

Assessment of Metal Toxicity in Marine Ecosystems: Comparative Toxicity Potentials for Nine Cationic Metals in Coastal Seawater - DTU Orbit (08/11/2017)

Assessment of Metal Toxicity in Marine Ecosystems: Comparative Toxicity Potentials for Nine Cationic Metals in Coastal Seawater

This study is a first attempt to develop globally applicable and spatially differentiated marine Comparative Toxicity Potentials (CTPs) or ecotoxicity characterization factors for metals in coastal seawater for use in Life Cycle Assessment. The toxicity potentials are based exclusively on marine ecotoxicity data and take account of metal speciation and bioavailability. CTPs were developed for nine cationic metals (Cd, Cr(III), Co, Cu(II), Fe(III), Mn, Ni, Pb and Zn) in 64 Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs) covering all coastal waters in the world. The results showed that the CTP of a specific metal varies 3-4 orders of magnitude across LMEs, largely due to different seawater residence time. Therefore the highest toxicity potential for metals was found in the LMEs with the longest seawater residence times. Across metals, the highest CTPs were observed for Cd, Pb and Zn. At the concentration levels occurring in coastal seawaters, Fe acts not as a toxic agent but an essential nutrient and thus has CTPs of zero.

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Authors: Dong, Y. (Intern), Rosenbaum, R. K. (Intern), Hauschild, M. Z. (Intern)

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