



Global database of oceanic particulate organic carbon to ^{234}Th ratios: Improving estimates of the biological carbon pump

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Abstract

The ocean's biological carbon pump (BCP) plays a major role in the global carbon cycle. A fraction of the photosynthetically fixed organic carbon produced in surface waters is exported below the sunlit layer as settling particles (e.g. marine snow). Since the seminal works on the BCP, global estimates of the global strength of the BCP have improved but large uncertainties remain (from 5 to 20 GtC yr⁻¹ exported below the euphotic zone or mixed layer depth). The ^{234}Th technique is widely used to measure the downward export of particulate organic carbon (POC). This technique has the advantage to allow a downward flux to be determined by integrating the deficit of ^{234}Th in the upper water column and coupling it the POC/ ^{234}Th ratio in sinking particles. However, the factors controlling the regional, temporal and depth variations of POC/ ^{234}Th ratios are poorly understood. We present a database of 9110 measurements of the POC/ ^{234}Th ratio in the ocean, from the surface down to >5500 m, sampled on three size fractions (\sim >0.7 μm , \sim 1-50 μm , \sim >50 μm), collected with *in situ* pumps and bottles, and also from bulk particles collected with sediment traps. The dataset is archived on the data repository PANGAEA® (www.pangaea.de) under <https://doi.pangaea.de/10.1594/PANGAEA.911424> (Puigcorbé, 2019). The samples presented in this dataset were collected between 1989 and 2016 and the data have been obtained from published papers and open datasets available online. Unpublished data has also been included. Multiple measurements can be found in most of the open ocean provinces. However, there is an uneven distribution of the data, with some areas highly sampled (e.g. China Sea, Bermuda Atlantic Time Series station) compared to some others that are not well represented, such as the southeastern Atlantic, the south Pacific and the south Indian oceans. Some coastal areas, although in a much smaller number, are also included in this global compilation. Globally, based on different depths horizons and climate zones, the median POC/ ^{234}Th ratios have a wide range, from 0.6 to 18 $\mu\text{mol dpm}^{-1}$.

1 Introduction

The ocean's biological carbon pump (Eppley and Peterson, 1979) plays a major role in the global carbon cycle. A fraction of the photosynthetically produced organic carbon is exported from the surface waters below the sunlit layer as settling particles (e.g. marine snow). Through this process, the ocean stores carbon dioxide (CO₂) away from the atmosphere and buffers the global climate system (Kwon et al., 2009). Indeed, estimates suggest that



atmospheric CO₂ levels would be 200 ppm higher than current concentrations without the biological carbon pump (Parekh et al., 2006). However, quantifying the magnitude of the biological carbon pump at both the regional and global scales is challenging and current assessments vary widely, with estimates ranging from 5 to 20 GtC y⁻¹ being exported below the euphotic zone or the mixed layer depth (Guidi et al., 2015; Henson et al., 2011; Laws et al., 2011).

Downward export fluxes of organic carbon can be estimated using: (i) indirect approaches derived from nutrient uptake (Le Moigne et al., 2013a; Pondaven et al., 2000; Sanders et al., 2005), radioisotopes (Cochran and Masqué, 2003; and references therein), satellite empirical algorithms (Dunne et al., 2007; Henson et al., 2011; Laws et al., 2011), underwater video systems (Guidi et al., 2008) or (ii) direct measurements using various designs of sediment traps (Buesseler et al., 2007; Engel et al., 2017; Lampitt et al., 2008; Owens et al., 2013) or marine snow catchers (Cavan et al., 2015; Riley et al., 2012).

Here we focus on the use of radioisotopes, specifically, ²³⁴Th. The ²³⁴Th approach allows to quantify an export flux from i) a water profile of ²³⁴Th to obtain its deficit relative to ²³⁸U combined with ii) an estimate of the POC concentration to ²³⁴Th activity (POC/Th ratio) in sinking matter (Buesseler et al., 1992). In reviewing POC/Th ratios variability using the data available at the time, (Buesseler et al., 2006) found that the POC/Th ratios i) increase or remain constant with increasing particle size and ii) decrease with depth. Regionally, the POC/Th ratios vary largely between oceanic provinces and regimes (Puigcorbé et al., 2017a). The study of the biogeochemical behavior of ²³⁴Th with regards to marine particles has received significant attention (Maiti et al., 2010; e.g., Le Moigne et al., 2013b; Puigcorbé et al., 2015; Rosengard et al., 2015; Santschi et al., 2006; and references therein), and the availability of ²³⁴Th related data has been enhanced thanks to international and national programs such as GEOTRACES (Mawji et al., 2015; Schlitzer et al., 2018) JGOFS (Joint Global Ocean Flux Study) (Buesseler et al., 1998, 1995, 2001) or VERTIGO (Buesseler et al., 2008b), yet the factors controlling the variations of the POC/Th ratio as function of region, time, particle size/type and water column depth remain poorly understood. Assessing the influence of such factors on the POC/Th ratios will contribute to improve our modelling efforts and our capacity to predict the export and fate of the organic carbon produced in the surface layers. Indeed, the necessity to constrain the variability of the POC/Th was discussed and considered a priority at the technical meeting “The Application of Radionuclides in Studies of the Carbon Cycle and the Impact of Ocean Acidification” held at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Environment Laboratories in Monaco in October 2016 (Morris et al., 2017).

Therefore, we compiled a database that comprises 9110 POC/Th ratios collected between 1989 to 2016 covering most oceanic provinces at depths ranging from 0 to >5500 m deep. The particles were collected using collection bottles (i.e., Niskin), *in situ* pumps or sediment traps, and include bulk and size fractionated samples. This database increases significantly the pool of POC/Th ratio data available at the time of (Buesseler et al., 2006) and enables to test the influence of various factors on the variability of POC/Th ratios. Among other information, the influence of biogeochemical characteristics of the area (e.g., nutrient concentrations) together with the surface productivity levels, phytoplankton compositions, zooplankton abundance could be examined through satellites products and/or global databases (e.g., Buitenhuis et al., 2013; Moriarty et al., 2013; Moriarty and O’Brien, 2013).

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2 Data

2.1 The ^{234}Th approach

70 The short-lived radionuclide thorium-234 (^{234}Th , $t_{1/2} = 24.1$ d) is widely used to estimate the magnitude of the POC that escapes the upper ocean layers (e.g., the euphotic zone) (Waples et al., 2006). ^{234}Th is the decay product of uranium-238 (^{238}U , $t_{1/2} = 4.47 \cdot 10^9$ y). While uranium is conservative and proportional to salinity in well oxygenated seawater (Chen et al., 1986; Ku et al., 1977; Owens et al., 2011), thorium is not soluble in seawater it is scavenged by particles as they form and/or sink along the water column. As a consequence, a radioactive disequilibrium between ^{238}U and ^{234}Th can be observed, mainly in the upper layers of the water column, which in 75 first approximation, is proportional to the amount of particles exported and hence can be used to estimate particle and elemental export fluxes.

One-box scavenging model (see review by Savoye et al. (2006) and references therein) is commonly applied to calculate ^{234}Th export rates. Steady state (SS) or non-steady state conditions (NSS) are assumed depending on the conditions at the sampling time and the possibility to reoccupy locations within an adequate timescale. Le Moigne et al. (2013c) reported ^{234}Th fluxes from both types of models in their database with flux integration depths 80 spanning from the surface down to 300 m, although the most common integration depths were between 100 and 150 m. The choice of export depth when using the ^{234}Th technique is not trivial. Rosengard et al. (2015) provide recommendations to the various manners of choosing the export depth in order to integrate the ^{234}Th fluxes. Once the ^{234}Th export flux is estimated it is multiplied by the ratio of POC to particulate ^{234}Th activity in sinking particles 85 to obtain the POC flux. The sinking particles from which the ratio is measured should, ideally, be collected at the depth where the export has been estimated and represent the pool of particles that is driving the export of organic carbon.

2.2 The crux of the ^{234}Th approach: POC/Th ratios of sinking particles

The determination of the POC/Th ratio has been historically attained by assuming that sinking carbon is driven 90 by large particles, generally >50 μm in size (researchers also use 51, 53 or 70 μm , depending on the mesh supplier), whereas organic carbon within small particles is assumed to remain suspended and therefore not contribute to the export flux (Bishop et al., 1977; Fowler and Knauer, 1986), although recent studies have shown that small particles can be significant players in the particle export and should not be disregarded (Alonso-González et al., 2010; Durkin et al., 2015; Le Gland et al., 2019; Puigcorb  et al., 2015; Richardson, 2019), particularly in oligotrophic 95 regions. The most common methods to obtain the particulate fraction to measure the POC/Th ratio are i) *in situ* pumps (ISP), which can allow for sampling different particle sizes, ii) collection bottles (CB) such as Niskin bottles, providing bulk particles, i.e., >0.7 or 1 μm particles, iii) sediment traps (ST) and although less common iv) marine snow catchers. In some instance various methods have been used in combination (e.g., Cai et al., 2010; Maiti et al., 2016; Puigcorb  et al., 2015).

100 Different sampling devices have been shown to provide differences in POC/Th ratios, usually within a factor of 2 to 4 (see review by Buesseler et al., 2006). The differences can be related to the collection of different particles pools and/or the enhanced presence of swimmers. ST collect sinking particles and may suffer from hydrodynamic discrimination and undersample slow sinking particles (Gustafsson et al., 2004), while CB sample both, sinking



105 and suspended particle, similar to ISP. ISP filter large volumes of water and have been suggested to potentially
undersample some of the fast sinking particles (Lepore et al., 2009) and sample neutrally buoyant C-rich
aggregates (i.e., non-sinking but with high POC/Th ratios) (Lalande et al., 2008). Biases due to washout of large
particles when using ISP (Bishop et al., 2012) or aggregates collapse induced by their high cross-filter pressure
(Gardner et al., 2003) may further enhance these differences. The presence of swimmers can also be an important
bias of POC/Th ratios when not thoroughly removed, since they skew measurements towards higher values
110 because of their high POC proportion compared to ^{234}Th (Buesseler et al., 1994; Coale, 1990).

2.3 POC/ ^{234}Th ratio variability

Despite the significant body of literature available on POC/Th ratios, more than 10 years after the review by
(Buesseler et al., 2006) we still cannot explain the variability of the POC/Th ratios with depth, time, particle type,
size or sinking velocity easily nor at a global level. Changes with size and depth have been the most extensively
115 examined. The relation between POC/Th ratio and particle size have been assessed before with results suggesting
that there is not a direct relationship. Previous studies have reported increasing ratios with increasing particle size
(e.g., Benitez-Nelson et al., 2001; Buesseler et al., 1998; Cochran et al., 2000), which has been interpreted as an
effect of the volume to surface area ratio of the particles, due to ^{234}Th being surface bound whereas C would be
contained within the particles (Buesseler et al., 2006). Yet, a number of studies have reported the opposite trend
120 (i.e., decreasing ratio with increasing particle size; (Bacon et al., 1996; Hung et al., 2010; Planchon et al., 2013;
Puigcorb  et al., 2015) or no clear change with size (Hung and Gong, 2010; Lepore et al., 2009; Speicher et al.,
2006). Depth is another factor that has been considered when assessing the variability of POC/Th, since particles
are produced in the surface layer and are remineralized on their transit along the water column (Martin et al.,
1987). POC/Th ratios have been found to be attenuated with depth (Jacquet et al., 2011; Planchon et al., 2015;
125 Puigcorb  et al., 2015). This is due to (in no order or importance) decreasing autotrophic production with
increasing water depth, preferential C loss compared to ^{234}Th through remineralization processes, changes in
superficial binding ligands along the water column, and/or scavenging of ^{234}Th during particle sinking resulting
in enhanced particulate ^{234}Th activities (Buesseler et al., 2006; Rutgers van der Loeff et al., 2002); leading to
significant variability in the attenuation rates. Theoretically, high sinking velocities may limit the variations of
130 POC/Th ratios with depth, owing to shorter residence times limiting the impacts of biotic and abiotic processes.
However, using specifically design ST that segregate particles according to their *in situ* sinking velocities,
(Szlosek et al., 2009) observed no consistent trend between POC/Th ratios and sinking velocities.

The truth is that numerous processes can impact the POC/Th ratios apart from particle size or depth, such as
particle composition or aggregation/disaggregation processes mediated by physical or biological activity
135 (Buesseler and Boyd, 2009; Burd et al., 2010; Maiti et al., 2010; Szlosek et al., 2009) which adds a level of
complexity to the prediction of their variability in the ocean. Yet, due to the significance of the POC/Th ratios for
the accuracy of the ^{234}Th flux method, the effort should be made to constrain the factors that will impact its
variability and a number of environmental and biogeochemical parameters can be assessed with that goal at a
global scale. Among others, surface productivity, phytoplankton composition, zooplankton abundance, mixed
140 layer depth, dust inputs to the surface ocean and ice cover (Buitenhuis et al., 2013; Mahowald et al., 2009;
Moriarty et al., 2013; Moriarty and O'Brien, 2013) are all potential candidates to test their global patterns against
POC/Th ratios variability.



3 Results and discussion

3.1 Data classification

145 Our dataset is archived on the data repository PANGAEA® (www.pangaea.de),
<https://doi.pangaea.de/10.1594/PANGAEA.911424> (Puigcorb , 2019). Latitude, longitude and sampling dates are
reported. When dates of the individual stations were not reported in the original publications, we allocated the
midpoint of the sampling period as the sampling date. The same was done when the specific sampling coordinates
were not available. The database consists of 9110 measurements of POC/Th ratios in the ocean. Particles were
150 collected using *in situ* pumps (ISP), water collection bottles (CB) and sediment traps (ST). We refer to “bulk”
(BU) for particles sampled using CB and ISP with a pore size filter of 0.2-1 μm . For this group of samples,
particles $>0.7 \mu\text{m}$ were collected using GFF filters and $>1 \mu\text{m}$ using QMA filters. In some particular cases other
types of filters, with a different pore size (e.g., 0.2 μm , 0.45 μm or 0.6 μm) might have been used (see database
for details). Hereafter, we use $>1 \mu\text{m}$ for the bulk particles. We refer to “small particles” (SP) for particles usually
155 collected using ISP on a 1-50 μm mesh size and “large particles” (LP) for particles usually collected using ISP on
mesh size $>50 \mu\text{m}$ (see details on other size ranges also used in the database). Finally, some POC/Th ratios were
measured in sinking particles sampled using sediment traps (ST). Figure 1 shows the global distribution of
POC/Th ratios grouped by these four categories: BU, LP, SP and ST. The POC/Th ratios were obtained from
particles collected at various depths from surface to $>5500 \text{ m}$ deep (Figure 2). All the information on locations,
160 dates, depth, size fractions/device (BU, SP, LP and ST) and references are included as metadata in the online
database and presented in Table 1.

Our database covers POC/Th measurements sampled between 1989 and 2016, including unpublished data from
our laboratories or graciously made available to us by colleagues and data available in online databases. Figure 3
shows the number of POC/Th measurements available per year. In years 1997, 2004, 2005, 2008, 2010, 2011 and
165 2013, the number of POC/Th measurements was >500 . This highlights dedicated carbon export programs such as
the Joint Global Ocean Flux Study (JGOFS) (Buesseler et al., 1992, 1998, 1995, 2001; Murray et al., 1996, 2005),
the VERTIGO (Vertical Transport in the Global Ocean) voyages in the Pacific Ocean (Buesseler et al., 2008b),
and the GEOTRACES program (Mawji et al., 2015; Schlitzer et al., 2018), as well as the maintained effort of the
Time Series Stations (Kawakami et al., 2004, 2010, e.g., 2015; Kawakami and Honda, 2007). Sampling effort
170 also varied depending on the month of the year (Fig. 3B), with late spring-summer months being the most highly
sampled in both hemispheres. The northern hemisphere has been largely sampled in September, May and June
(49, 10 and 5 times more data than in the southern hemisphere, respectively), whereas the southern hemisphere
has been more sampled in December and February (5 and 4 times more data than the northern hemisphere,
respectively), with no data available for the months of July and August and only 5 data points in September
175 (austral winter). For the rest of the months, the northern hemisphere presents 1.4-1.8 times more data than the
southern hemisphere. In the equatorial region (taken as the latitudes between -10° and 10° N) major sampling
efforts took place in May, with no data collected in January and just 8 data points available from December. The
monthly distribution is, therefore, globally biased towards the warmer and more productive seasons, leaving the
winter months largely undersampled, particularly in the southern hemisphere.

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3.2 Global variability: climate zones and depth horizons

The global variability of POC/Th ratios looking at six different depths horizons (50, 100, 200, 500, 1000 and >1000 m) and grouped by climatic zones (Polar >66.5°, Subpolar 66.5°-50°, Temperate 50°-35°, Subtropical 35°-23.5° and Tropical 23.5°N-23.5°S) is presented in Figure 4. A PERMANOVA analysis was conducted to examine the data and the results indicate that all the depths horizons defined here were significantly different ($p < 0.05$).
185 Significant differences were also found between climatic zones, except between the Temperate and Subtropical zones and between the Subtropical and the Tropical zones, when considering all the data together. Statistical differences between zones within a certain depth range are shown in Figure 4.

In general, we observe a reduction in POC/Th ratios with depth, previously reported by others (e.g., Buesseler et al., 2006 and references therein), and likely mainly due to the remineralization of carbon along the water column. The decrease is particularly marked in the upper 200 m, where biological processes affecting the ratios are more intense, and then it smoothes below that depth horizon as the strength of these processes is more limited below the euphotic zone. It is worth noticing that some studies, particularly in coastal areas, presented extremely large POC/Th ratios ($> 100 \mu\text{mol dpm}^{-1}$, not included in Figure 4). These high ratios are not always discussed in the
190 publications but the presence of live zooplankton (Buesseler et al., 2009; Savoye et al., 2008; Trull et al., 2008) especially in BU, ST and LP fractions when not picked out can be the cause for those high values and should be considered with caution.

Regarding the climate zones, there is significant variability but, in general, large POC/Th ratios occur more often in productive and high latitude regions relative to low latitude tropical areas, particularly in the upper 200 m (Figure 4). When looking at the different types of sampling method, the link between latitude and magnitude of the ratio seems to be clear for ST and BU but quite variable for LP and SP (Figure 5). High POC/Th ratios are usually associated to the presence of large phytoplankton groups, such as diatoms, which are dominant in high latitude areas with no nutrient limitations, or where zooplankton populations are large and there is a significant input of fecal pellets, which should have also high POC/Th ratios. Low ratios, on the other hand, are commonly
200 observed in warm oligotrophic areas where productivity is limited and the main phytoplanktonic groups are picoplankton (see Buesseler et al., 2006 and references therein). Exceptions do exist but they are usually found in coastal areas where other factors could be influencing the planktonic community (e.g., seasonal upwelling, continental influence, river inputs).

3.3 Contributing to global POC export estimates

The ^{234}Th approach has been used to derive an export model at global scale that uses sea surface temperatures and net primary productivity from satellite products (Henson et al., 2011). The parametrization for this model has large uncertainties in the cold regions (low sea surface temperature), which lead to a reduced estimate of the global biological carbon pump ($\sim 5 \text{ GtC y}^{-1}$) compared to other satellite-derived export models ($9\text{-}13 \text{ GtC y}^{-1}$; (Dunne et al., 2007; Laws et al., 2011). A recent study by (Puigcorb  et al., 2017a) estimated POC export fluxes in the North
210 Atlantic using *in situ* data for the ^{234}Th method and compared it to three different satellite-derived export, (Dunne et al., 2007; Henson et al., 2011; Laws et al., 2011). The conclusion was that, overall, the geographical trends were captured by all the approaches but the absolute values between them could reach important discrepancies. In that study, the authors advised for a revision of the parametrization of the models going beyond sea surface



220 temperatures in order to adjust to specific ocean bioregions. This database sets a strong background to develop
that parametrization and contribute to similar modeling efforts to constrain the global carbon export fluxes as done
by (Henson et al., 2011).

3.4 Significant gaps and recommendations.

225 This database provides the global POC/Th ratios sampled from all the oceans up until 2016. The sampling
coverage is significant but it is not evenly distributed. Areas such as the China Sea, Arabian Sea, North Western
Mediterranean Sea, Central Pacific and high latitudes of the Atlantic Ocean are well represented, whereas other
areas, such as the oligotrophic gyres, West Pacific or the Southern Ocean, present important gaps. The data is not
evenly distributed between seasons either, with most of the sampling taking place during spring and summer in
both hemispheres, which is also when the export fluxes are expected to be larger. High seasonality in under
sampled areas could potentially bias our global view of the POC/Th ratios and have an impact on the Th-derived
230 carbon export fluxes estimates.

It would be recommended to obtain data for those undersampled areas with high seasonality to better characterize
the expected variability in the ratios within those areas and to cover a larger span of seasons in order to better
understand the seasonality of POC/Th and thus be able to translate it more accurately to the global POC export
estimates.

235 4 Conclusion

Here we provide a global database of 9110 estimates of POC/Th ratios obtained between 1989 and 2016. POC/Th
ratios were sampled on three size fractions ($\sim >0.7 \mu\text{m}$, $\sim 0.7-50 \mu\text{m}$, $\sim >50 \mu\text{m}$) or on the bulk of particles at various
depths from below the surface to $>5500 \text{ m}$ deep using *in situ* pumps, Niskin® bottles and sediment traps. The
observed pattern of POC/Th ratios reflects a decrease with depth and a link with the latitude, with higher ratios
240 usually observed in high latitudes areas. Some noteworthy gaps in the dataset are the Benguela system, the
Mauritanian upwelling, the western and south Pacific, and the Southern Indian Ocean. The fall-winter months in
both hemispheres are also underrepresented. The temporal and spatial undersampling of some areas could bias
the global view of the POC/Th ratios. Despite the gaps, this database is the largest compilation POC/Th ratios up
to date and could be used to better understand the factors controlling the variation of ratios on a global scale. This
245 will help revising and providing improved estimates of the ocean's biological carbon pump.



Data availability

Our dataset is archived on the data repository PANGAEA® (www.pangaea.de), under the following doi: <https://doi.pangaea.de/10.1594/PANGAEA.911424> (Puigcorb , 2019).

Authors contribution

VP and FACLM compiled the dataset and prepared and reviewed the manuscript. PM contributed to the review of the manuscript.

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest

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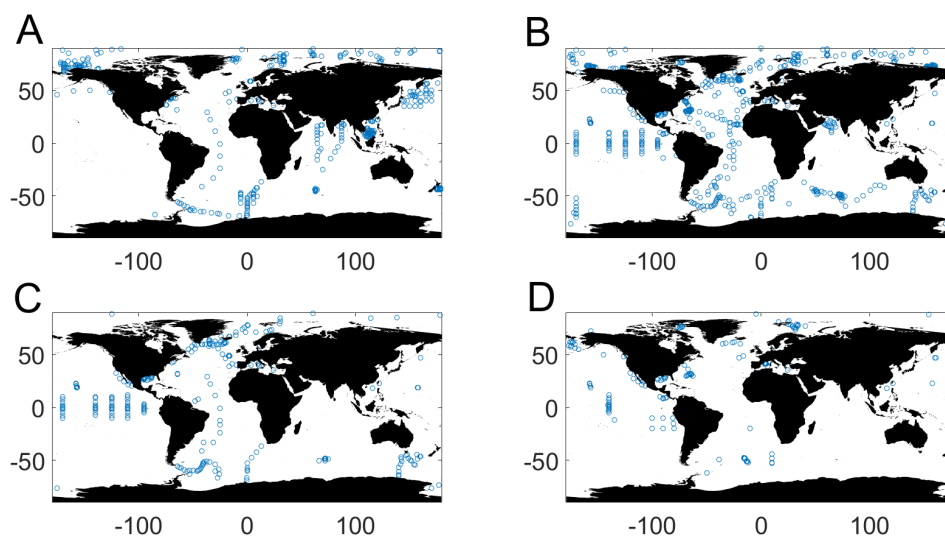


Figure 1: Maps showing the distribution of POC/Th ratios measured on (A) bulk particles, (B) large particles, (C) small particles, and (D) particles from sediment traps. See main text for details.

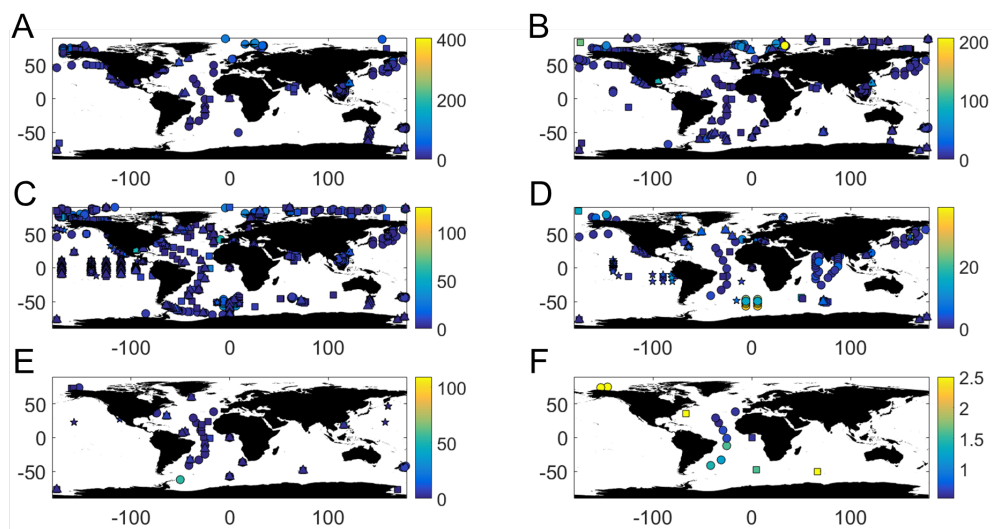


Figure 2: Global distribution of the POC/Th ratios (A) in surface, (B) at 50 m, (C) at 100 m, (D) at 200 m, (E) at 500 m and (F) at 1000 m. Circles represent BU, squares represent LP, triangles represent SP and stars represent ST (see main text for details). Data corresponds to samples collected at depths at +/- 5 meters the nominal depth for all cases, except for panel F (+/- 50 meters).

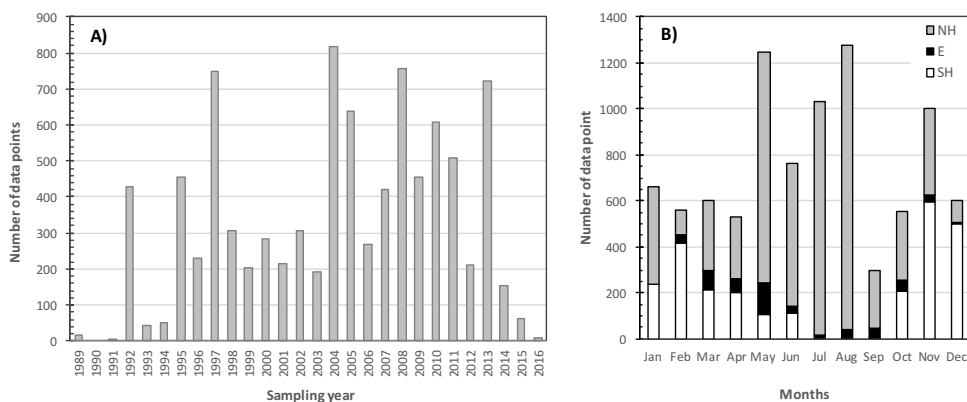


Figure 3: A) Histogram of data sampled between 1989 and 2016. See Table 1 for details. B) Number of samples per month of the year grouped as per samples collected in the Northern Hemisphere (NH; grey), Southern Hemisphere (SH; white) or Equator (E; -10° to 10° N; black).

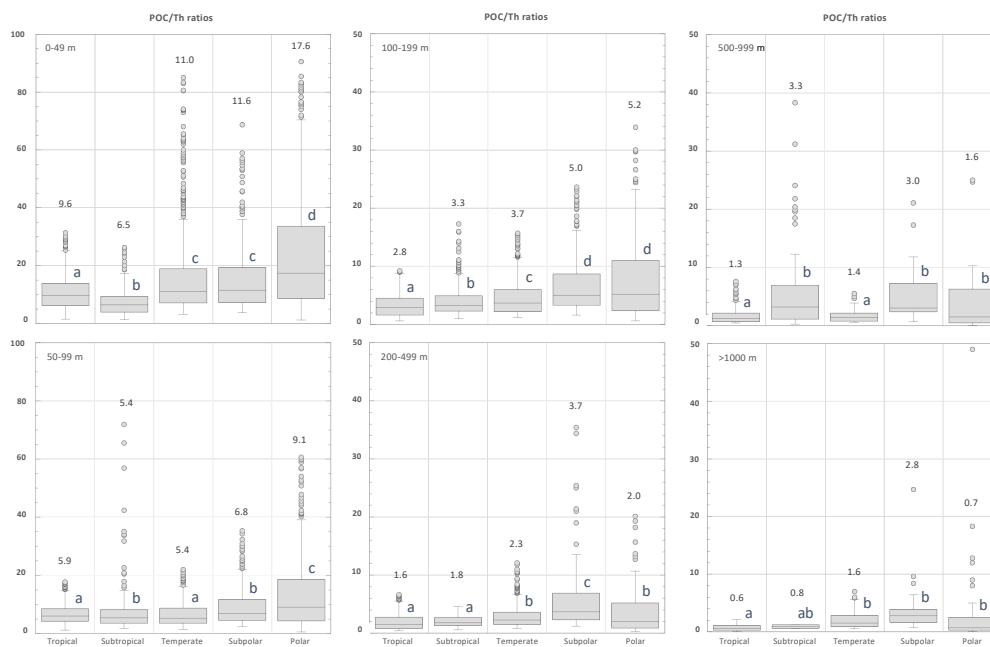


Figure 4: POC/Th ratios variability (box whisker plots) of 90% of the data sorted by climate zones and depth. The values shown on top of each box represent their median. Box plots within the same depth range (e.g., 0-49 m) sharing a letter are not significantly different. Note the different scale used between the 0 to 99 m and the 100 to >1000 m plots.

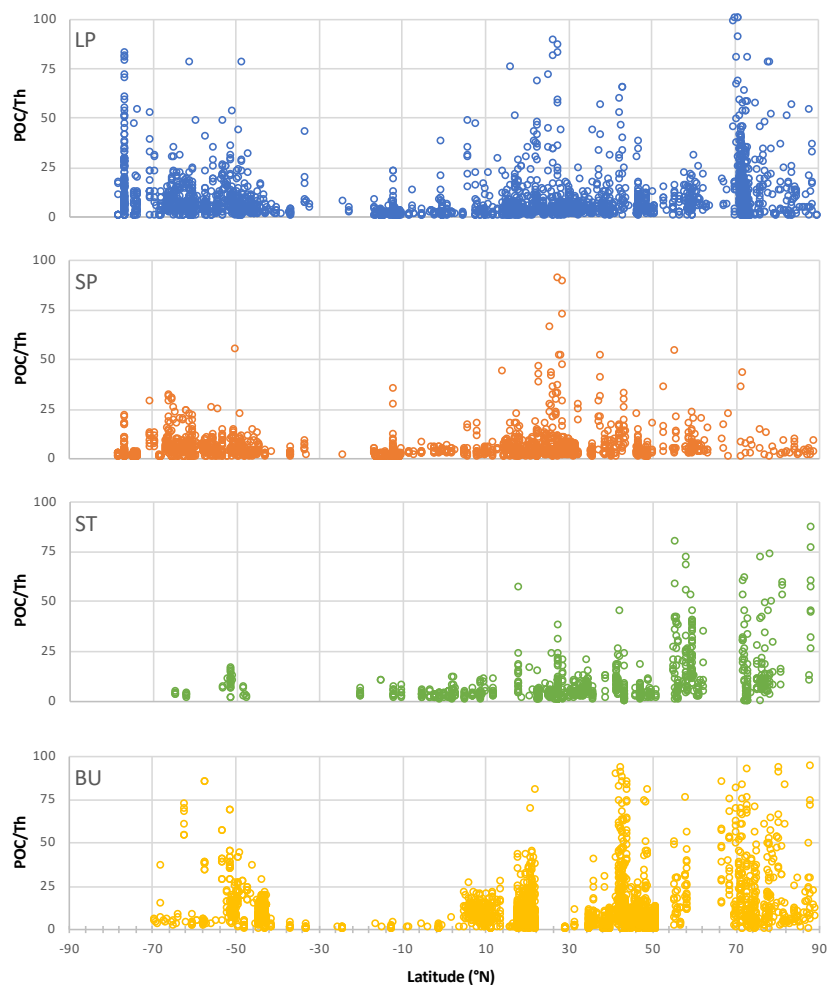


Figure 5: Latitudinal variability of the POC/Th ratios (<100 $\mu\text{m}/\text{dpm}$) grouped by large particles (LP), small particles (SP), sediment trap particles (ST) and bulk particles (BU).



| Sampling year | Area | LP n | SP n | ST n | BU n | Reference/Investigator |
|----------------------|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---|
| 1989 | North Atlantic | - | - | 6 | 12 | Buesseler et al. (1992) |
| 1991-1992 | Buzzards Bay | - | - | - | 7 | Moran and Buesseler (1993) |
| 1992 | Equatorial Pacific | 80 | - | - | - | Bacon et al. (1996) |
| 1992 | Sargasso Sea | - | - | 2 | - | Buesseler et al. (1994) |
| 1992 | Equatorial Pacific | 71 | 78 | - | - | Buesseler et al. (1995) |
| 1992 | Atlantic sector of the Southern Ocean | - | - | - | 31 | Friedrich and Rutgers van der Loeff (2002) |
| 1992 | Central Equatorial Pacific | - | - | 124 | - | Murray US JGOFS EqPac (Murray et al., 1996 and Murray et al., 2005) |
| 1992 | Atlantic Sector Southern Ocean | - | - | - | 32 | Rutgers van der Loeff et al. (1997) |
| 1992 | Bellingshausen Sea, Antarctica | - | - | - | 3 | Shimmield et al. (1995) |
| 1992-1993 | Northeast Water Polynya Greenland | - | - | - | 11 | Cochran et al. (1995) |
| 1993 | Middle Atlantic Bight | - | - | - | 30 | Santschi et al. (1999) |
| 1993-1994 | Station BATS, North Atlantic, and Gulf of Maine | - | - | - | 4 | Gustafsson et al. (1997) |
| 1993-1996 | Guaymas Basin | - | - | 58 | - | Smoak et al. (1999) |
| 1994 | Central Arctic Ocean | 28 | - | - | - | Moran et al. (1997) |
| 1995 | Arabian Sea | 123 | 148 | - | - | Buesseler JGOFS dataset Arabian Sea |
| 1995 | Wilkinson Basin and Jordan Basin | 20 | 20 | - | - | Charette et al. (2001) |
| 1995 | Beaufort Sea | - | - | - | 22 | Moran and Smith (2000) |
| 1995 | Atlantic Sector Southern Ocean | - | - | - | 80 | Rutgers van der Loeff et al. (2002) |
| 1995 | NW Mediterranean Sea | - | - | 3 | 15 | Schmidt et al. (2002a) |
| 1996 | Subtropical and ropical Atlantic Ocean | 25 | 22 | - | - | Charette and Moran (1999) |
| 1996-1997 | Northeast Pacific Ocean | - | - | 4 | 144 | Charette et al. (1999) |
| 1996-1997 | Ross Sea | 82 | 79 | - | - | Cochran et al. (2000) |
| 1996-1997 | Gulf of Maine | - | - | - | 7 | Dai and Benitez-Nelson (2001) |
| 1996-1997 | Sargasso Sea | - | - | - | 6 | Kim and Church (2001) |
| 1996-1998 | Ross-Sea | 291 | 271 | - | - | Buesseler JGOFS dataset Southern Ocean |
| 1997 | Southwestern Gulf of Maine | - | - | - | 64 | Benitez-Nelson et al. (2000) |
| 1997 | Sargasso Sea | - | - | 3 | - | Buesseler et al. (2000) |
| 1997 | Gulf of Lions | - | - | - | 33 | Giuliani et al. (2007) |
| 1997 | Northern Iberian Margin | - | - | - | 22 | Hall et al. (2000) |
| 1997 | Northern Adriatic Sea | - | - | - | 23 | Radakovitch et al. (2003) |
| 1997-2000, 2002-2008 | NW North Pacific | 92 | - | 48 | 664 | Kawakami North Pacific Time Series |
| 1998 | Arctic Ocean | - | - | - | 19 | Baskaran et al. (2003) |
| 1998 | Western Iberian Margin | - | - | - | 12 | Schmidt et al. (2002b) |
| 1998-1999 | Polynya North Water | 15 | - | 45 | - | Amiel et al. (2002) |
| 1999 | South China Sea | - | - | - | 20 | Cai et al. (2001) |
| 1999 | Canada Basin, Bering Sea | - | - | - | 27 | Chen et al. (2003) |
| 1999 | Barents Sea | - | - | 5 | 25 | Coppola et al. (2002) |
| 1999 | Crozet Basin | - | - | - | 8 | Coppola et al. (2005) |
| 1999 | Northern North Sea | - | - | - | 24 | Foster and Shimmield (2002) |
| 1999 | Labrador Sea | 8 | 3 | - | - | Moran et al. (2003) |
| 1999-2000 | North Pacific Subtropical Gyre | 5 | 5 | 9 | - | Benitez-Nelson et al. (2001) |
| 2000 | Gulf of Mexico | 15 | 15 | - | - | Guo et al. (2002) |
| 2000 | Canada Basin Arctic Ocean | - | - | - | 25 | Trimble and Baskaran (2005) |
| 2000-2001 | Gulf of Mexico | 21 | 21 | 4 | - | Hung et al. (2004) |
| 2000-2002 | Northern South China Sea | - | - | - | 44 | Chen et al. (2008) |
| 2001 | Subarctic Pacific | - | - | 6 | 19 | Aono et al. (2005) |
| 2001 | Gullmar fjord, Sweden | - | - | 7 | 8 | Gustafsson et al. (2006) |
| 2001 | Arctic Ocean (Marginal Ice Zone) | - | - | 17 | 46 | Gustafsson and Andersson (2012) |
| 2001 | Southern Ocean | 38 | 36 | - | - | Trull and Buesseler (unpublished) |



| | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|--|-----|-----|----|-----|-------------------------------------|
| 2002 | Southern Ocean/ South of the ACCF | 39 | 40 | - | - | Buesseler et al. (2005) |
| 2002 | Chukchi Sea | 171 | - | - | - | Moran et al. (2005) |
| 2002 | Bay of Biscay to Celtic Sea | - | - | - | 24 | Schmidt et al. (2013) |
| 2003 | Western Arctic Ocean | - | - | - | 18 | Ma et al. (2005) |
| 2003 | Southern Ocean | 6 | - | - | - | Rodriguez-Baena et al. (2008) |
| 2003 | NW Mediterranean Sea | 4 | - | 20 | - | Stewart et al. (2007) |
| 2003 | Western Arctic Ocean | - | - | - | 32 | Yu et al. (2010) |
| 2003, 2005 | Northern Barents Sea | 24 | - | 24 | - | Lalande et al. (2008) |
| 2003-2006 | Porcupine Abyssal Plain | 7 | - | 5 | - | Lampitt et al. (2008) |
| 2004 | Canadian Arctic Shelf | 24 | - | - | - | Amiel and Cochran (2008) |
| 2004 | South China Sea | - | - | - | 169 | Cai et al. (2008) |
| 2004 | Western Arctic Shelf-Basin | 38 | - | 45 | - | Lalande et al. (2007) |
| 2004 | Western Arctic Ocean | 206 | - | - | - | Lepore et al. (2007) |
| 2004 | Sargasso Sea | - | - | 2 | - | Maiti et al. (2009) |
| 2004 | NW Mediterranean Sea | - | - | 3 | - | Schmidt et al. (2009) |
| 2004 | Southern Ocean | - | - | - | 1 | Smetacek et al. (2012) |
| 2004 | Eastern Mediterranean Sea | 26 | 26 | - | - | Speicher et al. (2006) |
| 2004-2005 | Tropical North Pacific (Hawaii) | 103 | 115 | 8 | - | Buesseler et al. (2008a) |
| 2004-2005 | North Pacific (ALOHA and K2) | 35 | 97 | - | - | Buesseler et al. (2009) |
| 2004-2005 | North Pacific Ocean | - | - | 36 | - | Lamborg et al. (2008) |
| 2004-2005 | Southern Ocean | 20 | - | - | - | Morris et al. (2007) |
| 2005 | South China Sea | 16 | 15 | - | - | Cai et al. (2006) |
| 2005 | Mediterranean Sea and NW Atlantic | 37 | 32 | 15 | - | Lepore et al. (2009) |
| 2005 | Tropical North Pacific (Hawaii) | 13 | 13 | 2 | - | Maiti et al. (2008) |
| 2005 | Kerguelen Plateau, Southern Ocean | 26 | - | - | - | Savoie et al. (2008) |
| 2005 | Ligurian Sea, NW Mediterranean Sea | - | - | 22 | - | Szlosek et al. (2009) |
| 2005 | Falkland Island and Great Britain | 10 | 10 | - | 82 | Thomalla et al. (2006) |
| 2005-2006, 2009 | NW Gulf of Mexico and NW Pacific | 35 | 34 | 25 | - | Hung et al. (2010) |
| 2006 | Kuroshio Current | 6 | 6 | 4 | - | Hung and Gong (2007) |
| 2006 | Hung-Tsai Trough, southwestern Taiwan | - | - | - | 30 | Wei et al. (2009) |
| 2006-2007 | Sargasso Sea | 20 | 20 | 12 | - | Brew et al. (2009) |
| 2006-2007 | Sargasso Sea | 9 | 9 | 9 | - | Stewart et al. (2011) |
| 2006-2008 | Tsushima Basin, East Japan Sea | - | - | - | 12 | Kim et al. (2011) |
| 2006-2008 | South China Sea | - | - | 17 | - | Wei et al. (2011) |
| 2006-09, 2011-12, 2014, 2016 | California Current | 47 | - | 60 | - | Stukel et al. CCE |
| 2007 | Arctic Ocean | 14 | 14 | - | 36 | Cai et al. (2010) |
| 2007 | Southern Ocean | 77 | 75 | - | 2 | Jacquet et al. (2011) |
| 2007 | North Atlantic Ocean | 20 | - | - | - | Sanders et al. (2010) |
| 2007 | South China Sea | - | - | - | 85 | Zhou et al. (2013) |
| 2008 | Northwest Pacific | - | - | 13 | - | Hung et al. (2012) |
| 2008 | South China Sea | - | - | 9 | - | Hung and Gong (2010) |
| 2008 | Iceland Basin | - | - | 9 | - | Martin et al. (2011) |
| 2008 | Eastern Bering Sea | - | - | 35 | - | Moran et al. (2012) |
| 2008 | Southern Ocean | 46 | 49 | - | 45 | Planchon et al. (2013) |
| 2008 | Gulf of California and Easter Tropical Pacific | 83 | 83 | 8 | - | Puigcorb  et al. (2015) |
| 2008 | Atlantic Sector Southern Ocean | 12 | 12 | - | 27 | Rutgers van der Loeff et al. (2011) |
| 2008 | Chukchi Sea | - | - | - | 79 | Yu et al. (2012) |
| 2008 | Southern Ocean | - | - | - | 146 | Zhou et al. (2012) |
| 2008-2009 | West Antarctic Peninsula | 1 | 1 | 4 | - | Buesseler et al. (2010) |
| 2008-2009 | Southern Ocean and Sargasso Sea | - | 26 | - | - | Zhou et al. (2016) |
| 2009 | Porcupine Abyssal Plain | 20 | 13 | - | - | Le Moigne et al. (2013b) |
| 2009 | Southern Ocean | - | - | 6 | - | Martin et al. (2013) |



| | | | | | | |
|---------------|--|-------------|-------------|------------|-------------|--|
| 2009 | NW Mediterranean Sea | - | - | 42 | - | Puigcorb  et al (unpublished)- FAMOSO |
| 2009 | Powell Basin of the Weddell Sea | - | - | 5 | 6 | Shaw et al. (2011) |
| 2009 | Cape Verde Archipelago | 14 | - | - | - | Turnewitsch et al. (2016) |
| 2009-2010 | Eastern Bering Sea | - | - | 89 | - | Baumann et al. (2013) |
| 2009-2011 | South China Sea | - | - | - | 777 | Cai et al. (2015) |
| 2009-2011 | Saanich Inlet | - | - | - | 76 | Luo et al. (2014) |
| 2010 | Irminger Basin and Iceland Basin | - | - | 8 | - | Ceballos-Romero et al. (2016) |
| 2010 | Saronikos Gulf | 10 | 10 | - | - | Evangelidou et al. (2013) |
| 2010 | North Atlantic Ocean | 39 | 39 | - | - | Le Moigne et al. (2012) |
| 2010 | NW Atlantic | 11 | - | - | - | Puigcorb  et al. (2017a) |
| 2010 | Costa Rica upwelling Dome | 13 | - | 10 | - | Stukel et al. CRD |
| 2010-2011 | Southeastern Pacific | - | - | 16 | - | Haskell II et al. (2013) |
| 2010-2011 | Atlantic Ocean | 189 | - | - | - | Owens et al. (2015) |
| 2011 | Tropical Atlantic | 15 | - | - | - | Pabortsava (2014) |
| 2011 | Kerguelen Plateau, Southern Ocean | 48 | 52 | - | - | Planchon et al. (2015) |
| 2011-2012 | Southern Ocean (Atlantic and Indian Sectors) | 27 | - | - | - | Rosengard et al. (2015) |
| 2012 | Arctic Ocean | 13 | 10 | - | - | Le Moigne et al. (2015) |
| 2012 | Southeast of the Mississippi delta | 39 | 38 | 11 | - | Maiti et al. (2016) |
| 2012 | Atlantic Sector Southern Ocean | 8 | - | 2 | - | Puigcorb  et al. (2017b) |
| 2012 | Eurasian Basin of the central Arctic | 25 | - | - | - | Roca-Marti et al. (2016) |
| 2012 | Atlantic Sector Southern Ocean | 19 | - | 22 | - | Roca-Marti et al. (2017) |
| 2013 | Southeastern Tropical Pacific | 339 | 339 | - | - | Black et al. (2018) |
| 2013 | Southern Ocean (South Georgia) | 10 | 9 | - | - | Ceballos-Romero et al. unpublished |
| 2013 | Southern Ocean | 12 | 8 | - | - | Le Moigne et al. (2016) |
| 2013-2014 | Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal | - | - | - | 4 | Anand et al. (2018b) |
| 2014 | Bay of Bengal | - | - | - | 13 | Anand et al. (2017) |
| 2014 | Southern Indian Ocean to Arabian Sea | - | - | - | 11 | Anand et al. (2018a) |
| 2014 | North Atlantic Ocean | 56 | 58 | - | - | Lemaitre et al. (2018) |
| 2015 | Arctic Ocean | 17 | 17 | - | 28 | Puigcorb  et al. (unpublished)-PS94 |
| Totals | | 3013 | 1968 | 939 | 3190 | 9110 |

Table 1: Sampling year, area, the number of samples for large particles (LP), small particles (SP), bulk particles (BU) and particles collected with sediment trap (ST) and reference of studies used in the database. Note the following reference refer to data published in several papers: Stukel et al. CCE refers to data published in Stukel et al. (2011, 2015, 2017, 2019); Stukel et al. CRD refers to data from Stukel et al. (2015, 2016). Buesseler JGOFS dataset Arabian Sea refers to data published in (Buesseler et al., 1998) and also available at <https://www.bco-dmo.org/project/2043>. Buesseler JGOFS dataset Southern Ocean refers to data published in (Buesseler et al., 2001) and also available at <https://www.bco-dmo.org/project/2044>. Kawakami North Pacific Time Series data is available at <http://www.jamstec.go.jp/res/ress/kawakami/234Th.html> and has also been published in Kawakami (2009), Kawakami et al. (2004, 2010, 2015), Kawakami and Honda (2007) and Yang et al. (2004). Further details regarding particle size specifications or sampling device can be found in the database file <https://doi.pangaea.de/10.1594/PANGAEA.902103>