

1 **Spatial and temporal variability in the response of**
2 **phytoplankton and bacterioplankton to B-vitamin**
3 **amendments in an upwelling system**

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10 **Abstract.** We experimentally evaluated the temporal (inter-day and inter-season) and
11 spatial variability in microbial plankton responses to vitamin B12 and/or B1 supply
12 (solely or in combination with inorganic nutrients) in coastal and oceanic waters of the
13 northeast Atlantic Ocean. Phytoplankton and, to a lesser extent, prokaryotes were strongly
14 limited by inorganic nutrients. Inter-day variability in microbial plankton responses to B-
15 vitamins was limited compared to inter-season variability, suggesting that B-vitamins
16 availability might be partially controlled by factors operating at seasonal scale.
17 Chlorophyll-*a* (Chl-*a*) concentration and prokaryote biomass (PB) significantly increased
18 after B-vitamin amendments in 13 % and 21 %, respectively, of the 216 cases (36
19 experiments x 6 treatments). Most of these positive responses were produced by
20 treatments containing either B12 solely or B12 combined with B1 in oceanic waters,
21 which was consistent with the significantly lower average vitamin B12 ambient
22 concentrations compared to that in the coastal station. Negative responses, implying a
23 decrease in Chl-*a* or PB, represented 21 % for phytoplankton and 26 % for prokaryotes.
24 Growth stimulation by B1 addition was more frequent on prokaryotes than in
25 phytoplankton, suggesting that B1 auxotrophy in the sampling area could be more
26 widespread in prokaryotes than in phytoplankton. Negative responses to B-vitamins were
27 generalized in coastal waters in summer, and were associated to a high contribution of
28 Flavobacteriales to the prokaryote community. This observation suggests that the external
29 supply of B12 and/or B1 may promote negative interactions between microbial
30 components when B-vitamin auxotrophs are abundant. The microbial response patterns
31 to B12 and/or B1 amendments were significantly correlated with changes in the
32 prokaryotic community composition, highlighting the pivotal role of prokaryotes in B-
33 vitamins cycling in marine ecosystems.

34

35 **1 Introduction**

36 Phytoplankton accounts for almost half of the global net primary production (Field et al.,
37 1998) and may eventually cause toxic episodes, such as those associated to the
38 proliferation of toxic-producing species, entailing human health problems and large
39 economic losses (Hallegraeff, 1993; van Dolah et al., 2001). Recent emerging evidence
40 suggests the role of biologically active organic compounds, such as B-vitamins, on the
41 control of marine productivity in both coastal and oceanic waters (Panzeca et al., 2006;
42 Bertrand et al., 2007; Gobler et al., 2007; Koch et al., 2011; Browning et al., 2017, 2018).
43 B-vitamins act as cofactors for enzymatic reactions and are involved in many important
44 metabolic pathways (Madigan et al., 2005; Koch et al., 2011; Monteverde et al., 2017).
45 Vitamin B12 (B12 herein), which is exclusively synthesized by some bacteria and archaea
46 (Roth et al., 1996; Martens et al., 2002; Warren et al., 2002), acts as a cofactor of three
47 enzymes in eukaryotes (methionine synthase, methylmalonyl-coA mutase and
48 ribonucleotide reductase type II) (Helliwell et al., 2011; Bertrand and Allen, 2012). In
49 comparison, over 20 different B12-dependent enzymes are found in bacteria (Roth et al.,
50 1996), making B12 critically important also for these organisms. Vitamin B1 (B1 herein)
51 plays a pivotal role in intermediary carbon metabolism and is a cofactor for a number of
52 enzymes involved in primary carbohydrate and branched-chain amino acid metabolism
53 (Croft et al., 2006).

54 Most eukaryote phytoplankton species are auxotrophs for one or more B-vitamins,
55 consequently requiring an exogenous supply of these molecules (Bertrand and Allen,
56 2012; Carlucci and Bowes, 1970; Haines and Guillard, 1974; Helliwell et al., 2011).
57 Moreover, genomic data also indicate widespread B-vitamins auxotrophy among many
58 bacterial taxonomic groups (Sañudo-Wilhelmy et al., 2014; Paerl et al., 2018), which
59 implies that phytoplankton and bacterioplankton may eventually compete for the

60 acquisition of these compounds (Koch et al., 2012). Auxotrophic microorganisms may
61 acquire the required vitamins from the environment or through biotic interactions with
62 prototrophic (biosynthetically competent) microorganisms (Droop, 2007; Grant et al.,
63 2014; Kazamia et al., 2012). A well-known example is the mutualistic interaction
64 between B12 or B12 and B1 dependent phytoplankton and bacterioplankton (Croft et al.,
65 2005; Amin et al., 2012; Cooper and Smith, 2015; Cruz-López and Maske, 2016).

66 Even though B-vitamins appear to be important and potentially limiting factors for
67 microbial plankton, our understanding of B-vitamins cycling in the ocean is largely
68 limited by the complex and still evolving analytical methodology for its quantification in
69 natural waters (Okbami and Sañudo-Wilhelmy, 2004, 2005; Suffridge et al., 2017).
70 Sañudo-Wilhelmy et al. (2012) found extensive areas of coastal waters with close to
71 undetectable B12 concentrations, suggesting that microbes might be well adapted to drive
72 under limiting conditions for this growth factor.

73 The factors limiting phytoplankton and bacterial growth in marine ecosystems are known
74 to vary over different spatial and temporal scales (Cullen et al., 1992; Arrigo, 2005;
75 Martínez-García et al., 2010b; Moore et al., 2013), in accordance with the dynamic nature
76 of microbial communities (Pinhassi et al., 2003; Fuhrman et al., 2008; Hernando-Morales
77 et al., 2018). Compared to mineral nutrient and trace elements, much less is known about
78 B vitamin limitation and its spatial and temporal variability in marine ecosystems.

79 Some studies have shown enhanced phytoplankton biomass associated to B12
80 amendments in both temperate coastal and polar waters (Bertrand et al., 2007; Gobler et
81 al., 2007; Koch et al., 2011, 2012). The simultaneous effect of vitamin B12 supply on
82 both phytoplankton and bacteria has been barely explored (Koch et al., 2011, Barber-
83 Lluç et al., 2019). To our knowledge, the effect of B1 amendments on marine natural
84 microbial plankton community succession has been only assessed by Gobler et al. (2007),

85 who suggested that high concentration of B-vitamins, associated with high bacterial
86 abundance, caused an increase in auxotrophs, mostly dinoflagellates.

87 The Ría de Vigo (NW Spain) is a coastal embayment affected by intermittent upwelling
88 of subsurface cold and inorganic nutrient-rich water from March to September and the
89 downwelling of open ocean surface water from October to March (Fraga, 1981; Barton
90 et al., 2015). In addition to this seasonality, fluctuations of wind patterns in the area
91 generate upwelling and downwelling events occurring within each season (Alvarez-
92 Salgado et al., 1993; Figueiras et al., 2002). A recent study by Barber-Lluch et al. (2019)
93 at a shelf station off the Ría de Vigo (NW Spain) showed monthly variation in the
94 response of phytoplankton and bacteria to nutrient and/or B12 additions in surface waters,
95 likely related to variation in the ambient concentration of B12 and the taxonomic
96 community composition. Unfortunately, these authors did not specifically assess the role
97 of these factors on the microbial response to the amendments.

98 Within this context, the aim of our study was to explore spatial (horizontal and vertical)
99 and temporal (inter-day and inter-season) variability patterns in B12 and B1 vitamin
100 limitation in relation to the prevailing initial abiotic (e.g., nutrient and B12
101 concentrations) and biotic (eukaryote and prokaryote community composition)
102 conditions in this productive ecosystem. We conducted a total of thirty-six microcosm
103 bioassays in February, April, and August 2016 to evaluate the response of heterotrophic
104 bacteria and phytoplankton biomasses to the addition of B12 and/or B1.

105 Considering that a large fraction of eukaryotic phytoplankton and bacterial taxa require
106 exogenous B-vitamins and considering the different requirements and capabilities to
107 synthesize B-vitamins by different microbial taxa, we hypothesize that microbial
108 community composition play a relevant role in explaining B-vitamins limitation patterns
109 in microbial plankton.

110

111 **2 Methods**

112 **2.1 Sampling strategy**

113 Thirty-six enrichment experiments were performed in the upwelling system near Ría de
114 Vigo on board “B/O Ramón Margalef” in three different oceanographic cruises
115 (ENVISION I, II & III) conducted in 2016. Two different locations of the East Atlantic
116 Ocean, one coastal station (C) (42° N, 8.88° W) and one oceanic station (Oc) (42° N, 9.06°
117 W) (Fig. 1a), were sampled during three different seasons aimed to cover a wide range of
118 initial hydrographic and ecological conditions. The 10-day cruises were conducted in
119 February (ENVISION I), coinciding with the spring bloom, and April (ENVISION II)
120 and August (ENVISION III) during the early and late summer upwelling, respectively.
121 During each cruise, 12 enrichment experiments were carried out on board, 3 experiments
122 in each station (C-a, C-b & C-c and Oc-a, Oc-b & Oc-c, respectively) with water from
123 two different depths. Each experiment began on the first (day 0), third (day 2) and sixth
124 (day 5) of each cruise for the coast and on the second (day 1), fourth (day 3) and seventh
125 (day 6) of each cruise for the ocean (Fig. 1b, c). Water was collected using 20 l Niskin
126 metal-free bottles. Surface (5 m) and sub-surface chlorophyll maximum (SCM) (between
127 10 m and 50 m according to the CTD data) samples were taken (Fig. 2a-f). We failed to
128 sample the SCM on two occasions (C-a in February and C-a in April), due to large vertical
129 displacements between the downward and the upward casts. Vertical profiles of
130 temperature, salinity and chlorophyll fluorescence were obtained using a regular stainless
131 CTD-rosette down to 60 m in the coastal station and to 200 m in oceanic station. Samples
132 for chlorophyll-a (Chl-a), prokaryotic biomass (PB), dissolved nutrient concentration,
133 including vitamin B12, and microbial plankton community were collected at the

134 beginning (time zero, hereafter referred to as t_0) of each enrichment experiment. Daily
135 upwelling index (UI) values were computed by the Instituto Español de Oceanografía
136 (www.indicedeafloramiento.ieo.es/) in a $2^\circ \times 2^\circ$ geostrophic cell centered at 42°N , 10°W , using data from atmospheric pressure at sea level, derived from the WXMAP model
137 $^\circ\text{W}$, using data from atmospheric pressure at sea level, derived from the WXMAP model
138 (Gonzalez-Nuevo et al., 2014). Precipitation data was obtained from the Regional
139 Weather Forecast Agency-Meteogalicia (<http://www.meteogalicia.gal>) in the
140 meteorological station Illas Cies (ID 10125).

141 **2.2. Experimental design**

142 Seawater samples were gently pre-filtered through a $200\ \mu\text{m}$ mesh to exclude large
143 zooplankton in order to ensure good replicability and collected into a 20 l acid-cleaned
144 polyethylene carboy. It is important to note that incidental trace-metal contamination
145 could have occurred during water collection. Following sample collection, 300 ml PAR
146 and UVR transparent, sterile, and non-toxic (whirl-pak) bags were filled and nutrients
147 were added establishing eight different enrichment treatments as follows: (1) control
148 treatment (C); (2) inorganic nutrient treatment (I); (3) vitamin B12 (Sigma, V2876)
149 treatment; (4) vitamin B1 (Sigma, T4625) treatment; (5) Inorganic nutrients and vitamin
150 B12 (I+B12) treatment; (6) Inorganic nutrients and vitamin B1 (I+B1) treatment; (7)
151 vitamins B12 and B1 (B12+B1) treatment and (8) Inorganic nutrients with vitamins B12
152 and B1 (I+B12+B1) treatment (see Table 1 for details). Inorganic nutrients were added to
153 avoid that inorganic nutrient limitation masked the responses to B vitamins. The nutrient
154 concentrations of the additions were the same as previously used in similar enrichment
155 experiments in the sampling area (Martinez-García et al., 2010a). The amount of B12 and
156 B1 vitamin experimentally added approximated maximum concentrations previously
157 observed in coastal areas (Okbami and Sañudo-Wilhelmy 2004, 2005, Sañudo-
158 Wilhelmy et al., 2006). Each treatment had 3 replicates resulting in 24 whirl-pak bags

159 per experiment. To assess short-term effects of nutrient inputs, experimental bags were
160 incubated on-deck during 72 h. In-situ temperature was reproduced by submerging the
161 bags in tanks filled with constantly circulating surface seawater. To simulate light
162 intensity at the SCM the incident light was attenuated by covering the tanks with mesh
163 screens.

164 **2.3 Chlorophyll-*a***

165 Chlorophyll-*a* (Chl-*a*) concentration was measured at t_0 and after 72 h incubation as a
166 phytoplankton biomass proxy. 300 ml of water samples were filtered through 0.2 μm
167 polycarbonate filters and frozen at -20°C until further analysis. Chl-*a* was extracted with
168 90 % acetone and kept in darkness at 4°C overnight. Fluorescence was determined with a
169 TD-700 Turner Designs fluorometer calibrated with pure Chl-*a* (absorption coefficient at
170 665 nm = 12.6) standard solution.

171 **2.4 Flow cytometry**

172 Samples for prokaryote abundance quantification (2 ml) were preserved with 1 %
173 paraformaldehyde + 0.05 % glutaraldehyde (final concentrations). Samples were
174 incubated 20 min for the fixative to act on cells, immersed in liquid nitrogen for 15 min,
175 and frozen at -80°C . Abundance of prokaryotes was determined using a FACSCalibur
176 flow cytometer equipped with a laser emitting at 488nm. Samples were stained with
177 SYBR Green DNA fluorochrome, and bacterial abundance was detected by their
178 signature of side scatter (SSC) and green fluorescence as described by Gasol and Del
179 Giorgio, 2000. The empirical calibration between light side scatter (SSC) and cell
180 diameter described by Calvo-Díaz and Moran (2006) were used to estimate cell
181 biovolume (BV). BV was converted into biomass by using the allometric factor of

182 Norland (1993: $\text{fg C cell}^{-1} = 120 \times \text{BV}^{0.72}$) for the coastal experiments and using the open
183 ocean conversion factor for the oceanic experiments ($\text{fg C cell}^{-1} = 350 \times \text{BV}$).

184 **2.5 Nutrients**

185 Aliquots for inorganic nutrient determinations (ammonium, nitrite, nitrate, phosphate,
186 and silicate) were collected before all other variables and directly from the Niskin bottle
187 in order to avoid contamination. Polyethylene bottles (50 ml) precleaned with 5 % HCl
188 were filled with the sample using contamination-free plastic gloves and immediately
189 frozen at -20°C until analysis using standard colorimetric methods with a Bran-Luebbe
190 segmented flow analyzer (Hansen and Grasshoff 1983). The detection limit was $0.1 \mu\text{mol}$
191 l^{-1} for nitrate, $0.02 \mu\text{mol l}^{-1}$ for nitrite and phosphate and $0.05 \mu\text{mol l}^{-1}$ for ammonium
192 and silicate. Dissolved inorganic nitrogen (DIN) concentration was calculated as the sum
193 of the ammonium, nitrite and nitrate concentrations.

194 **2.6 Vitamin B12**

195 Seawater samples for dissolved vitamin analysis were taken at surface and SCM depth on
196 day 1, day 3 and day 5 in the coastal, and on day 1, day 3 and day 6 oceanic station of
197 each cruise (Table S1 in the Supplement). Samples were filtered through $0.2 \mu\text{m}$ sterivex
198 filters and frozen at -20°C until further analysis. Samples (1 l) were preconcentrated using
199 a solid-phase extraction with a C18 resin (Bondesil C18, Agilent) at pH 6.5 and rate of
200 1ml/min . Elution was performed with 12 ml of methanol (MeOH) LCMS grade that was
201 removed via evaporation with nitrogen in a Turbovap. Gas pressure was initially set at 5
202 PSI and was slowly increased to 15 PSI until 300-500 μl of sample remained. The
203 concentrated samples were frozen at -20°C until further analysis using liquid
204 chromatography coupled to mass spectrometry system.

205 The concentrate was filtered again through a cellular acetate membrane 0.2 μm
206 (Phenomenex) prior to the analysis. Ultra Performance Liquid Chromatography tandem
207 Mass Spectrometry 3Q (UPLC-MS/MS) methodology was adapted from Sañudo-
208 Wilhelmy et al. (2012), Heal et al. (2014) and Suffridge et al. (2017). Detection and
209 quantification of dissolved vitamin B12 (cyanocobalamin and hydroxocobalamin) was
210 conducted using an Agilent 1290 Infinity LC system (Agilent Technologies, Waghaeusel-
211 Wiesental, Germany), coupled to an Agilent G6460A triple quadrupole mass
212 spectrometer equipped with an Agilent Jet Stream ESI source. The LC system used a C18
213 reversed-phase column (Agilent Zorbax SB-C18 Rapid Resolution HT (2.1 inned
214 diameter \times 50 mm length, 1.8 μm particle size) with a 100 μl sample loop. Agilent
215 Technologies software was used for data acquisition and analysis. Chromatographic
216 separation was performed using MeOH and water LCMS grade, both buffered to pH 5
217 with 0.5 % acetic acid, as mobile phases in a 15 minutes' gradient. Gradient starting at 7
218 % MeOH for 2 min, changing to 100 % MeOH by minute 11, continuing at 100 % MeOH
219 until 13.5 min and returning to initial conditions to complete 15 min. Limits of detection
220 (LODs) and limits of quantification (LOQs) were determined using sequential dilutions
221 of the lowest point of the calibration curves. LODs were defined as the lowest detectable
222 concentration of the analyte with a signal-to-noise (S/N) ratio for the qualitative transition
223 of at least 3. In the same way, LOQs were defined as the lowest quantifiable
224 concentration with a S/N ratio of 10 for the quantitative transition. S/N ratios were
225 calculated using the Mass Hunter Workstation software B.04.01. The LODs obtained
226 were 0.04 for hydroxocobalamin (OHB12) and 0.01 pmol l^{-1} for cyanocobalamin
227 (CNB12), while the LOQs values were 0.05 and 0.025 pmol l^{-1} for OHB12 and CNB12,
228 respectively. The average B12 recovery percentage after pre-concentration and extraction
229 of B-vitamin spiked samples was 93%. B-vitamin free seawater was spiked with CNB12

230 and OHB12 standards for recovery percentage analysis. We failed to detect B1 vitamin
231 in the pre-concentrated samples, likely due to a low ambient concentration and low pre-
232 concentration volume.

233 **2.7 Microbial plankton community**

234 DNA samples were taken during the experimental period at surface and SCM depth in
235 the coastal and oceanic station. In particular, sampling of the microbial plankton
236 community was carried out on day 0, day 1, day 3 and day 5 of each cruise. Community
237 composition was assessed by sequencing the V4 and V5 regions from 16S rRNA gene
238 (16S rDNA) for prokaryotes and the V4 region from 18S rRNA gene (18S rDNA) for
239 eukaryotes. Two liters of water samples were sequentially filtered through 3 µm pore size
240 polycarbonate filters and 0.2 µm pore size sterivex filter and immediately frozen in liquid
241 nitrogen and conserved at -80 °C. DNA retained in the 3 µm and 0.2 µm filters was
242 extracted by using the PowerSoil DNA isolation kit (MoBio Laboratories Inc., CA, USA)
243 and the PowerWater DNA isolation kit (MoBio Laboratories Inc., CA, USA),
244 respectively, according to the manufacturer's instructions. Prokaryotic DNA from 0.2 µm
245 filters was amplified using the universal primers "515F and 926R" and eukaryotic DNA
246 from both, 3 µm and 0.2 µm filters, using the primers "TAReuk454FWD1" and
247 "TAReukREV3". Amplified regions were sequenced in an Illumina MiSeq platform and
248 the sequences obtained were analyzed with software package DADA2 (Callahan et al.,
249 2016). SILVA reference database (Quast et al., 2012) was used to taxonomic assignment
250 of 16S amplicon sequence variants (ASVs) and PR2 (Guillou et al., 2012) and the marine
251 protist database from the BioMarks project (Massana et al., 2015) were used to taxonomic
252 assignment of 18S ASVs. The data for this study have been deposited in the European
253 Nucleotide Archive (ENA) at EMBL-EBI (<https://www.ebi.ac.uk/ena>) under accession
254 numbers PRJEB36188 (16S rDNA sequences) and PRJEB36099 (18S rDNA sequences).

255 ASV table is an analogue of the traditional OTU table which records the number of times
256 each exact amplicon sequence variant was observed in each sample (Callahan et al.,
257 2016).

258 The raw ASV tables of prokaryotes and eukaryotes were subsampled to the number of
259 reads present in the sample with the lowest number of reads, which was 2080 and 1286,
260 for 16S rDNA and 18S rDNA, respectively. The abundance of ASVs was averaged for
261 coastal and oceanic samples, differentiating surface and SCM. A total of 1550 unique
262 ASVs of prokaryotes were identified. As many ASVs of eukaryotes were present in both
263 size fractions (e.g. those having a cell size range including 3 μm), we combined datasets
264 derived from the 0.2 and the 3 μm filters for eukaryotic community analyses. As explained
265 in Hernández-Ruiz et al. (2018), we normalized the reads from each filter size by the filter
266 DNA yield, as recommended in Dupont et al. (2015), obtaining 2293 unique ASVs. The
267 sequence abundances of the subsampled ASV tables were transformed using the centered
268 log ratio (clr) (Fernandes et al., 2014; Gloor et al., 2017). Before clr transformation, zeros
269 were replaced by the minimum value that is larger than 0 divided by 2 (Aitchison, 1982;
270 Martín-Fernández et al., 2003).

271 **2.8 Statistical analysis**

272 To compare the effect of different nutrient additions on the response variables,
273 chlorophyll-*a* concentration and prokaryote biomass, we calculated response ratios (RR)
274 by dividing each observation (mean of triplicates) of each treatment by the respective
275 control treatment mean. A value equal to 1 implies no response, a value < 1 implies a
276 negative response and a value > 1 implies growth stimulation after nutrient addition.
277 Secondary limitation by B vitamins was calculated by dividing the mean value in the
278 inorganic nutrients and B vitamin combined treatment by the mean value in the inorganic

279 nutrient addition treatment. In the same way, a value < 1 implies a negative effect of B
280 vitamins and a value > 1 implies stimulation positive effect of B vitamin treatment
281 through secondary limitation.

282 Normal distribution was tested by a Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and non-normal variables
283 were log transformed to attain normality. All statistical analysis were considered
284 significant at the 0.05 significance level and p-value was standardized as proposed by
285 Good (1982) in order to overcome the low number of replicates. Differences between
286 station and depth (spatial variability) and among sampling months (temporal variability)
287 in the responses to B vitamins were evaluated with factorial analysis of variance
288 (ANOVA). Bonferroni post hoc tests analyses were conducted to test which treatments
289 were significantly different from the control treatment in each experiment. Non-metric
290 multidimensional scaling (MDS) was used to analyze the similarities between the samples
291 based on microbial assemblage structure using the PRIMER6 software (Clarke and
292 Warwick, 2001; Clarke and Gorley, 2006). The similarities were evidenced in a
293 multidimensional space by plotting more similar samples closer together. Analysis of
294 similarity (ANOSIM) was used to verify that microbial community composition from the
295 same season and station were more similar to each other than to communities from a
296 different season and station. Z-test was used to test if averaged B vitamins response ratios
297 were significantly different from 1. The RELATE analysis implemented in PRIMER6 was
298 used to relate the B-vitamin response patterns (Bray-Curtis resemblance matrix built from
299 phytoplankton and bacteria response ratios) with: (1) environmental factors (Euclidean
300 resemblance matrix built from normalized values of ammonium, nitrite, nitrate,
301 phosphate, silicate, B12, temperature, salinity, chl-*a* and prokaryote biomass), (2)
302 prokaryote community composition (Euclidean resemblance matrix built from clr-
303 transformed sequence abundance of major taxonomic groups), or (3) eukaryote

304 community composition (Euclidean resemblance matrix built from clr-transformed
305 sequence abundance of major taxonomic groups). RELATE calculates the Spearman rank
306 correlations (Rho) between two resemblance matrices, and the significance is tested by a
307 permutation test (999 permutations). In order to highlight which specific taxonomic
308 groups are associated to changes of microbial plankton (prokaryote plankton and
309 phytoplankton) responses to vitamin B1 and B12, we conducted a distance based
310 redundancy analysis (dbRDA) combined with a distance linear-based model (DistLM)
311 using a step-wise procedure and adjusted r^2 as selection criteria using the PRIMER6
312 software.

313

314 **3 Results**

315 **3.1 Initial conditions**

316 Different hydrographic conditions were found during each cruise (Fig. 1 and Fig. 2). In
317 February, heavy rainfall (Fig. 1c) combined with relaxed winds caused a halocline at 10
318 m depth (Fig. 2m). High levels of Chl-*a* (as derived from the calibrated CTD fluorescence
319 sensor) were observed at the coastal station, being maximum ($4.97 \mu\text{g l}^{-1}$) by the end of
320 the cruise (Fig. 2a). At the oceanic station, Chl-*a* levels remained low (less than $3 \mu\text{g l}^{-1}$)
321 throughout the cruise, being slightly higher in the subsurface layer (Fig. 2d).

322 Strong precipitation during the April cruise (Fig. 1c) caused a persistent surface halocline
323 at the coastal station (Fig. 2n). Maximum Chl-*a* concentrations ranged from 0.99 to 2.73
324 $\mu\text{g l}^{-1}$, declining from day 5 onwards (Fig. 2b), coinciding with an increase in water
325 temperature associated to a downwelling situation. At the oceanic station, a persistent
326 subsurface Chl-*a* maximum (up to $1.61 \mu\text{g l}^{-1}$) was observed throughout the cruise (Fig.
327 2e).

328 In August, strong thermal stratification was observed at both stations (Fig. 2i and Fig. 2l).
329 At the beginning of the cruise, high Chl-*a* concentration (close to 20 $\mu\text{g l}^{-1}$) was observed
330 in subsurface water (Fig. 2c). Chl-*a* was relatively low at the oceanic station, and
331 increased by the end of the sampling period (Fig. 2f) as a consequence of an upwelling
332 event (Fig. 1b), that brought cold and nutrient rich water to the surface, at day 5.

333 Abiotic and biotic conditions at the beginning of each experiment are shown in Fig. 3 and
334 in the supplementary Table S2. Overall, the concentration of dissolved inorganic nitrogen
335 (DIN) was higher at the coastal than at the oceanic station, where very low levels were
336 measured in August (Fig. 3i). At the coastal station, higher DIN concentrations were
337 observed in surface compared to subsurface waters. The DIN:DIP (dissolved inorganic
338 phosphorous) ratio was always lower in open ocean than in the coastal station and mostly
339 below of Redfield ratio (16:1). Phosphorous limitation (DIN:DIP > 16) was frequent in
340 coastal surface waters in February and April (Fig. 3j and Fig. 3k).

341 Chl-*a* concentration varied greatly between stations and seasons but was always higher at
342 the coastal than at the oceanic station (Fig. 3a-c). Prokaryote biomass (PB) increased from
343 winter (February) to summer (August) at the two stations. In February, Chl-*a*
344 concentrations increased by the end of the cruise at both coastal and oceanic stations (Fig.
345 3a), while PB remained very low throughout this sampling period (Fig. 3d). In April, both
346 PB and Chl-*a* were similar in the ocean and the coast, and showed reduced temporal
347 variability (Fig. 3b and Fig. 3e), irrespective of the observed nutrient variability (Fig. 3h).
348 In August, Chl-*a* concentration was much higher at the coastal than at the oceanic station,
349 and showed reduced temporal variability (except at the SCM in the coast) (Fig. 3c). At
350 the beginning of the sampling period, PB was higher in the ocean than in the coast, and
351 tended to decline by the end of the cruise (Fig. 3f).

352 A MDS analysis revealed that microbial community composition showed a relatively
353 reduced variability within period, with samples clustering according to the sampling
354 period (ANOSIM, $p = 0.001$) and station (ANOSIM, $p = 0.001$) (Fig. S1 in the
355 Supplement). Consequently, we averaged the microbial community composition for each
356 period and sampling site. The sampling period-averaged composition of the eukaryote
357 community showed a clear variability among sampling dates, while differences between
358 sampling locations and depths were less pronounced (Fig. 4a). At the coastal location,
359 Mamiellophyceae (*Ostreococcus* and *Micromonas*) were relatively abundant in February
360 and April, but their abundance sharply decreased in August. By contrast, the relative
361 abundance of Dinophyceae was highest in August at both sampling locations. The
362 contribution of diatoms (Bacillariophyta) was very low in summer at the oceanic station
363 and marine alveolates (MALV) groups (MALV-I and MALV-II) were most
364 representative in February at both locations. Flavobacteriales and Rhodobacterales were
365 the dominant prokaryotes (Fig. 4b) in coastal waters, particularly in August, when both
366 represented more than 80 % of sequences, while the Cyanobacteria *Synechococcus* were
367 mostly present in February and April. In oceanic waters, Flavobacteriales and
368 *Synechococcus* were the dominant prokaryotes. SAR11 clade and Archaea
369 (Euryarchaeota and Thaumarchaeota) were most abundant in February at both sampling
370 locations.

371 B12 concentration was low, ranging from 0.06 to 0.66 pmol l^{-1} (Table S1 in the
372 Supplement) Average B12 concentration was significantly higher in the coast (0.30 ± 0.13
373 pmol l^{-1}) than in the ocean ($0.15 \pm 0.12 \text{ pmol l}^{-1}$) (t-test, $t = 3.17$, $gl = 10$, $p = 0.01$), and
374 showed less variability at the coastal than at the oceanic station (Fig. 4c).

375 **3.2 Short-term phytoplankton and prokaryote responses to inorganic nutrients and** 376 **vitamin additions**

377 The temporal development of the phytoplankton (as estimated from changes in Chl-*a*
378 concentration) and prokaryote biomass in the control treatments showed different
379 patterns. Chl-*a* remained either stable or increased after 72 h of incubation in 87.5% of
380 the experiments conducted in February and April. However, Chl-*a* mostly decreased in
381 the coastal experiments conducted in August (Fig. 5a and Fig. 5c). A very similar pattern
382 was observed for prokaryote biomass, although the decrease in biomass occurred both in
383 the coastal and in the oceanic stations during summer (Fig. 6).

384 The response ratios (RRs) of Chl-*a* and prokaryote biomass were calculated as a measure
385 of the magnitude of phytoplankton and prokaryote responses to nutrient and vitamin
386 treatments (Fig S2, S3 and S4 in the supplement). The RRs differed between sampling
387 stations (ANOVA, $F(1,502) = 18.059$, $p < 0.001$) and among sampling periods (ANOVA,
388 $F(2,501) = 6.54$, $p = 0.002$). The most prominent responses of phytoplankton, compared
389 to the control treatment, occurred after inorganic nutrient amendments, especially in
390 surface oceanic waters (Fig. 5c and Fig. S2b, f and j in the Supplement). The magnitude
391 of the phytoplankton response to inorganic nutrients was significantly higher in oceanic
392 than in coastal waters (ANOVA, $F(1,34) = 5.22$, $p = 0.028$). Prokaryotes responded less
393 than phytoplankton to inorganic nutrients and, in addition, heterotrophic prokaryote
394 responses to inorganic nutrients were similar between coastal and oceanic waters
395 (ANOVA, $F(1,34) = 1.68$, $p = 0.203$). The addition of inorganic nutrients caused
396 significant increases in Chl-*a* in 31 out of the 36 experiments (Fig. 5 and Fig S2 in the
397 supplement), while prokaryotes increased their biomass in 19 out of 36 experiments (Fig.
398 6 and Fig. S2 in the Supplement).

399 The addition of B12 stimulated phytoplankton in 5 out of 36 experiments (Fig. 5 and Fig.
400 S3 in the Supplement) and prokaryotes in 6 experiments (Fig. 6 and Fig. S4 in the
401 Supplement). Chl-*a* increased in 3, and prokaryote biomass in 7 out of 36 experiments

402 after adding B1 (Fig. 5 and Fig. 6). B vitamins also caused negative responses of
403 phytoplankton (Fig. 5 and Fig. S3 in the Supplement) and prokaryote biomass (Fig. 6 and
404 Fig. S4 in the Supplement). The addition of vitamins induced decreases of Chl-*a* in 6
405 experiments (4 after adding B12 and 2 after adding B1) and prokaryote biomass in 14
406 experiments (6 after adding B12 and 8 after adding B1). Secondary limitation by B1
407 and/or B12 was occasionally observed when inorganic nutrients were limiting, leading to
408 a higher biomass increase in the treatments including both inorganic nutrients and
409 vitamins as compared to the inorganic nutrient addition alone (Fig. 5, Fig. 6 and Fig. S3
410 and Fig. S4 in the Supplement). In the case of Chl-*a*, secondary limitation by B-vitamins
411 was found in the C-b-surface, Oc-a-SCM and Oc-b-SCM experiments in February, in the
412 C-b-surface and C-b-SCM experiments in April, and in the C-b-SCM, Oc-b-SCM and
413 Oc-c-surface experiments in August (Fig. 5).

414 In order to quantify the relevance of inter-day variability, we calculated the mean
415 coefficient of variation (CV) of the responses to B vitamins (i.e., excluding the responses
416 to inorganic nutrients, and normalizing the responses of the nutrient and vitamin
417 combined treatments to the corresponding response to inorganic nutrients alone) within
418 sampling periods for each sampling point (2 stations and 2 depths). The CV ranged from
419 9%, in subsurface oceanic waters in April, to 34% in surface coastal waters in April,
420 averaging 16 ± 6 (SD) % (data not shown). Considering that short-term (within sampling
421 period) variability was overall very low, and for simplicity, we averaged the responses to
422 B vitamins in the 3 experiments conducted at each of the 12 sampling points to further
423 describe spatial and temporal patterns in the response to B vitamin amendments (Fig. 7).

424 When averaging the responses within each sampling point (Fig. 7), some general patterns
425 emerge. Both phytoplankton and prokaryotes showed more negative than positive
426 responses to B1 and/or B12 amendments. Most positive responses occurred at the oceanic

427 station (83.3%), while negative responses dominated in the coast (61.5%). Phytoplankton
428 significant positive responses mostly occurred in February, showing an average increase
429 of up to 1.2-fold in coastal subsurface waters after B12+B1 amendment (Fig. 7a). The
430 largest significant increase in Chl-a (ca. 1.4-fold) occurred in April after the combined
431 addition of B12 and B1 in coastal surface waters. Significant positive prokaryote
432 responses mainly occurred in August, when the largest increase (ca. 1.3-fold) occurred in
433 coastal subsurface waters after B1 amendment (Fig. 7b). Most positive responses were
434 associated with treatments containing B12 either alone or combined with B1 (Fig. 7b).
435 Phytoplankton primary B1 limitation was only found at the oceanic SCM in February
436 (Fig. 7a), while prokaryote primary B1 limitation only occurred at the coastal SCM in
437 August. In addition, prokaryote secondary B1 limitation occurred in oceanic surface
438 waters in February and August.

439 **3.3 B-vitamin response patterns in relation to environmental factors and prokaryote** 440 **and eukaryote community composition**

441 In order to explore the controlling factors of the observed B-vitamin response patterns,
442 the correlation between the B-vitamin response resemblance matrix and the
443 corresponding resemblance matrices obtained from the initial environmental factors, the
444 initial prokaryotic community composition, or the initial eukaryotic community
445 composition were calculated. Only the prokaryotic community composition significantly
446 correlated with the B-vitamin responses (Spearman Rho = 0.31, $p = 0.041$). We then used
447 distance-based linear modelling (DistLM) to identify the prokaryotic taxa which best
448 explained the microbial plankton responses to B-vitamins (Fig. 8). The resulting model
449 explained 78% of the variation and included seven prokaryotic groups: *Planktomarina*
450 (24%), Actinobacteria (14%), SAR11_clade (8.2%), Cellvibrionales (8.5%),
451 Euryarchaeota (8.7%), Flavobacteriales (9%) and *Synechococcus* (6.1%). The sequential

452 test identified *Planktomarina* and Actinobacteria as the taxa explaining the largest
453 fraction of variation (ca. 24 % and 14%, respectively, data not shown). The total variation
454 explained by the db-RDA1 (34.9%) and db-RDA2 (24.5%) was 59.4 %, both represented
455 as x and y axis, respectively (Fig. 8). The db-RDA1 axis separated, to some extent, coastal
456 samples, where negative responses to B vitamins dominated, from oceanic samples,
457 where most positive responses were found (Fig. 7). The db-RDA plot showed that
458 Cellvibrionales and *Planktomarina* positively correlated with axis 1, while SAR11 and
459 *Synechococcus* showed negative correlation with axis 1. Flavobacteriales and
460 Actinobacteria mostly correlated with the db-RDA2 axis.

461

462 **4 Discussion**

463 Although the dependence of phytoplankton on B vitamin has been previously observed
464 in cultures (e.g. Croft et al., 2006; Droop, 2007; Tang et al., 2010) and in natural microbial
465 assemblages in coastal areas (e.g. Sañudo-Wilhelmy et al., 2006; Gobler et al., 2007;
466 Koch et al., 2011, 2012, Barber-Lluch et al., 2019), this is, to the best of our knowledge,
467 the most complete study about responses of phytoplankton and prokaryotes to vitamin
468 B12 and/or B1 addition. The 36 experiments developed in this study contributed to
469 increase our understanding of the role of vitamins B12 and B1 at different spatial and
470 temporal scales.

471 Considering the high short-time variability of the hydrographic conditions in the area
472 (Alvarez-Salgado et al., 1996), we expected a large inter-day variation in the responses
473 to B vitamin amendments. By contrast, inter-day variability of microbial responses to B
474 vitamins and microbial plankton community composition was relatively small (Fig. 5,
475 Fig. 6, Fig. S1 and Fig. S2 in the supplement). The reduced short-term variability in the

476 responses to B vitamins additions suggested that B vitamin availability might be
477 controlled by factors operating at larger temporal scales, such as the succession of
478 microbial communities associated to seasonal environmental variation (Hernández-Ruiz
479 et al., 2018; Hernando-Morales et al., 2018). Considering this, and for further discussion,
480 we averaged the responses from the three experiments conducted during each sampling
481 period, resulting in a total of 12 experimental situations (2 stations \times 2 depths \times 3 periods).
482 Overall, phytoplankton and/or prokaryote growth enhancement in at least one B vitamin
483 treatment was frequent but relatively small in this productive ecosystem, showing 1.1 to
484 1.3-fold increases in 75% of the experimental situations for phytoplankton and in 50%
485 for bacteria. On the other hand, negative responses to at least one B vitamin treatment
486 occurred in all but one of the experimental situations (Fig. 7). The low and constant B12
487 ambient concentration (Fig. 4c) and the reduced magnitude of microbial responses
488 suggest a close balance between production and consumption of this growth factor.
489 Different patterns of response to B-vitamin amendments were observed in phytoplankton
490 and prokaryotes (Fig. 7), which appear to be mostly explained by the prokaryotic
491 community composition (Fig. 8).

492 **4.1 Positive responses to vitamin B1 and B12 amendments**

493 The experimental design allowed the detection of two categories of B vitamin dependency
494 of the microbial plankton community. A primary limitation by B vitamins occurs when
495 microorganisms respond to additions of B vitamins alone, while a secondary limitation
496 by B vitamins arises when the response to the combined addition of B vitamins and
497 inorganic nutrients is significantly higher than that to inorganic nutrients alone, as a result
498 of the ambient B-vitamin depletion associated to the plankton growth after inorganic
499 nutrient enrichment. Most positive (72% for phytoplankton and 60 % for prokaryotes)
500 responses occurred after single B-vitamins additions, suggesting that inorganic nutrient

501 availability enhance B-vitamin production by the prototrophic microbes. Under nutrient-
502 limiting conditions, the external supply of vitamins could reduce the energy costs
503 associated to its synthesis (Jaehme and Slotboom, 2015), stimulating the growth not only
504 of auxotrophs but also of prototrophs.

505 The significant positive effects of B12 and/or B1 addition, suggest that these compounds
506 may be eventually limiting microbial growth in marine productive ecosystems, as
507 previously observed by other authors (e.g., Panzeca et al., 2006; Sañudo-Wilhelmy et al.,
508 2006; Bertrand et al., 2007; Gobler et al., 2007; Koch et al., 2011; 2012; Barber.-Lluch et
509 al., 2019). Most positive responses to B vitamin amendments were observed in oceanic
510 waters, where B12 concentration was significantly lower than in coastal waters (Fig. 4c).
511 Unfortunately we lack B1 measurements in this study, but, according to previous field
512 studies in other oceanographic regions, a similar pattern to that observed for B12 can be
513 expected (Cohen et al., 2017; Sañudo-Wilhelmy et al., 2012; Suffridge et al., 2018). The
514 overall low and stable concentration of B12 at both sampling locations suggests a high
515 turnover time of this compound in these productive, well-lit waters. Rapid cycling of B12
516 in surface waters may occur due to high biological uptake rates (Taylor and Sullivan,
517 2008; Koch et al., 2012) and/or photochemical degradation (Carlucci et al., 1969;
518 Juzeniene and Nizauskaite, 2013; Juzeniene et al., 2015). The measured B12
519 concentrations were in the lower range reported for coastal sites, and similar to that found
520 in the upwelling system off the California coast in the San Pedro Basin during winter,
521 spring and summer (Panzeca et al., 2009).

522 The increase of Chl-*a* was mostly associated to B12 amendments, which is consistent
523 with the known incapability of eukaryotes to synthesize this vitamin (Croft et al., 2005;
524 Tang et al., 2010; Sañudo-Wilhelmy et al., 2014). Considering the very low concentration
525 of B12 in the sampling area, the relatively limited phytoplankton response to B vitamins

526 suggests that the existing species might have adapted to overcome B12 shortage. For
527 example, changes in external B12 availability may cause shifts from vitamin B12-
528 dependence to vitamin B12-independence in taxa possessing the vitamin B12-
529 independent methionine synthase (MetE) gene (Bertrand et al., 2013; Helliwell et al.,
530 2014). Other strategies used by phytoplankton to cope with low cobalamin concentration
531 include, increased cobalamin acquisition machinery, decreased cobalamin demand, and
532 management of reduced methionine synthase activity through changes in folate and S-
533 adenosyl methionine metabolism (Bertrand et al., 2012). The available data on B12 half-
534 saturation constants for phytoplankton ($0.1-10 \text{ pmol l}^{-1}$) (Droop, 1968, 2007; Taylor and
535 Sullivan, 2008; Tang et al., 2010; Koch et al., 2011) are similar or higher than the B12
536 concentrations measured here (0.3 pmol l^{-1} in the coastal and 0.15 pmol l^{-1} in the oceanic
537 waters, on average), reinforcing the hypothesis of a phytoplankton community adapted to
538 B12 limiting concentrations in this upwelling system.

539 The positive responses of phytoplankton in surface oceanic waters in February seemed to
540 be associated with high abundance of *Synechococcus* and SAR11 (Fig. 4b and Fig. 8).
541 *Synechococcus* produce a B12 analog known as pseudocobalamin, where the lower ligand
542 base adenine replaces 5,6-dimethylbenzimidazole (DMB) (Helliwell et al., 2016). In
543 natural conditions, pseudocobalamin is considerably less bioavailable to eukaryotic algae
544 than other cobalamin forms (Helliwell et al., 2016; Heal et al., 2017). SAR11 do not
545 require B12 and do not have pathways for its synthesis (Sañudo-Wilhelmy et al., 2014;
546 Gómez-Consarnau et al., 2018), suggesting that B12 synthesis could be limited in oceanic
547 waters in winter, due to the low abundance of potential B12 producers.

548 Microbial responses to B vitamins in subsurface oceanic waters in February were
549 associated to high abundance of *Synechococcus* and, to some extent, of Actinobacteria
550 (Fig. 8). In these experiments, positive effects of B1 addition on phytoplankton and

551 prokaryotes were observed (Fig. 7). While *Synechococcus* is capable of B1 synthesis
552 (Carini et al., 2014; Sañudo-Wilhelmy et al., 2014; Gómez-Consarnau et al., 2018),
553 Actinobacteria seems to have a strong dependence on this vitamin (Gómez-Consarnau et
554 al., 2018). Among the sequenced eukaryote genomes, only Stramenopiles contain genes
555 codifying for the synthesis of thiamine monophosphate (Sañudo-Wilhelmy et al., 2014;
556 Cohen et al., 2017). While Stramenopiles, dominated by Bacillariophyta, were ubiquitous
557 in the sampling area, their relative contribution was lower in oceanic waters (Fig. 4a).
558 The simultaneous stimulation of phytoplankton and prokaryotes by B1 addition in
559 subsurface oceanic waters in winter suggest a strong demand for this compound under
560 these particular conditions, however what triggers the observed responses remain unclear.
561 Even though B1 caused a significant effect on phytoplankton only in subsurface waters
562 in winter, half of the positive responses of prokaryotes were associated to B1 supply (Fig.
563 7b). This pattern is consistent with the recently described widespread dependence of
564 bacterioplankton on external B1 supply (Paerl et al., 2018). B1 stimulated prokaryote
565 growth in subsurface coastal waters and surface oceanic waters in summer (Fig. 7b), when
566 the B vitamin response patterns were associated to high abundance of *Planktomarina* and
567 Actinobacteria (Fig. 8), which are expected to strongly depend on external B1 sources
568 (Giebel et al., 2013; Gómez-Consarnau et al., 2018). The generalized significant and
569 positive responses of prokaryotes to vitamin treatments in surface oceanic waters in
570 summer, when the prokaryote biomass was high and dissolved inorganic nitrogen
571 concentration was very low (Fig. 3i), suggest that prokaryotes may have an advantage in
572 the uptake and assimilation of B vitamins under nitrogen limiting conditions. This is
573 consistent with the observation of small (0.7–3 μm)-plankton cells containing more B1
574 than larger cells (Fridolfsson et al., 2019). Following this, it has been speculated that
575 bacteria and small phytoplankton can transfer B1 to large cells through predation by

576 acting as an important source of this compound in the marine environment (Fridolfsson
577 et al., 2019).

578 **4.2 Negative responses to vitamin B1 and B12 amendments**

579 Similar experiments conducted in this area also reported negative responses of microbial
580 plankton to vitamin B12 additions (Barber-Lluch et al., 2019). The predominantly
581 negative prokaryote responses after vitamin amendments in the coast during summer (Fig.
582 7b), when nutrient concentrations were low (Fig. 3), suggest either a strong competition
583 between phytoplankton and prokaryotes or a stimulation of predation. Dinoflagellates
584 were particularly abundant in summer at both sampling sites and depths. Many
585 dinoflagellate species are auxotrophs for B1 and/or B12 (Croft et al, 2006; Tang et al.,
586 2010), and also many of them are phagotrophs (Stoecker and Capuzzo, 1990; Smayda,
587 1997; Sarjeant and Taylor, 2006; Stoecker et al., 2017), thus the external supply of B
588 vitamins may have promoted their growth, ultimately leading to net decreases in
589 microbial biomass at the end of the experiments. Several studies demonstrated that
590 vitamin B12 is implicated in the occurrence of dinoflagellate blooms around the world
591 (Aldrich, 1962; Carlucci and Bowes, 1970; Takahashi and Fukazawa, 1982; Yu and
592 Rong-cheng, 2000). It has been suggested that the B12-dependent enzyme
593 methylmalonyl-CoA mutase in dinoflagellate, euglenoid, and heterokont algae allows
594 them to grow heterotrophically when B12 is available (Croft et al., 2006). Therefore, the
595 B12 enrichment could trigger such nutritional strategy, particularly in summer, when
596 mineral nutrients are less available, resulting in an increased predation pressure on
597 prokaryotes.

598 The B vitamin response patterns in surface coastal waters in summer (Fig. 7), seemed to
599 be associated with high abundance of Flavobacteriales (Fig. 8). All isolates of

600 Bacteroidetes sequenced so far are predicted to be B12 auxotrophs (Sañudo-Wilhelmy et
601 al., 2014; Gómez-Consarnau et al., 2018) and recent metatranscriptomic analyses reveal
602 that B1 synthesis gene transcripts are relatively low in Flavobacteriia as a group (Gómez-
603 Consarnau et al., 2018). As both phytoplankton and prokaryotes are dominated by
604 potentially B12 and B1 auxotrophs (dinoflagellates and Flavobacteriales) in the coast
605 during summer (Fig. 4b), the negative responses could be the result of strong competition
606 for B vitamins. However, the negative responses to B vitamins of both phytoplankton and
607 prokaryotes in surface coastal water in summer suggests an increase in phytoplankton and
608 prokaryote predation rather than competition between them. By contrast, prokaryotes and
609 phytoplankton showed opposite patterns of response to B vitamins in subsurface coastal
610 waters in summer, which suggests competition between both microbial compartments
611 (Fig. 7). While phytoplankton negatively responded only to single B vitamin additions,
612 prokaryotes responded negatively only when both inorganic nutrients and B vitamins
613 were added (Fig. 7). It is conceivable that phytoplankton had an advantage over
614 prokaryotes when mineral nutrients were added. This hypothesis contrasts with previous
615 studies reporting that B12 and B1 vitamin uptake is dominated by picoplankton (Koch et
616 al., 2011, 2012), strongly suggesting that bacteria could outcompete larger phytoplankton
617 for vitamin uptake. By contrast, Koch et al. (2014), found that carbon-specific B12 uptake
618 by large phytoplankton was significantly higher during non-bloom (low nutrient
619 concentration) compared to bloom conditions (high nutrient concentration), which
620 suggest better competitive ability under nutrient-rich conditions.

621 **5 Conclusions**

622 In conclusion, our findings suggest that the heterogeneous responses of microbial
623 plankton to B1 and B12 vitamins supply in this coastal upwelling system could be
624 partially controlled by the composition of the prokaryote community, which is consistent

625 with their previously reported major role as B12 producers and B1 consumers. Even
626 though we lack data on B1 concentration, the overall moderate responses together with
627 the low ambient B12 concentration, suggest that the microbial plankton community in
628 this area could be well adapted to cope with B vitamin shortage and that a close balance
629 exists between production and consumption of these important growth factors.

630

631 *Author contribution.*

632 Eva Teira designed the experiments and Vanessa Joglar carried them out with
633 contributions from all co-authors. Vanessa Joglar analyzed the data, Vanessa and Eva
634 Teira interpreted the results and Vanessa Joglar prepared the manuscript under Eva Teira
635 supervision.

636 *Competing interests.* The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

637 *Acknowledgements*

638 We thank all the people involved in the project ENVISION for helping with sampling
639 and analytical work. We also thank the crew of the Ramón Margalef for their help during
640 the work at sea. From IIM-CSIC, V. Vieitez and M.J. Pazó performed the nutrient
641 analyses. This research was supported by the Spanish Ministry of Economy and
642 Competitiveness through the ENVISION project (CTM2014-59031-P). Vanessa Joglar
643 was supported by a FPI fellowship from the Spanish Ministry of Economy and
644 Competitiveness.

645

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975

976 **6 Tables and Figures**

977 **Table 1:** Eight different treatments were applied consisting of: (1) control treatment (C):
978 no nutrients added; (2) inorganic (I) nutrient treatment: 5 μM nitrate (NO_3^-), 5 μM
979 ammonium (NH_4^+), 5 μM silicate (SiO_4^{2-}) and 1 μM phosphate (HPO_4^{2-}); (3) vitamin B12
980 treatment: 100 pmol l^{-1} ; (4) vitamin B1 treatment: 600 pmol l^{-1} ; (5) Inorganic nutrients
981 and vitamin B12 (I+B12) treatment; (6) Inorganic nutrients and vitamin B1 (I+B1)
982 treatment; (7) vitamins B12 and B1 (B12+B1) treatment and (8) Inorganic nutrients with
983 vitamins B12 and B1 (I+B12+B1) treatment.

984

985 **Figure 1:** (a) The NW Iberian margin (rectangle) and locations of the stations that were
986 sampled in the Ría de Vigo (C) and on the shelf(Oc) (diamonds), (b) distribution of daily
987 coastal upwelling index (UI) and (c) registered precipitations during each sampling period
988 showing the initial time of each experiment (C-a, C-b, C-c and Oc-a, Oc-b, Oc-c). ns: no
989 sampling day.

990

991 **Figure 2:** Vertical distribution in the coastal station of (a) Chl-*a* ($\mu\text{g l}^{-1}$), (b) temperature
992 ($^{\circ}\text{C}$) and (c) salinity (PSU) over time for February, April and August and vertical
993 distribution in the oceanic station of (d) Chl-*a* ($\mu\text{g l}^{-1}$), (e) temperature ($^{\circ}\text{C}$) and (f) salinity
994 (PSU) over time for February, April and August. Dots show the t_0 of the experiments.
995 Chl-*a*: Chlorophyll-*a* concentration.

996

997 **Figure 3:** Initial biological conditions and abiotic factors at the coastal and oceanic
998 sampling stations. Each bar corresponds to one of the 3 experiments performed in each
999 depth and station during February, April and August. (a, b, c), Chl-*a*, total Chl-*a* ($\mu\text{g l}^{-1}$).
1000 Note that the y-axis is broken; (d, e, f) PB, prokaryote biomass ($\mu\text{g C l}^{-1}$); (g, h, i) DIN,

1001 dissolved inorganic nitrogen ($\mu\text{mol l}^{-1}$) and (j, k, l) DIN:DIP, ratio inorganic
1002 nitrogen:phosphate. The blue line shows the Redfield ratio (16:1) and SCM refers to the
1003 sub-surface chlorophyll maximum. Chl-*a*: Chlorophyll-a concentration.

1004

1005 **Figure 4:** Averaged relative contribution of reads to the major taxonomic groups of (a)
1006 eukaryotes and (b) prokaryotes at surface and SCM in the coastal and oceanic station in
1007 February, April and August. (c) Averaged B12 concentration (pmol l^{-1}) at surface and
1008 SCM in the coastal and oceanic station in February, April and August. Error bars
1009 represent standard error.

1010

1011 **Figure 5:** Chlorophyll-a concentration ($\mu\text{g l}^{-1}$) in the t0 of each experiment (striped bars)
1012 and in the endpoint of each treatment (colored bars) in the experiments conducted at (a)
1013 5 m and (b) SCM in the coastal and at (c) surface and (c) SCM in the oceanic station in
1014 February, April and August. Error bars represent standard error. Note that the y-axis is
1015 broken. SCM: sub-surface chlorophyll maximum.

1016

1017 **Figure 6:** Prokaryote biomass ($\mu\text{g C l}^{-1}$) in the t0 of each experiment (striped bars) and in
1018 the endpoint of each treatment (colored bars) in the experiments conducted at (a) surface
1019 and (b) SCM in the coastal and at (c) surface and (d) SCM in the oceanic station in
1020 February, April and August. Error bars represent standard error. Note that the y-axis is
1021 broken. SCM: sub-surface chlorophyll maximum.

1022

1023 **Figure 7:** Monthly averaged response ratio (RR) of (a) Chl-*a* or (b) prokaryote biomass
1024 at surface and SCM in the coastal and oceanic station. Horizontal line represents a
1025 response equal to 1, that means no change relative to control in the pink bars (treatments

1026 with vitamins alone) and no change relative to inorganic (I) treatment in the green bars
1027 (vitamins combined with I treatments). Asterisks indicate averaged RRs that were
1028 significantly different from 1 (Z-test; * $p < 0.05$) and “a” symbols indicate averaged RRs
1029 that were marginally significant (Z-test; ^a $p = 0.05-0.06$). SCM: sub-surface chlorophyll
1030 maximum.

1031

1032 **Figure 8:** Distance based redundancy analysis (dbRDA) of B vitamin responses by
1033 phytoplankton and prokaryotes based on Bray-Curtis similarity. Only prokaryotic taxa
1034 that explained variability in the B vitamin responses structure selected in the DistLM
1035 model (step-wise procedure with adjusted R^2 criterion) were fitted to the ordination.
1036 Filled and open symbols represent samples from coastal and oceanic station, respectively,
1037 numbers correspond to the sampling station, triangles and circles represent samples from
1038 surface and SCM, respectively, and colours correspond to the months: (green) February,
1039 (blue) April and (pink) August. SCM: sub-surface chlorophyll maximum.