



Acuerdo sobre la Conservación de Albatros y Petreles

Fifth Meeting of the Population and Conservation Status Working Group

Florianópolis, Brazil, 9 - 10 May 2019

Pelagic Seabirds as Biomonitoros of Persistent Organic Pollutants in the Southwestern Atlantic

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SUMMARY

Organochlorine pesticides (OCPs), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs) comprised the so called persistent organic pollutants (POPs), globally banned and regulated since 2001 by the Stockholm Convention (UNEP). These compounds are characterized by their hydrophobicity, ubiquity, volatility and environmental persistence, exerting negative effects on organisms that inhabit different ecosystems. Chlorpyrifos, is the main organophosphate insecticide currently used in Argentina, whose toxicity has high environmental relevance. Pelagic seabirds are used as biomonitoros because they feed in remote areas and occupy high trophic levels. The objective of this study was to evaluate the concentrations of POPs and chlorpyrifos in feathers of adult pelagic seabirds (Black-browed Albatross, ACN, *Thalassarche melanophris* and Cape petrel, DAM, *Daption capense*) collected during their non-breeding seasons in the waters of the Argentine Sea, considering the relationship with sex. The analytical determinations were carried out by gas chromatography with electronic capture detector. Quantitatively, chlorpyrifos was the most important contaminant regardless of the species, without observing differences between sexes (both species combined). Considering the POPs, the distribution pattern obtained was: POCs> PCBs> PBDEs in both species, with the concentrations in DAM = 48.06; 9.93; 7.32 ng g⁻¹, respectively, while in ACN = 16.30; 7.23; 2.25 ng g⁻¹, respectively. The highest values of contaminants were found in DAM (POPs: males \bar{X} = 54.16 ng g⁻¹, females \bar{X} = 81.19 ng g⁻¹ and chlorpyrifos: males \bar{X} = 84.88 ng g⁻¹, females \bar{X} = 84.42 ng g⁻¹). This could be attributed to a greater exposure due to the mobilization of lipids with its consequent release of contaminants into the bloodstream during the non-breeding season. The results obtained were similar to those reported in other species of seabirds in the Northern Hemisphere.

Aves marinas pelágicas como biomonitoros de poluentes orgánicos persistentes en el Atlántico Sudoccidental

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RESUMEN

Los plaguicidas organoclorados (POCs), bifenilos policlorados (PCBs) y bifenilos polibromados (PBDEs) conforman los denominados poluentes orgánicos persistentes (POPs), prohibidos a nivel mundial y regulados desde 2001 por el Convenio de Estocolmo (UNEP). Los POPs están caracterizados por su alta persistencia, toxicidad crónica y ubicuidad, ejerciendo efectos negativos sobre organismos que habitan diferentes ecosistemas. El clorpirifós, es el principal insecticida organofosforado de uso actual en la Argentina, cuya toxicidad tiene alta relevancia ambiental. Las aves marinas pelágicas son utilizadas como biomonitoros debido a que se alimentan en áreas alejadas y ocupan altos niveles tróficos. El objetivo de este trabajo fue evaluar las concentraciones de POPs y clorpirifós en plumas de aves marinas pelágicas adultas (Albatros de ceja negra, ACN, *Thalassarche melanophrys* y Petrel damero, DAM, *Daption capense*) colectadas durante sus temporadas no reproductivas en aguas del Mar Argentino, considerando la relación con el sexo. Las determinaciones analíticas fueron llevadas a cabo por cromatografía gaseosa con detector de captura electrónica. El clorpirifós fue el contaminante cuantitativamente más importante independientemente de la especie, sin observarse diferencias entre sexos (ambas especies combinadas). Considerando los POPs, el patrón de distribución obtenido fue: POCs > PCBs > PBDEs en ambas especies, siendo las concentraciones en DAM = 48,06; 9,93; 7,32 ng g⁻¹, respectivamente, mientras que en ACN = 16,30; 7,23; 2,25 ng g⁻¹, respectivamente. Los mayores valores de contaminantes fueron encontrados en DAM (POPs: machos $\bar{X} = 54,16$ ng g⁻¹; hembras $\bar{X} = 81,19$ ng g⁻¹ y clorpirifós: machos $\bar{X} = 84,88$ ng g⁻¹; hembras $\bar{X} = 84,42$ ng g⁻¹), pudiendo ser atribuidos a una mayor exposición debido a la movilización de lípidos con su consecuente liberación de contaminantes al torrente sanguíneo durante la temporada no reproductiva. Los resultados obtenidos fueron similares a los reportados en otras especies de aves marinas del Hemisferio Norte.