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Fractionation of Siderophile Volatile Elements during core formation

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If we take the chondritic composition as the initial solar nebular element abundances, the Earth lacks ~ 85% of K and up to 98% of other volatiles. This large difference in compositions led to an intense discussion about how and when the volatile elements were delivered to the Earth, and it is still ongoing.

To investigate physicochemical conditions of core formation, siderophile refractory elements were studied intensely via metal-silicate experiments. However one potentially very important group of elements has received considerably less attention in this context, the siderophile but volatile elements (SVEs). SVEs perhaps provide important information regarding the timing of volatile delivery to Earth. This study will produce new metal-silicate partitioning data for a wide range siderophile volatile elements (SVE: S, Se, Te, Tl, Ag, As, Au, Cd, Bi, Pb, Sn, Cu, Ge, Zn, In and Ga) with a focus on the P, T and fO₂ dependencies. The initial hypothesis that we are aiming to test uses the accretion of major portions of volatile elements while the core formation was still active.

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