Response to reviewers for revised manuscript bg-2016-64

Referee # 1 (Orit Sivan)

Referee's comment: Suggest to accept as is.

Author's reply: We thank the referee for her insightful review that improved the quality of this paper.

Referee # 2 (anonymous)

Referee's comment: The authors have done an excellent job in revising the paper in response to the reviewers' comments. Most importantly in my view, they have justified the assumptions and reasons for excluding organoclastic iron reduction in the methane zone, making it clear that the purpose of the study is to explore the potential for iron-dependent AOM rather than determining actual Fe-AOM rates. I only find one minor issue:

I still respectfully disagree with the use of the closed-system Rayleigh distillation model to determine fractionation factors for sulfate-AOM (l. 428-441). A remark is now included that determination of accurate factors require modelling, which is fine, but I am confused by the remark that "diffusion could be slower than oxidation". This true in the sense that some methanogenesis occurs in the AOM zone, but AOM rates in the SMTZ are about an order of magnitude higher than methane production rates there (Fig. 6), so most of the methane must be supplied by diffusion – this is by no means a "quasi-closed system" as claimed in the text.

Just a remark: I my comments to the 1st version I had missed the fact that hydrogenotrophic methanogenesis in the model depends on the DIC concentration and not on the hydrogen concentration. This is a strange formulation since methanogens in sediments usually deplete hydrogen to the energetic threshold (see papers by Hoehler et al.) and thus, expectedly, are hydrogen limited (with hydrogen supply limited by the degradation of organic matter and, possibly, pyrite formation). Thus, the modelling of two separate methanogenic pathways is questionable, but this has no real influence on the paper now, because the authors have chosen to present the combined methane production.

Author's reply: We thank the referee for the compliment and for the critical remark regarding the modeling of hydrogenotrophic methanogenesis. We acknowledge the referee's view and have removed our previous interpretation of a "quasi-closed system" from the manuscript (lns 431-436).

Referee # 3 (W.-L. Hong)

Referee's comment: The authors have addressed all points I raised previously. It's now almost flawless. I would however like to make a final note on the numerical issue (my very first point in the review). I believe ReacTran is doing a good job numerically but numerical error is simply inevitable in many cases. It's something all modelers should acknowledge and be honest about. A better understanding about how large such error might be is therefore very important. TVD is such a widely used scheme for solving transport-reaction equations and is also a good numerical scheme. It is however not immune from numerical issues if a proper discretization is not chosen. I encourage the authors to refer to studies such as Wang and Hutter (2001) (DOI: 10.1002/fld.197) or Toth and Odstrcil (1996) (doi:10.1006/jcph.1996.0197) which comparing different numerical schemes including TVD. As the authors replied: "The ReacTran package accounts for numerical dispersion using total variation diminishing (TVD) slope limiters". This statement does not guarantee everything. The only way to check numerical issues is to run the model with some clean scenario (such as advection of a square function).

Author's reply: We thank the referee for the positive remarks and his helpful input regarding numerical errors. We will carefully consider the studies mentioned by the referee in our future modeling work.

Anaerobic oxidation of methane alters sediment records of sulfur, iron and phosphorus in the Black Sea

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Abstract. The surface sediments in the Black Sea are underlain by extensive deposits of iron (Fe) oxide-rich lake sediments that were deposited prior to the inflow of marine Mediterranean Sea waters ca. 9000 years ago. The subsequent downward diffusion of marine sulfate into the methane-bearing lake sediments has led to a multitude of diagenetic reactions in the sulfate-methane transition zone (SMTZ), including anaerobic oxidation of methane (AOM) with sulfate. While the sedimentary cycles of sulfur (S), methane and Fe in the SMTZ have been extensively studied, relatively little is known about the diagenetic alterations of the sediment record occurring below the SMTZ. Here we combine detailed geochemical analyses of the sediment and pore water with multicomponent diagenetic modeling to study the diagenetic alterations below the SMTZ at two sites in the western Black Sea. We focus on the dynamics of Fe, S and phosphorus (P) and demonstrate that diagenesis has strongly overprinted the sedimentary burial records of these elements. In line with previous studies in the Black Sea, we show that sulfate-mediated AOM substantially enhances the downward diffusive flux of sulfide into the deep limnic deposits. During this downward sulfidization, Fe oxides, Fe carbonates and Fe phosphates (e.g. vivianite) are converted to sulfide phases, leading to an enrichment in solid phase S and the release of phosphate to the pore water. Below the sulfidization front, high concentrations of dissolved ferrous Fe (Fe^{2+}) lead to sequestration of downward diffusing phosphate as authigenic vivianite, resulting in a transient accumulation of total P directly below the sulfidization front. Our model results further demonstrate that downward migrating sulfide becomes partly re-oxidized to sulfate due to reactions with oxidized Fe minerals, fueling a cryptic S cycle and thus stimulating slow rates of sulfate-driven AOM ($\sim$ 1 - 100 pmol cm^{-3} d^{-1}) in the sulfate-depleted limnic deposits. However, this process is unlikely to explain the observed release of dissolved Fe^{2+} below the SMTZ. Instead, we suggest that besides organoclastic Fe oxide reduction and reactivation of less reactive Fe oxides by methanogens, AOM coupled to the reduction of Fe oxides may also provide a possible mechanism for the high concentrations of Fe^{2+} in the pore water at depth. Our results reveal that methane plays a key role in the diagenetic alterations of Fe, S and P records in Black Sea sediments. The downward sulfidization into the limnic deposits is enhanced through sulfate-driven AOM with sulfate and AOM with Fe oxides may provide a deep source of dissolved Fe^{2+} that drives the sequestration of P in vivianite below the sulfidization front.

1

1 Introduction

Anaerobic oxidation of methane (AOM), a process initially regarded as a biogeochemical curiosity, functions as an important sink for oceanic methane (CH_4) by consuming > 90 % of all CH_4 produced in marine sediments (Knittel and Boetius, 2009; Reeburgh, 2007). Although recent studies indicate that the biological oxidation of CH_4 could be coupled to various additional electron acceptors such as nitrate and nitrite (Ettwig et al., 2010; Raghoebarsing et al., 2006) as well as metal oxides (Beal et al., 2009; Egger et al., 2015b; Riedinger et al., 2014; Scheller et al., 2016; Segarra et al., 2013; Sivan et al., 2011), sulfate (SO_4^{2-}) is commonly thought to be the dominant electron acceptor in anoxic marine systems (Knittel and Boetius, 2009; Reeburgh, 2007).

Nevertheless, a coupling between anaerobic CH_4 oxidation and iron (Fe) oxide reduction (Fe-AOM) could have a significant impact on sedimentary Fe cycling and related processes such as phosphorus (P) diagenesis, because of the 8:1 Fe-CH_4 stoichiometry of the reaction (Beal et al., 2009; Egger et al., 2015a; Rooze et al., 2016). Environmental conditions that favor Fe-AOM in marine systems are still poorly understood. The required co-occurrence of pore water CH_4 and abundant reducible Fe oxides suggests that Fe-AOM may occur in sediments that receive a relatively high input of Fe oxides compared to the in-situ production of sulfide, which could allow a portion of Fe oxides to escape the conversion to authigenic Fe sulfides and to remain preserved in the methanogenic sediments below the zone of SO_4^{2-} reduction (Egger et al., 2015b; Riedinger et al., 2014; Rooze et al., 2016). In addition, perturbations inducing transient diagenesis such as anthropogenic eutrophication or climate change may also create diagenetic environments that are likely favorable for Fe-AOM, as they provide a mechanism for the burial of Fe oxide-rich deposits below sulfidic sediment layers (Egger et al., 2015b; Riedinger et al., 2014).

The Black Sea represents a good example of a sedimentary system in which transient diagenesis associated with postglacial sea-level rise has led to the accumulation of sulfidic sediments above Fe oxide-rich deposits. Here, the establishment of a connection to the Mediterranean Sea through the shallow Bosporus around 9000 years ago (Degens and Ross, 1974; Soulet et al., 2011) led to the inflow of marine waters into a freshwater basin, resulting in permanent salinity/density stratification and in the development of euxinic conditions (i.e. free dissolved sulfide present in the bottom water), making the current Black Sea the largest permanently anoxic basin on Earth.

In the absence of oxygen and metal oxides, SO_4^{2-} reduction is the dominant benthic mineralization process of organic matter in Black Sea surface sediments below the chemocline (~ 100 m depth) (Jørgensen et al., 2001; Thamdrup et al., 2000). At present, SO_4^{2-} penetrates through the modern coccolith ooze (Unit I) and the marine sapropel (Unit II) sediments and a few meters into the Upper Pleistocene freshwater deposits (Unit III) (Arthur and Dean, 1998; Degens and Ross, 1974; Jørgensen et al., 2004). Below the SO_4^{2-}-bearing zone, methanogenesis takes over as the dominant process of organic matter degradation, resulting in the buildup of CH_4 in the pore water at depth.

Interactions between the cycles of sulfur (S) and CH_4 in Black Sea sediments have been extensively studied during recent years (Holmkvist et al., 2011b; Jørgensen et al., 2001, 2004; Knab et al., 2009; Leloup et al., 2007) and AOM coupled to SO_4^{2-} reduction (SO_4-AOM) was found to account for an estimated 7-18 % of total SO_4^{2-} reduction in these sediments (Jørgensen et al., 2001). The production of sulfide in the sulfate-methane transition zone (SMTZ) as a result of SO_4-AOM represents the main source of pore water sulfide at depth in the sediment. This intensified production of sulfide drives an enhanced downward diffusive flux of sulfide into the deep limnic deposits of Unit III,

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75   forming a distinct diagenetic sulfidization front recognized as a black band or a series of bands owing to the

76   conversion of Fe oxides to Fe sulfides (Berner, 1974; Jørgensen et al., 2004; Neretin et al., 2004).

77   At present, the impact of the downward-migrating sulfidization front on sedimentary P, a key nutrient for marine

78   phytoplankton, and the potential role of Fe-mediated AOM in the deep limnic deposits remain largely unknown. A

79   buildup of ferrous Fe (Fe^{2+}) in the pore water at depth as found in previous studies (Holmkvist et al., 2011b;

80   Jørgensen et al., 2004; Knab et al., 2009), could indicate ongoing Fe reduction in the CH_4-bearing deep limnic

81   sediments and thus a potential coupling between AOM and Fe oxide reduction. The sediment records investigated up

82   to now, however, do not extend deep enough to allow the sedimentary cycling of Fe and related biogeochemical

83   processes below the sulfidization front to be investigated. In particular, the presence of abundant dissolved Fe^{2+}

84   combined with a potential release of pore water phosphate (HPO_4^{2-}) during reductive dissolution of Fe oxides may be

85   conducive to the formation of reduced Fe(II)-P minerals such as vivianite ($Fe_3(PO_4)_2 \cdot 8H_2O$) below the sulfidization

86   front (Egger et al., 2015a; Hsu et al., 2014; März et al., 2008; Sivan et al., 2011). Post-depositional diagenetic

87   alterations as a result of downward sulfidization could therefore overprint burial records of P in the Upper

88   Pleistocene deposits.

89   In this study, we combine detailed geochemical analyses of the sediment and pore water with multicomponent

90   diagenetic modeling to study the diagenetic alterations below the lake-marine transition at two sites in the western

91   Black Sea. Focusing on the dynamics of S, Fe and P, we demonstrate that AOM coupled to SO_4^{2-} reduction enhances

92   the downward sulfidization and associated dissolution of Fe oxides, Fe carbonates and vivianite, supporting earlier

93   findings of an SO_4-AOM enhanced downward sulfidization in Black Sea sediments (Jørgensen et al., 2001). Below

94   the sulfidization front, downward diffusing HPO_4^{2-} precipitates as vivianite by reaction with the abundant dissolved

95   Fe^{2+}. We propose that organoclastic Fe oxide reduction, reactivation of less reactive Fe oxides by methanogens

96   (Sivan et al., 2016) and/or AOM coupled to the reduction of Fe oxides are the key processes explaining the high

97   concentrations of dissolved Fe^{2+} at depth in the sediment. Trends in total S and P with depth are significantly altered

98   by the above-mentioned reactions, highlighting that diagenesis may strongly overprint burial records of these

99   elements below a lake-marine transition.

100 **2   Materials and methods**

101 **2.1   Sample collection**

102 **2.1.1   Gravity core sampling**

103 Sediment samples were taken at two slope sites in the western Black Sea during a cruise in June 2013 with R/V

104 Pelagia. Gravity cores containing ~ 7 m of sediment were collected at sites 4 (43°40.6' N, 30°7.5' E; 377 meters

105 below sea surface (mbss)) and 5 (43°42.6' N, 30°6.1' E; 178 mbss) (Fig. 1), both situated below the current

106 chemocline (~ 100 m water depth). The core liners were pre-drilled with 2 cm diameter holes in two rows of 10 cm

107 resolution on opposing sides of the tube, offset by 5 cm and taped prior to coring. Upon recovery, the liners were cut

108 into 1 m sections, transferred to a temperature-controlled container set at in-situ bottom water temperature (11 °C)

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109 and secured vertically. Subsequently, the taped holes were cut open and a cut-off syringe was inserted horizontally
110 directly after opening each hole.

111 From one series of holes, 10 mL of wet sediment was extracted at 20 cm resolution and immediately transferred into
112 a 65 mL glass bottle filled with saturated NaCl solution for CH_4 analysis. The NaCl solution was topped up after
113 addition of the sample, ensuring that no air bubbles remained. Each bottle was sealed with a black rubber stopper and
114 a screw cap and was subsequently stored upside-down at room temperature. From the second series of holes, 20 mL
115 sediment was extracted at 20 cm resolution, sealed with parafilm that was tightly closed with an elastic band, and
116 directly inserted into a nitrogen (N_2)-purged glove box. Subsequently, the sediment was transferred into a 50 mL
117 centrifuge tube and centrifuged (4500 rpm; 30 min). The supernatant from each centrifuged sample was filtered
118 through 0.45 µm pore size disposable filters via 20 mL plastic syringes in the glove box and collected in 15 mL
119 centrifuge tubes. The sediment fraction was stored frozen (-20 °C) for solid phase analysis. Filtered pore water
120 samples were sub-sampled under N_2 for analysis of dissolved HPO_4^{2-}, ammonium (NH_4^+), dissolved inorganic
121 carbon (DIC), Fe, manganese (Mn), SO_4^{2-} and sulfide ($\sum H_2S = H_2S + HS^-$) (see section 2.2) Additional samples of 10
122 mL of sediment were collected at approximately 50 cm resolution and transferred into pre-weighed 15 mL glass vials
123 to determine porosity from gravimetric water loss.

124 **2.1.2   Multicore sampling**

125 To sample the surface sediment, sediment cores (30-60 cm of sediment and at least 10 cm of overlying water) were
126 recovered using an octopus multicorer (core diameter 10 cm). After recovery, the cores were stoppered at the base
127 and at the top and immediately transported to a temperature-controlled container (11 °C). One multicore from each
128 cast was pre-drilled with 2 cm diameter holes in two rows at 10 cm resolution on opposing sides of the tube, offset
129 by 5 cm, and taped prior to coring. These holes were sampled for CH_4 as described for the gravity cores. Another
130 core was directly inserted into a N_2-purged glove box through an airtight hole in the base. A bottom water sample
131 was collected using a 20 mL plastic syringe and the remaining bottom water was removed with a Tygon tube.
132 Subsequently, the core was sliced anoxically with decreasing resolution at depth, i.e. 0.5 cm resolution for the first 0-
133 2 cm, 1 cm resolution between 2-10 cm, 2 cm resolution between 10-20 cm and 4 cm resolution for the rest of the
134 core (> 20 cm). For each slice a sub-sample was placed in a pre-weighed 15 mL glass vial for water content and solid
135 phase analysis and stored under N_2 in airtight jars at -20 °C. A second sub-sample was transferred to a 50 mL
136 centrifuge tube and centrifuged (4500 rpm; 30 min). Both the supernatant water from each centrifuged sample and
137 the bottom water sample were subsequently processed as described for the gravity cores.
138 Visual alignment of the pore water profiles from the multicores with those of the gravity cores showed that the first ~
139 20 to 30 cm of sediment was lost during long coring. At site 5, the sediment in the multicore consisted of a gray and
140 homogeneous turbidite below 1.5 cm depth. The depth for the gravity core at site 5 was thus corrected for the loss of
141 the marine deposits, which were previously reported to be about 50 cm thick at a site in close proximity to site 5
142 (43°42.63' N, 30°6.12' E; 181 mbss) (Jørgensen et al., 2004)

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## 2.2	Pore water subsampling

A sub-sample of 0.5 mL was immediately transferred into a glass vial containing 1.5 mL of 8 M NaOH solution for analysis of dissolved sulfide. Sub-samples for total dissolved Fe and Mn, which are assumed to represent Fe(II) and Mn(II), were acidified with 10 μL 35 % suprapur HCl per mL of sub-sample. Note, however, that the dissolved (< 0.45 μm) Fe and Mn pools likely consist of a mixture of truly dissolved (aqueous), as well as organically complexed, colloidal and nanoparticulate Fe and Mn species (Raiswell and Canfield, 2012). Another 1 mL of pore water for HPO_4^{2-} analysis was acidified with 4 μL 5 M HCl. Pore water SO_4^{2-} was analyzed with ion chromatography (IC) in a 10-fold diluted sample (0.15 mL of pore water with 1.35 mL of de-oxygenated UHQ water). Sub-samples for DIC analysis (0.5 mL) were collected in glass vials (4.9 mL) to which 4.4 mL of 25 g/L NaCl solution was added, making sure that no headspace remained. Aliquots of the remaining pore water were used for the measurement of alkalinity (determined onboard by titrating 1 mL of untreated sub-sample with 0.01 M HCl; results presented in the Supplementary Information only) and NH_4^+. All sub-samples were stored at 4 °C and brought to room temperature just before analysis. Subsampling for sulfide was performed immediately after filtration and all other subsampling was performed within 4 hours of core recovery.

Pore water sub-samples for HPO_4^{2-}, DIC and sulfide were directly analyzed colorimetrically onboard on two separate QuAAtro (SEAL Analytical, Germany) auto analyzers. HPO_4^{2-} was measured at 880 nm after the formation of molybdophosphate-complexes (Murphy and Riley, 1962). Samples for DIC were acidified online after being oxidized by H_2O_2 and analyzed as described by Stoll et al. (2001). To keep the dissolved sulfide in the non-volatile HS^- form under alkaline conditions, 1.5 mL of 8 mM NaOH was added to the sulfide samples, which were subsequently analyzed using the methylene blue method as described by Grasshoff (1969). Sub-samples for dissolved Fe and Mn were analyzed onshore by ICP-OES (Perkin Elmer Optima 3000 Inductively Coupled Plasma - Optimal Emission Spectroscopy). For the analysis of pore water CH_4, a volume of 10 mL N_2 was injected into the CH_4 serum flasks (while a needle inserted through the septum allowed 10 mL of water to escape) to create a headspace from which a subsample was collected with a gas-tight syringe. Subsequently, CH_4 concentrations were determined in the home laboratory after injection into a Thermo Finnigan Trace GC gas chromatograph (Flame Ionization Detector). $\delta^{13}C\text{-}CH_4$ and $\delta D\text{-}CH_4$ (D, deuterium) were analyzed by Continuous Flow Isotope Ratio Mass Spectrometry (CF-IRMS) as described in detail in (Brass and Röckmann, 2010) and (Sapart et al., 2011).

## 2.3	Bulk sediment analysis

Sediment samples were freeze-dried, powdered and ground in an agate mortar in an argon (Ar)-filled glove box and split into oxic and anoxic fractions. Samples from the oxic fraction were used for total elemental and organic carbon (C_{org}) analyses under normal atmospheric conditions, whereas anoxic splits for sediment P and Fe speciation were kept under an inert, oxygen-free Ar or N_2 atmosphere at all times to avoid oxidation artefacts (Kraal and Slomp, 2014; Kraal et al., 2009).

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2.3.1 Total elemental composition and organic carbon

A split of ~ 125 mg of freeze-dried sediment was dissolved overnight in 2.5 mL HF (40 %) and 2.5 mL of $HClO_4/HNO_3$ mixture, in a closed Teflon bomb at 90 °C. The acids were then evaporated at 160 °C and the resulting gel was dissolved overnight in 1 M HNO_3 at 90 °C. Total elemental concentrations in the 1 M HNO_3 solutions were determined by ICP-OES. A second split of 0.3 g freeze-dried sediment was used to determine the C_{org} content using an elemental analyzer (Fison Instruments model NA 1500 NCS) after carbonate removal from the sediment with two washes with 1 M HCl (4 h and 12 h) followed by two washes with UHQ water and subsequent drying of the samples (Van Santvoort et al., 2002).

2.3.2 Sediment P fractionation

To determine the solid phase partitioning of P, aliquots of 0.1 g dried sediment were subjected to the SEDEX sequential extraction procedure after Ruttenberg (1992), as modified by Slomp et al. (1996b), but including the first $MgCl_2$ step (Table 1). Sediment P was fractionated as follows: i) exchangeable-P ("P_{exch}", extracted by 1 M $MgCl_2$, pH 8, 0.5 h), ii) Fe-associated P ("P_{Fe}", extracted by citrate-bicarbonate-dithionite (CDB), buffered to pH 7.5 with Na citrate/Na bicarbonate, 8 h, followed by 1 M $MgCl_2$, pH 8, 0.5 h), iii) authigenic Ca-P ("$P_{authi\ Ca-P}$", including carbonate fluorapatite, biogenic hydroxyapatite and $CaCO_3$-bound P, extracted by 1 M Na acetate solution, buffered to pH 4 with acetic acid, 6 h, followed by 1 M $MgCl_2$, pH 8, 0.5 h), iv) detrital Ca-P ("P_{detr}", extracted by 1 M HCl, 24 h) and v) organic P ("P_{org}", after ashing at 550 °C for 2 h, extracted by 1 M HCl, 24 h). The $MgCl_2$ washes in steps ii and iii were to ensure that any HPO_4^{2-} re-adsorbed during CDB or acetate extraction was removed and included in the pools of Fe-associated P and authigenic Ca-P, respectively. Sediments were shielded from oxygen inside an Ar-filled glovebox until step 3 of the SEDEX procedure to eliminate the potential conversion of Ca-P to Fe-bound P due to pyrite oxidation upon oxygen exposure (Kraal and Slomp, 2014; Kraal et al., 2009). Dissolved HPO_4^{2-} in the CDB solution was analyzed by ICP-OES. For all other solutions, HPO_4^{2-} was determined colorimetrically (Strickland and Parsons, 1972) on a Shimadzu spectrophotometer using the ammonium heptamolybdate – ascorbic acid method.

2.3.3 Sediment Fe fractionation

Sediment Fe was fractionated into i) carbonate associated Fe ("Fe_{carb}", including siderite and ankerite, extracted by 1 M Na-acetate brought to pH 4.5 with acetic acid, 24 h), ii) easily reducible (amorphous) oxides ("Fe_{ox1}", including ferrihydrite and lepidocrocite, extracted by 1 M hydroxylamine-HCl, 24 h), iii) reducible (crystalline) oxides ("Fe_{ox2}", including goethite, hematite and akagenéite, extracted by Na-dithionite buffer, pH 4.8, 2 h) and iv) Fe in recalcitrant oxides (mostly magnetite, "Fe_{mag}", extracted by 0.2 M ammonium oxalate / 0.17 M oxalic acid solution, 2 h), according to Poulton and Canfield (2005), using a 50 mg aliquot of dried sediment (Table 1). An additional aliquot of 50 mg was subjected to an adapted sequential extraction procedure after Claff et al. (2010), separating labile Fe(II) ("$Fe(II)_{HCl}$") and Fe(III) ("$Fe(III)_{HCl}$") using 1 M HCl (4 h) from crystalline Fe oxide minerals ("$Fe(II)_{CDB}$", Na-dithionite buffer, pH 4.8, 4 h) and from pyrite ("Fe_{pyrite}", concentrated nitric acid, 2 h), for all multicores as well as for the long core at site 4 (Table 1).

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211   At site 4 (multicore only) and 5 (multicore and gravity core), aliquots of 0.5 g dried sediment were used to

212   sequentially determine the amount of FeS (acid volatile sulfur, "AVS", using 6 M HCl) and FeS_2 (chromium

213   reducible sulfur, "CRS", using acidic chromous chloride solution) via the passive diffusion method described by

214   (Burton et al., 2008) using iodometric titration of the ZnS formed in the alkaline Zn acetate traps to quantify AVS

215   and CRS (Table 1).

216   **2.4   Diagenetic model**

217   **2.4.1   General form**

218   A multicomponent transient diagenetic model was developed for site 4 based on existing diagenetic models (Reed et

219   al., 2011a, 2011b; Rooze et al., 2016) to gain a better understanding of the transient diagenesis in Black Sea

220   sediments and to investigate the potential for Fe-AOM as a source of pore water Fe^{2+} at depth. The model describes

221   the cycling of dissolved and particulate chemical species in a 1D sediment column (Berner, 1980). A total of 25

222   different chemical species (Table 2) were subjected to a suite of biogeochemical reactions (Table 3) and vertical

223   transport through burial, as well as molecular diffusion for dissolved species (Boudreau, 1997; Soetaert et al., 1996;

224   Wang and Van Cappellen, 1996). The general diagenetic equations for solid (Eq. (1)) and dissolved species (Eq. (2))

225   are, respectively,

226    $(1-\phi)\frac{\partial C_S}{\partial t} = -(1-\phi)v\frac{\partial C_S}{\partial x} + \sum R_S$ (1)

227    $\phi\frac{\partial C_{aq}}{\partial t} = \phi D'\frac{\partial^2 C_{aq}}{\partial x^2} - \phi u\frac{\partial C_{aq}}{\partial x} + \sum R_{aq}$ (2)

228   where C_S is the concentration of the solid species (mol L^{-1}; mass per unit volume of solids), C_{aq} the concentration of

229   the dissolved species (mol L^{-1}; mass per unit volume of pore water), t is time (yr), ϕ the sediment porosity, x the

230   distance from the sediment-water interface (cm), D' the diffusion coefficients of dissolved species in the sediment

231   (cm^2 yr^{-1}) adjusted for the considered setting (Supplementary Table S1) (Boudreau, 1997) and corrected for the

232   tortuosity in the porous medium (Boudreau, 1996) (see Supplementary Information). $\sum R_S$ and $\sum R_{aq}$ are the net

233   reaction rates of the solid and dissolved species from the chemical reactions they participate in (Table 3), and v and

234   u the advective velocities (cm yr^{-1}) of the solid and the dissolved species, respectively. Porosity and advective

235   velocities were described by depth-dependent functions to account for sediment compaction (Meysman et al., 2005;

236   Reed et al., 2011a) (see Supplementary Information and Supplementary Fig. S1).

237   Reactions considered by the model and corresponding reaction equations are given in Tables 3 and 4, respectively,

238   and are divided into primary redox reactions and other biogeochemical reactions, including various mineral

239   formation and dissolution reactions (Reed et al., 2011a, 2011b; Rooze et al., 2016). Corresponding reaction

240   parameters were mostly taken from the literature or, if these were not available or no fit to the data could be obtained

241   with existing parameter ranges, constrained using the extensive geochemical dataset for site 4 (Table 5). A model

242   sensitivity analysis for key parameters is provided in the Supplementary Information (Supplementary Figs. S2 and

243   S3).

244   To account for differences in reactivity and crystallinity between different species, organic matter and Fe oxides are

245   divided into three different pools, representing highly reactive (α), less reactive (β) and non-reactive (i.e. inert) (γ)

246 phases. For the Fe oxides, only the α phase is used by organoclastic Fe reduction (Table 3), while the β phase is also

247 used by Fe-AOM. This assumption was made to test whether the pore water and sediment profiles observed in the

248 Black Sea can be reproduced with Fe-AOM as the main Fe reduction pathway at depth. In addition, it allows an

249 assessment of the potential impact of Fe-AOM on sedimentary CH_4 cycling. Note that, as a consequence of the

250 exclusion of organoclastic Fe reduction at depth, the model results should not be interpreted as proof for Fe-AOM

251 but rather imply that it is a possible mechanism.

252 The succession of oxidants during organic matter decomposition (Froelich et al., 1979) is described by means of

253 Monod kinetics (Table 4), whereby those oxidants with the highest metabolic free energy yield are used

254 preferentially until they become limiting and the oxidant with the next highest energy yield is used (Berg et al., 2003;

255 Boudreau, 1996; Reed et al., 2011b; Rooze et al., 2016; Wang and Van Cappellen, 1996). Oxidants considered by the

256 model are (in descending order of energy yield) O_2, nitrate (NO_3^-), Fe oxides and SO_4^{2-}. Once these oxidants are

257 exhausted, organic matter remineralization occurs by methanogenesis. Corresponding limiting concentrations for the

258 oxidants are taken from (Reed et al., 2011a) (Table 5). In addition, an attenuation factor, Ψ, is used to slow down

259 anaerobic organic matter degradation through SO_4^{2-} reduction and methanogenesis, thus allowing for better

260 preservation of organic matter under anoxic bottom water conditions (Moodley et al., 2005; Reed et al., 2011a,

261 2011b).

262 Cycling of S is simulated using five different chemical species, i.e. Fe monosulfides (FeS), pyrite (FeS_2), elemental S

263 (S_0), dissolved sulfide and pore water SO_4^{2-} (Table 2), combined in a network of various biogeochemical reactions

264 (Table 3). The CH_4 cycle includes CH_4 production from organic matter and from DIC (i.e. CO_2), as well as CH_4

265 oxidation coupled to the reduction of O_2, SO_4^{2-} and $Fe(OH)_3$ (Table 3). For AOM a bimolecular rate equation was

266 used (Table 4), which is the most common way to parameterize AOM in reactive transport models (Regnier et al.,

267 2011) and allows the use of largely unknown half-saturation constants, in particular for the putative Fe-AOM

268 pathway, to be avoided. Although Mn-oxides have also been suggested to be a thermodynamically favorable electron

269 acceptor for AOM (Beal et al., 2009), they were not included in the model because of the relatively low Mn

270 concentrations (~ 15 μmol g^{-1} for total sedimentary Mn and < 30 μM for dissolved Mn^{2+}; Supplementary Fig. S2 and

271 S3) when compared to Fe and the likely presence of most of the Mn in the form of Mn-carbonates.

272 The P forms included in the model are pore water HPO_4^{2-}, authigenic Ca-P, organic P and detrital P, as well as Fe-

273 bound P, i.e. P associated with Fe oxides and P in vivianite (Table 2). The removal of dissolved Fe^{2+} through

274 formation of the Fe minerals FeS, siderite ($FeCO_3$) and vivianite is also included in the model (Table 3). Mass

275 balances for all chemical species included in the model are given in Supplementary Table S2.

276 The boundary conditions at the sediment surface were specified as time-dependent depositional fluxes for the

277 particulate components and as fixed bottom water concentrations for the dissolved species, while a zero gradient

278 boundary condition was set for all chemical species at the base of the model domain (Fig. 2 and Supplementary

279 Table S3). To avoid potential interferences of the lower boundary conditions with the model results in the upper

280 sediments (see Supplementary Fig. S6), the model depth was set to 3000 cm and divided into 500 grid cells. The

281 thickness of the upper layer was set at 1 cm, and the thickness of the following grid layers increased exponentially to

282 ~ 6 cm at 800 cm depth and to ~18 cm at 3000 cm depth. In this paper, only the upper 800 cm are shown. However,

283 all profiles extending over the full depth range are provided in the Supplementary Information file (Supplementary

8

284 Fig. S5 and Fig. S7). The model code was written in R using the marelac geochemical dataset package (Soetaert et

285 al., 2010) and the ReacTran package (Soetaert and Meysman, 2012) to calculate the transport in porous media. The

286 set of ordinary differential equations was subsequently solved numerically with the lsoda integrator algorithm

287 (Hindmarsh, 1983; Petzoldt, 1983)

2.4.2 Transient scenario

289 The model applied in this study simulates the sediment deposition during the last 25000 years. A constant mass

290 accumulation rate of 0.06 g cm^{-2} yr^{-1} over the Holocene was assumed. In order to reduce the computing time for the

291 freshwater period, a higher mass accumulation rate of 1 g cm^{-2} yr^{-1} was used between 25000 and 10000 years before

292 present (B.P.) and all fluxes were corrected accordingly (i.e. multiplied with a factor of 16.67). Inflow of

293 Mediterranean saltwater into the Black Sea basin was modelled assuming an initial salinity of 1 for the freshwater

294 lake and a linear increase to a salinity of 22 between 8500 and 1500 years B.P. (Fig. 2). Such a salinization scenario

295 results in a good fit to the chloride (Cl^-) profile (Fig. 3) and compares well with a previous salinity reconstruction

296 suggesting a linear increase in salinity of 1 to 22 between 9000 ± 500 years B.P. and 2000 ± 500 years B.P. (Soulet et

297 al., 2010). Bottom water salinity was converted to Cl^- and SO_4^{2-} using the molecular weights and seawater density

298 derived from the marelac geochemical dataset package (Soetaert et al., 2010) (Supplementary Table S1). A shift

299 from oxic towards euxinic conditions around 7600 years B.P., with a peak in organic matter loading around 5300

300 years B.P. and constant elevated organic matter fluxes after 2700 years B.P. was assumed, following a recent study

301 comprising data from seven sediment cores collected from the Black Sea (Eckert et al., 2013) (Fig. 2). In addition,

302 the input of organic matter was assumed to increase again in the last century, reflecting anthropogenic eutrophication

303 of waters on the adjacent continental shelf as previously reported (Capet et al., 2013; Kemp et al., 2009). With the

304 development of anoxic and sulfidic bottom-water conditions, depositional fluxes of reactive Fe oxides were assumed

305 to be zero (Fig. 2). In contrast, fluxes of Fe sulfides are high under euxinic conditions and dominated by FeS_2.

3 Results

3.1 Pore water profiles

308 Pore water profiles of SO_4^{2-} show a linear decrease from ~ 17 mM at the sediment water interface to a depth of ~ 230

309 cm at both sites, below which CH_4 starts to accumulate in the pore water (Fig. 3). Bubble formation and degassing of

310 CH_4 during gravity coring could not be avoided because of the high concentrations of CH_4 in the limnic deposits

311 above the saturation of ca 1.3 mM CH_4 at atmospheric pressure (calculated for a salinity of 22 and a temperature of

312 25 °C using the algorithm from Mogollón et al. (2013)). Observations of increased outgassing with depth during

313 coring suggest that the low CH_4 concentrations in the deeper sediments at both sites are due to enhanced outgassing

314 with increasing levels of CH_4. Pore water profiles of NH_4^+ at both sites are similar and concentrations increase to ~ 3

315 mM at depth, suggesting that actual CH_4 concentrations at both sites could be comparable. Most of the CH_4 values

316 thus only indicate the presence or absence of CH_4 and are not a quantitative measure (indicated as open diamonds in

317 Fig. 4). Note that the upper ~ 300 cm of sediment at site 5 are likely less affected by CH_4 outgassing. Modeled pore

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318   water concentrations of CH_4 on the other hand, show a steep increase below the SMTZ, comparable to the gradient

319   observed at site 5, and build up to concentrations of ~ 15 mM at depth (Supplementary Fig. S5).

320   The SMTZ is located around 230 cm depth in the sediment and is characterized by the removal of both pore water

321   SO_4^{2-} and dissolved CH_4. In this zone, SO_4-AOM drives the production of dissolved sulfide, DIC and alkalinity

322   (Supplementary Fig. S5) and diffusion of these pore water constituents away from the SMTZ (Fig. 3). Below the

323   sulfide diffusion front, Fe^{2+} accumulates in the pore water. Dissolved HPO_4^{2-} reaches a maximum around the depth

324   where sulfide levels drop below the detection limit of 1 µmol L^{-1}, followed by a steep decrease with depth.

325   Concentrations of pore water Mn^{2+} are more than an order of magnitude lower than those of dissolved Fe^{2+}, and

326   decrease from the sediment surface until ~ 200 cm depth, below which they slightly increase again (Supplementary

327   Fig. S5).

328   The smooth pore water profiles of $\delta^{13}C$-CH_4 and δD-CH_4 suggest that the isotopic composition of pore water CH_4

329   (available for site 5 only) is less affected by the CH_4 loss and reveals a biological origin in the limnic deposits, with

330   hydrogenotrophic carbonate reduction, i.e. microbial reduction of CO_2 to CH_4 as the main methanogenic pathway for

331   the range of CH_4 isotope ratios observed in these sediments (Fig. 4) (Whiticar, 1999). Upward diffusing CH_4 shows a

332   gradual depletion in $\delta^{13}C$-CH_4 from ~ -74 ‰ at depth to ~ -96 ‰ around the SMTZ, followed by subsequent

333   progressive ^{13}C enrichment towards the sediment surface. δD-CH_4 shows a small enrichment from -226 ‰ at depth

334   to ~ -208 ‰ at the SMTZ and a strong shift towards high δD-CH_4 values of up to ~ 113 ‰.

335   **3.2   Solid phase profiles**

336   A pronounced excursion in sedimentary C_{org} at site 4 in combination with a shift from gray clay deposits to micro-

337   laminated black sediments indicates that the lake-marine transition, i.e. the transition between the marine sapropel

338   Unit II and the deep limnic sediments of Unit III (Arthur and Dean, 1998; Degens and Ross, 1974), is located around

339   a sediment depth of ~ 90 cm at site 4 (Fig. 5). At site 5, Unit I and Unit II were lost due to a turbidite, explaining the

340   low concentrations of C_{org} in the upper sediments.

341   Concentrations of solid S increase with decreasing depth from 20 µmol g^{-1} below 300 cm (sulfidization front) to ~

342   400 µmol g^{-1} in the upper 100 cm at both sites and are dominated by FeS_2 (Fig. 5). Iron oxides show a decrease from

343   ~ 100 µmol g^{-1} at depth to ~ 50 µmol g^{-1} in the sediments between 100 – 300 cm and a further decrease to ~ 10 µmol

344   g^{-1} closer to the sediment surface. Amorphous Fe oxides (Fe_{ox1}) and more crystalline oxides (Fe_{ox2}) both account for

345   half the total amount of Fe oxides, with a small contribution of recalcitrant oxides (Fe_{mag}) (Supplementary Fig. S4).

346   The results from the two different Fe extractions applied in this study (Table 1) generally compare well

347   (Supplementary Fig. S4). Note, however, that the Fe oxides in Fig. 5 represent the results from the extraction after

348   Poulton and Canfield (2005). Results from the Fe extractions modified from Claff et al. (2010) are provided in the

349   Supplementary Information only. Sedimentary Mn content is relatively low at all three sites, ranging from ~ 5-10

350   µmol g^{-1} in the marine sediments to ~ 15 µmol g^{-1} in the deep limnic deposits of Unit III (Supplementary Fig. S4).

351   Sediments below the sulfidization front are characterized by high Fe carbonate contents of ~ 100 µmol g^{-1}. The sharp

352   depletion in Fe carbonate around the sulfidization front could only be reproduced in the model by assuming Fe

353 carbonate dissolution by dissolved sulfide (Table 3). These results suggest a conversion of reactive Fe from

354 carbonate toward sulfide phases in the presence of abundant dissolved sulfide.

355 Units I and II show high concentrations of organic P, which accounts for ~ 30 % of total P in these sediments (Fig.

356 5). Low organic P and high concentrations of detrital P in the upper sediments at site 5 are due to the turbidite. The

357 limnic deposits of Unit III are generally depleted in organic P (< 6 % of total P) and enriched in detrital P.

358 Authigenic Ca-P shows little variation in the sediments of Unit III, accounting for ~ 20 to 30 % of total P at the two

359 sites. The contribution of Fe-associated P, on the other hand, is reduced in the limnic deposits of Unit III exposed to

360 the downward diffusing sulfide (~ 20 %) when compared to the sediments below the sulfidization front (~ 30 %).

361 Concentrations of exchangeable P are < 2 μmol g^{-1} for sediments above the SMTZ and < 1 μmol g^{-1} for sediments at

362 depth (data not shown).

363 Modeled SO_4^{2-} reduction rates show two distinct peaks of ~ 200 pmol SO_4^{2-} cm^{-3} d^{-1} in the sediments of Unit II and

364 in the sediments around the SMTZ (Fig. 6). Rates of CH_4 production are highest (~ 30 pmol CH_4 cm^{-3} d^{-1}) in the

365 organic-rich marine deposits of Unit II and in the limnic deposits below the SMTZ. The sediments around the SMTZ

366 are further characterized by high rates of SO_4-AOM (~ 200 pmol cm^{-3} d^{-1}), whereas sediments directly below the

367 sulfidization front show enhanced rates of S_0 disproportionation (~ 15 pmol cm^{-3} d^{-1}). Organoclastic SO_4^{2-} reduction

368 provides the main source for pore water sulfide in the organic-rich marine deposits, while SO_4-AOM and S_0

369 disproportionation are the dominant sources of dissolved sulfide in sediments around the SMTZ and directly below

370 the sulfidization front, respectively. Rates of Fe-AOM are generally low (< 0.04 pmol CH_4 cm^{-3} d^{-1}) and restricted to

371 the limnic deposits only.

372 **3.3   Temporal evolution**

373 The temporal evolution in pore water and solid phase constituents illustrates the impact of the lake-marine transition

374 on the sediment geochemistry (Fig. 7). Concentrations of pore water Cl$^-$ and SO_4^{2-} increase with the intrusion of

375 marine Mediterranean Sea waters, accompanied by a decrease in dissolved CH_4 and accumulation of pore water

376 sulfide in the shallower sediments. Dissolved Fe^{2+} becomes restricted to non-sulfidic pore waters at depth, while

377 HPO_4^{2-} and solid S start to accumulate in the presence of dissolved sulfide. Iron oxides decrease in the surface

378 sediments as well as in the sediments at depth. Vivianite, on the other hand, becomes increasingly enriched in

379 sediments below the downward diffusing sulfide front.

380 **4.   Discussion**

381 **4.1 Coupled S, CH_4 and Fe dynamics**

382 **4.1.1 Organoclastic SO_4^{2-} reduction**

383 Model-derived areal rates of total SO_4^{2-} reduction of ~ 0.24 mmol SO_4^{2-} m^{-2} d^{-1} (Table 6), i.e. the total amount of

384 SO_4^{2-} reduced per square meter of sea floor, compare well with calculated diffusive fluxes of SO_4^{2-} into the sediment

385 at sites 4 and 5 (~ 0.21 and 0.20 mmol SO_4^{2-} m^{-2} d^{-1}, respectively) and are in good agreement with previous SO_4^{2-} flux

386 estimates of 0.17 to 0.28 mmol SO_4^{2-} m^{-2} d^{-1} for sediments of the western Black Sea (Jørgensen et al., 2001). In the

11

387 model, organoclastic SO_4^{2-} reduction accounts for > 65 % of total organic matter degradation in the upper 800 cm of
388 sediment, supporting previous conclusions that SO_4^{2-} reduction represents the dominant mineralization process of
389 organic matter in sediments below the chemocline (Jørgensen et al., 2001; Thamdrup et al., 2000). The remaining <
390 25 % of organic matter remineralization is due to methanogenesis. The relative contribution of SRR to organic
391 matter remineralization, however, likely is significantly higher when taking into account the high SRR in the
392 uppermost sediment layers (Jørgensen et al., 2001), which are not captured by our model.

393 The depth-dependent rate profile of SO_4^{2-} reduction shows two distinct peaks of $\sim$ 70 and 230 pmol SO_4^{2-} cm^{-3} d^{-1}
394 associated with organoclastic SO_4^{2-} reduction in the organic matter rich marine deposits of Unit I and Unit II. These
395 rates are at the low end of reported values from Black Sea sediments (0.1 - 20 nmol cm^{-3} d^{-1}) (Holmkvist et al.,
396 2011b; Jørgensen et al., 2001, 2004; Knab et al., 2009; Leloup et al., 2007). Our model further demonstrates that the
397 two SRR peaks in the sediments of Unit I and Unit II are not reflected in the pore water profile of SO_4^{2-}. This finding
398 is in line with earlier work showing that the SO_4^{2-} gradient in Black Sea sediments is primarily affected by SO_4-
399 AOM in the SMTZ (Jørgensen et al., 2001). The shorter diffusion distance (the diffusion time to $\sim$ 200 cm is about 5
400 times longer than to $\sim$ 90 cm, i.e. $\sim$ 300 years vs. $\sim$ 60 years) and higher porosity in Unit I and II (Supplementary Fig.
401 S1) both dampen the effect of SO_4^{2-} reduction in the marine deposits on the SO_4^{2-} profile (see also Jørgensen et al.,
402 (2001)). Thus, our results support previous conclusions that SRR estimates based on pore water profiles of SO_4^{2-} (i.e.
403 net SO_4^{2-} consumption) alone may underestimate the actual SO_4^{2-} turnover (i.e. gross SO_4^{2-} reduction) in marine
404 sediments (Jørgensen, 1978; Jørgensen et al., 2001).

405 **4.1.2 SO_4-AOM**

406 Pore water profiles of SO_4^{2-}, CH_4, sulfide and DIC reveal a distinct SMTZ around 230 cm depth at both sites, where
407 SO_4-AOM with upward diffusing CH_4 results in the concomitant removal of pore water SO_4^{2-} and CH_4 and in the
408 accumulation of dissolved sulfide and DIC in the pore waters of these sediments (Fig. 3). The depth of the SMTZ
409 and the steep increase in CH_4 to > 3 mM below the SMTZ found in this study are consistent with earlier observations
410 in sediments of the western Black Sea (Henkel et al., 2012; Holmkvist et al., 2011b; Jørgensen et al., 2001, 2004;
411 Knab et al., 2009; Leloup et al., 2007). The location of the SMTZ, however, has progressed downwards in the last ca.
412 9000 years, following the inflow of SO_4^{2-}-rich salt water into the Black Sea basin (Fig. 7) (see also Henkel et al.,
413 (2012)).

414 Calculated diffusive fluxes of SO_4^{2-} and CH_4 to the SMTZ ($\sim$ 0.2 mmol SO_4^{2-} m^{-2} d^{-1} and 0.08 mmol CH_4 m^{-2} d^{-1}) and
415 modelled areal rates of SO_4-AOM ($\sim$ 0.16 mmol m^{-2} d^{-1}) suggest that AOM accounts for $\sim$ 40 to 70 % of the total
416 SO_4^{2-} reduction in these sediments, with the remaining $\sim$ 30 to 60 % attributed to organoclastic SO_4^{2-} reduction. Such
417 a high contribution of AOM exceeds the range of previous estimates that included experimentally measured SRR
418 close to the sediment surface ($\sim$ 7 to 18 %) (Jørgensen et al., 2001, 2004). Around the SMTZ, SO_4-AOM is
419 responsible for $\sim$ 97 % of the total SO_4^{2-} reduction (Fig. 6 and Table 6), thus enhancing the downward diffusive flux
420 of sulfide into the deep limnic deposits of Unit III. Our model suggests that without this additional source of sulfide
421 through SO_4-AOM, the sulfidization front would currently be located around 150 cm depth in the sediment (Fig. 8).

12

422   The consumption of upward diffusing CH_4 by SO_4^{2-}-driven AOM leads to a progressive enrichment of ^{13}C and D in

423   the residual CH_4 above the SMTZ (Fig. 4) due to the preferential oxidation of isotopically light CH_4 during SO_4-

424   AOM (Alperin et al., 1988; Martens et al., 1999; Whiticar, 1999). Interestingly, pore water CH_4 above the SMTZ

425   shows unusually high δD-CH_4 values that fall outside of the common range observed for pore water δD-CH_4 (e.g.

426   Whiticar et al., 1999). Future studies, however, are needed to resolve the cause of the strong D-enrichment of

427   dissolved CH_4 above the SMTZ in Black Sea sediments.

428   Modeled concentrations of CH_4 indicate that the measurements above the sulfidization front at site 5 are likely less

429   affected by outgassing during core recovery (Fig. 4) and can thus be used to derive kinetic isotope fractionation

430   factors for carbon (ε_C) and hydrogen (ε_H) associated with SO_4-AOM at the SMTZ using the Rayleigh distillation

431   function (Crowe et al., 2011; Egger et al., 2015b; Rayleigh, 1896; Whiticar, 1999). ==Corresponding estimates for ε_C of==

432   ==$\sim$ 8 ‰ (R^2 = 0.972) and ε_H of $\sim$ 58 ‰ (R^2 = 0.982) are at the lower end of previously documented values in marine==

433   ==and brackish-marine environments (8-38 ‰ for ε_C and 100-324 ‰ for ε_H) (Alperin et al., 1988; Egger et al., 2015b;==

434   ==Holler et al., 2009; Martens et al., 1999; Reeburgh, 2007). Note, however, that the Rayleigh distillation function only==

435   ==applies to closed systems (Rayleigh, 1896). These estimates should therefore be interpreted as an approximation, as==

436   ==more accurate estimates would require isotope modeling (e.g. Alperin et al., 1988).==

437   At the base of the SMTZ, upward diffusing CH_4 reveals an initial depletion in $\delta^{13}C$-CH_4 (Fig. 4). Such a shift to [13]C-

438   depleted CH_4 together with a decrease in its concentration could indicate an enzyme-mediated equilibrium C isotope

439   exchange during SO_4-AOM at low SO_4^{2-} concentrations (< 0.5 mM) (Holler et al., 2012; Yoshinaga et al., 2014). The

440   effect of such mechanisms on deuterated CH_4 is likely limited.

441   **4.1.3 Cryptic S cycling**

442   Earlier studies showed evidence for ongoing SO_4^{2-} reduction (< 1 nmol cm^{-3} d^{-1}) within the SO_4^{2-}-depleted (< 0.5

443   mM) limnic deposits below the SMTZ in sediments of the Black Sea (Holmkvist et al., 2011b; Knab et al., 2009;

444   Leloup et al., 2007), Baltic Sea (Holmkvist et al., 2011a, 2014; Leloup et al., 2009) and Alaskan Beaufort Sea

445   (Treude et al., 2014) likely driven by SO_4^{2-} production from re-oxidation of dissolved sulfide with oxidized Fe

446   minerals. In this mechanism, Fe oxides enhance the recycling of sulfide to SO_4^{2-} in a cryptic S cycle (Holmkvist et

447   al., 2011a; Treude et al., 2014) thereby fueling SO_4^{2-}-driven AOM in Fe oxide-rich sediments. In this cryptic S cycle,

448   dissolved sulfide is oxidized to zero-valent sulfur (S_0), a key intermediate in AOM, which is subsequently

449   disproportionated to SO_4^{2-} and sulfide by associated Deltaproteobacteria (Holmkvist et al., 2011a; Milucka et al.,

450   2012; Sivan et al., 2014; Treude et al., 2014). The additional SO_4^{2-}, produced during S_0 disproportion, may then

451   be re-used by the methanotrophic archaea as an electron acceptor for SO_4-AOM (Milucka et al., 2012).

452   Our model results suggest slow rates of ongoing SO_4^{2-} reduction of < 0.2 nmol cm^{-3} d^{-1} (Fig. 6) within the limnic

453   deposits below the SMTZ exposed to dissolved sulfide (Table 6), in line with estimated SRR based on $^{35}SO_4^{2-}$

454   incubation experiments with Black Sea sediments from below the SMTZ of $\sim$ 0.1-0.5 nmol cm^{-3} d^{-1} (Knab et al.,

455   2009; Leloup et al., 2007). Below the sulfidization front, SRR show a distinct peak of $\sim$ 5 pmol cm^{-3} d^{-1}. Active SO_4^{2-}

456   reduction in these SO_4^{2-}-depleted sediments requires deep SO_4^{2-} formation to maintain low net rates of SO_4^{2-}

457   reduction. In the model, S_0 disproportionation is the only potential source of pore water SO_4^{2-} at depth (Table 3).

13

458   Formation of S_0, in turn, occurs exclusively by oxidation of dissolved sulfide during the reductive dissolution of Fe

459   oxides, explaining the distinct S_0 disproportionation peak of ~ 15 pmol cm^{-3} d^{-1} around the sulfidization front (Fig. 6).

460   Thus, based on the model assumptions, we conclude that Fe oxides increase the transformation of sulfide to SO_4^{2-} via

461   formation and subsequent disproportionation of S_0 in these sediments, as suggested previously (Holmkvist et al.,

462   2011b; Knab et al., 2009; Leloup et al., 2007). Such recycling of SO_4^{2-} stimulates slow rates of SO_4-AOM in the

463   sediments below the SMTZ, explaining the low background rates of SO_4^{2-} reduction in the SO_4^{2-}-depleted limnic

464   deposits. These results support recent findings of indirect Fe stimulated SO_4^{2-} driven AOM in laboratory experiments

465   (Sivan et al., 2014), and highlight that Fe oxides could play a significant role as stimulators of AOM and S recycling

466   in natural environments.

4.2 Fe reduction below the sulfidization front

467

468   Below the sulfidization front, Fe^{2+} starts to accumulate in the pore water (Fig. 3). Although previous studies have

469   also reported an increase of dissolved Fe^{2+} around the depth where sulfide levels drop below the detection limit

470   (Holmkvist et al., 2011b; Jørgensen et al., 2004; Knab et al., 2009), the source of this pore water Fe^{2+} has remained

471   unknown. One possible explanation could be that the elevated Fe^{2+} concentrations at depth represent remnant Fe^{2+}

472   accumulated during the Black Sea "Lake" phase (Knab et al., 2009). In our model, Fe^{2+} shows a broad peak of ~ 300

473   µM until ~ 300 cm depth in the sediment during the initial Lake phase, assuming organoclastic Fe reduction as the

474   only Fe reduction pathway (data not shown). The removal of Fe^{2+} through authigenic formation of reduced Fe(II)

475   minerals, however, prevents the accumulation of substantial amounts of Fe^{2+} in the pore water below ~ 300 cm

476   sediment depth during the Lake phase (Fig. 8). We therefore conclude that the high concentrations of dissolved Fe^{2+}

477   below the sulfidization front are most likely indicative of active Fe reduction in these sediments.

4.2.1 Fe reduction through cryptic S cycling

478

479   In theory, a cryptic S cycle, as described in section 4.1.3, could result in net accumulation of dissolved Fe^{2+} if the

480   sulfide consumption from reaction with ferric Fe outweighs the production of sulfide from SO_4^{2-} reduction. Modeled

481   Fe^{2+} indeed shows a peak of < 100 µM directly below the sulfidization front, assuming no active Fe reduction in the

482   limnic deposits (Fig. 8). Model simulations further indicate that, based on the reaction network used in this study

483   (Table 3), cryptic S cycling could result in a build up of pore water Fe^{2+} of ~ 300 µM at depth in the sediment

484   provided there was no precipitation of reduced Fe(II) minerals (Supplementary Fig S2). However, concentrations of

485   dissolved Fe^{2+} are too low compared to the measurements and confined to sediments between $300 - 400$ cm depths

486   only. The diagenetic model developed in this study therefore suggests that cryptic S cycling is unlikely to explain the

487   high concentrations (~ 800 µM) of dissolved Fe^{2+} observed in the deep limnic deposits.

4.2.2 Organoclastic Fe reduction

488

489   In the model, the reduction of Fe oxides coupled to organic matter degradation only occurs with the easily reducible

490   α phase in order to allow for the burial of the more crystalline β phase at depth (Table 3). Since the α phase is

491   efficiently reduced in the upper few centimeters during organoclastic Fe reduction, no easily reducible Fe oxides are

14

492   being buried into the deep sediments in the diagenetic model. Organoclastic Fe reduction therefore does not occur

493   within the modeled deep limnic deposits that exclusively contain more crystalline (β) and refractory (γ) Fe oxides

494   (Fig. 5). Instead, we assume that CH_4 represents a plausible electron donor for the reduction of more crystalline Fe

495   oxides in the organic-poor deep sediments with relatively refractory old organic matter (< 0.8 wt %). The exclusion

496   of organoclastic Fe reduction at depth in the model provides an estimate of an upper constraint on the potential

497   importance of Fe-AOM in Black Sea sediments. As a result of this assumption, however, the model results cannot be

498   used to conclude whether Fe-AOM is more likely than organoclastic Fe reduction.

499   An increasing body of geochemical evidence and laboratory incubation experiments shows that Fe-AOM might be

500   occurring in a variety of different aquatic environments (Amos et al., 2012; Beal et al., 2009; Crowe et al., 2011;

501   Egger et al., 2015b; Riedinger et al., 2014; Scheller et al., 2016; Segarra et al., 2013; Sivan et al., 2011; Wankel et

502   al., 2012). In addition, several studies have shown that Fe-reducing microorganisms are able to outcompete

503   methanogens for common substrates (e.g. acetate and H_2), thus reducing the concentrations of these common

504   primary electron donors to levels that are too low for methanogens to grow (Achtnich et al., 1995; Lovley and

505   Phillips, 1987; Lovley et al., 1989). These results, together with the observed capability of methanogens to switch

506   from CH_4 production to Fe reduction (Bodegom et al., 2004; Bond and Lovley, 2002; Liu et al., 2011; Reiche et al.,

507   2008; Sivan et al., 2016; Vargas et al., 1998) led to the common conclusion that Fe oxides exert a suppressive effect

508   on methanogenesis. Ongoing CH_4 production in the Fe oxide-rich limnic deposits, as deduced from the isotopic

509   composition of pore water CH_4 (Fig. 4) could then indicate limited organoclastic Fe reduction in these sediments.

510   However, there is increasing evidence that (semi)conductive crystalline Fe oxides (e.g. hematite and magnetite) can,

511   in fact, stimulate concurrent methanogenesis and organoclastic Fe reduction through direct interspecies electron

512   transfer (DIET), by serving as electron conduits among syntrophic CH_4-producing organisms at rates that are

513   substantially higher than those for interspecies electron transfer by H_2 (Cruz Viggi et al., 2014; Kato et al., 2012; Li

514   et al., 2014; Zhou et al., 2014; Zhuang et al., 2015). The inhibitory effect of Fe reduction on methanogenesis thus

515   appears to be lower for crystalline Fe oxides such as hematite and magnetite, which are less bioavailable to Fe-

516   reducing organisms than poorly crystalline (amorphous) Fe oxides (e.g. ferrihydrite and lepidocrocite) (Lovley,

517   1991; Qu et al., 2004; Zhuang et al., 2015). These findings indicate that the crystallinity and conductivity of Fe

518   oxides may play a key role in determining whether methanogenesis is stimulated or suppressed in Fe oxide-rich

519   environments. In addition, the presence of methanogens that are able to rapidly switch between methanogenesis and

520   reduction of Fe oxides could also result in a reactivation of less reactive Fe oxides that were not reduced during

521   initial organoclastic Fe reduction in the deep methanogenic zone as suggested by Sivan et al. (2016). Thus, the deep

522   limnic sediments may be characterized by a complex interplay of concurrent methanogenesis, Fe oxide reduction and

523   methanotrophy, i.e. AOM.

524   **4.2.3 Fe-AOM**

525   Our model results indicate that Fe-AOM could also be a possible mechanism explaining the buildup of pore water

526   Fe^{2+} below the sulfidization front. Previous studies have shown that in systems where production and oxidation of

527   CH_4 take place concurrently, methanogenesis might conceal the isotopic signature of AOM (Egger et al., 2015b;

15

528 Seifert et al., 2006; Whiticar, 1999). Thus, unlike SO_4-AOM, Fe-dependent AOM likely only has little effect on the
529 isotopic composition of pore water CH_4 due to the removal of small amounts of CH_4 in sediments with ongoing
530 methanogenesis. This might explain why pore water CH_4 does not show enrichment in both heavy isotopes below the
531 sulfidization front as would be expected if Fe-AOM would occur, but rather indicates antipathetic changes, i.e.
532 depletion in ^{13}C-CH_4 and enrichment in D-CH_4, usually attributed to CH_4 production from carbonate reduction
533 (Chanton et al., 2005; Whiticar, 1999).

534 Model derived rates for Fe-AOM of ~ 0.04 pmol cm^{-3} d^{-1} (Fig. 6) are significantly lower than potential Fe-AOM
535 rates of ~ 4 nmol cm^{-3} d^{-1} estimated from laboratory incubation studies (Egger et al., 2015b; Segarra et al., 2013;
536 Sivan et al., 2011) with brackish and limnic sediment samples. This large deviation is likely due to an overestimation
537 of Fe-AOM rates derived from stimulated microbial communities under laboratory conditions using freshly
538 synthesized and thus easily bioavailable Fe oxides when compared to in-situ conditions.

539 In the upper 800 cm of sediment, Fe-AOM accounts for < 1 % of total CH_4 oxidation, with the remaining > 99 %
540 attributed to SO_4-AOM (Table 6; see also Supplementary Fig. S2). However, while high rates of SO_4-AOM are
541 mainly restricted to the SMTZ, Fe-AOM might occur over a deep methanogenic zone, reaching far down into the
542 sediment. To accurately assess the contribution of Fe-AOM to the total CH_4 consumption in Black Sea sediments,
543 additional knowledge about the vertical expansion of the Fe oxide-rich limnic sediments deposited during the Blake
544 Sea "Lake" phase would be required.

545 **4.3 Impact of S-Fe-CH_4 dynamics on sedimentary P diagenesis**

546 Degradation of organic matter and the subsequent release of HPO_4^{2-} to the pore water during early diagenesis
547 typically results in a sink-switching from organic P to authigenic P-bearing phases such as Ca phosphates (Filippelli,
548 1997; Ruttenberg and Berner, 1993; Slomp et al., 1996b), Mn-Ca carbonates (Jilbert and Slomp, 2013; Mort et al.,
549 2010; Suess, 1979) or reduced Fe phosphates (Burns, 1997; Jilbert and Slomp, 2013; Martens et al., 1978; März et
550 al., 2008). Reductive dissolution of Fe oxides by dissolved sulfide and the following liberation of HPO_4^{2-} may also
551 contribute to the buildup of pore water HPO_4^{2-} (Burns, 1997; Egger et al., 2015a; März et al., 2008; Schulz et al.,
552 1994). Thus, the downward sulfidization ultimately results in the accumulation of dissolved HPO_4^{2-} in the pore water
553 as the sulfidization front moves downward into the limnic deposits (Fig. 7).

554 The pore water profile of HPO_4^{2-} (Fig. 3) indicates the presence of a sink for HPO_4^{2-} below the sulfidization front
555 and, to a lesser extent, in the sulfidic sediments around the SMTZ, likely unrelated to Ca-P authigenesis (Fig. 5).
556 Such a sink for HPO_4^{2-} below sulfidic sediments has been observed previously (Burns, 1997; Egger et al., 2015a;
557 März et al., 2008; Schulz et al., 1994; Slomp et al., 2013) and shown to be most likely the result of vivianite
558 formation (Egger et al., 2015a; Hsu et al., 2014; März et al., 2008). Abundant dissolved Fe^{2+} and a peak in Fe-
559 associated P below the sulfidization front observed in this study (Fig. 3 and Fig. 5) suggest that vivianite authigenesis
560 might also be occurring in the limnic deposits below the sulfidzation front in Black Sea sediments.

561 Assuming that vivianite formation represents the only sink for pore water HPO_4^{2-} results in a good fit between the
562 modeled and measured pore water profile of HPO_4^{2-} below the sulfidization front (Fig. 3). Modeled vivianite
563 formation accounts for up to 70 % of total Fe-associated P directly below the sulfidization front. However, the model

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564　underestimates the sharp peak in Fe-associated P directly below the sulfidization front, suggesting that modeled

565　vivianite formation likely underestimates the actual contribution of vivianite in these sediments. In the limnic

566　deposits not yet impacted by the downward sulfidization, modeled vivianite accounts for ~ 20 – 30 % of total Fe-

567　associated P. From this, we estimate that vivianite may be responsible for > 20 % of total P burial directly below the

568　sulfidization front and for ~ 10 % of total P burial in the deep limnic deposits at depth.

569　Running the model without Fe-AOM and thus without Fe reduction at depth results in modeled pore water HPO_4^{2-}

570　concentrations of up to ~ 350 μM at depth in the sediment (Fig. 8). This suggests that Fe-AOM can promote

571　conditions that allow sequestration of a significant proportion of P as vivianite in the limnic deposits below the

572　sulfidization front. Consistent with earlier findings, Fe-AOM likely only accounts for a small fraction of total CH_4

573　oxidation, but may substantially impact the biogeochemical cycling of sedimentary P (Egger et al., 2015a, 2015b;

574　Rooze et al., 2016).

575　The deviation between the modeled and measured profiles of HPO_4^{2-} and Fe-associated P in the upper 300 cm of

576　sediment (Fig. 3 and Fig. 5) could indicate apatite authigenesis (Dijkstra et al., 2014) or the formation of vivianite in

577　microenvironments as previously suggested for sulfidic sediments (Dijkstra et al., 2014; Jilbert and Slomp, 2013).

578　For example, *Deltaproteobacteria*, known to be involved in SO_4-AOM, have been shown to accumulate Fe- and P-

579　rich inclusions in their cells (Milucka et al., 2012). They may therefore provide a potential explanation for the

580　occurrence of Fe-associated P in sulfidic sediments (Dijkstra et al., 2014; Jilbert and Slomp, 2013). However, such

581　microenvironments are not captured in our model.

582　In the diagenetic model, vivianite undergoes dissolution if sulfide is present in the pore waters (Table 3). Sulfide-

583　induced vivianite dissolution significantly improved the model fit to the measured HPO_4^2 and sulfide data. With the

584　downward migration of dissolved sulfide, modeled vivianite becomes increasingly enriched below the sulfidization

585　front (Fig. 7). Thus, similar to the sulfidization front, a downward diffusive vivianite front may exist in sedimentary

586　systems experiencing downward sulfidzation.

587　In summary, the enhanced downward sulfidization driven by SO_4-AOM leads to dissolution of Fe oxide-bound P in

588　the lake deposits. Below the sulfidization front, downward diffusing HPO_4^{2-} is bound again in authigenic vivianite

589　due to high concentrations of dissolved Fe^{2+} at depth in the sediment generated by ongoing Fe oxide reduction. As a

590　result, trends in total P with depth are significantly altered, showing an accumulation in total P below the

591　sulfidization front unrelated to changes in organic matter deposition and enhanced sedimentary P burial during

592　deposition.

593　**5.　　　Conclusions**

594　In the Black Sea, the shift from a freshwater lake to a marine system and subsequent downward diffusion of marine

595　SO_4^{2-} into the CH_4-bearing lake sediments results in a multitude of diagenetic reactions around the SMTZ (Fig. 9).

596　The diagenetic model developed in this study shows that SO_4-AOM within the SMTZ significantly enhances the

597　downward diffusive flux of sulfide into the deep limnic deposits, forming a distinct diagenetic sulfidization front

598　around 300 cm depth in the sediment. Our results indicate that without this additional source of dissolved sulfide in

599　the SMTZ, the current sulfidization front would be located around a depth of 150 cm. During the downward

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600   sulfidization, Fe oxides, Fe carbonates and vivianite are converted to Fe sulfide phases, leading to an enrichment in

601   solid phase S contents and the release of HPO_4^{2-} to the pore water. Our results further support the hypothesis that part

602   of the downward migrating sulfide is re-oxidized to SO_4^{2-} upon reaction with ferric Fe minerals, fueling a cryptic S

603   cycle and thus stimulating slow rates ($\sim$ 1-100 pmol cm^{-3} d^{-1}) of SO_4-AOM in the SO_4^{2-}-depleted limnic deposits

604   below the SMTZ (Holmkvist et al., 2011a, 2011b; Knab et al., 2009; Leloup et al., 2007).

605   We propose that besides organoclastic Fe oxide reduction and reactivation of less reactive Fe oxides by

606   methanogens, AOM coupled to the reduction of Fe oxides may also be a possible mechanism explaining the high

607   concentrations of Fe^{2+} in the pore water below the sulfidization front. The buildup of dissolved Fe^{2+} at depth creates

608   conditions that allow sequestration of the downward diffusing HPO_4^{2-} as authigenic vivianite, resulting in an

609   accumulation of total P in these sediments.

610   The diagenetic processes described here reveal that AOM may strongly overprint burial records of Fe, S and P in

611   depositional marine systems subject to changes in organic matter loading or water column salinity such as coastal

612   environments (Egger et al., 2015a; Rooze et al., 2016), deep-sea fan sediments (März et al., 2008; Schulz et al.,

613   1994) and many high-latitude seas (Holmkvist et al., 2014; Treude et al., 2014). Interpreting these diagenetic patterns

614   as primary sedimentary signals may lead to incorrect reconstructions of environmental conditions during sediment

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Tables

918   **Table 1. Overview of the sequential P, Fe and S fractionation methods used in this study.**

Step and code	Extractant, extraction time	Target phase
P fractionation (modified from Ruttenberg (1992); done for site 4 (MC & GC) and site 5 (MC & GC))		
1 P_{exch}	1 M $MgCl_2$, pH 8, 0.5 h	Exchangeable P
2^a P_{Fe}	25 g L^{-1} Na dithionite, pH 7.5, 8 h	Fe-associated P
3^a $P_{authi\ Ca-P}$	Na acetate buffer, pH 4, 6 h	P in authigenic and biogenic Ca-P minerals and $CaCO_3$
4 P_{detr}	1 M HCl, 24 h	Detrital P
5 P_{org}	Ashing at 550 °C (2h), then 1 M HCl, 24 h	Organic P
Fe fractionation (after Poulton and Canfield (2005); done for site 4 (MC & GC) and site 5 (MC))		
1 Fe_{carb}	1 M Na acetate, pH 4.5, 24 h	Carbonate-associated Fe
2 Fe_{ox1}	1 M hydroxylamine-HCl, 24 h	Amorphous Fe oxides (ferrihydrite)
3 Fe_{ox2}	50 g L^{-1} Na dithionite, pH 4.8, 2 h	Crystalline Fe oxides (goethite, hematite)
4 Fe_{mag}	0.2 M ammonium oxalate/ 0.17 M oxalic acid, 2 h	Recalcitrant Fe oxides (mostly magnetite)
Fe fractionation (modified from Claff et al. (2010); done for site 4 (MC & GC) and site 5 (MC))		
1 $Fe(II)_{HCl}$	1 M HCl, 4 h	Labile Fe (carbonates, poorly ordered sulfides)
2 $Fe(III)_{HCl}$	1 M HCl, 4 h	Labile Fe (easily reducible oxides)
3 $Fe(III)_{CDB}$	50 g L^{-1} Na dithionite, pH 4.8, 4 h	Crystalline Fe oxides
4 Fe_{pyrite}	Concentrated HNO_3, 2 h	Pyrite (FeS_2)
S fractionation (after Burton et al. (2008); done for site 4 (MC) and site 5 (MC & GC))		
1 AVS	6 M HCl, 24 h	S in Fe monosulfides (FeS)
2 CRS	Acidic chromous chloride solution, 48 h	S in pyrite (FeS_2)

919   ^{a} These steps were followed by a wash step with 1 M $MgCl_2$, which was added to the corresponding step. MC = multicore and GC

920   = gravity core.

921

922   **Table 2. Chemical species included in the diagenetic model.**

Species	Notation	Type
Organic matter[a]	$OM^{\alpha,\beta,\gamma}$	Solid
Iron oxides[a]	$Fe(OH)_3^{\alpha,\beta,\gamma}$	Solid
Iron monosulfide	FeS	Solid
Pyrite	FeS_2	Solid
Siderite	$FeCO_3$	Solid
Elemental sulfur	S_0	Solid
Iron oxide-bound phosphorus	$Fe_{ox}P$	Solid
Vivianite	$Fe_3(PO_4)_2$	Solid
Organic phosphorus	P_{org}	Solid
Authigenic (Ca) phosphorus	CaP	Solid
Detrital phosphorus	$DetrP$	Solid
Chloride	Cl^-	Solute
Oxygen	O_2	Solute
Sulfate	SO_4^{2-}	Solute
Iron	Fe^{2+}	Solute
Hydrogen sulfide[b]	$\sum H_2S$	Solute
Methane	CH_4	Solute
Ammonium[b]	$\sum NH_4^+$	Solute
Nitrate	NO_3^-	Solute
Phosphate	$\sum HPO_4^{2-}$	Solute
Dissolved inorganic carbon	DIC	Solute

923   [a] There are three types of species: reactive (α), less reactive (β) and refractory (γ)

924   [b] $\sum$ denotes that all species of an acid are included

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29

Table 3. Reaction pathways and stoichiometries implemented in the diagenetic model.

Primary redox reactions*	
$OM^{\alpha,\beta} + aO_2 \rightarrow aCO_2 + bNH_4^+ + cH_3PO_4 + aH_2O$	R1
$OM^{\alpha,\beta} + \frac{4a}{5}NO_3^- + \frac{4a}{5}H^+ \rightarrow aCO_2 + bNH_4^+ + cH_3PO_4 + \frac{2a}{5}N_2 + \frac{7a}{5}H_2O$	R2
$OM^{\alpha,\beta} + 4aFe(OH)_3^{\alpha} + 4a\chi^{\alpha}Fe_{ox}P + 12aH^+ \rightarrow aCO_2 + bNH_4^+ + (c + 4a\chi^{\alpha})H_3PO_4 + 4aFe^{2+} + 13aH_2O$	R3
$OM^{\alpha,\beta} + \frac{a}{2}SO_4^{2-} + aH^+ \rightarrow aCO_2 + bNH_4^+ + cH_3PO_4 + \frac{a}{2}H_2S + aH_2O$	R4
$OM^{\alpha,\beta} \rightarrow \frac{a}{2}CO_2 + bNH_4^+ + cH_3PO_4 + \frac{a}{2}CH_4$	R5
$CO_2 + 4H_2 \rightarrow CH_4 + 2H_2O$	R6

Secondary redox and other reaction equations[†]	
$2O_2 + NH_4^+ + 2HCO_3^- \rightarrow NO_3^- + 2CO_2 + 3H_2O$	R7
$O_2 + 4Fe^{2+} + 8HCO_3^- + 2H_2O + 4\chi^{\alpha}H_2PO_4^- \rightarrow 4Fe(OH)_3^{\alpha} + 4\chi^{\alpha}Fe_{ox}P + 8CO_2$	R8
$2O_2 + FeS \rightarrow SO_4^{2-} + Fe^{2+}$	R9
$7O_2 + 2FeS_2 + 2H_2O \rightarrow 4SO_4^{2-} + 2Fe^{2+} + 4H^+$	R10
$2O_2 + H_2S + 2HCO_3^- \rightarrow SO_4^{2-} + 2CO_2 + 2H_2O$	R11
$2O_2 + CH_4 \rightarrow CO_2 + 2H_2O$	R12
$2Fe(OH)_3^{\alpha} + 2\chi^{\alpha}Fe_{ox}P + H_2S + 4CO_2 \rightarrow 2Fe^{2+} + 2\chi^{\alpha}H_2PO_4^- + S_0 + 4HCO_3^- + 2H_2O$	R13
$2Fe(OH)_3^{\beta} + 2\chi^{\beta}Fe_{ox}P + H_2S + 4CO_2 \rightarrow 2Fe^{2+} + 2\chi^{\beta}H_2PO_4^- + S_0 + 4HCO_3^- + 2H_2O$	R14
$Fe^{2+} + H_2S \rightarrow FeS + 2H^+$	R15
$FeS + H_2S \rightarrow FeS_2 + H_2$	R16
$4S_0 + 4H_2O \rightarrow 3H_2S + SO_4^{2-} + 2H^+$	R17
$FeS + S_0 \rightarrow FeS_2$	R18
$SO_4^{2-} + CH_4 + CO_2 \rightarrow 2HCO_3^- + H_2S$	R19
$CH_4 + 8Fe(OH)_3^{\alpha,\beta} + 8\chi^{\alpha,\beta}Fe_{ox}P + 15H^+ \rightarrow HCO_3^- + 8Fe^{2+} + 8\chi^{\alpha,\beta}H_2PO_4^- + 21H_2O$	R20
$Fe(OH)_3^{\alpha} + (\chi^{\alpha} - \chi^{\beta})Fe_{ox}P \rightarrow Fe(OH)_3^{\beta} + (\chi^{\alpha} - \chi^{\beta})H_2PO_4^-$	R21
$Fe(OH)_3^{\beta} + (\chi^{\beta} - \chi^{\gamma})Fe_{ox}P \rightarrow Fe(OH)_3^{\gamma} + (\chi^{\beta} - \chi^{\gamma})H_2PO_4^-$	R22
$3Fe^{2+} + 2HPO_4^{2-} \rightarrow Fe_3(PO_4)_2 + 2H^+$	R23
$Fe^{2+} + CO_3^{2-} \rightarrow FeCO_3$	R24
$FeCO_3 + H_2S \rightarrow FeS + HCO_3^- + H^+$	R25
$Fe_3(PO_4)_2 + 3H_2S \rightarrow 3FeS + 2HPO_4^{2-} + 4H^+$	R26

927 * Organic matter (OM) is of the form $(CH_2O)_a(NH_4^+)_b(H_3PO_4)_c$, with 'a'=1, 'b' = 1/16 and 'c' = 1/106. Under anoxic bottom

928 water conditions, 'c' reduces to 0.25 to account for the preferential regeneration of P (e.g. Ingall et al. (1993)). † $\chi^{\alpha,\beta,\gamma}$ refers to

929 the P:Fe ratio of $Fe(OH)_3^{\alpha,\beta,\gamma}$ (see Supplementary Table S1). *R6* = CH₄ production from DIC (i.e. CO₂)*; R7* = nitrification; *R8* =

930 Fe(OH)₃ formation; *R9* = FeS oxidation; *R10* = FeS₂ oxidation; *R11* = H₂S oxidation; *R12* = aerobic CH₄ oxidation; *R13* and *R14*

931 = Fe(OH)₃ reduction by H₂S; *R15*= FeS formation; *R16* = pyrite formation (H₂S pathway); *R17* = S₀ disproportionation; *R18* =

932 pyrite formation (polysulfide pathway); *R19* = SO₄-AOM; *R20* = Fe-AOM; *R21* = conversion (i.e. crystallization) from α to β

933 phase; *R22* = crystallization from β to γ phase; *R23* = vivianite formation; *R24* = siderite precipitation; *R25* = conversion from

934 siderite to FeS; *R26* = vivianite dissolution by dissolved sulfide

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Table 4. Reaction equations implemented in the model.

Primary redox reaction equations

$$R_1 = k_{\propto,\beta} OM^{\propto,\beta} \left(\frac{[O_2]}{K_{O_2}+[O_2]} \right)$$ (E1)

$$R_2 = k_{\propto,\beta} OM^{\propto,\beta} \left(\frac{[NO_3^-]}{K_{NO_3^-}+[NO_3^-]} \right) \left(\frac{K_{O_2}}{K_{O_2}+[O_2]} \right)$$ (E2)

$$R_3 = k_{\propto,\beta} OM^{\propto,\beta} \left(\frac{[Fe(OH)_3^\alpha]}{K_{Fe(OH)_3^\alpha}+[Fe(OH)_3^\alpha]} \right) \left(\frac{K_{NO_3^-}}{K_{NO_3^-}+[NO_3^-]} \right) \left(\frac{K_{O_2}}{K_{O_2}+[O_2]} \right)$$ (E3)

$$R_4 = \Psi k_{\propto,\beta} OM^{\propto,\beta} \left(\frac{[SO_4^{2-}]}{K_{SO_4^{2-}}+[SO_4^{2-}]} \right) \left(\frac{K_{Fe(OH)_3^\alpha}}{K_{Fe(OH)_3^\alpha}+[Fe(OH)_3^\alpha]} \right) \left(\frac{K_{NO_3^-}}{K_{NO_3^-}+[NO_3^-]} \right) \left(\frac{K_{O_2}}{K_{O_2}+[O_2]} \right)$$ (E4)

$$R_5 = \Psi k_{\propto,\beta} OM^{\propto,\beta} \left(\frac{K_{SO_4^{2-}}}{K_{SO_4^{2-}}+[SO_4^{2-}]} \right) \left(\frac{K_{Fe(OH)_3^\alpha}}{K_{Fe(OH)_3^\alpha}+[Fe(OH)_3^\alpha]} \right) \left(\frac{K_{NO_3^-}}{K_{NO_3^-}+[NO_3^-]} \right) \left(\frac{K_{O_2}}{K_{O_2}+[O_2]} \right)$$ (E5)

$$R_6 = k_1 DIC \left(\frac{K_{SO_4^{2-}}}{K_{SO_4^{2-}}+[SO_4^{2-}]} \right) \left(\frac{K_{Fe(OH)_3^\alpha}}{K_{Fe(OH)_3^\alpha}+[Fe(OH)_3^\alpha]} \right) \left(\frac{K_{NO_3^-}}{K_{NO_3^-}+[NO_3^-]} \right) \left(\frac{K_{O_2}}{K_{O_2}+[O_2]} \right)$$ (E6)

Secondary redox and other reaction equations

$$R_7 = k_2[O_2][NH_4^+]$$ (E7)

$$R_8 = k_3[O_2][Fe^{2+}]$$ (E8)

$$R_9 = k_4[O_2][FeS]$$ (E9)

$$R_{10} = k_5[O_2][FeS_2]$$ (E10)

$$R_{11} = k_6[O_2][\textstyle\sum H_2S]$$ (E11)

$$R_{12} = k_7[O_2][CH_4]$$ (E12)

$$R_{13} = k_8[Fe(OH)_3^\propto][\textstyle\sum H_2S]$$ (E13)

$$R_{14} = k_9[Fe(OH)_3^\beta][\textstyle\sum H_2S]$$ (E14)

$$R_{15} = k_{10}[Fe^{2+}][\textstyle\sum H_2S]$$ (E15)

$$R_{16} = k_{11}[FeS][\textstyle\sum H_2S]$$ (E16)

$$R_{17} = k_{12}[S_0]$$ (E17)

$$R_{18} = k_{13}[FeS][S_0]$$ (E18)

$$R_{19} = k_{14}[SO_4^{2-}][CH_4]$$ (E19)

$$R_{20} = k_{15}[Fe(OH)_3^{\propto,\beta}][CH_4]$$ (E20)

$$R_{21} = k_{16}[Fe(OH)_3^\propto]$$ (E21)

$$R_{22} = k_{17}[Fe(OH)_3^\beta]$$ (E22)

$$R_{23} = k_{18}[Fe^{2+}][HPO_4^{2-}]$$ (E23)

$$R_{24} = k_{19}[Fe^{2+}][DIC]$$ (E24)

$$R_{25} = k_{20}[FeCO_3][\textstyle\sum H_2S]$$ (E25)

$$R_{26} = k_{21}[Fe_3(PO_4)_2][\textstyle\sum H_2S]$$ (E26)

940 **Table 5. Reaction parameters used in the diagenetic model.**

Parameter	Symbol	Value	Units	Values given in literature
Decay constant for OM$^{\alpha}$	k_{α}	0.05	yr^{-1}	0.05-1.62[a,b]
Decay constant for OM$^{\beta}$	k_{β}	0.0086	yr^{-1}	0.0086[b]
Limiting concentration of O_2	K_{O2}	0.02	mM	0.001-0.03[c]
Limiting concentration of NO_3^-	K_{NO3-}	0.004	mM	0.004-0.08[c]
Limiting concentration of $Fe(OH)_3$	$K_{Fe(OH)3}$	65	μmol g^{-1}	65-100[c]
Limiting concentration of SO_4^{2-}	K_{SO42-}	1.6	mM	1.6[c]
Attenuation factor for SO_4^{2-} and methanogenesis	Ψ	0.0042	-	0.00157-0.075[b,d]
Rate constant for reaction *E6*	k_1	0.0011	yr^{-1}	
Rate constant for reaction *E7*	k_2	10'000	mM^{-1} yr^{-1}	5'000-39'000[c,d]
Rate constant for reaction *E8*	k_3	140'000	mM^{-1} yr^{-1}	140'000[c]
Rate constant for reaction *E9*	k_4	300	mM^{-1} yr^{-1}	300[c]
Rate constant for reaction *E10*	k_5	1	mM^{-1} yr^{-1}	1[c]
Rate constant for reaction *E11*	k_6	160	mM^{-1} yr^{-1}	$\geq$ 160[c]
Rate constant for reaction *E12*	k_7	10'000'000	mM^{-1} yr^{-1}	10'000'000[c]
Rate constant for reaction *E13*	k_8	9.5	mM^{-1} yr^{-1}	$\leq$ 100[c]
Rate constant for reaction *E14*	k_9	0.95	mM^{-1} yr^{-1}	Model constrained
Rate constant for reaction *E15*	k_{10}	150	mM^{-1} yr^{-1}	100-14'800[b, d]
Rate constant for reaction *E16*	k_{11}	0.0003	mM^{-1} yr^{-1}	3.15[e]
Rate constant for reaction *E17*	k_{12}	3	yr^{-1}	3[f]
Rate constant for reaction *E18*	k_{13}	1	mM^{-1} yr^{-1}	7[f]
Rate constant for reaction *E19*	k_{14}	0.14	mM^{-1} yr^{-1}	10[c]
Rate constant for reaction *E20*	k_{15}	0.00000016	mM^{-1} yr^{-1}	0.0074[g]
Rate constant for reaction *E21*	k_{16}	0.6	yr^{-1}	0.6[f]
Rate constant for reaction *E22*	k_{17}	0.000013	yr^{-1}	Model constrained
Rate constant for reaction *E23*	k_{18}	0.052	mM^{-1} yr^{-1}	Model constrained
Rate constant for reaction *E24*	k_{19}	0.0027	mM^{-1} yr^{-1}	Model constrained
Rate constant for reaction *E25*	k_{20}	0.0008	mM^{-1} yr^{-1}	Model constrained
Rate constant for reaction *E26*	k_{21}	0.0008	mM^{-1} yr^{-1}	Model constrained

941 [a] Moodley et al. (2005); [b] Reed et al. (2011a); [c] Wang and Van Cappellen (1996); [d] Reed et al. (2011b); [e] Rickard and Luther

942 (1997); [f] Berg et al. (2003); [g] Rooze et al. (2016)

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946 **Table 6. Depth-integrated rates of key processes for selected depth intervals in μmol m^{-2} d^{-1}.**

Process	0 – 90 cm[a]	90 - 300 cm[b]	300 – 800 cm[c]	0 – 800 cm
Organoclastic SO$_4^{2-}$ reduction[d]	68.9	5.3	0.003	74.2
CH$_4$ production[e,f]	10.21	37.7	91.8	139.8
SO$_4$ - AOM	9.4	151.6	1.2	162.2
Fe – AOM[e]	0	0	1.2	1.2
S$_0$ disproportionation	0	0	0.9	0.9

947 [a] Marine deposits ; [b] limnic sediments around the SMTZ with dissolved sulfide; [c] non-sulfidic limnic deposits; [d] per mol of SO$_4^{2-}$; [e]

948 per mol of CH$_4$; [f] sum of CH$_4$ production from organic matter and from DIC (i.e. CO$_2$)

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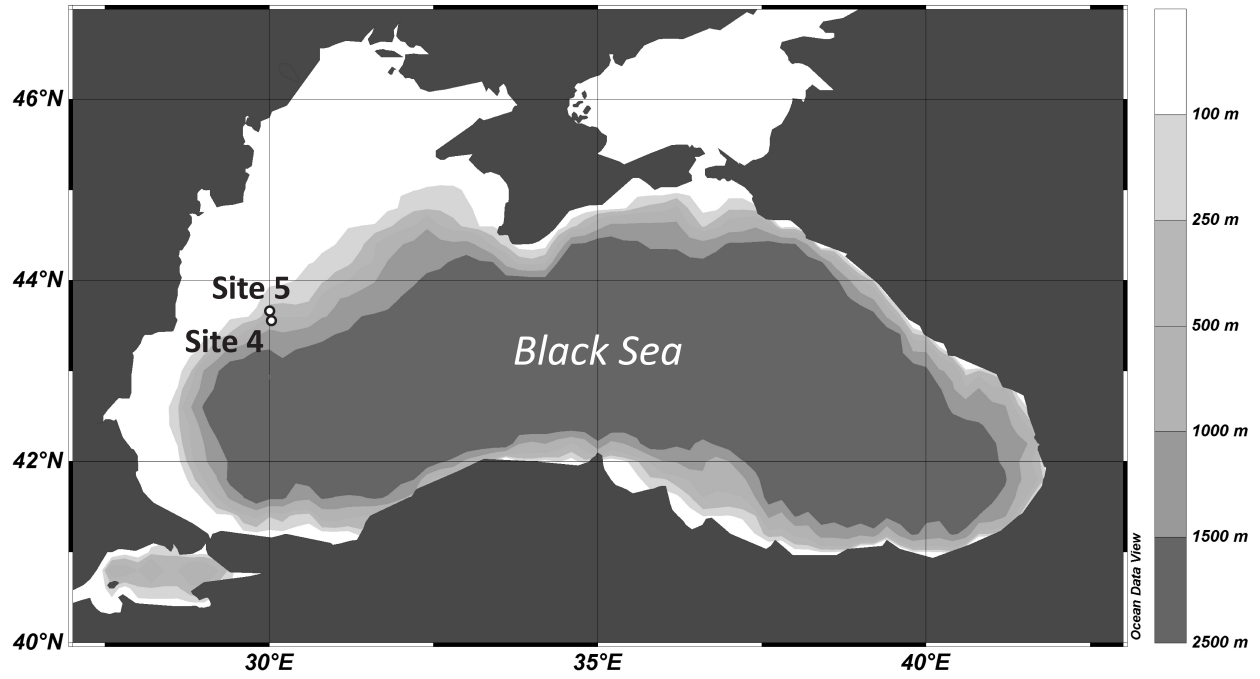
Figures

954   **Figure 1. Map showing the locations of site 4 (43°40.6' N, 30°7.5' E; 377 mbss) and site 5 (43°42.6' N, 30°6.1' E; 178 mbss),**
955   **sampled in June 2013.**

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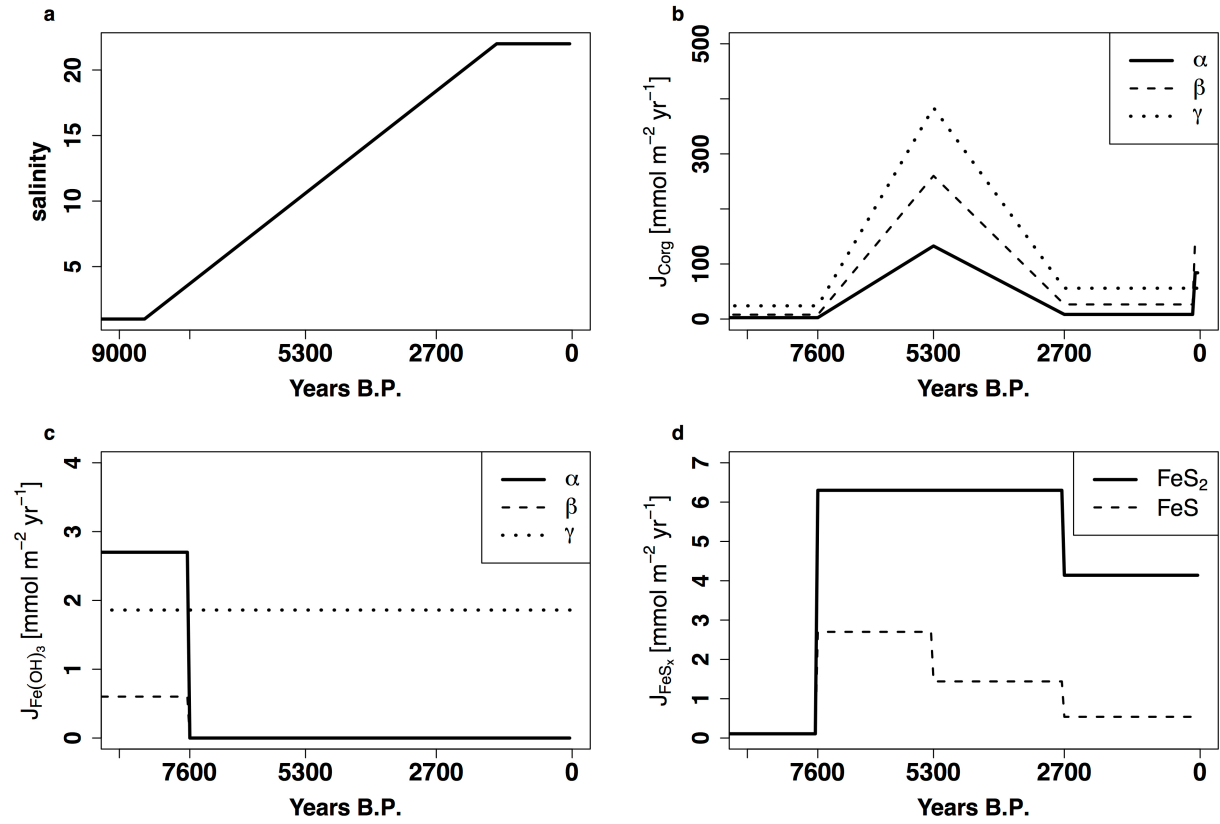
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959 Figure 2. Transient evolution of salinity with a linear increase from 1 to 22 between 8500 and 1500 years B.P. (a), fluxes of
960 organic matter ($J_{C_{Org}}$; b), Fe oxides ($J_{Fe(OH)_3}$; c) and Fe sulfides (J_{FeS_x}; d) as implemented in the diagenetic model (site 4).

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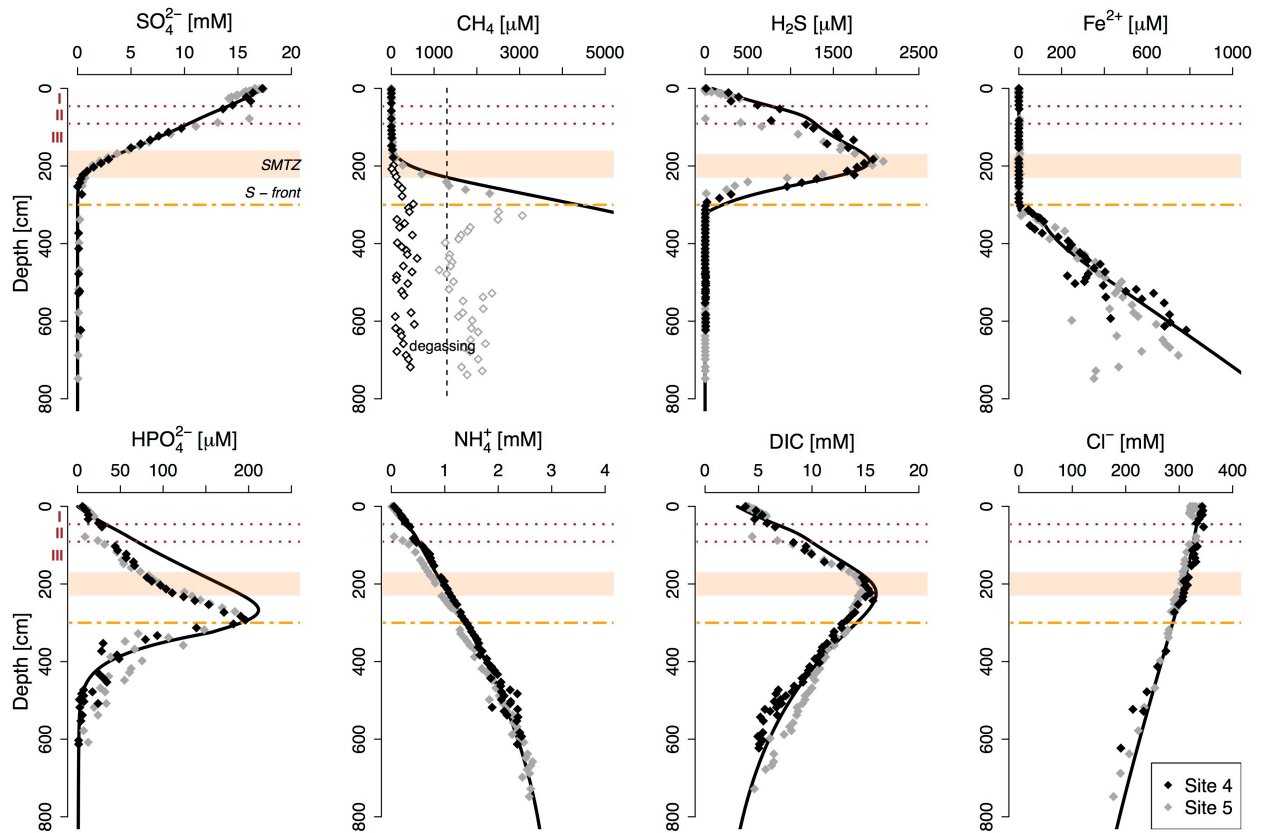
Figure 3. Pore water profiles of key components for site 4 (black diamonds) and site 5 (gray diamonds) and corresponding modeled profiles as calculated with the diagenetic model (black lines). Red dotted lines and roman numbers indicate the transitions between the lithological Unit I (modern coccolith ooze), Unit II (marine sapropel) and Unit III (limnic deposits). The orange bar represents the sulfate-methane transition zone (SMTZ) and the orange dashed line shows the current position of the downward migrating sulfidization front (S-front). The dashed vertical line indicates the CH_4 saturation concentration at atmospheric pressure (Mogollón et al., 2013). The open diamonds indicate CH_4 concentrations that are likely underestimated due to outgassing of CH_4 during coring.

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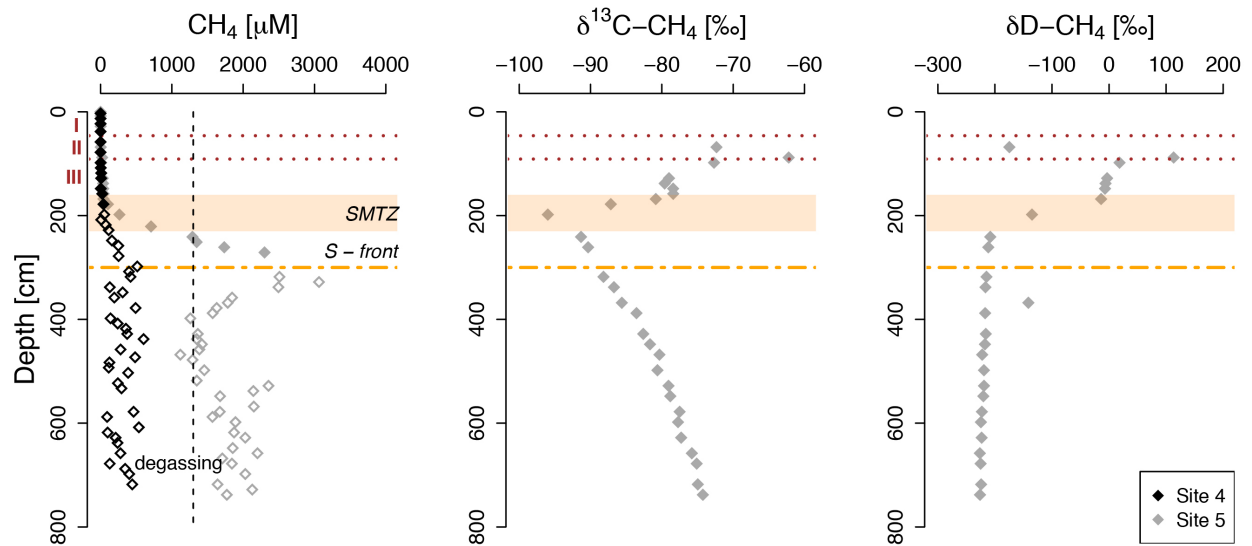
Figure 4. Pore water profiles of CH₄ for site 4 (black diamonds) and 5 (gray diamonds) and corresponding isotopic composition of dissolved CH₄ (available for site 5 only). δ^{13}C-CH₄ values are given in ‰ vs. VPDB (Vienna Pee Dee Belemnite) and δD-CH₄ values are given in ‰ vs. V-SMOW (Vienna Standard Mean Ocean Water). Red dotted lines and roman numbers indicate the transitions between the lithological Unit I (modern coccolith ooze), Unit II (marine sapropel) and Unit III (limnic deposits). The orange bar represents the sulfate-methane transition zone (SMTZ) and the orange dashed line shows the current position of the downward migrating sulfidization front (S-front). The dashed vertical line indicates the CH₄ saturation concentration at atmospheric pressure (Mogollón et al., 2013). The open diamonds indicate CH₄ concentrations that are likely underestimated due to outgassing of CH₄ during coring.

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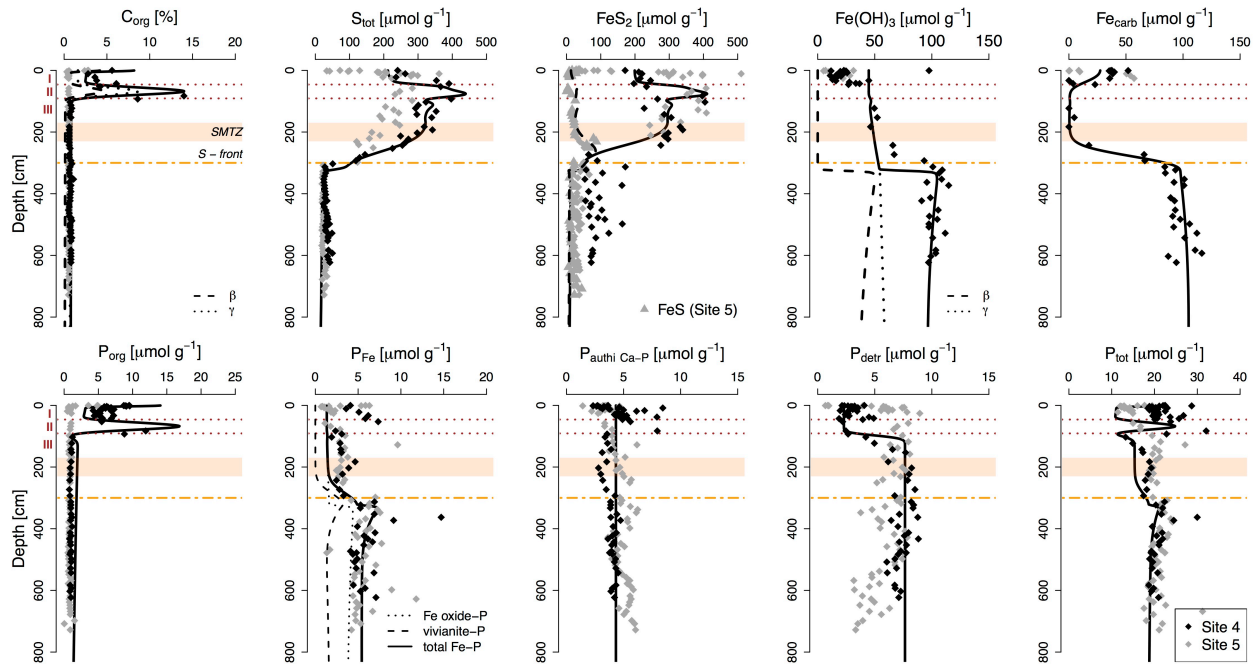
**Figure 5. Solid phase sediment profiles for site 4 (black diamonds) and 5 (gray diamonds). Fe oxides represent the sum of amorphous, crystalline and recalcitrant oxides, i.e. Fe_{ox1}, Fe_{Ox2} and Fe_{mag} (Table 1, Supplementary Fig. S4). Fe_{carb} was corrected for apparent AVS dissolution during the Na acetate extraction step (the uncorrected Fe_{carb} data is given in Supplementary Fig. S4). Black lines represent profiles derived from the diagenetic model. Red dotted lines and roman numbers indicate the transitions between the lithological Unit I (modern coccolith ooze), Unit II (marine sapropel) and Unit III (limnic deposits). The orange bar represents the sulfate-methane transition zone (SMTZ) and the orange dashed line shows the current position of the downward migrating sulfidization front (S-front).**
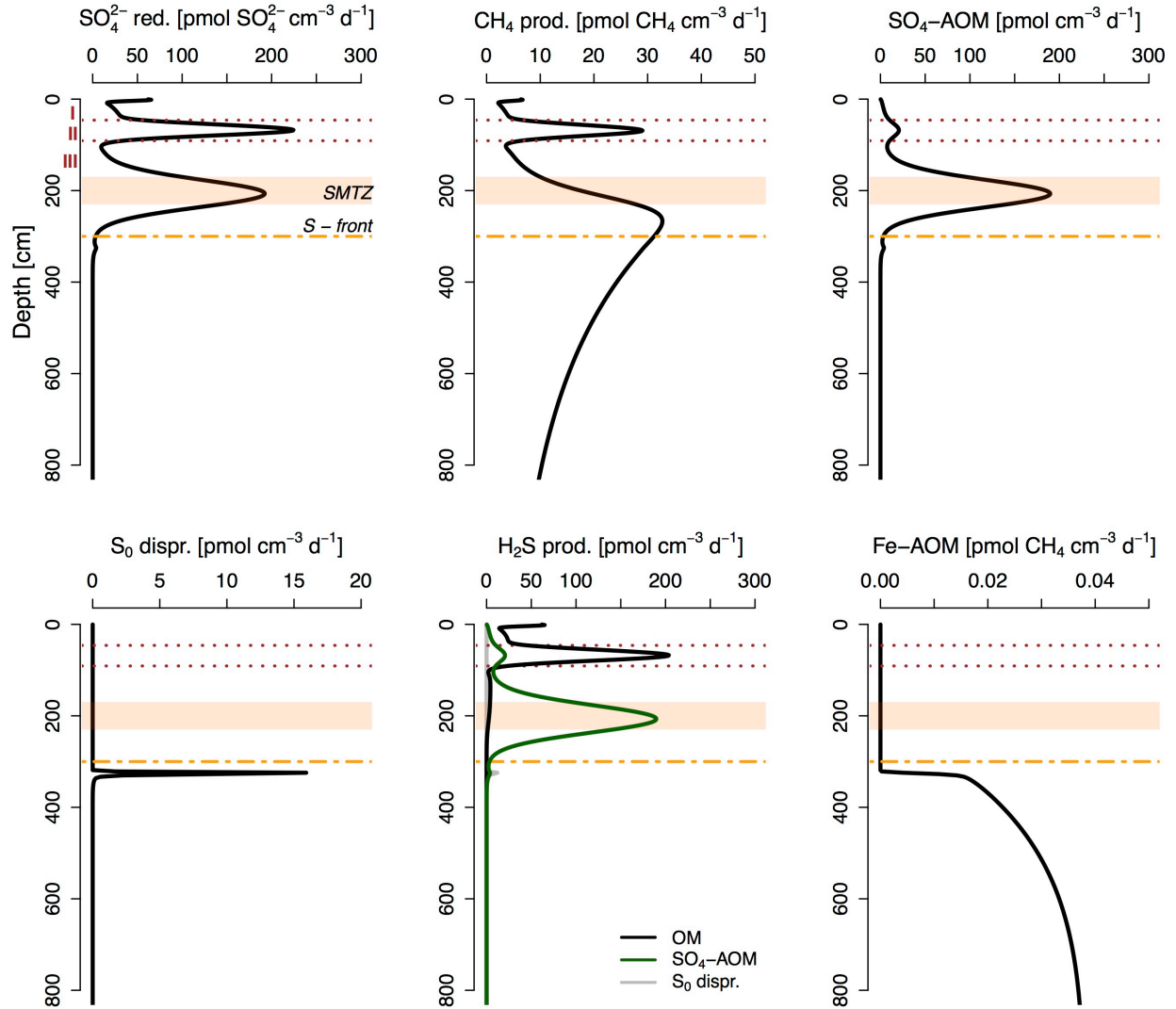
**Figure 6. Modeled rates of total SO_4^{2-} reduction, total CH_4 production, SO_4-AOM, S_0 disproportionation, sulfide production and Fe-AOM. Red dotted lines and roman numbers indicate the transitions between the lithological Unit I (modern coccolith ooze), Unit II (marine sapropel) and Unit III (limnic deposits). The orange bar represents the sulfate-methane transition zone (SMTZ) and the orange dashed line shows the current position of the downward migrating sulfidization front (S-front).**
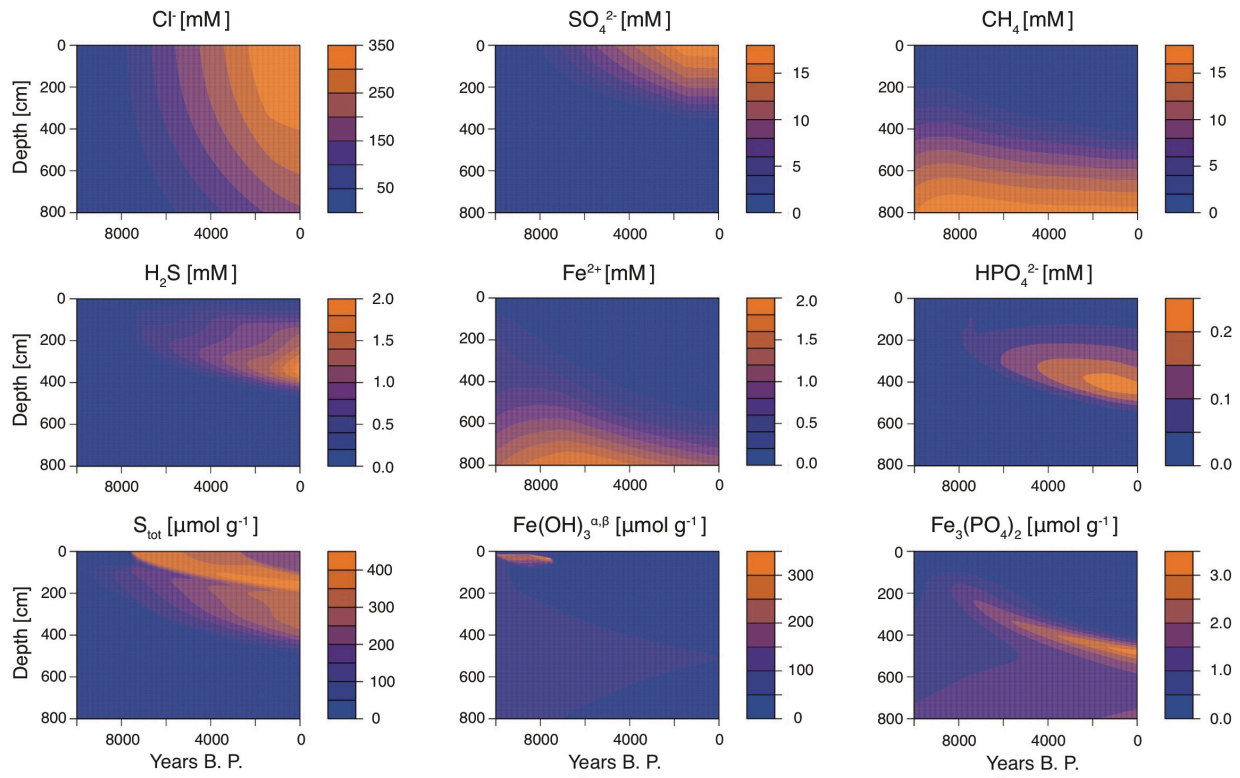
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999 **Figure 7. Transient evolution of selected pore water and sediment profiles with depth as calculated for site 4 using the**

1000 **diagenetic model.**

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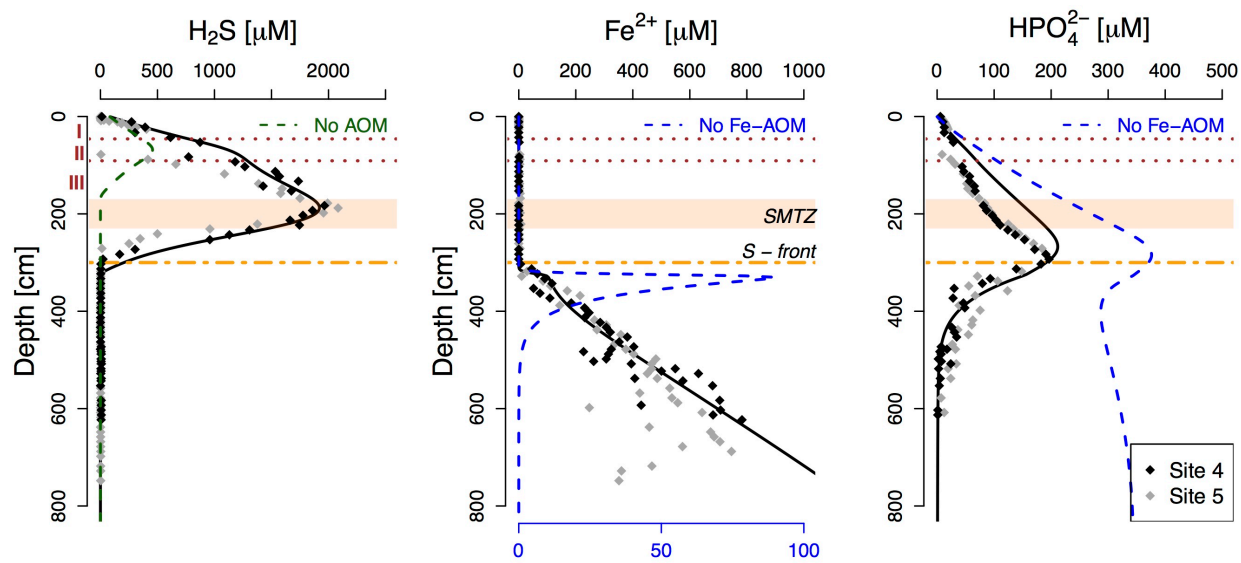
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1004 **Figure 8. Pore water profiles of dissolved sulfide, Fe^{2+} and HPO_4^{2-}. The green dashed line represents the modeled sulfide**

1005 **profile without SO_4-AOM, indicating that the latter significantly enhances the downward sulfidization. Blue dashed lines**

1006 **denote the modeled Fe^{2+} and HPO_4^{2-} profiles without ongoing Fe oxide reduction in the limnic deposits (i.e. no Fe-AOM).**

1007 **Note that concentrations of Fe^{2+} were multiplied 10 times in the model simulation without Fe oxide reduction to better**

1008 **visualize the potential release of Fe^{2+} through a cryptic S cycle (corresponding x axis at bottom). Red dotted lines and**

1009 **roman numbers indicate the transitions between the lithological Unit I (modern coccolith ooze), Unit II (marine sapropel)**

1010 **and Unit III (limnic deposits). The orange bar represents the sulfate-methane transition zone (SMTZ) and the orange**

1011 **dashed line shows the current position of the downward migrating sulfidization front (S-front).**

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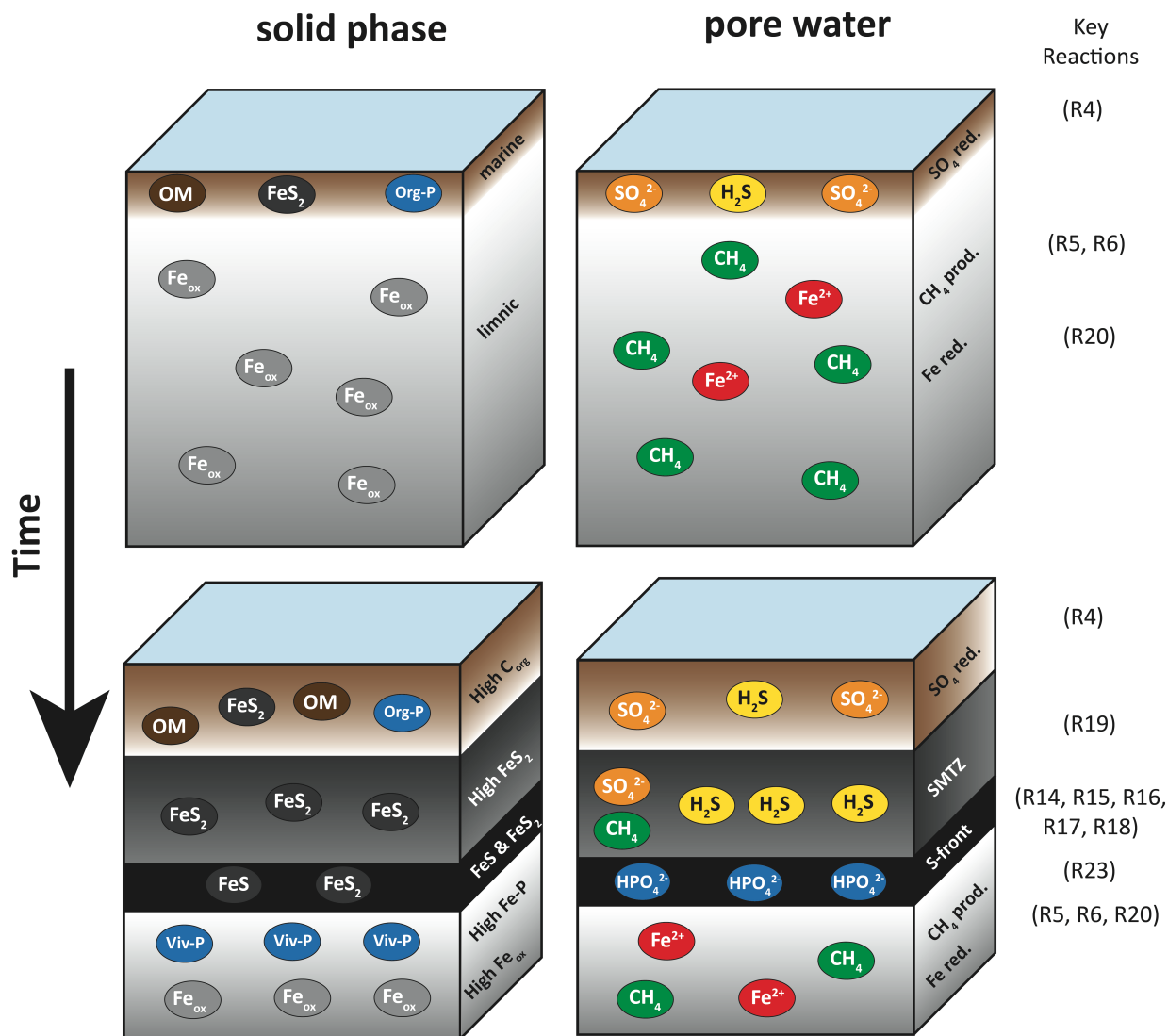
Figure 9. Schematic of the main diagenetic processes discussed in this study and their imprint on the geochemical solid phase (left) and pore water profiles (right). Accumulation of marine sediments with time and the subsequent downward diffusion of SO_4^{2-} into the CH_4-bearing limnic sediment stimulate SO_4-AOM around the sulfate-methane transition zone (SMTZ), thus enhancing the downward sulfidization of the Fe oxide-rich lake deposits. Below the sulfidization front (S-front), HPO_4^{2-} released during reductive dissolution of Fe oxides is bound again in vivianite, leading to an enrichment in sedimentary P in these sediments. Numbers on the right indicate the key reactions occurring in the corresponding sediment layers as described in Table 3. Note that in this study, Fe-AOM (R20) was assumed as the main source of pore water Fe^{2+} below the S-front to further test the potential impact of Fe-AOM on pore water CH_4. However, based on the geochemical data, we cannot exclude a potential role for organoclastic Fe reduction (R3) and/or reactivation of less reactive Fe oxides by methanogens.

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