

Enhanced weathering of alkaline waste materials for CO₂ mineralisation

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On site, large scale mineralisation of CO₂ from point sources can become a central Carbon Capture & Storage (CCS) technology to help decrease CO₂ in the air and oceans. Carbonate minerals are readily formed when CO₂ is absorbed into an alkaline solution containing divalent cations such as calcium. At the same time, waste materials containing divalent cation carbonates can potentially be upcycled to new, valuable materials, as part of the mineralisation process.

We studied simultaneous dissolution of alkaline waste materials and CO₂ mineralisation in 20 L reactors, in batch and multistage configurations. Solution pH and composition were determined from liquid samples and CO₂ absorption into solution was determined directly from the gas flow inlet and outlet concentrations. Using cation solution concentration and pH and the geochemical speciation program, PHREEQC, we estimated the amount of CO₂ that was mineralised.

Experiments show significant differences between CO₂ absorption and mineralisation potential depending on the initial leaching solution composition and the time and rate at which CO₂ is introduced into the system. The results contribute to our understanding of ex situ CO₂ mineralisation processes, which is central for developing economically and industrially feasible CCS technologies.