

Vulnerability to ozone in anthropized ecosystems. Improvement of the threshold for risk assessment (VULNOZ project)

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▶ To cite this version:

Pierre Dizengremel, Yves Jolivet, Didier Le Thiec, Olivier Bethenod, Jean-François Castell, et al.. Vulnerability to ozone in anthropized ecosystems. Improvement of the threshold for risk assessment (VULNOZ project). 1er Colloque national d'Ecologie Scientifique, Sep 2010, Montpellier, France. 1 p. hal-01192222

HAL Id: hal-01192222 https://hal.science/hal-01192222

Submitted on 6 Jun 2020

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Ecologie[®]2010 • •

Vulnerability to ozone in anthropized ecosystems. Improvement of the threshold for risk assessment (VULNOZ project)

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Context: In industrialized countries, ozone (O_3) is an important gaseous air pollutant with phytotoxic effects due to strong oxidizing properties. Model projections using IPCC scenarii for the 21st century indicate that concentrations of ozone will by far exceed internationally accepted critical levels. An increased vulnerability of agroecosystems could occur. Over the past decades, the risk assessment for O_3 effects on European vegetation has driven the development of policies primarily based on the AOT40 exposure index. There is now accumulating evidence that the responses of vegetation to ozone are better related to the absorbed dose (Cumulative Ozone Uptake CUO) through stomata than to external concentrations, the absorbed dose being defined as the balance between the O_3 taken up and the detoxification capacity. However, until now, the detoxification capacity of plants remains poorly quantified, and detoxification functions to be included in photosynthesis models are needed. Moreover, the O_3 taken up is often assimilated as the canopy O_3 flux, neglecting the non-stomatal flux.

O₃ physiological impact and detoxifying functions



Summary of the detoxifying processes to be tested by biochemical and molecular analyses. After validation, the resulting detoxifying functions will be included in photosynthesis models.



maize

wheat poplar



Relative to CUO, the Rubisco activity and CO2 assimilation were decreased. By contrast, higher PEPc activities were shown for C3 plants (poplar and wheat) not for C4 plants (maize). Based on this results maize is less resistant species than wheat and poplar.



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Partitioning stomatal and non-stomatal fluxes



The improvement of the parameterisation of ozone deposition requires to quantify O_3 fluxes and stomata conductances over various ecosystems with a unified and comparable experimental method.