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	2. Organic Geochemistry
	Stable carbon isotopic compositions of individual aromatic
	hydrocarbons as source and age indicators in oils from Western
	Australian basins
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Abstract

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The present study aims to establish the factors controlling the stable carbon isotopic compositions of individual aromatic hydrocarbons analysed by compound specific isotope analysis (CSIA) in crude oils from Western Australian petroleum basins of varying age, facies type but of similar thermal maturity. This paper reports δ^{13} C values of individual aromatic hydrocarbons, like alkylbenzenes, alkylnaphthalenes, alkylphenanthrenes and methylated biphenyls. The main aims are to confirm the origin (source) and age of these oils based on CSIA of selected aromatic compounds and to understand why the Sofer plot is ineffective in establishing source of Western Australian petroleum systems. The bulk $\delta^{13}C$ of saturate and aromatic fractions of crude oils have been previously used to differentiate sources, however, many Australian crude oils do not appear to follow this trend. The oils were classified as marine by the δ^{13} C values of individual aromatic compounds, and as terrigenous based on the bulk δ^{13} C data. The CSIA data of the aromatic hydrocarbons obtained for the oils provides opposite conclusions regarding the source of the oils compared to bulk data (Sofer plot). The oils where the δ^{13} C data of 1,6-DMN and 1,2,5-TMN isomers is most negative are probably derived from marine source, whereas oils containing 1,6-DMN and 1,2,5-TMN with a less negative value are representative of a terrigenous source. The δ^{13} C values falling inbetween probably have mixed source(s). Less negative δ^{13} C values of 1-MP and 1,9-DMP isomers probably reflects the varying inputs of terrigenous organic matter to the source rocks of the oils. Plots of P/DBT and Pr/Ph concentration ratios versus C isotope ratio values of DMP, 1,6-DMN, 1,2,5-TMN, 1-MP and 1,9-MP are constructed to establish the end members of terrigenous and marine sourced oils. The ratio of P/DBT and/or the ratio of Pr/Ph and δ^{13} C values of

aromatic isomers (such as 1,6-DMN, 1,2,5-TMN, 1-MP and 1,9-MP) when coupled together, provide a novel and convenient way of to infer crude oil source rock origin and sometimes even lithologies.

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1. Introduction

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62 Alkylated aromatic hydrocarbons such as alkylbenzenes (ABs), 63 alkylnaphthalenes (ANs), alkylphenanthrenes (APs) and biphenyls (BPs) are common 64 constituents of petroleum and sedimentary organic matter (OM). Variations in the 65 molecular distributions of aromatic hydrocarbons have received considerable attention 66 in the field of organic geochemistry as indicators of source, thermal history, facies type 67 and paleoenvironments of source rocks offering petroleum potential (Radke et al., 68 1982; Alexander et al., 1985; van Aarssen et al., 1999; Grice et al., 1998; Grice et al., 69 2001; Nabbefeld et al., 2010). The distributions of alkylated aromatic hydrocarbons 70 are highly variable amongst oil samples since they are controlled by the effects of 71 source, thermal maturity and secondary alteration processes such as biodegradation 72 (Budzinski et al., 1995; Bastow et al., 1998; van Aarssen et al., 1992, 1999; Trolio et 73 al., 1999; Asif et al., 2009). 74 Aromatic compounds are mainly formed by geosynthetic processes, resulting in a 75 host of isomerised, alkylated and dealkylated components (Alexander et al., 1985; 76 Ioppolo-Armanios et al., 1995; Asif et al., 2010). Previous work has primarily focused 77 on molecular distributions of aromatic hydrocarbons, especially in relation to 78 sedimentary methylation processes accounting for the occurrence of compounds not 79 derived from natural product precursors (Alexander et al., 1985). However, previous 80 researchers have suggested that natural product precursors derived from microbes and 81 land plants may be sources for some aromatic hydrocarbons reported in sediments and 82 crude oils (Püttman and Villar, 1987; Forster et al., 1989; Grice et al., 2009). 83 Some aromatic compounds are thought to form in the subsurface via methyl shift 84 and/or transalkylation reactions and in a study of Australian brown coals 1,2-methyl 85 shift reactions also occur prior to or during aromatization (Radke et al., 1982; Chaffee

and Johns, 1983; Strachan et al., 1988) and based on molecular parameters these reactions have been used to assess thermal history. In general, as thermal maturity increases the more stable geosynthetic isomers are formed. Thus the relative abundance of the isomers derived from natural product precursors decreases with rising thermal maturity (e.g. Radke et al., 1982; van Aarssen, et al., 1999). Aromatic compounds with alkyl groups in a α position are less stable than those with alkyl groups in a β position. Thus ratios of β -substituted and α -substituted aromatic hydrocarbons have been used to assess the degree of thermal alteration of OM in sediments and crude oils (Radke et al., 1986; Alexander et al., 1995; van Aarssen et al., 1999). Recently it has been demonstrated that the more stable β isomers of methylnaphthalene (MN) and methylphenanthrene (MP) are relatively more abundant in a bitumen associated with kerogen referred to as Bitumen II (Nabbefeld et al., 2010). The difference between the methylnaphthalene ratio (MNR, ratio between 2methylnaphthalene and 1-methylnaphthalene; Radke et al., 1982) of freely extracted bitumen (i.e. Bitumen I) and Bitumen II, when plotted against the ratio of clay to total organic carbon (clay/TOC) shows an excellent correlation. The highest clay/TOC ratio related to the largest difference in MNR for the respective bitumens, is consistent with the more stable β isomers being preferentially retained within the clay/kerogen matrix. The bulk C isotope composition of OM has been used to study secular change in the global carbon cycle (e.g. Chung et al., 1992; Summons et al., 1995; Andrusevich et al., 1998), which in the geological record has resulted in changes in the δ^{13} C values of inorganic carbon sources (e.g. primary carbonates). Sedimentary OM δ^{13} C is driven by water column carbon cycling through organic matter pools, fractionation during photosynthesis, and respiration products contributing to atmospherically-derived dissolved inorganic carbon. (e.g. Goericke et al., 1994; Hayes, 1993; Popp et al., 1998).

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Therefore, oil-source correlations based on δ^{13} C values of sedimentary OM are often applied to estimate the age (time of deposition) of a potential source rock (e.g. Chung et al., 1992; Summons et al., 1995; Andrusevich et al., 1998). Bulk isotopic analysis of organic carbon has been used to classify marine and non-marine (terrigenous) crude oils by plotting the bulk δ^{13} C values of the saturate fractions against bulk δ^{13} C values of aromatic fractions to infer genetic relationships (Sofer, 1984). Chung et al. (1992) classified over 600 post-Ordovician marine crude oils into four groups, in terms of their depositional environment and age of their source, on the basis of δ^{13} C values combined with pristane/phytane (Pr/Ph) ratios and total organic sulfur contents). Andrusevich et al. (1998) reported bulk δ^{13} C values of the saturate and aromatic hydrocarbon fractions of over 500 oils. They found that both fractions are enriched in ¹³C with decreasing geological age including three major isotopic shifts at the Cambrian/Ordovician, Triassic/Jurassic and Paleogene/Neogene boundaries. In Australian petroleum systems, marine and non-marine crude oils do not appear to fit the Sofer plot (Edwards et al., 2005). For example, oils interpreted to have been generated from a marine source rock are classified as terrigenous sourced on the Sofer plot parameters, while oils interpreted to be generated from a terrigenous source rock are classified as marine. The present study aims to establish factors controlling the stable carbon isotopic compositions (δ^{13} C) of individual aromatic hydrocarbons (ABs, ANs, APs and BPs) in crude oils from Western Australian petroleum basins of varying age, facies type and thermal maturities. The main aims are to confirm the source and age of these oils based on δ^{13} C of selected aromatic compounds and to understand why the Sofer plot is ineffective in establishing source of hydrocarbons in Western Australian petroleum systems.

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2. Sample Material

137	A set of 19 Mesozoic and Palaeozoic oils from Western Australian petroleum
138	basins was used for the present study, representing fluids derived from a range of
139	source rock types and ages. These oils were chosen according to the depositional
140	setting, dominant lithology of their source rocks, API values of the crude oils (showing
141	a good correlation with biodegradation) and their thermal maturities (the database of
142	Geoscience Australia is used, Edwards et al., 2005). The oils which were used to show
143	the effects of source on the $\delta^{13} C$ of aromatic hydrocarbons (Barrow Island, Elang
144	West, Tahbilk, Barnett, N. Scott Reef, Pictor and Meda) have similar thermal
145	maturities in terms of the oil window based on calculated vitrinite reflectance (Vrc
146	ranging between 0.51 and 0.95; Edwards et al., 2005). The remainder of the oils (e.g.
147	Flinders Shoal, Gorgon, and West Kora) were chosen mainly for their age. Mainly, oils
148	with no degradation were selected. Only two oils (West Kora and Flinders Shoal with
149	API values of 23° and 25.3°) (API gravity, The American Petroleum Institute, a
150	hydrometer scale expressed in degrees for the measurement of the specific gravity of
151	petroleum liquids) are characterised as being mildly and heavily biodegraded,
152	respectively (Edwards et al., 2005). The location of the oil samples are shown in Fig.
153	1. Table 1 lists the crude oils analysed in this study along with the geological age of
154	their inferred source rock, source rock type, reservoir formation and information
155	relating to sample origin including depth, field and sedimentary basin (the database of
156	Geoscience Australia is used, Edwards et al., 2005)
157	In order to understand the relationship between the crude oils within and between
158	basins, the study by Edwards et al. (2005) led to the characterisation of crude oils into
159	33 genetically related families. From a total of 316 samples (n=316), 33 oil/condensate
160	families were identified in the Western Australian Basins—Bonaparte (n=10), Browse

161 (n=2), Canning (n=4), Carnarvon (n=11) and Perth (n=6) (Fig. 1). These samples were 162 previously characterized by bulk geochemical, molecular and bulk stable carbon 163 isotopic analyses. Compound specific isotope analysis (CSIA) of individual aromatic 164 hydrocarbons of these crude oils was first done in this study. 165 166 3. Analytical Methods 167 The analytical procedures used are described below. Procedural blanks were 168 carried out in parallel to account for any contamination. 169 170 3.1. Separation of oils 171 The crude oil samples (described above) were fractionated using a small scale column liquid chromatography method (Bastow et al., 2007). The sample (10 mg) was 172 173 applied to the top of a mini column (5 cm x 0.5 cm i.d.) of activated silica gel (150 °C, 174 8 hrs). The saturated hydrocarbon fraction was eluted with *n*-hexane (2 ml); the 175 aromatic hydrocarbon fraction with dichloromethane in n-hexane (2 ml, 20%); and the 176 polar fraction with a mixture of dichloromethane and methanol (2 ml, 50%). The 177 saturated and aromatic fractions were analysed without any solvent evaporation by gas 178 chromatography-mass spectrometry (GC-MS). Aromatic hydrocarbon fractions were 179 analysed by gas chromatography-isotope ratio mass spectrometry (GC-irMS) 180 181 3.2. 5A Molecular sieving 182 Straight chain hydrocarbons were separated from the branched and cyclic 183 hydrocarbons by treating the saturated fractions with activated (250 °C, 8 hrs) 5A 184 molecular sieves (Murphy, 1969; Dawson et al., 2005; Grice et al., 2008) in

cyclohexane. In a typical 5A molecular sieving separation, a portion of the saturated

fraction in cyclohexane was added to a 2 ml vial, half of it filled with activated 5A molecular sieves. The vial was capped and placed in a pre-heated aluminum block (85 °C, overnight). The resulting solution was then cooled and filtered through a small column of silica plugged with cotton wool (pre-rinsed with cyclohexane) and the sieves were rinsed thoroughly with cyclohexane yielding the branched/cyclic fraction (5A excluded). The branched/cyclic fractions were analysed by GC-MS.

3.3. GC-MS analysis

GC-MS analysis was performed using a HP5973 MSD interfaced to HP6890 gas chromatograph, which was fitted with a DB-1 capillary column (J and W Scientific, 60 m, 0.25 mm internal diameter, 0.25 µm phase thickness). The GC oven was programmed from 40 °C to 300 °C at a heating rate of 3 °C/min with initial and final hold times of 1 and 30 minutes, respectively. Samples were dissolved in *n*-hexane and injected (split/splitless injector) by a HP6890 auto-sampler using pulsed-splitless mode. Helium was used as the carrier gas at a linear velocity of 28 cm/s with the injector operating at constant flow. The MS was operating with an ionisation energy of 70 eV, a source temperature of 180 °C, an electron multiplier voltage of 1800V, and a scanning a mass range of 50 to 550 amu.

Aromatic hydrocarbon compounds were identified by comparison of mass spectra and by matching retention times with those of reference compounds reported previously (Radke, 1987; Budzinski et al., 1992; Grice et al., 2005; Grice et al., 2007). Between 2 and 10 ng μ l⁻¹ of each biomarker compound was required for accurate GC-MS analysis. Peak areas of each compound were integrated using the HP ChemStation Data Analysis software.

3.4. GC-irMS analysis

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CSIA were carried out on a Micromass IsoPrime isotope ratio mass spectrometer connected to a HP 6890 gas chromatograph fitted with the same column to that used for GC-MS analysis. The GC oven, injection conditions and carrier were the same as those described for GC-MS analysis. For the external organic reference compounds, the GC oven was programmed from 50 to 310 °C at a rate of 10 °C/min with initial and final hold times of 1 and 10 minutes, respectively. The aromatic fraction was injected using pulsed splitless mode (30 seconds hold time at 15 psi above the head pressure of the column and 35 seconds purge time). The flow rate used was 1 ml/min. The GC oven was programmed from an initial temperature of 40 °C (1 min) over a temperature ramp of 3 °C/min to 300 °C and held for 30 min. A CO₂ reference gas standard (calibrated to Vienna Peedee Belemnite, VPDB) with a known δ^{13} C value was analysed in the irMS and 13 C/ 12 C of each aromatic component is reported in the δ notation (in ‰) relative to the international standard (VPDB). Average values of at least two runs for each compound within each sample were determined and only δ^{13} C results with a standard deviation of less than 0.4% were used. A mix of standard components with known δ^{13} C values were analysed daily in order to monitor the instrument's performance, precision and accuracy.

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4. Results and Discussion

232 4.1. Experimental remarks

 δ^{13} C values of selected aromatic hydrocarbons, API gravity, Vrc and ratios of Pr/Ph and P/DBT were determined for 19 Western Australian oils and are given in

235 Tables 1 and 2.

Almost all samples studied contain high relative abundances of the aromatic compounds identified above. δ^{13} C values were obtained for various sub-classes of the aromatic fractions such as DMB, TMB, TeMB, PMB, N, MN, DMN, TMN, BP, MBP, DMBP, P, MP, TMP, and for several isomers of the aromatic fraction such as 1,6-DMN, 1,2,5-TMN, 1-MP and 1,9-DMP (acronyms are defined in Table 2). In order to simplify the results, the δ^{13} C values of each isomer series were averaged since thev were quite similar (within $\leq \pm 0.4\%$). However, some specific isomers particularly the ones thought to be mainly influenced by source and depositional environment (Radke et al., 1986; Budzinski et al., 1995) are reported separately. These include 1,2,5-TMN, 1,6-DMN and 1,9-DMP (Table 2). $\delta^{13} C$ values of the individual aromatic compounds in the crude oils range from -32% to -22.2% (Table 2) and the bulk δ^{13} C of the aromatic fractions measured in a previous study for the same set of oils range between -29.9% to -25.4% (Fig. 2, Edwards et al., 2005). The range of the δ^{13} C values for the individual aromatic compounds in this study is much broader than the bulk δ^{13} C of the corresponding aromatic fractions (9.8 and 4.5 %, respectively). The bulk δ^{13} C of saturate and aromatic fractions of crude oils have been previously used to differentiate marine from non-marine sources (Sofer, 1984). However, many Australian crude oils do not appear to follow this trend (Edwards et al., 2005) (Fig. 2). For example, oils derived from marine source rocks are classified as terrigenous based on the Sofer plot. Barnett and Janpam North oils have been correlated to a marine source by Edwards et al. (2005). However, in the Sofer plot (Fig. 2), these oils are classified as terrigenous based on bulk $\delta^{13} C$ values of the saturate and aromatic fractions. On the other hand, N. Scott Reef oil is classified as a marine source even though it has previously been correlated to a terrigenous source (Fig. 2). The δ^{13} C values of the aromatic hydrocarbons obtained

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for these oils may provide opposing conclusions regarding the source of the oils compared to Sofer plot ($\delta^{13}C$ saturate versus $\delta^{13}C$ aromatics).

Both relative abundances and $\delta^{13}C$ values of individual aromatic compounds in crude oils are probably controlled by their source, relative thermal maturity and age of their source rock. In addition, it is known that secondary alterations such as biodegradation, in-reservoir mixing and water washing can alter the composition of aromatic hydrocarbons in crude oils (e.g. Volkman et al., 1984, Trolio et al., 1999). The following sub-sections describe these effects on $\delta^{13}C$ for the various aromatic compounds.

It is noted that there is generally depletion in the 13 C of individual aromatic compounds both with increasing methylation and increasing number of aromatic rings (e.g. Figs. 3 and 4). This trend is evident for all the oils analysed in this study. With decreasing methylation, 13 C of ABs and APs within their sub-groups show a more obvious depletion compared to ANs (e.g. Figs. 3 and 4). In an unpublished study (Le Metayer personal communication), δ^{13} C values of ANs are shown to be strongly related to thermal maturity, contrary to the δ^{13} C of ABs and APs. The oil samples chosen in this study were of similar maturity in terms of the oil window (a temperature dependant interval in the subsurface where oil is generated and expelled from the source rocks) and therefore maturity probably has a negligible effect on the δ^{13} C differences of ANs (Table 1).

4.2. $\delta^{13}C$ of aromatic isomers indicative of source

283 δ¹³C measurements were carried on 1,6-DMN, 1,2,5-TMN, 1-MP, and 1,9-DMP 284 for eight oils (in Section 2) from different basins around WA, generated from various source rock ages and types (Table 2, Fig. 5). The source effects on $\delta^{13}C$ of the individual aromatic isomers are discussed in this section.

 δ^{13} C values of 1,6-DMN from each oil are given in Table 2. The largest δ^{13} C difference for 1,6-DMN (4.6‰) is observed between Pictor (Canning Basin) and Elang West (Bonaparte Basin). The 1,6-DMN is an isomer which is thought to be derived largely from OM of higher plants (Alexander et al., 1992); an aromatization product of several natural product precursors (Püttmann and Villar, 1987; Alexander et al., 1992). It is assumed that the δ^{13} C difference between 1,6-DMN in the oils is indicative of terrigenous and marine derived end members (Fig. 5). The oils where the δ^{13} C values of 1,6-DMN isomer is most negative are probably derived from marine source, whereas oils containing 1,6-DMN with a less negative value are representative of a terrigenous source. The δ^{13} C values falling inbetween probably have mixed source(s).

Generally the higher δ^{13} C values of organic matter suggest a higher contribution of terrestrial plant material to the marine biomass, due to the pre-Miocene having 13 C-enriched terrestrial organic matter relative to marine organic matter (e.g., Lewan, 1986; Popp et al., 1989). Based on δ^{13} C data for the 1,6DMN appears to have a marine signal but it is unclear what the natural precursor would be.

In Fig. 5, the arrow represents an increase in terrigenous/deltaic source for the oils. When we compare these results with the Sofer plot (Fig. 2), the oils previously classified as terrigenous in origin i.e. Janpam North (Canning Basin) are interpreted to have a marine source based on δ^{13} C of 1,6-DMN. Similarly, the Barnett oil is classified as terrigenous based on bulk δ^{13} C values (Sofer plot), however based on δ^{13} C of 1,6-DMN this oil may be classified as having a mixed source. δ^{13} C of the 1,6-DMN falls inbetween marine and terrigenous oils (Fig.5).

Conifer resins and their catagenetic products in oils and sediments are
isotopically heavy compared with angiosperm resins and compounds derived from
them (Murray et al., 1998). This distinction has existed since at least the Late
Mesozoic and is probably a result of fundamental differences in the gas exchange
behaviour of conifers and angiosperms and their relative efficiencies of carbon
assimilation. The heavier $\boldsymbol{\delta}$ values of terrigenous derived oils in WA basins are most
probably for the same reason. Modern plant resins are isotopically depleted compared
to their fossil counterparts. The reasons for this are not yet clear but may include
secular change in the isotopic composition and partial pressure of atmospheric CO ₂ .
Resin derived compounds in oils and sediments, especially those associated with
conifers, are isotopically heavier than other hydrocarbons (Murray et al., 1998).
δ^{13} C values of 1,2,5-TMN for each oil are given in Table 2. The largest
difference for $\delta^{13}C$ values of 1,2,5-TMN (4.9‰) is observed between Tahbilk
(Bonaparte Basin) and Pictor (Canning Basin) oils. The oils from the Canning Basin
where 1,2,5-TMN is most negative are probably derived from marine sources, whereas
oils containing 1,2,5-TMN with a more positive $\delta^{13}C$ value are representative of a
terrigenous source. Since the oils are of similar thermal maturity in terms of oil
window, it is reasonable to assume that $\delta^{13}C$ of this isomer is largely determined by
source. Similarly, Le Metayer (unpublished data) has suggested that all the TMN
isomers, 1,2,5-TMN is most influenced by source. 1,2,5-TMN is suggested to be
bacterial in origin, resulting from the degradation of D-ring monoaromatic 8,14-
secohopanoids representing a dominant marine source (Püttmann and Villar, 1987). In
Fig. 5, based on δ^{13} C values of 1,2,5-TMN it can be interpreted that Pictor with the
most depleted $\delta^{13}C$ value is a marine sourced oil whereas Tahbilk with the most
enriched $\delta^{13}C$ value is the a terrigenous sourced oil. In addition to Pictor, Meda and

Janpam North have depleted δ^{13} C values of 1,2,5-TMN representing a marine source for Canning Basin oils rather than biological or thermal maturity factors. The oils (Barnett, Elang West, Barrow Island, N.Scott Reef) plot in between Canning Basin oils and Tahbilk oil have varying terrigenous input in their source based on the δ^{13} C values of 1,2,5-TMN. Budzinski et al. (1995) have investigated the source effect on the MP, DMP and TMP distributions for various crude oils and source rocks. From these studies, it has been established that the MPs are mostly influenced by source. 1-MP is generally dominant in terrigenously sourced oils (Heppenheimer et al., 1992); 9-MP is generally dominant in marine sourced oils (Isaksen, 1991). The 2-MP and 3-MP isomers are usually dominant compounds in highly mature lacustrine and/or marine sourced oils (Radke et al., 1986). The stable carbon isotopic compositions of P and MPs reported previously in coaly shales and coals at marginal to full thermal maturity are consistent with organic matter type rather than maturity (Radke et al., 1998). Authors reported that maturity differences in Lower Jurassic Posidonia shale samples had little effect on δ^{13} C of P and MPs. Similar results were also reported by Clayton and Bjorøy (1994) for a number of North Sea crude oils. Radke et al. (1998) reported that sediments containing marine derived organic matter had P and MPs up to 7% more depleted in ¹³C compared with those containing terrigenous derived organic matter. In Fig. 5, δ^{13} C values of 1-MP and 1,9-DMP in Canning Basin oils range from -29.3‰ to -28.5‰ and-30.3‰ to -30.0‰ to, respectively. For oils from the other basins (Bonaparte, Carnaryon, Browse), the δ^{13} C of 1-MP and 1.9-DMP ranges from -27.5% to -24.1% and -28.0% to -25.1%, respectively. δ^{13} C values of 1-MP and 1.9-DMP are

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359 less negative probably reflecting the varying inputs of terrigenous organic matter to the 360 source-rocks of these oils (N.Scott Reef, Elang West, Tahbilk, Barnett, Barrow Island). 361 4.2.1. Relationship of aromatic ratios and $\delta^{13}C$ of aromatic isomers indicative of 362 363 source 364 Hughes et al. (1995) proposed to identify the depositional environment of a 365 source rock and associated lithologies by using the plot of DBT/P versus the Pr/Ph. 366 They measured these ratios for 75 crude oils from 41 known source rocks ranging in 367 age from Ordovician to Neogene and classified them into the following groups; marine 368 carbonate, lacustrine sulfate poor, marine/lacustrine shale/fluvial deltaic carbonaceous 369 shale and coal. Similarly, Edwards et al. (2005) used Pr/Ph and P/DBT ratios to 370 classify marine and terrigenous oils. P/DBTand Pr/Ph ratios of the WA crude oils and $\delta^{13}C$ of source related aromatic 371 isomers are given in Table 2. The relationship between δ^{13} C values of 1.6-DMN and 372 373 P/DBT, and Pr/Ph ratios of the oils is shown in Fig.6. The plot reveals that oils 374 generated by source rocks of similar depositional environment and lithologies tend to 375 group together. Thus, oils from marine anoxic environments, predominantly marine 376 carbonaceous source rocks have low P/DBT and Pr/Ph ratios and the most negative δ^{13} C values for 1,6-DMN. In contrast, oils either from terrigenous siliciclastic or with a 377 terrigenous source input have high P/DBT and Pr/Ph ratios, and also high δ^{13} C values 378 379 for 1,6-DMN (Fig. 6). 380 Janpam North, Pictor and Meda oils have a low P/DBT ratio and δ^{13} C of 1,6-381 DMN is most depleted. These oils are from a marine source (Fig. 6a). Janpam North 382 oil with a low Pr/Ph ratio relative to other marine oils of Canning Basin (Pictor and 383 Meda) represents a more calcareous source rather than a shaley source rock (Fig. 6b).

384 Crocetane, an irregular tail-to-tail C₂₀ isoprenoid, was found to be present in the 385 Canning Basin oils (Maslen et al., 2009). Crocetane coelutes with phytane. However 386 the percentage of crocetane is low (~4 %) in abundance and therefore has a negligible 387 influence on Pr/Ph ratios for the Canning Basin oils. The δ^{13} C values of aromatic isomers (1,6-DMN and 1,2,5-TMN) of Barnett oil 388 389 suggest a mixed source, however when these data are plotted with the P/DBT and 390 Pr/Ph ratios (Figs. 6b, 7b and 8b) it points to a marine source similar to the Canning 391 Basin oils. The Barnett oil shows a distinction from the other mixed source oils with its 392 Pr/Ph ratio plotting in between the Canning Basin oils and the other WA oils (Figs. 6b, 393 7b and 8b). Elang West, N. Scott Reef, Barrow Island and Tahbilk oils show highly 394 variable P/DBT and Pr/Ph ratios reflecting varying degrees of terrigenous inputs to their source rocks. When δ^{13} C of 1,6-DMN (Fig. 6b), 1,2,5-TMN (Fig. 7b) and DMP 395 396 (Fig. 8b) are plotted versus Pr/Ph ratios, these oils plot together with higher Pr/Ph ratios and less negative δ^{13} C values of selected aromatic isomers (1,6-DMN, 1,2,5-397 398 TMN) relative to Canning Basin oils and to Barnett oil. δ^{13} C of 1,2,5-TMN (Fig. 7a) and δ^{13} C of DMP (Fig. 8a) are plotted versus 399 400 P/DBT ratios help to discriminate any source effects in WA oils. As discussed above, 401 the Canning Basin oils (Janpam North, Pictor and Meda) group together with their low P/DBT ratios and more negative δ^{13} C values reflecting a marine source. However, 402 403 compared to other diagrams where it shows more marine effect (Figs. 6b, 7b and 8b), 404 Barnett oil plots closer to the other WA oils from Bonaparte, Carnaryon and Browse 405 Basins reflecting a higher terrigenous input (Figs. 6a, 7a and 8a). Elang West, N. Scott 406 Reef, Barrow Island and Tahbilk oils make a group with high P/DBT ratios and less negative δ^{13} C values representing varying contributions of terrigenous organic matter 407 408 to their source.

As discussed above (Section 4.2), by studying the relative ratios of APs from oils
of different sources, Budzinski et al. (1995) proposed that several specific MP, DMP
and TMP isomers can be characteristic either of marine carbonate or terrigenous
siliciclastic depositional environments. Using the isotopic approach, Radke et al.
(1998) proposed that $\delta^{13}C$ of P and MPs reflect organic matter type rather than thermal
maturity. Amongst all the alkylated Ps, the MPs have been shown to be the most
indicative of source(s). Plots of P/DBT versus $\delta^{13}C$ values of 1-MP and 1,9-MP (Fig.
9a and b, respectively) help to discriminate between the end members of terrigenous
and marine sourced oils. The oils of the Canning Basin (Pictor, Meda and Janpam
North) are classified as marine having low P/DBT ratios and the most negative $\delta^{13} \text{C}$
values for 1-MP and 1,9-MP isomers (Figs. 9a and 9b). The other 5 oils (N. Scott Reef,
Barrow Island, Elang West, Tahbilk and Barnett) are more terrigenous derived having
higher P/DBT ratios and more positive $\delta^{13} C$ values for 1-MP and 1,9-MP. From most
terrigenously sourced (all with less negative $\delta^{13} \text{C}$ values relative to Canning Basin
oils) to least terrigenously sourced the oils can be put in an order as follows; N.Scott
Reef, Barrow Island, Elang West, Tahbilk, Barnett oils (Figs. 9a and 9b).
As a general conclusion, for the oils we have analysed ($\delta^{13}C$ of individual
aromatic hydrocarbons) that are identified on the Sofer plot, Pictor and Meda
(Canning) appear to follow the same trend (marine sourced). On the other hand,
Canning Basin oil (Janpam North) gives a marine signature based on $\delta^{13} C$ of
individual aromatic hydrocarbons in contrast to its terrigenous signature based on bulk
$\delta^{13}C$ data from the Sofer plot. From $\delta^{13}C$ data of aromatic isomers (1,6-DMN; 1,2,5-
TMN; 1MP and 1,9-DMP) Tahbilk and Barnett oils provide different conclusions to
those drawn from the Sofer plot showing mixed inputs with some and terrigenous

contribution. To clarify this, $\delta^{13}C$ values coupled with P/DBT and Pr/Ph ratios show 433 434 that the Tahbilk and Barnett oils are consistent with mixed oils. When we compare bulk ¹³C values of aromatic hydrocarbons of the same oils 435 (Fig. 2, Sofer Plot) opposite conclusions can be drawn. δ^{13} C values of individual 436 437 aromatic compounds provide an insight to classify WA oils based on their source. 438 4.3 δ^{13} C of aromatic sub-classes (age and basin for oils) 439 440 Previously attempts have been made to correlate oils to their geological age and 441 origin (e.g. Sofer, 1984; Andrusevich et al., 1998). Most of the previous studies have used molecular characteristics and bulk δ^{13} C of saturates and aromatics. Previous 442 applications of bulk δ^{13} C for constraining the geologic ages of crude oils and their 443 respective petroleum basins have only been met with limited success. This is a 444 consequence of the large range of bulk $\delta^{13}C$ values for crude oils from any specific age 445 interval. In general, oils tend to become enriched in ¹³C with decreasing geological age 446 447 (Andrusevich et al., 1998). Such changes are thought to be independent of the source 448 rocks from which the oils are derived. 449 δ¹³C distributions of individual aromatic sub-classes (ABs, ANs, BPs and APs) of two Mesozoic and three Paleozoic oils from WA petroleum basins are illustrated in 450 Figs. 3 and 4. We have tried to observe if there is any trend in δ^{13} C values of 451 452 individual aromatic hydrocarbons with respect to age and basin of the oils. Overall, Cretaceous Elang West oil from the Bonaparte Basin (Fig. 3a) (δ^{13} C of individual 453 aromatics ranges between -28.3 to -23.6%) has less negative ¹³C values than Flinders 454 Shoal a Jurassic aged oil from the Carnarvon/Barrow Basin (Fig. 3b) (δ^{13} C ranges 455 456 between -28.7 to -25.0%). These data is consistent with the previous study of Andrusevich et al. (1998) showing that oils become enriched in ¹³C both saturate and 457

aromatic hydrocarbons with decreasing source age. The change in 13 C of these two oils are believed to be directly age and source related because their thermal maturities are similar (Table 1, Vrc = 0.63 and 0.68 for Elang West and Flinders Shoal, respectively). Flinders Shoal is a mixture of heavily biodegraded and non-degraded oil (Grice et al., 2000). It is likely that the aromatic hydrocarbons in Flinders Shoal mainly derive from the non-degraded oil; however, biodegradation may still have an effect on the δ^{13} C of individual aromatic hydrocarbons.

Carboniferous West Kora oil from the Canning Basin (Fig. 4a) has individual

aromatic hydrocarbons with δ^{13} C values ranging between -32.0 to -27.5% (Table 2). Devonian Meda oil from the Canning Basin has δ^{13} C values ranging from -31.8 to -27.0% (Fig. 4b and Table 2). Ordovician Pictor oil from the Canning Basin has δ^{13} C values ranging from -31.0 to -26.9% (Table 2). Contrary to Mesozoic oils shown in Fig. 3, Paleozoic oils do not follow the trend of enrichment in 13 C with decreasing source age. The Ordovician oil Pictor has the most enriched 13 C values of individual aromatic hydrocarbons on average relative to Carboniferous West Kora and Devonian Meda oils though it was the oldest oil analysed (Fig. 4c). The change in δ^{13} C values of Ordovician oil might be more affected by thermal maturity rather than age since the Ordovician oil is the most mature oil of the Paleozoic oils in the present study (Vrc = 0.95, Table 1). However, in general Mesozoic oils in WA basins have more enriched values in their 13 C of aromatic sub-classes relative to older Paleozoic oils.

5. Conclusions

Molecular approaches were complimented with compound specific isotope (CSIA) approach for individual aromatic compounds in Western Australia crude oils to differentiate source and age. δ^{13} C values were obtained for various sub-classes of the

483 aromatic fractions such as DMB, TMB, TeMB, PMB, N, MN, DMN, TMN, BP, MBP, 484 DMBP, P, MP, TMP, and for several isomers of the aromatic fraction such as 1,6-485 DMN, 1,2,5-TMN, 1-MP and 1,9-DMP. The bulk δ^{13} C of saturate and aromatic fractions of crude oils have been 486 487 previously used to differentiate sources, however, many Australian crude oils do not appear to follow this trend. Oils from marine basins based on their δ^{13} C values of 488 individual aromatic compounds are classified as terrigenous based on their bulk δ^{13} C 489 490 values. The CSIA data of the aromatic hydrocarbons obtained for the oils provides 491 opposite conclusions regarding the source of the oils compared to bulk data (Sofer 492 plot). The oils where the δ^{13} C of 1,6-DMN and 1,2,5-TMN isomers is most negative 493 494 are probably derived from marine source, whereas oils containing 1,6-DMN and 1,2,5-TMN with a less negative value are representative of a terrigenous source. The δ^{13} C 495 values falling in between probably have mixed source(s). Less negative δ^{13} C values of 496 497 1-MP and 1.9-DMP isomers probably reflects the varying inputs of terrigenous organic 498 matter to the source rocks of the oils. Plots of P/DBT and Pr/Ph versus δ^{13} C of DMP; 1,6-DMN; 1,2,5-TMN; 1-MP 499 500 and 1,9-MP are constructed to establish the end members of terrigenous and marine 501 sourced oils. The ratio of P/DBT and/or the ratio of Pr/Ph and δ^{13} C of aromatic isomers (such 502 as 1.6DMN; 1,2,5-TMN; 1-MP and 1,9-MP) when coupled together, provide a novel 503 504 and convenient way of to infer crude oil source rock origin and sometimes even 505 lithologies. 506

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725	List of Figures.
726	
726	
727	Fig. 1. A map of the Carnarvon, Canning, Browse and Bonaparte basins in Western
121	11g. 1. 14 map of the Carnaryon, Caming, Blowse and Bonaparte basins in Western
728	Australia showing the location of petroleum exploration wells. The wells shown in green
729	dots are the samples used in this study.
730	
731	Fig. 2. δ^{13} C of the saturated versus aromatic hydrocarbon fractions for Western Australian
732	oils (Sofer Plot) (Edwards et al., 2005). Some oils with carbon isotope data of individual
733	aromatic compounds analysed in this study are plotted on the diagram.
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725	E: 2 T 1 CS/3C C: 1: 1 1 CM : : :
735	Fig. 3. Trends of δ^{13} C of individual aromatic compounds in crude oils of Mesozoic age in
726	calcated WA hasing (ADs; all with anyones, ANs; all with anythalance, DDs; high anythalance
736	selected WA basins (ABs: alkylbenzenes, ANs: alkylnaphthalenes, BPs: biphenyls, APs:
737	alkylphenanthrenes, other abbreviations given in Table 2).
151	ankyrphenanthrenes, other aboreviations given in rable 2).
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, 50	

- 739 Fig. 4. Trends of δ^{13} C of individual aromatic compounds in crude oils of Paleozoic age in
- selected WA basins (ABs: alkylbenzenes, ANs: alkylnaphthalenes, BPs: biphenyls, APs:
- alkylphenanthrenes, other abbreviations given in Table 2).

- Fig. 5. Graph showing the distribution of δ^{13} C of 1,6-DMN (dimethylnaphthalene), 1,2,5-
- TMN (trimethylnaphthalene), 1-MP (methylphenanthrene), 9-MP, 1,9-DMP
- 745 (dimethylphenanthrene) in crude oils of WA basins. Same legend is used in Figs. 6, 7, 8
- 746 and 9.

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- 748 Fig. 6. Plots of δ^{13} C of 1,6-DMN (DMN: dimethylnaphthalene) verus (a) P/DBT (P:
- phenanthrene, DBT: dibenzothiophene and (b) Pr/Ph (Pr: Pristane, Ph: Phytane) ratios in
- 750 WA crude oils as an indication of source. (Arrow shows the increasing input of terrigenous
- source). Same legend is used in Figs. 6, 7, 8 and 9.

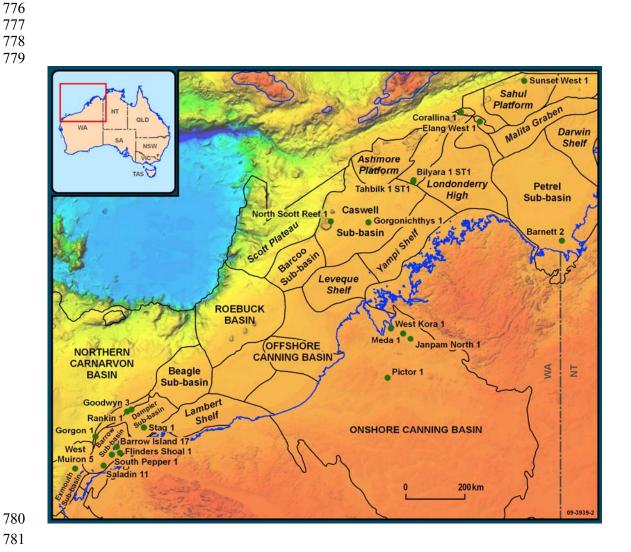
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- Fig. 7. Plots of δ^{13} C of 1,2,5-TMN (TMN: trimethylnaphthalene) verus (a) P/DBT (P:
- phenanthrene, DBT: dibenzothiophene and (b) Pr/Ph (Pr: Pristane, Ph: Phytane) ratios in
- WA crude oils as an indication of source. (Arrow shows the increasing input of terrigenous
- source). Same legend is used in Figs. 6, 7, 8 and 9.

757

- 758 Fig. 8. Plots of δ^{13} C of DMP (DMP: dimethylphenanthrene) verus (a) P/DBT (P:
- phenanthrene, DBT: dibenzothiophene and (b) Pr/Ph (Pr: Pristane, Ph: Phytane) ratios in
- 760 WA crude oils as an indication of source. (Arrow shows the increasing input of terrigenous
- source). Same legend is used in Figs. 6, 7, 8 and 9.

- Fig. 9. Plots of P/DBT verus (a) δ^{13} C of 1-MP (b) δ^{13} C of 1,9-MP in WA crude oils as an
- 765 indication of source. (Arrow shows the increasing input of terrigenous source). Same
- legend is used in Figs. 6, 7, 8 and 9.



782 Fig.1.

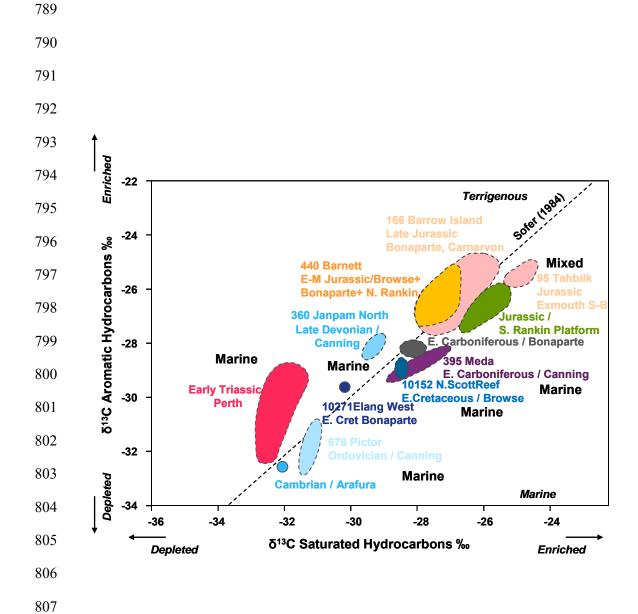
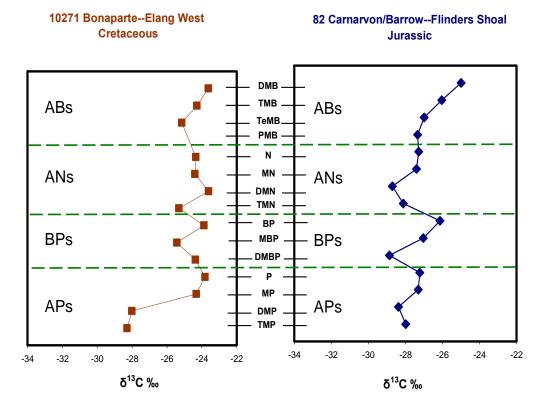
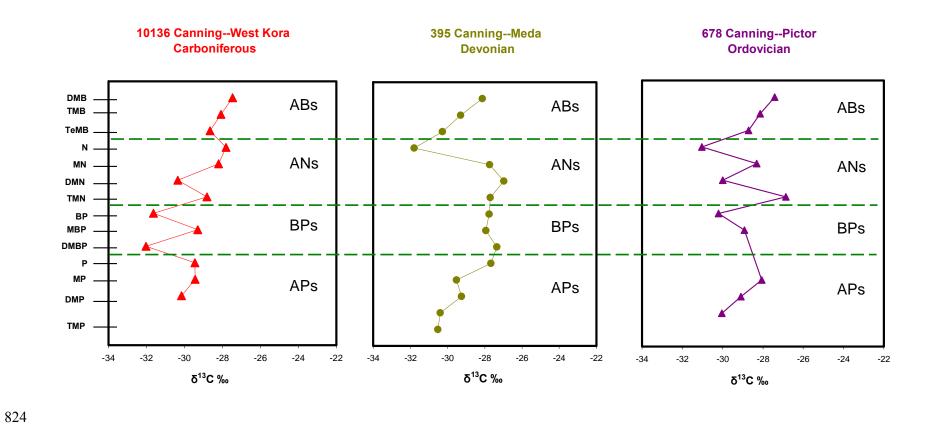


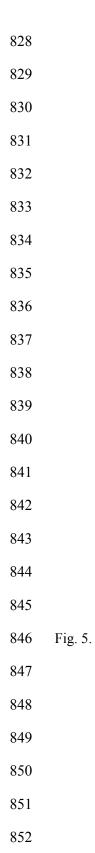
Fig. 2.

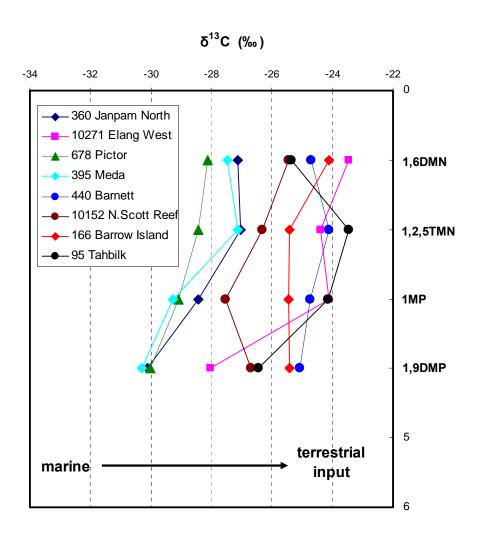


816 Fig. 3.



825 Fig. 4.





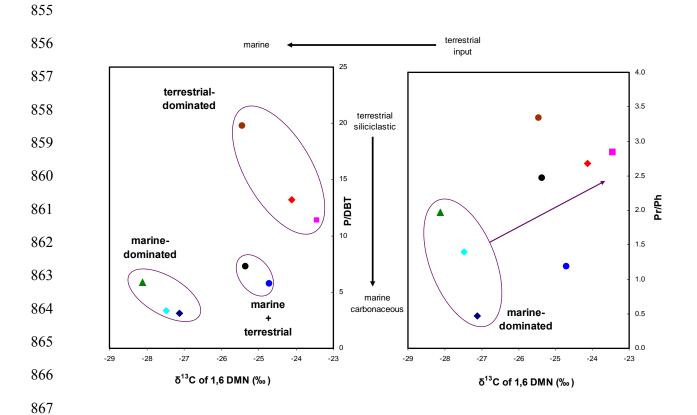


Fig. 6.

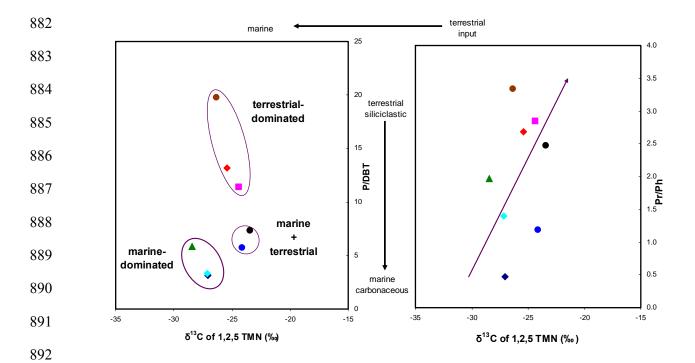
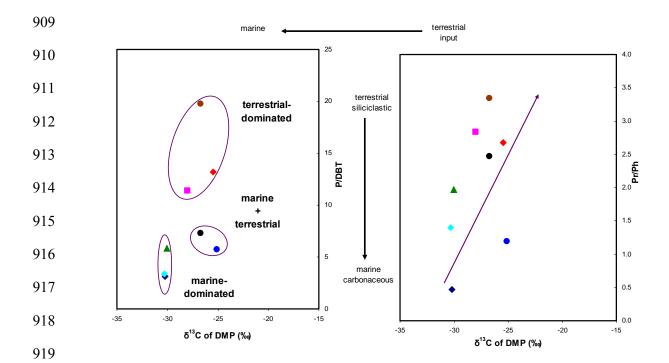
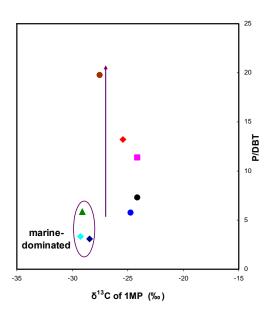
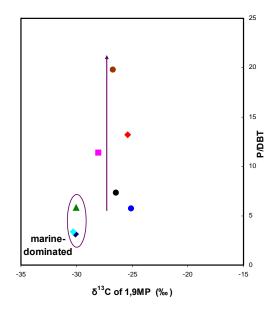


Fig. 7.



921 Fig. 8.





933 Fig. 9.

Table 1. Location, reservoir and age data of crude oils from Western Australia Basins. API, Vrc (calculated vitrinite reflectance) data are taken from Edwards et al. (2005). Mild and heavy biodegradation approximately corresponds to the levels 2-4, 5-7, respectively (Volkman et al., 1984; Peters and Moldowan, 1993; Grice et al., 2000). The term polyhistory used for reservoirs that have experienced several phases of recharge.

Sample ID	Basin	Field	Depth (m)	Reservoir Formation	Reservoir Age	Source Age	API	Vrc	Biodegradation	Source Type				
Western Aus	stralian													
82	Carnaryon/Barrow	Flinders Shoal	786.1-799.2	Birdrong	E. Cretaceous	Jurassic	25.30	0.63	heavy	Distal Marine Shale/Paralic-Deltaic Marine Shale				
881	Carnaryon/Barrow	South Pepper	2214-2217	Barrow Gp	E. Cretaceous	Jurassic	43.80	0.76	polyhistory	Paralic-Deltaic Marine Shale				
166	Carnaryon/Barrow	Barrow Island	2282.9-2312.2	Muderong	E. Cretaceous	Jurassic	36.70	0.78	polyhistory	Paralic-Deltaic Marine Shale				
233	Carnarvon/N. Rankin	Rankin	2954	Mungaroo	L. Triassic	Triassic-Jurassic	33.60	1.05	polyhistory	Distal Marine Shale/Paralic-Deltaic Marine Shale				
128	Carnarvon/N.Rankin	Goodwyn	2879-2891	Mungaroo	L. Triassic	Triassic-Jurassic	52.50	0.80	polyhistory	Paralic-Deltaic Marine Shale				
154	Carnarvon/S.Rankin	Gorgon	3973-4002	Mungaroo	L. Triassic	Triassic-Jurassic	45.10	0.79	non-degraded	Distal Marine Shale/Paralic-Deltaic Marine Shale				
10057	Carnarvon/Barrow	Saladin	1647-2436	Mardie					polyhistory	Distal Marine Shale/Paralic-Deltaic Marine Shale				
10271	Bonaparte/Flamingo High	Elang West	3007-30016	Jamieson - Flamingo	EL. Cretaceous	E. Cretaceous	39.00	0.68	non-degraded	Distal Marine Shale				
95	Bonaparte/Vulcan	Tahbilk	2690.2	n/a	L. Jurassic	Jurassic	34.70	0.51	non-degraded	Paralic-Deltaic Marine Shale				
36	Bonaparte/Vulcan	Bilyara	2708	Montara	L. Jurassic	EM. Jurassic	33.90	0.73	non-degraded	Paralic-Deltaic Marine Shale				
440	Bonaparte/Petrel	Barnett	1491-1497	U.Kuriyippi	L.Carboniferous-E.Permian	E. Carboniferous	36.90	0.86	polyhistory	Distal Marine Shale				
10300	Bonaparte/Laminaria High	Corallina	3186-3196	Laminaria	ML. Jurassic	Jurassic	58.20	0.62	non-degraded	Paralic-Deltaic Marine Shale				
354	Bonaparte/Sahul Platform	Sunset West	2189-2207	Plover	M. Jurassic	EM. Jurassic	61.80	0.53	non-degraded	n/a				
10152	Browse/Scott Reef	N.Scott Reef	4223-4283	unnamed	E. Jurassic	EM. Jurassic	47.90	0.89	non-degraded	Paralic-Deltaic Marine Shale				
98	Browse/Yampi Shelf	Gorgonichthys	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a				
678	Canning	Pictor	929-956	Nita	Ordovician	Ordovician	43.80	0.95	non-degraded	Distal Marine Shale				
360	Canning	Janpam North	1644-1661	Nullara	L. Devonian	Devonian	23.00	0.82	mild	Calcerous Marine Shale				
10136	Canning	West Kora	1735-1751	Anderson	E. Carboniferous	E. Carboniferous	46.90	0.67	polyhistory	Distal Marine Shale				
395	Canning	Meda	1557-1564	Laurel	L. Carboniferous	E. Carboniferous	39.00	0.72	non-degraded	Distal Marine Shale				

n/a; no data E.; Early, L.; Late, M.; Middle

Table 2. Results of δ^{13} C of individual aromatic hydrocarbons from crude oils analysed in this study (DMB, dimethylbenzene; TMB, trimethylbenzene; TeMB, tetramethylbenzene; PMB, pentamethylbenzene; N, naphthalene; MN, methylnaphthalene; DMN, dimethylnaphthalene; TMN, trimethylnaphthalene; Bp, biphenyl; MBp, methylbiphenyl; DMBp, dimethylbiphenyl; P, phenanthrene; MP, methylphenanthrene; DMP, dimethylphenanthrene; TMP, trimethylphenanthrene; Pr, Pristane; Ph, Phytane; DBT, dibenzothiophene).

Sample ID	DMB	TMB	TeMB	PMB	N	MN	DMN	1,6 DMN	TMN	1,2,5 TMN	BP	MBP	DMBP	P	MP	1MP	DMP	1,9 DMP	TMP	Pr/Ph	P/DBT
											δ ¹³ C(‰)										
Western Aust	tralian										` '										
82	-25.0	-26.0	-27.0	-27.3	-27.3	-27.4	-28.1		-27.0		-28.7	-26.1	-26.1	-27.2	-27.3		-28.4		-28.0		
881		-27.0	-27.8	-28.5																	
166	-25.6	-25.9	-27.6		-26.1	-24.1	-25.3	-24.1	-26.5	-25.4		-27.0	-26.0	-26.3	-25.7	-25.5	-25.5	-25.4	-28.8	2.68	13.18
233	-26.4	-26.3	-26.6	-25.5	-27.8	-27.7	-26.0		-27.8		-25.0	-24.7	-26.7	-27.0	-27.7		-28.2		-29.5		
128	-25.3	-26.2	-26.8	-27.0	-23.6	-24.0	-25.3		-27.9		-25.2	-25.1		-25.5	-24.7		-25.4		-27.6		
154	-25.3	-26.4	-26.3		-23.4	-24.3	-25.3		-28.8		-25.2	-24.9		-24.1	-24.3						
10057	-25.1	-26.1	-27.0	-27.2	-25.3	-27.4	-28.3		-28.1		-26.1	-26.8	-28.9	-28.2	-27.8		-28.3				
10271	-23.6	-24.3	-25.2		-24.3	-24.4	-25.3	-23.5	-25.4	-24.4	-23.6	-23.9	-24.4	-23.8	-24.3	-24.1	-28.0	-28.0	-28.3	2.84	11.38
95	-25.7	-26.3	-27.3	-26.7	-24.2	-22.2	-23.9	-25.4		-23.5	-25.3	-26.2	-26.4	-24.1	-24.8	-24.1	-26.7	-26.5	-27.0	2.47	7.30
36	-25.7	-27.1	-26.7		-23.1	-24.3	-24.8		-25.8		-25.2	-25.7	-26.0	-25.6	-27.3		-28.1		-29.9		
440	-25.9	-26.5	-27.3	-28.3	-24.0	-24.6	-25.2	-24.7	-26.6	-24.1	-25.8	-26.5	-26.5	-25.0	-24.8	-24.7	-25.1	-25.1	-27.0	1.19	5.74
10300	-28.4	-26.7	-28.1	-26.2	-26.7	-27.3	-25.6				-25.5	-26.5		-26.6	-26.7						
354	-25.7	-27.5	-27.7	-26.2	-25.9	-23.7	-26.5		-25.5		-26.0		-25.5	-27.2	-28.5						
10152	-24.7	-25.1	-25.3		-26.3	-27.0	-28.0	-25.5	-27.4	-26.3	-23.1	-23.6	-25.4	-25.5	-27.8	-27.5	-26.7	-26.7	-26.7	3.34	19.78
98	-23.4	-26.0	-28.8	-26.3	-26.1	-27.8	-27.1		-28.1		-27.8	-25.6	-27.0	-28.0	-27.8		-27.0		-27.5		
678	-27.4	-28.1	-28.7	-31.0	-28.3	-30.0	-30.2	-28.1	-30.2	-28.4	-26.9	-28.9		-28.1	-29.1	-29.1	-30.0	-30.0		1.97	5.84
360	-28.5	-29.7	-31.3	-30.8	-26.8	-26.6	-27.5	-27.1	-27.7	-27.0	-27.3	-27.4	-27.1	-29.5	-29.0	-28.5	-30.2	-30.1	-30.2	0.47	3.11
10136	-27.5	-28.1	-28.7	-27.8	-28.2	-30.3			-32.0		-28.8	-29.3	-29.5	-29.4							
395	-28.1	-29.3	-30.3	-31.8	-27.7	-27.0	-27.8	-27.5	-27.4	-27.1	-27.7	-27.9	-27.7	-29.5	-29.3	-29.3	-30.4	-30.3	-30.5	1.4	3.35