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## Underground geological storage

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Underground accumulation of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) is a widespread geological phenomenon, with natural trapping of CO<sub>2</sub> in underground reservoirs. Information and experience gained from the injection and/or storage of CO<sub>2</sub> from a large number of existing enhanced oil recovery (EOR) and acid gas projects, as well as from the Sleipner, Weyburn and In Salah projects, indicate that it is feasible to store CO<sub>2</sub> in geological formations as a CO<sub>2</sub> mitigation option. Industrial analogues, including underground natural gas storage projects around the world and acid gas injection projects, provide additional indications that CO<sub>2</sub> can be safely injected and stored at well-characterized and properly managed sites. While there are differences between natural accumulations and engineered storage, injecting CO<sub>2</sub> into deep geological formations at carefully selected sites can store it underground for long periods of time: it is considered likely that 99% or more of the injected CO<sub>2</sub> will be retained for 1000 years. Depleted oil and gas reservoirs, possibly coal formations and particularly saline formations (deep underground porous reservoir rocks saturated with brackish water or brine), can be used for storage of CO<sub>2</sub>. At depths below about 800–1000 m, supercritical CO<sub>2</sub> has a liquid-like density that provides the potential for efficient utilization of underground storage space in the pores of sedimentary rocks. Carbon dioxide can remain trapped underground by virtue of a number of mechanisms, such as: trapping below an impermeable, confining layer (caprock); retention as an immobile phase trapped in the pore spaces of the storage formation; dissolution in the *in situ* formation fluids; and/or adsorption onto organic matter in coal and shale. Additionally, it may be trapped by reacting with the minerals in the storage formation and caprock to produce carbonate minerals. Models are available to predict what happens when CO<sub>2</sub> is injected underground. Also, by avoiding deteriorated wells or open fractures or faults, injected CO<sub>2</sub> will be retained for very long periods of time. Moreover, CO<sub>2</sub> becomes less mobile over time as a result of multiple trapping mechanisms, further lowering the prospect of leakage.

Injection of CO<sub>2</sub> in deep geological formations uses technologies that have been developed for and applied by, the oil and gas industry. Well-drilling technology, injection technology, computer simulation of storage reservoir dynamics and monitoring methods can potentially be adapted from existing applications to meet the needs of geological storage. Beyond conventional oil and gas technology, other successful underground injection practices – including natural gas storage, acid gas disposal and deep injection of liquid wastes – as well as the industry's extensive experience with subsurface disposal of oil-field brines, can provide useful information about designing programmes for long-term storage of CO<sub>2</sub>. Geological storage of CO<sub>2</sub> is in practice today beneath the North Sea, where nearly 1 MtCO<sub>2</sub> has been successfully injected annually at Sleipner since 1996 and in Algeria at the In-Salah gas field. Carbon dioxide is also injected underground to recover oil. About 30 Mt of non-anthropogenic CO<sub>2</sub> are injected annually, mostly in west Texas, to recover oil from over 50 individual projects, some of which started in the early 1970s. The Weyburn Project

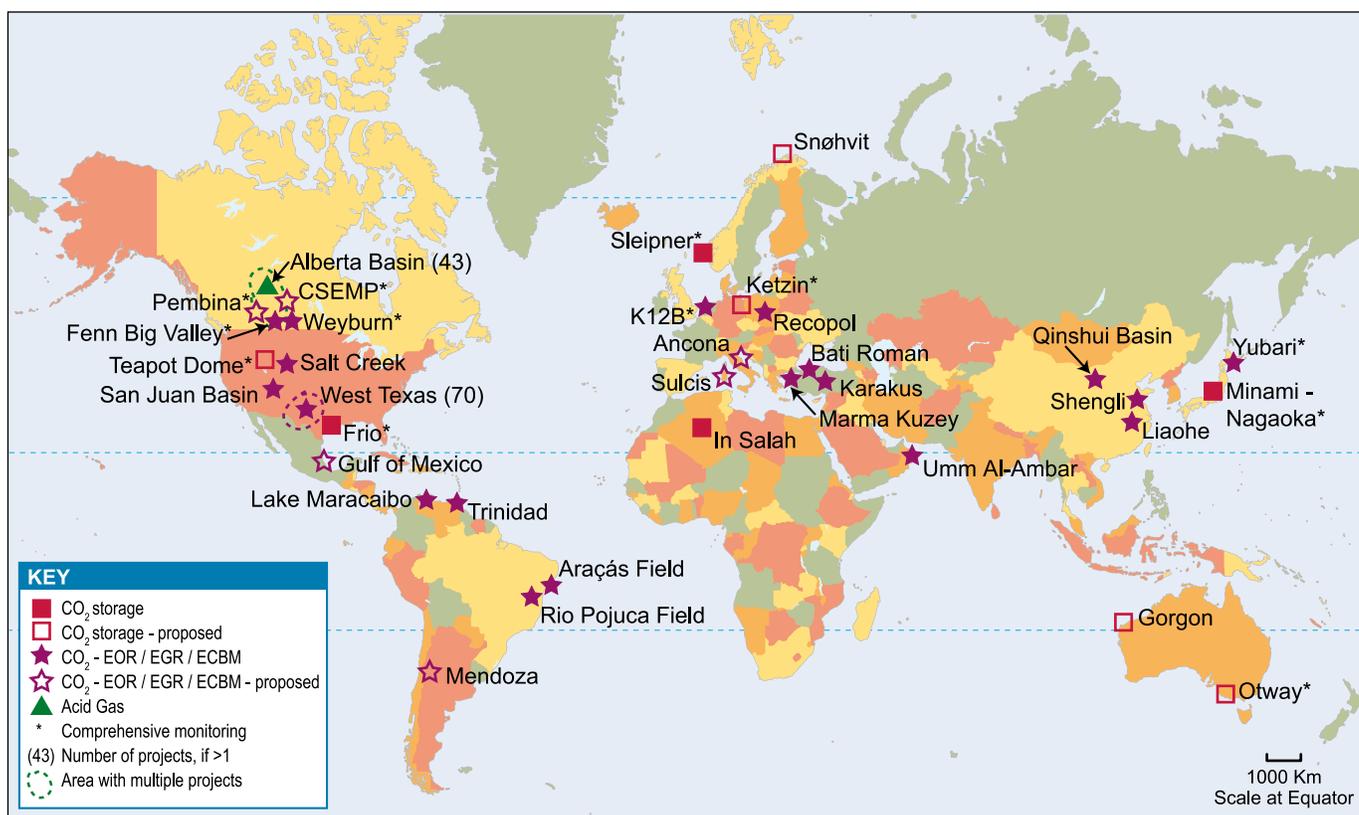
in Canada, where currently 1–2 MtCO<sub>2</sub> are injected annually, combines EOR with a comprehensive monitoring and modelling programme to evaluate CO<sub>2</sub> storage. Several more storage projects are under development at this time.

In areas with suitable hydrocarbon accumulations, CO<sub>2</sub>-EOR may be implemented because of the added economic benefit of incremental oil production, which may offset some of the costs of CO<sub>2</sub> capture, transport and injection. Storage of CO<sub>2</sub> in coal beds, in conjunction with enhanced coal bed methane (ECBM) production, is potentially attractive because of the prospect of enhanced production of methane, the cleanest of the fossil fuels. This technology, however, is not well developed and a better understanding of injection and storage processes in coals is needed. Carbon dioxide storage in depleted oil and gas reservoirs is very promising in some areas, because these structures are well known and significant infrastructures are already in place. Nevertheless, relatively few hydrocarbon reservoirs are currently depleted or near depletion and CO<sub>2</sub> storage will have to be staged to fit the time of reservoir availability. Deep saline formations are believed to have by far the largest capacity for CO<sub>2</sub> storage and are much more widespread than other options.

While there are uncertainties, the global capacity to store CO<sub>2</sub> deep underground is large. Depleted oil and gas reservoirs are estimated to have a storage capacity of 675–900 GtCO<sub>2</sub>. Deep saline formations are very likely to have a storage capacity of at least 1000 GtCO<sub>2</sub> and some studies suggest it may be an order of magnitude greater than this, but quantification of the upper range is difficult until additional studies are undertaken. Capacity of unminable coal formations is uncertain, with estimates ranging from as little as 3 GtCO<sub>2</sub> up to 200 GtCO<sub>2</sub>. Potential storage sites are likely to be broadly distributed in many of the world's sedimentary basins, located in the same region as many of the world's emission sources and are likely to be adequate to store a significant proportion of those emissions well into the future.

The cost of geological storage of CO<sub>2</sub> is highly site-specific, depending on factors such as the depth of the storage formation, the number of wells needed for injection and whether the project is onshore or offshore – but costs for storage, including monitoring, appear to lie in the range of 0.6–8.3 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> stored. This cost is small compared to present-day costs of CO<sub>2</sub> capture from flue gases, as indicated in Chapter 3. EOR could lead to negative storage costs of 10–16 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> for oil prices of 15–20 US\$ per barrel and more for higher oil prices.

Potential risks to humans and ecosystems from geological storage may arise from leaking injection wells, abandoned wells, leakage across faults and ineffective confining layers. Leakage of CO<sub>2</sub> could potentially degrade the quality of groundwater, damage some hydrocarbon or mineral resources, and have lethal effects on plants and sub-soil animals. Release of CO<sub>2</sub> back into the atmosphere could also create local health and safety concerns. Avoiding or mitigating these impacts will require careful site selection, effective regulatory oversight, an appropriate monitoring programme that provides

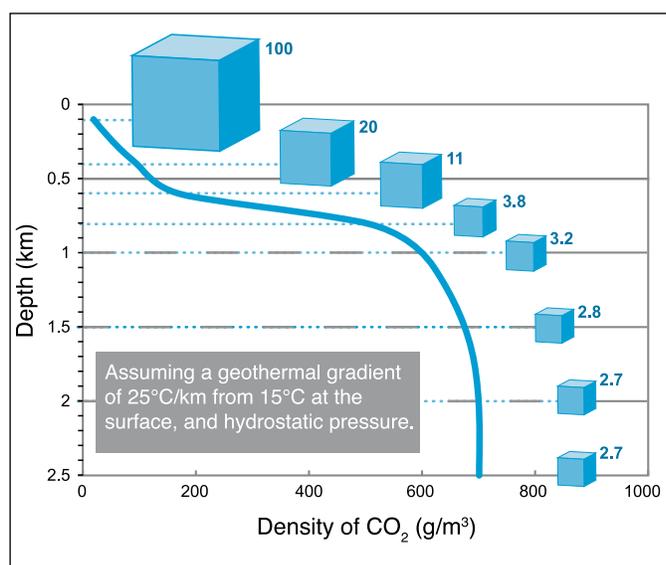


**Figure 5.1** Location of sites where activities relevant to CO<sub>2</sub> storage are planned or under way.

early warning that the storage site is not functioning as anticipated and implementation of remediation methods to stop or control CO<sub>2</sub> releases. Methods to accomplish these are being developed and tested.

There are few, if any, national regulations specifically dealing with CO<sub>2</sub> storage, but regulations dealing with oil and gas, groundwater and the underground injection of fluids can in many cases be readily adapted and/or adopted. However, there are no regulations relating specifically to long-term responsibility for storage. A number of international laws that predate any consideration of CO<sub>2</sub> storage are relevant to offshore geological storage; consideration of whether these laws do or do not permit offshore geological storage is under way.

There are gaps in our knowledge, such as regional storage-capacity estimates for many parts of the world. Similarly, better estimation of leakage rates, improved cost data, better intervention and remediation options, more pilot and demonstration projects and clarity on the issue of long-term stewardship all require consideration. Despite the fact that more work is needed to improve technologies and decrease uncertainty, there appear to be no insurmountable technical barriers to an increased uptake of geological storage as an effective mitigation option.



**Figure 5.2** Variation of CO<sub>2</sub> density with depth, assuming hydrostatic pressure and a geothermal gradient of 25°C km<sup>-1</sup> from 15°C at the surface (based on the density data of Angus *et al.*, 1973). Carbon dioxide density increases rapidly at approximately 800 m depth, when the CO<sub>2</sub> reaches a supercritical state. Cubes represent the relative volume occupied by the CO<sub>2</sub> and down to 800 m, this volume can be seen to dramatically decrease with depth. At depths below 1.5 km, the density and specific volume become nearly constant.

## 5.1 Introduction

### 5.1.1 What is geological storage?

Capture and geological storage of CO<sub>2</sub> provide a way to avoid emitting CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere, by capturing CO<sub>2</sub> from major stationary sources (Chapter 3), transporting it usually by pipeline (Chapter 4) and injecting it into suitable deep rock formations. This chapter explores the nature of geological storage and considers its potential as a mitigation option.

The subsurface is the Earth's largest carbon reservoir, where the vast majority of the world's carbon is held in coals, oil, gas organic-rich shales and carbonate rocks. Geological storage of CO<sub>2</sub> has been a natural process in the Earth's upper crust for hundreds of millions of years. Carbon dioxide derived from biological activity, igneous activity and chemical reactions between rocks and fluids accumulates in the natural subsurface environment as carbonate minerals, in solution or in a gaseous or supercritical form, either as a gas mixture or as pure CO<sub>2</sub>. The engineered injection of CO<sub>2</sub> into subsurface geological formations was first undertaken in Texas, USA, in the early 1970s, as part of enhanced oil recovery (EOR) projects and has been ongoing there and at many other locations ever since.

Geological storage of anthropogenic CO<sub>2</sub> as a greenhouse

gas mitigation option was first proposed in the 1970s, but little research was done until the early 1990s, when the idea gained credibility through the work of individuals and research groups (Marchetti, 1977; Baes *et al.*, 1980; Kaarstad, 1992; Koide *et al.*, 1992; van der Meer, 1992; Gunter *et al.*, 1993; Holloway and Savage, 1993; Bachu *et al.*, 1994; Korbol and Kaddour, 1994). The subsurface disposal of acid gas (a by-product of petroleum production with a CO<sub>2</sub> content of up to 98%) in the Alberta Basin of Canada and in the United States provides additional useful experience. In 1996, the world's first large-scale storage project was initiated by Statoil and its partners at the Sleipner Gas Field in the North Sea.

By the late 1990s, a number of publicly and privately funded research programmes were under way in the United States, Canada, Japan, Europe and Australia. Throughout this time, though less publicly, a number of oil companies became increasingly interested in geological storage as a mitigation option, particularly for gas fields with a high natural CO<sub>2</sub> content such as Natuna in Indonesia, In Salah in Algeria and Gorgon in Australia. More recently, coal mining companies and electricity-generation companies have started to investigate geological storage as a mitigation option of relevance to their industry.

In a little over a decade, geological storage of CO<sub>2</sub> has

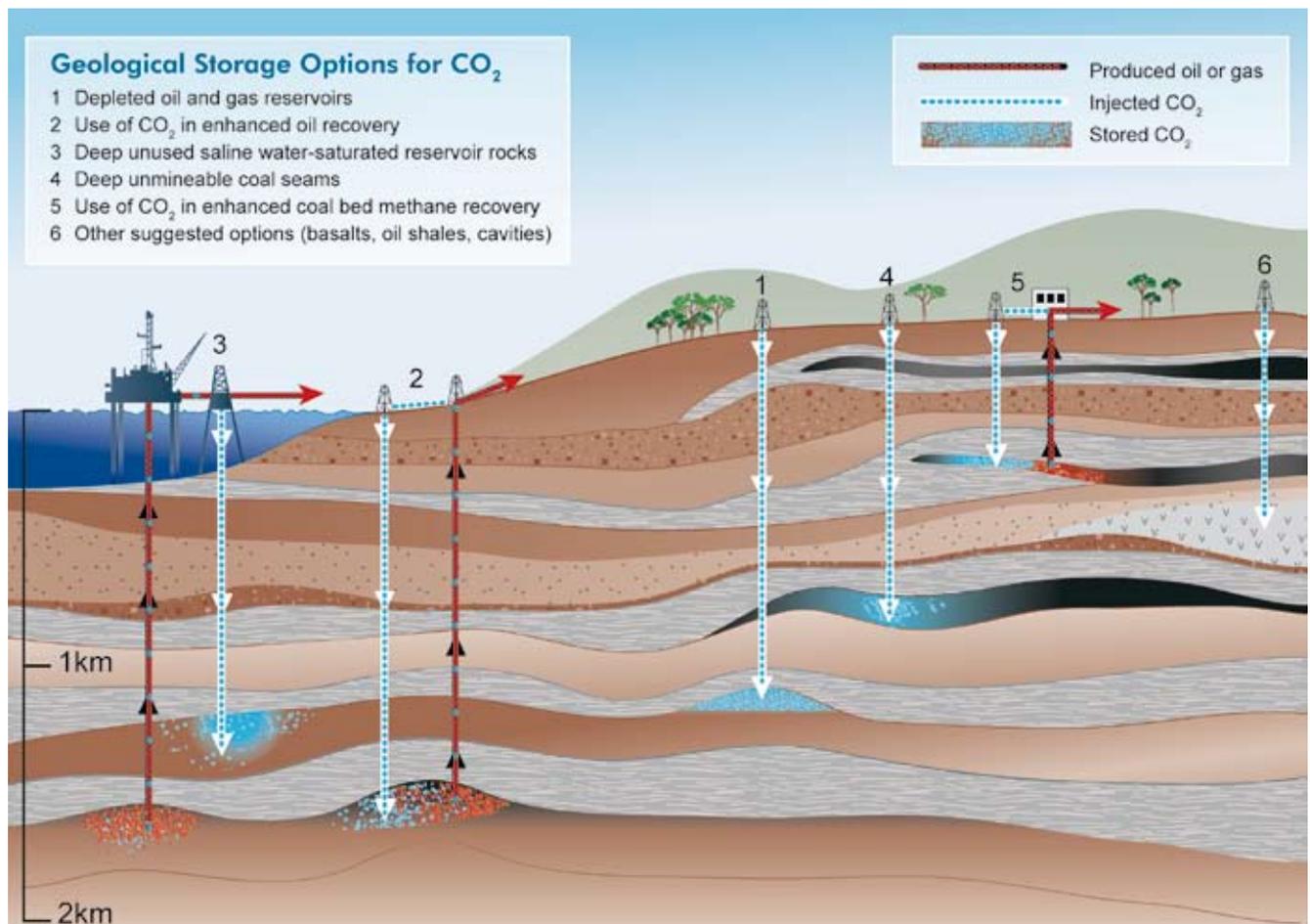


Figure 5.3 Options for storing CO<sub>2</sub> in deep underground geological formations (after Cook, 1999).

grown from a concept of limited interest to one that is quite widely regarded as a potentially important mitigation option (Figure 5.1). There are several reasons for this. First, as research has progressed and as demonstration and commercial projects have been successfully undertaken, the level of confidence in the technology has increased. Second, there is consensus that a broad portfolio of mitigation options is needed. Third, geological storage (in conjunction with CO<sub>2</sub> capture) could help to make deep cuts to atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. However, if that potential is to be realized, the technique must be safe, environmentally sustainable, cost-effective and capable of being broadly applied. This chapter explores these issues.

To geologically store CO<sub>2</sub>, it must first be compressed, usually to a dense fluid state known as ‘supercritical’ (see Glossary). Depending on the rate that temperature increases with depth (the geothermal gradient), the density of CO<sub>2</sub> will increase with depth, until at about 800 m or greater, the injected CO<sub>2</sub> will be in a dense supercritical state (Figure 5.2).

Geological storage of CO<sub>2</sub> can be undertaken in a variety of geological settings in sedimentary basins. Within these basins, oil fields, depleted gas fields, deep coal seams and saline formations are all possible storage formations (Figure 5.3).

Subsurface geological storage is possible both onshore and offshore, with offshore sites accessed through pipelines from the shore or from offshore platforms. The continental shelf and some adjacent deep-marine sedimentary basins are potential offshore storage sites, but the majority of sediments of the abyssal deep ocean floor are too thin and impermeable to be suitable for geological storage (Cook and Carleton, 2000). In addition to storage in sedimentary formations, some consideration has been given to storage in caverns, basalt and organic-rich shales (Section 5.3.5).

Fluids have been injected on a massive scale into the deep subsurface for many years to dispose of unwanted chemicals, pollutants or by-products of petroleum production, to enhance the production of oil and gas or to recharge depleted formations (Wilson *et al.*, 2003). The principles involved in such activities are well established and in most countries there are regulations governing these activities. Natural gas has also been injected and stored in the subsurface on a large scale in many parts of the world for many years. Injection of CO<sub>2</sub> to date has been done at a relatively small scale, but if it were to be used to significantly decrease emissions from existing stationary sources, then the injection rates would have to be at a scale similar to other injection operations under way at present.

But what is the world’s geological storage capacity and does it occur where we need it? These questions were first raised in Chapter 2, but Section 5.3.8 of this chapter considers geographical matching of CO<sub>2</sub> sources to geological storage sites in detail. Not all sedimentary basins are suitable for CO<sub>2</sub> storage; some are too shallow and others are dominated by rocks with low permeability or poor confining characteristics. Basins suitable for CO<sub>2</sub> storage have characteristics such as thick accumulations of sediments, permeable rock formations saturated with saline water (saline formations), extensive covers of low porosity rocks (acting as seals) and structural simplicity.

While many basins show such features, many others do not.

Is there likely to be sufficient storage capacity to meet the world’s needs in the years ahead? To consider this issue, it is useful to draw parallels with the terms ‘resources’ and ‘reserves’ used for mineral deposits (McKelvey, 1972). Deposits of minerals or fossil fuels are often cited with very large resource figures, but the ‘proven’ reserve is only some fraction of the resource. The resource figures are based on the selling price of the commodity, the cost of exploiting the commodity, the availability of appropriate technologies, proof that the commodity exists and whether the environmental or social impact of exploiting the commodity is acceptable to the community. Similarly, to turn technical geological storage capacity into economical storage capacity, the storage project must be economically viable, technically feasible, safe, environmentally and socially sustainable and acceptable to the community. Given these constraints, it is inevitable that the storage capacity that will actually be used will be significantly less than the technical potential. Section 5.3 explores this issue. It is likely that usable storage capacity will exist in many areas where people live and where CO<sub>2</sub> is generated from large stationary sources. This geographical congruence of storage-need and storage-capacity should not come as a surprise, because much of the world’s population is concentrated in regions underlain by sedimentary basins (Gunter *et al.*, 2004).

It is also important to know how securely and for how long stored CO<sub>2</sub> will be retained – for decades, centuries, millennia or for geological time? To assure public safety, storage sites must be designed and operated to minimize the possibility of leakage. Consequently, potential leakage pathways must be identified and procedures must be established, to set appropriate design and operational standards as well as monitoring, measurement and verification requirements. Sections 5.4, 5.6 and 5.7 consider these issues.

In this chapter, we primarily consider storage of pure or nearly pure, CO<sub>2</sub>. It has been suggested that it may be economically favourable to co-store CO<sub>2</sub> along with H<sub>2</sub>S, SO<sub>2</sub> or NO<sub>2</sub>. Since only a few scientific studies have evaluated the impacts of these added constituents on storage performance or risks, they are not addressed comprehensively here. Moreover, the limited information gained from practical experience with acid gas injection in Canada is insufficient to assess the impacts of the added components on storage security.

### 5.1.2 Existing and planned CO<sub>2</sub> projects

A number of pilot and commercial CO<sub>2</sub> storage projects are under way or proposed (Figure 5.1). To date, most actual or planned commercial projects are associated with major gas production facilities that have gas streams containing CO<sub>2</sub> in the range of 10–15% by volume, such as Sleipner in the North Sea, Snohvit in the Barents Sea, In Salah in Algeria and Gorgon in Australia (Figure 5.1), as well as the acid gas injection projects in Canada and the United States. At the Sleipner Project, operated by Statoil, more than 7 MtCO<sub>2</sub> has been injected into a deep sub-sea saline formation since 1996 (Box 5.1). Existing and planned

**Table 5.1** A selection of current and planned geological storage projects.

Project	Country	Scale of Project	Lead organizations	Injection start date	Approximate average daily injection rate	Total storage	Storage type	Geological storage formation	Age of formation	Lithology	Monitoring
Sleipner	Norway	Commercial	Statoil, IEA	1996	3000 t day <sup>-1</sup>	20 Mt planned	Aquifer	Utsira Formation	Tertiary	Sandstone	4D seismic plus gravity
Weyburn	Canada	Commercial	EnCana, IEA	May 2000	3-5000 t day <sup>-1</sup>	20 Mt planned	CO <sub>2</sub> -EOR	Midale Formation	Mississippian	Carbonate	Comprehensive
Minami-Nagoaka	Japan	Demo	Research Institute of Innovative Technology for the Earth	2002	Max 40 t day <sup>-1</sup>	10,000 t planned	Aquifer (Stn. Nagoaka Gas Field)	Haizume Formation	Pleistocene	Sandstone	Crosswell seismic + well monitoring
Yubari	Japan	Demo	Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry	2004	10 t day <sup>-1</sup>	200 t Planned	CO <sub>2</sub> -ECBM	Yubari Formation (Ishikari Coal Basin)	Tertiary	Coal	Comprehensive
In Salah	Algeria	Commercial	Sonatrach, BP, Statoil	2004	3-4000 t day <sup>-1</sup>	17 Mt planned	Depleted hydrocarbon reservoirs	Krechba Formation	Carboniferous	Sandstone	Planned comprehensive
Frio	USA	Pilot	Bureau of Economic Geology of the University of Texas	4-13 Oct. 2004	Approx. 177 t day <sup>-1</sup> for 9 days	1600t	Saline formation	Frio Formation	Tertiary	Brine-bearing sandstone-shale	Comprehensive
K12B	Netherlands	Demo	Gaz de France	2004	100-1000 t day <sup>-1</sup> (2006+)	Approx 8 Mt	EGR	Rotliegendes	Permian	Sandstone	Comprehensive
Fenn Big Valley	Canada	Pilot	Alberta Research Council	1998	50 t day <sup>-1</sup>	200 t	CO <sub>2</sub> -ECBM	Mannville Group	Cretaceous	Coal	P, T, flow
Recopol	Poland	Pilot	TNO-NITG (Netherlands)	2003	1 t day <sup>-1</sup>	10 t	CO <sub>2</sub> -ECBM	Silesian Basin	Carboniferous	Coal	
Qinshui Basin	China	Pilot	Alberta Research Council	2003	30 t day <sup>-1</sup>	150 t	CO <sub>2</sub> -ECBM	Shanxi Formation	Carboniferous-Permian	Coal	P, T, flow
Salt Creek	USA	Commercial	Anadarko	2004	5-6000 t day <sup>-1</sup>	27 Mt	CO <sub>2</sub> -EOR	Frontier	Cretaceous	Sandstone	Under development
<b>Planned Projects (2005 onwards)</b>											
Snohvit	Norway	Decided Commercial	Statoil	2006	2000 t day <sup>-1</sup>		Saline formation	Tubaen Formation	Lower Jurassic	Sandstone	Under development
Gorgon	Australia	Planned Commercial	Chevron	Planned 2009	Approx. 10,000 t day <sup>-1</sup>		Saline formation	Dupuy Formation	Late Jurassic	Massive sandstone with shale seal	Under development
Ketzin	Germany	Demo	GFZ Potsdam	2006	100 t day <sup>-1</sup>	60 kt	Saline formation	Stuttgart Formation	Triassic	Sandstone	Comprehensive
Otway	Australia	Pilot	CO2CRC	Planned late 2005	160 t day <sup>-1</sup> for 2 years	0.1 Mt	Saline fm and depleted gas field	Waarre Formation	Cretaceous	Sandstone	Comprehensive
Teapot Dome	USA	Proposed Demo	RMOTC	Proposed 2006	170 t day <sup>-1</sup> for 3 months	10 kt	Saline fm and CO <sub>2</sub> -EOR	Tensleep and Red Peak Fm	Permian	Sandstone	Comprehensive
CSEMP	Canada	Pilot	Suncor Energy	2005	50 t day <sup>-1</sup>	10 kt	CO <sub>2</sub> -ECBM	Ardley Fm	Tertiary	Coal	Comprehensive
Pembina	Canada	Pilot	Penn West	2005	50 t day <sup>-1</sup>	50 kt	CO <sub>2</sub> -EOR	Cardium Fm	Cretaceous	Sandstone	Comprehensive

storage projects are also listed in Table 5.1.

At the In Salah Gas Field in Algeria, Sonatrach, BP and Statoil inject CO<sub>2</sub> stripped from natural gas into the gas reservoir outside the boundaries of the gas field (Box 5.2). Statoil is planning another project in the Barents Sea, where CO<sub>2</sub> from the Snohvit field will be stripped from the gas and injected into a geological formation below the gas field. Chevron is proposing to produce gas from the Gorgon field off Western Australia, containing approximately 14% CO<sub>2</sub>. The CO<sub>2</sub> will be injected

into the Dupuy Formation at Barrow Island (Oen, 2003). In The Netherlands, CO<sub>2</sub> is being injected at pilot scale into the almost depleted K12-B offshore gas field (van der Meer *et al.*, 2005).

Forty-four CO<sub>2</sub>-rich acid gas injection projects are currently operating in Western Canada, ongoing since the early 1990s (Bachu and Haug, 2005). Although they are mostly small scale, they provide important examples of effectively managing injection of CO<sub>2</sub> and hazardous gases such as H<sub>2</sub>S (Section 5.2.4.2).

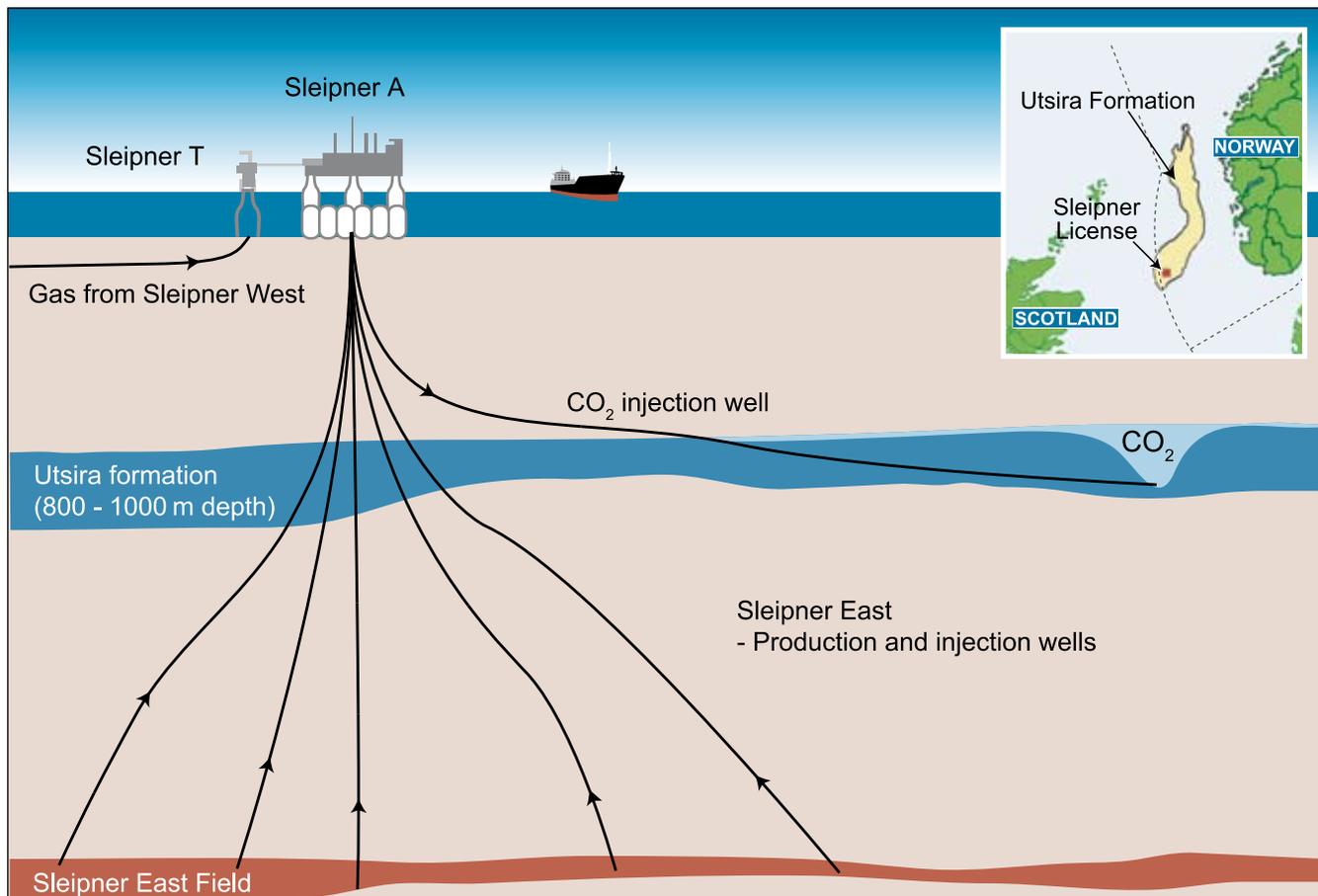
**Box 5.1** The Sleipner Project, North Sea.

The Sleipner Project, operated by Statoil in the North Sea about 250 km off the coast of Norway, is the first commercial-scale project dedicated to geological CO<sub>2</sub> storage in a saline formation. The CO<sub>2</sub> (about 9%) from Sleipner West Gas Field is separated, then injected into a large, deep, saline formation 800 m below the seabed of the North Sea. The Saline Aquifer CO<sub>2</sub> Storage (SACS) project was established to monitor and research the storage of CO<sub>2</sub>. From 1995, the IEA Greenhouse Gas R&D Programme has worked with Statoil to arrange the monitoring and research activities. Approximately 1 MtCO<sub>2</sub> is removed from the produced natural gas and injected underground annually in the field. The CO<sub>2</sub> injection operation started in October 1996 and, by early 2005, more than 7 MtCO<sub>2</sub> had been injected at a rate of approximately 2700 t day<sup>-1</sup>. Over the lifetime of the project, a total of 20 MtCO<sub>2</sub> is expected to be stored. A simplified diagram of the Sleipner scheme is given in Figure 5.4.

The saline formation into which the CO<sub>2</sub> is injected is a brine-saturated unconsolidated sandstone about 800–1000 m below the sea floor. The formation also contains secondary thin shale layers, which influence the internal movement of injected CO<sub>2</sub>. The saline formation has a very large storage capacity, on the order of 1–10 GtCO<sub>2</sub>. The top of the formation is fairly flat on a regional scale, although it contains numerous small, low-amplitude closures. The overlying primary seal is an extensive, thick, shale layer.

This project is being carried out in three phases. Phase-0 involved baseline data gathering and evaluation, which was completed in November 1998. Phase-1 involved establishment of project status after three years of CO<sub>2</sub> injection. Five main project areas involve descriptions of reservoir geology, reservoir simulation, geochemistry, assessment of need and cost for monitoring wells and geophysical modelling. Phase-2, involving data interpretation and model verification, began in April 2000.

The fate and transport of the CO<sub>2</sub> plume in the storage formation has been monitored successfully by seismic time-lapse surveys (Figure 5.16). The surveys also show that the caprock is an effective seal that prevents CO<sub>2</sub> migration out of the storage formation. Today, the footprint of the plume at Sleipner extends over an area of approximately 5 km<sup>2</sup>. Reservoir studies and simulations covering hundreds to thousands of years have shown that CO<sub>2</sub> will eventually dissolve in the pore water, which will become heavier and sink, thus minimizing the potential for long-term leakage (Lindeberg and Bergmo, 2003).



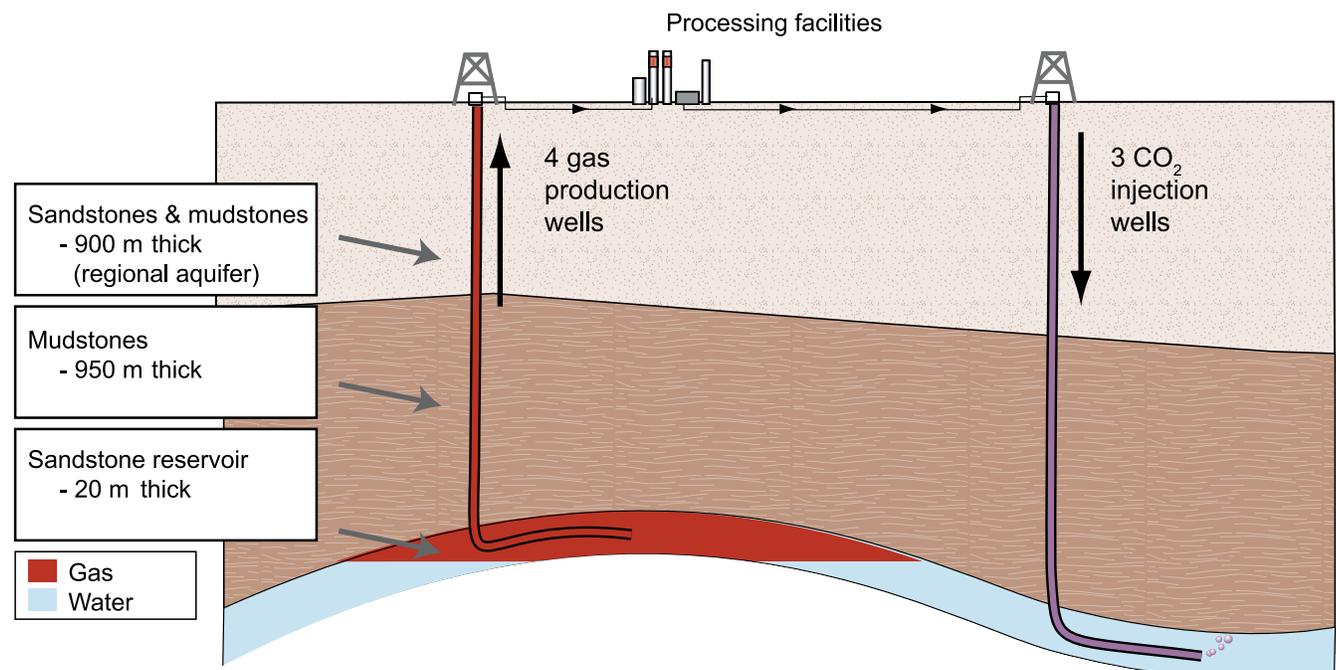
**Figure 5.4** Simplified diagram of the Sleipner CO<sub>2</sub> Storage Project. Inset: location and extent of the Utsira formation.

**Box 5.2** The In Salah, Algeria, CO<sub>2</sub> Storage Project.

The In Salah Gas Project, a joint venture among Sonatrach, BP and Statoil located in the central Saharan region of Algeria, is the world's first large-scale CO<sub>2</sub> storage project in a gas reservoir (Riddiford *et al.*, 2003). The Krechba Field at In Salah produces natural gas containing up to 10% CO<sub>2</sub> from several geological reservoirs and delivers it to markets in Europe, after processing and stripping the CO<sub>2</sub> to meet commercial specifications. The project involves re-injecting the CO<sub>2</sub> into a sandstone reservoir at a depth of 1800 m and storing up to 1.2 MtCO<sub>2</sub> yr<sup>-1</sup>. Carbon dioxide injection started in April 2004 and, over the life of the project, it is estimated that 17 MtCO<sub>2</sub> will be geologically stored. The project consists of four production and three injection wells (Figure 5.5). Long-reach (up to 1.5 km) horizontal wells are used to inject CO<sub>2</sub> into the 5-mD permeability reservoir.

The Krechba Field is a relatively simple anticline. Carbon dioxide injection takes place down-dip from the gas/water contact in the gas-bearing reservoir. The injected CO<sub>2</sub> is expected to eventually migrate into the area of the current gas field after depletion of the gas zone. The field has been mapped with three-dimensional seismic and well data from the field. Deep faults have been mapped, but at shallower levels, the structure is unfaulted. The storage target in the reservoir interval therefore carries minimal structural uncertainty or risk. The top seal is a thick succession of mudstones up to 950 m thick.

A preliminary risk assessment of CO<sub>2</sub> storage integrity has been carried out and baseline data acquired. Processes that could result in CO<sub>2</sub> migration from the injection interval have been quantified and a monitoring programme is planned involving a range of technologies, including noble gas tracers, pressure surveys, tomography, gravity baseline studies, microbiological studies, four-dimensional seismic and geomechanical monitoring.



**Figure 5.5** Schematic of the In Salah Gas Project, Algeria. One MtCO<sub>2</sub> will be stored annually in the gas reservoir. Long-reach horizontal wells with slotted intervals of up to 1.5 km are used to inject CO<sub>2</sub> into the water-filled parts of the gas reservoir.

Opportunities for enhanced oil recovery (EOR) have increased interest in CO<sub>2</sub> storage (Stevens *et al.*, 2001b; Moberg *et al.*, 2003; Moritis, 2003; Riddiford *et al.*, 2003; Torp and Gale, 2003). Although not designed for CO<sub>2</sub> storage, CO<sub>2</sub>-EOR projects can demonstrate associated storage of CO<sub>2</sub>, although lack of comprehensive monitoring of EOR projects (other than at the International Energy Agency Greenhouse Gas (IEA-GHG) Weyburn Project in Canada) makes it difficult to quantify storage. In the United States, approximately 73 CO<sub>2</sub>-EOR operations inject up to 30 MtCO<sub>2</sub> yr<sup>-1</sup>, most of which comes from natural CO<sub>2</sub> accumulations – although approximately 3

MtCO<sub>2</sub> is from anthropogenic sources, such as gas processing and fertiliser plants (Stevens *et al.*, 2001b). The SACROC project in Texas was the first large-scale commercial CO<sub>2</sub>-EOR project in the world. It used anthropogenic CO<sub>2</sub> during the period 1972 to 1995. The Rangely Weber project (Box 5.6) injects anthropogenic CO<sub>2</sub> from a gas-processing plant in Wyoming.

In Canada, a CO<sub>2</sub>-EOR project has been established by EnCana at the Weyburn Oil Field in southern Saskatchewan (Box 5.3). The project is expected to inject 23 MtCO<sub>2</sub> and extend the life of the oil field by 25 years (Moberg *et al.*,

**Box 5.3** The Weyburn CO<sub>2</sub>-EOR Project.

The Weyburn CO<sub>2</sub>-enhanced oil recovery (CO<sub>2</sub>-EOR) project is located in the Williston Basin, a geological structure extending from south-central Canada into north-central United States. The project aims to permanently store almost all of the injected CO<sub>2</sub> by eliminating the CO<sub>2</sub> that would normally be released during the end of the field life.

The source of the CO<sub>2</sub> for the Weyburn CO<sub>2</sub>-EOR Project is the Dakota Gasification Company facility, located approximately 325 km south of Weyburn, in Beulah, North Dakota, USA. At the plant, coal is gasified to make synthetic gas (methane), with a relatively pure stream of CO<sub>2</sub> as a by-product. This CO<sub>2</sub> stream is dehydrated, compressed and piped to Weyburn in southeastern Saskatchewan, Canada, for use in the field. The Weyburn CO<sub>2</sub>-EOR Project is designed to take CO<sub>2</sub> from the pipeline for about 15 years, with delivered volumes dropping from 5000 to about 3000 t day<sup>-1</sup> over the life of the project.

The Weyburn field covers an area of 180 km<sup>2</sup>, with original oil in place on the order of 222 million m<sup>3</sup> (1396 million barrels). Over the life of the CO<sub>2</sub>-EOR project (20–25 years), it is expected that some 20 MtCO<sub>2</sub> will be stored in the field, under current economic conditions and oil recovery technology. The oil field layout and operation is relatively conventional for oil field operations. The field has been designed with a combination of vertical and horizontal wells to optimize the sweep efficiency of the CO<sub>2</sub>. In all cases, production and injection strings are used within the wells to protect the integrity of the casing of the well.

The oil reservoir is a fractured carbonate, 20–27 m thick. The primary upper seal for the reservoir is an anhydrite zone. At the northern limit of the reservoir, the carbonate thins against a regional unconformity. The basal seal is also anhydrite, but is less consistent across the area of the reservoir. A thick, flat-lying shale above the unconformity forms a good regional barrier to leakage from the reservoir. In addition, several high-permeability formations containing saline groundwater would form good conduits for lateral migration of any CO<sub>2</sub> that might reach these zones, with rapid dissolution of the CO<sub>2</sub> in the formation fluids.

Since CO<sub>2</sub> injection began in late 2000, the EOR project has performed largely as predicted. Currently, some 1600 m<sup>3</sup> (10,063 barrels) day<sup>-1</sup> of incremental oil is being produced from the field. All produced CO<sub>2</sub> is captured and recompressed for reinjection into the production zone. Currently, some 1000 tCO<sub>2</sub> day<sup>-1</sup> is reinjected; this will increase as the project matures. Monitoring is extensive, with high-resolution seismic surveys and surface monitoring to determine any potential leakage. Surface monitoring includes sampling and analysis of potable groundwater, as well as soil gas sampling and analysis (Moberg *et al.*, 2003). To date, there has been no indication of CO<sub>2</sub> leakage to the surface and near-surface environment (White, 2005; Strutt *et al.*, 2003).

2003; Law, 2005). The fate of the injected CO<sub>2</sub> is being closely monitored through the IEA GHG Weyburn Project (Wilson and Monea, 2005). Carbon dioxide-EOR is under consideration for the North Sea, although there is as yet little, if any, operational experience for offshore CO<sub>2</sub>-EOR. Carbon dioxide-EOR projects are also currently under way in a number of countries including Trinidad, Turkey and Brazil (Moritis, 2002). Saudi Aramco, the world's largest producer and exporter of crude oil, is evaluating the technical feasibility of CO<sub>2</sub>-EOR in some of its Saudi Arabian reservoirs.

In addition to these commercial storage or EOR projects, a number of pilot storage projects are under way or planned. The Frio Brine Project in Texas, USA, involved injection and storage of 1900 tCO<sub>2</sub> in a highly permeable formation with a regionally extensive shale seal (Hovorka *et al.*, 2005). Pilot projects are proposed for Ketzin, west of Berlin, Germany, for the Otway Basin of southeast Australia and for Teapot Dome, Wyoming, USA (Figure 5.1). The American FutureGen project, proposed for late this decade, will be a geological storage project linked to coal-fired electricity generation. A small-scale CO<sub>2</sub> injection and monitoring project is being carried out by RITE at Nagoaka in northwest Honshu, Japan. Small-scale injection projects to test CO<sub>2</sub> storage in coal have been carried out in Europe (RECOPOP) and Japan (Yamaguchi *et al.*, 2005). A CO<sub>2</sub>-enhanced coal bed methane (ECBM) recovery

demonstration project has been undertaken in the northern San Juan Basin of New Mexico, USA (Reeves, 2003a) (Box 5.7). Further CO<sub>2</sub>-ECBM projects are under consideration for China, Canada, Italy and Poland (Gale, 2003). In all, some 59 opportunities for CO<sub>2</sub>-ECBM have been identified worldwide, the majority in China (van Bergen *et al.*, 2003a).

These projects (Figure 5.1; Table 5.1) demonstrate that subsurface injection of CO<sub>2</sub> is not for the distant future, but is being implemented now for environmental and/or commercial reasons.

### 5.1.3 Key questions

In the previous section, the point is made that deep injection of CO<sub>2</sub> is under way in a number of places (Figure 5.1). However, if CO<sub>2</sub> storage is to be undertaken on the scale necessary to make deep cuts to atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, there must be hundreds, and perhaps even thousands, of large-scale geological storage projects under way worldwide. The extent to which this is or might be, feasible depends on the answers to the key questions outlined below and addressed subsequently in this chapter:

- How is CO<sub>2</sub> stored underground? What happens to the CO<sub>2</sub> when it is injected? What are the physico-chemical and chemical processes involved? What are the geological

- controls? (Sections 5.2 and 5.3)
- How long can CO<sub>2</sub> remain stored underground? (Section 5.2)
  - How much and where can CO<sub>2</sub> be stored in the subsurface, locally, regionally, globally? Is it a modest niche opportunity or is the total storage capacity sufficient to contain a large proportion of the CO<sub>2</sub> currently emitted to the atmosphere? (Section 5.3)
  - Are there significant opportunities for CO<sub>2</sub>-enhanced oil and gas recovery? (Section 5.3)
  - How is a suitable storage site identified and what are its geological characteristics? (see Section 5.4)
  - What technologies are currently available for geological storage of CO<sub>2</sub>? (Section 5.5)
  - Can we monitor CO<sub>2</sub> once it is geologically stored? (Section 5.6)
  - Will a storage site leak and what would be the likely consequences? (Sections 5.6 and 5.7)
  - Can a CO<sub>2</sub> storage site be remediated if something does go wrong? (Sections 5.6 and 5.7)
  - Can a geological storage site be operated safely and if so, how? (Section 5.7)
  - Are there legal and regulatory issues for geological storage and is there a legal/regulatory framework that enables it to be undertaken? (Section 5.8)
  - What is the likely cost of geological storage of CO<sub>2</sub>? (Section 5.9)
  - After reviewing our current state of knowledge, are there things that we still need to know? What are these gaps in knowledge? (Section 5.10).

The remainder of this chapter seeks to address these questions.

## 5.2 Storage mechanisms and storage security

Geological formations in the subsurface are composed of transported and deposited rock grains organic material and minerals that form after the rocks are deposited. The pore space between grains or minerals is occupied by fluid (mostly water, with proportionally minute occurrences of oil and gas). Open fractures and cavities are also filled with fluid. Injection of CO<sub>2</sub> into the pore space and fractures of a permeable formation can displace the *in situ* fluid or the CO<sub>2</sub> may dissolve in or mix with the fluid or react with the mineral grains or there may be some combination of these processes. This section examines these processes and their influence on geological storage of CO<sub>2</sub>.

### 5.2.1 CO<sub>2</sub> flow and transport processes

Injection of fluids into deep geological formations is achieved by pumping fluids down into a well (see Section 5.5). The part of the well in the storage zone is either perforated or covered with a permeable screen to enable the CO<sub>2</sub> to enter the formation. The perforated or screened interval is usually on the order of 10–100 m thick, depending on the permeability and thickness of the formation. Injection raises the pressure near the well,

allowing CO<sub>2</sub> to enter the pore spaces initially occupied by the *in situ* formation fluids. The amount and spatial distribution of pressure buildup in the formation will depend on the rate of injection, the permeability and thickness of the injection formation, the presence or absence of permeability barriers within it and the geometry of the regional underground water (hydrogeological) system.

Once injected into the formation, the primary flow and transport mechanisms that control the spread of CO<sub>2</sub> include:

- Fluid flow (migration) in response to pressure gradients created by the injection process;
- Fluid flow in response to natural hydraulic gradients;
- Buoyancy caused by the density differences between CO<sub>2</sub> and the formation fluids;
- Diffusion;
- Dispersion and fingering caused by formation heterogeneities and mobility contrast between CO<sub>2</sub> and formation fluid;
- Dissolution into the formation fluid;
- Mineralization;
- Pore space (relative permeability) trapping;
- Adsorption of CO<sub>2</sub> onto organic material.

The rate of fluid flow depends on the number and properties of the fluid phases present in the formation. When two or more fluids mix in any proportion, they are referred to as miscible fluids. If they do not mix, they are referred to as immiscible. The presence of several different phases may decrease the permeability and slow the rate of migration. If CO<sub>2</sub> is injected into a gas reservoir, a single miscible fluid phase consisting of natural gas and CO<sub>2</sub> is formed locally. When CO<sub>2</sub> is injected into a deep saline formation in a liquid or liquid-like supercritical dense phase, it is immiscible in water. Carbon dioxide injected into an oil reservoir may be miscible or immiscible, depending on the oil composition and the pressure and temperature of the system (Section 5.3.2). When CO<sub>2</sub> is injected into coal beds, in addition to some of the processes listed above, adsorption and desorption of gases (particularly methane) previously adsorbed on the coal take place, as well as swelling or shrinkage of the coal itself (Section 5.3.4).

Because supercritical CO<sub>2</sub> is much less viscous than water and oil (by an order of magnitude or more), migration is controlled by the contrast in mobility of CO<sub>2</sub> and the *in situ* formation fluids (Celia *et al.*, 2005; Nordbotten *et al.*, 2005a). Because of the comparatively high mobility of CO<sub>2</sub>, only some of the oil or water will be displaced, leading to an average saturation of CO<sub>2</sub> in the range of 30–60%. Viscous fingering can cause CO<sub>2</sub> to bypass much of the pore space, depending on the heterogeneity and anisotropy of rock permeability (van der Meer, 1995; Ennis-King and Paterson, 2001; Flett *et al.*, 2005). In natural gas reservoirs, CO<sub>2</sub> is more viscous than natural gas, so the ‘front’ will be stable and viscous fingering limited.

The magnitude of the buoyancy forces that drive vertical flow depends on the type of fluid in the formation. In saline formations, the comparatively large density difference (30–50%) between CO<sub>2</sub> and formation water creates strong buoyancy forces that drive CO<sub>2</sub> upwards. In oil reservoirs, the density

difference and buoyancy forces are not as large, particularly if the oil and CO<sub>2</sub> are miscible (Kovscek, 2002). In gas reservoirs, the opposite effect will occur, with CO<sub>2</sub> migrating downwards under buoyancy forces, because CO<sub>2</sub> is denser than natural gas (Oldenburg *et al.*, 2001).

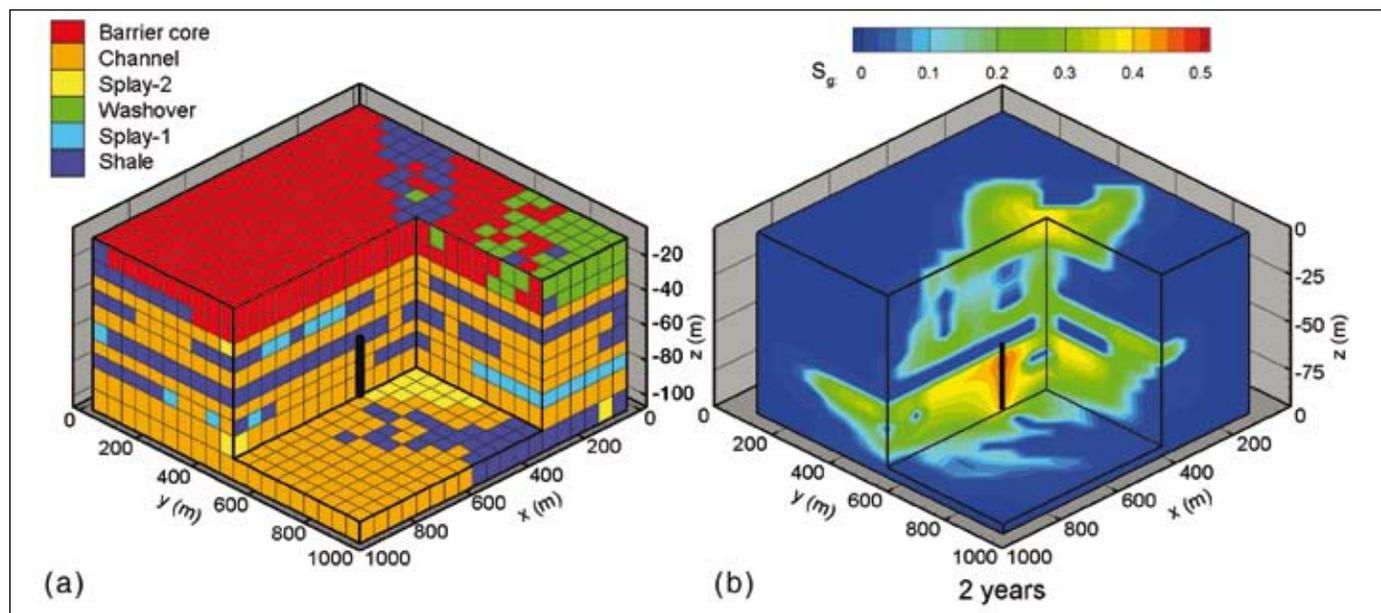
In saline formations and oil reservoirs, the buoyant plume of injected CO<sub>2</sub> migrates upwards, but not evenly. This is because a lower permeability layer acts as a barrier and causes the CO<sub>2</sub> to migrate laterally, filling any stratigraphic or structural trap it encounters. The shape of the CO<sub>2</sub> plume rising through the rock matrix (Figure 5.6) is strongly affected by formation heterogeneity, such as low-permeability shale lenses (Flett *et al.*, 2005). Low-permeability layers within the storage formation therefore have the effect of slowing the upward migration of CO<sub>2</sub>, which would otherwise cause CO<sub>2</sub> to bypass deeper parts of the storage formation (Doughty *et al.*, 2001).

As CO<sub>2</sub> migrates through the formation, some of it will dissolve into the formation water. In systems with slowly flowing water, reservoir-scale numerical simulations show that, over tens of years, a significant amount, up to 30% of the injected CO<sub>2</sub>, will dissolve in formation water (Doughty *et al.*, 2001). Basin-scale simulations suggest that over centuries, the entire CO<sub>2</sub> plume dissolves in formation water (McPherson and Cole, 2000; Ennis-King *et al.*, 2003). If the injected CO<sub>2</sub> is contained in a closed structure (no flow of formation water), it will take much longer for CO<sub>2</sub> to completely dissolve because of reduced contact with unsaturated formation water. Once CO<sub>2</sub> is dissolved in the formation fluid, it migrates along with the regional groundwater flow. For deep sedimentary basins characterized by low permeability and high salinity, groundwater flow velocities are very low, typically on the order

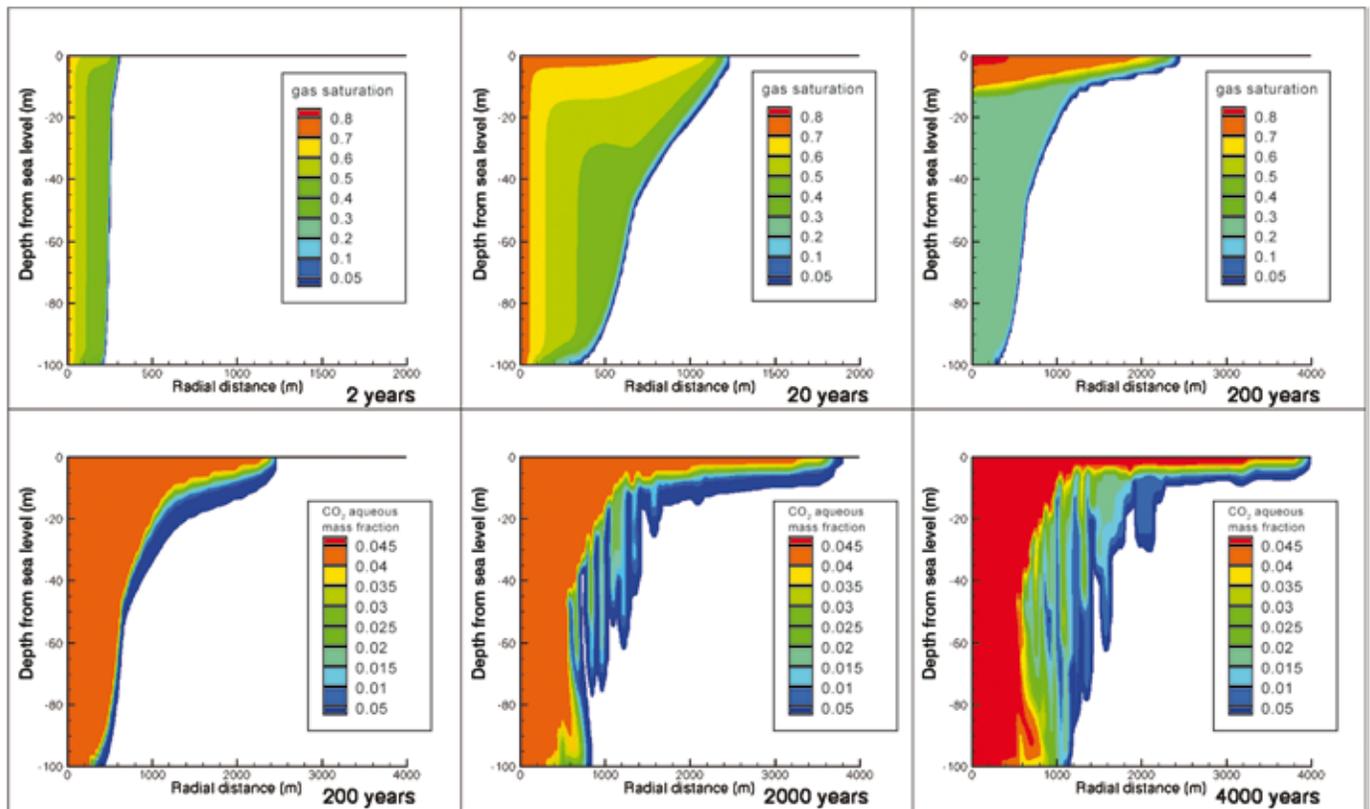
of millimetres to centimetres per year (Bachu *et al.*, 1994). Thus, migration rates of dissolved CO<sub>2</sub> are substantially lower than for separate-phase CO<sub>2</sub>.

Water saturated with CO<sub>2</sub> is slightly denser (approximately 1%) than the original formation water, depending on salinity (Enick and Klara, 1990; Bachu and Adams, 2003). With high vertical permeability, this may lead to free convection, replacing the CO<sub>2</sub>-saturated water from the plume vicinity with unsaturated water, producing faster rates of CO<sub>2</sub> dissolution (Lindeberg and Wessel-Berg, 1997; Ennis-King and Paterson, 2003). Figure 5.7 illustrates the formation of convection cells and dissolution of CO<sub>2</sub> over several thousand years. The solubility of CO<sub>2</sub> in brine decreases with increasing pressure, decreasing temperature and increasing salinity (Annex 1). Calculations indicate that, depending on the salinity and depth, 20–60 kgCO<sub>2</sub> can dissolve in 1 m<sup>3</sup> of formation fluid (Holt *et al.*, 1995; Koide *et al.*, 1995). With the use of a homogeneous model rather than a heterogeneous one, the time required for complete CO<sub>2</sub> dissolution may be underestimated.

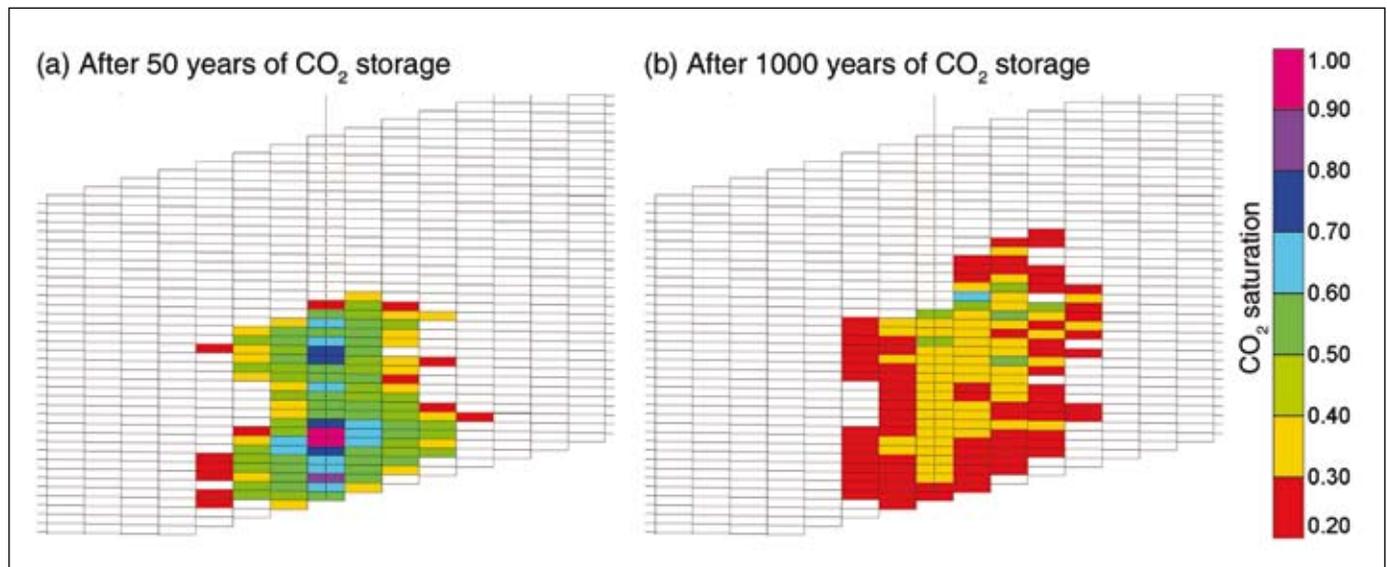
As CO<sub>2</sub> migrates through a formation, some of it is retained in the pore space by capillary forces (Figure 5.6), commonly referred to as ‘residual CO<sub>2</sub> trapping’, which may immobilize significant amounts of CO<sub>2</sub> (Obdam *et al.*, 2003; Kumar *et al.*, 2005). Figure 5.8 illustrates that when the degree of trapping is high and CO<sub>2</sub> is injected at the bottom of a thick formation, all of the CO<sub>2</sub> may be trapped by this mechanism, even before it reaches the caprock at the top of the formation. While this effect is formation-specific, Holtz (2002) has demonstrated that residual CO<sub>2</sub> saturations may be as high as 15–25% for many typical storage formations. Over time, much of the trapped CO<sub>2</sub> dissolves in the formation water (Ennis-King and



**Figure 5.6** Simulated distribution of CO<sub>2</sub> injected into a heterogeneous formation with low-permeability layers that block upward migration of CO<sub>2</sub>. (a) Illustration of a heterogeneous formation facies grid model. The location of the injection well is indicated by the vertical line in the lower portion of the grid. (b) The CO<sub>2</sub> distribution after two years of injection. Note that the simulated distribution of CO<sub>2</sub> is strongly influenced by the low-permeability layers that block and delay upward movement of CO<sub>2</sub> (after Doughty and Pruess, 2004).



**Figure 5.7** Radial simulations of  $\text{CO}_2$  injection into a homogeneous formation 100 m thick, at a depth of 1 km, where the pressure is 10 MPa and the temperature is  $40^\circ\text{C}$ . The injection rate is  $1 \text{ MtCO}_2 \text{ yr}^{-1}$  for 20 years, the horizontal permeability is  $10^{-13} \text{ m}^2$  (approximately 100 mD) and the vertical permeability is one-tenth of that. The residual  $\text{CO}_2$  saturation is 20%. The first three parts of the figure at 2, 20 and 200 years, show the gas saturation in the porous medium; the second three parts of the figure at 200, 2000 and 4000 years, show the mass fraction of dissolved  $\text{CO}_2$  in the aqueous phase (after Ennis-King and Paterson, 2003).



**Figure 5.8** Simulation of 50 years of injection of  $\text{CO}_2$  into the base of a saline formation. Capillary forces trap  $\text{CO}_2$  in the pore spaces of sedimentary rocks. (a) After the 50-year injection period, most  $\text{CO}_2$  is still mobile, driven upwards by buoyancy forces. (b) After 1000 years, buoyancy-driven flow has expanded the volume affected by  $\text{CO}_2$  and much is trapped as residual  $\text{CO}_2$  saturation or dissolved in brine (not shown). Little  $\text{CO}_2$  is mobile and all  $\text{CO}_2$  is contained within the aquifer (after Kumar et al., 2005).

Paterson, 2003), although appropriate reservoir engineering can accelerate or modify solubility trapping (Keith *et al.*, 2005).

## 5.2.2 CO<sub>2</sub> storage mechanisms in geological formations

The effectiveness of geological storage depends on a combination of physical and geochemical trapping mechanisms (Figure 5.9). The most effective storage sites are those where CO<sub>2</sub> is immobile because it is trapped permanently under a thick, low-permeability seal or is converted to solid minerals or is adsorbed on the surfaces of coal micropores or through a combination of physical and chemical trapping mechanisms.

### 5.2.2.1 Physical trapping: stratigraphic and structural

Initially, physical trapping of CO<sub>2</sub> below low-permeability seals (caprocks), such as very-low-permeability shale or salt beds, is the principal means to store CO<sub>2</sub> in geological formations (Figure 5.3). In some high latitude areas, shallow gas hydrates may conceivably act as a seal. Sedimentary basins have such closed, physically bound traps or structures, which are occupied mainly by saline water, oil and gas. Structural traps include those formed by folded or fractured rocks. Faults can act as permeability barriers in some circumstances and as preferential pathways for fluid flow in other circumstances (Salvi *et al.*, 2000). Stratigraphic traps are formed by changes in rock type caused by variation in the setting where the rocks were deposited. Both of these types of traps are suitable for CO<sub>2</sub> storage, although, as discussed in Section 5.5, care must be taken not to exceed the allowable overpressure to avoid fracturing the caprock or re-activating faults (Streit *et al.*, 2005).

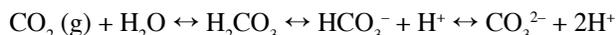
### 5.2.2.2 Physical trapping: hydrodynamic

Hydrodynamic trapping can occur in saline formations that do not have a closed trap, but where fluids migrate very slowly over long distances. When CO<sub>2</sub> is injected into a formation, it displaces saline formation water and then migrates buoyantly upwards, because it is less dense than the water. When it reaches the top of the formation, it continues to migrate as a separate phase until it is trapped as residual CO<sub>2</sub> saturation or in local structural or stratigraphic traps within the sealing formation. In the longer term, significant quantities of CO<sub>2</sub> dissolve in the formation water and then migrate with the groundwater. Where the distance from the deep injection site to the end of the overlying impermeable formation is hundreds of kilometres, the time scale for fluid to reach the surface from the deep basin can be millions of years (Bachu *et al.*, 1994).

### 5.2.2.3 Geochemical trapping

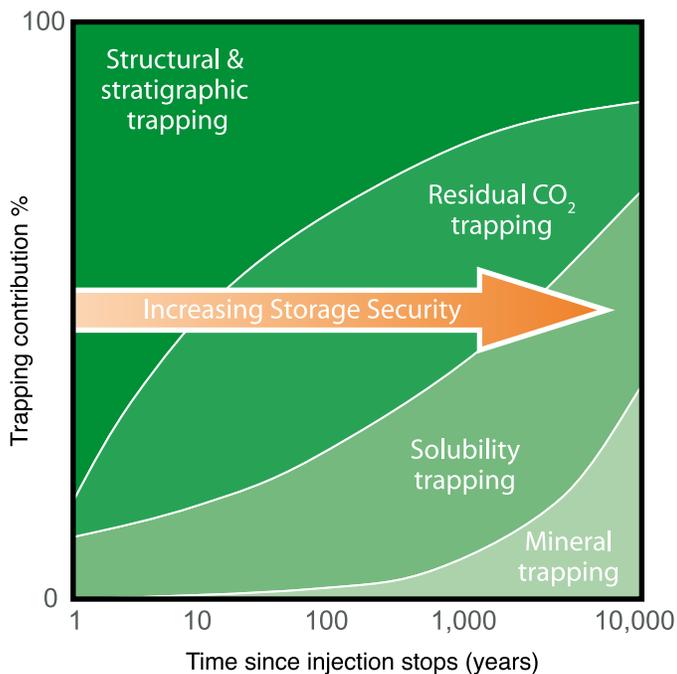
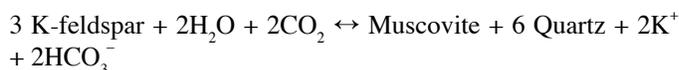
Carbon dioxide in the subsurface can undergo a sequence of geochemical interactions with the rock and formation water that will further increase storage capacity and effectiveness. First, when CO<sub>2</sub> dissolves in formation water, a process commonly called solubility trapping occurs. The primary benefit of solubility trapping is that once CO<sub>2</sub> is dissolved, it no longer exists as a separate phase, thereby eliminating the buoyant forces that drive it upwards. Next, it will form ionic species as the rock dissolves, accompanied by a rise in the pH. Finally, some fraction may be converted to stable carbonate minerals (mineral trapping), the most permanent form of geological storage (Gunter *et al.*, 1993). Mineral trapping is believed to be comparatively slow, potentially taking a thousand years or longer. Nevertheless, the permanence of mineral storage, combined with the potentially large storage capacity present in some geological settings, makes this a desirable feature of long-term storage.

Dissolution of CO<sub>2</sub> in formation waters can be represented by the chemical reaction:



The CO<sub>2</sub> solubility in formation water decreases as temperature and salinity increase. Dissolution is rapid when formation water and CO<sub>2</sub> share the same pore space, but once the formation fluid is saturated with CO<sub>2</sub>, the rate slows and is controlled by diffusion and convection rates.

CO<sub>2</sub> dissolved in water produces a weak acid, which reacts with the sodium and potassium basic silicate or calcium, magnesium and iron carbonate or silicate minerals in the reservoir or formation to form bicarbonate ions by chemical reactions approximating to:



**Figure 5.9** Storage security depends on a combination of physical and geochemical trapping. Over time, the physical process of residual CO<sub>2</sub> trapping and geochemical processes of solubility trapping and mineral trapping increase.

Reaction of the dissolved  $\text{CO}_2$  with minerals can be rapid (days) in the case of some carbonate minerals, but slow (hundreds to thousands of years) in the case of silicate minerals.

Formation of carbonate minerals occurs from continued reaction of the bicarbonate ions with calcium, magnesium and iron from silicate minerals such as clays, micas, chlorites and feldspars present in the rock matrix (Gunter *et al.*, 1993, 1997).

Perkins *et al.* (2005) estimate that over 5000 years, all the  $\text{CO}_2$  injected into the Weyburn Oil Field will dissolve or be converted to carbonate minerals within the storage formation. Equally importantly, they show that the caprock and overlying rock formations have an even greater capacity for

mineralization. This is significant for leakage risk assessment (Section 5.7) because once  $\text{CO}_2$  is dissolved, it is unavailable for leakage as a discrete phase. Modelling by Holtz (2002) suggests more than 60% of  $\text{CO}_2$  is trapped by residual  $\text{CO}_2$  trapping by the end of the injection phase (100% after 1000 years), although laboratory experiments (Section 5.2.1) suggest somewhat lower percentages. When  $\text{CO}_2$  is trapped at residual saturation, it is effectively immobile. However, should there be leakage through the caprock, then saturated brine may degas as it is depressurized, although, as illustrated in Figure 5.7 the tendency of saturated brine is to sink rather than to rise. Reaction of the  $\text{CO}_2$  with formation water and rocks may result in reaction products that affect the porosity of the rock and the

#### Box 5.4 Storage security mechanisms and changes over time.

When the  $\text{CO}_2$  is injected, it forms a bubble around the injection well, displacing the mobile water and oil both laterally and vertically within the injection horizon. The interactions between the water and  $\text{CO}_2$  phase allow geochemical trapping mechanisms to take effect. Over time,  $\text{CO}_2$  that is not immobilized by residual  $\text{CO}_2$  trapping can react with *in situ* fluid to form carbonic acid (i.e.,  $\text{H}_2\text{CO}_3$  called solubility trapping – dominates from tens to hundreds of years). Dissolved  $\text{CO}_2$  can eventually react with reservoir minerals if an appropriate mineralogy is encountered to form carbon-bearing ionic species (i.e.,  $\text{HCO}_3^-$  and  $\text{CO}_3^{2-}$  called ionic trapping – dominates from hundreds to thousands of years). Further breakdown of these minerals could precipitate new carbonate minerals that would fix injected  $\text{CO}_2$  in its most secure state (i.e., mineral trapping – dominates over thousands to millions of years).

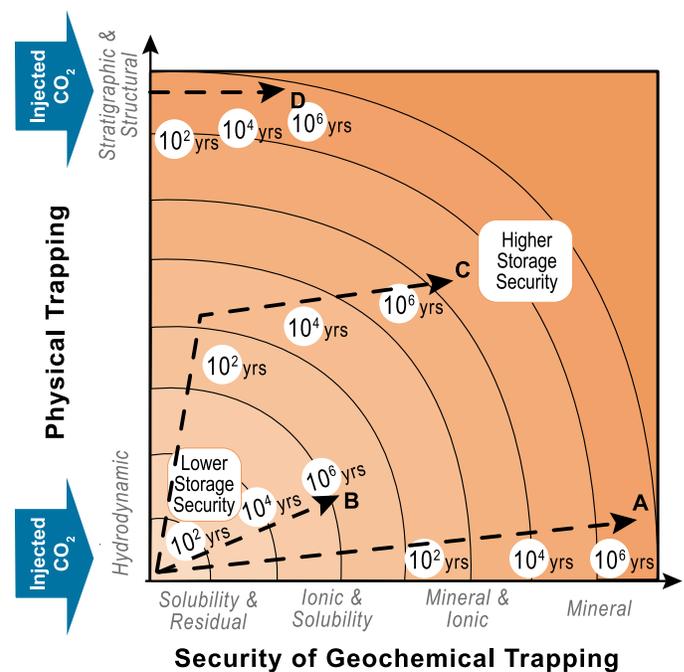
Four injection scenarios are shown in Figure 5.10. Scenarios A, B and C show injection into hydrodynamic traps, essentially systems open to lateral flow of fluids and gas within the injection horizon. Scenario D represents injection into a physically restricted flow regime, similar to those of many producing and depleted oil and gas reservoirs.

In Scenario A, the injected  $\text{CO}_2$  is never physically contained laterally. The  $\text{CO}_2$  plume migrates within the injection horizon and is ultimately consumed via all types of geochemical trapping mechanisms, including carbonate mineralization. Mineral and ionic trapping dominate. The proportions of  $\text{CO}_2$  stored in each geochemical trap will depend strongly on the *in situ* mineralogy, pore space structure and water composition.

In Scenario B, the migration of the  $\text{CO}_2$  plume is similar to that of Scenario A, but the mineralogy and water chemistry are such that reaction of  $\text{CO}_2$  with minerals is minor and solubility trapping and hydrodynamic trapping dominate.

In Scenario C, the  $\text{CO}_2$  is injected into a zone initially similar to Scenario B. However, during lateral migration the  $\text{CO}_2$  plume migrates into a zone of physical heterogeneity in the injection horizon. This zone may be characterized by variable porosity and permeability caused by a facies change. The facies change is accompanied by a more reactive mineralogy that causes an abrupt change in path. In the final state, ionic and mineral trapping predominate.

Scenario D illustrates  $\text{CO}_2$  injection into a well-constrained flow zone but, similar to Scenario B, it does not have *in-situ* fluid chemistry and mineralogy suitable for ionic or mineral trapping. The bulk of the injected  $\text{CO}_2$  is trapped geochemically via solubility trapping and physically via stratigraphic or structural trapping.



**Figure 5.10** Storage expressed as a combination of physical and geochemical trapping. The level of security is proportional to distance from the origin. Dashed lines are examples of million-year pathways, discussed in Box 5.4.

flow of solution through the pores. This possibility has not, however, been observed experimentally and its possible effects cannot be quantified.

Yet another type of fixation occurs when CO<sub>2</sub> is preferentially adsorbed onto coal or organic-rich shales (Section 5.3.4). This has been observed in batch and column experiments in the laboratory, as well as in field experiments at the Fenn Big Valley, Canada and the San Juan Basin, USA (Box 5.7). A rather different form of fixation can occur when CO<sub>2</sub> hydrate is formed in the deep ocean seafloor and onshore in permafrost regions (Koide *et al.*, 1997).

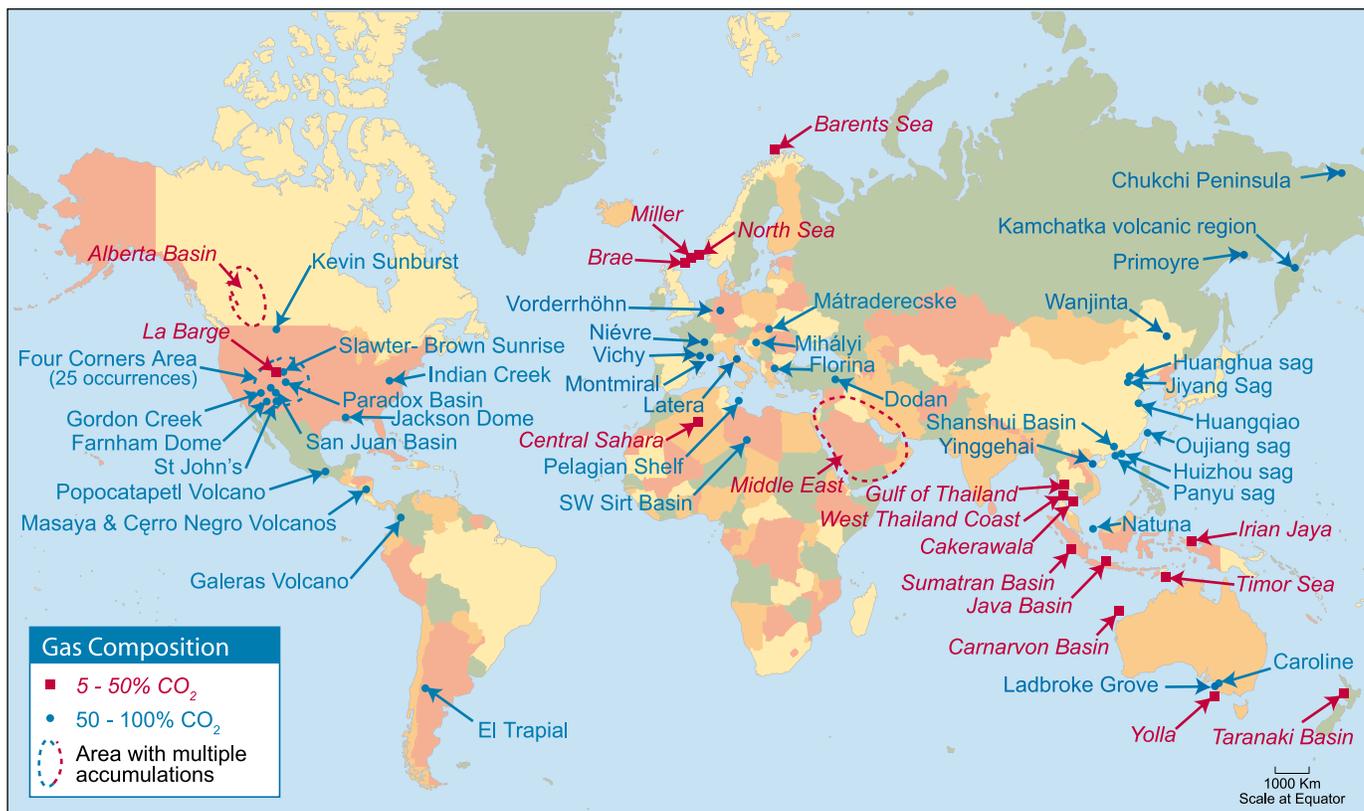
### 5.2.3 Natural geological accumulations of CO<sub>2</sub>

Natural sources of CO<sub>2</sub> occur, as gaseous accumulations of CO<sub>2</sub>, CO<sub>2</sub> mixed with natural gas and CO<sub>2</sub> dissolved in formation water (Figure 5.11). These natural accumulations have been studied in the United States, Australia and Europe (Pearce *et al.*, 1996; Allis *et al.*, 2001; Stevens *et al.*, 2003; Watson *et al.*, 2004) as analogues for storage of CO<sub>2</sub>, as well as for leakage from engineered storage sites. Production of CO<sub>2</sub> for EOR and other uses provides operational experience relevant to CO<sub>2</sub> capture and storage. There are, of course, differences between natural accumulations of CO<sub>2</sub> and engineered CO<sub>2</sub> storage sites: natural accumulations of CO<sub>2</sub> collect over very long periods of

time and at random sites, some of which might be naturally 'leaky'. At engineered sites, CO<sub>2</sub> injection rates will be rapid and the sites will necessarily be penetrated by injection wells (Celia and Bachu, 2003; Johnson *et al.*, 2005). Therefore, care must be taken to keep injection pressures low enough to avoid damaging the caprock (Section 5.5) and to make sure that the wells are properly sealed (Section 5.5).

Natural accumulations of relatively pure CO<sub>2</sub> are found all over the world in a range of geological settings, particularly in sedimentary basins, intra-plate volcanic regions (Figure 5.11) and in faulted areas or in quiescent volcanic structures. Natural accumulations occur in a number of different types of sedimentary rocks, principally limestones, dolomites and sandstones and with a variety of seals (mudstone, shale, salt and anhydrite) and a range of trap types, reservoir depths and CO<sub>2</sub>-bearing phases.

Carbon dioxide fields in the Colorado Plateau and Rocky Mountains, USA, are comparable to conventional natural gas reservoirs (Allis *et al.*, 2001). Studies of three of these fields (McElmo Dome, St. Johns Field and Jackson Dome) have shown that each contains 1600 MtCO<sub>2</sub>, with measurable leakage (Stevens *et al.*, 2001a). Two hundred Mt trapped in the Pisgah Anticline, northeast of the Jackson Dome, is thought to have been generated more than 65 million years ago (Studlick *et al.*, 1990), with no evidence of leakage, providing additional



**Figure 5.11** Examples of natural accumulations of CO<sub>2</sub> around the world. Regions containing many occurrences are enclosed by a dashed line. Natural accumulations can be useful as analogues for certain aspects of storage and for assessing the environmental impacts of leakage. Data quality is variable and the apparent absence of accumulations in South America, southern Africa and central and northern Asia is probably more a reflection of lack of data than a lack of CO<sub>2</sub> accumulations.

evidence of long-term trapping of CO<sub>2</sub>. Extensive studies have been undertaken on small-scale CO<sub>2</sub> accumulations in the Otway Basin in Australia (Watson *et al.*, 2004) and in France, Germany, Hungary and Greece (Pearce *et al.*, 2003).

Conversely, some systems, typically spas and volcanic systems, are leaky and not useful analogues for geological storage. The Kileaua Volcano emits on average 4 MtCO<sub>2</sub> yr<sup>-1</sup>. More than 1200 tCO<sub>2</sub> day<sup>-1</sup> (438,000 tCO<sub>2</sub> yr<sup>-1</sup>) leaked into the Mammoth Mountain area, California, between 1990 and 1995, with flux variations linked to seismicity (USGS, 2001b). Average flux densities of 80–160 tCO<sub>2</sub> m<sup>-2</sup> yr<sup>-1</sup> are observed near Matraderecske, Hungary, but along faults, the flux density can reach approximately 6600 t m<sup>-2</sup> yr<sup>-1</sup> (Pearce *et al.*, 2003). These high seepage rates result from release of CO<sub>2</sub> from faulted volcanic systems, whereas a normal baseline CO<sub>2</sub> flux is of the order of 10–100 gCO<sub>2</sub> m<sup>-2</sup> day<sup>-1</sup> under temperate climate conditions (Pizzino *et al.*, 2002). Seepage of CO<sub>2</sub> into Lake Nyos (Cameroon) resulted in CO<sub>2</sub> saturation of water deep in the lake, which in 1987 produced a very large-scale and (for more than 1700 persons) ultimately fatal release of CO<sub>2</sub> when the lake overturned (Kling *et al.*, 1987). The overturn of Lake Nyos (a deep, stratified tropical lake) and release of CO<sub>2</sub> are not representative of the seepage through wells or fractures that may occur from underground geological storage sites. Engineered CO<sub>2</sub> storage sites will be chosen to minimize the prospect of leakage. Natural storage and events such as Lake Nyos are not representative of geological storage for predicting seepage from engineered sites, but can be useful for studying the health, safety and environmental effects of CO<sub>2</sub> leakage (Section 5.7.4).

Carbon dioxide is found in some oil and gas fields as a separate gas phase or dissolved in oil. This type of storage is relatively common in Southeast Asia, China and Australia, less common in other oil and gas provinces such as in Algeria,

Russia, the Paradox Basin (USA) and the Alberta Basin (western Canada). In the North Sea and Barents Sea, a few fields have up to 10% CO<sub>2</sub>, including Sleipner and Snohvit (Figure 5.11). The La Barge natural gas field in Wyoming, USA, has 3300 Mt of gas reserves, with an average of 65% CO<sub>2</sub> by volume. In the Appennine region of Italy, many deep wells (1–3 km depth) have trapped gas containing 90% or more CO<sub>2</sub> by volume. Major CO<sub>2</sub> accumulations around the South China Sea include the world's largest known CO<sub>2</sub> accumulation, the Natuna D Alpha field in Indonesia, with more than 9100 MtCO<sub>2</sub> (720 Mt natural gas). Concentrations of CO<sub>2</sub> can be highly variable between different fields in a basin and between different reservoir zones within the same field, reflecting complex generation, migration and mixing processes. In Australia's Otway Basin, the timing of CO<sub>2</sub> input and trapping ranges from 5000 years to a million years (Watson *et al.*, 2004).

## 5.2.4 Industrial analogues for CO<sub>2</sub> storage

### 5.2.4.1 Natural gas storage

Underground natural gas storage projects that offer experience relevant to CO<sub>2</sub> storage (Lippmann and Benson, 2003; Perry, 2005) have operated successfully for almost 100 years and in many parts of the world (Figure 5.12). These projects provide for peak loads and balance seasonal fluctuations in gas supply and demand. The Berlin Natural Gas Storage Project is an example of this (Box 5.5). The majority of gas storage projects are in depleted oil and gas reservoirs and saline formations, although caverns in salt have also been used extensively. A number of factors are critical to the success of these projects, including a suitable and adequately characterized site (permeability, thickness and extent of storage reservoir, tightness of caprock, geological structure, lithology, etc.). Injection wells must be properly designed, installed, monitored and maintained and abandoned wells in and near the project must be located and plugged. Finally, taking into account a range of solubility, density and trapping conditions, overpressuring the storage reservoir (injecting gas at a pressure that is well in excess of the in situ formation pressure) must be avoided.

While underground natural gas storage is safe and effective, some projects have leaked, mostly caused by poorly completed or improperly plugged and abandoned wells and by leaky faults (Gurevich *et al.*, 1993; Lippmann and Benson, 2003; Perry, 2005). Abandoned oil and gas fields are easier to assess as natural gas storage sites than are saline formations, because the geological structure and caprock are usually well characterized from existing wells. At most natural gas storage sites, monitoring requirements focus on ensuring that the injection well is not leaking (by the use of pressure measurements and through *in situ* downhole measurements of temperature, pressure, noise/sonic, casing conditions, etc.). Observation wells are sometimes used to verify that gas has not leaked into shallower strata.

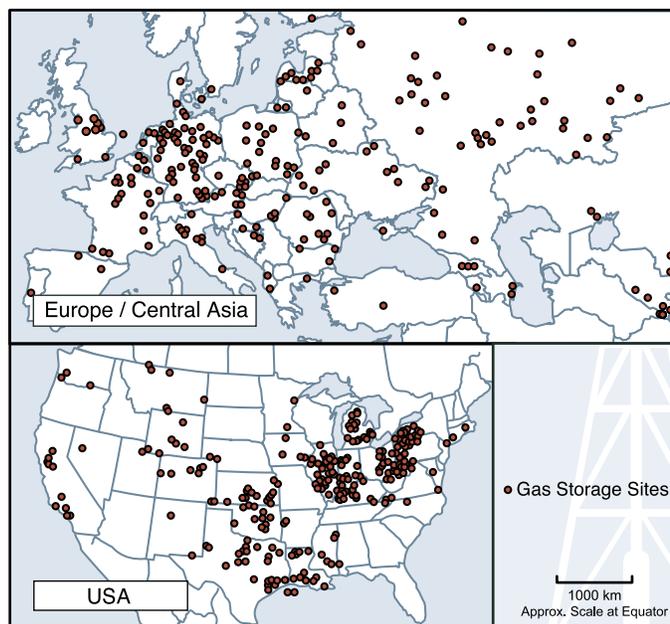


Figure 5.12 Location of some natural gas storage projects.

**Box 5.5** The Berlin Natural Gas Storage Facility.

The Berlin Natural Gas Storage Facility is located in central Berlin, Germany, in an area that combines high population density with nature and water conservation reservations. This facility, with a capacity of 1085 million m<sup>3</sup>, was originally designed to be a reserve natural gas storage unit for limited seasonal quantity equalization. A storage production rate of 450,000 m<sup>3</sup> h<sup>-1</sup> can be achieved with the existing storage wells and surface facilities. Although the geological and engineering aspects and scale of the facility make it a useful analogue for a small CO<sub>2</sub> storage project, this project is more complex because the input and output for natural gas is highly variable, depending on consumer demand. The risk profiles are also different, considering the highly flammable and explosive nature of natural gas and conversely the reactive nature of CO<sub>2</sub>.

The facility lies to the east of the North German Basin, which is part of a complex of basin structures extending from The Netherlands to Poland. The sandstone storage horizons are at approximately 800 m below sea level. The gas storage layers are covered with layers of claystone, anhydrite and halite, approximately 200 m thick. This site has complicated tectonics and heterogeneous reservoir lithologies.

Twelve wells drilled at three sites are available for natural gas storage operation. The varying storage sand types also require different methods of completion of the wells. The wells also have major differences in their production behaviour. The wellheads of the storage wells and of the water disposal wells are housed in 5 m deep cellars covered with concrete plates, with special steel covers over the wellheads to allow for wireline logging. Because of the urban location, a total of 16 deviated storage wells and water disposal wells were concentrated at four sites. Facilities containing substances that could endanger water are set up within fluid-tight concrete enclosures and/or have their own watertight concrete enclosures.

**5.2.4.2 Acid gas injection**

Acid gas injection operations represent a commercial analogue for some aspects of geological CO<sub>2</sub> storage. Acid gas is a mixture of H<sub>2</sub>S and CO<sub>2</sub>, with minor amounts of hydrocarbon gases that can result from petroleum production or processing. In Western Canada, operators are increasingly turning to acid gas disposal by injection into deep geological formations. Although the purpose of the acid gas injection operations is to dispose of H<sub>2</sub>S, significant quantities of CO<sub>2</sub> are injected at the same time because it is uneconomic to separate the two gases.

Currently, regulatory agencies in Western Canada approve the maximum H<sub>2</sub>S fraction, maximum wellhead injection pressure and rate and maximum injection volume. Acid gas is currently injected into 51 different formations at 44 different locations across the Alberta Basin in the provinces of Alberta and British Columbia (Figure 5.13). Carbon dioxide often represents the largest component of the injected acid gas stream, in many cases, 14–98% of the total volume. A total of 2.5 MtCO<sub>2</sub> and 2 MtH<sub>2</sub>S had been injected in Western Canada by the end of 2003, at rates of 840–500,720 m<sup>3</sup> day<sup>-1</sup> per site, with an aggregate injection rate in 2003 of 0.45 MtCO<sub>2</sub> yr<sup>-1</sup> and 0.55 MtH<sub>2</sub>S yr<sup>-1</sup>, with no detectable leakage.

Acid gas injection in Western Canada occurs over a wide range of formation and reservoir types, acid gas compositions and operating conditions. Injection takes place in deep saline formations at 27 sites, into depleted oil and/or gas reservoirs at 19 sites and into the underlying water leg of depleted oil and gas reservoirs at 4 sites. Carbonates form the reservoir at 29 sites and quartz-rich sandstones dominate at the remaining 21 (Figure 5.13). In most cases, shale constitutes the overlying confining unit (caprock), with the remainder of the injection zones being confined by tight limestones, evaporites and anhydrites.

Since the first acid-gas injection operation in 1990, 51 different injection sites have been approved, of which 44 are

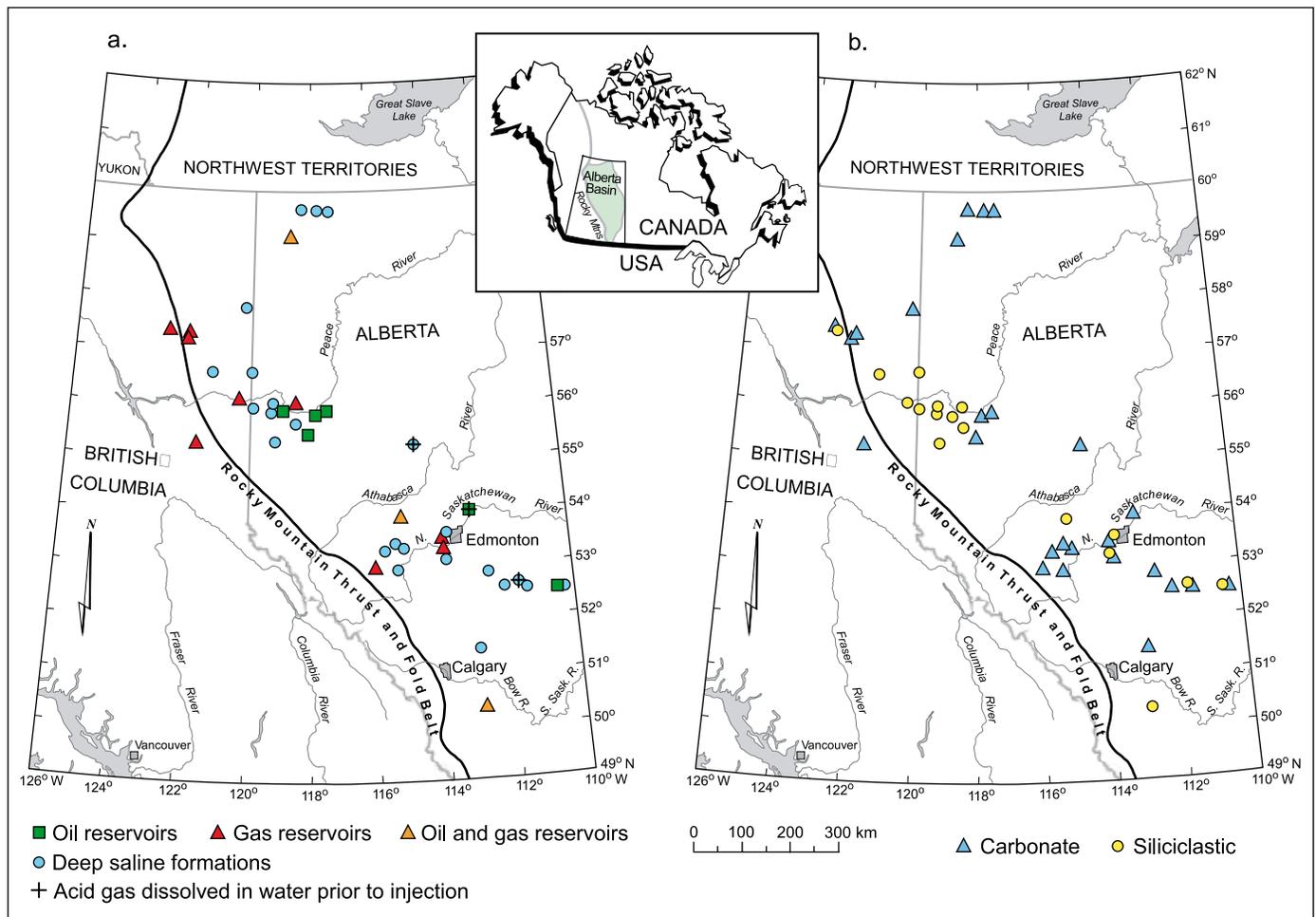
currently active. One operation was not implemented, three were rescinded after a period of operation (either because injection volumes reached the approved limit or because the gas plant producing the acid gas was decommissioned) and three sites were suspended by the regulatory agency because of reservoir overpressuring.

**5.2.4.3 Liquid waste injection**

In many parts of the world, large volumes of liquid waste are injected into the deep subsurface every day. For example, for the past 60 years, approximately 9 billion gallons (34.1 million m<sup>3</sup>) of hazardous waste is injected into saline formations in the United States from about 500 wells each year. In addition, more than 750 billion gallons (2843 million m<sup>3</sup>) of oil field brines are injected from 150,000 wells each year. This combined annual US injectate volume of about 3000 million m<sup>3</sup>, when converted to volume equivalent, corresponds to the volume of approximately 2 GtCO<sub>2</sub> at a depth of 1 km. Therefore, the experience gained from existing deep-fluid-injection projects is relevant in terms of the style of operation and is of a similar magnitude to that which may be required for geological storage of CO<sub>2</sub>.

**5.2.5 Security and duration of CO<sub>2</sub> storage in geological formations**

Evidence from oil and gas fields indicates that hydrocarbons and other gases and fluids including CO<sub>2</sub> can remain trapped for millions of years (Magoon and Dow, 1994; Bradshaw *et al.*, 2005). Carbon dioxide has a tendency to remain in the subsurface (relative to hydrocarbons) via its many physico-chemical immobilization mechanisms. World-class petroleum provinces have storage times for oil and gas of 5–100 million years, others for 350 million years, while some minor petroleum



**Figure 5.13** Locations of acid gas injection sites in the Alberta Basin, Canada: (a) classified by injection unit; (b) the same locations classified by rock type (from Bachu and Haug, 2005).

accumulations have been stored for up to 1400 million years. However, some natural traps do leak, which reinforces the need for careful site selection (Section 5.3), characterization (Section 5.4) and injection practices (Section 5.5).

### 5.3 Storage formations, capacity and geographical distribution

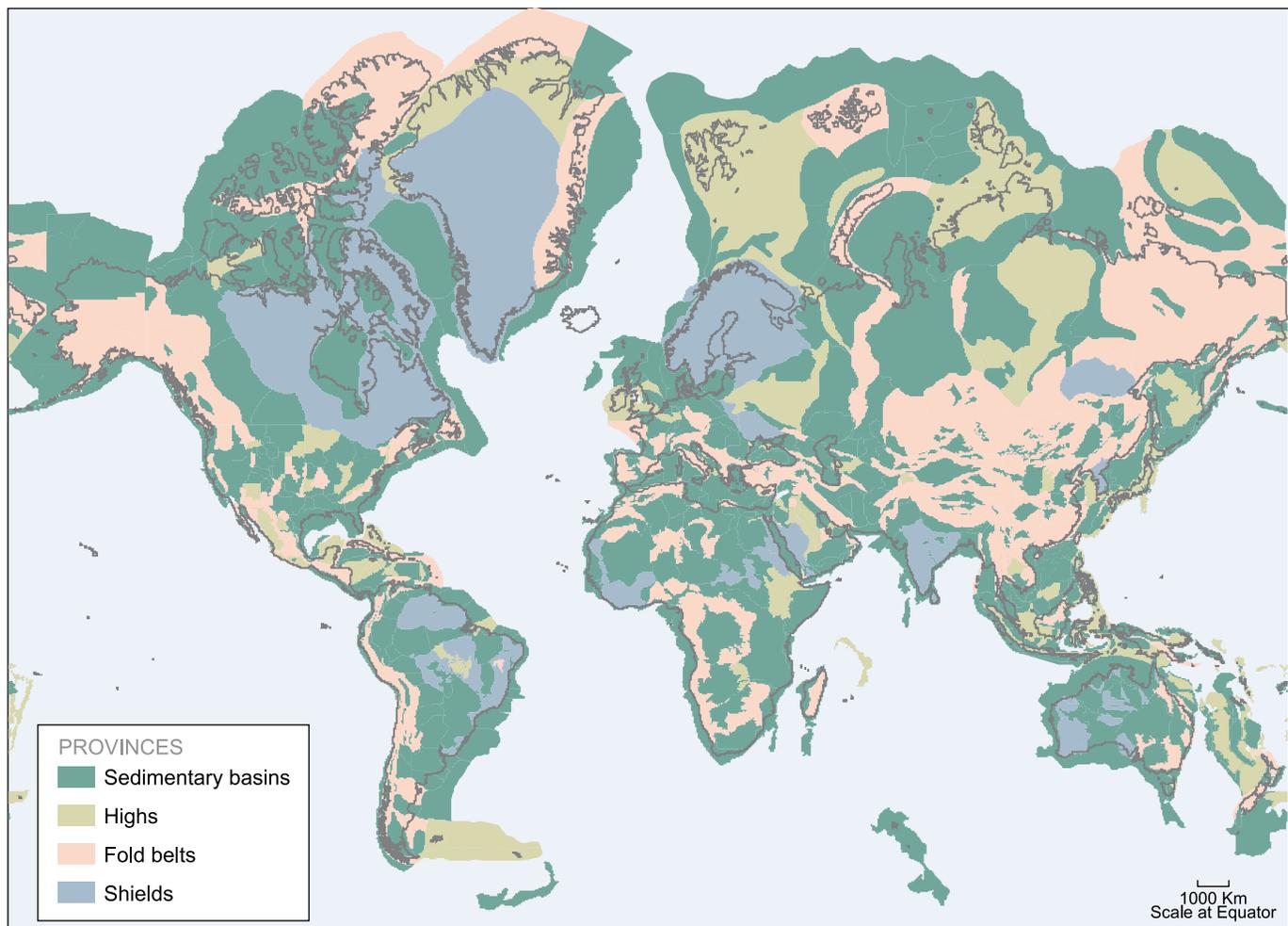
In this section, the following issues are addressed: In what types of geological formations can  $\text{CO}_2$  be stored? Are such formations widespread? How much  $\text{CO}_2$  can be geologically stored?

#### 5.3.1 General site-selection criteria

There are many sedimentary regions in the world (Figures 2.4–2.6 and Figure 5.14) variously suited for  $\text{CO}_2$  storage. In general, geological storage sites should have (1) adequate capacity and injectivity, (2) a satisfactory sealing caprock or confining unit and (3) a sufficiently stable geological environment to avoid compromising the integrity of the storage site. Criteria for assessing basin suitability (Bachu, 2000, 2003; Bradshaw *et al.*,

2002) include: basin characteristics (tectonic activity, sediment type, geothermal and hydrodynamic regimes); basin resources (hydrocarbons, coal, salt), industry maturity and infrastructure; and societal issues such as level of development, economy, environmental concerns, public education and attitudes.

The suitability of sedimentary basins for  $\text{CO}_2$  storage depends in part on their location on the continental plate. Basins formed in mid-continent locations or near the edge of stable continental plates, are excellent targets for long-term  $\text{CO}_2$  storage because of their stability and structure. Such basins are found within most continents and around the Atlantic, Arctic and Indian Oceans. The storage potential of basins found behind mountains formed by plate collision is likely to be good and these include the Rocky Mountain, Appalachian and Andean basins in the Americas, European basins immediately north of the Alps and Carpathians and west of the Urals and those located south of the Zagros and Himalayas in Asia. Basins located in tectonically active areas, such as those around the Pacific Ocean or the northern Mediterranean, may be less suitable for  $\text{CO}_2$  storage and sites in these regions must be selected carefully because of the potential for  $\text{CO}_2$  leakage (Chiodini *et al.*, 2001; Granieri *et al.*, 2003). Basins located on the edges of plates



**Figure 5.14** Distribution of sedimentary basins around the world (after Bradshaw and Dance, 2005; and USGS, 2001a). In general, sedimentary basins are likely to be the most prospective areas for storage sites. However, storage sites may also be found in some areas of fold belts and in some of the highs. Shield areas constitute regions with low prospectivity for storage. The Mercator projection used here is to provide comparison with Figures 5.1, 5.11 and 5.27. The apparent dimensions of the sedimentary basins, particularly in the northern hemisphere, should not be taken as an indication of their likely storage capacity.

where subduction is occurring or between active mountain ranges, are likely to be strongly folded and faulted and provide less certainty for storage. However, basins must be assessed on an individual basis. For example, the Los Angeles Basin and Sacramento Valley in California, where significant hydrocarbon accumulations have been found, have demonstrated good local storage capacity. Poor CO<sub>2</sub> storage potential is likely to be exhibited by basins that (1) are thin ( $\leq 1000$  m), (2) have poor reservoir and seal relationships, (3) are highly faulted and fractured, (4) are within fold belts, (5) have strongly discordant sequences, (6) have undergone significant diagenesis or (7) have overpressured reservoirs.

The efficiency of CO<sub>2</sub> storage in geological media, defined as the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> stored per unit volume (Brennan and Burruss, 2003), increases with increasing CO<sub>2</sub> density. Storage safety also increases with increasing density, because buoyancy, which drives upward migration, is stronger for a lighter fluid. Density increases significantly with depth while CO<sub>2</sub> is in gaseous phase, increases only slightly or levels off after passing from the gaseous phase into the dense phase and

may even decrease with a further increase in depth, depending on the temperature gradient (Ennis-King and Paterson, 2001; Bachu, 2003). ‘Cold’ sedimentary basins, characterized by low temperature gradients, are more favourable for CO<sub>2</sub> storage (Bachu, 2003) because CO<sub>2</sub> attains higher density at shallower depths (700–1000 m) than in ‘warm’ sedimentary basins, characterized by high temperature gradients where dense-fluid conditions are reached at greater depths (1000–1500 m). The depth of the storage formation (leading to increased drilling and compression costs for deeper formations) may also influence the selection of storage sites.

Adequate porosity and thickness (for storage capacity) and permeability (for injectivity) are critical; porosity usually decreases with depth because of compaction and cementation, which reduces storage capacity and efficiency. The storage formation should be capped by extensive confining units (such as shale, salt or anhydrite beds) to ensure that CO<sub>2</sub> does not escape into overlying, shallower rock units and ultimately to the surface. Extensively faulted and fractured sedimentary basins or parts thereof, particularly in seismically active areas, require

careful characterization to be good candidates for CO<sub>2</sub> storage, unless the faults and fractures are sealed and CO<sub>2</sub> injection will not open them (Holloway, 1997; Zarlenga *et al.*, 2004).

The pressure and flow regimes of formation waters in a sedimentary basin are important factors in selecting sites for CO<sub>2</sub> storage (Bachu *et al.*, 1994). Injection of CO<sub>2</sub> into formations overpressured by compaction and/or hydrocarbon generation may raise technological and safety issues that make them unsuitable. Underpressured formations in basins located mid-continent, near the edge of stable continental plates or behind mountains formed by plate collision may be well suited for CO<sub>2</sub> storage. Storage of CO<sub>2</sub> in deep saline formations with fluids having long residence times (millions of years) is conducive to hydrodynamic and mineral trapping (Section 5.2).

The possible presence of fossil fuels and the exploration and production maturity of a basin are additional considerations for selection of storage sites (Bachu, 2000). Basins with little exploration for hydrocarbons may be uncertain targets for CO<sub>2</sub> storage because of limited availability of geological information or potential for contamination of as-yet-undiscovered hydrocarbon resources. Mature sedimentary basins may be prime targets for CO<sub>2</sub> storage because: (1) they have well-known characteristics; (2) hydrocarbon pools and/or coal beds have been discovered and produced; (3) some petroleum reservoirs might be already depleted, nearing depletion or abandoned as uneconomic; (4) the infrastructure needed for CO<sub>2</sub> transport and injection may already be in place. The presence of wells penetrating the subsurface in mature sedimentary basins can create potential CO<sub>2</sub> leakage pathways that may compromise the security of a storage site (Celia and Bachu, 2003). Nevertheless, at Weyburn, despite the presence of many hundreds of existing wells, after four years of CO<sub>2</sub> injection there has been no measurable leakage (Strutt *et al.*, 2003).

### 5.3.2 Oil and gas fields

#### 5.3.2.1 Abandoned oil and gas fields

Depleted oil and gas reservoirs are prime candidates for CO<sub>2</sub> storage for several reasons. First, the oil and gas that originally accumulated in traps (structural and stratigraphic) did not escape (in some cases for many millions of years), demonstrating their integrity and safety. Second, the geological structure and physical properties of most oil and gas fields have been extensively studied and characterized. Third, computer models have been developed in the oil and gas industry to predict the movement, displacement behaviour and trapping of hydrocarbons. Finally, some of the infrastructure and wells already in place may be used for handling CO<sub>2</sub> storage operations. Depleted fields will not be adversely affected by CO<sub>2</sub> (having already contained hydrocarbons) and if hydrocarbon fields are still in production, a CO<sub>2</sub> storage scheme can be optimized to enhance oil (or gas) production. However, plugging of abandoned wells in many mature fields began many decades ago when wells were simply filled with a mud-laden fluid. Subsequently, cement plugs were required to be strategically placed within the wellbore, but not with any consideration that they may one day be relied upon to

contain a reactive and potentially buoyant fluid such as CO<sub>2</sub>. Therefore, the condition of wells penetrating the caprock must be assessed (Winter and Bergman, 1993). In many cases, even locating the wells may be difficult and caprock integrity may need to be confirmed by pressure and tracer monitoring.

The capacity of a reservoir will be limited by the need to avoid exceeding pressures that damage the caprock (Section 5.5.3). Reservoirs should have limited sensitivity to reductions in permeability caused by plugging of the near-injector region and by reservoir stress fluctuations (Kovscek, 2002; Bossie-Codreanu *et al.*, 2003). Storage in reservoirs at depths less than approximately 800 m may be technically and economically feasible, but the low storage capacity of shallow reservoirs, where CO<sub>2</sub> may be in the gas phase, could be problematic.

#### 5.3.2.2 Enhanced oil recovery

Enhanced oil recovery (EOR) through CO<sub>2</sub> flooding (by injection) offers potential economic gain from incremental oil production. Of the original oil in place, 5–40% is usually recovered by conventional primary production (Holt *et al.*, 1995). An additional 10–20% of oil in place is produced by secondary recovery that uses water flooding (Bondor, 1992). Various miscible agents, among them CO<sub>2</sub>, have been used for enhanced (tertiary) oil recovery or EOR, with an incremental oil recovery of 7–23% (average 13.2%) of the original oil in place (Martin and Taber, 1992; Moritis, 2003). Descriptions of CO<sub>2</sub>-EOR projects are provided in Box 5.3 and Box 5.6, and an illustration is given in Figure 5.15.

Many CO<sub>2</sub> injection schemes have been suggested, including continuous CO<sub>2</sub> injection or alternate water and CO<sub>2</sub> gas injection (Klins and Farouq Ali, 1982; Klins, 1984). Oil displacement by CO<sub>2</sub> injection relies on the phase behaviour of CO<sub>2</sub> and crude oil mixtures that are strongly dependent on reservoir temperature, pressure and crude oil composition. These mechanisms range from oil swelling and viscosity reduction for injection of immiscible fluids (at low pressures) to completely miscible displacement in high-pressure applications. In these applications, more than 50% and up to 67% of the injected CO<sub>2</sub> returns with the produced oil (Bondor, 1992) and is usually separated and re-injected into the reservoir to minimize operating costs. The remainder is trapped in the oil reservoir by various means, such as irreducible saturation and dissolution in reservoir oil that it is not produced and in pore space that is not connected to the flow path for the producing wells.

For enhanced CO<sub>2</sub> storage in EOR operations, oil reservoirs may need to meet additional criteria (Klins, 1984; Taber *et al.*, 1997; Kovscek, 2002; Shaw and Bachu, 2002). Generally, reservoir depth must be more than 600 m. Injection of immiscible fluids must often suffice for heavy- to-medium-gravity oils (oil gravity 12–25 API). The more desirable miscible flooding is applicable to light, low-viscosity oils (oil gravity 25–48 API). For miscible floods, the reservoir pressure must be higher than the minimum miscibility pressure (10–15 MPa) needed for achieving miscibility between reservoir oil and CO<sub>2</sub>, depending on oil composition and gravity, reservoir temperature and CO<sub>2</sub> purity (Metcalf, 1982). To achieve effective removal of the

**Box 5.6** The Rangely, Colorado, CO<sub>2</sub>-EOR Project.

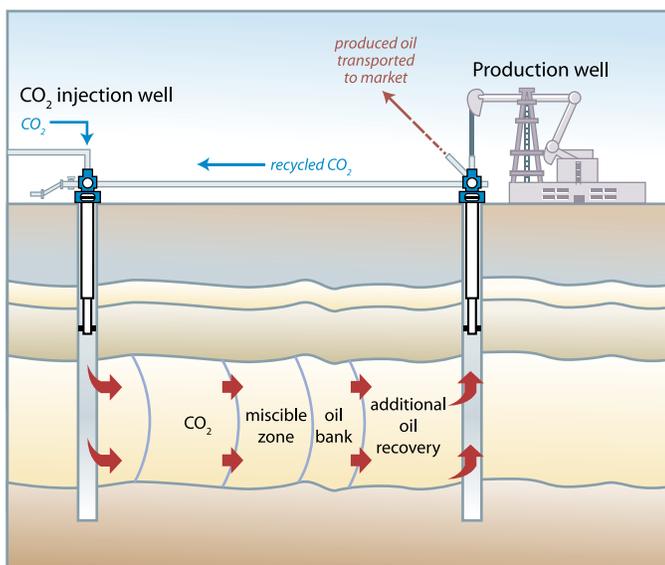
The Rangely CO<sub>2</sub>-EOR Project is located in Colorado, USA and is operated by Chevron. The CO<sub>2</sub> is purchased from the Exxon-Mobil LaBarge natural gas processing facility in Wyoming and transported 283 km via pipeline to the Rangely field. Additional spurs carry CO<sub>2</sub> over 400 km from LaBarge to Lost Soldier and Wertz fields in central Wyoming, currently ending at the Salt Creek field in eastern Wyoming.

The sandstone reservoir of the Rangely field has been CO<sub>2</sub> flooded, by the water alternating gas (WAG) process, since 1986. Primary and secondary recovery, carried out between 1944 and 1986, recovered 1.9 US billion barrels (302 million m<sup>3</sup>) of oil (21% of the original oil in place). With use of CO<sub>2</sub> floods, ultimate tertiary recovery of a further 129 million barrels (21 million m<sup>3</sup>) of oil (6.8% of original oil in place) is expected. Average daily CO<sub>2</sub> injection in 2003 was equivalent to 2.97 MtCO<sub>2</sub> yr<sup>-1</sup>, with production of 13,913 barrels oil per day. Of the total 2.97 Mt injected, recycled gas comprised around 2.29 Mt and purchased gas about 0.74 Mt. Cumulative CO<sub>2</sub> stored to date is estimated at 22.2 Mt. A simplified flow diagram for the Rangely field is given in Figure 5.15.

The Rangely field, covering an area of 78 km<sup>2</sup>, is an asymmetric anticline. A major northeast-to-southwest fault in the eastern half of the field and other faults and fractures significantly influence fluid movement within the reservoir. The sandstone reservoirs have an average gross and effective thickness of 160 m and 40 m, respectively and are comprised of six persistent producing sandstone horizons (depths of 1675–1980 m) with average porosity of 12%. Permeability averages 10 mD (Hefner and Barrow, 1992).

By the end of 2003, there were 248 active injectors, of which 160 are used for CO<sub>2</sub> injection and 348 active producers. Produced gas is processed through two parallel single-column natural-gas-liquids recovery facilities and subsequently compressed to approximately 14.5 MPa. Compressed-produced gas (recycled gas) is combined with purchased CO<sub>2</sub> for reinjection mostly by the WAG process.

Carbon dioxide-EOR operation in the field maintains compliance with government regulations for production, injection, protection of potable water formations, surface use, flaring and venting. A number of protocols have been instituted to ensure containment of CO<sub>2</sub> – for example, pre-injection well-integrity verification, a radioactive tracer survey run on the first injection, injection-profile tracer surveys, mechanical integrity tests, soil gas surveys and round-the-clock field monitoring. Surface release from the storage reservoir is below the detection limit of 170 t yr<sup>-1</sup> or an annual leakage rate of less than 0.00076% of the total stored CO<sub>2</sub> (Klusman, 2003). Methane leakage is estimated to be 400 t yr<sup>-1</sup>, possibly due to increased CO<sub>2</sub> injection pressure above original reservoir pressure. The water chemistry portion of the study indicates that the injected CO<sub>2</sub> is dissolving in the water and may be responsible for dissolution of ferroan calcite and dolomite. There is currently no evidence of mineral precipitation that may result in mineral storage of CO<sub>2</sub>.



**Figure 5.15** Injection of CO<sub>2</sub> for enhanced oil recovery (EOR) with some storage of retained CO<sub>2</sub> (after IEA Greenhouse Gas R&D Programme). The CO<sub>2</sub> that is produced with the oil is separated and re-injected back into the formation. Recycling of produced CO<sub>2</sub> decreases the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> that must be purchased and avoids emissions to the atmosphere.

oil, other preferred criteria for both types of flooding include relatively thin reservoirs (less than 20 m), high reservoir angle, homogenous formation and low vertical permeability. For horizontal reservoirs, the absence of natural water flow, major gas cap and major natural fractures are preferred. Reservoir thickness and permeability are not critical factors.

Reservoir heterogeneity also affects CO<sub>2</sub> storage efficiency. The density difference between the lighter CO<sub>2</sub> and the reservoir oil and water leads to movement of the CO<sub>2</sub> along the top of the reservoir, particularly if the reservoir is relatively homogeneous and has high permeability, negatively affecting the CO<sub>2</sub> storage and oil recovery. Consequently, reservoir heterogeneity may have a positive effect, slowing down the rise of CO<sub>2</sub> to the top of the reservoir and forcing it to spread laterally, giving more complete invasion of the formation and greater storage potential (Bondor, 1992; Kovsky, 2002; Flett *et al.*, 2005).

### 5.3.2.3 Enhanced gas recovery

Although up to 95% of original gas in place can be produced, CO<sub>2</sub> could potentially be injected into depleted gas reservoirs to enhance gas recovery by repressurizing the reservoir (van der Burgt *et al.*, 1992; Koide and Yamazaki, 2001; Oldenburg *et al.*, 2001). Enhanced gas recovery has so far been implemented only at pilot scale (Gaz de France K12B project, Netherlands,

Table 5.1) and some authors have suggested that CO<sub>2</sub> injection might result in lower gas recovery factors, particularly for very heterogeneous fields (Clemens and Wit, 2002).

### 5.3.3 Saline formations

Saline formations are deep sedimentary rocks saturated with formation waters or brines containing high concentrations of dissolved salts. These formations are widespread and contain enormous quantities of water, but are unsuitable for agriculture or human consumption. Saline brines are used locally by the chemical industry and formation waters of varying salinity are used in health spas and for producing low-enthalpy geothermal energy. Because the use of geothermal energy is likely to increase, potential geothermal areas may not be suitable for CO<sub>2</sub> storage. It has been suggested that combined geological storage and geothermal energy may be feasible, but regions with good geothermal energy potential are generally less favourable for CO<sub>2</sub> geological storage because of the high degree of faulting and fracturing and the sharp increase of temperature with depth. In very arid regions, deep saline formations may be considered for future water desalinization.

The Sleipner Project in the North Sea is the best available example of a CO<sub>2</sub> storage project in a saline formation (Box 5.1). It was the first commercial-scale project dedicated to geological CO<sub>2</sub> storage. Approximately 1 MtCO<sub>2</sub> is removed annually from the produced natural gas and injected underground at Sleipner. The operation started in October 1996 and over the lifetime of the project a total of 20 MtCO<sub>2</sub> is expected to be stored. A simplified diagram of the Sleipner scheme is given in Figure 5.4.

The CO<sub>2</sub> is injected into poorly cemented sands about 800–1000 m below the sea floor. The sandstone contains secondary thin shale or clay layers, which influence the internal movement of injected CO<sub>2</sub>. The overlying primary seal is an extensive thick shale or clay layer. The saline formation into which CO<sub>2</sub> is injected has a very large storage capacity.

The fate and transport of the Sleipner CO<sub>2</sub> plume has been successfully monitored (Figure 5.16) by seismic time-lapse surveys (Section 5.6). These surveys have helped improve the conceptual model for the fate and transport of stored CO<sub>2</sub>. The vertical cross-section of the plume shown in Figure 5.16 indicates both the upward migration of CO<sub>2</sub> (due to buoyancy forces) and the role of lower permeability strata within the formation, diverting some of the CO<sub>2</sub> laterally, thus spreading out the plume over a larger area. The survey also shows that the caprock prevents migration out of the storage formation. The seismic data shown in Figure 5.16 illustrate the gradual growth of the plume. Today, the footprint of the plume at Sleipner extends over approximately 5 km<sup>2</sup>. Reservoir studies and simulations (Section 5.4.2) have shown that the CO<sub>2</sub>-saturated brine will eventually become denser and sink, eliminating the potential for long-term leakage (Lindeberg and Bergmo, 2003).

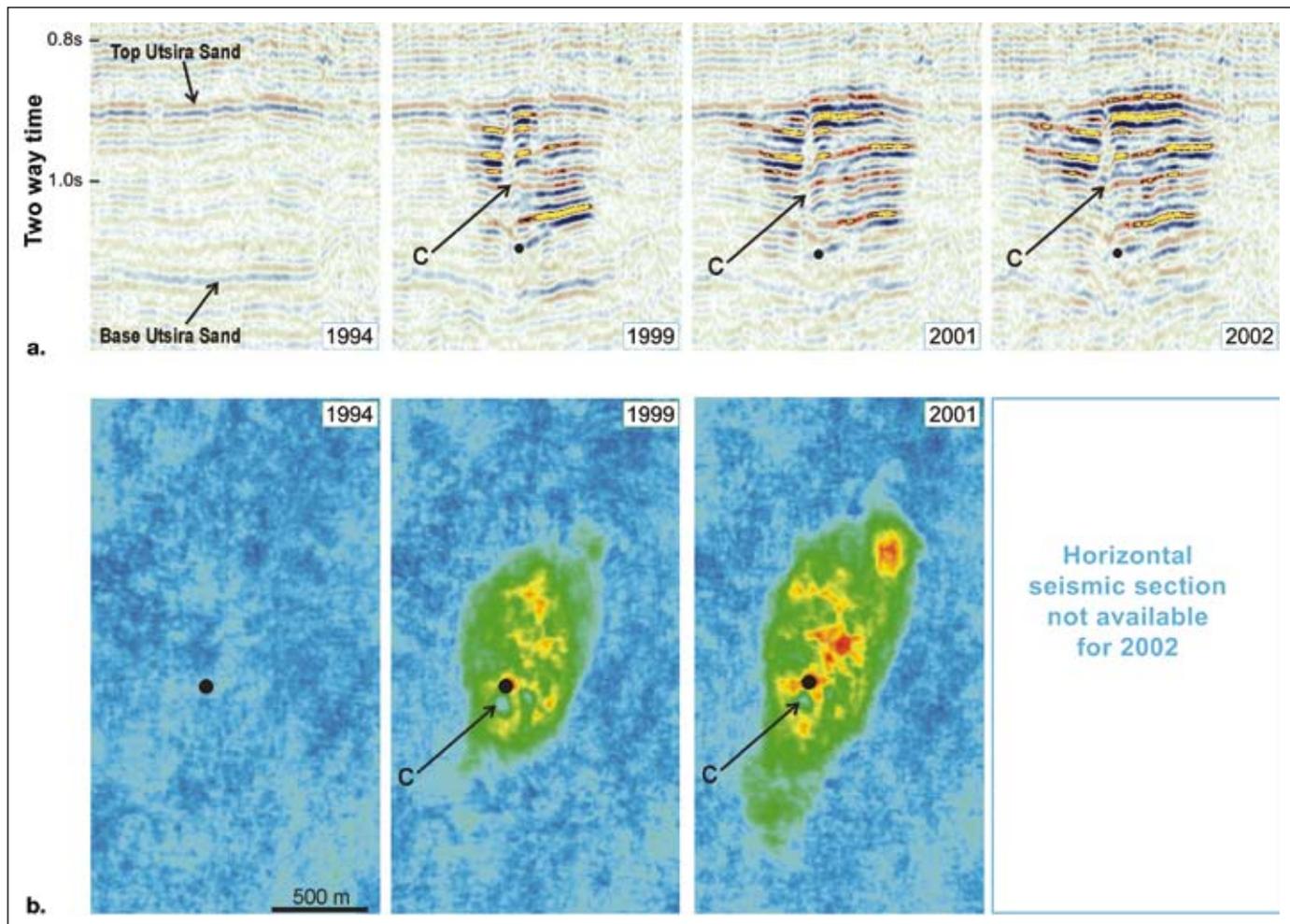
### 5.3.4 Coal seams

Coal contains fractures (cleats) that impart some permeability to the system. Between cleats, solid coal has a very large number of micropores into which gas molecules from the cleats can diffuse and be tightly adsorbed. Coal can physically adsorb many gases and may contain up to 25 normal m<sup>3</sup> (m<sup>3</sup> at 1 atm and 0°C) methane per tonne of coal at coal seam pressures. It has a higher affinity to adsorb gaseous CO<sub>2</sub> than methane (Figure 5.17). The volumetric ratio of adsorbable CO<sub>2</sub>:CH<sub>4</sub> ranges from as low as one for mature coals such as anthracite, to ten or more for younger, immature coals such as lignite. Gaseous CO<sub>2</sub> injected through wells will flow through the cleat system of the coal, diffuse into the coal matrix and be adsorbed onto the coal micropore surfaces, freeing up gases with lower affinity to coal (i.e., methane).

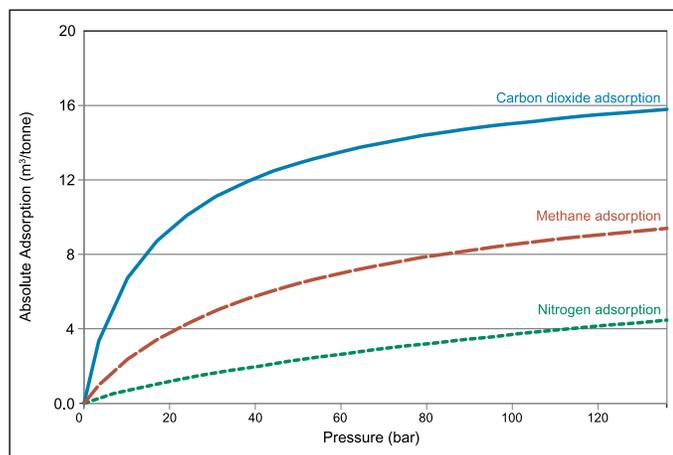
The process of CO<sub>2</sub> trapping in coals for temperatures and pressures above the critical point is not well understood (Larsen, 2003). It seems that adsorption is gradually replaced by absorption and the CO<sub>2</sub> diffuses or ‘dissolves’ in coal. Carbon dioxide is a ‘plasticizer’ for coal, lowering the temperature required to cause the transition from a glassy, brittle structure to a rubbery, plastic structure (coal softening). In one case, the transition temperature was interpreted to drop from about 400°C at 3 MPa to <30°C at 5.5 MPa CO<sub>2</sub> pressure (Larsen, 2003). The transition temperature is dependent on the maturity of the coal, the maceral content, the ash content and the confining stress and is not easily extrapolated to the field. Coal plasticization or softening, may adversely affect the permeability that would allow CO<sub>2</sub> injection. Furthermore, coal swells as CO<sub>2</sub> is adsorbed and/or absorbed, which reduces permeability and injectivity by orders of magnitude or more (Shi and Durucan, 2005) and which may be counteracted by increasing the injection pressures (Clarkson and Bustin, 1997; Palmer and Mansoori, 1998; Krooss *et al.*, 2002; Larsen, 2003). Some studies suggest that the injected CO<sub>2</sub> may react with coal (Zhang *et al.*, 1993), further highlighting the difficulty in injecting CO<sub>2</sub> into low-permeability coal.

If CO<sub>2</sub> is injected into coal seams, it can displace methane, thereby enhancing CBM recovery. Carbon dioxide has been injected successfully at the Allison Project (Box 5.7) and in the Alberta Basin, Canada (Gunter *et al.*, 2005), at depths greater than that corresponding to the CO<sub>2</sub> critical point. Carbon dioxide-E CBM has the potential to increase the amount of produced methane to nearly 90% of the gas, compared to conventional recovery of only 50% by reservoir-pressure depletion alone (Stevens *et al.*, 1996).

Coal permeability is one of several determining factors in selection of a storage site. Coal permeability varies widely and generally decreases with increasing depth as a result of cleat closure with increasing effective stress. Most CBM-producing wells in the world are less than 1000 m deep.



**Figure 5.16** (a) Vertical seismic sections through the CO<sub>2</sub> plume in the Utsira Sand at the Sleipner gas field, North Sea, showing its development over time. Note the chimney of high CO<sub>2</sub> saturation (c) above the injection point (black dot) and the bright layers corresponding to high acoustic response due to CO<sub>2</sub> in a gas form being resident in sandstone beneath thin low-permeability horizons within the reservoir. (b) Horizontal seismic sections through the developing CO<sub>2</sub> plume at Sleipner showing its growth over time. The CO<sub>2</sub> plume-specific monitoring was completed in 2001; therefore data for 2002 was not available (courtesy of Andy Chadwick and the CO<sub>2</sub>STORE project).



**Figure 5.17** Pure gas absolute adsorption in standard cubic feet per tonne (SCF per tonne) on Tiffany Coals at 55°C (after Gasem et al., 2002).

Original screening criteria proposed in selecting favourable areas for CO<sub>2</sub> ECBM (IEA-GHG, 1998) include:

- Adequate permeability (minimum values have not yet been determined);
- Suitable coal geometry (a few, thick seams rather than multiple, thin seams);
- Simple structure (minimal faulting and folding);
- Homogeneous and confined coal seam(s) that are laterally continuous and vertically isolated;
- Adequate depth (down to 1500 m, greater depths have not yet been studied);
- Suitable gas saturation conditions (high gas saturation for ECBM);
- Ability to dewater the formation.

However, more recent studies have indicated that coal rank may play a more significant role than previously thought, owing to the dependence on coal rank of the relative adsorptive capacities

**Box 5.7** The Allison Unit CO<sub>2</sub>-ECBM Pilot.

The Allison Unit CO<sub>2</sub>-ECBM Recovery Pilot Project, located in the northern New Mexico portion of the San Juan Basin, USA, is owned and operated by Burlington Resources. Production from the Allison field began in July 1989 and CO<sub>2</sub> injection operations for ECBM recovery commenced in April 1995. Carbon dioxide injection was suspended in August 2001 to evaluate the results of the pilot. Since this pilot was undertaken purely for the purposes of ECBM production, no CO<sub>2</sub> monitoring programme was implemented.

The CO<sub>2</sub> was sourced from the McElmo Dome in Colorado and delivered to the site through a (then) Shell (now Kinder-Morgan) CO<sub>2</sub> pipeline. The Allison Unit has a CBM resource of 242 million m<sup>3</sup> km<sup>-2</sup>. A total of 181 million m<sup>3</sup> (6.4 Bcf) of natural CO<sub>2</sub> was injected into the reservoir over six years, of which 45 million m<sup>3</sup> (1.6 Bcf) is forecast to be ultimately produced back, resulting in a net storage volume of 277,000 tCO<sub>2</sub>. The pilot consists of 16 methane production wells, 4 CO<sub>2</sub> injection wells and 1 pressure observation well. The injection operations were undertaken at constant surface injection pressures on the order of 10.4 MPa.

The wells were completed in the Fruitland coal, which is capped by shale. The reservoir has a thickness of 13 m, is located at a depth of 950 m and had an original reservoir pressure of 11.5 MPa. In a study conducted under the Coal-Seq Project performed for the US Department of Energy ([www.coal-seq.com](http://www.coal-seq.com)), a detailed reservoir characterization and modelling of the pilot was developed with the COMET2 reservoir simulator and future field performance was forecast under various operating conditions.

This study provides evidence of significant coal-permeability reduction with CO<sub>2</sub> injection. This permeability reduction resulted in a two-fold reduction in injectivity. This effect compromised incremental methane recovery and project economics. Finding ways to overcome and/or prevent this effect is therefore an important topic for future research. The injection of CO<sub>2</sub> at the Allison Unit has resulted in an increase in methane recovery from an estimated 77% of original gas in place to 95% of the original gas in place within the project area. The recovery of methane was in a proportion of approximately one volume of methane for every three volumes of CO<sub>2</sub> injected (Reeves *et al.*, 2004).

An economic analysis of the pilot indicated a net present value of negative US\$ 627,000, assuming a discount rate of 12% and an initial capital expenditure of US\$ 2.6 million, but not including the beneficial impact of any tax credits for production from non-conventional reservoirs. This was based on a gas price of 2.09 US\$ GJ<sup>-1</sup> (2.20 US\$/MMbtu) (at the time) and a CO<sub>2</sub> price of 5.19 US\$ t<sup>-1</sup> (0.30 US\$/Mcf). The results of the financial analysis will change, depending on the cost of oil and gas (the analysis indicated that the pilot would have yielded a positive net present value of US\$2.6 million at today's gas prices) and the cost of CO<sub>2</sub>. It was also estimated that if injectivity had been improved by a factor of four (but still using 2.09 US\$ GJ<sup>-1</sup> (2.20 US\$/MMbtu)), the net present value would have increased to US\$ 3.6 million. Increased injectivity and today's gas prices combined would have yielded a net present value for the pilot of US\$ 15 million or a profit of 34 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> retained in the reservoir (Reeves *et al.*, 2003).

of methane and CO<sub>2</sub> (Reeves *et al.*, 2004).

If the coal is never mined or depressurized, it is likely CO<sub>2</sub> will be stored for geological time, but, as with any geological storage option, disturbance of the formation could void any storage. The likely future fate of a coal seam is, therefore, a key determinant of its suitability for storage and in storage site selection and conflicts between mining and CO<sub>2</sub> storage are possible, particularly for shallow coals.

### 5.3.5 Other geological media

Other geological media and/or structures – including basalts, oil or gas shale, salt caverns and abandoned mines – may locally provide niche options for geological storage of CO<sub>2</sub>.

#### 5.3.5.1 Basalts

Flows and layered intrusions of basalt occur globally, with large volumes present around the world (McGrail *et al.*, 2003). Basalt commonly has low porosity, low permeability and low pore space continuity and any permeability is generally associated

with fractures through which CO<sub>2</sub> will leak unless there is a suitable caprock. Nonetheless, basalt may have some potential for mineral trapping of CO<sub>2</sub>, because injected CO<sub>2</sub> may react with silicates in the basalt to form carbonate minerals (McGrail *et al.*, 2003). More research is needed, but in general, basalts appear unlikely to be suitable for CO<sub>2</sub> storage.

#### 5.3.5.2 Oil or gas rich shale

Deposits of oil or gas shale or organic-rich shale, occur in many parts of the world. The trapping mechanism for oil shale is similar to that for coal beds, namely CO<sub>2</sub> adsorption onto organic material. Carbon dioxide-enhanced shale-gas production (like ECBM) has the potential to reduce storage costs. The potential for storage of CO<sub>2</sub> in oil or gas shale is currently unknown, but the large volumes of shale suggest that storage capacity may be significant. If site-selection criteria, such as minimum depth, are developed and applied to these shales, then volumes could be limited, but the very low permeability of these shales is likely to preclude injection of large volumes of CO<sub>2</sub>.

### 5.3.5.3 Salt caverns

Storage of CO<sub>2</sub> in salt caverns created by solution mining could use the technology developed for the storage of liquid natural gas and petroleum products in salt beds and domes in Western Canada and the Gulf of Mexico (Dusseault *et al.*, 2004). A single salt cavern can reach more than 500,000 m<sup>3</sup>. Storage of CO<sub>2</sub> in salt caverns differs from natural gas and compressed air storage because in the latter case, the caverns are cyclically pressurized and depressurized on a daily-to-annual time scale, whereas CO<sub>2</sub> storage must be effective on a centuries-to-millennia time scale. Owing to the creep properties of salt, a cavern filled with supercritical CO<sub>2</sub> will decrease in volume, until the pressure inside the cavern equalizes the external stress in the salt bed (Bachu and Dusseault, 2005). Although a single cavern 100 m in diameter may hold only about 0.5 Mt of high density CO<sub>2</sub>, arrays of caverns could be built for large-scale storage. Cavern sealing is important in preventing leakage and collapse of cavern roofs, which could release large quantities of gas (Katzung *et al.*, 1996). Advantages of CO<sub>2</sub> storage in salt caverns include high capacity per unit volume (kgCO<sub>2</sub> m<sup>-3</sup>), efficiency and injection flow rate. Disadvantages are the potential for CO<sub>2</sub> release in the case of system failure, the relatively small capacity of most individual caverns and the environmental problems of disposing of brine from a solution cavity. Salt caverns can also be used for temporary storage of CO<sub>2</sub> in collector and distributor systems between sources and sinks of CO<sub>2</sub>.

### 5.3.5.4 Abandoned mines

The suitability of mines for CO<sub>2</sub> storage depends on the nature and sealing capacity of the rock in which mining occurs. Heavily fractured rock, typical of igneous and metamorphic terrains, would be difficult to seal. Mines in sedimentary rocks may offer some CO<sub>2</sub>-storage opportunities (e.g., potash and salt mines or stratabound lead and zinc deposits). Abandoned coal mines offer the opportunity to store CO<sub>2</sub>, with the added benefit of adsorption of CO<sub>2</sub> onto coal remaining in the mined-out area (Piessens and Dusaar, 2004). However, the rocks above coal mines are strongly fractured, which increases the risk of gas leakage. In addition, long-term, safe, high-pressure, CO<sub>2</sub>-resistant shaft seals have not been developed and any shaft failure could result in release of large quantities of CO<sub>2</sub>. Nevertheless, in Colorado, USA, there is a natural gas storage facility in an abandoned coal mine.

### 5.3.6 Effects of impurities on storage capacity

The presence of impurities in the CO<sub>2</sub> gas stream affects the engineering processes of capture, transport and injection (Chapters 3 and 4), as well as the trapping mechanisms and capacity for CO<sub>2</sub> storage in geological media. Some contaminants in the CO<sub>2</sub> stream (e.g., SO<sub>x</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub>, H<sub>2</sub>S) may require classification as hazardous, imposing different requirements for injection and disposal than if the stream were pure (Bergman *et al.*, 1997). Gas impurities in the CO<sub>2</sub> stream affect the compressibility of the injected CO<sub>2</sub> (and hence the volume needed for storing a given amount) and reduce the capacity for storage in free phase,

because of the storage space taken by these gases. Additionally, depending on the type of geological storage, the presence of impurities may have some other specific effects.

In EOR operations, impurities affect the oil recovery because they change the solubility of CO<sub>2</sub> in oil and the ability of CO<sub>2</sub> to vaporize oil components (Metcalfe, 1982). Methane and nitrogen decrease oil recovery, whereas hydrogen sulphide, propane and heavier hydrocarbons have the opposite effect (Alston *et al.*, 1985; Sebastian *et al.*, 1985). The presence of SO<sub>x</sub> may improve oil recovery, whereas the presence of NO<sub>x</sub> can retard miscibility and thus reduce oil recovery (Bryant and Lake, 2005) and O<sub>2</sub> can react exothermally with oil in the reservoir.

In the case of CO<sub>2</sub> storage in deep saline formations, the presence of gas impurities affects the rate and amount of CO<sub>2</sub> storage through dissolution and precipitation. Additionally, leaching of heavy metals from the minerals in the rock matrix by SO<sub>2</sub> or O<sub>2</sub> contaminants is possible. Experience to date with acid gas injection (Section 5.2.4.2) suggests that the effect of impurities is not significant, although Knauss *et al.* (2005) suggest that SO<sub>x</sub> injection with CO<sub>2</sub> produces substantially different chemical, mobilization and mineral reactions. Clarity is needed about the range of gas compositions that industry might wish to store, other than pure CO<sub>2</sub> (Anheden *et al.*, 2005), because although there might be environmental issues to address, there might be cost savings in co-storage of CO<sub>2</sub> and contaminants.

In the case of CO<sub>2</sub> storage in coal seams, impurities may also have a positive or negative effect, similar to EOR operations. If a stream of gas containing H<sub>2</sub>S or SO<sub>2</sub> is injected into coal beds, these will likely be preferentially adsorbed because they have a higher affinity to coal than CO<sub>2</sub>, thus reducing the storage capacity for CO<sub>2</sub> (Chikatamarla and Bustin, 2003). If oxygen is present, it will react irreversibly with the coal, reducing the sorption surface and, hence, the adsorption capacity. On the other hand, some impure CO<sub>2</sub> waste streams, such as coal-fired flue gas (i.e., primarily N<sub>2</sub> + CO<sub>2</sub>), may be used for ECBM because the CO<sub>2</sub> is stripped out (retained) by the coal reservoir, because it has higher sorption selectivity than N<sub>2</sub> and CH<sub>4</sub>.

### 5.3.7 Geographical distribution and storage capacity estimates

Identifying potential sites for CO<sub>2</sub> geological storage and estimating their capacity on a regional or local scale should conceptually be a simple task. The differences between the various mechanisms and means of trapping (Sections 5.2.2) suggest in principle the following methods:

- For volumetric trapping, capacity is the product of available volume (pore space or cavity) and CO<sub>2</sub> density at *in situ* pressure and temperature;
- For solubility trapping, capacity is the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> that can be dissolved in the formation fluid (oil in oil reservoirs, brackish water or brine in saline formations);
- For adsorption trapping, capacity is the product of coal volume and its capacity for adsorbing CO<sub>2</sub>;

- For mineral trapping, capacity is calculated on the basis of available minerals for carbonate precipitation and the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> that will be used in these reactions.

The major impediments to applying these simple methods for estimating the capacity for CO<sub>2</sub> storage in geological media are the lack of data, their uncertainty, the resources needed to process data when available and the fact that frequently more than one trapping mechanism is active. This leads to two situations:

- Global capacity estimates have been calculated by simplifying assumptions and using very simplistic methods and hence are not reliable;
- Country- and region- or basin-specific estimates are more detailed and precise, but are still affected by the limitations imposed by availability of data and the methodology used. Country- or basin-specific capacity estimates are available only for North America, Western Europe, Australia and Japan.

The geographical distribution and capacity estimates are presented below and summarized in Table 5.2.

#### 5.3.7.1 Storage in oil and gas reservoirs

This CO<sub>2</sub> storage option is restricted to hydrocarbon-producing basins, which represent numerically less than half of the sedimentary provinces in the world. It is generally assumed that oil and gas reservoirs can be used for CO<sub>2</sub> storage after their oil or gas reserves are depleted, although storage combined with enhanced oil or gas production can occur sooner. Short of a detailed, reservoir-by-reservoir analysis, the CO<sub>2</sub> storage capacity can and should be calculated from databases of reserves and production (e.g., Winter and Bergman, 1993; Stevens *et al.*, 2001b; Bachu and Shaw, 2003, 2005; Beecy and Kuuskra, 2005).

In hydrocarbon reservoirs with little water encroachment, the injected CO<sub>2</sub> will generally occupy the pore volume previously occupied by oil and/or natural gas. However, not all the previously (hydrocarbon-saturated) pore space will be available for CO<sub>2</sub> because some residual water may be trapped in the pore space due to capillarity, viscous fingering and gravity effects (Stevens *et al.*, 2001c). In open hydrocarbon reservoirs (where pressure is maintained by water influx), in addition to the capacity reduction caused by capillarity and other local effects, a significant fraction of the pore space will be invaded by water, decreasing the pore space available for CO<sub>2</sub> storage,

if repressuring the reservoir is limited to preserve reservoir integrity. In Western Canada, this loss was estimated to be in the order of 30% for gas reservoirs and 50% for oil reservoirs if reservoir repressuring with CO<sub>2</sub> is limited to the initial reservoir pressure (Bachu *et al.*, 2004). The capacity estimates presented here for oil and gas reservoirs have not included any ‘discounting’ that may be appropriate for water-drive reservoirs because detailed site-specific reservoir analysis is needed to assess the effects of water-drive on capacity on a case-by-case basis.

Many storage-capacity estimates for oil and gas fields do not distinguish capacity relating to oil and gas that has already been produced from capacity relating to remaining reserves yet to be produced and that will become available in future years. In some global assessments, estimates also attribute capacity to undiscovered oil and gas fields that might be discovered in future years. There is uncertainty about when oil and gas fields will be depleted and become available for CO<sub>2</sub> storage. The depletion of oil and gas fields is mostly affected by economic rather than technical considerations, particularly oil and gas prices. It is possible that production from near-depleted fields will be extended if future economic considerations allow more hydrocarbons to be recovered, thus delaying access to such fields for CO<sub>2</sub> storage. Currently few of the world’s large oil and gas fields are depleted.

A variety of regional and global estimates of storage capacity in oil and gas fields have been made. Regional and national assessments use a ‘bottom-up’ approach that is based on field reserves data from each area’s existing and discovered oil and gas fields. Although the methodologies used may differ, there is a higher level of confidence in these than the global estimates, for the reasons outlined previously. Currently, this type of assessment is available only for northwestern Europe, United States, Canada and Australia. In Europe, there have been three bottom-up attempts to estimate the CO<sub>2</sub> storage capacity of oil and gas reservoirs covering parts of Europe, but comprising most of Europe’s storage capacity since they include the North Sea (Holloway, 1996; Wildenborg *et al.*, 2005b). The methodology used in all three studies was based on the assumption that the total reservoir volume of hydrocarbons could be replaced by CO<sub>2</sub>. The operators’ estimate of ‘ultimately recoverable reserves’ (URR) was used for each field where available or was estimated. The underground volume occupied by the URR and the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> that could be stored in that space under reservoir conditions was then calculated. Undiscovered reserves were excluded. For Canada, the assumption was that

**Table 5.2** Storage capacity for several geological storage options. The storage capacity includes storage options that are not economical.

Reservoir type	Lower estimate of storage capacity (GtCO <sub>2</sub> )	Upper estimate of storage capacity (GtCO <sub>2</sub> )
Oil and gas fields	675 <sup>a</sup>	900 <sup>a</sup>
Unminable coal seams (ECBM)	3-15	200
Deep saline formations	1000	Uncertain, but possibly 10 <sup>4</sup>

<sup>a</sup> These numbers would increase by 25% if “undiscovered” oil and gas fields were included in this assessment.

the produced reserves (not the original oil or gas in place) could be replaced by CO<sub>2</sub> (theoretical capacity) for all reservoirs in Western Canada, on the basis of *in situ* pressure, temperature and pore volume. Reduction coefficients were then applied to account for aquifer invasion and all other effects (effective capacity). This value was then reduced for depth (900–3500 m) and size (practical capacity) (Bachu and Shaw, 2005).

The storage potential of northwestern Europe is estimated at more than 40 GtCO<sub>2</sub> for gas reservoirs and 7 GtCO<sub>2</sub> for oil fields (Wildenborg *et al.*, 2005b). The European estimates are based on all reserves (no significant fields occur above 800 m). Carbon dioxide density was calculated from the depth, pressure and temperature of fields in most cases; where these were not available, a density of 700 kg m<sup>-3</sup> was used. No assumption was made about the amount of oil recovered from the fields before CO<sub>2</sub> storage was initiated and tertiary recovery by EOR was not included. In Western Canada, the practical CO<sub>2</sub> storage potential in the Alberta and Williston basins in reservoirs with capacity more than 1 MtCO<sub>2</sub> each was estimated to be about 1 GtCO<sub>2</sub> in oil reservoirs and about 4 GtCO<sub>2</sub> in gas reservoirs. The capacity in all discovered oil and gas reservoirs is approximately 10 GtCO<sub>2</sub> (Bachu *et al.*, 2004; Bachu and Shaw, 2005). For Canada, the CO<sub>2</sub> density was calculated for each reservoir from the pressure and temperature. The oil and gas recovery was that provided in the reserves databases or was based on actual production. For reservoirs suitable for EOR, an analytical method was developed to estimate how much would be produced and how much CO<sub>2</sub> would be stored (Shaw and Bachu, 2002). In the United States, the total storage capacity in discovered oil and gas fields is estimated to be approximately 98 GtCO<sub>2</sub> (Winter and Bergman, 1993; Bergman *et al.*, 1997). Data on production to date and known reserves and resources indicate that Australia has up to 15 GtCO<sub>2</sub> storage capacity in gas reservoirs and 0.7 GtCO<sub>2</sub> in oil reservoirs. The Australian estimates used field data to recalculate the CO<sub>2</sub> that could occupy the producible volume at field conditions. The total storage capacity in discovered fields for these regions with bottom-up assessments is 170 GtCO<sub>2</sub>.

Although not yet assessed, it is almost certain that significant storage potential exists in all other oil and gas provinces around the world, such as the Middle East, Russia, Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Global capacity for CO<sub>2</sub>-EOR opportunities is estimated to have a geological storage capacity of 61–123 GtCO<sub>2</sub>, although as practised today, CO<sub>2</sub>-EOR is not engineered to maximize CO<sub>2</sub> storage. In fact, it is optimized to maximize revenues from oil production, which in many cases requires minimizing the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> retained in the reservoir. In the future, if storing CO<sub>2</sub> has an economic value, co-optimizing CO<sub>2</sub> storage and EOR may increase capacity estimates. In European capacity studies, it was considered likely that EOR would be attempted at all oil fields where CO<sub>2</sub> storage took place, because it would generate additional revenue. The calculation in Wildenborg *et al.* (2005b) allows for different recovery factors based on API (American Petroleum Institute) gravity of oil. For Canada, all 10,000 oil reservoirs in Western Canada were screened for suitability for EOR on the basis of a set of criteria developed

from EOR literature. Those oil reservoirs that passed were considered further in storage calculations (Shaw and Bachu, 2002).

Global estimates of storage capacity in oil reservoirs vary from 126 to 400 GtCO<sub>2</sub> (Freund, 2001). These assessments, made on a top-down basis, include potential in undiscovered reservoirs. Comparable global capacity for CO<sub>2</sub> storage in gas reservoirs is estimated at 800 GtCO<sub>2</sub> (Freund, 2001). The combined estimate of total ultimate storage capacity in discovered oil and gas fields is therefore very likely 675–900 GtCO<sub>2</sub>. If undiscovered oil and gas fields are included, this figure would increase to 900–1200 GtCO<sub>2</sub>, but the confidence level would decrease.<sup>1</sup>

In comparison, more detailed regional estimates made for northwestern Europe, United States, Australia and Canada indicate a total of about 170 GtCO<sub>2</sub> storage capacity in their existing oil and gas fields, with the discovered oil and gas reserves of these countries accounting for 18.9% of the world total (USGS, 2001a). Global storage estimates that are based on proportionality suggest that discovered worldwide oil and gas reservoirs have a capacity of 900 GtCO<sub>2</sub>, which is comparable to the global estimates by Freund (2001) of 800 GtCO<sub>2</sub> for gas (Stevens *et al.*, 2000) and 123 GtCO<sub>2</sub> for oil and is assessed as a reliable value, although water invasion was not always taken into account.

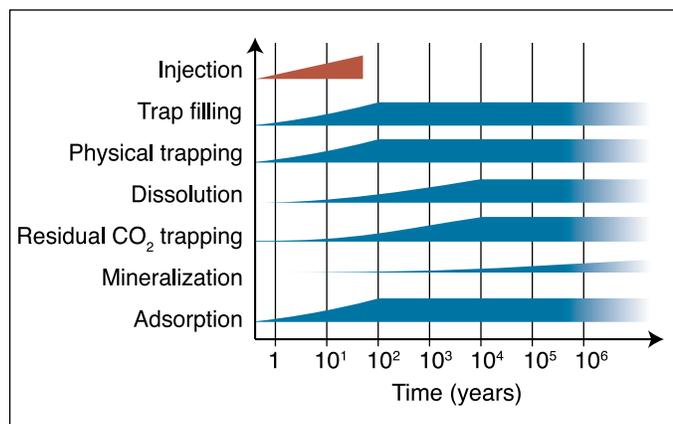
#### 5.3.7.2 Storage in deep saline formations

Saline formations occur in sedimentary basins throughout the world, both onshore and on the continental shelves (Chapter 2 and Section 5.3.3) and are not limited to hydrocarbon provinces or coal basins. However, estimating the CO<sub>2</sub> storage capacity of deep saline formations is presently a challenge for the following reasons:

- There are multiple mechanisms for storage, including physical trapping beneath low permeability caprock, dissolution and mineralization;
- These mechanisms operate both simultaneously and on different time scales, such that the time frame of CO<sub>2</sub> storage affects the capacity estimate; volumetric storage is important initially, but later CO<sub>2</sub> dissolves and reacts with minerals;
- Relations and interactions between these various mechanisms are very complex, evolve with time and are highly dependent on local conditions;
- There is no single, consistent, broadly available methodology for estimating CO<sub>2</sub> storage capacity (various studies have used different methods that do not allow comparison).
- Only limited seismic and well data are normally available (unlike data on oil and gas reservoirs).

To understand the difficulties in assessing CO<sub>2</sub> storage capacity in deep saline formations, we need to understand the interplay

<sup>1</sup> Estimates of the undiscovered oil and gas are based on the USGS assessment that 30% more oil and gas will be discovered, compared to the resources known today.



**Figure 5.18** Schematic showing the time evolution of various CO<sub>2</sub> storage mechanisms operating in deep saline formations, during and after injection. Assessing storage capacity is complicated by the different time and spatial scales over which these processes occur.

of the various trapping mechanisms during the evolution of a CO<sub>2</sub> plume (Section 5.2 and Figure 5.18). In addition, the storage capacity of deep saline formations can be determined only on a case-by-case basis.

To date, most of the estimates of CO<sub>2</sub> storage capacity in deep saline formations focus on physical trapping and/or dissolution. These estimates make the simplifying assumption that no geochemical reactions take place concurrent with CO<sub>2</sub> injection, flow and dissolution. Some recent work suggests that it can take several thousand years for geochemical reactions to have a significant impact (Xu *et al.*, 2003). The CO<sub>2</sub> storage capacity from mineral trapping can be comparable to the capacity in solution per unit volume of sedimentary rock when formation porosity is taken into account (Bachu and Adams, 2003; Perkins *et al.*, 2005), although the rates and time frames of these two processes are different.

More than 14 global assessments of capacity have been made by using these types of approaches (IEA-GHG, 2004). The range of estimates from these studies is large (200–56,000 GtCO<sub>2</sub>), reflecting both the different assumptions used to make these estimates and the uncertainty in the parameters. Most of the estimates are in the range of several hundred Gtonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>. Volumetric capacity estimates that are based on local, reservoir-scale numerical simulations of CO<sub>2</sub> injection suggest occupancy of the pore space by CO<sub>2</sub> on the order of a few percent as a result of gravity segregation and viscous fingering (van der Meer, 1992, 1995; Krom *et al.*, 1993; Ispen and Jacobsen, 1996). Koide *et al.* (1992) used the areal method of projecting natural resources reserves and assumed that 1% of the total area of the world's sedimentary basins can be used for CO<sub>2</sub> storage. Other studies considered that 2–6% of formation area can be used for CO<sub>2</sub> storage. However, Bradshaw and Dance (2005) have shown there is no correlation between geographic area of a sedimentary basin and its capacity for either hydrocarbons (oil and gas reserves) or CO<sub>2</sub> storage.

The storage capacity of Europe has been estimated as 30–577 GtCO<sub>2</sub> (Holloway, 1996; Bøe *et al.*, 2002; Wildenborg *et al.*, 2005b). The main uncertainties for Europe are estimates of

the amount trapped (estimated to be 3%) and storage efficiency, estimated as 2–6% (2% for closed aquifer with permeability barriers; 6% for open aquifer with almost infinite extent), 4% if open/closed status is not known. The volume in traps is assumed to be proportional to the total pore volume, which may not necessarily be correct. Early estimates of the total US storage capacity in deep saline formations suggested a total of up to 500 GtCO<sub>2</sub> (Bergman and Winter, 1995). A more recent estimate of the capacity of a single deep formation in the United States, the Mount Simon Sandstone, is 160–800 GtCO<sub>2</sub> (Gupta *et al.*, 1999), suggesting that the total US storage capacity may be higher than earlier estimates. Assuming that CO<sub>2</sub> will dissolve to saturation in all deep formations, Bachu and Adams (2003) estimated the storage capacity of the Alberta basin in Western Canada to be approximately 4000 GtCO<sub>2</sub>, which is a theoretical maximum assuming that all the pore water in the Alberta Basin could become saturated with CO<sub>2</sub>, which is not likely. An Australian storage capacity estimate of 740 GtCO<sub>2</sub> was determined by a cumulative risked-capacity approach for 65 potentially viable sites from 48 basins (Bradshaw *et al.*, 2003). The total capacity in Japan has been estimated as 1.5–80 GtCO<sub>2</sub>, mostly in offshore formations (Tanaka *et al.*, 1995).

Within these wide ranges, the lower figure is generally the estimated storage capacity of volumetric traps within the deep saline formations, where free-phase CO<sub>2</sub> would accumulate. The larger figure is based on additional storage mechanisms, mainly dissolution but also mineral trapping. The various methods and data used in these capacity estimates demonstrate a high degree of uncertainty in estimating regional or global storage capacity in deep saline formations. In the examples from Europe and Japan, the maximum estimate is 15 to 50 times larger than the low estimate. Similarly, global estimates of storage capacity show a wide range, 100–200,000 GtCO<sub>2</sub>, reflecting different methodologies, levels of uncertainties and considerations of effective trapping mechanisms.

The assessment of this report is that it is very likely that global storage capacity in deep saline formations is at least 1000 GtCO<sub>2</sub>. Confidence in this assessment comes from the fact that oil and gas fields 'discovered' have a global storage capacity of approximately 675–900 GtCO<sub>2</sub> and that they occupy only a small fraction of the pore volume in sedimentary basins, the rest being occupied by brackish water and brine. Moreover, oil and gas reservoirs occur only in about half of the world's sedimentary basins. Additionally, regional estimates suggest that significant storage capacity is available. Significantly more storage capacity is likely to be available in deep saline formations. The literature is not adequate to support a robust estimate of the maximum geological storage capacity. Some studies suggest that it might be little more than 1000 GtCO<sub>2</sub>, while others indicate that the upper figure could be an order of magnitude higher. More detailed regional and local capacity assessments are required to resolve this issue.

### 5.3.7.3 Storage in coal

No commercial CO<sub>2</sub>-ECBM operations exist and a comprehensive realistic assessment of the potential for CO<sub>2</sub>

storage in coal formations has not yet been made. Normally, commercial CBM reservoirs are shallower than 1500 m, whereas coal mining in Europe and elsewhere has reached depths of 1000 m. Because CO<sub>2</sub> should not be stored in coals that could be potentially mined, there is a relatively narrow depth window for CO<sub>2</sub> storage.

Assuming that bituminous coals can adsorb twice as much CO<sub>2</sub> as methane, a preliminary analysis of the theoretical CO<sub>2</sub> storage potential for ECBM recovery projects suggests that approximately 60–200 GtCO<sub>2</sub> could be stored worldwide in bituminous coal seams (IEA-GHG, 1998). More recent estimates for North America range from 60 to 90 GtCO<sub>2</sub> (Reeves, 2003b; Dooley *et al.*, 2005), by including sub-bituminous coals and lignites. Technical and economic considerations suggest a practical storage potential of approximately 7 GtCO<sub>2</sub> for bituminous coals (Gale and Freund, 2001; Gale, 2004). Assuming that CO<sub>2</sub> would not be stored in coal seams without recovering the CBM, a storage capacity of 3–15 GtCO<sub>2</sub> is calculated, for a US annual production of CBM in 2003 of approximately 0.04 trillion m<sup>3</sup> and projected global production levels of 0.20 trillion m<sup>3</sup> in the future. This calculation assumes that 0.1 GtCO<sub>2</sub> can be stored for every Tcf of produced CBM (3.53 GtCO<sub>2</sub> for every trillion m<sup>3</sup>) and compares well to Gale (2004).

### 5.3.8 Matching of CO<sub>2</sub> sources and geological storage sites

Matching of CO<sub>2</sub> sources with geological storage sites requires detailed assessment of source quality and quantity, transport and economic and environmental factors. If the storage site is far from CO<sub>2</sub> sources or is associated with a high level of technical uncertainty, then its storage potential may never be realized.

#### 5.3.8.1 Regional studies

Matching sources of CO<sub>2</sub> to potential storage sites, taking into account projections for future socio-economic development, will be particularly important for some of the rapidly developing economies. Assessment of sources and storage sites, together with numerical simulations, emissions mapping and identification of transport routes, has been undertaken for a number of regions in Europe (Holloway, 1996; Larsen *et al.*, 2005). In Japan, studies have modelled and optimized the linkages between 20 onshore emission regions and 20 offshore storage regions, including both ocean storage and geological storage (Akimoto *et al.*, 2003). Preliminary studies have also begun in India (Garg *et al.*, 2005) and Argentina (Amadeo *et al.*, 2005). For the United States, a study that used a Geographic Information System (GIS) and a broad-based economic analysis (Dooley *et al.*, 2005) shows that about two-thirds of power stations are adjacent to potential geological storage locations, but a number would require transportation of hundreds of kilometres.

Studies of Canadian sedimentary basins that include descriptions of the type of data and flow diagrams of the assessment process have been carried out by Bachu (2003).

Results for the Western Canada Sedimentary Basin show that, while the total capacity of oil and gas reservoirs in the basin is several Gtonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>, the capacity of underlying deep saline formations is two to three orders of magnitude higher. Most major CO<sub>2</sub> emitters have potential storage sites relatively close by, with the notable exception of the oil sands plants in northeastern Alberta (current CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of about 20 MtCO<sub>2</sub> yr<sup>-1</sup>).

In Australia, a portfolio approach was undertaken for the continent to identify a range of geological storage sites (Rigg *et al.*, 2001; Bradshaw *et al.*, 2002). The initial assessment screened 300 sedimentary basins down to 48 basins and 65 areas. Methodology was developed for ranking storage sites (technical and economic risks) and proximity of large CO<sub>2</sub> emission sites. Region-wide solutions were sought, incorporating an economic model to assess full project economics over 20 to 30 years, including costs of transport, storage, monitoring and Monte Carlo analysis. The study produced three storage estimates:

- Total capacity of 740 GtCO<sub>2</sub>, equivalent to 1600 years of current emissions, but with no economic barriers considered;
- ‘Realistic’ capacity of 100–115 MtCO<sub>2</sub> yr<sup>-1</sup> or 50% of annual stationary emissions, determined by matching sources with the closest viable storage sites and assuming economic incentives for storage;
- ‘Cost curve’ capacity of 20–180 MtCO<sub>2</sub> yr<sup>-1</sup>, with increasing storage capacity depending on future CO<sub>2</sub> values.

#### 5.3.8.2 Methodology and assessment criteria

Although some commonality exists in the various approaches for capacity assessment, each study is influenced by the available data and resources, the aims of the respective study and whether local or whole-region solutions are being sought. The next level of analysis covers regional aspects and detail at the prospect or project level, including screening and selection of potential CO<sub>2</sub> storage sites on the basis of technical, environmental, safety and economic criteria. Finally, integration and analysis of various scenarios can lead to identification of potential storage sites that should then become targets of detailed engineering and economic studies.

The following factors should be considered when selecting CO<sub>2</sub> storage sites and matching them with CO<sub>2</sub> sources (Winter and Bergman, 1993; Bergman *et al.*, 1997; Kavscek, 2002): volume, purity and rate of the CO<sub>2</sub> stream; suitability of the storage sites, including the seal; proximity of the source and storage sites; infrastructure for the capture and delivery of CO<sub>2</sub>; existence of a large number of storage sites to allow diversification; known or undiscovered energy, mineral or groundwater resources that might be compromised; existing wells and infrastructure; viability and safety of the storage site; injection strategies and, in the case of EOR and ECBM, production strategies, which together affect the number of wells and their spacing; terrain and right of way; location of population centres; local expertise; and overall costs and economics.

Although technical suitability criteria are initial indicators for identifying potential CO<sub>2</sub> storage sites, once the best

candidates have been selected, further considerations will be controlled by economic, safety and environmental aspects. These criteria must be assessed for the anticipated lifetime of the operation, to ascertain whether storage capacity can match supply volume and whether injection rates can match the supply rate. Other issues might include whether CO<sub>2</sub> sources and storage sites are matched on a one-to-one basis or whether a collection and distribution system is implemented, to form an integrated industrial system. Such deliberations affect cost outcomes, as will the supply rates, through economies of scale. Early opportunities for source-storage matching could involve sites where an economic benefit might accrue through the enhanced production of oil or gas (Holtz *et al.*, 2001; van Bergen *et al.*, 2003b).

Assigning technical risks is important for matching of CO<sub>2</sub> sources and storage sites, for five risk factors: storage capacity, injectivity, containment, site and natural resources (Bradshaw *et al.*, 2002, 2003). These screening criteria introduce reality checks to large storage-capacity estimates and indicate which regions to concentrate upon in future detailed studies. The use of 'cost curve' capacity introduces another level of sophistication that helps in identifying how sensitive any storage capacity estimate is to the cost of CO<sub>2</sub>. Combining the technical criteria into an economic assessment reveals that costs are quite project-specific.

#### 5.4 Characterization and performance prediction for identified sites

Key goals for geological CO<sub>2</sub> storage site characterization are to assess how much CO<sub>2</sub> can be stored at a potential storage site and to demonstrate that the site is capable of meeting required storage performance criteria (Figure 5.19). Site characterization requires the collection of the wide variety of geological data that are needed to achieve these goals. Much of the data will necessarily be site-specific. Most data will be integrated into geological models that will be used to simulate and predict the performance of the site. These and related issues are considered below.

##### 5.4.1 Characterization of identified sites

Storage site requirements depend greatly upon the trapping mechanism and the geological medium in which storage is proposed (e.g., deep saline formation, depleted oil or gas field or coal seam). Data availability and quality vary greatly between each of these options (Table 5.3). In many cases, oil and gas fields will be better characterized than deep saline formations because a relevant data set was collected during hydrocarbon exploration and production. However, this may not always be the case. There are many examples of deep saline formations whose character and performance for CO<sub>2</sub> storage can be predicted reliably over a large area (Chadwick *et al.*, 2003; Bradshaw *et al.*, 2003).

##### 5.4.1.1 Data types

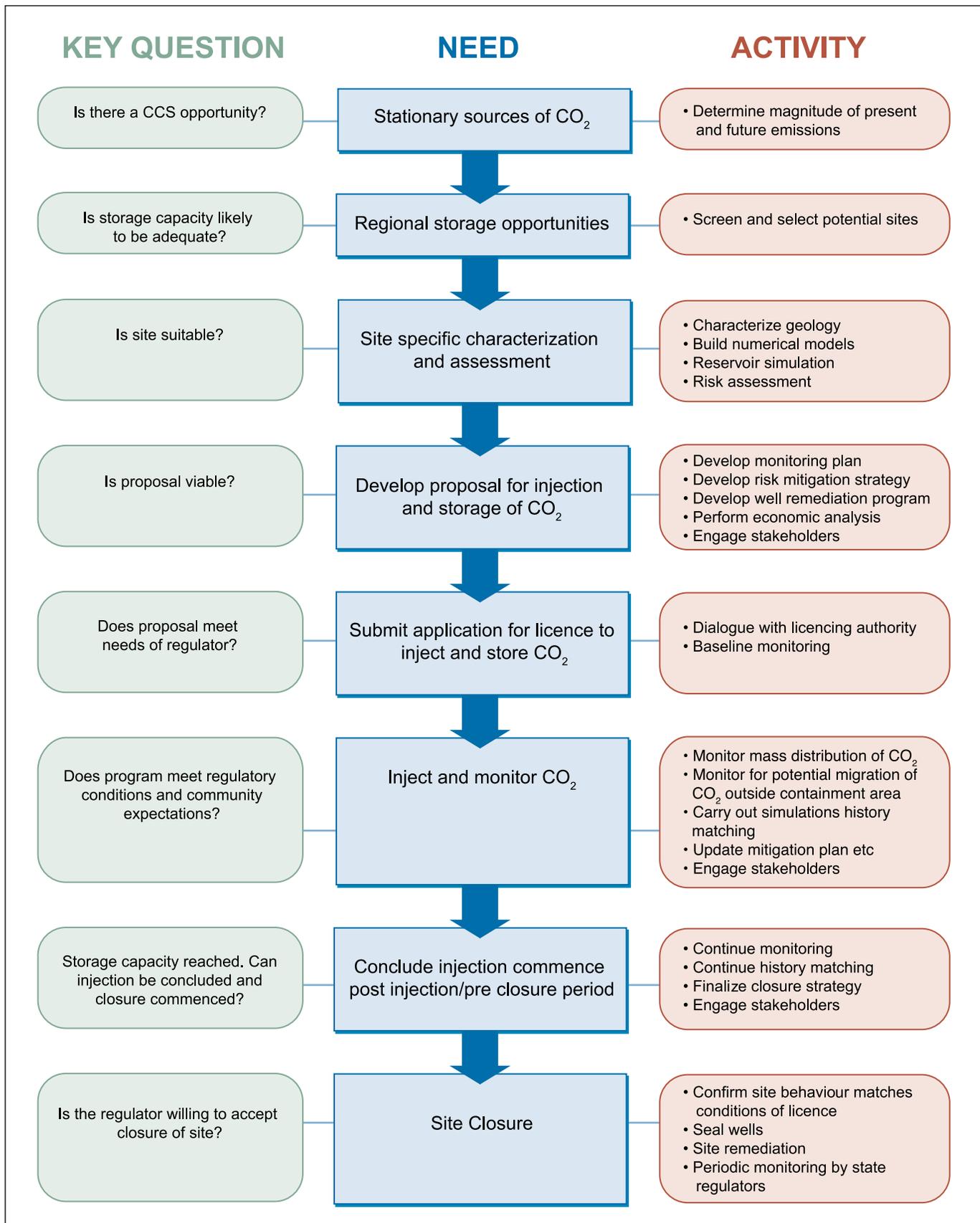
The storage site and its surroundings need to be characterized in terms of geology, hydrogeology, geochemistry and geomechanics (structural geology and deformation in response to stress changes). The greatest emphasis will be placed on the reservoir and its sealing horizons. However, the strata above the storage formation and caprock also need to be assessed because if CO<sub>2</sub> leaked it would migrate through them (Haidl *et al.*, 2005). Documentation of the characteristics of any particular storage site will rely on data that have been obtained directly from the reservoir, such as core and fluids produced from wells at or near the proposed storage site, pressure transient tests conducted to test seal efficiency and indirect remote sensing measurements such as seismic reflection data and regional hydrodynamic pressure gradients. Integration of all of the different types of data is needed to develop a reliable model that can be used to assess whether a site is suitable for CO<sub>2</sub> storage.

During the site-selection process that may follow an initial screening, detailed reservoir simulation (Section 5.4.2 will be necessary to meaningfully assess a potential storage site. A range of geophysical, geological, hydrogeological and geomechanical information is required to perform the modelling associated with a reservoir simulation. This information must be built into a three-dimensional geological model, populated with known and extrapolated data at an appropriate scale. Examples of the basic types of data and products that may be useful are listed in Table 5.3.

Financial constraints may limit the types of data that can be collected as part of the site characterization and selection process. Today, no standard methodology prescribes how a site must be characterized. Instead, selections about site characterization data will be made on a site-specific basis, choosing those data sets that will be most valuable in the particular geological setting. However, some data sets are likely to be selected for every case. Geological site description from wellbores and outcrops are needed to characterize the storage formation and seal properties. Seismic surveys are needed to define the subsurface geological structure and identify faults or fractures that could create leakage pathways. Formation pressure measurements are needed to map the rate and direction of groundwater flow. Water quality samples are needed to demonstrate the isolation between deep and shallow groundwater.

##### 5.4.1.2 Assessment of stratigraphic factors affecting site integrity

Caprocks or seals are the permeability barriers (mostly vertical but sometimes lateral) that prevent or impede migration of CO<sub>2</sub> from the injection site. The integrity of a seal depends on spatial distribution and physical properties. Ideally, a sealing rock unit should be regional in nature and uniform in lithology, especially at its base. Where there are lateral changes in the basal units of a seal rock, the chance of migration out of the primary reservoir into higher intervals increases. However, if the seal rock is uniform, regionally extensive and thick, then the main issues will be the physical rock strength, any natural or anthropomorphic penetrations (faults, fractures and wells) and



**Figure 5.19** Life cycle of a CO<sub>2</sub> storage project showing the importance of integrating site characterization with a range of regulatory, monitoring, economic, risking and engineering issues.

**Table 5.3** Types of data that are used to characterize and select geological CO<sub>2</sub> storage sites.

- Seismic profiles across the area of interest, preferably three-dimensional or closely spaced two-dimensional surveys;
- Structure contour maps of reservoirs, seals and aquifers;
- Detailed maps of the structural boundaries of the trap where the CO<sub>2</sub> will accumulate, especially highlighting potential spill points;
- Maps of the predicted pathway along which the CO<sub>2</sub> will migrate from the point of injection;
- Documentation and maps of faults and fault;
- Facies maps showing any lateral facies changes in the reservoirs or seals;
- Core and drill cuttings samples from the reservoir and seal intervals;
- Well logs, preferably a consistent suite, including geological, geophysical and engineering logs;
- Fluid analyses and tests from downhole sampling and production testing;
- Oil and gas production data (if a hydrocarbon field);
- Pressure transient tests for measuring reservoir and seal permeability;
- Petrophysical measurements, including porosity, permeability, mineralogy (petrography), seal capacity, pressure, temperature, salinity and laboratory rock strength testing;
- Pressure, temperature, water salinity;
- In situ stress analysis to determine potential for fault reactivation and fault slip tendency and thus identify the maximum sustainable pore fluid pressure during injection in regard to the reservoir, seal and faults;
- Hydrodynamic analysis to identify the magnitude and direction of water flow, hydraulic interconnectivity of formations and pressure decrease associated with hydrocarbon production;
- Seismological data, geomorphological data and tectonic investigations to indicate neotectonic activity.

potential CO<sub>2</sub>-water-rock reactions that could weaken the seal rock or increase its porosity and permeability.

Methods have been described for making field-scale measurements of the permeability of caprocks for formation gas storage projects, based on theoretical developments in the 1950s and 1960s (Hantush and Jacobs, 1955; Hantush, 1960). These use water-pumping tests to measure the rate of leakage across the caprock (Witherspoon *et al.*, 1968). A related type of test, called a pressure ‘leak-off’ test, can be used to measure caprock permeability and *in situ* stress. The capacity of a seal rock to hold back fluids can also be estimated from core samples by mercury injection capillary pressure (MICP) analysis, a method widely used in the oil and gas industry (Vavra *et al.*, 1992). MICP analysis measures the pressures required to move mercury through the pore network system of a seal rock. The resulting data can be used to derive the height of a column of reservoir rock saturated by a particular fluid (e.g., CO<sub>2</sub>) that the sealing strata would be capable of holding back (Gibson-Poole *et al.*, 2002).

#### 5.4.1.3 Geomechanical factors affecting site integrity

When CO<sub>2</sub> is injected into a porous and permeable reservoir rock, it will be forced into pores at a pressure higher than that in the surrounding formation. This pressure could lead to deformation of the reservoir rock or the seal rock, resulting in the opening of fractures or failure along a fault plane. Geomechanical modelling of the subsurface is necessary in any storage site assessment and should focus on the maximum formation pressures that can be sustained in a storage site. As an example, at Weyburn, where the initial reservoir pressure is 14.2 MPa, the maximum injection pressure (90% of fracture pressure) is in the range of 25–27 MPa and fracture pressure is in the range of 29–31 MPa. Coupled geomechanical-geochemical modelling may also be needed to document fracture sealing by precipitation of carbonates in fractures or pores. Modelling these will require knowledge of pore fluid composition, mineralogy,

*in situ* stresses, pore fluid pressures and pre-existing fault orientations and their frictional properties (Streit and Hillis, 2003; Johnson *et al.*, 2005). These estimates can be made from conventional well and seismic data and leak-off tests, but the results can be enhanced by access to physical measurements of rock strength. Application of this methodology at a regional scale is documented by Gibson-Poole *et al.* (2002).

The efficacy of an oil or gas field seal rock can be characterized by examining its capillary entry pressure and the potential hydrocarbon column height that it can sustain (see above). However, Jimenez and Chalaturnyk (2003) suggest that the geomechanical processes, during depletion and subsequent CO<sub>2</sub> injection, may affect the hydraulic integrity of the seal rock in hydrocarbon fields. Movement along faults can be produced in a hydrocarbon field by induced changes in the pre-production stress regime. This can happen when fluid pressures are substantially depleted during hydrocarbon production (Streit and Hillis, 2003). Determining whether the induced stress changes result in compaction or pore collapse is critical in assessment of a depleted field. If pore collapse occurs, then it might not be possible to return a pressure-depleted field to its original pore pressure without the risk of induced failure. By having a reduced maximum pore fluid pressure, the total volume of CO<sub>2</sub> that can be stored in a depleted field could be substantially less than otherwise estimated.

#### 5.4.1.4 Geochemical factors affecting site integrity

The mixing of CO<sub>2</sub> and water in the pore system of the reservoir rock will create dissolved CO<sub>2</sub>, carbonic acid and bicarbonate ions. The acidification of the pore water reduces the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> that can be dissolved. As a consequence, rocks that buffer the pore water pH to higher values (reducing the acidity) facilitate the storage of CO<sub>2</sub> as a dissolved phase (Section 5.2). The CO<sub>2</sub>-rich water may react with minerals in the reservoir rock or caprock matrix or with the primary pore fluid. Importantly, it may also react with borehole cements and steels (see discussion

below). Such reactions may cause either mineral dissolution and potential breakdown of the rock (or cement) matrix or mineral precipitation and plugging of the pore system (and thus, reduction in permeability).

A carbonate mineral formation effectively traps stored CO<sub>2</sub> as an immobile solid phase (Section 5.2). If the mineralogical composition of the rock matrix is strongly dominated by quartz, geochemical reactions will be dominated by simple dissolution into the brine and CO<sub>2</sub>-water-rock reactions can be neglected. In this case, complex geochemical simulations of rock-water interactions will not be needed. However, for more complex mineralogies, sophisticated simulations, based on laboratory experimental data that use reservoir and caprock samples and native pore fluids, may be necessary to fully assess the potential effects of such reactions in more complex systems (Bachu *et al.*, 1994; Czernichowski-Lauriol *et al.*, 1996; Rochelle *et al.*, 1999, 2004; Gunter *et al.*, 2000). Studies of rock samples recovered from natural systems rich in CO<sub>2</sub> can provide indications of what reactions might occur in the very long term (Pearce *et al.*, 1996). Reactions in boreholes are considered by Crolet (1983), Rochelle *et al.* (2004) and Schremp and Roberson (1975). Natural CO<sub>2</sub> reservoirs also allow sampling of solid and fluid reactants and reaction products, thus allowing formulation of geochemical models that can be verified with numerical simulations, further facilitating quantitative predictions of water-CO<sub>2</sub>-rock reactions (May, 1998).

#### 5.4.1.5 Anthropogenic factors affecting storage integrity

As discussed at greater length in Section 5.7.2, anthropogenic factors such as active or abandoned wells, mine shafts and subsurface production can impact storage security. Abandoned wells that penetrate the storage formation can be of particular concern because they may provide short circuits for CO<sub>2</sub> to leak from the storage formation to the surface (Celia and Bachu, 2003; Gasda *et al.*, 2004). Therefore, locating and assessing the condition of abandoned and active wells is an important component of site characterization. It is possible to locate abandoned wells with airborne magnetometer surveys. In most cases, abandoned wells will have metal casings, but this may not be the case for wells drilled long ago or those never completed for oil or gas production. Countries with oil and gas production will have at least some records of the more recently drilled wells, depth of wells and other information stored in a geographic database. The consistency and quality of record keeping of drilled wells (oil and gas, mining exploration and water) varies considerably, from excellent for recent wells to nonexistent, particularly for older wells (Stenhouse *et al.*, 2004).

#### 5.4.2 Performance prediction and optimization modelling

Computer simulation also has a key role in the design and operation of field projects for underground injection of CO<sub>2</sub>. Predictions of the storage capacity of the site or the expected incremental recovery in enhanced recovery projects, are vital to

an initial assessment of economic feasibility. In a similar vein, simulation can be used in tandem with economic assessments to optimize the location, number, design and depth of injection wells. For enhanced recovery projects, the timing of CO<sub>2</sub> injection relative to production is vital to the success of the operation and the effect of various strategies can be assessed by simulation. Simulations of the long-term distribution of CO<sub>2</sub> in the subsurface (e.g., migration rate and direction and rate of dissolution in the formation water) are important for the design of cost-effective monitoring programmes, since the results will influence the location of monitoring wells and the frequency of repeat measurements, such as for seismic, soil gas or water chemistry. During injection and monitoring operations, simulation models can be adjusted to match field observations and then used to assess the impact of possible operational changes, such as drilling new wells or altering injection rates, often with the goal of further improving recovery (in the context of hydrocarbon extraction) or of avoiding migration of CO<sub>2</sub> past a likely spill-point.

Section 5.2 described the important physical, chemical and geomechanical processes that must be considered when evaluating a storage project. Numerical simulators currently in use in the oil, gas and geothermal energy industries provide important subsets of the required capabilities. They have served as convenient starting points for recent and ongoing development efforts specifically targeted at modelling the geological storage of CO<sub>2</sub>. Many simulation codes have been used and adapted for this purpose (White, 1995; Nitao, 1996; White and Oostrom, 1997; Pruess *et al.*, 1999; Lichtner, 2001; Steefel, 2001; Xu *et al.*, 2003).

Simulation codes are available for multiphase flow processes, chemical reactions and geomechanical changes, but most codes account for only a subset of these processes. Capabilities for a comprehensive treatment of different processes are limited at present. This is especially true for the coupling of multiphase fluid flow, geochemical reactions and (particularly) geomechanics, which are very important for the integrity of potential geological storage sites (Rutqvist and Tsang, 2002). Demonstrating that they can model the important physical and chemical processes accurately and reliably is necessary for establishing credibility as practical engineering tools. Recently, an analytical model developed for predicting the evolution of a plume of CO<sub>2</sub> injected into a deep saline formation, as well as potential CO<sub>2</sub> leakage rates through abandoned wells, has shown good matching with results obtained from the industry numerical simulator ECLIPSE (Celia *et al.*, 2005; Nordbotten *et al.*, 2005b).

A code intercomparison study involving ten research groups from six countries was conducted recently to evaluate the capabilities and accuracy of numerical simulators for geological storage of greenhouse gases (Pruess *et al.*, 2004). The test problems addressed CO<sub>2</sub> storage in saline formations and oil and gas reservoirs. The results of the intercomparison were encouraging in that substantial agreement was found between results obtained with different simulators. However, there were also areas with only fair agreement, as well as some

significant discrepancies. Most discrepancies could be traced to differences in fluid property descriptions, such as fluid densities and viscosities and mutual solubility of CO<sub>2</sub> and water. The study concluded that 'although code development work undoubtedly must continue . . . codes are available now that can model the complex phenomena accompanying geological storage of CO<sub>2</sub> in a robust manner and with quantitatively similar results' (Pruess *et al.*, 2004).

Another, similar intercomparison study was conducted for simulation of storage of CO<sub>2</sub> in coal beds, considering both pure CO<sub>2</sub> injection and injection of flue gases (Law *et al.*, 2003). Again, there was good agreement between the simulation results from different codes. Code intercomparisons are useful for checking mathematical methods and numerical approximations and to provide insight into relevant phenomena by using the different descriptions of the physics (or chemistry) implemented. However, establishing the realism and accuracy of physical and chemical process models is a more demanding task, one that requires carefully controlled and monitored field and laboratory experiments. Only after simulation models have been shown to be capable of adequately representing real-world observations can they be relied upon for engineering design and analysis. Methods for calibrating models to complex engineered subsurface systems are available, but validating them requires field testing that is time consuming and expensive.

The principal difficulty is that the complex geological models on which the simulation models are based are subject to considerable uncertainties, resulting both from uncertainties in data interpretation and, in some cases, sparse data sets. Measurements taken at wells provide information on rock and fluid properties at that location, but statistical techniques must be used to estimate properties away from the wells. When simulating a field in which injection or production is already occurring, a standard approach in the oil and gas industry is to adjust some parameters of the geological model to match selected field observations. This does not prove that the model is correct, but it does provide additional constraints on the model parameters. In the case of saline formation storage, history matching is generally not feasible for constraining uncertainties, due to a lack of underground data for comparison. Systematic parameter variation routines and statistical functions should be included in future coupled simulators to allow uncertainty estimates for numerical reservoir simulation results.

Field tests of CO<sub>2</sub> injection are under way or planned in several countries and these tests provide opportunities to validate simulation models. For example, in Statoil's Sleipner project, simulation results have been matched to information on the distribution of CO<sub>2</sub> in the subsurface, based on the interpretation of repeat three-dimensional seismic surveys (Lindeberg *et al.*, 2001; van der Meer *et al.*, 2001; see also Section 5.4.3. At the Weyburn project in Canada, repeat seismic surveys and water chemistry sampling provide information on CO<sub>2</sub> distribution that can likewise be used to adjust the simulation models (Moberg *et al.*, 2003; White *et al.*, 2004).

Predictions of the long-term distribution of injected CO<sub>2</sub>, including the effects of geochemical reactions, cannot be

directly validated on a field scale because these reactions may take hundreds to thousands of years. However, the simulation of important mechanisms, such as the convective mixing of dissolved CO<sub>2</sub>, can be tested by comparison to laboratory analogues (Ennis-King and Paterson, 2003). Another possible route is to match simulations to the geochemical changes that have occurred in appropriate natural underground accumulations of CO<sub>2</sub>, such as the precipitation of carbonate minerals, since these provide evidence for the slow processes that affect the long-term distribution of CO<sub>2</sub> (Johnson *et al.*, 2005). It is also important to have reliable and accurate data regarding the thermophysical properties of CO<sub>2</sub> and mixtures of CO<sub>2</sub> with methane, water and potential contaminants such as H<sub>2</sub>S and SO<sub>2</sub>. Similarly, it is important to have data on relative permeability and capillary pressure under drainage and imbibition conditions. Code comparison studies show that the largest discrepancies between different simulators can be traced to uncertainties in these parameters (Pruess *et al.*, 2004). For sites where few, if any, CO<sub>2</sub>-water-rock interactions occur, reactive chemical transport modelling may not be needed and simpler simulations that consider only CO<sub>2</sub>-water reactions will suffice.

#### 5.4.3 Examples of storage site characterization and performance prediction

Following are examples and lessons learned from two case studies of characterization of a CO<sub>2</sub> storage site: one of an actual operating CO<sub>2</sub> storage site (Sleipner Gas Field in the North Sea) and the other of a potential or theoretical site (Petrel Sub-basin offshore northwest Australia). A common theme throughout these studies is the integration and multidisciplinary approach required to adequately document and monitor any injection site. There are lessons to be learned from these studies, because they have identified issues that in hindsight should be examined prior to any CO<sub>2</sub> injection.

##### 5.4.3.1 Sleipner

Studies of the Sleipner CO<sub>2</sub> Injection Project (Box 5.1) highlighted the advantages of detailed knowledge of the reservoir stratigraphy (Chadwick *et al.*, 2003). After the initial CO<sub>2</sub> injection, small layers of low-permeability sediments within the saline formation interval and sandy lenses near the base of the seal were clearly seen to be exercising an important control on the distribution of CO<sub>2</sub> within the reservoir rock (Figure 5.16a,b). Time-lapse three-dimensional seismic imaging of the developing CO<sub>2</sub> plume also identified the need for precision depth mapping of the bottom of the caprock interval. At Sleipner, the top of the reservoir is almost flat at a regional scale. Hence, any subtle variance in the actual versus predicted depth could substantially affect migration patterns and rate. Identification and mapping of a sand lens above what was initially interpreted as the top of the reservoir resulted in a significant change to the predicted migration direction of the CO<sub>2</sub> (Figure 5.16a,b). These results show the benefit of repeated three-dimensional seismic monitoring and integration of monitoring results into

modelling during the injection phase of the project. Refinement of the storage-site characterization continues after injection has started.

#### 5.4.3.2 *Petrel Sub-basin*

A theoretical case study of the Petrel Sub-basin offshore northwest Australia examined the basin-wide storage potential of a combined hydrodynamic and solution trapping mechanism and identified how sensitive a reservoir simulation will be to the collected data and models built during the characterization of a storage site (Gibson-Poole *et al.*, 2002; Ennis-King *et al.*, 2003). As at Sleipner, the Petrel study identified that vertical permeability and shale beds within the reservoir interval of the geological model strongly influenced the vertical CO<sub>2</sub> migration rate. In the reservoir simulation, use of coarser grids overestimated the dissolution rate of CO<sub>2</sub> during the injection period, but underestimated it during the long-term migration period. Lower values of residual CO<sub>2</sub> saturation led to faster dissolution during the long-term migration period and the rate of complete dissolution depended on the vertical permeability. Migration distance depended on the rate of dissolution and residual CO<sub>2</sub> trapping. The conclusion of the characterization and performance prediction studies is that the Petrel Sub-basin has a regionally extensive reservoir-seal pair suitable for hydrodynamic trapping (Section 5.2). While the characterization was performed on the basis of only a few wells with limited data, analogue studies helped define the characteristics of the formation. Although this is not the ideal situation, performing a reservoir simulation by using geological analogues may often be the only option. However, understanding which elements will be the most sensitive in the simulation will help geoscientists to understand where to prioritize their efforts in data collection and interpretation.

### 5.5 Injection well technology and field operations

So far in this chapter, we have considered only the nature of the storage site. But once a suitable site is identified, do we have the technology available to inject large quantities of CO<sub>2</sub> (1–10 MtCO<sub>2</sub> yr<sup>-1</sup>) into the subsurface and to operate the site effectively and safely? This section examines the issue of technology availability.

#### 5.5.1 *Injection well technologies*

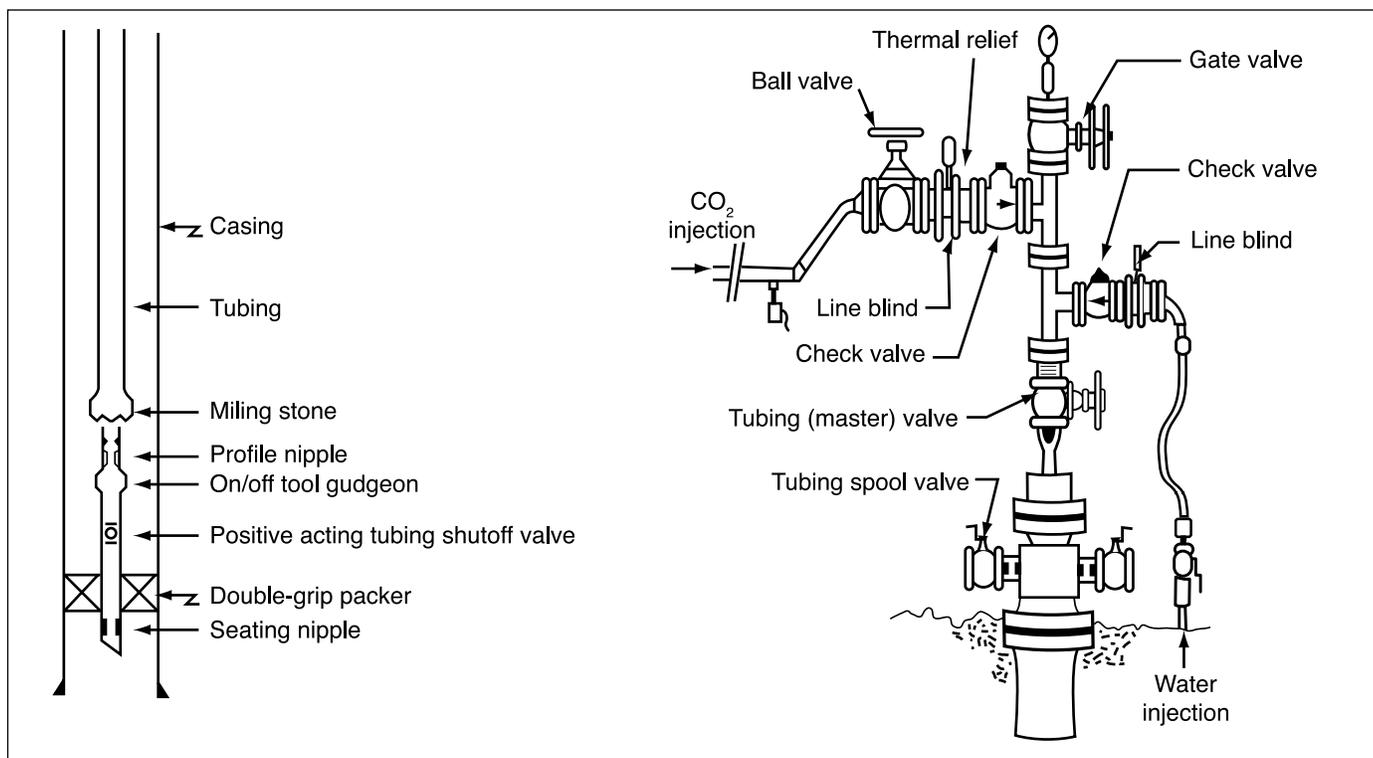
As pointed out earlier in this chapter, many of the technologies required for large-scale geological storage of CO<sub>2</sub> already exist. Drilling and completion technology for injection wells in the oil and gas industry has evolved to a highly sophisticated state, such that it is now possible to drill and complete vertical and extended reach wells (including horizontal wells) in deep formations, wells with multiple completions and wells able to handle corrosive fluids. On the basis of extensive oil industry experience, the technologies for drilling, injection, stimulations and completions for CO<sub>2</sub> injection wells exist and are being

practised with some adaptations in current CO<sub>2</sub> storage projects. In a CO<sub>2</sub> injection well, the principal well design considerations include pressure, corrosion-resistant materials and production and injection rates.

The design of a CO<sub>2</sub> injection well is very similar to that of a gas injection well in an oil field or natural gas storage project. Most downhole components need to be upgraded for higher pressure ratings and corrosion resistance. The technology for handling CO<sub>2</sub> has already been developed for EOR operations and for the disposal of acid gas (Section 5.2.4.) Horizontal and extended reach wells can be good options for improving the rate of CO<sub>2</sub> injection from individual wells. The Weyburn field in Canada (Box 5.3) is an example in which the use of horizontal injection wells is improving oil recovery and increasing CO<sub>2</sub> storage. The horizontal injectors reduce the number of injection wells required for field development. A horizontal injection well has the added advantage that it can create injection profiles that reduce the adverse effects of injected-gas preferential flow through high-permeability zones.

The number of wells required for a storage project will depend on a number of factors, including total injection rate, permeability and thickness of the formation, maximum injection pressures and availability of land-surface area for the injection wells. In general, fewer wells will be needed for high-permeability sediments in thick storage formations and for those projects with horizontal wells for injection. For example, the Sleipner Project, which injects CO<sub>2</sub> into a high-permeability, 200-m-thick formation uses only one well to inject 1 MtCO<sub>2</sub> yr<sup>-1</sup> (Korbol and Kaddour, 1994). In contrast, at the In Salah Project in Algeria, CO<sub>2</sub> is injected into a 20-m-thick formation with much lower permeability (Riddiford *et al.*, 2003). Here, three long-reach horizontal wells with slotted intervals over 1 km are used to inject 1 MtCO<sub>2</sub> yr<sup>-1</sup> (Figure 5.5). Cost will depend, to some degree, on the number and completion techniques for these wells. Therefore, careful design and optimization of the number and slotted intervals is important for cost-effective storage projects.

An injection well and a wellhead are depicted in Figure 5.20. Injection wells commonly are equipped with two valves for well control, one for regular use and one reserved for safety shutoff. In acid gas injection wells, a downhole safety valve is incorporated in the tubing, so that if equipment fails at the surface, the well is automatically shut down to prevent back flow. Jarrell *et al.* (2002) recommend an automatic shutoff valve on all CO<sub>2</sub> wells to ensure that no release occurs and to prevent CO<sub>2</sub> from inadvertently flowing back into the injection system. A typical downhole configuration for an injection well includes a double-grip packer, an on-off tool and a downhole shutoff valve. Annular pressure monitors help detect leaks in packers and tubing, which is important for taking rapid corrective action. To prevent dangerous high-pressure buildup on surface equipment and avoid CO<sub>2</sub> releases into the atmosphere, CO<sub>2</sub> injection must be stopped as soon as leaks occur. Rupture disks and safety valves can be used to relieve built-up pressure. Adequate plans need to be in place for dealing with excess CO<sub>2</sub> if the injection well needs to be shut in. Options include having



**Figure 5.20** Typical CO<sub>2</sub> injection well and wellhead configuration.

a backup injection well or methods to safely vent CO<sub>2</sub> to the atmosphere.

Proper maintenance of CO<sub>2</sub> injection wells is necessary to avoid leakage and well failures. Several practical procedures can be used to reduce probabilities of CO<sub>2</sub> blow-out (uncontrolled flow) and mitigate the adverse effects if one should occur. These include periodic wellbore integrity surveys on drilled injection wells, improved blow-out prevention (BOP) maintenance, installation of additional BOP on suspect wells, improved crew awareness, contingency planning and emergency response training (Skinner, 2003).

For CO<sub>2</sub> injection through existing and old wells, key factors include the mechanical condition of the well and quality of the cement and well maintenance. A leaking wellbore annulus can be a pathway for CO<sub>2</sub> migration. Detailed logging programmes for checking wellbore integrity can be conducted by the operator to protect formations and prevent reservoir cross-flow. A well used for injection (Figure 5.20) must be equipped with a packer to isolate pressure to the injection interval. All materials used in injection wells should be designed to anticipate peak volume, pressure and temperature. In the case of wet gas (containing free water), use of corrosion-resistant material is essential.

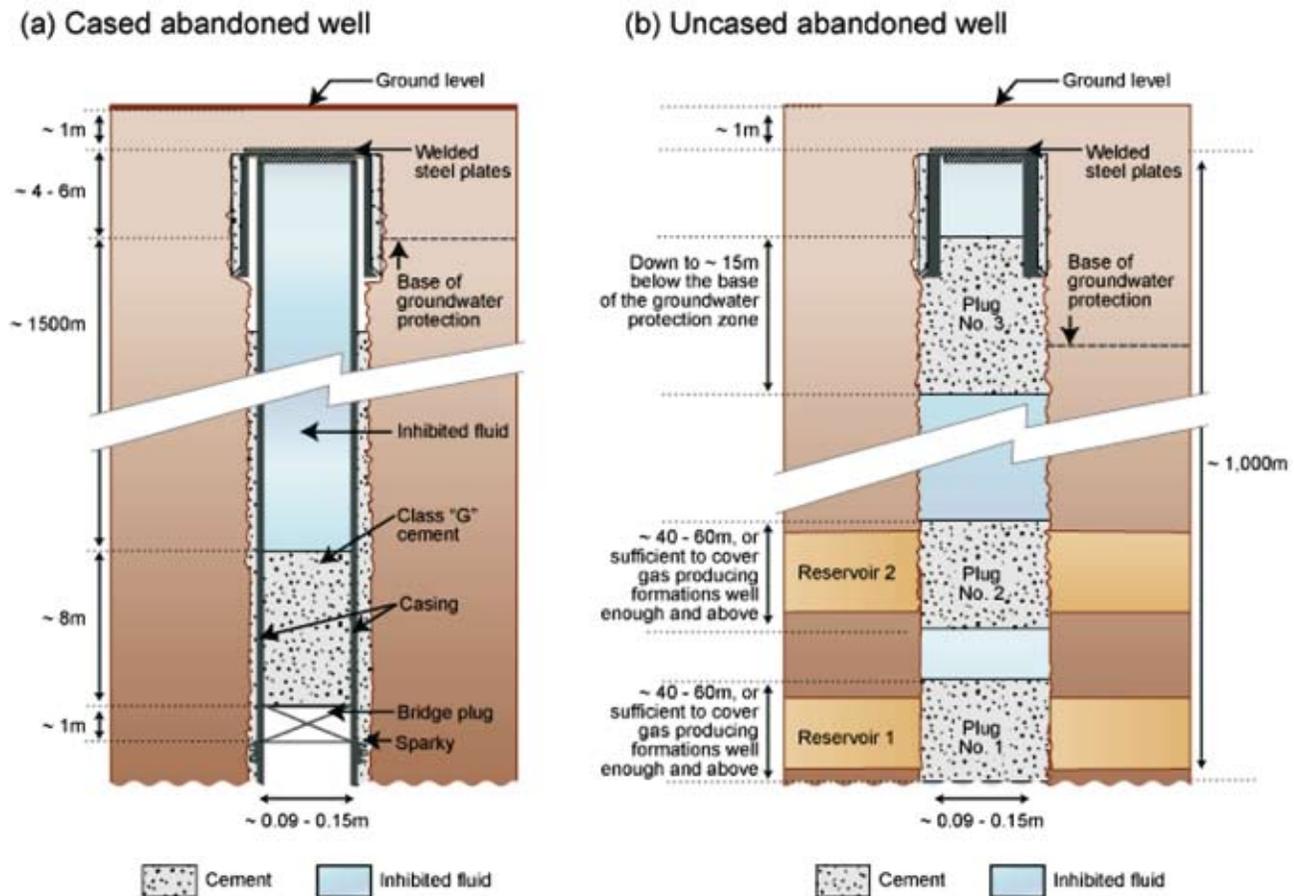
### 5.5.2 Well abandonment procedures

Abandonment procedures for oil, gas and injection wells are designed to protect drinking water aquifers from contamination. If a well remains open after it is no longer in use, brines, hydrocarbons or CO<sub>2</sub> could migrate up the well and into shallow drinking water aquifers. To avoid this, many countries

have developed regulations for well ‘abandonment’ or ‘closure’ (for example, United States Code of Federal Regulations 40 Part 144 and Alberta Energy and Utilities Board, 2003). These procedures usually require placing cement or mechanical plugs in all or part of the well. Extra care is usually taken to seal the well adjacent to drinking water aquifers. Examples of well abandonment procedures for cased and uncased wells are shown in Figure 5.21. Tests are often required to locate the depth of the plugs and test their mechanical strength under pressure.

It is expected that abandonment procedures for CO<sub>2</sub> wells could broadly follow the abandonment methodology used for oil and gas wells and acid-gas disposal wells. However, special care has to be taken to use sealing plugs and cement that are resistant to degradation from CO<sub>2</sub>. Carbon dioxide-resistant cements have been developed for oil field and geothermal applications. It has been suggested that removing the casing and the liner penetrating the caprock could avoid corrosion of the steel that may later create channels for leakage. The production casing can be removed by pulling or drilling (milling) it out. After removing the casing, a cement plug can be put into the open borehole, as illustrated in Figure 5.21.

The cement plug will act as the main barrier to future CO<sub>2</sub> migration. A major issue is related to the sealing quality of the cement plug and the bonding quality with the penetrated caprock. Microchannels created near the wellbore during drilling or milling operations should be sealed with cement. Fluid could also be flushed into the storage reservoir to displace the CO<sub>2</sub> and help to improve the cementing quality and bonding to the sealing caprock. Casing protective materials and alternative casing materials, such as composites, should also be evaluated



**Figure 5.21** Examples of how cased and uncased wells are abandoned today. Special requirements may be developed for abandoning CO<sub>2</sub> storage wells, including use of corrosion-resistant cement plugs and removing all or part of the casing in the injection interval and caprock.

for possible and alternative abandonment procedures. Sealing performance of abandoned wells may need to be monitored for some time after storage operations are completed.

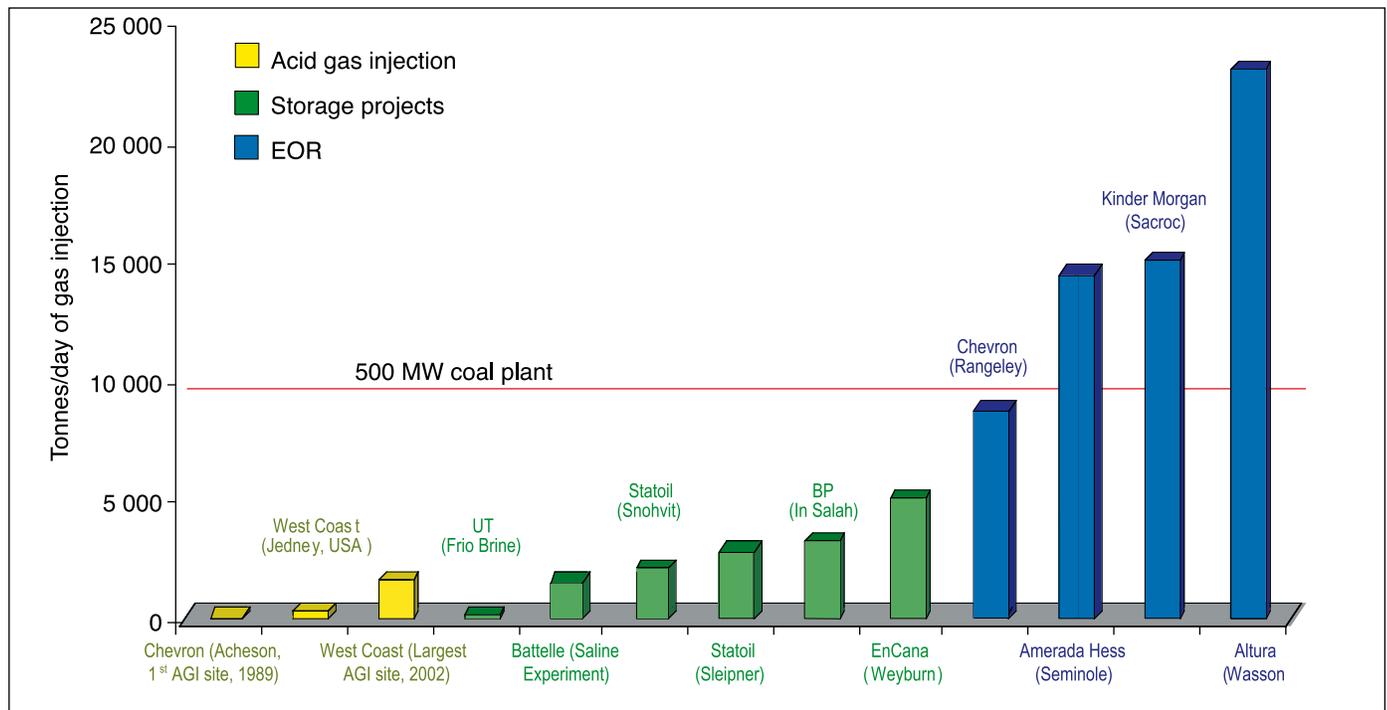
### 5.5.3 Injection well pressure and reservoir constraints

Injectivity characterizes the ease with which fluid can be injected into a geological formation and is defined as the injection rate divided by the pressure difference between the injection point inside the well and the formation. Although CO<sub>2</sub> injectivity should be significantly greater than brine injectivity (because CO<sub>2</sub> has a much lower viscosity than brine), this is not always the case. Grigg (2005) analyzed the performance of CO<sub>2</sub> floods in west Texas and concluded that, in more than half of the projects, injectivity was lower than expected or decreased over time. Christman and Gorell (1990) showed that unexpected CO<sub>2</sub>-injectivity behaviour in EOR operations is caused primarily by differences in flow geometry and fluid properties of the oil. Injectivity changes can also be related to insufficiently known relative permeability effects.

To introduce CO<sub>2</sub> into the storage formation, the downhole injection pressure must be higher than the reservoir fluid pressure. On the other hand, increasing formation pressure may induce fractures in the formation. Regulatory agencies

normally limit the maximum downhole pressure to avoid fracturing the injection formation. Measurements of *in-situ* formation stresses and pore fluid pressure are needed for establishing safe injection pressures. Depletion of fluid pressure during production can affect the state of stress in the reservoir. Analysis of some depleted reservoirs indicated that horizontal rock stress decreased by 50–80% of the pore pressure decrease, which increased the possibility of fracturing the reservoir (Streit and Hillis, 2003).

Safe injection pressures can vary widely, depending on the state of stress and tectonic history of a basin. Regulatory agencies have determined safe injection pressures from experience in specific oil and gas provinces. Van der Meer (1996) has derived a relationship for the maximum safe injection pressure. This relationship indicated that for a depth down to 1000 m, the maximum injection pressure is estimated to be 1.35 times the hydrostatic pressure – and this increased to 2.4 for depths of 1–5 km. The maximum pressure gradient allowed for natural gas stored in an aquifer in Germany is 16.8 kPa m<sup>-1</sup> (Sedlacek, 1999). This value exceeds the natural pressure gradients of formation waters in northeastern Germany, which are on the order of 10.5–13.1 kPa m<sup>-1</sup>. In Denmark or Great Britain, the maximum pressure gradients for aquifer storage of natural gas do not exceed hydrostatic gradients. In the United States,



**Figure 5.22** Comparison of the magnitude of CO<sub>2</sub> injection activities illustrating that the storage operations from a typical 500-MW coal plant will be the same order of magnitude as existing CO<sub>2</sub> injection operations (after Heinrich *et al.*, 2003).

for industrial waste-water injection wells, injection pressure must not exceed fracture initiation or propagation pressures in the injection formation (USEPA, 1994). For oil and gas field injection wells, injection pressures must not exceed those that would initiate or propagate fractures in the confining units. In the United States, each state has been delegated authority to establish maximum injection pressures. Until the 1990s, many states set state-wide standards for maximum injection pressures; values ranged from 13 to 18 kPa m<sup>-1</sup>. More recently, regulations have changed to require site-specific tests to establish maximum injection pressure gradients. Practical experience in the USEPA's Underground Injection Control Program has shown that fracture pressures range from 11 to 21 kPa m<sup>-1</sup>.

#### 5.5.4 Field operations and surface facilities

Injection rates for selected current CO<sub>2</sub> storage projects in EOR and acid gas injection are compared in Figure 5.22. As indicated, the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> injected from a 500-MW coal-fired power plant would fall within the range of existing experience of CO<sub>2</sub> injection operations for EOR. These examples therefore offer a great deal of insight as to how a geological storage regime might evolve, operate and be managed safely and effectively.

CO<sub>2</sub>-EOR operations fall into one of three groups (Jarrell *et al.*, 2002):

- Reservoir management – what to inject, how fast to inject, how much to inject, how to manage water-alternating-gas (WAG), how to maximize sweep efficiency and so on;
- Well management – producing method and remedial work, including selection of workovers, chemical treatment and CO<sub>2</sub> breakthrough;

- Facility management – reinjection plant, separation, metering, corrosion control and facility organization.

Typically, CO<sub>2</sub> is transported from its source to an EOR site through a pipeline and is then injected into the reservoir through an injection well, usually after compression. Before entering the compressor, a suction scrubber will remove any residual liquids present in the CO<sub>2</sub> stream. In EOR operations, CO<sub>2</sub> produced from the production well along with oil and water is separated and then injected back through the injection well.

The field application of CO<sub>2</sub>-ECBM technology is broadly similar to that of EOR operations. Carbon dioxide is transported to the CBM field and injected in the coal seam through dedicated injection wells. At the production well, coal-seam gas and formation water is lifted to the surface by electric pumps.

According to Jarrell *et al.* (2002), surface facilities for CO<sub>2</sub>-EOR projects include:

- Production systems-fluid separation, gas gathering, production satellite, liquid gathering, central battery, field compression and emergency shutdown systems;
- Injection systems-gas repressurization, water injection and CO<sub>2</sub> distribution systems;
- Gas processing systems-gas processing plant, H<sub>2</sub>S removal systems and sulphur recovery and disposal systems.

Jarrell *et al.* (2002) point out that CO<sub>2</sub> facilities are similar to those used in conventional facilities such as for waterfloods. Differences result from the effects of multiphase flow, selection of different materials and the higher pressure that must be handled. The CO<sub>2</sub> field operation setup for the Weyburn Field is shown in Figure 5.23.

It is common to use existing facilities for new CO<sub>2</sub> projects to reduce capital costs, although physical restrictions are always present. Starting a CO<sub>2</sub> flood in an old oil field can affect almost every process and facility (Jarrell *et al.*, 2002); for example, (1) the presence of CO<sub>2</sub> makes the produced water much more corrosive; (2) makeup water from new sources may interact with formation water to create new problems with scale or corrosion; (3) a CO<sub>2</sub> flood may cause paraffins and asphaltenes to precipitate out of the oil, which can cause plugging and emulsion problems; and (4) the potentially dramatic increase in production caused by the flood could cause more formation fines to be entrained in the oil, potentially causing plugging, erosion and processing problems.

## 5.6 Monitoring and verification technology

What actually happens to CO<sub>2</sub> in the subsurface and how do we know what is happening? In other words, can we monitor CO<sub>2</sub> once it is injected? What techniques are available for monitoring whether CO<sub>2</sub> is leaking out of the storage formation and how sensitive are they? Can we verify that CO<sub>2</sub> is safely and effectively stored underground? How long is monitoring needed? These questions are addressed in this section of the report.

### 5.6.1 Purposes for monitoring

Monitoring is needed for a wide variety of purposes. Specifically, monitoring can be used to:

- Ensure and document effective injection well controls, specifically for monitoring the condition of the injection well and measuring injection rates, wellhead and formation pressures. Petroleum industry experience suggests that leakage from the injection well itself, resulting from improper completion or deterioration of the casing, packers or cement, is one of the most significant potential failure modes for injection projects (Apps, 2005; Perry, 2005);
- Verify the quantity of injected CO<sub>2</sub> that has been stored by various mechanisms;
- Optimize the efficiency of the storage project, including utilization of the storage volume, injection pressures and drilling of new injection wells;
- Demonstrate with appropriate monitoring techniques that CO<sub>2</sub> remains contained in the intended storage formation(s). This is currently the principal method for assuring that the CO<sub>2</sub> remains stored and that performance predictions can be verified;
- Detect leakage and provide an early warning of any seepage or leakage that might require mitigating action.

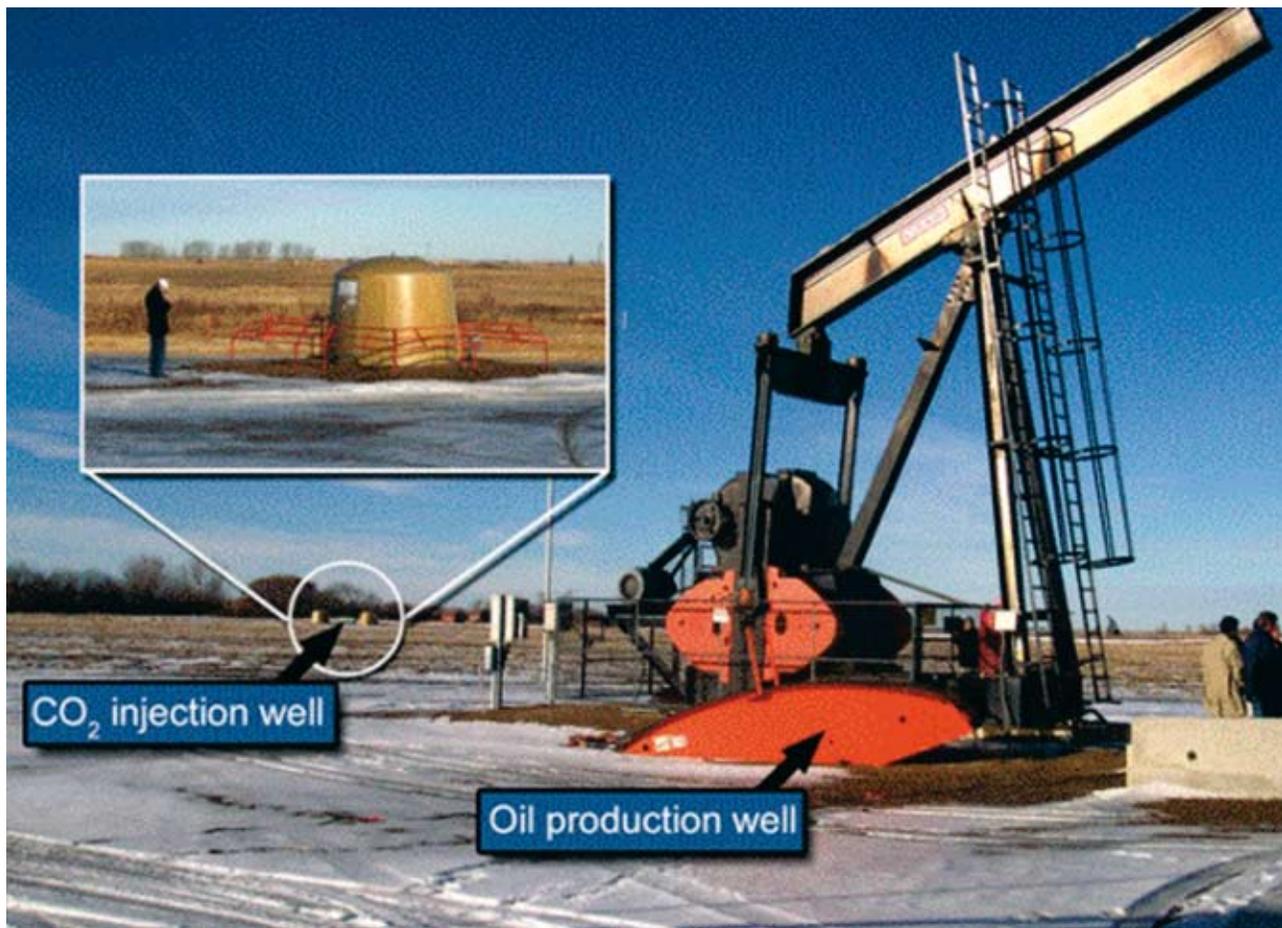


Figure 5.23 Typical CO<sub>2</sub> field operation setup: Weyburn surface facilities.

In addition to essential elements of a monitoring strategy, other parameters can be used to optimize storage projects, deal with unintended leakage and address regulatory, legal and social issues. Other important purposes for monitoring include assessing the integrity of plugged or abandoned wells, calibrating and confirming performance assessment models (including 'history matching'), establishing baseline parameters for the storage site to ensure that CO<sub>2</sub>-induced changes are recognized (Wilson and Monea, 2005), detecting microseismicity associated with a storage project, measuring surface fluxes of CO<sub>2</sub> and designing and monitoring remediation activities (Benson *et al.*, 2004).

Before monitoring of subsurface storage can take place effectively, a baseline survey must be taken. This survey provides the point of comparison for subsequent surveys. This is particularly true of seismic and other remote-sensing technologies, where the identification of saturation of fluids with CO<sub>2</sub> is based on comparative analysis. Baseline monitoring is also a prerequisite for geochemical monitoring, where anomalies are identified relative to background concentrations. Additionally, establishing a baseline of CO<sub>2</sub> fluxes resulting from ecosystem cycling of CO<sub>2</sub>, both on diurnal and annual cycles, are useful for distinguishing natural fluxes from potential storage-related releases.

Much of the monitoring technology described below was developed for application in the oil and gas industry. Most of these techniques can be applied to monitoring storage projects in all types of geological formations, although much remains to be learned about monitoring coal formations. Monitoring experience from natural gas storage in saline aquifers can also provide a useful industrial analogue.

### 5.6.2 Technologies for monitoring injection rates and pressures

Measurements of CO<sub>2</sub> injection rates are a common oil field practice and instruments for this purpose are available commercially. Measurements are made by gauges either at the injection wellhead or near distribution manifolds. Typical systems use orifice meters or other devices that relate the pressure drop across the device to the flow rate. The accuracy of the measurements depends on a number of factors that have been described in general by Morrow *et al.* (2003) and specifically for CO<sub>2</sub> by Wright and Majek (1998). For CO<sub>2</sub>, accurate estimation of the density is most important for improving measurement accuracy. Small changes in temperature, pressure and composition can have large effects on density. Wright and Majek (1998) developed an oil field CO<sub>2</sub> flow rate system by combining pressure, temperature and differential pressure measurements with gas chromatography. The improved system had an accuracy of 0.6%, compared to 8% for the conventional system. Standards for measurement accuracy vary and are usually established by governments or industrial associations. For example, in the United States, current auditing practices for CO<sub>2</sub>-EOR accept flow meter precision of ±4%.

Measurements of injection pressure at the surface and in the formation are also routine. Pressure gauges are installed

on most injection wells through orifices in the surface piping near the wellhead. Downhole pressure measurements are routine, but are used for injection well testing or under special circumstances in which surface measurements do not provide reliable information about the downhole pressure. A wide variety of pressure sensors are available and suitable for monitoring pressures at the wellhead or in the formation. Continuous data are available and typically transmitted to a central control room. Surface pressure gauges are often connected to shut-off valves that will stop or curtail injection if the pressure exceeds a predetermined safe threshold or if there is a drop in pressure as a result of a leak. In effect, surface pressures can be used to ensure that downhole pressures do not exceed the threshold of reservoir fracture pressure. A relatively recent innovation, fibre-optic pressure and temperature sensors, is commercially available. Fibre-optic cables are lowered into the wells, connected to sensors and provide real-time formation pressure and temperature measurements. These new systems are expected to provide more reliable measurements and well control.

The current state of the technology is more than adequate to meet the needs for monitoring injection rates, wellhead and formation pressures. Combined with temperature measurements, the collected data will provide information on the state of the CO<sub>2</sub> (supercritical, liquid or gas) and accurate measurement of the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> injected for inventories, reporting and verification, as well as input to modelling. In the case of the Weyburn project, for example, the gas stream is also analyzed to determine the impurities in the CO<sub>2</sub>, thus allowing computation of the volume of CO<sub>2</sub> injected.

### 5.6.3 Technologies for monitoring subsurface distribution of CO<sub>2</sub>

A number of techniques can be used to monitor the distribution and migration of CO<sub>2</sub> in the subsurface. Table 5.4 summarizes these techniques and how they can be applied to CO<sub>2</sub> storage projects. The applicability and sensitivity of these techniques are somewhat site-specific. Detailed descriptions, including limitations and resolution, are provided in Sections 5.6.3.1 and 5.6.3.2.

#### 5.6.3.1 Direct techniques for monitoring CO<sub>2</sub> migration

Direct techniques for monitoring are limited in availability at present. During CO<sub>2</sub> injection for EOR, the injected CO<sub>2</sub> spreads through the reservoir in a heterogeneous manner, because of permeability variations in the reservoir (Moberg *et al.*, 2003). In the case of CO<sub>2</sub>-EOR, once the CO<sub>2</sub> reaches a production well, its produced volume can be readily determined. In the case of Weyburn, the carbon in the injected CO<sub>2</sub> has a different isotopic composition from the carbon in the reservoir (Emberley *et al.*, 2002), so the distribution of the CO<sub>2</sub> can be determined on a gross basis by evaluating the arrival of the introduced CO<sub>2</sub> at different production wells. With multiple injection wells in any producing area, the arrival of CO<sub>2</sub> can give only a general indication of distribution in the reservoir.

**Table 5.4** Summary of direct and indirect techniques that can be used to monitor CO<sub>2</sub> storage projects.

Measurement technique	Measurement parameters	Example applications
Introduced and natural tracers	Travel time Partitioning of CO <sub>2</sub> into brine or oil Identification sources of CO <sub>2</sub>	Tracing movement of CO <sub>2</sub> in the storage formation Quantifying solubility trapping Tracing leakage
Water composition	CO <sub>2</sub> , HCO <sub>3</sub> <sup>-</sup> , CO <sub>3</sub> <sup>2-</sup> Major ions Trace elements Salinity	Quantifying solubility and mineral trapping Quantifying CO <sub>2</sub> -water-rock interactions Detecting leakage into shallow groundwater aquifers
Subsurface pressure	Formation pressure Annulus pressure Groundwater aquifer pressure	Control of formation pressure below fracture gradient Wellbore and injection tubing condition Leakage out of the storage formation
Well logs	Brine salinity Sonic velocity CO <sub>2</sub> saturation	Tracking CO <sub>2</sub> movement in and above storage formation Tracking migration of brine into shallow aquifers Calibrating seismic velocities for 3D seismic surveys
Time-lapse 3D seismic imaging	P and S wave velocity Reflection horizons Seismic amplitude attenuation	Tracking CO <sub>2</sub> movement in and above storage formation
Vertical seismic profiling and crosswell seismic imaging	P and S wave velocity Reflection horizons Seismic amplitude attenuation	Detecting detailed distribution of CO <sub>2</sub> in the storage formation Detection leakage through faults and fractures
Passive seismic monitoring	Location, magnitude and source characteristics of seismic events	Development of microfractures in formation or caprock CO <sub>2</sub> migration pathways
Electrical and electromagnetic techniques	Formation conductivity Electromagnetic induction	Tracking movement of CO <sub>2</sub> in and above the storage formation Detecting migration of brine into shallow aquifers
Time-lapse gravity measurements	Density changes caused by fluid displacement	Detect CO <sub>2</sub> movement in or above storage formation CO <sub>2</sub> mass balance in the subsurface
Land surface deformation	Tilt Vertical and horizontal displacement using interferometry and GPS	Detect geomechanical effects on storage formation and caprock Locate CO <sub>2</sub> migration pathways
Visible and infrared imaging from satellite or planes	Hyperspectral imaging of land surface	Detect vegetative stress
CO <sub>2</sub> land surface flux monitoring using flux chambers or eddy covariance	CO <sub>2</sub> fluxes between the land surface and atmosphere	Detect, locate and quantify CO <sub>2</sub> releases
Soil gas sampling	Soil gas composition Isotopic analysis of CO <sub>2</sub>	Detect elevated levels of CO <sub>2</sub> Identify source of elevated soil gas CO <sub>2</sub> Evaluate ecosystem impacts

A more accurate approach is to use tracers (gases or gas isotopes not present in the reservoir system) injected into specific wells. The timing of the arrival of the tracers at production or monitoring wells will indicate the path the CO<sub>2</sub> is taking through the reservoir. Monitoring wells may also be used to passively record the movement of CO<sub>2</sub> past the well, although it should be noted that the use of such invasive techniques potentially creates new pathways for leakage to the surface. The movement of tracers or isotopically distinct carbon (in the CO<sub>2</sub>) to production or monitoring wells provides some indication of the lateral distribution of the CO<sub>2</sub> in a storage reservoir. In thick formations, multiple sampling along vertical monitoring or production wells would provide some indication of the vertical distribution of the CO<sub>2</sub> in the formation. With many wells and frequently in horizontal wells, the lack of casing (open hole

completion) precludes direct measurement of the location of CO<sub>2</sub> influx along the length of the well, although it may be possible to run surveys to identify the location of major influx.

Direct measurement of migration beyond the storage site can be achieved in a number of ways, depending on where the migration takes the CO<sub>2</sub>. Comparison between baseline surveys of water quality and/or isotopic composition can be used to identify new CO<sub>2</sub> arrival at a specific location from natural CO<sub>2</sub> pre-existing at that site. Geochemical techniques can also be used to understand more about the CO<sub>2</sub> and its movement through the reservoir (Czernichowski-Lauriol *et al.*, 1996; Gunter *et al.*, 2000; Wilson and Monea, 2005). The chemical changes that occur in the reservoir fluids indicate the increase in acidity and the chemical effects of this change, in particular the bicarbonate ion levels in the fluids. At the surface, direct measurement can

be undertaken by sampling for CO<sub>2</sub> or tracers in soil gas and near surface water-bearing horizons (from existing water wells or new observation wells). Surface CO<sub>2</sub> fluxes may be directly measurable by techniques such as infrared spectroscopy (Miles *et al.*, 2005; Pickles, 2005; Shuler and Tang, 2005).

### 5.6.3.2 Indirect techniques for monitoring CO<sub>2</sub> migration

Indirect techniques for measuring CO<sub>2</sub> distribution in the subsurface include a variety of seismic and non-seismic geophysical and geochemical techniques (Benson *et al.*, 2004; Arts and Winthagen, 2005; Hoversten and Gasperikova, 2005). Seismic techniques basically measure the velocity and energy absorption of waves, generated artificially or naturally, through rocks. The transmission is modified by the nature of the rock and its contained fluids. In general, energy waves are generated artificially by explosions or ground vibration. Wave generators and sensors may be on the surface (conventional seismic) or modified with the sensors in wells within the subsurface and the source on the surface (vertical seismic profiling). It is also possible to place both sensors and sources in the subsurface to transmit the wave pulses horizontally through the reservoir (inter-well or cross-well tomography). By taking a series of surveys over time, it is possible to trace the distribution of the CO<sub>2</sub> in the reservoir, assuming the free-phase CO<sub>2</sub> volume at the site is sufficiently high to identify from the processed data. A baseline survey with no CO<sub>2</sub> present provides the basis against which comparisons can be made. It would appear that relatively low volumes of free-phase CO<sub>2</sub> (approximately 5% or more) may be identified by these seismic techniques; at present, attempts are being made to quantify the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> in the pore space of the rocks and the distribution within the reservoir (Hoversten *et al.*, 2003). A number of techniques have been actively tested at Weyburn (Section 5.6.3.3), including time-lapse surface three-dimensional seismic (both 3- and 9-component), at one-year intervals (baseline and baseline plus one and two years), vertical seismic profiling and cross-well (horizontal and vertical) tomography between pairs of wells.

For deep accumulations of CO<sub>2</sub> in the subsurface, where CO<sub>2</sub> density approaches the density of fluids in the storage formation, the sensitivity of surface seismic profiles would suggest that resolution on the order of 2500–10,000 t of free-phase CO<sub>2</sub> can be identified (Myer *et al.*, 2003; White *et al.*, 2004; Arts *et al.*, 2005). At Weyburn, areas with low injection rates (<2% hydrocarbon pore volume) demonstrate little or no visible seismic response. In areas with high injection rates (3–13% hydrocarbon pore volume), significant seismic anomalies are observed. Work at Sleipner shows that the CO<sub>2</sub> plume comprises several distinct layers of CO<sub>2</sub>, each up to about 10 m thick. These are mostly beneath the strict limit of seismic resolution, but amplitude studies suggest that layer thicknesses as low as 1 m can be mapped (Arts *et al.*, 2005; Chadwick *et al.*, 2005). Seismic resolution will decrease with depth and certain other rock-related properties, so the above discussion of resolution will not apply uniformly in all storage scenarios. One possible way of increasing the accuracy of surveys over time is to create a permanent array of sensors or even sensors and

energy sources (US Patent 6813566), to eliminate the problems associated with surveying locations for sensors and energy sources.

For CO<sub>2</sub> that has migrated even shallower in the subsurface, its gas-like properties will vastly increase the detection limit; hence, even smaller threshold levels of resolution are expected. To date, no quantitative studies have been performed to establish precise detection levels. However, the high compressibility of CO<sub>2</sub> gas, combined with its low density, indicate that much lower levels of detection should be possible.

The use of passive seismic (microseismic) techniques also has potential value. Passive seismic monitoring detects microseismic events induced in the reservoir by dynamic responses to the modification of pore pressures or the reactivation or creation of small fractures. These discrete microearthquakes, with magnitudes on the order of -4 to 0 on the Richter scale (Wilson and Monea, 2005), are picked up by static arrays of sensors, often cemented into abandoned wells. These microseismic events are extremely small, but monitoring the microseismic events may allow the tracking of pressure changes and, possibly, the movement of gas in the reservoir or saline formation.

Non-seismic geophysical techniques include the use of electrical and electromagnetic and self-potential techniques (Benson *et al.*, 2004; Hoversten and Gasperikova, 2005). In addition, gravity techniques (ground or air-based) can be used to determine the migration of the CO<sub>2</sub> plume in the subsurface. Finally, tiltmeters or remote methods (geospatial surveys from aircraft or satellites) for measuring ground distortion may be used in some environments to assess subsurface movement of the plume. Tiltmeters and other techniques are most applicable in areas where natural variations in the surface, such as frost heave or wetting-drying cycles, do not mask the changes that occur from pressure changes. Gravity measurements will respond to changes in the subsurface brought on by density changes caused by the displacement of one fluid by another of different density (e.g., CO<sub>2</sub> replacing water). Gravity is used with numerical modelling to infer those changes in density that best fit the observed data. The estimations of Benson *et al.* (2004) suggest that gravity will not have the same level of resolution as seismic, with minimum levels of CO<sub>2</sub> needed for detection on the order of several hundred thousand tonnes (an order of magnitude greater than seismic). This may be adequate for plume movement, but not for the early definition of possible leaks. A seabed gravity survey was acquired at Sleipner in 2002 and a repeat survey is planned for 2005. Results from these surveys have not yet been published.

Electrical and electromagnetic techniques measure the conducting of the subsurface. Conductivity changes created by a change in the fluid, particularly the displacement of high conductivity saline waters with low-conductive CO<sub>2</sub>, can be detected by electrical or electromagnetic surveys. In addition to traditional electrical or electromagnetic techniques, the self-potential the natural electrical potential of the Earth can be measured to determine plume migration. The injection of CO<sub>2</sub> will enhance fluid flow in the rock. This flow can produce an

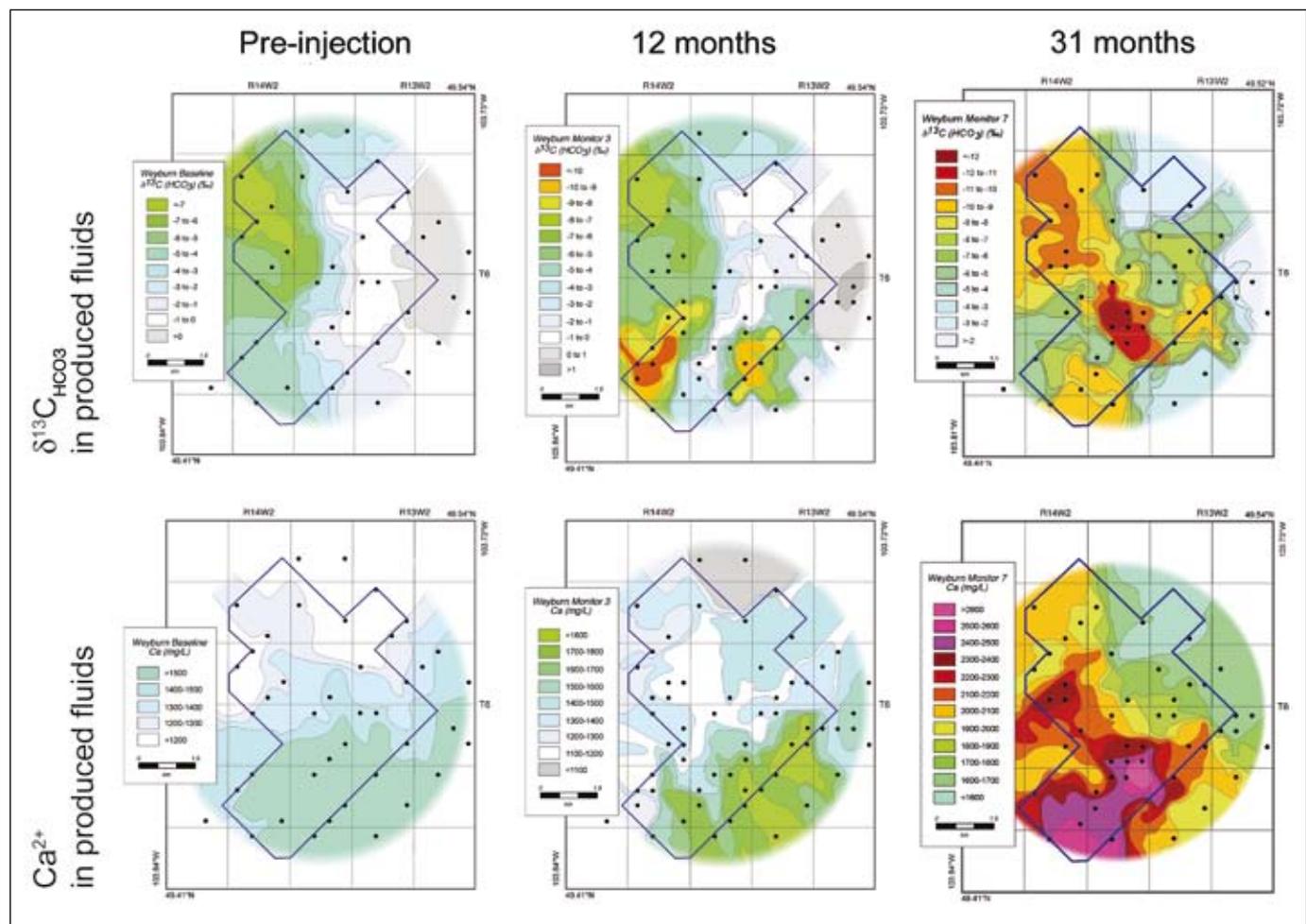
electrical potential that is measured against a reference electrode. This technique is low cost, but is also of low resolution. It can, however, be a useful tool for measuring the plume movement. According to Hoversten and Gasperikova (2005), this technique will require more work to determine its resolution and overall effectiveness.

### 5.6.3.3 Monitoring case study: IEA-GHG Weyburn Monitoring and Storage Project

At Weyburn (Box 5.3), a monitoring programme was added to a commercial EOR project to develop and evaluate methods for tracking CO<sub>2</sub>. Baseline data was collected prior to CO<sub>2</sub> injection (beginning in late 2000). These data included fluid samples (water and oil) and seismic surveys. Two levels of seismic surveys were undertaken, with an extensive three-dimensional (3D), 3-component survey over the original injection area and a detailed 3D, 9-component survey over a limited portion of the injection area. In addition, vertical seismic profiling and cross-well seismic tomography (between two vertical or horizontal wells) was undertaken. Passive seismic (microseismic) monitoring has recently been installed at the

site. Other monitoring includes surface gas surveys (Strutt *et al.*, 2003) and potable water monitoring (the Weyburn field underlies an area with limited surface water availability, so groundwater provides the major potable water supply). Injected volumes (CO<sub>2</sub> and water) were also monitored. Any leaks from surface facilities are carefully monitored. Additionally, several wells were converted to observation wells to allow access to the reservoir. Subsequently, one well was abandoned, but seismic monitors were cemented into place in the well for passive seismic monitoring to be undertaken.

Since injection began, reservoir fluids have been regularly collected and analyzed. Analysis includes chemical and isotopic analyses of reservoir water samples, as well as maintaining an understanding of miscibility relationships between the oil and the injected CO<sub>2</sub>. Several seismic surveys have been conducted (one year and two years after injection of CO<sub>2</sub> was initiated) with the processed data clearly showing the movement of CO<sub>2</sub> in the reservoir. Annual surface analysis of soil gas is also continuing (Strutt *et al.*, 2003), as is analysis of near-surface water. The analyses are being synthesized to gain a comprehensive knowledge of CO<sub>2</sub> migration in the reservoir, to understand



**Figure 5.24** The produced water chemistry before CO<sub>2</sub> injection and the produced water chemistry after 12 months and 31 months of injection at Weyburn has been contoured from fluid samples taken at various production wells. The black dots show the location of the sample wells: (a)  $\delta^{13}\text{C}_{\text{HCO}_3}$  in the produced water, showing the effect of supercritical CO<sub>2</sub> dissolution and mineral reaction. (b) Calcium concentrations in the produced water, showing the result of mineral dissolution (after Perkins *et al.*, 2005).

geochemical interactions with the reservoir rock and to clearly identify the integrity of the reservoir as a container for long-term storage. Additionally, there is a programme to evaluate the potential role of existing active and abandoned wells in leakage. This includes an analysis of the age of the wells, the use of existing information on cement type and bonding effectiveness and work to better understand the effect of historical and changing fluid chemistry on the cement and steel casing of the well.

The Weyburn summary report (Wilson and Monea, 2005) describes the overall results of the research project, in particular the effectiveness of the seismic monitoring for determining the spread of CO<sub>2</sub> and of the geochemical analysis for determining when CO<sub>2</sub> was about to reach the production wells. Geochemical data also help explain the processes under way in the reservoir itself and the time required to establish a new chemical equilibrium. Figure 5.24 illustrates the change in the chemical composition of the formation water, which forms the basis for assessing the extent to which solubility and mineral trapping will contribute to long-term storage security (Perkins *et al.*, 2005). The initial change in  $\delta^{13}\text{C}_{\text{HCO}_3}$  is the result of the supercritical CO<sub>2</sub> dissolving into the water. This change is then muted by the short-term dissolution of reservoir carbonate minerals, as indicated by the increase of calcium concentration, shown in Figure 5.24. In particular, the geochemistry confirms the storage of CO<sub>2</sub> in water in the bicarbonate phase and also CO<sub>2</sub> in the oil phase.

#### 5.6.4 Technologies for monitoring injection well integrity

A number of standard technologies are available for monitoring the integrity of active injection wells. Cement bond logs are used to assess the bond and the continuity of the cement around well casing. Periodic cement bond logs can help detect deterioration in the cemented portion of the well and may also indicate any chemical interaction of the acidized formation fluids with the cement. The initial use of cement bond logs as part of the well-integrity testing can indicate problems with bonding and even the absence of cement.

Prior to converting a well to other uses, such as CO<sub>2</sub> injection, the well usually undergoes testing to ensure its integrity under pressure. These tests are relatively straightforward, with the well being sealed top and bottom (or in the zone to be tested), pressured up and its ability to hold pressure measured. In general, particularly on land, the well will be abandoned if it fails the test and a new well will be drilled, as opposed to attempting any remediation on the defective well.

Injection takes place through a pipe that is lowered into the well and packed off above the perforations or open-hole portion of the well to ensure that the injectant reaches the appropriate level. The pressure in the annulus, the space between the casing and the injection pipe, can be monitored to ensure the integrity of the packer, casing and the injection pipe. Changes in pressure or gas composition in the annulus will alert the operator to problems.

As noted above, the injection pressure is carefully monitored to ensure that there are no problems. A rapid increase in pressure could indicate problems with the well, although industry interpretations suggest that it is more likely to be loss of injectivity in the reservoir.

Temperature logs and ‘noise’ logs are also often run on a routine basis to detect well failures in natural gas storage projects. Rapid changes in temperature along the length of the wellbore are diagnostic of casing leaks. Similarly, ‘noise’ associated with leaks in the injection tubing can be used to locate small leaks (Lippmann and Benson, 2003).

#### 5.6.5 Technologies for monitoring local environmental effects

##### 5.6.5.1 Groundwater

If CO<sub>2</sub> leaks from the deep geological storage formation and migrates upwards into overlying shallow groundwater aquifers, methods are available to detect and assess changes in groundwater quality. Of course, it is preferable to identify leakage shortly after it leaks and long before the CO<sub>2</sub> enters the groundwater aquifer, so that measures can be taken to intervene and prevent further migration (see Section 5.7.6). Seismic monitoring methods and potentially others (described in Section 5.6.3.2), can be used to identify leaks before the CO<sub>2</sub> reaches the groundwater zone.

Nevertheless, if CO<sub>2</sub> does migrate into a groundwater aquifer, potential impacts can be assessed by collecting groundwater samples and analyzing them for major ions (e.g., Na, K, Ca, Mg, Mn, Cl, Si, HCO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> and SO<sub>4</sub><sup>2-</sup>), pH, alkalinity, stable isotopes (e.g., <sup>13</sup>C, <sup>14</sup>C, <sup>18</sup>O, <sup>2</sup>H) and gases, including hydrocarbon gases, CO<sub>2</sub> and its associated isotopes (Gunter *et al.*, 1998). Additionally, if shallow groundwater contamination occurs, samples could be analyzed for trace elements such as arsenic and lead, which are mobilized by acidic water (Section 5.5). Methods such as atomic absorption and inductively coupled plasma mass spectroscopy self-potential can be used to accurately measure water quality. Less sensitive field tests or other analytical methods are also available (Clesceri *et al.*, 1998). Standard analytical methods are available to monitor all of these parameters, including the possibility of continuous real-time monitoring for some of the geochemical parameters.

Natural tracers (isotopes of C, O, H and noble gases associated with the injected CO<sub>2</sub>) and introduced tracers (noble gases, SF<sub>6</sub> and perfluorocarbons) also may provide insight into the impacts of storage projects on groundwater (Emberley *et al.*, 2002; Nimz and Hudson, 2005). (SF<sub>6</sub> and perfluorocarbons are greenhouse gases with extremely high global warming potentials and therefore caution is warranted in the use of these gases, to avoid their release to the atmosphere.) Natural tracers such as C and O isotopes may be able to link changes in groundwater quality directly to the stored CO<sub>2</sub> by ‘fingerprinting’ the CO<sub>2</sub>, thus distinguishing storage-induced changes from changes in groundwater quality caused by other factors. Introduced tracers such as perfluorocarbons that can be detected at very low concentrations (1 part per trillion) may also be useful for

determining whether CO<sub>2</sub> has leaked and is responsible for changes in groundwater quality. Synthetic tracers could be added periodically to determine movement in the reservoir or leakage paths, while natural tracers are present in the reservoir or introduced gases.

#### 5.6.5.2 Air quality and atmospheric fluxes

Continuous sensors for monitoring CO<sub>2</sub> in air are used in a variety of applications, including HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning) systems, greenhouses, combustion emissions measurement and environments in which CO<sub>2</sub> is a significant hazard (such as breweries). Such devices rely on infrared detection principles and are referred to as infrared gas analyzers. These gas analyzers are small and portable and commonly used in occupational settings. Most use non-dispersive infrared or Fourier Transform infrared detectors. Both methods use light attenuation by CO<sub>2</sub> at a specific wavelength, usually 4.26 microns. For extra assurance and validation of real-time monitoring data, US regulatory bodies, such as NIOSH, OSHA and the EPA, use periodic concentration measurement by gas chromatography. Mass spectrometry is the most accurate method for measuring CO<sub>2</sub> concentration, but it is also the least portable. Electrochemical solid state CO<sub>2</sub> detectors exist, but they are not cost effective at this time (e.g., Tamura *et al.*, 2001).

Common field applications in environmental science include the measurement of CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations in soil air, flux from soils and ecosystem-scale carbon dynamics. Diffuse soil flux measurements are made by simple infrared analyzers (Oskarsson *et al.*, 1999). The USGS measures CO<sub>2</sub> flux on Mammoth Mountain, in California (Sorey *et al.*, 1996; USGS, 2001b). Biogeochemists studying ecosystem-scale carbon cycling use data from CO<sub>2</sub> detectors on 2 to 5 m tall towers with wind and temperature data to reconstruct average CO<sub>2</sub> flux over large areas.

Miles *et al.* (2005) concluded that eddy covariance is promising for the monitoring of CO<sub>2</sub> storage projects, both for hazardous leaks and for leaks that would damage the economic viability of geological storage. For a storage project of 100 Mt, Miles *et al.* (2005) estimate that, for leakage rates of 0.01% yr<sup>-1</sup>, fluxes will range from 1 to 10<sup>4</sup> times the magnitude of typical ecological fluxes (depending on the size of the area over which CO<sub>2</sub> is leaking). Note that a leakage rate of 0.01% yr<sup>-1</sup> is equivalent to a fraction retained of 90% over 1000 years. This should easily be detectable if background ecological fluxes are measured in advance to determine diurnal and annual cycles. However, with the technology currently available to us, quantifying leakage rates for tracking returns to the atmosphere is likely to be more of a challenge than identifying leaks in the storage reservoir.

Satellite-based remote sensing of CO<sub>2</sub> releases to the atmosphere may also be possible, but this method remains challenging because of the long path length through the atmosphere over which CO<sub>2</sub> is measured and the inherent

variability of atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub>. Infrared detectors measure average CO<sub>2</sub> concentration over a given path length, so a diffuse or low-level leak viewed through the atmosphere by satellite would be undetectable. As an example, even large CO<sub>2</sub> seeps, such as that at Mammoth Mountain, are difficult to identify today (Martini and Silver, 2002; Pickles, 2005). Aeroplane-based measurement using this same principle may be possible. Carbon dioxide has been measured either directly in the plume by a separate infrared detector or calculated from SO<sub>2</sub> measurements and direct ground sampling of the SO<sub>2</sub>:CO<sub>2</sub> ratio for a given volcano or event (Hobbs *et al.*, 1991; USGS, 2001b). Remote-sensing techniques currently under investigation for CO<sub>2</sub> detection are LIDAR (light detection and range-finding), a scanning airborne laser and DIAL (differential absorption LIDAR), which looks at reflections from multiple lasers at different frequencies (Hobbs *et al.*, 1991; Menzies *et al.*, 2001).

In summary, monitoring of CO<sub>2</sub> for occupational safety is well established. On the other hand, while some promising technologies are under development for environmental monitoring and leak detection, measurement and monitoring approaches on the temporal and space scales relevant to geological storage need improvement to be truly effective.

#### 5.6.5.3 Ecosystems

The health of terrestrial and subsurface ecosystems can be determined directly by measuring the productivity and biodiversity of flora and fauna and in some cases (such as at Mammoth Mountain in California) indirectly by using remote-sensing techniques such as hyperspectral imaging (Martini and Silver, 2002; Onstott, 2005; Pickles, 2005). In many areas with natural CO<sub>2</sub> seeps, even those with very low CO<sub>2</sub> fluxes, the seeps are generally quite conspicuous features. They are easily recognized in populated areas, both in agriculture and natural vegetation, by reduced plant growth and the presence of precipitants of minerals leached from rocks by acidic water. Therefore, any conspicuous site could be quickly and easily checked for excess CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations without any large remote-sensing ecosystem studies or surveys. However, in desert environments where vegetation is sparse, direct observation may not be possible. In addition to direct ecosystem observations, analyses of soil gas composition and soil mineralogy can be used to indicate the presence of CO<sub>2</sub> and its impact on soil properties. Detection of elevated concentrations of CO<sub>2</sub> or evidence of excessive soil weathering would indicate the potential for ecosystem impacts.

For aquatic ecosystems, water quality and in particular low pH, would provide a diagnostic for potential impacts. Direct measurements of ecosystem productivity and biodiversity can also be obtained by using standard techniques developed for lakes and marine ecosystems. See Chapter 6 for additional discussion about the impact of elevated CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations on marine environments.

### 5.6.6 Monitoring network design

There are currently no standard protocols or established network designs for monitoring leakage of CO<sub>2</sub>. Monitoring network design will depend on the objectives and requirements of the monitoring programme, which will be determined by regulatory requirements and perceived risks posed by the site (Chalaturnyk and Gunter, 2005). For example, current monitoring for EOR is designed to assess the sweep efficiency of the solvent flood and to deal with health and safety issues. In this regard, the monitoring designed for the Weyburn Project uses seismic surveys to determine the lateral migration of CO<sub>2</sub> over time. This is compared with the simulations undertaken to design the operational practices of the CO<sub>2</sub> flood. For health and safety, the programme is designed to test groundwater for contamination and to monitor for gas buildup in working areas of the field to ensure worker safety. The surface procedure also uses pressure monitoring to ensure that the fracture pressure of the formation is not exceeded (Chalaturnyk and Gunter, 2005).

The Weyburn Project is designed to assess the integrity of an oil reservoir for long-term storage of CO<sub>2</sub> (Wilson and Monea, 2005). In this regard, the demonstrated ability of seismic surveys to measure migration of CO<sub>2</sub> within the formation is important, but in the long term it may be more important to detect CO<sub>2</sub> that has leaked out of the storage reservoir. In this case, the monitoring programme should be designed to achieve the resolution and sensitivity needed to detect CO<sub>2</sub> that has leaked out of the reservoir and is migrating vertically. The use of geochemical monitoring will determine the rate of dissolution of the CO<sub>2</sub> into fluids and the capacity of the minerals within the reservoir to react with the CO<sub>2</sub> and permanently store it. For identification of potential CO<sub>2</sub> leaks, monitoring includes soil gas and groundwater surveys. The soil gas surveys use a grid pattern superimposed on the field to evaluate any change in gas chemistry. Because grid patterns may miss narrow, linear anomalies, the study also looks at the pattern of linear anomalies on the surface that may reflect deeper fault and fracture systems, which could become natural migration pathways.

Current projects, in particular Sleipner and Weyburn, are testing a variety of techniques to determine those that are most effective and least costly. In Western Canada, acid-gas injection wells use pressure monitoring and set maximum wellhead injection pressures to ensure that reservoir fracture pressures are not exceeded. No subsurface monitoring is currently required for these projects. Chalaturnyk and Gunter (2005) suggest that an effectively designed monitoring programme should allow decisions to be made in the future that are based on ongoing interpretation of the data. The data from the programme should also provide the information necessary to decrease uncertainties over time or increase monitoring demand if things develop unexpectedly. The corollary to this is that unexpected changes may result in the requirement of increased monitoring until new uncertainties are resolved.

### 5.6.7 Long-term stewardship monitoring

The purpose of long-term monitoring is to identify movement of CO<sub>2</sub> that may lead to releases that could impact long-term storage security and safety, as well as trigger the need for remedial action. Long-term monitoring can be accomplished with the same suite of monitoring technologies used during the injection phase. However, at the present time, there are no established protocols for the kind of monitoring that will be required, by whom, for how long and with what purpose. Geological storage of CO<sub>2</sub> may persist over many millions of years. The long duration of storage raises some questions about long-term monitoring – an issue that is also addressed in Section 5.8.

Several studies have attempted to address these issues. Keith and Wilson (2002) have proposed that governments assume responsibility for monitoring after the active phase of the storage project is over, as long as all regulatory requirements have been met during operation. This study did not, however, specify long-term requirements for monitoring. Though perhaps somewhat impractical in terms of implementation, White *et al.* (2003) suggested that monitoring might be required for thousands of years. An alternative point of view is presented by Chow *et al.* (2003) and Benson *et al.* (2004), who suggest that once it has been demonstrated that the plume of CO<sub>2</sub> is no longer moving, further monitoring should not be required. The rationale for this point of view is that long-term monitoring provides little value if the plume is no longer migrating or the cessation of migration can be accurately predicted and verified by a combination of modelling and short- to mid-term monitoring.

If and when long-term monitoring is required, cost-effective, easily deployed methods for monitoring will be preferred. Methods that do not require wells that penetrate the plume will be desirable, because they will not increase the risk of leakage up the monitoring well itself. Technologies are available today, such as 3D seismic imaging, that can provide satisfactory images of CO<sub>2</sub> plume location. While seismic surveys are perceived to be costly, a recent study by Benson *et al.* (2004) suggests that this may be a misconception and indicates that monitoring costs on a discounted basis (10% discount rate) are likely to be no higher than 0.10 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> stored. However, seismic imaging has its limitations, as is evidenced by continued drilling of non-productive hydrocarbon wells, but confidence in its ability to meet most, but not all, of the needs of monitoring CO<sub>2</sub> storage projects is growing. Less expensive and more passive alternatives that could be deployed remotely, such as satellite-based systems, may be desirable, but are not currently able to track underground migration. However, if CO<sub>2</sub> has seeped to the surface, associated vegetative stress can be detected readily in some ecosystems (Martini and Silver, 2002).

Until long-term monitoring requirements are established (Stenhouse *et al.*, 2005), it is not possible to evaluate which technology or combination of technologies for monitoring will be needed or desired. However, today's technology could be deployed to continue monitoring the location of the CO<sub>2</sub> plume over very long time periods with sufficient accuracy to assess

the risk of the plume intersecting potential pathways, natural or human, out of the storage site into overlying zones. If CO<sub>2</sub> escapes from the primary storage reservoir with no prospect of remedial action to prevent leakage, technologies are available to monitor the consequent environmental impact on groundwater, soils, ecosystems and the atmosphere.

### 5.6.8 Verification of CO<sub>2</sub> injection and storage inventory

Verification as a topic is often combined with monitoring such as in the Storage, Monitoring and Verification (SMV) project of the Carbon Capture Project (CCP) or the Monitoring, Mitigation and Verification (MMV) subsection of the DOE-NETL Carbon Sequestration Technology Roadmap and Program Plan (NETL, 2004). In view of this frequently-used combination of terms, there is some overlap in usage between the terms ‘verification’ and ‘monitoring’. For this report, ‘verification’ is defined as the set of activities used for assessing the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> that is stored underground and for assessing how much, if any, is leaking back into the atmosphere.

No standard protocols have been developed specifically for verification of geological storage. However, experience at the Weyburn and Sleipner projects has demonstrated the utility of various techniques for most if not all aspects of verification (Wilson and Monea, 2005; Sleipner Best Practice Manual, 2004). At the very least, verification will require measurement of the quantity of CO<sub>2</sub> stored. Demonstrating that it remains within the storage site, from both a lateral and vertical migration perspective, is likely to require some combination of models and monitoring. Requirements may be site-specific, depending on the regulatory environment, requirements for economic instruments and the degree of risk of leakage. The oversight for verification may be handled by regulators, either directly or by independent third parties contracted by regulators under national law.

## 5.7 Risk management, risk assessment and remediation

What are the risks of storing CO<sub>2</sub> in deep geological formations? Can a geological storage site be operated safely? What are the safety concerns and environmental impact if a storage site leaks? Can a CO<sub>2</sub> storage site be fixed if something does go wrong? These questions are addressed in this section of the report.

### 5.7.1 Framework for assessing environmental risks

The environmental impacts arising from geological storage fall into two broad categories: local environmental effects and global effects arising from the release of stored CO<sub>2</sub> to the atmosphere. Global effects of CO<sub>2</sub> storage may be viewed as the uncertainty in the effectiveness of CO<sub>2</sub> storage. Estimates of the likelihood of release to the atmosphere are discussed below (Section 5.7.3), while the policy implications of potential release from storage are discussed elsewhere (Chapters 1, 8 and 9).

Local health, safety and environmental hazards arise from three distinct causes:

- Direct effects of elevated gas-phase CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations in the shallow subsurface and near-surface environment;
- Effects of dissolved CO<sub>2</sub> on groundwater chemistry;
- Effects that arise from the displacement of fluids by the injected CO<sub>2</sub>.

In this section, assessment of possible local and regional environmental hazards is organized by the kind of hazard (e.g., human health and ecosystem hazards are treated separately) and by the underlying physical mechanism (e.g., seismic hazards). For example, the discussion of hazards to groundwater quality includes effects that arise directly from the effect of dissolved CO<sub>2</sub> in groundwater, as well as indirect effects resulting from contamination by displaced brines.

Risks are proportional to the magnitude of the potential hazards and the probability that these hazards will occur. For hazards that arise from locally elevated CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations – in the near-surface atmosphere, soil gas or in aqueous solution – the risks depend on the probability of leakage from the deep storage site to the surface. Thus, most of the hazards described in Section 5.7.4 should be weighted by the probability of release described in Section 5.7.3. Regarding those risks associated with routine operation of the facility and well maintenance, such risks are expected to be comparable to CO<sub>2</sub>-EOR operations.

There are two important exceptions to the rule that risk is proportional to the probability of release. First, local impacts will be strongly dependent on the spatial and temporal distribution of fluxes and the resulting CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations. Episodic and localized seepage will likely tend to have more significant impacts per unit of CO<sub>2</sub> released than will seepage that is continuous and or spatially dispersed. Global impacts arising from release of CO<sub>2</sub> to the atmosphere depend only on the average quantity released over time scales of decades to centuries. Second, the hazards arising from displacement, such as the risk of induced seismicity, are roughly independent of the probability of release.

Although we have limited experience with injection of CO<sub>2</sub> for the explicit purpose of avoiding atmospheric emissions, a wealth of closely related industrial experience and scientific knowledge exists that can serve as a basis for appropriate risk management. In addition to the discussion in this section, relevant industrial experience has been described in Sections 5.1 to 5.6.

### 5.7.2 Processes and pathways for release of CO<sub>2</sub> from geological storage sites

Carbon dioxide that exists as a separate phase (supercritical, liquid or gas) may escape from formations used for geological storage through the following pathways (Figure 5.25):

- Through the pore system in low-permeability caprocks such as shales, if the capillary entry pressure at which CO<sub>2</sub> may enter the caprock is exceeded;
- Through openings in the caprock or fractures and faults;

- Through anthropomorphic pathways, such as poorly completed and/or abandoned pre-existing wells.

For onshore storage sites, CO<sub>2</sub> that has leaked may reach the water table and migrate into the overlying vadose zone. This occurrence would likely include CO<sub>2</sub> contact with drinking-water aquifers. Depending on the mineral composition of the rock matrix within the groundwater aquifer or vadose zone, the reaction of CO<sub>2</sub> with the rock matrix could release contaminants. The US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) has witnessed problems with projects designed to replenish groundwater with rainfall wherein mineralized (fixed) contaminants were inadvertently mobilized in concentrations sufficient to cause undesirable contamination.

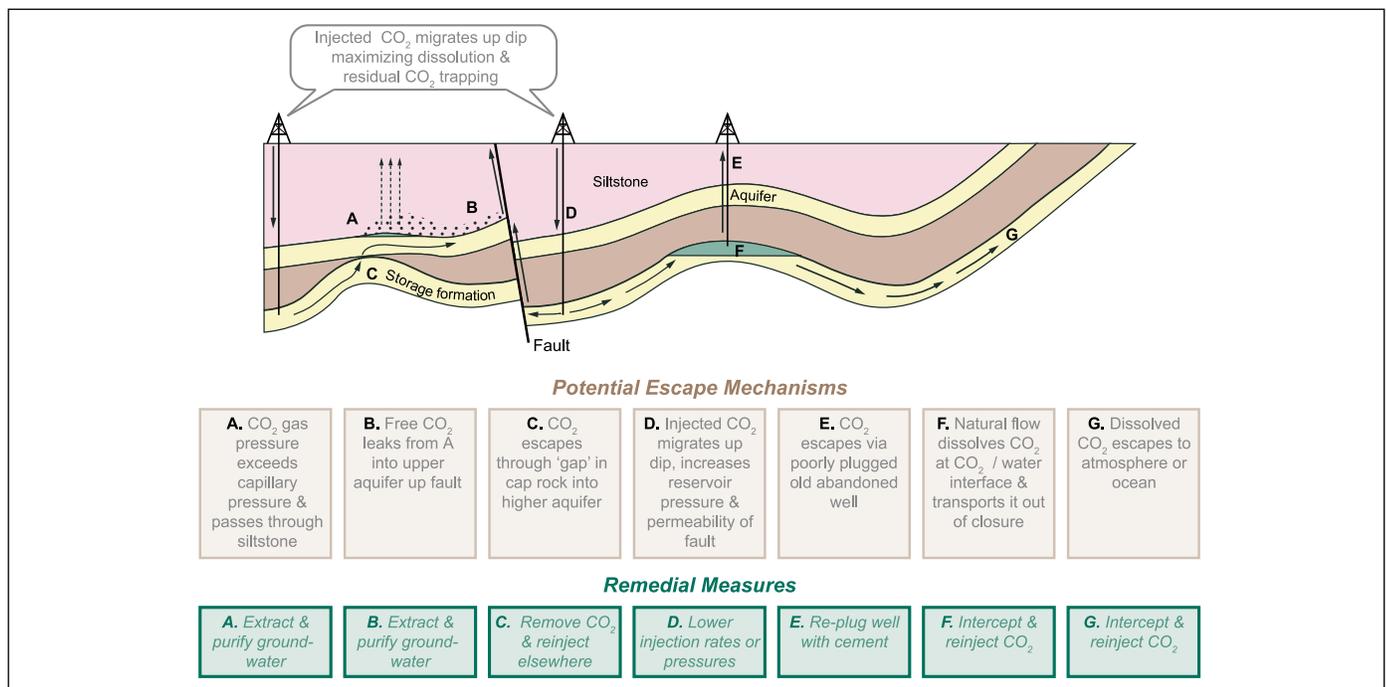
The vadose zone is only partly saturated with water; the rest of the pore space is filled with soil gas (air). Because it is heavier than air, CO<sub>2</sub> will displace ambient soil gas, leading to concentrations that locally may potentially approach 100% in parts of the vadose zone, even for small leakage fluxes. The dissipating effects of seepage into the surface layer are controlled mostly by pressure-driven flow and diffusion (Oldenburg and Unger, 2003). These occur predominantly in most shallow parts of the vadose zone, leaving the deeper part of the vadose zone potentially subject to accumulation of leaking CO<sub>2</sub>. The processes of CO<sub>2</sub> migration in the vadose zone can be modelled, subject to limitations in the characterization of actual complex vadose zone and CO<sub>2</sub> leakage scenarios.

For storage sites that are offshore, CO<sub>2</sub> that has leaked may reach the ocean bottom sediments and then, if lighter than the surrounding water, migrate up through the water column until it reaches the atmosphere. Depending upon the leakage rate, it may either remain as a separate phase or completely dissolve

into the water column. When CO<sub>2</sub> dissolves, biological impacts to ocean bottom and marine organisms will be of concern. For those sites where separate-phase CO<sub>2</sub> reaches the ocean surface, hazards to offshore platform workers may be of concern for very large and sudden release rates.

Once through the vadose zone, escaping CO<sub>2</sub> reaches the surface layer of the atmosphere and the surface environment, where humans and other animals can be exposed to it. Carbon dioxide dispersion and mixing result from surface winds and associated turbulence and eddies. As a result, CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations diminish rapidly with elevation, meaning that ground-dwelling animals are more likely to be affected by exposure than are humans (Oldenburg and Unger, 2004). Calm conditions and local topography capable of containing the dense gas will tend to prevent mixing. But such conditions are the exception and in general, the surface layer can be counted on to strongly dilute seeping CO<sub>2</sub>. Nevertheless, potential concerns related to buildup of CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations on calm days must be carefully considered in any risk assessment of a CO<sub>2</sub> storage site. Additionally, high subsurface CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations may accumulate in basements, subsurface vaults and other subsurface infrastructures where humans may be exposed to risk.

Carbon dioxide injected into coal seams can escape only if it is in free phase (i.e., not adsorbed onto the coal) via the following pathways (Wo and Liang 2005; Wo *et al.* 2005): flow into surrounding strata during injection when high pressures are used to inject CO<sub>2</sub> into low-permeability coal, either where the cleat system reaches the top of the seam or via hydrofractures induced to improve the contact between the cleat system and CBM production wells; through faults or other natural pathways intersecting the coal seam; via poorly abandoned coal or CBM exploration wells; and through anthropomorphic pathways such



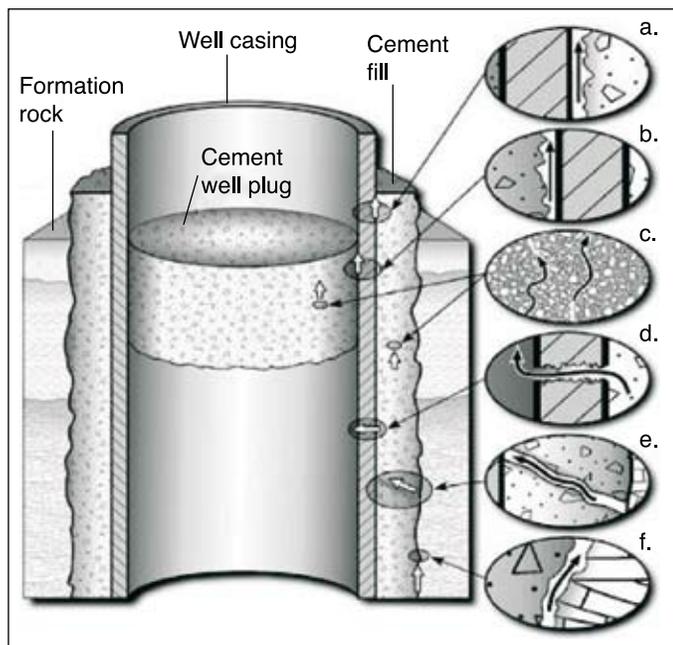
**Figure 5.25** Some potential escape routes for CO<sub>2</sub> injected into saline formations.

as coal mines or mining-induced subsidence cracks.

In general, however, CO<sub>2</sub> retained by sorption onto coal will remain confined to the seam even without caprocks, unless the pressure in the coal seam is reduced (e.g., by mining). Changes in pressure and/or temperature lead to changes in the maximum gas content. If the pressure drops markedly, any excess CO<sub>2</sub> may desorb from the coal and flow freely through cleats.

Injection wells and abandoned wells have been identified as one of the most probable leakage pathways for CO<sub>2</sub> storage projects (Gasda *et al.*, 2004; Benson, 2005). When a well is drilled, a continuous, open conduit is created between the land surface and the deep subsurface. If, at the time of drilling, the operator decides that the target formation does not look sufficiently productive, then the well is abandoned as a ‘dry hole’, in accordance with proper regulatory guidelines. Current guidelines typically require filling sections of the hole with cement (Section 5.5 and Figure 5.21).

Drilling and completion of a well involve not only creation of a hole in the Earth, but also the introduction of engineered materials into the subsurface, such as well cements and well casing. The overall effect of well drilling is replacement of small but potentially significant cylindrical volumes of rock, including low-permeability caprock, with anthropomorphic materials that have properties different from those of the original materials. A number of possible leakage pathways can occur along abandoned wells, as illustrated in Figure 5.26 (Gasda *et al.*, 2004). These include leakage between the cement and the outside of the casing (Figure 5.26a), between the cement and the inside of the metal casing (Figure 5.26b), within the cement plug itself (Figure 5.26c), through deterioration (corrosion) of



**Figure 5.26** Possible leakage pathways in an abandoned well: (a) and (b) between casing and cement wall and plug, respectively; (c) through cement plugs; (d) through casing; (e) through cement wall; and (f) between the cement wall and rock (after Gasda *et al.*, 2004).

the metal casing (Figure 5.26d), deterioration of the cement in the annulus (Figure 5.26e) and leakage in the annular region between the formation and the cement (Figure 5.26f). The potential for long-term degradation of cement and metal casing in the presence of CO<sub>2</sub> is a topic of extensive investigations at this time (e.g., Scherer *et al.*, 2005).

The risk of leakage through abandoned wells is proportional to the number of wells intersected by the CO<sub>2</sub> plume, their depth and the abandonment method used. For mature sedimentary basins, the number of wells in proximity to a possible injection well can be large, on the order of many hundreds. For example, in the Alberta Basin in western Canada, more than 350,000 wells have been drilled. Currently, drilling continues at the rate of approximately 20,000 wells per year. The wells are distributed spatially in clusters, with densities that average around four wells per km<sup>2</sup> (Gasda *et al.*, 2004). Worldwide well densities are provided in Figure 5.27 and illustrate that many areas have much lower well density. Nevertheless, the data provided in Figure 5.27 illustrate an important point made in Section 5.3 – namely that storage security in mature oil and gas provinces may be compromised if a large number of wells penetrate the caprocks. Steps need to be taken to address this potential risk.

### 5.7.3 Probability of release from geological storage sites

Storage sites will presumably be designed to confine all injected CO<sub>2</sub> for geological time scales. Nevertheless, experience with engineered systems suggest a small fraction of operational storage sites may release CO<sub>2</sub> to the atmosphere. No existing studies systematically estimate the probability and magnitude of release across a sample of credible geological storage systems. In the absence of such studies, this section synthesizes the lines of evidence that enable rough quantitative estimates of achievable fractions retained in storage. Five kinds of evidence are relevant to assessing storage effectiveness:

- Data from natural systems, including trapped accumulations of natural gas and CO<sub>2</sub>, as well as oil;
- Data from engineered systems, including natural gas storage, gas re-injection for pressure support, CO<sub>2</sub> or miscible hydrocarbon EOR, disposal of acid gases and disposal of other fluids;
- Fundamental physical, chemical and mechanical processes regarding the fate and transport of CO<sub>2</sub> in the subsurface;
- Results from numerical models of CO<sub>2</sub> transport;
- Results from current geological storage projects.

#### 5.7.3.1 Natural systems

Natural systems allow inferences about the quality and quantity of geological formations that could be used to store CO<sub>2</sub>. The widespread presence of oil, gas and CO<sub>2</sub> trapped in formations for many millions of years implies that within sedimentary basins, impermeable formations (caprocks) of sufficient quality to confine CO<sub>2</sub> for geological time periods are present. For example, the about 200 MtCO<sub>2</sub> trapped in the Pisgah Anticline, northeast of the Jackson Dome (Mississippi), is thought to have been generated in Late Cretaceous times, more than 65 million

years ago (Studlick *et al.*, 1990). Retention times longer than 10 million years are found in many of the world's petroleum basins (Bradshaw *et al.*, 2005). Therefore evidence from natural systems demonstrates that reservoir seals exist that are able to confine CO<sub>2</sub> for millions of years and longer.

### 5.7.3.2 Engineered systems

Evidence from natural gas storage systems enables performance assessments of engineered barriers (wells and associated management and remediation) and of the performance of natural systems that have been altered by pressure cycling (Lippmann and Benson, 2003; Perry, 2005). Approximately 470 natural gas storage facilities are currently operating in the United States with a total storage capacity exceeding 160 Mt natural gas (Figure 5.12). There have been nine documented incidents of significant leakage: five were related to wellbore integrity, each of which was resolved by reworking the wells; three arose from leaks in caprocks, two of which were remediated and one of which led to project abandonment. The final incident involved early project abandonment owing to poor site selection (Perry, 2005). There are no estimates of the total volumes of gas lost resulting from leakage across all the projects. In one recent serious example of leakage, involving wellbore failure at a facility in Kansas, the total mass released was about 3000 t (Lee, 2001), equal to less than 0.002% of the total gas in storage in the United States and Canada. The capacity-weighted median age of the approximately 470 facilities exceeds 25 years. Given that the Kansas failure was among the worst in the cumulative operating history of gas storage facilities, the average annual release rates, expressed as a fraction of stored gas released per year, are likely below 10<sup>-5</sup>. While such estimates of the expected (or statistical average) release rates are a useful measure of

storage effectiveness, they should not be interpreted as implying that release will be a continuous process.

The performance of natural gas storage systems may be regarded as a lower bound on that of CO<sub>2</sub> storage. One reason for this is that natural gas systems are designed for (and subject to) rapid pressure cycling that increases the probability of caprock leakage. On the other hand, CO<sub>2</sub> will dissolve in pore waters (if present), thereby reducing the risk of leakage. Perhaps the only respect in which gas storage systems present lower risks is that CH<sub>4</sub> is less corrosive than CO<sub>2</sub> to metallic components, such as well casings. Risks are higher in the case of leakage from natural gas storage sites because of the flammable nature of the gas.

### 5.7.3.3 Fundamental physical, chemical and mechanical processes regarding fate and transport of CO<sub>2</sub> in the subsurface

As described in Section 5.2, scientific understanding of CO<sub>2</sub> storage and in particular performance of storage systems, rests on a large body of knowledge in hydrogeology, petroleum geology, reservoir engineering and related geosciences. Current evaluation has identified a number of processes that alone or in combination can result in very long-term storage. Specifically, the combination of structural and stratigraphic trapping of separate-phase CO<sub>2</sub> below low-permeability caprocks, residual CO<sub>2</sub> trapping, solubility trapping and mineral trapping can create secure storage over geological time scales.

### 5.7.3.4 Numerical simulations of long-term storage performance

Simulations of CO<sub>2</sub> confinement in large-scale storage projects suggest that, neglecting abandoned wells, the movement of

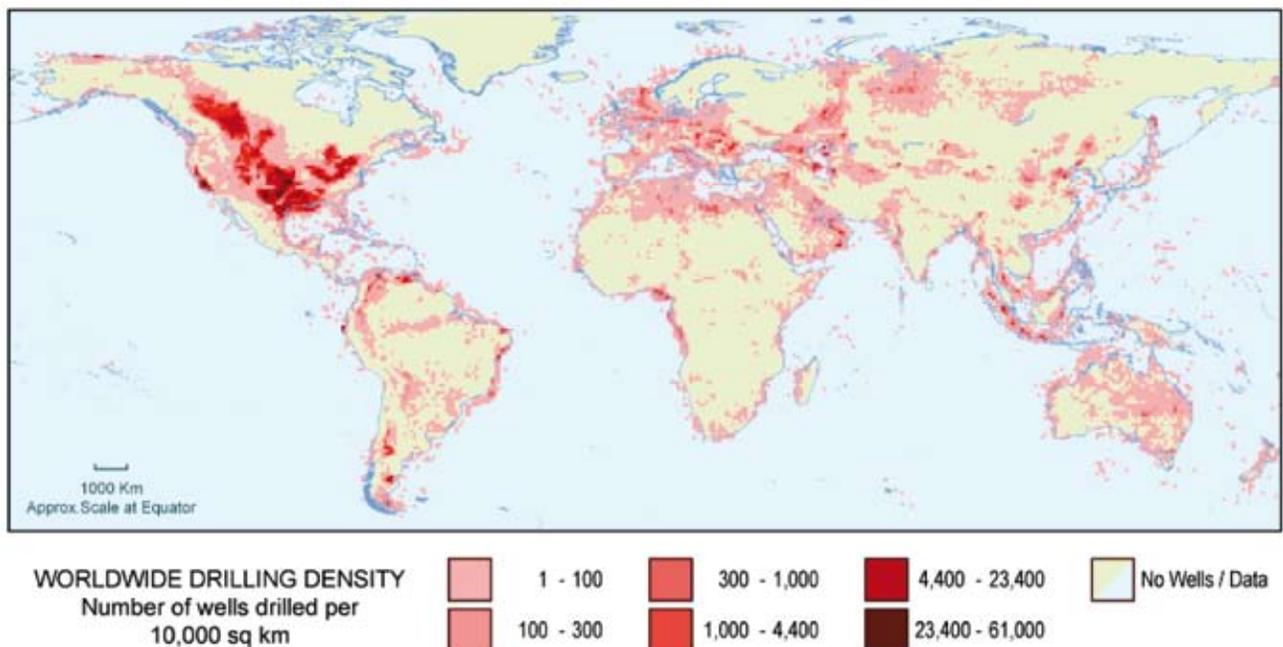


Figure 5.27 World oil and gas well distribution and density (courtesy of IHS Energy).

CO<sub>2</sub> through the subsurface will be slow. For example, Cawley *et al.* (2005) studied the effect of uncertainties in parameters such as the flow velocity in the aquifer and capillary entry pressure into caprock in their examination of CO<sub>2</sub> storage in the Forties Oilfield in the North Sea. Over the 1000 year time scale examined in their study, Cawley *et al.* (2005) found that less than 0.2% of the stored CO<sub>2</sub> enters into the overlying layers and even in the worse case, the maximum vertical distance moved by any of the CO<sub>2</sub> was less than halfway to the seabed. Similarly, Lindeberg and Bergmo (2003) studied the Sleipner field and found that CO<sub>2</sub> would not begin to migrate into the North Sea for 100,000 years and that even after a million years, the annual rate of release would be about 10<sup>-6</sup> of the stored CO<sub>2</sub> per year.

Simulations designed to explore the possible release of stored CO<sub>2</sub> to the biosphere by multiple routes, including abandoned wells and other disturbances, have recently become available as a component of more general risk assessment activities (Section 5.7.5). Two studies of the Weyburn site, for example, assessed the probability of release to the biosphere. Walton *et al.* (2005) used a fully probabilistic model, with a simplified representation of CO<sub>2</sub> transport, to compute a probability distribution for the cumulative fraction released to the biosphere. Walton *et al.* found that after 5000 years, the probability was equal that the cumulative amount released would be larger or smaller than 0.1% (the median release fraction) and found a 95% probability that <1% of the total amount stored would be released. Using a deterministic model of CO<sub>2</sub> transport in the subsurface, Zhou *et al.* (2005) found no release to the biosphere in 5000 years. While using a probabilistic model of transport through abandoned wells, they found a statistical mean release of 0.001% and a maximum release of 0.14% (expressed as the cumulative fraction of stored CO<sub>2</sub> released over 5000 years).

In saline formations or oil and gas reservoirs with significant brine content, much of the CO<sub>2</sub> will eventually dissolve in the brine (Figure 5.7), be trapped as a residual immobile phase (Figure 5.8) or be immobilized by geochemical reactions. The time scale for dissolution is typically short compared to the time for CO<sub>2</sub> to migrate out of the storage formation by other processes (Ennis-King and Paterson, 2003; Lindeberg and Bergmo, 2003; Walton *et al.*, 2005). It is expected that many storage projects could be selected and operated so that a very large fraction of the injected CO<sub>2</sub> will dissolve. Once dissolved, CO<sub>2</sub> can eventually be transported out of the injection site by basin-scale circulation or upward migration, but the time scales (millions of years) of such transport are typically sufficiently long that they can (arguably) be ignored in assessing the risk of leakage.

As described in Section 5.1, several CO<sub>2</sub> storage projects are now in operation and being carefully monitored. While no leakage of stored CO<sub>2</sub> out of the storage formations has been observed in any of the current projects, time is too short and overall monitoring too limited, to enable direct empirical conclusions about the long-term performance of geological storage. Rather than providing a direct test of performance, the current projects improve the quality of long-duration performance predictions

by testing and sharpening understanding of CO<sub>2</sub> transport and trapping mechanisms.

#### 5.7.3.5 Assessing the ability of operational geological storage projects to retain CO<sub>2</sub> for long time periods

Assessment of the fraction retained for geological storage projects is highly site-specific, depending on (1) the storage system design, including the geological characteristics of the selected storage site; (2) the injection system and related reservoir engineering; and (3) the methods of abandonment, including the performance of well-sealing technologies. If the above information is available, it is possible to estimate the fraction retained by using the models described in Section 5.4.2 and risk assessment methods described in Section 5.7.5. Therefore, it is also possible, in principle, to estimate the expected performance of an ensemble of storage projects that adhere to design guidelines such as site selection, seal integrity, injection depth and well closure technologies. Table 5.5 summarizes disparate lines of evidence on the integrity of CO<sub>2</sub> storage systems.

For large-scale operational CO<sub>2</sub> storage projects, assuming that sites are well selected, designed, operated and appropriately monitored, the balance of available evidence suggests the following:

- It is very likely the fraction of stored CO<sub>2</sub> retained is more than 99% over the first 100 years.
- It is likely the fraction of stored CO<sub>2</sub> retained is more than 99% over the first 1000 years.

#### 5.7.4 Possible local and regional environmental hazards

##### 5.7.4.1 Potential hazards to human health and safety

Risks to human health and safety arise (almost) exclusively from elevated CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations in ambient air, either in confined outdoor environments, in caves or in buildings. Physiological and toxicological responses to elevated CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations are relatively well understood (AI.3.3). At concentrations above about 2%, CO<sub>2</sub> has a strong effect on respiratory physiology and at concentrations above 7–10%, it can cause unconsciousness and death. Exposure studies have not revealed any adverse health effect of chronic exposure to concentrations below 1%.

The principal challenge in estimating the risks posed by CO<sub>2</sub> that might seep from storage sites lies in estimating the spatial and temporal distribution of CO<sub>2</sub> fluxes reaching the shallow subsurface and in predicting ambient CO<sub>2</sub> concentration resulting from a given CO<sub>2</sub> flux. Concentrations in surface air will be strongly influenced by surface topography and atmospheric conditions. Because CO<sub>2</sub> is 50% denser than air, it tends to migrate downwards, flowing along the ground and collecting in shallow depressions, potentially creating much higher concentrations in confined spaces than in open terrain.

Seepage of CO<sub>2</sub> is not uncommon in regions influenced by volcanism. Naturally occurring releases of CO<sub>2</sub> provide a basis for understanding the transport of CO<sub>2</sub> from the vadose zone to the atmosphere, as well as providing empirical data that link CO<sub>2</sub> fluxes into the shallow subsurface with CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations

**Table 5.5** Summary of evidence for CO<sub>2</sub> retention and release rates.

Kind of evidence	Average annual fraction released	Representative references
CO <sub>2</sub> in natural formations	The lifetime of CO <sub>2</sub> in natural formations (>10 million yr in some cases) suggests an average release fraction <10 <sup>-7</sup> yr <sup>-1</sup> for CO <sub>2</sub> trapped in sedimentary basins. In highly fractured volcanic systems, rate of release can be many orders of magnitude faster.	Stevens <i>et al.</i> , 2001a; Baines and Worden, 2001
Oil and gas	The presence of buoyant fluids trapped for geological timescales demonstrates the widespread presence of geological systems (seals and caprock) that are capable of confining gasses with release rates <10 <sup>-7</sup> yr <sup>-1</sup> .	Bradshaw <i>et al.</i> , 2005
Natural gas storage	The cumulative experience of natural gas storage systems exceeds 10,000 facility-years and demonstrates that operational engineered storage systems can contain methane with release rates of 10 <sup>-4</sup> to 10 <sup>-6</sup> yr <sup>-1</sup> .	Lippmann and Benson, 2003; Perry, 2005
Enhanced oil recovery (EOR)	More than 100 MtCO <sub>2</sub> has been injected for EOR. Data from the few sites where surface fluxes have been measured suggest that fractional release rates are near zero.	Moritis, 2002; Klusman, 2003
Models of flow through the undisturbed subsurface	Numerical models show that release of CO <sub>2</sub> by subsurface flow through undisturbed geological media (excluding wells) may be near zero at appropriately selected storage sites and is very likely <10 <sup>-6</sup> in the few studies that attempted probabilistic estimates.	Walton <i>et al.</i> , 2005; Zhou <i>et al.</i> , 2005; Lindeberg and Bergmo, 2003; Cawley <i>et al.</i> , 2005
Models of flow through wells	Evidence from a small number of risk assessment studies suggests that average release of CO <sub>2</sub> can be 10 <sup>-5</sup> to 10 <sup>-7</sup> yr <sup>-1</sup> even in existing oil fields with many abandoned wells, such as Weyburn. Simulations with idealized systems with 'open' wells show that release rates can exceed 10 <sup>-2</sup> , though in practice such wells would presumably be closed as soon as CO <sub>2</sub> was detected.	Walton <i>et al.</i> , 2005; Zhou <i>et al.</i> , 2005; Nordbotten <i>et al.</i> , 2005b
Current CO <sub>2</sub> storage projects	Data from current CO <sub>2</sub> storage projects demonstrate that monitoring techniques are able to detect movement of CO <sub>2</sub> in the storage reservoirs. Although no release to the surface has been detected, little can be concluded given the short history and few sites.	Wilson and Monea, 2005; Arts <i>et al.</i> , 2005; Chadwick, <i>et al.</i> , 2005

in the ambient air – and the consequent health and safety risks. Such seeps do not, however, provide a useful basis for estimating the spatial and temporal distribution of CO<sub>2</sub> fluxes leaking from a deep storage site, because (in general) the seeps occur in highly fractured volcanic zones, unlike the interiors of stable sedimentary basins, the likely locations for CO<sub>2</sub> storage (Section 5.3).

Natural seeps are widely distributed in tectonically active regions of the world (Morner and Etiope, 2002). In central Italy, for example, CO<sub>2</sub> is emitted from vents, surface degassing and diffuse emission from CO<sub>2</sub>-rich groundwater. Fluxes from vents range from less than 100 to more than 430 tCO<sub>2</sub> day<sup>-1</sup>, which have shown to be lethal to animal and plants. At Poggio dell'Ulivo, for example, a flux of 200 tCO<sub>2</sub> day<sup>-1</sup> is emitted from diffuse soil degassing. At least ten people have died from CO<sub>2</sub> releases in the region of Lazio over the last 20 years.

Natural and engineered analogues show that it is possible, though improbable, that slow releases from CO<sub>2</sub> storage reservoirs will pose a threat to humans. Sudden, catastrophic releases of natural accumulations of CO<sub>2</sub> have occurred, associated with volcanism or subsurface mining activities. Thus, they are of limited relevance to understanding risks arising from CO<sub>2</sub> stored in sedimentary basins. However, mining or drilling in areas with CO<sub>2</sub> storage sites may pose a long-term risk after site abandonment if institutional knowledge and precautions are not in place to avoid accidentally penetrating a storage formation.

#### 5.7.4.2 Hazards to groundwater from CO<sub>2</sub> leakage and brine displacement

Increases in dissolved CO<sub>2</sub> concentration that might occur as CO<sub>2</sub> migrates from a storage reservoir to the surface will alter groundwater chemistry, potentially affecting shallow groundwater used for potable water and industrial and agricultural needs. Dissolved CO<sub>2</sub> forms carbonic acid, altering the pH of the solution and potentially causing indirect effects, including mobilization of (toxic) metals, sulphate or chloride; and possibly giving the water an odd odour, colour or taste. In the worst case, contamination might reach dangerous levels, excluding the use of groundwater for drinking or irrigation.

Wang and Jaffé (2004) used a chemical transport model to investigate the effect of releasing CO<sub>2</sub> from a point source at 100 m depth into a shallow water formation that contained a high concentration of mineralized lead (galena). They found that in weakly buffered formations, the escaping CO<sub>2</sub> could mobilize sufficient dissolved lead to pose a health hazard over a radius of a few hundred metres from the CO<sub>2</sub> source. This analysis represents an extreme upper bound to the risk of metal leaching, since few natural formations have mineral composition so susceptible to the effects of CO<sub>2</sub>-mediated leaching and one of the expressed requirements of a storage site is to avoid compromising other potential resources, such as mineral deposits.

The injection of CO<sub>2</sub> or any other fluid deep underground necessarily causes changes in pore-fluid pressures and in the

geomechanical stress fields that reach far beyond the volume occupied by the injected fluid. Brines displaced from deep formations by injected CO<sub>2</sub> can potentially migrate or leak through fractures or defective wells to shallow aquifers and contaminate shallower drinking water formations by increasing their salinity. In the worst case, infiltration of saline water into groundwater or into the shallow subsurface could impact wildlife habitat, restrict or eliminate agricultural use of land and pollute surface waters.

As is the case for induced seismicity, the experience with injection of different fluids provides an empirical basis for assessing the likelihood that groundwater contamination will occur by brine displacement. As discussed in Section 5.5 and shown in Figure 5.22, the current site-specific injection rates of fluids into the deep subsurface are roughly comparable to the rates at which CO<sub>2</sub> would be injected if geological storage were adopted for storage of CO<sub>2</sub> from large-scale power plants. Contamination of groundwater by brines displaced from injection wells is rare and it is therefore expected that contamination arising from large-scale CO<sub>2</sub> storage activities would also be rare. Density differences between CO<sub>2</sub> and other fluids with which we have extensive experience do not compromise this conclusion, because brine displacement is driven primarily by the pressure/hydraulic head differential of the injected CO<sub>2</sub>, not by buoyancy forces.

#### 5.7.4.3 Hazards to terrestrial and marine ecosystems

Stored CO<sub>2</sub> and any accompanying substances, may affect the flora and fauna with which it comes into contact. Impacts might be expected on microbes in the deep subsurface and on plants and animals in shallower soils and at the surface. The remainder of this discussion focuses only on the hazards where exposures to CO<sub>2</sub> do occur. As discussed in Section 5.7.3, the probability of leakage is low. Nevertheless, it is important to understand the hazards should exposures occur.

In the last three decades, microbes dubbed ‘extremophiles’, living in environments where life was previously considered impossible, have been identified in many underground habitats. These microorganisms have limited nutrient supply and exhibit very low metabolic rates (D’Hondt *et al.*, 2002). Recent studies have described populations in deep saline formations (Haveman and Pedersen, 2001), oil and gas reservoirs (Orphan *et al.*, 2000) and sediments up to 850 m below the sea floor (Parkes *et al.*, 2000). The mass of subsurface microbes may well exceed the mass of biota on the Earth’s surface (Whitman *et al.*, 2001). The working assumption may be that unless there are conditions preventing it, microbes can be found everywhere at the depths being considered for CO<sub>2</sub> storage and consequently CO<sub>2</sub> storage sites may generally contain microbes that could be affected by injected CO<sub>2</sub>.

The effect of CO<sub>2</sub> on subsurface microbial populations is not well studied. A low-pH, high-CO<sub>2</sub> environment may favour some species and harm others. In strongly reducing environments, the injection of CO<sub>2</sub> may stimulate microbial communities that would reduce the CO<sub>2</sub> to CH<sub>4</sub>; while in other reservoirs, CO<sub>2</sub> injection could cause a short-term stimulation

of Fe(III)-reducing communities (Onstott, 2005). From an operational perspective, creation of biofilms may reduce the effective permeability of the formation.

Should CO<sub>2</sub> leak from the storage formation and find its way to the surface, it will enter a much more biologically active area. While elevated CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations in ambient air can accelerate plant growth, such fertilization will generally be overwhelmed by the detrimental effects of elevated CO<sub>2</sub> in soils, because CO<sub>2</sub> fluxes large enough to significantly increase concentrations in the free air will typically be associated with much higher CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations in soils. The effects of elevated CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations would be mediated by several factors: the type and density of vegetation; the exposure to other environmental stresses; the prevailing environmental conditions like wind speed and rainfall; the presence of low-lying areas; and the density of nearby animal populations.

The main characteristic of long-term elevated CO<sub>2</sub> zones at the surface is the lack of vegetation. New CO<sub>2</sub> releases into vegetated areas cause noticeable die-off. In those areas where significant impacts to vegetation have occurred, CO<sub>2</sub> makes up about 20–95% of the soil gas, whereas normal soil gas usually contains about 0.2–4% CO<sub>2</sub>. Carbon dioxide concentrations above 5% may be dangerous for vegetation and as concentration approach 20%, CO<sub>2</sub> becomes phytotoxic. Carbon dioxide can cause death of plants through ‘root anoxia’, together with low oxygen concentration (Leone *et al.*, 1977; Flower *et al.*, 1981).

One example of plant die-off occurred at Mammoth Mountain, California, USA, where a resurgence of volcanic activity resulted in high CO<sub>2</sub> fluxes. In 1989, a series of small earthquakes occurred near Mammoth Mountain. A year later, 4 ha of pine trees were discovered to be losing their needles and by 1997, the area of dead and dying trees had expanded to 40 ha (Farrar *et al.*, 1999). Soil CO<sub>2</sub> levels above 10–20% inhibit root development and decrease water and nutrient uptake; soil oil-gas testing at Mammoth Mountain in 1994 discovered soil gas readings of up to 95% CO<sub>2</sub> by volume. Total CO<sub>2</sub> flux in the affected areas averaged about 530 t day<sup>-1</sup> in 1996. Measurements in 2001 showed soil CO<sub>2</sub> levels of 15–90%, with flux rates at the largest affected area (Horseshoe Lake) averaging 90–100 tCO<sub>2</sub> day<sup>-1</sup> (Gerlach *et al.*, 1999; Rogie *et al.*, 2001). A study of the impact of elevated CO<sub>2</sub> on soils found there was a lower pH and higher moisture content in summer. Wells in the high CO<sub>2</sub> area showed higher levels of silicon, aluminum, magnesium and iron, consistent with enhanced weathering of the soils. Tree-ring data show that CO<sub>2</sub> releases have occurred prior to 1990 (Cook *et al.*, 2001). Data from airborne remote sensing are now being used to map tree health and measure anomalous CO<sub>2</sub> levels, which may help determine how CO<sub>2</sub> affects forest ecosystems (Martini and Silver, 2002).

There is no evidence of any terrestrial impact from current CO<sub>2</sub> storage projects. Likewise, there is no evidence from EOR projects that indicate impacts to vegetation such as those described above. However, no systematic studies have occurred to look for terrestrial impacts from current EOR projects.

Natural CO<sub>2</sub> seepage in volcanic regions, therefore, provides examples of possible impacts from leaky CO<sub>2</sub> storage, although

(as mentioned in Section 5.2.3) seeps in volcanic provinces provide a poor analogue to seepage that would occur from CO<sub>2</sub> storage sites in sedimentary basins. As described above, CO<sub>2</sub> seepage can pose substantial hazards. In the Alban Hills, south of Rome (Italy), for example, 29 cows and 8 sheep were asphyxiated in several separate incidents between September 1999 and October 2001 (Carapezza *et al.*, 2003). The measured CO<sub>2</sub> flux was about 60 t day<sup>-1</sup> of 98% CO<sub>2</sub> and up to 2% H<sub>2</sub>S, creating hazardous levels of each gas in localized areas, particularly in low-wind conditions. The high CO<sub>2</sub> and H<sub>2</sub>S fluxes resulted from a combination of magmatic activity and faulting.

Human activities have caused detrimental releases of CO<sub>2</sub> from the deep subsurface. In the late 1990s, vegetation died off above an approximately 3-km deep geothermal field being exploited for a 62 MW power plant, in Dixie Valley, Nevada, USA (Bergfeld *et al.*, 2001). A maximum flux of 570 gCO<sub>2</sub> m<sup>-2</sup> day<sup>-1</sup> was measured, as compared to a background level of 7 gCO<sub>2</sub> m<sup>-2</sup> day<sup>-1</sup>. By 1999, CO<sub>2</sub> flow in the measured area ceased and vegetation began to return.

The relevance of these natural analogues to leakage from CO<sub>2</sub> storage varies. For examples presented here, the fluxes and therefore the risks, are much higher than might be expected from a CO<sub>2</sub> storage facility: the annual flow of CO<sub>2</sub> at the Mammoth Mountain site is roughly equal to a release rate on the order of 0.2% yr<sup>-1</sup> from a storage site containing 100 MtCO<sub>2</sub>. This corresponds to a fraction retained of 13.5% over 1000 years and, thus, is not representative of a typical storage site.

Seepage from offshore geological storage sites may pose a hazard to benthic environments and organisms as the CO<sub>2</sub> moves from deep geological structures through benthic sediments to the ocean. While leaking CO<sub>2</sub> might be hazardous to the benthic environment, the seabed and overlying seawater can also provide a barrier, reducing the escape of seeping CO<sub>2</sub> to the atmosphere. These hazards are distinctly different from the environmental effects of the dissolved CO<sub>2</sub> on aquatic life in the water column, which are discussed in Chapter 6. No studies specifically address the environmental effects of seepage from sub-seabed geological storage sites.

#### 5.7.4.4 Induced seismicity

Underground injection of CO<sub>2</sub> or other fluids into porous rock at pressures substantially higher than formation pressures can induce fracturing and movement along faults (see Section 5.5.4 and Healy *et al.*, 1968; Gibbs *et al.*, 1973; Raleigh *et al.*, 1976; Sminchak *et al.*, 2002; Streit *et al.*, 2005; Wo *et al.*, 2005). Induced fracturing and fault activation may pose two kinds of risks. First, brittle failure and associated microseismicity induced by overpressuring can create or enhance fracture permeability, thus providing pathways for unwanted CO<sub>2</sub> migration (Streit and Hillis, 2003). Second, fault activation can, in principle, induce earthquakes large enough to cause damage (e.g., Healy *et al.*, 1968).

Fluid injection into boreholes can induce microseismic activity, as for example at the Rangely Oil Field in Colorado, USA (Gibbs *et al.*, 1973; Raleigh *et al.*, 1976), in test sites

such as the drillholes of the German continental deep drilling programme (Shapiro *et al.*, 1997; Zoback and Harjes, 1997) or the Cold Lake Oil Field, Alberta, Canada (Talebi *et al.*, 1998). Deep-well injection of waste fluids may induce earthquakes with moderate local magnitudes ( $M_L$ ), as suggested for the 1967 Denver earthquakes ( $M_L$  of 5.3; Healy *et al.*, 1968; Wyss and Molnar, 1972) and the 1986–1987 Ohio earthquakes ( $M_L$  of 4.9; Ahmad and Smith, 1988) in the United States. Seismicity induced by fluid injection is usually assumed to result from increased pore-fluid pressure in the hypocentral region of the seismic event (e.g., Healy *et al.*, 1968; Talebi *et al.*, 1998).

Readily applicable methods exist to assess and control induced fracturing or fault activation (see Section 5.5.3). Several geomechanical methods have been identified for assessing the stability of faults and estimating maximum sustainable pore-fluid pressures for CO<sub>2</sub> storage (Streit and Hillis, 2003). Such methods, which require the determination of *in situ* stresses, fault geometries and relevant rock strengths, are based on brittle failure criteria and have been applied to several study sites for potential CO<sub>2</sub> storage (Rigg *et al.*, 2001; Gibson-Poole *et al.*, 2002).

The monitoring of microseismic events, especially in the vicinity of injection wells, can indicate whether pore fluid pressures have locally exceeded the strength of faults, fractures or intact rock. Acoustic transducers that record microseismic events in monitoring wells of CO<sub>2</sub> storage sites can be used to provide real-time control to keep injection pressures below the levels that induce seismicity. Together with the modelling techniques mentioned above, monitoring can reduce the chance of damage to top seals and fault seals (at CO<sub>2</sub> storage sites) caused by injection-related pore-pressure increases.

Fault activation is primarily dependent on the extent and magnitude of the pore-fluid-pressure perturbations. It is therefore determined more by the quantity and rate than by the kind of fluid injected. Estimates of the risk of inducing significant earthquakes may therefore be based on the diverse and extensive experience with deep-well injection of various aqueous and gaseous streams for disposal and storage. Perhaps the most pertinent experience is the injection of CO<sub>2</sub> for EOR; about 30 MtCO<sub>2</sub> yr<sup>-1</sup> is now injected for EOR worldwide and the cumulative total injected exceeds 0.5 GtCO<sub>2</sub>, yet there have been no significant seismic effects attributed to CO<sub>2</sub>-EOR. In addition to CO<sub>2</sub>, injected fluids include brines associated with oil and gas production (>2 Gt yr<sup>-1</sup>); Floridan aquifer wastewater (>0.5 Gt yr<sup>-1</sup>); hazardous wastes (>30 Mt yr<sup>-1</sup>); and natural gas (>100 Mt yr<sup>-1</sup>) (Wilson *et al.*, 2003).

While few of these cases may precisely mirror the conditions under which CO<sub>2</sub> would be injected for storage (the peak pressures in CO<sub>2</sub>-EOR may, for example, be lower than would be used in formation storage), these quantities compare to or exceed, plausible flows of CO<sub>2</sub> into storage. For example, in some cases such as the Rangely Oil Field, USA, current reservoir pressures even exceed the original formation pressure (Raleigh *et al.*, 1976). Thus, they provide a substantial body of empirical data upon which to assess the likelihood of induced seismicity resulting from fluid injection. The fact that only a few

individual seismic events associated with deep-well injection have been recorded suggests that the risks are low. Perhaps more importantly, these experiences demonstrate that the regulatory limits imposed on injection pressures are sufficient to avoid significant injection-induced seismicity. Designing CO<sub>2</sub> storage projects to operate within these parameters should be possible. Nevertheless, because formation pressures in CO<sub>2</sub> storage formations may exceed those found in CO<sub>2</sub>-EOR projects, more experience with industrial-scale CO<sub>2</sub> storage projects will be needed to fully assess risks of microseismicity.

#### 5.7.4.5 Implications of gas impurity

Under some circumstances, H<sub>2</sub>S, SO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>2</sub> and other trace gases may be stored along with CO<sub>2</sub> (Bryant and Lake, 2005; Knauss *et al.*, 2005) and this may affect the level of risk. For example, H<sub>2</sub>S is considerably more toxic than CO<sub>2</sub> and well blow-outs containing H<sub>2</sub>S may present higher risks than well blow-outs from storage sites that contain only CO<sub>2</sub>. Similarly, dissolution of SO<sub>2</sub> in groundwater creates a far stronger acid than does dissolution of CO<sub>2</sub>; hence, the mobilization of metals in groundwater and soils may be higher, leading to greater risk of exposure to hazardous levels of trace metals. While there has not been a systematic and comprehensive assessment of how these additional constituents would affect the risks associated with CO<sub>2</sub> storage, it is worth noting that at Weyburn, one of the most carefully monitored CO<sub>2</sub> injection projects and one for which a considerable effort has been devoted to risk assessment, the injected gas contains approximately 2% H<sub>2</sub>S (Wilson and Monea, 2005). To date, most risk assessment studies have assumed that only CO<sub>2</sub> is stored; therefore, insufficient information is available to assess the risks associated with gas impurities at the present time.

#### 5.7.5 Risk assessment methodology

Risk assessment aims to identify and quantify potential risks caused by the subsurface injection of CO<sub>2</sub>, where risk denotes a combination (often the product) of the probability of an event happening and the consequences of the event. Risk assessment should be an integral element of risk-management activities, spanning site selection, site characterization, storage system design, monitoring and, if necessary, remediation.

The operation of a CO<sub>2</sub> storage facility will necessarily involve risks arising from the operation of surface facilities such as pipelines, compressors and wellheads. The assessment of such risks is routine practice in the oil and gas industry and available assessment methods like hazard and operability and quantitative risk assessment are directly applicable. Assessment of such risks can be made with considerable confidence, because estimates of failure probabilities and the consequences of failure can be based directly on experience. Techniques used for assessment of operational risks will not, in general, be readily applicable to assessment of risks arising from long-term storage of CO<sub>2</sub> underground. However, they are applicable to the operating phase of a storage project. The remainder of this subsection addresses the long-term risks.

Risk assessment methodologies are diverse; new methodologies arise in response to new classes of problems. Because analysis of the risks posed by geological storage of CO<sub>2</sub> is a new field, no well-established methodology for assessing such risks exists. Methods dealing with the long-term risks posed by the transport of materials through the subsurface have been developed in the area of hazardous and nuclear waste management (Hodgkinson and Sumerling, 1990; North, 1999). These techniques provide a useful basis for assessing the risks of CO<sub>2</sub> storage. Their applicability may be limited, however, because the focus of these techniques has been on assessing the low-volume disposal of hazardous materials, whereas the geological storage of CO<sub>2</sub> is high-volume disposal of a material that involves comparatively mild hazards.

Several substantial efforts are under way to assess the risks posed by particular storage sites (Gale, 2003). These risk assessment activities cover a wide range of reservoirs, use a diversity of methods and consider a very wide class of risks. The description of a representative selection of these risk assessment efforts is summarized in Table 5.6.

The development of a comprehensive catalogue of the risks and of the mechanisms that underlie them, provides a good foundation for systematic risk assessment. Many of the ongoing risk assessment efforts are now cooperating to identify, classify and screen all factors that may influence the safety of storage facilities, by using the features, events and processes (FEP) methodology. In this context, *features* includes a list of parameters, such as storage reservoir permeability, caprock thickness and number of injection wells. *Events* includes processes such as seismic events, well blow-outs and penetration of the storage site by new wells. *Processes* refers to the physical and chemical processes, such as multiphase flow, chemical reactions and geomechanical stress changes that influence storage capacity and security. FEP databases tie information on individual FEPs to relevant literature and allow classification with respect to likelihood, spatial scale, time scale and so on. However, there are alternative approaches.

Most risk assessments involve the use of scenarios that describe possible future states of the storage facility and events that result in leakage of CO<sub>2</sub> or other risks. Each scenario may be considered as an assemblage of selected FEPs. Some risk assessments define a reference scenario that represents the most probable evolution of the system. Variant scenarios are then constructed with alternative FEPs. Various methods are used to structure and rationalize the process of scenario definition in an attempt to reduce the role of subjective judgements in determining the outcomes.

Scenarios are the starting points for selecting and developing mathematical-physical models (Section 5.4.2). Such performance assessment models may include representations of all relevant components including the stored CO<sub>2</sub>, the reservoir, the seal, the overburden, the soil and the atmosphere. Many of the fluid-transport models used for risk assessment are derived from (or identical to) well-established models used in the oil and gas or groundwater management industries (Section 5.4.2). The detail or resolution of various components may vary greatly. Some

**Table 5.6** Representative selection of risk assessment models and efforts.

Project title	Description and status
Weyburn/ECOMatters	New model, CQUESTRA, developed to enable probabilistic risk assessment. A simple box model is used with explicit representation of transport between boxes caused by failure of wells.
Weyburn/Monitor Scientific	Scenario-based modelling that uses an industry standard reservoir simulation tool (Eclipse3000) based on a realistic model of known reservoir conditions. Initial treatment of wells involves assigning a uniform permeability.
NGCAS/ECL technology	Probabilistic risk assessment using fault tree and FEP (features, events and processes) database. Initial study focused on the Forties oil and gas field located offshore in the North Sea. Concluded that flow through caprock transport by advection in formation waters not important, work on assessing leakage due to well failures ongoing.
SAMARCADS (safety aspects of CO <sub>2</sub> storage)	Methods and tools for HSE risk assessment applied to two storage systems an onshore gas storage facility and an offshore formation.
RITE	Scenario-based analysis of leakage risks in a large offshore formation. Will assess scenarios involving rapid release through faults activated by seismic events.
Battelle	Probabilistic risk assessment of an onshore formation storage site that is intended to represent the Mountaineer site.
GEODISC	Completed a quantitative risk assessment for four sites in Australia: the Petrel Sub-basin; the Dongra depleted oil and gas field; the offshore Gippsland Basin; and, offshore Barrow Island. Also produced a risk assessment report that addressed the socio-political needs of stakeholders.
UK-DTI	Probabilistic risk assessment of failures in surface facilities that uses models and operational data. Assessment of risk of release from geological storage that uses an expert-based Delphi process.

models are designed to allow explicit treatment of uncertainty in input parameters (Saripalli *et al.*, 2003; Stenhouse *et al.*, 2005; Wildenborg *et al.*, 2005a).

Our understanding of abandoned-well behaviour over long time scales is at present relatively poor. Several groups are now collecting data on the performance of well construction materials in high-CO<sub>2</sub> environments and building wellbore simulation models that will couple geomechanics, geochemistry and fluid transport (Scherer *et al.*, 2005; Wilson and Monea, 2005). The combination of better models and new data should enable the integration of physically based predictive models of wellbore performance into larger performance-assessment models, enabling more systematic assessment of leakage from wells.

The parameter values (e.g., permeability of a caprock) and the structure of the performance assessment models (e.g., the processes included or excluded) will both be, in general, uncertain. Risk analysis may or may not treat this uncertainty explicitly. When risks are assessed deterministically, fixed parameter values are chosen to represent the (often unknown) probability distributions. Often the parameter values are selected ‘conservatively’; that is, they are selected so that risks are overestimated, although in practice such selections are problematic because the relationship between the parameter value and the risk may itself be uncertain.

Wherever possible, it is preferable to treat uncertainty explicitly. In probabilistic risk assessments, explicit probability distributions are used for some (or all) parameters. Methods such as Monte Carlo analysis are then used to produce probability distributions for various risks. The required probability distributions may be derived directly from data or may involve

formal quantification of expert judgements (Morgan and Henrion, 1999). In some cases, probabilistic risk assessment may require that the models be simplified because of limitations on available computing resources.

Studies of natural and engineered analogues provide a strong basis for understanding and quantifying the health, safety and environmental risks that arise from CO<sub>2</sub> that seeps from the shallow subsurface to the atmosphere. Natural analogues are of less utility in assessing the likelihood of various processes that transport CO<sub>2</sub> from the storage reservoir to the near-surface environment. This is because the geological character of such analogues (e.g., CO<sub>2</sub> transport and seepage in highly fractured zones shaped by volcanism) will typically be very different from sites chosen for geological storage. Engineered analogues such as natural gas storage and CO<sub>2</sub>-EOR can provide a basis for deriving quantitative probabilistic models of well performance.

Results from actual risk and assessment for CO<sub>2</sub> storage are provided in 5.7.3.

### 5.7.6 Risk management

Risk management entails the application of a structured process to identify and quantify the risks associated with a given process, to evaluate these, taking into account stakeholder input and context, to modify the process to remove excess risks and to identify and implement appropriate monitoring and intervention strategies to manage the remaining risks.

For geological storage, effective risk mitigation consists of four interrelated activities:

- Careful site selection, including performance and risk

assessment (Section 5.4) and socio-economic and environmental factors;

- Monitoring to provide assurance that the storage project is performing as expected and to provide early warning in the event that it begins to leak (Section 5.6);
- Effective regulatory oversight (Section 5.8);
- Implementation of remediation measures to eliminate or limit the causes and impacts of leakage (Section 5.7.7).

Risk management strategies must use the inputs from the risk assessment process to enable quantitative estimates of the degree of risk mitigation that can be achieved by various measures and to establish an appropriate level of monitoring, with intervention options available if necessary. Experience from natural gas storage projects and disposal of liquid wastes has demonstrated the effectiveness of this approach to risk mitigation (Wilson *et al.*, 2003; Apps, 2005; Perry, 2005).

### 5.7.7 Remediation of leaking storage projects

Geological storage projects will be selected and operated to avoid leakage. However, in rare cases, leakage may occur and remediation measures will be needed, either to stop the leak or to prevent human or ecosystem impact. Moreover, the availability of remediation options may provide an additional level of assurance to the public that geological storage can be safe and effective. While little effort has focused on remediation options thus far, Benson and Hepple (2005) surveyed the practices used to remediate natural gas storage projects, groundwater and soil contamination, as well as disposal of liquid waste in deep geological formations. On the basis of these surveys, remediation options were identified for most of the leakage scenarios that have been identified, namely:

- Leaks within the storage reservoir;
- Leakage out of the storage formation up faults and fractures;
- Shallow groundwater;
- Vadose zone and soil;
- Surface fluxes;
- CO<sub>2</sub> in indoor air, especially basements;
- Surface water.

Identifying options for remediating leakage of CO<sub>2</sub> from active or abandoned wells is particularly important, because they are known vulnerabilities (Gasda *et al.*, 2004; Perry, 2005). Stopping blow-outs or leaks from injection or abandoned wells can be accomplished with standard techniques, such as injecting a heavy mud into the well casing. If the wellhead is not accessible, a nearby well can be drilled to intercept the casing below the ground surface and then pump mud down into the interception well. After control of the well is re-established, the well can be repaired or abandoned. Leaking injection wells can be repaired by replacing the injection tubing and packers. If the annular space behind the casing is leaking, the casing can be perforated to allow injection (squeezing) of cement behind the casing until the leak is stopped. If the well cannot be repaired,

it can be abandoned by following the procedure outlined in Section 5.5.2.

Table 5.7 provides an overview of the remediation options available for the leakage scenarios listed above. Some methods are well established, while others are more speculative. Additional detailed studies are needed to further assess the feasibility of applying these to geological storage projects – studies that are based on realistic scenarios, simulations and field studies.

## 5.8 Legal issues and public acceptance

What legal and regulatory issues might be involved in CO<sub>2</sub> storage? How do they differ from one country to the next and from onshore to offshore? What international treaties exist that have bearing on geological storage? How does and how will the public view geological storage? These subjects are addressed in this section, which is primarily concerned with geological storage, both onshore and offshore.

### 5.8.1 International law

This section considers the legal position of geological CO<sub>2</sub> storage under international law. Primary sources, namely the relevant treaties, provide the basis for any assessment of the legal position. While States, either individually or jointly, apply their own interpretations to treaty provisions, any determination of the ‘correct’ interpretation will fall to the International Court of Justice or an arbitral tribunal in accordance with the dispute settlement mechanism under that treaty.

#### 5.8.1.1 Sources and nature of international obligations

According to general principles of customary international law, States can exercise their sovereignty in their territories and therefore could engage in activities such as the storage of CO<sub>2</sub> (both geological and ocean) in those areas under their jurisdiction. However, if such storage causes transboundary impacts, States have the responsibility to ensure that activities within their jurisdiction or control do not cause damage to the environment of other States or of areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction.

More specifically, there exist a number of global and regional environmental treaties, notably those on climate change and the law of the sea and marine environment, which, as presently drafted, could be interpreted as relevant to the permissibility of CO<sub>2</sub> storage, particularly offshore geological storage (Table 5.8).

Before making any assessment of the compatibility of CO<sub>2</sub> storage with the international legal obligations under these treaties, the general nature of such obligations should be recalled – namely that:

- Obligations under a treaty fall only on the Parties to that treaty;
- States take such obligations seriously and so will look to the provisions of such treaties before reaching policy decisions;

**Table 5.7.** Remediation options for geological CO<sub>2</sub> storage projects (after Benson and Hepple, 2005).

Scenario	Remediation options
Leakage up faults, fractures and spill points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lower injection pressure by injecting at a lower rate or through more wells (Buschbach and Bond, 1974);</li> <li>• Lower reservoir pressure by removing water or other fluids from the storage structure;</li> <li>• Intersect the leakage with extraction wells in the vicinity of the leak;</li> <li>• Create a hydraulic barrier by increasing the reservoir pressure upstream of the leak;</li> <li>• Lower the reservoir pressure by creating a pathway to access new compartments in the storage reservoir;</li> <li>• Stop injection to stabilize the project;</li> <li>• Stop injection, produce the CO<sub>2</sub> from the storage reservoir and reinject it back into a more suitable storage structure.</li> </ul>
Leakage through active or abandoned wells	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repair leaking injection wells with standard well recompletion techniques such as replacing the injection tubing and packers;</li> <li>• Repair leaking injection wells by squeezing cement behind the well casing to plug leaks behind the casing;</li> <li>• Plug and abandon injection wells that cannot be repaired by the methods listed above;</li> <li>• Stop blow-outs from injection or abandoned wells with standard techniques to 'kill' a well such as injecting a heavy mud into the well casing. After control of the well is re-established, the recompletion or abandonment practices described above can be used. If the wellhead is not accessible, a nearby well can be drilled to intercept the casing below the ground surface and 'kill' the well by pumping mud down the interception well (DOGGR, 1974).</li> </ul>
Accumulation of CO <sub>2</sub> in the vadose zone and soil gas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accumulations of gaseous CO<sub>2</sub> in groundwater can be removed or at least made immobile, by drilling wells that intersect the accumulations and extracting the CO<sub>2</sub>. The extracted CO<sub>2</sub> could be vented to the atmosphere or reinjected back into a suitable storage site;</li> <li>• Residual CO<sub>2</sub> that is trapped as an immobile gas phase can be removed by dissolving it in water and extracting it as a dissolved phase through groundwater extraction well;</li> <li>• CO<sub>2</sub> that has dissolved in the shallow groundwater could be removed, if needed, by pumping to the surface and aerating it to remove the CO<sub>2</sub>. The groundwater could then either be used directly or reinjected back into the groundwater;</li> <li>• If metals or other trace contaminants have been mobilized by acidification of the groundwater, 'pump-and-treat' methods can be used to remove them. Alternatively, hydraulic barriers can be created to immobilize and contain the contaminants by appropriately placed injection and extraction wells. In addition to these active methods of remediation, passive methods that rely on natural biogeochemical processes may also be used.</li> </ul>
Leakage into the vadose zone and accumulation in soil gas (Looney and Falta, 2000)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CO<sub>2</sub> can be extracted from the vadose zone and soil gas by standard vapor extraction techniques from horizontal or vertical wells;</li> <li>• Fluxes from the vadose zone to the ground surface could be decreased or stopped by caps or gas vapour barriers. Pumping below the cap or vapour barrier could be used to deplete the accumulation of CO<sub>2</sub> in the vadose zone;</li> <li>• Since CO<sub>2</sub> is a dense gas, it could be collected in subsurface trenches. Accumulated gas could be pumped from the trenches and released to the atmosphere or reinjected back underground;</li> <li>• Passive remediation techniques that rely only on diffusion and 'barometric pumping' could be used to slowly deplete one-time releases of CO<sub>2</sub> into the vadose zone. This method will not be effective for managing ongoing releases because it is relatively slow;</li> <li>• Acidification of the soils from contact with CO<sub>2</sub> could be remediated by irrigation and drainage. Alternatively, agricultural supplements such as lime could be used to neutralize the soil;</li> </ul>
Large releases of CO <sub>2</sub> to the atmosphere	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For releases inside a building or confined space, large fans could be used to rapidly dilute CO<sub>2</sub> to safe levels;</li> <li>• For large releases spread out over a large area, dilution from natural atmospheric mixing (wind) will be the only practical method for diluting the CO<sub>2</sub>;</li> <li>• For ongoing leakage in established areas, risks of exposure to high concentrations of CO<sub>2</sub> in confined spaces (e.g. cellar around a wellhead) or during periods of very low wind, fans could be used to keep the rate of air circulation high enough to ensure adequate dilution.</li> </ul>
Accumulation of CO <sub>2</sub> in indoor environments with chronic low-level leakage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slow releases into structures can be eliminated by using techniques that have been developed for controlling release of radon and volatile organic compounds into buildings. The two primary methods for managing indoor releases are basement/substructure venting or pressurization. Both would have the effect of diluting the CO<sub>2</sub> before it enters the indoor environment (Gadgil <i>et al.</i>, 1994; Fischer <i>et al.</i>, 1996).</li> </ul>
Accumulation in surface water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shallow surface water bodies that have significant turnover (shallow lakes) or turbulence (streams) will quickly release dissolved CO<sub>2</sub> back into the atmosphere;</li> <li>• For deep, stably stratified lakes, active systems for venting gas accumulations have been developed and applied at Lake Nyos and Monoun in Cameroon (<a href="http://perso.wanadoo.fr/mhalb/nyos/">http://perso.wanadoo.fr/mhalb/nyos/</a>).</li> </ul>

**Table 5.8** Main international treaties for consideration in the context of geological CO<sub>2</sub> storage (full titles are given in the Glossary).

Treaty	Adoption (Signature)	Entry into Force	Number of Parties/Ratifications
UNFCCC	1992	1994	189
Kyoto Protocol (KP)	1997	2005	132 <sup>a</sup>
UNCLOS	1982	1994	145
London Convention (LC)	1972	1975	80
London Protocol (LP)	1996	No	20 <sup>a</sup> (26)
OSPAR	1992	1998	15
Basel Convention	1989	1992	162

<sup>a</sup> Several other countries have also announced that their ratification is under way.

- Most environmental treaties contain underlying concepts, such as sustainable development, precautionary approach or principles, that should be taken into account when applying their provisions;
- In terms of supremacy of different treaties, later treaties will supersede earlier ones, but this will depend on *lex specialis*, that is, provisions on a specific subject will supersede general ones (relevant to the relationship between the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its Kyoto Protocol (KP) and the marine treaties);
- Amendment of treaties, if needed to permit CO<sub>2</sub> storage, requires further negotiations, a minimum level of support for their adoption and subsequent entry into force and will amend earlier treaties only for those Parties that have ratified the amendments.

#### 5.8.1.2 Key issues in the application of the marine treaties to CO<sub>2</sub> storage

When interpreting the treaties for the purposes of determining the permissibility of CO<sub>2</sub> storage, particularly offshore geological storage, it is important to bear in mind that the treaties were not drafted to facilitate geological storage but to prohibit marine dumping. Issues to bear in mind include the following:

- Whether storage constitutes ‘dumping’, that is, it does not if the placement of the CO<sub>2</sub> is ‘other than for the purposes of the mere disposal thereof’ in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the London Convention (LC), the London Protocol (LP) and the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR). Alternative scenarios include experiments and storage for the purposes of enhanced oil recovery;
- Whether CO<sub>2</sub> storage can benefit from treaty exemptions concerning wastes arising from the normal operations of offshore installations (LC/LP) or as discharges or emissions from them (OSPAR);
- Is storage in the seabed expressly covered in the treaties or is it limited to the water column (UNCLOS, LC/LP, OSPAR)?
- Is CO<sub>2</sub> (or the substance captured if containing impurities) an ‘industrial waste’ (LC), ‘hazardous waste’ (Basel

Convention) or does the process of its storage constitute ‘pollution’ (UNCLOS) or is it none of these?

- Does the method of the CO<sub>2</sub> reaching the disposal site involve pipelines, vessels or offshore structures (LC/LP, OSPAR)?

#### 5.8.1.3 Literature on geological storage under international law

While it is necessary to look at and interpret the treaty provisions themselves to determine the permissibility of CO<sub>2</sub> storage, secondary sources contain States’ or authors’ individual interpretations of the treaties.

In their analysis, Purdy and Macrory (2004) conclude that since stored CO<sub>2</sub> does not enter the atmosphere, it will not be classed as an ‘emission’ for the purposes of the UNFCCC/KP, but as an ‘emission reduction’. Emission reductions by CO<sub>2</sub> storage are permitted under the UNFCCC/KP, which allows projects that reduce greenhouse gases at the source. However, the authors consider a potential problem in UNFCCC/KP providing for transparent verification of emission reductions and there could be concerns over permanence, leakage and security.

In terms of marine treaties and in relation to OSPAR, which applies to the North East Atlantic, a report from the OSPAR Group of Jurists and Linguists contains the State Parties’ interpretation of OSPAR on the issue of geological (and ocean) offshore storage (OSPAR Commission, 2004). It concludes that, as there is the possibility of pollution or of other adverse environmental effects, the precautionary principle must be applied. More specifically, the report interprets OSPAR as allowing CO<sub>2</sub> placement in the North East Atlantic (including seabed and subsoil) through a *pipeline from land*, provided it does not involve subsequent activities through a vessel or an offshore installation (e.g., an oil or gas platform). The report states, however, that placement from a vessel is prohibited, unless for the purpose of experimentation (which would then require being carried out in accordance with other relevant provisions of OSPAR). In the case of placement in the OSPAR maritime area from an *offshore installation*, this depends upon whether the CO<sub>2</sub> to be stored results from offshore or land-based activities. In the case of offshore-derived CO<sub>2</sub>, experimental placement will again be subject to the Convention’s provisions,

while placement for EOR, climate change mitigation or indeed mere disposal will be strictly subject to authorization or regulation. As regards onshore-derived CO<sub>2</sub>, placement only for experimental or EOR purposes will be allowed, subject to the same caveats as for offshore-derived CO<sub>2</sub>. The report concludes that, since the applicable OSPAR regime is determined by the method and purpose of placement and not by the effect of placement on the marine environment, the results may well be that placements with different impacts on the environment (for example, placement in the water column and placement in underground strata) may not be distinguished, while different methods of placement having the same impact may be treated differently. A similar analytical exercise concerning the LC/LP has been initiated by Parties to that Convention.

There is uncertainty regarding the extent to which CO<sub>2</sub> storage falls under the jurisdiction of the marine treaties. Some authors argue they will probably not allow such storage or that the LC (globally) and OSPAR (in the North East Atlantic) could significantly restrict geological offshore storage (Lenstra and van Engelenburg, 2002; Bewers, 2003). Specifically regarding the issues raised above, the following propositions have been suggested:

- The long-term storage of CO<sub>2</sub> amounts to ‘dumping’ under the conventions (Purdy and Macrory, 2004); if CO<sub>2</sub> were to be injected for an industrial purpose, that is, EOR, it would not be considered dumping of waste and would be allowed under the LC (Wall *et al.*, 2005);
- CO<sub>2</sub> captured from an oil or natural gas extraction operation and stored offshore in a geological formation would not be considered ‘dumping’ under the LC (Wall *et al.*, 2005);
- There remain some ambiguities in the provisions of some conventions, especially in relation to the option of geological storage under the seabed (Ducroux and Bewers, 2005). UNCLOS provides the international legal basis for a range of future uses for the seafloor that could potentially include geological storage of CO<sub>2</sub> (Cook and Carleton, 2000);
- Under the LC, CO<sub>2</sub> might fall under the ‘industrial waste’ category in the list of wastes prohibited for disposal, while under the LP and OSPAR, it would probably not fall under the categories approved for dumping and should therefore be considered as waste and this is prohibited (Purdy and Macrory, 2004).

If CO<sub>2</sub> is transported *by ship* and then disposed of, either directly from the ship or from an offshore installation, this will be prohibited under the LC/LP (Wall *et al.*, 2005) and OSPAR (Purdy and Macrory, 2004). If CO<sub>2</sub> is transported *by pipeline* to an offshore installation and then disposed of, that would be prohibited under the LC/LP, but not necessarily under OSPAR, where prohibition against dumping applies only to installations carrying out activities concerning hydrocarbons (Purdy and Macrory, 2004). The option of storing CO<sub>2</sub> transported through a pipeline from land appears to remain open under most conventions (Ducroux and Bewers, 2005); the LC/LP apply only to activities that involve ships or platforms and contain no further controls governing pipeline discharges from land-based

sources. Any such discharges would probably be excluded from control by the LC because it would not involve ‘disposal at sea’ (Wall *et al.*, 2005). Under OSPAR, however, States have general environmental obligations with respect to land-based sources (Purdy and Macrory, 2004) (and discharges from pipelines from land will be regulated, although not prohibited).

### 5.8.2 National regulations and standards

States can regulate subsurface injection and storage of CO<sub>2</sub> within their jurisdiction in accordance with their national rules and regulations. Such rules and regulations could be provided by the mining laws, resource conservation laws, laws on drinking water, waste disposal, oil and gas production, treatment of high-pressurized gases and others. An analysis of existing regulations in North America, Europe, Japan and Australia highlights the lack of regulations that are specifically relevant for CO<sub>2</sub> storage and the lack of clarity relating to post-injection responsibilities (IEA-GHG, 2003; IOGCC, 2005).

Presently, CO<sub>2</sub> is injected into the subsurface for EOR and for disposal of acid gas (Section 5.2.4). Most of these recovery or disposal activities inject relatively small quantities of CO<sub>2</sub> into reasonably well-characterized formations. Generally, the longevity of CO<sub>2</sub> storage underground and the extent of long-term monitoring of the injected fluids are not specified in the regulation of these activities, which are generally regulated under the larger umbrella of upstream oil and gas production and waste disposal regulations that do not specify storage time and need for post-operational monitoring.

In Canada, the practice of deep-well injection of fluids in the subsurface, including disposal of liquid wastes, is legal and regulated. As a result of provincial jurisdiction over energy and mineral resources, there are no generally applicable national laws that specifically regulate deep-well injection of fluids. Onshore CO<sub>2</sub> geological storage would fall under provincial laws and regulations, while storage offshore and in federally administered territories would fall under federal laws and regulations. In the western provinces that are major oil and gas producers, substantive regulations specifically manage the use of injection wells. In Alberta, for example, there are detailed procedural regulations regarding well construction, operation and abandonment, within which specific standards are delineated for five classes of injection wells (Alberta Energy and Utilities Board, 1994). In Saskatchewan, *The Oil and Gas Conservation Regulations 1985* (with Amendments through 2000) prescribe standards for disposal of oil field brine and other wastes. In addition, capture, transport and operational injection of fluids, including acid gas and CO<sub>2</sub>, are by and large covered under existing regulations, but no regulations are in place for monitoring the fate of the injected fluids in the subsurface and/or for the post-abandonment stage of an injection operation.

In the United States, the Safe Drinking Water Act regulates most underground injection activities. The USEPA Underground Injection and Control (UIC) Program, created in 1980 to provide minimum standards, helps harmonize regulatory requirements for underground injection activities. The explicit goal of the UIC

programme is to protect current and potential sources of public drinking water. The Safe Drinking Water Act expressly prohibits underground injection that 'endangers' an underground source of drinking water. Endangerment is defined with reference to national primary drinking water regulations and adverse human health effects. For certain types or 'classes' of wells, regulations by the USEPA prohibit injection that causes the movement of any contaminant into an underground source of drinking water.

Wells injecting hazardous wastes require the additional development of a no-migration petition to be submitted to the regulators. These petitions place the onus of proof on the project proponent that injected fluid will not migrate from the disposal site for 10,000 years or more. The fluids can exhibit buoyancy effects, as disposed fluids can be less dense than the connate fluids of the receiving formation. Operators are required to use models to demonstrate they can satisfy the 'no-migration' requirement over 10,000 years. Wilson *et al.* (2003) suggests that this process of proving containment could provide a model for long-term storage of CO<sub>2</sub>. While detailed requirements exist for siting, constructing and monitoring injection well operation, there are no federal requirements for monitoring or verification of the actual movement of fluids within the injection zone, nor are there general requirements for monitoring in overlying zones to detect leakage. However, there are requirements for ambient monitoring in deep hazardous and industrial waste wells, with the degree of rigour varying from state to state.

Vine (2004) provides an extensive overview of environmental regulations that might affect geological CO<sub>2</sub> storage projects in California. Given that a developer may need to acquire up to 15 permits from federal, state and local authorities, Vine stresses the need for research to quantitatively assess the impacts of regulations on project development.

In Australia, permitting responsibility for onshore oil and gas activities reside with the State Governments, while offshore activities are primarily the responsibility of the Federal Government. A comprehensive assessment of the Australian regulatory regime is under way, but so far only South Australia has adopted legislation regulating the underground injection of gases such as CO<sub>2</sub> for EOR and for storage. Stringent environmental impact assessments are required for all activities that could compromise the quality of surface water or groundwater.

The 25 member states of the European Union (EU) have to ensure that geological storage of CO<sub>2</sub> is in conformity with relevant EU Directives. A number of directives could have an influence on CO<sub>2</sub> geological storage in the EU, notably those on waste (75/442/EEC), landfill (1999/31/EC), water (2000/60/EC), environmental impact assessment (85/337/EEC) and strategic environmental assessment (2001/42/EC). These directives were designed in a situation where CO<sub>2</sub> capture and storage was not taken into account and is not specifically mentioned.

There is one comprehensive Dutch study detailing legal and regulatory aspects of CO<sub>2</sub> underground injection and storage (CRUST Legal Task Force, 2001), including ownership of the stored CO<sub>2</sub>, duty of care, liability and claim settlement. It has as its basis the legal situation established by the Dutch Mining

Act of 2003 that covers 'substances' stored underground and unites previously divided regulation of onshore and offshore activities. Storage is defined as 'placing or keeping substances at depth of more than 100 m below the surface of the earth'. Legal interpretation indicates that CO<sub>2</sub> intended for storage would have to be treated as waste, because it was collected with the explicit purpose of disposal.

Regulating CO<sub>2</sub> storage presents a variety of challenges: the scale of the activity, the need to monitor and verify containment and any leakage of a buoyant fluid and the long storage time – all of which require specific regulatory considerations. Additionally, injecting large quantities of CO<sub>2</sub> into saline formations that have not been extensively characterized or may be close to populated areas creates potential risks that will need to be considered. Eventually, linkages between a CO<sub>2</sub> storage programme and a larger national and international CO<sub>2</sub> accounting regime will need to be credibly established.

### 5.8.3 *Subsurface property rights*

Storage of CO<sub>2</sub> in the subsurface raises several questions: Could rights to pore space be transferred to another party? Who owns CO<sub>2</sub> stored in pore space? How can storage of CO<sub>2</sub> in the pore space be managed so as to assure minimal damage to other property rights (e.g., mineral resources, water rights) sharing the same space? Rights to use subsurface pore space could be granted, separating them from ownership of the surface property. This, for example, appears to apply to most European countries and Canada, whereas in the United States, while there are currently no specific property-rights issues that could govern CO<sub>2</sub> storage, the rights to the subsurface can be severed from the land.

Scale is also an important issue. Simulations have shown that the areal extent of a plume of CO<sub>2</sub> injected from a 1 GW coal-fired power plant over 30 years into a 100-m-thick zone will be approximately 100 km<sup>2</sup> (Rutqvist and Tsang, 2002) and may grow after injection ceases. The approach to dealing with this issue will vary, depending on the legal framework for ownership of subsurface pore space. In Europe, for example, pore space is owned by the State and, therefore, utilization is addressed in the licensing process. In the United States, on the other hand, the determination of subsurface property rights on non-federal lands will vary according to state jurisdiction. In most jurisdictions, the surface owner is entitled to exclusive possession of the space formerly occupied by the subsurface minerals when the minerals are exhausted, that is, the 'pore space'. In other jurisdictions, however, no such precedent exists (Wilson, 2004). Some guidance for answering these questions can be found in the property rights arrangements associated with natural gas storage (McKinnon, 1998).

### 5.8.4 *Long-term liability*

It is important that liabilities that may apply to a storage project are clear to its proponent, including those liabilities that are applicable after the conclusion of the project. While a White

Paper by the European Commission outlines the general approach to environmental liability (EU, 2000), literature specifically addressing liability regimes for CO<sub>2</sub> storage is sparse. De Figueiredo *et al.* (2005) propose a framework to examine the implications of different types of liability on the viability of geological CO<sub>2</sub> storage and stress that the way in which liability is addressed may have a significant impact on costs and on public perception of CO<sub>2</sub> geological storage.

A number of novel issues arise with CO<sub>2</sub> geological storage. In addition to long-term *in-situ* risk liability, which may become a public liability after project decommissioning, global risks associated with leakage of CO<sub>2</sub> to the atmosphere may need to be considered. Current injection practices do not require any long-term monitoring or verification regime. The cost of monitoring and verification regimes and risk of leakage will be important in managing liability.

There are also considerations about the longevity of institutions and transferability of institutional knowledge. If long-term liability for CO<sub>2</sub> geological storage is transformed into a public liability, can ongoing monitoring and verification be assured and who will pay for these actions? How will information on storage locations be tracked and disseminated to other parties interested in using the subsurface? What are the time frames for storage? Is it realistic (or necessary) to put monitoring or information systems in place for hundreds of years?

Any discussion of long-term CO<sub>2</sub> geological storage also involves intergenerational liability and thus justification of such activities involves an ethical dimension. Some aspects of storage security, such as leakage up abandoned wells, may be realized only over a long time frame, thus posing a risk to future generations. Assumptions on cost, discounting and the rate of technological progress can all lead to dramatically different interpretations of liability and its importance and need to be closely examined.

### 5.8.5 Public perception and acceptance

There is insufficient public knowledge of climate change issues and of the various mitigation options, their potential impact and their practicality. The study of public perceptions and perceived acceptability of CO<sub>2</sub> capture and storage is at an early stage with few studies (Gough *et al.*, 2002; Palmgren *et al.*, 2004; Shackley *et al.*, 2004; Curry *et al.*, 2005; Itaoka *et al.*, 2005). Research on perceptions of CO<sub>2</sub> capture and storage is challenging because of (1) the relatively technical and 'remote' nature of the issue, with few immediate points of connection in the lay public's frame of reference to many key concepts; and (2) the early stage of the technology, with few examples and experiences in the public domain to draw upon as illustrations.

#### 5.8.5.1 Survey research

Curry *et al.* (2005) surveyed more than 1200 people representing a general population sample of the United States. They found that less than 4% of the respondents were familiar with the terms *carbon dioxide capture and storage* or *carbon storage*.

Moreover, there was no evidence that those who expressed familiarity were any more likely to correctly identify that the problem being addressed was global warming rather than water pollution or toxic waste. The authors also showed that there was a lack of knowledge of other power generation technologies (e.g., nuclear power, renewables) in terms of their environmental impacts and costs. Eurobarometer (2003) made similar findings across the European Union. The preference of the sample for different methods to address global warming (do nothing, expand nuclear power, continue to use fossil fuels with CO<sub>2</sub> capture and storage, expand renewables, etc.) was quite sensitive to information provided on relative costs and environmental characteristics.

Itaoka *et al.* (2005) conducted a survey of approximately a thousand people in Japan. They found much higher claimed levels of awareness of CO<sub>2</sub> capture and storage (31%) and general support for this mitigation strategy as part of a broader national climate change policy, but generally negative views on specific implementation of CO<sub>2</sub> capture and storage. Ocean storage was viewed most negatively, while offshore geological storage was perceived as the least negative. Part of the sample was provided with more information about CO<sub>2</sub> capture and storage, but this did not appear to make a large difference in the response. Factor analysis was conducted and revealed that four factors were important in influencing public opinion, namely perceptions of the environmental impacts and risks (e.g., leakage), responsibility for reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, the effectiveness of CO<sub>2</sub> capture and storage as a mitigation option and the extent to which it permits the continued use of fossil fuels.

Shackley *et al.* (2004) conducted 212 face-to-face interviews at a UK airport regarding offshore geological storage. They found the sample was in general moderately supportive of the concept of CO<sub>2</sub> capture and storage as a contribution to a 60% reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the UK by 2050 (the government's policy target). Provision of basic information on the technology increased the support that was given to it, though just under half of the sample were still undecided or expressed negative views. When compared with other mitigation options, support for CO<sub>2</sub> capture and storage increased slightly, though other options (such as renewable energy and energy efficiency) were strongly preferred. On the other hand, CO<sub>2</sub> capture and storage was much preferred to nuclear power or higher energy bills (no information on price or the environmental impact of other options was provided). When asked, unprompted, if they could think of any negative effects of CO<sub>2</sub> capture and storage, half of the respondents mentioned leakage, while others mentioned associated potential impacts upon ecosystems and human health. Others viewed CO<sub>2</sub> capture and storage negatively on the grounds it was avoiding the real problem, was short-termist or indicated a reluctance to change.

Huijts (2003) polled 112 individuals living in an area above a gas field in The Netherlands that had experienced two small earthquakes (in 1994 and 2001). She found the sample was mildly positive about CO<sub>2</sub> capture and storage in general terms, but neutral to negative about storage in the immediate

neighbourhood. The respondents also thought that the risks and drawbacks were somewhat larger than the benefits to the environment and society. The respondents considered that the personal benefits of CO<sub>2</sub> capture and storage were 'small' or 'reasonably small'. On the basis of her findings, Huijts (2003) observed the storage location could make a large difference to its acceptability; onshore storage below residential areas would probably not be viewed positively, although it has to be borne in mind that the study area had experienced recent earthquakes. Huijts also notes that many respondents (25%) tended to choose a neutral answer to questions about CO<sub>2</sub> capture and storage, suggesting they did not yet have a well-formed opinion.

Palmgren *et al.* (2004) conducted 18 face-to-face interviews in the Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA, area, followed by a closed-form survey administered to a sample of 126 individuals. The study found that provision of more information led the survey respondents to adopt a more negative view towards CO<sub>2</sub> capture and storage. The study also found that, when asked in terms of willingness to pay, the respondents were less favourable towards CO<sub>2</sub> capture and storage as a mitigation option than they were to all the other options provided (which were rated, in descending order, as follows: solar, hydro, wind, natural gas, energy efficiency, nuclear, biomass, geological storage and ocean storage). Ocean storage was viewed more negatively than geological storage, especially after information was provided.

#### 5.8.5.2 Focus-group research

Focus-group research on CO<sub>2</sub> capture and storage was conducted in the UK in 2001 and 2003 (Gough *et al.*, 2002; Shackley *et al.*, 2004). Initial reactions tended to be sceptical; only within the context of the broader discussion of climate change and the need for large cuts in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, did opinions become more receptive. Typically, participants in these groups were clear that other approaches such as energy efficiency, demand-reduction measures and renewable energy should be pursued as a priority and that CO<sub>2</sub> geological storage should be developed alongside and not as a straight alternative to, these other options. There was general support for use of CO<sub>2</sub> capture and storage as a 'bridging measure' while other zero or low carbon energy technologies are developed or as an emergency stop-gap option if such technologies are not developed in time. There was a moderate level of scepticism among participants towards both government and industry and what may motivate their promotion of CO<sub>2</sub> storage, but there was also some distrust of messages promoted by environmental groups. Levels of trust in key institutions and the role of the media were perceived to have a major influence on how CO<sub>2</sub> capture and storage would be received by the public, a point also made by Huijts (2003).

#### 5.8.5.3 Implications of the research

The existing research described above has applied different methodologies, research designs and terminology, making direct comparisons impossible. Inconsistencies in results have arisen concerning the effect of providing more detailed information to respondents and the evaluation of CO<sub>2</sub> capture and storage in general terms and in comparison with other low-

carbon mitigation options. Explanations for these differences might include the extent of concern expressed regarding future climate change. Representative samples in the USA and EU (Curry *et al.*, 2005) and most of the smaller samples (Shackley *et al.*, 2004; Itaoka *et al.*, 2005) find moderate to high levels of concern over climate change, whereas respondents in the Palmgren *et al.* (2004) study rated climate change as the least of their environmental concerns. A further explanation of the difference in perceptions might be the extent to which perceptions of onshore and offshore geological storage have been distinguished in the research.

From this limited research, it appears that at least three conditions may have to be met before CO<sub>2</sub> capture and storage is considered by the public as a credible technology, alongside other better known options: (1) anthropogenic global climate change has to be regarded as a relatively serious problem; (2) there must be acceptance of the need for large reductions in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions to reduce the threat of global climate change; (3) the public has to accept this technology as a non-harmful and effective option that will contribute to the resolution of (1) and (2). As noted above, many existing surveys have indicated fairly widespread concern over the problem of global climate change and a prevailing feeling that the negative impact outweighs any positive effects (e.g., Kempton *et al.*, 1995; Poortinga and Pidgeon, 2003). On the other hand, some survey and focus-group research suggests that widespread acceptance of the above factors amongst the public – in particular the need for large reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions – is sporadic and variable within and between national populations. Lack of knowledge and uncertainty regarding the economic and environmental characteristics of other principal mitigation options have also been identified as an impediment to evaluating the CO<sub>2</sub> capture and storage option (Curry *et al.*, 2005).

Acceptance of the three conditions does not imply support for CO<sub>2</sub> capture and storage. The technology may still be rejected by some as too 'end of pipe', treating the symptoms not the cause, delaying the point at which the decision to move away from the use of fossil fuels is taken, diverting attention from the development of renewable energy options and holding potential long-term risks that are too difficult to assess with certainty. Conversely, there may be little realization of the practical difficulties in meeting existing and future energy needs from renewables. Acceptance of CO<sub>2</sub> capture and storage, where it occurs, is frequently 'reluctant' rather than 'enthusiastic' and in some cases reflects the perception that CO<sub>2</sub> capture and storage might be required because of failure to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in other ways. Furthermore, several of the studies above indicate that an 'in principle' acceptance of the technology can be very different from acceptance of storage at a specific site.

#### 5.8.5.4 Underground storage of other fluids

Given minimal experience with storage of CO<sub>2</sub>, efforts have been made to find analogues that have similar regulatory (and hence public acceptance) characteristics (Reiner and Herzog, 2004). Proposals for underground natural gas storage schemes have generated public opposition in some localities, despite similar

facilities operating close by without apparent concern (Gough *et al.*, 2002). Concern regarding the effects of underground natural gas storage upon local property prices and difficult-to-assess risks appear in one case to have been taken up and possibly amplified by the local media. Public opposition to onshore underground storage is likely to be heightened by accidents such as the two deaths from explosions in 2001 in Hutchinson, Kansas (USA), when compressed natural gas escaped from salt cavern storage facilities (Lee, 2001). However, throughout the world today, many hundreds of natural gas storage sites are evidently acceptable to local communities. There has also been a study of the Underground Injection Control programme in the United States, because of the perceived similarity of the governing regulatory regime (Wilson *et al.*, 2003).

## 5.9 Costs of geological storage

How much will geological storage cost? What are the major factors driving storage costs? Can costs be offset by enhanced oil and gas production? These questions are covered in this section. It starts with a review of the cost elements and factors that affect storage costs and then presents estimated costs for different storage options. The system boundary for the storage costs used here is the delivery point between the transport system and the storage site facilities. It is generally expected that CO<sub>2</sub> will be delivered as a dense fluid (liquid or supercritical) under pressure at this boundary. The costs of capture, compression and transport to the site are excluded from the storage costs presented here. The figures presented are levelized costs, which incorporate economic assumptions such as the project lifetime, discount rates and inflation (see Section 3.7.2). They incorporate both capital and operating costs.

### 5.9.1 Cost elements for geological storage

The major capital costs for CO<sub>2</sub> geological storage are drilling wells, infrastructure and project management. For some storage sites, there may be in-field pipelines to distribute and deliver CO<sub>2</sub> from centralized facilities to wells within the site. Where required, these are included in storage cost estimates. For enhanced oil, gas and coal bed methane options, additional facilities may be required to handle produced oil and gas. Reuse of infrastructure and wells may reduce costs at some sites. At some sites, there may be additional costs for remediation work for well abandonment that are not included in existing estimates. Operating costs include manpower, maintenance and fuel. The costs for licensing, geological, geophysical and engineering feasibility studies required for site selection, reservoir characterization and evaluation before storage starts are included in the cost estimates. Bock *et al.* (2003) estimate these as US\$ 1.685 million for saline formation and depleted oil and gas field storage case studies in the United States. Characterization costs will vary widely from site to site, depending on the extent of pre-existing data, geological complexity of the storage formations and caprock and risks of leakage. In addition, to some degree, economies of scale may

lower the cost per tonne of larger projects; this possibility has not been considered in these estimates.

Monitoring of storage will add further costs and is usually reported separately from the storage cost estimates in the literature. These costs will be sensitive to the regulatory requirements and duration of monitoring. Over the long term, there may be additional costs for remediation and for liabilities.

The cost of CO<sub>2</sub> geological storage is site-specific, which leads to a high degree of variability. Cost depends on the type of storage option (e.g., oil or gas reservoir, saline formation), location, depth and characteristics of the storage reservoir formation and the benefits and prices of any saleable products. Onshore storage costs depend on the location, terrain and other geographic factors. The unit costs are usually higher offshore, reflecting the need for platforms or sub-sea facilities and higher operating costs, as shown in separate studies for Europe (Hendriks *et al.*, 2002) and Australia (Allinson *et al.*, 2003). The equipment and technologies required for storage are already widely used in the energy industries, so that costs can be estimated with confidence.

### 5.9.2 Cost estimates

There are comprehensive assessments of storage costs for the United States, Australia and Europe (Hendriks *et al.*, 2002; Allinson *et al.*, 2003; Bock *et al.*, 2003). These are based on representative geological characteristics for the regions. In some cases, the original cost estimates include compression and pipeline costs and corrections have been made to derive storage costs (Table 5.9). These estimates include capital, operating and site characterization costs, but exclude monitoring costs, remediation and any additional costs required to address long-term liabilities.

The storage option type, depth and geological characteristics affect the number, spacing and cost of wells, as well as the facilities cost. Well and compression costs both increase with depth. Well costs depend on the specific technology, the location, the scale of the operation and local regulations. The cost of wells is a major component; however, the cost of individual wells ranges from about US\$ 200,000 for some onshore sites (Bock *et al.*, 2003) to US\$ 25 million for offshore horizontal wells (Table 5.10; Kaarstad, 2002). Increasing storage costs with depth have been demonstrated (Hendriks *et al.*, 2002). The geological characteristics of the injection formation are another major cost driver, that is, the reservoir thickness, permeability and effective radius that affect the amount and rate of CO<sub>2</sub> injection and therefore the number of wells needed. It is more costly to inject and store other gases (NO<sub>x</sub>, SO<sub>x</sub>, H<sub>2</sub>S) with CO<sub>2</sub> because of their corrosive and hazardous nature, although the capture cost may be reduced (Allinson *et al.*, 2003).

**Table 5.9** Compilation of CO<sub>2</sub> storage cost estimates for different options.

Option type	On or offshore	Location	US\$/tCO <sub>2</sub> stored			Comments	Nature of Midpoint value
			Low	Mid	High		
Saline formation	Onshore	Australia	0.2	0.5	5.1	Statistics for 20 sites <sup>a</sup>	Median
Saline formation	Onshore	Europe	1.9	2.8	6.2	Representative range <sup>b</sup>	Most likely value
Saline formation	Onshore	USA	0.4	0.5	4.5	Low/base/high cases for USA <sup>c</sup>	Base case for average parameters
Saline formation	Offshore	Australia	0.5	3.4	30.2	Statistics for 34 sites <sup>a</sup>	Median
Saline formation	Offshore	N. Sea	4.7	7.7	12.0	Representative range <sup>b</sup>	Most likely value
Depleted oil field	Onshore	USA	0.5	1.3	4.0	Low/base/high cases for USA <sup>c</sup>	Base case for average parameters
Depleted gas field	Onshore	USA	0.5	2.4	12.2	Low/base/high cases for USA <sup>c</sup>	Base case for average parameters
Disused oil or gas field	Onshore	Europe	1.2	1.7	3.8	Representative range <sup>b</sup>	Most likely value
Disused oil or gas field	Offshore	N. Sea	3.8	6.0	8.1	Low/base/high cases for USA <sup>c</sup>	Most likely value

Note: The ranges and low, most likely (mid), high values reported in different studies were calculated in different ways. The estimates exclude monitoring costs.

- Figures from Allinson *et al.*, (2003) are statistics for multiple cases from different sites in Australia. Low is the minimum value, most likely is median, high is maximum value of all the cases. The main determinants of storage costs are rate of injection and reservoir characteristics such as permeability, thickness, reservoir depth rather than reservoir type (such as saline aquifer, depleted field, etc.). The reservoir type could be high or low cost depending on these characteristics. The figures are adjusted to exclude compression and transport costs.
- Figures from Hendriks *et al.*, (2002) are described as a representative range of values for storage options 1000-3000 m depth. The full range of costs is acknowledged to be larger than shown. The figures are converted from Euros to US\$.
- Bock *et al.*, (2003) define a base case, low- and high-cost cases from analysis of typical reservoirs for US sites. Each case has different depth, reservoir, cost and oil/gas price parameters. The figures are adjusted to exclude compression and transport costs.

**Table 5.10** Investment costs for industry CO<sub>2</sub> storage projects.

Project	Sleipner	Snøhvit
Country	Norway	Norway
Start	1996	2006
Storage type	Aquifer	Aquifer
Annual CO <sub>2</sub> injection rate (MtCO <sub>2</sub> yr <sup>-1</sup> )	1	0.7
Onshore/Offshore	Offshore	Offshore
Number of wells	1	1
Pipeline length (km)	0	160
Capital Investment Costs (US\$ million)		
Capture and Transport	79	143
Compression and dehydration	79	70
Pipeline	none	73
Storage	15	48
Drilling and well completion	15	25
Facilities	<sup>a</sup>	12
Other	<sup>a</sup>	11
Total capital investment costs (US\$ million)	94	191
Operating Costs (US\$ million)		
Fuel and CO <sub>2</sub> tax	7	
References	Torp and Brown, 2005	Kaarstad, 2002

<sup>a</sup> No further breakdown figures are available. Subset of a larger system of capital and operating costs for several processes, mostly natural gas and condensate processing.

### 5.9.3 Cost estimates for CO<sub>2</sub> geological storage

This section reviews storage costs for options without benefits from enhanced oil or gas production. It describes the detailed cost estimates for different storage options.

#### 5.9.3.1 Saline formations

The comprehensive review by Allinson *et al.*, (2003), covering storage costs for more than 50 sites around Australia, illustrates the variability that might occur across a range of sites at the national or regional scale. Onshore costs for 20 sites have a median cost of 0.5 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> stored, with a range of 0.2–5.1 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> stored. The 37 offshore sites have a median value of 3.4 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> stored and a range of 0.5–30.2 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> stored. This work includes sensitivity studies that use Monte Carlo analyses of estimated costs to changes in input parameters. The main determinants of storage costs are reservoir and injection characteristics such as permeability, thickness and reservoir depth, that affect injection rate and well costs rather than option type (such as saline formation or depleted field).

Bock *et al.* (2003) have made detailed cost estimates on a series of cases for storage in onshore saline formations in the United States. Their assumptions on geological characteristics are based on a statistical review of more than 20 different formations. These formations represent wide ranges in depth (700–1800 m), thickness, permeability, injection rate and well numbers. The base-case estimate for average characteristics has a storage cost of 0.5 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> stored. High- and low-cost cases representing a range of formations and input parameters are 0.4–4.5 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> stored. This illustrates the variability resulting from input parameters.

Onshore storage costs for saline formations in Europe for depths of 1000–3000 m are 1.9–6.2 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub>, with a most likely value of 2.8 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> stored (Hendriks *et al.*, 2002). This study also presents estimated costs for offshore storage over the same depth range. These estimates cover reuse of existing oil and gas platforms (Hendriks *et al.*, 2002). The range is 4.7–12.0 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> stored, showing that offshore costs are higher than onshore costs.

#### 5.9.3.2 Disused oil and gas reservoirs

It has been shown that storage costs in disused oil and gas fields in North America and Europe are comparable to those for saline formations (Hendriks *et al.*, 2002; Bock *et al.*, 2003). Bock *et al.* (2003) present costs for representative oil and gas reservoirs in the Permian Basin (west Texas, USA). For disused gas fields, the base-case estimate has a storage cost of 2.4 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> stored, with low and high cost cases of 0.5 and 12.2 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> stored. For depleted oil fields, the base-case cost estimate is 1.3 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> stored, with low- and high-cost cases of 0.5 and 4.0 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> stored. Some reduction in these costs may be possible by reusing existing wells in these fields, but remediation of abandoned wells would increase the costs if required.

In Europe, storage costs for onshore disused oil and gas fields at depths of 1000–3000 m are 1.2–3.8 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> stored. The most likely value is 1.7 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> stored. Offshore oil

and gas fields at the same depths have storage costs of 3.8–8.1 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> stored (most likely value is 6.0 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> stored). The costs depend on the depth of the reservoir and reuse of platforms. Disused fields may benefit from reduced exploration and monitoring costs.

#### 5.9.3.3 Representative storage costs

The different studies for saline formations and disused oil and gas fields show a very wide range of costs, 0.2–30.0 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> stored, because of the site-specific nature of the costs. This reflects the wide range of geological parameters that occur in any region or country. In effect, there will be multiple sites in any geographic area with a cost curve, providing increasing storage capacity with increasing cost.

The extensive Australian data set indicates that storage costs are less than 5.1 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> stored for all the onshore sites and more than half the offshore sites. Studies for USA and Europe also show that storage costs are generally less than 8 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub>, except for high-cost cases for offshore sites in Europe and depleted gas fields in the United States. A recent study suggests that 90% of European storage capacity could be used for costs less than 2 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> (Wildenborg *et al.*, 2005b).

Assessment of these cost estimates indicates that there is significant potential for storage at costs in the range of 0.5–8 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> stored, estimates that are based on the median, base case or most likely values presented for the different studies (Table 5.9). These exclude monitoring costs, well remediation and longer term costs.

#### 5.9.3.4 Investment costs for storage projects

Some information is available on the capital and operating costs of industry capture and storage projects (Table 5.10). At Sleipner, the incremental capital cost for the storage component comprising a horizontal well to inject 1 MtCO<sub>2</sub> yr<sup>-1</sup> was US\$ 15 million (Torp and Brown, 2005). Note that at Sleipner, CO<sub>2</sub> had to be removed from the natural gas to ready it for sale on the open market. The decision to store the captured CO<sub>2</sub> was at least in part driven by a 40 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> tax on offshore CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Details of the energy penalty and levelized costs are not available. At the planned Snohvit project, the estimated capital costs for storage are US\$ 48 million for injection of 0.7 MtCO<sub>2</sub> yr<sup>-1</sup> (Kaarstad, 2002). This data set is limited and additional data on the actual costs of industry projects is needed.

### 5.9.4 Cost estimates for storage with enhanced oil and gas recovery

The costs of CO<sub>2</sub> geological storage may be offset by additional revenues for production of oil or gas, where CO<sub>2</sub> injection and storage is combined with enhanced oil or gas recovery or ECBM. At present, in commercial EOR and ECBM projects that use CO<sub>2</sub> injection, the CO<sub>2</sub> is purchased for the project and is a significant proportion of operating costs. The economic benefits from enhanced production make EOR and ECBM potential early options for CO<sub>2</sub> geological storage.

#### 5.9.4.1 Enhanced oil recovery

The costs of onshore CO<sub>2</sub>-flooding EOR projects in North America are well documented (Klins, 1984; Jarrell *et al.*, 2002). Carbon dioxide EOR projects are business ventures to increase oil recovery. Although CO<sub>2</sub> is injected and stored, this is not the primary driver and EOR projects are not optimized for CO<sub>2</sub> storage.

The commercial basis of conventional CO<sub>2</sub>-EOR operations is that the revenues from incremental oil compensate for the additional costs incurred (including purchase of CO<sub>2</sub>) and provide a return on the investment. The costs differ from project to project. The capital investment components are compressors, separation equipment and H<sub>2</sub>S removal, well drilling and well conversions and completions. New wells are not required for some projects. Operating costs are the CO<sub>2</sub> purchase price, fuel costs and field operating costs.

In Texas, the cost of CO<sub>2</sub> purchase was 55–75% of the total cost for a number of EOR fields (averaging 68% of total costs) and is a major investment uncertainty for EOR. Tax and fiscal incentives, government regulations and oil and gas prices are the other main investment uncertainties (e.g., Jarrell *et al.*, 2002).

The CO<sub>2</sub> price is usually indexed to oil prices, with an indicative price of 11.7 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> (0.62 US\$/Mscf) at a West Texas Intermediate oil price of 18 US\$ per barrel, 16.3 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> at 25 US\$ per barrel of oil and 32.7 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> at 50 US\$ per barrel of oil (Jarrell *et al.*, 2002). The CO<sub>2</sub> purchase price indicates the scale of benefit for EOR to offset CO<sub>2</sub> storage costs.

#### 5.9.4.2 Cost of CO<sub>2</sub> storage with enhanced oil recovery

Recent studies have estimated the cost of CO<sub>2</sub> storage in EOR sites (Bock *et al.*, 2003; Hendriks *et al.*, 2002). Estimates of CO<sub>2</sub> storage costs for onshore EOR options in North America have been made by Bock *et al.* (2003). Estimates for a 2-MtCO<sub>2</sub> yr<sup>-1</sup> storage scenario are based on assumptions and parameters from existing EOR operations and industry cost data. These include estimates of the effectiveness of CO<sub>2</sub>-EOR, in terms of CO<sub>2</sub> injected for each additional barrel of oil. The methodology for these estimates of storage costs is to calculate the break-even CO<sub>2</sub> price (0.3 tCO<sub>2</sub>).

Experience from field operations across North America provides information about how much of the injected CO<sub>2</sub> remains in the oil reservoir during EOR. An average of 170 standard m<sup>3</sup> CO<sub>2</sub> of new CO<sub>2</sub> is required for each barrel of enhanced oil production, with a range of 85 (0.15 tCO<sub>2</sub>) to 227 (0.4 tCO<sub>2</sub>) standard m<sup>3</sup> (Bock *et al.*, 2003). Typically, produced CO<sub>2</sub> is separated from the oil and reinjected back underground, which reduces the cost of CO<sub>2</sub> purchases.

The base case for a representative reservoir at a depth of 1219 m, based on average EOR parameters in the United States with an oil price of 15 US\$ per barrel, has a net storage cost of –14.8 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> stored. Negative costs indicate the amount of cost reduction that a particular storage option offers to the overall capture and storage system. Low- and high-cost cases representing a range of CO<sub>2</sub> effectiveness, depth, transport

distance and oil price are –92.0 and +66.7 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> stored. The low-cost case assumes favourable assumptions for all parameters (effectiveness, reservoir depth, productivity) and a 20 US\$ per barrel oil price. Higher oil prices, such as the 50 US\$ per barrel prices of 2005, will considerably change the economics of CO<sub>2</sub>-EOR projects. No published studies are available for these higher oil prices.

Other estimates for onshore EOR storage costs all show potential at negative net costs. These include a range of –10.5 to +10.5 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> stored for European sites (Hendriks *et al.*, 2002). These studies show that use of CO<sub>2</sub> enhanced oil recovery for CO<sub>2</sub> storage can be a lower cost option than saline formations and disused oil and gas fields.

At present, there are no commercial offshore EOR operations and limited information is available on CO<sub>2</sub> storage costs for EOR options in offshore settings. Indicative storage cost estimates for offshore EOR are presented by Hendriks *et al.* (2002). Their range is –10.5 to +21.0 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> stored. For the North Sea Forties Field, it has been shown that CO<sub>2</sub>-flooding EOR is technically attractive and could increase oil recovery, although at present it is not economically attractive as a stand-alone EOR project (Espie *et al.*, 2003). Impediments are the large capital requirement for adapting facilities, wells and flowlines, as well as tax costs and CO<sub>2</sub> supply. It is noted that the economics will change with additional value for storage of CO<sub>2</sub>.

The potential benefit of EOR can be deduced from the CO<sub>2</sub> purchase price and the net storage costs for CO<sub>2</sub>-EOR storage case studies. The indicative value of the potential benefit from enhanced oil production to CO<sub>2</sub> storage is usually in the range of 0–16 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub>. In some cases, there is no benefit from EOR. The maximum estimate of the benefit ranges up to \$92 per tonne of CO<sub>2</sub> for a single case study involving favourable parameters. In general, higher benefits will occur at high-oil-price scenarios similar to those that have occurred since 2003 and for highly favourable sites, as shown above. At 50 US\$ per barrel of oil, the range may increase up to 30 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub>.

#### 5.9.4.3 Cost of CO<sub>2</sub> storage with enhanced gas recovery

CO<sub>2</sub>-enhanced gas recovery is a less mature technology than EOR and it is not in commercial use. Issues are the cost of CO<sub>2</sub> and infrastructure, concerns about excessive mixing and the high primary recovery rates of many gas reservoirs. Cost estimates show that CO<sub>2</sub>-EGR (enhanced gas recovery) can provide a benefit of 4–16 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub>, depending on the price of gas and the effectiveness of recovery (Oldenburg *et al.*, 2002).

#### 5.9.4.4 Cost of CO<sub>2</sub> storage with enhanced coal bed methane

The injection of CO<sub>2</sub> for ECBM production is an immature technology not yet in commercial use. In CO<sub>2</sub>-ECBM, the revenues from the produced gas could offset the investment costs and provide a source of income for investors. Cost data are based on other types of CBM operations that are in use.

There is significant uncertainty in the effectiveness of CO<sub>2</sub> storage in coal beds in conjunction with ECBM, because there

is no commercial experience. The suggested metric for CO<sub>2</sub> retention is 1.5–10 m<sup>3</sup> of CO<sub>2</sub> per m<sup>3</sup> of produced methane. The revenue benefit of the enhanced production will depend on gas prices.

Well costs are a major factor in ECBM because many wells are required. In one recent study for an ECBM project (Schreurs, 2002), the cost per production well was given as approximately US\$750,000 per well, plus 1500 US\$ m<sup>-1</sup> of in-seam drilling. The cost of each injection well was approximately US\$430,000.

The IEA-GHG (1998) developed a global cost curve for CO<sub>2</sub>-ECBM, with storage costs ranging from -20 to +150 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub>. It concluded that only the most favourable sites, representing less than 10% of global capacity, could have negative costs. Estimates of onshore CO<sub>2</sub>-ECBM storage costs in the United States have been made by using the approach described for EOR (Bock *et al.*, 2003). They estimate the effectiveness of ECBM in terms of CO<sub>2</sub> injected for incremental gas produced, ranging from 1.5 to 10 units (base case value of 2) of CO<sub>2</sub> per unit of enhanced methane. Other key inputs are the gas well production rate, the ratio of producers to injectors, well depth and the number of wells. The base case, storing 2.1 MtCO<sub>2</sub> per year for a representative reservoir at 610 m depth in a newly built facility, requires 270 wells. The assumed gas price is US\$1.90 per GJ (US\$2.00 per Mbtu). It has a net storage cost of -8.1 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> stored. Low- and high-cost cases representing a range of parameters are -26.4 and +11.1 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> stored. The range of these estimates is comparable to other estimates – for example, those for Canada (Wong *et al.*, 2001) and Europe (Hendriks *et al.*, 2002), 0 to +31.5 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub>. Enhanced CBM has not been considered in detail for offshore situations and cost estimates are not available.

Only one industrial-scale CO<sub>2</sub>-ECBM demonstration project has taken place to date, the Allison project in the United States and it is no longer injecting CO<sub>2</sub> (Box 5.7). One analysis of the Allison project, which has extremely favourable geological characteristics, suggests the economics of ECBM in the United States are dubious under current fiscal conditions and gas prices (IEA-GHG, 2004). The economic analyses suggest this would be commercial, with high gas prices about 4 US\$ per GJ and a credit of 12–18 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub>. Alternatively, Reeves (2005) used detailed modelling and economic analysis to show a break-even gas price of US\$2.44 per GJ (US\$2.57 per Mbtu), including costs of 5.19 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> for CO<sub>2</sub> purchased at the field.

### 5.9.5 Cost of monitoring

While there has been extensive discussion of possible monitoring strategies in the literature and technologies that may be applicable, there is limited information on monitoring costs. These will depend on the monitoring strategy and technologies used and how these are adapted for the duration of storage projects. Some of the technologies likely to be used are already in widespread use in the oil and gas and CBM industries. The costs of individual technologies in current use are well constrained.

Repeated use of seismic surveys was found to be an effective monitoring technology at Sleipner. Its applicability will vary between options and sites. Seismic survey costs are highly variable, according to the technology used, location and terrain and complexity. Seismic monitoring costs have been reviewed for an onshore storage project for a 1000 MW power plant with a 30-year life (Myer *et al.*, 2003). Assuming repeat surveys at five-year intervals during the injection period, monitoring costs are estimated as 0.03 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub>, suggesting that seismic monitoring may represent only a small fraction of overall storage costs. No discounting was used to develop this estimate.

Benson *et al.* (2005) have estimated life-cycle monitoring costs for two scenarios: (1) storage in an oil field with EOR and (2) storage in a saline formation. For these scenarios, no explicit leakage was considered. If leakage were to occur, the 'enhanced' monitoring programme should be sufficient to detect and locate the leakage and may be sufficient to quantify leakage rates as well. For each scenario, cost estimates were developed for the 'basic' and 'enhanced' monitoring package. The basic monitoring package included periodic seismic surveys, microseismicity, wellhead pressure and injection-rate monitoring. The enhanced package included all of the elements of the 'basic' package and added periodic well logging, surface CO<sub>2</sub> flux monitoring and other advanced technologies. For the basic monitoring package, costs for both scenarios are 0.05 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub>, based on a discount rate of 10% (0.16–0.19 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> undiscounted). The cost for the enhanced monitoring package is 0.069–0.085 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> (0.27–0.30 US\$/tCO<sub>2</sub> undiscounted). The assumed duration of monitoring includes the 30-year period of injection, as well as further monitoring after site closure of 20 years for EOR sites and 50 years for saline formations. Increasing the duration of monitoring to 1000 years increased the discounted cost by 10%. These calculations are made assuming a discount rate of 10% for the first 30 years and a discount rate of 1% thereafter.

### 5.9.6 Cost of remediation of leaky storage projects

No estimates have been made regarding the costs of remediation for leaking storage projects. Remediation methods listed in Table 5.7 have been used in other applications and, therefore, could be extrapolated to CO<sub>2</sub> storage sites. However, this has not been done yet.

### 5.9.7 Cost reduction

There is little literature on cost-reduction potential for CO<sub>2</sub> geological storage. Economies of scale are likely to be important (Allinson *et al.*, 2003). It is also anticipated that further cost reduction will be achieved with application of learning from early storage projects, optimization of new projects and application of advanced technologies, such as horizontal and multilateral wells, which are now widely used in the oil and gas industry.

### 5.10 Knowledge gaps

Knowledge regarding CO<sub>2</sub> geological storage is founded on basic knowledge in the earth sciences, on the experience of the oil and gas industry (extending over the last hundred years or more) and on a large number of commercial activities involving the injection and geological storage of CO<sub>2</sub> conducted over the past 10–30 years. Nevertheless, CO<sub>2</sub> storage is a new technology and many questions remain. Here, we summarize what we know now and what gaps remain.

#### 1. Current storage capacity estimates are imperfect:

- There is need for more development and agreement on assessment methodologies.
- There are many gaps in capacity estimates at the global, regional and local levels.
- The knowledge base for geological storage is for the most part based on Australian, Japanese, North American and west European data.
- There is a need to obtain much more information on storage capacity in other areas, particularly in areas likely to experience the greatest growth in energy use, such as China, Southeast Asia, India, Russia/Formal Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, the Middle East and parts of South America and southern Africa.

#### 2. Overall, storage science is understood, but there is need for greater knowledge of particular mechanisms, including:

- The kinetics of geochemical trapping and the long-term impact of CO<sub>2</sub> on reservoir fluids and rocks.
- The fundamental processes of CO<sub>2</sub> adsorption and CH<sub>4</sub> desorption on coal during storage operations.

#### 3. Available information indicates that geological storage operations can be conducted without presenting any greater risks for health and the local environment than similar operations in the oil and gas industry, when carried out at high-quality and well-characterized sites. However, confidence would be further enhanced by increased knowledge and assessment ability, particularly regarding:

- Risks of leakage from abandoned wells caused by material and cement degradation.
- The temporal variability and spatial distribution of leaks that might arise from inadequate storage sites.
- Microbial impacts in the deep subsurface.
- Environmental impact of CO<sub>2</sub> on the marine seafloor.
- Methods to conduct end-to-end quantitative assessment of risks to human health and the local environment.

#### 4. There is strong evidence that storage of CO<sub>2</sub> in geological storage sites will be long term; however, it would be beneficial to have:

- Quantification of potential leakage rates from more storage sites.
- Reliable coupled hydrogeological-geochemical-geo-mechanical simulation models to predict long-term storage performance accurately.

- Reliable probabilistic methods for predicting leakage rates from storage sites.
- Further knowledge of the history of natural accumulations of CO<sub>2</sub>.
- Effective and demonstrated protocols for achieving desirable storage duration and local safety.

#### 5. Monitoring technology is available for determining the behaviour of CO<sub>2</sub> at the surface or in the subsurface; however, there is scope for improvement in the following areas:

- Quantification and resolution of location and forms of CO<sub>2</sub> in the subsurface, by geophysical techniques.
- Detection and monitoring of subaquatic CO<sub>2</sub> seepage.
- Remote-sensing and cost-effective surface methods for temporally variable leak detection and quantification, especially for dispersed leaks.
- Fracture detection and characterization of leakage potential.
- Development of appropriate long-term monitoring approaches and strategies.

#### 6. Mitigation and remediation options and technologies are available, but there is no track record of remediation for leaked CO<sub>2</sub>. While this could be seen as positive, some stakeholders suggest it might be valuable to have an engineered (and controlled) leakage event that could be used as a learning experience.

#### 7. The potential cost of geological storage is known reasonably well, but:

- There are only a few experience-based cost data from non-EOR CO<sub>2</sub> storage projects.
- There is little knowledge of regulatory compliance costs.
- There is inadequate information on monitoring strategies and requirements, which affect costs.

#### 8. The regulatory and responsibility or liability framework for CO<sub>2</sub> storage is yet to be established or unclear. The following issues need to be considered:

- The role of pilot and demonstration projects in developing regulations.
- Approaches for verification of CO<sub>2</sub> storage for accounting purposes.
- Approaches to regulatory oversight for selecting, operating and monitoring CO<sub>2</sub> storage sites, both in the short and long term.
- Clarity on the need for and approaches to long-term stewardship.
- Requirements for decommissioning a storage project.

Additional information on all of these topics would improve technologies and decrease uncertainties, but there appear to be no insurmountable technical barriers to an increased uptake of geological storage as a mitigation option.

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