

We thank the referee for a very helpful review. We note that the points raised by the referee were predominantly editorial or matters of clarification, and we have addressed all of these fully in a revised manuscript. We have also attempted to condense where possible.

We would like to respond to some specific comments here.

Page 3391:

- Line 6: it is quite misleading to describe the five transects as north and south of the Mandovi/Zuari as there are a large number of other estuaries between Goa and Ratnagiri and also some between Goa and Karwar. Rewrite this part as well as line 10 and lines 12/13, use latitudes and the names of the transects rather than "north or south of the estuaries" as this implies that sedimentation may be still influenced by these two rivers.

Page 3395:

- the Kali river may be a more probable source of terrigenous matter at Karwar. As the $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ in this river has not been analysed it may be better to delete line 17

We respond to the above comments together as they are closely related. The referee is quite right that there are other rivers north and south of the Mandovi/Zuari estuary that could contribute to shelf sediments. We have modified our statements accordingly.

The Kali river, which appears to be the other most significant river in terms of discharge, would potentially impact on the southernmost (Karwar) station transect. Thus, because there is (to our knowledge) no stable C isotopic data for SPOM from this river (or others north/south of the Mandovi/Zuari), the referee is correct that we should perhaps alter our statement on p. 3395. However, we would point out that the C/N elemental and stable isotopic data for the Ratnagiri and Karwar transects, as well as the lignin data, are consistent (in an absolute sense and in offshore trend), with what is observed on the Goa transect offshore of the Mandovi/Zuari, and indicate predominance of marine OM, especially beyond the shallowest nearshore deposits. Therefore, and because vegetation in the catchments drained by the Kali and Mandovi/Zuari rivers, and rivers between Goa and Ratnagiri, is similar, there is no reason to suspect that $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ of SPOM in these rivers (or marine/terrestrial OM predominance for the offshore shelf sediments) are likely to be radically different.

There are several paragraphs comparing the Indian and Pakistan margins all through the paper. It would be better to summarize these in a new chapter, possibly, with Figures presenting the data for comparison and discussion of the differences and possible mechanisms. The respective paragraphs are on page 3394, lines 10-16, page 3395, lines 20-28, page 3398, lines 20-25, page 3399, lines 3/4, and also page 3403, lines 1-9.

We acknowledge that several separate comparisons are made to previous studies from the Pakistan margin. We will make sure that such comparison is as complete as possible, where valid. However, we would argue against an additional section/chapter dedicated to a margin comparison (with additional figures/tables), for several reasons.

Firstly, we believe that, as has been the case for our Pakistan margin study, and others from the Arabian Sea (e.g. Oman and Indian margins, which are fundamentally different in many key respects), this data set provides important new information, and deserves consideration, in its own right.

Secondly, we would stress that all previous Arabian Sea studies (including our Pakistan margin work) differed from the present study a) in parameters that were determined and/or b) in that essentially all (other than Calvert et al's 1995 work on the Indian margin, which we have directly compared our results to) were focused almost entirely on the continental slope (i.e. no shelf or estuary samples). Our previous work on the Indus margin off Pakistan, for example, included only one shelf station, and none from estuaries. Therefore, we would argue that, at this stage, it is more valid to make specific, isolated comparisons to previous studies, where these are appropriate.

Finally, a manuscript is in preparation that will be precisely what the referee recommends – an inter-margin comparison. We will compare the present data to unpublished and old data from the Oman and Pakistan margins (and to comparable results from other margins).