# Inhibition Of Corrosion Of Carbon Steel In A Well Water By Sodium Molybdate – Zn<sup>2+</sup> – A Phosphonic Acid System

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**Abstract:** The aim of this present work is to study, the corrosion behaviour of carbon steel in well water in the presence of sodium molybdate (SM)- $Zn^{2+}$ -2-chloroethylphosphonic acid (2-CEPA) solutions. In this paper, detailed studies on 2-CEPA as second synergist in the formulation containing relatively low levels of sodium molybdate (SM)- $Zn^{2+}$  in the corrosion inhibition of carbon steel are presented. Thus, the ternary system containing 100ppm of SM, 25ppm of  $Zn^{2+}$ , and 250ppm of 2-CEPA is quite effective. Electrochemical studies and FTIR spectral studies and weight loss study have been employed. Polarization study reveals that SM- $Zn^{2+}$ -2-CEPA system functions as an anodic inhibitor, and the formulation controls the anodic reaction predominantly. AC impedance spectra reveal that a protective film is formed on the metal surface. FTIR spectra reveal that the protective film consists of Fe<sup>2+</sup>-MoO4<sup>2-</sup> Complex, Fe<sup>2+</sup>-2-CEPA complex at anodic site and Zn(OH)<sub>2</sub> complex at cathodic site. Based on the above results a mechanism of corrosion inhibition is proposed.

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### 1. Introduction

Mild steel has many industrial applications because of its easy availability, low cost, uncomplicated fabrication of it into water pipe lines [1,2], cooling water systems [3], boilers etc. However, they are susceptible to different forms of corrosion inducted by chloride and so on. One of the most important methods in corrosion protection is to use inhibitors [4-5]. Inhibitors should be of low toxicity and easily biodegradable in order to meet environmental protection requirements. Molybdate is an environmentally friendly inhibitor and has been extensively studied for its application in the protection of iron, Zinc and Aluminium substrates in neutral, acidic and alkaline solutions. Normally it is not feasible to use molybdate alone as a corrosion inhibitor due to its low inhibition ability at low concentrations of molybdate and high cost. In most causes, the combinations of molybdate with coinhibitors were described in the literature [6-10]. However, previous literature has not reported the use of molybdate as the corrosion inhibitor for mild steel with more than one co inhibitors. Phosphates in the form of poly phosphates control the corrosion of ferrous metals [11]. They act as cathodic inhibitors [12,13]. Phosphonic acid is used as a corrosion inhibitor for the corrosion control in industrial boiler water and municipal water treatment [3]. Saha et al [15] studied the mechanism of phosphate based

cooling system corrosion inhibitors in a mild steel plant. Their inhibition properties were increased by the addition of metallic ions [16]. Their metallic ions form insoluble complexes with phosphonic acids and repair the porous oxide and prevent for the corrosion. Predominantly  $Zn^{2+}$  ions are used for elevating the corrosion inhibiting properties of phosphonic acids [17,18]. The Zn-Phosphonate complexes showed excellent corrosion inhibition as compared to other metal cations. For this present work, the first synergist is  $Zn^{2+}$  and second synergist is 2-CEPA with sodium molybdate (SM). Rajendran et al [19] have discussed polarization study of mild steel in neutral aqueous environment containing 60ppm Cl- in the presence of 2-CEPA. The present study evaluates the synergistic effect of sodium molybdate- $Zn^{2+}$  system; estimates the influence of 2-CEPA on the IE of SM-Zn<sup>2+</sup> system; a studies mechanistic aspects of corrosion inhibition by electrochemical studies and analysis protective film by FTIR spectroscopy.

# 2. Experimental

#### 2.1. Preparation of the Specimen

Carbon steel specimens (0.026 % S, 0.06 % P, 0.4 % Mn, 0.1 % C, and the rest iron) of the dimensions 1.0 cm  $\times$  4.0 cm  $\times$  0.2 cm were polished to a mirror finish and degreased with trichloroethylene and used for the weight loss method and surface examination studies.

#### 2.2. Weight-Loss Method

Carbon steel specimens in triplicate were immersed in 100 ml of the well water containing various concentrations of the inhibitor in the presence and absence of  $Zn^{2+}$  for 3 days.

The weights of the specimens before and after immersion were determined using a Digital Balance Model AUY 220 SHIMADZU. The corrosion products were cleaned with Clarke's solution. It can be prepared by dissolving 20 gms of Sb<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> and 50 gms of SnCl<sub>2</sub> in one litre of Conc.HCl of specific gravity (1.9)[20]. The corrosion IE was then calculated using the equation.

 $IE = 100 [1 - (W_2/W_1)] \%$ 

where  $W_1$  is the corrosion rate in the absence of inhibitor and  $W_2$  is the corrosion rate in the presence of inhibitor. Corrosion rate was calculated using the formula

Millimetre per year = 87.6 W / DAT

W = weight loss in milligrams

 $D = density of specimen g/cm^3 = 7.87 gm/cm^3$ 

A = area of specimen =  $10 \text{cm}^2$ 

T = exposure in hours = 72 hrs.

# **2.3. Surface Examination Study**

The carbon steel specimens were immersed in various test solutions for a period of 3 days. After 3 days, the specimens were taken out and dried. The nature of the film formed on the surface of the metal specimen was analyzed by various surface analysis techniques.

#### 2.4. Fourier Transform Infrared Spectra

These spectra were recorded in a Perkin-Elmer-1600 spectrophotometer using KBr pellet. The FTIR spectrum of the protective film was recorded by carefully removing the film, mixing it with KBr, and making the pellet.

#### 2.5. Potentiodynamic Polarization

Polarization studies were carried out in a CHIelectrochemical work station with impedance model 660A. It was provided with IR compensation facility. A three- electrode cell assembly was used. The working electrode was carbon steel. A SCE was the reference electrode. Platinum was the counter electrode. From polarization study, corrosion parameters such as corrosion potential ( $E_{corr}$ ), corrosion current ( $I_{corr}$ ), Tafel slopes anodic =  $b_a$ , and cathodic =  $b_c$  were calculated and a linear polarization study was done. The scan rate (V/S) was 0.01. Hold time at ( $E_{fcs}$ ) was zero and quiet time (s) was two.

#### 2.6. AC Impedance Spectra

The instrument used for polarization study was used to record AC impedance spectra also. The cell set up was also the same. The real part (Z') and imaginary part (Z'') of the cell impedance were measured in ohms at various frequencies. Values of charge transfer

resistance (R<sub>t</sub>) and the double layer capacitance (C<sub>dl</sub>) were calculated. AC impedance spectra were recorded with initial  $E_{(v)} = 0$ , high frequency (Hz) = 1x10<sup>5</sup>, low frequency (Hz) = 1, amplitude (V) = 0.005, and quiet time (s) = 2.

### 2.7. Synergism Parameter

The synergism parameter can be calculated by using the equation indicates the synergistic effect existing between the inhibitors [21-23].  $S_I$  value is found to be greater than one suggesting that the synergistic effect between the inhibitors is

 $S_I\!\!=\!\!1\text{-}I_1\!\!+\!\!2\;/1\text{-}I'_{1\!+\!2}$ 

where

 $I_1$  = inhibition efficiency of substance 1

 $I_2$  = inhibition efficiency of substance 2

 $I'_{1+2}$  = combined inhibition efficiency of substance 1 and 2.

If synergistic effect exists between the inhibitors,  $S_1$  value will be greater than one.

#### 2.8. Analysis of Variance (F-Test)

An F-test was carried out to investigate whether the synergistic effect existing between inhibitor systems is statistically significant [24]. If F-value is greater than 5.32 for 1,8 degrees of freedom, the synergistic effect proves to be statistically significant. If it is less than 5.32 for 1,8 degrees of freedom, it was statistically insignificant at a 0.05 level of significance.

# 3. Results And Discussion

#### 3.1 Weight-Loss Study

Total hardness

The physicochemical parameters of well water are given in Table 1. The corrosion inhibition efficiencies and the corresponding corrosion rates (millimetre per year) of sodium molybdate- $Zn^{2+}$  systems are given in Table 2.

Table 1. Flysico-Chemical Farameters of well water					
Parameter	Value				
pH	8.38				
Conductivity	3110µmhos/cm				
Chloride	665 ppm				
Sulphate	14ppm				
TDS	2013ppm				

1100ppm

Table 1. Physico-Chemical Parameters of Well Water

The inhibition efficiency (IE) of sodium molybdate (SM) in controlling corrosion of carbon steel immersed in well water for a period of 3 days in the absence and the presence of  $Zn^{2+}$  is given in Table 2. It can be seen from the data that SM alone shows some IE, whereas  $Zn^{2+}$  alone is found to be corrosive. When SM is combined with  $Zn^{2+}$  ions, it is found that the IE increases with the concentration of  $Zn^{2+}$  ions. For example, 250 ppm SM has only 64% IE and 50 ppm of  $Zn^{2+}$  has only 10% IE. Interestingly, their combination shows 92% IE. This suggests a

synergistic effect between the binary inhibitor formulation SM and  $Zn^{2+}$  ions; SM is able to transport  $Zn^{2+}$  towards the metal surface.

Table 2. Corrosion Rates (CR) of Carbon Steel in Well Water, in the Absence and the Presence of Inhibitors and Inhibition Efficiencies (IE) Obtained by Weight-Loss Method

SM (ppm)	Zn <sup>2+</sup> (ppm)							
	0	25	50	75				
CR(mmy)								
0	0.1174	0.1115	0.1056	0.0927				
50	0.0950	0.0845	0.0763	0.0481				
100	0.0845	0.0704	0.0493	0.0258				
150	0.0751	0.0493	0.0340	0.0187				
200	0.0587	0.0352	0.0211	0.0117				
250	0.0422	0.0293	0.0093	0.0058				
IE(%)								
0	-	5	10	21				
50	19	28	35	59				
100	28	40	58	78				
150	36	58	71	84				
200	50	70	82	90				
250	64	75	92	95				

# 3.1.2. Evaluation of synergistic effect of 2-CEPA with molybdate-Zn2+ system

In order to examine the role of 2-CEPA in the ternary inhibitor formulation, experiments were conducted with 2-CEPA alone, SM, and with Zn2++ 2-CEPA in a wide concentration range. The highest inhibition efficiencies with these systems are shown in Table 3. The synergistic effect in the SM- Zn2+-2-CEPA system is evident from the data in Table 3. The Zn2+ ion acts as one synergist and 2-CEPA acts as the other. From the data in Table 3, it is seen that at relatively higher concentrations of both SM, Zn2+ and 2-CEPA. 71% IE was obtained. However, such an efficiency is not obtained with combinations of SM and 2-CEPA, even at relatively high concentrations. Thus, it may be concluded that Zn2+ is the primary synergist and 2-CEPA is the secondary synergist and both play a significant synergistic role in inhibiting corrosion. Hence, the highest IE is obtained at such low concentrations of each of the components in the ternary inhibition formulation.

Table 3. Corrosion Rates (CR) and Inhibition Efficiencies (IE) of Carbon Steel in Well Water, in the Absence and the Presence of Inhibitors and Inhibition Efficiency (IE) Obtained by Weight-Loss Method

SM	Zn <sup>2+</sup>	2-CPEA	IE	CR
ppm	ppm	ppm	%	mmy
0	0	0	-	0.1174
100	0	0	28	0.0950
0	25	0	5	0.1115
0	0	250	26	0.0868
100	25	0	40	0.0704
100	25	50	49	0.0598
100	25	100	56	0.0516
100	25	150	63	0.0434
100	25	200	67	0.0387
100	25	250	71	0.0340
100	0	250	42	0.0680
0	25	250	37	0.0739

#### 3.1.1. Synergism parameter

The values of synergism parameters are shown in Table 4. The values of  $S_I$  are greater than one, suggesting a synergistic effect.  $S_I$  approaches 1 when no interaction exists between the inhibitor compounds. When  $S_I > 1$ , this points to the synergistic effect. In the case of  $S_I < 1$ , the negative interaction of inhibitors prevails (i.e., corrosion rate increases).

Table 4. Synergism Parameter of Carbon Steel Immersed in Well Water in the Presence and Absence of Inhibitor

SM+Zn <sup>2+</sup>	2-CEPA	SM-Zn <sup>2+</sup> -2-	
$(I_2)$	$(I_1)$	$\mathbf{CEPA}\left(\mathbf{I'}_{1+2}\right)$	SI
IE (%)	IE (%)	IE (%)	-
40	12	49	1.03
40	16	56	1.14
40	20	63	1.29
40	23	67	1.40
40	26	71	1.64

#### 3.1.2. Analysis of variance (ANOVA)

F-test is used if the synergistic effect exists between inhibitors is statistically significant [24]. The results are given in Table 5. Influence of various concentrations of 2-CEPA (50, 100, 150, 200, and 250 ppm) on the inhibition efficiencies of SM(100ppm) -Zn<sup>2+</sup> (25 ppm) is tested in Table 4. The calculated Fvalue is 8.354. It is statistically significant, since it is greater than the critical F-value (5.32) for 1, 8 degrees of freedom of 0.05 level of significance. Hence, it is concluded that the inhibition efficiencies of the SM-Zn<sup>2+</sup>-2-CEPA system is statistically significant.

Source variance	of	Sum squares	of	Degrees freedom	of	Mean square	F	Level of siginificance of F
Between		2118.4		1		2118.4	8.354	P>0.05
Within		2028.4		8		253.55	0.554	F=0.03

#### 3.2. Analysis of FTIR Spectra

FTIR spectra have been used to analyze the protective film formed on metal surface [25,26]. FTIR spectrum of pure sodium molybdate is given in Figure 1a. The Mo-O stretching frequency appears at 824 cm<sup>-1</sup>. The FTIR spectrum of pure 2-CEPA is shown in Figure 1b. The P-O stretching frequency appeared at 1006 cm<sup>-1</sup>. The FTIR spectrum of the film formed on the metal surface after immersion in the well water for 3 days containing 100ppm of sodium molybdate , 25ppm of

Zn<sup>2+</sup> and 250ppm 2-CEPA is shown in Figure 1c. The P-O stretching frequency shifted from 1006 cm-1 to 1081 cm-1. This suggests that the oxygen atoms of 2-CEPA are coordinated with Fe2+ on the anodic sites of the metal surface, resulting in the formation of Fe2+-2-CEPA complex [27,28]. The Zn-O stretching frequency appears at 669 cm<sup>-1</sup> and the stretching frequency due to -OH appears at 3428 cm<sup>-1</sup>. Therefore, it is concluded that Zn(OH)<sub>2</sub> is formed on cathodic sites of the metal surface [29].

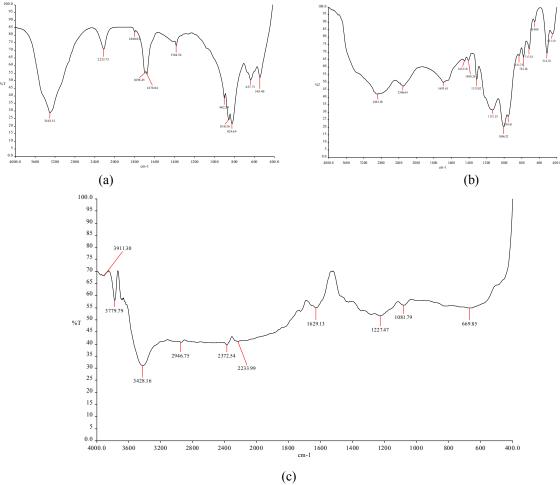


Figure 1. FTIR Spectrum

(a) Pure sodium molybdate (b) Pure 2-CEPA (c) Film formed on metal surface after the immersion in well water containing 100ppm SM - 25ppm of  $Zn^{2+}$  and 250ppm 2-CEPA

# 3.3. Analysis of Potentiodynamic Polarization Curves

A polarization study has been used to detect the formation of protective film on the metal surface [30,31]. The potentiodynamic polarization curves of carbon steel immersed in well water medium are shown in Figure 2. The corrosion parameters of carbon steel immersed in various test solutions obtained by polarization study are given in Table 6.

When mild steel is immersed in well water, the corrosion potential is -763 mV vs SCE. The formulation consisting of 100ppm SM + 25ppm Zn<sup>2+</sup> and 250ppm 2-CEPA shifts the corrosion potential to -601 mV vs SCE. This suggests that the anodic reaction is controlled predominantly, since more molybdate ions are transported to the anodic sites in the presence of Zn<sup>2+</sup>.

Table 6. Corrosion Parameters of Carbon Steel in Well Water in the Presence of Inhibitors, Obtained by Polarization Study

System	E <sub>corr</sub> mV vs SCE	b <sub>a</sub> mV	b <sub>c</sub> mV	LPR Ω cm <sup>2</sup>	I <sub>corr</sub> A/cm <sup>2</sup>
Well water (WW)	-763	148	64	496.9	3.92 x 10 <sup>-5</sup>
WW + SM (100ppm) + Zn <sup>2+</sup> (25ppm) + 2-CEPA (250ppm)	-601	155	67	910.6	2.226 x 10 <sup>-5</sup>

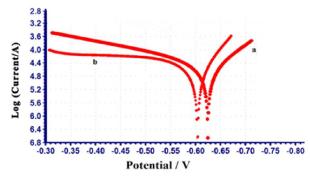


Figure 2. Polarization curves of carbon steel immersed in various test solutions

a) Well water b) Well water containing 100ppm of sodium molybdate, 25ppm of  $Zn^{2+}$  and 250ppm of 2-CEPA

The corrosion current I<sub>corr</sub> for well water is  $3.92 \times 10^{-5}$  A/cm<sup>2</sup>. When SM (100 ppm) Zn<sup>2+</sup> (25ppm) and (250ppm) 2-CEPA are added, it decreases to 2.226x10<sup>-5</sup> A/cm<sup>2</sup>. The significant reduction in corrosion current indicates a decrease in corrosion rate in the presence of the inhibitor. Both the anodic and cathodic Tafel slopes are shifted in the presence of the inhibitor. However, a shift of 7 mV in the anodic Tafel slope (b<sub>a</sub>) is much higher as compared to a shift of 3 mV in the cathodic Tafel slope for the blank and SM (100 ppm)-Zn<sup>2+</sup> (25)ppm)-2-CEPA(250ppm) formulations. Thus, it can be concluded that this inhibitor formulation acts as a anodic inhibitor. This indicates that a protective film is formed on the metal

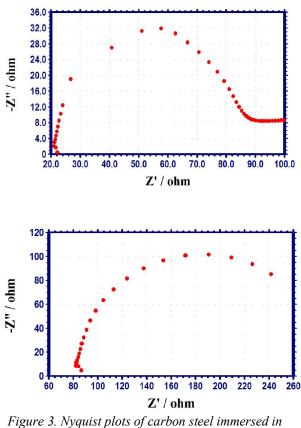
surface. This study clearly reveals the fact that the addition of increasing concentrations of SM-Zn<sup>2+</sup>-2-CEPA moves the corrosion potential towards less value and reduces the corrosion rate. In the presence of these combinations,  $I_{corr}$  value decreases.

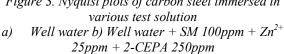
#### 3.4. Analysis of AC Impendance Spectra

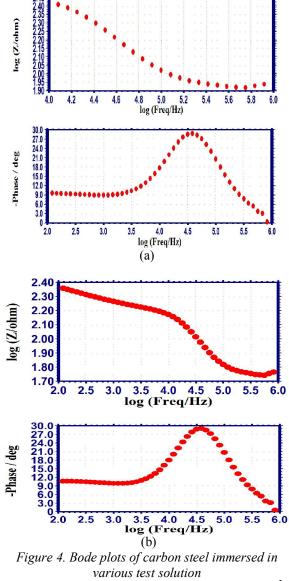
AC impedance spectra have been used to detect the formation of film on the metal surface. If a protective film is formed, the charge transfer resistance increases and double layer capacitance value decreases [32,33]. The AC impedance spectra of carbon steel immersed in various solutions are shown in Figure 3. The AC impedance parameters, namely charge transfer resistance (Rt) and double layer capacitance (Cdl), are given in Table 7. When carbon steel is immersed in well water, the R<sub>t</sub> value is 79.71  $\Omega$  cm<sup>2</sup> and the C<sub>dl</sub> value is  $5.21 \times 10^{-8} \ \mu\text{F}/0.5 \ \text{cm}^2$ . When  $\text{MoO}_4^{2-}$ , $\text{Zn}^{2+}$ and 2-CEPA are added to well water, the Rt value increases tremendously from 79.71  $\Omega$  cm<sup>2</sup> to 163.56  $\Omega$  $cm^2$  and the  $C_{dl}$  decreases from 5.21  $\times 10^{-8}~\mu F/0.5~cm^2$ to 2.537  $\times 10^{-8}$ . This suggests that a protective film is formed on the surface of the metal. This accounts for the very high IE of  $MOQ_4^{2^-}$ - $Zn^{2^+}$ -2-CEPA system. The impedance value increases from 2.007 to 2.367. This accounts for the high inhibition efficiency of SM-Zn<sup>2+</sup> and 2-CEPA system and a protective film is formed on the mild steel surface. This is also supported by the fact that for the inhibitor system the phase angle increases from 29.33° to 29.52°.

Table 7. Impedance parameter of	f carbon steel in	well water in the abs	sence and presence of in	nhibitors, obtained by
AC Impedance method				
	R <sub>4</sub>	Can	Impedance.	

System	R <sub>t</sub> , ohm cm <sup>2</sup>	C <sub>dl</sub> , F cm <sup>-2</sup>	Impedance, log(Z ohm <sup>-1</sup> )	Phase angle
Well water (WW)	79.71	5.21x10 <sup>-8</sup>	2.007	29.33°
$WW + SM + Zn^{2+} + 2-CEPA$	163.56	2.537x10 <sup>-8</sup>	2.367	29.52°







*Well water b) Well water* + *SM* 100ppm +  $Zn^{2+}$ a) 25ppm + 2-CEPA 250ppm

#### 3.5. Mechanism of Corrosion Inhibition

In order to explain the experimental results, the following mechanism of corrosion inhibition is proposed. The mechanistic aspect of the inhibition of carbon steel in well water by SM-Zn2+ and 2-CEPA can be explained in terms of complexation and adsorption.

i. Before immersion of carbon steel in well water environment, SM, Zn2+ and 2-CEPA- Zn2+ form complexes, *viz.*, Zn2+-SM, Zn2+-2-CEPA, and Zn2+-SM-2-CEPA. These complexes are in equilibrium in the solution with free Zn2+, SM, and 2-CEPA ions.

ii. During the dissolution of iron, the pH increases at the metal/electrolyte interface due to oxygen reduction. Thus, Zn(OH)2 precipitate may take place at cathodic sites [34,35], thus decreasing the rate of further oxygen reduction.

iii. Addition of phosphonic acids (PA) reduces metal dissolution; this may be due to adsorption and complex formation at the surface [36-39] with the combined application of Zn2+ and 2-CEPA. The corresponding anodic and cathodic reactions of the metal can be generalized as follows. Zn2+ inhibits the local cathodic region and the local anodic region was inhibited by 2-CEPA.

iv. The Zn-PA complex diffuses from the bulk solution to the surface of the metal and is converted into a Fe- PA complex, which is more stable than Zn-PA [35]. The released Zn2+ causes Zn(OH)2 precipitation at the local cathodic sites. Thus, the protective film consists of an Fe-PA complex and Zn(OH)2.

v. The film formed on the metal surface of the carbon steel consists of oxides/hydroxides of iron and zinc. It is also likely to comprise complexes of Fe2+ and Zn2+ with SM as well as with 2-CEPA.

vi. The FTIR spectra of the surface film suggests the formation of these complexes and the

presence of Zn(OH)2 in the surface.

#### 4. Conclusions

A formulation consisting of Zn2+, sodium molybdate, and 2-chloroethylphosphonic acid can be used as a potent inhibitor to prevent the corrosion of carbon steel in well water. 2-CEPA plays an excellent synergistic role in the SM-Zn2+-2-CEPA system. The ternary system SM (100ppm)-Zn2+(25ppm)- 2-CEPA (250ppm) is effective and has 71% IE. Significant synergism was attained by the combined application of SM-Zn2+-2-CEPA. The concentrations of both SM and Zn2+ are reduced, and 2-CEPA, which is environmentally friendly, is required only at low concentrations. Thus, this new inhibitor formulation is more environment-friendly. The inhibitor formulation acts as an anodic inhibitor. Both SM and 2-CEPA form stable complexes with metal ions in the metal

surface. The protective film consists of Zn(OH)2 and complexes of Fe2+ and Zn2+ with 2-CEPA and SM.

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