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317 **Tropopause Evolution in a Rapidly Intensifying Tropical Cyclone: A Static**
318 **Stability Budget Analysis in an Idealized, Axisymmetric Framework**

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ABSTRACT

324 1. Introduction

325 After undergoing a remarkably rapid intensification (RI), Hurricane Patricia (2015) set a new
326 record as the strongest tropical cyclone (TC) ever observed in the Western Hemisphere (Kim-
327 berlain et al. 2016; Rogers et al. 2017). High-altitude dropsonde observations taken during the
328 Tropical Cyclone Intensity (TCI) experiment captured this RI in unprecedented detail (Doyle et al.
329 2017). These observations revealed dramatic changes in the structure of the cold-point tropopause
330 and upper-level static stability as the storm intensified (Duran and Molinari 2018).

331 At tropical storm intensity, shortly before RI commenced, a strong inversion layer existed just
332 above Patricia’s cold-point tropopause, which was located near 17.2 km. During the first half of
333 the RI period, this inversion layer weakened throughout Patricia’s inner core, with the weakening
334 most pronounced over the developing eye. By the time the storm reached its maximum intensity,
335 the inversion layer over the eye had disappeared almost completely, which was accompanied by an
336 increase in the tropopause height to a level at or above the highest-available dropsonde data point
337 (18.3 km) at two locations. Meanwhile over the eyewall region, the static stability re-strengthened
338 and the tropopause was limited to a level at or below 17.5 km. The mechanisms that led to these
339 changes in upper-level static stability and tropopause height are the subject of the current paper.

340 Despite the importance of tropopause-layer thermodynamics in theoretical models of hurricanes
341 (Emanuel and Rotunno 2011; Emanuel 2012), few papers have examined the upper-tropospheric
342 evolution of TCs. Komaromi and Doyle (2017) found that stronger TCs tended to have a higher
343 and warmer tropopause over their inner core than weaker TCs. Their results are consistent with
344 the evolution observed over the inner core of Hurricane Patricia, in which the tropopause height
345 increased and the tropopause temperature warmed throughout RI (Duran and Molinari 2018).

346 Idealized simulations of a TC analyzed by Ohno and Satoh (2015) suggested that the develop-
347 ment of an upper-level warm core near the TC storm center acted to decrease the static stability
348 near the tropopause (see their Fig.). Although the mechanisms that drive this static stability
349 evolution have not been examined explicitly, Stern and Zhang (2013) described the development
350 of the TC warm core using a potential temperature (θ) budget analysis. They found that radial
351 and vertical advection both played important roles in warm core development throughout RI, and
352 subgrid-scale diffusion became particularly important during the later stage of RI. To our knowl-
353 edge, the only paper that has examined explicitly the static stability evolution in a modeled TC is
354 Kepert et al. (2016), but their analysis was limited to the boundary layer. The analysis herein is
355 based upon that of Stern and Zhang (2013), except using a static stability budget similar to that of
356 Kepert et al. (2016), with a focus on the upper troposphere and lower stratosphere.

357 **2. Model Setup**

358 The numerical simulations were performed using version 19.4 of Cloud Model 1 (CM1) de-
359 scribed in Bryan and Rotunno (2009). The equations of motion were integrated on a 3000-km-
360 wide, 30-km-deep axisymmetric grid with 1-km horizontal and 250-m vertical grid spacing. The
361 computations were performed on an f -plane at 15°N latitude, over a sea surface with constant
362 temperature of 30.5°C, which matches that observed near Hurricane Patricia (2015; Kimberlain
363 et al. 2016). Horizontal turbulence was parameterized using the Smagorinsky scheme described in
364 Bryan and Rotunno (2009, pg. 1773), with a prescribed mixing length that varied linearly from 100
365 m at a surface pressure of 1015 hPa to 1000 m at a surface pressure of 900 hPa. This formulation
366 allows for realistically-large horizontal mixing lengths near the hurricane’s inner core, consistent
367 with the results of Bryan (2012), while not over-representing horizontal turbulence in convection
368 at outer radii. Vertical turbulence was parameterized using the formulation of Markowski and

369 Bryan (2016, their Eq. 6), using an asymptotic vertical mixing length of 100 m. A Rayleigh
370 damping layer was applied outside of the 2900-km radius and above the 25-km level to prevent
371 spurious gravity wave reflection at the model boundaries. Microphysical processes were param-
372 eterized using the Thompson et al. (2004) microphysics scheme and radiative heating tendencies
373 were computed every two minutes using the Rapid Radiative Transfer Model for GCMs (RRTMG)
374 longwave and shortwave schemes (Iacono et al. 2008). The initial temperature and humidity field
375 was horizontally homogeneous and determined by averaging all Climate Forecast System Reanal-
376 ysis (CFSR) grid points within 100 km of Patricia's center of circulation at 18 UTC 21 October
377 2015. The vortex described in Rotunno and Emanuel (1987, their Eq. 37) was used to initialize
378 the wind field, setting all parameters equal to the values used therein.

379 Although hurricanes simulated in an axisymmetric framework tend to be more intense than
380 those observed in nature, the intensity evolution of this simulation matches reasonably well with
381 that observed in Hurricane Patricia. After an initial spin-up period of about 20 hours, the modeled
382 storm (Fig.1, blue lines) began an RI period that lasted approximately 30 hours. After this RI, the
383 storm continued to intensify more slowly until the maximum 10-m wind speed reached 89 m s^{-1}
384 and the minimum sea-level pressure reached its minimum of 846 mb, 81 hours into the simulation.
385 Hurricane Patricia (red stars) exhibited a similar intensity evolution, with an RI period leading to a
386 maximum 10-m wind speed of 95 m s^{-1} and a minimum sea-level pressure of 872 hPa. Despite the
387 limitations of the axisymmetric framework, the extraordinary intensity of Hurricane Patricia and
388 the rapidity of its intensification makes Patricia a particularly good candidate for axisymmetric
389 analysis.

390 3. Budget Computation

391 The static stability can be expressed as the squared Brunt Väisälä frequency:

$$N_m^2 = \frac{g}{T} \left(\frac{\partial T}{\partial z} + \Gamma_m \right) \left(1 + \frac{T}{R_d/R_v + q_s} \frac{\partial q_s}{\partial T} \right) - \frac{g}{1 + q_t} \frac{\partial q_t}{\partial z}, \quad (1)$$

392 where g is gravitational acceleration, T is temperature, R_d and R_v are the gas constants of dry air
 393 and water vapor, respectively, q_s is the saturation mixing ratio, q_t is the total condensate mixing
 394 ratio, and Γ_m is the moist-adiabatic lapse rate:

$$\Gamma_m = g(1 + q_t) \left(\frac{1 + L_v q_s / R_d T}{c_{pm} + L_v \partial q_s / \partial T} \right), \quad (2)$$

395 where L_v is the latent heat of vaporization and c_{pm} is the specific heat of moist air at constant
 396 pressure. In the tropopause layer, q_s , $\partial q_s / \partial T$, and $\partial q_t / \partial z$ approach zero. In this limiting case,
 397 Eq. 1 reduces to:

$$N^2 = \frac{g}{\theta} \frac{\partial \theta}{\partial z}, \quad (3)$$

398 where θ is the potential temperature.

399 To compute N^2 , CM1 uses Eq.1 in saturated environments and Eq. 3 in sub-saturated environ-
 400 ments. For simplicity, however, only Eq. 3 will be employed for the budget computations herein¹.

401 Taking the time derivative of Eq. 3 yields the static stability tendency:

$$\frac{\partial N^2}{\partial t} = \frac{g}{\theta} \frac{\partial}{\partial z} \frac{\partial \theta}{\partial t} - \frac{g}{\theta^2} \frac{\partial \theta}{\partial z} \frac{\partial \theta}{\partial t}, \quad (4)$$

402 where the potential temperature tendency, $\partial \theta / \partial t$, can be written:

$$\frac{\partial \theta}{\partial t} = HADV + VADV + HTURB + VTURB + MP + RAD + DISS \quad (5)$$

403 Each term on the right-hand side of Eq. 5 represents a θ budget variable, each of which is out-
 404 put directly by the model every minute. HADV and VADV are the radial and vertical advective

¹The validity of this approximation will be substantiated later in this section.

tendencies², HTURB and VTURB are the radial and vertical tendencies from the turbulence parameterization, MP is the tendency from the microphysics scheme, RAD is the tendency from the radiation scheme, and DISS is the tendency due to turbulent dissipation. This equation neglects Rayleigh damping, since this term is zero everywhere below 25 km, and the analysis domain does not extend to that level. Each term in Eq. 5 is substituted for $\partial\theta/\partial t$ in Eq. 4, yielding the contribution of each budget term to the static stability tendency. These terms are summed, yielding an instantaneous "budget change" in N^2 every minute. The budget changes are then averaged over 24-hour periods and compared to the total model change in N^2 over that same time period, i.e.:

$$\Delta N_{budget}^2 = \frac{1}{\delta t} \sum_{t=t_0}^{t_0+\delta t} \left. \frac{\partial N^2}{\partial t} \right|_t \quad (6)$$

$$\Delta N_{model}^2 = N_{t_0+\delta t}^2 - N_{t_0}^2 \quad (7)$$

$$Residual = \Delta N_{model}^2 - \Delta N_{budget}^2 \quad (8)$$

where t_0 is an initial time and δt is 24 hours.

Eqs. 6-8 are plotted for four consecutive 24-hour periods in Fig. 2. For this and all subsequent radial-vertical cross sections, a 1-2-1 smoother is applied once in the radial direction to eliminate $2\Delta r$ noise that appears in some of the raw model output and calculated fields. The left column of Fig. 2 depicts the model changes (Eq. 7), the center column depicts the budget changes (Eq. 6), and the right column depicts the residuals (Eq. 8). In every 24-hour period, the budget changes are nearly identical to the model changes, which is reflected in the near-zero residuals in the right column. This indicates that the budget accurately represents the model variability, which implies that the neglect of moisture in the budget computation introduces negligible error within the analysis domain³.

²These terms include the tendencies due to the diffusion that is implicit in the fifth-order advection scheme.

³This is not the case in the lower- and mid-troposphere, where the residual actually exceeds the budget variability in many places, likely due to the neglect of moisture; thus we limit this analysis to the upper troposphere and lower stratosphere.

425 In the tropopause layer, some of the budget terms are small enough to be ignored. To determine
 426 which of the budget terms are most important, a time series of the contribution of each of the
 427 budget terms in Eq. 5 to the tropopause-layer static stability tendency is plotted in Fig. 4. For this
 428 figure, each of the budget terms is computed using the method described in Section 3, except with
 429 1-hour averaging intervals instead of 24-hour intervals. The absolute values of these tendencies
 430 are then averaged over a radius-height domain surrounding the tropopause and plotted as a time
 431 series⁴. Advection (Fig. 4, red line) plays an important role in the mean tropopause-layer static
 432 stability tendency at all times, and vertical turbulence (Fig. 4, blue line) and radiation (Fig. 4, dark
 433 green line) also contribute significantly. Although the contribution from horizontal turbulence
 434 (Fig. 4, purple line) becomes more important after 48 hours, it is confined to a very small region
 435 immediately surrounding the eyewall tangential velocity maximum (not shown), and is negligible
 436 throughout the rest of the tropopause layer. The remaining two processes - microphysics and
 437 dissipative heating (Fig. 4, orange and light green lines, respectively) - lie atop one another near
 438 zero. These time series indicate that, at all times, three budget terms dominate the tropopause-layer
 439 static stability tendency: advection, vertical turbulence, and radiation. Variations in the magnitude
 440 and spatial structure of these terms drive the static stability changes depicted in Fig. 2; subsequent
 441 sections will focus on these variations and what causes them.

⁴It will be seen in subsequent figures that each of the terms contributes both positively and negatively to the N^2 tendency within the analysis domain. Thus, taking an average over the domain tends to wash out the positive and negative contributions. To circumvent this problem, the absolute value of each of the terms is averaged.

4. Results

a. Static stability evolution

The average N^2 over the first day of the simulation (Fig. 3a) indicates the presence of a weak static stability maximum just above the cold-point tropopause. Over the subsequent 24 hours, during the RI period, the static stability within and above this layer decreased near the storm center (Fig. 3b). This decreasing N^2 corresponded to an increase in the tropopause height within the developing eye, maximized at the storm center. Outside of the eye, meanwhile, the tropopause height decreased over the eyewall region (25-60-km radius) and increased only slightly outside of the 60-km radius. In this outer region, the N^2 maximum just above the tropopause strengthened during RI. These trends continued as the storm's intensity leveled off in the 48-72-hour period (Fig. 3c). The tropopause height increased to nearly 21 km at the storm center and sloped sharply downward to 16.3 km on the inner edge of the eyewall, near the 30 km radius. Static stability outside of the eye, meanwhile, continued to increase just above the cold-point tropopause. This N^2 evolution closely follows that observed in Hurricane Patricia (2015; Duran and Molinari 2018). The mechanisms that led to these static stability changes will be investigated in the subsequent sections.

b. Static stability budget analysis

(i) 0-24 hours The weakening of the lower-stratospheric static stability maximum during the initial spin-up period is reflected in the total N^2 budget change over this time (Fig. 5a). The 17-18-km layer was characterized by decreasing N^2 (purple shading), maximizing at the storm center. The layer immediately below the tropopause, meanwhile, saw strengthening N^2 during this time period. Although these tendencies extended out to the 200-km radius, they were particularly

pronounced at innermost radii. A comparison of the contributions of advection (Fig. 5b), vertical turbulence (Fig. 5c), and radiation (Fig. 5d) reveals that advection is primarily responsible for the change in static stability during this period. Although vertical turbulence acts in opposition to advection (i.e. it acts to stabilize regions that advection acts to destabilize), the magnitude of the advective tendencies is larger, particularly at the innermost radii. The sum of advection and vertical turbulence (Fig. 5e) almost exactly replicates the static stability tendencies above 17 km. Radiative tendencies (Fig. 5d) act to destabilize the layer below about 16 km and stabilize the layer between 16 and 17 km. The sum of advection, vertical turbulence, and radiation (Fig. 5f) reproduces the total change in N^2 almost exactly.

...Explain this in the context of radial and vertical velocities... ...See Stern and Zhang, Page 84, Section 3d... ...Add mention of total condensate and radiative heating tendencies as it relates to stability tendency due to rad...

(ii) *24-48 hours* During the RI period, N^2 within the eye generally decreased above 16 km and increased below (Fig. 6a). These tendencies at the innermost radii were driven almost entirely by advection (Fig. 6b); vertical turbulence (Fig. 6c) and radiation (Fig. 6d) contributed negligibly to the static stability tendencies in this region.

Outside of the eye, the N^2 evolution exhibited alternating layers of positive and negative tendencies. Near and above 18 km existed an upward-sloping region of decreasing N^2 that extended out to the 180-km radius. In this region, neither vertical turbulence nor radiation exhibited negative N^2 tendencies; advection was the only forcing for destabilization. Immediately below this layer was a region of increasing N^2 , which sloped upward from 17 km near the 30-km radius to just below 18 km outside of the 100-km radius. Advection and vertical turbulence both contributed to this positive N^2 tendency, with advection playing an important role below about 17.5 km and and

487 turbulence playing an important role above. The sum of advection and turbulence (Fig. 6e) reveals
 488 two discontiguous regions of increasing N^2 in the 17-18-km layer rather than one contiguous re-
 489 gion. The addition of radiation to these two terms, however, (Fig. 6f) provides the link between
 490 these two regions, indicating that radiation also plays a role in strengthening the stable layer just
 491 above the tropopause. In the 16-17-km layer, a horizontally-extensive layer of decreasing N^2 also
 492 was forced by a combination of advection, vertical turbulence, and radiation. The sum of advec-
 493 tion and vertical turbulence accounts for only a portion of the decreasing N^2 in this layer, and
 494 actually indicates forcing for stabilization near the 50-km radius and outside of the 130-km radius.
 495 Radiative tendencies overcome this forcing for stabilization in both of these regions to produce the
 496 radially-extensive region of destabilization observed just below the tropopause.

497 TWO REGIONS WHERE Panel (f) differs from panel (a): 30-60 km radial band below 16 km,
 498 which is actually canceled out by a vertical gradient of latent heating, and the thin region of strong
 499 stabilization between 15-17.5 km near $r=30$ km, which is canceled out by horizontal turbulence.

500 (iii) 48-72 hours After the storm's maximum wind speed leveled off near 80 m s^{-1} , the magnitude
 501 of the static stability tendencies within the eye decreased to near zero (Fig. 7a).

502 Outside of the eye, however, N^2 continued to increase just above the tropopause and decrease
 503 just below. The sum of advection and vertical turbulence (Fig. 7e) indicates that the increase
 504 of N^2 observed in the 17-18-km layer and inside of the 80-km radius cannot be attributed to
 505 these processes, since the sum of these two terms provided forcing for destabilization. Instead,
 506 radiation (Fig. 7d), provided the forcing for stabilization in this region. Outside of the 80-km
 507 radius, both advection (Fig. 7b) and vertical turbulence (Fig. 7c) provided forcing for stabilization
 508 near the 18-km level. The sum of the two terms indicates increasing N^2 near the 18-km level
 509 everywhere outside of the 80-km radius, but this stabilization is slightly weaker in the 90-120-km

radial band than the observed value. The addition of radiation (Fig. 7f) provides the extra forcing for stabilization required to account for the observed increase in N^2 . Outside of the 120-km radius, the region of radiative forcing for stabilization slopes downward, and the increase in N^2 observed near 18 km can be explained entirely by a combination of advection and vertical turbulence. The layer of decreasing N^2 observed near 17 km was forced primarily by vertical turbulence and radiation. Within most of this region, advection provided strong forcing for stabilization, but this forcing was outweighed by the negative N^2 tendencies induced by a combination of vertical turbulence and radiation.

5. Discussion

a. The role of advection

Advection played an important role in the tropopause-layer N^2 evolution at all stages of intensification, but for brevity, this section will focus only on the RI period. To investigate the advective processes more closely, the individual contributions of horizontal and vertical advection during the RI period are shown in Fig. 8, along with the corresponding time-mean radial and vertical velocities and θ . The N^2 tendencies due to the two advective components (Fig. 8a,b) exhibit strong cancellation, consistent with flow that is nearly isentropic. There are, however, some regions in which flow crosses θ surfaces; this flow accounts for all non-zero N^2 tendencies due to advection previously seen in Fig. 6b.

Some insight can be gained by considering the time tendency of the vertical θ gradient due to advection:

$$\left(\frac{\partial}{\partial t} \frac{\partial \theta}{\partial z} \right)_{adv} = -u \frac{\partial}{\partial r} \frac{\partial \theta}{\partial z} - w \frac{\partial}{\partial z} \frac{\partial \theta}{\partial z} - \frac{\partial u}{\partial z} \frac{\partial \theta}{\partial r} - \frac{\partial w}{\partial z} \frac{\partial \theta}{\partial z}. \quad (9)$$

530 The first two terms on the right-hand side of Eq. 9 represent advection of static stability by the
531 radial and vertical wind, respectively. The third and fourth terms represent, respectively, the tilting
532 of isentropes in the presence of vertical wind shear, and the spreading or compaction of isentropes
533 through divergence of the vertical wind.

534 During the RI period, strong radial and vertical circulations developed near the tropopause,
535 which forced high-magnitude N^2 tendencies due to advection (Fig. 8a,b). A layer of strong outflow
536 developed at and below the tropopause during this period, with the outflow maximum (dashed cyan
537 line) curving from the 14-km level at the 50-km radius to just below the 16-km level outside of
538 the 80-km radius (Fig. 8c). The cyan line, by definition, represents the level at which the vertical
539 gradient of radial velocity switched signs, with $\partial u / \partial z > 0$ below the line and $\partial u / \partial z < 0$ above.
540 Notably, the N^2 tendency due to horizontal advection (Fig. 8a) also tended to switch signs very
541 near this line, with stabilization below the outflow maximum and destabilization above. This
542 suggests that vertical wind shear above and below the outflow maximum played an important
543 role in the N^2 tendency during this time. Examination of the third term on the right-hand side
544 of Eq. 9 reveals that tilting of isentropes within these shear layers contributed to the strong N^2
545 tendencies that flanked the outflow maximum. Outside of the eye and eyewall, isentropes generally
546 sloped upward with radius, which means that θ decreased outward ($\partial \theta / \partial r < 0$). Thus, wherever
547 $\partial u / \partial z > 0$, the tilting term forced an increase in N^2 , and wherever $\partial u / \partial z < 0$, the tilting term
548 forced a decrease in N^2 . This is precisely the structure seen in Fig. 8a, which suggests that the
549 tilting term

550 Meanwhile in the lower stratosphere, a thin layer of 2-4 m s^{-1} inflow developed a few hundred
551 meters above the tropopause.

552 Radiative heating and turbulence viscosity figures?

553 Discuss how turbulence increases the static stability in some regions $-\zeta$ vertical gradients of
554 turbulence intensity.

555 Diurnal variability of static stability in the upper troposphere is an interesting area of future
556 research.

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558 of Cloud Model 1. We also thank Jeffrey Kepert, Robert Fovell, and Erika Navarro for helpful
559 conversations related to this work. ADD GRANT NUMBER

560 APPENDIX

561 **Sensitivity experiments**

562 The simulations exhibited some sensitivity to the initial thermodynamic profile and the prescribed
563 vertical mixing length. Although the details of the intensification and the tropopause-layer N^2 evo-
564 lution varied when these quantities were changed, the conclusions of the paper remain unchanged.

565 *a. Sensitivity to the initial thermodynamic profile*

566 A number of sensitivity experiments were conducted using a variety of initial soundings. Chang-
567 ing the initial temperature and humidity profiles affected the timing of the onset of organized deep
568 convection and the rapidity of intensification. In all simulations, however, convection eventually
569 penetrated to the tropopause, at which time vertical turbulence and radiation combined with ad-
570 vection to adjust the N^2 profile toward that which was observed in the control run. By the end of
571 the RI period in every simulation, all three processes were actively modifying the N^2 profile near
572 the tropopause.

573 *b. Sensitivity to the vertical mixing length*

574 The intensity of parameterized turbulence is highly dependent on a prescribed length scale.
575 Since there is no theoretical or observational guidance for the selection of this mixing length, the
576 value used in the control run (100 m) is based on the sensitivity experiments of Bryan (2012).
577 Since the vertical eddy viscosity varies linearly with the vertical mixing length, prescribing a
578 smaller mixing length produces smaller θ tendencies due to turbulence. Even with a mixing
579 length on the low end of those tested by Bryan (2012), however, turbulence still plays a role in the
580 tropopause-layer N^2 evolution. FIG shows the N^2 evolution in a simulation identical to the control
581 run, except with a vertical mixing length of 50 m rather than 100 m. DESCRIPTION OF THE
582 FIGURE

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LIST OF FIGURES

620	LIST OF FIGURES	
621	Fig. 1.	The maximum 10-m wind speed (top panel; m s^{-1}) and minimum sea-level pressure (bottom
622		panel; hPa) in the simulated storm (blue lines) and from Hurricane Patricia's best track (red
623		stars). 32
624	Fig. 2.	Left panels: Twenty-four-hour changes in squared Brunt-Väisälä frequency (N^2 ; 10^{-4} s^{-2})
625		over (a) 0-24 hours, (b) 24-48 hours, (c) 48-72 hours. Middle Panels: The N^2 change over
626		the same time periods computed using Eqs. 4-6, Right Panels: The budget residual over the
627		same time periods, computed by subtracting the budget change (middle column) from the
628		model change (left column). 33
629	Fig. 3.	Twenty-four-hour averages of squared Brunt-Väisälä frequency (N^2 ; 10^{-4} s^{-2}) over (a) 0-24
630		hours, (b) 24-48 hours, (c) 48-72 hours. Orange lines represent the cold-point tropopause
631		averaged over the same time periods. 34
632	Fig. 4.	Time series of the contribution of each of the budget terms to the time tendency of the
633		squared Brunt-Väisälä frequency (N^2 ; 10^{-4} s^{-2}). For each budget term, the absolute value
634		of the N^2 tendency is averaged temporally over 1-hour periods (using output every minute),
635		and spatially in a region extending from 0 to 200 km radius and 14 to 21 km altitude. . . . 35
636	Fig. 5.	(a) Total change in N^2 over the 0-24-hour period ($10^{-4} \text{ s}^{-2} (24 \text{ hr})^{-1}$) and the contributions to
637		that change from (b) the sum of horizontal and vertical advection, (c) vertical turbulence, (d)
638		longwave and shortwave radiation, (e) the sum of horizontal advection, vertical advection,
639		and vertical turbulence, and (f) the sum of horizontal advection, vertical advection, vertical
640		turbulence, and longwave and shortwave radiation. 36
641	Fig. 6.	As in Fig. 5, but for the 24-48-hour period. 37
642	Fig. 7.	As in Fig. 5, but for the 48-72-hour period. 38
643	Fig. 8.	The contribution to the change in N^2 over the 24-48-hour period ($10^{-4} \text{ s}^{-2} (24 \text{ hr})^{-1}$) by
644		(a) horizontal advection and (b) vertical advection. (c) The radial velocity (m s^{-1} ; filled con-
645		tours), potential temperature (K; thick black contours), cold-point tropopause height (orange
646		line), and level of maximum outflow (dashed cyan line) averaged over the 24-48-hour period.
647		(d) The vertical velocity (cm s^{-1} ; filled contours), potential temperature (K; thick black con-
648		tours), and cold-point tropopause height (orange line) averaged over the 24-48-hour period.
649		39
650	Fig. 9.	Ice mixing ratio (g kg^{-1}) and cold-point tropopause height (orange lines) averaged over (a)
651		0-24 hours, (c) 24-48 hours, and (e) 48-72 hours. Radiative heating rate (K hr^{-1}) and cold-
652		point tropopause height (orange lines) averaged over (b) 0-24 hours, (d) 24-48 hours, and (f)
653		48-72 hours. 40
654	Fig. 10.	Vertical eddy diffusivity ($\text{m}^2 \text{ s}^{-2}$; filled contours), cold-point tropopause height (cyan lines),
655		and radial velocity (m s^{-1} ; thick black lines) averaged over (a) 0-24 hours, (b) 24-48 hours,
656		and (c) 48-72 hours. 41

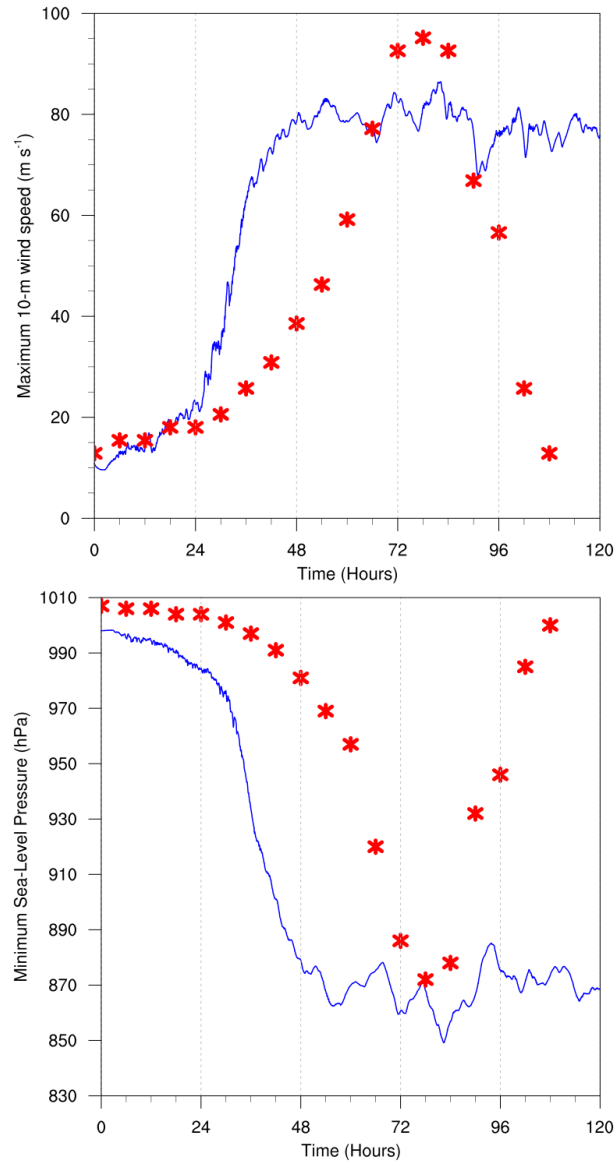


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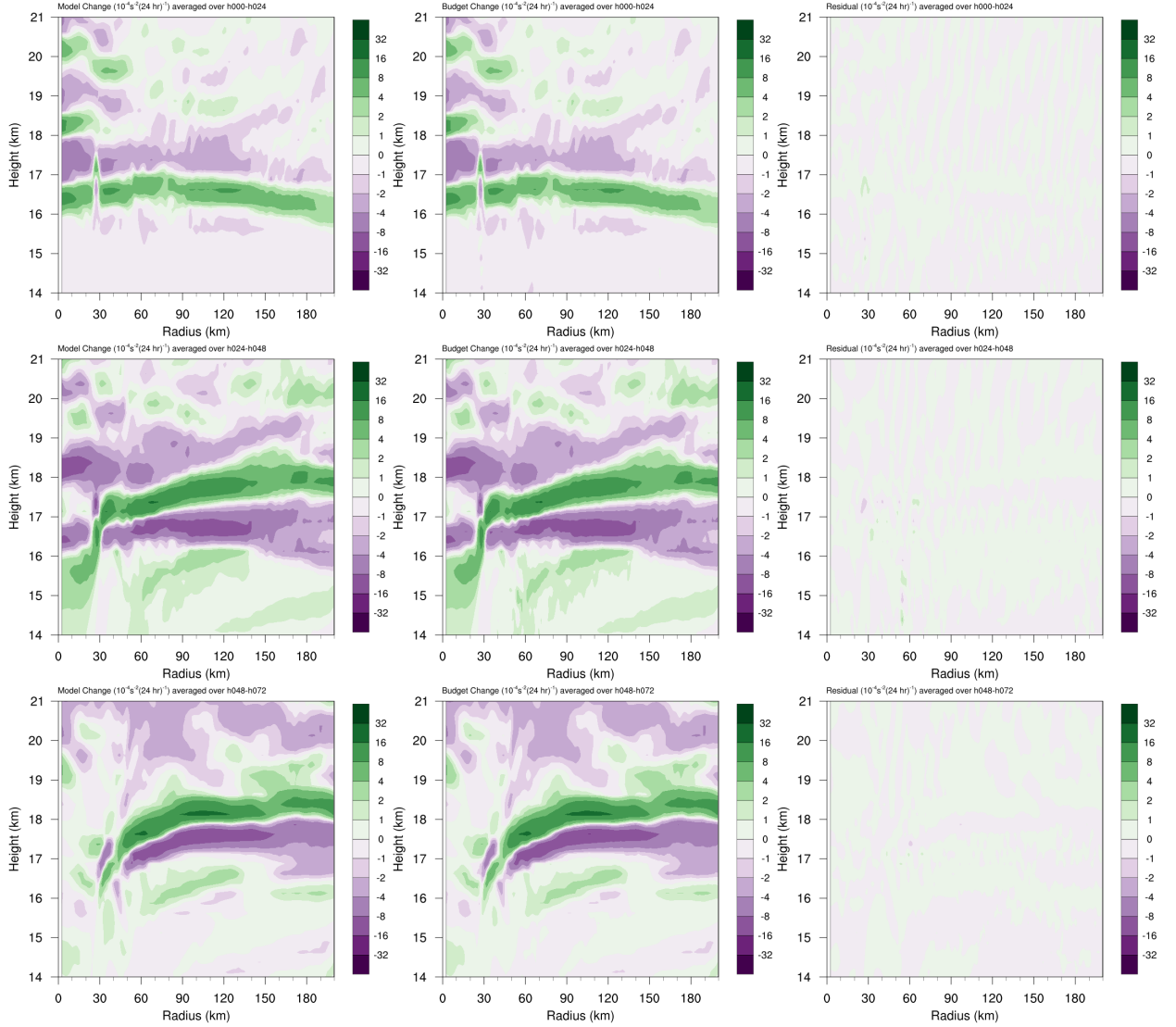


FIG. 2. Left panels: Twenty-four-hour changes in squared Brunt-Väisälä frequency (N^2 ; 10^{-4} s^{-2}) over (a) 0-24 hours, (b) 24-48 hours, (c) 48-72 hours. Middle Panels: The N^2 change over the same time periods computed using Eqs. 4-6, Right Panels: The budget residual over the same time periods, computed by subtracting the budget change (middle column) from the model change (left column).

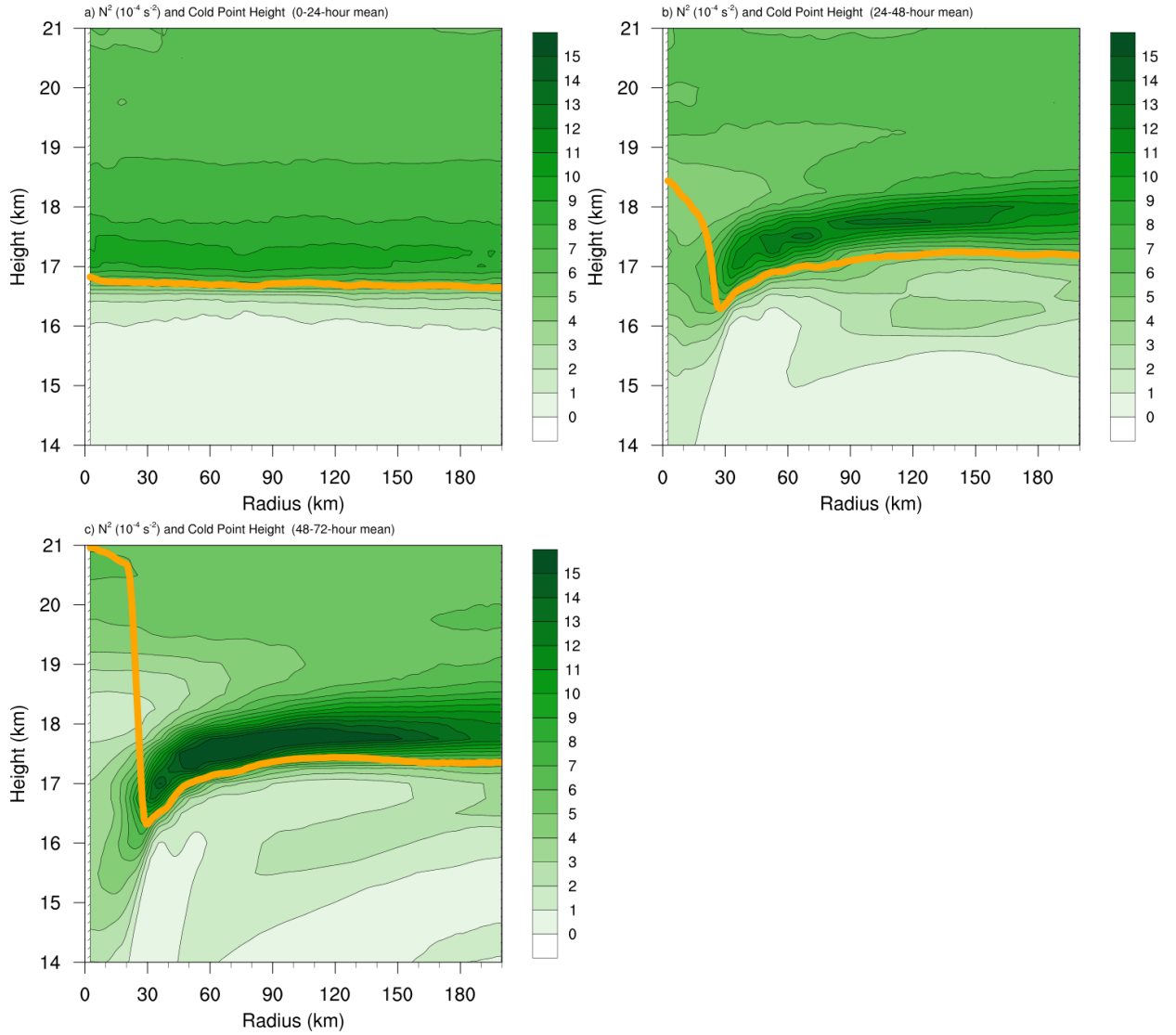


FIG. 3. Twenty-four-hour averages of squared Brunt-Väisälä frequency (N^2 ; 10^{-4} s^{-2}) over (a) 0-24 hours, (b) 24-48 hours, (c) 48-72 hours. Orange lines represent the cold-point tropopause averaged over the same time periods.

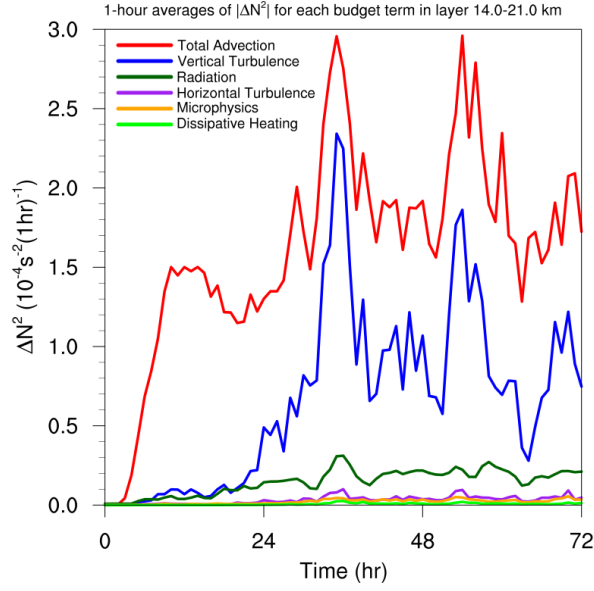


FIG. 4. Time series of the contribution of each of the budget terms to the time tendency of the squared Brunt-Väisälä frequency (N^2 ; 10^{-4} s^{-2}). For each budget term, the absolute value of the N^2 tendency is averaged temporally over 1-hour periods (using output every minute), and spatially in a region extending from 0 to 200 km radius and 14 to 21 km altitude.

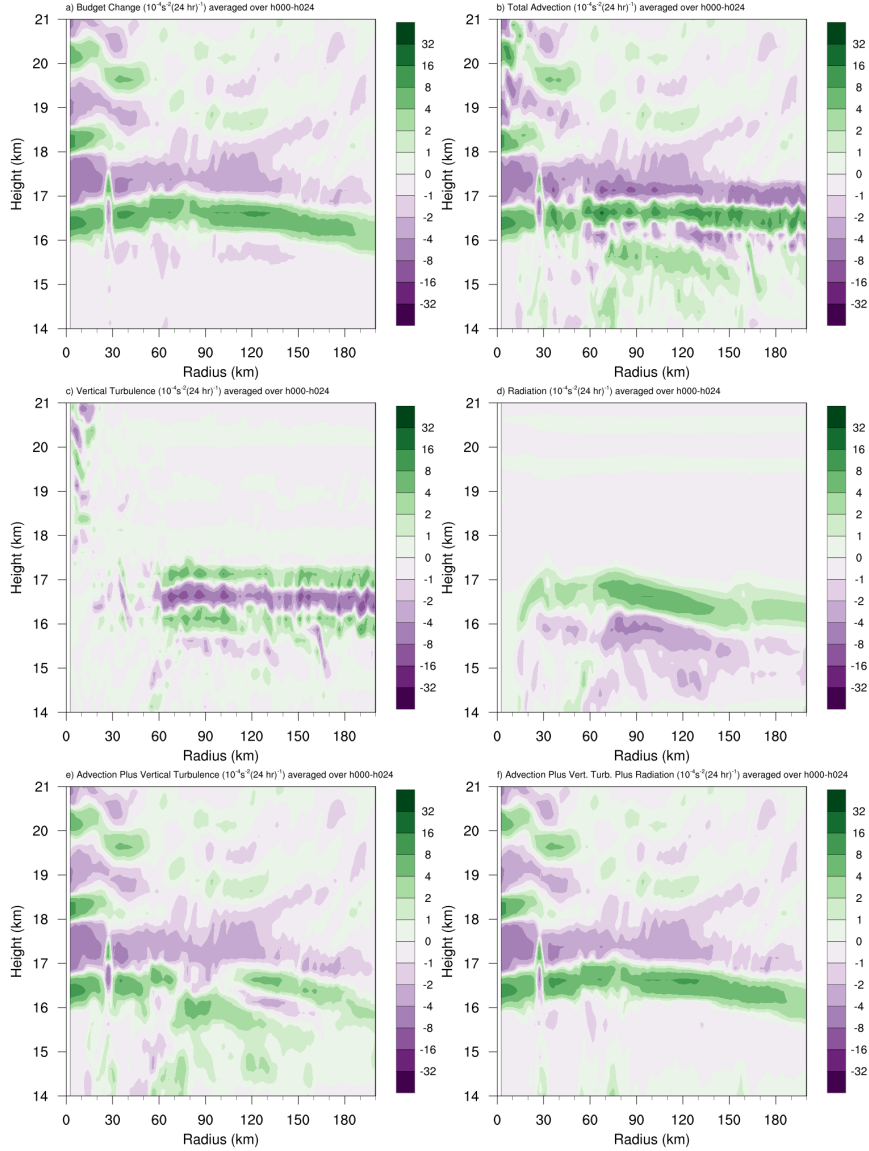


FIG. 5. (a) Total change in N^2 over the 0-24-hour period ($10^{-4} \text{ s}^{-2} (24 \text{ hr})^{-1}$) and the contributions to that change from (b) the sum of horizontal and vertical advection, (c) vertical turbulence, (d) longwave and shortwave radiation, (e) the sum of horizontal advection, vertical advection, and vertical turbulence, and (f) the sum of horizontal advection, vertical advection, vertical turbulence, and longwave and shortwave radiation.

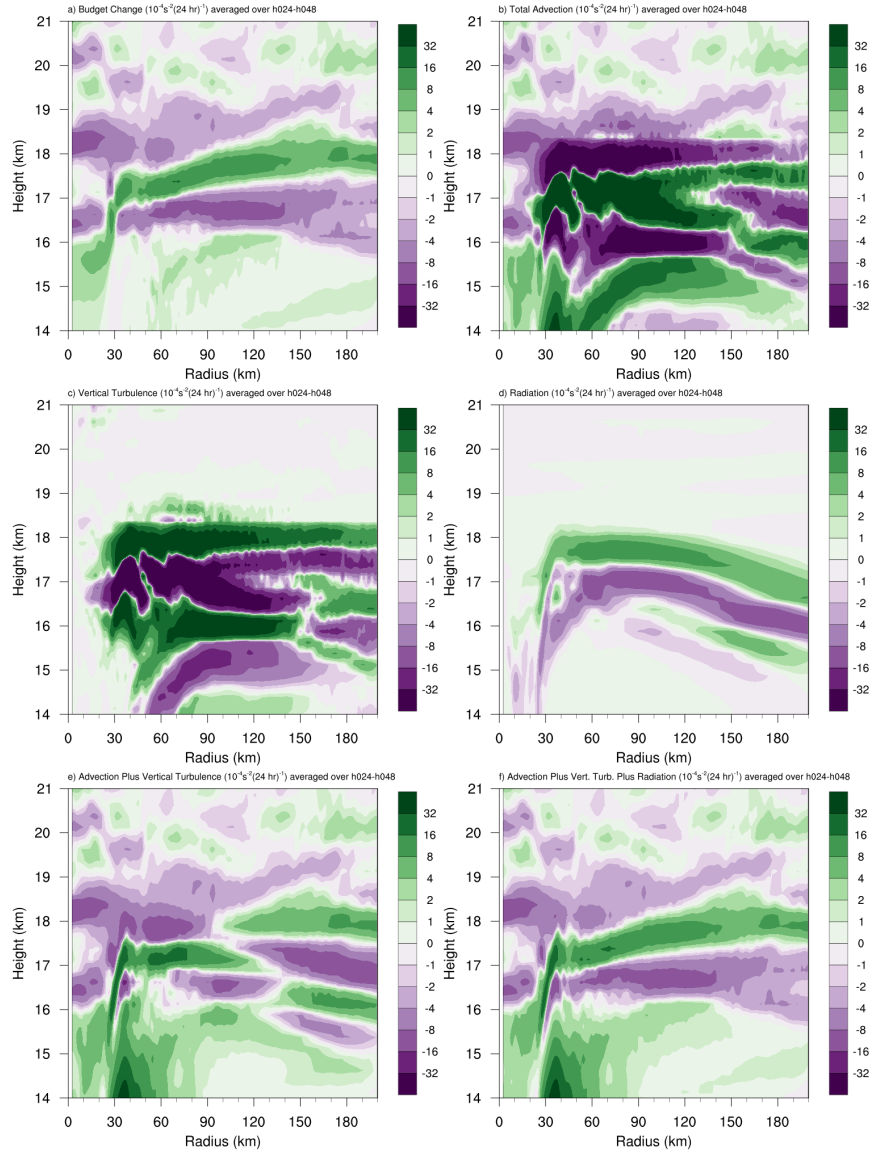


FIG. 6. As in Fig. 5, but for the 24-48-hour period.

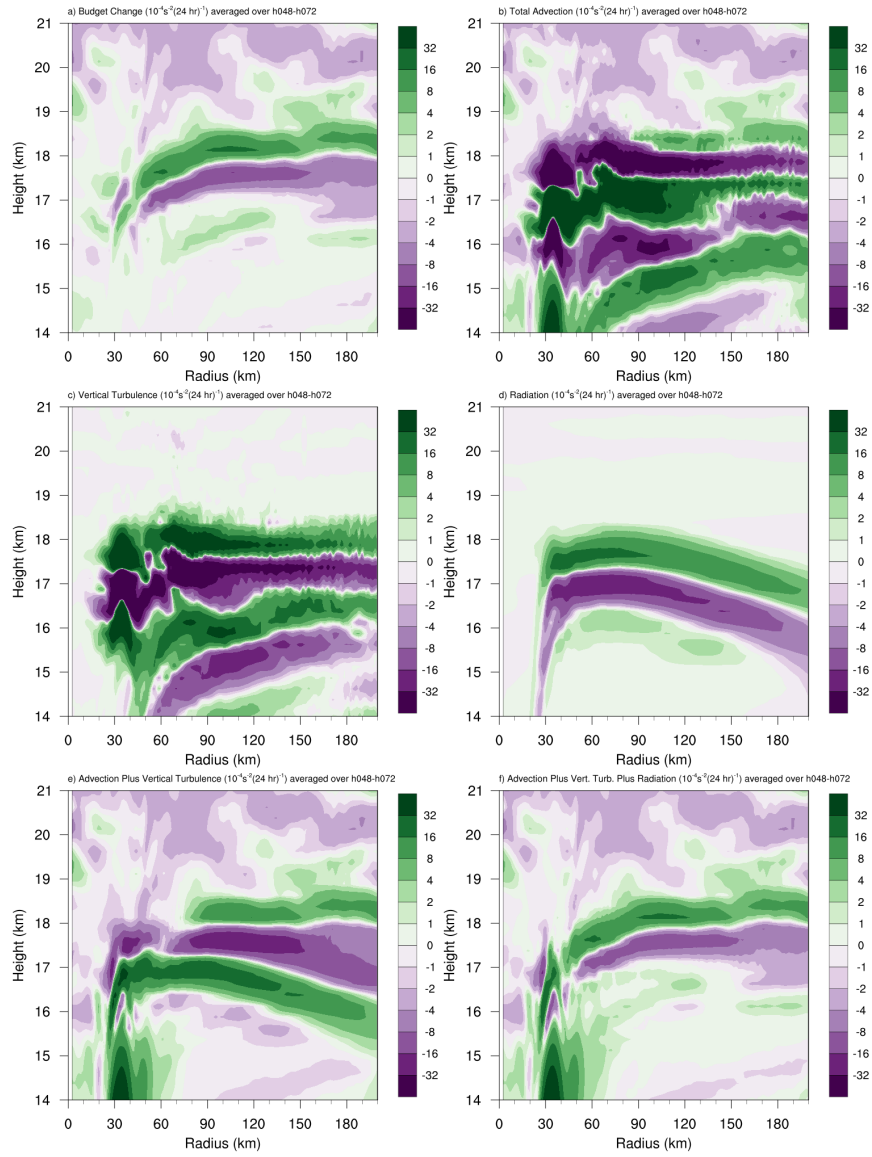


FIG. 7. As in Fig. 5, but for the 48-72-hour period.

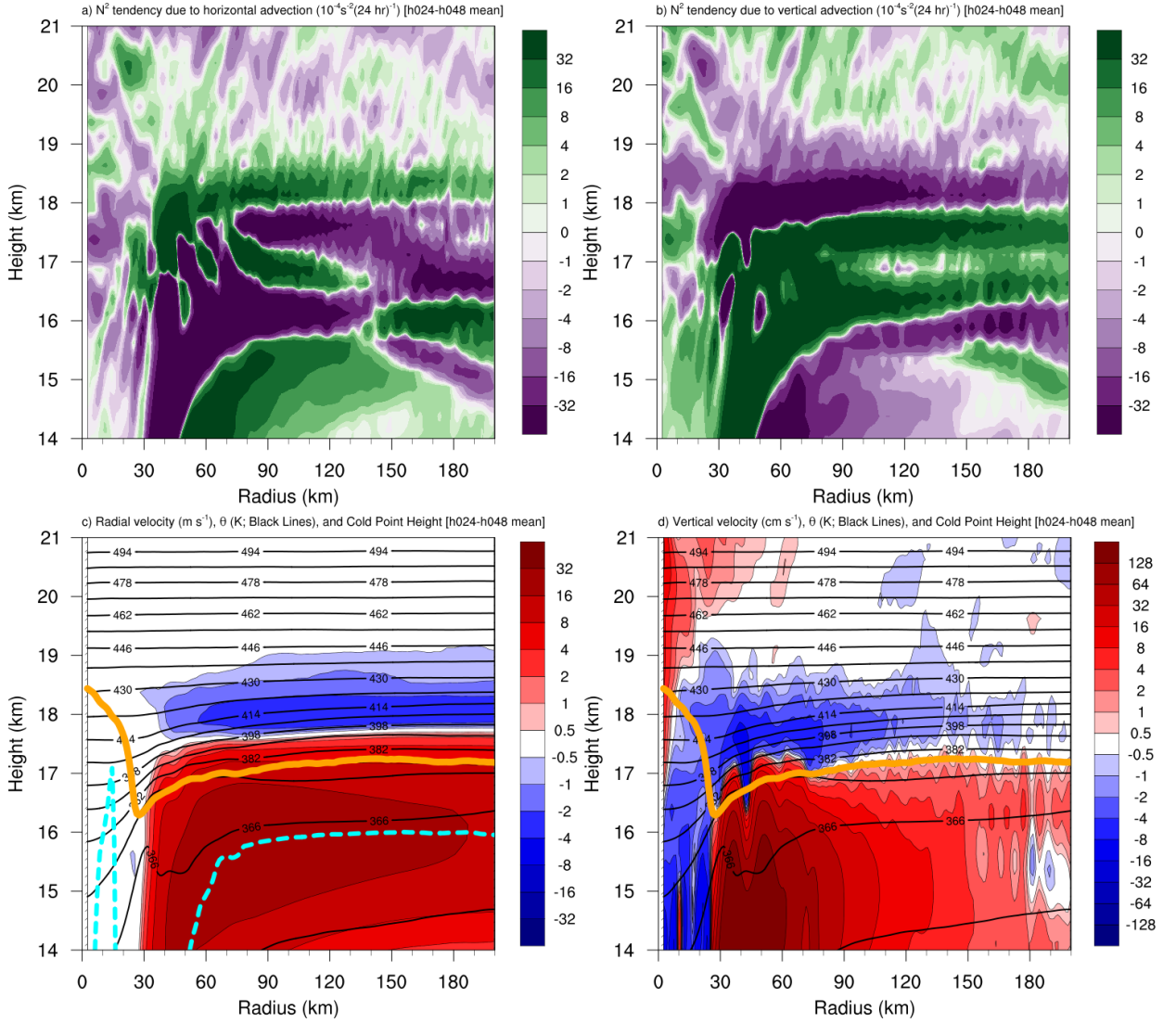


FIG. 8. The contribution to the change in N^2 over the 24-48-hour period ($10^{-4} \text{s}^{-2} (24 \text{ hr})^{-1}$) by (a) horizontal advection and (b) vertical advection. (c) The radial velocity (m s^{-1} ; filled contours), potential temperature (K; thick black contours), cold-point tropopause height (orange line), and level of maximum outflow (dashed cyan line) averaged over the 24-48-hour period. (d) The vertical velocity (cm s^{-1} ; filled contours), potential temperature (K; thick black contours), and cold-point tropopause height (orange line) averaged over the 24-48-hour period.

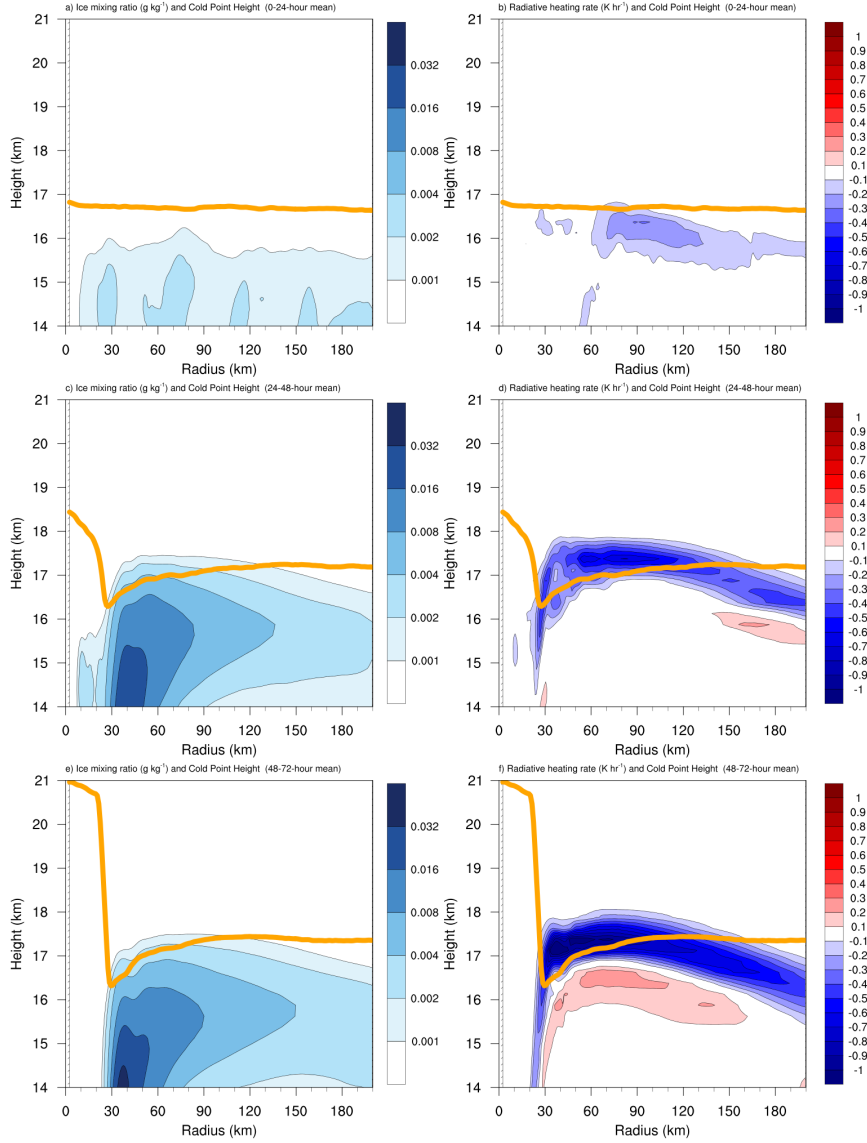


FIG. 9. Ice mixing ratio (g kg^{-1}) and cold-point tropopause height (orange lines) averaged over (a) 0-24 hours, (c) 24-48 hours, and (e) 48-72 hours. Radiative heating rate (K hr^{-1}) and cold-point tropopause height (orange lines) averaged over (b) 0-24 hours, (d) 24-48 hours, and (f) 48-72 hours.

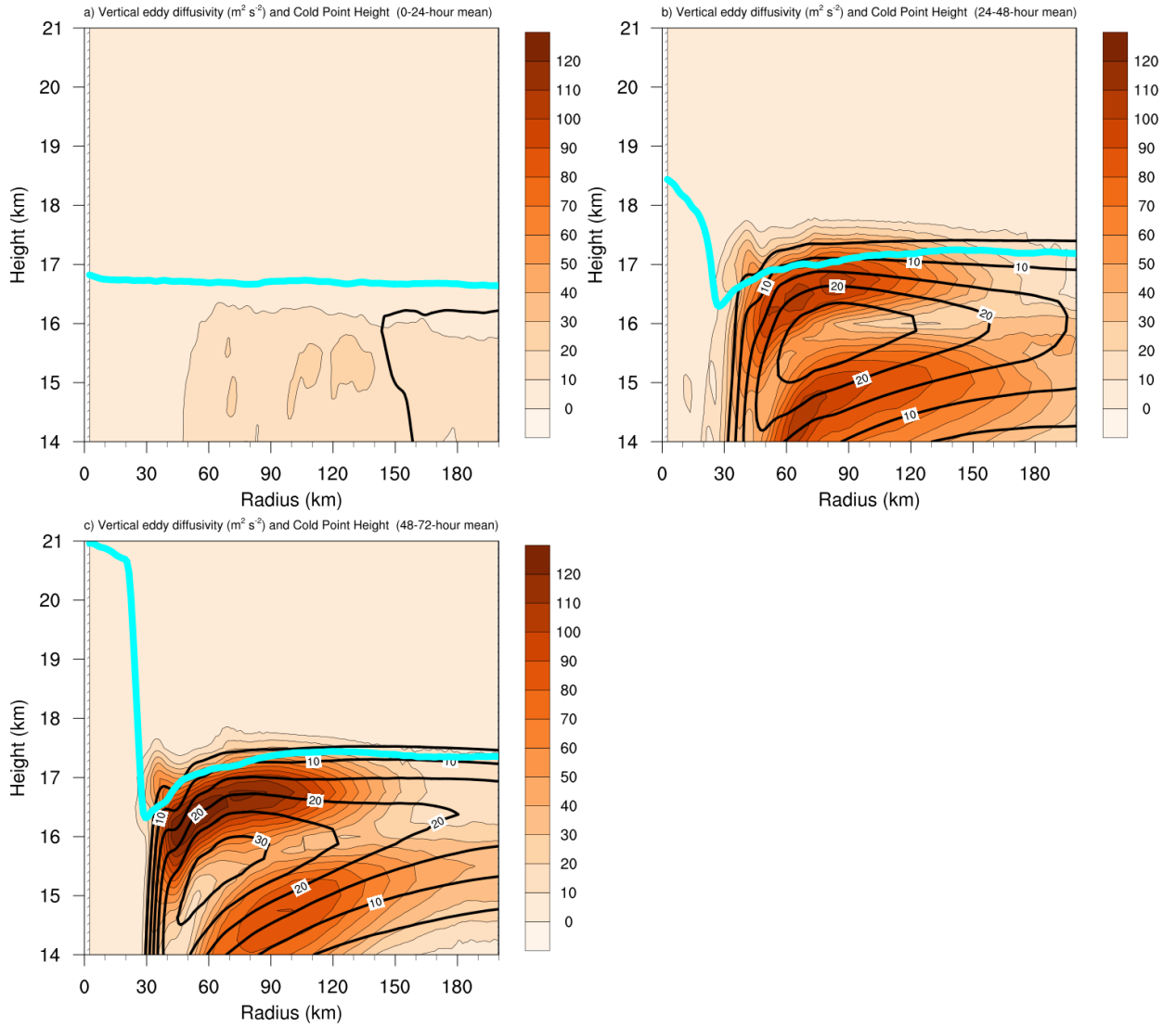


FIG. 10. Vertical eddy diffusivity ($\text{m}^2 \text{s}^{-2}$; filled contours), cold-point tropopause height (cyan lines), and radial velocity (m s^{-1} ; thick black lines) averaged over (a) 0-24 hours, (b) 24-48 hours, and (c) 48-72 hours.