



Monovalent Selective Desalination by Membrane Capacitive Deionisation

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Monovalent Selective Membranes

In regions with freshwater scarcity, saline waters are often desalinated by reverse osmosis or distillation to be used as drinking water and for irrigation purposes. Due to the complete desalination, remineralisation of the permeate is usually needed¹. Within the joint project innovat|ON, we develop selective ion exchange membranes which will be integrated into a capacitive deionization to remove monovalent ions such as sodium, chloride and nitrate, while polyvalent ions like magnesium and calcium can remain in the water.²

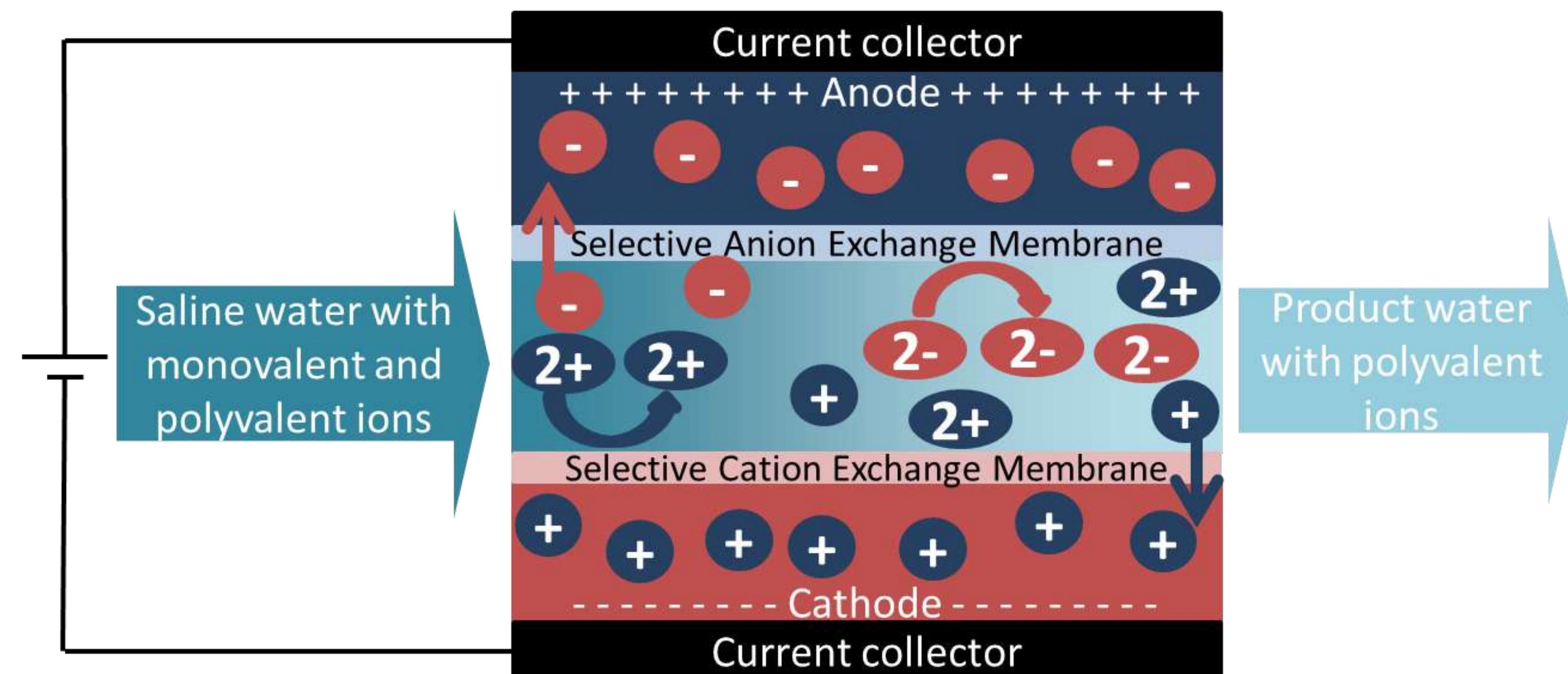


Figure 1. Principle of the selective membrane capacitive deionisation with high retention of monovalent ions (mMCDI).

Material & Methods

Production of Selective Ion exchange membranes

Selective ion exchange membranes are produced by FUMATECH BWT GmbH and Leibniz Institute of Polymer Research Dresden e.V. Hereby, the following approaches for the development of monovalent ion selective anion- as well as cation exchange membranes (AEMs and CEMs) will be investigated:

- i. coating of a NF-membrane (feed side) with ion-exchange material
- ii. coating/filling the permeate side of a NF-membrane with ion exchange material
- iii. preparation of ion-exchange membranes using MF-membranes or non-wovens as support for pore-filling
- iv. preparation of ion exchange membranes based on interpenetrating networks (IPN) consisting of an inert matrix (modified polyethersulfone (PES)) and a crosslinked ion-exchange material dispersed in the matrix
- v. Coating of ion exchange membranes with neutral or opposite charge.

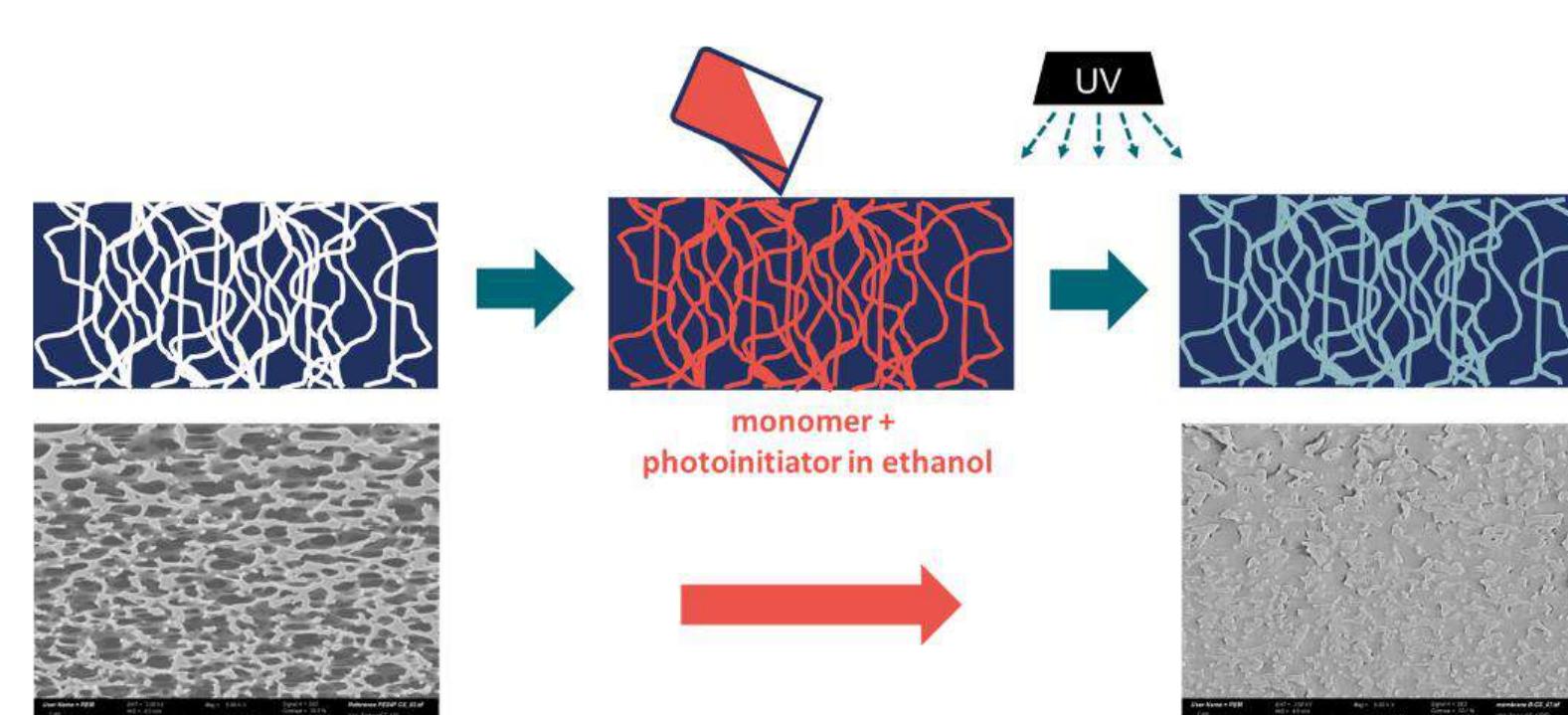


Figure 2. Preparation scheme of pore-filled membranes and SEM of support membrane (left) and pore-filled membranes (right).

Evaluation of Membranes

The novel membranes are evaluated by measuring thickness, resistance, permselectivity, swelling, ion exchange capacity, microscopy, stress-strain behaviour, FTIR-Spectroscopy, thermogravimetric analysis, monovalent ion selectivity within MCDI.

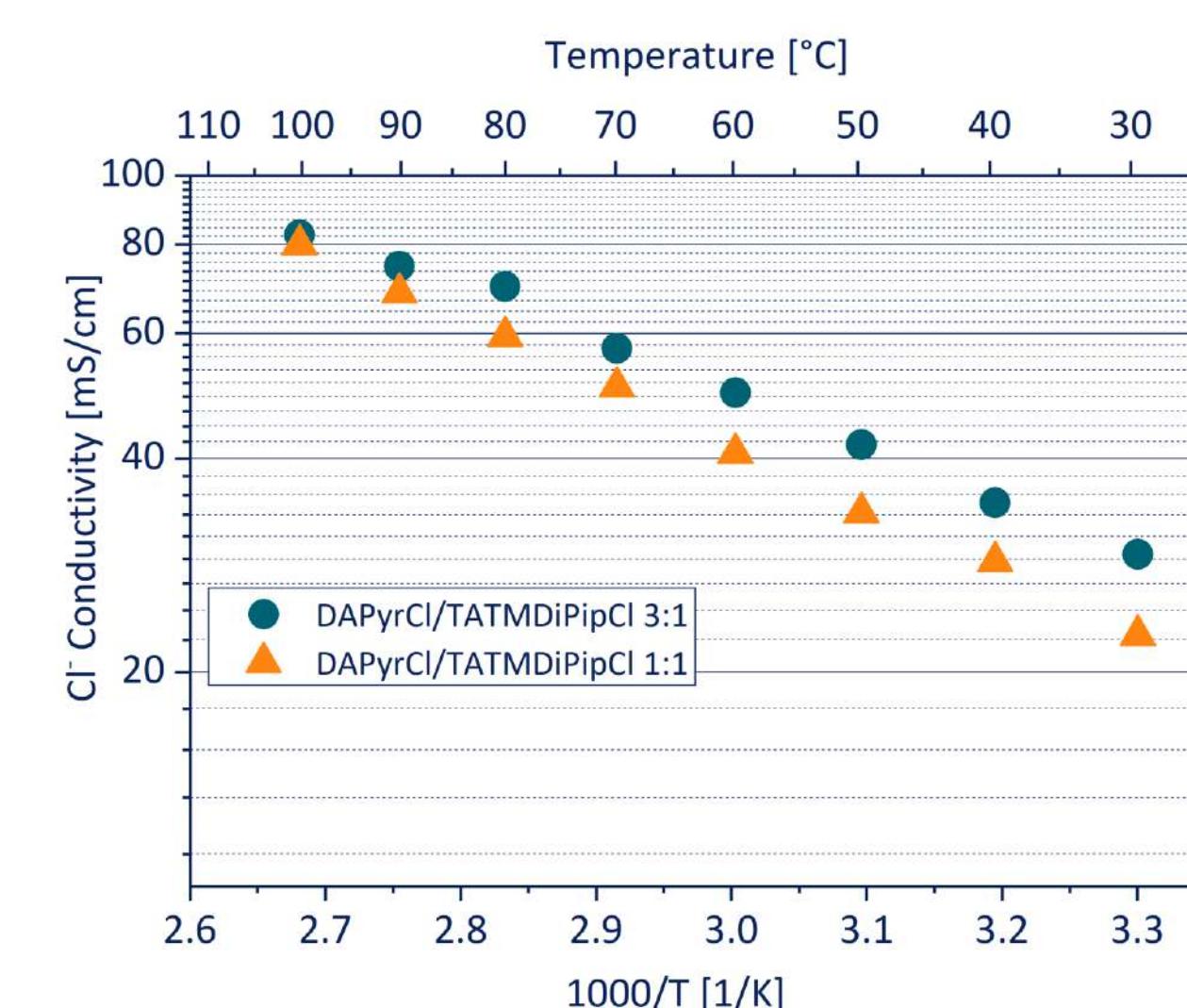


Figure 3. Cl⁻ Conductivity of pore-filled AEMs measured in humid air (95% relative humidity).

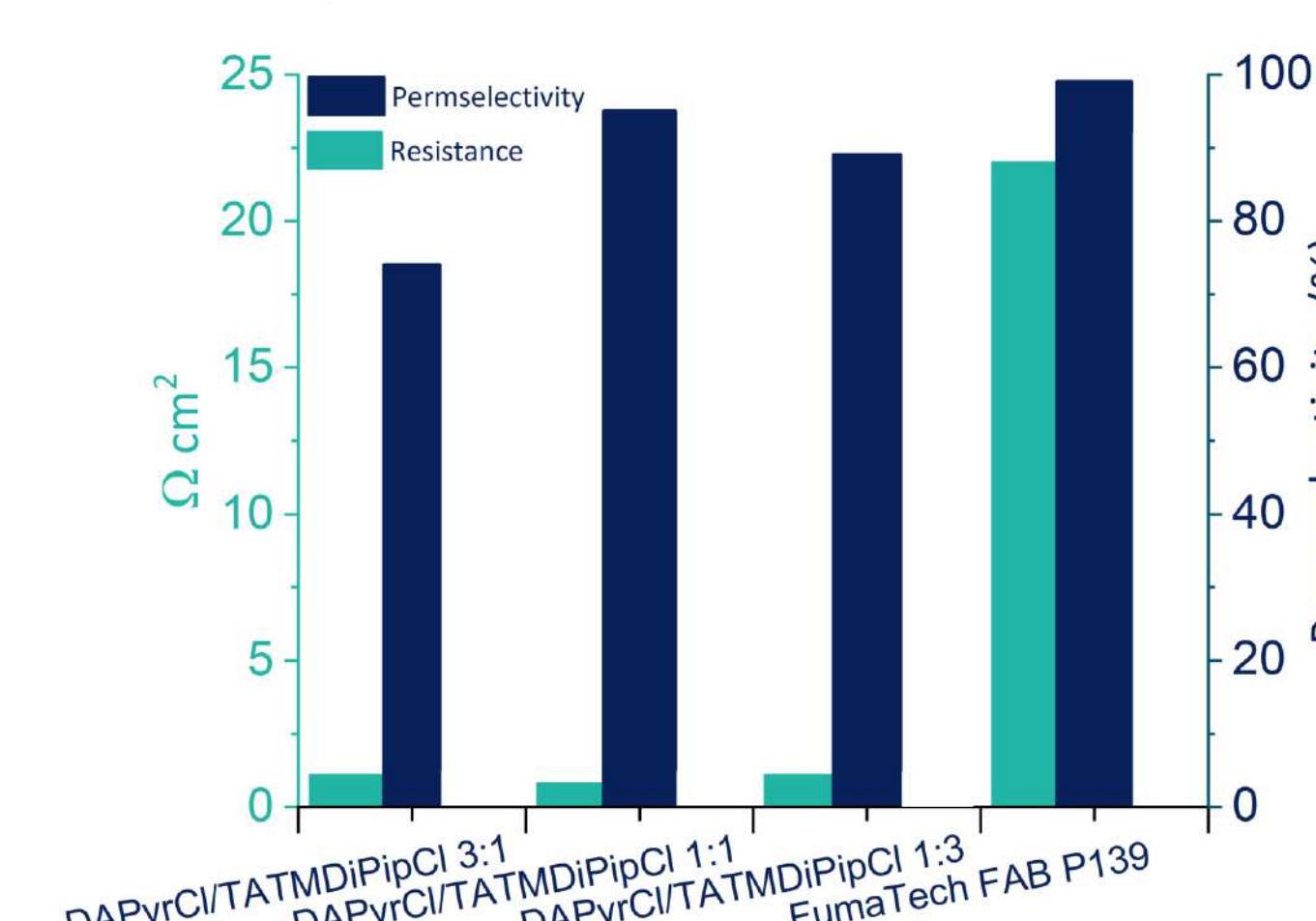


Figure 4. Resistance and permselectivity of pore-filled AEMs.

Modelling & Application of mMCDI

The desalination performance is investigated for varying feedwater salinities and adapted process parameter using the newly designed membranes. Further, we will use mass transport and flow modelling to describe the desalination performance and energy efficiency. The efficiency of the mMCDI is thereby evaluated by a holistic economic-ecological sustainability assessment.

The monovalent membrane capacitive deionisation (mMCDI) is tested in laboratory-scale and pilot-scale on the East Frisian island Langeoog and in Nienburg in Germany. In addition, the further use of the diluate as drinking water and for managed aquifer recharge will be analysed. The results of this project will be used to compare the mMCDI, as a new and innovative selective desalination technology, with conventional desalination technologies.



Figure 5. Laboratory plant designed by DEUKUM GmbH and elkoplan staiger GmbH.

Literature:

- [1] Rosentreter H., Walther M. & Lerch A. Membranes 2021, 11, 126.
- [2] Rosentreter H., Schödel D. & Lerch A. <https://innovat-ion.de/en-US>



The joint project
innovat|ON is
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[www.innovat-ion.de/en-US](https://innovat-ion.de/en-US)

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Initial findings on geochemical interactions of monovalent partial desalinated water infiltration into different dune sands

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Motivation

Managed aquifer recharge (MAR) with desalinated water is a proven method to secure groundwater resources and quality. But full desalination might not be necessary¹ as it is both energy demanding and costly. Therefore, the development of monovalent selective membrane capacitive deionization in the joint project "innovat|ON" could be a purposeful method to improve sustain water resources.

The recharge of treated water leads to a chemical disequilibrium between recharge and ambient groundwater that triggers geochemical interactions between water and sediment (Fig.1). It is known that especially the Ca^{2+} concentration of the recharge water is a controlling factor for ongoing chemical processes during MAR.^{2,3} In this study we present initial finding on potential geochemical interactions during MAR into different dune sands with a monovalent-partial desalinated water (mPDW) by conducting column experiments.

Material & Methods

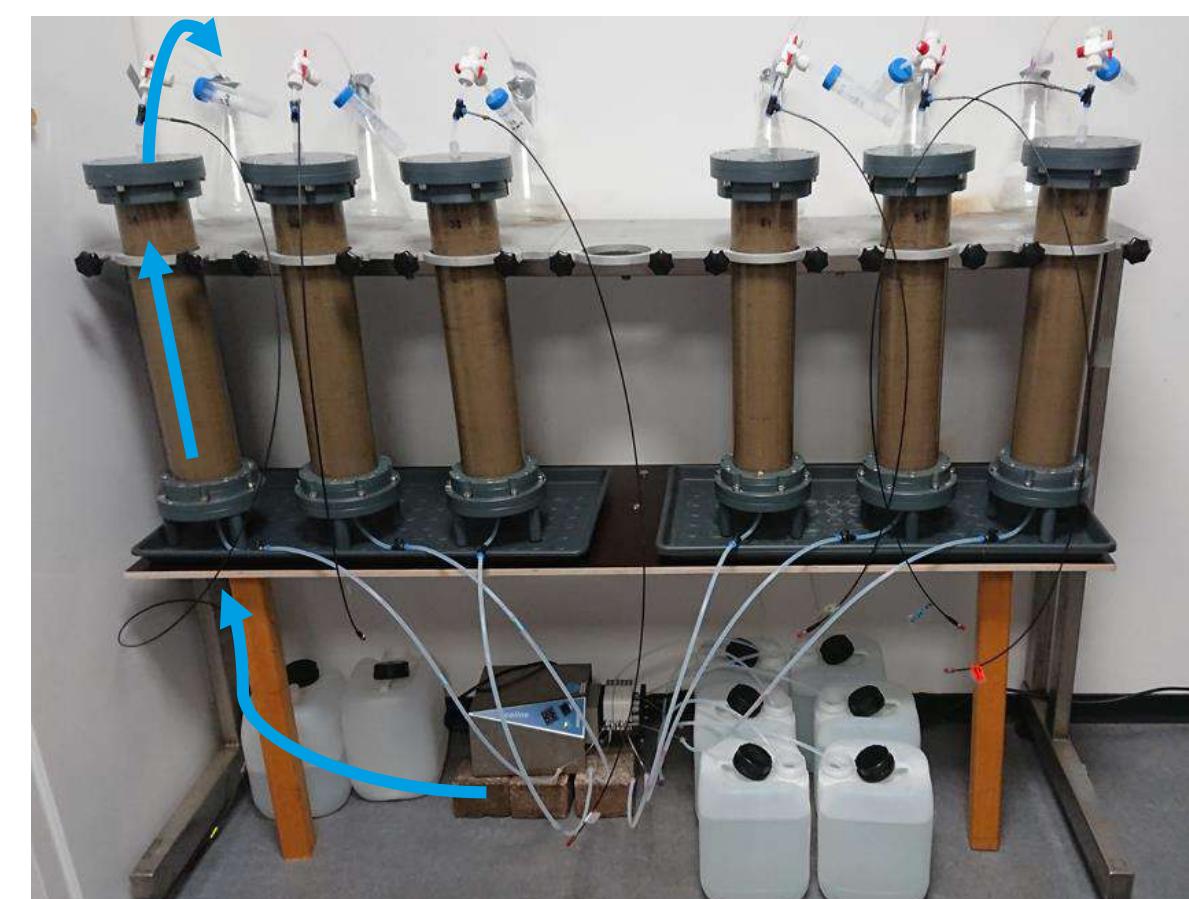


Fig. 2: Experimental set up with flow-through sediment columns.

As a potential MAR site, the East Frisian island Langeoog, Northern Germany, was chosen. For identification of the influence of different sediment characteristics, three sediment types were sampled in June 2021: beach sand, grey dune and brown dune sand. After determination of the most important soil characteristics, column experiments were conducted, infiltrating artificial produced mPDW (Tab.1) based monovalent partial desalinated water with 5 g/l total dissolved solids. Major ions and parameters such as pH and EC were measured in the outflow continuously during experiments.

The experimental results were compared to a hydrogeochemical model. For this purpose, PHREEQC was used to simulate the influence of different reactions that were expected during the column experiments.

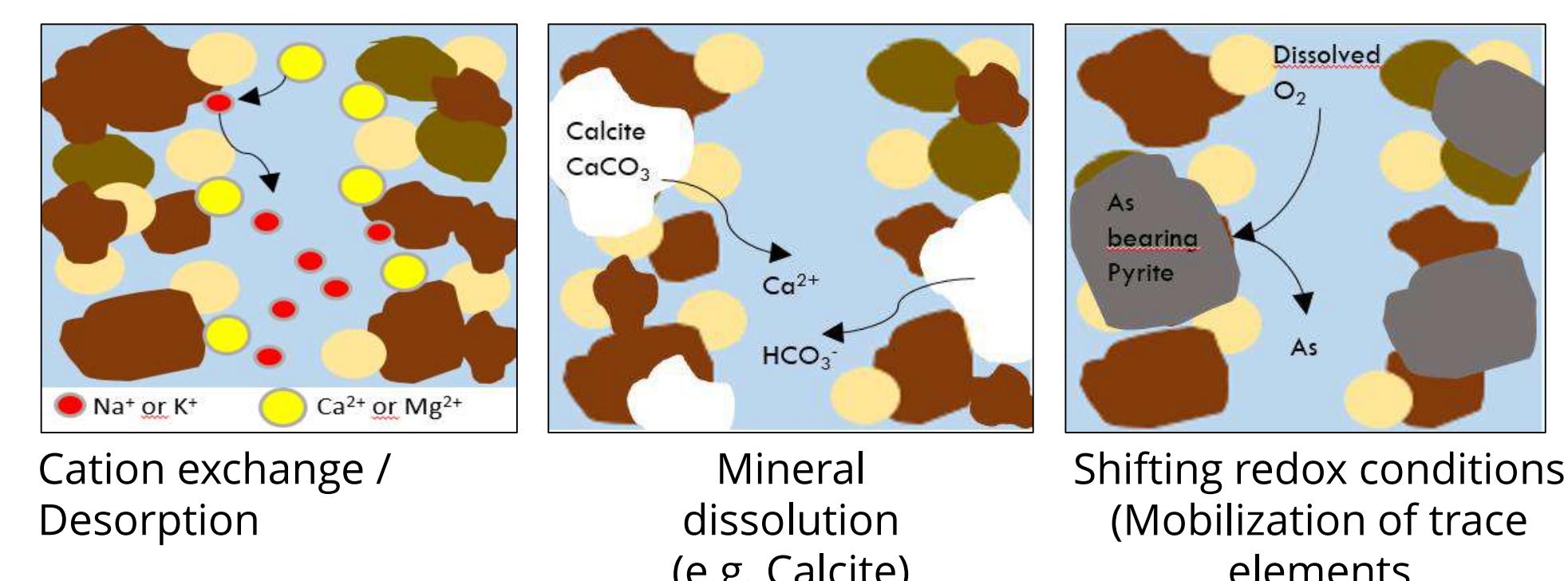


Fig. 1: Schematic potential geochemical reactions induced by infiltration of a desalinated water (modified after [3]).

Tab. 1: Parameter of the artificial mixed mPDW infiltration water.

	Inflow mPDW
pH	7.94
EC [$\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$]	1380
O_2 [mg/l]	8.3
Cl^-	10.6
SO_4^{2-}	1.2
HCO_3^-	0.9
Na^+ [mmol/l]	9.3
K^+	0.17
Ca^{2+}	0.49
Mg^{2+}	1.9
TDS [mg/l]	835

To outline the effect of every single reaction individually, different model runs of a reactive transport model were conducted. In Fig. 4 the modelling results from the column experiments with grey dune sediment are shown. The model run accounting for cation exchange and calcite dissolution (solid red line) fits the data best and confirms that these reactions occur.

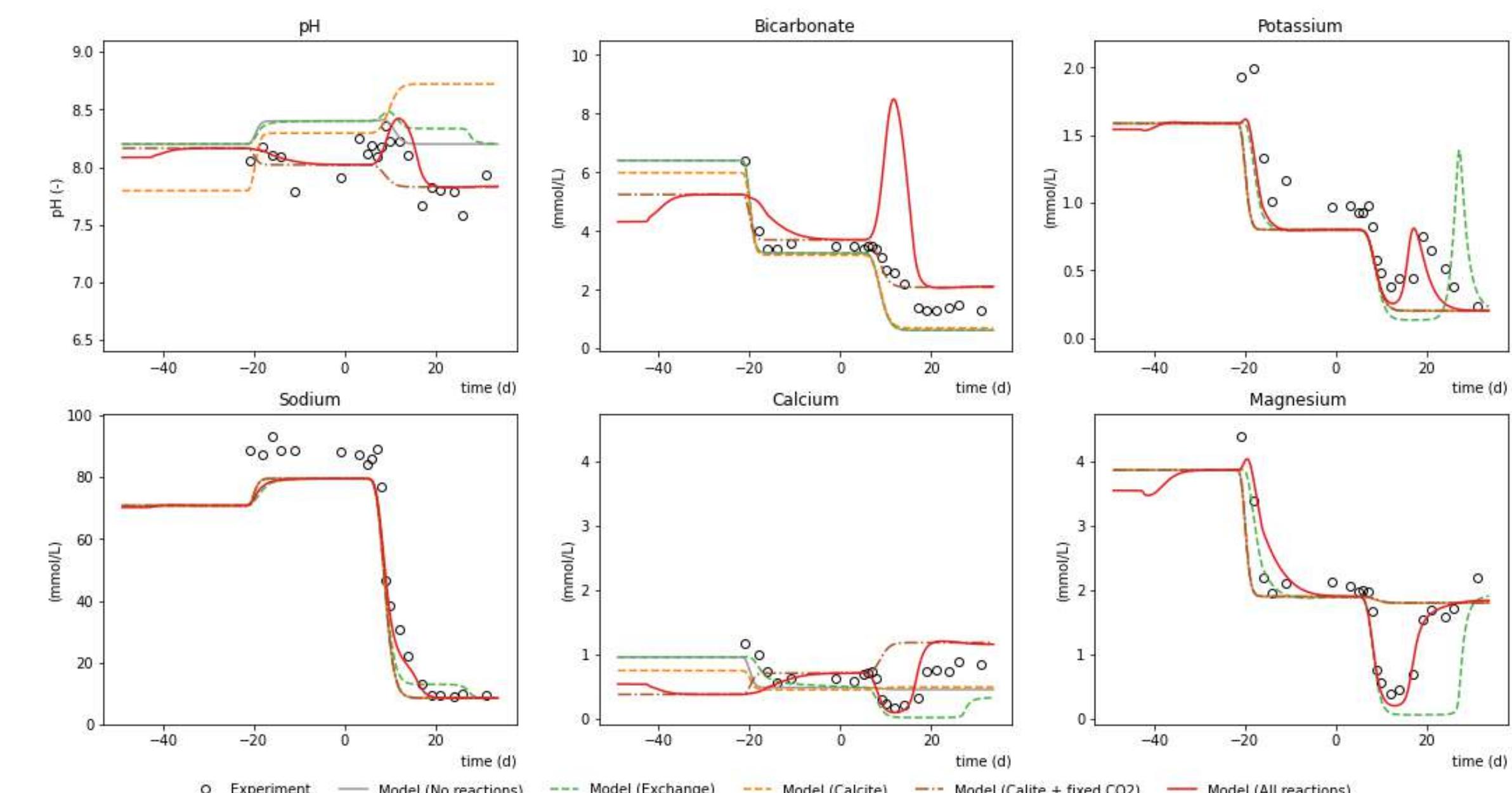


Fig. 4: Reactive Transport Model based on the column experiment with grey dune sands.

Summary & Outlook

- Cation exchange and calcite dissolution/precipitation are the main processes that can be expected during MAR with mPDW water into Langeoog dune sands
- The more pedogenic developed of the sands, the more complex geochemical interactions become
- Grey dune sands appear to be suitable sediments for potential MAR on Langeoog
- Further focus is on trace element mobilization, influence of chemistry and organic content of the recharge water

Literature:

- [1] Vandebosch, A., Van Houtte, E., Lebbe, L. (2009). Applied Geochemistry 24: 370 – 382.
[2] Ronen-Eliraz, G., Russak A., Nitzan I., Guttman, J., Kurtzman, D. (2016). Science of Total Environment 574: 1174 – 1181.
[3] Fakhreddine, S., Prommer, H., Scanlon, B. R., Ying, S. C., Nicot, J.-P. (2021). Sci. Technol. 2021, 55: 2208 – 2223.



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