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1 **How terpene content affects fuel flammability of wildland-urban interface vegetation**

2  
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15 Running head title: Role of terpenes on flammability

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18

19 **Abstract**

20 Among plant characteristics promoting flammability, terpenes have received far less attention,  
21 especially regarding the vegetation surrounding housing. Here, mono-, sesqui-, and diterpenes  
22 were screened in live and dead leaves of ornamental species found in Wildland-Urban Interfaces  
23 (WUI) of southeastern France. Terpene content and composition were compared among species  
24 and between fuel types. Their influence on flammability was assessed through several variables  
25 and compared to that of leaf thickness and moisture content. Six of the 17 species examined  
26 contained terpenes. Terpene diversity and content differed among species but not between fuel  
27 types. Mono-, sesqui-, and diterpenes (especially the highly concentrated compounds) were  
28 involved to varying degrees in both leaf and litter flammability. Their effects could be the opposite  
29 according to the flammability variable and the fuel type considered. Leaf sesquiterpene content  
30 and litter total terpene content had the strongest influence on maximum temperature; the former  
31 also mainly drove leaf flaming duration. The other flammability variables were more strongly  
32 associated with either moisture content or leaf thickness. Our findings underlined the idea that fire  
33 management in WUI must also acknowledge the potential for ornamental species containing  
34 terpenes, such as *P. halepensis*, in affecting fire behavior.

35

36

37 *Key Words* – *Pinus halepensis*; Fire prevention; Leaf traits; Fire-prone species; Ornamental  
38 vegetation; Volatile Organic Compounds

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41 *Short summary* - We compared terpene content and composition in leaves of species found in  
42 Wildland-Urban Interfaces of southeastern France and evaluated their influence on flammability.  
43 Terpene content had the strongest influence on maximum temperature and flaming duration. Other

44 flammability variables were more strongly associated with either moisture content or leaf  
45 thickness.

46

## 47 **Introduction**

48 Mediterranean regions are characterized by climatic conditions conducive to fire and these areas  
49 are often composed of highly flammable species. In some of these high fire risk areas, the human  
50 population has considerably increased wildfire frequency (Syphard et al. 2007; Ganteaume and  
51 Jappiot 2013), including wildland-urban interfaces (WUI) in southeastern France (Ganteaume and  
52 Long-Fournel 2015).

53 Plant species found in WUI (hereafter referred as “ornamental species” or “ornamental  
54 vegetation”), either native or exotic species, are important fuels during wildfires. Indeed, they can  
55 allow fire propagation from wildland vegetation to structures, possibly damaging or destroying  
56 buildings as highlighted during the destructive wildfires in 2016 in southeastern France  
57 (Ganteaume 2018a). Consequently, to better understand the role of the ornamental vegetation as a  
58 vector for the fire propagation (either due to massive firebrand showers or to the radiant heat  
59 emitted by the flame front), previous studies focused on the assessment of this vegetation’s  
60 flammability (Ganteaume et al. 2013a, 2013b; Ganteaume 2018b). These works targeted both live  
61 leaf particles and dead surface fuels but did not consider the effect of volatile or non-volatile  
62 organic compounds on the flammability of these fuels.

63 Plant flammability has been widely studied and experimentally assessed under laboratory  
64 conditions as well as *in situ* during prescribed fires, for instance. Laboratory methods focus on  
65 deriving the metrics of flammability, such as the three major dimensions (i.e. ignitability, heat  
66 release and fire spread rate) recently highlighted in Pausas et al (2017), typically via the  
67 measurement of individual species fuels (leaf, litter bed, etc.). For a given fuel scale, these  
68 flammability dimensions are not necessarily correlated (Engber & Varner 2012; Magalhães &

69 Schwilk 2012; Pausas & Moreira 2012; Cornwell et al. 2015) and each of them has relevance  
70 across fuel scales (Pausas & Moreira 2012). Previous works showed that these axes of  
71 flammability were primarily controlled by different plant traits (Scarff & Westoby 2006; Engber  
72 at al. 2012; Schwilk & Caprio 2011; Clarke et al. 2014), also called drivers of flammability. Some  
73 leaf traits continue to affect fuel bed flammability, scaling up from leaf to fuel bed (Varner *et al.*  
74 2015). Among these characteristics, thickness was one of the main drivers of leaf ignitability  
75 (Murray et al. 2013; Grootemaat et al. 2015; Ganteaume 2018b) and can sometimes override the  
76 effects of other essential drivers of leaf flammability (e.g., specific leaf area, surface area-to-volume  
77 ratio, or fuel moisture content as highlighted in several works, e.g., White and Zipperer 2010;  
78 Marino et al. 2011; Madrigal et al. 2013; Murray et al. 2013; Santoni et al. 2014; Grootemaat et  
79 al. 2015), as found in Ganteaume (2018b).

80 Along with fuel moisture content (FMC), terpenes are among the chemical compounds  
81 associated with flammability (Dimitrakopoulos 2001; Alessio et al. 2008a, 2008b). Indeed, some  
82 terpenes are volatile organic compounds naturally very flammable (Barboni et al. 2011) because  
83 of their high heating value, relatively low flash point, and low flammability limit (See, for instance,  
84 Sigma-Aldrich Data Sheets at [https://www.sigmaaldrich.com/united-kingdom/technical-](https://www.sigmaaldrich.com/united-kingdom/technical-services/datasheets.html)  
85 [services/datasheets.html](https://www.sigmaaldrich.com/united-kingdom/technical-services/datasheets.html)). Terpenes can be stored in the plant or directly emitted once synthesized,  
86 depending on their molecular weight. Their production and storage in the leaf require adapted  
87 structures such as resin ducts or trichomes (Martin et al. 2002), the location of these structures in  
88 the leaf depending on the species. These compounds are also involved in several ecological roles;  
89 for instance, coping with abiotic stresses (Paré and Tumlison 1999) such as water deficit (Peñuelas  
90 and Llusà 2003), or deterring herbivory as signal molecules in the communication between plants  
91 (Dicke et al. 2003) or between insects and plants (Pichersky and Gershenson 2002). Because of  
92 their chemical characteristics (such as low flash point), terpenes can also affect plant flammability.  
93 Even though, previous works linking terpene content and flammability are scarce as compared to

94 those dealing with the impact of FMC or of other leaf traits. Most of these works investigated  
95 terpenes in live fuel, but only a few targeted both live and dead fuels such as Ormeño et al. (2009)  
96 and Della Rocca et al. (2017) for instance. Moreover, the previous works predominantly took into  
97 account either the total amount of terpenes without distinguishing subgroups (De Lillis et al. 2009)  
98 or focused on their most abundant fraction, the monoterpenes (White et al. 1994; Alessio et al.  
99 2008a, 2008b), sometimes supplemented by the sesquiterpenes (Owens et al. 1998; Ormeño et al.  
100 2009; Pausas et al. 2016; Della Rocca et al. 2017). Often, results as to these relationships were not  
101 conclusive or were contradictory (De Lillis et al. 2009; Alessio et al. 2008b). For instance,  
102 monoterpenes were found to enhance flammability in White et al. (1994) as well as in Owens et  
103 al. (1998) while sesquiterpenes positively affected flammability in Pausas et al. (2016) and in Della  
104 Rocca et al. (2017). These differences could sometimes be due to different species or terpene  
105 subgroups studied but not in every case (e.g., Alessio et al. 2008b and Della Rocca et al. 2017).  
106 Furthermore, excluding the works of Ormeño et al. (2009) or Della Rocca et al. (2017),  
107 flammability was mostly assessed through only one variable (such as time-to-ignition in Pausas et  
108 al. 2016), therefore lacking results on other flammability components. The positive impact of  
109 terpenes on plant flammability could be an issue in Mediterranean areas where summer drought  
110 induces a water stress that forces some species to increase their terpene production, and possibly  
111 their storage amount (Llusià and Peñuelas 1998; Ormeño et al. 2007; Genard-Zielinski et al. 2014)  
112 if they are able to store compounds, thereby making them potentially more flammable. Moreover,  
113 as large amounts of these compounds can be emitted in response to high temperatures (Centritto  
114 et al. 2011), episodes of massive terpene emission can result from wildfire events.

115 As far as we know, except for *Pinus halepensis* and *Cupressus sempervirens*, no previous  
116 studies have described in depth the live leaf and litter terpene content of ornamental species,  
117 especially neglecting to take into account different terpene subgroups (e.g., the volatile  
118 monoterpenes and sesquiterpenes, as well as the non-volatile diterpenes) and their influence on

119 different flammability components. Filling these gaps would provide a better understanding of the  
120 live leaf and litter flammability processes regarding these chemical compounds. This is  
121 particularly important as terpene content might increase in response to the predicted warmer  
122 climatic conditions (Kleist et al. 2012), particularly as WUI species could be responsible for severe  
123 damage to buildings during a fire.

124 To tackle these goals, we i) screened for terpenes in the live and dead leaves of a wide range of  
125 common WUI species, characterizing the composition and concentration of terpenes, ii)  
126 determined if they differed between both fuel types within and among species, iii) examined the  
127 role of total terpene content and their constituent subgroups (e.g., monoterpenes, sesquiterpenes,  
128 diterpenes) on the flammability of these fuels, testing the hypothesis that terpenes would increase  
129 species' flammability, and iv) determined the relative importance of physical and chemical factors  
130 on flammability. Ultimately, focusing on a test species, we checked if these metrics varied between  
131 two different stages of plant maturity. This work, besides providing a better knowledge on the  
132 impact of terpenes on plant flammability, will also allow the identification of WUI species that  
133 could be deleterious during a fire regarding their specific terpene content.

134

135

## 136 **Material and Methods**

### 137 **Study Species and Sampling**

138 The species studied in the current work are common in the French Mediterranean WUI. They can be  
139 involved in the fire propagation from the wildland vegetation to the nearby buildings, especially  
140 regarding species used in ornamental hedges that provide strong horizontal fuel continuity. In total,  
141 seventeen of the most common ornamental species were studied (Suppl. Mat. 1) which, except for *P.*  
142 *halepensis* and *Cotinus coggygia*, have already been taken into account in the work of Ganteaume  
143 (2018b) in which these species' flammability was characterized. However, for most species,

144 screening for terpenes in live and dead fuels had never been attempted. These ornamental species are  
145 composed of both native (e.g., *Viburnum tinus*, *P. halepensis*, or *Cotinus coggygria*) and exotic  
146 species (such as *Thuja occidentalis*). During a fire, some of them (e.g., *P. halepensis*, *Cupressus*  
147 *sempervirens*) can also cause damage and ignite buildings, as often witnessed by firefighters.

148 In order to highlight a possible variation in flammability according to plant maturity (that could  
149 be possibly linked to a variation in terpene content), one of the species studied, *Cupressocyparis*  
150 *leylandii*, was sampled in hedges differing in maturity (a young stage and an older stage  
151 corresponding to a mature plant). This species is commonly used in hedges at both stages.

152 For each species, two fuel types were targeted, live leaves (mentioned hereafter as “leaf” or  
153 “leaves”) and dead leaves collected on the floor underneath the plants (mentioned hereafter as  
154 “litter”). The sampling was carried out in summer (July 2016) when the climate conditions were  
155 the most severe in southeastern France. Litter samples of *C. coggygria* could not be collected  
156 because of the rapid decomposition of the leaves preventing sufficient litter accumulation.  
157 Regarding dead fuel, we focused on dead individual leaves and not on the whole fuel bed (as done  
158 in previous works, e.g., Ganteaume et al. 2013a, 2018b). The physical arrangement of leaves in  
159 the litter bed (i.e. packing ratio) and the resulting air-to-fuel ratio has been shown to dominate the  
160 fuel bed flammability (Grootemaat et al. 2017), adding a supplementary parameter that could mask  
161 the effect of terpenes on flammability. For each species and each fuel type, a maximum of 25 g of  
162 mature live leaves and of intact dead leaves were collected on or underneath (for litter only) five  
163 different individuals, located at least 4 m apart. Per individual, 6 g were used for the burning  
164 experiments, 5 g for FMC measurements, and 1 g for the terpene analysis. Sampling was conducted  
165 at least 48 h following a precipitation event to avoid any impact of the recent rain on FMC. Litter  
166 samples were air-dried for 48 h, time necessary for the stabilization of their weight; oven-drying  
167 was avoided as this process could involve the degradation of terpenes. As soon as their weight  
168 stabilized, the litter samples were burned. The live leaves sampled were placed in plastic bags and

169 stored in a cool box for transportation to the laboratory, minimizing changes in water content; the  
170 samples were burned directly upon returning to the laboratory.

171

## 172 **Terpene content**

173 For the terpene analysis, leaf and litter samples were stored at -80°C in order to stop leaf metabolism.  
174 For both fuel types, terpene content was analyzed for each species using 500 mg of fuel collected  
175 from five different individuals and ground for extraction purposes using liquid nitrogen and put into  
176 a 4 mL of extraction solution (cyclohexane and dodecane). This vial was agitated for 30 min, filtered  
177 (PTFE – 0.22 µm filter), and put into a 3 mL-vial for analysis. Dodecane was used as an internal  
178 standard and was not naturally present in the samples.

179 This analysis was conducted using gas chromatography (GC-MS System 7890B – Agilent  
180 Technologies®). One microlitre was injected into a 30m x 0.25 mm x 0.25 µm thickness capillary  
181 column (HP-5MS – Agilent J&W GC Columns), at a constant flow (1 mL min<sup>-1</sup>) and in the splitless  
182 mode. The injection temperature was maintained at 250°C with Helium (99.99%) as the carrier gas.  
183 The initial temperature was 40°C and increased at 3°C min<sup>-1</sup> up to 300°C during analysis. A 5 min-  
184 solvent delay was respected and the total run time was 90 min.

185 The identification of terpenes was made using the molecule retention time (RT) as well as their  
186 mass spectrum which was compared to libraries in Adams (2007) and NIST (2011). To complete  
187 this identification, retention indexes (RI) were calculated for each molecule identified and compared  
188 to the libraries. We established these experimental RI from alkanes injected at each session:

$$189 \text{RI}_{(\text{mol})} = 100 \times X(\alpha) + \frac{RT(\text{mol}) - RT(\alpha)}{RT(\beta) - RT(\alpha)} \times 100$$

190 where  $\alpha$  = alkane before the molecule,  $\beta$  = alkane after the molecule, X = Carbon number, and RT  
191 = retention time.

192 To calculate the terpene content, several dilutions of many authentic reference compounds  
193 (Aldrich, Darmstadt, Germany and Firmenich, Geneva, Switzerland) were carried out in order to

194 establish the response factor of the terpene subgroup as compared to the internal standard  
195 (dodecane). Then, the integrated area of each peak was multiplied by the appropriate response  
196 factor and divided by the sample volume. The sample dry mass was previously calculated to obtain  
197 the mass of terpene compound per dry mass unit. In the current work, we focused on the content  
198 of mono-, sesqui-, and diterpenes as well as on the total terpene content.

199

## 200 **Flammability Experiments**

201 Flammability experiments were carried out only on species containing terpenes in order to highlight  
202 the link between flammability and terpene content. Fuel samples were burned using a 500W  
203 epiradiator composed of a 10 cm radiant disk. A pilot flame was placed 4 cm above the epiradiator  
204 surface; this flame did not take part in the sample combustion but allowed a better ignition of the  
205 gases emitted by the plant before combustion (Hernando-Lara 2000). A thermocouple (chromel-  
206 alumel, k type, 30  $\mu\text{m}$  diameter) was positioned 1 cm above the disk center to measure the  
207 temperature emitted by the radiant disk at a precise point ( $300 \pm 30^\circ\text{C}$  that will trigger the leaf  
208 burning), then the temperature emitted by the flame when the sample burned. This thermocouple was  
209 linked to a data logger (ALEMO 2590 Ahlborn, Ahlborn Mess- und Regelungstechnik GmbH  
210 Holzkirchen, Germany) to record the variation of temperature (one record per second) during the  
211 burning. The burning device was turned on thirty minutes before the first burning test to be sure the  
212 epiradiator temperature was stabilized.

213 For each species, 30 one g-samples were burned; larger fuel masses increased the possibility that  
214 other fuel properties, such as fuel height, would cause differences in flammability (Ormeño et al.  
215 2009). Thus, samples had to be as well distributed as possible on the radiant disk. As soon as the fuel  
216 was in contact with the epiradiator surface, time and temperature recordings were started. Five  
217 flammability variables were measured: i) time-to-ignition (TTI, s), defined as the time necessary for  
218 the fuel to ignite once laid on the radiant disk; ii) ignition temperature ( $T_{\text{TTI}}$ ,  $^\circ\text{C}$ ), defined as the

219 temperature recorded when the flame appeared; iii) ignition frequency (IF, %), calculated as the ratio  
220 between successful ignitions and the total number of samples (n=30); iv) flaming duration (FD, s),  
221 time elapsed between the flame occurrence and its extinction; and v) maximum temperature emitted  
222 during burning ( $T_{MAX}$ , °C). Live leaves were burned first to prevent chemical compound degradation  
223 and moisture content variation before the burning.

224 Just before the burning experiments, subsamples of litter and leaves of each individual were oven-  
225 dried for 48 h at 60°C in order to measure their moisture content at the time of burning. FMC was  
226 calculated according to the following equation:

$$227 \text{ FMC} = \frac{Mf (g) - Md (g)}{Md (g)} \times 100$$

228 where Mf represents the fresh fuel mass and Md represents the dry fuel mass.

229 Among the physical characteristics correlated with the leaf flammability of these species, leaf  
230 thickness was one of the most significant parameters because of the importance of this particle  
231 geometry in determining leaf combustion (Ganteaume 2018b). This parameter was chosen, along  
232 with FMC (also known to greatly influence flammability; Ganteaume et al. 2009) to be compared  
233 to terpene content as drivers of flammability. Immediately before burning, leaf thickness ( $Th_i$ , cm)  
234 was measured at the middle of the leaf (excluding the midrib), using a  $10^{-4}$  m accuracy micrometer.  
235 A preliminary test showed that thickness did not significantly vary between live and dead leaves  
236 ( $t = 0.577413$ ;  $p = 0.565$ ), so only live leaf thickness was used in the analyses.

237

## 238 **Data Analysis**

239 The statistical analyses were performed on each fuel dataset taking into account the content of the  
240 three terpene subgroups as well as the total terpene content (combining the three subgroups), FMC,  
241 and thickness as explanatory factors. The different flammability variables (using a single mean  
242 value per individuals of each species) were used as dependent variables.

243 To compare species and stage of maturity on terpene content and flammability, we used one-  
244 way ANOVA. Regarding the stage of maturity, the Kruskal-Wallis test was performed instead of  
245 the Fisher test because of the lower amount of data. Comparisons between both litter and leaf  
246 flammability and terpene content were performed using t-test. The normality of residual  
247 distribution was checked by the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and data were log-transformed if  
248 needed. The post-hoc LSD test was used to check for significant differences between the different  
249 means ( $p \leq 0.05$ ).

250 We used simple linear regression analyses to highlight (i) if flammability was more sensitive to  
251 the total terpene content or to terpene subgroups, and (ii) the significant correlations existing  
252 between flammability variables and fuel characteristics. When FMC and/or thickness explained a  
253 significant proportion of the variability of a given flammability variable, we used the residuals of  
254 the regression as a moisture/thickness-corrected measure of this variable. This corrected variable  
255 was then regressed against the terpene content in order to highlight the effect of terpenes without  
256 the bias of the above-mentioned factors (see Pausas et al. 2016). Partial least squares (PLS)  
257 regression analysis was performed to determine the relative importance of the physical and  
258 chemical fuel characteristics on each flammability variable. The significance of components for  
259 the models was determined by uncertainty tests carried out within a full cross-validation. Then, a  
260 bootstrap procedure (boot size=1000) was performed on the set of variables that presented the  
261 highest regression coefficients to rebuild the model, followed by a backwards elimination process  
262 until all explanatory variables were significant with  $p$ -values  $\leq 0.05$ . In order to take into account  
263 the flammability variables and fuel characteristics in a same analysis and to pinpoint the driving  
264 species of the relationships possibly highlighted, co-inertia analysis (Dolédéc and Chessel 1994)  
265 was performed on both fuel datasets. The complete matrix of data was transferred to the statistical  
266 program under R 2.5.1 (R Development Core Team, 2005), then standardized and analysed using  
267 the ADE-4 package (Thioulouse *et al.* 1997). The statistical significance of each effect or

268 combination of effects was tested using a Monte-Carlo permutation test with 1000 permutations  
269 using the R ‘coin’ package.

270 All tests, except the bootstrap procedure (part of the PLS regression analyses) and co-inertia  
271 analyses, were performed using StatGraphics Centurion XVII – X64 software (StatPoint  
272 Technologies, Inc®).

273

274

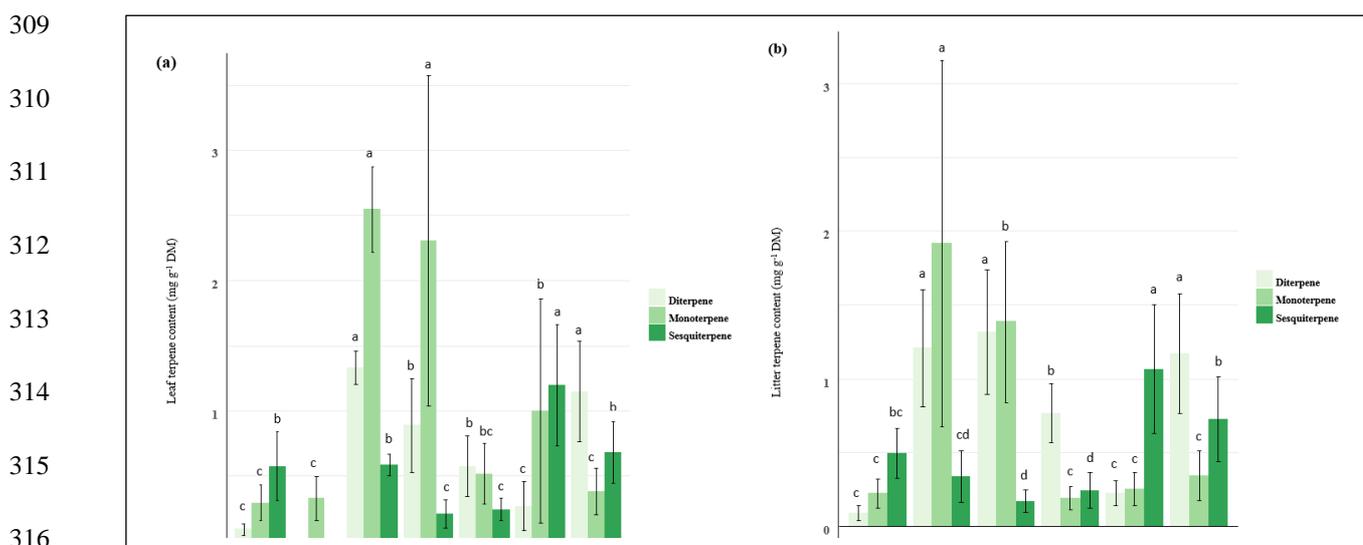
## 275 **Results**

### 276 **Terpene Diversity and Content**

277 The screening for terpenes in the different species studied revealed that only six species among the  
278 seventeen studied contained terpenes, mostly conifers: *P. halepensis*, *C. sempervirens*, *T.*  
279 *occidentalis*, *C. arizonica*, *C. leylandii* (in both stages of maturity), and *C. coggygia* (Suppl. Mat.  
280 2). We identified 54 different compounds in the leaves and litter of these species. The subgroup of  
281 sesquiterpenes was the most diverse (24 compounds, mostly in *C. leylandii* and *C. arizonica*),  
282 compared to that of diterpenes (19 compounds, mainly found in *C. leylandii* and in *C. sempervirens*)  
283 and monoterpenes (11 compounds, mostly in *C. leylandii*). *C. leylandii* presented the highest terpene  
284 diversity with more than 30 different compounds. *C. coggygia*’s leaves contained only one  
285 compound, limonene (monoterpene).

286 Regarding the terpene content, monoterpenes presented the highest number of compounds with  
287 content higher than 0.1 mg g<sup>-1</sup> dry matter (mentioned hereafter as “main compounds”), regardless  
288 of species and fuel type (Suppl. Mat. 3 and 4). However, the highest values were obtained for  
289 caryophyllene (sesquiterpene) in *P. halepensis*’ leaves and litter (0.905 and 0.866 mg g<sup>-1</sup>,  
290 respectively) and for nezukol (diterpene) in those of *T. occidentalis* (0.870 and 0.940 mg g<sup>-1</sup>,  
291 respectively). *C. sempervirens* and *C. arizonica* presented the lowest terpene content (<1.5 mg g<sup>-1</sup>)  
292 despite the high terpene diversity screened in these species (12 main compounds for both fuel types).

293 Regardless of the subgroup, terpene content differed among species (One way ANOVA:  $F=25.48$   
 294 and  $p<0.0001$  for monoterpenes;  $F=16.61$  and  $p<0.0001$  for sesquiterpenes;  $F=25.22$  and  $p<0.0001$   
 295 for diterpenes), the highest content being observed in the mature leaves of *C. leylandii* (mainly due  
 296 to their high number of different compounds) and the lowest in *C. coggygia* (presenting only one  
 297 compound) (Fig. 1). Regarding live leaves (Fig. 1a), *C. leylandii* and *P. halepensis* stored the largest  
 298 amounts of monoterpenes ( $> 2.00 \text{ mg g}^{-1}$  and  $1 \text{ mg g}^{-1}$ , respectively). It is worth noting that the  
 299 amount of monoterpenes in *C. coggygia* (corresponding to limonene only) was in the same range  
 300 ( $\leq 0.5 \text{ mg g}^{-1}$ ) as in *C. arizonica* and *T. occidentalis* which presented several compounds belonging  
 301 to this subgroup. *P. halepensis* presented the highest sesquiterpene content despite the small number  
 302 of compounds contained in this species' leaves (around  $1 \text{ mg g}^{-1}$ , mostly due to caryophyllene;  
 303 Suppl. Mat. 3). *C. leylandii* and *T. occidentalis* presented the highest diterpene content ( $> 1 \text{ mg g}^{-1}$   
 304 on average, mostly due to the high number of compounds in the former species and to nezukol in  
 305 the latter). Regarding litter (Fig. 1 b), the three terpene subgroups differed significantly among  
 306 species (One way ANOVA:  $F=20.81$  and  $p<0.0001$  for monoterpenes;  $F=13.63$  and  $p<0.0001$  for  
 307 sesquiterpenes;  $F=33.89$  and  $p<0.0001$  for diterpenes). For litter, the different terpene subgroups  
 308 were dominant in the same species as for leaves (Suppl. Mat. 4).



317 **Figure 1:** Comparison of the leaf (a) and litter (b) terpene content (means  $\pm$  SD) between species  
318 according to the three terpene subgroups. Means were calculated from the total terpene content of  
319 each individual. For each terpene subgroup, different letters indicate significant differences  
320 between species ( $p < 0.05$ ). No litter was sampled for *Cotinus coggygia* (Ca: *Cupressus arizonica*,  
321 Cl<sub>o</sub> and Cl<sub>y</sub>: mature and young *Cupressocyparis leylandii*, Cc: *Cotinus coggygia*, Cs: *Cupressus*  
322 *sempervirens*, Ph: *Pinus halepensis*, To: *Thuja occidentalis*). Lowercase letters indicate  
323 significant differences between species for each terpene subgroup.

324  
325 Comparing leaves and litter, we found that the total terpene content did not vary between fuel  
326 types (all species pooled). The trend was the same when each terpene subgroup was considered  
327 individually. Accordingly, regarding terpene diversity, species were characterized mostly by the  
328 same compounds in both fuel types (Suppl. Mat. 3 and 4). Among monoterpenes, alpha-pinene was  
329 one of the most abundant compounds in most species, regardless of the fuel type. The results were  
330 mixed for the content of sesqui- and diterpenes, the most concentrated compound varying according  
331 to species (sesquiterpene caryophyllene in *P. halepensis* and diterpene nezukol in *T. occidentalis*,  
332 for instance), for both leaves and litter.

333

334

### 335 **Relationships Between Flammability and Fuel Characteristics**

336 Flammability was assessed for the six species containing terpenes (Table 1). For both fuel types, all  
337 the flammability variables but leaf T<sub>TTI</sub> (ranging between 319 and 376°C) and litter IF (100% for  
338 all species) significantly differed among species ( $p < 0.0001$ ). Litter flammability was significantly  
339 higher than that of leaves, except for T<sub>TTI</sub> (TTI:  $t = 12.33$ ,  $p < 0.0001$ ; FD:  $t = -6.45$ ,  $p < 0.0001$ ; T<sub>MAX</sub>:  
340  $t = -11.24$ ,  $p < 0.0001$ ). *P. halepensis* had the highest leaf flammability (higher T<sub>MAX</sub> and IF, longer  
341 FD as well as shorter TTI and lower T<sub>TTI</sub> than the other species; Table 1); the results were mixed

342 regarding litter flammability, several species (e.g., *C. leylandii*, *P. halepensis*, or *C. sempervirens*)  
343 presenting characteristics of high flammability (e.g., short TTI, high T<sub>MAX</sub> or IF, etc.).

344 Checking for a possible effect of other fuel characteristics (FMC and thickness) than terpene  
345 content, we found that FMC significantly impacted leaf TTI (positive effect) and IF (negative  
346 effect) while, for both fuel types, leaf thickness was significantly correlated with TTI (positive  
347 effect) and FD (negative effect and strongest relationship:  $R^2=0.75$ ) as well as with litter T<sub>TTI</sub>  
348 (positive effect). These flammability variables were thus moisture and/or thickness-corrected  
349 when correlated with terpene content (Simple linear regression analyses; Table 2). Results  
350 revealed that terpene content could have a different impact on flammability from one fuel type to  
351 the other. Indeed, sesquiterpene content was negatively related to leaf TTI and to litter FD but  
352 positively to leaf T<sub>MAX</sub>. In the same manner, diterpene content was negatively related to leaf FD  
353 (as was total terpene content) but positively to litter FD and T<sub>MAX</sub> (as was total terpene content  
354 regarding the latter variable). Leaf and litter T<sub>MAX</sub> were only impacted by terpene content (leaf  
355 sesquiterpenes and litter mono- and diterpenes, as well as litter total terpene content), highlighting  
356 the strong influence of terpenes on this variable. Leaf ignition frequency was not impacted by  
357 terpene content and there was no significant relationship between leaf T<sub>TTI</sub> and any of the fuel  
358 characteristics. It is worth noting that, for both fuel types, most flammability variables were  
359 impacted by the content of one or several subgroups of terpenes rather than by the total terpene  
360 content.

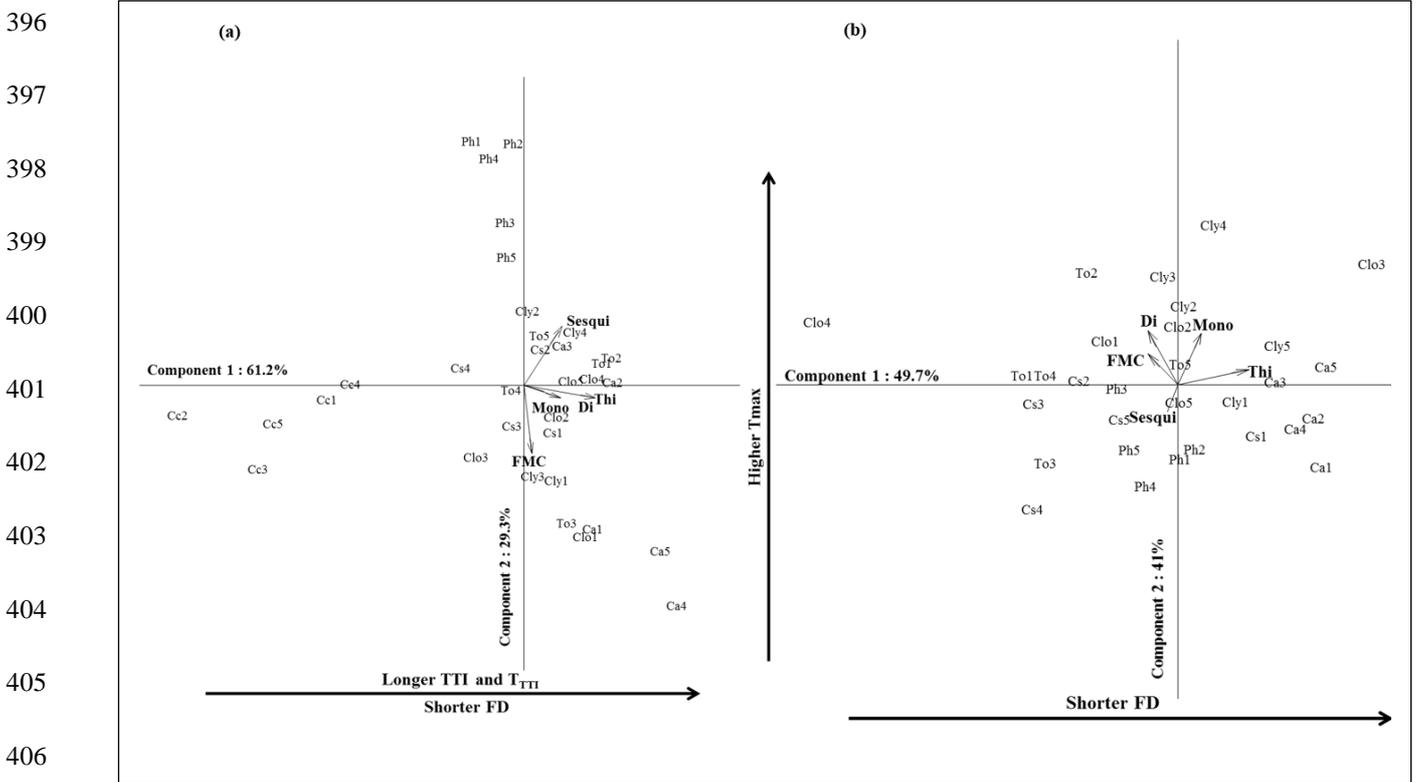
361 Determining the relative importance of the physical and chemical fuel characteristics on  
362 flammability (PLS regression analyses, Table 3), we found that leaf thickness and FMC strongly  
363 impacted leaf TTI ( $R^2=0.73$ ; positive effect) as well as FD (for the former), IF and T<sub>MAX</sub> (for the  
364 latter) but sesquiterpene content was the main driver of T<sub>MAX</sub> and FD (Table 3). Fuel characteristics  
365 were not significant drivers of leaf T<sub>TTI</sub>, as previously highlighted in the simple linear regression  
366 analyses. When total terpene content was taken into account in the analyses instead of that of the

367 different subgroups, the results were not significant for  $T_{MAX}$  whereas the variability, explained in  
368 the analysis linking FD to thickness and terpene content, strongly increased (from  $R^2=0.26$  to  
369 0.80), with a switch in the effect of the terpene content (negative for total terpene content instead  
370 of positive for sesquiterpene content). Regarding litter (Table 4), thickness was the only significant  
371 driver of litter TTI and  $T_{TTI}$ ; this fuel characteristic was also the most important driver of litter FD  
372 compared to the content of the three terpene subgroups. It is worth noting that, in this relationship,  
373 diterpene content negatively impacted litter FD contrary to the content of sesqui- and  
374 monoterpenes. Fuel characteristics did not impact litter  $T_{MAX}$  (monoterpene content and diterpene  
375 content ceased to be significant after the bootstrap procedure) but when total terpene content was  
376 used in the analysis, this factor positively impacted flammability. When total terpene content was  
377 taken into account, FMC did not affect litter flammability except FD, overriding total terpene  
378 content, along with thickness (Table 4).

379 Most relationships between flammability variables and fuel characteristics previously  
380 highlighted were confirmed performing co-inertia analyses on both fuels' datasets (Fig. 2).  
381 Regarding leaf flammability (Fig. 2a), the first two axes explained 90.5% of the variance (61.2%  
382 on axis 1). TTI and  $T_{TTI}$  (the latter however was not significant in the regression analyses) were  
383 opposed to FD on axis 1 (highest loading on this axis) and were mainly related to thickness (highest  
384 loading on this axis) and to mono- and diterpenes, at a lower extent (Suppl. Mat. 5). *C. arizonica*  
385 (presenting the thickest leaves) and *C. coggyria* (presenting the thinnest leaves) also displayed  
386 this opposition.  $T_{MAX}$  best characterized axis 2 and was positively related to sesquiterpene content  
387 and FMC (Suppl. Mat. 5) on the positive side of this axis, confirming the results obtained in the  
388 regression analyses. This axis was best characterized by *P. halepensis* which presented the lowest  
389 FMC.

390 Regarding litter flammability (Fig. 2b), the two first axes explained 91% of the variance (50%  
391 explained by axis 1). On the first axis, FD (and TTI as well as  $T_{TTI}$ , at a lower extent) was mainly

392 negatively related to thickness (highest loadings on this axis; Suppl. Mat. 6); *C. arizonica* and *T.*  
 393 *occidentalis* best characterizing this axis. On the second axis,  $T_{MAX}$  was mainly positively related  
 394 to mono- and diterpene content, *C. leylandii* (young stage) best characterizing these relationships.  
 395 Litter IF was not taken into account in the analysis as this variable scored 100% for all species.



407 **Figure 2:** Biplots of co-inertia analysis illustrating relationships between leaf (a) and litter (b)  
 408 flammability variables with fuel characteristics. In the litter dataset, IF was not taken into account,  
 409 given it was 100% for all species and no litter was sampled for *Cotinus coggygia* ( $T_{MAX}$ :  
 410 maximum temperature, FD: flaming duration, IF: ignition frequency, TTI: time to ignition,  $T_{TTI}$ :  
 411 ignition temperature, Mono: monoterpene content, Sesqui: sesquiterpene content, Di: diterpene  
 412 content, Thi: leaf thickness, FMC: fuel moisture content, Ca: *Cupressus arizonica*, Clo and Cly:  
 413 mature and young *Cupressocyparis leylandii*, Cc: *Cotinus coggygia*, Cs: *Cupressus sempervirens*,  
 414 Ph: *Pinus halepensis*, To: *Thuja occidentalis*).

415  
 416

417 **Variations in Terpene content and Flammability according to *Cupressocyparis leylandii*'s**  
418 **Stage of Maturity**

419 *C. leylandii* presented the highest terpene diversity with 31 to 34 different compounds in the young  
420 and mature stages, respectively. These two maturity stages stored the largest amounts of  
421 monoterpenes (2.3 and 2.54 mg g<sup>-1</sup>, respectively) in their live leaves (Fig. 1a). Accordingly, this  
422 terpene subgroup was also the most abundant in litter of both mature and young plants, the content  
423 being higher in the mature stage (1.77 vs 1.30 mg g<sup>-1</sup>) (Fig. 1b).

424 Regarding leaf flammability, only FD differed significantly between the two stages of maturity  
425 (KW=4.08, p=0.043), the mature plants presenting higher values (Tab. 2). Accordingly, FMC and  
426 the content of sesqui- and diterpenes were higher in this latter stage (p ≤ 0.05). When these  
427 parameters were used in the analysis, diterpene content and sesquiterpene content were the best  
428 drivers of leaf FD, this relationship explaining 65% of the variability. The stage of maturity did  
429 not impact litter flammability, regardless of the variable, even if FMC was lower in the mature  
430 plants contrary to sesquiterpene content (the only parameters significantly varying between litter  
431 of mature and young plants; p ≤ 0.05).

432

433

434 **Discussion**

435 **Variation of terpenes according to species, fuel type, and stage of maturity**

436 The screening for terpenes in the live and dead leaves of the 17 species studied revealed that only  
437 six contained terpenes, all but *C. coggygia* being conifers. These species have storage structures  
438 for such organic compounds, e.g., resin ducts for *C. leylandii*, *T. occidentalis*, *C. sempervirens*, *C.*  
439 *arizonica*, and *P. halepensis* (Yani et al. 1993; Ormeño et al. 2008), and trichomes were found on  
440 the leaf surface of *C. coggygia* (Ormeño, pers. obs.). Terpene content and composition differed  
441 according to species but the main compounds (e.g., alpha-pinene, limonene, caryophyllene) found

442 in the leaf and litter of the coniferous species we studied were consistent with compounds detected  
443 in previous studies (Gallis et al. 2007; Jitovetz et al. 2006; Chéraif et al. 2007). For *C. coggygia*,  
444 however, the monoterpene limonene was the only compound detected whereas Novakovic et al.  
445 (2007) also identified other monoterpenes (e.g., alpha-pinene and beta-pinene). Over all the  
446 terpenes screened, the sesquiterpene caryophyllene and diterpene nezukol were the most  
447 concentrated compounds (in *P. halepensis* and in *T. occidentalis*, respectively). The dominance of  
448 caryophyllene in *P. halepensis*' leaf has been highlighted in different areas of the Mediterranean  
449 Basin (Ioannou et al. 2014; Lahlou et al. 2003; Macchioni et al. 2003; Roussis et al. 1995; Tumen  
450 et al. 2010; Abi-Ayad et al. 2011).

451 Another important result of this work was that leaf and litter terpene content and diversity (total  
452 and by subgroup) did not differ within species nor between fuel types (54 compounds in both  
453 leaves and litter). Indeed, most terpenes are retained for long periods of time, e.g., in pine  
454 decomposed needles (Chomel et al. 2014); their polarity and chemical structure make them less  
455 degradable and/or leachable (White 1994; and the degradability decreases with the complexity of  
456 the molecule according to Kanerva et al. 2008). In both fuel types, the terpene content was higher  
457 in the mature stage of *C. leylandii* (regarding sesqui- and diterpenes), agreeing with the results of  
458 Peñuelas and Llusà (1997) on *Rosmarinus officinalis* and of Nowak et al. (2010).

459

### 460 **Impact of terpenes on flammability**

461 As expected, we found that litter was more flammable than live leaf (non-significant differences  
462 for ignition temperature) which was mostly due to lower FMC, as leaf thickness and terpene  
463 content did not differ from one fuel type to the other (regardless of the terpene subgroup). The  
464 total terpene content had only a limited effect on flammability (negative impact on leaf flaming  
465 duration but positive on litter maximum temperature) while this effect was more pronounced when  
466 the different subgroups were taken into account. Indeed, sesquiterpene content was one of the main

467 driver of leaf flammability, increasing maximum temperature and flaming duration (to a lower  
468 extent, sesquiterpenes were also negatively correlated to time-to-ignition), agreeing with Della  
469 Rocca et al. (2017), but decreasing litter flaming duration, along with monoterpene content,  
470 according to Ormeño et al. (2009). Monoterpenes primarily affected litter flaming duration but did  
471 not have a predominant impact on leaf flammability. In contrast, Pausas et al. (2016) showed that  
472 most compounds significantly related to *Rosmarinus officinalis*' flammability (only based on leaf  
473 time-to-ignition) were monoterpenes while several works highlighted a negative impact of these  
474 compounds on leaf flammability (Owen et al. 1998; Alessio et al. 2008b; Della Rocca et al. 2017).  
475 Diterpene content, usually not studied in literature, impacted litter flaming duration only, but  
476 positively contrary to sesqui- and monoterpene content.

477 The impact of terpenes on flammability was mostly due to the influence of the most abundant  
478 compound of a subgroup (such as sesquiterpene caryophyllene in *P. halepensis* or diterpene  
479 nezukol in *T. occidentalis*). Indeed, leaves of *P. halepensis* were the most flammable (especially  
480 regarding both maximum temperature and flaming duration). Despite other species with high litter  
481 flammability features, this pine species had already been found as one of the most flammable and  
482 containing a high content of terpenes (Ormeño et al. 2009), especially caryophyllene, regardless  
483 of the fuel type. Another explanation of the highest flammability of pine's needle-leaves compared  
484 to the cypress' scale-leaves could be that the resin ducts, where the terpenes are stored, are located  
485 deeply in the pine needles (Bernard-Degan 1988) in contrast to the cypress' sub-epidermal resin  
486 glands (Castro and De Magistris 1999). This deeper location delays the vaporization of terpenes  
487 whose content will be thus higher when the plant burns. In the current work, we showed that the  
488 sesqui- and diterpenes stored in *P. halepensis*' live leaf and litter (high content in caryophyllene  
489 and cembrene, respectively) increased flammability, especially leaf maximum temperature for the  
490 former and litter flaming duration for the latter. These compounds could thus be considered as  
491 functional characteristics linked to fire in the same way as serotiny, for instance. Several other

492 fire-prone species also presented high sesquiterpene content, such as some species of *Cistus* whose  
493 germination is triggered by fire; for instance, *Cistus albidus* and *Cistus monspeliensis* mainly  
494 synthesizing sesquiterpenes and, more precisely, caryophyllene for the latter (Llusà and Peñuelas  
495 1998).

496 *C. leylandii*'s mature stage presented longer leaf flaming duration (litter flammability did not  
497 differ between mature and young plants) and higher terpene content (especially cadina-1(6)4 diene  
498 <cis> present only in the mature leaves) than the young plants, sesquiterpene content being the  
499 only significant driver of leaf flammability.

500 Our results also showed that terpene subgroups could have opposite effects (negative for sesqui-  
501 and monoterpenes and positive for diterpenes regarding litter flaming duration, for instance).  
502 Moreover, a same subgroup (e.g., sesquiterpenes) could in turn enhance or mitigate a same  
503 flammability variable (for instance, flaming duration) from one fuel type to the other. This could  
504 be due to the higher FMC in live leaves suggesting interactions between sesquiterpenes and leaf  
505 water content. Our results highlight that greater terpene content does not necessarily mean greater  
506 flammability. Previous works already showed that different compounds belonging to the same  
507 terpene subgroup could have opposite effects on flammability (Owens et al. 1998; Della Rocca et  
508 al. 2017). We found that the terpene content did not affect some of the flammability variables (e.g.,  
509 leaf ignition frequency, ignition temperature), agreeing with De Lillis et al. (2009). Sometimes this  
510 effect only appeared in the simple linear regressions (as for leaf time-to-ignition or litter maximum  
511 temperature), highlighting that other fuel characteristics could override the effect of terpenes on  
512 flammability.

513

#### 514 **Relative importance of the different fuel characteristics on flammability**

515 Our results showed that terpenes did not affect ignitability, regardless of the fuel type, ignition  
516 frequency and time-to-ignition being primarily affected by thickness and/or FMC (but see Pausas

517 et al. 2016 or Della Rocca et al. 2017). The effect of terpenes could be hampered by FMC,  
518 especially in live leaves (Alessio et al. 2008a; De Lillis et al. 2009) while this hypothesis was not  
519 confirmed in the work of Della Rocca et al. (2017). The role of water as terpenes' carrier, favouring  
520 or hampering their volatilization during the pyrolysis should be investigated further. Indeed,  
521 terpenes could be dissolved in water, high FMC implying high terpene concentrations as suggested  
522 by Ciccioli et al. (2014).

523 In our experimental conditions (fuel collected in summer), FMC was a predominant factor only  
524 for leaf time-to-ignition, maximum temperature, and ignition frequency but was often overridden  
525 by leaf thickness or sesquiterpene content (except for ignition frequency). Blackmarr (1972)  
526 underlined the importance of exploring the effect of FMC and thickness at the same time because,  
527 when a fuel is thick, more energy is required for water evaporation before ignition becomes  
528 possible; that was clearly highlighted for *C. arizonica*'s live leaf and litter (longest time-to-ignition  
529 as this species presented the thickest leaves and the highest FMC). Due to lower FMC in litter,  
530 thickness was the predominant driver of litter flammability (except for maximum temperature)  
531 whereas this factor impacted mostly leaf time-to-ignition, along with FMC. Monoterpene content  
532 was among the significant drivers of litter flaming duration, along with that of sesquiterpenes and  
533 diterpenes (the latter presenting an opposite effect) as well as with thickness; this result differed  
534 from that of Alessio et al. (2008b) who concluded that the effect of this terpene subgroup was  
535 overridden by leaf moisture content. It is worth noting that, for *C. coggygria*, the very low leaf  
536 thickness (0.022 mm) compared to others species could hinder the effects of the terpene content  
537 on flammability.

538 In the framework of climate change, more severe climate conditions (especially regarding  
539 drought) will involve a decrease in FMC which, according to our results, will be more easily  
540 overridden by other parameters such as terpene content. Under such conditions, the terpene content  
541 is expected to increase given its role in coping for water deficit, as shown in several works (increase

542 in caryophyllene for *Cistus monspeliensis* as well as in alpha-pinene and delta-3-carene for *P.*  
543 *halepensis* according to Llusà and Peñuelas 1998, in monoterpenes for *Picea abies* and *Pinus*  
544 *sylvestris* according to Turtola et al. 2003, and for *Salvia officinalis* according to Nowak et al.  
545 2010), thereby increasing plant flammability. This role would be especially marked in the more  
546 flammable fire-prone species of the Mediterranean region in summer (for *P. halepensis* or the  
547 other species studied that are native to this region) or in spring in Arizona (USA) for *C. arizonica*.  
548 The effect of terpene content on flammability will thus likely be more pronounced in the future.

549

550

## 551 **Conclusions**

552 Both terpene content and diversity varied according to species and to the stage of plant maturity  
553 but the terpene content did not significantly differ between fuel types. *C. leylandii* (especially the  
554 mature plants) had the most diverse spectrum and the highest total content (especially regarding  
555 monoterpenes) in both leaves and litter. Terpenes and especially leaf sesquiterpenes were involved  
556 to varying degrees in plant flammability, yet their effects could be the opposite according to the  
557 variable and the fuel type considered. Moreover, for each subgroup, the effect on flammability  
558 was mostly due to one compound, which was the most concentrated of the subgroup, showing that  
559 flammability was more sensitive to a particular subgroup and, further, to a particular compound  
560 than to the total terpene content. *P. halepensis*, presenting the highest leaf and litter sesquiterpene  
561 content (mostly due to caryophyllene), was the most flammable species (especially regarding live  
562 leaf); *C. leylandii* (mature plants) and *T. occidentalis* were the other most flammable litter.  
563 However, even if the terpene content took part in plant flammability, other factors must be  
564 considered, such as FMC and especially fuel thickness that could override the terpene content  
565 according to the flammability variable considered. Previous studies showed a seasonal variation  
566 of the leaf terpene content (along with FMC) in different species including *P. halepensis* (Owens

567 *et al.* 1998; Staudt *et al.* 2000; Alessio *et al.* 2008a). In future works, it would be pertinent to  
568 highlight a possible seasonal variation of flammability according to the variation in moisture and  
569 terpene content throughout the year.

570 The current work underlined once more that, given the important role of ornamental vegetation  
571 in the fire propagation in WUI, the fire management in these areas must also acknowledge the  
572 potential for the species containing terpenes, such as *P. halepensis*, in affecting fire behaviour.  
573 Recommendations to home owners and forest managers should thus be provided accordingly.  
574 Indeed, our results confirmed that *P. halepensis*, already considered as a highly flammable species  
575 (Trabaud 2000; Dimitrakopoulos 2001), is a deleterious species in the case of a WUI fire and has  
576 often been responsible for significant damage to structures. Likewise, in *T. occidentalis*, the  
577 diterpene nezukol (which was also the terpene the most concentrated overall) played a significant  
578 part in the litter flammability of this species whose litter was also one of the most flammable. This  
579 highlighted once more the importance of cleaning the dead surface fuel from under the ornamental  
580 hedges in WUI.

581 Given that storing terpenes could be, for fire-prone species, an adaptive strategy to fire, it could  
582 be interesting to exhibit possible adaptations of species/populations to changes in fire regime  
583 (intraspecific variations in terpene content among populations undergoing different fire regimes  
584 or interspecific variations between two species that present different fire adaptive strategies such  
585 as the fire resistant *Pinus sylvestris* and the fire resilient *P. halepensis*).

586

587

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594

595

#### 596 **Conflict of interest statement**

597 The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

598

599

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786

**TABLES**

787 **Table 1.** Flammability variables (means  $\pm$  SD, n=30) according to species and fuel types ( $T_{MAX}$ :  
788 maximum temperature, TTI: time-to-ignition,  $T_{TTI}$ : ignition temperature; FD: flaming duration,  
789 and IF: ignition frequency; Ca: *Cupressus arizonica*,  $Cl_y$  and  $Cl_o$ : young and mature  
790 *Cupressocyparis leylandii*, Cc: *Cotinus coggygia*, Cs: *Cupressus sempervirens*, Ph: *Pinus*  
791 *halepensis*, To: *Thuja occidentalis*. *C. coggygia*'s litter was not collected).

792

793

Species	$T_{MAX}$ (°C)	TTI (s)	FD (s)	$T_{TTI}$ (°C)	IF (%)
<b>LEAF</b>					
<b>Ph</b>	545 $\pm$ 39.2	14 $\pm$ 2.4	13.9 $\pm$ 3.1	318.7 $\pm$ 17	100
<b>Cs</b>	428.4 $\pm$ 17.7	26.3 $\pm$ 5.1	10.6 $\pm$ 1.6	334.4 $\pm$ 26.6	81
<b>Ca</b>	454.2 $\pm$ 39.9	41.3 $\pm$ 10.2	11.1 $\pm$ 3.9	375.9 $\pm$ 32.7	90
<b><math>Cl_y</math></b>	420 $\pm$ 58.1	27.1 $\pm$ 6.6	7.9 $\pm$ 1.9	354.8 $\pm$ 23.5	81
<b><math>Cl_o</math></b>	459.1 $\pm$ 35.5	29.4 $\pm$ 3.9	12.4 $\pm$ 2.2	363.6 $\pm$ 45.7	70
<b>To</b>	466 $\pm$ 34.1	26.3 $\pm$ 2.4	9.6 $\pm$ 2.4	362.3 $\pm$ 21.7	87
<b>Cc</b>	400.5 $\pm$ 46.5	16.9 $\pm$ 6.6	8.82 $\pm$ 4.1	323.7 $\pm$ 29.2	77
<b>LITTER</b>					
<b>Ph</b>	589.4 $\pm$ 34.9	2.5 $\pm$ 0.8	14.6 $\pm$ 3.6	352.5 $\pm$ 30.7	100
<b>Cs</b>	551.7 $\pm$ 100.6	3.3 $\pm$ 0.7	21 $\pm$ 4.8	335.1 $\pm$ 31.6	100
<b>Ca</b>	569.2 $\pm$ 66.4	3.5 $\pm$ 0.8	12.6 $\pm$ 3.5	382.3 $\pm$ 54	100
<b><math>Cl_y</math></b>	628.9 $\pm$ 48.2	3.2 $\pm$ 0.9	14.9 $\pm$ 3.5	371.8 $\pm$ 35.8	100
<b><math>Cl_o</math></b>	619.4 $\pm$ 45.7	3.2 $\pm$ 1.4	18.5 $\pm$ 5.3	352.5 $\pm$ 63.9	100
<b>To</b>	612.6 $\pm$ 56.4	2.6 $\pm$ 0.8	19.6 $\pm$ 5.5	351.9 $\pm$ 41.8	100
<b>Cc</b>	-	-	-	-	-

1  
2 **Table 2:** Relationships obtained between leaf and litter flammability variables with fuel characteristics using simple linear regression analyses.  
3 Litter IF was not taken into account as this variable scored 100% in all the species (in bold: significant relationships, in italic: analyses performed  
4 on moisture and/or thickness-corrected flammability variable; R: correlation coefficient giving the sign of the relationship, R<sup>2</sup>: adjusted coefficient  
5 of determination, and p: p-value; T<sub>MAX</sub>: Maximum temperature, TTI: time-to-ignition, FD: flaming duration, T<sub>TTI</sub>: ignition temperature, IF: ignition  
6 frequency).

<b>LEAF</b>	FMC	Thickness	Monoterpenes	Sesquiterpenes	Diterpenes	Total Terpenes
T <sub>MAX</sub>	NS	NS	NS	<b>F= 25.87 ; p&lt; 0.0001</b> <b>R = 0.71 ; R<sup>2</sup>= 0.48</b>	NS	NS
TTI	<b>F=13.28 ; p=0.001</b> <b>R =-0.55 ; R<sup>2</sup>= 0.28</b>	<b>F= 19.57 ; p= 0.0001</b> <b>R = 0.62 ; R<sup>2</sup>=0.37</b>	NS	<b>F= 6.67 ; p=0.016</b> <b>R = -0.45 ; R<sup>2</sup>= 0.17</b>	NS	NS
FD	NS	<b>F= 95.95 ; p &lt; 0.0001</b> <b>rR= -0.87 ; R<sup>2</sup>= 0.75</b>	NS	NS	<b>F= 9.68 ; p= 0.005</b> <b>R = -0.52 ; R<sup>2</sup>= 0.24</b>	<b>F= 5.70 ; p= 0.023</b> <b>R = -0.39 ; R<sup>2</sup>= 0.13</b>
T <sub>TTI</sub>	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
IF	<b>F=8.97 ; p=0.020</b> <b>R =-0.40 ; R<sup>2</sup>=0.13</b>	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS

LITTER	FMC	Thickness	Monoterpenes	Sesquiterpenes	Diterpenes	Total Terpenes
T <sub>MAX</sub>	NS	NS	<b>F= 6.44 ; p= 0.017</b>	NS	<b>F= 7.61 ; p= 0.010</b>	<b>F= 10.62 ; p= 0.003</b>
			<b>R = 0.43 ; R<sup>2</sup>= 0.16</b>		<b>R = 0.46 ; R<sup>2</sup>= 0.19</b>	<b>R = 0.52 ; R<sup>2</sup>= 0.25</b>
TTI	NS	<b>F= 7.11 ; p= 0.013</b>	NS	NS	NS	NS
		<b>R = 0.45 ; R<sup>2</sup>= 0.17</b>				
FD	NS	<b>F= 6.36 ; p= 0.018</b>	NS	<b>F= 6.06 ; p= 0.020</b>	<b>F= 4.75 ; p= 0.038</b>	NS
		<b>R = -0.43 ; R<sup>2</sup>= 0.16</b>		<b>R = -0.42 ; R<sup>2</sup>= 0.15</b>	<b>R = 0.38 ; R<sup>2</sup>= 0.11</b>	
T <sub>TTI</sub>	NS	<b>F= 6.87 ; p= 0.014</b>	NS	NS	NS	NS
		<b>R = 0.44 ; R<sup>2</sup>= 0.17</b>				

1

1 **Table 3.** Results of the partial least squares regression analyses (PLS) highlighting the significant fuel characteristics impacting leaf flammability  
2 variables. A second PLS was run after the bootstrap procedure to obtain the correlation coefficients of the significant variables. Analyses were  
3 separately run taking into account either the terpene content of the different subgroups or the total terpene content (in bold: significant fuel  
4 characteristics, p: p value, R<sup>2</sup>: adjusted coefficient of determination, R: correlation coefficient; TTI: time-to-ignition, T<sub>MAX</sub>: maximal temperature,  
5 FD: flaming duration, IF : ignition frequency, T<sub>TTI</sub> : ignition temperature, FMC: fuel moisture content, Thi: leaf thickness, Mono: monoterpene  
6 content, Sesqui: sesquiterpene content, Di: diterpene content, Terp\_tot : total terpene content; bootstrap p-value: \*\*\* : p>0.01, \*\* : p=0.01, \* :  
7 p=0.05, boot size=1000).

Flammability variable	Analyses with content of terpene subgroups			Analyses with total terpene content				
	Results of PLS1	After bootstrap	P-value	Results of PLS2	Results of PLS1	After bootstrap	P-value	Results of PLS2
TTI	p<0.0001,R <sup>2</sup> =0.82			p<0.0001,R <sup>2</sup> =0.73	p<0.0001, R <sup>2</sup> =0.74			p<0.0001, R <sup>2</sup> =0.73
	<b>Thi: R=0.45</b>	<b>Thi</b>	<b>***</b>	<b>Thi: R=0.65</b>	<b>Thi: R=0.70</b>	<b>Thi</b>	<b>***</b>	<b>Thi: R=0.65</b>
	<b>FMC: R= 0.67</b>	<b>FMC</b>	<b>***</b>	<b>FMC: R= 0.58</b>	<b>FMC: R= 0.58</b>	<b>FMC</b>	<b>***</b>	<b>FMC: R= 0.58</b>
	Mono: R= - 0.006				Terp_tot: R= - 0.13			
	Sesqui: R= - 0.16							
	Di: R= - 0.05							
Tmax	p=0.0002,R <sup>2</sup> =0.65	<b>FMC</b>	<b>***</b>	p<0.0001,R <sup>2</sup> =0.60	NS			
	Thi: R= 0.13	<b>Sesqui</b>	<b>***</b>	<b>FMC: R= - 0.32</b>				

**FMC: R= - 0.43**

**Sesqui: R= 0.73**

**Mono: R= - 0.24**

**Sesqui: R= 0.83**

**Di: R= 0.27**

p<0.0001,

FD

p=0.003, R<sup>2</sup>=0.29

**Thi**

\*\*\*

p=0.006, R<sup>2</sup>=0.26

p<0.0001, R<sup>2</sup>=0.81

R<sup>2</sup>=0.80

**Thi: R= - 0.6**

**Sesqui**

\*

**Thi: R= - 0.25**

**Thi: R= - 0.78**

**Thi**

\*\*\*

**Thi: R= - 0.79**

FMC: R= - 0.02

**Sesqui: R= 0.33**

**Terp\_tot: R=-0.22**

**Terp\_Tot**

\*\*

**Terp\_tot: R=-0.22**

Mono: R= - 0.09

**Sesqui: R= 0.34**

Di: R= - 0.08

IF

p=0.010, R<sup>2</sup>=0.23

**FMC**

\*\*

p=0.020, R<sup>2</sup>=0.16

p=0.008, R<sup>2</sup>=0.21

p=0.020, R<sup>2</sup>=0.16

Thi: R= 0.05

Di

NS

**FMC: R= - 0.40**

Thi: R= 0.11

**FMC: R= - 0.40**

**FMC: R= - 0.31**

**FMC: R= - 0.42**

**FMC**

\*\*\*

Mono: R= - 0.10

Terp\_tot: R= - 0.16

Sesqui: R= - 0.02

**Di: R= - 0.24**

T<sub>TI</sub>

NS

**p=0.014, R<sup>2</sup>=0.18**

NS

**Thi: R= 0.30**

**FMC: R= 0.21      FMC      \***

Terp\_tot: R= 0.14

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1

2

1 **Table 4.** Results of the partial least squares regression analyses (PLS) highlighting the significant fuel characteristics impacting litter flammability  
2 variables. A second PLS was run after the bootstrap procedure to obtain the correlation coefficients of the significant variables. Analyses were  
3 separately run taking into account either the terpene content of the different subgroups or the total terpene content (in bold: significant fuel  
4 characteristics, p: p value, R<sup>2</sup>: adjusted coefficient of determination, R: correlation coefficient; TTI: time-to-ignition, T<sub>MAX</sub>: maximal temperature,  
5 FD: flaming duration, T<sub>TTI</sub> : ignition temperature, FMC: fuel moisture content, Thi: leaf thickness, Mono: monoterpene content, Sesqui:  
6 sesquiterpene content, Di: diterpene content, Terp\_tot : total terpene content; bootstrap p-value: \*\*\* : p>0.01, \*\* : p=0.01, \* : p=0.05, boot  
7 size=1000). Litter IF was not taken into account in the analysis as this variable scored 100% for all species.

Flammability variable	Analyses with content of terpene subgroups			Analyses with total terpene content				
	Results of PLS1	After bootstrap	P-value	Results of PLS2	Results of PLS1	After bootstrap	P-value	Results of PLS2
TTI	p=0.004, R <sup>2</sup> =0.33			p=0.013, R <sup>2</sup> =0.20	p=0.005, R <sup>2</sup> =0.25			p=0.013, R <sup>2</sup> =0.20
	<b>Thi: R=0.36</b>	<b>Thi</b>	*	<b>Thi: R=0.45</b>	<b>Thi: R=0.52</b>	<b>Thi</b>	***	<b>Thi: R=0.45</b>
	FMC: R= -0.17				FMC: R= -0.08			
	Mono: R= 0.20				Terp_tot: R= 0.10			
	<b>Sesqui: R= - 0.26</b>							
	Di: R= - 0.06							
Tmax	p=0.003, R <sup>2</sup> =0.27	NS			p=0.001, R <sup>2</sup> =0.31			p=0.003, R <sup>2</sup> =0.27
	Thi: R= - 0.02				Thi: R= - 0.04			<b>Terp_Tot:R=0.52</b>

	FMC: R= 0.16			<b>FMC: R= 0.24</b>			
	<b>Mono: R= 0.24</b>			<b>Terp_tot:R= 0.45</b>	<b>Terp_tot</b>	<b>***</b>	
	Sesqui: R=- 0.002						
	<b>Di: R= -0.25</b>						
FD	p=0.0002, R <sup>2</sup> =0.57	<b>Thi</b>	<b>***</b>	p<0.0001, R <sup>2</sup> =0.56	p=0.002, R <sup>2</sup> =0.36		p=0.003, R <sup>2</sup> =0.35
	<b>Thi: R= - 0.61</b>	<b>Mono</b>	<b>*</b>	<b>Thi: R= - 0.56</b>	<b>Thi: R= - 0.52</b>	<b>Thi</b>	<b>***</b>
	FMC: R= 0.18	<b>Sesqui</b>	<b>**</b>	<b>Mono: R= - 0.52</b>	<b>FMC: R= 0.44</b>	<b>FMC</b>	<b>**</b>
	<b>Mono: R= - 0.43</b>	<b>Di</b>	<b>***</b>	<b>Sesqui: R= - 0.42</b>	Terp_tot: R= - 0.11		<b>Thi: R= - 0.50</b>
	<b>Sesqui: R= - 0.42</b>			<b>Di : R= 0.49</b>			
	<b>Di: R= 0.34</b>						
T <sub>TTI</sub>	p=0.010, R <sup>2</sup> =0.34			p=0.014, R <sup>2</sup> =0.20	p=0.032, R <sup>2</sup> =0.28		p=0.014, R <sup>2</sup> =0.20
	<b>Thi: R= 0.58</b>	<b>Thi</b>	<b>**</b>	<b>Thi: R= 0.44</b>	<b>Thi: R= 0.53</b>	<b>Thi</b>	<b>***</b>
	FMC: R= - 0.04				FMC: R= - 0.15		
	<b>Mono: R= 0.39</b>				<b>Terp_tot: R=0.29</b>		
	<b>Sesqui: R= 0.33</b>						
	Di: R= - 0.04						

1

2

3