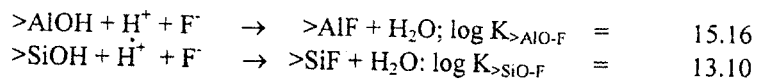


E2-54: Modeling of kaolinite-induced de-flouridation processes

H U S Wickramaratne¹ H A Dharmagunawardhane² S V R Weerasooriya¹
(¹ Institute of Fundamental Studies, Kandy ² Dept of Geology, University of Peradeniya)

Fluoride is both an essential and toxic trace element to human health. The WHO required that fluoride be present in the range of 0.5 to 1 mg/l in drinking water to prevent tooth and bone problems. In tropical parts in the world, such as in Sri Lanka, the drinking water contains high fluoride, 20 - 40 mg/l in some cases. Hence the fluoride concentration in drinking water should be regulated carefully to meet stringent conditions imposed by WHO. Previously kaolinite was suggested as a potential starting material for drinking water defluoridation. However, exact chemical mechanism of kaolinite-induced defluoridation process is not yet resolved. Hence, the aim of this research was to provide a mechanistic interpretation for fluoride adsorption process over a range of experimental conditions that are important environmentally.

Titration data showed that kaolinite (location:Rattota) possessed pHzpc at 8.9. Present experimental data signal the presence of 2 types of anion binding sites on kaolinite; namely >AlOH and >SiOH. Generalized diffuse-layer model calculations showed the following intrinsic acidity constants of protons. The overall fluoride adsorption mechanism onto kaolinite is quantitated considering the following reaction stoichiometries:



The physico-chemical data generated in this research provide the essential first step needed for the development of unit process for defluoridation of fluoride-rich drinking water.