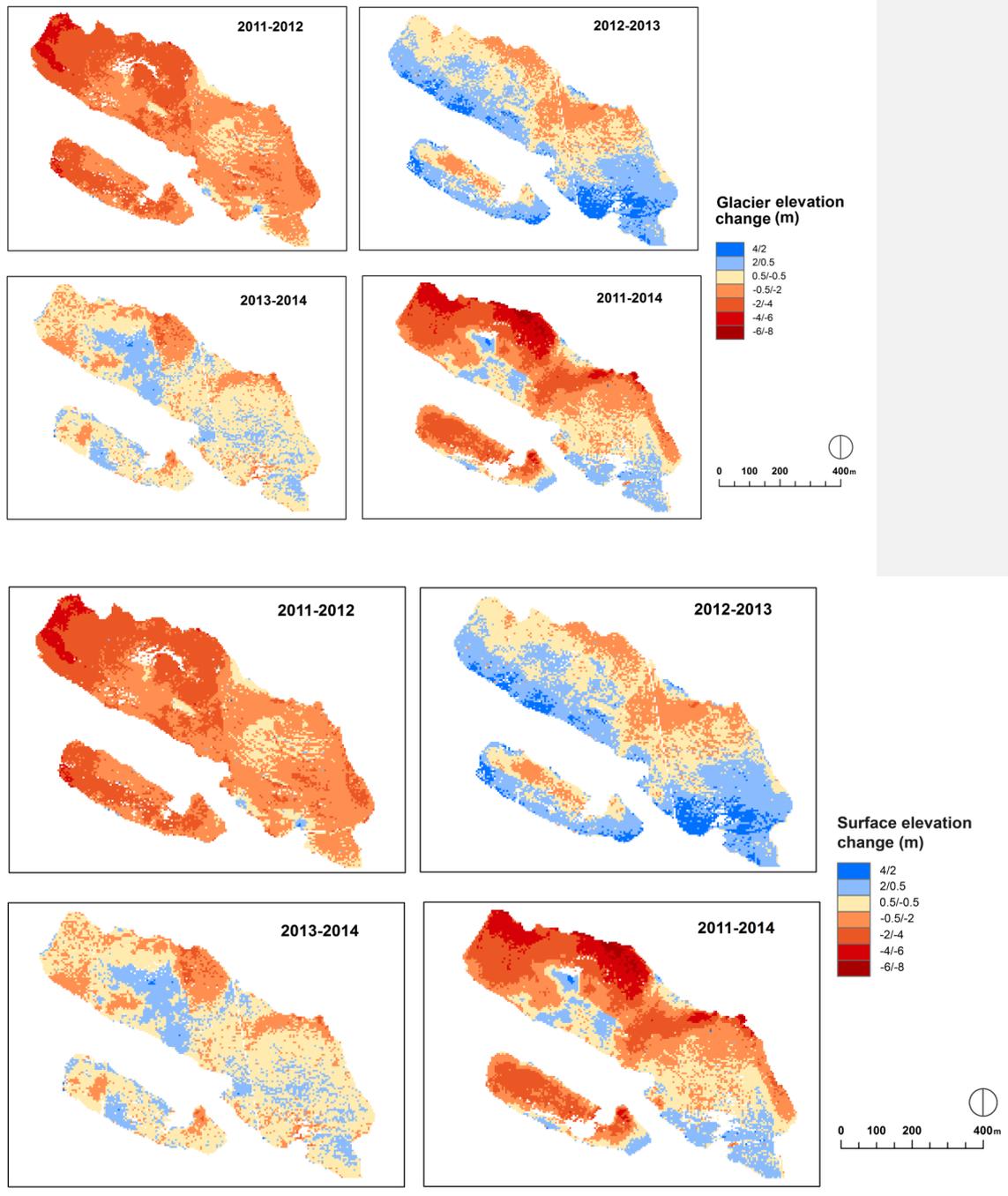
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**Figure 4.**

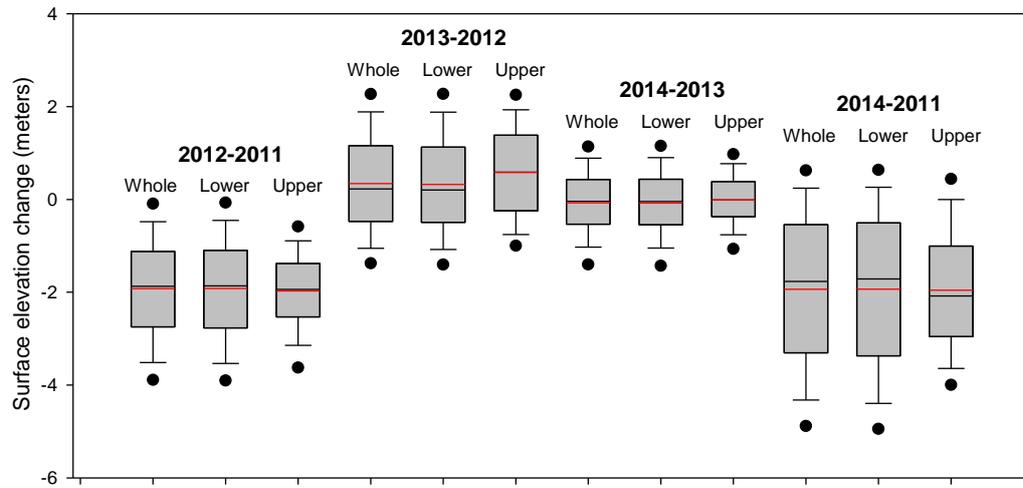
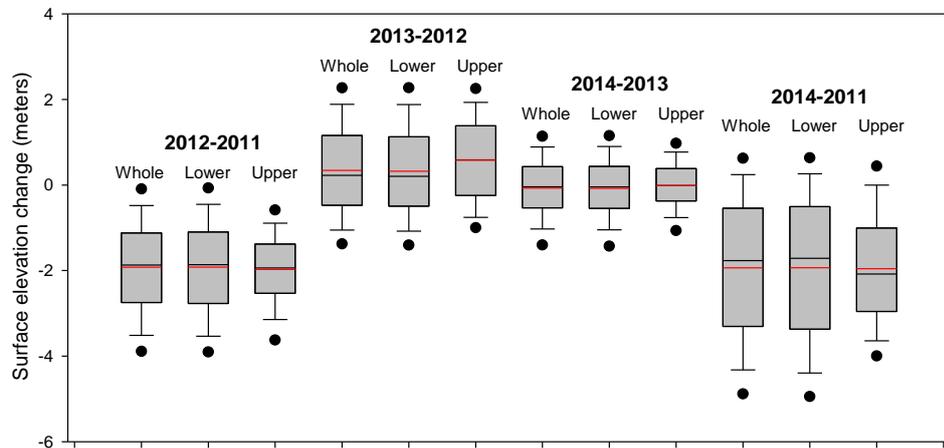




**Figure 5.**



**Figure 6.**



**Figure 7.**



**Con formato:** Fuente: Sin Negrita