

1 **MANUSCRIPT NUMBER: Biogeosciences Discussions 11, 13343-13387, 2014**

2 **TITLE OF THE REVISED VERSION: Records of past mid-depth ventilation:**
3 **Cretaceous Ocean Anoxic Event 2 vs. Pleistocene to Holocene Oxygen Minimum Zones**

4 **- Explanation of revisions -**

5 Associate Editor (Christophe Rabouille), 18 Jan 2015

6 - I wonder why the title contains reference to the Pleistocene (and not only the Holocene) as
7 the OMZ sediments from the Peru margin that you consider in your study are mostly from the
8 Holocene, aren't they? The point of your paper is to compare the OAE2 of the Cretaceous
9 with present characteristics of the OMZ, and it would be good to show it in your title. If the
10 reference to the Pleistocene is made to include the Last Glacial Maximum, then you could
11 insert it in the title as well, but you'd better keep it simple.

12 **reply:** Indeed, the majority of evidences for comparing the Cretaceous OAE2 with today's
13 OMZ comes from Holocene Peruvian Margin sediments. None-the-less, we refer to Last
14 Glacial and Deglaciation records of the last 20 kyr in several parts of the manuscript, in
15 particular Figure 3. We also referred to Marine Oxygen Isotope Stage 3 and 11, both beyond
16 the Last Glacial Maximum. Therefore, and in order to keep it simple, we decided to change
17 the title to "Records of past mid-depth ventilation: Cretaceous Ocean Anoxic Event 2 vs.
18 Quaternary Oxygen Minimum Zones". Cretaceous and Quaternary are both Systems in earth's
19 history and thus on the same level of hierarchy in chronostratigraphic terms.

20 - Line 21 of your abstract (page 1). you say that oxygen levels, flux of organic matter and
21 benthic life are "well known". Please remove well known. There are controversy on the flux
22 deposited and its fate in the sediment, and oxygen levels (at the nanomolar level) are still
23 questioned. You could replace by "well studied".

24 **reply:** - done -

25 - Line 24 of abstract replace "were" by "are".

26 **reply:** - done -

27 - page 17 line 14-19: a remark was made by reviewer 2 which was not answered in your reply
28 on the "20% export flux", and if it applied at the time of OAE2. In your paper, you wrote a
29 "20% burial efficiency", and the reviewer was wrong in his remark but please provide more
30 arguments in the text why this value was chosen for burial efficiency. Furthermore, when
31 dividing burial flux by burial efficiency, you obtain the deposition flux (or rain rate of organic

1 carbon), which is different from the export flux. Please change export flux to deposition flux
2 (or rain rate).

3 **reply:** We referred to Figure 2 of Flögel et al. (2011) in the first revised version of the
4 manuscript, and perhaps this was too brief as explanation. In this Figure, the Holocene burial
5 rate of particulate organic carbon in continental margin sediments is plotted versus the rain
6 rate of particulate organic carbon at the sites given. The data showed a logarithmic
7 relationship, and there is no significant difference between oxygen minimum zones and well-
8 ventilated bottom waters. If you extrapolate, for instance a rain rate of $1000 \text{ mmol m}^{-2} \text{ yr}^{-1}$ to
9 the regression line, you obtain a corresponding burial rate of $200 \text{ mmol m}^{-2} \text{ yr}^{-1}$, hence about
10 20 %. However, Flögel et al. (2011) also provided the equation of the regression curve (burial
11 rate = $0.14 * \text{rain rate}^{1.11}$) which yields a burial rate of $23 \text{ mmol m}^{-2} \text{ yr}^{-1}$ for a rain rate of 100
12 $\text{mmol m}^{-2} \text{ yr}^{-1}$, i.e. 23 %. We therefore used the equation rather than a constant ratio of 0.2,
13 and we explained this in the second revised version of the manuscript. The term export flux is
14 changed to rain rate as well, because it is denominated in the equation that way.

15 - page 17 line 19-21: The meaning of the sentence (Therefore, it is conceivable...) is unclear
16 to me, and its relation to the previous sentence also. Please clarify the link between "thick
17 section of lamination" and "redeposition due to near-bottom turbulence".

18 **reply:** Core SO147-106KL represents ideal conditions. We intended to emphasize with this
19 sentence that the other core sites from the Peruvian margin, where lower organic carbon
20 accumulation rates prevailed, were probably subjected to winnowing. As we come back to
21 core SO147-106KL in the next sentence, this statement is unnecessary and misleading. We
22 therefore omitted the sentence in the second revised version of the manuscript.

23 **Reference**

24 Flögel, S., Wallmann, K., Poulsen, C. J., Zhou, J., Oeschies, A., Voigt, S., Kuhnt, W.:
25 Simulating the biogeochemical effects of volcanic CO₂ degassing on the oxygen-state of the
26 deep ocean during the Cenomanian/Turonian Anoxic Event (OAE2), *Earth Planet. Sci. Lett.*,
27 305, 371-384, doi:10.1016/j.epsl.2011.03.018, 2011.

1 **Records of past mid-depth ventilation: Cretaceous Ocean**
2 **Anoxic Event 2 vs. ~~Pleistocene to Holocene~~ Quaternary**
3 **Oxygen Minimum Zones**

4
5 **J. Schönfeld¹, W. Kuhnt², Z. Erdem¹, S. Flögel¹, N. Glock¹, M. Aquit², M. Frank¹**
6 **and A. Holbourn²**

7 [1]{GEOMAR Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research, Kiel, Germany }

8 [2]{Institute for Geosciences, Christian-Albrechts-University, Kiel, Germany }

9 Correspondence to: J. Schönfeld (jschoenfeld@geomar.de)

10

11 **Abstract**

12 Present day oceans are well ventilated except mid-depth oxygen minimum zones (OMZs)
13 under high surface water productivity, regions of sluggish circulation, and restricted marginal
14 basins. In the Mesozoic, however, entire oceanic basins transiently became dysoxic or anoxic.
15 The Cretaceous Ocean Anoxic Events (OAEs) were characterised by laminated organic-
16 carbon rich shales and low-oxygen indicating trace fossils preserved in the sedimentary
17 record. Yet assessments of the intensity and extent of Cretaceous near-bottom water
18 oxygenation have been hampered by deep or long-term diagenesis and the evolution of
19 marine biota serving as oxygen indicators in today's ocean. Sedimentary features similar to
20 those found in Cretaceous strata were observed in deposits underlying Recent OMZs, where
21 bottom-water oxygen levels, the flux of organic matter, and benthic life are well
22 ~~known~~ studied. Their implications for constraining past bottom-water oxygenation are
23 addressed in this review. We compared OMZ sediments from the Peruvian upwelling with
24 deposits of the late Cenomanian OAE 2 from the NW African shelf. Holocene laminated
25 sediments ~~were~~ are encountered at bottom-water oxygen levels of $<7 \mu\text{mol kg}^{-1}$ under the
26 Peruvian upwelling and $<5 \mu\text{mol kg}^{-1}$ in California Borderland basins and the Pakistan
27 Margin. Seasonal to decadal changes of sediment input are necessary to create laminae of
28 different composition. However, bottom currents may shape similar textures that are difficult
29 to discern from primary seasonal laminae. The millimetre-sized trace fossil *Chondrites* was

1 commonly found in Cretaceous strata and Recent oxygen-depleted environments where its
2 diameter increased with oxygen levels from 5 to 45 $\mu\text{mol kg}^{-1}$. *Chondrites* has not been
3 reported from Peruvian sediments but cm-sized crab burrows appeared around 10 $\mu\text{mol kg}^{-1}$,
4 which may indicate a minimum oxygen value for bioturbated Cretaceous strata. Organic
5 carbon accumulation rates ranged from 0.7 and 2.8 $\text{g C cm}^{-2} \text{ kyr}^{-1}$ in laminated OAE 2
6 sections in Tarfaya Basin, Morocco, matching late Holocene accumulation rates of laminated
7 Peruvian sediments under Recent oxygen levels below 5 $\mu\text{mol kg}^{-1}$. Sediments deposited at
8 $>10 \mu\text{mol kg}^{-1}$ showed an inverse exponential relationship of bottom-water oxygen levels and
9 organic carbon accumulation depicting enhanced bioirrigation and decomposition of organic
10 matter with increased oxygen supply. In absence of seasonal laminations and under conditions
11 of low burial diagenesis, this relationship may facilitate quantitative estimates of paleo-
12 oxygenation. Similarities and differences between Cretaceous OAEs and late Quaternary
13 OMZs have to be further explored to improve our understanding of sedimentary systems
14 under hypoxic conditions.

15

16 **1 Introduction**

17 In the present day ocean, most of the water column is well ventilated as a consequence of
18 thermohaline circulation processes that lead to subduction of cold, oxygen rich and dense
19 water masses in high northern and southern latitudes (e.g. Kuhlbrodt et al., 2007). Exceptions
20 are restricted basins, in which the limited exchange with the oxygen rich water masses of the
21 open ocean is not sufficient to counteract oxygen consumption by organic matter respiration
22 such as in the Black Sea (Murray et al., 1989). In the open ocean, strongly oxygen depleted
23 water bodies occur underlying highly productive surface waters such as in the major
24 upwelling areas off the western continental margins of Africa and the Americas or below the
25 monsoon-driven upwelling of the Arabian Sea (Helly and Levin, 2004). In the geological past,
26 regional or global ventilation of the ocean underwent significant changes on different time
27 scales due to a variety of reasons, including changes in atmospheric and ocean circulation,
28 stratification, temperature or tectonic processes. It is, however, difficult to quantify the past
29 spatial extent and intensity of oxygen minima because the oxygen concentration of the water
30 column is not directly recorded in the sediments. As a consequence, derivative proxies have
31 been applied to reconstruct past ocean oxygenation.

1 A characteristic feature of marine low-oxygen environments on various time scales are black,
2 organic-rich, and laminated sediments (Kemp, 1996; Meyer and Kump, 2008). They are
3 known since the late Precambrian (Tucker, 1983). Widespread and contemporaneous
4 occurrences of these deposits in Devonian, Permian, early Jurassic, early and late Cretaceous,
5 and mid-Miocene successions depict periods of sluggish ocean circulation or extensive highly
6 productive seas (Schlanger and Jenkyns, 1976; Buggisch, 1991; Flower and Kennett, 1993;
7 Wignall and Twitchett, 1996; Trabucho-Alexandre et al., 2010). The question whether these
8 laminated sediments were formed due to enhanced primary production or due to restricted
9 ventilation of near-bottom waters has fueled a long-lasting debate (e.g. Calvert, 1987). Yet the
10 discovery of laminated sediments in the Arabian Sea during the International Indian Ocean
11 Expedition in 1965 revealed that this sedimentary facies is confined to OMZs at mid-depth
12 (Schott et al., 1970). Laminated sediments at the southwest African, Peruvian and Californian
13 margin provided further evidence for their association with today's OMZs (van Andel, 1964;
14 Reimers and Suess, 1983; Struck et al., 2002;). In contrast, basinwide stagnation events
15 resulting in the deposition of organic-rich, at least partially laminated sediments were
16 recorded during short time intervals with specific environmental settings from the Pliocene to
17 early Holocene in the eastern Mediterranean (sapropels) and in the Sea of Japan (Stein and
18 Stax, 1990; Rohling and Hilgen, 1991). They are, however, not considered potential
19 analogues for the extensively occurring black, laminated shales of the Mesozoic including the
20 Cretaceous OAEs (Erbacher et al., 2001).

21 Stable carbon isotope data obtained from Devonian, Toarcian, Aptian and
22 Cenomanian/Turonian successions revealed that the organic-rich beds recorded profound
23 perturbations of the global biogeochemical cycles, of which the Cenomanian/Turonian
24 boundary interval (OAE2) was probably the most extensive event (e.g. Jenkyns et al., 1994;
25 Hesselbo et al., 2000; Joachimski et al., 2002; Herrle et al., 2004). Detailed investigations of
26 the geochemistry, microfossil assemblages, and sedimentary structures of both, recent and
27 fossil strata were performed to unravel the interplay of local, regional and global processes
28 driving their formation, and to enforce a mutual understanding of late Quaternary OMZs and
29 Cretaceous OAEs (Thiede and Suess, 1983; Anbar and Rouxel, 2007; Dale et al., 2012;
30 Owens et al., 2013). These studies were complemented by oceanographic, biological and
31 biochemical studies in recent upwelling systems and OMZs. However, this actualistic
32 approach has been hampered by long periods of burial, diagenesis, and evolution of the
33 biosphere since their deposition in Mesozoic times.

1 Geochemical redox proxies were extensively explored on Cretaceous black shales in order to
2 constrain past ocean oxygenation, in particular trace metals (Brumsack, 2006; van Bentum et
3 al., 2009; Dale et al., 2012), sulfur isotopes (Hetzl et al., 2009; Owens et al., 2013), and iron
4 isotopes (Owens et al., 2012). Some of these proxies have also been measured on surface
5 sediments and sediment cores from the Peruvian OMZ, in particular U/Mo ratios (Böning et
6 al., 2004, Scholz et al., 2011, 2014a, b). However, only a very few data points are available
7 for a regional U/Mo – bottom-water oxygen calibration in the Peruvian OMZ (Scholz et al.,
8 2011). They strongly differ from corresponding data obtained from other OMZs (McManus et
9 al., 2006). This hampers a quantitative reconstruction of past oxygenation with U/Mo ratios
10 for the Peruvian OMZ as well as for black shales from Cretaceous of OAE2.

11 Besides geochemical redox indicators, there are only few other reliable parameters that are
12 sufficiently explored to investigate paleo low-oxygen conditions in the Mesozoic and
13 Cenozoic, which are trace fossils, laminations, and organic carbon accumulation rates. Their
14 potential, constraints, and implications for an assessment of past water column oxygenation
15 are addressed in this review. Particular emphasis is put on the comparison of Holocene OMZ
16 sediments from the upwelling area off Peru with deposits of Cretaceous Oceanic Anoxic
17 Event 2 from the Moroccan shelf.

18 **2 Material and Methods**

19 The Peruvian Margin study is based on stratigraphic and sedimentological data from 136
20 sediment cores within and below today's OMZ off the western South American continental
21 margin. They are located between the Equator and 18°S and were retrieved from water depths
22 between 180 and 2200 m (Figure 1). Data of 94 cores were taken from the literature and 42
23 new cores recovered during R/V METEOR cruises M77/1 and M77/2 in 2008 were assessed
24 as part of this study (Appendix Table A1). The cruises were performed in the framework of
25 Collaborative Research Centre (SFB) 754 "Climate Biogeochemistry Interactions in the
26 Tropical Ocean", through which supplementary data for the environmental interpretation of
27 the sedimentary records are available.

28 In particular, oxygen concentrations along the Peruvian continental margin were measured
29 during R/V METEOR cruises M77-1, M77-2 (Krahmann, 2012) and M77-3 (Kavelage et al.,
30 2013). We considered 159 CTD stations with a maximum water depth of 1750 m and a
31 maximum distance of 175 km to the shore (online supplement M77-1-3_CTD_Data.xls).
32 Other CTD casts further offshore were not included because they already showed

1 significantly elevated oxygen concentrations compared to proximal locations at the same
2 latitude. Kalvelage et al. (2013) observed an offset of $\sim 2 \mu\text{mol/kg}$ between the CTD attached
3 optode oxygen sensors and the more sensitive STOX sensors, which are based on a Clark-
4 type oxygen sensor, and corrected the optode data by $2 \mu\text{mol/kg}$ during the cruises M77-3 and
5 M77-4. The oxygen data presented in our study were not corrected for a $2 \mu\text{mol/kg}$ offset
6 since the STOX sensors were not deployed during M77-1 and M77-2.

7 We considered visual core descriptions, physical property data, in particular dry bulk
8 densities, sand content and abundances of biogenic, terrigenous and diagenetic components,
9 and organic carbon contents. The chronostratigraphy of the cores was established with
10 radiocarbon datings on monospecific samples of planktonic or benthic foraminifera, or bulk
11 sedimentary organic carbon.

12 The age models of the cores from M77/1 and M77/2 cruises are based on Mollier-Vogel et al.
13 (2013). Otherwise, published, conventional radiocarbon ages and new ^{14}C Accelerator Mass
14 Spectrometer (AMS) datings were calibrated using the software “Calib 7.0” (Stuiver and
15 Reimer, 1993) and by applying the marine calibration set “*Marine13*” (Reimer et al., 2013).
16 Reservoir age corrections (ΔR) were carried out by using the Marine Reservoir Correction
17 Database (<http://calib.qub.ac.uk/marine/>). Regionally weighted mean ΔR values ranged from
18 89 to 338 years for the eastern Pacific off Peru. The uncertainties of the source data ranged
19 from ± 31 to ± 82 years (2-sigma). For the pre-Holocene part of the records, the radiocarbon-
20 based chronologies were supplemented with planktonic and benthic oxygen isotope curves
21 correlated to stacked reference records (e.g. Liesicki and Raymo, 2005) or Antarctic ice cores
22 (e.g. EPICA Community Members, 2006). Subrecent sedimentation rates were constrained by
23 ^{210}Pb excess activity profiles (Reimers and Suess, 1983; Mosch et al., 2012). All ages are
24 given in calendar years before 1950 AD (abbreviated as cal. ka.). Organic carbon and bulk
25 sediment accumulation rates ($\text{g cm}^{-2} \text{ kyr}^{-1}$) were calculated from linear sedimentation rates
26 ($\text{cm } 10^3 \text{ years}$) and bulk dry densities (g cm^{-3}) following van Andel et al. (1975).

27 The M77/1 and M77/2 cores included in this study were described immediately after opening
28 aboard R/V METEOR (Pfannkuche et al., 2011). Two parallel series of volume-defined
29 samples were taken in 5 or 10-cm intervals with cut-off syringes. One series of 10-cc samples
30 was freeze-dried and physical properties were determined from wet sample volumes and the
31 weight loss after drying applying standard protocols and a pore-water density of 1.026 g cm^{-3}
32 (Boyce, 1976). The other series of 20-cc samples dedicated to isotopic measurements,

1 microfossil, and sand-fraction examination was washed gently with tap water through a 63
2 μm sieve within a few hours after sampling. Washing of fresh, wet samples facilitates a better
3 preservation of delicate calcareous microfossils, which otherwise may have been corroded or
4 even dissolved by oxidation products of ferrosulphides and labile organic matter (Schnitker et
5 al., 1980). The residues were dried at 50°C and weighed. For stable oxygen and carbon
6 isotope analyses, about 30 specimens of the planktonic foraminiferal species *Globigerinoides*
7 *ruber* (white), *Neogloboquadrina dutertrei* or 3 to 6 specimens of the benthic species
8 *Uvigerina striata*, *U. peregrina* or *Globobulimina pacifica* were picked from the size fractions
9 250 to 355 μm or >63 μm , respectively. We used these species because they were abundant in
10 the cores studied and incorporate stable oxygen isotopes in equilibrium with the surrounding
11 pore and supernatant bottom waters (e.g. McCorkle et al., 1990). Oxygen and carbon isotopes
12 were measured with a Thermo Fisher Scientific 253 Mass Spectrometer coupled to a CARBO
13 KIEL automated carbonate preparation device at GEOMAR, Kiel. The long-term analytical
14 precision (1-sigma) for $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ and $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ was better than 0.06 ‰ and 0.03 ‰ on the VPDB scale,
15 respectively, based on more than 1000 measurements of an in-house carbonate standard
16 during the respective measurement sessions. Replicate measurements of benthic foraminifera
17 from the same sample showed an external reproducibility of ± 0.1 ‰ for $\delta^{18}\text{O}$. For
18 radiocarbon analyses, 33 to 179 specimens of *Planulina limbata* or 229 to 250 specimens of
19 *Neogloboquadrina dutertrei* were picked from the size fraction >63 μm or 5 to 20 mg of
20 ground bulk sediment was prepared. AMS measurements were performed at the Leibniz
21 Laboratory for Radiometric Dating and Stable Isotope Research, University of Kiel (CAU)
22 and at Beta Analytic Inc. Dried samples used for physical properties measurements were
23 ground with an agate mortar. Aliquot subsamples of 3 to 20 mg were analysed for total carbon
24 and organic carbon content with a Carbon Erba Element Analyzer (NA1500) at GEOMAR,
25 Kiel. The long-term precision was ± 0.6 % of the measured values as revealed by repeated
26 measurements of two internal carbon standards.

27 Since the pioneering work of Einsele and Wiedmann (1975), Cenomanian to Lower
28 Campanian organic-rich marlstones of the Tarfaya Basin in southern Morocco have been
29 studied as a type locality of Cretaceous upwelling-related sediments at the eastern margin of
30 the central North Atlantic (Wiedmann et al., 1978; Leine et al., 1986; Kuhnt et al., 1997,
31 2001, 2005; Kolonic et al., 2005; Aquit et al., 2013). Numerical climate and circulation
32 models of the mid-Cretaceous Atlantic support a prevalence of cool and nutrient-rich

1 intermediate deep water masses in this area along the NW African margin (Poulsen et al.,
2 2001; Topper et al., 2011). The late Cenomanian to early Turonian OAE 2 sediments
3 discussed here were examined in outcrop sections during five field expeditions of the Kiel
4 Micropaleontology Group in 1997, 1998, 2000, 2003 and 2009. In addition, core material
5 from two commercial wells (S13 and S75), and a 350 m deep research well drilled in
6 October-December 2009 (Tarfaya SN°4) were considered in this study (Figure 1).

7 Analytical methods applied to samples from outcrops and drill cores were detailed in Kuhnt et
8 al. (2005) and Aquit et al. (2013). Core sections from the new exploration well Tarfaya SN°4
9 were cut lengthwise and described. Line scan measurements and photographs were acquired
10 with a Ja CVL 1073 CCD color line scan camera with 3 sensors of 2048 pixels and Dichroic
11 RGB beam splitter prism (RGB channels at 630 nm, 535 nm and 450 nm) at the Institute of
12 Geosciences, Kiel University. Color measurement in L*a*b* units are from RGB digital
13 images. Scanning was performed (resolution of 143 pixel per 70 micron) on the polished
14 surface of oriented cores. Intensity of lamination vs. bioturbational homogenization of the
15 sediment was estimated using high resolution lightness (L*) measurements for cores of SN°4.
16 We calculated a lamination index based on a moving window standard deviation of the
17 lightness values, similar to the method previously applied on core S75 (Kuhnt et al., 2005).
18 Organic carbon and carbonate contents of SN°4 core samples were measured with a Carbon
19 Erba Element Analyzer (NA1500) at Geomar, and with a conventional carbonate bomb at the
20 Institute of Geosciences, Kiel University.

21

22 **3 Results**

23 **3.1 Holocene to Recent organic-rich sedimentation underneath Recent OMZs**

24 *Bioturbation*

25 Organisms dwelling in sediments below the redox boundary commonly rely on oxygen supply
26 from the above near-bottom waters (Savrdaand Bottjer, 1991). They disappear if bottom-
27 water oxygenation drops below a certain limit (Rhoads and Morse, 1971; Savrdaet al., 1984).
28 Observations from Recent OMZs suggested that deposit-feeding gastropods, in particular
29 *Astyris permolesta*, may temporarily enter dead zones for grazing on fresh organic detritus or
30 sulphur bacterial filaments (Levin et al., 1991; Mosch et al., 2012). These gastropods leave

1 small biodeformational structures on the sea bed, which are, however, usually not preserved
2 (Schäfer, 1956). Sediments from oxygen-depleted environments are therefore characterised by
3 scarcity or absence of ichnofossils (Savrda and Bottjer, 1987). Only a few ichnogenera are
4 recognisable, in particular the mm-sized *Chondrites*. Their diameter correlates with
5 oxygenation although food availability or substrate properties also exert an influence
6 (Bromley and Ekdale, 1984; Fu, 1991; Kröncke, 2006). In eastern Pacific hypoxic
7 environments, a covariance of the highest average burrow size and oxygen content of near-
8 bottom water was recognised for an oxygen range of 5 to 45 $\mu\text{mol kg}^{-1}$ in the San Pedro Basin
9 (Savrda et al., 1984). This relationship was based on 6 to 10 burrows identified per x-ray
10 image. An assignment to particular ichnotaxa other than *Arenicolites* was not attempted, even
11 though many ichnogenera have a well constrained range of dimensions (e.g. Wetzel, 2008).

12 The general inverse relationship of burrow diameter and oxygenation has been challenged by
13 sea-floor observations with a photo sled and shallow multicorer samples taken during R/V
14 METEOR cruise M77/1 (Mosch et al., 2012). Surprisingly, it was not *Chondrites*, but
15 centimetre-sized open crab burrows that were recognised as first biogenic structures at
16 bottom-water oxygen concentrations approaching 10 $\mu\text{mol kg}^{-1}$ close to the lower OMZ
17 boundary where endobenthic macrofauna was able to exist. *Chondrites* burrows have not been
18 reported to date from any of the Peruvian OMZ sediment cores even though the responsible
19 organism, a nematode, most likely pursues chemotrophy at anaerobic conditions (Fu, 1991).

20 Older strata, such as Mesozoic sediments were usually subjected to a high degree of
21 compaction altering the shape and size of burrows (e.g. Gaillard and Jautee, 2006; Gingras et
22 al., 2010). A correct identification of ichnogenera may then not be possible any more.
23 Burrows have been preserved at their genuine dimensions in carbonate-rich sediments (e.g.
24 Savrda and Bottjer, 1986; Ekdale and Bromley, 1991). In particular *Chondrites*-rich layers
25 were reported from Cenomanian/Turonian limestones and marls deposited during OAE 2 in
26 NW Europe (Schönfeld et al., 1991; Hilbrecht and Dahmer, 1994; Rodríguez and Uchmann,
27 2011). As this ichnogenus is apparently missing from the Peruvian OMZ, bioturbation
28 structures do not offer a detailed comparison between Pleistocene to recent OMZs and
29 Cretaceous OAEs. The only feature in common is the scarcity or absence of bioturbation in
30 both, laminated Cretaceous shales and Holocene to Pleistocene sediments deposited under
31 dysoxic to anoxic conditions below the Peruvian upwelling.

1 *Laminations*

2 Laminated sediments have been studied in great detail to unravel the processes forming
3 millimetre-scale interbedded sediments with the perspective that alternations between the
4 varves reflect seasonal, annual or decadal environmental variability (von Stackelberg, 1972;
5 Brodie and Kemp, 1994; Kemp, 1996). In the Arabian Sea, laminated sediments were found
6 between 300 and 900 m water depth whereas the OMZ with oxygen concentrations of <23
7 $\mu\text{mol kg}^{-1}$ impinges the sea floor between 200 and 1200 m depth. Minimum values of 4.5
8 $\mu\text{mol kg}^{-1}$ were reported (Schulz et al., 1996). No benthic macroinvertebrates were observed
9 between 300 and 800 m where these low oxygen concentrations prevailed. The laminations
10 form couplets of dark grey organic-rich summer varves and light grey winter varves of
11 terrigenous detritus. Holocene average sedimentation rates were in the range of 0.9 to 1.5 mm
12 yr^{-1} . Winnowing and reworking by slope currents or turbidites was common, which prevented
13 the establishment of continuous long records of annual resolution (Schulz et al., 1996).
14 Instead, cyclic alternations of laminated and bioturbated core sections suggested a spatial
15 variability of the OMZ on longer time scales (von Rad et al., 1995).

16 In the California borderland basins the laminae consist of dark lithogenic winter layers and
17 light-coloured, nearly monospecific *Thalassiothrix longissima* diatom layers deposited during
18 spring and early summer (Thunell et al., 1995). In the Soledad Basin off northern Mexico,
19 whitish coccolith layers are intercalated as well (van Geen et al., 2003). Average
20 sedimentation rates may exceed 1 mm yr^{-1} , and despite the pronounced seasonal or El Niño
21 cyclicity of 3-6 years (Hagadorn, 1996), up to five biogenic sublaminae per year may be
22 preserved (Pike and Kemp, 1997). The regional and intra-basinal distribution of laminations
23 in latest Holocene sediments was confined to bottom-water oxygen concentrations <5 μmol
24 kg^{-1} . In contrast, a decoupling of sediment banding and bottom-water oxygenation has been
25 found at sites with a low primary production or where a less profound seasonality prevailed
26 (van Geen et al., 2003). There, alterations of bioturbated glacial and stadial sediments and
27 laminated Holocene and interstadial core sections suggested climatically driven variations in
28 northeastern Pacific OMZ intensity (Behl and Kennett, 1996; Cannariato and Kennett, 1999;
29 Jaccard and Galbraith, 2012).

30 In the Peruvian OMZ, laminated sediments from the Salaverry and Pisco Basins were
31 described in great detail (Kemp, 1990; Wefer et al., 1990). The sediments showed 0.3 to 0.6
32 m thick intervals of laminated and sub-laminated sediments with intercalated homogenous

1 bioturbated units. They are unconformably overlain by sand-rich layers with phosphorite
2 pebbles representing periods of erosion due to strong near-bottom currents (Reimers and
3 Suess, 1983; Garrison and Kastner, 1990). In banded core sections, the laminae form 0.3 to
4 0.7 mm thick couplets of clay-rich and silt-rich layers probably reflecting depositional
5 variability on seasonal timescales. Nearly monospecific *Skeletonema* or *Chaetoceras* diatom
6 layers of 2 to 10 mm thickness are irregularly intercalated. These diatom ooze layers were
7 often not preserved due to dissolution or grazing. Evidence for the latter is provided by
8 microbioturbation within the laminated intervals and pellet-rich horizons of 5 to 30 mm
9 thickness. These were created by epibenthic, vagile macrofauna during periods of elevated
10 bottom-water oxygenation, which lasted for 8 to 16 years (Brodie and Kemp, 1994). A
11 covariance of laminated core sections with certain climatic conditions was not identifiable
12 whereas pebbly or sand-rich beds preferentially occurred during cold stages suggesting either
13 stronger bottom currents or increased terrigenous sediment supply (Reimers and Suess, 1983;
14 Rein et al., 2005; Mollier-Vogel et al., 2013). On decadal to subdecadal time scales, however,
15 laminations were linked to changes in climate and ecosystem properties in the mid 19th
16 century (Gutiérrez et al., 2006). In particular, periodical “regime shifts” in the Peruvian OMZ
17 during the late Holocene were related to the variability of solar irradiance (Agnihotri et al.,
18 2008).

19 Information on the presence of laminations is available for 74 of 136 sediment cores reported
20 from the western South American Margin between the Equator and 18°S (Appendix Table
21 A1). From those, 36 showed laminated intervals whereas 38 cores were homogenized by
22 bioturbation with the exception of sediment-transport related structures, sand or gravel beds.
23 Laminated sediment sections are confined to a distinct area between 9° and 16°S and were not
24 retrieved from water depths below 600 m. With the exception of two cores from the
25 continental shelf, the upper and lower distribution limits of laminated sediments match the
26 outline of today’s OMZ as depicted by the 7 $\mu\text{mol kg}^{-1}$ isoline of bottom-water oxygen
27 concentration. However, most laminated cores were retrieved from areas with bottom-water
28 oxygen values of $<5 \mu\text{mol kg}^{-1}$ (Figure 2). The distribution limits are not reliably traceable
29 further to the North and South due to sparse data coverage and rarely observed laminated
30 sections. Sediment records may go as far back in time as marine oxygen isotope stage 11 and
31 contain several unconformities representing extended times of non-deposition or erosion
32 (Rein et al., 2005).

1 A reliable stratigraphic record is available for 9 sediment cores with laminated intervals.
2 Laminations occurred at any time and water depth during the past 20 kyrs with the exception
3 of the 6 to 8 ka time interval (Figure 3). This implies that there was no period of time during
4 the late Pleistocene and Holocene, during which the entire OMZ expanded and intensified, or
5 contracted and weakened on a regional scale. Some of the shallowest locations showed
6 weaker or no laminations during periods of inferred increased El Niño frequency marking
7 seasonally decreased productivity and elevated oxygen levels in the bottom waters (Rein et
8 al., 2005; Ehlert et al., 2013). Laminated deposits were rarely continuous and did not show a
9 time-transgressive pattern as previously suggested (Reimers and Suess, 1983). Sections
10 documenting periods of more than 2 kyrs duration of laminated sediment deposition were
11 recorded only between 11 and 13°S and at water depths of 184 to 325 m, i.e. in the upper
12 OMZ and underneath the most intense upwelling.

13 *Organic carbon accumulation rates*

14 Accumulation rates of sedimentary organic carbon have been widely considered as a proxy
15 for paleoproductivity reconstructions (Stein and Stax, 1991; Sarnthein et al., 1992; McKay et
16 al., 2004). While usually less than 1 % of organic matter exported from the photic zone is
17 deposited on the sea floor and preserved in the fossil record under oxic conditions, the burial
18 may increase to up to 18 % in low-oxygen environments (Müller and Suess, 1979). The
19 preservation of organic substances in OMZ sediments from the Arabian Sea was enhanced at
20 oxygen concentrations of $<22 \mu\text{mol kg}^{-1}$ suggesting a covariance between organic carbon
21 accumulation rates and bottom-water oxygenation (Koho et al., 2013). Recent organic carbon
22 accumulation rates ranged from 0.01 to $0.4 \text{ g C cm}^{-2} \text{ kyr}^{-1}$ in the Arabian Sea.

23 In the Peruvian OMZ, mid- to late Holocene and subrecent organic carbon accumulation rates
24 varied substantially between 0.06

25 and $6.8 \text{ g C cm}^{-2} \text{ kyr}^{-1}$ with most values between 1 and $3 \text{ g C cm}^{-2} \text{ kyr}^{-1}$ (Appendix Table A2),
26 i.e. one magnitude higher than in the Arabian Sea. Dilution by seasonal terrigenous sediment
27 input from Pakistan probably accounts for the difference (von Rad et al., 1995).

28 The organic carbon data from the Peruvian cores revealed distinct distribution patterns.
29 Laminated sediments showed scattered values at bottom-water oxygen $<5 \mu\text{mol kg}^{-1}$ whereas
30 bioturbated sediments depicted a well constrained inverse relationship of organic carbon
31 accumulation and bottom-water oxygenation (Figure 4).

1 **3.2 Organic-rich sedimentation during Cretaceous OAE-2 of the Tarfaya Basin**

2 *Laminations*

3 The laminated intervals in sediments from the Tarfaya Basin as recovered from SN°4 well
4 were usually 2 to 4 m thick organic-rich marlstones with intercalated bioturbated limestones
5 of 0.5 to 2 m thickness. the laminations showed a high scatter in lightness (Figure 5), which is
6 depicted by a lamination index based on a moving window standard deviation of high
7 resolution lightness data (L^*). Intense lamination is indicated by high standard deviations,
8 while standard deviations in homogenous sediments are close to zero. The average
9 thicknesses of individual laminae was extremely variable ranging from sub-millimetre
10 (mainly light layers composed of planktonic foraminiferal tests) to several millimeters
11 (mainly kerogen-rich dark layers). Simple estimates from average sedimentation rates of 4 to
12 8 cm per thousand years suggest an average time of 25 to 12.5 years to account for the
13 deposition of a 1 mm lamina, which points to a control on lamination by depositional or
14 winnowing processes, rather than a control by periodical climatic variations on the formation
15 of laminae.

16 Wavelet spectral analyses of the 70 μm resolution linescan data of core SN°4 also do not
17 exhibit clear periodicity patterns. The most prominent periodicities are in the range of 4, 15
18 and 30 mm, which would correspond to approximately 100, 400 and 800 years at a
19 sedimentation rate of 4 cm kyr^{-1} and clearly do not reflect seasonal variability or ENSO-type
20 sub-decadal oscillations (3-7 years) (Figure 6).

21 Sediment re-working and re-distribution through small scale erosion and/or winnowing by
22 bottom currents appeared commonly in the deposition of organic-rich sediments during OAE
23 2. Low angle truncations, indicating small scale erosion surfaces occurred frequently in the
24 upper part of the OAE 2 black shales in the Tarfaya Basin (i.e. in black shales at the base of
25 the Turonian within the Amma Fatma outcrop section, Figure 7).

26 Recent depositional environments off NW Africa were distinctly different from those during
27 OAE 2. In the modern upwelling zone off NW Africa, textural upwelling indicators, such as
28 organic-rich, laminated sediments, were virtually absent in shallow shelf sediments directly
29 underlying upwelling cells (Fütterer, 1983). They were winnowed out by strong bottom
30 currents, sediment particles were transported across the shelf and finally redeposited in deeper
31 parts of the shelf or on the continental slope. The main depositional center of organic-rich

1 material is located today at water depths between 1000 and 2000 m, where fine-grained
2 material is accumulating as mid-slope mud lenses (Sarnthein et al., 1982).

3 The organic-rich sediments in the Cretaceous Tarfaya Basin also exhibited a range of
4 sedimentary features pointing to an important role of re-suspension and lateral advection in
5 the depositional processes. However, sedimentological (El Albani et al., 1999) and
6 micropaleontological evidences (Wiedmann et al., 1978; Gebhardt et al., 2004, Kuhnt et al.,
7 2009) indicated that the main depositional center of organic-rich sediments during OAE 2
8 were in the middle to outer shelf part of the Tarfaya Basin in relatively shallow water depths
9 between approx. 100 and 300 m. Such a setting would be in general agreement with the
10 situation on the Peruvian shelf and upper slope today, where similar high-accumulation areas
11 were recognised at depths of less than 300m (Wefer et al., 1990).

12 *Organic carbon accumulation rates during OAE 2 in the Tarfaya Basin*

13 Organic matter accumulation rates were calculated in three cores (S13, S75, SN°4) for
14 individual cycles based on an orbitally tuned age model (Meyers et al., 2012) for the time
15 interval from the onset of OAE 2 (late Cenomanian, upper part of the *R. cushmani* Zone) to
16 the lower Turonian (end of the OAE 2 carbon isotope excursion in the *H. helvetica* Zone).
17 This period represents a time span of ~ 800 kyr (Sagemann et al., 2006; Meyers et al., 2012).

18 Cores were correlated using density and natural gamma ray logs. We used density/NGR
19 minima/maxima for each individual cycle as tie points, and, whenever possible, correlatable
20 features within individual cycles. The overall pattern and number of cycles in the studied
21 interval revealed that most of the regular density variations mirrored obliquity cycles, i.e. a
22 periodicity of 41 kyrs. The local cyclostratigraphic age model is then tied to the GTS2012
23 timescale chronology using the new radiometric age of 93.9 Ma for the C/T boundary (top
24 cycle 3, FO *Quadrum gartneri*). Based on this age model, we calculated sedimentation rates
25 for each individual cycle, dry bulk density from density logging and total organic carbon
26 values from individual measurements as well as continuous organic carbon estimates from
27 NGR logging and lightness (L*) measurements (Figure 8).

28

1 **4 Discussion**

2 **4.1 Origin and composition of laminae**

3 Light laminae in Peruvian upwelling sediments represent diatom blooms, either resulting from
4 seasonal variations or deposition during strong La Niña events (Kemp, 1990), whereas in the
5 Tarfaya Basin light layers are mainly composed of planktonic foraminiferal tests, phosphate
6 or fecal pellets, indicating periods of higher oxygenation of the water column with enhanced
7 grazing activity of vagile benthic organisms. These events occurred on decadal-centennial
8 timescales as brief interruptions of otherwise continuously dysoxic to anoxic conditions.

9 The different marine primary producers in the Cenomanian-Turonian may have influenced the
10 stoichiometry and isotope composition of marine organic matter. Whereas Holocene to
11 Recent organic-rich sediments in the Peruvian upwelling contain high proportions of diatoms,
12 Cretaceous organic-rich sediments are dominated by haptophyte algae preserved as shields of
13 coccolithophorids and nannoconids, archaeans, and cyanobacteria as revealed by biomarkers
14 (Kuypers et al. 1999; Dumitrescu and Brassell, 2005). It is conceivable that such organisms
15 may have induced higher C/P and C/N ratios under high $p\text{CO}_2$ conditions, exceeding the
16 Redfield ratio (Sterner and Elser, 2002; Riebesell, 2004; Sterner et al., 2008; Flögel et al.,
17 2011; Hessen et al., 2013). As a result, nutrient limitation for marine productivity may have
18 been less severe during Cretaceous OAEs, than it was reached under low $p\text{CO}_2$ conditions
19 during the last deglaciation and the Holocene.

20 **4.2 Persistence of laminated sediments – dynamics of the OMZ**

21 The geological record of OAE 2 in the Tarfaya Basin showed a cyclic sedimentation of
22 variegated, laminated marlstone beds with low gamma-ray density and high organic carbon
23 accumulation rates, which were intercalated with uniformly pale, bioturbated limestones
24 showing low organic carbon values. A regular periodicity of cyclic sedimentation in the
25 obliquity domain indicated climatic forcing that was different from Late Cretaceous times
26 with well-ventilated oceans, when short and long precession, and eccentricity had a stronger
27 influence (Gale et al., 1999; Voigt and Schönfeld, 2010). It has been suggested that changes
28 in mid-depth ocean circulation during OAE 2 promoted the influence of a high-southern
29 latitude climatic signal in the Cretaceous North Atlantic (Meyers et al., 2012).

1 In the north-eastern Pacific, we also see alterations of bioturbated sediments deposited during
2 the last glacial and stadial climatic intervals with laminated intervals deposited during the
3 Holocene and late Pleistocene interstadials (Behl and Kennett, 1996; Cannariato and Kennett,
4 1999). Even though these alterations reflect much shorter periodicities than during the mid
5 Cretaceous, they were climatically driven by intensified upwelling due to stronger trade winds
6 and enhanced nutrient supply through Subantarctic Mode Water, thus again linked to
7 processes in the Southern Ocean (Jaccard and Galbraith, 2012, and references therein).

8 Off Peru, laminations have neither been strictly linked to climatic periodicities nor were they
9 continuously preserved in the fossil record. Numerous discontinuities, their time-transgressive
10 nature, and phosphoritic sand layers are evidences for the impact of strong bottom-near
11 currents and breaking internal waves (Reimers and Suess, 1983). On the other hand, eddies
12 and warm, oblique filaments can facilitate a short-term supply of oxygen to the Peruvian
13 OMZ (e.g. Stramma et al., 2013), and large burrowing or grazing organisms may invade the
14 dead zone from below (Mosch et al., 2012), thus destroying recently deposited laminae.
15 Therefore it is conceivable that a preservation of continuous laminated sediments has rather
16 been an exception than the rule in the Peruvian OMZ. This exception was more likely to
17 occur in the permanently anoxic centre of the OMZ underneath the most intense upwelling
18 cell.

19 None-the-less, it has to be emphasized that many of the north-eastern Pacific cores were
20 retrieved from marginal basins where a quiet depositional regime prevailed. Furthermore, the
21 impact of bottom-near currents and redeposition is also documented in OAE 2 deposits from
22 Tarfaya outcrop sections. We speculate that if there were a possibility to examine older
23 Peruvian OMZ sediments in an outcrop section, many similar features will emerge helping to
24 better understand the fragmentations of the stratigraphic record described above.

25 **4.3 Organic carbon accumulation and bottom-water oxygenation**

26 A large range of chemical, biological and oceanographic factors controlling organic detritus
27 flux to the sea bed, decomposition and remineralisation, preservation and finally
28 accumulation as refractory substances constitute the complex nature of organic matter
29 turnover. Furthermore, organic carbon preservation strongly depends on the local
30 circumstances of deposition (Hedges and Keil, 1995; Arndt et al., 2013), thus limiting the
31 comparability of settings between regions and oceanic basins. There is an ongoing debate

1 whether the proportion of organic matter, which is buried and preserved in marine sediments,
2 is dependant on the ambient bottom water oxygenation or not (Dale et al., 2014). The only
3 assured perception is that carbon burial does not co-vary with bottom-water oxygenation at
4 high sedimentation rates near continental margins (Betts and Holland, 1991; Canfield, 1994).
5 At low sedimentation rates, the oxygenated near-surface layer of sediments deposited under
6 oxygenated bottom water increases in thickness and facilitates enhanced aerobic
7 decomposition, while sediments deposited under low-oxic conditions remain anaerobic and
8 decomposition is effected by nitrate and sulphate reduction (Hartnett and Devol, 2003). As a
9 consequence, organic carbon burial correlates with oxygen exposure time of particulate
10 organic carbon at the sea floor in oxic to suboxic environments, and shows no covaraince in
11 dysoxic zones (Hartnett et al. 1998).

12 **4.4 Comparison of organic carbon accumulation rates: Glacial-Holocene** 13 **Peruvian upwelling vs. Cretaceous upwelling along the East Atlantic** 14 **Margin**

15 For a comparison of Cretaceous organic carbon accumulation rates with those of Recent
16 OMZs, we considered Cretaceous sections with more than 90% organic rich shales (Kuhnt et
17 al., 1990). With reference to Recent OMZ sediments, we assumed a bottom water
18 oxygenation $<5 \mu\text{mol kg}^{-1}$ at sites where fine laminations were preserved. The first estimates
19 of TOC accumulation rates of Kuhnt et al. (1990) were based on a duration of 500 kyr for
20 OAE 2 and on averaging of a relatively small number of discrete organic carbon
21 measurements over the entire interval. These rough estimates resulted in accumulation rates
22 between $0.01 \text{ g C cm}^{-2} \text{ kyr}^{-1}$ for deep sea sites and $1.1 \text{ g C cm}^{-2} \text{ kyr}^{-1}$ for NW African shelf
23 basins with upwelling conditions, which showed the highest accumulation rates (Kuhnt et al.,
24 1990). A re-evaluation of organic carbon accumulation rates in the Tarfaya Basin using an
25 orbitally tuned age model and high resolution measurements or continuous organic carbon
26 estimates indicated variable carbon accumulation rates, which varied between 0.7 and 2.8 g C
27 $\text{cm}^{-2} \text{ kyr}^{-1}$ and thus match the data range of the majority of laminated late Holocene sediments
28 from the Peruvian margin presently under bottom-water oxygen levels of $<5 \mu\text{mol kg}^{-1}$
29 (Figure 4).

30 The palaeo water depths of the Tarfaya Basin during OAE 2 were slightly shallower than the
31 centre of the Peruvian OMZ today. Based on molecular evidences, it was even suggested that

1 the Cretaceous OMZ extended into the photic zone (Sinninghe Damsté and Köster, 1998). As
2 such, decomposition and remineralisation of organic detritus while sinking to the sea floor
3 was less likely (Martin et al., 1987). We therefore have to assume that the deposition rate of
4 particulate organic matter was very close to the export flux ~~rate~~ at 150 m water depth
5 (Buesseler et al., 2007). ~~An empirical relationship between the rain rate and Holocene burial~~
6 ~~rate of particulate organic carbon has been established by Flögel et al. (2011) for continental~~
7 ~~margin settings:~~

8 *Eq. 1: $BUR_{POC} = 0.14 * RR_{POC}^{1.1}$*

9 (BUR_{POC} = burial rate of particulate organic carbon; RR_{POC} = rain rate of particulate organic
10 carbon)

11 No significant difference between data from oxygen minimum zones and well-ventilated
12 bottom waters is recognised ~~If we assume a burial efficiency of about 20 %~~ (Flögel et al.,
13 2011, their Figure 2). ~~, and consider~~ Applying Equation 1 and considering a maximum
14 organic carbon accumulation rates of $2.8 \text{ g C cm}^{-2} \text{ kyr}^{-1}$, i.e. approximately $30 \text{ g C m}^{-2} \text{ yr}^{-1}$ to
15 bring up to a round figure, the maximum paleo ~~export flux~~ rain rate would be on the order of
16 ~~126 150~~ $\text{g C m}^{-2} \text{ yr}^{-1}$, i.e. about half the productivity of the present day Peruvian upwelling
17 provides ranging from 200 to $>400 \text{ g C m}^{-2} \text{ yr}^{-1}$ (Wefer et al., 1983). Even though this
18 approximation includes many uncertainties, e.g. reliability of early sediment traps, variable
19 burial efficiency (Dale et al., 2014), poorly constrained rates of Cretaceous primary
20 production, it is reasonable to assume that part of the OAE 2 organic matter was lost during
21 early diagenesis.

22 It has to be emphasized that Holocene organic carbon accumulation rates in the centre of the
23 Peruvian OMZ show a large scatter too, with maximum values of $6.8 \text{ g C cm}^{-2} \text{ kyr}^{-1}$ in core
24 SO147-106KL, i.e. rounded up $70 \text{ g C m}^{-2} \text{ yr}^{-1}$. If we likewise apply Equation 1, ~~assume a~~
25 ~~burial efficiency of about 20 %~~, we obtain ~~an export flux~~ a rain rate of ~~350 270~~ $\text{g C m}^{-2} \text{ yr}^{-1}$.
26 This value is in good agreement with today's productivity of the Peruvian upwelling, and it is
27 derived from a core interval, where an unusually thick section of laminations was preserved.
28 ~~Therefore, it is conceivable that organic matter deposition at many Peruvian core sites is~~
29 ~~hampered by instantaneous redeposition due to near bottom turbulences.~~ None-the-less, the
30 Recent carbon burial efficiency at 10 cm sediment depth close to the SO147-106KL coring
31 site amounts to 62 % of the organic matter arriving at the sea floor (Dale et al., 2014). It is
32 thus much higher than burial rate estimates for the late Holocene (Müller and Suess, 1979).

1 The difference may either originate from a strong inter-annual variability, a subrecent rise in
2 carbon accumulation since 1800 AD (Gutierrez et al., 2009), or for a further remineralisation
3 of organic matter with time in the historical layer below 10 cm sediment depth and beyond.

4 For the laminated beds of OAE 2 in the Tarfaya Basin, a bottom water oxygenation of less
5 than $5 \mu\text{mol kg}^{-1}$ is suggested with reference to the distribution of laminated sediments in
6 Recent oxygen minimum zones worldwide. The question arises whether it is possible to
7 assign a bottom-water oxygen estimate to the intercalated, pale bioturbated limestones from
8 the Tarfaya sections. Indeed, benthic foraminifera from the non-laminated light coloured
9 interval at the base of cycle 0 in core S75 revealed a diverse benthic foraminiferal assemblage
10 dominated by *Bolivina* species in high abundances. They indicate less dysoxic bottom waters
11 (Kuhnt et al., 2005). The organic carbon accumulation rate was estimated at $1.1 \text{ g C cm}^{-2} \text{ kyr}^{-1}$
12 over this interval. If we apply the late Holocene relationship of organic carbon accumulation
13 rates and bottom water oxygen for bioturbated sediments, an oxygenation of ca. $38 \mu\text{mol kg}^{-1}$
14 is obtained. Such levels prevail at the Peruvian Margin today either below 800 m water depth,
15 i.e. well below the OMZ, or above 90 m depth in the surface ocean mixed layer. *Bolivina*
16 dominated faunas live in the centre of the Peruvian OMZ today, with high abundances
17 between 150 and 520 m, and at oxygen concentrations of $<2 \mu\text{mol kg}^{-1}$ (Mallon, 2012).
18 Between 800 and 900 m depth, the range to which the Cretaceous oxygen approximation
19 points, *Bolivina* species were rare, accounting for less than 5 % of the living fauna.

20

21 **5 Conclusions**

22 Pleistocene to Holocene and late Cenomanian to early Turonian stages are more than 94
23 million years apart in Earth's history. A direct comparison of their sedimentary record and
24 environmental processes is hampered by burial diagenesis, evolution of marine biota,
25 different continental and ocean configuration, different climate, ocean circulation, and
26 biogeochemical cycles. The late Cenomanian was marked by the onset of OAE 2.
27 Sedimentological, faunistic, and biogeochemical parameters suggested that large parts of the
28 water column were devoid of dissolved oxygen, but the absolute levels are less well
29 constrained. In an actualistic approach, we compared deposits of OAE 2 from the Moroccan
30 shelf close to Tarfaya with deglacial and Holocene OMZ sediments from the upwelling area
31 off Peru and found only a few parameters for a reliable investigation of paleo low-oxygen

1 conditions in both records, i.e. trace fossils, laminations, and organic carbon accumulation
2 rates.

3 The millimetre-sized trace fossil *Chondrites* was common in Cretaceous strata, in particular in
4 the beds directly underlying OAE 2 black shales. It was also found in modern oxygen-
5 depleted environments, where it is created by a nematode pursuing chemotrophy at anaerobic
6 conditions. The burrow diameter increased with oxygen level from 5 to 45 $\mu\text{mol kg}^{-1}$ in the
7 San Pedro Basin, California. However, *Chondrites* has never been reported from Peruvian
8 OMZ sediments. The oxygen - burrow size relationship is challenged by cm-sized crab
9 burrows appearing at oxygen levels around 10 $\mu\text{mol kg}^{-1}$ below the OMZ already. Crab
10 burrows are also common in Cretaceous sediments. Their appearance in OAE 2 sediments
11 may therefore indicate that a threshold of approximately 10 $\mu\text{mol kg}^{-1}$ bottom-water oxygen
12 has been exceeded.

13 Laminations are a more reliable indicator, but they display only one, very low oxygen level.
14 In the Peruvian, northeastern Pacific, and Pakistan OMZs, depositional laminae created by
15 seasonal or multi-annual variations in sediment supply or composition were preserved at
16 bottom-water oxygen concentrations of less than 5 $\mu\text{mol kg}^{-1}$. Coherent occurrences of
17 laminated beds and biogeochemical indicators for oxygen drawdown in Tarfaya OAE 2
18 sediments supported the applicability of this feature for bottom-water oxygen estimates. The
19 cyclic pattern of laminated and non-laminated intervals in Tarfaya sections and in sediment
20 cores from the eastern Pacific suggested the impact of climatic variations with direct linkages
21 to the high-latitude Southern Ocean as source of nutrients and better ventilated intermediate
22 waters. This regular cyclic pattern is blurred in Peruvian OMZ sediments by erosion,
23 omission and redeposition due to bottom-near currents and breaking internal waves, making
24 the preservation of laminated sediments an exception rather than the rule. Redeposition
25 features were also observed in Tarfaya outcrop sections and reveal episodic, strong currents
26 on the Cretaceous shelf and upper slope as an important process that was likely responsible
27 for many observed unconformities in upper Cenomanian and lower Turonian formations.

28 Organic carbon accumulation rates of late Holocene sediments off Peru displayed a disjunct
29 pattern. They showed a high scatter and a broad abundance maximum between 0.8 and 2.8,
30 mode value at 1.3 $\mu\text{mol kg}^{-1}$, in laminated sediments under a Recent bottom-water
31 oxygenation of $<5 \mu\text{mol kg}^{-1}$. If we compare the carbon accumulation rates of the Tarfaya
32 OAE 2 laminated sediments with late Holocene to Recent ones from the Peruvian OMZ, the

1 Cretaceous rates between 0.7 and 2.8 g C cm⁻² kyr⁻¹ match the data range of the majority of
2 late Holocene sediments very well. Taking into account the high burial efficiency of organic
3 carbon deposited in OMZs, and calculating ~~export-deposition~~ fluxes ~~rates~~ from the photic
4 zone, the maximum Cretaceous values would account for only half of the present-day export
5 production under the Peruvian upwelling. Thermal maturation or the loss of volatile
6 hydrocarbons from Tarfaya black shales may well account for this difference. Maximum
7 Holocene carbon accumulation rates off Peru compare well to the present-day export
8 production. This agreement is, however, valid only for sediments with a continuous,
9 laminated record. All other cores exhibiting average carbon accumulation rates have most
10 likely been subjected to instant winnowing and redeposition of organic detritus.

11 At higher oxygen levels, organic carbon accumulation rates showed an inverse exponential
12 relationship with oxygen concentrations. This mirrors the successive bioirrigation and
13 concomitant decomposition of organic matter through increasingly better ventilation below
14 the Peruvian OMZ. Such a relationship has not been described before. Few available data
15 from the Arabian Sea suggested a similar covariance conferring credibility to the pattern
16 observed at the Peruvian margin (Koho et al., 2013). The relationship has been used to assign
17 a paleo oxygen level to a well constrained, intermittently oxygenated interval at the base of
18 cycle 0 (named Plenus Cold Event) in the Tarfaya sections. The estimate of 38 μmol kg⁻¹
19 overall disagrees with the composition of the Cretaceous and Recent benthic foraminiferal
20 assemblages prevailing at this oxygen level.

21 In summary, close similarities and distinct differences between the two periods of low
22 oxygenation in the sedimentary record of the Cretaceous OAE2 and the Late Quaternary
23 OMZs were recognised. More data are needed to further constrain the organic carbon
24 accumulation – oxygen relationship. This emerging paleoproxy has to be complemented and
25 corroborated by other, advanced bottom-water ventilation proxies, e.g. molybdenum isotopes
26 or I/Ca ratios in foraminiferal shells in order to achieve more quantitative reconstructions of
27 past oxygen levels and their controlling factors.

28 **Acknowledgements**

29 Stefan Sommer, Thomas Mosch, and Richard Camilli, Kiel, operated the CTD during R/V
30 METEOR cruise M77-1 and provided the water column oxygen profiles. Samuel Jaccard,
31 Bern, provided previously unpublished data on Pacific sediment cores, and Ralph Schneider,
32 Kiel, provided core photographs obtained during R/V METEOR M77/2 cruise. Marcus

1 Dengler and Kristin Döring, Kiel, gave advise about primary production and mid-depth
2 hydrodynamics at the Peruvian Margin. Volker Liebetrau, Kiel, scrutinised an earlier draft of
3 this paper. Their support, encouragements, and suggestions are gratefully acknowledged. [We](#)
4 [thank the Associate Editor Christophe Rabouille, Holger Gebhardt, and an anonymous](#)
5 [reviewer for their useful and constructive comments.](#) The corresponding author thanks the
6 Subcommission on Cretaceous Stratigraphy, Germany, for intense discussions on OAE 2
7 features and dynamics during their excursions to unnumbered outcrop sections. This work
8 was funded by Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) through SFB 754
9 “Climate–Biogeochemistry Interactions in the Tropical Ocean”.

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1 Tables

2 Appendix Table A1: Metadata of cores for which information about laminations were
 3 available. *: Last Glacial to 12 ka, ** chronostratigraphy based on $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ curve, ***
 4 chronostratigraphy based on correlation with cores from IODP hole 680A, -: no information
 5 available.

Cruise	Core	Latitude	Longitude	Depth	Lamina- tions	Age model
		S	W	(m)		
M77/1	413	17°47.10'	72°04.44'	2166	no	-
M77/1	414	17°38.60'	71°58.38'	928	no	-
M77/1	415	17°34.39'	71°56.19'	800	no	-
M77/1	417	17°26.02'	71°51.76'	328	yes	-
M77/1	493	10°59.97'	78°44.79'	2020	no	-
M77/1	494	11°0.025'	78°44.80'	2024	no	-
M77/1	495	10°59.96'	78°34.44'	1194	no	-
M77/1	496	11°0.01'	78°34.39'	1192	no	-
M77/1	503	11°0'	78°25.65'	699	no	-
M77/1	504	11°0.01'	78°25.67'	699	no	-
M77/1	505	11°0.01'	78°25.66'	699	no	-
M77/1	506	11°0'	78°21.14'	521	yes	-
M77/1	507	11°0.03'	78°21.13'	520	no	-
M77/1	508	11°0.03'	78°14.19'	377	yes	-
M77/1	509	11°0.03'	78°17.18'	377	yes	-
M77/2	002-6	15°04.75'	75°44.00'	285	yes	-
M77/2	003-2	15°06.21'	75°41.28'	271	yes	yes
M77/2	005-3	12°05.66'	77°40.07'	214	yes	-
M77/2	024-5	11°05.01'	78°00.91'	210	yes	-
M77/2	026-1	10°45.13'	78°28.43'	424	yes	-
M77/2	028-3	09°17.69'	79°53:86'	1104	no	-
M77/2	029-1	09°17.70'	79°37.11'	444	yes	yes

M77/2	029-3	09°17.70'	79°37.11'	433	yes	-
M77/2	045-4	07°59.99'	80°20.51'	359	no	-
M77/2	050-4	08°01.01'	80°30.10'	1013	no	yes
M77/2	052-2	05°29.01'	81°27.00'	1249	no	yes
M77/2	053-2	05°29.02'	81°43.00'	2591	no	-
M77/2	054-1	05°29.00'	81°18.35'	299	no	-
M77/2	056-3	03°44.99'	81°07.25'	350	no	-
M77/2	056-5	03°44.99'	81°07.48'	355	no	yes
M77/2	059-1	03°57.01'	81°19.23'	997	no	yes
M77/2	060-3	03°50.98'	81°15.50'	699	no	-
M77/2	062-1	02°29.98'	81°14.72'	1675	no	-
M77/2	064-3	01°53.49'	81°11.76'	523	no	-
M77/2	065-1	01°57.01'	81°07.23'	204	no	-
M77/2	067-4	01°45.18'	82°37.50'	2080	no	-
AM77/2	069-1	03°16.00'	80°56.86'	338	no	-
M77/2	072-3	02°49.00'	81°00.53'	425	no	-
M77/2	075-1	00°13.00'	80°39.44'	1316	no	-
M77/2	076-4	00°05.45'	80°33.40'	291	no	-
W7706	40	11°15'	77°57'	186	yes	yes
W7706	41	11°20'	78°07'	411	yes	yes
W7706	44	11°24.6'	78°13.8'	580	no	yes
W7706	04	12°58'	76°57'	325	no	yes
W7706	37	13°37'	76°50'	370	yes*	yes
B0405	13	12°00.8'	77°42.64'	185	yes	yes
B0405	6	14°07.9'	76°30.1'	299	yes	yes
IODP112	680A	11°03.90'	78°04.67'	253	yes	yes**
IODP112	686A	13°28.81'	76°53.49'	447	yes	yes***
SO78	158KAL	10°57'	78°06'	237	yes	-
SO78	175KAL	11°03'	78°36'	695	no	-

SO78	173KAL-4	11°05.64'	78°01.35'	204	yes	-
SO78	162KAL-5	11°21'	78°	281	yes	-
SO78	162KAL-6	11°21'	78°	283	yes	-
SO78	172KAL	11°30'	78°09.6'	511	yes	-
SO147	34SL	9°39.55'	79°28.43'	702	no	-
SO147	46SL	9°41.43'	78°40.97'	154	yes	-
SO147	41SL	9°51.08'	79°20.31'	587	yes	-
SO147	40SL	9°51.18'	79°20.22'	597	yes	-
SO147	83SL	10°36.5'	78°44'	605	no	-
SO147	80SL	10°40'	78°51.2'	1276	no	-
SO147	97SL	11°16.5'	77°58.4'	219	yes	-
SO147	27KL	11°37'	78°02'	382	no	-
SO147	25SL	11°54.7'	78°	202	yes	-
SO147	118KA	11°56.9'	77°18'	95,8	yes	-
SO147	4SL	11°56'	77°18'	96	no	-
SO147	106KL	12°03.0'	77°39.8'	184	yes	yes
SO147	123KA	12°57.30'	77°00.10'	363	yes	-
SO147	128KA	13°30.9'	76°21'	86	yes	-
SO147	137SL	13°36.4'	76°40.6'	196	yes	-
SO147	136SL	13°36.9'	76°45.9'	282	yes	-
MW87/08	SC2	11°04.21'	-	255	yes	-
MW87/08	SC7	14°56.62'	-	105	no	-
MW87/08	SC3	15°06.16'	-	253	yes	-

1 Appendix Table A2. Bottom-water oxygen and organic carbon accumulation rates of
 2 Quaternary sediment cores from the Peruvian OMZ. BW: bottom water, AR: accumulation
 3 rate, *average dry bulk density for near-surface sediments at the 12°S transect off Peru, -:
 4 value not reported.

Core	Depth (m)	BW O ₂ (μmol kg ⁻¹)	Sed. rate (cm kyr ⁻¹)	Dry bulk density (g/cm ³)	AR (g cm ⁻² kyr ⁻¹)	C _{org} (%)	C _{org} AR (g cm ⁻² kyr ⁻¹)	Time interval (cal ka)	Data source
W7706-40	186	2.17	-	-	28.00	13.40	3.30	0-0.5	Reimers, Suess (1983)
W7706-04	325	2.22	-	-	9.00	17.30	1.30	0-0.5	Reimers, Suess (1983)
W7706-37	370	2.65	-	-	11.00	13.20	1.60	0-0.5	Reimers, Suess (1983)
W7706-41	411	2.89	-	-	33.00	19.60	6.30	0-0.5	Reimers, Suess (1983)
SO147-106KL	184	2.10	168.8	0.36	60.38	11.25	6.79	1.5-1.9	Wolf (2002)
543MUC52	85	1.10	70	0.5*	35.00	3.50	1.23	recent	Mosch et al. (2012)
449MUC19	319	2.12	50	0.5*	25.00	10.65	2.66	recent	Mosch et al. (2012)
516MUC40	512	2.47	20	0.5*	10.00	6.07	0.61	recent	Mosch et al. (2012)
487MUC39	579	3.69	26	0.5*	13.00	6.48	0.84	recent	Mosch et al. (2012)
459MUC25	697	12.84	81	0.5*	40.50	6.72	2.72	recent	Mosch et al. (2012)
549MUC53	1005	40.34	45	0.5*	22.50	4.00	0.90	recent	Mosch et al. (2012)
M77/2-03-2	271	2.40	39.6	0.19	7.38	4.87	0.36	0.5-1.5	this study
M77/2-29-3	433	2.80	47.67	0.50	23.84	5.77	1.38	10.7-12.6	this study
M77/2-50-4	1013	53.90	23.77	0.50	11.81	3.94	0.46	11.2-14.0	this study
M77/2-52-2	1249	73.20	28.75	0.51	14.58	0.42	0.06	0-3.0	this study

5

1 **Figure captions**

2 Figure 1. Location map of the sediment cores and wells studied.

3 Figure 2. Oxygen concentrations of a composite section along the Peruvian continental
4 margin and locations of sediment cores. Triangles: cores with laminated intervals. Crosses:
5 non-laminated cores.

6 Figure 3. Distribution of laminated intervals in sediment cores from the Peruvian OMZ.
7 Triangles depict age control points. All cores were radiocarbon dated except IODP 112 680
8 and 686, which have been dated by graphic correlation of the benthic stable oxygen isotope
9 curve with the SPECMAP stack (Imbrie et al., 1984; Wefer et al., 1990). Note that
10 laminations were not recorded in sediments deposited between 6 and 8 cal. ka.

11 Figure 4. Organic carbon accumulation rates versus bottom-water oxygen. Filled symbols
12 indicate laminated sediment cores.

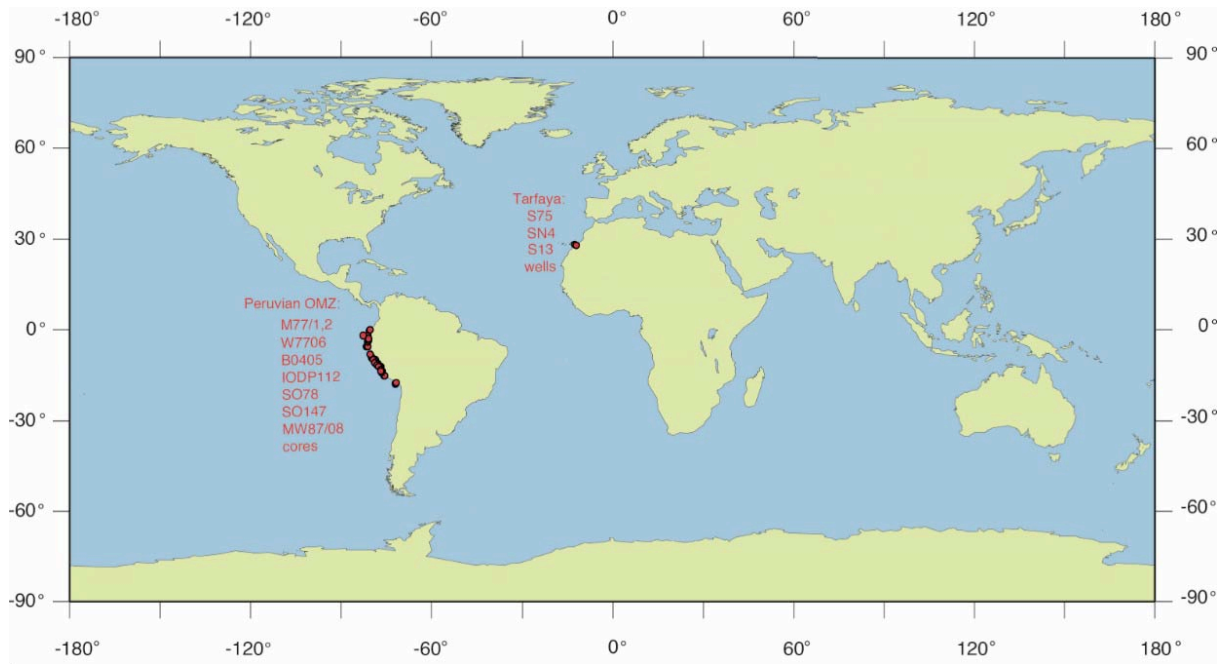
13 Figure 5. Onset of OAE2 in Tarfaya well SN^o4. Red box indicates transition from
14 homogenous to laminated sediments. Note the increase in lightness variability.

15 Figure 6. Wavelet power spectrum of lightness values in a laminated portion of Core SN^o4
16 (Section 41, Segment 1). Morlet wavelet with 6 parameters, the contour levels are chosen so
17 that 75%, 50%, 25%, and 5% of the wavelet power is above each level, respectively. (←
18 (Torrence and Compo, 1998).

19 Figure 7. Low angle truncations and small scale erosional surfaces indicating sediment
20 reworking and re-distribution through small scale erosion and/or winnowing by bottom
21 currents. A.-B. Coastal section near Shell/Onhym oil shale mine, lower Turonian; C. Amma
22 Fatma coastal section, base of Turonian. Scale: 1 Dirham coin (24 mm diameter)

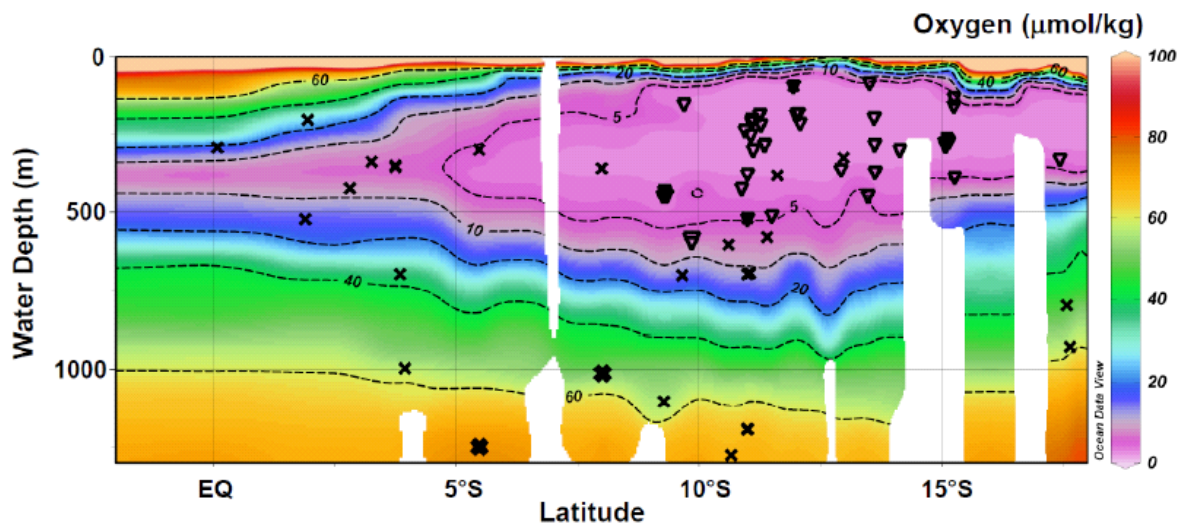
23 Figure 8. Organic carbon accumulation rates estimated from TOC measurements of 2 m
24 continuously sampled and homogenized core sections, and density logging in Tarfaya well
25 S13. Note the maximum between 94.4 and 93.75 Ma corresponding to the OAE-2 positive
26 carbon isotope excursion.

1 Figure 1



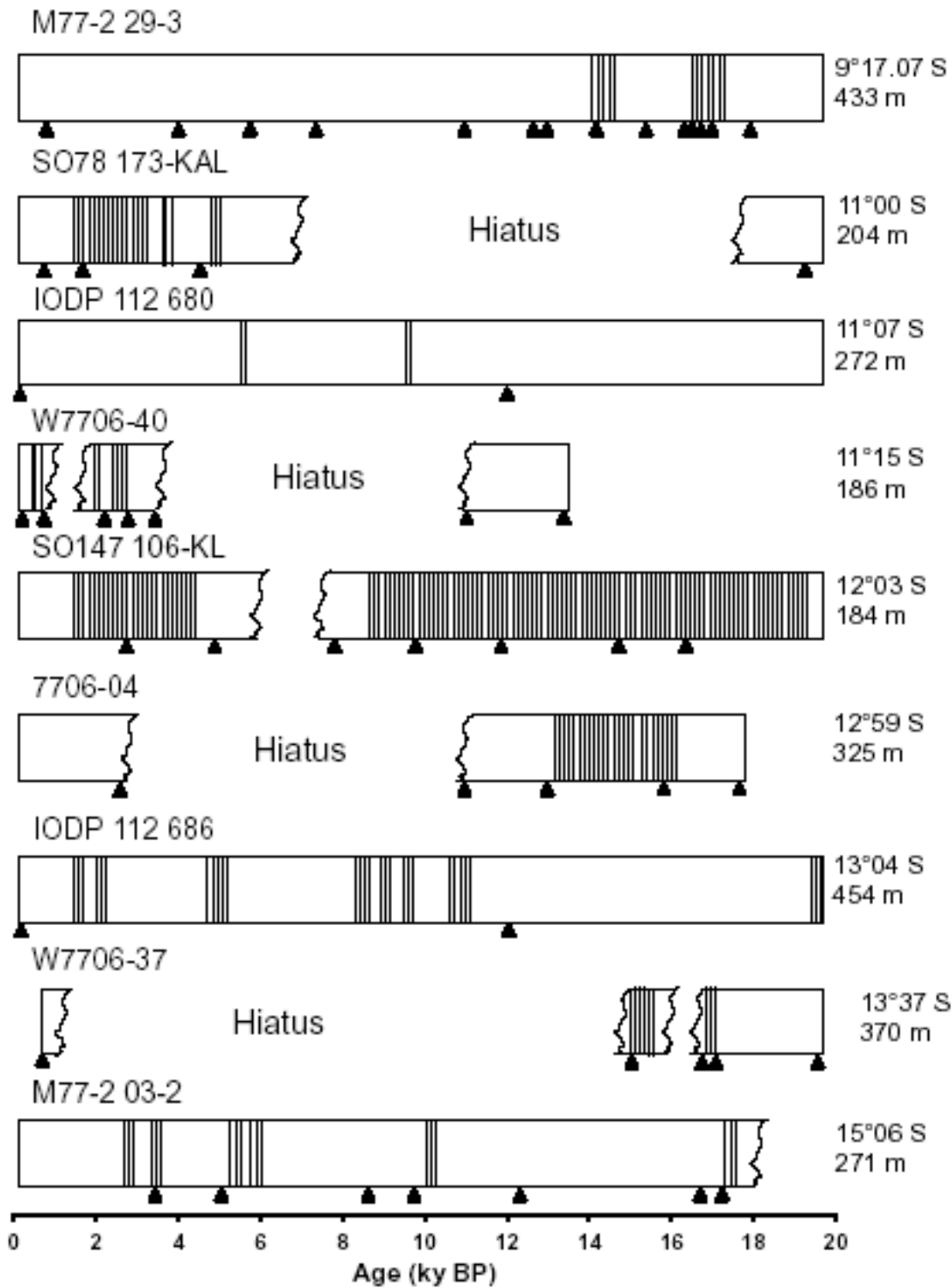
2

3 Figure 2



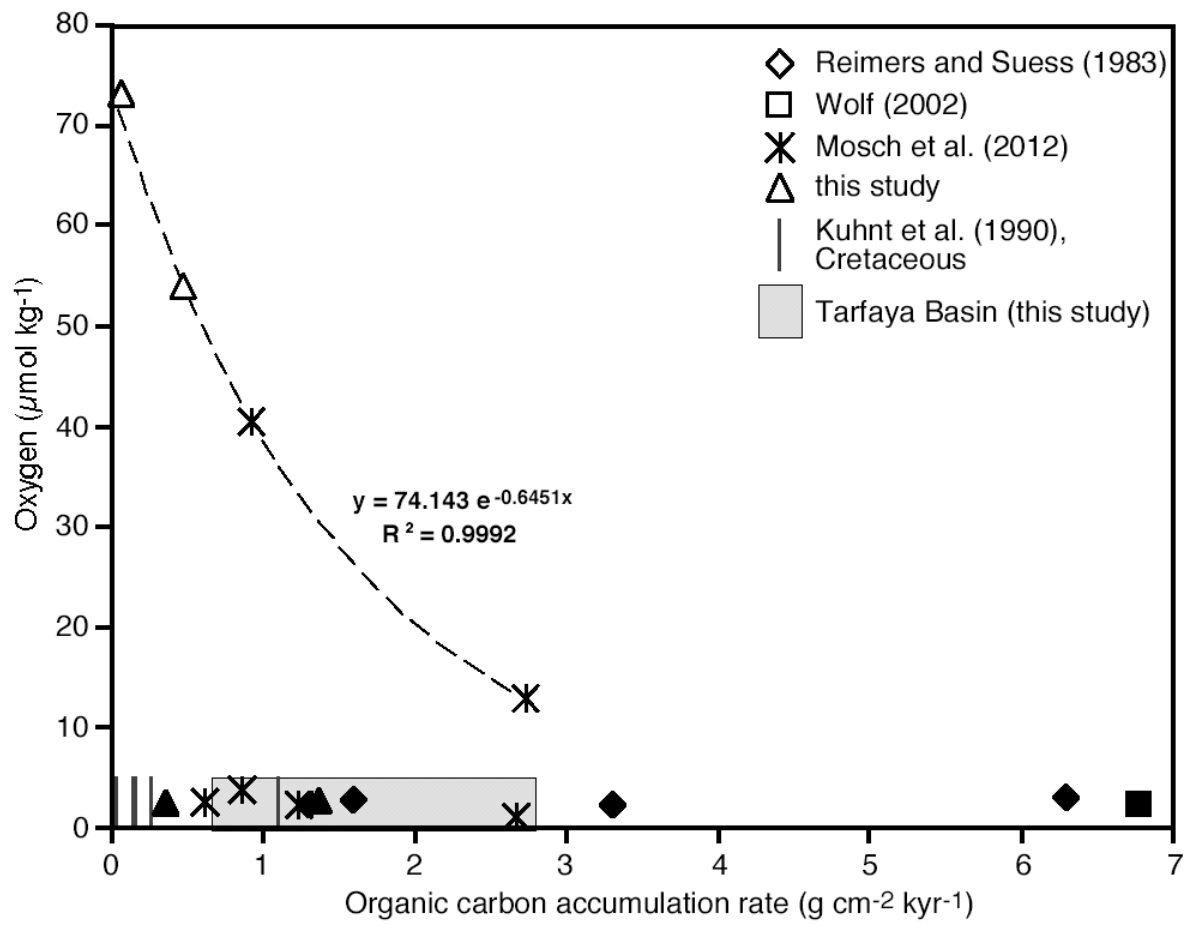
4

1 Figure 3



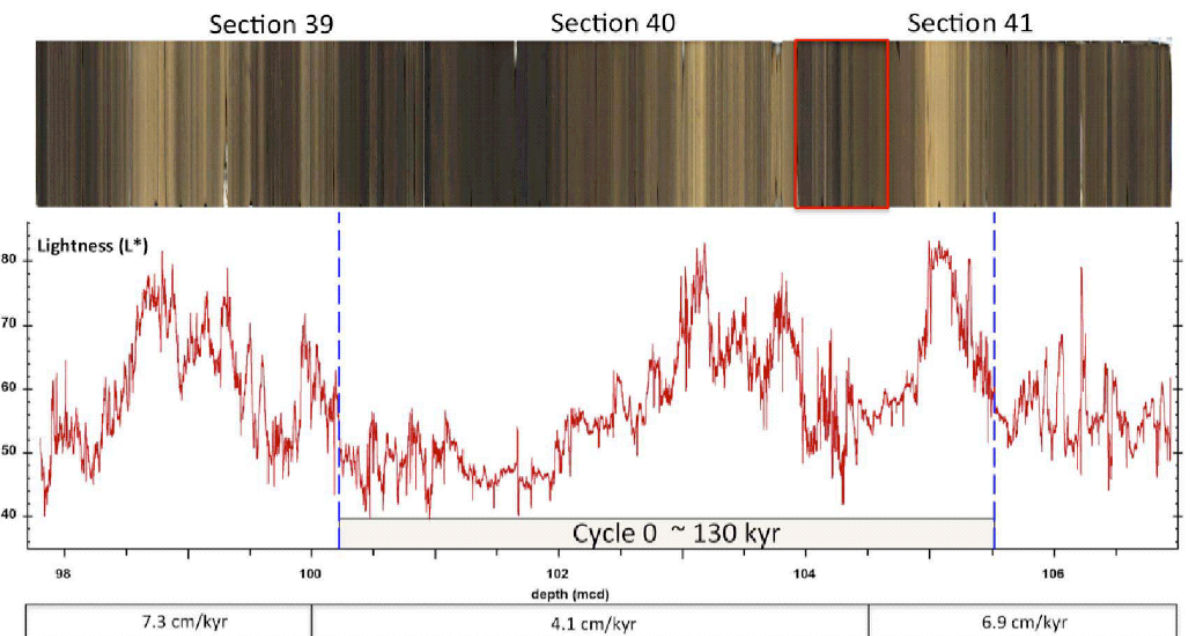
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1 Figure 4



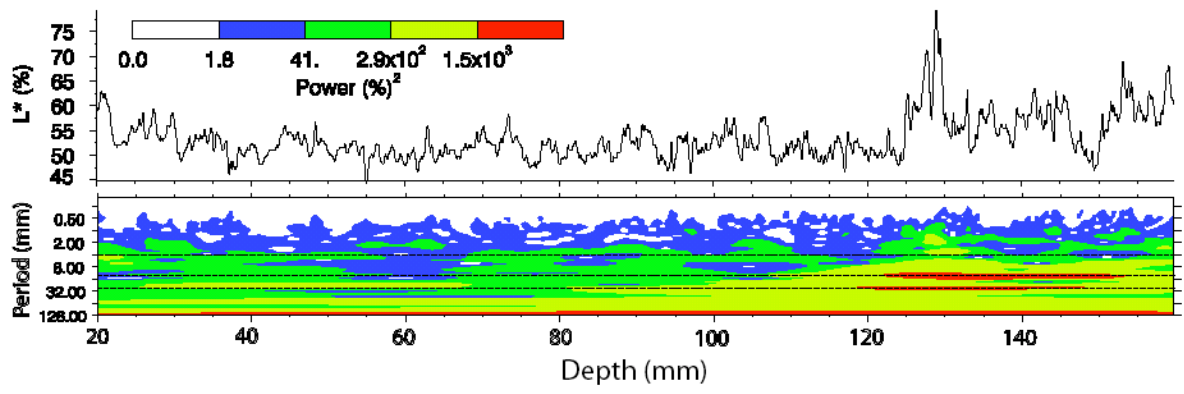
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3 Figure 5



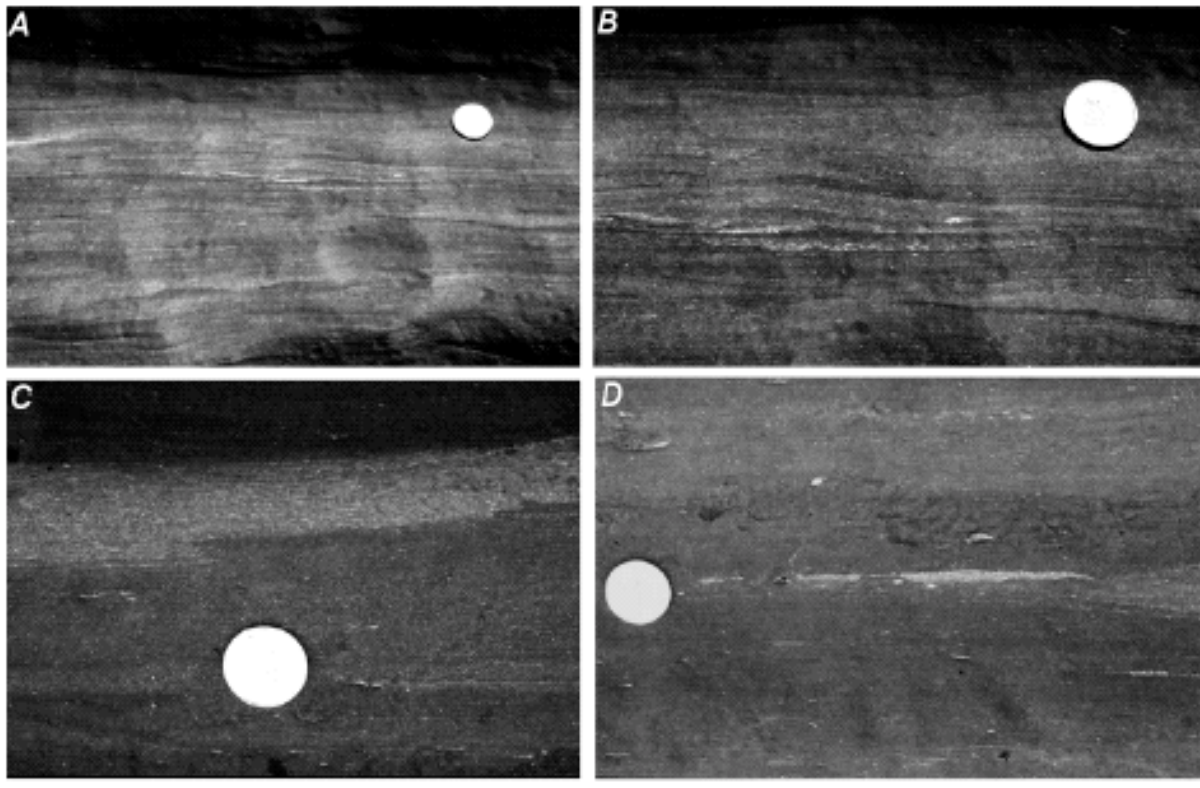
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1 Figure 6



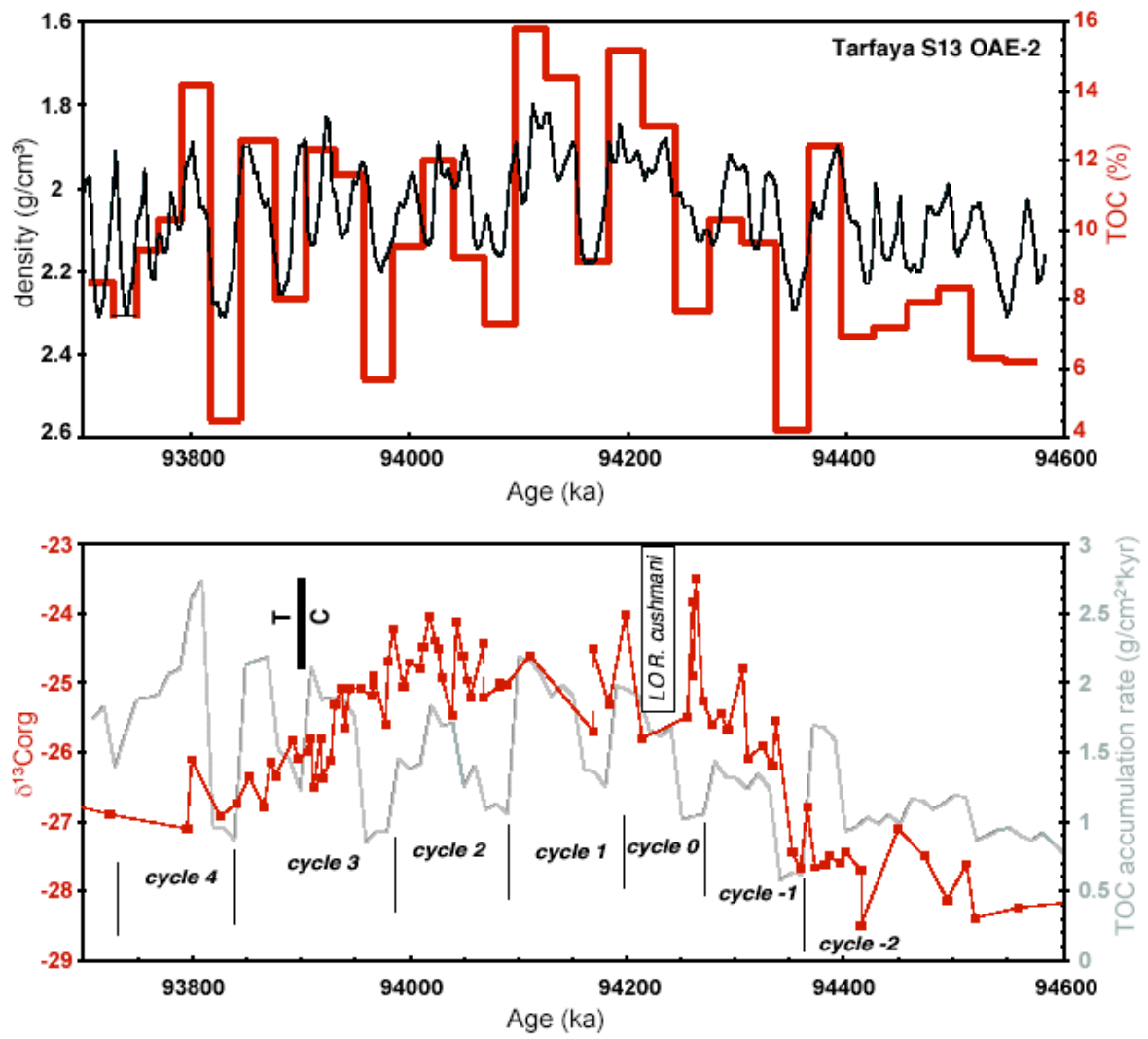
2

3 Figure 7



4

1 Figure 8



2