Behaviour of chromium and chromium isotopes during estuarine mixing in the Beaulieu Estuary, UK

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Abstract

Rivers are the principal source of chromium (Cr) to seawater and the Cr isotopic signatures of ancient marine sediments are widely considered to provide a record of the presence or absence of oxidative weathering processes on land. This assumes, however, that the $\delta^{53}Cr$ value of river water is faithfully transferred to the oceans and is not modified in the estuarine mixing zone. To test this assumption we have determined the concentration and $\delta^{53}Cr$ values of inorganic Cr (Cr(III)+Cr(VI)), and also Cr speciation for water samples collected within the estuarine mixing zone of the Beaulieu River, UK. The $\delta^{53}Cr$ values of dissolved inorganic Cr ranged from -0.59 to 1.68‰, Cr(VI) concentrations from 0.39 to 1.83 nmol kg^{-1} and Cr(III) concentrations from 0.11 to 3.21 nmol kg^{-1}. Both Cr(VI) concentrations and $\delta^{53}Cr$ values increased linearly as a function of salinity, while Cr(III) concentrations decreased linearly with salinity. Thus $\delta^{53}Cr$, Cr(III) and Cr(VI) all showed conservative behaviour in the estuarine mixing zone, and the $\delta^{53}Cr$ signature of Beaulieu River water was modified only by mixing between the river and seawater endmembers. The calculated average $\delta^{53}Cr$ value of the river water endmember (-0.39 ± 0.08‰) was, however, lower than the range that has been observed in other rivers, which we attribute to input of organically-bound Cr(III) released by anoxic weathering processes. This is supported by the fact that Cr recovered by UV irradiation was found to have low $\delta^{53}Cr$ values (-0.11 to -0.75‰). While input of Cr from anoxic weathering processes is unlikely to be an important source of Cr to the oceans today, this suggests that processes other than oxidative weathering may have an influence on the $\delta^{53}Cr$ values of estuarine and coastal waters on the local scale. The $\delta^{53}Cr$ value of the coastal seawater endmember (1.6 ± 0.4‰) was also higher than the range observed in the deep open ocean, due to *in situ* biogeochemical cycling of Cr. These factors need to be considered in the interpretation of marine sedimentary $\delta^{53}Cr$ records.

Keywords: chromium isotopes, chromium speciation, chromium cycling, estuarine mixing, anoxic weathering

1. Introduction

Chromium (Cr) is a redox sensitive element with two stable oxidation states, Cr(VI) and Cr(III), at Earth surface conditions. It has four stable isotopes, ^{50}Cr, ^{52}Cr, ^{53}Cr and ^{54}Cr, which can fractionate during oxidation and reduction reactions (Zink et al., 2010; Døssing et al., 2011; Kitchen et al., 2012). Most ground water and seawater samples analysed to date are enriched in heavy Cr isotopes (i.e. they have relatively high $\delta^{53}Cr$ values, where $\delta^{53}Cr=\left(\frac{(^{53}Cr/^{52}Cr)_{sample} - (^{53}Cr/^{52}Cr)_{NBS979\ standard}}{(^{53}Cr/^{52}Cr)_{NBS979\ standard}}\right)\times1000$; Ellis et al. 2002; Bonnand et al. 2013; Scheiderich et al. 2015; Holmden et al. 2016; Paulukat et al. 2016; Pereira et al. 2015; Goring-Harford et al. 2018; Moos and Boyle 2018; Bruggmann et al. 2019) compared to crustal rocks ($\delta^{53}Cr$ = -0.12 ± 0.10‰; Schoenberg et al. 2008). This has been attributed to the preferential release of heavy Cr isotopes during the oxidative weathering of Cr(III), followed by transfer of the Cr(VI) that forms to the oceans *via* rivers (Frei et al. 2009), and to the preferential removal of light Cr isotopes during biologically-mediated redox reactions in seawater (Scheiderich et al., 2015; Goring-Harford et al., 2018; Moos and Boyle, 2018).

Records of ancient seawater $\delta^{53}Cr$ values, preserved in the authigenic fraction of marine sediments, are considered to provide evidence for the evolution of atmospheric oxygen, and consequently life, on Earth (e.g. Frei et al. 2009; Crowe et al. 2013; Planavsky et al. 2014). Critically, this interpretation relies on the assumption that the oxidative weathering signal is faithfully transferred from rivers to seawater, as rivers are the main source of Cr to the oceans (>90% of the total Cr input; Jeandel and Minster 1987; Bonnand et al. 2013; Reinhard et al. 2013; McClain and Maher 2016; Sun et al. 2019). The $\delta^{53}Cr$ range previously reported for unpolluted river water is -0.3 to 1.7‰ (n=49; Figure 1; Frei et al. 2014; D'Arcy et al. 2016; Wu et al. 2017; Andronikov et al. 2019), which is similar to that of seawater (0.02 to 1.7‰; n=156; Bonnand et al. 2013; Scheiderich et al. 2015; Holmden et al. 2016; Paulukat et al. 2016; Pereira et al. 2015; Goring-Harford et al. 2018; Moos and Boyle 2018; Bruggmann et al. 2019). However, the mean value for river water (0.49 ± 0.45‰) is higher than the mean value for seawater (1.07 ± 0.35‰), which implies that $\delta^{53}Cr$ values may be altered after oxidative

weathering occurs, for example by redox reactions of Cr in surface ocean waters (Scheiderich et al., 2015; Goring-Harford et al., 2018; Bruggmann et al., 2019). Although other potential mechanisms for Cr isotope fractionation in natural waters have yet to be investigated in detail, it is likely that refinements to the model proposed by Frei et al. 2009 are required to properly employ Cr as a proxy for atmospheric oxygenation (see also Toma et al. 2019).

Fractionation of Cr isotopes during transport from rivers to the ocean has the potential to significantly modify $\delta^{53}Cr$ values before preservation in marine sediments (Bonnand et al., 2013; Paulukat et al., 2015; D'Arcy et al., 2016). Rivers typically contain between 2nM and 20nM of dissolved Cr (e.g. Bonnand et al. 2013 and references therein), though rivers draining mafic lithologies or land contaminated with industrial waste can contain much higher levels (100-2000nM; McClain and Maher 2016; Novak et al. 2014; Paulukat et al. 2015). Chromium(VI) is the thermodynamically stable form of Cr in oxygen-replete waters (Elderfield, 1970), but rivers commonly contain both Cr(III) and Cr(VI) in varying proportions (Cranston and Murray, 1980; Dolamore-Frank, 1984; Kieber and Helz, 1992; Abu-Saba and Flegal, 1995; Gardner and Ravenscroft, 1996; Comber and Gardner, 2003; Saputro et al., 2014; McClain and Maher, 2016), likely due to complexation of Cr(III) with organic molecules, which stabilises it in solution (Dolamore-Frank, 1984; Kaczynski and Kieber, 1994; Abu-Saba and Flegal, 1995; Buerge and Hug, 1998; Icopini and Long, 2002). Chromium(VI) shows conservative behaviour in many estuaries, meaning its concentration is simply determined by the relative proportion of freshwater to seawater (Cranston and Murray, 1980; Mayer and Schick, 1981; Dolamore-Frank, 1984). However, in some estuaries Cr(VI) appears to be partially reduced to Cr(III) in the presence of organic molecules or photochemically produced Fe(II) (Kieber and Helz, 1992; Saputro et al., 2014; D'Arcy et al., 2016). The Cr(III) that is produced can be removed (i) at low salinities due to the flocculation of organic materials (Cranston and Murray, 1980; Mayer and Schick, 1981; Campbell and Yeats, 1984), or (ii) by adsorption onto sedimentary particles (Mayer and Schick, 1981; Abu-Saba and Flegal, 1995; Jonas and Millward, 2010). As Cr(III) is expected to be enriched in lighter isotopes (Ellis et al., 2002; Zink et al., 2010; Døssing et

al., 2011; Kitchen et al., 2012), this may drive $\delta^{53}Cr$ values in the remaining Cr(VI) that is delivered to the oceans to higher values (Bonnand et al., 2013; Paulukat et al., 2015; D'Arcy et al., 2016).

To date, Cr isotope behaviour has only been studied in the Connecticut estuary, USA (Sun et al., 2019). This study revealed that there were no systematic variations in $\delta^{53}Cr$ (or Cr concentration) as a function of salinity, although Cr speciation was not determined. Given the diverse range of Cr reactions that can occur in estuarine mixing zones, further investigation is needed to assess their potential for modification of $\delta^{53}Cr$. This study reports the results of a systematic investigation of $\delta^{53}Cr$ values and Cr speciation with respect to salinity in the Beaulieu River and estuary (UK).

2. Sampling location

The Beaulieu River is located in the New Forest National Park (UK), and drains into the strait between mainland England and the Isle of Wight known as the Solent (Figure 2). The protected status of the National Park means that its catchment is sparsely populated and there is little industry, so levels of pollution in the Beaulieu River are minimal compared to most UK rivers.

The New Forest primarily consists of heathlands, woodlands, bogs and wetlands. Surficial deposits are predominantly the Paleogene Barton and Headon Group sands, although Quaternary alluvia, clays and silts are found around the river and promote the growth of forest patches (Gilkes 1968). There are also tidal flats around the mouth of the estuary. The upper limit of the estuary is marked by a sluice gate, upstream of which is a small lake (the Mill Dam; Figure 2) that sometimes contains a small component of seawater. The depth of the river does not usually exceed ~1m whereas the depth of the estuary changes considerably with the state of the tide, varying between ~0.1 and 4m. The freshwater residence time in the estuary is ~7 days (Fang, 1995), which is similar to the residence time of water in the Solent (~6.25 days; Dyer and Lasta King 1975).

Concentrations of dissolved oxygen are high (up to 370µmol L^{-1}) throughout the river, and pH varies between 6.5 and 7.8 (Hopwood et al. 2014). Due to the nature of the vegetation in the catchment, the river waters have high levels of dissolved organic carbon (DOC), and estuarine waters can have DOC concentrations of >1mg L^{-1} even at high salinities (*S* = >24) (Moore et al. 1979). Concentrations of dissolved iron (dFe) in the river are highly variable (8-21µM), and they fall significantly as the river water mixes with seawater, because Fe is incorporated into organic flocculates or forms Fe oxyhydroxide precipitates (Holliday and Liss, 1976; Fang, 1995; Hopwood et al., 2014). Up to ~50% of Fe at low salinities (*S* = <5) is present as Fe(II) (Hopwood et al., 2014), which is an effective reductant for Cr(VI) (Døssing et al., 2011; Kitchen et al., 2012).

The total dissolved concentration of Cr in the Solent adjacent to the Beaulieu estuary (also known as Southampton Water) is ~1.3-1.8nM (Bonnand et al., 2013), although higher concentrations (up to 5nM) have been recorded in the Beaulieu River itself (Dolamore-Frank, 1984). In a previous study, dissolved Cr appeared to behave conservatively during estuarine mixing, although loss of Cr(VI) from solution was suggested at high salinities, possibly as a result of reduction of Cr(VI) by DOC and removal of the Cr(III) that formed (Dolamore-Frank, 1984). Nevertheless, concentrations of particulate Cr were low even though dissolved concentrations of Cr(III) were relatively high, indicating that adsorption of this Cr(III) onto particulate material was not an important process in the estuary (Dolamore-Frank, 1984). The δ^{53}Cr value of total dissolved Cr in Southampton Water at salinities of 30 and higher appears to be consistent over time at 1.50 ± 0.02‰, (n = 7; Bonnand et al. 2013; Goring-Harford et al. 2018) though the Cr isotopic compositions of river and estuarine waters of the Beaulieu have not hitherto been measured.

3. Methods

3.1. Sampling

All containers and sampling/filtration equipment were acid cleaned before use. A river water endmember sample was taken from the King's Hat Enclosure on 20th March 2016 and the

estuary was sampled around high tide on 22nd March 2016 from the R.V. *Bill Conway*. A rigid-inflatable boat (RIB) was used to access the shallowest waters, but the low to intermediate salinities (*S* = 1-14) were inaccessible due to low rainfall in the preceding week, and the rapid mixing between freshwater and seawater at the sluice gate. A second set of samples targeting a lower salinity range was therefore taken on 5th October 2016 from the river, Mill Dam and upper part of the estuary waters during the early stages of the flood tide. Rainfall in the week preceding each sampling date were 0.0mm for March and 8.8mm for October (measured by a Davis Vantage Pro Plus weather station; http://www.tottonweather.co.uk/data-summary/).

All samples were recovered from 0.1-0.5m depth below the surface using a 1L bottle either by hand or by deploying a weighted metal free bottle holder. The 1L aliquots were homogenised in a larger container (5-6L total sample volume) and a subsample of this was taken immediately to measure salinity, pH and temperature (WTW Measurement Systems Inc. 340i handheld multimeter).

River sediment pore waters were sampled by inserting 80mm diameter plastic core liners into the river bed at King's Hat Enclosure in April 2017. Cores were immediately transported back to the National Oceanography Centre Southampton (NOCS) and placed in a constant temperature laboratory at 10°C (to approximately match the temperature of the river water) before processing.

3.2. Determination of Cr concentration and Cr isotopic composition of river and estuarine waters

All acids used in sample processing were thermally distilled, while the other chemicals were Romil UpA, Fluka TraceSELECT Ultra, or Aristar® Ultra grade and contributed negligible Cr to the total procedural blank.

Water samples were filtered within 24 hours of collection in a class 100 clean laboratory using pre-rinsed Sartorius Sartobran 300 capsule filters (0.45µm). A ^{50}Cr+^{54}Cr(III) double spike was

added to samples being processed for isotopic analysis to account for any fractionation incurred during sample processing (full details of the spike are given in Goring-Harford et al 2018). At least 100ng of Cr, at a concentration of ~30 ppb in the analyte, was required for isotopic analysis. Because the Cr concentration of river waters and seawater is much lower (typically ~0.1ppb), it was necessary to pre-concentrate Cr. To do this we employed a Fe(II) co-precipitation method (Bonnand et al. 2013; Scheiderich et al. 2015; Goring-Harford et al. 2018). Samples collected in March 2016 were preserved by acidification to pH <2 using 2ml L^{-1} of sub-boiled HCl prior to Fe(II) precipitation (except for the aliquots taken for Cr(III) analysis). The October 2016 samples were precipitated with Fe(II) on the day of filtration (within ~8 hours). Both approaches are expected to successfully capture all inorganic Cr, as Cr(III) adsorption to container walls is prevented both by low pH conditions prior to spiking and by prompt co-precipitation after collection; adsorption is not thought to be important for Cr(VI) (Gaillardet et al. 2003).

The pH of the river water samples (~3L volume) was adjusted to pH 8-9 approximately 24 hours after the double spike was added. Total dissolved inorganic chromium (Cr_T, defined as Cr(III) + Cr(VI)) was then removed from solution using an Fe(II) hydroxide precipitate (made from 2mM ammonium Fe(II) sulphate, Sigma-Aldrich batch 04728LI, 10ml L^{-1} of sample) that converts any Cr(VI) to Cr(III) and quantitatively removes the Cr(III) in the form of a Fe(III)-Cr(III) precipitate (Shigematsu et al., 1977; Cranston and Murray, 1978; Dolamore-Frank, 1984; Jeandel and Minster, 1984). The precipitate was then separated by vacuum filtration using acid cleaned Millipore Omnipore filters (1 µm). A two-stage ion exchange chromatography procedure was carried out to remove the Fe and residual salts using the Biorad AG1-X8 and AG50-X12 resins respectively (Bonnand et al., 2013), and any remaining organic material was oxidised using H_2O_2. The Cr isotopic composition of the purified Cr sample-spike mixture was determined using a Thermo Fisher Neptune multicollector inductively coupled plasma mass spectrometer (MC-ICP-MS) in medium resolution mode. Newton-Raphson deconvolution and isotope dilution calculations were used to calculate

$\delta^{53}Cr_T$ and Cr_T respectively. Raw data were corrected for instrumental drift and the total procedural blank contribution, which mainly came from the Fe precipitate and typically constituted <10% of the total Cr analysed (blank $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ = -0.34 ± 0.32‰ 2SD, n = 6). Repeat analyses of the NBS979 standard, normalised to the daily average NBS979 value, yielded an analytical reproducibility of ±0.04‰ (n = 344, 2SD). The external reproducibility of co-precipitated samples, determined from multiple analyses of the OSIL salinity standard (n = 6), was better than ±0.11‰ (Goring-Harford et al., 2018).

It is important to note that this technique is not expected to collect organically bound dissolved Cr (Cr_{ORG}), as this fraction is thought to be resistant to reduction and adsorption (Nakayama et al., 1981; Abu-Saba and Flegal, 1995). By contrast, previously published analyses of $\delta^{53}Cr$ in river waters have been obtained from samples that were pre-concentrated by evaporation; a technique considered to capture Cr_{T+ORG} (Frei et al., 2014; Paulukat et al., 2015; D'Arcy et al., 2016). Nevertheless, a wide range of organic complexes with different binding strengths are present in the Beaulieu River (Hopwood et al., 2015), and our Fe co-precipitation method may capture weakly complexed Cr_{ORG}, thus Cr_T values reported in this study are considered to be operationally defined. Filtered aliquots of two samples (B1 and B2) were analysed after UV irradiation for ~3 hours in LDPE bottles using a UV box containing 4 × G20T10 lamps, in an attempt to oxidise any Cr_{ORG} and assess the potential contribution of this fraction to the total dissolved Cr pool.

3.3. Determination of Cr speciation in river and estuarine waters

Dissolved Cr(III) concentrations were measured using a modified version of the Fe co-precipitation technique, wherein Fe(III) hydroxide was used in place of Fe(II) hydroxide to collect Cr(III) only. Cr(III) is strongly adsorbed to Fe(III) hydroxide, whereas Cr(VI) is not, allowing effective separation of the two species (Shigematsu et al., 1977; Cranston and Murray, 1978; Dolamore-Frank, 1984; Jeandel and Minster, 1984). As for Cr_T, Cr(III) values are considered operationally defined because there is potential to collect some weakly bound Cr_{ORG}. A 500 mL sub-sample for Cr(III) analysis was taken from the bulk 5-6L sample and

188 filtered, spiked and treated with the Fe(III) hydroxide precipitate (3 mL) either in a class 100
189 clean laboratory at NOCS or on board the R.V. *Bill Conway*. The Fe(III) solution was prepared
190 in the same manner as the Fe(II) solution described in Section 3.2, except it was allowed to
191 oxidise for 1 week with occasional shaking. As the proportions of Cr(III) and Cr(VI) in natural
192 water samples may change rapidly after sample collection (Kingston et al., 1998), co-
193 precipitation was done within 4 hours of sample collection. Blank solutions of Milli-Q water
194 were processed alongside the samples.

195 The $^{50}Cr+^{54}Cr$ double spike was replaced with a ^{53}Cr(III) single spike for Cr(III) analysis and
196 isotope dilution calculations were made using the $^{52}Cr/^{53}Cr$ ratio. The lowest analytical error
197 occurs when the $^{52}Cr/^{53}Cr$ ratio is 0.1 - 3.5 (Bedson, 2007); all samples had ratios of of 0.1 -
198 1.1. Despite the lack of isobaric interferences on ^{52}Cr and ^{53}Cr, large quantities of residual Fe
199 and salts will interfere with ICP-MS analysis so an ion exchange procedure similar to that
200 described above was used to purify the Cr fraction. $^{52}Cr/^{53}Cr$ ratios were then measured on an
201 Element 2 ICP-MS. The accuracy of this procedure was tested by processing Cr(III) standards
202 (NBS979) and mixed Cr(III) + Cr(VI) standards (NBS979 and potassium chromate, Fluka
203 TraceCERT®) in the same way as samples. Cr(VI) concentrations were subsequently
204 calculated by subtracting Cr(III) from Cr_T.

205 **3.4. Analysis of dissolved iron concentrations**

206 Total dissolved iron concentrations in the <0.45µm fraction were measured using the ferrozine
207 method (Stookey, 1970). Approximately 5mL of each sample was filtered through pre-cleaned
208 0.45µm syringe filters (Millipore Millex) within 4 hours of collection. 3mL aliquots of the filtered
209 water were immediately pipetted into vials pre-loaded with 0.2mL of 5mM ferrozine and 0.2mL
210 of 10mM ascorbic acid. A series of Fe standards (0-50µM, made with ammonium Fe(II)
211 sulphate) were treated in the same way. Under these conditions all Fe (Fe(II) + Fe(III)) is
212 converted to Fe(II) that reacts to form a purple complex with ferrozine. The method collects
213 inorganic Fe as well as organically complexed Fe, except for the most strongly bound Fe
214 complexes (Hopwood et al., 2014). Fe concentrations were determined using a Unicom 8625

UV/Visible spectrometer set to measure absorbance at 562nm. A 4cm cell was used to maximise sensitivity and the detection limit was 0.13μM.

3.5. Processing of push cores and sampling of pore waters

Profiles of dissolved oxygen were measured for two of the four push cores using an optical oxygen meter (Pyroscience FirestingO2 with OX50 needle-type sensor) mounted on a micromanipulator (Pyroscience MU1). The uppermost 5cm of sediment from each core was then centrifuged to extract the pore water. Pore waters were combined and centrifuged once more; co-precipitation with Fe was not necessary. The pore waters were then vacuum filtered through pre-cleaned 0.45μm membrane filters (Whatman Polycarbonate). Organic material was oxidised by addition of 0.2mL H_2O_2 and refluxing in 1mL of aqua regia at 130°C for ~24 hours. Any precipitate was digested by refluxing in 0.5mL of hydrogen fluoride at 170°C for 4 days. The samples were then dissolved in 3mL of 7M HCl and dried before being passed through the ion chromatography procedure. The total procedural blank was ~3 ng, almost entirely contributed by the filter (2.4 ± 0.8 ng, n = 3). This is less than 1% of the Cr processed and is therefore considered negligible.

4. Results

4.1. Method validation

It is essential that equilibration between natural Cr in the sample and Cr in the spike is achieved in order to produce accurate data, because the yield of Cr is <100% (9 – 60% in samples with $S \leq 10$, and 60 - 85% in samples with $S \geq 10$). Equilibration is effective in seawater samples (Jeandel and Minster, 1984; Bonnand et al., 2013; Scheiderich et al., 2015; Goring-Harford et al., 2018), but to verify that this was also the case for low salinity samples, we tested an archived Beaulieu river water sample ($S = 0$) that had not been acidified for Cr_T, Cr(III) and Cr_{T+ORG} using the ^{53}Cr spike, yielding concentrations of 0.63 nmol kg^{-1}, 0.37 nmol kg^{-1} and 0.73 nmol kg^{-1} respectively. To obtain an independent Cr_{T+ORG} value, two more aliquots were simply dried down and treated with H_2O_2 to eliminate organic matter before analysis on the Element 2. The Cr_{T+ORG} values of these samples (0.71 ± 0.09 nmol kg^{-1} 2SD,

n=2) were within error of the spiked and co-precipitated sample. Thus, this investigation demonstrates that: (i) spike equilibration is effective in low salinity waters containing a mixture of Cr(III) and Cr(VI); (ii) Cr_{ORG} is effectively released by UV irradiation; and (iii) all Cr species have been determined by our analyses. Apart from its atomic mass, the $^{50+54}$Cr spike is identical to the ^{53}Cr spike, so it is reasonable to assume that spike equilibration was also effective for Cr_T and $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ analyses.

For speciation analyses, the average total procedural blank for the samples that were partly processed on board the R.V. *Bill Conway* was 0.08 ± 0.02nmol (2SD, n=2). This is within error of our long term total procedural blank for samples processed in the clean laboratory (0.09 ± 0.06nmol 2SD; n=13), implying that the samples were not compromised by handling outside of the clean laboratory. Several authors have shown that Fe(III) co-precipitation is an effective technique for measuring Cr(III) in natural waters, with or without employing an isotopic spike (Shigematsu et al., 1977; Cranston and Murray, 1978; Dolamore-Frank, 1984; Jeandel and Minster, 1984). To check that the method is capable of producing accurate Cr(III) concentrations with our ^{53}Cr spike, Cr(III) and mixed Cr(III) + Cr(VI) standards in Milli-Q water were tested (Table 2). The Cr(III) standards gave values within ±4% of the expected value, demonstrating that little Cr(III) was lost to container walls before sample-spike equilibration occurred. Mixed Cr(III) + Cr(VI) standards had a slightly higher uncertainty of ±10% (Table 1). The higher uncertainty of the mixed standards may reflect speciation changes prior to addition of the Fe precipitate, as this was not done until ~24 hours after spiking. In an effort to circumvent this issue, the Fe precipitate was added to river water and estuary samples within 4 hours of sample collection; nevertheless, the uncertainty of Cr(III), Cr(VI) and Cr_T measurements are conservatively reported in this study as ± 10%. In support of this, sample B13 was processed twice and yielded an average Cr(III) concentration of 0.25nmol kg^{-1} ± 7%.

4.2. Cr and $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ variation in estuarine waters

The range of Cr_T values for samples collected in March 2016 (1.64 to 1.89 nmol kg^{-1}; Table 2) was similar to that measured previously for this location (1.64 to 5.05nmol kg^{-1}; Bonnand et al.

2013; Dolamore-Frank 1984), whereas the October samples had very low Cr_T (0.66 to 1.03 nmol kg^{-1}). On both sampling dates Cr_T decreased slightly with salinity. A negative correlation was observed between Cr(III) and salinity (Figure 3C; $R^2 = 0.95$, $p < 10^{-7}$ for March, $R^2 = 0.57$, $p < 0.1$ for October), whereas Cr(VI) showed a positive correlation (Figure 3D; $R^2 = 0.87$, $p < 10^{-5}$ for March, $R^2 = 0.24$, $p < 0.4$ for October). Approximately 15% of Cr_T was found to be present as Cr(III) in high salinity waters (S = >29), compared with up to 55% in low salinity waters (S = <5). The $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ values (-0.59 to 1.68‰) increased linearly with increasing salinity (Figure 3E; $R^2 = 0.98$, $p < 10^{-10}$ for March, $R^2 = 0.84$, $p < 0.02$ for October). Assuming that the relationship between salinity and $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ is linear, even at very low salinity (see Section 5.1), then the extrapolated $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ value of the river endmember at S = 0 was the same in March ($\delta^{53}Cr_{T\text{-CALCULATED}}$ = -0.43 ± 0.06‰) and October ($\delta^{53}Cr_{T\text{-CALCULATED}}$ = -0.34 ± 0.13‰).

4.3. Cr associated with organic material

Tests performed using the ^{53}Cr single spike method demonstrated that UV irradiation did not contribute any significant Cr to the total procedural blank, as the average UV irradiated blank (0.06 ± 0.03nmol, n = 3) was within error of the long term procedural blank (0.09 ± 0.06nmol; n=13).

Water samples B1 and B2 irradiated with UV light had higher dissolved Cr concentrations (Cr_{T+ORG}) compared to non-irradiated aliquots, indicating that at least 18% of the Cr in low to mid salinity waters was organically bound (Table 3). The UV-irradiated samples also had lower $\delta^{53}Cr_{T+ORG}$ compared to $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ in non-irradiated samples, which implies that the Cr_{ORG} fraction has a lower $\delta^{53}Cr$ composition than the Cr_T fraction. The $\delta^{53}Cr$ value of Cr_{ORG} is given by:

$$\delta^{53}\mathrm{Cr}_{\mathrm{ORG}} = \frac{\left(\delta^{53}\mathrm{Cr}_{\mathrm{T+ORG}} - \left(\mathrm{F_T} \times \delta^{53}\mathrm{Cr_T}\right)\right)}{\mathrm{F_{ORG}}}$$

Where $F_T = Cr_T/Cr_{T+ORG}$ and $F_{ORG} = Cr_{ORG}/Cr_{T+ORG}$. B1 and B2 yield $\delta^{53}Cr_{ORG}$ values of -0.75‰ and -0.11‰, respectively (Table 3).

293 ### 4.4. Cr concentration and Cr isotopic composition of river sediment pore waters

294 The sediment core-top waters contained 230-260μM of dissolved O_2, and the pH was 6.9 at
295 approximately 1cm depth below the river bed (measured in one core only). Oxygen profiles
296 (Figure 4) revealed a shallow oxygen penetration depth of 2.9 ± 1.7mm (2SD) below the
297 sediment-water interface. Cr_T concentrations of pore waters from the two cores were 100 and
298 120nmol kg^{-1} and $\delta^{53}Cr_{T+ORG}$ values were 0.06 ± 0.05‰ and 0.13 ± 0.05‰ respectively. These
299 analyses included any Cr_{ORG} in the pore waters as the Fe co-precipitation method was not
300 used.

301 ## 5. Discussion

302 ### 5.1. Behaviour of Cr and Cr isotopes during estuarine mixing

303 Concentrations of Cr_T in samples collected in October were significantly lower than in March,
304 and compared to previous measurements (Dolamore-Frank, 1984). Dilution of surface water
305 Cr may have played a part as there was more rainfall (8.8 mm) in October, however this cannot
306 explain a reduction of ~50% in Cr_T. Another explanation is that a greater proportion of
307 dissolved Cr(III) was contained in the organic fraction (which is not captured by our Fe co-
308 precipitation method) due to the release of dissolved organic material in the autumn following
309 the decomposition of deciduous tree leaves; this would have affected even the high salinity
310 sample (B20, *S* = 29.6) because it was taken from a well vegetated part of the river (Figure
311 2). Organic molecules from leaf litter leachates have been shown to strongly bind copper in
312 the early stages of decomposition because microbes transform or consume the most effective
313 organic ligands (proteins and polyphenol-like compounds) over time (Cuss and Gueguen,
314 2012). It is possible that a similar situation applies to Cr. In support of this, large amounts of
315 foam were observed on the river surface in October, suggesting that concentrations of organic
316 surfactants were high.

317 Figure 3A provides evidence for the removal of dissolved iron at low salinities in the Beaulieu
318 Estuary as observed in previous studies (Holliday and Liss, 1976; Fang, 1995), which is
319 thought to reflect the incorporation of Fe into flocculated organic particles (Sholkovitz et al.,

1978; Moore et al., 1979; Hopwood et al., 2014). However, no relationship was observed between Cr_T and dFe concentrations at low salinities (R^2 = 0.01 for October), suggesting that inorganic Cr species were unaffected by the flocculation of organic material during the transition from river to estuary.

Concentrations of Cr(VI), Cr(III) and $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ exhibited linear relationships with salinity on both sampling dates, whilst Cr_T showed little variation with salinity because the river and seawater endmembers had similar Cr_T concentrations (Figure 3B-E). Re-release of Cr from particulate material at high salinities has previously been observed in both the Beaulieu estuary (Dolamore-Frank, 1984) and the Connecticut estuary (Sun et al., 2019), but there was no increase in Cr_T that would suggest a similar mechanism in this case. Furthermore, the relationship between $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ and salinity was much stronger (R^2 = 0.98 and 0.84 for March and October respectively; Figure 3E) than that between $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ and Cr_T (R^2 = 0.24 and 0.00 for March and October respectively; Figure 3F), strongly suggesting that salinity, rather than reduction and removal of isotopically light Cr(III), exerts the main control on $\delta^{53}Cr_T$. The distributions of Cr(VI), Cr(III) and $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ in the Beaulieu estuary are therefore thought to be principally controlled by simple mixing between a high Cr(III)/low Cr(VI), low $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ river water endmember and a low Cr(III)/high Cr(VI), high $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ seawater endmember. This is supported by our mixing model (Figure 5; see Sections 5.2 and 5.3), where river and seawater endmember values for Cr(III), Cr(VI) and $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ for March have been calculated by linear extrapolation, and intermediate values calculated by adding the proportions contributed by the endmembers; there is good agreement between model and measured values. These findings contrast with those from the Connecticut estuary, where Cr removal onto suspended particulate material and into sediments at low to moderate salinities appeared to be associated with Cr isotope fractionation (Sun et al., 2019).

It is possible that removal of Cr(III) and/or Cr(VI) occurs at very low salinities (<0.5), because sample B1 (which was taken from further upstream than the other samples), had a much higher Cr_T concentration (5.05nmol kg^{-1}) than the other samples. Reduction of Cr(VI) and

subsequent removal of the Cr(III) that forms would drive the $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ composition of the remaining dissolved Cr to a higher value because the fractionation factors for Cr(VI) reduction by Fe(II) or DOC, the most abundant reductants in the Beaulieu River system, are large ($\Delta_{Cr(VI)-Cr(III)}$ = 3.6 to 4.2‰ and 3.1‰ respectively; Døssing et al. 2011; Kitchen et al. 2012). Figure 5A models the $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ value of remaining dissolved Cr in the Beaulieu estuary for March, assuming that all of the Cr(III) in sample B1 (3.21nmol kg^{-1}, 64% of the Cr_T) was produced by reduction of Cr(VI), and that this Cr(III) was subsequently removed at *S* = <0.5, followed by conservative mixing at higher salinities. It is clear that this would result in much higher $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ values than those observed in the estuary, which instead fall along a conservative mixing line with a river water endmember $\delta^{53}Cr_{T\text{-}CALCULATED}$ value of -0.39‰ (see Section 5.2). Therefore, if Cr removal does occur, it must be associated with no, or minimal, isotopic fractionation.

5.2. Controls on the Cr concentration and Cr isotopic composition of the river water endmember

The variation in Cr_T and $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ values is higher in the lower salinity samples that were collected from upstream of the sluice gate (*S* = ≤14.5; Figure 3). In particular, samples B1 and B17 have high $\delta^{53}Cr_T$, high Cr_T and a low proportion of Cr(III) relative to samples of similar salinity that may be indicative of input of Cr from a different source. Nevertheless, overall there is a linear relationship between $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ and salinity, so the average $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ value of the river water endmember can be estimated by extrapolating the regression line to *S* = 0. The estimated $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ value of the river water endmember, based on both the March and October data, is -0.39 ± 0.08‰, lower than the range determined for most other rivers to date (Figure 1). It is also lower than the $\delta^{53}Cr$ value of crustal rocks (-0.12 ± 0.10‰; Schoenberg et al. 2008), and the $\delta^{53}Cr_{T+ORG}$ values of pore waters in Beaulieu River bed sediments (0.06 to 0.13‰). Although Cr isotope fractionation during oxidative weathering is poorly characterised, it is expected to produce aqueous Cr(VI) that has a higher $\delta^{53}Cr$ value than the crustal value (e.g. Frei et al. 2014; D'Arcy et al. 2016), thus oxidative weathering cannot be the principal control on the $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ value of the Beaulieu River.

374 Chromium can also be released into solution *via* dissolution of sedimentary Fe-Cr
375 (oxy)hydroxides under anoxic conditions (Rigaud et al., 2013). The oxic-anoxic boundary is
376 located close to the sediment-water interface in the Beaulieu River (Figure 4), thus given the
377 high concentration of dissolved Cr_{T+ORG} in the sediment pore waters (100-120nmol kg^{-1}),
378 diffusion of dissolved Cr(III) derived from the dissolution of Fe-Cr (oxy)hydroxides could be an
379 important source of Cr into the Beaulieu river. Chromium contained in (oxy)hydroxides is
380 expected to be enriched in lighter Cr isotopes (Døssing et al., 2011; Kitchen et al., 2012), so
381 this mechanism may also account for the low $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ values in the Beaulieu river endmember.
382 Analyses of sediment pore waters from the Beaulieu do not support this scenario, however,
383 as their $\delta^{53}Cr_{T+ORG}$ values (0.06‰ and 0.13‰) were higher than that of the river water
384 endmember ($\delta^{53}Cr_{T\text{-}CALCULATED}$ = -0.39‰; measured values as low as -0.59‰). Instead, we
385 suggest that the $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ value of Beaulieu River water is primarily controlled by the presence
386 of organic ligands (Figure 6). Mobile organic Cr(III) species are likely to form in the soil solution
387 (Icopini and Long, 2002; Beck et al., 2008; Rigaud et al., 2013), and may be released into river
388 waters. Formation of these organic Cr(III) complexes can occur *via* inorganic or biological
389 reduction of Cr(VI), which may be derived from oxidation of Cr(III) in the uppermost oxic
390 sediments, or from Cr(VI) that has formed *via* the diffusion and oxidation of dissolved Cr(III)
391 originating from the underlying anoxic zone. Reduction of Cr(VI) by both mechanisms is
392 associated with large isotopic fractionation factors ($\Delta_{Cr(VI)\text{-}Cr(III)}$ = 1.8 - 4.5‰ for various bacteria
393 and 3.1‰ for organic molecules; Sikora et al. 2008; Han et al. 2012; Kitchen et al. 2012; Basu
394 et al. 2014). Thus, organic Cr(III) complexes produced in this way are likely to have a low $\delta^{53}Cr$
395 value, consistent with our findings for $\delta^{53}Cr_{ORG}$ in the Beaulieu (-0.8 to -0.1‰; Table 3).
396 Dissociation of these low $\delta^{53}Cr$(III) bearing complexes by photochemical reactions (Kieber and
397 Helz, 1992) would also explain why $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ values were low and the proportion of dissolved
398 Cr(III) was high in low salinity waters, and particularly as we sampled very shallow waters on
399 clear, sunny days. In support of this hypothesis, it is notable that the $\delta^{53}Cr_{T+ORG}$ value of the
400 UV irradiated sample B1 (0.06‰) was very similar to that of the pore waters (0.06-0.13‰) that
401 were sampled in very close proximity; it appears that the river water directly reflects the pore

water Cr source when Cr_{ORG} is taken into account. The changing proportion of Cr released into solution *via* this process *versus* Cr released due to oxidative weathering may also explain the higher scatter in the data at low salinities.

5.3. Controls on the Cr concentration and Cr isotopic composition of the seawater endmember

The estimated $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ value of the coastal seawater endmember at S = 35 (1.6 ± 0.4‰; calculated using March and October data) is similar to those previously measured in shelf waters (typically 1.3 to 1.5‰, S = 30 to 34; Bonnand et al. 2013; Scheiderich et al. 2015; Goring-Harford et al. 2018), but higher than the values typically measured in oxic deep water masses (1.0 to 1.2‰; Bonnand et al. 2013; Scheiderich et al. 2015; Goring-Harford et al. 2018). This likely reflects internal cycling of Cr within coastal and shelf waters, e.g. the reduction of Cr(VI) to Cr(III) in surface waters followed by removal onto biogenic particles, and the release of Cr from sedimentary sources (Scheiderich et al., 2015; Goring-Harford et al., 2018), Because the volume of the Beaulieu River is far smaller than that of Southampton Water and its Cr_T is low, the low $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ of the Beaulieu River does not have a significant impact Southampton Water $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ values. In other estuarine systems, however, high salinity shelf waters (which typically have similar Cr concentrations to Southampton Water, ~2 nM; Scheiderich et al. 2015; Goring-Harford et al. 2018) may be significantly impacted by riverine $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ if there is a larger riverine Cr input. Figure 7 shows how $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ values in high salinity waters would be modified by a river with similar $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ to the Beaulieu and a higher Cr_T of 15nM (similar to, for example, the Humber River; Comber and Gardner 2003). In this situation, the riverine input would still be significantly impacting $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ at S = 34 (1.18‰), causing it to be over 0.4‰ lower than the seawater endmember (S = 35, $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ = 1.60‰), whereas for a river like the Beaulieu (with much lower Cr_T), the difference is <0.1‰. Thus, rivers with high Cr_T may influence the $\delta^{53}Cr$ value of high salinity estuarine waters, and possibly even the adjacent continental shelf waters if the river and seawater endmembers also have very different $\delta^{53}Cr$ values.

5.4. Implications for the $\delta^{53}Cr$ redox proxy

Whilst our data provide no insight as to the behaviour of organically bound Cr in estuaries, significant quantities of Cr_{ORG} are unlikely to be transferred to the open ocean because DOC concentrations are extremely low in the open ocean (~40-100µmol C L^{-1}, compared to up to ~5mmol C L^{-1} in the Beaulieu River; e.g. Miller and Zepp 1995; Hansell and Carlson 1998). Furthermore, organically bound Cr in the Beaulieu River is <20% of the total Cr, even though it has far higher DOC concentrations than most other rivers (Moore et al., 1979). Thus, Cr is most likely to be transferred to the ocean in its inorganic forms, with the composition of the dissolved Cr(III) and Cr(VI) species controlling the 'baseline' $\delta^{53}Cr$ value of seawater on a global scale (though modifications will occur in the ocean itself; Scheiderich et al. 2015; Goring-Harford et al. 2018; Bruggmann et al. 2019). Our study shows that inorganic forms of dissolved Cr behave conservatively during estuarine mixing in the Beaulieu and that Cr(VI) is not reduced to Cr(III). If this were true for all estuaries, the global average riverine $\delta^{53}Cr$ value would be faithfully transferred to the ocean. However, our study also reveals that anoxic, rather than oxidative, weathering processes are likely to be the principal source of Cr to the Beaulieu River, and that the $\delta^{53}Cr$ value of the river water endmember is controlled by complexation with organic ligands. The operation of fractionating processes beside oxidative weathering potentially complicates the interpretation of seawater $\delta^{53}Cr$ values in terms of the level of atmospheric oxygenation, although we note that on a global scale, the input of Cr from oxidative weathering in mafic catchments is likely to be far more important source of Cr to the oceans than from organic rich, non-mafic catchments (McClain and Maher, 2016).

Finally, in a scenario where riverine $\delta^{53}Cr$ values are dissimilar to those of seawater, and especially where the riverine Cr concentration is high, $\delta^{53}Cr$ values of shelf waters may be significantly influenced by input of riverine Cr (Figure 7). As a result, shelf sediments are likely to be poor candidates for redox proxy studies, because $\delta^{53}Cr$ values will reflect a mixture of local and global scale processes.

6. Conclusions

In contrast to most river systems that have relatively high $\delta^{53}Cr$ values due to release of Cr(VI) by oxidative weathering processes, dissolved Cr in the Beaulieu River is characterised by low $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ values (-0.59 to 0.24‰). We suggest that in this DOC-rich river system, pore water Cr(VI) is partly back-reduced to Cr(III) by organic or Fe(II) reductants, and the formation of organic complexes keeps the Cr(III) in solution. Our results also demonstrated that Cr(III), Cr(VI) and Cr isotopes behave conservatively in the estuarine mixing zone and, even in the presence of high concentrations of dFe and DOC, we found no evidence for reduction of Cr(VI) to Cr(III).

Knowledge of the behaviour of Cr and Cr isotopes in rivers and during estuarine mixing is essential for the interpretation of the Cr isotope redox proxy. We have shown that oxidative weathering is not the only source of dissolved Cr in organic-rich river systems, and that input of Cr from anoxic weathering processes contributes Cr with a distinctly lower $\delta^{53}Cr$ value (~ -0.4‰). At the global scale, however, such organic-rich rivers are unlikely to be an important source of dissolved Cr to the oceans. While inorganic riverine $\delta^{53}Cr$ values appear to be unmodified during estuarine mixing, the estimated $\delta^{53}Cr$ value of the seawater endmember (1.6 ± 0.4‰) is higher than the range reported to date for most deep water masses (1.0-1.2‰), which supports existing evidence that cycling of Cr within coastal and shelf seas may modify the $\delta^{53}Cr$ value of seawater (Scheiderich et al., 2015; Goring-Harford et al., 2018). Internal biogeochemical cycling of oceanic Cr therefore needs to be taken into consideration in the interpretation of the seawater $\delta^{53}Cr$ record preserved in authigenic marine sediments in terms of oxidative weathering. We also show that even in estuaries where Cr behaves conservatively, $\delta^{53}Cr$ values of shelf waters can be modified by input of riverine Cr. The sedimentary record of seawater $\delta^{53}Cr$ in these settings may therefore reflect local, rather than global, processes.

Acknowledgements

This work was partly supported by NERC grant NE/H006443/1. HJGH was supported by a PhD studentship funded by the Graduate School of the National Oceanography Centre Southampton (NOCS), the University of Southampton and the NERC National Capability programme. We thank Graham Blythe and Kevin Padley for assistance with fieldwork and Andy Milton for technical support for the Element and Neptune mass spectrometers.

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732

Figure captions

Figure 1. $\delta^{53}Cr$ data for unpolluted rivers that drain into the ocean ([1]D'Arcy et al. 2016; [2]Wu et al. 2017; [3]Frei et al. 2014). Horizontal grey bar shows $\delta^{53}Cr$ values for silicate crust; orange bar shows typical $\delta^{53}Cr$ and Cr concentration of seawater (Bonnand et al., 2013; Scheiderich et al., 2015; Paulukat et al., 2016).

Figure 2. Sampling locations. Darker blue areas are intertidal flats.

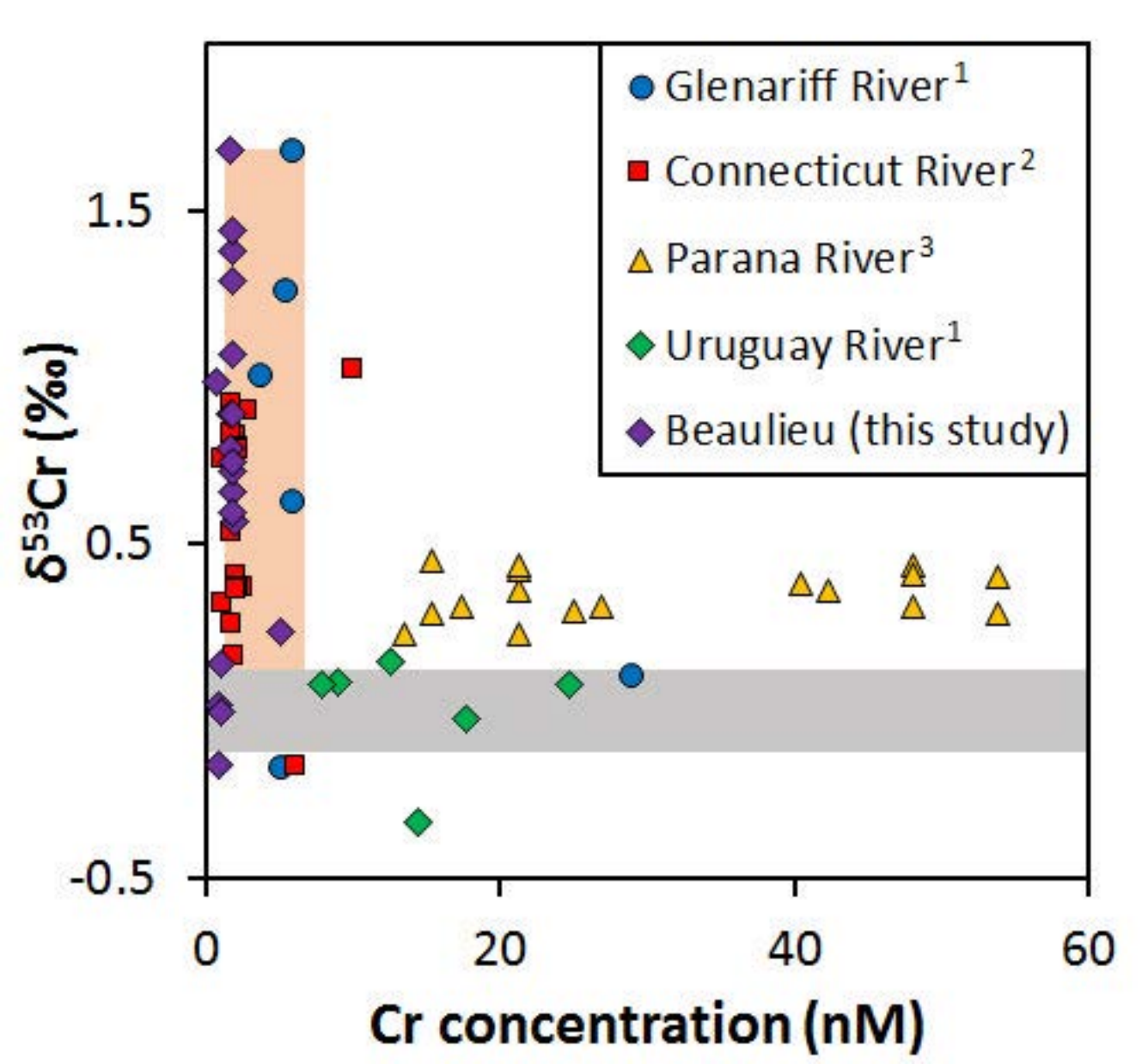
Figure 3. Relationship between salinity and (A) dFe, (B) Cr_T, (C) Cr(III) concentration, (D) Cr(VI) concentration, and (E) $\delta^{53}Cr_T$ (where error bars represent the external reproducibility; 0.11‰). (F) Relationship between Cr_T and $\delta^{53}Cr_T$. Error bars for Cr_T, Cr(VI) and Cr(III) are 10%. The March 20th sample (B1) is excluded from A and from the trend lines in B-E because it is thought to be an outlier (see text for details).

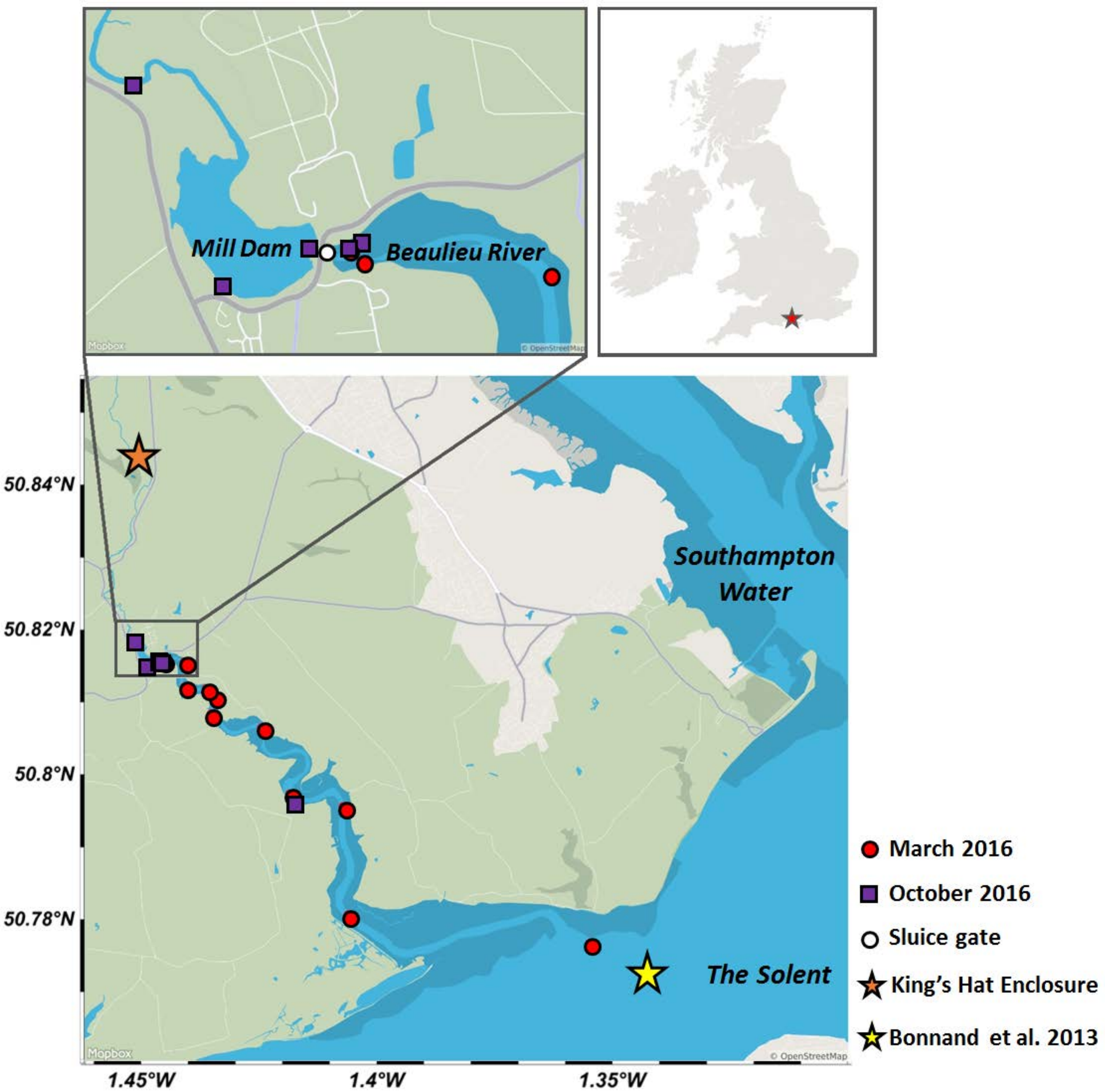
Figure 4. Combined O_2 profile for river sediment push cores (n=3). Solid horizontal lines show the standard deviation from the mean value (none for -2.0 to -0.2mm as only one set of measurements taken). Dotted line is the sediment-water interface and dashed line is the average oxic-anoxic boundary depth.

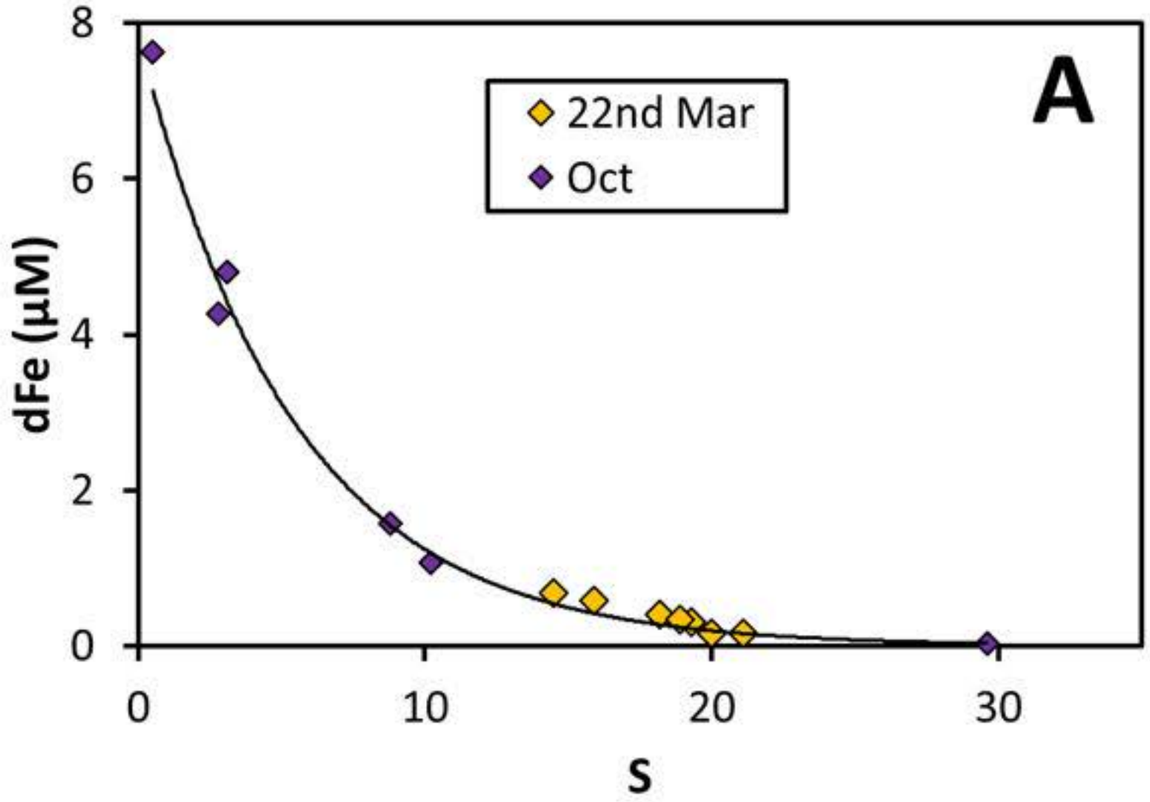
Figure 5. (A) Modelled evolution of the $\delta^{53}Cr$ value of Cr remaining in solution after reductive removal of Cr(VI) in sample B1 at S = <0.5, as a function of salinity. Sample B1 and B14 $\delta^{53}Cr$ and Cr_T values used to represent river and seawater endmembers respectively. River endmember $\delta^{53}Cr$ for conservative mixing line = -0.39‰ (see text for details). (B) Modelled evolution of Cr(VI)/Cr(III) for conservative mixing. River (S = 0) and seawater (S = 35) endmember Cr(VI) and Cr(III) values extrapolated from March data.

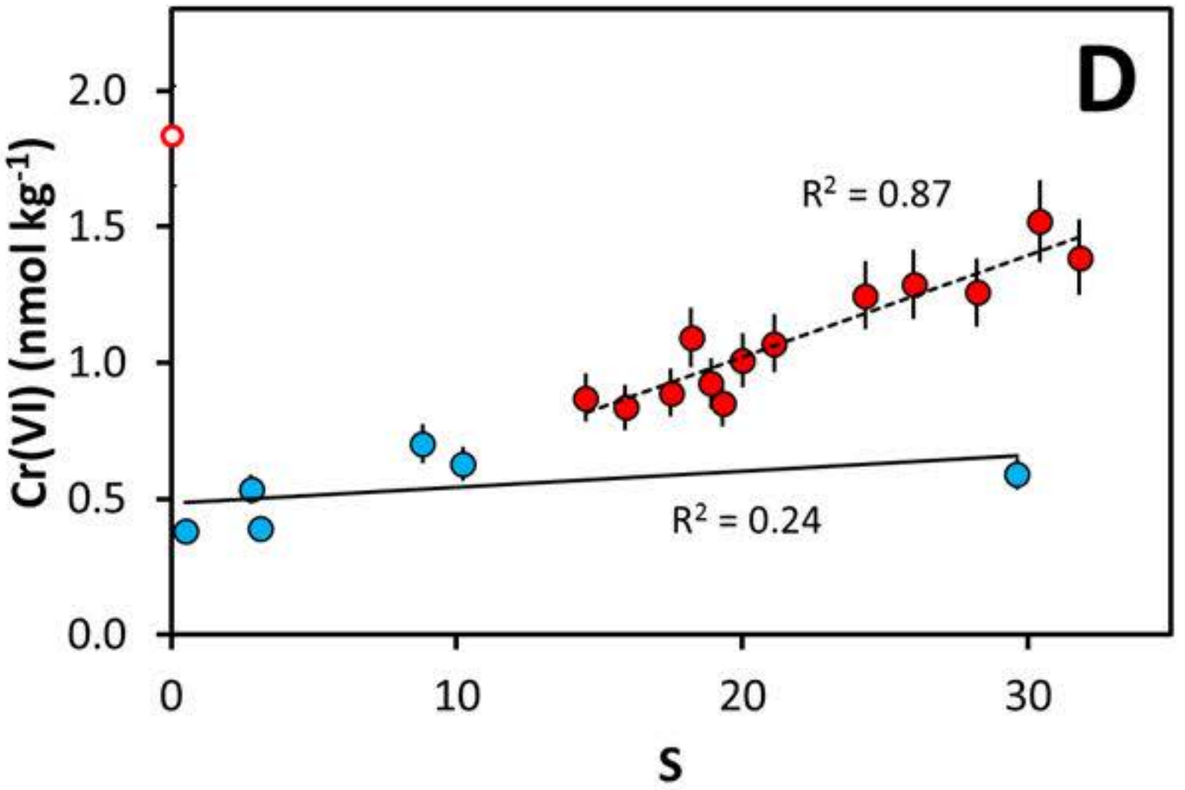
Figure 6. Schematic diagram showing potential mechanisms for Cr release and redox transformations within sediments/soils in the Beaulieu River catchment ([1]Frei et al. 2014; [2]D'Arcy et al. 2016; [3]Wu et al. 2017).

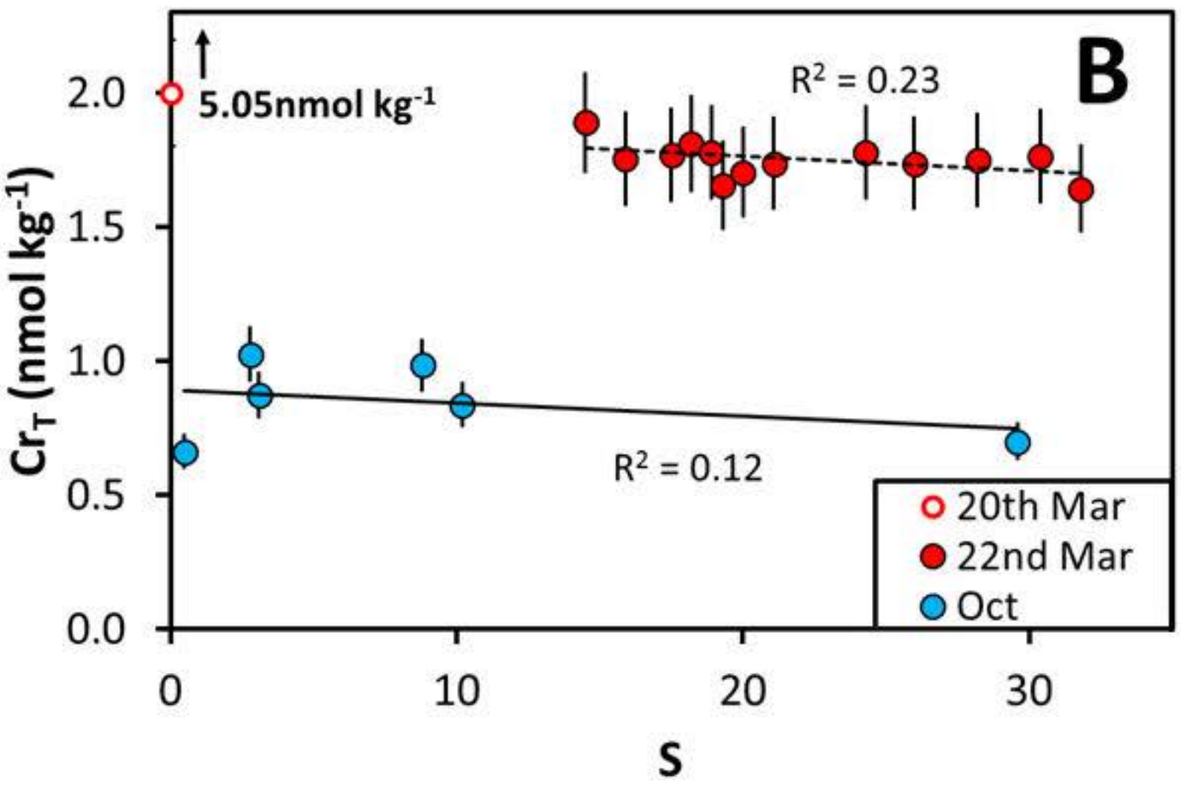
Figure 7. Modelled evolution of the $\delta^{53}Cr$ value of Cr during conservative mixing between a seawater endmember with Cr_T = 1.6 nM and $\delta^{53}Cr$ = 1.6‰, and river water endmembers with various Cr_T and $\delta^{53}Cr$ values.

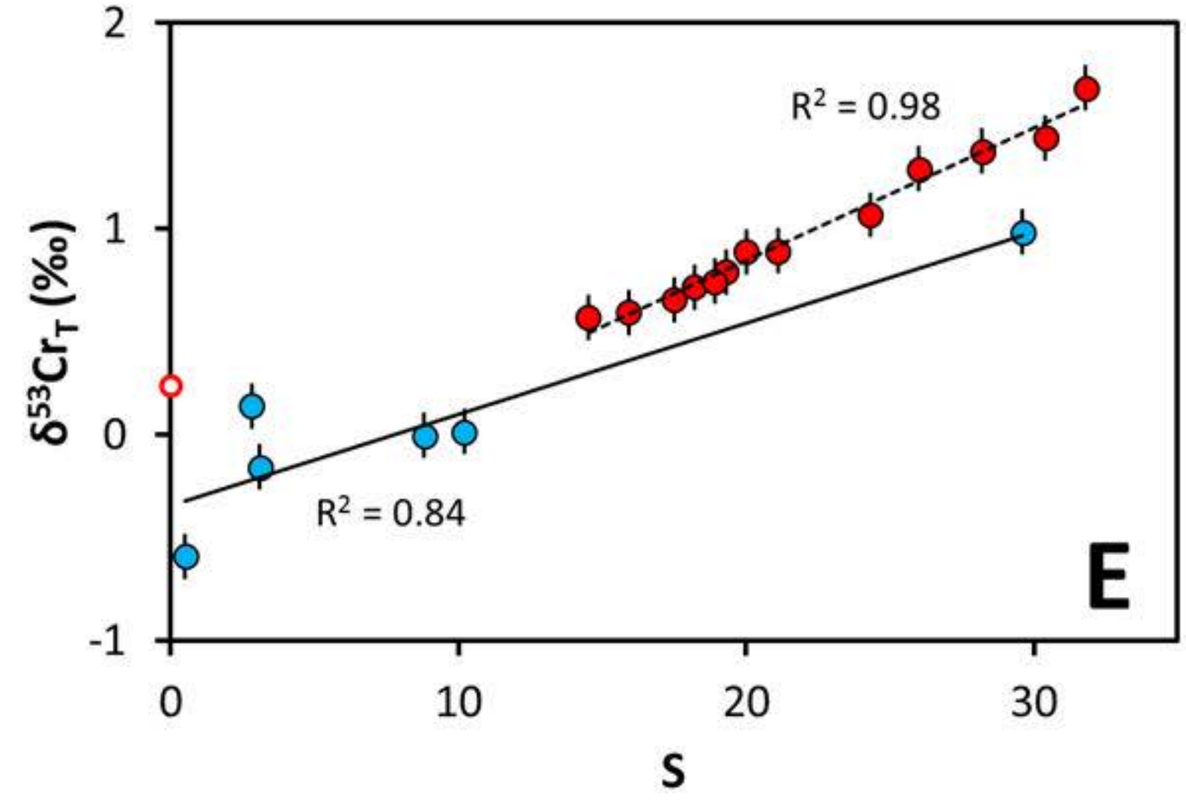

Glenariff River[1]
Connecticut River[2]
Parana River[3]
Uruguay River[1]
Beaulieu (this study)
1.5
0.5
-0.5
δ53Cr (‰)
0
20
40
60
Cr concentration (nM)

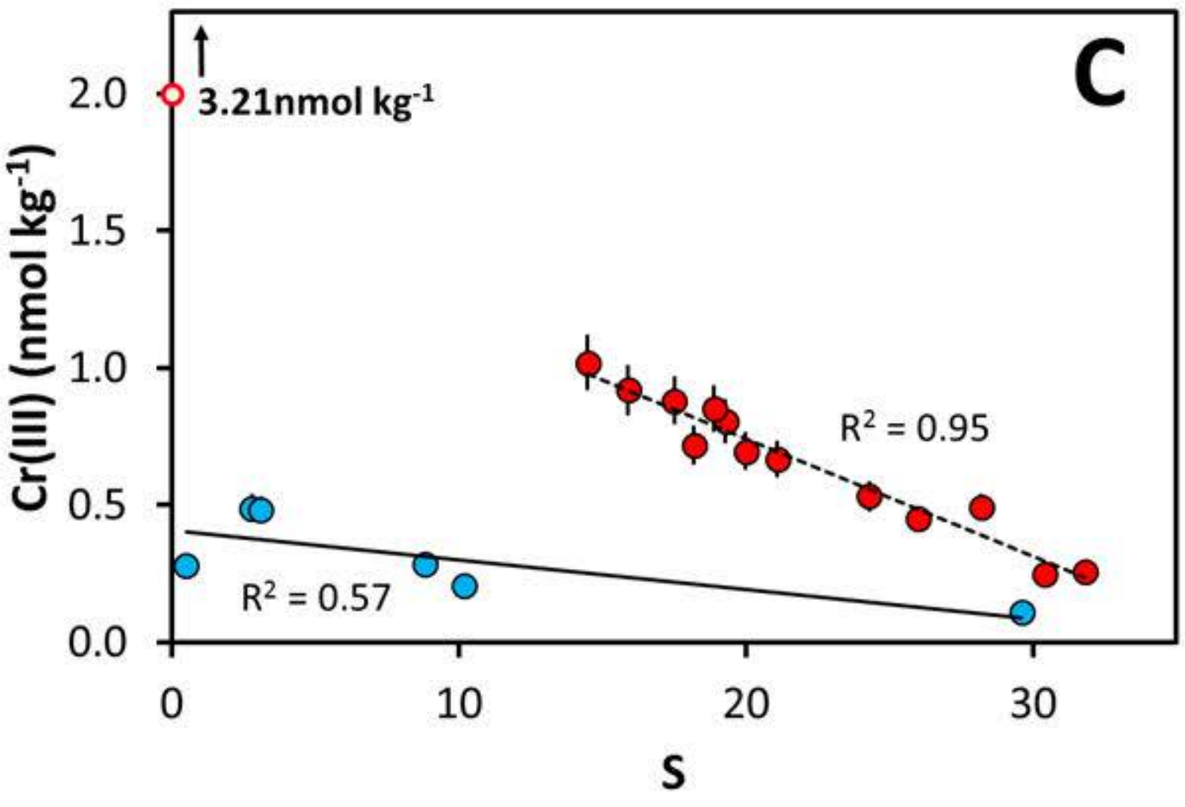

Mill Dam
Beaulieu River
Mapbox
© OpenStreetMap
Southampton Water
The Solent
50.84°N
50.82°N
50.8°N
50.78°N
1.45°W
1.4°W
1.35°W
March 2016
October 2016
Sluice gate
King's Hat Enclosure
Bonnand et al. 2013

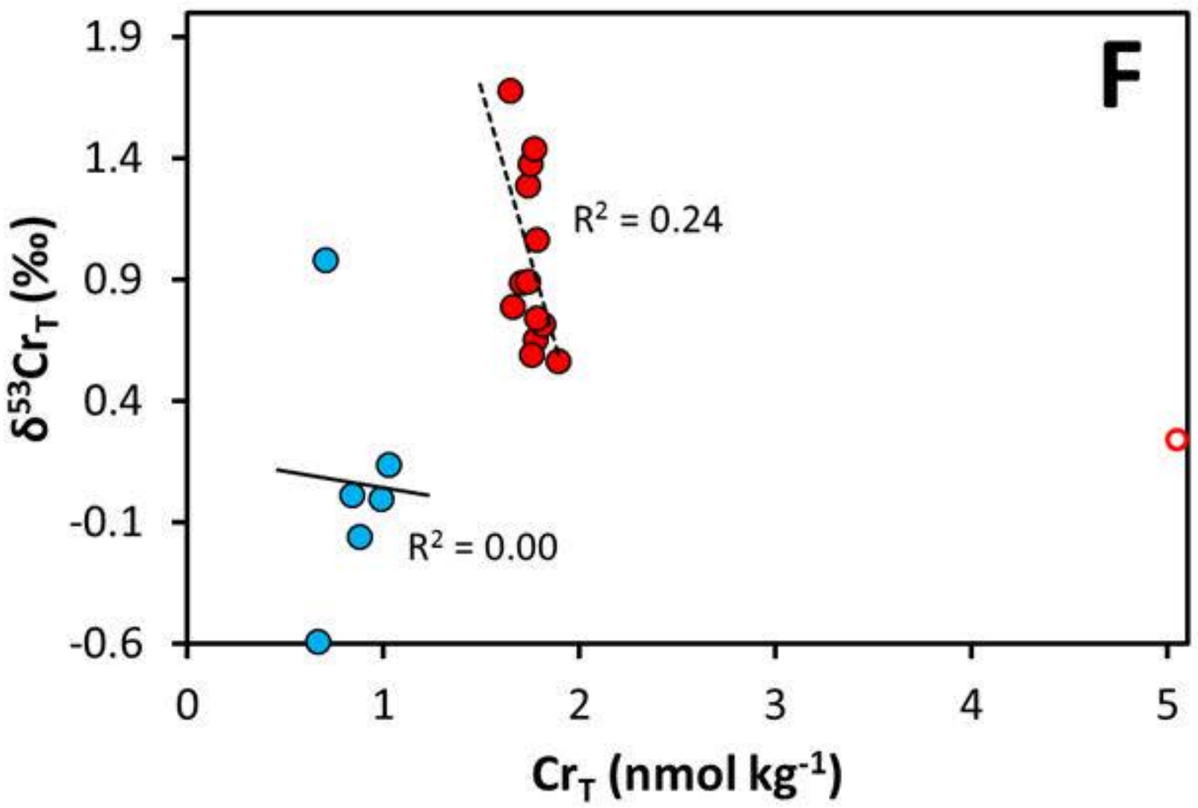

A
22nd Mar
Oct
dFe (µM)
S

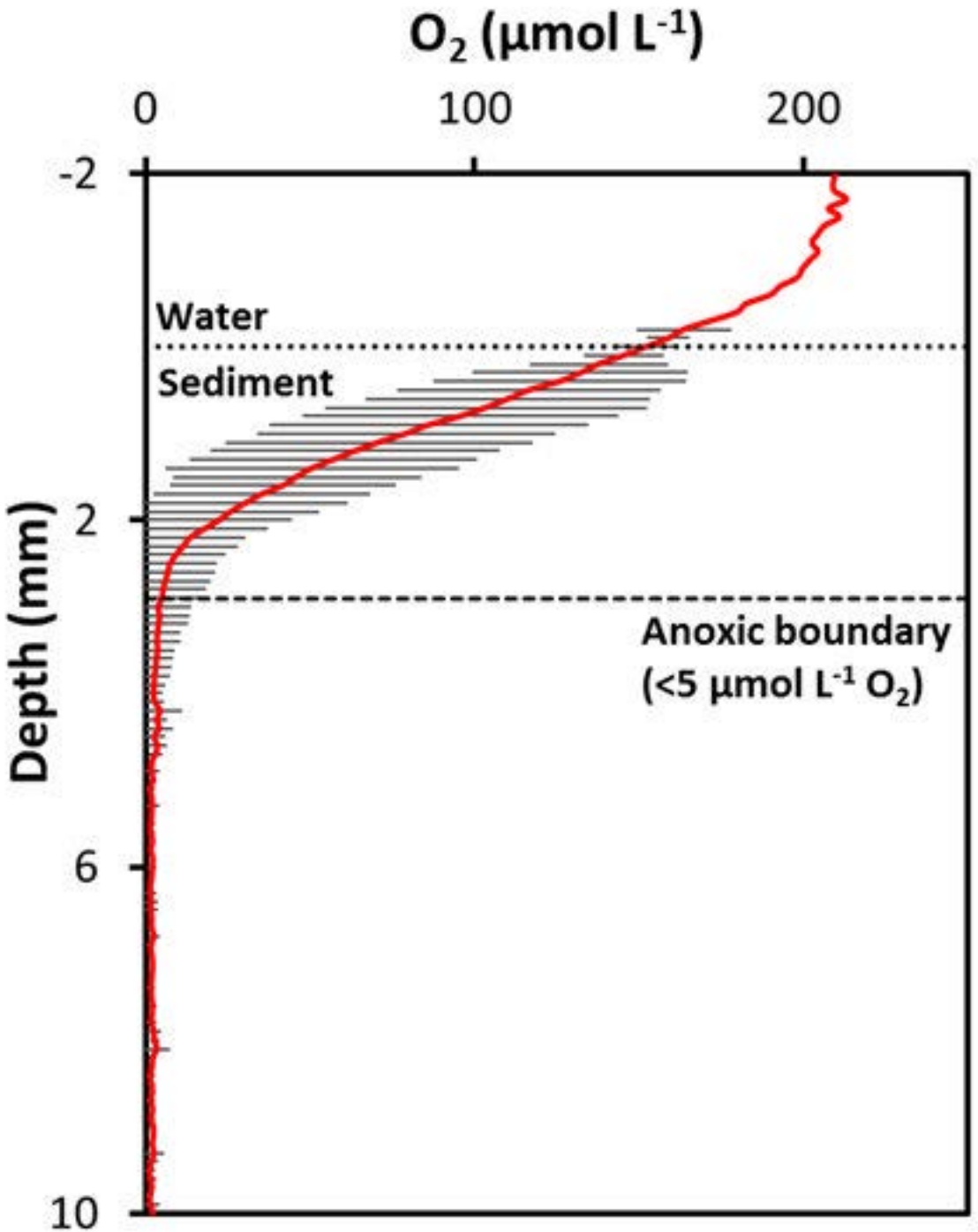

D
R² = 0.87
R² = 0.24
Cr(VI) (nmol kg⁻¹)
S

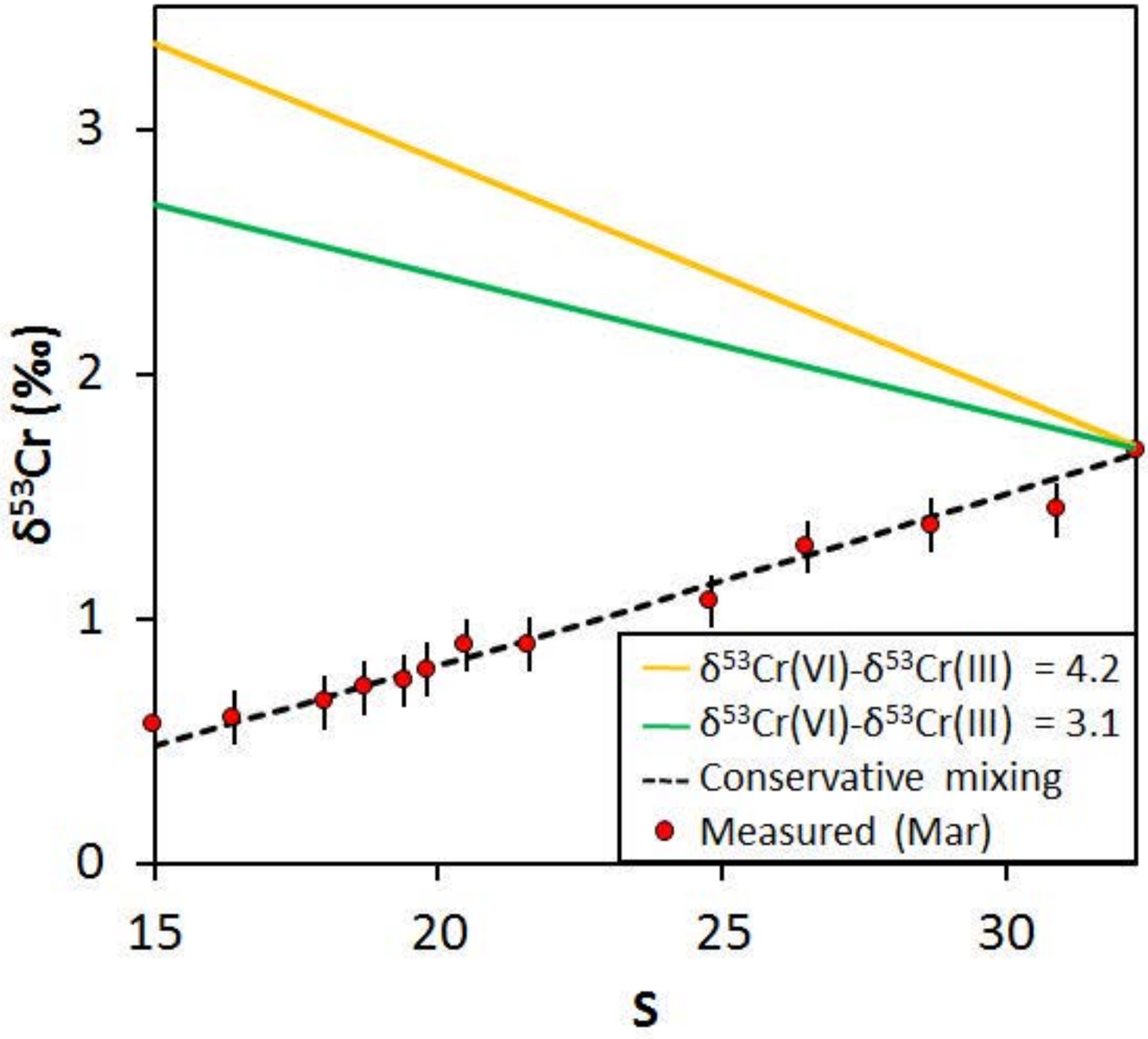

B
5.05nmol kg⁻¹
R² = 0.23
R² = 0.12
20th Mar
22nd Mar
Oct
Cr_T (nmol kg⁻¹)
S

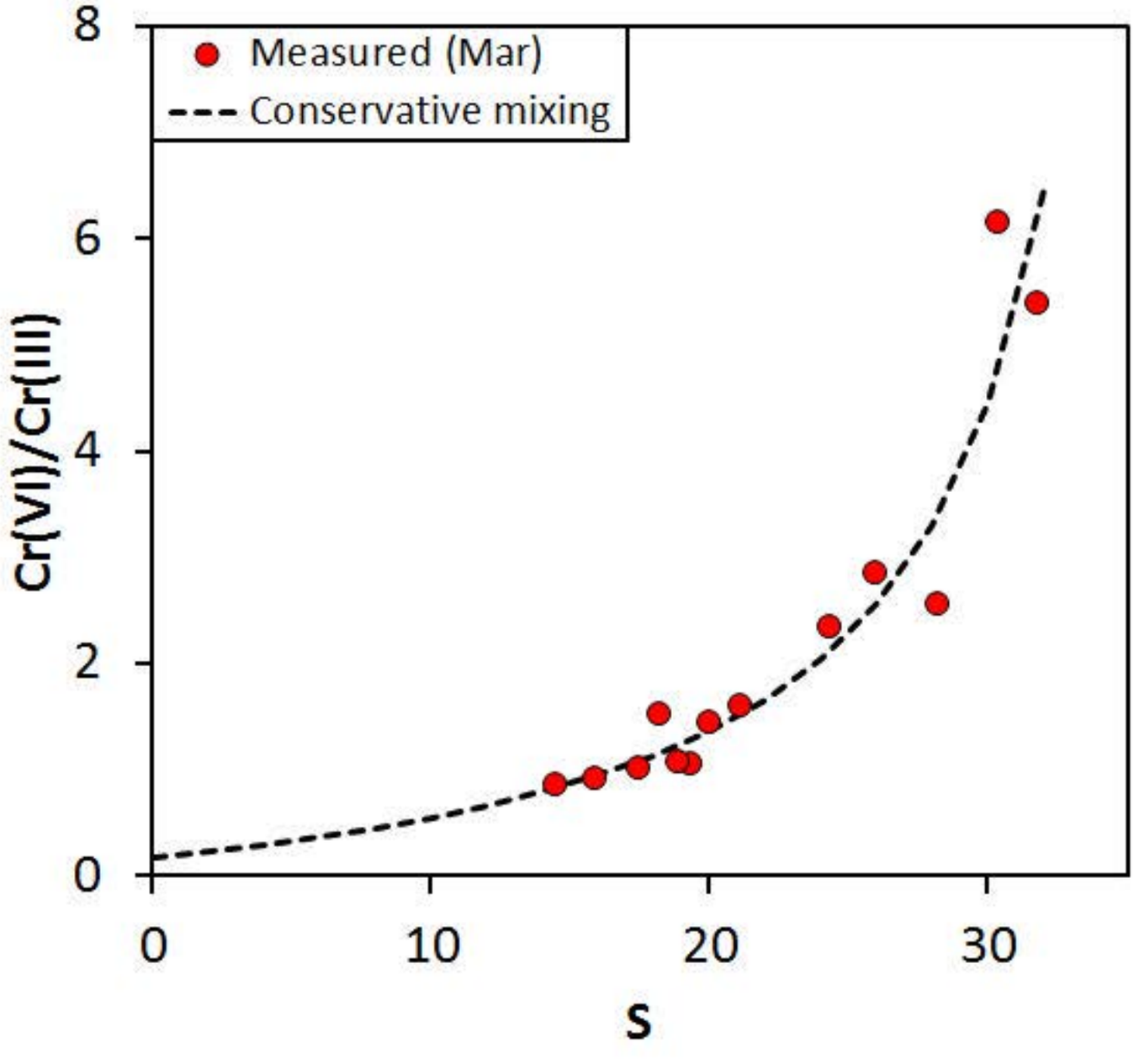

E
R² = 0.98
R² = 0.84
δ⁵³Cr_T (‰)
S

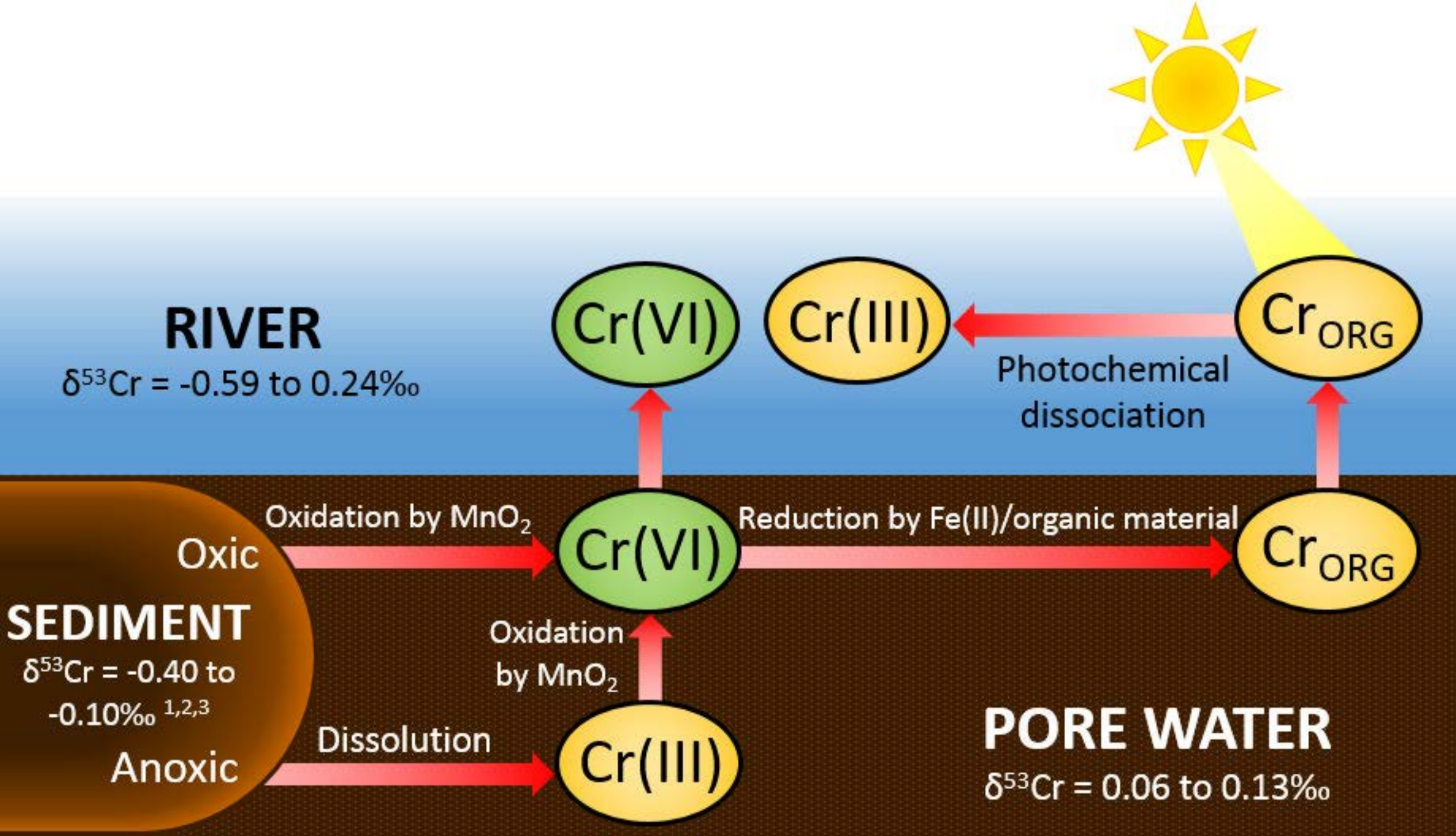

C
3.21nmol kg⁻¹
R² = 0.95
R² = 0.57
Cr(III) (nmol kg⁻¹)
S


F
R² = 0.24
R² = 0.00
δ⁵³Cr_T (‰)
Cr_T (nmol kg⁻¹)


O2 (µmol L-1)
0
100
200
-2
2
6
10
Depth (mm)
Water
Sediment
Anoxic boundary
(<5 µmol L-1 O2)


δ53Cr (‰)
3
2
1
0
15
20
25
30
S
δ53Cr(VI)-δ53Cr(III) = 4.2
δ53Cr(VI)-δ53Cr(III) = 3.1
Conservative mixing
Measured (Mar)


Cr(VI)/Cr(III)
8
6
4
2
0
0
10
20
30
S
Measured (Mar)
Conservative mixing


RIVER
δ53Cr = -0.59 to 0.24‰
Cr(VI)
Cr(III)
CrORG
Photochemical dissociation
Oxic
SEDIMENT
δ53Cr = -0.40 to -0.10‰ 1,2,3
Anoxic
Oxidation by MnO2
Cr(VI)
Reduction by Fe(II)/organic material
CrORG
Oxidation by MnO2
Dissolution
Cr(III)
PORE WATER
δ53Cr = 0.06 to 0.13‰

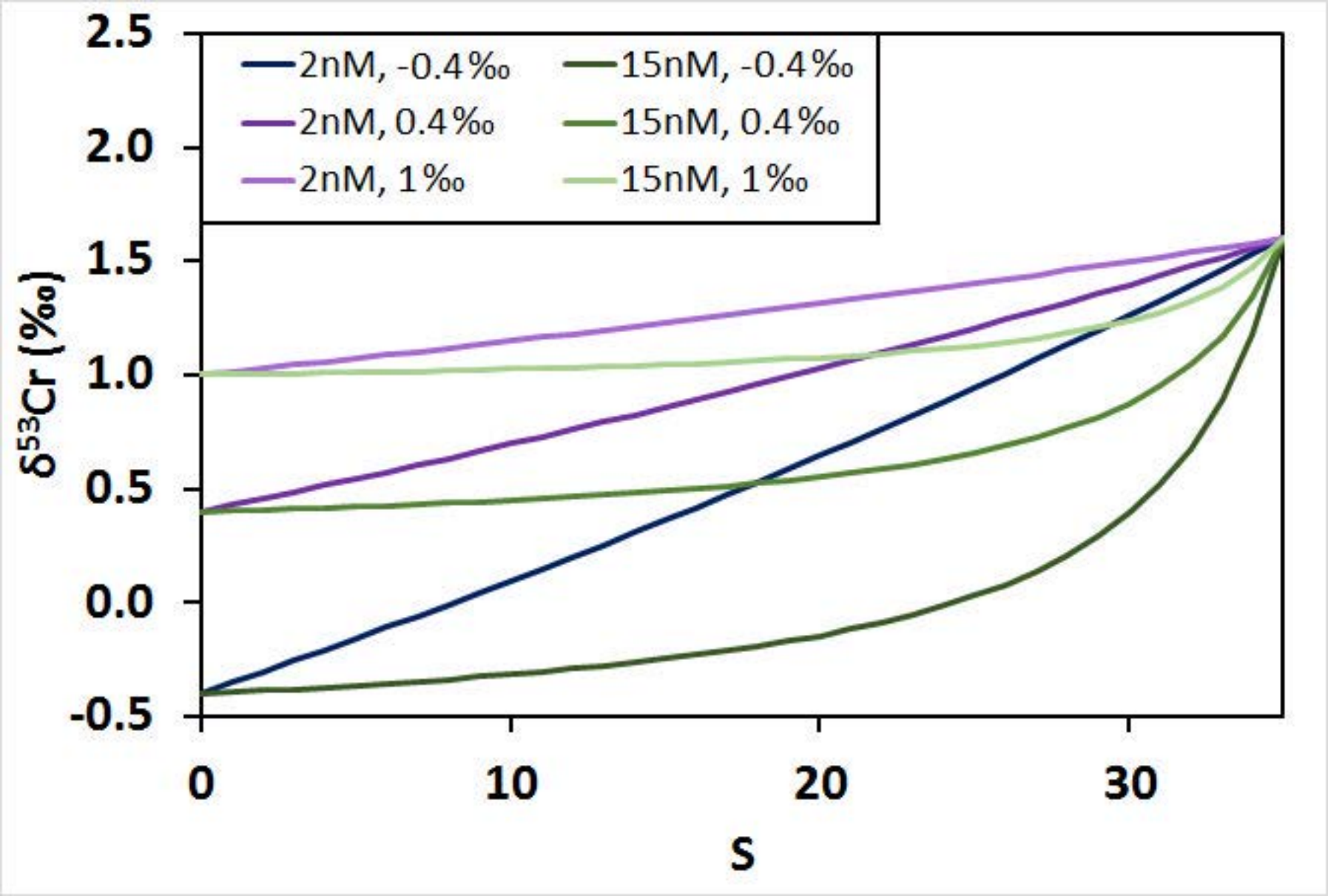

2nM, -0.4‰
15nM, -0.4‰
2nM, 0.4‰
15nM, 0.4‰
2nM, 1‰
15nM, 1‰
δ53Cr (‰)
2.5
2.0
1.5
1.0
0.5
0.0
-0.5
0
10
20
30
S

Table 1. Results of analysis of Cr(III) concentration by Fe(III) pre-concentration and addition of ^{53}Cr-enriched spike.

Standard type	**Calculated Cr(III) (nmol kg^{-1})**	**Measured Cr(III) (nmol kg^{-1})**	**Difference (%)**
Cr(III) only	11.00	11.23	2.0
	10.77	11.19	3.8
	10.58	10.48	-2.0
	10.04	10.44	1.9
	10.49	10.78	+2.8
	10.45	10.23	-2.1
Cr(III) + Cr(VI)	4.75	5.19	8.6
(1:1 mix)	4.81	5.23	8.0
	5.77	5.25	-9.7
	5.77	5.23	-10.0

Table 2. Composition of water samples from the Beaulieu River and Beaulieu estuary. BDL = Below Detection Limit.

Sampling date	Sample	Salinity (*S*)	pH	Temperature (°C)	$\delta^{53}Cr$ (‰)	2SD	Cr_T (nmol kg^{-1})	Cr(III) (nmol kg^{-1})	Cr(VI) (nmol kg^{-1})	dFe (µM)
20th March 2016	B1	0.0	7.68	8.6	0.24	0.02	5.05	3.21	1.83	12.63
22nd March 2016	B2	14.5	7.81	10.4	0.57	0.04	1.89	1.02	0.87	0.68
	B3	17.5	7.95	9.6	0.66	0.01	1.77	0.88	0.89	0.17
	B4	20.0	8.10	11.3	0.89	0.00	1.70	0.70	1.01	0.30
	B5	19.3	8.09	10.2	0.79	0.06	1.66	0.81	0.85	0.17
	B6	21.1	8.09	10.3	0.89	0.02	1.74	0.67	1.07	0.59
	B7	15.9	7.97	11.1	0.59	0.04	1.76	0.92	0.84	0.39
	B8	18.2	8.05	10.3	0.72	0.02	1.81	0.72	1.09	0.34
	B9	18.9	8.05	11.4	0.74	0.06	1.78	0.85	0.92	BDL
	B10	24.3	8.11	10.7	1.07	0.11	1.78	0.53	1.25	BDL
	B11	26.0	8.08	10.3	1.29	0.06	1.74	0.45	1.29	BDL
	B12	28.2	8.12	10.3	1.38	0.04	1.75	0.49	1.26	BDL
	B13	30.4	8.14	10.3	1.44	0.02	1.77	0.25	1.52	BDL
	B14	31.8	8.14	9.9	1.68	0.04	1.64	0.26	1.39	BDL
5th October 2016	B15	10.2	7.40	14.7	0.02	0.06	0.84	0.21	0.63	1.37
	B16	0.5	7.04	13.3	-0.59	0.05	0.66	0.28	0.38	7.55
	B17	2.8	7.68	14.7	0.14	0.01	1.03	0.49	0.54	4.22
	B18	3.1	7.31	13.7	-0.16	0.07	0.87	0.48	0.39	4.76
	B19	8.8	7.37	15.7	0.00	0.01	0.99	0.28	0.70	1.57
	B20	29.6	8.17	17.1	0.98	0.04	0.70	0.11	0.59	BDL

Table 3. Results for UV irradiated samples.

Sample	$Cr_T + Cr_{ORG}$ (nmol kg^{-1})	Cr_{ORG} (nmol kg^{-1})	Cr_{ORG} (%)	$\delta^{53}Cr$ $Cr_T + Cr_{ORG}$ (‰)	2SD	$\delta^{53}Cr$ Cr_{ORG} calculated (‰)
B1	6.17	1.13	18	0.06	0.01	-0.75
B2	2.52	0.63	25	0.40	0.01	-0.11