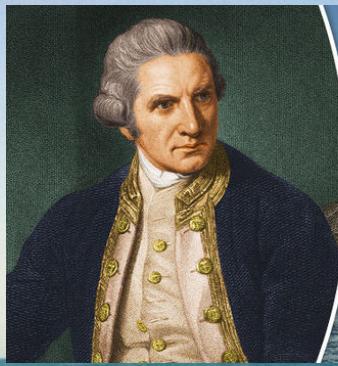


# Trichodesmium global distribution

Sara Rivero-Calle  
University of Southern California  
[riveroca@usc.edu](mailto:riveroca@usc.edu)

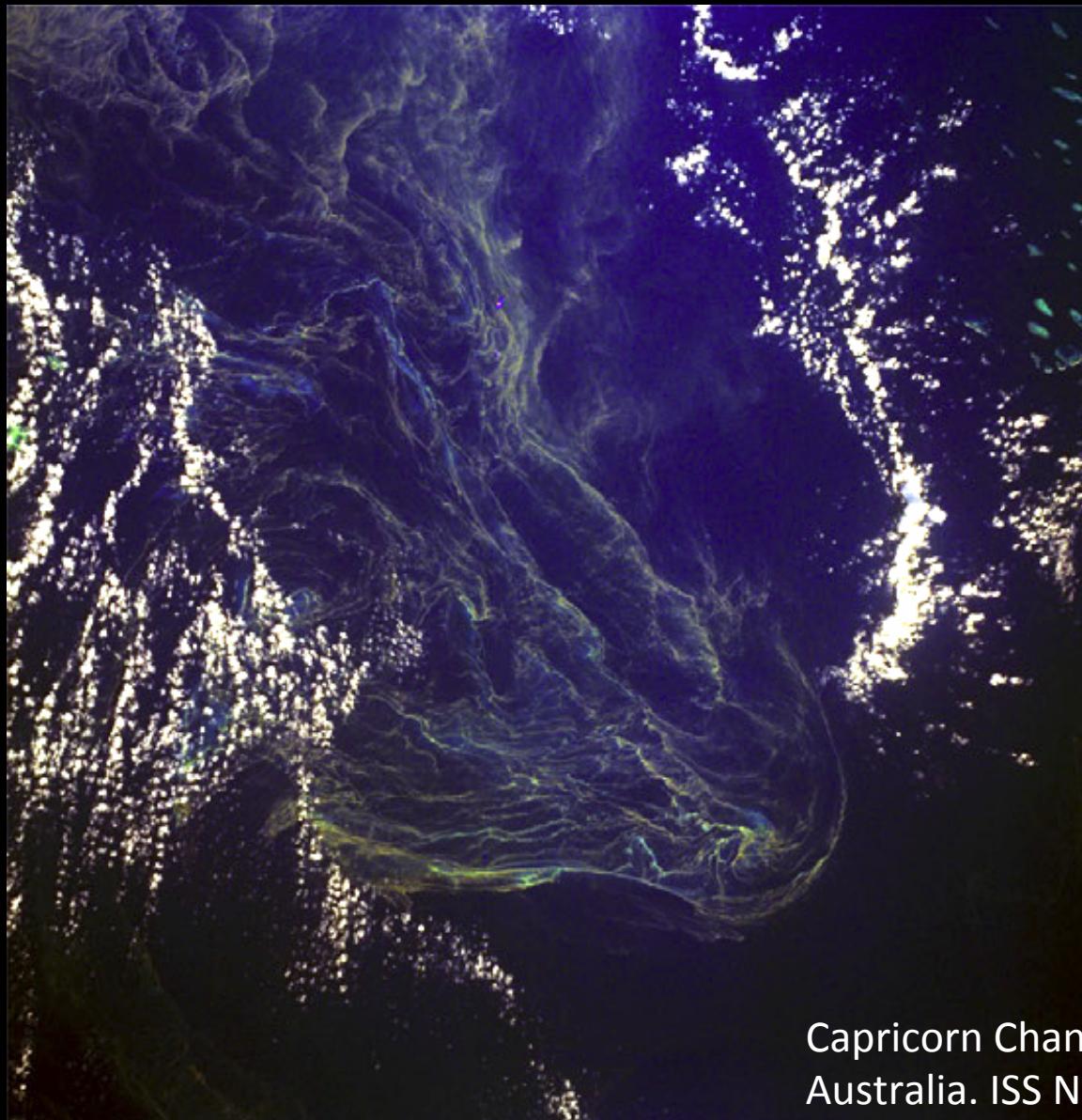


In August 1770, Captain Cook wrote:  
“The Sea in many places is her cover’d with a kind of a brown scum...”  
sailors call it “Sea Sawdust”



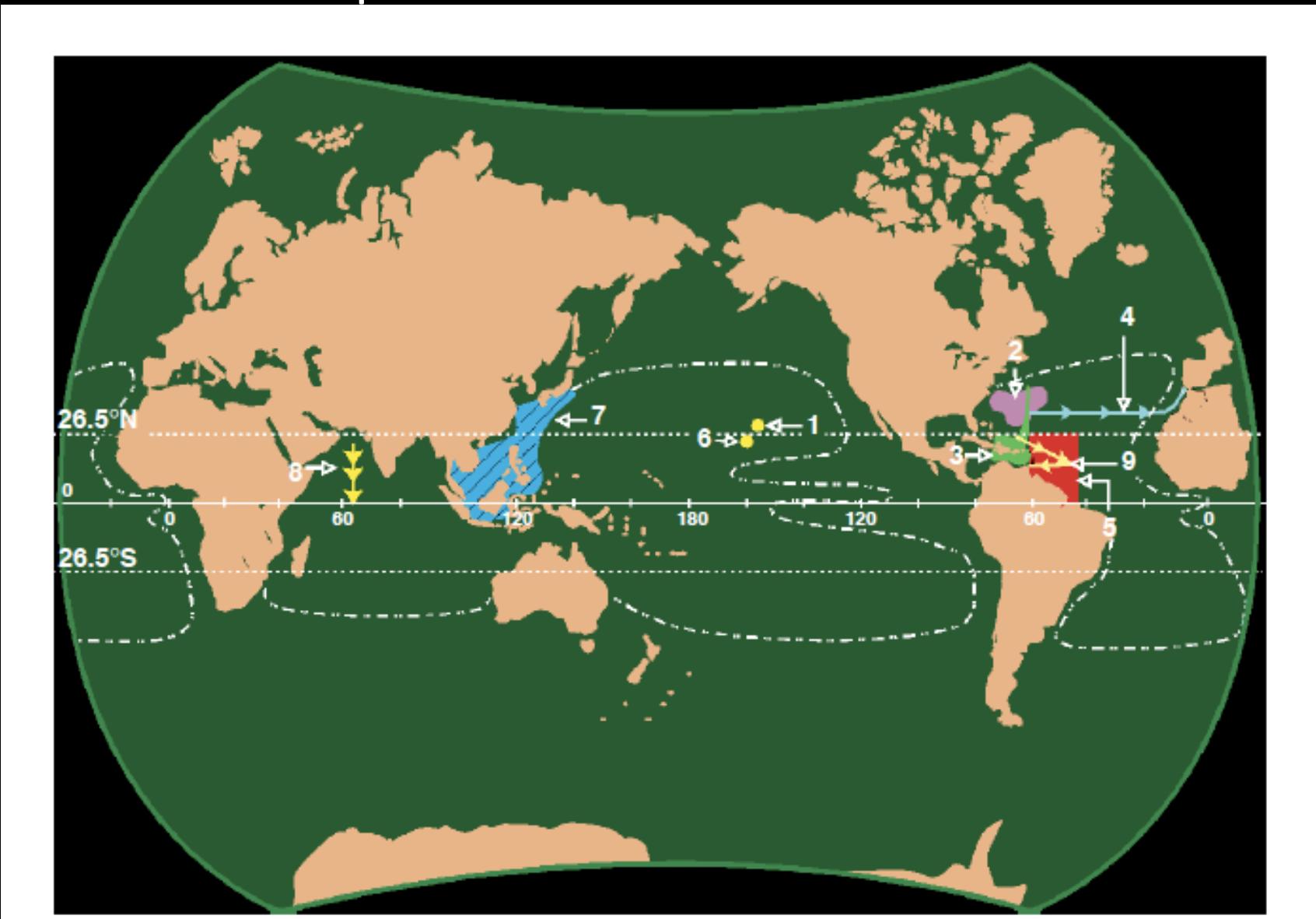
Key West, Florida. U.S. Coast Guard photo

# First report from Space, Nov 1983



Capricorn Channel of the southern Great Barrier Reef,  
Australia. ISS Nov 1983 (Kuchler and Jupp, 1988)

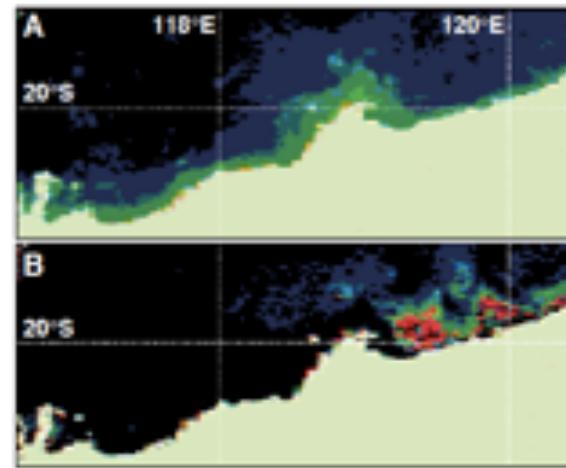
# Global compilation of in situ and satellite records



(Capone et al.,  
Science 1997)

# Global compilation of in situ and satellite records

a net sequestering of atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> into



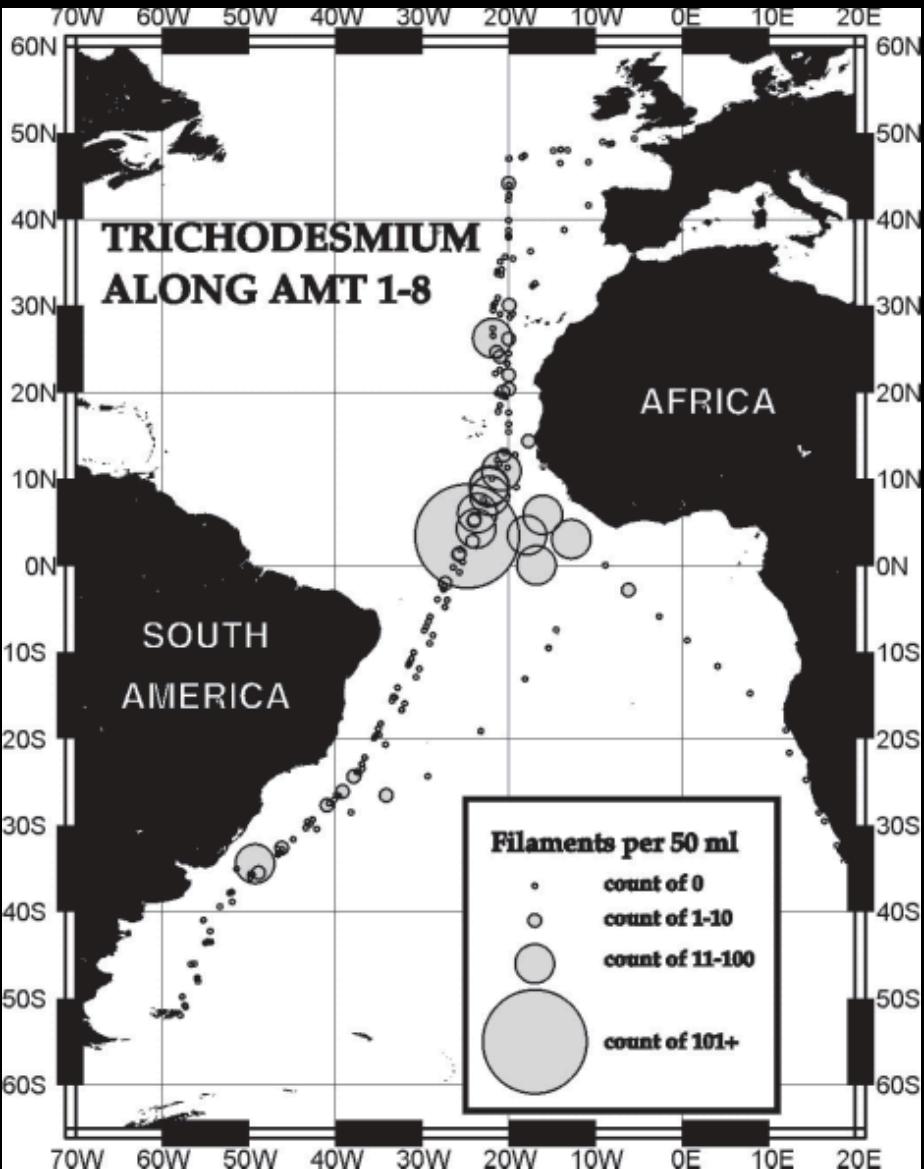
**Fig. 5.** (A) Image of chlorophyll and (B) relative *Trichodesmium* abundance derived from a coastal zone color scanner (CZCS) image of the northwestern coast of Australia in the vicinity of the Dampier Archipelago and confirmed by contemporaneous sea-truth data [adapted from (42)]. A protocol based on reflectivity and absorption at 550 nm was used. Chlorophyll is reported as detected by CZCS, with lowest to highest chlorophyll a concentrations ranging from purple (<0.05 mg m<sup>-3</sup>) to red (>3.0 mg m<sup>-3</sup>). For *Trichodesmium*, dark colors indicate its absence; lighter colors (light blue through orange) indicate its presence. Differences in color represent varying responses to the protocol, not necessarily differences in *Trichodesmium* concentration.

**Table 1.** Summary of direct areal estimates of N<sub>2</sub> fixation, as originally reported or as derived. Studies based on C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>2</sub> reduction determinations of N<sub>2</sub> fixation used a 3:1 conversion from C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>2</sub> reduced to N<sub>2</sub> fixed, unless otherwise noted. N, number of discrete observations.

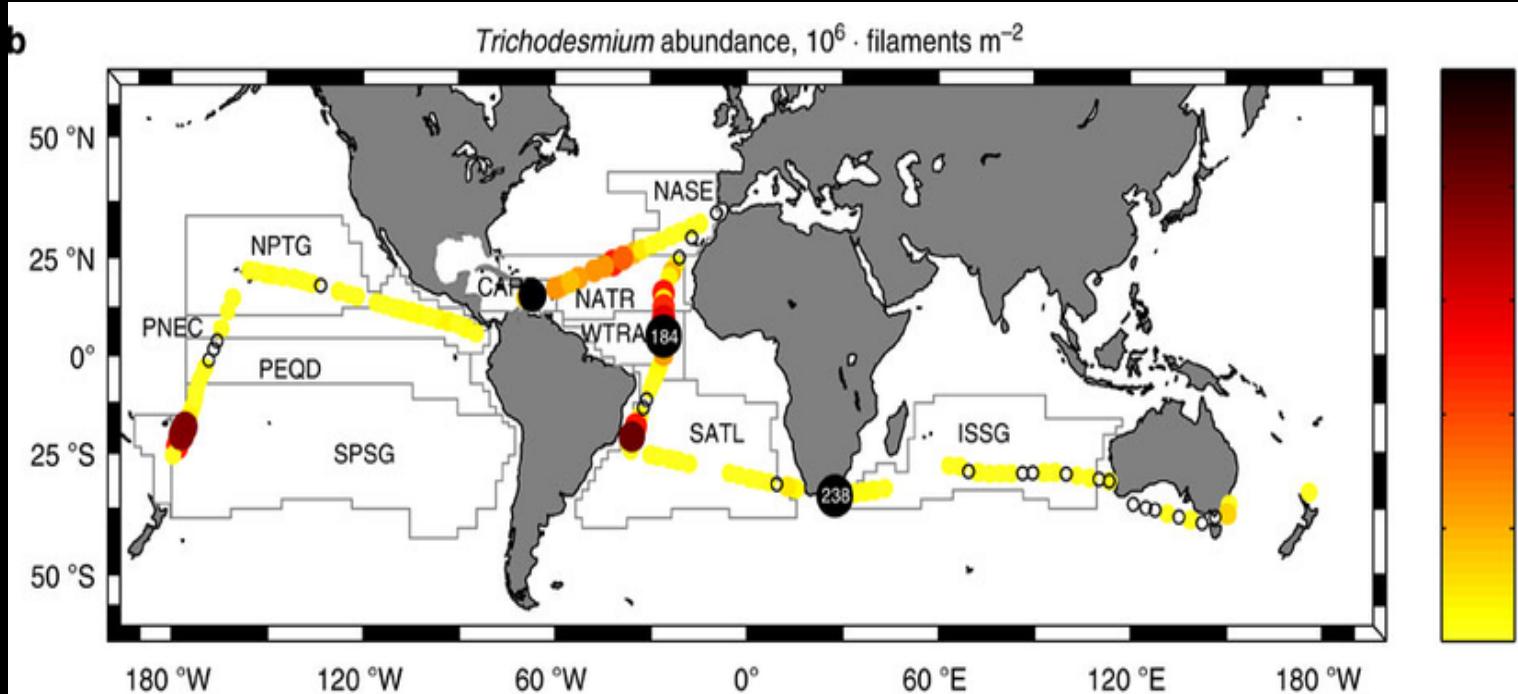
Location	Areal estimates			Map code	Reference
	Date	Average ± SE (μmol N m <sup>-2</sup> day <sup>-1</sup> )	N		
Subtropical					
28°N, 155°W (North Pacific)	Aug 73	33	1	1	(95)
27° to 34°N (NW Sargasso Sea)	Sep-Oct 73	1.4* ± 0.47	9	2	(93)
22° to 36°N (Sargasso Sea)	Aug 74	6.2* ± 4.0	7	3	(92)
22° to 23°N (Caribbean passages)	Feb-Mar 74, Aug 74	4.2* ± 4.0	10	3	(92)
30°N (Atlantic transect)	May-Jun 75	0.29* ± 0.13	5	4	(94)
Tropical					
0° to 24°N, 45° to 66°W (SW North Atlantic)	Fall 64	41† ± 7.6	19	5	(65)
21°N, 159°W (North Pacific)	Spring 65 Oct, Dec 72	108† ± 24 134	15 2	5 6a	(62)
12° to 22°N (Caribbean)	Feb-Mar 74, Aug 74	77* ± 9.7	12	3	(92)
10° to 25°N (SE East China Sea)	Summer 77	126	32	7	(63)
23°N, 158°W (North Pacific)	Jun 90, Feb 91	85	2	6b	(89)
7° to 10°N (Arabian Sea)	May 95	35 ± 7.4	9	8	(81)
14° to 22°N (SW North Atlantic)	May 94	73 ± 22	12	9	(64)
NE Caribbean	May 94	278 ± 129	3	9	(64)
Tropical, grand average		106 ± 24			

\*Data as originally presented using a 6.3:1 conversion ratio.

†Data based on direct <sup>15</sup>N<sub>2</sub> uptake. Average rates from 0 and 15 m are assumed over the top 20 m and have been increased by 50% to account for activity below 20 m, on the basis of data for the region from Fig. 4 and (64).



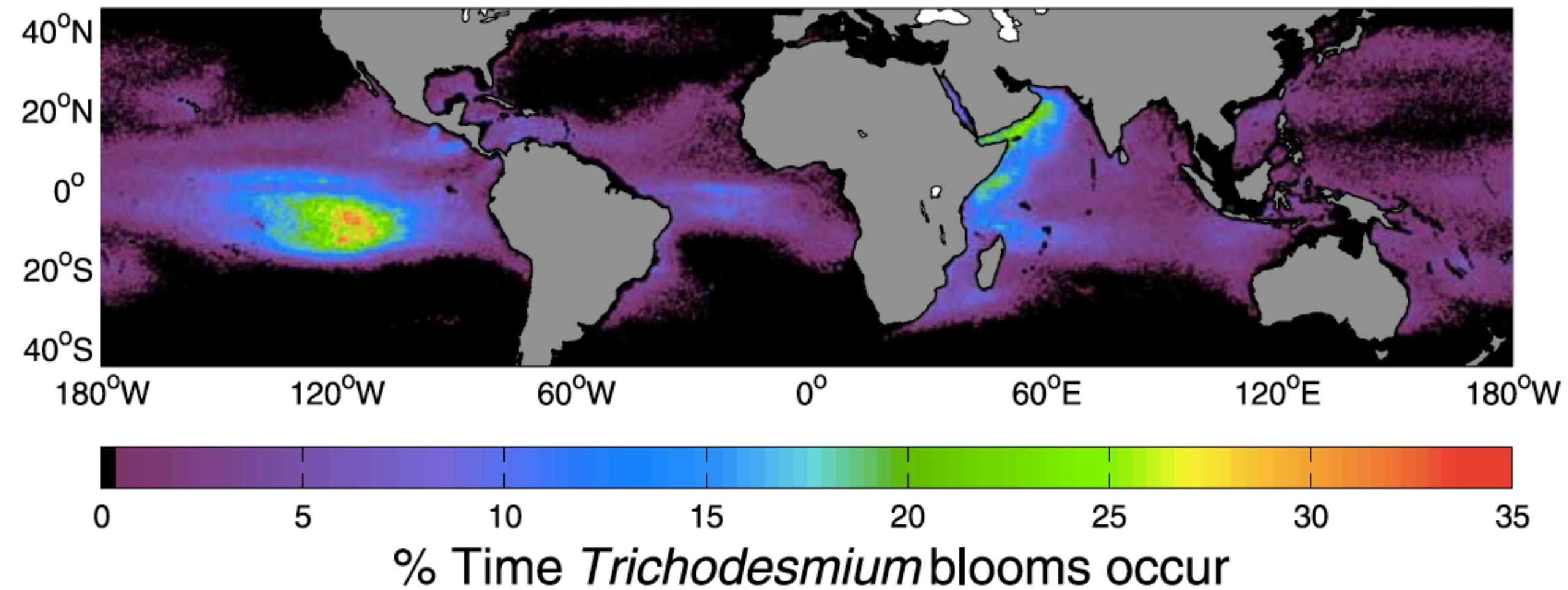
< Tyrrell et al 1990' s-10 cruises between about 50S and 50N in the Atlantic.



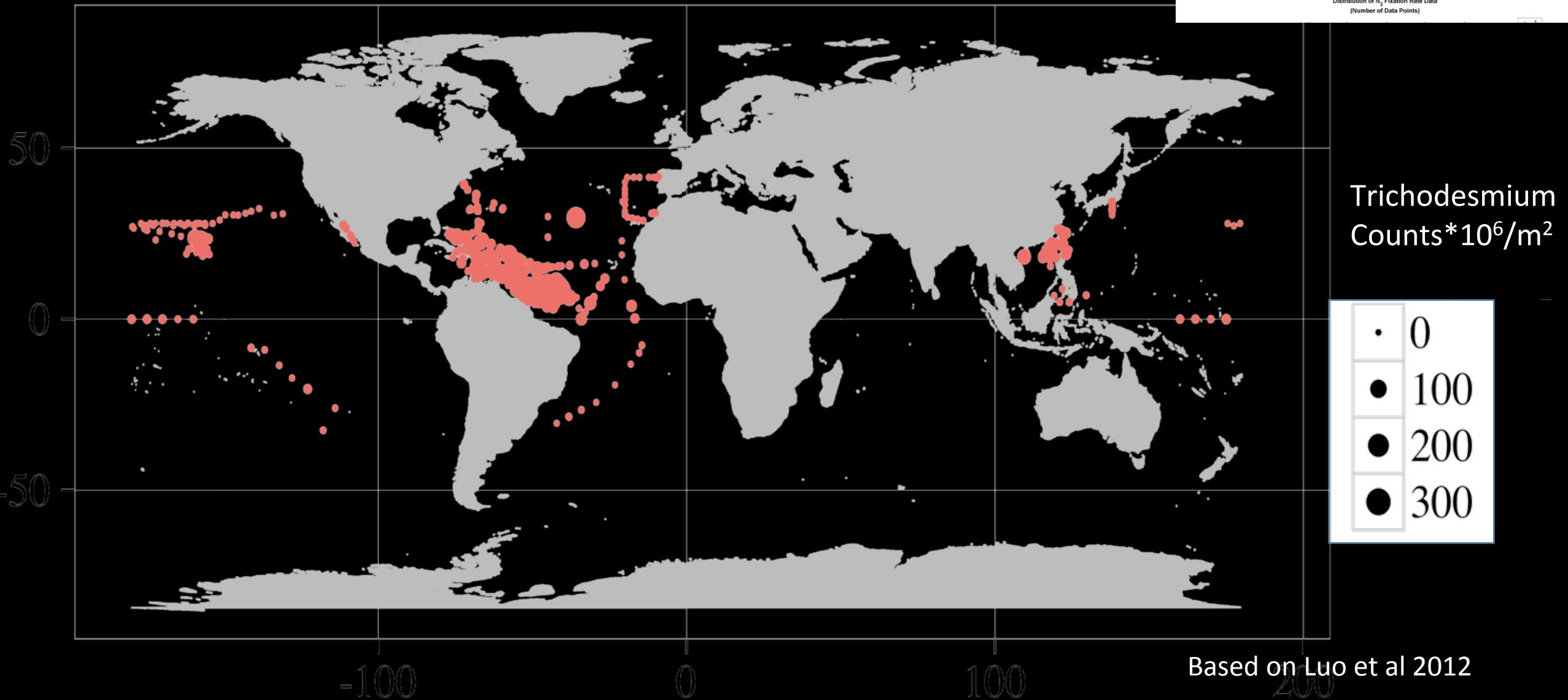
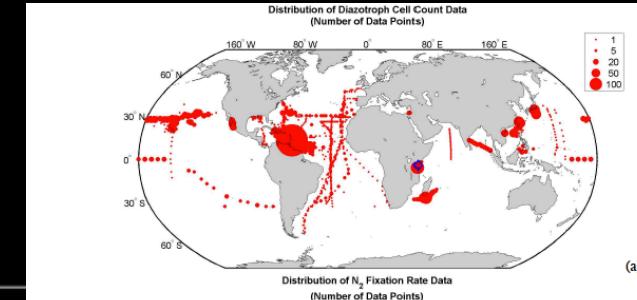
^ Malaspina Expedition 2010-2011  
Fernandez-Castro et al, 2015 Nature Comm.

# First Satellite-derived Global Bloom Occurrence

Westberry & Siegel 2006. GBC.



# A global database effort: MAREDAT



# Methods

- Light Microscopy
- Flow cytometry
- Video Camera Recorder (VCR)
- Molecular: nifH genes
- DNA: clade specific qPCR
- Pigments (PUB,PEB, PC)
- Optics: Backscattering +Absorption

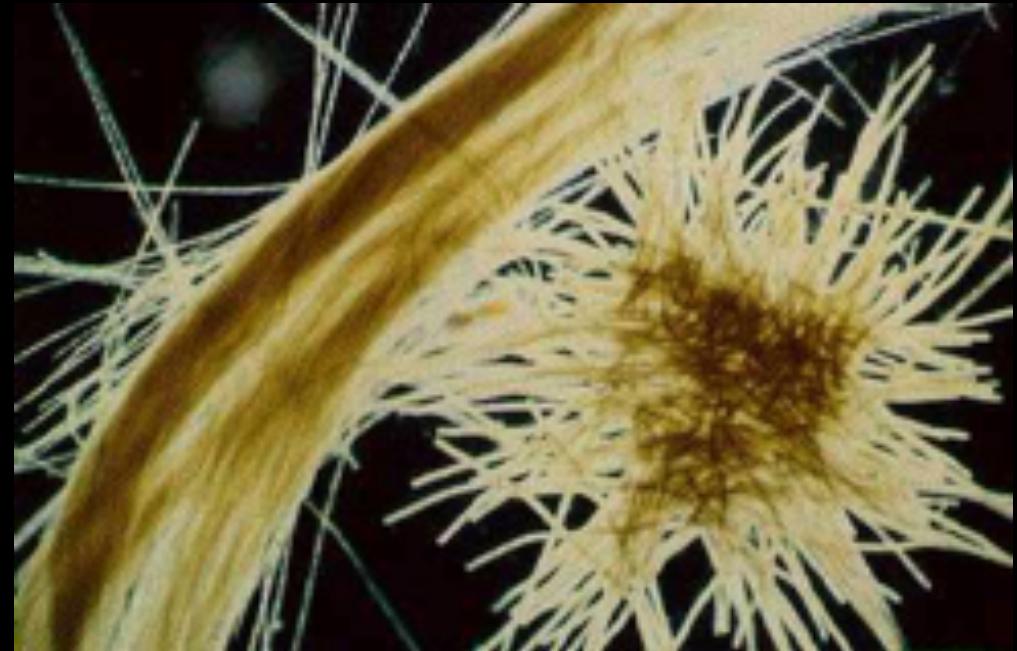
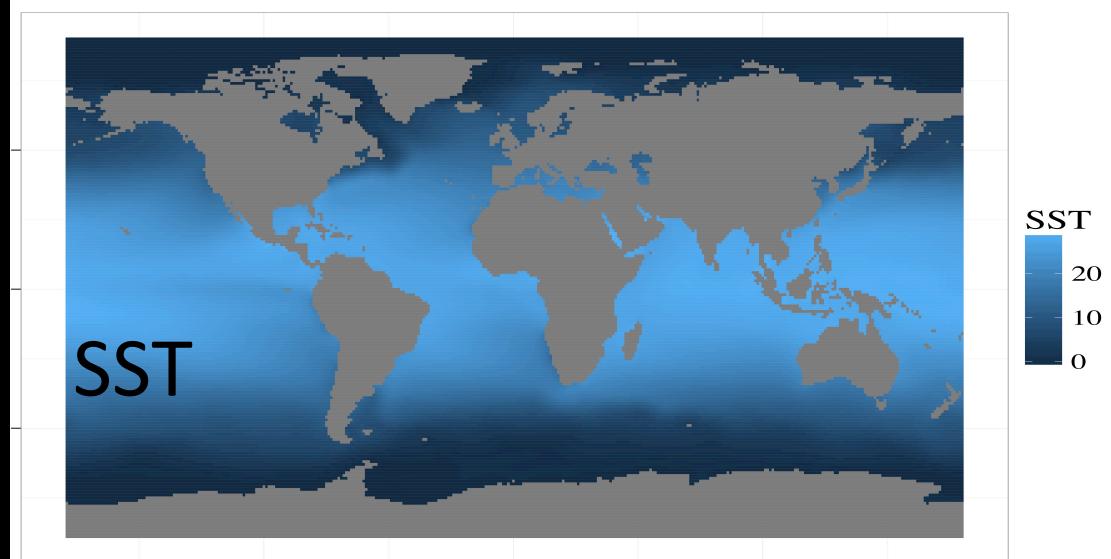
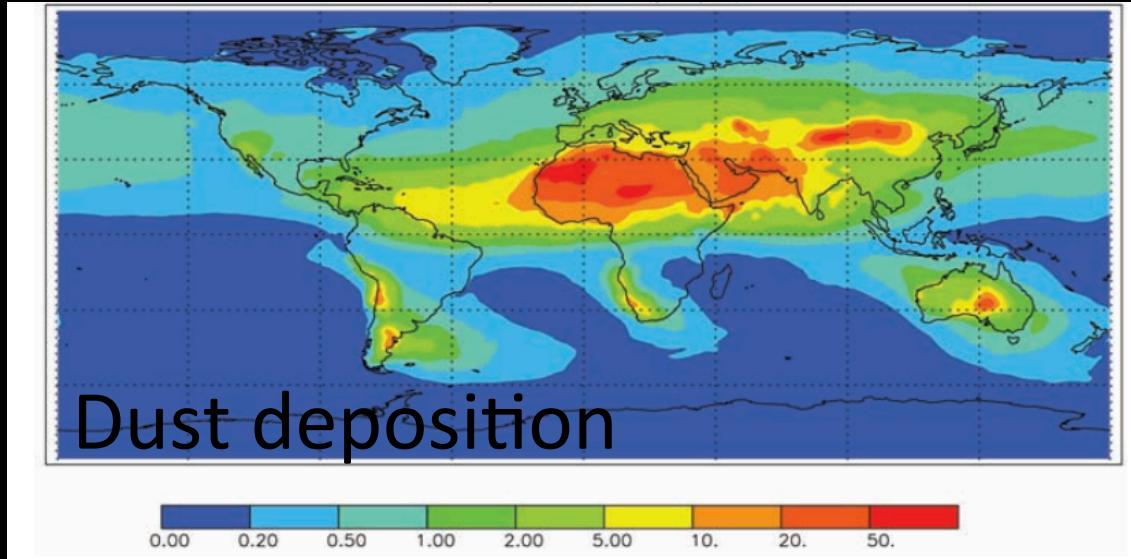


Photo Credit: Bergman

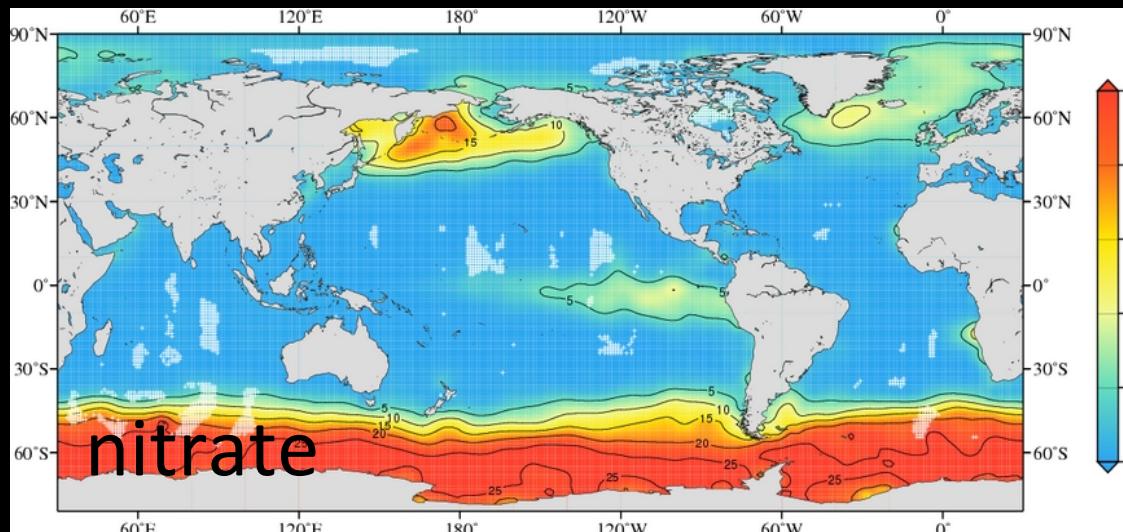
# Environmental limitations



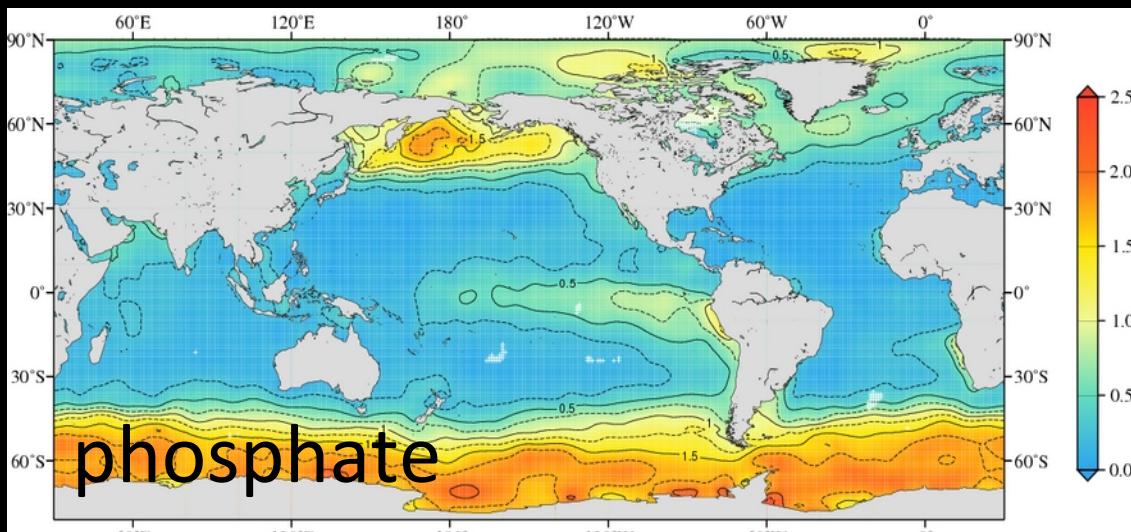
Levitus, 2005

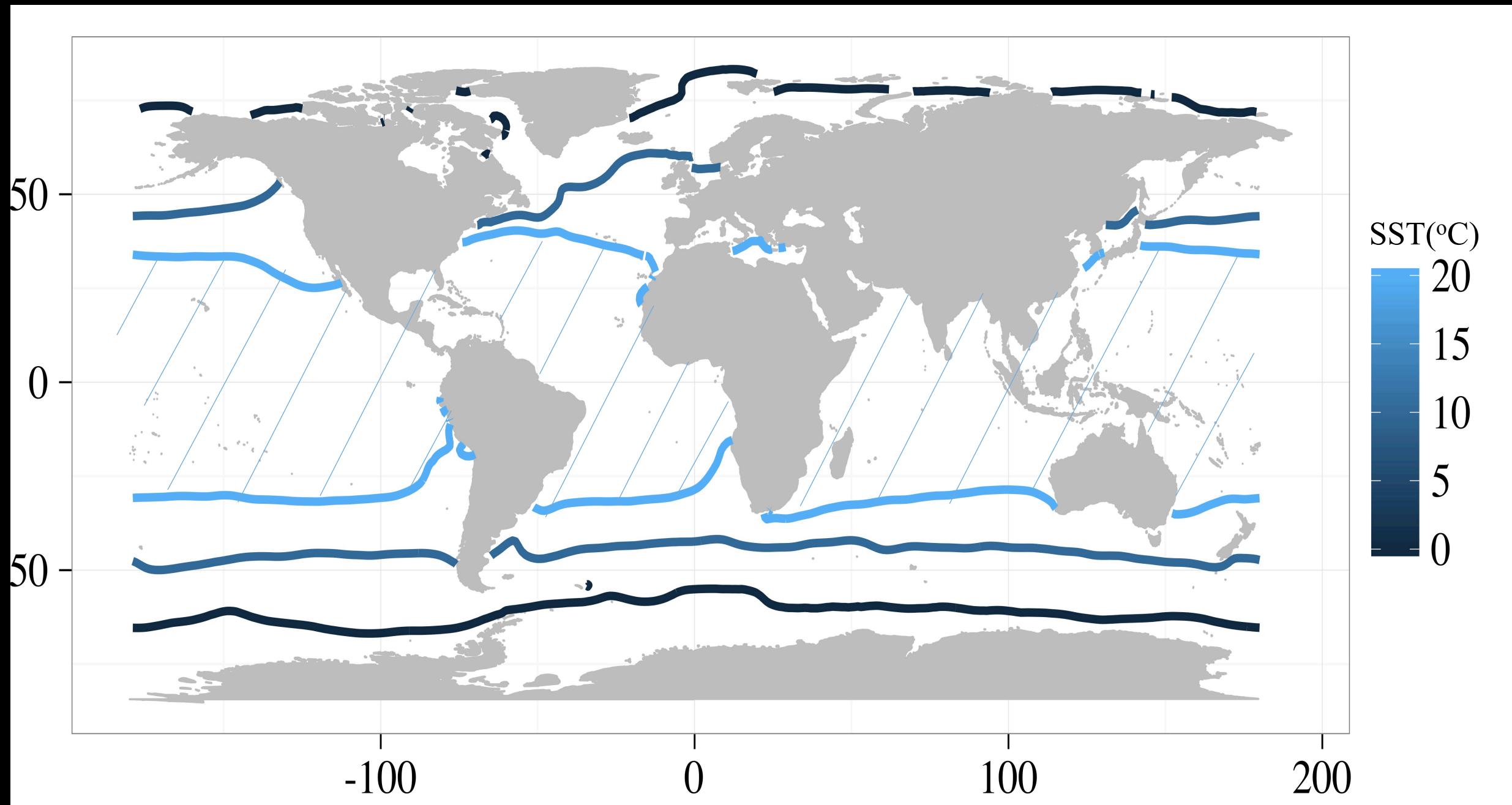


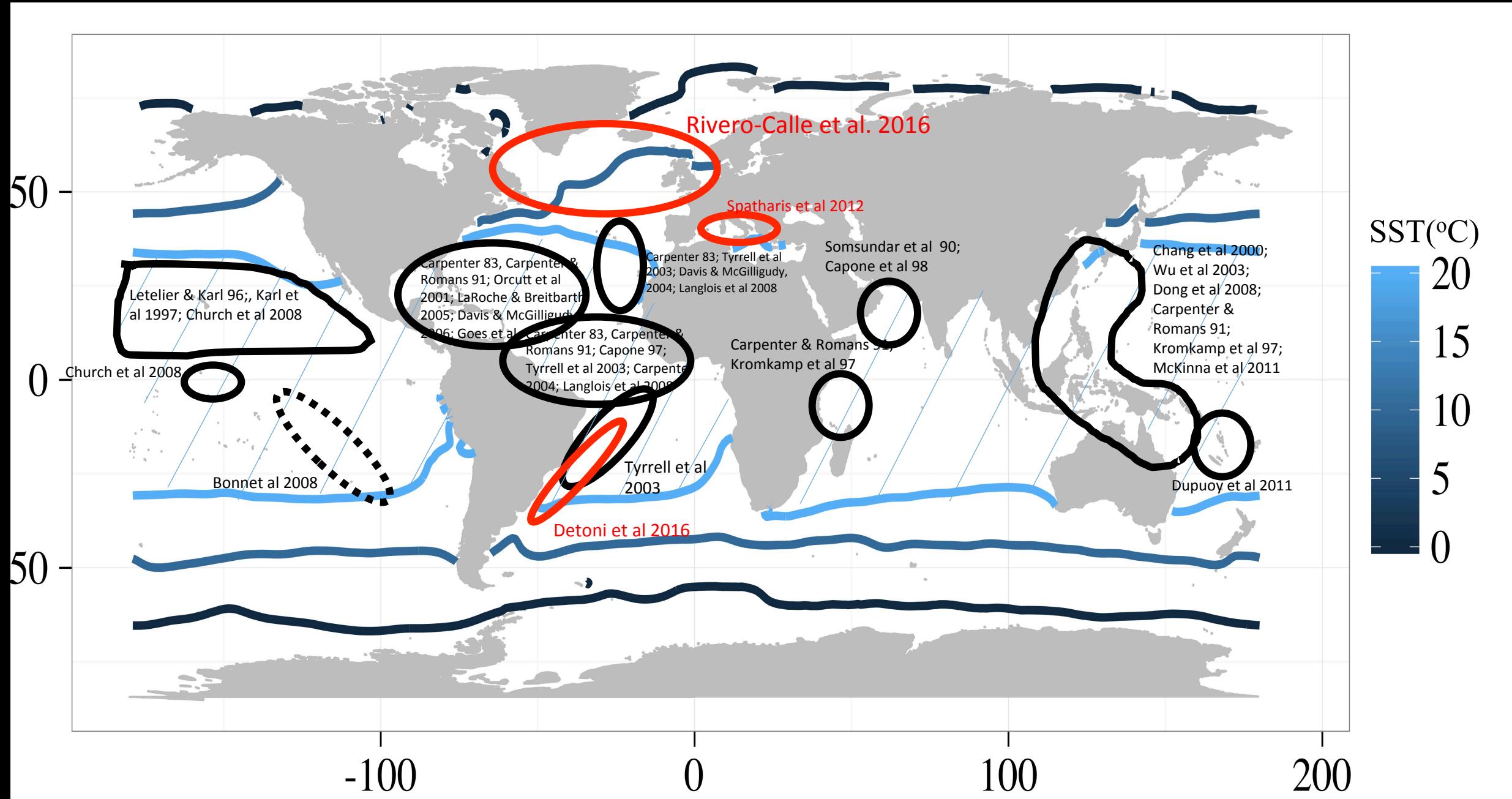
Jickells et al., Science, 2005



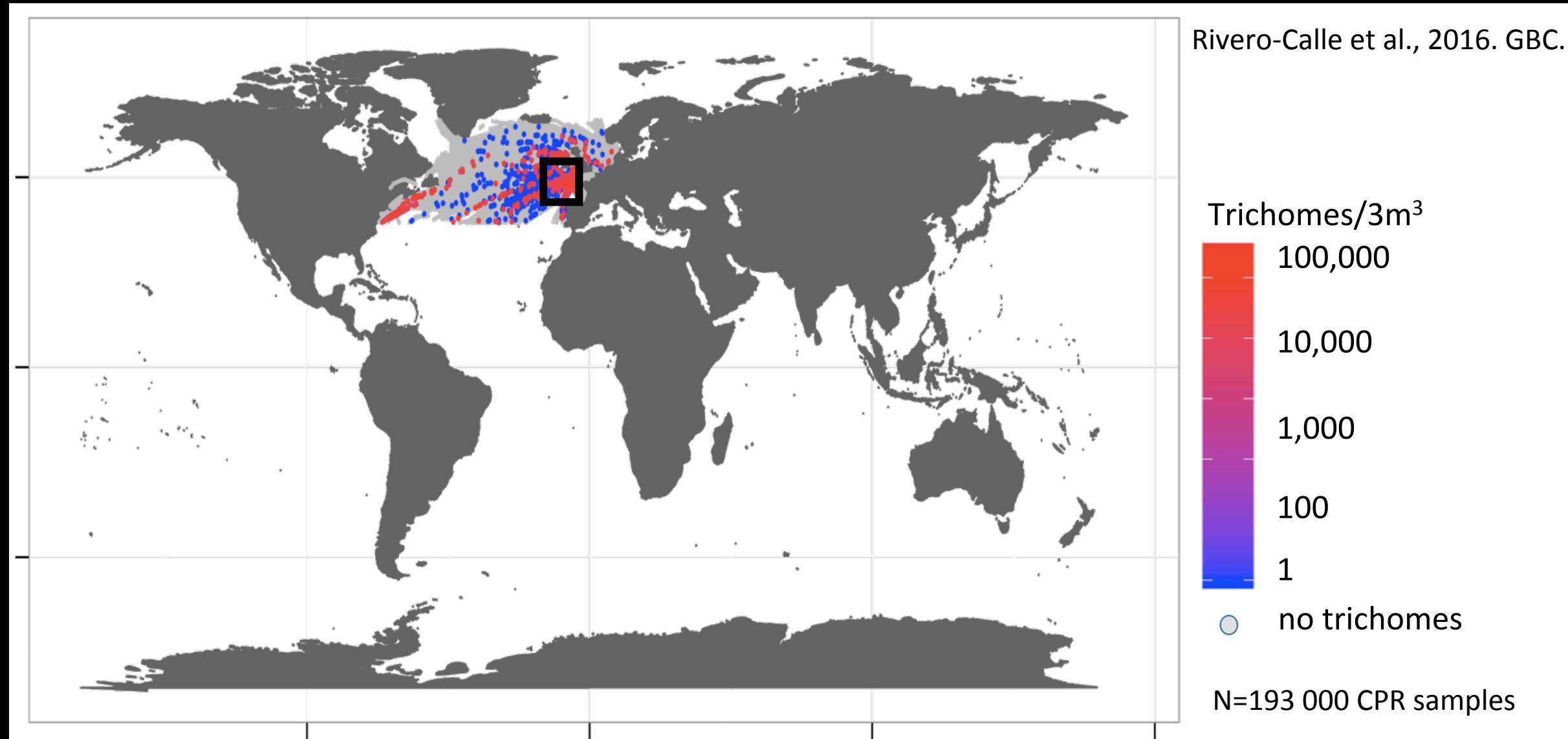
<https://www.nodc.noaa.gov/OC5/woa13fv2/>





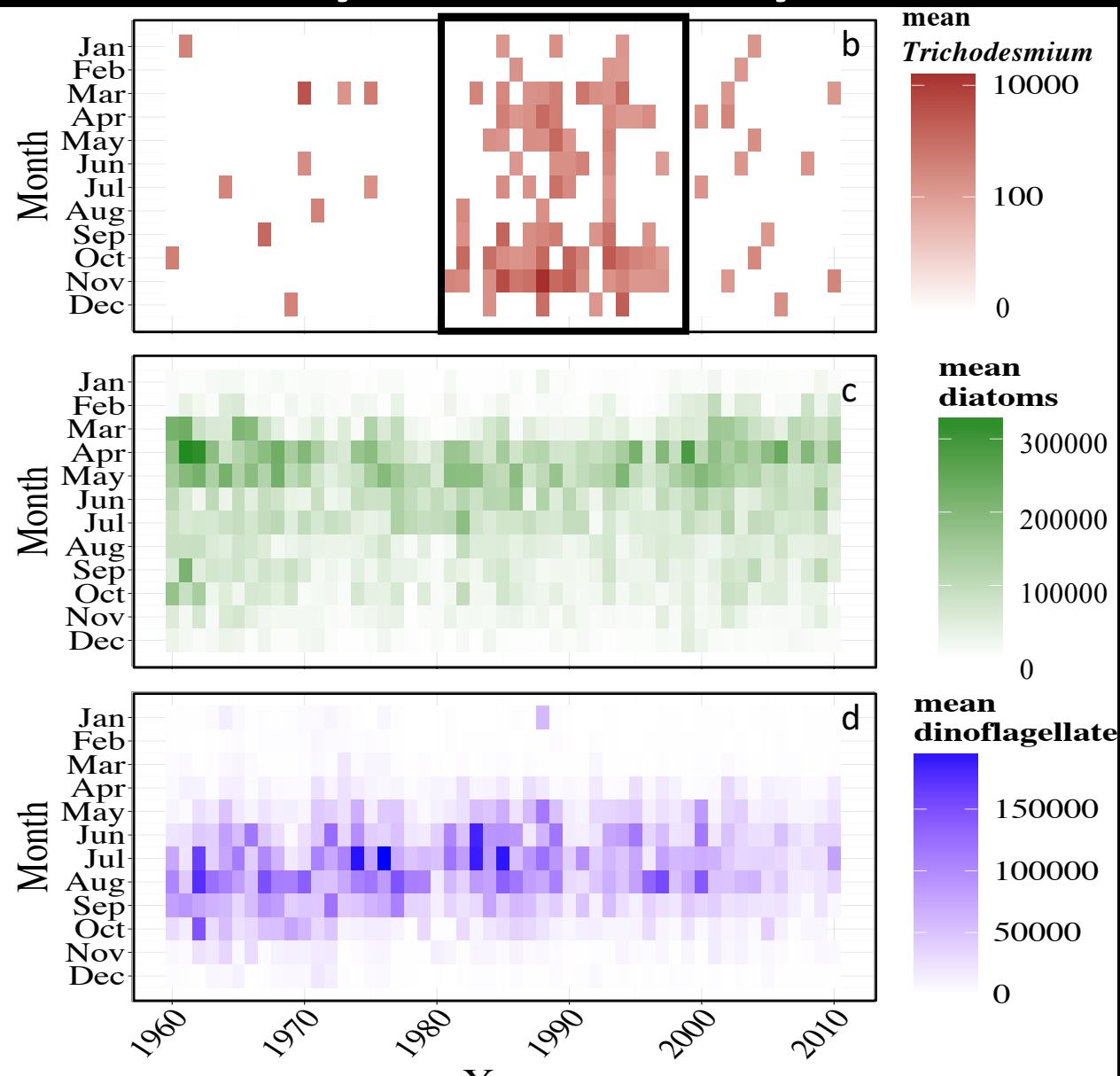
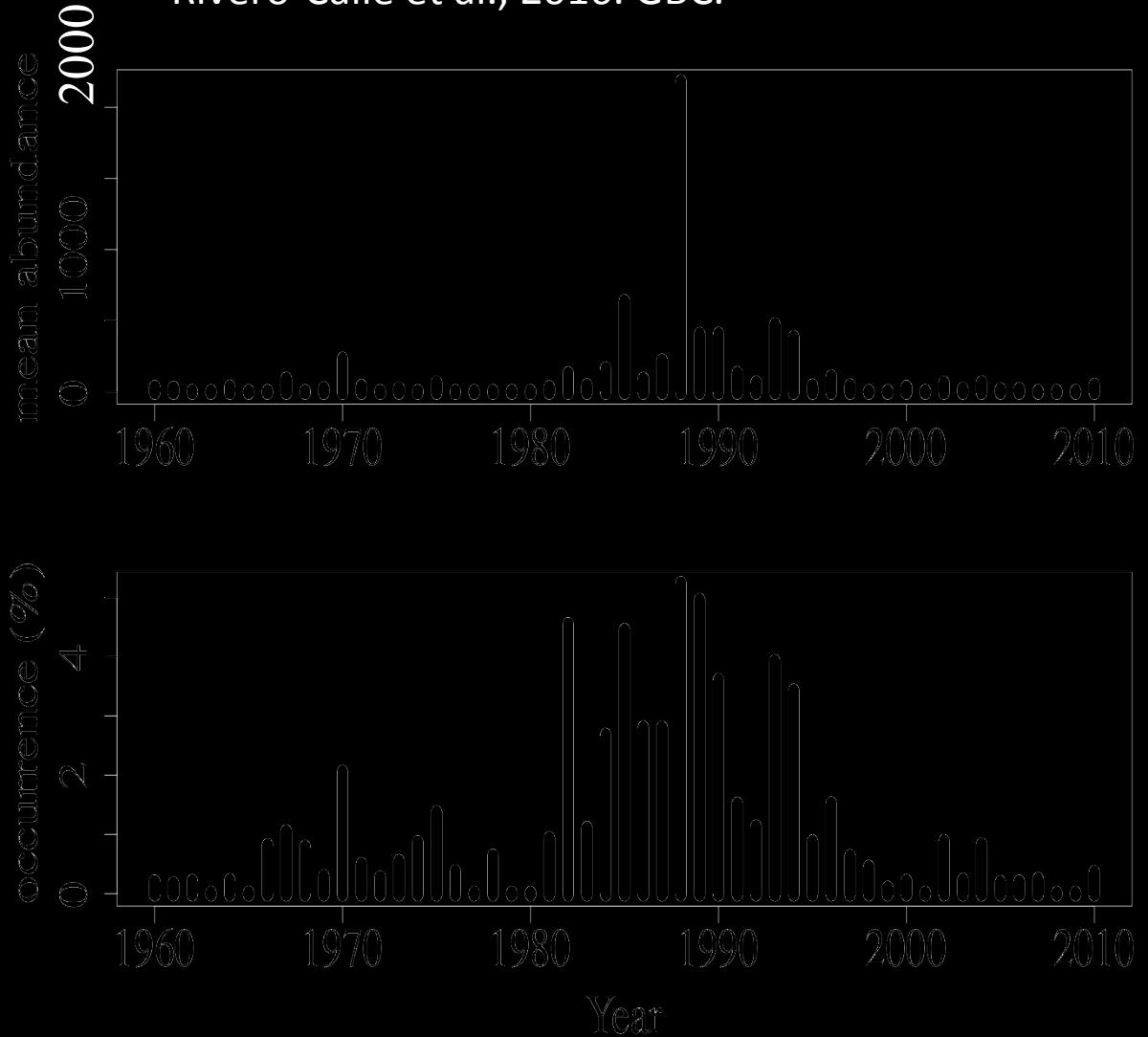


# 50 years of *Trichodesmium* records in the North Atlantic



# Biscay interannual and monthly variability

Rivero-Calle et al., 2016. GBC.



# Conclusions, challenges, future work



- Disagreement among methods
- Reports often clump diazotrophs together
- Specificity of techniques
- Matchups – groundtruthing
- Hard to predict blooms
- Rare + ephemeral blooms
- Sub-bloom concentrations
- Patchiness
- Vertical migration
- Subsurface distribution
- Resolution: Spectral + Spatial + Temporal
- Quantitative algorithms
- Nutrients, temperature assumptions often bias sampling areas
- Clades/ strains/ species differences

# Acknowledgements

- Advisors: Carlos Del Castillo, Anand Gnanadesikan, Naomi Levine
- Co-authors: Amin Dezfuli, Ben Zaitchik, David Johns
- Funding: APL graduate fellowship, EPS, EPS summer research funding, SAHFOS external researcher fund, Student travel Awards
- USC Postdoctoral Scholar Travel and Training Award, Ocean Carbon and Biogeochemistry Travel scholarship and the *Trichodesmium* Breakout session organizers

**Thank you!!**

Sara Rivero-Calle

Contact: [riveroca@usc.edu](mailto:riveroca@usc.edu)



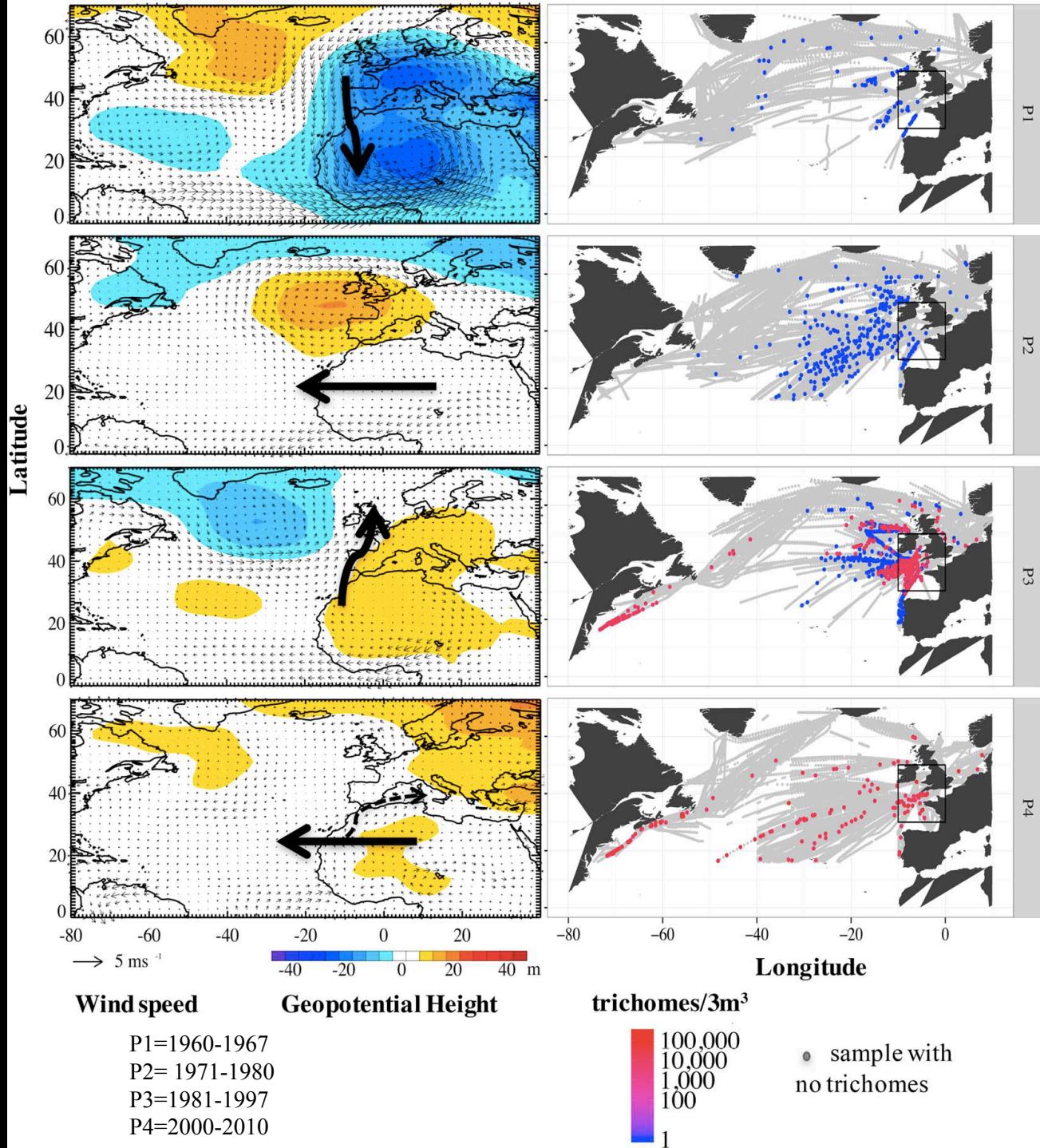
**USC** University of  
Southern California

**JOHNS HOPKINS**  
UNIVERSITY

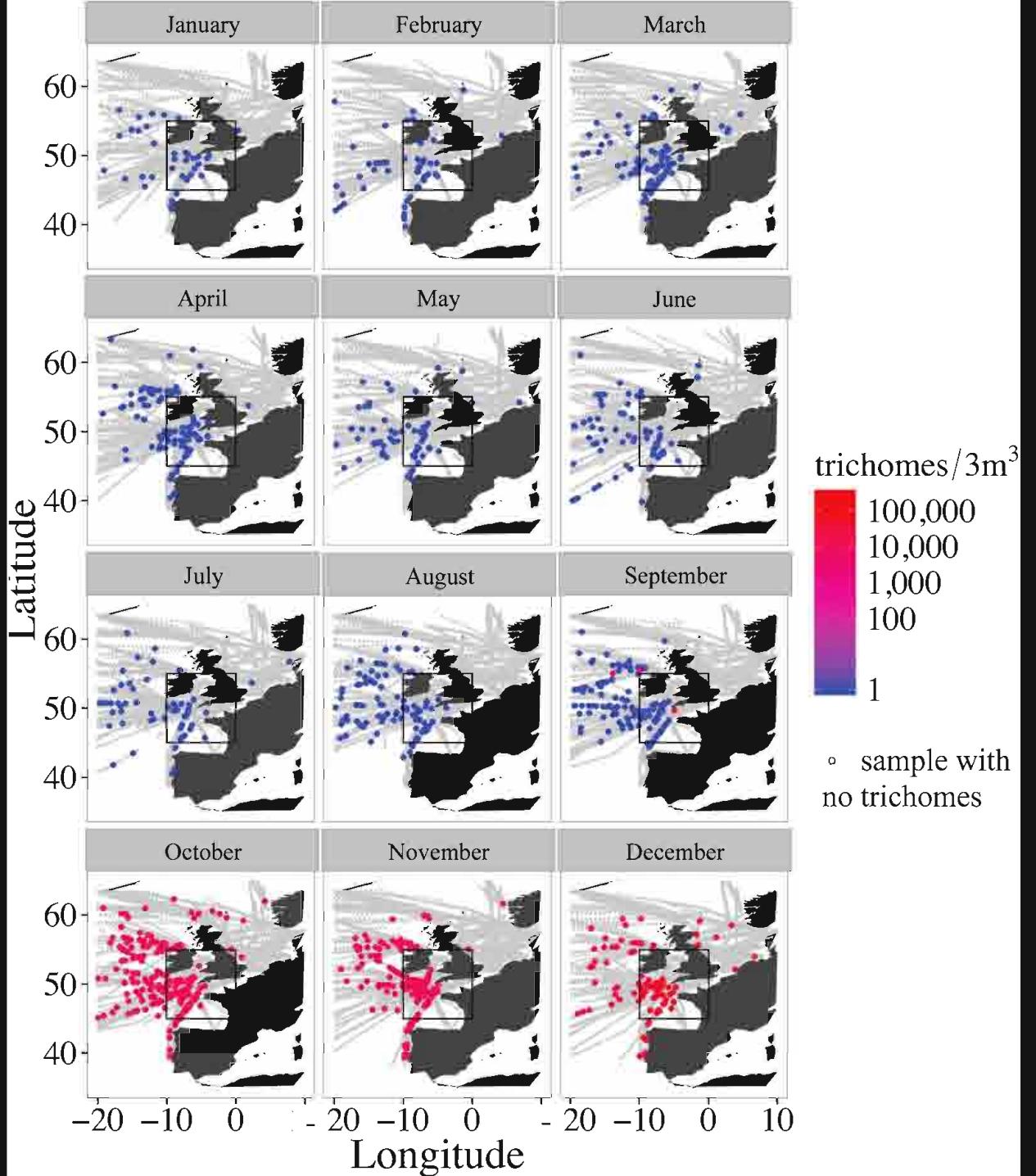
**APL**  
The Johns Hopkins University  
APPLIED PHYSICS LABORATORY

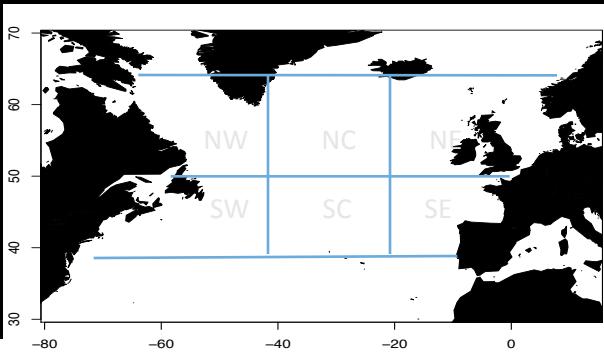




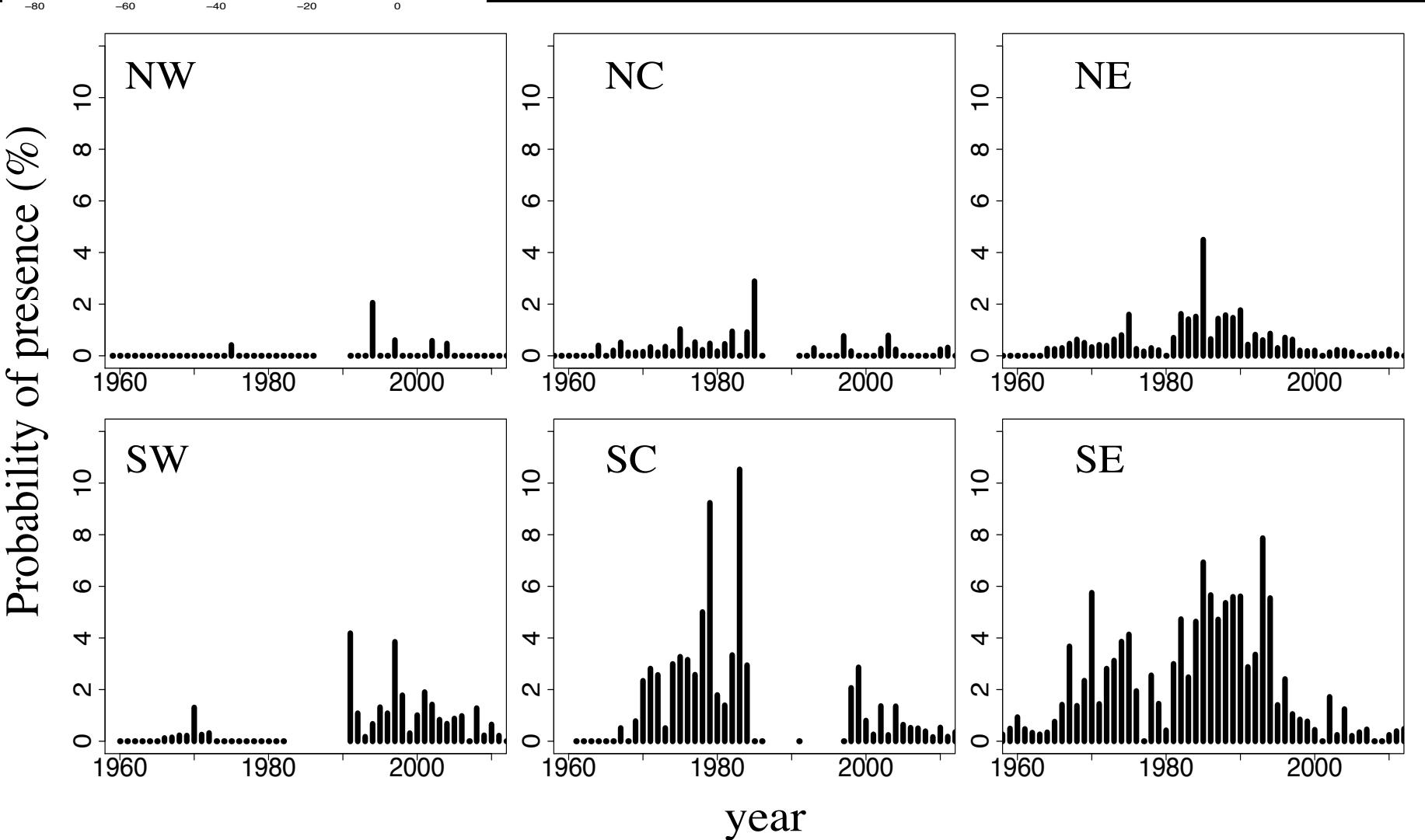


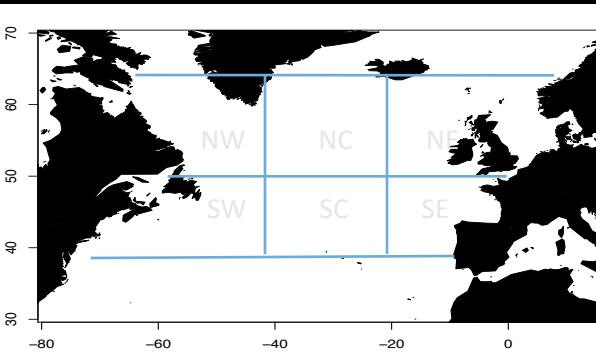
Rivero-Calle, S., C. E. Del Castillo, A. Gnanadesikan, A. Dezfuli, B. Zaitchik, and D. G. Johns (2016), Interdecadal Trichodesmium variability in cold North Atlantic waters, *Global Biogeochem. Cycles*, 30. doi:10.1002/2015GB005361.



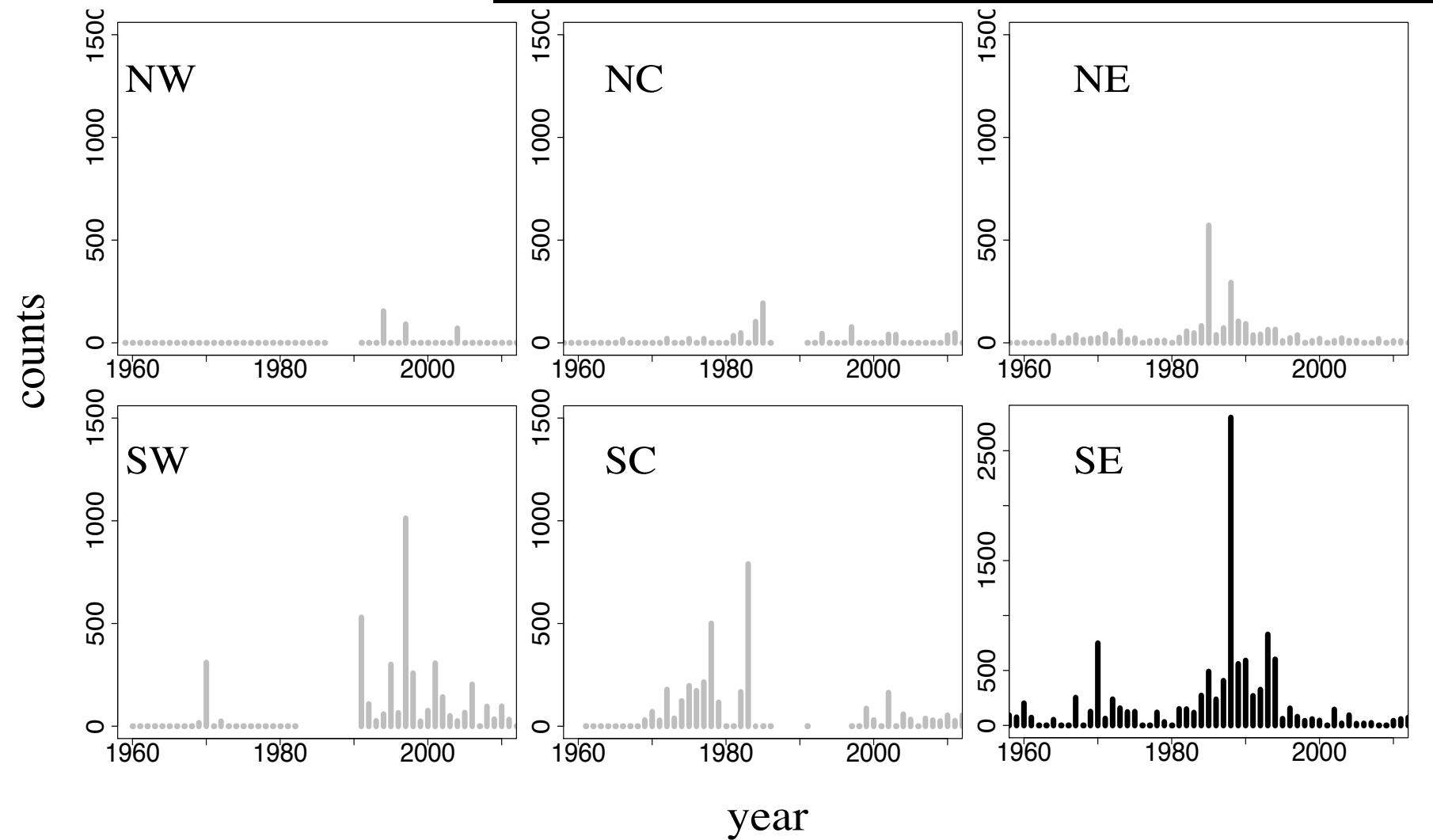


Annual *Trichodesmium* occurrence per region



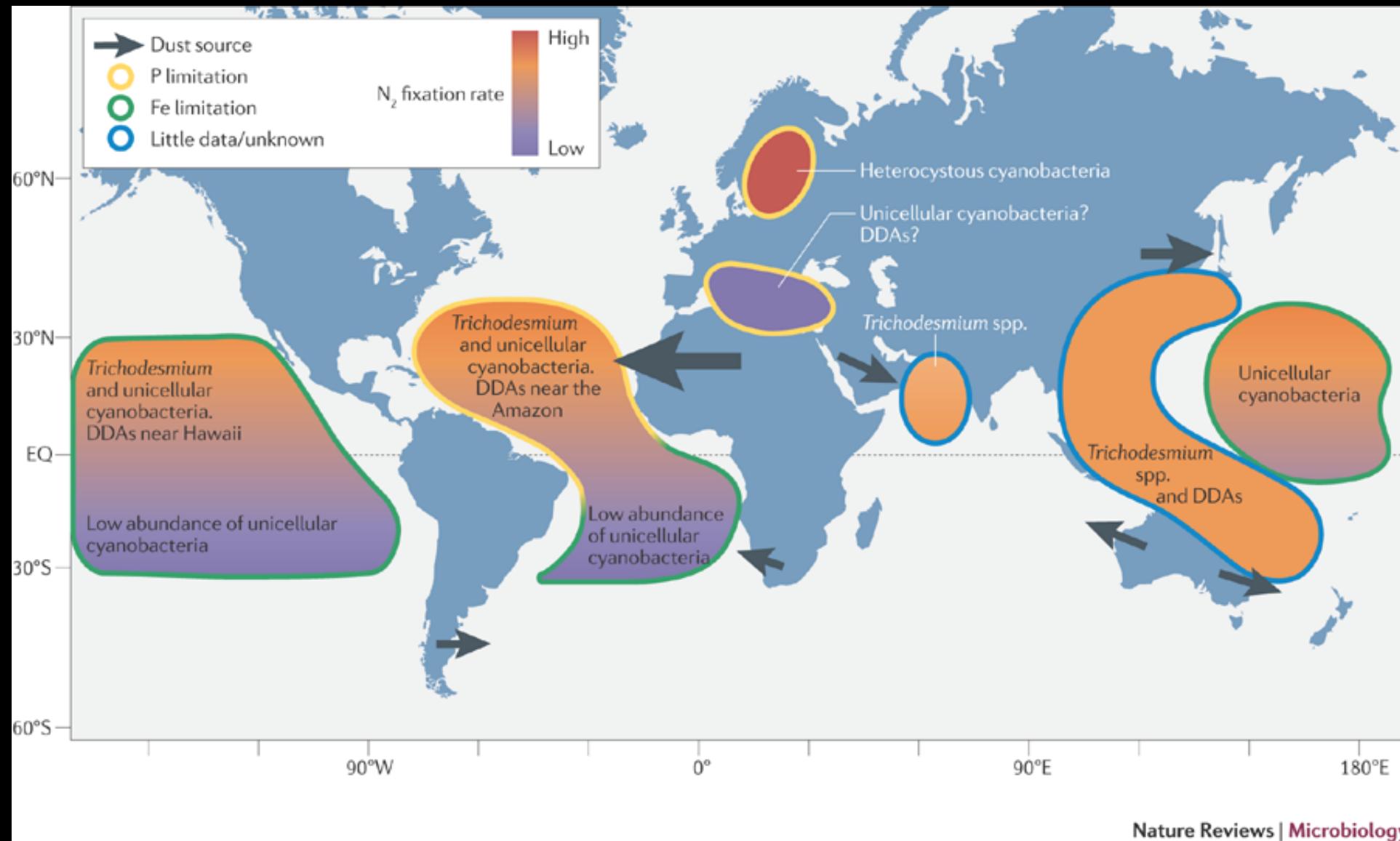


Mean annual *Trichodesmium* counts per region



d.

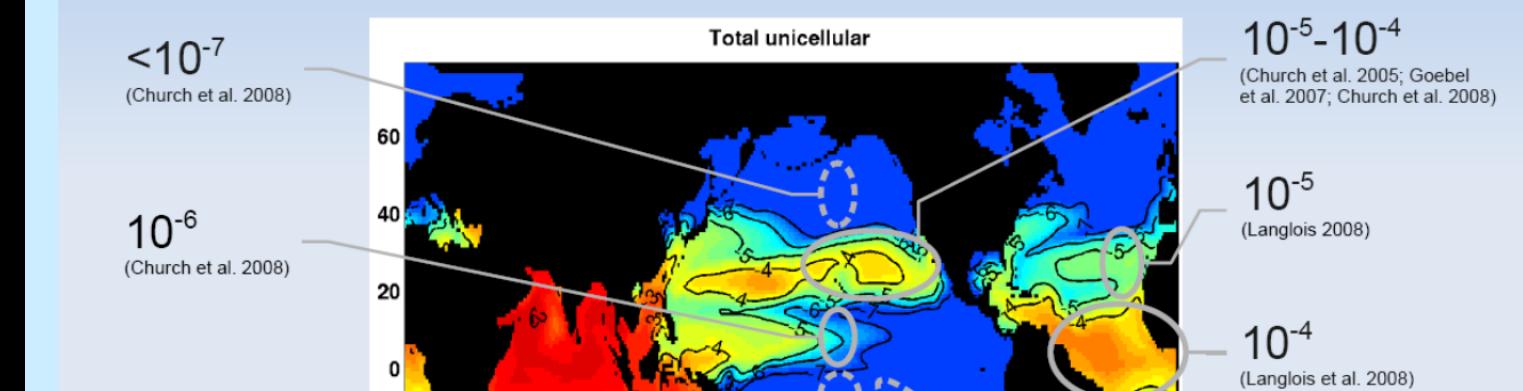
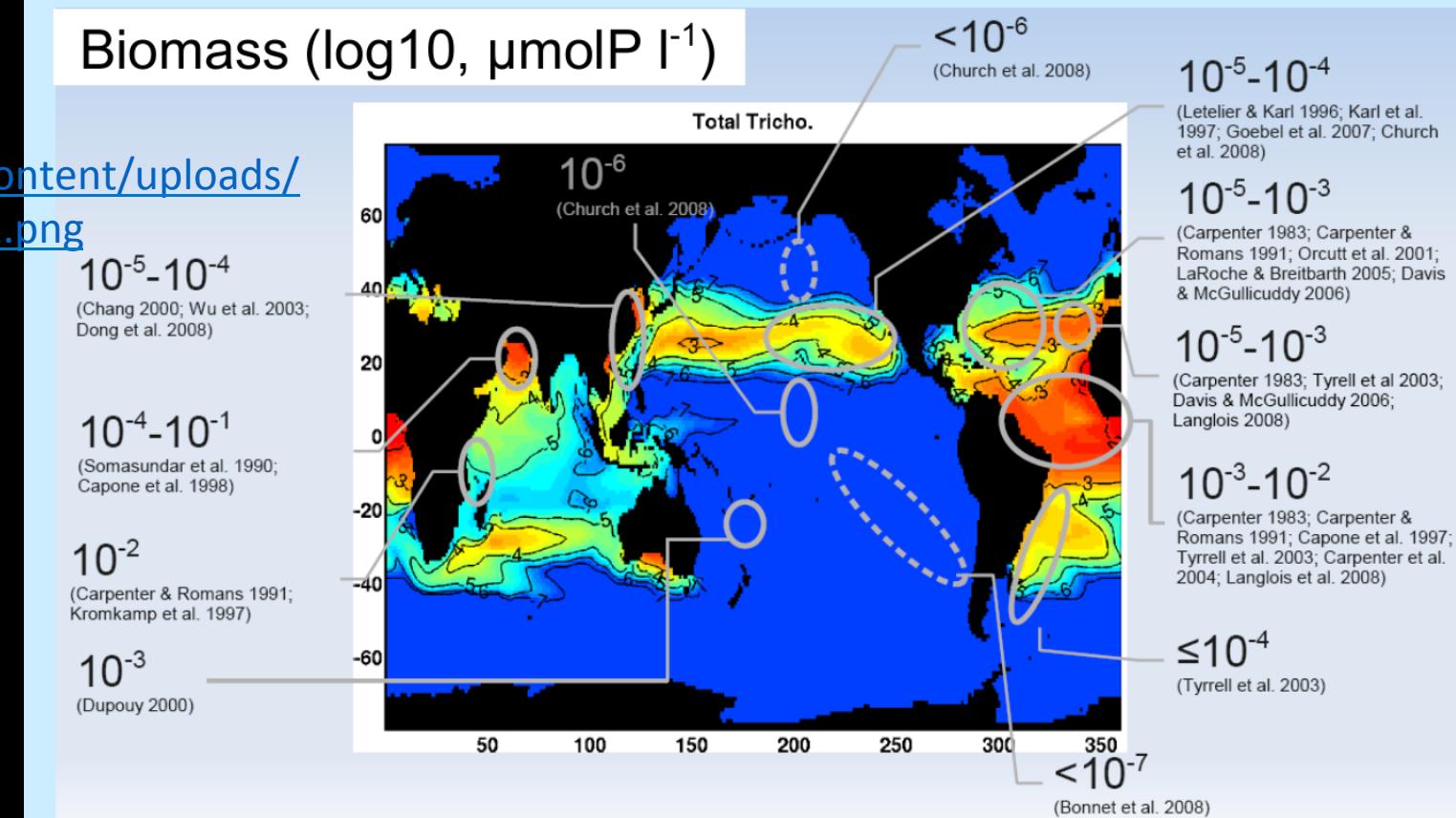
## Element limitation P, Fe , little data



MIT

<http://mitgcm.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2009/06/comparisontobbservations1.png>

# Distributions and comparison to observations



Trichode  
analogs

Unicellula



Home | U.K. **News** Sports

News Home | Arts | Headlines |



Brazil's darkest hour: National



## Sand-ageddon! Britain is covered in layer of dust after African storms carry in sand from the SAHARA desert 2,000 miles away (and even Cameron's car got hit)

- Unusual atmospheric conditions have blown up sandstorm from Africa
- Thin layer of dust seen today in areas including Cornwall and London
- 10/10 air pollution forecast for London for tomorrow and Wednesday
- Temperatures hit 20.9C yesterday and today is expected to be as hot

By MARK DUELL

PUBLISHED: 07:41 EST, 31 March 2014 | UPDATED: 12:21 EST, 31 March 2014

# Methods

- Sampling and filtering-microscopy
- Flow cytometry
- HPLC Pigments (PE, PB)
- Video Camera Recorder (VCR)
- Molecular: Nifh genes
- DNA: clade specific qPCR
- Inferred from N fixation
- Optics: Backscattering +Absorption

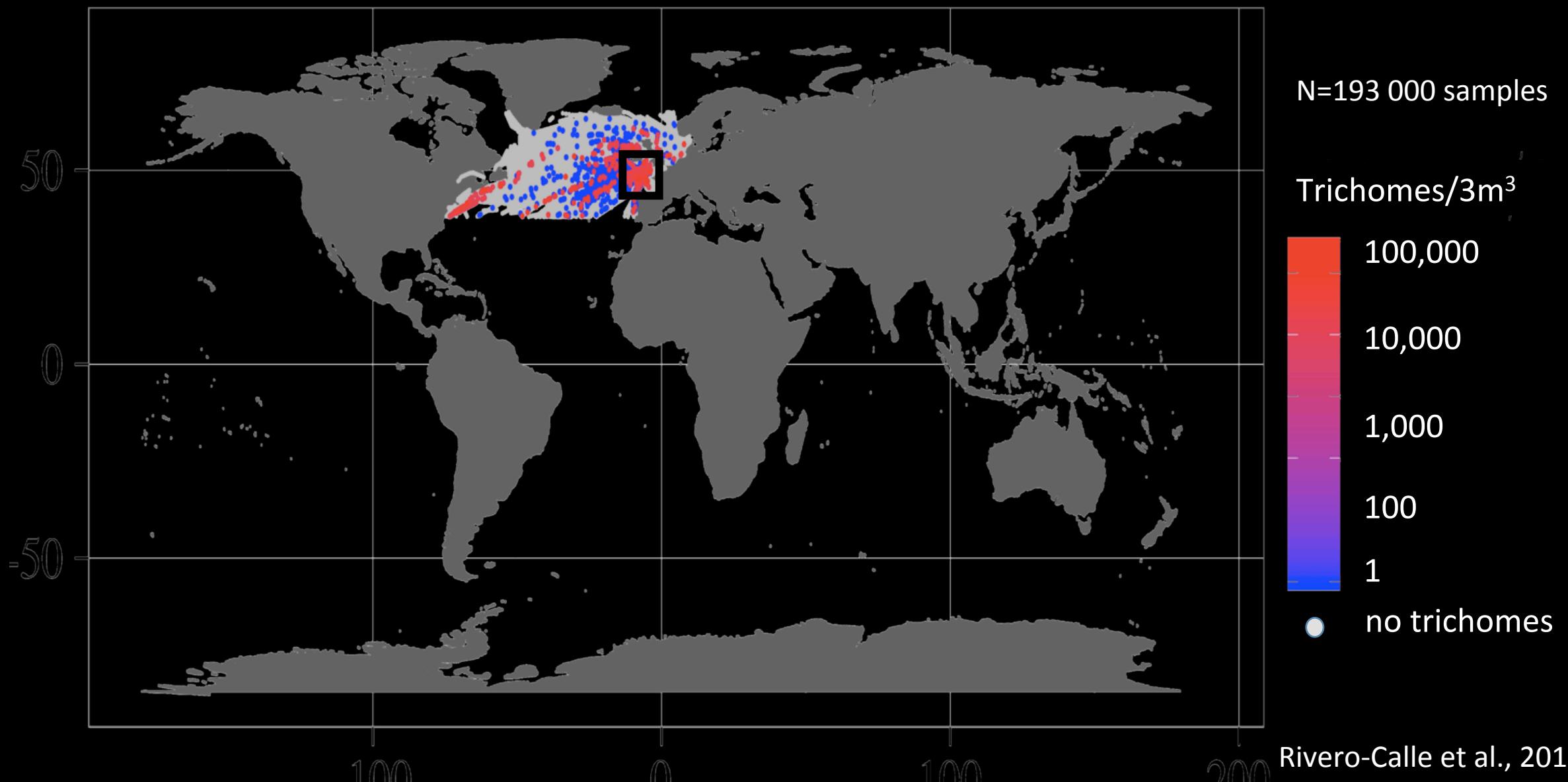
# Challenges

- Agreement among methods
- Reports often clump diazotrophs together
- Specificity of techniques
- Matchups – groundtruthing
- Predicting blooms
- subbloom concentrations
- ephymerous blooms
- Patchiness
- Vertical migration
- Subsurface distribution
- Resolution: Spectral +Spatial + Temporal
- Quantitative algorithms
- Nutrients, temperature assumptions
- previous knowledge as sampling bias
- Clades/ strains/ species differences

# Challenges mapping global distribution

- Sampling and filtering – microscopy –time consuming
- Vertical distribution- how far down? Vertical migration
- Flow citometry
- Pigments HPLC- specific tricho pigment
- Video
- Nif h genes- not exclusive to *trichodesmium*
- Inferred from N fixation
- Backscattering- vesicle, depth
- Absorption- need the right bands
- Sub-bloom concentrations
- DNA-clades

# 50 years of *Trichodesmium* records in the North Atlantic



# Global map attempts

<http://mitgcm.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2009/06/comparisontobservations1.png>

The first report in the literature of a direct observation of Trichodesmium is the photograph taken from the Space Shuttle of a massive bloom of this organism in the Capricorn Channel (Kuchler and Jupp, 1988).

Phycoerythin and phycocyanin

Luo

Westberry- temp mask

Capone-science

Rouco

Detoni 2016

Monteiro, F. M., M. J. Follows, and S. Dutkiewicz (2010), Distribution of diverse nitrogen fixers in the global ocean, *Global Biogeochem. Cycles*, 24, GB3017, doi:10.1029/2009GB003731.

Dupuoy 2011

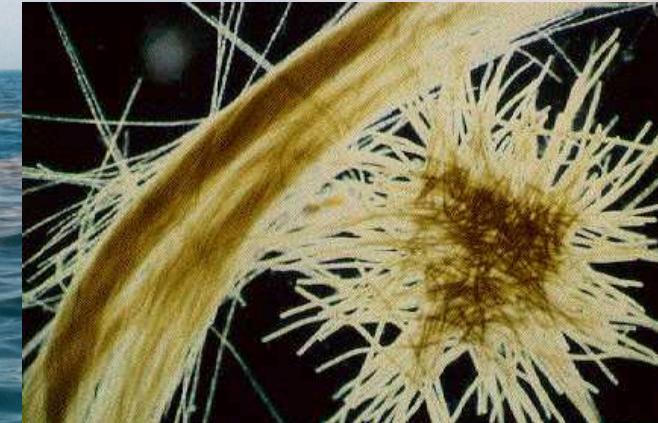
subramiam

- Rouco, M., Haley, S. T., Alexander, H., Wilson, S. T., Karl, D. M. and Dyhrman, S. T. (2016), Variable depth distribution of *Trichodesmium* clades in the North Pacific Ocean. *Environmental Microbiology Reports*, 8: 1058–1066. doi:10.1111/1758-2229.12488
- Detoni, A. M. S., Á. M. Ciotti, P. H. R. Calil,V. M. Tavano, and J. S. Yunes (2016), *Trichodesmium* latitudinal distributionon the shelf break in the southwestern Atlantic Ocean during spring and autumn, *Global Biogeochem. Cycles*, 30,1738–1753, doi: 10.1002/2016GB005431.
- The depth-distribution of nitrogen fixation by *Trichodesmium* spp. colonies in the tropical–subtropical North Atlantic

In August 1770, Captain Cook wrote:  
“The Sea in many places is her cover’d with a  
kind of a brown scum...”

sailors call it “Sea Sawdust”

# Trichodesmium



1. The most significant primary producer in tropical oligotrophic waters
2. Responsible for ~1/2 of the ocean N fixation
3. Comparable to the amount of new nitrate from upwelling processes

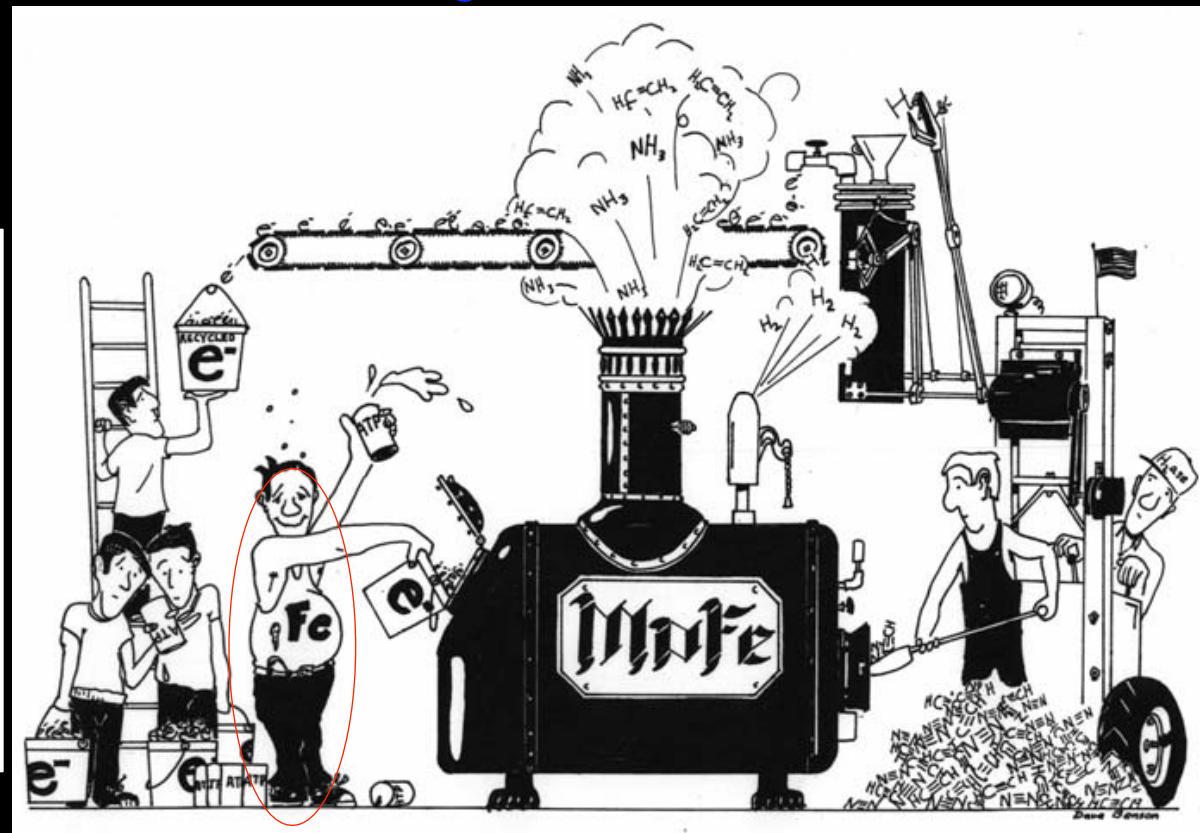
# Nitrogenase

$N_2$

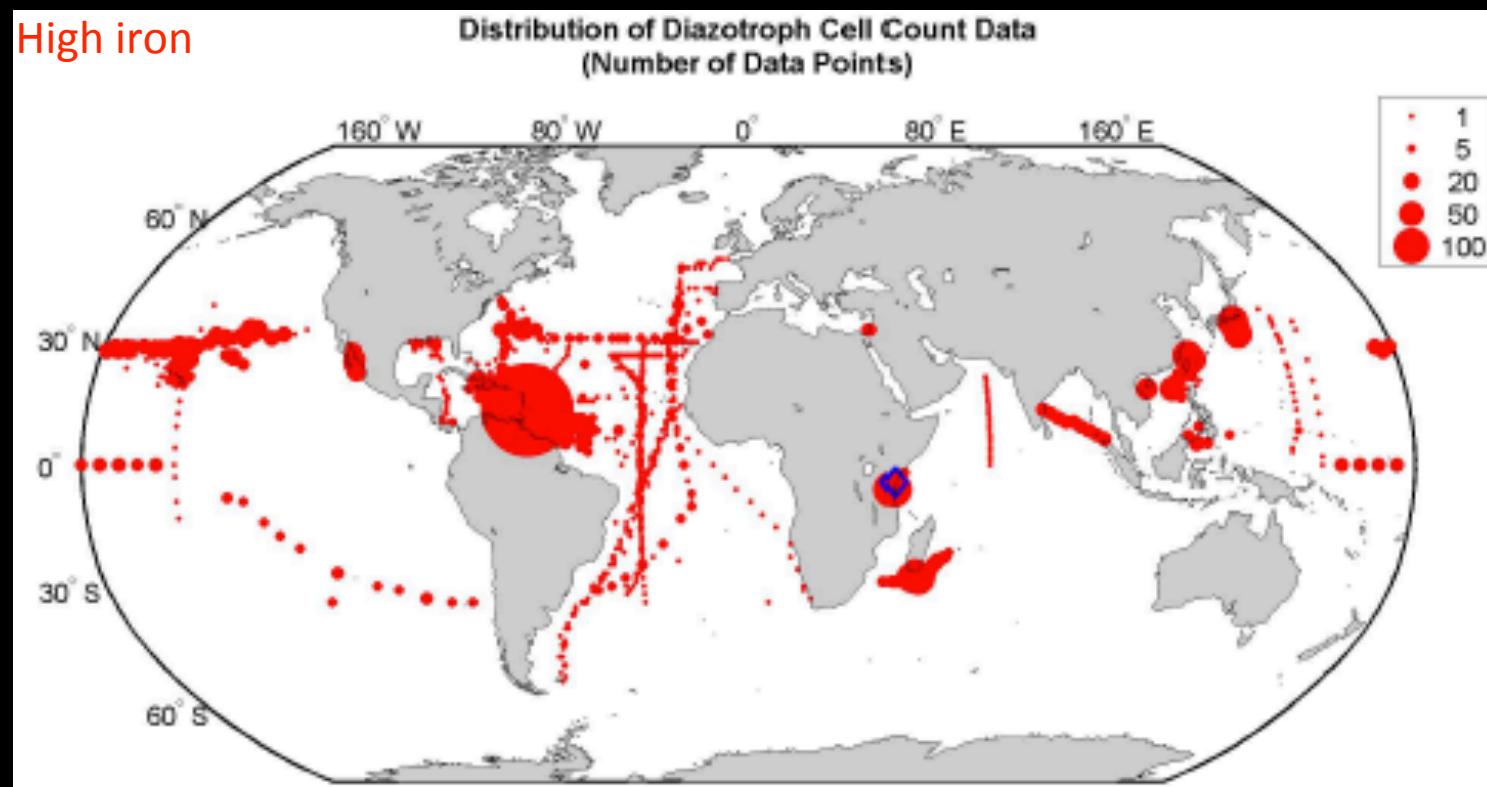
– High Iron

Tropical and subtropical

$NH_3$



- Distribution of N<sub>2</sub>-fixers is patchy in time and space
- Lack of global long-term variability
- Most studies focus on tropical + subtropical regions
- Distribution assumptions
  - Temperature >20°C
  - High iron

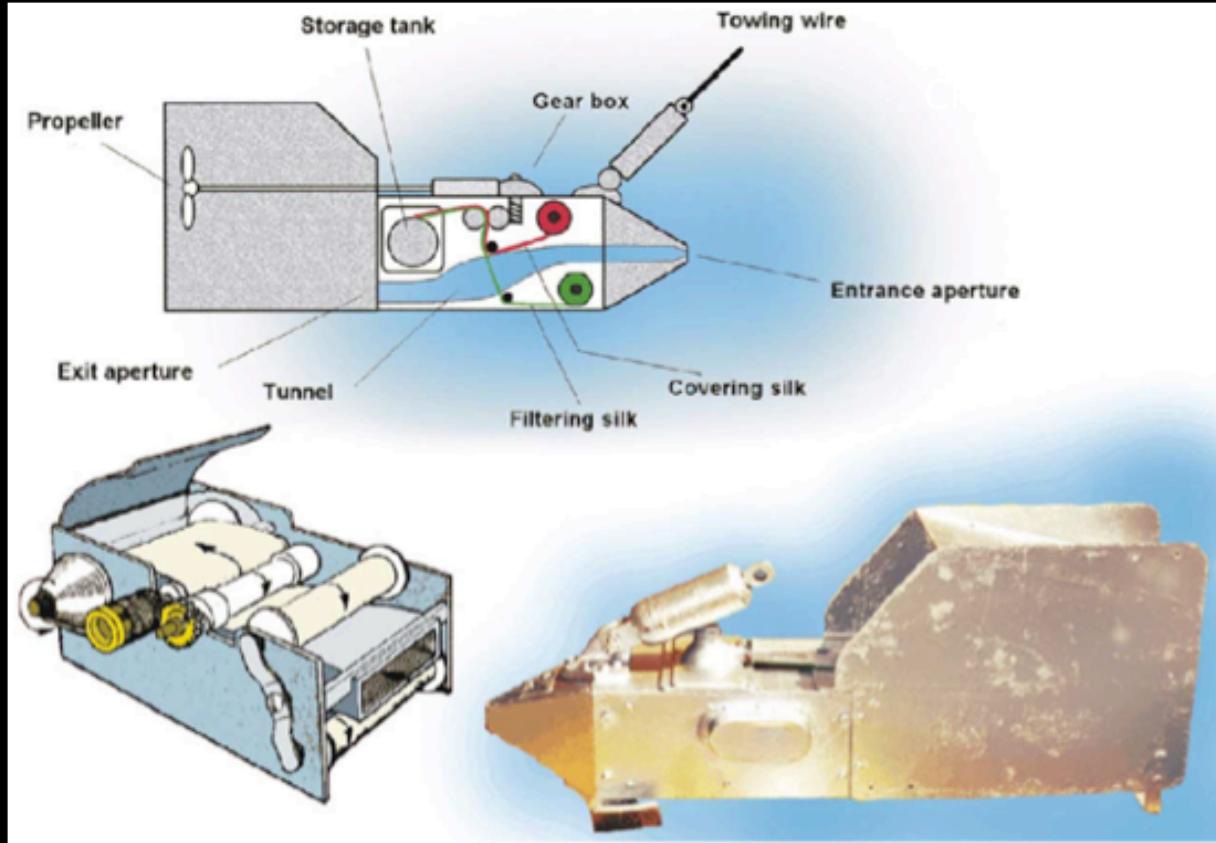


# Continuous Plankton Recorder (CPR)

- Samples with ships of opportunity
- Longest and most extensive plankton survey in the World
- >200,000 samples
- >400 taxa



Sir Alister Hardy with CPR

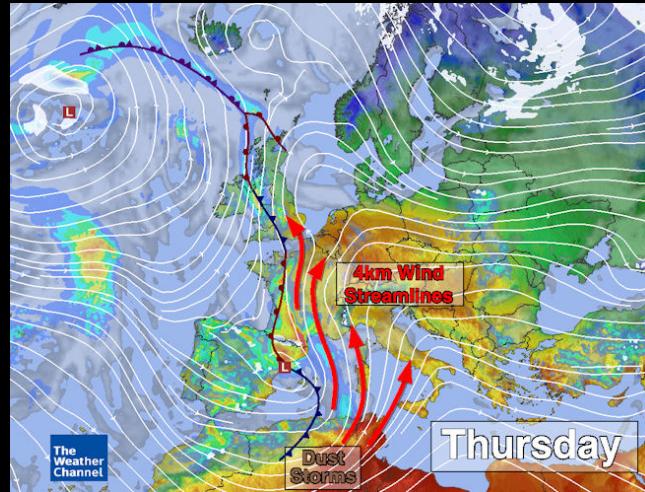


# The Dust Hypothesis

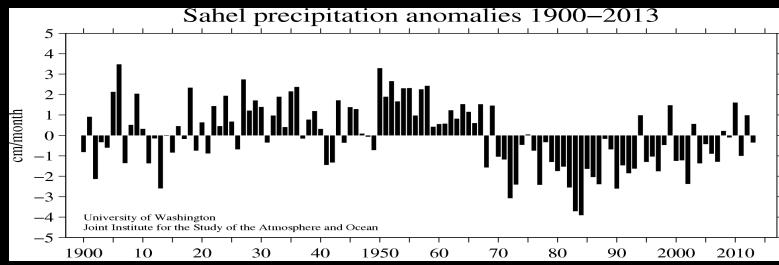
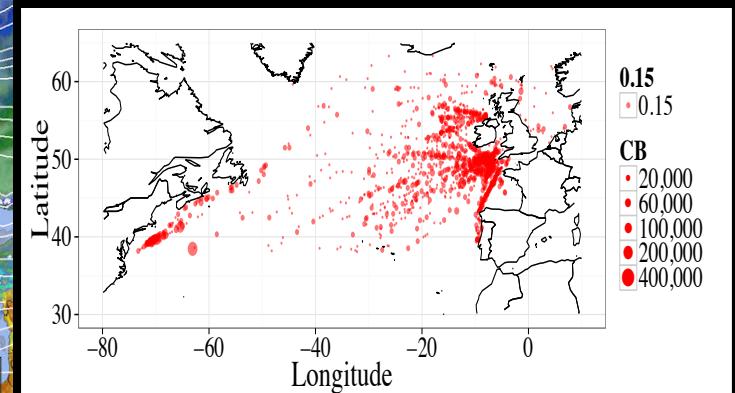
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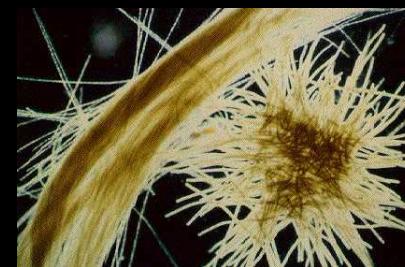
Pathway



Bloom



London Tower Bridge

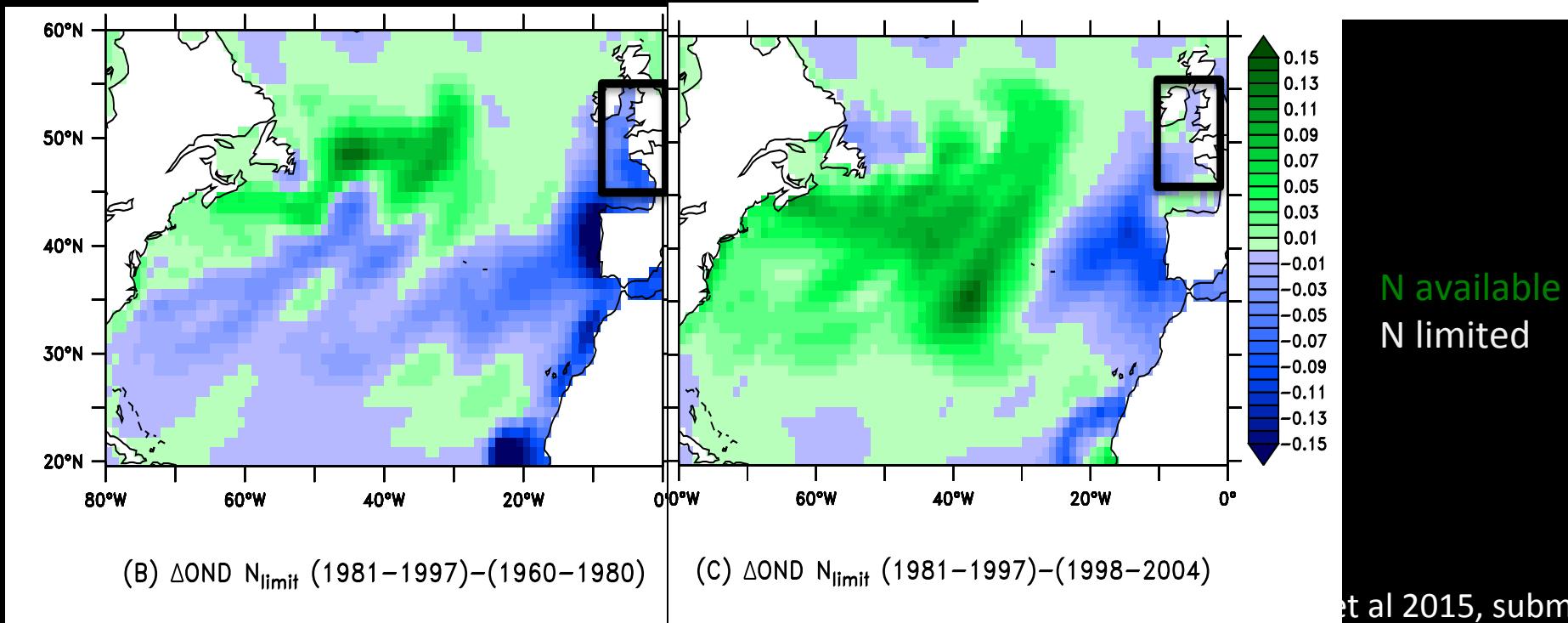
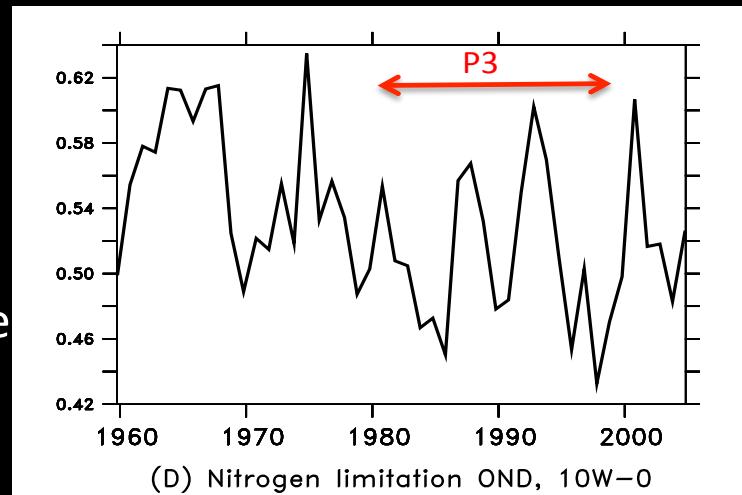


# Conclusions and questions

- *Trichodesmium* is present outside the tropics
- In temperate N Atlantic (40-65N): year round
- Temperature assumption needs to be revised (this study: 0-27°C)
- Seasonal and interannual variability can be explained based on African dust variability.
- Most ESMs use historical dust climatologies, need for a dynamic dust component
  
- What will be the impacts from increasing global N deposition and CO<sub>2</sub> levels?
- What are the effects on N and C cycles? On higher trophic levels?

# N fixation in Bay of Biscay?

- In absence of other forms of N, *Trichodesmium* can fix dissolved N<sub>2</sub>.
- This requires large amounts of iron
- GFDL model runs suggests low N levels that in the 1980-1990s
- N fixation could be possible if enough iron.



# *Trichodesmium* spp.

- Tropical and subtropical
- Distribution limitations
  - Temperature >20°C
  - iron
  - NO<sub>3</sub>
  - PO<sub>4</sub>
  - Dissolved O<sub>2</sub>





# Anthropogenic Change vs. Natural Variability: Lessons Learned from the Continuous Plankton Recorder

Sara Rivero-Calle

Advisors:  
Dr. Carlos Del Castillo & Dr. Anand Gnanadesikan

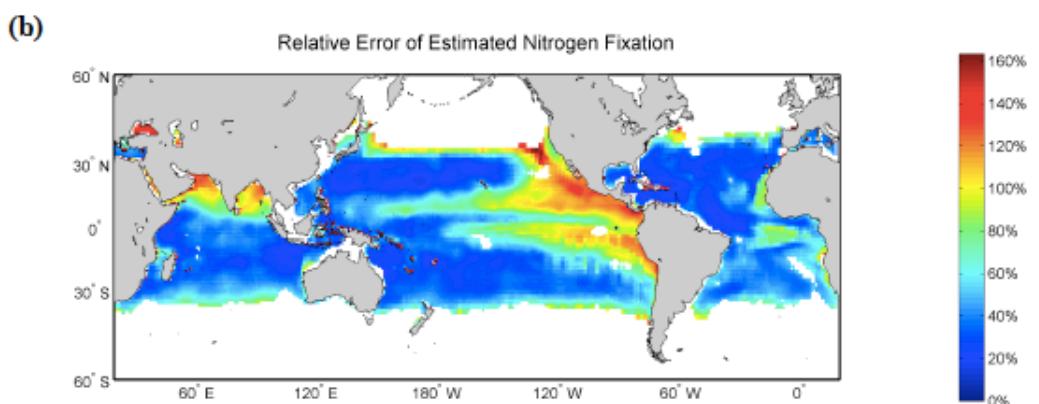
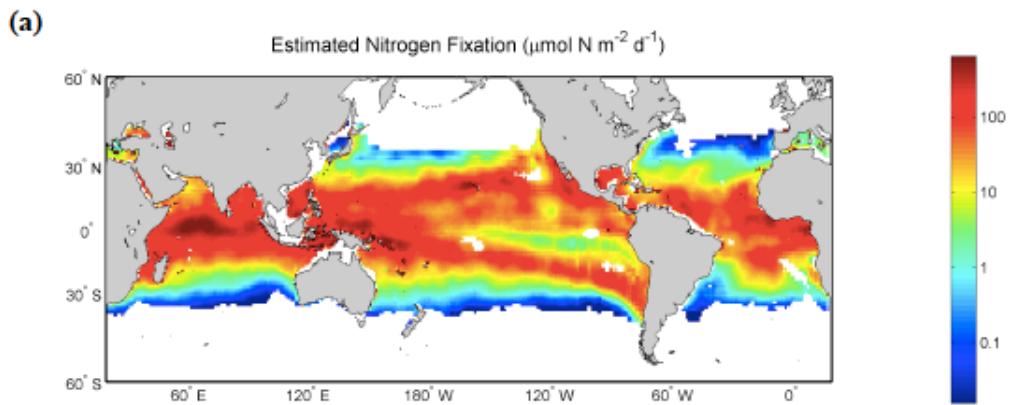
December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015



Luo et al 2014a Biogeosciences.

Envir

marine N<sub>2</sub> fixation



**Fig. 6.** (a) Map of estimated annual-mean, depth-integrated marine N<sub>2</sub> fixation using equation derived from the multiple linear regression (MLR) and (b) the relative errors of the estimates. White areas were outside the limits of the environmental parameter(s) used in the regression or were less than 250 m depth in coastal zones.