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An intermediate complexity dynamic model for predicting accumulation of atmospherically-deposited metals (Ni, Cu, Zn, Cd, Pb) in catchment soils: 1400 to present

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Abstract

The Intermediate Dynamic Model for Metals (IDMM) is a model for prediction of the pools of metals (Ni, Cu, Zn, Cd, Pb) in topsoils of catchments resulting from deposition of metals from the atmosphere. We used the model to simulate soil metal pools from 1500 onwards in ten UK catchments comprising semi-natural habitats, and compared the results with present day observations of soil metal pools. Generally the model performed well in simulating present day pools, and further improvements were made to simulations of Ni, Cu, Zn and Cd by adjusting the strength of metal adsorption to the soils. Some discrepancies between observation and prediction for Pb appeared to be due either to underestimation of cumulative deposition, or to overestimation of the metal pool under ‘pristine’, pre-industrial conditions. The IDMM provides a potential basis for large scale assessment of metal dynamics in topsoils.

Keywords

Metals; soils; dynamic modelling; atmospheric deposition

The Intermediate Dynamic Model for Metals predicts the present day pools of Ni, Cu, Zn, Cd and Pb in semi-natural catchment soils of the UK.

1. Introduction

Soils may become contaminated by metals from a variety of sources including mining and smelting activities, atmospheric deposition and land application of materials such as manures and sludges. Since metals tend to associate strongly with soil solids, responses of soil concentrations to changes in inputs, particularly decreases, are predicted to occur on timescales from decades to centuries (Paces, 1998). Thus, current concentrations of metals in soils, and leaching to groundwater and surface waters, are highly dependent upon historic inputs. The critical loads approach (e.g. Hall et al., 2006; Lofts et al., 2007; de Vries and Groenenberg, 2009) uses the steady state concept as a starting point for assessing the sensitivity of soils to metal contamination. It is clear, however, that the timescales of metal accumulation and leaching in soils are sufficiently slow to warrant dynamic modelling for more realistic assessment of future risks.

Approaches for long term (decades or longer) dynamic modelling of metals in soils vary in sophistication and range of applicability, from detailed catchment models such as the Chemistry of the Uplands Model (CHUM; CHUM-AM) (Tipping, 1996; Tipping et al., 2006a; Tipping et al., 2006b) and the SMARTml model (Bonten et al., 2011) to simpler models such as those presented by Posch and de Vries (2009) and de Vries and Groenenberg (2009) or the TRANSPEC-II model of Bhavsar et al. (2008). The CHUM model simulates the long-term chemistry of both major ions and metals, taking into account solid-solution partitioning of major ions (Na, Mg, Al, K, Ca) and trace metals, mineral weathering, and cycling of C, N and S in soils. Thus, CHUM-AM can simulate mechanistically the confounding effects of changes in soil pH status and C cycling on metal accumulation and release over time. The dynamic models presented by Posch and de Vries (2009) and de Vries and Groenenberg (2009) are intended for the calculation of target loads of input metal over a defined period. Transfers between metal pools (e.g. soil-bound and dissolved) are calculated using a combination of empirical and mechanistic modelling, while potential confounding effects such as changes in porewater pH or dissolved organic carbon (DOC) in drainage water are not simulated. Complex models such as CHUM-AM are applicable for catchments where detailed monitoring data are available for parameterisation and testing, while the simpler

models are more suitable for larger scale application where less detailed data are available for parameterisation.

In this paper we present a dynamic model for metals in soils that is intermediate in complexity between CHUM-AM and the simpler dynamic models. The Intermediate Dynamic Model for Metals (IDMM) combines mechanistic and empirical submodels to describe metal speciation in the soil and runoff, within a flexible framework whereby temporal changes in driving variables such as metal deposition, porewater pH and DOC may be imposed. We describe the model structure, inputs and limitations, and demonstrate its application to prediction of historical metal accumulation in a set of UK catchments comprising semi-natural habitats. The objective is to demonstrate the utility of the IDMM as a tool for predicting present day and future metal concentrations in soils as a result of past, current and future metal inputs.

2. Materials and methods

2.1. Intermediate Dynamic Model for Metals

The IDMM simulates a single chemically and physically homogenous soil layer, composed of fine soil (comprising material <2mm), stones (inorganic material > 2mm) and pore space, which represents an idealised average composition of the catchment soil. The pore space is occupied by air and water. The depth of soil to be simulated is the choice of the user. In this study we have simulated complete soil profiles, to bedrock, for the non-peat soils. In peat soils the acrotelm only was simulated. The relative proportions of fine soil, stones, water and unoccupied pore space making up the soil layer are assumed not to change over time. The soil layer is defined by its depth (m), bulk density (g m^{-3}), organic matter content (%) (SOM), the proportion of the total volume that is occupied by stones (%), the proportion of the catchment that is bare rock (%), and the soil water content (% saturation of the pore space). The density of the fine soil is calculated by assuming the soil mineral matter to have a particle density of $2.6 \times 10^6 \text{ g m}^{-3}$ and the soil organic matter to have a density of $1.5 \times 10^6 \text{ g m}^{-3}$. These variables are used to calculate the concentration of fine soil (g soil per m^3 porewater) in the soil layer.

Metal fluxes and mass balance

The model runs on an annual timestep. Metal (Ni, Cu, Zn, Cd, Pb) may be either adsorbed to the fine soil solids, dissolved in the porewater, or adsorbed to eroded fine soil in the

porewater. Together, these forms comprise the pool of ‘geochemically active’ or labile metal. On each timestep, metal enters the soil as an input to the soil surface (e.g. from atmospheric deposition) and by mineral weathering, and is assumed to mix completely with the metal already present. Inputs of metal are assumed to be completely geochemically active. The pool of mineral-associated metal is not explicitly simulated beyond the simulation of weathering inputs to the geochemically active pool over time. The ‘fixation’ or ‘aging’ of metal into soil particles is not simulated. Metals are lost from the soil layer by porewater leaching. The mass balance of metal in the soil layer is given by the expression

$$\Delta M_{soil} = \frac{F_{input} + F_{weath}}{1 - f_{rock}} - L \cdot 10^3 \left(\{M\}_{ads} \cdot [ES] + [M]_{pw,diss} \right) \quad (1)$$

The terms in this equation are as follows:

- ΔM_{soil} is the change in the geochemically active metal pool in the soil in one year, in mol per m² of soil);
- F_{input} and F_{weath} are the inputs of metal to the soil surface and by mineral weathering, respectively, in mol per m² of the catchment. The metal input to the soil surface may vary over time, while the weathering rate is assumed to be constant;
- f_{rock} is the proportion of the catchment area that is bare rock;
- L is the annual leaching volume of water from the soil layer, in m³ per m² of soil area;
- $\{M\}_{ads}$ is the adsorbed part of the geochemically active metal pool in mol per g of fine soil;
- $[ES]$ is the concentration of eroded soil in the porewater in g dm⁻³;
- $[M]_{pw,diss}$ is the concentration of dissolved metal in the porewater.

Soil-porewater partitioning of metal

The model calculates the partitioning of the geochemically active metal between the solid (soil) and solution (porewater) phases using a combination of two submodels. A semi-empirical Freundlich transfer function is used to describe the relationship between the adsorbed pool and the free metal ion in porewater, and the WHAM/Model VI equilibrium speciation model calculates the dissolved metal in porewater from the free ion. The transfer function relates the adsorbed and free ion forms of the metal in the soil layer:

$$\log \left(\frac{M_{ads}}{M_{free}^n} \right) = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 \cdot pH + \alpha_2 \cdot \log \%SOM \quad (2)$$

The terms α_0 , α_1 , α_2 and n are fitted constants, and $\{M\}_{\text{ads}}$ and $[M]_{\text{free}}$ are the geochemically active metal pool (mol per g fine soil) and the free metal ion in porewater (mol per dm^3), respectively. The %SOM is the % organic matter content of the fine soil.

The concentration of metal dissolved in the porewater is calculated from the free ion concentration using WHAM/Model VI. This calculation requires specification of the porewater chemical composition (pH, concentrations of ionic species and dissolved organic carbon (DOC)). The chemical composition of the porewater is determined as follows:

- The pH is a time-variant input;
- the concentrations of sodium and chloride are fixed to $1.00 \times 10^{-3} \text{ mol dm}^{-3}$ and $3.33 \times 10^{-4} \text{ mol dm}^{-3}$ respectively;
- the concentrations of calcium, nitrate and sulphate are initially set to zero, $3.33 \times 10^{-4} \text{ mol dm}^{-3}$ and $1.67 \times 10^{-4} \text{ mol dm}^{-3}$ respectively. During model initialisation, the concentration of either calcium, or the combined concentrations of nitrate and sulphate, are adjusted to achieve charge balance;
- iron(III) and aluminium are specified by estimation of their free ion activities. The activity of iron(III) is specified by assuming equilibrium with precipitated iron(III) hydroxide (Lofts et al., 2008). The activity of aluminium is specified using the expressions derived by Tipping (2005) for activity in soil solutions. Following Tipping (2005), different expressions are used for ‘mineral’ soils (having less than 20% organic matter) and ‘organic’ soils (greater than or equal to 20% organic matter);
- the carbonate concentration is calculated assuming it to be in equilibrium with CO_2 in the soil atmosphere. The partial pressure of CO_2 is a fixed input. For the calculations presented here we assumed a partial pressure of CO_2 of $3.8 \times 10^{-3} \text{ atm}$ in the soil atmosphere, ten times the pressure in the open atmosphere.
- the DOC concentration is specified as a model input, which may change from year to year. Binding of ions by dissolved organic matter (DOM) is simulated assuming each unit mass of DOM to have binding properties equivalent to 0.65 unit masses of fulvic acid (FA) (i.e. $1 \text{ mg dm}^{-3} \text{ DOM}$ is equivalent to 0.65 mg dm^{-3} of FA). The DOM is assumed to comprise 50% carbon.

The concentration of metal adsorbed to eroded fine soil in the porewater is computed from the concentration of eroded fine soil and the concentration of adsorbed metal per unit mass of

fine soil. The concentration of eroded fine soil in the soil porewater is specified as a model input. The mass of fine soil in the soil layer is not corrected for erosion losses.

2.2. Dynamic modelling

To simulate metal dynamics in a soil layer, the model is run from a chosen starting year in the past which is assumed to represent pristine conditions with respect to metal inputs, i.e. when inputs are assumed to comprise only atmospheric deposition of metal from natural sources such as volcanism. Furthermore, the soil pool of geochemically active metal is assumed to be in steady state in the starting year, such that losses in leaching balance inputs from deposition and weathering. Under the steady state assumption, $\Delta M_{soil} = 0$, so Equation (1) can be rearranged as follows:

$$\frac{F_{input} + F_{weath}}{1 - f_{rock}} = L \cdot 10^3 \left([M]_{ads} \cdot [ES] + [M]_{pw,diss} \right)$$

$$\text{and } [M]_{pw,total} = [M]_{ads} \cdot [ES] + [M]_{pw,diss} = \frac{F_{input} + F_{weath}}{(1 - f_{rock}) \cdot L \cdot 10^3} \quad (3)$$

where $[M]_{pw,total}$ is the total metal concentration (dissolved and adsorbed to eroded soil) in the porewater. Initially, $[M]_{pw,total}$ is calculated from the pristine metal inputs and runoff, then $[M]_{free}$ and $[M]_{ads}$ at steady state are calculated iteratively using the transfer functions and WHAM/Model VI. Metal dynamics in subsequent years are then computed by first speciating the total geochemically active metal into adsorbed and dissolved pools, then calculating the change in the geochemically active pool, and the annual leaching flux, according to Equation (1).

2.3. Catchments, soils and atmospheric deposition

The locations of the catchments from which soils were sampled are shown in Figure 1. The catchments comprise the following:

1. Four small sub-catchments (0.3–1.8 km² in area) of the upper River Duddon in the English Lake District. The catchments are Gaitscale Gill (GG), Troughton Gill (TG), Hardknott Gill (HKG) and Castle How Beck (CHB). The landscape is high relief with altitude within the catchments varying from 200–800 metres above sea level (m.a.s.l.). Vegetation is predominantly grassland, with appreciable areas of bare rock (20% of the total area). Soils at higher altitude are largely thin humic rankers, with some peats, with areas of humic brown earth soils towards valley bottoms.

2. The catchment of Scoat Tarn (ST) (0.8 km^2), a small mountain lake in the western Lake District. General catchment and soil characteristics are similar to those for the upper Duddon; catchment altitude varies from 600–820 m.a.s.l..
3. An area of 0.4 km^2 on the western side of Great Dun Fell (GDF), in the Pennine hills of central northern England. The area is shallow-sloped, at an altitude of approximately 500 m.a.s.l., and comprises peat and ranker soils. The vegetation is heather-grass moorland and wetland. Precipitation is around 1300 mm a^{-1} .
4. The River Etherow (RE) and Howden Reservoir (HR) catchments, in the southern part of the Pennines range. These are neighbouring catchments with areas of 13 km^2 and 36 km^2 , and altitudes of 310–630 m.a.s.l. and 290–600 m.a.s.l., respectively. Soils and vegetation in both catchments are similar; soils comprise peats and podzols and the vegetation is largely heather moorland with some areas of rough grazing.
5. Lochnagar (LN) is a mountain catchment in the eastern part of the Cairngorms massif in the Scottish Highlands, at an altitude of 790–1150 m.a.s.l. and an area of 1.2 km^2 . The catchment comprises heather-grass moorland with peaty soils and an extensive proportion (50%) of bare rock, and a corrie lake of area 0.1 km^2 .
6. The Old Lodge (OL) catchment is situated in Ashdown Forest in south east England. The catchment has an area of 0.4 km^2 and comprises lowland heathland with some improved grassland and a small portion of woodland. Soils are cambisols and podzols. Catchment altitude varies from 105–190 m.a.s.l..

The approach to soil sampling has been previously described by Tipping et al. (2006a; 2006b; 2010). Briefly, soils were sampled in five or six locations in each catchment by digging pits to the maximum accessible depth, i.e. to bedrock or to large stones. In peaty catchments (GDF, RE and HR), soils were sampled to a depth of 10cm in wetter places and to 20cm in drier places. Separate soil samples were taken from organic and mineral horizons where both were encountered. Soil pH, C content, concentrations of geochemically-active metals and bulk densities were measured. Soil pH was determined on supernatants obtained by extraction of soil with 1 mM NaCl at a field moist soil:solution ratio of 1:2.5. Soil carbon was determined by elemental analysis (Universal CHNS-O Vario EL elemental analyser). Geochemically-active soil metal concentrations were determined following extraction with 0.1M HNO_3 . Contents of trace elements and Si in representative rock samples were determined by X-ray fluorescence (British Geological Survey).

The collection and processing of bulk atmospheric deposition has been described previously (Lawlor and Tipping, 2003; Tipping et al., 2007; Yang et al., 2002). Deposition was collected in the Duddon, GDF, RE and OL catchments using polypropylene funnels and polyethylene collection vessels and analysed by ICP–MS, and in the LN catchment using an RS-1 type precipitation collector. Sample collection and processing followed strict cleanliness protocols. Trace metal determination was done by ICP–MS.

3. Model application

3.1. Timespan of simulations

The objective of this study was to predict present day pools of metals in the topsoils of the study catchments from measurements and estimates of historic metal deposition. To do this, we assumed that the soil metal pools were in steady state with deposition and weathering in the year 1400, as was previously done by Tipping et al. (2006b) and Tipping et al. (2010). Simulations were started from this date and run to 2010.

3.2. Atmospheric deposition

The overall shape of the time trend in atmospheric deposition of metals to was derived from the observations of Ochsenein et al. (1983) on metal concentrations in sediments cores from Blelham Tarn in the English Lake District. Deposition was assumed to comprise a constant background rate D_B , a variable rate D_A due to deposition of metal emitted at regional and national scale, and a second variable rate due to deposition of metal emitted due to mining and smelting activities in the local region of the catchment $D_{A, \text{local}}$. The deposition profile started in 1400 with a rate equal to D_B . Regional/national scale anthropogenic deposition was assumed to start in a year y_0 (1600 for Pb, 1800 for the other metals) and to increase over time to 1960 according to the expression

$$D_A = D_{A, \text{max}} \left(\frac{y - y_0}{1960 - y_0} \right)^n \quad (4)$$

where D_A is the deposition rate ($\text{g ha}^{-1} \text{a}^{-1}$), y is the year for which deposition is being calculated, y_0 is the starting year, $D_{A, \text{max}}$ is the deposition in 1960 and n is a constant. From 1960 to 1970 anthropogenic deposition was assumed to be constant at a rate of $D_{A, \text{max}}$, after which it declines linearly to 2000 and then remains constant to 2010.

Deposition profiles were first calculated for the Duddon catchments (GG, TG, HKG and CHB) and scaled to the measured present-day deposition fluxes in the GDF, RE and OL catchments. Deposition fluxes at ST were assumed to be equal to those in the Duddon catchments, and those at HR assumed to be equal to those in the RE catchment. In both cases this assumption was based on the proximity of the catchments to each other. Deposition profiles for LN were derived by adjustment of the parameters of Equation 4 to observed metal profiles in the sediments of the lake within the catchment (Tipping et al., 2007).

The possible influence of additional local metal deposition ($D_{A, local}$), due to mining activities, was investigated in the RE and HR catchments. To incorporate historic local deposition we used the time series profiles constructed by Tipping et al. (2010), which represent idealised scenarios. Local deposition was assumed to start in 1700, increase linearly until 1830 to a value $D_{A, local, max}$, then remain constant until 1860 and decrease linearly to zero in 1900. For these catchments, scenarios were run both including and omitting the local deposition.

Parameter values for Equation 4 are given in Table S1.

3.3. Soil properties

We derived for each catchment a single idealised soil profile representing the ‘best average’ physicochemical properties (pH, soil organic matter content, bulk density, stony material content) of the sampled catchment soils. This was done using the same approach previously used by Tipping et al. (2006a) and Tipping et al. (2010) based on surveys of soils across each catchment, but deriving a single ‘best average’ set of properties for the complete soil layer, rather than for two layers. The properties derived are listed in Table S2.

Pools of ‘geochemically active’ metal, expressed on an areal basis (mol m^{-2}), were calculated for each sampling location within the catchment from soil metal concentrations, bulk density and the proportion of stony material, as previously described in detail by Tipping et al. (2006b) and Tipping et al. (2010). Mean values for each catchment are given in Table S3.

3.4. Metal weathering

We used the weathering rates of metals into the soil pool (F_{weath}) ($\text{mol m}^{-2} \text{a}^{-1}$) previously calculated by Tipping et al. (2006b) and Tipping et al. (2010). These calculations assumed that metals are weathered by congruent dissolution of silicate minerals. Weathering rates were calculated from the streamwater flux of Si and the metal:Si ratios in minerals. Weathering rates for each catchment are given in Table S4.

3.5. Porewater pH, DOC and SPM concentrations

Modelling with the IDMM requires time series data for soil pH, as the model does not itself compute this variable. Where historic changes in soil pH are known or suspected to have occurred in the catchment, reconstruction or estimation of a time trend for model input may be appropriate. The catchments simulated here have all been subject to historic anthropogenic acidification, with more recent evidence for declines in acidification (Tipping et al., 2000; Davies et al., 2005). Past trends in pH may be estimated by a number of methods, such as from diatom assemblages preserved in lake sediments (e.g. Birks et al., 1990), or by simulation using an acidification model such as MAGIC (Cosby et al., 1985). For the simulations presented here, we used time series of soil porewater pH predicted by the CHUM-AM model (Tipping et al., 2006a, 2007, 2010; Ashmore et al., 2007) as inputs. The porewater pH in the CHUM-AM simulations was calculated for two soil layers, which for the IDMM runs have been bulked to form a single mixed layer. A single porewater pH for this layer was calculated from the CHUM-AM predictions by taking the mean of the predicted pHs for each year, weighted for the soil solid mass in each of the layers used for the CHUM-AM simulations. The time trends in porewater pH are shown for each catchment in Figure 2. It can be seen that soil acidification is predicted to begin between 1600 and 1700 and to increase in rate in the 1800s to reach a minimum pH around 1960-1980, after which a partial recovery towards pristine values is predicted to occur. Concentrations of DOC and SPM in the porewater were set equal to the concentrations in drainage from the lowest soil horizon in the CHUM-AM simulations (Tipping et al., 2006b, 2010). The influence of erosion on the predicted soil metal pools was assessed by also performing model with the porewater SPM concentration set to zero.

3.6. Metal soil-solution partitioning

The distribution of metal between the free ion in porewater and the geochemically active pool (Equation (2)) was calculated using one of two sets of parameters. The first was derived by Shotbolt and Ashmore (2004) using a dataset derived from UK soils. The dataset comprised chemical analyses of (i) 95 upland grassland topsoils of England and Wales (Tipping et al., 2003) (Cu, Zn, Cd and Pb only), (ii) 56 topsoils from locations with mixed land uses (deciduous woodland, heathland, upland coniferous forest, acid grasslands and lowland coniferous forest), and (iii) 16 topsoils, comprising soils from three locations contaminated by historic Pb mining, and three neighbouring uncontaminated locations. The methods

described by Tipping et al. (2003) were used for the extraction of soil porewaters and chemical analysis of soils and porewaters. The geochemically active soil metal pools were estimated by extraction with 0.1M sodium EDTA at a soil:solution ratio (w:v) of 1:10. Free metal ion concentrations in the porewater were calculated using WHAM/Model VI (Tipping, 1998). We will refer to the transfer functions derived using these data as set A.

In order to make a comparison with a transfer function parameterised on a wider range of soil types, we also performed model runs using the transfer function parameters calculated for Equation (2) by Groenenberg et al. (2010), which we will refer to as set B. These parameters were calculated from three datasets: the UK non-forested upland soils dataset already described, and two datasets comprising measurements from soil samples of the Netherlands. The Groenenberg et al. datasets cover a slightly smaller range of porewater pH (3.3–8.3) and a wider range of soil organic matter content (0.5%–97.8%) compared to the UK-only datasets (pH 3.0–8.3 and soil organic matter 4.6%–97.8%). Parameter values for both sets of transfer functions are provided in Table 1.

Comparisons of the predictions made by each set of transfer functions are shown in Figure S1. The figure illustrates how the predicted free metal ion concentrations change with increasing soil organic matter content, for two porewater pH values, and a single geochemically active metal concentration. For Ni, transfer function B predicts higher free ion concentrations, indicating weaker binding to the soil. The difference between the predictions is smaller at higher pH and lower soil organic matter content; at a soil pH of 6 and an organic matter content of 10% or lower, the predictions are similar. Copper is predicted to have a difference dependence of binding strength on soil organic matter content. At a soil organic matter content of 50%, predicted binding strengths are very similar, while at lower soil organic matter transfer function A predicts stronger binding and at higher soil organic matter transfer function B predicts stronger binding. Conversely, the predictions for Zn show that both transfer functions predict similar dependences of binding strength on soil organic matter content, but show different dependences on pH: at a porewater pH of 3 transfer function A predicts stronger binding, while at pH 6 transfer function B predicts stronger binding. The predictions for Cd are very similar, while for Pb transfer function A consistently predicts stronger binding. This is particularly pronounced at low soil organic matter contents ($\leq 10\%$), where the free ion predicted by transfer function A is over an order of magnitude lower than that predicted using transfer function B.

3.7. *Dynamic model application*

Model runs were performed for the period 1400 to 2010, assuming that in 1400 the soils were in steady state with respect to their chemistry and organic matter content. The model was initially applied to each catchment without optimisation of parameters. For the catchments where only regional deposition was considered, two simulations were made, one with each transfer function. For the catchments where both local and regional deposition were considered, four runs were made, considering regional deposition only, and considering regional and local deposition, using each transfer function.

Model performance was assessed by comparing the observed and predicted soil pools for each metal for the year for which observations were available. Temporal trends were also assessed to consider the predicted metal behaviour.

4. **Results**

4.1. *Time series predictions*

Examples of time series predictions for two catchments, TG and HR, are shown in Figure 3. Nickel, Zn and Cd are all predicted to show reductions in soil pools in response to lower deposition inputs since 1970, while Cu and Pb show reduced accumulation but no net losses.

4.2. *Predicted retention of metals by catchment soils*

Retention of anthropogenic metal by the soils to 1970 and 2000 is shown in Figure S2. The metals show contrasting patterns of retention. Generally, retention increases in the order $Zn < Ni < Cd < Cu < Pb$ in simulations using transfer function A. In simulations using transfer function B, the order is similar with the exception that Ni shows slightly lower mean retention than Zn. Copper retention is higher in simulations using transfer function B (mean 81%) than in simulations using transfer function A, while the opposite trend is seen for Pb, with mean 93% retention in simulations using transfer function set A and 83% in simulations using transfer function set B. Nickel, Zn and Cd generally show greater cross-catchment variability in retention than do Cu and Pb.

Simulated changes in soil metal pools in response to reduced deposition from 1970 to 2000 also show patterns dependent on the metal and the transfer function used for simulation. Generally, Cu and Pb are predicted to continue accumulating in most catchments, independent of the transfer function used. Cd is predicted to have continued to accumulate in

around half the catchments and to have shown a net loss in the remainder, while both Ni and Zn are predicted to have shown net losses in most of the catchments.

Examination of the role of soil erosion on metal loss showed that for Ni, Cd and Zn, predicted metal losses in erosion at the present day were consistently less than 5% of the total losses, regardless of catchment or transfer function used. Erosional losses of copper were also consistently below 5% with the exception of HR where they were predicted to be 7% when using transfer function A and 9% when using transfer function B. Erosional losses of Pb were predicted to comprise a widely proportion of the total losses, across all the catchments. When using transfer function A, proportional losses were predicted to range from 0.5% for RE to 34% for HR and 47% for GDF. When using transfer function B, losses ranged from less than 0.1% for OL to 8% for HR and 26% for GDF.

The influence of simulating erosion on the prediction of soil metal pools was variable. When erosion was not simulated, present-day metal pools were consistently predicted to be higher than in the simulations where erosion was simulated. For Ni, Zn and Cd, the difference in present-day pools was less than 0.1% in all the catchments except GDF and HR, regardless of the transfer function used. For Cu and Pb, the differences covered a wider range. For Cu, the largest difference seen was 1.5%, in the GDF catchment, with transfer function A, and 3.3%, in HR, with transfer function B. For Pb, the respective largest differences were 14.3% (HKG) and 5.5% (GDF). The largest differences for Ni, Zn and Cd respectively were 2.3%, 0.9% and 2.1% using transfer function set A, and 1.3%, 0.8% and 1.9% using transfer function set B. All these differences were observed in the GDF catchment.

4.3. Influence of local deposition

Figure 4 illustrates the effect of simulating additional local metal deposition on the predictions of metal pools in the HR catchment. In all cases the addition of local deposition, with an earlier onset date than the regional deposition, results in higher metal pools at an earlier date. In the cases of Ni, Zn and Cd, the model predicts that present day pools would be very similar to those seen if there were no additional deposition, with pools in the presence of local deposition calculated to be 1.1, 1.0 and 1.1 times higher, respectively, than the pools predicted in the absence of local deposition. In the cases of Cu and Pb, local deposition is predicted to have a residual effect on current day pools. For Cu the pool is predicted to be 1.8 times larger than in the absence of local deposition, while the Pb pool is predicted to be 2.0 times larger. The proportional predicted increases in present day metal pools for the three

catchments for which scenarios including local deposition have been run are shown in Figure S3. Generally, the addition of local deposition has the largest influence on the predicted Pb pools, with a near doubling of the present day pools predicted. Conversely, present day pools of Zn are predicted to be little affected by the addition of local deposition.

4.4. Comparison with observed soil metal pools

Figure 5 compares observed present day metal pools in all the catchment with IDMM predictions using transfer function set A, and Figure 6 shows the equivalent comparison for transfer function set B. The model predicts the observed present day Zn and Cd pools to within a factor of three in all the catchments and the observed Cu and Pb to within the same degree in nine catchments. Nickel pools are predicted to the same degree in seven of the catchments. Overall, the root mean squared differences in the (logged) observed pools, for Ni, Cu, Zn, Cd and Pb respectively, are 0.40, 0.35, 0.24, 0.29 and 0.39 when using transfer function set A. When using transfer function set B, Zn and Cd pools are predicted to within a factor of three in nine and eight catchments respectively, and Cu and Pb pools to within the same degree in seven catchments. Nickel is predicted to within the same degree in all ten catchments. The root mean squared differences for Ni, Cu, Zn, Cd and Pb are 0.33, 0.43, 0.27, 0.31 and 0.46 respectively.

The predicted soil pools of Pb exhibit some distinctive patterns compared to the observed pool. The observed present day pool in the RE catchment soils (100 mmol m^{-2}) is over seven times greater than the pool predicted by the IDMM using either transfer function (13.1 mmol m^{-2} using transfer function set A and 8.61 mmol m^{-2} using transfer function set B). This pool is also greater than the sum of the total anthropogenic input of Pb and the predicted steady state pool under pristine conditions, when using either transfer function. In two catchments (LN and OL) the model predicts that the present day pool would be overestimated by the model even in the absence of any anthropogenic deposition, when using transfer function set A (Figure S4). Conversely, this is not observed in either catchment when using transfer function set B, and the model achieves good agreement between observation and prediction.

Clear trends towards over- or under-prediction of observed metal pools were noted for Ni, Cu, Cd and Pb, when using either transfer function. In the case of Pb, as already noted, this may result from overestimation of the pristine pool or apparent underestimation of the anthropogenic inputs. In the case of the other metals, uncertainties in the transfer functions are a plausible source of this bias. To investigate this we optimised the constant term α_0 in the

transfer functions for Ni, Cu, Zn and Cd to achieve the best fit between (logged) observed and predicted metal pools. For transfer function set A, optimal fits (Figure 5) were obtained by adjusting α_0 by -0.27, -0.33, 0.15 and 0.38 respectively, resulting in root mean squared deviations of 0.29, 0.29, 0.18 and 0.12. For transfer function set B, optimal fits (Figure 6) were obtained by adjusting α_0 by 0.12, -0.43, 0.15 and 0.41 respectively, resulting in root mean squared deviations of 0.30, 0.30, 0.22 and 0.13.

5. Discussion

The IDMM generally makes reasonable predictions of present day metal pools in the catchments studied here, given the inherent uncertainty in the historic metal deposition profiles and the within-catchment variability in soil properties and metal pools. Also, despite the relatively simple nature of the model compared to CHUM-AM, which we have previously applied to these catchments (Tipping et al., 2006; 2010), the model predicts reasonably similar soil pools (Figure S5). Thus, the IDMM has clear promise as a model for predicting the dynamics of metals in soils on the basis of relatively simple inputs.

The IDMM describes the solid-solution partitioning of metals by coupling an empirical transfer function with a chemical speciation model for the computation of porewater metal speciation. This is a somewhat more complex approach than is often taken in chemical fate models where a simple partition coefficient (K_d) approach is used to compute the distribution of chemical between solid and dissolved (i.e. porewater) phases. Such an approach has also been shown to provide a good description of soil–solution partitioning for metals, where the dependence of K_d upon soil and porewater properties is modelled (e.g. Groenenberg et al., 2012), and could readily be incorporated into the IDMM. The reason for adopting the more complex, ‘coupled’ approach it allows calculation of the free metal ion concentration. Since the free ion concentration is a key variable in metal uptake and toxicity models, this potentially allows the IDMM to be coupled to models such as the terrestrial BLM (Thakali et al., 2006), the free ion approach (Lofts et al., 2004; Lofts et al., 2013) and Freundlich–based uptake modelling approaches (e.g. Plette et al., 1999; Mertens et al., 2007). Thus, the simplicity of a K_d –based approach is sacrificed to allow greater model potential, without the need to take a purely mechanistic approach.

The comparison of transfer functions suggested that transfer function set A in general performed better than transfer function set B, despite being derived from a smaller set of soils with a narrower range of physicochemical properties. However, set A simulated Pb relatively

poorly in two catchments (OL and LN), due to overestimating the steady state soil pool. The porewater Pb concentration at steady state is calculated so that Pb losses in leaching balance the inputs, therefore it is independent of the transfer function. Since set A predicts greater binding of Pb to the soil than does set B, this must necessarily result in a higher steady state adsorbed pool. Clearly, the performance of both transfer functions for Pb suggests that the set B parameters are providing the more realistic estimates of metal distribution between free ion and soil-adsorbed forms,

A useful development would be to use soil data to calibrate the model directly, by optimising the transfer function coefficients, instead of relying on values determined from soil experiments. This could provide tighter relationships between prediction and observation, and thereby more precise predictions. Adjustment of the constant term in the transfer function, as we have done in this study, is a useful alternative method, despite being less satisfactory since it makes the assumption that all bias is due to a single parameter.

Extension of the model to other trace metals and metalloids is clearly possible, given suitable parameterisation. Metals that exist in cationic form are clearly amenable to incorporation, if transfer function parameters and solution complexation constants, including binding to DOC, become available. Anionic metals and metalloids, such as molybdenum and arsenic, present distinct, although not insurmountable issues. The binding characteristics of these species to dissolved organic matter are poorly known compared to the metals simulated in this study, and so more fundamental DOM-binding studies and model development would be required before such species could be incorporated into the IDMM at the same level of complexity. A first step would be to express soil-solution partitioning of such species as a single empirical function, as has been done, for example, by Groenenberg et al. (2012) for Mo and As. This would alleviate the need to explicitly consider binding to DOM as a separate process, but would be potentially less useful for linking to toxicity modelling since it would not entail calculation of the free ion concentrations.

The role of soil erosion as a present day loss process was predicted in most cases to be relatively minor in comparison to losses as dissolved metal in soil drainage, and to have a minor influence on the prediction of present day metal pools in the topsoils. An exception was Pb, where differences in predictions with and without erosion occasionally exceeded 10%. Applications of the model to other soils are clearly desirable. Its ease of application means that it can be tested for many sites, using generic histories of metal deposition (and acidification if relevant), but taking into account local variations where known. Thus, in

principle the IDMM could be applied to sufficient representative soils to permit national assessments of soil metal dynamics, including future scenarios. In particular, there is potential scope for application to other soil systems apart from the ones described here, such as agricultural systems receiving metal inputs from sources such as sludges, manures and fertilisers. Another possible improvement would be to add a second soil box, so that the slow downward movement of metals through soil could be represented. This would also open the possibility of incorporating a description of metal transfer to surface waters and groundwaters, permitting integrated assessment of metal dynamics in a similar manner to CHUM-AM. Wider application of the model could benefit from more detailed consideration of processes causing metal losses, particularly erosion, which may be significantly higher in lowland catchments (e.g. Chambers et al., 2000; Chapman et al., 2005). Additionally, the selective erosion of particles enriched in metals relative to the bulk soil (e.g. Quinton and Catt, 2007) could be usefully incorporated into the model. The IDMM provides a suitable framework within which to test the influence of processes not currently considered in heavy metal dynamic models. For example, it could be used to assess the influence of metal storage, cycling and removal in biomass (e.g. trees in forested catchments, crops in arable catchments), and the effects of fixation (“ageing”) processes whereby metal added to soil in geochemically active form is rendered unreactive by incorporation into mineral matter. Existing models of metal fixation (e.g. Crout et al., 2006) could readily be incorporated into the IDMM.

6. Conclusions

The Intermediate Dynamic Model for Metals (IDMM) provides generally reasonable predictions of present day metal (Ni, Cu, Zn, Cd, Pb) pools in a series of semi-natural UK catchments, based on profiles of historic metal deposition and soil pH. Agreement between observation and prediction can generally be improved by optimising the transfer functions describing the partitioning of metal between the free ion and the soil-bound pool. In the case of Pb, the generally strong predicted retention in the soil makes the historic deposition rate the most important driving variable in the predictions. The IDMM provides a potentially useful tool for large scale application to study and predict topsoil metal dynamics. Additional processes such as metal fixation and biomass uptake could be readily incorporated in order to simulate more complex systems than those studied here.

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642

Table 1. Derived parameters for transfer functions A and B.

Transfer function A				
	α_0	α_1	α_2	N
Ni	-4.84	0.31	0.93	0.70
Cu	-5.17	1.17	0.78	1.00
Zn	-3.28	0.36	0.90	1.00
Cd	-5.85	0.39	0.95	0.68
Pb	-4.20	1.12	0.72	1.00
Transfer function B				
	α_0	α_1	α_2	N
Ni	-4.76	0.45	0.91	0.84
Cu	-6.37	0.64	0.87	0.57
Zn	-4.67	0.46	0.84	0.84
Cd	-5.71	0.41	0.91	0.70
Pb	-6.46	0.96	1.35	0.84

643

644

645 **Figures**

646 Figure 1. Locations of modelled catchments. A = Lochnagar; B = Great Dun Fell (GDF);
647 C = Scoat Tarn; D = Upper Duddon (Gaitscale Gill, Troughton Gill, Hardknott Gill, Castle
648 How Beck); E = River Etherow; F = Howden Reservoir; G = Old Lodge.

649 Figure 2. Time trends in soil porewater pH, predicted by the CHUM-AM model and used as
650 inputs to the IDMM simulations. Catchment abbreviations are as follows: HKG = Hardknott
651 Gill; CHB = Castle How Beck; TG = Troughton Gill; GG = Gaitscale Gill; GDF = Great Dun
652 Fell; HR = Howden Reservoir; BER = Blackstone Edge Reservoir; RE = River Etherow;
653 OL = Old Lodge; LN = Lochnagar.

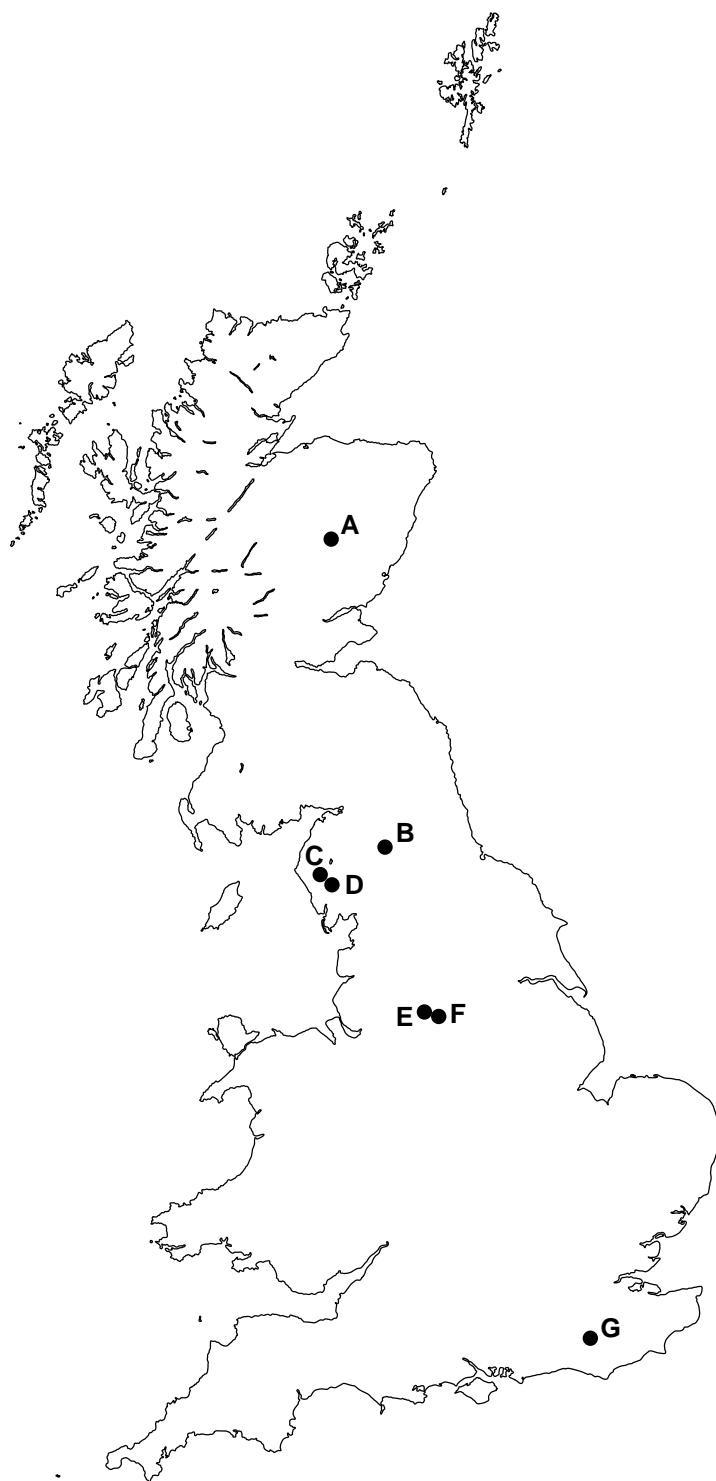
654 Figure 3. Time trends of geochemically active metal concentrations (mol m^{-2}) in TG
655 catchment soils (left hand plots) and HR catchment soils (right hand plots). Points represent
656 individual determinations of geochemically active metal pools. Lines represent IDMM
657 simulations. Thin solid lines: simulations using transfer function set A; thin dashed lines:
658 simulations made transfer function set B.

659 Figure 4. Time trends of geochemically active metal concentrations (mol m^{-2}) in HR
660 catchment soils, with and without the consideration of local deposition and using transfer
661 function set A. Points represent individual determinations of geochemically active metal
662 pools. Lines represent IDMM simulations. Thin solid lines: including national/regional
663 deposition only; dashed lines: simulations including national/regional and local deposition.
664 All simulations use the UK soils transfer function.

665 Figure 5. Comparison between mean observed and simulated soil metal pools (mmol m^{-2})
666 when using transfer function set A. Solid points represent blind predictions, open points
667 represent fits obtained by optimisation of the constant term in the transfer function.

668 Figure 6. Comparison between mean observed and simulated soil metal pools (mmol m^{-2})
669 when using transfer function set B. Solid points represent blind predictions, open points
670 represent fits obtained by optimisation of the constant term in the transfer function.

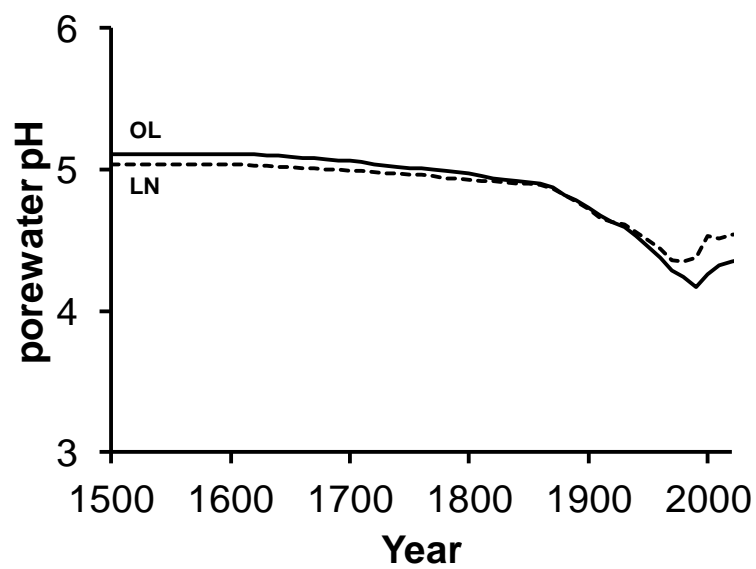
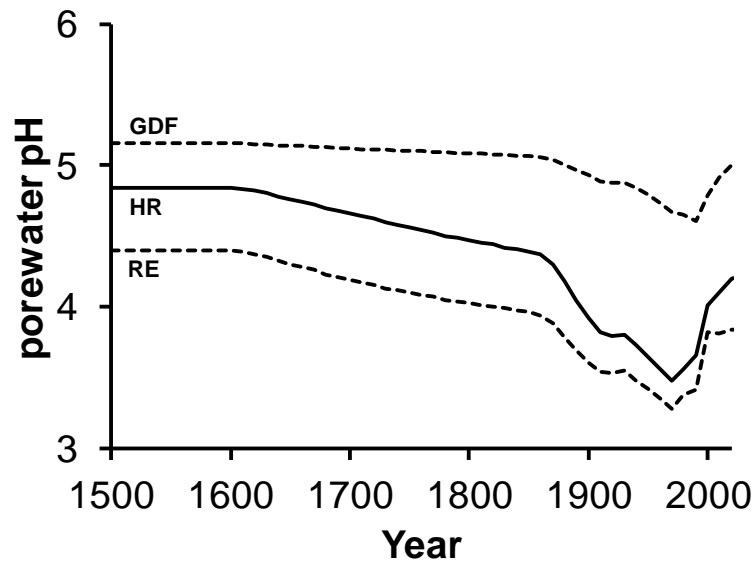
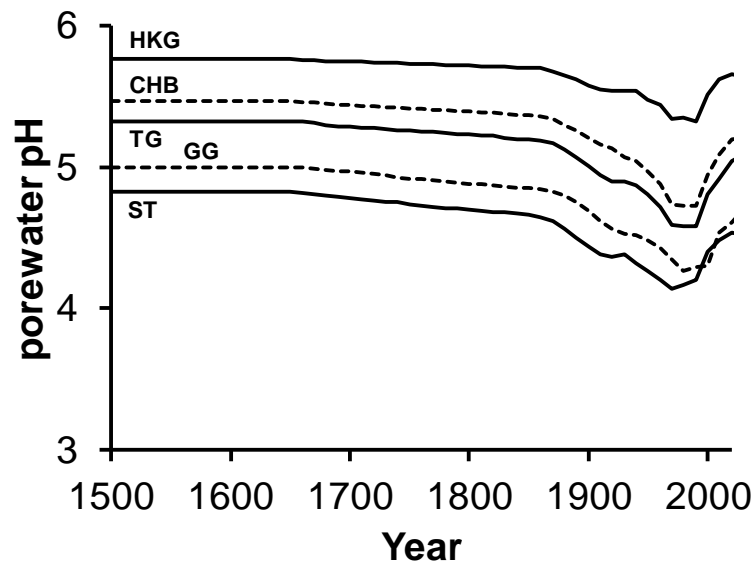
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673 Figure 1.

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676 Figure 2.

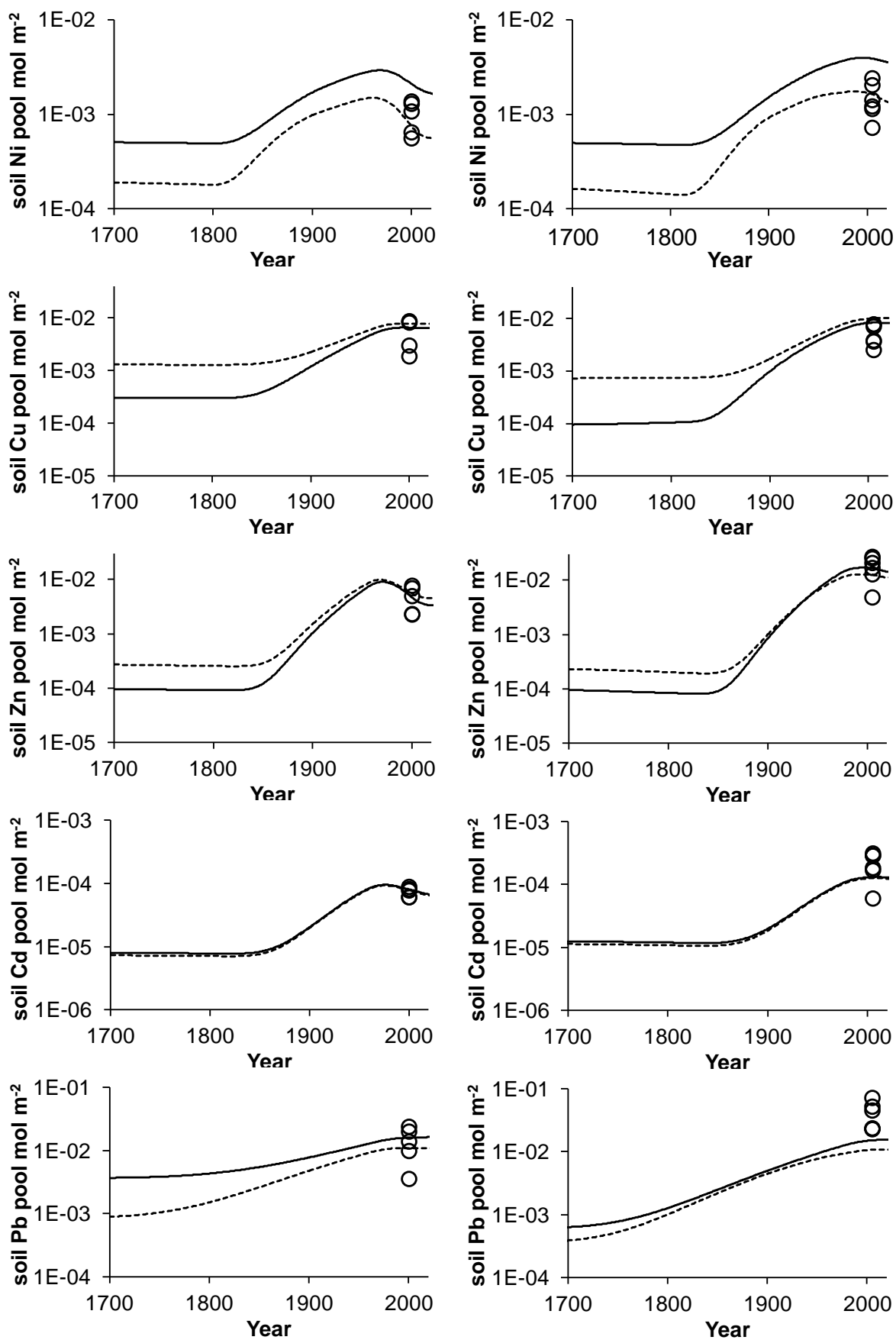
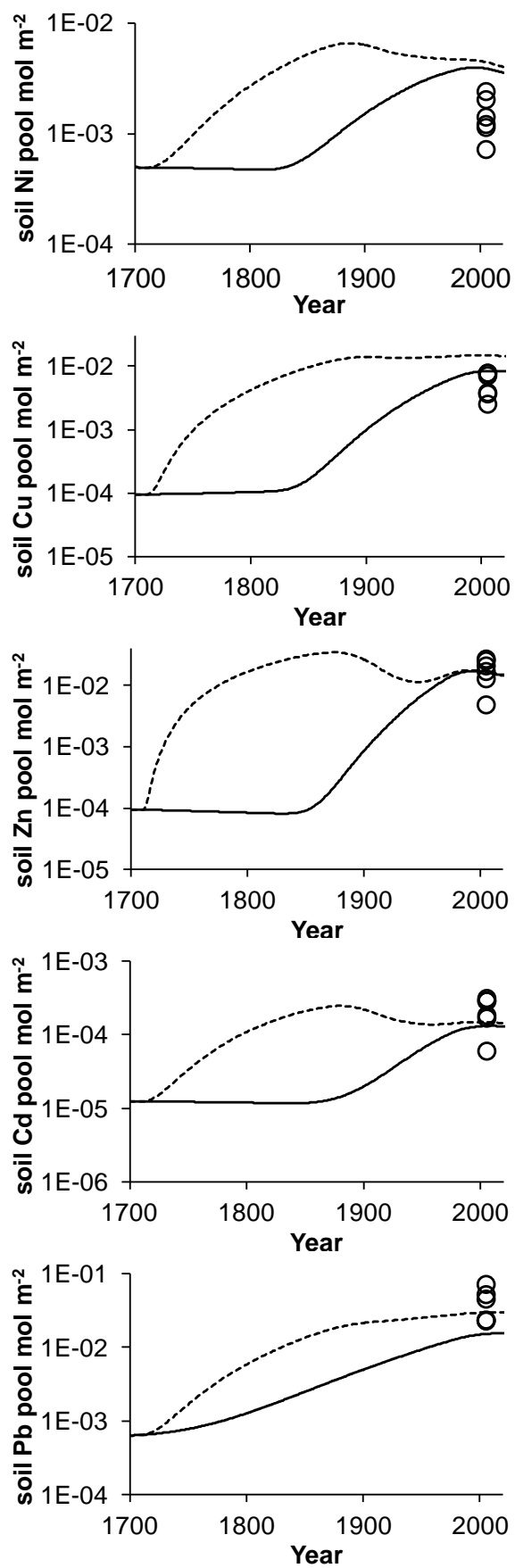


Figure 3.



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680 Figure 4.

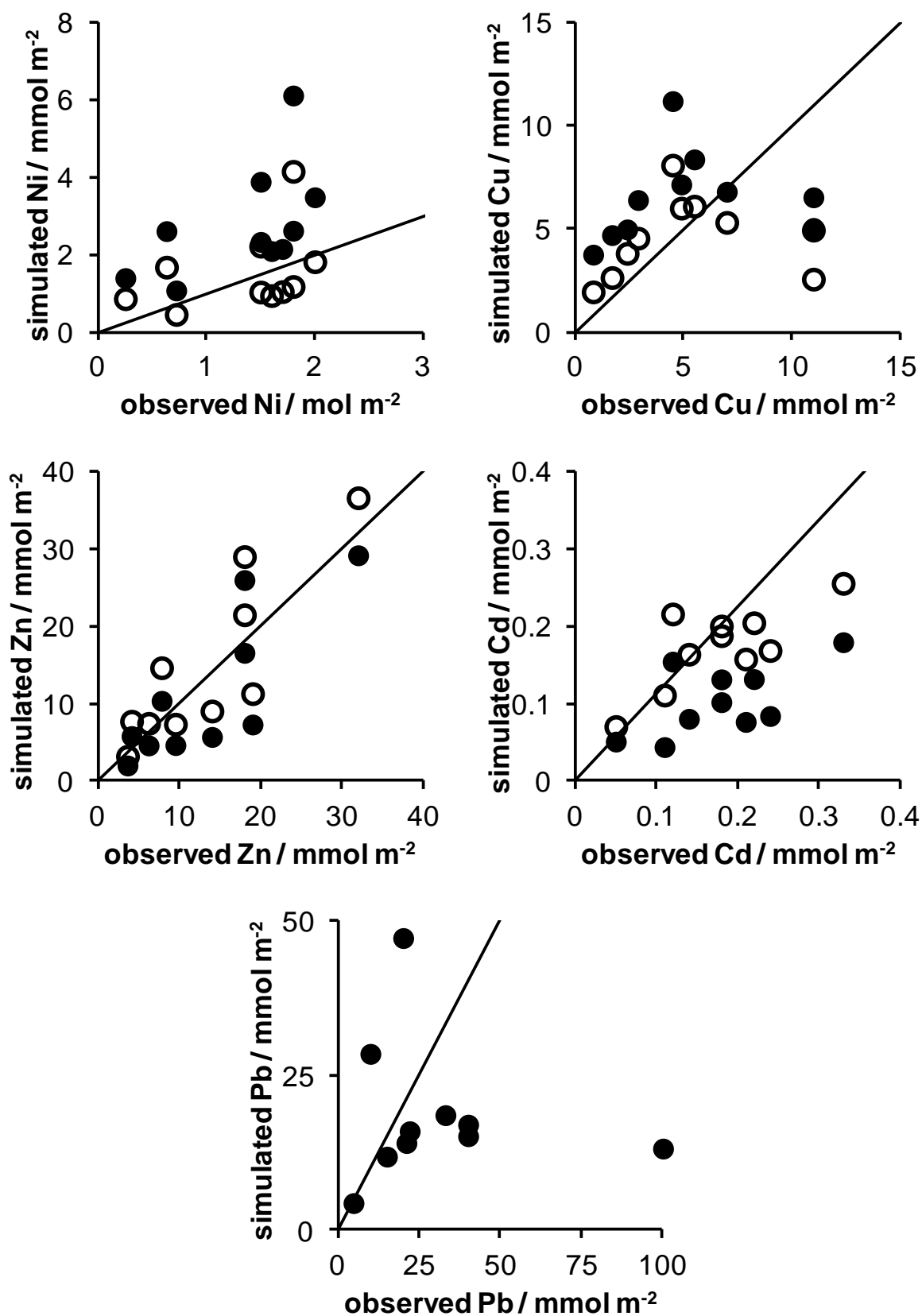


Figure 5.

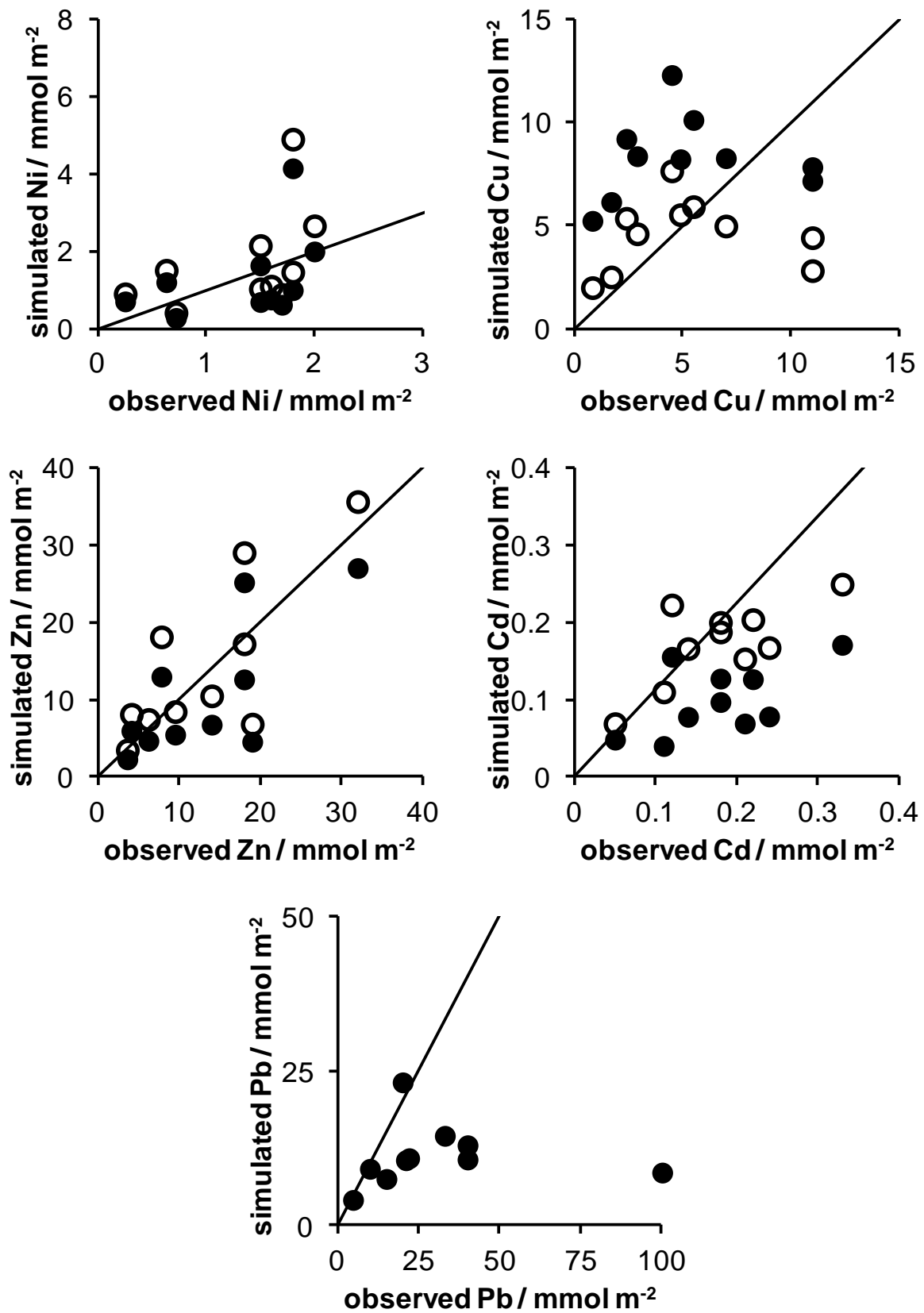


Figure 6.