**Pollution Characteristics of Heavy Elements in Nanchang, China Street Dust**

Xiaoling Xu¹, Hua Zhang¹,²*, Xiaoying Xiong¹, Huaming Zhang¹, Huan Zeng¹, Wenjing Yang¹,²

¹Key Laboratory of Education Ministry for Poyang Lake Wetland and Watershed Research, Geography and Environmental College, Jiangxi Normal University, Nanchang, P.R. China
²Jiangxi Provincial Key Laboratory of Poyang Lake Comprehensive Management and Resource Development, Jiangxi Normal University, Nanchang, China

Received: 13 January 2019  
Accepted: 12 February 2019

**Abstract**

Heavy elements are always the major pollutants in urban areas, and their pollution levels and spatial distributions vary among various land use types. In this study, we investigated the concentrations, pollution levels, spatial-temporal distributions, and health risks of 23 elements in street dusts (<63 μm) along the urban expansion in metropolitan Nanchang. The average concentrations of Cu, Zn, Cd, Pb, Sr, Te, Ba, Sn, Sb, and Bi were distinctly higher than their background values, and most of their enrichment factor (Ef) > 2, indicating anthropogenic inputs as the major sources. The majority of elements in dust had high spatial heterogeneities and area characteristics. Seasonality had a minor effect on the variation of element concentrations, but had a significant effect on the modified degree of contamination index ($mC_d$) of elements. The quantity of elements with characteristics of anthropogenic fingerprint (Ef>2) was identified as an indicator of urban expansion due to it being consistent with the distributions of population density and traffic flow. The enrichment of Cd, Sr, and Sb contributed 36.38-46.96% to the $mC_d$. The $mC_d$ values decreased significantly along urban expansion, which happened only in summer. Most elements in street dusts had multiple sources and were highly related to the traffic input due to their close correlation with the recognized anthropogenic-related elements such as Cd and Pb. The HI values for all the elements were below the safe level, suggesting a non-carcinogenic risk to inhabitants. The exposure for As and Cd in dusts caused significant carcinogenic risk to inhabitants. High concentration, Ef value, and HI value of Sb possibly caused adverse health risks and requires more attention.

**Keywords:** street dust, heavy elements, urban expansion, seasonality, health risk

*e-mail: zhangh2013@jxnu.edu.cn, zhalxx@163.com*
Introduction

About 54.5% of the world’s population settled in urban areas before 2016, based on the statistical estimation from the United Nations [1]. Meanwhile, city expansion and rapid urbanization are common phenomena around the world, especially in developing countries [2]. As a consequence, the results of a high percentage of human activity have placed great stress on the urban environment, which in turn threatens public health [3, 4]. Heavy elements regarded as priority pollutants are the immediate consequence of human activities such as traffic exhaust, industrial emissions, and municipal waste disposal [5-7]. The medium such as soil, air, water, and dust in many cities have been determined to contain high levels of heavy elements [4, 8-10].

Street dust mainly consists of solid matter and is an important medium in the urban ecological system [4, 11]. Compared to soil, street dust is more sensitive and has been reported to have high levels of heavy elements [12], thus presenting a greater hazard to human health. Moreover, street dust mainly from atmospheric depositions is also easily re-suspended to dominate the atmospheric particulate matter (PM) [11]. It was calculated that street dust contributed 57% ambient levels to coarse particle fraction (3.0-10 μm), and also accounted for 28% of the fine size fraction (<3.0 μm) [13]. Elements adhering to these PMs are easily absorbed by human bodies through ingestion, inhalation and dermal contact, which cause hazards to health [7]. Therefore, it is necessary to study the heavy element enrichment in street dust from urban environments.

Indeed, increased literature about heavy elements in street dust has focused on concentrations, spatial variation, source identifications, bioavailability by fraction analysis, and pollution levels by some indices such as geo-accumulation index (Igeo), enrichment factor (Ef), potential risk index (RI), and health risk assessment via hazard index (HI) and carcinogenic risk (CR) [4, 12, 14-18]. Observed linkage between magnetic signature and heavy elements in street dust was also reported [11, 19]. Most of published works determined the concentrations of heavy element in dust with particle size <75 μm due to it enriched of more than 90% of the heavy elements and easily transported in suspension [20-21]. All previous studies seemingly provided enough information for understanding the behaviors of heavy elements, such as Cr, Ni, Cu, Zn, As, Cd, and Pb, which were always identified as anthropogenic sources [23-24]. Hence, to overcome the above gaps, the objectives of this study were to: (1) characterize the seasonal variations of the 23 elements (Ti, Li, Sc, V, Cr, Co, Ni, Cu, Zn, Ga, As, Rh, Sr, Cd, Sn, Sb, Te, Cs, Ba, W, Ti, Pb, Bi) in street dust from a metropolitan area along an urban expansion; (2) to modify the contamination degree index (CI) in order to evaluate the pollution level of heavy elements in street dust; and (3) assess the risks posed to human health (children and adults) through ingestion, inhalation, and dermal contact due to exposure to heavy elements in street dust.

Materials and Methods

Study Area and Sampling Collection

Nanchang (28°09′~29°11′N, 115°27′~116°35′E), the capital of Jiangxi Province, is situated in the middle part of the Yangtze delta of China. Its area is 7432.17 km² with a population of 5.10 million inhabitants. It is characteristic of subtropical humid monsoon with an average annual temperature of 17–18°C and average annual rainfall of 1600 mm [25]. Just like other cities in China, urbanization and industrialization of Nanchang in the past 3 decades has increased at a very high and extraordinary pace. These drastic changes inevitably affect the urban environment.

The typical transection extending from the center to the fringe on behalf of the urban expansion of Nanchang was chosen as the study area. Three areas were divided, based mainly on administrative boundary characteristics of distinctive ages. Xihu and Donghu districts, being mainly developed before the 1930s, were the core area of Nanchang. Qingshanhu District was formed before the 1980s as part of urban expansion. The Gaoxin District was established in 2003 and indicated the periurban area, which became part of metropolitan Nanchang. In view of the above-mentioned details regarding urban expansion, parts of Xihu and Donghu districts were chosen as the center area, part of Qingshanhu was named as the extension area, and part of Gaoxin was chosen as the fringe area in this study (Fig. 1). A total of 132 street dust samples (3 sub-samples for each sampling site) were collected from the center area (N = 26), extension area (N = 23), and fringe area (N = 19) during summer (n = 68) (July 2015) and winter (n = 68) (January 2016). The basic meteorological parameters (temperature, relative humidity, rainfall, wind speed, and wind direction) during sampling are presented in Table S1. In addition, the other parameters (population density and traffic flow) in each area were also provided in Table S2. The dust sampling was arranged after a successive five (at least) dry period. We used clean plastic brushes to sweep an area of about 1 m² adjacent to the curb of the street to composite one sub-sample. A 200-300 g
A dust sample composed of 3 sub-samples was collected at each site and wrapped in aluminum foil and transferred to the laboratory as soon as possible. The samples were air-dried for 7-15 days and passed through a 2 mm nylon sieve to remove coarse materials such as stone, plastic, leaves, and hair. Then all samples were sieved through 220 mesh nylon sieve (<63 μm) for analysis due to street dust with diameters <63μm mainly arising from atmospheric deposition and easily being transported by resuspension [15].

**Chemical Analysis**

The method for extraction of heavy element concentrations in street dust samples with diameters <63 μm was established in our previous study [26]. In brief, total metal extraction was performed by HNO-HF-HCl mixture in a Teflon digestion bomb and diluted for analysis. The total concentrations of elements (Ti, Li, Sc, V, Cr, Co, Ni, Cu, Zn, Ga, As, Rb, Sr, Cd, Sn, Sb, Te, Cs, Ba, W, Tl, Pb, Bi) were determined by inductively coupled plasma mass spectrometry (ICP-MS, Thermo X series II, USA).

The experiments were performed under strict quality control. All of the containers were soaked in 10% HNQ₃ before the experiments. All reagents used were of guaranteed grade. Standard reference materials (Geochemical Standard Soil GSS-5, GSS-9) were used for quality assurance and quality control. The recoveries ranged from 89% to 118% for all elements. Duplicate samples were analyzed synchronously for 15% of the samples and the standard deviation was controlled within 5% in each digestion procedure.

**Estimation of Dust Enrichment**

**Enrichment Factor**

Enrichment factor (Ef) is currently performed to assess the degree of heavy element in environmental media [27-28]. It is calculated using the following formula [18]:

\[
Ef = \frac{X_s/E_s}{X_r/E_r}
\]

where \(X_s/E_s\) is the ratio of concentration of element \(X\) to that of normalizer element \(E\) in street dust and \(X_r/E_r\) is the same reference ratio in the earth crust. In this study, Ti was used as the normalizer element due to its natural origin being found in a previous study [29]. The background concentrations of soil heavy elements in Nanchang instead of the crustal element concentration were applied in this study in order to reduce the effects of natural geochemical variability [30]. The Ef classification is listed in Table S3 [31].

**Modified Degree of Contamination (mC₆)**

The degree of contamination (C₆) was initially raised by Hakanson in order to evaluate the degree of
overall contamination suffered from eight pollutants (PCB, Hg, Cd, As, Cu, Pb, Cr, and Zn) [32]. Abrahim modified C_d as the quotient being equal to the sum of all the contamination factors (CF) (the ratio of pollutant concentration to that in the background environment) for given pollutants divided by the number of analyzed pollutants, which allowed for the extension from eight pollutants to more pollutants with no upper limit [33]. In this study, CF is replaced by Ef in order to evaluate the C_d of street dust in a specific site. The equation of modified degree of contamination (mC_d) is given below:

\[
mC_d = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n} Ef_i}{n}
\]

...where n is the number of analyzed elements. The classification of mC_d was the same as Ef and presented in Table S3.

Health Risk Assessment

The health risk assessment mode, raised by the United States Environmental Protection Agency [34], was widely used to evaluate human health risk (carcinogenic and non-carcinogenic) exposure to pollutants in various media [18, 35-36]. Direct ingestion, inhalation and dermal contact were the common exposure pathways into the human body. The average daily dose (ADD) (mg kg\(^{-1}\) day\(^{-1}\)) for heavy elements through the above three pathways was calculated as follows:

\[
ADD_{ing} = \frac{C_{UCL} \times IngR \times EF \times ED}{BW \times AT}
\]

\[
ADD_{inh} = \frac{C_{UCL} \times InhR \times EF \times ED}{PEF \times BW \times AT}
\]

\[
ADD_{dermal} = \frac{C_{UCL} \times SA \times CF \times AF \times ABF \times EF \times ED}{BW \times AT}
\]

...where ADD\(_{ing}\), ADD\(_{inh}\), and ADD\(_{dermal}\) are ADD for ingestion, inhalation and dermal contact, respectively. C\(_{UCL}\) is the upper limit of the 95% confidence interval for the mean to yield an estimate of reasonable maximum exposure [37]. The other variables used in these equations are specified in Table S4.

Hazards quotient (HQ), hazard index (HI), and carcinogenic risks (CR) were employed to understand the health risks due to element exposure in environmental media. The HI represents the non-carcinogenic risk to estimates of the probability of developing illness except cancer, while CR calculates the probability of developing cancer in an individual from exposure to heavy elements [14]. These indexes were calculated for an individual using the following equations [14, 38]:

\[
HQ = \frac{ADD}{R_f D}
\]

\[
HI = \sum HQ_{ing/inh/dermal}
\]

\[
CR = \sum ADD \times SF
\]

...where R\(_D\) and SF (dimensionless) are reference dose and carcinogenic slope factor, respectively. HI is the sum of HQs for each exposure pathway. HI<1 indicates the low non-carcinogenic risk, while HI>1 shows the serious risk [39]. The tolerance limit value of CR for regulatory purposes falls in the range of 10\(^{-6}\)-10\(^{-4}\) [18].

Statistical Analysis

The descriptive data was analyzed statistically with PASW Statistics 18 software (SPSS Inc., Chicago, IL, USA). Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was applied to analyze the interaction of seasons and areas on concentrations of heavy elements in street dust. Correlation analysis for relationships among heavy elements was conducted in R package. All graphs were plotted using Origin 9.0 (Origin Lab Corporation, Northampton, Massachusetts, USA).

Results and Discussion

Heavy Element Concentrations in Street Dusts of Nanchang

The concentrations of heavy element in street dusts are summarized in Table 1. By comparison, mean concentrations of Ti, Sc, Ga, Rb, Cs, and Tl were lower than their corresponding background values of soil, while mean concentrations of Cr, Cu, Zn, Cd, and Pb greatly exceeded their corresponding background values of soil. Furthermore, it was found that Cu, Zn, Cd, and Pb levels were even more than 2 times higher than their soil background values. A similar result was also reported in [40]. These elements were always derived from urban anthropogenic sources such as vehicular traffic, industrial plants, city construction and demolition activities, especially for Cd and Pb [41]. It is worth noting that mean concentrations of Sr, Te, Ba, Sn, Sb, and Bi exceed corresponding soil background values, which indicate anthropogenic input. This was especially true for Sr and Sb, which were on average 6.79 and 8.82 times their background values, respectively. These elements in dust received little attention in the previous studies and the specific source was scarcely reported. Only Ali et al. reported Sb and Sn in the street dust, possibly derived from the smelter industry [22]. The rest of the metals, including Li, V, Co, Ni, As, and W, exceeded their corresponding background values in some area or season (Table 1).

The interactive influences from areas and seasons on element concentrations in the street dust are shown in Table S5. It was found that concentrations of most elements had high spatial variation, except Li, Sc, Sr,
Cs, W, and Pb. In the case of Cr, Ni, Cu, Zn, Sn, and Sb, the mean concentrations were highest in the center area, while some elements such as V, Co, As, Cd, Te, and Bi had the highest levels in the extension area (Table 1). The previous studies found that the street dust from industrial and urban areas had high levels of heavy elements, while the dust from the peri-urban area always had the lowest mean values of heavy elements [22]. Most heavy elements had similar spatial variation from the center area to the fringe area, except Cd, Sb, Ba, and W. The high levels of Cd and Sb in the fringe area indicated their varied sources [41, 42-43]. The effect of seasons on element concentrations was far less than that of areas (Table S5). Only concentrations of Ti, V, Rb, Sr, Cs, and Tl had significant seasonal variations. Gope et al. also found that concentrations of some elements such as As, Cd, Co, Cr, Cu, Ni, and Pb had no significant differences between summer and winter [18]. Oppositely, Men et al. found that the concentrations of As, Cd, Cr, Cu, and Pb had significant seasonal differences [4]. These different conclusions indicated the uncertainty of effects of seasonal variations on concentrations of heavy elements in street dusts. The interactive influences from areas and seasons on concentrations of elements in street dust only happened on Ti, Sc, V, Cu, and Ga.

A comparison of the results with those reported in literature for the heavy elements in street dusts from other cities is presented in Table S6. Most comparisons only happened on some common potential toxic elements such as V, Cr, Co, Ni, Cu, Zn, As, Cd, and Pb. The investigated elements in dust samples from Nanchang city did not present distinct concentration characteristics compared to those in other cities except V. The high V level in street dust from Nanchang was possibly due to its high background value (92.13 mg/kg) (Table 1). The concentrations of investigated elements in street dusts were almost similar to those of Chengdu, China [21]. It was not suitable for comparison of element concentrations between Guangzhou, Chongqing and Nanchang (this study) due to their different particle sizes. Different particle sizes always resulted in different levels of heavy

Table 1. Mean ± standard deviation of element in street dusts in Nanchang, China (mg kg⁻¹)

| Elements | Center | | | Extension | | | Fringe | | | Background Values |
|---------|--------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|---------|--------|
|         | Summer | Winter  | Summer  | Winter  | Summer  | Winter  |         |         |         |
| Ti      | 2902±351.1 | 3087±317.1 | 3099±613.2 | 3043±458.0 | 3671±611.1 | 2967±336.6 | 4400    |
| Li      | 29.37±6.03  | 66.52±82.70  | 43.68±61.77  | 47.44±16.55  | 35.63±4.20  | 36.53±4.23  | 45.1    |
| Sc      | 5.860±0.828 | 7.193±2.972 | 6.785±2.647 | 6.478±1.028 | 7.045±0.957 | 6.227±0.897 | 10.31   |
| V       | 58.47±5.32  | 59.01±9.10   | 140.00±77.43 | 101.41±42.28 | 81.28±24.28 | 71.76±15.55 | 92.13   |
| Cr      | 122.5±30.67 | 152.4±121.58 | 95.57±27.30 | 108.4±33.39 | 89.21±23.95 | 103.5±74.4 | 60.74   |
| Co      | 8.66±0.99   | 10.26±2.16   | 13.68±5.59   | 10.66±2.04   | 8.934±1.700 | 8.751±2.319 | 12.17   |
| Ni      | 31.55±10.33 | 35.64±23.24  | 29.58±10.29  | 25.88±8.79   | 22.21±8.59  | 20.17±8.10  | 20.96   |
| Cu      | 94.30±30.95 | 128.68±70.79 | 110.1±67.31  | 87.61±39.83  | 66.01±34.26 | 63.11±25.87 | 20.1    |
| Zn      | 352.5±241.5 | 345.1±137.7  | 263.5±99.99  | 251.0±78.63  | 309.2±317.3 | 296.7±214.1 | 64.37   |
| Ga      | 9.666±1.149 | 10.57±1.634  | 11.50±1.83   | 11.00±1.46   | 10.78±1.12  | 10.08±1.15  | 20.00   |
| As      | 7.808±1.511 | 10.13±2.976  | 14.74±12.38  | 11.69±5.05   | 8.209±1.86  | 9.696±5.14  | 11.12   |
| Rb      | 107.2±9.896 | 112.2±14.22  | 94.41±16.04  | 108.67±11.43 | 103.2±12.0  | 110.9±10.6  | 174     |
| Sr      | 223.6±86.32 | 250.7±105.1  | 216.8±83.83  | 244.17±61.95 | 225.3±76.3  | 264.8±85.8  | 35      |
| Cd      | 0.677±0.251 | 0.802±0.306  | 0.890±0.686  | 1.452±1.301  | 1.070±0.899 | 1.036±0.564 | 0.11    |
| Sn      | 16.71±11.15 | 17.76±10.53  | 10.28±4.53   | 10.05±3.36   | 10.29±4.78  | 8.508±2.21  | 6.4     |
| Sb      | 8.327±2.575 | 10.059±4.869 | 7.323±3.665  | 8.095±2.703  | 9.442±3.87  | 9.667±3.07  | 1.15    |
| Te      | 0.1110±0.027 | 0.1430±0.044 | 0.240±0.024  | 0.173±0.073  | 0.107±0.056 | 0.135±0.077 | 0.042   |
| Cs      | 5.538±0.802 | 6.720±2.249  | 5.792±1.986  | 6.426±0.755  | 6.120±0.696 | 6.400±1.81  | 12.99   |
| Ba      | 560.9±62.62 | 630.7±254.7  | 627.2±183.9  | 645.4±122.6  | 715.7±184  | 731.2±157  | 345     |
| W       | 5.424±2.363 | 8.659±9.133  | 5.018±2.219  | 6.516±2.554  | 10.11±14.7  | 8.668±8.04  | 5.28    |
| Tl      | 0.537±0.051 | 0.588±0.065  | 0.540±0.157  | 0.608±0.844  | 0.604±0.064 | 0.640±0.077 | 0.875   |
| Pb      | 72.53±38.89 | 93.15±43.46  | 98.57±96.21  | 118.7±107.5  | 97.3±71.7  | 88.4±34.6  | 29.64   |
| Bi      | 1.226±0.759 | 1.560±1.044  | 2.498±2.929  | 1.669±0.651  | 1.419±1.28  | 1.197±0.914 | 0.89    |
Fig. 2. Environmental factor (Ef) of elements in street dusts in the center, extension and fringe areas from Nanchang, China (C is the concentration of element X; horizontal dash represents the different level of risk; vertical dash shows the background value of corresponding element; S represents summer; W represents winter).
Pollution Characteristics of Heavy Elements in Street Dusts

The pollution of 22 heavy elements in street dust of Nanchang was evaluated using the enrichment factor (Ef). This method is applied widely in order to evaluate the pollution level of heavy elements and can also be used for distinguishing the anthropogenic source or natural origin [27, 29]. The Ef values of heavy elements are shown in Fig. 2. In general, the Ef value for Sc, Ga, Rb, Cs, Tl were <2, which indicated that there was no pollution in case of these elements. On the contrary, most Ef values for Cu, Zn, Sr, Te, Ba, Cd, Sn, Sb, Pb, and Bi exceeded 2, which indicated there was moderate enrichment in case of these elements. Especially for Cd, some Ef values >40 indicated extremely high enrichment. Almost all Ef values for Cu, Zn, Sr, Cd, and Sb were >2, which suggested that the street dust in Nanchang city was moderately contaminated by these elements. Saeedi et al. found that heavy elements in dusts with maximum Ef values >10 were mainly derived from anthropogenic activities [45]. Therefore, heavy elements in street dust such as Cr, Ni, Cu, Zn, Sr, Te, Cd, Sn, Sb, W, Pb, and Bi in this study had anthropogenic footprints. The high Ef values of Cd were almost found in all other cities [18, 21]. And Cd had been regarded as the anthropogenic-related element in city environment [7, 14, 44]. Ali et al. also evaluated the pollution levels of Sn, Sb, and Ga in street dust and found that these elements had high pollution levels [22]. High pollution levels of Sn and Sb were also found in this study. However, the pollution level of Ga was relatively low in this study. This comparison suggested that Sn and Sb were also common urban pollutants, just like Cu, Zn, Pb, and Cd, while Ga was an exclusive pollutant relating to urban characteristics [22]. Other elements such as Sr and Te also had high pollution levels in our study, which were not found in previous studies. The Ef values of heavy element were distributed randomly and did not show obvious spatial-temporal characteristics (Fig. 2).

To further evaluate the pollution levels of heavy elements in street dusts in different areas and seasons, the mC	ext{d} was calculated and shown in Fig. 3. The mC	ext{d} presented the total Ef of heavy elements in environments without regard to the antagonism or mutualism among elements [28, 46]. All mC	ext{d} values for heavy elements at center, extension, and fringe area with two seasons ranged from 2 to 5, which suggested that the street dusts in Nanchang suffered from moderate enrichment by heavy elements. The mC	ext{d} values among three areas in winter had no significant difference, while it decreased significantly from the center area to the fringe area in summer. The enrichment of heavy elements at the center street dusts in winter had significantly higher levels than in summer. The seasonality suggested that more pollution sources at center area in winter enhanced the high levels of element emission [47-49]. Additionally, the seasonality of meteorological parameters also affected the enrichment of heavy elements in dust [50]. Precipitation with high amounts and intensities easily carried fine particulates from surface dusts and resulted in the decline of element levels in dusts, while light precipitation prevented fine particulate resuspension in atmosphere and the pollutants in dust migration because of the lack of effective runoff [50]. Both amount and intensity of precipitation of Nanchang in summer was clearly higher than those in winter (Table S1) [51]. Therefore, this situation consequently resulted in

Fig. 3. mC	ext{d} (mean ± standard error) values of the 22 heavy elements in street dusts from Nanchang in the different areas and seasons.
the higher element enrichments in winter than in summer. The “rain inland” effect in summer prompted the significantly lower element enrichment in the center area than in winter [51]. The sum Ef of Cd, Sr, and Sb in the street dusts in Nanchang accounted for 36.38–46.96% of total Ef. Therefore, these metals in street dusts in Nanchang should be viewed as priority pollutants.

Relationships among Heavy Elements from the Center to the Fringe

An average Ef greater than 2 indicated that the elements in the environments were affected by anthropogenic inputs [28, 31]. Therefore, heavy elements in street dust from different areas with Ef
higher than 2 were chosen in order to understand their interrelationships. The interrelationships among heavy elements in street dusts from different areas are shown in Fig. 4. Concentrations and geo-accumulation index ($I_{geo}$) were always regarded as the indicators of anthropogenic activities from urban area to peri-urban area [4, 22]. It was noteworthy that the average Efs of 13, 11, and 8 elements in dusts in our study were higher than 2 in center, extension, and fringe areas, respectively. The change of element (EF>2) number from center to fringe was consistent with the change of population density and traffic flow (Table S2). Therefore, the number of trace heavy elements influenced by anthropogenic activities also could be identified as an indicator of urban expansion. Specifically, the Efs of elements such as Cr, Ni, Sn, and W also decreased from the center to the fringe area. Therefore, those elements also could be regarded as indicators of urban expansion.

As shown in Fig. 4, Cd and Pb had significant positive correlation with most elements in all three areas. Positive correlated elements were always deemed as having similar sources, accumulation and transport [18]. Therefore, these two elements could be served as the representative individuals to identify the sources of elements in the street dusts in Nanchang. Lead was the symbolic element of the traffic and mainly derived from exhaust, tyres, and lubricant [18, 21, 52]. Most metals correlated with Pb, suggesting their traffic source. Cadmium had been regarded as the anthropogenic-related element in a city environment and derived from diverse sources such as paints, building materials, platting industry, batteries, plastic, and fertilizer [29, 41, 53-55], which indicated that most metals had varied sources. Barium was reported to have high correlation with metal smelting in a previous study [29]. It was noteworthy that Ba and Sr correlated well in three areas, which were regarded as the indicators of metal smelting. Cadmium and Te were the typical elements related to coal combustion [29, 47]. Antimony had high correlation with Cd and Te, Sr and Ba, Zn and Pb at center area, extension area, and fringe area, respectively, which suggested that the varied sources of Sb varied in different areas. It was also found that the correlation coefficients among the same elements varied in different areas, possibly due to the different contributions of the pollutant sources [56]. There were high correlations between Pb and other elements in the fringe area, which indicated that traffic accounted for the majorities of elements in street dusts.

Human Health Risk Assessment

The HQ values were calculated to evaluate the human health risk (non-carcinogenic) from heavy element exposure through dust in three areas and two seasons (Table S5 and S6). The $HQ_{ing}$ values for all the elements in all areas and two seasons were below 1, which suggested that the non-carcinogenic hazard via
The HI values equal the sum of HQ\textsubscript{ing}, HQ\textsubscript{inh}, and HQ\textsubscript{derm} and reflects the total non-carcinogenic risk for any element. As a whole, the HI values for the elements were all less than the safety level of unity, which suggested a non-carcinogenic risk from heavy elements for children and adults (Fig. 5). The HI values of V, 

Table 2. Lifetime carcinogenic risk (CR) of heavy elements for children and adults at different areas in two seasons.

| Seasons | Elements | SF\textsubscript{ing} | SF\textsubscript{inh} | SF\textsubscript{derm} | Central Children | Adults | Extension Children | Adults | Fringe Children | Adults |
|---------|---------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------|-----------------|--------|----------------|--------|
| Summer  | Cr      | 4.02E+01        | 2.93E-09        | 3.66E+00        | 1.80E-04        | 2.65E-05 | 4.31E-04        | 6.33E-05 | 1.95E-04        | 2.87E-05 |
|         | Co      | 9.80E+00        | 3.18E-08        | 1.34E-08        | 5.72E-08        | 2.57E-08 | 3.43E-08        | 1.54E-08 | 7.94E-09        | 3.57E-09 |
|         | Ni      | 8.40E-01        | 1.08E-08        | 4.84E-09        | 1.03E-08        | 4.62E-09 | 7.94E-09        | 3.57E-09 | 7.94E-09        | 3.57E-09 |
|         | As      | 1.50E+00        | 1.51E+00        | 3.66E+00        | 1.80E-04        | 2.65E-05 | 4.31E-04        | 6.33E-05 | 1.95E-04        | 2.87E-05 |
| Winter  | Cr      | 4.02E+01        | 3.04E-06        | 1.37E-06        | 1.86E-06        | 8.35E-07 | 2.10E-06        | 9.45E-07 | 3.39E-09        | 1.52E-09 |
|         | Co      | 9.80E+00        | 3.91E-08        | 1.76E-08        | 4.07E-08        | 1.83E-08 | 3.47E-08        | 1.56E-08 | 7.25E-09        | 3.26E-09 |
|         | Ni      | 8.40E-01        | 1.36E-06        | 6.11E-09        | 8.97E-09        | 4.04E-09 | 7.25E-09        | 3.26E-09 | 7.25E-09        | 3.26E-09 |
|         | As      | 1.50E+00        | 1.51E+00        | 3.66E+00        | 2.43E-04        | 3.54E-05 | 2.99E-04        | 4.39E-05 | 2.61E-04        | 3.83E-05 |
|         | Cd      | 6.30E+00        | 1.76E-09        | 7.91E-10        | 2.86E-09        | 1.29E-09 | 3.39E-09        | 1.52E-09 | 3.39E-09        | 1.52E-09 |

CR for As equals the sum of CR\textsubscript{ing}, CR\textsubscript{inh}, and CR\textsubscript{derm}.
In fact, higher levels of HI and CR were observed in street dusts from center and extension areas, suggesting possibly more health risks to the inhabitants in these two areas than the fringe area, in case of heavy elements. The level of As in street dusts essentially corresponded to the natural soil background for Nanchang, and its low Ef was also found. Nevertheless, arsenic appeared to be the largest single contributor to the overall risk (HI and CR). A similar result was also reported in a previous study [60]. The immediate application of the assumed constants in the USEPA models possibly resulted in the uncertainty of health risk in Nanchang [21]. Moreover, the health risk decreased drastically by considering bioavailable fraction of metals and there was probably an overestimate of health risk in this study [12]. Furthermore, some other potential exposure to indoor dust, urban aerosol, and contaminated soil would elevate the overall risk [60]. All of these considerations indicated that the results for HI and CR in our and similar studies should be interpreted with caution. However, the relative risks among heavy elements were identified in this study. It still provided valuable information on human exposure to heavy elements through street dust that needed more attention.

Conclusions

The objectives of this study were to determine the concentrations, enrichment, and possible sources and health risks of 23 elements (Ti, Li, Sc, V, Cr, Co, Ni, Cu, Zn, Ga, As, Rb, Sr, Cd, Sn, Sb, Te, Cs, Ba, W, Ti, Pb, and Bi) in street dusts along the urban expansion in two seasons (summer and winter) of Nanchang. The mean concentrations of Cu, Zn, Cd, Pb, Sr, Te, Ba, Sn, Sb, and Bi were notably higher than their corresponding background values. The results of the MANOVA test indicated that the levels of heavy elements in street dusts varied with spatial variabilities rather than seasonality. However, seasonality had a significant effect on the comprehensive risk (mC) of heavy elements in street dusts, and the precipitation possibly made the largest contribution. Obtained concentrations in dusts corresponded to those reported for other cities except V. Most Ef values for Cu, Zn, Sr, Te, Ba, Cd, Sn, Sb, Pb, and Bi exceeded 2, which indicated that there was moderate enrichment in the case of these elements. The number of heavy elements influenced by anthropogenic activities decreased along urban expansion, which was consistent with the distributions of population densities and traffic flows, and could be identified as an indicator of urban expansion. The mC values among three areas in winter had no significant difference, while it decreased significantly along the urban expansion in summer. The higher level of mC in the center area was observed in winter more than in summer. The enrichment of Cd, Sr, and Sb accounted for 36.38-46.96% of mC. The close relationship with Cd and Pb indicated that most elements in street dusts were influenced by the traffic inputs and also had diverse sources. The HI values for all the elements below the safe level suggested non-carcinogenic risk to the inhabitants, including children and adults. There was higher HI level of Cr at the center area in winter, while higher HI level of As at extension was observed in summer. The enrichment of Sb in street dusts in Nanchang needed to be paid more attention due to its high concentration, HI and Ef values. The exposure for As and Cr in dusts possibly caused significant carcinogenic risk to the inhabitants.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Acknowledgements

This work was supported by the Natural Science Foundation of Jiangxi Province (2017BAB213023), the Science and Technology Research Project of Jiangxi Provincial Education Department (GJJ160276), the National Natural Science Foundation of China (41401587, 41561097), the Opening Fund of Key Laboratory of Poyang Lake Wetland and Watershed Research (Jiangxi Normal University), Ministry of Education (PK2019003), and the Young Talents Cultivation Funding Project of Jiangxi Normal University.

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Supporting Information

The Pollution Characteristics of Heavy Element in Street Dusts Along the Urban Expansion in Metropolitan Area of Nanchang City, China

Xiaoling Xu¹, Hua Zhang¹,²*, Xiaoying Xiong¹, Huaming Zhang¹, Huan Zeng¹, Wenjing Yang¹,²

¹Key Laboratory of Education Ministry for Poyang Lake Wetland and Watershed Research, Geography and Environmental College, Jiangxi Normal University, Nanchang, P.R. China
²Jiangxi Provincial Key Laboratory of Poyang Lake Comprehensive Management and Resource Development, Jiangxi Normal University, Nanchang, China

Table S1. Meteorological parameters recorded during the sampling period (national meteorological information center of China).

| Season | Summer | Winter |
|--------|--------|--------|
| Temperature, °C | | |
| Mean | 27.4 | 6.3 |
| Minimum | 24.7 | 4.5 |
| Maximum | 31.2 | 8.8 |
| Relative humidity (%) | | |
| Mean | 78 | 77 |
| Minimum | 42 | 20 |
| Rainfall (mm/month) | | |
| Amount | 237.8 | 131.1 |
| Wind speed (m/s) | | |
| Mean | 1.9 | 1.8 |
| Maximum | 7.3 | 5.7 |
| Wind direction | Southeast (SE) | Northeast (NE) |

Table S2. The parameters related to anthropogenic activity in different areas.

| Area | Population density (thousand people/km²)⁴ | Traffic flow (Vehicle/h)⁵ |
|------|------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Center | 12.2 | 6360 |
| Extension | 3.19 | 4427 |
| Fringe | 2.16 | 2162 |

a. the population density is the ration of the permanent people to the whole area
b. the traffic flow was monitored in the typical section in the same road straightly from the center to the fringe area, and the time synchronously happened from 14:00 to 15:00 in same day in winter.

Table S3. Ef and mCₐ categories for heavy elements.

| Value | Category |
|-------|----------|
| Ef<2  | Depletion to minimal pollution |
| 2≤Ef≤5 | Moderate pollution |
| 5≤Ef≤20 | Significant pollution |
| 20≤Ef≤40 | Strong pollution |
| 40<Ef | Extreme pollution |
Table S4. The parameters used in the USEPA models.

| Parameters | Description and units                           | Values | References                                      |
|------------|------------------------------------------------|--------|------------------------------------------------|
| ABF        | Absorption factor (Dermal)                     | 0.001  | [1-3] USEPA (2001a, 2001b), Wei et al., 2015   |
| AF         | Skin adherence factor (mg cm\(^{-2}\))         | 0.07   | [4-5] USEPA (1996, 2001)                        |
| AT         | Average time (days)                            | 365×ED | [6] USEPA, 1989                                |
| BW         | Body weight (kg)                               | 55.9   | [7-8] ESAG (2009), Zheng et al., 2010          |
| CF         | Conversion factor (kg mg\(^{-1}\))            | 1.00E-06| [9] Li et al. (2001)                           |
| ED         | Exposure duration (years)                      | 24     | [1-2] USEPA (2001a, 2001b); [10] USEPA, 2002   |
| EF         | Exposure frequency (days year\(^{-1}\))       | 350    | [8] Zheng et al., 2010                         |
| IngR       | Ingestion rate of dust (mg day\(^{-1}\))      | 100    | [7, 11] ESAG (2009); Van den Berg 1995         |
| InhR       | Inhalation rate of dust (m\(^3\) kg\(^{-1}\)) | 12.8   | [7, 9] Li et al. (2001); USEPA, 2002            |
| PEF        | Particular emission rate (m\(^3\) kg\(^{-1}\))| 1.36E+09| [1-2] USEPA (2001a, 2001b)                     |
| SA         | Surface area of skin exposed to dust (cm\(^2\))| 4350   | [7-8] ESAG (2009); Zheng et al., 2010          |

Table S5. Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) results of heavy element in street dusts of Nanchang city.

| Metals | Season | Area | Season × area |
|--------|--------|------|---------------|
|        | \(F\)  | sig  | \(F\)  | sig  | \(F\)  | sig  |
| Ti     | 5.822  | 0.017| **5.795**  | 0.004| **10.660**| **0.000** |
| Li     | 3.171  | 0.077| 0.811      | 0.446| 2.377   | 0.097 |
| Sc     | 0.046  | 0.830| 0.053      | 0.949| 4.263   | 0.016 |
| V      | 5.746  | 0.018| 33.032     | 0.000| 3.331   | 0.039 |
| Cr     | 2.849  | 0.094| 5.581      | 0.005| 0.259   | 0.772 |
| Co     | 1.027  | 0.313| 15.100     | 0.000| 7.156   | 0.001 |
| Ni     | 0.059  | 0.809| 9.659      | 0.000| 1.165   | 0.315 |
| Cu     | 0.121  | 0.728| 10.205     | 0.000| 4.156   | **0.018** |
| Zn     | 0.733  | 0.393| 3.251      | 0.042| 0.283   | 0.754 |
| Ga     | 0.156  | 0.693| 7.811      | 0.001| 4.438   | **0.014** |
| As     | 0.058  | 0.810| 7.413      | 0.001| 2.627   | 0.076 |
| Rb     | 15.885 | **0.000**| 5.124  | 0.007| 1.677   | 0.191 |
| Sr     | **4.485**| **0.036**| 0.300  | 0.741| 0.071   | 0.932 |
| Cd     | 2.681  | 0.104| 4.116      | 0.018| 1.733   | 0.181 |
| Sn     | 0.062  | 0.804| 16.192     | 0.000| 0.402   | 0.670 |
| Sb     | 2.151  | 0.145| 3.255      | 0.042| 0.519   | 0.596 |
| Te     | 0.015  | 0.901| 7.965      | 0.001| 2.738   | 0.068 |
| Cs     | **6.768**| **0.010**| 0.114  | 0.892| 0.974   | 0.380 |
| Ba     | 1.337  | 0.250| 6.117      | 0.003| 0.376   | 0.687 |
| W      | 0.686  | 0.409| 2.367      | 0.098| 1.038   | 0.357 |
| Ti     | **11.171**| **0.001**| 5.116  | 0.007| 0.329   | 0.720 |
| Pb     | 0.749  | 0.388| 1.616      | 0.203| 0.585   | 0.558 |
| Bi     | 0.862  | 0.355| 3.630      | 0.029| 1.855   | 0.161 |
Table S6. Comparison of heavy element (mg kg⁻¹) in street dusts with previous literature from China and the World.

| Site               | Season | Ø (μm) | Ti  | Li  | Sc  | V   | Cr  | Co  | Ni  | Cu  | Zn  | Ga  | As  | Rb  | Sr  | Cd  | Sn  | Sb  | Te  | Cs  | Ba  | W  | Tl  | Pb  | Bi  | Reference |
|--------------------|--------|--------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|
| Nanchang, China    | S      | <63    | 3148| 36.0| 6.5 | 92.4| 104 | 10.4| 28.3| 91.7| 310.3| 10.6| 10.3| 101.7| 221.8| 0.9 | 12.7| 8.3 | 0.2 | 5.8 | 626.5| 6.6 | 0.6 | 88.3| 1.7 | This study |
| W      | <63    | 3033  | 51.7| 6.7 | 76.5| 124.1| 10.0 | 28.0| 96.6| 286.2| 10.6| 10.5| 110.7| 252.5| 1.1 | 12.6| 9.3 | 0.2 | 6.5 | 664.1| 8.0 | 0.6 | 100.2| 1.5 |
| Hefei, China       | S      | <73    | 1522| 20.3| 31.4| 139.3| 7.2 | 28.6| 41.6| 130.1| 83.6| 2.0 | 1.2 | 1.6 | 12.2 | 9.9 | [12] |
| Changsha, China    | A      | <73    |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | [13] |
| Beijing, China     | S      | <73    |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | [14] |
| W      | <73    |       |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | [15] |
| Xi’an, China       | SP     | <75    | 69.6| 145 | 30.9| 30.8| 54.7| 268.6| 67.0 | [14] |
| Chengdu, China     | A      | < 63   | 84.3| 24.4| 100 | 290 | 2.8 | [16] |
| Shijiazhuang, China| AP     | <63    | 65.9| 141.4| 14.2| 107.3| 14.5 | 62.7 | [17] |
| Lanzhou, China     | W      | <75    | 62.1| 73.0| 296.9| 2.4 | 177.0 | 1.1 | [18] |
| Xining, China      | S      | <100   | 57.1| 573.0| 50.1| 22.6| 40.6| 108.6| 415.6| 52.7 | [19] |
| Tianjin, China     | -      | <63    | 71.9| 55.5| 101.4| 0.5 | 61.1 | 103.0 | [20] |
| Nanjing, China     | A      | <63    | 74.6| 126.0| 10.7| 55.9| 123.0| 394.0| 356.0| 240.0 | [22] |
| Guangzhou, China   | AP     | <2000  | 23.0| 78.8| 13.0| 23.0| 176.0| 586.0| 75.9 | 2.4 | 240.0 | 73.6 | [23] |
| Chongqing, China   | -      | <2000  | 83.9| 34.7| 78.2| 144.7| 12.2| 0.3 | 110.0 | [24] |
| Asansol, India     | S      | <53    | 33.5| 34.8| 132 | 192.0| 0.8 | 257.4 | 48.0 | [26] |
| Tehran, Iran       | S      | <63    | 9.5 | 225.3| 873.2| 10.7 | 48.0 | 976.0 | [27] |
| Birmingham, UK     | S      | <63    | 41.1| 466.9| 534.0| 1.6 | 1.1 | [25] |
| Amman, Jordan      | S      | <2000  | 1.7 | 18.3| 16.3| 249.6| 401.0| [27] |

-, no mention; Sp, Spring; S, Summer; A, Autumn; W, winter.
| C (99% UCL) (mg kg⁻¹) | Age | Area | V | Cr | Co | Ni | Cu | Zn | As | Sb | Se | Ba | Ti | Pb | Cd | Sr | Mo | Cr |
|------------------------|-----|------|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|---|---|---|
| Central                | Fringe | Extension | Central | Fringe | Extension | Central | Fringe | Extension | Central | Fringe | Extension | Central | Fringe | Extension | Central | Fringe | Extension | Central | Fringe | Extension | Central | Fringe | Extension | Central | Fringe | Extension |
| Children              | Adults | HQinh | Central | Fringe | Extension | Central | Fringe | Extension | Central | Fringe | Extension | Central | Fringe | Extension | Central | Fringe | Extension | Central | Fringe | Extension | Central | Fringe | Extension | Central | Fringe | Extension |
| HQderm                | Adult | HQinh | Central | Fringe | Extension | Central | Fringe | Extension | Central | Fringe | Extension | Central | Fringe | Extension | Central | Fringe | Extension | Central | Fringe | Extension | Central | Fringe | Extension | Central | Fringe | Extension |

**Pollution Characteristics of Heavy Elements...**

935.
|                        | Age          | Area   | V     | Cr     | Co     | Ni     | Cu     | Zn     | As     | Cd     | Sb     | Ba     | Tl     | Pb     |
|------------------------|--------------|--------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| **C (95% UCL)**        | Central      | 62.7   | 201.5 | 11.1   | 45.0   | 157.3  | 400.8  | 11.3   | 293.2  | 0.93   | 12.0   | 733.6  | 0.61   | 110.7  |
|                        | Extension    | 120.2  | 123.2 | 11.6   | 29.8   | 105.3  | 285.9  | 13.9   | 271.6  | 2.0    | 9.3    | 699.8  | 0.65   | 166.4  |
|                        | Fringe       | 79.2   | 139.3 | 9.7    | 24.1   | 75.6   | 314.3  | 12.2   | 306.1  | 1.3    | 11.1   | 806.7  | 0.68   | 105.1  |
| **RfDing**             |              |        |       |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Central                | 7.00E-03     | 3.00E-03 | 2.00E-02 | 4.00E-02 | 3.00E-01 | 3.00E-04 | 6.00E-01 | 1.00E-03 | 4.00E-04 | 7.00E-02 | 3.20E-05 | 3.50E-03 |        |
| Extension              | 2.86E-05     | 5.71E-06 | 2.06E-02 | 4.02E-02 | 3.00E-01 | 3.01E-04 |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Fringe                 | 7.00E-05     | 5.00E-05 | 1.60E-02 | 5.40E-03 | 1.20E-02 | 6.00E-02 | 1.23E-04 | 1.20E-01 | 1.00E-05 | 8.00E-06 | 4.90E-03 | 6.40E-06 | 5.25E-04 |
| **RfDhm**              |              |        |       |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Central                | 1.14E-01     | 8.59E-01 | 7.12E-03 | 2.88E-02 | 5.03E-02 | 1.71E-02 | 4.83E-01 | 6.25E-03 | 1.18E-02 | 3.84E-01 | 1.34E-01 | 2.46E-01 | 4.04E-01 |
| Extension              | 2.19E-01     | 5.25E-01 | 7.40E-03 | 1.90E-02 | 3.36E-02 | 1.22E-02 | 5.94E-01 | 5.79E-03 | 2.59E-02 | 2.97E-01 | 1.28E-01 | 2.58E-01 | 6.08E-01 |
| Fringe                 | 1.45E-01     | 5.94E-01 | 6.31E-03 | 1.54E-02 | 2.42E-02 | 1.34E-02 | 5.19E-01 | 6.52E-03 | 1.67E-02 | 3.56E-01 | 1.47E-01 | 2.70E-01 | 3.84E-01 |
| **HQng**               |              |        |       |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Children               |              |        |       |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Central                | 2.53E-03     | 7.00E-04 | 7.84E-07 | 1.40E-06 | 4.79E-07 | 1.35E-05 |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Extension              | 1.54E-03     | 7.27E-04 | 5.18E-07 | 9.39E-07 | 3.42E-07 | 1.66E-05 |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Fringe                 | 1.75E-03     | 6.20E-04 | 4.19E-07 | 6.74E-07 | 3.76E-07 | 1.45E-05 |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Adults                 |              |        |       |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Central                |              |        |       |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Fringe                 |              |        |       |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| **HQnh**               |              |        |       |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Children               |              |        |       |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Central                | 1.14E-03     | 3.15E-04 | 3.53E-07 | 6.32E-07 | 2.16E-07 | 6.08E-06 |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Extension              |              |        |       |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Fringe                 |              |        |       |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Adults                 |              |        |       |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Central                |              |        |       |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Fringe                 |              |        |       |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| **HQdem**              |              |        |       |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Children               |              |        |       |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Central                | 1.83E-02     | 8.25E-02 | 1.42E-05 | 1.71E-04 | 2.68E-04 | 1.37E-04 | 5.65E-02 | 5.00E-05 | 1.89E-03 | 3.08E-02 | 3.06E-03 | 1.97E-03 | 4.31E-03 |
| Extension              | 3.51E-02     | 5.04E-02 | 1.48E-05 | 1.13E-04 | 1.79E-04 | 9.75E-05 | 6.95E-02 | 4.63E-05 | 4.15E-03 | 2.38E-02 | 2.92E-02 | 2.06E-03 | 6.48E-03 |
| Fringe                 | 2.32E-02     | 5.70E-02 | 1.26E-05 | 9.12E-05 | 1.29E-04 | 1.07E-04 | 6.07E-02 | 5.22E-05 | 2.68E-03 | 2.85E-02 | 3.37E-02 | 2.16E-03 | 4.09E-03 |
| Adults                 | 4.68E-03     | 3.64E-06 | 4.36E-05 | 6.85E-05 | 3.49E-05 | 1.44E-02 | 1.28E-05 | 4.83E-04 | 7.85E-03 | 7.82E-04 | 5.02E-04 | 1.10E-03 |        |
| Extension              | 8.97E-03     | 1.29E-02 | 3.78E-06 | 2.88E-05 | 4.58E-05 | 2.49E-05 | 1.78E-02 | 1.18E-05 | 1.06E-03 | 6.07E-03 | 7.46E-04 | 5.27E-04 | 1.66E-03 |
| Fringe                 | 5.91E-03     | 1.46E-02 | 3.22E-06 | 2.33E-05 | 3.29E-05 | 2.74E-05 | 1.55E-02 | 1.33E-05 | 6.83E-04 | 7.28E-03 | 8.60E-04 | 5.52E-04 | 1.05E-03 |

Table S8. The HI of heavy elements for children and adults in different areas in winter.
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