

1 **The influence of DOC and UVR on the genomic**
2 **integrity of *Daphnia magna***

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7 **Summary**

8 **1.** Many northern freshwaters are currently experiencing a pronounced “browning”,
9 i.e., an increase of terrestrially derived dissolved organic carbon (DOC).
10 Chromophoric DOC offers protection against photodamage by absorbing harmful
11 ultraviolet radiation (UVR), but may also produce free radicals and reactive oxygen
12 species (ROS) following photoactivation. The aim of this study was to explore the
13 combined effects of DOC and UVR on DNA integrity of limnetic zooplankton.
14 Specifically, DNA strand breaks in the cladoceran *Daphnia magna* were investigated.

15 **2.** DNA strand breaks were assessed using comet assays with treatment of individual
16 daphnids. A four-by-four design was used for exposure to DOC (2.03, 5, 10, and 20
17 mg L⁻¹), UVA (0, 10.8, 21.7, and 43.4 μmol m⁻² s⁻¹ at 390 nm), and their
18 combinations. ROS production from photoactivated DOC was quantified using a
19 modified DCFH-DA *in vitro* ROS detection assay.

20 **3.** While UVA had no effects on DNA damage above background levels (4.5 to
21 2.8%), we observed increased DNA damage in DOC treatments (4.1 to 9.1%). The
22 highest increase was observed in combined DOC and UVA treatments (up to 20.2%).
23 ROS production showed similar patterns, as simultaneous exposure to both DOC and
24 UVA resulted in higher formation rates than exposure to DOC and UVA alone (up to
25 684.5 μmol L⁻¹ versus 5.9 to 13.1 and 27.5 to 83.9 μmol L⁻¹, respectively). This
26 indicates that the observed increase in DNA damage was due to ROS production of
27 photoactivated DOC.

28 **4.** This study showed that strong interactive effects of short-wave radiation and DOC
29 could have major genomic impacts on pelagic biota. With future scenarios of
30 increased DOC, our study points towards increasing oxidative stress for ecosystems.

31 These findings highlight an important aspect of climate change at the intersection
32 between ecology, limnology and toxicology.

33

34 **Key-words:** Browning, climate change, dissolved organic carbon, DNA damage,
35 photoactivation, ROS formation, ultraviolet radiation, zooplankton

36 **Introduction**

37 Water browning, i.e., an increase of dissolved organic carbon (DOC) in freshwater
38 systems is a known phenomenon throughout the northern hemisphere (Solomon et al.
39 2015). Potential drivers of this browning include changes in agriculture (Evans et al.
40 2012), altered vegetation (Larsen, Andersen & Hessen 2011), climate change
41 (Erlandsson et al. 2008), and decreased sulphuric deposition (Monteith et al. 2007).
42 This poses a multitude of impacts on physical, chemical, and biological properties in
43 lakes (Williamson et al. 2015). DOC attenuates shortwave light, which has both
44 negative (light attenuation, various photoproducts) and positive effects (nutrient
45 release, photoprotection) for primary producers (Palen et al. 2002; Kelly et al. 2014;
46 Thrane, Hessen & Andersen 2014; Karlsson et al. 2015; Seekell, Lapierre & Karlsson
47 2015). Photoactivated DOC is known to release free radicals and reactive oxygen
48 species (ROS; Cooper & Zika 1983; Scully, McQueen & Lean 1996; Richard et al.
49 2007), which may induce membrane and DNA damages in plankton (Cooke et al.
50 2003; Vehmaa et al. 2013).

51 While stratospheric ozone depletion is a major factor for increasing ultraviolet
52 radiation (UVR) on earth (Dugo, Han & Tchounwou 2012; IPCC 2014; Robinson &
53 Erickson III 2015), the impact of UVR on lake biota is first and foremost regulated by
54 the concentration of chromophoric DOC. While current browning will increase
55 attenuation and narrow down the zone of active photochemistry, drought may work in
56 the opposite direction and increase water clarity and UVR penetration due to extended
57 renewal rates and reduced terrestrial inputs of DOC (Yan et al. 1996; Schindler et al.
58 1997). Zooplankton may be affected by UVR by increased mortality (Zagarese,
59 Tartarotti & Añón Suárez 2003), reduced fecundity and growth (Williamson et al.
60 1994; de Lange et al. 1999), or synergistic effects in combination with chemical

61 stressors (Hessen & Alstad Rukke 2000; Ma, Brennan & Diamond 2012). Underlying
62 these phenotypic fitness costs are, however, cellular damages. The UVR-mediated
63 damage is generally caused by direct photon damage (MacFayden et al. 2004), but
64 also by photoactivation of DOC, producing free radicals and harmful ROS like
65 peroxides, superoxides, singlet oxygen, and hydroxide radicals (Cooper et al. 1988;
66 Fede & Grannas 2015). While UVB photons are more efficient in producing these
67 ROS (Cullen & Neale 1994; IPCC 2014), UVA is the main contributor to their
68 formation in natural systems, as most UVB is absorbed in the stratosphere (Cooper et
69 al. 1994; Abele-Oeschger, Tüg & Röttgers 1997).

70 In a scenario of moderate browning, the net impact of DOC on zooplankton could
71 be considered positive, if photoprotection outweighs decreased primary production
72 (Hessen et al. 2004). However, indirect effects of DOC, like ROS formation under
73 UVR-exposure, could have a negative impact on zooplankton in the upper layers.
74 UVR affects zooplankton species *via* a range of direct and indirect mechanisms
75 (Williamson et al. 2001; Hessen, Borgeraas & Ørbæk 2002; MacFayden et al. 2004;
76 Scoville & Pfrender 2010). E.g., UVR is a main cue for vertical migration of
77 zooplankton species during daytime (Leech & Williamson 2001; Rhode, Pawlowski
78 & Tollrian 2001), a driving force in phenotypic divergence (Miner & Kerr 2011;
79 Miner et al. 2015), and a potent DNA disruptor (Malloy et al. 1997). DNA damaging
80 effects of UVR and other mutagenic drivers to zooplankton species like *Daphnia* are
81 well established (Pellegrini, Gorbi & Buschini 2014; Tartarotti et al. 2014), but the
82 indirect effects of UVR *via* formation of free radicals and ROS under gradients of
83 DOC is less explored.

84 This study seeks to investigate the interaction of DOC and UVR exposure on DNA
85 damage in *Daphnia magna* STRAUS, 1820. Using orthogonal study designs with

86 environmentally relevant levels of DOC and UVR, both ROS production and resulting
87 DNA damage were determined. As proxy for DNA damage, strand breaks were
88 chosen. Although UVR and ROS result in different initial DNA modifications (e.g.,
89 pyrimidine dimers and oxidised nucleotides, respectively), they subsequently induce
90 enzyme-mediated DNA strand breaks, allowing for a comparative analysis of DNA
91 damage (Collins et al. 1997; Collins 2009).

92 **Materials and methods**

93 *DAPHNIA MAGNA* CULTURING

94 The *D. magna* culture was kept in multiple aerated 15–20 L full silicate glass aquaria
95 at a temperature of 20 ± 1 °C. Filtered tap water (0.22 µm polyethersulfone sterilising
96 filter; Corning, Corning, NY, USA) was used as medium, enriched to 4 mmol CaCl₂
97 L⁻¹, 4 mmol NaHCO₃ L⁻¹, and 12 nmol H₂SeO₃ L⁻¹, with additional vitamins (4 nmol
98 B₁₂ L⁻¹, 2 nmol D-biotin L⁻¹, and 300 nmol thiamine HCl L⁻¹) and pH = 7.5. The
99 light:dark cycle was set to 16:8 h (L 18 W/950 fluorescent lamps; OSRAM, Munich,
100 Germany) and *Daphnia* were fed *ad libitum* with the chlorophyte *Chlamydomonas*
101 *reinhardtii* P.A. DANGEARD, 1888. The *D. magna* culture (DHI strain) was obtained
102 from Norwegian Institute for Water Research (NIVA; Oslo, Norway) in early 2014. It
103 has since been kept at our facilities without observable signs of stress (e.g., decreased
104 reproduction or ephippia).

105

106 GRADIENTS IN DISSOLVED ORGANIC CARBON (DOC) 107 AND ULTRAVIOLET RADIATION (UVR)

108 DOC gradients were produced with lyophilized natural organic matter (NOM) from
109 Lake Skjervatjern in Western Norway, which was isolated by reverse osmosis and
110 subsequently freeze-dried (details in Hessen & Færøvig 2001). Concentrations of
111 2.03, 5, 10, and 20 mg DOC L⁻¹ were prepared in *D. magna* culture medium and
112 verified on a TOC-V_{CPH} Total Organic Carbon Analyzer (Shimadzu, Kyoto, Japan).
113 2.03 mg DOC L⁻¹ was the background concentration of DOC in *D. magna* culture
114 medium. UVR exposure was conducted using a fully programmable 96-LED board
115 (Microwell 96 LED Controller, Version 3.2, 13.06.2014;

116 https://www.tindie.com/stores/Dead_Bug_Prototypes/; Dead_Bug_Prototypes,
117 Sandnes, Norway) at 390 nm (UVA₃₉₀) and photon fluxes of 0, 10.8, 21.7, and 43.4
118 $\mu\text{mol m}^{-2} \text{s}^{-1}$. Photon flux gradients were scripted in Arduino (version 1.6.6;
119 <https://www.arduino.cc/en/Main/Software/>) and calibrated using a SpectraPen LM
120 500-UVIS spectroradiometer (Photon Systems Instruments, Drásov, Czech Republic).
121 Unless noted otherwise, all chemicals were purchased from Sigma-Aldrich (St. Louis,
122 MO, USA).

123

124 *IN-VIVO D. MAGNA* EXPOSURE

125 A four-by-four bifactorial geometric design was chosen, using DOC concentrations
126 and UVA₃₉₀ intensities mentioned above. This reflected typical ranges of DOC
127 concentrations in boreal lakes and surface water intensities of UVR (Larsen et al.
128 2011). Exposures were performed in black deep 96-well plates (Advantage 2mL,
129 Square Top/V Bottom, Black 96-Well Collection Plate; Analytical Sales and Services,
130 Pompton Plains, New Jersey, USA) to avoid scattering of UVA₃₉₀ between wells. For
131 each DOC×UVA₃₉₀ combination, three five-day old daphnids were exposed
132 individually for six hours. The experiment was repeated three times, yielding nine
133 analyses per treatment in total.

134

135 COMET ASSAY PROCEDURE

136 The comet assay is a single cell gel electrophoresis, allowing detection of DNA strand
137 breaks of single nuclei (Singh et al. 1988). Here, a modified high-throughput protocol
138 for multiple agarose gels on a hydrophilic polyester film was used (Gutzkow et al.
139 2013). After exposure, individual daphnids were rapidly transferred into 1.5 mL
140 Eppendorf tubes filled with 50 μL ice-cold buffer P (8.5 mmol $\text{NaH}_2\text{PO}_4 \text{L}^{-1}$, 91.5

141 mmol Na₂HPO₄ L⁻¹, 100 mmol NaCl L⁻¹, 1 mmol EDTA L⁻¹, 2 wt% citric acid, and
142 pH = 7.8; Pellacani et al. 2006) and homogenized. The homogenate was diluted 1:10
143 in 0.75 wt% ultra-low gelling temperature agarose (Type IX-A) in PBS (137 mmol
144 NaCl L⁻¹, 2.7 mmol KCl L⁻¹, 10 mmol Na₂HPO₄ L⁻¹, 2 mmol KH₂PO₄ L⁻¹, and 10
145 mmol EDTA L⁻¹) at 20 °C and 20 µL of the mixture were transferred onto the
146 hydrophilic side of a GelBond film (Lonza, Basel, Switzerland). Films were placed in
147 ice-cold lysis buffer (2.5 mol NaCl L⁻¹, 100 mmol EDTA L⁻¹, 10 mmol Tris L⁻¹, 10
148 vol% DMSO, 1 vol% Triton X-100, and pH = 10) and kept therein overnight. Films
149 were rinsed in electrophoresis buffer (300 mmol NaOH L⁻¹, 1 mmol EDTA L⁻¹, and 6
150 vol% concentrated HCl) for 20 min before electrophoresis was run at 15 V for 25 min.
151 Afterwards, films were transferred to neutralising buffer (400 mmol Tris L⁻¹ and pH =
152 7.5) at room temperature for 15 min, before rinsing in dH₂O and dehydration in
153 ethanol for 2 h. Films were air-dried overnight in darkness. Staining was done with
154 1×SYBR Gold (Life Technologies, Carlsbad, California, USA) in TE buffer (10
155 mmol Tris L⁻¹, 1 mmol EDTA L⁻¹, and pH = 8) for 20 min, then the films were rinsed
156 in dH₂O and mounted. Comets were scored on a Nikon Eclipse LV 100ND
157 microscope with a Nikon Plan Fluor 20×/0.50 objective (Nikon Corporation, Tokyo,
158 Japan) using Comet Assay IV software (version 4.3; Perceptive Instruments, Bury St
159 Edmund, England, UK). DNA damage was defined as percentage tail DNA and 50
160 comets were scored for each daphnid.

161

162 QUANTIFICATION OF ROS PRODUCTION

163 To quantify *in vitro* ROS production, a four-by-three bifactorial design was applied,
164 using 2.03, 5, 10, and 20 mg DOC L⁻¹ and 0, 21.7, and 43.4 µmol UVA₃₉₀ m⁻² s⁻¹.
165 DOC concentrations were achieved by diluting NOM powder in *D. magna* culture

166 medium and UVA₃₉₀ intensities were calibrated as described above. ROS production
167 was determined colourmetrically using 2',7'-dichlorofluorescein diacetate (DCFH-DA;
168 CAS 4091-99-0). The principle mechanism is described in Fig. S1 (Marchesi et al.
169 1999; Gomes, Fernandes & Lima 2005). Experiments were carried out in black 96-
170 well plates (Nunc 96F Nontreated MicroWell; Thermo Scientific Fisher, Roskilde,
171 Denmark) to avoid scattering of UVA₃₉₀ across wells. Each well contained 100 µL
172 DOC medium with 25 µmol DCFH-DA L⁻¹ and 20 U esterase (from porcine liver;
173 CAS 9016-18-6). A hydrogen peroxide (H₂O₂) standard was used (0.03–72.1 nmol
174 L⁻¹) and substituted the DOC medium where applicable. Five replicates were used for
175 each DOC×UVA₃₉₀ combination and three for each H₂O₂ concentration. Plates were
176 incubated at 20±0.3 °C for six hours. Fluorescence was measured on a BioTek
177 Synergy Mx plate reader with Gen5 software (version 1.10.8; BioTek Instruments,
178 Winooski, VT, USA) and the experiment repeated three times.

179

180 ABSORBED PHOTON FLUX

181 The relationship between ROS formation rates and absorbed photon fluxes of UVA₃₉₀
182 was investigated with absorbed photon flux C in mol m⁻³ s⁻¹ calculated as

183

$$184 \quad \frac{dC}{dt} = \frac{q_{p,\lambda}[1 - 10^{-abs(\lambda)}]}{V} \cdot A$$

185

186 where $q_{p,\lambda}$ is the photon flux in mol m⁻² s⁻¹, $abs(\lambda)$ the exposure absorbance at 390
187 nm (non-dimensional), V the exposure volume in m³, and A the exposure area in m²
188 (IUPAC 2006). Absorbance values for the same DOC×UVA₃₉₀ treatments used for

189 ROS production estimation were measured on a BioTek Synergy Mx plate reader and
190 Gen5 software (version 1.10.8; BioTek Instruments) at 390 nm.

191 Absorbed photons at the end of the experiment were calculated by multiplying the
192 absorbed photon flux with the exposure time.

193

194 STATISTICAL ANALYSES

195 Statistical analyses were carried out using open source statistical software R (version
196 3.3.1; R Core Team 2016) and recommended package nlme (version 3.1-128;
197 Pinheiro et al. 2016).

198 DNA damage data was aggregated by median values of 50 scored comets for each
199 animal (Collins et al. 2014) and analysed in LME models using individual daphnids
200 and experimental replicates as random factors with individual daphnids nested within
201 experimental replicates, DNA damage as response variable, and DOC, UVA₃₉₀, and
202 their combination as fixed effects. This LME model was also used for three-
203 dimensional visualisation of DNA damage in relation to DOC and UVA₃₉₀. As DNA
204 damage data was skewed, it was power-transformed ($\lambda = 0.5$) to improve error
205 distribution.

206 For analysis of ROS production, measured fluorescence was aggregated by mean
207 values of five technical replicates, standardised to H₂O₂ fluorescence and analysed
208 using an LME model with power-transformed ($\lambda = 0.5$) ROS production as response
209 variable, DOC, UVA₃₉₀, and absorbed photons (substituting DOC×UVA₃₉₀
210 interactions) as fixed effects, and experimental replicates as random factor.

211 To investigate the correlation of ambient ROS production and DNA damage in *D.*
212 *magna*, a reduced major axis regression approach was applied. Two separate LME
213 models were fitted: (1) untransformed DNA damage as response variable, mean ROS

214 production as fixed effect, and individual daphnids and experimental replicates as
215 random factors with individual daphnids nested within experimental replicates, and
216 (2) untransformed ROS production as response variable, mean DNA damage as fixed
217 effect, and experimental replicates as random factor. The final regression was
218 calculated as the geometric mean of both fixed-effects estimates and their confidence
219 intervals (Sprent & Dolby 1980). The effect of ROS production on DNA damage was
220 analysed using model (1) with power-transformed ($\lambda = 0.5$) DNA damage data.

221 For each LME model, P values of fixed-effect model parameters were calculated
222 using Wald F -tests with marginal (type III) sum of squares (Pinheiro & Bates 2000;
223 Li & Redden 2015) and a significance threshold of $P < 0.05$.

224 Results

225 THE EFFECTS OF DOC AND UVA ON DNA DAMAGE IN

226 *D. MAGNA*

227 DOC had an effect on DNA strand breaks in *D. magna* (Tab. 1). While UVA₃₉₀ did
228 not yield a significant effect, the co-exposure surpassed DOC-induced strand break
229 levels. The DOC effect on DNA damage was significant ($F_{1,129} = 10.45$, $P < 0.01$),
230 while effects of UVA₃₉₀ were not significant ($F_{1,129} = 2.20$, $P > 0.05$). The results also
231 showed a strong interactive effect of DOC and UVA₃₉₀ on DNA damage ($F_{1,129} =$
232 11.86 , $P < 0.001$; Fig. 1).

233

234 ROS PRODUCTION AND CORRELATION WITH DOC, UVA

235 AND ABSORBED PHOTONS

236 Absorbed photons and UVA₃₉₀ induced *in vitro* ROS production (Tab. 2). At single
237 exposures, ROS production was significantly affected by UVA₃₉₀ ($F_{1,30} = 14.79$, $P <$
238 0.001), but not by DOC ($F_{1,30} = 3.42$, $P > 0.05$). *In-vitro* ROS production was strongly
239 correlated with the amount of absorbed photons ($F_{1,30} = 98.13$, $P < 0.001$).
240 Additionally, a distinct “grouping” was observed, seemingly dependent on UVA₃₉₀
241 intensities (Fig. 2).

242

243 DNA DAMAGE IN *D. MAGNA* AS A RESULT OF ROS

244 PRODUCTION

245 The data for ROS production allowed for a collapse of dimensions, i.e., DOC and
246 UVA₃₉₀ could be expressed as ROS production, which had a strong effect on DNA
247 damage in daphnids ($F_{1,95} = 57.41$, $P < 0.001$; Fig. 3).

248 Discussion

249 THE DNA-DAMAGING POTENTIAL OF ABIOTIC ROS

250 PRODUCTION

251 This present study demonstrated a strong, interactive effect of DOC and UVA₃₉₀ on
252 ROS formation rates and that *de novo* ROS formation is mediated by photoactivated
253 DOC. At environmentally relevant levels of DOC and UVA₃₉₀, the generated ROS
254 caused significant increases in DNA damage in *D. magna*.

255 ROS formation was mainly promoted by the interaction of DOC and UVA₃₉₀, with
256 the amount of absorbed photons providing a mechanistic explanation for this
257 interaction (Fig. 2). Interestingly, UVA₃₉₀ had an effect on ROS formation by itself,
258 while there was no significant generation by DOC. Possible explanations include
259 autocatalytic processes, in which already existing ROS could evoke the production of
260 additional ROS from DOC as second-order effects of UVA₃₉₀ photons (Wilson,
261 Hinman & Sheridan 2000), ROS release of UVA₃₉₀-activated container material, or
262 other synergistic interactions (Howard & Webster 2009). Overall, the ROS formation
263 rates reported in this study surpassed previous estimated H₂O₂ formation rates from
264 lake systems (e.g., Scully et al. 1996), most likely because our results presented a
265 gross ROS formation rate as opposed to a H₂O₂ formation rate alone. Apart from
266 H₂O₂, other ROS are generally extremely short-lived and many of the produced ROS
267 would react immediately with nearby organic matter before interacting with *Daphnia*.
268 While ROS formation rate and DNA damage were still proportional, only a fraction of
269 the formed ROS was thus responsible for the observed DNA damage. Although *D.*
270 *magna* possess enzymatic repair abilities for DNA base dimers (photolyase; Thoma
271 1999) or replacement of entire nucleotides (excision repair; Sinha & Häder 2002),

272 these pathways do not repair DNA strand breaks, as detected in the comet assay of our
273 study.

274 While comet assay data sets contained some scatter (Tab. 1), variations of this
275 magnitude are considered part of natural variability among individuals (Martins &
276 Costa 2015). Indeed, the resolution of individual *Daphnia* in the comet assay resulted
277 in a more scattered, yet more holistic view of DNA damage, theoretically allowing for
278 investigation of individual-, treatment-, and experiment-variability (Frenzilli, Nigro &
279 Lyons 2009; David et al. 2011). Furthermore, the low background damage in controls
280 suggests a high sensitivity of the assay in this study (Jha 2008; Pellegrini, Gorbi &
281 Buschini 2014). The DOC-induced increase in DNA damage could possibly be due to
282 the presence of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) or similar compounds in
283 the NOM, which are known to induce DNA strand breaks (e.g., Farmer et al. 2003; Fu
284 et al. 2012).

285

286 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS OF DOC-MEDIATED 287 ROS PRODUCTION FOR ZOOPLANKTON

288 The UVA₃₉₀ intensities used in this study correspond to UV index number 1 or “low
289 exposure” (Lucas et al. 2006). Intensities of this magnitude are frequently reached and
290 surpassed in both the northern and southern hemisphere (Rae et al. 2001; Lucas et al.
291 2006; IPCC 2014). Data on spectral attenuation along a gradient of DOC in 75 Nordic
292 lakes (Thrane et al. 2014) shows that UVA₃₉₀ is mostly absorbed within the first meter
293 of water, depending on DOC concentrations. This has implications for zooplankton
294 residing in the upper layers of lakes or in shallow ponds, if sufficient DOC is present.
295 In fact, for long-lived ROS, i.e., H₂O₂, the whole mixed layer could be affected by
296 photoproducts formed in the surface layers.

297 UVA is known to be the major driver of peroxide formation in surface waters
298 (Cooper et al. 1994; Abele-Oeschger et al. 1997; Wilson et al. 2000). While UVB has
299 higher peroxide formation efficiencies than UVA, the amount of UVA photons
300 impacting on surface waters far surpasses that of UVB photons (Cullen & Neale
301 1994; IPCC 2014). This implies that the first meter of surface waters is most affected
302 by DOC-mediated ROS formation in general, and hence increasing browning
303 indicates additional oxidative stress. As UVA radiation at intensities similar to this
304 study would appear throughout the year (Rae et al. 2001; Hudson, Dillon & Somers
305 2003; Lucas et al. 2006), plankton residing in such an oxidative stress environment
306 would need to adapt, e.g., by increased enzymatic activity of oxidative stress enzymes
307 (Borgeraas & Hessen 2002).

308 To protect themselves from harmful effects of direct exposure to UVR,
309 zooplankton also uses enzymatic DNA repair and pigmentation such as melanin or
310 carotenoids (Hessen & Sørensen 1990). Some zooplankton species use mycosporine-
311 like amino acids (MAAs; Sommaruga & Garcia-Pichel 1999; Tartarotti et al. 2004;
312 Moeller et al. 2005) for UV-protection, but *Daphnia* species are not known to contain
313 MAAs (Miner et al. 2015). While carotenoids may serve a dual role by direct
314 protection, but also as radical scavengers (Mortensen et al. 1997; Skibsted 2012),
315 pigments would generally not protect well against ambient ROS. Pigments mainly
316 appear in daphnids' carapace, while ambient ROS would most likely be taken up
317 through filter-feeding ingestions or respiratory processes. On the other hand,
318 behavioural strategies such as vertical migration (Hansson & Hylander 2009) would
319 protect against both direct (photodamage) and indirect (ROS formation) effects of
320 UVR.

321 For zooplankton in clear-water lakes, UV radiation causes a conspicuous vertical
322 migration, also in the absence of fish predators, to avoid DNA damage due to
323 radiation (Williamson et al. 2001; Kessler et al. 2008). However, our results indicate
324 that DNA damage as a result of oxidative stress in the environment could function as
325 an additional cue for vertical migration. On an ecosystem level, the mutual effects of
326 browning and UVR are not straightforward, since the photoprotective role of DOC in
327 fact may be offset by damage caused by photoproducts. This interplay of such
328 antagonistic and synergistic effects requires a detailed knowledge of the system itself
329 (Urabe et al. 2002; Häder et al. 2007).

330 Increased oxidative stress could also pose an energetic trade-off for zooplankton,
331 e.g., a reallocation of resources for UV-protecting pigments to an improved enzymatic
332 oxidative stress response. This could result in either an increased sensitivity or
333 tolerance towards chemical stressors causing oxidative stress. Interestingly, browning
334 is linked to an increased abundance and mobility of anthropogenic contaminants (e.g.,
335 heavy metals and persistent organic pollutants; Bundschuh & McKie 2015).
336 Furthermore, humic substances are known to affect the epigenome of *Daphnia* species
337 (Menzel et al. 2011), suggesting additional mechanisms by which DOC can
338 potentially influence zooplankton life history (Mirbahai & Chipman 2014).

339 In some regions, climate change will cause drier climate, less export of DOC, and
340 extended renewal rates, causing increased water transparency and UV-stress (Yan et
341 al. 1996; Schindler et al. 1997). In other regions, wetter climate and more terrestrial
342 vegetation will play in concert with reduced sulphate deposition, all promoting
343 browning of surface waters (Lapierre, Seekell & del Giorgio 2015). In both cases,
344 better knowledge of DOC and UVR interplay is demanded to predict future ecosystem
345 responses.

346 **Acknowledgements**

347 We are grateful to Berit Kaasa and Lilla Varga for assistance in DOC quantification.

348 **Data accessibility**

349 All data was used in the article. Additional information on the DCFH-DA assay, raw
350 data files, and R scripts for data analysis are included in the Supporting information.

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605 **Supporting Information**

606 Additional Supporting information may be found in the online version of this article:

607 **Figure S1.** Principal mechanistic pathway of the DCFH-DA ROS production assay.

608 **Appendix S1.** Comet assay data and R script to analyse the effects of DOC and
609 UVA₃₉₀ on DNA damage.

610 **Appendix S2.** Raw ROS production data and R script to summarise ROS production.

611 **Appendix S3.** Absorbance data and R script to analyse the effects of DOC, UVA₃₉₀,
612 and absorbed photons on ROS production.

613 **Appendix S4.** R script to analyse the effects of ROS production on DNA damage.

614 **Figure legends**

615 **Fig. 1.** Response-surface plot of DOC and UVA₃₉₀ effects on DNA damage in *D.*
616 *magna*. The surface was obtained from a LME model with DNA damage as response
617 variable, DOC, UVA₃₉₀ and their interaction as fixed effect, and individual daphnids
618 and experimental as random factor with individual daphnids nested in their
619 experimental replicates. $n = 141$.

620 **Fig. 2.** Correlation of absorbed photons and ROS production. The three distinct
621 groups can be attributed to 0, 21.7, and 43.4 $\mu\text{mol UVA}_{390} \text{ m}^{-2} \text{ s}^{-1}$ (squares, circles,
622 and triangles, respectively). Within these groups, the four values represent 2.03, 5, 10,
623 and 20 mg DOC L^{-1} (left to right). Both dimensions are directly comparable, i.e.,
624 $\text{mmol m}^{-3} = \mu\text{mol L}^{-1}$. $n = 36$. Dots: mean values for each treatment \pm standard error;
625 red line: LME model prediction; red band: 95% confidence interval; right-hand rugs:
626 raw ROS production data distribution.

627 **Fig. 3.** Comet assay results of all DOC \times UVA₃₉₀ treatments expressed as a function of
628 ROS production in respective treatments. The LME model regression was obtained by
629 major axis regression using both variables (DNA damage and ROS production) as
630 fixed effects, and subsequently using the geometric mean of both LME models. $n =$
631 141 and 36, respectively. Dots: mean values for each treatment \pm standard error; red
632 line: LME model prediction; red band: 95% confidence interval; upper rug: raw ROS
633 production distribution; right-hand rug: raw DNA damage data distribution.

634 **Table legends**

635 **Tab. 1.** Summary of comet assay results for *D. magna* exposed to DOC and UVA₃₉₀.

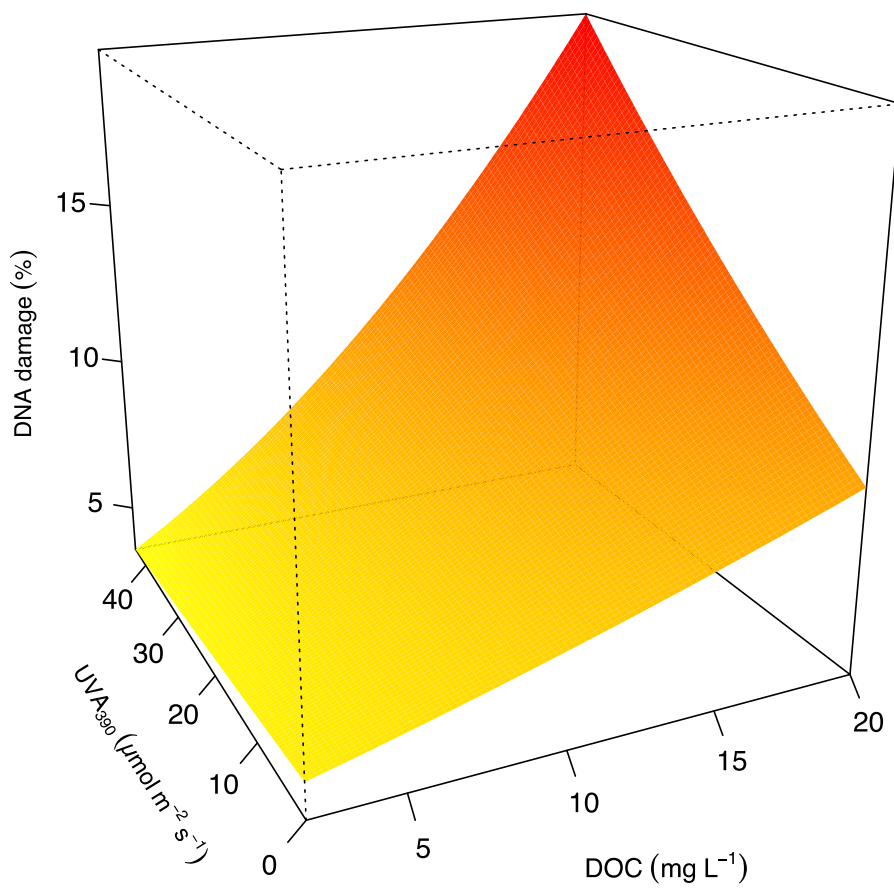
636 Results are expressed as mean DNA damage \pm standard error of three independent
637 experiments.

638 **Tab. 2.** Summary of *in vitro* ROS formation rates for DOC and UVA₃₉₀

639 combinations. Results are expressed as mean ROS formation rate \pm standard error of

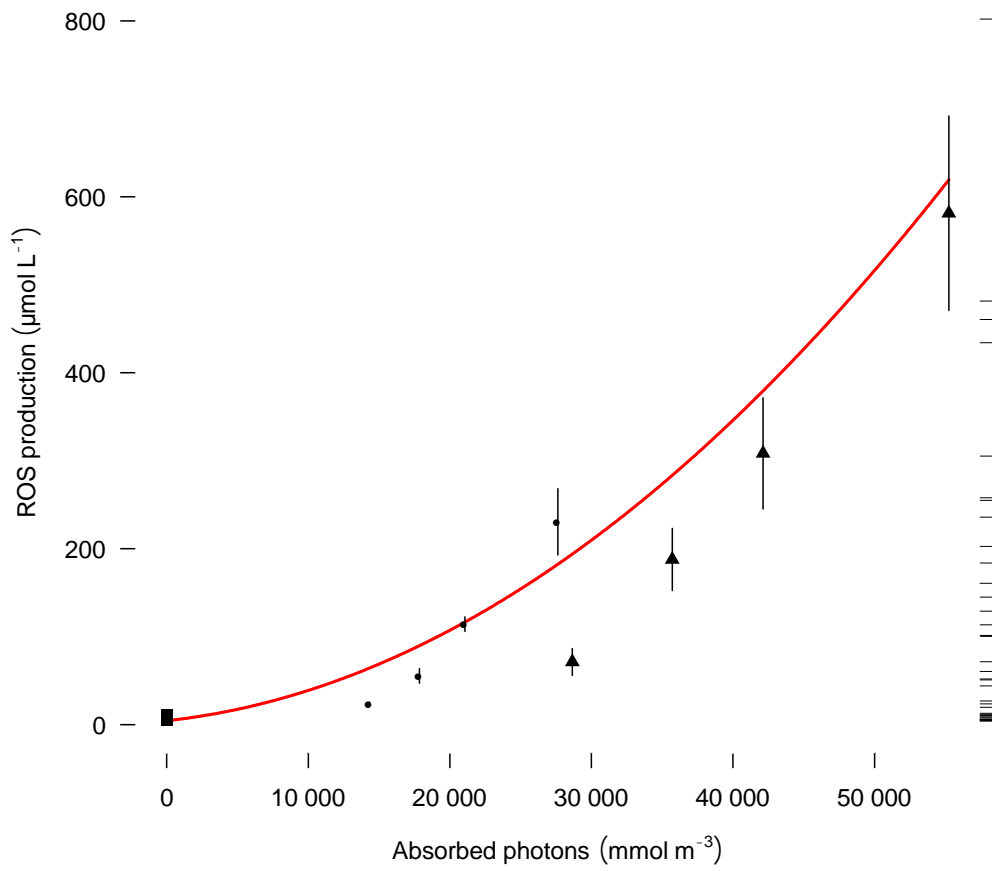
640 three independent experiments.

641 **Figures**



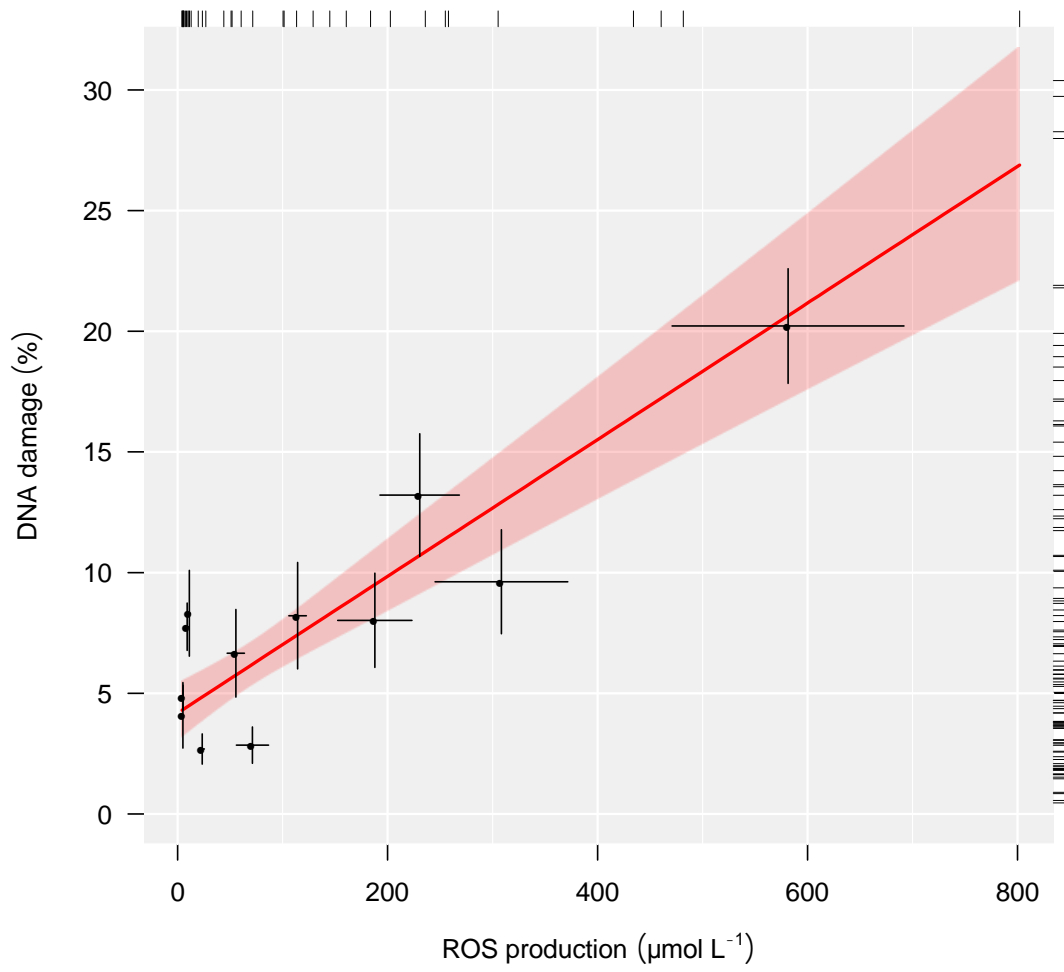
642

643 **Fig. 1**



644

645 **Fig. 2**



646

647 **Fig. 3**

648 **Tables**649 **Table 1**

DOC	UVA ₃₉₀			
	0 $\mu\text{mol m}^{-2} \text{s}^{-1}$	10.8 $\mu\text{mol m}^{-2} \text{s}^{-1}$	21.7 $\mu\text{mol m}^{-2} \text{s}^{-1}$	43.4 $\mu\text{mol m}^{-2} \text{s}^{-1}$
2.03 mg L ⁻¹	4.1±1.4%	4.5±0.7%	2.7±0.6%	2.9±0.8%
5.0 mg L ⁻¹	4.8±0.5%	8.8±0.8%	6.7±1.8%	8.0±1.9%
10.0 mg L ⁻¹	7.8±1.0%	9.8±1.3%	8.2±2.2%	9.6±2.2%
20.0 mg L ⁻¹	8.3±1.8%	13.2±2.5%	13.2±2.5%	20.2±2.4%

650

651 **Table 2**

DOC	UVA ₃₉₀		
	0 $\mu\text{mol m}^{-2} \text{s}^{-1}$	21.7 $\mu\text{mol m}^{-2} \text{s}^{-1}$	43.4 $\mu\text{mol m}^{-2} \text{s}^{-1}$
2.03 mg L^{-1}	5.1 \pm 0.6 $\mu\text{mol L}^{-1}$	23.4 \pm 2.1 $\mu\text{mol L}^{-1}$	71.3 \pm 15.3 $\mu\text{mol L}^{-1}$
5.0 mg L^{-1}	5.2 \pm 0.5 $\mu\text{mol L}^{-1}$	55.4 \pm 8.3 $\mu\text{mol L}^{-1}$	187.8 \pm 35.3 $\mu\text{mol L}^{-1}$
10.0 mg L^{-1}	9.1 \pm 1.1 $\mu\text{mol L}^{-1}$	114.3 \pm 8.3 $\mu\text{mol L}^{-1}$	308.4 \pm 63.2 $\mu\text{mol L}^{-1}$
20.0 mg L^{-1}	11.1 \pm 1.0 $\mu\text{mol L}^{-1}$	230.5 \pm 37.8 $\mu\text{mol L}^{-1}$	581.4 \pm 110.5 $\mu\text{mol L}^{-1}$

652