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# 1           **Characterisation of the Impact of Dissolved Organic Matter on Iron,** 2           **Manganese, and Arsenic Mobilisation during Bank Filtration**

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## 9           Abstract

10          Bank filtration (BF) has been used for many years as an economical technique for providing  
11          high-quality drinking water. However, under anaerobic conditions, the aquifer release of  
12          undesirable metal(loid)s, such as iron manganese, and arsenic, reduces the bank filtrate quality  
13          and thus restricts the application of this technique. This study investigates the impact of the  
14          organic-matter composition of source water on the mobilisation of Fe, Mn, and As during the  
15          anaerobic BF process. A laboratory-scale column study was conducted at a controlled-  
16          temperature (30±2°C) using different feed water sources. The organic matter characteristics of  
17          the feed water were elucidated using excitation-emission spectroscopy techniques integrated  
18          with parallel factor framework clustering analysis (PFFCA) model. The experiment was  
19          performed at redox conditions between 66 mv and -185 mv. Moreover, batch studies were  
20          implemented to study the effect of natural organic matter type (humic, fulvic and tyrosine) and  
21          concentration on the mobilisation of the selected metal(loids). The laboratory experiments  
22          demonstrated that the mobilisation of Fe, Mn and As during the BF are varied with the organic  
23          water concentration and composition of the source water. The fluorescence results revealed  
24          that terrestrial and condensed structure humic compounds are more capable to release Fe into  
25          the filtrate water. In contrast, Mn exhibited an equal tendency of mobilisation towards all the  
26          humic compounds regardless of its origin and structure. However, at a humic concentration

27 higher than 5 mg-C/L, Mn showed more affinity towards lower molecular weight humic  
28 compounds. Arsenic was found to be the least impacted by the alteration in the source water  
29 organic matter composition; its mobilisation was highly correlated with iron releasing process.  
30 On the other hand, the biodegradable organic matter at high concentration (>10 mg-C/L) was  
31 found to be highly effective to turn the infiltration area into Fe-reducing environment and  
32 thereby elevating Fe and As concentrations in the pumped water. In conclusion, this study  
33 revealed that the DOM composition and concentration of the raw water could play an important  
34 role in the mobilisation of metal(loids) during the BF processes.

35 **Keywords:** Bank filtration, Iron, Manganese, Arsenic, Organic Matter

## 36 1. Introduction

37 Bank filtration (BF) has been known to be a sustainable and natural treatment technique for  
38 water supplies worldwide (Eckert et al., 2006). This technique is based on inducing surface  
39 water to flow towards a vertical or horizontal well located near a surface water system. The  
40 river bank acts as a robust barrier filter to reduce the pollutant concentration. Irmischer et al.  
41 (2002) reported that there are more than 100 BF fields in Europe; many of them have been  
42 operated for more than 100 years. Recently, BF has been getting increasing attention as a  
43 desirable technique for treating water supplies in several developing countries with different  
44 and extreme environmental conditions (Wahaab et al., 2019).

45 BF is an effective technique to remove persistent pollutants and produce high drinking water  
46 quality. Sandhu et al. (2019) reported a 50% removal of dissolved organic matter (DOM) and  
47 13-99% of micro-organic pollutants for BF fields along the Yamuna River (India). Moreover,  
48 BF can also be used as a pre-treatment step to improve the quality of the water and reduce the  
49 treatment cost. Haas et al. (2018) revealed that BF could reduce the fouling development in  
50 membrane treatment plant and this subsequently will reduce the energy consumption, increase

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58 membrane treatment plants and this subsequently will reduce the energy consumption, increase  
59 the efficiency and life-time of the membrane, and therefore, reduce the operation cost of the  
60 plant. However, other BF processes (e.g., mixing the infiltrate water with the contaminated  
61 ambient groundwater and reduction of toxic metals from soil into the filtrate water) might also  
62 have an adverse effect on the quality of the pumped water. In the last decades, the quality of  
63 the River Rhine at Dusseldorf (Germany) was deteriorated and an anaerobic environment was  
64 developed in the infiltration area that led to increase the concentrations of Fe and Mn in the  
65 pumped water. In the last years, the water quality of the raw water improved; however, the  
66 periodic changes of river water quality and hydraulics as a result of climate conditions should  
67 be considered. Recently, granular activated carbon combined with ozonation and filtration are  
68 used as a further treatment of bank filtrate to remove the chemical pollutants (Eckert et al.,  
69 2006). Thus, it can be concluded that the BF processes and environmental condition of the  
70 infiltration area highly determine the quality of the pumped water.

71 Biodegradation and adsorption are the main mechanisms to remove chemical pollutants during  
72 the filtration process (Bertelkamp et al., 2014). Biodegradation is a process in which the  
73 microorganisms degrade organic matter using acceptor electrons. Organisms use oxygen as the  
74 primary electron acceptor for the organic-matter biodegradation process, followed by nitrate,  
75 Mn, and Fe. This process is highly useful to reduce the concentration of organic matter and

76 nitrogen and consequently increase the quality of the pumped water. However, turning the  
77 environment into anaerobic, where the insoluble Fe and Mn are the primary electron acceptor,  
78 will increase the metals concentrations in the infiltrate water (Massmann et al., 2008). The  
79 microbial reduction and mobilisation of Fe and Mn are considered as significant sources of  
80 elevated toxic substances (e.g., arsenic (As)) in pumped water, which adversely affects human  
81 health and degrades bank filtrate quality (Yang et al., 2015). These processes are mainly  
82 controlled by environmental conditions along the subsurface flow path, such as the  
83 temperature, hydraulic conductivity of the soil, redox potential, metal speciation in the ores,  
84 and the organic and inorganic compositions of source water (Vega et al., 2017).

85 DOM is considered as the primary energy source for the metal and metalloids (has intermediate  
86 properties of metals and non-metals) mobilisation taking place during the subsurface water  
87 flow process (Vega et al., 2017). DOM can be subdivided into two major categories namely,  
88 biodegradable and non-biodegradable. Biodegradable compounds enrich the biological activity  
89 along the flow path and subsequently accelerate the microbial reduction of metal(loid)s into  
90 the filtrate water (Schittich et al., 2018). Non-biodegradable compounds (i.e., humics) have  
91 high electron shuttle capacities and thus could play a dual role in these mobilisation processes.  
92 First, they could enhance the mobilisation of metal(loid)s biotically by mediating the microbial  
93 reduction processes (Brune et al., 2004). Second, they might chemically form aqueous  
94 complexes with metal(loid)s and thereby increase their concentrations in filtrate water (Liu et  
95 al., 2011). On the other hand, the microbial reduction of Fe and Mn might also affect the  
96 dynamics and alter the chemical structures of DOM during infiltration. Vega et al. (2017)  
97 highlighted that the microbial reduction process is concurrent with the oxidation of labile  
98 compounds (e.g., phenol) into refractory humic compounds, as well as the destruction of high-  
99 molecular-weight organic compounds into smaller compounds that can serve as electron donors  
100 for microorganisms during the microbial reduction processes. The dynamics of DOM and its

101 impact on the mobilisation of metal(loid)s during the subsurface flow of water is highly  
102 dependent on the chemical structure of DOM and environmental conditions such as the redox  
103 potential and the temperature.

104 The main objective of this research was to assess the effectiveness of this technique in  
105 providing high-quality water in hot-climate environments and to address the problems that  
106 restrict the extended application of this technique. The bank filtrate temperature of wells  
107 located along the Nile River (Egypt) was 26.4 °C (Ghodeif et al., 2016), whereas, it was  
108 reported as 28.6 and 30 °C along the Ganga River and Yamuna River (India) (Sprenger et al.,  
109 2012). Moreover, recent climate models expect a 12.6 °C global average temperature rise by  
110 2050 (R.K. Pachauri et al., 2014). The depletion of oxygen in surface water systems is more  
111 likely in arid environments. Hence, there is a higher potential of developing an anaerobic  
112 environment during the BF processes, which subsequently leads to the enrichment of pumped  
113 water in metal(loid)s and degrades the bank filtrate quality. This is one of the major drawbacks  
114 that restrict the widespread application of the BF technique in hot-climate regions. Therefore,  
115 this research investigated the role of DOM composition in the mobilisation of Fe, Mn, and As  
116 during the BF processes under hot-climate conditions. This is an important step to predict and  
117 control their concentrations in pumped bank filtrate water. During this research, laboratory-  
118 scale column and batch studies were conducted using different feed water sources. The organic  
119 composition of the feed water was investigated using different fluorescence techniques.

## 120 2. Research Methodology

### 121 2.1. Soil and feed water characteristics

122 Manganese iron coated sand (MICS) used in this research was obtained from the groundwater  
123 water treatment plant Brucht (Netherlands). The media was sieved through a 3 mm mesh  
124 screen, washed gently with water to discard the deposits, and then dried at 70 °C. The size of

125 the used media was 1-3 mm. The physical and chemical properties of the media were  
126 determined and presented in table S1.

127 During this study, four different types of waters were fed to the columns to assess the impact  
128 of organic matter composition on the mobilisation of Fe, Mn and As during soil passage. The  
129 quality parameters of the feed water (pH, conductivity, ammonia, nitrate, total phosphorus, and  
130 chlorides) are summarized in table S2. The redox potential of the effluent water was ranged  
131 between -66 mv and -185 mv and pH varied between 7.56 and 8.14 during the experimental  
132 period.

## 133 2.2. Column experiment

134 A laboratory-scale column study was performed to evaluate the role of the organic composition  
135 of water in the release of Mn, Fe and As from the soil into the bank filtrate at a high temperature.  
136 Four PVC columns with 2.1 cm internal diameter and 50 cm height were developed. The  
137 columns were packed at the bottom with a support layer of graded gravel with a diameter 3-5  
138 mm to a height of 5 cm and then filled with MICS in deionised water to ensure the  
139 homogeneous packing. The feed water was introduced to the columns in an up-flow mode  
140 (saturated flow), and a variable-speed peristaltic pump was used at the top of the column  
141 providing at a constant hydraulic rate (0.5 m/d) to avoid the entrapment of air bubbles in the  
142 soil bed. This hydraulic rate has been experienced in many BF fields (Ghodeif et al., 2016;  
143 Paufler et al., 2018). The tracer test using NaCl was conducted to estimate the retention time;  
144 the empty bed contact time was 16 hours. Sub-oxic conditions were maintained in all columns  
145 by continuously degassing the feed water tank with a nitrogen stream to dissipate the air until  
146 the dissolved oxygen concentration was lower than 0.2 mg/L. Moreover, the column was fed  
147 continuously with water during the whole experiment to prevent the penetration of air into the  
148 soil bed. Then, the columns were acclimated using Delft canal water (DCW) for more than 70  
149 days. After that, the columns were fed with waters of different organic composition. The first

150 column continued to be fed with DCW. The second column was fed with DCW mixed with  
151 secondary treated wastewater effluent from Hoek van Holland, the Netherlands (DCWW). The  
152 third column was fed with DCW mixed with water-extractable organic matter (WEOM) that  
153 had high humic content. The procedures used for WEOM preparation are described in detail in  
154 (Abdelrady et al., 2018). The last column was fed with non-chlorinated tap water (NCTW),  
155 representing low-organic-matter-content water. The experiment was conducted in a controlled-  
156 temperature room (at 30 °C). The pore volume (PV) of each column was changed 10–15 times  
157 during the whole experiment. Influent and effluent samples were taken regularly (at every PV  
158 change) to characterise their quality parameters. Physical and chemical parameters (i.e., pH,  
159 redox potential, temperature, and dissolved oxygen concentration) were measured  
160 continuously to ensure that the experiment was conducted under the desired environmental  
161 conditions.

### 162 2.3. Batch experiment

163 Laboratory-scale batch reactors were employed to determine the impact of the type and  
164 concentration of natural organic matter (NOM) on the mobilisation of Fe, Mn, and As from the  
165 soil into the filtrate water. Each reactor (0.5 L brown glass bottle containing 100 g MICS) was  
166 ripened with 400 mL of DCW and the ripening process was continued for 70 days. The feed  
167 water was degassed with a nitrogen stream to dissipate the air. Then, the reactors were sealed  
168 tightly and placed on a reciprocal shaker at 100 rpm in a controlled-temperature room (30 °C).  
169 The renewal process was conducted inside an anaerobic chamber to ensure that the experiment  
170 was conducted under anaerobic conditions. After ripening, three NOM types (humic, fulvic,  
171 and tyrosine) were spiked at four different concentrations (5, 10, 15, and 20 mg-C/L) in the  
172 reactors (one type and one concentration in each), and the experiment was conducted for 30  
173 days at the same experimental conditions. This residence time was recommended by several  
174 previous studies to remove chemical and biological contaminants from the raw water during



175 the BF processes (Ray et al., 2011). The humic acid and tyrosine were purchased as powders  
176 from Sigma-Aldrich (Netherlands) and the powdered fulvic acid was bought from the  
177 International Humic Substances Society. Control (DCW without sand) reactors were operated  
178 under the same environmental conditions.

#### 179 2.4. Analytical methods

180 Influent and effluent samples were collected and analysed directly to avoid the degradation of  
181 the organic matter. The samples were first filtered using 0.45  $\mu\text{m}$  filtration (Whatman, Dassel,  
182 Germany). The Fe and Mn concentrations were determined using inductively coupled plasma–  
183 mass spectrometry instrument (Xseries II Thermo Scientific, Bermen, Germany). The arsenic  
184 concentration was analysed using a graphite furnace atomic absorption spectrophotometer  
185 (Solaar MQZe, Thermo Electron Co). The limit of quantitation (LOQ) of Fe, Mn and As was  
186 10, 10 and 2  $\mu\text{g/L}$ , respectively.

187 The organic matter content of the feed waters was measured as dissolved organic carbon (DOC,  
188 in  $\text{mg-C/L}$ ) using the combustion technique with a total organic carbon analyser (TOC-VCPN  
189 (TN), Shimadzu, Japan). The organic composition of the influent and effluent water was  
190 determined using the fluorescence excitation–emission technique (F-EEM). A Fluoromax-3  
191 spectrofluorometer (HORIBA Jobin Yvon, Edison, NJ, USA) was used to determine the  
192 fluorescence intensity (FI) of the water samples at excitation wavelengths ( $\lambda_{\text{ex}}$ ) of 240–452  
193 nm (interval = 4 nm) and emission wavelengths ( $\lambda_{\text{em}}$ ) of 290–500 nm (interval = 2 nm).

#### 194 2.5. Fluorescence indices

195 Fluorescence indices, including the humification index (HIX), the fluorescence index (FIX),  
196 and the biological index (BIX), were estimated based on the F-EEM measurements. HIX is  
197 used as a marker of the humification (polycondensation) degree of the water, and higher HIX

198 values refer to higher humic content (lower H:C) (Gabor et al., 2014). This parameter was  
199 estimated following the equation proposed by (Ohno, 2002):

$$200 \quad HIX = \frac{\sum FI_{\lambda em} (434-480 \text{ nm})}{\sum FI_{\lambda em} (434-480 \text{ nm}) + \sum FI_{\lambda em} (300-344 \text{ nm})} \quad \text{at } \lambda_{ex} (254 \text{ nm}) \quad (1)$$

201 FIX is used widely to identify the origin of DOM in water. It is estimated following the method  
202 developed by Hansen et al. (2016) (see Equation 2). Its values range between 1.2 and 1.8, with  
203 higher values for terrestrial DOM and lower values for microbial DOM origin (Gabor et al.,  
204 2014).

$$205 \quad FIX = \frac{FI_{\lambda em} (450)}{FI_{\lambda em} (500)} \quad \text{at } \lambda_{ex} (370 \text{ nm}) \quad (2)$$

206 BIX is used as an indicator of the contribution of recently produced and microbial-derived  
207 organic compounds to the fluorescence DOM pool. It was determined following the method of  
208 following the method of Huguet et al. (2009) (Equation 3).

$$209 \quad BIX = \frac{FI_{\lambda em} (380)}{FI_{\lambda em} (430)} \quad \text{at } \lambda_{ex} (310 \text{ nm}) \quad (3)$$

## 210 2.6. Fluorescence modelling

211 Although F-EEM is a qualitative technique, it is still effective in quantifying the characteristics  
212 of DOM. A parallel factor framework-clustering analysis (PFFCA) model was recently  
213 stipulated by Qian et al. (2017) for decomposing the F-EEM dataset into major fluorescence  
214 components representing different NOM compounds. Briefly, PFFCA decomposes the F-EEM  
215 datasets into several factors (7–13). Afterwards, the highly correlated factors are clustered into  
216 one component representing organic matter with the same fluorescence characteristics.

217 To ensure the quality of the data and the robustness of the fluorescence dataset interpretation,  
218 parallel factor (PARAFAC) analysis was used as well to decompose the fluorescence dataset  
219 into major components and to assess the contribution of each component to the full

220 fluorescence spectrum. The development and validation of the model developing were  
221 described in details in Murphy et al. (2013). Split-half validation technique was used to validate  
222 the fluorescence model. This technique is based on the comparison of multiple models  
223 generated by splitting the dataset. In this research, the dataset was divided into four groups,  
224 and the samples were assigned alternately into the groups. Then, the groups were assembled  
225 into six combined groups; each combined group contains half of the dataset. After that, the  
226 PARAFAC test was applied for each combined group and the produced models were compared  
227 (Harshman et al., 1994). The validation process was implemented using drEEM MATLAB  
228 toolboxes developed by Murphy et al. (2013).

229 The redox index (RI) is used as an indicator of the reducibility of quinone-like moieties in the  
230 DOM of raw water. This parameter was calculated following the definition of Miller et al.  
231 (2006), by dividing the sum of the FI of the reduced quinone-like moieties to the total of the  
232 (reduced and oxidised) quinone-like moieties of the fluorescence components, with values  
233 close to 1 indicating a higher reducing capacity of the feed water (Gabor et al., 2014).

## 234 2.7. Statistical analysis

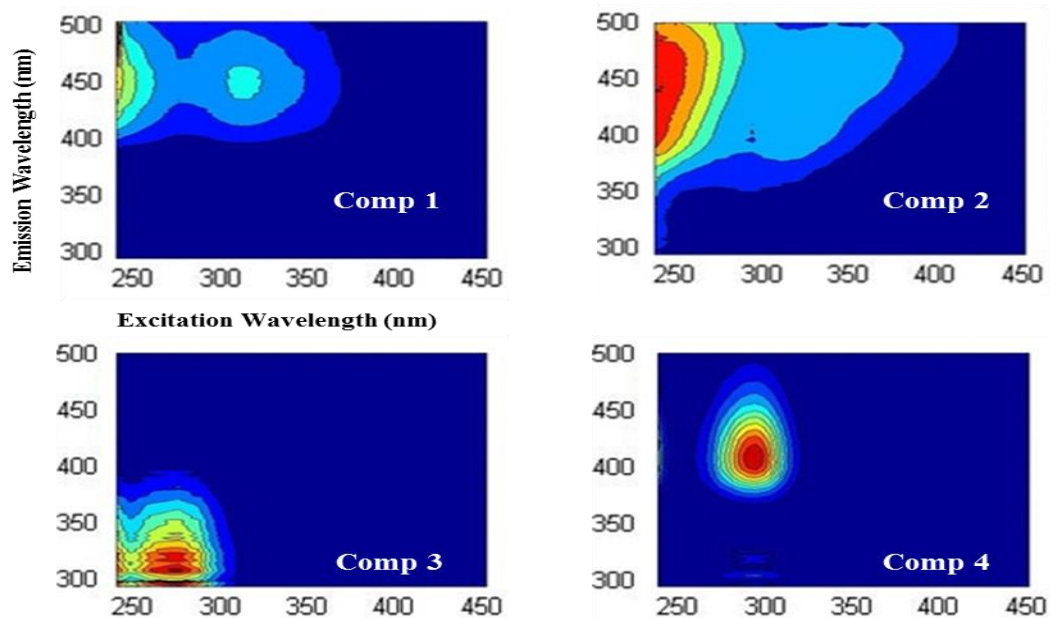
235 The relationship between Fe, Mn, and As concentrations in the effluent waters and the  
236 fluorescence organic characteristics of the feed water were explored using Pearson correlation  
237 ( $r$ ) and nonparametric Spearman rank correlation ( $\rho$ ) analysis. The strength of the correlation  
238 was considered high when the correlation value ( $\rho$ ) was higher than 0.7 and moderate when it  
239 ranged between 0.7 and 0.5 (Hinkle et al., 1988). The relationship was considered significant  
240 if the criterion level of significance ( $p$ ) was lower than 0.05.

241 3. Results

242 3.1. Impact of DOM composition on metal(loids) mobilisation (column experiment)

243 3.1.1. Fluorescence components

244 A F-EEM dataset of 80 water samples collected from the influents and effluents of the columns  
245 was used to develop and validate a PFFCA-EEM model. The dataset was decomposed into 11  
246 factors and afterwards clustered into four main components (FC1–FC4). To ensure the  
247 reliability and interpretability of the F-EEM dataset, it was also analysed using the PARAFAC  
248 technique. A model with four fluorescence components (PC1–PC4) was successfully split-half-  
249 validated and explained 99.7% of the data variability. The footprints of the PFFCA components  
250 and their corresponding PARAFAC components is presented in Figure 1 and Figure S1. A  
251 comparison between the spectral characteristics of the recognised components and those  
252 reported in earlier studies was conducted using OpenFluor online database (Table S1).  
253 Component FC1 exhibited maximum wavelengths of  $\lambda_{ex} = 332$  nm and  $\lambda_{em} = 460$  nm and



*Figure 1. Contour plots of the four PFFCA components (PF1-PF4) identified from the complete measured F-EEMs dataset for the influents and effluents water of column experiment.*

254 therefore it could be allocated to a terrestrial humic component (Coble, 1996). Singh et al.  
255 (2013) reported that this component is ubiquitous in a reduced environment and holds reduced  
256 quinone-like moieties in its structure. Component FC2 showed a maximum peak at  $\lambda_{ex} = 310$

257 nm and  $\lambda_{em} = 410$  nm, and therefore it was as attributed to a combination of terrestrial fulvic  
258 acid and microbial humic compounds (Gonçalves-Araujo et al., 2016; Li et al., 2016).  
259 Component FC4 displayed a maximum peak at  $\lambda_{ex} = 300$  nm and  $\lambda_{em} = 410$  nm. This  
260 component is frequently associated with marine and/or microbial humic fluorophores and was  
261 recently connected to humic/fulvic compounds of agricultural origin (Baghoth et al., 2011).  
262 According to Singh et al. (2013) component FC2 and component FC4 contain oxidised  
263 moieties in their structures. Based on these definitions, the RI was calculated as the ratio of the  
264 first component (FC1) to the sum of the three humic components (FC1, FC2, and FC4).  
265 Component FC3 exhibited maximum fluorescence at the shortest wavelengths ( $\lambda_{ex} = 240$  nm,  
266 268 nm) and ( $\lambda_{em} = 308$  nm), which corresponds to a protein-like fluorophore (tyrosine and  
267 tryptophan-like fluorophores) (Wünsch et al., 2017).

### 268 *3.1.2. Feed water DOM characteristics*

269 Four feed waters (DCW, DCWW, WEOM, and NCTW) with different organic compositions  
270 were used in the experiments. Table 1 shows that WEOM had the highest concentration of  
271 organic matter (DOC ranged between 15.8 and 19.3 mg-C/L) and the NCTW influent had the  
272 lowest one (DOC varied from 1.98 to 4.1 mg/L). However, the DOC levels of DCW and  
273 DCWW were 10.8–13.6 mg-C/L and 10.2–13.7 mg/L, respectively.

274 The fluorescence indices were used to elucidate the DOM characteristics of the feed waters  
275 (Table 1). The results showed that DCW and DCWW had relatively similar fluorescence DOM  
276 characteristics. The HIX, FIX, and BIX of the DCW feed water were 0.85, 1.25, and 0.54,  
277 respectively, whereas they were 0.83, 1.26, and 0.61 for DCWW. WEOM had the highest  
278 humic content (HIX = 0.9) and the lowest microbial-derived (autochthonous) DOM content  
279 (BIX = 0.47), and its ratio of terrestrial humic DOM to microbial DOM (FIX) was 1.08. By  
280 contrast, NCTW retained a lower humic content (HIX = 0.62) and higher fresh DOM (BIX =  
281 0.73). There were no notable changes in the fluorescence indexes values for DCW, DCWW,

282 and WEOM feed water during the filtration process. However, an increase in the terrestrial  
283 humic content ( $HIX = 0.79$ ,  $FIX = 1.2$ ) for the NCTW effluent was recorded.

284 The PFFCA-EEM technique was used to gain insight into the DOM characteristics of the  
285 influent waters. Table 1 shows the average FI of PFFCA-EEM components for all of the feed-  
286 water types. The results demonstrated that the WEOM influent had a considerably higher  
287 concentration of humic compounds than the other influents. Terrestrial humic (FC1) was  
288 present in a proportion (45–49%) of the fluorescence spectrum of WEOM feed water; however,  
289 it only represents 43–46%, 41–42%, and 33–34% of the DCW, DCWW, and NCTW  
290 fluorescence spectrum, respectively. The average FIs of microbial humic FC2 and humic-like  
291 from agricultural sources, FC4, were  $2.36 \pm 0.42$  and  $0.24 \pm 0.04$  RU, while their values for  
292 NCTW were  $0.2 \pm 0.09$  and  $0.1 \pm 0.03$  RU, respectively. The humic-like components (FC1, FC2,  
293 and FC4) exhibited a decreasing behaviour during the filtration; the FI of the humic  
294 components decreased by 8–26% for DCW, 11–24% for DCWW, and 20–32% for WEOM  
295 influent water. An exception was the terrestrial and processed humic compounds of the NCTW  
296 influent, which followed an increasing behaviour during the filtration process. On average, the  
297 FI of FC1 and FC2 increased by a factor of two and three, respectively, during the filtration  
298 process. The enrichment of humic compounds in the effluent water might be attributed to: (i)  
299 the dissolution of soil organic compounds into the filtrate water, (ii) the presence of micro-  
300 organisms that are able to bio-transform the labile organic matter into more condensed and  
301 refractory compounds (Abdelrady et al., 2018). DCWW and WEOM had the highest  
302 concentration of protein-like fluorescent compounds. The average FI of FC3 was  $0.47 \pm 0.19$ ,  
303  $0.52 \pm 0.14$ ,  $0.15 \pm 0.08$ , and  $0.65 \pm 0.23$  RU for DCW, DCWW, NCTW, and WEOM influents,  
304 respectively. For all feed-water types, the protein-like component FC3 exhibited a decreasing  
305 trend during the filtration process; its removal ranged between 67% and 80%, which is in

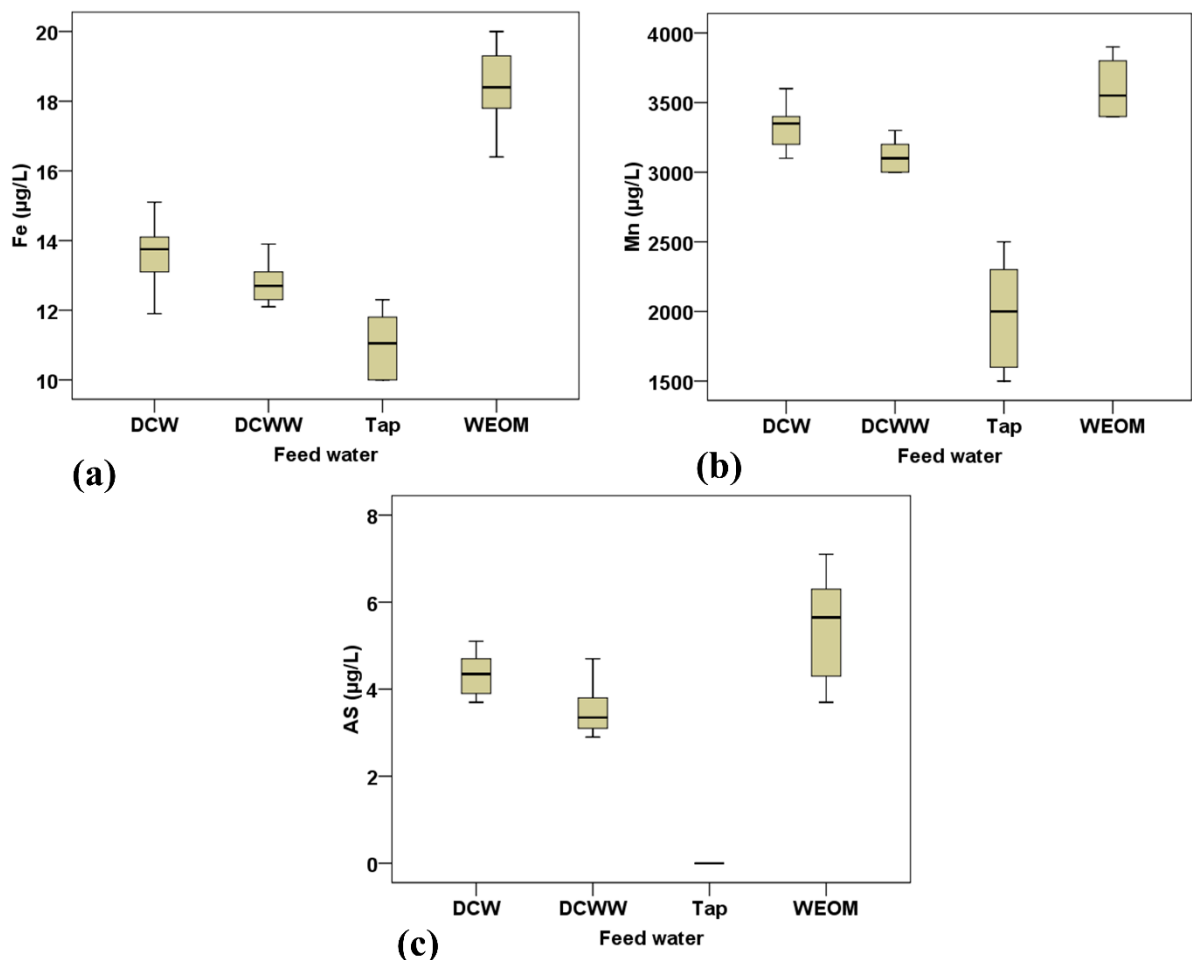
306 agreement with Abdelrady et al. (2019), who observed an average removal of 80% of labile  
307 organic compounds during the filtration process.

308 *Table 1. The organic characteristics of the feed waters*

<b>Parameter</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>DCW</b>	<b>NCTW</b>	<b>DCWW</b>	<b>WEOM</b>
<b>DOC</b>	mg-C/L	11.64±3.51	3.98±0.73	11.73±1.06	18.23±1.6
<b>HIX</b>	----	0.85±0.02	0.62±0.04	0.83±0.06	0.9±0.02
<b>FIX</b>	----	1.25±0.07	1.35±0.02	1.26±0.14	1.08±0.13
<b>BIX</b>	----	0.54±0.11	0.73±0.04	0.61±0.17	0.47±0.11
<b>FC1</b>	RU	1.48±0.22	1.44±0.24	0.23±0.09	2.63±0.64
<b>FC2</b>	RU	1.10±0.19	1.53±0.21	0.20±0.09	2.36±0.42
<b>FC3</b>	RU	0.47±0.19	0.52±0.14	0.15±0.08	0.65±0.23
<b>FC4</b>	RU	0.20±0.03	0.15±0.06	0.10±0.03	0.24±0.04

309 *3.1.3. Iron, manganese and arsenic mobilisation*

310 Figure 2 shows the concentrations of Fe, Mn, and As in the effluents of the columns fed with  
 311 different water sources. The figure shows that the mobilisation of Mn was much higher than  
 312 that of Fe and As during the filtration processes. The concentration of Fe, Mn, and As for the  
 313 four different water types were 10–20 µg/L, 1500–3900 µg/L, and >2–7.1 µg/L, respectively.  
 314 The concentrations of the tested metal(loid)s in the effluents were found to be dependent on  
 315 the feed-water source. The WEOM feed water exhibited the highest capacity to release Fe, Mn,  
 316 and As from their solid forms into the filtrate water. The mean concentration of Fe, Mn, and  
 317 As in the WEOM effluent were  $18.28 \pm 1.5$  µg/L,  $3590 \pm 185.3$  µg/L, and  $5.48 \pm 1.2$  µg/L,  
 318 respectively. The DCW and DCWW effluents showed a lower capacity of releasing these  
 319 metal(loid)s during the filtration process. The Fe, Mn, and As concentrations of the DCW



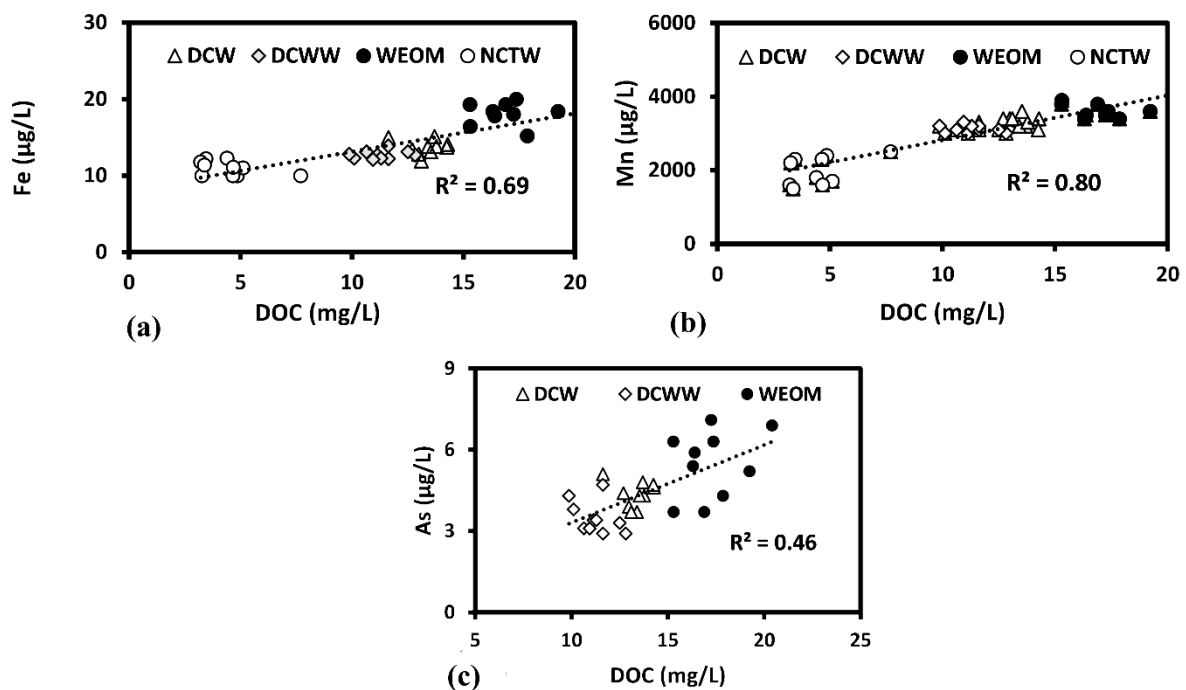
**Figure 2.** Fe (a), Mn (b), and As (c) concentrations in the effluents of columns operated using different water sources (DCW, DCWW, WEOM, NCTW) (anaerobic, 30°C, HRL=0.5 m/d)



320 effluent were 11.9–15.1  $\mu\text{g/L}$ , 3100–3600  $\mu\text{g/L}$ , and 3.7–5.1  $\mu\text{g/L}$ , respectively, and those of  
 321 the DCWW effluent were 12.1–13.9  $\mu\text{g/L}$ , 3000–3600  $\mu\text{g/L}$ , and 2.9–4.7  $\mu\text{g/L}$ ,  
 322 correspondingly. By contrast, NCTW exhibited the lowest capability of releasing the assessed  
 323 metal(loid)s, with Fe and Mn concentrations of  $10.98\pm 0.9$   $\mu\text{g/L}$  and  $1990\pm 384.3$   $\mu\text{g/L}$ ,  
 324 respectively. Moreover, the As concentration was always below the detection limit ( $<2$   $\mu\text{g/L}$ ).  
 325 A strong correlation ( $\rho = 0.77$ ) was observed between Fe and As concentrations in the effluent  
 326 waters. By contrast, a weak correlation ( $\rho = 0.35$ ) was detected between the As and Mn  
 327 concentrations.

### 3.1.4. Relationship between DOM composition and metal(loid) mobilisation

329 Figure 3 illustrates that the release of metal(loid)s (Fe, Mn, and As) during the filtration process  
 330 is highly dependent on the DOM concentration of the feed water. The feed DOM concentration  
 331 was highly correlated with Fe ( $\rho=0.89$ ) and Mn ( $\rho=0.87$ ) concentrations in the effluent waters,



**Figure 3. Impact of DOC concentration (mg-C/L) of different water sources (DCW, DCWW, WEOM, NCTW) on Fe (a), Mn (b), and As (c) mobilisation during column experiment (anaerobic, 30°C)**

332 whereas a moderate positive relationship was observed between DOM concentration and  
333 effluent As concentrations ( $\rho = 0.63$ ).

334 The fluorescence indexes results illustrate that Fe, Mn, and As release during the anaerobic  
335 filtration process is much more dependent on the humic content of the feed water than its  
336 autochthonous microbial DOM concentration (Table 2). The correlation between HIX and the  
337 effluent Fe concentration was observed to be  $\rho = 0.87$ , whereas it was recorded as  $\rho = 0.82$  for  
338 the Mn concentration. However, a moderate correlation was observed between HIX and the  
339 effluent As concentration ( $\rho = 0.51$ ). On the other hand, the mobilisation of Fe, Mn, and As  
340 was observed to be in a negative relationship with the microbial and terrestrial DOM ratio, and  
341 the correlation between the FIX of the feed waters and the released metal(loid)s was  $\rho = -0.71$   
342 for Fe,  $\rho = -0.64$  for Mn, and  $\rho = -0.39$  for As.

343 The correlation between the released metal(loid) concentrations and the FI of the fluorescence  
344 components of the feed waters was estimated and is presented in Table 2 and figures S2-S4. A  
345 strong positive correlation was observed between the Fe concentration and the FI of the humic  
346 components (FC1, FC2, and FC4) in the feed waters. The Mn mobilisation, in contrast,  
347 exhibited a strong correlation with the FI of humic components from different sources; the  
348 correlations between the Mn concentration and the FI of the PFFCA humic components (FC1,  
349 FC2, and FC4) were 0.7, 0.82, and 0.73, respectively. Conversely, the As concentration in the  
350 column effluent water was found to be in a moderate correlation with microbial humic  
351 component (FC2) and in weak correlations with the other humic components (FC1 and FC4).  
352 Furthermore, the RI demonstrated a moderate correlation with Fe mobilisation and a weak  
353 correlation with Mn and As mobilisation. This infers a role for condensed-structure humic  
354 compounds in the mobilisation of Fe into filtrate water. On the other hand, labile fluorescence

355 compounds (FC3) were found to have a greater influence on the mobilisation of Mn than on  
 356 those of Fe and As.

357 **Table 2. Correlations between the tested metal(loid)s and the fluorescence characteristics of the feed waters**

		DOC	FC1	FC2	FC3	FC4	RI	HIX	FIX	BIX
<b>Fe</b>	<i>spearman Correlation (<math>\rho</math>)</i>	0.89**	.82**	.88**	.6**	.68**	.64**	.87**	-.71**	-.76**
	<i>Pearson correlation (r)</i>	0.83**	.83**	.89**	.58**	.68**	.60**	.77**	-.71**	-.71**
	<i>n</i>	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40
<b>Mn</b>	<i>spearman Correlation (<math>\rho</math>)</i>	0.87**	.70**	.82**	.77**	.73**	.33**	.82**	-.64**	-.85**
	<i>Pearson correlation (r)</i>	0.89**	.77**	.84**	.75**	.67**	.21**	.85**	-.59**	-.72**
	<i>n</i>	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40
<b>As</b>	<i>spearman Correlation (<math>\rho</math>)</i>	0.63**	.32	.57**	.05	.42*	.37*	.51**	-.39*	-.57**
	<i>Pearson correlation (r)</i>	0.68**	.48**	.64**	.08	.47**	.41*	.52**	-.51**	-.58**
	<i>n</i>	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30

358 \*\**P*-value is less than 0.001

359 \**P*-value is less than 0.05

360 **3.2. Impact of NOM concentrations on metal(loid) mobilisation (batch study)**

361 The effect of NOM (humic, fulvic, and tyrosine) concentrations on the release of metal(loid)s  
 362 (Fe, Mn, and As) from the soil into the filtrate water under anaerobic conditions was studied in  
 363 established batch reactors. The fluorescence characteristics of the injected NOM is presented  
 364 in Figure S5. The experimental results illustrated that the Fe mobilisation increased steadily  
 365 with humic and fulvic concentrations (Figure 4.a). Fe exhibited relatively higher affinity with  
 366 humic (high molecular weight) compounds compared to that with fulvic ones (low molecular  
 367 weight). The concentration of soluble Fe reached  $162 \pm 19 \mu\text{g/L}$  when the humic concentration  
 368 was  $20 \text{ mg-C/L}$ , whereas it was  $114 \pm 28 \mu\text{g/L}$  at the same concentration of fulvic acid. On the  
 369 other hand, tyrosine exhibited lower ability to release Fe at low concentrations; the  
 370 concentrations of Fe in the effluent water in the batch reactors injected with 5 and 10 mg-C/L

371 of tyrosine were  $30 \pm 17$  and  $32 \pm 11$   $\mu\text{g/L}$ , respectively. However, an immense increase in Fe  
 372 concentration was observed for the batch reactors injected with 15 mg-C/L and 20 mg-C/L of  
 373 tyrosine, where the soluble Fe concentrations were  $290 \pm 47$   $\mu\text{g/L}$  and  $340 \pm 24$   $\mu\text{g/L}$ ,  
 374 respectively.

375 Figure 4.b illustrates the impact of NOM type and concentration on the mobilisation of Mn  
 376 during the filtration process. It can be observed that fulvic compounds have the highest capacity  
 377 of releasing Mn into the filtrate water. The concentration of Mn increased from  $250 \pm 47$   $\mu\text{g/L}$   
 378 to  $1041 \pm 69$   $\mu\text{g/L}$  as the concentration of fulvic acid increased from 5 mg-C/L to 20 mg-C/L.  
 379 The same trend was noted for humic compounds, where a humic acid concentration of 20 mg-

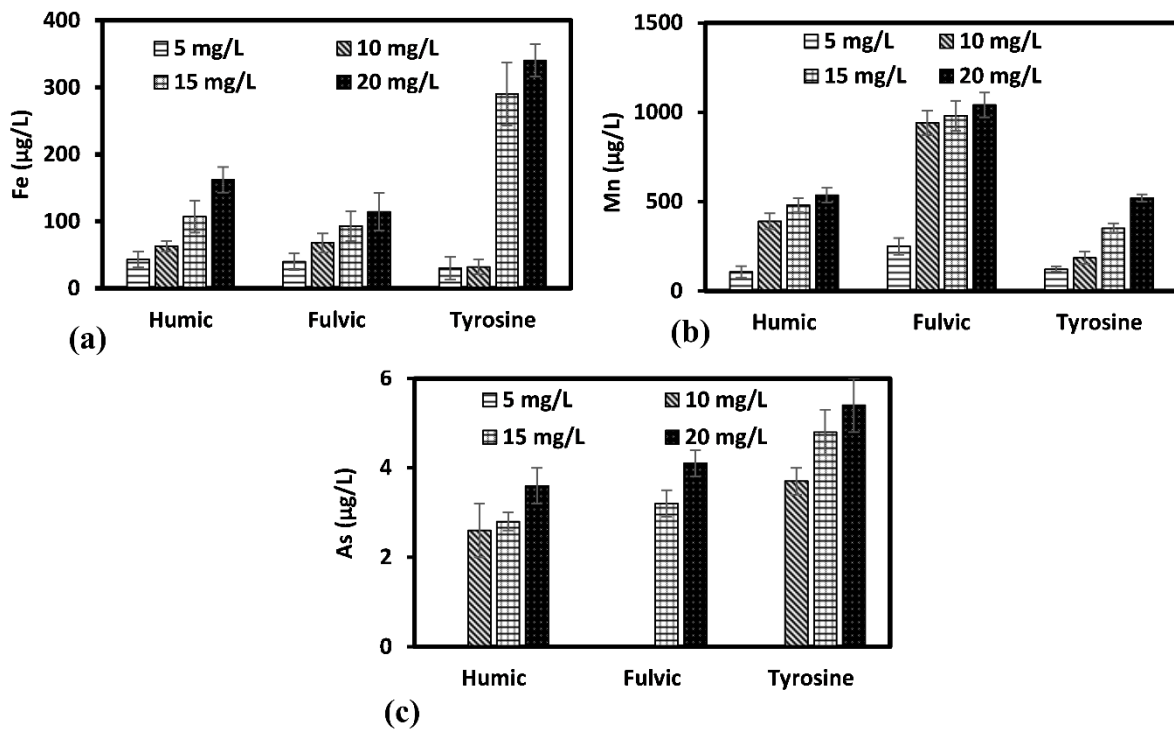


Figure 4. Effect of NOM type (humic, fulvic, and tyrosine) and concentration (5, 10, 15, 20 mg-C/L) on (a) Fe, (b) Mn, and (c) As mobilisation during the batch experiment (anaerobic, 30 °C, HRL = 0.5 m/d)

380 C/L resulted in increasing the released Mn concentration five times compared with its effluent  
 381 concentration in the reactors injected with 5 mg-C/L humic acid. Likewise, a positive  
 382 relationship was observed between Mn concentration in the batch reactor effluents and tyrosine  
 383 concentration. The concentration of Mn was increased by 35%, 65%, and 77% in the batch

384 reactors injected with 10, 15, and 20 mg-C/L, respectively, compared with its concentration in  
385 the batch reactors injected with 5 mg-C/L.

386 The batch study results showed that the mobilisation of As is obviously affected by the type  
387 and concentration of NOM (Figure 4.C). NOM at low concentration exhibited a poor capacity  
388 of releasing As from its precipitated form into the filtrate water. No As concentration was  
389 quantitatively (LOQ = 2 µg/L) detected in any of the batch reactor effluents at DOC = 5 mg-  
390 C/L for the three NOM types. At higher concentrations (20 mg-C/L), tyrosine exhibited the  
391 highest capacity of releasing As into the filtrate water; the As concentrations in the batch  
392 reactors injected with humic, fulvic, and tyrosine were  $3.6\pm0.4$ ,  $4.1\pm0.3$ , and  $5.4\pm0.6$  µg/L,  
393 respectively.

#### 394 4. Discussion

##### 395 4.1. Mobilisation of Fe, Mn and As during BF

396 The mobilisation of Mn was two orders of magnitude higher than that of Fe during the  
397 infiltration process under the experimental conditions. From stoichiometry, 1 mole of simple  
398 organic matter (e.g., acetate) could act as an electron donor to mobilise 4 moles of Mn and 8  
399 moles of Fe from the soil into the filtrate water (Lovley et al., 1988). However, the higher  
400 mobilisation of Mn compared with those of Fe and As observed during this study was probably  
401 due the combination of three factors:

402 (i) The reducing environment was still not high enough to be dominated by the Fe microbial  
403 reduction process.

404 (ii) Mn oxide was used as an agent for the Fe oxidation process and thereby could be  
405 precipitated as Fe oxides. This process would increase the re-adsorption of As on the surface  
406 of iron oxides and thus reduce the concentrations of Fe and As in the filtrate water (Vega et al.,

407 2017). Neidhardt et al. (2014) illustrated that Fe (oxyhydr)oxide redox processes control the  
408 concentration of As in filtrate water.

409 (iii) The column experiment was conducted at a high temperature (30 °C) and a low infiltration  
410 rate (0.5 m/d), which greatly enhanced the microbial reduction of manganese.

411 Low infiltration rate increases the contact time and interaction between the metals of the soil  
412 and the DOM of the raw water. Moreover, it promotes the reducing conditions along the flow  
413 path, which leads to increase the mobilisation of metals into the infiltrating water. Paufler et  
414 al. (2018) conducted column studies to assess the impact of the temperature (15–35 °C) and  
415 flow rate on the Mn mobilisation during the BF process. It was found that raising the  
416 temperature from 20 to 30 °C at a low hydraulic rate (1 ml/min) resulted in increasing the Mn  
417 release rate ( $K_{Mn}$ ) 10–15 times, whereas  $K_{Mn}$  was negligible when the feed-water temperature  
418 was below 10 °C. Bourg et al. (1994) reported that increasing the temperature (>10 °C) triggers  
419 the microbial reduction of manganese in an alluvial aquifer. Based on these findings, it is  
420 presumed that the higher Mn mobilisation rate in the column experiment relative to Fe and As  
421 mobilisation is primarily ascribable to the microbial reduction of Mn at high temperature (30  
422 °C) that stimulates simultaneously the associated Fe (II) and As (III) oxidation and precipitation  
423 processes. This plausible mechanism was observed and reported in many BF and alluvial  
424 aquifer fields (Bourg et al., 1993, 1994; Eckert et al., 2006; Jacobs et al., 1988; Kedziorek et  
425 al., 2008; Thomas et al., 1994; Vega et al., 2017). However, it is worth noting that other  
426 mechanisms (e.g., the simultaneous mobilisation of Fe and Mn) have also been observed in  
427 many BF fields (Grischek et al., 2017; Hamdan et al., 2013; Matsunaga et al., 1993).

#### 428 4.2. Influence of composition and concentration of DOM on metal(loid) mobilisation

429 The strong correlation between DOC and metal(loid) (Fe, Mn, and As) concentrations in the  
430 effluent water of the column indicates that DOM plays a key role in the mobilisation of these

431 metal(loid)s during infiltration. In this research, NCTW with low organic content demonstrated  
432 lower efficiency in releasing Fe, Mn, and As into the filtrate water compared with those of  
433 other source-water types. This is consistent with the findings of recent studies (Hossain Md  
434 Anawar et al., 2013; Vega et al., 2017), which reported an increase in the mobilisation rate of  
435 Fe and As associated with higher DOM in Daudkandi (Meghna delta) and Marua of the Ganges  
436 delta plain aquifer in Bangladesh (Hossain M. Anawar et al., 2003; Hossain Md Anawar et al.,  
437 2013). Wang et al. (2012) illustrated that DOM influences the mobilisation and release of  
438 metal(loid)s during the passage of the soil through a redox process, complexation, and  
439 competitive adsorption. Therefore, it can be concluded that the organic composition of feed  
440 water controls the concentration of Fe, Mn, and As in bank filtrate water.

441 Refractory compounds (i.e., humic) play a vital role in the mobilisation of Fe, Mn, and As  
442 during the subsurface flow of water. The experimental results revealed that the mobilisation of  
443 Fe and Mn has a strong positive relationship with the humic content of the feed water (HIX),  
444 whereas As mobilisation was the least affected by changes in the humic content of the feed  
445 water. Several previous studies highlighted the multiple roles of humic compounds in the  
446 mobilisation of metal(loid)s during the filtration process (Brune et al., 2004; Liu et al., 2011;  
447 Yuan et al., 2018). Owing to their high electron shuttle capacities, humic compounds might act  
448 as catalysts for the iron microbial reduction process by transferring electrons between the  
449 insoluble metal(loid)s and the reducing microorganisms; this was investigated in many field  
450 studies (Mladenov et al., 2010; Mladenov et al., 2015; Poggenburg et al., 2018). In addition,  
451 these electron-rich compounds have high capabilities of binding to the soil metal(loid)s and  
452 increasing their solubility (Sharma et al., 2010). Chen et al. (2003) pointed out that humic  
453 compounds are more soluble at higher pH (>4); thus, they are subjected to more trapping of  
454 metal(loid)s from the soil and are maintained in their soluble forms by forming soluble complex  
455 compounds.

456 The effect of humic compounds on the metal(loid) mobilisation is relatively dependent on the  
457 origin and characteristics of the organic compounds and type of metal(loid). In this research,  
458 a moderate correlation was detected between RI and Fe concentration in the filtrate water,  
459 indicating that terrestrial humic compounds (with condensed structures) have relatively higher  
460 capability to trap Fe into filtrate water than lower molecular weight humic compounds.  
461 According to Yuan et al. (2018), high-molecular-weight humic compounds have more binding  
462 sites, and therefore higher capability of forming chemically stable compounds with Fe, than  
463 less-condensed-structure and labile compounds. Therefore, it can be deduced that humic  
464 compounds of terrestrial origin are more triggered to release iron from its solid forms into  
465 filtrate water. This was confirmed by the batch experiment results, which showed a relatively  
466 higher increase in Fe mobilisation with humic than with fulvic acid (lower-molecular-weight  
467 humic compounds). By contrast, a weak correlation was observed between RI and Mn  
468 mobilisation, demonstrating comparable abilities of humic compounds with low and high  
469 condensation (i.e., terrestrial and microbial humic) to mobilise Mn; this indicates that Mn metal  
470 has a high affinity to both low- and high-molecular-weight humic compounds. This is in  
471 agreement with Vega et al. (2017), who observed higher concentrations of Mn to be associated  
472 with higher humic content in shallow aquifers at West Bengal (India). Nevertheless, the batch  
473 experiment showed that fulvic compounds at higher concentrations (>5 mg-C/L) have a higher  
474 capability of mobilising Mn than higher-molecular-weight humic compounds; this could be  
475 due to their high capacity to form soluble and stable Mn complexes at high pH (>6) compared  
476 with humic compounds, as proven previously by Du Laing (2010).

477 The mobilisation of Mn during the filtration process was observed to be highly influenced by  
478 the biodegradable organic matter content of the source water. The high correlation between Mn  
479 concentration in the filtrate water and protein-like fluorescent components indicates that the  
480 microbial reduction of Mn is the primary mechanism of Mn release. However, a moderate



481 correlation was observed between Fe concentration and protein-like components. The batch  
482 experiment showed that a protein-like (i.e., tyrosine) compound is the most effective NOM for  
483 releasing Fe and As at high concentrations (>10 mg-C/L). This is probably due to the increased  
484 concentration of biodegradable compounds, which increases the biological activity associated  
485 to sand, increases the mobilisation of Mn and decreases the redox potential to a level that  
486 permits bacteria to use Fe from the soil as a source of energy, thus increasing the Fe  
487 concentration in the effluent water. This process is concurrent with the release of As adsorbed  
488 on Fe (oxyhydr)oxides into the filtrate water.

## 489 5. Conclusions

490 The mobilisation of geogenic metal(loid)s, such as Fe, Mn, and As, during the BF process  
491 restricts their application, particularly in arid-climate countries. Based on the results of  
492 laboratory-scale column and batch studies, which were conducted to assess the impact of the  
493 organic composition of raw water on the mobilisation of these metal(oids) during anaerobic  
494 BF, the following conclusions are drawn:

- 495 • The mobilisation of Mn under the applied experimental conditions was two and three  
496 orders of magnitude higher than those of Fe and As, respectively.
- 497 • The dissolved organic matter concentration and composition of the raw water could  
498 change the capacity of mobilisation of metal(oids) during the filtration process
- 499 • The humic content of the source water was found to significantly affect the release of  
500 Fe and Mn during the BF process; a positive relationship was found between the  
501 mobilisation of the metal(oids) and the HIX of the source water. This might be  
502 attributed to the high electron shuttle capacity of the humic compounds, which enables  
503 them to act as mediators for the microbial reduction processes and to form soluble  
504 complex compounds with the released metals.

- 505 • Terrestrial humic compounds with complex structures showed a higher capability of  
506 releasing Fe from the soil into the filtrate water. On the other hand, source water with  
507 lower-molecular-weight humic compounds at a concentration of >5 mg-C/L was able  
508 to mobilise Mn at a higher rate than higher-molecular-weight humic compounds.  
509 However, the metal(loid) species in the soil may alter the behaviours of NOM  
510 compounds, which should be investigated.
- 511 • Arsenic mobilisation was observed to have a high correlation with Fe mobilisation and  
512 a weak correlation with the variations in the organic composition of source water.
- 513 • Biodegradable organic matter was found to be effective in mobilising Mn into the  
514 filtrate water; a strong correlation was observed between the FI of protein-like  
515 components in the source water and Mn mobilisation. However, a moderate correlation  
516 was found between Fe mobilisation and the FI of protein-like components.  
517 Nevertheless, the experimental results showed that a high concentration (>10 mg-C/L)  
518 of a protein-like compound is enough to produce a Fe-reducing environment in the  
519 infiltration area and thereby increase the Fe concentration in the filtrate water.
- 520 • In summary, this study revealed that the organic matter composition of source water  
521 determines the redox environment during the BF process and affects the mobilisation  
522 process of the metal(loid)s that should be considered during the BF design process.  
523 Moreover, this research highlights the efficiency of the fluorescence spectroscopy  
524 technique as a monitoring tool for characterisation the organic composition of the raw  
525 water as well as for prediction and control the redox process and the mobilisation of  
526 metal(loid)s during BF.

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