The role of glacier dynamics and threshold definition in the characterisation of future streamflow droughts in glacierised catchments

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Abstract. Glaciers are essential hydrological reservoirs, storing and releasing water at various time scales. Short-term variability in glacier melt is one of the causes of streamflow droughts, defined as below normal water availabilities. Streamflow droughts in glacierised catchments have a wide range of interlinked causing factors related to precipitation and temperature on short and long time scales. Climate change affects glacier storage capacity, with resulting consequences for discharge regimes and drought. Future projections of streamflow drought in glacierised basins can, however, strongly depend on the modelling strategies and analysis approaches applied. Here, we examine the effect of different approaches, concerning the glacier modelling and the drought threshold, on the characterisation of streamflow droughts in glacierised catchments. Streamflow is simulated with the HBV-light model for two case study catchments, the Nigardsbreen catchment in Norway and the Wolverine catchment in Alaska, and two future climate change scenarios (RCP 4.5 and RCP 8.5). Two types of glacier modelling are applied, a constant and dynamical glacier area conceptualisation. Streamflow droughts are identified with the variable threshold level method and their characteristics are compared between two periods, a historical (1975-2004) and future (2071-2100) period. Two existing threshold approaches to define future droughts are employed, 1) the threshold from the historical period and 2) a transient threshold approach, whereby the threshold adapts every year in the future to the changing regimes. Results show that drought characteristics differ among the combinations of glacier area modelling and thresholds. The historical threshold combined with a dynamical glacier area projects extreme increases in drought severity in the future, caused by the regime shift due to a reduction in glacier area. The historical threshold combined with a constant glacier area results in a drastic decrease of the number of droughts. The drought characteristics between future and historic periods are more similar when the transient threshold is used, for both glacier dynamics conceptualisations. With the transient threshold causing factors of future droughts, can be analysed. This study revealed the different effects of methodological choices on future streamflow drought projections and it highlights how the options can be used to analyse different aspects of future droughts: the transient threshold for analysing future drought processes, the historical threshold to assess changes between periods, the constant glacier area

to analyse the effect of short term climate variability on droughts and the dynamical glacier area to model realistic future discharges under climate change.

1 Introduction

Glaciers and snow packs are an important freshwater resource, supplying water to more than one-sixth of the Earth's population
5 (Barnett et al., 2005). Glaciers play an essential role in the global water cycle as hydrologic reservoirs on various time scales (Jansson et al., 2003; Vaughan et al., 2013). They for example reduce the inter-annual variability by storing water in cold and wet years and releasing it in warm and dry years (Jansson et al., 2003; Koboltschnig et al., 2007; Viviroli et al., 2011). Also on seasonal time scales glacier storage and release are important: the glacier melt peak in summer sustains discharge downstream during otherwise low flow conditions (due to low precipitation or high evapotranspiration; e.g. Fountain and Tangborn, 1985;
10 Huss, 2011; Miller et al., 2012; Bliss et al., 2014). Fluctuations in the summer glacier melt peak may therefore be an important driver of streamflow drought.

Drought is defined as a below-normal water availability (Tallaksen and Van Lanen, 2004; Sheffield and Wood, 2012) and streamflow drought (also called hydrological drought) is a drought in river discharge. Streamflow droughts are a recurring and worldwide phenomenon (Tallaksen and Van Lanen, 2004) which can have severe impacts on river ecology, water supply and
15 energy production (e.g. Jonsdottir et al., 2005; van Vliet et al., 2016). Hydrological drought is often caused by meteorological drought (deficit in precipitation) which propagates through the hydrological cycle (Tallaksen and Van Lanen, 2004; Van Loon, 2015). In cold climates, where snow and ice are an important part of the seasonal water balance, streamflow drought can also be caused by anomalies in temperature (Van Loon et al., 2015). In glacierised catchments, 'glacier melt droughts', defined as a deficiency in the glacier melt peak and caused by below normal temperatures in the summer season (Van Loon et al., 2015),
20 may be important to downstream water users.

Climate change is expected to have large influences on both glaciers and droughts due to a reduction in the water storage capacity of glaciers and snow packs. This will have major consequences for the water supply downstream (e.g. Kaser et al., 2010; Immerzeel et al., 2010; Huss, 2011; Finger et al., 2012). The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports with high confidence that glaciers worldwide are shrinking and that current glacier extents are out of balance with the current
25 climate, indicating that glaciers will continue to shrink (Vaughan et al., 2013). Retreating glaciers affect the discharge regimes in glacierised catchments. Déry et al. (2009) and Bard et al. (2015) found a shift in the melt peak towards an earlier moment in the season in trend studies of observed streamflow, in British Columbia, Canada and in the European Alps, respectively. Also for the future, changes in the timing of the melt peak are expected, together with a more dominant role of rainfall and less snow accumulation (Horton et al., 2006; Jeelani et al., 2012, for Swiss Alps and Western Himalyas, respectively). Two recent studies
30 showed that retreating glaciers can have contrasting effects on the hydrology. Ragettli et al. (2016) project rising flows with limited shifts in the seasonality for the Langtang catchment in Nepal and a reduced and shifted peak in streamflow for the Juncal catchment in Chile. The latter was also found by Lutz et al. (2016) for the Upper Indus basin. What these projected changes in glacial hydrology mean for streamflow droughts has, however, not been explicitly modelled. From global and continental scale

drought studies, we expect streamflow droughts to become more severe in the future (Bates et al., 2008; Van Huijgevoort et al., 2014), with an increase in average streamflow drought duration and deficit volume expected for the globe (Van Huijgevoort et al., 2014; Wanders and Van Lanen, 2015). Also for Europe, Feyen and Dankers (2009) and Forzieri et al. (2014) found that many river basins are likely to experience more severe streamflow drought, which is in line with Wong et al. (2011), who show

5   that drought duration and drought-affected area are expected to increase in Norway.

These projections are however strongly dependent on the methodology applied in the analysis and for both future glacier modelling and future drought analysis many options exist. In order to make projections for hydrology in glacierised catchments under climate change, a glacio-hydrological model is needed. Especially in highly glacierised catchments and when modelling long time periods, a realistic representation of the glacier in the model is crucial. However, complex ice flow models require

10   a lot of input data (e.g. glacier bathymetry and density estimates, see also Immerzeel et al., 2012; Naz et al., 2014) which is often not available and they are in general not applicable for hydrological modelling (Huss, 2011). Different types of glacier geometry conceptualisations are therefore used in hydrological studies. For example, past studies by Klok et al. (2001), Verbunt et al. (2003), and Schaefli et al. (2005) used a simple infinite and constant glacier reservoir in their hydrological model. Juen et al. (2007) simulate future glacier extent assuming a new steady state in the future obtained by reducing the glacier area

15   gradually until the future annual mass balance is zero. Stahl et al. (2008) used a volume-area relation to re-scale the glacier based on modelled glacier mass balances, however distributing the area reduction only conceptually in space. Huss et al. (2010) used a more detailed glacier representation in their model by introducing the $\triangle$h-parametrisation to calculate the transient evolution of the glacier surface elevation and area. Huss et al. (2010) found that the simulation of glacier evolution with this $\triangle$h-parametrisation method was comparable to the results of a 3-D finite-element ice flow model. Li et al. (2015)

20   used the approach of Huss et al. (2010) in combination with the well known HBV model (Bergström et al., 1995; Seibert and Vis, 2012). The effect of these different glacier area conceptualisations on streamflow drought characterisation remains to be investigated.

For the analysis of future streamflow drought methodological questions have been raised in the literature that relate to the definition of drought as a below-normal water availability. To quantify below-normal discharge often a threshold method is

25   used that defines the 'normal' based on a baseline period. In the drought studies mentioned above (Feyen and Dankers, 2009; Wong et al., 2011; Wanders and Van Lanen, 2015; Van Huijgevoort et al., 2014; Forzieri et al., 2014), a threshold based on a historical period was used to define streamflow droughts in the future. It can be questioned if this historical threshold is a good indicator of the 'normal water availability' in the future (see Wanders et al., 2015; Wanders and Wada, 2015; Van Loon et al., 2016). Especially in cold climates, expected regime shifts lead to the identification of severe droughts if evaluated against

30   a historical threshold (Van Huijgevoort et al., 2014). This is particularly relevant in studies on future changes in streamflow drought in glacierised catchments where we expect fast changing regimes due to the retreat of glaciers (e.g. Horton et al., 2006; Lutz et al., 2016). Wanders et al. (2015) therefore developed a transient threshold approach that takes into account changing regimes under climate change. This transient threshold assumes adaptation to long-term changes in the hydrological regime and hence identifies future droughts with reference to changed normal conditions. Wanders et al. (2015) applied this method

35   to identify future streamflow droughts on a global scale and found that it reduces the area for which an increase in drought

duration and deficit volume are expected from 62% to 27%. The transient threshold approach has however never been tested at the catchment scale and more specifically not in glacierised catchments.

This study aims to systematically test the effect of different methodological choices in simulating and analysing streamflow drought in glacierised catchments and elucidate which method to use for which purposes. We focus on two options for modelling of glacier dynamics (constant and dynamical glacier area) and two different threshold approaches (historical and transient threshold) resulting in four combinations. We test these combinations in two contrasting case study regions in Norway and Alaska and discuss the implications for projections of future streamflow drought in glacierised basins in general.

2 Study areas and data

2.1 Study areas

Two catchments, one in Alaska (the Wolverine catchment) and one in Norway (the Nigardsbreen catchment), are used as case study in this research (Fig. 1). The catchments are highly glacierised; i.e. 67% (for the Wolverine catchment) and 70% (for the Nigardsbreen catchment). The Wolverine glacier is a so called "benchmark glacier", where a long-term glacier monitoring program is maintained by the United States Geological Survey (USGS, 2015). The glacier has a southerly aspect. The area of the Wolverine catchment is 25 km^2 and the catchment elevation range is 360–1700 m. It is located in the Kenai mountains in Alaska and close to the ocean at 60°N. It experiences a maritime climate (O'Neel et al., 2014). Long term average monthly temperatures range from -6.7°C to $+8.8$°C. The catchment receives most of its annual precipitation (2700 mm) in autumn (410 mm in September) and summer is the driest season (100 mm in June). The Nigardsbreen glacier in Norway is one of the largest outlet glaciers of the Jostedalsbreen, which is the largest glacier in Europe. The main aspect of the glacier is south-east. The catchment area is 65 km^2 and it has a large elevation range of 260–1950 m. The climate of this catchment is also maritime. Long term average monthly temperatures range from -6.6°C to $+6.6$°C. Precipitation amounts are highest in winter (450 mm in December) and lowest in spring (130 mm in May). Annual precipitation is around 3300 mm. The discharge station is located at the outlet of lake Nigardsbrevatn.
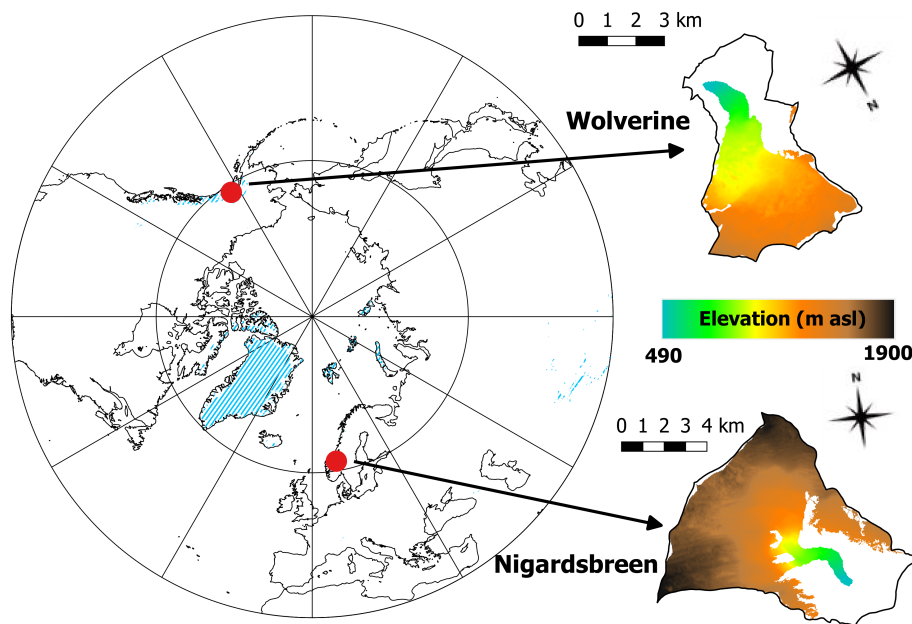
Figure 1. Location of case study catchments in Alaska (Wolverine catchment) and Norway (Nigardsbreen catchment). The coloured part in the catchments indicate the glacier areas of 2006 (Wolverine) and 2009 (Nigardsbreen) and the elevation of the glaciers. The light blue colour in the overview map shows glaciated areas.

2.2 Climate and hydrometric data

Observations of temperature (T_{obs}) and precipitation (P_{obs}) were used to force the model in the calibration and validation period and to validate the climate model data in the historical period. Daily T_{obs} and P_{obs} data of Nigardsbreen catchment were taken from a gridded dataset based on interpolation of observations from different gauging stations. From this dataset the

5 catchment average precipitation and temperature were calculated by the Norwegian Water Resources and Energy Directorate (NVE). Data were available for the period 1957-2014. Daily T_{obs} and P_{obs} data of the Wolverine catchment were obtained from USGS and were available for the period 1967-2015. The data comes from a weather station close to the margin of the Wolverine glacier. However, the Wolverine catchment is a windy site, where windspeeds up to 100 km/h can occur during precipitation events, which can result in an under catch problem. Therefore, after comparison with ERA-Interim precipitation

10 data (Dee et al., 2011), observed precipitation amounts were increased with a factor 2.5, to account for this precipitation under catch in the Wolverine catchment. This was verified during the calibration process where the model forced with increased precipitation amounts resulted in a better fit with observed discharge than using the original precipitation values. Gaps in the T_{obs} time series (7%) of the Wolverine catchment were filled in with linear interpolation (for < 10 days missing data) or, for longer than 10 days missing data, with data from surrounding National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

15 stations (taking into account altitude differences) or, when no data was available from surrounding stations, with long term

average daily temperatures. Gaps in the P_{obs} time series (7%) of Wolverine were filled based on surrounding NOAA stations, again accounting for elevation differences.

For the future projections, daily P_{cm} and T_{cm} data from a set of climate models were used. Additionally the model in the historical period was forced with climate model data, in order to compare discharge and droughts between the historical and

5   future period. The climate model data is output from GCM-RCM model combinations from the World Climate Research Program Coordinated Regional Downscaling Experiment (CORDEX Giorgi et al., 2009). For Norway data from EURO-CORDEX and for Alaska data from the North-America CORDEX (Jacob et al., 2014) were available. The resolution of the data over Norway is 0.11° and for Alaska 0.22°. Nearest neighbour interpolation to the center point of the catchments was used to obtain catchment average P_{cm} and T_{cm} from the climate models. Climate model data for the period 1975-2004 (historical period) was

10 used as reference data and was compared with P_{obs} and T_{obs}. For the period 2006-2100, the climate model outcomes for two climate scenarios were used, i.e. the RCP 4.5 and RCP 8.5 scenarios. For Norway, bias corrected (with E-OBS Haylock et al., 2008) climate model output data from eight GCM-RCM model combinations were available for the RCP 4.5 scenario and nine for the historical period and the RCP 8.5 scenario. For Alaska only data from one GCM-RCM model combination was available, without bias-correction. Therefore, the empirical quantile mapping method was applied to perform bias correction

15 on the Alaskan data by using the observations of the weather station in the Wolverine catchment (Teutschbein and Seibert, 2012). This method was chosen because it is the same method as was used for the Norwegian climate data.

Observed discharge (Q_{obs}) was used for calibration and validation of the model and was provided by NVE and USGS, for Nigardsbreen and Wolverine (USGS Waterdata, 2016), respectively. The discharge was measured at the outlet of the catchments. Daily discharge data was available for 1963–2013 for Nigardsbreen and 1969–2015 for the Wolverine catchment. In the

20 Wolverine discharge time series, gaps were present of several years. These years were excluded from the analysis.

2.3   Glaciological data

Seasonal glacier-wide mass balances of both glaciers were also obtained from USGS (O'Neel et al., 2016) and NVE (Andreassen and Engeset, 2016). The mass balances were used for calibration of the HBV-light model. Geodetically adjusted seasonal mass balances (winter and summer mass balances) were available for the Wolverine glacier and a homogenised sea-

25 sonal mass balance series was available to this study for the Nigardsbreen glacier (Van Beusekom et al., 2010; O'Neel, 2014; Andreassen and Engeset, 2016).

Glacier outlines were used to define the glacier fraction in the catchments. These glacier outlines were obtained from the Randolph Glacier Inventory (RGI Version 5.0 Pfeffer et al., 2014) and from NVE (Winsvold et al., 2014; Andreassen et al., 2012). The glacier outlines were also used in combination with ice thickness data to define the volume of the glaciers. The

30 ice thickness maps were available at a spatial resolution of 100×100 m for Nigardsbreen and 25×25 m for Wolverine. The information on distributed ice thickness of the glaciers from the maps was used for the dynamical glacier area modelling. For the Wolverine glacier the ice thickness data of Huss and Farinotti (2012), and for the Nigardsbreen glacier the data of Andreassen et al. (2015) were used.

3 Methods

3.1 General modelling approach

The main variable of interest in this research is the river discharge. Since we are interested in the future, streamflow is modelled using a coupled glacio-hydrological model (see Sect. 3.2). Streamflow droughts are studied in two periods, a historical period
5 (1975-2004) and a future period (2071-2100), in order to assess changes in drought characteristics between both periods (see Fig. 2). In this study, the effect of glacier dynamics and threshold approach on future streamflow droughts and their characteristics are systematically tested by combining the glacier dynamics and threshold approach options in four scenarios:

- HVT - C: Historical Variable Threshold and Constant glacier area

- HVT - D: Historical Variable Threshold and Dynamical glacier area

10 - TVT - C: Transient Variable Threshold and Constant glacier area

- TVT - D: Transient Variable Threshold and Dynamical glacier area
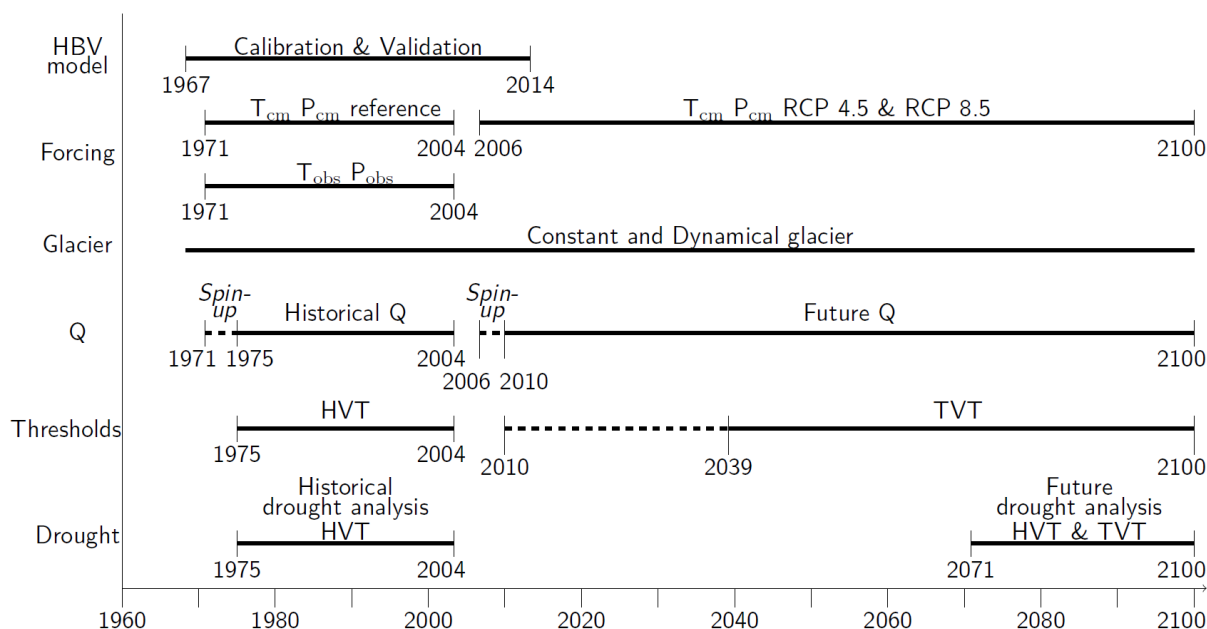
Figure 2. Timeline indicating the simulation periods, forcings and periods for threshold derivation and application. The different glacier area conceptualisations, constant and dynamical, are used in all simulation periods.

The different thresholds are explained in Sect. 3.5 and the glacier area conceptualisations in Sect. 3.2. P_{obs}, T_{obs} and Q_{obs} were used to calibrate and validate the model, and were compared with P_{cm} and T_{cm} data and simulated discharge (Q_{sim})

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obtained by forcing with observations (Q_{sim_o}) and climate model data ($Q_{sim_{cm}}$) in the historical period, to address the uncertainty in both components. Future runs start in 2006 with a 4 year spin-up period, so that discharge is modelled for the period 2010-2100, to include the transient evolution of the glacier area during the 21st century (Fig. 2). The model is forced with RCP 4.5 and RCP 8.5 climate change scenario data during the future simulations.

3.2 Conceptual model

The model used in this study is the conceptual HBV-light model with extended glacier routine (Seibert and Vis, 2012; Seibert et al., 2017). It is a version of the original HBV model developed at the Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological institute (Bergström et al., 1995). The model is semi-distributed, based on elevation zones, vegetation zones and aspect classes. Daily temperature and precipitation and daily or long term monthly potential evapotranspiration are needed as input variables. The model simulates discharge and also calculates the contributions of the different components (rain, glacier ice (Q_g) and snow) to the total discharge. A glacier profile is needed in order to run the model with a dynamic glacier area.

The model consists of different routines. The glacier, snow and soil moisture routine are semi-distributed, whereas the groundwater and routing routine are lumped. The model simulates discharge at a daily time step. Based on a threshold temperature, precipitation will fall either as snow or rain. A snowfall correction factor is used in the model to multiply the snowfall with to compensate for systematic errors in snowfall measurements and for evaporation/sublimation from the snowpack (not explicitly modelled). In the snow and glacier routine the melt is computed by a degree-day-method. A different degree-day factor is used for snow and glacier, because of the lower albedo of glacier ice. For a detailed model description we refer to Seibert and Vis (2012). The calibrated parameter values of the snow and glacier routine are presented in Appendix A. The glacier in the model is represented by two components: a glacier ice reservoir and a glacier water content reservoir. A small fraction (0.001) of the snow on the glacier is transformed into ice each time step. When the glacier is not covered by snow, glacier melt is taking place for temperatures above the threshold temperature. Glacier melt is added to the glacier water content reservoir, just like water from snow on the glacier which melts and rain falling on the glacier. From the glacier water content reservoir, water is flowing directly into the routing routine. The amount of discharge from the glacier is based on an outflow coefficient which varies in time because it depends on the snow water equivalent of the snowpack on the glacier. It represents the development of glacial drainage systems (Stahl et al., 2008). In the non-glaciated part of the catchment snow melt and rainfall flow into the soil routine. From here water can evaporate or be added to the groundwater reservoirs. Peak flow, intermediate flow and baseflow discharge components are generated within the groundwater routine, which is followed by the routing routine, in which the total discharge of one timestep is distributed over one or multiple timesteps according to a weighting function.

The glacier routine in the HBV-light model can be used as a static or dynamic conceptualisation of the glacier in the catchment. In the static conceptualisation the glacier area is constant over time, while in the dynamic conceptualisation the area of the glacier is adjusted every year. The dynamical glacier conceptualisation in the HBV-light model is based on Huss et al. (2010), who proposed a simple parametrisation to calculate the change in glacier surface elevation and area ($\triangle$h-parametrisation), so that future glacier geometry change can be approximated without using complex ice flow modelling. The $\triangle$h-parametrisation describes the spatial distribution of the glacier surface elevation change in response to a change in mass balance and has also

been used in other studies e.g. Salzmann et al. (2012); Li et al. (2015); Duethmann et al. (2015). The implementation of various dynamic glacier change options into HBV-light based on the △h-parametrisation are described and tested in Seibert et al. (2017). In HBV-light one out of three possible type curves for different glacier sizes can be chosen. Furthermore, a glacier profile, in which the water equivalent and area of the glacier for each elevation band (elevation bands are subdivisions of the

5   elevation zones) are specified, is required by HBV-light as input for the dynamical glacier conceptualisation. Before the actual model simulation starts, the glacier profile is melted in steps of 1% of the total glacier volume, and for each step the △h-parametrisation of Huss et al. (2010) is applied to compute the areal change for each elevation zone. This information is stored by the HBV-light model in a lookup table of percentage of melt and corresponding glacier areas. This table is then used to dynamically change the glacier during the actual model simulation. Each hydrological year the area of the glacier is updated by

10   calculating the percentage of glacier volume change from the modelled mass balance and selecting the corresponding glacier areas from the lookup table.

3.3   Model set up

For daily temperature and precipitation input, we used observations or output from climate models. The HBV-light model requires a climate station at a certain elevation for the input of P and T. For Wolverine the HBV climate station elevation

15   was set to the elevation of the weather station in the catchment for T_{obs}, P_{obs}, T_{cm} and P_{cm}. For the Nigardsbreen catchment the average catchment elevation was used for the HBV climate station elevation for T_{obs} and P_{obs} and the average elevation of the RCM model grids for the T_{cm} P_{cm}. P and T values for each elevation zone are calculated based on precipitation and temperature lapse rates, which are calibration parameters. Monthly evapotranspiration (E) was calculated for all simulation periods with the Blaney-Criddle method by using monthly average temperatures in order to get E values for both the historical

20   and future simulations (Xu and Singh, 2001; Brouwer and Heibloem, 1986). The monthly values were linearly interpolated to retrieve daily values which were used as input to HBV-light. Each catchment was divided in several elevation zones, with elevation bins of 100 or 200 m depending on the elevation range in the catchment. Each elevation zone was split up in three aspect classes (North, South, East-West). The amount of pixels in each elevation zone and each aspect class was determined from the ASTER Digital Elevation Model (DEM) to calculate relative areas. Missing values present in the ASTER DEM of

25   Nigardsbreen were filled in by interpolation. The lake present in the Nigardsbreen catchment was defined as separate model unit. The mean elevation of each zone (glacier and non glacier area combined) was calculated and used in the model together with the relative area in that zone.

To determine the glacier area in each elevation zone, glacier outlines of 2006 were used. For the static glacier conceptualisation these areas were used in all model runs, independent of time. However, in order to run the model with the dynamical

30   glacier settings, initial glacier areas and glacier profiles were adapted to the largest glacier extent within the specific simulation period. For the future simulation period, it was assumed that the glacier extent will be largest at the start of the period (2006). Therefore initial glacier areas and the glacier profile based on ice thickness maps and 2006 glacier outlines needed no adaptation. For the other simulation periods (historical period, calibration period and validation period), the largest glacier extent was determined from area information from USGS for the Wolverine glacier and from homogenised area data from NVE for

Nigardsbreen glacier (Andreassen and Engeset, 2016). The 2006 glacier areas and glacier profiles were adapted to these largest glacier extents.

For the construction of the 2006 glacier profile each glacier elevation zone was subdivided in smaller elevation bands, with elevation bins of 20 or 50 m, depending on the size of the elevation zone. For each elevation band the average ice thickness was determined from the ice thickness maps and converted into millimeter water equivalent (mm w.e.q.) by multiplying with the ratio of the densities from ice to water (0.917). The adjustment of the glacier profile to another glacier extent was done based on volume-area scaling (Bahr et al., 1997; Andreassen et al., 2015) to calculate the needed increase in ice thickness/water equivalent to match the new volume based on the new largest glacier extent. When the largest glacier extent does not occur at the beginning of the simulation period, an initial glacier fraction was defined in the glacier profile which was also calculated with the volume-area scaling method.

3.4 Calibration

The models were calibrated against observed discharge and seasonal mass balances using the automatic calibration tool Genetic Algorithm and Powell (GAP) optimization in HBV-light (Seibert and Vis, 2012; Seibert, 2000). Including mass balances in the calibration is known to improve the model performance significantly (Konz and Seibert, 2010; Mayr et al., 2013; Engelhardt et al., 2014). For each catchment the model was calibrated with a constant glacier area conceptualisation and a dynamical glacier conceptualisation, so that a different parameter set was obtained for both glacier area conceptualisations. For the calibration period, T_{obs} and P_{obs} were used as input data. To calibrate on mass balances, the dates of maximum and minimum mass balances were used for the winter balance and the summer balance, respectively for the Wolverine catchment, and the actual measurement dates of the summer and winter balances for the Nigardsbreen catchment (meta data from NVE). A calibration period of at least 10 years was used for both catchments. The objective function that was maximised during the calibration is

$$R = 0.4 \times R_{\text{effG}} + 0.4 \times R_{\text{effS}} + 0.2 \times R_{\text{effP}} \tag{1}$$

with

$$R_{\text{eff}} = 1 - (\frac{\sum (Obs - Sim)^2}{\sum (Obs - \overline{Obs})^2}),$$

where R is the model performance, R_{effG} the calibration on glacier mass balances, R_{effS} the calibration on the discharge from April-September and R_{effP} is the calibration on the peak discharges. Obs and Sim are observed and simulated (seasonal) discharge or glacier mass balances, respectively. A R_{eff} value of one indicates a perfect fit for that variable.

After the calibration was performed, model performance was evaluated with the Kling-Gupta Efficiency (KGE) which is defined as:

$$KGE = 1 - \sqrt{(r-1)^2 + (\alpha - 1)^2 + (\beta - 1)^2} \tag{2}$$

In Eq. 2 r is the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient, α the ratio of the standard deviations of simulated and observed discharge and β the ratio between the means of simulated and observed discharge (Gupta et al., 2009). A KGE value of one indicates a perfect fit between modelled and observed discharge.

3.5 Drought thresholds

5 A variable threshold level method was used to identify droughts and to determine their characteristics (Hisdal et al., 2000; Fleig et al., 2006; Van Loon, 2013). A drought occurs when a variable (e.g discharge) falls below the threshold. We used a daily variable threshold that is derived from a 30-day moving average discharge time series. The moving average time series was used to compute the flow duration curve and to determine the 80th percentile for use as a drought threshold (Van Loon et al., 2014). This variable threshold was calculated for the historical period, calibration period and validation period for

10 both glacier conceptualisations separately. For the future period two threshold approaches were used: 1) a variable threshold from the historical period (historical variable threshold, HVT) following the work of Wanders and Van Lanen (2015) and Van Huijgevoort et al. (2014), and 2) a transient variable threshold (TVT) that assumes adaptation in the future based on reduced or increased water availability of the preceding 30 year period (Wanders et al., 2015). For each catchment and each glacier area conceptualisation a new threshold was calculated. The HVT was used in the historical period and the future

15 period for both climate change scenarios. The TVT was used in the future period, but for both climate change scenarios a different threshold was calculated. For the Nigardsbreen catchment the multi-model mean $Q_{sim_{cm}}$ was used for calculation of the thresholds and the drought analysis.

We computed the drought duration and deficit, to characterise changes in drought characteristics. The drought duration is defined as the consecutive number of days that the discharge is below the threshold. Droughts with a duration of three days or

20 shorter were not taken into account. The drought deficit volume is computed by taking the cumulative difference between the drought threshold and the discharge, for each drought event. Drought intensity is defined as the deficit divided by the duration. We analysed drought processes and drought types by studying temperature, precipitation, SWE and the different discharge components together with the total discharge following the approach of Van Loon and Van Lanen (2012) and Van Loon et al. (2015). The thresholds for these variables were computed in the same way as was done for the discharge, except for temperature

25 for which we used the median as threshold.

4 Results

4.1 Calibration and validation of model and data

The KGE of the calibration and validation periods are generally high (Table 1). Especially the Nigardsbreen catchment shows a very good agreement between modelled and observed discharge (KGE=0.94). The KGE is slightly lower in the validation

30 period of the Nigardsbreen catchment and somewhat higher for the Wolverine catchment. The latter might be caused by the very short validation period of Wolverine. The type of glacier area modelling does not influence the model performance with

respect to discharge in both the calibration and validation period. The hydrological regimes of observed and modelled discharge also match well (Fig. 3a and c), for both types of forcing: observations and climate model data. Besides matching regimes, the model is also able to simulate a similar inter-annual variability in discharge compared to the observations for Nigardsbreen (Fig. 3b) and Wolverine (Fig. 3d, but only for a few years).

Table 1. Model performance for the two catchments. Performance is expressed by KGE between observed and modelled discharge and shown for the calibration and validation periods and the dynamical (D) and constant (C) glacier area conceptualisations.

	Calibration			**Validation**		
Catchment	C	D	period	C	D	period
Nigardsbreen	0.94	0.94	1967-2003	0.90	0.90	2004-2013
Wolverine	0.82	0.83	2005-2014	0.89	0.87	1973-1977

5   We also compared modelled and observed glacier mass balances for the dynamical glacier area. During the calibration period the general trend in mass balance is simulated very well by the model for the Wolverine catchment, with a small underestimation in the winter mass balances. In the Nigardsbreen catchment the model simulates negative cumulative mass balances at the start of the calibration period, while observed cumulative mass balances are positive. During the second half of the calibration period, the trend in mass balance is the same in the observations and simulations. However, the intra-annual

10   differences in summer and winter balances are smaller in the simulations.
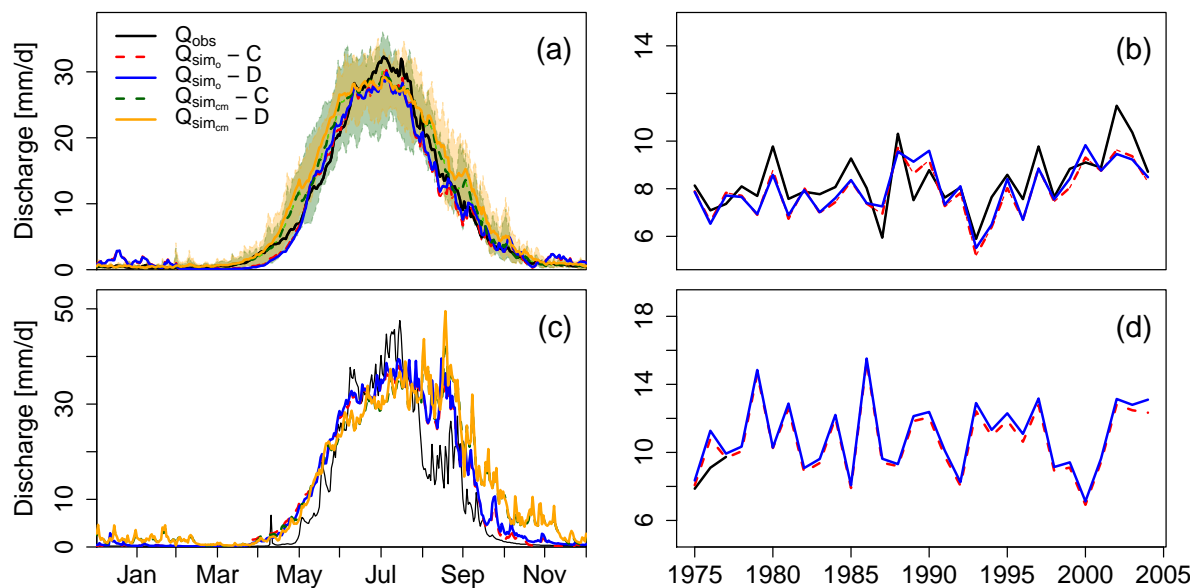
Figure 3. Discharge comparisons in the historical period. The hydrological regime (a and c) and annual discharges (c and d) are shown for Nigardsbreen catchment (a and b) and for Wolverine (c and d). Observed discharge is compared with both (Q_{sim_o}) and ($Q_{sim_{cm}}$) for both glacier model conceptualisations. The coloured areas in panel A indicate the range of discharge outputs as a result of the different climate models forcing. The results are shown for the historical period (1975-2004). Note that ($Q_{sim_{cm}}$) is not shown in the inter-annual variability graphs because climate models only statistically represent historic climate and that observed discharge for the Wolverine catchment was only available for 1975-1977.

4.2 Glacier area conceptualisations and their effect on discharge

During the constant glacier area runs, the model used a glacier area from 2006, both in the historical and future periods (Fig. 4). Assuming that glaciers will shrink in the future, this area is too big during the future period and too small during the historical period because both glaciers had a larger area in the past compared to 2006. With a dynamical glacier area conceptualisation, this mismatch should not occur. In the Wolverine catchment, the glacier area in the historical period for the dynamical settings is indeed higher than the glacier area in the constant settings and the area at the end of the historical period agrees with the constant area used throughout the whole modelled time period (Fig. 4). However, in the Nigardsbreen catchment the average modelled glacier area at the end of the historical period (2004) is smaller than the observed glacier area in 2006 (the constant glacier area). The model simulates a glacier area that decreases too much or a too small glacier extent was used at the start of the historical period and therefore there is a small jump between the average glacier area at the end of the historical period and the start of the future period (2006-2100) (Fig. 4). The model simulates a glacier disappearance in the Wolverine catchment in the future when dynamical glacier areas are used, first in the RCP 8.5 scenario and later also in the RCP 4.5 scenario. In the Nigardsbreen catchment the glacier area develops similarly in both climate scenarios until 2060, after which the glacier is

projected to shrink more quickly in the RCP 8.5 scenario. The spread in glacier area evolution projections for the Nigardsbreen catchment is however large. One climate model forcing even gives hardly any decrease in glacier area.
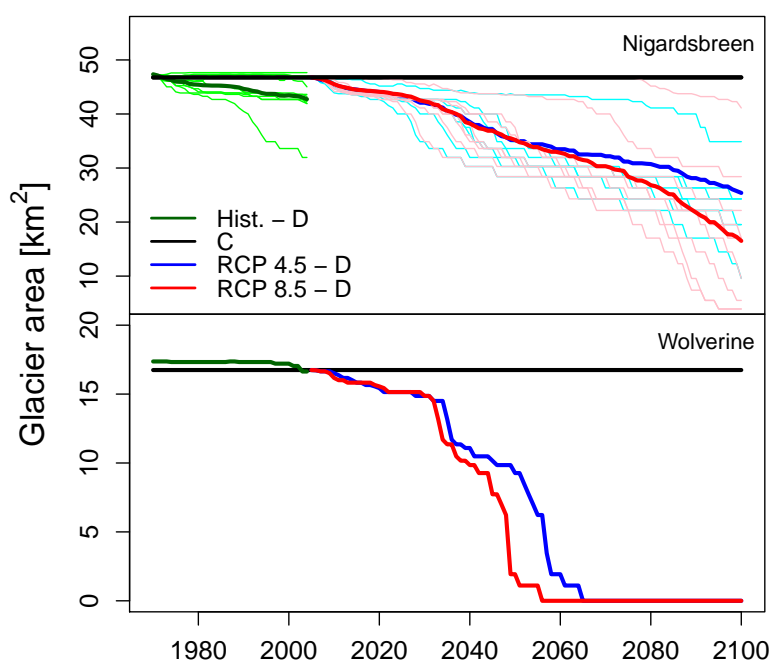
Figure 4. Temporal evolution of glacier areas for the historical and future period. The top panel shows the glacier areas for Nigardsbreen and the bottom panel for Wolverine. The glacier area in both glacier conceptualisations is shown. The lighter coloured lines in Nigardsbreen show the results of the forcing with different climate models.

The different options for glacier area modelling have an effect on the future water availability (Fig. 5). The constant glacier area causes an amplification of the hydrological regime and increasing annual discharges in the future in both catchments. On the other hand, the dynamical glacier area causes a drastic change in the regime in the Wolverine catchment in the future period (2071-2100) (Fig. 5c). The regime in the Nigardsbreen catchment changes as well: the magnitude of the high flow period is smaller, the rising limb starts earlier and the recession limb is higher than during the historical period. For both catchments the changes compared to the historical period are larger for the RCP 8.5 scenario. Annual discharges are projected to decrease in the Wolverine catchment with dynamical glacier area. The changes in multi-model mean annual discharges for Nigardsbreen are not so clear and the uncertainty due to the different climate models increases in the future.
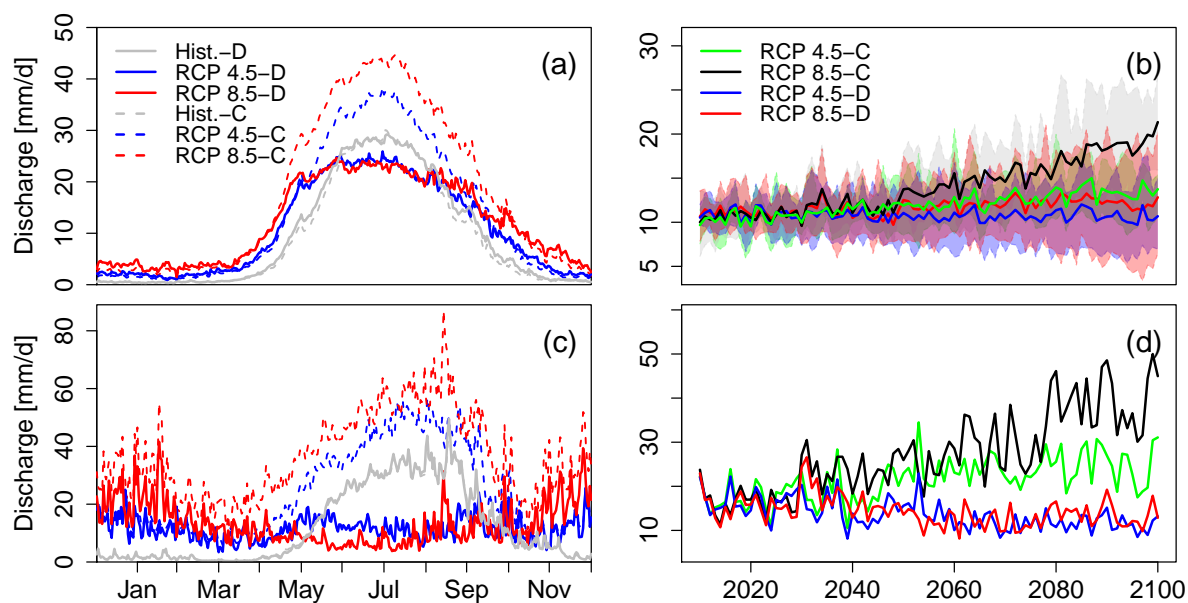
Figure 5. Future water availability. The left panels show the hydrological regime (average of 2071-2100) for Nigardsbreen (a) and Wolverine (c) and the right panels the inter-annual variability (annual average discharge) for the future period (2010-2100) (b: Nigardsbreen and d: Wolverine). Discharge is shown for both glacier area conceptualisations and both climate change scenarios. The shaded areas in b indicate the spread in annual average discharges among the different climate models forcing.

4.3 Thresholds: the result of different glacier conceptualisations and threshold methods

Four approaches were used for the future drought analysis, based on combinations of the threshold options and the glacier area conceptualisations. For both catchments the HVT-C and HVT-D thresholds are quite comparable (Fig. 6), except in the rising and recession limb of Nigardsbreen, where the HVT-D is higher than the HVT-C. The transient thresholds however, vary in time. The magnitude of the peak flow in the TVT-C increases, while with the TVT-D it decreases each year in the future. In the Nigardsbreen catchment, the TVT-D threshold has a higher peak during the first decade compared to the historical period, after which the peak in the threshold becomes lower. All future TVT-D have however a wider peak than the historical threshold. In the Wolverine catchment the TVT-D only shows a higher peak in August and September in the first years in the future compared to the HVT-D. Moreover, a shift is visible for the rising limb in the TVT-D towards an earlier moment in the spring season for Nigardsbreen. The TVT-C develops in both catchments differently, in Nigardsbreen the peak shifts to earlier in the season, while for Wolverine the TVT-C peak shifts to later in the season.
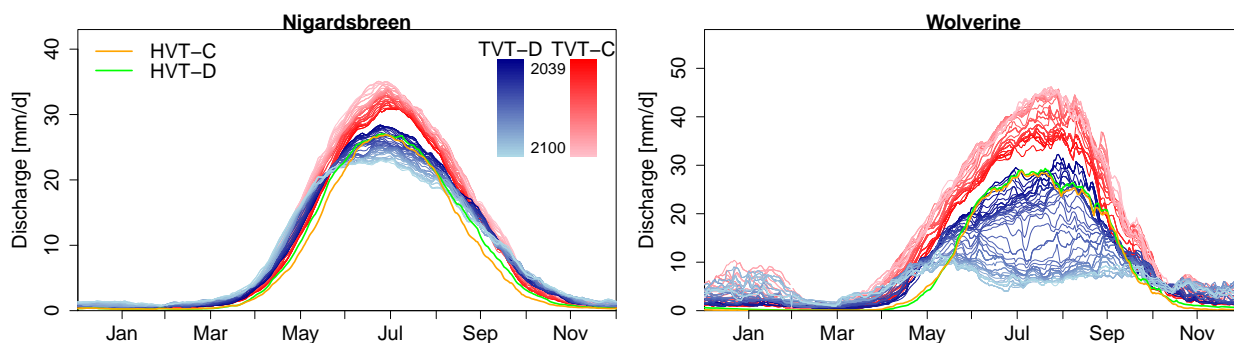
Figure 6. Drought thresholds for the four different scenarios HVT-C, HVT-D, TVT-C and TVT-D. The colour gradient for both transient thresholds (blue and red) indicates the adaptation of the threshold each year (for 2039-2100). The thresholds are shown for the Nigardsbreen (left) and Wolverine (right) catchments for climate scenario RCP 4.5.

The transient threshold does not adapt at a constant rate, shown by the different spaces between the lines (Fig 6). The threshold follows the climate. The RCP 8.5 scenario gives similar results (not shown), but there is even more difference between consecutive thresholds. This is due to a faster changing climate and discharge. For the Wolverine catchment the changes in the transient threshold are more extreme than Nigardsbreen, especially in the first half of this future period (2039-2070) of the

5   TVT-D, in which the glacier is rapidly shrinking. Furthermore, due to the drastically changing regime, the transient threshold in the Wolverine catchment changes also rapidly in the historical low flow periods (winter), in contrast with Nigardsbreen where the threshold stays low in the historical low flow periods.

4.4 Effect of thresholds on future droughts

Applying the different thresholds to the discharge time series shows when droughts occur during the year (Fig. 7 shows an

10   example for Nigardsbreen catchment). The HVT-C and TVT-C are applied to the discharge output of the model simulated with a constant glacier area conceptualisation and the HVT-D and TVT-D to the output produced with a dynamical glacier area conceptualisation. Applying the threshold of the past to the discharge of the future with a constant glacier area (HVT-C) results in (almost) no droughts (Fig. 7), due to increased glacier melt. If the threshold of the past is applied to discharge with a dynamical glacier area conceptualisation (HVT-D), severe droughts occur at the period of the threshold peak flow and in the

15   recession limb of the discharge curves, due to a lower peak flow and a shift in the hydrological regime (Fig. 7).
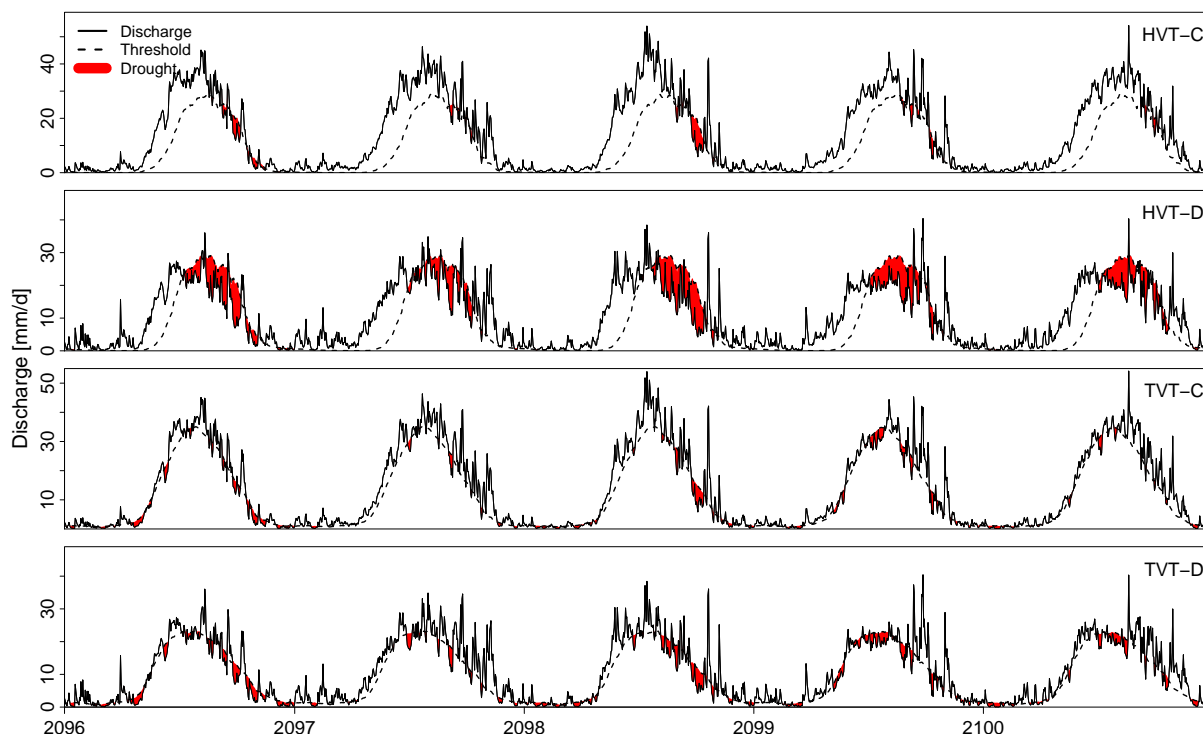
Figure 7. Example timeseries of possible timing and deficit volume of droughts in the four scenarios HVT-C, HVT-D, TVT-C and TVT-D. The droughts are shown for the Nigardsbreen catchment and the RCP 4.5 climate scenario for the period 2096-2100.

The transient threshold gives future droughts with much smaller deficits volume, compared to droughts determined with HVT-D (Fig. 7). Droughts do not only occur in the peak flow period, but are more distributed over the season and occur in the rising limb and low flow period as well in both the TVT-C and TVT-D case. In Fig. 7 streamflow droughts look more severe in the TVT-D settings than TVT-C settings, while in both cases the threshold has adapted. This is probably caused by the contribution of glacier melt to discharge. In the TVT-D, the threshold is based on 30 previous years when the glacier was larger than the year to which the threshold was applied, resulting in droughts partly caused by glacier retreat. The TVT-C, on the other hand, is based on 30 previous years in which the climate was colder than the year the threshold is applied, resulting in less melt from the glacier compared to the year the threshold is applied (glacier area is constant) and consequently less droughts are observed in the high flow season compared to TVT-D.

Besides a different timing of streamflow droughts in the year, the four threshold scenarios also resulted in different drought characteristics (e.g. deficit volume). Comparing drought characteristics between historical and future periods shows the changes that can be expected in the future. However, the four scenarios resulted in different future changes in drought characteristics (Table 2). The number of droughts will decrease in both catchments when the HVT is used. The number of droughts will increase in the Wolverine catchment when the transient threshold is used. In Nigardsbreen catchment the TVT-C indicates a

Table 2. Change in drought characteristics in the future compared to the historical period. The percentages show the increase or decrease of the respective drought characteristic with respect to the historical period for each catchment and each glacier area conceptualisation.

	Period	Scenario	Number		Avg. Duration [d]		Avg. Deficit [mm]		Avg. Intensity [mm/d]	
			RCP 4.5	RCP 8.5	RCP 4.5	RCP 8.5	RCP 4.5	RCP 8.5	RCP 4.5	RCP 8.5
Nigardsbreen	**Hist**	**HVT + C**	477		7.86		8.77		0.96	
	Fut	HVT + C	−80 %	−97 %	−39 %	−46 %	−61 %	−81 %	−35 %	−60 %
	Fut	TVT + C	−10 %	−47 %	−14 %	−26 %	25 %	−3 %	58 %	48 %
	Hist	**HVT + D**	467		8.06		9.34		1.04	
	Fut	HVT + D	−37 %	−58 %	−4 %	12 %	166 %	309 %	137 %	191 %
	Fut	TVT + D	9 %	3 %	−15 %	−18 %	38 %	66 %	63 %	97 %
Wolverine	**Hist**	**HVT + C**	400		10.21		26.68		3.21	
	Fut	HVT + C	−66 %	−81 %	−35 %	−39 %	9 %	−14 %	53 %	23 %
	Fut	TVT + C	23 %	21 %	−21 %	−38 %	79 %	88 %	106 %	142 %
	Hist	**HVT + D**	354		10.1		34.1		4.39	
	Fut	HVT + D	−21 %	−31 %	25 %	66 %	431 %	674 %	133 %	152 %
	Fut	TVT + D	72 %	91 %	−12 %	−12 %	−20 %	−13 %	−30 %	−21 %

decrease in the number of droughts and the TVT-D only result in a small increase in the number of droughts. The average duration will only increase in the HVT-D scenario (except RCP 4.5 for Nigardsbreen), in the other threshold scenarios the average duration is projected to decrease. The HVT-D and TVT-D result in a projected increase in deficit volumes, except for TVT-D in the Wolverine catchment. However, deficit volumes are projected to increase more drastically when HVT-D is used. The HVT-C causes in general a decrease in deficit volume, while the TVT-C causes an increase in the deficit volume. Average intensities are in general projected to increase for all scenarios, with one exception for both Nigardsbreen and Wolverine (see Table 2). For most threshold scenarios the RCP 8.5 will give a larger change in the drought characteristic than the RCP 4.5 scenario compared to the historical period.

4.5 Effect of thresholds on analysing future drought processes

Using the four different scenarios we can analyse streamflow drought processes differently. We separated the four scenarios in two comparisons: the glacier dynamics effect and the influence of the threshold approach on analysing drought processes. To study the glacier dynamics effect, the transient threshold was used for both glacier area conceptualisations (Fig. 8). No historical variable threshold was used here to exclude the effect of changing peak flow discharges compared to the historical period. The thresholds in de left and right panels of Fig. 8, are based on the 30 previous years of discharge. In the constant glacier area conceptualisation a drought occurs in streamflow in the beginning of September, while for the dynamical glacier area several
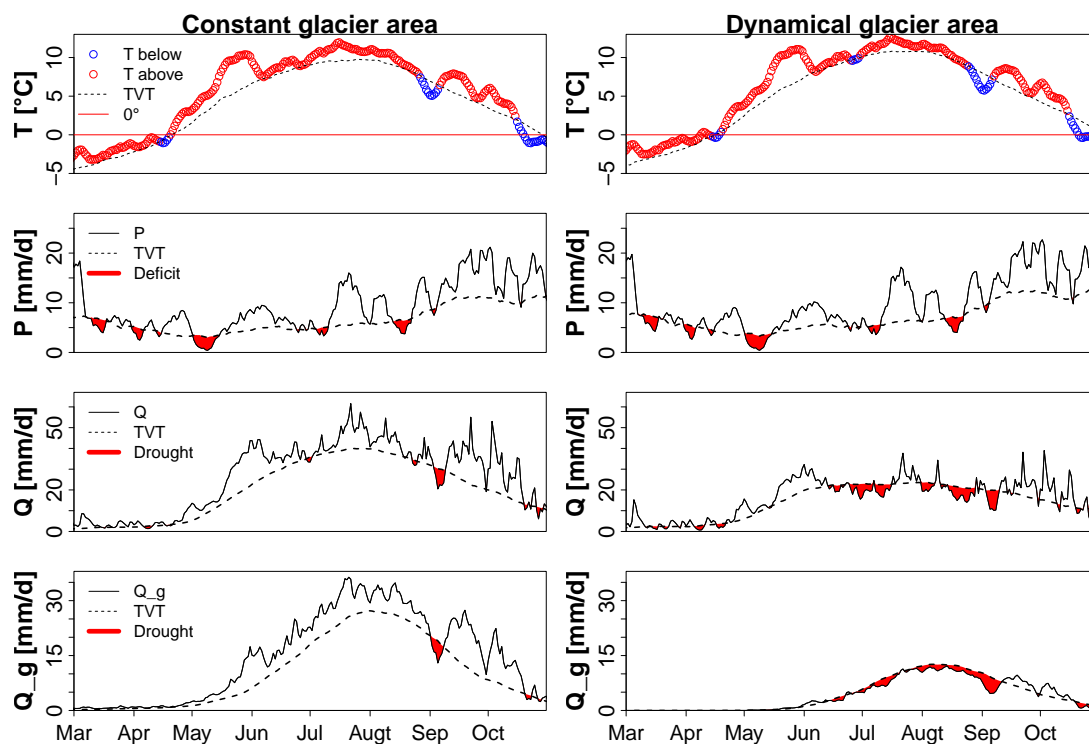
Figure 8. Example of streamflow droughts and causing factors (T, P and Q_g) for the different glacier area conceptualisations. Multi-model mean temperature, precipitation and discharge time series are presented for the Nigardsbreen catchment for March-October 2092, based on climate scenario RCP 8.5. For the time series of P and T a 7-day moving average was used. Droughts are analysed with the transient threshold. Note that T and P are slightly different in the left and right panels due to different lapse rates obtained during the calibration.

streamflow droughts occur between June and September (Fig. 8). The long term climatic changes cause the glacier to retreat in the future in the dynamical glacier conceptualisation. This glacier retreat can have an indirect effect on the occurrence of streamflow droughts because of less melt due to a smaller glacier. Streamflow droughts occurring in the summer period of 2092 in the Nigardsbreen catchment for the dynamical glacier area show this process. Streamflow droughts are caused by short term (seasonal) anomalies in P and T (lower) and additionally due to a retreating glacier resulting in less discharge from the glacier (Fig. 8). In the constant glacier area conceptualisation the effect of long term climate changes on glacier size is neglected and streamflow droughts are caused by short term climate variability. In Fig. 8 (left panel) the drought in September is caused by below normal temperatures, resulting in a drought in Q_g and also in the total streamflow (Q). Furthermore, Fig. 8 (left panels) shows that glacier melt in summer is buffering against the propagation of precipitation deficits. This effect gets lost with retreating glaciers and any remaining buffering needs to come from other stores, e.g. the snowpack and groundwater.

For comparison of the effect of the two threshold approaches on drought analysing processes, a dynamical glacier area conceptualisation was used for both thresholds (Fig. 9). The different thresholds clearly result in contrasting streamflow droughts
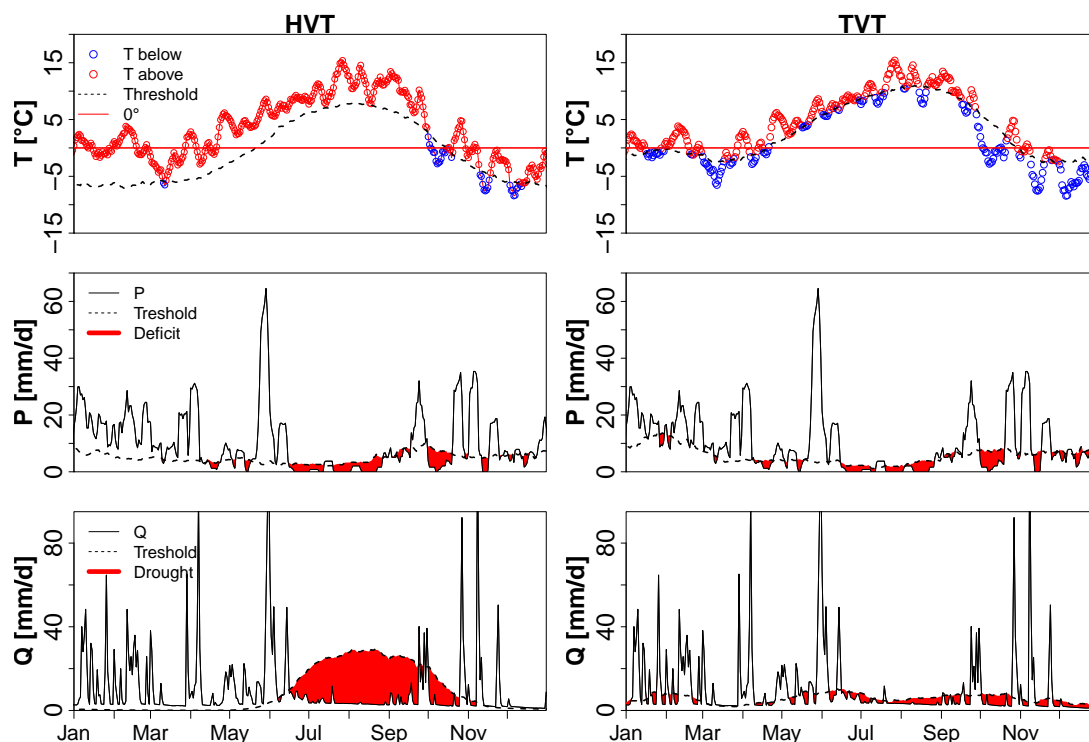
Figure 9. Example of streamflow drought and causing factors (T and P) for the different threshold methods. Temperature, precipitation and discharge time series are presented for the Wolverine catchment for 2091, based on climate scenario RCP 4.5 and the dynamical glacier area conceptualisation. For the P and T time series a 7-day moving average was used.

in the Wolverine catchment in 2091. The HVT shows a large drought from July until October, while the TVT shows many streamflow droughts during the whole year (Fig. 9). The glacier has disappeared in the Wolverine catchment, which caused a change in the regime. The HVT is based on the historical regime and the 'drought' that can be seen is essentially the mismatch between the old and new regime. Therefore, this drought occurs every year at the same moment, since the HVT is not changing and there is no glacier any more to produce a discharge peak in the summer. This 'drought' does not represent extreme or exceptional discharge values and relating it to anomalies in P and T is not possible. T anomalies are mostly above the HVT temperature threshold, due to a warming climate and can therefore not directly be used as explanation for droughts. Also the deficits in P can not explain the large drought in the discharge. However, in the TVT approach, the threshold has adapted to the reduced summer discharge, like the thresholds of P and T have adapted (Fig. 9). This causes temperatures to fluctuate around the threshold and these anomalies can be used to analyse the causing factors of drought in Q. Also deficits in P can be related to the droughts that are occurring in the streamflow. The TVT approach therefore could be used to study which drought processes and drought types will become important in the future.

5 Discussion

In this study we aimed to systematically test the role of glacier dynamics and threshold approaches in simulating and analysing future streamflow droughts in glacierised catchments. The results indicate different effects of both methodological choices on drought characteristics and the analysis of drought processes, which is of major importance for further studies analysing climate
5 change effects on streamflow droughts in cold climates. The study also showed that the methodological choices highlight different aspects of future streamflow droughts and it is therefore essential for further studies to determine which aspect of drought one wants to study and choose the methods accordingly.

As glaciers have been shrinking and likely will further shrink in the future (e.g. Vaughan et al., 2013), there is wide consensus that glacier change needs to be accounted for in hydrological modelling. However, we have shown in this study that
10 a constant glacier area can be interesting to analyse seasonal drought processes in the future, without taking into account the long term changes of the glacier area. Analysing drought processes usually includes looking at anomalies in precipitation and temperature and their propagation through the hydrological cycle. Most drought processes occur within the season (Van Loon and Van Lanen, 2012) but some drought types can be classified as multi-season drought. For example, the snowmelt drought can be caused by high temperatures or low precipitation in winter, resulting in less snow supply to the snowpack, causing a
15 drought in the snowmelt peak in summer due to less snow available for melt (Van Loon et al., 2015). In glacierised catchments the time between the meteorological drivers and the drought is even longer due to the long response time of glaciers (Bahr et al., 1998; Roe and O'Neal, 2009). A reduced winter mass balance would not directly result in a streamflow drought in the glacier melt peak if temperatures are above or close to normal in summer. However, after several negative mass balance years and consequent glacier retreat, less glacier area and volume will be available for melt-water generation, possibly resulting in
20 a drought when temperatures are close to or below normal in summer. Thus, the long term effects of dynamical glaciers can influence droughts. Separating the effects of short term climate variability and a changing glacier area and volume on droughts by using a constant and dynamical glacier area can therefore give useful insights on these intertwined processes.

The dynamical glacier area representation used in this study is a simplification and therefore has its limitations. The △h-parametrisation in HBV-light can for example not be used to simulate glacier advance compared to the defined glacier profile
25 (see also Huss et al., 2008, 2010). Moreover, Huss et al. (2008) mention that this parametrisation is not able to reproduce the time scales for transfer of mass from the accumulation area to the ablation area. The change in volume is distributed over the glacier area to simulate an elevation change at the end of each year. Response time effects on drought can therefore not be directly analysed. However, the constant and dynamic glacier area conceptualisations are able to show the effect of short term climate variability and long term glacier area changes on streamflow droughts. Another drawback, in this HBV-light
30 model version, is that elevations do not change after melting of glaciated model units. The surface lowering may in reality result in a positive feedback of melt due to higher temperatures and potentially less precipitation. Despite these limitations the implementation of the dynamical glacier area in the HBV model is an important improvement for the hydrological modelling in glacierised catchments. Many of the global hydrological models that have so far been applied to estimate changes in streamflow drought have not included glacier dynamics or any glacier component at all (e.g. Zhang et al., 2013). Compared to catchment

scale hydrological models which use approaches where glacier area is adjusted in larger jumps, without the coupling between melt and ice volume, (e.g. Juen et al., 2007) the dynamic glacier area method used here is more applicable for the transient drought threshold approach because of the gradually changing discharge regime due to the gradually changing glacier. Using more advanced models to simulate glacier retreat may result in slightly different numbers in the timing of glacier retreat and

5   changes in the discharge regime, but it would not change the results of this study regarding the use of the methodological options for drought analysis.

    The other choice, which threshold approach to use, mainly relates to the question of the definition of a drought. For streamflow drought projections a comparison with a historical period is always needed in order to assess the changes and to be able to understand them. However, one can raise the question if the threshold needs to be the same in the two periods (HVT approach).

10   The results showed that due to the regime shift the HVT indicates severe droughts every year in summer. If we would have applied pooling (Fleig et al., 2006), the differences in drought characteristics between the threshold methods due to the regime shift would have been even more pronounced. Because this 'regime shift drought' occurs each year it will become the normal situation and it is clear that this mismatch of regimes can not be regarded as a drought. Therefore, the transient threshold is a better option to study droughts in glacierised catchments where discharge regimes change. Moreover, the advantage of TVT is

15   that it can be used to analyse future drought processes which will be an important aspect for future water management. This study agrees with the findings of Wanders et al. (2015) that different threshold approaches can have substantial effects on future streamflow drought characteristics. Furthermore the results confirm the findings of Van Huijgevoort et al. (2014) and Wanders et al. (2015) that in cold climates where regime shifts are expected the TVT is a better identifier of droughts than HVT. This is especially the case in glacierised basins as shown in this study, which are rapidly changing due to glacier retreat.

20   However, using the TVT, changes between historical and future situations cannot be assessed, because the benchmark itself is changing. Most studies (e.g. Forzieri et al., 2014) looking at future droughts in low flow periods have used a historical threshold to define future droughts and conclude that low flows will increase and therefore less droughts will occur. Here, the normal situation is changed (higher low flows), which is identified using the HVT. This information about changing normals is lost when only drought characteristics are analysed using the TVT. It is therefore important to complement the TVT drought

25   characteristics with an analysis of the changes in the regime to put the drought results into perspective. This could be done for example by looking at the changes in the TVT itself or comparing the TVT with the HVT, and by checking annual discharges (Figs. 6 and 5). In this study the annual discharges of the Wolverine catchment are decreasing in the future, whereas the signal for Nigardsbreen is less clear. Apart from a changing seasonality, these annual discharges give information on how the total water availability will change.

30   Both threshold approaches thus take another viewpoint of drought. With the HVT we look at future droughts from a viewpoint now and with the transient threshold we change our viewpoint to the future and we then look at droughts. Since future droughts will also have impacts in the future, the latter viewpoint is more logical to study future droughts. However, the TVT also has some uncertainties. The main uncertainty concerns the adaptation that is assumed when using the transient threshold. The transient threshold changes every year and not always in the same direction and with the same magnitude. This would

35   mean that society and ecosystems need to be flexible in the adaptation and the question is how adaptable we are to these regime

changes and if we can assume that a same level of adaptation can be reached in both climate change scenarios (RCP 4.5 and RCP 8.5). Vidal et al. (2012) for example discuss in their study about future droughts in France, in which the baseline of a standardized drought index is adapted each month, the feasibility of this time step and compare it with adaptation time scales for irrigated crops (seasonal or annual) and forestry (decadal). Nevertheless, several studies argue the use of 'constant normals'

5 as being representative for both the current and future climate and indicate ways to derive changing normals (e.g. Livezey et al., 2007; Arguez and Vose, 2011; Vidal et al., 2012).

The two case study catchments in this study, with a different glacier area evolution and resulting changing discharge regime, showed the range of possible effects the methodological choices can have on future streamflow and drought projections. The glacier disappearance simulated by 2060 for the Wolverine catchment might be an unrealistically extreme result for most of

10 the glacierised catchments in the world (Zemp et al., 2006; Rees and Collins, 2006; Radić et al., 2014; Bliss et al., 2014; Huss and Hock, 2015), but it is a highly relevant and clear example in the discussion about drought definitions and thresholds in future projections. The Wolverine case also illustrates that the hydrological regime becomes more variable when the catchment changes from highly-glacierised to non-glacierised (Fountain and Tangborn, 1985). This is important for streamflow drought analysis, since streamflow droughts will be more variable and mainly dependent on variability in precipitation and it is therefore

15 not appropriate to use a historical threshold that is based on other hydrological processes (stable glacier-dominated regime). The use of a calibrated conceptual glacio-hydrological model in our study which uses a simplification of glacier processes and does not take into account e.g. a varying lapse rate (Gardner and Sharp, 2009), firn on the glacier, reduced albedo due to melt and explicit en- and subglacial drainage, might have influenced the glacier melt and thereby also rate of glacier disappearance. However, we should also keep in mind that the future glacier area evolution has a large uncertainty caused by climate model

20 uncertainties as shown in this study for the Nigardsbreen catchment (Fig. 4). The historical glacier area changes for Wolverine agree with the observed glacier area at the end of the historical period, but for Nigardsbreen a smaller glacier area than observed is simulated. This could be caused by the simplified modelling of glacier processes, the construction of the glacier profile and/or due to the climate forcing. We compared the annual average glacier melt contribution in Nigardsbreen catchment with Engelhardt et al. (2014) and find comparable results (around 20%). Nevertheless, both uncertainties, in the model and

25 forcing, mainly influence the timing of changes in both catchments but not the processes that we studied and compared in the different scenarios, which is the main focus of this study. Some uncertainty is also caused by the assumption that parameters stay constant over time, while the catchment and climate are changing (Merz et al., 2011). It would be interesting to apply the methods and outcomes of this study to other glacierised catchments around the world where climate change will likely have impacts on water availability and droughts.

30 **6 Conclusions**

This study systematically elucidated the effect of glacier dynamics and threshold approach on future streamflow drought characterisation and the analysis of the governing hydrological processes. The discharges and streamflow droughts of two case study catchments, Nigardsbreen (Norway) and Wolverine (Alaska), with a currently high percentage of glacier cover

were studied. Streamflow was modelled with the HBV-light model for a historical period and into the future. This model accounts for the glacier retreat but also allows to keep glaciers constant, a feature that enabled this study to carry out a comparison of four potential views on future streamflow droughts. Assuming a constant glacier area and a threshold approach whereby droughts are defined based on the historical hydrological regime, results in almost no droughts in the future, due to

5   an increase in glacier melt. When the same historical threshold approach is applied to discharge simulated with glacier change, results show severe 'regime shift droughts' in summer due to retreat, or even complete disappearance (Wolverine), of the glacier. If future droughts are studied from a future perspective, by using a transient threshold that changes with the changing hydrological regime, differences in drought characteristics between historical and future periods, and glacier dynamics options are smaller. Drought characteristics greatly differ among the four scenarios and these choices will therefore strongly influence

10   future drought projections. We found the four options to be able to answer different questions about future streamflow drought in glacierised catchments: the transient threshold for analysing drought processes in the future, the historical threshold approach to assess changes between historical and future periods, the constant glacier area conceptualisation to analyse the effect of short term climate variability and the dynamical glacier area to model realistic future discharges in glacierised catchments.

Most important for further future streamflow drought studies is to define what a future drought is and subsequently choose

15   the right method. In addition to the definition of future droughts, questions that also need to be addressed in further studies is the relation between the statistical description of droughts (the threshold based on a percentile of the flow duration curve) and the impacts and experiences of droughts by ecosystems and society. Are all droughts detected in the high flow season also experienced as droughts, or for example only droughts with high deficits or long durations? Streamflow droughts upstream would mainly impact energy production and river ecology. However, if for example enough reservoir capacity is present for

20   the energy production, a deficit in a part of the melt peak might be compensated by higher discharges from the glacier during the rest of the melt season and no impact is felt. In this study an upstream perspective was used, but many people depending on the water from glaciers live more downstream (e.g. water dependency in the Himalayas). Streamflow droughts in the high-flow season upstream in glacierised catchments are related to droughts in the low-flow season downstream, with potentially even larger impacts. Further research should investigate this relation and the impacts of drought downstream in these regions.

25   **7   Data availability**

Data for the Nigardsbreen catchment are available via the Norwegian Water Resources and Energy Directorate (NVE) and for the Wolverine catchment via U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Streamflow data and mass balances for Wolverine are also available online (https://waterdata.usgs.gov/nwi and https://alaska.usgs.gov/products/data.php?dataid=79). Ice thickness maps are available via Matthias Huss and for some Norwegian glaciers via NVE. The climate model data are available from the Coordi-

30   nated Regional Climate Downscaling Experiment (CORDEX) (http://www.cordex.org/). Glacier outlines can be obtained from GLIMS and NVE (Nigardsbreen) (http://www.glims.org/RGI/rgi50_dl.html and https://www.nve.no/hydrologi/bre/bredata/). The ASTER DEM can be downloaded from http://reverb.echo.nasa.gov/reverb/ and ERA-interim data from http://apps.ecmwf.int/datasets/.

Appendix A: Model parameters glacier and snow routine

In Table A1 the calibrated parameter values that were used in the glacier and snow routine of the HBV-light model are presented. A different parameter set was obtained for the dynamical and constant glacier area conceptualisations. The refreezing coefficient (CFR), which determines the amount of refreezing liquid water in the within the snowpack when temperatures
5 are below the threshold temperature, and the water holding capacity of snow (CWH), which determines how much meltwater and rainfall are retained within the snowpack, were assigned a constant value and not calibrated. KG_{min}, dKG and AG are the parameters for the glacial water storage-outflow relationship (Stahl et al., 2008). The degree-day factor ($CFMAX$) is multiplied with $CF_{glacier}$ to simulate glacier melt and it is multiplied (divided) by CF_{slope} to calculate melt of snow and ice for south-facing slopes (north-facing slopes). No correction is used for east- and west-facing slopes.

Table A1. Glacier and snow routine parameter values. All parameters were calibrated except CFR and CWH, indicated with *. For each catchment two parameter sets were obtained, one for the dynamical glacier conceptualisation (D) and one for the static glacier area conceptualisation (C).

Parameter	Description	Nigardsbreen - C	Nigardsbreen - D	Wolverine - C	Wolverine - D
T_{calt} [°C/100 m]	T lapse rate	0.65	0.55	0.54	0.46
P_{calt} [%/100 m]	P lapse rate	13.40	15.43	15.98	12.70
TT [°C]	Threshold temperature	−0.17	−0.32	0.04	0.12
$CFMAX$ [mm/d°C]	Degree day factor	2.34	3.17	2.67	1.94
$SFCF$ [-]	Snowfall correction factor	1.00	0.95	1.69	1.88
CFR * [-]	Refreezing coefficient	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05
CWH * [-]	Water holding capacity of snow	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
$CF_{glacier}$ [-]	Glacier melt correction factor	1.32	1.18	1.80	1.72
CF_{slope} [-]	Slope melt correction factor	2.67	1.54	1.65	2.57
KG_{min} [1/d]	Minimum outflow coefficient glacier storage	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20
dKG [1/d]	Maximum minus minimum glacier storage outflow coefficient	0.50	0.39	0.50	0.50
AG [mm]	Calibration parameter	0.003	1.25	9.95	0.0003

10 *Author contributions.* AVL and MVT conceived and designed the study. MVT carried out the modelling and analyses with feedback from AVL and MV. NW and MV provided the R-script for TVT calculation and the HBV model with glacier routine, respectively. AVL and AT supervised the MSc thesis work that formed the basis of this paper. MVT, AVL and AT discussed the structure and content of the manuscript. MVT wrote the manuscript. All co-authors edited and revised the manuscript and approved the final version (AVL, NW, KS, MV, AT).

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