

1 **Tracing terrestrial versus marine sources of dissolved organic carbon in a coastal bay**  
2 **using stable carbon isotopes**

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21 **Abstract**

22 The sources of dissolved organic matter (DOM) in coastal waters are diverse, and they play  
23 different roles in the biogeochemistry and ecosystems of the ocean. In this study, we measured  
24 dissolved organic carbon (DOC) and nitrogen (DON),  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ -DOC, and fluorescent dissolved  
25 organic matter (FDOM) in coastal bay waters surrounded by large cities (Masan Bay, Korea)  
26 to determine the different DOM sources in this region. The surface seawater samples were  
27 collected in two sampling campaigns (Aug. 2011 and Aug. 2016). The salinities were in the  
28 range of 10–21 in 2011 and 25–32 in 2016. In 2011, excess DOC was observed for high-salinity  
29 (16–21) waters, indicating that the excess source inputs were mainly from marine  
30 autochthonous production according to the  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ -DOC values of  $-23.7\text{‰}$  to  $-20.6\text{‰}$ , the higher  
31 concentrations of protein-like FDOM, and the lower DOC/DON (C/N) ratios (8–15). By  
32 contrast, excess DOC observed in high-salinity waters in 2016 was characterized by low  
33 FDOM, more depleted  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$  values of  $-28.8\text{‰}$  to  $-21.1\text{‰}$ , and high C/N ratios (13–45),  
34 suggesting that the excess DOC source is from terrestrial C3 plants by direct land-seawater  
35 interactions. Our results show that multiple DOM tracers such as  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ -DOC, FDOM, and C/N  
36 ratios are powerful for discriminating the complicated sources of DOM occurring in coastal  
37 waters.

## 38 **1. Introduction**

39           Dissolved organic matter (DOM) plays an important role in biogeochemical cycles  
40 (e.g., de-oxygenation, acidification, photochemistry) and ecosystems of the ocean (Hansell and  
41 Carlson, 2002). DOM composition depends on its parent organic matter and subsequent  
42 biogeochemical processes. DOM in coastal waters originates from various sources including  
43 (1) *in situ* production by primary production, exudation of aquatic plants, and their degradation  
44 (Markager et al., 2011; Carlson and Hansell, 2015), (2) terrestrial sources by the degradation  
45 of soil and terrestrial plant matter (Opsahl and Benner, 1997; Bauer and Bianchi, 2011), and (3)  
46 anthropogenic sources such as industrial, agricultural, and domestic sewage (Griffith and  
47 Raymond, 2011).

48

49           Depending on the origin and composition of DOM, its behavior and cycling are  
50 different: the labile fraction of DOM is decomposed rapidly through microbially or  
51 photochemically mediated processes, whereas refractory DOM is resistant to degradation and  
52 can persist in the ocean for millennia. In the coastal ocean, organic matter from terrestrial plant  
53 litter or soils appears to be more refractory (Cauwet, 2002) and thus often behaves  
54 conservatively. In addition, refractory DOM is produced in the ocean by bacterial  
55 transformation of labile DOM by reshaping its composition (Tremblay and Benner, 2006; Jiao  
56 et al., 2010). However, it is still very difficult to determine the sources and characteristics of  
57 DOM in coastal waters.

58

59           There are many approaches to distinguish the source of DOM in coastal areas using  
60 various tracers (Faganeli et al., 1988; Benner and Opsahl, 2001; Chen et al., 2004; Baker and  
61 Spencer, 2004; Cawley et al., 2012; Lee and Kim, 2018). The stable carbon isotopic

62 composition of dissolved organic carbon ( $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ -DOC) has been used to distinguish different  
63 sources. In general,  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$  values derived from C3 and C4 land plants are in the range of  $-23\text{‰}$   
64  $-34\text{‰}$  and  $-9\text{‰} - -17\text{‰}$  (Deines, 1980), respectively, while those derived from marine  
65 phytoplankton range from  $-18$  to  $-22\text{‰}$  (Kelley et al., 1998; Coffin and Cifuentes, 1999). In  
66 addition, the optically active fraction of DOM known as fluorescent DOM (FDOM) have been  
67 successfully used for characterizing DOM (Coble et al., 1990; Coble, 1996). Fluorescence  
68 excitation-emission matrices and parallel factor analysis (EEM-PARAFAC) technique has been  
69 applied to trace the source of humic-like versus protein-like DOM in coastal waters and  
70 estuaries (Chen et al., 2004; Jaffé et al., 2004; Murphy et al., 2008). DOC/DON ratios are often  
71 used to differentiate allochthonous versus autochthonous sources. The C/N ratios of terrestrial  
72 organic carbon are usually higher than 12, while those of marine organic carbon from  
73 phytoplankton are almost constant ranging from 6 to 8 (Milliman et al., 1984; Lobbes et  
74 al., 2000). However, the interpretation of isotopic ratio of bulk sample alone in complex coastal  
75 environments is somewhat complicated by the overlap of the isotopic ranges. Thus, several  
76 studies have used  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ -DOC combined with FDOM (Osburn and Stedmon, 2011; Osburn et  
77 al., 2011; Ya et al., 2015; Lu et al., 2015) or carbon isotope ratios combined with C/N ratio  
78 (Thornton and McManus, 1994; Andrews et al., 1998; Wang et al., 2004; McCallister et al.,  
79 2006; Pradhan et al., 2014) to discriminate different sources of DOM in estuarine and coastal  
80 waters. As far as we know, these three tracers together have not yet been used together to  
81 determine DOM sources in coastal waters.

82

83 Our study aimed at discriminating DOM sources in coastal waters, where various  
84 sources are present, using  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ -DOC, FDOM, and DOC/DON ratios together. Masan bay is  
85 surrounded by cities with thousands of industrial plants and a population of 1.1 million. In

86 association with large anthropogenic nutrient loading, this area has been recognized as a highly  
87 eutrophic embayment (Lee and Min, 1990; Yoo, 1991; Hong et al., 2010). Red tides and  
88 hypoxic water mass in the bottom layer of the bay have occurred annually in spring and summer  
89 (Lee et al., 2009). In addition, there are potential point sources of sewage treatment plants  
90 (STPs) which manage domestic and industrial wastewater from Masan and Changwon cities.  
91 Lee et al. (2011) revealed the origins of sewage and organic matter using dissolved sterols in  
92 Masan Bay. They reported that the water samples from the creeks, inner bay, and nearby STP  
93 were affected by sewage sources. Oh et al. (2017) showed that the excess DOC in bay water is  
94 produced by phytoplankton production. Therefore, Masan Bay is a suitable place to test the  
95 applicability of these multiple tracers to differentiate complicated DOM sources in other areas  
96 of the world's coastal regions.

97

## 98 **2. Materials and methods**

### 99 *2.1 Study site*

100 Masan Bay is located on the southeast coast of Korea with an area of approximately  
101 80 km<sup>2</sup> (Fig. 1). The annual precipitation is approximately 1500 mm, and most of the  
102 precipitations occurs in the summer monsoon season. The amount of freshwater discharge into  
103 this bay is approximately  $2.5 \times 10^8$  m<sup>3</sup> yr<sup>-1</sup> with significant seasonal variation. The tide is semi-  
104 diurnal, showing a maximum tidal amplitude of ~1.9 m (average = 1.3 m) during the sampling  
105 period. Due to topographic conditions, the current is very weak (2–3 cm s<sup>-1</sup>), and the residence  
106 times of water in the inner bay and in the entire bay are approximately 54 and 23 days,  
107 respectively (Lee et al., 2009). In the middle of the bay, an artificial island was constructed in  
108 2015–2016 (Fig. 1) with an area of 0.64 km<sup>2</sup>. The artificial island may have resulted in changes  
109 in water currents, residence times, and biogeochemical conditions.

110

## 111 *2.2 Sampling*

112           Sampling was conducted in August 2011 and August 2016 in Masan Bay. Water  
113 samples were collected from the surface at 17 sites in 2011 and 10 sites in 2016. The bay  
114 receives a large amount of freshwater discharge from the northernmost part of the region. The  
115 average surface water temperatures were  $30.4 \pm 2.3^\circ\text{C}$  in 2011 and  $26.5 \pm 0.7^\circ\text{C}$  in 2016. All  
116 water samples were filtered through pre-combusted GF/F filters. Samples for FDOM analysis  
117 were stored at  $4^\circ\text{C}$  in pre-combusted amber vials. Samples for DOC, total dissolved nitrogen  
118 (TDN), and  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ -DOC analysis were stored in pre-combusted glass ampoules after acidifying  
119 to a pH  $\sim 2$  with 6M HCL. Samples analyzed for dissolved inorganic nitrogen (DIN) were stored  
120 frozen in a HDPE bottle (Nalgene) prior to analyses.

121

## 122 *2.3 Analytical methods*

123           The concentrations of DOC and TDN were determined using a high-temperature  
124 catalytic oxidation (HTCO) analyzer (TOC-V<sub>CPH</sub>, Shimadzu, Japan). The standardization for  
125 DOC analysis was performed using a calibration curve of acetanilide (C:N ratio = 8) in ultra-  
126 pure water. The acidified samples were purged with pure air carrier gas for two min to remove  
127 dissolved inorganic carbon. Samples were carried into a combustion tube heated to  $720^\circ\text{C}$   
128 where the DOC was converted quantitatively to  $\text{CO}_2$ .  $\text{CO}_2$  gas was detected by a non-dispersive  
129 infrared detector (NDIR). Our DOC and TDN methods were verified using the seawater  
130 reference samples for DOC of  $44\text{--}46 \mu\text{mol L}^{-1}$  and for TDN of  $32\text{--}34 \mu\text{mol L}^{-1}$ , which were  
131 produced by the University of Miami (Hansell's lab, USA). Inorganic nutrients were measured  
132 using nutrient auto-analyzers (Alliance Instruments, FUTURA+ for 2011 samples and  
133 QuAAtro39, SEAL Analytical Ltd. for 2016 samples). Reference seawater materials (KANSO

134 Technos, Japan) were used for the verification of analytical accuracy. DON concentrations  
135 were calculated based on the difference between the TDN and DIN concentrations.

136

137 The values of  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ -DOC were determined using a TOC-IR-MS instrument (Isoprime,  
138 Elementar, Germany). The analytical method is the same as that used by Kim et al. (2015) and  
139 Lee and Kim (2018). Low carbon water ( $< 2 \mu\text{M}$ ; University of Miami, Hansell's lab) was  
140 measured for blank corrections and used for preparing all standard samples. The blank  
141 correction procedure is the same as that reported previously (Panetta et al., 2008; De Troyer et  
142 al., 2010). Certified IAEA-CH6 sucrose (International Atomic Energy Agency,  $-10.45 \pm$   
143  $0.03\text{‰}$ ) was used for standardization. The standard solution was measured for every ten  
144 samples to monitor the drifting effect. Our measured values of  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ -DOC of the Deep-Sea  
145 Water Reference (University of Miami) samples were  $\pm 0.3\text{‰}$  relative to the values provided  
146 by Panetta et al. (2008) and Lang et al. (2007).

147

148 FDOM was determined using a spectrofluorometer (FluoroMate FS-2, SCINCO)  
149 within two days from the sampling time. EEMs were collected for the emission (Em)  
150 wavelength range of 240–600 nm with 2 nm intervals and an excitation (Ex) wavelength range  
151 of 240–500 nm with 5 nm intervals. Each sample value was subtracted for the signal of Milli-  
152 Q water produced daily to remove Raman scattering peaks. All data were converted to quinine  
153 sulfate units (QSU) using a quinine sulfate standard solution dissolved in 0.1N sulfuric acid at  
154 Ex/Em of 350/450 nm. We did not correct EEM data for inner filter effects before  
155 measurements, because the inner filter effects were found to be negligible for coastal water  
156 samples using this instrument (Lee and Kim, 2018). EEMs-PARAFAC was performed on

157 MATLAB (R2013a) using a DOMFluor toolbox, and the three components (C1-C3) were  
158 validated by split-half analysis (Figs. S1 and S2).

159

### 160 **3. Results and Discussion**

#### 161 *3.1 Horizontal distributions of DOM*

162 The salinity of surface seawater in August 2011 ranged from 10 to 21, while the salinity in  
163 August 2016 ranged from 25 to 32 (Table 1 and Fig. 2). The concentrations of DOC in both  
164 sampling periods ranged from 100  $\mu\text{M}$  to 200  $\mu\text{M}$  (Fig. 2), which fall within the DOC ranges  
165 commonly observed in coastal waters (Gao et al., 2010; Osburn and Stedmon, 2011; Kim et al.,  
166 2012). The highest concentration of DOC in 2011 (186  $\mu\text{M}$ ) was observed at station M4-1 in  
167 the middle of the bay, whereas the highest concentration of DOC in 2016 (191  $\mu\text{M}$ ) was  
168 observed at station M1, which is the innermost station in the bay. DOC concentrations were  
169 lowest at the outermost stations in both sampling periods. Concentrations of DON were in the  
170 range of 7–24  $\mu\text{M}$  in 2011 and 3–15  $\mu\text{M}$  in 2016, with the highest value at M5-1 in 2011 and  
171 at M1 in 2016 (Fig. 2).

172

173 EEM-PARAFAC dataset analyses identified three components in the surface water  
174 samples. EEMs contour plots and split-half validation results of three components are shown  
175 in the supplementary (Figs. S1 and S2). Based on the comparison with the data in the  
176 OpenFluor (Murphy et al., 2014), Component 1 (F<sub>DOMH</sub>, Ex/Em = 322/405 nm) is associated  
177 with a terrestrial humic-like component (Liu et al., 2019; Dalmagro et al., 2019; Chen et al.,  
178 2016). Component 2 (F<sub>DOMM</sub>, Ex/Em = 386/450 nm) is also associated with an allochthonous  
179 humic-like component (Wünsch et al., 2017). Component 3 (F<sub>DOMP</sub>, Ex/Em = 280/330 nm)  
180 is associated with a protein-like component, which is a product of microbial processes (Liu et



181 al., 2019; Murphy et al., 2011; Osburn et al., 2011). We use Component 1 as a representative  
182 of terrestrial humic-like FDOM (FDOM<sub>H</sub>) in this study because there was a significant  
183 correlation ( $r^2 = 0.95$ ) between Component 1 and Component 2.

184

185 FDOM<sub>H</sub> is known to indicate humic substances from terrestrial, anthropogenic, or  
186 agricultural sources (Coble, 2007), whereas FDOM<sub>P</sub> is likely related to autochthonous or  
187 anthropogenic sources (Coble, 1996; Hudson et al., 2007). The intensities of FDOM<sub>H</sub> and  
188 FDOM<sub>P</sub> in 2011 were in the range of 3.6–9.2 QSU and 4–79 QSU, respectively (Fig. 3). The  
189 intensities of FDOM<sub>H</sub> and FDOM<sub>P</sub> in 2016 were in the range of 2.7–0.6 QSU and 4.8–2.1 QSU,  
190 respectively (Fig. 3). An exceptionally higher concentration of FDOM<sub>P</sub> was observed at station  
191 M4-1 (78 QSU) relative to that of other stations (2–25 QSU) in 2011 (Fig. 4d).

192

### 193 *3.2 Origin of excess DOM*

194 The plot of DOC against salinity in 2011 showed two different mixing trends. The first  
195 slope showed a slight increase in DOC with decreasing salinity toward the innermost stations,  
196 including M1, M1-1, and M2 (Fig.4a, Group 1). The second trend showed a sharp rise in DOC  
197 (excess DOC in 2011) to the maximum at stations with salinities between 18 and 22 (Fig.4a,  
198 Group 2), indicating that there are other DOC sources at the high-salinity stations, besides the  
199 two end-member mixing. The plot of DOC against salinity showed that DOC in 2016 was in a  
200 range similar to that of 2011, although there was much less influence from fresh water (Fig. 4a,  
201 Group 3). This plot shows that there was an addition of DOC (excess DOC) in 2016 for high-  
202 salinity water in the bay. The potential sources of excess DOC occurring in this bay water may  
203 include terrestrial freshwater in creeks, STP water, direct land-seawater interaction, and *in situ*  
204 biological production. The creek water may also include various anthropogenic sources (i.e.,

205 industrial, agricultural, and domestic sewage) as well as natural land sources. There are no salt-  
206 marsh or wetland habitats in Masan Bay. To determine the main sources of the excess DOC  
207 using  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ -DOC, FDOM, and DOC/DON ratios, the excess DOC stations are separated into  
208 three groups (Group 1, Group 2 in 2011, and Group 3 in 2016) (Fig. 4a).

209  
210 Group 1 includes low-salinity water stations (M1, M1-1, M2, M3, M5-1, M5-2, and  
211 M5-3) observed in 2011 (Fig. 1).  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ -DOC values for Group 1 ranged from  $-25.4\text{‰}$  to  
212  $-23.3\text{‰}$ . We plotted a conservative mixing curve of  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ -DOC for two end-member mixing  
213 (Spiker, 1980; Raymond and Bauer, 2001). The assumed end-member values of DOC and  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ -  
214 DOC were  $185\ \mu\text{M}$  and  $-28\text{‰}$  (Raymond and Bauer, 2001), respectively, for the terrestrial  
215 end-member (S=0) and  $100\ \mu\text{M}$  and  $-18\text{‰}$  (Kelley et al., 1998), respectively, for the marine  
216 end-member (S=34). The  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$  values of Group 1 fall into the mixing line or are slightly heavier  
217 than the mixing line within  $1.5\ \text{‰}$ , indicating the conservative mixing between the terrestrial  
218 C3 land plant ( $-23\text{‰}$  to  $-32\text{‰}$ ; Deines, 1980) in freshwater and the open ocean seawater. The  
219 slightly heavier values could be produced by *in situ* biological production during the mixing  
220 processes. As such, the plot of  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ -DOC values versus C/N ratios also indicates that the excess  
221 DOC of Group 1 is from freshwater DOC (Fig. 5a).

222  
223 Group 2 includes high-salinity water stations (M4-1, M4-2, M6, M6-1, M7-1, M7-2,  
224 M8, M9, and M9-1) observed in 2011 (Fig. 1). The  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ -DOC values of Group 2 were in the  
225 range of  $-23.3\text{‰}$  to  $-20.6\text{‰}$  and were more enriched than the conservative mixing curve.  
226 These values are close to the marine  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ -DOC values ( $-22$  to  $-18\text{‰}$ ) (Fry et al., 1998), except  
227 for one station (M6), in this group ( $-23.3\text{‰}$ ). The  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ -DOC values of Group 2 suggest that  
228 excess DOM was added *in situ* by biological production in seawater. As such, the plot of  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ -

229 DOC values versus C/N ratios also indicates that the excess DOC of Group 2 is produced by  
230 marine phytoplankton (Fig. 5a).

231

232 Group 3 includes high-salinity water stations (M1, M2, M3, M4, M5, M6, and M7)  
233 observed in 2016 (Fig. 1). Although all data were collected in the same wet season (August),  
234 the salinity ranges of both campaigns were different from those in 2011, with a narrow high  
235 salinity range in 2016. The  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ -DOC values for Group 3 also showed significantly different  
236 values relative to those sampled in 2011 (Group 1 and Group 2). The  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ -DOC values for  
237 Group 3 were depleted ( $-28.8\text{‰}$  and  $-21.1\text{‰}$ ) relative to the conservative mixing curve (Fig.  
238 4b). The plot of  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ -DOC values versus C/N ratios indicates that the excess DOC of Group 3  
239 is from C3 terrestrial plants through direct land (including the possible sources from a newly-  
240 built artificial island)-seawater interactions, based on the fact that the excess DOC occurred in  
241 high-salinity (26–32) waters (Fig. 5a).

242

243  $\text{FDOM}_\text{H}$  showed a significant negative correlation with salinity ( $r^2 = 0.89$ ). The  
244 concentrations were highest for Group 1 and lowest for Group 3. This result indicates that  
245 humic DOM in this region was mainly from a terrestrial source and behaved conservatively in  
246 the freshwater and seawater mixing zone. This trend is commonly observed in coastal waters  
247 worldwide (Coble et al., 1998; Mayer et al., 1999). However, the concentration of  $\text{FDOM}_\text{P}$   
248 showed no correlation with salinity. In general,  $\text{FDOM}_\text{P}$  shows non-conservative behavior in  
249 many estuaries owing to the extra source of DOC produced by *in situ* biological production  
250 (Benner and Opsahl, 2001). In the study region, a remarkably high  $\text{FDOM}_\text{P}$  concentration was  
251 observed at station M4-1 in 2011, where DOC concentration was highest. This trend also  
252 supports the argument, based on the  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ -DOC results, that the main source of DOC at this

253 station is from *in situ* biological production. We observed the decoupling between DOC and  
254 FDOM<sub>H</sub> because FDOM<sub>H</sub> is not the major portion of DOC in this bay, except M4-1 station.

255

256 Masan Bay has many potential land sources of DOM from different creeks. In addition,  
257 the treated sewage outflow from a STP is located near station M7-1 (Fig. 1). Many studies have  
258 been conducted to identify organic pollutants from STP (Kannan et al., 2010; Lee et al., 2011).  
259 In our study, however, station M7-1 did not show different DOM characteristics: (1) the  
260 concentrations of DOC, FDOM<sub>H</sub>, and FDOM<sub>P</sub> against salinity did not show anomalously  
261 higher or lower trends, relative to the other stations nearby. (2) The  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ -DOC values at M7-1  
262 ( $-20.6\text{‰}$ ) were close to the marine values (Fry et al., 1998), similar to those in other stations  
263 nearby, although they are known to be lighter in some US wastewater treatment plants ( $-26\text{‰}$ )  
264 (Griffith et al., 2009). (3) A fulvic-like peak was not observed, although a significantly higher  
265 fulvic-like peak (Ex/Em 320–340 nm/410–430 nm) was observed in treated sewage (Baker and  
266 Inverarity, 2004). (4) The increase of FDOM<sub>P</sub> intensities at stations M7-1 and M7-2 was  
267 insignificant relative to those at stations M6-1 and M8, although FDOM<sub>P</sub> is often used as a  
268 tracer of anthropogenic material including treated effluents (Hudson et al., 2007). Thus, we  
269 conclude that the concentration of DOC at station M7-1 was not influenced by STP. This STP  
270 appears to reduce TOC concentrations to a level that cannot influence the DOC concentrations  
271 resulting from the other mixing sources, as shown in several other estuaries (Abril et al., 2002).

272 In general, anomalously high FDOM<sub>P</sub> was observed for anthropogenic sources (Coble,  
273 1996; Baker et al., 2003). The  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$  values of sewage effluents generally ranged from  $-22\text{‰}$  to  
274  $-28.5\text{‰}$  (Andrews et al., 1998; Barros et al., 2010), and those of STP effluents ranged from  $-$   
275  $24\text{‰}$  to  $-28\text{‰}$  (Griffith et al., 2009). The  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$  vs FDOM<sub>P</sub> plot (Fig. 5b) shows that there was  
276 no increase in FDOM<sub>P</sub> concentrations for samples which had depleted  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$  values. Thus, we

277 conclude that there was no significant DOC input from untreated sewage or STP sources in this  
278 bay.

279

#### 280 **4. Conclusions**

281 We determined the sources of DOM in 2011 and 2016 using the  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ -DOC, FDOM,  
282 and DOC/DON ratios. The main sources were separated into three groups based on DOC  
283 concentrations versus salinity plots. The DOM concentrations in the first group in 2011, which  
284 included the lowest salinity waters, were found to be mixtures of terrestrial DOM and open-  
285 ocean DOM sources based on the  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$  values of  $-25.4\text{‰}$  to  $-23.3\text{‰}$  and a good correlation  
286 between FDOM<sub>H</sub> and salinity. The excess DOC concentrations in the second group in higher  
287 salinity waters in 2011 were found to be produced *in situ* by biological production based on  
288 more enriched  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ -DOC values ( $-22.0\text{‰}$  to  $-20.6\text{‰}$ ), high FDOM<sub>P</sub> concentrations, and low  
289 C/N ratios. The excess DOC concentrations in the third group in high salinity waters in 2016  
290 seemed to be produced by direct interaction between land and seawater based on more depleted  
291  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ -DOC values ( $-28.8\text{‰}$  and  $-21.1\text{‰}$ ), low FDOM concentrations, and high C/N ratios. Our  
292 results show that the combination of multiple DOM tracers, including  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ -DOC, FDOM, and  
293 DOC/DON ratios, is powerful for discriminating the complicated sources of DOM occurring  
294 in coastal waters.

295

#### 296 **Data availability**

297 All data used in this paper can be accessed by email to the corresponding author upon request.

298

#### 299 **Author contribution**

300 GK conceptualized the study. SL and TK collected the samples. SL performed the analyses. SL

301 and GK wrote the manuscript and all authors contributed to the interpretation and discussion  
302 of the results.

303

#### 304 **Competing interests**

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

306

#### 307 **Acknowledgements**

308 We thank members of the Environmental and Marine Biogeochemistry Laboratory  
309 (EMBL) for their assistance with sampling and laboratory analyses. We would like to thank  
310 two anonymous reviewers for constructive discussion and valuable comments.

311

#### 312 **Financial support**

313 This work was supported by the National Research Foundation of Korea (NRF) grant  
314 funded by the Korean government (MEST) (NRF-2018R1A2B3001147).

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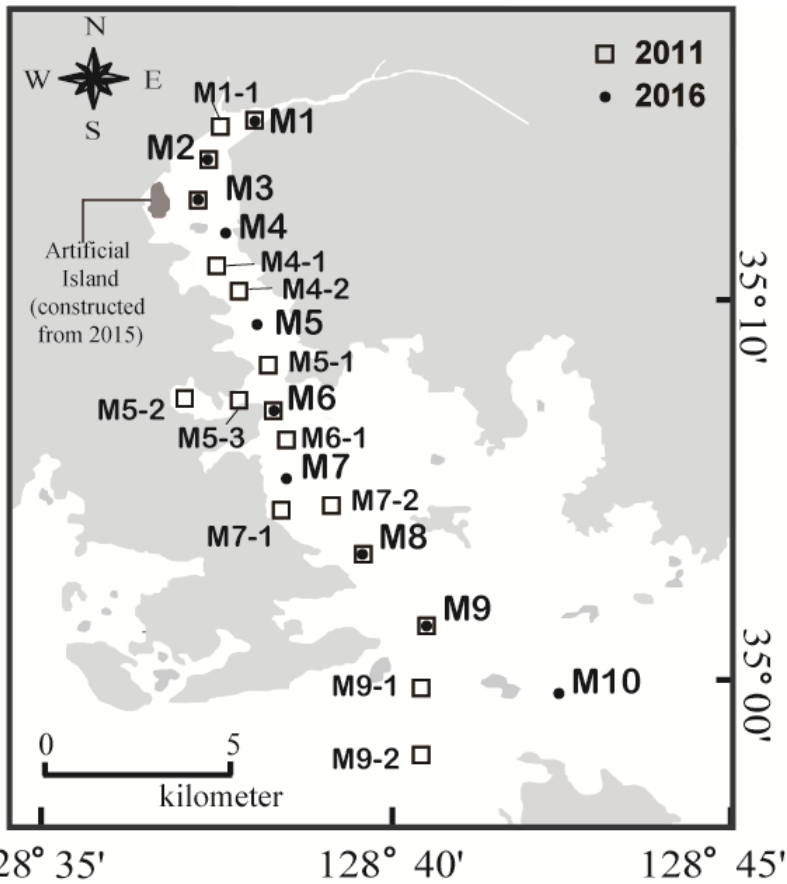
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494 **Table 1.** Salinity, DOC, FDOM<sub>H</sub>, FDOM<sub>P</sub>, and  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ -DOC in surface water of Masan Bay in  
 495 August 2011 and August 2016.

Sampling	station	salinity	DOC ( $\mu\text{M}$ )	FDOM <sub>H</sub> (QSU)	FDOM <sub>P</sub> (QSU)	$\delta^{13}\text{C}$ - DOC (‰)	DON ( $\mu\text{M}$ )	DOC/DON
Aug. 2011	M1	14.0	148	6.7	13.6	-25.4	12	12
	M1-1	12.8	151	9.2	14.3	-24.3	7	21
	M2	10.2	157	9.0	5.4	-24.6	11	14
	M3	16.3	147	8.2	14.7	n/a	16	9
	M4-1	19.0	186	7.1	78.7	-21.9	13	15
	M4-2	18.6	155	6.9	8.3	-21.6	10	15
	M5-1	17.7	138	4.5	4.5	-23.3	24	6
	M5-2	18.4	133	5.8	20.9	-24.5	11	12
	M5-3	18.9	135	8.0	11.3	-23.7	13	11
	M6	18.4	146	6.6	24.8	-23.3	19	8
	M6-1	19.2	142	5.5	7.4	n/a	9	15
	M7-1	19.5	157	5.8	10.5	-20.6	11	15
	M7-2	18.9	148	5.6	9.6	-21.5	12	12
	M8	19.5	152	5.6	7.6	-21.5	15	10
	M9	18.8	149	5.6	14.5	-21.9	10	15
	M9-1	19.1	154	5.1	10.2	-21.0	12	13
M9-2	20.8	106	3.6	13.1	-22.0	8	13	
Aug. 2016	M1	29.2	191	2.7	4.8	-22.8	15	13
	M2	29.9	164	2.0	3.4	-21.1	7	22
	M3	26.0	155	2.5	3.8	-28.8	8	19
	M4	27.4	149	1.9	3.5	-22.6	9	17
	M5	25.5	165	1.8	3.3	-23.5	10	16
	M6	30.5	147	1.1	3.0	-23.7	6	26
	M7	31.4	166	1.3	4.4	-26.2	4	45
	M8	32.0	123	0.8	2.3	-23.7	5	26
	M9	32.0	146	0.6	2.1	-24.4	5	30
	M10	31.9	130	0.7	2.7	-25.0	3	39

496 n/a = not available.



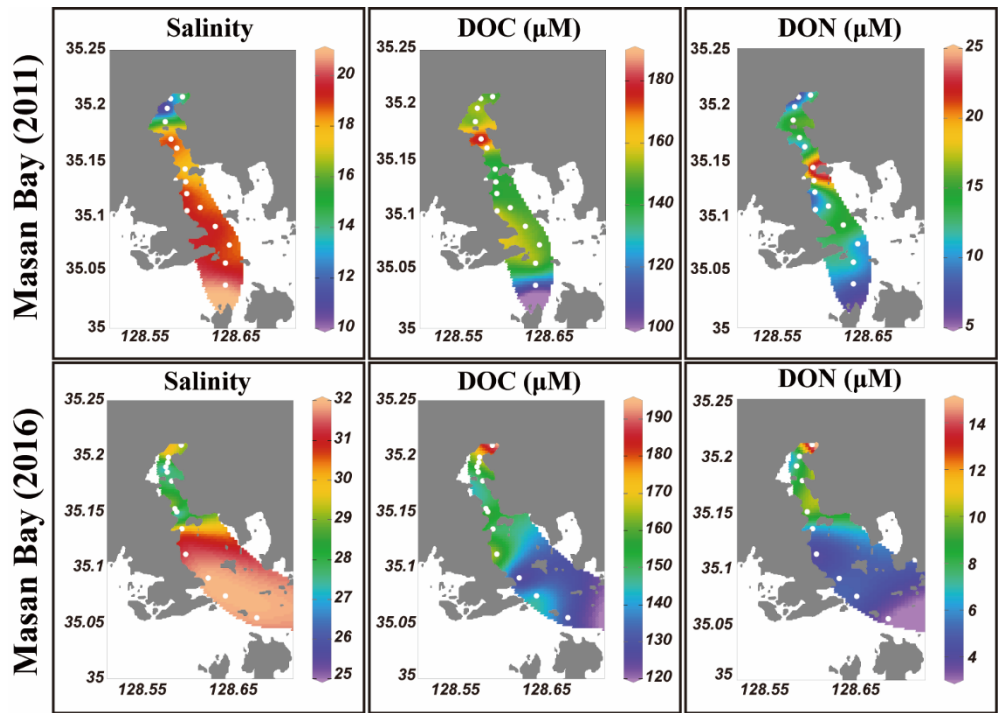
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**Figure 1.** A map showing the sampling stations for DOC,  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ -DOC, FDOM, and DOC/DON ratio in Masan Bay, Korea, in 2011 and 2016.

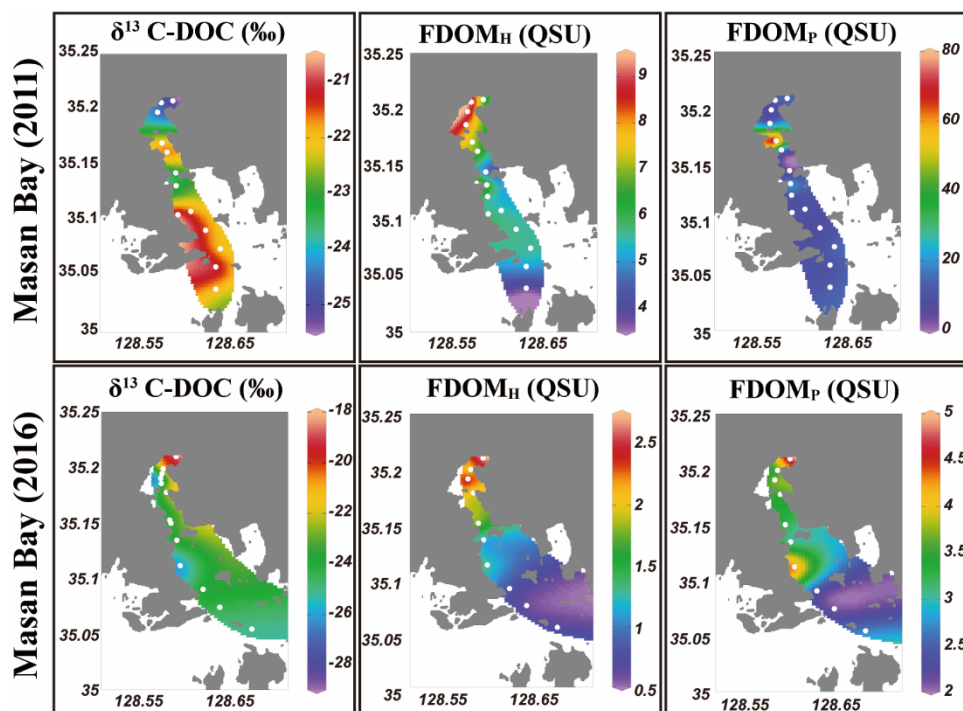




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501 **Figure 2.** Surface distributions of salinity, DOC, and DON in Masan Bay, Korea, in 2011 and

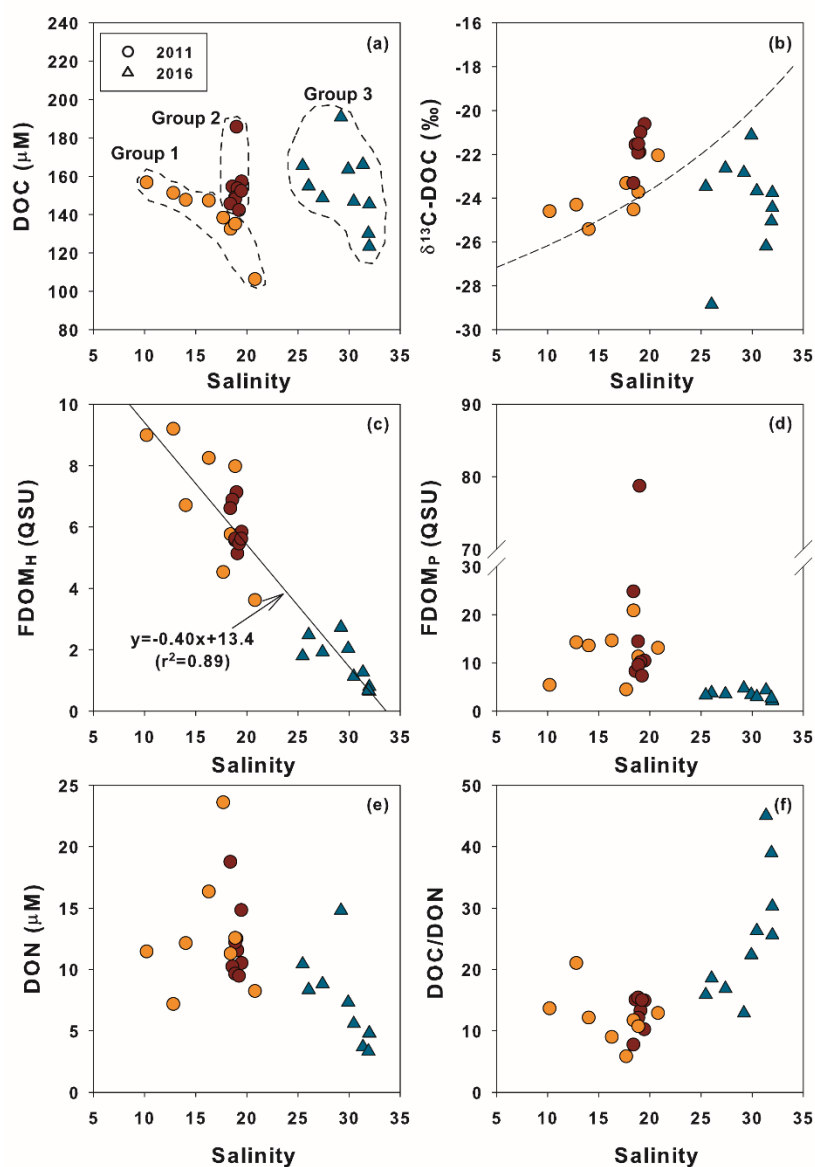
502 2016.



503

504 **Figure 3.** Surface distributions of  $\delta^{13}\text{C-DOC}$ ,  $\text{FDOM}_H$ , and  $\text{FDOM}_P$  in Masan Bay, Korea, in

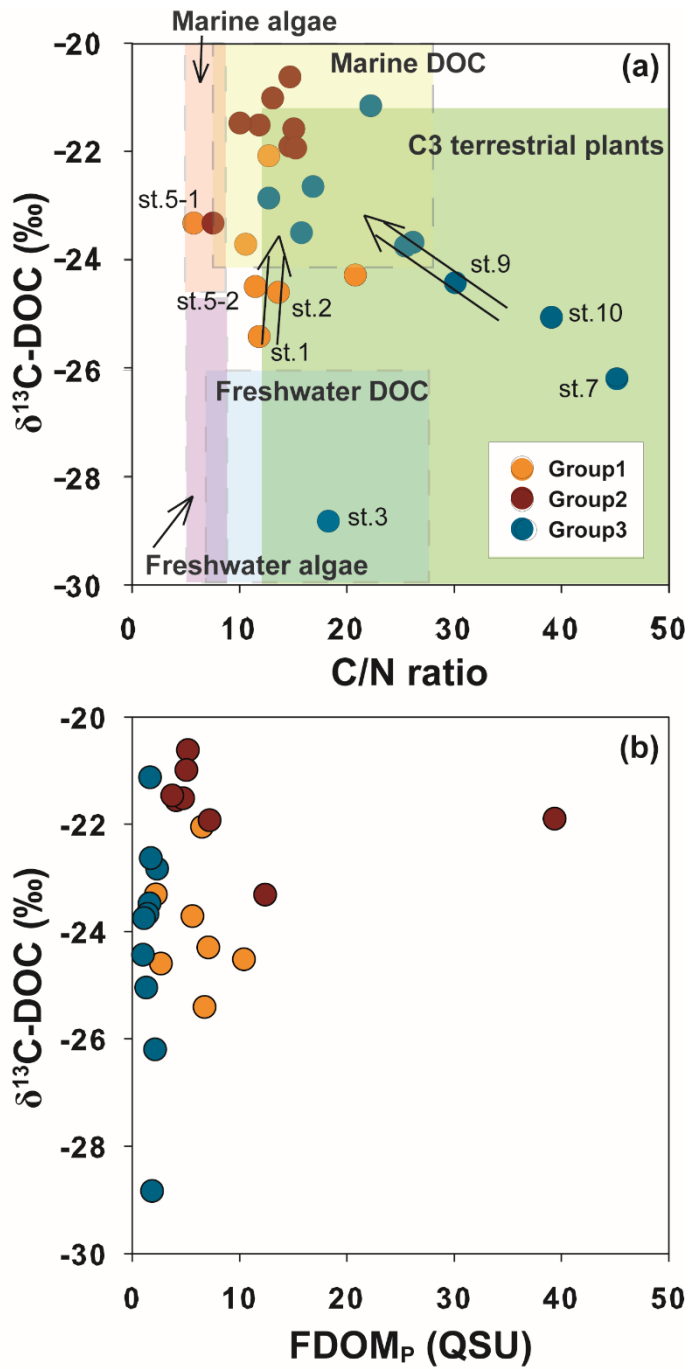
505 2011 and 2016.



506

507 **Figure 4.** Relationships between salinity versus (a) DOC, (b)  $\delta^{13}\text{C-DOC}$ , (c)  $\text{FDOM}_H$ , (d)  
 508  $\text{FDOM}_P$ , (e) DON, and (f) DOC/DON values. The DOC concentrations are divided into three  
 509 groups based on probable different sources (in the dashed circles). The dashed line (b)  
 510 represents the binary conservative mixing line for  $\delta^{13}\text{C-DOC}$  between the terrestrial end-  
 511 member and the marine end-member. The solid line (c) represents a linear regression fit of the  
 512 data.

513



514

515 **Figure 5.** Relationships between  $\delta^{13}\text{C-DOC}$  values versus (a) DOC/DON ratio and (b) FDOM<sub>p</sub>  
 516 in Masan Bay, Korea. The ranges of DOC/DON ratio and  $\delta^{13}\text{C-DOC}$  values for each group are  
 517 based on the values reported by Lamb et al. (2006) and Beaupré (2015).