

Computation and characterization of local sub-filter-scale energy transfers in atmospheric flows

Davide Faranda, Valerio Lembo, Denis Kuzzay, Francois Daviaud, Berengere

Dubrulle

▶ To cite this version:

Davide Faranda, Valerio Lembo, Denis Kuzzay, Francois Daviaud, Berengere Dubrulle. Computation and characterization of local sub-filter-scale energy transfers in atmospheric flows. 2017. hal-01566028v1

HAL Id: hal-01566028 https://hal.science/hal-01566028v1

Preprint submitted on 20 Jul 2017 (v1), last revised 15 Mar 2018 (v3)

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers. L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

1	Computation and characterization of local sub-filter-scale energy transfers			
2	in atmospheric flows			
3	Davide Faranda ¹ *, Valerio Lembo ² , Denis Kuzzay ³ ,			
4	Francois Daviaud ⁴ & Berengere Dubrulle ⁴ ,			
5	¹ Laboratoire des Sciences du Climat et de l'Environnement, LSCE/IPSL, CEA-CNRS-UVSQ,			
6	Université Paris-Saclay, F-91191 Gif-sur-Yvette, France			
7	davide.faranda@lsce.ipsl.fr			
8	² Meteorological Institute, University of Hamburg, Grindelberg 5, 20146 Hamburg, Germany			
9	³ Univ Lyon, Ens de Lyon, Univ Claude Bernard, CNRS, Laboratoire de Physique, F-69342 Lyon,			
10	France			
11	⁴ SPEC, CEA, CNRS, Université Paris-Saclay, CEA Saclay 91191 Gif sur Yvette cedex, France			

¹² **Corresponding author address:* Laboratoire de Sciences du Climat et de l'Environnement, UMR
 ¹³ 8212 CEA-CNRS-UVSQ, IPSL, Universite Paris-Saclay, 91191 Gif-sur-Yvette, France.

14

ABSTRACT

Atmospheric motions are governed by turbulent motions associated to non-15 trivial energy transfers at small scales (direct cascade) and/or at large scales 16 (inverse cascade). Although it is known that the two cascades coexist, energy 17 fluxes have been previously investigated from the spectral point of view but 18 not on their instantaneous spatial and local structure. Here, we compute local 19 and instantaneous sub-filter scale energy transfers in two sets of reanalyses 20 (NCEP-NCAR and ERA-Interim) in the troposphere and the lower strato-21 sphere for the year 2005. The fluxes are mostly positive (towards subgrid 22 scales) in the troposphere and negative in the stratosphere reflecting the baro-23 clinic and barotropic nature of the motions respectively. The most intense 24 positive energy fluxes are found in the troposphere and are associated with 25 baroclinic eddies or tropical cyclones. The computation of such fluxes can be 26 used to characterize the amount of energy lost or missing at the smallest scale 27 in climate and weather models. 28

29 1. Introduction

Large scale atmospheric motions are modeled via a set of nonlinear equations known as primi-30 tive equations (Smagorinsky 1963). They include an equation for mass conservation, the thermal 31 energy equation and the evolution equations of velocity fields. The latter are derived from the 32 Navier-Stokes equations on spherical geometry under the hydrostatic assumption, i.e. that vertical 33 motion is much smaller than horizontal motion. Such equations are the cornerstone of all weather 34 and climate models and their explicit implementation depends on the choice of coordinate system 35 and the resolution of the model (Cao and Titi 2007; Klein 2010; Stevens and Bony 2013; Cao et al. 36 2015). In the classical turbulence phenomenology, valid for isotropic and homogeneous flows, en-37 ergy is injected at large scales, transferred downscale at a constant averaged rate ε (Kolmogorov 38 (1941) cascade) and dissipated at small scales by viscous effects (Frisch 1995). Due to rotation and 39 inertial effects, atmospheric flows are rotating and stratified (Holton and Hakim 2012). Turbulence 40 in such condition is known to develop a complex dynamics, as revealed by accurate numerical sim-41 ulations and laboratory experiments (Levich and Tzvetkov 1985; Schertzer et al. 1997; Falkovich 42 1992; Pouquet and Marino 2013). Depending on the scale of the flow, energy transfers can be 43 directed either towards smaller scales (direct cascade) or towards larger scales (inverse cascade) 44 (Bartello 1995). 45

To date, there is no general consensus about the existence of dual cascades in atmospheric motions. Observed energy spectra in the troposphere and in the lower stratosphere (Nastrom and Gage 1985) exhibit $k^{-5/3}$ law, generally connected to direct cascades, and/or k^{-3} power laws, associated to an inverse energy cascade. The inverse cascade has been historically associated to the quasi-geostrophic two dimensional dynamics induced by rotation (Charney 1971), and fed by baroclinic instability. Tung and Orlando (2003) simulated the Nastrom-Gage energy spectrum of

atmospheric turbulence as a function of wavelength with a two-level quasigeostrophic model, and 52 were able to obtain both spectral behaviors with this simple dynamics. Kitamura and Matsuda 53 (2006) analyzed the role of stratification and rotation in the generation of the cascades, observing 54 that in experiments without planetary rotation, the obtained spectral slope was steeper and energy 55 transfer to larger vertical wave-numbers was increased. Some theories for a mesoscale inverse 56 cascade for stratified (not quasi-geostrophic) turbulence were proposed by Gage (1979) and Lilly 57 (1983) but these are no longer considered viable. According to Lindborg (2005), atmospheric 58 mesoscale -5/3 energy spectra can be explained by the existence of a direct cascade arising in the 59 limit of strong stratification while the role of planetary rotation is to inhibit the cascade process 60 at large scales leading to an accumulation of kinetic energy and steepening of the kinetic energy 61 spectrum at small wave numbers. Evidence on the existence of a direct energy cascade comes from 62 high resolution direct numerical simulations of stratified flows (Lindborg 2006). They also sug-63 gest that the direction of the cascade may be crucially dependent on the ratio of the Brunt-Vaissala 64 frequency to the rotation frequency. 65

A way to clarify the situation is to compute the energy fluxes. In the classical picture of turbu-66 lence, such energy transfers are related to the skewness of the distribution of velocity increments, 67 and the direction of the cascade is provided by the sign of the skewness (positive for direct cas-68 cade, negative for inverse cascade). This quantity has thus been used in the past to quantify the 69 direction of the energy transfer. From the observed stratospheric third-order structure function, 70 Lindborg and Cho (2001) argued that there is a forward energy cascade in the mesoscale range of 71 atmospheric motions. In that study the authors pointed out that for scale smaller than 100 km the 72 statistical inhomogeneities can be neglected while this assumption is not valid for larger scales. 73 Similar conclusions also hold for the study of intense phenomena such as in tropical cyclones 74

⁷⁵ (Tang and Chan 2015) and suggests that one must be careful in using skewness based approaches
 ⁷⁶ to infer energy fluxes depending on the homogeneity assumptions.

Another approach to compute energy fluxes for atmospheric model is to rely on the spectral kinetic energy budgets (see e.g. Augier and Lindborg (2013) and Peng et al. (2015). However, like the skewness approach, these computations only provide a global in space estimate of the energy transfers and not their local value, nor their instantaneous spatial distribution.

An important breakthrough was made when Duchon and Robert (2000) reformulated the notion 81 of local energy budget using a weak formulation of the Navier-Stokes equations, allowing for 82 the definition of energy transfers local in space and time. It is valid for any geometry including 83 when strong inhomogeneity and anisotropy is present. Its ability to provide interesting information 84 about energy transfers at a given scale ℓ has been so far exploited in the experimental set-up of 85 the Von Karman swirling flow to measure the inertial energy transfers (Kuzzay et al. 2015; Saw 86 et al. 2016). The Duchon and Robert indicator requires only the 3D velocity fields and provides, 87 for each instant, 3D maps of the inertial sub-grid energy transfers at a scale ℓ . The interest of this 88 formulation is that it is devoid of any adjustable parameters unlike, for exemple, local estimates of 89 energy budgets based on LES methods Kuzzay et al. (2015). 90

In this work we adapt the definition of such indicators to the atmospheric dynamics providing 91 the first local maps of sub-filter-scale energy transfers without any adjustable parameter. The goal 92 of this work is i) to identify and characterize the atmospheric motions responsible for large energy 93 transfers and ii) to compute global time and spatial average and assess whether the reanalyses 94 over(under)-represent energy fluxes. The paper is structured as follows. After presenting the 95 indicator, we will study these transfers in the NCEP-NCAR and ERA-Interim reanalyses - to 96 ensure that results are model independent - for the year 2005 and investigate: i) the vertical and 97 horizontal global averages, ii) the distribution of energy transfers at different scales, iii) two case 98

⁹⁹ studies of intense cyclones that occurred in 2005 (Katrina and Jolina) and also correspond to ¹⁰⁰ extreme energy transfers according to our indicator. We finally discuss the implications of our ¹⁰¹ results on a theoretical and practical level.

102 2. Methods

¹⁰³ Duchon and Robert (2000) defined energy transfers in a fluid at an arbitrary scale ℓ using a ¹⁰⁴ local energy balance equation based on the weak solution formalism of Leray (1934) and on the ¹⁰⁵ ideas of Onsager (1949). For this, they consider a sequence of coarse-grained solutions of the ¹⁰⁶ Navier-Stokes equations at a scale ℓ :

$$\begin{cases} \partial_t u_i^\ell + u_j^\ell \partial_j u_i^\ell = -\partial_j \tau^{ij} - \partial_i P^\ell + \nu \partial_j \partial_j u_i^\ell \end{cases}$$
(1)

$$\left(\partial_j u_j^\ell = 0.$$
(2)

where u_i are the components of the velocity field and *P* the pressure, and derive the corresponding energy balance:

$$\partial_t E^\ell + \partial_j \left(u_j (E^\ell + P^\ell) - \mathbf{v} \partial_j E^\ell \right) = -\mathbf{v} \partial_j u_i^\ell \partial_j u_i^\ell - \mathscr{D}_\ell, \tag{3}$$

where $E^{\ell} = \frac{u_{\ell}^{\ell} u_{\ell}^{\ell}}{2}$ is the kinetic energy per unit mass at scale ℓ , \mathscr{D}_{ℓ} is expressed in terms of velocity increments $\delta \vec{u}(\vec{r}, \vec{x}) \stackrel{def}{=} \vec{u}(\vec{x} + \vec{r}) - \vec{u}(\vec{x}) \equiv \delta \vec{u}(\vec{r})$ (the dependence on ℓ and \vec{x} is kept implicit) as:

$$\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u}) = \frac{1}{4\ell} \int_{\mathscr{V}} d\vec{r} \, (\vec{\nabla}G_{\ell})(\vec{r}) \cdot \delta\vec{u}(\vec{r}) \, |\delta\vec{u}(\vec{r})|^2, \tag{4}$$

where *G* is a smooth filtering function, non-negative, spatially localized and such that $\int d\vec{r} \ G(\vec{r}) = 1$. The function G_{ℓ} is rescaled with ℓ as $G_{\ell}(\vec{r}) = \ell^{-3}G(\vec{r}/\ell)$. As noticed by Duchon and Robert, the average of $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})^{-1}$ coincides exactly with the statistical mean rate of inertial energy

¹we will refer also to it as "the DR indicator"

dissipated per unit mass as it can be derived from the anisotropic version of the Karman-Howarth 114 equation (Frisch 1995). The importance of their work relies on the fact that it provides a local non-115 random form of the Karman-Howarth-Monin equation (Eyink 2002), valid even for anisotropic, 116 inhomogeneous flows as those associated with the atmospheric motions. The sign of $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ pro-117 vides the direction of the fluxes in the scale space: a positive sign implies transfer towards the 118 scales smaller than ℓ . Kuzzay et al. (2015) have shown the validity of the indicator in the case of a 119 turbulent axisymmetric von Kármán flow where the contribution of $\mathcal{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ over the whole volume 120 of the experiment agrees with global direct torque measurements of the injected power within 2% 121 at large Reynolds numbers, as long as the scale ℓ lies in the inertial range. 122

Note that it is possible to implement the expression of $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ in climate models as it demands 123 only the numerical 3D velocity fields. Moreover, the intrinsic structure of $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ makes it less 124 sensitive to noise than classical gradients, or even than the usual Kármán-Howarth relation: in-125 deed, the derivative in scale is not applied directly to the velocity increments, but rather on the 126 smoothing function, followed by a local angle averaging. This guarantees that no additional noise 127 is introduced by the procedure. Even more, the noise coming from the estimate of the velocity is 128 naturally averaged out by the angle smoothing as shown in Kuzzay et al. (2015). In the same study, 129 the authors argued that the Duchon and Robert approach was a better alternative to the widespread 130 large eddies simulation based method for the computation of energy fluxes, since it relies on very 131 few arbitrary hypotheses. Experimentally, in the von Karman set-up, the DR formula provided a 132 better estimate of the energy dissipation than the LES method : in particular, estimates of the in-133 jected and dissipated powers were within 20% of the measured value using the LES-PIV method, 134 whereas reached 98% of the actual dissipation rate of energy with the DR formula Kuzzay et al. 135 (2015).136

We have investigated the occurrence of high and low values of $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ in the von Kármán swirling 137 flow and identified some typical shape of the velocity field structures corresponding to those val-138 ues. In general, positive values of $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ are measured whenever there is a strong convergence 139 of the flow. These dissipative structures are represented in Figure 1 and can be associated with a 140 front, a jet or a vortex. The corresponding divergent flows are instead associated to negative values 141 of $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$, and they point to injection of energy from the sub-grid scales. As we will see in Section 142 3.1 for real atmospheric flows, dipolar $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ structures may appear with 3D structures as those 143 observed during hurricanes. 144

145 **3. Analysis**

For this study, outputs of the ERA-Interim and NCEP-NCAR Reanalysis 1 have been 146 used. ERA-Interim is the currently operational Reanalysis product at the European Center for 147 Medium-Range Weather Forecasting (ECMWF) (Dee et al. 2011). Released in 2007, it provides 148 reanalyzed data from 1979 to nowadays, stored at an original T255 spectral resolution (about 149 80 km horizontal resolution), with 60 vertical hybrid model levels. A 12h four-dimensional 150 variational data assimilation (4D-Var) is adopted. As a forecast model, the Integrated Forecast 151 Model (IFS), Cy31r2 release, is used, fully coupling modules for the atmosphere, ocean waves 152 and land surface. Sea-surface temperatures (SST) and sea-ice concentration (SIC) are ingested 153 as boundary conditions and interpolated on a reduced-Gaussian grid as needed. In our case 154 zonal, meridional and vertical wind components are considered at a $0.75^{\circ} \times 0.75^{\circ}$ horizontal 155 resolution over 12 pressure levels between 1000 and 100 hPa. A 12h time-step is considered. 156 Known problems concerning these datasets are the lack of dry mass conservation (Berrisford et al. 157 2011) and the slight asymmetry between evaporation and precipitation (Dee et al. 2011). The 158 turbulent fluxes are based on the tiled ECMWF scheme for surface exchanges over land (Viterbo 159

and Beljaars 1995; Viterbo and Betts 1999). Each gridbox is divided into up to six fractions
 (over land) depending on the type of surface, having different transfer coefficients based on a
 Monin-Obukhov formulation. Similarly, over oceans, two different coefficients are used for stable
 and unstable conditions (Beljaars 1995).

164

NCEP-NCAR Reanalysis 1 has been developed in a joint effort by the National Center for Envi-165 ronmental Prediction (NCEP) and the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) (Kalnay 166 et al. 1996). The simulation is operational since January 1995, covering a period from 1948 to 167 nowadays. Data assimilation is performed via a 3D variational scheme (Parrish and Derber 1992). 168 The NCEP model system, operational in 1994, has been used for forecasting. It features a T62 169 spectral resolution, corresponding to a $2.5^{\circ} \times 2.5^{\circ}$ horizontal grid (about 200 km horizontal reso-170 lution), with 28 sigma levels. Most of the major physical processes involving the climate system 171 are parametrized. SST, SIC, snow cover, albedo, soil wetness and roughness length are ingested as 172 boundary conditions. Data are archived at an original 6h time-step, and such a temporal resolution 173 is retained for our analysis. The atmospheric model which provides the NCEP/NCAR reanalysis 174 data, uses bulk aerodynamic formulas to estimate the turbulent fluxes, with exchange coefficients 175 depending on empirical profiles extending the Monin-Obukhov similarity relationship (Miyakoda 176 and Sirutis 1986). For more details on the comparison between different subgrid parametrization 177 of surface fluxes, one might refer to Brunke et al. (2011). 178

¹⁷⁹ a. Yearly and seasonal average local energy transfers

We begin the analysis by studying the latitudinal averages and the horizontal distributions of the DR indicator. In Figure 2 we show the results obtained for the ERA-Interim reanalysis at $\ell = 220$ km, slightly larger than the horizontal resolution of the coarser reanalysis (NCEP-NCAR). The

results are consistent with those obtained for the NCEP-NCAR reanalysis reported in Figure 3. 183 The left panels of Figure 2-3 show the yearly average, the central ones the winter (DJF) average 184 and the right ones the summer (JJA) average of the DR indicator. $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ is mostly positive in the 185 troposphere, about zero at the tropopause and negative in the lower stratosphere. The behavior of 186 $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ is clearly associated to that of the jet stream, and the most intense patterns are observed 187 in winter for the northern hemisphere and summer for the southern hemisphere. We can explain 188 the sign of the DR indicator by invoking the relation between baroclinic and barotropic flows and 189 direct and inverse cascades (Tung and Orlando 2003). The baroclinic motions responsible for the 190 genesis and decay of extratropical cyclones are mostly associated to direct cascades and positive 191 $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ contributions. Our results are therefore consistent with those found by Peng et al. (2015) 192 who also found upscale transfer in the lower stratosphere at outer mesoscale length scales. On the 193 contrary, the essential barotropic motions governing the lower stratosphere atmospheric dynamics, 194 are associated to an inverse energy cascade and to negative values of the DR indicator. The 195 change of sign of the $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ with height is evident when looking at the DR indicator distribution 196 shown in the upper panels of Figure 5. Results from ERA-Interim are shown in the left panels, 197 from NCEP-NCAR in the right panels. The shape of the distribution recalls the one observed in 198 the turbulent von Kármán swirling flow (Saw et al. 2016). The global average is slightly positive, 199 i.e. both the reanalyses suffer from a small energy imbalance corresponding to underrepresented 200 fluxes towards scales smaller than ℓ . Long tail distributions correspond to large excursions 201 towards large positive (in the troposphere) or negative (in the lower stratosphere) energy fluxes. 202 Although there is agreement between the ERA interim and the NCEP-NCAR data, the latter 203 shows fatter tails. This might be due either to the different resolution of the datasets and/or on the 204 different physical parametrizations. It is therefore worth investigating the dependence of $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ 205 on the scale ℓ . These results are reported in the lower panels of Figure 5. It is apparent how by 206

²⁰⁷ measuring $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ at larger scales we get lighter tails. This means that the energy imbalance of the ²⁰⁸ reanalyses is reduced when we look at motions whose characteristic scales are larger.

209

²¹⁰ We further compare the $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ results with the spectra $E(\ell)$ obtained at each pressure level ²¹¹ for the horizontal velocity fields and reported in Figure 4. Indeed the scale $\ell = 220$ km lies at ²¹² the crossover between -5/3 and -3 spectra, depending on the height: the spectra support then ²¹³ the results obtained with the Duchon and Robert indicator, namely the upscale transfers in the ²¹⁴ stratosphere associated to the -3 part of the spectrum and the -5/3 downscale transfers in the ²¹⁵ troposphere. The lower quality of the NCEP-NCAR spectra for smaller ℓ scales also justify our ²¹⁶ choice to restrict the analysis at $\ell > 220$ Km. .

217

To understand the relation between baroclinic eddies and scale dependence we analyze the maps 218 of $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ collected each 6 or 12h depending on the datasets. They are collected for NCEP-NCAR 219 in the supplementary video. As an example, we report in Figure 6 the analysis for January, 6th at 220 midnight, issued from ERA-Interim. Large positive and negative values of the DR indicator are 221 found as dipoles in baroclinic eddies. When increasing the scale ℓ of the analysis, the tails become 222 lighter as the local positive and negative contributions get averaged out. To investigate better the 223 role of baroclinic eddies in the development of large DR values, we analyze two tropical cyclones 224 (Katrina and Jolina) whose life-cycle ended up as extratropical storms. 225

b. Local energy transfers during hurricanes

Some aspects of DR indicator evolution in Katrina and Jolina (Nabi) tropical cyclones case studies are shown in Figures 7,8 and 9. These extreme events have been well documented in the literature (Wang and Oey 2008; Harr et al. 2008; Hsiao et al. 2009). Here we observe that

hurricanes correspond to large values of the DR indicator and are extremely localized in space and 230 time. To have a finer understanding of their dynamics, we focus on these events by computing 231 $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ in proximity of the cyclonic structures and we use the dataset at higher resolution (ERA-232 Interim). At every time step, the cyclone is tracked as the region bordered by sea-level pressure 233 (SLP) values lower than 1005 hPa (in the case of Katrina), lower than 1000hPa (in the case of 234 Jolina). The threshold difference is motivated by the presence of other low pressure structures 235 in the region corresponding to Jolina's trajectory. As the cyclones follow their path, a transition 236 occurs from a condition characterized by the alternation of negative and positive DR values, to one 237 characterized by dominant positive values. This is particularly evident in the middle levels of the 238 troposphere (between 850 hPa and 250 hPa). 239

Some relevant differences are found, comparing the two cyclones. On one hand, $\mathcal{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ decreases 240 as Katrina moves northward, and the patterns of DR at higher levels apparently lose their co-241 variability with the surface structure of the cyclone. On the other hand, the DR indicator remains 242 large as Jolina moves northward, preserving its vertical coherence. Furthermore, the land-sea 243 contrasts seems to have a role in shaping the DR patterns at lower levels, with Jolina possibly 244 deriving its strength from its permanence over a sea surface, even at mid-latitudes. While Katrina 245 loses its energy source as cyclonic system as soon as it move northward in the continental areas, 246 Jolina develops into a powerful extra-tropical storm, as also noticeable looking at the SLP values 247 at the center of the system (Harr et al. 2008). 248

The DR evolution during the lifetime of the two systems suggests that this quantity may well represent the different natures of a tropical cyclone (which is typically barotropic) and an extratropical cyclone (which is in turn baroclinic). Dominant positive $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ values reflect an unresolved energy transfer towards the smaller scales, that is coherent with the downscale enstrophy transfer by means of eddy-eddy interaction in baroclinic eddies (Burgess et al. 2013). The jet stream,

which is sustained by the eddy-mean flow interactions over mid-latitudes, is indeed denoted by 254 large positive DR values (cfr. Figure 2), enforcing the hypothesis that the downscale enstrophy 255 transfer is associated with an upscale kinetic energy transfer (Held and Hoskins 1985; Straus and 256 Ditlevsen 1999). A dipole vertical structure emerges, as shown in Figure 2, with opposite sign 257 DR values in coincidence of the jet stream. This is consistent with previous findings from general 258 circulation models (Koshyk and Hamilton 2001) and higher resolution Reanalyses (Burgess et al. 259 2013), showing a decay of synoptic scale rotational kinetic energy and a downscale transfer of 260 divergent kinetic energy above the jet stream and in correspondence to the tropopause. 261

262 **4. Discussion**

Weather and climate models do not resolve the viscous scales, which for the atmospheric mo-263 tions are order of 0.1 mm (Priestley 1959). Up to date, their resolution ranges from $\simeq 2$ km of 264 regional weather models to $\simeq 100$ km of global climate models. To correctly represent dissipation 265 effects at a scale ℓ , the turbulent cascade needs to be parametrized at each grid point depending 266 on the type of motion and the geographical constraints. Despite the importance of such energy 267 transfers, their distribution and their time and spatial behavior is known only partially through 268 field campaigns (Lübken 1997) or by global averages (Sellers 1969; Seinfeld and Pandis 2016). 269 This does not ensure a global coverage and does not tell the direction of the energy transfers in the 270 free troposphere. In this paper, we have used Duchon and Robert (2000) to compute and charac-271 terize the distribution of instantaneous and local sub-grid energy transfers in the atmosphere using 272 3D velocity fields obtained in NCEP-NCAR and ERA-Interim reanalysis. Those energy transfers 273 are highly correlated with the baroclinic eddies occurring at mid-latitudes and with severe tropical 274 cyclones. Our computation of local energy transfer provides the direction of the local energy cas-275 cade at a certain scale ℓ in physical space. At the grid resolution l, the value of $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ is an exact 276

measure of the amount of energy *that must be transferred to subgrid scales* (positive DR contributions) or *that must be injected from the subgrid scales* (negative contributions) to the scale ℓ of the analysis. This information could be used to interactively adjust the energy fluxes to account for the energy conservation laws in the atmosphere (Lucarini and Ragone 2011). We have also observed that extreme events as tropical and extratropical storms are associated with large values of $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$, even at the ground.

The quantity $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ is also a measure of the flux of energy that can be exploited in wind turbines 283 (Miller et al. 2011, 2015). Although our analysis is performed for large scale general circulation 284 models, the Duchon and Robert (2000) formula can be applied to regional climate and weather 285 prediction models. At smaller scales, it will be extremely interesting to analyze the relation be-286 tween $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ and the genesis of extreme wind gusts or even tornadoes. At such scales, one could 287 investigate the distributions of $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ to the instantaneous subgrid scales dissipation obtained by 288 field measurements (Higgins et al. 2003). It will also been worth to investigate whether adaptive 289 asymptotic methods, as those proposed by Klein et al. (2001) or the Lagrangian scale-dependent 290 models for the subgrid scales in Large Eddy Simulations (Bou-Zeid et al. 2004), afford better 291 energy balances, i.e. the spatial and temporal average of $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ is closer to zero. 292

Acknowledgments

²⁹⁴ D. Faranda was supported by ERC grant No. 338965. DF thanks G. Messori and N. Vercauteren ²⁹⁵ for useful discussions and comments on the paper.

References

²⁹⁷ Augier, P., and E. Lindborg, 2013: A new formulation of the spectral energy budget of the at-²⁹⁸ mosphere, with application to two high-resolution general circulation models. *Journal of the* ²⁹⁹ Atmospheric Sciences, **70** (**7**), 2293–2308.

- ³⁰² Beljaars, A., 1995: The parametrization of surface fluxes in large-scale models under free convec-³⁰³ tion. *Quarterly Journal of the Royal Meteorological Society*, **121 (522)**, 255–270.
- Berrisford, P., P. Kållberg, S. Kobayashi, D. Dee, S. Uppala, a. J. Simmons, P. Poli, and H. Sato,
 2011: Atmospheric conservation properties in ERA-Interim. *Quarterly Journal of the Royal*

³⁰⁶ *Meteorological Society*, **137** (**July**), 1381–1399, doi:10.1002/qj.864.

- ³⁰⁷ Bou-Zeid, E., C. Meneveau, and M. B. Parlange, 2004: Large-eddy simulation of neutral atmo-³⁰⁸ spheric boundary layer flow over heterogeneous surfaces: Blending height and effective surface ³⁰⁹ roughness. *Water Resources Research*, **40** (2).
- ³¹⁰ Brunke, M. A., Z. Wang, X. Zeng, M. Bosilovich, and C.-L. Shie, 2011: An assessment of the ³¹¹ uncertainties in ocean surface turbulent fluxes in 11 reanalysis, satellite-derived, and combined ³¹² global datasets. *Journal of Climate*, **24** (**21**), 5469–5493.
- ³¹³ Burgess, B. H., A. R. Erler, and T. G. Shepherd, 2013: The troposphere-to-stratosphere transition ³¹⁴ in kinetic energy spectra and nonlinear spectral fluxes as seen in ecmwf analyses. *Journal of the* ³¹⁵ *Atmospheric Sciences*, **70** (2), 669–687.
- Cao, C., S. Ibrahim, K. Nakanishi, and E. S. Titi, 2015: Finite-time blowup for the inviscid primi tive equations of oceanic and atmospheric dynamics. *Communications in Mathematical Physics*,
 337 (2), 473–482.
- ³¹⁹ Cao, C., and E. S. Titi, 2007: Global well-posedness of the three-dimensional viscous primitive
- equations of large scale ocean and atmosphere dynamics. *Annals of Mathematics*, 245–267.

Bartello, P., 1995: Geostrophic adjustment and inverse cascades in rotating stratified turbulence.
 Journal of the atmospheric sciences, 52 (24), 4410–4428.

- Charney, J. G., 1971: Geostrophic turbulence. Journal of the Atmospheric Sciences, 28 (6), 1087– 32 1095. 322
- Dee, D. P., and Coauthors, 2011: The ERA-Interim reanalysis: configuration and performance of 323 the data assimilation system. Quarterly Journal of the Royal Meteorological Society, 137 (656), 324
- 553-597, doi:10.1002/qj.828, URL http://doi.wiley.com/10.1002/qj.828. 325
- Duchon, J., and R. Robert, 2000: Inertial energy dissipation for weak solutions of incompressible 326 euler and navier-stokes equations. Nonlinearity, 13 (1), 249. 327
- Eyink, G. L., 2002: Local 4/5-law and energy dissipation anomaly in turbulence. Nonlinearity, 328 **16 (1)**, 137. 329
- Falkovich, G., 1992: Inverse cascade and wave condensate in mesoscale atmospheric turbulence. 330 *Physical review letters*, **69** (**22**), 3173. 331
- Frisch, U., 1995: Turbulence: the legacy of AN Kolmogorov. Cambridge university press. 332
- Gage, K., 1979: Evidence far ak- 5/3 law inertial range in mesoscale two-dimensional turbulence. 333 Journal of the Atmospheric Sciences, 36 (10), 1950–1954. 334
- Harr, P. A., D. Anwender, and S. C. Jones, 2008: Predictability associated with the downstream 335 impacts of the extratropical transition of tropical cyclones: Methodology and a case study of 336 typhoon nabi (2005). Monthly Weather Review, 136 (9), 3205–3225. 337
- Held, I. M., and B. J. Hoskins, 1985: Large-scale eddies and the general circulation of the tropo-338 sphere. Advances in Geophysics, 28, 3–31. 339
- Higgins, C. W., M. B. Parlange, and C. Meneveau, 2003: Alignment trends of velocity gradients 340 and subgrid-scale fluxes in the turbulent atmospheric boundary layer. Boundary-Layer Meteo-341 rology, 109 (1), 59-83.

342

- ³⁴³ Holton, J. R., and G. J. Hakim, 2012: *An introduction to dynamic meteorology*, Vol. 88. Academic
 ³⁴⁴ press.
- Hsiao, L.-F., M. S. Peng, D.-S. Chen, K.-N. Huang, and T.-C. Yeh, 2009: Sensitivity of typhoon
 track predictions in a regional prediction system to initial and lateral boundary conditions. *Jour- nal of Applied Meteorology and Climatology*, 48 (9), 1913–1928.
- Kalnay, E., and Coauthors, 1996: The NCEP/NCAR 40-year reanalysis project. *Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society*, **77**, 437–471, doi:10.1175/1520-0477(1996)077(0437:
 TNYRP)2.0.CO;2.
- Kitamura, Y., and Y. Matsuda, 2006: The kh- 3 and kh- 5/3 energy spectra in stratified turbulence.
 Geophysical research letters, 33 (5).
- Klein, R., 2010: Scale-dependent models for atmospheric flows. *Annual review of fluid mechanics*,
 42, 249–274.
- Klein, R., N. Botta, T. Schneider, C.-D. Munz, S. Roller, A. Meister, L. Hoffmann, and T. Sonar,
 2001: Asymptotic adaptive methods for multi-scale problems in fluid mechanics. *Practical Asymptotics*, Springer, 261–343.
- Kolmogorov, A. N., 1941: Dissipation of energy in locally isotropic turbulence. *Dokl. Akad. Nauk SSSR*, Vol. 32, 16–18.
- Koshyk, J. N., and K. Hamilton, 2001: The horizontal kinetic energy spectrum and spectral bud get simulated by a high-resolution troposphere-stratosphere-mesosphere gcm. *Journal of the atmospheric sciences*, 58 (4), 329–348.
- Kuzzay, D., D. Faranda, and B. Dubrulle, 2015: Global vs local energy dissipation: The energy
- cycle of the turbulent von kármán flow. *Physics of Fluids (1994-present)*, **27 (7)**, 075 105.

- Leray, J., 1934: Sur le mouvement d'un liquide visqueux emplissant l'espace. Acta mathematica,
 63 (1), 193–248.
- Levich, E., and E. Tzvetkov, 1985: Helical inverse cascade in three-dimensional turbulence as a fundamental dominant mechanism in mesoscale atmospheric phenomena. *Physics reports*, **128** (1), 1–37.
- Lilly, D. K., 1983: Stratified turbulence and the mesoscale variability of the atmosphere. *Journal* of the Atmospheric Sciences, **40** (**3**), 749–761.
- Lindborg, E., 2005: The effect of rotation on the mesoscale energy cascade in the free atmosphere.
 Geophysical research letters, **32** (1).
- Lindborg, E., 2006: The energy cascade in a strongly stratified fluid. *Journal of Fluid Mechanics*,
 550, 207–242.
- ³⁷⁶ Lindborg, E., and J. Y. Cho, 2001: Horizontal velocity structure functions in the upper troposphere ³⁷⁷ and lower stratosphere. ii- theoretical considerations. *Journal of geophysical research*, **106**, 10.
- Lübken, F.-J., 1997: Seasonal variation of turbulent energy dissipation rates at high latitudes as
 determined by in situ measurements of neutral density fluctuations. *Journal of Geophysical Research: Atmospheres*, **102 (D12)**, 13 441–13 456.
- ³⁸¹ Lucarini, V., and F. Ragone, 2011: Energetics of climate models: Net energy balance and merid-³⁸² ional enthalpy transport. *Reviews of Geophysics*, **49** (1).
- Miller, L. M., N. A. Brunsell, D. B. Mechem, F. Gans, A. J. Monaghan, R. Vautard, D. W. Keith,
- and A. Kleidon, 2015: Two methods for estimating limits to large-scale wind power generation.
- Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, **112** (**36**), 11 169–11 174.

- ³⁸⁶ Miller, L. M., F. Gans, and A. Kleidon, 2011: Estimating maximum global land surface wind ³⁸⁷ power extractability and associated climatic consequences. *Earth Syst. Dynam*, **2** (1), 1–12.
- ³⁸⁸ Miyakoda, K., and J. Sirutis, 1986: Manual of the e-physics. *Available from Geophysical Fluid* ³⁸⁹ *Dynamics Laboratory, Princeton University, PO Box*, **308**.
- Nastrom, G., and K. S. Gage, 1985: A climatology of atmospheric wavenumber spectra of wind
 and temperature observed by commercial aircraft. *Journal of the atmospheric sciences*, 42 (9),
 950–960.
- ³⁹³ Onsager, L., 1949: Statistical hydrodynamics. *Il Nuovo Cimento (1943-1954)*, **6**, 279–287.
- Parrish, D. F., and J. C. Derber, 1992: The national meteorological center's spectral
 statistical-interpolation analysis system. *Monthly Weather Review*, **120** (8), 1747–1763,
 doi:10.1175/1520-0493(1992)120(1747:TNMCSS)2.0.CO;2, URL http://dx.doi.org/10.1175/
 1520-0493(1992)120(1747:TNMCSS)2.0.CO;2.
- Peng, J., L. Zhang, and J. Guan, 2015: Applications of a moist nonhydrostatic formulation of
 the spectral energy budget to baroclinic waves. part i: The lower-stratospheric energy spectra.
 Journal of the Atmospheric Sciences, 72 (5), 2090–2108.
- ⁴⁰¹ Pouquet, A., and R. Marino, 2013: Geophysical turbulence and the duality of the energy flow
 ⁴⁰² across scales. *Physical review letters*, **111 (23)**, 234 501.
- ⁴⁰³ Priestley, C. H. B., 1959: *Turbulent transfer in the lower atmosphere*. University of Chicago Press
 ⁴⁰⁴ Chicago.
- Saw, E.-W., D. Kuzzay, D. Faranda, A. Guittonneau, F. Daviaud, C. Wiertel-Gasquet, V. Padilla,
 and B. Dubrulle, 2016: Experimental characterization of extreme events of inertial dissipation
- ⁴⁰⁷ in a turbulent swirling flow. *Nature Communications*, **7**, 12466.

- Schertzer, D., S. Lovejoy, F. Schmitt, Y. Chigirinskaya, and D. Marsan, 1997: Multifractal cascade
 dynamics and turbulent intermittency. *Fractals*, 5 (03), 427–471.
- Seinfeld, J. H., and S. N. Pandis, 2016: *Atmospheric chemistry and physics: from air pollution to climate change*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Sellers, W. D., 1969: A global climatic model based on the energy balance of the earth-atmosphere
 system. *Journal of Applied Meteorology*, 8 (3), 392–400.
- Smagorinsky, J., 1963: General circulation experiments with the primitive equations: I. the basic
 experiment*. *Monthly weather review*, **91** (3), 99–164.
- 416 Stevens, B., and S. Bony, 2013: What are climate models missing? *Science*, **340** (6136), 1053–
 417 1054.
- Straus, D. M., and P. Ditlevsen, 1999: Two-dimensional turbulence properties of the ecmwf re analyses. *Tellus A*, **51** (**5**), 749–772, doi:10.1034/j.1600-0870.1996.00015.x, URL http://dx.doi.
 org/10.1034/j.1600-0870.1996.00015.x.
- Tang, C. K., and J. C. Chan, 2015: Idealized simulations of the effect of local and remote to pographies on tropical cyclone tracks. *Quarterly Journal of the Royal Meteorological Society*,
 141 (691), 2045–2056.
- Tung, K. K., and W. W. Orlando, 2003: The k- 3 and k- 5/3 energy spectrum of atmospheric turbulence: Quasigeostrophic two-level model simulation. *Journal of the atmospheric sciences*,
 60 (6), 824–835.
- Viterbo, P., and A. C. Beljaars, 1995: An improved land surface parameterization scheme in the
 ecmwf model and its validation. *Journal of Climate*, 8 (11), 2716–2748.

- Viterbo, P., and A. K. Betts, 1999: Impact on ecmwf forecasts of changes to the albedo of the boreal forests in the presence of snow. *Journal of Geophysical Research: Atmospheres*, **104 (D22)**, 27 803–27 810.
- 432 Wang, D.-P., and L.-Y. Oey, 2008: Hindcast of waves and currents in hurricane katrina. Bulletin of
- the American Meteorological Society, **89** (4), 487–495.

434 LIST OF FIGURES

435 436	Fig. 1.	Schematic representation of velocity fields (arrows) possibly originating large positive (or- ange) or negative (blue) local energy transfers $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ (color patches).	•	23
437 438 439 440	Fig. 2.	Distribution of $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ for $\ell = 220$ Km and the ERA-Interim reanalysis. The left panels show the all 2005 year average, the central the winter average, the right panels the summer averages. The maps show the average $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ for three different fixed height: 1000 hPa, 500 hPa and 100hPa.	•	24
441 442 443 444	Fig. 3.	Distribution of $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ for $\ell = 220$ Km and the NCEP-NCAR reanalysis. The left panels show the all 2005 year average, the central the winter average, the right panels the summer averages. The maps show the average $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ for three different fixed height: 1000 hPa, 500 hPa and 100hPa.	•	25
445 446 447	Fig. 4.	Solid lines: spectra $E(\ell)$ computed, at each pressure level, for the horizontal velocity fields. Dotted lines: -5/3 and -3 slopes. Magenta vertical lines: $\ell = 220$ Km. Top: NCEP-NCAR reanalysis, Bottom: ERA Interim reanalysis.		26
448 449 450	Fig. 5.	Empirical $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ density functions for ERA-Interim (left) and NCEP-NCAR (right) and the year 2005. Upper panel show the dependence on the height for $\ell = 220$ km, lower panel that on the scale.	•	27
451 452	Fig. 6.	Instantaneous values of $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ for ERA-Interim computed for January, 6th at midnight, for $\ell = 220$ km. Black Isolines show the sea level pressure field in hPa.		28
453 454 455 456	Fig. 7.	Katrina Analysis: Spatial average $\langle \mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u}) \rangle$ for the region with $p < 1000$ hPa in the regions shown in the maps, obtained by the ERA-Interim reanalysis, for $\ell = 220$ km. The time interval is 12h and the dates correspond to midday. The maps show $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ for three different levels (1000,700 and 200 hPa) at the time corresponding to the black arrows.	•	29
457 458 459 460	Fig. 8.	Jolina Analysis: Spatial average $\langle \mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u}) \rangle$ for the region with $p < 1005$ hPa in the regions shown in the maps, obtained by the ERA-Interim reanalysis, for $\ell = 220$ km. The time interval is 12h and the dates correspond to midday. The maps show $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ for three different levels (1000,700 and 200 hPa) at the time corresponding to the black arrows.		30
461 462 463 464	Fig. 9.	3D structure of the wind field (green cones) and $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ for the Hurricane Katrina (top) and Jolina (bottom), obtained by the ERA-Interim reanalysis, for $\ell = 220$ km. Red: isosurfaces at $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u}) = 0.001$. Dark Blue: isosurfaces at $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u}) = -0.001$. The colorscale indicates values $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u}) > 0.001$. See supplementary videos for the animations.	•	31

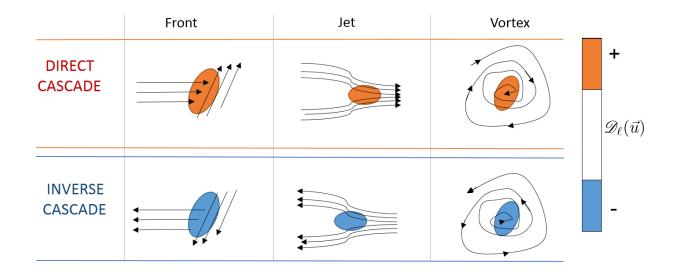


FIG. 1. Schematic representation of velocity fields (arrows) possibly originating large positive (orange) or negative (blue) local energy transfers $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ (color patches).

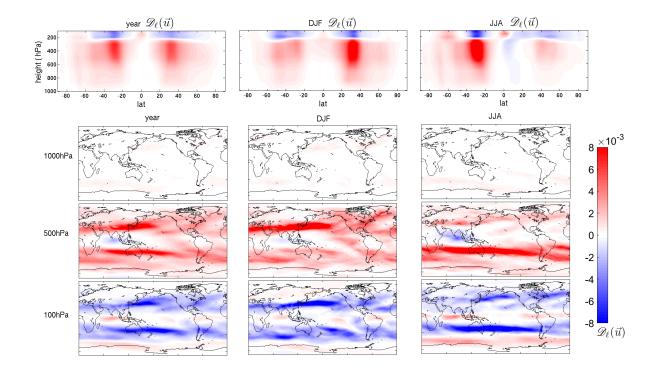


FIG. 2. Distribution of $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ for $\ell = 220$ Km and the ERA-Interim reanalysis. The left panels show the all 2005 year average, the central the winter average, the right panels the summer averages. The maps show the average $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ for three different fixed height: 1000 hPa, 500 hPa and 100hPa.

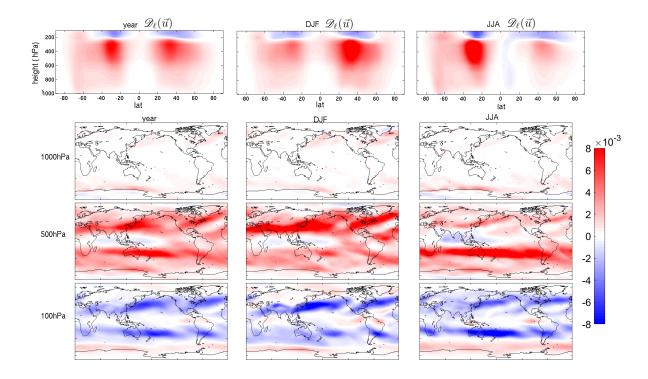


FIG. 3. Distribution of $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ for $\ell = 220$ Km and the NCEP-NCAR reanalysis. The left panels show the all 2005 year average, the central the winter average, the right panels the summer averages. The maps show the average $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ for three different fixed height: 1000 hPa, 500 hPa and 100hPa.

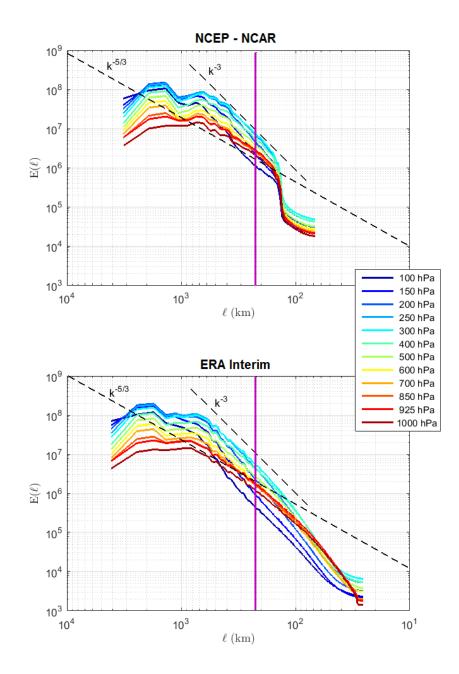


FIG. 4. Solid lines: spectra $E(\ell)$ computed, at each pressure level, for the horizontal velocity fields. Dotted lines: -5/3 and -3 slopes. Magenta vertical lines: $\ell = 220$ Km. Top: NCEP-NCAR reanalysis, Bottom: ERA Interim reanalysis.

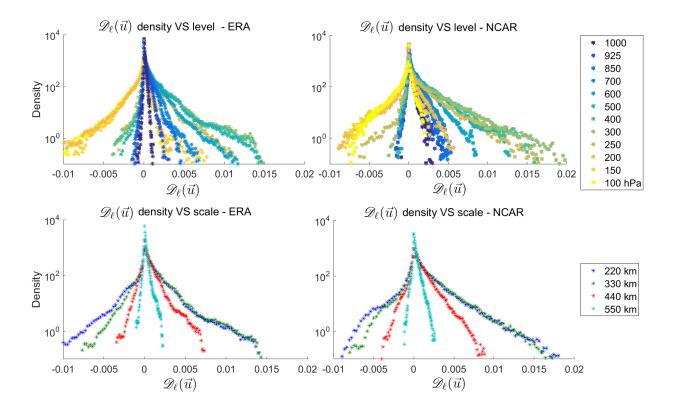


FIG. 5. Empirical $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ density functions for ERA-Interim (left) and NCEP-NCAR (right) and the year 2005. Upper panel show the dependence on the height for $\ell = 220$ km, lower panel that on the scale.

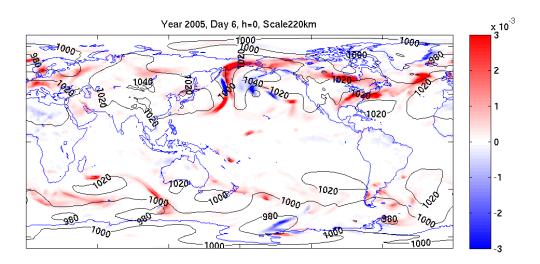


FIG. 6. Instantaneous values of $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ for ERA-Interim computed for January, 6th at midnight, for $\ell = 220$ km. Black Isolines show the sea level pressure field in hPa.

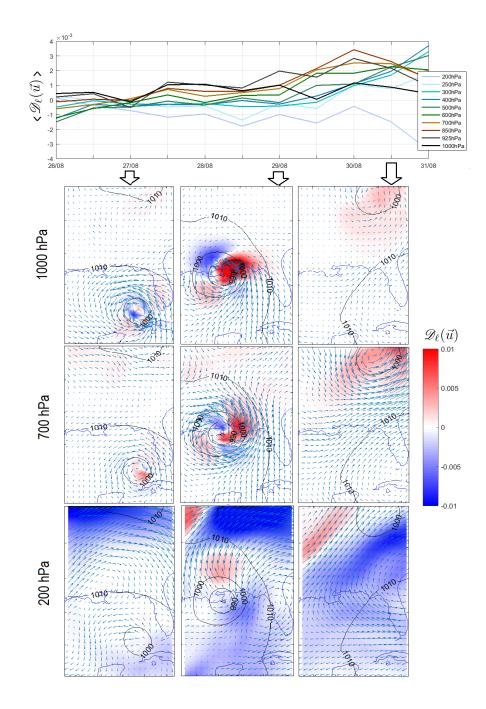


FIG. 7. Katrina Analysis: Spatial average $\langle \mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u}) \rangle$ for the region with p < 1000 hPa in the regions shown in the maps, obtained by the ERA-Interim reanalysis, for $\ell = 220$ km. The time interval is 12h and the dates correspond to midday. The maps show $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ for three different levels (1000,700 and 200 hPa) at the time corresponding to the black arrows.

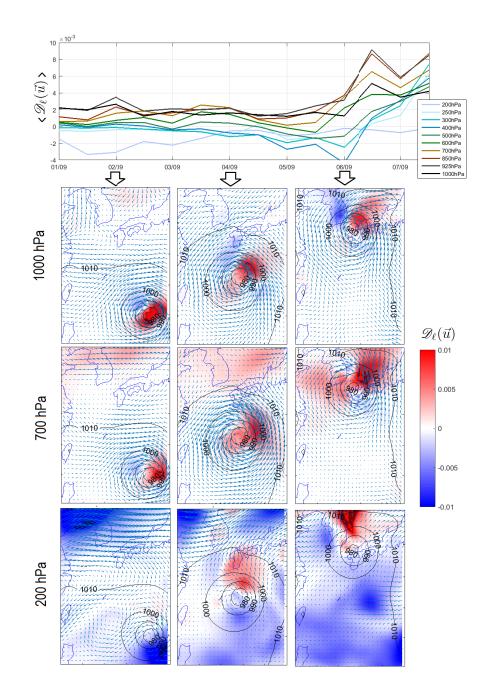


FIG. 8. Jolina Analysis: Spatial average $\langle \mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u}) \rangle$ for the region with p < 1005 hPa in the regions shown in the maps, obtained by the ERA-Interim reanalysis, for $\ell = 220$ km. The time interval is 12h and the dates correspond to midday. The maps show $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ for three different levels (1000,700 and 200 hPa) at the time corresponding to the black arrows.

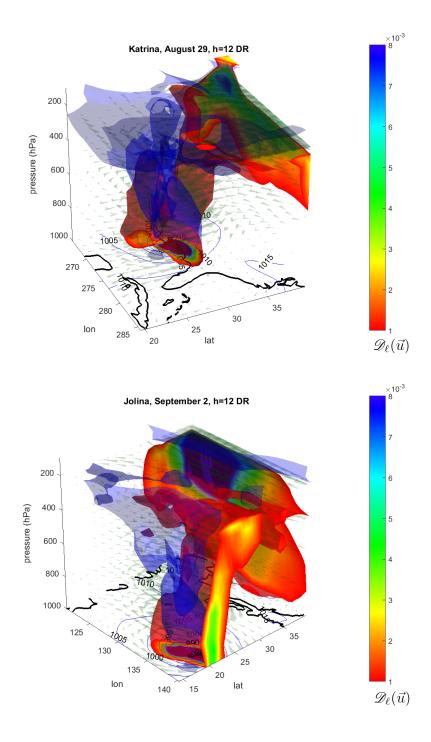


FIG. 9. 3D structure of the wind field (green cones) and $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u})$ for the Hurricane Katrina (top) and Jolina (bottom), obtained by the ERA-Interim reanalysis, for $\ell = 220$ km. Red: isosurfaces at $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u}) = 0.001$. Dark Blue: isosurfaces at $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u}) = -0.001$. The colorscale indicates values $\mathscr{D}_{\ell}(\vec{u}) > 0.001$. See supplementary videos for the animations.