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## ► To cite this version:

Olivier Cantat, Edwige Savouret. A catalog of 'weather types' in metropolitan France. Climatologie, 2014, 11, pp.65-71. 10.4267/climatologie.584 . hal-01699201

# HAL Id: hal-01699201 https://hal.univ-lorraine.fr/hal-01699201

Submitted on 27 May 2021  $\,$ 

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### A CATALOG OF 'WEATHER TYPES' IN METROPOLITAN FRANCE \*

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#### Abstract

Weather types allow the reality of atmospheric conditions to be understood on a regional scale and their potentialities and risks envisaged. This summary presents the results for one of metropolitan France's sixty weather stations from 1991 to 2010.

Keywords: weather types, spatial diversity, temporal variability, metropolitan France.

### Introduction

This extended summary outlines the concept of a catalog of 'weather types' whose spatial distribution, frequency, length and succession enable the concrete reality of atmospheric conditions over a given land area to be understood and their consequences for the geographical space envisaged. The catalog aims firstly to provide a knowledge base for the whole of France, among other reasons useful for defining climatic regions 'since it is frequency which in the end determines the contrasts between regional climates' (Godard & Tabeaud, 2009). It could also be useful for environmental and planning actors because of the global nature of the information it provides (with possible applications in farming, tourism, health, transportation and so on).

Our presentation is accompanied by a brief commentary of four daily data sheets covering the period between 1991 and 2010 from Caen weather station, Normandy, taken as an example from among the sixty stations in metropolitan France.

## 1. Classification of 'weather types' and complete catalog description

A study of 'weather types' was envisaged based on a classification comprising four essential meteorological-climate elements: the cloud cover, temperature, precipitation and wind. The four parameters were differentiated on the basis of frequency analyses of eight stations representative of the major French climatic tendencies for lowland areas (oceanic, continental and Mediterranean). The resulting classes are displayed in the middle graph in figure 1; values for each station are compared to the national mean calculated for the eight reference stations (cf. the two right-hand columns on each line).

<sup>\*</sup> This paper was also published in French in the Conference Proceedings of AIC 2014 (Dijon).



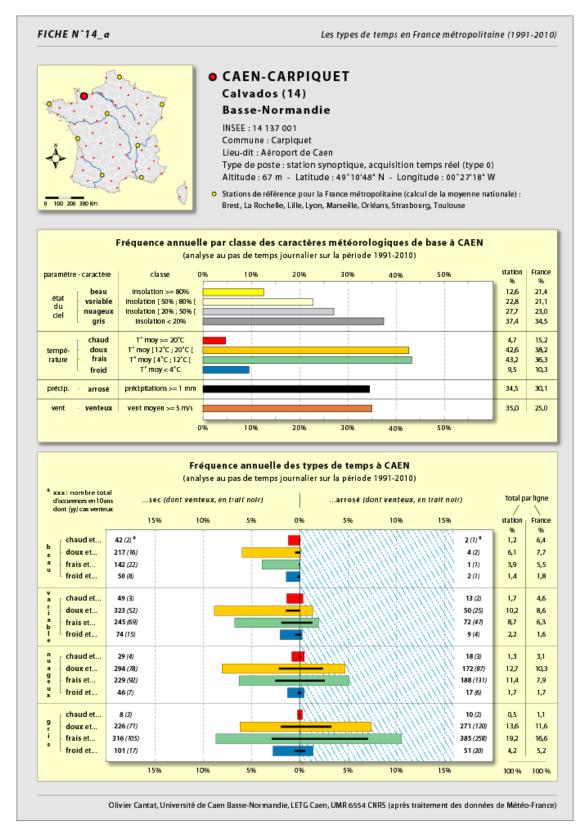


Figure 1: Weather station details (top), basic climate parameters (middle), and 'weather types' (bottom), 1991-2010, (Caen-Carpiquet weather station, Normandy).

In order to make as accurate a distinction as possible of French climatic diversity, sixty criteria were selected in accordance with their intra-regional geographical representativeness (i.e., the role of local factors), the availability of data over the last two decades (i.e., with no significant gaps), and the stability of the landscapes around the

stations and in the immediate vicinity of measuring instruments so as to ensure the homogeneity of the data series (cf. the dot distribution on the map in figure 1).

Concretely, the typology was obtained by combining the different classes, giving sixtyfour possible combinations (4\*4\*2\*2). Certain combinations occur frequently (e.g., *overcast, cool, wet* weather, typical of maritime polar air masses), while others are very occasional, as they associate atmospheric conditions *a priori* unlikely to occur simultaneously but nevertheless possible (e.g., *clear, warm, rainy, windy* weather, corresponding to a fine summer's day with a southerly wind, preceding the arrival of an active disturbance in the evening or of thunderstorms). Such rare combinations need to be taken into account, however, as they often signify environmental and/or human risks, due to the unpreparedness of the places in question for this type of atmospheric constraint.

In sum, the first data sheet provides an overall approach to 'weather types' for each station (figure 1), while the other three sheets show respectively their seasonality (figure 2), year-to-year variations (figure 3), and area of influence and temporal persistence (figure 4).

### 2. Example of the analysis for Caen-Carpiquet weather station (Normandy)

In the graph at the bottom of Figure 1, the Caen station's combinations appear to be extremely varied, reflecting the region's geographical exposure to all kinds of air masses. The most common is 'overcast and cool' weather (19.2%), half the time with showers and very often wind. This combination is followed by four typical types for North-West France: 'overcast and mild' (13.6%), with a slight prevalence of accompanying rain and wind; 'cloudy and mild' (12.7%), preferably dry and not as windy; 'cloudy and cool' (11.4%), with a fairly even distribution between dry or wet and windy or calm; and finally 'changeable and mild' (10.2%), with a strong prevalence of neither rain nor wind.

Such typical conditions do not exclude the occurrence of more contrasted episodes linked to rare synoptic weather configurations (Cantat, Savouret & Bensaid, 2013). For example, the *'clear and warm'* weather type, – sometimes leading to a heatwave and/or drought – occurs on average in 1.2% of situations (or 4.4 days p.a.). On the other hand, the *'overcast, cold, rainy'* type – with its concomitant risk of landslips – accounts for 1.4% (5.1 days p.a.), along with a likelihood of snowdrifts in high winds in 0.6% of cases (2.0 days p.a.).

Figure 2 shows that the season is a factor in determining key risk periods according to the various 'weather types', from the most to the least common. Figure 3, with year-by-year values over twenty years, shows climate variability and illustrates different possible circulation types (zonal and meridian). The map in Figure 4 shows clear spatial coherence in North-West France, with over 50% of identical types on a given day, and confirms the distinct dichotomy with the Mediterranean region (15 to 18%). The number of consecutive days with the same 'weather type' shows the extremely changeable nature of the atmosphere, with a continuous maximum series of seven days in Caen, compared with 28 at Ajaccio and 12 in Dijon, for example.

### Conclusion

Since 'every type is the result of a classification, ...weather types can quite rightly be distinguished according to their "use" (Carréga, 2004). In order to go beyond the predefined structure of this typology, we have also developed a supervised classification module of 'weather types' (with free selection from among 12 parameters), thus enabling a variety of key subject areas to be focused on more precisely (Cantat & Savouret, 2013).



EN-CARPIQUET dos (14)_Basse-Normandie	Saisonnalité des types de temps (moyenne du nombre de jours sur la période 1991-2010)														
	JAN	FEV	MAR	AVR	MAI	NUL	JUL	AOU	SEP	ОСТ	NOV	DEC			
eau chaud sec dont beau chaud sec et venteux					0,2	0,5	1,2	1,8	0,6						
eau chaud arrosé dont beau chaud arrose et venteux							0,1		0,1						
eau doux sec	+		+	0,5	3,1	4,5	3,8	3,9	4,4	1,5	+				
dont beau doux sec et venteux eau doux arrosé	+				0,2	0,3	0,3	0,2 +	Q,5 +	0,2 +	+ 0,1				
dont beau doux arrosé et venteux			+ +				-	-	+	+	0,1				
eau frais sec dont beau frais sec et venteux	0,7	1,6 0,3	3,2 0,3	3,5 0,5	1,3	0,3			0,4	1,8 0,3	1,2	0,4 0,2			
eau frais arrosé dont beau frais arrose et venteux	0,1														
eau froid sec	1,4	1,1	0,5	0,1						+	0,7	1,4			
dont beau froid sec et venteux eau froid arrosé	0,2 +	0,1 +	0,3	+								0,3 +			
dont beau froid arrose et venteux	+	+										+			
	JAN	FEV	MAR	AVR	MAI	NUL	JUL	AOU	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC			
ariable chaud sec dont variable chaud sec et venteux					0,1	0,8	1,5 0,2	2,1	0,5	+					
ariable chaud arrosé						0,3	0,6	0,3	0,2						
ariable doux sec	+		0,6	1,5	4,4	6,4	4,5	5,7	6,0	3,2	0,3				
dont variable doux sec et venteux ariable doux arrosé	+		0,2 0,1	0,3 0,4	0,7	0,6 0,6	0,8 0,8	0,9 0,9	1,0	1,0	0,1				
dont variable doux arrosé et venteux ariable frais sec	2,1	2.2	+	0,2	0,2	0,2	0,4	0,6	0,5	0,4	0,2	1.0			
dont variable frais sec et venteux	1,1	2,3 0,8	4,5 1,1	1,7	0,6	0,4			0,4	0,4	0,9	<b>1,8</b> Q,5			
ariable frais arrosé dont variable frais arrosé et venteux	0,8	0,9	0,7	1,3 0,7	0,5					0,9 0,3	1,3 0,8	0,9 0.8			
ariable froid sec	2,1	1,3	0,8	+						+	0,7	2,5			
dont variable froid sec et venteux ariable froid arrosé	0,6 0,2	0,2 0,4	0,4 +	+							0,1	0,3			
dont variable froid arrosé et venteux	0,1	0,2									+	0,1			
uageux chaud sec	JAN	FEV	MAR	AVR	MAI	JUN 0,4	JUL 1.0	AOU 1,5	SEP 0,2	OCT	NOV	DEC			
dont nuageux chaud sec et venteux							0,1	0,3							
luageux chaud arrosé dont nuageux chaud arrosé et venteux					+	0,2	0,7	0,8	0,1						
luageux doux sec dont nuageux doux sec et venteux		0,2 0,2	0,5	1,7 0,4	3,7 1,1	5,2 1,5	5,8 1,5	5,0 1,1	4,2 0,8	3,0 0,9	0,4 0,3				
uageux doux arrosé		+	0,2	0,8	2,4	2,5	2,7	2,3	4,0	2,2	0,1				
dont nuageux doux arrosé et venteux uageux frais sec	2,5	2,6	0,2 4,2	0,4 3,5	0,9 2,1	1,1 0,2	1,4	1,2	2,1 0,3	1,4	0,1	2,0			
dont nuageux frais sec et venteux	1,6	1,3	1,5	1,1	0,8				+	0,4	1,8	0,7			
luageux frais arrosé dont nuageux frais arrose et venteux	2,1	2,3 1,8	2,7	3,3 2,1	0,6 0,4	0,2			0,1	1,6	3,4 2,3	2,6 1,8			
luageux froid sec dont nuageux froid sec et venteux	1,6 0,3	1,0	0,3	+							0,4	1,3 0,2			
uageux froid arrosé	0,4	0,6	0,2	+								0,5			
dont nuageux froid arrosé et venteux	0,2	0,3	0,1	41.15				4011	665	0007		+			
ris chaud sec	JAN	FEV	MAR	AVR	MAI	JUN	JUL 0,4	AOU 0,3	SEP 0,1	OCT	NOV	DEC			
dont gris chaud sec et venteux							0,1	0,2	+						
ris chaud arrosé dont gris chaud arrosé et venteux					+	+	0,4	0,5 +	+++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++						
ris doux sec dont arts doux sec et venteux	0,2 0,2	0,2 0,2	0,9 0,6	0,9 0,3	2,2	3,1 0,6	4,3 1,3	3,0 0,8	3,1 0,8	3,6 1,1	1,1	0,2 0,2			
ris doux arrosé	0,2	0,2	1,1	1,2	3,1	4,3	3,5	3,1	3,9	4,4	1,5	0,9			
dont gris doux arrosé et venteux ris frais sec	0,2 6,0	0,2 5,2	0,6 5,3	0,6 3,1	1,0 1,9	1,5 0,2	1,2	1,2	1,4 0,3	2,4	1,3	0,8 4,2			
dont gris frais sec et venteux	2,9	1,5	2,1	0,9	0,8	+	F		+	0,4	0,8	1,2			
ris frais arrosé dont gris frais arrosé et venteux	6,2 5,3	5,2 43	4,4 2,8	3,6 2,3	2,5 1,2	0,2			0,5 0,3	2,7	6,2 3,2	7,2 5,4			
ris froid sec dont gris froid sec et venteux	3,3	2,3	0,5	+							0,5	3,6			
ris froid arrosé	0,7 1,3	0,3 1,1	0,2							+	0,5	0,6 1,6			
dont gris froid arrose et venteux	0,3	0,5	0,3							+	0,2	0,8			
ta : un signe + indique une occurrence non nulle i								A				also donte			

Figure 2: Seasonal nature of 'weather types', 1991-2010 (Caen-Carpiquet weather station, Normandy).

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ados (14)_Basse-Normandie	1991	92	93	04	1995	96	97	98		2000	01	02	03	04	2005	06	07	08	09
Beau chaud sec	1	1	1	4	8	7	2	3	4	6	11	0	12	6	5	6	1	0	4
dont beau chaud sec et venteux Beau chaud arrosé	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
dont beau chaud arrose et venteux	0		o	0	0	0	o	0	o	°0	°0	0	°0	°0	°0	•	0	o	
Beau doux sec dont beau doux sec et venteux	21	18	17	17	21	32 9	26 4	24 2	22	10	17	20	21 0	26	21	24	21	21 : 0	23
Beau doux arrosé dont beau doux arrosé et venteux	0	0	0	2	1,	1,	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0
Beau frais sec dont beau frais sec et venteux	11	13	11 3	8	7	7	34 10	9 1	8	7	3	10 7	31 6	14	15 7	11 2	24	2	18
Beau frais arrosé dont beau frais arrosé et venteux	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	1,	0	0	0	1,	0	0	0	-	0	0
Beau froid sec dont beau frold sec et venteux	7,	2	3	1	3	13 3	5	8	1	4	2,	0	9	4	6	3	4	8	8
Beau froid arrosé dont beau froid arrosé et venteux	0	0	0 0	1,	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 0	0	0	0	0 0	0	0	1
	1991	92	93	94	1995	96	97	98	99	2000	01	02	03	04	2005	06	07	08	09
Variable chaud sec dont variable chaud sec et venteux	8	2	0	4	11 0	2	9	1	8	4	9 0	7	9	1	6	6	0	3	4
Variable chaud arrosé dont variable chaud arrosé et venteux	4	0	0	2,	0	0	2	1 0	3,	1,	0	1 0	2	0	1	6 0	1	0	0
Variable doux sec dont variable doux sec et venteux	34	38	41 5	28	36	30 7	26 4	33 6	29 6	31 6	36 9	29 3	34 4	24 6	38	28	32	27	39 S
Variable doux arrosé dont variable doux arrosé et venteux	3	7	8	6	2	3,	4	8 4	4	8	7	3	2	6	6	5	2,	6	5
Variable frais sec dont variable frais sec et venteux	32	30	23 8	29 6	32 9	21 6	21 7	24 9	25 4	26 11	16 4	36 73	17 5	13 4	22 6	24 4	23 5	27 8	23
Variable frais arrosé dont variable frais arrosé et venteux	7	7	5	4,	5	3	4	9 6	8	11 6	8	8 6	8	10	8	7	8	10 6	6
Variable froid sec dont variable froid sec et venteux	11	11	8	2,	6	9	4	7,	3	4	14 3	6	6	8	6,	10	8 0	4	9
Variable froid arrosé dont variable froid arrosé et venteux	2	0	1,	0	0	2	0	0	1 0	1	2,	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	1
	1991	92	93	94	1995	96	97	98	99	2000	01	02	03	04	2005	06	07	08	09
Nuageux chaud sec dont nuageux chaud sec et venteux	1	4	0	1	2	1	7	0	6	2	1,	5	3	5	4	7	1	1	1
Nuageux chaud arrosé	1	3	1	4	0	1	1	2	5	0	0	0	3	5	2	3	0	2	2
dont nuageux chaud arrosé et venteux Nuageux doux sec	29	25	0 33	25	25	0 31	0 20	1 25	1	0 34	0 34	0 31	0 24	7 39	1 25	28	0 35	0 38	ر 37
dont nuageux doux sec et venteux	10		33	25	_	9	20	25 11	25	<b>54</b> 9	34 9	9	7	39 16	25	20	5	4	57
Nuageux doux arrosé dont nuageux doux arrosé et venteux	8	21	17	15	8	10 8	18 9	16 73	28 15	15 6	18 14	18 10	17	16 10	17 8	19 8	29 16	20 12	25 11
Nuageux frais sec dont nuageux frais sec et venteux	23	27	20	16	25 14	24 11	25 11	27 16	_	20 13	18 6	23 10	22	33	19 6	21	12		23
Nuageux frais arrosé dont nuageux frais arrosé et venteux	25 17	18 17	12	30 22	14 14	14 12	16 11	23 17	22 19	27 20	20 16	14 8	15 8	16 7	11,	14 //	16 12	25 15	26 17
Nuageux froid sec dont nuageux froid sec et venteux	7	3	4	3	3	8	2	7	4	2	7	2	5	6	4	8,	1	3	1
Nuageux froid arrosé dont nuageux froid arrosé et venteux	1	0	1,	0	0	0	0	2	1,	0	2	0	2	2	6	3	0	3	3
	1991	92	93	94	1995	96	97	98	99	2000	01	02	03	04	2005	06	07	08	09
Gris chaud sec dont gris chaud sec et venteux	2	0	0	2	1,	1,	1	0	1	1,	2	0	1	0	1	1,	0	1	0
Gris chaud arrosé dont aris chaud arrosé et venteux	0	0	0	1	2	0	3	0	2	0	1	1	3	1	1	1	0	0	1
Gris doux sec dont gris doux sec et venteux	22	15	18 5	29	19	26 11	27	29 17		35 9	17 9	26 6	19 2	18 7	26 7	28 15	19 5	_	13
Gris doux arrosé dont gris doux arrosé et venteux	18 6	29 15	30 17	32 14	30 15	17 7	31 12	31 76	19 6	33 73	29 18	44 21	26 9	19 8	29 9	27 14	36 17	18 9	18
Gris frais sec dont gris frais sec et venteux	37 13	40	49 21	40	43 15	38 15	24	25 8	21 9	35 73	30 11	25 5	27 10	29 10	33 7	25 6	39 12	28 10	27
Gris frais arrosé	32	37	39	52	35	47	34	43	45	42	44	49	33	50	29	23	43	39	31
dont gris frais arrosé et venteux Gris froid sec dont gris froid sec et venteux	20 16 0	15	33 18 7	32 4 0	12	21 17 6	22 12 2	32 4 2	35 4 1	33 2 0	32 9 4	32 7 3	22 7 2	26 11	20 8 2	16 19 2	30 5 0	23 5	11
Gris froid arrosé dont gris froid arrose et venteux	2	0	5	3	3	11 7	7	4,	6	5,	8,	0	5 4	2,	13 4	5	4	3,	5

Figure 3: Year-to-year variability of 'weather types', 1991-2010 (Caen-Carpiquet weather station, Normandy).

Les types de temps en France métropolitaine (1991-2010)



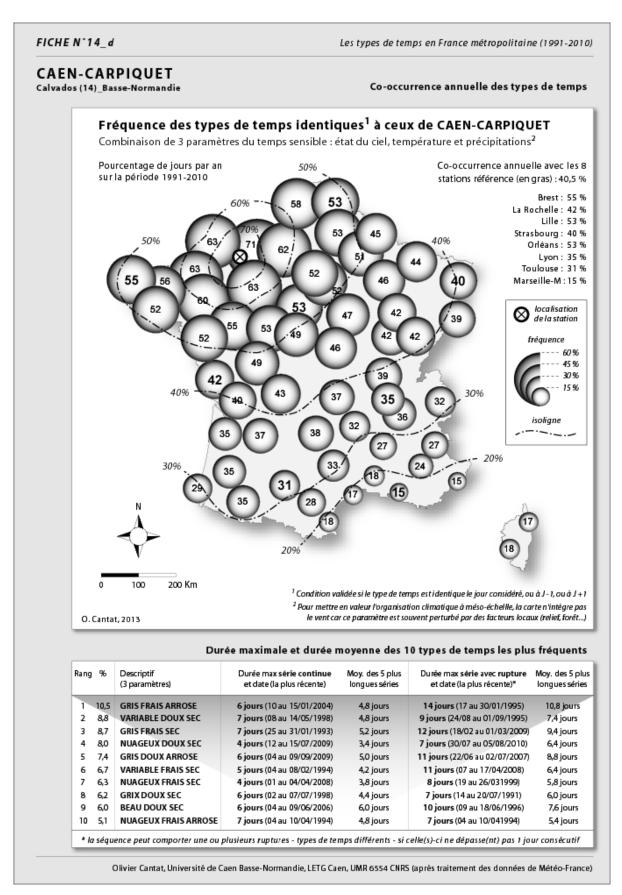


Figure 4: Annual concurrent occurrences (top) and duration (bottom) of the most frequent 'weather types', 1991-2010 (Caen-Carpiquet weather station, Normandy).

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