

Detrital carbonate minerals in Earth's element cycles

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Abbreviations: PIC: Particulate inorganic carbon, DIC: Dissolved inorganic carbon, POC: Particulate Organic Carbon, DOC: Dissolved Organic Carbon, SOC: Soil organic carbon, TC: Total river carbon, SVM: Support Vector Machine, MGGP: Multi-Gene Genetic Programming, SR: Symbolic Regression, RMSE: Root mean squared error, MC: Monte Carlo, VI: Variable Influence, fwm: flux-weighted mean, med: median, mod: modelled, wo: without, S: related to change in sediment discharge, D: related to damming, SC: Source Carbonate, hdi: human development index, gdp: gross domestic product, nli: night light index, pop: population count.

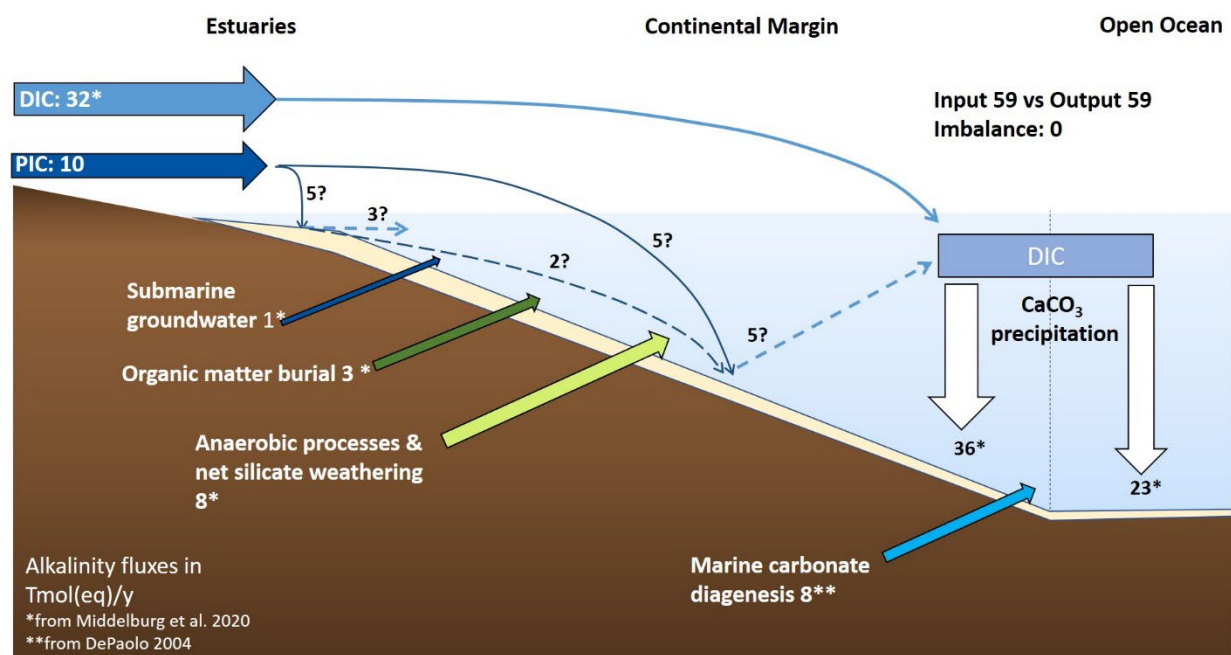
21 Key points:

- 22 • The present day riverine detrital carbonate flux from land to sea is 3.0 ± 0.4 Tmol C/y.
- 23 • Associated calcium, alkalinity and strontium contribute significantly to their global
- 24 biogeochemical cycles.
- 25 • Damming reduced the riverine PIC flux by 25 % (from naturally 4.0 ± 0.5 Tmol C/y).

26 **Abstract.** We investigate if the commonly neglected riverine detrital carbonate fluxes
27 might balance several chemical mass balances of the global ocean. Particulate inorganic
28 carbon (PIC) concentrations in riverine suspended sediments, i.e., carbon contained by
29 these detrital carbonate minerals, was quantified at the basin and global scale. Our approach
30 is based on globally representative datasets of riverine suspended sediment composition,
31 catchment properties and a two-step regression procedure. The present day global riverine
32 PIC flux is estimated at 3.0 ± 0.4 Tmol C/y (13% of total inorganic carbon export and 4 %
33 of total carbon export). The flux prior to damming was 4.0 ± 0.5 Tmol C/y, with a flux-
34 weighted mean concentration is 0.26 ± 0.03 wt%. PIC fluxes are concentrated in limestone-
35 rich, rather dry and mountainous catchments of large rivers in Arabia, South East Asia and
36 Europe with 2.2 Tmol C/y (67.6 %) discharged between 15 °N and 45 °N. Greenlandic and
37 Antarctic meltwater discharge and ice-rafting additionally contribute 0.8 ± 0.3 Tmol C/y.
38 This amount of detrital carbonate minerals annually discharged into the ocean implies a
39 significant contribution of calcium (4.6 Tmol Ca/y) and alkalinity fluxes (9.6 Tmol(eq)/y)
40 to marine mass balances and moderate inputs of strontium (4.8 Gmol Sr/y), based on
41 undisturbed riverine and cryospheric inputs and a dolomite/calcite ratio of 0.1. Magnesium
42 fluxes (0.2 Tmol Mg/y), mostly hosted by less-soluble dolomite, are rather negligible.
43 These unaccounted fluxes help balancing, albeit not completely close, respective marine
44 mass balances and potentially alter any conclusions based on these budgets.

Plain Language Summary. Earth surface conditions, including climate and sea level, are largely controlled by the cycling of carbon and biogeochemically coupled elements. However, most elemental budgets cannot be consentaneously balanced for the present state. Here, we investigate the possible role of riverine carbonate minerals in such marine mass balances. We derive individual river basin export fluxes, the global export flux to the ocean and its reduction by human influence, utilizing state-of-the-art regression techniques and published global-scale datasets. Results point to a significance of riverine detrital carbonates for the global mass balances of carbon, calcium, alkalinity and strontium, which might help solving this long-standing problem.

Graphical Abstract



59 **1 Introduction**

60 Erosion and weathering of Earth's surface not only shape landscapes, but also influence the
61 global carbon cycle, thereby maintaining the habitability of our planet (Ebelmen, 1845; Urey,
62 1952; Berner et al., 1983; West et al., 2005; Ferrier and West, 2017; Penman et al., 2020).
63 Oceanic mass balances of carbon (C) and biogeochemically coupled elements provide a
64 powerful tool to investigate these processes and their role in the Earth system globally and over
65 longer time-scales (classically > 100 ka) (Dickens, 2001; Krabbenhöft et al., 2010; Tipper et
66 al., 2010; Berner and Berner, 2012). They also allow quantification of hardly measurable
67 processes, such as global rates of marine carbonate burial or hydrothermal activity (Tipper et
68 al., 2006; van der Ploeg et al., 2019; Shalev et al., 2019). However, some of the most prominent
69 and most frequently considered budgets presented in that context remain unbalanced and/or
70 highly debated, such as that of Ca, Mg, Sr and alkalinity (Berner and Berner, 1987; Milliman,
71 1993; Gislason et al., 2006; Tipper et al., 2006; Krabbenhöft et al., 2010; Tipper et al., 2010;
72 Berner and Berner, 2012; Jones et al., 2012; Lebrato et al., 2020). This is usually explained by
73 disequilibrium, i.e., the present state strongly differs from average Pleistocene conditions, by
74 proposing a variety of smaller-scale marine processes and/or by invoking yet unaccounted input
75 fluxes (Milliman, 1993; Krabbenhöft et al., 2010; Tipper et al., 2010; Shalev et al., 2019;
76 Middelburg et al., 2020).

77 For most budgets, riverine dissolved loads are considered the only major input term,
78 reflecting the catchment-integrated result of chemical rock weathering as transported by the
79 Earth-spanning fluvial networks (Berner and Berner, 1987; Berner and Berner, 2012). Some
80 authors recognized submarine groundwater discharge as another important flux to the ocean
81 with a probable magnitude of 0.7 to 6 % of the global river discharge (Milliman, 1993; Zhou
82 et al., 2019; Mayfield et al., 2021). In addition to these dissolved inputs, it is generally accepted
83 that organic and biogenic riverine particles exert major control on the biogeochemical cycling

of carbon (C), nitrogen (N) and phosphorous (P) (Berner, 1982; Froelich et al., 1982; Berner, 1999; Boyer and Howarth, 2008; Hilton and West, 2020), and of silicon (Si) (Conley, 2002; Sutton et al., 2018). Moreover, the importance of ions and complexes sorbed to the surfaces of riverine sediments was highlighted (Berner et al., 1983; Tipper et al., 2021). A similar importance was proposed for particulate inorganic forms (mineral detritus) of silicon (Si) (Mackenzie and Garrels, 1965; Mackenzie and Garrels, 1966), calcium (Ca) (Gislason et al., 2006), strontium (Sr) (Jones et al., 2012; Hong et al., 2020), and iron (Fe) (Poulton and Raiswell, 2002; Luo et al., 2020), based on experimental and field-measured element release rates. Recently, based on a limited dataset, Middelburg et al. (2020) suggested that riverine particulate inorganic carbon (PIC) fluxes to the ocean may be about 1/3 of riverine dissolved inorganic carbon (DIC) fluxes and that the ocean alkalinity budget is close to balance when this is considered an additional alkalinity input. While basaltic minerals and glasses of volcanic origin are currently considered to be the major host minerals of particulate Ca and Sr fluxes (Gislason et al., 2006; Jones et al., 2012; Torres et al., 2020), significant riverine PIC fluxes would imply substantial additional Ca, Sr and Mg delivery in particulate forms.

Carbonate dissolution and recrystallization are well known to occur in estuaries (Aller, 1982; Gattuso et al., 1998; Santos et al., 2019) and the ocean (Milliman, 1974; Krumins et al., 2013; Sulpis et al., 2017), providing evidence for the (partial) release of Ca, Mg, Sr, IC and alkalinity from detrital sources to the oceanic inventories. Dissolution of PIC in the ocean could, thus, represent a major missing term in oceanic mass balances, potentially altering the conclusions deduced from those budgets (e.g., Berner and Berner, 2012; Krabbenhöft et al., 2010; Paytan et al., 2021; Tipper et al., 2006, 2010). Notably, recrystallization within the sediment column, i.e., dissolution and direct re-precipitation, may still result in an exchange of PIC-derived and marine elements and isotopes (DePaolo, 2004; Fantle et al., 2010; Paytan et al., 2021).

High solubility and rapid dissolution kinetics of carbonate minerals cause the dominant mass of IC to be transported in dissolved form (Lasaga, 1984). Therefore, the significance of detrital carbonate minerals in river sediments is often neglected. However, detrital carbonates are commonly observed constituents of suspended sediments in rivers (Mackenzie and Garrels, 1966; Müller et al., 2021a) and even authigenic carbonate production in calcite-saturated rivers is common (Kempe and Emeis, 1985; Négrel and Grosbois, 1999; Grosbois et al., 2001). Sr-isotopic constraints suggest that 30 – 50 % of the carbonate minerals within the Gulf of Lyon sediments are detrital, even more during glacial periods (Pasquier et al., 2019). Additionally, the isotopic composition of carbonates from turbidites in the Bengal fan, one of the largest sediment dispersal systems on earth (Mouyen et al., 2018), suggests a mixture of biogenic (> 85 wt%), detrital (up to 10 wt%) and diagenetic (1.2 – 4 wt%) origin (France-Lanord et al., 2018). This indicates that the PIC delivery may indeed be a relevant flux to the marine realm, but its size and dissolving fraction remain unclear because a global assessment is lacking.

We aim to better constrain these important numbers based on several approaches. First, we establish a first-order calculation based on published average PIC and CaO concentrations and sediment fluxes. Next, we quantify PIC concentrations and fluxes globally at the basin-scale, using published datasets of riverine suspended sediment and catchment characteristics, and a two-step regression procedure, involving regressive classification through Support Vector Machines (SVM) and symbolic regression by multi-gene genetic programming (MGGP). Controlling factors of the global PIC flux, human influence and the fate of the delivered detrital carbonates in the ocean are then discussed, including implications for oceanic mass balances and carbon cycling.

2 Methods and procedures

To calculate the global PIC flux, we need a gapless set of PIC concentrations and sediment

fluxes of all rivers in the world. The latter can be generated using advanced models that provide sediment fluxes of global rivers in space and time, based on water balance and catchment properties (WBMSed 2.0, Cohen et al., 2014). These data, along with the locations of the river mouths, were taken from a compilation of the *GlobalDelta* project (Nienhuis et al., 2020). No such model is available for PIC concentrations yet. Hence, we here develop a statistical, spatially-explicit model that predicts PIC concentrations from catchment properties.

Annual median PIC concentrations were calculated for all locations in the GloRiSe v1.1 database (Müller et al., 2021b) from direct measurements, mineralogical and petrographic observations or empirically from major element composition (Supplementary Information SI 1). The uncertainty of these concentrations was defined as the mean relative deviation of single measurements from the flux-weighted mean of available time-series (Müller et al., 2021b). A large set of hydro-environmental and physiographic variables was derived from the HydroBasins database (Linke et al., 2019) by spatially assigning each GloRiSe-location to the corresponding sub-basin (at Pfafstetter level 7). Annual averages for the upstream catchment of nine variables were selected based on correlation analysis and/or a causal link to PIC concentrations (Supplementary Information SI 1). These variables cover topography, vegetation, hydrology, climate and human impact (Table 1). As the carbonate in the catchment is the source of riverine PIC, a proper indication of this ‘source carbonate’ (SC) was extracted from global maps of lithology (GLiM, Hartmann and Moosdorf, 2012), unconsolidated sediments (GUM, Börker et al., 2018) and soils (WISE, Batjes, 2012). For soils, the carbonate content was given directly, while for each rock and sediment class a global representative estimate of the carbonate content was taken from literature (Supplementary Information SI 1). Area-weighted upstream averages were calculated individually for the carbonate content of GLiM, GUM and WISE in each basin. Next, these were summed and normalized to 100 % to represent the SC, i.e., carbonate available to be transported as PIC. All the predictor variables

are summarized in Table 1. Catchments with SC < 10 % were assumed to be PIC-free, as dissolution usually dominates over detrital carbonate transport in (undersaturated) rivers (see Introduction).

Table 1 Predictor variable selection to model PIC concentrations. Variables are taken from HydroBasins (Linke et al., 2019), except for the potential source carbonate, which was calculated from global soil, sediment and lithological maps (Batjes, 2012; Hartmann and Moosdorf, 2012; Börker et al., 2018). All variables represent the upstream-average of a specific HydroBasins sub-basin at Pfafstetter level 7. Abbreviations: hdi: human development index, gdp: gross domestic product, nli: night light index, pop: population count.

Topography & Vegetation	Underground & Humans	Climate & Hydrology
Elevation	Potential source carbonate (rock, sediment, soil)	Precipitation
Upstream catchment area	Soil organic carbon content	Temperature
Forestation	Human factor (log(hdi+gdp+nli+pop))	Extent of water bodies (rivers, lakes, reservoirs)
Bare areas (rock, desert, tundra, open shrub land)		

2.1 Regression & Upscaling

To estimate PIC concentrations in the remaining ~65 % of the global suspended sediment discharge, we employed a two-step regression procedure consisting of (I) a qualitative indication of the presence of PIC in a catchment (yes/no) and (II) a quantitative regressive estimation of the PIC concentration. This two-step procedure was necessary because PIC concentrations are not only log-normally distributed, but also frequently close or equal to zero, thus hampering the regression procedure, which is a well-known problem in ecology (Fletcher et al., 2005).

For the qualitative model, we applied a Support Vector Machine (SVM), a standard technique from the MATLAB 2019b Machine Learning toolbox. This model was trained and forced by only five variables, because SVMs have been found to achieve better results with

less variables (Kitsikoudis et al., 2013). We chose to use SC, precipitation, elevation, forestation and human factor, covering the most diverse aspects of sources and preservation potential of PIC. PIC concentration was assumed not present if it was below 0.1 wt%, approximating the uncertainty of most measurements included in *GloRiSe*. SVM was chosen, because it performed slightly better than alternative methods, such as logistic regression and ensemble techniques.

For the quantitative model, symbolic regression (SR) by means of multi-gene genetic programming (MGGP) was used, providing a fully data-driven tool to find both the model structure and its parameters. The implemented SR-algorithm pseudo-randomly creates linear combinations of (potentially non-linear) terms, which are tested and evolved to best fit the observed PIC concentrations as assessed by the root mean squared error (*GPTIPS 2.0*, Searson et al., 2010). Thus, SR is able to cover non-linear relationships between the variables and its performance seems comparable to artificial neural networks, while it still results in comparably simple equations that can be related to the governing processes (Kitsikoudis et al., 2013; Gandomi et al., 2015; Jin et al., 2019). Variable selection and SR intrinsically determine the importance of individual variables for, and their direction of relationship to PIC concentrations, which we quantitatively assess using the linear correlation coefficient and coefficient of determination (R and R^2 , respectively, at $p < 0.01$) between the median result of 830 accepted Monte Carlo simulations and each variable. This method reduces biases due to multicollinearity and non-linearity and is commonly applied to the evaluation of canonical correlations analyses (Kuylen and Verhallen, 1981).

The global riverine PIC flux is the sum of the products of sediment fluxes and PIC concentrations in each basin draining directly to the coastal ocean. For a proper re-estimation and uncertainty analysis, the regression and prediction procedure was repeated 2,000 times with a (pseudo-)random perturbation of sediment fluxes and PIC concentrations within the

range of their respective uncertainties, including the full model derivation via SVM and SR. The final result is the mean of 830 accepted simulations that produced less than 0.3 % outliers in respect to the 10 % and 90 % percentile (10 of 3364 coastal basins) and its uncertainty is the standard deviation of these models (Koehler et al., 2009). For comparison, we also provide literature-based first-order estimates of riverine PIC fluxes (Supplementary Information S3). Because much less detailed data is available for atmospheric and cryospheric PIC contributions, these fluxes were estimated using published PIC concentrations and sediment fluxes (Supplementary Information S3).

3 Results

We calculate that currently 3.1 ± 0.3 Tmol PIC/y are annually discharged to the coastal ocean. The pre-human flux was 4.1 ± 0.5 Tmol PIC/y; the 25 % reduction is caused by particle retention in reservoirs (Fig. 1). The uncertainty of 10 % appears low, considering the much larger uncertainty of sediment fluxes (50 %), observed PIC concentrations (50 %) and

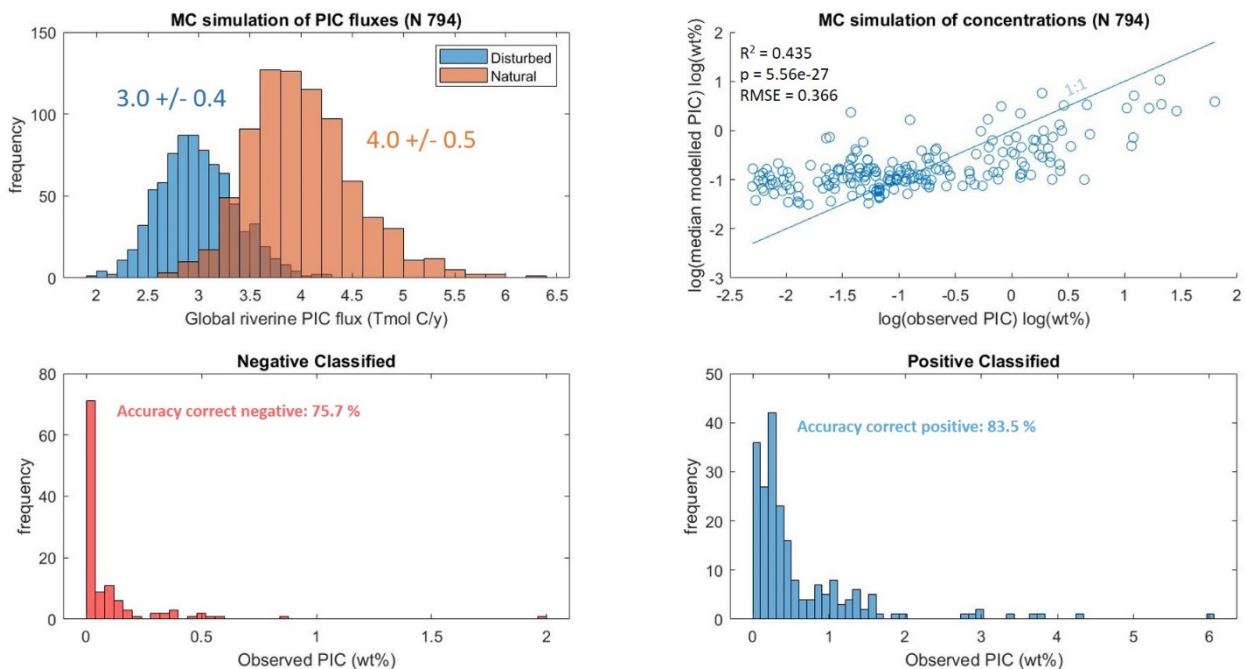


Figure 1: Results (upper) and performance (lower) of the Monte Carlo-refined regression procedure. Histograms (upper panels) show the distribution of natural (left) and anthropogenically disturbed (right) global PIC fluxes. The lower panels evidence the performance of an exemplary quantitative model (left, prediction within factor 4) and the qualitative classification (right).

Table 2 Comparison of the herein presented results and literature-based estimates of global average PIC concentration (cPIC), flux-weighted mean, median and mixture of median and mean, respectively), suspended sediment discharge (fTSS, global sum) and PIC flux (fPIC, global sum). References: 1: Meybeck (1982), 2: Viers et al. (2009), 3: Savenko (2007), 4: Bayon et al. (2015), 5: Beusen et al., (2005), 6: Milliman and Farnsworth (2011), 7: Syvitski and Kettner (2011), 8: Cohen et al. (2014), 9: Middelburg et al. (2020) based on Canfield, (1997) and Beusen et al. (2005), 10: Meybeck (1993), 11: Journet et al. (2014), 12: Jickells et al (2005), 13: Overeem et al. (2017), 14: Raiswell et al. (2008), 15: Wadham et al. (2013). Abbreviations: med: median, fwm: flux-weighted mean, obs: observations, wo: without, Q_s^{nat} : natural sediment discharge. ‘Literature’ indicates values and ranges that were calculated from published values (‘first-order’ estimates (Supplementary Information SI 2, grey columns). ‘This study’ refers to values we derived in this contribution (2 Methods & Procedures, Supplementary Information SI 1). Bold numbers indicate the values suggested for further use.

Variable (unit)	cPIC (wt%)	cPIC (wt%)	cPIC (wt%)	fTSS river (Gt/y)	fPIC river, Q_s^{nat} (Tmol C/y)	fPIC river, actual (Tmol C/y)	fPIC river, actual (Tmol C/y)	fPIC atmosphere (Tmol C/y)	fPIC cryosphere (Tmol C/y)
Value	0.26	0.42	0.7	16	4.1	3.1	10.4	0.25	0.78
Range	0.24 – 0.28	0.1 – 0.7	0.4 – 1	12 – 20	3.6 – 4.6	2.8 – 3.4	4.0 – 16.7	0.10 – 0.40	0.48 – 1.12
Reference	This study (fwm, model)	This study (med, obs.)	Literature (1 – 4)	Literature (5-8)	This study (model)	This study (model)	Literature (1 – 10)	Literature (11,12)	Literature (13-15)

212 quantitatively modelled PIC concentrations (factor 4) (Supplementary Information S2.3). The
213 reason is the low uncertainty of PIC presence: correct negative classifications (75.7 %) have a
214 lower range of 0 – 0.1 wt% and basins with less than 10 % source carbonate are assumed to
215 have a PIC concentration and error of 0 wt%. Positive classifications are similarly accurate
216 (83.5 %). However, these uncertainties do not account for inaccuracies in the input datasets.

217 For instance, the global lithological map (*GLiM*) has an accuracy of only ~ 60% compared to
218 point observations (Hartmann and Moosdorf, 2012). The flux-weighted mean PIC

concentration of 0.26 ± 0.03 wt% is lower than the median of PIC-bearing rivers only (0.41 ± 0.01 wt%, excluding PIC-free rivers) implying ~40 % of the riverine sediment flux to be PIC-free. Both are statistically indistinguishable from the median of observed basinal averages (0.35 ± 0.3 wt%), covering ~ 35 % of the global sediment flux (Cohen et al., 2014). Additionally, some authors used mean values, which are more susceptible to outliers caused by small rivers and are typically higher than medians (because of log-normal distributions). High PIC concentrations are rarely found in rivers with high discharge, except for a few large rivers draining markedly dry (e.g., the Nile and Euphrates-Tigris systems) and/or mountainous (e.g., the Indus system) catchments (Fig. 3).

From a total of 3365 catchments considered, the biggest 862 basins contribute ~ 99 % of the total PIC flux, while the biggest 10 catchments, situated in South-East Asia, Arabia, Europe and North America already sum up to ~ 53 %. The Euphrates-Tigris system (13.3 %), the Indus (10.3 %) and the Nile (8.9 %) alone contribute 32.6 % of the total global PIC flux, followed by Yangtze (4.5 %), Salween (4.4%), Colorado (USA, 3.4 %), Rhone (2.8 %),

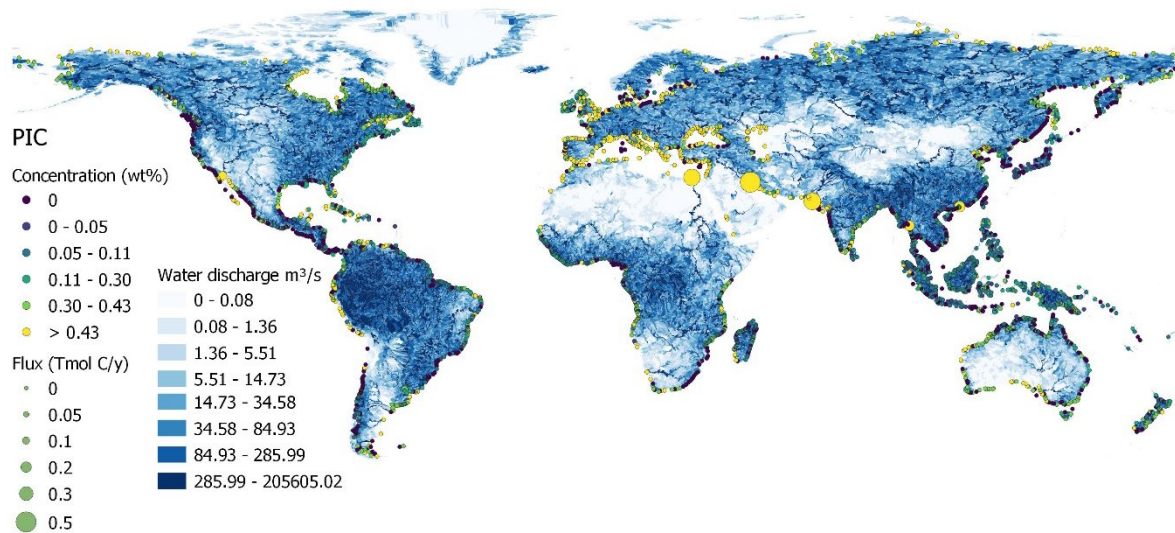


Figure 1 Map of the model results. Point data along the coast are the result of this study (Mean of 3000 Monte Carlo simulations). Size scales with the magnitude of the PIC flux (Tmol C/y), based on natural sediment discharge) and color is related to PIC concentration (wt %). For comparison, blue colors indicate natural annual mean water discharge (m^3/s) (Linke et al., 2019)

Huanghe (2.1 %), Mississippi (2.0 %) and the Ganga-Brahmaputra system (1.6 %). 2.7 Tmol PIC/y (67.6 %) is delivered to the coastal ocean between 15 °N and 45 °N, contrasting riverine DIC, OC, total solute and bulk sediment fluxes (Ludwig et al., 1996; Milliman and Farnsworth, 2011; Hartmann et al., 2014). The anthropogenic reduction of the global PIC flux is dominated by the decreasing contribution of the Nile due to intense damming (~ 8 of 25 %).

The present PIC flux related to atmospheric dust deposition is 0.25 ± 0.15 Tmol C/y, which is ~ 3 % of the riverine PIC flux and ~ 0.3 % of the total riverine carbon flux (~ 71 Tmol C/y, Supplementary Information S3). Thus, the atmospheric contribution is negligible in global mass balances. PIC related to meltwater discharge and ice-rafted debris from Greenland and Antarctica together contribute another 0.8 ± 0.3 Tmol PIC/y, which is ~ 26 % of the present day riverine PIC flux and ~ 1 % of the total river carbon flux (Supplementary Information S3). In total, ~ 4 Tmol PIC arrive in the ocean annually.

4 Discussion

4.1 Natural controls of PIC and their variation through time

The relevance of each variable to the model was assessed through the coefficients of correlation and of determination between the individual variable and the median model outcome, being independent of non-linearity and multi-collinearity (Fig. 3). A strong positive influence of SC on PIC concentrations is eminent from these procedures (+ 38 %, Fig. 3). SC includes carbonate from soils (~ 3 % on average) and unconsolidated sediments (~ 2 – 4 %) but is dominated by lithological (bedrock) contributions (~ 20 % on average). This is because terrestrial carbonate weathering is dissolution-dominated, which arises from fast dissolution rates and high solubility (Lasaga, 1984; Morse and Arvidson, 2002). This contrasts with the precipitation-dominated behavior of silicates, producing clay minerals and oxides characteristic to soil assemblages (Lasaga, 1984; Morse and Arvidson, 2002; Brantley et al., 2008; Ma et al., 2011).

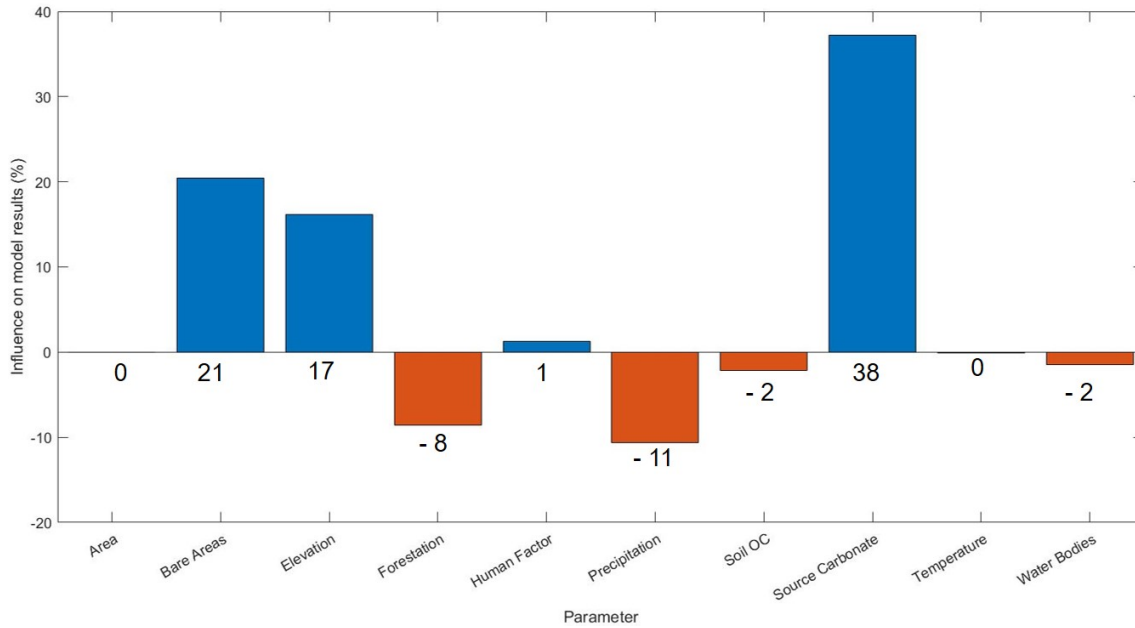


Figure 3 Relative importance of the different variables to our model results as assessed by the coefficient of determination (R^2) between the variable in question and the median result of 794 high-quality Monte Carlo simulations. The correlation coefficient gives the direction of influence (orange: negative, blue: positive). Individual values are indicated above the bars. OC: Organic Carbon. Variables correspond to (Table 1).

Generally, riverine suspended sediment is a mixture of source rocks, their solid weathering products (soil and sediment), organic matter and material of anthropogenic origin, with additional in-stream processing. Thus, the differences between SC and PIC may arise from preferential dissolution of carbonates compared to silicates in the weathering zone (= soil) before erosion, and also from in-stream dissolution (Dornblaser and Striegl, 2009), precipitation (e.g., Kempe and Emeis, 1985; Négrel and Grosbois, 1999) and particle sorting during transport (e.g., Bouchez et al., 2011; Garzanti et al., 2011). According to our results, humans did not significantly influence riverine PIC concentrations on a global scale (yet; Fig. 3), in contrast to sediment fluxes (see section 4.2 Human activities and riverine carbon). A thick soil cover can only develop if chemical weathering rates exceed material removal by erosion (West, 2012; Ferrier and West, 2017), and it is promoted by biological activity. Especially forestation stabilizes the soil, disintegrates pristine rocks and introduces organic acids and

ligands, increasing mineral solubilities (Calmels et al., 2014; Brantley et al., 2017).

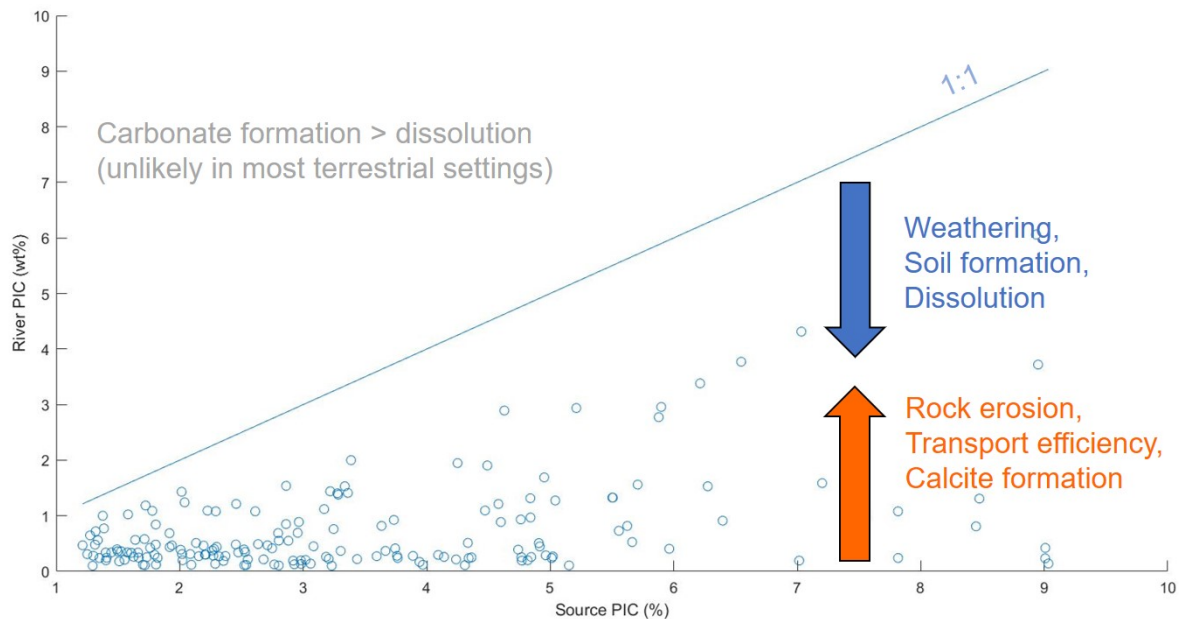


Figure 4 Relationship of river PIC and source PIC. Source PIC (12 % of SC) includes sediment and soil contributions but is dominated by rocks. In-stream dissolution and contributions of weathered material decrease river PIC, while rock erosion has a pronounced positive effect by contributing source rock. Transport efficiency and in-stream precipitation can further enhance PIC concentrations at the river mouth.

This view is supported by the negative impact of variables in favor of soil formation and dissolution, such as precipitation (- 11 %) and forestation (- 8 %). In contrast, the organic carbon content of soils and temperature, which may influence dissolution kinetics, do not seem to play a major role for PIC concentrations, nor do catchment size or the extent of water bodies, (relatable to the residence time of the particles within the fluvial system). The more prominent influence of (rock) erosion on PIC concentrations is evident from the large influence of related variables, namely, elevation (+ 17 %) and the extent of bare areas (+ 21 %). Rapidly eroding, mountainous terrains are characterized by fast, efficient transport and diminutive sediment storage (Milliman and Syvitski, 1992; Hilton and West, 2020), limiting both the extent of soil formation (Jenny, 1941; Dixon and von Blanckenburg, 2012) and in-stream dissolution.

248 This interpretation that PIC concentrations increase with erosion is apparently
249 inconsistent with increasing carbonate dissolution following pyrite oxidation and sulfuric acid

production upon accelerated erosion as observed in shale-dominated terrains (Calmels et al., 2007; Torres et al., 2014; Bufe et al., 2021). However, we do not only consider shale-rich, but all carbonate-bearing (> 10 %) terrains in this analysis, which could obscure such relationships. Such an apparent inconsistency was noted for other global scale compilations as well (Bufe et al., 2021). Moreover, PIC is predominantly produced by the physical disintegration of pristine rocks and soils, while this same process promotes dissolution and oxidation kinetics. Thus, trends in PIC concentrations and carbonate dissolution do not strictly oppose each other but may even covary in rapidly eroding terrains.

In summary, the rather slowly changing ($10^3 - 10^5$ y) tectonic, physiographic and lithological settings seem to exert a dominant control on PIC concentrations as demonstrated by the eminent role of SC and elevation in our model. Superimposed on this base-line situation, much faster variations in climatic and vegetation patterns seem to affect the relative contributions of weathered, PIC-poor soil and pristine, PIC-rich source rock.

Although heavily discussed (Foster and Vance, 2006; Willenbring and Von Blanckenburg, 2010; Caves Rügenstein et al., 2019), many observations suggest that soil formation and/or chemical weathering decreased during cold, dry periods (Jenny, 1941; Berner et al., 1983; Dixon et al., 2016; Schachtman et al., 2019), potentially increasing the ratio of pristine source rock to weathered soil in suspended sediments, thus, the riverine PIC flux. Moreover, glacial activity during cooler periods may accelerate erosion, thus, PIC production and potentially preservation (because of decreased residence times). This is supported by an increase of the detrital carbonate fraction in glacial sediments of the Gulf of Lyon, compared to sediments deposited during interglacial periods (Pasquier et al., 2019). An indication of increased cryogenic PIC deposition in response to ice-sheet dynamics is provided by the so-called ‘Heinrich-events’, which are unusual accumulations of coarse carbonate-rich detritus in marine sediment (Bond and Lotti, 1995; White et al., 2016). In contrast, melting permafrost

exposes old, but fresh organic matter that is rapidly respired (e.g., Walz et al., 2017), potentially increasing PIC dissolution (Aller, 1982; Archer et al., 1989; Oelkers et al., 2011; Calmels et al., 2014). Consistently, although not solely related to carbonate weathering, an increased riverine export of alkalinity in response to the recent warming was reported from large Russian Arctic rivers (Drake et al., 2018).

However, recent observations and theories challenge this simple view (Foster and Vance, 2006; Willenbring and Von Blanckenburg, 2010; Caves Rügenstein et al., 2019), implying more complex and transitional spatio-temporal dynamics of erosion (Foreman et al., 2012; Chen et al., 2018; van de Schootbrugge et al., 2020) and carbonate weathering (Gaillardet et al., 2019; Zeng et al., 2019) and, consequently, of riverine inorganic carbon export. Additionally, environmental conditions and, consequently, carbonate dissolution in the (coastal) ocean are expected to change over multiple time-scales, ranging from seasons and decades (Cai et al., 2011; Wallace et al., 2014) to geological time-scales (Broecker, 1982; Ganeshram et al., 2000; Sluijs et al., 2013), with implications for the magnitude and timing of contribution of PIC to oceanic inventories.

4.2 Human activities and riverine carbon

Rivers annually deliver about 31.5 Tmol DIC, 19.1 Tmol DOC and 17.4 Tmol POC to the ocean (Table 3). Including 3.0 Tmol PIC/y increases the total riverine carbon export (TC) to 71.0 Tmol C/y, equating a contribution of 4 %, which is within the uncertainty of the estimates excluding PIC (Table 3). An accurate and precise knowledge of the riverine carbon export is necessary to understand the distribution and fate of anthropogenic carbon perturbations (Resplandy et al., 2018; Friedlingstein et al., 2020). Over the past century these riverine carbon fluxes have changed and continue doing so, likely in response to climate change and local human activities, such as industrialization, changes in land-use, hydrology and agricultural

practices (Lambert et al., 2017; Noacco et al., 2017; Drake et al., 2018; Raymond and Hamilton, 2018; Li et al., 2019; Zeng et al., 2019; Liu et al., 2020).

The net effect of human activity on riverine sediment discharge is a ~10 % reduction, dominated by damming (Syvitski et al., 2005; Cohen et al., 2014), resulting in an even higher reduction of riverine PIC (~ 25 %, Table 3) and OC fluxes (~ 13 %, Maavara et al. (2017)). The differences between those fractions are related to the non-even spatial patterns of riverine carbon discharge (Ludwig et al., 1996; Milliman and Farnsworth, 2011, Figure 2). Damming also increases the residence time of particles in the riverine realm (Rueda et al., 2006), where PIC and POC are commonly remobilized by dissolution/degradation. However, organic matter degradation and burial in reservoirs is very heterogeneous and dependent on reservoir age (Maavara et al., 2017). Low importance for the model (- 2 % for water bodies) indicate a rather negligible effect of reservoirs on PIC concentrations on the global scale. Our human factor is not an important predictor in the model (1 %), despite the expected influence of lime-fertilizers (Haynes and Naidu, 1998; Shoghi Kalkhoran et al., 2019; Zeng et al., 2019), cementitious construction materials (Horvath, 2004), and human-induced soil erosion, affecting the active weathering zone (Govers et al., 2014). PIC could also be reduced by increasing dissolution through industrial or agricultural acids (Wicks and Groves, 1993; Webb and Sasowsky, 1994; Perrin et al., 2008). Eventually, the lack of resolution between those positive and negative influences in our human factor obscures a clearer relationship. Thus, more detailed studies on the different human influences on riverine carbonate are required. Notably, the human influence is correlated to observed PIC concentrations, but this spurious relationship stems from collinearity of SC and human population, both being high in southeast Asia, Europe and North America, confirming our method is correcting for multi-collinearity.

A 25 % reduction of PIC fluxes equates to only 1.4 % of the total riverine carbon flux (TC). The damming-related decrease in organic carbon fluxes (13 % of OC, Maavara et al.

(2017)) results in another 6 % reduction of TC. In contrast, carbonate dissolution-related DIC fluxes likely increase(d) by ~ 13.5 % in the period 1950 – 2100 as a consequence of climate-change and land-use change (Zeng et al., 2019). Such an increase of DIC fluxes would result in a 5.6 % increase of TC, partially compensating the reduction of OC and PIC in terms of total carbon export (total disturbance: - 2 %). This is consistent with the estimation of a somewhat stable riverine TC export as a result of in-stream removal of anthropogenic carbon by POC deposition and respiration (Cole et al., 2007; Regnier et al., 2013).

The bulk anthropogenic effect on total global riverine DIC fluxes remains elusive (Raymond and Hamilton, 2018) and human activities other than dam-building impact terrestrial and freshwater carbon cycling. Notably, humans also change conditions at the site of riverine PIC deposition: The current coastal ocean acidification in response to anthropogenic emissions and eutrophication (Borges and Gypens, 2010; Carstensen and Duarte, 2019) , could enhance PIC dissolution, acting as a heterogeneous buffer (Middelburg et al., 2020).

Table 3 Summary of the riverine carbon export (in Tmol C/y). DIC: (Amiotte Suchet et al. (2003); Gaillardet et al. (1999); Hartmann et al. (2014); Li et al. (2017); Ludwig et al. (1996, 1998); Meybeck (1982), DOC: (Aitkenhead and McDowell (2000); Dai et al. (2012); Harrison et al. (2005); Li et al. (2019); Ludwig et al. (1996, 1998), POC: Beusen et al. (2005); Galy et al. (2015); Li et al. (2017); Ludwig et al. (1996, 1998); Meybeck (1982), Superscripts: ^S: By changes in sediment flux only, ^D: By damming only (Maavara et al., 2017; This study); *: By climate change and land-use change for carbonate weathering only (Zeng et al., 2019). Human disturbance of TC is the bulk effect as indicated for DIC, PIC, DOC and POC. 'Literature' indicates averages and ranges taken from the above mentioned studies (grey columns). TC represents the sum of our PIC estimate and DIC, DOC and POC estimates from literature.

	DIC	PIC	DOC	POC	TC
Modern global river export (Tmol C/y)	31.5	3.0	19.1	17.4	71.0
Percentage of TC	44.4	4.2	26.9	24.5	100
Range (Tmol C/y)	26.6 - 36.3	2.6 - 3.4	14.2 - 30.0	14.2 - 20.0	64.8 - 89.0
Human disturbance (%)	+13.5*	-24 ^S	-13 ^D	-13 ^D	- 2

Range (%)	+9.8 - +17.1	- 8.3 - - 39	-12.8 - -13.2	-12.8 - -13.2	- 2 - + 0.5
Source	Literature	This study	Literature	Literature	This study & Literature

However, the bulk anthropogenic effect on total global riverine DIC fluxes remains elusive (Raymond and Hamilton, 2018) and human activities other than dam-building impact terrestrial and freshwater carbon cycling. Notably, humans also change conditions at the site of riverine PIC deposition: The current coastal ocean acidification in response to anthropogenic emissions and eutrophication (Borges and Gypens, 2010; Carstensen and Duarte, 2019) , could enhance PIC dissolution, acting as a heterogeneous buffer (Middelburg et al., 2020).

4.3 Implications for oceanic mass balances

The fate of the detrital carbonate flux in the marine realm, i.e., PIC burial or dissolution, determines the implication of the global PIC flux for oceanic mass balances (Middelburg et al., 2020). PIC preservation may affect global estimates of marine carbonate burial, while PIC dissolution would translate to an additional input of Ca, Mg, Sr, C and alkalinity to the marine solute inventories. Because the scientific community lacks a reliable global quantification of these aspects, we discuss the following questions:

1. Where is river PIC deposited?
2. Does PIC deposition influence global estimates of carbonate burial?
3. Does PIC dissolve and alter oceanic mass balances of Ca, Mg, C, Sr and alkalinity?

1. On time scales of years to centuries, a major fraction of the riverine suspended matter remains in the estuary (often ~ 40 - 60 %), while the rest is deposited along the shelves and continental slopes (Meade, 1972; Wright and Nittrouer, 1995). Very narrow shelf morphologies, effective transport along canyons in the slope and large flood events cause minor fractions of the suspended sediment to enter open ocean (Dyer, 1995). Moreover, global sea

level fall under cooler climates (average Pleistocene state) exposes the PIC-rich shelf to erosion, shifting depocenters to the slope, where PIC may be further transported to and/or dissolved in the open ocean (Kump and Alley, 1994; Filippelli et al., 2007; Tsandev et al., 2010). Thus, on larger time-scales ($>10^3$ years), most of the riverine PIC that does not dissolve on short time-scale (1 to 10^2 years) will be transported to the slope (Figure 4). A significant fraction may, however, have dissolved before re-mobilization or remain at the initial site of deposition (preservation of the former estuary/shelf). Saderne et al., (2019) emphasize that some coastal ecosystems, such as mangrove forests and seagrass meadows, efficiently trap and dissolve such detrital carbonate from external sources.

2. Riverine PIC burial on the shelves may be implicitly included in carbonate mass accumulation (CMA) rate estimates derived from carbonate content, density and sediment accumulation rates, although microscopic criteria were established to distinguish biogenic and detrital carbonates (Milliman, 1974). However, hot spots of carbonate burial do generally not coincide very well with hot spots of riverine suspended sediment deposition (i.e., carbonate-poor shelves) (O'Mara and Dunne, 2019). Moreover, the dissolving PIC fraction and the fraction that remains at the initial site of deposition (i.e., is not re-eroded from the former estuary over longer time-scales) does not contribute to estimates of carbonate burial on the slope. Therefore, we believe that the effect of riverine PIC deposition on CMA-derived estimates of biogenic carbonate burial is rather limited. In contrast, carbonate burial estimates derived from mass balances (e.g., van der Ploeg et al., 2019) or solution chemistry (e.g., Chung et al., 2003) are directly affected by PIC dissolution.

3. Marine surface waters are supersaturated with respect to most carbonate minerals (Peterson, 1966; Milliman, 1974). Therefore, provision of carbonate mineral surfaces by PIC discharge, energetically favoring nucleation of these same minerals, may trigger inorganic carbonate precipitation in the water column (Wurgaft et al., 2016). TIC/TOC ratios of

sediments from the Huanghe estuary, China (Gu et al., 2009; Yu et al., 2018), and trends in alkalinity/DIC ratios in the marginal Red Sea support this view (Wurgaft et al., 2016). Compared to marine carbonate compensation, PIC will rapidly settle in the shallow coastal ocean and the degree of carbonate saturation varies with depth and across different local environments at the seafloor (Aller, 1982; Boudreau and Canfield, 1993). As chemical conditions, especially pH, vary within the sediment column, carbonate may even be dissolved in the upper parts of the sediment column, but formed in the lower, more alkaline parts (Aller, 1994).

Carbonate dissolution at the sediment-water interface and in diagenetic settings is well known (Aller, 1982; Archer et al., 1989; Sulpis et al., 2017). In these settings, aerobic degradation of organic matter may drive carbonate dissolution via the production of CO₂ and other acidic compounds (Aller, 1982; Oelkers et al., 2011). Anaerobic degradation produces reduced metabolites such as ammonium, sulfide and iron(II), most of which form strong acids upon upward migration and subsequent re-oxidation in the bioturbated zone, which drastically reduces carbonate saturation (Boudreau and Canfield, 1993; Aller, 1994) and may alter the carbon cycle-coupling of subsequent dissolution (Beaulieu et al., 2011; Huang et al., 2017; Torres et al., 2017; Liu et al., 2018).

Carbonate dissolution may also be influenced by biological activity such as seagrass root oxygen loss, sponge boring and bioturbation (Burdige et al., 2008; Mackenzie and Andersson, 2011; Saderne et al., 2019). Substantial riverine PIC dissolution was observed in the maximum turbidity zone of the eutrophic Loire estuary, France (Abril et al., 2003). Moreover, (detrital) carbonate dissolution driven by eutrophication-related bottom water acidification was observed in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, Canada (Nesbitt and Mucci, 2021) and in the Chesapeake Bay, USA (Shen et al., 2019). The proposed total flux of ~ 4.9 Tmol PIC/y corresponds to 9.8 Tmol(eq)/a of alkalinity (~ 30 % of dissolved equivalent), which is ~ 30 %

lower than the estimate of Middelburg et al. (2020). Despite integration of groundwater discharge, marine organic matter burial, anaerobic processes and marine silicate weathering, the modern ocean alkalinity budget is marked by an imbalance of ~25 % of the output by carbonate burial (59 Tmol(eq)/y in the coastal and open ocean). Half of this imbalance can be closed by inclusion of riverine PIC fluxes, assuming terrestrial PIC will either dissolve or biases estimates of carbonate burial (Graphical Abstract). Part of the residual imbalance could be attributed to other diagenetic processes in the coastal zone, such as marine aluminosilicates weathering (Gislason et al., 2006; Jones et al., 2012; Hong et al., 2020; Torres et al., 2020) and carbonate diagenesis (DePaolo, 2004; Fantle et al., 2010; Paytan et al., 2021). However, part of the imbalance could be real, considering that the residence time of carbonate ions in the ocean (~ 100 ky) is larger than the time since the last glaciation (Milliman, 1993; Middelburg et al., 2020).

The inputs of 4.9 Tmol PIC/y (rivers + cryosphere) further imply ~4.6 Tmol Ca/y, ~0.2 Tmol Mg/y and ~4.8 Gmol Sr/y, assuming ideal stoichiometry, 10 % dolomite (typical value in *GloRiSe* v1.1) and 1000 ppm Sr in calcite and dolomite. This equates to ~34.0 % (Ca), ~4.3 % (Mg) and ~8.8 % (Sr) of the respective dissolved equivalents, representing the current major input terms of the respective marine mass balances (Tipper et al., 2006; Krabbenhöft et al., 2010; Tipper et al., 2010; Berner and Berner, 2012; Mayfield et al., 2021). As dolomites typically exhibit much lower dissolution rates than calcites (Pokrovsky et al., 2005), Mg addition by PIC dissolution is probably even smaller and thus negligible. So far, none of these highly discussed budgets could be consensually balanced, neither at the present state nor in reconstructions of the past – a conundrum persisting already for decades (Berner and Berner, 1987; Milliman, 1993; Tipper et al., 2006; Krabbenhöft et al., 2010; Tipper et al., 2010; Berner and Berner, 2012; Jones et al., 2012; Shalev et al., 2019; Hong et al., 2020; Middelburg et al., 2020; Mayfield et al., 2021).

Riverine PIC input also impacts the Ca-cycle (Figure 5). Apart from riverine dissolved Ca fluxes, submarine groundwater discharge (1 Tmol Ca/yr, Mayfield et al., 2021) and hydrothermal processes (2 - 3 Tmol Ca/yr, DePaolo, 2004) were invoked to balance the high output fluxes by carbonate burial, but still leave an imbalance of 36 %, that can be reduced by further 16 % through consideration of PIC fluxes. The remaining 20 % could be attributed to submarine weathering of volcanogenic silicate debris (Gislason et al., 2006; Jones et al., 2012; Hong et al., 2020; Torres et al., 2020) and/or carbonate diagenesis (3 - 5 Tmol Ca/yr, DePaolo, 2004; Fantle et al., 2010). However, carbonate precipitation in early diagenetic settings would rather represent an additional sink of ~ 1 Tmol Ca/yr and ~ 2 Tmol(eq)/y of alkalinity (Schrage, 2013; Torres et al., 2020).

The fraction of detrital carbonates in coastal margin sediments was estimated to <10 and 50 % in the Bengal fan (France-Lanord et al., 2018) and in the Gulf of Lyon (Pasquier et al., 2019), respectively. If the long-term biogenic carbonate burial on the slope is ~ 2 Tmol C/y (Milliman, 1993) and all riverine PIC (natural: 4.1 Tmol C/y) either dissolves or is transported

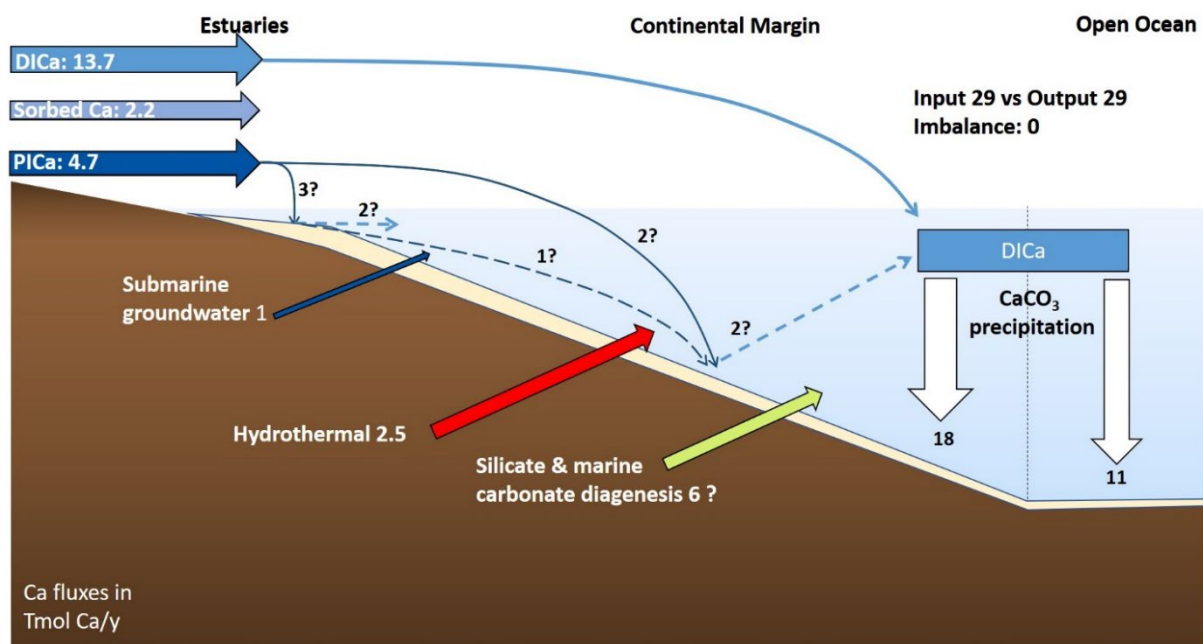


Figure 4 Illustration of the modern ocean calcium budget and how it may be complemented by the inclusion of the riverine PICa flux. The fate of PICa (particulate Ca) in the ocean is,

however, uncertain (details in the main text). Fluxes are given in Tmol Ca/y. CaCO₃ burial fluxes are from Middelburg et al. (2020), Milliman (1993) and O'Mara and Dunne (2019). River sorbed Ca is from Müller et al., (2021), DICa (dissolved Calcium) and groundwater inputs are from Mayfield et al. (2021), the hydrothermal flux and marine carbonate diagenesis (3 – 4 Tmol Ca/yr) is from DePaolo (2004). The silicate diagenesis flux of Ca is assumed to fill the residual imbalance of ~ 2 Tmol Ca/yr.

to the slope on long time-scales, then 2.1 to 3.9 Tmol PIC/y (51 – 95 %) would need to dissolve in order to match these detrital fractions. This back-of-the-envelope calculation is not a valid quantification of the globally dissolving PIC fraction, but illustrates PIC dissolution may indeed be significant. However, as argued above, the coastal ocean is a heterogeneous region with locally very spatio-temporally variable conditions supporting carbonate dissolution, preservation as well as precipitation. Importantly, recrystallization still leads to an exchange with the marine element and isotope inventories (e.g., Fantle et al., 2010; Kastner, 1999; Paytan et al., 2021). A global estimation of the dissolving PIC fraction should account of this spatio-temporal variability and complex interactions of organic and inorganic particles within coastal sediments. Therefore, consideration of the detrital mineral flux of rivers to the ocean and its isotopic composition may help to solve longwithstanding debates about imbalances in global biogeochemical cycles.

5 Conclusion

The riverine flux of PIC, i.e., discharge of detrital carbonate minerals, represents a significant, yet mostly unaccounted chemical mass transfer in the Earth system (3.0 ± 0.4 Tmol C/y), currently contributing ~4 % to the total riverine carbon export. The pre-human flux was 4.0 ± 0.5 Tmol PIC/y; the 25 % reduction is caused by particle retention in reservoirs, especially of the Nile river. Considering perturbations of riverine particulate and dissolved, inorganic and organic carbon species in concert, the riverine export flux seems to have remained rather stable, while carbon speciation changed.

Although the fate of PIC in the ocean remains quantitatively unknown, oceanic element and isotope inventories of Ca and alkalinity are most probably affected by detrital carbonate dissolution in the coastal ocean, with implications for conclusions deduced from their highly debated, but frequently used mass balances. PIC contributions to the oceanic budgets of Sr and total C are less important and Mg fluxes are insignificant.

Naturally, the concentration of PIC is controlled by catchment topography and surface lithology, i.e., slowly changing tectonic factors ($10^3 - 10^5$ y scales), but also by climate and vegetation, which are subjected to much faster spatio-temporal variations. Similarly, marine conditions change through time, so that related PIC dissolution may also vary. An additional, significant amount of detrital carbonate (0.7 ± 0.3 Tmol C/y) is exported from Greenland and Antarctica and responds to ice-sheet dynamics, while eolian contributions can be neglected (at the present). These results imply a response of the global PIC flux to human activity and to natural changes in environmental and climatic conditions, but also to the tectonic evolution of our planet.

6 Data and script accessibility

The all data and scripts used for this study, along with a detailed manual and the supplementary information, can be accessed via:

<https://github.com/GerritMuller/Detrital-Carbonates-in-Earths-Element-cycles>; INSERT
ZENODO DOI HYPERLINK AFTER REVIEW.

7 Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict in interest.

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