Impact and Reclamation of Red Mud of Refinary Unit of Nalco at Damanjodi, Odisha

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Abstract: Globally, there is approximately 90 million tonnes of red mud being produced every year. More than 4 million tonnes of red mud are generated annually in India only. The amount of red mud generated in refinery unit of NALCO, Damanjodi is 25 lakhs ton per annum. The amount of red mud generated per ton of alumina processed, varies greatly with the type of bauxite ore used in the refinery. During the process of extraction of alumina from bauxite ore, the insoluble residue generated after digestion with sodium hydroxide at elevated temperature and pressure is known as red mud or Bauxite residue. It is generated by the Bayer's process which is highly alkaline with pH usually ranging from 10-13. Due to its hazardous corrosive nature, it is posing a very serious and alarming environmental pollution problem in adjoining region, which needs its ecological rehabilitation.

It is observed that, the red mud of refinery unit of NALCO, Damanjodi is highly toxic and carrying pH 11.45. During reclamation of red mud, for developing vegetation, two leguminous species i.e. *Acacia auriculiformis, Acacia mangium* and two non leguminous species such as *Eucalyptus tereticornis* and *Terminalia chebula*are taken where, *Acacia auriculiformis* showed better results in its survival percent, plant height, collar diameter, chlorophyll a, chlorophyll b, chlorophyll a/b, fresh weight, dry weight followed by *Terminalia chebula*. Both the species are very hardy and adjusted to drier types overcome to alkaline conditions. Further, T_3 level (25% RM + 75% Soil mixture) with constant Nitrogen, Phosphorus, Potassium is significantly better performing than other treatments.

Keywords: Environmental pollution, red mud, reclamation, vegetation

INTRODUCTION

Environmental pollution now caused many ways globally particularly, in active mining. During the process of extraction of alumina from bauxite ore, the insoluble residue generated after digestion with sodium hydroxide at elevated temperature and pressure is known as red mud or Bauxite residue. The amount of red mud generated per ton of alumina processed, varies greatly with the type of bauxite ore used in the refinery. It is generated by the Bayer's process which is highly alkaline with pH usually ranging from 10-13. The ecological rehabilitation of red mud residue is complicated by many factors, including its hazardous nature, extremely high pH and salinity, poor water holding capacity, and extremely low microbial activity. In view of this, very few research studies were conducted in this field and among those successful studies were very limited. The residue has larger environmental impact, its reclamation and further utilization become a great problem for the industries as well as for the community. Globally, there is approximately 90 million tonnes of red mud being produced every year. More than 4 million tonnes of red mud is generated annually in India only. The amount of red mud generated in refinery unit of NALCO, Damanjodi is 25 lakhs ton per annum. Due to its hazardous corrosive nature, it is posing a very serious and alarming environmental pollution problem in adjoining region. So, for study and research findings would be very helpful in stabilizing the toxic red and in development of vegetation to reclaim the inhospitable red mud substrate into a substrate that will allow to grow appropriate plants and develop green cover is badly need for this region. Another important outcome of vegetation intervention is significant changes in the quality of red mud in the form of decline in the pH value and improvement in the proportion of sand, and increase in micronutrients.

Red mud created from bauxite ores is brick red in colour and has slimy appearance due to presence of high content of iron oxide and caustic soda. The average particle size is about <10micron meter but few particles having size greater than 20micron meter can also be found (Mohapatra et al., 2000). About 35% by weight of solids have size less than 5micron meter and 80% less than 8micron meter. The sand, silt, clay of red mud is 3-5, 79-80, 14-15% respectively. It is highly alkaline (pH > 11), saline-sodic and possess high surface area in the range of $13-16m^2/g$ with a true density of 3.30 g/cc (Paramguru *et al.*, 2005). The free moisture content is highly variable (30-60%) depending upon the disposal method. The contamination of surrounding environment is a global environmental issue, which can be solved by utilization for environmental benefits. Although extensive uses for red mud have been investigated and many have already been pilot tested, there are limited examples of commercial scale reuse of it. There is an "inherent" safety in keeping red mud stored, as the risk of misuse or environmental damage is low (Tuazon and Corder, 2008). However, investigations into red mud reuse are continued if red mud could be reused then it would create a valuable synergy between the Gladstone alumina refineries and other reuse stakeholders (Cooling and Glenister, 1992). Several attempts have been employed for utilization of red mud throughout the world including in heap leaching of gold ores (Browner, 1995), in the removal of sulphur compounds from kerosene oil (Singh et al., 1993), in the hydrogenation of anthracites (Alvarez et al.,

1995), coals and aromatic compounds (Eamsiri et al., 1992), in the extraction of iron and titanium oxides (Parek and Goldberger, 1976) and in the synthesis of inorganic polymeric material (Dimas et al., 2009). In India, it is reported that 2.5 million tons of red mud was utilized in the cement industry whereas in China, about 10% of RM used for metal extraction or utilized as a raw material for brick production (Agarwal and Sashikanth, 2008). Red mud has been successfully used as an amendment on sandy, acidic soils both in agriculture and mine spoils due to its neutralizing capacity (Fortin *et al.*, 2000, Komnitsas et al., 2004; Hanumanth, et al., 2012; Paradis et al., 2007 and Summers et al., 2001). Two approaches are needed for rehabilitation of red mud. The first is amelioration of the surface layer of the residue by adding amendments and the second is the appropriate vegetation establishment. Based on the above facts the present study is designed to evaluate the impact and reclamation of red mud release from refinery unit of NALCO at Damanjodi, Odisha.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The present investigation was conducted during the year 2018-19 at, Damanjodi, a refinery unit of NALCO, in the district of Koraput, Odisha and the trial & analysis made in Department of Natural Resource Management, College Forestry, OUAT, Bhubaneswar. of The investigations was comprised of two parts vis impact assessment and evaluation of relative performance of species in varied concentrations of red mud in Department of Natural Resource Management, College of Forestry, OUAT collecting the required amount of red mud from Damanjodi unit of NALCO, Koraput. Damanjodi unit of NALCO located at 18.7743°N latitude, 82.9125°E longitude at an elevation of 870m above mean sea level. It is situated about 450km to the south of Bhubaneswar city. The climate is characterized by warm and humid summer and a short mild winter. The average annual rainfall is about 1627mm (Anonymous, 2011). Whereas Department of Natural Resource Management, College of Forestry, OUAT, falls under Eastern and South-eastern coastal plain zone of Odisha and situated between 20°15'N latitude and 85°52′E longitude at an elevation of 25.9metres above mean sea level which is situated about 64km to the west of the Bay of Bengal. The climate is characterized by sub-humid, warm climate with a short mild winter. The annual rainfall is 1500mm.

The study was divided into two experiments. In the first experiment Environmental Impact Assessment of Red mud pond of Damanjodi unit of NALCO, Koraput was studied where as species screening, analysis in different concentration of red mud were analyzed in the nursery and laboratory of Department of Natural Resource Management, College of Forestry, OUAT, Bhubaneswar.

Design: RBD

Number of treatments: 4

 T_1 - 100% RM + NPK T_2 - 50% RM + 50% PM + NPK T_3 - 25% RM + 75% PM + NPK T_0 - Control condition + NPK

Number of Replication: 2

Poly pot size: 9inch X 4inch

Species: S₁ - Acacia auriculiformis

- S₂ Acacia mangium
- S_3^- Eucalyptus tereticornis
- S₄ Terminalia chebula

Observations are recorded such as on soil texture, water holding capacity, pH, organic carbon, available nitrogen, available phosphorous and available potassium by following standard methods (Jackson, 1973).

For plant observation, various qualitative and quantitative characteristics like number of individuals of various plant species, survival percentage for each species, plant height, collar diameter and vegetation study were studied.

The impact of red mud pond at Damanjodi unit of NALCO, Koraput was studied on its surrounding environment. Accordingly, the baseline data was collected there in.

The data obtained from the experiments in desired replicates on various growth parameters such as survival percent, plant height, collar diameter, chlorophyll a, chlorophyll b, chlorophyll a/b, dry weight, fresh weight, were arranged in appropriate tables and were analysed as per the procedure prescribed for randomized block design to obtain the analysis of variance (ANOVA) (Gomez & Gomez, 1984). The variances were tested at 5% level of significance. Critical differences (CD) were estimated for comparing the treatments.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results obtained during the present investigation are mentioned here in details. The physical properties of red mud studied are red colour, clay-loam texture and its water holding capacityClay-loam with poor water holding capacity. Similarly, the chemical properties of red mud such as pH, electrical conductivity, total nitrogen, available phosphorous, available potassium and organic carbon are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Physico-chemical	properties	of red	mud
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Red mud properties	Values
Colour	Red
Texture Class	Clayey-Loam
Pore space (%)	48.1 ± 2.1
Water holding capacity (%)	58.2 ± 1.41
pН	11.45 ± 0.11
EC (mS/cm)	1.86 ± 0.01
Organic Carbon (%)	0.34 ± 0.01
Total N (mg/kg)	4.00 ± 0.01
Available P (mg/kg)	0.26 ± 0.03
Available K (mg/kg)	0.08 ± 0.95

The environmental impact of red mud pond is categorized as primary and secondary. Primary impacts are attributed directly by the red mud pond and the secondary impact is indirectly induced and typically include the associated with social and economic activities by the proposed action. The impact on land use change is presented in Table 2. It is observed that, there are no sensitive locations such as archaeological monuments, sanctuaries, national parks, etc within 10km radial distance around the red mud pond site. The chemical properties of red mud are presented in Table 3.

From the composition of the red mud, it can be observed that, the solubility of the constituents is minimal. It contains iron, silicon, calcium, titanium and sodium in form of oxides depending on the ore used. Apart from the high alkalinity from liquors the residue is chemically stable, non-toxic and non-hazardous in nature. The

Sl. No.	Land use(in ha)	0-3km	3-7km	7-10km	%
1	Forest Area	55.28	206.01	402.48	2.25
2	Irrigated land	0.00	92.11	68.49	0.54
3	Un irrigated land	1749.21	4197.12	2542.58	28.81
4	Land under trees, crops area etc.	0.22	7.89	6.00	0.05
5	Area under Non- Agricultural Uses	258.05	479.39	361.53	3.73
6	Barren land	680.78	4325.74	3038.69	27.30
7	Permanent pasture and grazing area	26.77	247.77	160.07	1.47
8	Current fallow	225.29	411.57	112.67	2.54
9	Waste land	26.54	109.62	37.62	0.59
10	Urban areas	2506.00	3228.59	3518.11	31.40

 Table 2: Land use pattern of study area

Table 3: Chemical properties of red mud

Sl. No.	Parameter	Range (%)
1	SiO ₂	5-7
2	Al ₂ O ₃	10-15
3	Fe ₂ O ₃	50-60
4	Na ₂ O	3-5
5	TiO ₂	6-8

properties of untreated and treated wastewater from the project mingle with red mud pond is presented in Table 4. The impacts on terrestrial vegetation due to emission of gaseous pollutants like SO₂, PM and NO₂ andsoil properties are presented in Table5 and Table 6.

Table 4: Properties of water quality

Sl.	Parameters	Untreated	Treated
No.		Waste water	Waste waster
1	pН	>9.0	6.5-8.5
2	Total Dissolved Solids (mg/l)	>5000	<2100
3	Total Suspended Solids (mg/l)	>300	<100
4	BOD (3d, 27 degree Celsius) (mg/l)	>100	<30
5	Oil & Grease (mg/l)	>50	<10

Table 5:	Trees in	and	around	red	mud	pond
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Sl.	Scientific Name	Common	Family
No.		Name	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,
1	Grevillea robusta	Silver Oak	Proteaceae
2	Eucalyptus turliana	Nilgiri	Myrataceae
3	Syzygiumcumini	Jamun	Myrataceae
4	Psidium guajava	Common	Myrataceae
		guava	

Sl.	Scientific Name	Common	Family
No.		Name	·
5	Syzygiumjambos	Rose apple	Myrataceae
6	Albizzia sripulata	Tentra	Mimisaceae
7	Dalbergialatifolia	Sissoo	Fabaceae
8	Alstoniascholoaris	Chhatian	Apocynaceae
9	Pongamiapinnata	Karanj	Fabaceae
10	Artocarpusheterophyllus	Jack fruit	Anacardiaceae
11	Haldinacordifolia	Kadamba	Rubiaceae
12	Azadirachtaindica	Neem	Meliaceae
13	Anogeissuslatifolia	Dhaura	Combretaceae
14	Cassia fistula	Amaltas	Caesalpinaceae
15	Diospyros melanoxylon	Tendu	Ebenaceae
16	Dendrocalamusstrictus	Bans	Poaceae
17	Ficus religiosa	Peepal	Moraceae
18	Ficus bengalensis	Banyan	Moraceae
20	Lanneacoromandelica	Mohin	Anacardiaceae
21	Morindatinctora	Aal	Rubiaceae
22	Pterocarpus marsupium	Bija	Fabaceae
23	Emblica officinalis	Indian	Euphorbiaceae
		Gooseberry	
24	Tamaindusindica	Imli	Fabaceae
25	Terminalia belerica	Bahera	Combretaceae

Table 6: Shrubs in and around red mud pond

Sl. No.	Scientific Name	Common Name	Family
1	Andrographis panic- ulate	Kirayat	Acanthaceae
2	Lantana camera	Wild sage	Verbanaceae
3	Gardenia gummifera	Gummy gar- denia	Rubiaceae
4	Holarrhenapubeseens	Korvaindraju	Apocynaceae
5	Woodfordiafruticose	Dhatki	Lythracea
6	Leucas aspera	Chhotahalkusa	Lamiaceae
7	Rugiarepens	Kharmor	Acanthaceae
8	Arundinellasetosa	Jhadu grass	Poaceae
9	Aristida setaceae	Ghoralengi	Poaceae
10	Cynodondactylon	Doob grass	Poaceae
11	Eragristisunioloides	Chinese love grass	Poaceae
12	Heteropogancon- tortus	Black spear grass	Poaceae
13	Dioscoreatomentosa	Taranga	Dioscoreaceae
14	Glioriosa superb	Flame lily	Colchicaceae
15	Mucunapruriens	VevetBean	Fabaceae

However, the study and analysis made in Department of Natural Resource Management are presented here. The survival percent (%) as influenced by different species at different red mud mixture level have been presented in the Table 7& Fig. 1 and Fig. 2.

Month /	1 st Month	2 nd Month	3 rd Month	4 th Month	5 th Month
Species	(February)	(March)	(April)	(May)	(June)
A. auriculiformis	99.62	99.25	99.12	99.00	99.12
A. mangium	94.00	92.62	92.00	91.50	91.12
E. tereticornis	94.62	93.75	93.25	93.00	92.87
T. chebula	98.12	97.62	96.75	96.62	96.62
L.S.D (0.05)	0.78	0.55	0.706	0.72	0.68
T ₀	99.50	99.00	99.00	94.87	94.62
T ₁	95.92	95.00	92.50	92.25	91.00
T ₂	97.87	96.25	96.00	95.75	95.75
T ₃	98.37	97.62	97.50	97.25	97.25
L.S.D (0.05)	0.78	0.55	0.706	0.720	0.68





Fig. 1: Survival % of different species



Fig. 2: Survival percent of plants in different treatments level

The survival percent is seen high in *Acacia auriculiformis* followed by *Terminalia chebula* and least in *Acacia mangium*. The survival percent in T_1 (100% RM) is least. However, it improves with treatment having lower concentration of red mud. Plant height as influenced by different red mud mixture is presented in Table 8.

It is evident from the data that the overall rate of increase of plant height was slow in T_1 (100% RM) as compared to the T_0 (Control). The highest height growth is observed in *Acacia auriculiformis* higher where, lowest in *Terminalia chebula*. The plant height among different species

at the age of 5 months stage is in the order $T_0 > T_3 > T_2 > T_1$.

The collar diameter (mm) recorded as influenced by different species at different red mud mixture level in represented in Table 9.

From the above data it is revealed that, collar diameter increased in T_3 as compared to T_1 . The maximum collar diameter was recorded in *Acacia auriculiformis* and least in *Acacia mangium*. It grows vigorously after the 3rd month. It is observed that the increase in collar diameter is least in T_1 (100% RM) and increasing continuously with lowering of the concentration of red mud.

Month / Species	1 st Month (February)	2 nd Month (March)	3 rd Month (April)	4 th Month (May)	5 th Month (June)
A. auriculiformis	21.18	22.57	24.26	28.20	31.73
A. mangium	19.42	20.26	20.91	22.48	24.60
E. tereticornis	20.00	20.91	21.91	24.28	27.16
T. chebula	8.97	9.90	11.40	13.03	14.07
L.S.D (0.05)	0.16	0.16	0.17	0.18	0.19
T ₀	24.07	25.73	26.45	30.05	33.42
T ₁	23.26	23.92	25.07	27.47	31.22
T ₂	24.85	26.07	27.46	30.80	34.33
T ₃	8.97	9.90	11.40	13.03	14.07
L.S.D (0.05)	0.16	0.16	0.17	0.18	0.19

Table 8: Plant height (cm) as influenced by different species at different red mud mixture level

Table 9: Collar diameter (mm) as influenced by different species at different red mud mixture level

Month /	1 st Month	2 nd Month	3 rd Month	4 th Month	5 th Month
Species	(February)	(March)	(April)	(May)	(June)
A. auriculiformis	1.86	2.26	2.37	2.88	3.30
A. mangium	1.68	1.84	1.92	2.18	2.46
E. tereticornis	1.68	1.91	2.09	2.38	2.84
T. chebula	1.80	2.09	2.23	2.64	3.10
L.S.D (0.05)	0.042	0.046	0.065	0.061	0.084
T ₀	2.16	2.43	2.68	3.00	3.40
T ₁	1.22	1.27	1.31	1.40	1.43
T ₂	1.65	1.70	1.75	1.79	2.42
T ₃	1.99	2.19	2.27	2.65	2.88
L.S.D (0.05)	0.042	0.046	0.065	0.061	0.084

Fresh weight of plant is an important index of tree growth. The data on mean plant fresh weight recorded at successive month have been presented in Table 10. The highest fresh weight was recorded in *Acacia auriculiformis* and least in *Acacia mangium*. *Terminalia chebula* shows a good growth rate. The fresh weight of plants in various treatment is $T_0 > T_3 > T_{2>}T_1$. While, the dry weight of plant recorded at successive month have been presented in Table 11 & Fig. 3&4. The highest dry weight was recorded in *Acacia auriculiformis* and least in *Acacia mangium*. *Terminalia chebula* shows a good growth rate. The fresh weight of plants in various treatment is $T_0 > T_3 > T_{2>}T_1$.

Month / Species	1 st Month	2 nd Month	3 rd Month	4 th Month	5 th Month
	(February)	(March)	(April)	(May)	(June)
A. auriculiformis	87.15	90.50	93.77	105.16	116.62
A. mangium	79.33	83.38	85.63	91.73	97.12
E. tereticornis	82.15	85.90	89.40	95.70	101.30
T. chebula	84.80	87.95	91.15	100.25	108.08
L.S.D (0.05)	0.302	0.541	0.224	0.366	0.49
T ₁	89.85	95.20	98.07	106.85	114.21
T ₁	77.90	82.15	85.86	93.30	99.92
Τ ₂	81.73	84.36	87.06	95.48	103.50
T ₃	85.37	90.54	95.41	101.3	109.8
L.S.D (0.05)	0.302	0.541	0.224	0.366	0.49

Table 10: Plant Fresh weight (g) as influenced by different species at different red mud mixture level

Table 11: Plant Dry weight (g) as influenced by different species at different red mud mixture level

Month / Species	1 st Month (February)	2 nd Month (March)	3 rd Month (April)	4 th Month (May)	5 th Month (June)
A. auriculiformis	30.83	33.76	36.88	41.37	45.16
A. mangium	24.68	29.76	31.55	34.11	36.30
E. tereticornis	26.93	31.63	33.41	36.08	38.92
T. chebula	29.12	32.55	34.82	38.53	42.42
L.S.D (0.05)	0.200	0.235	0.382	0.324	0.163
T ₀	30.63	37.45	40.35	42.70	46.03
T ₁	23.98	26.31	28.78	33.61	36.23
T ₂	26.41	29.77	31.75	35.61	38.55
T ₃	30.55	34.17	35.75	38.18	41.98
L.S.D (0.05)	0.200	0.235	0.382	0.324	0.163



Fig. 3. Dry weight of different species



Fig. 4: Dry weight of plants in different treatments

In dry weight content of the plants it is observed that, in T₂ (109.8 g/ plant) possesses significantly higher dry weight than T_{2} (103.5 g/ plant) & T_1 (99.12 g/ plant) It is also observed that Acacia auriculiformis has maximum dry weight (45.16 g/plant) followed by Terminalia chebula (42.42g/plant), Eucalyptus tereticornis (38.92g/ plant) and least in Acacia mangium (36.30g/ plant). So, the above experiment indicated that Acacia auriculiformis possesses higher dry weight at 5months stage in treatment level T₃ followed by T_2 and T_1 Acacia auriculiformis has higher survival percentage in red mud composition and has higher efficiency than other species followed by Terminalia chebula. Similar findings were reported by Banning, et al., 2011; Chauhan and Silori. 2010; Wong and Ho, 1993 and 1994; and Krishna *et al.*, 2005.

CONCLUSION

During the study of Environmental Impact Assessment of red mud of refinery unit of NALCO at Damanjodi of Odisha that, the red mud pond has least effect to the adjoining eco-regions. However, its utilization through vegetation and a strong green belt development need to be generated for wider impact and sustainability of the project. Sufficient measures required to conserve the local species particularly the dominant herb, shrubs and trees in the eco region. From the study on reclamation of red mud, steps have been taken to utilize red mud through two leguminous species i.e. Acacia auriculiformis, Acacia mangium and two nonleguminous species such as *Eucalyptus tereticornis* and Terminalia chebula. It is observed that Acacia auriculiformis showed better results in its survival percent, plant height, collar diameter, fresh weight and dry weight followed by Terminalia chebula. Both the species are very hardy and adjusted to drier types overcome to alkaline conditions. Further T_3 level (25% RM + 75% Soil mixture) is significantly better performing than other treatments. So it is recommended that the red mud can be utilized in afforestation activities to 25% in developing its greenbelt and other nurseries of the state.

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