Dear Gerhard,

Herewith, I would like to submit the revised version of the manuscript, 'Effects of varied nitrate and phosphate supply on polysaccharidic and proteinaceous gel particle production during tropical phytoplankton bloom experiments '. We are thankful to the two referees, who thoroughly evaluated the manuscript and gave valuable and very detailed suggestions for improvements. We are confident to have satisfactorily addressed all major comments, and hope that the revision will meet with yours and the referee's approval.

Best regards,

Anja

# **Response to referees**

#### Anonymous Referee #1:

General comments: This paper addresses an interesting issue, i.e. what will be the effects of varied nutrient supply and stoichiometry on the production and dynamics of gel particles. While I find the question interesting and the paper well written, I find the rational to justify such a study rather weak. The first sentence of the abstract suggests that "oxygen minimum zone (OMZ) will expand in the tropical oceans as a result of global change with potential consequences for marine element cycling, resulting in a lower supply of nitrate relative to phosphate". However, neither the Introduction nor the Discussion develop this argument, and the link between OMZ/global change/nutrient supply is rapidly lost, which leaves the reader with the question: What happens for gel particles if the nutrient availability is altered? Instead, the Introduction develops on the general role of inorganic nutrient availability on ecosystem productivity. It would certainly be beneficial for the paper to focus the Introduction on the expected alteration of the nutrient input/stoichiometry/cycling in OMZ, and in particular in the studied site and in the context of global change. If the link with global change and OMZ is kept in the Abstract, it also seems necessary to discuss the impact of changing nutrient availability on the long term perspective (global change) and for this specific environment (OMZ). I find the main conclusion, i.e. increasing inorganic N supply (relative to inorganic P) favors gel particles formation, rather convincing despite the limitation of the mesocosm approach to extrapolate to long term responses of natural systems (already acknowledged by the authors on page 6610).

**Response**: We agree with the referee that the impact of altered nutrient concentration and stoichiometry should be discussed more extensively with respect to biogeochemical consequences of oxygen minimum zones. We will expand the link between nutrients and sub/anoxia in the introduction (e.g. sinks of NO3, sources of PO4) and give a perspective on potential consequences for gel particles production in the discussion section.

Referee: Specific comments/questions Page 6594, Line 20: A mesh to filter out zooplankton was not used. Do you mean "was used"?
Response: A mesh was <u>not used</u> in order to avoid changes of the community composition tested, compared to the natural situation.

**Referee:** Page 6596, Line 21: The microscopic study of gel particles was conducted at a 200xmagnification. Although this magnification covers most of the gel size spectra (at least for TEP), it is probably too high to allow a good statistical determination of large particles (that are less abundant), and it probably renders the observation of small micrometric particles very difficult. This limitation is somehow acknowledged by the authors since in Fig. 5, the regression line is fitted to the data only until 14.14  $\mu$ m, suggesting that above this size, the large particles are not well represented. I think this limitation should be acknowledged in the paper. **Response**: Gel particles were determined in the size range 1-760  $\mu$ m. We choose to fit the size distribution line to a largest size of 14.14 $\mu$ m ESD to assure a minimum number of 10 ml<sup>-1</sup> in all samples (TEP and CSP at all time points, throughout the study) for better comparability. Larger gel particles were too seldom and variable to meet this criteria and thus would not allow for a good fit. We will include this explanation in the method section. Larger TEP thus were included in the enumeration but not in determination of the size distribution.

**Referee:** Page 6612, Lines 24-29: It is suggested that the high [TEP-C]:[POC] ratio is due to an underestimation of POC due to TEP passing through GF/F filters. While this possibility exists, it should also be mentioned that TEP-C could be overestimated using the TEP-C versus TEP size relationship. Indeed, the use of this relationship is very sensitive to the determination of the TEP size distribution, and one could argue that the determination of the TEP size spectra at a single x200 magnification does not allow such an accurate description of their distribution. Furthermore, this relationship has been established from phytoplankton cultures and could overestimate TEP-C of naturally occurring TEP particles.

**Response:** The referee raises valid arguments and we will include this potential bias of the TEP-C calculations in the discussion.

**Referee:** Page 6609, Lines 22-27: This paragraph brings to light the possible impact of various nutrient supply for the phytoplankton community composition. Since phytoplankton composition strongly influences the release rate and composition of TEP precursors (and probably also that of CSP), it would be useful to mention some results from the phytoplankton composition (if available). If the community composition differs significantly between treatments, the effects of changing nutrients supply and stoichiometry on the dynamics of gel particles could be only due to phytoplankton composition.

**Response:** Unfortunately, we do not have data to test for community differences among mesocosms. We refer to the study of Meyer et al. (2015, BGD, doi:10.5194/bgd-12-9991-2015), who describe development of cyanobacterial (nifH gene and transcript abundances) communities over time.

Referee: References The following references are listed, but are not cited in the text: - Azam and Long 2001 - Carlson 2002 - Engel et al. 2014 - Finkel et al. 2010 - Graziano et al. 1996 - Kreus et al. 2014 - Mills et al. 2004 - Moore et al. 2008 The following references are cited, but are not in the reference list: - Fraga 2001 - Hauss et al. 2012 - del Giorgio and Duarte 2002 - Chin et al. 1998 - Verdugo et al. 2004 - Hauss et al. 2013 -Meyeret al. 2015 - Berman and Viner-Mozzini 2001 - Claquin et al. 2008 - Underwood etal. 2004 - Alldredge et al. 1995 - Arrigo 2005

The following references are not cited properly: - Rhee 1974 or 1978? - Fogg 1966 or 1983? -Bakker et al. 2007 or Baker et al. 2007? - Logan et al. 1995 or 1994? **Response:** We thank the referee for carefully checking the references. We will correct the list

during revision.

# Anonymous Referee #2

**Specific comments**: Comments by reviewer #1 also reflect my concerns. In particular, I would like to see some information given on the phytoplankton community composition. **Response:** The species composition of the phytoplankton communities was not assessed quantitatively. However, we did not notice obvious differences between mesocosm of each experiment. Small initial differences with respect to the cyanobacterial population were determined and are included in Meyer et al (2015, BGD doi:10.5194/bgd-12-9991-2015).

P6594 L17: Already stated by anonymous reviewer #1: a mesh was used I presume?
What size was the mesh and if no mesh was used, what is the reasoning behind this, as this would have serious consequences for these mesocosm experiments.
Response: A mesh was not used in order to avoid changes of the community composition tested, compared to the natural situation. Moreover, cells may break during mesh filtration, which would potential lead to higher DOM release and bias gel particles formation.

P6594 L23: So only one beaker was taken from which all subsamples for the various analyses were obtained? What volume did the beaker have? Also where was this sampled i.e. was it thus only surface water? Was the water in the tank mixed before sampling? Please clarify this for the reader. This would have an impact on how representative the sample is. If there was any mixing then this would have had to be very gentle to not influence gel particle formation, etc., so I presume there wasn't any? The depth of sampling would also affect gel particle abundance since it can be expected that particles will potentially settle out as they aggregate and bloom dynamics change.
Response: The beaker had a 10 L volume and 5.5-7 liter were sampled from each mesocosm at the surface. The mesocosms were gently mixed prior to sampling to obtain representative samples for the entire mesocosm. We will add this information to the manuscript.

**P6590 L6ff**: I suggest to exclude the description of TEP and CSP from here: "Here, were investigated how different ... affect the abundance and size distribution of polysaccharidic transparent exopolymer particles (TEP) and proteinaceous Coomassie stainable particles (CSP)." The phrase "which are suggested to enhance particle aggregation and export fluxes" could also be applicable to CSP and it is unclear why only CSP would be a "supposedly" good substrate for heterotrophic bacteria and not also TEP. **Response:** We altered the abstract to include both TEP and CSP for aggregation and microbial cycling proccesses

**P6592 L10**: Perhaps write: "To date, mostly two types of gel particles have been studied in seawater:

" Since other gel particles have also been 'described' or at least suggested to be present in seawater

Response: Adopted

...

**P6596 L11ff and 18ff**: Why do you mention that a certain number of tanks was similar or smaller in ratios to the Redfield value, whilst for the other you mention those that had a larger ratio? What is the rationale behind this?

**Response:** The rationale was to indicate in how many mesocosms of Varied P the conditions were supposedly non- P limiting (N:P< or equal to 16) and in how many mesocosms during Varied N the conditions were supposedly non- N limiting (N:P> or equal to 16).

**P6600 L9:** You refer here to there also being a higher variability in the varied N experiment, however, you also have a higher number of different treatments compared to the P experiment.

**Response.** We had 15 mesocosms in Varied P and 17 mesocosms in Varied N. However, the variability in Chl a concentration was much higher in Varied N, even if we exclude the highest and lowest values in Varied N. So we think that the notice of higher variability in Varied N is valid.

**P6606 L9:** Perhaps it would be good to also include a similar figure as Fig. 5 for CSP. **Response**: We modified the figure to include CSP size distributions

**P6607 L5:** You mention you relate the gel particle abundance to bloom development but in fact you mostly only relate it to the period until day 6 and thus exclude the bloom decline. In addition you have no data for 3 and 4, which should be acknowledged somewhat when interpretations are being made. You also mention in the next part that abundances were related to chl a until the bloom peak, however, the bloom peak for Varied P was on day 5 and large changes in the biogeochemistry have already happened on day 6 in these mesocosms.

**Response:** We modified this sentence to 'In order to identify differences between the two series of mesocosms experiments, gel particle abundance was compared to bloom development, which also differed between the experiments.' In the following, we related gel particles to organic matter production for the full period and to Chl a concentration until the bloom peak (day 5 for Varied P and day 6 for Varied N). We added this information to the figure caption.

**P6614 L9:** I may have not understood correctly but is it really new formation of CSP or CSP potentially disaggregating? You mention only a few sentences later that CSP numbers decreased at the end of Varied N with a potentially higher loss than new formation.

**Response:** We revised this paragraph to clarify that CSP new formation was observed during the bloom and post-bloom periods. A decrease in total number and area of CSP was observed only at the last day (day 8) of Varied N. We suggest that increasing bacterial decomposition activities at that time lead to a net decrease in CSP.

**Table 4 and in the main text**: Why do you use Mol% for TEP-C:POC but mol:mol for TEP-C:PN?

**Response:** We use Mol% when the reference element is the same (C:C) and Mol:Mol when the elements are different (C:N).

**Unclear sentences/phrases** are the following lines, which either do not make sense as they currently stand or do not fully explain what aspects are meant, and would require reworking:

**P6591 L12-16**, in particular the last part does not fit well. Why also a new paragraph here? The next sentence is also unclear (L16-21).

**Response:** This is referring to the following sentences: 'Growth strategies relying on specific cellular nutrient requirements were also suggested to induce non-Redfield stoichiometry in oceanic biomass (Klausmeier et al., 2004; Mills and Arrigo, 2010; Franz et al. 2012b) and changes in community structure have been reported as response to changes in nutrient ratios (Sommer et. al., 2004; Hauss et al., 2012). With regard to CO2 uptake and organic matter production, variations in element stoichiometry have been linked to carbon overconsumption - a particular increase in carbon assimilation relative to the uptake of nitrogen and phosphorous (Toggweiler, 1993; Schartau et al., 2007), when photosynthesis proceeds, while cell division and growth are hampered due to nutrient limitation (Wood and van Valen, 1990).'

These sentences explain that cells have different requirements for C, N, and P, which is seen in biomass and also by changes in species composition when nutrient ratios changes. The sentence 16-21 explains how carbon overconsumption affects carbon to nutrient ratios.

**P6608 L12:** thereby – not the right word to use here. **Response:** We exchanged 'thereby' with 'the'

P6608 L28: what factors? Which factors do you refer to here?

**Response:** We can only speculate about these factors as the treatment of these mesocosms was the same during the two experiments. We therefore removed this sentence from the results section and added to the discussion that differences in initial community structures such as described in Meyer et al. may have co-affected the nutrient treatment.

P6609 L17-21, especially the last part.
P6609 L26 - P6610 L4
P6610 L10-14: what is meant by 'potential variability of ecological responses towards nutrient supply'? What ecological variability??
P6612 L13-15: may contrasts??
P6615 L2-3
Response: We reformulated the sentence to clarify the point.

**Technical corrections:** - Please make sure that throughout the document coomassie stainable particles is in fact written as Coomassie stainable particles i.e. Coomassie with a capital letter.

Throughout please make sure you use "gel particle" when written together with other words such as 'gel particle formation', 'gel particle abundance' and not gel particles abundance or gel-particles abundance. Only if 'gel particles' is used on its own and the plural is meant do you write it with an -s.

Response: Adopted

Abstract: L7: we investigated how
L14: In the days until the bloom peak is reached, a positive correlation ...
L17: After the bloom peak,
Response: All adopted

Introduction: P6591 L16ff: Add onto previous paragraph, not a new paragraph. Separate paragraphs later in line 21. Response: Adopted

P6591 L22: in the form of dissolved Response: Adopted

•••

**P6592 L8**: Verdugo et al., 2004). ->Begin a new paragraph here. "The formation of gel particles thus represents **Response:** Adopted

... "

**P6592 L16:** been reported ([add some newer references here]), with higher **Response:** Newer reference was added

P6592 L17: It has been shown that the rateP6593 L12: nitrogen in the form of CSP thus represents important source of nutrition.

Response: All adopted

# P6595 L5:

(Table 1) for 14 tanks. Two additional **Response:** Adopted 'for 13 tanks'

P6596 L3: Samples for the dissolved P6596 L5: is it really Quaatro? Perhaps Quattro? Section 2.2.1.: Please specify what volume of sample was used for these analyses. P6596 L10: Please specify at least for how long the staining was done. P6598 L7: the range found in samples were prepared P6599 L5: HCl not HCL P6599 L10: experiments were statistically tested P6600 L12: response was much stronger P6600 L15, 19: mesocosm; also check other places where 'mesocosms' is in combination with 'experiment' or other words and should be 'mesocosm' instead. P6603 L7: initial (day 1) TEP numerical P6605 L17: at the end of the experiment. P6606 L3: the figure reference (Fig 6b, left) is incorrect: P6606 L20: Multiple comparison (Holm-Sidak) tests revealed P6607 L18: the figure reference (Fig 8b-f) is incorrect: P6608 L27: the increase in CSP abundance over time P6609 L7: in a large variation P6609 L24: remove superfluous comma after days. P6610 L8: to long-term responses of natural P6610 L18: Chow et al. (wrong by Marine Chemistry but how it will be cited) P6610 L23: influencing this release P6611 L12: In addition, phosphorus P6611 L25: North Pacific (offshore Hawaii). P6612 L15: bloom build-up and decay. P6612 L21: to the POC pool in the form of TEP. accounted for 0.5µMol C (initial days) to P6613 L13: about the role of CSP on the organic carbon and, more importantly, on organic P6613 L15: for auto- and heterotrophic growth. During this study [also no new paragraph here] P6613 L21: at a later time. Because

P6614 L14: accordance with findings

P6615 L4: Particle dynamics of TEP and CSP differ..

Response: All adopted!

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5	Effects of varied nitrate and phosphate supply on polysaccharidic
6	and proteinaceous gel particles production during tropical
7	phytoplankton bloom experiments
8	
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10	Engel, A., Borchard, C., Loginova, A., Meyer, J., Hauss, H. and Kiko, R.
11	
12	GEOMAR Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research, 24105 Kiel, Germany
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20	Keywords: Transparent exopolymer particles (TEP), Coomassie stainable particles (CSP),
21	mesocosms, N:P ratio, dissolved organic carbon (DOC), dissolved organic nitrogen (DON)
22	

# 23 Abstract

24 It has been suggested that oxygen minimum zones (OMZ) will expand in the Ttropical Ooceans 25 as a result of global change with potential consequences for marine element cycling, such as an 26 increase in anaerobic nitrogen loss, resulting in a lower supply of nitrate relative to phosphate to 27 the euphotic zone. So far, the effects of changes in nutrient ratios on organic matter recycling and 28 export fluxes are not well understood. Here, were report of two series of mesocosm experiments 29 that were conducted to investigated how different phosphate (Experiment 1, Varied P: 0.15 - 1.58)  $\mu$ mol L<sup>-1</sup>) or nitrate (Experiment 2, Varied N: 1.9 - 21.9  $\mu$ mol L<sup>-1</sup>) concentrations affect the 30 31 abundance and size distribution of polysaccharidic transparent exopolymer particles (TEP), and 32 of proteinaceous Coomassie stainable particles (CSP). Both types of gel particles which are play 33 an important role in biogeochemical and ecological processes like suggested to enhance particle 34 aggregation and export fluxes, and on proteinaceous coomassie stainable particles (CSP), a 35 supposedly orgood substrate for microbial nutrition and growth-heterotrophic bacteria. Two Theseries of mesocosm bloom experiments were conducted with natural plankton communities 36 37 collected from the Eastern Tropical North Atlantic (ETNA) close to Cape Verde in October 2012. 38 In the days Uuntil the bloom peak was reached, a positive correlation between gel particle 39 abundance and Chl a concentration was determined, linking the release of dissolved gel precursors and the subsequent formation of gel particles to autotrophic production. After the 40 41 bloom peak, gel particle abundance remained stable or even increased, implying a continued 42 partitioning of dissolved into particulate organic matter after biomass production itself ceased. 43 During both experiments, differences between TEP and CSP dynamics were observed; TEP were 44 generally more abundant than CSP. Changes in size distribution indicated aggregation of TEP 45 during after the bloom, while newly formed CSP decomposed. Abundance of gel particles clearly increased with nitrate concentration during the second experiment, suggesting that changes in 46

- 47 [DIN]:[DIP] ratios can affect gel particle formation with potential consequences for carbon and
- 48 nitrogen cycling as well as food web dynamics in tropical ecosystems.
- 49

# 50 1. Introduction

51 Ecosystem productivity in the surface ocean is largely controlled by the availability of inorganic 52 nutrients. The Redfield ratio describes a constant molar ratio of C:N:P of 106:16:1 and associates 53 the relative elemental composition of seawater to that of marine organisms (Redfield, 1958;-54 Redfield et al., 1963). It provides a widely used basis for the calculation of elemental fluxes in 55 marine food webs and biogeochemical cycles. (Sarmiento and Gruber, 2006; Sterner and Elser, 56 2002). On a regional or temporal scale, however, strong deviations of cellular composition from 57 the Redfield ratio were reported (Fraga, 2001; Geider and LaRoche, 2002),- One reason is and 58 related to the physiological state of cells of individual primary producers or communities, which 59 was shown to affect elemental composition (Rhee, et al., 1978; Goldman et al., 1979; Falkowski, 2000; Borchard et al., 2011; Franz et al., 2012a), differences in- gGrowth strategies 60 relying on specific cellular nutrient requirements were also suggested to induce non Redfield 61 stoichiometry in oceanic biomass (Klausmeier et al., 2004; Mills and Arrigo, 2010; Franz et al. 62 2012b) and changes in community structure have been reported as response to changes in nutrient 63 ratios (Sommer et. al., 2004; Hauss et al., 2012). 64

With regard to  $CO_2$  uptake and organic matter production, variations in element stoichiometry <u>of</u> cells have been linked to carbon overconsumption - a particular increase in carbon assimilation relative to the uptake of nitrogen and phosphorous (Toggweiler, 1993; Schartau et al., 2007), when photosynthesis proceeds, while cell division and growth are hampered due to nutrient limitation (Wood and van Valen, 1990).

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71 A fraction of this 'excess carbon' is released from phytoplankton cells in the form of dissolved organic carbon (DOC). DOC release occurs during all stages of phytoplankton growth (Fogg, 72 73 19661983; Mague et al., 1980; Bjørnsen, 1988). In natural communities, the percentage of 74 extracellular release typically ranges between 10-20% (Baines and Pace, 1991; Nagata, 2000). 75 Depending on their nutrient status, however, marine phytoplankton cells can release up to 80% of 76 primary production as DOC (Sharp, 1977; Mague, 1980; Fogg, 1983; Bjørnsen, 1988). Thereby, 77 the extent and composition of freshly produced DOC is affected by various environmental factors, 78 such as temperature, CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations and nutrient supply (Thornton, 2009; Engel et al., 2011; 79 Borchard and Engel, 2012). Abiotic factors influencing DOC production concomitantly define its 80 fate in the global carbon cycle. DOC can either be transferred back to CO<sub>2</sub> by microbial 81 degradation and respiration (Azam, 1983; Ducklow et al. 1986; del Giorgio and Duarte, 2002), or 82 it can be transformed into particulate organic carbon (POC), either through uptake by organisms, 83 or by abiotic assembly and coagulation into gel particles (Alldredge et al., 1993; Chin et al., 84 1998; Engel et al., 2004a; Verdugo et al., 2004).

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The F formation of gel particles thus represents an abiotic pathway of repartitioning dissolved 86 87 organic matter (DOM) into particulate organic matter (POM). To date, mostly two types of gel 88 particles have been described in seawater: transparent exopolymer particles (TEP) that are rich in 89 carbon and mainly originate from dissolved polysaccharides, and Ceoomassie stainable particles 90 (CSP) that are rich in nitrogen and assumed to form from proteinaceous compounds (Alldredge et 91 al., 1993; Passow, 2002; Long and Azam, 1996; Engel, 2009; Cisternas-Novoa et al., 2015). Ubiquitous in the ocean, numerical abundances of TEP and CSP around 10<sup>6</sup> L<sup>-1</sup> have been 92 reported, with higher abundances  $(10^8 L^{-1})$  during phytoplankton blooms (Long and Azam, 1996; 93

94	Passow, 2002 <u>; Galgani et al., 2014</u> ). It was has been shown that the rate of TEP formation during
95	phytoplankton blooms is controlled by the release rate of dissolved polysaccharides (Engel et al.,
96	2004 <u>a</u> ). TEP abundance often increases at times when phytoplankton growth becomes nutrient
97	limited, either by nitrogen (Corzo et al., 2000; Pedrotti et al., 2010) or by phosphorus (Borchard
98	and Engel, 2011). In addition to phytoplankton, often considered as main source of dissolved gel
99	precursors, bacteria can significantly contribute to the DOM pool and therewith to TEP and CSP
100	formation (Radic et al., 2006; Vadstein et al., 2012).
101	TEP play an important role in the formation of particle aggregates and therewith can enhance
102	carbon export fluxes in marine systems (Passow et al., 2001; Engel et al., 2014). Due to the high
103	carbohydrate content, high abundance of TEP can increase C:N ratios of suspended and sinking
104	particles in the ocean (Engel et al., 2002, Schneider et al., 2004; Schartau et al., 2007).

105

106 It has been suggested that CSP and TEP are different particles, as their spatial and temporal 107 occurrence in the ocean can be quite different (Cisternas-Novoa et al., 2015). Compared to TEP, 108 much less is known for processes controlling CSP formation. However, it can be assumed that 109 dissolved precursor concentration and quality are affecting CSP formation in a similar way that 110 DOC precursors are affecting TEP formation (Cisternas-Novoa et al., 2014). Thus, CSP 111 formation may be part of the extracellular cycling of organic nitrogen, i.e. CSP precursors are 112 released by microorganisms into the dissolved organic nitrogen (DON) pool and repartitioned 113 into particles by abiotic gel particle formation. Nitrogen is often considered to be a temporarily 114 limiting element of biomass production in marine ecosystems, favouring auto- and heterotrophic 115 nitrogen fixation (Gruber and Sarmiento, 1997; Deutsch et al., 2007). A labile, extracellular 116 fraction of organic nitrogen in the form of CSP thus represents a potentially important source of 117 nutritionus resource. Moreover, extracellular particulate nitrogen included in CSP may

erroneously be attributed to the cellular nitrogen pool and may hence disguise the real nitrogen cell quota. Thus, a better knowledge on CSP formation and of the factors controlling CSP abundance may greatly improve our understanding of nitrogen cycling in marine ecosystems. So far it is unknown, how much CSP contribute to variable stoichiometry of POM, but we can expect that changes in N:P nutrient stoichiometry favouring organic nitrogen release also support higher CSP abundance, potentially increasing the nitrogen fraction in POM.

124 In this study, we investigated how gel particle formation is affected by different nitrate and 125 phosphate concentrations during mesocosm bloom experiments with natural plankton 126 communities collected from surface waters of the Eastern Tropical North Atlantic (ETNA), close 127 to Cape Verde. At this site, surface waters are often depleted in nutrients (Hauss et al., 2013). 128 Coastal upwelling, N2- fixation or deposition of Aeolian dust represent prevalent pathways of 129 nutrient, particularly inorganic nitrogen, supply to nutrient depleted surface waters (Bakker et al., 130 2007; Hansell et al., 2004; Hauss et al., 2013). On the other hand, anoxic mesoscale eddies have 131 been described recently in surface waters around Cape Verde, potentially leading to enhanced 132 nitrogen losses (Karstensen et al., 2014). Thus, pelagic communities in the euphotic zone of the ETNA are occasionally exposed to nutrient pulses with different [NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>]: [PO<sub>4</sub><sup>3-</sup>] [DIN]:[DIP] 133 134 ratios in surface waters.

135Understanding the impact of changes in nutrient stoichiometry on phytoplankton communities in<br/>the Tropical Ocean may also help to better estimate consequences of suboxia on ecosystemFormatiert: Zeilenabstand: Doppelt136the Tropical Ocean may also help to better estimate consequences of suboxia on ecosystemproductivity and biogeochemical cycling. Coastal boundary upwelling systems in the ETNA and138Eastern Tropical North Pacific (ETNP) include some of the largest oxygen minimum zonesFormatiert: Tiefgestellt139(OMZ) in the ocean (<20-45 µmol O<sub>2</sub> kg<sup>-1</sup>) (Gilly et al., 2013). Although they comprise only aFormatiert: Tiefgestellt140small fraction of the global ocean by volume, they nevertheless play a pivotal role in controllingFormatiert: Hochgestellt

141	the oceans nutrient regimes (Lam and Kuypers, 2011). A profound loss of the oceanic nitrate		
142	stock was suggested to occur in OMZ's (Gruber and Sarmiento, 1997, Codispoti et al., 2001) due		
143	to microbial processes, such as heterotrophic denitrification and anaerobic ammonium oxidation		
144	(anammox) (Codispoti and Richards, 1976; Kuypers et al., 2005). As a consequence, the [NO3 <sup>-</sup> ]:		Formatiert: Schriftart: Times New Roman, 12 Pt., Englisch
145	[PO <sub>4</sub> <sup>3-</sup> ] stoichiometry of upwelling water masses above OMZ's with strong nitrogen loss often		(Großbritannien)
146	deviate from the canonical Redfield ratio of 16 (Deutsch et al., 2007). Because global climate		Roman, 12 Pt., Englisch (Großbritannien)
147	change may lead to an expansion of OMZ, particularly in the Atlantic and Pacific Ocean	Ň	Formatiert: Schriftart: Times New Roman, Englisch (Großbritannien)
148	(Stramma et al., 2008), future changes in surface ocean nutrient cycling are to be expected.		
149			
150	Our experiments aimed to identify effects of varied nutrient supply and stoichiometry on the		
151	abundance and size distribution of TEP and CSP, their dissolved precursors and the potential		
152	impact on carbon and nitrogen cycling.		

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### 154 **2. Methods**

#### 155 2.1 Setup of the mesocosms

156 Two 8-day mesocosm experiments were conducted in October 2012 at the Instituto Nacional de 157 Desenvolvimento das Pescas (INDP), Mindelo, Cape Verde. Surface water was collected with 158 RV Islândia south of São Vicente (16°44.4'N, 25°09.4'W) using four 600L containers. Surface 159 water was collected in the night of the 1.10.2012/2.10.2012 (first experiment) and 160 11.10.2012/12.10.2012 (second experiment). Sixteen mesocosm (MK) bags were placed in four 161 flow-through water baths and shaded with blue, transparent lids to approximately 20% of surface 162 irradiation. Mesocosm bags were filled from the containers by gravity, using a submerged hose to 163 minimize bubbles. A mesh to filter out zooplankton was not used in order to avoid changes of the 164 community composition as well as breakage of delicate cells. The accurate volume inside the 165 individual bags was calculated after addition of 1.5 mmol silicate and measuring the resulting 166 silicate concentration. The volume ranged from 106 to 145 L. In order to keep temperature 167 constant, all MKs were evenly distributed between four water baths, the temperature of which 168 was maintained at 25.9 - 28.7°C using water from the bay close to the experiment site. Daily 169 sampling was conducted between 9.00 a.m. and 10.30 a.m. with a 10L beaker completely rinsed 170 with ultra-pure water. Between 5.5 and 7 liters were sampled from each mesocosm at the surface. 171 The mesocosms were gently mixed prior to sampling to obtain representative samples for the 172 entire mesocosm

The experimental manipulation comprised additions of different amounts of nitrate (NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>) and phosphate (PO<sub>4</sub><sup>3-</sup>) at day 1 of the experiment. Treatment identifications specifying micromolar target concentrations of NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> and PO<sub>4</sub><sup>3-</sup> are given in table 1. Nutrient concentrations before Formatiert: Schriftart: (Standard) Times New Roman, Englisch (USA)

Formatiert: Schriftart: (Standard) Times New Roman 176 nutrient addition were below the detection limit for  $NO_3^-$ ,  $NO_2$  and  $PO_4^{-3-}$  while only traces of 177  $NH_4$  (<0.08 µmol L<sup>-1</sup>) were determined.

In the first experiment (referred to as *Varied P* in the following), the  $PO_4^{3-}$  supply was changed at 178 constant NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> supply, aiming at a range of 0.25-vielding a range of 0.25-1.75  $\mu$ mol L<sup>-1</sup> PO<sub>4</sub><sup>3-</sup> at 179 12.0  $\mu$ mol L<sup>-1</sup> NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> (Table 1) for 13 tanks. Two additional MKs were set to 1.10  $\mu$ mol L<sup>-1</sup> PO<sub>3</sub><sup>4-</sup> 180 at 6.35 and 17.65  $\mu$ mol L<sup>-1</sup> NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>, respectively, representing low and high NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> treatments. One 181 182 mesocosm (MK 5) received erroneous filling during the Varied P experiment and was excluded from data evaluation. -Realized concentrations of  $PO_3^{4-}$  and  $NO_3^{-}$  inside the mesocosms slightly 183 184 deviated from target values (Table 1), which may be due to fast uptake, or to underestimation of water volume. Initial [NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>]: [PO<sub>4</sub><sup>3-</sup>]NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>: PO<sub>4</sub><sup>3-</sup> during Varied P covered a range of 6.7 – 77, 185 186 with ratios similar to, or smaller than the Redfield value, in 11 out of 15 mesocosms, suggesting non-P-limiting conditions in the majority of mesocosms during the first experiment. [DIN]:[DIP] 187 ratios similar to, or smaller than the Redfield value in 11 out of 15 mesocosms. 188

189 During the second experiment (referred to as *Varied N* in the following), initial  $NO_3^{-1}$ concentration was varied at relatively constant  $PO_3^{4-}$  concentration, yielding a target range of 2.0 190 - 20.0  $\mu$ mol L<sup>-1</sup> NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> at 0.75  $\mu$ mol L<sup>-1</sup> PO<sub>4</sub><sup>3-</sup> in 12 out of 16 MKs (Table 1). In addition, two low 191 and two high  $PO_3^{4-}$  treatments at low and high  $NO_3^{-}$  were realized. The realized nutrient 192 concentrations deviated only slightly from target values.  $[NO_3^-]$ ;  $[PO_4^{3-}]NO_3^-; PO_4^{3-}$  ratios during 193 194 Varied N therewith covered a range of 3.3 - 84 with ratios of > 16, in 9 out of 16 mesocosms suggesting non-N-limiting conditions --in the majority of mesocosms during the second 195 experiment. 9 out of 16 mesocosms realizing [DIN]:[DIP] ratios of > 16. 196

Two nutrient treatments were realized in both experiments; 12.0N/0.75P with 4 replicates during *Varied P* and 3 replicates during *Varied N*, and 6.35N/1.10P with 1 mesocosm during each experiment.

### 201 2.2 Analytical methods

#### 202 2.2.1. Inorganic nutrient

Samples (10ml) for the dissolved inorganic nutrients nitrate (NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>), nitrite (NO<sub>2</sub><sup>-</sup>) and phosphate (PO<sub>4</sub><sup>3-</sup>) were taken daily from each mesocosm. an

205 dDuplicate measurements were carried outd within four hours after sampling using a Quaattro 206 Autoanalyzer according to Grasshoff et al. (1999). Detection limits of nutrients were 0.01  $\mu$ mol 207 L<sup>-1</sup> for NO<sub>2</sub><sup>-</sup> and PO<sub>4</sub><sup>3-</sup>, and 0.03  $\mu$ mol L<sup>-1</sup> for NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>.

208

## 209 2.2.2 Gel particles

210 For TEP and CSP, duplicate samples of 20-80 ml were gently (< 150 mbar) filtered onto 25 mm 211 nuclepore membrane filters (0.4 µm pore size, Whatman Ltd.). Samples were stained with either 212 1ml of pre-filtered (<0.2 μm) Alcian Blue solution (Allredge et al., 1993) or 1ml of pre-filtered 213 (<0.2 µm) Coomassie Brilliant Blue solution (Long and Azam, 1996). After a staining time of 214 approximately 4s (Alcian Blue) or 30s (Coomassie Brilliant Blue), the Eexcessive dye was 215 removed by rinsing the filter with several millilitres of MilliQ water. Blank filters were prepared 216 from the same MilliQ water. No samples for gel particles have been taken during Varied P on 217 day 3 and 4 due to a break-down of the ultra-pure water system.

Each filter was placed on the white side of a semi-transparent glass slide (CytoClear, Poretics Corp., Livermore, US) and stored frozen (-20°C) until microscopic analysis. Abundance, area and size frequency distribution of transparent exopolymer particles (TEP) and of <u>Ceoomassie</u> stainable particles (CSP) in the size range 1-760 μm were determined after Engel (2009) using a light microscope (Zeiss Axio Scope A.1) connected to a camera (AxioCAM Mrc). Filters were screened at 200x magnification. 30 pictures were taken randomly from each filter in two perpendicular cross sections (15 pictures each; resolution 1040 x 1040 pixel, 8-bit color depth).
Image analysis software WCIF ImageJ (Version 1.44, Public Domain, developed at the US
National Institutes of Health, courtesy of Wayne Rasband, National Institute of Mental Health,
Bethesda, Maryland) was used to semi-automatically analyse particle numbers and area.

228 The size frequency distribution of gel particles can be described by:

229

$$dN/d(d_p) = 2k d_p^{\delta}$$
<sup>(1)</sup>



where dN is the number of particles per unit water volume in the size range  $d_p$  to  $[d_p + d(d_p)]$  with 232 233  $d_p$  being the equivalent spherical diameter (ESD), k is a constant that depends on the total number 234 of particles per volume, and  $\delta$  ( $\delta < 0$ ) describes the spectral slope of the size distribution. The less 235 negative  $\delta$  the greater is the fraction of larger gels. Both,  $\delta$  and k were derived from regressions of 236  $\log[dN/d(d_p)]$  versus  $\log[d_p]$  (Mari and Kiørboe, 1996). The value  $\delta$  is related to the slope of the cumulative size distribution  $N = ad_p^{\beta}$  by  $\delta = \beta + 1$ . To determine  $\delta$ , data for CSP and TEP were fitted 237 238 over the size range 1.05-14.14 µm ESD. Median size (ESD) of TEP and CSP were determined 239 over the whole size range  $(1-760 \,\mu\text{m})$ .

The carbon content of TEP (TEP-C) was estimated after Mari (1999) using the size dependentrelationship:

242

243 
$$TEP-C = a \Sigma_i n_i r_i^D$$
 (2)

244

with  $n_i$  being the number of TEP in the size class *i* and  $r_i$  the mean equivalent spherical radius of the size class. The constant  $a = 0.25 * 10^{-6}$  (µg C) and the fractal dimension of aggregates 247 D=2.55 were proposed by Mari (1999). In order to relate TEP-C to POC and TOC, data are given 248 as  $\mu$ mol L<sup>-1</sup>.

249

# 250 2.2.3 Dissolved organic carbon and nitrogen

251 Duplicate samples for DOC (20 ml) were filtered through pre-combusted GF/F filters (450°C for 252 5 hours) and collected in pre-combusted glass ampoules (450°C for 5 hours). Samples were 253 acidified with 80 µl of 85% phosphoric acid, flame sealed and stored at 4°C in the dark until 254 analysis. DOC samples were analysed by applying the high-temperature catalytic oxidation 255 method (TOC -VCSH, Shimadzu) after Sugimura and Suzuki (1988). The instrument was 256 calibrated every 8-10 days by measuring standard solutions of 0, 500, 1000, 1500, 2500 and 5000  $\mu$ g C L<sup>-1</sup>, prepared from a potassium hydrogen phthalate standard (Merck 109017). Every 257 258 measurement day, ultrapure (MilliQ) water was used for setting the instrument baseline, followed 259 by the measurement of deep-sea water with known DOC concentration (Dennis Hansell, 260 RSMAS, University of Miami) to verify results. Additionally, two internal standards with DOC 261 within the range of those in found in samples were prepared each measurement day using a 262 potassium hydrogen phthalate (Merck 109017). DOC concentration was determined in each 263 sample from 5 to 8 injections.

Simultaneously with DOC, total dissolved nitrogen (TDN) was determined using the TNM-1 detector on the Shimadzu analyzer. Dissolved organic nitrogen (DON) was calculated from TDN by subtraction of NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>, NO<sub>2</sub> concentrations.

267

268 2.2.4 Chlorophyll a

269	Samples (0.5-1 L) for chlorophyll a (Chl a) were vacuum-filtered (<200 mbar) onto Whatman
270	GF/F filters (25mm), 1 ml of ultrapure water was added and the filters were frozen at -20°C for at
271	least 24 hours. Subsequently, 9 ml acetone (100 %) was added to each sample and the
272	fluorescence was measured with a Turner Trilogy fluorometer, which was calibrated with a Chl a
273	standard (Anacystis nidulans, Walter CMP) dilution series. Chl a concentrations were calculated
274	according to Parsons et al. (1984).

275

#### 276 2.2.5 Bacterial abundance

Bacterial cell counts were obtained by flow cytometry (FACScalibur, Becton Dickinson, San
Jose, CA, USA). Samples (5ml) were fixed with formaldehyde (2% final concentration), frozen at
-80°C and transported to the home laboratory. Samples were diluted 1:3, stained with SYBR
Green I (Molecular Probes) and measured at a flow rate of 11.0 µl min<sup>-1</sup>.

281

# 282 2.2.6 Particulate organic carbon and nitrogen

For analyses of particulate organic carbon (POC) and particulate nitrogen (PN) water samples
(0.5-1 L) were filtered onto pre-combusted (450°C for 5 hours) Whatman GF/F filters (25mm,
0.7 μm) under low pressure (<200 mbar). Filters were frozen at -20°C and stored until analysis.</li>
Prior to analysis, filters were acid fumed (37% HCL for 24 hours) in order to remove inorganic
carbon and dried at 40°C for 24 hours. Subsequently, filters were wrapped in tin cups (8 × 8 × 15
mm), combusted and analyzed according to Sharp (1974) using an elemental analyzer (Euro EA).

290 2.3 Data analysis

291 Differences in terms of nutrient manipulation and course of the experiments were statistically 292 tested by multiple comparison (Holm-Sidak-method) or by two-way ANOVA with factors being 293 the treatment identification (Table 1) and day of the experiment, respectively. To determine a 294 potential effect of the nutrient treatment, the mean deviation (MD) of a component in a 295 mesocosm was calculated as mean of daily deviations. Those were calculated for each sampling 296 day by subtracting the mean value of all mesocosms at that day from the value of the individual 297 mesocosm at the same day. For each experiment, MD-values were correlated to the initial (day 1) 298 nutrient concentration. The overall significance level was p < 0.05. Statistical tests were 299 performed using Sigma Plot 12.0 (Systat).

300

# 301 3. Results

## 302 3.1 Phytoplankton bloom and nutrient development

The development of phytoplankton blooms during the mesocom experiments and the build-up of particulate matter is-are described in more detail in Meyer et al. (<u>2015*in prep*.</u>) and is summarized here only briefly.

Before nutrient addition (day 0), Chl *a* concentration was on average  $0.38 \pm 0.09 \ \mu g \ L^{-1}$  in all 306 mesocosms of Varied P and hence higher than at the start of Varied N with  $0.18\pm0.05 \ \mu g \ L^{-1}$ 307 308 (Table 1). As long as nutrients were replete, bloom development was similar in all mesocosms 309 within each experiment (Fig. 1a-f). However, during Varied P most mesocosms reached 310 maximum Chl a concentrations, i.e. bloom peak, on day 5 and thus one day earlier than during Varied N (Fig. 1 a, b). Maximum Chl a concentration ranged between 2.1 and 3.3 µg L<sup>-1</sup> during 311 Varied P and between 2 and 10  $\mu$ g L<sup>-1</sup> during Varied N. Hence, during Varied N higher 312 313 concentrations of Chl a were determined as well as a higher variability among mesocosms. 314 During both experiments mean deviations (MD) of Chl a concentration in the different mesocosms were correlated to the concentration of the initial nutrient varied, i.e.  $PO_4^{3-}$  during 315 Varied P and NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> during Varied N, although the response much-was much stronger during 316 317 Varied N (Table 2). The phytoplankton biomass composition was dominated by diatoms (data not 318 shown). Diazotrophic bacteria of the genus Trichodesmium were more present in the initial 319 waters of Varied P, while proteobacterial diazotrophs were more abundant in Varied N (Meyer et

320 al., *in prep.<mark>2015</mark>)*.

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Bacterial abundance was not determined before nutrient addition, but data from day 2 showed higher abundance in mesocosms of *Varied N* with 8.37 x  $10^5 \pm 9.80$  x  $10^4$  ml<sup>-1</sup> compared to 5.26x10<sup>5</sup> ± 5.48 x  $10^4$  ml<sup>-1</sup> for *Varied P*. During the first four days of both experiments, cell 325 numbers remained relatively stable or even decreased slightly (Fig. 1 c, d). After day 5, cell numbers increased in all mesocosms and strongly differed between treatments. During Varied P, 326 different  $PO_4^{3-}$  addition could not significantly explain differences in bacterial abundance (Table 327 2). Instead, highest abundances in the bloom phase were reached in the 'centerpoint' treatment 328 (12.0N/0.75P), with a maximum value of  $2.4 \times 10^6 \pm 7.1 \times 10^5$  ml<sup>-1</sup> on day 6 compared to  $2.3 \times 10^6 \pm$ 329  $7.1 \times 10^5$ ,  $1.5 \times 10^6 \pm 3.0 \times 10^5$  and  $1.7 \times 10^6 \pm 8.4 \times 10^5$  ml<sup>-1</sup> in treatments 12.0N/0.25P, 12.0N/1.25P 330 331 and 12.0N/1.75P, respectively. During Varied N, bacterial abundances were positively influenced by NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> input (Table 2). At the end of the experiment (day 8)  $1.6x10^6 \pm 4.7x10^5$  and  $2.3x10^6 \pm 4.7x10^5$ 332  $5.4 \times 10^5$  ml<sup>-1</sup> cell were observed in the high NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> treatments 20.0N/0.75P and 12.0/0.75P, 333 respectively, compared to  $8.1 \times 10^5 \pm 1.4 \times 10^5$  and  $1.0 \times 10^6 \pm 1.5 \times 10^5$  ml<sup>-1</sup> in 2.0N/0.75P and 334 335 4.0N/0.75P, respectively.

Initial concentrations of particulate organic carbon (POC) were  $13.6\pm3.8 \ \mu mol \ L^{-1}$  and  $11.9\pm1.9 \ \mu mol \ L^{-1}$  during *Varied P* and *Varied N*, respectively (Table 1). During both experiments, concentrations increased steadily until day 6 and remained relatively stable thereafter (Fig. 1e, f). POC concentrations during *Varied P* were up to 73  $\mu mol \ L^{-1}$  (17.65N/1.10P), but not related to the initial PO<sub>4</sub><sup>3-</sup> addition. In contrast, build-up of POC was more pronounced during *Varied N* with values up to 102±18  $\mu mol \ L^{-1}$  determined in treatments with the highest initial NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> supply (20.0N/0.75P) and indicated a clear correlation to the initial NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> treatment (Table 2).

343

Along with plankton growth, inorganic nutrient concentrations declined (Fig. 2). During *Varied P*, PO<sub>4</sub><sup>3-</sup> was exhausted on day 5 in the treatments with the lowest initial  $PO_4^{3-}$  supply and the highest initial  $[NO_3^{-+}]$ :  $[PO_4^{3-}]$  ratio of 74, i.e. 12.0N/0.25P. In all other treatments,  $PO_4^{3-}$ depletion was reached later during the experiment, except for the highest  $PO_4^{3-}$  treatment (12.0N/1.75P), in which  $PO_4^{3-}$  remained >0.3 µmol L<sup>-1</sup> until the last experimental day. During the same experiment, NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> concentrations fell below the detection limit of 0.03 µmol L<sup>-1</sup> in some of the mesocosms after day 5, but were not depleted in 12.0N/0.25P. During *Varied N*, NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> was exhausted on day 5 in the low N supply mesocosms (2.00N/0.75P and 4.00N/0.75P). On day 6, NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> was still available in treatments with an initial nitrate supply > 12 µmol L<sup>-1</sup>, and on day 8 NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> was only available in 17.65N/0.40P, the mesocosms with the highest [NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>]: [PO<sub>4</sub><sup>3-</sup>]NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> #PO<sub>4</sub><sup>3-</sup> ratio of 84. After the bloom, PO<sub>4</sub><sup>3-</sup> was below the detection limit in 9 out of 16 mesocosms having [NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>]: [PO<sub>4</sub><sup>3-</sup>] ratios >10.

356

### 357 3.2 Dissolved organic carbon (DOC) and nitrogen (DON)

358 Averaged for all mesocosms, initial (day 1) DOC concentration was very similar for Varied P  $(95\pm5 \text{ }\mu\text{mol C }\text{L}^{-1})$  and Varied N (96±4  $\mu\text{mol C }\text{L}^{-1})$  (Table 1). Throughout both experiments, 359 360 DOC concentrations increased steadily after day 2, except for day 5, when a slight decrease was 361 observed in most mesocosms (Fig. 3a, b). For Varied P, accumulation of DOC with respect to initial concentration (day 1) ( $\Delta DOC$ ) was observed, ranging from 18.8±6.7 µmol L<sup>-1</sup> 362 (12.0N/0.25P) to 44.0±12.0  $\mu$ mol L<sup>-1</sup> (12.0N/0.75P). During Varied N,  $\Delta$ DOC increased also in 363 the course of the experiment with highest values observed at the end of the experiment, ranging 364 from 12.1±1.1  $\mu$ mol L<sup>-1</sup> DOC in the treatment with the lowest nitrate supply (2.0N/0.75P) to 365 74.4 $\pm$ 16.6 µmol L<sup>-1</sup> in 12.0N/0.75P 75, the same treatment that yielded highest  $\Delta$ DOC during 366 Varied P. MD of DOC were not significantly correlated to the initial PO<sub>4</sub><sup>3-</sup> supply during Varied 367 P, but to the initial NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> supply during Varied N (p < 0.005), indicating a general dependence of 368 369 DOC accumulation on  $NO_3^-$  stocks (Table 2).

370 On day 1, DON concentration (day 1) was  $8.8 \pm 1.1$  and  $11 \pm 1.5 \mu mol L^{-1}$  for mesocosms of 371 *Varied P* and *Varied N*, respectively. In both experiments, DON concentration decreased after 372 nutrient addition (Fig. 3c, d). During *Varied P*,  $\Delta DON$  was negative in some of the mesocosms 373 until the Chl a maximum on day 5. Values increased slowly between days 6 and 7 before a clear 374 increase was determined for all mesocosms on day 8 with  $\Delta DON$  accumulation ranging between 1.9 and 5.9  $\mu$ mol L<sup>-1</sup> (Fig. 3c). During *Varied N*, a clear accumulation of DON was not observed, 375 yielding values of  $\Delta$ DON of -6.0 to 4.8 µmol L<sup>-1</sup> at the end of the experiment. On day 8 of both 376 377 experiments, highest and lowest  $\Delta DON$  was determined in the treatments with the highest and lowest initial  $NO_3^-$  supply at identical  $PO_4^{3-}$  supply, respectively. A significant correlation 378 between the initial PO<sub>4</sub><sup>3-</sup> or NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> supply and DON accumulation, however, was not determined 379 380 (Table 2).

Both, increasing DOC and decreasing DON concentrations resulted in a rise of molar [DOC]:[DON] ratios until the bloom peak during both experiments (data not shown). During *Varied P* [DOC]:[DON] ratios were initially 10.1 $\pm$ 0.92, averaged for all mesocosms and ranged between 7.7 and 31 throughout the experiment, with highest values being observed just before the bloom peak. During *Varied N*, [DOC]:[DON] ratios started at 9.1 $\pm$ 1.1 and ranged between 6.8 and 34 throughout the experiment, with highest values also observed shortly before the bloom peak on day 6.

388

389

#### 390 **3.3 Gel particle abundance**

391 Averaged for all mesocosms, initial (day 1) TEP numerical abundance was  $0.97 \pm 0.64 \ge 10^7 \ \text{L}^{-1}$ 392 <sup>1</sup>for *Varied P* and steadily increased to highest values between 5.9  $\ge 10^7$  and 1.5  $\ge 10^8 \ \text{L}^{-1}$  until 393 the end of the study (Fig. 4a). TEP total area behaved similar to TEP numerical abundance; 394 values increased from an initial 4.46  $\pm 2.36 \ge 10^7 \ \mu\text{m}^2 \ \text{L}^{-1}$  to values between 3.9  $\ge 10^8 \ \text{and } 7.9 \le 10^8 \ \mu\text{m}^2 \ \text{L}^{-1}$  on day 8 (data not shown). Variation of initial NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> concentrations during *Varied N* 396 induced clearly stronger responses in TEP formation than variation of initial PO<sub>4</sub><sup>3-</sup> concentration 397 (Fig. 4b). From an averaged  $1.07 \pm 0.34 \ge 10^7 \ L^{-1}$ , TEP abundance increased until day 8 to values 398 of  $1.1 \ge 10^8 - 2.8 \ge 10^8 \ L^{-1}$ . While initial numbers were in a comparable range for both 399 experiments, the maximum TEP abundances (day 8) during *Varied N* were about twice as high as 400 during *Varied P*. The same holds for TEP total area: Initial averaged values were only slightly 401 higher ( $5.04\pm 1.43 \ge 10^7 \ \mu\text{m}^2 \ L^{-1}$ ) than initial values during *Varied P*, but highest values more than 402 doubled on day 8 during *Varied N*, yielding 9.6  $\ge 10^8 - 1.6 \ge 10^9 \ \mu\text{m}^2 \ L^{-1}$  (data not shown).

403

404 During both experiments, TEP numbers and total area increased similarly in all treatments until 405 the Chl a maximum. From day 6 onwards, however, distinct differences emerged between 406 treatments, particularly during Varied N. Here, TEP abundance was significantly higher in the 407 highest  $NO_3$  treatment (20.0N/0.75P) compared to treatments amended with lower nitrate supply 408 (2.0N/0.75P; p<0.001, 4.0N/0.75P; p<0.005, 6.0N/1.03P; p<0.05). On day 7, TEP numbers in 409 20.0N/0.75P reached their maximum and were significantly higher than in all other treatments 410 (p < 0.001), where TEP numbers continued to increase on day 8. Like TEP numbers, TEP total 411 area was also significantly larger in the highest  $NO_3^-$  treatment (20.0N/0.75P) compared to 412 2.0N/0.75P and 6.0N/1.03P (p < 0.01) showing a clear stimulation of TEP formation at higher 413 nitrate levels.

For *Varied P*, initial  $PO_4^{3-}$  concentration had on average no significant effect on MD of TEP abundance (Table 2). In contrast, a significant positive relationship between MD of TEP abundance and initial  $NO_3^{-}$  supply was determined during *Varied N* (p<0.001). This relationship, however, reversed when MD of Chl a normalized TEP concentration were considered, indicating that a relatively higher fraction of newly fixed organic carbon was partitioned into TEP at lower nitrate supply on a cellular level (p<0.001; data not shown).

420

421 Similar to TEP, CSP abundance and total area increased steadily over time during both 422 mesocosm experiments, albeit CSP were generally less abundant than TEP (Fig. 4c, d). From an initial mean value of  $1.06 \pm 0.61 \times 10^6 \text{ L}^{-1}$  during *Varied P*, CSP numerical abundance increased 423 to 4.2 x  $10^6$  to 1.0 x  $10^7$  L<sup>-1</sup> on day 8. Highest CSP abundance was determined in the treatment 424 with the highest nitrate supply (17.65N/1.10P), where CSP total area of initially  $1.5 \pm 0.5 \times 10^7$ 425  $\mu$ m<sup>2</sup> L<sup>-1</sup> increased to 4.5 x 10<sup>7</sup> - 1.2 x 10<sup>8</sup>  $\mu$ m<sup>2</sup> L<sup>-1</sup> on day 8. Similar to TEP, a much stronger 426 427 increase in CSP abundance was observed during Varied N. Here, CSP numbers increased from an initial average of  $1.63 \pm 0.48 \times 10^6 \text{ L}^{-1}$ , to highest values of  $1.4 \times 10^7 - 2.8 \times 10^8 \text{ L}^{-1}$  on day 7 (Fig. 428 5d); more than double the amount observed during Varied P. Again, highest CSP abundances 429 430 were determined in replicate treatments of highest  $NO_3^-$  supply (20.0N/0.75P) yielding 2.7±0.1 x  $10^7 L^{-1}$ . 431

432

433 Analysis of variance for data obtained on day 7 revealed significantly higher CSP abundances in 434 20.0N/0.75P compared to 2.0N/0.75P (p<0.001), 4.0N/0.75P (p<0.001) and 6.35N/0.40P 435 (p < 0.05), indicating a stimulation of CSP formation at elevated initial NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> concentrations. This 436 is in accordance with a highly significant correlation of MD of CSP abundance and initial  $NO_3^{-1}$ 437 concentrations (p < 0.001, Table 2). Findings for CSP numbers are reflected in CSP total area: 438 highest values were also observed for the high NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> treatment (20.0N/0.75P;  $213\pm21 \times 10^6 \mu m^2 L^{-1}$ 439 <sup>1</sup>) with values significantly larger than in 2.0N/0.75P (p<0.005), 4.0N/0.75P (p<0.001), 440 6.35N/0.40P (*p*<0.001), 17.65N/1.10P (*p*<0.05) and 12.0N/0.75P (*p*<0.005) (data not shown). In 441 contrast to TEP abundance, CSP number declined in most treatments on day 8 of Varied N 442 (except for 12.0N/0.75P; only MK 1, 6.35N/0.40P and 4.0N/0.75P; only MK 11).

443

## 444 **3.4. Gel particle size distributions**

445 At the beginning of the study, median values for TEP equivalent spherical diameter (ESD) were almost identical for Varied P and Varied N, yielding  $1.78 \pm 0.12$  and  $1.79 \pm 0.08 \ \mu m$  ESD, 446 respectively. Except for days 6 and 8, median size of TEP was steadily increasing over time in 447 448 Varied P, with largest particles occurring in 6.35N/1.10P, 12.0N/1.75P and 12.0N/1.25P on day 7 449 (2.28 - 2.30 µm ESD). On day 8, median TEP size was slightly smaller again and similar in all 450 treatments ranging between 1.80 and 2.26 µm ESD. During Varied N, size of TEP remained 451 relatively constant between days 1-4 and then increased until the Chl a maximum. After the 452 bloom peak, median TEP size further increased until day 6 yielding values between 2.5 and 1.9 453 µm ESD at the end of the experiment.

454 Spectral slopes describe the size frequency distribution of particles with more negative values 455 indicating relatively more small particles (Fig. 5) and mirrored changes in the median ESD of 456 both types of gel particles during both experiments. Changes in size frequency distribution of 457 TEP were observed for Varied P and Varied N, with slope values ( $\delta$ ) becoming significantly 458 smaller during the first half of both experiments (p < 0.001; multiple comparison, Holm-Sidak) 459 (Fig. 6). Average slopes on day 1 were very similar for Varied P and Varied N, yielding  $\delta$ =-1.81  $\pm 0.12$  and  $\delta = -1.81 \pm 0.11$ , respectively. Slopes increased to average  $-1.44 \pm 0.06$  (Varied P) and -460 461  $1.38 \pm 0.06$  (Varied N) on day 8 of both experiments suggesting a relative shift from smaller to 462 larger TEP (Fig. 6a, b).

463

Slightly smaller than TEP, median CSP size was on average  $1.37 \pm 0.06 \ \mu m$  ESD at the beginning of *Varied P*, and increased to values between 1.13 and 1.78  $\mu m$  ESD until the end of the experiment (Fig. 6<u>c</u>b, left). During *Varied N*, median CSP size increased between day 1 (1.36  $\pm 0.09 \ \mu m$  ESD) and day 4 (1.34-1.85  $\mu m$  ESD). In contrast to median TEP size, median CSP decreased towards the end of the experiments and ranged between 1.18 and 1.71  $\mu m$  ESD on day 469 8. During Varied P, a large variability of  $\delta$  values was observed for CSP size distribution on day 470 1. To estimate changes in size distribution during this experiment, data evaluation of CSP slopes 471 was started on day 2 (Fig. 6c), when CSP size distribution was more similar between mesocosms. 472 Like for TEP, development of CSP spectral slopes during this study mirrored the change in 473 median ESD size of particles. Averaged for all mesocosms,  $\delta = -1.40 \pm 0.14$  was obtained on day 474 2 of Varied P increasing steadily to  $-1.24 \pm 0.23$  until day 8. The size frequency distribution of 475 CSP during Varied P was not affected by the initial nutrient supply. For Varied N, initial slopes 476 also scattered on day 1, however not as strong as for initial values for Varied P. Initial averaged 477 slopes for all mesocosms were  $-1.64 \pm 0.28$  (Fig. 6d). During days 2-4, the overall development 478 shows a relative increase in the slope of the size distribution during the onset of the bloom. 479 Highest values of  $\delta$ =-0.84 coincided with the largest median ESD of CSP on day 4. At the time 480 of the Chl a maximum, slopes became more negative, revealing higher abundance of relatively 481 small particles. Multiple comparison (Holm-Sidak) tests revealed significantly larger slopes for 482 days 2 to 4, compared to days 1, 6, 7 and 8 (p < 0.010). The increase in abundance of smaller CSP 483 continued during the bloom decay and was most pronounced in 2.0N/0.75P and 4.0N/0.75P, the 484 treatments with the lowest initial NO<sub>3</sub> supply.

485

# 486 **3.5.** Differences between two mesocosms experiments - a case of treatment effects?

Although the development of gel particle abundance was rather similar for TEP and CSP during
both experiments, particularly until the bloom peak, abundance of gel particles was clearly higher
during the second mesocosm experiment, *Varied N*, compared to *Varied P* (Fig. 4). Moreover,
during *Varied N*, CSP increased relatively more than TEP and showed a unique change of size
distributions during bloom development not observed during *Varied P* and different from TEP.

In order to identify differences between the two series of mesocosms experiments, gel particle
abundance was <u>related\_compared</u> to bloom development, which also differed between the
experiments.

495 During both experiments, gel particle dynamics were tightly coupled to the production of organic 496 matter during bloom development (Fig. 7, Table 3). Numerical abundances of TEP and CSP were 497 directly related to Chl a concentration until the bloom peak (Fig. 7a, d). Thereby, the increase of 498 gel particles abundance with Chl a concentration was different for TEP and CSP during Varied P 499 as well as during N. While TEP abundance increased slightly faster with Chl a concentration 500 during Varied P, the increase in CSP abundance with Chl a concentration was twice as strong 501 during Varied N than during Varied P (Table 3). After the Chl a maxima, gel particle formation 502 continued while Chl a concentrations declined, leading to higher [gel particles]:[Chl a] ratios 503 towards the end of the experiments (Table 4). Partly decoupled from Chl a concentration, gel 504 particles remained tightly coupled to POC and PN dynamics throughout both experiments (Fig. 505 8b f7b, c, e, f). Thereby, a similar coupling was observed between TEP and POC or PN 506 concentration during both experiments, while CSP abundance increased more strongly with POC 507 and PN concentration during Varied N (Table 3). The carbon content of TEP (TEP-C) averaged for all mesocosms on day 1 was  $0.61 \pm 0.29 \ \mu\text{mol} \ \text{L}^{-1}$  and  $0.72 \pm 0.38 \ \mu\text{mol} \ \text{L}^{-1}$  for Varied P and 508 509 Varied N, respectively. During both experiments, TEP-C steadily increased along with the 510 general abundance of TEP. Maximum TEP-C during Varied P was reached on day 8 with values of 12.6 – 34.9 µmol L<sup>-1</sup> representing a share of 31-41 Mol% POC, or 8.4-17.6 Mol% TOC (Table 511 512 4). During Varied N, final TEP-C concentration contributed with an even higher proportion to 513 organic carbon pool, equivalent to 22.8-84 Mol % POC or 12-29 Mol % of TOC. Molar ratios of 514 [TEP-C]:[PN] (mol:mol) were initially below 1 and increased to averaged 2.2-3.6 during Varied 515 *P* and to 1.8-6.9 during *Varied N*.

516 A direct coupling was also observed between gel particles and bacterial abundance (Table 3). 517 Like for POC and PN, the relative increase in gel abundance was much steeper during Varied N 518 than during Varied P, again showing that gel particles in general were more abundant during the 519 second experiment. Although less pronounced than for particulate organic matter, TEP and CSP 520 numerical abundances were also related to DOC concentration during Varied P and Varied N 521 (Table 3), while no significant relationship was observed between gel particle abundance and 522 DON concentration. In contrast to gel particles, however, DOC was not significantly related to 523 Chl a concentration in both experiments, but to POC and PN concentrations (Fig. 7g-i, Table 3). 524 Differences in the relationship of DOC to POC or PN were relatively small, suggesting an only 525 slightly higher increase of DOC with particulates during Varied N. DOC concentration correlated 526 significantly with bacterial abundance (Table 3). Thereby increase of DOC concentration relative 527 to bacterial numbers was almost twice as high during Varied N, suggesting that bacteria didn't 528 catch up with DOC production during the second experiment.

529

Another comparison of both experiments can be made by relating gel particle abundance to initial [DIN]:[DIP] ratios that covered a similar range during both experiments (Fig. 8). This showed that for similar initial nutrient ratios, maximum abundance of both TEP and CSP were generally higher during the second experiment, *Varied N*. Moreover, only during the second experiment changes in [DIN]:[DIP] ratios had an effect on maximum gel particle abundance.

However, direct comparison of the 'centre-point' treatment 12.0N/0.75P that was realized with 4 replicates during *Varied P* and 3 replicated during *Varied N* showed clear differences in organic matter development during the two experiments for mesocosms that received the same nutrient addition (Fig. 9). For this treatment, Chl a concentration, DOC and TEP accumulated about two times more in the course of *Varied N*, while <u>the</u> increase in CSP abundance over time was even

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threefold higher. This suggests that factors in addition to the nutrient treatments were responsible
for the different outcomes of the experiments.

542

# 543 4. Discussion

# 544 4.1 Nutrient availability and phytoplankton bloom development

545 After fertilization with inorganic nutrients, phytoplankton blooms developed in all mesocosms 546 during the two consecutive experiments conducted with natural surface water from the eastern 547 tropical North Atlantic (ETNA). Responses to varied nutrient supply became more obvious after 548 one (or both) macronutrients were exhausted, resulting in a large variation of organic matter 549 concentration among mesocosms and treatments during the bloom peak and post-bloom phases. 550 Accumulation of organic matter during bloom development revealed a generally stronger 551 fertilization effect after addition of different amounts of NO<sub>3</sub> in the second experiment compared to the first one with varied initial PO<sub>4</sub><sup>3-</sup> supply. This indicates that biomass production in ETNA 552 553 surface waters near Cape Verde may be limited by nitrogen rather than by phosphorus 554 availability. However, clear differences between both experiments were also observed for 555 mesocosms receiving the same nutrient supply. This suggests that small differences in the initial 556 conditions of experiments with natural communities, such as during this mesocosme study, can 557 significantly impact the outcome of biogeochemical responses.

558 Moderate variations in responses of planktonic food webs and associated biogeochemical cycling 559 to the same nutrient treatment have been observed previously for mesocosms experiments 560 conducted at different marine ecosystem sites, but a coherent picture of nitrogen stimulation was 561 clearly demonstrated (Olsen et al., 2006; Vadstein et al., 2012).
562 During this study, phytoplankton abundance was lower during the early days of Varied N, while 563 bacterial abundance was higher, despite sampling of initial waters at the same location and within a time difference of only a few days. Moreover, differences between Varied N and P were 564 565 identified for the initial community composition of diazotrophs (Meyer et al., in prep. 2015). We 566 cannot fully exclude that these differences in the initial conditions generally affected the 567 sensitivity to nutrient addition, regardless of the varied nutrient and were also responsible for the 568 higher response in mesocosms where the same nutrient treatment was applied. However, the clear 569 increase in organic matter accumulation with increasing initial NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> concentration is in 570 accordance with together with previous findings (Franz et al., 2012a) and strongly suggests that ecosystems in the ETNA are controlled by NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> rather than by PO<sub>4</sub><sup>3-</sup> availability. 571

572 It should be kept in mind that mesocosm experiments such as conducted during this study can 573 only capture a transient response to perturbation, such as nutrient addition, and mainly give 574 insights to short-term effects on processes. To extrapolate from mesocosm experiments to long-575 er-termed responses of natural systems is not straightforward. Hence, although the response to 576  $NO_3^-$  addition during the second experiment was pronounced, it represents only one possible 577 outcome. The observed differences for the 12.0N/0.75P treatment indicate that the response of an 578 ecosystem to a potential variability of ecological responses towards nutrient supply may vary 579 even in a comparatively stable environment like the ETNA. Clearly, a better knowledge of the 580 impact of ecological variability, e.g. plankton community structure, diversity and acclimation 581 potential, on biogeochemical processes is needed to fully explain differences in the response size 582 to perturbation.

583

### 584 **4.2 Nutrient effects on gel particles dynamics**

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585 Previous studies on TEP and CSP in marine systems have suggested that the rate of gel-particle 586 formation depends on the amount and chemical quality of dissolved precursors (Engel et al., 2004aa; Mari and Robert, 2008; Szlosek-Chow et al., 2015). For extracellular organic matter 587 588 released by bacterio- and phytoplankton, the chemical composition and molecular weight of 589 compounds varies among species, and is also dependent on environmental conditions and 590 physiological status (Aluwihare and Repeta, 1999; Grossart et al., 2007; Borchard and Engel, 591 2015). Because extracellular release is a major source for gel particle precursors, factors 592 influencing this extracellular release likely also affect marine gel particle formation.

593 During this study, a clear accumulation of DOC was observed along with biomass build-up in all 594 mesocosms, indicating that the rate of DOC release exceeded DOC loss processes such as 595 coagulation into gel- particles or microbial uptake and respiration. Higher  $\Delta DOC$  values were 596 observed shortly after the Chl a peak, coinciding with nutrient concentrations being strongly 597 reduced. Enhanced extracellular release of DOC or 'malfunctioning' of the microbial loop, i.e. 598 reduced microbial uptake and respiration of DOC by bacteria, have been suggested to explain 599 DOC accumulation in the ocean, particularly at times when inorganic nutrients become depleted (Myklestad, 1974; Biddanda and Benner, 1997; Thingstad et al., 1997; Engel et al., 2004b). 600 601 During this study, DOC accumulation was significantly related to the initial  $NO_3^-$  concentration 602 during Varied N, suggesting a dependence on the trophic status, although no direct relationship to 603 Chl a concentration was observed. Higher accumulation of DOC with increasing nitrogen load 604 has been observed during previous mesocosm experiments and explained by a combination of 605 production and recycling of DOC being both higher at higher microbial biomass (Vadstein et al., 606 2012). In addition, phosphorus limitation may have reduced bacterial utilisation of DOC in mesocosms with high initial [DIN]:[DIP] ratios and below detection levels of PO<sub>4</sub><sup>3-</sup> after the 607 608 bloom, when highest accumulation rates of DOC occurred.

In contrast to DOC, no accumulation of DON was observed in the course of the experiments in almost all mesocosms, except for the last day of *Varied P* and for those treatments receiving highest  $NO_3^-$  additions during *Varied N*. This indicates that loss processes such as microbial utilization of organic nitrogen forms or partitioning of DON into CSP exceeded DON release during this study.

In general, little is known about gel particles production at tropical open ocean sites. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first report on TEP and CSP abundance in the ETNA. Data on TEP-C concentration observed during our study (Table 4), however, agree well with observations from Wurl et al. (2011), who determined <2 to 40  $\mu$ mol C L<sup>-1</sup> for TEP in surface waters of the Tropical North Pacific<sub>5</sub> (offshore Hawaii).

Like DOC, gel-particles abundance during this study was strongly related to the general build-up and decay\_of autotrophic biomass. Thereby, a significant impact of initial  $NO_3^-$  supply on gel particles abundance, especially on CSP, was observed during *Varied N*, as well as a general increase of the maximum abundance of gel particles with the initial [DIN]:[DIP] ratio.

623 An increase of TEP formation, when phytoplankton was grown at higher  $NO_3^-$  concentration, is 624 in accordance with earlier observations made during culture and mesocosms experiments (Corzo 625 et al., 2000; Pedrotti et al., 2010) and has been explained by higher biomass production at higher 626 nutrient loads; a larger biomass leads to a higher amount of released polysaccharides when the 627 autotrophic biomass runs into nutrient limitation. A general relationship between TEP and 628 autotrophic biomass concentration, e.g. determined as Chl a, has been observed before (Passow, 629 2002; Beauvais et al., 2003). Furthermore, species or physiology specific variations in TEP 630 formation by phytoplankton were observed (Berman and Viner-Mozzini, 2001; Claquin et al., 2008; Passow, 2002; Underwood et al., 2004). During this study, gel particles and Chl a 631

632	dynamics were decoupled after the Chl a peak. Hence, despite the general observation that higher
633	autotrophic biomass leads to more gel particles, temporal developments of Chl a and gel particle
634	concentration may contrasts between bloom built-up and decay. This is in accordance with earlier
635	studies showing that POC, TEP and CSP concentration continued to increase after the Chl a peak
636	(Alldrege, 1995; Engel, 2002; Logan et al., 19954; Mari and Kiørboe, 1996) and can be explained
637	by the 'carbon-overflow' theory (Schartau et al., 2007; Kreus et al., 2015).

638 During the post-bloom phase, a large proportion of organic carbon was thus channeled to the 639 POC pool in the form of TEP. Carbon contained in TEP, accounted for 0.5 µmol C (initial days) 640 to ~68  $\mu$ mol C (final days) indicating a much higher DOC production than derived from  $\Delta$ DOC 641 alone. The ratio of [TEP-C]: [POC] strongly increased during Varied N, yielding values of up to 642 93%. Even though these values are within the range of earlier findings (Engel and Passow, 2001; 643 Pedrotti, 2010), an underestimation of POC, and hence overestimation of [TEP-C]:[POC] ratio, 644 seems likely, because a large proportion of TEP was in the size range 1-2 µm ESD and may not 645 be retained on GF/F filters (nominal pore size 0.7 µm), due to their flexible and non-spherical structure (Engel and Passow, 2001; Pedrotti, 2010). In addition, TEP-C calculation by use of an 646 647 empirical relationship to TEP size previously established from phytoplankton cultures could 648 overestimate carbon content of naturally occurring TEP at this site.

A recent study by Rahav et al. (2013) suggested that bacterial diazotrophs in aphotic, DIN-rich layers of the Red Sea and eastern Mediterranean Sea benefit from TEP as organic carbon source, resulting in an increase in aphotic nitrogen fixation with TEP concentration. For the ETNA, unicellular heterotrophic diazotrophs are readily abundant, also below the euphotic zone in high DIN waters (Langlois et al., 2005), and contribute substantially to total nitrogen fixation of the system (Agawin et al., 2014). High TEP production by surface phytoplankton communities in the ETNA as observed during this study, and settling of TEP to aphotic layers, may therefore providean important labile carbon source for sustaining heterotrophic nitrogen fixation.

While the importance of TEP formation for converting DOC to POC, and related consequences
for carbon cycling and export, have been highlighted over the past decades (Alldrege et al., 1995;
Passow, 2002; Engel et al., 2004a; Arrigo, 20052007), little is known on-about the role of CSP,
on organic carbon and more importantly on organic nitrogen cycling. It is likely that CSP plays a
significant role for nitrogen cycling, contributing to DON to PN conversion and to the PN pool as
well as providing a nitrogenous resource for auto- and heterotrophic growth.

663 During this study, clearly higher accumulation of CSP relative to Chl a was observed during 664 Varied N, i.e. when a surplus of inorganic nitrogen was available. As a consequence, CSP 665 contributed more to POC and PON increase during Varied N than during Varied P. This suggests 666 that higher inorganic nitrogen supply favors production of extracellular PON, which may be 667 subject to bacterial utilization at a later time. Because CSP are proteinaceous particles, their 668 export to depth, e.g. by physical transport or as part of sinking aggregates, may provide important 669 amino acids for microorganisms in aphotic zones, including denitrifying and anammox bacteria. 670 Since labile amino acids have been suggested to be one important factor limiting organic matter 671 degradation in oxygen minimum zones (Pantoja et al., 2004; 2009), a supply with CSP from the 672 photic zone may also affect total carbon remineralisation and therewith oxygen consumption at 673 deeper depths. Our results furthermore suggest that CSP as proteinaceous particles may include 674 an important fraction of organic nitrogen in the size fraction typically attributed to bacteria.

675

## 677 4.3 Formation, aggregation and degradation of gel particles – Insights from size frequency

678 distributions

679 Changes in the size frequency distribution of TEP during this study revealed an increase in the 680 proportion of larger particles in the course of phytoplankton blooms, indicating TEP aggregation 681 rather than degradation during both experiments. For CSP, decreasing slopes together with a strong increase in total abundance revealed an increasing number of smaller particles during 682 683 *Varied N*, indicating new formation of CSP during the phytoplankton bloom peak and until the 684 end of the experiment postbloom periods. Occurrence of CSP at the time or depth of the Chl a 685 maxima has also been observed during previous studies (Cisternas Novoa et al., 2014; 2015). A 686 clear indication for aggregation processes, i.e. decreasing slopes as for TEP, was not observed for 687 CSP. This is in accordance with findings of Prieto et al. (2002), who suggested that CSP are less 688 involved in aggregate formation during diatom blooms than TEP. Moreover, CSP number and 689 total area decreased at the end of Varied N (day 8), suggesting that loss processes exceeded new 690 CSP formation.

TEP and CSP, both represent hotspots for microbial activity (Azam, 1983; Passow and Alldrege, 1994; Pedrotti, 2009; Grossart, 1998; Bar-Zeev, 2009). However, CSP are per definition proteinaceous particles and thus expected to include high amounts of labile N-compounds. The observed decrease in CSP abundance at day 8 of *Varied N* can therefore be explained by bacterial degradation in order to liberate N, as suggested earlier (Long and Azam, 1998). Bacteria cell numbers sharply increased from day 5 onwards during both experiments, along with the strongest increase in gel-particle abundance.

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### 702 **5. Conclusion**

703 Gel particles can represent a substantial fraction of organic particles in ETNA ecosystems after 704 nutrient supply, e.g. deep upwelling of water masses. Increasing  $NO_3^-$  relative to  $PO_4^{3-}$ concentrations favors gel particles formation. Consequently, it may be expected that a reduction 705 706 of NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> surface water concentrations as a result of increasing ocean anoxia will diminish the 707 abundance of marine gel particles, particularly CSP, with potential implications for aggregation, 708 export and turn-over processes of organic matter in the water column. -PThereby, particle 709 dynamics of TEP and CSP differ during bloom development; while TEP seem to be more prone 710 to aggregation, potentially enhancing export of organic matter, CSP appear to be a better organic 711 substrate for heterotrophs and may decompose within a few days. Because TEP and CSP are part 712 of the bulk POC and PN pools, changes in the balance of TEP and CSP formation processes such as induced by changes in the  $[NO_3^-]$ :  $[PO_4^{3-}]$  supply ratio will likely impact biogeochemistry 713 714 during and after phytoplankton blooms as well as food-web dynamics. Biogeochemical responses 715 to variations in nutrient supply and stoichiometry may differ between different pelagic 716 communities, even in supposedly stable ecosystems such as the ETNA.

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# 1013 Tables

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**Table 1:** Summary of initial conditions of the seawater used to fill the mesocosms during the two experiments, target nutrient concentrations (Treat-ID), and different nutrient conditions inside the mesocosms after nutrient addition (day 1).

		Varied	Р				Varied	1 N				
Day 0					1							
Latitude			16.74	'N	1	16.76°N						
Longitude			25.16	W			25.16°W					
POC [µmol L <sup>-1</sup> ]			13.6 ±	3.8				11.9 ±	1.9			
PON [µmol L <sup>-1</sup> ]			1.85 ± (	0.68				1.54 ±	0.26			
POP [µmol L <sup>-1</sup> ]			0.10 ± 0	0.02				0.07 ±	0.01			
Chl a lug L <sup>-1</sup> 1			0.38 ± 0	0.09				0.18 ±	0.05			
DOC [umol L-1]			95 ± 4	.6				96± 3	3.9			
DON [umol L <sup>-1</sup> ]			8.8 ± 1	1.1				11 ±	1.5			
Day 1												
Mesocosm	Nitrate [µmol L <sup>-1</sup> ]	Phosphate [µmol L <sup>-1</sup> ]	DIN:DIP	Treat - ID	Mesocosm	Nitrate [µmol L <sup>-1</sup> ]	Phosphate [µmol L <sup>-1</sup> ]	DIN:DIP	Treat - ID			
MK 13	11.2	0.15	76.8	12.0N/0.25P	MK 13	2.1	0.46	4.5	2.0N/0.75P			
MK 14	11.2	0.16	69.8	12.0N/0.25P	MK 15	1.9	0.56	3.3	2.0N/0.75P			
MK 16	11.3	0.15	75.8	12.0N/0.25P	MK 16	2.7	0.48	5.6	2.0N/0.75P			
MK 1	11.5	0.73	15.8	12.0N/0.75P	MK 9	4.6	0.45	10.4	4.0N/0.75P			
MK 2	11.0	0.68	16.1	12.0N/0.75P	MK 11	4.5	0.47	9.6	4.0N/0.75P			
MK 3	10.6	0.52	20.5	12.0N/0.75P	MK 12	4.0	0.49	8.2	4.0N/0.75P			
MK 10	10.8	0.61	17.6	12.0N/0.75P	MK 14	12.6	0.47	27.0	12.0N/0.75P			
MK 6	10.7	1.14	9.4	12.0N/1.25P	MK 4	12.4	0.51	24.3	12.0N/0.75P			
MK 7	11.2	1.12	9.9	12.0N/1.25P	MK 1	12.6	0.51	24.7	12.0N/0.75P			
MK 8	10.9	1.09	10.0	12.0N/1.25P	MK 2	20.6	0.47	43.9	20.0N/0.75P			
MK 9	10.5	1.57	6.7	12.0N/1.75P	MK 3	20.6	0.45	45.9	20.0N/0.75P			
MK 11	10.8	1.58	6.9	12.0N/1.75P	MK 6	21.9	0.45	48.8	20.0N/0.75P			
MK 12	11.1	1.53	7.2	12.0N/1.75P	MK 7	6.7	0.78	8.5	6.0N/1.03P			
MK 4	5.7	1.00	5.7	6.35N/1.10P	MK 8	6.9	0.18	39.4	6.35N/0.40P			
MK 15	16.9	1.01	16.7	17.65N/1.10P	MK 10	18.5	0.22	84.3	17.65N/0.40P			
					MK 5	18.4	0.79	23.4	17.65N/1.10P			
Legends	*	12.0N/0.25P			1	×	2.00N/0.75P					
	•	12.0N/0.75P			1	0	4.00N/0.75P					
	$\nabla$	5.35N/1.10P			1	$\nabla$	6.00N/1.10P					
	•	17.65N/1.10P			1	•	6.35N/0.40P					
	×	12.0N/1.25P			1	•	12.0N/0.75P					
	$\triangle$	12.0N/1.75P			1	*	17.65N/0.40P					
					1		17.65N/1.10P					
					1	0	20.0N/0.75P					

		Varieo	IP	Varied N						
Day 0										
Latitude			16.74	°N	1			16.76	8°N	
Longitude			25.16	°W	1			25.16	°W	
POC [µmol L <sup>-</sup> ]			13.6 ±	3.8				11.9 ±	: 1.9	
PON [µmol L <sup>-1</sup> ]			1.85 ±	0.68				1.54 ±	0.26	
POP [µmol L <sup>-1</sup> ]			0.10 ±	0.02	1			0.07 ±	0.01	
Chl a [µg L <sup>-1</sup> ]			0.38 ±	0.09				0.18 ±	0.05	
DOC [µmol L <sup>-1</sup> ]			95 ± 4	4.6				96± 3	3.9	
DON [µmol L <sup>-1</sup> ]			8.8 ±	1.1	1			11 ±	1.5	
Day 1										
Mesocosm	Nitrate [µmol L <sup>-1</sup> ]	Phosphate [µmol L <sup>-1</sup> ]	DIN:DIP	Treat - ID	Mesocosm	Nitrate [µmol L <sup>-1</sup> ]	Phosphate [µmol L <sup>-1</sup> ]	DIN:DIP	Treat - ID	
MK 13	11.2	0.15	76.8	12.0N/0.25P	MK 13	2.1	0.46	4.5	2.0N/0.75P	
MK 14	11.2	0.16	69.8	12.0N/0.25P	MK 15	1.9	0.56	3.3	2.0N/0.75P	
MK 16	11.3	0.15	75.8	12.0N/0.25P	MK 16	2.7	0.48	5.6	2.0N/0.75P	
MK 1	11.5	0.73	15.8	12.0N/0.75P	MK 9	4.6	0.45	10.4	4.0N/0.75P	
MK 2	11.0	0.68	16.1	12.0N/0.75P	MK 11	4.5	0.47	9.6	4.0N/0.75P	
MK 3	10.6	0.52	20.5	12.0N/0.75P	MK 12	4.0	0.49	8.2	4.0N/0.75P	
MK 10	10.8	0.61	17.6	12.0N/0.75P	MK 14	12.6	0.47	27.0	12.0N/0.75P	
MK 6	10.7	1.14	9.4	12.0N/1.25P	MK 4	12.4	0.51	24.3	12.0N/0.75P	
MK 7	11.2	1.12	9.9	12.0N/1.25P	MK 1	12.6	0.51	24.7	12.0N/0.75P	
MK 8	10.9	1.09	10.0	12.0N/1.25P	MK 2	20.6	0.47	43.9	20.0N/0.75P	
MK 9	10.5	1.57	6.7	12.0N/1.75P	MK 3	20.6	0.45	45.9	20.0N/0.75P	
MK 11	10.8	1.58	6.9	12.0N/1.75P	MK 6	21.9	0.45	48.8	20.0N/0.75P	
MK 12	11.1	1.53	7.2	12.0N/1.75P	MK 7	6.7	0.78	8.5	6.0N/1.03P	
MK 4	5.7	1.00	5.7	6.35N/1.10P	MK 8	6.9	0.18	39.4	6.35N/0.40P	
MK 15	16.9	1.01	16.7	17.65N/1.10P	MK 10	18.5	0.22	84.3	17.65N/0.40P	
	*	12.01/0.250			MK 5	18.4	0.79	23.4	17.65N/1.10P	
Legends	-	12.UN/0.25P			1	â	2.00N/0.75P			
	-	12.UN/0.75P			1	0	4.00N/0.75P			
	~	5.35N/1.10P			1	V	6.00N/1.10P			
		17.65N/1.10P			1	•	6.35N/0.40P			
	×	12.0N/1.25P			1	•	12.0N/0.75P			
	$\triangle$	12.0N/1.75P			1	*	17.65N/0.40P			
					1	•	17.65N/1.10P			
						<b>P</b>	20.0N/0.75P			

 Table 1: Summary of initial conditions of the seawater used to fill the mesocosms during the two experiments, target nutrient concentrations (treat-ID), and different nutrient conditions inside the mesocosms after nutrient addition (day 1).

Table 2: Mean deviations (MD) from the average development, averaged for each mesocosm for the full experimental period (day 1-								
day8) and Pearson coefficients for correlations of MD versus initial nutrient concentration [µmol L <sup>-1</sup> ]; bold numbers indicate significant								
correlation ( $p$ <0.05).								

Varied P	Chla	Bact	POC	PN	DOC	DON	TEP	CSP	Varied N	Chla	Bact	POC	PN	DOC	DON	TEP	CSP
treatment	$\mu L^{-1}$	10 <sup>5</sup> L <sup>-1</sup>	μΜ	μΜ	μΜ	μΜ	10 <sup>6</sup> L <sup>-1</sup>	10 <sup>5</sup> L <sup>-1</sup>	treatment	$\mu L^{-1}$	10 <sup>5</sup> L <sup>-1</sup>	μΜ	μΜ	μΜ	μΜ	10 <sup>6</sup> L <sup>-1</sup>	10 <sup>5</sup> L <sup>-1</sup>
12.0N/0.75P	-0.21	2.84	2.45	0.35	3.81	-0.27	4.42	2.07	12.0N/0.75P	0.15	-1.70	4.24	0.61	3.3	1.1	-6.47	-4.23
12.0N/0.75P	0.03	-0.65	1.93	0.14	-1.39	-0.54	21.16	3.32	12.0N/0.75P	0.23	1.12	4.87	0.56	2.7	-0.6	1.78	14.98
12.0N/0.75P	0.06	-0.69	3.35	0.71	-0.74	0.00	16.00	4.73	12.0N/0.75P	0.64	1.10	11.32	1.34	-0.7	-0.9	5.09	12.60
12.0N/0.75P	0.06	3.61	-0.10	0.29	-4.41	0.19	0.53	-5.63	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
17.65N/1.10P	0.54	4.14	4.07	0.83	3.15	-0.38	7.77	5.48	17.65N/1.10P	0.76	4.24	2.34	0.75	-1.4	-0.5	-7.40	8.06
12.0N/0.25P	-0.28	-1.44	-8.30	-1.14	-4.86	0.49	-19.47	3.39	2.00N/0.75P	-1.01	-1.58	-4.51	-1.14	-2.3	-0.5	-15.10	-18.80
12.0N/0.25P	-0.26	-0.46	-6.51	-0.99	-4.39	0.56	-17.77	-6.21	2.00N/0.75P	-1.04	-1.89	-14.10	-2.12	-9.3	3.4	-21.78	-19.77
12.0N/0.25P	-0.30	-1.09	-2.00	-0.67	-0.10	0.13	-17.16	-4.46	2.00N/0.75P	1.05	1.85	7.29	1.51	1.5	-0.1	17.43	-1.03
6.35N/1.10P	-0.29	-0.79	-0.47	-0.35	-2.48	-0.51	5.83	-4.87	4.00N/0.75P	-0.62	-0.52	-5.46	-1.05	-3.9	-0.7	1.07	-9.07
12.0N/1.25P	0.03	0.28	4.86	0.58	2.84	-0.41	0.59	0.15	4.00N/0.75P	0.91	-0.79	7.45	1.17	6.2	-0.3	15.35	16.30
12.0N/1.25P	0.16	-0.73	0.39	0.10	5.46	0.24	10.52	-2.35	4.00N/0.75P	-0.22	-0.79	-6.56	-1.54	-2.4	-1.6	3.12	-9.56
12.0N/1.25P	0.38	-1.32	2.71	0.19	4.69	0.06	6.48	-6.93	6.00N/1.03P	-0.65	-2.14	-12.28	-1.73	-0.1	-1.3	-23.60	-8.95
12.0N/1.75P	0.13	-2.16	-1.61	-0.40	-2.89	0.04	3.00	4.16	6.35N/0.40P	-1.09	-2.20	-8.85	-1.38	-18.8	-2.2	-15.68	-14.42
12.0N/1.75P	-0.27	-0.83	-4.35	-0.19	4.07	-0.12	-15.74	4.07	17.65N/0.40P	1.31	1.30	14.47	2.76	4.2	0.8	33.98	24.11
12.0N/1.75P	0.23	-0.70	1.66	0.26	-2.75	0.51	-6.15	3.07	20.0N/0.75P	-0.49	1.26	0.10	-0.25	0.5	0.1	-5.21	-0.84
									20.0N/0.75P	-0.88	-0.88	-10.83	-1.58	-4.8	0.3	-21.95	-9.19
									20.0N/0.75P	0.94	1.62	10.52	2.08	7.7	1.8	39.38	19.81
$r(PO_4^{3-}) =$	0.45	-0.10	0.37	0.41	0.39	-0.24	0.25	0.31	$r(NO_3) =$	0.97	0.70	0.87	0.94	0.71	0.18	0.80	0.86

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5 **Table 3:** Statistics for linear regression analysis of gel particle numerical abundance <u>and DOC</u>

26 <u>concentration</u> against organic matter components during mesocosm experiments with different initial

1027 PO<sub>4</sub><sup>3-</sup> (*Varied P*;  $\mu$ mol L<sup>-1</sup>) and NO<sup>3-</sup> (*Varied N*;  $\mu$ mol L<sup>-1</sup>) concentrations. Units TEP: x10<sup>7</sup> L<sup>-1</sup>, CSP: x10<sup>6</sup>

1028 | L<sup>-1</sup>, POC:  $\mu$ mol L<sup>-1</sup>, PN:  $\mu$ mol L<sup>-1</sup>, Chl  $a : \mu$ g L<sup>-1</sup>, DOC  $\mu$ mol L<sup>-1</sup>, bacteria x10<sup>6</sup> mL<sup>-1</sup>,  $\underline{a}$  is the slope and  $\underline{b}$ 

1029 <u>is the intercept.</u> See figure 7 for further information.

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		Varied P		Varied N							
	а	b	n	r <sup>2</sup>	а	b	n	$r^2$			
TEP vs.											
Chla	2.0±0.22	1.27±0.39	60	0.65	$1.2{\pm}0.08$	1.52±0.26	96	0.69			
POC	0.18±0.012	-0.63±0.49	89	0.72	0.22±0.13	-1.5±0.60	128	0.70			
PN	1.2±0.07	-1.4±0.4	89	0.80	1.5±0.1	-1.2±0.7	128	0.64			
DOC	0.14±0.02	-8.7±2.2	90	0.34	$0.22 \pm 0.02$	-18±2.1	127	0.54			
bacteria	3.4±0.4	0.78±0.67	90	0.46	6.8±0.9	-1.3±1.1	128	0.32			
CSP vs.											
Chla	1.3±0.1	1.4±0.3	60	0.76	2.5±0.15	3.2±0.5	96	0.74			
POC	0.11±0.01	0.3±0.4	89	0.58	0.25±0.01	-1.2±0.6	112	0.77			
PN	0.7±0.06	0.2±0.3	89	0.65	1.9±0.09	-0.1±0.6	112	0.80			
DOC	0.10±0.01	-6.6±1.4	90	0.42	0.21±0.03	-13±3.0	111	0.35			
bacteria	2.3±0.26	0.63±0.43	90	0.49	8.8±0.84	-2.3±1.11	128	0.47			
DOC vs											
Chla	n.s	-	-	-	n.s.	-	-	-			
POC	0.54±0.06	88±2	119	0.38	$0.66 \pm 0.05$	88±2	127	0.58			
PN	3.5±0.4	88±2	119	0.38	4,2±0.4	90±3	127	0.47			
bacteria	11±1.5	92±2	119	0.31	21±3.1	88±4	127	0.27			

Table 4: Ratios of estimated carbon content of transparent exopolymer particles (TEP-C) to
<u>concentrations of particulate organic carbon (POC)</u> , total organic carbon (TOC), particulate
nitrogen (PN) and Chl a-concentrations. Average values (mean for TEP-C, median for ratios) are
given for replicate treatments on day 1 and 8 during Varied P and Varied N, respectively.

Sampling	n	Treat_ID	TEP-C [µmol L <sup>-1</sup> ]	TEP-C : POC	TEP-C : TOC	TEP-C : PN [mol:mol]	TEP-C : Chl <i>a</i> [μM:μg L <sup>-1</sup> ]
Varied P				[IIIOI /0]	[mor /o]	[mor.mor]	
Day 1	3	12.0N/0.25P	0.52	3.01	0.48	16.3	0.25
1	4	12.0N/0.75P	0.40	3.12	0.36	3.4	0.26
1	1	6.35N/1.10P	0.98	5.98	0.83	13.0	0.45
1	1	17.65N/1.10P	0.52	4.14	0.45	7.5	0.28
1	3	12.0N/1.25P	0.49	3.99	0.46	4.7	0.29
1	3	12.0N/1.75P	0.55	5.12	0.50	4.4	0.38
Day 8	3	12.0N/0.25P	13	41	8.4	2.21	25
8	4	12.0N/0.75P	16	15	10.4	2.62	28
8	1	6.35N/1.10P	21	28	14.8	2.85	63
8	1	17.65N/1.10P	22	31	13.3	2.77	61
8	3	12.0N/1.25P	18	26	9.9	2.79	32
8	3	12.0N/1.75P	35	19	17.6	3.63	83
Varied N							
Day 1	3	2.0N/0.75P	0.36	3.07	0.29	0.21	2.04
1	3	4.0N/0.75P	0.62	4.90	0.54	0.36	3.84
1	1	6.0N/1.03P	0.50	4.99	0.48	0.41	4.18
1	1	6.35N/0.40P	0.51	4.56	0.47	0.35	3.63
1	3	12.0N/0.75P	0.88	7.34	0.90	0.66	5.16
1	1	17.65N/0.40P	1.77	14	1.67	1.12	9.33
1	1	17.65N/1.10P	0.97	9.32	0.91	0.66	7.43
1	3	20.0N/0.75P	0.75	4.86	0.68	0.40	4.37
Day 8	3	2.0N/0.75P	25	52	12.0	3.42	47
8	3	4.0N/0.75P	46	82	22.4	6.61	48
8	1	6.0N/1.03P	35	87	18.9	6.88	36
8	1	6.35N/0.40P	37	53	17.3	4.03	45
8	3	12.0N/0.75P	40	43	15.6	3.51	43
8	1	17.65N/0.40P	68	93	29.1	6.36	81
8	1	17.65N/1.10P	23	26	9.7	1.79	14
8	3	20.0N/0.75P	42	47	16.1	3.16	19

#### **Figure captions:**

**Fig. 1, a-f:** Bloom development during <u>two series of mesocosms</u> experiments with varied supply of  $PO_4^{3-}(Varied P; a, c, e; n=16)$  or  $NO_3^-$  (*Varied N;* b, d, f; n=16), respectively. Shaded areas indicate the range (min-max) of data observed during both treatments for Chl *a* concentration (a, b), bacterial abundance (c, d) and particulate organic carbon (POC) concentration (e, f).

**Fig. 2, a-d:** Nutrient concentrations during <u>two series of</u> mesocosm experiments with varied supply of  $PO_4^{3-}$  (*Varied P*; a, c; n=16) or  $NO_3^{--}$  (*Varied N*; b, d; n=16), respectively. For treatments with identical nutrient supply, average values are given  $\pm 1$  standard deviation (error bars). See table 1 for explanation of symbols.

**Fig. 3, a-d:** Changes in dissolved organic carbon ( $\Delta$ DOC; a, b) and dissolved organic nitrogen ( $\Delta$ DON; c, d) concentration during *Varied P* (a, c) and *Varied N* (b, d). Values are given as difference to day 1. For treatments with identical nutrient supply, average values are given ±1 standard deviation (error bars). The dashed line visualizes the zero value; symbols as in Table 1.

**Fig. 4, a-d:** Temporal changes in the total numerical abundance of transparent exopolymer particles (TEP; a, b) and of <u>Ceoomassie stainable particles</u> (CSP; c, d) during *Varied P* (a, c) and *Varied N* (b, d). For treatments with identical nutrient supply, average values are given  $\pm 1$  standard deviation (error bars). The dashed line visualizes the zero value; symbols as in Table. 1.

**Fig. 5<u>, a-d</u>:** Size frequency distribution of gel particles. Calculation of the size frequency distribution slope exemplified for TEP, averaged for all mesocoms on day 1 (circles) and 8 (triangles) during *Varied P* (lefta) and *Varied N* (rightb), respectively and for CSP on day 2

(circles) and 8 (triangles) during <u>Varied P</u> (c) and <u>Varied N</u> (d). Linear regression of  $\log[dN/d(d_p)]$  versus  $\log[d_p]$  was fitted to the particles in the size range of 1.05 – 14.14 µm ESD (solid symbols).

Fig. 6, a-d: Changes in the slope (δ) of the size frequency distribution of TEP (a, b) and CSP (c, d) during the mesocosm blooms. The grey lines indicate the mean value of all mesocosms on the respective day; symbols as in Table 1.

**Fig. 7, a-i:** Relationships between organic components during *Varied P* and *Varied N*. Solid symbols: data obtained during *Varied P*; open symbols: data obtained during *Varied N*. Linear regressions with Chl *a* include data of samplings 1, 2 and -5 for *Varied P* and 1-6 for *Varied N*. Linear regressions with POC and PN include data of all samplings. Information on regression statistics is given in table 2.

**Fig. 8, a-b:** The maximum numerical abundance of TEP (a) and CSP (b) in the mesocosms increased with the initial (day 1) [DIN]:[DIP] ratio during *Varied N* (open symbols), but not during *Varied P* (solid symbols).

**Fig 9, a-c:** Comparison of Chl *a* concentration (a), accumulation of DOC (b, open symbols) and DON (b, solid symbols), and abundance of TEP (c, open symbols) and CSP (c, solid symbols) observed in the course of the two mesocosms experiments for the treatment 12.0N/0.75P. Direct relationships ( $[y_{Varied N}] = a [x_{Varied P}]+b$ ) were observed for Chl *a*, with a=2.3±0.2, r<sup>2</sup>=0.94, n=8; DOC with a=2.1±0.4, r<sup>2</sup>=0.84, n=8, TEP with a= 1.7±0.4, r<sup>2</sup>=0.78, n=6 and CSP with a=3.3±0.7, r<sup>2</sup>=0.86, n=6. Symbols represent mean values of 3 mesocosms (*Varied P*) or 4 mesocosms (*Varied N*) with ± 1 standard deviation (error bars).

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Figure: 1, a-f



Figure: 2, a-d



Figure: 3, a-d



Figure: 4, a-d




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Figure: 5



Figure: 6, a-d



Figure: 7, a-i



Formatiert: Schriftart: Fett

Figure: 8a, b



Figure: 9, a-c