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Climate Velocity Can Inform Conservation in a Warming World

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40

41 Abstract

42 Climate change is shifting species' ranges. Simple predictive metrics of range shifts, such 43 as climate velocity, that do not require extensive knowledge and data on individual species 44 could help guide conservation. We review research on climate velocity, describing the theory 45 underpinning the concept and its assumptions. We highlight how climate velocity has 46 already been applied in conservation-related research, including climate residence time, 47 climate refugia, endemism, historic and projected range shifts, exposure to climate change, 48 and climate connectivity. Finally, we discuss ways to enhance the use of climate velocity in 49 conservation, through tailoring it to be more biologically meaningful, informing design of 50 protected areas, conserving ocean biodiversity in three dimensions, and informing 51 conservation actions.

52

53 Simple climate metrics could help conservation in a changing climate

54 Climate change is likely to become the most serious threat to biodiversity this century [1, 2]. In fact, anthropogenic climate change, initiated in the Industrial Revolution, has already 55 56 affected ecological systems from individual organisms to biomes [3, 4], and has influenced 57 >80% of all biological processes [5]. Although ecological responses to climate change are numerous, complex and multi-faceted, probably the most fundamental is the spatial 58 59 redistribution of global biodiversity [3]. Such species range shifts, in response to a changing 60 climate, have been observed across terrestrial and marine ecosystems during the current 61 warming period [6-8] and since the last glacial maximum [9, 10]. Understanding the 62 processes underpinning range shifts and predicting their potential outcomes is needed to 63 inform conservation, and reduce risks to food security, human health, and the viability of 64 numerous industries that depend on ecosystem services, including forestry, fisheries, and 65 eco-tourism.

66

67 Mechanisms underpinning range shifts are a blend of a species' exposure, sensitivity and 68 vulnerability to climate change, combined with its adaptive capacity [11]. Of these 69 characteristics, only exposure to climate change might be considered relatively generic 70 across species, with other traits being specific to individual species or populations. But 71 detailed physiological, ecological and evolutionary data are missing for most species, 72 especially in the tropics and much of the global ocean [12], and current research priorities 73 make collection of such data increasingly difficult [13, 14]. This leaves conservation and 74 management agencies to make decisions with whatever alternative tools are available. 75 Threats to biodiversity posed by climate change have thus traditionally been quantified using 76 rates of warming or cooling, temperature anomalies, or degree heating weeks [15]. What 77 these simple indices do not convey is the relative likelihood that a species might escape the 78 threat of climate change by shifting its distribution. A promising solution that retains 79 generality, but conveys more ecologically relevant information is the velocity of climate 80 change, or more simply, climate velocity [16-18]. Climate velocity is a metric that uses freely-

81 accessible environmental and climate data, without the need for detailed ecological 82 knowledge [19], to approximate the observed shifts in species' distributions [20-23]. Climate 83 velocity thereby provides a simple and intuitive measure of threats to biodiversity posed by 84 climate change [24] and as such, in is simplest form, is not bespoke for particular species.

85

86 Here, we explore the meaning, utility and application of climate velocity, with a particular 87 focus on the potential for its use to guide conservation under a changing climate. We begin 88 by defining the concept of climate velocity, as there are several formulations with different 89 conceptual underpinnings. This leads to a summary of the methodological aspects and 90 caveats that need to be considered when using climate velocity. We then describe the 91 different applications of climate velocity that have provided new insights into many areas of 92 climate-change ecology. Next, we look to the future and explore four ways to improve the 93 utility of climate velocity in conservation. We focus on simple metrics that use raw climate 94 variables, and do not consider velocities that can be calculated from species distribution 95 models or assemblage models that scale climate space by biological data (e.g., Generalized 96 Dissimilarity Modelling) [25]. This review is targeted at ecologists seeking to understand how climate change could affect communities, and for conservation practitioners wanting to 97 98 include climate change in their planning.

99

100 What is climate velocity?

101 Climate velocity is a vector that describes the speed and direction that a point on a gridded 102 map would need to move to remain static in climate space (e.g., to maintain an isoline of a 103 given variable in a univariate environment) under climate change (see Glossary). From an 104 ecological perspective, climate velocity can be conceptualized as the speed and direction in 105 which a species would need to move to maintain its current climate conditions under climate 106 change (see Box 1). For this reason, climate velocity can be considered the potential 107 exposure to climate change faced by a species, if the climate moves beyond the 108 physiological tolerance of a local population. Despite the intuitive ecological relevance,

109 however, climate velocity is based solely on environmental variables and not on species110 data (Box 1).

111

112 Two major approaches to calculating climate velocity have emerged: viz., "local" climate and 113 "climate-analogue" velocities (Figure 1). Local climate velocity is the original metric 114 proposed in 2009 by Loarie et al. [16]. To calculate local climate velocity at a location - how 115 far and in which direction the isoline of an environmental variable would move - only the 116 rate of change of a variable (e.g., temperature) through time (i.e., the trend, usually 117 estimated as the regression slope), and the corresponding spatial gradient of that variable, 118 are needed. The spatial gradient represents the complexity of the climate landscape, its 119 magnitude calculated as the length of a vector resulting from the weighted sum of the 120 latitudinal and longitudinal pairwise differences in values of the climate variable between a 121 focal cell and its nearest neighbours (Figure 1A). The associated angle of the vector gives 122 the direction of the spatial gradient. Directions of climate velocity are reversed relative to 123 those of the spatial gradient to reflect response expectations (e.g., in a warming climate, 124 movement towards cooler locations). It is this dependence on neighbouring (local) cells for 125 the estimation of the spatial gradient in climate that gives local climate velocity its name.

126

127 Climate-analogue velocity [26] emerged as an extension of the climate analogue concept 128 [27] – i.e., the identification of points in space with climates sufficiently similar to those of the 129 points under consideration (Figure 1). Euclidean distances are often used as measures of 130 multivariate climatic dissimilarity, climate analogy being set by reference to a dissimilarity 131 threshold defined either subjectively [28, 29] or using regional statistics (e.g., 95th percentile 132 of the minimum Euclidean distance between each future climate and all current climates) 133 [26, 30]. Importantly, the selected threshold is constant and common to all local climates. 134 When the points under consideration represent the current climate, and their analogues are 135 sought in a future climate, the geographic distance between points can be divided by the 136 time separating the periods to compute a speed of climate change. The direction for the

137 climate-analogue velocity is provided by the relative positions of the original point and its 138 future analogue (Figure 1B). Climate-analogue velocity can be further conceptualized in two 139 related but distinct ways: *"forward" analogue velocity*, the original formulation, and 140 *"backward" analogue velocity*, which is the inverse of forward velocity ([28], Glossary).

141

142 Local and climate-analogue velocities have been used in different situations. Local climate 143 velocity has usually been used for exploring potential responses of biota to single variables, 144 usually temperature [31], but sometimes precipitation [32]. This metric has been favoured 145 by ecologists when gradients are smooth and where there is one main variable driving 146 change (e.g., in the open ocean, Figure S1). Local climate velocity can be constrained by 147 species requirements for particular habitat features, such as being limited to coastal marine 148 regions by the need for light on the sea bottom, or substratum types for reef formation, or 149 intertidal zones [33]. By contrast, climate-analogue velocity has usually been used with 150 multiple variables [34]. It has greater ecological realism in complex environments with 151 contrasting climatic gradients, and is favoured by ecologists dealing with species with 152 multiple needs. For example, on land, temperature and rainfall have often been analysed in 153 multivariate space using climate-analogue velocity (Figure S1). Irrespective of the climate-154 velocity metric used and data availability, researchers should be aware of several associated 155 caveats (Box 2), and a suite of methodological aspects, including which environmental 156 variables to use, their time and space scales, and how to combine multiple variables (Box 157 3).

158

To encourage the robust use of climate velocity in the ecological and conservation research communities, we provide two resources. The first is a collection of R functions aggregated into a package, *vocc*, that is freely available on GitHub (<u>https://github.com/cbrown5/vocc</u>). This package calculates the local climate velocity for univariate environmental datasets, on local to global scales (see the SOM of Hamann *et al.* [28] for R code for climate-analogue velocity). The second resource is a list of all freely available environmental datasets (and

their websites) that have been used in climate-velocity research (Table S1 supplemental

166 online information).

167

168 Current applications of climate velocity

Figure S2 shows conceptual relationships among different applications of climate velocity, highlighting key references, and common applications between local climate and climateanalogue velocity. There are six main areas where local and climate-analogue velocities have provided new insights into climate-change ecology.

173

174 1. Climate residence time

175 From its inception, local climate velocity was used to estimate the residence time of current 176 climates in protected areas and different biomes under climate change [16, 17]. Large 177 protected areas, especially in hilly areas, are likely to continue to provide climate space for 178 resident species into the next century (because air temperature decreases with altitude), but 179 small reserves and reserves in flatter areas are likely to fail to do so (see also Box 1 and 180 Box 3). The latter conclusion should, however, be viewed with caution: values of climate 181 residence time can be alarmingly small, but might not reflect individual species' residence 182 times, because the local climate might not approach critical thermal limits for a species, a 183 species' thermal range might be large, or a species might be able to adapt behaviourally (or 184 otherwise) thereby persisting in a climate that might otherwise be inhospitable [33, 35]. 185 Nevertheless, the primary conservation-related recommendations from studies of climate 186 residence time seem defensible. They include emissions reductions to slow the rate of 187 climate change, and expanding networks of protected areas and including more 188 mountainous terrain [36] to increase the residence time of climates (and therefore migrating 189 species).

190

191 2. Climate refugia and rates of endemism

192 Areas of low local climate and climate-analogue velocities can be considered candidate 193 areas for protection [24, 37] because they are likely to contain a consistent suite of species 194 and their ecological interactions as they evolved together in a slowly moving climate. Such 195 areas are often called climate refugia, and have been linked with high levels of endemism 196 [38]. For example, Sandel et al. [9] related local climate velocity between the last glacial 197 maximum and current climates, and used these to explore endemism of amphibians, 198 mammals and birds. Relationships between climate velocity and rates of endemism were 199 weakest for wide-ranging species and strongest for narrow-ranged species, suggesting that 200 areas of slow climate velocity provide important refugia for biodiversity under climate 201 change. Subsequent studies on endemic species of insects and mammals [39], birds [40, 202 41], and plants [42, 43] confirm these patterns at a regional scale, and patterns seem to 203 hold even at local scales within freshwater streams [44].

204

205 3. Historic range shifts

206 The magnitude and direction of local climate velocity explains range shifts in many species 207 on land [22] and in the ocean [7, 21, 22, 45-47]. For example, on land, global meta-analysis 208 of over the past 40 years showed that terrestrial species tracked local climate velocity in 209 response to warming to higher latitudes and higher elevation [48]. In marine systems, 210 extensive data on marine species (128 million individual fish and invertebrate records across 211 360 harvested species) around North America closely track local climate velocity, both 212 horizontally and vertically in the ocean, over the past 50 years [20]. We expect greater 213 agreement between climate velocity and species distribution shifts in homogenous systems 214 such as the open ocean and continental plains. Such homogenous systems pose fewer 215 constraints on movement because species are more able to follow local climate velocity, 216 whereas heterogeneous and complex systems have barriers to dispersal and movement 217 that can constrain distribution shifts. In such environments, estimates of climate velocity can 218 be modified - see Section Tailoring climate velocity to be more biologically meaningful. Note

also that even in relatively homogenous regions, divergence among climate variables
mediating species' distributions might complicate responses.

221

4. Exposure of organisms to climate change, migration velocities and the formation of novel
 communities

224 Because climate velocity quantifies the speed and direction of a changing climate, it also 225 quantifies the exposure of a species to climate change [19, 29]. Recently, Ordonez et al. 226 [30] used local climate velocity as one of three mechanisms driving the reshuffling of species 227 and emergence of novel communities under climate change, the other two being climate 228 novelty (opening of new suitable environments) and divergence (discrepancy in the direction 229 of change among gradients of different climate variables in relation to a species' niche). As 230 elsewhere [24, 26, 49], slow local and climate-analogue velocities were associated with 231 regions of strong spatial gradients in environmental conditions (e.g., mountains) and 232 assumed to be least-exposed to climate change (i.e., requiring shorter dispersal distances 233 to track changes in climate). Climate exposure can also be modified by climate connectivity 234 (see below) [24, 29, 50]. In this case, exposure relates to the cost of moving through 235 climatically heterogeneous land- or seascapes, possibly accounting for other non-climate 236 drivers conditioning dispersal [29].

237

238 5. Climate-velocity trajectories and climate connectivity

239 To address Loarie et al.'s [16] caution that local climate velocity is discontinuous, Burrows 240 et al. [24] developed climate-velocity trajectories by moving climate "tracers" between 241 neighbouring grid cells based on the local climate velocity. Climate-velocity trajectories thus 242 track specific climate conditions through time as continuous paths (see Box 4 Figure I). 243 Spatially aggregated patterns of climate-velocity trajectories suggest changes in species 244 richness with climate, and notably highlight areas that might receive few or no climate 245 migrants through lack of connections to warmer places (climate 'sources': locally warm 246 areas such as equatorward-facing coastlines on land or poleward-facing coastlines in the

ocean), and areas where there might be local extirpations through lack of connections to
cooler areas (climate 'sinks': locally cool areas such as mountain tops on land and
equatorward facing coastlines in the ocean) (e.g. [2, 22]).

250

251 6. Projected range shifts with climate change

252 As climate velocity is an indicator of the speed at which species' range shifts track climate 253 change - potentially the maximum possible rate of range shift when dispersal is not a limiting 254 factor – climate-driven changes in the geographical distribution of species can be simply 255 predicted by forward (or backward) projection of their climate envelopes (see Glossary) 256 following the speed and direction of local or analogue climate velocities. This approach has 257 been combined with species' thermal tolerances and depth preferences to predict changes 258 in distribution of marine species. Applying this approach for >13,000 marine species, García 259 Molinos et al. [33] found that biodiversity would decrease in equatorial regions, but increase 260 in others, and there would be a spatial homogenization of biodiversity by 2100. Recent 261 observations of marine communities confirm those results in response to climate change 262 [51, 52]. However, the likelihood of a response, and a subsequent shift in range mirroring 263 climate velocity, is species-specific. For example, opportunities for the expansion and risk 264 of contraction of a geographical range will depend on changes in the local climate space 265 relative to a species' physiological tolerances (see Box 1, Figure II). Even if a geographical 266 shift is triggered by changes in climate, different dispersal capacities of species result in 267 range shifts that keep pace with, lag or even exceed rates of climate displacement [53-60]. 268 Range shifts will also depend on the interaction between climate change and external 269 directional forces. In a recent global meta-analysis [61], statistical models combining the 270 effect of climate velocity and its alignment with ocean currents explained a significantly 271 higher proportion of the variance in observed range shifts for marine species globally than 272 models based only on climate.

273

274 Enhancing use of climate velocity in conservation

Although recent applications of climate velocity have provided new insights into climatechange ecology, they have so far made only generic recommendations concerning conservation [62-64]. Here, we explore four research areas where we believe that climate velocity can be integrated more directly into biodiversity conservation under a changing climate.

280

281 1. Tailoring climate velocity to be more biologically meaningful

282 In its simplest form, climate velocity is a purely physical metric, so the utility of climate 283 velocity in conservation could be improved through the addition of information that can better 284 represent underlying ecological processes (Figure 2). First, a more realistic spatial extent 285 can be defined for climate-analogue velocity algorithms by limiting the pool of potential 286 analogues to those locations within the distance that species can be expected to cover over 287 a given period based on their dispersal capability (Figure 2B). If this information on dispersal 288 capacity is not available, alternative proxies might be suitable. For example, the limits of 289 reported range expansion and contraction rates can be used to limit the analogue search 290 radius [50]. Similar considerations apply to the spatial resolution of the climatic layers 291 defining the spatial units for local climate velocities (e.g., resolutions that are too fine could 292 result in local climate sinks that are easily avoided in reality by a widely-dispersing species). 293 Second, analogous environmental conditions can be made more relevant to a species by 294 considering the climate tolerance of a species, or the historical variability in local climate 295 conditions [50] (Figure 2C). Last, climate velocity (local and analogue approaches) and 296 climate-velocity trajectories miss information about the potential for a species to depart from 297 the minimum-distance path in search of routes less exposed to changes in climate [29, 50] 298 or other non-climate factors conditioning dispersal, such as habitat permeability [65], or 299 directional forces, such as wind and ocean currents [61]. Least-cost paths [29, 65] and 300 randomized shortest paths [50] linking present and future analogues can be used for this 301 purpose, the latter having the advantage of allowing a degree of network exploration rather

than a single, unidirectional source-to-destination pathway [66]. This reflects a more realistic
scenario, where the location of the future climate analogue and the optimal route to reach it
are unknown *a priori*.

305

306 Changes in climate can also manifest differently depending on season, and this seasonal 307 signal can be obscured in annual means that are usually used in calculating climate velocity. 308 Tailoring climate velocity to match temporal windows of biological processes or life stages 309 could therefore provide more meaningful information for conservation (see example in 310 Figure S3). For example, maximum and/or minimum monthly temperature or precipitation 311 [26, 32, 34, 67] can be used to calculate local or climate-analogue velocities when seasonal 312 processes are under consideration [68]. Further, analysis of the seasonal local climate 313 velocity could be complemented with the shift in the timing of fixed temperatures-to capture 314 the onset or termination of seasonal processes [18]. The utility of combining metrics of 315 climate velocity and timing has not yet been investigated.

316

317 Species can "escape" climate change by exploiting specific microclimates. For example, 318 mammals could spend more time underground in burrows, or marine invertebrates could 319 spend more time in the sediment than exposed. Thus, incorporating such microhabitats or 320 local climate refugia into climate velocity might also increase biological realism. But how this 321 might be achieved is an open question, and many challenges remain. For example, 322 microclimate refugia manifest at scales finer than those resolved in climate velocities, yet 323 the local climate heterogeneity generated by such microclimates can be much greater than 324 macroclimatic trends [69]. Microhabitats could also be more important in two-dimensional 325 environments (e.g. terrestrial landscapes) than well-mixed, three-dimensional pelagic 326 environments, at least for large organisms.

327

328 It should be noted that in each instance, adding biological realism to climate velocity comes 329 at a cost. The current lack of biological information in climate velocity in its simplest form

confers generality across a broad range of species. However, the more climate velocity is tailored to be more biologically meaningful, the more specific the metric becomes to the species under consideration. Thus, the path of increasing biological realism moves climate velocity towards species distribution models or other species-specific modelling approaches that potentially have better predictive ability, but require more species-specific information and are less generally applicable.

336

337 2. Informing design of protected areas and their networks

338 Protected areas need to be considered within a holistic ecosystem-based management 339 approach that recognizes the interactive and cumulative impact of human activities [70]. 340 However, the consideration of climate change in the design and evaluation of protected 341 areas is still in its infancy [71]. Here, climate velocity might be useful in several ways. First, 342 climate velocity identifies regions where climate conditions are changing rapidly, or are 343 projected to do so in the future. These regions might correspond to those where distribution 344 shifts are more likely, particularly at range boundaries or for range-restricted species, 345 potentially moving species out of the protected areas designed to protect them [72, 73]. 346 Further, current climate-velocity patterns can differ strongly from those projected for the 347 future, highlighting the challenge of anticipating effects of a dynamic climate when designing 348 static networks of protected areas (see Box 3). Second, climate velocity can be used to 349 estimate climate residence time (Glossary) of different protected areas across a network 350 (Box 3), indicating the required pace of adaptation to climate change. Areas of long climate 351 residence times correspond to areas of low climate velocity. On land, however, areas of long 352 residence times tend to be in mountainous terrain, perhaps contributing to the problem of 353 residual reserves, that is, areas where conservation impact is low because the land is 354 unsuitable for conversion or extraction of natural resources [74, 75]. Third, climate velocity 355 can also be interpreted in terms of the opportunities for range expansions via dispersal and 356 colonization from local populations at the leading edge of a species' distribution. Here, 357 establishing the connectivity between current and future climates will be important for

anticipating whether the existing network of protected areas will capture those expansions.
For example, climate-velocity trajectories [24] used for this purpose can reveal emergent
classes of isotherm shifts [76], which could be relevant to biology and ultimately used to
inform conservation actions (Box 3).

362

363 3. Conserving ocean biodiversity in three dimensions

364 In the ocean, climate velocity has mainly been applied to surface temperatures (e.g., [33, 365 50, 77]), which are probably relevant for epipelagic (0-200 m) marine groups, including all 366 photosynthetic organisms that need to remain within the sunlit zone (the top 200 m). But in 367 the open ocean, mesopelagic (200-1000 m) and bathypelagic (1000-4000 m) marine groups 368 live below this sunlit zone, and the magnitude and direction of climate velocity might change 369 with depth, with important implications for conservation [78, 79] (Figure S4). For example, 370 although there is less warming in the deep ocean relative to the surface [80], spatial 371 gradients are likely to be gentler at depth, so it is unclear how the climate velocity might 372 change with depth. Moreover, the direction of climate velocity could differ with depth, 373 according to the spatial gradient of temperature in different ocean layers (Figure S4, also 374 see the SOM of Hiddink et al. [21]), implying that species distributions might move in different 375 directions with depth. Different horizontal speeds and directions of climate velocity with 376 depth would influence whether organisms at different depths remain within a particular 377 marine protected area with climate change [81], and whether communities at different 378 depths and that interact, remain intact.

379

Not only can climate velocity be applied in horizontal slices in the ocean, but to the seafloor.
Movements of organisms on the seafloor are restricted to a two-dimensional surface, as
they are on land, and conventional two-dimensional climate velocity is therefore appropriate.
As terrestrial species move to higher (cooler) elevations with warming, marine organisms
on the seafloor have been observed to move to deeper (cooler) water with warming [20]
(Figure S4). A pertinent conservation issue concerning seafloor communities is how best to

386 conserve seamounts, which have high levels of endemism and vertical habitat zonation [82], 387 as mountains do on land. Applying local-climate velocity to seamounts could provide new 388 insights into how these unique communities could respond to climate change. Seamounts 389 also function as stepping stones for many animals across the abyssal plain [83], as 390 mountains do on land. Applying climate-analogue velocity could provide new insights into 391 how animals might move between seamounts in response to climate change, and help 392 inform networks of protected areas for seamounts.

393

394 Movements of organisms at the sea surface, at different ocean depths, or on the seafloor 395 are restricted to two dimensions, and conventional climate velocity is therefore appropriate. 396 However, movement of organisms in the open ocean is different, as organisms can move 397 vertically through the water to maintain their environmental conditions. Climate velocity can 398 thus be calculated purely vertically, from the surface to seafloor. This vertical climate velocity 399 can be used to make projections of vertical shifts of open ocean species under climate 400 change (Figure S4). Similarly, vertical velocity could be calculated for other variables (e.g., 401 shoaling of oxygen or pH [84], but see Boxes 2 and 3).

402

403 So far, we have considered horizontal and vertical climate velocity independently. Most 404 organisms in the open ocean, however, are not constrained to moving only horizontally or 405 vertically in response to climate change, but could simultaneously move horizontally and 406 vertically to maintain their current temperature conditions. Thus, a final advance in the open 407 ocean would be to combine the horizontal and vertical velocities into a truly three-408 dimensional climate velocity.

409

410 4. The potential of climate velocity to inform conservation actions

Climate-velocity trajectories provide considerable scope to inform conservation actions (see
Table S2 for trajectory classes [24, 76] and a summary of potential implications for species
and conservation actions). For example, climate source areas (i.e., regions of novel climate

414 conditions) might face loss of indigenous biodiversity through emigration of species with 415 good dispersal ability, and in some cases extirpation of some species with short dispersal 416 abilities that cannot track their climate niche. In climate source areas, conservation actions 417 might be focused not only on monitoring alien invasive species that might occupy emptying 418 niches, but also ensuring that indigenous species have the ability to emigrate (Table S1). 419 By contrast, in climate sink areas (i.e., where climates converge and sometimes disappear). 420 species must adapt to new climate or face extirpation, and must also cope with climate-421 immigrant species that bring novel interactions. In climate sinks, conservation actions might 422 be focused on potential mitigation of other anthropogenic stressors to aid adaptation, and in 423 extreme cases, assisted migration could be considered [85] (Table S2). Areas where climate 424 changes little (e.g., slow and non-moving climate-velocity trajectory classes) are key for 425 conservation because they usually provide refuges from climate change and have high rates 426 of endemism [9]. Although these areas are likely to be the main focus to protect biodiversity, 427 they might also be good places to release species translocated from climate sinks (Table 428 S2).

429

430 **Concluding remarks**

431 The growing literature on climate velocity demonstrates that it can provide valuable 432 information on the magnitude and direction of species' range shifts under a changing 433 climate. This simple index, based on environmental data with no physiological information, 434 is providing new ecological insights. We hope that this review stimulates wider consideration 435 and incorporation of climate velocity in biodiversity conservation, and that the emerging 436 approaches we highlight will help generate positive long-term conservation outcomes. We 437 also hope that the vocc R package we have made freely available on GitHub 438 (https://github.com/cbrown5/vocc) for calculating local climate velocity (in conjunction with 439 the the R code from Hamann et al. [28] for calculating climate-analogue velocity) will make the use of climate velocity more accessible, and thus stimulate further applications, 440 441 especially by conservation practitioners.

442

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- 654

655 Figures

Figure 1. Mathematical and graphical differences between (A) local climate and (B) climate-analogue velocities.

658

659 Figure 2. Tailoring climate velocity to be more biologically meaningful. (A) The local velocity 660 associated with a cell in flat terrain (black square - L_1), typically high because of the relatively 661 flat spatial thermal gradient (note the widely spaced isotherms), can overestimate true 662 migration requirements by only considering the immediate surroundings (a 3x3 663 neighbourhood in this case) if suitable future habitats are nearby (grey square). Conversely, 664 in mountainous terrain (red square - L₂), steep gradients resulting in low climate velocity can 665 underestimate migration requirements where no suitable habitat (orange square) is 666 available in the surroundings (e.g., locations close to mountain tops), despite the perceived 667 low migration requirements. (B) Where human-assisted migration is not of concern and the 668 purpose is to infer potential biological responses, climate-analogue velocities can be too 669 inclusive by searching for future climate analogues (orange squares) across unrealistically 670 wide regions beyond the distances species might be able to disperse over time (inner circle 671 - tree, outer circle - bird). (C) Thresholds can be set by reference to the thermal tolerances 672 of representative taxa (upper row) or the local historical climate variability (lower row) 673 characterizing the range of climatic conditions local populations are adapted to (grey box 674 bounding the extremes of the local temperature time series for a reference period). Future 675 mean thermal conditions at the focal cell L₂ (dotted red line, first column) move beyond the 676 upper thermal tolerance of the species and outside the bounds of historical local thermal 677 variability, suggesting a likely extirpation of the local population. On the other hand, the two 678 candidate target sites (L_3, L_4) within the dispersal range will develop analogue climates for 679 the species as their future thermal environments will be within the threshold (note that L₄ will 680 be a climate analogue only under one criterion). The selected target locality for the 681 calculation of the analogue velocity would be the geographically closest climate analogue to 682 the focal cell (L₃). Alternatively, cost-path analysis could be used instead of Euclidean

- 683 distances to reflect more realistically the influence of thermal gradients (climate connectivity)
- 684 and other non-climate factors on the dispersal route between present and future analogues.
- 685
- 686 Elements
- 687 Glossary
- 688 BOX 1. The ecological context of climate velocity
- 689 BOX 2. Caveats associated with climate velocity
- 690 BOX 3. Methodological considerations when applying climate velocity
- 691 BOX 4. A case study applying climate velocity, residence time and climate-velocity
- trajectories to the UK marine protected area network
- 693 SI Additional support figures and tables

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695 Glossary
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696 Bioclimatic or biotic velocity: Based on data from species' range shifts using climate 697 maps of suitable and unsuitable areas, biotic velocity estimates the rate at which species 698 must move to track their climate niche. For any species, it is calculated as the distance 699 between a site and the nearest location considered to be suitable for that species within its 700 future projected range [67, 86]. Biotic velocity has also been termed bioclimatic velocity [87]. 701 and calculated following the local climate velocity approach using species' suitability maps 702 instead of climate maps to obtain temporal trends and spatial gradients. Sometimes a 703 distinction is made between these terms based on whether ranges and habitat suitability for 704 the periods being analysed are projected or predicted [88].

705

Climate-analogue velocity: A climate-velocity metric that considers the distance between points at a particular point in time and their future climate analogues, divided by the time difference (Fig. 1B). There are two types: *forward analogue velocity*, which is the straightline speed and direction required to reach a given climate-analogue destination at some point in the future (usually a single destination for any origin under consideration); and *backward analogue velocity*, which considers a destination and asks which points (usually several) of origin might eventually feed into the destination.

713

714 Climate residence time: The amount of time necessary for a climate isoline to emerge from 715 a specific area (usually a protected area). It is estimated as the (equivalent) diameter of the 716 area divided by the mean climate velocity within that area [16].

717

718 Isoline: A line connecting points of equal value across space. Isoline, isocline, and isopleth719 are all synonyms.

720

Local climate velocity: The original climate-velocity metric [16] that has two main
 components in its calculation: a temporal trend and a spatial gradient, both for the same

- 723 climate variable (Fig. 1A). Local climate velocity is an estimate of the instantaneous climate
- velocity of an isoline at a location.

725 Box 1. The ecological context of climate velocity

726 Estimates of speed and direction associated with climate velocity can be conceptualized by 727 considering air temperature on land. Because air temperature decreases predictably with 728 elevation (~6.5°C per 1,000 m), as the climate warms, an organism at the bottom of a hill 729 tends to move uphill or to the nearest climate-analogue area to maintain its thermal 730 environment (i.e., short-distance dispersal). This would yield slow (low) climate velocities 731 (directed uphill or to the closest climate analogue area), because an organism does not 732 need to move far to maintain its thermal environment (Figure I blue arrow). Conversely, flat landscapes are more homogenous thermal environments, and an organism experiencing a 733 734 warming landscape might need to migrate a long way to remain in its original thermal 735 environment (i.e., long-distance dispersal). This would manifest as a high climate velocity 736 directed towards the nearest occurrence of the original temperature (Figure I red arrow).

737

Figure I. Understanding climate velocity on land.

739

740 How the distribution of a species responds to a gradual change in its climate space [89] 741 requires consideration of the relationship between a species' physiological tolerance and 742 range dynamics. This can be conceptualized in two ways: a representation of a species' 743 performance curve across a latitudinal gradient (Figure IIA), and a geographical 744 representation of species' distribution across a latitudinal gradient (Figure IIB). As climate warms, the initial location of the thermal performance curve will shift in space towards cooler 745 746 environments, commonly higher latitudes (Fig. IIA). This shift in climate, which can be 747 represented by climate velocity, will tend to cause geographic range shifts in species' 748 distribution (i.e., range expansions or contractions of local populations), as species maintain 749 their original thermal environment (Fig. IIB).

750

Figure II. (A) Simple bell-shaped curve for the relationship between species distribution and
 performance (probability of occurrence) across a latitudinal gradient under climate change.

(B) The distribution of a species showing separate populations (dark circles) across a
latitudinal gradient at two times. Local population contractions and expansions are observed
at each range edge at time *t*2.

757 Box 2. Caveats associated with climate velocity

758 **Climate velocity is not species movement.** When discussing climate velocity, it is 759 sometimes easy to fall into the trap of making unsupported claims about species movement. 760 A range-edge might be more likely to move if it is near the species' thermal maximum, but 761 other responses to climate change are possible, including behavioural modification and 762 genetic selection, which are more important in species with limited capacity to disperse.

763

764 The fractional nature of the local climate velocity metric can be misleading. Because 765 local climate velocity is the ratio of the temporal trend over the spatial gradient in climate, 766 small and biologically irrelevant temporal trends over vanishingly small spatial gradients can 767 lead to high local climate velocities. Imagine two different locations on the Earth's surface, 768 one of which warms by 0.1°C over a given time, and the other by 1°C over the corresponding 769 period. Further imagine that tracking the 0.1°C change experienced at the first location 770 requires moving 100 km, while tracking the 1°C change at the second location requires 771 moving 50 km. The first location has twice the climate velocity of the second, but it ignores 772 the magnitude of change at the location itself, which can sometimes be a better index of the 773 need for a range shift.

774

775 Climate velocity currently has no standard measure of uncertainty. There are many 776 potential sources of uncertainty in estimates of climate velocity that are usually 777 unacknowledged. These include (but are not limited to): (a) error in the gridded climate 778 metrics that affect estimates of spatial gradient and temporal trend in the climate variable, 779 and (b) variability both within individual climate projections (model runs) and among climate 780 projections (different general circulation models and representative concentration 781 pathways). Schliep et al. [90] go beyond the conventional finite-difference approach to 782 climate velocity explained here by modelling temperature (as an example of a climate 783 variable) as a function of both space and time within a stochastic Bayesian framework. This 784 allows the quantification of variability associated with simultaneous estimates of spatial

gradients and temporal trends in temperature (i.e., uncertainty source (a) above). Although
this process is numerically complex and computationally demanding, it is an important first
step in quantifying uncertainty. Accounting for remaining sources of uncertainty require
further research.

789

790 **Climate velocity does not include biological information.** In its simplest form, climate 791 velocity does not include biological information such as dispersal potential of species, 792 landscape permeability, habitat suitability, or species interactions. This lack of biological 793 information means that climate velocities are general; any increase in biological realism 794 reduces this generality (see Section *1. Tailoring climate velocity to be more biologically 795 meaningful*).

797 Box 3. Methodological considerations when applying climate velocity

798 Which environmental variables?

Most analyses of climate velocity have used temperature, as it influences species' distributions on land, in freshwater, and in the ocean. Temperature is a particularly strong environmental driver in the ocean because it is correlated with nutrient availability, thereby also controlling system structure and function [14]. But climate velocity can be applied to any environmental variable. For example, on land, climate-velocity analyses have often included rainfall because the distribution and productivity of plant communities is regulated by water availability.

806

807 When applying climate velocity to a new environmental variable, one should consider the 808 functional relationship between the environmental driver and its biological response. Climate 809 velocity might have ecological relevance for a variable where the relationship with biological 810 performance is symmetrical (Box 1), but might not if it is a step function. For example, most 811 marine life cannot survive oxygen concentrations <2 mg.l⁻¹, and tracking this "threshold" 812 oxygen isoline might be more informative than estimating climate velocity for all isotherms, 813 most of which are not ecologically relevant. Technically this is just the analogue velocity of 814 a single isoline.

815

Finally, most environmental variables are represented in climate-velocity analyses using summary statistics, and their selection warrants careful consideration. For example, annual mean values might better predict shifts over the entire species' ranges, while extreme values might be more appropriate at range edges. Similarly, bottom temperatures are more appropriate than surface temperatures for bottom-dwelling marine species [21]. The often unacknowledged uncertainties associated with data products should also be considered (Box 2).

823

824 What time scales?

825 Climate velocity is best suited to studies of climate-change impacts, which by definition, 826 implies time scales of decades or longer.

827

828 What space scales?

829 Climate velocity has been applied to gridded environmental data at spatial scales from ~1 830 km to ~110 km. On land, most applications have used a fine spatial resolution (e.g., a few 831 kilometres [26], [32]), reflecting the importance of terrain on microclimates and organism 832 dispersal [29]. By contrast, analyses in the ocean have used a coarser spatial resolution 833 (e.g., a hundred kilometres), not only because fine-scale data are not always available, but 834 because there are fewer dispersal barriers [91] so organisms disperse further, and because 835 microclimates might be less important [92]. However, shallow-water and seafloor 836 communities are structured more by biological than environmental processes [93], 837 suggesting the need for finer-scale analyses. It might be desirable in some instances to 838 match the spatial resolution to climate turnover, so that the spatial resolution might be finer 839 around mountains than plains, and coastally than in the open ocean. Irrespective, coarser 840 spatial resolution leads to greater climate velocity because it averages over fine-scale 841 variation [32].

842

843 Combining environmental variables?

844 Climate velocity has usually been applied to an individual variable. When considering 845 multiple variables (e.g., temperature and rainfall), these have generally been treated 846 separately as independent drivers of species movement [17, 26, 32]. However, Hamann et 847 al. [28] developed a multivariate approach to climate-analogue velocity based on a Principal 848 Components Analysis of multiple metrics (e.g., minimum, maximum, mean) of temperature 849 and rainfall. This approach has the benefit of considering the multivariate movement of 850 climate space, but at the cost of complicating interpretation. Moreover, multivariate climate-851 analogue velocities are likely to be higher than corresponding univariate estimates [28, 34], 852 since finding similar multivariate climates will often require a large search radius (i.e., similar

853 rainfall is likely to be found closer than similar rainfall and temperature combined). The 854 magnitude of this effect can be mitigated by relaxing assumptions defining analogue 855 climates (e.g., expanding bandwidth to incorporate more climate variability [67]). Multivariate 856 local climate velocity could be calculated by applying vector algebra to multiple univariate 857 estimates of local climate velocity. For example, if there were two univariate climate 858 velocities (e.g., temperature and rainfall) in opposing directions and equal in magnitude they 859 would cancel. However, in general, the new multivariate climate space would not be the 860 same as the original. This divergence in angles of such univariate estimates can be 861 considered as a measure of climate stress on an organism and has provided insight into 862 potential ecological responses to multivariate climate change [30].

864 Box 4. A case study applying climate velocity, residence time and climate-velocity

865 trajectories to the UK marine protected area network

866 To illustrate the utility of climate velocity to networks of marine protected areas (MPA), we 867 examine climate conditions across the network in UK territorial waters for past (1960-2009) 868 and future (2006-2050) climate at 1° spatial resolution. Past and future local climate 869 velocities were calculated, respectively, from annual mean sea surface temperatures (SSTs) 870 from the Hadley Centre data set HadISST 1.1 and a multi-model ensemble for the IPCC 871 RCP8.5 climate pathway [94]. Climate velocities were calculated for both periods as cell 872 ratios of the local temporal trend (slope from the linear regression of annual SST over time) 873 to the (3x3) spatial gradient based on average annual mean SSTs [18]. Local climate 874 velocity associated with the MPA network over the past 50 years in UK waters shows strong 875 contrasts between western and eastern halves of the UK Exclusive Economic Zone (Figure 876 IA). However, both sides are projected to have similar magnitudes of local climate velocity 877 by 2050, because of a general decrease in local climate velocity in the North Sea and local 878 increases on the western side (Figure IB). The large spatial variability in local climate velocity 879 will require species responding to climate change to shift their distribution up to 10 times 880 faster or slower depending on the location of the MPA within the network.

881

On the other hand, climate residence time shows high variation across the UK MPA network for both periods (Figure IC,D). MPAs along the west coast of Scotland are predicted to register largest reductions in residence time, while those within the Irish Sea and north of the Strait of Dover are predicted to increase. Reduction of residence time suggests reduced viability of a protected area as the rate of change in conditions within the area increases, potentially compromising local adaptation to climate change, especially of range-restricted species, while facilitating the establishment of immigrant and invasive species [95].

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890 Climate-velocity trajectories over the past 50 years are generally directed poleward along 891 the English coast (Figure IE), suggesting that the coastal network currently exhibits good

892 connectivity (MPAs in the north should receive climate migrants from those in the south as 893 temperature warms). However, climate-velocity trajectories until 2050, as projected from 894 RCP8.5, show a different pattern on the east coast of the UK, where thermal niches move 895 offshore into the North Sea towards Scandinavia (Figure IF). This scenario suggests that 896 littoral species on this coast might be forced to adapt in situ, because they become 897 disconnected from their current thermal niches. This could have management implications, 898 especially for smaller protected areas on the east coast of Scotland, where residence times 899 will continue to be short. Here, the possibility of assisted migration and translocations of 900 species of concern might be considered.

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Figure I. A case study illustrating the application of (A, B) local climate velocity, (C, D) residence time, and (E, F) climate trajectories. (A, C, E) past (1960-2009) and (B, D, F) future (2006-2050) climate conditions across the MPA network in UK territorial waters (dashed line). For each MPA centroid (points on the maps), we show the expected thermal shift by projecting its SST in time following the speed and direction of local climate velocities (VoCC) at each cell.