

Ocean productivity in the Gulf of Cadiz over the last 50 kyr

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27 **Abstract**

28 Reconstructions of ocean primary productivity (PP) help to explain past and present
29 biogeochemical cycles and climate changes in the oceans. We document PP variations over
30 the last 50 kyr in a currently oligotrophic subtropical region, the Gulf of Cadiz (GoC). Data
31 combine refined results from previous investigations on dinoflagellate cyst (dinocyst)
32 assemblages, alkenones, and stable isotopes (^{18}O , ^{13}C) in planktonic (*Globigerina bulloides*)
33 and endobenthic (*Uvigerina mediterranea*) foraminifera from cores MD04-2805 CQ and
34 MD99-2339 with new isotopic measurements on epibenthic (*Cibicidoides* species)
35 foraminifera and dinocyst-based estimates of PP using the new $n = 1,968$ modern database.
36 We thus constrain paleoproductivity variations and export production by integrating
37 qualitative information from micropaleontological bio-indicators with quantitative
38 reconstructions of parameters such as dinocyst-based PP and seasonal sea-surface temperature
39 (SST), as well as information about remineralization from the benthic $\Delta\delta^{13}\text{C}$. We show that
40 PP, carbon export, and remineralization were generally high in the NE subtropical Atlantic
41 Ocean during the last glacial period and that the Last Glacial Maximum (LGM) had lower
42 $\Delta\delta^{13}\text{C}$ than the Heinrich Stadials with sustained high PP, likely allowing enhanced carbon
43 sequestration. This study also provides vital information on the dynamics PP regime changes,
44 as the dataset includes alkenone-based SST and total organic carbon (TOC). We link these
45 stimulated PP periods to seasonal intensification of upwelling, active almost year-round
46 during stadials, but restricted to spring–summer during interstadials and LGM, like today.
47 During interstadials, nutrient advection through freshwater inputs during autumn–winter rains
48 need to be considered to fully understand PP regimes.

49

50 *Keywords: Dinocysts; Stable isotopes; Alkenones; Last Glacial Maximum; Heinrich Stadials;*
51 *Primary productivity; Remineralization*

52

53 **1. Introduction**

54 Reconstructing primary productivity (PP) in the past surface ocean is a challenging topic to
55 address in paleoceanography given the limited number of proxies that can be used (e.g.
56 biogenic opal fluxes or mass accumulation rates of total organic carbon). Nevertheless, some
57 bioindicators like dinocysts can offer an alternative and useful way when targeting specific
58 fractions that reach the seabed and are preserved in marine sediments, such as those
59 associated with dinoflagellate production (Radi & de Vernal, 2008). Establishing a strong
60 relationship between PP and dinocyst assemblages based on the modern analogue technique
61 (MAT) could, therefore, significantly improve the quantification of past PP in numerous key
62 oceanographic settings such as the central Gulf of Cadiz (GoC), located in the northeastern
63 (NE) Atlantic subtropical region. Indeed, this region, part of an Eastern Boundary Current
64 (EBC) system characterized by high annual and seasonal marine planktonic productivity (e.g.
65 Hagen, 2001), is particularly interesting for studying: i) the PP-derived organic matter export
66 toward the seafloor, and ii) its potential influence on the biological pump. Moreover, the GoC
67 is considered as an exceptional region for evaluating past PP during contrasting climatic
68 periods, as well as for testing different methodological approaches, since it is characterized by
69 pronounced shifts in latitudinal fronts associated with abrupt climate changes.

70 Apart from abiotic processes, CO₂ storage evolution is governed by continental and marine
71 primary producers through biological carbon fixation, export, and burial. Today, the GoC is
72 characterized by an oligotrophic regime associated with low CO₂ storage (Huertas et al.,
73 2006, 2009; Flecha et al., 2012) and with nutrient-poor waters carried by the Azores Current
74 and surface Atlantic waters (i.e. between the surface and around 100 m depth) into the GoC.
75 However, this oligotrophic zone experienced a different PP regime during the last glacial
76 period, characterized by overall high PP (Wienberg et al., 2010), especially across the stadials
77 (Penaud et al., 2011, 2016). Over the last 50 kyr, from the subtropical to the NE North
78 Atlantic Ocean (including Irish-Norwegian seas), long-term northward migration of cold-
79 water corals and thus of high PP centers also occurred, as previously documented (Freiwald et
80 al., 2004; Dorschel et al., 2005; Rüggeberg et al., 2007; Eisele et al., 2008; Frank et al., 2005,
81 2009; de Haas et al., 2009; Wienberg et al., 2009, 2010), with interglacial (/glacial) obliquity
82 maxima favoring phytoplanktonic growth in northern (/southern) North Atlantic latitudes
83 (Wienberg et al., 2010; Penaud et al., 2016). Enhanced glacial PP was also noted off
84 Mauritania, one of the major upwelling areas of the world ocean (Eisele et al., 2011; McKay

85 et al., 2014), with generally cold-water coral growth restricted to glacial and stadial periods at
86 low latitudes (17°N) of the continental NE Atlantic margin.

87 Because there are still large uncertainties surrounding the evolution of PP in the NE Atlantic
88 subtropical region, it is important to investigate this further in strategically located regions
89 such as the GoC. This can be done by comparing existing and new proxy records. Here, we
90 combine for the first time new dinocyst-based PP estimates and new geochemical proxies,
91 including Total Organic Carbon (TOC) content and indirect diagenesis signals reconstructed
92 from the difference between epi- and endo-benthic foraminiferal $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ signatures (benthic
93 $\Delta^{13}\text{C}$), in the GoC, with an updated and expanded database of $n = 1,968$ modern analogues for
94 the mid-to-low latitude regions (de Vernal et al., 2020), to better take into account past carbon
95 cycles from productivity export to sequestration *versus* remineralization at the regional scale.

96

97 **2. Material and methods**

98 Marine core MD04-2805 CQ (southern GoC; 34.52°N; 7.02°W; 859 m deep; Figure 1a) was
99 retrieved from the Portugal-Canary Eastern Boundary Current (EBC) upwelling system,
100 which characterizes the southern Moroccan and Portuguese coasts. Today, this seasonal
101 upwelling system is mainly active in summer (from late May to early October; Aristegui et
102 al., 2005) due to the seasonal migration of the Azores High coupled with the Inter Tropical
103 Convergence Zone dynamics (Fiúza et al., 1998), with variable extents of upwelling filaments
104 (e.g. Wooster et al., 1976; Peliz et al., 2005; Garcia Lafuente & Ruiz, 2007). Marine core
105 MD99-2339 was collected in the central sector of the GoC (35.89°N; 7.53°W; 1,170 m deep;
106 Figure 1a) within a contouritic field (Habgood et al., 2003). The GoC is under the influence of
107 river discharges such as the Guadalquivir River, one of the largest rivers in Spain, whose
108 turbidity plumes in autumn–winter (i.e. at times of higher rainfall) are crucial for
109 phytoplankton blooms occurring in the GoC during the subsequent spring–summer seasons
110 (Garcia Lafuente & Ruiz, 2007; Caballero et al., 2014). Fluvial inputs from major rivers such
111 as the Guadalete, Guadania, and Tinto-Odiel also contribute to high turbidity levels on the
112 continental shelf of the GoC (Navarro et al., 2012) and high biological productivity in the
113 eastern GoC (Prieto et al., 2009).

114 **2.1. New MD04-2805 CQ and MD99-2339 chronologies**

115 **2.1.a. MD04-2805 CQ chronology**

116 In addition to six existing ^{14}C dates from bivalves (Penaud et al., 2010), eight new ^{14}C dates

117 were obtained from planktonic foraminiferal samples between 10 and 321 cm (Table S1). The
118 new dates, together with data from SST proxies (dinocyst- and alkenone-based) and benthic
119 and planktonic foraminiferal isotopes, indicate re-sedimentation or mud-flow issue from 140–
120 147 cm to 270–287 cm that had not been identified in Penaud et al. (2010). A detailed RX
121 analysis (SCOPIX, EPOC laboratory) of core MD04-2805 CQ revealed the existence of micro
122 faults between 160 and 166 cm and between 263 and 285 cm, within a clayey-silty
123 sedimentary matrix (Figure 1d).

124 These facies, within “section 2” of the core, are unique in the whole 7.72-m long core. They
125 were observed on thin sections examined under a transmitted polarizing microscope for
126 micro-facies and structure description (Figure 1d). Inverted dates and micro-faults led us to
127 adopt a conservative approach and discard data from 300 to 140 cm. Moreover, we added an
128 additional age constraint with respect to the age model entirely based on calibrated ^{14}C ages
129 as published in Waelbroeck et al. (2019), taking advantage of the large amplitude (planktonic
130 foraminiferal-based) SST signals reconstructed in both MD04-2805Q and MD99-2339 cores,
131 in which the HS1-BA transition is easily recognizable (Figure S1). This led us to assign an
132 age of 14.6 ± 0.1 cal ka BP (Rasmussen et al., 2014) at 140 ± 8 cm (Table S1).

133 The age–depth relationship of core MD04-2805 CQ was built accounting for both the age and
134 depth uncertainties in the ^{14}C dates and additional chronological marker, using the age–depth
135 modeling routine “Undatable” (Lougheed & Obrochta, 2019) (Figure 1c). For continuity
136 between this work and previous studies (Penaud et al., 2010, 2011), results obtained in the
137 140–300 cm interval are shown in the result section with reference to depth (Figure 2) and are
138 not subsequently addressed in the discussion, in which data are presented *versus* age cal ka
139 BP.

140

141 **2.1.b. MD99-2339 chronology**

142 The age model of core MD99-2339 was not included in the dataset of Waelbroeck et al.
143 (2019) because its age model could not be entirely based on MD99-2339 records, but had to
144 be derived from an alignment to core MD04-2805Q, thereby introducing additional dating
145 uncertainties. The chronology of core MD99-2339 we adopted was established as follows: i)
146 the ages in the interval spanning 0–11 ka BP were based on six previously published ^{14}C dates
147 from planktonic foraminifera (Voelker et al., 2006), ii) the chronology of the 11–26 ka BP
148 interval was defined based on the alignment of the *Globigerina bulloides* $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ and SST
149 variations with those of the nearby core MD04-2805 CQ (10 tie points), and iii) the
150 chronology of the 26–49 ka BP interval was based on the alignment of the *Globigerina*

151 *bulloides* $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ and SST variations with the NGRIP $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ data (12 tie-points) as described in
152 Penaud et al. (2016) (Table S2).

153 In the same way as for core MD04-2805 CQ, the age–depth relationship of core MD99-2339
154 was built accounting for both age and depth uncertainties of the ^{14}C dates and chronological
155 markers, using the age-depth modeling routine “Undatable” (Lougheed & Obrochta, 2019)
156 (Figure 1b).

157 **2.2. MD04-2805 CQ stable isotopic analyses**

158 Measurements of stable isotopes ($\delta^{18}\text{O}$ and $\delta^{13}\text{C}$) in planktonic (*Globigerina bulloides*; 76
159 samples) and endobenthic (*Uvigerina mediterranea*; 77 samples) foraminifera were obtained
160 at the LSCE (Gif-sur-Yvette, France) and University of Bordeaux (UMR 5805 EPOC,
161 France), respectively, from the 250–315 μm size fraction at every 10 cm (Penaud et al., 2010).
162 In this study, additional data on the epifaunal benthic foraminifera of the *Cibicidoides* genus
163 (hand-picked from the $> 150 \mu\text{m}$ size fraction, 98 samples) were obtained to document the
164 isotopic composition of bottom waters at the study site. In most of the levels, the only
165 recovered species was *Cibicides pachyderma*. Since we did not observe any significant
166 differences between the isotopic values of *Cibicidoides* (syn. *Planulina*) *wuellerstorfi* and
167 *Cibicides pachyderma* in samples in which they co-occurred, either of these two species were
168 used for epibenthic stable isotope analysis.

169 The $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ and $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ versus VPDB (Vienna PDB), were measured on an Isoprime 100 mass
170 spectrometer on samples of 1–4 specimens. The VPDB was defined based on the NBS19
171 calcite standard ($\delta^{18}\text{O} = 2.20\%$ and $\delta^{13}\text{C} = +1.95\%$) (Coplen, 1988). The mean reproducibility
172 (1σ) of carbonate standards was $\pm 0.05 \text{‰}$ for $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ and $\pm 0.03 \text{‰}$ for $\delta^{13}\text{C}$. The measured
173 NBS18 $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ was $-23.27 \pm 0.10 \text{‰}$ and $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ is $-5.01 \pm 0.03 \text{‰}$.

174 **2.3. MD04-2805 CQ dinocyst data**

175 **2.3.a. New dinocyst-based environmental parameter quantifications**

176 We applied the modern analogue technique (MAT) run on “R” version 3.6.3 to the dinocyst
177 assemblages of cores MD04-2805 CQ (Penaud et al., 2010) and MD99-2339 (Penaud et al.,
178 2016). The MAT compares fossil records with modern dinocyst assemblages from the most
179 up-to-date version of the standardized “modern” Northern Hemisphere dinocyst database,
180 which includes the abundance of 71 taxa and 1,968 sites in relation to 17 modern
181 environmental parameters (de Vernal et al., 2020). This method relies on the assumption that

182 modern relationships between environmental parameters and dinocyst assemblages were the
183 same in the past (e.g. Guiot & de Vernal, 2007). Uncertainties may, however, arise from the
184 probable lack of modern analogues corresponding to fossil assemblages (e.g. Guiot & de
185 Vernal, 2007; de Vernal et al., 2020). The quantification of environmental parameters is based
186 on a weighted average of the values obtained for a maximum of the five best modern
187 analogues, with the maximum weight being given to the closest ones. The threshold distance
188 for analogues to be considered significant is around 1.3 ($d_T = 1.3$). Hence, we may define
189 analogues as: i) "good" when the distance (d) $< d_T/2$, ii) "acceptable" when $d_T/2 < d < d_T$, or
190 iii) "poor" when $d > d_T$ (de Vernal et al., 2005). Here, we reconstructed summer and winter
191 Sea-Surface Temperature (SST), Salinity (SSS), and annual Primary Productivity (PP). The
192 uncertainty defined from the root mean square error (RMSE or standard deviation of the mean
193 residuals) was $\pm 1.7^\circ\text{C}$ and $\pm 1.2^\circ\text{C}$ for $\text{SST}_{\text{summer}}$ and $\text{SST}_{\text{winter}}$ respectively, ± 2.0 psu and \pm
194 1.0 psu for $\text{SSS}_{\text{summer}}$ and $\text{SSS}_{\text{winter}}$, respectively, and ± 138 $\mu\text{gC m}^{-2}$ for $\text{PP}_{\text{annual}}$. We also
195 calculated the difference between summer and winter SST in order to document the seasonal
196 differences in temperature (SST seasonality). Furthermore, the enlarged $n = 1,968$ dinocyst
197 database includes additional sites from middle and low latitudes and provides additional
198 environmental parameters: seasonal PP with strong correlations between all PP parameters
199 (de Vernal et al., 2020) for winter (RMSE = $250 \mu\text{gC m}^{-2} \text{day}^{-1}$), spring (RMSE = $542 \mu\text{gC m}^{-2}$
200 day^{-1}), summer (RMSE = $720 \mu\text{gC m}^{-2} \text{day}^{-1}$) and fall (RMSE = $240 \mu\text{gC m}^{-2} \text{day}^{-1}$); mean
201 annual and winter PP being the best reconstructed. Although seasonal and annual PP
202 parameters are not independent, we used them as proxies for the overall PP and indicators for
203 the annual PP cycle. The updated $n = 1,968$ also includes the "distance to the coast"
204 parameter, which shows correlations with the bathymetry and explains part of the variance in
205 the distribution of dinocyst assemblages. We used this parameter (expressed in degrees) as an
206 index of coastal proximity (i.e. inshore *versus* offshore assemblages).

207

208 **2.3.b. Canonical Correspondence Analysis (CCA)**

209 Multivariate analyses were performed with Past software version 1.75b (Hammer et al.,
210 2001). Canonical Correspondence Analysis (CCA) was applied to the dinocyst assemblages
211 (expressed in percentages and absolute concentrations) of core MD04-2805 CQ to capture the
212 main factors (i.e. environmental variables including stable isotope data, alkenone-based SST,
213 and dinocyst-based quantifications) that could typify the control of productivity in the study
214 area.

215 2.4. MD99-2339 Total Organic Carbon and alkenone-based SST

216 Total organic carbon (TOC; in %) was assessed at the University of Bordeaux (UMR 5805
217 EPOC, France). Measurement was based on 50 samples and performed by the total
218 combustion of homogenized sediment samples using a LECO C-S 125 analyzer after
219 treatment of the sediment with hydrochloric acid (1N) to remove calcium carbonate. Precision
220 of TOC measurements from standard and sample replicates was higher than $\pm 0.5\%$.

221 Total lipids were extracted at the University of Bordeaux (UMR 5805 EPOC, France).
222 Extracts were obtained from 70 freeze-dried and homogenized sediment samples (15–20 g)
223 using a mixture of 9 mL dichloromethane/methanol (3:1; v:v) following several steps of
224 sonication and centrifugation until all organic compounds had been properly extracted. After
225 drying with N_2 at $+35^\circ C$, the alkenones were separated from the other organic compounds on
226 a Al_2O_3 column using hexane/dichloromethane (1:1; v:v). These were then analyzed at the
227 University of Hanyang, South Korea, where they were co-injected with a hexatriacontane
228 standard before assessment on a Shimadzu GC (Shimadzu Corporation, Kyoto, Japan) fitted
229 with a flame ion detector (FID) with a DB-5 column (60 m \times 0.25 mm, 0.25 μm , Agilent).
230 The U^{k}_{37} index (Prahl & Wakeham, 1987) was calculated as the ratio between the different
231 $C_{37:2}$ and $C_{37:3}$ areas, and annual mean SSTs were computed using the equation of Müller et al.
232 (1998), with a standard error of about $1.5^\circ C$.

233

234 3. Results

235 3.1. Benthic isotopic data of core MD04-2805 CQ

236 In this study, *Cibicidoides*–*Cibicides* $\delta^{18}O$ values range between 1.5 and 3.5 ‰ (Figure 2).
237 They show relatively constant values averaging 3.9 ‰ in the lower part of the core, up to 300
238 cm, followed by a gradual decrease to mean values of 2.2‰ in the 80–0 cm interval, similarly
239 to the *Uvigerina mediterranea* $\delta^{18}O$ (Penaud et al., 2010).

240 Epifaunal *Cibicidoides*–*Cibicides* have been shown to record the $\delta^{13}C$ of ambient bottom-
241 water dissolved inorganic carbon (DIC) with minor isotopic fractionation (Duplessy et al.,
242 1984; Zahn et al., 1986; Gottschalk et al., 2016a; Schmittner et al., 2017), even in eutrophic
243 areas (Eberwein & Mackensen, 2006). Here, the epibenthic $\delta^{13}C$ values can be seen to range
244 between 0.1 and 1.5‰ (mean of 0.9) (Figure 2). Also, the shallow infaunal *Uvigerina*
245 *mediterranea* $\delta^{13}C$ (Figure 2) reflects the $\delta^{13}C$ of pore waters, which depends on the export
246 flux of organic matter and availability of dissolved oxygen in bottom waters (e.g. McCorkle et

247 al., 1990; Mackensen & Licari, 2003; Fontanier et al., 2006). The amount of sedimentary
248 organic carbon respiration or remineralization can be captured by the difference in $\delta^{13}\text{C}$
249 between bottom waters and pore waters (Gottschalk et al., 2016a; Hoogakker et al., 2015).
250 Thus, we used the *Cibicidoides*–*Cibicides* versus *Uvigerina* $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ signal (benthic $\Delta\delta^{13}\text{C}$) as a
251 proxy for remineralization in the sediments. In core MD04-2805 CQ, benthic $\Delta\delta^{13}\text{C}$ values
252 range between 0.2 and 2.2‰ (Figure 2). It is worth noting that the $\Delta\delta^{13}\text{C}$ peaks on Figure 2
253 correspond to depleted endobenthic $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ and generally heavier $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ and $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ values in the
254 planktonic *Globigerina bulloides*, suggesting high PP combined with low SSTs.

255 3.2. Sea-surface parameter estimates based on the $n = 1,968$ dinocyst database

256 Dinocyst-derived environmental parameters were based on dinocyst assemblages of cores
257 MD04-2805 CQ and MD99-2339 using both the $n = 1,492$ and $n = 1,968$ databases for
258 unedited comparison (Figure 3). In core MD04-2805 CQ, 15 of 80 spectra did not yield
259 estimates with the $n = 1,492$ database because of the lack of modern analogues, but the
260 number of levels having no analogues decreased to 11 using the $n = 1,968$ database. Similarly,
261 in core MD99-2339, 6 of 158 spectra had no modern analogues using the $n = 1,492$ database,
262 whereas all levels yielded estimates with the updated $n = 1,968$ database. Moreover, the
263 number of analogues for each level was significantly higher with the updated modern
264 dinocyst database (Figure 3). Overall, most of the estimates are “acceptable”, with the
265 distance of best analogues ranging between 0.6 and the threshold distance ($d_T = 1.3$ for the $n =$
266 $1,968$ database and $d_T = 1.4$ for the $n = 1,492$ database). Holocene samples with modern
267 analogues close to the study cores yielded “good” results with $D_{\text{min}} < d_T$ (Figure 3).

268 The closest analogues in the $n = 1,968$ modern dinocyst database are mainly from the GoC,
269 Bay of Biscay, North Sea, Cap Verde, Gulf of Guinea, and Gulf of Mexico (dots in Figure 4
270 with labels as in de Vernal et al., 2020 for all closest analogues found for both study cores).
271 We attributed seven code colors for the closest analogues illustrated on D_{min} (Figure 3) in
272 order to show the areas where the modern analogues yielding peaks of high $\text{PP}_{\text{annual}}$ values
273 came from (dotted lines in Figure 3). Downcore, over the last 27 kyr, peaks of high $\text{PP}_{\text{annual}}$
274 ($>500 \text{ gC m}^{-2}$) in core MD04-2805 CQ mainly correspond to analogues from the Gulf of
275 Guinea, while the peaks of extremely high $\text{PP}_{\text{annual}}$ ($>1,000 \text{ gC m}^{-2}$) in core MD99-2339
276 between 27 and 50 ka BP correspond to analogues from the Gulf of Mexico. Peaks of high PP
277 were also recorded with the $n = 1,492$ dataset, but their amplitudes were much larger with the
278 additional sites of the updated $n = 1,968$ database. Moreover, while the SSS and SST profiles

279 from core MD99-2339 were generally flat with the $n = 1,492$ dataset, with the exception of
280 cold pulses during stadials, the $n = 1,968$ database allowed a much improved capture of
281 variability. The SST and SSS minima show similar values with the two dinocyst datasets but
282 show larger variability and amplitudes between the stadials with the new $n = 1,968$ database.
283 In core MD04-2805 CQ, the new estimates suggest that SSS_{winter} varied mostly between 31.3
284 and 36.4 psu, with Holocene values of about 36 psu. They also indicate SST_{winter} variation
285 between $+3.4$ and $+28.7^{\circ}\text{C}$ with Holocene values of about $+15.9^{\circ}\text{C}$. In core MD99-2339, the
286 new estimates put SSS_{winter} between 28.9 and 36.2 psu, with Holocene values of about 35.9
287 psu, and SST_{winter} between $+3.3$ and $+28.6^{\circ}\text{C}$ with Holocene values of about $+16.7^{\circ}\text{C}$. For
288 both cores, Holocene SSS and SST estimates fall within the modern winter–summer seasonal
289 range (Figure 3). The peaks of high PP_{annual} generally correspond to low SST and SSS values.

290 ***3.3. Total Organic Carbon and alkenone based SST in core MD99-2339***

291 In core MD99-2339, the TOC ranges from 0.3 to 1.2 % (mean value of 0.5 %) with the higher
292 values comprised between 15 and 27 ka BP (Figure 6). Also, our new alkenone-based SST
293 record provides strikingly similar amplitude and SST values to those generated from core
294 MD04-2805 CQ (Penaud et al., 2010), with colder temperatures ($+8.1^{\circ}\text{C}$) during the glacial
295 period and the warmest ones during the Holocene interval ($+20.3^{\circ}\text{C}$; Figure 5). We compare
296 these new data with the other records acquired for both cores below in the discussion (section
297 4.1).

298

299 **4. Paleoenvironmental changes over the last 27 kyr in the** 300 **Subtropical NE Atlantic Ocean**

301 ***4.1. SST and SSS variations***

302 **4.1.a. Holocene reconstructions**

303 The new dinocyst-based SST and SSS estimates from cores MD04-2805 CQ and MD99-2339
304 show similar stable patterns (Figure 5d), thereby confirming regionally consistent
305 hydrological sea-surface conditions in the central and southern GoC (Penaud et al., 2011,
306 2016). Moreover, the dinocyst-derived qualitative paleothermometer index (W/C dinocyst
307 ratios; Figure 5c) generally matches the $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ signal in both cores (Figure 5b), thus
308 strengthening the robustness of dinocyst assemblages for capturing sea-surface hydrological
309 conditions in the subtropical NE Atlantic Ocean (Penaud et al., 2011, 2016). Mean dinocyst-

310 derived SSTs of +21°C in summer and +16°C in winter during the Holocene sections of both
311 studied cores are close to present-day SSTs (+22.4°C: red star and +16.6°C: blue star,
312 respectively, on Figure 5d), with modern analogues found close to the study site (Figures 3
313 and 4). In comparison, alkenone-based SSTs exhibit mean annual values of +19°C during the
314 Holocene (Figure 5e), which is also consistent with the dinocyst-based SST seasonal
315 variability range (Figure 5d).

316

317 **4.1.b. The paradox raised by LGM reconstructions in the Gulf of Cadiz**

318 Glacial dinocyst-based SST and SSS estimates (Figure 5c, d, and f) show high amplitude
319 oscillations at the sub-millennial scale that are in line with the high climate variability
320 recorded in the Northern Hemisphere during glacial times (Figure 5g). This is particularly
321 evident for the millennial events of the Last Glacial Maximum (LGM; 23–19 ka BP), which
322 have been documented in numerous regional sea-surface records such as in the Celtic margin
323 (Eynaud et al., 2012), Norwegian Sea (Eynaud et al., 2004), and Nordic Seas (de Vernal et al.,
324 2006), during which high amplitude sea-surface instabilities were shown to have occurred.
325 Our reconstructions of LGM dinocyst-based SST indicate relatively warm summers and
326 winters (seasonal range of 23.3–22.4°C for both study cores), with some values as high or
327 higher than present summer ones (mean of 22.7°C in southern Cadiz and 22.1°C in central
328 Cadiz; mean of 22.4°C highlighted in Figure 5d). Whereas such high SST during the LGM
329 may appear striking, there is growing evidence for warm conditions, at least episodically, in
330 the North Atlantic and European region, not only from marine records (e.g., Falardeau et al.,
331 2018 and discussion therein) but also from terrestrial evidence (e.g., van der Bilt & Lane,
332 2019; Alsos et al., 2020).

333 In contrast to dinocyst data, alkenone-based SST values point to cooler conditions (13.4°C on
334 average; Figure 5e) than during the Holocene (19°C on average). It is worth noting that the
335 long-term alkenone-based increasing SST trend from 27 kyr BP onwards (Figure 5e) follows
336 a pattern similar to the long-term increasing trend of dinocyst-based SSS (Figure 5f). Hence,
337 both alkenone and dinocyst data indicate a change in hydrographical conditions, which might
338 include a shift in seasonal hydrological conditions and/or upper water mass stratification.
339 During the glacial period, cooler and less saline waters in the study area might have resulted
340 from a longer wind-driven upwelling season and/or a stronger upwelling activity. During the
341 Holocene, however, the prevailing influence of the warmer and saltier Azores Current may
342 correspond to weaker upwelling and/or shorter seasonal upwelling intervals (Figure 5).

343 During the glacial interval, therefore, an intensified and/or longer seasonal upwelling with

344 haptophyte blooms responsible for alkenones, may have resulted in a bias towards over-
345 estimated cooler alkenone-based SSTs. Conversely, dinocyst-based quantifications suggest
346 warmer conditions during the LGM, which might correspond to a bias towards warmer SST
347 estimates; the best modern analogues being found in the Gulf of Guinea (Figures 3 and 4).
348 Indeed, while the heterotrophic taxa of *Brigantedinium* spp. are abundant in the LGM section
349 of each core, suggesting high productivity likely related to upwelling (Radi and de Vernal,
350 2008), the co-occurrence of *Operculodinium israelianum* (which reaches up to 5% in the
351 LGM section of both cores) reflects warm conditions (Penaud et al., 2016). The highest
352 proportions of *O. israelianum* recorded today (5–10%) are found in the tropical environments
353 of the western African margin, characterized by summer SST as high as 29°C and not below
354 24°C (Marret & Zonneveld, 2003). It is interesting to note that closer to the Equator, off the
355 mouth of the Congo (5°N), thermophilic and river-plume linked dinocysts, were shown to
356 have occurred during the LGM, suggesting warmer conditions similar to present-day ones
357 (Hardy et al., 2016). Dinocyst-based SST estimates from the mouth of the Congo, yielding
358 high temperatures ranging between 18 and 27°C, were also higher than mean annual
359 alkenone-based SST estimates (Hardy et al., 2018). The same over-estimation of seasonal
360 dinocyst-based estimates and under-estimation of annual alkenone-based ones may again be
361 the case for this this tropical area of highly variable production.

362 In the LGM section of both study cores, planktonic foraminifera are characterized by
363 relatively light $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ (mean of 1.9 ‰ with peaks reaching 1.4 ‰; Figure 5b) compared to the
364 entire glacial interval. Lower sea level during that period would, in fact, lead to heavier values
365 (Waelbroeck et al., 2002) and thus cannot be accounted for. Such light values indicate slightly
366 lower SSS and/or slightly higher SST, both being consistent with dinocyst-based estimates
367 and the W/C ratio (Figure 5c and d). Although absolute dinocyst-based SST estimates must be
368 interpreted with caution, the W/C index likely points out to generally warmer LGM SSTs,
369 with marked contrast with the two encompassing HS that experienced significant SST drops
370 in the study area (Penaud et al., 2011, 2016).

371 **4.2. Productivity signals: from production to remineralization**

372 **4.2.a. General observations on past PP conditions**

373 The climatic subdivisions identified in Figure 5 are also shown in Figure 6 to help us discuss
374 PP conditions over the last 27 kyr BP. Dinocyst-based PP estimates (Figure 6b) follow
375 previously reconstructed glacial-interglacial patterns in the intertropical Atlantic, with
376 generally higher PP during the last glacial period than during the Holocene. Higher

377 productivity during glacial times has been associated with increased wind-stress accompanied
378 by: i) enhanced aeolian dust availability of iron and micronutrients leading to fertilization of
379 the surface ocean (Moreno et al., 2002; Bout-Roumazelles et al., 2007; Wienberg et al.,
380 2010), and ii) physical hydrographical processes leading to strong upwellings (Dupont et al.,
381 1998; Shi et al., 1998; Dupont & Behling, 2006; Kim et al., 2010; Zonneveld et al., 2013;
382 Penaud et al., 2016; Hardy et al., 2016, 2018). The long-term changes in productivity inferred
383 by our dinocyst reconstructions lend further support to previous results from the same region
384 based on a foraminiferal index (core GeoB 9064 from the central GoC; Wienberg et al., 2010;
385 Figure 6b, c).

386

387 **4.2.b. Remineralization processes**

388 In core MD04-2805 CQ, the benthic $\Delta\delta^{13}\text{C}$ offset (Figure 6e) provides information on the
389 respired carbon at the core site (859 m deep off NW Morocco), with high $\Delta\delta^{13}\text{C}$ values
390 indicating high remineralization release of isotopically light $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ to pore waters (McCorkle &
391 Emerson, 1988; Gehlen et al., 1999). This approach has been used in cores encompassing the
392 LGM and Holocene in the Eastern Equatorial Pacific Ocean (Umling & Thunell, 2018, with
393 shallow infaunal foraminifera) and sub-Antarctic Atlantic Ocean (Gottschalk et al., 2016a,
394 with deep infaunal foraminifera) to provide information on organic matter flux to the seafloor
395 and, thus, information on the export productivity. Close to our study area, on the Iberian
396 margin at 3,146 m water depth, $\Delta\delta^{13}\text{C}$ between epifaunal *Cibicidoides* and deep infaunal
397 *Globobulimina* was further used by Hoogakker et al. (2015) to reconstruct bottom-water
398 oxygen concentrations over the past 150 kyr. In our study area, higher $\Delta\delta^{13}\text{C}$ values (Figure
399 6e) are generally observed during the glacial interval (mean of 1.1 ‰, std of 0.4 ‰), while
400 lower $\Delta\delta^{13}\text{C}$ values characterize the Holocene (mean 0.7‰, std 0.2‰), suggesting generally
401 higher rates of organic carbon respiration during high glacial PP periods (Figures 6b and c). In
402 contrast, the Holocene is characterized by low dinocyst fluxes and the establishment of
403 oligotrophic conditions (Penaud et al., 2016), thus implying reduced export production, and
404 reduced organic matter respiration or remineralization (Figure 6e).

405 **4.3. Hypothesized links between PP and seasonality**

406 Canonical Correspondence Analysis (CCA; Figure 7) was applied to dinocyst assemblages of
407 core MD04-2805 CQ. A group of thermophilic taxa characteristic of full-oceanic oligotrophic
408 conditions (*Spiniferites mirabilis* and *Impagidinium* spp.) appears distinct from taxa with an

409 affinity for cold environments (*Bitectatodinium tepikiense*, *Spiniferites elongatus* and
410 *Spiniferites lazus*) (Figure 7). Heterotrophic taxa that are generally associated with strong
411 upwellings in modern environments (Marret & Zonneveld, 2003; Radi & de Vernal, 2008) are
412 closer to the cold group of taxa. In contrast, *Lingulodinium machaerophorum*, which is often
413 related to water mass stratification, is closer to the group of warm taxa; the latter group being
414 mainly related to high annual and summer SST (as shown by alkenone- and dinocyst-based
415 estimates, respectively) as well as to high SSS (Azores Current influence). This distribution is
416 consistent with cold and nutrient-rich waters in the glacial period and more specifically during
417 stadials (Penaud et al., 2010, 2011, 2016), in contrast to warm and thermally-stratified
418 oligotrophic waters such as found today. Also, high dinocyst-based PP estimates are
419 distributed along the same axis as high planktonic $\delta^{18}\text{O}$, hence supporting the argument of
420 enhanced PP in the studied area during the glacial period. We also included the benthic $\Delta\delta^{13}\text{C}$
421 signal as an environmental variable in the CCA (Figure 7). It shows an inverse relationship
422 with the planktonic $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ signal (Figure 7), further supporting the hypothesis of an opposition
423 between low productivity (Penaud et al., 2010; Frihmat et al., 2015) and high remineralization
424 under oxic conditions (Hoogaker et al., 2015). We also included SST and SSS seasonality
425 variables in the CCA (Figure 7), knowing that today's seasonal-scale processes impact the
426 hydrographical conditions in the GoC (Garcia Lafuente & Ruiz, 2007). Seasonal contrasts of
427 SST and SSS might thus have influenced the plankton dynamics during the last glacial cycle
428 offshore of Portugal (Datema et al., 2019). Therefore, we suggest two potential links as
429 follows (Figure 7): i) high organic matter remineralization and high SST seasonal contrast
430 (likely related to colder winter seasons), and ii) high PP conditions and high SSS seasonal
431 contrast (likely related to seasonal salinity drops).

432

433 **5. A new look at the carbon cycle along an Eastern** 434 **Boundary Current over the last 50 kyr**

435 Present-day processes on the northern GoC platform (Garcia Lafuente & Ruiz, 2007) are
436 driven by westerlies inducing upwellings off southern Iberia (northwestern GoC), with
437 filaments directed southward to the open GoC. This mechanism diverts waters from the
438 northwestern shelf to the open GoC. On the contrary, under easterlies, a westward coastal
439 counter-current allows the connection of the highly productive and wider northeastern GoC
440 shelf, influenced by strong fluvial discharges, to the northwestern GoC shelf (Garcia Lafuente
441 & Ruiz, 2007). We thus expect to record higher numbers of heterotrophic species in the GoC

442 under strong-dominant westerlies, and higher fluvial-sensitive taxa such as *L.*
443 *machaerophorum* under strong-dominant easterlies. Also, under modern conditions,
444 continental shelf dynamics and PP show a clear seasonal and inter-annual signal in the
445 northern GoC (e.g. Garcia Lafuente & Ruiz, 2007). Here, we combine this knowledge of
446 modern oceanography and seasonality with that of past productivity, seasonality, and
447 remineralization to address the long-term carbon cycle in the GoC, which could be used as a
448 regional model for understanding an EBC system of the North Atlantic subtropical gyre.

449 **5.1. Paleoproductivity changes over the last 50 kyr in the Gulf of Cadiz**

450 **5.1.a. A three-step scheme of PP regimes**

451 Our new PP estimates (Figure 8b) are in line with the observed decrease in dinocyst fluxes
452 from the glacial to the Holocene (Penaud et al., 2016), and provide evidence for a three-step
453 decrease: i) the 27–50 ka BP interval with PP_{annual} peaks higher than 600 gC m⁻² (“A”
454 window, Figure 8); ii) the 11–27 ka BP interval with high PP_{annual} of 430–600 gC m⁻² (“B”
455 window, Figure 8); and iii) the 0–11 ka BP interval characterized by the lowest PP_{annual}
456 values, as low as 250 gC m⁻² (“C” window, Figure 8). Interestingly, planktonic and benthic
457 $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ records combined with benthic foraminiferal assemblages from NE Indian Ocean cores
458 also recorded three paleoceanographic stages, but with slightly different temporal boundaries
459 (Devendra et al., 2019): high PP from 56 to 27.5 ka BP is related to moderate bottom water
460 oxygenation, followed by high equatorial productivity under low bottom water oxygen
461 concentration until 15 ka BP, and intermediate-low PP conditions/active deep-water
462 oxygenation until the present day. This three-step scheme is discussed below.

463

464 **5.1.b. The Holocene**

465 In our study, the Holocene interval (“C” window, Figure 8) is characterized by a relatively
466 strong SST seasonality (Figure 8i), which is similar to modern conditions (around 6°C).
467 Oligotrophic waters (low PP, Figure 8b) are thermally stratified, as suggested by the high
468 percentages of *L. machaerophorum* (Figure 8c) – a taxon typical of estuarine environments
469 (Morzadec-Kerfourn, 1977; Ganne et al., 2016; Penaud et al., 2020). The GoC is today under
470 the oligotrophic influence of the Azores Current and is characterized by a marked seasonal
471 gradient of temperature that exerts a strong control on chlorophyll concentrations (Garcia
472 Lafuente & Ruiz, 2007; Prieto et al., 2009), combined with the seasonal influence of river
473 discharges in autumn–winter (i.e. at times of higher rainfall; see introduction to section 2.).
474 Our Holocene reconstructions, therefore, fit these modern observations.

475

476 **5.1.c. The 11–27 ka interval**

477 The 11–27 ka interval encompasses HS1, HS2, and the LGM. In the study area, this interval is
478 characterized by an intensified and/or longer seasonal interval of spring–summer upwellings,
479 as indicated by the high H/A ratio (Figure 8j; Datema et al., 2019), which promoted higher PP
480 than today (Figure 8b). Strengthened upwellings are suggested to occur under stronger
481 westerlies (i.e. present-day meteorological model of Garcia Lafuente & Ruiz, 2007). The
482 occurrence of the tropical species *O. israelianum* (Figure 8e) also suggests high SSTs in
483 winter, thus accounting for the low SST seasonal contrast (Figure 8i), with cooler summers
484 (i.e. at times of upwelled waters) and warmer winters. Interestingly, our reconstructions are
485 also consistent with studies on other regions, such as that of Lopes and Mix (2018) in the
486 North Pacific, whose diatom-based PP reconstructions and SST changes revealed higher PP
487 and warmer SSTs during the LGM than today.

488

489 **5.1.d. Marine Isotope Stage 3**

490 Strong PP peaks occurred during MIS 3 (Figure 8b), especially during Greenland Interstadials
491 (GIs; Figure 8a). In the GoC, present-day nutrient concentrations are generally low but
492 relatively high at the mouth of the Guadalquivir River, which is also the most productive area
493 of the GoC (i.e. the GoC is oligotrophic elsewhere, Navarro & Ruiz, 2006; Garcia Lafuente &
494 Ruiz, 2007). High MIS 3 PP peaks here, coinciding with low values of the “Distance to the
495 Coast” (DC) index (Figure 8f), may be related to nutrient replenishments of surface waters by
496 intensified runoff carrying dissolved or suspended substances from the continent under warm
497 and humid climate GI conditions. Indeed, beyond the eustatic envelope (Figure 8g;
498 Waelbroeck et al., 2002), the particularly low DC excursions (Figure 8f), which are linked to
499 coastal dinocyst taxa, suggest strong riverine inputs during PP increases (Figure 8b). We,
500 therefore, suggest that the rainfall pattern led to enhanced frequencies of flooding events on
501 the northern shelf of the GoC margin and possibly more largely in eastern subtropical Atlantic
502 latitudes, as reconstructed for the hinterland of the Cariaco Basin in the western subtropical
503 North Atlantic (González et al., 2008; Deplazes et al., 2019). In order to explain observations
504 from the study site (MD99-2339, central GoC), we propose an efficient warm counter-current
505 in the northern GoC as observed today during phases of intense easterlies (present-day
506 meteorological model of García Lafuente et al., 2006; Garcia Lafuente & Ruiz, 2007).
507 Interestingly, between 32 and 27 ka BP, “high PP peaks (Figure 8b) and low DC indices
508 (Figure 8f)” correspond to low *L. machaerophorum* percentages (Figure 8c), while “high PP

509 peaks and low DC indices” correspond to extremely high *L. machaerophorum* percentages
510 during GIs 12 and 8, even reaching percentages as high as those found in present-day western
511 French estuaries (Morzadec-Kerfourn, 1977; Ganne et al., 2016; Penaud et al., 2020). We
512 suggest that the *L. machaerophorum* occurrences during GIs 12 and 8 reflect interstadial
513 conditions long enough to sustain stabilization of fluvial systems, and the development and
514 fixation of riparian vegetation on riverbanks (Penaud et al., 2020), such as during the Bölling-
515 Alleröd and the Holocene.

516 *5.2. Implications of PP regimes in EBC systems for CO_{2 atm} changes*

517 **5.2.a. Importance of biogeochemical cycles in CO_{2 atm} variations**

518 It was hypothesized that enhanced PP contributed significantly to the CO_{2 atm} drawdown
519 during glacial times (e.g. Broecker, 1982). Indeed, biogeochemical mechanisms need to be
520 taken into account (e.g. Buchanan et al., 2016; Galbraith & Jaccard, 2015; Schmittner &
521 Somes, 2016) with physical processes (inducing gas solubility or atmosphere-ocean exchange
522 of CO₂ and ocean circulation; e.g. Hain et al., 2010; Gottschalk et al., 2016b) to understand
523 the carbon cycle. Many studies have suggested that, during glacial intervals, circulation in the
524 Southern Ocean acted as a driver of CO_{2 atm} changes through strengthened AABW formation
525 and/or enhanced nutrient uptake (e.g. Sarmiento & Toggweiler, 1984; Marinov et al., 2006;
526 Gottschalk et al., 2016b; Jansen, 2017). In addition, studies also revealed the impact of
527 increased sediment exposure and subsequent silicate weathering during low sea level stands
528 for explaining the CO_{2 atm} drawdown (Wan et al., 2017). Hence, as highlighted by Gottschalk
529 et al. (2019), high temporal resolution reconstructions at the regional scale, such as this study,
530 are necessary to quantify environmental changes accompanying CO_{2 atm} variations, especially
531 for constraining some parameters in modeling studies.

532 Today, the GoC is characterized by an oligotrophic regime (nutrient-poor waters carried by
533 the Azores Current) and is associated with low CO₂ storage (Huertas et al., 2006, 2009;
534 Flecha et al., 2012), as previously discussed at the Holocene scale. However, the last 50 kyr
535 have been characterized by different glacial PP regimes, which thus influenced carbon export
536 to the seafloor, along with variable conditions of carbon sequestration *versus* remineralization
537 through time that likely had consequences for the carbon cycle. Dinocyst-based (Figure 6b)
538 and foraminiferal-based (Figure 6c) PP reconstructions point to changes consistent with the
539 CO_{2 atm} drawdown (Bereiter et al., 2015; Figure 6d) by recording similar timing and rate of
540 change. We may consider how our study site evolved with regard to carbon remineralization

541 *versus* sequestration as a model for an Eastern Boundary Current (EBC) under a glacial
542 climate.

543

544 **5.2.b. Carbon sequestration across the LGM**

545 At glacial–interglacial (orbital) timescales, we have discussed the link between PP and $\Delta\delta^{13}\text{C}$
546 (see subsection 4.2.), which generally fluctuate together, with stronger remineralization
547 during higher PP and *vice versa* (southern Cadiz; Figure 6). A more complex scheme is
548 depicted at the millennial timescale in the reconstructions of core MD04-2805 CQ. Indeed, a
549 positive relationship between PP (Figure 6b and c) and $\Delta\delta^{13}\text{C}$ (Figure 6e) still characterizes
550 the last 15 kyr (dotted lines at ca. 12 and 14 ka BP; Figure 6) and, before 18 ka, high PP
551 reconstructed during the LGM does not coincide with significant increases in $\Delta\delta^{13}\text{C}$ (Figure
552 6e) while significant peaks in TOC values (reaching 1%) are occasionally found in core
553 MD99-2339 (Figure 6f). Therefore, sustained LGM-PP (Figure 6b) combined with moderate
554 remineralization rates may have offered favorable conditions for carbon sequestration, at least
555 between 859 m and 1,170 m depth over the studied area. It is worth noting that low organic
556 matter remineralization when PP remains high may be explained by reduced bottom-water
557 oxygen concentrations. This would also be consistent, during the LGM, with: i) poor
558 ventilation promoting the accumulation of a respired carbon pool at 1–3 km depth (e.g.
559 Buchanan et al., 2016; Umling & Thunell, 2017, 2018); ii) reduced bottom-water dissolved
560 oxygen concentrations along the southern Iberian margin (Hoogakker et al., 2015); and iii)
561 reduced and weakly oscillating Mediterranean Outflow Water intensity (MOW; Voelker et
562 al., 2006; Figure 8d) at our study site, keeping in mind that the GoC study area lies beyond
563 the reach of the MOW as it did during the glacial period (e.g. Eberwein & Mackensen, 2008;
564 Rogerson et al., 2011). Because the lowest CO_2 atm concentrations were reached at around 25
565 ka BP (Figure 8i), we hypothesize that the increase in respired carbon storage at mid-depths
566 (850–1200 m water depth) could have contributed to maintaining low atmospheric CO_2
567 concentrations during the LGM through an efficient biological pump. The mechanism we
568 propose here is based on a regional dataset but could be applied at a larger scale to explain, at
569 least partly, atmospheric CO_2 changes through time.

570

571 **5.2.c. Carbon sequestration across GIs 12 and 8**

572 Pronounced MOW millennial-scale variability was recorded during MIS 3 (Voelker et al.,
573 2006; Figure 8d), which likely implies variable oxygenation in bottom waters at the study site.

574 We may expect that lower remineralization followed the shutdown of the MOW during the

575 interstadials, as discussed for the LGM, and conversely during the stadials. During GIs 12 and
576 8, the highest *L. machaerophorum* percentages coincide with two major atmospheric CO_{2 atm}
577 declines shaping the long-term trend across the glacial period (Figure 8i). We suggest that
578 prolonged intervals of organic matter deposition from both terrestrial and marine sources into
579 a poorly oxygenated basin may have contributed to increasing carbon sequestration in the
580 Gulf of Cadiz. The magnitude of CO_{2 atm} rise has been shown to be largely determined by the
581 stadial duration (Gottschalk et al., 2020). Here, we suggest that the corollary may be true for
582 the long interstadials as being favorable to an ocean sink of CO_{2 atm}.

583

584 **6. Conclusion**

585 This study addresses the oceanographic response of the GoC to complex continent–ocean
586 interactions. Today, this region is characterized by low to moderate PP, the oligotrophic
587 regime being related to nutrient-poor water advection from the Azores Current. In contrast,
588 the area was characterized by high PP during the last glacial period. In this study, the multi-
589 proxy dataset includes new stable isotope data of epibenthic foraminifera of the *Cibicidoides*
590 genus, allowing estimation of organic matter export and remineralization processes through
591 the benthic epifaunal-infaunal $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ gradient ($\Delta\delta^{13}\text{C}$), in addition to new dinocyst-based PP
592 estimates reconstructed with the new enlarged n = 1,968 dinocyst database. Our results show
593 high PP during the glacial period and the establishment of oligotrophic conditions from the
594 onset of the Holocene. High benthic $\Delta\delta^{13}\text{C}$ excursions and high PP were generally observed
595 for the glacial period, in contrast to the Holocene, also suggesting higher carbon export and
596 remineralization. We furthermore show, based on dinocyst-based estimates, that seasonal
597 gradients in SST and SSS were potential drivers of productivity changes over the last 50 kyr.
598 During MIS 3, particularly high PP may be related to nutrient replenishments in surface
599 waters by runoff, as shown by neritic dinocyst assemblages and peak nutrient concentrations
600 during the warmer and humid climate phases of Greenland interstadials, also characterized by
601 strong seasonal contrasts in both SSS and SST. During MIS 2, and more specifically across
602 the LGM, extremely low dinocyst-based SST seasonality due to warmer winters and colder
603 summer conditions were reconstructed. We suggest that intensified and/or longer seasonal
604 functioning of upwellings allowed the maintenance of sustained PP levels, although lower
605 than during MIS 3, combined with lower remineralization of organic matter contributing to
606 carbon sequestration at that time. Finally, the Holocene is characterized by the establishment
607 of oligotrophic conditions with reduced organic matter export in parallel with reduced oxic

608 respiration. The Gulf of Cadiz is not presently a carbon sink; however, this study
609 demonstrates that its state was different under glacial regimes. Hence, our study may help to
610 improve understanding of variations in the carbon cycle along Eastern Boundary Currents
611 (EBC) under glacial and interglacial climates, thus providing new elements to consider in
612 global biogeochemical models.

613

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635

636 **8. Figure captions**

637 **Figure 1:** a) Area of interest with major sea-surface features. Study cores MD04-2805 CQ
638 and MD99-2339 are located on the large map, also depicting the bathymetry of the study area.
639 The small map on the left present large scale North Atlantic currents with: the North Atlantic
640 Current (NAC), the Portugal Current (PC) flowing southward from 45°N to 30°N, the Azores

641 Current (AC) derived from the southern branch of the Gulf Stream and flowing eastward to
642 the Gulf of Cadiz at about 35°N, and the Canary Current (CC) fed by both the AC and the PC.
643 Together, these currents form the Eastern Boundary Current of the North Atlantic subtropical
644 gyre. **b)** MD99-2339 age model (cf. Table S2): 6 ¹⁴C dates on the 0-11 ka BP interval (cf.
645 Voelker et al., 2006), 10 tie-points on the 11-26 ka BP interval (alignment of *Globigerina*
646 *bulloides* $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ and SST signals of core MD99-2339 with those of core MD04-2805 CQ), 12
647 tie-points mainly on the 26-49 ka BP interval (alignment of *G. bulloides* $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ and SST signals
648 with NGRIP $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ data as in Penaud et al., 2016). Age-depth relationship built using the age-
649 depth modelling routine “Undatable” (Lougheed and Obrochta, 2019). **c)** MD04-2805 CQ age
650 model: six ¹⁴C dates on bivalves (Penaud et al., 2010) combined with 8 new ¹⁴C dates from
651 planktonic foraminifera. One more age constraint (tie point) is based on the calibrated ¹⁴C
652 ages of consistently dated Atlantic sediment cores by Waelbroeck et al. (2019). Interval 140-
653 300 cm discarded (inverted dates and micro-faulted levels unique in the 7.72 m long core
654 within a clayey-silty sedimentary matrix). Age model built using the age-depth modelling
655 routine “Undatable” (Lougheed and Obrochta, 2019). **d)** MD04-2805 CQ “section 2” (155-
656 290 cm). From the left to the right: photography of section 2 affected by micro faults that are
657 revealed by RX radioscopy: zooms of RX and photographs of two thin indurated slides (a)
658 and schematic representation of some of the micro-faulted structures (b).

659

660 **Figure 2:** Core MD04-2805 CQ. Core depths are displayed in centimetres and in ages (ages
661 indicated on the scale correspond to the pointers used to establish the stratigraphy of the core)
662 along the vertical axis. Stable isotope ($\delta^{18}\text{O}$ and $\delta^{13}\text{C}$) data are displayed for planktonic
663 (*Globigerina bulloides*) and benthic foraminifera (*Uvigerina mediterranea* and *Cibicidoides*
664 species). Red dotted lines highlight major peaks of benthic $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ gradient ($\Delta\delta^{13}\text{C}$) accounting
665 for higher organic remineralisation in bottom sediments at the study site.

666

667 **Figure 3:** Cores MD04-2805 CQ and MD99-2339 with vertical scales in depth (cm) and
668 stratigraphic pointers used for the establishment of both age models. Selected environmental
669 are highlighted with both dinocyst databases for comparison: n=1,492 (de Vernal et al., 2013)
670 in orange and n=1,968 (de Vernal et al., 2020) in other colors. SST: Sea Surface Temperature.
671 SSS: Sea Surface Salinity. PP: Primary Productivity. The number of retained modern
672 analogues is also shown for each dinocyst-based quantifications, as well as the Dmin for the
673 statistical distance of best retained analogues. For each reconstruction, the closest analogue is

674 represented by a colored diamond, this color code referring to the areas highlighted in maps of
675 Figure 4. Dotted lines underline intervals of high dinocyst-based PP estimates.

676

677 **Figure 4:** Maps established with QGis with the points encompassing the n=1,968 modern
678 dinocyst database (de Vernal et al., 2020). From top to bottom: PP_{annual} for annual Primary
679 Productivity, *Lingulodinium machaerophorum* percentages, SST_{winter} for winter Sea Surface
680 Temperature. Colored dots with labels (numbers in reds are in green) are as in de Vernal et al.
681 (2020) and highlight all closest analogues found for dinocyst-based quantifications performed
682 on both study cores (MD04-2805 CQ and MD99-2339).

683

684 **Figure 5:** Relative Sea Level (a) and glaciological $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ from NGRIP (g) in parallel with sea-
685 surface hydrological quantifications performed on both study cores with dinocysts (c,d,f) and
686 alkenones (e): MD99-2339 (central Cadiz) with solid lines and MD04-2805 CQ (southern
687 Cadiz) with dotted lines. SST: Sea Surface Temperature and SSS: Sea Surface Salinity.
688 Modern values are highlighted with colored stars as well as standard errors for each
689 reconstructed parameter. HS: Heinrich Stadial; LGM: Last Glacial Maximum; BA: Bölling-
690 Alleröd; YD: Younger Dryas. Purple bands indicate HSs and the YD.

691

692 **Figure 6:** CO₂ _{atm} concentrations (d) and foraminiferal-based Primary Productivity (PP)
693 qualitative information (c) in parallel with selected proxies acquired on both study cores (red
694 solid lines for core MD04-2805 CQ, southern Cadiz, and black solid lines for core MD99-
695 2339, central Cadiz). While planktonic $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ data, dinocyst-based PP and SST seasonality
696 were acquired for both cores, the benthic $\Delta\delta^{13}\text{C}$ is only available for the southern Cadiz core
697 and the Total Organic Carbon is only available for the central Cadiz core. Red horizontal
698 dotted lines highlight the major peaks recorded with the $\Delta\delta^{13}\text{C}$ proxy. HS: Heinrich Stadial;
699 LGM: Last Glacial Maximum; BA: Bölling-Alleröd; YD: Younger Dryas. Purple bands
700 indicate HSs and the YD.

701

702 **Figure 7:** Canonical Correspondence Analysis (CCA) performed with the Past version 1.75b
703 software (Hammer et al., 2001) to dinocyst assemblages (expressed in percentages “%” and
704 absolute concentrations “conc.”) of core MD04-2805 CQ to capture the main factors (i.e.
705 environmental variables including stable isotope data, alkenone-based SST and dinocyst-
706 based quantifications) that could typify the productivity control in the study area. SST: Sea
707 Surface Temperature; SSS: Sea Surface Salinity; PP: Primary Productivity. Ispp:

708 *Impagidinium* species; Lmac: *Lingulodinium machaerophorum*; Ocen: *Operculodinium*
709 *centrocarpum*; Oisr: *Operculodinium israelianum*; Nlab: *Nematosphaeropsis labyrinthus*;
710 Btep: *Bitectatodinium tepikiense*; Bsp: *Brigantedinium* species; *Spiniferites* species: *S.*
711 *mirabilis* (Smir), *S. delicatus* (Sdel), *S. bentorii* (Sben), *S. lazus* (Slaz), *S. elongatus* (Selo).

712

713 **Figure 8:** Relative sea level curve (g) and CO₂ atm concentrations (h) in parallel with selected
714 proxies acquired on core MD99-2339: planktonic $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ (a) and mean-grain size of the fine
715 fraction (d), dinocyst percentages (c,e), Heterotrophic/Autotrophic (H/A) ratio (j), and
716 dinocyst-based parameters (b: Primary Productivity or PP, f: Distance to the coast index, and
717 i: Sea Surface Temperature or SST seasonality. Horizontal dotted lines underline major PP
718 peaks. HS: Heinrich Stadial; GI: Greenland Interstadial; LGM: Last Glacial Maximum; BA:
719 Bölling-Alleröd; YD: Younger Dryas. Purple bands indicate HSs and the YD, pink bands
720 indicate GIs 8 and 12 and the BA.

721

722 9. Supplementary material

723 **Table S1:** Age constraints of core MD04-2805Q

724

725 **Table S2:** Age constraints of core MD99-2339

726

727 **Figure S1:** SST and planktonic $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ signals of cores MD04-2805 CQ and MD99-2339 *versus*
728 calendar age (cf. Tables S1 and S2). **Upper panel:** planktonic foraminifer-based SST of core
729 MD04-2805 CQ (Penaud et al., 2011) and MD99-2339 (Voelker et al., 2006). **Middle panel:**
730 *G. bulloides* $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ of core MD04-2805 CQ (Penaud et al., 2010, 2011) and MD99-2339
731 (Voelker et al., 2006). Both panels: diamonds and squares above the x-axis indicate calibrated
732 ^{14}C ages and alignment tie points, respectively. **Bottom panel:** NGRIP $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ *versus* GICC05
733 timescale (Seierstad et al., 2014). Grey bands mark the Younger Dryas and Heinrich stadial
734 1–4 chronozones as defined in Waelbroeck et al. (2019).

735

736 **10. References**

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