

Chemical Oceanography

Element Fluxes in the Sea

Chemical Oceanography: Element Fluxes in the Sea focuses on the use of chemical distributions to understand mechanisms of physical, chemical, biological, and geological processes in the ocean. After an introduction describing observed chemical concentrations, chapters focus on using chemical tracers to determine fluxes on a variety of timescales. Long-term chemical cycles are dominated by exchanges between seawater and land, sediments, and underwater volcanoes. Biological and ocean mixing processes dominate internal chemical cycles that respond to changes on hundred- to thousand-year timescales. Stable and radioactive isotopes trace the fluxes of nutrients and carbon to quantify the rates and mechanisms of chemical cycles. Anthropogenic influences – which have grown to be of the same magnitude as some natural cycles – are a specific focus throughout the book. Discussion boxes and quantitative problems help instructors to deepen student learning. Appendices enhance the book’s utility as a reference text for students and researchers.

Steven R. Emerson has been a professor of Oceanography at the University of Washington for about 40 years. He taught Chemical Oceanography for most of this period while being the major advisor to 12 Ph.D. students and an equal number of post-docs. His research focuses on fluxes at the air–sea interface and the sediment–ocean interface. He is a fellow of the American Geophysical Union and the Geochemical Society.

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“*Chemical Oceanography: Element Fluxes in the Sea* is completely updated from the previous version. The new version cites up-to-date, peer-reviewed literature, and includes compelling figures, discussion boxes, and problems at the end of each chapter. In addition, the links to MATLAB® and Python® toolboxes are a great resource. In my opinion, this is the best chemical oceanography textbook currently available for both undergraduate and graduate-level courses.”

Annie Bourbonnais, University of South Carolina

“The choice of contents for a chemical oceanography textbook is, to some extent, a Rorschach test of the authors’ view of the field. In their focus on element fluxes affected by life in the oceans, Emerson and Hamme seek to navigate the narrow channel between attention to detail – a hallmark of quantitative ocean science – and the desire to share the fabulous panorama that is the field as a whole.”

Andrew Dickson, Scripps Institution of Oceanography

“In their outstanding and exceptionally well-structured textbook, Emerson and Hamme transform the way we think about chemical oceanography. While the distribution of chemical tracers in the ocean still provides the foundation of their textbook, they organize it around the biogeochemical transformations that govern these distributions. A particular focus is the question of how fast these processes operate and how we can measure these rates. To this end, they introduce many modern techniques involving various isotope systems and transient tracers in a way no other textbook has achieved so far. This is a must-read for any student, postdoc, and researcher in the field, especially in these rapidly changing times.”

Nicolas Gruber, ETH Zürich

“A readable, comprehensive, authoritative account, by two distinguished chemical oceanographers, of what we know about chemical processes in the oceans, and how we have learned it. The book features deep descriptions of the oceanic cycles of oxygen, nitrogen, and especially carbon. *Chemical Oceanography* will be valuable to Earth scientists as a guide to topics in chemical oceanography, to specialists as a source of detailed information, and to students as a textbook chock full of stimulating problems and provocative topics for discussion.”

Michael Bender, Princeton University

“This new book is a comprehensive and modern treatment of a broad range of marine chemistry topics. The thoughtful, well-written text and clear illustrations are a valuable resource for professors, and provide a strong foundation in the subject for advanced undergraduate and graduate students.”

Abigail Renegar, Nova Southeastern University

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Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India
103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment,
a department of the University of Cambridge.

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education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/highereducation/9781107179899

DOI: 10.1017/9781316841174

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First published 2022

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication data

Names: Emerson, Steven (Steven R.), author. | Hamme, Roberta C., author.

Title: Chemical oceanography : element fluxes in the sea / Steven R. Emerson, Roberta C. Hamme.

Description: Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York, NY : Cambridge University Press, 2022. | Includes
bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2021029696 | ISBN 9781107179899 (hardcover)

Subjects: LCSH: Chemical oceanography.

Classification: LCC GC111.2 .E64 2022 | DDC 551.46/6—dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2021029696>

ISBN 978-1-107-17989-9 Hardback

Additional resources for this publication at www.cambridge.org/emerson-hamme

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Contents

<i>Preface</i>	page xi
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xiii
1 Oceanography Background: Dissolved Chemicals, Circulation, and Biology in the Sea	1
1.1 The Chemical Perspective	1
1.2 Constituents of Seawater	3
1.2.1 Water in Seawater	3
1.2.2 Ions in Seawater	7
1.2.3 Salinity and Density of Seawater	10
1.2.4 Element Classification	17
1.2.5 Anthropogenic Influences	22
Discussion Box 1.1	24
1.3 Ocean Circulation	25
1.3.1 Seasonality	25
1.3.2 Wind-Driven Circulation	25
1.3.3 Interior Circulation	30
Discussion Box 1.2	34
1.4 Ocean Biology	35
1.4.1 Types of Plankton	35
1.4.2 Marine Metabolism: Estimates of Fluxes	37
Discussion Box 1.3	39
References	40
Problems for Chapter 1	41
2 Geochemical Mass Balance: Chemical Flow across the Ocean's Boundaries	44
2.1 Major Ion Mass Balance: Weathering and Authigenic Mineral Formation	45
2.1.1 The Source: Weathering and River Fluxes to the Ocean	45
2.1.2 Residence Times of Seawater Constituents	47
Discussion Box 2.1	50
2.1.3 Mackenzie and Garrels Mass Balance	50
2.1.4 The Sinks: Hydrothermal Circulation	56
Discussion Box 2.2	65
2.1.5 The Sinks: Reverse Weathering	65
2.2 Gases in the Ocean–Atmosphere System	68
2.2.1 Air–Sea Chemical Equilibrium: Henry's Law Solubility	69
Discussion Box 2.3	73
2.2.2 Gas Sources and Sinks in the Ocean–Atmosphere System	74

Appendix 2A.1 A Brief Review of Rocks and Minerals	76
Appendix 2A.2 The Meaning of Residence Time	78
Appendix 2A.3 The Kinetics of Air–Sea Gas Exchange	80
2A.3.1 The Gas Exchange Flux Equations	80
2A.3.2 Measurements of Gas Exchange Rates in the Ocean	84
2A.3.3 Gas Transfer Due to Bubbles	87
References	90
Problems for Chapter 2	94
3 Life in the Surface Ocean: Biological Production and Export	96
3.1 The Chemistry of Life	97
3.1.1 Redox Processes	97
3.1.2 The Main Elements of Organic Matter: C, H, O, N, P	99
Discussion Box 3.1	106
3.1.3 Trace Elements in Organic Matter: Fe, Zn, Mn, Ni, Cu, Co, Cd	107
Discussion Box 3.2	112
3.2 The Flux of Biologically Produced Elements from the Surface Ocean: The Ocean’s Biological Pump	113
3.2.1 A Simplified Whole-Ocean Model of the Biological Pump	114
Discussion Box 3.3	118
3.2.2 Particle Fluxes and Thorium Isotope Tracers	119
3.2.3 Upper Ocean Metabolite Mass Balance: O ₂ , NO ₃ ⁻ , DIC, DIC+δ ¹³ C-DIC	121
3.2.4 O ₂ /Ar and O ₂ /N ₂ Tracers	126
3.2.5 Comparing Different Methods for Determining ANCP	128
3.3 Global Distributions of Organic Carbon Export	129
3.3.1 Comparing Measured ANCP with Model Predictions	129
3.3.2 The Anthropogenic Influence: Evidence for Changes in Biological Fluxes	133
Appendix 3A.1 Measurement of Net and Gross Biological Production	134
3A.1.1 Net Primary Production Rates	134
3A.1.2 Gross Primary Production Rates	135
References	136
Problems for Chapter 3	141
4 Life in the Deep Ocean: Biological Respiration	144
4.1 Respiration below the Euphotic Zone	144
4.1.1 Oxygen Concentrations and Apparent Oxygen Utilization (AOU)	147
4.1.2 Nutrient Concentrations and Preformed Nutrients	149
4.1.3 Nitrogen and Phosphorus Cycles	152
Discussion Box 4.1	155
4.2 Respiration Rates	156
4.2.1 Oxygen Utilization Rates (OUR)	156
4.2.2 Interaction of Respiration Rate and Age	159

4.2.3 Relationship between OUR and the Biological Pump	160
4.2.4 Respiration of Particulate and Dissolved Organic Carbon (POC & DOC)	162
4.2.5 Benthic Respiration	162
Discussion Box 4.2	165
4.3 Respiration in the Absence of Oxygen	166
4.4 Anthropogenic Influences	170
References	172
Problems for Chapter 4	174
5 Marine Carbonate Chemistry	177
5.1 Acids and Bases	178
5.1.1 The Chemical Equilibrium Constant	178
5.1.2 Hydrogen Ion Exchange	180
5.1.3 Acids and Bases in Seawater	182
5.1.4 The Alkalinity of Seawater	187
Discussion Box 5.1	191
5.2 Calculating Carbonate Equilibria and pH	191
5.3 Processes that Control Alkalinity and DIC of Seawater	194
5.3.1 Terrestrial Weathering and River Inflow	194
5.3.2 Alkalinity and DIC Changes within the Ocean	195
Discussion Box 5.2	204
5.4 Mechanisms of Calcium Carbonate Dissolution and Burial	205
5.4.1 Thermodynamic Equilibrium	206
5.4.2 The Kinetics of CaCO ₃ Dissolution	211
5.5 Anthropogenic Influences	214
Discussion Box 5.3	218
Appendix 5A.1 Carbonate System Equilibrium Equations in Seawater	220
References	221
Problems for Chapter 5	223
6 Stable Isotope Tracers	226
6.1 Isotopes in the Environment	227
6.2 Analytical Methods and Terminology	229
6.3 Equilibrium Isotope Fractionation	231
6.3.1 Oxygen Isotopes, $\delta^{18}\text{O}$, in CaCO ₃ , a Tracer for Temperature Change	232
Discussion Box 6.1	236
6.3.2 Boron Isotopes, $\delta^{11}\text{B}$, a Tracer for pH	241
6.4 Kinetic Isotope Fractionation	244
Discussion Box 6.2	245
6.4.1 $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ -DIC, a Tracer of Biological Processes	246
6.4.2 Triple Isotopes of Oxygen, a Tracer for Ocean Photosynthesis	249
6.4.3 $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ in Molecular Oxygen, a Tracer for Respiration	251

6.4.4 $\delta^{15}\text{N}$, a Tracer for the Marine Nitrogen Cycle	255
6.5 Rayleigh Fractionation	259
Discussion Box 6.3	263
6.6 Anthropogenic Influences	263
Appendix 6A.1 Relating the Stable Isotope Terms K , α , ϵ , and δ	266
Appendix 6A.2 Derivation of the Rayleigh Fractionation Equation	267
References	268
Problems for Chapter 6	271
7 Radioisotope Tracers	274
7.1 Radioactive Decay Mechanisms and Equations	275
7.2 Atmospheric Spallation	278
7.2.1 Natural Carbon-14	278
7.2.2 Beryllium-7	285
Discussion Box 7.1	287
7.3 Uranium and Thorium Decay Series	288
7.3.1 Secular Equilibrium	289
7.3.2 The Geochemistry of Decay Series Isotopes in the Ocean	291
7.3.3 Uranium–Thorium Activities and Ocean Particle Dynamics	294
7.3.4 ^{222}Rn – ^{226}Ra Disequilibrium in Surface Waters: A Tracer of Air–Sea Gas Exchange	301
7.3.5 Excess ^{210}Pb and ^{234}Th : Tracers of Coastal Sediment Accumulation	303
7.4 Anthropogenic Influences	304
Discussion Box 7.2	308
References	309
Problems for Chapter 7	311
8 The Role of the Ocean in the Global Carbon Cycle	313
8.1 Carbon Reservoirs and Fluxes	314
Discussion Box 8.1	317
8.2 Natural Ocean Processes Controlling Atmospheric CO_2	317
8.2.1 The Solubility Pump	321
8.2.2 The Biological Pump	321
8.3 Past Changes in Atmospheric CO_2	324
8.3.1 Three-Box Ocean and Atmosphere Model	326
8.3.2 Carbonate Compensation	327
8.4 Anthropogenic Influences	329
8.4.1 Atmospheric CO_2 Observations	330
8.4.2 Anthropogenic CO_2 in the Ocean (the Revelle Factor)	331
8.4.3 The Residence Time of Dissolved Carbon with Respect to Air–Sea Gas Exchange	335
Discussion Box 8.2	336
8.4.4 Measuring Ocean Anthropogenic CO_2 Uptake	338
Discussion Box 8.3	345

8.4.5	The Oxygen Cycle: Carbon's Mirror Image	345
8.4.6	Future Challenges of the Anthropogenic Influence	350
Appendix 8A.1	The Solution to the Three-Box Ocean and Atmosphere Model	351
	References	353
	Problems for Chapter 8	356
Appendix A	Critical Quantities for the Ocean–Atmosphere System	358
Appendix B	Fundamental Constants and Unit Conversions	359
Appendix C	Vapor Pressure of Water	361
Appendix D	Atmospheric Mole Fractions, Molar Volumes, Saturation Concentrations, and Henry's Law Constants for Gases	362
Appendix E	Viscosity, Diffusion Coefficients, and Schmidt Numbers	369
Appendix F	Equilibrium Constants of the Carbonate and Borate Buffer Systems	375
Appendix G	Apparent Solubility Products of Calcite and Aragonite	379
	Appendix References	381
	<i>Index</i>	384

The plate section can be found between pp. 250 and 251.

Preface

The field of Chemical Oceanography is evolving from surveys of chemical distributions toward a focus on deriving element fluxes in the sea. By evaluating fluxes, ocean scientists glean an understanding of mechanisms that underlie circulation, biological processes, air–sea exchange, and interactions between seawater and solids on land and in the ocean basins. Because of the imprint each process leaves on the chemistry of the sea, chemical oceanography in many ways unites the various disciplines of oceanography. As anthropogenic influences on element fluxes grow stronger so must oceanographers' understanding of processes that control them, so that humanity's impact can be predicted and informed decisions can be made about managing the ocean environment to maintain a livable planet.

This book, *Chemical Oceanography: Element Fluxes in the Sea*, is both a text for teaching the subject at the level of senior undergraduates and graduate students and an aid to chemical oceanography researchers. We were inspired to write this successor to *Chemical Oceanography and the Marine Carbon Cycle* by Emerson and Hedges (2008, Cambridge University Press) to better align with the development of our teaching strategies. This new book is more than a second edition to the earlier work. In particular, we have incorporated new materials for teaching. These include Discussion Boxes throughout each chapter, designed to facilitate in-class, small-group student discussions of the material and Problems intended to solidify key concepts using quantitative approaches. These have grown out of our courses for graduate students at University of Washington and primarily undergraduates at University of Victoria. We have also developed an extensive appendix section to provide a go-to reference for key constants.

For this new text, we have reordered and streamlined topics following the way we have found most natural to teach them and to bring greater focus to the interactions between processes and the element fluxes they control. We begin the book with a background on chemical concentrations in the ocean and introductory physical and biological aspects of oceanography that influence chemical distributions (Chapter 1). This chapter sets up some of the key questions we return to throughout the book. After this introduction, long-term geological processes that control the concentrations of major ions and gases are discussed in Chapter 2. The next two chapters (3 and 4) deal with shorter-term fluxes controlled by biological processes in the upper ocean and thermocline – the impact of life on the ocean and how it is quantified. This leads naturally to Chapter 5 on the carbonate system, which combines equilibrium chemical concepts with the impact of life and circulation on ocean carbon. This chapter provides the background necessary for a detailed discussion of the global carbon cycle and the fate of fossil fuel CO₂, with which

we conclude the text (Chapter 8). Chapters 6 and 7, on the way from the carbonate system to the carbon cycle, demonstrate applications of stable and radioactive isotopes as tracers of chemical fluxes. This new text contains fewer chapters than the earlier Emerson and Hedges (2008). We have incorporated parts of the earlier book into the new text, and the publisher has agreed to make three of the earlier chapters that are not in the new book freely available online.

As an aid to teaching and research we provide the following material online at the Cambridge University Press website (www.cambridge.org/emerson-hamme): (a) all figures as they appear here, (b) computer code (MATLAB and Python) for determining constants presented in the appendices, and (c) pdf copies of chapters from Emerson and Hedges (2008) that do not appear in this book (Chapters 3, 8, and 9: Thermodynamics Background, Marine Organic Geochemistry, and Molecular Diffusion and Reaction Rates, respectively).

Acknowledgments

We are both to some extent products of the University of Washington (UW) School of Oceanography in Seattle, either as a professor (Emerson) or as a graduate student (Hamme). We would like to acknowledge the influence of UW colleagues – professors, post-docs, technicians, and students – during the time we were there. Because we were Ph.D. thesis advisor and advisee, we knew our talents well enough to feel secure in undertaking the daunting task of writing a textbook together. We each appreciate the support and encouragement we received from the other when the time invested in the book seemed to encroach too greatly on other responsibilities, and the end seemed far away.

Special acknowledgment goes to the late UW Professor John Hedges, who was a co-author of the predecessor to this book (*Chemical Oceanography and the Marine Carbon Cycle*, 2008, by Emerson and Hedges). Many concepts and descriptions that were part of the earlier work were from John, and they remain. This book could not have been completed without the efforts of Michael Peterson, whose hard work produced beautiful figures in record time, and whose knowledge of chemical oceanography and skill in drafting the figures greatly improved the clarity of our explanations.

We are grateful to the students of EOS 312/504 at University of Victoria who experienced early versions of most of the discussion boxes and quantitative problems in this book. Their reactions to these were invaluable. Several colleagues across North America either “test drove” the text in their own courses on this subject or helped to edit some of the chapters. This feedback has been important to the final product and is greatly appreciated. Parts of this book were written on short sabbaticals by Emerson to the writing-friendly environments of the Whiteley Center at Friday Harbor Laboratory of the University of Washington, and Clare Hall College of Cambridge University in Cambridge, England. We would like to thank the editors at Cambridge University Press for their skill in presenting the book. Matt Lloyd, in particular, helped us to solve problems, from the concept at the beginning to the final product.

Finally, we would like to thank our families for their generosity in giving us the time we devoted to creating this textbook, which was sometimes stolen from our personal lives. Steve Emerson would like to thank his wife Julie for her support and love during this project. Roberta Hamme thanks her husband Jody for both his love and his suggestions on physical oceanography, as well as their children, Cordelia and Felix, for enlivening every day.