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Distribution and enrichment of heavy metals in Sabratha coastal sediments, Mediterranean Sea, Libya

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Abstract

In order to assess heavy metal pollutants in Sabratha coastal sediments, Mediterranean Sea, Libya, 30 sediment samples were collected for Fe, Cu, Pb, Mn, Cd, Co, Ni and Zn analysis using Atomic Absorption Spectrometry. The analysis indicated that, the Sabratha 's coastal sediments were enriched with Cd, Pb, Cu, Ni, Co and Za (EF = 81.48, 17.26, 12.80, 11.42, 9.85 and 8.56 respectively). The highest levels of Mn, Cu, Ni, Pb and Co were recorded nearby the Mellitah complex oil and gas station in the western Libyan region, while the highest levels of Zn and Cd were recorded at the central part of the study area nearby fishing port and Sabratha hospital. Average values of Cd, Pb and Co were mostly higher than the ones recorded from the Arabian and Oman gulfs, the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aqaba, the Caspian Sea, coast of Tanzania and the background shale and the earth's crust. The high levels of most of the studied heavy metals suggested significant anthropogenic sources along Sabratha coast. The results of the present study provide a useful background for further marine studies on the Mediterranean area.

Keywords: Enrichment, Heavy metals, Coastal sediments, Sabratha, Mediterranean Sea, Libya.

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