Interactive comment on “Carbon export and sequestration in the southern Benguela upwelling system: lower and upper estimates” by H. N. Waldron et al.

Anonymous Referee #1

Received and published: 21 August 2009

In this paper three different estimates of carbon export from the southern Benguela upwelling system are contrasted. All of the estimates had been reported previously, so the paper doesn’t add much if any in terms of new results. The paper is not particularly well written and would greatly benefit from a thorough revision. I can’t recommend publication in the present form.

Furthermore, I have major concerns about the concept underlying the Waldron estimate on page 1177: The equation on line 5 (C=A+B) says that New Production (C) is equal to upwelled nitrate (A) plus recycled nitrate (B). In my opinion this is wrong. By definition New Production does not use recycled nutrients. The equation on line 6 (C=D+E) says that New Production is the sum of the fraction of New Production that is advected offshore and sinks below the permanent thermocline (D) and the fraction that sinks on the shelf (E). There will also be a significant fraction that is advected offshore but doesn’t sink below the thermocline. Why is this not accounted for?

Specific comments not in order of importance:

Lines 18-19: The open ocean is not always nutrient limited (e.g. Southern Ocean or North Atlantic in winter) and doesn’t always have low primary productivity and biomass (e.g. spring blooms in temperate latitudes, open ocean upwelling regions).

P. 1174, Line 21-22: What do “the former” and “the latter” refer to?

P. 1174, Line 24: Toggweiler is misspelled (no double l)


P. 1175, Line 2-3: “Previous studies have upheld the view that the modest areal extent of the ocean margins account for a disproportionately large fraction of total ocean productivity . . .” What does this sentence mean? Are the authors trying to say that despite their relatively limited areal extent the margins account for a large fraction of total productivity?

P. 1175, Line 7: “In respect of the NE USA, . . .” is awkward.

P. 1175, Line 15: This was stated by who?

P. 1175, Line 20: “. . . meridional contrasts in ocean-atmosphere CO2 fluxes” What are these contrasts specifically?

P. 1175, Line 26-27: A hypothesis contrasting the southern and northern Benguela system is formulated. Why is this hypothesis posed when only the southern part is considered in this manuscript?
Interactive comment on Ocean Sci. Discuss., 6, 1173, 2009.

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