

This is an Accepted Manuscript of the following article:

Jussi Vuorenmaa, Algirdas Augustaitis, Burkhard Beudert, Witold Bochenek, Nicholas Clarke, Heleen A. de Wit, Thomas Dirnböck, Jane Frey, Hannele Hakola, Sirpa Kleemola, Johannes Kobler, Pavel Krám, Antti-Jussi Lindroos, Lars Lundin, Stefan Löfgren, Aldo Marchetto, Tomasz Pecka, Hubert Schulte-Bisping, Krzysztof Skotak, Anatoly Srybny, Józef Szpikowski, Liisa Ukonmaanaho, Milan Váňa, Staffan Åkerblom, Martin Forsius. Long-term changes (1990–2015) in the atmospheric deposition and runoff water chemistry of sulphate, inorganic nitrogen and acidity for forested catchments in Europe in relation to changes in emissions and hydrometeorological conditions. *Science of the Total Environment*. Volume 625, 2018, pages 1129-1145 , ISSN 0048-9697.

The article has been published in final form by Elsevier at

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2017.12.245>

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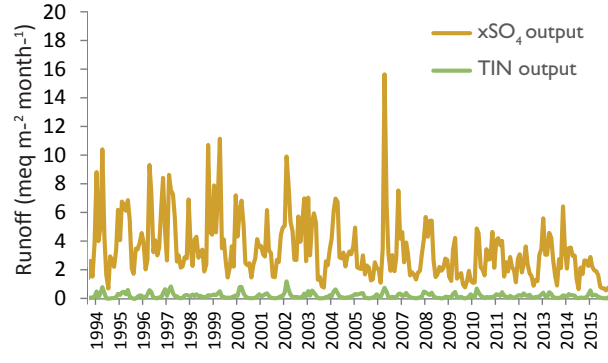
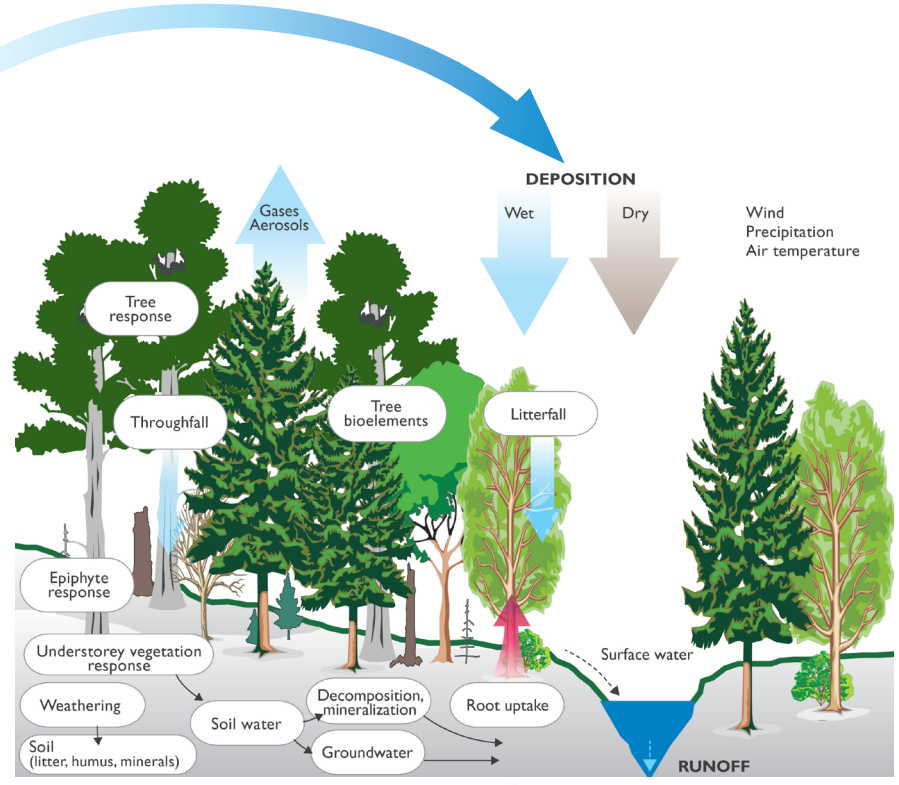
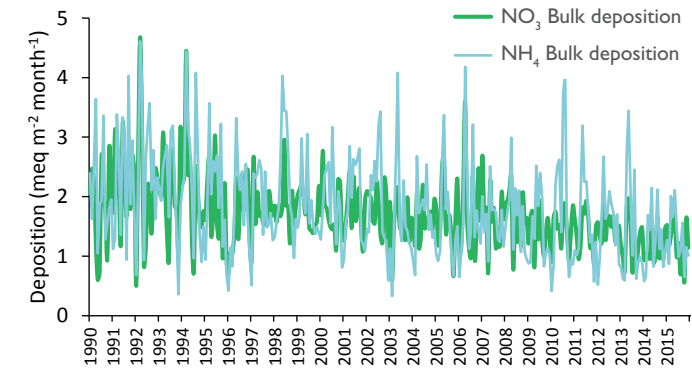
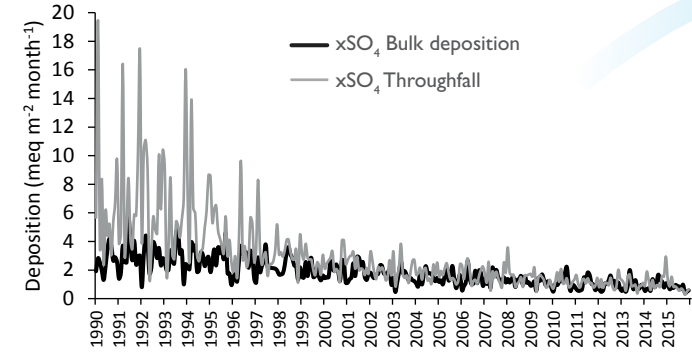
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# \*Graphical Abstract



## **ILTER/STOTEN**

Vuorenmaa, J. et al.: Long-term changes (1990-2015) in atmospheric deposition and runoff water chemistry of sulphate, inorganic nitrogen and acidity for forested catchments in Europe in relation to changes in emissions and hydrometeorological conditions

### **Highlights**

- Trends in runoff fluxes of  $\text{SO}_4$  have increasingly responded to the decrease in S emissions
- Trends in  $\text{NO}_3$  concentrations in deposition and runoff are predominantly decreasing
- Trends in inorganic N output fluxes are still highly variable
- Variation of  $\text{SO}_4$  in runoff was most powerfully explained by deposition pattern
- No clear signs of a consistent climate-driven increase in inorganic N loss in forest catchments

1 Ms. Ref. No.: STOTEN-D-17-05394R1

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3 Long-term changes (1990-2015) in the atmospheric deposition and runoff water  
4 chemistry of sulphate, inorganic nitrogen and acidity for forested catchments in  
5 Europe in relation to changes in emissions and hydrometeorological conditions

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9 Lars Lundin <sup>l</sup>, Stefan Löfgren <sup>l</sup>, Aldo Marchetto <sup>m</sup>, Tomasz Pecka <sup>n</sup>, Hubert Schulte-Bisping <sup>o</sup>, Krzysztof Skotak <sup>n</sup>, Anatoly  
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## Abstract

The international Long-Term Ecological Research Network (ILTER) encompasses hundreds of long-term research/monitoring sites located in a wide array of ecosystems that can help us understand environmental change across the globe. We evaluated long-term trends (1990–2015) for bulk deposition, throughfall and runoff water chemistry and fluxes, and climatic variables in 25 forested catchments in Europe belonging to the UNECE International Cooperative Programme on Integrated Monitoring of Air Pollution Effects on Ecosystems (ICP IM). Many of the IM sites form part of the monitoring infrastructures of this larger ILTER network. Trends were evaluated for monthly concentrations of non-marine (anthropogenic fraction, denoted as x) sulphate ( $xSO_4$ ) and base cations  $x(Ca + Mg)$ , hydrogen ion ( $H^+$ ), inorganic N ( $NO_3$  and  $NH_4$ ) and ANC (Acid Neutralising Capacity) and their respective fluxes into and out of the catchments and for monthly precipitation, runoff and air temperature. A significant decrease of  $xSO_4$  deposition resulted in decreases in concentrations and fluxes of  $xSO_4$  in runoff, being significant at 90% and 60% of the sites, respectively. Bulk deposition of  $NO_3$  and  $NH_4$  decreased significantly at 60–80% (concentrations) and 40–60% (fluxes) of the sites. Concentrations and fluxes of  $NO_3$  in runoff decreased at 73% and 63% of the sites, respectively, and  $NO_3$  concentrations decreased significantly at 50% of the sites. Thus, the LTER/ICP IM network confirms the positive effects of the emission reductions in Europe. Air temperature increased significantly at 61% of the sites, while trends for precipitation and runoff were rarely significant. The site-specific variation of  $xSO_4$  concentrations in runoff was most strongly explained by deposition. Climatic variables and deposition explained the variation of inorganic N concentrations in runoff at single sites poorly, and as yet there are no clear signs of a consistent deposition-driven or climate-driven increase in inorganic N exports in the catchments.

**Keywords:** Sulphur, nitrogen, climate, trends, monitoring, LTER

## 59 **Introduction**

60

61 Increased emissions of air pollutants and greenhouse gases into the atmosphere since the 1950s have  
62 escalated environmental problems from the local to the global scale. The long-range transport of sulphur  
63 ( $\text{SO}_2$ ) and nitrogen compounds ( $\text{NO}_x$ ,  $\text{NH}_x$ ) has caused widespread acidification of acid-sensitive aquatic  
64 ecosystems in Europe and North America (e.g. Leivestad and Muniz, 1976; Rodhe et al., 1995; Schindler,  
65 1988; Ulrich et al., 1980; Wright et al., 2005). A sustained accumulation of deposited inorganic N in  
66 forest soil and vegetation also poses a threat to ecosystems through nutrient enrichment and nutrient  
67 imbalance (Bergström et al., 2005; Bergström and Jansson, 2006; Lepori and Keck, 2012; Stevens et al.,  
68 2011) and deteriorated tree mineral nutrition (Jonard et al., 2014). It also poses a threat to biodiversity, as  
69 a consequence of the eutrophication of sensitive ecosystems, as shown by the results of the international  
70 networks of forested sites from both ICP IM (International Cooperative Programme on Integrated  
71 Monitoring of Air Pollution Effects on Ecosystems) and ICP Forests (International Cooperative  
72 Programme on Assessment and Monitoring of Air Pollution Effects on Forests) sites under the United  
73 Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air  
74 Pollution (CLRTAP) (Dirnböck et al., 2014) and other studies (Bleeker et al., 2011; Bobbink et al., 2010;  
75 MEA, 2005; Sala et al., 2000). At the same time, emissions of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere are  
76 causing global warming, and consequent climate change affects freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems.  
77 There is growing evidence that, for example, lakes throughout the world, particularly in northern Europe  
78 and North America have been subject to climate change-driven warming (Hook et al., 2012; Schneider  
79 and Hook, 2010), and a substantial body of research demonstrates the sensitivity of lakes to the climate  
80 and shows that physical, chemical and biological lake properties respond rapidly to climate-related  
81 changes (e.g. Adrian et al., 2009; Jeppesen et al., 2012; Rosenzweig et al., 2007; Shimoda et al., 2011).  
82 Many of the retention and release processes for sulphate and inorganic N in catchment soil are sensitive to  
83 climatic variables, and would, therefore, be affected by climate change (e.g. Dirnböck et al., 2016;  
84 Mitchell et al., 2013; Moore et al., 2010; Templer et al., 2012; Wright and Jenkins, 2001). Inter-annual  
85 variations in water chemistry related to variations in the deposition of air pollutants and climate are  
86 greater than the expected improvement in water chemical status in 2020. The effects of climate variability

87 and change are expected to offset and delay chemical and biological recovery of acid-sensitive waters, for  
88 example (de Wit et al., 2015).

89

90 Observed detrimental effects of transboundary air pollution led to international negotiations on emission  
91 reductions under the CLRTAP, signed in 1979 under the UNECE (UNECE, 1996). Since the 1980s,  
92 environmental regulations have led to declining emissions of air pollutants in Europe, and overall  
93 emissions of SO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> declined by ca. 60% and ca. 45%, respectively, between 1990 and 2014  
94 (Fagerli et al., 2016), resulting in a declining deposition of air pollutants. Emission reduction measures  
95 have been less successful for nitrogen than sulphur, and the decrease in inorganic N deposition has not  
96 been observed as strongly as for SO<sub>4</sub> (e.g. Waldner et al., 2014). Emissions of NH<sub>3</sub> decreased by ca. 20%,  
97 but they stabilised or even increased slightly between 2000 and 2014 (Fagerli et al., 2016).

98

99 In order to assess the impacts of air pollution and climate change in the environment, a long-term  
100 integrated monitoring approach in remote unmanaged areas including physical, chemical and biological  
101 variables is needed. The multidisciplinary International Cooperative Programme on Integrated Monitoring  
102 of Air Pollution Effects on Ecosystems (ICP IM) is one of the activities set up under the UNECE  
103 CLTRAP to develop the necessary international co-operation in the assessment of the air pollutant effects  
104 and ecosystem impacts of climate change. In addition to ICP IM, the Long-Term Ecosystem Research  
105 (LTER) infrastructures are mainly focused on ecological phenomena that could be investigated at the  
106 local level (site-level) in natural or semi-natural ecosystems, but support the interpretation of larger scale  
107 processes. The concepts of LTER and ICP IM are closely related, and therefore many of the ICP IM sites  
108 form part of the monitoring infrastructures of these larger LTER sites.

109

110 The ultimate goals of air pollution emission abatement actions are the improvement and recovery of  
111 damaged terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, and the protection of threatened or affected ecosystems has  
112 increasingly received considerable attention (de Wit et al., 2015). Successful reductions in air pollution  
113 emissions over the past 30 years in Europe have led to substantial improvements in ecosystems, e.g.  
114 substantially decreased SO<sub>4</sub> deposition has led to widespread recovery from the acidification of sensitive

115 freshwater ecosystems in Europe and North America (de Wit et al, 2015; Garmo et al., 2014; Helliwell et  
116 al., 2014). Implementing air pollution reduction policy is costly. For example, integrated assessment  
117 model studies estimated a total cost of approximately EUR 59 billion per year to further reduce European  
118 S, N and VOC emissions to below 1990 levels by 2010 (Amann et al., 2000). The Clean Air Policy  
119 Package and its main legislative instrument, the National Emission Ceilings Directive, set binding  
120 national reduction objectives for six air pollutants (SO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub>, NMVOCs, NH<sub>3</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub> and CH<sub>4</sub>) to be met  
121 by 2020 and 2030. It also implements the UNECE CLRTAP 1999 Gothenburg/Multi-effect Protocol to  
122 Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone as amended in 2012. The European  
123 Commission estimates that the costs of pollution abatement to implement the EU Clean Air Package are  
124 expected to reach EUR 3.4 billion per year in 2030 (Maas and Grenfelt, 2016). It is, therefore, essential  
125 that empirical evidence is available for assessing and documenting the ecosystem responses of costly  
126 emission reduction investments. In this paper, we analysed site-specific long-term trends for  
127 concentrations of acidifying and eutrophying air pollutants in deposition (input) and runoff (output) and  
128 their fluxes, using available long-term monthly data (with the longest time series being 1990–2015)  
129 collected in the international ICP IM network of forested research catchments in Europe. In addition, the  
130 long-term trends for climatic variables using monthly data were also analysed. The main aims of the  
131 present study are: (i) to evaluate whether concentrations and fluxes of air pollutants in deposition and  
132 runoff have changed during the course of successful emission reductions in different regions in Europe,  
133 and (ii) to assess the changes in concentrations and fluxes in the context of emission and deposition  
134 reduction responses and climatic variation. We hypothesise that fluxes and concentrations of SO<sub>4</sub> and  
135 inorganic N show decreasing temporal trends in unmanaged forested catchments across Europe due to  
136 international emission reduction measures. We further hypothesise that climate and hydrology  
137 (precipitation, runoff, air temperature) are additional factors that explain temporal patterns of S and N  
138 output fluxes.

139

## 140 **2. Materials and methods**

141

## 142 **2.1 Site description**

143

144 The long-term data used in this study relies on the monitoring of unmanaged and calibrated forest  
145 catchments belonging to the ICP IM network. Many of the sites also belong to the LTER-Europe and  
146 international LTER (ILTER) networks for long-term ecosystem research. Long-term trends of air  
147 pollution effects and climatic variables were evaluated at a selection of 25 IM sites in 11 countries in  
148 Europe between 1990 and 2015 (Fig. 1, Table 1). The selection was guided by the availability of  
149 deposition (bulk and throughfall) data, runoff chemistry data and runoff volume data in the ICP IM  
150 database.

151

152 The LTER/IM catchments are located in nature conservation areas or semi-natural areas with minimum  
153 direct human disturbance. Many of the catchments have been relatively intact for as much as over 100  
154 years, and are therefore suitable for the monitoring of air pollution and climate change effects on  
155 ecosystems (Manual for Integrated Monitoring, 1998). The multidisciplinary ICP IM under the CLRTAP  
156 has been conducted since the late 1980s, enabling a cause-effect approach for studying the long-term  
157 effects of air pollution and climate change on ecosystems in forested catchments across Europe with  
158 different deposition, climate and acidification and eutrophication potential. The ICP IM network provides  
159 the only data set that uses consistent and simultaneous physical, chemical and biological measurements  
160 over time from atmosphere, terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems across Europe.

161

162 The dominant vegetation in the monitored catchments mainly consists of northern and central European  
163 coniferous and broadleaf forests (Table 1). The type of bedrock and soil within the catchment areas varies  
164 widely; some consist of sorted sediments on sedimentary bedrock, others are till soils on igneous and  
165 metamorphic bedrock and some sites contain extensive wetlands and lakes. The soils in Fennoscandia  
166 (Finland, Sweden and Norway) within northern Europe are thin and young glacial or supra-aquatic acid-  
167 sensitive soils with underlying granite bedrock. Unglaciated but thin and acid-sensitive soils also  
168 characterise the catchment of CZ02. The soils in DE01 and CZ01 are thin to medium-deep soils with  
169 underlying acidic granitic or paragneiss bedrock, respectively, while the other catchments in the Baltic



170 States and in many parts of central, eastern and southern Europe are located in areas with medium-deep to  
171 thick surface deposits and sandstone and limestone present with dolomite bedrock. Mineral soils  
172 dominate most of the catchments, but some of the catchments include considerable areas of peaty soils.

173

## 174 **2.2 Sampling**

175

176 Methods for the collection, storage and analysis of bulk deposition and throughfall samples are described  
177 in the programme manual (Manual for Integrated Monitoring, 1998). Samples for bulk deposition (largely  
178 wet deposition but also including some dry deposition), including the precipitation amount and chemistry  
179 of bulk precipitation, were collected in an open area within or adjacent to each catchment, using  
180 continuously open HDPE (high-density polyethylene) plastic funnel collectors. At some sites, the  
181 precipitation amount for the deposition estimate was obtained from meteorological rain gauges situated  
182 within the catchment or from the closest climate station nearby. At sites with regular winter conditions  
183 (snow cover), cylindrical HDPE collectors or purpose-made plastic bags were used to collect the winter  
184 snowfall. The minimum number of samplers for precipitation amount (meteorology) and bulk  
185 precipitation chemistry (deposition) is one sampler per site.

186

187 Precipitation which passes through the canopy to the forest floor (throughfall) was also sampled. It is well  
188 known that precipitation under the forest canopy differs in quality and quantity from that of precipitation  
189 collected in an open area due to the wash-off of dry deposition and strong canopy interactions, such as  
190 e.g. leachates produced by the canopy, and uptake of N by plant tissue and through stomata (e.g. Draaijers  
191 and Erisman, 1995). Throughfall samples were collected using funnel-shaped collectors, which were  
192 placed randomly or systematically around the plot or in a grid under the canopy. During winter, at the  
193 sites with snow cover, snow collectors (a plastic ring and attached plastic bag) were used to collect  
194 snowfall under the canopy. The number of throughfall samplers usually ranges from 10 (minimum) to 20  
195 per site.

196

197 The bulk deposition samples are collected weekly, and analysed as a monthly composite sample.  
198 Throughfall sampling is made monthly, weekly or at a time interval between the two, e.g. every two or  
199 three weeks, depending mainly on the climate and the method used. Throughfall samples from a number  
200 of collectors are pooled to a composite sample representative for a certain stand. Weekly samples can be  
201 analysed or mixed with monthly samples before analyses. All the deposition samples are stored at 4 °C  
202 before analysis.

203

204 Samples for runoff water chemistry were collected, usually weekly or fortnightly, at the catchment  
205 outlets, where water levels are also continuously recorded to calculate stream discharge. At some sites,  
206 the sampling of runoff water chemistry was carried out monthly during the base-flow period in winter and  
207 summer. As the quantitative calculation of the runoff at site AT01 is impeded by the karstified geology,  
208 runoff at the weir and in the extended catchment was modelled by a process-based semi-distributed karst  
209 model (Hartmann et al., 2016). The IM catchments DE02 and EE01 have no measurements of surface  
210 runoff water volume and chemistry, but monitoring of soil water chemistry is carried out at these sites,  
211 and therefore trend results only for soil water concentrations are presented in this study.

212 Methods for the collection, storage and analysis of runoff and soil water samples are described in more  
213 detail in the ICP IM programme manual (Manual for Integrated Monitoring, 1998).

214

### 215 **2.3 Parameters and data preparation**

216

217 The integrated monitoring of ecosystems means physical, chemical and biological measurements over  
218 time of different ecosystem compartments simultaneously at the same location. In practice, monitoring is  
219 divided into a number of compartmental sub-programmes, which are linked by the use of the same  
220 parameters (cross-media flux approach) and/or the same or nearby stations (cause-effect approach).

221 Therefore the experimental unit of our study/analyses is a well-defined calibrated forest catchment in  
222 which deposition fluxes (input) to the defined area and runoff water fluxes (output) from the defined area  
223 were measured.

224

225 Trends for deposition and runoff were evaluated for monthly concentrations ( $\mu\text{eq l}^{-1}$ ) and fluxes ( $\text{meq m}^{-2}$   
226  $\text{month}^{-1}$ ) of non-marine (x denotes non-marine fraction) sulphate ( $x\text{SO}_4$ ), base cations ( $x\text{Ca} + x\text{Mg}$ ),  
227 hydrogen ion ( $\text{H}^+$ ), nitrate ( $\text{NO}_3\text{-N}$ ), ammonium ( $\text{NH}_4\text{-N}$ ) and ANC (Acid Neutralising Capacity). To  
228 distinguish changes in anthropogenic  $\text{SO}_4$  and base cations ( $\text{Ca} + \text{Mg}$ ) from climate-related variations in  
229 sea salt, trends for deposition and runoff chemistry and fluxes for  $\text{SO}_4$  and base cations were calculated  
230 using non-marine fractions. The sea salt-corrected fractions were calculated by subtracting the marine  
231 contribution estimated from the ratio of the ion to Cl in seawater (Lyman and Fleming, 1940). ANC was  
232 calculated as  $\Sigma(\text{base cations}) - \Sigma(\text{strong acid anions})$  equal to  $(\text{Ca} + \text{Mg} + \text{Na} + \text{K}) - (\text{SO}_4 + \text{NO}_3 + \text{Cl})$ ,  
233 and trends for ANC were analysed using concentrations ( $\mu\text{eq l}^{-1}$ ). Monthly deposition (both for bulk  
234 deposition and throughfall) fluxes were calculated as the product of the respective volume-weighted ion  
235 concentration and monthly precipitation sum. Output fluxes were calculated as the product of monthly  
236 runoff and volume-weighted monthly mean concentration (weekly or fortnightly sampling) or single  
237 sample solute concentration (monthly sampling). Chemical input and output fluxes are expressed as  $\text{meq}$   
238  $\text{m}^{-2} \text{month}^{-1}$ .

239

240 Hydrometeorological variables such as precipitation amount, runoff volume and air temperature are  
241 regularly measured as part of the ICP Integrated Monitoring programme. Monthly sum of precipitation  
242 and runoff volume ( $\text{mm month}^{-1}$ ) and mean monthly air temperature ( $^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) were examined for long-term  
243 trends of climatic variables.

244

## 245 **2.4 Statistical analysis**

246

247 The Seasonal Kendall test (SKT) (Gilbert, 1987; Helsel and Hirsch, 1995; Hirsch et al., 1982) was used for  
248 detecting long-term monotonic trends in chemical concentrations and fluxes and climatic variables for  
249 each of the study sites, and SKT was applied to monthly data. SKT is an extension of the Mann-Kendall  
250 test, and SKT is widely used in detecting monotonic trends in water chemistry records because it is not  
251 particularly sensitive to missing data and outliers, and is robust with respect to non-normality and serial  
252 character (e.g. seasonal changes). A Visual Basic program for a multivariate and conditional Mann-

253 Kendall test of monotonic trends was used for trend detection, and a multivariate technique, in which  
254 correction for covariates and trend detection are carried out simultaneously, was applied (Libiseller and  
255 Grimvall, 2002). The magnitude of trend slope was estimated by the Theil-Sen slope estimation method  
256 (Sen, 1968), and was expressed as  $\mu\text{eq l}^{-1} \text{ yr}^{-1}$  for chemical concentrations,  $\text{meq m}^{-2} \text{ yr}^{-1}$  for chemical  
257 fluxes,  $\text{mm yr}^{-1}$  for precipitation and runoff and  $^{\circ}\text{C yr}^{-1}$  for air temperature. A statistical significance  
258 threshold of  $p < 0.05$  was applied to the trend analysis, i.e. providing at least 95% confidence that the  
259 detected trend was significantly different from a zero.

260

261 Statistical models to explain monthly variation of  $\text{xSO}_4$  and  $\text{NO}_3$  concentrations in runoff for each of the  
262 study sites between 1990 and 2015 were built using stepwise multiple regression analysis.

263 The explanatory variables were monthly precipitation and runoff volume, mean monthly air temperature  
264 and monthly concentration and flux of  $\text{xSO}_4$  and sum of inorganic N ( $\text{TIN}=\text{NO}_3+\text{NH}_4$ ) in bulk deposition  
265 and throughfall. A stepwise regression procedure was applied for 15 catchments which had a complete  
266 data set of explanatory variables covering precipitation, runoff volume, air temperature, deposition (both  
267 bulk deposition and throughfall) and runoff chemistry (Table 2). Stepwise regression analysis used  
268 forward and backward selection, and only explanatory variables having a significance of  $p < 0.05$  were  
269 included in the model. Statistical analyses were performed by using SAS Enterprise Guide version 5.1 for  
270 Windows.

271

## 272 **3. Results**

273

### 274 **3.1 Gradients and trends in precipitation, air temperature and deposition**

275

276 The studied IM areas exhibit a great range of precipitation amounts. Mean annual precipitation exceeding  
277  $900\text{--}1000 \text{ mm yr}^{-1}$  occurred generally in stations near the coast in the vicinity of the North Atlantic Ocean  
278 in Norway (NO01, NO02, NO03) and in the south-western part of Sweden (SE04), and in high altitude  
279 regions in central Europe (AT01, CZ02, DE01, IT01, IT03 and IT09) (Table 2). A number of IM sites are

280 located in lowland areas (e.g. BY02, DE02, EE01, EE02, FI01, FI03, LT01 and PL06) and have relatively  
281 low precipitation (600–700 mm yr<sup>-1</sup>). The long-term annual (January–December) precipitation records  
282 showed decreasing trends at 10 sites (40%) and increasing trends at 15 sites (60%) (Fig. 2), but trends  
283 were rarely significant. Significant increasing trends were detected, but only at three sites (DE02, EE01,  
284 NO02) (Table S1, Supplementary material). Precipitation records of individual months showed almost  
285 equally decreasing (149 out of the 300 monthly records) and increasing (151 out of the 300 monthly  
286 records) trends, but only 4–5% of the trends were significant. The few significant trends were mostly  
287 observed for winter and spring months (January–May) (Fig. 2, Table S1, Supplementary material).

288

289 Annual (January–December) air temperature records in 1990–2015 showed predominantly increasing  
290 trends (17 out of the 18 sites), with a significant increase at 11(61%) sites located both in central and  
291 northern parts of Europe (Fig. 2, Table S2, Supplementary material). Air temperature records of  
292 individual months showed increasing trends in 152 out of the 216 monthly records (70%), and 28 out of  
293 the 216 monthly records (13%) increased significantly. The significant increasing monthly trends were  
294 detected mostly during spring (April–May, 36% of the significant monthly trends) and late autumn  
295 (November, 32% of the significant monthly trends) (Fig. 2, Table S2, Supplementary material).

296

297 The deposition of xSO<sub>4</sub> and inorganic N (TIN) showed large differences between the sites, with the  
298 highest values at sites located in parts of central, eastern and southern Europe and the lowest values at  
299 sites in northern regions. The sites in south-western Fennoscandia (NO01, SE04) were also exposed to  
300 high xSO<sub>4</sub> and TIN depositions (Table 2). The throughfall (surrogate to dry deposition) of xSO<sub>4</sub> was  
301 higher than the bulk deposition of xSO<sub>4</sub> at the majority of the IM sites, indicating the importance of dry  
302 deposition fraction of xSO<sub>4</sub> for total deposition (e.g. Vuorenmaa et al., 2017).

303

304 The study sites that have been exposed to the highest xSO<sub>4</sub> and TIN deposition during the period 1990–  
305 2015 (Table 2) also showed the strongest reductions in the deposition. The bulk deposition of xSO<sub>4</sub>  
306 decreased significantly at all study sites within the study period, and xSO<sub>4</sub> in throughfall exhibited a  
307 significant decrease in 1990–2015 as well (Figs. 3 and 4, Table S3, Supplementary material, Fig S1,

308 Supplementary material). Concentrations and fluxes of  $x\text{SO}_4$  in throughfall (mean slopes  $-3.70 \mu\text{eq l}^{-1} \text{yr}^{-1}$   
309  $^1$  and  $-0.15 \text{ meq m}^{-2} \text{yr}^{-1}$ , respectively) decreased more than those of bulk deposition (mean slopes  $-1.39$   
310  $\mu\text{eq l}^{-1} \text{yr}^{-1}$  and  $-0.08 \text{ meq m}^{-2} \text{yr}^{-1}$ , respectively) (Table 3).

311

312 The IM sites showed dominantly negative trend slopes in  $\text{NO}_3$  and  $\text{NH}_4$  concentrations in bulk deposition  
313 ( $> 90\%$  of the sites), and a decrease of  $\text{NO}_3$  and  $\text{NH}_4$  concentrations in bulk deposition was significant at  
314 20 (80%) and 16 (64%) out of the 25 sites, respectively (Fig. 3, Table S3, Supplementary material). The  
315 fluxes of inorganic N in bulk deposition also showed largely negative trends ( $> 80\%$  of the sites) (Figs. 3  
316 and 4, Fig. S1, Supplementary material), with a significant decrease in  $\text{NO}_3$  and  $\text{NH}_4$  fluxes at 15 (60%)  
317 and 11 (44%) of the sites, respectively. Significant increases in inorganic N concentrations and fluxes in  
318 bulk deposition were not detected. Concentrations of  $\text{NO}_3$  and  $\text{NH}_4$  in throughfall also showed  
319 predominantly negative trend slopes (91% and 70% out of the 23 sites, respectively), a decrease in  $\text{NO}_3$   
320 concentrations was significant at 16 (70%) sites, and  $\text{NH}_4$  concentrations decreased significantly at 11  
321 (48%) sites. Fluxes for  $\text{NO}_3$  and  $\text{NH}_4$  in throughfall decreased at 96% and 74% of the sites, and the  
322 decrease was significant at 65% and 22% of the sites, respectively. Three sites (EE01, NO02 and SE14)  
323 showed significant increases in  $\text{NH}_4$  concentrations and fluxes in throughfall.

324

325 Concentrations and fluxes of non-marine base cations ( $x\text{BC} = x\text{Ca} + x\text{Mg}$ ) in bulk deposition and  
326 throughfall decreased at the majority of the sites (ca. 60–70% of the sites) in 1990–2015, being significant  
327 at ca. 30–55% of the sites. Base cation concentrations and fluxes in bulk deposition decreased less than  
328 those of  $x\text{SO}_4$  in general (Table 3), allowing acid neutralising capacity (ANC) to increase, being  
329 significant at ca. 70–80% of the sites in bulk deposition and throughfall (Fig. 3). Along with decreased  
330 acid anion ( $x\text{SO}_4$  and  $\text{NO}_3$ ) concentrations and increased ANC in precipitation, hydrogen ion ( $\text{H}^+$ )  
331 concentrations, i.e. acidity of precipitation, decreased (increase of pH) in bulk deposition and throughfall,  
332 being significant at ca. 70% of the sites (Fig. 3, Table S3, Supplementary material, Fig. S1,  
333 Supplementary material).

334

335 Following a steeper decrease in the 1990s, concentrations and deposition fluxes for  $xSO_4$ , TIN and acidity  
336 in precipitation experienced a more gradual decrease during the 2000s. In general, the  $xBC$  deposition  
337 levelled out or even increased between 2001 and 2015 (Table 3).

338

### 339 **3.2 Gradients and trends in runoff volume, chemistry and catchment output fluxes**

340

341 The runoff volume pattern was in agreement with the precipitation pattern. The highest annual runoff  
342 volume occurred at sites located in south-western Scandinavia and in central parts of Europe, and the  
343 lowest values occurred generally in low altitude areas, e.g. in the Baltic States and in parts of Sweden and  
344 Finland (Table 2). The forest at DE01 consists of ca. 60% young spruce and mixed stands regenerating  
345 from a bark beetle attack; at this site, the annual amount of runoff increased due to decreased  
346 evapotranspiration (Bernsteinová et al., 2015). Annual runoff records (January–December) showed  
347 almost equally positive (10 sites) and negative (9 sites) trends, but trends were rarely significant. Detected  
348 significant trends were increasing, but only at four sites (EE02, LT03, NO03, SE04). Runoff volume  
349 records for individual months showed slightly less decreasing (102 out of the 226 monthly records, 45%)  
350 than increasing (124 out of the 226 monthly records, 55%) trends, but only 5% of them were significant.  
351 The significant decreasing trends (12% out of the 102 decreasing trend slopes) were observed mostly in  
352 the summer months (June–July, 70%), while significant increasing trends (10% out of the increasing 124  
353 trend slopes) were more evenly distributed throughout the year (Fig. 2, Table S2, Supplementary  
354 material).

355

356 Similar to the deposition gradients, there were large differences in the annual output fluxes of  $xSO_4$  in  
357 runoff between the different sites. The highest mean annual output fluxes of  $xSO_4$  were observed at IM  
358 sites located in parts of south-western Scandinavia, central and eastern Europe, where  $xSO_4$  deposition  
359 has been elevated, and the lowest fluxes at sites in some remote northern regions (Table 2).

360 Concentrations and fluxes of  $xSO_4$  in runoff decreased significantly at 19 out of the 22 sites (86%) and 12  
361 out of the 19 sites (63%), respectively, between 1990 and 2015 (Figs. 5 and 6, Table S4, Supplementary  
362 material, Fig. S2, Supplementary material). Concentrations of  $H^+$  and ANC in runoff decreased and

363 increased significantly at 15 out of the 22 sites (70%) (Fig. 5, Fig. S2, Supplementary material).

364 Concentrations of  $xSO_4$  and  $H^+$  in soil water at IM sites DE02 and EE01 decreased significantly as well,  
365 and resulted in an increase of ANC, dependent on the soil depth (Table S5, Supplementary material).

366

367 The highest annual output fluxes of  $NO_3$  were found at sites located in parts of south-western  
368 Scandinavia, central and eastern Europe, where TIN deposition was elevated, and output flux rate  
369 decreased gradually towards the northern region (Table 2). Nitrate clearly dominated the sum of monthly  
370 TIN ( $NO_3 + NH_4$ ) concentrations (n=4987, mean=78%, median=90%, SD=26) and fluxes (n=4383,  
371 mean=79%, median=93%, SD=26) and annual TIN fluxes (Table 2). Trends in  $NO_3$  concentrations were  
372 decreasing (16 out of the 22 sites, 73%) rather than increasing, while  $NH_4$  concentrations were decreasing  
373 only at 10 out of the 19 sites (53%). Concentrations of  $NO_3$  decreased significantly at 50% of the sites,  
374 but increased significantly at only three sites (AT01, BY02, SE14) and  $NH_4$  concentrations increased  
375 significantly at two sites (PL10, SE14). Trends in fluxes of inorganic N in runoff showed a more mixed  
376 response with both decreasing and increasing trends. Output fluxes of  $NO_3$  were decreasing at 12 out of  
377 the 19 sites (63%), being significant at four sites (21%) (Figs. 5 and 6, Fig. S2, Supplementary material).

378 A significant increase in output fluxes of  $NO_3$  was detected for two catchments (SE04, SE14).

379 Concentrations of  $NO_3$  in soil water at site DE02 predominantly decreased, while  $NH_4$  increased at all soil  
380 depths. Concentrations of  $NO_3$  and  $NH_4$  in soil water at site EE01 tended to increase at all soil depths  
381 (Table S5, Supplementary material).

382

383 Significant monthly trends for concentrations of  $NO_3$  occurred commonly in spring, early summer and  
384 autumn, while corresponding trends for fluxes occurred generally between spring and autumn. Monthly  
385 concentrations of  $xSO_4$  decreased most significantly in June, October and November, but concentrations  
386 decreased generally more steadily throughout the year compared to the  $xSO_4$  fluxes, in which significant  
387 downward trends occurred most commonly in spring (Fig. 7).

388

389 The monthly variation of  $xSO_4$  concentrations in runoff ( $xSO_4 rwc$ ) was explained by variations in air  
390 temperature ( $xSO_4 at$ ), runoff volume ( $xSO_4 rw$ ) and deposition ( $xSO_4 tfc, tff, bdc, bdf$ ) (Fig. 8, Table S6,



391 Supplementary material). Air temperature and runoff were selected predictors ( $p < 0.05$ ) at 11 (73%) and  
392 9 (60%) out of the 15 sites, respectively. Decreasing concentrations and fluxes in bulk deposition ( $xSO_4$   
393 *bdc* and  $xSO_4$  *bdf*, respectively) and throughfall ( $xSO_4$  *tfc* and  $xSO_4$  *tff*, respectively) were predictor  
394 variables at ca. 30–50% of the sites, but the variation of  $xSO_4$  deposition (concentration or flux in bulk  
395 deposition and throughfall) was the first predictor variable at 10 sites, and the model gave highest partial  
396 *R*-squares for deposition from 0.03 to 0.42. The variation of  $xSO_4$  concentrations in throughfall ( $xSO_4$  *tfc*)  
397 had the highest predictive ability among the explaining deposition variables. The model generally  
398 explained the variation of  $xSO_4$  *rwc* from 16% to 58% between the sites. Combining the results for all  
399 studied IM catchments, the variation of  $xSO_4$  *rwc* was best explained by  $xSO_4$  *tfc*. The variation of TIN  
400 concentrations in runoff (TIN *rwc*) was also mostly associated with a variation in air temperature, and  
401 temperature was the first predictor in 11 IM catchments. The variations in the runoff volume (TIN *rw*)  
402 and concentrations and fluxes in bulk (TIN *bdc* and TIN *bdf*, respectively) or throughfall (TIN *tfc* and  
403 TIN *tff*, respectively) were predictors only at 1 to 4 sites (Fig. 8, Table S6, Supplementary material). The  
404 model generally explained the variation of TIN *rwc* from 4% to 39% between the sites, and similar to  
405 variation in  $xSO_4$  *rwc*, the variation in throughfall (TIN *tfc*) was the first predictor explaining variation in  
406 TIN *rwc* in the whole data.

407

## 408 **4. Discussion**

409

### 410 **4.1 Changes in deposition chemistry and fluxes**

411

412 The spatial differences in  $xSO_4$  and TIN deposition in IM areas reflect well-known emission and  
413 deposition gradients of air pollutants in Europe (Lövblad et al., 2004; Vuorenmaa et al., 2017; Waldner et  
414 al., 2014). Central and eastern parts of Europe were historically large sources of emissions, and thus sites  
415 in the region (e.g. CZ01, CZ02, LT03, DE01, AT01, PL06, PL10) received the highest anthropogenic  
416  $xSO_4$  and TIN deposition, while the long-range transport and deposition of S and N decrease gradually  
417 towards northern remote regions. At the IM sites that received the highest deposition,  $SO_4$  deposition has  
418 substantially decreased from a level of 150–250  $\text{meq m}^{-2} \text{ yr}^{-1}$  to  $< 50 \text{ meq m}^{-2} \text{ yr}^{-1}$  between 1990 and the

419 present time (Vuorenmaa et al., 2017). The high  $xSO_4$  and TIN deposition at sites in southern Scandinavia  
420 (NO01, SE04) was due to the elevated long-range transport and can also be explained, at least partly, by  
421 high amounts of precipitation.

422

423 Successful emission reduction measures in Europe over the past 30–40 years have led to a declining  
424 deposition of air pollutants (Colette et al., 2016), as shown at IM sites throughout Europe. The emission  
425 control programmes have been particularly successful for S, and the deposition of  $xSO_4$  decreased at  
426 studied IM sites located in the historically high S emission and deposition regions in central-eastern  
427 Europe by 70–90% and in the northern remote regions by 60–80% between 1990 and 2015. The dry  
428 deposition of  $xSO_4$  decreased more than the bulk deposition ( $\Delta$ Throughfall >  $\Delta$  Bulk deposition), which is  
429 in agreement with previous studies for a number of European forested catchments (e.g. Prechtel et al.,  
430 2001; Waldner et al., 2014).  $SO_4$  concentrations in throughfall are influenced by interception deposition,  
431 where the relative decrease has been even more pronounced, because improved emission control  
432 techniques and fuel-switching away from high sulphur-containing solid and liquid fuels to low sulphur  
433 fuels have markedly reduced S-containing gases and particles in emissions and ambient air concentrations  
434 in Europe (Amann et al., 2013). Decreased N emissions have resulted in a decrease of  $NO_3$  and  $NH_4$   
435 depositions at the majority of the IM sites in 1990–2015, but the decrease of TIN deposition has been  
436 generally smaller than that of  $xSO_4$ . European N emissions in 1990–2015 have decreased less than those  
437 of S, and the bulk deposition of TIN has generally exceeded  $xSO_4$  deposition on an equivalent basis since  
438 the late 1990s (e.g. Forsius et al., 2005). Like for  $xSO_4$ , a significant decrease of TIN in throughfall at  
439 many of the IM sites may indicate the pronounced effect of declining dry deposition as well, or increased  
440 canopy uptake. The acid anion ( $xSO_4$  and  $NO_3$ ) concentrations in precipitation have decreased, while  
441 trends for base cation concentrations exhibited only a gradual change during the 2000s. This has generally  
442 resulted in an increase of acid neutralising capacity (ANC) and a decrease of  $H^+$  (increase of pH) in  
443 precipitation.

444

445 Changes in emission reductions and emission reduction responses on deposition chemistry in Europe  
446 were more pronounced in the 1990s than 2000s. Sulphur emissions decreased substantially from 1990

447 until the early 2000s, and after that emissions exhibited a more gradual decrease. Following a steeper  
448 decrease from 1990, emissions of NO<sub>x</sub> also experienced a more gradual decrease since the early 2000s  
449 (Colette et al., 2016). These emission patterns were reflected by a steeper decrease in concentrations and  
450 deposition fluxes of SO<sub>4</sub> and TIN, and in acidity of precipitation as well, in the 1990s compared to the  
451 2000s (Aas and Vet, 2011), as also shown at IM sites.

452

#### 453 **4.2 Changes in runoff water chemistry and catchment output fluxes of SO<sub>4</sub>**

454

455 The substantial decrease of xSO<sub>4</sub> deposition has evidently resulted in a decrease of xSO<sub>4</sub> concentrations  
456 and output fluxes in forested IM catchments in large parts of Europe between 1990 and 2015. Although  
457 the runoff volume records in 1990–2015 showed almost equally increasing and decreasing trend slopes,  
458 our results showed that 63% of the IM sites exhibited a significant decrease in output fluxes. The previous  
459 trend assessment for monthly concentrations and fluxes at IM sites in 1993–2006 showed that xSO<sub>4</sub>  
460 output fluxes in catchments used in the present study decreased significantly at 40% of the sites  
461 (Vuorenmaa et al., 2009). This suggests that IM catchments have increasingly responded to the decreases  
462 in S emissions and the deposition of SO<sub>4</sub>. A much larger proportion of the sites (86%) showed significant  
463 decreasing trends in xSO<sub>4</sub> concentrations between 1990 and 2015. The short-term inter-annual  
464 fluctuations in runoff volume, which may largely modify the output fluxes of SO<sub>4</sub>, can mask long-term  
465 changes in matter dynamics in ecosystems (e.g. Prechtel et al., 2001). Long-term mass balance budgets  
466 from IM catchments have shown that variation in the annual retention and net release of SO<sub>4</sub> from soils  
467 can be partly explained by variation in annual runoff, thus also masking long-term trends in output fluxes  
468 (Vuorenmaa et al. 2017). Nevertheless, our results are consistent with the recent regional trend analysis of  
469 surface water chemistry in Europe as part of the UNECE ICP Waters programme (Garmo et al., 2014)  
470 and another European assessment of surface water SO<sub>4</sub> concentrations (Helliwell et al., 2014), which have  
471 also shown clear decreases of xSO<sub>4</sub> concentrations in surface waters that eventually resulted from  
472 decreased xSO<sub>4</sub> fluxes into the water courses. Sulphur emissions have substantially reduced in North  
473 America as well, which have resulted in a widespread decline of SO<sub>4</sub> deposition, a consequent decline of

474 SO<sub>4</sub> concentrations and an increase of ANC in acid-sensitive surface waters (e.g. Garmo et al., 2014;  
475 Kahl et al., 2004; Stoddard et al., 1999).

476

477 Concentrations of xSO<sub>4</sub> and H<sup>+</sup> in soil water at IM sites EE01 and DE02 decreased significantly as well,  
478 showing that the declined S emissions and deposition loads have resulted not only in decreased xSO<sub>4</sub>  
479 concentrations and fluxes in surface runoff water, but a similar trend (and recovery from acidification)  
480 also proceeds in the soil at these sites. Several studies throughout Europe have documented decreasing  
481 trends in SO<sub>4</sub> concentrations in soil water in forested catchments (e.g. Karlsson et al., 2011; Kvaalen et  
482 al., 2002; Löfgren et al., 2011; Sawicka et al., 2016; Ukonmaanaho et al., 2014).

483

484 The different emission and deposition patterns between the 1990s and 2000s likely reflected the trends in  
485 runoff concentrations and fluxes at IM sites. Decrease in concentrations and output fluxes for xSO<sub>4</sub>, TIN  
486 and H<sup>+</sup> was steeper in the period 1990–2000 than in the period 2001–2015. Garmo et al. (2014) also  
487 reported that the decrease in xSO<sub>4</sub> concentrations in acid-sensitive surface waters in Europe was stronger  
488 in the 1990s than in the 2000s, and also trends in concentrations of other indicators of recovery from  
489 acidification tended to be less pronounced during the 2000s, suggesting that the rate of improvement of  
490 water quality has slowed. The more gradual decrease in concentrations and fluxes of SO<sub>4</sub> in IM  
491 catchments in the 2000s compared to the 1990s may also be due to an increased net release of SO<sub>4</sub>. The  
492 IM catchments generally retained SO<sub>4</sub> (input > output) in the early 1990s, but since the late 1990s, they  
493 commonly shifted towards net release (output > input) (Vuorenmaa et al., 2017). Many other studies on  
494 forested catchments in Europe and North America have also shown an increased net release of SO<sub>4</sub>  
495 fuelled by the mobilisation of legacy S pools accumulated during times of high atmospheric SO<sub>4</sub>  
496 deposition (Augustaitis et al., 2010; De Vries et al., 2003, 2001; Forsius et al., 2005; Löfgren et al., 2001;  
497 Mitchell et al., 2013, 2011; Prechtel et al., 2001; Watmough et al., 2005).

498

499 The studied IM catchments vary in their sensitivity to acidification, and the sites in Finland, Sweden and  
500 Norway and the Czech site CZ02 are considered to be susceptible to acidification (ANC in runoff  
501 commonly < 100 µeq l<sup>-1</sup>). Although a decreasing trend in the atmospheric acid input has been less

502 pronounced during the 2000s, the most acid-sensitive IM catchments in the present study are experiencing  
503 a recovery from sulphate-driven acidification, indicated by clear increases in pH and ANC in the soil-  
504 water ecosystem. Trends in surface water chemistry have shown widespread and consistent recovery from  
505 acidification in Europe due to the decreased  $\text{SO}_4$  input and loss (de Wit et al., 2015), and progressing  
506 recovery from acidification at acid-sensitive IM sites has been documented in more detail for CZ02  
507 (Krám et al., 2012), FI01 (Ukonmaanaho et al., 2014; Vuorenmaa et al., 2014), NO01 (Wright, 2008) and  
508 SE04, SE14, SE15 and SE16 (Löfgren et al., 2011).

509  
510 The  $\text{xSO}_4$  deposition (particularly throughfall) was clearly the strongest predictor explaining variation in  
511  $\text{xSO}_4$  concentrations in runoff ( $\text{xSO}_4$  *rwc*) at the studied IM sites, but the predictive power of  $\text{xSO}_4$   
512 deposition was poorer than expected. Median values for the coefficient of determination ranged from 19  
513 to 20% for concentrations and from 4 to 9% for fluxes. Thus, drivers other than deposition are also likely  
514 to be regulating present trends in runoff water  $\text{xSO}_4$  concentrations. Air temperature and runoff volume  
515 explained the variation in  $\text{xSO}_4$  *rwc* at the majority of the IM sites, but climatic variables were rarely the  
516 first predictor, and their predictive power (coefficient of determination) was clearly poorer than that of  
517 deposition. As indicated, the net release of  $\text{SO}_4$  due to desorption processes and the excess mineralisation  
518 of organic S in soils in response to decreased levels of deposition have been observed in many forested  
519 catchments in Europe and North America, which may partly explain the present  $\text{xSO}_4$  trend patterns in  
520 catchment output at IM sites. It has previously been shown that climate-driven changes in  
521 hydrometeorological conditions, such as variations in watershed wetness and runoff, wetting and drying  
522 cycles and soil temperature, together with internal  $\text{SO}_4$  sources, can largely regulate  $\text{SO}_4$  loss from  
523 catchments (Benčoková et al., 2011; Dillon et al., 1997; Mitchell et al., 2013; Rice et al., 2014; Wright,  
524 1998; Wright and Jenkins, 2001). The effects of climatic drivers on S-cycling in catchment soils are  
525 expected to become increasingly important, as atmospheric  $\text{SO}_4$  input has declined (e.g. Mitchell et al.,  
526 2013) and climate change continues.

527

#### 528 **4.3 Changes in runoff water chemistry and catchment output fluxes of inorganic N**

529

530 Enhanced leaching of  $\text{NO}_3$  from IM catchments can be associated with high deposition inputs of TIN  
531 (Holmberg et al., 2013, Vuorenmaa et al., 2017). An elevated N deposition has been found to be related to  
532 elevated TIN concentrations in soil water and TIN leaching in many areas in Europe (Gundersen, 1995;  
533 Iost et al., 2012; Waldner et al., 2015). Nitrate leaching mainly occurs when TIN deposition is above a  
534 critical deposition threshold of ca.  $10 \text{ kg ha}^{-1} \text{ yr}^{-1}$  (ca.  $70 \text{ meq m}^{-2} \text{ yr}^{-1}$ ) (Dise and Wright, 1995; Kaste et  
535 al., 2007; MacDonald et al., 2002; Stoddard et al., 2001; Wright et al., 2001). Dise et al. (2009) have also  
536 determined that N in throughfall over  $8 \text{ kg ha}^{-1} \text{ yr}^{-1}$  (ca.  $60 \text{ meq m}^{-2} \text{ yr}^{-1}$ ) is necessary for N leaching to  
537 occur. The mean annual TIN deposition ( $\text{NO}_3 + \text{NH}_4$ ) in 1990–2015 in IM catchments AT01, CZ01,  
538 CZ02, NO01, PL06 and PL10 (with no substantial forest disturbance) equalled or exceeded most clearly  
539 these deposition thresholds, and at these sites the output fluxes of TIN were also elevated compared to the  
540 other sites (Table 2). Likewise, Holmberg et al. (2013) found that at IM sites where the critical loads of  
541 nutrient nitrogen were exceeded, they also showed higher TIN concentrations and fluxes in runoff.  
542 Elevated leaching of  $\text{NO}_3$  was found at DE01, but high TIN output was related to widespread and  
543 substantial forest dieback of Norway spruce (70% of the catchment area) and consequent excess N  
544 mineralisation due to bark beetle infestation (1997–2007), although – along with the recovery of forests –  
545 leaching of  $\text{NO}_3$  started to decrease after 2007 (Beudert et al., 2014; Vuorenmaa et al., 2017).  
546 Concentrations of  $\text{NH}_4$  in runoff in forested catchments are usually very low due to effective microbial  
547 immobilisation in the soil (e.g. Booth et al., 2005; Corre et al., 2007) and uptake by plants (i.e. trees), and  
548 in the majority of catchments  $\text{NO}_3$  clearly dominated the TIN loss. Concentrations of  $\text{NH}_4$  in runoff in the  
549 Norwegian IM catchments NO01, NO02 and NO03 are known to be negligible, which is why  $\text{NH}_4$  was  
550 not included in the chemical analysis in the runoff water chemistry monitoring program (H. de Wit,  
551 pers.comm.). In Finnish and Swedish IM catchments, the flux of  $\text{NH}_4$  was larger than that of  $\text{NO}_3$ ,  
552 although it was comparatively small, or the contribution of  $\text{NH}_4$  to the TIN fluxes was proportionally  
553 important (FI01, FI03, SE04, SE15, SE16). This is likely due to catchment characteristics, such as  
554 hydrological flow paths, elevation gradients and proportions of organic soils. These forest ecosystems are  
555 likely still N limited and therefore there is no significant nitrification of  $\text{NH}_4$ .

556

557 The present trend of TIN deposition at IM sites is decreasing, which should generally lead to decreased  
558 NO<sub>3</sub> concentrations in runoff (Forsius et al., 2005; Holmberg et al., 2013; Wright et al., 2001). Trends for  
559 NO<sub>3</sub> and NH<sub>4</sub> in runoff showed a mixed response with both positive and negative trend slopes, but at  
560 more than 60% of the sites TIN concentrations and fluxes were decreasing, and NO<sub>3</sub> concentrations  
561 decreased even at 73% of the sites, with a significant decrease at 50% of the sites. The previous trend  
562 assessment (1993–2006) for monthly concentrations and fluxes at IM sites (Vuorenmaa et al., 2009)  
563 showed decreasing trends for NO<sub>3</sub> concentrations and fluxes in runoff at 48% and 42% of the sites,  
564 respectively, with a significant decrease both in concentrations and fluxes at 20% of the sites. Thus, the  
565 present trend in NO<sub>3</sub> concentrations and output fluxes is decreasing at the majority of the sites, and a  
566 decreasing trend has strengthened. Vuorenmaa et al. (2017) reported long-term (1990–2012) annual  
567 input-output budgets of inorganic N for 17 IM catchments located in low or intermediate N deposition  
568 areas, and they found that deposited inorganic N was, in general, effectively retained in undisturbed  
569 catchments. As yet there are no widespread signs of a consistent increase in NO<sub>3</sub> concentrations or  
570 exports in sensitive undisturbed freshwater, i.e. no widespread signs of N saturation in Europe and North  
571 America (Garmo et al., 2014; Helliwell et al., 2014; Mitchell, 2011; Watmough et al., 2005; Wright et al.,  
572 2001). However, contrary to the status and trends in Europe and North America, the signs of elevated  
573 NO<sub>3</sub> leaching from N-saturated ecosystems have been documented from Asia (Duan et al., 2016a, see  
574 section 4.4)

575

576 The trends for the concentrations and output fluxes of TIN at IM sites are, however, still variable,  
577 indicating that surface water-watershed nitrogen dynamics are inherently complex, as nitrogen is strongly  
578 affected by biological processes and hydrological conditions, and nitrate concentrations in surface waters  
579 may fluctuate greatly by season and spatially across ecosystems (e.g. Aber et al., 2003). Moreover, the  
580 short- and long-term variations in the climate and forest disturbance may mask long-term trends caused  
581 by N deposition (Dale et al., 2001; Wright et al., 2001). One might infer that the risk of N saturation is  
582 decreasing at IM sites, because of the somewhat decreasing trend in NO<sub>3</sub> leaching. Nitrogen saturation of  
583 terrestrial ecosystems may occur when N input and available inorganic N exceeds biotic demand, and  
584 may result in excess NO<sub>3</sub> leaching into surface waters. An elevated NO<sub>3</sub> loss from catchments can be

585 associated with a high N deposition, e.g. as shown at IM sites by Holmberg et al. (2013), and has reached  
586 elevated levels in forested areas which are prone to chronic N deposition (Corre et al., 2007; Kiese et al.,  
587 2011; Thimonier et al., 2010). However, the elevated leaching of NO<sub>3</sub> is only one signal of nitrogen  
588 saturation and may not be indicative in all sites (Lovett and Goodale, 2011). It should be noted that  
589 studied IM catchments are rarely located in very high N deposition areas. In recent decades TIN  
590 deposition in these areas rarely exceeded 100 meq m<sup>-2</sup> yr<sup>-1</sup> (ca 15 kg ha<sup>-1</sup> yr<sup>-1</sup>), which can be considered  
591 an intermediate N deposition level that is documented to increase the deposition-driven risk of elevated  
592 NO<sub>3</sub> leaching (e.g. Dise and Wright, 1995). It should also be noted that large forest areas in Europe, or at  
593 least in central Europe, were subjected to former/ancient forest and soil exploitation. Periodic ‘resetting’  
594 of the N accumulation clock through e.g. harvesting and fire could maintain the baseline N accumulation  
595 over long time periods (Dise et al., 2009), and N storage dynamics should be taken into account when  
596 interpreting decreasing TIN behaviour in light of expected movement towards saturation. Several recent  
597 global studies showing that the unbalanced inputs of C and N relative to P induced significant changes in  
598 organism stoichiometry, resulting in profound and uncertain consequences on the structure, functioning  
599 and diversity of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems (Peñuelas et al., 2013, 2012; Sardans et al., 2012).  
600 Jonard et al. (2015) reported deteriorated tree mineral nutrition (mainly phosphorus) in forests in Europe  
601 due to the elevated N deposition. Surveys covering lakes in Europe and North America in low and high N  
602 deposition regions (Bergström et al., 2005; Bergström and Jansson, 2006; Elser et al., 2009) suggested  
603 that the atmospheric deposition of N in excess of natural levels has increased inorganic nitrogen  
604 concentrations, which is likely to have caused a shift from natural phytoplankton N limitation to P  
605 limitation. The shift from N or N+P limitation towards to P limitation was observed to be most  
606 pronounced in oligotrophic lakes at a relatively low N deposition level, from 2 to 5 kg N ha<sup>-1</sup> yr<sup>-1</sup>  
607 (Bergström et al., 2005; Bergström and Jansson, 2006). Our focus in this paper was on large-scale spatial  
608 and temporal trends in deposition (input) and runoff (output), and we did not study the negative effects of  
609 N (and S) deposition on ecosystems in detail at the study sites, but these alarming findings call for further  
610 studies at IM sites.

611



612 We detected a significant long-term (1990–2015) increase of TIN concentrations and/or fluxes at five  
613 sites (AT01, BY02, PL10, SE04 and SE14), but trends were not likely to be linked to the direct N  
614 deposition effects. Site AT01 is a leaky karst catchment, where high TIN deposition causes a high NO<sub>3</sub>  
615 loss, even if the forests are not N-saturated. The catchment has a fast runoff dynamic, and snowmelt  
616 periods and heavy rain events cause a strong throughflow, dictating not only annual but also long-term N  
617 budgets (Jost et al., 2011). Site AT01 was also affected by storm-driven forest disturbance causing  
618 elevated NO<sub>3</sub> leaching during the period 2007–2010 (T. Dirnböck, pers.comm). If this period is masked  
619 from the trend analysis, the trend for NO<sub>3</sub> concentrations remained increasing and significant (0.97 µeq l<sup>-1</sup>  
620 yr<sup>-1</sup>, p=0.048). In January 2005, site SE14 was hit by a severe storm, causing substantial damage to the  
621 forest by windthrow followed by a bark beetle infestation (~50% of trees killed/seriously affected in  
622 2009), which substantially increased the variability and mean of the annual TIN output from 0.5–3.5 meq  
623 m<sup>-2</sup> yr<sup>-1</sup> (mean 1.3 meq m<sup>-2</sup> yr<sup>-1</sup>) to 1.8–8.3 meq m<sup>-2</sup> yr<sup>-1</sup> (mean 5.0 meq m<sup>-2</sup> yr<sup>-1</sup>) between the periods  
624 1997–2006 and 2007–2015, respectively. The disturbance regime caused increased TIN concentrations  
625 and NO<sub>3</sub> output flux at site SE14 from 2007 on (Löfgren et al., 2011). We did not detect any significant  
626 increases in inorganic N concentrations for site SE04 in 1990–2015, and therefore the increase in NO<sub>3</sub>  
627 flux may be partly related to increased runoff. The storm in 2005 also hit this site, but caused much less  
628 direct damage and bark beetle infestation than at site SE14 (Löfgren et al., 2011). Precipitation increased  
629 – although not significantly – at site SE04, and a strong relationship between runoff and precipitation  
630 ( $R^2=0.65$ ,  $p < 0.0001$ , data not shown) may indicate a precipitation-driven increase in runoff. Significant  
631 increasing trends in TIN concentrations in the large semi-natural IM catchments BY02 (A=1780 km<sup>2</sup>) and  
632 PL10 (A=13 km<sup>2</sup>) may be partly due to the direct human influence, such as agricultural leaching, from the  
633 catchment.

634

635 Air temperature and throughfall of TIN explained the variation in TIN concentrations in runoff (TIN *rwc*)  
636 at most of the IM sites, and air temperature was the first predictor at ca. 70% of the sites. Globally  
637 increasing trends in surface air temperature are widely documented, and were also detected ( $p < 0.05$ ) at  
638 ca. 60% of the IM sites in 1990–2015. The predictive power of air temperature, however, was poor

639 (coefficient of determination ranged between 3% and 22%). Unlike in  $x\text{SO}_4$  *rwc*, the site-specific  
640 variation of TIN *rwc* was rarely explained by runoff volume. The model generally explained the variation  
641 of TIN *rwc* from 4% to 39% between the sites. In contrast to site-specific variation, the variation of TIN  
642 *rwc* in the combined data, however, was best explained by TIN *tfc*. Dise et al. (2009) found that in forest  
643 ecosystems with chronically elevated N deposition, the throughfall flux of inorganic N was the strongest  
644 predictor of N leaching, and N leaching from these ecosystems is primarily driven by the flux of N  
645 through deposition and canopy interception rather than any intrinsic attributes of the sites themselves,  
646 including climate, topography, hydrology, vegetation or soil properties. As indicated, the IM sites are  
647 located in areas with very different N deposition gradients, and it is obvious that not all potential drivers  
648 (see e.g. Rothwell et al., 2008) were included in the empirical model in this study, and further analysis  
649 with specific landscape and soil data is needed to elucidate the variation in inorganic N concentrations at  
650 IM sites. Elevated leaching losses of TIN are generally linked to high N deposition, but losses and trends  
651 of  $\text{NO}_3$  may be highly variable between sites exposed to relatively similar levels of N deposition  
652 (Bringmark and Kvarnäs, 1995; Rothwell et al., 2008), and also other factors than TIN deposition may  
653 largely modify TIN losses and trends from forested catchments (Lovett and Goodale, 2011). These factors  
654 would include e.g. site characteristics (Brumme and Khanna, 2008; Gundersen et al., 1998), acid  
655 deposition (Kopáček et al., 2013; Oulehle et al., 2011), denitrification (Wexler et al., 2014), soil organic  
656 N mineralisation and nitrification (Kreutzer et al., 2009), immobilisation (Booth et al., 2005; Corre et al.,  
657 2007), disturbance legacies (Bernal et al., 2012; Dale et al., 2001), climatic variables (Brookshire et al.,  
658 2011; de Wit et al., 2008; Monteith et al., 2000; Wright and Jenkins, 2001) and changes in tree  
659 composition (Crowley and Lovett, 2017). De Wit et al. (2008) reported increasing trends in  $\text{NO}_3$  fluxes in  
660 runoff during the period 1973/1978–2005 at sites NO01 and NO02, which are located in high and low N  
661 deposition areas, respectively, but these trends were likely related to climatic variables, such as changes  
662 in snow depth, winter discharge and air temperature. Our model included air temperature at the majority  
663 of the study sites which was negatively related to TIN *rwc*. This negative relationship can be at least  
664 partly related to the efficient biological uptake of available nitrogen compounds through plants and soil  
665 microbes (e.g. Tamm, 1991), soil immobilisation and nutrient uptake by aquatic biota (e.g. algae and  
666 bryophytes) (e.g. Mulholland, 2004), which is why  $\text{NO}_3$  concentrations in surface waters are usually at a

667 low level during the summer growing season, and peak in the dormant season/snowmelt in winter and  
668 spring. It should be noted that ultimately soil temperature controls N-cycling in catchments, but soil  
669 temperature, particularly in the presence of snow, is not a linear function of air temperature (see e.g. de  
670 Wit et al., 2008). Nevertheless, the present trend in TIN concentrations and fluxes in runoff is decreasing  
671 – particularly for NO<sub>3</sub> – at the majority of the sites, and the influence of long-term variation of climatic  
672 variables on TIN *rwc* trends did not strongly arise from this data set and analysis. While a continued  
673 decrease in N deposition is anticipated at the ICP IM sites in the future (Forsius et al., 2005; Holmberg et  
674 al., 2013), nitrogen continues to accumulate in catchment soils and vegetation, which may ultimately lead  
675 to biodiversity losses, decreased soil capacity to retain N and an increased leaching of TIN. Enhanced  
676 TIN leaching may be superimposed by climate change, e.g. through increased mineralisation and  
677 nitrification rates in the soils due to increased temperature (Beier et al., 2008; Rustad et al., 2001; Wright  
678 and Jenkins, 2001), but also an absence of a response has been observed (Beier et al., 2008). Dirnböck et  
679 al. (2017) have also suggested that expected future climate change will likely increase ecosystem N  
680 retention through increasing N immobilisation in tree biomass and soil organic matter (SOM). Our  
681 knowledge on the combined effects of changing climate and a rise in atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> is also still limited  
682 (Norby et al., 2010). In addition to inorganic N, organic N in IM catchments also needs further study,  
683 because climate change impacts on the production and mineralisation of organic nitrogen and leaching of  
684 organic matter, and the potential risk of an elevated N loss from watersheds to surface waters may also be  
685 anticipated in the future.

#### 686 687 **4.4 New hotspot regions of global S and N emissions and deposition**

688  
689 While a recovery in acid-sensitive surface waters has taken place in Europe and North America due to the  
690 substantial reductions in S and N emissions and deposition over the past 20–30 years, many countries in  
691 South America, Africa and Asia have experienced an increase in industrialisation and S and N emissions  
692 during the past decades (Smith et al., 2011). Therefore, further expansion of acidifying and eutrophying  
693 deposition in these regions in recent decades would warrant the collection of new long-term monitoring  
694 data on the ecosystem effects of S and N deposition. At present, Asia, particularly East Asia, has become

695 a global hotspot of S and N deposition (Smith et al., 2015; Vet et al., 2014). Driven by a dramatic  
696 economic development, Asian SO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub> and NH<sub>3</sub> emissions have increased rapidly over recent decades,  
697 and for all of the three acidifying precursors (SO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub>, and NH<sub>3</sub>), more than 35% of the global emissions  
698 were contributed by Asia in 2005, mainly by China (Smith et al., 2011). Emissions of SO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> in  
699 China increased rapidly until 2005 and 2011, respectively, but subsequent emission abatement actions  
700 have resulted in a decline in emissions and deposition, although decreases were more evident for SO<sub>4</sub> than  
701 inorganic N (Duan et al., 2016a).

702  
703 High S and N emissions have resulted in elevated SO<sub>4</sub> and NO<sub>3</sub> concentrations in surface water in many  
704 parts of East Asia, and has caused surface water acidification in some regions with acid-sensitive soil  
705 properties, but generally surface water acidification may not be a serious regional issue across Asia due to  
706 the soil properties (S and N sink), good buffering capacity of inland waters and high alkaline Ca  
707 deposition (Duan et al., 2016a; Yu et al., 2017). However, high S deposition in China has led to an  
708 increasing trend of SO<sub>4</sub> concentrations in rivers and increased riverine output fluxes (Duan et al., 2016b),  
709 and has also caused general soil acidification in many regions in East Asia (Duan et al., 2016a). Nitrogen  
710 deposition, especially of NH<sub>4</sub>, is of increasing concern in Asia due to nitrification and nitrate leaching in  
711 N-saturated ecosystems causing acidification of soils and water. Enhanced NO<sub>3</sub> leaching has been  
712 observed in China and Japan, and N-derived decreasing pH-values have been reported for some streams  
713 (Duan et al., 2016a; Qiao et al., 2014). Although further studies are needed, the acidifying effect of N  
714 deposition may be more important than S deposition in well-drained tropical/subtropical soils due to high  
715 SO<sub>4</sub> adsorption. The relative importance of N deposition in future acidification may increase, because the  
716 role of S as an acidifying agent is likely to decrease, as has occurred in Europe and North America.  
717 Excess nitrogen deposition has not only led to acidification, but has also resulted in ecosystem  
718 eutrophication in East Asia, shown as changes in N dynamics, plant growth or biodiversity. The decrease  
719 in S (and N) deposition has started a recovery from soil acidification, but as with Europe and North  
720 America, however, the large stores of adsorbed SO<sub>4</sub> are expected to be desorbed, a process which delays  
721 the recovery of the soil from acidification. Thus, how quickly soils respond to decreased deposition in  
722 these regions is uncertain (Duan et al., 2016a).

723

724 **Conclusions**

725

726 A pattern of S and N emission reduction responses in large areas across Europe is shown by trend  
727 analysis from the international ICP IM network of forested research catchments also belonging to the  
728 LTER (Long-Term Ecosystem Research) research infrastructure. Concentrations and deposition fluxes of  
729  $xSO_4$ , and consequently acidity in precipitation, have substantially decreased in IM areas. TIN deposition  
730 has decreased in most of the IM areas, but to a lesser extent than that of  $xSO_4$ . Substantially decreased  
731  $xSO_4$  deposition has resulted in decreased concentrations and output fluxes of  $xSO_4$  in runoff, and  
732 decreasing trends of TIN concentrations in runoff – particularly for  $NO_3$  – are more prominent than  
733 increasing trends. In addition, decreasing trends appeared to strengthen over the course of emission  
734 reductions during the last 25 years. TIN concentrations in runoff were mainly decreasing, while trends in  
735 output fluxes were more variable, but trend slopes were decreasing rather than increasing. The ICP  
736 IM/LTER network covers important deposition gradients in Europe, and these results confirm that  
737 emission abatement actions are having their intended effects on precipitation and runoff water chemistry  
738 in the course of successful emission reductions in different regions in Europe, even though decreasing  
739 trends for S and N emissions and deposition and deposition reduction responses in runoff water chemistry  
740 tended to be more gradual since the early 2000s.

741

742 At most IM catchments,  $xSO_4$  is on average leached out at the same level as  $xSO_4$  deposition, or output  
743 fluxes in runoff have been higher than input fluxes in deposition, while deposited TIN is effectively  
744 retained in catchments. Thus, generally higher leaching fluxes of  $xSO_4$  than those of TIN indicate that  
745  $SO_4$  processes are generally the dominant source of actual soil acidification, despite the lower deposition  
746 inputs of  $SO_4$ , than TIN (De Vries et al., 2007; Forsius et al., 2005).

747

748 The effects of climatic drivers on trends of  $SO_4$  losses in catchment soils, together with internal  $SO_4$   
749 sources, are anticipated to become increasingly important as atmospheric  $SO_4$  deposition has declined.

750 The combined effect of climate variability/change and N deposition is also a potential concern, as many

751 of the retention and release processes of TIN are sensitive to changes in climatic variables. Deposited N  
752 continues to accumulate in catchment soils and vegetation, but as of yet there are no clear signs of a  
753 consistent climate-driven increase in TIN concentrations or exports in forested IM catchments. Further  
754 analysis of processes regulating mobilisation and the release of SO<sub>4</sub> and TIN in terrestrial ecosystems are  
755 needed to allow an evaluation of the effects of not only emission reduction policies, but also of the  
756 changing climate. This study strongly emphasises the importance of the larger scale integrated long-term  
757 monitoring and research of different ecosystem compartments under the LTER infrastructures for  
758 detecting the variety of impacts of changing environmental conditions on ecosystems.

759

## 760 **Acknowledgements**

761

762 The authors would like to thank the UNECE LRTAP Convention Trust Fund, the Swedish Environmental  
763 Protection Agency and the European Commission through the H2020-project eLTER (grant agreement  
764 no. 654359) for financial support for the study. We would also like to express our thanks to the national  
765 focal points and many national institutions involved in the ICP IM and LTER work for continued  
766 intensive field monitoring and data collection efforts.

767

## 768 **Appendix A. Supplementary data**

769

770 Supplementary data to this article can be found online at ....

771

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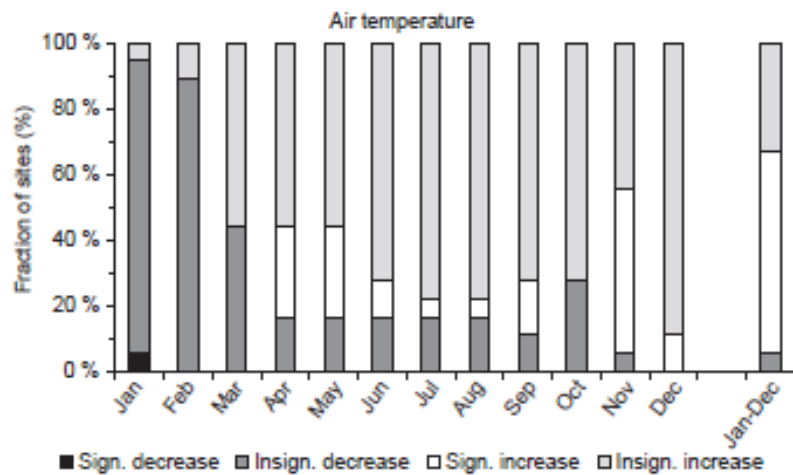
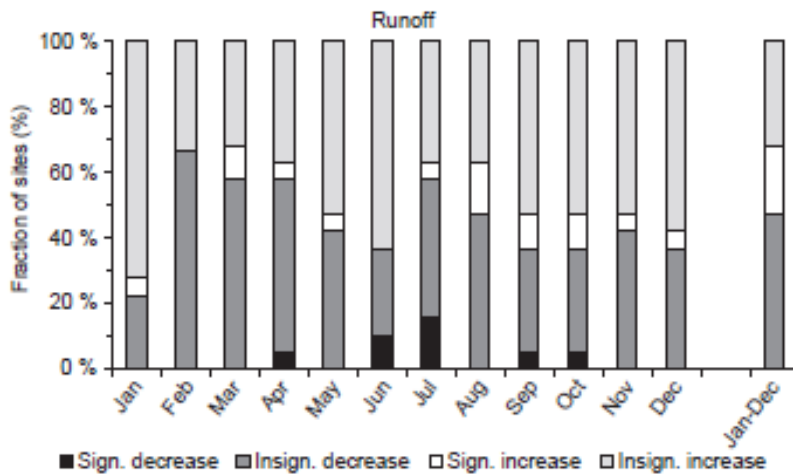
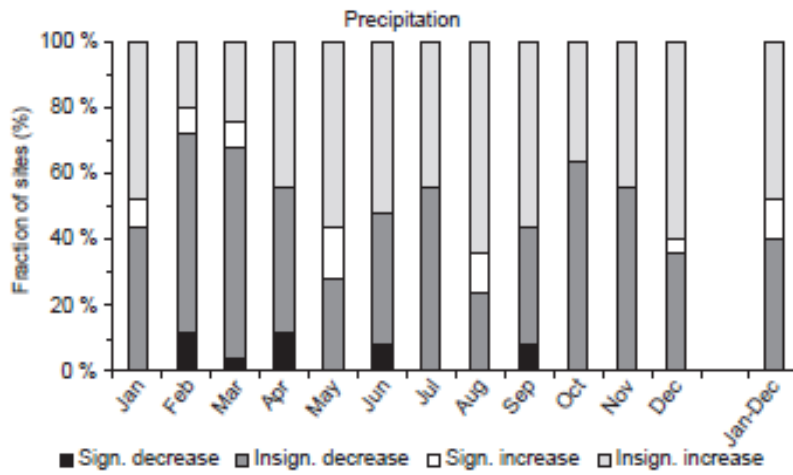
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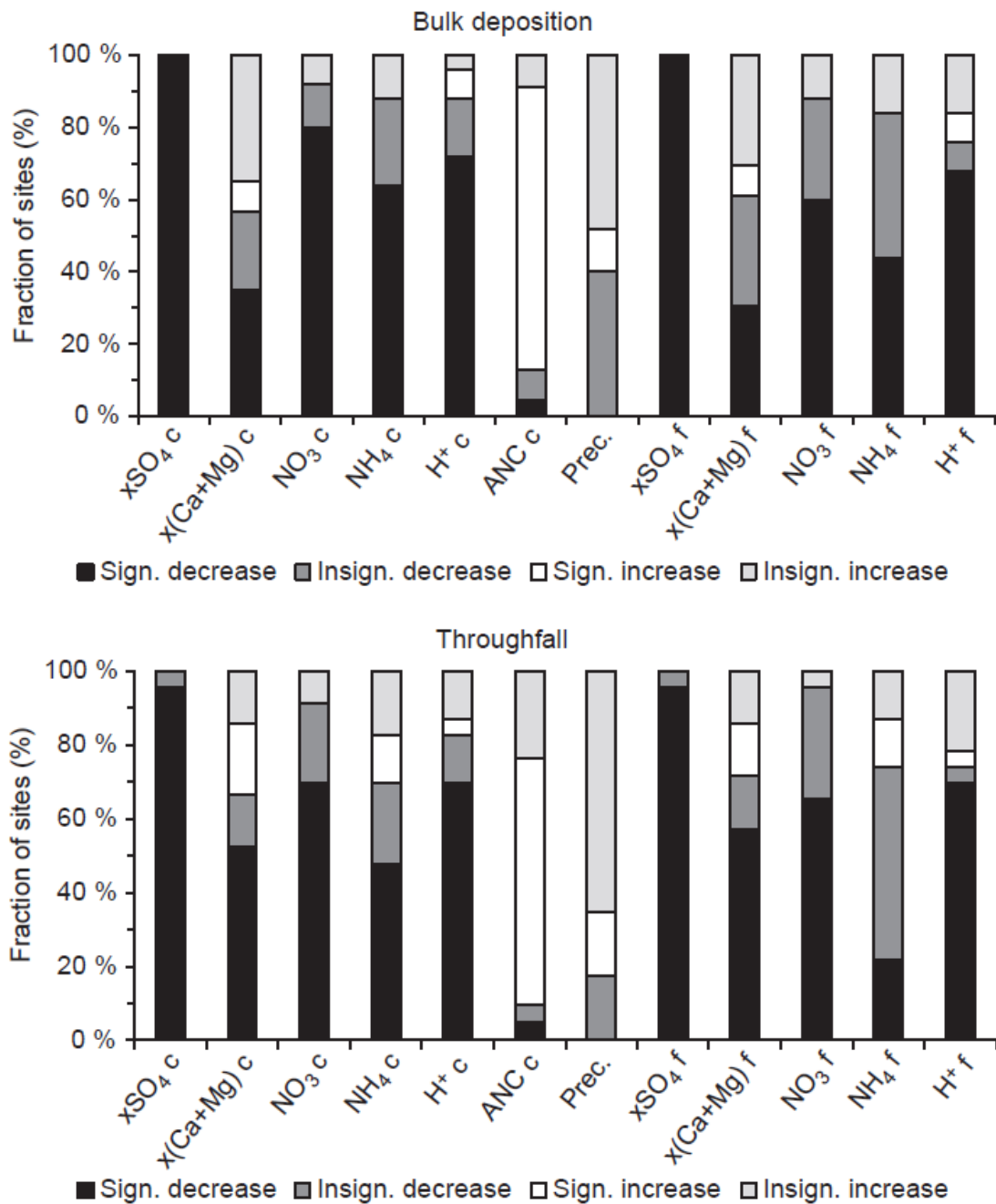
1266 Fig. 1. Location of the 25 ICP Integrated Monitoring sites included in the trend assessment.



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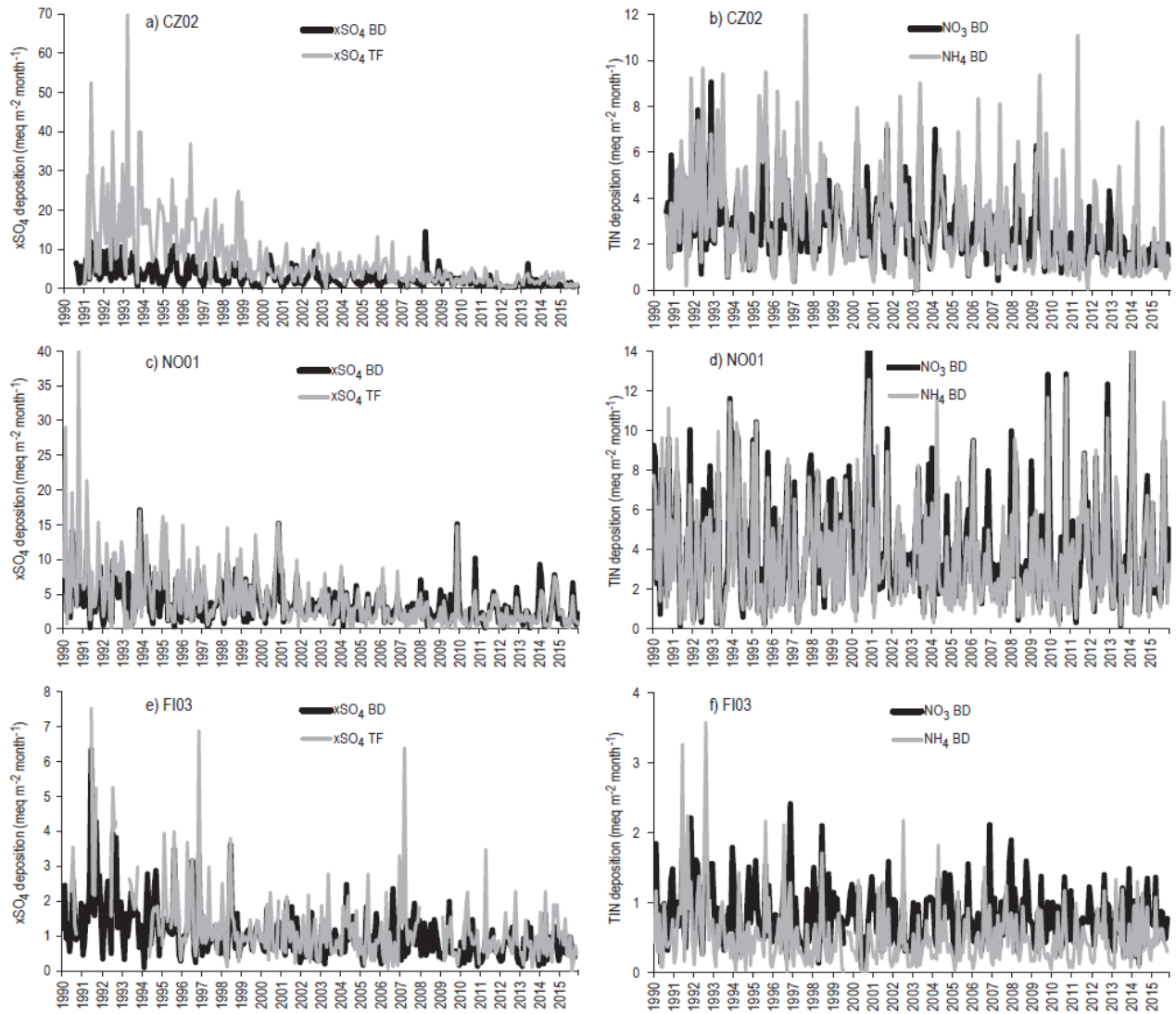
1268 Fig. 2. Percentage of Integrated Monitoring sites with a significant decreasing (black), insignificant  
 1269 decreasing (dark grey), significant increasing (white) and insignificant increasing (light grey) trend in  
 1270 monthly and annual (Jan–Dec) records of precipitation (top), runoff (middle) and air temperature  
 1271 (bottom) in 1990–2015.

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1273  
 1274  
 1275 Fig. 3. Percentage of Integrated Monitoring sites with a significant decreasing (black), insignificant  
 1276 decreasing (dark grey), significant increasing (white) and insignificant increasing (light grey) trend in  
 1277 concentrations (denoted as c) and fluxes (denoted as f) of bulk deposition (top) and throughfall (bottom)  
 1278 in 1990–2015.

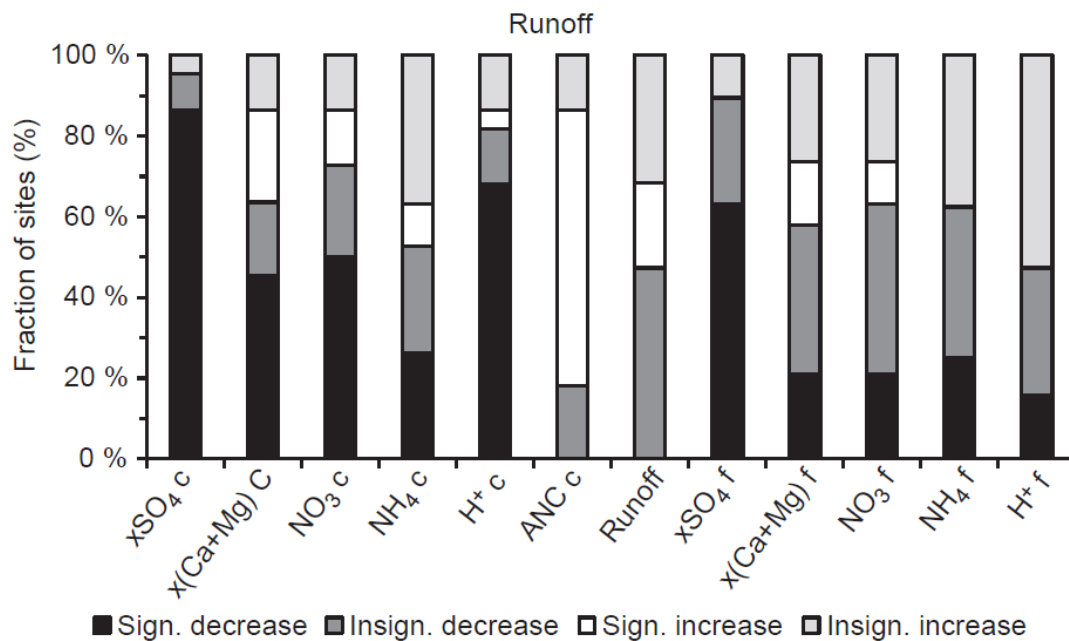
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1281 Fig. 4. Monthly bulk (BD) and throughfall (TF) deposition (meq m<sup>-2</sup> month<sup>-1</sup>) of xSO<sub>4</sub> and monthly bulk  
 1282 deposition (BD) of NO<sub>3</sub> and NH<sub>4</sub> (inorganic N=TIN) (meq m<sup>-2</sup> month<sup>-1</sup>) in 1990–2015 in catchments  
 1283 CZ02 (Lysina, Czech Republic) (a and b, respectively), NO01 (Birkenes, Norway) (c and d, respectively)  
 1284 and FI03 (Hietajärvi, Finland) (e and f, respectively) reflecting different deposition and  
 1285 hydrometeorological gradients.

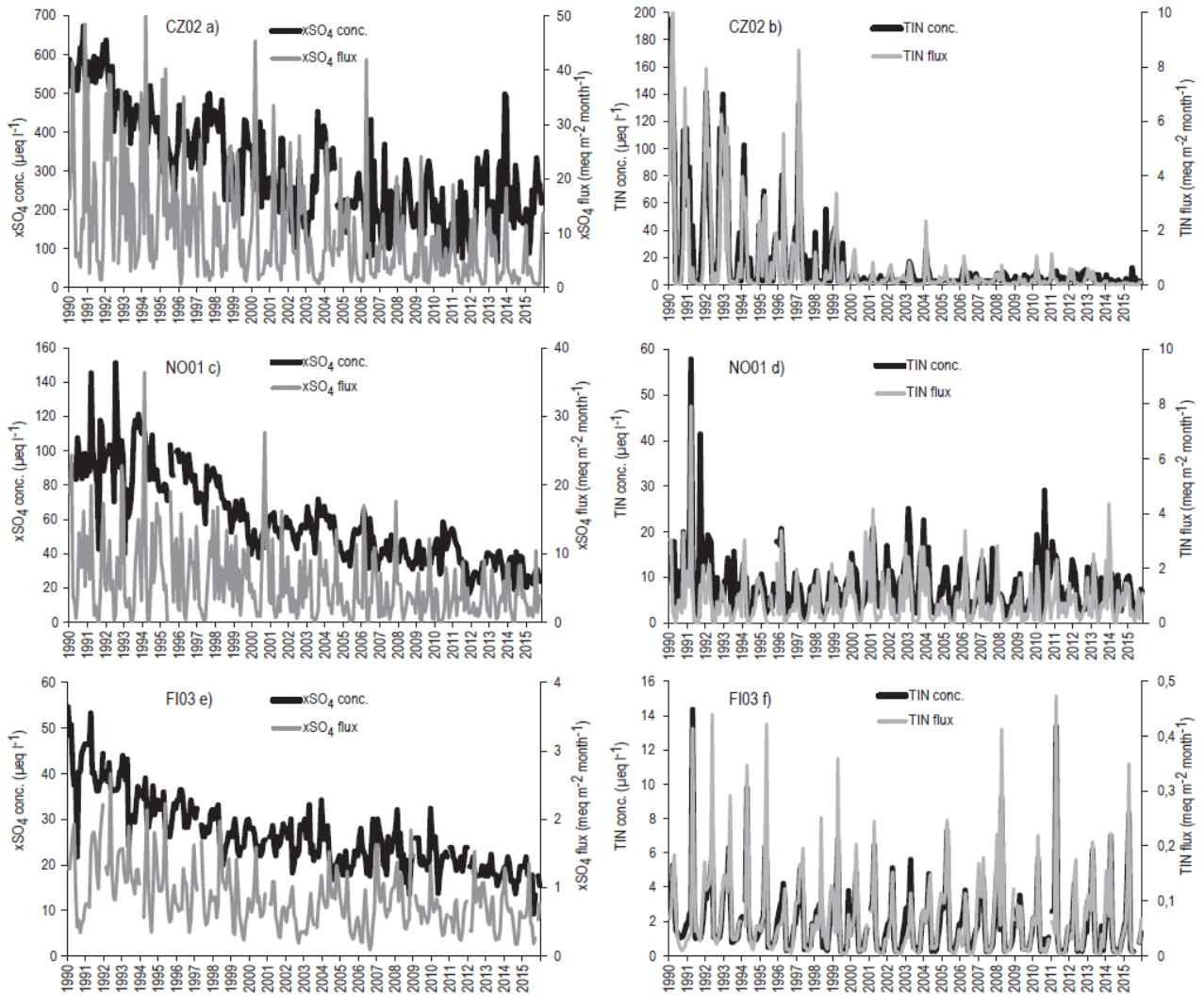
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1288 Fig. 5. Percentage of Integrated Monitoring sites with a significant decreasing (black), insignificant  
 1289 decreasing (dark grey), significant increasing (white) and insignificant increasing (light grey) trend in  
 1290 concentrations (denoted as c) and fluxes (denoted as f) of runoff in 1990–2015.

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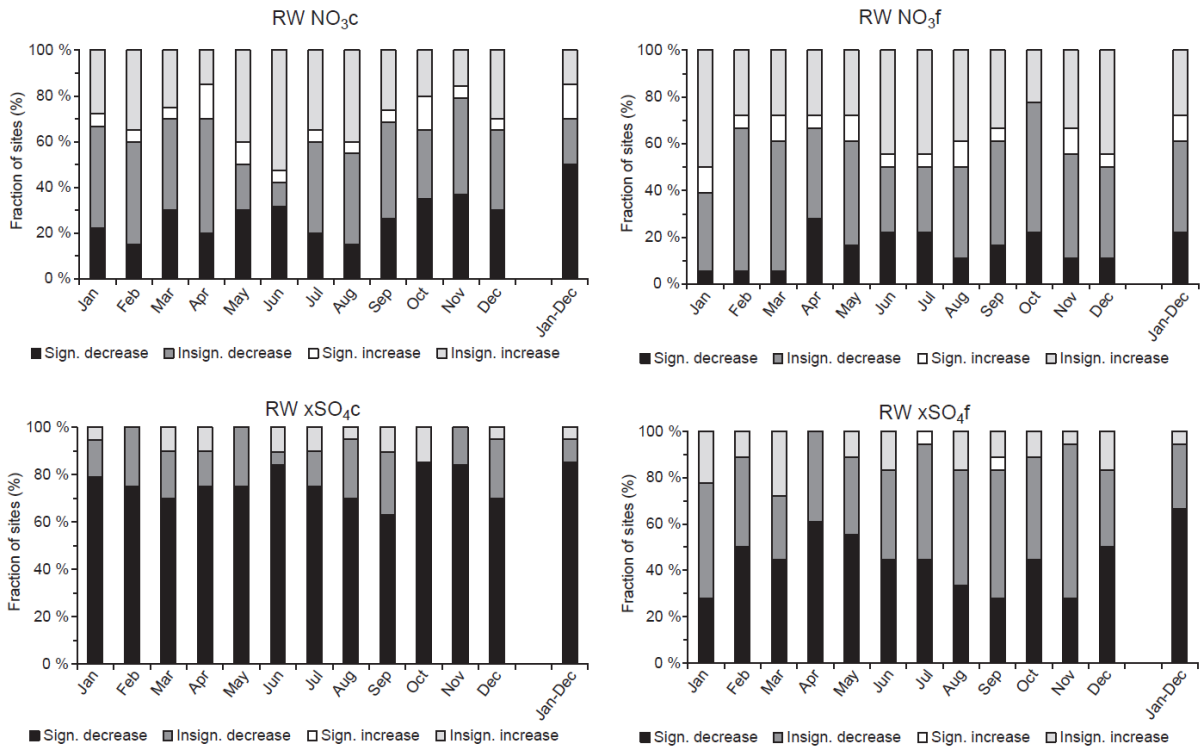


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1293 Fig. 6. Monthly runoff water concentrations (left y-axis,  $\mu\text{eq l}^{-1}$ ) and fluxes (right y-axis,  $\text{meq m}^{-2} \text{ month}^{-1}$ ) of xSO<sub>4</sub> and inorganic N (TIN) in 1990–2015 in catchments CZ02 (Lysina, Czech Republic) (a and b,  
 1294 respectively) NO01 (Birkenes, Norway) (c and d, respectively) and FI03 (Hietajärvi, Finland) (e and f,  
 1295 respectively) reflecting different deposition and hydrometeorological gradients.  
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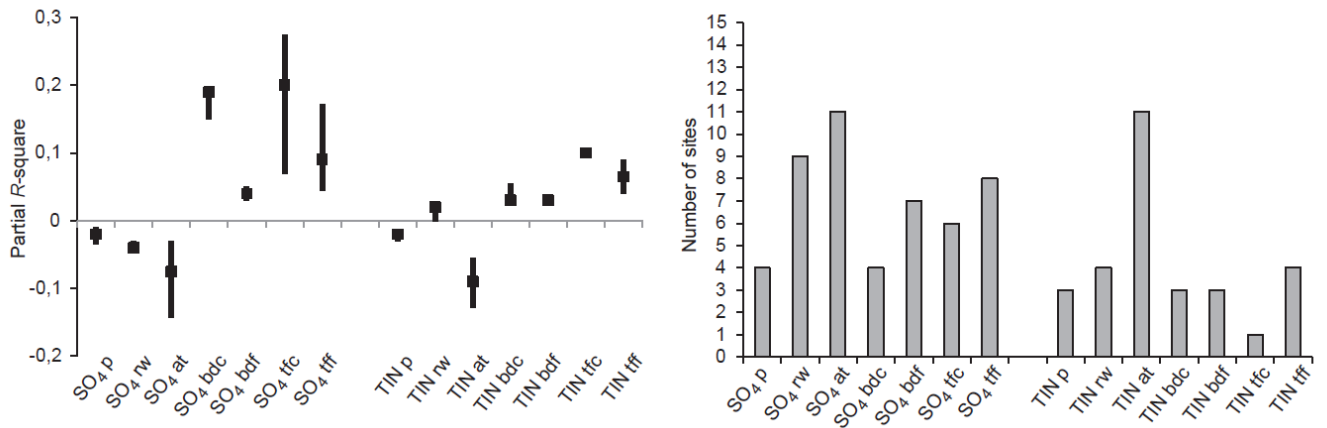
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Fig. 7. Percentage of Integrated Monitoring sites with a significant decreasing (black), insignificant decreasing (dark grey), significant increasing (white) and insignificant increasing (light grey) trend in monthly and annual (Jan–Dec) NO<sub>3</sub> and xSO<sub>4</sub> runoff concentrations (denoted as c) and fluxes (denoted as f) in 1990–2015.



1311

1312 Fig. 8. Percentiles (25%, median 50%, 75%) of partial  $R$ -squares of explanatory variables for variation in  
 1313  $xSO_4$  and TIN concentrations in runoff (left), and number of sites in which different explanatory variables  
 1314 were selected in the model (right). The lower and upper lines indicate 25<sup>th</sup> and 75<sup>th</sup> percentiles,  
 1315 respectively, and a square indicates the median value (p, precipitation; rw, runoff volume; at, air  
 1316 temperature;  $xSO_4$  bdc,  $xSO_4$  concentration in bulk deposition;  $xSO_4$  bdf,  $xSO_4$  flux in bulk deposition;  
 1317  $xSO_4$  tfc,  $xSO_4$  concentration in throughfall;  $xSO_4$  tff,  $xSO_4$  flux in throughfall; TIN bdc, TIN  
 1318 concentration in bulk deposition; TIN bdf, TIN flux in bulk deposition; TIN tfc, TIN concentration in  
 1319 throughfall; TIN tff, TIN flux in throughfall.



## Ms. Ref. No.: STOTEN-D-17-05394R1

### Tables

Table 1. Basic catchment characteristics in the studied Integrated Monitoring catchments.

Site code	Site name	Country	ILTER	Catchment area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Altitude (m)	Forest area (%)	Lakes (%)	Peatland (%)	Predominant vegetation	Dominant bedrocks	Soil type
AT01	Zöbelboden	Austria	x	0.90	550–950	100	0	0	Norway spruce, European beech	Calcitic dolomite	Chromic Cambisols, Hydromorphic Stagnosols, Lithic and Rendzic Leptosols
BY02	Berezina	Belarus		1780	155–227	83	2	69	Scots pine, Norway spruce	Sand	Podzols, alluvial soils
CZ01	Anenske Povodi	Czech Republic		0.29	487–543	90	0	0	Norway spruce	Biotitic and sillimanitic-biotitic paragneiss	Dystric Cambisols
CZ02	Lysina	Czech Republic	x	0.27	829–949	100	0	6	Norway spruce	Leucogranite	Podzol, Gleysol
DE01	Forellenbach	Germany	x	0.69	787–1293	95	0	30	Norway spruce, European beech	Granite, gneiss	Dystric and Podzolic Cambisols, Rankers and Lithosols
DE02	Neuglobsow	Germany		14.2	65	55	32	<2	European beech, Scots pine	Pleistocene	Haplic Arenosol
EE01	Vilsandi	Estonia	x	0.008	2–5	95	0	0	Scots pine	Calcitic dolomite	Calcari-Gleyic Leptosol
EE02	Saarejärve	Estonia	x	3.32	44–77	68	8	10	Norway spruce, Scots pine	Sandstone, limestone	Haplic Podzol, glaciofluvial sands
FI01	Valkea-Kotinen	Finland	x	0.30	150–190	86	13	19	Norway spruce, Scots pine	Mica gneiss	Dystric Cambisols, Histols
FI03	Hietajärvi	Finland		4.64	165–214	55	23	35	Scots pine dominated	Porphyritic granodiorites	Fibric Histosols, Podzols
IT01	Renon-Ritten	Italy	x	0.009	1720–1750	100	0	0	Norway spruce, Swiss pine	Quartz-porphiry	Podzol
IT03	Passo Lavazzèe	Italy	x	2.0	1750–1800	69	0	0	Norway spruce, Swiss pine	Crystalline (granite)	Haplic Podzols
IT07	Carrega	Italy	x	0.50	180–200	100	0	0	Sessile oak, Manna ash	Non-consolidated clay	Haplic Luvisols
IT09	Monte Rufeno	Italy	x	0.50	650–690	100	0	0	Austrian oak, European hophornbeam	Flysch (sandstone clay)	Dystric Cambisols
LT01	Aukstaitija	Lithuania	x	1.02	159–189	100	0	10	Norway spruce, Scots pine	Sandstone, limestone	Podzols
LT03	Zemaitija	Lithuania	x	1.47	147–180	100	0	20	Norway spruce, Scots pine	Sandstone, limestone	Podzols
NO01	Birkenes	Norway	x	0.41	200–300	90	0	7	Norway spruce, Scots pine	Granite	Podzols, Histosols, Leptosols
NO02	Kårvatn	Norway	x	25	200–1375	18	4	2	Scots pine, alpine birch	Gneiss, quartzite	Podzols
NO03	Langtjern	Norway	x	4.8	500–710	67	5	25	Scots pine	Granite, gneiss	Podzols
PL06	Storkowo	Poland		74.3	83–203	41	0.3	1.7	Scots pine	Sand, loamy sand	Podzols
PL10	Szymbark	Poland		13	301–753	38	0	0	European beech, fir	Sandstone, shale	Dystric and Eutric Cambisols
SE04	Gårdsjön	Sweden	x	0.04	114–140	95	0	10	Norway spruce	Granite	Podzol, Histosols
SE14	Aneboda	Sweden	x	0.19	210–240	99	0	17	Norway spruce, Scots pine	Granite	Podzol, Gleysols, Histosols
SE15	Kindla	Sweden	x	0.20	312–415	99	0	24	Norway spruce	Granite	Podzol, Histosols
SE16	Gammtratten	Sweden	x	0.45	410–545	99	0	16	Norway spruce, Scots pine	Granite	Podzol, Histosols

Table 2. Annual average values for climatic variables (precipitation, runoff and air temperature) and the deposition and output fluxes of xSO<sub>4</sub>, NO<sub>3</sub>, NH<sub>4</sub>, H<sup>+</sup> and ANC in studied Integrated Monitoring catchments in 1990–2015 (P=precipitation, RW=runoff volume, AT=air temperature, BD= bulk deposition, TF=throughfall, output=runoff water flux, n.d.= no data). Annual average values (mm yr<sup>-1</sup> for precipitation and runoff, °C yr<sup>-1</sup> for air temperature and meq m<sup>-2</sup> yr<sup>-1</sup> for deposition and output fluxes) were calculated for the period for which data was available.

Site	Data	P	RW	AT	xSO <sub>4</sub> BD	xSO <sub>4</sub> TF	xSO <sub>4</sub> RW	NO <sub>3</sub> BD	NO <sub>3</sub> TF	NO <sub>3</sub> RW	NH <sub>4</sub> BD	NH <sub>4</sub> TF	NH <sub>4</sub> RW	H <sup>+</sup> BD	H <sup>+</sup> TF	H <sup>+</sup> RW	ANC BD	ANC TF	ANC RW
		mm yr <sup>-1</sup>	mm yr <sup>-1</sup>	°C yr <sup>-1</sup>	meq m <sup>-2</sup> yr <sup>-1</sup>									µeq l <sup>-1</sup> yr <sup>-1</sup>					
AT01	1993–2015	1623	407	7.4	35	38	22	44	67	46	70	64	0.15	17	15	0.01	-22	-9.6	3747
BY02	1990–2015	699	n.d.	6.3	26	n.d.	n.d.	20	n.d.	n.d.	28	n.d.	n.d.	5.8	n.d.	n.d.	-58	n.d.	3054
CZ01	1990–2015	652	49	8.0	33	83	60	30	47	4.2	37	56	0.13	13	19	0.01	-73	-179	460
CZ02	1990–2015	987	432	6.3	36	89	119	32	31	7.5	35	27	0.34	26	36	33	-61	-69	-61
DE01	1991–2015	1229	993	6.4	28	40	67	35	37	75	36	23	3.6	22	25	0.90	-35	14	162
DE02	1998–2015	599	n.d.	9.2	17	21	n.d.	21	25	n.d.	23	23	n.d.	8.3	7.2	n.d.	-39	27	n.d.
EE01	1994–2015	574	n.d.	7.8	16	29	n.d.	14	22	n.d.	18	18	n.d.	11	8.5	1.9	-17	170	1016
EE02	1994–2015	662	165	5.8	24	36	42	13	8.0	9.0	15	11	0.78	3.1	2.9	0.19	33	126	2928
FI01	1990–2015	633	191	4.4	14	26	25	12	6.9	0.51	8.8	4.0	0.81	15	8.5	6.2	-39	50	83
FI03	1990–2015	629	381	2.8	12	17	10	9.6	6.7	0.53	6.2	6.9	0.26	13	15	0.25	-34	-9.4	118
IT01	1993–2014	981	78	4.3	20	24	8.6	25	28	0.59	29	17	0.09	4.4	3.5	0.01	-14	71	355
IT03	1997–2013	1065	n.d.	n.d.	19	15	n.d.	21	16	n.d.	26	13	n.d.	2.3	3.7	n.d.	11	45	264
IT07	1997–2015	869	n.d.	n.d.	29	42	n.d.	36	62	n.d.	50	79	n.d.	2.9	1.5	n.d.	-24	63	n.d.
IT09	1997–2015	1017	n.d.	n.d.	28	30	n.d.	26	34	n.d.	19	14	n.d.	4.1	2.9	n.d.	26	118	5642
LT01	1993–2015	666	128	6.6	21	21	138	15	12	2.0	22	11	0.22	8.1	6.3	0.01	-25	53	2698
LT03	1995–2015	859	164	7.0	24	62	108	25	26	2.0	29	23	0.41	11	6.3	0.02	-29	163	1249
NO01	1990–2015	1623	1139	6.0	43	50	67	49	32	10	44	28	n.d.	40	31	27	-48	-15	-20
NO02 <sup>1)</sup>	1990–2015	1492	1850	n.d.	7.7	7.9	13	6.4	5.0	2.2	11	8.0	n.d.	8.4	8.5	1.3	-6.2	-2.4	34
NO03 <sup>2)</sup>	1990–2015	979	636	n.d.	16	n.d.	18	18	n.d.	0.8	19	n.d.	n.d.	12	n.d.	8.0	-26	n.d.	41
PL06	1995–2015	700	260	n.d.	22	40	178	20	22	34	29	61	5.8	12	13	0.00	-37	19	3393
PL10 <sup>3)</sup>	1995–2015	870	403	n.d.	51	85	316	41	64	46	48	35	8.5	17	22	0.01	-54	37	2718
SE04	1990–2015	1166	620	7.4	30	44	61	35	41	1.3	32	22	1.0	24	21	34	-44	-15	-35
SE14	1996–2015	838	311	5.9	19	16	39	25	11	2.6	22	8.9	0.46	18	6.1	9.1	-44	32	84
SE15	1996–2015	913	491	5.0	17	20	48	18	9.5	0.33	16	5.8	0.25	16	7.3	14	-31	47	-13
SE16	1999–2015	693	447	1.9	9.8	7.4	15	9.0	4.9	0.23	7.8	3.6	0.21	8.9	6.5	1.8	-18	2.3	91

<sup>1)</sup>TF data for NO02 1990–2011, <sup>2)</sup>PC data for NO03 1998–2015, <sup>3)</sup>TF data for PL10 2002–2015

Table 3. Annual changes of concentrations ( $\mu\text{eq l}^{-1} \text{yr}^{-1}$ , denoted as  $c$ ), precipitation/runoff (P/RW,  $\text{mm yr}^{-1}$ ) and fluxes ( $\text{meq m}^{-2} \text{yr}^{-1}$ , denoted as  $f$ ) for  $\text{xSO}_4$ ,  $\text{xBC}$ ,  $\text{NO}_3$ ,  $\text{NH}_4$ ,  $\text{H}^+$  and ANC in bulk deposition (BD), throughfall (TF) and runoff (RW) in the periods 1990–2000, 2001–2015 and 1990–2015 at the studied Integrated Monitoring sites.

Programme	Period		$\text{xSO}_4 c$	$\text{xBC } c$	$\text{NO}_3 c$	$\text{NH}_4 c$	$\text{H}^+ c$	ANC	P/RW	$\text{xSO}_4 f$	$\text{xBC } f$	$\text{NO}_3 f$	$\text{NH}_4 f$	$\text{H}^+ f$
			$\mu\text{eq l}^{-1} \text{yr}^{-1}$					$\text{mm yr}^{-1}$	$\text{meq m}^{-2} \text{yr}^{-1}$					
BD	1990–2000	Mean	-3.96	-0.13	-0.88	-2.09	-1.10	4.26	1.52	-0.15	0.03	-0.01	-0.07	-0.05
		Median	-3.15	-0.07	-0.83	-0.89	-1.38	4.16	0.40	-0.18	0.02	-0.02	-0.03	-0.03
	2001–2015	Mean	-1.01	0.15	-0.49	-0.20	-0.42	1.93	-0.17	-0.06	0.00	-0.04	-0.01	-0.03
		Median	-0.97	0.05	-0.26	-0.14	-0.45	1.22	-0.25	-0.06	0.00	-0.03	0.00	-0.02
	1990–2015	Mean	-1.45	-0.07	-0.46	-0.52	-0.59	1.94	0.08	-0.08	-0.01	-0.03	-0.03	-0.04
		Median	-1.34	-0.02	-0.43	-0.41	-0.66	1.57	0.00	-0.10	0.00	-0.04	-0.03	-0.04
TF	1990–2000	Mean	-12.3	-5.89	-1.26	-2.68	-4.70	6.39	1.42	-0.48	-0.17	-0.06	-0.08	-0.17
		Median	-9.26	-3.60	-1.07	-0.80	-3.10	5.42	1.33	-0.41	-0.10	-0.04	-0.01	-0.11
	2001–2015	Mean	-2.41	-0.08	-0.79	-0.18	-0.32	3.51	0.15	-0.10	-0.02	-0.04	-0.02	-0.02
		Median	-1.81	-0.78	-0.69	-0.28	-0.27	1.00	0.27	-0.09	-0.04	-0.03	-0.02	-0.01
	1990–2015	Mean	-4.17	-0.98	-0.62	-0.17	-1.12	4.52	0.37	-0.17	-0.05	-0.03	-0.01	-0.05
		Median	-2.64	-1.21	-0.60	-0.16	-0.60	2.04	0.30	-0.14	-0.06	-0.02	-0.01	-0.03
RW	1990–2000	Mean	-16.0	-21.3	-0.29	0.18	-0.39	-1.44	0.62	-0.32	-0.30	0.01	-0.01	0.00
		Median	-10.2	-4.02	-0.04	0.00	-0.00	2.19	0.07	-0.05	-0.02	0.00	-0.00	0.00
	2001–2015	Mean	-10.8	-4.84	-0.72	-0.06	-0.28	7.55	0.14	-0.12	0.05	-0.04	-0.00	-0.00
		Median	-3.87	-0.95	-0.01	-0.01	-0.00	1.97	0.08	-0.07	-0.01	-0.00	0.00	0.00
	1990–2015	Mean	-7.23	-3.93	-0.22	0.01	-0.29	4.21	0.13	-0.12	-0.05	-0.00	0.00	-0.01
		Median	-3.36	-1.18	-0.02	0.00	0.00	2.42	0.00	-0.06	-0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00

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