

# REPORT NO. 3982

# **RISK ASSESSMENT OF SEDIMENT DISPLACED IN THE WAITANGI CATCHMENT FOLLOWING CYCLONE GABRIELLE**

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# **RISK ASSESSMENT OF SEDIMENT DISPLACED IN THE WAITANGI CATCHMENT FOLLOWING CYCLONE GABRIELLE**

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# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In February 2023, the Hawke's Bay Region was heavily impacted by Cyclone Gabrielle, experiencing intense weather conditions with more than 180 mm of rainfall in a day. Rivers and streams surged beyond their banks, carrying significant amounts of sediment in their flow. The suburb of Awatoto, south of Napier, where the sewage treatment plant and a variety of industries are located, was heavily impacted, and contaminants were potentially spread across the land.

The aim of this study was to investigate the risk of displaced sediments that were deposited throughout the Waitangi catchment, south of Napier City, using a combination bioassays and chemical analysis. Sediment samples were collected from three locations between the coastline and Waitangi Stream (Sites 4679, 4680 and 4681, from north to south), and toxicity was assessed using a series of bioassays. Chemicals present in the samples were subjected to targeted analysis for specific analytes and a more rapid comprehensive chemical analysis method based on an automated identification and quantification system linked to a database. The toxicity of sediments was assessed on chemical extracts or elutriates with four different bioassays. The yeast two-hybrid assays provide insights into the presence of organic chemicals, including dioxin-like chemicals. The Microtox® and blue mussel embrvo-larval development assays provide indication on the general toxicity of the extracts to bacteria and invertebrates.

The *in vitro* assay (yeast two-hybrid), with the human ligand-activated transcription factors involved in xenobiotic metabolism, detected high activity levels in two of the three samples  $(4679$  and  $4681)$ . The Microtox<sup>®</sup> and blue mussel embryo-larval development (survival) bioassays detected significant inhibitory activities for samples 4679 and 4680.

The targeted and comprehensive analyses both detected the presence of insecticides in sediments.

The most toxic sediment elutriate was found at the site 4679 with the blue mussel test, but variation in pH could have been a confounding factor affecting the survival of the embryos.

Overall, the results from this study suggest that the toxicity and chemicals detected are what would be expected from a typical agricultural soil. The risk posed by the displaced sediment in the Waitangi catchment can be considered low. Nonetheless, some caution is warranted for handling and disposing of the sediment material.

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# <span id="page-8-0"></span>**1. INTRODUCTION**

On 14 February 2023, Tropical Cyclone Gabrielle impacted Hawke's Bay Region, depositing more than 180 mm of rainfall in a day at Napier's Hawke's Bay Airport (Figure 1) and generating strong winds, resulting in widespread damage and flooding. Rivers burst their banks, flooding homes and businesses. The Awatoto suburb south of Napier City was completely inundated, including the wastewater treatment plant, the surrounding industrial area (Napier City Council 2023) and the Waitangi Stream catchment (Figure 2), and contaminants were potentially spread across the land.



<span id="page-8-1"></span>Figure 1. Daily precipitation at Hawke's Bay Airport from January to the end of February 2023. Data source: National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research.





<span id="page-9-0"></span>Figure 2. Before (A) and after (B) Cyclone Gabrielle hit the Awatoto suburb of Napier in the vicinity of Waitangi Stream. Imagery source: Toitū Te Whenua – Land Information New Zealand. **B**

There were concerns over the potential risk posed by the silt and sediment that were displaced and covered the Waitangi Stream during the cyclone event. Staff from Hawke's Bay Regional Council (HBRC) contracted Cawthron Institute (Cawthron) to conduct an investigation to assess the risk of contamination associated with the displaced sediment.

<span id="page-10-0"></span>The aims of this study were to assess the toxicity of sediment samples from the Waitangi Stream to provide an indication of chemical contamination and using a series of bioassays. Chemical contamination was assessed using a rapid comprehensive chemical analysis method and a targeted chemical analysis. For bioassays, we used bacteria and mussel embryo development standard tests to assess the general toxicity of the sediment samples. Two yeast-based assays were used to determine the presence of chemicals commonly found in urban environments based on their biological activities. The aryl hydrocarbon receptor (AhR) and the constitutive androstane receptor (CAR) are ligand-activated transcription factors involved in xenobiotic metabolism. Dioxin-like compounds are the ligands of the AhR and include molecules such as polychlorinated dibenzo-p-dioxins (PCDDs), polychlorinated dibenzofurans (PCDFs), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs). CAR has a low specificity for ligands and is implicated in hepatic detoxification of endogenous molecules, xenobiotics and environmental contaminants. Both AhR and CAR yeast assays have detected these biological activities for many chemicals (Kamata et al. 2018; Shiraishi et al. 2018).

# **2. MATERIAL AND METHODS**

## <span id="page-11-0"></span>**2.1. Sediment sampling**

Sediment samples were collected by HBRC staff on 13 May 2023 at three locations (Figure 3):

- Waitangi Stream opposite 32 Waitangi Road (Site 4679) (latitude -39.54070, longitude 176.91752)
- Waitangi Stream D/S BioRich driveway (Site 4680) (latitude -39.55579, longitude 176.92030)
- Waitangi Stream D/S stopbank receiving environment (Site 4681) (latitude -39.55939, longitude 176.92128).



<span id="page-11-1"></span>Figure 3. Sediment sampling sites in the Awatoto suburb south of Napier City in Hawke's Bay.

The sediment samples were double-bagged and kept refrigerated at 4 °C until they were sent to Cawthron, where they were received on 20 May 2023 and stored in the dark at 4 °C until use.

## <span id="page-12-0"></span>**2.2. Toxicity testing**

## <span id="page-12-1"></span>**2.2.1. Elutriates and sediment extract preparations**

Sediment samples were mixed with the dilution water corresponding to each test at a ratio of 1:4 sediment:dilution water (ASTM International 2014). Two water types – including a solution of 2% sodium chloride (NaCl) filtered at 0.22  $\mu$ m and reconstituted seawater filtered at 0.45  $\mu$ m – were used to dilute the test solutions for the Microtox® and the blue mussel embryo-larval tests, respectively.

The mixture of sediment / diluent was mixed in a rotating block for 1 hour in the dark at 4 °C. It was then centrifuged for  $2 \times 3$  minutes at 1,500 g to achieve a clear supernatant without any coloration or obvious suspended particles. The alternative method of letting sediment settle to achieve a clear supernatant took too long (> 1 hour), likely due to the fine silt.

Supernatants were then used immediately to generate the dilution series for the assays with their respective diluents. Tests were carried out within 1–4 hours after elutriates were prepared. Elutriates were diluted two-fold to a range of concentrations (Table 4).

For the non-targeted chemical analysis, 20 g of sediment (wet weight) sample was first extracted with 20 mL of acetone by shaking and sonication for 10 minutes. It was further extracted with a 20 mL solution of acetone and dichloromethane (DCM) (1:1) using the same method, and the resulting extracts were then combined (40 mL in total). Of the total 40 mL, a volume of 20 mL consisting of 5 mL of DCM and 15 mL of acetone was used as the analysis sample. Then, 100 mL of pure water and 3 g of NaCl were added to 20 mL volume, and 5 mL of DCM was recovered after shaking at 2,700 rpm for 10 minutes. The DCM was dried under a nitrogen stream and redissolved in 1 mL n-hexane. The internal standard (10 μL) for NAGINATA was added to a 100 μL sample to prepare a sample for AIQS-GC analysis (Omagari et al. 2022). NAGINATA is one of the software of AIQS-GC (Nishikawa Keisoku Co., Ltd) that can identify and quantify chemicals using AIQS-database.

In parallel, moisture content of the sediment samples was determined following a recognised standard protocol (ASTM International 1998), where a known weight of sediment was dried at 105 °C until constant weight was reached to estimate dry weight.

## <span id="page-13-0"></span>**2.2.2. Assays**

The potential sediment toxicity was assessed using a combination of *in vitro* and whole organism assays. The *in vitro* assays provide insights into the presence and bioavailability of chemical contamination that was translocated in the soil during the flood event, while the whole organisms' assays provide a general toxicity indication of the contaminants from the sediments that could be resuspended in water

## **In vitro yeast two-hybrid assay**

Yeast two-hybrid (Y2H) assays with yeast cells (*Saccharomyces cerevisiae* Y190) incorporating human CAR and AhR were previously developed and described (Shiraishi et al. 2000; Kamata et al. 2018). CAR and AhR are ligand-activated transcription factors involved in xenobiotic metabolism. Y2H is a genetically modified assay incorporating the chemiluminescent reporter gene (for β-galactosidase) as a marker of activity in 96-well culture plates.

#### **CAR binding assay**

Yeast cells were pre-incubated at 30 °C for 24 hours with shaking in the medium (Table 1), and the cell density was adjusted to an absorbance of 1.75–1.85 at 595 nm. The medium ( $60 \mu L$ ) was added to each well of the first row of a black 96-well culture plate for chemiluminescence measurement.

The medium ( $60 \mu L$ ) was added to the wells in all cells. Sediment extracts (in DMSO, 20  $\mu$ L) were added to the medium (480  $\mu$ L), and aliquots of this mixture (60  $\mu$ L) were also added to the wells of the first row of the plate. The test solution was serially diluted from rows 1–7 (each 2), then the yeast cell suspension (60  $\mu$ L) was added to each well (including those in row 8, which served as the blank control).

After adding the yeast suspension and vortexing, the plates were incubated at 30 °C under high humidity for 4 hours. Next, 50 µL of lysis solution (zymolyase 100T/Z buffer [2.9 mg/10 mL]) was added to each well, mixed and left at 37 °C for 1 hour. The solution (80 μL) for inducing chemiluminescence from released β-galactosidase, consisting of a reaction buffer (Table 2) containing enhancer (Sapphire-II, Applied Biosystems, Japan) and substrate (Galacton-Star, Applied Biosystems, Japan), was added to each well. The plate was incubated on a hotplate set at 30 °C for 10 minutes and then placed in a 96-well plate luminometer (Luminescencer JNRAB2100, Atto Corporation, Tokyo, Japan). Agonist activity was evaluated as  $EC_{x10}$ , defined as the concentration of test solution producing a chemiluminescent signal 10 times that of the solvent control. 4-tertoctyl-phenol (4op) was used in the positive control of the Y2H for CAR. The sample's activity was calculated by converting it into each positive control equivalent concentration, compared with the 4op activity on that day. The activity was calculated as wet weight (ww) and converted to dry weight (dw) using the moisture content of each sediment sample.

## **AhR binding assay**

Yeast cells for AhR were pre-incubated with shaking for 24 hours at 30 °C in medium (Table 1) supplemented at 1% with filter-sterilised leucine aqueous solution (1.76 mg/100 mL).

After measuring the cell density of the bacteria at 595 nm, the yeast suspension was centrifuged to precipitate it and the supernatant was decanted. Cell density was adjusted to an absorbance of 1.75–1.85 using the reaction solution medium (Table 2).

The next stage in the procedure was similar to that applied for CAR. Final composition of the medium for the assay is reported in Table 3.

AhR activity values were calculated using β-naphthoflavone (βna) as a positive control.



<span id="page-14-0"></span>Table 1. Composition of medium for pre-incubation and CAR final assay.

<span id="page-14-1"></span>Table 2. Components of the reaction solution.



<span id="page-15-0"></span>Table 3. Composition of medium for AhR final assay.



## **Microtox® (Aliivibrio fischeri ) bioluminescence inhibition**

Microtox® determines the acute toxicity of aqueous solutions by measuring the changes of light naturally produced by the bioluminescent bacterium *Aliivibrio fischeri* under standard conditions when exposed to a test sample (Johnson 2005). The test was conducted according to the relevant International Organization for Standardization standard (ISO 1999). Briefly, freeze-dried bacteria in a vial were revived in a 5 °C aqueous suspension and added at 1% in the test solution. Luminescence in test samples was measured after 5, 15 and 30 minutes at 15 °C, with the measured effect, light reduction, relating to the control. A summary of the test conditions is presented in Table 4.

## **Blue mussel (Mytilus galloprovincialis) embryo-larval development / survival**

Adult blue mussels were collected from Pelorus Sound / Te Hoiere. Animals were kept in a recirculatory system at 13 °C until use. The test was conducted according to the ASTM standard (ASTM International 2021). A summary of the test conditions is presented in Table 4.

The survival of mussel larvae was determined by the yield of normal D-larvae characterised under the microscope. The number of abnormal D-larvae in a test solution provides an indication of embryo toxicity in early life stage development. Survival at each concentration is compared to survival in the control to assess the ecotoxicological parameters (10%, 25% and median lethal concentration).



<span id="page-16-2"></span>Table 4. Summary of test conditions for Microtox® and blue mussel embryo-larval bioassays.

## <span id="page-16-0"></span>**2.3. Chemical analysis**

#### <span id="page-16-1"></span>**2.3.1. Rapid comprehensive chemical analysis**

Sediment extracts from each sediment sample were analysed using AIQS-GC methods as previously described (Omagari et al. 2022). Information on retention times (RTs), retention indexes (RIs), mass spectra and calibration curves were registered in the AIQS database (AIQS-DB). A chemical was identified by comparing RTs or RIs and the mass spectrum in the sample with the AIQS-DB. The chemical analyses

presented here used AIQS-GC for the identification of each chemical in the environmental sample.

Chemicals identified in the AIQS-GC were allocated between one and five stars based on the identification accuracy using the star-based scoring conditions presented in Table 5. Target concentrations below the method of detection limits were treated as zero.

<span id="page-17-2"></span>Table 5. Conditions of scoring in AIQS-GC. The number of asterisks (\*) indicates the accuracy of  $identification. RI = retention index; MS hit rate = similarity of MS spectrum between$ AIQS-DB and samples; QT ratio = qualifier ion / target ion. These are calculated from the difference between actual results in the sample and predicted results in AIQS-DB. When the targets are evaluated for scoring, the ignored index is not considered.



## <span id="page-17-0"></span>**2.3.2. Targeted chemical analysis**

Sediments collected by HBRC staff were sent to Hills Laboratory Ltd for analysis for a suite of metals and metalloids, and an extensive suite of organic chemicals (heavy metals, pesticides, polychlorobiphenyls, ethers, hydrocarbons (polycyclic aromatic and total petroleum), phenols, plasticisers and halogenated compounds. Details are provided in Appendix 1. For the organic chemicals, results of measured concentrations in sediment samples were normalised to 1% total organic carbon to allow comparison with the available default guideline values (ANZG 2018).

## <span id="page-17-1"></span>**2.4. Statistical analysis**

Model-based ecotoxicological parameters  $(LC_{10}$  and  $LC_{50}$  with associated 95% confidence intervals (CI), and no effect (significant) concentration (N(S)EC) were calculated using R (R Core Team 2023) with the drc (Ritz et al. 2015) and bayesnec (Fisher et al. 2023) packages, respectively. Hypothesis testing (no effect and lowest effect observed concentrations (NOEC and LOEC) (at level of statistical significance of *P* < 0.05) were determined with the Statistica software (TIBCO Software Inc., 2020).

## <span id="page-18-0"></span>**3. RESULTS**

The sediment samples were homogenous in colour and texture. They can be classified as 'mud' (mix of silt and clay, with a majority of sediment grain size < 63 µm – see Appendix 1; Valentine 2019). No dark colour, which is typically characteristic of anoxic conditions, was observed. Moisture content of the three sediment samples used for bioassays was 47%, 43% and 47% for 4679, 4680 and 4681, respectively (similar to the dry matter reported in Appendix 1).

## <span id="page-18-1"></span>**3.1. AhR and CAR**

The results from the AhR and CAR binding activity using Y2H reporter gene assays are summarised in Table 6. AhR- and CAR-mediated activities were detected in all sediment sample extracts tested. The AhR activities were higher than those reported for sediment samples displaced by floods caused by Typhoon Hagibis in Japan in October 2019 (Omagari et al. 2022). The CAR activities detected were also higher than those reported for the sediment samples from Typhoon Hagibis, indicating the presence of 4-tertoctyl-phenol-type substances.

<span id="page-18-3"></span>



## <span id="page-18-2"></span>**3.2. Microtox®**

Results of the Microtox® test are presented in Figure 4, with raw data reported in Appendix 3. Only measurements after 15 minutes of exposure are shown in the figure as these best represent the trend. Measurements after 5 minutes and 30 minutes are reported in Appendix 3. Elutriates from sediment samples from Site 4679 and Site 4680 inhibited light emission in bacteria at lowest concentration but stimulated it at the highest concentration. Elutriate from sediment samples from Site 4681 showed stimulation of light emission from the bacteria at all concentrations. No significant toxicity of the elutriates was detected (*P* < 0.05).



<span id="page-19-1"></span>Figure 4. Mean effect  $(\pm$  standard deviation) on bacterial luminescence of the three tested elutriates.

## <span id="page-19-0"></span>**3.3. Blue mussel embryo-larval development assay**

The conditions of the assays (salinity, oxygen saturation, dissolved oxygen concentration [DO], pH) were measured at the highest elutriate concentrations and are presented in Appendix 4 (Table A4.1). The survival of larvae in the controls was below the required 60%, and therefore did not comply with test validity requirements. Sensitivity of test, assessed with the response to the reference toxicant (0.148  $(0.144-0.153)$  mg Zn<sup>2+</sup>/L), was within the required limits of  $\pm 2$  standard deviations of historical data ( $[0.115-0.233]$  mg  $Zn^{2+}/L$ ,  $n = 8$ ). In this case, the ecotoxicity parameters can be misestimated, but they still can allow comparison between the effects of the elutriates.

Blue mussel larvae survival in relation to elutriate concentration is reported in Figure 5. Ecotoxicity parameters are reported in Table 7. The ecotoxicity parameters associated with sediment elutriate from Site 4679 were the lowest compared to the two other sites, indicating the strongest toxic effects on mussel larvae development. The sediment elutriate with the least toxicity was from Site 4681; this had the highest ecotoxicity parameters, indicating the least impact on mussel larvae development. The sediment elutriate from Site 4680 had an intermediate impact. The raw data for the embryo-larval development assay are reported in Appendix 4 (Table A4.2).



- <span id="page-20-2"></span>Figure 5. Mean and standard deviation (whiskers) of the blue mussel larvae survival (D-yield) in the range of concentration of elutriates from the three sediment samples (a same letter indicates a statistical non-significance, *P* < 0.05).
- <span id="page-20-3"></span>Table 7. Ecotoxicity parameters for the blue mussel 48-hour embryo-larval development assay after exposure to the elutriates of the three sediment samples.



## <span id="page-20-0"></span>**3.4. Chemical analysis**

#### <span id="page-20-1"></span>**3.4.1. Rapid comprehensive chemical analysis**

The number of compounds detected in sediment extracts were 52, 46 and 55 for the samples from Sites 4679, 4680 and 4681, respectively. Details of the detected compounds are presented in Appendix 2. The most abundant chemicals found in the three sediment extracts were phytosterols, sterols and 'paraffins' (Figure 6). Sterols found were cholesterol and its metabolites. 'Paraffins' are long carbon chains and can be found in oil, lubricant, fuel and plant products. The extract from Site 4679 showed the highest concentration of pesticides, or chemicals used in the manufacture / formulation of pesticides and sterols. The extract from Site 4680 showed the highest

concentration of phytosterol. The extract from Site 4681 had the highest concentration of flame retardants, PAHs, plasticisers, stabilisers and plant products (Figure 6). The rapid comprehensive chemical analysis detected the presence of DDT metabolites at highest concentrations in Site 4681, followed by Site 4680. The lowest concentrations were found in the Site 4679 sample extract.



<span id="page-21-1"></span>Figure 6. Main categories of chemicals detected and their relative abundances in the three sediment extracts.

## <span id="page-21-0"></span>**3.4.2. Targeted analysis**

Full details of the detected compounds and their concentrations are presented in Appendix 1. Metal and metalloid concentrations in sediments were all below the Australia and New Zealand default guideline values (DGVs) for sediment (ANZG 2018) (Table 8). The total organic carbon content in sediments was 1.82%, 1.45% and 2.4% for the samples from Sites 4679, 4680 and 4681, respectively. A limited number of organic chemicals (DDT and its metabolites, bifenthrin and dieldrin) were detected. Their concentrations were normalised to a carbon content of sample to 1% for comparison against the DGVs. The chemicals and their concentrations are reported in Table 9, along with the related DGVs. Site 4680 had the highest concentration of DDT metabolites (DDD and DDE) above the DGV high. Site 4679 had the lowest concentration of DDT and metabolites (only the DDE concentration was above DGV).

Site 4680 was intermediate. Bifenthrin was detected above the Environmental Quality Standards for Priority Substances under the European Water Framework Directive (SCHEER 2022) (no Australia and New Zealand DGV available) for Site 4679 and, at a lesser concentration, at Site 4681.

<span id="page-22-0"></span>Table 8. Concentrations of total recoverable metals and metalloids (mg/kg dry weight) in the three sediment samples and their related default guideline values (DGVs).



<span id="page-22-1"></span>Table 9. Measured (Meas.) and normalised (Norm.) (at 1% TOC; Norm.) concentrations of organic contaminants ( $\mu$ g/kg dry weight) detected in the three sediment samples, and their related default guideline values (DGVs).



Numbers in bold indicate concentration value above DGV – comparisons with DGV are made with the normalised concentration value at 1% TOC.

# <span id="page-23-0"></span>**4. DISCUSSION**

In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of severe weather events globally that can result in the remobilisation of pollutants (Crawford et al. 2022). Flood events can redistribute sediment-bound chemicals, and robust risk assessment processes are required to inform communities and develop effective remediation management actions. The approach of this study to characterise the risk of the relocated sediment in the Waitangi catchment has been used successfully to assess the risk of the aftermath of Typhoon Hagibis in Japan (Omagari et al. 2022). The combination of bioassays and chemical analysis can characterise the toxicity and identify the likely chemicals responsible for the biological activities.

The Microtox® and mussel embryo-larval development assays provide insights into the general toxicity of a sample. The AhR and CAR binding assays provide more specific information about the presence of chemicals with specific mechanisms of toxicity through binding to these receptors. The Microtox® results suggest low overall toxicity in the elutriates from the three sediment samples. Elutriates from sediments from Site 4679 and Site 4680 were slightly toxic, while those from Site 4681 stimulated bacterial growth and therefore may have contained nutrients beneficial to *Aliivibrio fischeri*. It has been reported that some substances can stimulate the growth of bacteria and modulate the response to toxicants (Cerro-Gálvez et al. 2019; Vila-Costa et al. 2019). The results of the mussel embryo-larval development assay agreed with the Microtox® results, with the elutriate from the Site 4681 sediment sample being the least toxic, followed by Site 4680 and with Site 4679 being the most toxic. It should be noted that pH values were lower at higher elutriate concentrations, which could be a confounding factor for the toxicity observed in the embryo-larval test. The sediment elutriate dilutions for which the pH fell below 7 were 25%, 50% and 100% for the elutriates from Site 4679, 4680 and 4681 sediment samples, respectively.

The AhR- and CAR-mediated activities were the highest in the sediment sample from Site 4681, followed by that from Site 4679. This finding was opposite to the results from the Microtox® and mussel embryo-larval development assays, where the Site 4681 sample had the lowest toxicity. It is important to note that the yeast tests were carried out on chemically extracted sediment samples, which means that they contained hydrophobic chemicals that are likely absent from the elutriate samples. As such, they complement the results obtained from the tested elutriates, which provide insights into the more water-soluble chemicals present in the sediment. The results mean that there are more toxic hydrophobic chemicals that can bind to the AhR receptor in samples from Sites 4679 and 4681 compared to the Site 4680 sample.

The chemical analysis detected low DDT concentrations in the sediment samples but some of its metabolites were high (above DGVs; Table 9). This suggests a historical contamination, where legacy DDT has degraded. It has been reported that agricultural soils in Aotearoa New Zealand where DDT was applied to pasture contain persistent residues (Boul et al. 1994). The half-life of DDT in soil is 2–10 years, and DDD (dichlorodiphenyldichloroethane) and DDE (dichlorodiphenyldichloroethylene) are the two main metabolites resulting from its degradation (Boul 1995). DDT is primarily degraded to DDE by a dechlorination reaction, and DDE can further be degraded to DDD by another dechlorination reaction. DDE and DDD are less toxic than DDT but remain persistent in the environment (Corona-Cruz et al. 1999; Cutright and Erdem 2012).

Bifenthrin is the other pesticide that was measured in the sediment samples at concentrations above its DGV (Table 9). Bifenthrin is a pyrethroid insecticide that affects the nervous system of the insects it targets. It has a broad range of activities used against foliar pests, including Coleoptera, Diptera, Heteroptera, Lepidoptera, Homoptera and Orthoptera, among others. It is allowed for use, with controls, in Aotearoa New Zealand in various formulations<sup>2</sup> to control insects in commercial and residential applications. It has a moderate to high persistence in soil, with a half-life of 7 days to 8 months (Mukherjee et al. 2010).

<span id="page-24-0"></span>The most prevalent category of chemicals detected with the rapid comprehensive chemical analysis was the sterols, most of which have a plant origin (phystosterol). However, other sterols such as coprostanol, epicoprostanol, cholesterol, 3-cholestanone and cholestanol are of faecal origin (Islam et al. 2023) and found in mammalians (Prost et al. 2017). The other prevalent group detected by the rapid comprehensive chemical analysis was the alkanes ('paraffins'). The alkanes detected  $(C_{15}$  to  $C_{33}$ ) can either be produced by plants (Maffei et al. 2004) or from oil refining to make waxes, anticorrosive agents and lubricating oils (Morrison and Boyd 1992).

<sup>2</sup> New Zealand Environmental Protection Authority, HSNO application register[. https://epa.govt.nz/database](https://epa.govt.nz/database-search/approved-hazardous-substances-with-controls/DatabaseSearchForm/?SiteDatabaseSearchFilters=34&Keyword=bifenthrin&DatabaseType=AHSC)[search/approved-hazardous-substances-with](https://epa.govt.nz/database-search/approved-hazardous-substances-with-controls/DatabaseSearchForm/?SiteDatabaseSearchFilters=34&Keyword=bifenthrin&DatabaseType=AHSC)[controls/DatabaseSearchForm/?SiteDatabaseSearchFilters=34&Keyword=bifenthrin&DatabaseType=AHSC](https://epa.govt.nz/database-search/approved-hazardous-substances-with-controls/DatabaseSearchForm/?SiteDatabaseSearchFilters=34&Keyword=bifenthrin&DatabaseType=AHSC)

# **5. CONCLUSION**

Overall, the results from the toxicity bioassays did not suggest high risk in relation to the displaced sediment in the Waitangi catchment. We tested elutriates which are a complex mixture of chemicals that are water soluble and indicate bioavailability. The Microtox® bioassay results showed some bacterial growth stimulation which suggest that some components in the elutriate samples were beneficial nutrients. The most toxic sediment elutriate was found at the site 4679 with the blue mussel test, but the variation in pH could have been an influencing factor on the survival of the embryos. The yeast assays showed activities similar to what has been reported in Japan after the event of Typhoon Hagibis.

The rapid comprehensive chemical analysis is a qualitative method to provide information on the presence of molecules, while the targeted analysis allows the quantification, but only for the specific chemicals for which a reference is used. Both methods highlighted the presence of a historical contamination by DDT and its metabolites DDE and DDD. These chemicals can, in part, be contributing to the effects in the AhR bioassay. The concentrations of metals and metalloids tested were all below the Australia and New Zealand DGVs. There was also indication of mammalian faecal contamination, likely from farm animals.

<span id="page-25-0"></span>Overall, the results from this study suggest that the risk of the displaced sediment in the Waitangi catchment is low. However, some caution is warranted for handling and disposing of the sediment material.

## **6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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# <span id="page-29-0"></span>**8. APPENDICES**

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# <span id="page-29-1"></span>**Appendix 1. Targeted analysis**





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3280937.1

102127 - Waitangi Stream opposite 32 Waitangi Rd: 4679 18-May-2023 1:30 pm

Client Chromatogram for TPH by FID

#### **Analyst's Comments**

It has been noted that the System Monitoring Compounds 2-fluorophenol and phenol-d5 in the SVOC analysis on sample 3280937.3 had lower than expected recoveries. The recoveries were 38% and 38% respectively. Therefore the phenolic compounds may be underestimated.

The following table(s) gives a brief description of the methods used to conduct the analyses for this job. The detection limits given below are those attainable in a relatively simple matrix. Detection limits may be higher





These samples were collected by yourselves (or your agent) and analysed as received at the laboratory.

Testing was completed between 19-May-2023 and 17-Jul-2023. For completion dates of individual analyses please contact the laboratory.

Samples are held at the laboratory after reporting for a length of time based on the stability of the samples and analytes being tested (considering any<br>preservation used), and the storage space available. Once the storage

This certificate of analysis must not be reproduced, except in full, without the written consent of the signatory.

Ara Heron BSc (Tech) Client Services Manager - Environmental

# **Appendix 2. Rapid comprehensive chemical analysis**

Table A2.1.Concentration of the detected organic compounds by rapid comprehensive analysis in the three sediment samples collected.

<span id="page-39-0"></span>

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Source: National Center for Biotechnology Information. 2023. PubChem compound summary. [accessed July 2023]. [https://pubchem.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov](https://pubchem.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/)

# **Appendix 3. Microtox® raw data**

Table A3.1. Luminescence and gamma measured in the range of concentrations of the three sediment elutriates after 5, 15 and 30 minutes of exposure.

<span id="page-43-0"></span>



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I0: luminescence before sample I5, I15, I30: luminescence after 5, 15 and 30 min.

G5, G15, G30: 'gamma'



Figure A3.1. Dose-response of *Aliivibrio fischeri* to an increasing concentration of the reference toxicant.

# <span id="page-45-0"></span>**Appendix 4. Blue mussel embryo-larval development assay**

Table A4.1 Physico-chemical parameters of the control and the three sediment elutriate samples at the start of the exposure at the highest tested concentrations.









Figure A4.1 Dose-response (median, with quartiles and maximum / minimum) and fitted model (dashed line) of the blue mussel larvae survival in an increasing concentration of the reference toxicant.



# <span id="page-48-0"></span>**Appendix 5. Abbreviations and acronyms**

