

International Conference on Sabkha in Qatar – Agenda

Day 1: Monday, 16 January, 2023

08:00 – 09:00 Registration

09:00 – 09:30 Opening Session

- Dr. Hassan Al-Derham, President, Qatar University
- Mr. Jagir Baxi, Vice President and Ventures Manager at ExxonMobil
- Prof. Hamad Al-Saad Al-Kuwari, Environmental Science Center Director

09:30 – 10:00 Coffee Break and picture exhibition

10:00 – 12:00 Session I: General overview of the Sabkha in Qatar

Moderator: Saeed Al Meer

Keynote Speaker:

- Tomaso Bontognali, “The sabkhas of Qatar: a treasure for scientific research”

Speakers:

- Zulfa Al-Disi, “Exploring the role of microbially-produced organic molecules in formation of Mg-rich carbonate minerals”
- Rajendran Sankaran, “Salinity and temporal stability of an inland sabkha of the State of Qatar”
- Judith McKenzie, “Coastal Sabkhas of Qatar: Nature’s Laboratory for the Study of Biogeochemical Processes in Hypersaline Environments”

12:00 – 13:00 Lunch

13:00 – 15:00 Session 2: The dolomite problem

Moderator: PJ Moore

Keynote Speaker:

- Maurice Tucker, “Dolomite: is it still a problem? Still some issues but microbes part of the answer ”

Speakers:

- Adrian Immerhauser, “The ‘Dolomite Problem’ - A personal view”
- Maria Mutti, “Strata-bound dolomite and stratigraphic patterns”
- Peter Swart, “Hypersaline Origins of Bahamian Dolomites: Evidence from New Geochemical Proxies”

15:00 – 16:00 Coffee break and Poster competition

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Day 2: Tuesday, 17 January, 2023

08:00 – 10:00 Session 3: Microbial ecology in extreme evaporitic environments

Moderator: Radhouane Ben Hamadou

Keynote Speaker:

- **Dimtri Meier**, “Thriving or surviving? Survival strategies and limitation of physiological processes in a microbial mat at salt saturation”

Speakers:

- **Nabil Zouari**, “Understanding the biodiversity of bacterial adaptation in hypersaline evaporitic environments of Qatar Sabkhas”
- **Raeid Abed**, “Structural-Functional analysis of extremely hypersaline microbial mats from the Arabian Peninsula”
- **Samir Jaoua**, “Investigation and Application of Local Qatari Microbial resources for the Biological Control of pathogenic Bacteria, Insects and Mycotoxigenic Fungi”

10:00 – 10:20 Coffee Break

10:20 – 11:55 Session 4: The sabkha as a natural laboratory to understand the formation of hydrocarbon reservoirs

Moderator: Sophia Ghanimeh

Keynote Speaker:

- **Fadhil Sadooni**, “Dolomites from the Carbonate-Evaporite strata of the Permian – Jurassic of Eastern Arabia”

Speakers:

- **Mahmoud Ashour**, “Sabkhas in Qatar Peninsula”
- **Crisogono Vasconcelos**, “Coupled silica and carbon cycles in hypersaline Environment, possible phage processes to mineralization”

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Day 3: Wednesday, 18 January, 2023

08:00 – 10:00 **Session 5: The sabkhas of Qatar as a modern analogue for the study of early life**

Moderator: Fadhil Sadooni

Keynote Speaker:

- **Martin Van Kranendonk**, “The sabkhas of Qatar as a modern analogue for the study of early life in the 3.4 billion-year-old Strelley Pool Formation of the Pilbara Craton, Australia and the search for life on Mars”

Speakers:

- **Maria Dittirch**, “Biomineralization within microbial mats during a transition from anoxygenic to oxygenic photosynthesis”
- **Jassim Al-Khayat**, “Exploring the potentiality of Qatar coastal sabkhas to store organic carbon”
- **Kirstin Bergmann**, “Sabkhas in the Neoproterozoic: Records of dolomite formation, climate, and microbial life”

10:00 – 10:20 Coffee Break

10:20 – 12:20 **Session 6: The sabkhas of Qatar as Terrestrial analogues for the search of life on Mars**

Moderator: Tomaso Bontognali

Keynote Speaker:

- **Jean-Luc Josset**, “The ExoMars Mission, the search of life on Mars using CLUPI the CLose-UP Imager part of the science payload”

Speakers:

- **Zach Diloreto**, “Hybrid Genomic and Spectroscopic Analyses of Gypsum from the Dohat Faishakh Sabkha in Qatar: Biomarkers and their Astrobiological Implications”
- **Franziska Blattmann**, “Microbial polygons: defining a morphological biosignatures for the search for life on Mars”
- **Tomaso Bontognali**, “Concluding remarks”

12:20 – 13:20 Sabkha protection plan – round table/closing session and announcement of poster competition results

13:20 – 14:20 Lunch