

Assessment of the toxic effects of mixtures of three lanthanides (Ce, Gd, Lu) to aquatic biota

A. Romero-Freire, E. Joonas, M. Muna, C. Cossu-Leguille, Davide Anselmo

Luigi Vignati, L. Giamberini

▶ To cite this version:

A. Romero-Freire, E. Joonas, M. Muna, C. Cossu-Leguille, Davide Anselmo Luigi Vignati, et al.. Assessment of the toxic effects of mixtures of three lanthanides (Ce, Gd, Lu) to aquatic biota. Science of the Total Environment, 2019, 661, pp.276-284. 10.1016/j.scitotenv.2019.01.155. hal-01990037

HAL Id: hal-01990037 https://hal.univ-lorraine.fr/hal-01990037

Submitted on 22 Jan 2019 $\,$

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers. L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés. This is the final peer-reviewed version of the article:

Assessment of the toxic effects of mixtures of three lanthanides (Ce, Gd, Lu) to aquatic biota

Published in Science of the Total Environment, doi: <u>https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2019.01.155</u>

Romero-Freire, A^{1,2#*}., Joonas, E^{3,4#}., Muna, M^{3,5#}., Cossu-Leguille, C¹., Vignati, D.A.L¹., Giamberini, L¹.

¹CNRS UMR 7360, Laboratoire Interdisciplinaire des Environnements Continentaux (LIEC), Université de Lorraine, Metz 57070, France.

²Marine Research Institute (IIM-CSIC), Eduardo Cabello 6, Vigo 36208, Spain.

³Laboratory of Environmental Toxicology, National Institute of Chemical Physics and Biophysics, Akadeemia tee 23, Tallinn 12618, Estonia.

⁴Institute of Ecology and Earth Sciences, University of Tartu, Lai 40, 51005 Tartu, Estonia.

⁵Tallinn University of Technology, Ehitajate tee 5, Tallinn 19086, Estonia.

[#]These authors contributed equally to this work

*Corresponding author: <u>anaromero@iim.csic.es</u>

ABSTRACT

Lanthanide (LNs) release into the environment is expected to greatly increase in the coming years due to a high demand for new technologies. However there is a gap in the ecological risk assessment of these metals because most of the ecotoxicological studies have been performed with only one element, although they are usually found in nature as a group. This research evaluated the effects of mixtures of three lanthanides, cerium (Ce), gadolinium (Gd), and lutetium (Lu), representative of the light, middle and heavy rare earth elements, respectively, on seven aquatic species (A. fischeri, R. subcapitata, C. vulgaris, B. calyciflorus, H. incongruens, D. magna and D. rerio). Lanthanide content decreased over time in all toxicity test media and it was observed that LN sedimentation starts at the beginning of the tests with a steep decline of the available LN amount. Potential toxic effects of LNs were observed only in five species of the seven studied, predominantly in the unicellular organism (A. fischeri) and in the organisms belonging to the lower trophic levels (R. subcapitata and B. *calyciflorus*). The multi-toxicity approach performed in this study showed synergistic effects in tests performed with the bacteria A. fischeri and the algae R. subcapitata, and antagonistic effects for the rotifer *B. calyciflorus*. Although predicting the response of aquatic organisms exposed to multi-elements is not an easy task and can be masked by potential interactions with other compounds or even by nutrient removal. The variation in toxic action among species observed in this study reveals that lanthanide interaction in toxicity mechanisms should not be discarded, and supports that further studies with LN mixtures are required to properly understand their toxic behaviour in nature ecosystems.

CAPSULE Mixtures of lanthanides showed toxic effects in bacteria and organisms of low trophic levels, with potential synergistic or antagonistic effects depending on the studied organism.

Keywords: ecotoxicology, bioassays, rare earth elements, toxic units, multi-element

1. INTRODUCTION

Rare earth elements (REE), more specifically lanthanides (LNs), play an essential role in modern technology. Along with a growing demand for applications from electronics and fuel additives (UNCTAD, 2014) to agriculture (Pang et al., 2002) and even environmental remediation (Stauber, 2000), lanthanide production rates are expected to increase (Alonso et al., 2012), and thus their release into the environment. The trend towards a greater environmental input of LNs indicates a pressing need to assess the potential hazard they pose (Alonso et al., 2012, Zhang et al., 2017). In overviews about the effect of lanthanides on aquatic organisms, the toxic effective concentration values have been reported in the g to mg per liter range for algae, crustaceans, nematodes and fish (González et al., 2014; Herrmann et al., 2016). Different mechanisms for LN inhibitive action, including competition with Ca, replacement of Mg or precipitation with phosphates or carbonates (Sneller et al., 2000), have been previously observed. Additionally it has been also observed that toxicity-inducing free LN concentration in some test media can be drastically reduced by pH increase (Weltje at al., 2004). Metal inhibitive effects are, therefore, not only connected to their direct toxicity, but complexation with ligands and competition with other metals could interfere in the study of their effects (El-Akl et al., 2015).

The additional input of LNs into the environment usually results in a concentration into the ng L^{-1} range (Kulaksiz and Bau, 2013, Klaver et al., 2014, Hatje et al., 2016). Concentrations due to anthropogenic input do not normally reach levels that induce ecotoxicity in standard laboratory tests, except at some point sources (Kulaksiz and Bau, 2011, González et al., 2015). Toxicity assessment is mainly done by acute tests, however Blinova et al. (2018a) stated that acute toxicity data of lanthanides are not reliable and the environmental risk assessment of lanthanides have been shown to be beneficial for plants (Pang et al., 2002) and

bacteria (Wehrmann et al., 2017); and even used as fertilizers in agriculture (Zhang et al., 2001). To date, the only regulatory levels for LN concentrations in freshwaters are available for the Netherlands, where the maximal permissible levels range from 1.8 μ g L⁻¹ for Nd to 22.1 μ g L⁻¹ for Ce (Sneller et al., 2000).

The evaluation of the toxicity of LN's has mostly been on one element, with a special emphasis on La, Ce and Gd effects (Pagano et al., 2015; González et al., 2015). To date, information about the toxicity of other LNs remains relatively scarce, and studies on LN mixture toxicity in aquatic environments are almost absent. Blinova et al. (2018a) suggested that LN should be considered as an uniform group of elements with a similar mode of action based on a study using crustaceans. Tai et al. (2010) found that the inhibitive effect of LNs remained the same for the algae *Skeletonema costatum* whether the toxicant was an individual LN or an equimolar mixture of all LNs. Tan et al. (2017) observed in a study with the algae *Chlamydomonas reinhardtii* and different LNs that they can share common transport sites and, therefore, can have competitive effects. Thus, the combined effects should not be overlooked since different LNs occur together in nature, albeit with variable relative abundances.

In the present work, the effects of mixtures of three lanthanides, cerium (Ce), gadolinium (Gd), and lutetium (Lu), representative of the light, middle and heavy rare earth elements respectively, (ranked by atomic weight), were studied on aquatic species from different trophic levels (the marine bacteria *A. fischeri*, representative of decomposers; the algae *R. subcapitata* and *C. vulgaris* as primary producers; *B. calyciflorus*, *H. incongruens* and *D. magna* as primary consumers; and the fish *D. rerio* as secondary consumer). Our aim was to establish a preliminary approach of lanthanide mixture ecotoxicology to characterize and assess their

toxic effects as well as to obtain a better understanding of lanthanide-interactions in aquatic ecosystems.

2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

2.1. ARTIFICIALLY SPIKED WATERS

The experiments were conducted using spiked aqueous solutions prepared with soluble salts of the three studied lanthanides: CeCl₃-7Hon₂O (purity 99.9%), GdCl₃-6H₂O (purity 99.0%) and LuCl₃₋₆H₂O (purity 99.9%) (Sigma Aldrich, St. Louis, Missouri U.S.A). Before starting the tests, exposure concentrations were prepared by diluting stock solutions, previously made by dissolving the salts in deionized water and stored refrigerated, in the corresponding exposure medium. Lanthanide concentrations used in the present study were selected based on the effective concentration causing a 10% reduction (EC_{10}) for the least sensitive species obtained previously by González et al. (2015) in a battery of tests with aquatic organisms. Lu was the exception, where a lowered value, according to its lower occurrence in the environment, was selected (855 μ g L⁻¹). The mixtures were done according to three different ratios and for three different concentrations (Table 1). The first mixture (CE1) had a-natural ratio of Ce:Gd:Lu (Ce:Gd=20:1 and Gd:Lu=17:1), in accordance with the ratio obtained in a freshwater system in a natural area with LN geological enrichment (Romero-Freire et al. 2018; own data). The second mixture (GD1) was enriched in Gd and the third mixture (LU1) was enriched in Lu. These three treatments were diluted twice by a dilution factor of 2, maintaining the established ratios (CE2, CE3, GD2, GD3, LU2, LU3). In addition, dual salt mixtures (A, B, C) were combined from the highest LN concentrations used in the triple salt mixtures, with a final number of 12 treatments (Table 1). Because the spiking was prepared using lanthanide chlorides, a control with $CaCl_2$ (final Cl^- concentration 4.8 mg L^{-1} , the highest quantity of Cl⁻ added in the treatments) was used in addition of the specified control for the different exposure media.

2.2. ECOTOXICITY TESTS

Seven ecotoxicity tests with organisms representative of the main trophic levels (decomposers, primary producers and consumers and secondary consumers) were selected. The methodology followed and the specific modifications performed in the different toxicity tests are summarized in Table 2. The marine bacteria Aliivibrio fischeri (Microtox test, MIT), formerly known as Vibrio fischeri, representative of decomposers, was tested following the ISO 11348-1 standard protocol (2007), but with the standard medium diluted twice (NaCl 1%). For the primary producer algae Raphidocelis subcapitata, the standard toxicity test (ALT) was performed in the EPA medium (OECD, 2011). This medium was selected because it contains less carbonate (CO₃ = 10.71 mg L⁻¹, 70.0% less) and phosphates (PO₄ = 0.73 mg L⁻¹) ¹, 34.6% less) than the common used OECD 201 media, but 3 times greater EDTA content (Table SI.1). Additionally, the LuminoTox test (LUT), with the algae Chlorella vulgaris, was performed in deionized water (Bellemare et al., 2006). Primary consumers were represented by three organisms: Brachionus calyciflorus, Heterocypris incongruens and Daphnia magna. B. calyciflorus (ROT) and H. incongruens (OST) toxicity tests were performed according to the bench protocols (Microbiotest, 2001a, b) but the final test concentrations (EPA moderately hard freshwater) had media diluted twice. Toxicity test with D. magna (DAT) was carried out according to OECD protocol (2004), but to minimize the matrix effects shown by Lurling and Tolma (2010), the same test medium used for ROT and OST was selected, after supplementation with extra CaSO₄·2H₂O to ensure minimum required water hardness (140 mg L⁻¹ as CaCO₃). Finally, an additional toxicity test with the fish Danio rerio (FET) (secondary consumer) was conducted according to the protocol FET test without modifications (OECD, 2013), carried out respecting the policy regulation (Directive 2010/63/CE – Décret 2013-118). The eggs used were obtained from an in-house culture (agreement number: A-57-463-3).

Before performing the toxicity tests, the organisms were incubated in the modified test media to ensure the viability of the organisms in the selected media and to not mask the potential toxic effects of LNs with inhibition due to lack of nutrients. For the organisms obtained from in-house cultures, ZnCl₂ (for algae), CuSO₄ (for fish) and K₂Cr₂O₇ (for daphnid) were used as positive controls respectively. Responses obtained in the tests were scaled to range from 0% for samples that did not exhibit toxicity, to 100% for samples with maximum toxicity. In addition pH (edge®blu, Hanna Instruments, USA) was checked at the beginning of all tests.

2.3. EVALUATION OF LANTHANIDE CONCENTRATION AND HAZARD

At the start of each toxicity test (t0h) and at the end (tXh) of tests with a longer exposure than 24 h, LN concentrations were determined by inductively coupled plasma-mass spectrometry (ICP-MS) (Ce (Z=58), Gd (Z=64) and Lu (Z=71)). Instrument measurements were carried out in triplicate with a PE SCIEX ELAN-5000 spectrometer using Rh as the internal standard. Aliquots for measuring were obtained directly from the supernatant at t0h and after centrifuging at 300 g for 10 minutes at tXh. Aliquots were acidified with HNO₃ (65%) at 1% for preserving. The supernatants were obtained from the wells of the toxic tests, however for the algae test, due to the small quantities used (250 μ L per sample), 15 ml falcon tubes with the studied artificial spiked waters and with and without algae addition (same content in algae cells) were incubated at the same time under the same conditions. For determining ICP-MS precision, surface water (SPS-SW1 Batch 120, LGC standard, UK) without specific treatment, was measured. Average recovery values for SPS-SW1 (n=5) were 120±32% (Ce), 106±37% (Gd) and 101±21% (Lu). From the LN concentrations at the start and at

the end of the tests, and after observing concentrations decline significantly over the exposure period of the tests, the geometric mean ($\sqrt{t0*tXh}$) was calculated for assessing the toxic effects obtained (OECD, 2000). Additionally, in the algae test, a temporary evolution of P content in the used EPA medium spiked with individual salts of Ce, Gd and Lu at the highest used concentrations (4000, 1400 and 855 µg L⁻¹, respectively), according to the same experimental conditions, was determined by spectrometry (Analytik Jena Specord 205).

To predict and understand multi-element toxicity, the toxic unit approach was used, calculated by dividing the total concentration of each element by their corresponding EC_{50} obtained in González et al. (2015). Finally, total toxic units (TU) were obtained as the sum of all the toxic units (TU_i) calculated from a single element (Weltje, 1998). TU calculation was applied from the nominal concentration, the measured LN content at time 0h (t0h); at the end of each test (tXh); the calculated geometric mean ($\sqrt{t0*tXh}$); and from the free LN content obtained by modelling speciation, when data was available. From the obtained TU values, the effective concentrations causing a 50% reduction for the corresponding endpoint (EC₅₀) and the 95% confidence intervals (95%CI) were obtained by fitting a log-logistic model to the data (Doelman et al., 1989) using the method of Marquardt (proc NLIN, SAS 9.1, SAS Institute, Cary, NC). Data interpretation of the obtained EC₅₀ was based on ATSDR (2004) and the interactions were identified as follows: TU near the unit was identified as additive (no apparent influence). When TU>1, it was identified as antagonistic, effect less than additive (inhibition or masking); and when TU<1, it was identified as synergistic, effect greater than additive (potentiation).

Additionally, to better understand the toxic action of the mixtures, which with LN show similar physicochemical properties and occur together in nature (Walker et al., 2001), cumulative concentration of the mixtures (CCM) were calculated as the sum of each LN composing the mixture, and they corresponding EC_{50} were calculated. Obtained values were used as representative of the LN content as a whole, and they were compared to the individual toxic values previously reported by González et al. (2015).

Finally in order to show the hazard of the mixtures, the predicted no effect concentration (PNEC) was estimated using an assessment factor (1000) and the EC₅₀ of the most sensitive species, according to TGD (2003). While the predicted environmental concentration (PEC), was derived from the mean natural concentrations in a freshwater system (Romero-Freire et al., 2018; own data: Ce=1.67 μ g L⁻¹; Gd= 0.09 μ g L⁻¹; Lu=0.01 μ g L⁻¹). PEC/PNEC ratio higher than the unit indicates that unacceptable effects on organisms are likely to occur (Smit et al., 2005).

2.4. DATA ANALYSIS

Chemical equilibrium model VisualMINTEQ 3.1 (KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm, Sweden) was used to calculate LN speciation in the seven studied toxicity tests. Calculations were performed using inputs of measured pH, nominal concentrations of the lanthanides, cations and anions of the media, and temperature (set to those used in each toxicity test). Algae added as food/test organism (ROT, OST, ALT, LUT) and sand added in OST test, were not included in the model.

Data distributions were established by calculating the mean values and the standard deviations (\pm SD). The differences between the individual means of the treatments were compared using ANOVA and post-hoc Duncan's tests (p<0.05), either to compare among tests or to do

multiple comparisons inside each test. Moreover, in order to analyse the influence of LN content in ecotoxicological effects, Spearman's correlations were performed. Analyses were done with a confidence level of 95% by using SPSS v.20.0 (SPSS Inc., Chicago, USA).

3. RESULTS

3.1. EFFECT OF EXPERIMENTAL CONDITIONS ON LN RECOVERY

Lanthanide content in all test media before and after organisms' exposure is summarized as percentages of recovery from the nominal LN in Table 3. Lanthanide content after spiking (t0h) showed good recovery of the nominal content, ranging between 85 and 122%. In the zebrafish test (FET), LN at t0h was not determined, but the same procedure from stock dilution was followed as in the other tests. LN contents for microtox (MIT) and luminotox (LUT) tests were not measured at the end of the tests because of the short test duration (\leq 4h). In algae test (ALT), LN content was determined both with and without the addition of algae (R. subcapitata). Obtained recoveries show that the addition of algae has a decreasing effect of LN concentration, with a maximal recovery of 37%, whereas without algae addition, it was up to 81% (both for Lu). Additionally in this test, temporal evolution of P was determined for 3 treatments (Figure SI-1). Phosphorous content decreased during the test with greater decreases for treatments with Gd>Ce>Lu. In rotifer (ROT) and ostracod (OST) tests, where algae were added as food sources, maximal LN recoveries were 24% (Lu) and 27% (Gd) at the end of the tests. In tests involving algae (ROT, OST, ALT), agglomeration of cells was observed in the higher concentrations of LNs (Figure SI-2). In OST, standard sand was added to the media and the assay was the longest in duration (144h), which likely caused it to have one of the lowest LN recoveries (1-5% for total LN). Ambient lanthanide concentrations were followed over time in OST for the highest added concentrations (CE1, GD1 and LU1) (Figure SI-3), and it was observed that LN decreased quickly in the first hours. In the 96h zebrafish assay, the observed recoveries, obtained from the nominal content, were also low (1-10%).

To assess the effect of test duration on LN content, the values of LN recoveries at the end of the test in respect to the start (tXh-t0h) were compared to test duration using Spearman correlation. For the zebrafish test (FET), the comparison was based on nominal instead of t0h concentrations. Percentages of LN recoveries after performing the 7 toxicity tests were strongly negatively correlated with time of exposition (R=-0.899, p<0.01, n=216). The same analysis done only from tests with a longer duration than 24h (without MIT and LUT) also showed negative correlation (R=-0.671, p<0.01, n=144).

3.2. EFFECT OF MEDIA COMPOSITION ON LN SPECIATION

The speciation of the lanthanides in the studied media was calculated with VisualMINTEQ for the treatments CE1, GD1 and LU1 from the nominal contents. The precipitation percentage and the % of formed species from the remaining dissolved media can be seen in Table 4. Considerable precipitation occurred in all tests with the exception of microtox (MIT) and luminotox (LUT) test where almost all available forms were present as free LNs. For MIT done in NaCl (1%), LNs also formed species of LNCl⁺². In LUT test, done in deionized water, only LNOH⁺² species were reported, and the formation of these complexes decreased with the increase in the ionic radii, with more than 1% only for Lu.

In the *R. subcapitata* (ALT) exposure media, soluble species with EDTA and insoluble species with phosphates formed in addition to the carbonates, hydroxides and sulfates mainly present in the other test media. Cerium precipitated as phosphate, Gd as hydroxide, while Lu precipitation was not observed. Available LNs appeared as free ions and forming species with CO_3^+ in great percentages for Ce and Gd, with higher percentage of free species for the treatments with higher nominal content, unless uneven precipitation occurred. On the

contrary, Lu distribution was mainly forming species with EDTA⁻ for treatments at lower nominal values of Lu (CE1>GD1>LU1). In the case of higher content of Lu (LU1), Lu appeared also as a free ion and mainly formed species with CO_3^+ . Other species formed in high percentages (values up to 9.3%) were with SO_4^+ , which showed a trend of decreasing with the decrease in the ionic radii (this trend appeared also for HCO_3^{2+}).

For the test done with the primary and secondary consumers (ROT, OST, DAT and FET), LN appeared mainly in complexes with SO_4^+ and CO_3^+ and as free forms (LN⁺³). The percentage of free forms and sulphate complexes decreased with the decrease in the ionic radii (Ce>Gd>Lu), and, to the detriment of these complexes, species with CO_3^+ increased for these four tests with the decrease in the ionic radii. In all tests, the formed species with OH^{+2} and $(CO_3)_{2-}$, also showed an increase with the decrease in the ionic radii, although in lower percentages.

3.3. TOXICITY RESPONSE OF THE ORGANISMS

Organisms in experimental controls were not adversely affected by media dilution (*A. fischeri, B. calyciflorus, H. incongruens* and *D. magna*); and controls with Cl⁻ were similar to negative controls in the tests. In all tests, negative controls met all the validation criteria suggested in the corresponding protocols. Positive controls for house cultures (*R. subcapitata, D. magna* and *D. rerio*) showed, in the case of algae, effective concentration (EC) values similar to those reported in literature (Franklin et al., 2007); for daphnids $K_2Cr_2O_7 EC_{50}$ values were more restrictive (3-13 times lower) compared to the frequently used medium (OECD 202); and in the zebrafish test, the positive control done with CuSO₄, systematically used in our laboratory, validated the sensitivity of the organisms (EC₅₀≈60µg Cu L⁻¹).

Toxic effects are reported for the different studied organisms in Figure 1. From a Duncan test performed with all treatments, effect was ranged from higher to lower toxicity in the

following order: ALT, MIT, ROT>LUT>OST, DAT, FET. Significant inhibition (p<0.05) by the mixtures compared to the controls, obtained by multiple comparisons, was found in the bacterium (MIT) for all treatments except CE3. In the test with primary producers, the luminotox test showed significant inhibitions only for treatments GD1-GD3 and in all treatments for *R. subcapitata* (ALT). In the primary consumers, significant differences were obtained for almost all treatments of the rotifer test (ROT), while for *D. magna* (DAT) significant inhibitions were reported only in CE3 and GD3. From the 7 studied tests, only the ostracod *H. incongruens* (OST) and *D. rerio* (FET) were not relevantly inhibited by any treatment. Comparing toxicity test results, only MIT and ALT showed a direct correlation for the inhibition reported (R=0.892, p<0.01). Toxicity observed in the dual salt mixtures (A, B, C) showed in general values similar to the obtained for the triple-mixtures, with a trend to have less inhibition in microtox and rotifer tests in treatment B (without Ce addition, and lower total LN content than A and C).

The inhibitory effects were consistently concentration-dependent (according to the nominal values) only for *A. fischeri* (MIT) (Spearman: R=0.882, p<0.01, n=36), *R. subcapitata* (ALT) (R=0.450, p<0.01, n=72) and *B. calyciflorus* (ROT) (R=0.883, p<0.01, n=24). This dependence was also studied with the free LN ion and with the dissolved LN obtained in the modelling calculation from the averages (n=12), with correlation again only for MIT, ALT and ROT. Thus, these three tests, both for showing inhibition values higher than 50% and for the observed correlations with LN content, were selected for further multi-toxicity studies.

3.4. LANTHANIDE MULTI-TOXICITY APPROACH

In order to predict multi-element toxicity, a correlation study between the inhibitions obtained for microtox (MIT), algae (ALT) and rotifer (ROT) tests and the multi-LNs and the individual content for all studied treatments was done (Table 4). A direct correlation between inhibition and nominal LN content, as well as with LN content at the start of the tests (t0h), was observed in the three studied tests. At the end of the test for MIT, due to the shortness of test time duration, LN content was not determined. In the case of ALT an inverse correlation between inhibition and recovered LN content was found at 72h, while for ROT a positive correlation was obtained at 48h. From the study of the individual LN content (Ce, Gd and Lu), positive correlations were obtained for all cases (nominal and t0h) in MIT test. The ALT test showed positive correlation between inhibition and individual LN content only for the nominal value and t0h. In the ROT test inhibition showed only correlation with Ce, at all studied times and with Gd for nominal and t0h. In addition, toxic units (TU) for the nominal and the LN content at t0h were calculated for the 3 tests using the effective concentration values (EC₅₀) obtained by González et al. (2015). For TU direct correlations with inhibition for all cases were observed.

For interpreting the potential interaction of LN in the observed toxicity, EC_{50} values were calculated both from the toxic unit approach (TU) and from the cumulative concentration of the mixtures (CCM). Effective concentrations obtained by CCM approach were compared to the individual EC_{50} reported by González et al. (2015) (Table 5). For microtox (MIT) EC_{50} values were obtained only from the nominal and the measured content at the beginning of the test. Additionally calculated free lanthanide (ΣLN^{3+}) by modeling with VisualMINTEQ was also obtained for CCM. Obtained EC_{50} values did not show significant differences (no superposition of confidence intervals) in both approaches (TU, CCM). EC_{50} values obtained from TU were lower than the unit, which implies potential synergism. Whereas the comparison of the EC_{50} values obtained from CCM were lower than the individual nominal EC_{50} values reported by González et al. (2015), which support the idea of potential synergism effects. For algae test (ALT) EC_{50} values were obtained additionally for the LN content at the end of the test (t72h). Obtained EC_{50} values did not show either significant difference in both approaches. TU approach showed EC_{50} values lower than the unit, potential synergism, and CCM approach showed EC_{50} values lower than the individual ones in almost all cases, which helps to corroborate the synergistic effect. In the rotifer test (ROT) it was also possible to calculate EC values also from the geometric mean. For the TU approach EC_{50} obtained were in all cases higher than the unit (potential antagonistic effect). Whereas the comparison of the EC_{50} values obtained by CCM were higher than the individual nominal EC_{50} values reported by González et al. (2015), which underscores the idea of potential antagonistic effects. In this test obtained EC showed significant differences, when comparing the confidence intervals. Differences were mainly with the EC calculated from the nominal and the measured at the beginning of the test, and the obtained at the end of the test or by modeling and calculation approaches.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1. LANTHANIDE CONTENT AND PREDICTED SPECIATION IN STUDIED MEDIA

LNs content in media will be influenced by the exposure method; in the present study toxicity tests were conducted under static conditions and with different exposure times. The observed decrease in LN concentration was directly correlated with time exposure, and LN precipitation seems to take place at the start of the tests with a high decline of the LN amount remaining in the solution (Figure SI-3). Differences between measured concentrations at the beginning and at the end of the tests (Table 3) were previously reported (Hermann et al., 2016). Thus in chronic tests without medium renewal, forms of LN available might not be present for all the test duration, which supports, for a more reliable risk assessment, the need of measuring LN concentration both at the beginning and at the end of the experiment. The

majority of these metals lost are possibly in colloidal forms, and the trivalent lanthanides (as most of them are present) are poorly soluble in the natural environment (El-Akl et al., 2015), therefore free ions often account for a small portion in natural water, although they have generally been found as the main predictors of LN toxicity (Tan et al., 2017; Lingott et al., 2016).

The toxicity tests performed in this study with the shortest duration, microtox and luminotox (MIT, LUT), done in deionized water and in NaCl 1% respectively, showed that LNs remained mainly as free ions (>90%). While in the test of longer duration, the addition of more chemical ligands in the media promoted the formation of additional soluble complexes mainly with SO_4^+ , CO_3^+ and OH^{+2} . In spite of the expected high precipitation of LN in carbonates (Evans et al., 1990), carbonate ions (LNCO₃+) were also found, in general, as the main dissolved species for all LNs in our study, which was also found in González et al. (2015). Additionally, results obtained from the data modelling showed high percentages of LNSO₄⁺. Saito and Ueno (1979) observed that the LN concentrations in the supernatant increased with increasing sulphate contents and the solubility of these forms decreased regularity with the increase in the atomic number, which was in accordance with our results.

The selection of the EPA media in the algae test (ALT) over the OECD one, based on the lower content in the anions $-PO_4$ and -CO was highlighted in order to obtain higher LN availability during the test. Total precipitation of these $-PO_4$ complexes was suggested by VisualMINTEQ modelling. A clear decrease in P during the test for solutions spiked with individual salts was observed (Figure SI-1). Phosphorous remained in the solution only in the treatment with lutetium due to the Lu concentration not exceeding the P presented in the media. The opposite occurred with Ce and Gd spiked solutions where P precipitated (Table 3). Also, modelling showed no precipitation of Lu with PO₄. Furthermore, this medium had 3

times higher content of EDTA, and LN-EDTA-complexes increased with the decrease in ionic radii, according to their binding affinity. Additionally, the comparison of Ln content in the ALT test with and without the addition of algae (Table 3), as well as the observed agglomeration by microscopy (Figure SI-2), reflected a possible effect for the presence of algae in the decrease of LN concentration in media. Tests with algae addition were LUT, ALT, ROT and OST, the two first as studied organisms and the two last ones as food addition. In ALT, ROT and OST tests (>24h), the media contained Ca and Mg (among other elements), which were observed to have an effect in competition in algae membrane transport sites with the lanthanide Sm (Tan et al., 2017). Tan et al. (2017) also reported potential competition for transport sites with other lanthanides. Whilst El-Akl et al. (2015) suggested that colloidal Ce could also accumulate by algae under high pH.

Lanthanides are known to possess low solubility and easily precipitate or bind to complexing ions (Ng et al., 2011), therefore the distribution and (bio)availability of these elements in waters, and other environments, will be strongly dependent on their speciation, which will be determined for the physicochemical properties of the media (Herrmann et al., 2016). Thus, lanthanide chemical speciation will be key for understanding their potential toxic effects on living organisms (El-Akl et al., 2015). In this work, we used Visual MINTEQ for simulating the chemical processes involved the LN in the different studied media. Lanthanides modelling are still in progress and assumptions need to be made for modelling them, therefore values have to be considered carefully according to model limitations.

4.2. TOXICITY TESTS

Toxic effects were observed only in 5 of 7 toxicity tests done. The two organisms that did not show toxicity, ostracod and zebrafish (OST and FET test) had the longest duration (>96h) and the lowest LN content at the end of the exposure period, as well as organisms used

corresponding with the highest part of the trophic chain. Results showed toxic effects in the bacteria and in the organisms belonging to the bottom of the trophic chain: algae and rotifer, but discarding the luminotox test (LUT) for having a high variability among replicates (although it rose until inhibition of 69% in some treatments). Toxicity for bacteria *A. fischeri*, algae *R. subcapitata* and rotifer *B. calyciflorus* rose until 93, 100 and 100 % of inhibition respectively in some treatments, and the recorded toxicity only showed a clear LN concentration-dependence for these three tests, although effects caused by nutrient removal should not be discarded. To highlight that, dual LN mixtures did not show marked differences compared to triple mixtures.

The highest toxic effects observed were in the algae test (ALT); in addition of the dissolved concentrations of LNs observed in this test (mainly ionic or in EDTA complexes), which could be mainly responsible for adverse effects (Weltje et al., 2002), the formation of insoluble forms of lanthanides could also be tied to the removal of other compounds (Petersen et al., 1974), which could promote indirect toxic effects due to lack of nutrients, for example the observed case of P (Figure SI-1). Also Fe could have been less available due to LNs competing with Fe for binding with EDTA. Joonas et al. (2017) observed in an assay with R. subcapitata that inhibitive effects could be related to the removal of essential nutrients besides LN direct toxic effects; while El-Akl et al. (2015) reported competition with calcium for the uptake sites with Ce in C. reinhardtii. In the microtox test (MIT), toxicity results agreed with the trends obtained for the study of individual LNs. González et al. (2015) and Weltje et al. (2004) identified that LN toxicity increases with the increase of the atomic number (Lu>Gd>Ce), which was in accordance with our results. Moreover, speciation results (Table SI-2) supported the stronger affinity of Ce to join to chloride species than Gd>Lu. Primary consumers, i.e. crustaceans and rotifers, are taxonomic groups usually used for assessing toxicity using standardized exposure media (Herrmann et al., 2016). In daphnid (DAT) and ostracod (OST) test, toxic effects were not related with the LN content in the studied media. In these tests a high content of Ca was added for DAT; while sand, used as reference sediment, and algae, as food, were added in OST, which probably could have also influenced the direct effect of LN for the organisms. Blinova et al. (2018) also observed considerable decrease of toxicity in the OST test if sand was added. However in the speciation analysis, algae and sand additions were not taken into account, thus the absence of toxic effects could not be related to their introduction in the media. It should be noted that the use of sediment and algae does not make this test consistently less sensitive to metal toxicity compared to tests without sediments and algae (e.g. D. magna and A. fischeri) (Kudłak et al., 2011). In the rotifer test (ROT), where algae was added as food (but with a content 4 times lower than in the OST test) LN toxic effects were identified. In this test, the observed toxic effects could be directly related to the algae addition. Algae could be an additional route of LN uptake for zooplankton besides the medium, inducing a higher than expected LN uptake and toxicity, because algae concentrate LNs and form agglomerates that zooplankton feed on. Blinova et al. (2018) remarked that crustaceans, as non-selective filter-feeder organisms, can ingest both soluble and insoluble fractions, and toxicity could be attributed to both forms. For the secondary consumer, Herrmann et al. (2016), assessing La toxicity, observed that zebrafish (FET) had the lowest sensitivity; also the impact of water hardness affected the toxicity towards fish and their early development stages, which could support the absence of toxic effects observed in the FET test for this study.

4.3. LANTHANIDE MULTI-TOXICITY

Toxicity studies using a battery of different species offer a more complete and realistic view of potential toxic effects on natural communities. However it is noted that the obtained information is especially diversified if the selected test organisms represent different trophic levels (Maciorowski and Clarke, 1980). The need to evaluate interactions of potential toxic compounds within a mixture is well supported (ATSDR, 2004); and predicting the response of aquatic organisms exposed to multiple elements is one of the most difficult tasks in environmental toxicology and risk assessment (Norwood et al., 2003). Due to the difficulty to characterizing the modes of joint action of the toxicants, dose additivity is usually assumed for public health protection (ATSDR, 2004). However, understanding if biological responses induced by mixtures are greater (synergism), the same (additive) or lower (antagonism) than expected, based on the toxicity of individual compounds in the mixtures, could be key in risk assessment. To date, there are only three ecotoxicological studies assessing lanthanide mixture effects conducted with aquatic organisms, two dealt with algae (Tai et al., 2010, Tan et al., 2017) and one with crustaceans (Blinova et al., 2018). From the three tests, which showed toxicity related to LNs in this experiment, it is remarkable that LN content at the end of the test with algae (ALT) was not correlated with the obtained inhibition (Table 4). Sneller et al. (2000) reported that the mechanisms of toxic action of REE are in essence the competition and/or replacement with Ca/Mg as well as a phosphate deficiency to precipitations of phosphate-REEs. The decrease in algal macronutrients could lead to an indirect toxic effect through nutrient limitation (OECD, 2011). Therefore LN toxicity could be masked or multiple effects could occur at the same time (Lies et al., 2016).

The analysis of multi-toxicity performed in this study showed potential synergism for microtox and algae tests (Table 5), which is considered an undesirable event (Borgert, 2004). The synergistic effect observed in the algae test can be related with the potential combination of stressor factors (Lies et al. 2016). The observed decrease in phosphate by precipitation (Figure SI-1), and, the competition of LN with Ca in transport sites for algae (El-Akl et al., 2015), could contribute to the observed toxicity. However, the same synergistic effect obtained in the microtox test, with only the addition of NaCl in the medium and less contact

time, strongly shows that combined effects of LNs should not be discarded. Instead, in the rotifer test, toxicity appeared to be more strongly correlated with LNs with lower atomic number (Ce>Gd) (Table 4) and the multi-toxicity approaches performed support the idea by observing lower inhibition from the mixtures compared to the individual elements (antagonism) (Table 5). An assumption could be that the observed toxic effect in rotifer tests was mainly due to Ce and Gd according to the correlations observed (Table 4). Tan et al. (2017) observed that an antagonist effect could be assumed because heavy REEs (e.g. Lu) were first joined to the algae added as food, and therefore light REEs could have greater toxic effect by direct uptake from the media. On the other hand, Lingott et al. (2016), in an experiment with daphnids exposed to Gd, suggested a greater Gd content related by algae ingestion added as food. Although LN-uptake routes for the rotifer should be further studied for a better interpretation of the obtained effect, these previous results indicated that the addition of algae as food could modify the availability of LN for the organisms and therefore results should be interpreted carefully.

Toxicity was also studied from the free lanthanide content (LN^{3+}) obtained by modelling and the geometric mean calculated according to the observed decrease in Ln content over time. In general these calculated EC_{50} showed a decrease compared to the nominal and measured LN content. However only in the OST test were some significant differences between EC_{50} observed (IC not overlapping) (Table 5). This observation in the studied effect re-emphasizes the need to measure LN concentration or study their speciation in the used media during toxicity experiments for a more reliable risk assessment.

Finally, predicted no effect concentration (PNEC) of 1.30 μ g L⁻¹ was derived based on the EC₁₀ value of the algae test, the most sensitive species (TGD, 2003). PEC value was estimated for a natural area as the addition of the concentration of the 3 studied lanthanides

with a mean PEC value of $1.77 \ \mu g \ L^{-1}$. PEC/PNEC ratio was 1.36, which indicates the potential hazard of the mixture and therefore toxic effects due to lanthanide mixtures on organisms are likely to occur.

CONCLUSIONS

In this study, regarding the ecotoxicological assessment of mixtures of lanthanides (Ce, Gd and Lu) with seven toxicity tests, lanthanide toxic effects were reported only in bacteria and in the organisms belonging to the lower trophic levels (algae and rotifer). The strong decrease in lanthanide concentration during toxicity tests should be taken into consideration for assessing their toxicity. This decline was dependent on test media (forming mainly complexes with sulphurs and carbonates) and took place usually at the start of the tests; thus, it is directly correlated with time exposure. The multi-toxicity approaches used in this study indicated potential synergism for tests performed with the bacteria *A. fischeri* and with the algae *R. subcapitata*, and antagonism for the rotifer *B. calyciflorus*. Obtained results highlight that it should not yet be assumed that multi-LN toxicity is additive, and predicting the response of aquatic organisms exposed to multi-LNs needs further research, taking in consideration LN speciation in the media and understanding their interactions for the assessment of their risk in the environment.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This work has been supported by the French National Research Agency through the national program "Investissements d'avenir" with the reference ANR-10-LABX-21-01/LABEX RESSOURCES21. The authors would like to acknowledge support by the Estonian Research Council project IUT23-5, The COST-European Cooperation in Science and Technology

(TD1407: NOTICE), and the European Regional Development Fund scholarship Dora Plus (T1.2).

REFERENCES

Alonso, E., Sherman, A. M., Wallington, T. J., Everson, M. P., Field, F. R., Roth, R., Kirchain, R. E., 2012. Evaluating Rare Earth Element availability: A Case with revolutionary demand from clean technologies. Environmental Science & Technology. 46(6): 3406–3414. https://doi.org/10.1021/es203518d.

ATSDR, 2004. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Public Health Service Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry Division of Toxicology. Guidance Manual for the Assessment of Joint Toxic Action of Chemical Mixtures. pp.107.

Bellemare, F., Rouette, M.E., Lorrain, L., Perron, E., Boucher, N., 2006. Combined use of photosynthetic enzyme complexes and microalgal photosynthetic systems for rapid screening of wastewater toxicity. Environmental Toxicology. 21 (5): 445-449.

Blinova, I., Lukjanova, A., Muna, M., Vija, H. and Kahru, A., 2018a. Evaluation of the potential hazard of lanthanides to freshwater microcrustaceans. Science of The Total Environment. 642: 1100-1107.

Blinova, I., Vija, H., Lukjanova, A., Muna, M., Syvertsen-Wiig, G., Kahru, A., 2018b. Assessment of the hazard of nine (doped) lanthanides-based ceramic oxides to four aquatic species. Science of the Total Environment. 612: 1171–1176.

Borgert, C.J., Quill, T.F., McCarty, L.S. and Mason, A.M., 2004. Can mode of action predict mixture toxicity for risk assessment? Toxicology and applied pharmacology. 201(2): 85-96.

Décret n° 2013-118 du 1er février 2013 relatif à la protection des animaux utilisés à des fins scientifiques. texte n° 24. JORF n°0032 page 2199. pp.15.

Directive 2010/63/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 September 2010 on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes Text with EEA relevance. 276: 33-79.

Doelman, P., Haanstra L., 1989. Short- and long- term effect of heavy metals on phosphatase activity in soils: An ecological dose-response model approach. Biology and Fertility of Soils. 8: 235-241.

Eisentraeger, A., Dott, W., Klein, J., Hahn, S., 2003. Comparative studies on algal toxicity testing using fluorometric microplate and Erlenmeyer flask growth-inhibition assays. Ecotoxicology and Environmental Safety. 54: 346–354. doi:10.1016/S0147-6513(02)00099-4.

El-Akl, P., Smith, S., Wilkinson, K.J., 2015. Linking the chemical speciation of cerium to its bioavailability in water for a freshwater alga. Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry, 34(8):1711-1719. doi: 10.1002/etc.2991.

European Commission, 2003. Technical guidance document in support of Commission Directive 93/67/EEC on Risk assessment for new notified substances and Commission Regulation (EC) No 1488/94 on Risk assessment for existing substances and Commission Directive (EC) 98/8 on Biocides, second ed. European Commission, Luxembourg, Part 1, 2 and 3. p. 760. TGD (2003

Evans, C., 1990. Biochemistry of the Lanthanides. Plenum Press, New York.

Franklin, N. M., Rogers, N. J., Apte, S. C., Batley, G. E., Gadd, G. E., Casey, P. S., 2007. Comparative toxicity of nanoparticulate ZnO, bulk ZnO, and ZnCl₂ to a freshwater microalga (*Pseudokirchneriella subcapitata*): The importance of particle solubility. Environmental Science and Technology. 41(24): 8484–8490.

French guideline (NF T 90-377), 2000. Qualité de l'eau-Détermination de la toxicité chronique vis-à-vis de *Brachionus calyciflorus* en 48h. Essay d'inhib. croissance la popul. 17: 0335-3931.

González, V., Vignati, D.A.L., Leyval, C., Giamberini, L., 2014. Environmental fate and ecotoxicity of lanthanides: Are they a uniform group beyond chemistry? Environment International. 71: 148–157. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envint.2014.06.019.

González, V., Vignati, D.A.L., Pons, M.N., Montarges-Pelletier, E., Bojic, C., Giamberini, L., 2015. Lanthanide ecotoxicity: First attempt to measure environmental risk for aquatic organisms. Environmental Pollution. 199: 139–147.

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envpol.2015.01.020.

Hatje, V., Bruland, K.W., Flegal, A.R., 2016. Increases in anthropogenic gadolinium anomalies and rare earth element concentrations in San Francisco Bay over a 20 year record. Environmental Science and Technology. 50: 4159–4168. http://dx.doi.org/10.1021/acs.est.5b04322.

Herrmann, H., Nolde, J., Berger, S., Heise, S., 2016. Aquatic ecotoxicity of lanthanum – A review and an attempt to derive water and sediment quality criteria. Ecotoxicology and Environmental Safety. 124: 213–238. <u>https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecoenv.2015.09.033.</u>

ISO (International Organization for Standardization), 2012. Water quality - Determination of freshwater sediment toxicity to *Heterocypris incongruens* (Crustacea, Ostracoda). ISO 14371(E). Geneva, Switzerland. pp 16.

ISO (International Standard Organization), 2007. Water Quality - Determination of the Inhibitory Effect of Water Samples on the Light Emission of *Vibrio Fisheri* (Luminiscence Bacteria Test). ISO 11348-1. Geneva, Switzerland. pp. 23.

ISO (International Standard Organization), 2008. Water quality - Determination of the chronic toxicity to *Brachionus calyciflorus* in 48 h. ISO 20666. Geneva, Switzerland. pp. 16.

ISO (International Standard Organization), 2012a. Water Quality Determination of the Inhibition of the Mobility of *Daphnia Magna* Strauss (Cladocera, Curstacean). ISO 6341. Geneva, Switzerland. pp. 22.

ISO (International Standard Organization), 2012b.Water Quality Fresh Water Algal Growth Inhibition Test with Unicellular Green Algae. ISO 8692. Geneva, Switzerland. pp. 21.

Joonas, E., Aruoja, V., Olli, K., Syvertsen-Wiig, G., Vija, H., Kahru, A., 2017. Potency of (doped) rare earth oxide particles and their constituent metals to inhibit algal growth and induce direct toxic effects. Science of the Total Environment. 593-594: 478-486. doi: 10.1016/j.scitotenv.2017.03.184.

Klaver, G., Verheul, M., Bakker, I., Petelet-Giraud, E., Négrel, P., 2014. Anthropogenic Rare Earth Element in rivers: gadolinium and lanthanum. Partitioning between the dissolved and particulate phases in the Rhine River and spatial propagation through the Rhine-Meuse delta (the Netherlands). Applied Geochemistry. 47, 186–197.

Kudłak, B., Wolska, L. and Namieśnik, J., 2011. Determination of EC50 toxicity data of selected heavy metals toward *Heterocypris incongruens* and their comparison to "direct-contact" and microbiotests. Environmental monitoring and assessment. 174(1-4): 509-516.

Kulaksiz, S., Bau, M., 2011. Rare earth elements in the Rhine River, Germany: First case of anthropogenic lanthanum as a dissolved microcontaminant in the hydrosphere. Environment International. 37(5): 973–979. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envint.2011.02.018.

Kulaksiz, S., Bau, M., 2013. Anthropogenic dissolved and colloid/nanoparticle-bound samarium, lanthanum and gadolinium in the Rhine River and the impending destruction of the natural rare earth element distribution in rivers. Earth and Planetary Science Letters. 362: 43-50.

Lies, M., Foit, K., Knillmann, S., Schäfer, R.B., Lless, H-D., 2016. Predicting the synergy of multiple stress effects. Scientific Reports 6, Article number: 32965. doi:10.1038/srep32965.

Lingott, J., Lindner, U., Telgmann, L., Esteban-Fernández, D., Jakubowski, N., Panne, U., 2016. Gadolinium-uptake by aquatic and terrestrial organisms-distribution determined by laser ablation inductively coupled plasma mass spectrometry. Environmental Science: Processes & Impacts. 18(2):200-207. doi: 10.1039/c5em00533g.

Lurling, M., Tolman, Y., 2010. Effects of lanthanum and lanthanum-modified clay on growth, survival and reproduction of *Daphnia magna*. Water Research. 44: 309–319.

Maciorowski, H.D. Clarke, R.M.V., 1980. Advantages and disadvantages of using invertebrates in toxicity testing. In Aquatic Invertebrate Bioassays. ASTM International.

MicroBioTest- OstracodToxKit FTM. 2001a. "Direct Contact" Toxicity Test for Freshwater Sediments. Standard Operational Procedure, Deinze, Belgium, pp. 34.

MicroBioTest- RotoxKit Chronic Toxicity Test for Freshwater. 2001b. Standard Operational Procedure, Deinze, Belgium, pp. 28.

Ng, T., Smith, D.S., Straus, A., McGeer, J.C., 2014. Review of aquatic effects of lanthanides and other uncommon elements, Attachment 7. EC Contribution Agreement. Wilfrid Laurier University, pp. 42.

Norwood, W.P., Borgmann, U., Dixon, D.G., Wallace, A., 2003. Effects of metal mixtures on aquatic biota: a review of observations and methods. Human and Ecological risk assessment. 9(4): 795-811.

OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development), 2000. Series on testing and assessment n°23: Guidance document on aquatic toxicity testing of difficult substances and mixtures (ENV/JM/MONO(2000)6). p. 53.

OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development), 2008. Guidelines for the Testing of Chemicals: *Daphnia Magna* Reproduction Test p. 23.

OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development), 2004. OECD Guidelines for the Testing of Chemicals. Daphnia Sp. Acute Immobilisation Test (Guideline No. 202). OECD, Paris, France.

OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development), 2013. OECD Guidelines for the Testing of Chemicals. Test No 236 Fish Embryo Acute Toxicity (FET) Test. OECD, Paris, France.

OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development), 2011. OECD guidelines for the testing of chemicals: Freshwater Alga and Cyanobacteria, Growth Inhibition Test. doi:10.1787/9789264069923-en. Pagano, G., Aliberti, F., Guida, M., Oral, R., Siciliano, A., Trifuoggi, M., Tommasi, F., 2015.
Rare earth elements in human and animal health: State of art and research priorities.
Environmental Research. 142: 215-220. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.envres.2015.06.039.

Pang, X., Li, D., Peng, A., 2002. Application of Rare-earth Elements in the Agriculture of China and its Environmental behaviour in soil. Environmental Science and Pollution Research. 9(2): 143–148. http://dx.doi.oro/10.1065/espr2001.05.065.

Petersen, S.A., Sanville, W.D., Stay, F.S., Powers, C.F., 1974. Nutrient inactivation as a lake restoration procedure - Laboratory Investigations. Report EPA-660/3-74- 032 ed. Corvallis, Oregon. pp. 118.

Romero-Freire, A., Minguez, L., Pelletier, M., Cayer, A., Caillet, C., Devin, S., Gross, E.M., Guérold, F., Pain-Devin, S., Vignati, D.A.L., Giamberini, L., 2018. Assessment of baseline ecotoxicity of sediments from a prospective mining area enriched in light rare earth elements. Science of the Total Environment. 612: 831-839.

Saito, A., Ueno, K., 1979. The precipitation of the lanthanide elements complexes with hexammine cobalt(iii) cation—I: The sulphate complexes of the trivalent lanthan1de elements Journal of Inorganic and Nuclear Chemistry 41: 503-506, doi 0022.-1902/79/0401-0503/\$02.0010.

Smit, M.G.D., Holthaus, K.I.E., Tamis J.E., Karman C.C., 2015. TNO-report B&O-DH - R 2005/181: From PEC_PNEC ratio to quantitative risk level using Species Sensitivity Distributions; Methodology applied in the Environmental Impact Factor. The Netherlands, pp.72.

Sneller, F.E.C., Kalf, D.F., Weltje, L., van Wezel, A.P., 2000. Maximum permissible
concentrations and negligible concentrations for rare earth elements (REEs), report
601501011, National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM): Bilthoven, The
Netherlands.

Stauber, J. L., 2000. Toxicity testing of modified clay leachates using freshwater organisms.Report No: ET/IR267R. Centre for Advanced Analytical Chemistry Energy Technology. pp. 27.

Tai, P., Zhao, Q., Su, D., Li, P., Stagnitti, F., 2010. Biological toxicity of lanthanide elements on algae. Chemosphere, 80(9): 1031–1035.

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chemosphere.2010.05.030.

Tan, Q-G., Yang, G., Wilkinson, K.J., 2017. Biotic ligand model explains the effects of competition but not complexation for Sm biouptake by *Chlamydomonas reinhardtii*. Chemosphere. 168: 426-434, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chemosphere.2016.10.051.

UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development), 2014. Commodities at a glance: special issue on rare earths. UNCTAD/SUC/2014/1, pp. 58.

Walker, C.H., Hopkin, S.P., Sibly, R.M., Peakall, D.B., 2001. Interactive effects of pollutants, Ed Taylor and Francis. ISBN 0-7484-0939-4. pp. 309, UK.

Wehrmann, M., Billard, P., Martin-Meriadec, A., Zegeye, A., Klebensberger, J., 2017.
Functional role of lanthanides in enzymatic activity and transcriptional regulation of
Pyrroloquinoline quinone-dependent alcohol dehydrogenases in *Pseudomonas putida*KT2440. MBio, 8(3), pp. e00570-17.

Weltje, L., 1998. Mixture toxicity and tissue interactions of Cd, Cu, Pb and Zn in earthworms (Oligochaeta) in laboratory and field soils: a critical evaluation of data. Chemosphere. 36: 2643-2660.

Weltje, L., Heidenreich, H., Zhu, W., Wolterbeek, H.T., Korhammer, S., Goeij, J.J.M., Markert, B., 2002. Lanthanide concentrations in freshwater plants and molluscs, related to those in surface water, pore water and sediment. A case study in The Netherlands. Science of the Total Environment. 286 (1–3): 191–214, https://doi.org/10.1016/S0048-9697(01)00978-0.

Weltje, L., Verhoof, L.R.C.W., Verweij, W., Hamers, T., 2004. Lutetium speciation and toxicity in microbial bioassay: testing the free-ion model for lanthanides. Environmental Science and Technology. 38: 6597-6604.

Zhang, S., Ding, Y., Liu, B., Chang, CC., 2017. Supply and demand of some critical metals and present status of their recycling in WEEE. Waste Management. 65(Supplement C): 113-127.

Zhang, S., Shan, X., 2001. Speciation of rare earth elements in soil and accumulation by wheat with rare earth fertilizer application. Environmental Pollution. 112: 395-405.

Table 1. Concentrations of REE in the tested mixtures. Bold text is used for concentrations similar to the effective concentrations inducing 10% of inhibition (EC₁₀) of the least sensitive organism tested by González et al. (2015) (Lu concentration being twice lower than least restrictive EC₁₀ reported).

	Ce	Gd	Lu
		$(\mu g L^{-1})$	
CE1	4000	200	12
CE2	2000	100	6
CE3	1000	50	3
GD1	5000	1400	82
GD2	2500	700	41
GD3	1250	350	21
LU1	3420	1710	855
LU2	1710	855	428
LU3	855	428	214
Α	5000	1710	
В		1710	855
С	5000		855

Table 2. Toxicity test description for seven test organisms representative of the main trophic levels: decomposer (the bacteria *Allivibrio fischeri*), primary producers (the algae *Chlorella vulgaris* and *Raphidocelis subcapitata*), primary consumers (the rotifer *Brachionus calyciflorus* and the crustacean *Heterocrypris incongruens* and *Daphnia magna*) and secondary consumer (the fish *Danio rerio*).

TEST	ORGANISMS	RATIO	REPLICATES	EXPOUSRE MEDIA	EXPOSURE CONDITIONS	ENDPOINTS	BIBLIOGRAPHY
Microtox Test (MIT)	Aliivibrio fischeri (strain NRRL B-11177)	1 ml with 10 μL of bacteria (10 ⁶ cells mL ⁻¹)	3	$NaCl = 10 g L^{-1}$	30 min, 15 °C, darkness	Luminiscence inhibition (%)	ISO guideline 11348-1 (2007)
Luminotox Test (LUT)	Chlorella vulgaris	2 ml with 100 μ L of alga (10 ⁶ cells mL ⁻¹)	3	Deionized water	4 h, room Tª, darkness	Fluorescence inhibition (%)	Bellemare et al. (2006)
Algal growth inhibition test (ALT)	Raphidocelis subcapitata	250 μ l with 125 μ l of algae (10 ⁴ cells mL ⁻¹)	6	AAP media (U.S. EPA) Entire composition in Table SI-1.	72 h, 23 °C, continuous ilumination (6000 lux)	Growth inhibition (%)	OECD guideline 201 (OECD, 2011) Eisentraeger et al. (2003) González et al. (2015)
Rotifer Toxicity Test (ROT)	<i>Brachionus calyciflorus</i> (Incubation of cysts 20 h. Organisms < 2 h old)	1 org: 1 mL	8	$\begin{split} NaHCO_3 &= 48 \text{ mg } L^{-1}, \\ CaSO_4 \cdot 2H_2O &= 60 \text{ mg} L^{-1}, \\ MgSO_4 \cdot 7H_2O &= 62 \text{ mg } L^{-1}, \\ KCl &= 2 \text{ mg } L^{-1} \end{split}$	48 h, 25 °C, darkness ^{*2}	Population growth inhibition (%)	Microbiotest (2001a) French guideline NF T 90-377 (2000) ISO guideline 20666 (2008)
Ostracodtox Test (OST)	<i>Heterocrypris incongruens</i> (Incubation of cysts 52 h, neonates)	10 org: 4 mL*1	3	$\begin{split} &NaHCO_3 = 48 \text{ mg } \text{L}^{-1}, \\ &CaSO_4 \cdot 2H_2O = 60 \text{ mg } \text{L}^{-1}, \\ &MgSO_4 \cdot 7H_2O = 62 \text{ mg } \text{L}^{-1}, \\ &KCl = 2 \text{ mg } \text{L}^{-1} \end{split}$	144 h, 25 °C, darkness ^{*2}	Growth inhibition (%)	Microbiotest (2001b) ISO guideline 14371 (2012)
Daphnia sp. Acute Immobilisation Test (DAT)	<i>Daphnia magna</i> (from a culture raised as described by Toumi et al. (2013))	5 org: 10 mL	4	$\begin{split} &NaHCO_3 = \ 48 \ mg \ L^{-1}, \\ &CaSO_4 \cdot 2H_2O = 107.4 \ mg \ L^{-1}, \\ &MgSO_4 \cdot 7H_2O \ = \ 62 \ mg \ L^{-1}, \\ &KCl = 2 \ mg \ L^{-1} \end{split}$	48 h, 20 °C	Immobilisation (%)	OECD guideline 202 (2004)
FET Test (FET)	Danio rerio < 24 h old	1 org: 2 mL	6	NaHCO ₃ = 63 mg L ⁻¹ , CaCl ₂ ·2H ₂ O = 294 mg L ⁻¹ , MgSO ₄ ·7H ₂ O = 123.3 mg L ⁻¹ , KCl = 5.5mg L ⁻¹	96 h, 26 °C, LD 14:10 h (700 lux) ^{*2}	Alteration (%)	OECD guideline 236 (2013)

*1 In addition, 0.5 mL of standard sand were added according to the protocol.

*2 In these experiments food was added: algae Scenedesmus sp. for H. incongruens, algae R. subcapitata for B. calyciflorus and shrimp Artemia sp. for D. rerio.

Table 3. Minimal and maximal recovery values (%) for total LN availability at time zero (t0h)

comparing to the nominal added (nominal-t0h) and at the end of the each test (tXh) comparing

to the time 0 h (tXh-t0h) for the individual LN studied (Ce, Gd and Lu) and for the total. In test

with duration lower than 24 h (microtox (MIT) and luminotox (LUT) test) lanthanide content at

the end of the test was not determined.

	Test duration	Recovery of the nominal	Ce	Gd	Lu	Total
		(nominal-t0h) (tXh-t0h)				
	(h)	(%)		(%	5)	
MIT	0.5	105-122	-	-	-	-
LUT	4	85-106	-	-	-	-
ALT (without algae addition)	72	95 102	3-71	4-74	5-81	3-72
ALT (with algae addition)	72	83-105	<1-21	<1-24	<1-37	1-22
ROT	48	86-109	5-20	6-20	11-24	5-22
OST	144	79-109	1-4	<1-27	<1-14	1-5
DAT	48	97-107	1-29	2-33	5-46	1-31
FET	96	n.d.	<1-8*1	$2-9^{*1}$	3-12 ^{*1}	<i>1-10</i> ^{*1}

n.d. no data. Data at time 0 for zebrafish was not measured. ^{*1} Recovery values calculated from the nominal content.

Table 4. Spearman correlation with the obtained inhibition in the tests MIT, ALT and ROT with the total content: nominal, at the start (t0h) and at the end of the tests (tXh); with the toxic units (TU) calculated from the nominal, and t0h; and with the individual LN content (Ce, Gd and Lu) for the nominal t0h and tXh. TU were calculated using the effective concentrations

14 values (EC₅₀) obtained by González et al. (2015) (consult EC₅₀ values in Table 5).

% Inhibition	MIT	ALT	ROT
\sum LN-Nominal	0.883**	0.450**	0.882**
∑LN-t0h	0.883**	0.438**	0.882**
∑LN-tXh	n.c.	-0.442**	0.674**
Ce-Nominal	0.795**	0.366**	0.843**
Ce-t0h	0.781**	0.369**	0.835**
Ce-tXh	n.c.		0.596**
Gd-Nominal	0.896**	0.793**	0.555**
Gd-t0h	0.864**	0.786**	0.508*
Gd-tXh	n.c.		
Lu-Nominal	0.801**	0.852**	
Lu-t0h	0.818**	0.830**	
Lu-tXh	n.c.		
∑TU-Nominal	0.923**	0.566**	0.870**
∑TU-t0h	0.922**	0.634**	0.871**
∑TU-tXh	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.

15 Test duration (tXh) for ALT=72h and for ROT=48h.

16 n.c. calculation not possible for test duration lower than 24h.

- 17 n.d. no EC50 data available for performing the calculations.
- 18

Table 5. Effective concentrations inducing 50% of inhibition (EC_{50}) and their confidence 19 intervals at 95% (95%CI) in three different organisms: A. fischeri (MIT), R. subcapitata (ALT) 20 and B. calyciflorus (ROT); calculated from the toxic units approach (TU) based on individual 21 EC₅₀ values obtained by González et al. (2015). TU were obtained for the nominal and for the 22 measured LN concentration for time 0h (t0h) in MIT, ALT and ROT, and for the corresponding 23 final time (tXh) in ALT and ROT from all studied treatments. M was also calculated from the 24 free lanthanide (ΣLN^{3+}) obtained by modelling speciation (using Visual MINTEQ 3.1). 25 Geometric mean of the LN concentrations at the start and at the end of the tests ($\sqrt{t0*tXh}$) 26 (OECD, 2000) was only obtained for ROT test. 27

28

			EC ₅₀								
			This s	study		Gonz	González et al. (2015)				
			From mixtur	e treat	ments	Ce	Gd	Lu			
			TU	CN	IM (µg L ⁻¹)						
	Nominal	<0.36 (0.31-0.43) 2		2070	(1674-2558)	>6400*1	>6400*1	>3200*1			
MIT	Measured (t0h)	< 0.44*2	(0.38-0.52)	2286	(1816-2877)			2041			
	Modelled (∑LN ³⁺)		n.c.	1909	(1556-2343)						
	Nominal	< 0.29	(0.24-0.34)	1302	(1031-1643)	>6400*1	3111	2062			
АТТ	Measured (t0h)	0.28	(0.23-0.35)	1149	(849-1553)	6317	2219	2079			
ALI	Measured (t72h)		n.c.		n.c.						
	Modelled (∑LN ³⁺)		n.c.	875	(652-1175)	4421	1257	809			
	Nominal	3.38	(2.52-4.52)	3034	(2496-3687)	775	1120	760			
	Measured (t0h)	3.68	(3.27-4.13)	2532	(2329-2752)	620	914	575			
ROT	Measured (t48h)		n.c.	265	(154-456)						
	Modelled (∑LN ³⁺)		n.c.	362	(182-719)	80.6	63.9	17.2			
	Geometric mean (√t0*tXh)	1.16	n.c.	780	(640-951)						

^{*1}For EC values with symbol higher than (>), the expressed value was used for TU calculation.

^{*2}In this case, due to the lack of some EC values at t0h, nominal values were used for TU calculation.

31 n.c. calculation not possible.

32

33

- 34
- 35
- 36
- 37



Figure 1. Inhibition (%) induced by different lanthanide mixtures towards bacteria and organisms on different trophic levels. Corresponding concentrations for the 12 treatments used are given in Table 1. Samples with * showed significant inhibition respect to the control obtained by multiple comparison (Pearson, p<0.05).

Assessment of the toxic effects of mixtures of three lanthanides (Ce, Gd, Lu) to aquatic

biota

Romero-Freire, A^{1,2#*}., Joonas, E^{3,4#}., Muna, M^{3,5#}., Cossu-Leguille, C¹., Vignati, D.A.L¹., Giamberini, L¹.

¹CNRS UMR 7360, Laboratoire Interdisciplinaire des Environnements Continentaux (LIEC), Université de Lorraine, Metz 57070, France.

²Marine Research Institute (IIM-CSIC), Eduardo Cabello 6, Vigo 36208, Spain.

³Laboratory of Environmental Toxicology, National Institute of Chemical Physics and Biophysics, Akadeemia tee 23, Tallinn 12618, Estonia.

⁴Institute of Ecology and Earth Sciences, University of Tartu, Lai 40, 51005 Tartu, Estonia.

⁵Tallinn University of Technology, Ehitajate tee 5, Tallinn 19086, Estonia.

[#]These authors contributed equally to this work

*Corresponding author: <u>anaromero@iim.csic.es</u>

1 ,	1				
Substance	EPA final concentration (mg L ⁻¹)	OECD final concentration (mg L ⁻¹)	Ratios EPA/OECD		
NH ₄ Cl	-	15			
NaNO ₃	25.5	-			
MgCl ₂ ·6H ₂ O	12.16	12	1.01		
CaCl ₂ ·2H ₂ O	4.41	18	0.25		
MgSO ₄ ·7H2O	14.6	15	0.97		
KH ₂ PO ₄	1.044	1.6	0.65		
FeCl ₃ ·6H ₂ O	0.16	0.064	2.50		
Na ₂ EDTA·2H ₂ O	0.3	0.1	3.00		
H ₃ BO ₃	0.186	0.185	1.01		
MnCl ₂ ·4H ₂ O	0.415	0.415	1.00		
ZnCl ₂	0.00327	0.003	1.09		
CoCl ₂ ·6H ₂ O	0.00143	0.0015	0.95		
CuCl ₂ ·2H2O	0.000012	0.00001	1.20		
Na ₂ MoO ₄ ·2H ₂ O	0.00726	0.007	1.04		
NaHCO ₃	15	50	0.30		

Table SI-1. Composition of the media used in the ALT test (US EPA algal media) and the usual media used for algae toxicity test (OECD algal media) (OECD 201, 2011). For easily comparison, ratios of the main compounds are calculated in the last column.

Table SI-2. Percentage of precipitation and major Ce, Gd and Lu dissolved species percentage distribution (on a molar basis) among the dissolved species formed in the studied test media. Data only show for the treatments with mixtures with the highest LN contents (CE1, GD1 and LU1). Species were calculated with VisualMINTEQ 3.1. Shown are values where some specie had at least a distribution higher than 0.3%. In ALT, ROT and OST the addition of algae was not having into consideration for modeling, and, for OST test, the sand added in the final media was neither used.

			Ce			Gd			Lu	
	Nominal content (ug L ⁻¹)	4000	5000	3420	200	1400	1710	12	82	855
	%Species	CE1	GD1	LU1	CE1	GD1	LU1	CE1	GD1	LU1
NATT	%Precipitation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	LN^{+3}	90	90	90	94	94	94	95	95	95
	LNCI ⁺²	10	10	10	5.8	5.8	5.8	4.8	4.8	4.8
TIT	%Precipitation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
LUI	LN^{+3}	100	100	100	100	99	100	98	98	99
	LNOH ⁺²							1.4	1.5	1.1
	%Precipitation	21	17	25	0	0	51	0	0	0
	Precipitated species		$CePO_4$		$Gd(OH)_3$					
	LN^{+3}	58	65	56	35	49	40	0.69	5.0	19
ALT	LNEDTA ⁻	1.3	0.17	0	20	3.3	0.14	97	85	16
	$LNSO_4^+$	8.6	9.3	8.3	5.4	7.3	6.2	0.078	0.54	2.2
	LNCO ₃ ⁺	29	22	32	36	36	48	1.7	8.3	53
	LNOH ⁺²	1.5	1.2	1.7	2.9	2.9	4.0	0.21	1.1	7.1
	$LN(CO3)_2$	0.082	0.044	0.11	0.26	0.18	0.39	0.040	0.14	1.5
	LNHCO ₃ ²⁺	1.6	1.7	1.5	1.0	1.4	1.2	0.028	0.20	0.75
	%Precipitation	0	0	0	0	60	73	0	0	0
	Precipitated species			$Gd(OH)_3$						
	LN^{+3}	21	17	16	13	9.9	9.1	6.1	4.5	4.0
ROT/OST	LNSO ₄ ⁺	24	20	19	16	12	11	5.5	4.0	3.6
		51	58	60	66	71	72	74	73	73
	LNOH ⁺²	0.93	1.1	1.1	1.8	2.0	2.0	3.2	3.3	3.2
	$LN(SO_4)_2$	0.31	0.26	0.24	0.23	0.18	0.17	0.11	0.083	0.076
	$LN(CO_3)_2$	0.89	1.4	1.6	2.8	4.1	4.6	11	14	16
	LNHCO ₃ ²⁺	1.8	1.5	1.4	1.2	0.93	0.86	0.79	0.57	0.51
	%Precipitation	0	0	0	4.3	83	77	0	0	48
	Precipitated species				(id(OH)3	I	Lu(OH)	3
		32	33	36	25	26	30	16	18	23
DAT		44	46	49	35	37	42	17	19	24
	$LNCO_3$	22	19	13	35	32	24	54	50	42
		14	1.3	1.2	3.6	3.5	3.2	9.3	9.5	9.7
	$LN(SO_4)_2$	0.69	0.72	0.77	0.69	0.73	0.83	0.47	0.53	0.66
	$\frac{\text{LN}(\text{CO}_3)_2}{2}$	0.11	0.077	0.036	0.43	0.32	0.10	2.2	1./	0.94
	%Precipitation	0	0	0	44	92 14011	, 94	0		/9
	Precipitatea species	20	20	20)3		$\frac{Ju(OH)}{14}$	3
FET		38	<i>3</i> 9	58 22	26	26	26	14	14	14
		22	22	22	15	15	15	6.0	6.0	6.0
	$LNCU_3$ LNOU ⁺²	35	<i>3</i> 3	<i>3</i> 5		51	51 6 4	03	63 12	63 12
		3.0	5.0	3.0	0.4	6.4	0.4	12	12	12
	$LIN(CO_3)_2$	0.30	0.30	0.30	1.1	1.1	1.1	4.5	4.5	4.5



Figure SI-1. Evolution of the availability of phosphorous (P) in EPA media used in ALT test spiked with the highest concentrations used of the studied lanthanides (Ce, Gd and Lu) in individual form, without algae addition. Additional information is presented in Table SI-1 for the EPA media composition, and in Table 2 for the test procedure.



Figure SI-2. Comparison of algae distribution added as food in the rotifertox test (ROT) after 48h of exposition. a) Treatments with high LN content (CE1-2, GD1-2, LU1-2, A and C), b) controls and treatments with low LN content (CE3, GD3, LU3 and B).



Figure SI-3. LN availability in logarithmic scale for the longest toxicity test performed (OST) at different periods of the test (time 0, 24, 96 and 144 h). Lanthanide content for each treatment is given in Table 1; while additional information for the test procedure is given in Table 2.