

Medium Range Forecasts Representation (and Long Range Forecasts?)

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The progress of the numerical forecasts urges us to interest us in more and more distant ranges. We thus supply more and more forecasts with term of some days. Nevertheless, precautions of use are necessary to give the most reliable and the most relevant possible information.

Available in a TV bulletin or on quite other support (Internet, mobile phone), the interpretation and the representation of a medium range forecast (5 - 15 days) must be different from those of a short range forecast. Indeed, the "foresee-ability" of a meteorological phenomenon decreases gradually in the course of the ranges, it decreases all the more quickly that the phenomenon is of small scale. So, at the end of some days, the probability character of a forecast becomes very widely dominating. That is why in Météo-France the forecasts of D+4 to D+7 are accompanied with a confidence index since around ten years. It is a figure between 1 and 5: the more we approach 5, the more the confidence in the supplied forecast is good. In the practice, an indication is supplied for period D+4 / D+5, the other one for period D+6 / D+7, every day being able to benefit from a different forecast, that is be represented in a independent way. We thus supply a global tendency over 24 hours with less and less precise symbols as the range goes away. Concrete examples will be presented.

From now on two years, we also publish forecasts to D+8 / J+9, accompanied with a sign of confidence ("good reliability" or "to confirm"). These two days are grouped together on a single map because for us, the described tendency to this term is relevant on a duration about 48 hours with a spatial scale slightly superior to the synoptic scale. So, we avoid producing more than two zones of types of weather over France and we content with giving an evolution for the temperatures (still, in increase or in decline). Newspapers began to publish this information, it should soon be the case of televisions. It is particularly interesting on Fridays because it gives then a first outlook of the weather for the second weekend. There also, an example will illustrate that.

Finally, we lead an experiment for some months to go beyond and supply a tendency of weather forecasts over the period D+10 / D+14, whom we also call "tendency for week 2". It is a question at the moment of producing a small text describing the global evolution of the temperatures and the precipitation, there is no graphic production. All this is completed by a sentence summarizing the tendencies expected from the temperature for weeks 3 and 4. We thus begin to think seriously about the production of a monthly forecast for the public within the framework of our operational activities. We have to establish under which graphic shape this one can be made.