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### ► To cite this version:

Katixa Lajaunie-Salla, Aldo Sottolichio, Sabine Schmidt, Xavier Litrico, Guillaume Binet, et al.. Comparing the efficiency of hypoxia mitigation strategies in an urban, turbid tidal river, using a coupled hydro sedimentary–biogeochemical model. *Natural Hazards and Earth System Sciences Discussions*, In press, pp.1-32. 10.5194/nhess-2018-381 . hal-02357268

**HAL Id: hal-02357268**

**<https://hal.science/hal-02357268>**

Submitted on 26 Aug 2022

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1 **Comparing the efficiency of hypoxia mitigation strategies in an urban, turbid tidal**  
2 **river, using a coupled hydro sedimentary-biogeochemical model**

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15 **Acknowledgments**

16 This study was funded by the Aquitaine Region (DIAGIR project) and LyRE (SUEZ research  
17 center) who co-sponsored a PhD grant to K. Lajaunie-Salla. This work was also supported by  
18 the Cluster of Excellence COTE at the Université de Bordeaux (ANR-10-LABX-45). The  
19 authors are grateful to the MAGEST network for the availability of data and to the SGAC and  
20 Bordeaux Metropole for providing urban effluent data and fruitful discussions. This work  
21 was supported by the Avakas cluster resources of the Mésocentre de Calcul Intensif Aquitain  
22 (MCIA) of the University of Bordeaux



23 **Highlights**

- 24 - A 3D model shows different efficiencies of management actions to limits hypoxia.
- 25 - Sewage overflow reduction improves DO levels only locally.
- 26 - Downstream relocation of wastewater discharges mitigates totally hypoxia.
- 27 - Support of river flow must be adapted depending of hydrological context
- 28 - The combination of different management actions improves DO levels.



29 **Abbreviations**

- 30 DO: dissolved oxygen
- 31 DOC: dissolved organic carbon
- 32 LTS: long-term support
- 33 NT: Neap tide
- 34 POC: particulate organic carbon
- 35 SO: sewage overflow
- 36 ST: Spring tide
- 37 STS: short-term support
- 38 TGR: Tidal Garonne River
- 39 TMZ: turbidity maximum zone
- 40 WS: watershed
- 41 WW: wastewater
- 42 WWTP: wastewater treatment plant
- 43



44 **Abstract**

45 In view of future coastal hypoxia widespreading, it is essential to define management  
46 solutions to preserve a good quality of coastal ecosystems. The lower Tidal Garonne River  
47 (TGR, SW France), characterized by the seasonal presence of a turbidity maximum zone and  
48 urban water discharges, is subject to episodic hypoxia events during summer low river flow  
49 periods. The future climatic conditions (higher temperature; summer droughts) but also an  
50 increasing urbanization could enhance hypoxia risks near the city of Bordeaux in the next  
51 decades. A 3D model of dissolved oxygen (DO), which couples hydrodynamics, sediment  
52 transport and biogeochemical processes, is used to assess the efficiency of different  
53 management solutions on TGR oxygenation during summer low-discharge periods. We have  
54 runned different scenarios of reduction of urban sewage overflows, displacement of urban  
55 discharges downstream from Bordeaux, and/or temporary river flow support during summer  
56 period. The model shows that each option limits hypoxia, but with variable efficiency over  
57 time and space. Sewage overflow reduction improves DO levels only locally near the city of  
58 Bordeaux. Downstream relocation of wastewater discharges allows to reach better  
59 oxygenation level in the lower TGR. The support of low river flow limits the upstream TMZ  
60 propagation and dilutes TGR waters with well-oxygenated river waters. Scenarios combining  
61 wastewater network management and low water replenishment indicate an improvement in  
62 water quality over the entire TGR. These modelling outcomes constitute important tools for  
63 local water authorities to develop the most appropriate strategies to limit hypoxia in TGR

64 **Keywords:** hypoxia, management, modeling, Garonne Tidal River, wastewater, water quality

65



## 66 1 Introduction

67 In view of the ongoing global change, it is essential to find management strategies for  
68 hypoxia mitigation (dissolved oxygen (DO) concentration  $< 2 \text{ mg.L}^{-1}$  or  $< 30\%$  of saturation,  
69 Rabalais et al. (2010)). Coastal hypoxia is a widespread phenomena since the middle of the  
70 20th century due to the combined effect of the increase in temperature and anthropogenic  
71 activities (Breitburg et al., 2018). Hypoxia is a major environmental issue, which stresses  
72 marine organisms and perturbs the functioning of coastal ecosystem (Vaquer-Sunyer and  
73 Duarte, 2008). Due to their strategic position for fish migration, a good oxygenation of  
74 estuarine waters is crucial (Rabalais et al., 2010). Usually, coastal and transitional zones  
75 receive increasing organic matter and nutrients inputs from watershed and urban effluents,  
76 that lead to an extension of eutrophic and hypoxic areas (Diaz, 2001). In macrotidal estuaries,  
77 the DO consumption by heterotroph processes is exacerbated by the presence of a turbidity  
78 maximum zone (TMZ) which limits primary production (Goosen et al., 1999). Estuarine  
79 deoxygenation is the result of the complex interaction of several environmental factors such  
80 as temperature, river flow, the quantity of urban effluents discharged in the aquatic system,  
81 high turbidity and sediment dynamics (Talke et al., 2009). For that reason, recovering or  
82 maintaining a good ecological status for transitional waters is one of the objectives of the  
83 European Water Framework Directive (Best et al., 2007).

84 In an urban tidal river, a first obvious action to mitigate hypoxia is to improve urban  
85 wastewater network and treatment and to reduce the input of organic matter and nutrients to  
86 the estuary. In several European estuaries undergoing urban inputs, water quality  
87 improvement were achieved: in the Thames Estuary since the installation and renovation of a  
88 wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) in 1980s (Andrews and Rickard, 1980; Tinsley, 1998),  
89 in the Seine River since the construction of a WWTP in 1990s (Billen et al., 2001). In the



90 Scheldt Estuary, the sewage network was also improved and two WWTPs were implemented  
91 for the city of Brussels since 2000 (Billen et al., 2005; Soetaert et al., 2006; Vanderborght et  
92 al., 2007). Sewage network systems in Europe usually combine both the urban sewage and  
93 stormwater collection. During heavy rain and storm events, the capacity of urban wastewater  
94 network is generally insufficient to treat all effluents, inducing deoxygenation events due to  
95 untreated wastewater release from sewage overflows (SO) (Even et al., 2007). In the 2000s,  
96 the Environmental Protection Agency promoted a strategy to monitor urban drainage network  
97 in real time to regulate flow and avoid overflow of untreated wastewater (EPA, 2006; Gonwa,  
98 1993). This control was developed in several cities, such as Québec (Pleau et al., 2005) or  
99 Tokyo (Maeda et al., 2002). An additional management solution was tested in the Thames  
100 Estuary: the construction of a 24-km long outfall under the riverbed, which allows the transit  
101 of urban wastewater to the WWTP located downstream (Thames Tideway Tunnel,  
102 [www.tideway.london](http://www.tideway.london)). This type of solution is also ongoing in Stockholm  
103 ([www.stockholmvatten.se](http://www.stockholmvatten.se)) and Helsinki ([www.hsy.fi](http://www.hsy.fi)) metropolis.

104 In macrotidal estuaries, the lowest DO concentrations occur during the lowest river flow  
105 (Lanoux et al., 2013; Talke et al., 2009; Zhang et al., 2015). A second possible action  
106 therefore could be to modify the local residual circulation and to reduce water flushing time,  
107 to promote the renewal of well-oxygenated waters, and/or the seaward dispersion of oxygen-  
108 consuming material (Lajaunie-salla et al., 2018). This implies to provide water replenishment  
109 above critical levels, by limiting water abstraction for irrigation in the watershed or by  
110 modulating water release from dams, when hypoxia is present (Schmidt et al., 2017).

111 In order to optimize preventive management strategy, the efficiency of the potential solutions  
112 needs to be evaluated. For that, numerical modelling is an efficient tool to assess  
113 quantitatively hypoxia mitigation by management scenarios. Moreover, models allow to



114 provide guidelines for setting objectives to maintain a good water quality of coastal  
115 environment (Kemp et al., 2009; Skerratt et al., 2013).

116 A recently developed 3D coupled hydro sedimentary-biogeochemical DO model simulated  
117 possible scenarios for the coming decades suggesting a future spatial and temporal extension  
118 of summer hypoxia in the Tidal Garonne River (TGR, S-W France), an urban, turbid tidal  
119 river (Lajaunie-salla et al., 2018). Until now in the TGR, only few hypoxia events have been  
120 reported, for example during summer 2006 (Lanoux et al., 2013). Previous work highlighted  
121 that these low DO level are due to the combination of the presence of TMZ high water  
122 temperature, drought periods and urban effluents inputs (Lajaunie-Salla et al., 2017; Lanoux  
123 et al., 2013; Schmidt et al., 2017). Such a perspective of a permanent summer hypoxia in the  
124 lower TGR implies to develop management strategies to protect the ecosystem. The aim of  
125 the present work was to assess the efficiency of possible management solutions to limit future  
126 hypoxia risk in the Tidal Garonne River. For this purpose, we applied the aforementioned DO  
127 model in order to simulate scenarios based on two main management actions: optimization of  
128 urban wastewater network and fresh water replenishment during low water periods.

## 129 **2 Materials and Methods**

### 130 **2.1 Study Area**

131 The Garonne River, located in Southwest of France, is the main tributary of the Gironde  
132 Estuary, which is formed by its confluence with the Dordogne River and flows toward the  
133 Atlantic Ocean (Fig.1). This macro-tidal fluvio-estuarine system is characterized by the  
134 presence of a TMZ, where suspended sediment concentration in surface waters are  $> 1 \text{ g.L}^{-1}$   
135 (Allen, 1972). The position of the TMZ varies seasonally : during low river flow it is present  
136 in the Tidal Garonne River, from PK25 to PK-70 (Fig.1). The rest of the year, the TMZ is





137 located around Pauillac (Fig.1) at downstream of the Gironde Estuary (Jalón-Rojas et al.,  
138 2015)

139 The annual mean Garonne River flow is  $680 \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$  for the period 1913-2018, with the highest  
140 values in winter (mean of  $720 \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$ ) and the lowest in summer and early autumn (mean of  
141  $190 \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$ ) (<http://www.hydro.eaufrance.fr/indexd.php>). Since mid 80s, there has been an  
142 increase in the number of days with a river flow below  $110 \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$  (Etcheber et al., 2013). Such  
143 a decrease in the Garonne flow limits the reoxygenation of TGR waters with well-oxygenated  
144 freshwaters and favours the upstream advection and the concentration of TMZ (Lajaunie-  
145 salla et al., 2018). Six water reservoirs are located in the upper Garonne River, which can  
146 store a maximum water volume of  $58 \text{ hm}^3$ : this volume corresponds to an equivalent river  
147 flow of  $95 \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$  during one week. This water storage is used to maintain the Garonne  
148 discharge above the critical thresholds for the ecosystem during summer.

149 The large city of Bordeaux is located at the border of the Tidal Garonne River, 25 km  
150 upstream of the confluence (Bec d'Ambès, Fig.1). The sewage systems of the metropolis  
151 drains an urban area of  $578 \text{ km}^2$  and serves a population estimated at 749 595 inhabitants in  
152 2015. The part of the sewage system is composed of a combined sewer network: two  
153 wastewater treatment plants (WWTP), Clos de Hilde and Louis Fargue, and nine sewage  
154 overflows (SO). The continuous releases of treated and untreated wastewaters represent up to  
155 1.5 % of the fluvial Garonne discharge (Lanoux et al., 2013).

156 Bordeaux Metropolis has already taken several actions to improve the urban wastewater  
157 network. In 2011, the WWTP Louis Fargue was resized and upgraded to the treatment  
158 effectiveness of the WWTP Clos de Hilde. In addition, since 2013 a real time control of  
159 urban drainage network was developed in order to reduce urban effluents during rainy  
160 weather (Andréa et al., 2013). This system had allowed to decrease the volume of untreated



161 wastewater released by 30% in 2013 and 40% in 2014 and 2015 (Robitaille et al., 2016),  
162 improving the overall net epuration efficiency to > 95% for particulate organic carbon (POC),  
163 >75% for dissolved organic carbon (DOC) and >30% for ammonia (Lanoux, 2013).

## 164 **2.2 Model description**

165 The SiAM-3D model, which couples hydrodynamics, suspended sediment transport and  
166 biogeochemical processes (Lajaunie-Salla et al., 2017), was used to test the efficiency of  
167 possible management solutions. The model and its avalidation is presented in detail in  
168 Lajaunie-Salla et al. (2017). Briefly, the transport model solves the advection/dispersion  
169 equations for dissolved and particulate variables, i.e. suspended sediment, salinity and  
170 biogeochemical variables. The biogeochemical model includes all the processes that produce  
171 and consume oxygen in the water column, taking into account different types of dissolved  
172 and particulate organic matters: degradation of organic matter (mineralization of organic  
173 carbon and ammonification using the C/N ratio), nitrification, photosynthesis, respiration and  
174 mortality of phytoplankton, and DO gas exchange with the atmosphere. The model includes  
175 11 state variables: dissolved oxygen (DO), ammonia ( $\text{NH}_4^+$ , input from rivers and mainly  
176 from urban effluents), nitrate ( $\text{NO}_3^-$ ), POC and DOC from the watershed (POC from litter;  
177 DOC from rivers), WWTPs, SOs, phytoplankton and detritus. At the open boundaries, the  
178 hydrodynamic model is forced by astronomical tides at the shelf and by daily river flow of  
179 the Garonne and Dordogne Rivers at the upstream limit (data from [www.hydro.eaufrance.fr](http://www.hydro.eaufrance.fr)).  
180 The biogeochemical model use measured water temperature (MAGEST network; Etcheber et  
181 al. (2011), [https://twitter.com/Gironde\\_Magest](https://twitter.com/Gironde_Magest)), wind and incident light intensity (Météo  
182 France). Urban wastewater discharges are included in the model (Fig.1).

183 The reference simulation is based on the real conditions of year 2006, which was a critical  
184 year from the point of view of river discharge, temperature and hypoxia. A 21-days heat



185 wave occurred and the summer water temperature reached a maximum of 29.5°C, with an  
186 average of 24.6°C. The reference simulation considered a severe and constant low flow of 40  
187 m<sup>3</sup>s<sup>-1</sup> from July 15 to September 30, which is different from the real river flow recorded, but  
188 helps to visualize the impact of potential solutions on oxygenation (Fig.2a). However, we  
189 used urban effluents time series of 2014, as the WWTP rehabilitation in 2011 permitted to  
190 reduce the percentage of SO discharge (12% in 2014; 16% in 2006).

### 191 **2.3 The scenarios**

192 Several scenarios have been designed to assess the efficiency of the retained management  
193 strategies to improve DO levels of the Tidal Garonne River (Tab.1): optimization of urban  
194 wastewater network and water replenishment during low water periods.

195 Two main actions of wastewater management were simulated (Tab.2):

- 196 - the increase of wastewater storage during heavy rains. For this, a fraction of 10, 20,  
197 30, 40 and 50%, of untreated wastewater SO was transferred to WWTP discharges;
- 198 - the implementation of an outfall, that releases urban effluents downstream. Two  
199 wastewater discharge points were tested: at 11 km (PK15) and 21 km (PK25)  
200 downstream Bordeaux (Fig.1). Although this solution seems difficult to implement  
201 due to technical and financial constraints, it is interesting to investigate its potential  
202 environmental benefits.

203 For the support of low river flow during the driest season, two actions were tested according  
204 to the available volume of stored water (Tab.2):

- 205 - a low-intensity and long-term support (LTS) from 15<sup>th</sup> July, by 10, 20 and 30 m<sup>3</sup>s<sup>-1</sup>  
206 during 67, 33 and 22 days, respectively.



207 - an intense and short-term support (STS) as an emergency solution, by 100, 200 and  
208  $400 \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$  at spring tide from July 27 to 29 (3 days), corresponding to a water volume  
209 of 16, 41 and  $93 \text{ hm}^3$ , respectively.

210 Finally, two scenarios which couple wastewater management actions and the support of low  
211 river flow were simulated (Tab.2):

212 - a LTS of  $10 \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$  during 67 days was combined to the reduction of 50% of untreated  
213 wastewater SO which is transferred to WWTP discharges;

214 - a LTS of  $10 \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$  during 67 days was combined to the reduction of 50% of untreated  
215 wastewater SO which is transferred to WWTP discharges and to the relocation of  
216 wastewater discharges at 11 km (PK15) downstream Bordeaux (Fig.1).

217 Each of the 16 scenarios were run over 10 months, from the January 1 to October 31. To  
218 evaluate the improvement of DO level, three indicators were used: (1) the minimum DO  
219 value ( $\text{DO}_{\min}$ ); (2) the number of hypoxia days, i.e.  $\text{DO} < 2 \text{ mg.L}^{-1}$ ; and (3) the summer-  
220 averaged rates of biogeochemical processes consuming DO at Bordeaux and Portets. The grid  
221 cells in front of Bordeaux and Portets were chosen because Bordeaux is directly under the  
222 impact of urban effluents and Portets represents the presence of TMZ in the upper TGR.

## 223 **3 Results**

### 224 **3.1 Action 1: Wastewater management**

#### 225 • **Action 1.1: Reduction of sewage overflows**

226 The simulations of sewage overflow reduction do not show an increase of  $\text{DO}_{\min}$  at Bordeaux  
227 and Portets (Tab.2). However, some short but significant differences in modeled DO time  
228 series in Bordeaux are noticeable during the largest sewage overflow flow events (Fig.2c).



229 For the scenario SO-50%, there is a slight increase of DO level by 6 and 2 %sat in late June  
230 and mid-August, respectively (Fig.2c). The total DO consumption by biogeochemical  
231 processes decreases up to 6% at Bordeaux (Tab.3). The rate of mineralization of urban  
232 organic matter decreases considerably, by 31% and 33% with a reduction of 50% of SO flow  
233 at Bordeaux and Portets, respectively (Tab.3). In fact, at Bordeaux the material brought by  
234 the SO contributes to 7% of total DO consumption with the reduction of 50% against 13%  
235 without reduction (Fig.2d). In addition, the contribution of WWTP matter degradation  
236 represents 16% when untreated water discharge is reduced by 50%, against 14% without  
237 reduction (Fig.2d). In contrast, the nitrification process is slightly increased by the reduction  
238 of SO flow (Tab.3) because the wastewater removed from SOs is transferred to WWTPs,  
239 which are enriched in ammonia compared to SOs (Lanoux, 2013).

240 In these simulations, sudden events of wastewater releases from SO (end-June) did not occur  
241 simultaneously with the maximum of temperature (i.e. end-July). In such a case, a more  
242 critical hypoxia event would have occurred. However, the modelling results show that  
243 improvement of SO management contributes to improve DO level only locally and temporary  
244 at the vicinity of the city of Bordeaux.

245 **• Action 1.2: Downstream relocation of wastewater discharges**

246 In the case of a relocation of urban effluents discharge at PK15, only 4 days of hypoxia are  
247 simulated with a minimum of  $1.8 \text{ mg.L}^{-1}$  (Tab.2), which represents a reduction of 9 days in  
248 comparison with the reference simulation. In case of a relocation of urban effluents discharge  
249 more downstream at PK25, the model simulates no hypoxia and a minimum DO value of  $2.1$   
250  $\text{mg.L}^{-1}$  (Tab.2). According to the model, the displacement of the urban wastewater discharge  
251 point downstream shows a significant improvement of oxygen levels in the TGR around  
252 Bordeaux (Tab.2 & Fig.3) and appears to be an efficient action to mitigate hypoxia near  
253 Bordeaux (Fig.3). Under these relocation scenarios, the amount of urban organic matter and



254 ammonia are lower at Bordeaux. Urban effluents are diluted by downstream estuarine waters  
255 and exported toward the Gironde. In fact, urban matters reach the city of Pauillac, about 50  
256 km downstream Bordeaux (Fig. 1) after 1 and 1.5 days when effluents are released at PK25  
257 and PK15, respectively, against 2.5 days when they are discharged near Bordeaux. With the  
258 relocation of urban discharge downstream, DO levels are strongly improved in the TGR,  
259 without significantly altering the oxygenation condition downstream. This is due to shorter  
260 residence times and larger dilution with oxygenated estuarine waters downstream.

261 A downstream relocation (PK15 or PK25) significantly decreases total DO consumption in  
262 the lower TGR, by 33% and 47% respectively: the mineralization of urban matter is reduced  
263 by 65% and 95%, and the nitrification by 47% and 69%, respectively (Tab.3). At Portets,  
264 even if the total DO consumption decreases only by 8%, the degradation of urban matter  
265 decreases strongly by 76% and 94% and the nitrification is reduced by 17% and 20% when  
266 urban effluents are discharged in PK 15 and PK25, respectively (Tab.3). In fact the  
267 mineralization of urban matter occurs downstream of TGR with little impact on DO due to  
268 dilution effect with estuarine waters. Finally, at Bordeaux the contribution of urban effluents  
269 on DO consumption decreases from 27% to 2% and nitrification from 20% to 10% (Fig. 3d).

270 The discharge of wastewater downstream city center improves considerably the water quality  
271 in the vicinity of Bordeaux. However, hypoxia persists in Portets (30 hypoxic days, Tab.2 &  
272 Fig.3), because in the upper TGR, hypoxia is mainly due to very high turbidities and low  
273 water renewal.

### 274 **3.2 Action 2: Support of summer river discharge**

#### 275 • **Action 2.1: Low intensity and long-term support of summer river discharge**

276 The simulations of low-intensity and long-term support (LTS) of water flow show an increase  
277 of  $DO_{\min}$  not only at Portets, but also at Bordeaux (Tab.2). At Bordeaux, the  $DO_{\min}$  increases



278 only by  $0.3 \text{ mg}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$  and the number of simulated hypoxia days decreases only by 2 days for a  
279 discharge increase of  $30 \text{ m}^3\text{s}^{-1}$ . However in Portets, oxygen levels are much more improved:  
280 the additional flows reduce significantly the number of hypoxic days: it drops from 52 days  
281 (reference simulation) to 29, 39 days or 40 days for a support of 10, 20 or  $30 \text{ m}^3\text{s}^{-1}$   
282 respectively (Tab2).

283 Significant effects of maintaining summer river discharge in the area of Bordeaux are the  
284 decrease of nitrification processes and the increase of mineralization of matter coming from  
285 the watershed (Tab.3). At Portets, nitrification and mineralization of organic matter are  
286 decreased due to the reduced input of urban water upstream (Tab.3).

287 These simulations show that a low-intensity and long-term support of river flow reduces  
288 considerably hypoxia events in the upper TGR, but not sufficiently to influence significantly  
289 Bordeaux waters. The average time to renew half of the water volume in Bordeaux is 22 and  
290 67 days in cases of river flows increased by 10 and  $30 \text{ m}^3\text{s}^{-1}$ , respectively. By comparison, at  
291 Portets, the renewal times are only 3 and 11 days, respectively. The option of low-intensity  
292 support needs to be sufficiently long to maintain good oxygen level during all summer in the  
293 upper TGR. An additional river flow  $> 10 \text{ m}^3\text{s}^{-1}$  during two months will be a feasibly solution  
294 to avoid hypoxia events upstream Bordeaux, and freshwater storage should be optimized to  
295 reach these objectives.

296 **• Action 2.2: Intense and Short-term support of low water discharges**

297 An intense and short-term support (STS) of freshwater induces a strong dilution of estuarine  
298 water with well-oxygenated fluvial waters due to the large amount of water supply (100, 200  
299 and  $400 \text{ m}^3\text{s}^{-1}$ ) (Fig.4 & Fig.5). Model results show a decrease of the number of hypoxia days  
300 in Bordeaux and Portets (Tab.2). Water half-renewal times are less than 1 day at Portets, and  
301 decrease from 6.6 to 1.6 at Bordeaux with increasing discharge support from 100 to  $400 \text{ m}^3\text{s}^{-1}$



302 <sup>1</sup>. During STS, DO concentrations increase faster at Portets than at Bordeaux (Fig.4 & Fig.5).  
303 During a semi-diurnal tidal cycle, DO rises by 9 %sat at Bordeaux and by 56 %sat at Portets  
304 with an input of 400 m<sup>3</sup>s<sup>-1</sup>. Higher is the river flow support, faster waters of TGR are  
305 reoxygenated.  
306 The total oxygen consumption decreases only in Portets with STS (Tab.3). At Bordeaux, the  
307 decrease of nitrification is counterbalanced with an increase of river organic matter  
308 mineralization (Tab.3). The intense short-term support moves the TMZ downstream Portets,  
309 reducing organic matter mineralization in the area of Portets (Tab.3 & Fig.4).  
310 Intense STS (400m<sup>3</sup>s<sup>-1</sup>) is not able to maintain good level of oxygen all summer long. After  
311 the massive water input, DO level stays above the hypoxia threshold during one or two weeks  
312 only and then decreases again (Fig.5). This type of management is very powerful as an urgent  
313 remediation during a severe hypoxia to improve quickly the oxygenation levels of TGR  
314 waters, more particularly in the upper section of the tidal river. For example, during the heat  
315 wave of end-July 2006 (Fig.2c), STS would have avoided hypoxia. In the case of a late  
316 hypoxia occurring at the end of the summer, STS may be efficient if the stored water volume  
317 is sufficient.

### 318 **3.3 Synthesis of management actions efficiency**

319 These different simulated scenarii allow us to estimate quantitatively the efficiency of  
320 different options of management to reduce hypoxia in the TGR. The two management  
321 solutions have locally different impacts on DO (Tab.4): optimization of urban wastewater  
322 network reduces hypoxia in the lower TGR, whereas the water replenishment during low  
323 water periods enhances DO levels in the upper TGR. The improvement of wastewater  
324 network by a reduction of labile organic matter input reduces oxygen consumption in  
325 Bordeaux waters. The alternative, consisting in discharging urban effluents downstream the  
326 lower TGR, has the advantage to dilute wastewater with the Gironde water and to favor their





327 dispersion downstream in the wider sections of the estuary. In addition, taking into account  
328 the increasing gradient of temperature landward (Schmidt, personal data), wastewater  
329 effluents would be discharged in cooler waters, about 1-2°C, than at Bordeaux. The water  
330 replenishment during low water periods is also a powerful solution, which favors the  
331 dilution of upper TGR waters with well oxygenated freshwater and limits the upstream TMZ  
332 displacement. The scenario combining an increase of  $10 \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$  of the Garonne River flow, a  
333 reduction of 50% of SO releases and discharge of urban effluents at PK15 suggests an  
334 improvement of water quality over the entire TGR (Fig.6): only 2 days below the hypoxia  
335 threshold (Tab.2) and the oxygen consumption by urban matter degradation is totally reduced  
336 (Tab.3).

337 Regarding the projected population growth of Bordeaux city (one millions inhabitants will be  
338 reached in 2030) and the objectives of the European Water Framework Directive to maintain  
339 a good water quality, the reduction of the impact of urban wastewater networks in urban areas  
340 appears as a major challenge for the coming years. The construction of an outfall under the  
341 river could be an efficient solution to mitigate total hypoxia at Bordeaux but this solution is  
342 for instance an academic scenario considering its cost and technical constraints. Moreover the  
343 environmental impact of such construction can hinder this solution. The support of summer  
344 river flow could be certainly optimized by reducing water use for agricultural practice in the  
345 watershed during summer and by improving the release of stored water as a function of  
346 meteorological conditions. In the case of defavorable conditions (heat wave, drought) early  
347 summer, LTS could be implemented. But if these conditions occur late summer, intense STS  
348 could be considered. An alternative solution could be intermittent supports, with water  
349 release of  $100 \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$  during spring tide all summer long (July and August, i.e. 4 spring tides).  
350 By continuing the improvement of urban wastewater network and by maintaining good river



351 flow level simultaneously, the both management options may improve oxygen level on the  
352 TGR.

#### 353 **4 Conclusion**

354 The 3D biogeochemical model for the Tidal Garonne River coupling hydrodynamics and  
355 sediment transport was applied to assess the efficiency of different management solutions to  
356 improve the DO level of waters. This study tested different scenarios of management  
357 solutions that can be implemented by local water authorities to maintain the best water  
358 quality as possible. Whereas a reduction of SO flows contributes only to improve locally and  
359 temporary DO levels, the downstream relocation of WWTP outfalls totally mitigates hypoxia  
360 in TGR and seems to be the most efficient management solution, despite being difficult to  
361 implement in practice. The support of low river flow limits the propagation of TMZ upstream  
362 of the TGR and dilutes estuarine waters with fresh oxygenated waters. A low-intensity  
363 support over the summer maintains a good oxygen level of waters during all the drought  
364 period and prevents hypoxia in the upper TGR. In contrast, an intense support of low water  
365 flow during 3 days improves quickly and considerably oxygen levels along the entire TGR,  
366 but only during few weeks. The improvement of urban effluents network and the support of  
367 low river flow periods from dams, or irrigation reduction, are complementary. They  
368 contribute to reoxygenate waters near the city of Bordeaux and upstream of Tidal Garonne  
369 River, respectively. The biogeochemical numerical model turns out helpful to guide  
370 management policy of urban effluents and watershed, in order to limit and mitigate hypoxia  
371 events.

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475 **Table 1: Forcing of the different scenarios simulated with the model.**

Scenarios	River flow	Wastewater flow
Reference	$Q_{ref} = Q_{G/D} 2006 + Q_G = 40 \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$ from 15/07 to 30/09	$Q_{WW} 2006$
WW of 2014 (WWTP rehabilitated)	Qref	$Q_{WW} 2014$
SO -10%	Qref	$Q_{WW} 2014 - 10\%$ SO
SO -20%	Qref	$Q_{WW} 2014 - 20\%$ SO
SO -30%	Qref	$Q_{WW} 2014 - 30\%$ SO
SO -40%	Qref	$Q_{WW} 2014 - 40\%$ SO
SO -50%	Qref	$Q_{WW} 2014 - 50\%$ SO
Management of wastewater discharges		
Release moved to PK15	Qref	$Q_{WW} 2014$ at Parempuyre
Release moved to PK25	Qref	$Q_{WW} 2014$ at Bec d' Ambès
Support of low river flow		
+10 $\text{m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$	$Q_{ref}; Q_G < 50 \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1} : Q_G + 10 \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$ over 67 days	$Q_{WW} 2006$
+20 $\text{m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$	$Q_{ref}; Q_G < 50 \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1} : Q_G + 20 \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$ over 33 days	$Q_{WW} 2006$
+30 $\text{m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$	$Q_{ref}; Q_G < 50 \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1} : Q_G + 30 \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$ over 22 days	$Q_{WW} 2006$
+100 $\text{m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$	$Q_{ref}; Q_G + 100 \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$ over 3 days	$Q_{WW} 2006$
+200 $\text{m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$	$Q_{ref}; Q_G + 200 \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$ over 3 days	$Q_{WW} 2006$
+400 $\text{m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$	$Q_{ref}; Q_G + 400 \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$ over 3 days	$Q_{WW} 2006$
Combined options		
-50% +10 $\text{m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$	$Q_{ref}; Q_G < 50 \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1} : Q_G + 10 \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$ over 67 days	$Q_{WW} 2014 - 50\%$ SO
-50% + PK15 +10 $\text{m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$	$Q_{ref}; Q_G < 50 \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1} : Q_G + 10 \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$ over 67 days	$Q_{WW} 2014 - 50\%$ SO at Parempuyre



476 **Table 2:** Minimum simulated DO (in % of saturation and in  $\text{mg}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ ), the corresponding temperature and the number of hypoxia days in  
 477 Bordeaux and Portets for each scenario.

Scenarios	Bordeaux				Portets			
	T (°C)	DO <sub>min</sub> (%)	DO <sub>min</sub> ( $\text{mg}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ )	Days of hypoxia	T (°C)	DO <sub>min</sub> (%)	DO <sub>min</sub> ( $\text{mg}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ )	Days of hypoxia
Reference	27.4	13.5	1.0	13	24.4	8	0.7	52
<b>WW of 2014</b>	27.3	16.4	1.3	17	24.4	8.5	0.7	39
-10%	27.3	16.5	1.3	16	24.4	8.6	0.7	38
-20%	27.3	16.5	1.3	16	24.4	8.6	0.7	38
-30%	27.3	16.5	1.3	16	24.4	8.6	0.7	38
-40%	27.3	16.6	1.3	14	24.4	8.6	0.7	37
-50%	27.3	16.6	1.3	13	24.4	8.6	0.7	37
<b>Release moved to PK15</b>	26.9	23.5	1.8	4	24.4	9.7	0.8	33
<b>Realease moved to PK25</b>	26.9	26.9	2.1	0	24.4	10	0.8	32
<b>Support of low river flow</b>								
+10 $\text{m}\cdot\text{s}^{-1}$	26.9	13.8	1.1	13	24.4	12.7	1.0	29
+20 $\text{m}\cdot\text{s}^{-1}$	26.8	15.3	1.2	11	24.4	8.3	0.7	39
+30 $\text{m}\cdot\text{s}^{-1}$	26.8	17	1.3	11	24.4	8.3	0.7	40
+100 $\text{m}\cdot\text{s}^{-1}$	26.9	12.3	1.0	12	24.4	8.4	0.7	48
+200 $\text{m}\cdot\text{s}^{-1}$	27.4	14.5	1.1	10	24.4	8.3	0.7	44
+400 $\text{m}\cdot\text{s}^{-1}$	27.7	16.7	1.3	5	24.4	9.1	0.7	37
<b>Combined options</b>								
-50% +10 $\text{m}\cdot\text{s}^{-1}$	26.9	14.5	2	14	24.4	12.5	1	26
-50% + PK15 +10 $\text{m}\cdot\text{s}^{-1}$	26.9	24.9	2	2	26.9	14.1	1.1	22







480 **Table 4: Summary of management solutions efficiency and recommendations**

Management Solutions	Efficiency to mitigate hypoxia		Recommendation
	Lower TGR	Upper TGR	
SO reduction: -50 %	++	+	Implementation of SOs
WW discharges at PK15	+++	+	WWTP outfall relocation
WW discharges at PK25	+++	+	WWTP outfall relocation
LTS	+	++	Preventive measures against hypoxia: reduction of freshwater substruction during summer
STS	++	+++	Curative measures at spring tide during severe drought
LTS - SO reduction -50 %	+	++	reduction of freshwater substruction during summer implementation of SOs
LTS - SO reduction: -50 % - WW discharges at PK15	+++	++	reduction of freshwater substruction during summer implementation of SOs WWTP outfall relocation



481 **Figure 1:** The Gironde-Garonne-Dordogne estuary including the Tidal Garonne River in the  
482 southwestern France (Inset B). “PK” denotes the distances in km from the city center of  
483 Bordeaux; the control grid cell at Bordeaux is at PK-4 and Portets is at PK-20. The inset A  
484 precises the position of sewage overflows (purple triangles) and of the two wastewater  
485 treatment plants (green squares). The area in orange represents the area of Bordeaux for  
486 which the biogeochemical fluxes were calculated.

487

488 **Figure 2:** Time series of Garonne River (black) and Dordogne River (grey) flow of the  
489 reference simulation (a,  $\text{m}^3\text{s}^{-1}$ ), wastewater discharges (WWTP+SO) for year 2006 (green)  
490 and 2014 (blue) (b,  $\text{m}^3\text{s}^{-1}$ ). Comparison of simulated  $\text{DO}_{\min}$  evolution (over tidal cycle in  
491 %sat) in Bordeaux with urban effluents of 2014 (blue) or a 50% reduction of SOs (red) (c).  
492 The contribution on DO consumption (%) of degradation of watershed organic matter  
493 (brown), WWTP (red), SO (green) and nitrification (blue) in Bordeaux (d). For nitrification  
494 processes, ammonium is coming from watershed and wastewater.

495 **Figure 3:** Snapshot of the vertical transect of simulated DO saturation along the Garonne  
496 tidal river for the scenarios with an urban effluents discharges points in Bordeaux (a), at  
497 PK15 (b) and at PK25 (c). P1, P2 and P3 indicate the locations of Bec d’Ambès, Bordeaux  
498 and Portets, respectively. The contribution on DO consumption (%) of degradation of  
499 watershed (brown), WWTP (red), SO (green) and nitrification (blue) processes at Bordeaux  
500 (d). For nitrification processes, ammonium is coming from watershed and wastewater.

501 **Figure 4:** Snapshot of the vertical transect of simulated DO concentration in %sat along the  
502 Garonne tidal river for the scenarios of reference (a), short river flow increases by  $100 \text{ m}^3\text{s}^{-1}$   
503 (b),  $200 \text{ m}^3\text{s}^{-1}$  (c) and  $400 \text{ m}^3\text{s}^{-1}$  (d). P1, P2 and P3 indicate the locations of Bec d’Ambès,  
504 Bordeaux and Portets, respectively.

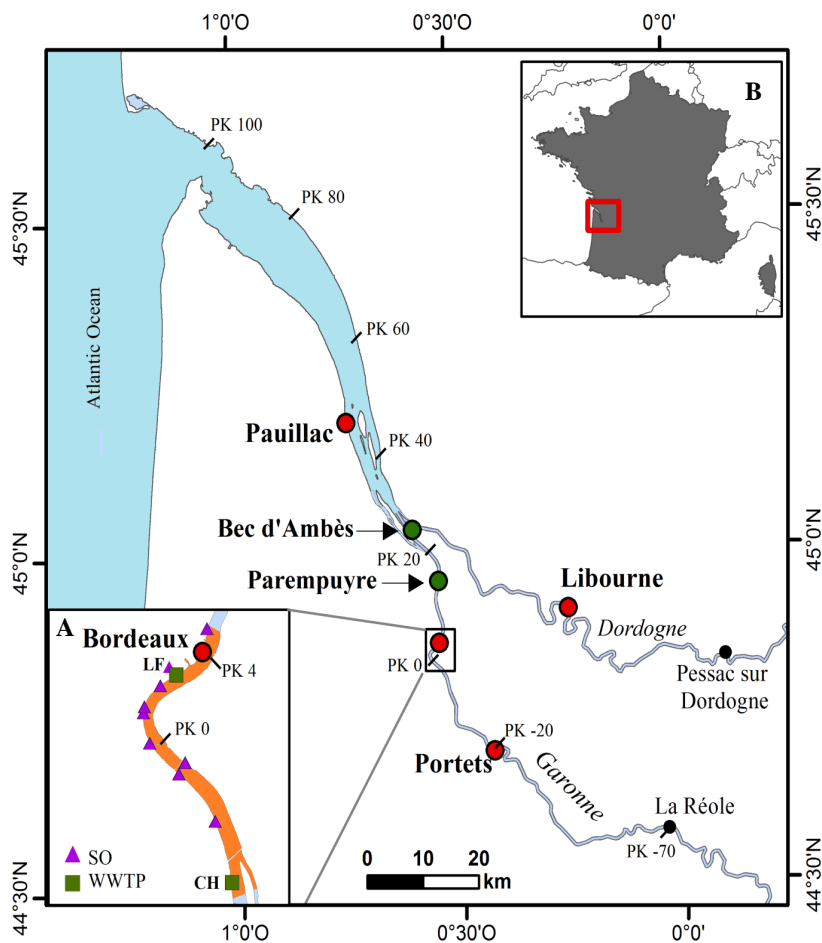
505 **Figure 5:** Time series of river flow (top,  $\text{m}^3\text{s}^{-1}$ ), DO at Bordeaux (middle, %sat) and DO at  
506 Portets (bottom, %sat) for the scenarios of short river flow increases by  $100 \text{ m}^3\text{s}^{-1}$  (a, d and  
507 g),  $200 \text{ m}^3\text{s}^{-1}$  (b, e and h) and  $400 \text{ m}^3\text{s}^{-1}$  (c, f and i). Blue line represents the simulation of  
508 reference.

509 **Figure 6:** Spatiotemporal evolution of daily average surface DO (saturation in %) along the  
510 Tidal Garonne River section for the scenarios of reference (a) combining  $+10 \text{ m}^3\text{s}^{-1}$  of river  
511 flow and reduction of 50% of SO releases (b), and  $+10 \text{ m}^3\text{s}^{-1}$  of river flow, a reduction of 50%  
512 of SO releases and urban effluents discharges at PK15 (c). The y-axis represents the  
513 kilometric points, and the white lines represent Bordeaux and Portets.

514



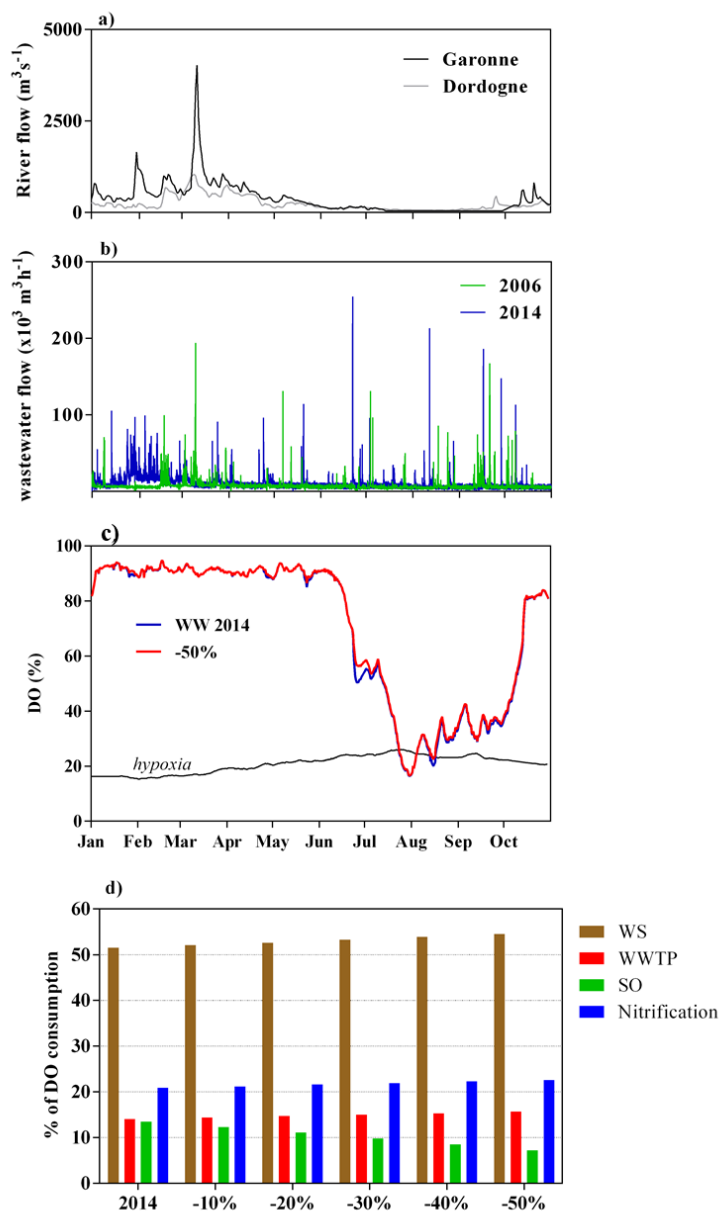
515 **Figure 1**



516



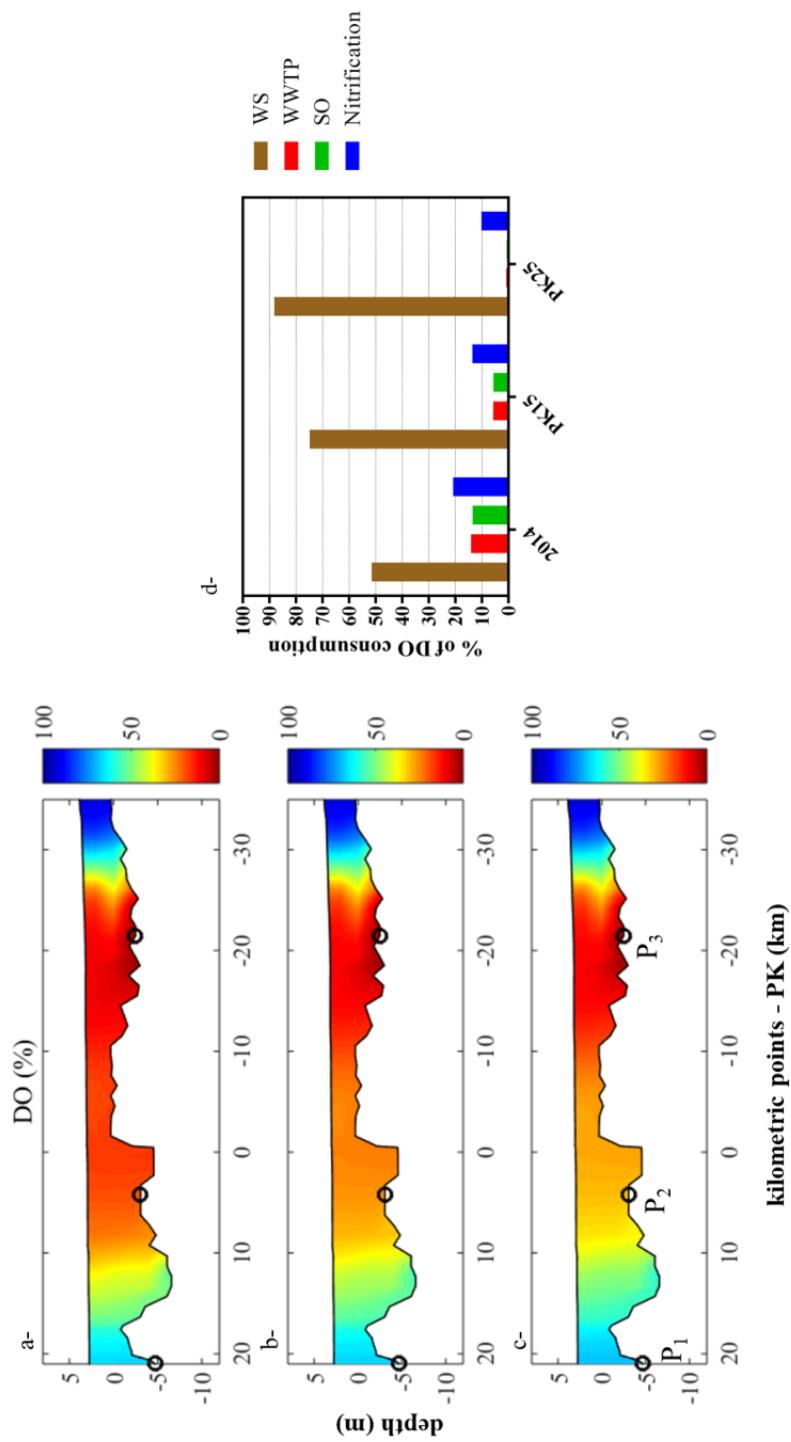
517 **Figure 2**



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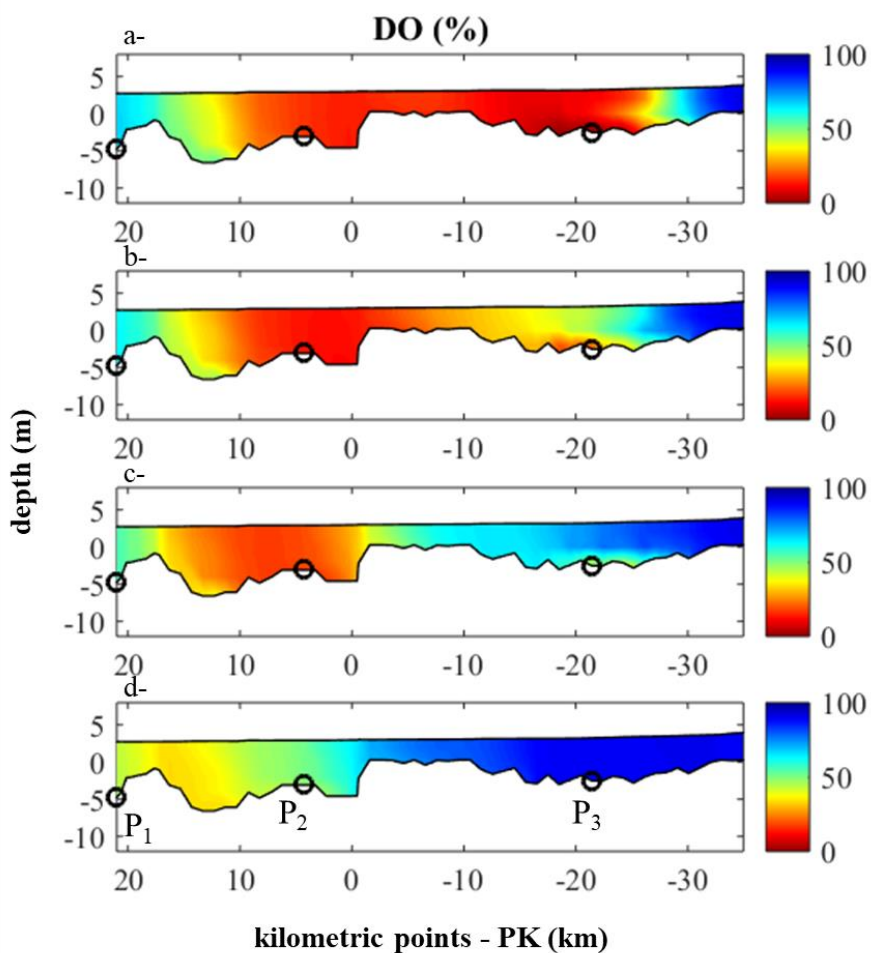


519 **Figure 3**





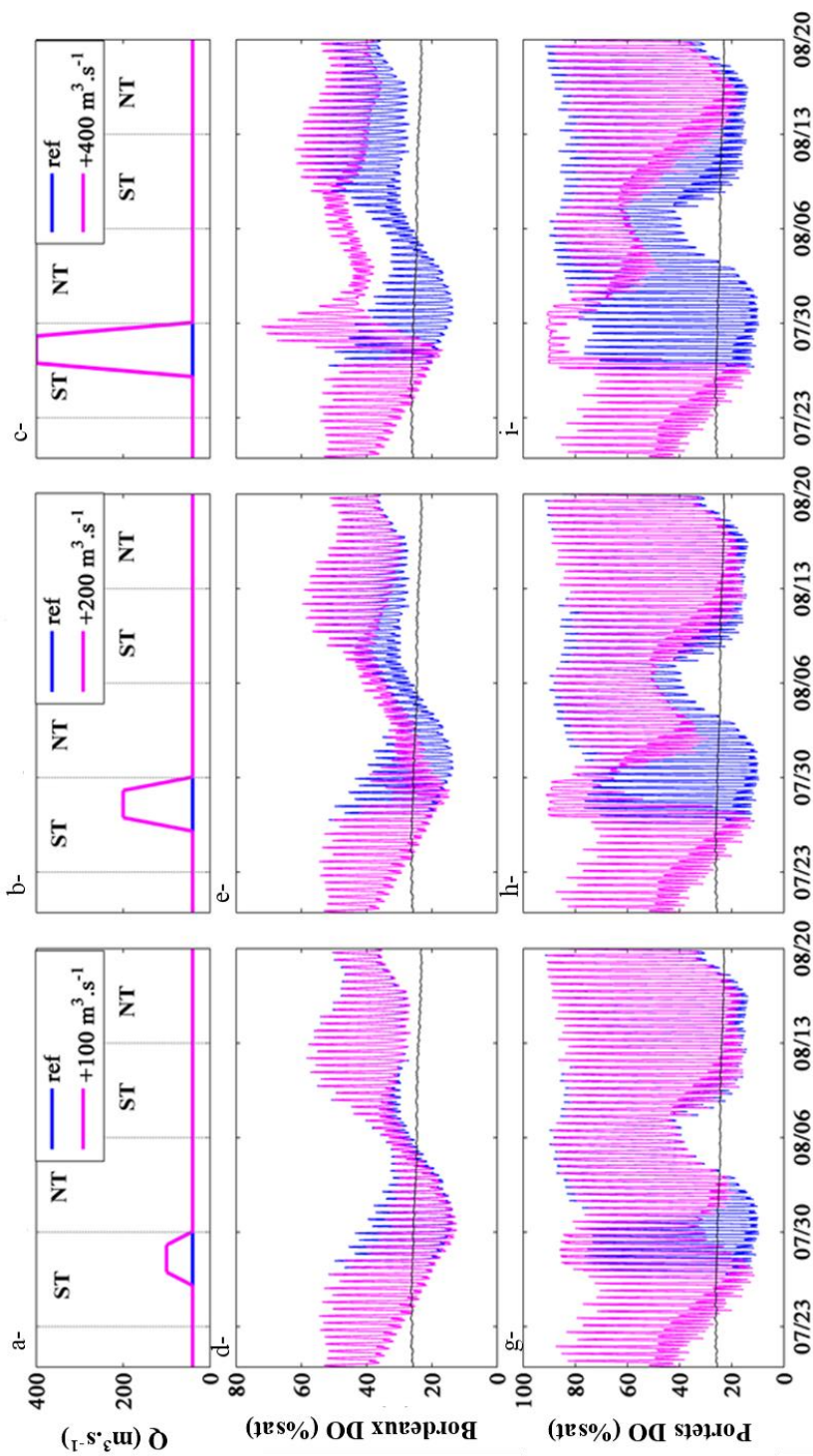
521 **Figure 4**



522



523 **Figure 5**

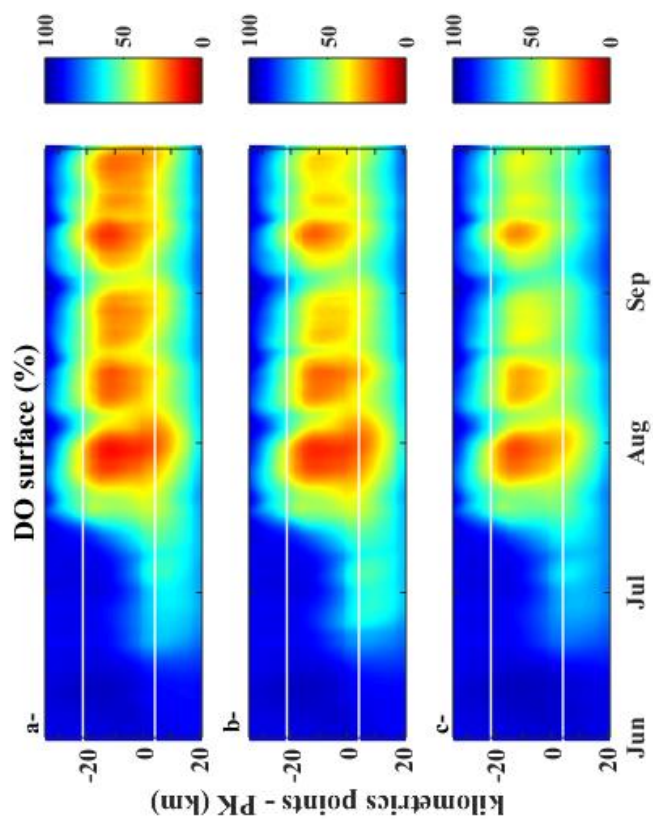


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525 **Figure 6**



526