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OceanSODA-UNEXE: A multi-year gridded Amazon and Congo River outflow surface ocean carbonate system dataset

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Abstract

Large rivers play an important role in transferring water and all of its constituents including carbon in its various forms from the land to the ocean, but the seasonal and inter-annual variations in these riverine flows remain unclear. Satellite Earth observation datasets and reanalysis products can now be used to observe synoptic-scale spatial and temporal variations in the carbonate system within large river outflows. Here we present the OceanSODA-UNEXE time series, a dataset of the full carbonate system in the surface water outflows of the Amazon (2010-2020) and Congo Rivers (2002-2016). Optimal empirical approaches were used to generate gridded Total alkalinity (TA) and dissolved inorganic carbon (DIC) fields in the outflow regions. These combinations were determined by equitably evaluating all combinations of algorithms and inputs against a matchup database of *in situ* observations. Gridded TA and DIC along with gridded temperature and salinity data enable the calculation of the full carbonate system in the surface ocean. The algorithm evaluation constitutes a Type A uncertainty evaluation for TA and DIC where model, input and sampling uncertainties are considered. Total combined uncertainties for TA and DIC were propagated through the carbonate system calculation allowing all variables to be provided with an associated uncertainty estimate. In the Amazon outflow, the total combined uncertainty for TA was identified as 36 µmol kg^{-1} (weighted RMSD 35 µmol kg^{-1} and weighted bias 8 µmol kg^{-1} for n=82) and for DIC was 44 µmol kg^{-1} (weighted RMSD 44 µmol kg^{-1} and weighted bias -6 µmol kg^{-1} for n=70). The spatially averaged propagated uncertainties for the partial pressure of carbon dioxide (pCO$_2$) and pH are 85 µatm and 0.08 respectively, where the pH uncertainty is relative to an average pH of 8.19. In the Congo outflow, the combined uncertainty for TA was identified as 29 µmol kg^{-1} (weighted RMSD 28 µmol kg^{-1} and weighted bias 6 µmol kg^{-1} for n=102) and for DIC was 40 µmol kg^{-1} (weighted RMSD 37 µmol kg^{-1} and weighted bias -16 µmol kg^{-1} for n=77). The spatially averaged propagated uncertainties for pCO$_2$ and pH are 74 µatm and 0.08 respectively, where the pH uncertainty is relative to an average pH of 8.21. The combined

uncertainties in TA and DIC in the Amazon and Congo outflows are lower than the natural variability their respective

35   regions allowing the time varying regional variability to be evaluated. Potential uses of these data would be for assessing the spatial and temporal flow of carbon from the Amazon and Congo rivers into the Atlantic and for assessing the riverine driven carbonate system variations experienced by tropical reefs within the outflow regions.

1 Introduction

Rivers connect the land and ocean providing a major pathway for carbon transport to the ocean (Regnier et al., 2013). The

40   inorganic carbon content of rivers is poorly constrained due to the difficulties of sampling these highly spatial and temporal variable river outflows. Global estimates of the riverine flow of carbon from the land to the ocean (Friedlingstein et al., 2022) are determined from *in situ* upscaling (Regnier et al., 2013), ocean inverse model estimates (Jacobson et al., 2007), partial pressure of carbon dioxide (pCO$_2$) ocean sink based estimates (Watson et al., 2020) and atmosphere inversion based estimates (Rödenbeck et al., 2018). Clearly new methods that improve the characterisation of the magnitude, variability and

45   temporal variations of carbon transported by rivers will help constrain uncertainties within global carbon budgets (Hauck et al., 2020).

The vast majority of pCO$_2$ measurements in the Surface ocean CO$_2$ Atlas (SOCAT) were made on research ships and ships of opportunity that mainly survey the open ocean and continental shelves (Bakker et al., 2016). Many bottle samples have

50   been collected for total alkalinity (TA) and dissolved organic carbon (DIC) in rivers, but fully surveying the entirety of large rivers across all seasons is logistically challenging requiring extensive and economically expensive field campaigns (Ward et al., 2017). For example, the majority of the largest 100 rivers by discharge are found in South America and Asia (Dai and Trenberth, 2002) and have been historically under-sampled for carbonate system variables (Lauerwald et al., 2015). Issues related to scarcity of measurements is compounded by insufficient knowledge of the hydrology and spatial area extents of

55   these systems (Allen and Pavelsky, 2018). Additionally, the amount of carbon in the rivers is a function of runoff rates, rainfall and land use, all of which have been disrupted by climate change and land use change (Piao et al., 2007;Kaushal et al., 2014;Regnier et al., 2013). This lack of large spatial and temporal scale baseline carbonate system observations in rivers means that assessing changes in these systems is challenging.

60   The carbon dynamics of the world's rivers also have implications on local biogeochemistry. Ocean acidification is the process by which the ocean becomes less alkaline (as the hydrogen ion concentration increases) whilst at the same time decreasing carbonate ion availability (Doney et al., 2009). Ocean acidification poses a threat to marine organisms which build calcium carbonate structures and many rivers are sensitive to this due to their low buffering capacity (Hu and Cai, 2013;Cai et al., 2011). River plumes can negatively influence wild fisheries and the aquaculture industry (Mathis et al.,

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65   2015;Cattano et al., 2018) as plumes can transport low pH waters that can impact the growth and life stages of many marine organisms (Cai et al., 2021) Additionally, river plumes can interact with high biodiversity regions that are sensitive to sudden changes in the carbonate system such as sensitive coral reef systems (Mongin et al., 2016;Dong et al., 2017). Episodic changes in the carbonate system caused by river plumes can result in financial and biodiversity losses and are of paramount interest to local communities, businesses and policy makers (Doney et al., 2020).

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Satellite Earth observations provide a means of accurately assessing the carbonate content of large rivers by utilising oceanographic variables that can now be routinely observed from space combined with published empirical algorithms from the literature (Land et al., 2019). We present the University Of Exeter (UNEXE) OceanSODA dataset (OceanSODA-UNEXE), decadal datasets of riverine carbonate system variables for the two largest rivers in the world by discharge, the

75   Amazon and the Congo Rivers (Dai and Trenberth, 2002). This paper details how the optimal combination of empirical algorithms and Earth observation datasets were selected and used to construct OceanSODA-UNEXE. This paper provides an assessment of the uncertainty associated with the key TA and DIC parameters using a standardised uncertainty framework and a large *in situ* database. The remaining ocean carbon system variables were calculated from TA and DIC with propagated uncertainties.

80   **2 Methods**

2.1 Statistical terms overview

Root mean squared difference (RMSD) is a measure of accuracy and is calculated as the square root of the average of squared errors e.g. $RMSD = ((\Sigma(x_0 - x_1)^2)/n)^{1/2}$, where x_0 are the estimated values, x_1 are the reference values and n is the number of observations. The bias of a dataset is defined as the mean difference between the estimation and reference, Bias=

85   $\Sigma(x_0 - x_1))/n$. The mean absolute difference (MAD) of a dataset is a measure of variability and is calculated as $MAD = (\Sigma|x - \bar{x}|)/n$, where $\bar{x}$ is the mean. The correlation coefficient (r_{ij}) is a measure of linear correlation between the estimate and the reference variables and is defined as $r_{ij} = (\Sigma (x_i - \bar{x}_i) (x_j - \bar{x}_j)) / (\Sigma (x_i - \bar{x}_i)^2 \Sigma (x_j - \bar{x}_j)^2)^{1/2}$. Uncertainty representation and the terminology used throughout this paper are consistent with the International Bureau of Weights and Measures (BIPM) Guide to the expression of uncertainty in measurement (GUM) methodology (JCGM, 2008).

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Weighted statistics allow uncertainties in the reference dataset (*in situ* measurement uncertainty in this case) to be accounted for within the performance analysis (i.e. the reference data are not considered 'truth' as they also contain uncertainties). Weights are calculated as the sum of the individual weight of each algorithm (w), where $w = 1/((in\ situ$ measurement uncertainty)^2+(literature algorithm uncertainty)$^2)^{1/2}$ (Ford et al., 2021). For clarity and easy comparison to previous published

95 work both weighted and unweighted statistics of all metrics are given, for example weighted RMSD (wRMSD) is calculated as wRMSD= $(\Sigma(\text{weights}*(x_0 - x_1)^2))^{\frac{1}{2}}$.

When evaluating algorithms by wRMSD, a further issue can arise where the valid region over which each algorithm can be applied overlaps with different *in situ* data. For example, an algorithm evaluated using data from highly-variable coastal
100 waters may have a higher wRMSD than another algorithm evaluated using solely data from a less variable open ocean region; in this scenario it may be falsely concluded that the coastal ocean algorithm performs worse. This is a clear weakness of comparing wRMSD values from different sources and across differing regions (Land et al., 2019). Following the methodology of Land, Findlay et al. (2019) we derive RMSDe from wRMSD, RMSDe is a more representative metric to compare accuracies as it allows algorithms to be evaluated in a like for like manner allowing their performance to be ranked.
105 It is important to note that for the best algorithm, wRMSD = RMSDe as the best algorithm will always have a score of 1. To ensure the robustness of any statistics generated it was considered prudent to specify a minimum data threshold. Only algorithms that had at least 30 matchups (n=30) between the algorithm and reference outputs were used in the calculation of RMSDe, this was done to prevent the selection of algorithms with low RMSDe values caused by evaluating the algorithm with a small number of data points. wRMSD is used as the preferred measure of accuracy in this paper but unweighted
110 RMSD values are also given.

2.2 Selection of empirical algorithms

In order to generate the full ocean carbonate system, two of the four carbonate system variables are needed. As TA is closely linked to salinity it is selected as one variable, for the second variable DIC is selected. There are many algorithms in the published literature for both TA and DIC and the required measurements in the river outflows are available to evaluate those
115 algorithms. Other pairings of carbonate system parameters can be used to derive the full carbonate system (Land et al., 2015b) but are not explored here (e.g. Gregor and Gruber (2021) who use TA and $p\mathrm{CO}_2$).

An exhaustive literature search using 24 search terms (listed in the supplementary materials) identified prospective algorithms that could be applied to the Amazon and Congo River outflows. The full list of identified algorithms can be found
120 in the supplementary materials. To be included in the algorithm evaluation, algorithms needed to be applicable within the outflow region of either river (the Amazon between 2° S and 24° N and between 70° W and 31° W or the Congo between 10°S and 4°N and between 2° W and 16° E) and to take the form of a linear or quadratic relationship with accessible input variables e.g. sea surface temperature (SST), sea surface salinity (SSS), potential temperature (which is assumed to be approximately equal to SST at the surface), dissolved oxygen (DO), nitrate ($\mathrm{NO_3^-}$), phosphate ($\mathrm{PO_4^{-3}}$), silicate ($\mathrm{SiO_4^{-4}}$) and
125 chlorophyll-a. 26 of the identified algorithms were not included in the algorithm evaluation as they could not generate TA or DIC using the accessible input variables listed above or were not based on empirical algorithms (e.g. they were full

biogeochemical models or neural networks approaches) (See Table S2 for the full list). 10 TA algorithms (5 of 10 report RMSD values in their original publication) and 6 DIC algorithms (5 of 6 report RMSD) were evaluated for the Amazon and 4 TA algorithms (3 of 4 report RMSD) and 9 DIC algorithms (4 of 7 report RMSD) were evaluated for the Congo (Table

130   S1). wRMSD and RMSDe can only be calculated for algorithms which report RMSD, so it is important to distinguish these. Table S1 details each algorithm's input variables, the published algorithm RMSD, the stated environmental ranges for which the algorithm is valid and some brief descriptive notes of how the algorithm was developed. The target output variable, the input variables, the mathematical algorithm, the valid geographical region and the valid geophysical conditions for each algorithm were then gathered for use in the algorithm evaluation process.

135   **2.3 Algorithm evaluation**

A multipurpose global reference matchups database (MDB) matching *in situ* carbonate system parameters from the surface 10 m with satellite, model and interpolated *in situ* datasets was used to perform the algorithm evaluation (Land et al., 2022). The MDB is optimised to reduce biases arising from uneven data density; this is achieved by grouping *in situ* observations into 100 km diameter regions of interest (ROI) which span a 10 day time period. The MDB was constructed from global

140   datasets that include all of the variables required for all algorithms (SST, SSS, θ, DO, NO_3^-, PO_4^-, SiO_4^- and chlorophyll-a see section 2.2). The MDB includes three global SST datasets: European Space Agency Climate Change Initiative SST (ESACCI SST) v2.1 (Merchant et al., 2019;Good et al., 2019), Optimum Interpolation SST (OISST) v2.1 (Huang et al., 2021;Banzon et al., 2016) and the Coriolis Ocean dataset for Reanalysis (CORA) v5.2 (Szekely et al., 2019)) and four global SSS datasets: European Space Agency Climate Change Initiative SSS (ESACCI SSS) v2.31 (Boutin et al., 2020;Boutin et

145   al., 2021), CORA v5.2 (Szekely et al., 2019), the *in situ* Analysis System (ISAS 15) (Kolodziejczyk et al., 2021;Gaillard et al., 2016) and Remote Sensing Systems data from the Soil Moisture Active Passive satellite (RSS-SMAP) level 3 v4.0 (Meissner et al., 2019;Meissner et al., 2018)). The MDB also contains TA, DIC and pH values, most of which come from the Global Ocean Data Analysis Project (GLODAPv2.2020) database (Olsen et al., 2016) and *p*CO_2 values most of which come from SOCAT v2020 (Bakker et al., 2016) along with additional data for Arctic waters. A full list of references for data

150   variable sources used in the MDB can be found in (Land et al., 2022). Before beginning this analysis we limited our analysis to only used MDB data that fall within these bounds: SST>-10 °C or <40 °C, SSS>0 or <50, DIC>500 µmol kg^{-1} or <3000 µmol kg^{-1}, TA>500 µmol kg^{-1} or <3000 µmol kg^{-1}, pH >6 or <8.5 and *p*CO_2>100 µatm or <3000 µatm and these constraints are consistent with the conditions likely within the Amazon and Congo regions.

155   Each valid algorithm was implemented by closely following the specific literature recommendations; this was done in such a way that empirical algorithms were only assessed for the geographical and geophysical ranges for which they were originally developed. The algorithm evaluation involved running each algorithm with inputs from the MDB to estimate the TA and DIC outputs (termed the "algorithm output"). Each algorithm output was then evaluated using the TA and DIC values from

the MDB matchup database (termed the "reference output"). The RMSD, bias, correlation coefficient, and MAD are
160 calculated from the algorithm output and the reference output. Additionally, wRMSD was calculated for algorithms where an
RMSD is reported in the literature. Where wRMSD was calculated and the matchups (n) were >30, RMSDe was calculated
for those algorithms following the methodology of Land et al. (2019). As the MDB includes three global SST and four
global SSS datasets, each algorithm was run for each of the twelve combinations of SST and SSS input datasets, and separate
statistics were generated for each configuration. The subset of input variables from the MDB used to implement the
165 algorithm, the algorithm output and the reference output for all 12 SST and SSS combinations are included in the
supplementary materials. Additionally, summary statistics between the algorithm output and the reference output, (mean,
wmean, standard deviation, RMSD, wRMSD, RMSDe, Bias, wBias, r, wr, MAD and wMAD) are also provided in the
supplementary materials.

170 The best performing TA and DIC algorithms for both regions were determined by ranking the algorithms by RMSDe, the
best performing algorithms were the algorithms with the lowest RMSDe values. In order to select algorithms suitable for
generating time series, observation datasets for SSS and SST needed a temporal overlap of at least 8 years. The remainder of
this paper exclusively discusses the time series generated with these "optimal algorithms".

175 The algorithm evaluation process follows a standardised framework for a Type A uncertainty evaluation for TA and DIC
whereby the following sources of uncertainties are considered:

1. The TA or DIC measurement uncertainty. The measurement uncertainty for both TA and DIC is typically stated as
   ± 4 μmol kg^{-1} but following (Bockmon and Dickson, 2015), we use their more conservative measurement
   uncertainty of ± 10 μmol kg^{-1} (approximately equal to 0.5% of the nominal TA and DIC values for the open ocean);
180 2. The algorithm uncertainty which is the RMSD stated in the literature for each algorithm;
   3. The spatial uncertainty arising from spatial heterogeneity in the region;
   4. The uncertainty due to differences in the measurement depths in the MDB.

The measurement uncertainty of 10 μmol kg^{-1} and algorithm uncertainty are explicitly considered in the calculated of
wRMSD and the remaining uncertainties should be minimised through using the MDB (as the MDB has been designed to
185 minimise these components (Land et al., 2022)). By accounting for all known sources of uncertainty this constitutes a
complete Type A uncertainty evaluation. The combined standard uncertainty (δQ) for TA and DIC is calculated as $\delta Q = ((\delta a)^2 + (\delta b)^2)^{1/2}$ where δa is the RMSDe from the evaluation algorithm and δb is the wBias. The uncertainty estimates
provided within the dataset is the combined standard uncertainty (δQ) and these combined standard uncertainties are
reported without confidence intervals.

190

To aid interpretation of the combined uncertainty budgets, a second Type A uncertainty evaluation of the TA and DIC approaches was calculated based purely on the empirical algorithm (e.g. literature RMSD value) and the uncertainties in the input data propagated using standard techniques (Taylor, 1997) and assuming that any uncertainties were uncorrelated. This is a second independent Type A uncertainty evaluation that does not include uncertainties due to spatial variability and

195   depth. Assuming that the first Type A uncertainty evaluation has captured all the uncertainties, the difference between the two uncertainty evaluations enables estimation of the contribution of the spatial and depth variability on the uncertainty budget. A similar approach was recently performed by Gregor and Gruber (2021) where they refer to these two approaches as 'top down' (our first Type A uncertainty evaluation) and 'bottom up' (our second Type A uncertainty evaluation) assessments.

200   **2.4 Creation of gridded monthly time series product**

The full spatiotemporal resolution SST and SSS datasets and gridded World Ocean Atlas (WOA) DO, NO_3^-, PO_4^- and SiO_4^- datasets were downloaded from their online repositories, the total size of these full resolution datasets occupies ~500 GB of hard drive space and take several days to fully download. The SST and SSS datasets were uncompressed and were re-gridded onto a monthly 1° X 1° standard World Geodetic System grid for use creating the gridded output, the grid has 180°

205   of Latitude and 360° of Longitude with 0° centred on the Greenwich Meridian. Reformatting the datasets considerably reduced the file size to a more manageable ~50 GB. The scripts used to download these SST and SSS monthly datasets are fully automated, meaning that when new data are added to these datasets it can be easily incorporated into future versions of OceanSODA-UNEXE.

210   For each target variables (TA or DIC), the selected optimal SST and SSS gridded datasets and gridded WOA datasets were used as inputs to the respective TA and DIC algorithms. The algorithms were applied to the datasets in the two outflow regions where the SST and SSS dataset overlapped in time for the published environmental limits of each algorithm. The monthly SST and SSS inputs as well as the calculated monthly output variable (TA or DIC) are saved to a netCDF4 file as separate variables on the grid described above with dimensions of 768 by 180 by 360 (where 768 is the time step in months

215   starting in January 1957). It is important to note that TA and DIC datasets (even if for the same region) can span different temporal domains and so should be treated as separate datasets. These differences are due to differences in the temporal range of the input data used to calculate them.

Where there was temporal overlap between the TA and DIC datasets in each region, the pyCO2SYS v1.7.1 software package

220   (Humphreys et al., 2022) was used to calculate the complete carbonate system variables (pCO$_2$, fCO$_2$ and pH on the free, total and seawater scales), the carbonate ion content (CO_3^{-2}), the bicarbonate ion content (HCO_3^-), the hydrogen ion content (H^+) and the calcite (Ω Calcite) and aragonite (Ω Aragonite) saturation states. pyCO2SYS was run at the surface (0 m depth)

with the carbonic acid dissociation constants of Mehrbach (1973) refitted by Dickson and Millero (1987) and the hydrogen sulphate dissociation constant of Dickson (1990). The full carbonate system is calculated twice, once using the optimal SST

225 and SSS datasets that were used to calculate TA then again using those used to calculate DIC. Consequently each netCDF file contains a complete set of carbonate system outputs that are unique to that input dataset.

Whilst some of the SST and SSS products used to create the gridded datasets contain only satellite observed SST at a specified depth, some of the re-analysis SST and SSS products also incorporate surface ocean measurements from ships and

230 buoys which were made at differing depths. The TA and DIC data used to generate the MDB comes from the top 10 m of the ocean and has not been adjusted for potential concentrations gradients in the surface ocean (Land et al., 2022). For these reasons, OceanSODA-UNEXE is deemed relevant in the surface 10 m of the ocean.

2.5 Uncertainties in gridded monthly time series product

As stated in section 2.3, the assessed combined standard uncertainties for TA and DIC are single fixed values provided as

235 regionally-static (non-spatially varying) fields in the netCDF files. Uncertainty information for SST and SSS are taken from the literature references and are provided as spatially varying fields in the netCDF files (as provided in the original datasets). Uncertainties in TA, DIC, SST and SSS are provided as optional uncertainty input arguments in pyCO2SYS to generate uncertainties for pH, pCO$_2$, Ω Calcite and Ω Aragonite. PyCO2SYS uses a forward finite difference approach to calculate the derivatives needed to propagate uncertainties for all these output variables. This produces a spatially varying combined

240 uncertainty budget for each remaining carbonate system parameter. The spatially varying uncertainties in SST, SSS, pH, pCO$_2$, Ω Calcite and Ω Aragonite are all provided in the respective netCDF files.

3 Results

3.1 Algorithm evaluation

The algorithm evaluation RMSDe values in the Amazon and Congo for TA and DIC are shown in Figure 1. From these

245 RMSDe values we selected the "optimal algorithms" for both regions as the algorithm combination with the lowest RMSDe. The optimal algorithms were then used to produce OceanSODA-UNEXE. In the Amazon the optimal algorithm to generate the TA data was (Cai et al., 2010) with ESACCI SST and ESACCI SSS (Table 1). To generate DIC for the Amazon the best algorithm was (Lefèvre et al., 2010) using OISST SST and ESACCI SSS. In the Congo, the optimal algorithm to generate the TA data was Lee et al. (2006) with CORA SST and ISAS SSS (Table 2). For DIC in the Congo the optimal algorithm

250 was (Lee et al., 2000) with ESACCI SST and CORA SSS.
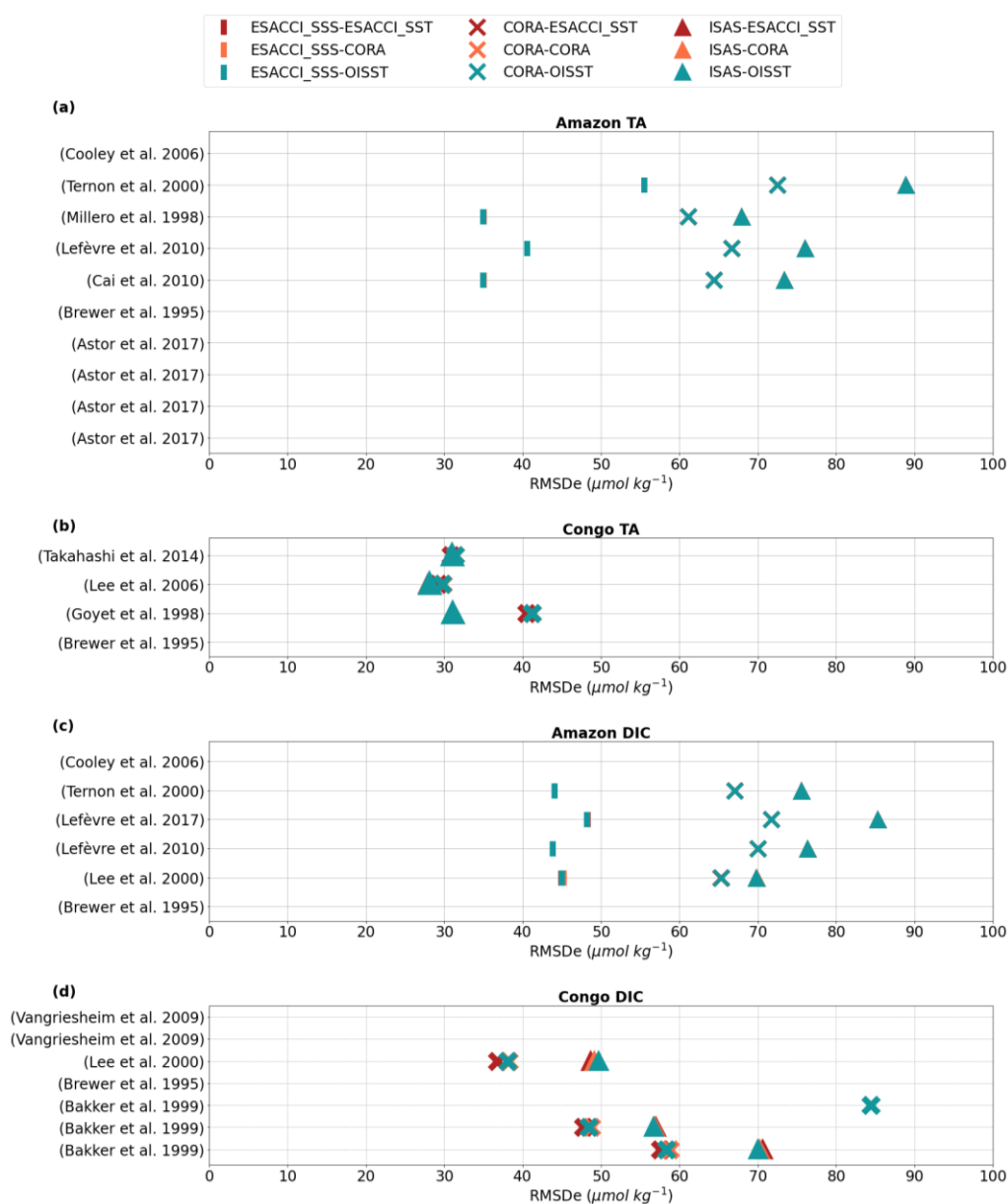
255 **Figure 1: Results of the algorithm evaluation, DIC and TA algorithms for the Amazon and Congo regions are compared by RMSDe. Each of the valid algorithms is listed by literature reference on the y axis, all of which correspond to algorithms in Table S1. Each SST and SSS dataset input configurations for which algorithms were evaluated are shown for each algorithm, with each SSS dataset given by a different symbol and each SST dataset given as a different colour in the legend. Entries are blank where there was no RMSD value in the literature, there were < 30 matchups or where the assessed RMSDe value was >100 µmol kg^{-1}.**

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Table 1: Summary table of the best combination of algorithm and SST/SSS datasets (aka the "optimal algorithms") in the Amazon River domain. These optimal algorithms were determined by selecting the algorithm with the lowest RMSDe where there was at least 8 years of data.

	Algorithm	SST dataset	SSS dataset	Years of overlap	Number of matchups (n) for weighted statistics	RMSD (μmol kg^{-1})	wBias (μmol kg^{-1})	wRMSD (μmol kg^{-1})	RMSDe (μmol kg^{-1})	Combined standard uncertainty (μmol kg^{-1})
Optimal TA algorithm	(Cai et al., 2010)	ESACCI SST	ESACCI SSS	10 years (2010 - 2020)	82	50.92	7.83	34.97	34.97	35.84
Optimal DIC algorithm	(Lefèvre et al., 2010)	OISST	ESACCI SSS	10 years (2010 - 2020)	70	53.33	-5.98	43.83	43.83	44.23

265   Table 2: Summary table of the best combination of algorithm and SST/SSS datasets (aka the "optimal algorithms") in the Congo River domain. These optimal algorithms were determined by selecting the algorithm with the lowest RMSDe where there was at least 8 years of data.

	Algorithm	SST dataset	SSS dataset	Years of overlap	Number of matchups (n) for weighted statistics	RMSD (μmol kg^{-1})	wBias (μmol kg^{-1})	wRMSD (μmol kg^{-1})	RMSDe (μmol kg^{-1})	Combined standard uncertainty (μmol kg^{-1})
Optimal TA algorithm	(Lee et al., 2006)	CORA	ISAS	14 years (2002 - 2016)	102	27.33	6.00	27.91	27.91	28.54
Optimal DIC algorithm	(Lee et al., 2000)	ESACCI SST	CORA	14 years (2002 - 2016)	77	37.37	-16.64	36.79	36.79	40.37

3.2 Dataset output

270   3.2.1 Amazon dataset

The primary output datasets are the monthly gridded carbonate system variables (DIC and TA). The seasonal progression of both these variables is shown in the Amazon outflow region in Figures 2 and 3. There is a large range of DIC and TA in this region, with high values (DIC ~2000 µmol kg^{-1} and TA ~2350 µmol kg^{-1}) in the open ocean. The lowest values (DIC and TA ~1400 µmol kg^{-1}) are located at the mouth of the river. Intermediate values occur where the plume and ocean water are

275   mixing. The plume extends to the Northwest from the Amazon River mouth (Coles et al., 2013); this is especially visible from April to September (Figures 2 and 3 plots b and c), less so from October to March (plots a and d), demonstrating the seasonal variability. The region of influence of the Amazon Plume extends into the Caribbean between April and June (Figure 2b and 3b), a feature reported elsewhere (Chérubin and Richardson, 2007). From July to September (Figure 2c and 3c) another large outflow region occurs just off the coast of Venezuela at the mouth of the Orinoco River (Hu et al., 2004).

280   The Orinoco plume is much less prominent in the other seasons. The proximity of the Orinoco River to the Caribbean suggests that the Orinoco plume often reaches the islands between July and September (López et al., 2013). There are some differences between the structure of the average TA and DIC plumes which may indicate active processes in the plume, for example gas exchange which only affects DIC or biological production which affects TA and DIC at different rates. Annual and seasonal data averages over the region shown in Figures 2 and 3 are provided in Table S3 for DIC, TA, pH, pCO$_2$, Ω
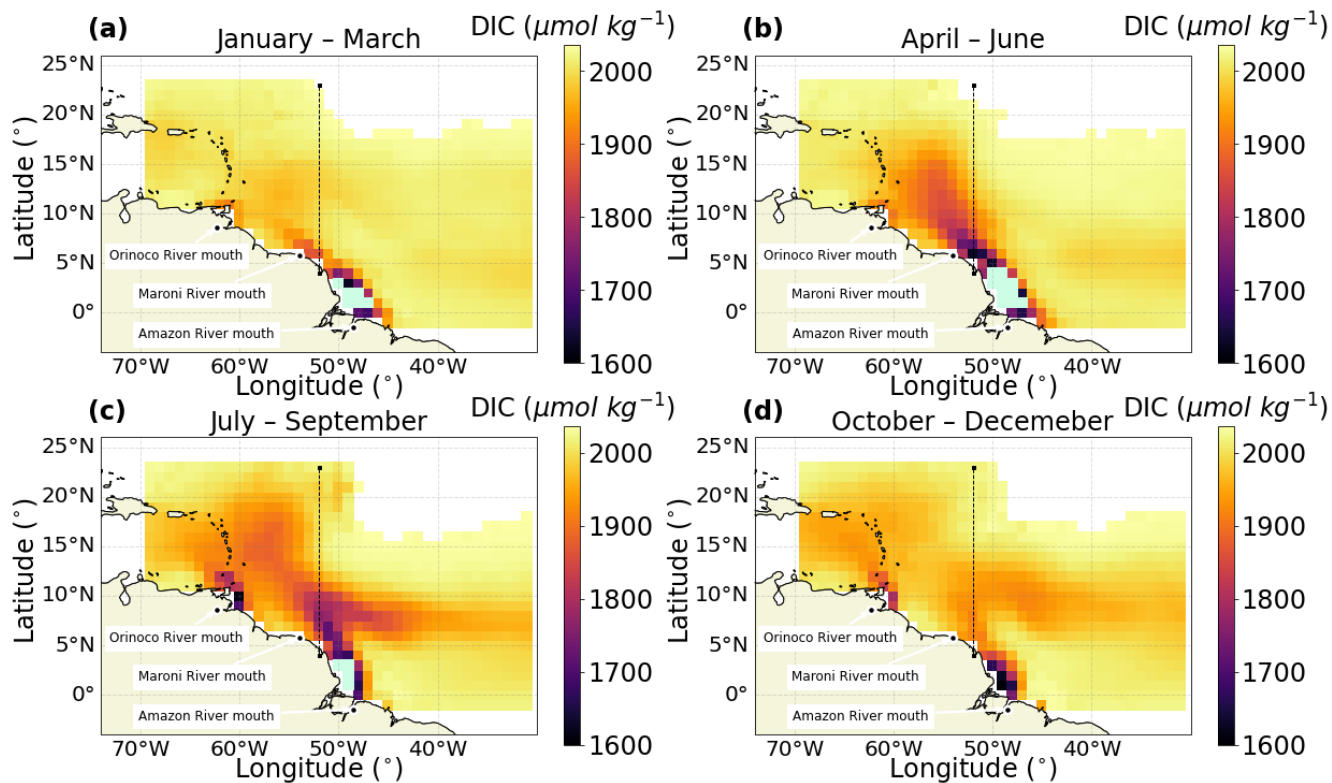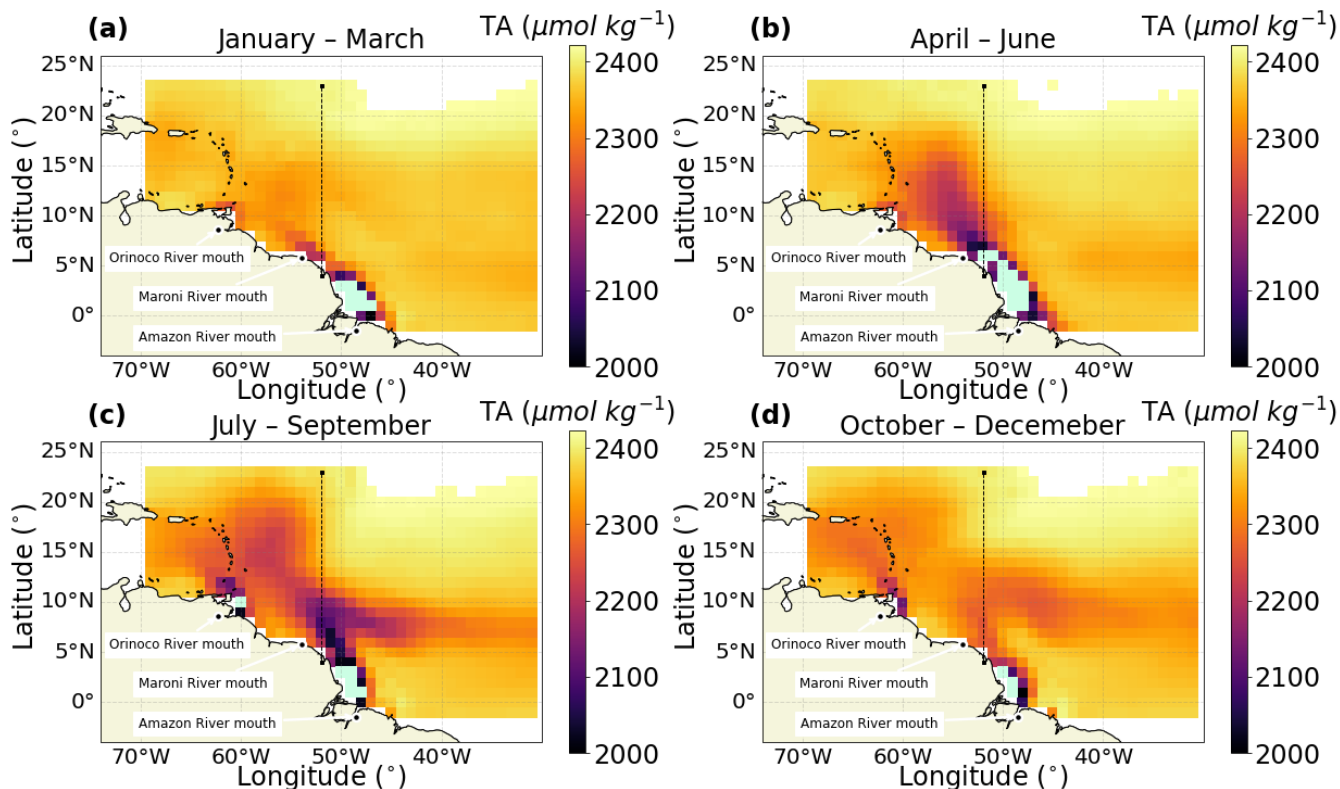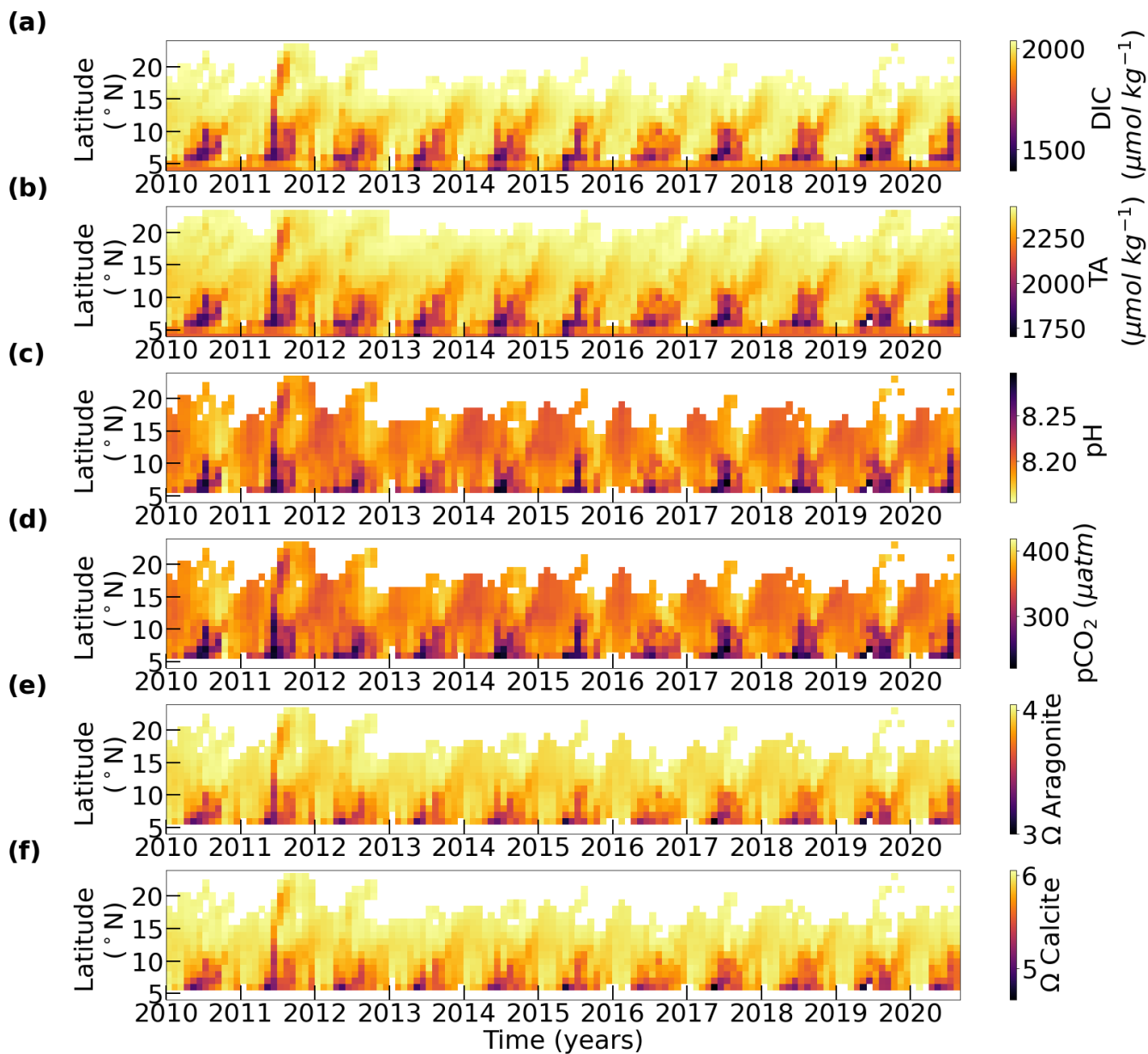
285   Calcite and Ω Aragonite.

Figure 2: Seasonally averaged DIC for the Amazon plume region in (a) January to March (b) April to June (c) July to September (d) October to December. Land outlines are shown in beige. Ocean regions out of bounds or where there was no algorithm output are left white. Algorithm data below 1600 µmolkg^{-1} at the river outflows is shown in mint green. The mouths of the Amazon, Orinoco and Maroni Rivers are labelled. The 52° W meridional section used for the Hovmöller plot used in Figure 4 is indicated as a black dashed line.

Figure 3: Seasonally averaged TA for the Amazon plume region in (a) January to March (b) April to June (c) July to September (d) October to December. Land outlines are shown in beige. Ocean regions out of bounds or where there was no algorithm output are left white. Algorithm data below 2000 µmolkg⁻¹ at the river outflows is shown in mint green. Orinoco and Maroni Rivers are labelled. The 52° W meridional section used for the Hovmöller plot used in Figure 4 is indicated as a black dashed line.

The temporal aspect of the dataset is presented in Figure 4 as a meridional Hovmöller plot at 52° W (marked on Figures 2 and 3) which broadly cuts through the central plume outflow at 4° N, the mixing of the plume up to 10° N and the open ocean Atlantic water >10° N. The lowest DIC values (~1400 µmol kg-1) are found in the plume at 4° N, there is regular seasonality with lower values in the October to December and higher values in April to June (Figure 4a). There does not appear to be much interannual variability in the magnitude of the DIC plume in the June to August period, although 2010 and 2013 appear to be weaker (Figure 4a). The maximum northerly extent of the plume varies from year to year, with higher DIC found at 15° N in the May to August period of 2011. The opposite is true in other years, for example the plume does not extend as far northwards in 2013 (Figure 4a). TA shows much more interannual variability (Figure 4b). The minimum plume values do not always occur at the same latitude or at the same time. In most years the minimum plume values are as low as 1750 µmol kg⁻¹ but this was not the case in 2016. The northward extent of the plume is variable, in some years the plume extended much further North, e.g. June to July 2011, and in other years the plume influence was not as detectable

further North, e.g. May to July 2016. The period of time where the plume dominates the region is also variable; in some

305   years the peak plume intensity which begins in May lasts through to September while in other years it is already declining in July.

As $p\mathrm{CO_2}$ and pH are derived from DIC and TA, the behaviour of these variables mirrors that of TA and DIC (Figure 4c and 4d). The river plume always has above neutral pH and occasionally extends far to the north, e.g. June to July 2011. There are low $p\mathrm{CO_2}$ values (<200 µatm) in the plume which are much lower than some of the values observed in the plume (Lefèvre et

310   al., 2017). Calcite and aragonite saturation states have the expected magnitude in open ocean regions and are lower in the plume, with Ω Calcite levels ~3 in the plume.

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Figure 4: Hovmöller plots in the Amazon outflow region for (a) DIC, (b) TA, (c) pH on the free scale, (d) pCO$_2$, (e) Ω Aragonite and (f) Ω Calcite. The plots span the 52° W meridian from 4 to 24° N. The plots cover the temporal overlap period of the TA and DIC datasets 2010- 2020.

The gridded data can also be spatially averaged to show the evolution of each of the carbonate system variables in time within the plume (defined as SSS <35 (Grodsky et al., 2014)), outside the plume (SSS>35) and over the whole region (Figures 5). The mean DIC calculated across whole region shows a very consistent seasonal pattern, with higher DIC in

December to February (~2000 µmol kg^{-1}) and lower DIC in June to August (~1970 µmol kg^{-1}). The mean values within the plume are much lower; the lowest DIC values (~1700 µmol kg^{-1}) are seen in December to February and the highest values (~1900 µmol kg^{-1}) are during September and October. The mean non-plume values show much smaller seasonal variability.

325 In the plume, outside of the plume and the whole region, surface DIC is very similar year to year. The mean DIC within the plume reaches a minimum in 2013 which was much lower than all other years. TA across the whole region is consistent inter annually, with a seasonal maximum in December to February (~2360 µmol kg^{-1}) and minimum in July to August (~2330 µmol kg^{-1}), while TA within the plume shows a seasonal maximum in October (~2250 µmol kg^{-1}) and minimum in April to May (~2150 µmol kg^{-1}). The annual minimum within the plume varies from December to March, while the maximum

330 consistently occurs in October and November, with considerable interannual variability of the timing of the annual minimum, with much lower TA in the December to February periods of 2012/2013 and 2017/2018 than over the same period in other years. It should be noted that the whole region is out of phase with the plume, this is because whilst the plume is more dilute this effect is outweighed by the larger plume between May and August.

335 For pH there is a weak seasonal trend in the overall region and outside the plume. There is a lot more variability in the plume, with the highest pH values (~8.225) occurring in December and the lowest values (~8.2) in September. The best SST and SSS dataset from the DIC algorithm predict that the pH will be >0.1 higher than the best SST and SSS dataset from the TA algorithm between January and March. The two estimates agree within <0.1pH units for the other 9 months of the year. For pCO_2, also computed from TA and DIC, mean values in the non-plume region and over the whole region were very

340 stable, which is consistent with the minimal season variability seen in oligotrophic oceans. Whereas there was considerable variability in plume pCO_2, with average values of ~325 µatm seen in the plume in March and values of ~350 µatm in August. The differences between the pCO_2 calculated with the different SST and SSS datasets was very small, with differences <5 µatm most of the year. The average calcite and aragonite saturation states are in the typical range for seawater and are much greater than the critical threshold value of 1 (the critical thermodynamic threshold for calcification,

345 Waldbusser et al., 2016). It should be noted that an aragonite saturation state threshold of 3 has also been recommended for warm water corals (Guinotte et al., 2003), other studies have since shown that warm water corals can still adapt and survive in these conditions (Enochs et al., 2020;Uthicke et al., 2014). There are periods in the data such as at the start of 2019 where the aragonite saturation state falls below 3. The mean saturation states within the plume are lower than those found in the wider region.
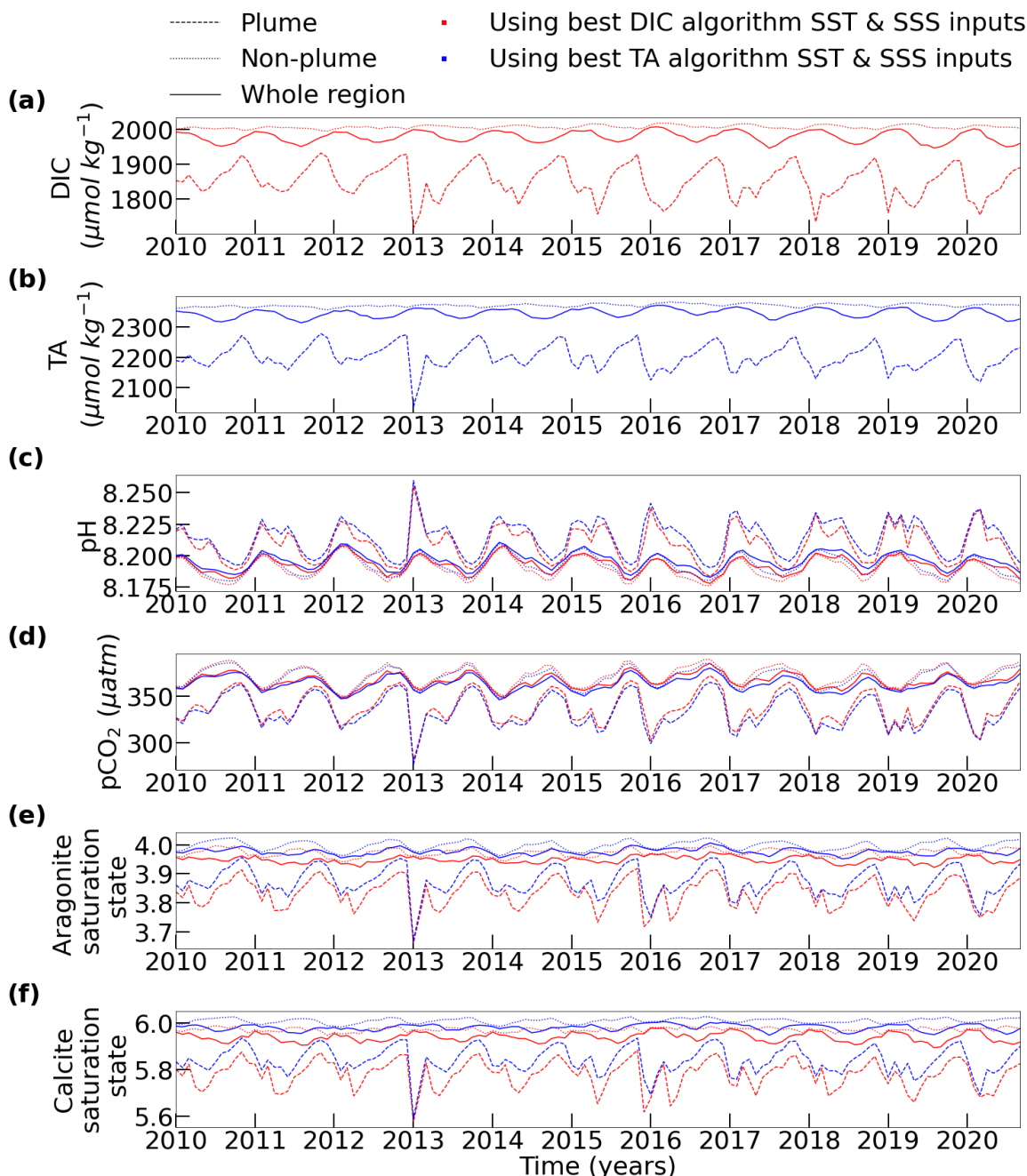
350

Figure 5: **Timeseries of spatially averaged (a) DIC, (b) TA, (c) pH, (d) pCO₂, (e) Ω Aragonite and (f) Ω Calcite in the Amazon region. The plots spans the temporal overlap period of the TA and DIC datasets 2010- 2020. Data are averaged across the whole region (solid line) as well as in the plume defined as S<35 (dashed line) and outside of the plume S>35 (dotted line). The line colour corresponds to variables that were calculated with SST and SSS datasets selected during the DIC algorithm evaluation (red) and the TA algorithm evaluation (blue).**

3.2.1 Congo dataset

In the Congo outflow region, there is a strong seasonal variation in DIC (Figure 6). From July to September (Figure 6c) there are two regions of low DIC, one directly at the outflow point of the Congo River and another at the outflow point of the
355 Niger River Delta. The outflows of both of these river dominated regions extend directly west, aligned to the South Equatorial Current in the eastern Atlantic (Hopkins et al., 2013). In October to December (Figure 6d) the spatial influence of the Congo outflow is smaller possibly due water masses moving northwards along the coast. Into January to March (Figure 6a) there is a region of low DIC along the whole coast, representing the intensification of the Niger and Congo discharges at this time of year (Chao et al., 2015). In April to June (Figure 6b) the coastal water mass separates becoming two distinct
360 outflows, the outflows reach their greatest westward extent covering almost the whole domain.

Similar trends are seen in TA (Figure 7) with two distinct outflow regions in July to September (Figure 7c). The outflows begin to intensify in October to December (Figure 7d). The lowest TA values are observed in January to March to the east of the Niger Delta outflow (Figure 7a). Unlike in Figure 6a, the outflows remain distinct in Figure 7a. Between April and June
365 the outflow reaches its maximum spatial extend as it flows out to the west where it is has a detectable impact across the region.
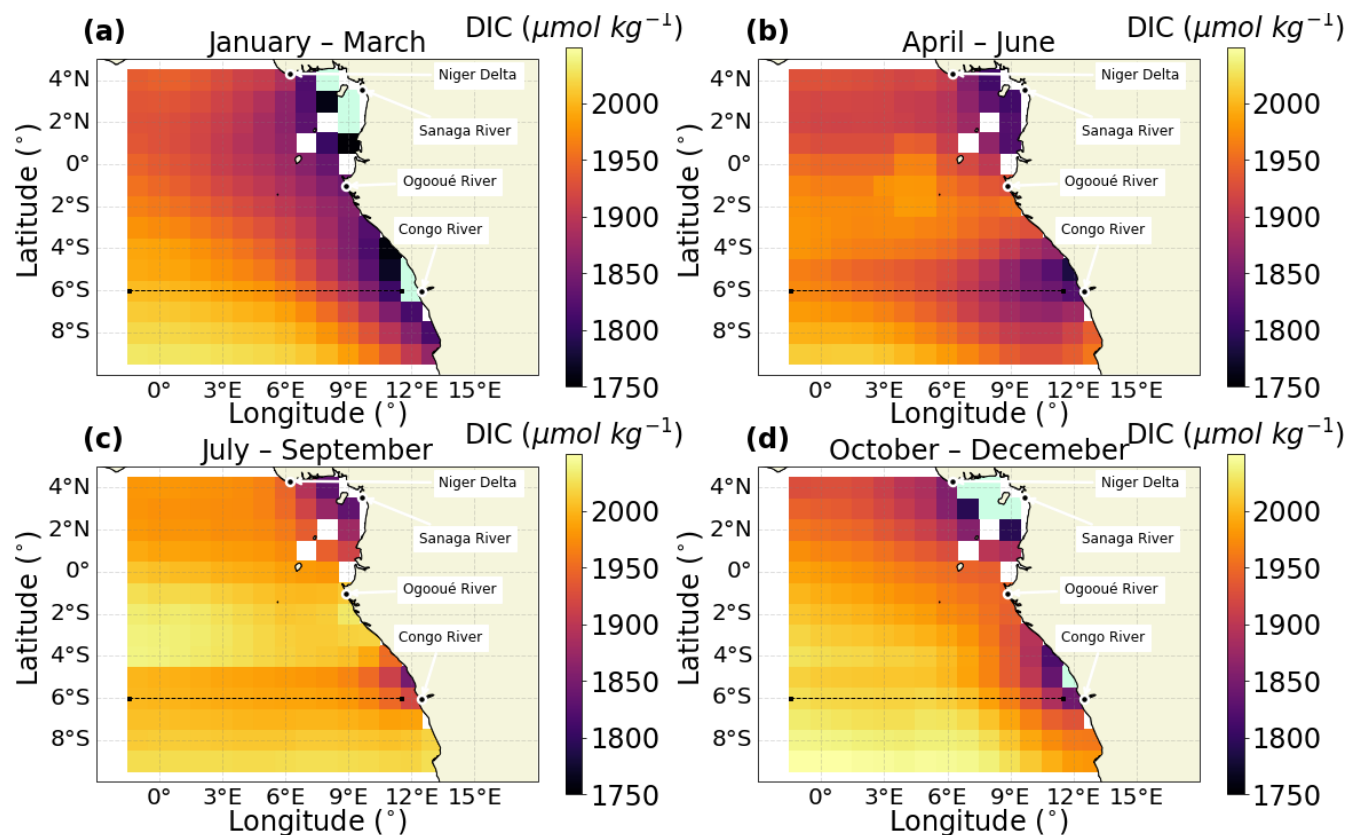
Figure 6: Seasonally averaged DIC for the Congo outflow region in (a) January to March (b) April to June (c) July to September (d) October to December. Land outlines are shown in beige. Ocean regions out of bounds or where there was no algorithm output are left white. Algorithm data below 1750 µmolkg^{-1} at the river outflows is shown in mint green. The Niger River Delta and the mouths of the Congo, Ogooué and Sanaga Rivers are labelled. The 6° S meridional section used for the Hovmöller plot used in Figure 8 is indicated a bold dashed line.
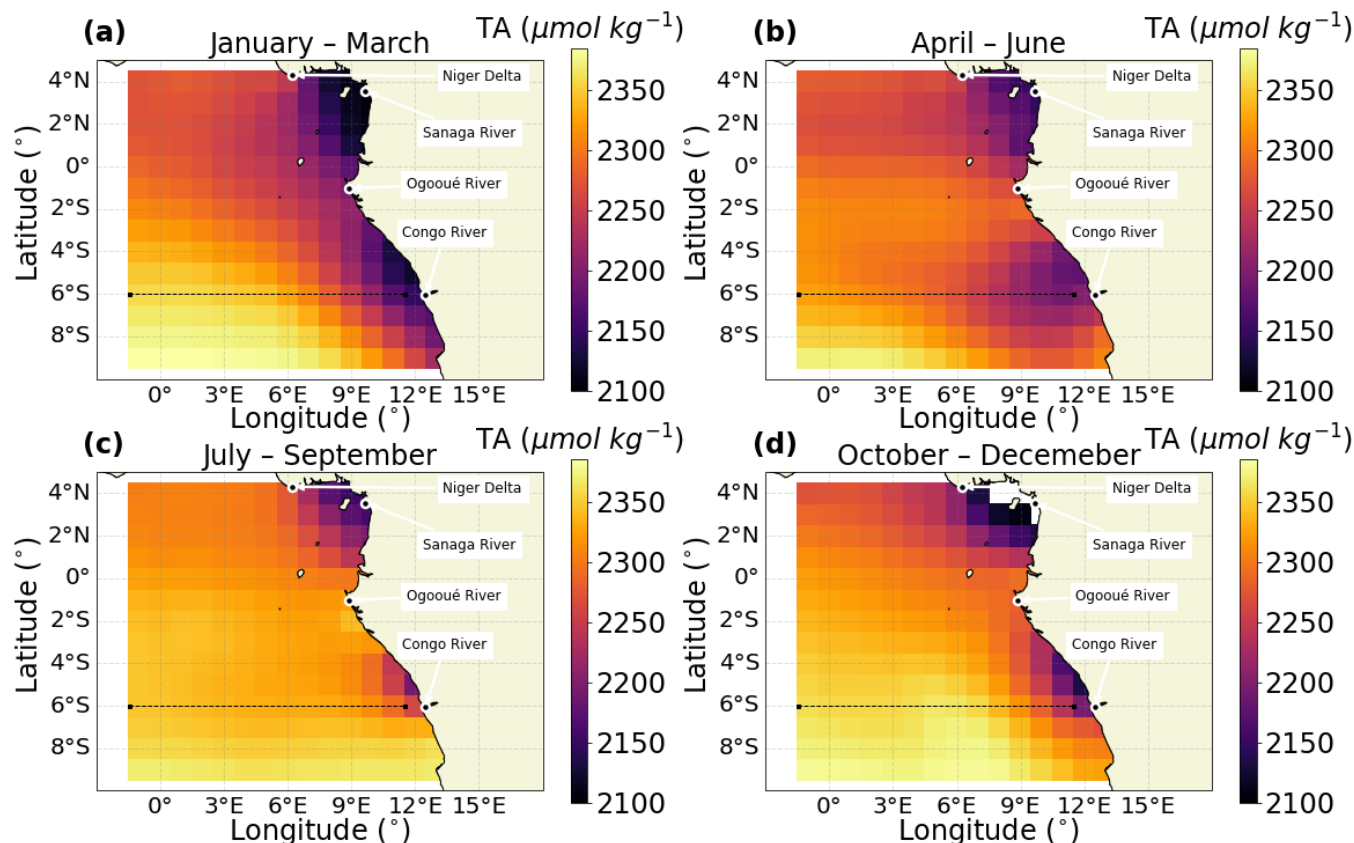
Figure 7: Seasonally averaged TA for the Congo outflow region in (a) January to March (b) April to June (c) July to September (d) October to December Land outlines are shown in beige. Ocean regions out of bounds or where there was no algorithm output are left white. The Niger River Delta and the mouths of the Congo, Ogooué and Sanaga Rivers are labelled. The 6° S meridional section used for the Hovmöller plot used in Figure 8 is indicated a bold dashed line.

A zonal section at 6° S was used to construct a Hovmöller plot of variables in the Congo (Figure 8). This latitude is centred across the outflow of the Congo River. Unlike in the Amazon, much of the plot region is masked in between May and July as the published algorithms were not valid for full environmental conditions experienced by the region.

The DIC plot (Figure 8a) shows that the outflow is low in DIC (~1800 µmol kg^{-1}) and the open ocean is higher (~2050 µmol kg^{-1}). The highest values are found in the January to March period, consistent with Figure 6a. The outflow is detectable over the widest area in the March to June period in all years. Whilst there is one period of intense outflow each year there are is also some indication that a weaker outflow is intermittently detectable in the data (shown as vertical streaks in Figure 8a). TA (Figure 8b) shows an almost identical pattern to DIC. The lowest TA values (~2100 µmol kg^{-1}) were observed between January and March and slightly higher values (~2200 µmol kg^{-1}) were seen when the outflow extended further West between April and June.

20

Higher pH values (~8.3) were observed in the outflow compared to the open ocean (~8.2) (Figure 8c. Previous studies have measured low pH values in the main body of the river and its tributaries (Wang et al., 2013;Bouillon et al., 2014), the higher pH values at the mouth of the river may be due to complex carbonate speciation. The minimum pCO_2 values are very low

395 (~200 μatm) in the inner part of the outflow (Figure 8d), while values in the outer part of the outflow are closer to the expected pCO_2 values around 350 μatm. (da Cunha and Buitenhuis, 2013). Mirroring the trends in pH, the calcite and aragonite saturation states (Figure 8e and 8f) are higher in the outflow relative to the open ocean. Anomalous pH, pCO_2 and the calcite and aragonite saturation states values in December 2003 are likely associated with the heavy rainfall over south-central Africa (Kadomura, 2005).
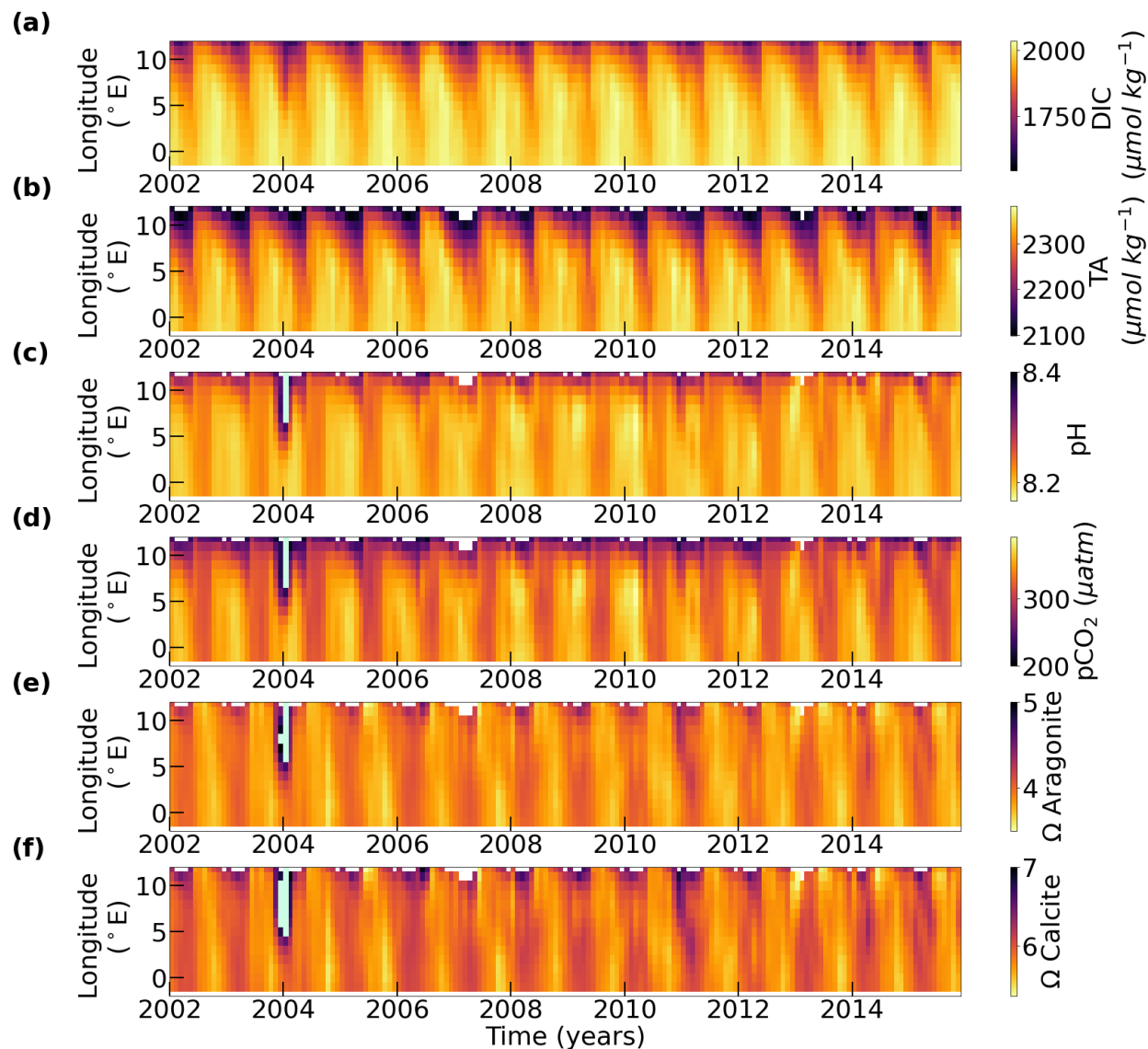
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Figure 8: Hovmöller plots of (a) DIC, (b) TA, (c) pH, (d) pCO₂, (e) Ω Aragonite and (f) Ω Calcite for the Congo outflow region. The plots are centred on the 6° S slice that spans 2° W to 12° E. pH > 8.4, pCO₂ data < 200µatm, Ω Calcite>5 and Ω Calcite>7 in the river outflow in December 2003 are shown in mint green. The plots spans the temporal overlap period of the TA and DIC datasets 2002- 2016 and thus the period for which the rest of the carbonate system was generated.

The mean DIC and TA across the whole Congo region, in the outflow and out of the outflow are very consistent year to year (Figure 9a and 9b). The yearly TA and DIC minima occur at approximately the same time and are the same magnitude most years. DIC and TA values are always higher in the non-outflow region than in the outflow. This consistency is also seen in the propagated variables pH (Figure 9c), pCO₂ (Figure 9d), and the aragonite and calcite saturation states (Figure 9e and 9f) all of which show very minor differences between the outflow and non-outflow regions.
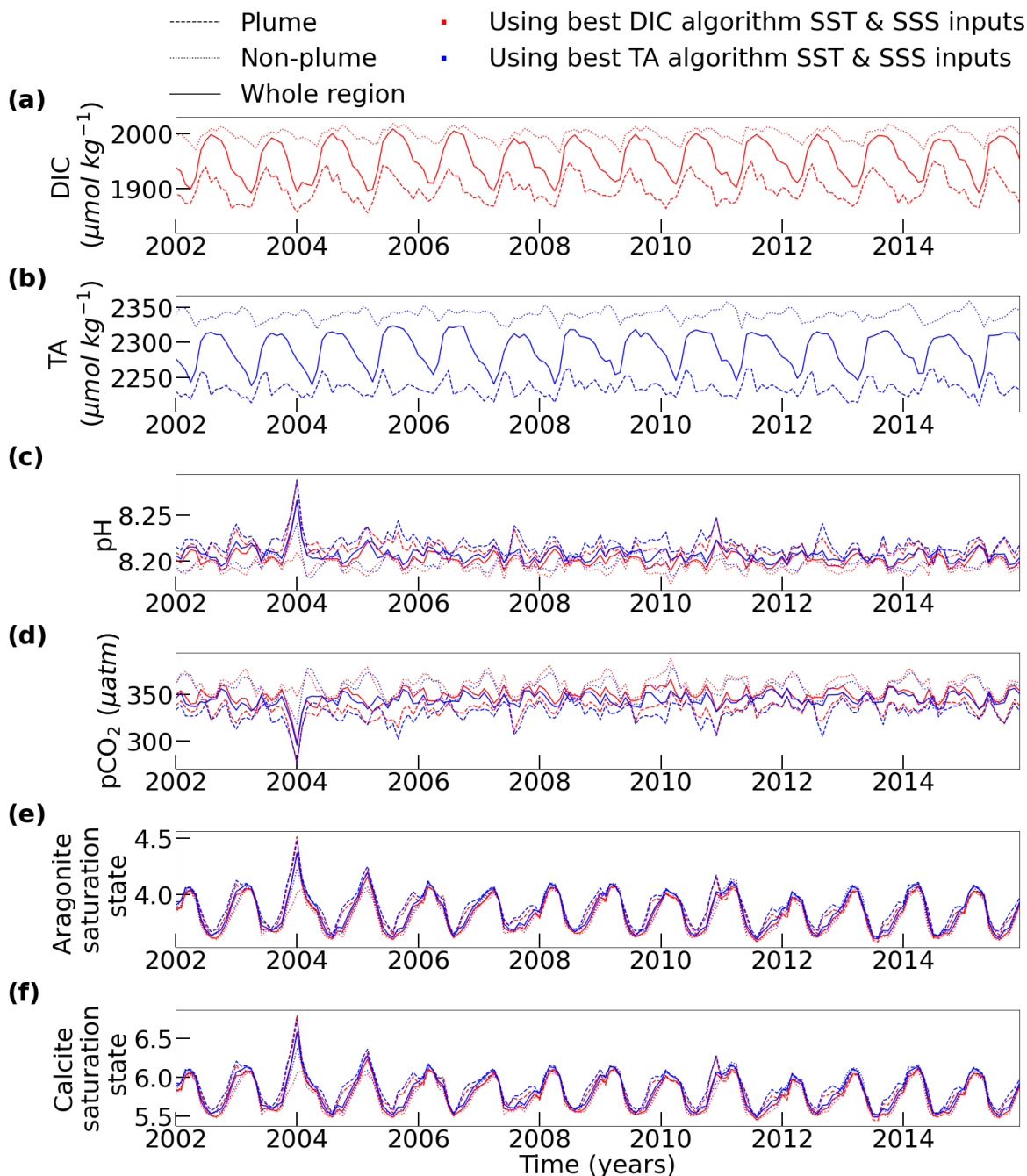
Figure 9: Timeseries of spatially averaged (a) DIC, (b) TA, (c) pH, (d) $p\mathrm{CO_2}$, (e) Ω Aragonite and (f) Ω Calcite in the Congo region. The plots spans the temporal overlap period of the TA and DIC datasets 2002- 2016. Data are averaged across the whole region (solid line) as well as in the outflow defined as S<35 (dashed line) and outside of the outflow S>35 (dotted line). The line colour corresponds to variables that were calculated with SST and SSS datasets selected during the DIC algorithm evaluation (red) and the TA algorithm evaluation (blue).

3.4 Uncertainty assessment

The TA and DIC combined standard uncertainties from the algorithm evaluation are shown in Table 1 and 2. The combined standard uncertainties for the optimal algorithms used to generate the time series dataset are reproduced in Table 3. The

415 combined standard uncertainties are the first Type A uncertainty evaluation, which can be thought of as a "top down" estimate. The spatially averaged uncertainties of the remaining carbonate system variables using this top down estimate are shown in both outflow regions (Table 3). The uncertainties of the remaining carbonate system variables appear to be weakly dependent on the choice of SST and SSS datasets used to calculate them in PyCO2SYS (Table 3).

420 The second Type A uncertainty evaluation (using the algorithm RMSD from the literature and the uncertainties in the inputs) can be thought of as a "bottom up" estimate. For this bottom up estimate, the average combined standard uncertainties in TA and DIC are smaller for TA (8.52) and DIC (16.59) in the Amazon and in the Congo for TA (17.23) and DIC (14.25). These values are much lower than from the top down uncertainty evaluation as this uncertainty evaluation does not fully account for spatial and depth variability (by assuming that the literature RMSD values perfectly capture the variability), these values

425 also do not account for measurement variability. The bottom up evaluation does account for uncertainty in the input SST and SSS datasets suggesting spatial and depth variabilities and differences between the in situ data (used to evaluate the uncertainties) are likely dominating the uncertainty budget

As the top down uncertainty evaluation is more robust it is the preferred uncertainty estimate. By comparing the

430 uncertainties with the natural variability in TA and DIC (Table 4) it is clear that the dataset uncertainty is less than the natural variability data in both riverine regions. Whereas, the propagated uncertainties for pCO$_2$ and pH are larger than the natural variability, this is only because the pCO$_2$ and pH data generated in OceanSODA-UNEXE has full spatio temporal coverage (including in the high variability plume) compared to the pCO$_2$ and pH *in situ* data in the MDB.

435 Table 3: Output variable uncertainties in the two regions of OceanSODA-UNEXE. TA and DIC uncertainties are the combined standard uncertainties from the algorithm evaluation. The uncertainty for the remaining carbonate system variables are the average of the spatially varying propagated uncertainties for each of those variables calculated with the SST and SSS pair from either the TA or DIC algorithm. Note that due to the logarithmic nature of pH, uncertainty is calculated as 1σ in pH units and also in pH units where variability was determined in H$^+$ as -log$_{10}$($\overline{H^+}$) +log$_{10}$($\overline{H^+}$ +1σ H$^+$).

440

Variable	TA	DIC	Using SSS and SST from TA algorithm					Using SSS and SST from DIC algorithm				
			pCO_2	pH converted from H^+	pH	ΩCal	ΩArag	pCO_2	pH converted from H^+	pH	ΩCal	ΩArag
Combined uncertainty in the Amazon	34.74	44.34	85.19	0.08 relative to a pH of 8.20	0.07 relative to a pH of 8.19	0.91	0.61	86.17	0.08 relative to a pH of 8.19	0.08 relative to a pH of 8.19	0.91	0.60
Combined uncertainty in the Congo	28.54	33.25	73.14	0.07 relative to a pH of 8.21	0.08 relative to a mean pH of 8.21	0.79	0.52	74.02	0.07 relative to a pH of 8.20	0.08 relative to a mean pH of 8.20	0.79	0.52

Table 4: *In situ* measurement variabilities for TA, DIC, pH and pCO_2 are calculated as the standard deviation of the reference output (MDB).For the Amazon ESACCI SST and ESACCI SSS were the combination used with the MDB and for the Congo this was CORA SST and ISAS SSS. Note that due to the logarithmic nature of pH, uncertainty is calculated as 1σ in pH units and also in pH units where variability was determined in H^+ as $-\log_{10}(\overline{H^+}) + \log_{10}(\overline{H^+} + 1\sigma\ H^+)$.

Variable	TA	DIC	pCO_2	pH converted from H^+	pH	ΩCal	ΩArag
In situ measurement variability (1σ) in the Amazon from the MDB	104.47	102.96	25.86	0.037 relative to a pH of 8.07	0.043 relative to a mean pH of 8.07	–	–
In situ measurement variability (1σ) in the Congo from the MDB	46.13	51.71	31.36	0.003 relative to a pH of 8.03	0.003 relative to a mean pH of 8.03	–	–

4 Discussion

450

The algorithm evaluation (Figure 1) demonstrated that the choice of input SSS dataset to the TA and DIC algorithms makes the biggest difference in reducing the RMSDe in TA and DIC (whereas SST tends to be a secondary term in the majority of the algorithms so has less of a controlling effect). The choice of literature TA and DIC algorithm itself impacts RMSDe to a much smaller extent than the choice of input SSS datasets. The prominence of SSS terms in the majority of the algorithms

455 explains why the RMSDe is much more sensitive to the choice of SSS dataset compared to SST dataset, as SST is a secondary term in the majority of the algorithms. Whilst some algorithms did perform better than others the differences were so slight that it may not be that helpful to declare which of the algorithms are the best outright especially as this could change in the future with more data.

460 The requirement of having n=30 matchups to calculate the weighted statistics has a large impact on the choice of optimal algorithms. By including this stipulation, some of the more recent salinity input datasets are effectively de-selected as there are not enough contemporary measurements over their temporal range to allow their evaluation (particularly in the Congo region). For example, the SMAP satellite only launched in 2015 and there were not enough *in situ* matchups in either region to be able to fully assess the RSS-SMAP dataset. So using ISAS for salinity in the optimal TA algorithm in the Congo where

465 data are available from 2002 onwards) increases the number of matchups by a factor of twenty compared to using RSS-SMAP (Table 2). Given time, the number of matchups with the satellite only products will increase allowing them to be fully evaluated. Considering the better spatial coverage of the satellite only products, it is likely that in the near future the best algorithm combinations to generate updates to this product will all use satellite derived SSS and SST. The recent proliferation of certified reference materials when measuring TA (Dickson et al., 2003) and DIC (Dickson, 2001) should also

470 mean that newer *in situ* data will have lower uncertainties.

By comparing the two type A uncertainty estimates, the standard combined uncertainty estimate (accounting for measurement uncertainty, spatial uncertainty, depth uncertainty and algorithm uncertainty, aka "top down") and the second type A uncertainty evaluation (propagated input uncertainties through the literature algorithm, aka "bottom up"); the

475 contribution of different factors to the uncertainty can be dissected. The bottom up uncertainty estimates are much smaller than the top down uncertainty estimates reflecting the fact that less of the uncertainty has been considered in the bottom up uncertainty estimates. The difference between the top down and bottom up estimates can be mainly attributed to the spatial and depth uncertainty which is accounted for by using the MDB in the algorithm evaluation. Land et al. (2019) note that reducing the uncertainty of the *in situ* measurements is just as important as all the remaining uncertainties in their full

480 methodology. Further reducing the standard combined uncertainty is challenging and would require either improvements in satellite SSS retrievals (Vinogradova et al., 2019) or improvements in how uncertainty is quantifying in the GLODAP data (a huge challenge give the different systems and protocols used by different laboratories) (Bockmon and Dickson, 2015).

The timeseries data demonstrates that there is low TA and DIC in the river outflows of both regions. The timeseries data
clearly shows that the discharge of the outflows and their zone of influence changes seasonally. Our results are consistent
with previous observations that the Amazon plume extent is smallest between January and March (Fournier et al., 2015) and
largest in the between April and June where it expels low TA and DIC waters (Cooley and Yager, 2006). The Amazon
plume reaches the Caribbean, as previously shown by Hellweger and Gordon (2002). The timeseries data identify that in
parts of the Amazon plume saturation states can drop below 3(Table S4) which has implications for OA research, especially
for researchers studying coral reefs. The results identify that the discharge of the Congo outflow is greatest between January
and March and veers towards West Africa, which is consistent with work by Hopkins et al. (2013).

The timeseries data comprises over ten years of carbonate system data for two of the world's largest rivers by discharge.
One immediate use for the timeseries data would be to assess the inorganic carbon flow of both of these rivers over time.
The timeseries data could also be used to investigate the impact of charges in land use within the river basin, e.g.
deforestation impacts on river discharge and inorganic carbon flow into rivers (Bass et al., 2014). If the impact of land use
changes were identifiable within the data then these approaches may prove a useful tool in monitoring the effectiveness of
policy or management actions addressing climate change and biodiversity loss in the Amazon Basin. The timeseries data
could also be used for ocean acidification research (Land et al., 2015a), as these rivers discharge enough fresh water to
influence carbonate saturation states. The tropical reefs of the Caribbean are infrequently impacted by the Amazon plume
(Chérubin and Richardson, 2007); the impact of the low pH waters on reef health is of great concern (Hoegh-Guldberg et al.,
2007) and could be explored with the timeseries data. Ocean acidification has been shown to impact foraging behaviour in
fish (Jiahuan et al., 2018) and sharks (Rosa et al., 2017), the timeseries data could be used in conjunction with GPS tracks of
fish or marine mammals to see if the outflows alter foraging behaviour. The timeseries data could also be used to explore
CO_2 fluxes in the Amazon outflow building upon more recent estimates (Olivier et al., 2022;Ibánhez et al., 2016;Mu et al.,
2021).

5 Conclusions

OceanSODA-UNEXE is a time series dataset of the carbonate system in the outflow regions of the Amazon and Congo
rivers. Optimal TA and DIC data are generated with the optimal combination of published algorithms and input datasets
determined by an exhaustive round robin inter-comparison evaluation. By using a specially designed matchup database for
the algorithm evaluation, uncertainties due to spatial and depth variability in the *in situ* references have been minimised. TA,
DIC, SST and SSS are used as inputs into PyCO2SYS to calculate the complete carbonate system. TA and DIC are provided

with standard combined uncertainties from a Type A uncertainty evaluation whereas pH and pCO$_2$ are provided with
propagated uncertainties from PyCO2SYS. The assessed uncertainties are lower than the natural variability within these
regions and the main features of both river outflows are evident in all of the carbonate system variable outputs. Potential uses
for these data could include evaluating the riverine carbon flux from the land into the ocean resulting from the Amazon and
Congo rivers, or evaluating the extent that river-driven episodic changes in the carbonate system may be having on sensitive
coral reefs that interact with the outflows.

Data availability

The dataset described in this paper is freely available at https://doi.pangaea.de/10.1594/PANGAEA.946888. The matchup
database of (Land et al., 2022) which is needed to reproduce the algorithm evaluation is available at https://data-cersat.ifremer.fr/data/ocean-carbonate/oceansoda-mmdb/. All the remote sensing datasets needed to create the gridded
products are all freely available from their respective online repositories.

Code availability

The code used to run this analysis and download the remote sensing datasets is provided in the supplement and is freely
available at https://github.com/Richard-Sims/OceanSODA, upon acceptance of this manuscript the final version of the code
will be issued a version number and DOI at https://github.com/JamieLab/OceanSODA. The code can be run on a desktop
computer and requires no specialist computing facilities. For example, a laptop with Intel i7-4800MQ 2.70GHz CPU and 8
GB of memory can complete the algorithm evaluation in around one hour. On the same machine the remote sensing datasets
take several days to download and reprocess, this is partially subject to local internet speeds and host server speeds. Creating
the gridded datasets for each region takes two hours on the same machine.

Author contributions

This manuscript was written by Richard Sims, all co-authors made contributions to the final paper. Thomas Holding wrote
the majority of the code used for the algorithm evaluation and the creation of the dataset, Richard Sims made additional

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