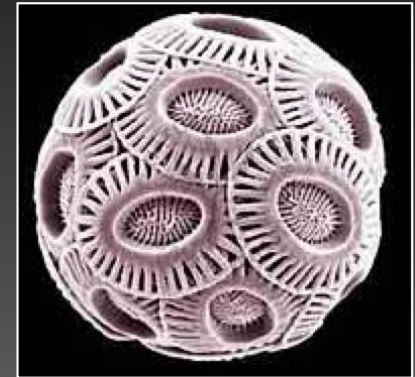


Vignettes

- Light and nutrients: defining the drivers of physiological ecology and competition in microeukaryotes



- Host-microbiome interactions: Tracking the microbiome of a keystone N₂ fixer



Core questions

Host-microbiome interactions

- What is the role of the microbiome in *Trichodesmium* physiological ecology
 - Who is there?
 - What are they doing?
 - Are they interacting?

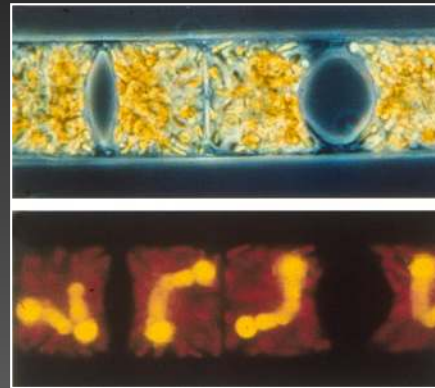


Nitrogen-fixing marine cyanobacteria

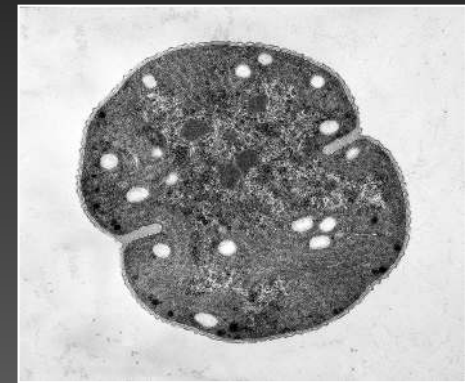
- Symbionts

- UNCYN-A
- *Richelia*

Richelia



Crocospaera



- Free-living

- *Crocospaera*
- *Trichodesmium*

-*Trichodesmium erythraeum*

Clade III

-*Trichodesmium tenue*

-*Trichodesmium contortum*

Clade II

-*Trichodesmium* spp. (*miru*, *nobis*)*

* Delmont et al. (2021) PNAS

-*Trichodesmium thiebautii*

Clade I

-*Trichodesmium spiralis*

-*Trichodesmium hildebrandtii*

Clade IV

Trichodesmium



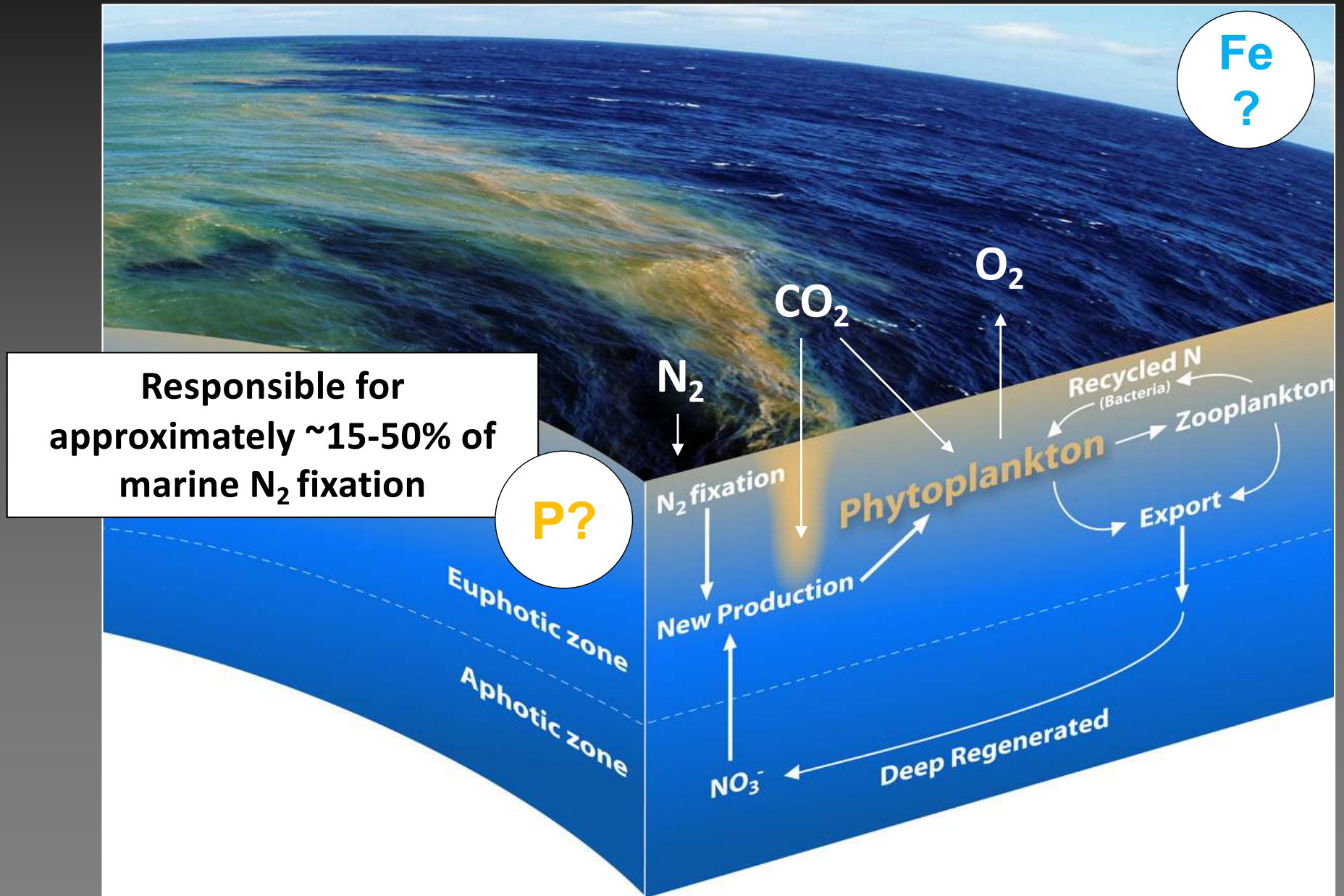


Trichodesmium: critical to ecosystem function

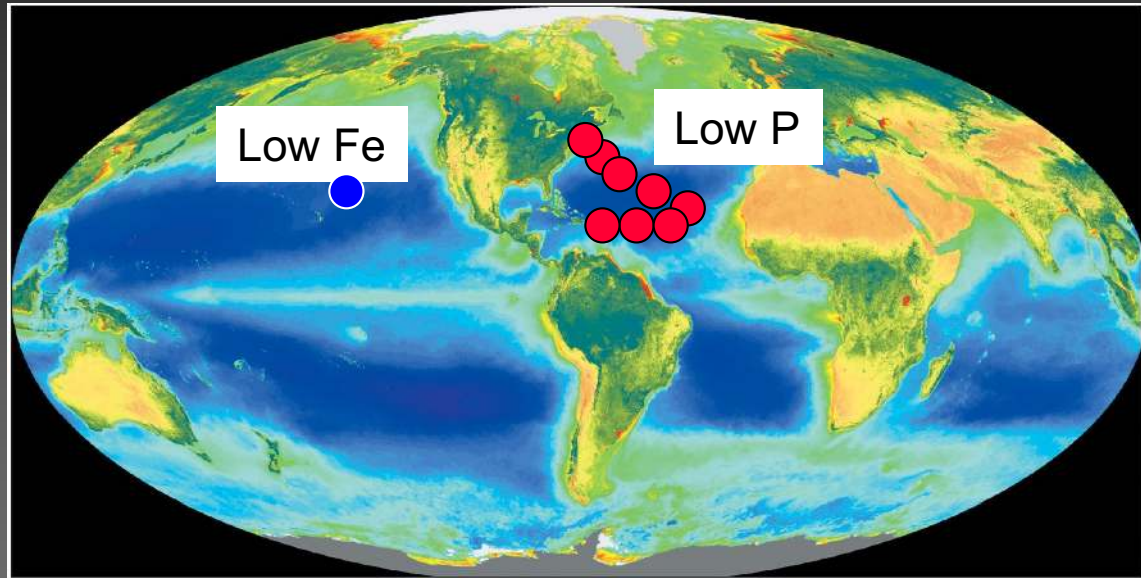


Photo: Chris Wade
Tricho. micrograph: WHOI

Trichodesmium: critical to ecosystem function



Predicting the role of Fe and P in *Trichodesmium* distribution and N₂ fixation



North Atlantic
P-limited?

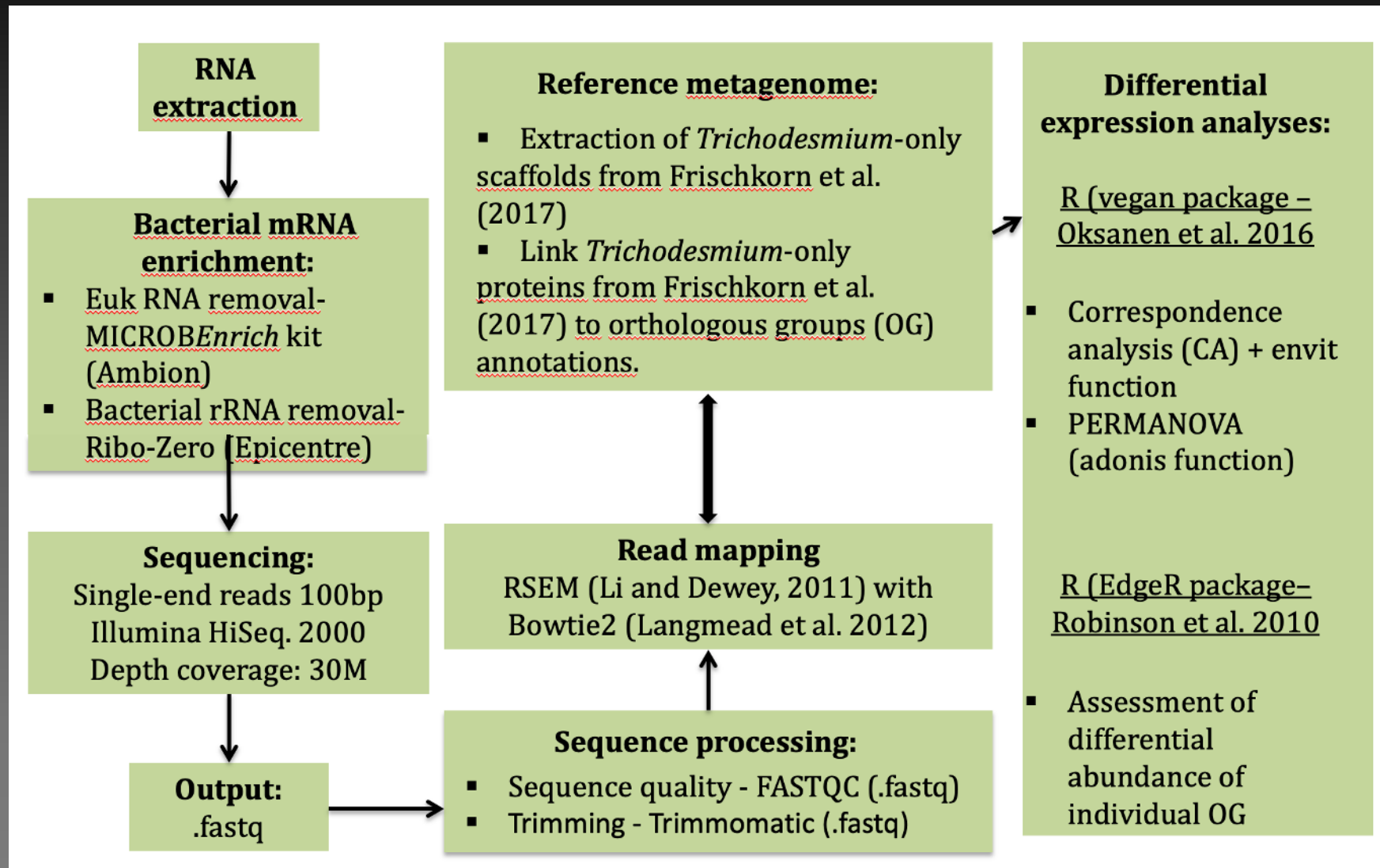
North Pacific
Fe-limited?

2000s

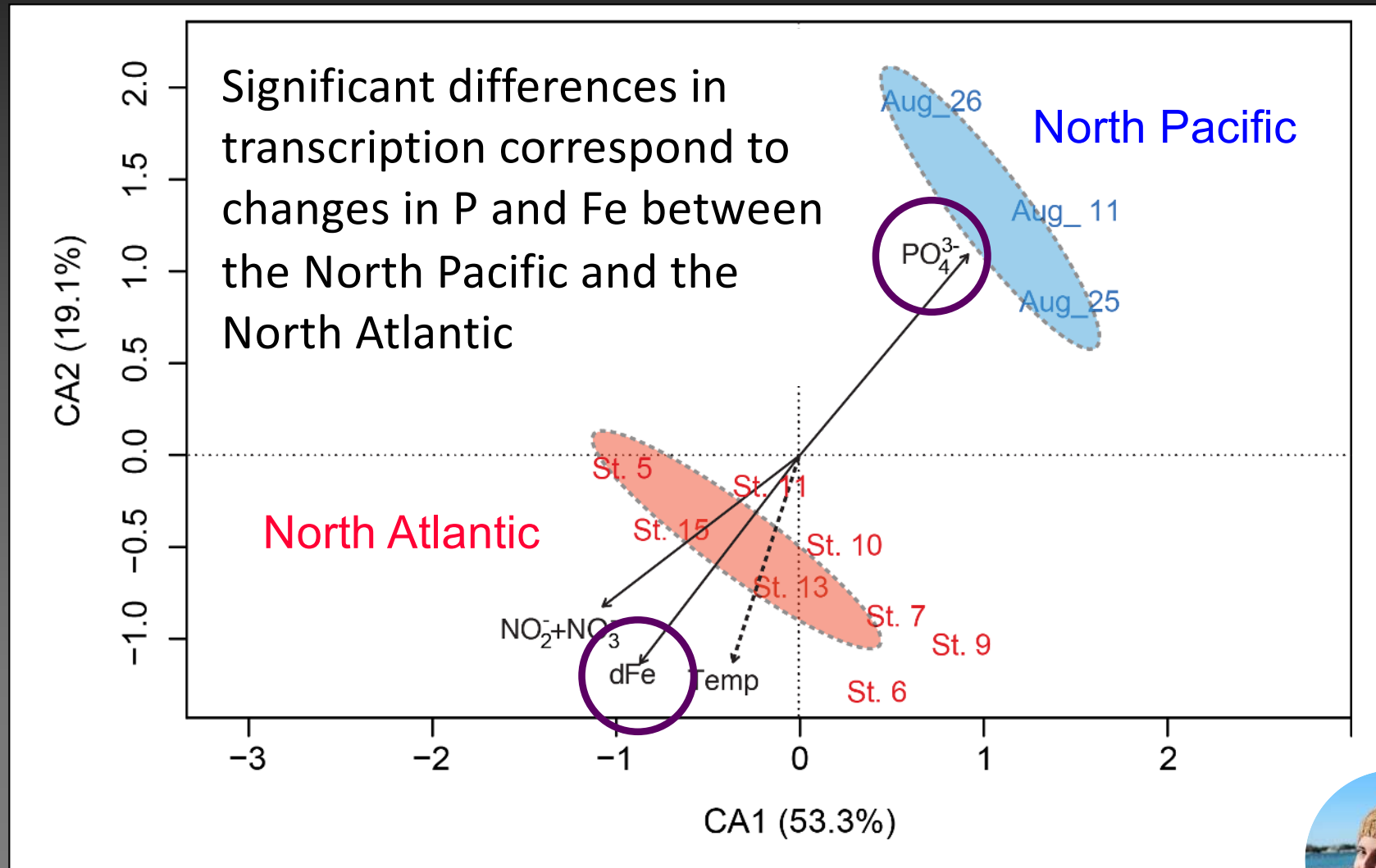
- Protein biomarkers: Dyhrman et al. (2002) *L&O*
- qRT-PCR of transcript biomarkers: Dyhrman et al. (2006) *Nature*

2010s

- Metagenomics and Metatranscriptomics: Rouco et al. (2018) *ISME J.*

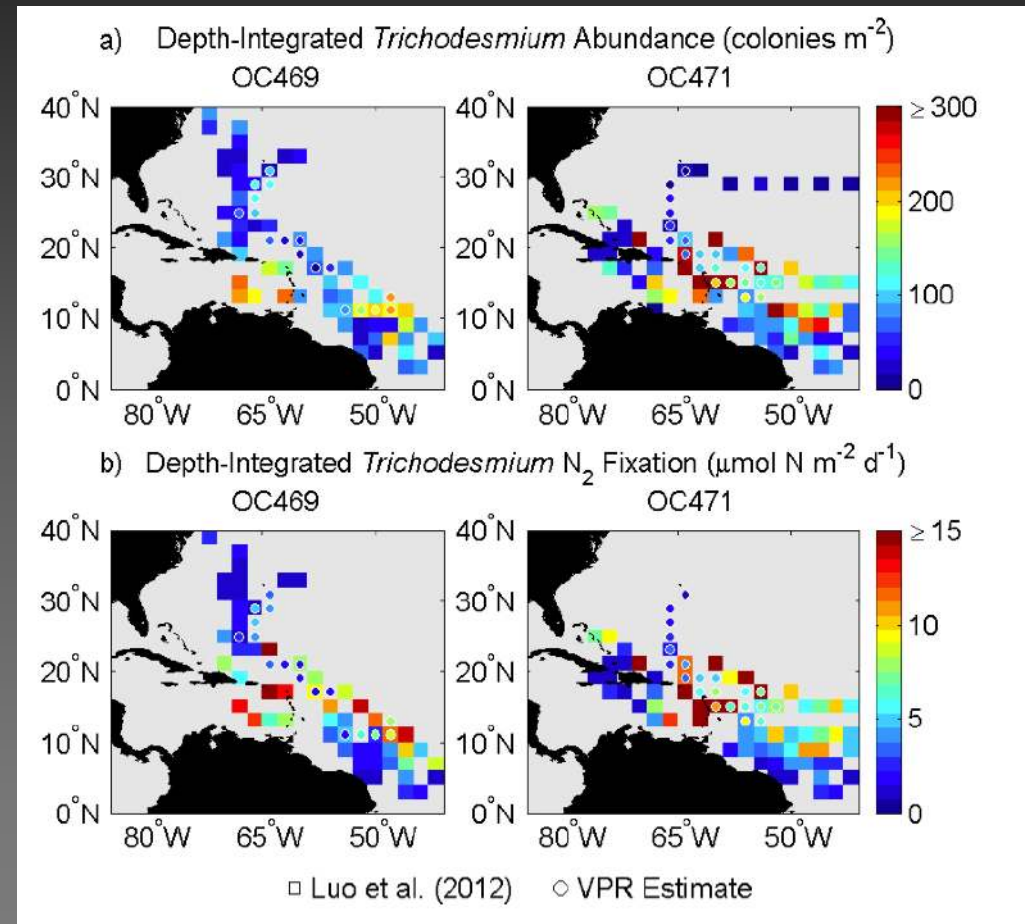


Trichodesmium transcriptional patterns between the North Pacific and the North Atlantic



Modeling N₂ fixation is still a challenge

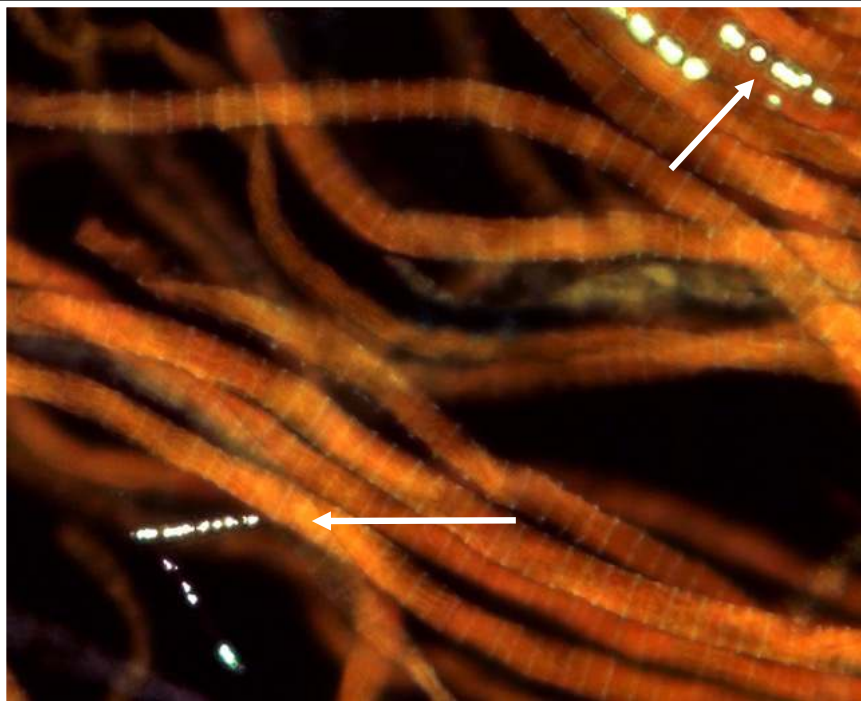
- Models do not balance the N cycle in the ocean or recapitulate patterns well
- Assays of nitrogen fixation are technically difficult = variability
- Information on distribution over time and with depth is still patchy
- **Geochemistry is not often a good predictor of distribution or N₂ fixation**



Olson et al. 2015 *DSR II*

Trichodesmium hosts a community of epibiotic microbes

Trichodesmium and *Plectonema*



Dyhrman et. al. (2002) *L&O*

Trichodesmium and Epibionts

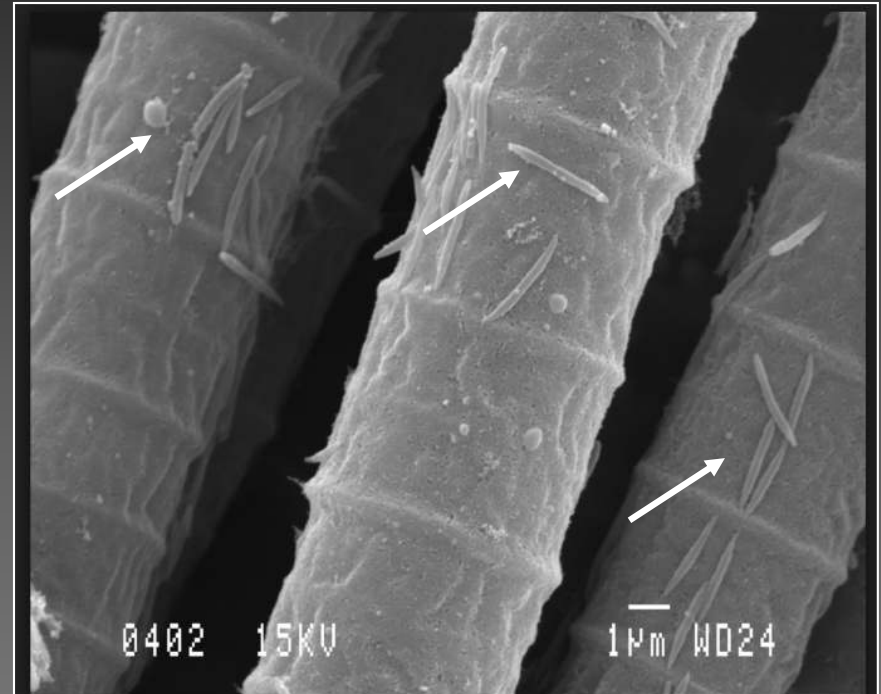


Image courtesy Tracy Mincer

Trichodesmium colonies harbor other microbes with distinct physiology.

Core questions about the *Trichodesmium* microbiome

Who is there?

- Microbiome diversity
- *16S amplicon sequencing*



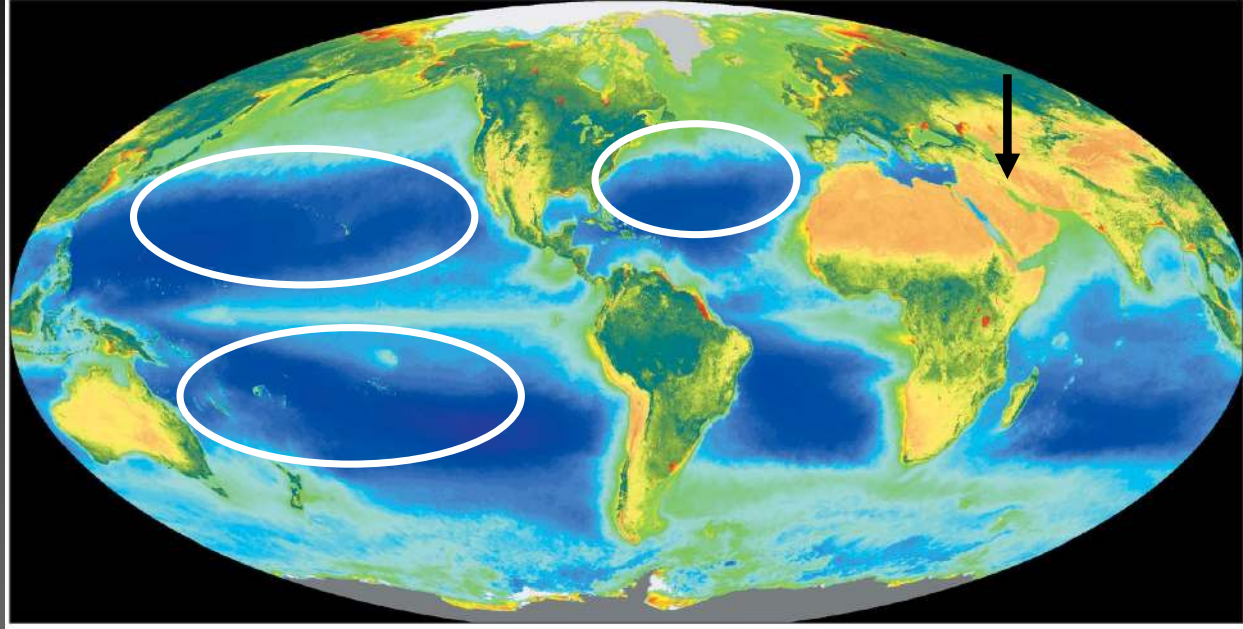
What are they doing?

- Microbiome functional diversity
- *Metagenome assembled genomes*

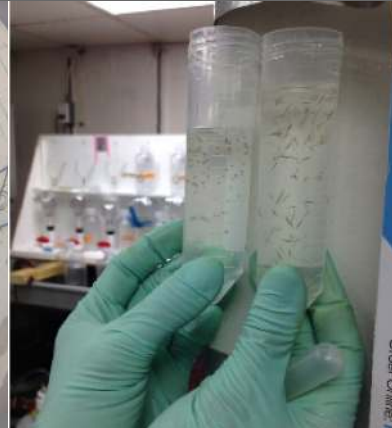


Are they interacting?

- Diel patterns in the consortia
- *Metatranscriptomics*



SeaWiFS Project, NASA/Goddard Space Flight Center and ORBIMAGE





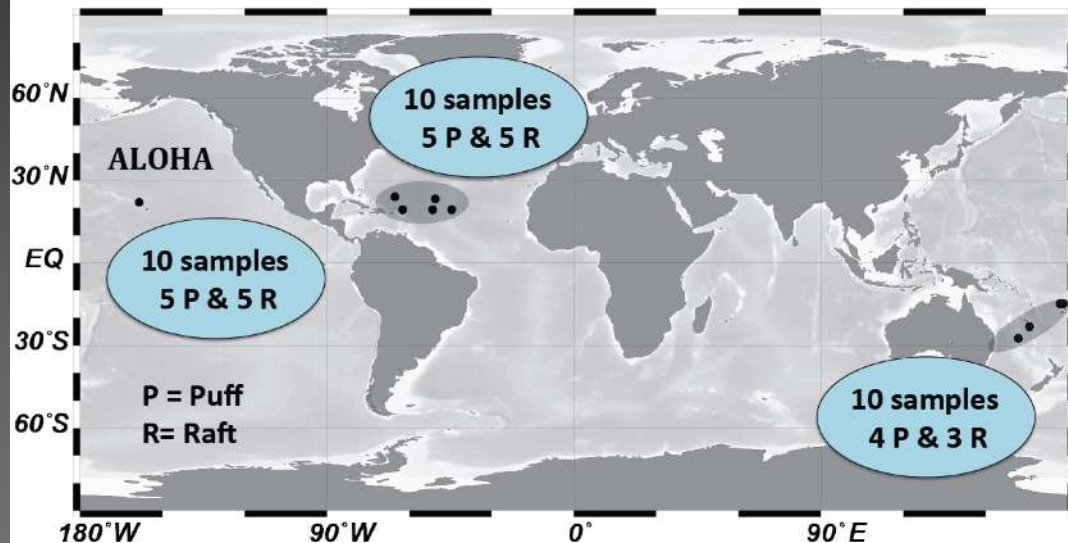
Trichodesmium microbiome diversity



Trichodesmium colonies are picked and rinsed from net tows for 16S sequencing to remove all but the tightly associated epibionts.

Epibiont diversity

EXPERIMENTAL APPROACH



Collection of colonies from 3 ocean basins (~top 25m)

DNA extraction

Sequencing:
V4 region of 16S
rRNA gene
Miseq
(2x150 bp)



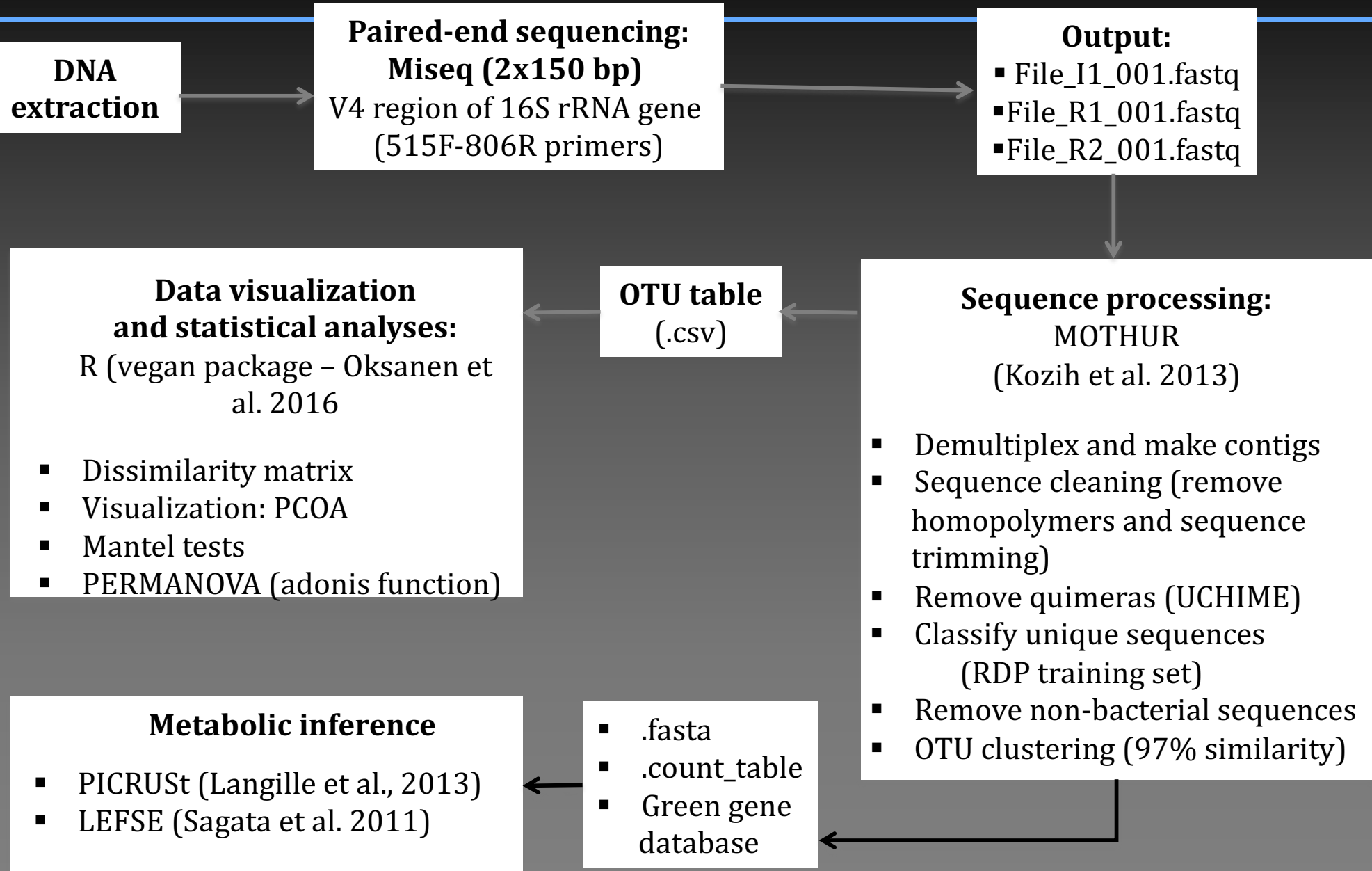
Mothur v. 1.34.0 (936,749 reads)

- *Trichodesmium*: ~67% of reads
- Epibionts: ~32% of reads

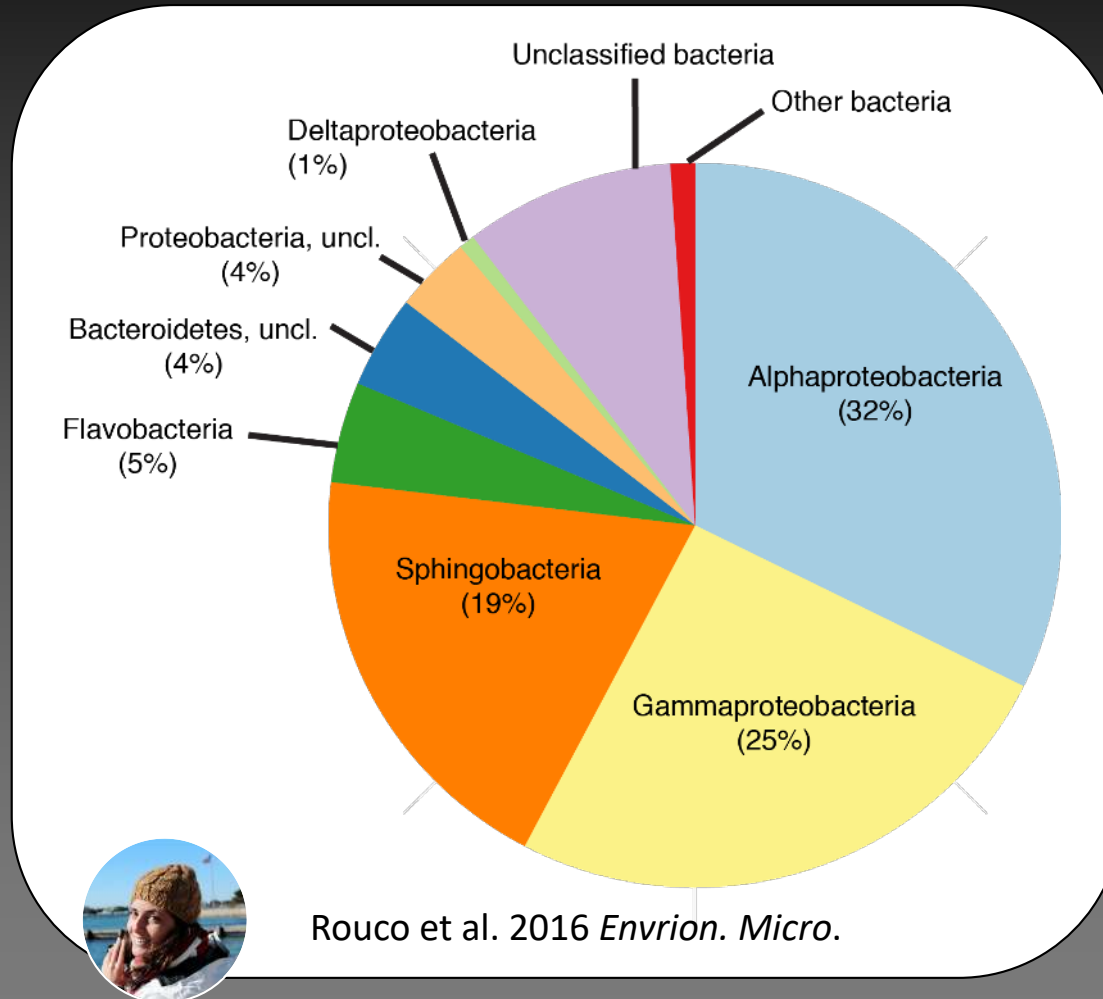
What groups co-occur with *Trichodesmium*?

Are epibiont communities distinct as a function of colony morphology or environment?

16S rDNA analyses

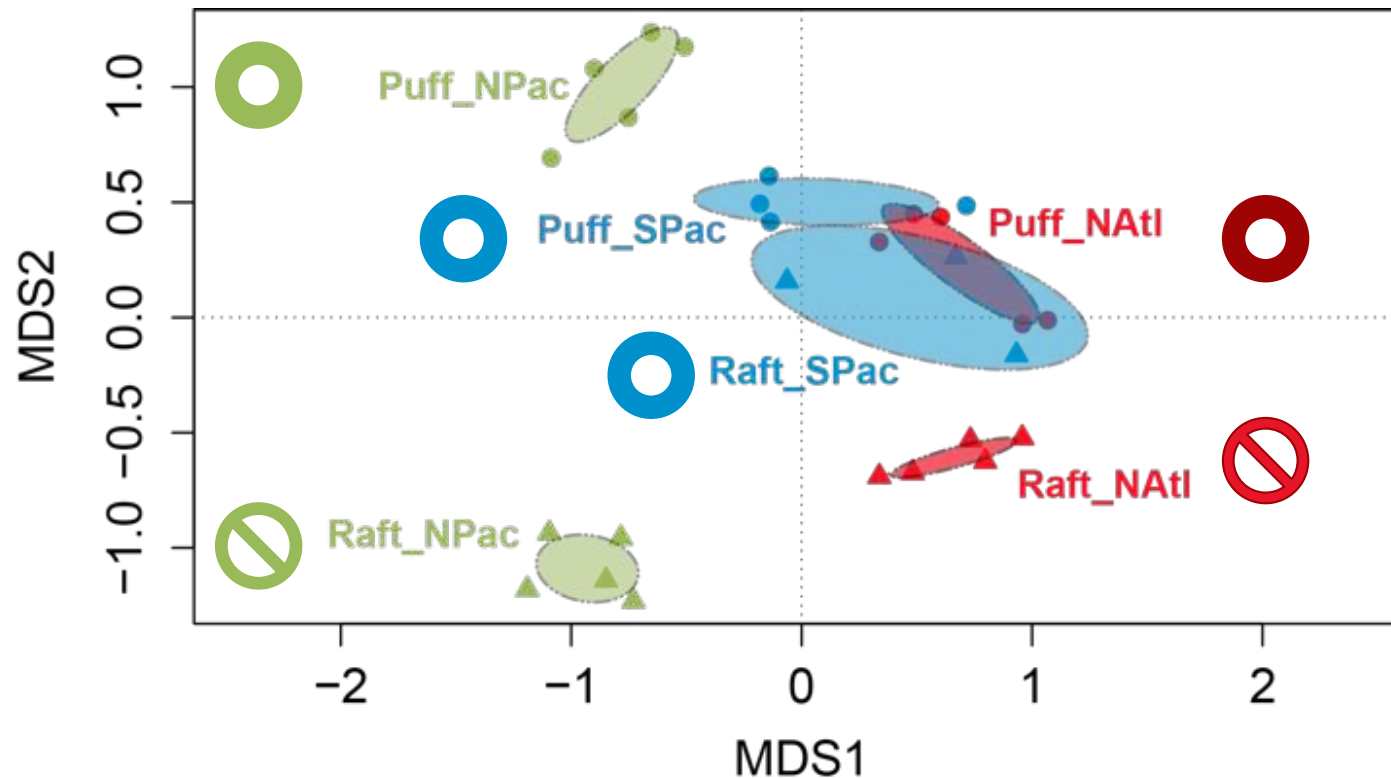


Average epibiont community



16S amplicon sequencing indicates that *Trichodesmium* colonies harbor diverse epibionts distinct from common water column bacteria, and those found on sinking particles.

Microbiome community diversity (16S)



Rouco et al. (2016) *Environ. Micro.*

Microbiome communities significantly differ by ocean basin, and with colony morphology, except for the S. Pacific where the *Trichodesmium* composition of rafts and puffs were not significantly different.

Summary

- **Need to think about *Trichodesmium* as a holobiont**
- *What drives community assembly?*
 - *Unique niche?*
 - Type of *Trichodesmium*
 - Physiological ecology in the colony
 - Environment
 - *Lottery?*
 - Random selection of potential copiotrophs with certain gene functions?
- *Stability over time?*

Core questions about the *Trichodesmium* microbiome

Who is there?

- **Diverse community, distinct from water column**



What are they doing?

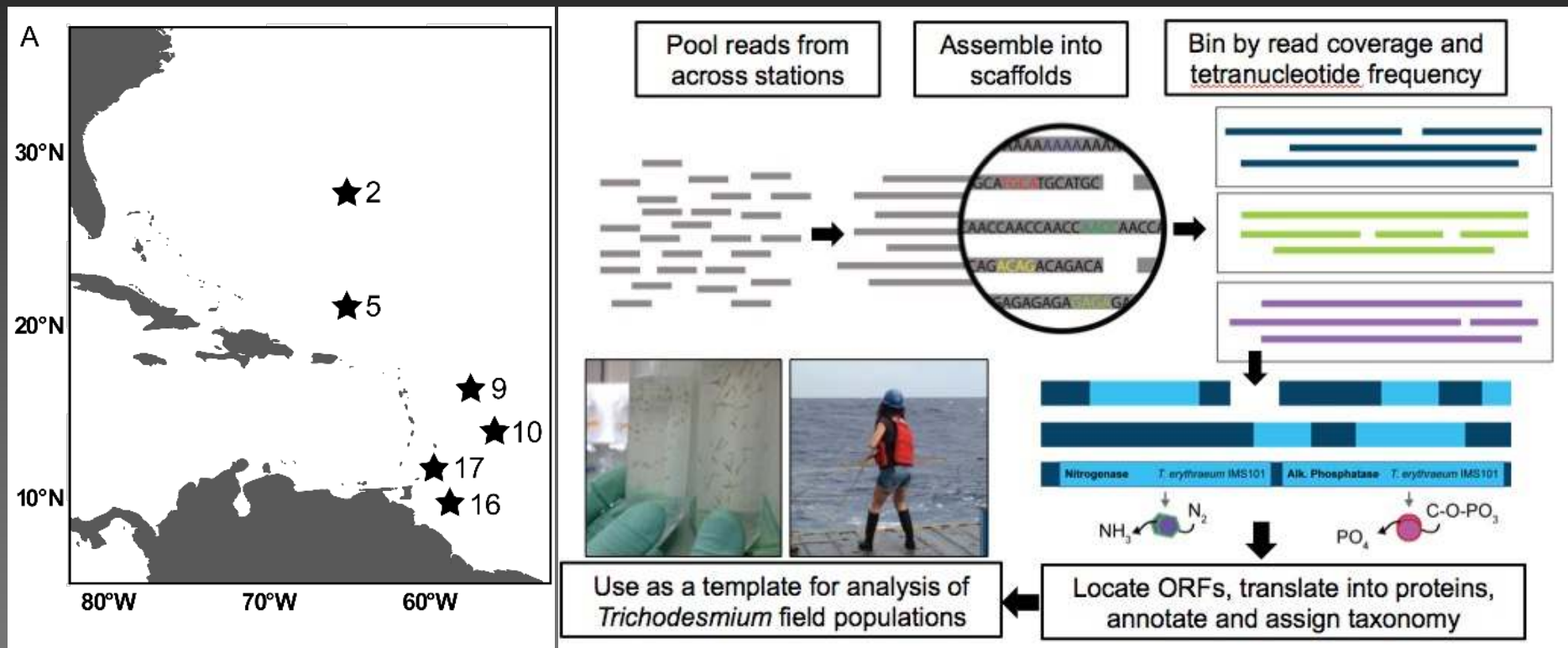
- **Microbiome functional diversity**



Are they interacting?

- **Diel patterns in the consortia**

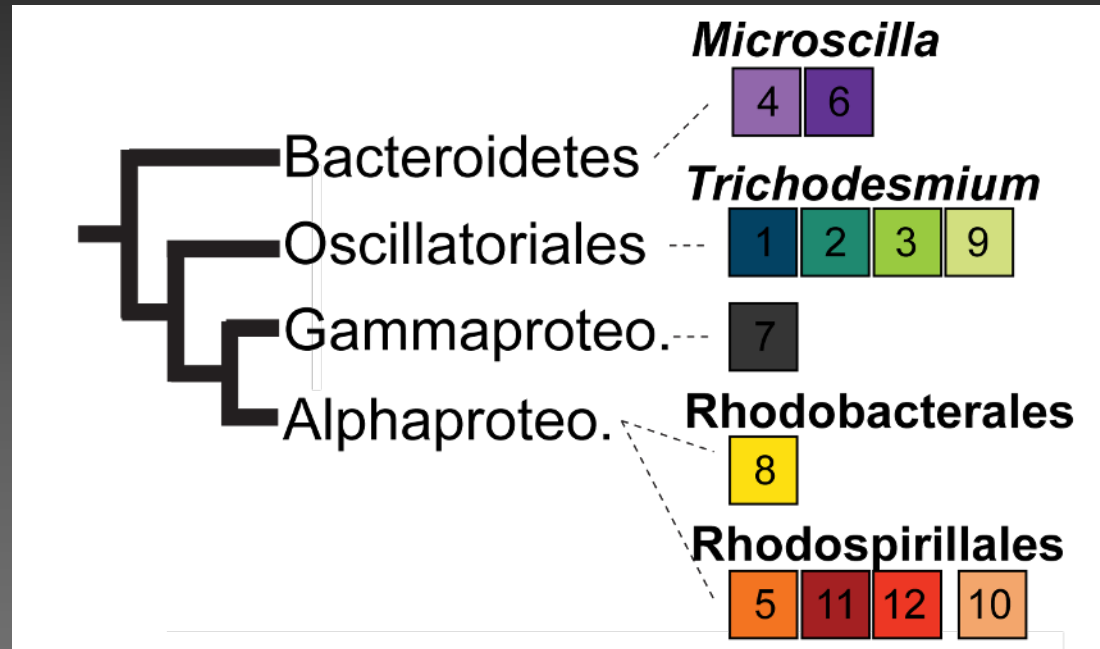
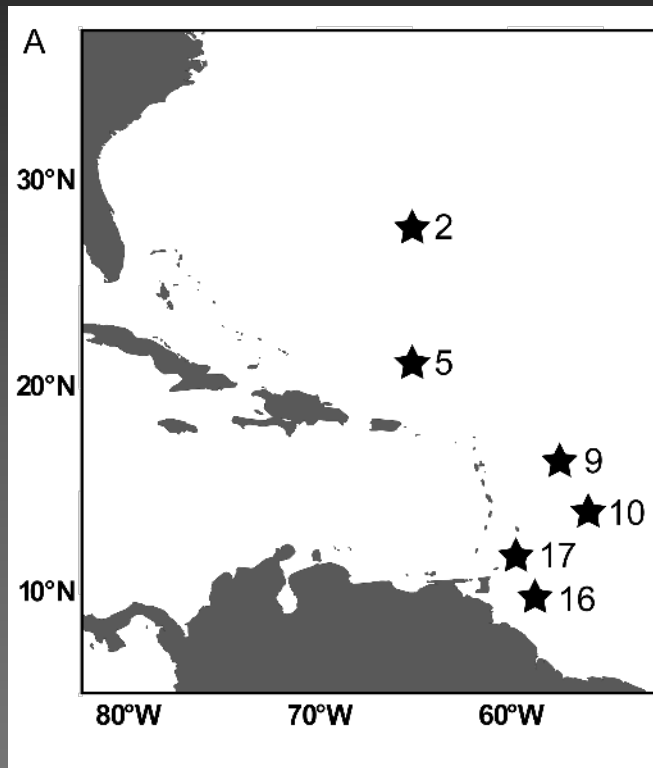
Metabolic potential in the *Trichodesmium* holobiont



Prodigal DIAMOND-BLAST
MEGAN KEGG

Trichodesmium colonies were isolated for metagenome sequencing along a phosphorus gradient in the western north Atlantic.

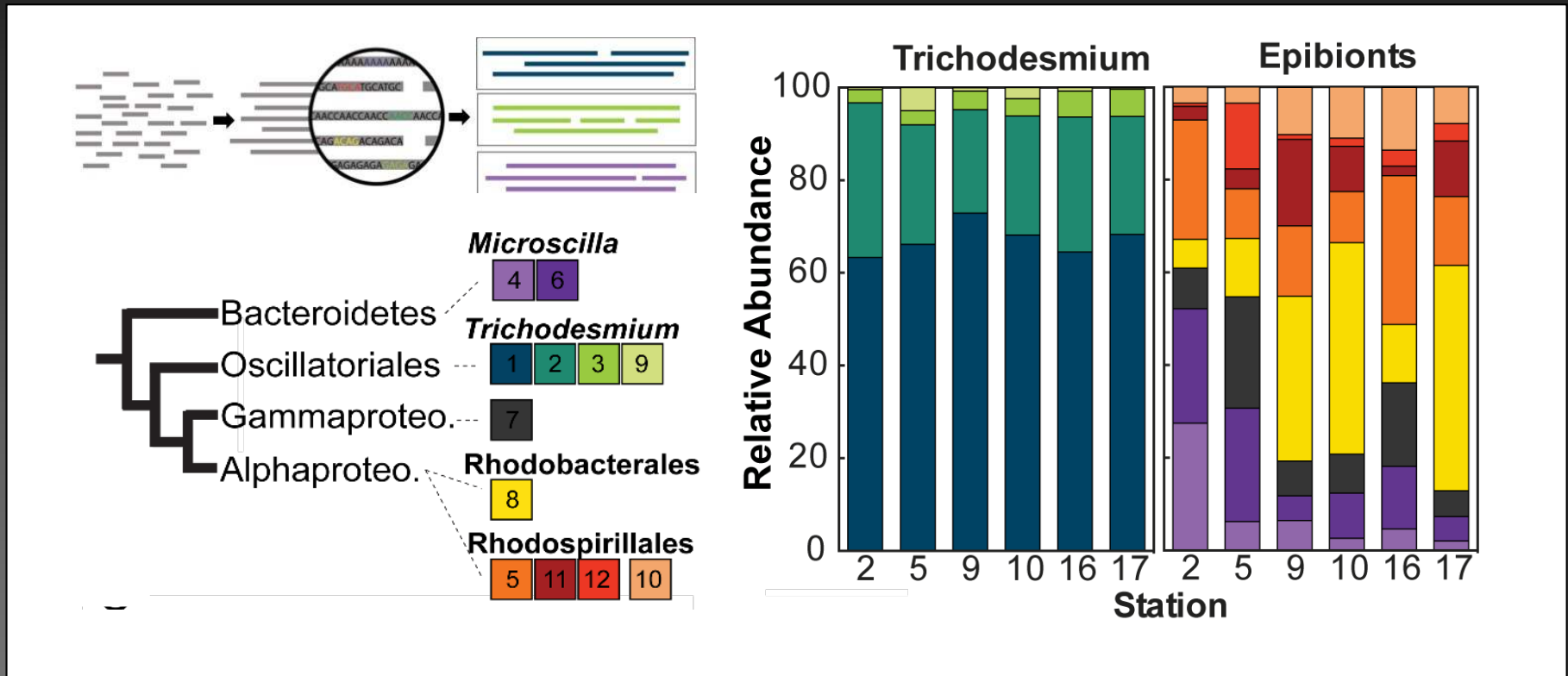
Composition of the holobiont



Nearly complete (~90%) genome bins were reconstructed from a merged assembly and results are consistent with 16S data



Distribution of MAGs with read mapping

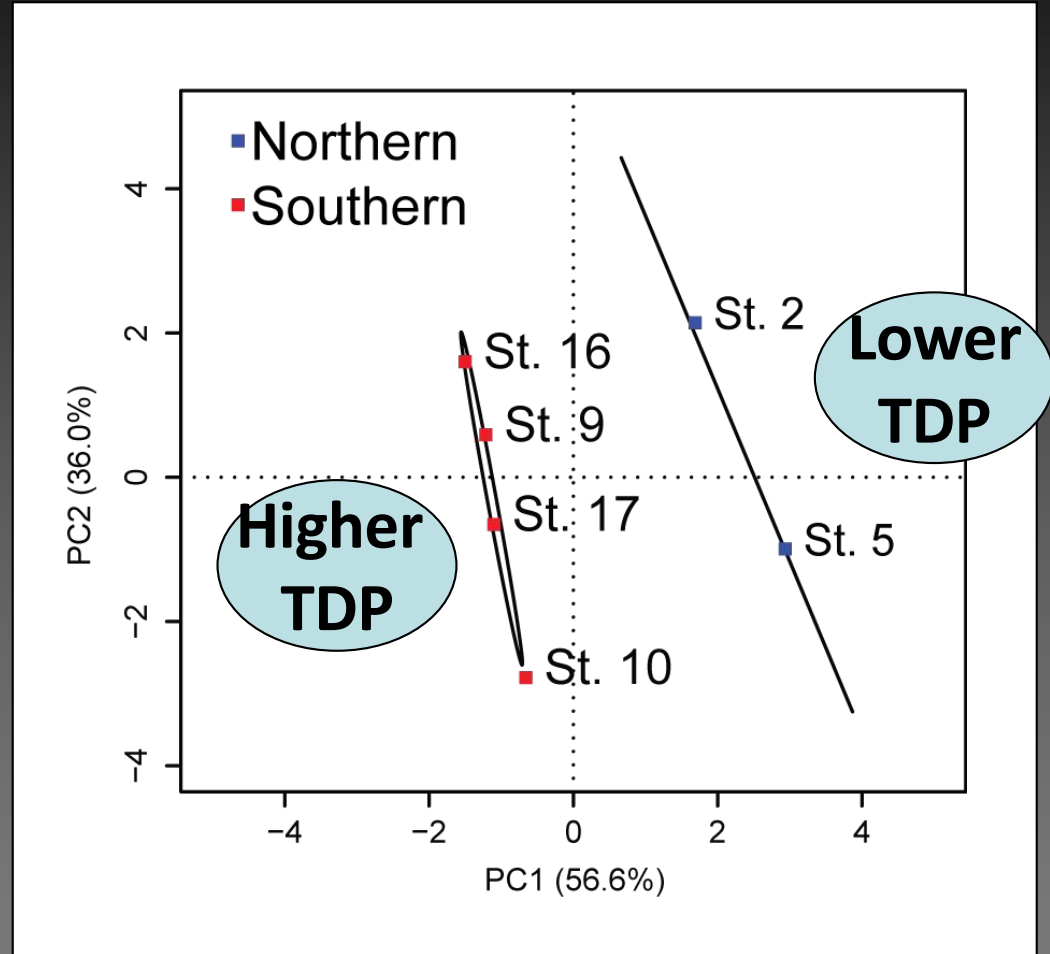
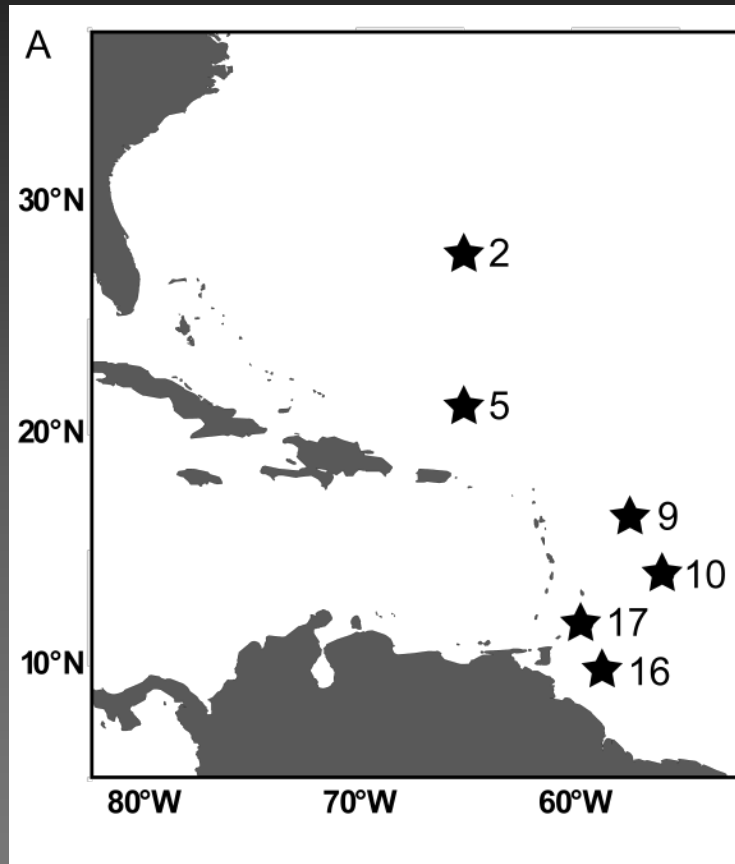


Frischkorn et al. (2017) *ISMEJ*

Relative proportion of *Trichodesmium* bins consistent across stations

Epibiont genome bins are detected at all stations, but the relative abundance varies

Microbiome MAGs differ significantly between regions

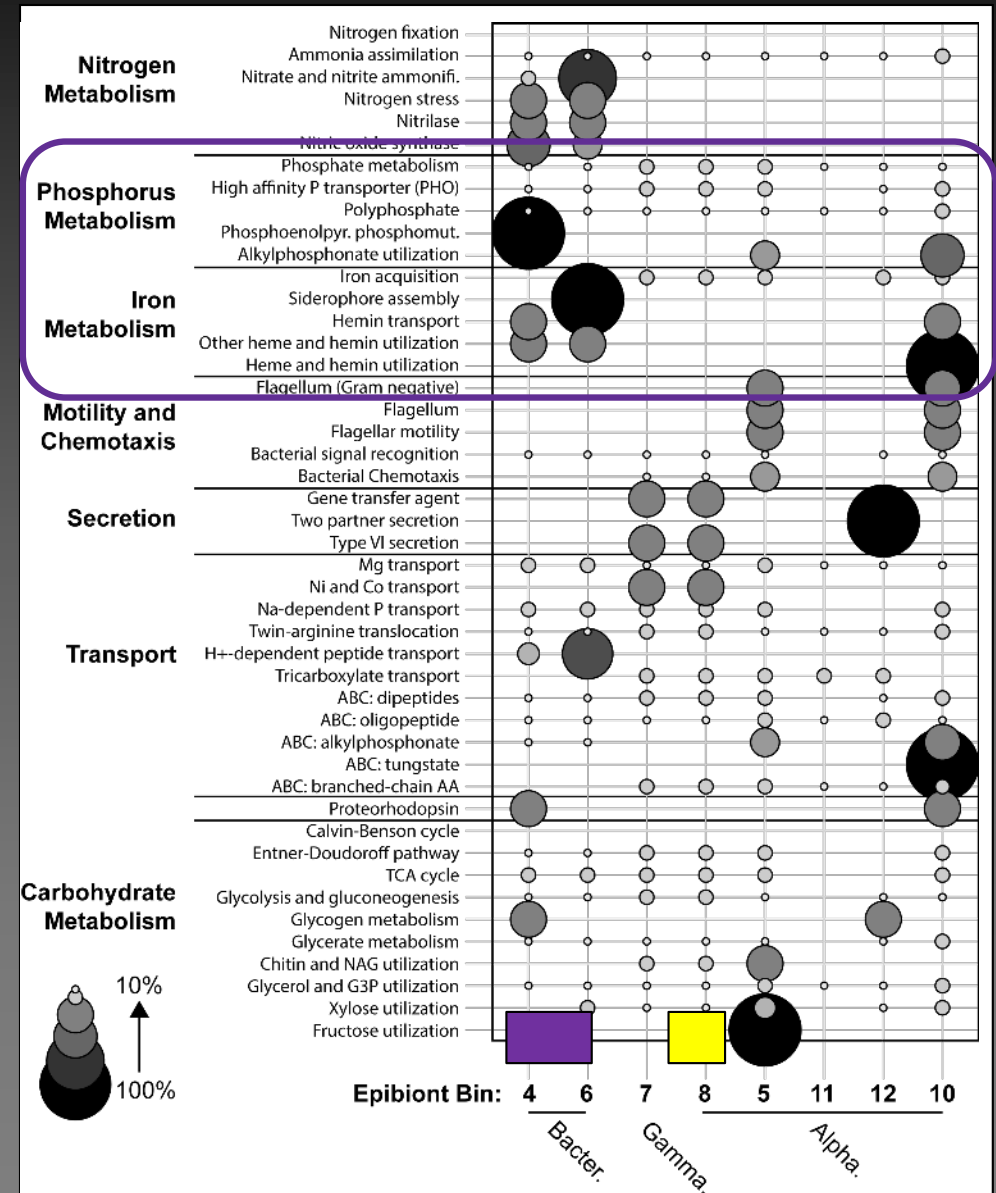
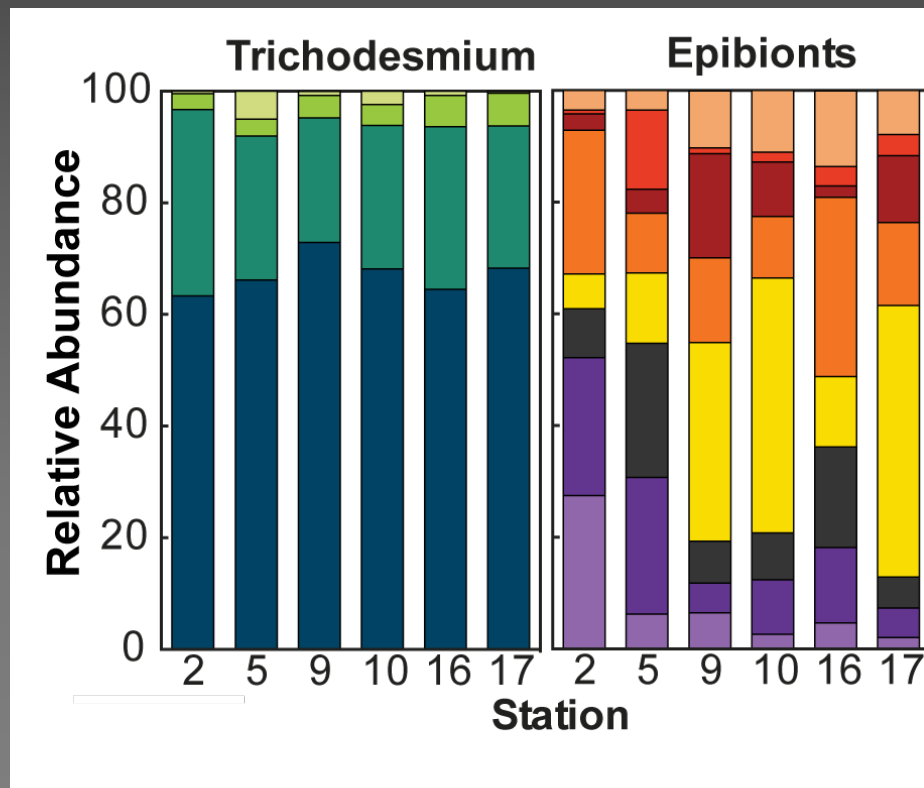


Frischkorn et al. (2017) *ISME J*

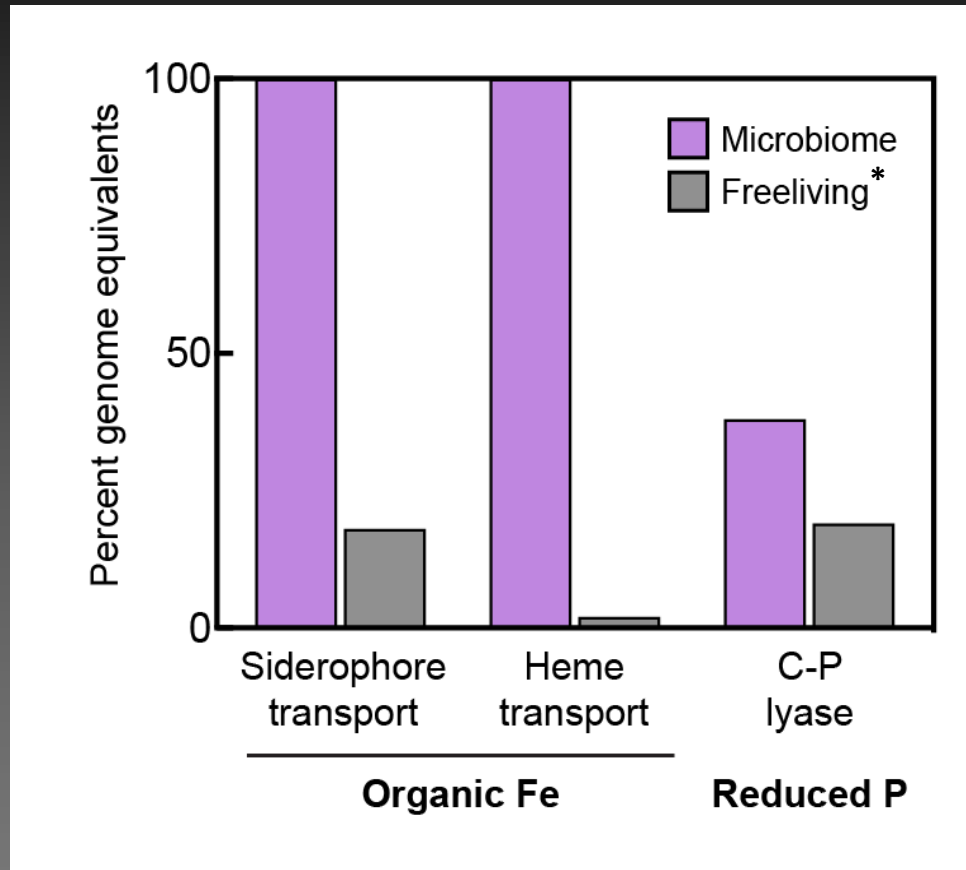
Significant difference in epibiont relative abundance with total dissolved phosphorus (TDP)

Variable distribution of functional pathways among epibionts

- Differential pathway enrichment consistent with a microbiome that is modulated as a function of environment



Epibionts enrich holobiont for key functions



Frischkorn et al. (2017) ISME J

Phosphonate, heme and siderophore functions are enriched in the epibionts relative to water column microbes in the Sargasso Sea.

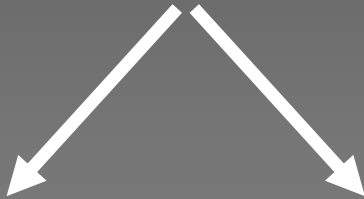
Comparing metabolic potential in the holobiont



Metagenomes



Orthologous group
analysis



Epibionts v. *Trichodesmium*

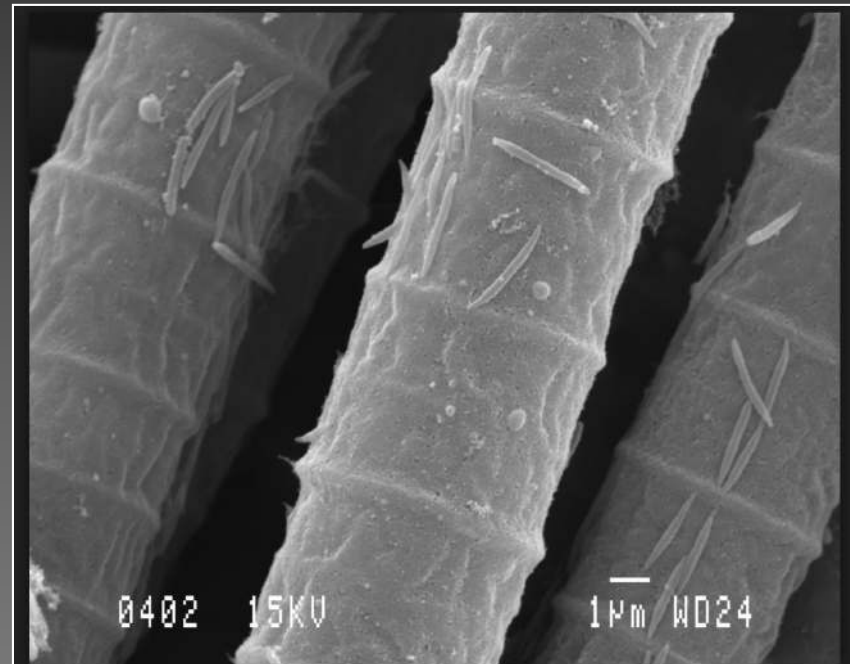
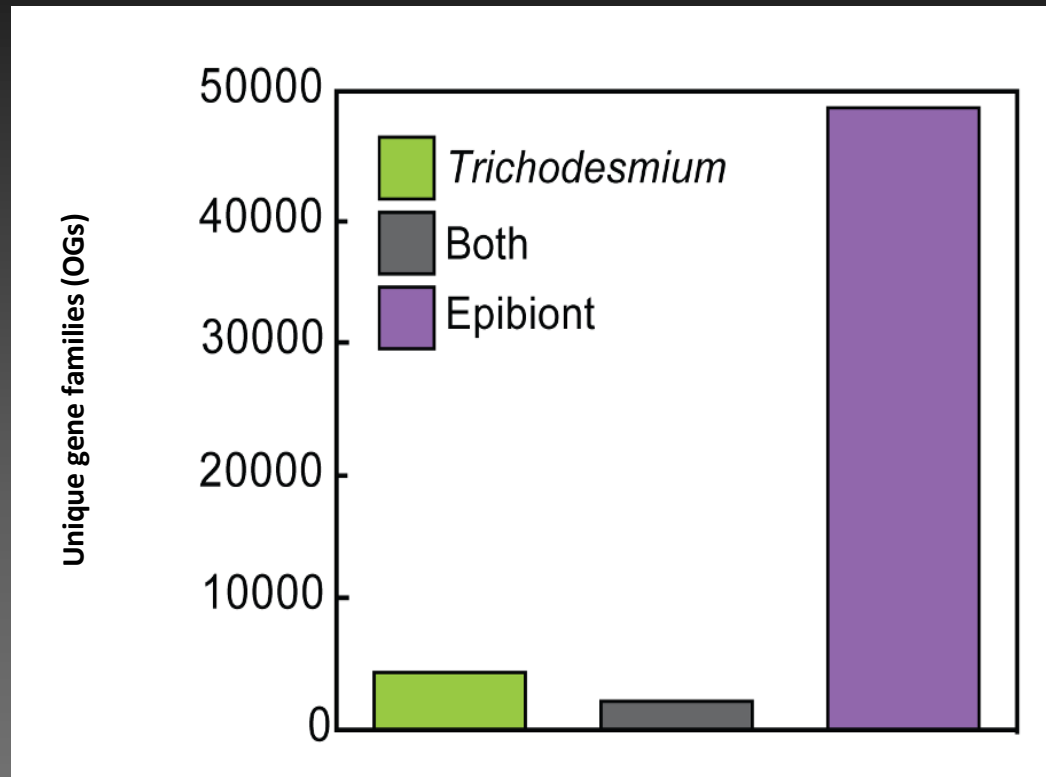


Image courtesy Tracy Mincer

Epibionts significant metabolic potential



Frischkorn et al. (2017) *ISME J*

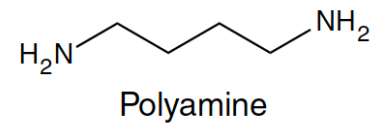
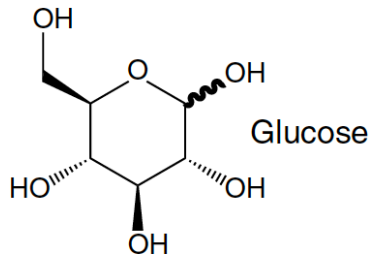
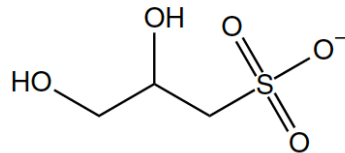
Orthologous (OG) group analysis suggests that epibionts confer the vast majority (>90% of OGs) of metabolic *functions* to the holobiont.

Caveat... “Orthology not equal to function.” Rob Waterhouse

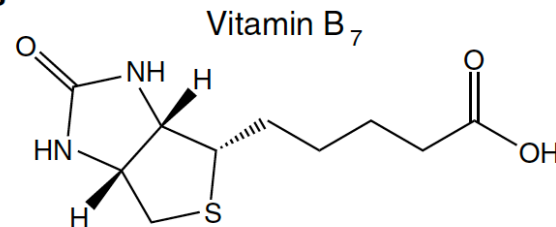
Chemical-microbe network within the *Trichodesmium* holobiont

Substrates sustain biomass production and element cycling

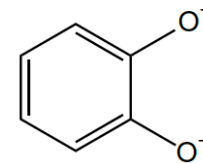
DHPS



Facilitators enable chemical reactions

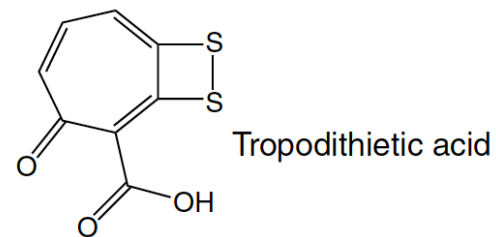
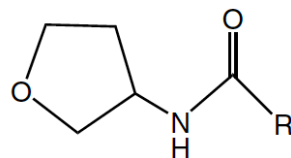


Catecholate siderophore



Signals alter microbial phenotypes

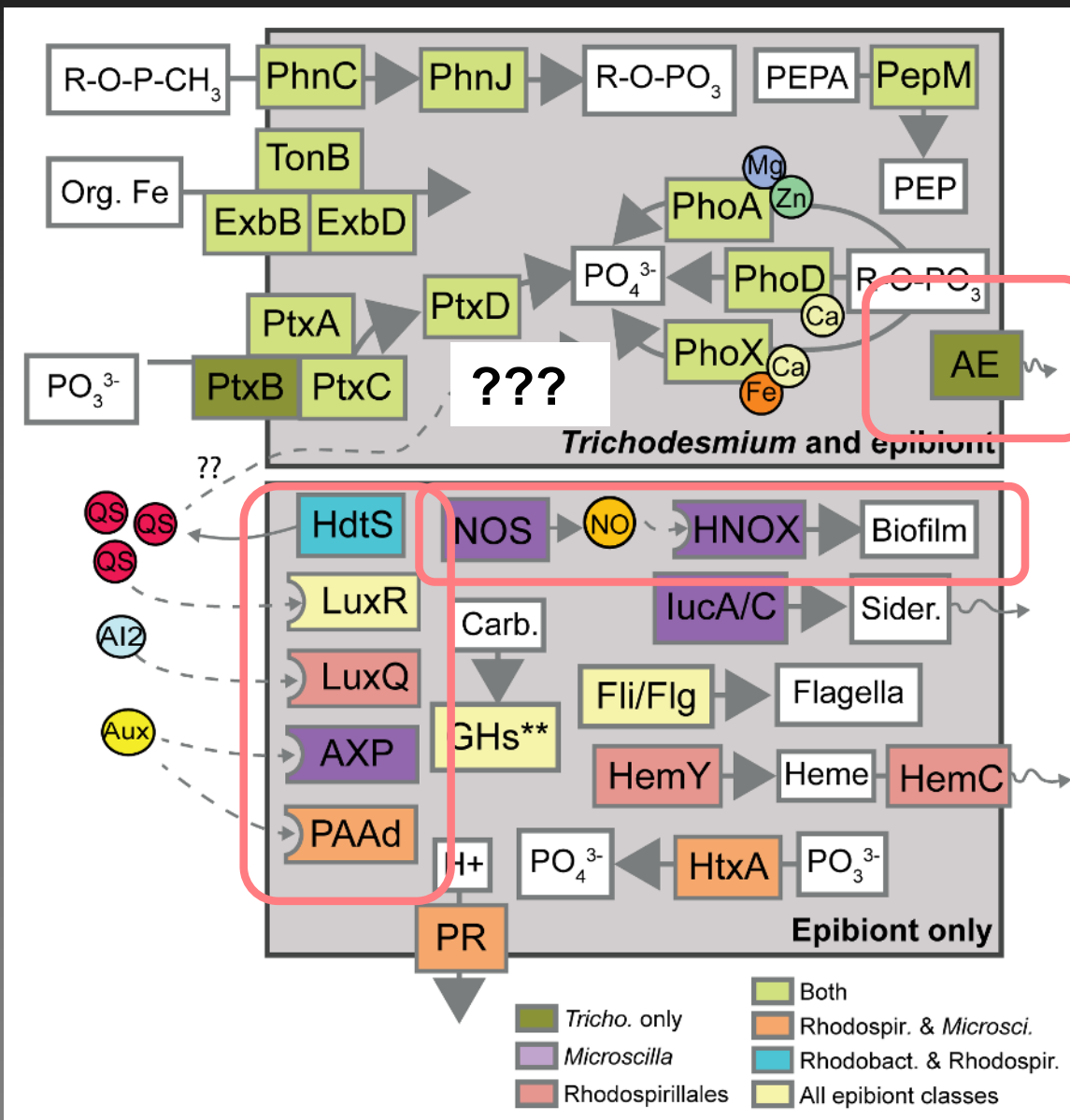
N -acyl homoserine lactone



Quorum Sensing

Moran et al. (2022) *Nature Micro.*

Microbial cross talk within the *Trichodesmium* holobiont



Auxin sensing and response

NO production

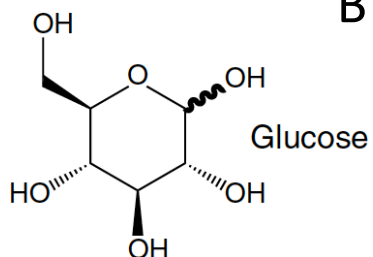
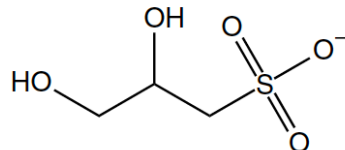
AHL QS Pathways are isolated to microbiome

QS and cell signaling

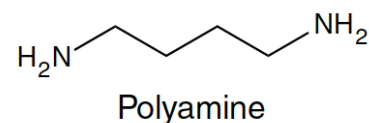
Chemical-microbe network within the *Trichodesmium* holobiont

Substrates sustain biomass production and element cycling

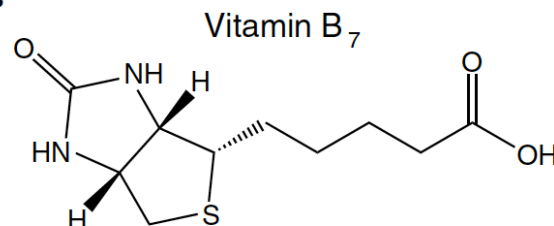
DHPS



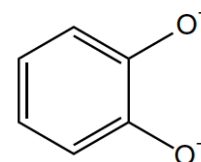
**Organic Fe, P, C, N
B vitamins**



Facilitators enable chemical reactions

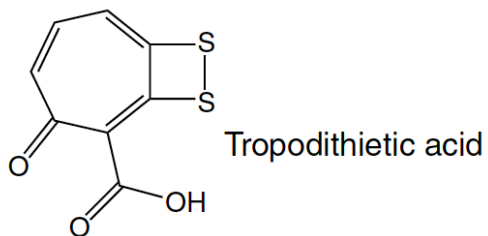
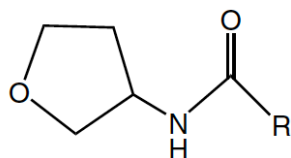


Catecholate siderophore



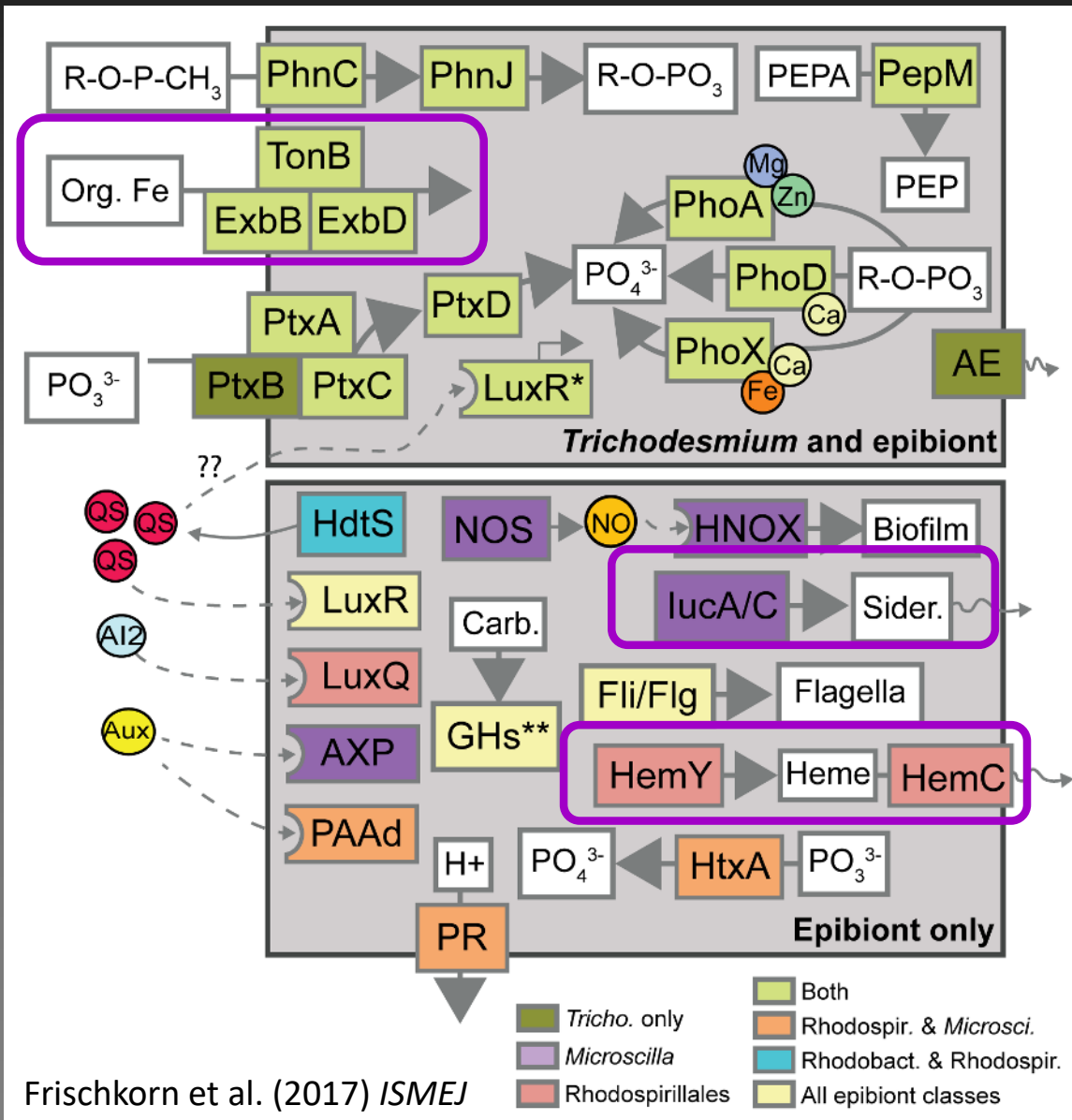
Signals alter microbial phenotypes

N-acyl homoserine lactone



Moran et al. (2022) *Nature Micro.*

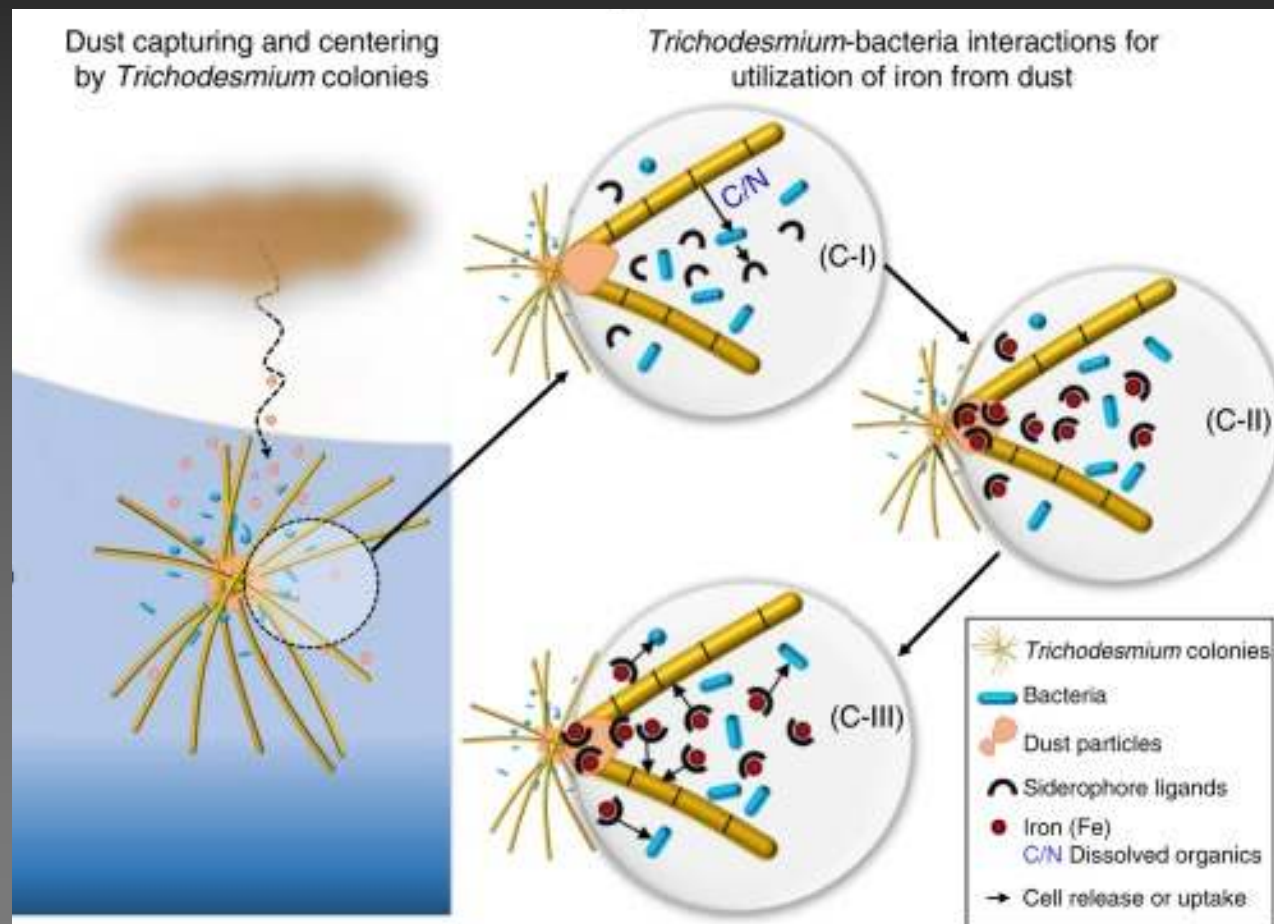
Metabolic partitioning within the *Trichodesmium* holobiont



Organic Iron

Epibionts can produce organic iron complexes that likely modulate iron in the holobiont microenvironment

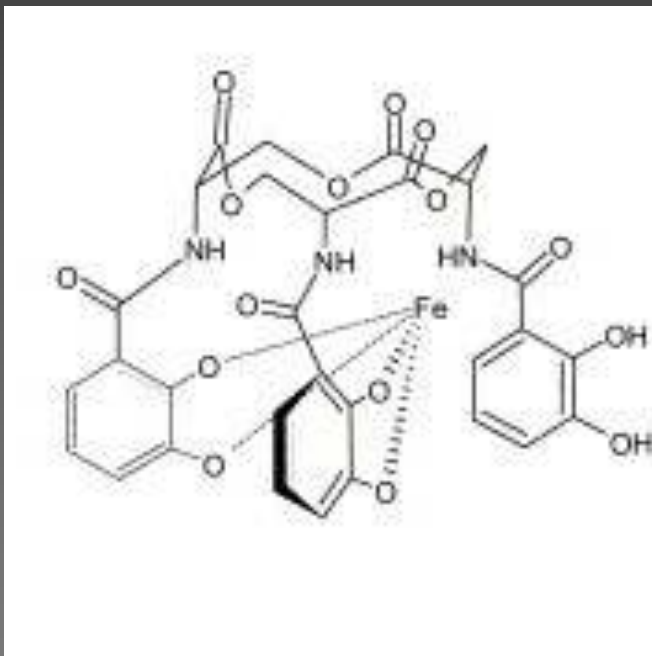
Siderophore mining of iron from dust



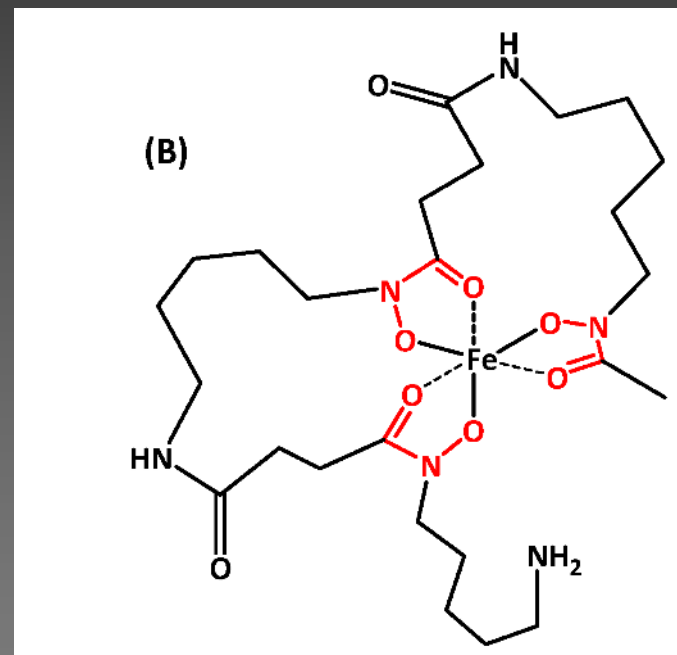
Basu et al. (2019) *Communication Biol.*

Siderophores are C and N rich compounds

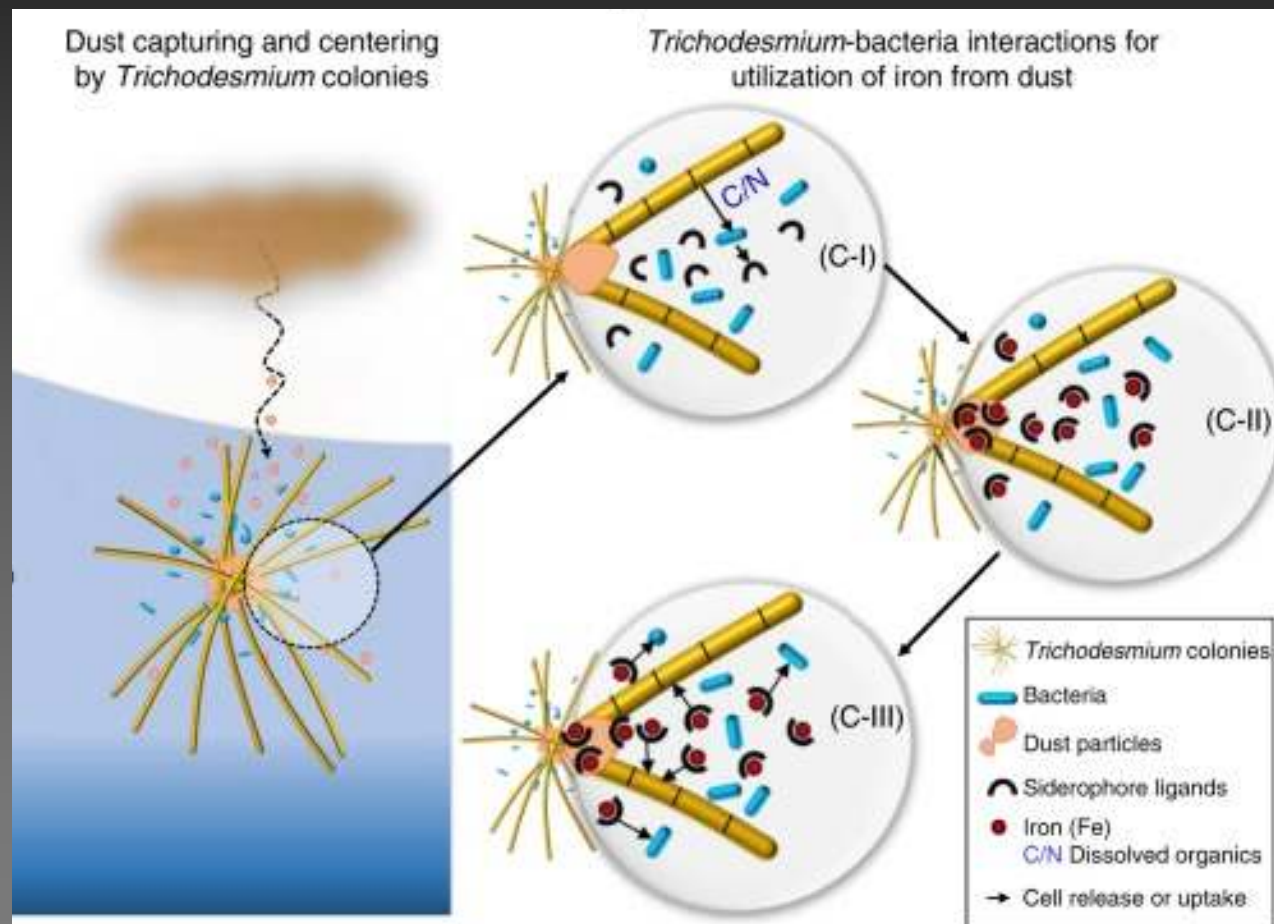
Aerobactin



Desferrioxamine B

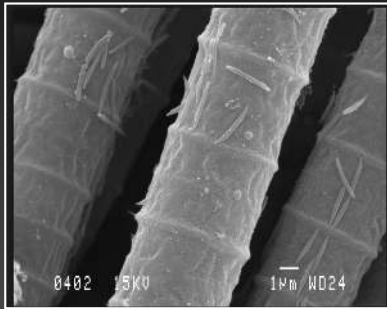


Siderophore mining of iron from dust



Basu et al. (2019) *Communication Biol.*

Cultured epibionts produce siderophores in low iron media

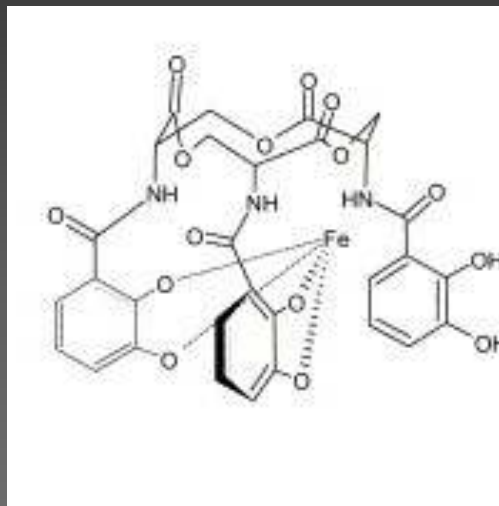


Isolate epibionts

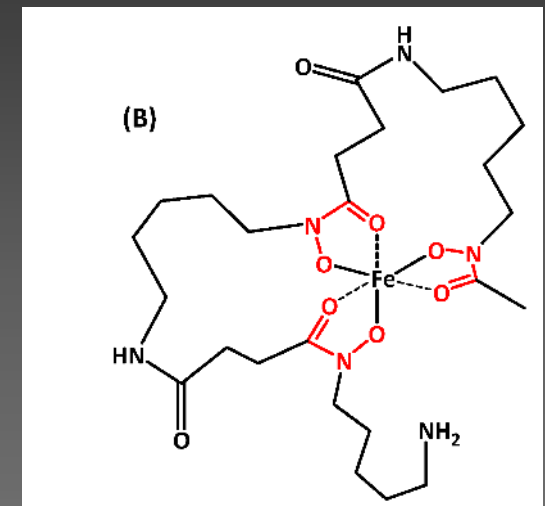


LC-MS

Aerobactin

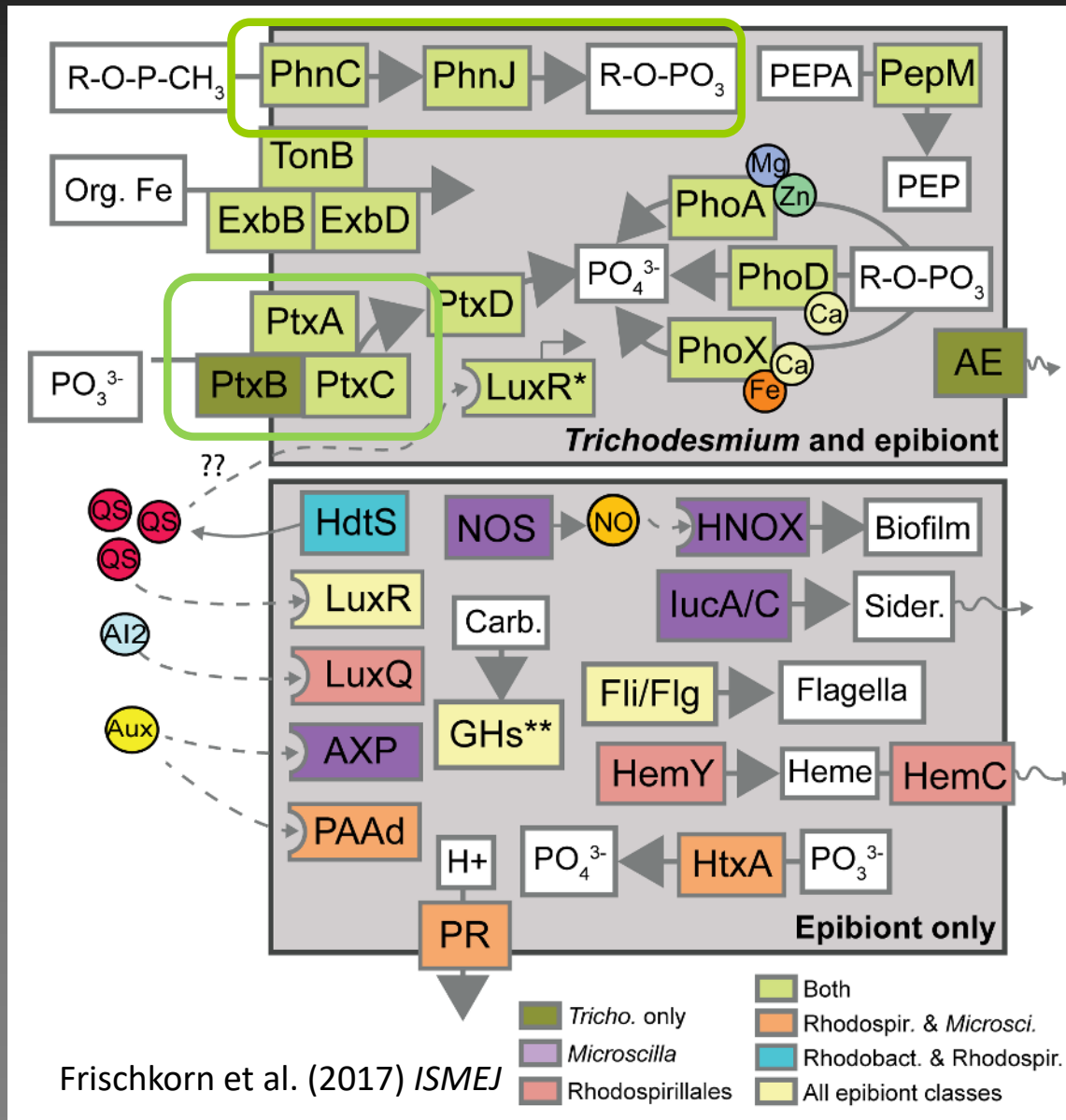


Desferrioxamine B



All six epibionts produce siderophores including those related to aerobactin and desferrioxamine consistent with MAG predictions and iron experiments.

Uptake and metabolism of organic and reduced phosphorus forms



C-P Lyase

C-P

PhoX

C-O-P

PhoA

Phosphite uptake

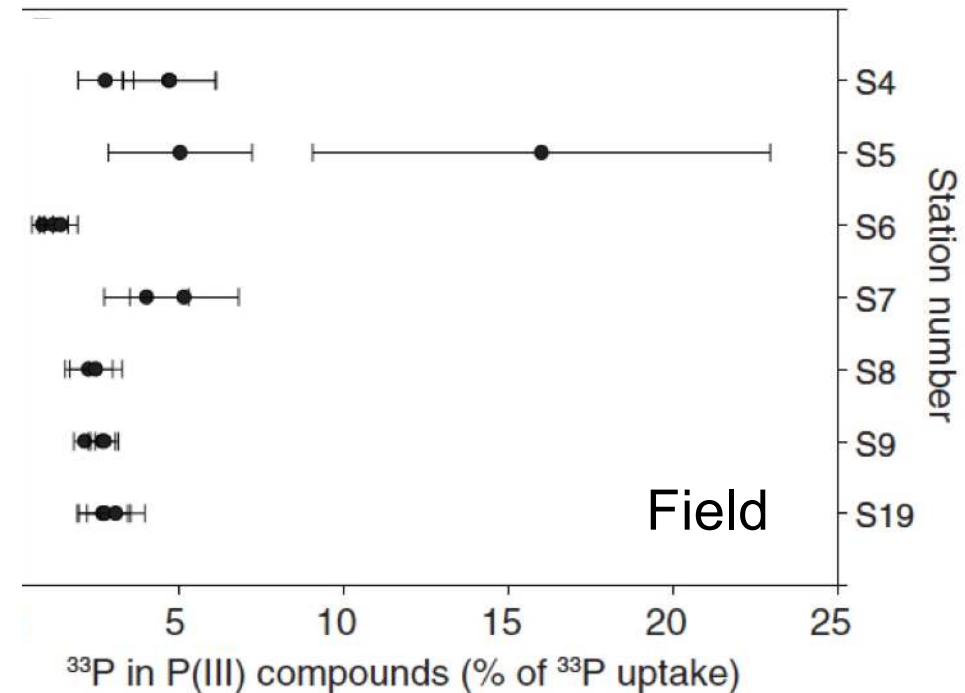
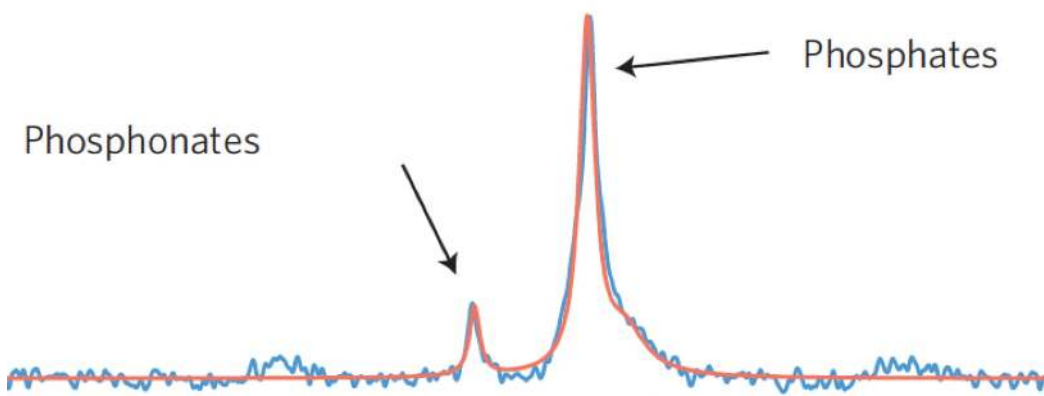
PO₃

Phosphorus metabolisms are present in both *Trichodesmium* and the microbiome.

Answers to enduring mysteries... who makes C-P compounds?

Phosphonate (C-P) biosynthesis

Enrichment Culture

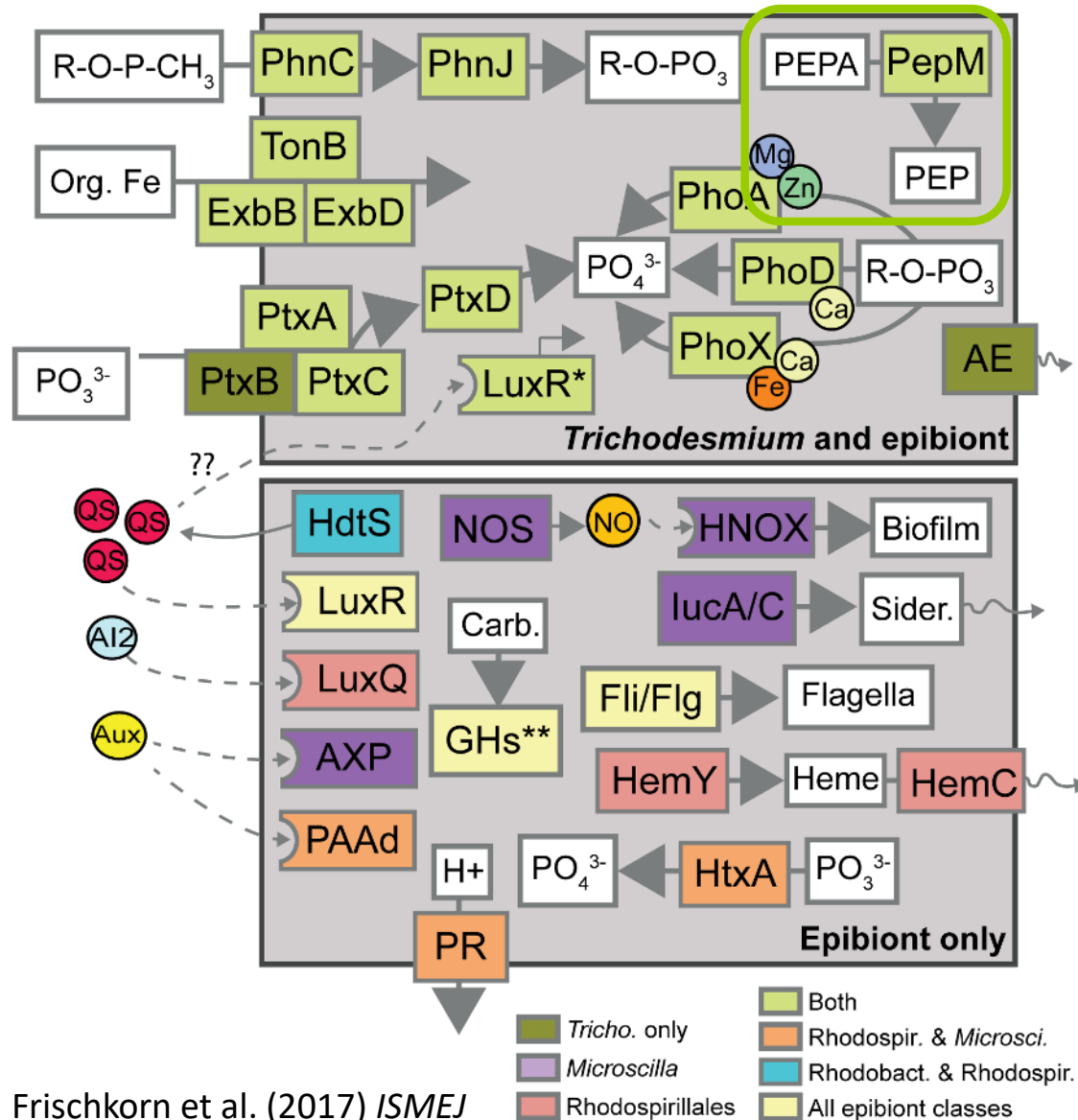


Dyhrman et al. (2009) *Nature Geo.*

Van Mooy et al. (2015) *Science*

Phosphonates are produced at high rates in the holobiont - hot spot for reduced phosphorus cycling. Is it *Trichodesmium* or the epibionts?

Phosphonate production is a shared metabolism



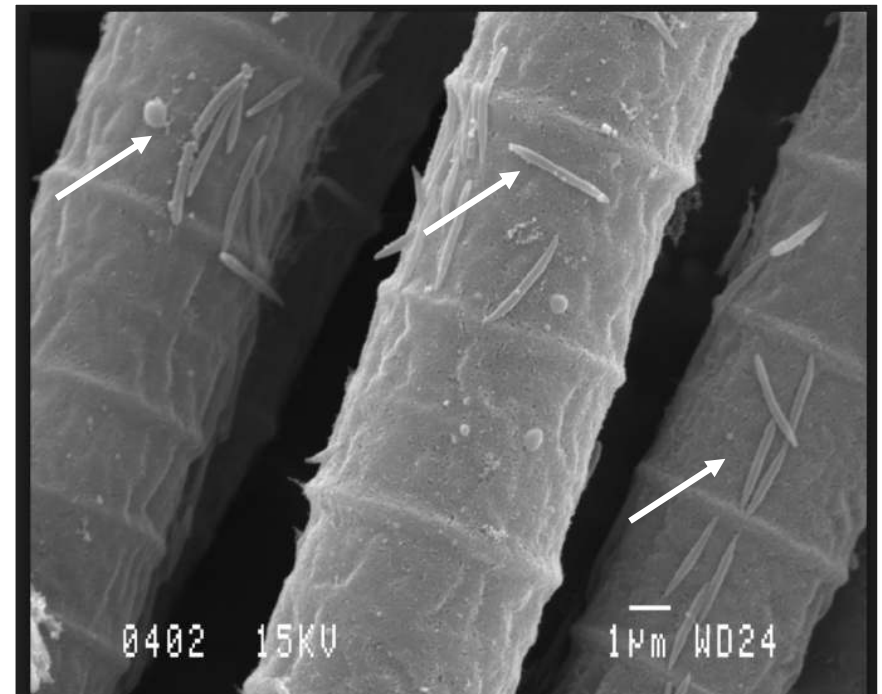
Phosphonate
biosynthesis

C-P

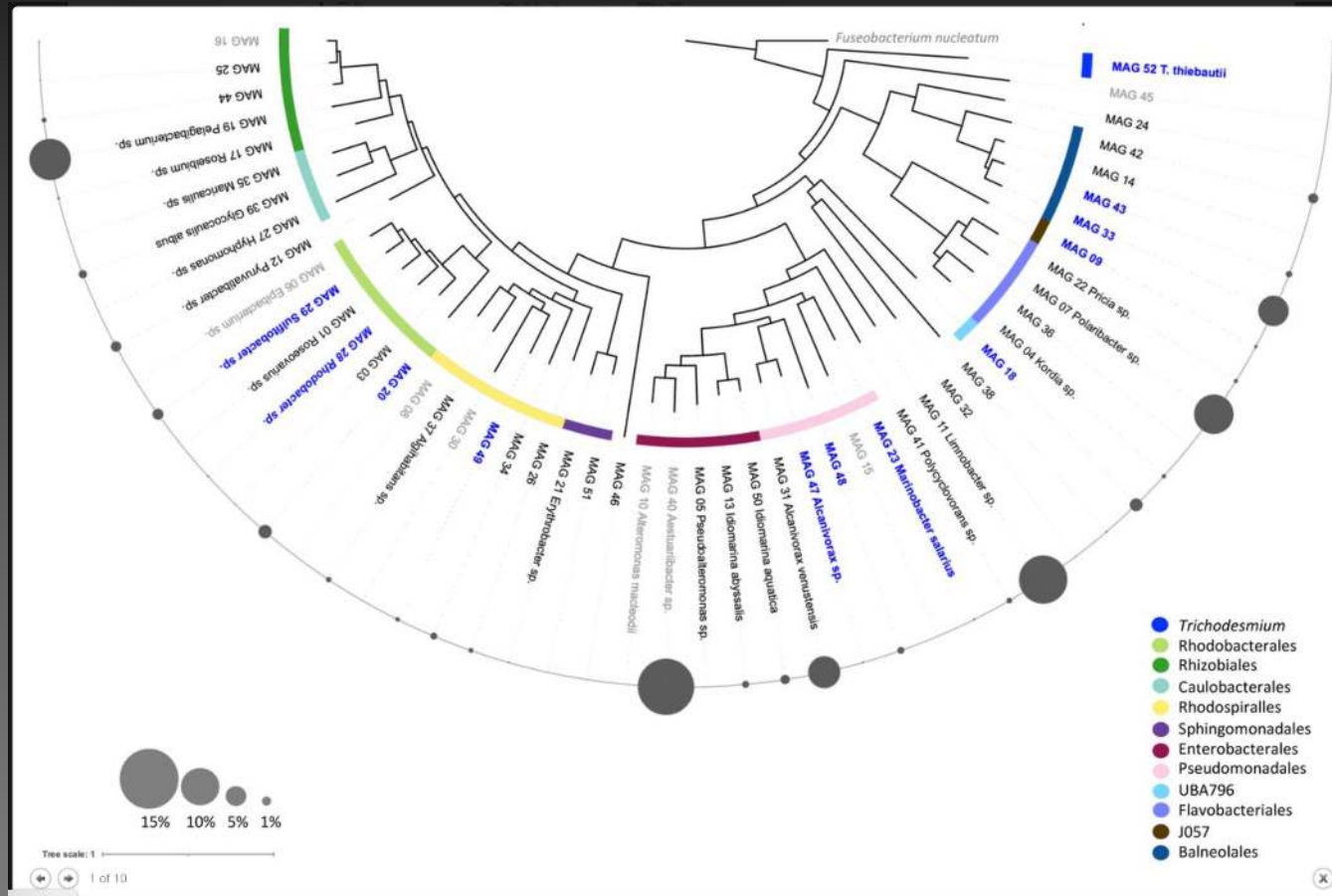
Phosphonate can be produced by both *Trichodesmium* and the epibionts – at least in this environment

Lessons learned...

- There is an amazing microbiome on *Trichodesmium*! But we need to sequence deeper.
- *Trichodesmium* epibionts are functionally diverse, and these functions suggest complex interactions within holobiont (substrates, signals)

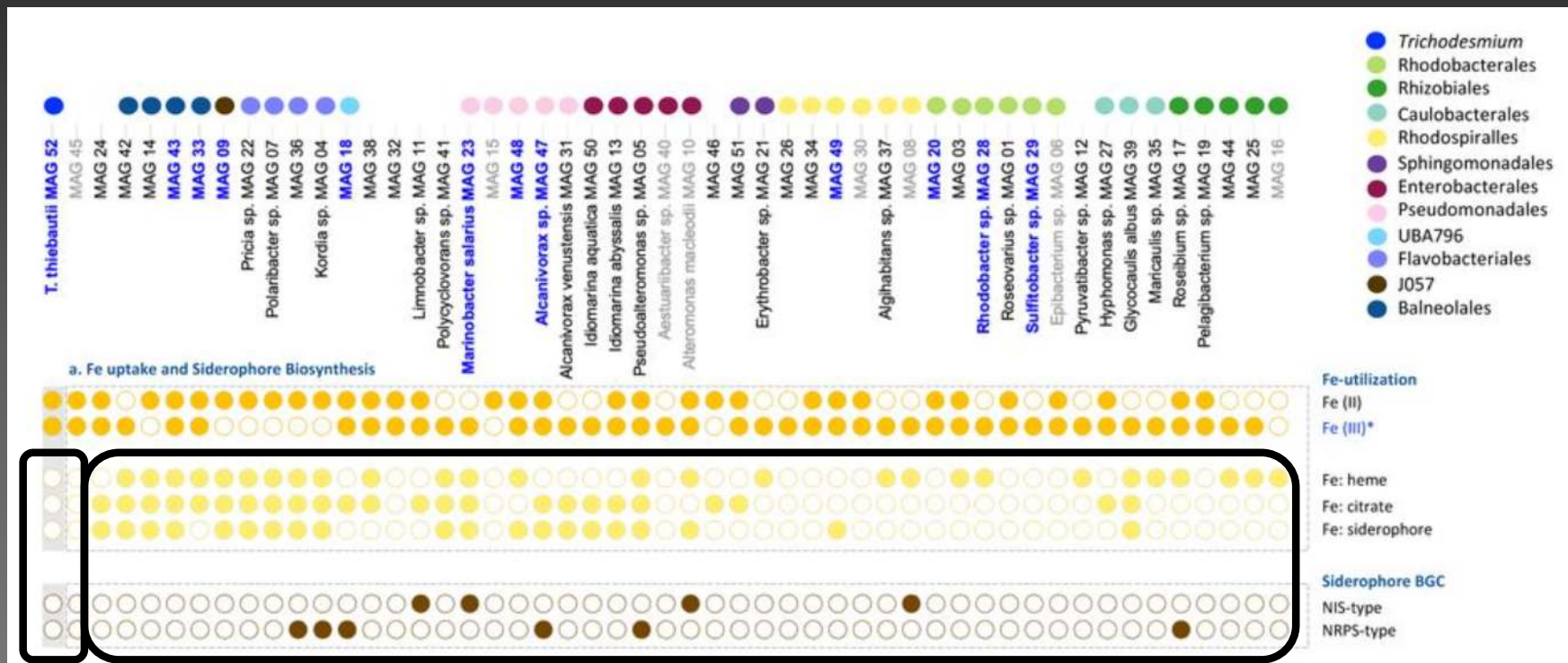


Epibiont distribution in Red Sea samples



Koedooder et al.

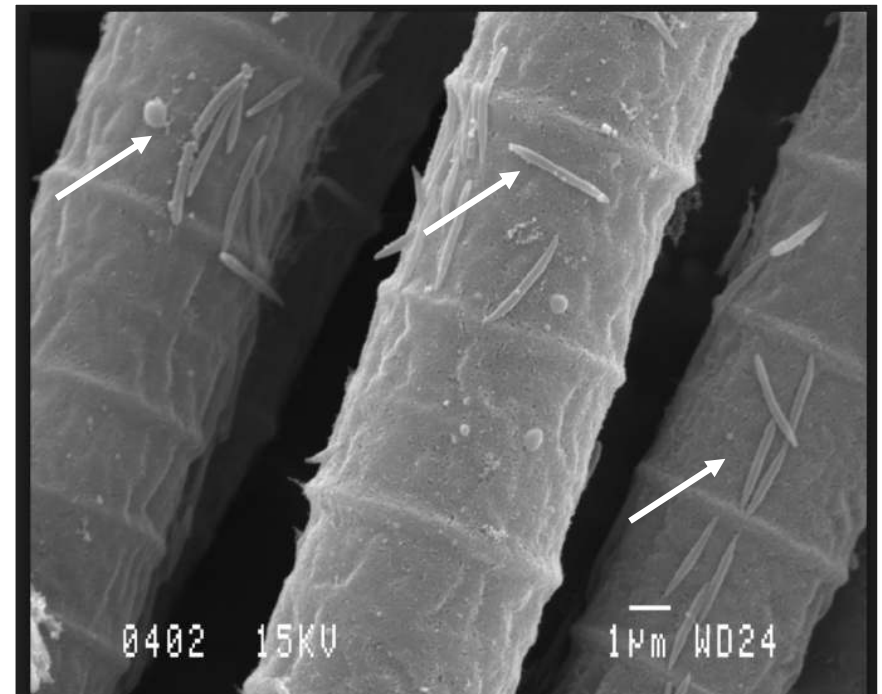
Red Sea epibionts carry enriched Fe traits relative to *Trichodesmium*



<https://www.biorxiv.org/content/10.1101/2023.03.15.532517v4.full>

Lessons learned...

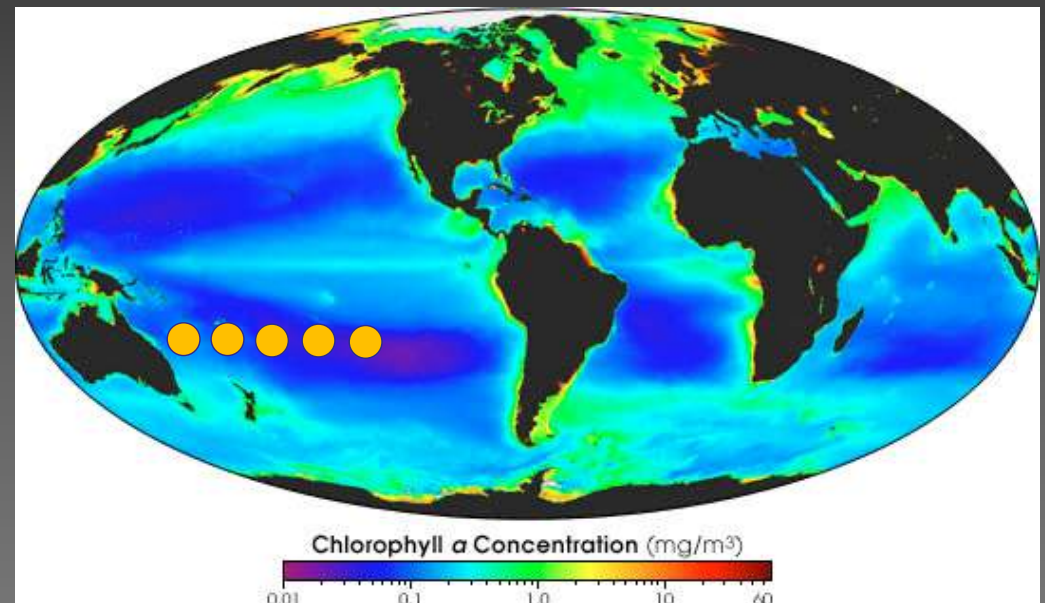
- We can do it! But we need to sequence deeper.
- *Trichodesmium* epibionts are functionally diverse, and these functions suggest complex interactions within holobiont (substrates, signals)
- Now we are looking at how those metagenomic functions are expressed.



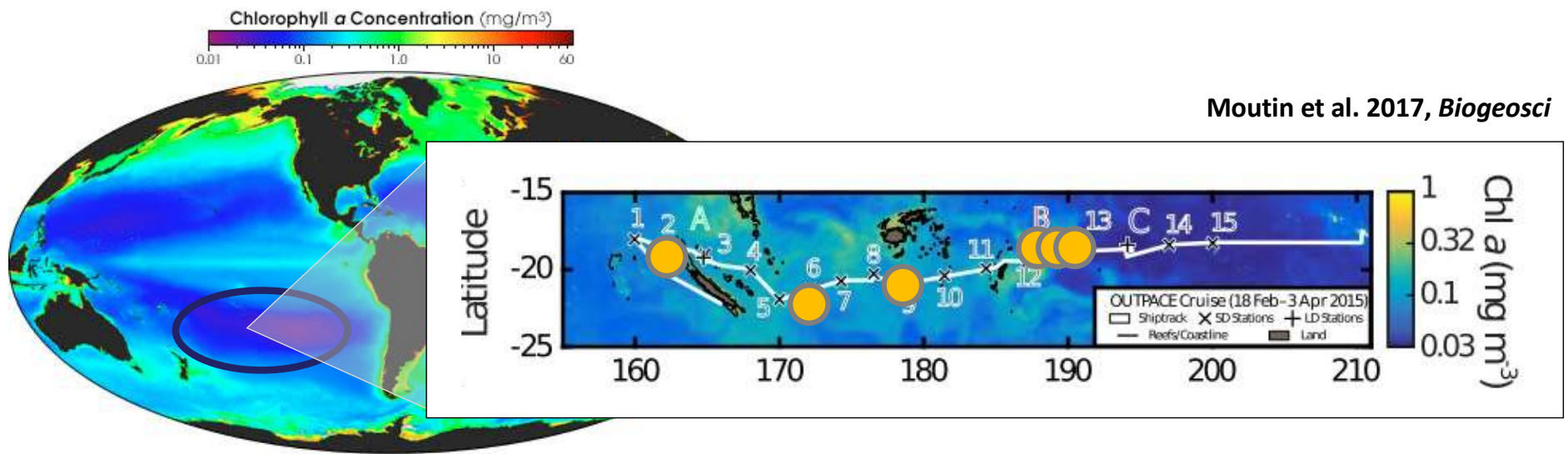
Coordinated analysis of phosphorus cycling

- South Pacific is undersampled and the dynamics of the *Trichodesmium* holobiont are not well understood
- Unique opportunity to sample metagenome, metatranscriptome, and key activities.
- Is there evidence of holobiont phosphorus reduction and cycling in this environment?

OUTPACE



Physiological ecology of *Trichodesmium* and its microbiome in the western tropical South Pacific

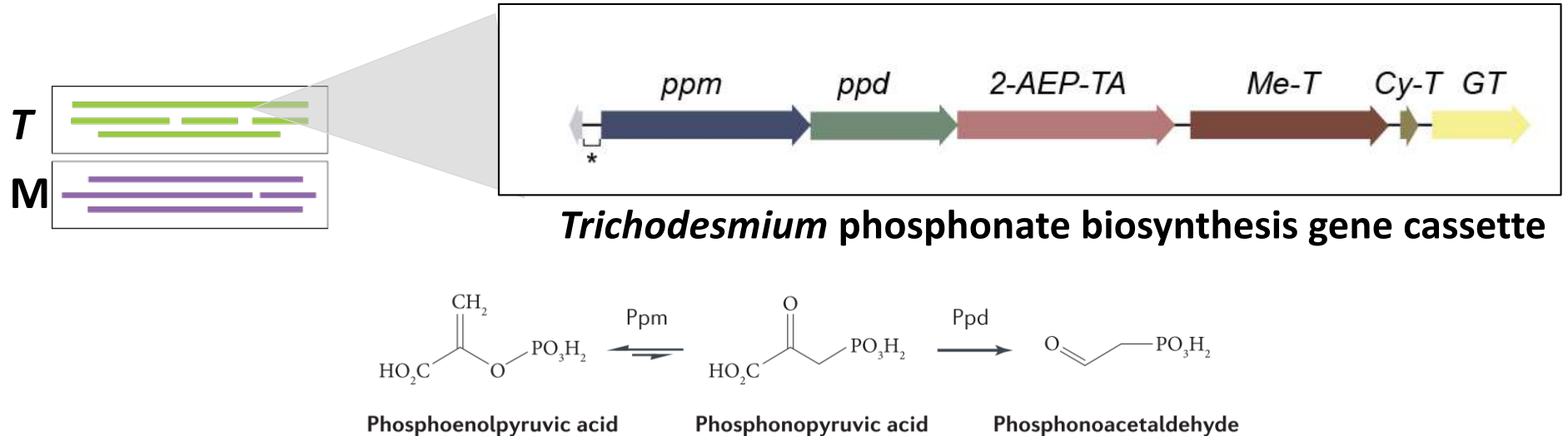


- *Trichodesmium*
- Metagenome
- Metatranscriptome
- *P* reduction

Metatranscriptomes



Metagenomic evidence of P reduction



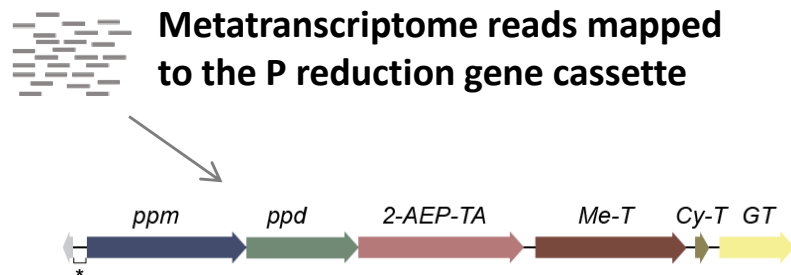
Frischkorn et al. (2018) *Biogeoscience*

Complete gene set for phosphonate biosynthesis assembled in *Trichodesmium* genome bin (MAG).

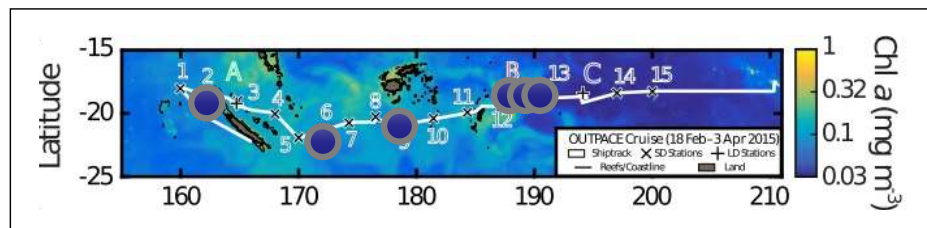
Not present in microbiome MAGs

Genes are expressed with P reduction

Measure gene expression

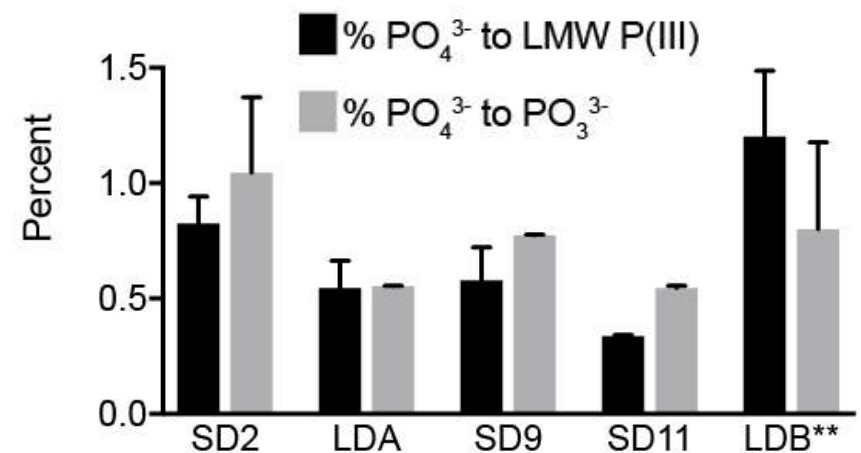


Frischkorn et al. (2018) *Biogeoscience*



Measure phosphate reduction

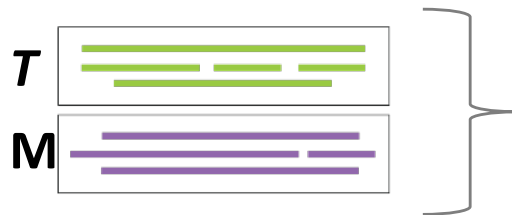
Percentage of radiolabeled phosphate taken up and reduced by *Trichodesmium* colonies



*methylphosphonate, phosphonoacetylaldehyde, or 2-aminoethylphosphonate

- ✓ Genes detected
- ✓ Genes expressed
- ✓ Activity measured
- ? P cycling

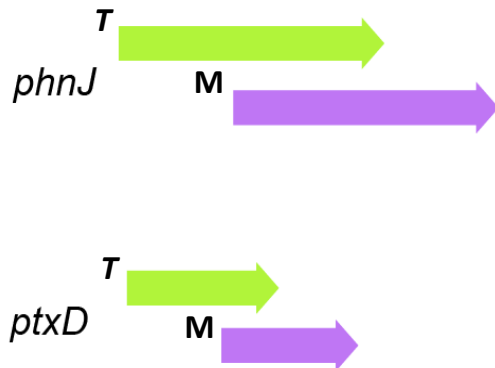
Evidence for metabolism of reduced phosphorus compounds in *Trichodesmium* and the microbiome



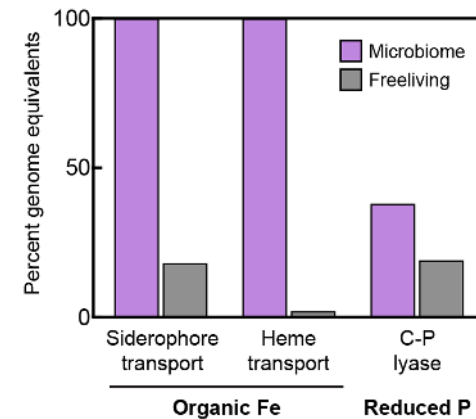
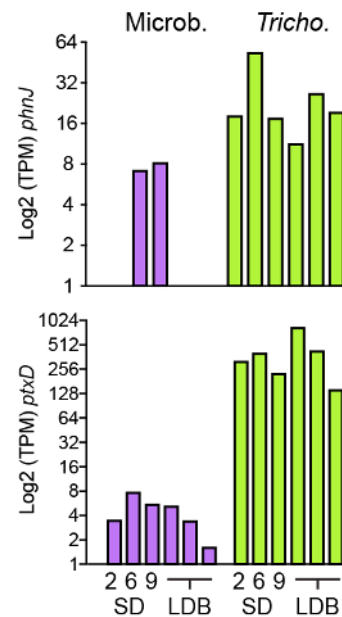
Query for genes:

- Phosphonate C-P lyase (*phnJ*)
- Phosphite dehydrogenase (*ptxD*)

✓ Genes detected

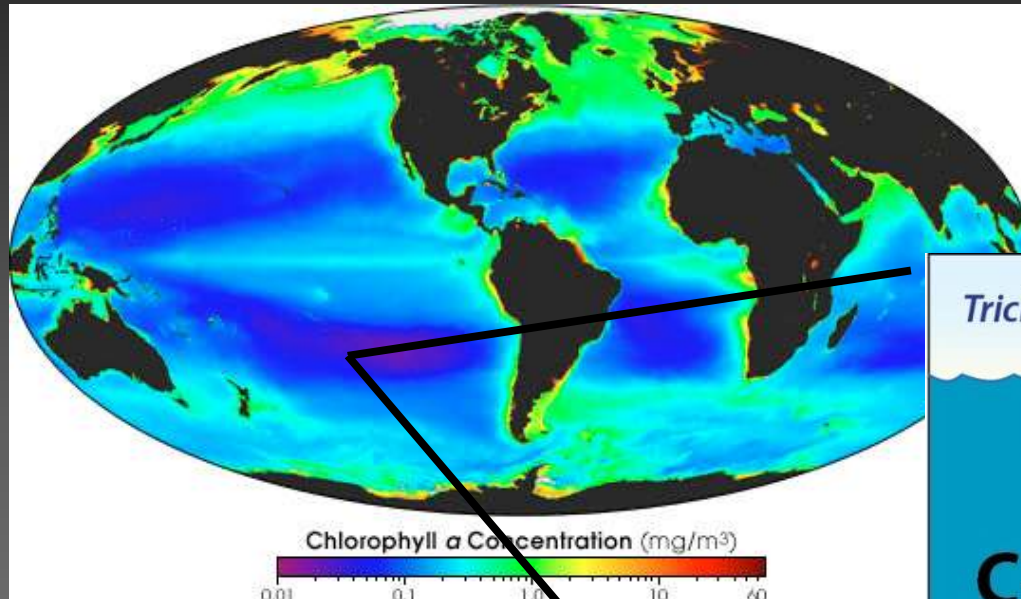


✓ Genes expressed

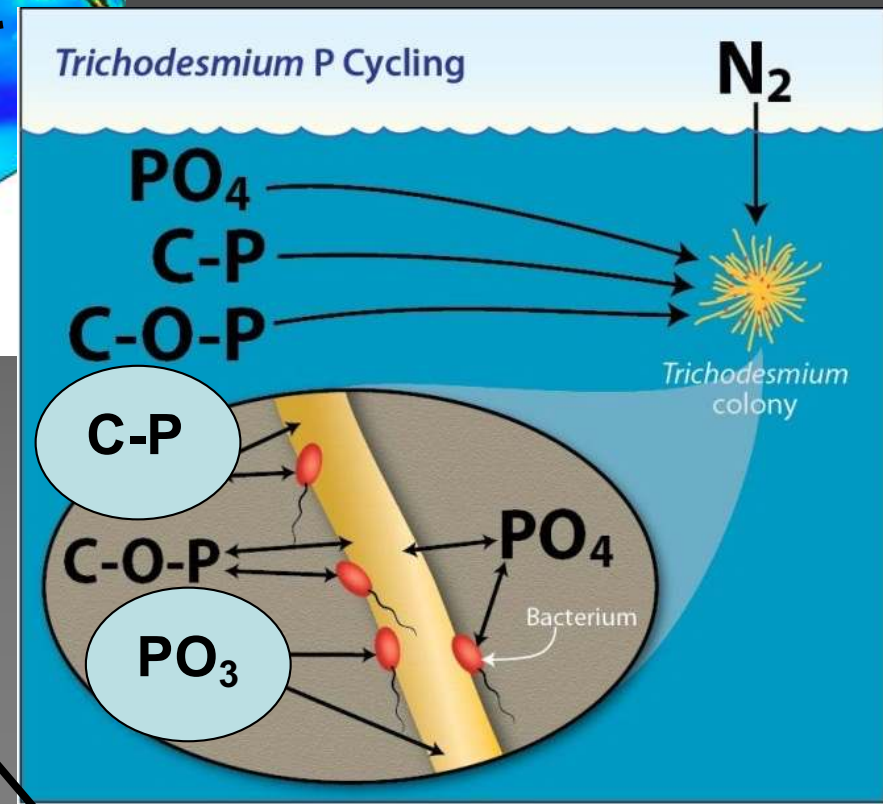


Ability to access reduced P is enriched in *Trichodesmium* consortia

Novel P currencies used in holobiont....



Mitigate competition
for scarce resource?



Summary

- Need to think about *Trichodesmium* as a holobiont with a broader metabolic potential than just *Trichodesmium* alone.
- Microbiome is distinct and varies as a function of environment
- Holobiont is a potential hot-spot of reduced phosphorus cycling.
- *Consistency of epibiont diversity and functional capacity across environments?*
 - Metagenomes and metatranscriptomes from different environments

Core questions about the *Trichodesmium* microbiome

Who is there?

- **Diverse community, distinct from water column**



What are they doing?

- **Microbiome contributes functional diversity to community**

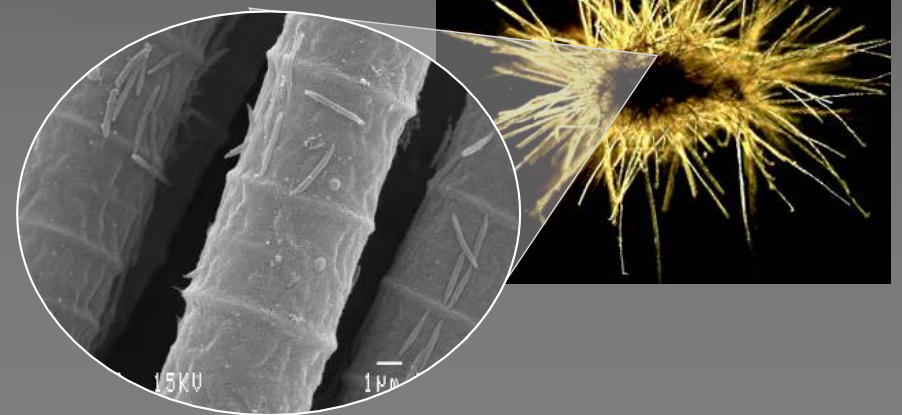
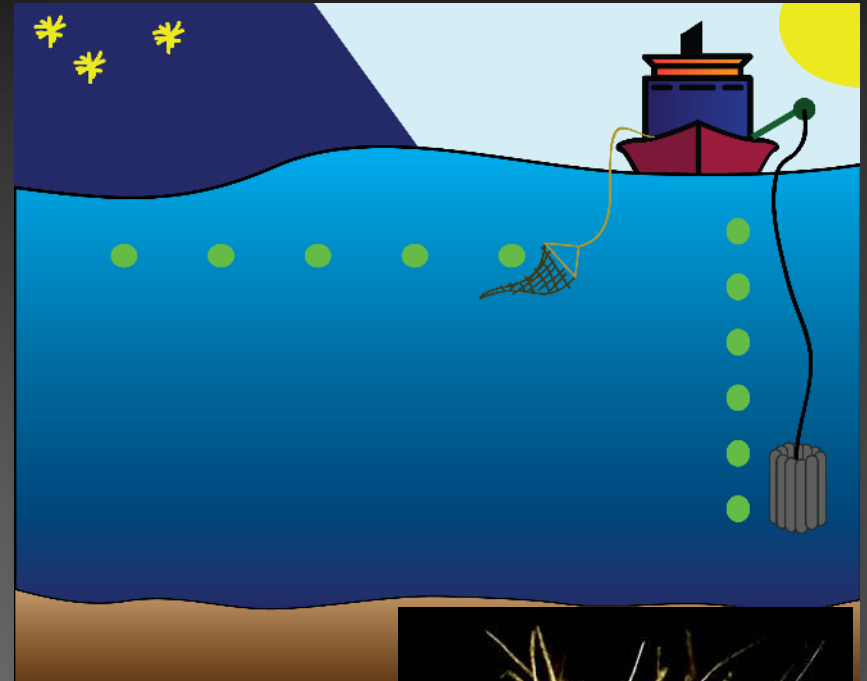


Are they interacting?

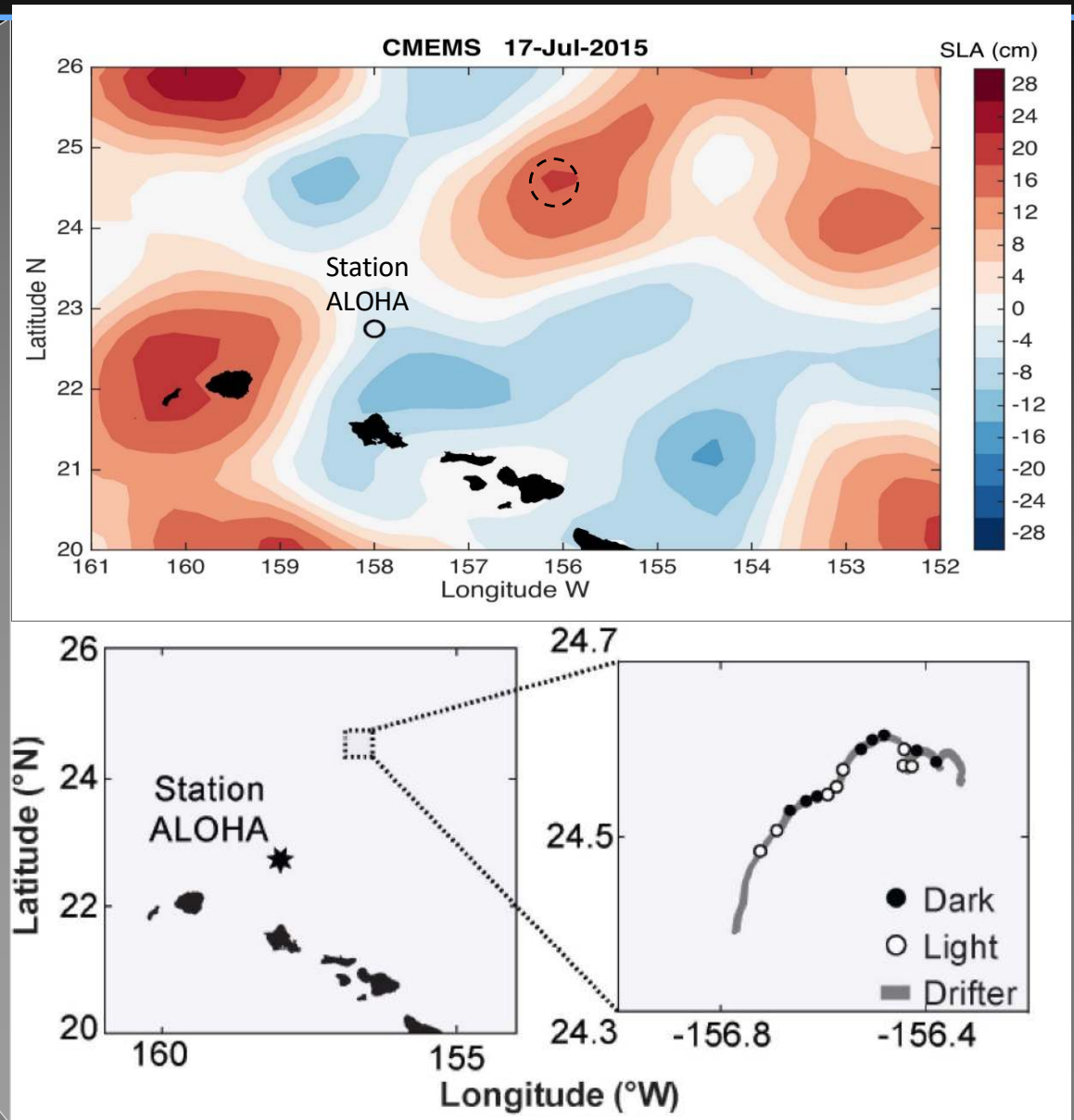
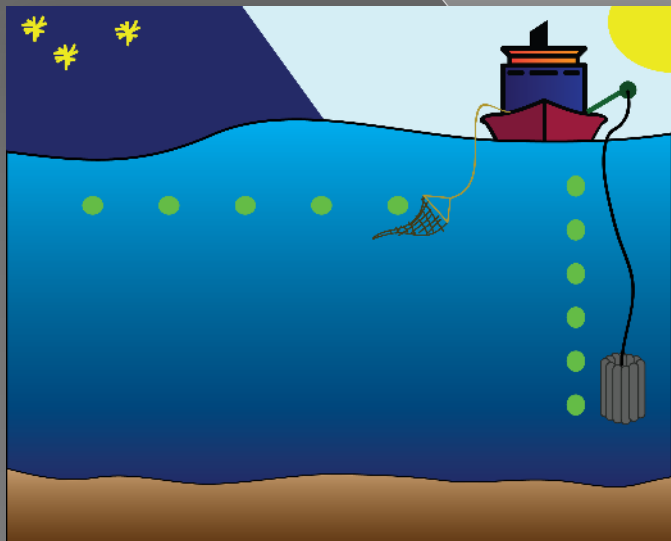
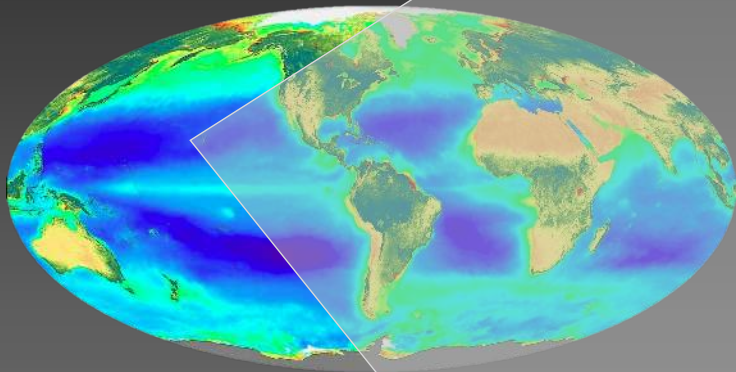
- **Diel patterns in the consortia**

Using light to study interactions

- Light drives diel changes in *Trichodesmium* CO₂ and N₂ fixation
- Do epibionts have diel responses, and what might they tell us about interactions between the host and microbiome?

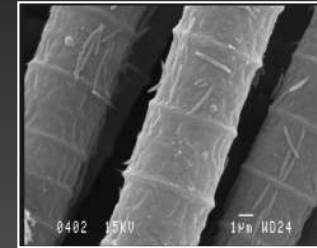


Sampling light driven responses in the NPSG





Coordinated expression dynamics in host and microbiome



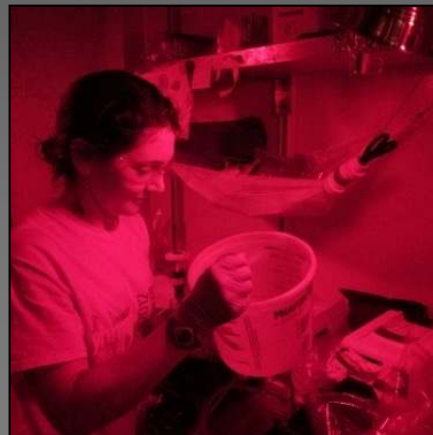
Metatranscriptomes



Orthologous group
analysis



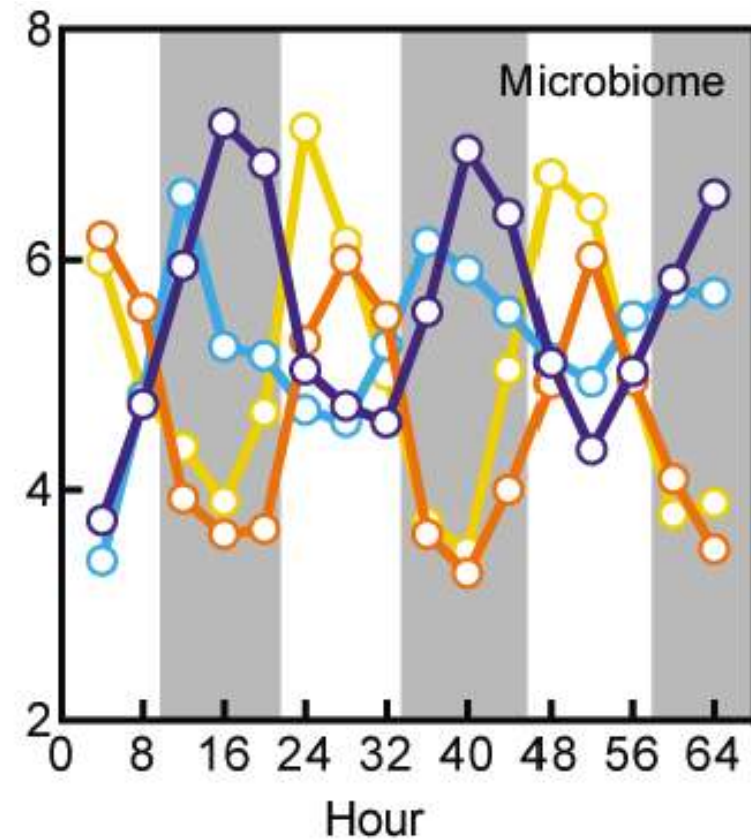
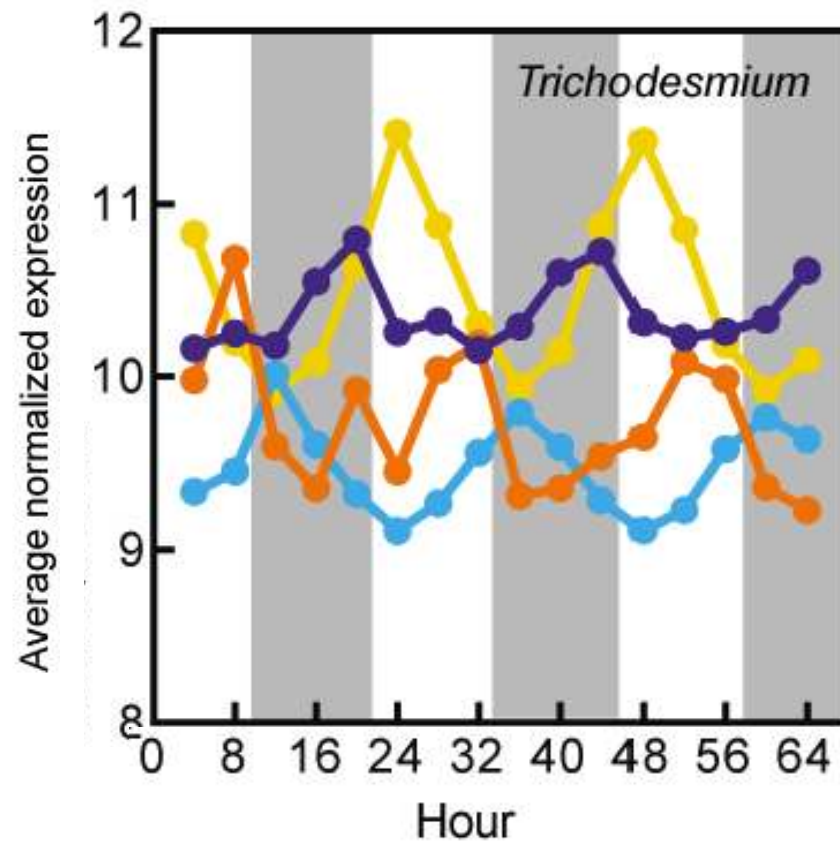
Periodicity: RAIN
Co-expression: WGCNA



<https://omictools.com/rhythmicity-analysis-incorporating-nonparametric-methods-tool>

<https://bmcbioinformatics.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/1471-2105-9-559>

Diel modulation of transcripts in *Trichodesmium*



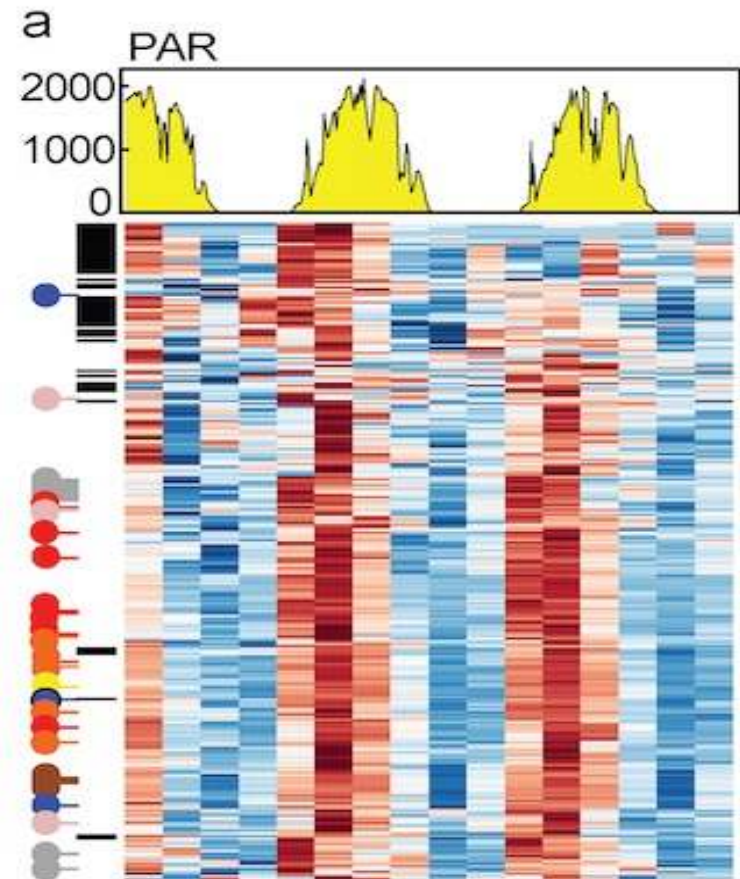
WGCNA co-expression network

Module example: Significantly coordinated expression patterns between *Trichodesmium* and microbiome.

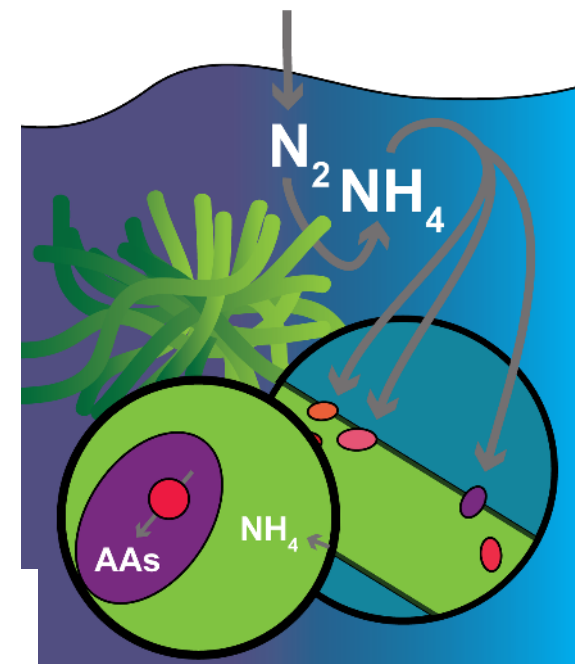
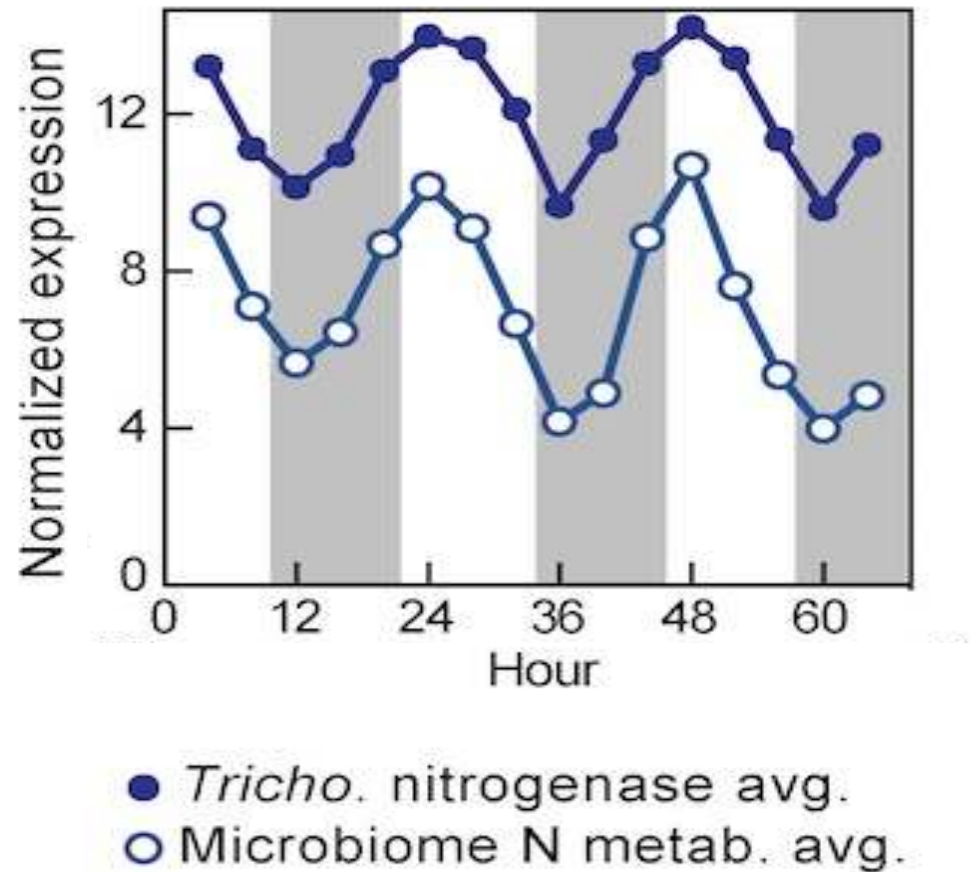
Low  High
Relative expression

Functional Groups

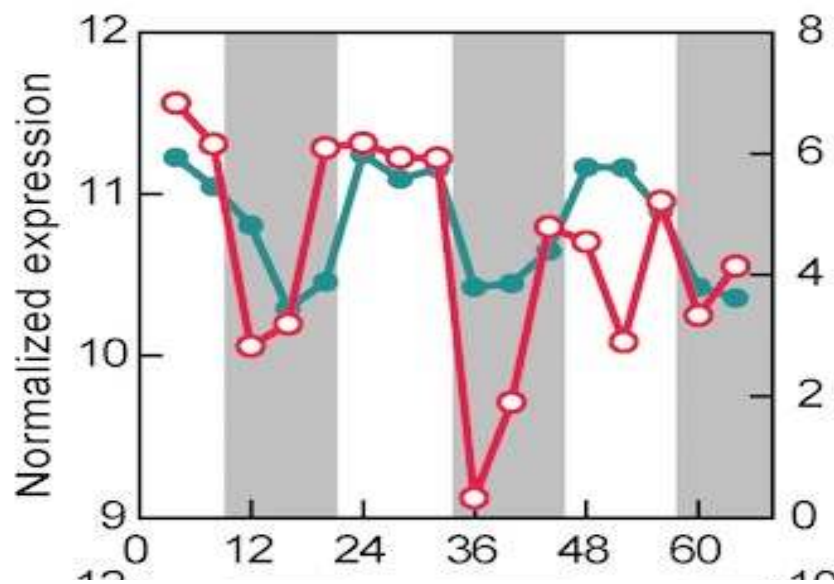
- Amino acid metabolism
- ATP synthesis
- Carbohydrate metabolism
- Cofactor and vitamin biosyn.
- Nitrogen metabolism
- Ribosome
- Sugar transport and metabolism
- Transport



Diel modulation of transcripts suggest coordination: Nitrogen



Diel modulation of transcripts suggests coordination: Carbon



Trichodesmium Microbiome

● *Tricho.* photosystem & C fixation avg.

○ Microbiome respiration avg.

Summary

- The microbiome and *Trichodesmium* are interacting!
 - Nitrogen
 - Carbon
 - Vitamin B12, P, Fe etc.
- Heterotrophic epibionts have striking diel signals that likely underpin signaling, exchanges and other activities in the holobiont.

Core questions about the *Trichodesmium* microbiome

Who is there?

- **Diverse community, distinct from water column**



What are they doing?

- **Microbiome contributes functional diversity to community**



Are they interacting?

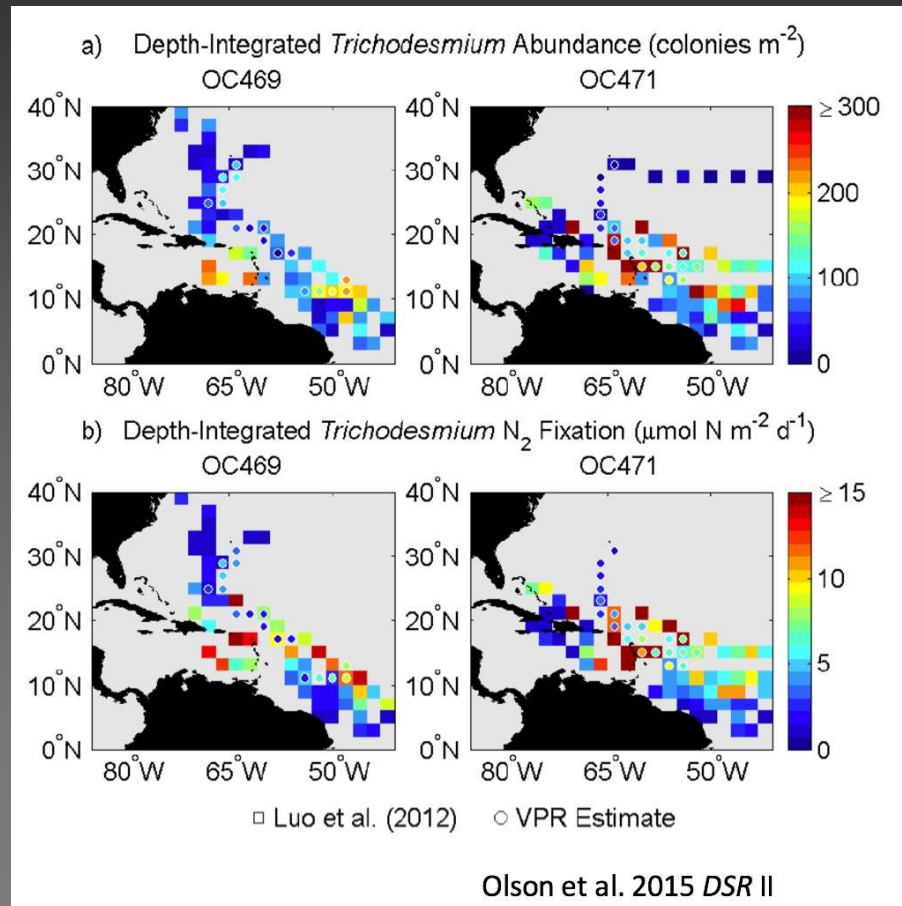
- **Yes! Significant co-expression of host-microbiome genes**

Host → Microbiome

Microbiome → Host

Can the microbiome influence host N₂ fixation?

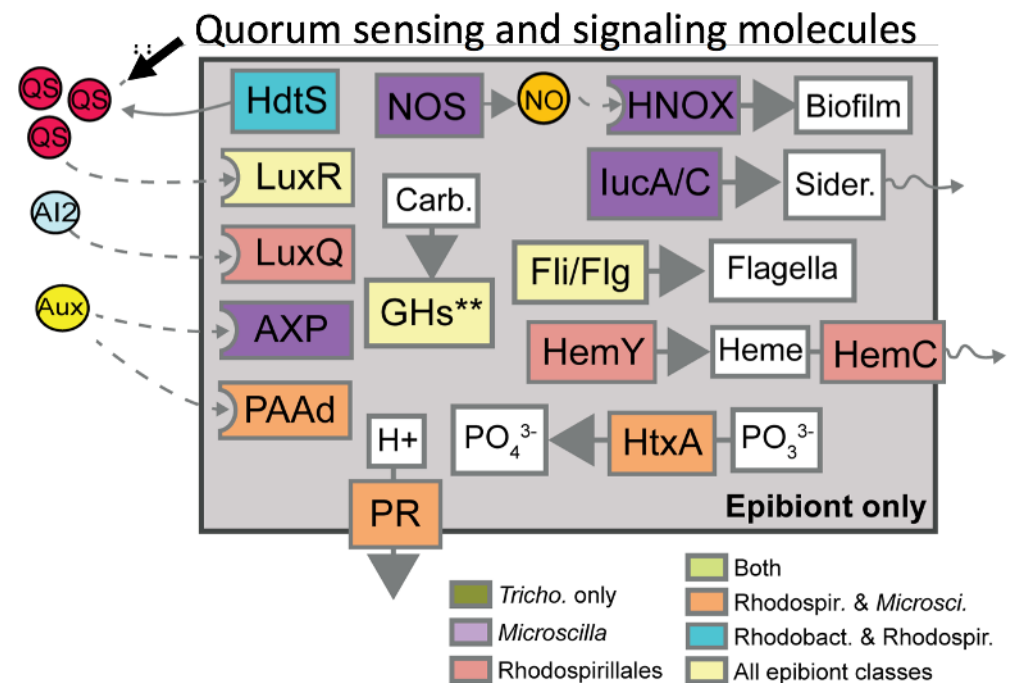
Maybe the models are missing the role of the microbiome?



Selective manipulation of the microbiome...

The epibiont community is talking to itself...

- Quorum sensing communication molecules (acylated homoserine lactones - AHL) detected in colonies (Van Mooy et al. 2012 *ISME J*)
- Addition of AHLs to field colonies changes activity independent of geochemistry (Van Mooy et al. 2012 *ISME J*)
- Genes for AHL biosynthesis and AHL receptors detected in epibionts – not Trichodesmium

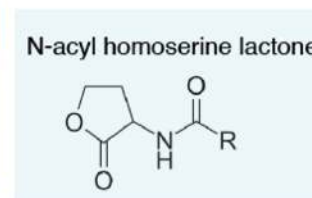
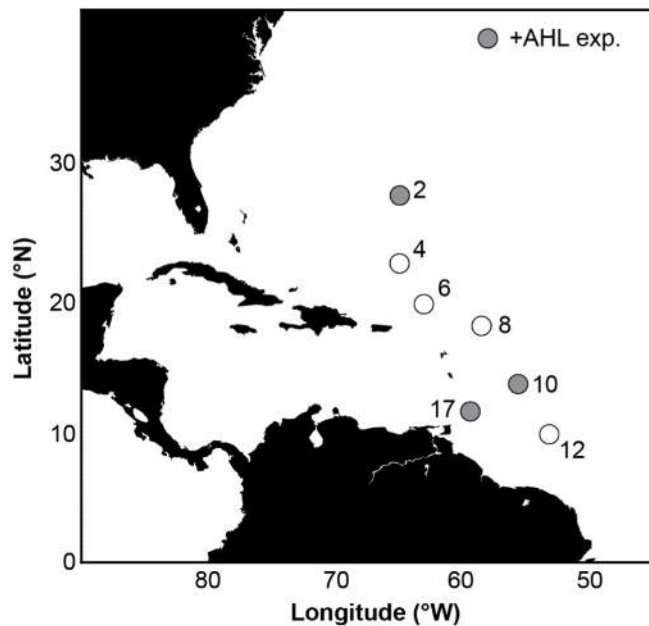


Frischkorn et al. (2017) *ISMEJ*

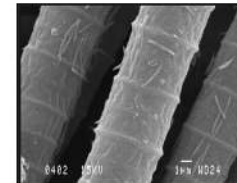
Selective manipulation of the microbiome...

Do microbiome infochemicals influence Trichodesmium phenotype?

Selective manipulation of the epibiont activities with AHLs



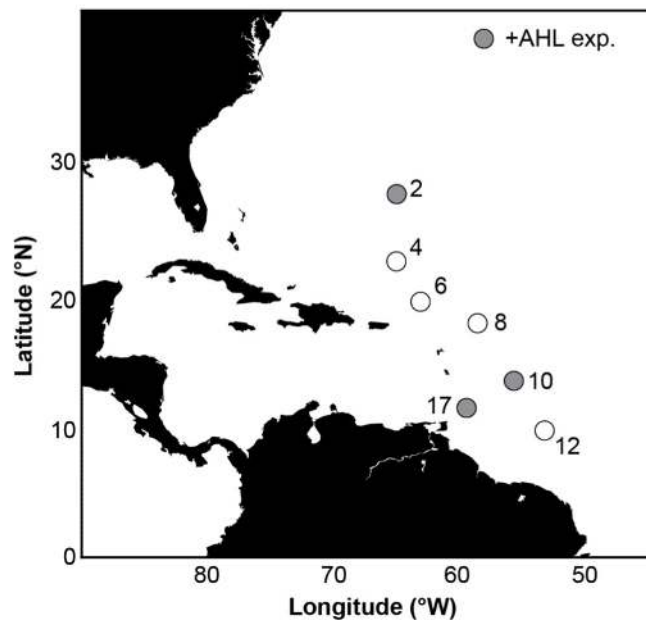
Microbiome



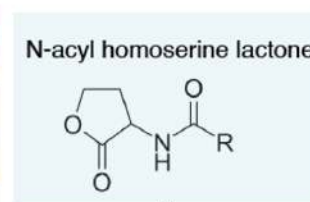
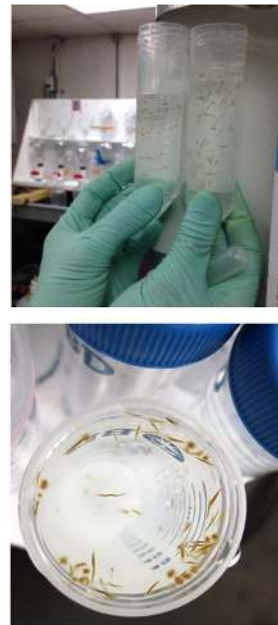
Trichodesmium N₂ Fixation

AHL incubations modulate *Trichodesmium* N₂ fixation

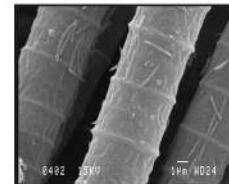
Epibiont infochemicals influence host phenotype



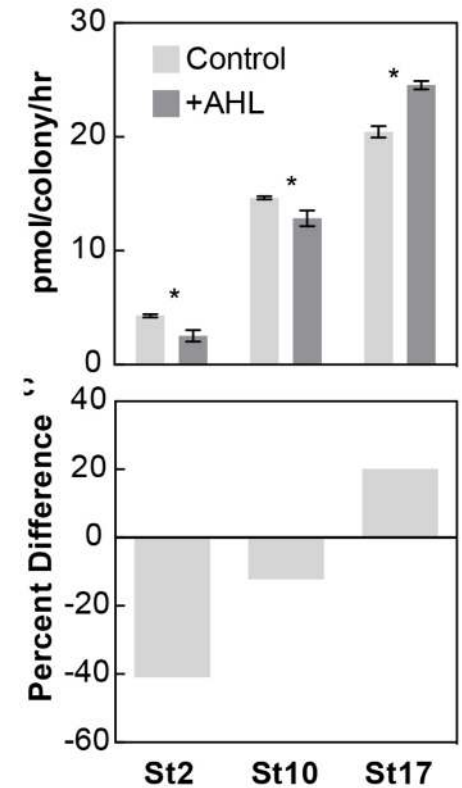
Frischkorn et al. (2018) *L&O Letters*



Microbiome



Trichodesmium N₂ Fixation

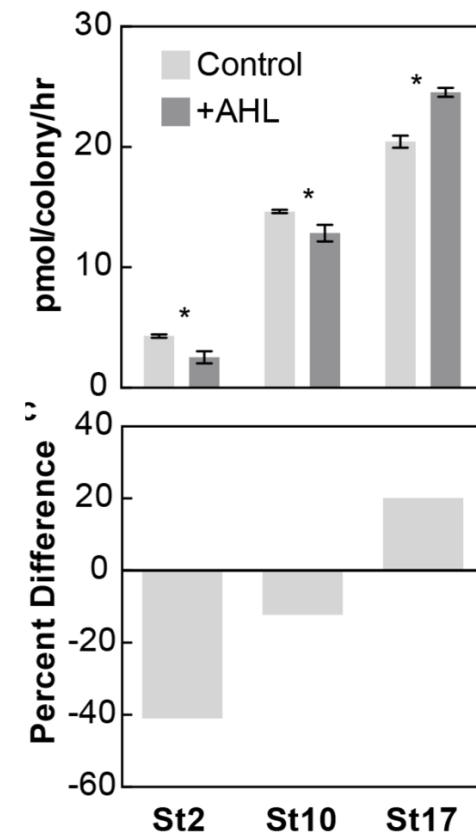
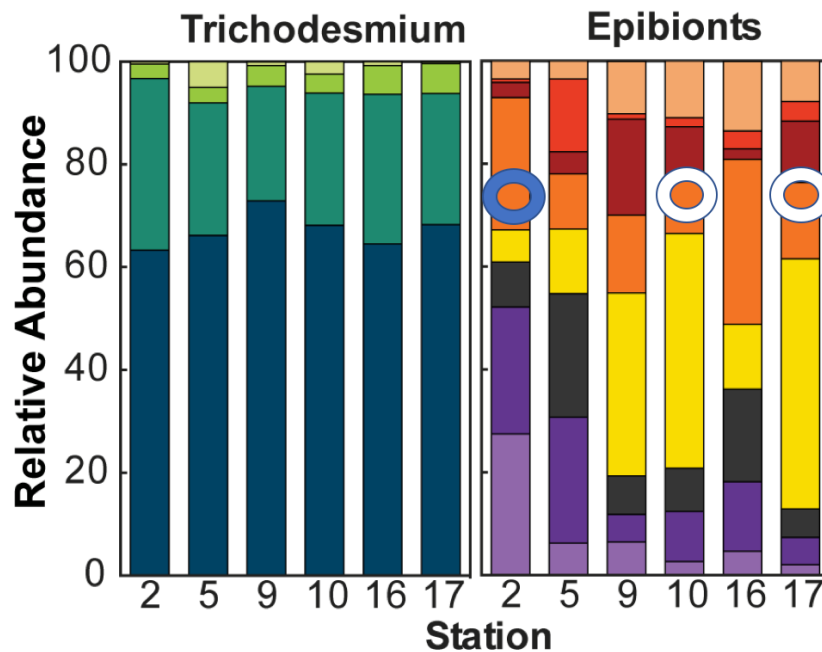


Microbiome can modulate host N₂ fixation rates up to 40%, in orthogonal directions, and independently of known drivers (P, Fe, light, temperature)

Mechanisms still uncertain...

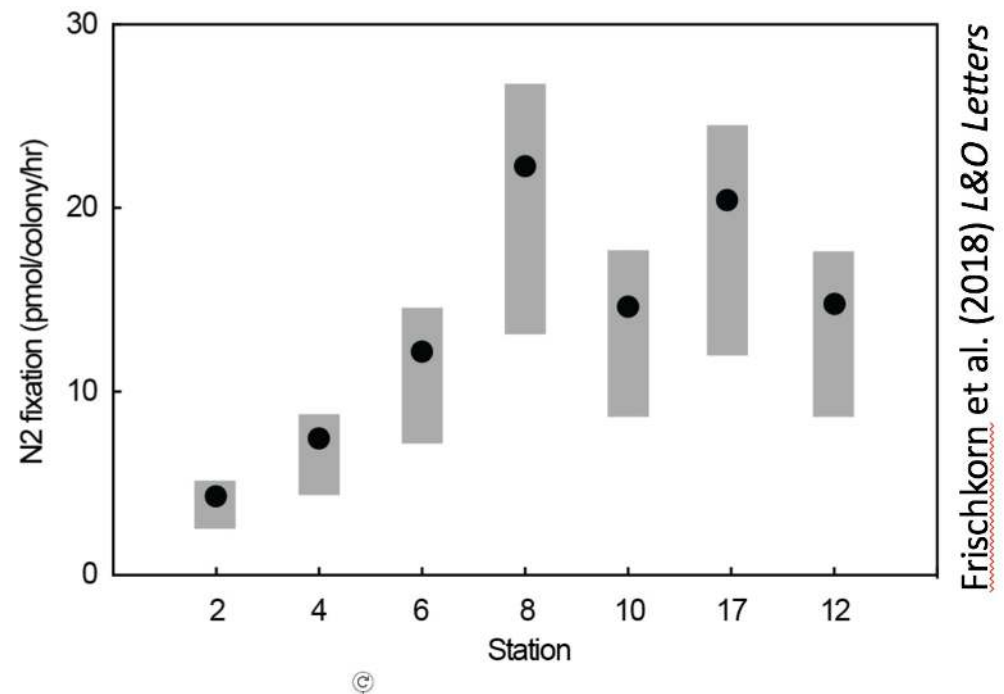
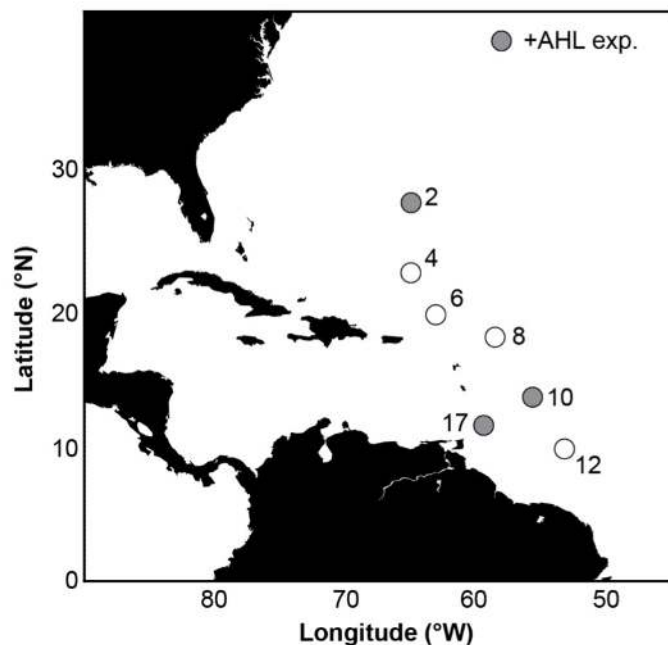
What is the mechanism driving the N_2 fixation response?

Changes in epibiont community structure, and *Trichodesmium* physiology could play a role.



Microbiome activities modulate N₂ fixation in host

Epibiont infochemicals influence ecosystem drivers



Frischkorn et al. (2018) *L&O Letters*

Biological interactions are a previously unrecognized driver of N₂ fixation
Need to revise modeling efforts focused on drivers of N₂ fixation

Summary

- The microbiome and *Trichodesmium* are interacting!
- Epibionts can influence N₂ fixation, but the full mechanisms that underpin this still need to be identified.



Core questions about the *Trichodesmium* microbiome

Who is there?

- **Diverse community, distinct from water column**



What are they doing?

- **Microbiome contributes functional diversity to community**



Are they interacting?

- **Yes! Significant co-expression of host-microbiome genes**

Microbiome can influence host N₂ fixation!

Summary

- **16S community amplicon sequencing:** Colonies harbor diverse epibionts distinct from water column, that are dynamically curated across gradients in the environment
- **Metagenomics:** Epibionts confer substantial metabolic potential which likely underpins *Trichodesmium* fitness
- **Metatranscriptomics:** Novel P cycling currencies may avoid competition
- Apparent interactions between *Trichodesmium* and its microbiome

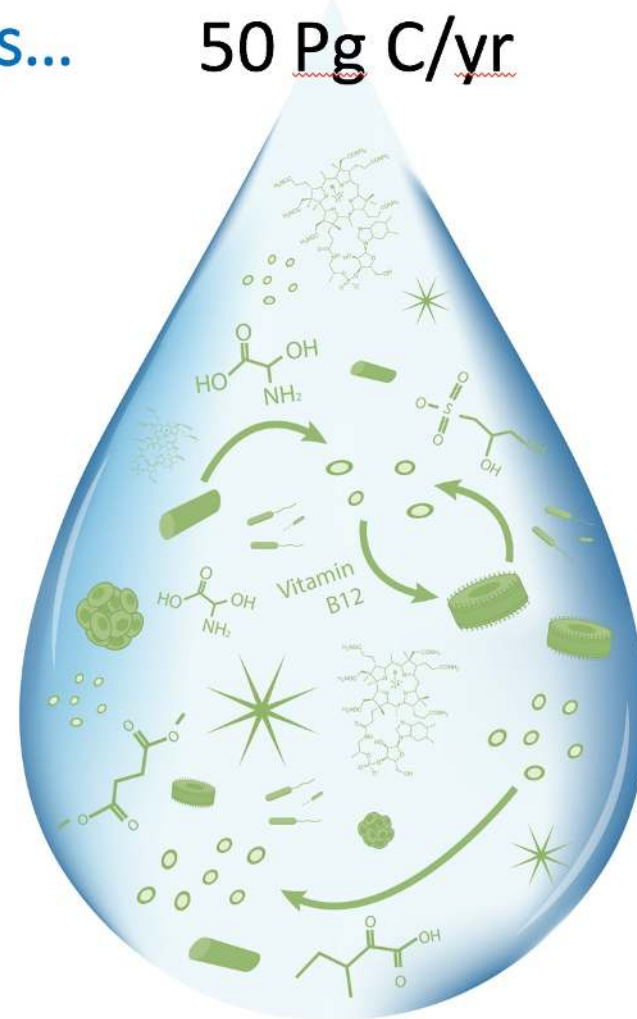


Microbiome plays a critical role in *Trichodesmium* physiological ecology and biogeochemical cycling

What comes next?

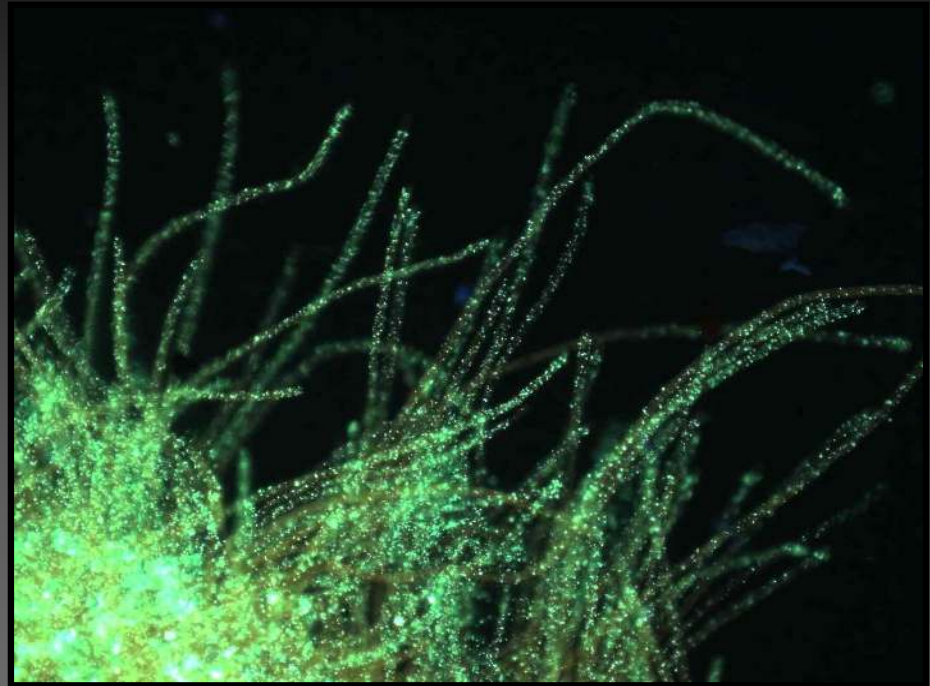
We still need to understand the rules...

- The network of interacting microbes, chemicals and their ecological and biogeochemical relationships
- How taxonomic and functional diversity underpin processes at different scales
- Sensitivity to disturbance and longer term changes – *resilience*
- *The time is now*



Acknowledgements

- Dyhrman Lab and many extraordinary collaborators
- NSF
- DOE
- Simons Foundation
- World Surf League
- Angell Family Foundation



Conclusions

'Omics approaches are providing new insights into the chemical-microbe network that drive ocean ecosystem structure and function

Lessons learned: Where there is a will there is a way!

Enjoy the rest of the workshop!

