



1 What controls planktic foraminiferal calcification?


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10 **Abstract.** Planktic foraminifera are key producers of pelagic carbonate, and their shell weight is suggested to
11 ~~represent have been influenced by~~ the environment in which they calcify. However, there is debate about the
12 use of size-normalised weight (SNW) as a proxy, as some authors invoke a carbonate system control on
13 calcification (and by extension SNW as a $p\text{CO}_2$ proxy), while others suggest that species optimum conditions,
14 nutrient concentration, or temperature drive shell weight. To better understand ~~its use as a~~ proxy, we
15 investigate what drives SNW and whether discrepancies in the proposed control on weight ~~is-are~~ due to
16 differing data collection methodologies and/or regionally different drivers. We integrate new and published
17 SNW data with environmental hindcast data ~~extracted~~ from the CMIP6 modelling suite. Using Bayesian
18 regression modelling, we find that the environment alone ~~cannot does not~~ explain the variability in SNW across
19 species. Although physiology likely modulates the response to the environment, we find little evidence of a
20 unifying driver at the ecogroup-level. Instead, we identify species-specific responses associated with drivers
21 including (but not limited to) the carbonate system, which are likely different between ocean basins. We
22 hypothesise that this is partly influenced by cryptic species and regional phenotypic plasticity in not well
23 understood changes to shell weight, such as the thickness of calcite deposited during some species'
24 reproductive phase. Consequently, which species to use as a $p\text{CO}_2$ proxy or whether multiple species should be
25 used in parallel to reduce uncertainty should be carefully considered. We strongly encourage the regional
26 testing and calibration of $p\text{CO}_2$ – SNW relationships.

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28 **Short summary.** Planktic foraminifers are a plankton whose fossilised shell weight is used to reconstruct past
29 environmental conditions such as seawater CO_2 . However, there is debate about whether other environmental
30 drivers impact shell weight. Here we use a global data compilation and statistics to analyse what controls their
31 weight. We find that the response varies between species and ocean basin, making it important to use regional
32 calibrations and consider which species should be used to reconstruct CO_2 .

33

34 1 Introduction

35 The unprecedented rise in CO₂ and temperature is altering our oceans and impacting marine ecosystems and
36 their services functioning (such as marine biogeochemical cycles). In the case of planktic foraminifera (a
37 calcifying zooplankton which lives in the surface ocean), ocean acidification, sea surface warming and changing
38 nutrient availability are all projected to impact their calcification (IPCC, 2022; Leung et al., 2022). Currently,
39 these zooplankton contribute approximately a quarter of modern pelagic carbonate production (Buitenhuis et
40 al., 2019; Langer, 2008) and 23–56% of total carbonate flux (Neukermans et al., 2023; Schiebel, 2002). The
41 amount of carbonate produced by individual planktic foraminifers in the first order determines this flux to
42 depth and is a function of their abundance, size and weight (Barrett et al., 2023). While research generally
43 agrees on what drives foraminiferal size (Schmidt et al., 2004; c.f. Rillo et al., 2020) and abundance (Bé and
44 Tolderlund, 1971), the controls on the size-normalized weight (SNW) of planktic foraminifers is debated (e.g.
45 Aldridge et al., 2012; Barker & Elderfield, 2002; de Villiers, 2004; Lombard et al., 2010; Table 2).

46 As well as resolving what controls SNW to understand how carbonate production could be impacted by
47 environmental change, it is also important for the interpretation of SNW as a proxy for past ocean conditions.
48 That is whether SNW should be used to reconstruct carbonate saturation from bottom waters (Lohmann,
49 1995), and/or as proxy for surface ocean carbonate, and by extension atmospheric pCO₂ (Barker and Elderfield,
50 2002). The former stipulates that SNW records dissolution post deposition rather than environmental
51 conditions during life. The latter supports the opposite – that SNW is controlled by carbonate ion concentration
52 [CO₃²⁻] and records changes in the environment during life and the impact of post depositional processes are
53 minimal (Russell et al., 2004). If variables other than the carbonate system control SNW, the use of this proxy
54 should be reassessed.

55 There is contradicting evidence of a carbonate system control on foraminiferal calcification, with some studies
56 showing a positive relationship between SNW and [CO₃²⁻], pH, and calcite saturation (Ω) (Barker & Elderfield,
57 2002; Beer et al., 2010b; Bijma et al., 2002; Bijma et al., 1999; Broecker & Clark, 2001; Davis et al., 2017; de
58 Moel et al., 2009; Dong et al., 2022; Lombard et al., 2010; Manno et al., 2012; Moy et al., 2009; Russell et al.,
59 2004; Weinkauf et al., 2013). However, this response is not uniform between or even within species, with some
60 studies reporting no response to [CO₃²⁻] (Béjard et al., 2023; Gonzalez-Mora et al., 2008; Henehan et al., 2017;
61 Mallo et al., 2017; Naik et al., 2011; Pak et al., 2018; Song et al., 2022; Weinkauf et al., 2016). Others suggest
62 that different environmental parameters are the primary control on SNW, such as temperature (Marr et al.,
63 2011; Pak et al., 2018; Qin et al., 2020; Song et al., 2022), nutrient concentration (Aldridge et al., 2012), ~~and~~
64 optimum growth conditions (de Villiers, 2004) and seawater density (Zarkogiannis et al., 2019). (Schiebel and
65 Hemleben, 2005)(Zarkogiannis et al., 2022)Importantly, many studies identify multivariate environmental
66 controls on foraminiferal calcification, such as surface ocean carbonate chemistry, temperature, productivity,
67 nutrient availability, and salinity, (Béjard et al., 2023; Mallo et al., 2017; Marshall et al., 2013; Pallacks et al.,
68 2023; Weinkauf et al., 2016), which can be species-specific and vary between and within ocean basins.

69 Physiology and ecological mechanisms such as biogeography or symbiosis may modulate the environmental
70 response. Hence different ecogroups (i.e., species grouped by their ecology ~~which that~~ have functional traits
71 such as spines in common; Table 1; (Aze et al., 2011)) may respond differently to the environment. For
72 example, in symbiont bearing species the negative impact of low carbonate ion concentration could be reduced
73 due to CO₂ uptake by symbionts in the foraminifer's microenvironment (Jørgensen et al., 1985; Köhler-Rink and
74 Köhl, 2005; Rink et al., 1998). Species with spines may better capture food than non-spinose species (Gaskell et
75 al., 2019; Spindler et al., 1984), providing energy for metabolic processes ~~which that~~ support calcification.

76 SNW could additionally be variable between species due to potential differences in biomineralization
77 pathways. Models suggest different biological controls, such as the intracellular storage of inorganic carbon and
78 calcium ions (Erez, 2003), pH regulation (Lastam et al., 2023; de Nooijer et al., 2009; Toyofuku et al., 2017), and
79 active transport of calcium and/or magnesium pumping (Bentov and Erez, 2006; Nehrke et al., 2013). These
80 different pathways could have different sensitivities to environmental change. Furthermore, SNW
81 measurements taken at the morphospecies level (i.e., a species designated based on morphological features)
82 could mask differences in the individual genotypes within cryptic species (i.e., organisms that look identical but
83 represent distinct evolutionary lineages) if these have different environmental preferences (Darling et al., 2000;
84 Morard et al., 2024).

85 Furthermore, the SNW response may vary spatially. For example, at higher latitudes where carbonate
86 saturation is close to undersaturation (Mikis et al., 2019), a foraminifera may be at its limit of tolerance and
87 therefore more vulnerable to small changes in carbonate ion concentration than low latitudes dwellers, akin to
88 observations of coralline algae species responses to temperature changes at the trailing and leading edges of
89 their distribution (Kolzenburg et al., 2023).

90 Additionally, the wide range in methodology used to collect weight measurements could also complicate our
91 understanding of what drives SNW. Results are either generated with a sieved-based approach (SBW), in which
92 planktic foraminifers are sieved through a narrow size fraction then the average specimen weight is taken, or
93 through the measurement-based approach (MBW), where the additional step of normalizing to a measured
94 size parameter (diameter or area) is taken (equation 1). MBW is a more rigorous approach as the use of sieve
95 fractions (SBW) can be unreliable due to size variability within the sieve fraction itself (Aldridge et al., 2012;
96 Beer et al., 2010a; Béjard et al., 2023)

$$MBW = \frac{Mean\ SBW_{sample} * Mean\ parameter_{size\ fraction}}{Mean\ parameter_{sample}} \quad (1)$$

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98 Finally, different sample collection methodologies (i.e., whether results are derived from culture, plankton tow,
99 core-top, or sediment trap samples) could further complicate our understanding of what drives calcification.
100 Some authors have analysed foraminiferal SNW from plankton tow samples (Aldridge et al., 2012; Beer et al.,
101 2010b; Mallo et al., 2017). However, foraminifers living in the water column are likely juvenile and have not
102 completed calcification, meaning that anomalously light tests could be measured in comparison to the same

103 size class derived from sediments. The SNW of sediment trap or core-top samples could be impacted by
104 dissolution as foraminifera fall through the water column, however this can be largely accounted for if samples
105 are derived from above the lysocline. Culture experiments are useful in circumventing these limitations, but
106 they do not reflect real-world conditions as many are grown in artificial seawater, and the meta-data collected
107 is variable between publications limiting aggregation of studies.

108 Here, we apply Bayesian regression to statistically infer what drives SNW (measurement-based). We
109 hypothesise that (1) the environment alone ~~cannot~~ does not explain variability in foraminiferal SNW across
110 species. ~~Instead,~~ (2) physiology modulates the foraminiferal SNW response to the environment, hence the
111 SNW response will be similar within ecogroups. (3) Species-specific SNW sensitivities may overprint the
112 ecogroup response.

113 2 Methods

114 To infer which environmental variables drive SNW ~~at both across~~ species (i.e., all foraminifers in this study
115 pooled together) and group at the ecogroup and species level, we conducted an exhaustive literature review,
116 pre-processed our data to ensure data quality, and then statistically analysed our data using Bayesian
117 regression modelling. Details for each step are provided below.

118 2.1 Compilation of planktic foraminiferal SNW data

119 This study gathers articles on foraminiferal SNW published until the 31st October 2023, and includes 7790
120 samples covering 11 species from 7 published datasets and a new dataset ($n = 2209$; Fig. 1; ~~Text S1 and S2~~). The
121 full article list is available in the supplementary material (Text S1) and the new SNW data can be found in the
122 supplementary data.

123 A literature search for planktic foraminiferal SNW was conducted on Google Scholar. Publications with the key
124 words ‘planktic foraminifera’ with ‘size normalized weight’, ‘weight’, ‘calcification’ were included. The results
125 were expanded by exploring citations of key papers and identifying additional studies from the reference list of
126 review articles. Articles were initially screened considering title relevance, then abstract content, and finally
127 full-text content. ~~Additionally, we included our own unpublished SNW which significantly increased data~~
128 ~~coverage in high latitudes and the subtropical Atlantic (Fig 1, see Text S1 for methodology). The full article list is~~
129 ~~available in the supplementary material and the new SNW data can be found in the supplementary data.~~

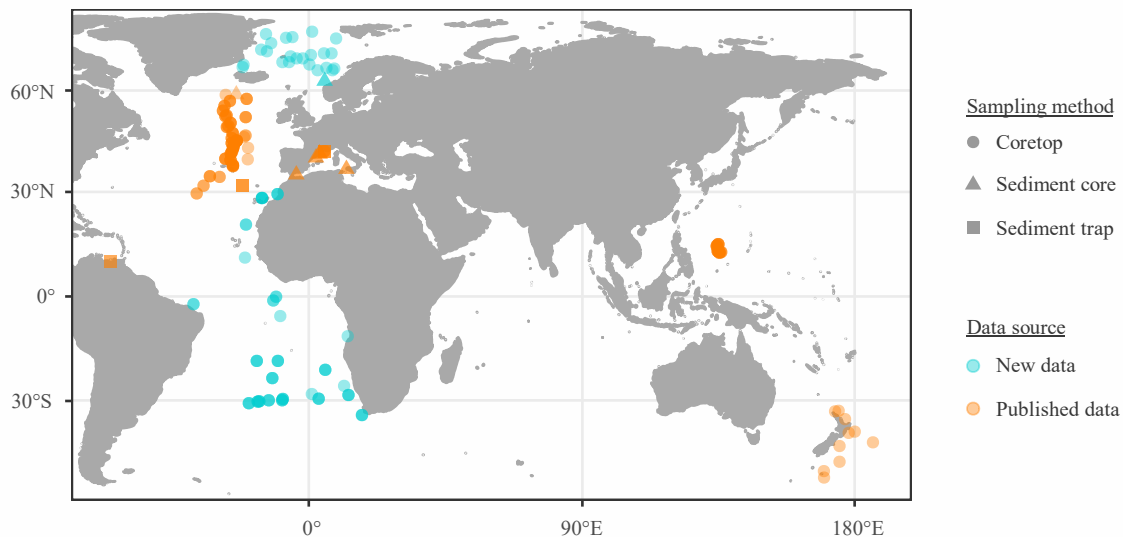
130 Data were only included if SNW was normalized by the measurement based weight (MBW) method as in
131 equation 1 ~~(Barker & Elderfield, (Aldridge et al., 2012; Barker and Elderfield, 2002)~~ using diameter or silhouette
132 area ~~(Béjard et al., 2023; Marshall et al., 2013).~~ ~~(Aldridge et al., 2012; Beer et al., 2010a; Béjard et al., 2023).~~

133 Because the count of foraminifera collected can be low in sediment traps, selecting narrow size classes was not
134 always possible for this data type as restricting sieve size would have resulted in a very small number of
135 specimens. Data from plankton tows were removed from analysis as these may contain juvenile foraminifers.
136 Given typical sedimentation rates in the open ocean and bioturbation, core-top data were considered

137 preindustrial (unless the publication stated otherwise). Core samples were considered preindustrial if dated
138 between 1000 AD and 1900 AD as CO₂ remained fairly stable over the Holocene (IPCC, 2021). - *Globigerinoides*
139 *G. ruber* white and *G. ruber* pink are combined to increase sample size.

140 Additionally, we included our own unpublished SNW measurements which significantly increased data
141 coverage in high latitudes and the subtropical Atlantic (Fig. 1). For these new data, SNW measurements were
142 collected from Atlantic core-tops and sediment cores for *G. truncatulinoides*, *G. ruber*, *O. universa*, *N.*
143 *pachyderma*, *N. incompta* and *G. bulloides*. The former three were analysed from a 300-355 µm sieve size
144 fraction, *G. bulloides* from 250-300 µm and the latter two from a 200-250 µm size fraction. SNW data were
145 collected through the measurement-based approach (MBW; equation 1). Approximately 20-30 individuals were
146 analysed per sample. Samples were weighed using a Mettler Toledo MT5 microbalance (error = ± 0.5 µg) and
147 the mean weight calculated. Size measurements were taken for each individual foraminifera test at 125x
148 magnification using a LEICA MZ12.5 microscope. Individual tests were aligned in the same orientation and the
149 longest axis of the test (Feret's diameter) was measured using Fiji (Schindelin et al., 2012). The average Feret's
150 diameter was calculated for each sample and tests were size normalised using equation 1.

151 For all data, S samples were omitted if dissolution of foraminifera specimens was reported, or if the water
152 depth was more than 40500m thereby approaching the CCD (Carbonate compensation depth; Broecker &
153 Clark, 2009). Due to sampling effort and preservation (i.e., the CCD being shallower in the P Pacific), data are
154 focused in the Atlantic with only some Pacific data. Measurements span a wide latitudinal gradient (54°S to
155 78°N; Fig. 1). Planktic foraminifers were assigned to one of three ecogroups following Aze et al. (2011) (Table
156 1).



157 **Figure 1** Location of SNW data. See Fig. S1 for sample count per datatype and Fig. S2 for a breakdown of
158 species by location. $n_{samples} = 7790$.

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Table 1 Planktic foraminifera species and their features which determine their ecogroup (Aze et al., 2011). The number in brackets indicate the genotype counts from Morard et al. (2024).

Species	Ecogroup	Habitat depth	Cryptic diversification
<i>G. bulloides</i>	symbiont-barren, spinose	mixed layer	High (10)
<i>G. inflata</i>	symbiont-barren, non-spinose	thermocline	Low (2)
<i>N. pachyderma</i>	symbiont-barren, non-spinose	mixed layer	High (8)
<i>G. truncatulinoides</i>	symbiont-barren, non-spinose	sub-thermocline	Moderate (5)
<i>N. incompta</i>	symbiont-barren, non-spinose	mixed layer	Low (2)
<i>G. ruber</i>	symbiont-obligate, spinose	mixed layer	Moderate (4)
<i>O. universa</i>	symbiont-obligate, spinose	mixed layer	Low (2)
<i>T. sacculifer</i>	symbiont-obligate, spinose	mixed layer	None (1)
<i>G. elongatus</i>	symbiont-obligate, spinose	mixed layer	None (1)
<i>N. dutertrei</i>	symbiont-facultative, non-spinose	thermocline	None (1)
<i>P. obliquiloculata</i>	symbiont-facultative, non-spinose	thermocline	Low (2)

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2.2 CMIP6 data extraction: compilation of environmental data

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For all SNW data, corresponding ~~surface ocean~~ environmental data were extracted from models in the CMIP6 ensemble for the modern and preindustrial. Using environmental data from Earth system models (ESMs) rather than the environmental output reported in publications enables us to fill data gaps and ensure harmonisation of environmental data. Environmental data includes 1° × 1° gridded decadal averages for seawater temperature, phosphate concentration, nitrate concentration, salinity, chlorophyll *a* concentration, net primary productivity (NPP), alkalinity, CO₃²⁻, DIC, Calcite Ω and pH.

Although some species (e.g., *G. truncatulinoides*, *G. inflata*, *N. dutertrei*, *P. obliquiloculata*) in our analysis are considered deep dwelling (i.e., live at the thermocline), we use surface ocean environmental data (≤ 20 m depth). This approach is in part due to the challenges of estimating exact habitat depth given its variability. These challenges include (1) the habitat depth of a foraminifera changes through its life time, hence it would be difficult to determine the most suitable average depth; (2) even if an average habitat depth were determined, there is uncertainty about how much calcification happens at which depth; (3) thermocline depth, which is frequently used to describe habitats is different in different parts of the ocean (Mulitza et al., 1997) and (4) habitat depth can vary with the seasons (Waterson et al., 2017). For further discussion and analysis of

182 habitat depth see Supplementary Text S3. In future SNW analysis we recommend that oxygen isotope values
183 are measured on individual specimens and combined with SNW to calculate exact habitat depth.

184 Carbonate system, salinity and temperature data were derived from Jiang et al. (2023), in which 14 CMIP6
185 Earth system models (ESMs) were corrected for bias and model drift (see Table S1 and Jiang et al. 2023).
186 Environmental data for the Mediterranean ~~was-were~~ not available from ~~the~~Jiang et al. (2023)-. For this region,
187 sea surface temperature (SST), sea surface salinity (SSS), dissolved inorganic carbon (DIC) and total alkalinity
188 (TA) were extracted from CESM2 (Danabasoglu et al., 2020) (Fig. S32) as the carbonate system output from
189 CESM2 was closest to the median of the global average for the 14 ESMs (see Table S4 and S5 in Jiang et al.
190 2023).

191 The CESM2 data used in this manuscript were manipulated the same as other ESMs in Jiang et al. (2023). For
192 consistency with other models, CESM2 outputs were converted from mol m⁻³ to μmol kg⁻¹ using a density
193 function calculated from the Thermodynamic Equation of Seawater (TEOS-10; IOC et al., 2010; McDougall &
194 Barker, 2011). Interannual variability was reduced by calculating a 10 year average for each decade. Model bias
195 was removed by correcting to DIVA gridded (Troupin et al., 2012) GLODAP (Lauvset et al., 2022) observational
196 data and model drift was removed using the relevant CESM2 preindustrial control (piControl). The adjusted SST,
197 SSS, DIC and TA were then used to calculate the rest of the OA indicators (CO₃²⁻, Calcite Ω and pH) using
198 CO2System (van Heuven et al., 2011; Lewis and Wallace, 1998). Ice core-based atmospheric CO₂ data
199 (Etheridge et al., 1996; MacFarling Meure et al., 2006) were used to approximate the oceanic fCO₂ change from
200 1750 to 1850, thereby enabling estimation of the carbonate system for the preindustrial (1750) assuming that
201 all locations are in equilibrium with the atmosphere (Takahashi et al., 2014).

202 Five Earth ~~system~~ ~~models~~ ~~(ESMs)~~ were used to extract phosphate concentration, nitrate concentration,
203 chlorophyll *a* concentration and net primary productivity (NPP) data to determine 'optimum conditions' (Table
204 S1; Fig. S43). NPP and chlorophyll are indicators of the algal biomass concentration, which is a large part of
205 some foraminifera species' diet (Schiebel and Hemleben, 2017). Nutrient concentration is a step detached from
206 this, and represents the food available for their prey. Additionally, there is some evidence that phosphate can
207 inhibits calcification in some other calcifiers (Demes et al., 2009; Kinsey and Davies, 1979; Lin and Singer, 2006;
208 Paasche and Brubak, 1994). Decadal averages were calculated for these variables. For comparison to existing
209 data and to improve data readability phosphate and nitrate were converted from mol m⁻³ to μmol kg⁻¹, and
210 chlorophyll *a* from kg m⁻³ to mg m⁻³. ~~The median of the non-corrected environmental outputs were calculated~~
211 ~~and the preindustrial (1750) values were assumed the same as in 1850.~~ These data were not corrected to
212 observational data as the data coverage is insufficient. The median of the non-corrected environmental outputs
213 were calculated and the preindustrial (1750) values were assumed the same as in 1850. Although species'
214 abundance is also often used to inform optimum conditions, these data were not available for the same
215 locations.

217 2.3 Statistical modelling

218 2.3.1 Data cleaning: addressing size fraction bias and collinearity in environmental data

219 All statistical analyses were carried out using R version 4.2.1 (R Core Team, 2018). To remove size fraction bias
220 in SNW, the size fractions 250-300 and 300-350 were merged into one size fraction and (unless stated
221 otherwise) this was used. These size fractions were chosen because of their large sample number, they are in
222 the middle of the size range, and allow us to cover a wide environmental gradient (Fig. 2). This resulted in
223 statistical analysis of 491542 samples covering seven species from four published datasets and our data (Text
224 S12).

225 Four of the initial ten environmental parameters were included in the analysis: phosphate concentration,
226 salinity, NPP, and CO_3^{2-} . We were unable to analyse the impact of sea surface temperature due to collinearity,
227 which would inflate the variance and standard error of coefficient estimates (Dormann et al., 2013). Nitrate
228 was excluded as phosphate and nitrate concentration are highly correlated ($\rho = 0.83$, $p < .000$). We chose to
229 keep phosphate as it is more commonly assessed in the literature. Similarly, the carbonate system parameters
230 are highly correlated (Fig. S54), but as carbonate ion concentration is often used in the literature we use this to
231 represent the carbonate system. Because NPP is more directly linked with plankton biomass than chlorophyll *a*
232 concentration, the former is analysed here. Due to this data cleaning, it is important to note that while in the
233 following we emphasise the parameter we analysed, the impacts on SNW could also be driven by the highly
234 correlated driver.

235 2.3.2 Model Specification

236 All models were fitted using the Bayesian regression model package, brms (Bürkner, 2017) which uses the
237 probabilistic programming language Stan (Carpenter et al., 2017). The models were specified to be Gamma
238 distributed and were fitted using the NUTS (Hoffman and Gelman, 2014) sampler with 4 chains and 2000
239 iterations, each of which the first 1000 are warmup to calibrate the sampler, thus leading to 4000 posterior
240 samples.

241 All models were checked with appropriate tests before interpretation to ensure model assumptions were not
242 violated. Variables were centred and standardised ~~to reduce structural collinearity~~, and a QR decomposition
243 term added to models to reduce the effect of correlation between variables. To check for any remaining
244 collinearity, pairs plots were visually assessed, and variance inflation factors (VIF) were verified using the
245 package 'performance' which passes the brms model to its frequentist counterpart. A VIF of ten or less
246 indicates that collinearity is not problematic (Marcoulides & Raykov, 2019; Table S3). For the species *G.*
247 *truncatulinoides*, *G. elongatus* and *N. incompta* VIF values suggested collinearity was problematic. As such, we
248 decompose the data into non-correlated factors using principal component analysis (PCA; see Text S2) and use
249 these principal components instead of individual environmental drivers in the Bayesian models. For all
250 Bayesian analysis, ~~Q~~ outliers were ~~detected~~ checked for using Pareto's k , for which a value of 0.7 or higher
251 indicated an unduly influential observation. Visual posterior predictive checks were carried out to assess model

252 fit and chain mixing (Fig. S65). An \hat{R} value close to 1 (i.e., less than 1.1) indicates the chains have converged
253 (Bürkner, 2017). All models had an \hat{R} of 1.01 or 1 and a Pareto's k of less than 0.7.

254 2.3.3 Modelling: Can the environment explain foraminiferal SNW across species?

255 To assess whether there is a universal driver and how much variability in SNW across all foraminifers can be
256 explained by the environment, a "group-level" (i.e., foraminifera species pooled together; $n_{samples} = 491512$)
257 Bayesian multi-level model was fitted (Bürkner, 2018). The full model included carbonate ion concentration
258 (CO_3^{2-}), salinity, phosphate concentration, and net primary productivity (NPP) as fixed environmental effects
259 and species as a random effect (intercept only; Table S3). Data type (i.e., sediment trap, sediment core and
260 core-top) was added as a fixed effect, ~~(not a random effect, because data type had less than five levels~~
261 (Harrison et al., 2018). Because the range of variance was unequal ("heteroscedastic") between species (Fig.
262 S76), we include the Gamma distribution shape term in the model which allows the variance between each
263 species to vary.

264 The full model was compared to a 'null' model ~~which that included fixed environmental effects and sampling~~
265 ~~method but did not consider species and included fixed environmental effects only (the impact of data type as~~
266 ~~a fixed effect was removed from bayes R2 values to ensure it was environmental effect only that was~~
267 ~~measured).~~ Both models were compared using leave-one-out cross-validation ('LOO'; Vehtari et al., 2017), a
268 measure which informs which model is performing best.

269 LOO indicated that adding species as a random effect improved model fit ($\widehat{\text{elpd}}_{\text{loo}}$ improved by ~~261.347.5~~ \pm
270 ~~18.619.4~~, see details in results; Table S3). As such, we fit models for individual species to assess their
271 association with the environment.

272 2.3.4 Modelling: Is the SNW response to the environment similar between ecogroups or species specific?

273 The size fraction restriction imposed for analysis of SNW across species (250-350 μm only) was relaxed (Text
274 S12) as it is less relevant at the species-level, which recognises the size ranges of taxa. Only sieve size fractions
275 that are 50 μm in range were used (unless data were from sediment traps). Similar to the group-level (i.e.,
276 across species) model, data type was added as a fixed effect for each species-level model. *Globoconella*
277 *inflata*, *T. sacculifer*, *N. dutertrei*, *P. obliquiloculata* and *O. universa* were not modelled because of their low
278 number of observations ($n = < 30$). To remove the impact of collinearity for *G. truncatulinoides*, *G. elongatus*
279 and *N. incompta*, PCs were used in place of the individual environmental variables (Text S2). *N. incompta* was
280 excluded from analysis because of significant multi-collinearity that prevented meaningful inference of
281 environmental effects. Bayesian models were fitted to the remaining five-six species. To assess how much of
282 the variability in foraminiferal SNW for different species can be explained by the environment and sampling
283 method, the effect size and credible interval (i.e., Bayesian confidence interval) of coefficients (environmental
284 variables) were extracted from each model. ~~Results were clustered by ecogroup to assess whether there were~~
285 ~~differences in the SNW response to the environment between ecogroups (Fig. 4).~~

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287 **3 Results**

288 **3.1 Qualitative assessment of existing data**

289 Assessing the available SNW data and their suggested drivers in the literature, there is no single environmental
290 control on foraminiferal size normalised weight across species (Table 2). Although this summary suggests that a
291 ~~low negative correlation between~~ carbonate ion concentration ~~does not reduce foraminiferal~~ and SNW ~~is~~
292 unlikely, it is inconclusive as to whether an increase in carbonate ion concentration has no impact on shell
293 weight or increases it. For other environmental variables, it is either a mixed response or there is too little
294 information to determine a direction of response. However, it is important to note that where no significant
295 effect is reported in Table 2, this could possibly reflect the lack of statistical power rather than no response.
296 ~~Using environmental data from earth system models allows us to reanalyse the data and determine whether~~
297 ~~any environmental drivers emerge for SNW across all species.~~

298 **Table 2** Compilation of results from previous studies assessing the relationship between planktonic
 299 foraminiferal size-normalized weight (SNW) and the environment. + = positive correlation, - = negative
 300 correlation, ~ = no response. This table summarizes information from measurement based SNW (i.e. silhouette
 301 area, or diameter normalised) studies only and omits those which only normalised to size by sieving (i.e. sieve-
 302 based weights; SBW) or use plankton tow data. See supplementary Table S2 for detail on SNW measurement
 303 method. [1] Barker & Elderfield (2002); [2] Bédard et al. (2023); [3] Marr et al. (2011); [4] Marshall et al. (2013);
 304 [5] Osborne et al. (2016); [6] Pallacks et al. (2023); [7] Weinkauff et al. (2016).

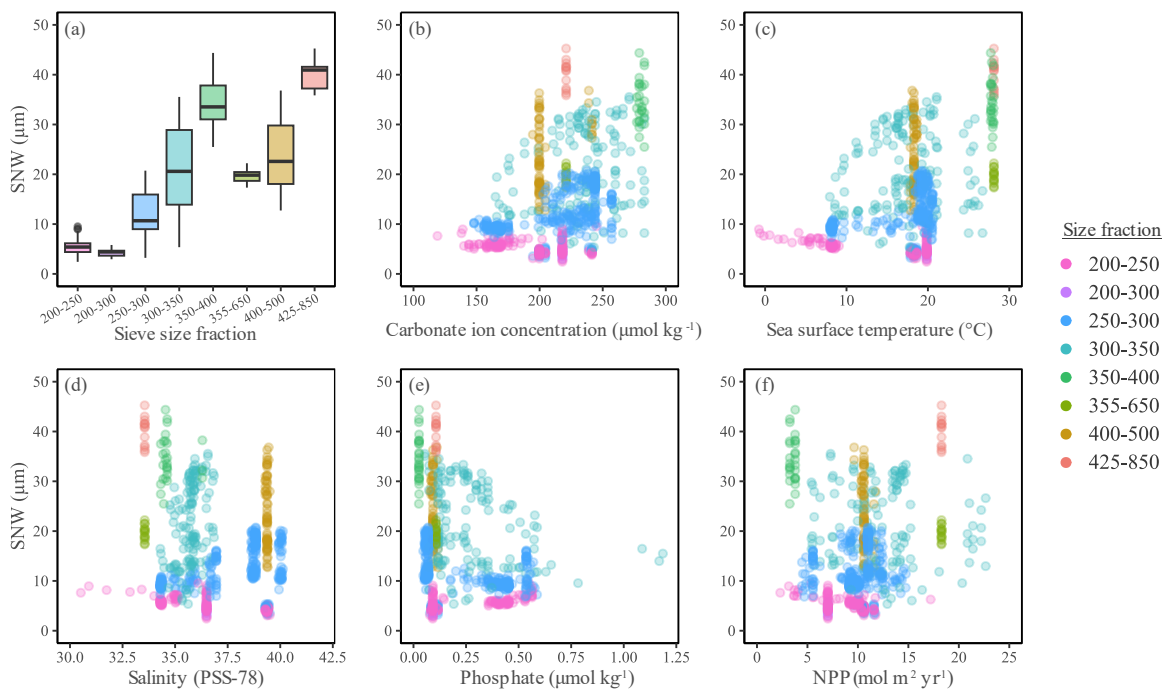
Species	Data type	Biogeozone	Carbonate ion	pH	CO ₂	Temperature	Productivity	Phosphate	Nitrate	Salinity	Optimum conditions
<i>symbiont-barren, spinose</i>											
<i>G. bulloides</i> ⁶	Core	Subtropical	+		-	-					
<i>G. bulloides</i> ¹	Core-top	Temperate	+			~					
<i>G. bulloides</i> ³	Core-top	Subtropical				-					
<i>G. bulloides</i> ⁵	Trap/Core	Tropical	+			~		~			
<i>G. bulloides</i> ²	Trap	Subtropical	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~	~
<i>G. bulloides</i> ⁷	Trap	Subtropical	~			~	~				-
<i>symbiont-obligate, spinose</i>											
<i>G. elongatus</i> ⁶	Core	Subtropical	+		-	-					
<i>G. elongatus</i> ⁷	Trap	Subtropical	~			+	-				+
<i>G. ruber</i> ⁷	Trap	Subtropical	~			+	-				~
<i>G. ruber</i> ⁴	Trap	Tropical	+			+					
<i>G. sacculifer</i> ⁴	Trap	Tropical	+			+					
<i>symbiont-barren, non-spinose</i>											
<i>G. inflata</i> ¹	Core-top	Temperate	+			~					
<i>G. trunc</i> ¹	Core-top	Temperate	+			~					
<i>G. trunc</i> ²	Trap	Subtropical	+	~	~	+	-	~	~	~	-
<i>N. incompta</i> ²	Trap	Subtropical	~	~	~	+	~	~	~	~	~
<i>N. incompta</i> ¹	Core-top	Temperate	+			~					

305 **Table 2** Compilation of results from previous studies assessing the relationship between planktonic
 306 foraminiferal size-normalized weight (SNW) and the environment. + = positive correlation, - = negative
 307 correlation, ~ = no response. This table summarizes information from measurement based SNW (i.e., silhouette
 308 area, or diameter normalised) studies only and omits those which only normalised to size by sieving (i.e., sieve-
 309 based weights; SBW) or use plankton tow data. See supplementary Table S2 for detail on SNW measurement
 310 method. [1] Barker & Elderfield (2002); [2] Bédard et al. (2023); [3] Marr et al. (2011); [4] Marshall et al. (2013);
 311 [5] Osborne et al. (2016); [6] Pallacks et al. (2023); [7] Weinkauff et al. (2016).

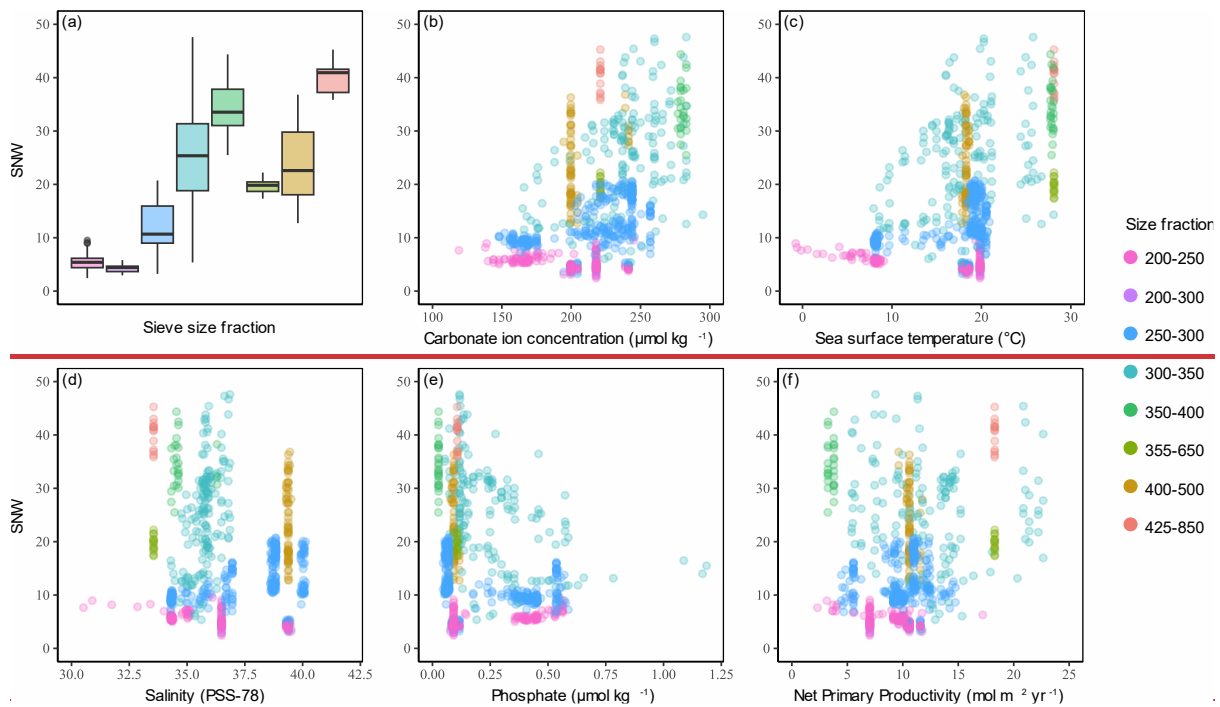
312

313 **3.2 Qualitative assessment of reanalysed data**

314 Here we qualitatively assess the integrated published SNW and new SNW dataset alongside the environmental
315 output from the CMIP6 modelling suite. Generally, larger foraminifers (e.g. 425-850 μm) have heavier tests
316 (average 40.14 μg) and smaller foraminifers (e.g. 200-250 μm) have lighter tests (average 5.49 μg ; (Fig. 2a). The
317 300-350 μm size fraction shows greatest variability in weight (standard deviation [σ] 9.327.96; Fig. 2a), likely as
318 it has a higher species diversity ($n = 5$) compared to other size fractions ($n = 1$ to 4). Interestingly, the second
319 highest variability in weight is for the 400-500 μm size fraction (σ 6.77; Fig. 2a) and is linked to only one
320 species, *G. truncatulinoides*, from one publication (Béjard et al., 2023; Fig. S87). The species is atypical as a very
321 large proportion of the weight is in the gametogenic calcite covering the entire test (Schmidt et al., 2008)
322 whose thickness might be driven by environmental parameters as well. Furthermore, the species has a year-
323 long life cycle (whilst other species analysed here have lunar cycles and peak in a specific season), meaning
324 that *G. truncatulinoides* this species is exposed to greater environmental variability throughout the year. The
325 lack of environmental variability shown here for these samples likely reflects averaging of the seasons in this
326 annual environmental record.



327



328

329 **Figure 2** (a) Boxplot showing SNW distribution across sieve size fractions. (b-f) Planktic foraminiferal size-
 330 normalised weight (MBW) against environmental variables extracted from the CMIP6 modelling suite (see
 331 methods). Colour indicates the size-fraction foraminifers were initially sieved at before being normalised to
 332 their length or area. See Fig. S87 for planktic foraminiferal SNW separated by species, with sieve size fraction
 333 information [and Fig. S9 for panel \(a\) separated by data type.](#)

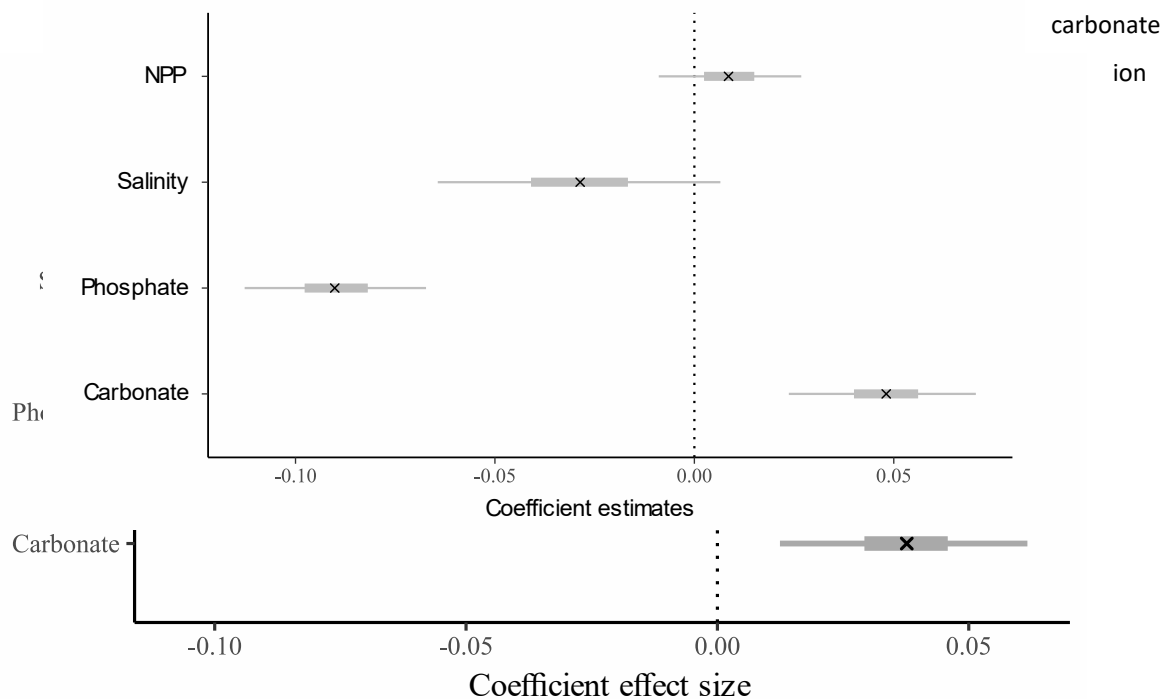
334

335 The smallest size fractions must be interpreted with caution (Fig. 2) as they have not been systematically
 336 assessed in warm regions (where carbonate ion concentration is higher) due to a preference for using larger
 337 sieve size fractions in these regions. [As such, although the smaller size fractions are meaningful in polar and](#)
 338 [subpolar areas \(as foraminifers are smaller at the poles\), they must be interpreted with caution in warm, high](#)
 339 [calcite saturation regions where including smaller size fractions might result in the selection of species which](#)
 340 [have not undergone a full developmental cycle and hence might miss final calcification such as the cortex or](#)
 341 [gametogenic calcite.](#) The absence of heavy foraminifer in low carbonate ion saturation (Fig. 2b) and cool (Fig.
 342 2c) environments suggest that these environments limit foraminiferal weight. To [take out](#) size fraction bias, [all](#)
 343 [size fractions other than 250-300 \$\mu\text{m}\$ and 300-350 \$\mu\text{m}\$ have been removed and these two remaining size](#)
 344 [fractions have been merged to create a dataset sufficient for statistical analysis.](#) ~~the size fractions 250-300 and~~
 345 ~~300-350 have been merged to create a 250-350 size fraction and (u~~ Unless stated otherwise), the following
 346 statistics ~~has~~ [have](#) been performed on this reduced dataset.

347

3.3 Is there an environmental control on SNW at the group level? across species?

We use Bayesian regression to determine whether there is an environmental control on SNW at the group-level (i.e., across species). A model that is "environment only" explains 20% of the variability in SNW (Bayes R2; Table S3; Gelman et al., 2019). The addition of sampling method (i.e., the "null model") improves model performance ($\widehat{\text{elpd}}_{100}$ improved by 114.4 [± 23.7]) and explained variance increases to 60% (Table S3). The "full" model (i.e., environment, sampling method and species) performs better than the "null" model ($\widehat{\text{elpd}}_{100}$ improved by 247.5 [± 19.4]) and explained variance increases to 90% (Table S3). Together, this shows that the choice of sampling method can influence the SNW recorded and that species-specific responses are important in determining SNW. Results from the 'full' model highlight that an 'environment only' model explains 23% of the variability in SNW (Bayes R2; Gelman et al., 2019), whilst a model which additionally includes species as a random effect explains 86% of the variability in SNW, indicating that species-specific differences are more important than environmental effects for SNW at the group level. Higher SNWs are associated with a higher



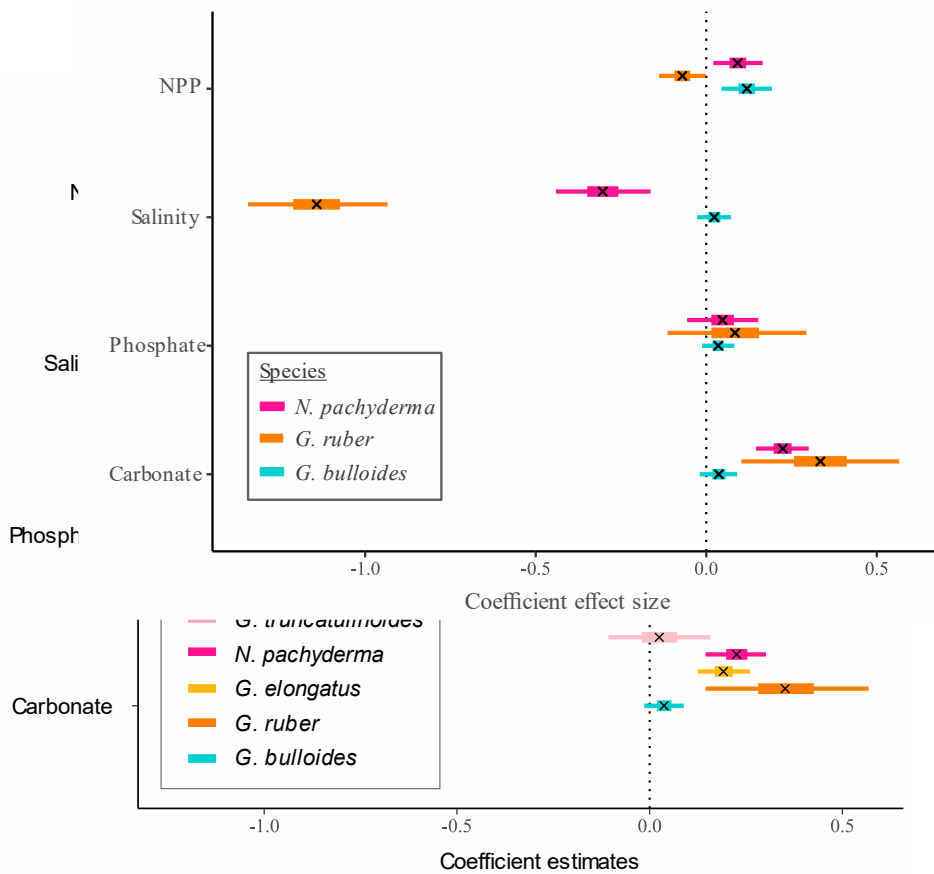
concentration (0.045 [0.012, 0.076]; effect size and 95% credible interval [lower, upper]; Fig. 3; Table S4) and lower phosphate concentration (-0.098 [-0.11, -0.076]; Fig. 3; Table S34), though the effect size is small. To dive deeper into the link between SNW and the environment, Bayesian models were fitted at the species level.

Figure 3 Effect size and credible intervals for the association between SNW and the environment for the group-level (across species, "full") model (see Table S4). A cross [x] represents the median value, the thicker line the 50% interval (i.e., where 50% of the posterior probability lies) and the thinner line the 95% interval. If the 95% interval does not cross zero, then there is a 95% probability there is an effect of the environmental variable. A negative value represents a negative correlation between SNW and the coefficient. Note that the modelled dataset is slightly different to the species-level dataset. The group-level model dataset includes species which were omitted from species-level models due to their low sample size, and the size fraction ranges are more

373 restricted for the group-level model due to a bias against larger size fractions in cooler environments (see
374 methods).

375

376 **3.4 Is there a species specific or an ecogroup response?**



377
 378 **Figure 4** Effect size and credible intervals for the association between SNW and the environment for the
 379 species-level Bayesian modelling. A cross [x] represents the median value, the thicker line the 50% interval (i.e.,
 380 where 50% of the posterior probability lies) and the thinner line the 95% interval. If the 95% interval does not
 381 cross zero then there is a 95% probability there is an effect of the environmental variable. A negative value
 382 represents a negative correlation between SNW and the environmental variable. Ecogroups are grouped by
 383 colour. *G. bulloides* is a symbiont barren, spinose species. *G. ruber* and *G. elongatus* are a symbiont-obligate,
 384 spinose species. *N. pachyderma* and *G. truncatulinoides* are a symbiont barren, non-spinose species.

385 **Table 3** Summary of Bayesian model results for species that required and Principal Component Analysis to
 386 remove collinearity from models. The coefficient effect size and credible intervals (lower and upper 95%
 387 credible interval) for the association between SNW and the environment. Variance explained (%) indicate how
 388 well the principal component explains the environmental data. Percentage contribution show how well a
 389 particular environmental variable is represented in the principal component. Loadings (Eigenvectors) are
 390 indicative of the correlation between variables. Ecogroups are grouped by colour. *G. elongatus* is a symbiont-
 391 obligate, spinose species. *G. truncatulinoides* and *N. incompta* are symbiont barren, non-spinose species. See
 392 Text S2 for discussion of PCA results and Table S5 for extended data.

Model name and Principal components	Bayesian model results	PCA results				
	Coefficient effect size [lower 95%, upper 95%]	Variance explained (%)	Quality of representation of variable in PC (% contribution) and [Eigenvectors]			
			Salinity	PO ₄	Carbonate	NPP
<i>G. truncatulinoides</i>						
PC1	0.06 [0.00, 0.12]	59	34% [0.58]	28% [-0.54]	20% [-0.45]	17% [-0.41]
<i>G. elongatus</i>						

PC1	-0.06 [-0.08, -0.04]	62	27% [-0.52]	34% [0.59]	5% [0.22]	34% [-0.58]
PC2	-0.09 [-0.12, -0.06]	26	15% [-0.39]	2% [-0.15]	80% [-0.90]	2% [-0.15]
<i>N. incompta</i>						
PC1	0.08 [0.06, 0.09]	85	29% [-0.53]	28% [0.53]	23% [-0.48]	20% [-0.45]
PC2	0.01 [-0.02, 0.05]	12	1% [-0.08]	0% [0.01]	39% [-0.62]	60% [0.78]

393 Due to collinearity we are unable to assess the impact of sea surface temperature (SST) on SNW. However, we
394 could expect an increase in SNW with warming as warmer water decreases the solubility of atmospheric CO₂,
395 which elevates surface water carbonate ion concentration, and also increases enzymatic activity which
396 promotes growth and calcification rate (Lombard et al., 2009; Spero et al., 1991). Although some past research
397 has identified an increase in SNW with warming (Béjard et al., 2023; Davis et al., 2013; Gonzalez-Mora et al.,
398 2008; Marshall et al., 2013; Osborne et al., 2016; Qin et al., 2020; Song et al., 2022; Weinkauff et al., 2016),
399 there is also evidence for the reverse (Mallo et al., 2017; Naik et al., 2010, 2011; Pallacks et al., 2023). This
400 dichotomy has been attributed to the overriding effect of decreasing carbonate ion concentration on SNW due
401 to ocean carbon input (Naik et al., 2010; Pallacks et al., 2023), temperature induced sea surface stratification
402 and lower food availability (Mallo et al., 2017).

403

404 In agreement with published literature (Aldridge et al., 2012; Barker and Elderfield, 2002; Béjard et al., 2023;
405 Marshall et al., 2013; Osborne et al., 2016; Pallacks et al., 2023), an increase in carbonate ion concentration
406 does not negatively impact SNW (Fig. 4; Table S43). The relationship is not always positive though, with *G.*
407 *bulloides* (0.04 [-0.02, 0.09]) and *G. truncatulinoides* (0.03 [-0.11, 0.16]) exhibiting no notable response to a
408 change in carbonate ion concentration (0.04 [-0.01, 0.09]; Fig. 4; i.e., 95% interval crosses zero). PC1 for *G.*
409 *truncatulinoides* is associated with a decrease in carbonate ion concentration (Eigenvector -0.45) that results in
410 an increase in SNW (i.e., positive coefficient effect size; 0.06 [0.00, 0.12]; Table 3). Carbonate only contributes
411 approximately one fifth to PC1, which only explains 59% of the variance in environmental data. Moreover,
412 attributing the relative impact of environmental drivers is difficult given the contributions of salinity, PO₄ and
413 NPP to PC1 (34%, 28% and 17%, respectively; Table 3). The positive eigenvector associated with *G. elongatus*
414 PC1 for carbonate that contributes to a decrease in SNW (coefficient effect size -0.06 [-0.08, -0.04]; Table 3)
415 should not be overinterpreted considering that carbonate only contributes 5% to PC1 in *G. elongatus*.
416 Otherwise, the contributions of carbonate are as expected (i.e., a negative loading for carbonate in
417 combination with the other environmental variables results in a negative coefficient effect size for SNW, i.e., a
418 lower SNW).

419 It remains up for debate which part of the carbonate system exerts control on calcification. It has been
420 suggested that the HCO₃⁻ / H⁺ ratio (where HCO₃⁻ [bicarbonate ions] are the inorganic carbon substrate and H⁺
421 [protons] are a calcification inhibitor) controls calcification and that CO₃²⁻ correlates because of a

422 proportionality between CO_3^{2-} and this ratio (Bach, 2015). Yet even if this is the case, this implies that CO_3^{2-} can
423 be a proxy for the $\text{HCO}_3^- / \text{H}^+$ ratio, hence it is still important for calcification.

424 An increase in phosphate concentration is unlikely (<95% probability and <50% probability for *G. ruber*) to
425 impact the SNW other than for *G. truncatulinoides* (-0.13 [-0.26, -0.01]), and *G. elongatus* (0.27 [0.22, 0.32]) of
426 *N. pachyderma*, *G. ruber* and *G. bulloides* (Fig. 4; Table S4; 95% interval crosses zero). Higher phosphate
427 concentration is associated with lower SNWs for *G. truncatulinoides* and *G. elongatus*. For the former, weights
428 are higher when phosphate concentration is lower (Eigenvector -0.54 and a positive coefficient effect size for
429 PC1; Table 3), and for the latter weights are lower with increased phosphate (Eigenvector 0.59 and a negative
430 coefficient effect size for PC1; Table 3). However, for both species phosphate only represents about a third of
431 PC1, hence this impact cannot be separated from other environmental variables due to similar percent
432 representations. Although *N. incompta* is also a symbiont barren non-spinose species, its response is different
433 to *G. truncatulinoides*. Increased phosphate (in combination with other environmental drivers; Eigenvector
434 0.53; Table 3) is associated with a higher SNW (a positive coefficient effect size for PC1).

435 ~~For the former, increased phosphate may reduce SNW and for the latter, SNW increases with phosphate~~
436 ~~concentration (Fig. 4; Table S3).~~ Given the evidence for calcification inhibition in high phosphate conditions (Lin
437 and Singer, 2006) for other calcifiers, such as corals (Kinsey and Davies, 1979), coccolithophores (Paasche and
438 Brubak, 1994), and calcifying green algae (Demes et al., 2009), it is interesting that we do not observe a
439 stronger detrimental effect of phosphate on these foraminiferal species. However, this disparity could be
440 explained by the different calcification mechanisms. For example, foraminifers biomineralize extracellularly by
441 engulfing calcite-forming materials through seawater vacuolisation (potentially assisted by transmembrane ion
442 transport; Bentov et al., 2009; de Nooijer et al., 2014; Erez, 2003; Nehrke et al., 2013). In contrast,
443 coccolithophores biomineralize by forming coccoliths in intracellular organelles called 'coccolith forming
444 vesicles' (Brownlee and Taylor, 2004).

445 There is no consensus on the impact of phosphate on calcification even within a taxon, with a recent study on
446 coccolithophores not showing calcification inhibition but instead showing decreased calcification with
447 phosphate limitation (Gerecht et al., 2018). Hence pointing to other taxa exhibiting similar response to our
448 species-level modelling. Our *G. bulloides* result conflicts with a study of North Atlantic *G. bulloides*, in which a
449 decrease in SNW with increased phosphate was recorded (Aldridge et al., 2012), though Béjard (2023) and
450 Mallo et al. (2017) did not observe this in the Mediterranean. This disparity could be due to the use of shallow
451 plankton tows in Aldridge et al. (2012), which is likely to complicate the SNW signal as juveniles which had not
452 completed their development may have been measured. Additionally, *G. bulloides* has several cryptic species
453 (Morard et al., 2024) which have their own ecological adaptation and spatial variability. Hence the geographic
454 difference might further complicate the interpretation of data in these studies (Fig. S2). ~~Though~~ in our group-
455 level model (i.e., all foraminifers) ~~though~~ we observe a negative impact of phosphate on SNW across species
456 (-0.089 [-0.11, -0.067]; Fig. 3; Table S34). This is unlikely an effect of sampling bias toward the Atlantic as the
457 Atlantic has near-even sampling ($n = 26342$) to the Mediterranean ($n = 239$). Instead, as the group-level model

458 contains some different species than the species-level modelling, we suggest that this difference reflects that
459 certain species of foraminifera are sensitive to phosphate, while others are not.

460 Salinity has a mixed impact on foraminiferal SNW. For *G. ruber* SNW is lighter at high salinity (-1.1406 [-1.2435 ,
461 -0.8893]), and *Neogloboquadrina pachyderma* has a similar but weaker response (-0.30 [-0.44 , -0.16]; Fig.
462 4; Table S3) and *G. bulloides* shows no response (0.03 [-0.01 , 0.08]; Fig. 4; Table S4). *Globorotalia*
463 *truncatulinoides* and *G. elongatus* have the same direction of response to salinity, with SNWs being heavier
464 when salinity is higher (Table 3). For *G. truncatulinoides*, this presents as higher salinity (Eigenvector 0.58)
465 being associated with heavier weights, i.e., a positive coefficient effect size (0.06 [0.00 , 0.12]) and for *G.*
466 *elongatus*, as lighter weights (-0.06 [-0.08 , -0.04] under lower salinity (Eigenvector -0.52 ; Table 3). The
467 opposite is true for *N. incompta*, for which in combination with other drivers, weight increases (0.08 [0.06 ,
468 0.09]) under lower salinity (Eigenvector -0.53 ; Table 3).

469 Meanwhile, the SNW of *G. elongatus*, closely related to *G. ruber* and by some assumed to be an ecotype,
470 increases with salinity (0.47 [0.41 , 0.54]). Laboratory experiments which that exposed foraminifers to a wider
471 salinity range than observed under normal ocean conditions concluded that *G. ruber* was most tolerant to
472 changes in salinity out of the seven species analysed (Bijma et al., 1990). For other foraminiferal species, they
473 found that under low salinity, growth rate reduced and the final test size was smaller. This difference in the *G.*
474 *ruber* response here and in Bijma et al. (1990) could be because salinity values reported by Bijma et al. (1990)
475 were more extreme than normal ocean conditions, or that growth rate and size are impacted differently to
476 from weight, i.e., foraminifers could be smaller but have a thicker test. Unfortunately, weight was not recorded
477 in the study so this cannot be tested.

478 Similar to carbonate ion concentration, it is unlikely (<95% probability) that an increase in NPP decreases SNW.
479 Instead, for *N. pachyderma*, *G. elongatus* and *G. bulloides*, increasing a higher NPP (food availability) results is
480 associated with a heavier SNWs for *N. pachyderma* and *G. bulloides* (Fig. 4; Table S3) and is likely to be
481 associated with a lighter SNW for *G. ruber* (Fig. 4; Table S4). Lower NPP is associated with heavier SNWs on PC1
482 for *G. truncatulinoides* and *N. incompta* (negative Eigenvectors associated with positive coefficient effect sizes;
483 Table 3). Though it is important to note that the percent representation of NPP is one fifth or less of the total
484 contribution to the PC. For *G. elongatus* SNW is lighter with lower NPP (Eigenvector -0.58 and coefficient effect
485 size -0.06 [-0.08 , -0.04]), though this interpretation is similarly limited by NPP being in combination with other
486 environmental variables.

487 For *G. elongatus*, their symbionts should make the species less dependent on productivity due to cross transfer
488 of sugars (LeKieffre et al., 2018), and for *G. bulloides* and *G. ruber* the presence of spines should
489 which could make it easier for them to capture prey therefore less reliant on NPP compared to non-spinose
490 types, therefore it should be surprising that these species (though in opposite directions) are less
491 associated with NPP. Yet, both SNWs increase with food availability (*G. bulloides*: 0.12 [0.05 , 0.19]; *G.*
492 *elongatus*: 0.33 [0.27 , 0.40]). Even in the for the asymbiotic, non-spinose ecogroup, *N. pachyderma* and *G.*
493 *truncatulinoides* there is no clear pattern, with the former's SNW increasing increases with productivity (0.09

494 [0.02, 0.167]; Fig. 4, Table S4) and the latter showing no response (-0.00 [-0.05, 0.05]). It is interesting that
495 despite constructing a secondary calcite crust (which could overprint the primary SNW signal), *N. pachyderma*
496 (Kohfeld et al., 1996) still exhibits a response to the environment. Given that asymbiotic species (*N.*
497 *pachyderma* and *G. bulloides*) show a positive impact on SNW with increased food, while the opposite is true
498 for the symbiont bearing *G. ruber*, this could hint at light attenuation due to high plankton standing stocks
499 reducing symbiotic activity (Bijma et al., 1992; Ortiz et al., 1995) thereby reducing this additional energy source
500 used to support growth and calcification (LeKieffre et al., 2018).

501 ~~Due to collinearity we are unable to assess the impact of SST on SNW for the species-level models. However,~~
502 ~~we could expect an increase in SNW with warming as warmer water decreases the solubility of atmospheric~~
503 ~~CO₂, which elevates surface water carbonate ion concentration, and also increases enzymatic activity which~~
504 ~~promotes growth and calcification rate (Lombard et al., 2009; Spero et al., 1991). Although some past research~~
505 ~~has identified an increase in SNW with warming (Béjard et al., 2023; Davis et al., 2013; Gonzalez-Mora et al.,~~
506 ~~2008; Marshall et al., 2013; Osborne et al., 2016; Qin et al., 2020; Song et al., 2022; Weinkauff et al., 2016),~~
507 ~~there is also evidence for the reverse (Mallo et al., 2017; Naik et al., 2010, 2011; Pallacks et al., 2023). This~~
508 ~~dichotomy has been attributed to overriding effect of decreasing carbonate ion concentration on SNW due to~~
509 ~~ocean carbon input (Naik et al., 2010; Pallacks et al., 2023), temperature induced sea surface stratification and~~
510 ~~lower food availability (Mallo et al., 2017).~~

511 Due to limited shell flux data, we were unable to investigate how optimum growth conditions (OGC) impacted
512 SNW. Although NPP may facilitate OGC by making food available for growth, we cannot assume that high NPP
513 results in optimum conditions as it also hinders photosynthesis and excludes species (Ortiz et al., 1995). There
514 is some evidence of SNW increasing where a species is at its OGC (i.e., where shell flux for that species is high;
515 de Villiers, 2004), but there is no consensus in the data (Table 2) with some observing a negative correlation
516 between OGC and SNW (Béjard et al., 2023; Weinkauff et al., 2016).

517 Some tentative evaluation of ecogroup responses can be made despite the interpretation of PCA factors being
518 limited. Interpretation is limited because PCA represents a gradient which includes multiple environmental
519 drivers, hence the impact of a single driver cannot be separated from other environmental drivers. The SNW
520 response to the environment is largely species specific and shows little evidence of an overriding ecological
521 driven response. Although an increase in carbonate ion concentration is likely linked to heavier SNWs, this is
522 true across all species and not ecogroup dependent. For some taxa, similar responses can be found, e.g. the
523 symbiont-obligate, spinose species *G. ruber* and *G. elongatus* show the same direction of response to
524 carbonate, though the strength of response is variable (0.35 [0.14, 0.56] and 0.19 [0.12, 0.26], respectively; Fig.
525 4; Table S3). Otherwise, ecogroups do not have a unifying driver. For example, ~~the~~ the symbiont barren, non-
526 spinose species (*N. pachyderma*, and *G. truncatulinoides*) lack a unifying driver linked to their ecology and have
527 the lowest Bayes R2 scores (55% and 33%, respectively). Though it is important to note that This could be
528 because the SNWs of these species are likely to be more heavily impacted the production of a secondary calcite
529 crust than other species analysed here (Kohfeld et al., 1996; Schmidt et al., 2008).

530 **3.5 Impact of sampling type**

531 The choice of sampling method is important for the resulting weight of foraminifers. Despite attempting to
532 minimise the impact of sampling method by removing (1) plankton tow data, (2) data for which dissolution is
533 reported and (3) samples approaching the CCD, the impact of sampling method on SNW is still evident. In all
534 models (excluding *N. pachyderma*, which only had one sampling method), the lightest SNWs were recorded
535 from sediment traps (Fig. S10). Sediment core data are lighter than coretop data, hinting towards questions of
536 preservation not visible externally, but are more similar to each other than to sediment trap data (Fig. S10). We
537 additionally split data by location to check whether sediment trap data are still lighter when the ocean basin is
538 explicitly accounted for (Fig. S11). This separation shows (1) no clear trends for *N. incompta*, a relatively thick
539 specimen, (2) no clear trends in the two datasets for *G. bulloides* comparing the Mediterranean with the
540 Atlantic, though overall for this reduced dataset SNW in sediment trap data is lighter than, or equal to seafloor
541 (coretop and sediment core) data, (3) heavier *G. truncatulinoides* weight with coretop data. It is important to
542 note that we have limited data from regions ~~which~~ have a very shallow CCD such as the Pacific, thereby limiting
543 insight.

544 It is unlikely that dissolution in the water column (i.e., impact of intermediate and deep water) is the cause of
545 lighter weights in sediment trap data (Fig. S10 and S11), because it would have impacted coretop and/or
546 sediment core samples even more due to longer exposure. It is unlikely that diagenetic alteration (e.g.
547 recrystallization in the pore water) has made the SNW of coretop and sediment core data comparatively
548 heavier as relative to the weight of the entire test it would have little impact on overall weight. We speculate
549 that sediment trap data are lighter as they reflect current environmental conditions, whereas sediment core
550 and most coretop data are preindustrial, hence the lighter weights may be due to impacts of lower carbonate
551 ion concentration due to ocean acidification (Moy et al., 2009; Pallacks et al., 2023).

552 **4 Discussion**

553 **3.5 4.1 Should SNW be used as proxy for CO₂?**

554 Disentangling the controls on SNW is important for understanding the use of SNW as a proxy for interpreting
555 past ocean conditions. This paper cautions the use of planktic foraminiferal SNW as a reliable proxy for the
556 surface ocean carbonate system and palaeo $p\text{CO}_2$.

557 Although there is a small but likely (i.e., >95% probability) effect of carbonate on a group level (i.e., across
558 species; 0.045 [0.012, 0.067]), phosphate is also likely associated with SNW (-0.098 [-0.11, -0.067]; Fig. S3;
559 Table S34). Hence, unless the impact of phosphate on SNW can be quantified and disentangled from the
560 carbonate effect, SNW across species is not a reliable predictor for $p\text{CO}_2$. As SNW is variable on a species level,
561 there is a need to consider which species to use for paleo proxies, or a need to consider multiple species in
562 parallel to reduce uncertainty from species-specific differences.

563 Although the use of SNW to inform past CO₂ has been shown to work regionally with certain species, e.g. *G.*
564 *bulloides* in the North Atlantic (Barker and Elderfield, 2002), the relationship between SNW and carbonate ion
565 concentration seems to break down when taken out of its calibration region. When expanding the *G. bulloides*
566 dataset to include Pacific, Mediterranean and higher latitude North Atlantic samples (Fig. S24) we find no
567 correlation between SNW and carbonate ion concentration (Fig. 4). Hence we advocate for the regional
568 calibration of $p\text{CO}_2$ – SNW relationships, and caution against the extrapolation and global application of SNW
569 as proxy for $p\text{CO}_2$.

570 **4.2 Current challenges and future outlook**

571

572 One of the challenges in assessing a unifying calcification response is unequal methodologies and data
573 reporting. In this paper 57 publications were screened for their SNW data, but only 7 publications (and our
574 data) could be used for the species-level modelling. Around half were omitted as they were older than
575 preindustrial and environmental data were not available therefore could not be used to determine drivers.

576 Otherwise, [SNW](#) data were often not freely available (or at all available) and if deposited, only provided
577 processed data with different methods of normalising weight to size. We strongly encourage the community to
578 deposit raw data to make the legacy of data longer. 28 publications were omitted because shell weights were
579 reported using the sieve-based weight (SBW) methodology and not normalised to size or area (MBW).
580 Although there is some debate as to whether this additional step of normalising weight to measurement-
581 based size is necessary, some publications (Aldridge et al., 2012; Beer et al., 2010a; Béjard et al., 2023) indicate
582 that MBW SNW is more robust than SBW. It would be a step forward for the community to derive protocols for
583 SNW akin to trace element analysis e.g. Hathorne et al. (2013) and Rosenthal et al. (2004). Additionally, it is
584 important to acknowledge the different developmental stages in plankton tow samples compared to sediment
585 trap and core-top samples. Post-depositional dissolution will reduce weights, while infilling and diagenesis
586 increase weight and both need to be carefully monitored (Bassinot et al., 1994; Broecker & Clark, 2001). [It](#)
587 [would also be useful for authors to report their foraminifera cleaning protocol, or even better, the community](#)
588 [agree on a standardised cleaning method as different methods can result in variable sedimentary](#)
589 [contamination, which impacts the weight of specimens](#) (Béjard et al., 2023; Zarkogiannis et al., 2020). [-A](#)
590 [Additionally, we still have important gaps in our understanding of foraminiferal ecology, for example the](#)
591 [dynamics of the habitat throughout the year \(including the depth of calcification; see Text S3\), the peak times](#)
592 [of biomass production in different regions and the drivers of thickness of gametogenic calcite. All of these](#)
593 [factors limit the use of the proxy.](#)

594 Importantly, our analyses lack data from the Indian Ocean, [s](#)Southern high latitudes and large parts of the
595 Pacific - highlighting challenges of preservation in deep sea sediments, logistics of reaching remote areas, and
596 bias due to the traditional areas of sampling of sea going nations. As analyses expand to ocean regions below
597 the lysocline, authors should provide a measure of dissolution and/or high resolution images of specimens
598 which can help assess the impact of post-diagenetic alteration. Although such images can also support
599 morphological assessment of cryptic species, these images are still not systematically implemented in
600 palaeoceanographic studies.

601 **[54](#) Conclusions**

602 Although higher carbonate ion concentration and lower phosphate concentration are associated with heavier
603 SNWs at the group-level (i.e., across species), the environment alone explains relatively little of the variability in
604 SNW at the group-level. Instead, we identify species-specific SNW responses that better explain variability in
605 weight. Although physiology is likely to modulate the foraminiferal response to the environment, we find
606 limited evidence of an ecogroup-level response.

607 The species-specific SNW response to the environment is complex, with each species responding to a different
608 combination of environmental drivers. We hypothesise that this is in part influenced by cryptic species and our
609 limited understanding of what drives the thickness of gametogenic calcite. The SNW response being species-
610 specific and responding to drivers other than carbonate implies there is a need to consider which species to

611 use as a $p\text{CO}_2$ proxy, or a need to consider multiple species in parallel to reduce uncertainty from species-
612 specific differences. Furthermore, due to differences in the published response of *G. bulloides* in the North
613 Atlantic and our more global dataset of *G. bulloides* SNW, we advocate for the regional calibration of $p\text{CO}_2$ -
614 SNW relationships.

615 Our understanding of SNW as a proxy would be greatly improved with some community efforts to solve some
616 of the above questions including (1) making raw SNW data freely available, (2) community agreed protocols,
617 i.e., whether SBW or MBW should be used in such analyses, (3) improving our understanding of the
618 calcification process itself and how the environment drives the thickness of gametogenic calcite, and (4)
619 resolving the impact that cryptic species have on SNW measurements.

620

621 **Code availability**

622 ~~The code (R script) supporting this article~~An R markdown file has been uploaded as part of the supplement and
623 is available at the University of Bristol Research Data Storage Facility (RDSF) DOI ~~XXXXX~~

624 **Data availability**

625 All data used in this study are available at Pangaea DOI ~~XXXX~~

626 **Supplement**

627 The supplement related to this article is available at: DOI ~~XXXX~~

628 **Author contribution**

629 R.B. and D.N.S. conceptualised the study. R.B. collated existing SNW data and processed CMIP6 model data,
630 and conducted analysis of these data. J.V. contributed to the methodological design and statistical analysis. R.B.
631 prepared the manuscript with contributions from all co-authors.

632 **Competing interests**

633 The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

634 **Disclaimer**

635 ~~[for journal to fill out?]~~

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648

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