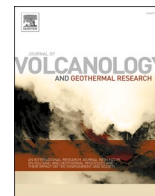


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PROMETHEUS: Probability in the Mediterranean of Tephra dispersal for various grain sizes. A tool for the evaluation of the completeness of the volcanic record in medial-distal archives

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ABSTRACT

PROMETHEUS is a statistical tool that allows creating maps showing the probability of finding tephra deposits of different grain sizes, originating from eruptions of a specific volcanic source, at any location around the vent. It couples wind profiles at different heights in the Mediterranean area with terminal velocity of volcanic particles. The input parameters include the height of the eruption column (which characterizes the intensity of the eruption), wind statistics (directions and intensities), and tephra deposits of a selected grain size. In particular, we used the parameterizations provided by [Costa et al. \(2016\)](#) and performed simulations using the HAZMAP tephra dispersal model to determine the maximum reachable distances that tephra can cover under weak, medium, and strong wind conditions (e.g. 7, 30, and 70 m/s velocities at the tropopause) and with column heights of 10, 20, and 30 km, depositing of at least the loading corresponding to 0.1 mm (corresponding to crypto-tephra). Three alternative configurations of the model are validated analyzing first the eruptive source of Somma Vesuvius, with the related explosive eruptions from 22 ka Pomici di Base to the 1944 eruption. A further validation is made by comparing the probabilistic maps with the tephrostratigraphy of known marine and terrestrial cores using standard test of proportions (binomial distributions) and the binary logistic regression model, statistically quantifying the effectiveness of the model against the tephrostratigraphy recorded within this time frame. Based on this validation, a preferred configuration of PROMETHEUS is selected. PROMETHEUS probability maps will guide the selection of sampling sites for specific tephra deposits and could also support the study of the completeness of overall eruption catalogs over time.

1. Introduction

Assessing and predicting dispersal of ash from volcanic eruptions represent a very difficult task in volcanology ([Sparks and Aspinall, 2004](#); [Pfeiffer et al., 2005](#); [Rose and Durant, 2009](#)). This is due to the long residence time of ash in the atmosphere ([Dellino et al., 2005](#); [Sulpizio et al., 2008](#); [Rose and Durant, 2009](#)), the multiple processes that can affect its deposition ([Armienti et al., 1988](#); [Macedonio et al., 2005](#); [Folch, 2012](#)) and the ephemeral thickness they usually deposit over the landscape and marine realm (e.g. [Wulf et al., 2004](#); [Di Roberto et al., 2008](#); [Lowe, 2011](#); [Leicher et al., 2016](#); [Insinga et al., 2019](#)). These phenomena may result in patchy recognition of ash deposits in distal, and largely impact on tephrostratigraphy and its correlative potential among

different sedimentary archives. They may also affect the inversion of data for modelling ash dispersal and probabilistic hazard assessment of ash deposition (e.g., [Costa et al., 2006](#); [Folch, 2012](#)). For these reasons, the completeness of the tephrostratigraphic catalogs containing ash deposits is a key factor for the reliable assessment of tephra dispersal areas, which is the base for any volcanological and/or hazard assessment study. Even if many databases of volcanic activity like the Global Volcanism Program ([Cottrell et al., 2010](#); [Croswell et al., 2012](#)) exist, only few studies about incompleteness of volcanic records are available ([Mead et al., 2014](#); [Wang et al., 2020](#)), and there are still not satisfactory techniques to estimate the degree of completeness of stratigraphic records in distal areas, which may significantly contribute to catalogs especially for large and old eruptions. In fact, numerous modern

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volcanological studies concerning eruptions already previously studied underline how the eruptive history of the different volcanic districts is not yet well known, but instead requires considerable study and new statistical and probabilistic methodologies (Bebbington, 2020). Indeed, this would allow the use of the information recorded in locations where, for geological reasons, a well preserved long tephrostratigraphic record is available. Such locations are few, and in most of cases they are far from volcanoes, and potentially impacted in the far field by multiple volcanic sources (Wagner et al., 2008, 2019; Leicher et al., 2016, 2021). This is especially urgent in regions affected by ash deposition from many different volcanoes, such as the central Mediterranean area. Since the Pleistocene, the central Mediterranean region witnessed numerous volcanic eruptions sourced mainly from southern Italy volcanoes (Keller et al., 1978; Paterne et al., 1988; Wulf et al., 2004; Sulpizio et al., 2010). The recognition of the different tephra layers has allowed reconstruction of frequency maps, which are useful for improving the assessment of volcanic hazard (Sulpizio et al., 2014). However, the preservation of tephra in the middle and distal archives downwind of southern Italy volcanoes is sometimes largely incomplete, due to both discontinuous deposition and erosion. In order to reduce the uncertainty on dispersal area of ash, we need to consider a probabilistic approach that combines the characteristics of the eruption and the intensity of winds in both the stratosphere and troposphere.

Here we present an innovative probabilistic method that, by combining statistics of wind profiles over the last 30 years in southern Italy and inferred eruption intensity, allows us to calculate the probability for a given grain size to reach a given point downwind of the source volcano. The method is sufficiently simple to allow a rapid application to multiple volcanoes and volcanic areas, allowing the potential exploration of multiple sources without the need of large computational resources. We initially apply the method to Somma Vesuvius, which accounts for most of ash dispersal during late Pleistocene and Holocene in central Mediterranean area (Paterne et al., 1988; Sulpizio et al., 2010, 2014; Caron et al., 2012; Crocitti et al., 2018), then we demonstrate that the method is equally applicable to any other volcano of the area, provided that the validity of the meteorological conditions is approximately preserved.

Table 1
eruptions of Somma Vesuvius considered in this work from 22 Ka to 1944.

Eruption	Age (a)		Column Height (b)	ML tephtras	OL tephtras	References
1944	1944		CE 10			Arrighi et al., 2001 (a)(b)
1906	1906		CE 15			Arrighi et al., 2001 (a)(b)
1822	1822		CE 5–10			Arrighi et al., 2001 (a)(b)
1794	1794		CE 2			Arrighi et al., 2001 (a)(b)
1779	1779		CE 3			Arrighi et al., 2001 (a)(b)
1730	1730		CE 6			Arrighi et al., 2001 (a)(b)
1723	1723		CE 2.8			Arrighi et al., 2001 (a)(b)
1707	1707		CE 2.1			Arrighi et al., 2001 (a)(b)
1682	1682		CE 2.2			Arrighi et al., 2001 (a)(b)
1631	1631		CE 20	X		Santacroce et al., 2008 (a)(b)
AS5	540	± 30	cal yr BP 8			Selva et al., 2022 (a)(b)
AS4	1100	± 70	cal yr BP 4			Selva et al., 2022 (a)(b)
AS3	1310	± 30	cal yr BP 8			Selva et al., 2022 (a)(b)
AS2	1470	± 60	cal yr BP 8			Cioni et al., 2008 (a); Sulpizio et al., 2005 (b)
512 d.C.	512		CE 15	X	X	Cioni et al., 2011 (a)(b)
Pollena	472		CE 20	X	X	Sulpizio et al., 2005 (a)(b)
S.Maria cycle	305		CE 10			Cioni et al., 2008 (a)(b)
S.Maria cycle	222–235		CE 10			Cioni et al., 2008 (a)(b)
S.Maria cycle	203		CE 10			Cioni et al., 2008 (a)(b)
S.Maria cycle	172		CE 10			Cioni et al., 2008 (a)(b)
Pomici di Pompei	79		CE 35	X		Sigurdsson et al., 1982 (a); Cioni et al., 2008 (b)
AP3	2710	± 60	BP 15	X		Cioni et al., 2008 (a); Andronico et al., 2002 (b)
AP2	3000	± 200	BP 15	X		Cioni et al., 2008 (a); Andronico et al., 2002 (b)
AP1	3220	± 65	BP 15			Cioni et al., 2008 (a)(b)
Pomici di Avellino	4365	± 40	BP 35	X		Andronico et al., 1995 (a); Santacroce et al., 2008 (b)
Pomici di Mercato	8890	± 90	BP 22	X	X	Santacroce et al., 2008 (a); Mele et al., 2011 (b)
Pomici Verdoline	19,265	± 105	cal yr BP 20	X		Andronico et al., 1995 (a); Santacroce et al., 2008 (b)
Pomici di Base	22,030	± 175	cal yr BP 25	X		Bertagnini et al., 1998 (a)(b)

The results were tested through a series of validation exercises, such as the comparison of the maps with the previously published geological data (Wulf et al., 2004; Di Roberto et al., 2008; Leicher et al., 2016; Insinga et al., 2019), tests of proportions via the binomial distribution (Bebbington et al., 2013; Selva et al., 2013; Grezio et al., 2017) and binary logistic regression model (logit) (Kereszturi et al., 2017; Ang et al., 2020).

The scripts used to produce the probability maps are available at: https://gitlab.com/bari_maps/probability_maps.git.

1.1. Volcanological and tephrostratigraphic framework

Somma Vesuvius is a stratovolcano characterized by an older edifice (Mount Somma) dissected by a summit caldera. The Vesuvius cone grew within the summit caldera after 79 CE (Cioni et al., 2000). In the last 22 ky the explosive activity of Somma Vesuvius witnessed the Plinian eruptions of the “Pomici di Base” (22,030 ± 175 cal yr BP; Bertagnini et al., 1998), Mercato (8890 ± 90 BP; Santacroce et al., 2008; Mele et al., 2011), Avellino (4365 ± 40 BP; Andronico et al., 1995; Santacroce et al., 2008) and Pompei (79 CE Sigurdsson et al., 1982) (Table 1). Sub-Plinian eruptions occurred at 19265 ± 105 cal yr BP (Pomici Verdoline; Andronico et al., 1995; Cioni et al., 2004, Santacroce et al., 2008), in the period between Avellino and 79 CE eruptions (named APs; Andronico and Cioni, 2002), in 472 CE (Pollena; Sulpizio et al., 2005) and 1631 CE (Rosì and Santacroce, 1983). After the 79 CE Plinian eruption the Somma Vesuvius activity alternated periods of closed and open conduit, with explosive eruptions occurred sporadically (Cioni et al., 2008).

The most recent period (1631–1944 CE) was characterized by open conduit conditions and persistent effusive, explosive or mixed activity, with a maximum of 7 year period of quiescence (Santacroce, 1987). Major, mixed effusive explosive eruptions occurred in 1822 CE, 1906 CE and 1944 CE (Arrighi et al., 2001), which is also the last eruption of Somma Vesuvius (Cole and Scarpati et al., 2010).

Initially, the reference targets used in this work are the core drilling of Lago di Monticchio (Table 2; Italy - 40.9 N, 15.6 E) and Lake Ohrid (Table 3; Republic of North Macedonia - 41.04 N, 20.71 E). Tables 2 and 3 contain information regarding the recognized tephra layers in Lake

Table 2

core of the Lago di Monticchio. References: a) Wulf et al., 2004; b) Wulf et al., 2008; c) Wulf et al., 2012; d) Narcisi, 1996.

Tephra	Age (yr BP)		Age varve (yr BP)- 5% error		Volcanic district	Eruption	References
	Data	(±)	Data	(±)			
TM-1*	1631		90	5	Somma Vesuvius	1631	b
L1	79				Somma Vesuvius	Pomici di Pompei	d
TM-2b	472		1440	70	Somma Vesuvius	Pollena	a
TM-2a	512		1420	1420	Somma Vesuvius	512	a
TM-3b	2710	60	4020	4020	Somma Vesuvius	AP3	a
TM-2-1	2920	160	3040	150	Phlegrean volcanic district	Ischia-Cannavale o Chiarito	b
TM-2-2			3940	200	Somma Vesuvius	AP5	b
TM-3a*			3990	200	Somma Vesuvius	AP4	b
TM-3c*	3160	230	4150	210	Somma Vesuvius	AP2	b
TM-4*	3590	25	4310	220	Somma Vesuvius	Pomici di Avellino	b
TM-5b*	4220	70	4660	230	Phlegrean volcanic district	Astroni 1–3	b
TM-5c*	4620	40	5390	270	Phlegrean volcanic district	Agnano Monte Spina	b
TM-5d*	5150	30	5680	280	Phlegrean volcanic district	Averno 1	b
TM-5-2	5500	4500	7150	360	Phlegrean volcanic district	Ischia	b
TM-6a*	8010	35	9620	480	Somma Vesuvius	Pomici di Mercato_final	b
TM-5-1	8500		6590	330	Phlegrean volcanic district	Ischia-Puzzillo	b
TM-6b*			9680	480	Somma Vesuvius	Pomici di Mercato_base	b
TM-6-1a	8890	30	9890	490	Phlegrean volcanic district	Campi Flegrei-Fondi di Baia	b
TM-7b*	10,430	90	12,180	610	Phlegrean volcanic district	CF-Pomici Principali	b
TM-6-4a	11,010	60	11,670	580	Phlegrean volcanic district	Campi Flegrei-Soccavo 5	b
TM-6-4b	12,140	100	11,890	590	Phlegrean volcanic district	Campi Flegrei-Soccavo 4	b
TM-7-1			12,590	630	Phlegrean volcanic district	Campi Flegrei-Gaiola	b
TM-7-2	12,980	60	12,640	630	Phlegrean volcanic district	Campi Flegrei-La Pigna	b
TM-10a	13,070	90	15,030	750	Phlegrean volcanic district	Campi Flegrei-Lagno Amendolare	b
L7	14,000	14,000			Phlegrean volcanic district	Campi Flegrei/Unità tefra superiori	d
TM-7-3	14,900	400	12,770	640	Phlegrean volcanic district	Campi Flegrei-NYT	b
TM-12*	15,920	110–130	17,560	880	Somma Vesuvius	Pomici Verdoline	b
TM-12-1	16,950	360	17,980	900	Mount Etna	Biancavilla Y-1	b
TM-10-1	17,800	3200	15,820	790	Phlegrean volcanic district	Ischia-St. Angelo	b
TM-12-2a	17,900	500	18,500	920	Phlegrean volcanic district	Campi Flegrei-Tufi Biancastri	b
TM-13*	18,300	180	19,280	960	Somma Vesuvius	Pomici di Base	b
TM-14	19,620	270	20,150		Phlegrean volcanic district	Procida-Solchiaro	a
TM-15	21,299	170	23,930		Phlegrean volcanic district	Campi Flegrei- Masseria del Monte Y-3	a
L10	22,250	1000			Somma Vesuvius	Sarno Formation	d
TM-16a	25,100	400	26,130		Somma Vesuvius	Codola (top)	a
TM-17a			25,930		Albano volcanic district	Peperino Albano Ignimbrite	a
L12	36,200	36,200			Phlegrean volcanic district	Ignimbrite campana Y-5	d
L14	55,000	55,000			Phlegrean volcanic district	Ischia/Monte Epomeo Tufi Verdi	d
TM-20	56,000	4000	57,570		Phlegrean volcanic district	Ischia Y-7	a
TM-22	79,300	4200	85,320		Pantelleria	Green Tuff Pantelleria P-10	a
TM-23	85,000	9000	85,670		Sabatini volcanic district	Tufo di Baccano	a
TM-31	102,000		114,770	5740	Phlegrean volcanic district	Campi Flegrei	c
TM-24a	105,000	2000	97,770		Phlegrean volcanic district	X-5 (Pumice fallout)	a
TM-26	106,300	5300	106,300	5320	Mount Etna	Salto della Giumenta Unit	c
TM-29-1	111,500	5600	111,480	5570	Phlegrean volcanic district	Campi Flegrei	c
TM-29-2	111,500	5600	112,460	5620	Phlegrean volcanic district	Campi Flegrei	c
TM-30-1	111,500	5600	113,370	5670	Phlegrean volcanic district	Campi Flegrei	c
TM-30-2	111,500	5600	114,440	5720	Phlegrean volcanic district	Campi Flegrei	c
TM-32	115,300	5800	115,250	5760	Aeolian Islands	Stromboli/Petrazza Y-9	c
TM-33-2	115,700	5800	118,190	5910	Phlegrean volcanic district	Ischia/Punta Imperatore	c
TM-34	118,800	5900	118,810	5940	Aeolian Islands	Salina	c
TM-35a	120,700	6000	120,670	6030	Phlegrean volcanic district	Campi Flegrei	c
TM-35b	120,700	6000	121,940	6100	Phlegrean volcanic district	Campi Flegrei	c
TM-37	124,100	6200	124,080	6200	Phlegrean volcanic district	Ischia/Monte di Vezzi	c
TM-42	132,100	6600	132,110	6610	Phlegrean volcanic district	Ischia/Scarrupata di Barano	c

Ohrid (Vogel et al., 2010; Wagner et al., 2008, 2019; Francke et al., 2019; Leicher et al., 2016, 2021) and in Lago di Monticchio (Narcisi, 1996; Wulf et al., 2004, 2008, 2012). The lacustrine sequences of these two lakes appear to be the most representative archive for the recognition of tephra layers in the Mediterranean area. In fact, they preserve various volcanic products coming from the volcanoes of Campania but, being at two very different distances from the volcanic source of Somma Vesuvius, they present a different tephra content of this particular volcano. Lago di Monticchio is located about 100 km from the Somma Vesuvius, and for this reason it appears to be an excellent database for the recognition of its tephra. Within this core sample, tephra from explosive eruptions between 79 CE and 132,100 years ago were identified (Table 2). Lake Ohrid, on the other hand, is located about 530 km from Somma Vesuvius, therefore, within this core sample, layers were

verified only relating to large magnitude eruptions originating from the Neapolitan volcanic district. Notably, in this case the tephrostratigraphic succession of Lake Ohrid extends from 1.46 ± 0.02 ky to 1221.57 ky (Table 3).

2. Methods

The goal is to define a simplified method to produce probability maps that a given target location is reached by a particular grain size of tephra, provided that an eruption of a certain size occurs at a given volcano. These maps should include the far field of the volcano, without requiring an explicit calculation of tephra dispersal over such large areas. To this end, the method considers in input only the intensity and direction of winds in the last 30-years, the different heights of the

Table 3

Core of the Lake Ohrid. Reference: a) Leicher et al., 2016; b) Leicher et al., 2021; c) Leicher et al., 2021; d) Wagner et al., 2019; e) Francke et al., 2019; f) Vogel et al., 2010.

Tephra	Age (yr BP)		Volcanic district	Eruption	References
	Data	(±)			
OH-DP-0009	1.46	0.02	Somma Vesuvius	472/512 CE	d
OH-DP-0015	3.37	0.07	Mount Etna	FL	d
OH-DP-0016.2*	3.61	0.1	Somma Vesuvius	AP1-AP2	e
OH-DP-0019.2*	4.5	0.2	Phlegrean volcanic district	CF-Agnano Monte Spina	
OH-DP-0026.*	8.2	0.3	Aeolian Islands	Gabelotto-Fiumebianco (Lipari)	
OH-DP-0027	8.43		Somma Vesuvius	Pomici di Mercato	a
OH-DP-0049	14.75	0.52	Phlegrean volcanic district	Campi Flegrei LN2	d
OH-DP-0052*	15.53	0.62	Phlegrean volcanic district	Campi Flegrei LN1	d
OH-DP-0115	28.68		Phlegrean volcanic district	Campi Flegrei-Masseria del Monte	c
OT0702-5	34.27	0.87	Somma Vesuvius	Codola	f
OH-DP-0169	39.95	0.12	Phlegrean volcanic district	Campi Flegrei/Ignimbrite Campana	a
OT0702-7	46.9	3.6	Phlegrean volcanic district	Green Tuff Pantelleria?	f
OH-DP-0435	109.5	0.9	Phlegrean volcanic district	Campi Flegrei X-6	a
OH-DP-0499	133.5	2	Pantelleria		a
OH-DP-0505	135.36	4.06	Pantelleria		b
OH-DP-0599	156.89	3.79	Vicano-Cimino Volcanic District	Vico B	b
OH-DP-0616	158.76	3.83	Vicano-Cimino Volcanic District	Vico B	b
OH-DP-0617	163	22	Vicano-Cimino Volcanic District	Vico Ignimbrite B	a
OH-DP-0624	158.29	3	Vicano-Cimino Volcanic District	Vulcano Vico D	a
OH-DP-0710	172.26	5.5	Phlegrean volcanic district	Campi Flegrei-Acqua Feconia	a
OH-DP-0725*	174.44	5.22	Pantelleria		not published
OH-DP-0766	180.02	4.14	Pantelleria		b
OH-DP-0997	228.87	5.66	Phlegrean volcanic district	Roccamorfinina?	b
OH-DP-1006	230.93	6.27	Phlegrean volcanic district	Ischia-Taurano Ignimbrite?	b
OH-DP-1055	240.93	6.45	Phlegrean volcanic district	Ignimbrite Seiano?	b
OH-DP-1175	270.64	4.88	Sabatini volcanic district		b
OH-DP-1513	353.43	7.49	Aeolian Islands		b
OH-DP-1520	355.76	7.64	Aeolian Islands		b
OH-DP-1527	358.25	4.64	Roccamorfinina district	Roccamorfinina	b
OH-DP-1640	398.37	5.95	Roccamorfinina district	Roccamorfinina	b
OH-DP-1700.6	410	2	Vicano-Cimino Volcanic District	Vico Ignimbrite B	d
OH-DP-1719.7*	419.76	5.41	Sabatini volcanic district	Monti sabatini	not published
OH-DP-1733	423.93	6.43	Roccamorfinina district	Roccamorfinina	b
OH-DP-1812	453.95	2.94	Roccamorfinina district	Roccamorfinina	b
OH-DP-1817	456.19	3.3	Albano volcanic district	Pozzolane Rosse	b
OH-DP-1911	480.49	6.84	Sabatini volcanic district		b
OH-DP-1955	490.67	3.92	Sabatini volcanic district	Tufi Terrosi	a
OH-DP-1966	494.05	4.43	Roccamorfinina district	Roccamorfinina	b
OH-DP-1998	508.67	4.14	Vulsini volcanic district		b
OH-DP-2010	514.17	4.37	Sabatini volcanic district	Fall A	a
OH-DP-2017	516.87	5.47	Phlegrean volcanic district	CVZ	a
OH-DP-2060	530.86	3.35	Albano volcanic district	Tufo Bagni Albule	a
OH-DP-2439	626.87	3.98	Mount Vulture		b
OH-DP-2512	648.56	6.76	Phlegrean volcanic district	CVZ	not published
OH-DP-2555	662.55	7.16	Phlegrean volcanic district	CVZ	not published
OH-DP-2589	674.22	5.93	Mount Vulture		not published
OH-DP-2603	680.85	4.46	Phlegrean volcanic district	CVZ	not published
OH-DP-2669	717.3	5.4	Phlegrean volcanic district	CVZ	d
OH-DP-2717	734.41	5.86	Roccamorfinina district		c
OH-DP-2869	776.51	5.14	Phlegrean volcanic district	CVZ	not published
OH-DP-2898	791.9	1.9	Roccamorfinina district		c
OH-DP-3144	888.18	5.28	Phlegrean volcanic district	CVZ	not published
OH-DP-3443	979.32	6.19	Phlegrean volcanic district	CVZ	not published
OH-DP-3860 A + B	1113.67	7.36	Phlegrean volcanic district	CVZ	not published
OH-DP-3914	1132.57	4.27	Phlegrean volcanic district	CVZ	not published
OH-DP-4089 A + B	1206.89	4.55	Phlegrean volcanic district	CVZ	not published
OH-DP-4124	1221.57	6.49	Phlegrean volcanic district	CVZ	not published

eruptive column, and the maximum distance that tephra can travel in different wind conditions. This allows the creation of a simplified dispersal model, which enables associating to a given grain size the probability to be found at a given place.

To accomplish this objective, wind characteristic data were downloaded and analysed from the online re-analysis database Climate Data Store-Copernicus (Earth Rapidly Acquired 5th- ERA5). These data provide hourly estimations of a variable number of atmospheric, terrestrial and oceanic meteorological parameters. Wind data were downloaded at the following pressure levels: 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 300, 500, and 1000 hPa (corresponding to heights from 30 km to 0.1 km). Wind data

was downloaded for each day from 1990 to 2020 at 6:00 AM and 6:00 PM, resulting in a total of 21,900 records. Based on the wind data, it can be observed that in the central Mediterranean area there is a predominant wind component from west to east, common for these latitudes. For eruptive columns of 20 km and 30 km, there is also a wind component from east to west, but with lower intensity. For heights below 10 km, the characteristics of wind intensity and direction are more variable, although the west to east component remains prevalent.

The time span considered in this study mainly covers eruptions of the last 10,000 years, with only two cases up to 20,000 years (Base Pomici and Verdoline Pomici). For this reason, we consider the one made on

wind data to be a reasonable approximation, since the basic structure of the atmospheric circulation has not been dramatically altered, comparing the atmospheric conditions during the Last Glacial Maximum with today's conditions (Lautenschlager and Herterich, 1990).

To determine the distances that the various tephra grain sizes may reach, we used results from HAZMAP simulations (Macedonio et al., 2005; Costa et al., 2013). HAZMAP is a model used to solve the diffusion, transport and sedimentation equations of small particles and model the ash dispersion generated by a sustained convective column (Macedonio et al., 2005). These simulations do not depend on the specific target area, but only on the typical wind profiles at different latitude ranges (equatorial, mid-latitude and polar) (Costa et al., 2016). The Eruption Source Parameters (ESP) that were used for the simulations are the values of the column heights and the mass of the fall-out pyroclastic products. In fact, no ESP was set starting from the data of the two reference targets, Lago di Monticchio and Lake Ohrid. A total of 18 simulations were performed in HAZMAP, 9 for the 4ϕ grain size and 9 for the aggregate grain size. These simulations were produced under light, medium and strong wind conditions and for eruptive columns of 10, 20 and 30 km.

The developed method is initially applied to Somma Vesuvius, but it is applicable everywhere to any eruptive source in the same area. We defined a target grid within a range of 5–37 degrees longitude and 29–44 degrees latitude (Fig. 1b), and a nodal distance of 0.1 degrees latitude and longitude (about 11 km). Obviously, we implicitly assume that the wind is uniform within such a large domain, that is typically not valid but, since we are interested to the daily average and on a statistical treatment, we can maintain such a simplification (Sandri et al., 2016; Matthews et al., 2015) and improve the method in future works by using 3D time-dependent wind fields which require intense HPC resources (see e.g., Martínez et al., 2022; Massaro et al., 2023).

To define the best approach to quantify the probability maps, we implemented three methods, with increasing sophistication:

- 1) Method A (SA_phi4): we used HAZMAP simulations for the grain size of 0,063 mm (4ϕ) and a vertically uniform wind equal to that blowing at top of column height, considering three distinct eruptive size classes (10, 20, and 30 km).
- 2) Method B (MA_phi4): like Method A, but sampling wind intensity and direction from the elevation 0.1 km to the upper part of the eruptive column (from 0.1 to 10 km, from 0.1 to 20 km and from 0.1 to 30 km).
- 3) Method C (MA_agg): like Method B but using aggregated particles instead of $\phi = 4$.

2.1. Quantification of the probability of Method a (Sa_phi4)

For a given target point $x = (\text{lat}, \text{lon})$ and a given grain size, we quantify the probability that x is reached by the tephra of grain size ϕ generated by a source in x_s as:

$$P_A(x|x_s, h_c, \phi_A) = P(\theta|h_c)P(v_{ref})P(d(x, x_s)|v_{ref}, \phi, h_c) \quad (1)$$

where θ represents the angle to the north of the line connecting source x_s and target x ; h_c the column height; $d(x, x_s)$ their distance between x and x_s ; $P(\theta|h_c)$ and $P(v_{ref})$ are the probability of having at the target a wind blowing sufficiently close to θ at the altitude h_c and with a maximum velocity of the profile larger than v_{ref} ; $P(d(x, x_s)|v_{ref}, \phi, h_c)$ is the probability that a given ϕ will cover the distance d , given a wind with velocity v_{ref} . Following Costa et al. (2016), the maximum velocity of the profile v_{ref} is calculated at the tropopause altitude, that is 12 km at our latitudes.

To compute $P(\theta|h_c)$ and $P(v_{ref})$, we considered the distribution of wind profiles at the source. Here, we use the coordinates of Somma Vesuvius. However, wind profiles are similar to each other in the same area, especially for the higher altitudes, making tephra fall hazard from sub-Plinian and Plinian columns, relatively insensitive to the exact

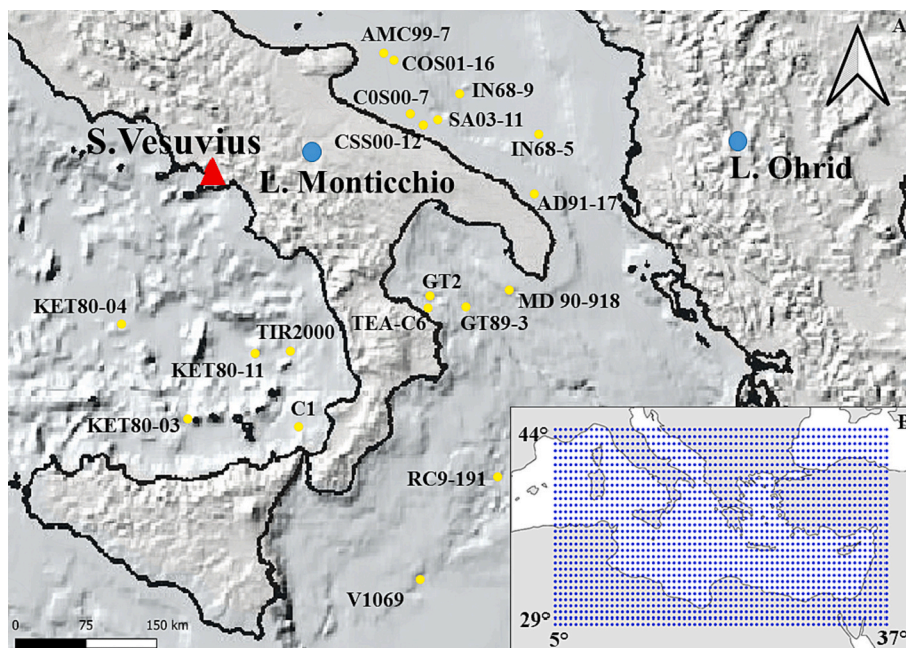


Fig. 1. in Fig. 1a, the eruptive source and the corings present in the Mediterranean area are depicted: the Somma Vesuvius volcano is represented by the red triangle; the two primary cores under consideration, located in the Lake of Monticchio and Lake Ohrid, are indicated by the blue dots; the yellow dots denote all other corings in the Mediterranean area, primarily utilized for the LOGIT validation exercise (Kereszturi et al., 2017; Ang et al., 2020). In Fig. 1b, on the other hand, the entire area from which the data concerning wind intensity and direction characteristics between 1990 and 2020 were sourced is illustrated (Paterne et al., 1988; Di Roberto et al., 2008; Insinga et al., 2019; Keller et al., 1978; Di Donato et al., 2019; Crocitti et al., 2018; Castagnoli et al., 1990; Caron et al., 2012; Marchini et al., 2014; Calanchi et al., 2008; Lowe et al., 2017; Siani et al., 2004; Matthews et al., 2015; Jalali et al., 2018; Narcisi et al., 1996; Wulf et al., 2004, 2008, 2012; Wagner et al., 2019; Leicher et al., 2016, 2021; Vogel et al., 2010).

location of the retrieval of the wind (Selva et al., 2013). Thus, if we assume negligible or we correct for potential topographic effects, this evaluation results a good statistical approximation for all volcanoes of the area.

All data are here averaged over areas of 0.1 by 0.1 degree (11×11 km) (Fig. 1b). Using ERA5, we recovered the geopotential variables, u and v components, which are the zonal and southern wind components respectively. In evaluating $P(\theta|h_c)$ and $P(v_{ref})$, a tolerance of 30 degrees on θ and of 15% on v_{ref} were considered. In other words, for any angle θ , $P(\theta|h_c)$ was calculated by counting the number of times the wind had a direction at the top of the column within $\theta \pm 15$ degree and dividing by the number of records. Similarly, for any velocity v_{ref} , $P(v_{ref})$ was calculated by counting the number of times the wind had a speed larger than v_{ref} less 15% at an altitude of 10 km and dividing by the number of records. To assess $P(d(x, x_s) | v_{ref}, \phi, h_c)$, we have to consider the distances that various grain sizes of tephra can travel under typical wind conditions and column heights. These values were based on wind profiles at medium latitudes and under weak, medium, and strong wind conditions. To determine the maximum reachable distances, 9 HAZMAP simulations were used to determine the distances that a tephra can cover in weak, medium, and strong wind conditions (7, 30, and 70 m/s; Costa et al., 2016) and with column heights of 10, 20 and 30 km, depositing a thickness of at least 0.1 mm (representative of a cryptotephra). In this way, we obtained a total of 9 distance values (in km) for each column height (10, 20, and 30 km) and wind speed (7, 30, and 70 m/s). For each column height, the distances relative to the three wind speeds considered (7, 30, and 70 m/s) are linearly interpolated, to obtain the values of the intermediate wind speeds, at each point of the grid. Then, the probability $P(d(x, x_s) | v_{ref}, \phi, h_c)$ for that wind field was treated as a step function at the maximum distance achievable for any given velocity v_{ref} , that is equal to 1 if d is smaller than the maximum distance, and 0 otherwise. This was repeated for each wind field to convert the step functions into probabilities.

With this information, the probabilities that the grain size ϕ_A can reach a given distance from the eruptive source are calculated for each point of the grid. The results are reported in Figs. 2a, 2b, 2c.

2.2. Quantification of the probability of Method B (Ma_phi4)

This group considers the contribution of winds at all altitudes up to the top of the column height. Since wind directions are statistically correlated at the different altitudes, we assume a full correlation among the different wind intensities and velocities. Therefore, Eq. (1) becomes:

$$P_B(x|x_s, h_c, \phi_A) = (P(\theta|h)P(v_{ref})P(d(x, x_s) | v_{ref}, \phi, h)) \quad (2)$$

The expression inside the maximum is equal to the one of Eq. (1), but the direction of the wind and the maximum distance reached by the tephra are calculated at all the intermediate altitudes instead of only the top of the column, then taking the maximum among them for each target point. This should benefit the quantification in the near intermediate distances, where the potential contribution of intermediate altitudes may be relevant. As discussed above in Method A, the velocity is instead always retrieved at the reference altitude of 10 km.

For group B, we consider 32 pressure levels ranging from 10 hPa to 1000 hPa, corresponding at 0.1, 0.3, 0.5, 0.75, 0.9, 1.2, 1.4, 1.6, 1.9, 2.2, 2.4, 3, 3.5, 4.2, 4.8, 5.5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 11.8, 12.5, 13.5, 14, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, and 30 km. The HAZMAP simulations produced for three column heights, but now we want to consider also the dispersion of intermediate levels of the column. To this end, we first interpolate for the intermediate eruptive column levels (32 wind levels), and then for intermediate wind speeds. The obtained values were used to evaluate $(d(x, x_s) | v_{ref}, \phi, h_c)$. The results are reported in Figs. 2d, 2e, 2f.

2.3. Quantification of the probability of Method C (Ma_agg)

As regards the third and last group of maps (MA_agg), the entire procedure described for the maps of group B was followed, but for particles created by aggregating different grain size classes of fine ash, called “agg”. HAZMAP simulations were carried out using this effective grain size class. Also in this case the total dependence of the winds at the different altitudes is taken into account. Therefore, for all the points of the grid, the maximum probability values, associated with the grain size of the aggregates were calculated using this formula:

$$P_C(x|x_s, h_c, \phi_A) = (P(\theta|h)P(v_{ref})P(d(x, x_s) | v_{ref}, \phi_A, h)) \quad (3)$$

Which is identical to Eq. 2, with the use of another grain size class. For the class of aggregates ϕ_A we considered the parameterization of Cornell et al. (1983), which assumes that the particle sizes of the aggregates are composed either of 50% of ash with diameters 63–44 μm , or of 75% of 44–31 μm , or for 100% of particles <31 μm , forming aggregates with a diameter of 200 μm and a density of 400 kg m^{-3} (Folch et al., 2010). However, the terminal velocity of this class corresponds to an effective settling velocity of the order of 0.3–0.4 m/s (Costa et al., 2010). The results are reported in Figs. 2g, 2e, 2h for the three selected h_c .

3. Result

3.1. Probability maps

In Fig. 2a, the probability maps obtained by Method A show the probabilities of finding a deposit with a particle grain size of 0.063 mm ($\phi = 4$) at various distances from the eruptive source during an eruption with a 10 km eruption column. The maximum probabilities are always eastward, with 40% at around 170 km, 20% at 510 km and 1% at 740 km from the source. For column height of 20 km (Fig. 2b), 40% at 180 km, 20% at 535 km and 1% at 800 km from the source. There is a westward component of the probability with a maximum probability of 20% at 180 km and 1% at 350 km. For a column height of 30 km (Fig. 2c), the maximum probability of 40% at 190 km, 20% probability at 890 km, and the 1% at 1380 km from the source. Also in this case, there is a westward component of the probability, which reach a maximum of 30% at 400 km and 1% at 750 km.

Adopting Method B, considering the 10 km eruptive column, the maximum probability is 40% at 315 km from the source, 20% at 695 km and 1% at 800 km (Fig. 2d). For an eruption column of 20 km, the maximum probability of 60% at 250 km, 40% at 555 km, 20% at 805 km and 1% at 920 km. The western component shows probability of 20% at 180 km and 1% at about 380 km (Fig. 2e). The case of 30 km eruptive column (Fig. 2f) shows the probability of 60% at 270 km, 40% at 560 km, 20% at 1020 km and 1% at 1585 km. The western component shows probability of 30% at 410 km and 1% at about 860 km.

For Method C, Figs. 2g, 2h, and 2i show the values of maximum probability for aggregate volcanic particles. For 10 km column (Fig. 2g), the probability values are 40% at 225 km, 20% at 485 km and 1% at 560 km. In the case of 20 km eruptive column (Fig. 2h) we have 60% probability at 170 km, 40% at 350 km, 20% at 520 km and 1% at 580 km. Fig. 2i shows the probability maps for 30 km eruptive column, with a probability of 60% at 190 km, 40% at 360 km, 20% at 675 km and 1% at 985 km. For both 20 km and 30 km columns (Fig. 2h and Fig. 2i), there is also an east-west wind component. In this wind direction, the probabilities get to be 1% at 150 km for the 20 km eruptive column, and at 570 km for 30 km eruptive column. All the maps show an almost linear decrease of maximum probability (in respect to the different angles) with distance, testifying for the first order approximation of the produced maps. Furthermore, as a result of the modelling choices and the way in which the variables are used within the method, it can be noted that to the north and south of the eruptive vent, in all the maps,

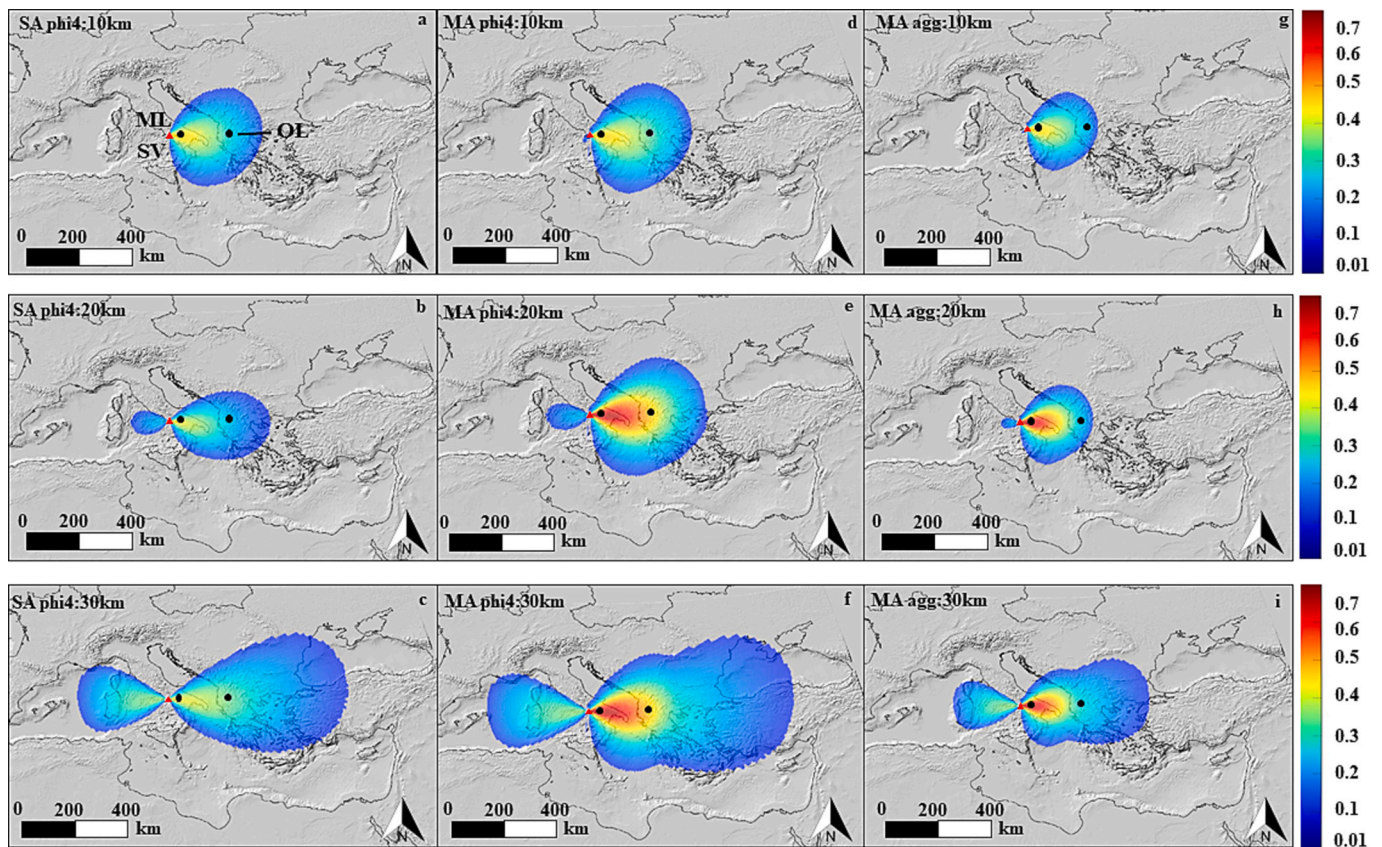


Fig. 2. probability maps. SV: Somma Vesuvius; ML: Monticchio Lake; OL: Ohrid Lake. Fig. 2a, 2b, 2c refer to the SA_phi4 maps respectively relating to the columns of 10, 20 and 30 km. Fig. 2d, 2e, 2f refer to the MA_phi4 maps respectively relating to the columns of 10, 20 and 30 km. Fig. 2g, 2h, 2i refer to the MA_agg maps respectively relating to the columns of 10, 20 and 30 km. The Somma Vesuvius volcano is marked with the red triangle. The two main cores considered present in the Great Lake of Monticchio and in the Ohrid Lake are marked with the black dots.

the probabilities present values $<1\%$. The SA_phi4 maps show a linear decrease of maximum probability with distance (Fig. 2a, 2b, 2c), with column heights of 10 km and 20 km that show quite similar decay and close values of probability (Fig. 3a). The probability of 30 km column height shows a gentler decrease with respect to the other two (Fig. 3a). This behaviour clearly reflects the dependence of probability from column heights and wind patterns.

3.2. Model validation and method selection

The selection of the appropriate method among the 3 alternatives discussed can be made through a validation study using the observed frequencies at two target locations with a particularly well recorded tephrostratigraphy: Lago di Monticchio and Lake Ohrid (Fig. 2a, 2b, 2c; Table 4). In these locations we can compare the computed probabilities with the observed frequencies for the three reference sizes in the recent activity of Somma Vesuvius, which is known from proximal records. The frequencies observed, as reported in Table 4, at Lake Monticchio, are 0 tephra associated with the 10 known eruption with approximately 10 km eruptive columns (observed frequency 0%), 7 tephra relating to the 9 known eruption with 20 km eruptive columns (observed frequency 78%) and 3 tephra connected to the 3 known eruptions with 30 km eruptive columns were verified (100%). At Lake Ohrid, the tephra observed in the core sampling are 0 relating to the 10 eruptions with 10 km eruptive columns (0%), 3 tephra relating to the 9 eruptions with 20 km eruptive columns (33%), and 0 tephra relating to the 3 eruptions with 30 km eruptive columns (0%).

Considering Method A, it can be seen how, for the Lago di Monticchio data, there is not a good agreement for the 10 km column (35% probability vs 0% observed; Table 4), nor for the 20 km column (29%

probability vs 78% observed) and from 30 km (40% probability vs 100% observed). At Lake Ohrid the discrepancies are 19% versus 0% for the 10 km column, 32% versus 33% for the 20 km column, and 42% versus 0% for the 30 km column. Even if we consider the possible bias due to not complete recognition of tephra layers in distal areas, the unsatisfactory match between calculated probabilities and observed distances indicate the SA_phi4 method is probably too simplified and tends to overestimate the distance traveled by ash particles.

Method B (Ma_phi4), including the intermediate levels, increases the probabilities in proximal areas, reaching values close to 60% within the first 250 km from the eruptive source. The 10 km column increases the maximum distance of 20% probability of 36% (from 510 km to 695 km; Fig. 3b), while the 20% probability increases the maximum distance of ca. 50% for the 20 km column (from 535 km to 805 km), and 15% for the 30 km column (from 890 km to 1020 km; Fig. 3b). These results highlight the importance of lower atmosphere winds in the dispersal of tephra, especially for low-height columns (Fig. 4). When comparing the probabilities with real data for Lago di Monticchio, we have an apparent worsening of match for the 10 km column (43% probability vs 0% observed frequency) and a significant improvement for 20 km column (64% probability vs 78% observed frequency) and 30 km column (65% probability vs 100% observed frequency). Comparing to Lake Ohrid data we again have poor matches for all the considered eruptive columns, with 31% probability vs 0% real for 10 km column, 46% probability vs 33% real for 20 km column and 47% probability vs. 0% real for 30 km column. Also in this case therefore, the MA_phi4 maps seem to overestimate the distances traveled by the tephra particles.

A more quantitative comparison can be made considering that the expected number of observations (i.e. the number of tephra that should be found within the core samples; Table 4) can be considered an

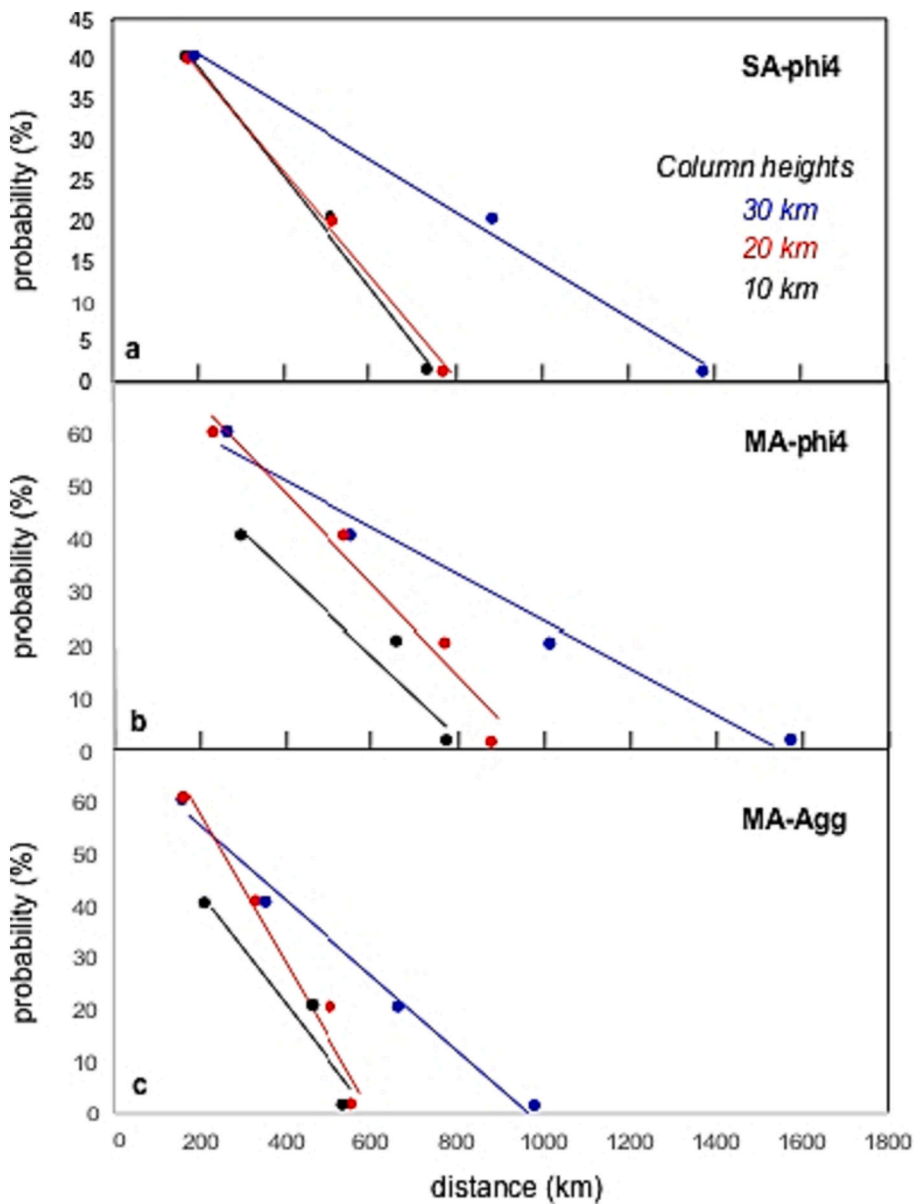


Fig. 3. These graphs allow us to define the relationships between probability values and distances for each type of map and for each column height considered. Fig. 3a considers the case of SA_phi4 maps, Fig. 3b the MA_phi4 maps and Fig. 3c the MA_adj maps.

Table 4

Probability values related to the SA_phi4, MA_phi4, and MA_agg maps are divided based on the different heights of the eruptive columns. The quantities of tephra found in the core drillings of Lake Monticchio and Lake Ohrid are also included. Along with the total number of eruptions from Somma Vesuvius, categorized according to the eruptive column heights. In Section 3, we propose 3 alternative configurations for the model.

Eruptive column (km)	SA_phi4		MA_phi4		MA_agg		N° tephras		N° eruption
	Probability		Probability		Probability		L. Mont	L. Ohrid	
	L. Mont	L. Ohrid	L. Mont	L. Ohrid	L. Mont	L. Ohrid	L. Mont	L. Ohrid	
10	0.35	0.19	0.43	0.31	0.43	0.23	0	0	10
20	0.29	0.32	0.64	0.46	0.64	0.26	7	3	9
30	0.4	0.42	0.65	0.47	0.65	0.3	3	0	3

independent sampling from the probability map, that is, they should follow a binomial distribution with parameters p and n , where p is the probability of the observation (the values relating to the probabilities of finding a tephra at a certain distance from the eruptive source, based on the different eruptive columns identified in Lake Ohrid and Lago di Monticchio; Table 4) and n is the number of trials (the total number of

Holocene eruptions of Somma Vesuvius, with a particular eruptive column; Table 1). Therefore, the binomial distribution can be used to test the probability values by evaluating how likely the observations results are if the model is correct (Bebbington, 2013; Selva, 2013; Grezio et al., 2017). To therefore test these probability values and be able to use the maps constructed (Fig. 2), we assume substantial stationarity of the

wind field starting from the Pomici di Base eruption (22 ka; [Bebbington and Lai, 1998](#)). In order for the models not to be rejected by binomial distribution test ([Grezio et al., 2017](#)), we expect that the probability to record the observed number of tephra layers should larger than a given significance level, which is usually set to 0.05 or 0.01 in standard hypothesis testing. We apply this method to methods B and C.

The results show that Method B cannot be rejected for both lakes in case of 20 km and 30 km eruptive columns ([Fig. 5b, c, e, f](#)).

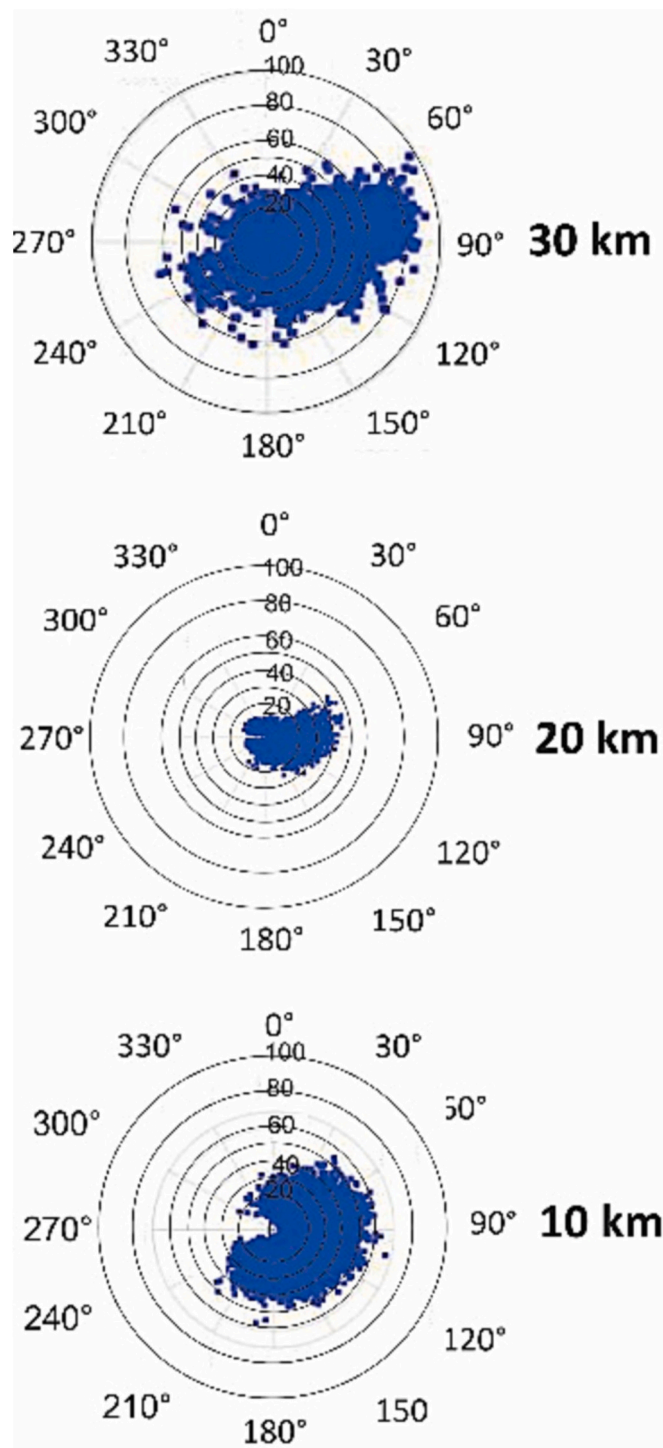


Fig. 4. Wind distribution diagrams that allow viewing the different characteristics of intensity and direction at different altitudes (10–20–30 km). For all three cases, the wind characteristics were downloaded over a period of time between 1990 and 2020 from the Climate data Store database.

Discrepancies become apparent regarding the distribution of the 10 km eruptive columns ([Fig. 5a, d](#)), for which Method B is rejected in Lago di Monticchio and close-to-rejection (p -value between 0.01 and 0.05) in Ohrid. This inconsistency could potentially be attributed to the fact that the height of the eruptive column for the eruption of the Santa Maria Cycle (172–305 CE) was roughly estimated only through the value of the erupted volume ([Cioni et al., 2008](#)). The Santa Maria Cycle was divided into 4 eruptions (172 CE, 203 CE, from 222 to 235 CE, and 305 CE), to which only [Cioni et al. \(2008\)](#) estimated only the total volume equal to 0.15 km^3 (VEI 3). The 10 km eruptive column was subjectively associated with this volume value. Including the Santa Maria Cycle, there are 10 eruptions of Somma Vesuvius with an eruptive column of 10 km. However, no tephra from Holocene eruptions of Somma Vesuvius with an eruptive column height of 10 km was found inside the two lake cores, although the maps indicate probable values between 30% and 40%. If these 4 eruptions were not considered, the Holocene eruptions of Somma Vesuvius would be reduced to 6, and the results would be more acceptable.

Method C (MA_agg) arises from the fact that, especially in the medial area, ash usually does not fall as single particles but as aggregates, due to the clustering effect due to both atmospheric humidity and forces electrostatics ([Cornell et al., 1983](#); [Costa et al., 2010](#); [Brown et al., 2012](#); [Vecino et al., 2022](#)). The aggregate particles can have a greater terminal velocity with respect to the single finer particles, and this reduces the travel distance of fine ash. In order to evaluate the aggregation effect on ash dispersal, we produced the MA_agg maps ([Fig. 2 g, 2 h, 2i](#)). The use of aggregation reduces the 20% maximum probability distance of 30% for the 10 km column, 35% for the 20 km column and 51% for the 30 km column ([Fig. 3c](#)). When comparing the Method C (MA_agg) probabilities with the Lago di Monticchio data, it emerges how they remain the same than for the Method B (MA_phi4 maps).

Therefore, the results relating to the binomial test are also identical to those already described for the MA_phi4 maps ([Fig. 5a, b, c](#)). What changes significantly is the probability for Lake Ohrid, which is 23% probability versus 0% for the 10 km column, 26% versus 33% actual for the 20 km column, and 30% probability versus 0% real for the 30 km column ([Fig. 5g, h, i](#)). It can therefore be deduced that the good correspondence shown by the 20 km and 30 km columns indicates how the particle aggregation process affects taller columns. In the binomial test, the p -value for 0 observations in Lake Ohrid increases significantly for Method C to a value larger than 0.05. Therefore, Model C passes the test in Ohrid also for 10 km column height.

In conclusion, a slight preference to Model C is found considering Ohrid lake data. However, the difference between Method B and Method C performances is very small, and we are unable to discriminate well among them. To extend the validation, we need to consider more observations and a more sophisticated statistical approach, as described in the next section.

3.3. Binary logistic regression

To further investigate the difference between the three methods, and check that the model encapsulates all the relevant factors, we perform another validation test applying a binary logistic regression ([Kereszturi et al., 2017](#); [Ang et al., 2020](#)) to the MA_phi4 and MA_agg maps. To do this we consider the observed deposition of volcanic particles in the proximal and distal areas with respect to the eruptive source, based on the tephra actually found in marine and lake cores, comparing these yes/no observations with the calculated probabilities from the maps.

Binary logistic regression variables ([Davis et al., 2002](#)) is a statistical model used to assess the connection between a (predicted, or dependent) categorical variable that has only two possible outcomes, and one or more (predictor, or independent) variables that can be continuous or categorical. The only definite information about a given tephra at a given location is whether or not it can be found. Hence our dependent variable has two levels, observed (1) or not observed (0).

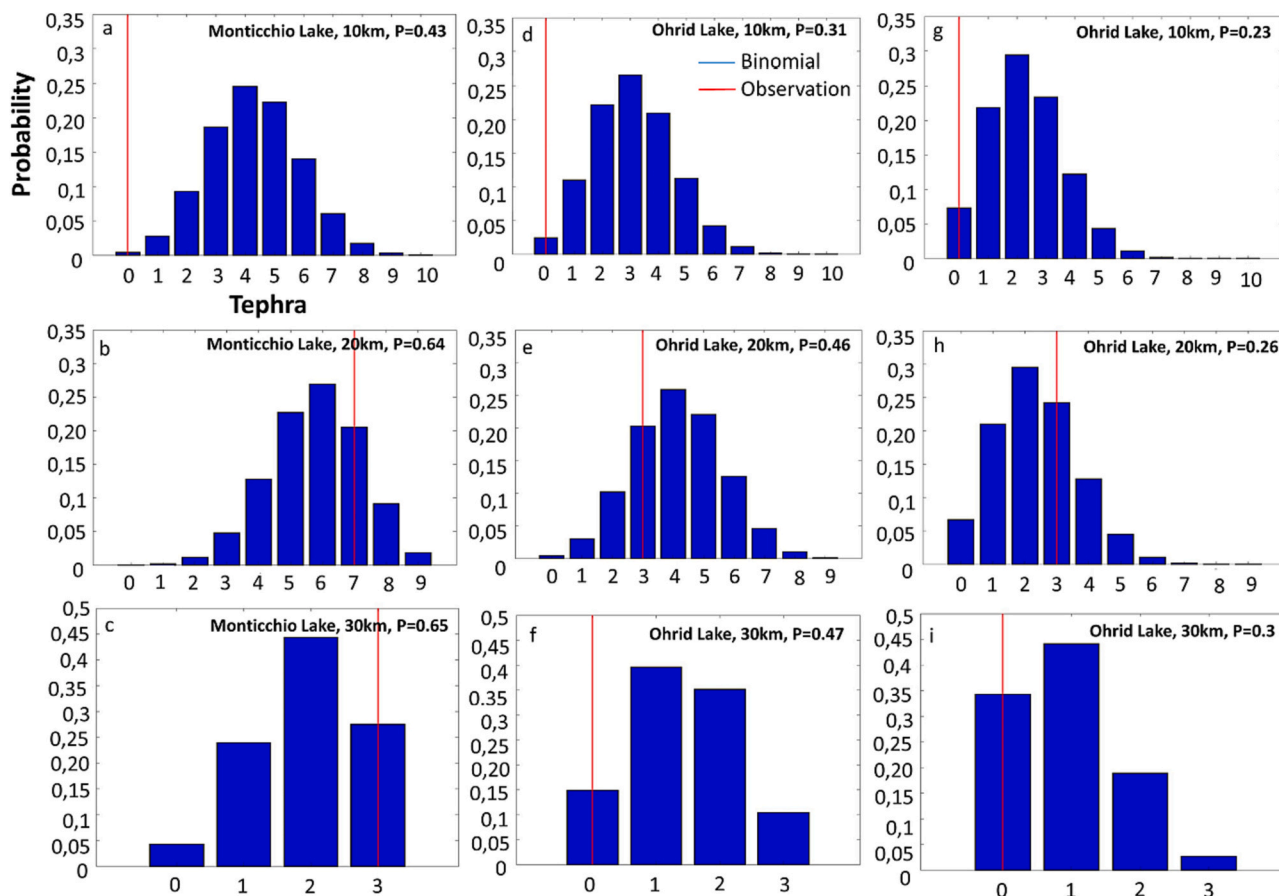


Fig. 5. Plots of binomial distributions broken down by different probability values. Fig. 5a, b, c refer to the probability values relating to Lago di Monticchio both for both Method B(MA_phi4) and for Method C (MA_agg), as they have equal probabilities. Fig. 5d, e, f refer to the probability values related to Lake Ohrid for Method B (MA_phi4). Fig. 5g, h, i refer to the probability values related to Lake Ohrid for Method C (MA_agg maps).

In order to fit the problem into a linear regression framework, a 'link function' is used so that the forecast is actually the probability of tephra being observed. Here we use the logit link function, which works out as

$$P(obs) = \frac{\exp(Y)}{1 + \exp(Y)} \quad (4)$$

where $P(obs)$ is the probability of observing a tephra, and Y is the result of the linear regression. Equation (*) maps $Y \in (-\infty, \infty)$ to $P(obs) \in (0, 1)$. If our models are accurate, there should be a very strong correlation between the probabilities produced from the maps and those of the logistic regression.

The best test of the models is to find that they synthesise all the useful information about the likelihood of tephra observation. However, there are a number of possible independent (predictor) variables that may provide information about the likelihood of observing a tephra including, but not necessarily limited to, the distance, the column height, the age of the tephra (a proxy for preservation), degrees off axis from the prevailing wind, whether the location corresponds to a lake or a marine core and the identity of the volcano. The first 4 factors are continuous variables, the last two categorical.

The probability maps MA_phi4 and MA_agg, relating to the source of Somma Vesuvius were mainly used. However, this methodology requires more data than those present in just the two lake sediment cores, and an extension to more eruptions, which is only possible by considering additional volcanoes. Considering this need of the model and taking into consideration the wind distribution diagrams built in relation to our study area (Fig. 4), which did not show particular differences in the various areas of the Mediterranean, we can use the same maps

with a simple translation from values of the coordinates of Somma Vesuvius to those of the other three eruptive sources, Mount Etna, the Aeolian Islands and Campi Flegrei.

Specifically, to consider other volcanoes besides Somma Vesuvius, we determined the coordinate change needed to move the new considered volcano to the Somma Vesuvius position, and then we applied this coordinate transformation also to the core position, creating a new pseudo-location also for the various deposits considered. It is also important to underline that the general topography has been neglected, in fact cases are taken into consideration in which the topographic altitude of the eruptive vent is higher than the general topographic difference in level. Specifically, the MA_phi4 and MA_agg maps relating to the source of Somma Vesuvius were also used in relation to the eruptive sources of Mount Etna, the Aeolian Islands and Campi Flegrei. In first approximation, we neglect the potential effect of topography (that is, the altitude of the potential vents), including for Mount Etna. The consideration of more eruptive sources within the model also becomes useful for taking into consideration a greater amount and range of eruption source parameters relating to the tephra found in cores positioned in a different area than the dispersion zone towards the east of Somma Vesuvius.

The additional cores considered are (Fig. 1a): KET80-04, KET80-03, KET80-11, TIR2000-C1, C1, CP10BC, UM42BC, V1069, RC9-191, TEA C-6, GT2, GT89-3, MD 90-918, AD91-17, IN68-5, CSS00-12, COS00-7, MD 9091-7, SA03-11, SW104-ND, IN68-9, COS01-16, AMC99-7 (Paterne et al., 1988; Di Roberto et al., 2008; Insinga et al., 2019; Di Donato et al., 2019; Crocitti et al., 2018; Castagnoli, 1990; Caron et al., 2012; Marchini et al., 2014; Calanchi and Dinelli, 2008; Siani et al., 2004; Matthews et al., 2015; Jalali et al., 2018).

The dependent variable considered in the logistic regression model is the presence or absence of tephra in the core sample, using all known eruptions from Somma Vesuvius, Campi Flegrei, Mount Etna, and the Aeolian Islands that occurred between 39 ka and 1779 CE. In order to determine whether the observation pattern is satisfactorily explained by the probability values determined by the maps at the cores' sample point, we include in the initial model other potential explanatory variables:

- Heights of the eruptive columns associated with the defined explosive eruptions;
- Distances (km) and azimuth (in degrees off-axis from the prevailing wind) between the cores and the eruptive sources;
- Age, as a proxy/test for incompleteness;
- A differential preservation effect, allowing for lakes to preserve more tephra than ocean cores;
- A volcano-specific term, as a test of homogeneity.

The goal of this logistic regression model is to consider the effects of the dependent variables, including the significance associated to each of these factors (Kereszturi et al., 2017), and compare the probability results of the MA_phi4 and MA_agg maps with the tephrostratigraphic data, thus determining which of the two maps/methods best models the observed dispersion of volcanic ash.

Potential model deficiencies would be indicated by significant terms involving distance, azimuth or column height, as these factors are built into the model. A significant age effect would suggest a preservation bias. Preservation has to be corrected for lake cores, which should preserve more tephra, hence the indicator for this. Finally, a significant of the volcano-specific term effect would indicate that the spatial transformation used is inappropriate.

For the case of MA_phi4 maps, stepwise regression yielded a model (significant terms only):

$$P(\text{observed}) = \frac{e^Y}{1 + e^Y} \quad (5)$$

$$\text{with } Y = 1.794I_{\text{LAKE}} - 0.00306D + 0.647 \log \frac{p}{1-p} \quad (6)$$

where $I_{\text{LAKE}} = 1$ if the site is a lake, 0 if a marine core, D is distance from the volcano in km, and p is the forecast probability from the map model. The P -values for the terms were < 0.001 for I_{LAKE} , 0.009 for p (i.e., the model/map) and 0.018 for D . This means that the probability map explains all the dependencies, with the exception of the impact on preservation that occurs for lake samples (as expected) and a residual dependency on the distance that is not fully captured by the map. The R-squared value was 15.9%, indicating a high degree of random variability expected in the process. All the other investigated features are found not significant, meaning that the model accounts for all the information contained in them. In particular, age (P value = 0.316) is found non significant, meaning that wind distribution is representative enough also for older eruptions. The individual volcano terms had P -values between 0.581 and 0.723, meaning that the coordinate transformation is sufficient, and no further corrections (including for topography) are required. Eruptive column height, volume and azimuth were not significant too, with P -values of 0.932, 0.288 and 0.584, respectively, indicating that the map probabilities have incorporated all the useful information from them, and no missing trends exist.

Based on these results, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- The probabilities derived from the maps show a significant positive correlation with the presence of tephra in the core samples and are thus a satisfactory rendering of the dispersal pattern for our purposes.
- The age of the tephra does not appear to influence its preservation within the core samples. However, as expected, it is more likely to

find volcanic tephra in lake cores than in marine cores under similar eruptive conditions.

- The model successfully considers column height and azimuth as factors influencing the presence of tephra. These variables have insignificant coefficients in the model, indicating that they play no additional role in predicting the presence of ash.
- Also regarding the data on volumes, they appear to be a variable that does not influence the prediction of the presence of ash, as they present a P -value = 0.288. Furthermore, during the construction of the model, only 65% of the estimates of the volume of the eruptions were retrieved from the bibliography, compared to 100% of the data relating to the heights of the columns which allowed the use of more analysable data. Therefore, data relating to eruption volumes are found to be insignificant in the model.
- In contrast, distance, although incorporated in the model in a somewhat stylized manner, has a residual effect. The coefficient is negative, indicating that tephra is slightly less likely to be observed with increasing distance than the map suggests.
- The model does not show significant differences across the eruptive sources. This suggests that the model's predictive power is consistent across different eruptive centres. It also implies that the model can be applied to other volcanic areas to predict the presence of ash.

Subsequently, the binary logistic regression model was also used to test whether the incorporation of ash aggregation via the MA_agg maps better explained the observations with the aim of incorporating the study of coarser tephtras into the model. Aggregation acts through time, accelerating the fall of particles, thus it may impact the decrease-with-distance of probability, eventually correcting the residual dependence not sufficiently modelled so far.

The logistic regression model is the same type as the one described above for the MA_phi4 maps. In this case, the α value in the stepwise regression was set to 0.15 after eruptive volume (with 276 missing values) was deleted. Moreover, in this analysis, both the MA_phi4 and MA_agg maps were considered as predictors. The one selected by the stepwise procedure would be the one that provides the better fit.

The observed probabilities are calculated using the eq. (4), but with

$$Y = -0.773 + 1.584I_{\text{LAKE}} - 0.00195D + 0.507 \log \frac{p}{1-p} \quad (7)$$

where the selected map (last term) term was the MA_agg map. The P -values were 0.008 (Constant = -0.773), < 0.001 (p and I_{LAKE}) and 0.049 (D). Therefore, there is a significant agreement of data with the map, with the exception of the impact on preservation that occurs for lake samples, which is not included in the map and therefore it is expected to remain. This model somewhat corrects the residual dependence on distance, pushing the p -value to more acceptable levels (> 0.01). Age, azimuth, column height and volcano were all not significant terms, with p -values larger than 0.05. The R-squared value is equal to 10.29%.

Based on these results, the following conclusions can be made:

- The MA_agg method is a better description of the ash deposition, and using it renders the residual distance effect as less significant. The introduction of a constant is due to the sea cores now having a non-zero intercept.
- Using the MA_agg maps thus appears to extract the maximum of information from the available eruption source parameters. This indicates that this model can be applied to any volcanic zone characterized by ash dispersion, and best explains the decay and deposition of volcanic particles at a given distance from the eruptive source.
- It can therefore be concluded that, through this methodology, the probability to find a tephra particle of a given size at a given distance from the source can be modelled considering only the probability values derived through Method C, without analyzing other variables.

These results show that Method C is able to correctly capture all the main features emerging from data. In particular, differently from Method B, Method C is able to correctly model the attenuation with distance, highlighting the importance of including the aggregation effect to correctly capture long-range tephra deposits. Consequently, Method C is selected as the final implementation for PROMETHEUS.

4. Conclusions

PROMETHEUS is a simplified model that creates maps allowing us to determine the probability of finding a specific grain size of tephra at a certain distance from the eruptive source. The model is first validated based on Holocene eruptions of Somma-Vesuvius (from eruption of the Pomici di Base to the 1944 eruption), then with previously published marine and terrestrial cores in central Mediterranean, considering as potential sources Somma Vesuvius, Mount Etna, the Aeolian Islands and Campi Flegrei. The model is easy to apply, requires only basic information about high altitude winds, and it can be spatially translated to be applied to multiple volcanic sources in a given area. The validation is made assuming as correct the heights of the eruptive columns present in the literature, the stable winds relating to the last 22 ka and the vertical fall of the volcanic particles both in the sea and in the lakes. Several configuration of the models were tested, and the validation study allowed concluding that the aggregation of the particles (MA_agg maps) dominates the distribution and deposition in space, especially in areas distant from the volcano compared to other particle sizes.

This model turns out to be very useful for new volcanological studies, allowing us to better understand, thanks also to new technologies, the different eruptive histories of volcanic springs. Importantly, “Prometheus” was designed to be playable in any location. Among the data used, topography is neglected (Scollo et al., 2008). The validation demonstrated that this has been possible also for cases with significant topography, like Mt. Etna. In any case, the cases in which the topographic elevation of the eruptive vent is higher than the general topographic difference in height can be taken into consideration. Furthermore, only the easily downloadable ERA5 data relating to the wind intensity and direction characteristics and the information relating to the tephra recognized in the proximal and distal areas with respect to the volcano are used as input.

This model can be used in single volcanoes to deepen a study relating to the completeness of the eruptive catalog, similarly to what we have done in the validation study for the catalog of Somma Vesuvius from eruption of the Pomici di Base to the 1944 eruption. This model will also be useful because, through the comparison of probability maps with tephrostratigraphy of marine and terrestrial cores, it will guide the location of sampling sites for a given tephra deposit and the related type of explosive eruption. By also considering longer periods of time, it will be possible to increase and improve the completeness of the eruption catalogs and better recognize the different eruptive histories.

Author agreement statement

We the undersigned declare that this manuscript is original, has not been published before and is not currently being considered for publication elsewhere.

We confirm that the manuscript has been read and approved by all named authors and that there are no other persons who satisfied the criteria for authorship but are not listed. We further confirm that the order of authors listed in the manuscript has been approved by all of us.

We understand that the Corresponding Author is the sole contact for the Editorial process. He/she is responsible for communicating with the other authors about progress, submissions of revisions and final approval of proofs.

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Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

Data availability

Data will be made available on request. All the data necessary to evaluate the conclusions of the document are present in the document.

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