



# Pollen-based reconstruction of Holocene land-cover in mountain regions: Evaluation of the Landscape Reconstruction Algorithm in the Vicdessos valley, northern Pyrenees, France

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## 1    **Highlights**

- 2    - Pollen-based reconstruction of Holocene land-cover in mountain regions
- 3    - The LRA approach is effective in mountain regions
- 4    - The REVEALS-based estimates are influenced by the systematic selection of pollen sites
- 5    - Pollen proportions alone are not useful for the local reconstruction
- 6    - New horizons for answering questions about human impact on upland vegetation

1    **Pollen-based reconstruction of Holocene land-cover in mountain regions: evaluation of the**

2    **Landscape Reconstruction Algorithm in the Vicdessos valley, Northern Pyrenees, France**

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33   **ABSTRACT**

34       Long-term perspectives on climate- and human-induced shifts in plant communities and tree  
35       line in mountains are often inferred from fossil pollen records. However, various factors, such as  
36       complex patterns of orographic wind fields and abundant insect-pollinated plants in higher altitudes,  
37       make pollen-based reconstruction in mountain regions difficult.

38       Over the last decade the Landscape Reconstruction Algorithm (LRA) - a model-based  
39       approach in reconstruction of vegetation – has been successfully applied in various parts of the globe.

40       However, evaluation of its effectiveness in mountain ranges is still limited. The present study assesses  
41       the extent to which the LRA approach helps quantify the local changes in vegetation cover at  
42       Vicdessos valley in northern French Pyrenees as a case study. In the study area well-dated sediment  
43       cores are available from eight bogs and ponds, 6 – 113 m in radius, located above the current tree  
44       line. We first use a simple simulation experiment to evaluate the way how pollen records from  
45       “landscape islands” (mountain tops and plateaus) would represent local vegetation and to clarify

46       important factors affecting the LRA-based reconstruction in a mountainous region. This study then  
47       uses pollen records from these sites and vegetation and land-cover data both within a 50-km radius  
48       around the Vicdessos valley and within a 2-km radius from each site for evaluation of the REVEALS-  
49       and LOVE-based reconstruction of the regional and local plant cover, respectively, in the LRA  
50       approach. The land-cover data are compiled for coniferous trees, broadleaved trees and non-forested

51 areas from the CORINE and historical maps in three time windows: 1960-1970, 1990-2000 and 2000-  
52 2013.

53 Major findings are as follows. (1) Accuracy of the regional vegetation estimates affects the  
54 reliability of the LRA-based reconstruction of vegetation within a 2-km radius; use of the CORINE  
55 data as input to the LOVE model improves reliability of the results over the use of the REVEALS-  
56 based estimates of regional vegetation. This implies that a systematic selection of pollen data only  
57 from sites above the tree line is problematic for estimating regional vegetation, and thus the entire  
58 LRA process. (2) Selection of the dispersal models for pollen transport (i.e. the Langrangian  
59 Stochastic Model vs. Gaussian Plume Model) does not affect significantly the LRA-based estimates  
60 at both the regional and local scales in the study area. (3) The LRA approach improves the pollen-  
61 based reconstruction of local vegetation compared to pollen percentage alone in northern Pyrenees.  
62 Although further empirical and simulation studies are necessary, our results emphasize the  
63 importance of site selection for the LRA-based reconstruction of vegetation in mountain regions.

64

65 **Keywords** Vegetation, Land use, Landscape, Open land, REVEALS, LOVE, Holocene, France

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68

69 **1. INTRODUCTION**

70 Mountain landscapes in Europe are expected to change significantly over the next few decades  
71 because of the ongoing climate change and reforestation caused by the abandonment of agro-pastoral  
72 areas (IPCC, 2014). These human-induced changes in climate and land cover will affect undoubtedly  
73 species composition and spatial dynamics of plant communities on mountains, including altitudinal  
74 shifts in tree lines (Leunda et al., 2019). All those expected changes in mountain regions will impact  
75 on a large range of ecosystem services, including tourism, recreation, water resources (Szczypta et  
76 al., 2015) and loss of traditional land-use.

77 The Pyrenean mountains have been under intense human influence (e.g. pastoralism and  
78 deforestation) since the Bronze Age (Galop et al., 2013) and have undergone major transformations  
79 during the last century. Owing to rural depopulation, traditional pastoral management has declined  
80 since the 1950s (MacDonald et al., 2000). The history of the Vicdessos area in northeastern Pyrenees  
81 is closely related to this progressive depopulation and the associated abandonment of former  
82 management practices. This has led to fast reforestation of the slopes and replacement of pastoral  
83 uplands by forests and heathlands (Houet et al., 2012, 2015; Vacquié et al., 2016), as in many  
84 European mountains (Kozak et al., 2017). This has further resulted in a loss of plant diversity (Galop  
85 et al., 2011) and insect species richness (e.g. hoverflies) in an adjacent valley (Herrault et al., 2016).  
86 Those baseline information on the past mountain landscapes are critical to evaluate the effects of

87 current and future land-use changes on high altitude ecosystems, biodiversity and for sustainable  
88 land-management strategies.

89 Fossil pollen records have provided information on the century- to millennium-scale changes  
90 in the past land cover. However, interpretation of pollen data is tricky in mountain regions because  
91 of the complex physical and biological conditions and factors that influence the pollen-vegetation  
92 relationships in unknown ways (e.g. Ortú et al., 2006; Leunda et al., 2017; Zhang et al., 2017). There  
93 are several possible reasons: 1) The amount of long-distance pollen, particularly arboreal pollen types  
94 from lower altitudes brought by orographic wind, overwhelms local pollen signals of meadows and  
95 parklands in alpine zones (Markgraf, 1980; Randall, 1990; Fall, 1992; David, 1993, 1997; Ortú et al.,  
96 2006; Zhang et al., 2017). 2) Plant communities vary significantly within relatively short distances  
97 along mountain slopes and altitudes; accordingly, pollen records from mountain sites tend to reflect  
98 several vegetation types together that are closely located (Fall, 1992). 3) Differences in plant  
99 phenology between mountains and lowlands, especially flowering timing of plants of the same  
100 species, make interpretation of pollen records difficult (Fall, 1992; Leunda et al., 2017). 4) Insect-  
101 pollinated plants - the dominant type of plants in alpine zones - tend to be low pollen-producers, thus  
102 biasing pollen representation of vegetation (Markgraf, 1980; Fall, 1992). 5) Wind gradients and  
103 directions are often site-specific in mountains, thus it is difficult to generalize what pollen records  
104 represent (Markgraf, 1980). To reduce the uncertainties associated with these issues, palaeoecologists

105 often use both macro-remains of plants and pollen for reconstruction of the local- to landscape-scale  
106 changes in mountain plant communities (e.g. Birks and Birks, 2000; Leunda et al., in press).

107 The present study aims to explore applicability of modeling approaches that overcome some  
108 of these difficult issues and evaluate the extent to which models help to improve the interpretation of  
109 pollen records in mountain regions. In the next section we first explore feasibility of the Landscape  
110 Reconstruction Algorithm (LRA; Sugita, 2007a, 2007b) – a two-step model-based reconstruction  
111 approach – for mountain vegetation, using simple simulations based on the POLLSCAPE models  
112 (e.g., Sugita 1994; Broström et al., 2005; Gaillard et al., 2008; Hjelle and Sugita, 2012). The LRA  
113 has been used widely in many parts of Europe and elsewhere over the last decade with a reasonable  
114 success, especially in relatively flat and less complex geomorphological terrains. We create simplified  
115 simulated landscapes that represent mountain landscapes on a two-dimensional space, and then  
116 evaluate the potential and limitations of the LRA approach in the idealized simulated situations. With  
117 insights into the LRA applicability from the simulations at hand, the rest of this paper evaluates  
118 empirically the applicability and reliability of the LRA approach around the Vicdessos valley in the  
119 Pyrenees. The study area is well suited for this study, because (1) well-dated pollen records from  
120 eight sites are available at and above the tree line, and (2) the regional- and local-scale land-cover  
121 maps are available in three time periods (i.e., 1960-1970, 1990-2000 and 2000-2013) for comparison  
122 with the pollen-based reconstruction of the past land cover. Major assumptions and current important

123 issues related to the LRA are described in detail in the method section, Appendix A and wherever  
124 appropriate. We then discuss pros and cons of the LRA-based reconstruction in mountains and  
125 address future directions to improve the approach.

126

127 **2. FEASIBILITY OF LRA-BASED RECONSTRUCTION OF VEGETATION IN**  
128 **MOUNTAIN REGIONS: EVALUATION WITH SIMULATED LANDSCAPES**

129 Besides the complex nature of the wind field on mountains and juxtaposition of plant  
130 communities within short distances along short elevational gradients, a systematic selection of sites  
131 restricted only to mountain tops and plateaus also potentially biases pollen representation of  
132 vegetation, thus affecting the accuracy of the LRA. It is a common practice to select pollen sites  
133 located only in sub-alpine or alpine zones because of the availability of sediments free from human-  
134 related disturbances (Simonneau et al., 2013). This site-selection scheme would influence the  
135 evaluation of long-distance pollen from lower altitudes - an important step for objective  
136 reconstruction of local vegetation on mountains (Sugita, 2007a,b).

137 The current section uses the POLLSCAPE approach (*sensu* Sugita, 2013) to evaluate the  
138 extent to which this site-selection scheme would affect the entire LRA process. In the POLLSCAPE  
139 simulations we regard mountain tops and high-altitude plateaus as “landscape islands” on a flat two-  
140 dimensional terrain, 80 km x 80 km in size, for the sake of simplicity (as in Sugita, 1994; Sugita et

141 al., 1997, 1999; Bunting et al., 2004; Broström et al., 2004, 2005; Gaillard et al., 2008; Hjelle and  
142 Sugita, 2012). Although generalized, the simulated landscapes depict the characteristics of the spatial  
143 structure and species composition of plant communities in high-altitude plateaus and the regional  
144 vegetation around the Vicdessos valley (see section 3.1.). Figure 1a illustrates the general scheme of  
145 the simulated landscapes with randomly located patches of specific plant-community types within  
146 the Matrix. Seven plant/pollen types are included for simulations: *Betula*, *Calluna*, Ericaceae, *Fagus*,  
147 *Quercus*, Poaceae and *Pinus*. The Matrix and Patch Type B represent plant communities in lower  
148 altitudes in mountain valleys and flat plains, characterized by forests of mixed broadleaved and  
149 conifer trees (*Fagus*, *Quercus* and *Pinus*) and grass (Poaceae)-dominated open areas, respectively.  
150 Patch Type A symbolizes mountain tops that are characterized by Ericaceae plants (including  
151 *Rhododendron* spp. and *Vaccinium* spp.) with semi-dominant grass and *Calluna* (heather). In Patch  
152 Type A, small-patches of two types of heather heathlands are placed to fine-tune the local spatial  
153 structure of vegetation: Patch Type C with heather, grass and Ericaceae and Patch Type D with  
154 heather, grass, Ericaceae and *Pinus*.

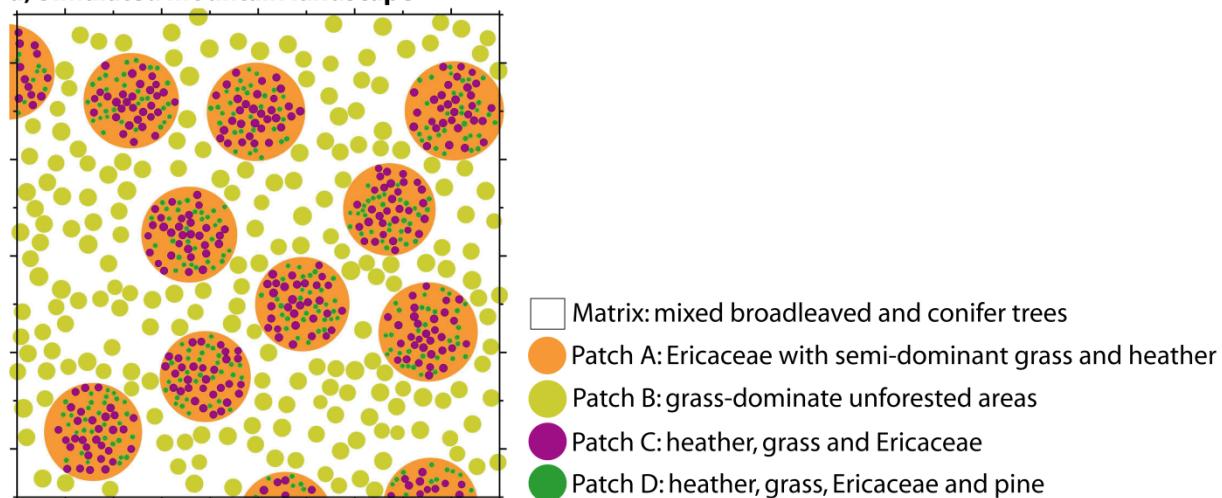
155 The LRA consists of two steps: the first to estimate regional vegetation within <50-100 km  
156 with the REVEALS model and the second to reconstruct the local- and landscape-scale changes in  
157 vegetation within the relevant source area of pollen (RSAP; *sensu* Sugita, 1994). Each step requires  
158 pollen counts from multiple sites that are ideally selected randomly within the targeted area of interest.

159 For either REVEALS or LOVE calculation, one of the patches of Patch Type A is selected randomly  
160 in the central part of the plot, and a lake is placed within the area of the patch. For REVEALS  
161 applications a lake 500-m in radius is placed at the center of the patch selected, and for LOVE  
162 applications a lake 50-m in radius is located randomly within the patch. In each simulation run, we  
163 repeat this process thirty times to obtain pollen counts from 30 lakes for REVEALS and LOVE,  
164 separately. Pollen loading on lakes, with which pollen counts are simulated, is calculated by Sugita's  
165 model for pollen deposition on lakes (Sugita, 1993). Pollen transport in air is approximated by both  
166 a Gaussian Plume model (GPM) (Prentice, 1985; Sugita, 1993, 1994, 2007a, 2007b) and a Lagrangian  
167 Stochastic model (LSM) of Kuparinen et al. (2007) and Theuerkauf et al. (2013, 2016). Pollen  
168 productivity estimates – important parameters for the pollen loading calculation – are after Mazier et  
169 al. (2012). We assume that the simulated pollen records are independently obtained at each site. These  
170 records are used as inputs for the LRA-based reconstruction of vegetation around each site. The  
171 LOVE results are expressed as area proportions within the RSAP for three categories: conifers (i.e.  
172 *Pinus*), broadleaved trees (i.e. *Betula*, *Quercus* and *Fagus*) and open land (i.e. Poaceae, *Calluna* and  
173 Ericaceae); by definition all the LOVE results are expressed in a distance-weighted fashion (Distance  
174 Weighted Plant Abundance: DWPA) (Sugita, 2007b; Sugita et al., 2010). Appendix A provides a  
175 brief description and sets of parameters necessary for the POLLSCAPE simulations and the LRA  
176 calculation.

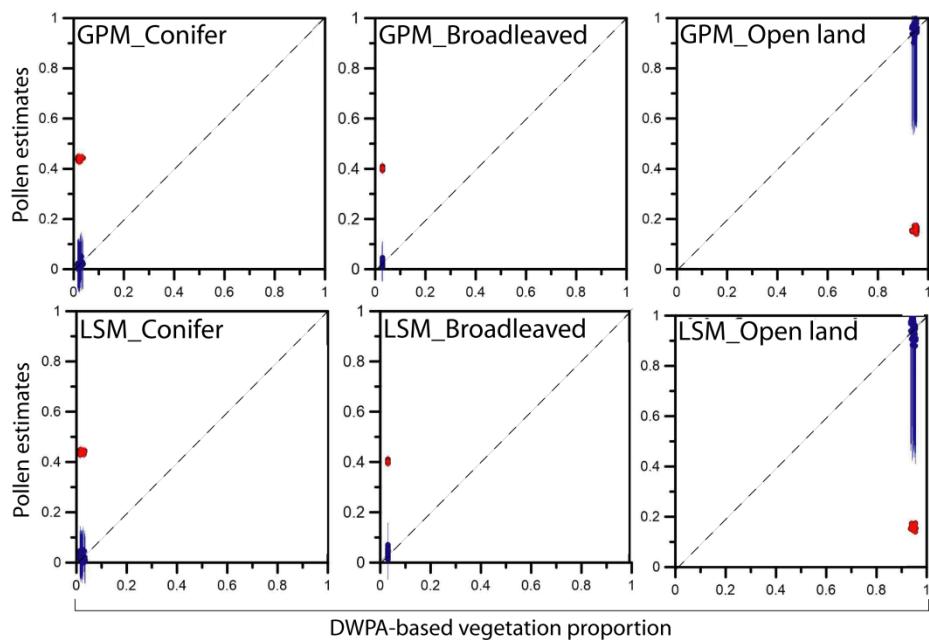
177       Figure 1b shows the LRA results against the DWPA of the three land-cover categories within  
178       the RSAP. The LRA approach improves the accuracy of vegetation reconstruction significantly over  
179       the pollen proportions alone. Considering the standard errors, the reconstructed values are not  
180       significantly different from the 1:1 line along the two axes. Note that the standard errors of the open  
181       land category are large, suggesting large uncertainties to be expected in reconstruction of the local  
182       open land. The selection of the different dispersal models of pollen did not cause large differences in  
183       the LRA-based reconstruction of the local vegetation. The inverse modelling of LOVE (Sugita,  
184       2007b; Sugita et al., 2010) demonstrates that the RSAP is consistent in the simulations regardless of  
185       the pollen dispersal models employed; the RSAP is within 310 m and 325 m with the GPM and LSM  
186       options, respectively. With the LSM option, the variation in vegetation reconstruction among sites,  
187       as well as the standard error estimate at each site, appears larger than that with the GPM option for  
188       the three categories of land cover.

189

a) Simulated mountain landscape



b) Comparison pollen estimates versus DWPA based on simulated mountain landscape



190

191 **Figure 1a)** Simulated mountain landscape that mimics the one of the Vicdessos valley to estimate pollen loadings on 30  
192 lakes systematically located on mountain tops and plateaus. Mountain tops and plateaus correspond to Patch type A that  
193 includes two small patch types (Patch types C and D) of heather heathlands. The Matrix and Patch type B represent plant  
194 communities in lower altitudes in mountain valleys and flat plains. The simulated study plot is of 80 km x 80 km. More  
195 details about the simulation are given in the text and Appendix A. **b)**) Results of LRA comparing distance weighted plant  
196 abundance (DWPA) based on observed vegetation (i.e. landscape design around each lake) against pollen proportion  
197 (untransformed pollen data; red dots) and two sets of LRA estimates (blue dots), one using GPM and the other LSM as  
198 pollen dispersal model. Each point represents a pollen record from each lake. Pollen proportion and LRA estimates are  
199 reasonable representation of observed vegetation when pollen records are close to the dashed line. Standard errors are  
200 also shown.

201

202        The simulation results provide insights into, and caveats for, pollen-based reconstruction of  
203        vegetation in mountain regions such as in the Pyrenees.

204        (1) Accuracy of the regional estimates of vegetation and land cover matters for reliable LRA  
205        applications in mountains as in any other regions. Ideally, the REVEALS application requires pollen  
206        records from randomly-selected sites >100 ha in both mountains and lowland areas in the region of  
207        interest. It is hard to achieve this scenario in reality, however. The simulation results suggest that, as  
208        long as multiple pollen sites are available, the application of REVEALS and LOVE appears to provide  
209        reasonable estimates of the regional and local vegetation even if the sites are systematically selected  
210        only in the “mountain patches”. Of course, large sites (e.g. 500 m in radius – ca. 78 ha – in the  
211        simulations) would be preferable to reduce biases and uncertainties of the REVEALS results (Figure  
212        1b); if only small sites 50 m in radius are used, we expect larger uncertainties for the regional  
213        estimates, resulting in less reliable LRA outcomes (Appendix A).

214        (2) Differences in the LRA results between using the GMP and LSM as a pollen dispersal  
215        model appear negligible in the simulation runs. Recent studies have shown that the LSM option  
216        produces more realistic results in REVEALS-based reconstruction of regional vegetation, especially  
217        for plants with heavy and light pollen types (Theuerkauf et al., 2013, 2016; Mariani et al., 2017) than  
218        the GPM option does. Considering more advanced understanding of wind field and particle transport  
219        in air (Kuparinen et al. 2007), the LSM option has advantages over the GPM option, especially for

220 describing long-distance pollen from regional sources. As the simulation results (Figure 1b) suggest,  
221 however, consistency in dispersal-model selection for REVEALS and LOVE in the LRA process  
222 helps provide robust LRA estimates for reconstruction of the local- to landscape-scale vegetation in  
223 spatially and topographically complex terrains (e.g. Hjelle et al., 2015).

224

### 225 **3. MATERIALS AND METHODS**

#### 226 **3.1 Geographical setting, site characteristics and pollen data collection**

227 We use pollen records from eight small sites: three lakes and five bogs (Table 1, Fig. 2)  
228 situated between 1600 and 2000 m a.s.l. Seven sites are located on the plateau of Bassiès (Fig. 2) and  
229 one site (ARBU) 6 km to the north. ARBU belongs to another small watershed that is also part of the  
230 Vicdessos area. All sites are small, varying from 6 to 40 m in radius for bogs and from 60 to 113 m  
231 in radius for lakes (Table 1).

232 Mean annual temperature in this area (over the 2000–2012 period) is around 7°C and mean  
233 annual precipitation about 1640 mm (Quintana-Seguí et al., 2008). Snow season generally starts in  
234 November/December and ends in April/May. Winds are mostly coming from the west and north-  
235 west; wind speed varies from 0 to 4 m.s<sup>-1</sup> (Szczypta et al., 2015; Claustres, 2016).

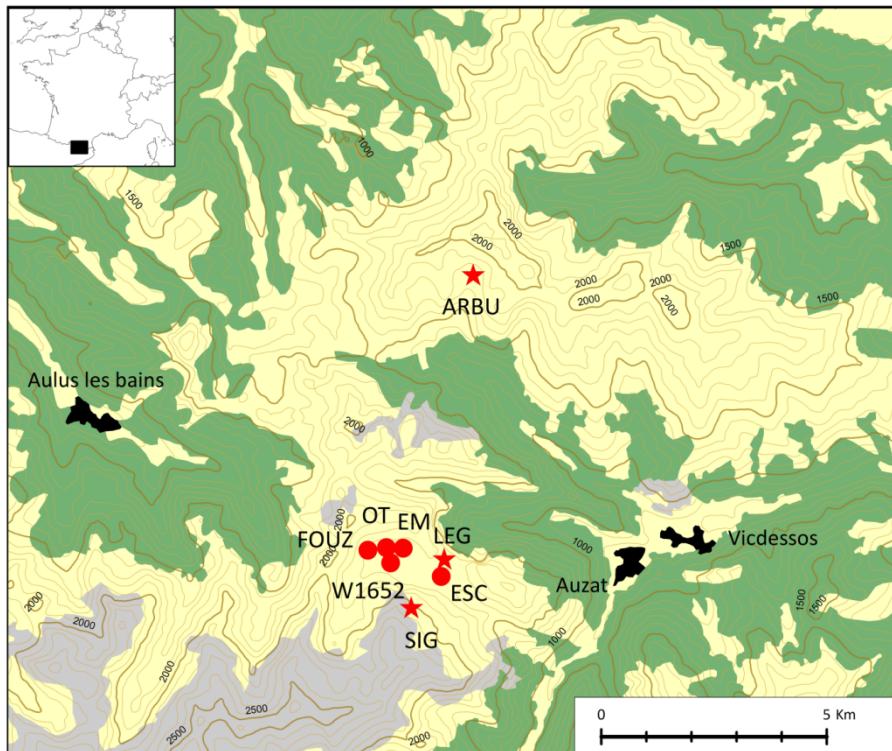
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237

238 **Table 1** Metadata of the pollen archives.

Site name	Lat.DD	Long.DD	Elevation (m)	Site radius (m)	Basin type	Age/depth model and dating
Sigriou (SIG)	42.754	1.422	2000	66	Lake	Simonneau et al. (2013)
Legunabens (LEG)	42.764	1.431	1680	58	Lake	Appendix B
Arbu (ARBU)	42.821	1.437	1740	113	Lake	Appendix B
Escale (ESC)	42.761	1.430	1630	40	Bog	Hansson et al. (2017)
Fouzes (FOUZ)	42.766	1.410	1720	13	Bog	Appendix B
W1652a (W1652)	42.763	1.416	1660	6	Bog	Hansson et al. (2017)
Etang Mort (EM)	42.766	1.419	1670	36	Bog	Hansson et al. (2017)
Orry de Théo (OT)	42.766	1.415	1680	31	Bog	Galop et al. (2011)

239



240

241 **Figure 2** Location of the study area and pollen archives in the Vicdessos area (French Pyrenees). Yellow color  
 242 corresponds to open land (above the tree line), green to forests and grey to mineral surfaces. Isolines of 100 m are shown.  
 243 Seven pollen records (SIG, ESC, LEG, W1652, FOUZ, OT and EM) are located on the plateau of Bassiès and one (ARBU)  
 244 6km north of Bassiès (see Table 1 for the labels of the sites). Red dots are bogs and red stars are lakes.

245

246 Raw radiocarbon dates, dated materials and details on the age-depth models at individual sites  
247 are given in Appendix B. Age-depth models of sediments are constructed by using both  $^{210}\text{Pb}$  CRS  
248 (Constant Rate of Supply) model (Appleby, 2002) and CLAM radiocarbon age depth model (Blaauw,  
249 2010). In order to build a robust age-depth model at each site, uncertainties of the  $^{210}\text{Pb}$  ages  
250 calculated using Matlab with Monte Carlo simulations according to Binford (1990) are combined  
251 with the radiocarbon uncertainties in CLAM. The pollen counts are pooled together for each 10-year  
252 time window between 1960 and 2013; the most recent time window is 2000-2013. For this study we  
253 select three time windows to assess the accuracy of the LRA-based reconstruction of vegetation:  
254 1960-1970, 1990-2000 and 2000-2013; those are the time windows for which both the regional and  
255 local land-cover maps are available. Total sum of pollen counts used for data analysis varies from  
256 463 (SIG) to 2164 (FOUZ), 544 (EM) to 2530 (W1652), and 1143 (ARBU) to 5812 (OT) for the  
257 periods 1960-1970, 1990-2000 and 2000-2013, respectively.

258

### 259 **3.2 Observed land-cover maps**

260 For evaluation of the LRA estimates, this study obtains the regional- and local/landscape-  
261 scale estimates of plant composition for the areas within a 50-km radius from the plateau of Bassiès  
262 and within a ca. 2-km radius from each site, respectively.

263

264    3.2.1 *Observed regional land-cover*

265        The CORINE Land Cover raster-based data (<https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/data>)

266        for 1990 and 2006 are selected as a source of the observed regional land-cover for time windows of

267        1990-2000 and 2000-2013 (Fig. 3). The digitized vegetation map of Foix (oeuvre collective CNRS,

268        77 Foix, 1964, Henry Gaußen) in 1964 is used for the time window 1960-1970 (Fig. 3). Note that

269        this 1964 vegetation map does not cover the entire area in the 50-km radius. For this study the land-

270        cover maps from three time windows (1964, 1990 and 2006) are harmonized to be comparable to

271        each other.

272        The regional land-cover in 2006 is characterized by broadleaved forest (27%) and conifer

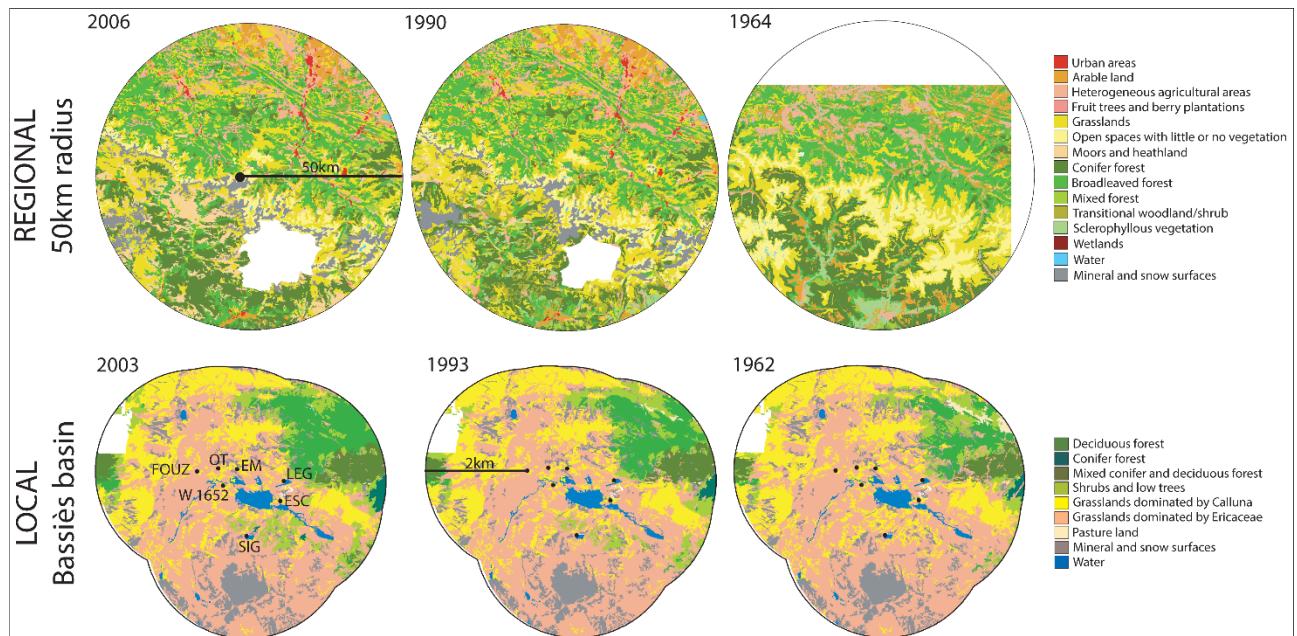
273        forest (16%) and grasslands (24%); arable and agricultural lands (12%) are mainly located in the

274        northernmost corner (Fig. 3). Oak and beech are the main components of the broadleaved forests,

275        associated with birch, hazel, lime-tree, willow and ash. Pine and fir characterize the conifer forests.

276        Forested areas have increased in the 1964-2013 period.

277



278

279 **Figure 3** Observed regional land-cover maps of a 50-km radius from the plateaus of Bassiès and local land-cover maps  
 280 of an agglomerated 2-km radius around each lakes and bogs (pollen archives). Regional maps are based on CORINE  
 281 datasets for 2006 and 1990 and from the CNRS vegetation map "Foix 1964" for 1964. Local maps are based on series of  
 282 aerial imageries (Houet et al., 2012). The meanings of the labels of each pollen record are given in Table 1. Note that  
 283 white color corresponds to the absence of data.

284

### 285 3.2.2 Observed local land-cover

286 Local land-cover maps of the plateaus of Bassiès, which were compiled and created for 1962,  
 287 1993 and 2003 (Fig. 3), are suitable for the data-model comparison in the three time windows of our  
 288 interest: 1960-1970, 1990-2000 and 2000-2013. These maps are based on a semi-automatic  
 289 geographic object-based image analysis technique and visual interpretation of airborne imageries  
 290 (Houet et al., 2012).

291 The plateaus of Bassiès is covered by heather and rhododendron heathlands and grasslands.  
 292 Small clumps of short conifer trees are spread out over the plateaus unevenly. Forested areas are

293 located on the neighboring slopes; conifer trees are mostly pine and fir, and broadleaved trees mostly  
294 beech, birch and hazel.

295

296 *3.2.3 Plant composition in individual land-cover types of the maps*

297 Twenty major plant/pollen types (Table 2), which are well presented in both the pollen records  
298 and land-cover maps in the study region, are selected for data analysis. Plant composition in each  
299 land-cover type is approximated according to a local botanical expert (N. de Munnik, personal  
300 communication) and botanical survey on the plateaus of Bassiès (S. Haunold, unpublished). Details  
301 about the plant composition in each land-cover type are given in Appendix C.

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309 **Table 2** Taxa and groups of taxa used in this study. Relative pollen productivity estimates (RPPs) of individual taxa and  
310 their standard errors, and fall speed of pollen are listed. RPP values are relative to that of Gramineae. Botanical  
311 nomenclature follows *Flora Europaea* (Tutin et al., 1964-1980).

312

Pollen taxa	RPP and standard errors	Fall speeds of pollen (m/s)	Groups of taxa
<i>Abies</i>	6.88 +/- 1.44	0.12	Conifer trees
<i>Juniperus</i>	2.07 +/- 0.04	0.016	
<i>Picea</i>	2.62 +/- 0.12	0.056	
<i>Pinus</i>	6.38 +/- 0.45	0.031	
<i>Betula</i>	3.09 +/- 0.27	0.024	
<i>Corylus</i>	1.99 +/- 0.19	0.025	
<i>Fagus</i>	2.35 +/- 0.11	0.057	
<i>Fraxinus</i>	1.03 +/- 0.11	0.022	Broadleaved trees
<i>Quercus</i>	5.83 +/- 0.15	0.035	
<i>Salix</i>	1.22 +/- 0.11	0.022	
<i>Tilia</i>	0.8 +/- 0.03	0.032	
<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>	0.82 +/- 0.02	0.038	
<i>Cerealia-t</i>	1.85 +/- 0.38	0.06	
<i>Cichorioideae</i>	0.16 +/- 0.02	0.051	
<i>Cyperaceae</i>	0.87 +/- 0.06	0.035	
<i>Ericaceae</i>	0.07 +/- 0.04	0.038	Open land
<i>Gramineae</i>	1 +/- 0	0.035	
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	1.04 +/- 0.09	0.029	
<i>Plantago media</i>	1.27 +/- 0.18	0.024	
<i>Potentilla-t</i>	1.19 +/- 0.13	0.018	

313

314 **3.3 Evaluation of the LRA-based vegetation reconstruction**

315 *3.3.1 Testing strategy*

316 This study uses pollen records from eight sites for the LRA-based vegetation reconstruction

317 in the regional- and local/landscape-scales. Three categories of land-cover types are considered for

318 evaluation: areas covered by conifers, broadleaved trees, and open land characterized by Ericaceous

319 shrubs, graminoids and other herbaceous plants. The results - both the REVEALS-based estimates of

320 regional vegetation and the LRA-based estimates of local vegetation - are evaluated against the

321 composition of those three categories of land cover regionally and locally. Both the GPM and LSM  
322 options are applied in the LRA as the pollen dispersal functions (as in section 2). Figure 4 summarizes  
323 the testing scheme described in this section, and Table 3 the nomenclature for the models, data sets  
324 used, and model outcomes.

325 Since pollen data are available only from small-sized sites < 4 ha (Table 1), we use a leave-  
326 one out strategy (LOO; Efron and Tibshirani, 1998; Sugita et al., 2010; Mazier et al., 2015) to avoid  
327 circularity in the LRA process: that is, selection of one site for local vegetation reconstruction with  
328 LOVE and the other seven sites for regional vegetation reconstruction with REVEALS. This process  
329 is repeated for all the eight sites in the study area. Theoretically and empirically the REVEALS results  
330 prove to be robust even when pollen data from several small-sized lakes and bogs are used (Sugita,  
331 2007a; Sugita et al., 2010; Fyfe et al., 2013; Trondman et al., 2016; Hjelle et al. 2018; and others),  
332 although error estimates would be large. Hereafter, the REVEALS-based estimates of regional  
333 vegetation is referred to as RVs\_LOO.

334 Another set of estimates for the regional vegetation composition within a 50-km radius from  
335 individual sites is compiled from the land-cover maps (section 3.2) and used as inputs for the LOVE  
336 application, independently and separately from RVs\_LOO; hereafter, the data set is referred to as  
337 RVs\_MAP50. Both RVs\_LOO and RVs\_MAP50 are then applied for reconstruction of the  
338 local/landscape-scale vegetation composition within the relevant source area of pollen (RSAP) with

339 the LOVE model for comparison. The inverse modeling of LOVE (Sugita, 2007b; Sugita et al., 2010)  
340 is applied for estimating the RSAP with RVs\_MAP50 around the plateaus of Bassiès in the three time  
341 windows.

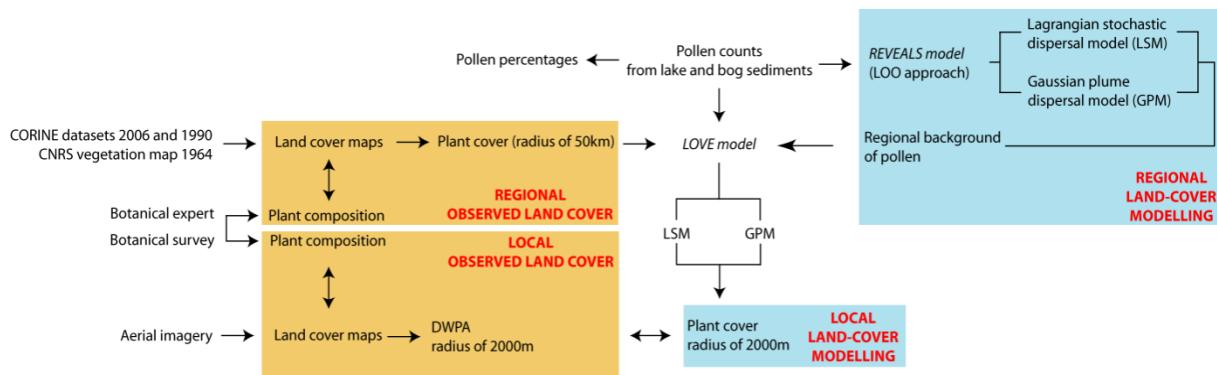
342 In addition, RVs\_MAP50 is compared to the REVEALS results using pollen records from all  
343 the eight sites together, referred to as RVs, to evaluate the extent to which the pollen-based  
344 reconstruction reflects the observed vegetation composition of the region for the sake of simplicity.  
345 The differences between RVs and individual RVs\_LOO are negligible.

346 The LOVE results with either RVs\_LOO or RVs\_Map50 are evaluated against the plant  
347 composition data extracted from the observed local land-cover maps in each time window. The  
348 proportions of the areas ( $m^2$ ) occupied by each land-cover type are estimated in successive concentric  
349 rings at 20-m increment out to 2 km from the center of each site. Cumulative estimates of plant  
350 composition within a 2-km radius are calculated, using a distance weighting method (either with the  
351 LSM or GPM option) and fall speed of pollen for the 20 taxa as listed in Table 2. For all the  
352 calculations this study uses ArcGIS 10.2.2, a script in R (Binet, unpublished) and  
353 "DWPACalculator.v7.3a" (Sugita, unpublished).

354

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356



359 **Figure 4** Flow chart of the methodological approach. LOO: Leave One Out approach. DWPA: Distance weighted plant  
360 abundance.

363 **Table 3** Nomenclature

Model data/name	Meaning
LRA	Landscape Reconstruction Algorithm: REVEALS + LOVE models
REVEALS	Model for regional land-cover reconstruction
LOVE	Model for local land-cover reconstruction
POLLSCAPE	Model for landscape simulation
DWPA	Distance Weighted Plant Abundance
RSAP	Relevant Source Area of Pollen
RPP	Relative Pollen Productivity estimates
GPM	Gaussian Plume Model as pollen dispersal model
LSM	Lagrangian Stochastic Model as pollen dispersal model
RVs	The eight pollen archives are used with REVEALS
RVs-LOO	Seven pollen archives are used with REVEALS; LOO: Leave One Out approach
RVs-MAP50	Regional land-cover reconstruction based on the CORINE map
SE	Standard errors
LRA-LOO	Local vegetation estimates for a RSAP of 2-km radius with RVs-LOO as regional background of pollen
LRA-MAP50	Local vegetation estimates for a RSAP of 2-km radius with RVs-MAP50 as regional background of pollen

367 3.3.2 Assumptions and parameter setting for the LRA calculation

368 We use the pollen count data from three lakes and five bogs as inputs to the LRA. Our  
369 preliminary trials (not shown) show that the selection of basin type (i.e. lake or bog) does not affect  
370 the outcomes significantly; accordingly all the REVEALS and LOVE applications assume that the  
371 pollen data used are from bogs. For model calculations this study uses a set of RPPs and fall speed of  
372 pollen from Mazier et al. (2012) (Table 2) that is used in the LANDCLIM project (Trondman et al.,  
373 2015; Marquer et al., 2014, 2017) and other projects in Europe.

374 A previous study (Mazier et al., 2015) shows that rare taxa can influence the LRA and RSAP  
375 estimates. We therefore apply a threshold of 1 % to select the major pollen taxa recorded in both the  
376 pollen and observed vegetation data sets. Accordingly, eighteen taxa are selected. Two additional  
377 taxa (fir and juniper), locally important for the vegetation history of the Vicdessos valley, are added;  
378 twenty taxa in total (Table 2). These plant/pollen types include both anemophilous and entomophilous  
379 taxa.

380 We use “LRA.REVEALS.v6.2.2.exe” and “LRA.LOVE.v6.2.3.exe” for data analysis (Sugita,  
381 unpublished). When the GPM option is used, pollen dispersal in a neutral atmospheric condition is  
382 assumed with wind speed of 3 msec<sup>-1</sup> (although the local wind speed varies mostly between 0 and 4  
383 msec<sup>-1</sup> (Szczępta et al., 2015; Claustres, 2016)).  $Z_{\max}$ , the maximum spatial extent of the regional  
384 vegetation from the centre of the study sites, is set to 50 km as in Mazier et al. (2012, 2015). When

385 the LSM option is applied,  $Z_{\max}$  is automatically set to 100 km; all other conditions and parameters  
386 specific to the model are the same as those in Kuparinen et al. (2007) and Theuerkauf et al. (2016).

387 The REVEALS and LOVE results are expressed in proportion cover for three land-cover  
388 types: conifers, broadleaved trees, and open-land taxa (Table 2); their standard errors are obtained  
389 according to the delta method (Stuart and Ord, 1994).

390 The regional plant composition based on the CORINE maps – RVs\_MAP50 – do not have  
391 error estimates (SEs), and these estimates are needed as inputs for the LOVE runs. We therefore have  
392 calculated SEs for RVs\_MAP50 by taking into account both SEs that were previously obtained from  
393 RVs and both GPM and LSM options as follow:

$$394 \quad SE_i = \frac{\frac{SE_{RV_{GPM}i}}{RV_{GPM}i} + \frac{SE_{RV_{LSM}i}}{RV_{LSM}i}}{2} \times RV_{MAP50i}$$

395 where  $SE_{RV_{GPM}i}$  and  $SE_{RV_{LSM}i}$  are the standard errors for species i of RVs using the GPM ( $RV_{GPM}i$   
396 ) and LSM ( $RV_{LSM}i$ ) option, respectively.  $RV_{MAP50i}$  is RVs\_MAP50 for the species i.

397

## 398 4. RESULTS

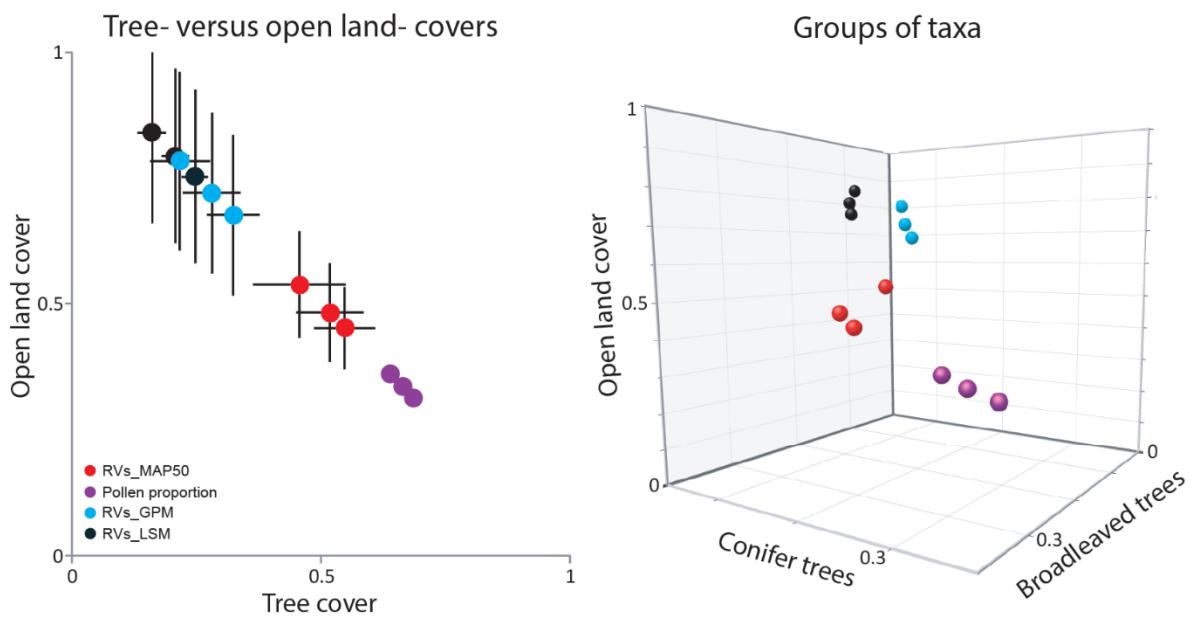
### 399 4.1 Estimates of the regional vegetation composition

400 When the forested (i.e. conifers and broadleaved trees together) and unforested (i.e. open land)  
401 covers are concerned, the REVEALS results (RVs) are largely overestimating open land, in particular

402 the ones using the LSM, in comparison to the observed data (RVs\_MAP50); on the other hand,  
403 forested areas are overestimated by pollen proportions alone (the left graph in Figure 5). In general,  
404 RVs (with pollen data from all sites) using REVEALS with either the GPM or the LSM are more  
405 dissimilar to the CORINE-map based estimates (RVs\_MAP50) than pollen proportions alone.

406 The right graph of Figure 5 depicts the results along three axes of land cover types: open land,  
407 conifers and broadleaved trees. Conifers and broadleaved trees are overestimated in pollen  
408 proportions in comparison to RVs\_MAP 50. Open land cover is overestimated in RVs relative to  
409 RVs\_MAP50. RVs with the GPM tend to be more similar to RVs\_MAP50 than RVs with the LSM.

410



411  
412 **Figure 5** Differences between RVs\_MAP50 (i.e. observed regional land-covers for 2006, 1990 and 1964), pollen  
413 proportions (untransformed pollen data) and REVEALS (RVs) using all local pollen records together for the three time  
414 windows, 2013-2000, 2000-1990 and 1970-1960. REVEALS estimates have been calculated using both pollen dispersal  
415 model alternatives, GPM and LSM. Results are shown for tree- versus open land- cover and groups of taxa (conifer trees,  
416 broadleaved trees and open land taxa). The error bars are shown for the tree-versus open land-covers.

417 Standard errors of RVs for the open land category are larger than those for the forested areas  
418 in general. Standard errors for pollen proportions, which represent the counting errors of pollen grains  
419 are too low to be plot in Figure 5.

420

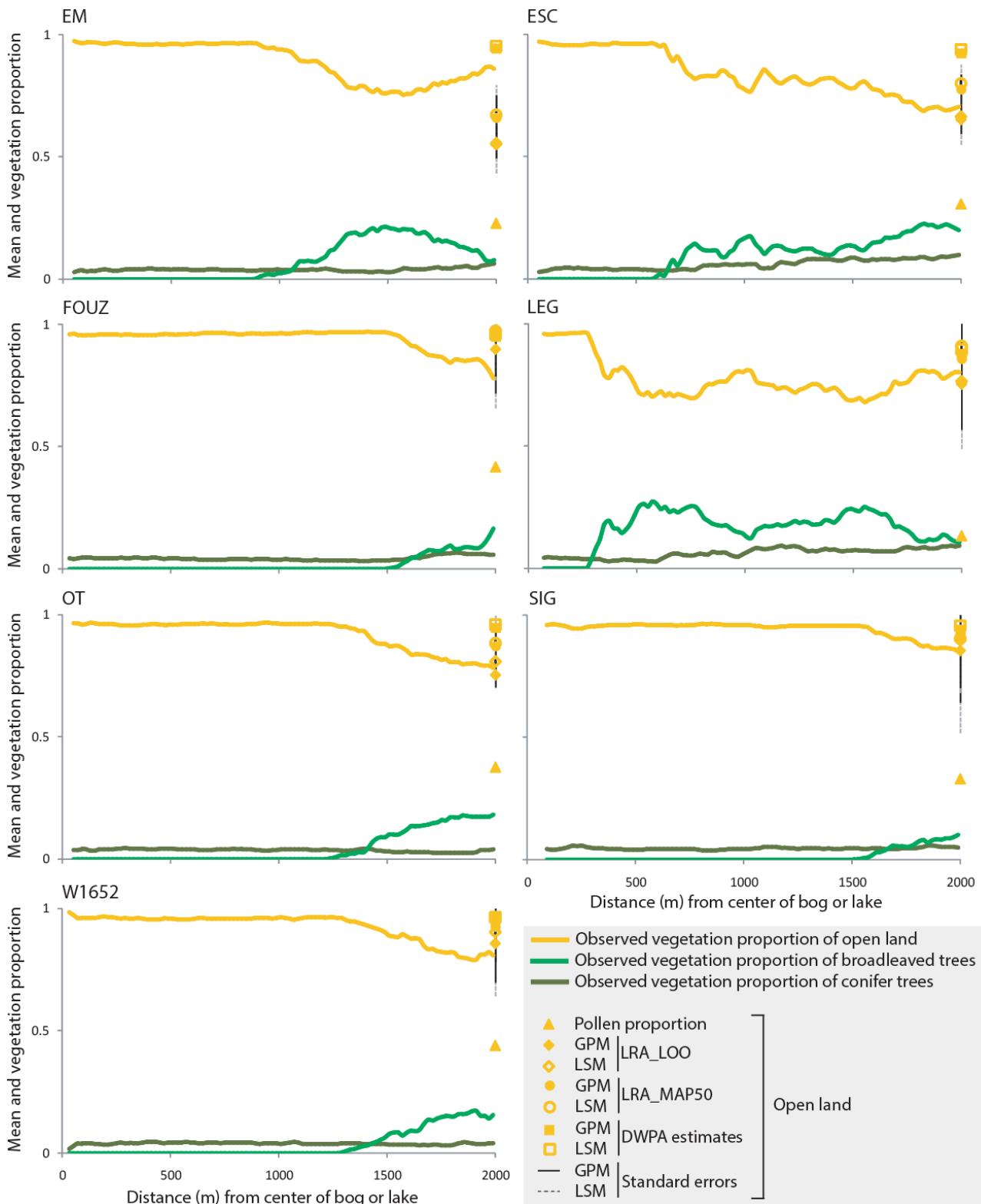
421 **4.2 Relevant source area of pollen (RSAP)**

422 The RSAP estimates for the three time windows vary from 663 to 1038 m with the GPM  
423 option and from 1933 to 5113 m with the LSM option (Table 4); the former is consistently lower than  
424 the latter in each time window. In four cases out of six, the RSAP estimates is lower than 2 km; the  
425 two extreme values >4.5 km occur in the time windows of 1960-1970 and 2000-2013 with the LSM  
426 option. Hereafter we assume that the area within a 2-km radius from each site is appropriate as the  
427 RSAP and the reasonable spatial scale for the local/landscape scale reconstruction of vegetation in  
428 the area. Possible reasons for the two extreme estimates of the RSAP will be considered in the  
429 discussion section.

430

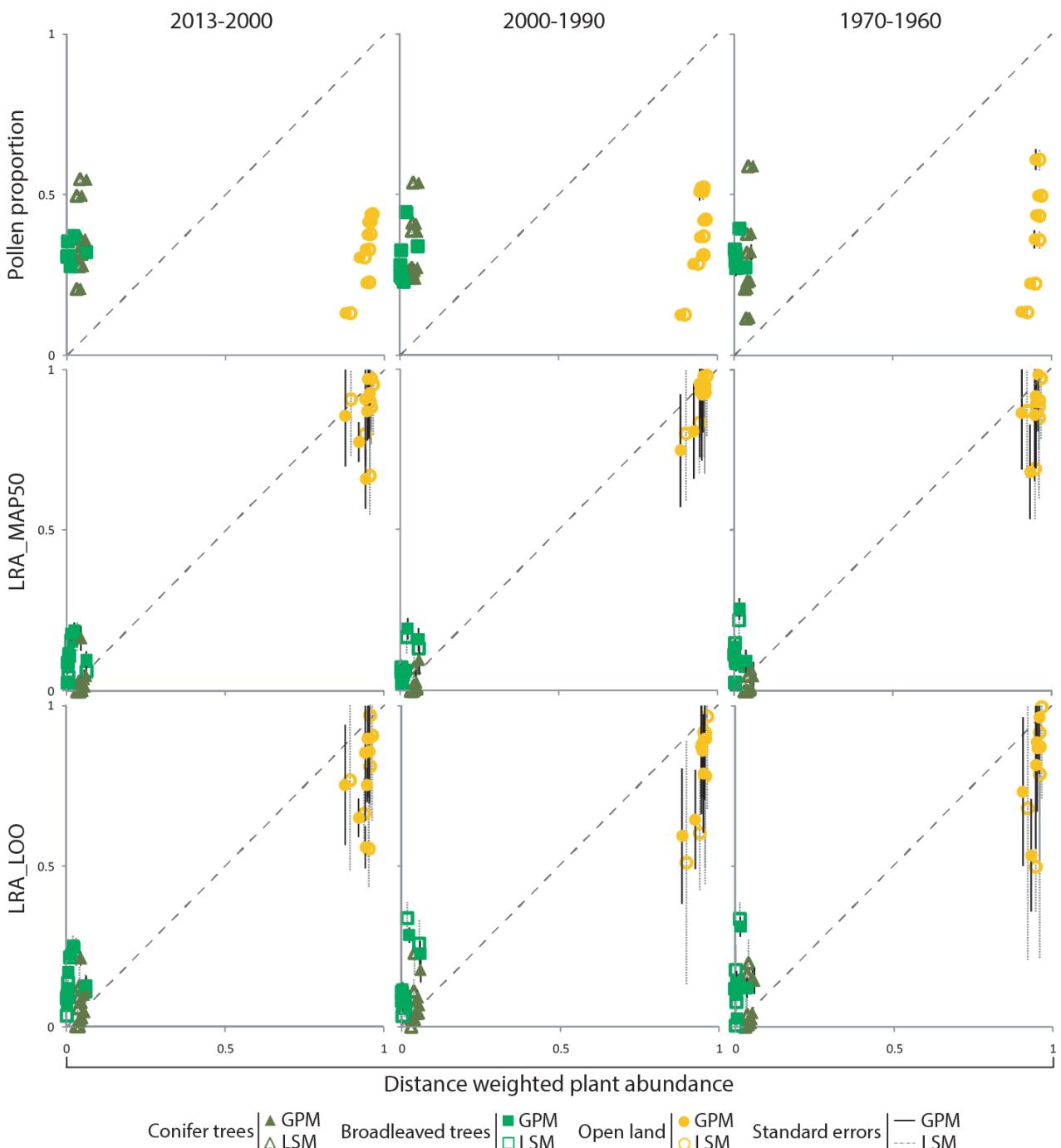
431 **Table 4** The relevant source areas of pollen (RSAP) based on LOVE runs using RVs\_MAP50 as regional vegetation  
432 background in LOVE. For all RSAP calculations both pollen dispersal model options have been tested, GPM and LSM.  
433

	RVs_MAP50_2006	RVs_MAP50_1990	RVs_MAP50_1964
<b>RSAP - GPM</b>	1038 m	888 m	663 m
<b>RSAP - LSM</b>	4693 m	1933 m	5113 m



434

435 **Figure 6** Spatial distribution of observed vegetation proportion based on local maps at a scale of incremental 20-m rings  
 436 from the center of each site. Results are shown for the three groups of taxa, i.e. open land, broadleaved and conifer trees.  
 437 Mean pollen proportion (untransformed pollen data) and LRA and DWPA estimates are given at a distance 2 km for each  
 438 site. Note that pollen proportion, LRA and DWPA estimates are means over the whole 2 km. Results from all alternative  
 439 scenarios we have used in this study are shown as well as the standard errors, for open land category. All data presented  
 440 in this figure correspond to the time window 2013-2000. See Table 1 and Figure 2 for labels and site locations.



441

442

443 **Figure 7** Comparison distance weighted plant abundance based on observed local land-cover maps against pollen  
 444 proportion (untransformed pollen data) and two sets of LRA estimates, LRA\_MAP50 and LRA-LOO (see text for further  
 445 explanation). The results are shown for the three studied time windows. Each point represents a site. Pollen proportions  
 446 and LRA estimates are reasonable representation of observed local land-cover (expressed here as distance weighted plant  
 447 abundance) when pollen records are close to the dashed line.

448

449

450    **4.3 Evaluation of the LRA-based reconstruction of vegetation within a 2-km radius**

451    *4.3.1 Relationship between the spatial structure of plant composition and the LRA results*

452        Figure 6 summarizes the spatial distribution of the three land-cover types in proportion from

453        the basin shore out to 2 km at each site in the 2000-2013 window. Additional information is plotted

454        at the right end of each graph at each site, including (1) pollen proportion of plant types that indicate

455        open land, (2) the LRA-based estimates of open-land cover within a 2-km radius, with various

456        calculation settings tested (in a distance-weighted fashion; Sugita, 2007b), and (3) the cumulated

457        DWPA at 2 km from the center of each site (expressed in proportion) calculated from the local land-

458        cover maps. The LOVE model reconstructs the local vegetation in proportion based on the cumulative

459        DWPA within the RSAP (Sugita, 2007b) as a whole; thus, it is theoretically hard to look into the

460        spatial structure of local vegetation within the RSAP in detail. Figure 6 assists to visualize better the

461        extent to which the spatial structure of the local land cover would influence the LRA results in the

462        study area. Note that ARBU belongs to another watershed and detailed maps of the local land cover

463        are unavailable; therefore we do not include the site information in the figure.

464        Open land characterizes the immediately surrounding areas around individual sites. The

465        distances, at and beyond which tree covers (mostly broadleaved trees) increase, vary site to site: 270,

466        650, 900, 1250, 1300, 1500 and 1600 m at LEG, ESC, EM, OT, W1652, FOUZ and SIG, respectively.

467        The broadleaved-tree cover rises up to 10, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22 and 25% within a 2-km radius at SIG,

468 FOUZ, W1652, OT, EM, ESC and LEG, respectively.

469 Except for the EM site, the LRA-based reconstruction of open land is mostly in good  
470 agreement with the estimates based on the cumulated DWPAAs at 2 km from each site. LRA\_LOO for  
471 open land varies between 65 and 97% and LRA\_MAP50 between 77.5 and 97% among the sites,  
472 whereas the open-land proportion based on the cumulative DWPA ranges from 88 to 96%; all those  
473 results consider the vegetation cover within a 2-km radius as a whole. At those seven sites the open-  
474 land cover from the shore out to 2 km changes from 68 to 98.5%. The EM site is an exception. The  
475 LRA-based results of open land at EM are underestimated, relative to the estimate based on the  
476 cumulative DWPA; both LRA\_LOO and LRA\_MAP50 vary between 55 and 67%, but the cumulative  
477 DWPA-based estimates range from 94 to 95%. The range of the changes in open land from the shore  
478 out to 2 km is from 75 to 97% at EM.

479 The pollen proportions representing the open-land cover vary between 13 and 43% among the  
480 sites, and thus significantly underestimate both the cumulative DWPA-based estimates and the  
481 observed proportions of the open-land cover within a 2-km radius (Figure 6). Three graphs in the top  
482 row of Figure 7 also demonstrate clearly that pollen proportions alone do not correspond to the  
483 DWPA-based estimates of all the three land-cover types within a 2-km radius in all time windows.  
484 Although expected, those results reaffirm that the LRA-based results are more realistic than pollen  
485 proportions alone in reconstruction of vegetation and land cover in mountains such as our study area.

486

487    4.3.2 *The LRA estimates and factors affecting their reliability in three time windows*

488       Against the cumulative DWPA-based estimates of vegetation cover within a 2-km radius,

489       LRA\_MAP50 is a better choice for all the land-cover types than LRA\_LOO in the three time windows

490       (Figure 7). Relative to the LRA\_LOO results (the bottom row of Figure 7), the LRA\_MAP50

491       estimates tend to have smaller standard errors at individual sites, to have smaller site-to-site variations

492       for each land-cover type, and to be closer to the 1:1 relationship against the cumulative DWPA-based

493       estimates (the middle row of Figure 7). These patterns are apparent for the open-land cover estimates

494       in particular. For example, the differences between the highest and lowest LRA\_MAP50 estimates

495       are 32, 23 and 30%, and 42, 46 and 49% when LRA\_LOO is concerned, in time windows 2013-2000,

496       2000-1990 and 1970-1960, respectively. The site-to-site variation of the LRA estimates does not

497       change significantly among the three time-windows when LRA\_MAP50 is considered; when

498       LRA\_LOO is concerned, however, the older the time window, the larger the site-to-site variation of

499       the LRA estimates for each land-cover type.

500       This study shows that selection of a pollen dispersal model, either the GPM or the LSM option,

501       does not affect significantly the LRA-based reconstruction of vegetation cover within the RSAP since

502       the 1960s (Figure 7) as long as the model selection is consistent in the entire LRA process. However,

503       the selection appears influencing the magnitude of uncertainties. With the LSM option, the SEs of

504 LRA\_LOO for open land vary from 10.5-57 %; on the other hand, those vary from 5.2 to 26.1% with  
505 the GPM option. When LRA\_MAP50 is concerned, the differences influenced by the selection of the  
506 dispersal model are negligible: the SEs vary from 7.4 to 25.2% with the LSM option and from 5.2 to  
507 26.1 % with the GPM option. As suggested in the simulations in section 2, the systematic selection  
508 of pollen sites in mountains, which is the case for RVs\_LOO (and thus affecting LRA\_LOO), is a  
509 suspect for those results on the differences in the SEs.

510

## 511 **5. DISCUSSION**

512 Pollen proportions are notoriously difficult to use for reconstruction of mountain vegetation  
513 (Markgraf, 1980; Fall, 1992; Birks and Birks, 2000; Ortú et al., 2006; Leunda et al., 2017). This study  
514 demonstrates that the LRA approach improves reconstruction of vegetation and land cover in  
515 mountains greatly over pollen percentages alone. The assumptions and conditions for the LRA are  
516 too simple for landscapes with complex topography and wind field in mountain regions. However,  
517 the simulations (section 2) and the application results in the Vicdessos area show that some of the  
518 difficult issues associated with pollen-based reconstruction of vegetation in mountains can be  
519 addressed and overcome.

520

521

522    5.1. Effects on the LRA results of systematic selection of pollen sites on mountain

523              Pollen-based reconstruction of mountain vegetation often selects small-sized pollen sites only  
524              in mountains and high-altitude plateaus. This site-selection strategy is useful for evaluating site-  
525              specific correlational relationships between pollen assemblages and the surround vegetation; however,  
526              it makes the LRA-based quantitative reconstruction of vegetation difficult. The REVEALS-based  
527              estimates of regional vegetation – an important outcome from the first step of the LRA- are critical  
528              for evaluating the abundance of long-distance pollen from the regional sources that are assumed to  
529              be consistent among small-sized sites for the LOVE applications. However, when several small-sized  
530              sites are selected above the tree line on the same land cover type, we expect biased estimates of the  
531              regional vegetation within a 50-100 km radius. This is the case in our study in the Vicedessos area  
532              (Figure 5); the regional components of the open land cover are overestimated by REVEALS. Because  
533              pollen records from small-sized sites tend to represent local vegetation (Prentice, 1985; Sugita, 1994),  
534              we expect that the REVEALS results based on pollen records from those sites underestimate the  
535              abundances of tree covers in the region.

536              One of the solutions to reduce the biases described above is to use large lakes (known as  
537              regional reliable pollen archives; Sugita, 2007a; Trondman et al., 2016) and/or several small sites  
538              (lakes and bogs) located in various valleys, slopes and altitudes in the region, although reliable pollen  
539              sites in mountains are mainly small and located in sub-alpine or alpine zones (Simonneau et al., 2013).

540 Abraham et al. (2017) used pollen records from small sites located above and below the treeline in  
541 low mountain ranges of NE Czech Republic and obtained reasonable REVEALS estimates of past  
542 regional vegetation. Hjelle et al. (2015) have used pollen samples from one large lake and twenty-  
543 eight small lakes located in different types of vegetation in western Norway. They found a good  
544 relationship between the REVEALS estimates and CORINE land-cover data, although the  
545 REVEALS model tends to overestimate open land cover against the CORINE land-cover. Hjelle et  
546 al. further show that the higher the number of small lakes, the more reliable the REVEALS estimates.  
547 Thus, establishing a proper site-selection scheme is the important step for REVEALS applications,  
548 although it is hard to find a large number of suitable pollen sites in mountain regions.

549 As expected, the LRA results using RVs\_MAP50 are better matched with the map-based  
550 DWPs within a 2-km radius than those using RVs\_LOO (Figure 7). Standard errors of  
551 LRA\_MAP50s are smaller than those of LRA\_LOOs, in general. Those results demonstrate the  
552 importance of the accuracy and reliability of the regional estimates of vegetation and land cover for  
553 the LRA approach. Even so, it's also encouraging that the RVs\_LOOs are usable to provide robust  
554 estimates of LRA\_LOOs using our data set.

555

556

557

558 5.2 Selection of pollen dispersal models for mountain situations

559 The differences in the LRA results with the LSM and GPM options are negligible in the  
560 simulations and the empirical study at the Vicdessos area (Figure 7). A LSM scheme is more  
561 advanced and realistic in description of atmospheric airflow and long-distance particle dispersal than  
562 a GPM scheme (Kuparinen et al., 2007). Comparisons between REVEALS\_LSM and  
563 REVEALS\_GPM (Theuerkauf et al., 2013, 2016) using pollen records from lakes in NE Germany  
564 showed the superiority of the use of the LSM of Kuparinen et al. (2007) over the GPM traditionally  
565 used in pollen-based vegetation modelling. Mariani et al. (2017) came to the same conclusion based  
566 on their study in Tasmania. We expected that applications of the LSM would improve the LRA results,  
567 in particular reducing biases on the long-distance pollen from the regional source, caused by complex  
568 topography and wind field in mountains. However, our results show that the REVEALS\_GPM-based  
569 estimates of the regional vegetation cover tend to be closer to the observed regional land-cover than  
570 those by REVEALS\_LSM (Figure 5); the LSM and GPM options do not influence significantly the  
571 LOVE results.

572 The LSM takes into account higher updraft velocities in air via turbulence better than the  
573 GPM (Kuparinen et al., 2007); thus, heavier pollen types, such as *Abies* and *Fagus*, tend to be  
574 modeled to disperse further with the LSM than with the GPM (Sutton, 1953). The consequence is  
575 that GPM gives greater importance to pollen arriving from shorter distances, especially for pollen

576 types with high fall speed of pollen, than the LSM does (Kuparinen et al., 2007; Theuerkauf et al.,  
577 2013), and in our study this is the cause of the underestimation of *Abies* and *Fagus* based on LSM,  
578 and thereby of the overestimation of regional open land based on LSM.

579 Size of pollen-sampling sites may be one of the possible reasons why the LRA estimates with  
580 the LSM option do not improve significantly against those with the GPM option. Indeed, the LSM  
581 would be a better option for pollen dispersion and deposition in large lakes than the GPM; pollen  
582 dispersion and deposition in such lakes are greatly affected by turbulent flows and updrafts (Jackson  
583 and Lyford, 1999), thus the LSM is more appropriate than the GPM. However, short-distance  
584 dispersal of pollen is better described by the GPM than by the LSM (Theuerkauf et al., 2016);  
585 accordingly, the GPM option would be better suited for reconstruction of vegetation using pollen  
586 records from small bogs and lakes like in the Vicdessos, where asymmetric airflows would play a  
587 minor role locally. As a consequence, selection of a pollen dispersal model would affect the LRA  
588 results little, when small sites are used. Standard errors are higher using LSM than using GPM,  
589 however, as the simulations (section 2) demonstrate.

590 Another important issue is the availability of the estimates of relative pollen productivity, RPP,  
591 for the constituent taxa used for data analysis. This study uses RPPs that were compiled from previous  
592 studies in NW Europe; those studies used the Extended R-value models to obtain RPPs, assuming  
593 that pollen dispersal follows the GPM (e.g. Sugita, 1994; Broström et al., 2008; Mazier et al., 2012).

594 Ideally, when the LSM is used for the LRA, RPPs need to be obtained from other data sets by  
595 assuming the LSM as a pollen dispersal model for consistency. Theuerkauf et al. (2013, 2016)  
596 obtained RPPs of selected taxa in lowlands in North Germany; however, Asteraceae and Ericaceae,  
597 important taxa in our study, are not included. Mariani et al. (2016, 2017) estimated RPPs for selected  
598 taxa in Tasmania. Thus far, the LSM-based estimates of RPPs are available from one study only in  
599 NE Germany; considering their variations caused by various environmental and anthropogenic  
600 factors, it is necessary to expand the database of the LSM-based RPPs for further applications of the  
601 LSM in the LRA reconstruction. All things considered, it is justified for this study to use RPPs for  
602 the selected taxa from NW Europe (Mazier et al., 2012; Trondman et al., 2015; Marquer et al., 2014,  
603 2017).

604

### 605 5.3 The LRA-based reconstruction of vegetation composition with insect-pollinated plants

606 Plant communities at the mountain tops in our study region are characterized by high  
607 abundance of insect-pollinated taxa such as Ericaceae (e.g. *Rhododendron* spp. and *Vaccinium* spp.)  
608 with semi-dominant grass and *Calluna* (heather). Ericaceae plants have low pollen production (see  
609 Table 2) relative to the wind-pollinated taxa in general (Mazier et al., 2012); then fall speed of pollen  
610 being similar among the constituent taxa, the LRA estimates of Ericaceae, thus the open land cover,  
611 tend to increase relative to the other taxa and land cover types. Mazier et al. (2012) excluded

612 zoophilous taxa from the REVEALS reconstruction, mainly because the model assumes that all pollen  
613 grains are coming via wind transport. However, the majority of the upland plant taxa common on  
614 mountain tops are zoophilous. It is ecologically important to include zoophilous taxa in pollen-based  
615 reconstruction of vegetation. Mariani et al. (2017) used both wind- and animal-pollinating plant taxa  
616 together for the REVEALS applications in Tasmania successfully. In the Pyrenees, this study also  
617 demonstrates that the LRA approach appears working reasonably well with zoophilous taxa for  
618 reconstruction of the vegetation and land cover in the local- and landscape-scales. This suggests that  
619 entomophilous taxa that are preserved in sediments might also be transported by wind.

620

621 *5.4 Relevant source area of pollen (RSAP) and LRA estimates of local vegetation in mountains*

622 In theory and practice the RSAP is the smallest spatial scale possible for pollen-based  
623 reconstruction of vegetation (Sugita, 1994, 2007b, 2013; Sugita et al., 2010). In the current LRA form  
624 (Sugita, 2007a, 2007b), the LRA result is expressed in proportions of the total cumulative sum of  
625 plant abundance at the RSAP (e.g., in biomass, plant cover, foliage mass, basal area, etc.) that is  
626 measured in a distance-weighted fashion for all the constituent taxa. Interpretation of the LRA results  
627 can be confusing, however. A cumulative sum of the DWPA is a way how pollen records reflect the  
628 surrounding vegetation (Prentice, 1984, 1988; Sugita, 1994; Sugita et al., 2010), and the LRA results  
629 are based on the cumulative DWPA at the RSAP (Sugita, 2007b). According to this view on the

630 pollen-vegetation relationship, the site-specific spatial structure of vegetation within the RSAP is  
631 impossible to assess quantitatively. Figure 6 is an attempt to visualize how different the spatial  
632 structure of the surrounding vegetation at individual sites could be, even when the LRA results are  
633 relatively similar among most of the sites.

634 The RSAP estimates (Table 3), which are obtained with an inverse modeling of LOVE (Sugita,  
635 2007b; Sugita et al., 2010), are significantly smaller with the GPM option than those with the LSM  
636 option at all time windows. This is contradictory to the simulation results in section 2; the LRA-based  
637 estimate of the RSAP with the GPM option (i.e. 310 m) is only slightly smaller than that with the  
638 LSM option (i.e. 325 m). The GPM describes pollen dispersal in such a way that pollen grains,  
639 especially heavy pollen types such as Ericaceae fall to the ground in shorter distances than the LSM  
640 does (Kuparinen et al., 2007; Theuerkauf et al., 2016; see also section 5.2). On the other hand, the  
641 LSM predicts higher abundance of long-distance pollen from the regional source, including arboreal  
642 plants growing abundantly in lower altitudes, into mountain sites than the GPM does. All these factors,  
643 as well as others (e.g., the spatial structure of mountain vegetation, non-random selection of pollen-  
644 site location, and the lack of RPP estimates considering LSM) would interact and affect the LRA-  
645 based estimates of the RSAP in unknown ways. Further studies are necessary.

646 Among the six RSAP estimates listed in Table 3, four estimates are close to or smaller than 2  
647 km. The other two, which are obtained with the LSM option, are >4.5 km. Most of the previous

648 studies also show that the RSAP estimates are smaller than 2.8 km in radius, when pollen sites are  
649 small- to medium-sized (Sugita et al., 2010; Overballe-Petersen et al., 2013; Cui et al., 2013, 2014;  
650 Poska et al., 2014; Hjelle et al., 2015; Mazier et al., 2015; Abraham et al., 2017). In practice, the local  
651 vegetation maps are available only within a 2-km radius around each site for comparison, as well. All  
652 things considered, the area within a 2-km radius is appropriate to be used as the RSAP for the study,  
653 with which all the results in Figures 6 and 7 are obtained.

654 Figure 6 shows that the areas close to the sampling sites are mostly unforested; tree cover  
655 (mostly broadleaved trees) increases at and beyond 270-1600 m depending on the sites. The DWPA  
656 results depict that, with either the GPM or LSM option, the open-land cover is dominant consistently.  
657 Except for the EM site, the LRA\_LOOs and LRA\_MAP50s within a 2-km radius are reasonable  
658 against the DWPA; these results assure the relevance of the LRA approach in this area. At the same  
659 time it is clear that the spatial structure of vegetation within the RSAP varies among sites significantly,  
660 even though the site-to-site variation of the LRA results is small. It's hard to speculate the site-specific  
661 spatial structure of vegetation within the RSAP based on the LRA approach or something else.

662 When the GPM option is selected, the radii of the LRA-based RSAP vary from 663 m (1960-  
663 1970) to 888 m (1990-2000) to 1038 m (2000-2013), indicative of a shift in the “grain size” of the  
664 spatial structure of the surrounding vegetation around the sites (Sugita, 1994; Bunting et al., 2004).  
665 It is reasonable to assume that changes in climate regimes and anthropogenic forcing in the area have

666 affected the spatial structure of vegetation and land cover constantly.

667

## 668 **6. CONCLUSIONS**

669 The main conclusions from this study are:

670 • The LRA approach is a significant improvement in pollen-based reconstruction of mountain  
671 vegetation in the local- and landscape-scales over pollen percentages alone.

672 • Both the simulations and empirical model-data comparison in the Pyrenees demonstrate that  
673 accuracy of the regional estimates of vegetation matters for reconstruction of the  
674 local/landscape scale reconstruction of mountain vegetation in the LOVE applications.

675 • The REVEALS-based estimate of regional vegetation – the first step of the LRA – is  
676 influenced by selection of pollen dispersal model and the systematic selection of pollen sites  
677 on mountains. Historical land-cover maps are effective as an alternative source for the  
678 regional vegetation in the last couple of centuries.

679 • Area within a 2-km radius appears to be a relevant spatial scale for the LRA reconstructions  
680 in the Vicdessos area in the Pyrenees in the three time windows evaluated.

681 • Insect-pollinated plant taxa, often important to characterize vegetation in higher altitudes, can  
682 be included and informative for the LRA-based vegetation reconstruction in mountains.

683 • Further clarification is necessary to better understand the pros and cons of two dispersal  
684 models – the Lagrangian Stochastic Model and Gaussian Plume model – for the LRA  
685 applications in mountain environments.

686 The present work provides an important basis for reliable palaeoecological reconstruction in  
687 the Pyrenees and for advances in research about the past and recent intense human impact in the  
688 region. Further studies will help improve some of the modelling approaches for a better understanding  
689 of the spatial and temporal distribution of plant taxa within a catchment (Plancher et al., in prep.) and  
690 the reconstruction of local paleorainfall by using the erosion processes (Allen et al., in press).

691

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705

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886 **APPENDICES**

887 **Appendix A.** POLLSCAPE simulation and evaluation of the Landscape Reconstruction Algorithm

888 for mountain regions.

889 **Appendix B.** Dated materials and details on age-depth models of sedimentary archives.

890 **Appendix C.** Land cover types based on CORINE datasets, CNRS vegetation map and local maps

891 from Houet et al. (2012), and their absolute proportions of the 20 taxa.

892

## **Appendix A. POLLSCAPE simulation and evaluation of the Landscape Reconstruction Algorithm for mountain regions**

### **A-1. POLLSCAPE simulations (Sugita 1994, 2013; Sugita et al., 1999; Gaillard et al., 2008) and parameter setting**

POLLSCAPE is a simple simulation approach to evaluate factors and mechanisms that affect pollen-vegetation relationships in patchy and heterogeneous landscapes (Sugita, 1994, 2013). Effects on pollen assemblages of various combinations of specific assumptions and conditions can be assessed; those factors include inter-taxonomic differences in productivity and fall speed of pollen, basin size, spatial patterns of plant distribution and land cover, and atmospheric conditions (e.g., wind speed and turbulence that simultaneously influence pollen dispersal and deposition). This modeling approach has been informative to provide plausible scenarios about how pollen assemblages from lakes and mires would reflect the surrounding vegetation (e.g., Sugita et al., 1997, 1999; Bunting et al., 2004; Bunting and Middleton, 2009; Caseldine et al., 2008; Fyfe, 2006; Gaillard et al., 2008; Hellman et al., 2008; Hjelle and Sugita, 2012).

Major basic assumptions and conditions of the POLLSCAPE approach in this study are as follows:

- The sampling basin, either a lake or mire, is a circular opening in the vegetation canopy on a flat two-dimensional plain; heights of source plants for pollen are assumed to be at the ground level.
- Each taxon has a constant pollen productivity in the entire simulated plot.
- Wind above canopy is the dominant agent of pollen transport.
- Wind direction is even in all directions. Accordingly the spatial distribution of source plants for each taxon is described as a function of distance from a point at the center of the basin.
- Pollen dispersal is approximated either by a Gaussian Plume Model (GPM) of small particles from a ground-level source under various atmospheric conditions (Sutton, 1953; Tauber, 1965; Prentice, 1985, 1988; Sugita, 1993, 1994) or by a Lagrangian Stochastic Model (LSM) under more realistic wind-fields and atmospheric turbulence conditions (Kuparinen et al., 2007; Theuerkauf et al., 2016).
- When pollen assemblages from lakes are concerned, Sugita's model (Sugita, 1993) is used for approximation of pollen deposition on the entire lake surface either by the GPM or the LSM.

For the sake of simplicity this simulation study assumes mountain tops and high plateaus as “landscape islands” on a flat two-dimensional terrain 80 km x 80 km in size. Wind fields and turbulence in mountain regions are complex in reality; thus, pollen transport is area- and region-

specific, making it hard to model in a general way. Although the simulated plots with flat terrains are simplistic, it captures the main characteristics of the spatial structure and species composition of plant communities both in high plateaus and the regional vegetation around the Viceddossos valley (Figure 1a in the main text).

Table A-1 shows the parameter setting for the simulated landscapes, including the mean plant composition in proportion for individual patch types and the matrix in 80 km x 80 km plots. The Matrix and Patch Type B represent plant communities in lower altitudes including mountain valleys and flat plains. The Matrix is characterized by forests consisted of broadleaved and conifer trees (*Fagus*, *Quercus* and *Pinus*) with small amounts of grasses (Poaceae) and Ericaceous plants (*Calluna* and other Ericaceae taxa). Patch type B represents Poaceae-dominated unforested/open areas. Patch Type A symbolizes mountain tops that are characterized by Ericaceae plants (including *Rhododendron spp.* and *Vaccinium spp.*) with semi-dominant grass and *Calluna* (heather). Within the areas occupied by Patch Type A, small-patches of two types of heather heathlands are placed to create a localized mosaic of mountain plant communities: Patch Type C with heather, grass and Ericaceae and Patch Type D with heather, grass, Ericaceae and *Pinus*. Patch Type A occupies 30% of the total area in the 80-km x 80-km plots, and the Matrix and Patch Type B 50% and 20%, respectively. Within the "mountain" areas covered by Patch Type A, Patch Types C and D occupy 20% and 10% in area respectively; the rest (i.e. 70% in mountain area) is characterized by plant composition of Patch Type A. For all the patch types circular-shaped patches are placed randomly without overlap; patch sizes ( $\pm$ SE) for Patch Types A, B, C and D are 314 ( $\pm$ 15) ha, 10 ( $\pm$ 1) ha, 2 ( $\pm$ 0.2) ha and 1 ( $\pm$ 0.1) ha, respectively.

Simulations place different-sized and circular-shaped lakes - 500 m and 50 m in radius - only in patches of Patch Type A. Pollen data from 500-m radius lakes are used for REVEALS modeling in the LRA (Sugita, 2007a) to estimate the mean vegetation composition within a 100-km radius from the center of individual lakes; those from 50-m radius lakes are applied for LOVE modeling (Sugita, 2007b) to evaluate the relevant source area of pollen (RSAP; *sensu* Sugita, 1994) and estimate the local vegetation composition within the RSAP. A 500-m radius lake is set at the center of a patch of Patch Type A that is randomly selected in the central part of the plot; we repeat the same process thirty times to obtain thirty sets of pollen loading and proportions independently. For a 50-m radius lake the same sampling scheme is used, except for the location of the lake that is placed randomly within a patch of Patch Type A; then we repeat the process thirty times. Each trial, either for a 500-m radius lake or a 50-m radius lake, is run independently from the other runs. Mean plant abundance (i.e. the area occupied by each plant type per unit area) is calculated in consecutive concentric rings 5-m in width from the lake shore out to 100 km. For plant abundance data beyond the 80 km x 80 km plot border, simulations assume the outside-plot vegetation as homogeneous and the plant composition the same as that within the plot for the constituent taxa (the last column in

Table A-1).

**Table A-1.** Parameter setting for simulated landscapes

					Nested patches within Patch Type A		
		Matrix	Patch Type A	Patch Type B	Patch Type C	Patch Type D	
Landscape design	Areal proportion	0.50	0.30	0.20	0.20	0.10	
	Patch size ( $\pm$ SE) in ha		314 $\pm$ 15	10 $\pm$ 1	2 $\pm$ 0.2	1 $\pm$ 0.1	
						Overall proportion in the entire plot	
Plant composition in each patch type and the matrix	<i>Poaceae</i>	0.03	0.15	0.94	0.21	0.30	0.256
	<i>Pinus</i>	0.40	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.05	0.208
	<i>Betula</i>	0.05	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.030
	<i>Quercus</i>	0.30	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.155
	<i>Fagus</i>	0.20	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.105
	<i>Calluna</i>	0.01	0.10	0.01	0.55	0.40	0.073
	Ericaceae	0.01	0.70	0.01	0.20	0.22	0.173
	SUM	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.000

Pollen dispersal and deposition is modeled by both the GPM and LSM options implemented in POLLSCAPE2017.v3.4.exe (Sugita, unpublished). The LSM option uses a look-up table of distance-dependent pollen deposition from a single point source based on the LSM model of Kuparinen et al. (2007) and Theuerkauf et al. (2016); the table was obtained from M. Theuerkauf. This implementation assumes the pollen source area to be within a 100-km radius from each lake. The GPM option, based on Sutton (1953), has been applied in palynology since the 1960s (Tauber, 1965). Those dispersal models are used to obtain the distance-weighted plant abundance (DWPA) of the surrounding vegetation, using the mean plant-abundance data at every 5-m increment out to 100 km at each site. In theory, pollen loading is linearly related to the DWPA for each of the constituent plant taxa (Prentice, 1985; Sugita, 1993, 1994, 2007a, 2007b); the slope of the relationship represents pollen productivity of the corresponding taxon. Pollen productivity estimates (PPEs) relative to that of Poaceae are listed in Table A-2 (after Mazier et al., 2012). Those estimates were compiled from previous studies in various parts of northwestern Europe (Broström et al., 2008; many others). Those studies cited use the Extended R-Value (ERV) model for obtaining PPEs, assuming that pollen dispersal and deposition follows the GPM (Prentice, 1985; Sugita, 1994). With the LSM option the

number of European plant/pollen types, for which PPEs are available, is still limited, except for PPEs obtained in Theuerkauf et al. (2013). This study uses the estimates in Table A-2 as inputs to simulation runs with either the GPM or the LSM, for the sake of consistency. Table A-2 also includes estimates of the fall speed of pollen in air - an important parameter for either the GPM or the LSM - for individual taxa (after Mazier et al., 2012).

**Table A-2.** Relative pollen productivity and fall speed of pollen used in simulations (after Mazier et al., 2012)

	Relative pollen productivity	Fall speed of pollen [m sec <sup>-1</sup> ]
Poaceae	1.00	0.035
<i>Pinus</i>	6.38	0.031
<i>Betula</i>	3.09	0.024
<i>Quercus</i>	5.83	0.035
<i>Fagus</i>	2.35	0.057
<i>Calluna</i>	0.82	0.038
Ericaceae	0.07	0.038

POLLSCAPE simulations result in pollen proportions of the constituent taxa at each lake, calculated from the pollen loading data relative to that of a reference taxon. Pollen counts are then obtained by back calculation in such a way that the total sum becomes 1000 grains at each site.

## A-2. Landscape Reconstruction Algorithm (LRA – Sugita, 2007a, 2007b; Sugita et al., 2010)

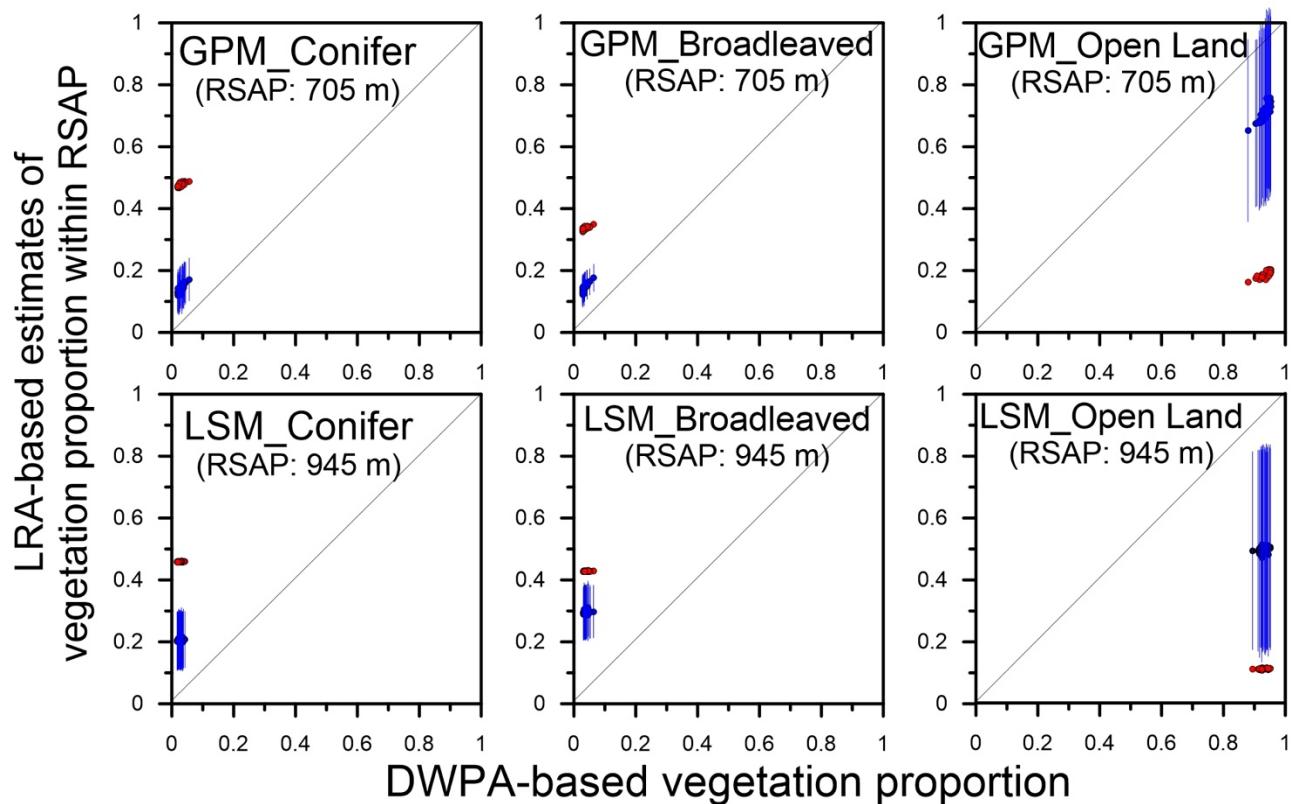
The Landscape Reconstruction Algorithm (LRA) consists of two steps: estimating regional vegetation using the REVEALS model (Sugita, 2007a) and local vegetation using the LOVE model (Sugita, 2007b). REVEALS outcomes provide the mean vegetation composition, not distance weighted, within a 50-100 km radius. With the REVEALS results as inputs, LOVE calculates the local vegetation composition in a distance-weighted fashion within the relevant source area of pollen (RSAP) - the smallest spatial scale possible for local vegetation reconstruction (Sugita, 1994, 2007b; Sugita et al., 2010). Both the GPM and the LSM options are used for the LRA applications for comparison. Relative PPEs and fall speed of pollen in Table A-2 are entered to all the LRA runs.

All the LOVE-based estimates of local vegetation within the RSAP are obtained using pollen data from lake 50-m in radius. An inverse modeling approach of LOVE (Sugita, 2007b; Sugita

et al., 2010) is applied for the RSAP estimate for all the LRA runs. The basic assumptions and conditions described in the POLLSCAPE section above are mostly the same for the Landscape Reconstruction Algorithm (LRA) applied in the simulation runs here.

Ideally pollen records from large sites >100 ha are preferable for REVEALS applications (Sugita, 2007a). The main conclusions of this simulation study (i.e. Figure 1 in the main text) are drawn from the result based on the REVEALS runs with pollen data from 500-m radius lakes. When large sites are unavailable as in most mountain regions, pollen records from a number of small sites could potentially be used for both the REVEALS and LOVE applications; however, uncertainties of the regional vegetation estimates in particular are expected to increase in unknown ways (Sugita, 2007a; Sugita et al., 2010; Fyfe et al., 2013; Mazier et al., 2015; Trondman et al., 2016).

To evaluate uncertainties and accuracy of the LRA results when pollen records from small sites are used for REVEALS in mountain situations, we conducted additional simulation runs, assuming that the REVEALS estimates of regional vegetation composition are obtained using pollen records from 50-m radius lakes (i.e. those are the same as those created for the LOVE calculations in the main simulation runs). Figure A-1 shows the simulation result.



**Figure A-1.** LRA-based estimates of local vegetation against DWPA-based vegetation proportion within RSAP, assuming all the pollen records are from 50-m radius lakes in Patch Type A. Blue dots and error bars indicate the LRA estimates and their SEs against vegetation proportions at 30 sites; red dots represent pollen proportions at 30 sites. RSAP is the area within a 705-m radius when GPM is used and within a 945-m radius when LSM is used.

When all pollen sites are small lakes 50-m in radius for both the REVEALS and LOVE runs, the accuracy of the LRA results are not as good as those shown in Figure 1-b in the main text. The RSAP estimates become larger than those shown in Figure 1-b: 705 m (GPM) and 945 m (LSM) against 310 m (GPM) and 325 m (LSM). Although Figure A-1 indicate that the LRA still improves significantly the accuracy of vegetation reconstruction over pollen percentages alone, the simulation results demonstrate that regional vegetation reconstruction using pollen records from “large sites” is preferred whenever possible to reduce impacts on the LRA results and reliability of the systematic selection of pollen sites only on mountain tops (Sugita, 2007a).

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## Appendix B. Dated materials and details on age-depth models of sedimentary archives.

Lake and peat cores were dated by using radiocarbon and  $^{210}\text{Pb}$  ages together. Age-depth models were based on all available age dating information and the entire cores, although the present study focused on the last 60 years. Radiocarbon dating were obtained from previously-identified above-ground plant remains selected from 1 cm<sup>3</sup> of bulk peat/sediment at EcoLab and GEODE laboratories following Mauquoy et al. (2004). Sample pretreatments included acid-alkali-acid washing (to remove bacterial CO<sub>2</sub>, carbonate and humic-fulvic acids), drying, combustion and graphitization. These pretreatments and the radiocarbon measurements by acceleration mass spectrometer were performed at Beta Analytic (London, UK), Poznan Radiocarbon Laboratory (Poznan, Poland) and ARTEMIS facility (CNRS-Gif sur Yvette, France).  $^{210}\text{Pb}$  measurements were achieved by using peat powder and Gamma spectrometry (Van Beek et al., 2013; Appleby, 2002), except Orry de Théo peatland for which Alpha spectrometry was used (Sanchez-Cabeza et al., 1998).

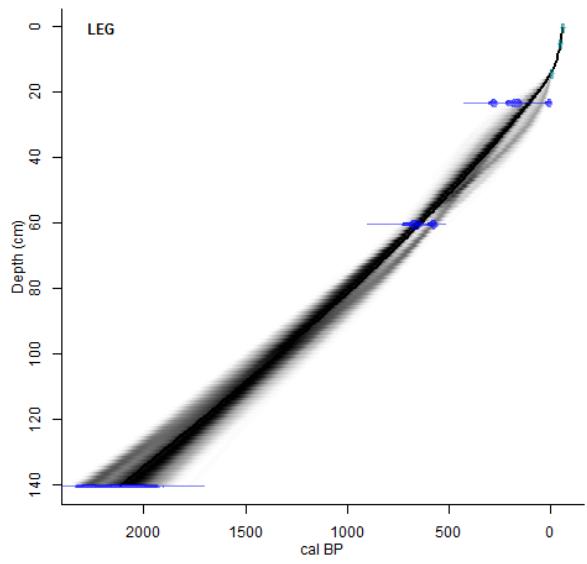
Table B-1 summarizes the dating information. The age-depth models of Legunabens, Arbu and Fouzes that were not published so far are given below.

**Table B-1.** Background information about the dating used in this study.

Site name	Type of Records	$^{14}\text{C}$ Bomb Pulse	$^{210}\text{Pb}$	Number of $^{14}\text{C}$ ages	References
Sigriou (SIG)	Lake		Gamma spec.	n=5 (+ 2 outliers)	Simonneau et al. 2013
Legunabens (LEG)	Lake	2		3	this study
Arbu (ARBU)	Lake		Gamma spec.	3	this study
Escale (ESC)	Peat		Gamma spec.	2	Hansson et al. 2017
Fouzes (FOUZ)	Peat		Gamma spec.	0	this study
W1652a (W1652)	Peat	5	Gamma spec.	4	Hansson et al. 2017
Etang mort (EM)	Peat		Gamma spec.	2	Hansson et al. 2017
Orry de Théo (OT)	Peat		Alpha spec.	4	Galop et al. 2011

## **LEGUNABENS**

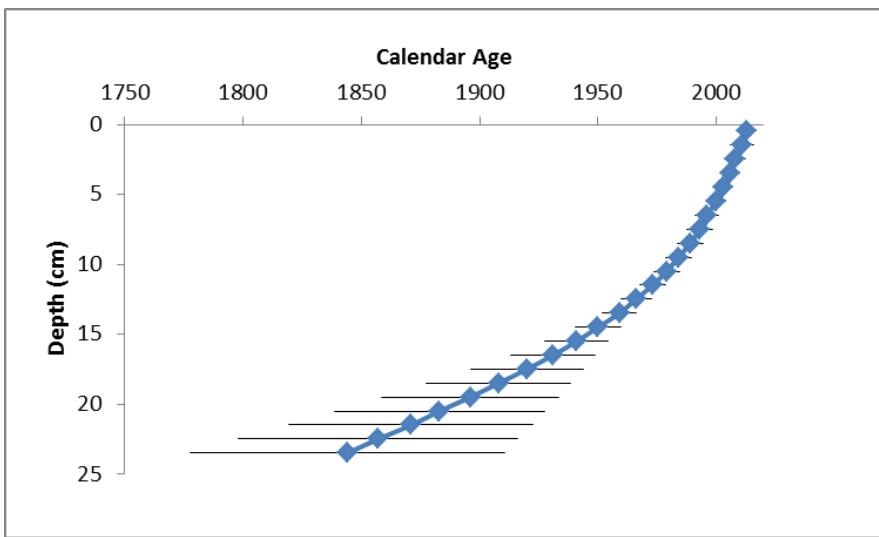
The age-depth model of Legunabens sediment core is based on five radiocarbon measurements from macrofossils. Three radiocarbon ages are calibrated by using the NH IntCal09 calibration curve. The results from the two upper sediment layers are used as post-bomb ages (Goodsite et al., 2001). The Clam age-depth model is shown in figures B-1 and B-2 and all details about radiocarbon measurements are described in Table B-2 below.



**Figure B-1.** Clam age-depth model for Legunabens.

**Table B-2.** Background information about the dating used for Legunabens.

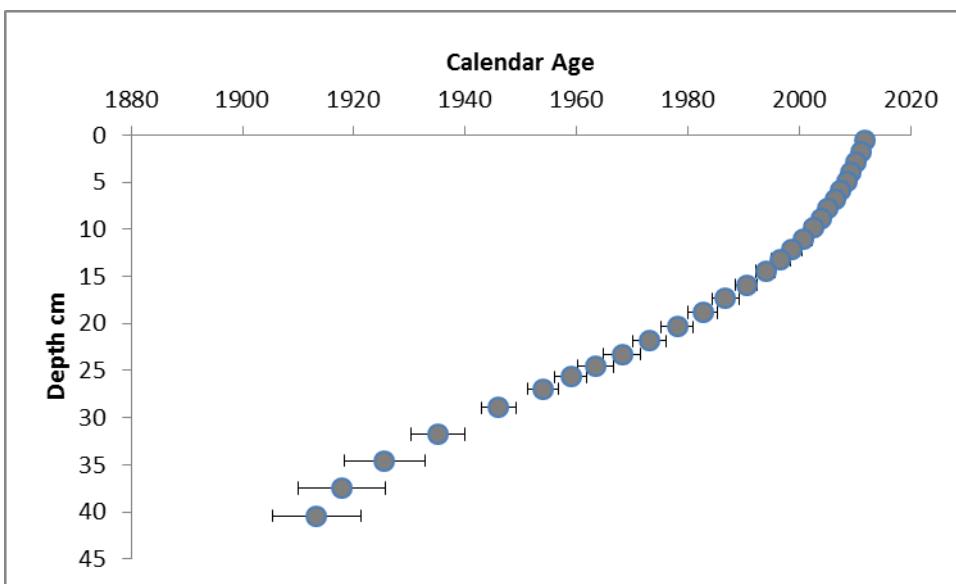
Legunabens Raw radiocarbon measurements	Mass in grams	Laboratory label and type of macrofossils that has been dated	$^{14}\text{C}$ uncal.
LG01 05-06	5.5	Poz-49543 Sphagnum leaves and branches, + insect remains	$105.7 \pm 1.08$ pMC
LG01 14-15	14.5	Poz-49578 Sphagnum leaves and branches, + insect remains	$113.86 \pm 1.23$ pMC
LG01 23-24 CS	23.5	Poz-49576 Sphagnum leaves and branches, + other mosses sp.	$195 \pm 30$
LG01 60-61 CS	60.5	Poz-49575 Sphagnum leaves and branches, and some insect remains	$700 \pm 50$
LG01 140-141 CS	140.5	Poz-49542 Leaves of Sphagnum sp.	$2130 \pm 90$



**Figure B-2.** Zoom on the outcomes of the Clam age-depth model for the upper sediment layers of Legunabens.

## **FOUZES**

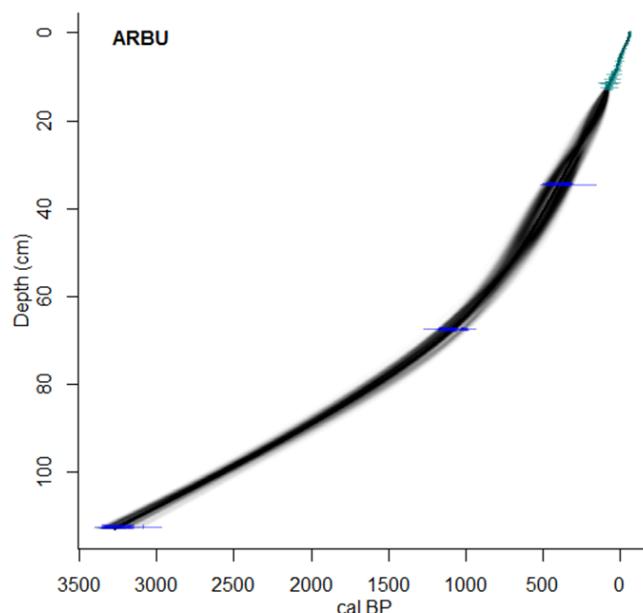
$^{210}\text{Pb}$  and other radionuclides were measured at LAFARA/OMP by gamma Spectrometry (P. Van Beek and M. Souhault) - <https://lafara.obs-mip.fr/>. Unsupported  $^{210}\text{Pb}$  was estimated using total  $^{210}\text{Pb}$  and  $^{226}\text{Ra}$  ( $^{214}\text{Pb}$ ) to assess supported  $^{210}\text{Pb}$ . Age dating was estimated using the CRS model (Appleby, 2002) and model uncertainties were calculated with MonteCarlo simulations (Binford et al., 1990) based on a Matlab routine written by P.E. Higuera and modified by M. Enrico. The age-depth model was validated by the measurements of a  $^{137}\text{Cs}$  peak around 1960 and the detection of  $^{241}\text{Am}$  traces at the same time period. The Clam age-depth model is shown in Figure B-3.



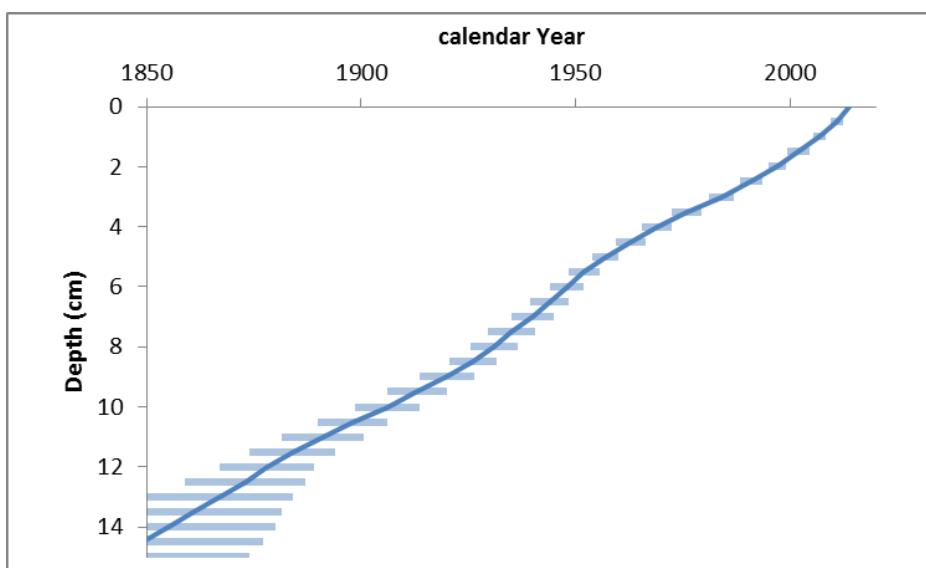
**Figure B-3.** Clam age-depth model for Fouzes.

## **ARBU**

The age-depth model for Arbu sedimentary core is based on a combination of  $^{210}\text{Pb}$  measurements (CRS model; Appleby, 2002) and three radiocarbon age dates. No  $^{137}\text{Cs}$  peak was clearly defined, however  $^{137}\text{Cs}$  was found in the layer dated after 1950 with an increase until  $\sim 1960$ . A clear peak of  $^{241}\text{Am}$  was found for the sediment slices dated from 1955 to 1975. The Clam age-depth model is shown in Figure B-4. Figure B-5 corresponds to a zoom on the outcomes of the Clam age-depth model for the upper sediment layers.



**Figure B-1.** Clam age-depth model for Arbu.



**Figure B-2.** Zoom on the outcomes of the Clam age-depth model for the upper sediment layers of Arbu.

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To: J. S. Carrion (Editor of *Quaternary Science Reviews*).

Mainz, October 24<sup>th</sup> 2019

Dear Professor Carrion,

We have no conflict of interest to declare.

Yours sincerely,

Laurent Marquer and the co-authors.

1    **Author contributions**

2    L.M., F.M., S.S. and M.J.G. conceived the initial idea; L.M. ran the LRA model; S.S. led the  
3    runs related to the evaluation with simulated landscapes; D.G., F.M. and E.F. provided the  
4    pollen data; T.H. provided the local land-cover maps for three time windows; S.H. and  
5    N.D.M. provided the plant composition in each land-cover type; A.S., F.D.V. and G.L.R.  
6    provided the age-depth models at individual sites. L.M. led analyses and writing with  
7    substantial input from F.M. and S.S. All authors contributed to various versions of the  
8    manuscript.