

1 **Global patterns of surface ocean dissolved organic matter stoichiometry**

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12 **Key points**

- 13 • Surface ocean bulk and labile DOM stoichiometry vary across ocean regions with global
14 means of 387:26:1 and 179:20:1, respectively.
- 15
- 16 • The stoichiometries of bulk and labile surface ocean DON:DOP and DOC:DOP vary
17 more than DOC:DON due to variability in DOP concentrations.
- 18
- 19
- 20 • Surface ocean gradients in P-depleted DOM stoichiometries in the Pacific and Atlantic
21 basins reflect variable nutrient stress.
- 22

23 Keywords: dissolved organic matter, dissolved organic nitrogen, dissolved organic phosphorus,
24 stoichiometry

27 **Abstract**

28 Surface ocean marine dissolved organic matter (DOM) serves as an important reservoir of carbon
29 (C), nitrogen (N), and phosphorus (P) in the global ocean, and is produced and consumed by both
30 autotrophic and heterotrophic communities. While prior work has described distributions of
31 dissolved organic carbon (DOC) and nitrogen (DON) concentrations, our understanding of
32 DOC:DON:DOP stoichiometry in the global surface ocean has been limited by the availability of
33 DOP concentration measurements. Here we estimate mean surface ocean bulk and labile
34 DOC:DON:DOP stoichiometry in biogeochemically and geographically defined regions, using
35 newly available marine DOM concentration databases. Global mean surface ocean bulk (C:N:P =
36 387:26:1) and labile (C:N:P = 179:20:1) DOM stoichiometries are higher than Redfield
37 stoichiometry, with labile DOM stoichiometry similar to that of global mean surface ocean
38 particulate organic matter (C:N:P = 160:21:1) reported in a recent compilation. DOM
39 stoichiometry varies across ocean basins, ranging from 251:17:1 to 638:43:1 for bulk and 83:15:1
40 to 414:49:1 for labile DOM C:N:P, respectively. Surface ocean DOP exhibits larger relative
41 changes than DOC and DON, driving surface ocean gradients in DOC:DON:DOP stoichiometry.
42 Inferred autotrophic consumption of DOP helps explain intra- and inter-basin patterns of marine
43 DOM C:N:P stoichiometry, with regional patterns of water column denitrification and iron supply
44 influencing the biogeochemical conditions favoring DOP use as an organic nutrient. Specifically,
45 surface ocean marine DOM exhibits increasingly P-depleted stoichiometries from east to west in
46 the Pacific and from south to north in the Atlantic consistent with patterns of increasing P stress
47 and alleviated iron stress, respectively.

48

49 **1. Introduction**

50 The ocean plays a critical role in the global carbon cycle, holding about fifty times as much carbon
51 as does the atmosphere, and sequesters atmospheric carbon through its solubility and biological
52 pumps (Hain et al., 2014; DeVries, 2022). The marine biological pump starts in the euphotic zone
53 whereby phytoplankton transform inorganic carbon into organic matter through photosynthesis
54 (“marine primary production”), followed by vertical export of that organic matter to the deep ocean
55 (“marine export production”) (Emerson, 2014; Hain et al., 2014; DeVries, 2022). Decades of effort
56 have sought to understand the patterns and estimate the rates of marine primary production and

57 export production (e.g., Behrenfeld & Falkowski, 1997; Westberry et al., 2008; Emerson, 2014;
58 DeVries & Weber, 2017). However, considerable uncertainty in and discrepancy between
59 estimates of marine primary productivity and export productivity still exist (Carr et al., 2006;
60 Emerson, 2014; Siegel et al., 2023). In particular, the fields of biological and chemical
61 oceanography are still working to describe the processes that support marine primary and export
62 production in subtropical gyres where inorganic nutrients are scarce (Emerson, 2014).

63

64 A range of nutrient sources have been evaluated for their potential to support marine productivity
65 in subtropical gyres where nitrate (NO_3^-) and phosphate (PO_4^{3-}) concentrations are often at or
66 below detection limits, yet rates of export production are comparable to more nutrient-replete
67 regions (Gruber et al., 1998; Keeling et al., 2004; Johnson et al., 2010; Emerson, 2014). Candidate
68 sources include subsurface inorganic nutrients entrained by a range of physical mechanisms
69 (Kadko & Johns, 2011; Stanley et al., 2015; Mahadevan, 2016) and/or by vertically migrating
70 phytoplankton (Villareal et al., 1993; Wirtz et al., 2022), atmospheric deposition (Baker et al.,
71 2003; Knapp et al., 2010; Jickells & Moore, 2015), biological di-nitrogen (N_2) fixation (Knapp et
72 al., 2016, 2018b, 2021), and organic nutrients (Torres-Valdés et al., 2009; Lomas et al., 2010;
73 Letscher et al., 2016; Knapp et al., 2018a). While all of these mechanisms are thought to contribute
74 to marine production under different conditions, here we focus on evaluating the role of organic
75 nutrients. Phytoplankton may utilize dissolved organic nitrogen (DON) or dissolved organic
76 phosphorus (DOP) either after heterotrophic degradation that releases inorganic nutrients that are
77 then assimilated, or by the direct assimilation of DON and/or DOP. A wide range of marine
78 phytoplankton species including cyanobacteria, coccolithophores, diatoms, and dinoflagellates
79 utilize DON and DOP directly when the supply of inorganic nutrients is not sufficient to meet their
80 demands (e.g., Dyhrman et al., 2006; Bronk et al., 2007; Berges & Mulholland, 2008; Orchard et
81 al., 2010; Kathuria & Martiny, 2011; Li et al., 2018; Zhang et al., 2020b; Duhamel et al., 2021).
82 For example, phytoplankton have been shown to release extracellular alkaline phosphatase and C-
83 P lyase metalloenzymes to exploit P in DOP molecules (Dyhrman et al., 2006; Duhamel et al.,
84 2021), while for DON, phytoplankton may use leucine aminopeptidase to access N in peptides
85 (Bronk et al., 2007; Berges & Mulholland, 2008; Zhang et al., 2020b). While the significance of
86 organic nutrients in supporting marine production is expected to vary spatially, modeling studies
87 suggest that DOP uptake by phytoplankton sustains >50% of annual net community production in

88 the North Pacific and North Atlantic subtropical gyres (Torres-Valdés et al., 2009; Reynolds et al.,
89 2014; Letscher et al., 2016, 2022).

90

91 The preferential consumption of DON and DOP as nutrient sources stands in contrast to the
92 pressures on surface ocean dissolved organic carbon (DOC), which is primarily consumed by
93 heterotrophs. Consequently, the additional pressure on the DON and DOP pool by autotrophs is
94 expected to drive surface ocean DOM stoichiometry away from that of its source, autotrophic
95 production, and its associated “Redfield Ratio” stoichiometry (C:N:P = 106:16:1) (Redfield,
96 1934). Thus, interpreting variability in surface ocean dissolved organic matter (DOM)
97 stoichiometry may provide insight into conditions where utilization of DON and/or DOP supports
98 marine primary productivity. For instance, the bulk surface ocean DOC:DON:DOP ratio at Station
99 ALOHA in the North Pacific Ocean is ~350:24:1 (Foreman et al., 2019) and at the BATS station
100 in the North Atlantic Ocean is ~983:68:1 (Singh et al., 2015), both relatively depleted in N and P
101 compared with “Redfield” stoichiometry. Numerous additional observations and inversions
102 describing the variability in surface ocean organic matter stoichiometry have emerged in recent
103 years, often attributing the patterns to the plasticity of phytoplankton experiencing nutrient stress
104 (Martiny et al., 2013; Teng et al., 2014; DeVries & Deutsch, 2014; Galbraith & Martiny, 2015;
105 Inomura et al., 2022). However, most of these studies have investigated either marine particulate
106 or total organic matter. The examination of the patterns and causes of marine DOM stoichiometric
107 variability has been limited by the lack of global DON and DOP datasets, even though DOM is an
108 important component of the biological pump, accounting for ~20-25% of export productivity
109 (Carlson et al., 1994; Hopkinson & Vallino, 2005; Hansell et al., 2009; Letscher et al., 2015;
110 Roshan & DeVries, 2017; Siegel et al., 2023).

111

112 Here, we take advantage of new global surface ocean DOM datasets (Hansell et al., 2021; Liang
113 et al., 2022b) which permit evaluation of basin-scale trends in DOC, DON, and DOP distributions
114 and associated stoichiometry. The goals of this article are to: 1) describe basin-scale trends in
115 surface ocean DOM concentration and its C:N:P stoichiometry, and 2) evaluate mechanisms
116 consistent with inter-basin surface ocean DOM stoichiometric variability.

117

118 **2. Methods**

119 **2.1 DOC, DON and DOP concentration datasets**

120 The DOC and DON concentration data are from a recent compilation of global ocean observations
121 from 1994 to 2021 (Hansell et al., 2021, version 1). The DOP concentration data are from the
122 DOPv2021 database, which contains DOP concentration observations from 1990 to 2020 (Liang
123 et al., 2022b). Only DOC concentration data marked with the “good” quality flag (WOCE bottle
124 flag = 2) were used, and similar data screening processes were used for the DON and DOP
125 concentration data. The remaining DOC, DON and DOP concentration data were binned onto the
126 OCIM2 model grid with 2°x2° horizontal resolution and 24 vertical layers (DeVries & Holzer,
127 2019; John et al., 2020) for further analysis. After gridding, there were 24,458 DOC concentration,
128 5,679 DON concentration, and 1,878 DOP concentration observations. Most DOM concentration
129 observations are from the upper ocean with 40% of DOC, 87% of DON, and 87% of DOP
130 observations from the upper 400 m.

131

132 **2.2 Global ocean partitioning**

133 To study variability in DOM stoichiometry across the surface ocean, we divided the global ocean
134 into 10 biogeochemical or geographical regions. First we partitioned the global ocean into 10
135 biogeochemical regions according to Teng et al., 2014 and Letscher et al., 2022. The boundaries
136 between regions correspond to the 0.3 μM surface ocean PO₄³⁻ concentration contour. The regions
137 include the Atlantic Subarctic (AtlSub), the North Atlantic Subtropical Gyre (NASG), the Atlantic
138 equatorial region (EqAtl), the South Atlantic Subtropical Gyre (SASG), the Pacific Subarctic
139 (PacSub), the North Pacific Subtropical Gyre (NPSG), the Pacific equatorial region (EqPac), the
140 South Pacific Subtropical Gyre (SPSG), the Indian Ocean (IND), and the Southern Ocean (SO).
141 We also evaluated variability in DOM stoichiometry using geographical divisions, including the
142 Eastern North Atlantic (ENATL, 0° - 65° N and 45° W – 10° E), the Eastern South Atlantic (ESATL,
143 0° - 40° S and 20° W – 20° E), the Western North Atlantic (WNATL, 0° - 65° N and 45° W -100°
144 W), the Western South Atlantic (WSATL, 0° - 40° S and 20° W – 60° W), the Eastern North
145 Pacific (ENPAC, 0° - 65° N and 70° E - 160° E), the Eastern South Pacific (ESPAC, 0° - 40° S
146 and 70° E - 160° E), the Western North Pacific (WNPAC, 0° - 65° N and 100° W - 160° E), the

147 Western South Pacific (WSPAC, 0° - 40° S and 100° W - 160° E), the Indian Ocean (Indian, 40°
148 S - 25° N and 20° E - 145° E), and the Southern Ocean (Southern, >40° S).

149

150 **2.3 Calculation of bulk and labile surface ocean DOC:DON:DOP concentration ratios**

151 Bulk and labile surface (<73 m) ocean DOC:DON:DOP concentration ratios were calculated for
152 each biogeochemical and geographical region. The upper 73 m was chosen to reflect the surface
153 ocean because the upper 73 m corresponds to the upper two vertical layers in the OCIM2 grid,
154 which are often used to represent the euphotic zone (DeVries & Holzer, 2019; Wang et al., 2019;
155 John et al., 2020; Letscher et al., 2022). For bulk DOC:DON:DOP concentration ratios, we
156 calculated the mean surface ocean bulk DOC, DON, and DOP concentrations in each region and
157 then used those to calculate mean DOC:DON:DOP concentration ratios in each region. For labile
158 DOC:DON:DOP concentration ratios, we subtracted the mean deep ocean bulk DOC, DON, and
159 DOP concentrations for each region from the mean surface ocean bulk DOC, DON and DOP
160 concentrations to get the mean surface ocean labile DOC, DON and DOP concentrations, and from
161 those the mean surface ocean labile DOC:DON:DOP concentration ratios were calculated for each
162 region. We assumed that the deep ocean DON concentration was 1.8 µM, which was taken as the
163 mean DON concentration in the deep ocean (>1000 m) according to Letscher & Moore, 2015, and
164 0.05 µM was taken as the mean deep ocean DOP concentration, which is the average deep ocean
165 (>1000 m) DOP concentration reported in the DOPv2021 database (Liang et al., 2022b). It is
166 known that deep ocean DOC concentrations decrease slightly along the global ocean conveyor belt
167 with highest DOC concentrations in the deep North Atlantic and lowest DOC concentrations in
168 the deep North Pacific (Hansell & Carlson, 1998b). Thus, we used different deep ocean DOC
169 concentrations to calculate surface labile DOC concentrations in each region. Concentrations of
170 deep ocean DOC were estimated at 44.4 µM in the North Atlantic, 41.5 µM in the South Atlantic,
171 39.6 µM in the Pacific, 42.2 µM in the Indian Ocean, and 41.9 µM in the Southern Ocean (Lønborg
172 et al., 2018). We did not include the Arctic Ocean in this study due to limited DOP concentration
173 observations from that basin.

174

175 **2.4 Relationships between bulk surface ocean DOC, DON and DOP concentrations and Net
176 Primary Productivity**

177 We performed correlation analyses between gridded surface ocean bulk DOC, DON and DOP
178 concentrations and rates of net primary production (NPP) ($\text{mol C m}^{-2} \text{ yr}^{-1}$) by applying a Type II
179 regression model in MATLAB with the function ‘gmregress’ (Trujillo-Ortiz & Hernandez-Walls,
180 2021). In order to test the robustness of the correlations between surface ocean bulk DOC, DON,
181 and DOP concentrations and rates of NPP, we used climatological NPP fields from two algorithms:
182 the Carbon-based Productivity Model (CbPM) (Westberry et al., 2008) and the Vertically
183 Generalized Productivity Model (VGPM) (Behrenfeld & Falkowski, 1997), both estimated from
184 SeaWiFS chlorophyll *a* observations. We did not include samples from the Arctic Ocean in this
185 correlation analysis because it is known that DOC concentrations in the Arctic are significantly
186 influenced by river discharge, an external source of DOC to the ocean (Anderson & Amon, 2015)
187 and because of limited DOP concentration observations from this basin.

188

189 **3. Results**

190 **3.1 Global patterns in bulk surface ocean DOC, DON, and DOP concentration distributions**

191 Concentrations of DOC in the surface ocean reflect the balance of their sources and sinks. The
192 primary source of DOC in the ocean is marine photosynthesis (Carlson & Hansell, 2015) with
193 secondary coastal inputs that are especially pronounced in the Arctic (Hansell et al., 2004; Benner
194 et al., 2005; Anderson & Amon, 2015) and other areas of significant riverine (Raymond & Spencer,
195 2015; Medeiros et al., 2015; Gledhill et al., 2022) and/or submarine groundwater discharge
196 (Connolly et al., 2020). Marine DOC is lost due to heterotrophic consumption (Hansell & Carlson,
197 1998b; Carlson & Hansell, 2015), which results in progressive decreases in DOC concentration
198 with depth and along circulation pathways (Hansell & Carlson, 1998b). Additionally, DOC can be
199 lost due to photolysis (Mopper et al., 2015) or hydrothermal circulation (Lang et al., 2006). Our
200 calculations of mean surface ocean DOC concentrations for each region based on the recent
201 compilation of global DOC concentration data (Hansell et al., 2021) reflect the impact of these
202 inputs, with relatively high concentrations, $\sim 68 \mu\text{M}$, in tropical and subtropical surface waters (40°
203 $\text{S} - 40^\circ \text{ N}$), and relatively low concentrations in Southern Ocean surface waters, $\sim 50 \mu\text{M}$ (Tables
204 1 & 2), consistent with previous observations and model output (Hansell et al., 2009; Roshan &

205 DeVries, 2017). We also note that the standard deviations of mean surface ocean DOC
206 concentrations in the EqAtl are high ($73.5 \pm 21.6 \mu\text{M}$), potentially resulting from the seasonally
207 variable input of DOC from the Amazon River (Raymond & Spencer, 2015; Gledhill et al., 2022).

208

209 While marine DON and DOP have the same source as DOC, and they share the same sinks as
210 DOC listed above, they can also be consumed by autotrophs as assimilative sources of N and P.
211 Indeed, autotrophic consumption of DON and DOP in the surface ocean appears to be significant
212 in the subtropical gyres when inorganic forms of N and P are scarce (Mather et al., 2008; Letscher
213 et al., 2013, 2022). Regardless, variations in mean surface ocean DON concentration among
214 regions are modest, with concentrations typically between 4.2 and 5.3 μM (Tables 1 & 2), also
215 consistent with previous observations (Letscher et al., 2013; Knapp et al., 2011; Knapp et al., 2018;
216 Bif et al., 2022). Mean regional surface ocean DON concentrations in the EqAtl and EqPac were
217 $5.3 \pm 1.1 \mu\text{M}$ and $4.5 \pm 0.8 \mu\text{M}$, respectively. In the NPSG, mean surface ocean DON concentrations
218 were $4.4 \pm 0.4 \mu\text{M}$ and in the SPSG were $4.2 \pm 0.5 \mu\text{M}$ (Table 1). The lowest mean surface ocean
219 DON concentrations were found in the SO, $3.7 \pm 0.8 \mu\text{M}$ (Tables 1 and 2).

220

221 In contrast, mean bulk surface ocean DOP concentrations showed more variability than DOC or
222 DON, with higher mean concentrations associated with regions of elevated upwelling and new
223 production. For example, mean surface ocean DOP concentrations in the EqPac were 0.27 ± 0.06
224 μM , and in the EqAtl were $0.20 \pm 0.07 \mu\text{M}$, and were lower in subtropical gyres, $0.11 \pm 0.07 \mu\text{M}$ in
225 the NASG and $0.15 \pm 0.07 \mu\text{M}$ in the SASG (Table 1), consistent with previous observations
226 (Björkman & Karl, 2003; Mather et al., 2008; Lomas et al., 2010; Hashihama et al., 2020; Liang
227 et al., 2022b). We note that the calculation of mean surface ocean DOP concentrations in the
228 AtlSub and IND were based on small data sets ($n = 11$ for AtlSub and $n = 18$ for IND) due to
229 limited observations from these two regions (Table 1). Additionally, DOP concentration
230 measurements in the AtlSub from the DOPv2021 database were collected at sites adjacent to the
231 NASG (Liang et al., 2022a), leading to potential bias. Further sampling for the Atlantic subpolar
232 region and Indian Ocean is required.

233

234 **3.2 Variations in bulk surface ocean DOM stoichiometry in different biogeochemical regions**

235 Bulk surface (< 73 m) ocean DOC:DON:DOP concentration ratios varied among biogeochemical
236 regions (Figures 1a, b, c) (Table 3). DOC:DON concentration ratios in the different regions fell
237 into a relatively narrow range, increasing by ~25% from 13.0:1 to 16.1:1, higher than the canonical
238 Redfield ratio (C:N = 6.6:1), with relatively high DOC:DON concentration ratios found in the
239 subtropical gyres, similar to previously reported bulk DOC:DON concentration ratios (Bif et al.,
240 2022; Hansell & Carlson, 2001; Hopkinson & Vallino, 2005; Letscher & Moore, 2015). Bulk
241 surface ocean DOC:DON concentration ratios in the NPSG, SPSG, NASG and SASG fell within
242 a narrower range and were 15.5:1, 16.1:1, 14.6:1 and 15.3:1, respectively (Figure 1a) (Table 3).
243 Bulk DOC:DON concentration ratios in equatorial and subpolar regions were slightly lower,
244 15.0:1 in the EqPac, 13.7:1 in the PacSub, 13.9:1 in the EqAtl, 13.0:1 in the AtlSub, and 14.2:1 in
245 the SO (Figure 1a) (Table 3).

246

247 In contrast, bulk surface ocean DON:DOP concentration ratios were more variable than bulk
248 surface ocean DOC:DON concentration ratios, and increased by ~175% from 17:1 in the EqPac to
249 44:1 in the AtlSub (Figure 1b) (Table 3). Bulk surface ocean DON:DOP concentration ratios in
250 the PacSub were 21:1, in the SPSG were 22:1, and in the NPSG were 23:1 (Figures 1b, c) (Table
251 3). The Atlantic Ocean generally had higher DON:DOP concentration ratios than the Pacific. For
252 example, the bulk surface ocean DON:DOP concentration ratios in the EqAtl were 27:1, in the
253 SASG were 29:1, in the NASG were 43:1, and were 44:1 in the AtlSub (Figure 1b) (Table 3). We
254 note that the high bulk surface ocean DON:DOP concentration ratios in the AtlSub were
255 potentially biased by the limited DOP concentration observations in the region (n = 11, Table 1),
256 with most of the observations collected near the neighboring subtropical gyre (NASG) (Liang et
257 al., 2022b), which has elevated bulk surface ocean DOC:DOP and DON:DOP concentration ratios.
258 Finally, bulk surface ocean DON:DOP concentration ratios were 19:1 in the IND and 21:1 in the
259 SO (Figure 1b) (Table 3), intermediate between the EqPac and EqAtl values, and we also note that
260 the majority of the IND samples were collected near the SO (Liang et al., 2022b).

261

262 As was seen for bulk surface ocean DON:DOP concentration ratios, bulk surface ocean DOC:DOP
263 concentration ratios were also more variable than DOC:DON concentration ratios, and exhibited
264 a 150% range from a low of 251:1 in the EqPac to a high of 638:1 in the NASG. Bulk surface
265 ocean DOC:DOP concentration ratios in the PacSub were 293:1, and were higher in the NPSG and

266 SPSG, 358:1 and 356:1, respectively (Figure 1c) (Table 3). As was seen for DON:DOP, bulk
267 surface ocean DOC:DOP concentration ratios in the Atlantic were higher than in the Pacific. In
268 the EqAtl the bulk DOC:DOP concentration ratios were 368:1, in the SASG were 450:1, in the
269 AtlSub were 573:1, and in the NASG were 638:1 (Figure 1c) (Table 3). Finally, bulk surface ocean
270 DOC:DOP concentration ratios were 281:1 and 291:1 in the IND and SO, respectively (Figure 1c)
271 (Table 3).

272

273 In summary, bulk surface ocean DOM concentration ratios were depleted in N and P compared
274 with the canonical Redfield ratio (C:N:P = 106:16:1), and ranged from 251:17:1 in the EqPac to
275 638:43:1 in NASG (Table 3), with a global mean of 387:26:1 . Smaller regional variations in bulk
276 DOC:DON concentration ratios were observed than in bulk DON:DOP and DOC:DOP
277 concentration ratios, which were largely driven by changes in DOP concentration. Two patterns in
278 bulk surface ocean DOM stoichiometry emerged: 1) bulk DON:DOP and DOC:DOP concentration
279 ratios were lower in the equatorial and subpolar regions than those in the subtropical gyres; and,
280 2) bulk surface ocean DON:DOP and DOC:DOP concentration ratios were higher in the Atlantic
281 than in the Pacific (Figures 1b, c) (Table 3).

282

283 **3.3 Variations in bulk surface ocean DOM stoichiometry in different geographical regions**

284 Variations in bulk surface ocean DOM stoichiometry were also evaluated among geographical
285 divisions of ocean basins, which allowed us to compare stoichiometric differences between the
286 Western and Eastern or Southern and Northern regions of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, which
287 are not apparent from the biogeochemical divisions (Figures 1d, e, f). In the Atlantic Ocean, bulk
288 surface ocean DOC:DON concentration ratios showed no notable differences between Western
289 and Eastern regions or Southern and Northern regions, which were 15.7:1 in the WNATL, 13.1:1
290 in the ENATL, 15.2:1 in the WSATL, and 14.3:1 in ESATL (Table 4). A similarly narrow range
291 in bulk surface ocean DOC:DON concentration ratios was found in the Pacific Ocean, which
292 ranged from 14.5:1 to 16.1:1 (Table 4). Bulk surface ocean DOC:DON concentration ratios in the
293 WNPAC, ENPAC, WSPAC, and ESPAC were 15.3:1, 14.5:1, 16.1:1, and 15.4:1, respectively
294 (Figures 1-3).

295

296 Differences in bulk surface ocean DON:DOP concentration ratios in the Pacific were more
297 pronounced between the East and West than the North and South. In the ENPAC and ESPAC,
298 bulk surface ocean DON:DOP concentration ratios were 19:1 and 20:1, but increased to 25:1 and
299 27:1 in the WNPAC and WSPAC, respectively (Figure 1e) (Table 4). In contrast, differences
300 between bulk surface ocean DON:DOP concentration ratios were larger between the North and
301 South Atlantic regions compared to the Eastern and Western regions (Figure 1e) (Table 4). Bulk
302 surface ocean DON:DOP concentration ratios in the ESATL were 29:1 and in the WSATL were
303 31:1 while in the ENATL they were 39:1 and in the WNATL were 48:1 (Figure 1e) (Table 4).

304

305 Similar to DON:DOP, bulk surface ocean DOC:DOP concentration ratios had greater differences
306 between the Western and Eastern than between the Northern and Southern regions of the Pacific.
307 The bulk surface ocean DOC:DOP concentration ratios were 273:1 and 301:1 in the ENPAC and
308 ESPAC, respectively, while in the WNPAC they were 388:1 and in the WSPAC were 433:1
309 (Figure 1f) (Table 4). In contrast, differences in bulk surface ocean DOC:DOP concentration ratios
310 were larger between the North and South than between the East and West in the Atlantic Ocean
311 (Figure 1f) (Table 4). Bulk surface ocean DOC:DOP concentration ratios in the ESATL were 413:1
312 and in the WSATL were 467:1 while in the ENATL they were 515:1 and in the WNATL they
313 were 755:1 (Figure 1f) (Table 4). The relatively high bulk DOC:DOP and DON:DOP
314 concentration ratios found in the WNATL are consistent with the very low DOP concentrations
315 previously observed in Sargasso Sea (Mather et al., 2008; Lomas et al., 2010).

316

317 To further identify potential large-scale gradients in bulk surface ocean DOM stoichiometry, we
318 calculated zonal-mean, bulk surface ocean DOC:DON, DON:DOP, and DOC:DOP concentration
319 ratios in the Pacific, and meridional-mean, bulk surface ocean DOC:DON, DON:DOP, and
320 DOC:DOP concentration ratios in the Atlantic Oceans (Figures 2 and 3). In both cases, we used a
321 robust, locally weighted regression (LOWESS) in R (Cleveland, 1979) to fit the points along the
322 line of latitude or longitude to capture the zonal or meridional trends. Mean bulk surface ocean
323 DOC:DON concentration ratios in the Pacific exhibited limited variability (~50%), ranging from
324 ~12:1 to 18:1, but mean bulk surface ocean DON:DOP and DOC:DOP concentration ratios

325 increased ~100% when comparing ratios West vs. East of 160° W (Figure 2). In particular, mean
326 bulk surface ocean DON:DOP concentration ratios increased from ~20:1 to ~40:1 from east to
327 west of 160° W and mean bulk surface ocean DOC:DOP concentration ratios increased from
328 ~250:1 to ~500:1 from east to west of 160 °W (Figure 2). In the Atlantic Ocean, the most
329 pronounced DOM stoichiometric gradient occurred meridionally. While bulk surface ocean
330 DOC:DON concentration ratios in the Atlantic Ocean were relatively invariant around ~15:1, bulk
331 surface ocean DON:DOP and DOC:DOP concentration ratios increased ~100% from South to
332 North, reaching maxima of ~45:1 and ~700:1, respectively, between 20° N and 40° N compared to
333 ratios observed between 30° S to 20° S, ~25:1 and 350:1, respectively (Figure 3). The majority of
334 these increases in DON:DOP and DOC:DOP concentration ratios were driven by decreasing DOP
335 concentrations between the South and North Atlantic.

336

337 In summary, two patterns were identified from the geographical divisions that were not clear from
338 the biogeochemical divisions: 1) bulk surface ocean DOC:DON:DOP concentration ratios
339 increased from ~250:20:1 in the East to ~500:40:1 in the West in the Pacific Ocean, and, 2) bulk
340 surface ocean bulk DOC:DON:DOP concentration ratios increased meridionally from South to
341 North in the Atlantic Ocean to maxima of ~700:45:1 between 20° N and 40° N.

342

343 **3.4 Relationships between surface ocean DOM concentrations and rates of NPP**

344 To evaluate patterns in DOM production and consumption, we calculated correlations of bulk
345 surface ocean DOC, DON, and DOP concentrations vs. satellite-derived rates of NPP using the
346 Carbon-based Productivity Model (CbPM) (Westberry et al., 2008). Given that NPP is the primary
347 source of DOM to the surface ocean (Carlson & Hansell, 2015), it is not surprising that bulk surface
348 ocean DOC, DON, and DOP concentrations are all statistically significantly correlated with rates
349 of NPP (Figure 4). Indeed, similar results have been previously observed for DOC (Hansell &
350 Carlson, 1998a), DON (Knapp et al., 2018a; Zhang et al., 2020a), and DOP (Liang et al., 2022a).
351 However, since DON and DOP are also quantitatively important assimilative nutrient sources for
352 autotrophs, their correlations are not as strong as between DOC and NPP rate estimates; the
353 correlations between bulk surface ocean DOC, DON, and DOP concentrations and CbPM-derived

354 rates of NPP had $R^2 = 0.41$, $p < 0.0000001$, $R^2 = 0.28$, $p < 0.0000001$, and $R^2 = 0.09$, $p < 0.0000001$,
355 respectively, evaluated using Type II regression model (reduced major axis regressions) (Figure
356 4). Importantly, the y-intercepts for the relationships between bulk surface ocean DOC and DON
357 concentrations and CbPM-derived NPP rates were 46 μM and 2.8 μM , respectively, consistent
358 with the concentration of deep ocean (>1000 m), “refractory” DOC and DON calculated from the
359 DOC and DON concentrations database (Hansell et al., 2021) (Table 5). However, the y-intercept
360 for the relationship between bulk surface ocean DOP concentration and CbPM-derived NPP rates
361 was a small negative number (-0.05 μM), which is nonsensical. We note that a number of surface
362 ocean DOP concentration data from the North Atlantic fall below the best fit regression line while
363 data from the Eastern Pacific fall above the line, contributing to the negative intercept (Figure 4c).
364 Low DOP concentrations were observed in the North Atlantic, consistent with previous
365 observations of elevated rates of DOP consumption due to elevated PO_4^{3-} stress (Dyhrman et al.,
366 2006; Van Mooy et al., 2009; Lomas et al., 2010; Sohm & Capone, 2010; Liang et al., 2022a),
367 which contributes to the negative y-intercept. To address this issue but still capture the relationship
368 between estimated rates of NPP and bulk surface ocean DOP concentrations, we set the intercept
369 to 0.05 μM , which corresponds to the deep ocean (>1000 m) DOP concentration observed at
370 Station ALOHA (Foreman et al., 2019) as well as that calculated from the DOPv2021 database
371 (Liang et al., 2022b), and then refitted the linear regression.

372
373 After forcing the y-intercept of the regression between surface ocean DOP concentration and
374 CbPM estimated rates of NPP through 0.05 μM , the ratios of the three slopes in Figures 4a, b and
375 c are C:N:P = 173:15.5:1, and the ratio of the y-intercepts is 920:56:1. Here, we consider the
376 stoichiometry of the y-intercepts to reflect the DOC:DON:DOP concentration ratios of
377 “refractory”, or deep-ocean DOM, where rates of NPP = 0. In contrast, the ratio of the slopes can
378 be considered the DOC:DON:DOP concentration ratio of “labile” surface ocean DOM, or the
379 stoichiometry of the incrementally added DOM that results from increasing rates of NPP. Using
380 the VGPM NPP product (Behrenfeld & Falkowski, 1997) did not meaningfully alter the strength
381 of the correlation between DOC, DON, and DOP concentrations vs. rates of NPP ($R^2 = 0.36$, $p <$
382 0.0000001 for DOC vs. NPP, $R^2 = 0.28$, $p < 0.0000001$ for DON vs. NPP, and $R^2 = 0.07$, $p <$

383 0.0000001 for DOP vs. NPP), or the labile or refractory DOM C:N:P ratios calculated from this
384 method (Table 5). Our labile DOC:DON:DOP concentration ratios calculated by this approach are
385 also similar to those reported in Hopkinson & Vallino, 2005, 199:20:1. However, our refractory
386 DOC:DON:DOP concentration ratios are much lower than those that reported in Hopkinson &
387 Vallino, 2005, 3511:202:1, probably in part due to the majority of their samples being collected
388 in the North Atlantic, where the highest global ocean bulk DON:DOP and DOC:DOP
389 concentration ratios and lowest DOP concentrations are found (Figure 1). However, our refractory
390 DOC:DON:DOP concentration ratios calculated by this approach are consistent with the carefully
391 measured deep ocean DOC:DON:DOP concentration ratios via improved methods at Station
392 ALOHA, C:N:P = 760:45:1 (Foreman et al., 2019) .

393

394 **3.5 Variations in labile surface ocean DOM stoichiometry in different biogeochemical
395 regions**

396 Correlations between surface ocean DOC, DON, and DOP concentrations and rates of NPP
397 indicate that DOC, DON and DOP can be divided into labile and refractory pools, and here we
398 specifically explore the stoichiometry of labile surface ocean DOM. Removing the “inertia” of the
399 recalcitrant DOM from surface ocean stoichiometry allows us to focus on variability associated
400 with DOC:DON:DOP production and consumption patterns unique to biogeochemically and
401 geographically defined regions. Here we estimate labile surface ocean DOC, DON, and DOP
402 concentrations by subtracting the mean deep ocean concentrations from the mean surface ocean
403 concentrations, as has been done previously (Lønborg et al., 2018; Letscher et al., 2022). We find
404 that regional variations in labile surface ocean DOM stoichiometry are similar to those observed
405 for bulk surface ocean DOM stoichiometry, with generally lower ratios found in the equatorial and
406 subpolar regions and higher concentration ratios found in the subtropical gyres (Figures 5a, b, c)
407 (Table 6). Additionally, labile surface ocean DOM had higher DON:DOP and DOC:DOP
408 concentration ratios but lower DOC:DON concentration ratios in the Atlantic Ocean than in the
409 Pacific Ocean (Figures 5a, b, c) (Table 6).

410

411 Broadly speaking, labile surface ocean DOC:DON concentration ratios were lower, and thus closer

412 to the “Redfield” C:N ratio of 6.6:1 than the bulk DOC:DON concentration ratios, and ranged from
413 5.4:1 to 12.0:1, or spanned a ~100% range, a larger dynamic range than was observed for bulk
414 surface ocean DOC:DON concentration ratios. Specifically, in the IND and SO, labile surface
415 ocean DOC:DON concentration ratios were 9.2:1 and 5.4:1, respectively (Figure 5a) (Table 6). In
416 the EqPac and EqAtl, labile surface ocean DOC:DON concentration ratios were 10.6:1 and 8.4:1,
417 respectively, and in the PacSub and AtlSub were 8.1:1 and 7.0:1, respectively (Figure 5a) (Table
418 6). In the NPSG and SPSG, labile surface ocean DOC:DON concentration ratios were 11.0:1 and
419 12.0:1, respectively, and in the NASG and SASG they were 8.5:1 and 9.8:1, respectively (Figure
420 5a) (Table 6).

421

422 As was seen for labile surface ocean DOC:DON concentration ratios, labile surface ocean
423 DON:DOP concentration ratios were also lower than was seen in the bulk pool, ranged from 12:1
424 to 50:1, and thus were closer to the “Redfield” N:P ratio of 16:1. Generally, labile surface ocean
425 DON:DOP concentration ratios were lowest near regions of significant upwelling and/or new
426 production, and were higher in the subtropical gyres. For example, in the EqPac and EqAtl, labile
427 surface ocean DON:DOP concentration ratios were 12:1 and 23:1, respectively, and in the IND
428 and SO were both 15:1 (Figure 5b) (Table 6). In the PacSub and AtlSub, labile surface ocean
429 DON:DOP concentration ratios diverged between the basins, and were 17:1 and 50:1, respectively.
430 However, this Atlantic/Pacific difference needs further investigation due to limited DOP
431 observations in the AtlSub (n=11, Table 1). This Atlantic/Pacific difference is also observed in the
432 subtropical gyres, with NPSG and SPSG labile surface ocean DON:DOP concentration ratios of
433 19:1 and 17:1, respectively, while in the SASG and NASG they were 26:1 and 49:1, respectively.
434 We note that labile surface ocean DON:DOP concentration ratios in the EqPac are lower than the
435 canonical Redfield ratio, 12:1, which has not been reported before and is lower than the reported
436 PON:POP ratios of ~22:1 in the Pacific equatorial region (Lee et al., 2021).

437

438 Similar to DOC:DON and DON:DOP, mean labile surface ocean DOC:DOP concentration ratios
439 observed in the biogeochemical regions were lower than the bulk surface ocean DOC:DOP
440 concentration ratios, and ranged from 83:1 to 414:1 (Table 6), and thus were closer (and sometimes

even lower than) the “Redfield” C:P ratio of 106:1. As was seen previously, lower mean labile surface ocean DOC:DOP concentration ratios were observed in regions associated with upwelling and higher rates of NPP, and increased in the subtropical gyres. Specifically, in the EqPac and EqAtl, the mean labile surface ocean DOC:DOP concentration ratios were relatively low, 127:1 and 195:1, respectively, similar to those in the IND and SO, 138:1 and 83:1, respectively (Figures 5c) (Table 6). Labile surface ocean DOC:DOP concentration ratios increased in the subpolar gyres, 139:1 in the PacSub and 346:1 in the AtlSub (Figure 5c) (Table 6). In the NPSG and SPSG, labile surface ocean DOC:DOP concentration ratios were both 209:1 and in the NASG and SASG they were 414:1 and 254:1, respectively (Figure 5c) (Table 6). In the SO, labile surface ocean DOC:DOP and concentration ratios (C:P = 83:1) were also lower than the canonical Redfield ratio. However, lower-than Redfield POM C:P ratios have also been reported from the Southern Ocean in previous work (POM C:P = 91:1 in Teng et al., 2014, and POM C:P = 61:1 - 190:1 in Lee et al., 2021).

454

In summary, labile surface ocean DOC:DON:DOP concentration ratios ranged from 83:15:1 to 414:49:1 among biogeochemically divided regions, with a global mean of 179:20:1, and with typically lower stoichiometric ratios than in the bulk pool, with the low DOP concentrations observed in the NASG and AtlSub driving maxima in labile DON:DOP and DOC:DOP concentration ratios (Figure 5) (Table 6).

460

461 **3.6 Variations in surface ocean labile DOM stoichiometry in different geographical 462 regions**

Regional variations in labile surface ocean DOM stoichiometry in the geographical regions are similar to those observed in the biogeochemical regions, with concentration ratios closer to the canonical Redfield ratio than the bulk DOM concentration ratios observed in the same regions (Figures 5d, e, f) (Table 7). As was apparent in the bulk surface ocean DOM stoichiometry, the geographical divisions again highlight labile DOM stoichiometric gradients between the Eastern and Western Pacific, and between the Southern and Northern Atlantic Oceans.

469

470 Surface ocean labile DOC:DON concentration ratios in the geographical regions ranged from 4.8
471 to 12.1, and were generally lower near regions of elevated rates of NPP, most notably in the
472 Southern region where labile surface ocean DOC:DON concentration ratios were 4.8:1 (Table 7).
473 In the Pacific Ocean, we found no notable differences in labile surface ocean DOC:DON
474 concentration ratios between the Northern and Southern or Eastern and Western geographic
475 regions. Surface ocean labile DOC:DON concentration ratios in the ENPAC and ESPAC were
476 9.6:1 and 10.9:1, respectively, and in the WNPAC and WSPAC were 10.6:1 and 12.1:1,
477 respectively (Table 7). In the Atlantic Ocean, differences in labile surface ocean DOC:DON
478 concentration ratios are also small. In the ENATL and ESATL, labile surface ocean DOC:DON
479 concentration ratios were 7.1:1 and 8.9:1, respectively and in the WNATL and WSATL labile
480 surface ocean DOC:DON concentration ratios were 10.5:1 and 10.1:1, respectively.

481

482 Similar to bulk surface ocean DON:DOP concentration ratios, labile surface ocean DON:DOP
483 concentration ratios, which ranged from 14:1 to 58:1, were more variable than labile surface ocean
484 DOC:DON concentration ratios. However, labile surface ocean DON:DOP concentration ratios
485 were not meaningfully lower than bulk surface ocean DON:DOP ratios. Relatively low labile
486 surface ocean DON:DOP concentration ratios were observed in the Indian and SO, 14.8 and 19.3,
487 respectively (Figure 5) (Table 7). In the Pacific Ocean, there were larger differences between labile
488 surface ocean DON:DOP concentration ratios in the East vs. West than between the North vs.
489 South, similar to the bulk pool (Figure 5). Labile surface ocean DON:DOP concentration ratios in
490 the ENPAC and ESPAC were both 14:1 but increased to 22:1 in the WNPAC and WSPAC (Figure
491 5) (Table 7). In the Atlantic the difference in labile surface ocean DON:DOP concentration ratios
492 was most pronounced between the North vs. South. The ESATL and WSATL had labile surface
493 ocean DON:DOP concentration ratios of 26:1 and 27:1, while the ENATL and WNATL had labile
494 surface ocean DON:DOP concentration ratios of 42:1 and 58:1, respectively (Figure 5) (Table 7).

495

496 Similar patterns were observed for labile surface ocean DOC:DOP concentration ratios, which
497 ranged from 93:1 to 610:1, and were generally higher in the Western vs. Eastern Pacific, and
498 Northern vs. Southern Atlantic. Again, the lowest labile surface ocean DOC:DOP concentration
499 ratios were found in the Southern and IND regions, 93:1 and 135:1, respectively. In the Pacific

500 Ocean, labile surface ocean DOC:DOP concentration ratios in the ENAPC and ESPAC were 134:1
501 and 154:1, respectively, and increased to 228:1 and 270:1 in the WNPAC and WSPAC,
502 respectively (Figure 5) (Table 7). In the Atlantic Ocean, the labile surface ocean DOC:DOP
503 concentration ratios in the ESATL and WSATL were 228:1 and 276:1, while in the ENATL and
504 WNATL they were 299:1 and 610:1, respectively (Figure 5) (Table 7).

505

506 In summary, the labile surface ocean DOC:DON:DOP concentration ratios in the geographically
507 defined regions ranged from 93:19:1 in the Southern Ocean to 610:58:1 in the WNATL (Table 7),
508 and were typically closer to “Redfield” stoichiometry than the bulk surface ocean DOC:DON:DOP
509 concentration ratios (268:19:1 to 745:47:1) (Table 4). Labile surface ocean DON:DOP and
510 DOC:DOP stoichiometry shared similar patterns to their bulk counterparts, and increased from
511 East to West in the Pacific Ocean and from South to North in the Atlantic Ocean, with the highest
512 labile surface ocean DON:DOP and DOC:DOP stoichiometry found in the Sargasso Sea (20° N –
513 40° N) of the WNATL.

514

515 **4. Discussion**

516 **4.1 Variability in bulk surface ocean DOM stoichiometry driven by changes in surface 517 ocean DOP concentrations**

518 Previous work has examined variability in bulk surface ocean DOC and DON concentrations as
519 well as their concentration ratios, finding relatively small variations in DON concentrations and
520 DOC:DON concentration ratios (Hansell & Carlson, 2001; Letscher et al., 2013; Sipler & Bronk,
521 2015; Bif et al., 2022). We similarly find relatively low variability in both bulk and labile surface
522 ocean DOC:DON concentration ratios (Figures 1 & 4) (Tables 1-6). Evaluating bulk global surface
523 ocean DOC and DON concentration data together with new DOP concentration data (Liang et al.,
524 2022b), we find that bulk and labile surface ocean DON:DOP and DOC:DOP concentration ratios
525 vary more than bulk and labile surface ocean DOC:DON concentration ratios, indicating that
526 variations in DON:DOP and DOC:DOP concentration ratios are driven by the relatively wide
527 range in DOP concentrations compared to the ranges in surface ocean DOC and especially DON
528 concentrations (Figures 1 and 4) (Tables 3-7). Indeed, according to the global ocean DOC, DON
529 and DOP concentration datasets (Hansell et al., 2021; Liang et al., 2022b), the typical range in

530 bulk surface ocean DOC, DON and DOP concentrations are 40 – 80 μM , 3 – 6 μM and 0.05 – 0.6
531 μM , respectively. These concentration ranges correspond to a 100% increase between typical
532 surface ocean DOC and DON minimum and maximum concentrations, but a 1100% increase
533 between the typical minimum and maximum surface ocean DOP concentrations. Thus, the order
534 of magnitude larger variability in bulk surface ocean DOP concentrations relative to bulk surface
535 ocean DOC and DON concentrations corresponds to the higher variability in surface ocean
536 DON:DOP and DOC:DOP concentration ratios relative to bulk surface ocean DOC:DON
537 concentration ratios.

538

539 We hypothesize that high variability in bulk surface ocean DON:DOP and DOC:DOP
540 concentration ratios is driven by the changes in DOP concentrations due to DOP consumption by
541 phytoplankton in the surface ocean. To evaluate this, we compared bulk surface ocean DON:DOP
542 and DOC:DOP concentration ratios with a model product of the estimated fraction of annual net
543 community production (ANCP) supported by DOP consumption (Letscher et al., 2022) in different
544 biogeochemical regions (Figure 6). Although no correlation for the global data set was found, we
545 found positive correlations between bulk surface ocean DOC:DOP concentration ratios and the
546 model-estimated fraction of ANCP supported by DOP consumption for points in the Pacific Ocean
547 ($R^2=0.89$, slope = 1347, $p<0.05$) as well as separately for the Atlantic Ocean ($R^2=0.85$, slope =
548 1987, $p<0.05$) (Figure 6). Similarly, positive correlations between DON:DOP concentration ratios
549 and the model estimated fraction of ANCP supported by DOP consumption were also found for
550 points in the Pacific Ocean ($R^2=0.88$, slope = 68, $p<0.05$) and separately for the Atlantic Ocean
551 ($R^2=0.67$, slope = 147, $p<0.05$) (Figure 6). These positive correlations between bulk surface ocean
552 DOC:DOP or DON:DOP concentration ratios and the fraction of ANCP supported by DOP
553 consumption by surface ocean phytoplankton supports the conclusion that DOP consumption by
554 phytoplankton is the major contributor to changes in bulk surface ocean DOP concentrations, and
555 the associated changes in bulk surface ocean DOC:DOP and DON:DOP concentration ratios. We
556 interpret the higher bulk surface ocean DOC:DOP and DON:DOP concentration ratios and
557 associated y-intercepts in Figure 6 for the Atlantic Ocean relative to the Pacific to imply that the
558 Atlantic Ocean has a more P-depleted ‘preformed’ character relative to the Pacific Ocean,

559 consistent with elevated rates of dissimilatory N loss in the Pacific vs. Atlantic (see section 4.2
560 below). Quantitatively, the slopes above suggest that for a 10% increase in the fraction of ANCP
561 supported by DOP consumption in the Atlantic Ocean, DON:DOP and DOC:DOP concentration
562 ratios increase by 15:1 and 135:1, respectively. In the Pacific Ocean, DON:DOP and DOC:DOP
563 concentration ratios increase by 7:1 and 15:1, respectively, with a 10% increase in the fraction of
564 ANCP supported by the DOP consumption. We suggest that these relatively large changes in
565 surface ocean DOP concentrations due to autotrophic DOP consumption contribute to the zonal
566 and meridional mean trends in bulk and labile surface ocean DON:DOP and DOC:DOP
567 concentration ratios observed in the Pacific Ocean and Atlantic Ocean, respectively (Figures 3 and
568 4), which are explored further below.

569

570 **4.2 Linkage between bulk and labile surface ocean DOM stoichiometry and water column 571 denitrification in the Pacific Ocean**

572 As reported here, the Pacific Ocean experiences greater West to East variability in bulk and labile
573 surface ocean DOM stoichiometry than between the North and South (Figure 1) (Tables 3 and 4).
574 In particular, higher bulk surface ocean DOP concentrations are observed East vs. West of ~160°
575 W (Figure 2). These gradients in bulk surface ocean DOP concentration correspond to large
576 gradients in bulk and labile surface ocean DON:DOP and DOC:DOP stoichiometry zonally across
577 the Pacific Ocean, with lower ratios in the Eastern vs. Western Pacific Ocean (Figure 2). Previous
578 work has suggested that zonal changes in DOP concentration across the Pacific can be attributed
579 to the net production and accumulation of DOP in surface waters over oxygen deficient zones
580 (ODZs), driven by dissimilatory NO_3^- consumption in suboxic subsurface waters (Liang et al.,
581 2022a). The ODZs of both the Eastern Tropical North Pacific (ETNP) and Eastern Tropical South
582 Pacific (ETSP) support significant rates of water column denitrification and/or anaerobic
583 ammonium oxidation (Ward et al., 2009; Chang et al., 2010, 2012; DeVries et al., 2012) (Figure
584 2). The resulting supply of a relative excess of PO_4^{3-} compared to NO_3^- and “Redfieldian”
585 phytoplankton demands in waters upwelled to the surface puts low pressure on the DOP pool as
586 an assimilative source of P, and allows accumulated DOP to be advected west, where slow but
587 progressive DOP consumption gradually reduces bulk surface ocean DOP concentrations (Liang

588 et al., 2022a). At basin scales, this corresponds to zonal increases in bulk surface ocean DON:DOP
589 and DOC:DOP concentration ratios from East to West (Figure 2).

590

591 In addition to direct measurements and modeled estimates of rates of water column
592 denitrification and anammox, geochemical tracers such as “P*”, where $P^* = ([PO_4^{3-}] - [NO_3^-]/16)$,
593 record the effects of water column denitrification and/or anaerobic ammonium
594 oxidation (Deutsch et al., 2007). Here we compare modeled rates of water column
595 denitrification (Wang et al., 2019) and zonally averaged surface ocean P* values calculated
596 using World Ocean Atlas 2013 nutrient data (Garcia et al., 2013) with zonal trends in bulk
597 surface ocean DON:DOP and DOC:DOP concentration ratios (Figure 7). Results show that
598 Spearman’s correlation coefficients for both zonal mean bulk surface ocean DON:DOP and
599 DOC:DOP concentration ratios vs. rates of water column denitrification are -0.58 ($p < 0.001$).
600 Similarly, Spearman’s correlation coefficients for both zonal mean bulk surface ocean
601 DON:DOP and DOC:DOP concentration ratios vs. P* are -0.55 ($p < 0.001$), indicating
602 significant negative correlations between zonal trends of bulk surface ocean DON:DOP and
603 DOC:DOP concentration ratios and rates of water column denitrification and P* in the Pacific
604 Ocean (Figure 7). Similar results are found when comparing labile surface ocean DOM
605 stoichiometry with P* and modeled denitrification rates (Spearman’s correlation coefficients
606 = -0.56, $p < 0.001$ for labile DON:DOP/DOC:DOP vs. rates of water column denitrification
607 and Spearman’s correlation coefficients = -0.53, $p < 0.001$ for labile DON:DOP/DOC:DOP
608 vs. P*).

609

610 The linkage between the surface ocean DOM stoichiometry and water column denitrification
611 rates is also apparent when comparing patterns in DOM stoichiometry in the Pacific Ocean
612 with the Atlantic Ocean. The minimum oxygen concentration in the water column in the
613 Eastern Atlantic is not low enough to enable denitrification (Zehr & Ward, 2002; Paulmier &
614 Ruiz-Pino, 2009; DeVries et al., 2012), which results in a reduced supply of excess PO_4^{3-} to
615 surface waters relative to the supply of NO_3^- and Redfieldian phytoplankton demands.
616 Without significant rates of dissimilatory N loss in the water column of the Eastern Atlantic
617 reducing pressure on the surface ocean PO_4^{3-} , and thus DOP pools, we do not observe
618 significant zonal gradients in bulk and labile DON:DOP and DOC:DOP concentration ratios
619 between the Eastern and Western Atlantic (Figure 1). Instead, we observe relatively elevated

620 bulk surface ocean DON:DOP concentration ratios in the Eastern Atlantic (~30:1-40:1)
621 relative to the Eastern Pacific, 19:1 (Table 4), with similar trends observed for bulk surface
622 ocean DOC:DOP concentration ratios (Table 4). We interpret this to result from increased
623 pressure on the DOP pool in the Eastern Atlantic due to higher PO₄³⁻ stress. Consequently, we
624 argue that water column denitrification in the ETNP and ETSP leaves a signature in bulk and
625 labile surface ocean DOM stoichiometry that effectively leads to a “subsidy” of DOP in
626 Pacific surface waters that may support elevated rates of carbon and nitrogen fixation
627 compared to the Atlantic.

628

629 Although low surface ocean PO₄³⁻ concentrations and thus elevated P stress are the primary
630 drivers of DOP consumption, recent work suggests that alleviated iron stress can enhance surface
631 ocean DOP consumption (Liang et al., 2022a). In Figure 7 we overlay the zonal trends of 12
632 modeled dust deposition rates (Xu & Weber, 2021), as well as satellite derived NPQ-corrected
633 φ_{sat} , a remote-sensing based estimate of iron stress experienced by phytoplankton (Behrenfeld et
634 al., 2009; Liang et al., 2022a), to explore their relationships with surface ocean DOP
635 distributions. Since modeled dust deposition patterns and rates are highly dependent on model
636 choice, we consider the dust deposition output from 12 different atmospheric models (Xu &
637 Weber, 2021). These 12 atmospheric models include 10 models from the AEROCOM Phase II
638 Intercomparison project and two estimates from Mahowald et al., 2005 and Zhang et al., 2015.
639 NPQ-corrected φ_{sat} has been used to indicate iron stress experienced by marine phytoplankton
640 (Behrenfeld et al., 2009; Browning et al., 2014; Hopwood et al., 2018; Lee et al., 2021; Liang et
641 al., 2022a) based on phytoplankton photochemical and physiological relationships (Behrenfeld &
642 Milligan, 2013), where higher NPQ-corrected φ_{sat} values correspond to elevated iron stress faced
643 by phytoplankton. We find that dust deposition rates increase and NPQ-corrected φ_{sat} decreases
644 from East to West across the Pacific Ocean (Figure 7). Gradients in both metrics suggest that
645 phytoplankton experience less iron stress in the Western than Eastern Pacific Ocean, consistent
646 with observations that iron limits phytoplankton growth (Mahowald et al., 2005; Moore et al.,
647 2013; Ustick et al., 2021) and nitrogen fixation rates (Knapp et al., 2016) in the Eastern Pacific
648 Ocean. We note that hydrothermal vents along the Tonga-Kermadec Ridge in the Western Pacific
649 Ocean are another potential source of iron in addition to dust deposition (Guieu et al., 2018). Thus,
650 we interpret the increasing bulk and labile surface ocean DON:DOP and DOC:DOP stoichiometry

651 from East to West in the Pacific Ocean to result from progressive DOP consumption, in particular
652 as PO_4^{3-} stress increases and iron stress decreases zonally.

653

654 **4.3 Linkage between bulk and labile DOM stoichiometry and iron supply in the Atlantic 655 Ocean**

656 Here we explore potential causes of the meridional as opposed to zonal gradients in bulk and
657 labile surface ocean DOM stoichiometry observed in the Atlantic Ocean. In the Atlantic
658 Ocean the maxima in bulk and labile surface ocean DON:DOP and DOC:DOP concentration
659 ratios were found in the Sargasso Sea (20° N- 40° N) (Figures 3 and 8), coincident with the
660 extraordinarily low DOP concentrations previously observed in this region, ~50 nM (Mather
661 et al., 2008; Lomas et al., 2010; Liang et al., 2022b) (Figure 3). Indeed, the Sargasso Sea is the
662 region where the highest bulk and labile surface ocean DON:DOP and DOC:DOP
663 stoichiometry is found not just in the Atlantic Ocean, but in the global ocean (Figures 1 and
664 2), highlighting the unique nature of this region . Previous work suggested that enhanced DOP
665 consumption in this region occurs when phytoplankton face increased PO_4^{3-} stress but iron
666 stress is alleviated (Liang et al., 2022a). Similar to our analysis in the Pacific Ocean, we use
667 meridionally-averaged, modeled dust deposition rates (Xu & Weber, 2021), NPQ-corrected
668 φ_{sat} (Behrenfeld et al., 2009; Liang et al., 2022a), and surface ocean P* calculated from World
669 Ocean Atlas 2013 (Garcia et al., 2013) to evaluate iron and PO_4^{3-} stress, respectively, in the
670 Atlantic Ocean.

671

672 The minima in Atlantic surface ocean P* is found between 20° N and 40° N (Figure 8), indicative
673 of elevated PO_4^{3-} stress in this region. The maxima of dust deposition rates estimated from the 12
674 models converged between 0° and 20° N, and NPQ-corrected φ_{sat} also decreases between 20° N
675 and 40° N (Figure 8), suggesting reduced iron stress in this region. The maxima of DOC and DON
676 concentrations in the Atlantic Ocean were also found between 0° N and 20° N, consistent with
677 regional dust fertilization of phytoplankton (Figures 3 & 8). However, no notable increase in DOP
678 concentrations are observed between 0° and 20° N, and the maxima in DON:DOP and DOC:DOP
679 concentration ratios are found between 20° N and 40° N. We interpret these meridional trends to
680 indicate that reduced iron stress from dust deposition enhances primary productivity to the extent
681 that phytoplankton can access adequate N and P, from either inorganic or organic sources. Between

682 20° N to 40° N, consumption of DOP increases due to elevated PO_4^{3-} stress, with a resulting
683 surface ocean DOM stoichiometric signature of extraordinarily elevated bulk and labile DON:DOP
684 (up to ~58:1) and DOC:DOP (up to ~745:1) concentration ratios (Figure 8). We suggest that other
685 regions with relatively elevated bulk and labile surface ocean DON:DOP (~27-30:1) and
686 DOC:DOP (~400:1) concentration ratios, e.g., the Western North and South Pacific and Western
687 South Atlantic (Figures 1 and 5) (Tables 3,4, 6 & 7) would continue to draw down surface ocean
688 DOP concentrations if iron were more abundant.

689

690 **4.4 Comparison between surface ocean DOM and POM stoichiometry**

691 Finally, we compare our results in bulk and labile surface ocean DOM stoichiometry with POM
692 stoichiometry. Recent studies show that surface ocean POM C:N:P stoichiometry exhibits regional
693 variability depending on nutrient stress and phytoplankton community composition (Teng et al.,
694 2014; Galbraith & Martiny, 2015; Lomas et al., 2021; Inomura et al., 2022). Here, we use recent
695 global POM concentration datasets (Martiny et al., 2014; Tanioka et al., 2022) to calculate surface
696 ocean POC:PON:POP stoichiometry in the same 10 biogeochemical regions (Table S1) and
697 compare them with the bulk and labile surface ocean DOC:DON:DOP stoichiometry (Figure 9).
698 First, we find that bulk DOC:DON concentration ratios (C:N = 14.6:1) are higher than labile
699 DOC:DON and POC:PON concentration across all regions, with labile DOC:DON and POC:PON
700 concentration ratios more similar to each other, mean of 8.9:1 for labile DOC:DON and 7.7:1 for
701 POC:PON (Figure 9) (Table S1). These results suggest that labile DOM and POM are produced
702 with similar C:N ratios, with refractory DOM becoming more depleted in N either from
703 preferential remineralization (Letscher & Moore, 2015, Knapp et al., 2018), and/or potentially
704 accumulating DOC from another source (McCarthy et al., 2004). We also note that labile
705 DOC:DON concentration ratios are systematically higher than POC:PON concentration ratios in
706 the Pacific than Atlantic Ocean (Figure 9). We hypothesize that this results from preferential loss
707 of surface ocean DON resulting from increased pressure on the surface ocean DON pool due to
708 dissimilatory inorganic N loss in the ODZs of the Eastern Pacific (Knapp et al., 2018a; Bif et al.,
709 2022), although additional field work would help evaluate this possibility.

710

711 Additionally, we find that labile DOM, bulk DOM, and POM have similar N:P stoichiometry
712 across different biogeochemical regions, with the exception of the NASG, where labile and bulk

713 DON:DOP stoichiometry ($N:P = 43:1$ for bulk DOM and $N:P=49:1$ for labile DOM) exceed
714 PON:POP stoichiometry ($N:P = 31:1$) (Figure 9) (Table S1), suggesting that the NASG is a unique
715 region with significant DOP consumption by phytoplankton. Typically, bulk DOC:DOP
716 stoichiometry (global mean of 387:1) is higher than labile DOC:DOP and POC:POP stoichiometry
717 (global mean of 179:1 for labile DOC:DOP and global mean of 160:1 for POC:POP), which are
718 similar across the different biogeochemical regions (Figure 9). However, the NASG exhibits
719 higher labile DOC:DOP stoichiometry ($C:P = 638:1$) than POC:POP ($C:P = 285:1$), which we
720 hypothesize results from autotrophic DOP consumption. We argue that the reduced P^* and
721 elevated dust deposition to the NASG sets it apart in the global ocean and places extreme pressure
722 on the surface ocean DOP pool as alternative autotrophic nutrient sources, consistent with previous
723 studies on DOP cycling in the Sargasso Sea (Mather et al., 2008; Van Mooy et al., 2009; Lomas
724 et al., 2010; Orchard et al., 2010; Sohm & Capone, 2010; Reynolds et al., 2014).

725

726 **5. Conclusion**

727 In this work we describe global patterns in surface ocean DOC:DON:DOP stoichiometry using
728 updated global ocean DOC, DON and DOP concentration datasets (Hansell et al., 2021; Liang et
729 al., 2022b). We find that bulk and labile surface ocean DOC:DON stoichiometry exhibit the least
730 spatial variability, consistent with prior work (Hansell & Carlson, 1998a, 2001; Bif et al., 2022),
731 although the labile DOC:DON stoichiometry is closer to the “Redfield” 6.6:1 C:N stoichiometry
732 (on average $\sim 8.9:1$) than bulk DOC:DON stoichiometry (on average $\sim 14.6:1$). Additionally,
733 significant differences in bulk and labile surface ocean DON:DOP and DOC:DOP stoichiometry
734 were observed within and among ocean basins, whether divided based on biogeochemical or
735 geographical boundaries, and we argue that these trends are driven by the significant rates of water
736 column denitrification occurring in the eastern tropical Pacific, and because of the high rates of
737 atmospheric dust deposition to the tropical North Atlantic. Specifically, we find that bulk and labile
738 surface ocean DON:DOP and DOC:DOP stoichiometry increase from the East to West in the
739 Pacific as a result of increasing pressure on the DOP pool as surface waters transit westwards in
740 the basin (Liang et al., 2022a). In the Atlantic, meridional increases in bulk and labile surface
741 ocean DON:DOP and DOC:DOP stoichiometry from the South to the North are coincident with
742 regions of low iron stress and high PO_4^{3-} stress, and the lowest concentrations of surface ocean
743 DOP observed globally. These observations illustrate the geochemical expression of subsurface

744 (i.e., denitrification) and atmospheric (dust deposition) processes on surface ocean organic matter
745 stoichiometry. We stress that these observations would not be possible without the considerable
746 effort associated with basin-crossing cruises including the CLIVAR, GO-SHIP, and
747 GEOTRACES field campaigns, which provide unique synoptic insight into global marine
748 biogeochemical processes.

749

750 **Data availability**

751 DOPv2021 database is publicly available at BCO DMO website ([https://www.bco-](https://www.bco-dmo.org/dataset/855139)
752 [dmo.org/dataset/855139](https://www.bco-dmo.org/dataset/855139)) and DOM data compilation is publicly available at NCEI
753 (<https://doi.org/10.25921/s4f4-ye35>)

754

755 **Acknowledgement**

756 This research was funded by NSF-OCE-1829797 (ANK) and NSF-OCE-1829916 (RTL). We also
757 acknowledge Tom Weber and Hairong Xu who kindly shared their model output of dust deposition
758 rates. We gratefully acknowledge the scientists and crew who facilitated sample collection for the
759 global DOC, DON, and DOP concentration databases.

760

761 **Author contributions**

762 ZL and ANK wrote the manuscript. ZL processed and analyzed the data. ZL, RTL, and ANK
763 designed the study. ZL, ANK and RTL revised the manuscript.

764

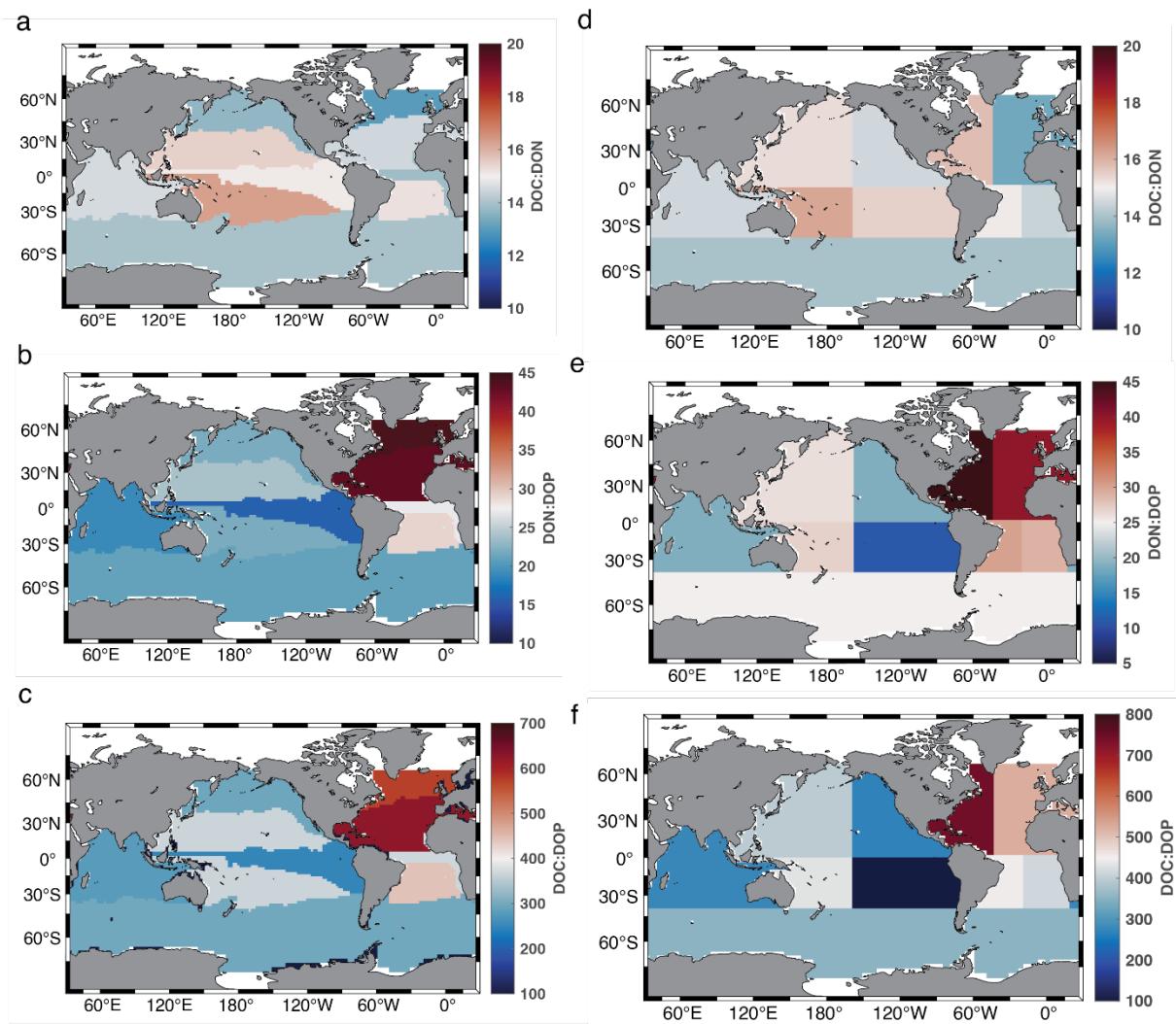
765 **Competing interests**

766 The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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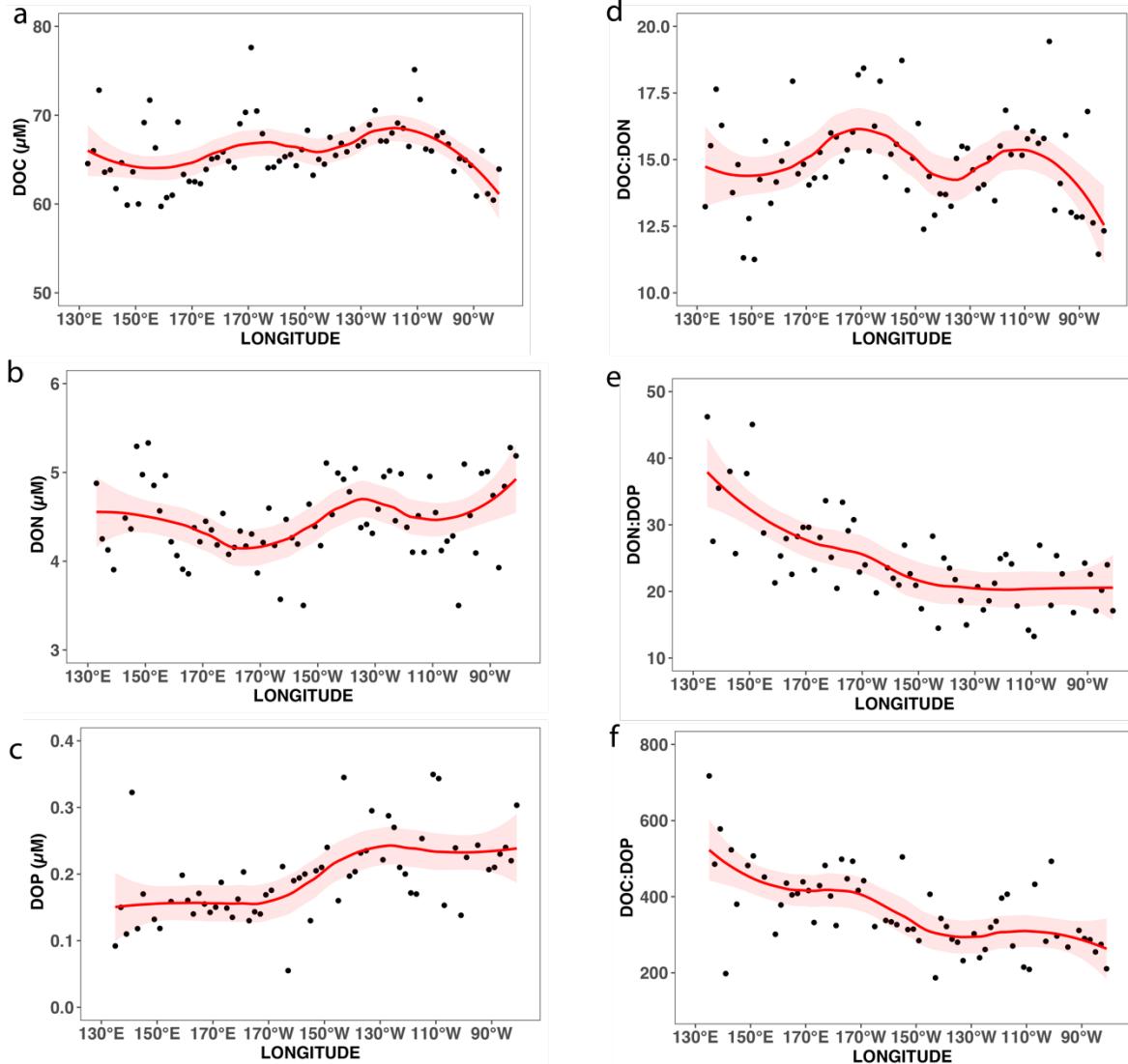


770

771 Figure 1. Surface (<73 m) ocean bulk DOC:DON (a), DON:DOP (b) and DOC:DOP (c)
 772 concentration ratios in different biogeochemical regions, and surface bulk DOC:DON (d),
 773 DON:DOP (e), and DOC:DOP (f) concentration ratios in different geographical regions.

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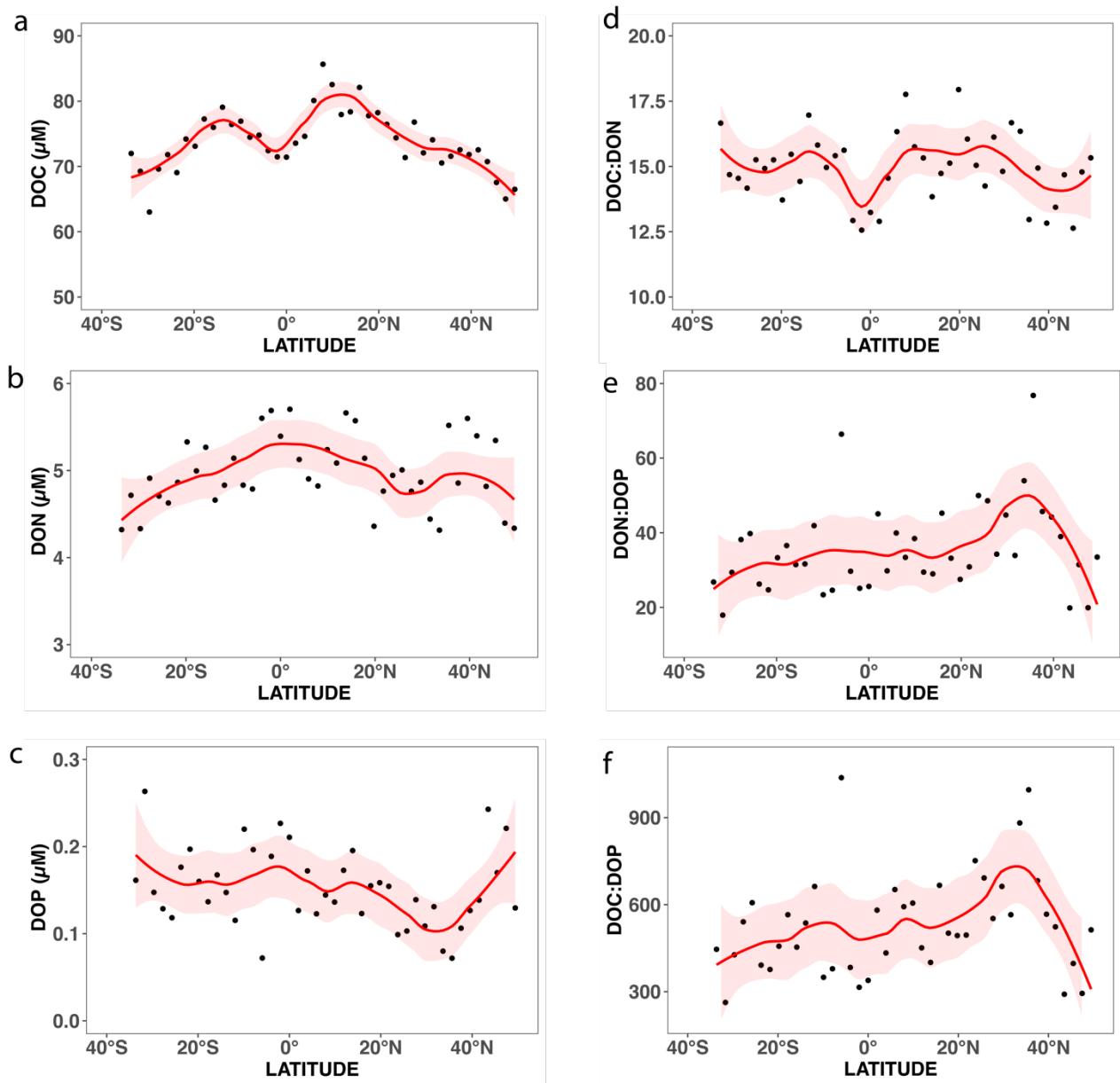
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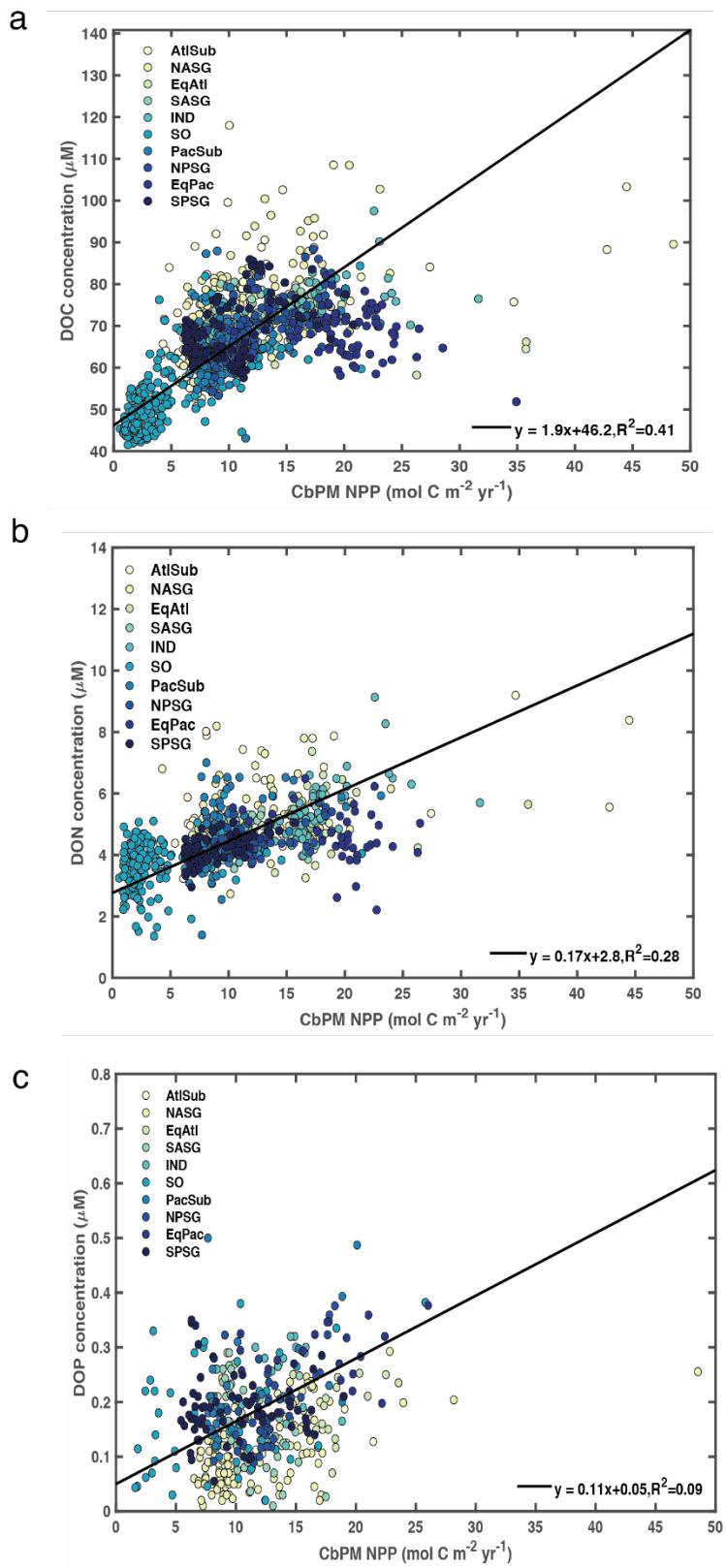
777 Figure 2. Combined North and South Pacific zonal mean surface (< 73 m) ocean bulk DOC (a),
 778 DON (b), and DOP concentration (c), as well as bulk surface ocean DOC:DON (d), DON:DOP
 779 (e) and DOC:DOP (f) concentration ratios. Red line shows the fitting curve of the data using the
 780 LOWESS method (Cleveland, 1979) and red shading area shows the 95% confidence interval.

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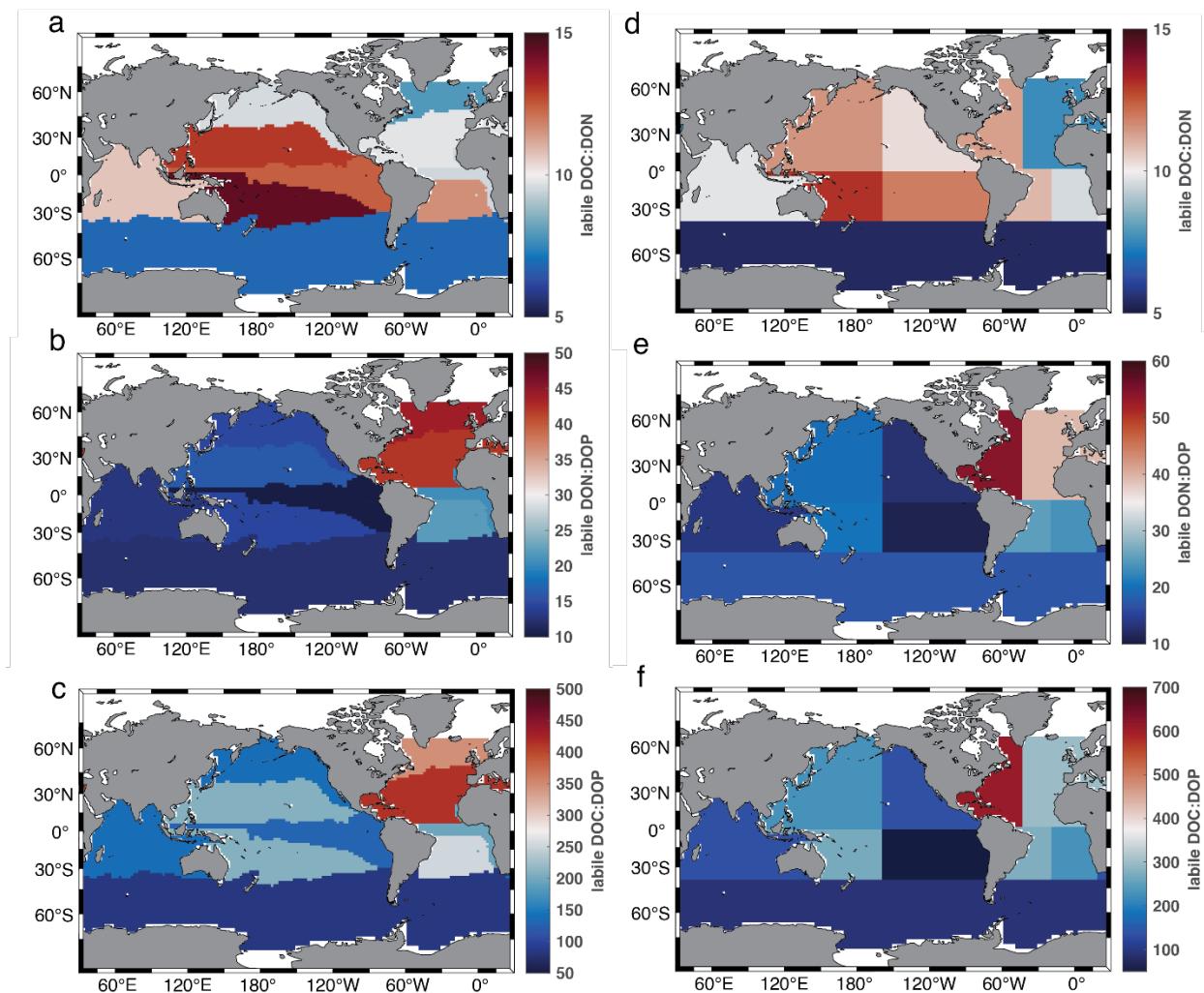
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Figure 3. Combined West and East Atlantic mean meridional bulk surface ocean (<73 m) DOC (a), DON (b), and DOP (c), concentrations, as well as bulk surface ocean DOC:DON (d), DON:DOP (e), and DOC:DOP (f) concentration ratios. Red line shows the fitting curve of the data using the LOWESS method (Cleveland, 1979) and red shading area shows the 95% confidence interval.



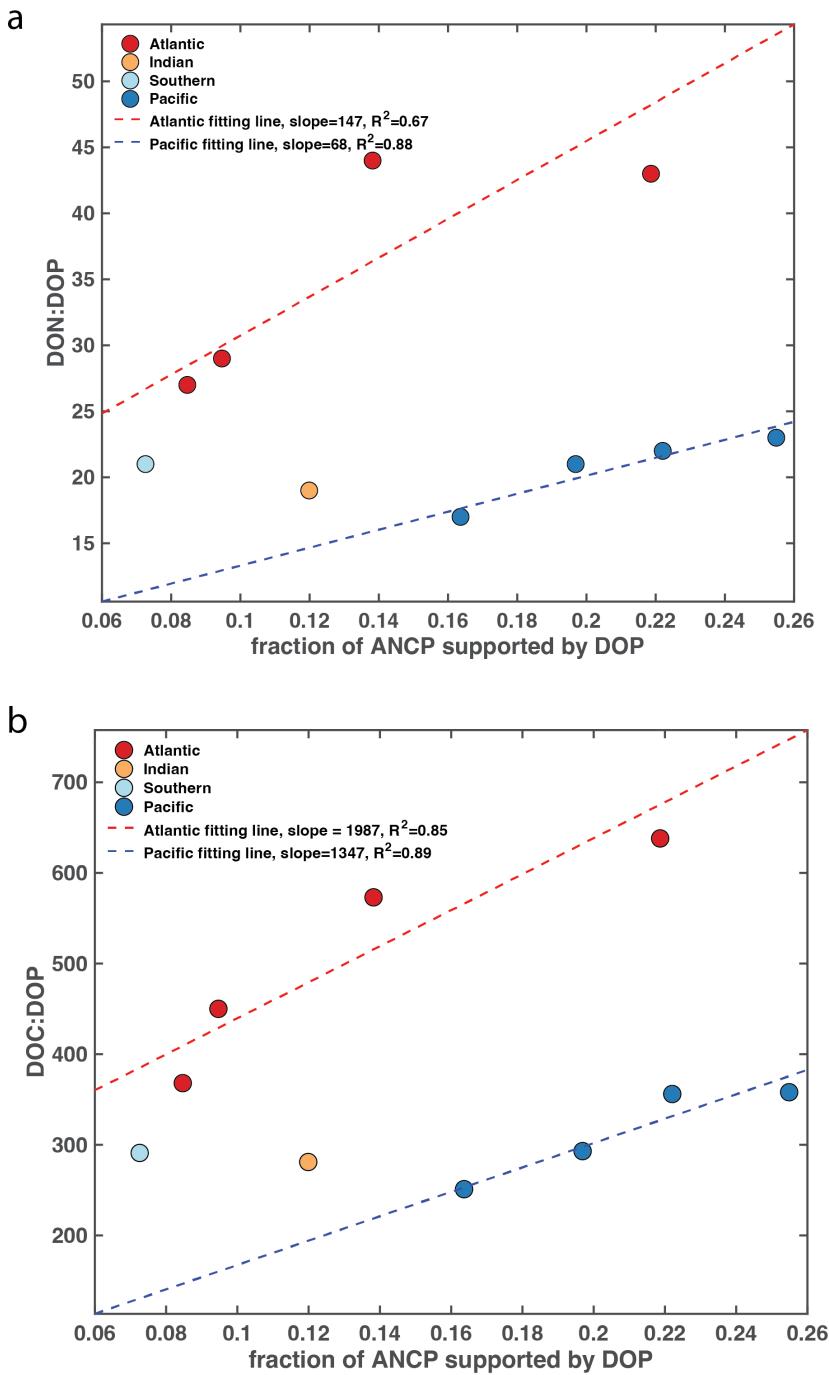
789 Figure 4. Type II linear regressions of bulk surface (<73 m) ocean DOC concentrations (a), DON
 790 concentrations (b), and DOP concentrations vs. Net Primary Productivity determined with the
 791 Carbon-based Productivity Model (CbPM) (Westberry et al., 2008). “AtlSub”: Atlantic Subarctic
 792 region; “NASG”: North Atlantic Subtropical Gyre; “EqAtl”: Equatorial Atlantic region; “SASG”:
 793 South Atlantic Subtropical Gyre; “IND”: Indian Ocean; “SO”: Southern Ocean; “PacSub”: Pacific
 794 Subarctic region; “NPSG”: North Pacific Subtropical Gyre; “EqPac”: Equatorial Pacific region;
 795 “SPSG”: South Pacific Subtropical Gyre.

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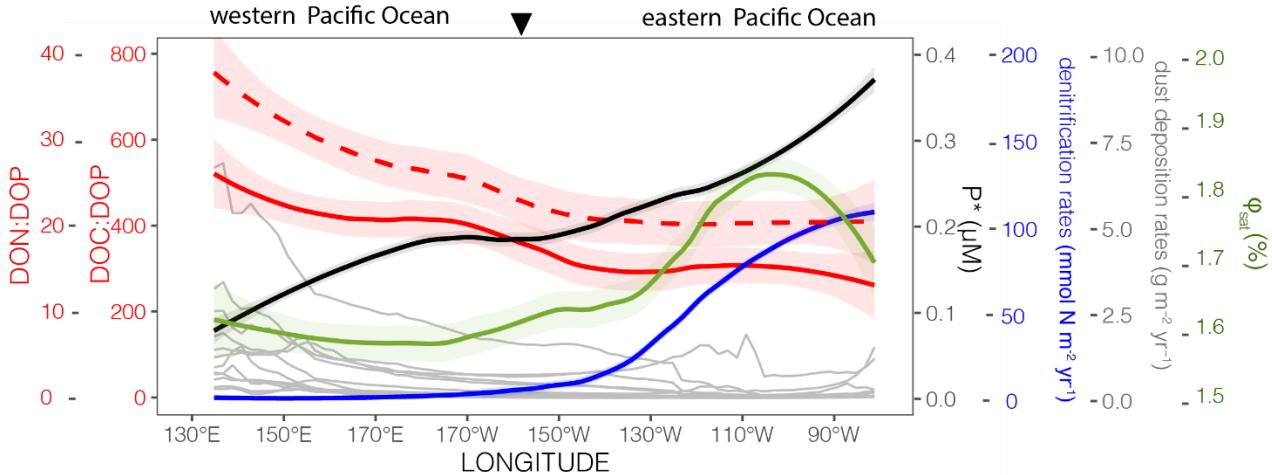
797
 798 Figure 5. Labile surface (<73 m) ocean DOC:DON (a), DON:DOP (b), and DOC:DOP (c)
 799 concentration ratios in different biogeochemical regions, and labile surface ocean DOC:DON (d),
 800 DON:DOP (e), and DOC:DOP (f) concentration ratios in different geographical regions.

801

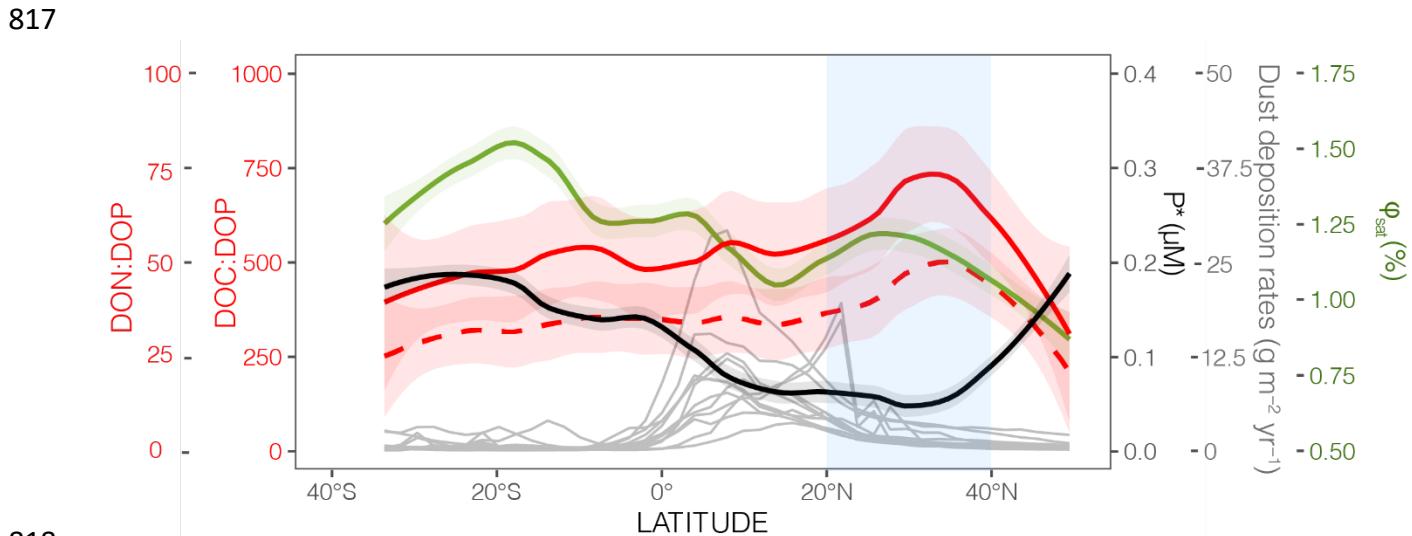


802
803 Figure 6. Correlations between bulk surface ocean DON:DOP (a) and DOC:DOP (b)
804 concentration ratios vs. the fraction of ANCP supported by DOP consumption. DON:DOP and
805 DOC:DOP concentration ratios are from Table 3 and are based on biogeochemical divisions.
806 Model-diagnosed fractions of ANCP supported by DOP consumption are from Letscher et al.,
807 2022.

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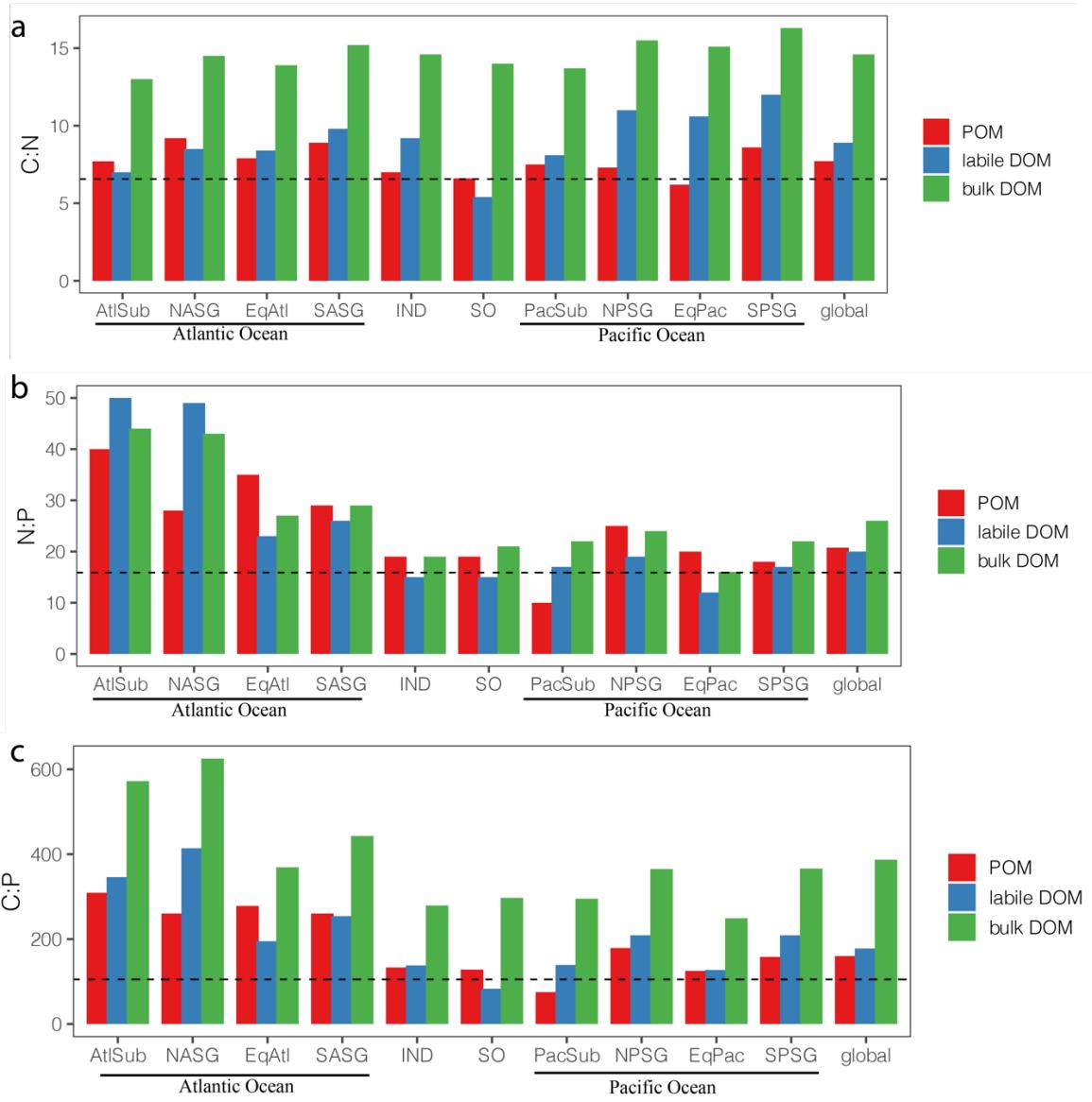
810
811 Figure 7. Combined North and South Pacific zonal mean bulk surface (< 73 m) ocean DOC:DOP
812 concentration ratios (solid red line, same data as in Figure 2), DON:DOP concentration ratios
813 (dashed red line, same data as in Figure 2), surface ocean P^* (black line), water column
814 denitrification rates (Wang et al., 2019) (blue line), NPQ-corrected φ_{sat} (green line), and dust
815 deposition rates from 12 different model outputs (Xu & Weber, 2021) (gray lines). Shadings reflect
816 the 95% confidence interval. Black inverted triangle represents 160° W.



817
818 Figure 8. Combined Western and Eastern Atlantic meridional mean bulk surface (< 73 m) ocean
819 DOC:DOP concentration ratios (solid red line, same data as in Figure 3), DON:DOP concentration
820 ratios (dashed red line, same data as in Figure 3), surface ocean P^* calculated from World Ocean
821 Atlas 2013 (Garcia et al., 2013) (black line), NPQ-corrected φ_{sat} (Behrenfeld et al., 2009) (green
822 line), and dust deposition rates from 12 different model outputs (Xu & Weber, 2021) (gray lines).

824 Blue shading marks the Sargasso Sea region (20° N – 40° N). Red, green, and black shadings
825 reflect the 95% confidence interval.

826



827
828 Figure 9. Comparison of surface ocean POM, labile, and bulk DOM stoichiometry in different
829 biogeochemical regions. The dashed line marks the canonical Redfield ratio (C:N:P = 106:16:1).
830 C:N:P ratios in POM were calculated from global ocean POM concentration datasets (Martiny et
831 al., 2014; Tanioka et al., 2022).

832

833

834 Table 1. Mean bulk surface (<73 m) ocean DOC, DON and DOP concentrations (± 1 S.D.) in the
 835 10 biogeochemical regions, where n_DOC, n_DON and n_DOP represent the number of DOC,
 836 DON and DOP concentration observations in each region.

	DOC (μM)	n_DOC	DON (μM)	n_DON	DOP (μM)	n_DOP
AtlSub	68.7 \pm 15.4	313	5.3 \pm 1.7	94	0.12 \pm 0.04	11
NASG	70.2 \pm 8.6	493	4.8 \pm 0.9	244	0.11 \pm 0.07	229
EqAtl	73.5 \pm 21.6	46	5.3 \pm 1.1	43	0.20 \pm 0.07	26
SASG	67.5 \pm 6.3	130	4.4 \pm 0.7	126	0.15 \pm 0.07	89
IND	70.2 \pm 4.8	247	4.8 \pm 0.8	241	0.25 \pm 0.06	18
SO	52.4 \pm 8.3	569	3.7 \pm 0.8	349	0.18 \pm 0.09	67
PacSub	61.5 \pm 7.5	234	4.5 \pm 1.5	186	0.21 \pm 0.11	46
NPSG	68 \pm 6.3	228	4.4 \pm 0.4	151	0.19 \pm 0.08	93
EqPac	67.7 \pm 6.4	154	4.5 \pm 0.8	81	0.27 \pm 0.06	39
SPSG	67.7 \pm 6.8	228	4.2 \pm 0.5	171	0.19 \pm 0.06	141
Global mean	65.8	2642	4.5	1686	0.17	759

837
 838 Table 2. Mean bulk surface (< 73 m) ocean DOC, DON and DOP concentrations (± 1 S.D.) in the
 839 10 geographical regions, where n_DOC, n_DON and n_DOP represent the number of DOC, DON
 840 and DOP concentration observations in each region.

region	DOC (μM)	n_DOC	DON (μM)	n_DON	DOP (μM)	n_DOP
ENATL	67.0 \pm 10.2	586	5.1 \pm 1.3	206	0.13 \pm 0.07	162
WNATL	75.5 \pm 11.9	240	4.8 \pm 0.8	150	0.10 \pm 0.06	94
WSATL	70.1 \pm 11.4	89	4.6 \pm 0.9	85	0.15 \pm 0.07	71
ESATL	66.0 \pm 6.2	85	4.6 \pm 0.7	74	0.16 \pm 0.07	39
Indian	69.3 \pm 5.5	275	4.8 \pm 0.7	261	0.25 \pm 0.06	21
Southern	50.4 \pm 7.2	505	3.6 \pm 0.9	304	0.14 \pm 0.08	32
ENPAC	65.4 \pm 7.0	236	4.5 \pm 1.2	210	0.24 \pm 0.10	62
WNPAC	66.0 \pm 7.8	286	4.3 \pm 0.8	145	0.17 \pm 0.07	83
WSPAC	69.2 \pm 8.7	104	4.3 \pm 0.4	55	0.16 \pm 0.04	62
ESPAC	66.2 \pm 5.3	236	4.3 \pm 0.6	196	0.22 \pm 0.07	133
Global mean	65.8	2642	4.5	1686	0.17	759

841
 842 Table 3. Mean (± 1 S.D.) bulk surface (< 73 m) ocean DOC:DON, DON:DOP, and DOC:DOP
 843 concentration ratios in the 10 biogeochemical regions, calculated from Table 1.

Region	Mean DOC:DON	Mean DON:DOP	Mean DOC:DOP	Mean DOC:DON:DOP
AtlSub	13.0 \pm 5.1	44 \pm 20	573 \pm 230	573:44:1
NASG	14.6 \pm 3.3	43 \pm 29	638 \pm 414	638:43:1
EqAtl	13.9 \pm 5.0	27 \pm 11	368 \pm 168	368:27:1

SASG	15.3±2.8	29±14	450±214	450:29:1
IND	14.6±2.6	19±6	281±70	281:19:1
SO	14.2±3.8	21±12	291±153	291:21:1
PacSub	13.7±4.9	21±13	293±158	293:21:1
NPSG	15.5±2.0	23±10	358±154	358:23:1
EqPac	15.0±3.0	17±5	251±61	251:17:1
SPSG	16.1±2.5	22±7	356±118	356:22:1
Global mean	14.6	26	387	387:26:1

844

845 Table 4. Mean (\pm 1 S.D.) bulk surface (< 73 m) ocean DOC:DON, DON:DOP, and DOC:DOP
 846 concentration ratios in the 10 geographical regions, calculated from Table 2.

region	Mean DOC:DON	Mean DON:DOP	Mean DOC:DOP	Mean DOC:DON:DOP
ENATL	13.1±3.9	39±23	515±288	515:39:1
WNATL	15.7±3.6	48±30	755±468	755:48:1
WSATL	15.2±3.9	31±16	467±231	467:31:1
ESATL	14.3±2.6	29±13	413±185	413:29:1
Indian	14.4±2.4	19±5	277±70	277:19:1
Southern	14.0±4.0	26±16	360±212	360:26:1
ENPAC	14.5±4.2	19±9	273±117	273:19:1
WNPAC	15.3±3.4	25±11	388±166	388:25:1
WSPAC	16.1±2.5	27±7	433±121	433:27:1
ESPAC	15.4±2.5	20±7	301±99	301:20:1
Global mean	14.6	26	387	387:26:1

847

848 Table 5. Mean labile and refractory DOC:DON, DON:DOP, and DOC:DOP concentration ratios
 849 determined using different NPP data products and approaches. See text for details.

	DOC (µM)	DON (µM)	DOP (µM)	DOC:DON	DON:DOP	DOC:DOP	DOC:DON:DOP
Labile DOM (slope ratios, CbPM)				11.2:1	15.5:1	173:1	173:15.5:1
Labile DOM (slope ratios, VGPM)				10.7:1	16.4:1	176:1	176:16.4:1
Refractory DOM (intercept ratios, CbPM)	46	2.8	0.05	16.5:1	56:1	920:1	920:56:1
Refractory DOM (intercept ratios, VGPM)	45	2.5	0.05	18.0:1	50:1	900:1	900:50:1

Refractory DOM (>1000 m deep ocean average)	42	3.0	0.05	14.0:1	60:1	842:1	842:60:1
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850

851

852 Table 6. Mean labile (± 1 S.D.) surface (< 73 m) ocean DOC, DON and DOP concentrations and
 853 labile DOC:DON, DON:DOP and DOC:DOP concentration ratios in the 10 biogeochemical
 854 regions.

region	laDOC (μM)	laDON (μM)	laDOP (μM)	laDOC:DON	laDON:DOP	laDOC:DOP	laDOC:DON:DOP
AtlSub	24.3 \pm 16.3	3.5 \pm 1.7	0.07 \pm 0.06	7.0 \pm 5.8	50 \pm 51	346 \pm 392	346:50:1
NASG	25.8 \pm 10.0	3.0 \pm 1.0	0.06 \pm 0.08	8.5 \pm 4.3	49 \pm 63	414 \pm 549	414:49:1
EqAtl	29.1 \pm 22.2	3.5 \pm 1.1	0.15 \pm 0.08	8.4 \pm 7.0	23 \pm 14	195 \pm 178	195:23:1
SASG	26.0 \pm 8.2	2.6 \pm 0.8	0.10 \pm 0.08	9.8 \pm 4.3	26 \pm 21	254 \pm 209	254:26:1
IND	27.8 \pm 7.1	3.0 \pm 0.9	0.20 \pm 0.07	9.2 \pm 3.6	15 \pm 7	138 \pm 58	138:15:1
SO	10.5 \pm 9.8	1.9 \pm 0.9	0.13 \pm 0.09	5.4 \pm 5.6	15 \pm 13	83 \pm 98	83:15:1
PacSub	22.0 \pm 9.1	2.7 \pm 1.5	0.16 \pm 0.11	8.1 \pm 5.8	17 \pm 15	139 \pm 114	139:17:1
NPSG	28.5 \pm 8.2	2.6 \pm 0.6	0.14 \pm 0.09	11.0 \pm 4.0	19 \pm 12	209 \pm 141	209:19:1
EqPac	28.2 \pm 8.2	2.7 \pm 0.9	0.22 \pm 0.07	10.6 \pm 4.7	12 \pm 5	127 \pm 53	127:12:1
SPSG	28.2 \pm 8.6	2.4 \pm 0.6	0.14 \pm 0.07	12.0 \pm 4.9	17 \pm 9	209 \pm 118	209:17:1
Global mean	25.0	2.8	0.14	8.9	20	179	179:20:1

855

856

857 Table 7. Mean (± 1 S.D.) labile surface (< 73 m) ocean DOC, DON, and DOP concentrations and
 858 labile DOC:DON, DON:DOP and DOC:DOP concentration ratios in the 10 geographical
 859 regions.

	laDOC (μM)	laDON (μM)	laDOP (μM)	laDOC:DON	laDON:DOP	laDOC:DOP	laDOC:DON:DOP
ENATL	23.5 \pm 11.8	3.3 \pm 1.3	0.08 \pm 0.09	7.1 \pm 4.6	42 \pm 51	299 \pm 372	299:42:1
WNATL	31.3 \pm 13.0	3.0 \pm 0.9	0.05 \pm 0.07	10.5 \pm 5.3	58 \pm 76	610 \pm 813	610:58:1
WSATL	28.8 \pm 12.6	2.8 \pm 1.0	0.10 \pm 0.08	10.1 \pm 5.7	27 \pm 22	276 \pm 236	276:27:1
ESATL	24.6 \pm 8.1	2.8 \pm 0.8	0.11 \pm 0.08	8.9 \pm 3.9	26 \pm 20	228 \pm 185	228:26:1
Indian	27.1 \pm 7.6	3.0 \pm 0.9	0.20 \pm 0.07	9.1 \pm 3.6	15 \pm 7	135 \pm 61	135:15:1
Southern	8.6 \pm 8.9	1.8 \pm 0.9	0.09 \pm 0.08	4.8 \pm 5.6	19 \pm 20	93 \pm 126	93:19:1
ENPAC	26.0 \pm 8.8	2.7 \pm 1.2	0.19 \pm 0.10	9.6 \pm 5.4	14 \pm 9	134 \pm 83	134:14:1
WNPAC	26.6 \pm 9.4	2.5 \pm 0.9	0.12 \pm 0.07	10.6 \pm 5.2	22 \pm 15	228 \pm 166	228:22:1
WSPAC	29.8 \pm 10.1	2.5 \pm 0.6	0.11 \pm 0.05	12.1 \pm 5.0	22 \pm 11	270 \pm 153	270:22:1
ESPAC	26.9 \pm 7.5	2.5 \pm 0.8	0.17 \pm 0.07	10.9 \pm 4.5	14 \pm 7	154 \pm 78	154:14:1
Global mean	25.0	2.8	0.14	8.9	20	179	179:20:1

860

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