



1 **A protocol for quantifying mono- and polysaccharides in**
2 **seawater and related saline matrices by electro-dialysis (ED) –**
3 **combined to HPAEC-PAD**

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11

12 **Abstract**

13 An optimized method is presented to determine free (DFCHO) and combined monosaccharides (CCHO) in
14 saline matrices, such as oceanic seawater, Arctic ice core samples or brine using a combination between
15 desalination with electro-dialysis and high performance anion exchange chromatography coupled to
16 pulsed amperometric detection (HPAEC-PAD). Free neutral sugars, such as glucose and galactose, were
17 found with 95-98% recovery rates. Free amino sugars and uronic acids were strongly depleted during
18 electro-dialysis at pH=8, but an adjustment of the pH could result in higher recoveries (58-59% for amino
19 sugars at pH=11; 45-49% for uronic acids at pH=1.5). The applicability of this method for the analysis of
20 CCHO was evaluated with standard solution and real seawater samples compared with another
21 established desalination method using membrane dialysis. DFCHO in real field samples from different
22 regions on earth ranged between 11-118 nM and CCHO between 260-1410 nM. This novel method
23 potentially contributes to a better understanding of biogeochemical processes in the oceans and sea-air
24 transfer processes of organic matter into the atmosphere during further research studies.

25

26 **Introduction**

27 The majority of organic matter (OM) in oceanic seawater can be assigned to the chemical classes of
28 proteinogenic amino acids, carbohydrates and lipids (Benner and Kaiser, 2003; Kaiser and Benner, 2009;
29 Kuznetsova and Lee, 2002; Marty et al., 1979; Skoog et al., 1999; Wakeham et al., 1997). Previous studies
30 uncovered that combined amino acids are the most abundant organic substances in fresh particles sinking



31 within the water column (Wakeham et al., 1997), although more recent studies indicate that
32 carbohydrates may be equally abundant (Cisternas-Novoa et al., 2019), while hydrolysable carbohydrates
33 dominate the chemical composition of dissolved organic matter (DOM) (Kaiser and Benner, 2009). Marine
34 carbohydrates also appear in high concentrations in other related saline matrices, such as ice cores, brine
35 and melt ponds in the Arctic (Ewert and Deming, 2013; Underwood et al., 2013; Zeppenfeld et al., 2019).
36 Hence, a reliable analysis of carbohydrates is essential for understanding biogeochemical processes in the
37 (Arctic) ocean and their impact on Earth's atmosphere.

38 Most marine carbohydrates exist as polysaccharides or combined sugars (CCHO), which are linear or
39 branched chains of monosaccharides, including deoxy sugars, amino sugars and uronic acids. In living
40 marine microorganisms including prokaryotes, polysaccharides assume their functions as structural
41 compounds or as energy storage (Skoog and Benner, 1997). Storage carbohydrates mainly consist of
42 glucose, such as laminarans and other glucans, while structural heteropolysaccharides (e.g. galactans) such
43 as occurring in algal cell walls can contain a lot of galactose, mannose and rhamnose (McCarthy et al.,
44 1996). Furthermore, an elevated release of polysaccharides by phytoplankton, mostly of gelatinous nature,
45 has been associated to stress situations, such as a deficiency of nutrients, freezing or fluctuating water
46 potential (Berman-Frank et al., 2007; Bianchi and Canuel, 2011; Borchard and Engel, 2012, 2015; Ittekkot
47 et al., 1981; Krembs et al., 2002; Krembs and Deming, 2008). These exuded polysaccharides are relatively
48 depleted in glucose and galactose and mainly contain acidic sugars, fucose, rhamnose and arabinose in
49 their chemical structure (Borchard and Engel, 2012; Passow, 2002). Even though polysaccharides are
50 ubiquitous in nature, a latest study revealed that the individual sugar pattern is different between algae
51 and terrestrial plants (Hepp et al., 2016) and may allow a source apportionment of carbohydrates in
52 seawater.

53

54 Dissolved free monosaccharides (DFCHO) have been found to form another fraction of marine
55 carbohydrates (Engel and Händel, 2011; Ittekkot et al., 1981; Kirchman et al., 2001). DFCHO are considered
56 to be either directly released by phytoplankton cells or be the product of enzymatic degradation of
57 polysaccharides (Pakulski and Benner, 1994). In most studies, DFCHO are found in lower concentrations
58 than CCHO, since marine microbes utilize them with high turnover rates (Sakugawa and Handa, 1985;
59 Thornton et al., 2016). From the concentrations of DFCHO, or rather the ratio between CCHO and DFCHO,
60 information about in situ activities of local phytoplankton and bacteria in the seawater can be obtained
61 (Pakulski and Benner, 1994; Sakugawa and Handa, 1985). Recently, correlations between the



62 concentrations of free glucose in Arctic surface water samples and their ice nucleating activity (INA)
63 suggested a potential link between the formation of INA and marine carbohydrates (Zeppenfeld et al.,
64 2019).

65 At the ocean surface, wind and wave interactions lead to bubble bursting. The emitted sea spray aerosol
66 contains marine carbohydrates, including hydrogels, which contribute to the chemical and physical
67 properties of these particles (Bigg and Leck, 2008; Frossard et al., 2014; Hawkins and Russell, 2010;
68 Rosenørn et al., 2006). They have been detected in particles at different maritime regions on earth,
69 including the North Atlantic, the Arctic and Antarctica (Barbaro et al., 2015; Frossard et al., 2014; Gao et
70 al., 2011, 2012; Leck et al., 2013; Russell et al., 2010). However, understanding the quantitative fluxes of
71 marine carbohydrates from the ocean to the atmosphere is still challenging, since chemical analysis of
72 sugars in seawater strongly suffers from matrix effects, especially caused by sea salt.

73 The concentrations of individual monosaccharides in seawater, related saline matrices and aerosol
74 particles can be determined with different kind of chromatographic methods, such as high performance
75 liquid chromatography and gas chromatograph. These methods require a quite difficult sample
76 preparation, including a labor-intensive derivatization step (Panagiotopoulos and Sempéré, 2005). In the
77 last decades, high performance anion exchange chromatography coupled to pulsed amperometric
78 detection (HPAEC-PAD) has been established as a reliable alternative, since it facilitates a sensitive
79 quantification of sugar compounds both in seawater and in airborne particles without a prior derivatization
80 (Iinuma et al., 2009; Panagiotopoulos and Sempéré, 2005; van Pinxteren et al., 2012; Skoog and Benner,
81 1997). However, the presence of sea salt in seawater samples strongly affects the chromatographic
82 performance of the HPAEC-PAD and needs to be removed before analysis.

83 Several procedures are available for the desalination of seawater. The desalination using anion exchange
84 resins AG2-X8 and the cation exchange resin AG50W-X8 exhibits strong drawbacks such as the complete
85 loss of charged sugars (amino sugars, uronic acids) and quite low recovery rate of neutral sugars between
86 20-80% depending on the individual monosaccharide (Borch and Kirchman, 1997; Mopper et al., 1992;
87 Rich et al., 1996). The use of silver cartridges (Dionex OnGuard II Ag/H Cartridges) is faster and easier, but
88 requires very expensive consumables and the capacity of removable sea salt per cartridge is strongly
89 limited (Mopper et al., 1992; Panagiotopoulos and Sempéré, 2005). The desalination applying dialysis
90 membranes achieves reproducible and very high recovery rates of hydrolysable polysaccharides (> 90%).
91 However, this method does not allow the analysis of DFCHO, since these small molecules pass the
92 membrane during dialysis (Engel and Händel, 2011).



93
94 Electro-dialysis is a fast way to remove ions by applying an electrical field. The use of two different chemo-
95 selective ion exchange membranes allows the exclusive removal of small anions, or cations respectively.
96 Hence, uncharged small substances (neutral DFCHO) and macromolecules (CCHO) can, in principle, be
97 recovered in high quantities. Electro-dialysis is being used for the desalination of salty water to generate
98 potable water, the denitrification of wastewater and soil remediation (Gain et al., 2002; Ottosen et al.,
99 2000; Sadrzadeh and Mohammadi, 2008; Tsiakis and Papageorgiou, 2005; Wisniewski et al., 2001). For
100 analytical sample preparation, electro-dialysis has been reported as a powerful desalination, e.g. for the
101 analysis of DOM and marine neutral DFCHO (Josefsson, 1970; Koprivnjak et al., 2009; Mopper et al., 1980;
102 Vetter et al., 2007; Wirth et al., 2019). However, biases, which have hitherto not been discussed in this
103 analytical context, can occur during the application of electro-dialysis due to the osmotic and electro-
104 osmotic loss of water, the migration and diffusion of monosaccharides and the appearance of sudden pH
105 changes.

106
107 Within the present study, a novel protocol for the desalination of seawater samples and related saline
108 samples, applying electro-dialysis and HPAEC-PAD is presented, accounting for the described biases. This
109 method with a low need of consumables allows the analysis of individual monosaccharides with (CCHO)
110 and without hydrolysis (DFCHO). This developed technique was applied to analyze a diverse set of
111 carbohydrates in different kinds of ambient seawater samples.

112

113 **2. Experimental**

114 2.1 Chemicals and materials

115 Prior to the analysis of carbohydrates in seawater, all used laboratory glassware had been washed with
116 ultrapure water (conductivity >18.2 MΩ·cm) thoroughly and pre-heated in a muffle furnace at 550°C for 4
117 h. All plastic equipment was washed in 10% HCl solution and washed with ultrapure water three times.
118 For calibrating the HPAEC-PAD and determining the recovery of individual monosaccharides, a mixed stock
119 solution was prepared from fucose (Roth, 95%), galactosamine (Sigma, 99%), rhamnose (Sigma, 99%),
120 arabinose (Sigma, 99%), glucosamine (Fluka), galactose (Fluka, 99%), glucose (99%), xylose (Fluka, 99%),
121 mannose (Fluka, 99%), fructose (Aldrich, 99%), ribose (Aldrich, 98%), muramic acid (Sigma, 95%),
122 galacturonic acid (Sigma-Aldrich, 97%), glucuronic acid (Sigma, 97%), mannuronic acid (Sigma, 90%).



123 Synthetic seawater samples were made of commercially available sea salts (Sigma). The salinity in practical
124 salinity units (PSU) and the pH of water aliquots was measured by using a conductivity meter (pH/Cond
125 3320, WTW).

126

127

128 2.2 Field samples

129 Seven different real seawater samples, one ice core from Arctic sea ice and two brines collected within
130 Arctic ice cores (**Table 1**) were measured and used for evaluating recovery rates and comparability of the
131 method presented here. These saline samples were collected during different campaigns of our
132 department and kept stored at -20°C. All sampling bottles had been rinsed with dilute hydrochloric acid
133 (10% v/v) prior to the campaign. Field blanks (ultra-pure water filled up in sampling bottles during the
134 campaign) were collected during each campaign and treated in the same way as the samples.

135

136 **Table 1** Sampling details of discussed saline samples including seawater samples (SWS), ice cores (IC) and
137 brine (B). SML stands for surface microlayer (Engel et al., 2017). *(Wendisch et al., 2019)

Saline sample (SS)	Location	Sampling date	Campaign	Latitude	Longitude	Depth (m)
SWS 1	Tropical Atlantic	13.11.2011	Cape Verde	16.935°N	024.915°W	0 (SML)
SWS 2	Tropical Atlantic	13.11.2011	Cape Verde	16.935°N	024.915°W	2
SWS 3	Raunefjorden	16.05.2011	Raunefjorden	60.274°N	005.181°E	2
SWS 4	North Atlantic	07.05.2012	ANT-XXVIII-5	33.3°N	013.5°W	0 (SML)
SWS 5	Arctic Ocean	13.07.2017	PS 106*	81.229°N	018.744°E	1
SWS 6	Arctic Ocean	14.07.2017	PS 106*	81.015°N	026.883°E	1
SWS 7	North Sea	25.05.2017	PS 106*	57.288°N	005.213°E	1
IC 1	Arctic Ocean	12.06.2017	PS 106*	81.824°N	011.571°E	0-0.8
B 1	Arctic Ocean	12.06.2017	PS 106*	81.824°N	011.571°E	0-0.8
B 2	Arctic Ocean	12.06.2017	PS 106*	81.824°N	011.571°E	0-1.5

138

139 2.3 The electro dialysis system

140

141 The centerpiece of the PCCell Micro Bench Electro dialysis system for small sample volumes consisted of
142 three separated compartments (**Figure 1**): The sample compartment was an open chamber that was filled
143 up with 9 ml of the standard solution or seawater sample. The functionalized anion exchange membrane
144 (quaternary ammonium aliphatic polyether) and cation exchange membrane (sulfonated aromatic



145 polyether) bordered this compartment on both sides. Depending on their chemical properties, the
146 membranes allowed exclusively the migration of either positively or negatively charged ions. The contact
147 surface with the sample was 7.8 cm^2 for each membrane. For maintaining the conductivity within the
148 system and receiving the sea salt from the sample, the next compartment contained the concentration
149 circuit, a $16 \text{ g}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ NaCl solution (Merck). This solution was circulated at a rate of $60 \text{ ml}\cdot\text{mL}^{-1}$. Two end
150 membranes on each side divided the concentration circuit from the third department including the
151 electrodes. The mixed metal oxide (MMO) anode was made of a titanium base body coated by RuO_2 , IrO_2
152 and TiO_2 . The MMO cathode was based on stainless steel. The electrodes were permanently surrounded
153 by a circulating $0.25 \text{ M Na}_2\text{SO}_4$ (Fluka) electrolyte circuit for avoiding unwanted redox reactions, e.g. the
154 generation of corrosive elemental chlorine from chloride. Spacers were inserted between each membrane
155 for keeping the electrolyte and concentration circuits well mixed. The sample solution was homogenized
156 with a pipette during each desalination. The electrolyte and the concentration solutions were regularly
157 renewed. The maximal electrical current I_{max} within the ED cell was adjusted by an automatic online

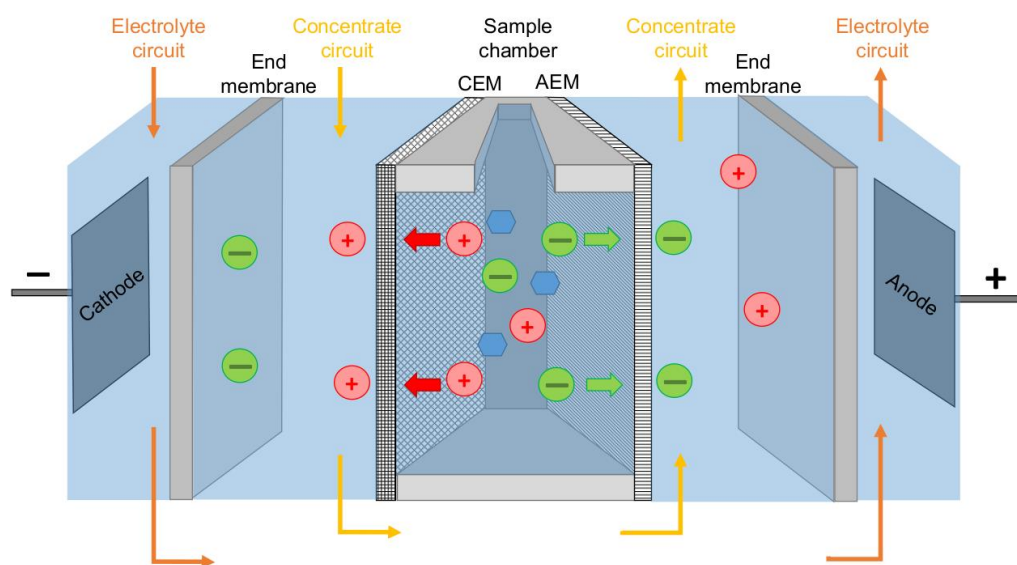


Figure 1 Schematic setup of the used ED cell. Red circles represent cations, green circles anions, and blue hexagons are carbohydrates. CEM and AEM stand for cation exchange membrane and anion exchange membrane respectively.

158 adaption of the voltage, which never exceeded 25 V. The desalination was stopped when the electric
159 current dropped to a value of 0.20 A.

160 The used ion-exchange membranes have a quite long lifetime as long as they are not damaged
161 mechanically. However, very high attention needs to be given to remove residues of previous desalinated



162 samples in order to avoid carry-over phenomena and obtain good reproducibility. Hence, every time
163 before a new sample was desalinated, the sample chamber was always first exposed to ultrapure water
164 for ten minutes and then flushed once with an aliquot of the new sample, which was disposed after.

165

166 2.4 HPAEC-PAD system

167 HPAEC-PAD was applied for the analysis of marine carbohydrates in seawater samples. Here, we used an
168 Dionex ICS-3000 ion chromatography system coupled to an autosampler AS-1 as it has been already
169 described for the analysis of saccharidic biomass burning markers in atmospheric particles (Iinuma et al.,
170 2009). Several neutral monosaccharides, amino sugars and uronic acids were separated on a Dionex
171 CarboPac 20 analytical column (3x150mm) combined with a Dionex CarboPac PA20 guard column
172 (3x30mm), which was permanently temperature conditioned at 30°C. The separation of these saccharides
173 was conducted by applying the gradient profile shown in **Table 2**, which was an adaption to the elution by
174 (Meyer et al., 2008). Neutral and amino sugars eluted within the first 19 min at 4 mM NaOH. By adding
175 sodium acetate, sugar acids eluted and organic and inorganic contaminants were flushed from the column.
176 After the removal of remaining acetate by 250 mM NaOH, the system was equilibrated at 4 mM NaOH for
177 the next sample injection. The flow rate of the eluent was 0.5 mL·min⁻¹. The retention times, peak widths
178 and resolution factors of the measured monosaccharides are shown in **Table 3**. For the injection of a
179 sample aliquot, a 25 µL loop was used. Each sample was measured as a duplicate and each standard as a
180 triplicate. Limits of detection (LOD) of individual monosaccharides were ranging between 2-12 nM, which
181 is in good agreement with literature (Engel and Händel, 2011; Panagiotopoulos and Sempéré, 2005).

182

183 For the preparation of eluents A-D, filtered ultra-pure water (conductivity >18.2 MΩ·cm) was degassed
184 with helium for 20 min. Eluents A and B were made by adding a defined volume of low-carbonate NaOH
185 solution (Fisher Chemical, 50% w/w) to the degassed water. Eluent C was prepared by dissolving sodium
186 acetate (Thermo scientific, anhydrous) in ultra-pure water, filtering it through a nylon membrane (0.2 µm,
187 Thermo Scientific), degassing the solution with helium for 20 min and adding the corresponding volume
188 of NaOH solution.

189

190

191

192



193 **Table 2** Gradient profile applied on the CarboPac PA20 column during HPAEC-PAD analysis

Time (min)	%A (250 mM NaOH)	%B (20 mM NaOH)	%C (1 M Na-acetate/ 250 mM NaOH)	%D (H ₂ O)
0	0	20	0	80
19	0	20	0	80
20	5	0	15	80
35	5	0	15	80
38	20	0	40	40
39	100	0	0	0
44	100	0	0	0
45	0	20	0	80
78	0	20	0	80

194

195 **Table 3** Averaged peak characteristics of monosaccharide standards separated by the presented elution averaged over 24 runs.
 196 Resolution factors are calculated between peak and following peak in chromatogram.

	Retention time (min)	Peak width (min)	Resolution factor
Fucose	3.79±0.01	0.27	10.5
Galactosamine	7.28±0.01	0.40	1.0
Rhamnose	7.70±0.02	0.42	1.1
Arabinose	8.15±0.02	0.42	2.2
Glucosamine	9.23±0.02	0.56	2.1
Galactose	10.33±0.02	0.51	2.8
Glucose	11.81±0.03	0.56	3.4
Xylose	13.89±0.03	0.65	0.8
Mannose	14.43±0.04	0.77	2.8
Fructose	16.52±0.05	0.75	2.0
Ribose	18.20±0.05	0.93	13.2
Muramic acid	25.84±0.01	0.23	9.0
Galacturonic acid	29.27±0.02	0.53	4.6
Glucuronic acid	31.49±0.02	0.45	2.8
Mannuronic acid	32.83±0.02	0.49	



197 2.5 Protocol for the analysis of DFCHO and CCHO in seawater and other saline samples

198 Stored frozen samples were defrosted in a fridge at 4°C. 9 ml of the filtered sample (0.2 µm, Millex, PTFE)
199 was desalinated with electrodialysis as described above. In the end of each desalination, electro-(osmotic)
200 water loss was replenished with ultra-pure water and mixed thoroughly. In order to analyze free amino
201 sugars or uronic acids, pH could be adapted with concentrated HCl or 1 M NaOH.

202 A concentration step using a vacuum concentrator (MiVac) at 55°C allowed the detection of low
203 concentrated DFCHO, as it occurs in most seawater samples. For this purpose, a round-bottom glass vial
204 was filled with an aliquot of 6 ml desalted sample, which was weighted empty and filled. After reaching a
205 remaining volume of less than approximately 600 µl, the glass vial was weighted again (in order to calculate
206 the concentration factor) and the concentrated aliquot was pipetted in the autosampler vial for HPAEC-
207 PAD analysis. This step allowed a decrease of LOD by a factor of 10. Each sample was prepared and
208 measured as duplicate.

209 In order to measure CCHO, marine polysaccharides need to be cleaved into their monomeric compounds
210 by acid hydrolysis. We applied the optimized conditions described by Engel and Händel (2011) with slide
211 modifications. An aliquot of 1 ml desalted sample was hydrolyzed with hydrochloric acid (HCl
212 concentration in sample= 0.8 M) in pre-heated (550°C, 4 h) glass ampules for 20 h at 100°C. Neutralization
213 was performed by evaporating all liquid under vacuum at 55°C until dryness. The dry residue was dissolved
214 in 700 µl ultra-pure water, treated with a vortex homogenizer (IKA MS 3 basic) and filled in the
215 autosampler vial for HPAEC-PAD analysis. Each sample was prepared and measured as duplicate.

216

217 2.6 Parameter optimization and assessment of method

218 Impact of osmosis and electro-osmosis during ED desalination

219 For quantifying the loss of water in the sample due to osmosis and electro-osmosis, a synthetic sea salt
220 solution was pipetted into the desalination chamber, which was desalinated for 0, 5, 10, 15, 20 and 25 min
221 with a voltage of 25 V and a maximal current of 0.6 A. After the lapse of time, the total remaining volume
222 was pipetted quantitatively into a glass vial and weighted (Mettler Toledo, XS105 DualRange). These
223 measurements were repeated for four different sea salt solution (10, 20, 30 and 40 PSU) and as triplicate
224 for each time. The recovery of the sample mass was calculated as the ratio between the mass after the
225 corresponding desalination time and the averaged mass after 0 min.



226 Recovery of DFCHO within the ED membrane system

227 Standard addition experiments with real seawater were performed, for quantifying the recovery of
228 monosaccharides due to diffusion and migration under consideration of all matrix effects. For that reason,
229 sample 7 was filtered (0.2 μm , Millex, PTFE) and spiked with a sugar standard mix (neutral sugars, amino
230 sugars, uronic acids) resulting in a concentration increase of 10 $\mu\text{g L}^{-1}$ and 100 $\mu\text{g L}^{-1}$. These samples were
231 desalinated using electrodialysis ($I_{\text{max}}=0.6$ A, stop at 0.2 A). In the end of each run, (electro-) osmotic water
232 loss was either replenished or not, and the sample directly measured with the HPAEC-PAD. These
233 measurements were repeated as triplicates for each concentration. In order to account for possible
234 wasting phenomena, repetitions were performed with new membranes, as well with membranes, which
235 already had been used for some time before. Given recovery rates for neutral monosaccharides are the
236 average of the results for 10 $\mu\text{g L}^{-1}$ and 100 $\mu\text{g L}^{-1}$. For sugar acids and amino sugars, only the averaged
237 recovery rates for 100 $\mu\text{g L}^{-1}$ are given for avoiding determinations close to the LOD.

238 In order to investigate the influence of pH on the migration of charged monosaccharides, this experiment
239 was repeated for three different pH values: At pH=8 (natural pH of seawater), pH of 1.5 (acidified with
240 concentrated HCl) and pH of 11 (addition of 1 M NaOH). Since high pH in seawater leads to precipitation
241 of hydroxides of alkaline earth metals, an additional filtering (0.2 μm) was performed for these runs.

242

243 Recovery of CCHO within the ED membrane system

244 Recovery experiments were performed with solutions and a suspension of the polysaccharide standards
245 sodium alginate (Aldrich), laminarin from *Laminaria digitate* (Sigma) and cellulose powder from spruce
246 (Fluka) at natural pH. Stock solutions were added to filtered sample SWS 7 resulting in concentrations of
247 10 mg L^{-1} . Aliquots of 1 ml with and without desalinations were hydrolyzed (HCl 0.8 M, 100°C, 20 h) and
248 neutralized by evaporation with the vacuum concentrator (55°C) until dryness. The residue was
249 reconstituted in 700 μL , treated with a vortex homogenizer (IKA MS 3 basic) and filled in the autosampler
250 vial for HPAEC-PAD analysis. Recovery rates were calculated as a ratio between the determined
251 monosaccharide concentrations after hydrolysis of the standard solutions with and without desalination.

252 In order to compare our method on the recovery of CCHO with another established method, aliquots of
253 four seawater samples were treated following the electro-dialysis protocol presented here and the
254 protocol by Engel and Händel (2011) using membrane desalination, an acid hydrolysis with HCl (0.8 M,



255 100°C, 20h), neutralization by evaporation (nitrogen, 50°C) and an elution on a Dionex CarboPac PA10
256 column.

257

258 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

259 A reproducible quantification of carbohydrates in seawater samples using HPAEC-PAD requires a prior
260 removal of disturbing sea salt. Here, we present electrodialysis as a reliable desalination method, its
261 parameter optimization and the discussion of arising phenomena resulting in a protocol for the analysis of
262 marine carbohydrates.

263

264 3.1 Kinetics and efficiency of desalination

265 During the desalination of seawater by electrodialysis, anions and cations migrate through an electrical
266 field and pass chemo-selective membranes. Depending on their electrical charge, they move either to the
267 positively charged anode or to the negatively charged cathode. In this process, the salt flux through the
268 membranes j_s ($\text{mol}\cdot\text{m}^{-2}\cdot\text{s}^{-1}$), which determines the desalination time, is proportional to the applied
269 electrical current I (Han et al., 2017; Vanoppen et al., 2015). **Figure 2** shows the current within the used
270 ED system and the salinity of the seawater sample during a typical desalination of an artificial seawater
271 sample (40 PSU) for two different applied maximal currents I_{max} within the system. For almost the entire
272 desalination run, the current I was maintained at I_{max} due to automatic adjustment of the voltage. During
273 this time, the salt flux was approximately constant. Towards the end of the desalination, when almost all
274 salt ions were removed, the current dropped down and the salt flux became lower. Since a direct salinity
275 measurement was not possible in the sample chamber without contaminating the sample, the end of each
276 desalination was defined, when the current I reached a value of 0.2 A. At this point, the salinity of the
277 sample typically ranged between 0.2 and 0.4 PSU, which was found to be sufficiently low for the
278 carbohydrate analysis at the HPAEC-PAD. This reduction in salinity represents an overall desalination of
279 more than 99% of the initial salt concentration. A desalination reaching a salinity below 0.1 PSU was
280 possible, but was not necessary for this application and would have resulted in longer desalination times.
281 Consequently, for minimizing the required desalination time, a high I_{max} is favorable.

282 However, it was observed that the application of an I_{max} of more than 0.8 A during the desalination,
283 resulted in a strong rise of the pH and a white precipitation in the (synthetic) seawater solution, apparently



284 due to the formation of hydroxides of alkaline earth metals. This uncontrolled precipitation strongly
285 disturbed the efficiency of the desalination and the reproducibility of the carbohydrate measurements and
286 caused a scaling of the membranes. Previous studies explained these unfavorable changes of pH by a
287 strong concentration polarization at the membranes surface leading to water splitting to H^+ and OH^- ions,
288 when a certain limiting current is exceeded. This phenomenon has been preferably observed at anion
289 exchange membranes with quaternary amino groups in the presence of divalent cations, such as Mg^{2+} and
290 Ca^{2+} (Cowan, 1962; Martí-Calatayud et al., 2018; Ottosen et al., 2000). The described phenomena
291 exclusively occurred when (synthetic) seawater was desalinated and not during the desalination of NaCl
292 standard solutions. This finding shows the importance of performing parameter optimization tests with

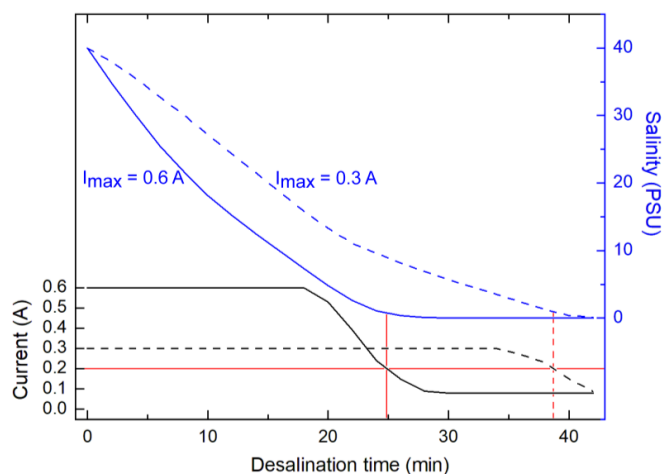


Figure 2 Measured current within the ED system and salinity of a synthetic seawater sample (40 PSU) versus desalination time with two different maximal applied currents I_{max} (0.6 A solid line, 0.3 A dashed line). The red line represents the current and the corresponding salinity, when desalination was stopped.

293 synthetic seawater standards that include all important seawater constituents such as divalent cations. In
294 summary, the optimum maximal current I_{max} of 0.6 A was found for the used ED system for avoiding scaling
295 effects and performing desalination as fast as possible.

296

297 3.2 Possible biases during the application of electrodialysis

298 During the application of ion exchange membranes, the passive transport of water (*osmosis*) and solutes
299 with a low molecular weight (*diffusion*), such as dissolved monosaccharides, can occur triggered by a
300 concentration gradient between the sample and concentration channels (Galama et al., 2014; Galier et al.,
301 2012). By operating an electrical field, the active transport of charged molecules (*migration*) and hydrated



302 water (*electro-osmosis*) takes place (Galama et al., 2014; Galier et al., 2012). While osmosis and electro-
303 osmosis induce an unavoidable loss of water and hence of the total volume of the sample, diffusion and
304 migration of the analytes result in a loss of analyzable molecules. All these phenomena might falsify the
305 determined concentration of the analytes in the sample and need to be characterized for an accurate
306 sample preparation for the analysis of marine carbohydrates.

307

308 Osmotic and electro-osmotic transport of water

309 Osmosis describes the passive transport of free water molecules through a partially permeable membrane
310 caused by large differences of the osmotic pressures between the concentrate circuit and the sample
311 solution (Sata, 2007). The direction and the quantity of the water transport depends on the residence time
312 t_R of the sample solution within the membrane system, the difference between the concentrations of
313 solutes in the sample solution and the concentration circuit ($c_s - c_c$) and membrane specific parameters,
314 such as the osmotic water transfer coefficient the membrane area and the membrane thickness (Galama
315 et al., 2014). The quantitative effect of osmosis can be reduced by minimizing t_R and ($c_s - c_c$). Hence, c_c was
316 set at 16 g NaCl L⁻¹, which is approximately in the middle between the concentrations of a typical seawater
317 sample before (30-39 PSU) and after the desalination (0.2-0.4 PSU) for balancing the positive and negative
318 contribution of osmosis on the total sample volume during a typical desalination. Under these conditions,
319 a maximum loss of 3% sample volume was observed in the described ED system due to osmosis.

320 In aqueous solutions, water molecules form a hydration shell around ions (Ohtaki and Radnai, 1993).
321 Whenever ions pass through membranes during electrodialysis, a cotransport of these hydrating water
322 molecules occurs, known as electro-osmosis (Galama et al., 2014). The electroosmotic water transfer j_W
323 (m³·m⁻²·s⁻¹) is proportional to the salt flux j_S in the system and can be expressed by formula (Eq-1) with the
324 molar volume of water V_M (1.8·10⁻⁵·m³·mol⁻¹) and the salt hydration number n_H (mol water·mol⁻¹ salt)
325 (Galier and Balmann, 2015; Han et al., 2015).

$$326 \quad j_W = n_H \cdot V_M \cdot j_S \quad (\text{Eq-1})$$

327 The salt hydration number of NaCl, as the major compound of sea salt, has been reported with values
328 between 11 and 14 (Han et al., 2015; Rutgers and Hendriks, 1962; Singlande et al., 2006; Walker et al.,



329 2014). Assuming a NaCl concentration of $30 \text{ g}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ and n_H to be 14, a maximal reduction of the sample
330 volume onto 87 % due to electro-osmosis is expected, additionally to osmosis.

331 The recovery of the sample volume due to electro-osmosis and osmosis during the desalination was
332 characterized for four different salinities for the used ED system (**Figure 3**). During the active removal of
333 sea salt, electro-osmosis is the dominating force causing the water loss in the sample. The electroosmotic
334 water loss is continual as long as the salt flux stays constant. However, in the final stages of each
335 desalination, the salt flux decreases and consequently the electroosmotic water transfer decreases, too.

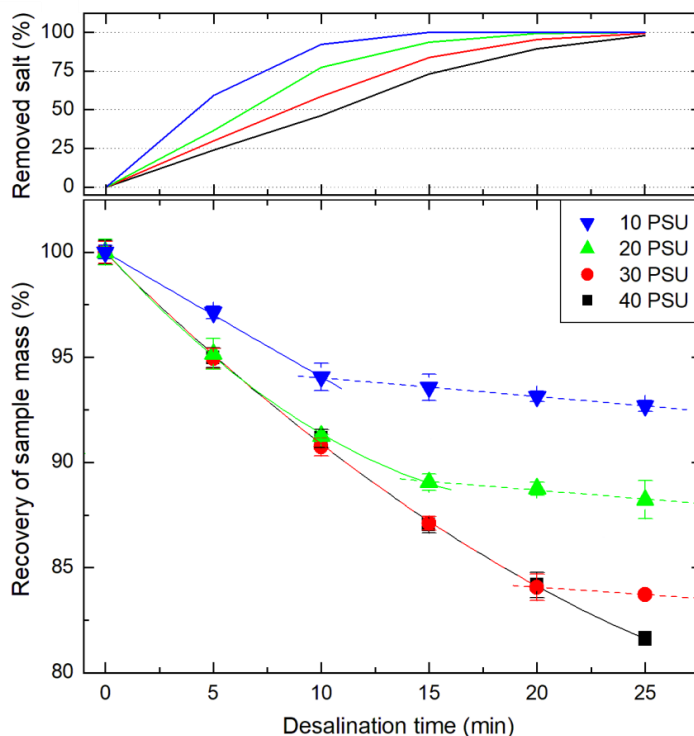


Figure 3 Combined effect of electro-osmosis and osmosis (solid lines) and osmosis (dashed lines) on the recovery of sample mass as a function of the desalination time within the described membrane system ($I_{max}=0.6 \text{ A}$, $c_c=16 \text{ g NaCl L}^{-1}$) for artificial sea salt solutions with four different initial salinities.

336 For a synthetic seawater sample with a salinity of 30 PSU, 84% of sample mass was recovered. This is in
337 good agreement with the estimation mentioned above considering the additional contemporaneous
338 contribution of osmosis of about 2-3%. Once the sea salt is removed, osmotic water transfer remains at
339 constant rate of approximately $0.1\% \cdot \text{min}^{-1}$.

340 The overall water loss resulting from osmosis and electro-osmosis needs to be taken into account since it
341 falsifies the determined concentrations of marine carbohydrates. For its compensation, the chamber was



342 replenished with ultra-pure water in the end of each desalination until the initial sample volume was
343 reached. This procedure was performed with a maximal overall error of 0.5%.

344

345 Analysis and recovery of DFCHO in seawater samples

346 The recovery of neutral monosaccharides during electro-dialysis is impacted by diffusion and convection
347 processes (Galier and Balmann, 2015). Additionally, free amino sugars and uronic acids migrate through
348 an electrical field due to their charge and pass the ion exchange membranes. Recovery tests were
349 performed with standard solutions spiked to a real seawater sampled, which have been typically reported
350 for seawater samples (Kirchman et al., 2001; Mopper et al., 1980; Skoog et al., 1999; Zeppenfeld et al.,
351 2019). Recovery rates of neutral sugars (Glc, Man, Xyl, Gal, Ara, Fuc, Rha, Fru) ranged between 95-98% at
352 the natural pH of seawater (approx. pH=8) (**Table 4**). Hence, the overall impact of diffusion and convection
353 on the recovery of monosaccharides is quite low for the short contact time with these membranes.
354 However, a higher loss of neutral monosaccharides due to diffusion was observed, when the sample
355 solution remained within the membrane system for a longer period of time, which calls for a fast
356 desalination. An overestimation of the determined concentrations was avoided by performing a correction
357 of the water loss in the end of each desalination. Charged monosaccharides were found with much lower
358 recoveries of 25-31% for uronic acids and 16-19% for amino sugars at pH=8. This is due to their weak
359 acidic/basic properties (pK_a (amino sugars) = 7.6-8.5 (Bichsel and von Gunten, 2000; Sinnott, 2007), pK_a
360 (uronic acids) = 3.3-3.5 (Kohn and Kovác, 1978)) and hence their partially ionic state, which makes them
361 migrate through the electrical field. However, a low pH can protonate the carboxylic group of uronic acids
362 and a high pH deprotonates the amino group of amino sugars for reducing this effect. Here, we found that
363 an initial pH of 1.5 before desalination could increase the recovery of free uronic acids up to 45-49%, while
364 a high pH of 11 resulted into a higher recovery of free amino sugars up to 58-59%. The recovery of neutral
365 sugars seemed to be quite unaffected within the range of the tested pH, with the exception of fructose,
366 which was recovered with 89% at pH 1.5, certainly due to its instability within acid conditions. To our
367 knowledge, here we report for the first time a method, which allows a possible determination of free
368 amino sugars and uronic acids in saline matrices, such as seawater or the brine from Arctic sea ice.

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373 **Table 4** Recovery of individual free monosaccharides (neutral, amino sugars, uronic acids) after desalination with electro-dialysis
 374 including correction of (electro-) osmotic water loss. n.d.= not determined

Monosaccharide	Recovery rate (%)		
	pH _{Start} = 1.5	pH _{Start} = 8 (seawater)	pH _{Start} = 11
Galactose	97.6±1.0	96.0±0.9	97.2±1.4
Fucose	97.2±2.4	97.9±1.6	97.0±1.0
Glucose	96.9±1.5	97.2±1.4	97.1±2.1
Mannose	95.8±1.8	95.8±1.3	95.8±2.1
Xylose	95.6±2.3	95.9±2.2	95.2±2.0
Rhamnose	93.5±1.6	94.2±1.6	95.1±1.4
Arabinose	93.4±2.3	95.1±1.1	94.5±1.9
Fructose	89.3±3.4	94.6±2.7	94.1 ±2.2
Glucuronic acid	48.7±2.7	31±1.9	n.d.
Mannuronic acid	44.9±0.6	25±1.9	n.d.
Muramic acid	24.7±1.7	n.d.	n.d.
Glucosamine	1.5±0.4	18.9±1.2	59±3.2
Galactosamine	1.2±0.3	15.9±1.5	58±3.4

375

376 Analysis and recovery of CCHO in seawater samples with standard polysaccharides

377 Recovery experiments with standard solutions of common polysaccharides were performed with and
 378 without desalination by electrodialysis. The neutral, water-soluble polysaccharide laminarin was
 379 recovered with 91.0±5.4%. The acidic polysaccharide alginic acid could be recovered with 93.2±5.3%. Even
 380 though alginic acid might move within the electrical field due to its acidic molecular structure, its molecular
 381 weight does not allow passing the membrane and does not leave the sample solution. Standard
 382 desalination experiments with a suspension of the water insoluble cellulose, which could represent the
 383 fraction of particulate polysaccharides, resulted in much worse recoveries of 48±19%. The reason for this
 384 high, less reproducible loss of polysaccharide was likely caused by sedimentation within the sample
 385 chamber. Engel and Händel (2011) described adsorption processes during the desalination with dialysis
 386 membranes and tackled this problem with sonification of the membranes. However, sonification could not
 387 be applied in our gadget. In this study, flushing the chamber several times with a defined volume of ultra-
 388 pure water after desalination and reuniting the washing water with the desalinated sample could increase
 389 the yield of cellulose up to 85.2±6.9% under consideration of dilution factors. This procedure was not



390 found to be feasible, since a dilution of a natural sample reduced the sensitivity of low concentrated sugars
391 in seawater in the analysis by HPAEC-PAD. Rather, we recommend electro-dialysis only for the application
392 at filtered samples (dissolved compounds), while particulate organic matter might be better analyzed from
393 filters after filtration.

394

395 Comparison of electro-dialysis and dialysis method for the determination of CCHO in seawater samples

396 In order to evaluate the presented procedure for the analysis of CCHO, comparison studies have been
397 performed measuring four ambient seawater samples (SWS 1-4) with the established membrane dialysis
398 protocol after Engel and Händel (2011) and with the here presented method. **Figure 4** shows the results
399 of the individual monosaccharides after hydrolysis with HCl. Major concentrated sugars, such as glucose,
400 galactose and xylose/mannose, were determined at similar concentrations. Furthermore, a good
401 agreement was observed for minor concentrated sugars, such as fucose and galactosamine. Mild
402 discrepancies were found for rhamnose and arabinose, which appeared in higher concentrations after the
403 electro-dialysis method, and glucosamine, which was determined at lower concentrations. These
404 variations might be explained by statistical uncertainties or co-elution of unknown substances. In
405 summary, the here presented method using electro-dialysis has shown to be in good agreement with the
406 established membrane dialysis method regarding the analysis of CCHO. In addition, the electro-dialysis

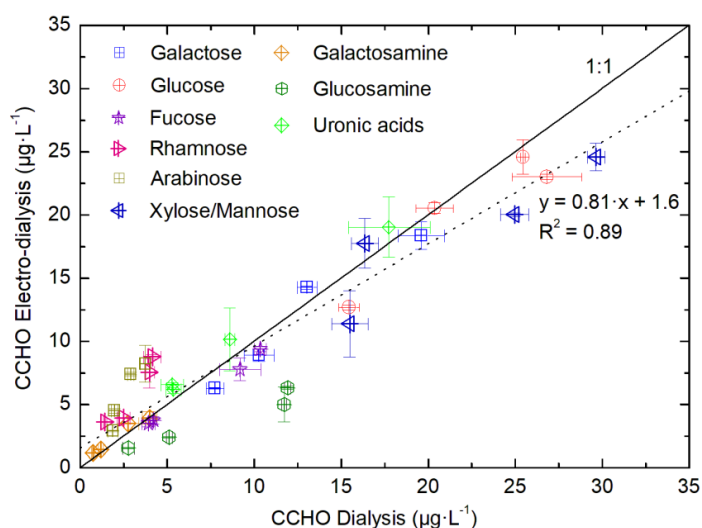


Figure 4 Determined monosaccharide concentrations in four seawater samples (SWS 1-4) after hydrolysis (CCHO) comparing the desalination by dialysis (Engel&Händel, 2011) and electro-dialysis (presented in this study).



407 offers the major advantage of analysing the full spectrum of DFCHO as well - which comprise a group of
408 hardly investigated but potentially important marine compounds.

409

410 3.3 Chromatographic performance with HPAEC PAD after desalination.

411 Several kinds of saline samples were desalinated with electro-dialysis and analyzed on the CarboPac PA20
412 column. **Figure 5** shows some examples for DFCHO and CCHO chromatograms in a brine and a seawater
413 sample after desalination with electro-dialysis. The insufficient chromatographic separation of mannose
414 and xylose using previous kinds of analytical columns has been frequently described in literature (Borch
415 and Kirchman, 1997; Engbrodt, 2001; Engel and Händel, 2011; Kirchman et al., 2001). Therefore, xylose
416 and mannose have frequently given only as sum concentrations. The elution of the sugars on a CarboPac20
417 column, applied in the present study, strongly improved the separation between the both sugars mannose
418 and xylose (resolution factor=0.8), and allowed the individual determination of these two sugars.
419 However, most of the analyzed samples showed high concentrations of xylose, which strongly overlapped
420 the smaller peak of mannose. For these cases, we kept reporting a sum value for Xyl/Man.

421

422 3.4 DFCHO and CCHO in saline field samples from different regions.

423 Several real samples were analyzed on DFCHO and CCHO (**Table 5** and **6**). In both sugar fractions, glucose
424 was the most abundant monosaccharide, as it has been reported before (Panagiotopoulos and Sempéré,
425 2005). In some of the samples, free fructose could be determined reaching concentrations comparable to
426 glucose. However, fructose cannot be determined in CCHO, since hydrolysis leads to complete destruction
427 of this sugar. High DFCHO was found in the samples from the Arctic including brine and ice core samples
428 reaching up to 118 nM in comparison to seawater samples from the Atlantic SWS 1-4 (11-15 nM).
429 However, a clear regional trend could not be identified for CCHO with concentrations, ranging between
430 260-1410 nM. Traces of free amino sugars and uronic acids were found after neutral desalinations.
431 However, a stronger enrichment is required in order to determine them quantitatively and will be the
432 focus of further studies.

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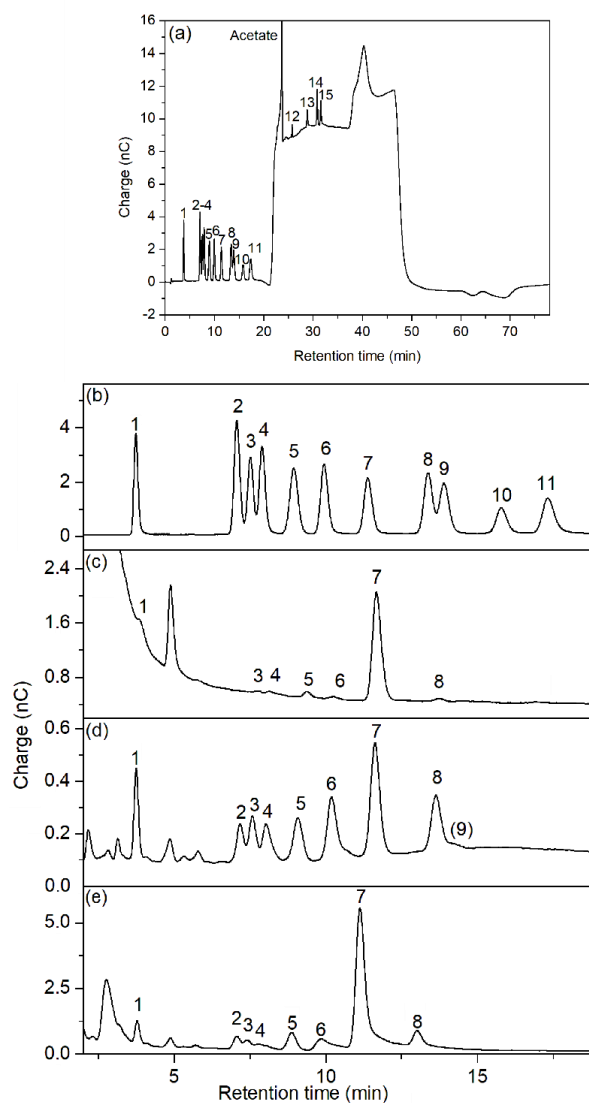


Figure 5 Chromatograms of a) full chromatogram of standard solution $100 \mu\text{g}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$; b-e) neutral sugars and amino sugars of b) standard solution $100 \mu\text{g}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$; c) DFCHO in brine (B2) desalinated at natural pH; d) CCHO in a seawater sample (SWS 3); e) CCHO in Arctic brine (B2). 1 fructose, 2 galactosamine, 3 rhamnose, 4 arabinose, 5 glucosamine, 6 galactose, 7 glucose, 8 xylose, 9 mannose, 10 fructose, 11 ribose, 12 muramic acid, 13 galacturonic acid, 14 glucuronic acid, 15 mannuronic acid.

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459



460 **Table 5** Mol percentages of individual neutral monosaccharides within DFCHO in seawater, Arctic brine and ice core samples.
 461 <LOD stands for below detection limit.

	Glc mol%	Gal mol%	Xyl/Man mol%	Rha mol%	Fuc mol%	Ara mol%	Fru mol%	Total DFCHO nM
SWS 1	57	8	<LOD	<LOD	7	8	20	15
SWS 2	52	<LOD	<LOD	<LOD	<LOD	<LOD	48	14
SWS 3	80	<LOD	15	<LOD	<LOD	5	<LOD	11
SWS 4	87	<LOD	5	<LOD	<LOD	8	<LOD	14
SWS 5	89	3	3	<LOD	<LOD	4	<LOD	35
SWS 6	16	8	22	<LOD	34	20	<LOD	27
IC 1	50	6	2	3	15	<LOD	25	118
B 1	23	27	13	8	29	<LOD	<LOD	15
B 2	85	2	3	2	6	1	<LOD	53

462

463

464 **Table 6** Mol percentages of individual monosaccharides within CCHO in seawater, Arctic brine and ice core samples. <LOD
 465 stands for below detection limit.

	Glc mol%	Gal mol%	Xyl/Man mol%	Rha mol%	Fuc mol%	Ara mol%	GalN mol%	GluN mol%	Gal-ac mol%	Gluc-ac mol%	Total CCHO nM
SWS 1	20	15	22	7	7	8	3	4	12	3	680
SWS 2	25	12	24	8	7	7	2	3	11	1	290
SWS 3	20	14	21	9	10	9	3	6	7	2	580
SWS 4	31	12	26	5	6	7	2	3	6	2	410
SWS 5	84	3	2	2	2	2	1	1	<LOD	3	1410
SWS 6	48	7	10	4	2	<LOD	2	4	15	7	260
IC 1	54	9	11	1	<LOD	1	2	1	10	10	330
B 1	47	11	13	4	4	3	3	5	<LOD	10	420
B 2	65	8	10	3	4	1	2	3	<LOD	3	640

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468 5. Summary and conclusion

469 In this study, a novel protocol was presented for the analysis of both DFCHO and CCHO in saline aqueous
 470 samples by applying HPLC-PAD with prior desalination by electro-dialysis. Recovery rates for neutral
 471 monosaccharides ranged between 95-98%. By adjusting pH, charged monosaccharides such as free amino
 472 sugars and uronic acids could be recovered with 58-59% at pH = 11 and 45-49% at pH = 1.5, respectively.
 473 Dissolved polysaccharide standards, such as laminarin and alginic acid showed good recovery rates of 91-
 474 93%, while a suspension of insoluble cellulose was quite difficult to recover reproducibly. Hence, electro-
 475 dialysis for carbohydrate analysis is recommended to be used for filtered samples or for samples with low



476 amount of particulate matter. In this study, the osmotic and electro-osmotic loss of water was considered
477 in order to avoid an overestimation of the determined concentrations. In real seawater from different
478 locations, Arctic brine and sea ice core samples, CCHO was found in concentrations between 260 and
479 1410 nM. DFCHO ranged in much lower concentrations with 11-118 nM. Within both, DFCHO and CCHO,
480 the most dominant monosaccharide was glucose, followed by other neutral sugars.

481 In this study, the successful application of electro-dialysis in combination with HPAEC-PAD for the analysis
482 of marine carbohydrates (both free and combined) in marine matrices, such as seawater, ice cores and
483 brine could be demonstrated. The application of electro-dialysis for other more salt sensitive analyses
484 should be the focus of further researches, e.g. the reported interference of suspended sea spray aerosol
485 in Arctic snow samples during the quantification of insoluble light absorbing impurities such as black
486 carbon and dust performed via nebulization. Hence, this developed method has the potential to contribute
487 strongly in further research studies understanding biogeochemical processes in the oceans and related
488 saline matrices and sea-air exchange processes, especially for studying hot spot regions of climate change,
489 such as the Arctic.

490

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492

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503 in our laboratory.

504



505 *Data availability.* The data will be available through the World Data Center PANGAEA
506 (<https://www.pangaea.de/>) in the near future.

507

508 *Author contributions.* SZ wrote the manuscript with contributions from MvP, HH and AE. SZ and MvP
509 collected seawater samples during different field campaigns. SZ optimized the presented method and
510 performed the chemical measurements. AE performed CCHO analysis with supplied samples following her
511 published protocol for evaluation purposes. All co-authors proofread and commented the manuscript.

512

513 *Competing interest.* The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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