

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Environmental Research



journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/envres

Antimicrobial resistance genes are enriched in aerosols near impacted urban surface waters in La Paz, Bolivia

Olivia Ginn^a, Dennis Nichols^b, Lucas Rocha-Melogno^c, Aaron Bivins^d, David Berendes^e, Freddy Soria^f, Marcos Andrade^{g,h}, Marc A. Deshusses^c, Mike Bergin^c, Joe Brown^{a,i,*}

^a School of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, GA, 30332, United States

^b Rollins School of Public Health, Emory University, Atlanta, GA, United States

^c Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, And Duke Global Health Institute, Duke University, Durham, NC, 27708, United States

^d Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Earth Science, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN, 46656, United States

^e Division of Foodborne, Waterborne, and Environmental Diseases, National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, GA, United States

^f Centro de Investigación en Agua, Energía y Sostenibilidad, Universidad Católica Boliviana "San Pablo", La Paz, Bolivia

^g Laboratory for Atmospheric Physics, Institute for Physics Research, Universidad Mayor de San Andres, La Paz, Bolivia

h Department of Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences, University of Maryland, College Park, MD, USA

¹ Department of Environmental Sciences and Engineering, Gillings School of Global Public Health, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC, USA

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords: Bioaerosol Wastewater *E. coli* Mobile integron Dissemination Antibiotic resistance

ABSTRACT

Antibiotic resistance poses a major global health threat. Understanding emergence and dissemination of antibiotic resistance in environmental media is critical to the design of control strategies. Because antibiotic resistance genes (ARGs) may be aerosolized from contaminated point sources and disseminated more widely in localized environments, we assessed ARGs in aerosols in urban La Paz, Bolivia, where wastewater flows in engineered surface water channels through the densely populated urban core. We quantified key ARGs and a mobile integron (MI) via ddPCR and E. coli spp. as a fecal indicator by culture over two years during both the rainy and dry seasons in sites near wastewater flows. ARG targets represented major antibiotic groups-tetracyclines (tetA), fluoroquinolines (qnrB), and beta-lactams (bla_{TEM})-and an MI (intl1) represented the potential for mobility of genetic material. Most air samples (82%) had detectable targets above the experimentally determined LOD: most commonly blaTEM and intl1 (68% and 47% respectively) followed by tetA and *qnrB* (17% and 11% respectively). ARG and MI densities in positive air samples ranged from 1.3×10^1 to 6.6 \times 10^4 gene copies/m³ air. Additionally, we detected culturable *E. coli* in the air (52% of samples <1 km from impacted surface waters) with an average density of 11 CFU/m³ in positive samples. We observed decreasing density of bla_{TEM} with increasing distance up to 150 m from impacted surface waters. To our knowledge this is the first study conducting absolute quantification and a spatial analysis of ARGs and MIs in ambient urban air of a city with contaminated surface waters. Environments in close proximity to urban wastewater flows in this setting may experience locally elevated concentrations of ARGs, a possible concern for the emergence and dissemination of antimicrobial resistance in cities with poor sanitation.

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envres.2021.110730

Received 8 October 2020; Received in revised form 5 January 2021; Accepted 6 January 2021 Available online 11 January 2021 0013-9351/© 2021 Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Abbreviations: AR, antibiotic resistance; ARG, antibiotic resistance gene; mobile genetic element (MGE), mobile integron (MI); LMICs, low- and middle-income countries; OWC, open waste canal; ASTER, Advanced Spaceborne Thermal Emission and Reflection Radiometer; GDEM, Global Digital Elevation Model; ACI, Andersen Cascade Impactor; FIB, fecal indicator bacteria; CFU, colony-forming unit; ddPCR, droplet digital PCR; ESBL, extended spectrum β-lactamases; LOD, limit of detection; gc, gene copies.

^{*} Corresponding author. Department of Environmental Sciences and Engineering, Gillings School of Global Public Health, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, CB 7431, Rosenau Hall, Chapel Hill, NC, USA.

E-mail addresses: oginn3@gatech.edu (O. Ginn), dennis.george.nichols@emory.edu (D. Nichols), lucas.rocha.melogno@duke.edu (L. Rocha-Melogno), abivins@nd.edu (A. Bivins), uws8@cdc.gov (D. Berendes), soriakaigan@gmail.com (F. Soria), mandrad3@umd.edu (M. Andrade), marc.deshusses@duke.edu (M.A. Deshusses), michael.bergin@duke.edu (M. Bergin), joebrown@unc.edu (J. Brown).

1. Introduction

Antibiotic resistance (AR) is a serious threat to global public health (World Health Organization, 2019). Increased antibiotic use coupled with poor antibiotic stewardship has contributed to the rapid development and dissemination of resistance in microbial communities and ultimately the emergence of AR as a global crisis (Davies and Davies, 2010; de J. Sosal et al., 2010; Nadimpalli et al., 2020; Pruden et al., 2006; Vikesland et al., 2017). Bacteria may inherit resistance, acquire resistance by horizontal gene transfer (Bennett, 2008) or may possess resistance genes conferring resistance indirectly (Allen et al., 2010). Genes that enable resistance to antimicrobials are known as antibiotic resistance genes (ARGs); genes that confer horizontal gene transfer ability or enable bacteria to take up resistance genes from the environment are known as mobile genetic elements (MGEs); and genes that are physically related to MGEs and enable the recombination and functional conversion of ARGs are known as mobile integrons (MIs) (Barraud et al., 2010; Ma et al., 2017; Mazel, 2006).

Although most studies have focused on AR development and dissemination in clinical settings (Schrag et al., 2004; Wellington et al., 2013), understanding the fate and transport of ARGs in all types of environmental media is crucial to controlling AR, especially because the full extent of AR dispersion in the environment is still poorly characterized. Sabatino et al. recently detected AR residues in a highly diluted marine environment far from any waste sources, showcasing the potential for extensive AR circulation at large scales and subsequent introduction into previously susceptible microbial species and populations where rapid resistance development may occur (Sabatino et al., 2020). A noteworthy example of rapid resistance development is the class A enzyme of β-lactamase genes, Cefotaximase (CTX-M), which appears to have originated in the *Kluyvera* spp. bacteria that exist in both environmental media and the human gut (Cantón, 2009). From first identification in the 1980s to the 2000s, CTX-M had displaced other variants to become the dominant extended spectrum β -lactamase (ESBL) in countries where testing occurred (Cantón et al., 2012; Cantón and Coque, 2006), with environmental transmission implicated. Closely related in the same class and often co-occurring with CTX-M are the Temoneira (TEM) enzyme and Pseudomonas extended resistance (PER) enzyme (Celenza et al., 2006; Shahid et al., 2011). The TEM enzyme, first discovered in E. coli isolated from a patient in Athens, Greece in 1965, has since expanded to include 223 new and novel variants from all over the globe (Rahman et al., 2018; Steward et al., 2000). Other clinically relevant ARGs of putative environmental heritage include the qnr gene family which confers mild resistance to fluoroquinolones. These genes, often found in Enterobacteraciae affecting humans, are thought to have originated in several aquatic species of bacteria like Shewanella algae and Vibrio splendidus. (Cantón, 2009; Lupo et al., 2012).

Evidence exists indicating prevalent ARGs and high potential for mobility in environments such as water runoff from animal feedlots; air, soils and groundwater surrounding wastewater and solid waste treatment plants; air surrounding poultry farms and markets; and other sites where concentrated fecal wastes exist (Chapin et al., 2005; de J. Sosal et al., 2010; Echeverria-Palencia et al., 2017; Gao et al., 2018, 2016; Gibbs et al., 2006; Hu et al., 2018; Li et al., 2018, 2016; Liu et al., 2012; McEachran et al., 2015; Neher et al., 2020; Pal et al., 2016; Rizzo et al., 2013; Sancheza et al., 2016; Stange and Tiehm, 2020; Zhang et al., 2017; Zhu et al., 2013). In a few high-income cities across the globe, a variety of ARGs have been detected and quantified in aerosols. Xie et al. (2019) and Wang et al. (2019) detected ARGs encoding resistance to β -lactams, tetracyclines, and fluoroquinolones in ambient urban air from Chinese cities. Echeverria-Palencia et al. (2017) detected aerosolized blaSHV, a β-lactam resistance-encoding ARG, in densities ranging from 0.2 to 600 gene copies (gc)/m3 air in four cities in California. Less well characterized are sources and densities of specific ARGs of concern in cities in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), however. These are settings where conditions favor AR emergence and transfer, and where uncontained, concentrated fecal waste may be present in densely populated areas with a high burden of enteric disease and poor antibiotic stewardship (Graham et al., 2018; Nadimpalli et al., 2020; Witte, 2000; Zhang et al., 2017). Even where wastewater treatment is successful in removing a majority of fecal bacteria in these settings, AR-bacteria can persist post-treatment (Kumar et al., 2020). Where sanitation systems are completely absent or operating ineffectively, ARG diversity and AR protein concentrations are even more likely to be widely disseminated in the environment (Pehrsson et al., 2016), presenting possible exposure risks to nearby populations.

We hypothesized that where urban wastewater flows are uncontained and open to the atmosphere, ARGs would be detectable and quantifiable in aerosols nearby. The absolute densities of specific ARGs of concern – necessary for developing mechanistic models for fate, transport, and exposure – remain a critical unknown in these settings. We further hypothesized that aerosolized ARGs would decrease with distance from potential sources. The city of La Paz, Bolivia, where wastewater is conveyed in open, engineered channels shared with surface water, provided an opportunity to test these hypotheses.

2. Methods

2.1. Sample sites and collection

We collected samples during both the rainy (March) and dry (May-July) seasons in La Paz, Bolivia (March/2018, May-June/2018, March/ 2019, June-July/2019) where a network of rivers receives untreated sewage discharge, industry effluent, and stormwater runoff. Most of the waterway flows in a series of engineered channels (Alarcon Calderon, 1996; Poma et al., 2016) consisting of highly impacted surface waters, which we refer to here as open wastewater canals (OWCs). The channels incorporate engineered cascades - made possible by the steep elevation gradients throughout the city - intended to decrease the appearance of pollution and increase dissolved oxygen content (Alarcon Calderon, 1996). The main waterway, the Choqueyapu River, begins as a small stream at Pamapalarama, flowing south through central La Paz, home to 900,000 people (1900 persons/km²) (INE, 2018; Ohno, A; Marui, A; Castro, ES; Reyes, AA; Elio-Calvo, D; Kasitani, H; Ishii, Y; Yamaguchi, 1997). As it flows through the city, the Choqueyapu is joined by tangential tributaries including the Orkojahuira, Irpavi, and Achumani rivers (Fig. 1).

During the first three sampling events, we identified 13 sites along the Choqueyapu River meeting the following criteria: (1) proximity to OWCs, (2) accessible at ground level, and (3) unintrusive to residents or passers-by. We identified two control sites >1 km from known concentrated wastewaters or other contaminated sources: (1) Chacaltaya, a weather station and environmental observatory located at 5380 m in elevation and far from human habitation and (2) Pampalarama, a pristine site near the Choqueyapu headwaters. In a final sampling event (June-July 2019), we chose an expanded range of sites to further interrogate the spatial relationship of targets in relation to the OWCs, with particular attention to distances of 200 m or less from OWCs. We based selected sampling locations on the Advanced Spaceborne Thermal Emission and Reflection Radiometer (ASTER) Global Digital Elevation Model (GDEM) version 2 data for the study area (NASA/ME-TI/AIST/Japan Space Systems and Team, 2009) and a hydrographic model in ArcGIS Version 10.7.1 to generate the major streamlines according to the topography for the La Paz metro area. Based on the four main OWCs, we randomly selected sites ≤ 200 m from the mid-point of OWCs and at least 150 m from the nearest other site. Given the diurnal cycles of atmospheric stability and the resulting impact on bioaerosol dissemination (Jacob, 1999; Jones and Harrison, 2004), we assessed the potential temporal associations of ARG densities in the air through sampling both in the morning and afternoon at each site.



Fig. 1. (A) Location of La Paz, Bolivia. (B) La Paz Municipality boundaries with all sampling sites and control sites. (C) Sampling locations in relation to covered and uncovered OWCs.

2.2. Sample collection, culture, extraction, and analysis

We used the Six-Stage Viable Andersen Cascade Impactor (ACI) with selective media in six partitioned chambers at a flow rate of approximately 28.5 L/min to assess viability of *E. coli* at a subset of sites (Andersen, 1958) (ACI, Thermo ScientificTM, USA), as an indicator of aerosolized fecal material. We used AquaTest Medium (Sisco Research Laboratories PVT. LTD., India) to select for *E. coli* (Bain et al., 2015; Brown et al., 2020; Genter et al., 2019; Magro et al., 2014). We incubated plates overnight at 37 °C. The limit of detection for the culture analysis was determined by dividing 1 colony-forming unit (CFU, the minimum count per plate) by the volume of air sampled.

To collect larger volumes for molecular analysis, we sampled for approximately 4 h per sampling event using the ACD-200 BobCat Dry Filter Air Sampler (InnovaPrep, Drexel, MO, USA) with 52 mm electret filters and a flow rate of 150 L/min, to yield a total sample volume of 36 m^3 of air per sample. We used a single-use wet foam carbon compressed elution kit (InnovaPrep, Drexel, MO, USA) to flush the filter following the manufacturer's instructions, yielding approximately 6 mL of liquid. In a subset of locations, we collected 150 mL grab samples of OWC water for further molecular analysis.

We treated filter eluant with a guanidine thiocyanate-based lysis buffer (UNEX; Microbiologics, St. Cloud, MN, USA) in a 1:1 volumetric ratio, stored these in SK38 bead tubes (Bertin Corp, MD, USA) and cryovials and transported them to our laboratory in Atlanta. We used 900 μ L of sample eluant and UNEX mixture for extraction. We extracted DNA per the bacterial/viral UNEX protocol (Hill et al., 2015) using the following steps we: 1) treated the sample and UNEX mixture with 100% ethanol to bind DNA to HiBind mini spin columns (Omega BioTek, GA, USA), 2) added 70% ethanol to spin column to wash excess debris from filter and 3) eluted extracted nucleic acids in 50–75 μ L of 10 mM Tris-1 mM EDTA (pH 8) and 4) stored them in a -80 °C freezer until further

analysis. We vortexed OWC samples and then followed the same extraction and storage procedures as for eluted air samples.

In total, we collected 27 ACI samples near OWCs (13 wet season, 14 dry season) for *E. coli* enumeration by culture, 71 high-volume samples for molecular analysis near OWCs (13 wet season, 58 dry season), and 4 grab samples of OWC water. The distance to nearest OWCs was a mean of 93 m (range: 1–778 m). We further collected 4 ACI (3 wet season, 1 dry season) and 4 high-volume (2 wet season, 2 dry season) control samples in the unimpacted settings far from human habitation. Sampling locations are shown in relation to OWCs in Fig. 1.

2.3. ARG detection and quantitative analysis

We conducted absolute quantification of ARGs via droplet digital PCR (ddPCRTM, Bio-Rad, Hercules, CA, USA). ARG targets spanned three major antibiotic groups commonly used in low-income settings and whose ARGs have been detected previously in environmental samples: tetracyclines (*tetA*) (Guarddon et al., 2011), fluoroquinolones (*qnrB*) (Cavé et al., 2016), and β -lactams (*bla_{TEM}*) (Lachmayr et al., 2009). Resistance to tetracycline in clinical isolates has been reported in multiple studies in Bolivia, including a study in two urban cities of Bolivia where 93% of *E. coli* isolates from children's stool were not susceptible to the antibiotic and another study in La Paz, Bolivia where 28% of ETEC isolates from children's stool were as a sours at 28% prevalence (Salazar et al., 2020) and 50% prevalence (Medina et al., 2020). Fluoroquinolone resistance has been reported in one study in

Bolivia where overall, qnr genes were detected in 63% of commensal enterobacteria isolated from healthy children's stools and specifically, gnrB was detected in 60% of isolates (Pallecchi et al., 2009). Additionally, another study in Bolivia reported fluoroquinolones as a common antibiotic used to treat upper respiratory infections (Cordoba et al., 2017). Class A β -lactamases such as TEM varieties are known to be present in South American countries due to the widespread distribution of β -lactam antibiotics (Villegas et al., 2008). Though the other three assays are specific to the individual gene, the *bla_{TEM}* assay used in our analysis incorporates 135 variants within the TEM family of β -lactam resistance including resistance to penicillins, cephalosporins, carbapenems and other antibiotics that have a β -lactic ring in their structure. The TEM β-lactamases can be both ESBL (extended spectrum β-lactamases) and inhibitor resistant and are the most clinically significant. Therefore this assay accounts for a wide range of resistance mechanisms and target drugs that are commonly used in this sampling locations (Lachmayr et al., 2009).

Integron class 1 (*intI1*) has been frequently detected in environmental media (Ma et al., 2017; Zhang et al., 2009) and was included, as an additional target, to assess potential genetic mobility. Through enabling gene cassette movement and their physical association to MGEs, integrons aid in the spread of antibiotic resistance in gram negative bacteria and when present in the environment or in bacteria, they indicate that resistance has either been acquired or may be acquired in the future (Barraud et al., 2010; Gillings et al., 2015; Mazel, 2006). One study by Leverstein-Van Hall et al. found that the detection and presence of integrons in *Enterobacteriaceae* is strongly associated with resistance to multiple antibiotics and in the case of some

Table 1

Forward and reverse primers and probes for each assay are listed. Reaction mixes were set to a total volume of 20 μ L, containing a primer concentration of 900 nM, probe concentration of 250 nM and 1X Supermix for Bio-Rad's QX200TM Droplet Digital PCR system (Bio-Rad, Hercules, CA, USA). We used the ddPCRTM Supermix for Probes for all targets except *bla_{TEM}*, for which we used ddPCRTM Supermix for Residual DNA Quantification due to the known presence of residual sequence in less purified commercial supermixes (Chiang et al., 2005). On each ddPCRTM plate for all assays, we included 2 positive control wells using a gBlockTM (IDT, Coralville, Iowa, US) containing all of the target ARG sequences in its length, diluted to approximately 10³ gc/uL of reaction mixture. For reproducibility, the positive control sequence is also included in a supplementary file. Additionally, we included at least 2 no template controls using molecular water to control for contamination via human or other error and to assess the rate of false positives. For 2 replicates of each sample extract, we quantified gene copies of each target in the ddPCR reaction mixture (2 μ L extract, 21 μ L of ddPCR reagents) and averaged the results together.

Gene target	Primers	Probes	Limit of Detection (gc/uL ddPCR reaction mix)	Cycling conditions
tetA	F: CCGCGCTTTGGGTCATT R: TGGTCGCGTCCCAGTGA	FAM-TCGGCGAGGATCG-BHQ1	0.19	95 °C for 10 min 45 cycles of 95 °C for 30 s and 56 °C for 1 min 98 °C for 10 min
qnrB	F: CAGATTTYCGCGGCGCAAG R: TTCCCACAGCTCRCAYTTTTC	FAM-CGCACCTGGTTTTGYAG YGCMTATATCAC-BHQ1	0.24	95 °C for 10 min 45 cycles of 95 °C for 30 s and 56 °C for 1 min 98 °C for 10 min
bla _{TEM}	F: CACTATTCTCAGAATGACTTGGT R: TGCATAATTCTCTTACTGTCATG	FAM- CCAGTCACAGAAAAGCATCTTA CGG-BHQ1	0.12	95 °C for 10 min 45 cycles of 95 °C for 30 s and 56 °C for 1min 98 °C for 10 min
int11	F: GCCTTGATGTTACCCGAGAG R: GATCGGTCGAATGCGTGT	6HEX- ATTCCTGGCCGTGGTTCTGGG TTTT-BHQ1	0.10	95 °C for 10 min 45 cycles of 95 °C for 30 s and 57 °C for 1 min 08 °C for 10 min
Positive Control	ACTTGTCGGACAGGTGCCGGCCGCGCTTTGGGTCATTTTCGGCGAGGATCGCTTTCACTGGGAC GCGACCACGATGGGCATTTCGCTTGCCGAAATCCTTCTTGGGCGCCACCGTTGGCCTTCCTGTAA AGGATCTGGGTCCAGCGAGCCTTGCGGCGGAACTTCACGCGATCGGCGAATGGCGCTGACTACGT CCGCATGGGCACCCATCCAACGGTTTTCCCACAGCTCACACTTTTCCAACACGACTTTCGAAAAA TTGGCGTAGCTTAGATTGGTATTCGTGATATATGCGCTACAAAACCAGGTGCGCGTGGTGATCAT ATTCATAAAGCTTGCGCCGCGGAAATCTCGCGCCGTCACACACTTTTCCAACACGACTCCGGTCGCC GCATACACTATTCTCAGAATGACTTGGTGAGTACTCACCAGTCACAGAAAAGCATCTTACGGAT GGCATGACAGTAAGAGAATTATGCGGCTGCCATAACCATGAGGTGATCGGCGGGGTTCTGGGA TGGCACGGCATATTCATTACTTTGGCGTCGCCATAACCATGAGGTGATCGGCGGGTTTCAG GTGGCACGGAAACCCGCCCTCTGGATCAAGCCAGCGCCGCGGTATGGGCAACTTCTGCGG AGTCCGGCTTTTTGGGTTTACACTGACGGCGCGGCG			

antibiotics, predictive of their resistance. (Leverstein-Van Hall et al., 2003).

We experimentally determined LODs for each assay using a probit analysis outlined by Stokdyk et al. (Bivins et al., 2020; Stokdyk et al., 2016). Reaction mixes, conditions, ARG target sequences, and experimentally determined limits of detection (LOD) for each target are described in Table 1.

2.4. Spatial analysis

We conducted a spatial analysis to estimate the relationship between lateral distance from OWCs and ARGs in aerosols, using data from the fourth sampling event (2019). First, we calculated the two-dimensional distance from each sampling location to the nearest OWC segment and then, to account for the city's variable topography and elevation, we adjusted distances by applying the elevations we extracted from the ASTER GDEM (NASA/METI/AIST/Japan Space Systems and Team, 2009) to the horizontal distances of the sampling points in ArcGIS, calculating the adjusted distance through using Pythagorean theorem. We performed a linear regression analysis in RStudio version 1.1.383 to assess the significance of the relationship between lateral distance from OWCs and ARGs density based on 95% confidence (alpha = 0.05), subsequently disaggregating the data based on time of sampling (morning or afternoon) and conducting a multiple linear regression analysis to assess the potential diurnal impacts.

3. Results and discussion

3.1. E. coli, ARG and MI detection in aerosol samples

We analyzed high-volume samples for ARG and MI targets (mean volume 48 m³, range 9–216 m³). We set all densities below the experimentally derived LOD to zero. Our LODs can be interpreted as the density at which we are 95% confident that the density detected is accurate. Among samples located <1 km from OWCs (n = 71), we detected the MI, *int11*, in 47% of samples (n = 33) and we detected ARGs *qnrB*, *tetA*, and *bla_{TEM}* in 11%, 17%, and 68% of samples respectively (n = 8,12, and 48; Table 2). We then plotted the density distribution and the corresponding standard error for each target (Fig. 2).

To confirm the presence of aerosolized fecal material, we measured culturable E. coli in aerosol samples (Cronholm, 1980; Dueker, 2012; Farling et al., 2019; Rocha-Melogno et al., 2020; Salazar et al., 2020). We detected E. coli in 52% of samples (n = 14) with an average density of 11 CFU/m³ air across all positive samples (Fig. 2). We detected culturable E. coli in aerosols with aerodynamic particle sizes of 0.6-7 µm, with 27% of culturable E. coli under 2.1 µm, the size cutoff for fine aerosol particles. These data indicate that fecal indicator bacteria may linger in the air on a scale of hours, with a settling velocity in still air of 0.5 m/h for a typical particle with 2 µm diameter (Flagan and Seinfeld, 1988), indicating high transport potential in air near OWCs. While ARGs can be free-floating or contained within viable or non-viable cells, we make no inference about the relationship between E. coli and ARGs in this context, instead using E. coli only as a marker for aerosolized fecal waste that may be attributed to many sources in a contaminated urban setting such as La Paz. We do note that E. coli cultured from aerosols near the

Table 2

Summary of positive detections in all air samples after applying the experimentally determined LOD.

	Detections in samples above experimentally determined LOD, n (%)			
	Samples <1 km from OWCs (n = 71)	Samples >1 km from OWCs (n = 4)		
intI1	33 (47%)	0 (0%)		
qnrB	8 (11%)	0 (0%)		
tetA	12 (17%)	0 (0%)		
bla _{TEM}	48 (68%)	2 (50%)		

We detected all targets above the LOD among OWC-adjacent sites (Table 2). We detected *bla_{TEM}* at one control site. Other studies in highand-middle-income countries have reported comparable ARG absolute densities in contaminated settings where fecal wastes may be enriched, primarily indoors (Gao et al., 2018; Ling et al., 2013). Studies reporting relative abundances of ARGs in outdoor ambient air, such as Li et al. (2018), show that a wide range of ARG and MI subtypes may persist in the environment and shed light on the potential threat of urban aerosol transmission of these contaminants. However, where relative abundance reveals target diversity and presence within the microbial communities of a particular sample, absolute quantification in environmental media allows for characterization in a broader context that can be directly applied to population and environmental exposures through fate and transport modeling and risk assessments. Our results further confirm the range of ARGs present in outdoor ambient air at detectable levels and additionally through absolute quantification allow for public health exposure applications. This suggests widespread distribution of ARGs and associated MIs in ambient air, with uncontained urban wastewater flows now implicated as a potential source in cities with poor sanitation, especially where mechanisms for aeration exist such as the engineered cascades in our study site. Though originally implemented as a means to mitigate contamination in OWCs, the cascades likely contribute further to the aerosolization of contaminated waters and associated AR organisms. Once airborne, ARGs and MIs in microorganisms may be transported through the air, inhaled or deposited on surfaces and fomites and subsequently ingested (de Man et al., 2014). Free floating ARGs and MIs may be picked up by other microorganisms in the environment through horizontal gene transfer (Mazel, 2006). Both mechanisms may contribute to the dissemination of AR in the environment and potentially pose a public health threat to the affected populations. Throughout the study area, we observed a lack physical or spatial barriers between AR saturated environments and the environments in which humans conduct daily activities including: sidewalks and trails, parks and playgrounds, residential buildings, food and flower markets, and other businesses. Our findings suggest that localized environments near OWCs and the people inhabiting them may be exposed to elevated densities of ARGs. The implications of such exposures are uncertain, however: further work is required to understand whether and to what extent ARG presence can contribute to AR dissemination and ultimately risk of exposure to AR pathogens of public health relevance.

3.2. ARG and MI detection in OWCs

To confirm the presence of targets in OWCs, we collected samples during the third sampling event (n = 4). We detected *intI1* and *bla_{TEM}* in all OWC samples and at the highest averages $(1.4 \times 10^8 \text{ and } 6.4 \times 10^7)$ gc/100 mL respectively). We detected *qnrB* and *tetA* in 3/4 OWC samples at averages of 1.7×10^7 and 1.4×10^7 gc/100 mL respectively, indicating AR contaminated surface waters that are likely contributing to the dissemination and proliferation of AR in the surrounding environment. Comparably, ESBL-producing bacteria, such as *bla_{TEM}-carrying* bacteria, have been detected in the Choqueyapu River previously (Guzman-Otazo et al., 2019; Poma et al., 2016). Although there are limited data on antibiotic usage in Bolivia, previous studies have reported that in some areas in Bolivia and more widely in South America, the most commonly used antibiotics include penicillin, ampicillin, and amoxicillin (Bartoloni et al., 1998; Cordoba et al., 2017), all members of the β-lactam family. High usage of these drugs combined with poor wastewater treatment may lead to the release and spread of resistant organisms. A study in Cochabamba, Bolivia, a city south-east of La Paz, detected the presence of *β*-lactam resistance encoding ARG variants (also covered by the *bla_{TEM}* ARG target we used in our study) in rivers that flow throughout the city (Saba Villarroel et al., 2017). Our results



Fig. 2. Left: average ARG and MI densities with mean standard error bars for the distribution in gene copies per cubic meter of air, where targets were detected at levels equal to or above the LOD. Right: mean culturable *E. coli* per cubic meter of air with mean standard error bars for the distribution in coliforming units per cubic meter of air.



Fig. 3. ARG density in gene copies per m^3 of air in relation to the distance from OWCs. The blue line indicates the linear regression calculation for each data set and the data is not separated by time of day. Each plot includes the corresponding regression line equation, R-squared value, and p-value. (For interpretation of the references to color in this figure legend, the reader is referred to the Web version of this article.)

support these studies that β -lactam resistance encoding ARGs, in addition to tetracycline and fluoroquinolone resistance encoding ARGs are highly prevalent in these urban settings.

3.3. Spatial analysis

We sought to assess the relationship between ARGs and one MI near OWCs. From the randomly generated points (n = 50) for the final sampling event, we only sampled at 25 sites due to time restraints and in some cases, lack of accessibility. One site we sampled at was observed to be much further (~450 m) than within the intended buffer because the actual river location varied from the model near this point. We excluded the 2 samples taken at this site from further analysis and the sample taken at the control site. Hence, we assessed 46 samples from 23 sites in our spatial model, all located within 150 m from OWCs. We performed a linear regression calculation for target densities as distance from OWCs increased and examined the relationship between lateral distance and OWCs for all targets detected (Fig. 3).

Despite observed mean higher densities of targets at locations close to OWCs, specifically for bla_{TEM} , overall regression results showed no significance between distance from OWCs and ARG density based on 95% confidence both when separated by time of day and when not separated. However, when not separated by time of day we observed a tendency of bla_{TEM} density in aerosols to decrease (p = 0.082) as distance from OWCs increases within the 150 m. The apparent decrease may indicate that proximity to OWCs is important when assessing human risk through exposure, though we cannot rule out that this observation is attributable to chance.

Our interpretation of findings is constrained by the study limitations. Our data are observational and limited in time and space, where phenomena such as aerosolization of waste and aerosol transport may be highly variable according to local conditions. We identified a limited number of ARGs to assess *a priori*, and these may or may not be the most relevant targets for the study area or for exposure relevance more generally. Additionally, we acknowledge that though identification of low gene target densities via ddPCR is improved when compared to qPCR (Cavé et al., 2016), false positives are possible (Cao et al., 2015) even though we have applied conservative estimates of LODs derived experimentally. Though the detection of *E. coli* in air near OWCs indicates the presence of fecal waste in aerosols, we cannot unambiguously attribute *E. coli* to these OWCs. Additionally, though ARGs are present in air near OWCs where the same ARGs are also present, we cannot unambiguously identify the OWCs as the source.

4. Conclusion

Bioaerosols near urban wastewater flows may be an important factor in the environmental transmission of AR in cities with poor sanitation, particularly in sites where uncontained wastewater is adjacent to densely populated urban spaces. We found that as distance from fecal waste sources such as OWCs increases, bla_{TEM} density decreases, indicating that proximity to these OWCs is important to consider in the context of dissemination of AR. While the exposure and health risks are unknown, uncontained, concentrated fecal wastes in densely populated cities may present a range of health risks related to exposure to sanitation-related aerosols. Further exploration into the spatial relationship between fecal sources and ARG and MI presence in the environment – including in cities of LMICs – should be pursued, along with quantitative risk models to assess the potential for exposures in this poorly characterized pathway.

Author credit_Bolivia ARGs

Olivia Ginn: Conceptualization, Methodology, Resources, Formal analysis, Investigation, Data curation, Writing- Original Draft, Writing-Review and Editing, Visualization, Supervision, Project administration. Dennis Nichols: Methodology, Formal analysis, Investigation, Data curation, Writing- Original Draft, Writing- Review and Editing. Lucas Rocha-Melogno: Investigation, Writing- Review and Editing. Aaron Bivins: Formal analysis, Writing- Review and Editing. David Berendes: Formal analysis, Investigation, Writing – original draft, Writing-Review and Editing. Freddy Soria: Resources, Writing- Review and Editing. Marcos Andrade: Resources, Writing- Review and Editing. Marc A. Deshusses: Writing-Review and Editing. Mike Bergin: Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing- Review and Editing. Joe Brown: Conceptualization, Methodology, Resources, Formal analysis, Investigation, Data curation, Writing- Original Draft, Writing-Review and Editing, Visualization, Supervision, Project administration, Funding acquisition.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Acknowledgements

This material is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation under grant number 1653226. The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. We are thankful for undergraduate and graduate students who helped with sampling and data collection in Bolivia.

References

- Alarcon Calderon, V.J., 1996. A Water Quality Model of the Choqueyapu River, La Paz, Bolivia 1–24. https://doi.org/10.16953/deusbed.74839.
- Allen, H.K., Donato, J., Wang, H.H., Cloud-Hansen, K.A., Davies, J., Handelsman, J., 2010. Call of the wild: antibiotic resistance genes in natural environments. Nat. Rev. Microbiol. 8, 251–259. https://doi.org/10.1038/nrmicro2312.
- Andersen, A.A., 1958. New sampler for the collection, sizing, and enumeration of viable airborne particles. U. S. Army Chem. Corps Proving Gr. 76, 471–484.
- Bain, R.E.S., Woodall, C., Elliott, J., Arnold, B.F., Tung, R., Morley, R., Du Preez, M., Bartram, J.K., Davis, A.P., Gundry, S.W., Pedley, S., 2015. Evaluation of an inexpensive growth medium for direct detection of Escherichia coli in temperate and sub-tropical waters. PloS One 10, 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal. pone.0140997.
- Barraud, O., Baclet, M.C., Denis, F., Ploy, M.C., 2010. Quantitative multiplex real-time PCR for detecting class 1, 2 and 3 integrons. J. Antimicrob. Chemother. 65, 1642–1645. https://doi.org/10.1093/jac/dkq167.
- Bartoloni, A., Cutts, F., Leoni, S., Austin, C.C., Mantella, A., Guglielmetti, P., Roselli, M., Salazar, E., Paradisi, F., 1998. Patterns of antimicrobial use and antimicrobial resistance among healthy children in Bolivia. Trop. Med. Int. Health 3, 116–123.
- Bartoloni, A., Pallecchi, L., Benedetti, M., Fernandez, C., Vallejos, Y., Guzman, E., Villagran, A.L., Mantella, A., Lucchetti, C., Bartalesi, F., Strohmeyer, M., Bechini, A., Gamboa, H., Rodríguez, H., Falkenberg, T., Kronvall, G., Gotuzzo, E., Paradisi, F., Rossolini, G.M., 2006. Multidrug-resistant commensal Escherichia coli in children, Peru and Bolivia. Emerg. Infect. Dis. 12, 907–913. https://doi.org/10.3201/ eid1206.051258.
- Bennett, P.M., 2008. Plasmid encoded antibiotic resistance: acquisition and transfer of antibiotic resistance genes in bacteria. Br. J. Pharmacol. 153, 347–357. https://doi. org/10.1038/sj.bjp.0707607.
- Bivins, A., Lowry, S., Murphy, H.M., Borchardt, M., Coyte, R., Labhasetwar, P., Brown, J., 2020. Waterborne pathogen monitoring in Jaipur, India reveals potential microbial risks of urban groundwater supply. npj Clean Water 3. https://doi.org/10.1038/ s41545-020-00081-3.
- Brown, J., Bir, A., Bain, R.E.S., 2020. Novel Methods for Global Water Safety Monitoring: Comparative Analysis of Low-Cost, Field-Ready E. coli Assays. Npj Clean Water 3. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41545-020-0056-8.
- Cantón, R., 2009. Antibiotic resistance genes from the environment: a perspective through newly identified antibiotic resistance mechanisms in the clinical setting. Clin. Microbiol. Infect. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-0691.2008.02679.x.
- Cantón, R., Coque, T.M., 2006. The CTX-M β-lactamase pandemic. Curr. Opin. Microbiol. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.mib.2006.08.011.
- Cantón, R., González-Alba, J.M., Galán, J.C., 2012. CTX-M enzymes: origin and diffusion. Front. Microbiol. https://doi.org/10.3389/fmicb.2012.00110.
- Cao, Y., Raith, M.R., Griffith, J.F., 2015. Droplet digital PCR for simultaneous quantification of general and human-associated fecal indicators for water quality assessment. Water Res. 70, 337–349. https://doi.org/10.1016/j. watres.2014.12.008.

O. Ginn et al.

- Cavé, L., Brothier, E., Abrouk, D., Bouda, P.S., Hien, E., Nazaret, S., 2016. Efficiency and sensitivity of the digital droplet PCR for the quantification of antibiotic resistance genes in soils and organic residues. Appl. Microbiol. Biotechnol. 100, 10597–10608. https://doi.org/10.1007/s00253-016-7950-5.
- Celenza, G., Pellegrini, C., Caccamo, M., Segatore, B., Amicosante, G., Perilli, M., 2006. Spread of blaCTX-M-type and blaPER-2 β-lactamase genes in clinical isolates from Bolivian hospitals. J. Antimicrob. Chemother. 57, 975–978. https://doi.org/ 10.1093/jac/dkl055.
- Chapin, A., Rule, A., Gibson, K., Buckley, T., Schwab, K., 2005. Airborne multidrugresistant bacteria isolated from a concentrated swine feeding operation. Environ. Health Perspect. 113, 137–142. https://doi.org/10.1289/ehp.7473.
- Chiang, C., Liu, C., Weng, L., Wang, N., Liaw, G., 2005. Presence of β -lactamase gene TEM-1 DNA sequence in commercial. Taq DNA Polymerase 43, 530–532. https://doi.org/10.1128/JCM.43.1.530.
- Cordoba, G., Caballero, L., Sandholdt, H., Arteaga, F., Olinisky, M., Ruschel, L.F., Makela, M., Bjerrum, L., 2017. Antibiotic prescriptions for suspected respiratory tract infection in primary care in South America. J. Antimicrob. Chemother. 72, 305–310. https://doi.org/10.1093/jac/dkw370.
- Cronholm, L.S., 1980. Potential Health Hazards from Microbial Aerosols in Densely Populated Urban Regions, 39, pp. 6–12.
- Davies, J., Davies, D., 2010. Origins and evolution of antibiotic resistance. Microbiol. Mol. Biol. Rev. 74, 417–433. https://doi.org/10.1128/MMBR.00016-10.
- de, J., Sosal, A., Byarugaba, D.K., Amabile-Cuevas, C.F., Hsueh, P.-R., Kariuki, S., Okeke, I.N. (Eds.), 2010. Antimicrobial Resistance in Developing Countries. Springer Science and Buisiness Media. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13312-014-0374-3.
- de Man, H., Heederik, D.D.J., Leenen, E.J.T.M., de Roda Husman, A.M., Spithoven, J.J. G., van Knapen, F., 2014. Human exposure to endotoxins and fecal indicators originating from water features. Water Res. 51, 198–205. https://doi.org/10.1016/j. watres.2013.10.057.
- Dueker, M.E., 2012. Connecting Water Quality with Air Quality through Microbial Aerosols.
- Echeverria-Palencia, C.M., Thulsiraj, V., Tran, N., Ericksen, C.A., Melendez, I., Sanchez, M.G., Walpert, D., Yuan, T., Ficara, E., Senthilkumar, N., Sun, F., Li, R., Hernandez-Cira, M., Gamboa, D., Haro, H., Paulson, S.E., Zhu, Y., Jay, J.A., 2017. Disparate antibiotic resistance gene quantities revealed across 4 major cities in California: a survey in drinking water, air, and soil at 24 public parks. ACS Omega 2, 2255–2263. https://doi.org/10.1021/acsomega.7b00118.
- Farling, S., Rogers, T., Knee, J.S., Tilley, E.A., Brown, J., Deshusses, M.A., 2019. Bioaerosol emissions associated with pit latrine emptying operations. Sci. Total Environ. 648, 1082–1086. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2018.08.147.
- Flagan, R.C., Seinfeld, J.H., 1988. Fundamentals of Air Pollution Engineering. Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey.
- Gao, M., Qiu, T., Sun, Y., Wang, X., 2018. The abundance and diversity of antibiotic resistance genes in the atmospheric environment of composting plants. Environ. Int. 116, 229–238. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envint.2018.04.028.
- Gao, X., Shao, M., Luo, Y., Dong, Y., Ouyang, F., Dong, W., Li, J., 2016. Airborne bacterial contaminations in typical Chinese wet market with live poultry trade. Sci. Total Environ. 572, 681–687. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2016.06.208.
- Genter, F., Marks, S.J., Clair-Caliot, G., Mugume, D.S., Johnston, R.B., Bain, R.E.S., Julian, T.R., 2019. Evaluation of the novel substrate RUGTM for the detection of: Escherichia coli in water from temperate (Zurich, Switzerland) and tropical (Bushenyi, Uganda) field sites. Environ. Sci. Water Res. Technol. 5, 1082–1091. https://doi.org/10.1039/c9ew00138g.
- Gibbs, S.G., Green, C.F., Tarwater, P.M., Mota, L.C., Mena, K.D., Scarpino, P.V., 2006. Isolation of antibiotic-resistant bacteria from the air plume downwind of a swine confined or concentrated animal feeding operation. Environ. Health Perspect. 114, 1032–1037. https://doi.org/10.1289/ehp.8910.
- Gillings, M.R., Gaze, W.H., Pruden, A., Smalla, K., Tiedje, J.M., Zhu, Y.G., 2015. Using the class 1 integron-integrase gene as a proxy for anthropogenic pollution. ISME J. 9, 1269–1279. https://doi.org/10.1038/ismej.2014.226.
- Graham, D.W., Giesen, M.J., Bunce, J.T., 2018. Strategic approach for prioritising local and regional sanitation interventions for reducing global antibiotic resistance. Water 11. https://doi.org/10.3390/w11010027.
- Guarddon, M., Miranda, J.M., Rodríguez, J.A., Vázquez, B.I., Cepeda, A., Franco, C.M., 2011. Real-time polymerase chain reaction for the quantitative detection of tetA and tetB bacterial tetracycline resistance genes in food. Int. J. Food Microbiol. 146, 284–289. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijfoodmicro.2011.02.026.
- Guzman-Otazo, J., Gonzales-Siles, L., Poma, V., Bengtsson-Palme, J., Thorell, K., Flach, C.-F., Iñiguez, V., Sjöling, Å., 2019. Diarrheal bacterial pathogens and multiresistant enterobacteria in the Choqueyapu River in La Paz, Bolivia. PloS One 14, e0210735. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0210735.
- Hill, V., Narayanan, J., Gallen, R., Ferdinand, K., Cromeans, T., Vinjé, J., 2015. Development of a nucleic acid extraction procedure for simultaneous recovery of DNA and RNA from diverse microbes in water. Pathogens 4, 335–354. https://doi. org/10.3390/pathogens4020335.
- Hu, J., Zhao, F., Zhang, X.X., Li, K., Li, C., Ye, L., Li, M., 2018. Metagenomic profiling of ARGs in airborne particulate matters during a severe smog event. Sci. Total Environ. 615, 1332–1340. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2017.09.222.
- INE, 2018. Bolivia cuenta con más de 11 millones de habitantes a 2018 [WWW Document]. accessed 1.22.20. https://www.ine.gob.bo/index.php/notas-de-p rensa-y-monitoreo/item/3170-bolivia-cuenta-con-mas-de-11-millones-de-habitant es-a-2018.
- Jacob, D.J., 1999. Introduction to Atmospheric Chemistry. Princeton University Press, New Jersey.

- Jones, A.M., Harrison, R.M., 2004. The effects of meteorological factors on atmospheric bioaerosol concentrations - a review. Sci. Total Environ. 326, 151–180. https://doi. org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2003.11.021.
- Kumar, M., Ram, B., Sewwandi, H., Sulfikar, Honda, R., Chaminda, T., 2020. Treatment enhances the prevalence of antibiotic-resistant bacteria and antibiotic resistance genes in the wastewater of Sri Lanka, and India. Environ. Res. 183 https://doi.org/ 10.1016/j.envres.2020.109179.
- Lachmayr, K.L., Cavanaugh, C.M., Kerkhof, L.J., DiRienzo, A.G., Ford, T.E., 2009. Quantifying nonspecific tem β -lactamase (blatem) genes in a wastewater stream. Appl. Environ. Microbiol. 75, 203–211. https://doi.org/10.1128/AEM.01254-08.
- Leverstein-Van Hall, M.A., Blok, H.E.M., Donders, A.R.T., Paauw, A., Fluit, A.C., Verhoe, J., 2003. Multidrug resistance among enterobacteriaceae is strongly associated with the presence of integrons and is independent of species or isolate origin. J. Infect. Dis. 187, 251–259. https://doi.org/10.1086/345880.
- Li, J., Cao, J., Zhu, Y., Chen, Q., Shen, F., Wu, Y., Xu, S., Fan, H., Da, G., Huang, R., Wang, J., de Jesus, A.L., Morawska, L., Chan, C.K., Peccia, J., Yao, M., 2018. Global survey of antibiotic resistance genes in air. Environ. Sci. Technol. https://doi.org/ 10.1021/acs.est.8b02204 acs.est.8b02204.
- Li, J., Zhou, L., Zhang, X., Xu, C., Dong, L., Yao, M., 2016. Bioaerosol emissions and detection of airborne antibiotic resistance genes from a wastewater treatment plant. Atmos. Environ. 124, 404–412. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.atmosenv.2015.06.030.
- Ling, A.L., Pace, N.R., Hernandez, M.T., Lapara, T.M., 2013. Tetracycline Resistance and Class 1 Integron Genes Associated with Indoor and Outdoor Aerosols. https://doi. org/10.1021/es400238g.
- Liu, D., Chai, T., Xia, X., Gao, Y., Cai, Y., Li, X., Miao, Z., Sun, L., Hao, H., Roesler, U., Wang, J., 2012. Formation and transmission of Staphylococcus aureus (including MRSA) aerosols carrying antibiotic-resistant genes in a poultry farming environment. Sci. Total Environ. 426, 139–145. https://doi.org/10.1016/j. scitotenv.2012.03.060.
- Lupo, A., Coyne, S., Berendonk, T.U., 2012. Origin and evolution of antibiotic resistance: the common mechanisms of emergence and spread in water bodies. Front. Microbiol. https://doi.org/10.3389/fmicb.2012.00018.
- Ma, L., Li, A.D., Le Yin, X., Zhang, T., 2017. The prevalence of integrons as the carrier of antibiotic resistance genes in natural and man-made environments. Environ. Sci. Technol. 51, 5721–5728. https://doi.org/10.1021/acs.est.6b05887.
- Magro, G., Bain, R.E.S., Woodall, C.A., Matthews, R.L., Gundry, S.W., Davis, A.P., 2014. Synthesis and application of resorufin β- D -glucuronide, a low-cost chromogenic substrate for detecting Escherichia coli in drinking water. Environ. Sci. Technol. 48, 9624–9631. https://doi.org/10.1021/es502319n.
- Mazel, D., 2006. Integrons: agents of bacterial evolution. Nat. Rev. Microbiol. 4, 608–620. https://doi.org/10.1038/nrmicro1462.
- McEachran, A.D., Blackwell, B.R., Hanson, J.D., Wooten, K.J., Mayer, G.D., Cox, S.B., Smith, P.N., 2015. Antibiotics, bacteria, and antibiotic resistance genes: aerial transport from cattle feed yards via particulate matter. Environ. Health Perspect. 123, 337–343. https://doi.org/10.1289/ehp.1408555.
- Medina, C., Ginn, O., Brown, J., Soria, F., Garvizu, C., Salazar, D., Tancara, A., Herrera, J., 2020. Detection and assessment of the antibiotic resistance of Enterobacteriaceae recovered from bioaerosols in the Choqueyapu River area, La Paz – Bolivia. Sci. Total Environ. 143340 https://doi.org/10.1016/j. scitotenv.2020.143340.
- Nadimpalli, M.L., Marks, S.J., Montealegre, M.C., Gilman, R.H., Pajuelo, M.J., Saito, M., Tsukayama, P., Njenga, S.M., Kiiru, J., Swarthout, J., Islam, M.A., Julian, T.R., Pickering, A.J., 2020. Urban informal settlements as hotspots of antimicrobial resistance and the need to curb environmental transmission. Nat. Microbiol. 5, 787–795. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41564-020-0722-0.
- NASA/METI/AIST/Japan Space Systems, Team, U.S./Japa. A.S., 2009. ASTER Global Digital Elevation Model [Data Set], NASA EOSDIS Land Processes DAAC [WWW Document]).
- Neher, T.P., Ma, L., Moorman, T.B., Howe, A., Soupir, M.L., 2020. Seasonal variations in export of antibiotic resistance genes and bacteria in runoff from an agricultural watershed in Iowa. Sci. Total Environ. 738, 140224. https://doi.org/10.1016/j. scitotenv.2020.140224.
- Ohno, A., Marui, A., Castro, E.S., Reyes, A.A., Elio-Calvo, D., Kasitani, H., Ishii, Y., Yamaguchi, K., 1997. Enteropathogenic bacteria in the La Paz river of Bolivia. Am. J. Trop. Med. Hyg. 57, 438–444.
- Pal, C., Bengtsson-Palme, J., Kristiansson, E., Larsson, D.G.J., 2016. The structure and diversity of human, animal and environmental resistomes. Microbiome 4, 54. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40168-016-0199-5.
- Pallecchi, L., Riccobono, E., Mantella, A., Bartalesi, F., Sennati, S., Gamboa, H., Gotuzzo, E., Bartoloni, A., Rossolini, G.M., 2009. High prevalence of qnr genes in commensal enterobacteria from healthy children in Peru and Bolivia. Antimicrob. Agents Chemother. 53, 2632–2635. https://doi.org/10.1128/AAC.01722-08.
- Pehrsson, E.C., Tsukayama, P., Patel, S., Mejía-Bautista, M., Sosa-Soto, G., Navarrete, K. M., Calderon, M., Cabrera, L., Hoyos-Arango, W., Bertoli, M.T., Berg, D.E., Gilman, R.H., Dantas, G., 2016. Interconnected microbiomes and resistomes in lowincome human habitats. Nature 533, 212–216. https://doi.org/10.1038/ nature17672.
- Poma, V., Mamani, N., Iñiguez, V., 2016. Impact of urban contamination of the La Paz River basin on thermotolerant coliform density and occurrence of multiple antibiotic resistant enteric pathogens in river water, irrigated soil and fresh vegetables. SpringerPlus 5. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40064-016-2132-6.
- Pruden, A., Pei, R., Storteboom, H., Carlson, K.H., 2006. Antibiotic resistance genes as emerging contaminants: studies in northern Colorado. Environ. Sci. Technol. 40, 7445–7450. https://doi.org/10.1021/es0604131.

- Rahman, S.U.R., Ali, T., Ali, I., Khan, N.A., Han, B., Gao, J., 2018. The growing genetic and functional diversity of extended spectrum beta-lactamases. BioMed Res. Int. 2018 https://doi.org/10.1155/2018/9519718.
- Rizzo, L., Manaia, C., Merlin, C., Schwartz, T., Dagot, C., Ploy, M.C., Michael, I., Fatta-Kassinos, D., 2013. Urban wastewater treatment plants as hotspots for antibiotic resistant bacteria and genes spread into the environment: a review. Sci. Total Environ. 447, 345–360. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2013.01.032.
- Rocha-Melogno, L., Ginn, O., Bailey, E.S., Soria, F., Andrade, M., Bergin, M.H., Brown, J., Gray, G.C., Deshusses, M.A., 2020. Bioaerosol sampling optimization for community exposure assessment in cities with poor sanitation: a one health cross-sectional study. Sci. Total Environ. 738 https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2020.139495.
- Rodas, C., Mamani, R., Blanco, J., Blanco, J.E., Wiklund, G., Svennerholm, A.M., Sjöling, Å., Iniguez, V., 2011. Enterotoxins, colonization factors, serotypes and antimicrobial resistance of enterotoxigenic Escherichia coli (ETEC) strains isolated from hospitalized children with diarrhea in Bolivia. Braz. J. Infect. Dis. 15, 132–137. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1413-8670(11)70158-1.
- Saba Villarroel, P.M., Gutkind, G.O., Di Conza, J.A., Radice, M.A., 2017. First survey on antibiotic resistance markers in Enterobacteriaceae in Cochabamba, Bolivia. Rev. Argent. Microbiol. 49, 50–54. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ram.2016.10.002.
- Sabatino, R., Di Cesare, A., Dzhembekova, N., Fontaneto, D., Eckert, E.M., Corno, G., Moncheva, S., Bertoni, R., Callieri, C., 2020. Spatial distribution of antibiotic and heavy metal resistance genes in the Black Sea. Mar. Pollut. Bull. 160, 111635. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpolbul.2020.111635.
- Salazar, D., Ginn, O., Brown, J., Soria, F., Garvizu, C., 2020. Assessment of antibiotic resistant coliforms from bioaerosol samples collected above a sewage-polluted river in La Paz, Bolivia. Int. J. Hyg Environ. Health 228, 113494. https://doi.org/ 10.1016/i.iiheh.2020.113494.
- Sancheza, H.M., Echeverria, C., Thulsiraj, V., Zimmer-Faust, A., Flores, A., Laitz, M., Healy, G., Mahendra, S., Paulson, S.E., Zhu, Y., Jay, J.A., 2016. Antibiotic resistance in airborne bacteria near conventional and organic beef cattle farms in California, USA. Water. Air. Soil Pollut. 227 https://doi.org/10.1007/s11270-016-2979-8.
- Schrag, S.J., McGee, L., Whitney, C.G., Beall, B., Craig, A.S., Choate, M.E., Jorgensen, J. H., Facklam, R.R., Klugman, K.P., 2004. Emergence of Streptococcus pneumoniae with very-high-level resistance to penicillin. Antimicrob. Agents Chemother. 48, 3016–3023. https://doi.org/10.1128/AAC.48.8.3016-3023.2004.
- Shahid, M., Singh, A., Sobia, F., Rashid, M., Malik, A., Shukla, I., Khan, H.M., 2011. Bla CTX-M, bla TEM, and bla SHV in Enterobacteriaceae from North-Indian tertiary hospital: high occurrence of combination genes. Asian Pac. J. Trop. Med. 4, 101–105. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1995-7645(11)60046-1.
- Stange, C., Tiehm, A., 2020. Occurrence of antibiotic resistance genes and microbial source tracking markers in the water of a karst spring in Germany. Sci. Total Environ. 742, 140529. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2020.140529.
- Steward, C.D., Wallace, D., Hubert, S.K., Lawton, R., Fridkin, S.K., Gaynes, R.P., McGowan, J.E., Tenover, F.C., 2000. Ability of laboratories to detect emerging

- antimicrobial resistance in nosocomial pathogens: a survey of Project ICARE laboratories. Diagn. Microbiol. Infect. Dis. 38, 59–67. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0732-8893(00)00161-9.
- Stokdyk, J.P., Firnstahl, A.D., Spencer, S.K., Burch, T.R., Borchardt, M.A., 2016. Determining the 95% limit of detection for waterborne pathogen analyses from primary concentration to qPCR. Water Res. 96, 105–113. https://doi.org/10.1016/j. watres.2016.03.026.
- Vikesland, P.J., Pruden, A., Alvarez, P.J.J., Aga, D., Bürgmann, H., Li, X.D., Manaia, C. M., Nambi, I., Wigginton, K., Zhang, T., Zhu, Y.G., 2017. Toward a comprehensive strategy to mitigate dissemination of environmental sources of antibiotic resistance. Environ. Sci. Technol. 51, 13061–13069. https://doi.org/10.1021/acs.est.7b03623.
- Villegas, M.V., Kattan, J.N., Quinteros, M.G., Casellas, J.M., 2008. Prevalence of extended-spectrum β-lactamases in South America. Clin. Microbiol. Infect. 14, 154–158. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-0691.2007.01869.x.
- Wang, Y., Wang, C., Song, L., 2019. Distribution of antibiotic resistance genes and bacteria from six atmospheric environments: exposure risk to human. Sci. Total Environ. 694 https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2019.133750.
- Wellington, E.M.H., Boxall, A.B.A., Cross, P., Feil, E.J., Gaze, W.H., Hawkey, P.M., Johnson-Rollings, A.S., Jones, D.L., Lee, N.M., Otten, W., Thomas, C.M., Williams, A. P., 2013. The role of the natural environment in the emergence of antibiotic resistance in Gram-negative bacteria. Lancet Infect. Dis. 13, 155–165. https://doi. org/10.1016/S1473-3099(12)70317-1.
- Witte, W., 2000. Selective pressure by antibiotic use in livestock. Int. J. Antimicrob. Agents 16, 19–24. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0924-8579(00)00301-0.
- World Health Organization, 2019. Ten Threats to Global Health in 2019 [WWW Document]. WHO Bull. https://www.who.int/emergencies/ten-threats-to-global -health-in-2019.
- Xie, J., Jin, L., He, T., Chen, B., Luo, X., Feng, B., Huang, W., Li, J., Fu, P., Li, X., 2019. Bacteria and antibiotic resistance genes (ARGs) in PM2.5 from China: implications for human exposure. Environ. Sci. Technol. 53, 963–972. https://doi.org/10.1021/ acs.est.8b04630.
- Zhang, M., Zuo, J., Yu, X., Shi, X., Chen, L., Li, Z., 2017. Quantification of multiantibiotic resistant opportunistic pathogenic bacteria in bioaerosols in and around a pharmaceutical wastewater treatment plant. J. Environ. Sci. 1–11. https://doi.org/ 10.1016/j.jes.2017.12.011.
- Zhang, X., Wu, B., Zhang, Y., Zhang, T., Yang, L., Fang, H.H.P., Ford, T., Cheng, S., 2009. Class 1 integronase gene and tetracycline resistance genes tetA and tetC in different water environments of Jiangsu Province, China. Ecotoxicology 18, 652–660. https:// doi.org/10.1007/s10646-009-0332-3.
- Zhu, Y.-G., Johnson, T.A., Su, J.-Q., Qiao, M., Guo, G.-X., Stedtfeld, R.D., Hashsham, S.A., Tiedje, J.M., 2013. Diverse and abundant antibiotic resistance genes in Chinese swine farms. Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. Unit. States Am. 110, 3435–3440. https://doi. org/10.1073/pnas.1222743110.