



# Soil Colloid

- In Greek colloid means "glue-like."
- Organic or inorganic matter with very small particle size and a corresponding large surface area per unit mass.
- Less than 0.001mm in size

## A Comparison

Mineral	Specific surface (m²/g)	C.E.C (meq/100g)
Kaolinite	10-20	3-10
Illite	80-100	20-30
Montmorillonite	800	80-120
Chlorite	80	20-30

# Soil Colloids

## 4 TYPES

## **Crystalline Silicates**

1:1, 2:1 (expanding and non-expanding), 2:1:1

## Non-Crystalline Silicates

Allophane and Immogolite (products of volcanic ash)

## Fe and Al Oxides / Hydroxides / Oxyhydroxides

Geothite, Gibbsite, Hematite, Ferryhydrite, Maghemite

## Organic Matter (humus)

High and Low Molecular Weight Acids (Fulvic, Fluvic, Hemic)











# Water and Clays

- When clays become wet, they exhibit different properties which are related to their structure
- These properties include: (1) plasticity, (2) stickiness, (3) cohesion, (4) shrinkage and (5) swelling
- Of major importance is shrink/swell capacity

# Result of Shrink/Swell in clay soils

# Isomorphous Substitution

### Isomorphous Substitution

Replacement of one atom by another atom of similar size in the crystal lattice without disrupting or changing the crystal structure of the mineral.

- In tetrahedral sheets Al<sup>3+</sup> can be substituted for Si<sup>4+</sup>
- In octahedral sheets Mg<sup>2+</sup> can be substituted for Al<sup>3+</sup>
- Importance-
  - Causes unbalanced internal negative charge in the layers.
     Unbalanced negative charges are compensated by the absorption of ions on the edges of clay particles





• Cation exchange capacity (CEC)- the total sum of exchangeable cations that a soil can adsorb.

# Types of clays (1:1 and 2:1 clays)

- The arrangement of tetrahedral and octahedral sheets within the layers are used to classify clay type.
- 1:1 clays exhibit one tetrahedral layer and one octahedral layer
- 2:1 clays exhibit one octahedral layer between two tetrahedral layers













## Smectite Clays (2:1) Expanding

- The smectite group has a high amount of negative charge resulting from isomorphic substitution
- This process affects the overall charge of the mineral, making the layer more negative

# Smectite Clays

- Within a smectite clay
  - -Mg<sup>2+</sup> ions can be substituted in the Al<sup>3+</sup> positions of the octahedral sheet
  - $-AI^{\rm 3+}$  for  $Si^{\rm 4+}$  in the tetrahedral sheets
- The most common clay in the smectite group is Montmorilinite







## Vermiculite (2:1) Expanding

- Al<sup>3+</sup> usually dominates the octahedral sheet but some magnesium-dominated vermiculites exist.
- The tetrahedral sheets of most vermiculites have a lot of aluminum substitution for silicon, which creates a large negative charge.
- Highest CEC of all clays.
- Interlayer constituents act as bridges, which physically hold the layers together and reduces swell capacity.
- SOME SWELL CAPACITY (1.0-1.5 nm).









# Chlorite (2:1:1) Nonexpanding

- Iron or Magnesium dominate most of the octahedral sites.
  - Remember:  $\mathsf{AI}^{\scriptscriptstyle 3+}$  usually dominates the octahedral sheet
- In most chlorite clays a magnesiumdominated octahedral sheet is sandwiched in between adjacent 2:1 layers.
- The hydroxides are hydrogen-bonded to the oxygen atoms of the two adjacent tetrahedral sheets, binding the layers tightly together.







Componente	Tipo de mineral	Fórmula química	Carga da camada	CTC (cmol <sub>*</sub> kg <sup>-1</sup> )	ASE (m <sup>2</sup> g <sup>-1</sup> )	Espaça- mento (nm)	Expansi -vidade	Dependência da carga com o pH	Atividade coloidal
Mica	2:1	K <sub>x</sub> [Al <sub>2</sub> (Si <sub>4-x</sub> Al <sub>x</sub> )	1,0	20-40	70-120	1,0	Não	Média	Alta
Vermiculita	2:1	$O_{10}(OH)_2]$ Na[Mg <sub>3</sub> (Si <sub>4-x</sub> Al <sub>x</sub> )O <sub>10</sub>	0,6-0,9	120-100	600-800	1,0-1,5	Não	Baixa	Alta
Montmorilonita	2:1	$(OH)_{21}$ Na <sub>x</sub> $(Al_{2-x}M_x)$ Si O (OH)	0,25-0,6	80-120	600-800	Variável	Sim	Baixa	Extrem. alta
Clorita	2:1:1	$[AIMg_2  (OH)_6]_x  [Mg_3  (Si_{4-x}Al_x)  O(x)(OH)_b]$	≈1	20-40	70-150	1,4	Não	Elevada	Média
Caulinita	1:1	$Al_2Si_2O_5$	≈0	1-10	10-20	0,72	Não	Elevada	Baixa
Alofana	-	Si <sub>x</sub> Al <sub>y</sub> (OH) <sub>4x+3y</sub>	-	10-150	70-300	-	-	Elevada	Média

Properties of common silicate clays						
Property	Kaolinite	Smectites / Vermiculite	Illite (fine-grained micas)			
General class	1:1 (TetraOcta)	2:1 (TOT)	2:1 (TOT)			
Swelling	Low	High/Moderate	Low, none			
Layer Bonding ionic > H-bonding > van der Waals	Hydrogen (strong)	O-O & O-Cation van der Waals (weak)	Potassium ions (strong)			
Net negative charge (CEC) →Fertility	Low	High / Highest	Moderate			
Charge location	Edges only – No isomorphic substitution	Octahedral / Octa+Tetra	Tetra(~balanced by K <sup>+</sup> 's) so: Edges			

























## What's so great about ion exchange?

- · Retards the release of pollutants to groundwater
- Affects permeability, with implications for landfills, ponds, etc.
- Affects nutrient availability to plants (constant supply, protection vs. leaching)

"Next to photosynthesis and respiration, probably no process in nature is as vital to plant and animal life as the exchange of ions between soil particles and growing plant roots." Nyle C. Brady













































































- Almost all particulate or macroscopic materials in contact with a liquid acquire an electronic charge on their surfaces.
- 2. Zeta potential is an important and useful indicator of this charge which can be used to predict and control the stability of colloidal suspensions or emulsions.
- The greater the zeta potential the more likely the suspension is to be stable because the charged particles repel one another and thus overcome the natural tendency to aggregate.
- 4. The measurement of zeta potential is often the key to understanding dispersion and aggregation processes
- 5. Zeta potential can also be a controlling parameter in processes such as adhesion, surface coating, filtration, lubrication and corrosion.

Flocculation or Coagulation: sticking together in clusters

Deflocculation or Dispersion- opposite

Chemically Sodium Hexametaphosphate

Mechanically Stirring or Ultrasound vibration







