

SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION OF HEAVY METALS IN MEDITERRANEAN MUSSEL *MYTILUS GALLOPROVINCIALIS* FROM SPANISH MEDITERRANEAN COAST

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In 1991 the Spanish Mediterranean Mussel Watch Project by the Spanish Institute of Oceanography was formed to monitor spatial distributions and temporal trends of persistent toxic substances in marine waters. 20 different stations along the Spanish Mediterranean coast were chosen. As suggested by some authors (GOLDBERG *et al.*, 1978; PHILLIPS, 1980) mussel was chosen as sentinel organism for indicating the levels of pollutants because this species offers most of the requisite features of a biological indicator, is a permanent resident of geographically fixed sites, common and abundant for ease of collection.

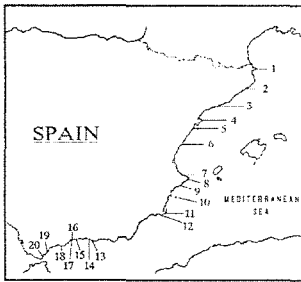
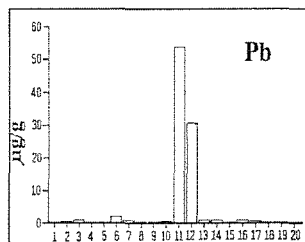
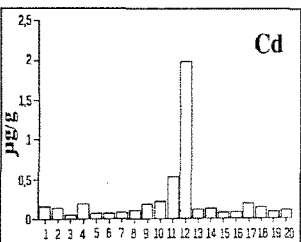
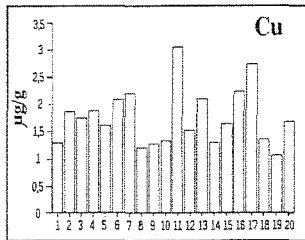
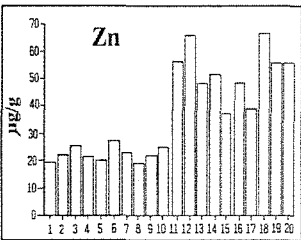


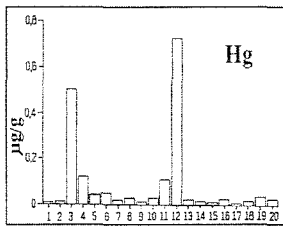
Fig. 1. Sampling locations
 1. Cadaqués 2. Blanes
 3. Cabo Salou 4. Cabo Tortosa
 5. Peñíscola 6. Burriana
 7. Cabo Cullera 8. Cabo La Nao
 9. Isla de Benidorm 10. Isla de Tabarca
 11. Portman 12. Cartagena
 13. Motril 14. Almuñécar
 15. Lagos 16. Málaga-Boya
 17. Málaga 18. Rocas de Mar
 19. Punta Chullera 20. Punta Carnero

It is well known that different factors affect the heavy metal content in shellfish. In order to avoid part of the variability, sampling was made under standardized conditions. Whenever it was possible, mussels were collected from natural populations, at the same time of the year (May 1991), at the same depth, from the same substrata and of the size 3-4 cm (shell length). In the areas of Tortosa, Algameca, Tabarca and Málaga where no natural mussel beds in the coast were found, the molluscs were taken from buoys in order to cover the whole Spanish Mediterranean coast. The specimens were collected by divers and taken to the laboratory for measuring and preparation. They were dissected in a laminar-flow clean bench. Soft parts were used for analysis. Approximately 1gr. of lyophilized, homogenized tissue was digested with 3 ml. of nitric acid in closed teflon digestion vessels. The digested samples were cooled and transferred to 25 ml volumetric flask for dilution. Reagents blanks and the certified reference material MA-M-2/TM from the International Atomic Energy Agency were runned with each batch. Concentrations of metals were measured with an Atomic Absorption Spectrometer (Perkin Elmer 605 compiled to a HGA 76B programmer). Mercury was determined by the cold vapour method (Perkin Elmer 2380, MHS 20). In the following figures the distributions for copper, zinc, cadmium, lead and mercury in the different populations along the Spanish Mediterranean coast from North to South are presented. All results are expressed in mg kg⁻¹ fresh weight. A significant increase of zinc concentrations in mussels from south of the area of Portman-Algameca (32.8-75.8) than northern (17.7-30.7) was found. This should be considered due to the natural conditions and characteristics of the populations. The high levels of zinc and the extremely high peaks of Cd and Pb found in Portman and Cartagena are influenced by effluents from the industrial town of Cartagena and from the exploitation of a lead-zinc mine (RODRIGUEZ DE LEÓN *et al.*, 1984). Mercury occurred in high concentrations in C. Salou and Algameca near the industrialized towns of Tarragona and Cartagena respectively. The elevated levels in C. Tortosa might be due to the discharges of the Ebro river. The distribution of Cu shows a rather uniform pattern. As suggested by PHILLIPS (1976) mussels should not be relied upon as accurate indicators of copper in the marine environment. The results show that high heavy metal concentrations are found in stations located near areas receiving discharges from urban or industrial effluents or rivers. From this first study it seems that the Mediterranean mussel is a good indicator of the spatial heavy metal distributions along the Spanish Mediterranean coast. Results from following years would show temporal trends in the concentrations.

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POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS FROM THE VOLATILE ORGANIC EMISSIONS OF THE GREEN ALGAE *ULVA RIGIDA* AND *ENTEROMORPHA INTESTINALIS*

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The oceans, besides their most important function which is the regulation of the global climate through both physicochemical and biological processes, produce a third to half of the global oxygen supply and help in the regulation of the primary greenhouse gas, carbon dioxide, by the mechanism known as the biological pump (WEBER, 1994). Scientific interest has increasingly been turning to the sea in search for medical cures and unique compounds. Marine life, a relatively unstudied frontier, has produced antileukemia drugs from sea sponges, bone graft material from corals, diagnostic chemicals from red algae and many other useful agents (KHOL, 1993; HODGSON, 1991). But the treasury of the oceans might never be fully exploited since the flow of nutrients into oceans has at least doubled since prehistoric times and sediments have nearly tripled as a result of human activity (UNEP, 1992). The recently introduced pollutants degrade estuaries and coastal waters by blocking sunlight, suffocating fish and coastal habitats and importing pathogens and toxins. They have also contributed to the increased incidence of algal blooms that release deadly toxicants into the surrounding waters (YASUMOTO & MURATA, 1993).

The cosmopolitan green algae *Ulva rigida* and *Enteromorpha intestinalis* are among the most commonly found marine organisms in polluted and eutrophicated ecosystems. The population density of these aggressive macroalgae can reach excessive levels especially during the summer months (HO, 1981). All around the Mediterranean basin the wave-protected coastal areas are facing seasonal blooms of these intertidal species. In continuation of our program aiming at the evaluation of the impact these algal blooms might have at their immediate habitat, we focused our recent efforts on the identification of the volatile secondary metabolites produced by *U. rigida* and *E. intestinalis*. In the past we studied the composition of the non-volatile metabolites of *U. rigida*, as well as the variation of the chemical profile when the organism is stressed, exposed to increased concentrations of heavy metals (SCOULLOS *et al.*, 1992).

The intense odour of *U. rigida* and *E. intestinalis* and the precedence of harmful volatile emissions from other marine organisms (MANLEY *et al.*, 1992; GSCHWEND *et al.*, 1985) were the main reasons that intrigued us to analyze the composition of the volatile chemicals of these macroalgae. Both species were collected from the gulf of Elefsis and the experiments were performed in the laboratory under simulated natural conditions (temperature, photoperiod, medium). The algae were placed in air-tight fiberglass containers and the air of the system was recycled for 24 hrs via a membrane pump. The volatile organic metabolites were trapped in glass traps loaded with surface active polymers. The experiment was repeated with sea water from the same area in the absence of algae, to determine whether the detected chemicals were true volatile metabolites of the algae or contaminants of the water. The quantification and identification of the volatile constituents were performed by Gas Chromatography and Gas Chromatography-Mass Spectrometry analyses. The results of the experiments revealed that significant amounts of low molecular weight halogenated and non halogenated hydrocarbons are produced and liberated, by the algae, at the atmosphere during their life cycle. Besides the head-space analyses, quantities of the algae were subjected to steam distillation-extraction (Likens Nickerson method) (GODEFROOT *et al.*, 1981) for the quantitative determination of the total volatile chemical content of the organisms. Many of these chemicals were found to be oxygenated water-soluble hydrocarbons, that most probably are liberated from the algae in the water. Eventhough the percentages of the most harmful secondary metabolites within the total emitted chemicals have been determined, precise calculation of the actual amounts of these metabolites per Kg of biomass need to be performed so that it would be possible to assess if these notorious to the stratospheric ozone layer chemicals constitute an alarming factor.

Some Volatile Metabolites of *U. rigida* and *E. intestinalis*.

- Hydrocarbons :** Pentane Octane 1,2 Dimethyl cyclopentane Decane
Oxygenated Hydrocarbons : Hexanal Heptanol 2-Ethyl hexanol Nonanal
Aromatic Hydrocarbons : Toluene Benzaldehyde
Halogenated Hydrocarbons : Dichloromethane Tribromomethane
Sulfur containing Metabolites : Dimethyl sulfide

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The financial support of the project was provided from the Ministry of Research and Technology under the form of a PENED programme

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