

Metrological assessment of on-site geochemical monitoring methods within an aquifer applied to the detection of H₂ leakages from deep underground storages

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Presented at:



1. Context and research work objectives

The underground storage of hydrogen is being considered as a temporary storage solution for electrical energy. To manage potential risks due to H₂ leaks into the near-surface geosphere from H₂ underground storages (e.g. salt caverns, aquifer), reliable monitoring methods along with a precise knowledge of the geochemical environmental impacts are necessary. Thus, the evolution of some prominent parameters in soil and aquifers can be determined: gas concentrations, redox potential, ionic balance and trace elements.

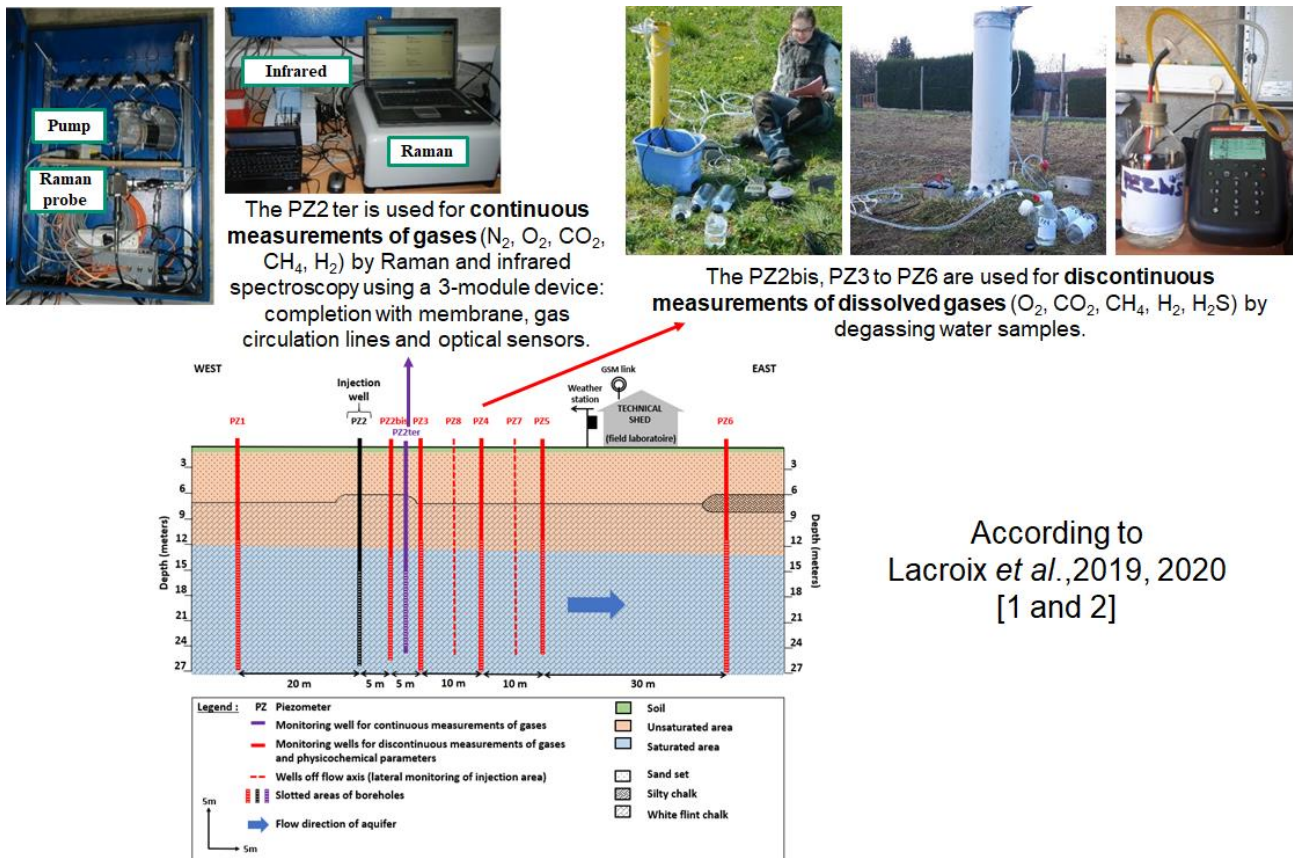
The Géodénergies "ROSTOCK'H" research project studies these risks by developing monitoring methods and characterizing potential impacts of H₂ leaks. A simulation of leak by dissolved H₂ injection into a water table in the Paris Basin was carried out.

2. Hydrogeochemical monitoring planned following the dissolved H₂ injection

Saturated area (S.A.)	
Effects of H ₂ arrival (leakage)	Sensors used and detection range
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase of [dissolved H₂] - Decrease of [dissolved O₂] (Berta <i>et al.</i> 2018). - Decrease of potential oxidation/reduction (Berta <i>et al.</i> 2018). - Increase of pH (Berta <i>et al.</i> 2018). - Reduction of nitrates to nitrite or to nitrogen or NH₄⁺ (Berta <i>et al.</i> 2018). - Reduction of sulfates to sulfites or H₂S (Bai <i>et al.</i> 2014, Berta <i>et al.</i> 2018, Truche <i>et al.</i> 2009). - Reduction of Fe (III) in Fe (II) (Truche <i>et al.</i> 2010). - Dissolution of metallic trace elements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2 probes AMT of AquaMS (0-2 mg/L of H_{2(aq)}) : [dissolved H₂] measurements. - 2 portable analyzers (0-1000 ppmv H_{2(aq)}) by partial degassing : [gas H₂] measurements. - Multiparameter physicochemical probes: 0-50 mg/L for [O_{2(aq)}], ± 2000 mV for redox, 0-14 of pH. - Laboratory analyzes of major, minor and trace ions.
Production/increase of [CH ₄] due to biotic interactions: 4H ₂ + CO ₂ = CH ₄ + 2H ₂ O (Berta <i>et al.</i> 2014, Berta <i>et al.</i> 2018, Ebigo <i>et al.</i> 2013, Tarkowski 2019, Toleukhanov <i>et al.</i> 2015).	
Other possible interactions such as acetogenesis (4H ₂ + 2CO ₂ = CH ₃ COOH + 2H ₂ O) and acetotrophy (CH ₃ COO ⁻ + H ⁺ = CH ₄ + 2H ₂ O) (Berta <i>et al.</i> 2018, Ebigo <i>et al.</i> 2013).	

According to Lacroix *et al.* 2019 [1].

The Ineris experimental site in Catenoy (Paris Basin) is used to test direct and indirect near-surface monitoring methods relating to dissolved H₂ [2]:



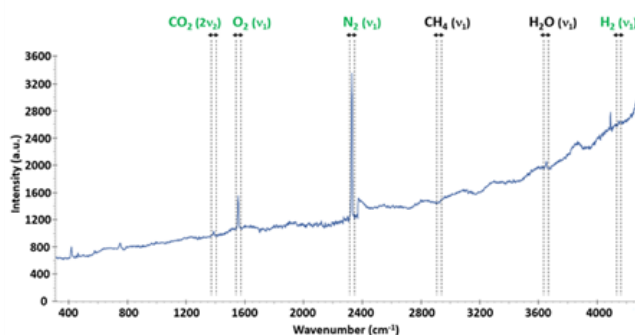
3. Geochemical baseline definition

⇒ **Physico-chemistry [1]:**

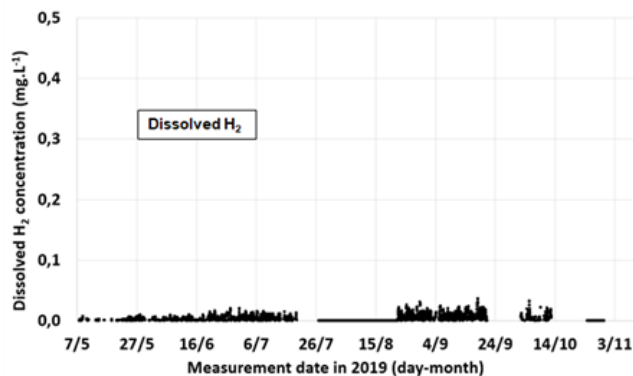
- pH of 7.3 ± 0.3 and temperature of $12.0 \pm 1.8^\circ\text{C}$
- electrical conductivity of $471 \pm 40 \mu\text{S/cm}$
- positive redox potential
- water of calcium-bicarbonate facies

⇒ **Baseline of dissolved gases acquired over 6 months (May-November 2019) [3]:**

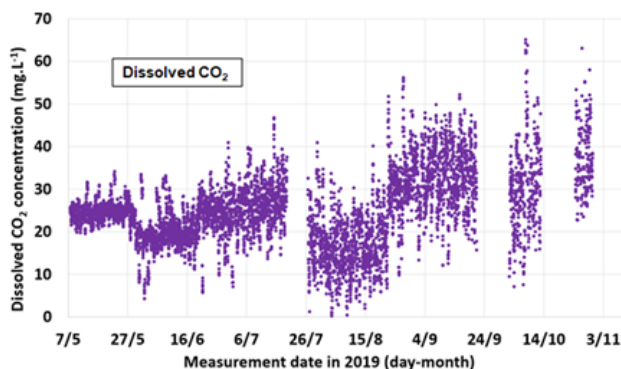
Statistical processing of **Raman** spectral data based on moving averages method (7966 spectra over 6 months)



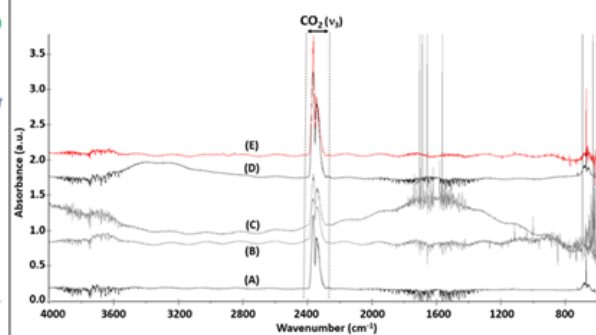
Average $[\text{N}_{2(\text{aq})}] \approx 17.0 \text{ mg.L}^{-1}$
 Average $[\text{O}_{2(\text{aq})}] \approx 7.6 \text{ mg.L}^{-1}$
 Average $[\text{H}_{2(\text{aq})}] \approx 0 \text{ mg.L}^{-1}$



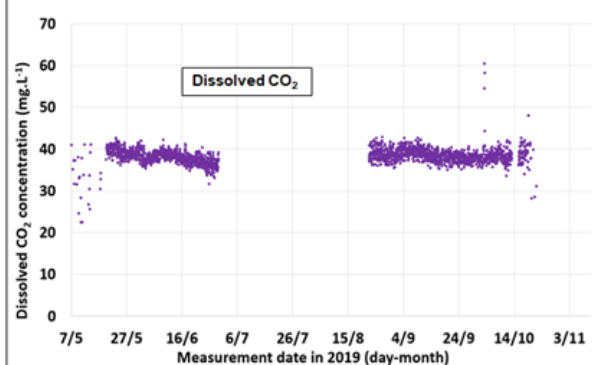
Average $[\text{CO}_{2(\text{aq})}] \approx 20\text{-}35 \text{ mg.L}^{-1}$



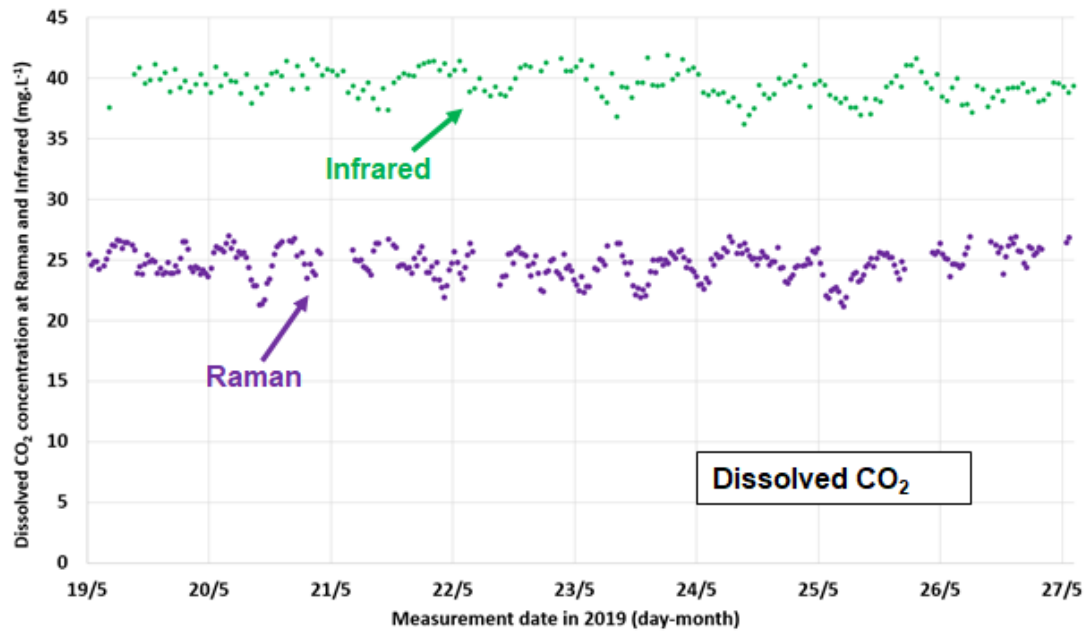
Infrared data processing by spectral profile analysis of ν₃ CO₂ band at 2400-2220 cm⁻¹. (3150 spectra over 6 months)



Average $[\text{CO}_{2(\text{aq})}] \approx 40 \text{ mg.L}^{-1}$



⇒ Combined Raman/Infrared metrology validated on site [3]:

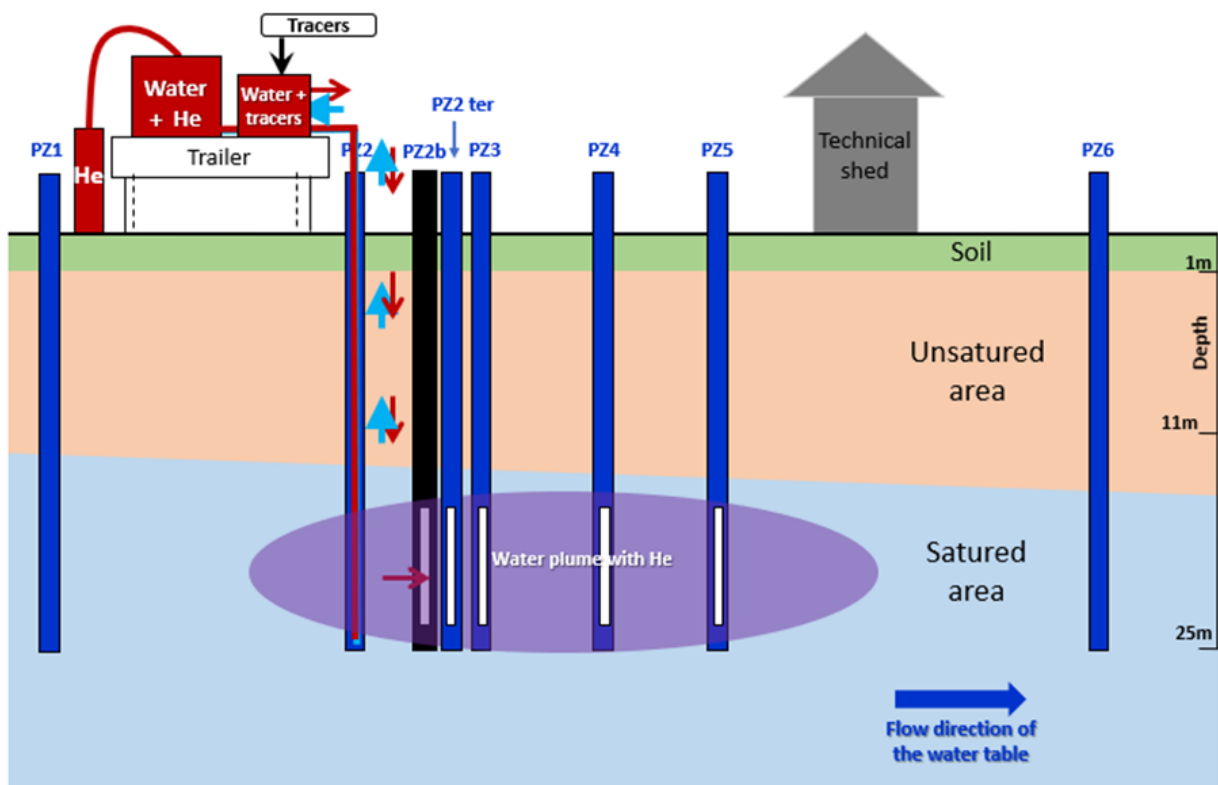


4. Protocol validation by preliminar injection of water saturated with He

⇒ He: gas with a physical behavior similar to that of H₂.

⇒ Validation of the experimental protocol for the future H₂ injection [4]:

The steps of this protocol are presented in the following figure and audio



- success of this injection experimental protocol with monitoring of the He plume migration in the water table and up to 20 m downstream.
- choice of 2 hydrogeological tracers among the 5 used during this preliminar injection (uranine and lithium).
- characterization of the 2 distinct hydrodynamic regimes linked to a matrix and a fissure porosities.
- protocol adaptability: change in the injection preparation and modification of the monitoring organization.

5. Leak simulation by dissolved H₂ injection

⇒ On-site layout:

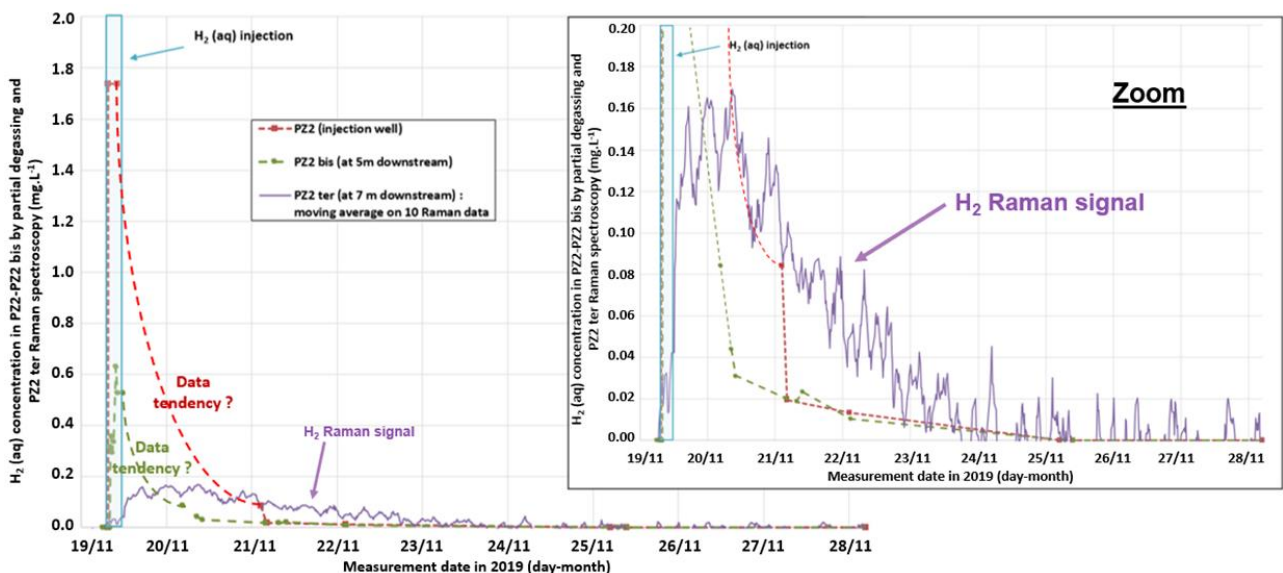


Panoramic view of the Catenoy site: over a W-E length of 80 m.

⇒ Dissolved H₂ transfer dynamics according to distance [2]:

- [H_{2(aq)}] max injected in the injection well (PZ2) is 1.78 mg.L⁻¹:

90% of theoretical saturation in 5m³ tank (after 16h of dissolution)



- 1114 Raman spectra acquired during the period following the H₂ injection from 19 to 30 November 2019.

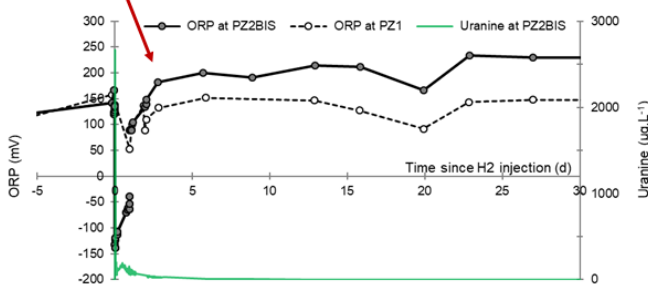
- Detection of $H_{2(aq)}$ up to 20 m downstream and at very low concentrations $1.8 \mu g.L^{-1}$

Piezometer	Distance from the injection well (m)	Breakthrough time after the start of the H_2 injection (hour)	$[H_{2(aq)}]_{max}$ detected
PZ1	-20	-	0 $mg.L^{-1}$ (DL of $H_{2(aq)}$ = 0,05 $\mu g.L^{-1}$)
PZ2	0	0	1,78 $mg.L^{-1}$
PZ2 bis	+5	2	0,6 $mg.L^{-1}$
PZ2 ter	+7	≈ 10 and during 19 hours	0,17 $mg.L^{-1}$
PZ3	+10	71	1,8 $\mu g.L^{-1}$
PZ4	+20	90	1,8 $\mu g.L^{-1}$
PZ5	+30	-	0 $\mu g.L^{-1}$ (DL of $H_{2(aq)}$ = 0,05 $\mu g.L^{-1}$)
PZ6	+60	-	0 $\mu g.L^{-1}$ (DL of $H_{2(aq)}$ = 0,05 $\mu g.L^{-1}$)

⇒ Behavior of Redox and dissolved O_2 in PZ2bis (5 m downstream) monitored over 1 month [5]:

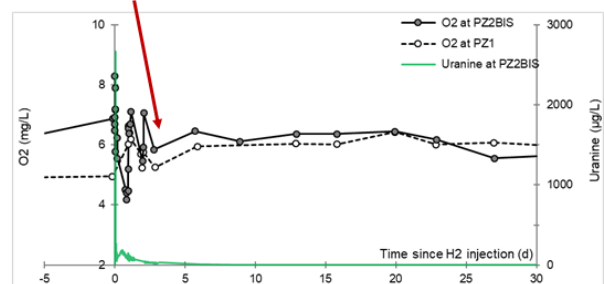
Redox evolution

Back to normal after 3 days following injection (similar to baseline)



Dissolved O_2 evolution

Back to normal after 3 days following injection (similar to baseline)



Conclusions

⇒ Successful of H_2 and other gases in-situ and continuous monitoring by Raman and FTIR spectroscopy:

- Conclusive results for the continuous monitoring of gases in aquifers by specific device (completion, gas circulation lines, optic sensors) over a long period of time.
- Very good sensitivity for the continuous detection of H_2 in aquifer ($<0.03 \text{ mg.L}^{-1}$).

⇒ Successful of H_2 monitoring by degassing water samples.

⇒ Under our experimental conditions, the physicochemical impact of a H_2 leak is moderate and $<10 \text{ m}$.

6. Scientific valuation of the project

[1] **Lacroix E.**, Lafortune S., De Donato P., Gombert P., Pokryszka Z., Rupasinghe S., Caumon M.-C. et Barrès O. (2019), *Développement d'outils de monitoring pour la surveillance des sites de stockage souterrain d'H₂ : premiers résultats de l'expérimentation de simulation de fuite à Catenoy (60)*. Poster presentation, colloque CNRS Miti « H₂ naturel », Paris, 10/10/2019.

[2] **Lacroix, E.**, Lafortune, S., De Donato, P., Gombert, P., Pokryszka, Z., Adélie, F., Caumon, M.-C., Barrès, O., and Rupasinghe, S. (2020), *Development of monitoring tools in soil and aquifer for underground H₂ storages and assessment of environmental impacts through an in-situ leakage simulation*, EGU General Assembly 2020, Online, 4–8 May 2020, EGU2020-17949, <https://doi.org/10.5194/egusphere-egu2020-17949>.

[3] **Lacroix E.**, de Donato P., Lafortune S., Caumon M.-C., Barres O., Derrien M., Piedevache M. and Liu X., *Metrological development based on in situ and continuous monitoring of dissolved gases in an aquifer: application to the geochemical baseline definition for hydrogen leakage survey*. Analytical Methods. To be submitted.

[4] Lafortune S., Gombert P., Pokryszka Z., **Lacroix E.**, de Donato P., Nevila Jozja N., (2020), *Monitoring Scheme for the Detection of Hydrogen Leakage from a Deep Underground Storage. Part 1: On-Site Validation of an Experimental Protocol via the Combined Injection of Helium and Tracers into an Aquifer*. Appl. Sci., 10, 6058, <https://doi.org/10.3390/app10176058>

[5] Gombert P., Lafortune S., Pokryszka Z., **Lacroix E.**, de Donato P., Jozja N. *Monitoring scheme for the detection of hydrogen leakage from a deep underground storage. Part 2: Chemico-physical impacts of hydrogen injection into a shallow chalky aquifer*. Appl. Sci. To be submitted.

Disclosures

Images are author's own unless otherwise stated.

The images and objects in videos as well as the texts/paragraphs are the property of Ineris and Lorraine's University.

Author Information

Presentation :

Elodie Lacroix is PhD student in geosciences in the field of geochemical monitoring methods for the risk prevention of a future underground gas storage. During this doctorate, she carried out my research work on two main geographical sites: (i) at Ineris (institute and experimental site belonging to it: Catenoy in Oise department, next to Paris) and (ii) at the University of Lorraine (Nancy).

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Abstract

To manage potential risks due to H₂ leaks into the near-surface geosphere from H₂ underground storages (e.g. salt caverns, aquifer), reliable monitoring methods along with a precise knowledge of the geochemical environmental impacts are necessary. Thus, the evolution of some prominent parameters in soil and aquifers can be determined: gas concentrations, redox potential, ionic balance and trace elements.

As part of the ROSTOCK'H project, Ineris simulated H₂ leakage by injection of dissolved H₂ into a shallow aquifer (~20 m deep) in an experimental site within the Paris basin. This experiment aimed to testing advanced monitoring techniques and studying hydrogeochemical impacts at shallow depths. The aquifer water has calcium-bicarbonate facies and a neutral pH. Eight piezometers were aligned over 80 m according to the aquifer main flow (west-east). Hydrogeochemical monitoring devices were set up. One of the piezometers was equipped with a completion connected to a Raman probe and a specific Mid-IR cell for continuous measurement of aqueous gases.

At the experiment outset, 5 m³ of water were extracted from the aquifer to be saturated with H₂ under atmospheric conditions, before being reinjected through the injection well. About 100 L^{STP} of dissolved H₂ (concentration of 1,8 mg/L) was injected in the aquifer. The H₂ injection was preceded by the injection of underground water containing tracers (He_(aq), uranine and LiCl) in order to warn the H₂ plume arrival in the piezometers located downstream of the injection well. The concentrations of aqueous gases (He, H₂, N₂, O₂, CO₂, H₂S and CH₄) were measured in a control piezometer (20 m upstream) and in six piezometers up to 60 m downstream. Thus, the maximum H₂ contents were detected up to 20 m downstream of the injection well: 0.6 mg/L at 5 m, 0.17 mg/L at 7 m then 1.8 µg/L of H₂ at 10 and 20 m during the first week. Following the H_{2(aq)} addition, the aquifer physico-chemistry has been modified: low increase in pH, high decrease in redox potential and O_{2(aq)}. These results confirm the feasibility of detecting and monitoring H₂ in shallow aquifers in very low concentration conditions and highlight the potential impacts. This is of first importance for establishing the surveillance and security aspects related to with H₂ storage.

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