

1 **Estuarine sediment resuspension and acidification: release behaviour of**
2 **contaminants under different oxidation levels and acid sources**

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10
11 **Highlights**

- 12 • Trace element release under resuspension conditions from anoxic and oxic sediment
13 • Experimental and modelled release under HNO₃ and CO₂ conditions at pH = 6.5
14 • CO₂ acidification enhances contaminant mobility under slightly acidic scenarios
15 • The sediment resuspension mobilises more Pb than acidification at pH = 7.0

16
17 **Keywords:** Kinetic modelling; HNO₃ and CO₂ acidification; contaminant release;
18 resuspension; pH-static leaching; oxic and anoxic sediment.

19
20 **Abstract**

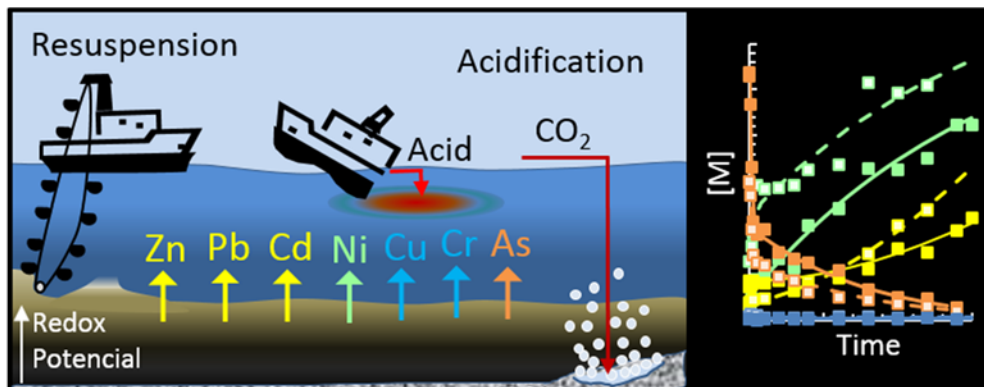
21 Carbon dioxide (CO₂) Capture and Storage (CCS) is a technology to reduce the
22 emissions of this gas to the atmosphere by sequestering it in geological formations. In
23 the case of offshore storage, unexpected CO₂ leakages will acidify the marine
24 environment. Reductions of the pH might be also caused by anthropogenic activities or
25 natural events such as acid spills and dredging operations or storms and floods. Changes

26 in the pH of the marine environment will trigger the mobilisation of elements trapped in
27 contaminated shallow sediments with unclear redox boundary. Trace element (As, Cd,
28 Cr, Cu, Ni, Pb and Zn) release from anoxic and oxic estuarine sediment is analysed and
29 modelled under different laboratory acidification conditions using HNO₃ (l) and
30 CO₂ (g): acidification at pH = 6.5 as worst-case scenario in events of CO₂ leakages and
31 acid spills, and acidification at pH = 7.0 as a seawater scenario under CO₂ leakages,
32 acid spills, as well as sediment resuspension. The prediction of metal leaching
33 behaviour appear to require sediment specific and site specific tools. In the present work
34 it is demonstrated that the proposed three in-series reactions model predicts the process
35 kinetics of the studied elements under different simulated environmental conditions
36 (oxidation levels and acid sources). Differences between HNO₃ and CO₂ acidification
37 are analysed through the influence of the CO₂ gas on the ionic competition of the
38 medium. The acidification with CO₂ provokes higher released concentrations from the
39 oxic sediment than from the anoxic sediment, except in the case of Zn, which influences
40 the release of the other studied elements. Slight acidification can endanger the aquatic
41 environment through an important mobilisation of contaminants. The obtained
42 prediction of the contaminant release from sediment (kinetic parameters and maximum
43 concentrations) can contribute to the exposure assessment stage for risk management
44 and preincidental planning in accidental CO₂ leakages and chemical spills scenarios.

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51 **Graphical Abstract**

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56 **1. INTRODUCTION**

57 The Carbon dioxide (CO₂) Capture and Storage (CCS) technology will play an
58 important role in climate change mitigation while the global economy continues based
59 on fossil fuels (IEA, 2013; Sheppard and Socolow, 2007). However, it is still perceived
60 as technically and economically risky. Cost reduction can be achieved through
61 innovation, exploitability of economies of scale and sharing infrastructures. This
62 scenario would allow this technology for helping to meet the climate change targets into
63 the 2030s and beyond. However, the CCS can enter to the market only once the overall
64 risk involved is reduced (Gammer, 2016; IEA, 2013).

65

66 During the injection stage of CCS, potential CO₂ leakages from the storage sites would
67 expose the ecosystem to unprecedented changes. In addition to the potential negative
68 effects on health and environment, the public perception of the implementation of this
69 technology might highly condition its industrial application (Benson and Cole, 2008;
70 IPIECA, 2003; PTECO₂, 2014). In order to establish a risk management procedure
71 which contributes to the safety of the CCS projects, the determination of contaminant

72 mobility (kinetic) and availability (maximum released concentration from the solid
73 matrix in contact as caprock formations, sediment or marshes) under different
74 acidification events need to be assessed.

75

76 Coastal and estuarine sediments are an essential part of the aquatic systems and can act
77 as a sink for contaminants discharged to the environment (Kalnejais et al., 2015).
78 Unexpected CO₂ leakages from CCS offshore storage sites will acidify the marine
79 environment and trigger the mobilisation of contaminants previously trapped within
80 sediments, endangering the aquatic medium (de Orte et al., 2014; Martín-Torre et al.,
81 2015a; Roberts et al., 2013; Rodríguez-Romero et al., 2014).

82

83 Additionally, the resuspension of sediments also reduces the pH of the medium due to
84 the oxidation process, causing the mobilisation of contaminants (Calmano et al., 1993;
85 Cappuyns et al., 2014). These resuspension conditions, which are usually uncontrolled
86 and unavoidable (Pourabadehei and Mulligan, 2016, Simpson et al., 1998), might be
87 caused by natural events or human activities (Eggleton and Thomas, 2004; Xu et al.,
88 2015).

89

90 Seawater acidification processes enhance the solubility of most trace metals and
91 increase their bioavailability for uptake by organisms because of the influence of pH
92 on the dissolved organic matter, dissolution of carbonate, sulphide and iron
93 (oxy)hydroxide minerals, adsorption/desorption surface reactions and ion exchange
94 (Dooley et al., 2009; Kharaka et al., 2010; Millero et al., 2009; Zheng et al., 2009).

95

96 Sequential extraction procedures which are designed to differentiate between fractions,
97 have been commonly applied to evaluate the redistribution of metals in their
98 (operationally defined) binding phases and can give an indication of the ‘pools’ of
99 heavy metals that are potentially available under changing environmental conditions.
100 However, the metal-binding phases are defined operationally, so real chemical species
101 of metals cannot be clearly determined and sequential extraction procedures generally
102 possess a low reproducibility (Ho et al., 2012); In addition, significant discrepancies
103 have been observed between extractable pools of different element due to the
104 differences in extraction procedures and natural conditions (Cappuyns et al., 2007; Cai
105 et al., 2016; Choppala et al., 2017).

106

107 Considering that CO₂-induced acidification can provoke the disappearance of the
108 macrobenthic community at pH = 6.0 (Almagro-Pastor et al., 2015) and that a pH value
109 of 6.5 might be expected as the ‘worst-case’ scenario in cases of CO₂ leakages from
110 storage sites, a pH value of 6.5 is chosen to address element release from a sediment
111 with different levels of oxidation. This scenario has been previously studied in relation
112 to the impact acidification assessment (Riba López et al., 2010; Wang et al., 2015).

113

114 Although the sediment redox potential can widely vary from -250 or -300 mV to 400-
115 700 mV (Popenda, 2014; Ye et al., 2013), surface sediments (2 - 5 mm) are oxic
116 (Kristensen, 2000; Williamson et al., 1999) and they become suboxic at greater depths
117 due to the coexistence of mixtures of oxic and anoxic processes, bioturbation and
118 seasonal variations that make the redox boundaries unclear (Atkinson et al., 2007;
119 Burdige, 1993; Williamson et al., 1999). Considering that the upper layers of the
120 sediment might be the first affected by changes in the aquatic environment and that the

121 oxidation level within sediments might vary over short periods of time, the redox
122 potential of the sediment matrix is expected to influence the release behaviour of
123 contaminants (Cappuyens and Swennen, 2005; Kalnejais et al., 2015; Lions et al., 2014).
124 In this way, the redox potential and pH are the two primary factors controlling the
125 release of trace metals from sediments (Frohne et al., 2011; Fonti et al., 2013; Choppala
126 et al., 2017).

127

128 The pH dependence leaching test with continuous pH control (CEN/TS 14997: 2006
129 standard, superseded by EN14997: 2015) has been previously used to assess
130 contaminant release from sediment under different types of acidification (Martín-Torre
131 et al., 2015b and Martín-Torre et al., 2016). Moreover, and owing to the huge number of
132 complex reactions involved in contaminant mobilisation from sediment matrices, a
133 general mathematical model has been proposed to fit experimental release over time
134 (Martín-Torre et al., 2015b). However, a comparative analysis and modelling of element
135 release under different types of acidification conditions and sediments with different
136 levels of oxidation has not been addressed, to the best of our knowledge.

137

138 The main purpose of this article is the analysis and modelling of the release of As, Cd,
139 Cr, Cu, Ni, Pb and Zn under different conditions of acidification and oxidation levels
140 from estuarine contaminated sediment. Hence, the release of trace elements from anoxic
141 and oxic sediment is addressed under resuspension conditions in order to analyse the pH
142 range of variation and the trace element mobilisation. Afterwards, the comparative
143 leaching behaviour of contaminants from anoxic and oxic sediment is assessed using
144 HNO₃ or CO₂ at pH = 6.5. Finally, the leaching behaviour of the trace elements from
145 anoxic sediment is compared under resuspension and acidification situations obtained

146 by the addition of HNO₃ or CO₂ at the minimum pH value achieved by the resuspension
147 experiments (pH = 7.0).

148

149 **2. EXPERIMENTAL METHODOLOGY**

150 The sediment samples were collected in the Suances estuary, inside a potential site for
151 CO₂ storage in the Cantabrian region (Northern Spain) (BOE, 2008). Shallow sediment
152 (0-5 cm) with its initial water content was sampled using a plastic paddle, sieved
153 through a 2-mm plastic mesh, homogenised and frozen until use.

154

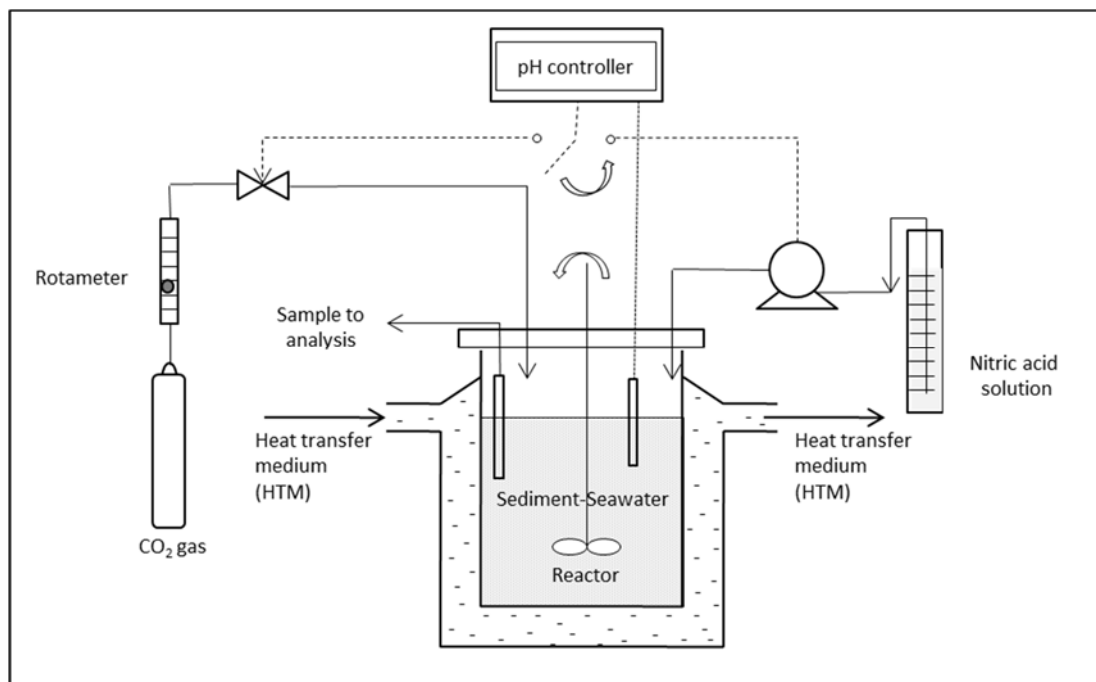
155 When the leaching tests were performed with anoxic sediment (-168 ± 7.00 mV), the
156 selected sediment samples were used the day after being unfrozen. Oxic sediment
157 samples (27.0 ± 37.0 mV) were achieved after some weeks stored in the fridge. In this
158 period of time, the initially anoxic sediment was oxidised leading to a pH reduction and
159 an increase in redox potential. Upon oxidation, among other changes in the speciation
160 and binding of metals, sulphides were partially converted to sulphate and to
161 intermediary oxidised sulphur compounds (Calmano et al., 1993; Cappuyns and
162 Swennen, 2006; Tack et al., 1997). Therefore, the colour of the sediment also changed
163 (from very dark brown to brownish). It is important to highlight that the terms ‘anoxic’
164 and ‘oxic’ refer to the initial state of the sediment, because the oxidation of the sediment
165 was allowed over the time of assay.

166

167 As explained in Martín-Torre et al. (2015b), the main crystalline phases of the used
168 sediment are quartz, aluminium oxide, calcite and dolomite. The total concentrations of
169 Zn, Pb, Cd, Ni, Cr, Cu and As are 5220 ± 140 , 564 ± 2.22 , 12.6 ± 0.732 , 36.0 ± 1.86 ,
170 72.0 ± 5.31 , 48.0 ± 3.13 and 59.0 ± 1.39 mg/kg, respectively.

171 The modified pH dependence leaching tests performed in this work were based on the
172 CEN/TS 14997: 2006 standard although some modifications such as the particle size,
173 the leaching agent and the duration of the experiment were undertaken. The
174 experimental equipment consisted of a glass-made 2-L jacketed vessel and a
175 temperature controller (Polyscience) in order to perform all the assays at a temperature
176 of 20 °C. The operation of the equipment when HNO₃ was used to acidify the medium
177 is already published in Martín-Torre et al., 2015b. When the acidification was provoked
178 by the addition of CO₂, the pH controller (AT Control systems) injected pure CO₂
179 bubbles as needed to maintain the set point pH of the assay, with a hysteresis of 0.1 pH
180 units (Martín-Torre et al., 2016). In the resuspension assays, the pH was measured
181 continuously but without any control. A schematic figure of the three possibilities of the
182 experimental equipment is shown in Fig. 1. In all the cases, the pH electrode used was
183 suitable for samples with suspended solids and calibrated against standard solutions.

184



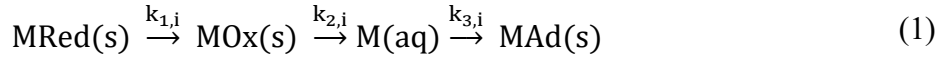
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186 Fig. 1. Experimental equipment used in the pH-static leaching tests with continuous pH
187 control. Depending on the position of the switch, the addition of CO₂, HNO₃ or of none
188 of them (resuspension assay) was allowed.

189 Seawater and sediment were placed in the reactor at the Liquid to Solid (L/S) ratio of 10
190 and taking into consideration the moisture of the sediment, according to the standard. In
191 all the assays, the mixture was shaken for 15 minutes before the beginning of the assay
192 in order to homogenise it. Resuspension assays lasted 288 hours, when the value of the
193 pH was almost constant. Assays conducted at pH = 6.5 using HNO₃ lasted 96 hours
194 whereas assays acidified by CO₂ lasted between 288 and 360 hours, depending on the
195 oxidation level of the sediment, until reaching constant pH. Samples of the mixture
196 were taken at 0, 0.5, 1, 3, 6, 12, 24, 48, 72, 96 h and afterwards for every 48 hours
197 without interrupting the shaking of the medium. The redox potential was measured
198 continuously during the experiment by a Basic 20 pH metre (Crison) with a special
199 electrode for samples with suspended solids. Samples were filtered through a 0.45- μ m
200 pore size nitrocellulose filtration membrane and HNO₃-acidified to analyse the
201 dissolved concentrations of the selected trace elements by an Agilent 7500CE ICP-MS
202 equipment in helium-collision mode. The detection limits for the elements under study
203 (Zn, Pb, Cd, Ni, Cr, Cu and As) were 0.750; 0.0200; 0.0600; 0.230; 0.0300; 0.210 and
204 0.160 μ g/L, respectively. Before the experiments, all the used material was precleaned,
205 acid washed (10 % HNO₃) and rinsed with Milli-Q water (Direct-Q 5 UV, Merck
206 Millipore). All the experiments were performed in duplicate.

207

208 In this study, the kinetic model proposed by Martín-Torre et al. (2015b) was used. The
209 model considers that the contaminant (M) is associated with an oxidised fraction of the
210 sediment (MO_x) and with a reduced fraction (MRed), that must be oxidised before the
211 release of the element. It also considers an adsorption/precipitation (MAd) reaction in
212 series. The reaction scheme and the integral expression of the mass balance assuming
213 first order reactions are shown in Eqs. 1 - 2, respectively.



$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\text{LS}}{1000} [M]_i = & \left(\frac{k_{1,i} k_{2,i} [\text{MRed}]_{i,0}}{(k_{2,i} - k_{1,i})(k_{3,i} - k_{1,i})} \right) \exp(-k_{1,i}t) \\ & + \left(\frac{k_{1,i} k_{2,i} [\text{MRed}]_{i,0}}{(k_{1,i} - k_{2,i})(k_{3,i} - k_{2,i})} - \frac{k_{2,i} [\text{MOx}]_{i,0}}{(k_{2,i} - k_{3,i})} \right) \exp(-k_{2,i}t) \\ & + \left(\frac{\text{LS} [M]_{i,0}}{1000} + \frac{k_{2,i} [\text{MOx}]_{i,0}}{(k_{2,i} - k_{3,i})} \right. \\ & \left. + \frac{k_{2,i} k_{1,i} [\text{MRed}]_{i,0}}{(k_{1,i} - k_{3,i})(k_{2,i} - k_{3,i})} \right) \exp(-k_{3,i}t) \end{aligned} \quad (2)$$

215

216 where LS corresponds to the Liquid/Solid ratio of the experiment, $[M]_{i,0}$ is the
 217 concentration of element i in the liquid phase at $t = 0$ expressed in units of $\mu\text{g/L}$,
 218 $[\text{MRed}]_{i,0}$ and $[\text{MOx}]_{i,0}$ are the maximum concentration (mg/kg) of the element i that
 219 can be released in the proposed leaching test from the reduced and oxidised fractions of
 220 the sediment respectively, and t is the reaction time. It should be noted that these
 221 concentrations are those available in the experimental conditions under study and do not
 222 have to match with the maximum extractable concentrations in each fraction.

223

224 The modelling of this study and the estimation of the corresponding parameters were
 225 completed using the Aspen Custom Modeler software which solves rigorous models and
 226 simultaneously estimates parameters. The adjustment of the model parameters was
 227 performed using the NL2SOL algorithm for the least-square minimization of the
 228 deviation between the experimental results and simulated data.

229

230 **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

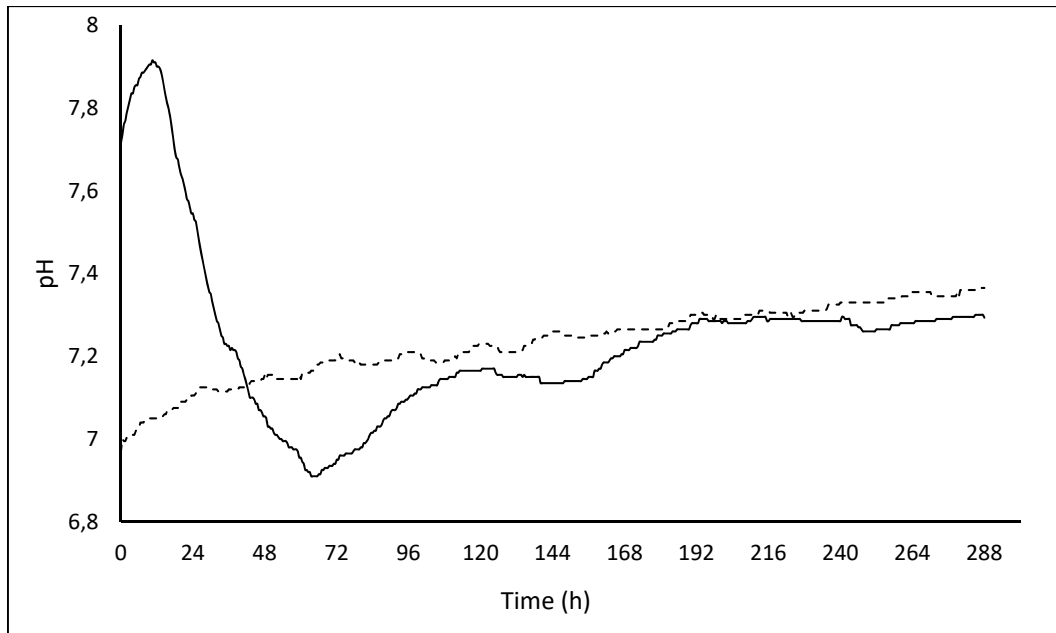
231 The average value of the experimental results obtained for the release of Zn, Pb, Cd, Ni,
232 As, Cu and Cr from the different experiments carried out in this work and the error bars
233 between both replicates are shown in Fig. 2a, 2b and 2c. The relative error between both
234 replicates under the same leaching conditions is lower than 20 % for any of the studied
235 elements. Errors lower than 10 % are shown for the near half (49.56 %) of the
236 experimental results obtained from assays with pH control; under resuspension
237 conditions higher experimental variability is shown because the slight different
238 behaviour of pH with time in each replicate.

239

240 **3.1. Resuspension conditions**

241 Under sediment-seawater resuspension conditions the pH is allowed to vary over time
242 (Fig. 3). When anoxic sediment is used, the initial pH of the sediment-seawater mixture
243 is 7.72. During the first 10.5 hours of the assay the pH increases and reaches a
244 maximum value of 7.92. Afterwards, the pH decreases likely because the acid
245 producing capacity resulting from the oxidation of reduced compounds is higher than
246 the acid neutralising capacity of the mixture (Cappuyns and Swennen, 2005; Eggleton
247 and Thomas, 2004; Ho et al., 2012; Hwang et al., 2011). The minimum value
248 (pH = 6.91) occurs at t = 64 h. There is a subsequent increase of the pH value likely
249 because there are not more oxidation reactions and there are still buffer components,
250 like CaCO₃, in the medium; at t = 288 h the pH reaches a value of 7.30. The mixture of
251 oxic sediment-seawater has an initial pH of 6.97. The pH increases over time, being the
252 final measured pH value of 7.37. In both cases (anoxic and oxic sediment) the final pH
253 of the sediment-seawater mixture takes a similar value (7.34 ± 0.0350).

254



255

256 Fig. 3. Experimental pH evolution over time under resuspension conditions using
 257 anoxic and oxic sediment: — anoxic sediment; --- oxic sediment

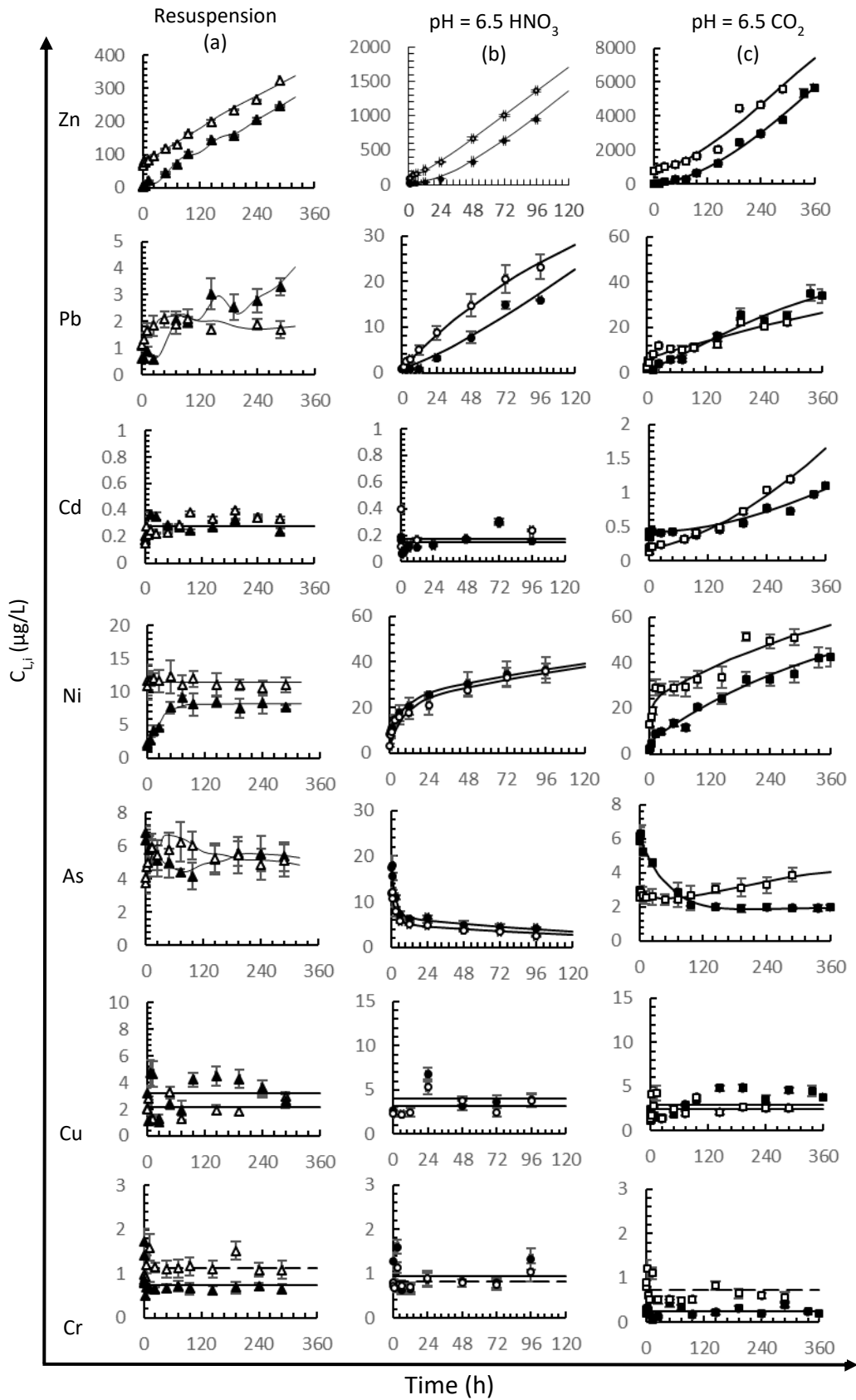
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259 Element release models that include pH instead of other explanatory variables such as
 260 the redox potential shows a slightly better explaining power (Schul-Zunkel et al., 2015).
 261 The pH of the resuspension assays varies over time so it has to be fitted to polynomial
 262 equations before being introduced in the kinetic model, as shown in the Section 1 of the
 263 Supplementary Information.

264

265 Fig. 2a shows the trace element experimental release ($C_{L,i}$) over time under resuspension
 266 conditions for assays with anoxic and oxic sediment. Considering the concentrations of
 267 Cd, Cu and Cr in the used seawater (0.481 ± 1.02 , 1.62 ± 1.03 and 0.718 ± 0.418 $\mu\text{g/L}$,
 268 respectively) and their low release ($0.149 - 0.394$; $0.510 - 1.73$ and $1.00 - 4.74$ $\mu\text{g/L}$,
 269 respectively) independently of the sediment level of oxidation, their mobilisation from
 270 the sediment is considered negligible and these elements are not modelled. The main
 271 reason for this behaviour might be the high insolubility of their salts. In the case of Ni,
 272 there is a fast release, higher from the oxic sediment than from the anoxic one. Hence, at

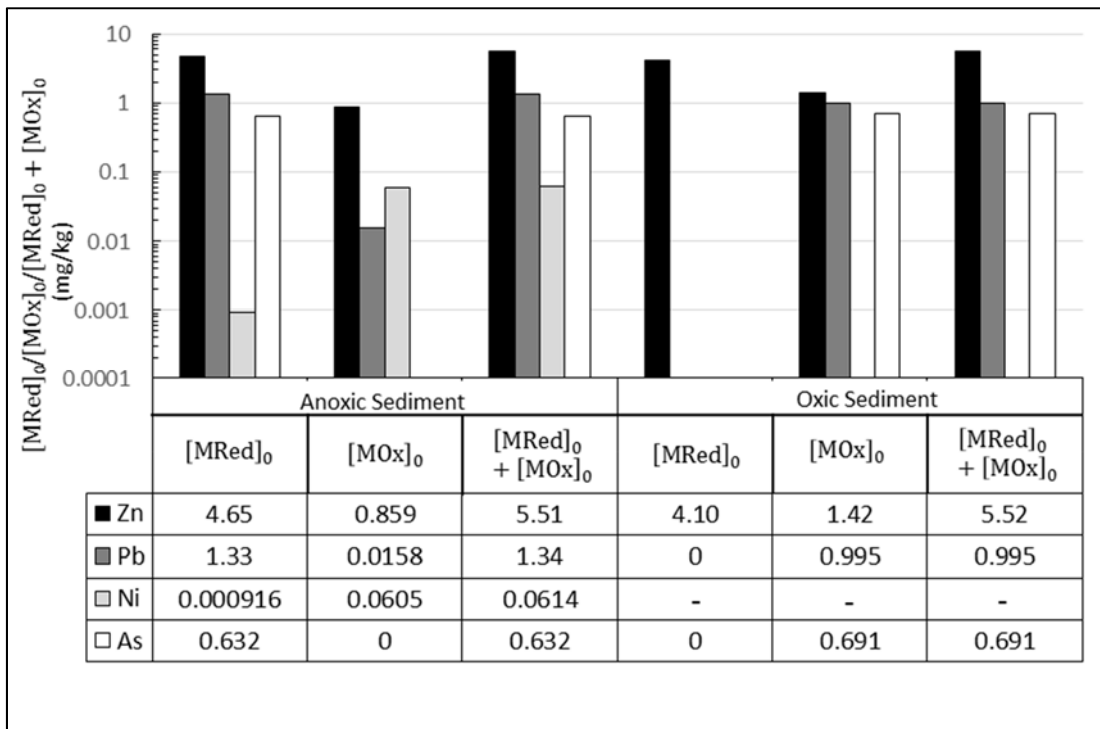
273 t = 0 h and when oxic sediment is used, all the Ni that can be leached from the sediment
274 is already in the liquid phase. As a consequence of this rapid release, it is not possible to
275 determine the kinetic parameters of the mathematical model. Zn shows a similar release
276 behaviour from both sediments, although leached concentrations from oxic sediment are
277 higher during the whole assay. On the contrary, the release of As and Pb does not
278 present a clear trend.
279



280
 281 Fig. 2. Experimental and modelled concentration ($C_{L,i}$) over time under (a)
 282 resuspension, (b) HNO₃ and (c) CO₂ acidified at pH = 6.5 conditions using anoxic and
 283 oxic sediment: ▲ resuspension with anoxic sediment; △ resuspension with oxic
 284 sediment; ● pH = 6.5, HNO₃ acidified with anoxic sediment; ○ pH = 6.5, HNO₃

285 acidified with oxic sediment; ■ pH = 6.5, CO₂ acidified with anoxic sediment; □
 286 pH = 6.5, CO₂ acidified with oxic sediment, — modelled curve for anoxic sediment;
 287 — modelled curve for oxic sediment. Error bars between both experimental replicates
 288 are also shown.
 289

290 In Fig. 4 the maximum concentrations, under resuspension conditions, that can be
 291 leached from the reduced ([MRed]₀) and oxidised ([MOx]₀) fraction of the sediment, as
 292 well as the sum of the maximum concentrations that can be leached from both fractions
 293 of the sediment ($C_{s,0} = [MRed]_0 + [MOx]_0$), are shown.



294
 295 Fig. 4. Maximum concentrations that can be leached from the reduced and oxidised
 296 fractions of the anoxic and oxic sediment under resuspension conditions. [MRed]₀ and
 297 [MOx]₀ are the reduced and oxidised fractions of the sediment, respectively.
 298

299 As expected, the element concentrations that can be leached from the oxidised fraction
 300 are higher in assays using oxic sediment than when anoxic sediment is selected. In
 301 addition, the contaminant concentrations leached from the reduced fraction of the
 302 sediment are higher in assays using anoxic sediment. The maximum release ($C_{s,0}$) of Zn
 303 and As is slightly higher when the oxic sediment is used likely because of the
 304 transformation of the stable metal sulphides into more labile binding positions during

305 the oxidation process of the sediment (Calmano et al., 1993). On the contrary, Pb
306 mobilisation is higher from the anoxic sediment.
307 Considering that the pH is not constant in the resuspension assay, kinetic parameters
308 which depend on the pH ($k_{j,i}$) have to be correlated with this variable following a
309 second order polynomial equation, obtaining the kinetic and statistical parameters
310 shown in Table 1.

311 Table 1. Coefficients of the second order equations that correlate kinetic rate coefficients with the pH under resuspension conditions.

312

Trace element	Sediment	$k_{1,i} = n_{1,i} \text{pH}^2 + m_{1,i} \text{pH} + p_{1,i}$			$k_{2,i} = n_{2,i} \text{pH}^2 + m_{2,i} \text{pH} + p_{2,i}$			$k_{3,i} = n_{3,i} \text{pH}^2 + m_{3,i} \text{pH} + p_{3,i}$		
		$n_{1,i}$	$m_{1,i}$	$p_{1,i}$	$n_{2,i}$	$m_{2,i}$	$p_{2,i}$	$n_{3,i}$	$m_{3,i}$	$p_{3,i}$
Zn	Anoxic and oxic	0.00323	-0.042	0.143	0.0175	-0.261	0.978	-	-	-
Pb	Anoxic	0.00332	-0.0431	0.143	0.00476	-0.0705	0.261	-	-	-
	Oxic				0.00484	-0.0711	0.261	-	-	-
Cd	Oxic	0.0037	-0.0457	0.148	0.0173	-0.0668	0.509	-	-	-
Ni	Anoxic	0.00332	-0.0435	0.147	0.0158	-0.263	1.11	-	-	-
As	Anoxic	0.00513	-0.0735	0.265	0.0105	-0.122	0.358	0.0237	-0.342	1.25
	Oxic				0.0428	-0.622	2.26	0.0869	-1.23	4.36
Percentage variation explained (R²)							99.23			
Relative standard deviation (RSD in %)							6.03			

313

314

315

316 For all the trace elements under study and both types of sediment, the parameters to
317 correlate the kinetic rate of the oxidation reaction ($k_{1,i}$) take the same value than those
318 obtained in assays using HNO_3 (Martín-Torre et al., 2015b). The release kinetic
319 parameters ($k_{2,i}$) does not present a common trend for the elements under study likely
320 due to the ionic competition occurs in the sediment-seawater system. The oxyanion As
321 is the only trace element with an adsorption/precipitation reaction ($k_{3,i} \neq 0$). The
322 modelled curves under resuspension conditions, shown in Fig. 2a, correlate reasonably
323 well ($R^2 = 99.2\%$, $\text{RSD} = 6.03\%$) with the experimental results.

324

325 **3.2. Acidified conditions at pH = 6.5 with HNO_3 and CO_2**

326 As shown in Fig. 2b and 2c, the mobilisation of Cu and Cr at pH = 6.5 with both types
327 of acidification and the release of Cd in assays using HNO_3 are almost constant and
328 lower than $5\ \mu\text{g/L}$. Similarly to resuspension conditions, taking into account the initial
329 concentration in the seawater, their release is considered negligible.

330

331 Independently of the type of acidification, the initial delay of Zn, Pb and Cd is shorter
332 when the oxic sediment is used likely because there is a higher concentration of each
333 element in the oxidised fraction, which is released before that from the reduced fraction
334 of the sediment. The release of Ni seems not to be depend on the acid used due to the
335 similar leaching behaviour in both assays.

336

337 The initial release rate of Zn, Pb and Ni is higher from oxic sediments than from anoxic
338 sediments, except in the case of Ni in assays by using HNO_3 , in which the mobilisation
339 rate from both types of sediment is similar. Initially, arsenic shows a higher release
340 from the anoxic sediment. In the case of HNO_3 acidification, the mobilisation of As at

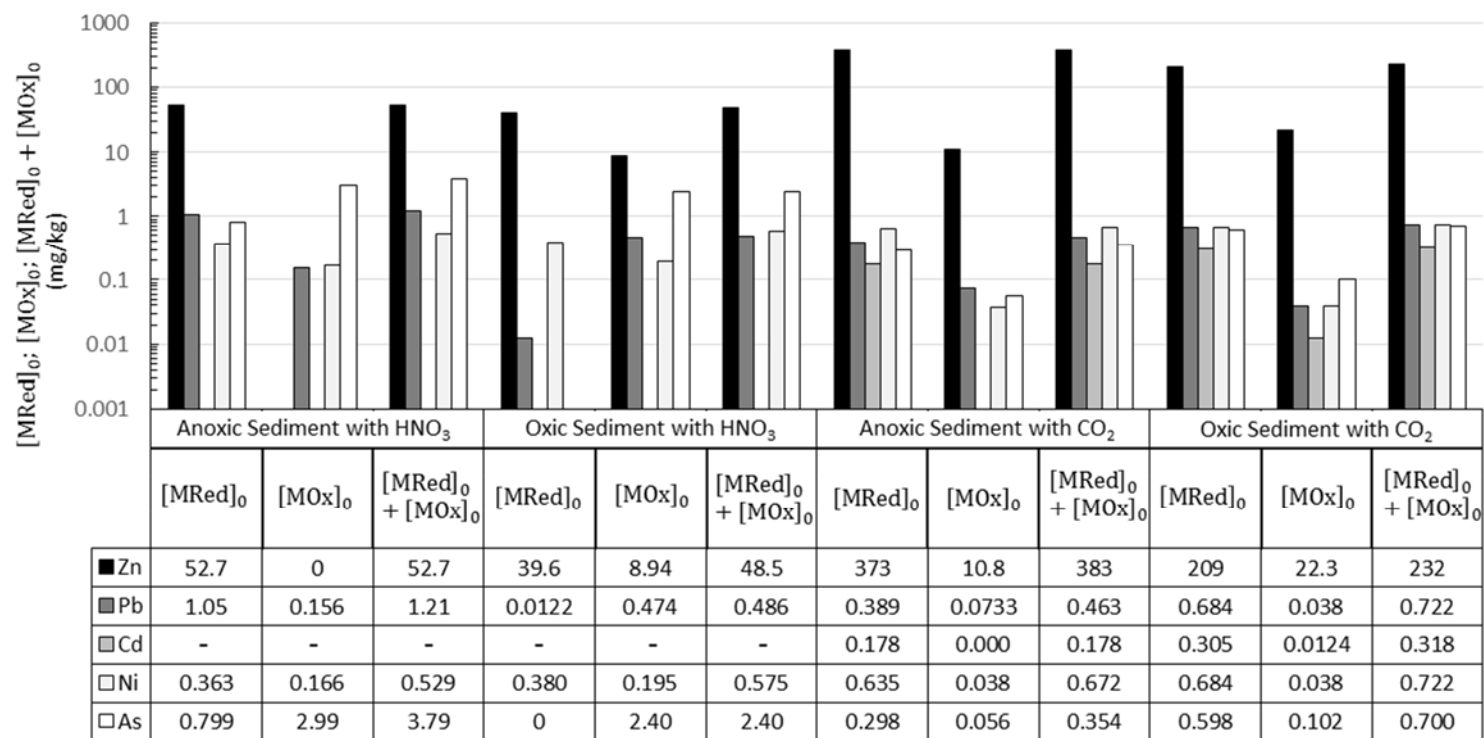
341 short times ($t < 6$ h) is higher than its release in CO₂ assays; however, as the following
342 adsorption is also higher, the final release of As is almost coincident in all the studied
343 cases (lower than 4.00 µg/L).

344

345 Regarding the acidification with HNO₃, the contaminant release patterns are similar
346 independently of the level of oxidation of the sediment although the release rates differ
347 significantly. In the case of CO₂ acidification, only the release of Zn and Ni follow the
348 same pattern for both sediments used (oxic and anoxic). At $t = 96$ h, there is a higher
349 release of Zn, Pb and Ni in assays acidified with HNO₃ whereas dissolved
350 concentrations of Cd are slightly higher in assays with CO₂. The application of the
351 mathematical model of Martín-Torre et al. (2015b) to the experimental results leads to
352 the modelled curves under pH = 6.5 acidification by HNO₃ and CO₂ shown in Fig. 2a
353 and b. The maximum released concentrations from the reduced and oxidised fractions
354 and the kinetic parameters ($k_{j,i}$) are obtained.

355

356



358

359 Fig. 5. Maximum concentration of each studied trace element that can be leached from the sediment and from each fraction (oxidised fraction
 360 and reduced fraction) in units of mg/kg.

361

362

363 Fig. 5 shows the maximum concentrations that can be leached from the reduced
364 ($[MRed]_0$) and oxidised ($[MOx]_0$) fractions of the sediment as well as the maximum
365 concentration that can be leached from the sediment ($C_{s,0} = [MRed]_0 + [MOx]_0$). In
366 assays acidified by HNO_3 , the maximum concentrations leached from the oxidised
367 fraction are higher in the assays which use the oxic sediment than those with the anoxic
368 sediment in the cases of Zn, Pb and Ni whereas this situation is shown for Zn, Cd and
369 As when CO_2 is added to the sediment-seawater mixture. When the acidification is
370 obtained by the addition of HNO_3 , the concentration of As that can be leached from the
371 reduced fraction takes the value of zero. Under both studied acidic conditions (HNO_3
372 and CO_2) there is an increase in the percentage of the concentration that can be leached
373 from the oxidised fraction in the oxic sediment with respect to the anoxic sediment; this
374 implies a proportional decrease of the percentage of the potential leachable element
375 concentration from the reduced fraction of the oxic sediment in relation to the anoxic
376 sediment. Exceptions are found in the cases of Pb in assays with HNO_3 and Ni in assays
377 with CO_2 .

378

379 In assays with HNO_3 , the maximum concentration that can be leached from the
380 sediment of all the modelled contaminants is higher in the anoxic sediment. In the case
381 of Ni, almost the same concentration (0.529 and 0.575 mg/kg) can be leached from oxic
382 and anoxic sediment in both type of assays. In the assays using CO_2 , a higher release
383 from the anoxic sediment is shown in the case of Zn but not for the rest of the trace
384 elements under study. This different trend between HNO_3 and CO_2 acidified assays
385 might be caused by the influence of the acidic agent on the characteristics of the
386 medium: CO_2 gas modifies the chemical equilibria of the sediment-seawater mixture
387 whereas HNO_3 does not. Hence, acidification with CO_2 provokes higher leached

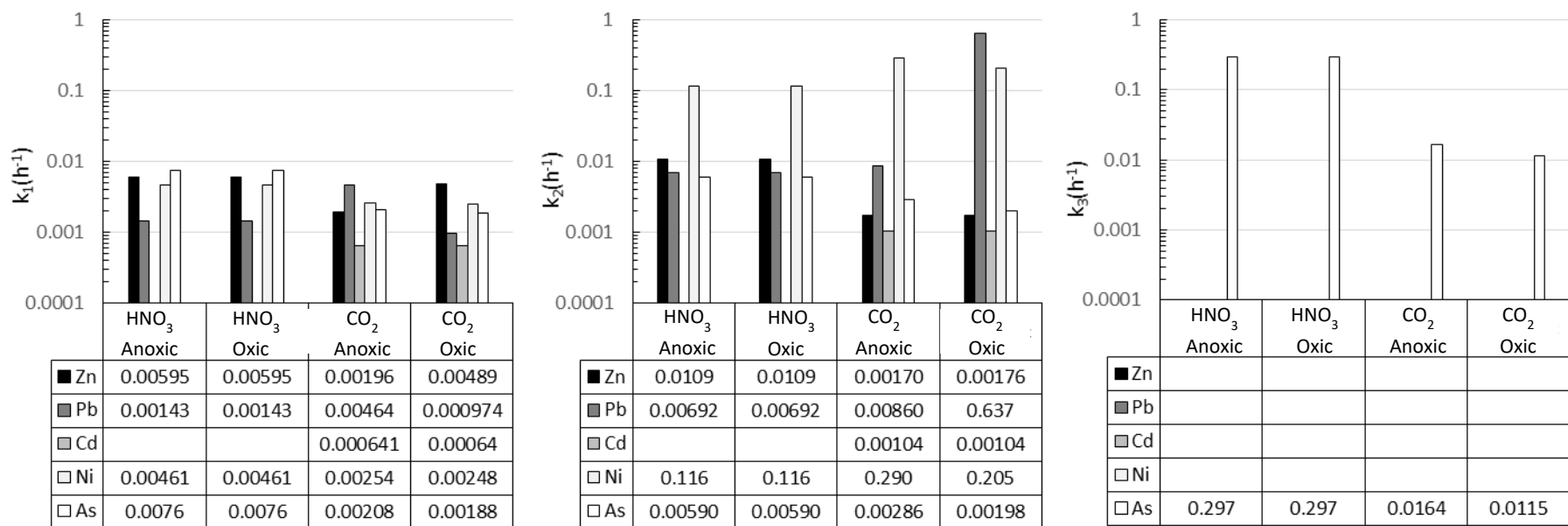
388 concentrations ($C_{s,0}$) from the oxic sediment than from the anoxic sediment, except in
389 the case of the major of the trace elements (Zn), which influences the release of the
390 other studied trace elements.

391

392 The kinetic parameters $k_{1,i}$ of the oxidation, $k_{2,i}$ of the release and $k_{3,i}$ of the
393 adsorption/precipitation reactions in assays at pH = 6.5 obtained from the mathematical
394 model are shown in Fig. 6. The kinetic parameters obtained in assays acidified by HNO₃
395 take the same value independently of the sediment level of oxidation. Hence, in HNO₃-
396 acidified assays, the mobilisation of the contaminants only depends on the maximum
397 concentrations that can be leached from the reduced and oxidised fractions. On the other
398 hand, the kinetic parameters from assays in which CO₂ is used for the acidification are
399 different depending on the oxidation level of the sediment. It might be provoked by the
400 changes which occurred in the sediment-seawater mixture due to the interaction of the
401 CO₂ with the ions present in the medium. HNO₃ is a strong and oxidant acid which
402 generates soluble salts whereas CO₂ is a weak acid that generates partially soluble salts
403 which influence the ionic competition and influence trace element release. Moreover,
404 the kinetic parameters vary differently for each trace element without a clear pattern due
405 to the characteristics of the medium, their concentration and the interactions among all
406 the elements.

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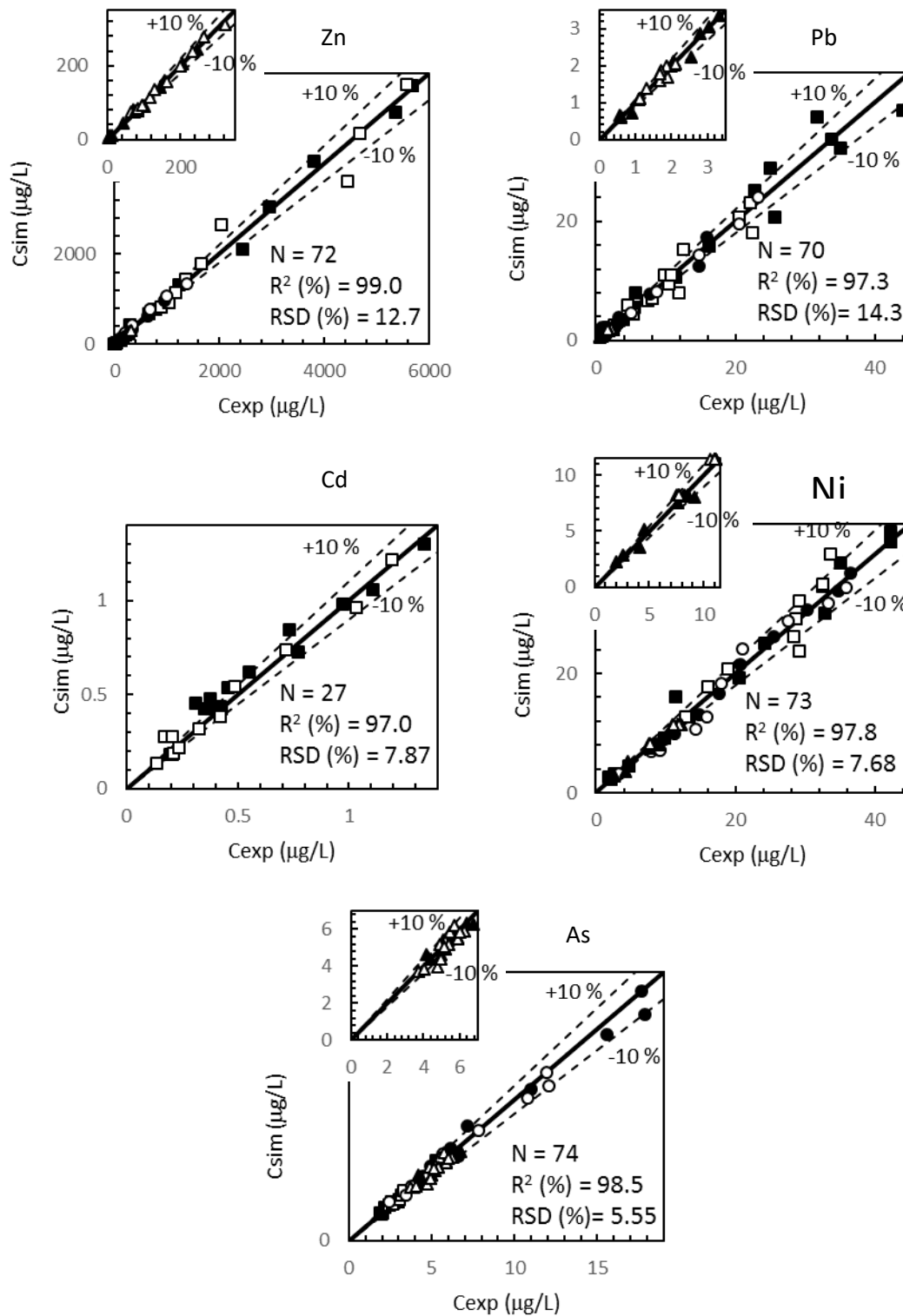
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Fig.6. Kinetic rate coefficients of the generalised chemical reactions that occurred at pH = 6.5 using anoxic and oxic sediment.

413 Parity plots (Fig. 7) are useful for the validation of the model in terms of the released
414 element concentration at any time and pH value. In the case of Cd, the results from the
415 assays with CO₂ acidification are the only considered because they are the only which
416 are modelled. Differences between experimental and simulated mobilisation are lower
417 than 20% for 85.1 % of the data. Moreover, they are lower than 10 % for 74.7 % of the
418 data. Considering all the trace elements at once, the data number (N) is 316, the
419 percentage variation-explained value (R^2) takes a value of 99.2 % and the relative
420 standard deviation (RSD) is 25.0 %. The high values of the global statistical parameters
421 and the high individual R^2 (Fig. 7), show the good fit of the proposed model in all
422 studied experiments.

423



424

425 Fig. 7. Parity plots of the element concentrations from the experimental (C_{exp}) and
 426 simulated (C_{sim}) results of the elements under study. ▲ resuspension with anoxic
 427 sediment; △ resuspension with oxic sediment; ● pH = 6.5, HNO₃ acidified with anoxic
 428 sediment; ○ pH = 6.5, HNO₃ acidified with oxic sediment; ■ pH = 6.5, CO₂ acidified
 429 with anoxic sediment; □ pH = 6.5, CO₂ acidified with oxic sediment. Additionally, the
 430 data number (N), percentage variation-explained value (R²) and relative standard
 431 deviation (RSD) are shown.

432 **3.3. Simulation of the trace element release at pH = 7.0 (resuspension, HNO₃ and**
433 **CO₂ acidification)**

434 During the resuspension experiment using anoxic sediment, the mixture reaches a pH
435 value of 7.0 ± 0.30 for more than 260 h, beyond the initial 24 h. For this reason, it
436 would be useful to compare the mobilisation of elements under resuspension conditions
437 against acidification conditions achieved by HNO₃ and CO₂ at pH = 7.0 (Fig. 8). This
438 comparative analysis highlights how small changes in the natural pH increase highly the
439 release of the studied elements. Modelled data are obtained by applying the
440 mathematical model of Martín-Torre et al. (2015b) to the experimental results.

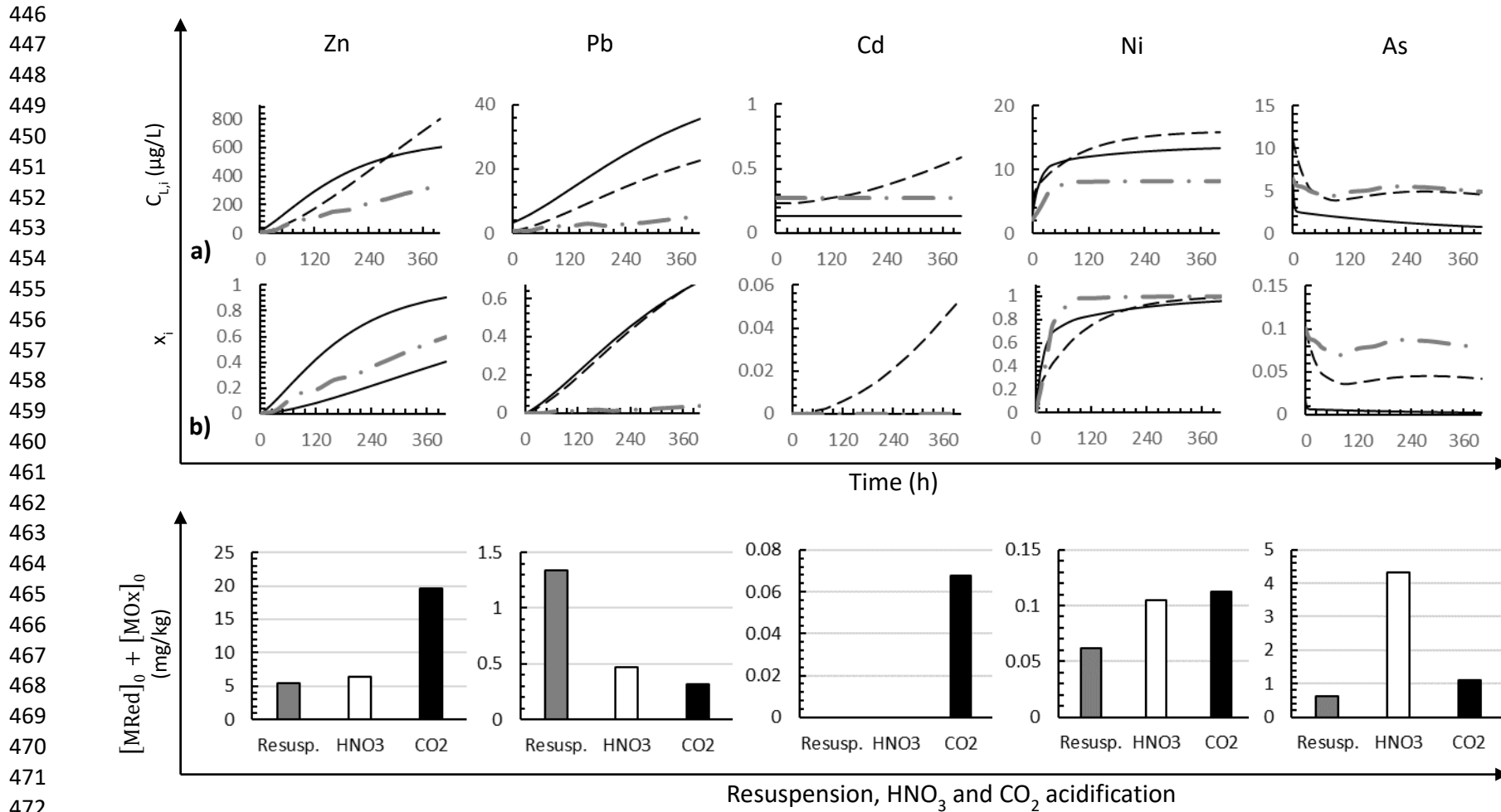
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442 In order to better compare the release of contaminants over time, we consider a ‘release
443 fraction’ (x_i), defined as Eq. 8, which takes into consideration the maximum
444 concentration that can be leached from the sediment, $C_{s,0}$. (Eq. 9).

$$x_i = \frac{C_i - C_{i,0}}{C_{s,0}} \quad (\text{Eq. 8})$$

$$C_{s,0} = [\text{MRed}]_0 + [\text{MOx}]_0 \quad (\text{Eq. 9})$$

445



474 Fig. 8. a) Simulation over time of trace element released concentration ($C_{L,i}$) and release fraction (x_i) from anoxic sediment under
475 resuspension (— .); acidification at $\text{pH} = 7.0$ with CO_2 (—) and HNO_3 (—) conditions; b) Maximum concentration that can be leached
476 ($C_{s,0}$) from anoxic sediment under resuspension (— .); acidification at $\text{pH} = 7.0$ with CO_2 (—) and HNO_3 (—) conditions.

477 Fig. 8a shows the modelled curves for the trace element release over time under
478 resuspension and acidification ($\text{pH} = 7.0$) conditions. The ‘release fraction’ (x_i) is
479 shown in Fig. 8b in order to address in detail, and without the influence of the initial
480 dissolved concentrations, the trace element mobilisation under each studied scenario.
481 Moreover, the slope of these modelled curves indicates the release rate of each element.
482 Hence, at short times, the most rapid release of Zn, Pb and Ni occurs in the assay
483 acidified by HNO_3 (Fig. 8b).

484

485 In Fig. 8c the maximum concentrations that can be leached from the sediment ($C_{s,0} =$
486 $[\text{MRed}]_0 + [\text{MOx}]_0$) are shown. In the cases of Zn, Pb, Cd and Ni, this maximum
487 concentration is achieved at long times whereas in the case of As, it occurs at $t = 0$. The
488 concentrations of As in the liquid phase at longer times are always lower than the initial
489 one due to the adsorption process. The higher maximum dissolved concentrations of Zn,
490 Cd and Ni that can be leached from the sediment are shown under CO_2 -acidified
491 conditions. However, the metal Pb releases the most under resuspension scenario. This
492 fact highlights how anthropogenic activities or natural events might provoke higher
493 risks than slight acidification conditions.

494

495 The oxyanion As is the only element which is adsorbed or precipitated after an initial
496 release. Although the dissolved concentration of As at $t = 0$ is higher in HNO_3 -
497 acidified assays than in the other two cases, it is the lowest at long times (Fig. 8b).
498 Higher initial dissolved concentrations of As, make the trace element more available to
499 precipitate or adsorb when nitric acid is added to the sediment-seawater mixture.

500

501

502 4. CONCLUSIONS

503 This work analyses and models the release of Zn, Pb, Cd, Ni, Cu, Cr and As over time
504 under resuspension and acidification (pH = 6.5 and 7.0) conditions using anoxic and
505 oxic sediment. The kinetic parameters and the maximum concentrations that can be
506 leached from the sediment allow for predicting the element release behaviour and the
507 maximum concentrations in the seawater from anoxic (-168 ± 7.00 mV) and oxic
508 (27.0 ± 37.0 mV) sediment under different conditions: acidification by HNO₃ (potential
509 acid spills), acidification by CO₂ (mimicking potential leakages from CCS) and
510 resuspension conditions due to natural or anthropogenic causes.

511

512 Acidification at pH = 6.5 is studied as worst-case scenario in events of CO₂ leakages.
513 The kinetic coefficients obtained from assays acidified by HNO₃ present a clear trend
514 whereas it does not happen in assays with CO₂, likely due to the influence of the CO₂
515 gas on the ionic competition of the medium. Acidification with CO₂ provokes higher
516 leached concentrations from the oxic sediment than from the anoxic sediment, except in
517 the case of Zn, the major of the trace elements which influences the release of the other
518 studied elements. Independently of the external stress to the environment (resuspension,
519 acidification with HNO₃ or with CO₂), sediment layers with different redox values,
520 implies a release with different modelled contaminant speciation (oxidised or reduced
521 element). Therefore, a distinct bioavailability and potential effects in the marine
522 environment would be expected.

523

524 Acidification at pH = 7.0 is studied as a seawater acidification scenario by CO₂ leakages
525 from storage sites as well as sediment resuspension. The release of most trace elements
526 from anoxic sediment, independently of the type of acidification (HNO₃ or CO₂), is

527 higher than under resuspension conditions showing that even a slight acidification can
528 endanger the aquatic environment through an important mobilisation of contaminants.
529 However, resuspension conditions might mobilise some contaminants, like Pb, more
530 than slight acidification levels.

531

532 In order to increase the range of applicability of the mathematical model used,
533 additional steps should analyze the results studying sediments with different physico-
534 chemical properties and the influence of organic matter under pH and redox
535 environmental relevant conditions.

536

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