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1 **Monitoring and forecasting hazards from a slow growing**
2 **lava dome using aerial imagery, tri-stereo Pleiades-1A/B**
3 **imagery and PDC numerical simulation.**

4
5 *Yves Moussallam^{1,2*}, Talfan Barnie³, Álvaro Amigo⁴, Karim Kelfoun², Felipe Flores⁵, Luis*
6 *Franco⁵, Carlos Cardona⁵, Loreto Cordova⁵, Virginia Toloza⁵*

7
8 ¹ *Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, Columbia University, New York, USA*

9 ² *Université Clermont Auvergne, CNRS, IRD, OPGC, Laboratoire Magmas et Volcans, F-63000 Clermont-*
10 *Ferrand, France*

11 ³ *Nordic Volcanological Center, Institute of Earth Sciences, Sturlugata 7 – Askja, 101 Reykjavik, Iceland*

12 ⁴ *Servicio Nacional de Geología y Minería (SERNAGEOMIN). Red Nacional de Vigilancia Volcánica, Santiago,*
13 *Chile*

14 ⁵ *Observatorio Vulcanológico de los Andes del Sur, Servicio Nacional de Geología y Minería, Temuco, 03850,*
15 *Chile*

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17
18 *Corresponding author: Yves Moussallam; yves.moussallam@ldeo.columbia.edu

19
20 **Keywords:** structure from motion; volcanic dome; photogrammetry; dome collapse; dome
21 growth; pyroclastic flow

22

23 ABSTRACT

24 In December of 2017, a lava dome emerged at the Nevados de Chillan volcanic complex in
25 the southern Andean volcanic zone, Chile, at the base of a summit crater excavated by
26 explosions during two preceding years of unrest. This posed a number of potential hazards to
27 the surrounding touristic region, so the eruption was carefully monitored. Structure from
28 Motion techniques were used to generate DEMs from satellite and aerial images, from which
29 several useful measurements could be made. Dome growth was characterised at an
30 unprecedented resolution, allowing for the calculation of discharge rates and effusion rates in
31 near real time. A simple model fit to the distance between the dome and crater rim predicted
32 relatively accurately the arrival of the dome toe at the crater rim and the onset of dome
33 collapse outside the crater. Simulations of the path and extent that potential pyroclastic
34 density currents (PDC) generated by dome collapse would follow showed that PDC were not
35 directly threatening populated areas. Over its life cycle as of August 2019, the dome growth
36 was punctuated by frequent explosions, averaging around 30 per day, one of which generated
37 a minor 600 m long PDC on 13 to 15 of July 2018. There appears to be a positive correlation
38 between explosion frequency and lava dome growth rate suggesting that both explosive and
39 effusive processes can coexist, operating at different timescales but responding to the same
40 driving force. A positive correlation is apparent between dome growth rate and seismic
41 activity such as the frequency of tremor and long-period earthquakes suggesting that these
42 might be used as proxies to estimate effusion rate. Initial lava dome effusion rates of $1730 \pm$
43 $110 \text{ m}^3/\text{day}$ in January 2018 declined to $100 \pm 150 \text{ m}^3/\text{day}$ in June 2019. These growth rates
44 are extremely slow when compared to other lava domes, about 300 to 600 times slower than
45 the lava domes at Mt Unzen (1992) and Mt. St. Helens (1980).

46 **Highlights:**

- 47 • Ultra-high-resolution DEM and time series of lava dome growth
- 48 • Real time forecasting of initiation of dome gravitational instability
- 49 • Simulations of PDC from dome collapse show no immediate threat to populated areas
- 50 • Simultaneity of explosive and effusive activities, positively correlated
- 51 • Strong positive correlation between effusion rate and seismic event frequencies

52

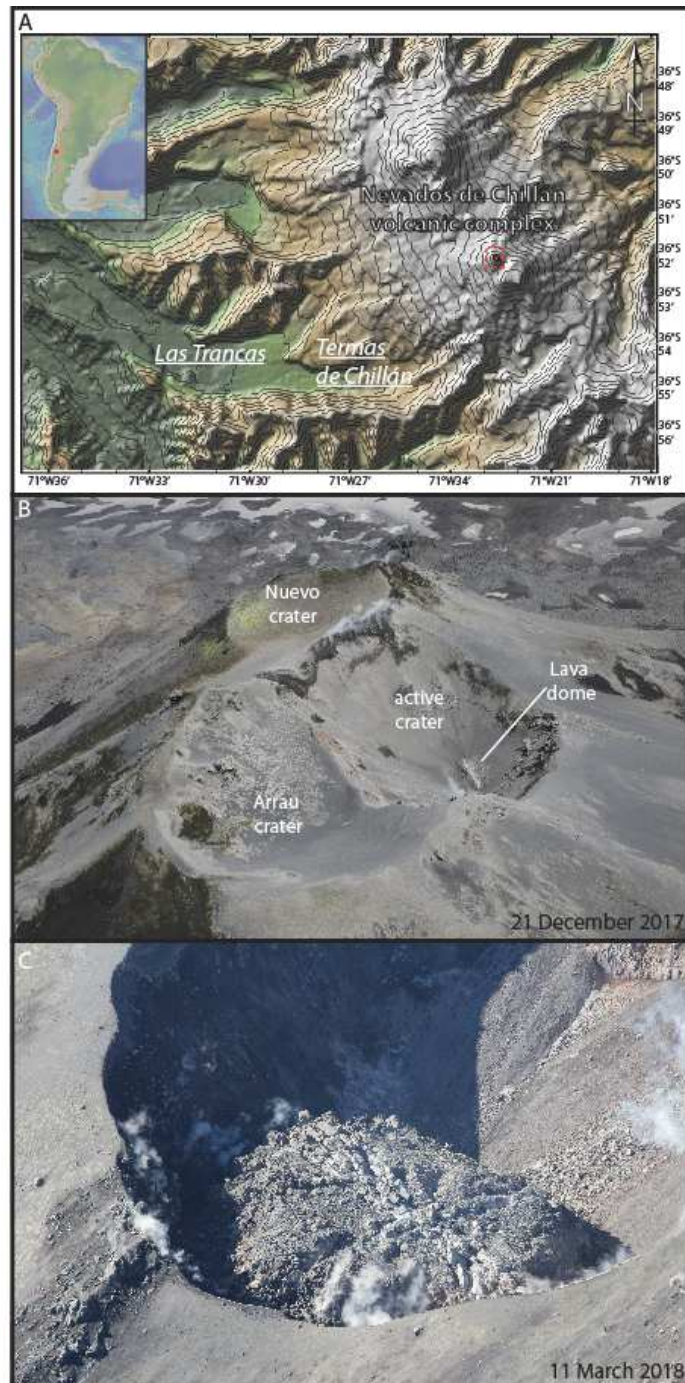
53 1. INTRODUCTION

54 Lava domes form by the slow effusion of typically felsic and viscous magma at the surface
55 and are commonly associated with hazardous phenomena. The most common hazard is the
56 formation of pyroclastic density currents generated by partial or complete collapse of the
57 dome, also termed Merapi-type pyroclastic flows. Examples of these types of flow include the
58 1991 eruption period at Unzen volcano (e.g., Sato et al., 1992), the 1994 eruption period at
59 Merapi volcano (e.g., Abdurachman et al., 2000), the 1996-97 eruption period at Soufriere
60 Hills volcano (e.g., Cole et al., 1998) and the 1998–99 eruption period at Colima volcano
61 (e.g., Saucedo et al., 2002). Lava domes can also be associated with explosive eruptions and
62 blast generating Peléan-type pyroclastic flows such as in the 1956 eruption at Bezymianny
63 volcano (e.g., Gorshkov, 1959), the 1980 eruption at Mt St. Helens volcano (e.g., Lipman and
64 Mullineaux, 1981), the 1991 eruption period at Unzen volcano (e.g., Sato et al., 1992), the
65 1997 eruption at Soufriere Hills volcano (e.g., Woods et al., 2002) and the 2010 eruption at
66 Merapi volcano (e.g., Komorowski et al., 2013). Monitoring the growth and behaviour of
67 active lava domes is therefore of primal importance to forecast potential explosive events and
68 mitigate their hazards.

69

70 In late December 2017 (exact date unknown), after two years of increased activity with
71 frequent eruptions propelled by the emplacement of a small intrusion of magma at shallow
72 level (Moussallam et al., 2018), lava reached the surface at the Nevados de Chillán volcanic
73 complex forming a small lava dome (Fig. 1). Subsequent growth of the lava dome was
74 monitored by bimonthly helicopter overflights operated by the Observatorio Volcanológico de
75 Los Andes del Sur (OVDAS), part of the Servicio Nacional de Geología y Minería
76 (SERNAGEOMIN). As helicopter flights became unavailable to continue the monitoring, we
77 tasked the monthly acquisition of Pleiades-1 tri-stereo optical imagery. We used aerial

78 photographs taken during observation flights and tri-stereo optical imagery to construct ultra-
79 high-resolution digital elevation models (DEM) of the summit area and precisely measure the
80 dome growth rate and extruded volume over a period of nineteen months. During this period,
81 we used these measurements to forecast the onset and location of rock fall events. Finally, we
82 performed numerical modelling to predict the extent of PDC that would be generated by a
83 potential dome collapse or large explosion in order to assess hazard to nearby population.



84

85 **Figure 1:** A: DEM of the Nevados de Chillán Volcanic Complex and surrounding valleys
 86 (Global Multi-Resolution Topography grid version 3.8 source: GeoMapApp). The towns of
 87 Las Trancas and Termas de Chillán (combined permanent populations of 1600 rising to
 88 30,000 during the tourist season) are shown. Contour lines are drawn every 100 meters and
 89 go from 3200 to 600 m. Red circle shows the location of the active crater, red dashed
 90 rectangle shows the location of the view shown in (B). B: Aerial photograph taken on 21

91 *December 2017 looking W-NW. The emergence of an ellipsoid-shaped lava dome (35 m long*
92 *by 22 m wide) with a central fissure can be seen in the centre of the newly formed crater (see*
93 *Moussallam et al., 2018 for detailed eruption history and formation of the new crater). C:*
94 *Aerial photograph taken on 11 March 2018 looking south and showing the now 119 m long*
95 *by 79 m wide lava dome. The central crease structure can be observed with lava flowing away*
96 *from both directions. Crater's dimensions are 205 by 155 m.*

97 **2. METHODS**

98 In this paper we (i) apply Structure from Motion (SfM) to make measurements of dome
99 volume and geometry from stereo images, (ii) fit Bayesian models to these measurements
100 using Hamiltonian Monte Carlo techniques to estimate effusion rates and predict the start of
101 dome collapse, and (iii) use 2 layer numerical modelling of pyroclastic flows to predict the
102 potential extent of dome collapse. We discuss each of these three techniques in the following
103 sections.

104

105 **2.1 Digital Elevation Model generation**

106 *Aerial photogrammetry*

107 Helicopter flights were performed on 21 December 2017, 09 January 2018, 12 January 2018,
108 16 January 2018, 23 January 2018, 07 February 2018, 22 February 2018, 11 March 2018, 4th
109 April 2018, 18th April 2018, 16 July 2018 and 9th August 2019. Flight height was typically
110 around 3400 to 3700 m altitude and circular flight paths were performed around the summit
111 area in order for aerial photograph to capture the lava dome from all angles (Fig. S1).
112 Cameras were operated manually. Cameras used to take the photograph were equipped with
113 GNSS (GPS of accuracy strictly better than 10m) to provide an approximate position of the
114 camera. 3D models were constructed after each helicopter overflight using the Agisoft
115 Metashape (Agisoft LLC., St. Petersburg, Russia) modelling software (Fig. S1). The Structure

116 from Motion (SfM) software identifies and matches scale invariant features in each images,
117 performs bundle adjustments to refine the camera positions and construct a georeferenced
118 dense point cloud. The georeferenced dense point cloud is then (1) processed with soft-copy
119 triangulation to reconstruct the scene geometry and create a solid 3D mesh (e.g., Burns et al.,
120 2015) and (2) used to construct a DEM. On several occasions however, the internal camera
121 GPS did not work and georeferencing was achieved using easily identifiable features in
122 previously reconstructed DEM as Ground Control Points (GCPs). Pixel resolution on the
123 DEMs varied from 10 cm to 1 m (see supplementary table S1 for details).

124

125 *Tri-stereo satellite optical imagery processing*

126 The PLEIADES constellation consists of two satellites in Low Earth Orbit imaging the Earth
127 at 0.7 m resolution across a 20 km wide swath in the panchromatic band. The satellites are
128 particularly agile, allowing them to acquire multiple images of a target from different angles
129 during a single overpass (Gleyzes et al., 2012). This stereoscopic facility has been extensively
130 used to measure volcanic deposit volumes (e.g. Bagnardi et al., 2016; Di Traglia et al., 2018;
131 Carrara et al., 2019; Ganci et al., 2019a, 2019b). Pleiades images were acquired in tristero
132 mode (three views from one overpass) at roughly monthly intervals from October 2018 to
133 June 2019. Images acquired in February and April 2019 had views of the dome obscured by
134 degassing activity and could not be used to generate DEMs.

135

136 We used the MicMac Structure from Motion software suite (Rupnik et al., 2017) to create the
137 DEMs, following the Pleiades examples in Pierrot-Deseilligny et al., (2014), which we
138 summarise briefly here. First the Rational Polynomial Coefficients (RPCs) which are supplied
139 by the data provider and define the polynomial functions that map 3D geographic space to 2D
140 image space were converted to MicMac format using Convert2GenBundle. Then matching

141 points are automatically found across all possible pairs of images. This is accomplished using
142 the Tapioca tool in ‘All’ mode, which uses the Sift+ (Scale Invariant Feature Transform)
143 algorithm (Lowe, 2004) to find tie points. For this step the images were scaled to a width of
144 10000 (a scaling factor of ~0.5) to save memory. These tie points overdetermine the location
145 and orientation of the imaging systems and so can be used to improve the estimated RPCs
146 using a least squares Levenberg-Marquardt minimization, implemented in the Campari module,
147 improving their accuracy – this is also known as Bundle Block Adjustment. Finally, the DEM
148 is generated from the images using the adjusted RPCs with Ann matching by the Malt tool
149 using the dense matching module UrbanNME.

150

151 Vertical precision for both Aerial and Pleiades DEMs were estimated by randomly sampling
152 one hundred points over a stable area (Nuevo crater) and interpolating values at these points
153 for all DEMs, the median height for each sampling point was calculated and subtracted from
154 each height to give a collection of deviations from the median for each point (Fig. S2). The
155 median of all the aerial and Pleiades absolute deviations were then taken, to give the Median
156 Absolute Deviation, or MAD statistic, which came to 1.00 m for Pleiades and 0.476 m for
157 aerial DEMs.

158

159 **2.2 DEM alignment**

160 The aerial and Pleiades DEMs were found to be misaligned with standard topographic models
161 such as Shuttle Radar Topography Mission (SRTM, Farr et al., 2007), as well as misaligned
162 with each other. We aligned our DEMs using the pc_align tool of the NASA Ames Stereo
163 Pipeline software suite (Shean et al., 2016), using the Similarity-Point-to-Point Iterative
164 Closest Point (ICP) alignment method. This solves for rotation, translation and scaling to
165 align one DEM with another. The area to be used for alignment was selected by masking out

166 areas where the DEMs showed evidence of change, was noisy, interpolated or otherwise
167 noticeably inaccurate (Fig. S3). For the dome, we then aligned the 21st December 2017 DEM
168 with SRTM, and aligned all subsequent DEMs with the aligned 21st December DEM. This
169 ensured all our DEMs were aligned with each other as well as being at roughly the right
170 geographic location and scale. In early 2019 it became apparent that a gulley was developing
171 below the dome with a depositional fan at the distal end, which could potentially account for
172 some of the erupted volume. We found that DEMs aligned using the area around the dome
173 were poorly aligned around the gulley and fan, and vice versa, so the DEMs were aligned
174 again using an area surrounding the gulley and fan (Fig. S3). Only data from 16th January
175 2019 onwards reliably and systematically covered the whole feature, so the 16th January 2019
176 DEM was chosen as our reference and all subsequent DEMs were aligned with that.

177

178 **2.3 DEM differencing**

179 For the dome, we took the 21st Dec 2017 DEM as our reference surface, above which all
180 volumes are measured. This DEM was then resampled to and subtracted from every other
181 aligned DEM, using the ASP geodiff tool to give a time series of differential DEMs (dDEMs)
182 each with the resolution of the newer DEM. These are effectively thickness maps of the dome
183 at given dates relative to our 21st Dec 2017 reference surface. For the gulley and fan, we took
184 the 16th January 2019 DEM as our reference surface and differenced all successive DEMs
185 with it. Histograms of the dDEMs over stable regions are shown in Fig S4 giving the Median
186 Absolute Deviation (MAD) and standard deviation for each dDEM.

187

188 **2.4 Volume calculations**

189 Dome volumes were calculated by digitising each dome and integrating the dDEMs over
190 these shapes. We estimated uncertainties in these volumes by moving the plan shapes of each

191 dome to a neighbouring crater that is well resolved in all the DEMs (Arrau crater, in Figure
192 1b), but doesn't show any appreciable topographic change, and measuring the volume for all
193 dDEMs. This gives a number of estimates of a 'dome' of zero volume for each dome shape,
194 from which we took the standard deviation as the error. For the gulley and fan a similar
195 procedure was performed where we moved the shape delineating the feature to nearby regions
196 where no significant volume change is expected. We measured the net volume of the gulley
197 and fan to try to estimate the volume of fresh volcanic material present. The hope being that
198 the negative contribution of material removed from the gulley is compensated by the net
199 positive contribution of deposition in the fan. In reality, remobilised material is unlikely to
200 pack back down to the same volume, so it is likely that the values would be an overestimate –
201 we discuss this further in the results section.

202

203 **2.5 Time Averaged Discharge Rates**

204 Time Averaged Discharge Rates (TADRs) (defined after Harris et al., 2007) were calculated
205 by differencing successive volumes and dividing by the time interval between them.
206 Uncertainties in TADR were found by simple propagation of errors.

207

208 **2.6 Effusion rates**

209 Effusion rates (or the instantaneous discharge rate) were calculated by fitting a model to the
210 time series of volumes and finding its derivative. In the absence of an obvious physical model
211 to fit to the data we chose a Gaussian Process (or GP), which can be considered a distribution
212 over functions (Görtler et al., 2019); an infinite dimensional multivariate normal distribution
213 where each dimension maps to a point in the domain on which we wish to define a function.
214 We adopt a Bayesian approach to fitting the GP, where we seek to calculate the posterior
215 distribution, $p(\theta \vee d)$, over the parameters θ of our model in light of our data, d :

216

217

$$p(\theta|d) = \frac{p(d \vee \theta)p(\theta)}{p(d)}$$

218

219 Where $p(d \vee \theta)$ is the likelihood, $p(\theta)$ is the prior distribution over the parameter space and220 $p(d)$ is effectively a normalising constant that can be ignored. The GP is defined by the

221 kernel function that is used to calculate the covariance matrix of any multinormally

222 distributed subset of variables in the GP, and here we choose the simple squared exponential

223 kernel function:

224

$$K_{ij} = \alpha^2 \exp\left(\frac{-1}{2\rho^2}(t_i - t_j)^2\right)$$

225

226 Where K_{ij} is the ij^{th} element of the covariance matrix K that specifies the covariance227 between points t_i and t_j , and α and ρ are ‘hyperparameters’ that specify the variability and

228 length scale of the functions drawn from the GP. Gaussian processes have the property that

229 their derivatives are also GPs and so can be included in the covariance matrix (e.g., Riihimäki

230 and Vehtari, 2010) provided the kernel function is modified appropriately for the ij elements

231 where one or both points are gradients:

232

$$K'_{ij} = \alpha^2 \exp\left(\frac{-1}{2\rho^2}(t_i - t_j)^2\right) \left(\frac{-1}{\rho^2}(t_i - t_j)\right)$$

233

$$K''_{ij} = \alpha^2 \exp\left(\frac{-1}{2\rho^2}(t_i - t_j)^2\right) \frac{1}{\rho^2} \left(1 - \frac{1}{\rho^2}(t_i - t_j)^2\right)$$

234

235 Where K'_{ij} is the ij^{th} element of the covariance matrix where the i^{th} element is a gradient and236 K''_{ij} is that where both the i^{th} and j^{th} elements are gradients. We thus have a model parameter237 space with dimensions of θ , α , ρ , V , V' . We use a non centred model (Betancourt and

238 Girolami, 2013; Papaspiliopoulos et al., 2007) as this is computationally easier and can avoid
 239 some problems during Monte Carlo sampling. Briefly, in a non-centered GP model we place
 240 an independent and unit-normally distributed prior on our volumes V_i and gradients V_i' at our
 241 points t_i and transform them using the Cholesky factor of the covariance matrix. The model
 242 was fit to standardised data, and the following priors were selected:

243

$$244 \quad p(\alpha) \text{ normal}(0,1)$$

$$245 \quad p(\rho) \text{ inv}_{\text{gamma}}(5,5)$$

$$246 \quad \eta \text{ normal}(0,1)$$

$$247 \quad K = k(\alpha, \rho)$$

$$248 \quad L = \text{Cholesky}(K)$$

$$249 \quad \begin{pmatrix} V \\ V' \end{pmatrix} = L \cdot \eta$$

250 For the likelihood, we assume our measured volumes are distributed about those predicted by
 251 the GP by their observed uncertainties as calculated above in section 2.4:

252

$$253 \quad V_{i,obs} \text{ normal}(V_i, \sigma_{i,obs})$$

254

255 This model was implemented in the Stan probabilistic programming language (Carpenter et
 256 al., 2017), which uses Hamiltonian Monte Carlo to draw samples. These samples were then
 257 used to calculate expectations over the posterior distribution (or PD) such as the mean and
 258 standard deviation at our points of interest t_i, t_j . Additionally, for every sample V_i we generate
 259 an additional sample $V_i + \text{normal}(0, \sigma_i)$ which gives us a draw from the Posterior Predictive
 260 Distribution (PPD). One can think of the PD as giving the best estimate of the volumes and
 261 effusion rates in light of our priors and data, while PDD gives the measurements we might
 262 expect to make given the above, and, additionally, the measurement error.

263

264 **2.6 Predicting the onset of dome collapse**

265 During the first months of extrusive activity, the lava dome was filling and remained
 266 contained in a crater formed by the last two years of explosive activity (Moussallam et al.,
 267 2018). As long as the dome was contained within this crater there were no external reason for
 268 it to become unstable and collapse (i.e. the dome might still become unstable due to internal
 269 overpressure but not due to gravity). In April 2018, DEMs produced by aerial
 270 photogrammetry and resulting growth rates were used to forecast future dome growth and the
 271 time at which the dome was expected to reach the crater rim, hence becoming partially
 272 unstable and starting to generate rock falls (Fig. 5). To predict the time at which this was to
 273 happen, we developed a simple conceptual model of the dome growth in a geometry
 274 constrained by an inverted conical-shaped crater of height H , radius R , volume V and half
 275 angle θ (Fig. 5 C). Within the crater, the level of the foot of the dome forms a horizontal
 276 surface at height h , of radius r , that forms the top of a smaller inverted cone of volume v . The
 277 horizontal distance d between the dome edge and crater rim can be expressed as a function of
 278 effusion rate E and time t as:

$$279 \quad d = R - \sqrt[3]{\frac{3E \tan(\theta) t}{\pi}}$$

280 Using this relationship, we then fitted the data presented in Fig. 5A using a function of the
 281 form:

$$282 \quad d = A - \sqrt[3]{B(t - t_0)}$$

283

284 As before the model was fitted using Stan, as above, although in this instance flat priors were
 285 used.

286 **2.7 Computer simulation of dome-collapse and explosion induced PDC**

287 During the extrusive activity, a possible scenario was that as the lava dome growth continued,
288 larger portions of the dome might eventually become gravitationally unstable and partial or
289 complete dome collapse might occur, associated with pyroclastic density currents (PDC). In
290 order to determine the spatial area likely to be affected by potential PDC we used the two-
291 fluids version of the VolcFlow numerical model (Kelfoun, 2017; Kelfoun et al., 2017) that
292 simulates concentrated part of PDC (i.e. the block-and-ash flow), the dilute part (ash-cloud
293 surge) and their interaction. Surge can be formed from the concentrated part and, inversely,
294 can form concentrated parts by sedimentation. For details on the method and on equation
295 used, the reader is referred to Kelfoun (2017).

296

297 We simulated two scenarios; a dome collapse and an explosion. For both scenarios, the total
298 volume of rocks forming the concentrated flow was of $6.4 \times 10^6 \text{ m}^3$ which is the size of the
299 Merapi 2010 Eruption. This size was used as to represent a hypothetical worst-case scenario
300 and is not related to the current dome volume which is an order of magnitude smaller.
301 Although we stress that larger eruptions are of course possible. Concentrated pyroclastic
302 currents were simulated starting from a circular zone of 50 m in radius for the dome collapse
303 scenario, and a zone of 500 m radius for the explosion scenario. These starting locations were
304 used to simulate eruption initiated by dome collapse, hence starting at the current dome
305 location in the first case and eruption from explosion that could happen anywhere within the
306 general summit location in the second case. At the source area, the initial velocity is zero. The
307 concentrated mass then accelerates along the topography forming a surge. Since model results
308 are strongly dependent on the mass rate at the source, two initial durations of genesis were
309 used for each scenario: 60 and 600 seconds. Short durations (i.e., high mass rates) simulations
310 form widespread concentrated flows and powerful surges. Long durations (i.e., low mass
311 rates) simulations form very small surges and flows, channelized in a few drainages valleys

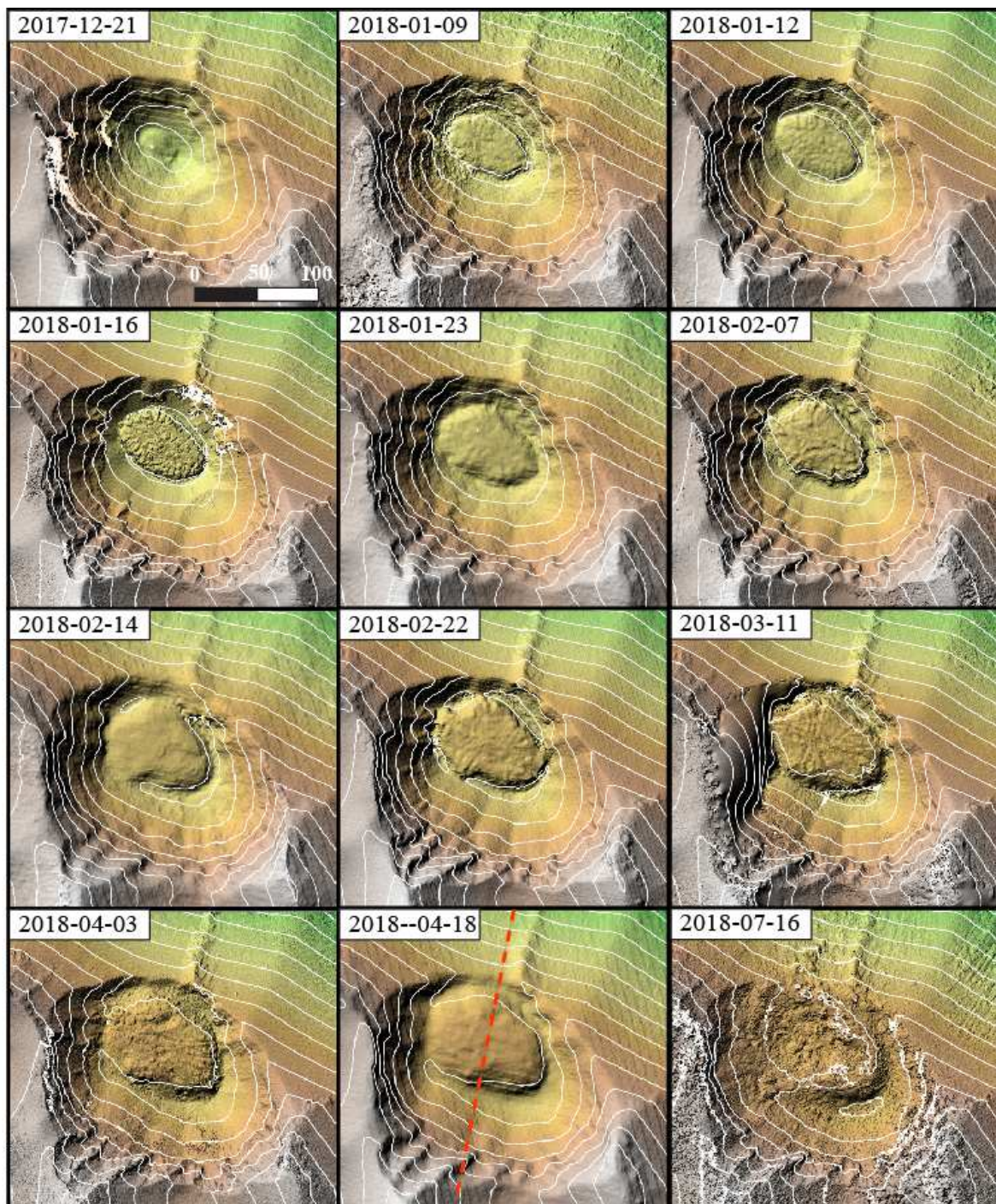
312 and reaching long distances. Fourteen parameters must be defined to run the two-fluids
313 simulation. Some parameters are known (e.g. gravity or topography) or can be estimated from
314 field observations, at least within a given range (e.g. density of the PDCs or volume of the
315 dome that collapse). Five parameters are unknown: three rheological parameters that rule the
316 PDCs dynamics, the exchange coefficient from the concentrated to the dilute PDC, and the
317 density of the mixture formed by the fine particles of the concentrated PDC with volcanic or
318 atmospheric gases. These parameters have been estimated by reproducing real emplacements
319 of the 2010 PDCs at Merapi volcano and the 1997 PDCs at Montserrat, and are similar for
320 both fields cases (Kelfoun et al., 2017; Gueugneau et al., 2019). For the present study, we
321 have chosen to use the parameters of the 2010 eruptions of Merapi volcano.

322

323 **3. RESULTS**

324 The time series of aerial and Pleiades DEMs show the growth of the dome from a small
325 mound at the base of the summit crater in December 2017 to overflowing sometime between
326 April and July 2018 (Fig. 2). Cross sections across the DEMs show the dome maintained a
327 relatively flat surface, consistent with an extruding fluid with a finite yield strength (Fig. 5B),
328 until explosions from January 2019 onwards began to excavate a crater on the top of the
329 dome. Once the dome reached the rim of its host crater, a combination of rock falls and
330 pyroclastic flows appears to have cut a gulley into the volcano's northern flank, which is
331 terminated by a depositional fan. These features are visible as negative and positive height
332 changes in the dDEMs in Fig. 3., respectively. Cross sections of the gulley and fan in the
333 DEMs reveal the progressive incision of the former and growth of the latter from March to
334 June 2019. However, it should be noted that snow is present on the lower flanks of the
335 volcano, so changes in elevation may also partially be a function of changes in snow
336 thickness.

337



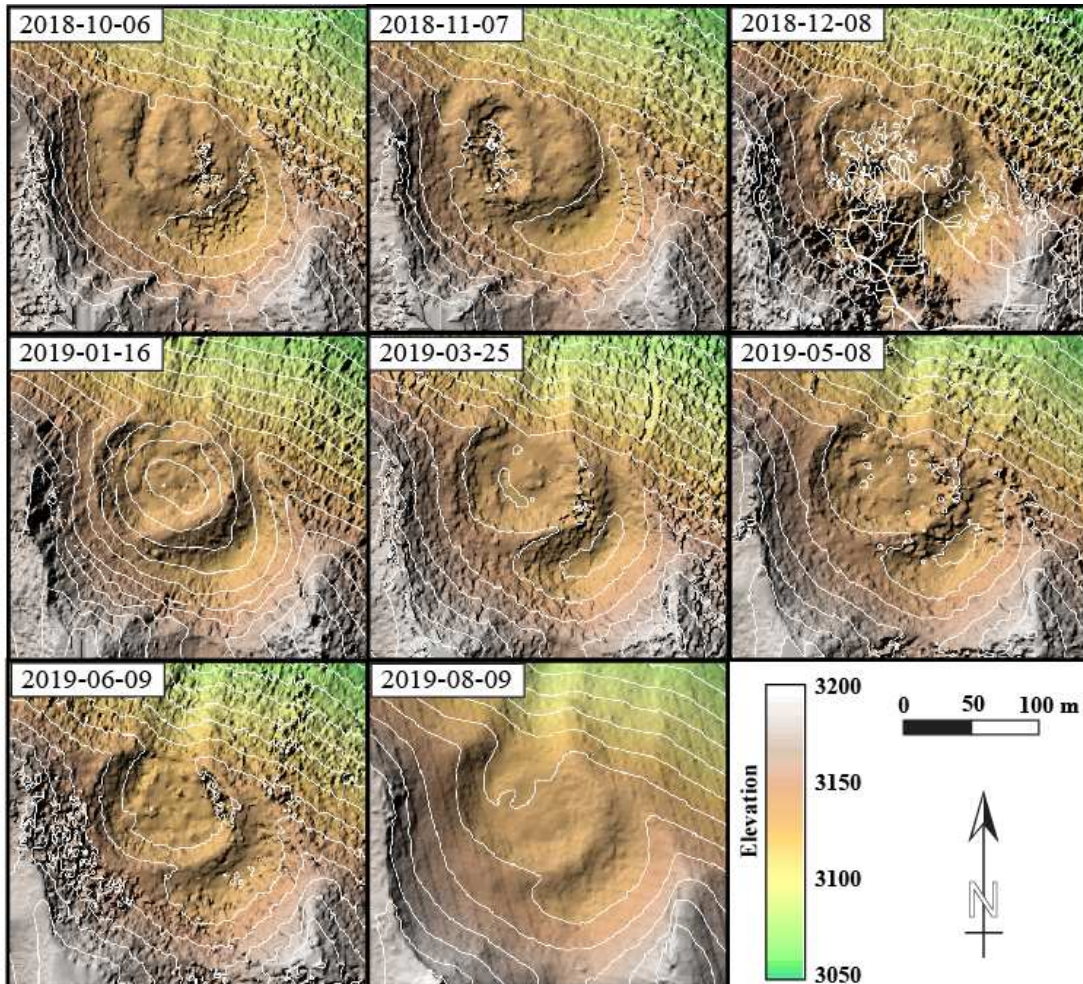
338

339 **Figure 2** (panel 1 of 2): DEMs of the summit area after helicopter observation flights and
 340 Pleiades 1 tri-stereo imaging showing the growth of the lava dome in the active crater. Red
 341 dash line shows the location of the profile in Fig. 5B. Reconstruction of the area on the west
 342 side of the dome on 11 March 2018 is inaccurate due to obstruction by gases during
 343 observation flight, so is the area from the center to the SE of the dome on 08 December 2018.

344 *Contour lines are drawn every ten meters. Contains information © CNES (2018-2019) and*

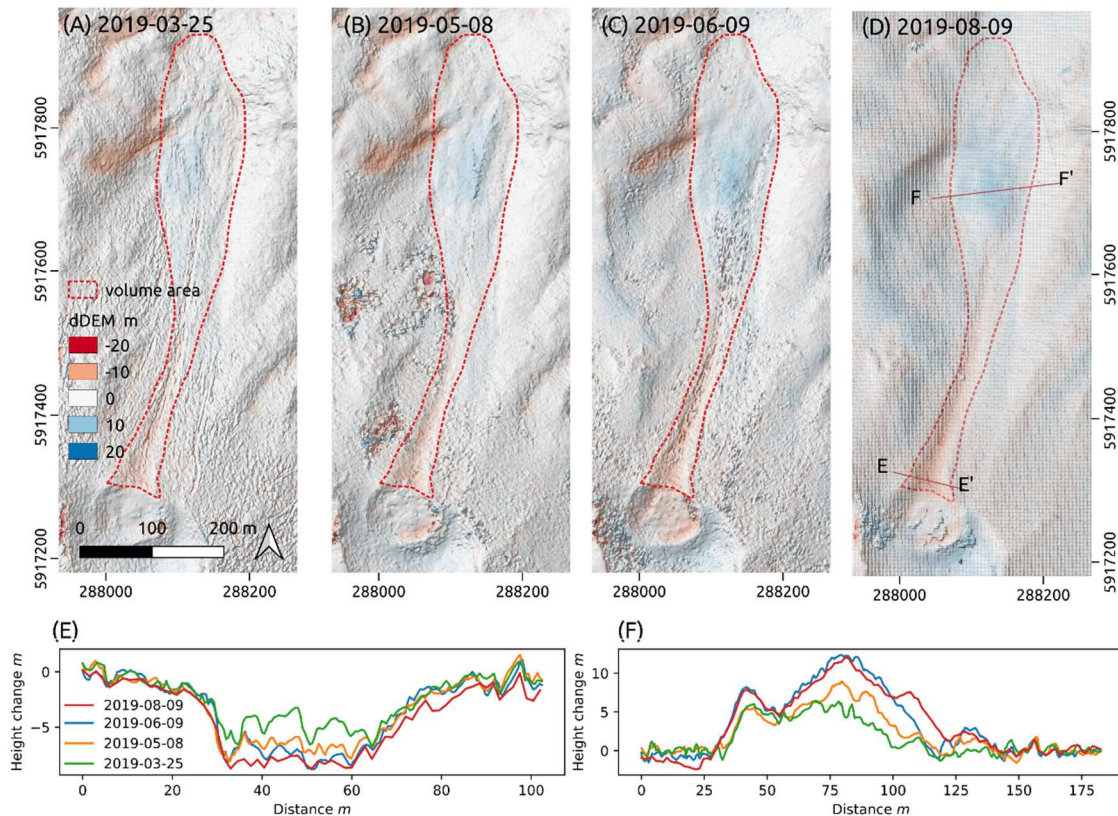
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346



347

348 *Figure 2 cont (panel 2 of 2)*



349

350 **Figure 3:** Development of the gully and fan in 2019. (A)-(D) Hillshade of Pleiades DEMs
 351 overlain on dDEM with datum taken as the 2019-01-16 dem for 2019-03-25, 2019-05-08,
 352 2019-06-09 and 2019-08-09 respectively. Red colors indicate erosion, blue deposition.
 353 Dashed red polygon shows integration area for volume calculations. Cross sections E-E'
 354 across the gully just below the dome and F-F' across the depositional fan are shown in
 355 figures (E) and (F). Note the continuous erosion of the gully in (E) and growth of the fan in
 356 (F) across the period. Contains information © CNES (2018-2019) and Airbus DS (2018-
 357 2019), all rights reserved, commercial use prohibited.

358 Dome volumes and their uncertainties are given in Table 1 and shown in Fig. 4. We were able
359 to estimate dome volumes with uncertainties of approximately 4% and 3% for Aerial and
360 Pleiades DEMs, respectively. The dome grew steadily, reaching a maximum of $3.97\text{e}5\text{m}^3$ in
361 August of 2019. A small decrease between May and June 2019 is presumably due to
362 increasing collapses and explosions. These volumes gave Time Averaged Discharge Rates
363 (TADR) values that fluctuate quite substantially, varying between $1.17\text{e}3$ and $2.39\text{e}3\text{ m}^3\text{day}^{-1}$
364 in the first 3 months, before declining over the rest of the observation period. Uncertainties in
365 TADR averaged 33% for Aerial dDEM and 121% for Pleiades dDEM, although the high
366 latter value is largely a function of low effusion rates during the Pleiades acquisition period.
367 By fitting the GP model we were able to estimate the instantaneous effusion rate, which was
368 found to be $1.73\text{e}3\text{ m}^3\text{ day}^{-1}$ on the 9th January of 2018 before declining to around $\sim 1\text{e}3\text{ m}^3$
369 day^{-1} and remaining roughly constant from early May to July 2018 before declining again
370 more rapidly in mid-2019. Effusion rate estimates using the GP model had uncertainties of
371 between 3% and 422%.

372

373 Seismic activity also shows a remarkably similar pattern to the dome effusion rate during the
374 observation period (Fig. 4D). The total number of seismic event decreases sharply during the
375 first three to four months before reaching a plateau with fairly constant activity from April
376 2018 to January 2019, followed by another period of decreasing activity from January 2019 to
377 June 2019 and increasing again in July to August 2019. The number of explosions at the
378 crater per day (Fig. 4C) also follows the same temporal evolution, averaging 60 to 40
379 explosions per day in the first three months before stabilising around 35 explosions per day
380 from April 2018 to April 2019, dropping below 20 eruptions per day in June 2019 before
381 increasing sharply in July-August 2019. A direct comparison between our modelled mean
382 monthly effusion rate and measured mean monthly numbers of seismic events is shown in

383 Fig. 5. The positive correlation between the modelled effusion rate and the frequency of long-
384 period earthquakes, explosions and tremors is apparent (with R^2 of 0.9, 0.7 and 0.5 and P-
385 values of 10^{-10} , 10^{-6} and 10^{-4} respectively). Looking in more details at Fig. 5, three different
386 regimes seem to emerge. The first is for effusion rates below ~ 100 m³/day, the number of
387 seismic events (long-period earthquakes, explosions, and tremors) is high in comparison with
388 the effusion rate and increases quickly with increasing effusion rate. The second regime, for
389 effusion rates between ~ 100 and ~ 900 m³/day shows no correlation between effusion rate and
390 seismic activity with the number of long-period earthquakes, explosions and tremors
391 remaining fairly constant over this large range of effusion rates. The third regime, for effusion
392 rates between ~ 900 and ~ 1700 m³/day shows again a strong positive correlation between
393 effusion rates and numbers of explosions, tremors, and long-period earthquakes but with an
394 increase in seismic event with increasing effusion rate that is slower from the correlation
395 observed in the first regime.

396

397 The net volume of the gully and fan (volume accumulated in the fan minus volume eroded in
398 the gully) grew to 5.24×10^4 m³ from January to June 2019, and then fell slightly to 4.0×10^4 m³ by
399 August, although errors are high and this may simply indicate that rockfalls had ceased. As
400 the integration area was constant, the error in the volume was also constant at 1.20×10^4 m³,
401 however the estimate of the uncertainty is only based on the standard deviation of four 'zero
402 volume' gully and fan dDEMs, so is itself likely quite uncertain. We measured the net
403 volume of the gully and fan in the hope that the erosion and deposition of older material
404 cancels out leaving the net contribution of fresh volcanic material, however it seems likely
405 that redeposited older material will not compact back down, and so there will be a net positive
406 volume even before new volcanic material comes into consideration. The uncertain
407 contribution of snow to these volumes also makes them suspect. However we include them to

408 show that, in principle, the gulley and fan have a net positive volume that could account for a
409 substantial part of the apparent decline in dome growth in June 2019 - i.e., rather than
410 continuing to contribute to dome growth, it is at plausible that extrusion of further material
411 triggered collapse and diverted material out of the crater instead during this period.

412 **Table 1:** Volume, Time Averaged Discharge Rates and Effusion Rates for the dome and gulley DEM timeseries. The uncertainties for a given
 413 value are given to the last two significant figures using concise notation (i.e. $5.04(13)e+04 = 5.04e4 \pm 0.13e4$). TADR values are given for the
 414 date at the end of the interval they are measured over. Effusion rates are instantaneous discharge rates predicted by the GP model for the
 415 specified date. The DEMs used as datums for estimating volumes of the dome and gulley are tinted red and green respectively.
 416

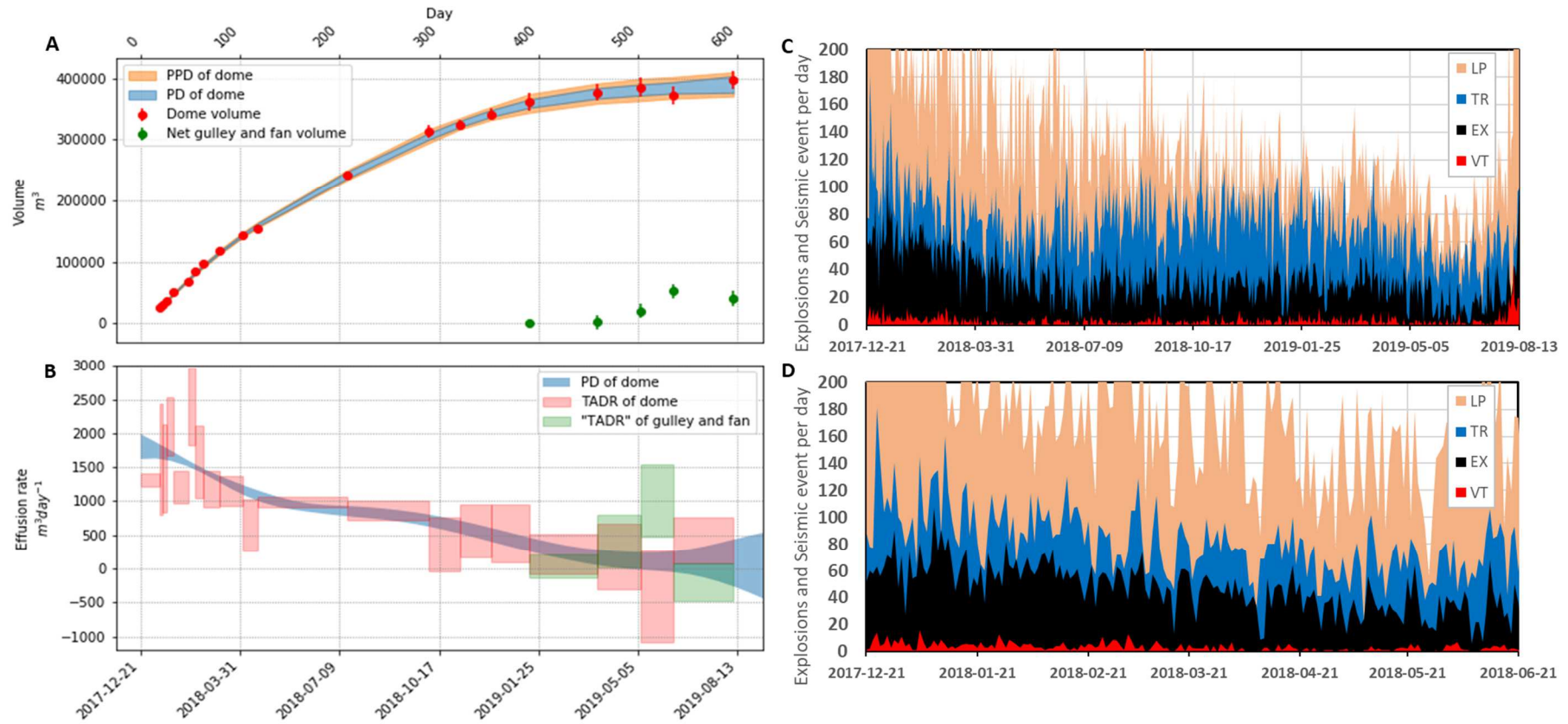
Date	Type	Volume m^3	TADR m^3day^{-1}	Effusion Rate m^3day^{-1}	Gulley volume m^3	Gulley TADR m^3day^{-1}
2017-12-21	Aerial	0.0(1.0)e+03	-	-	-	-
2018-01-09	Aerial	2.49(17)e+04	1.31(10)e+03	1.73(11)e+03	-	-
2018-01-12	Aerial	2.98(18)e+04	1.61(82)e+03	1.72(10)e+03	-	-
2018-01-16	Aerial	3.57(19)e+04	1.48(64)e+03	1.694(88)e+03	-	-
2018-01-23	Aerial	5.04(23)e+04	2.11(43)e+03	1.652(71)e+03	-	-
2018-02-07	Aerial	6.86(27)e+04	1.21(24)e+03	1.552(44)e+03	-	-

2018-02-14	Aerial	8.53(29)e+04	2.39(57)e+03	1.502(38)e+03	-	-
2018-02-22	Aerial	9.79(31)e+04	1.58(54)e+03	1.444(37)e+03	-	-
2018-03-11	Aerial	1.179(34)e+05	1.17(27)e+03	1.319(49)e+03	-	-
2018-04-03	Aerial	1.443(39)e+05	1.15(22)e+03	1.164(71)e+03	-	-
2018-04-18	Aerial	1.540(40)e+05	6.5(3.7)e+02	1.079(77)e+03	-	-
2018-07-16	Aerial	2.419(62)e+05	9.88(83)e+02	8.52(76)e+02	-	-
2018-10-06	Pleiades	3.12(10)e+05	8.6(1.5)e+02	7.14(89)e+02	-	-
2018-11-07	Pleiades	3.240(79)e+05	3.6(4.0)e+02	6.15(97)e+02	-	-
2018-12-08	Pleiades	3.415(92)e+05	5.6(3.9)e+02	5.0(1.0)e+02	-	-
2019-01-16	Pleiades	3.62(14)e+05	5.2(4.3)e+02	3.6(1.0)e+02	0.00(0)e+00	-
2019-03-25	Pleiades	3.77(14)e+05	2.2(2.9)e+02	1.6(1.1)e+02	0.2(1.2)e+04	0.3(1.8)e+02

2019-05-08	Pleiades	3.85(16)e+05	1.8(4.8)e+02	1.1(1.3)e+02	2.0(1.2)e+04	4.1(3.8)e+02
2019-06-09	Pleiades	3.72(15)e+05	-4.0(6.8)e+02	1.0(1.5)e+02	5.2(1.2)e+04	1.01(53)e+03
2019-08-09	Aerial	3.97(14)e+05	4.1(3.4)e+02	0.8(3.5)e+02	4.0(1.2)e+04	-2.0(2.8)e+02

417

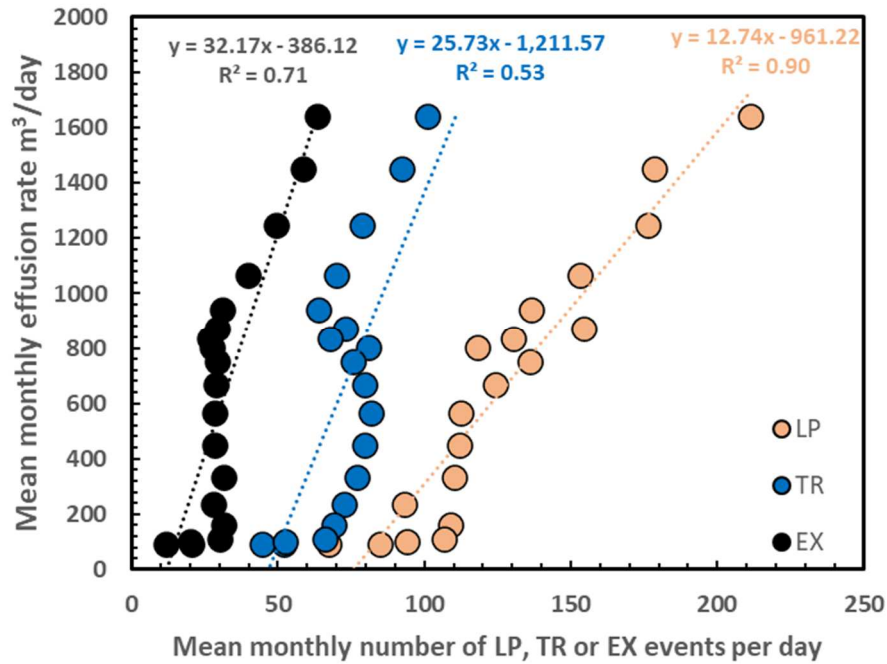
418



419

420 **Figure 4:** A. growth of dome and gulley-and-fan; red points are dome volumes, green points net volume of gulley and fan, blue tint is posterior
 421 distribution over modelled volume (PD) at $\pm 1\sigma$, orange tint is posterior predictive distribution of volume measurements (i.e. incorporating
 422 measurement error). B. Time Averaged Discharge Rates of dome and gulley-and-fan, as well as modelled dome effusion rate. Width of boxes
 423 shows duration of averaging interval and height uncertainty for TADR estimates for dome and gulley-and-fan (red and green, respectively). Blue
 424 tint shows posterior distribution of modelled effusion rates. C. Number of explosions (EX), volcano-tectonic (VT), tremor (TR) and long-period

425 *(LP) seismic events per day recorded by SERNAGEOMIN's seismic network at Nevados de Chillan. Note the broad correspondence between the*
426 *decreasing lava dome effusion rate and total number of seismic events. The increase in seismic event in August 2019 is due to a new extrusion*
427 *phase not discussed here. D. Close up of (C) for the first six months of observations showing the close correspondence between number of*
428 *explosions per day and number of seismic events.*



429

430 **Figure 5:** Mean monthly modelled effusion rate at Nevados de Chillán for the period of
 431 January 2018 to July 2019 compared to the measured mean monthly number of explosions
 432 (EX), tremor (TR) and long-period (LP) seismic events per day recorded by
 433 SERNAGEOMIN's seismic network. Lava effusion rate appears to be positively correlated
 434 with all three types of seismic event but most strongly with long-period earthquakes. In detail
 435 three different regime seem to emerge for effusion rates below ~ 100 m³/day, between ~ 100
 436 and ~ 900 m³/day and between ~ 900 and ~ 1700 m³/day.

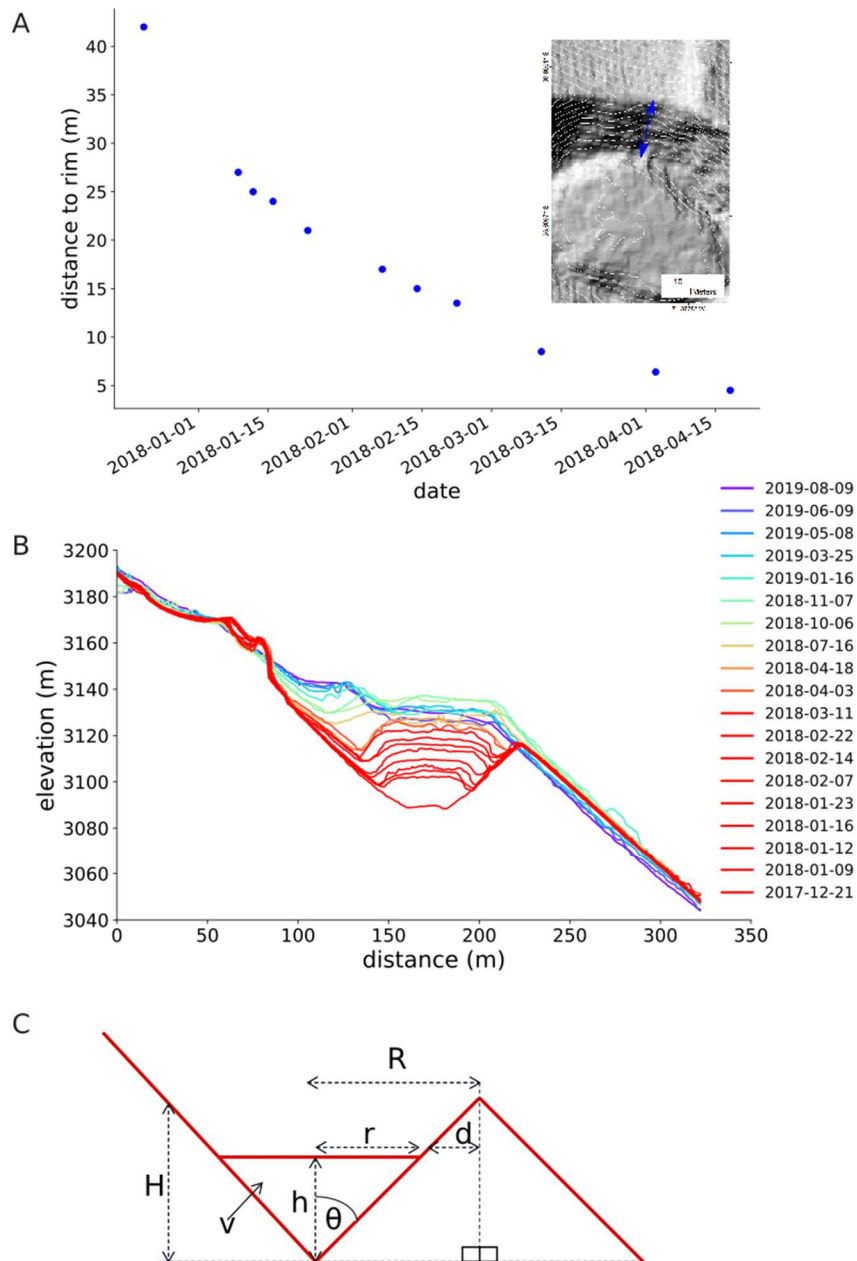
437

438 The predicted time that the foot of the dome would reach the rim is shown on Fig. 7 with the
 439 PD and PPD indicating that the dome edge should reach the crater rim sometime in May
 440 2018. Near-real time estimates of the probability of the dome reaching the rim by a given date
 441 were produced in April 2018 and updated after each DEM reconstructions. Probability
 442 estimates were produced by conditioning on the distance to the rim being equal to zero, and
 443 integrating across time, as shown by the curves. This indicated that the dome was likely to
 444 have reached the rim by the end of May 2018. Indeed, OVDAS/SERNAGEOMIN cameras

445 then observed the dome at the crater rim on 28 May 2018. No rock fall occurred subsequently
446 until three large explosions on 13 to 15 July 2018 partially destroyed the dome leaving a small
447 crater within the dome and small pyroclastic flows deposits extending 600 m from the vent.

448

449 The results of the pyroclastic flow simulations using VolcFlow are shown in Fig. 8. The maps
450 show the compilation of 10 simulations and indicate the areas that have been affected by at
451 least one simulation. Given the dome location at the time of the calculations (April 2018), our
452 simulations show that PDC generated by dome collapse will always flow towards the north,
453 north-east, away from any populated areas (Fig. 8). In the case of explosions, our simulations
454 suggest that PDC could travel towards the town of Termas de Chillan, potentially just
455 entering the upper part of the town. The relatively 'flat' topography of the volcano will cause
456 any PDC to disperse and lose velocity rapidly, limiting their extent from the source. By
457 comparison, similar simulation performed on Merapi volcano would results in PDC travelling
458 up to 20 km away from the source while at Nevados de Chillán, this simulation results in PDC
459 confined within 5 km of the vent.

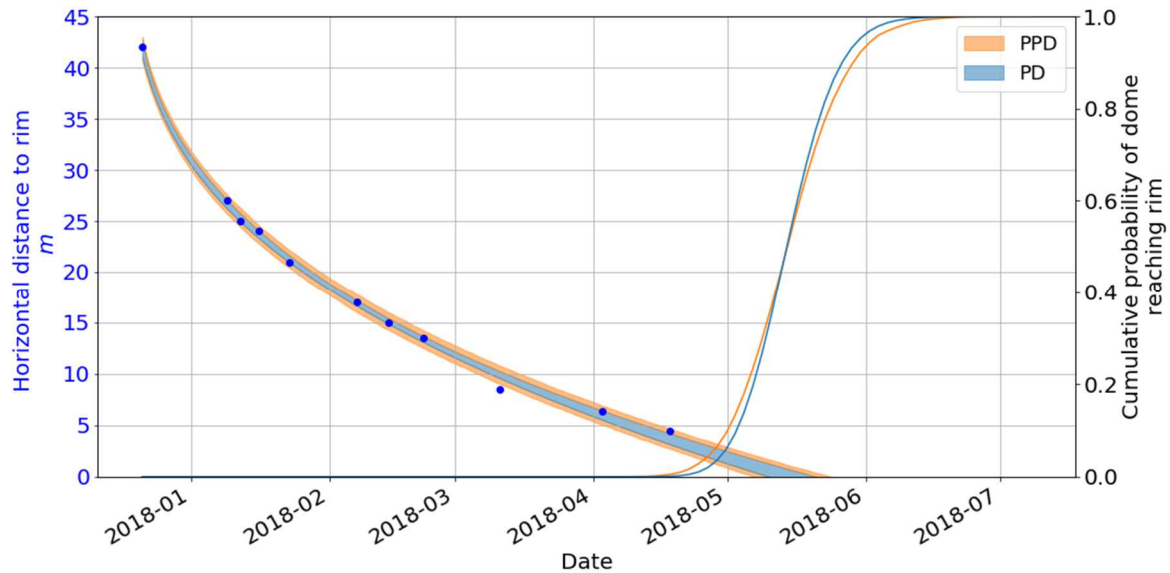


460

461 **Figure 6:** **A:** Time evolution of the minimum horizontal distance between the foot of the lava
 462 dome and the lowest point of the crater rim. Inset show a close up of the 11 March 2018 hill
 463 shaded DEM with one-meter elevation contour lines. The blue arrow shows the remaining
 464 distance between the lava dome edge and the lowest point of the crater rim. **B:** Cross section
 465 of dome growth through time (21 December 2017 to 9 August 2019). Location of the profile is
 466 shown in Fig. 2 (red line). **C:** Simplified conceptual representation of lava dome growth in a

467 *geometry constrained by a conical-shaped crater and used to model the time evolution of the*
 468 *distance between the dome and crater edge (Fig. 7).*

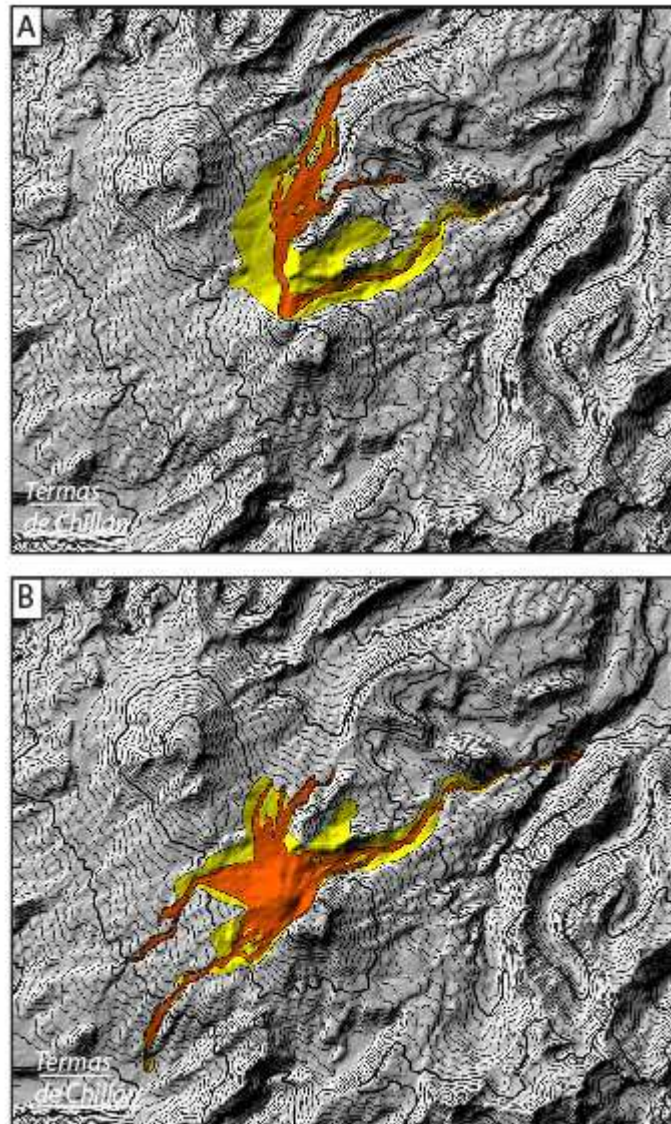
469



470

471 **Figure 7:** *Time evolution of the minimum horizontal distance between the foot of the lava*
 472 *dome and the lowest point of the crater rim. Blue tint shows the posterior distribution of*
 473 *modelled distance to rim (PD), while orange tint shows posterior predictive distribution of*
 474 *measured distance to rim (i.e. inclusive of measurement error), both at $\pm 1\sigma$. Blue and orange*
 475 *curves show the PD and PPD of the cumulative probability distributions of the dome having*
 476 *reached the rim by a given date (i.e. the cumulative distribution of the PD and PDD of the*
 477 *tinted areas conditioned on the distance equalling zero).*

478



479

480 **Figure 8:** DEM showing the results of numerical simulations of PDC generated by (A) Dome

481 collapse and (B) Explosion. Area in orange shows the extent of the concentrated fraction of

482 the PDC (i.e. the block-and-ash flow), area in yellow shows the extent of the dilute fraction

483 (ash-cloud surge). Each map is the results of 10 simulations considering both short (60 s) and

484 long (600 s) durations of genesis (i.e., high and low mass rates respectively).

485

486 4. DISCUSSION

487 TADR is a primordial parameter to monitor the evolution of effusive eruptions and yet is not
488 always an easy parameter to determine with sufficient accuracy, precision, or temporal
489 resolution. TADR estimation combined with prior knowledge of a volcano allows hazard
490 assessments based on semi-quantitative event trees (Newhall and Pallister, 2015; Ogburn et
491 al., 2015). Eruption parameters such as extrusion rate and magma composition integrated with
492 (1) a correct statistical analysis of global dome growth episodes database (Newhall and
493 Melson, 1983; Ogburn and Calder, 2012); (2) the recent eruptive record and geological
494 background of the volcano; (3) an adequate interpretation of instrumental and remote sensing
495 monitoring and surface activity; and (4) the use of numerical simulation for modelling
496 volcanic processes, allows for a trusted hazard assessment to be reached in complex risk
497 scenarios situations and these were the parameters used by SERNAGEOMIN's frequent
498 reports on the volcanic activity to forecast future possible scenarios
499 (<http://sitiohistorico.sernageomin.cl/volcan.php?id=32>). At Nevados de Chillán the
500 complexity stems from the fact that several touristic facilities are exposed to volcanic risks,
501 the high seasonal population is unfamiliar with volcanic hazards, few roads are available in
502 case of evacuation and the eruption period is very long-lived (started in December 2015).

503
504 The rate of dome growth at Nevados de Chillán is one of the lowest ever reported. Table 2
505 shows the average growth rate at other well studied lava domes. By comparison, the
506 maximum growth rate at Nevados de Chillán of $\sim 1500 \text{ m}^3/\text{day}$ is about two orders of
507 magnitude slower than most. Comparison with the global dome growth episodes database of
508 Ogburn (2012), reveals that only 12 out of 96 events (12,5%) with calculated time average
509 extrusion rate have comparable values for TADR ($< 0.1 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$). Nevertheless, comparing with
510 historical eruption at Nevados de Chillán, at the same subcomplex, the current eruptive cycle

511 exhibits similar TADR with the last two historical magmatic eruption. The 2008 Sebastian
512 lava flow, a viscous and dacitic lava flow erupted over an 8 month period with a mean TADR
513 of $0.075 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$ and no associated explosive activity (Coppola et al., 2016) and the 1976-1986
514 Arrau eruption with a mean TADR of $0.005 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$ (Naranjo et al., 1994). As seen from the data
515 in Table 2, there are no correlations between the growth rates and final dome volumes, so the
516 lava dome growth rates are not informative of the final dome volumes. The time evolution of
517 the dome growth rate observed at Nevados de Chillán is broadly similar to the one observed at
518 other volcanoes. During the 2004 – 2005 eruption of Mount St. Helens for instance the dome
519 growth rate dropped from about 9 to $3 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$ within the first three months (Schilling et al.,
520 2008). Similar patterns were observed in the growth rates of the 2009 (Diefenbach et al.,
521 2013) and 1989–1990 (Miller, 1994) lava domes at Redoubt volcanoes, 1991 lava dome at
522 Unzen (Kaneko et al., 2002; Nakada et al., 1995) and 1980 lava dome at Mount St. Helens
523 (Fink et al., 1990; Swanson and Holcomb, 1990).

524

525 The 2017-2019 eruptive episode at Nevados de Chillán is a striking example of effusive and
526 explosive activities taking place simultaneous at a silicic volcano. The inception of dome
527 formation and growth at the surface was accompanied by a sharp increase in explosive
528 activity, averaging less than 5 to 10 eruptions per day prior to December 2017 to reach more
529 than a hundred explosions in a day on 09 January 2018. Eruption of silicic volcanoes
530 commonly show transitions from episodes of explosive activity to regimes of dome formation
531 and vice versa (e.g., Fink, 1987; Nguyen et al., 2014). The transition from one style of activity
532 to the other is thought to occur due to changes in magma ascent rate (e.g., Dingwell, 1996;
533 Martel and Iacono-Marziano, 2015; Woods and Koyaguchi, 1994) or gas loss through
534 permeable conduit walls (e.g., Eichelberger et al., 1986; Jaupart and Allègre, 1991). Neither
535 of these processes however easily explains how concurrent effusive and explosive activity can

536 be taking place at a single vent. We envision that the conduit at Nevados de Chillán must be
537 filled by a magma penetrated by an extensive fracture network allowing overpressure to be
538 periodically released by ash venting or explosions accompanying magma ascent and dome
539 growth at the surface (Fig. 9). Both processes are operating at different timescales but appear
540 to be strongly positively correlated; periods of heightened explosion frequency corresponding
541 to the periods of heightened dome growth rate and vice versa.

542

543 The strong first-order positive correlation between effusion rate and the frequency of
544 explosions, long-period earthquakes and tremors (Fig. 5) suggests (1) that these metrics all
545 tract the same physical process, presumably reflecting variations in overpressure of the
546 magmatic system and (2) that one metric may be used to estimate another. As shown in this
547 study and previous ones, measuring lava effusion rate in real time is not an easy endeavour for
548 any volcano observatory. The strong correlation observed especially with the frequency of
549 long-period events ($R^2=0.9$) suggests that LP event frequency might be used as a simple way
550 of estimating effusion rate in real time as the eruption continues. A similar observation was
551 made after the 2018 Kīlauea eruption were a positive correlation ($R^2=0.6$) between effusion
552 rate and real-time seismic amplitude was observed (Patrick et al., 2019). In details however,
553 the relationship between effusion rate and seismic activity at Nevados de Chillán is not a
554 simple and continuous one and three regime can be distinguished showing strong increase in
555 seismic events with increasing effusion rate at low effusion rates ($\leq 100 \text{ m}^3/\text{day}$), no
556 noticeable changes in seismic activity for effusion rates between ~ 100 and $\sim 900 \text{ m}^3/\text{day}$, and
557 again an increase in the number of seismic events with effusion rate at higher effusion rates
558 (~ 900 to $\sim 1700 \text{ m}^3/\text{day}$) but with a different slope from the first regime (Fig. 5). Following the
559 observation period reported in this manuscript the effusion rate increased again with a lava
560 flow originating from the lava dome flowing down the northern flank. Then again, a strong

561 positive correlation between effusion rate and the number of explosions, tremors and long-
562 period events was noticed but again with a different slope. The question we are left with is
563 what physical process are these different regimes a reflection of? Regime 3, with effusion
564 rates between ~ 900 to ~ 1700 m³/day, corresponds to the initiation of dome growth and
565 includes the months from January to May 2018 (Fig. 4), regime 2 with effusion rates between
566 ~ 100 to ~ 900 m³/day correspond to the period from June 2018 to April 2019 when effusion
567 rate was decreasing very slowly (Fig. 4) with seismic activity remaining constant while
568 regime 1 corresponds to the months of May 2019 to July 2019 when the effusion rate
569 decreased faster and the number seismic events also dropped (Fig. 4). As the eruption
570 continues and variations in effusion rates are recorded, we will be able to determine if these
571 regimes are replicated or if a strong hysteresis emerges.

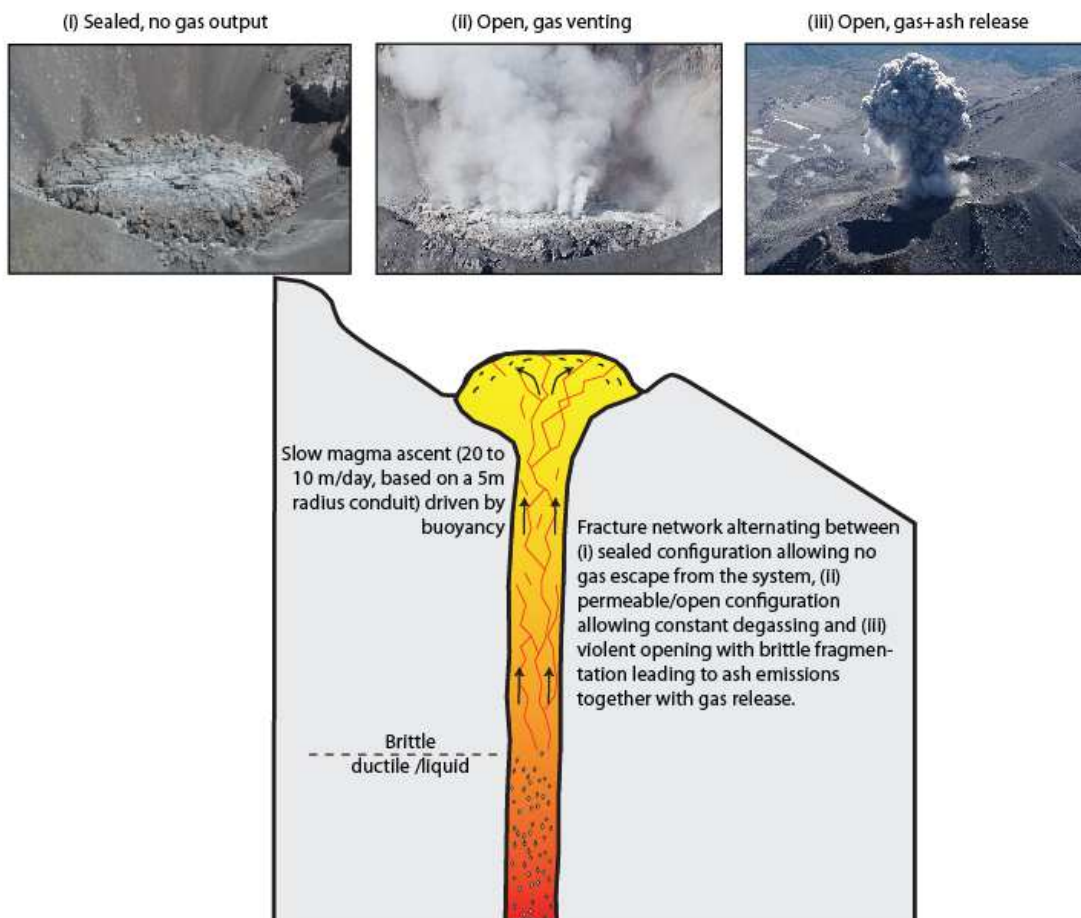
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573 The disconnect in terms of ascent processes between the gas phase (sporadically escaping via
574 a fracture network) and the magma might partly explain the extremely slow dome growth rate,
575 much of the overpressure being accommodated by the gas escape leaving little driving force
576 for the magma to ascend. Assuming a conduit radius of 5 meters, our dome growth rates can
577 be translated to ascent rate at the top of the conduit (base of the dome) ranging from 20 meters
578 per day in early 2018 to 9 meters per day in June 2019 (corresponding to decompression rates
579 in the order of $10e-6$ Mpa/s). Considering a smaller conduit would lead to higher ascent rate
580 estimates (up to ~ 130 m/day for a 2 m radius conduit) which would remain much slower than
581 most other well studied volcanic eruptions (see Fig. 9 in Shea, 2017, Fig. 5 in Cassidy et al.,
582 2018 and Fig. 13 in Moussallam et al., 2019 for compilations of ascent rates estimates).

583

584 Historical activity records at Nevados de Chillán include eruptive cycles with durations of
585 years to decade (Naranjo et al., 1994). This long-lived eruptive behaviour has been seen at

586 other volcanoes with lava dome eruption such as Popocatepetl (Mendoza-Rosas et al., 2017)
 587 (also see global compilation by Wolpert et al., 2016). In addition, Holocene activity at Volcán
 588 Viejo (Las Termas Subcomplex) includes Vulcanian and sub Plinian episodes with 4 fall
 589 pumice and at least 3 pyroclastic density currents deposits recognized (Dixon et al., 1999).
 590 The wide range of past eruptive styles at Nevados de Chillan hence suggest that our two
 591 “worst-case” scenarios modelled here to map the maximum extent of PDC are realistic
 592 scenarios. The ongoing mostly effusive eruption could be but a stage in a bigger cycle, with
 593 much more explosive events remaining a future possibility. Monitoring the TADR and
 594 seismic activity at Nevados de Chillán in near-real time hence remain a priority to forecast
 595 and prepare for future activity. Further petrological studies would also help in this endeavour.
 596



597

598 **Figure 9:** Schematic depiction of the magmatic conduit at Nevados de Chillán, perforated by
599 an extensive fracture network allowing the release of overpressure through frequent gas-
600 venting and explosions. Upper photographs illustrating these three configurations observed
601 at Nevados de Chillán. Note that explosion frequency and magma ascent rate seem to be
602 positively correlated suggesting that the two processes respond to the same driving forces yet
603 operating at different timescale. Gas escape through the fracture network might
604 accommodate a large part of the system overpressure, leaving the magma to rise extremely
605 slowly.
606

607 **Table 2:** Growth rates of lava domes, data are from the compilation of Yokoyama (2005) with
 608 additional data from *Miller, (1994), **Diefenbach et al., (2013), and ***Schilling et al.,
 609 (2008).

<i>Volcano</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Final lava dome volume (x10⁷m³)</i>	<i>Average growth rate (m³/day)</i>
<i>Soufrière St. Vincent</i>	1979	3.5	5.37E+05
<i>Colima</i>	1998	0.04	3.80E+05
<i>Lamington</i>	1951	6	1.58E+06
<i>Redoubt</i>	1987	6.8	2.00E+05
<i>Redoubt*</i>	1989-1990	8.8	5.01E+05
<i>Redoubt**</i>	2009	7.2	7.94E+05
<i>Soufrière Hills</i>	1996	6.8	2.00E+05
<i>Turumai</i>	1909	1.5	3.80E+06
<i>Bezymianny</i>	1956	4.2	1.41E+06
<i>Shiveluch</i>	1980	1	1.86E+05
<i>Pelée</i>	1902	3.7	3.16E+05
<i>Mt. St. Helens</i>	1980	1	8.32E+05
<i>Mt. St. Helens***</i>	2004-2005	7.3	1.58E+05
<i>Santiaguito</i>	1922	20	1.58E+05
<i>Popocatépetl</i>	1996	1.1	1.82E+05
<i>Unzen</i>	1992	5	5.01E+05
<i>Usu</i>	1944	4.4	1.12E+05
<i>Novarupta</i>	1912	0.5	2.51E+04

610

611 **5. CONCLUSIONS**

612 We have used aerial photogrammetry and Pleiades-1 tri-stereo imagery to produce ultra-high-
613 resolution DEMs tracking the growth of a lava dome at the Nevados de Chillán volcanic
614 complex. We found that (i) The dome growth started as fairly stable over the first three
615 months before decreasing over time (ii) The growth rate is orders of magnitude slower than
616 most other lava domes (iii) Prediction of the time at which the lava dome should reach the
617 crater rim proved accurate (iv) Modelling of dome-collapse-generated PDC showed no direct
618 threat to populated areas but PDC generated by large explosions could travel towards
619 populated area (v) The coexistence and simultaneity of effusive and explosive activity is
620 uncommon and may contribute to explains the resulting exceptionally slow ascent rate (vi)
621 Positive correlation between dome growth rate, eruption frequency and seismic activity
622 suggest that they all respond to the same driving force and that the frequency of LP event
623 could be used as a proxy of effusion rate for operational monitoring.

624

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633

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