

1 **Towards a representation of priming on soil carbon**  
2 **decomposition in the global land biosphere model**  
3 **ORCHIDEE (version 1.9.5.2).**

4 **Guenet B.<sup>1</sup>, Moyano, F.E.<sup>2</sup>, Peylin, P.<sup>1</sup>, Ciais P.<sup>1</sup>, Janssens, I.A.<sup>3</sup>**

5 [1] Laboratoire des Sciences du Climat et de l'Environnement, LSCE/IPSL, CEA-  
6 CNRS-UVSQ, Université Paris-Saclay, F-91191 Gif-sur-Yvette, France

7 [2] Department of Bioclimatology, Georg-August University of Göttingen, Büsgenweg  
8 2, D-37077 Göttingen, Germany

9 [3]Department of Biology, Research Group of Plant and Vegetation Ecology,  
10 University of Antwerp, Universiteitsplein 1, B-2610 Wilrijk, Belgium

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12 Correspondence to: B. Guenet ([bertrand.guenet@lsce.ipsl.fr](mailto:bertrand.guenet@lsce.ipsl.fr))

## 13 **Abstract**

14 Priming of soil carbon decomposition encompasses different processes through which  
15 the decomposition of native (already present) soil organic matter is amplified through the  
16 addition of new organic matter, with new inputs typically being more labile than the native  
17 soil organic matter. Evidence for priming comes from laboratory and field experiments, but to  
18 date there is no estimate of its impact at global scale and under the current anthropogenic  
19 perturbation of the carbon cycle. Current soil carbon decomposition models do not include  
20 priming mechanisms, thereby introducing uncertainty when extrapolating short-term local  
21 observations to ecosystem and regional to global scale. In this study we present a simple  
22 conceptual model of decomposition priming, called PRIM, able to reproduce laboratory  
23 (incubation) and field (litter manipulation) priming experiments. Parameters for this model  
24 were first optimized against data from 20 soil incubation experiments using a Bayesian  
25 framework. The optimized parameter values were evaluated against another set of soil  
26 incubation data independent from the ones used for calibration and the PRIM model  
27 reproduced the soil incubations data better than the original, CENTURY-type soil  
28 decomposition model, whose decomposition equations are based only on first order kinetics.  
29 We then compared the PRIM model and the standard first order decay model incorporated  
30 into the global land biosphere model ORCHIDEE. A test of both models was performed at  
31 ecosystem scale using litter manipulation experiments from 5 sites. Although both versions  
32 were equally able to reproduce observed decay rates of litter, only ORCHIDEE-PRIM could  
33 simulate the observed priming ( $R^2=0.54$ ) in cases where litter was added or removed. This  
34 result suggests that a conceptually simple and numerically tractable representation of priming  
35 adapted to global models is able to capture the sign and magnitude of the priming of litter and  
36 soil organic matter.

37

38 Keywords: soil carbon decomposition, global land biosphere model, priming effect, climate  
39 change.

## 40      **1. Introduction**

41           Soils are the largest reservoir of organic carbon (C) on land, holding three times as  
42 much as plant biomass globally (MEA, 2005). The dynamics of long-term soil organic matter  
43 formation (Schmidt et al., 2011) and its decomposition on time scales of future climate  
44 change (Jones et al. 2003) both remain poorly understood. The lack of a mechanistic  
45 understanding of soil carbon dynamics on time scales going from years to centuries induces  
46 important differences in the future projections of the global land carbon storage among global  
47 land biosphere models (Todd-Brown et al., 2013).

48           Different conceptual models have been proposed to explain empirical data on soil  
49 carbon decomposition, mainly incubation experiments (Wutzler and Reichstein, 2008;  
50 Manzoni and Porporato, 2009). Those conceptual models are usually calibrated to fit data (i.e.  
51 measurements of stock evolution or fluxes) from experiments on soil incubation, and on time  
52 scales going from hours to days (Panikov and Sizova, 1996; Blagodatsky and Richter 1998).  
53 It was shown by Wutzler and Reichstein (2008) that conceptual decomposition models  
54 accounting for interactions between labile and more recalcitrant microbial-related carbon,  
55 often called “priming effects”, could better fit data from incubation experiments acquired over  
56 periods of about 100 days.

57           The conceptual models of soil carbon decomposition encapsulated in global land  
58 biosphere models usually ignore interactions between labile and recalcitrant carbon. All  
59 global land biosphere models part of the Earth System Models used for IPCC climate  
60 projections are based on donor-pool dominant transfer and first order decay (Luo et al. 2015).  
61 Many of those global land biosphere models have soil carbon modules derived from the  
62 CENTURY (Parton et al., 1988) and RothC (Coleman and Jenkinson, 1999) models, in which  
63 the first order decay rates of different pools are modulated by soil temperature and moisture,  
64 as well as by soil texture (Friedlingstein et al., 2006).

65           Although the conceptual models with priming showed a more realistic behavior than  
66 first order decay models when applied to short term incubation data, one may still wonder if  
67 priming significantly influences the dynamics of soil carbon on time scales ranging from  
68 years to decades, and at large spatial scales. On the one hand, incorporating priming in a  
69 global land biosphere model has the disadvantage of introducing new parameters that are  
70 difficult to constrain and of generating a more complex - but unproven - dynamical behavior  
71 than the first order decay models. On the other hand, if the performances of first order decay  
72 models are not satisfactory at the large scale, structural changes of soil carbon models are  
73 needed and must be carefully tested.

74           The current situation with first-order decay dynamics in global land biosphere is that  
75 out of the 11 Earth System models used for the IPCC-AR5 CMIP5 simulations and  
76 benchmarked by Todd-Brown et al., (2013) against a global soil organic carbon (SOC) map,  
77 only six succeeded in representing the total mean C stocks at the global scale, but all failed to  
78 reproduce the spatial heterogeneity of SOC stocks as well as the SOC distribution under  
79 different vegetation cover (Todd-Brown et al., 2013). Possible causes of model failure include  
80 both errors in model structure but also errors in the different parameters controlling soil  
81 carbon dynamics. The optimization of the parameters of a first order decay model against a  
82 global SOC map could only partly reduce regional discrepancies with observations, with the  
83 optimized model explaining only 41% of the global variability of SOC (Hararuk et al., 2014).  
84 On the other hand, the use of a structurally different model that accounted for microbial  
85 biomass was shown to produce a rather realistic large-scale SOC variability, but very different  
86 soil carbon dynamics in response to future climate change (Wieder et al., 2013). This  
87 illustrates that model structure matters a lot for the simulation of the current distribution of  
88 soil carbon and its future evolution in response to climate and CO<sub>2</sub> changes.

89           Discrepancies between global land biosphere model predictions and observations are  
90 partially due to models lacking key mechanisms controlling SOC dynamics (Schmidt et al.,

91 2011). One example is the interactions with the N cycle. The majority of the ESMs used for  
92 the IPCC-AR5 CMIP5 Earth System simulations did not represent explicitly the nitrogen  
93 cycle, but the two ESMs with an explicit nitrogen cycle did not result either in a better  
94 simulations of current SOC (Todd-Brown et al., 2013). Another example is the role of  
95 microorganisms. The first order kinetics used in most models obviates the role that microbial  
96 decomposers are known to play in controlling SOC mineralization (Cleveland et al., 2007;  
97 Garcia-Pausas and Paterson 2011), but their activities is controlled by physical and chemical  
98 drivers (Kemmit et al., 2008). Therefore, ESMs have significant gaps in reproducing the  
99 mechanisms related to microbial dynamics such as priming (see definition below), the object  
100 of this study.

101         Soil C priming is defined as a modification of SOC decomposition rates when fresh  
102 organic C (FOC) is added (Kuzyakov et al., 2000). Priming is almost ubiquitously observed in  
103 ecosystem studies where organic matter inputs are altered in laboratory incubations (reviewed  
104 by Blagodatskaya and Kuzyakov 2008) or directly on the field (Boone et al., 1998; Borken et  
105 al., 2002; Chemidlin-Prévost-Bouré et al., 2010; Subke et al., 2004; Sulzman et al., 2005;  
106 Xiao et al., 2015). Priming can occasionally be negative but most commonly has a stimulative  
107 effect on the decomposition of organic matter that decomposes. Several mechanisms may be  
108 involved in controlling priming (Fontaine et al., 2003; Blagodatskaya and Kuzyakov 2008,  
109 Guenet et al., 2010b), and conceptual models of priming can have substantial number of  
110 parameters making their parameterization quite complex at large scales (Wutzler and  
111 Reichstein, 2013). Wutzler and Reichstein (2008) proposed conceptual models summarized  
112 into different equations to introduce priming without using too many parameters, but in all  
113 cases an explicit representation of microbial biomass was required. Recently, Guenet et al.,  
114 (2013a) modified the equation proposed by Wutzler and Reichstein (2008) to represent  
115 priming without an explicit representation of microbial biomass, assuming that microbial  
116 biomass is always at equilibrium with FOC. This assumption is suitable for being

117 incorporated into ESMs since it adds only one more free parameter compared to the first order  
118 kinetic models. This priming scheme was incorporated into the global land biosphere model  
119 ORCHIDEE, with the priming parameters statistically calibrated to reproduce the same  
120 equilibrium state (in terms of C stocks, after spin up of the model) than the standard version  
121 based on CENTURY (Guenet et al., 2013b). Despite its calibration ensuring the same initial  
122 state of SOC for England and Wales, the version of ORCHIDEE with priming resulted in a  
123 loss of SOC during the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century, in better agreement with inventory data (Bellamy et  
124 al., 2005) than the standard version which produced a continuous SOC gain. In that study,  
125 however, the parameters of the priming model were not based on observations but tuned  
126 instead to equilibrium SOC values. The objectives of this study are therefore:

- 127 • To derive optimal parameter values of a priming model (PRIM) with C inputs  
128 forced by data by using a Bayesian method (Tarantola, 1987) with priors and  
129 data from 20 different soil incubations.
- 130 • To introduce the calibrated PRIM model into the ORCHIDEE ecosystem  
131 model version AR5 and evaluate the new version ORCHIDEE-PRIM against  
132 independent *in situ* litter manipulation experiments at ecosystem scale.
- 133 • To assess if the priming model significantly improves the simulation of SOC  
134 mineralization compared to the standard first order decay model used in  
135 ORCHIDEE, on time scales of months to years.

136

## 137 2. Materials and Methods

138 The material and methods section is summarized in Fig. 1.

### 139 2.1 Models presentation

#### 140 2.1.1 Soil carbon priming model PRIM

141 To represent priming, we used the ORCHIDEE soil decomposition module, which is  
142 based on the carbon-related modules of CENTURY (Parton et al., 1988). It has three carbon  
143 pools (active, slow and passive) and two litter pools (metabolic and structural). SOC  
144 decomposition is modulated by soil temperature and moisture functions. Active SOC  
145 decomposition is further modulated by a clay function. These functions are the same as in  
146 CENTURY but they are driven by soil physical variables calculated at a daily time step by the  
147 soil physics of ORCHIDEE (Krinner et al., 2005). The transfers among pools are described  
148 using the CENTURY equations with similar parameters (Parton et al., 1988). In the PRIM  
149 model, we replaced the CENTURY decomposition equations by those developed by Guenet  
150 et al. (2013a) to simulate a priming effect:

$$151 \quad (1) \quad \frac{dSOC_{Active}}{dt} = I - k_{SOC_{Active}} \times SOC \times (1 - e^{-c \times (Litter\_C)}) \times \theta \times \tau \times \gamma$$

$$152 \quad (2) \quad \frac{dSOC_{Slow}}{dt} = I - k_{SOC_{Slow}} \times SOC \times (1 - e^{-c \times (Litter\_C + SOC_{Active})}) \times \theta \times \tau$$

$$153 \quad (3) \quad \frac{dSOC_{Passive}}{dt} = I - k_{SOC_{Passive}} \times SOC \times (1 - e^{-c \times (Litter\_C + SOC_{Active} + SOC_{Slow})}) \times \theta \times \tau$$

154 with  $I$  being the input of C into the pool considered,  $k_{SOC}$  the SOC decomposition rate for the  
155 active, the slow and the passive pool,  $Litter\_C$ , the sum of all the litter pools of the model.  $\theta$ ,  
156  $\tau$ , and  $\gamma$  are the soil moisture function, the temperature function and the clay function  
157 modulating decomposition, respectively.  $c$  is a parameter controlling the impact of the fresh  
158 organic carbon (FOC) pool on the SOC mineralization rate. Here, we considered that FOC  
159 represents all the carbon from pools more labile than the pool being affected as shown in  
160 equation (1) to (3). Therefore, FOC is only litter for the active SOC pool, but for the slow  
161 SOC pool, FOC is the sum of the litter and the active SOC pool. Finally, for the passive SOC



162 pool, FOC is the litter and the active and slow carbon pools. The decomposition of the first  
 163 donor litter pool is described using first order kinetics (4):

164

$$165 \quad (4) \quad \frac{dLitter\_C}{dt} = I - k_{Litter\_C} \times Litter\_C \times \theta \times \tau$$

166

167 In the Wutzler and Reichstein (2008) equation, the SOC mineralization was described by:

$$168 \quad (5) \quad \frac{dSOC}{dt} = I - k_{SOC} \times SOC \times (1 - e^{-c \times MB})$$

169 with  $MB$  being the microbial biomass. Unlike Wutzler and Reichstein (2008), our  
 170 model does not explicitly simulate  $MB$  but assumes that  $MB$  equilibrates with FOC thus the  
 171 relationship between  $MB$  and FOC is linear. Consequently, we represent priming using a  
 172 direct relationship between FOC and SOC mineralization. Finally, the moisture, temperature  
 173 and clay functions are described by equation (6), (7) and (8), respectively with  $soil\_moisture$   
 174 in  $m^3 H_2O m^{-3}$  of soil,  $soil\_temperature$  in Kelvin and  $clay$  in %wt :

$$175 \quad (6) \quad \theta = \max(0.25, \min(1, -1.1 \times soil\_moisture^2 + 2.4 \times soil\_moisture + 0.29))$$

$$176 \quad (7) \quad \tau = \exp(0.69 \times (soil\_temperature - 303)/10)$$

$$177 \quad (8) \quad \gamma = 1 - 0.75 \times clay$$

178 The flux of decomposed carbon of the  $i^{th}$  pool is then split into different fluxes  
 179 following eq. (9 and 10) between respired carbon ( $resp_i$ ) and recycled carbon ( $recy$ ).

$$180 \quad (9) \quad resp_i = (1 - \sum_{pools} f_{i,pools}) \times decomposed\_carbon_i$$

$$181 \quad (10) \quad C_{i \rightarrow j} = f_{i,j} \times decomposed\_carbon_i$$

182 with  $decomposed\_carbon$  being the second terms of eq. (1) to (5),  $f_{i,j}$  a set of  
 183 parameters controlling the flux from the pool  $i$  to the pool  $j$  and  $C_{i \rightarrow j}$  being the flux from the  
 184 pool  $i$  to  $j$ . The values of the  $f$  parameters are similar to Parton et al., (1988).

185

## 186 **2.1.2** ORCHIDEE and ORCHIDEE-PRIM

187 ORCHIDEE is a process-based global land biosphere model that calculates the fluxes  
188 of CO<sub>2</sub>, H<sub>2</sub>O, and heat between the terrestrial land and the atmosphere. The time step of the  
189 model is 1/2-hour, and the variations of H<sub>2</sub>O and C pools are calculated on a daily basis. The  
190 model has been evaluated at different scales (sites, regions, globes) and under different  
191 climates from the tropics to northern boreal zones (Krinner et al., 2005; Ciais et al., 2005;  
192 Santaren et al., 2007; Piao et al., 2006). ORCHIDEE results from the coupling of three  
193 different sub-models. The first one is called SVAT SECHIBA and describes soil water budget  
194 and turbulent fluxes of energy and water between the atmosphere and the biosphere  
195 (Ducoudré et al., 1993; de Rosnay and Polcher, 1998). The second one is derived from the  
196 dynamic global vegetation model LPJ (Sitch et al., 2003) and deals with vegetation dynamics  
197 (fire, sapling establishment, light competition, tree mortality, and climatic criteria for the  
198 introduction or elimination of plant functional types). The last, called STOMATE (Saclay  
199 Toulouse Orsay Model for the Analysis of Terrestrial Ecosystems) deals with phenology and  
200 carbon dynamics of the terrestrial biosphere. Twelve plant functional types (PFT) are used to  
201 classify the vegetation. Each PFT dynamic is controlled by similar set of governing equations  
202 but using different parameter values. Only the leafy season onset and offset, are PFT-specific  
203 (Krinner et al., 2005).

204 The simulation of SOC in ORCHIDEE version is based on CENTURY (Parton et al.,  
205 1988) as described above. No vertical description of the SOC is included in the ORCHIDEE  
206 version used here. In ORCHIDEE-PRIM we replaced CENTURY by the PRIM model  
207 described in section 2.1.1.

208

## 209 **2.2** Data description

## 210                    **2.2.1**            Incubation experiments to calibrate the priming model

211                    We optimized the PRIM parameters and the ORCHIDEE soil module parameters  
212 using data from soil incubation experiments where FOC was added and the priming effect  
213 was measured by comparing a control study without FOC with a perturbation study with FOC  
214 (table 1). The data come from 20 incubations (from nine studies) of duration going from one  
215 week to 10 months. The incubated soil samples have very different characteristics (table 1)  
216 and came from different ecosystems (grassland, cropland, broadleaf forest, needleleaf forest,  
217 savannah). However, the great majority of the data used to optimize the model were obtained  
218 from temperate soils. In the incubation experiments, added FOC was labeled with  $^{13}\text{C}$  or  $^{14}\text{C}$   
219 and therefore the respired  $\text{CO}_2$  fluxes coming from either SOC already present before the  
220 FOC amendments or from the FOC induced priming of SOC pools was estimated separately.  
221 We used only incubations performed during at least 7 days to eliminate all studies that  
222 potentially observed apparent priming effects. Apparent priming is a replacement of the  $^{12}\text{C}$  in  
223 microbial biomass with labeled carbon isotopes, a short- term artifact due to the amendment  
224 of labeled material to an unlabelled soil (Blagodatskaya and Kuzyakov, 2008). Moreover, we  
225 used only studies that reported cumulative respired  $\text{CO}_2$  fluxes in order to optimize the  
226 priming parameters against the extra  $\text{CO}_2$  fluxes obtained at the end of the experiment and not  
227 those resulting from short-term priming dynamics, since cumulative mineralization integrates  
228 the different processes occurring during incubation. Finally, several treatments might be  
229 performed in the studies used to optimize the model (different soils, different types and  
230 amount of FOC). When the treatments performed differed on aspects reproducible by the  
231 model (amounts of FOC added, different clay content in the soils used, etc.) we considered all  
232 the treatments. In the opposite case we averaged the results of the different treatments to  
233 perform the optimization except in case where the treatments clearly impact the results  
234 without the possibility to reproduce the experimental design with the model (addition of  
235 mineral N for instance).

236 We also use the control incubations without FOC amendments to evaluate both  
237 models. We extracted data from the figures of original publications (Table 1) using  
238 GraphClick version 3.0 . Several input variables are needed to run the soil model, as described  
239 in section 2.1.1. When data were not available from the surveyed publications, we obtained  
240 them from the databases normally used for running ORCHIDEE, except for the C:N ratio of  
241 FOC and for clay content where data came from Rodal et al., (1960) and from USDA  
242 (<http://soils.usda.gov/technical/classification/osd/index.html>), respectively. The three  
243 carbon pools of CENTURY are not measurable (Six et al., 2002), so we cannot estimate how  
244 much C of in each pool is present in the incubated samples. To calculate the distribution of C  
245 among the three pools of the model we ran ORCHIDEE until equilibrium was reached at the  
246 sites where soil samples were taken and calculated the percentage of each pool.

### 247 **2.2.2** Incubation data used for evaluation of the priming model

248 A first evaluation of the soil carbon model with and without priming is performed at  
249 the scale of soil samples against independent data from the large database of soil incubations  
250 (300 in total) published by Moyano et al., (2012). Within this database we selected the  
251 experiments where all the inputs necessary to run the two soil carbon models were available  
252 (clay, content, moisture, temperature, SOC content at the beginning of the incubation) and  
253 where cumulative mineralization or mineralization rates associated to the time step between  
254 two measurements were reported. We removed all the studies without information on the  
255 location since geographical coordinates are necessary to run ORCHIDEE and thus estimate  
256 the initial fraction of each pool. We selected only data coming from experiments without  
257 important soil manipulation (e.g. compaction, litter amendments). The model evaluation was  
258 performed against a set of 164 independent incubation experiments.

### 259 **2.2.3** Ecosystem-level data used for evaluation of the priming model

260 A second evaluation of the ORCHIDEE-PRIM model was performed at ecosystem scale  
261 against observations of four litter manipulation experiments (Boone et al., 1998; Chemidlin-  
262 Prévost-Bouré et al., 2010; Subke et al., 2004; Sulzman et al., 2005) and one compost  
263 amendment experiment (Borken et al., 2002). In the litter experiments, two treatments and a  
264 control are generally performed. The treatments are total exclusion of above ground litter  
265 using nets to prevent fresh litter from falling onto the soil, often transplanting the collected  
266 fresh litter to create a second treatment with doubled aboveground litter inputs (Boone et al.,  
267 1998; Chemidlin-Prévost-Bouré et al., 2010; Sulzman et al., 2005). For the compost  
268 amendment experiment by Borken et al. (2002), 1.4 kg C m<sup>-2</sup> (and a zero-addition control) of  
269 compost was added to the soil. These studies are presented in table 3. When information  
270 about soil clay content was not available in the original study, we extracted it from Zobler  
271 (1986). The data measured at field scale are the soil CO<sub>2</sub> efflux including the heterotrophic  
272 respiration but also root respiration in the same flux without clear separation of the two  
273 components.

### 274 **2.3 Optimization procedure**

275 For PRIM, the 6 parameters optimized are turnover rate ( $k_{SOC}$ ) and priming parameters  
276  $c$  for each of the three pools (table 2). For the ORCHIDEE soil module, only the three  $k_{SOC}$   
277 values are optimized. The same parameters are optimized against the priming incubations  
278 dataset described in 2.2.1. Since optimizations were performed using soil incubations data  
279 obtained at optimal temperature and soil moisture, we did not optimize the parameters related  
280 to the eq. (6) and (7) because the range of observations was quite limited. Optimization was  
281 performed in the framework of the Bayesian inversion method with priors (Tarantola, 1987)  
282 as described by Santaren et al., (2007) using assimilating all data streams in the same cost  
283 function. Assuming that all uncertainties follow Gaussian distributions (parameter error,  
284 measurement error, model error), the optimized parameters correspond to a set minimizing the  
285 following quadratic cost function:

286

287 (11) 
$$J(\mathbf{x}) = \frac{1}{2} \left[ (\mathbf{y} - \mathbf{H}(\mathbf{x}))' \mathbf{R}^{-1} (\mathbf{y} - \mathbf{H}(\mathbf{x})) + (\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{x}_b)' \mathbf{P}_b^{-1} (\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{x}_b) \right]$$

288 The cost function defined by equation (11) contains both the mismatch between model  
289 outputs and observed data, and the mismatch between optimized parameters and the prior  
290 values. The mismatch is weighted by errors of each quantity.  $\mathbf{x}$  is the of unknown parameters  
291 vector,  $\mathbf{x}_b$  the prior values,  $\mathbf{y}$  the observations vector and  $\mathbf{H}(\mathbf{x})$  the model outputs.  $\mathbf{P}_b$  is the  
292 prior parameter error variances/covariances, and  $\mathbf{R}$  contains the observational error  
293 variances/covariances which represents both measurement uncertainty and model uncertainty.

294 To minimize the cost function, we used a gradient-based iterative algorithm, called L-  
295 BFGS-B (Zhu et al., 1995). A range of values for all the parameters is prescribed by called L-  
296 BFGS-B. At each iteration, the cost function  $J(\mathbf{x})$  gradient is calculated, with respect to the six  
297 parameters. When  $J(\mathbf{x})$  is minimized, using a classic finite difference method, we further  
298 calculated the posterior error covariance matrix on the parameters  $\mathbf{P}_a$  from the prior error  
299 covariance matrices and the Jacobian of the model at the minimum of the cost function, using  
300 the linearity assumption (Tarantola, 1987). When error correlations are close to 1 it suggests  
301 that the observations do not permit to clearly separate the effect of two parameters.

302 The model  $\mathbf{H}(\mathbf{x})$  is non linear and therefore the approach to minimize the cost function  
303 is sensitive to potential local minima. We get around by performing 30 optimizations with  
304 different sets of prior parameter randomly distributed within their variation range. We then  
305 used the case providing the lowest cost function. This approach reduces drastically the  
306 sensitivity to potential local minima as illustrated in Santaren et al. (2014).

307 We defined the prior ranges of decomposition rates using literature data (Parton et al.,  
308 1988; Gignoux et al., 2001). However, only two studies already estimated the  $c$  parameter  
309 before (Guenet et al, 2013a, Guenet et al., 2013b), its prior value is therefore considered as  
310 non-informative and we set a large error on the prior (50%). As for the variance of the model-

311 data mismatch term in the cost function of equation (11), note that with our formalism this  
312 error should include both the model error (for instance the model capability to represent the  
313 measurement) and the measurement error. Given that the error on the measurements was  
314 difficult to estimate precisely for each study, we fixed it to 5% of the mean observed CO<sub>2</sub> flux  
315 assuming that all incubation data were independent. At its minimum,  $J(\mathbf{x})$  should be close to  
316 half the number of observations (reduced  $\chi^2$  of one). We assumed that all errors (the  
317 observations and on the a priori parameters) are uncorrelated.

318

## 319 **2.4** Simulations protocol

### 320 **2.4.1** Simulation protocol for the soil priming model PRIM

321 Simulations were performed for each incubation experiment presented in 2.2.1 (table  
322 1) as well as for the evaluation sites in 2.2.2. The simulations of the stand-alone PRIM carbon  
323 model (i.e. unplugged from the ORCHIDEE full ecosystem model) were run at a daily time  
324 step using FOC inputs from table 1 or from the Moyano et al., (2012) database. No spin-up  
325 was performed. We started the simulation by prescribing to the soil carbon models with and  
326 without priming an initial amount of SOC equal to that measured in the study considered,  
327 distributed among active, slow and passive pools as explained in section 2.2.1 At each time  
328 step we increment the cumulative heterotrophic respiration coming from SOC mineralization,  
329 so that this cumulative simulated CO<sub>2</sub> flux can be compared to data from the end of the  
330 incubation experiment. Simulations were performed using R 3.0.2.

331

### 332 **2.4.2** Simulation protocol for ORCHIDEE-PRIM and ORCHIDEE

333 We ran ORCHIDEE and ORCHIDEE-PRIM at each litter manipulation site presented  
334 in table 3 using 6 hourly climate data obtained from the combination of two existing datasets:  
335 the Climate Research Unit (CRU) (Mitchell et al. 2004) and the National Centers for

336 Environmental Prediction (NCEP) (Kalnay et al., 1996). Both models were run using the first  
337 ten years of the climate forcing (1901-1909) repeated in a loop, and an atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> value  
338 corresponding to the year 1901. When the simulated relative yearly change of the SOC stock  
339 was less than 0.01%, we considered that SOC equilibrium was reached. Once pre-industrial  
340 equilibrium was reached in each grid point, we run transient simulations from 1901 until the  
341 beginning of the manipulation experiment assuming no land use change driven by  
342 reconstructed climate and observed CO<sub>2</sub>. Then when the simulation reached the year at which  
343 the litter manipulation experiment began, we modified the input of above-ground litter in the  
344 same proportion than in the actual manipulation experiments, Finally, we ran the model for  
345 each treatment during a period corresponding to duration of each experiment.

346

## 347 **2.5 Model evaluation**

348 The model evaluation was performed in two steps. First, we evaluated separately  
349 PRIM and the standard first order decay model with their optimized parameters, as stand  
350 alone decomposition models, i.e. unplugged from the ORCHIDEE ecosystem model. To  
351 evaluate the stand-alone soil models, we used incubation data coming from Moyano et al.,  
352 (2012) as described in 2.2.2. Secondly, we evaluated ORCHIDEE and ORCHIDEE-PRIM,  
353 against litter manipulation experiments (see 2.2.3).

354 To compare model outputs with data we used different metrics. First a linear mixed  
355 effect model with intercept value forced to zero using model outputs as the variable to  
356 explain, and data as the fixed effect and the study where data came from as random effect.  
357 This approach aimed to take into account the fact that incubations performed within the same  
358 study are not independent because they were performed and analyzed by the same team. The  
359 linear-mixed effect model gives the slope of the relationship as output. A slope close to one  
360 indicates that the model reproduces the data well. Then, we used the Normalized Standard



361 Deviation (*NSD*) or ratio of model to observed standard deviations ; *NSD* = 1 means that the  
 362 model perfectly reproduces the observed standard deviations across experiments:

$$363 \quad (12) \quad NSD = \frac{\sqrt{\frac{1}{n} \times \sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - \bar{x})^2}}{\sqrt{\frac{1}{n} \times \sum_{i=1}^n (o_i - \bar{o})^2}}$$

364 where *x* refers to the model value, *o* to the observed value and *n* the number of  
 365 samples. Finally, we compared model performance using the Bayesian Information Criterion  
 366 (*BIC*) to take into account that the PRIM soil model has three more priming parameters (one  
 367 per pool) than the standard model:

$$368 \quad (13) \quad BIC = \log(MSD) \times n + \log(n) \times p$$

369 with *MSD* being the mean squared deviation derived from equation (14), *n* the number  
 370 of data used to evaluate the model, and *p* the number of parameters of the soil model.

$$371 \quad (14) \quad MSD = \frac{\sum (m - o)^2}{n}$$

372 with *o* the observed values, *m* the values calculated by the model and *n* the number of  
 373 observations. The lowest is the BIC the better the model is.

### 374 **3. Results**

#### 375 **3.1 Optimized parameters of the priming model**

376 The parameters obtained after optimization using incubation data described in section  
 377 2.2.1 are given in Table 2. The turnover times ranged from a few months ( $0.30 \pm 0.15$  year)  
 378 for the active pool to  $462.0 \pm 233.8$  years for the passive pool, the slow pool being  
 379 intermediate with  $1.12 \pm 0.01$  years. The priming parameters indicated a decreasing  
 380 sensitivity with increasing turnover time. The parameter *c* values were  $493.7 \pm 246.8$ ,  $194.0 \pm$   
 381  $97.0$  and  $136.5 \pm 68.3$  for the active, slow and passive pools, respectively. Errors correspond  
 382 to the estimates from the linear assumption at the minimum of J(x). For both, the correlation

383 between parameters was low (table 4) suggesting that the dataset used to optimize the  
384 parameters cover a large range of situations. We used soil respiration data obtained after  
385 incubations of very different time length (few days to few months) disentangling the effect of  
386 each parameter.

387         After optimization, both models with and without priming parameterization were able  
388 to reproduce the cumulative mineralization measured in the different incubations where FOC  
389 was added well (Fig. 2, top panel). The slope of the linear regression between optimized  
390 model output and incubation measurements was 1.13 for PRIM and 0.93 for the ORCHIDEE  
391 soil module. The NSD value (1.80 and 1.52 for PRIM and the standard soil module,  
392 respectively) showed that the models overestimated the variance after optimization. When  
393 both models were evaluated against the same incubation experiments but without FOM  
394 addition, the PRIM model slightly over-estimated accumulated mineralization (Fig. 2 middle  
395 panel), as indicated by the value of the slope (1.05). Nevertheless, it performed better than the  
396 standard soil module, which underestimated the soil mineralization as indicated by the value  
397 of the slope (0.72). The PRIM soil model reproduced quite well the observed priming effect  
398 (section 2.2.1) as shown in Fig. 2 (lower panel) with a slope value (1.07). PRIM largely  
399 overestimated however the variance of data as indicated by the NSD value (3.14). As  
400 expected, the standard soil module was totally unable to reproduce priming (Fig. 2, lower  
401 panel).

### 402 **3.2** Standard soil module vs. PRIM against incubations data

403         To evaluate the performance of PRIM we tested it against data from soil incubation  
404 experiments independent from those used for optimization (see section 2.2.2). We did the  
405 same with the standard soil module (Fig. 3). The standard soil module tended to overestimate  
406 accumulated mineralization as indicated by a slope value of 1.32 and to underestimate the  
407 cross-experiments variance by more than 50% (NSD=0.44). PRIM performed slightly better,

408 but underestimated accumulated mineralization (slope 0.80). The optimized PRIM  
409 underestimated the variance by 29%, but the NSD value (0.71) was closer to 1 compared to  
410 the standard model. Using the BIC index, which takes into account the higher number of  
411 parameters of PRIM, this model still performed better (BIC values of 546.2 vs. 347.4 for  
412 standard and PRIM, respectively).

413

### 414 **3.3 ORCHIDEE vs. ORCHIDEE-PRIM comparison using *in situ* datasets**

415 When tested at ecosystem-level against litter manipulation experiments, 4 studies x 3  
416 treatments and 1 study with 2 treatments. Both ORCHIDEE and ORCHIDEE-PRIM  
417 performed generally well to reproduce the soil CO<sub>2</sub> efflux (Fig. 4). Generally, both versions  
418 showed similar performance as indicated by the values of slopes and NSD presented in table  
419 5. The mean slopes are 0.98 for ORCHIDEE-PRIM against 0.97 for ORCHIDEE, and the  
420 mean NSD are 1.26 and 1.27, respectively. It must be noted that slope values were generally  
421 lower for the treatments excluding litter compared to control and double litter inputs (Table  
422 5). No particular differences of the NSD values were observed between the different litter  
423 input regimes. Nevertheless, the BIC index was always higher for ORCHIDEE-PRIM  
424 because three more parameters were used by this version compared to ORCHIDEE.

425 ORCHIDEE-PRIM was able to reproduce the priming observed defined as the  
426 difference of CO<sub>2</sub> efflux coming from SOC only with or without litter (Fig. 5), but tended to  
427 underestimate its intensity as indicated by the slope value lower than one (0.55). The variance  
428 between experiments calculated for priming was overestimated as shown by the NSD value of  
429 1.29. It must be noted that priming was not calculated for ORCHIDEE since the structure of  
430 its soil decomposition model does not include a priming mechanisms.

## 431 **4. Discussion**

### 432 **4.1 PRIM in the context of other soil priming conceptual models**

433 Priming is a complex phenomenon controlled by several mechanisms, such as N  
434 mining by microbial communities with different growth strategies, competition between  
435 microbial groups for substrate, energy limitations, etc. (Kuzyakov et al., 200; Fontaine et al.,  
436 2003; Guenet et al., 2010b). Priming may have important consequences on the feedbacks  
437 between climate and C cycle (Schmidt et al., 2011) and it is therefore crucial to better  
438 quantify the C fluxes due to priming, especially at large scale (i.e, continental to global).  
439 Several models have been developed to describe soil C mineralization with a representation of  
440 priming (Gignoux et al., 2001; Fontaine and Barot, 2005; Neill and Gignoux, 2006; Moorhead  
441 and Sinsabaugh, 2006; Wutzler and Reichstein, 2008; Neill and Guenet, 2010; Blagodatsky et  
442 al., 2010) and such models generally succeeded at reproducing short-term data, mainly  
443 incubation. However, to our knowledge, they have never been tested in a range of contrasted  
444 situations (different soil types, different FOC amount and chemical composition, different  
445 temperature and soil moisture, etc.). Here, we used most of the available incubation data  
446 respecting the criteria described in the material and method section. Moreover, previous  
447 priming models all needed a high number of parameters compared to PRIM. For these two  
448 reasons, the conceptual soil models accounting for soil priming were thus far not included in  
449 global land biosphere models (Wutzler and Reichstein, 2008) and very few studies of soil  
450 priming at global scale have been performed (Foereid et al., 2014). Here, using a simple  
451 scheme with only three additional parameters than the standard soil module of ORCHIDEE,  
452 we were able to reproduce priming but also soil mineralization data coming from very  
453 different incubation studies performed with different soils at different temperature and  
454 moisture, with different time length, etc. The PRIM soil model, which is a microbial steady-  
455 state model, might not be able to reproduce short-term response to abrupt change of FOC  
456 inputs but with negligible bias over the long term (Wutzler and Reichstein 2013). However, it  
457 might have similar performances than more complex models to reproduce long-term trends of  
458 FOC inputs (Wutzler and Reichstein 2013). PRIM performed better than the standard soil  
459 module to reproduce soil incubation data used to optimize, but it must be noted that the BIC

460 values indicate that the improvement observed with PRIM may be simply due to a higher  
461 number of parameters. Nevertheless, when using independent soil incubations data from the  
462 one used to optimize the model the improvement is quite clear with BIC values much lower  
463 with PRIM than with the standard soil module (347.4 and 546.2, respectively). Furthermore,  
464 PRIM was not able to fully catch the observed variability of priming. As discussed above,  
465 priming is a complex phenomenon resulting from the interactions of different mechanisms  
466 that we summarized in a very simple equation. Therefore, PRIM is probably good in  
467 representing a general trends but not all the complexity of the phenomenon. Nevertheless, the  
468 use of the PRIM soil model seems justified since it increases only slightly the number of  
469 parameter of a global land biosphere model and since the parameter values were obtained  
470 after optimization on data coming from incubations performed in a range of soils and  
471 conditions (different soil types, different ecosystems, different temperatures, different  
472 moistures, different amount and type of FOC amended, etc.).

473

## 474 **4.2** ORCHIDEE vs. ORCHIDEE-PRIM

### 475 **4.2.1** Cross sites evaluation

476 ORCHIDEE-PRIM exhibited similar performance than ORCHIDEE when simulating  
477 litter manipulation experiments. It must be noted that both versions share the same scheme for  
478 primary production (controlling soil C input by litter), soil temperature and moisture function.  
479 The similar performance obtained by the two versions may be due to a model bias for these  
480 quantities as well as poorly constrained site histories and climate forcing errors. Since primary  
481 production is the main driver of the C input into the soil, the soil CO<sub>2</sub> efflux calculated by the  
482 models was largely driven by the capacity of the model to reproduce the observed primary  
483 production. In particular, both models largely underestimated the soil CO<sub>2</sub> efflux when litter  
484 was removed (Table 5), but obtained good results when litter was kept or when litter was  
485 added. This suggests that both models performed quite well when reproducing soil CO<sub>2</sub>  
486 efflux, but this was due to bias compensation, meaning that the fraction of CO<sub>2</sub> coming from

487 soil mineralization and root respiration was underestimated and the fraction of CO<sub>2</sub> coming  
488 from litter mineralization was overestimated. Moreover, the modification of the litter cover  
489 may change the soil humidity and temperature and these effects were not represented in the  
490 models.

491 Finally, the use of microbial steady state model like ORCHIDEE-PRIM present some  
492 advantages compared to explicit microbial models. Wieder et al., (2015) identified several  
493 challenges related to the incorporation of explicit microbial models in ESMs. In particular, it  
494 needs much more parameter than the classical approach. With ORCHIDEE-PRIM these  
495 difficulty is resolved since we only add three more parameters.

496

## 497 **5. Conclusion**

498

499 Regarding the several processes that may lead to priming, the satisfactory performance  
500 of ORCHIDEE-PRIM compared to observations from both laboratory incubation and field  
501 litter manipulation experiments suggests that the simple PRIM conceptual model simulates  
502 well the magnitude of observed priming. Consequently, ORCHIDEE-PRIM has the potential  
503 to quantify the impact of priming on the soil C cycle at large scales. Nevertheless,  
504 ORCHIDEE-PRIM underestimates the priming intensity as shown by the slope value (0.55),  
505 indicating that the model still misses important mechanisms explaining the observations. In  
506 particular, N availability is an important driver of priming, inducing higher priming when N  
507 availability is reduced (Fontaine et al., 2004; Blagodatskaya et al., 2007). The role of N in the  
508 priming intensity as well as the extra N mineralization induced by priming and its effect on  
509 primary production may represent the next addition to the soil representation in a land surface  
510 model by adding a control on the  $c$  parameter depending on the mineral N availability and on  
511 the C:N ratio of the considered pool. Nevertheless, some detailed information on the N

512 dynamic in priming effect experiments would be necessary to do so and very few authors  
513 reported the impact of priming effect on N dynamic after FOC additions.

514

515

516 Code availability

517 For ORCHIDEE, the main part of the code was written by Krinner et al., (2005). The  
518 version used here is the 1.9.5.2 version. In this version, compared to the one presented in  
519 Krinner et al., (2005), the albedo representation was improved (Hourdin et al., pers. com.), a  
520 routing scheme controlling the flux of water from land surface to the ocean was added (Ngo-  
521 Duc et al., 2007) and the dynamic of vegetation was modified (Viovy et al., pers. com.).  
522 Furthermore, since 2005 the code has been parallelized. A detailed documentation and the  
523 code can be provided upon request to the corresponding author.

524 ORCHIDEE-PRIM is derived from ORCHIDEE with the modifications presented in  
525 the section 2.1.2. A detailed description can be found in Guenet et al., (2013). The code is  
526 available upon request to the corresponding author.

527

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722

723 Figure legends

724 Figure 1: Summarizing scheme of the methods

725 Figure 2: Scatter plot between data and the PRIM model outputs for the incubations with FOC  
726 amendment (a), without FOC amendment (b) and for priming effect (c). The dataset used here  
727 are the similar to those used for optimization (a) or are the control incubations (b) and are  
728 described in section (2.2.1). Red lines indicate the 1:1 line. Different symbol indicate different  
729 studies.

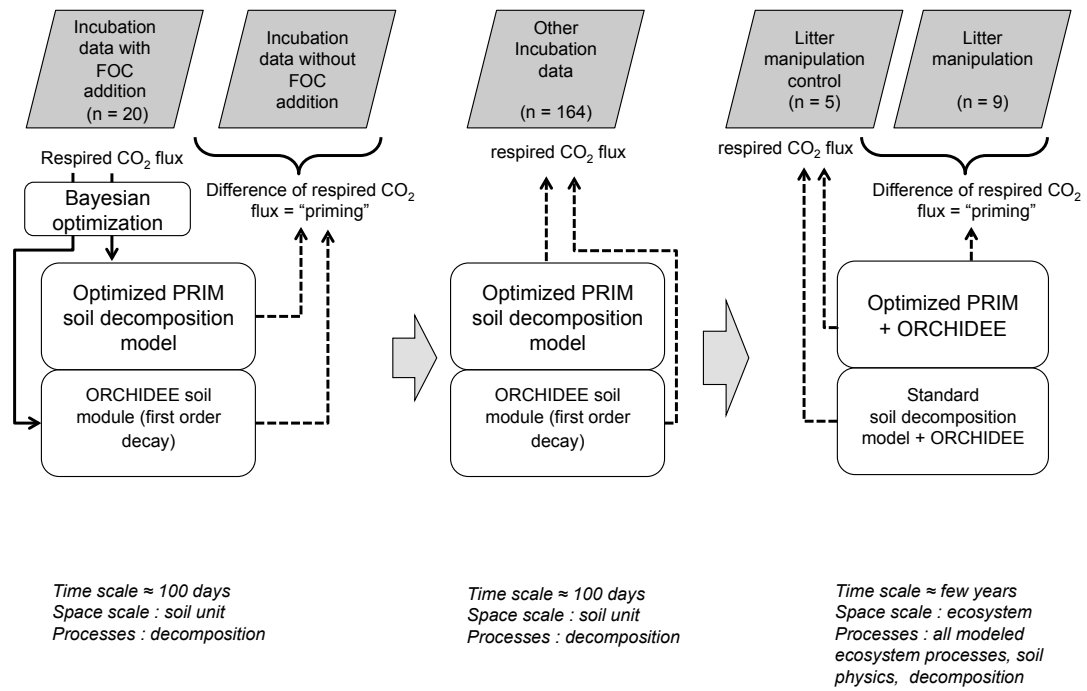
730 Figure 3: Scatter plot between independent data from optimization (dataset describes in  
731 section 2.2.2) and the soil module of ORCHIDEE outputs (a) or between data and the PRIM  
732 model outputs (b). Red lines indicate the 1:1 line.

733 Figure 4: Soil CO<sub>2</sub> efflux calculated by ORCHIDEE on the left side and by ORCHIDEE-  
734 PRIM on the right side for the data coming from Boone et al., (1998) (a), from Boriken et al.,  
735 (2002) (b), from Chemidlin-Prévost-Bourré et al., (2010) (c), from Subke et al., (2004) (d)  
736 and from Sulzman et al., (2005) (e). Red lines indicate the 1:1 line, black, dashed and dotted  
737 lines correspond to control, litter exclusion and litter amendment situations respectively.

738 Figure 5: Scatter plot between the priming effect measured and the priming effect calculated  
739 by ORCHIDEE-PRIM. Red line indicate the 1:1 line and different symbol indicate different  
740 studies.

741





**Figure 1**

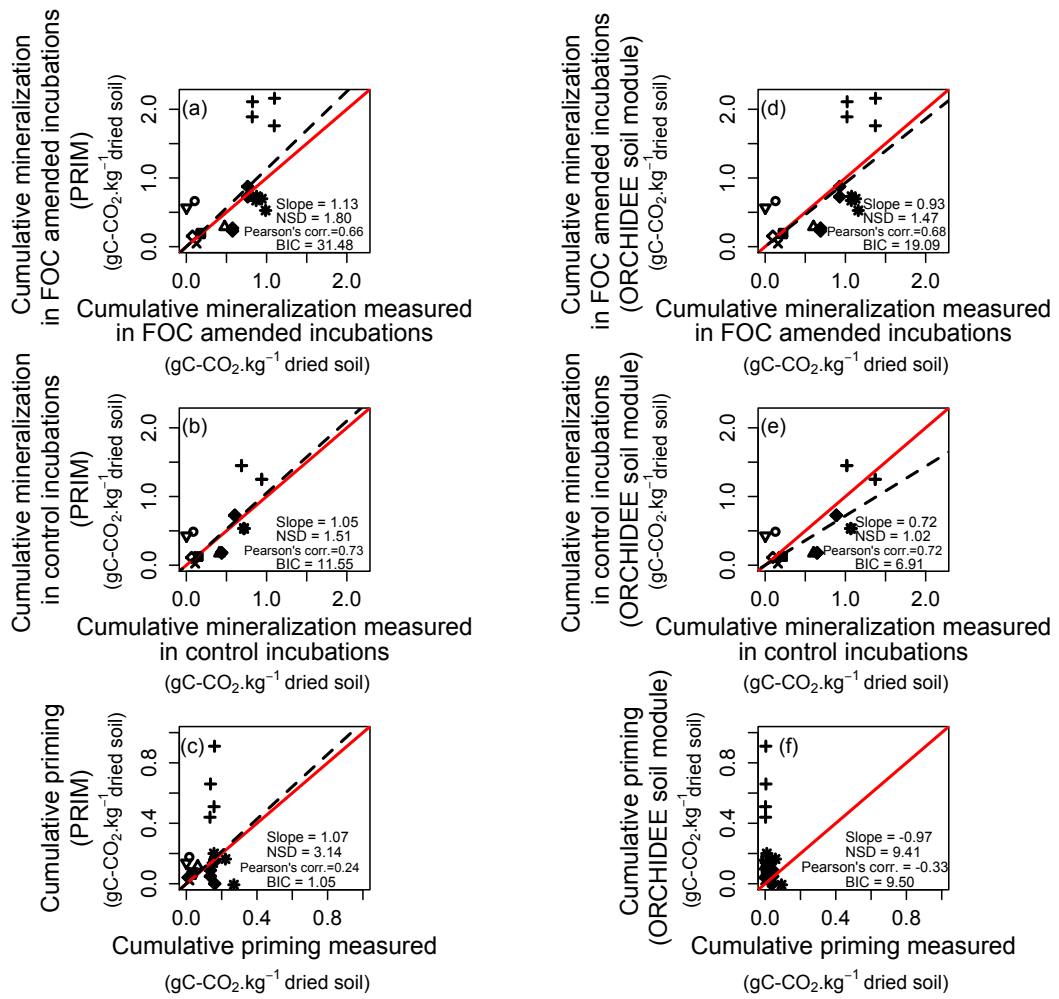


Figure 2

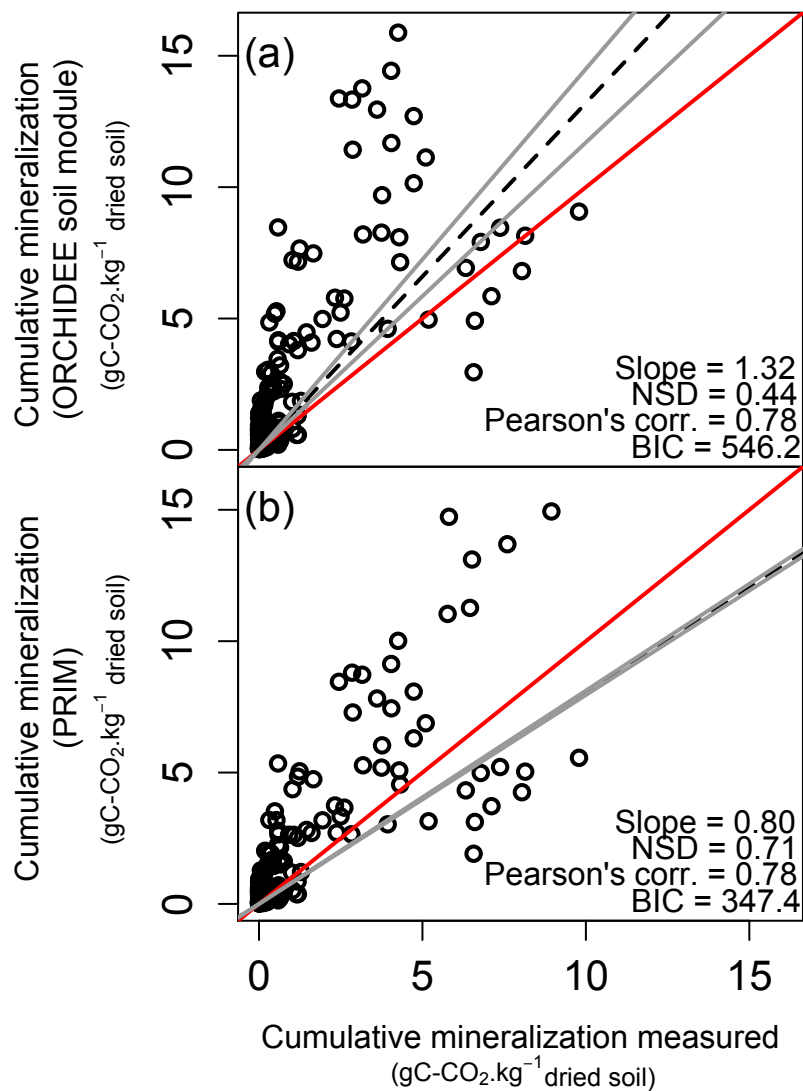


Figure 3

ORCHIDEE ORCHIDEE-PRIM

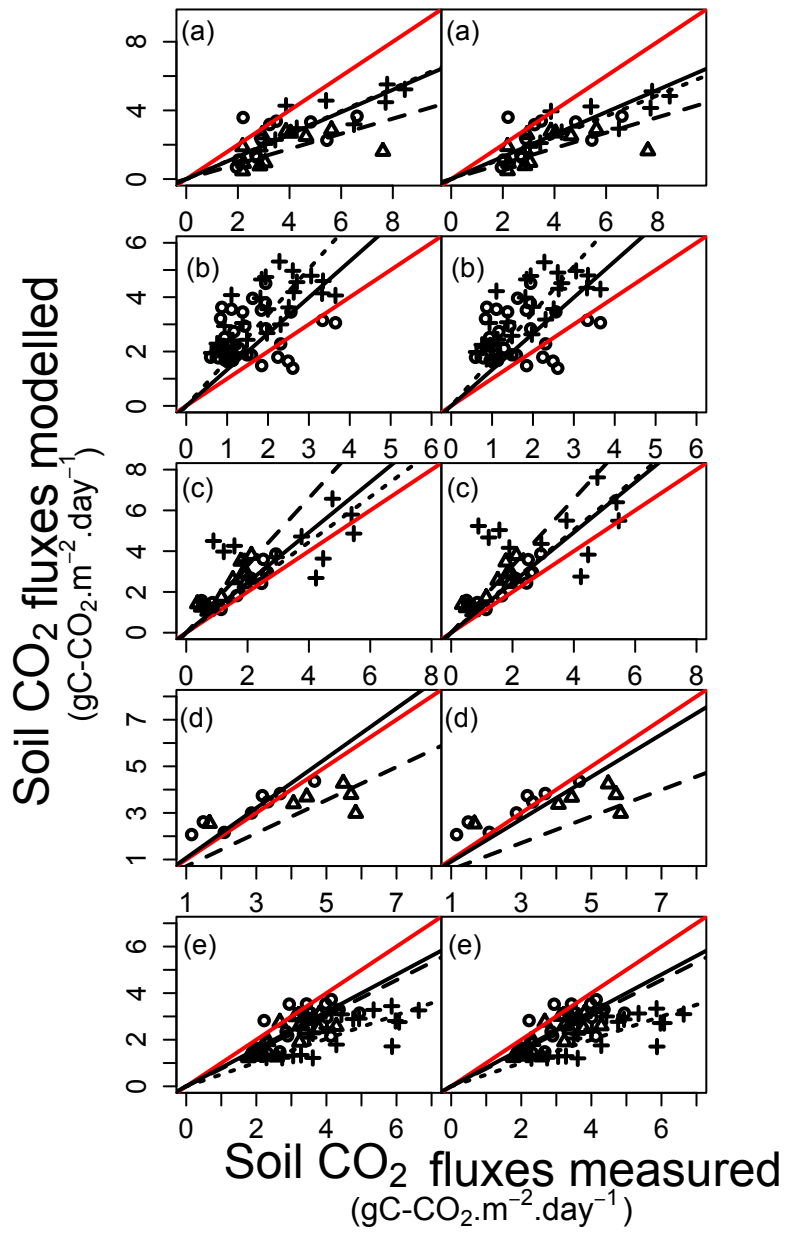


Figure 4

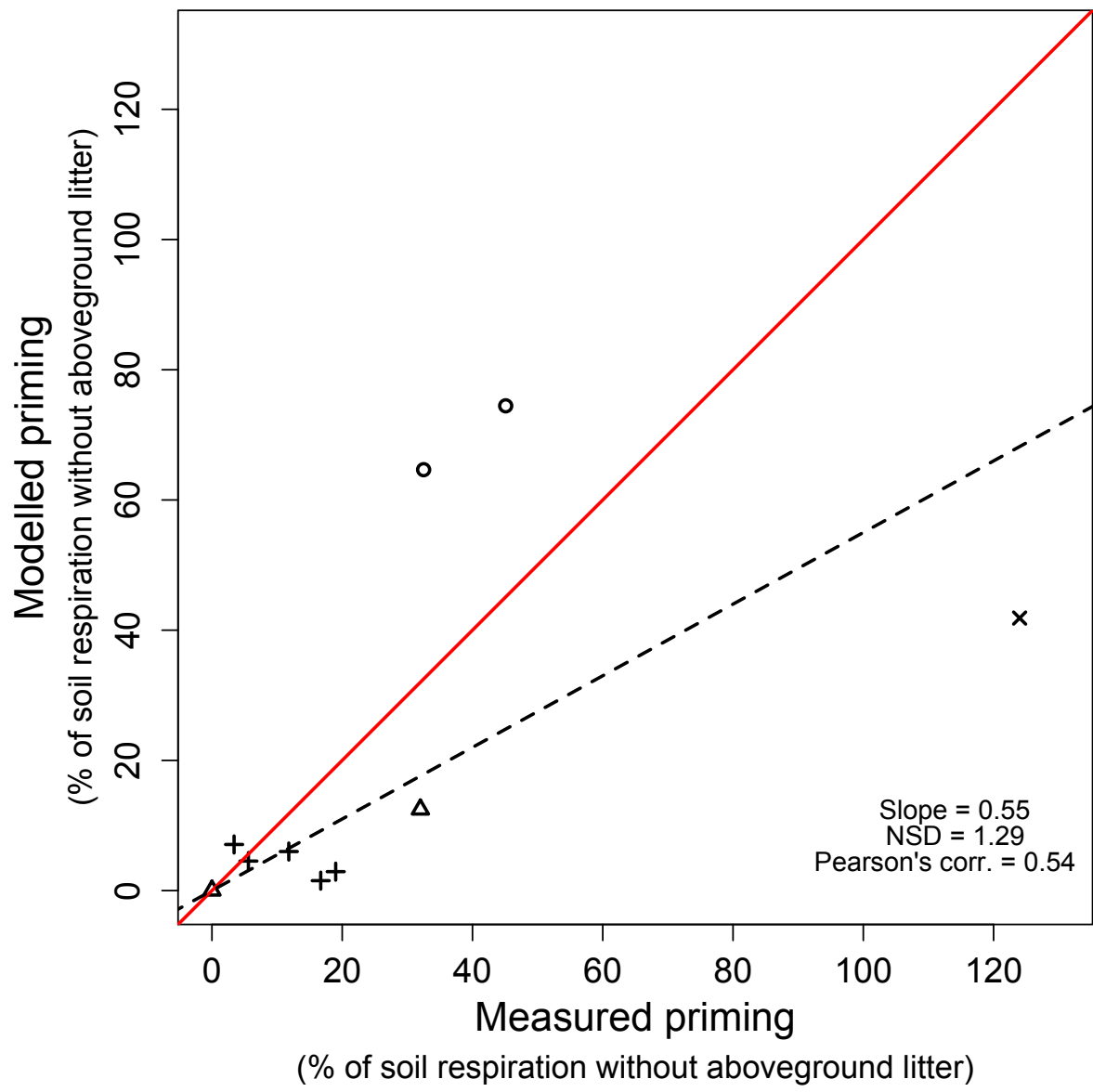


Figure 5

**Table 1:** Description of the studies used to optimize the model parameters

Study	Incubations	Study site	FOC types	Amount of FOC amended (g C kg <sup>-1</sup> dry soil)	Lignin:C ratio of FOC	C:N ratio of FOC	Soil clay content (%)	Temperature (K)	Moisture (% of Field Capacity)	Incubation length (days)	SOC content (g C kg <sup>-1</sup> dry soil)
Bell et al., (2003)	Experience 1 averaged over the 4 soils tested	Ralston, Washington State, USA	Wheat straw	1.54	0.22*	128*	0.08	298.15	0.2	31	10.1
Blagodatskaya et al., (2007)	GL treatment	Ramon, Voronezh region, Russia	Glucose	0.0487	0	0	0.2*	295.15	0.6	14	50
Conde et al., (2005)	Soil A+ Maize	Former lake Texcoco in the valley of Mexico City (Mexico)	Maize	1	0.575	39.8	0.22	295.15	0.55	28	53
	Soil A + Glucose	former lake Texcoco in the valley of Mexico City (Mexico)	Glucose	1	0	0	0.22	295.15	0.55	28	53
	Soil B + Maize	former lake Texcoco in the valley of Mexico City (Mexico)	Maize	1	0.575	39.8	0.054	295.15	0.55	28	38.8
	Soil B + Glucose	former lake Texcoco in the valley of Mexico City (Mexico)	Glucose	1	0	0	0.054	295.15	0.55	28	38.8
De Nobili et al., (2001)	Experiment 1 with Soil 2	Rothamsted experimental station, UK	Cellulose	1	0	0	0.24	298.15	0.5	11	14.8
Falchini et al., (2003)	Average over the tree treatments	Grassland in Tuscany, Italy	Oxalix acid/ Glutamic acid/ Glucose	0.1815	0	0	0.14	298.15	0.5	7	16.6
Fontaine et al., (2004)	Only one incubation	Lamto experimental station, Ivory Coast	Cellulose	0.495	0	0	0.1	231.15	0.032	70	10.5

Guenet et al., (2010)	S1 without N amendment	La cage experimental station, France	Wheat Straw	1.5	0.22*	44	0.167	293.15	0.17	80	10.4
	S2 without N amendment	La cage experimental station, France	Wheat Straw	2.2	0.22*	44	0.167	293.15	0.17	80	10.4
	S3 without N amendment	La cage experimental station, France	Wheat Straw	3.2	0.22*	44	0.167	293.15	0.17	80	10.4
Guenet et al., (2012)	Arable soil with high cellulose input	Closeaux experimental station, France	Cellulose	5	0	0	0.167	293.15	0.19	209	19.9
	Arable soil with high wheat straw input	Closeaux experimental station, France	Wheat Straw	5	0.22*	98	0.167	293.15	0.19	209	19.9
	Arable soil with low cellulose input	Closeaux experimental station, France	Cellulose	0.5	0	0	0.167	293.15	0.19	209	19.9
	Arable soil with low wheat straw input	Closeaux experimental station, France	Wheat Straw	0.5	0.22*	98	0.167	293.15	0.19	209	19.9
Harmer & Marschner (2005)	Dystric cambisol (A horizon) + Alanine	Steigerwald, Bavaria, Germany	Alanine	13.3	0	3	0.14	293.15	0.6	26	44
	Dystric cambisol (A horizon)+ Fructose	Steigerwald, Bavaria, Germany	Fructose	13.3	0	0	0.14	293.15	0.6	26	44
	Haplic podzol (EA horizon) + Alanine	Fichtelgebirge, Bavaria, Germany	Alanine	13.3	0	3	0.104	293.15	0.6	26	32
	Haplic podzol (EA horizon) + Fructose	Fichtelgebirge, Bavaria, Germany	Fructose	13.3	0	0	0.104	293.15	0.6	26	32

\*estimated values

**Table 2:** Model parameters summary for PRIM and the ORCHIDEE soil module

Model parameter	Meaning	SOC pools	Prior range	Posterior modes $\pm$ s.d. (prior modes) for PRIM	Posterior modes $\pm$ s.d. (prior modes) for the ORCHIDEE soil module
k <sub>soc</sub>	Turnover rate of SOM (d)	Active	10 <sup>-3</sup> -0.5	0.30 $\pm$ 0.15 (0.31)	0.43 $\pm$ 0.22 (0.43)
		Slow	0.5-5	1.12 $\pm$ 0.01 (4.51)	0.50 $\pm$ 0.09 (2.39)
		Passive	5-500	462.0 $\pm$ 233.8 (467.55)	40.17 $\pm$ 22.19 (44.39)
c	Influence of the FOM carbon pool in the SOM mineralization (priming parameter)	Active	2.10 <sup>-4</sup> -500	493.7 $\pm$ 246.8 (493.7)	NA
		Slow	2.10 <sup>-4</sup> -500	194.0 $\pm$ 97.0 (194.0)	NA
		Passive	2.10 <sup>-4</sup> -500	136.5 $\pm$ 68.3 (136.5)	NA



Table 3: Description of the studies used to evaluate the model

Study	Treatments performed	Ecosystems	Sites Names (Coordinates)	Treatment performed in:	CO <sub>2</sub> monitored between:	Soil clay content (%)	Soil silt content (%)	Soil sand content (%)
Boone et al., (1998)	No litter/Double litter/Control	Deciduous forest	Harvard forest, Petersham, Massachusetts, USA (42°30' N, 72°12' W)	January 1990	June 1994- June 1995	25*	30*	45*
Borken et al. (2002)	Compost amendment/Control	Needleleaf forest	Solling, Norway (51°46'N, 9°34'E)	August 1997	September 1997- December 1999	3	23	74
Chemidlin-Prévost-Bouré et al., (2010)	No litter/Double litter/Control	Deciduous forest	Barbeau National Forest, France (48°29'N, 02°47'E)	March 2006	May 2006- March 2007	19.3	38.8	41.9
Subke et al., (2004)	Double litter/Control	Needleleaf forest	Wetzstein, Thüringisches Schiefergebirge, Germany (50°30'N 11°10'E)	April 2002	April 2002(three weeks after treatment) - October 2002	70*	18*	12*
Sulzman et al., (2005)	No litter/Double litter/Control	Needleleaf forest	H.J. Andrews Experimental Forest, Oregon, USA (44°15'N, 122°10'W)	January 1997	July 2001- December 2003	25*	30*	45*

\*estimated values

Table 4a: Correlation between optimized parameters for PRIM

		$k_{soc}$			c		
		Active	Slow	Passive	Active	Slow	Passive
$k_{soc}$	Active	1.00	$1.1 \cdot 10^{-4}$	$2.4 \cdot 10^{-5}$	$7.3 \cdot 10^{-5}$	$6.7 \cdot 10^{-4}$	$3.2 \cdot 10^{-4}$
	Slow	$1.1 \cdot 10^{-4}$	1.00	$-2.1 \cdot 10^{-2}$	$3.1 \cdot 10^{-5}$	$8.5 \cdot 10^{-5}$	$-3.8 \cdot 10^{-4}$
	Passive	$2.4 \cdot 10^{-5}$	$-2.1 \cdot 10^{-2}$	1.00	$-8.2 \cdot 10^{-5}$	$7.6 \cdot 10^{-4}$	$5.3 \cdot 10^{-4}$
c	Active	$7.3 \cdot 10^{-5}$	$3.1 \cdot 10^{-5}$	$-8.2 \cdot 10^{-5}$	1.00	$-1.2 \cdot 10^{-5}$	$2.9 \cdot 10^{-4}$
	Slow	$6.7 \cdot 10^{-4}$	$8.5 \cdot 10^{-5}$	$7.6 \cdot 10^{-4}$	$-1.2 \cdot 10^{-5}$	1.00	$9.6 \cdot 10^{-4}$
	Passive	$3.2 \cdot 10^{-4}$	$-3.8 \cdot 10^{-4}$	$5.3 \cdot 10^{-4}$	$2.9 \cdot 10^{-4}$	$9.6 \cdot 10^{-4}$	1.00

Table 4b: Correlation between optimized parameters for the ORCHIDEE soil module

		$k_{soc}$		
		Active	Slow	Passive
$k_{soc}$	Active	1.00	$7.2 \cdot 10^{-5}$	$3.8 \cdot 10^{-5}$
	Slow	$7.2 \cdot 10^{-5}$	1.00	$-1.5 \cdot 10^{-2}$
	Passive	$3.8 \cdot 10^{-5}$	$-1.5 \cdot 10^{-2}$	1.00

Table 5: Model performances for each evaluation sites

		Boone et al., (1998)				Borken et al., (2002)			Chemidlin-Prévost-Bouré et al., (2010)				Subke et al., (2004)			Sulzman et al., (2005)			
		All data	No litter	Control	Double litter	All data	Compost	Control	All data	No litter	Control	Double litter	All data	No litter	Control	All data	No litter	Control	Double litter
<b>ORCHIDEE</b>	slope	0.56	0.45	0.65	0.66	0.65	1.68	1.33	0.55	1.65	1.23	1.11	0.48	0.72	1.07	0.60	0.77	0.80	0.51
	NSD	1.43	1.86	1.37	1.48	0.77	0.79	0.87	1.03	0.70	0.97	1.56	1.85	1.65	1.41	1.53	1.10	1.08	1.68
	BIC	103.4	57.9	49.3	53.8	116.8	84.0	74.9	73.1	39.4	29.1	52.2	45.9	38.3	24.3	109.9	39.9	42.4	78.3
<b>ORCHIDEE-PRIM</b>	slope	0.55	0.45	0.65	0.61	0.67	1.71	1.33	0.54	1.64	1.23	1.26	0.48	0.71	1.07	0.58	0.76	0.80	0.50
	NSD	1.53	1.85	1.37	1.59	0.77	0.79	0.86	0.86	0.70	0.97	1.30	1.86	1.66	1.41	1.55	1.10	1.09	1.76
	BIC	116.3	64.9	56.5	63.46	131.1	95.9	85.0	96.1	46.2	36.3	65.1	54.3	44.6	30.5	124.1	48.2	51.3	88.1