

## Article

# Biochemical Effects of Two Pesticides in Three Different Temperature Scenarios on the Diatom *Thalassiosira weissflogii*

Andreia F. Mesquita <sup>1</sup>, Fernando J. M. Gonçalves <sup>1</sup>, Carolina P. Rocha <sup>2</sup>, João C. Marques <sup>2</sup>  
and Ana M. M. Gonçalves <sup>1,2,\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Biology and CESAM, University of Aveiro, 3810-193 Aveiro, Portugal; filipamesquita@ua.pt (A.F.M.); fjmg@ua.pt (F.J.M.G.)

<sup>2</sup> University of Coimbra, MARE—Marine and Environmental Sciences Centre, Department of Life Sciences, Calçada Martim de Freitas, 3000-456 Coimbra, Portugal; carolina.vpr@gmail.com (C.P.R.); jcmimar@ci.uc.pt (J.C.M.)

\* Correspondence: amgoncalves@uc.pt; Tel.: +351-239-240-700 (ext. 262-286)

**Abstract:** The exponential increase of the human population demands the overuse of fertilizers and pesticides in agriculture practices to suppress food production needs. The excessive use of these chemicals (fertilizers and pesticides) can comport deleterious effects to the ecosystems, including aquatic systems and communities. Oxyfluorfen is a fluorine-based herbicide, and its application has increased, since it is seen as an alternative to control glyphosate-resistant weeds. Copper sulfate is an inorganic pesticide based on copper which is being used in several chemical formulations, and it is the second main constituent of fungicides. Besides the known effects of such products in organisms, climatic changes pose an additional issue, being a main concern among scientists and politicians worldwide, since these alterations may worsen ecosystems' and organisms' sensitivity to stress conditions, such as the exposure to pollutants. *Thalassiosira weissflogii* (Grunow) G. A. Fryxell & Hasle, 1977 plays an important role in aquatic food webs as a primary producer and an essential food source to zooplankton. Thus, alterations on the diatom's abundance and nutritional value may lead to consequences along the trophic chain. However, few studies have evaluated the biochemical impacts of oxyfluorfen and copper sulfate exposure on diatoms. This study intends to (1) evaluate the effects on the growth rate of both contaminants on *T. weissflogii* at three temperatures, considering the actual scenario of climatic changes, and (2) assess biochemical changes on the diatom when exposed to the chemicals at different temperatures. To achieve these aims, the marine diatom was exposed to the two chemicals individually at different temperatures. The results showed an increase in the growth rate with increasing temperatures. Oxyfluorfen exhibited higher toxicity than copper sulfate. At the biochemical level, the microalgae were greatly affected when exposed to oxyfluorfen at 20 °C and 25 °C and when exposed to copper sulfate at 15 °C. Moreover, a general increase was observed for the polysaccharide content along the copper sulfate and oxyfluorfen concentrations. Therefore, the contaminants show the ability to interfere with the diatom growth and the nutritive value, with their effects dependent on the temperature.

**Keywords:** marine diatoms; pesticides; ecotoxicological effects; biochemical effects; climatic changes



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## 1. Introduction

The human population is constantly increasing, with a rise of about 30% in the next few decades predicted, increasing from 7 billion to 9.6 billion in 2050 [1], making it necessary to have great food production to feed the growing population. This is only possible with intensive agriculture practices and pesticide usage. However, intensive agriculture and the overuse of pesticides are known to cause dangerous effects on the biosphere, hydrosphere and atmosphere [2–6]. Therefore, these pesticides become significant pollutants not only to agricultural systems but also to the surrounding systems [7], including marine coastal ecosystems, causing negative effects on its structure and function [8]. Extensive research

has been conducted to assess the effects of these chemicals on non-target species, and effects have been reported ranging from sub-lethal to lethal levels, such as changes in enzymatic activity [9–16], changes in fatty acid profiles (and consequently in the nutritive value) [11,17–23], inhibition of the photosynthetic pigments and activity [21,24–26], and changes in behavior [22,27,28], growth inhibition [25,29], and mortality [16–18,27].

Pesticides comprise several chemical formulations and are classified according to their targets (e.g., herbicides, fungicides, and insecticides), the chemical compositions of the active ingredients (e.g., pyrethroids, carbamates, organophosphorus, organochlorine, and pyrethrin), and according to the risk (slightly, moderately, highly, and extremely dangerous). Another prominent form of classification includes organic (as the herbicide oxyfluorfen) or inorganic compounds (as copper sulfate, a copper-based pesticide). Oxyfluorfen is an organic persistent herbicide, being a diphenyl ether and one of the most used herbicides in the world [30]. The use of this herbicide has been increasing since it was seen as an alternative to control glyphosate-resistant weeds [31], but oxyfluorfen has been reported to be carcinogenic and possibly mutagenic, neurotoxic, and lethal by some researchers [9,11,12,32]. On the other side, copper sulfate is an inorganic pesticide, the second main constituent of fungicides [33] with the potential to accumulate in aquatic organisms [18,34] and reported effects on the metabolism of lipids and proteins, in addition to their possibly being lethal [13,18,20,35].

Alongside pesticides, nowadays, climate change is also one of the main concerns among scientists and politicians. Global warming is effectively occurring, as proven by the increase of air and ocean water mean temperatures, snow and ice melting in polar regions and high heights, and the increase in sea level [36]. The previsions about warming rates are diverse, from super slow (over 0.05 °C per decade) to super fast (over 0.45 °C per decade) [37]. Independent of the previsions, this phenomenon comports changes to the ecosystems and species' life cycles [36]. In marine systems, phytoplankton is a key element to many biogeochemical cycles and trophic food webs [38]. Several researchers reported the potential effects on this group as consequence of climatic changes, such as changes in biomass, communities' structures, and diversity [39–42]. Moreover, phytoplankton is responsible for about 50% of the global primary production [43], making coastal systems, where phytoplankton is abundant, the most productive systems [44]. Diatoms are the most abundant and ecologically successful phytoplankton group [45], playing a key role in the carbon cycle, organic matter production, nutrient production, lipids, and carbohydrates via CO<sub>2</sub> fixation [46,47]. Some researchers have reported changes at a large scale in fatty acid production, including the essential fatty acid generation by phytoplankton, as a consequence of eutrophication [48] and climate changes [49], with significant effects on fish communities [50]. *Thalassiosira weissflogii* is a diatom, a marine, unicellular microalgae with a relevant ecological role since it is a primary producer and consumed as a food source by several zooplankton species. The diatom is used in waste treatment, ecotoxicological tests, and biodiesel production [51].

Fatty acids and carbohydrates are considered good biomarkers to evaluate stress conditions, such as organic and inorganic pollutants, the ashes of wildfires, or climate changes [18–20,52,53]. Fatty acids are the main lipid constituent and have a key role on biological processes, being essential constituents of the cell membrane and taking part in physiological functions. These biomolecules are used as fuel in metabolic processes at all trophic levels [54]. On the other hand, carbohydrates are the main and fastest energy source to answer to stress conditions. These molecules have a key role in biological functions such as the maintenance of cell homeostasis in the immunity defense process [55]. Polysaccharides are carbohydrate polymers composed of long-chain monosaccharides, and these biomolecules are reported as able to protect bacterial cells against environmental or chemical stress conditions [56–59].

Considering these two great current problems (pesticide overuse and climate change) and the key role of the diatoms, this work's purpose is to (1) evaluate the effects of oxyfluorfen and copper sulfate on the diatom *T. weissflogii* at a lethal level through cell

count, growth, and inhibition rate determination, (2) assess the effects of these chemicals at the biochemical level on the diatom through the analysis of fatty acids and carbohydrates profiles, and (3) determine the changes in the nutritive value of this primary producer.

## 2. Materials and Methods

### 2.1. Culture Maintenance

*T. weissflogii* was maintained with Guillard's f/2 medium (adapted from [59]) without EDTA and a salinity of 30 psu. The cultures were renewed with new medium every week and maintained at controlled laboratory conditions (temperature of  $20 \pm 2$  °C, photoperiod 16hL:8hD).

### 2.2. Inhibition Growth Bioassays

*T. weissflogii* was exposed to three different temperatures (15 °C, 20 °C, and 25 °C). Two weeks before the bioassay at each temperature, an inoculum was acclimated to the respective temperature, and three days before the test, an inoculum was prepared from the acclimated culture and incubated with a photoperiod of 16hL:8hD. At the beginning of the bioassay, the inoculum cell density was determined using a Neubauer hemocytometer and then was rectified to an initial test cell density of  $1 \times 10^4$  cell/mL. To evaluate the effects of the compounds on the growth rate, the diatoms were exposed to 9 treatments of oxyfluorfen (PESTANAL<sup>®</sup> analytical standard by Sigma Aldrich, Lisbon, Portugal; CAS: 42874-03-3) (0.00–0.018 mg/L) plus a solvent control and to 11 treatments of copper (II) sulfate pentahydrate (using EMSURE<sup>®</sup> ACS, ISO, Reag. Ph Eur, by Merck; CAS: 7758-99-8) (0.00–1.00 mg/L), with each treatment composed of three replicates over 96 h in the same photoperiod cited above. At the end of the bioassay, the cell density of each replicate was determined through microscopic counting in a Neubauer hemocytometer to determine the effective concentration of each chemical at the different temperatures.

### 2.3. Biochemical Bioassays

Considering the effective concentrations, mainly the EC<sub>10</sub> and EC<sub>20</sub> values, from the inhibition growth bioassays, biochemical bioassays were performed for 7 days using sub-lethal concentrations to evaluate the biochemical changes, namely in the fatty acids and carbohydrate profiles, in the organisms when exposed to oxyfluorfen and copper sulfate and the cited temperatures. The diatoms were exposed to 6 treatments of oxyfluorfen (at 15 °C: 0.000–0.0015 mg/L; at 20 °C: 0.000–0.0015 mg/L and at 25 °C: 0.000–0.006 mg/L) plus a solvent control and to 6 treatments of copper sulfate (at 15 °C: 0.00–0.125 mg/L; at 20 °C: 0.00–0.625 mg/L and at 25 °C: 0.00–0.750 mg/L). At the end of the bioassays, each inoculum was filtered through a GF/F Whatman filter using a vacuum pump, and the filters were stored at  $-80$  °C for about 2 weeks for posterior analysis.

### 2.4. Biochemical Analysis

#### 2.4.1. Fatty Acids Analysis

The fatty acid methyl ester (FAME) extraction was performed following the protocol [60]. The samples were incubated with methanol for the extraction of the lipids. Methyl nonadecanoate (C19:0, Fluka 74208) was used as the internal standard, being added to the samples during the extraction process. Then, sodium chloride was added, and the samples were centrifuged for the separation of FAMES. At the end of the extraction process, the samples were centrifuged, and the supernatant was stored at  $-80$  °C for posterior quantification. Additionally, the inferior phase was also stored for the sugar analysis.

The FAMES were separated, identified, and quantified by gas chromatography coupled with mass spectrometry (GC-MS) using a Thermo Scientific Trace 1310 Network (Waltham, MA) equipped with a TR-FFAP column (0.32 mm internal diameter, 0.25 µm film thickness, and 30 m long). The carrier gas was helium with a flow rate of  $1.4 \text{ mL min}^{-1}$ . The sample (1.00 µL) was injected into the injector in splitless mode at a temperature of 250 °C, lined with a split glass liner of 4.0 mm i.d. The oven temperature increased linearly from

80 °C to 160 °C (25 °C min<sup>-1</sup>), followed by another temperature increase until to 210 °C (2 °C min<sup>-1</sup>) and, at the end, an increase of 40 °C min<sup>-1</sup> to the final temperature of 230 °C, which was maintained for 10 min. A Thermo Scientific ISQ 7000 Network mass selective detector single quadrupole was used for scanning the *m/z* range of 50–500 in full scan mode for acquisition. The detector started operating 3.5 min after injection, corresponding to the solvent delay. The injector ion source and transfer line were maintained at 240 °C and 230 °C, respectively. Peak's identification was performed through the mass spectrum and the retention time of each FAME compared with the Supelco<sup>®</sup> 37 component FAME mix (Sigma-Aldrich, Steinheim, Germany). FAME quantification was achieved following the method described in [60].

#### 2.4.2. Sugar Analysis

The samples were subjected to a hydrolysis, acetylation, and reduction process, converting the neutral sugars (NS) in their alditol acetates following the method described in [61]. Before adding distilled water, the samples were incubated with sulfuric acid. Acetylation was performed with methylimidazole, acetic acid, and acetic acid anhydride after a reduction with sodium borohydride and ammonia as described by Coimbra et al. [61]. Moreover, 2-desoxiglucose was used as the internal standard being added to each sample. The composition of the monosaccharides was determined through gas chromatography equipped with a flame ionization detector (GC-FID), namely a Thermo Scientific Trace 1310. A TG-WAXMS A GC column with a length of 30 m, i.d. of 0.32 mm, and film thickness of 0.25 µm was used. The oven had an initial temperature of 180 °C, increasing linearly until reaching 230 °C (5 °C min<sup>-1</sup>) and being maintained for 12 min. Helium was used as the carrier gas at a flow rate of 2.5 mL min<sup>-1</sup>. Monosaccharide identification and quantification were conducted in comparison with the standards.

#### 2.5. Data Analysis

The 3-parameter logistic model was applied to determine the effect concentration (EC) values, namely EC<sub>10</sub>, EC<sub>20</sub>, and EC<sub>50</sub> with corresponding 95% confidence intervals for each compound at the different temperatures. ANOVA was also performed, followed by Dunnet's test to verify significant differences between each concentration and the control treatment using SigmaPlot 12.5 software. The fatty acid (FA) profiles and monosaccharide compositions were defined by quantification of the total FA concentrations (µg/10<sup>4</sup> cell) and sugar concentrations (µg/10<sup>4</sup> cell).

The relationship between treatments based on fatty acid profiles and on monosaccharides compositions was determined through multivariate analysis, carried out using PRIMER 6 software [62,63]. The original data were converted into similarity matrices by Bray–Curtis resemblance measures, and a cluster model based on the group average distance was applied to obtain a non-metric multidimensional scaling (n-MDS) plot, as well as a dendrogram obtained by hierarchical clustering. Moreover, differences between the tested conditions (treatments, temperatures, and compounds) were determined by one-way analysis of similarity (ANOSIM). Furthermore, through similarity percentage (SIMPER) analysis, it was possible to identify the main fatty acids and monosaccharides that contributed to the similarities and dissimilarities within and between the sample groups.

### 3. Results

#### 3.1. Acute Bioassays

The results from the acute bioassays are exhibited in Figure 1. The graphs show a general decrease in the cell density and growth rate for both chemical concentrations for all exposure temperatures. Moreover, *T. weissflogii* showed inhibition on the growth rate at the lowest temperatures. Comparing the exposure to both pollutants, oxyfluorfen showed itself to be more dangerous than copper sulfate to the diatoms (Table 1).

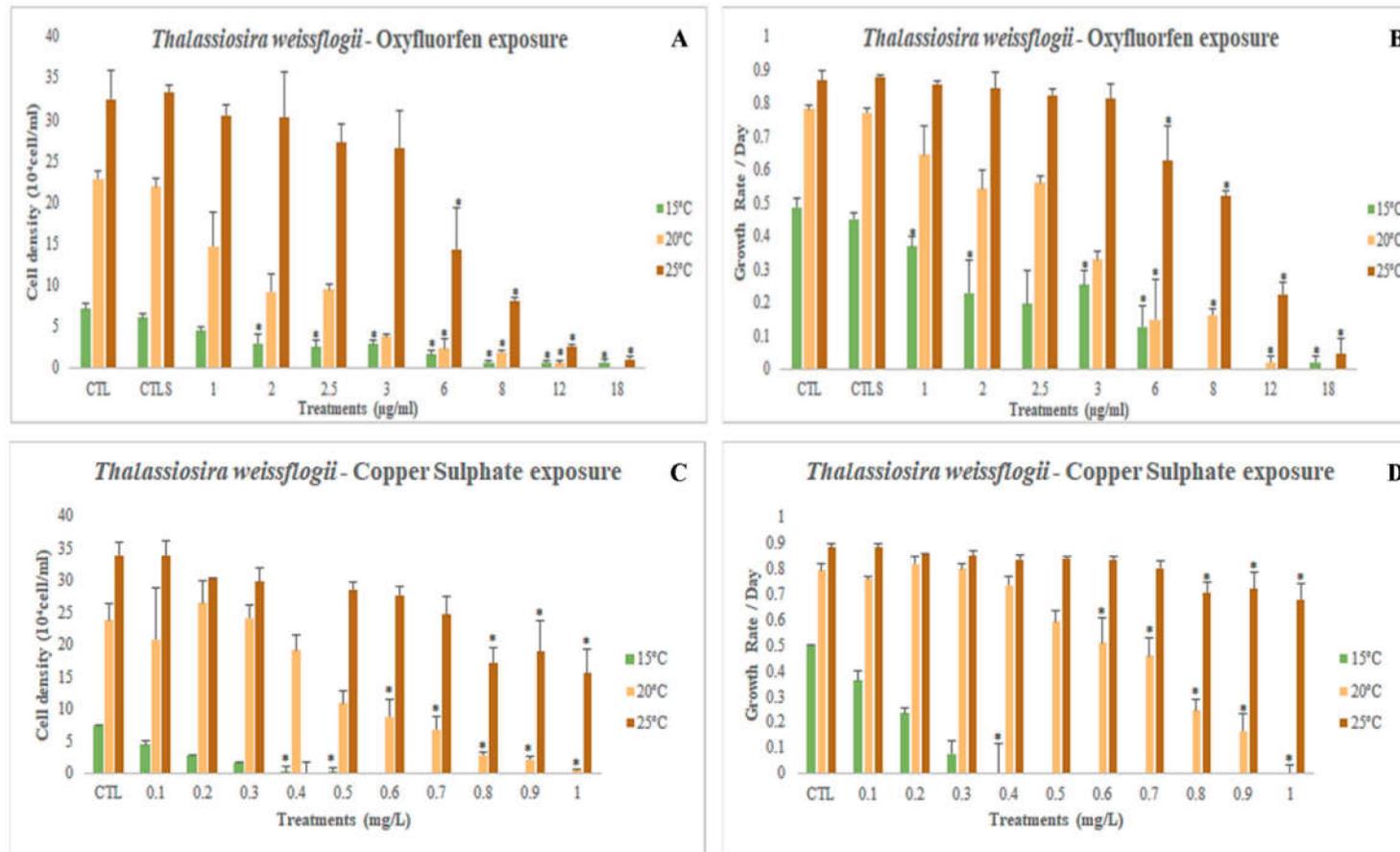
**Table 1.** EC values and confidence intervals (95%) for *T. weissflogii* when exposed to oxyfluorfen and to copper sulfate ( $\mu\text{g/L}$ ) for 96 h, considering the growth rate data.

	Oxyfluorfen ( $\mu\text{g/L}$ )			Copper Sulfate ( $\mu\text{g/L}$ )		
	15 °C	20 °C	25 °C	15 °C	20 °C	25 °C
<b>EC10</b>	0.57 (0.03–1.20)	0.90 (0.52–1.28)	4.41 (3.48–5.34)	77 (36–119)	479 (388–569)	689 (534–844)
<b>EC20</b>	0.96 (0.28–1.64)	1.44(0.99–1.89)	5.67 (4.81–6.54)	104 (61–147)	547 (472–622)	936 (822–1049)
<b>EC50</b>	2.31 (1.44–3.17)	3.22 (2.60–3.84)	8.74 (7.98–9.49)	173 (132–215)	687 (635–738)	1580 (1017–2142)

### 3.2. Biochemical Bioassays

#### Fatty Acid Content

Biochemical analyses showed changes in the fatty acid content of the microalga after exposure to the contaminants at the different temperatures. *T. weissflogii* showed itself to be more sensitive to exposure to oxyfluorfen at 20 °C and 25 °C, with its fatty acid content decreasing (Table 2). An opposite trend was observed when the diatom species was exposed to copper sulfate at the same temperatures, with the fatty acid content increasing. Considering the organisms' exposure to the organic herbicide (Table 2), the results showed a dominance of the saturated fatty acids on the organisms' profiles to the exposure at the three temperatures. Despite this, the saturated fatty acid (SFA) content decreased along with the concentrations in regard to the control treatment for all temperatures tested, as well as the monounsaturated fatty acid (MUFA) and highly unsaturated fatty acid (HUFA) content at 20 °C and 25 °C and the polyunsaturated fatty acid (PUFA) content at 25 °C. Moreover, an increase in the MUFA, HUFA, and of PUFA contents at 15 °C was observed (except at the highest concentrations for the last one). On the other hand, considering the organisms exposed to copper sulfate (Table 3), different trends were observed. The MUFAs assumed dominance of the organisms' profiles at 20 °C and 25 °C, whereas the HUFAs dominated the organisms' profiles when exposed at 15 °C at the CTL at 25  $\mu\text{g/L}$  and 125  $\mu\text{g/L}$ , while the SFAs dominated in the intermediate treatments. When analyzing the profiles, an increase in the SFA content was observed along with the concentrations in regard to the control at all temperatures, except for the organisms exposed to the highest concentrations at 20 °C. An increase of the PUFA and HUFA contents at 20 °C and 25 °C and of the MUFA content at 20 °C was also observed, with 15 °C being notorious for displaying a decrease in the amounts of all unsaturated fatty acids.



**Figure 1.** (A,C) The diatom cell density ( $10^4$  cell/mL) along with the exposure to oxyfluorfen and to copper sulfate, respectively, at the three different temperatures (15 °C, 20 °C, and 25 °C). (B,D) The growth rate per day. The symbol \* indicates the treatments with significant differences compared with the control situation.

**Table 2.** Quantification of the fatty acid profiles (SFA, MUFA, PUFA, and HUFA at  $\mu\text{g}/10^4$  cell and expressed in %) of *Thalassiosira weissflogii*, determined in organisms after 7 days of exposure to 5 concentrations of oxyfluorfen ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{L}$ ) and at 3 different temperatures (15 °C (white); 20 °C (light gray); 25 °C (dark gray)).

FA	15 °C						20 °C						25 °C						
	CTL	CTLS	0.5	1.00	1.25	1.50	CTL	CTLS	0.5	1.00	1.25	1.50	CTL	CTLS	1.00	2.00	4.00	6.00	
C10:0	8.53	20.17		4.25				25.15	9.86				0.00						
C11:0			2.83	61.95			4.48	8.06	2.12	3.43			2.86	3.53	8.90	8.22	15.03	18.28	
C12:0				2.00			0.56	31.05					2.60	1.60	1.18	0.50	0.71	0.67	
C13:0	8.95	13.33	10.25	19.46	5.94				1.20	2.18			69.56	58.47	49.03	15.53	25.60	20.22	
C14:0					2.32	2.82	22.81	26.14	1.18	0.00	0.72	0.55	1.05	1.03	0.95	0.41	0.43	0.00	
C15:0				1.68			1.95	2.47	2.02	3.21	0.00	0.32	3.34	3.05	3.00	1.06	1.61	1.64	
C16:0				29.40			33.20	40.89				0.27	112.57	108.29	72.23	32.19	39.78	35.86	
C17:0	47.94	67.40	53.40	0.71	47.06	50.89			31.10	17.15	19.27	27.99	41.99					0.49	
C18:0	1.08	5.01					2.37	2.44	28.95	19.29	22.51	20.55	6.71	32.51					
C20:0													2.74	2.67					
C22:0													0.00	1.64					
<b>ΣSFA</b>	<b>66.49</b>	<b>105.90</b>	<b>66.48</b>	<b>119.45</b>	<b>55.32</b>	<b>53.70</b>	<b>65.38</b>	<b>136.19</b>	<b>76.43</b>	<b>45.27</b>	<b>42.50</b>	<b>49.67</b>	<b>243.43</b>	<b>212.81</b>	<b>135.29</b>	<b>57.91</b>	<b>83.65</b>	<b>76.67</b>	
C15:1			0.49												0.52	0.37			
C16:1			6.67	1.73	5.68	12.16	25.67	30.80					71.70	63.67	61.84	19.91	24.10	21.06	
C17:1	0.72	0.59	44.31	17.50	19.03	23.09			1.08	2.97			14.54	3.30	5.49	2.38	2.24	2.99	
C18:1n6													6.72	55.78	1.09	0.53	0.35	0.00	
C20:1n9									1.75	1.72	2.12	2.19							
C22:1														10.85	5.23	2.76			
C24:1n9							7.24	12.42					13.20	12.46	9.93	3.88	3.97		
<b>ΣMUFA</b>	<b>0.72</b>	<b>0.59</b>	<b>51.47</b>	<b>19.23</b>	<b>24.71</b>	<b>35.25</b>	<b>32.91</b>	<b>43.22</b>	<b>2.83</b>	<b>4.69</b>	<b>2.12</b>	<b>2.19</b>	<b>106.17</b>	<b>146.07</b>	<b>84.11</b>	<b>29.82</b>	<b>30.66</b>	<b>24.04</b>	
C18:2n6c	2.17						1.97			59.85									
C18:2n6t	1.97	3.48	5.47		25.99	6.60			0.31	0.13									
C18:2n9													17.84	8.91	2.16	0.66	1.34	1.85	
C18:3n6							3.06		2.76										
C20:2	3.62	1.71	6.17		35.14	14.68		1.55	3.32	64.03									
C22:2	27.32	32.13	52.84				3.80	9.07					6.20						
<b>ΣPUFA</b>	<b>35.08</b>	<b>37.31</b>	<b>64.48</b>		<b>61.13</b>	<b>21.28</b>	<b>8.83</b>	<b>10.62</b>	<b>6.39</b>	<b>124.01</b>			<b>24.04</b>	<b>8.91</b>	<b>2.16</b>	<b>0.66</b>	<b>1.34</b>	<b>1.85</b>	
EPA	0.87			25.66	4.28	17.82	32.68	46.37					78.72	61.91	59.26	23.64	21.95	22.55	
DHA			15.88	34.39									55.59	4.09	6.74	8.72	7.99		
<b>ΣHUFA</b>	<b>0.87</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>15.88</b>	<b>60.06</b>	<b>4.28</b>	<b>17.82</b>	<b>32.68</b>	<b>46.37</b>					<b>134.31</b>	<b>61.91</b>	<b>63.35</b>	<b>30.38</b>	<b>30.68</b>	<b>30.54</b>	

Table 2. Cont.

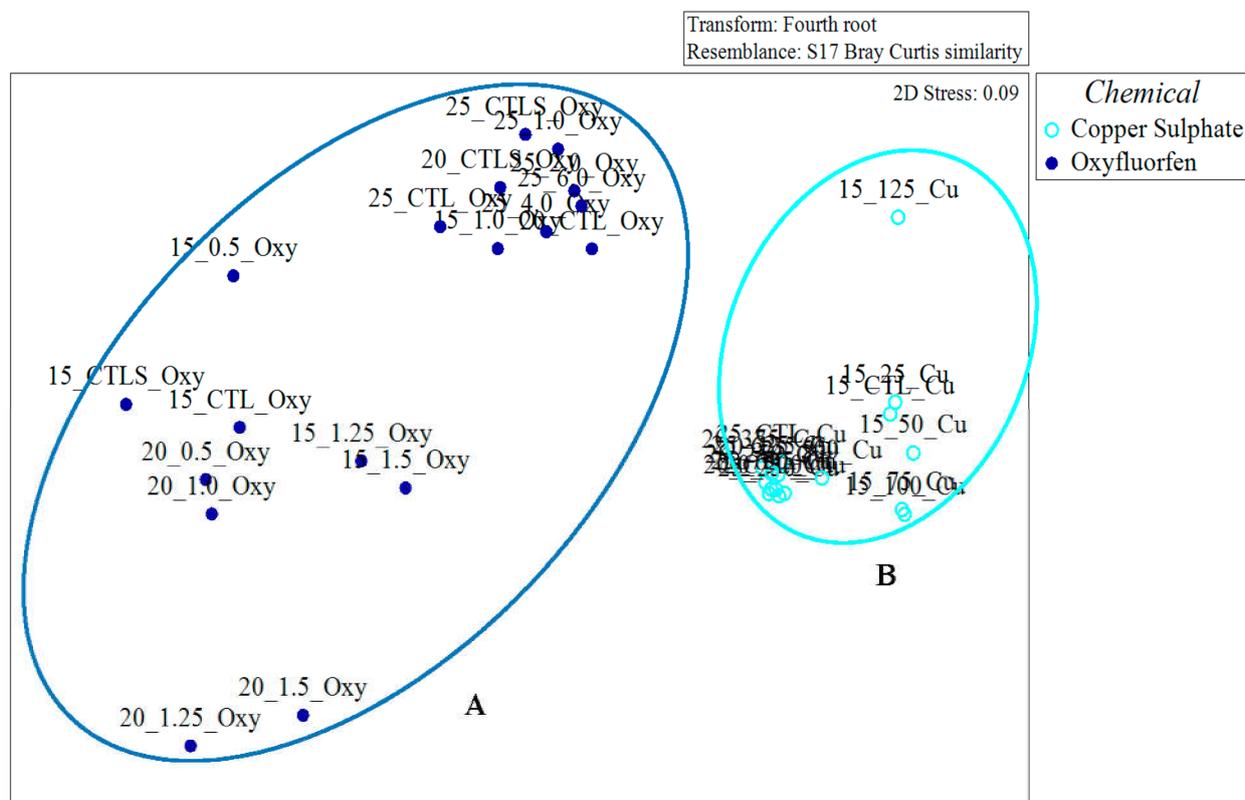
	15 °C						20 °C						25 °C					
$\Sigma$ FA	103.15	143.81	198.31	198.73	145.44	128.05	139.80	236.40	85.65	173.96	44.62	51.85	507.95	429.69	284.90	118.76	146.33	133.11
%SFA	64.46	73.64	33.52	60.11	38.04	41.94	46.77	57.61	89.24	26.02	95.24	95.79	47.92	49.53	47.49	48.76	57.17	57.60
%MUFA	0.69	0.41	25.96	9.68	16.99	27.53	23.54	18.28	3.30	2.69	4.76	4.21	20.90	33.99	29.52	25.11	20.95	18.06
%PUFA	34.01	25.95	32.51		42.03	16.62	6.32	4.49	7.46	71.29			4.73	2.07	0.76	0.55	0.92	1.39
%HUFA	0.84		8.01	30.22	2.94	13.92	23.38	19.61					26.44	14.41	22.24	25.58	20.96	22.94

**Table 3.** Quantification of fatty acid profiles (SFA, MUFA, PUFA, and HUFA at  $\mu\text{g}/10^4$  cell and expressed in %) of *Thalassiosira weissflogii*, determined in organisms after 7 days of exposure to different concentrations of copper sulfate ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{L}$ ) at three different temperatures (15 °C (white); 20 °C (light gray); 25 °C (dark gray)).

	15 °C						20 °C						25 °C				
FA	CTL	25	50	75	100	125	CTL	125	250	375	500	625	CTL	250	500	625	750
C14:0							0.97	0.22	0.47	0.32	0.49	0.34	0.76	0.18	0.18	0.43	0.24
C16:0	8.28	7.20	8.19	7.88	7.49	173.63	10.58	9.62	12.46	13.80	9.57	10.28	11.64	9.28	13.01	18.32	12.64
$\Sigma$ SFA	8.28	7.20	8.19	7.88	7.49	173.63	11.55	9.85	12.93	14.12	10.06	10.62	12.39	9.45	13.19	18.75	12.87
C13:1	6.41	6.24	4.77	6.17	5.28		9.56	8.52	12.17	12.14	10.96	12.81	16.46	13.78	18.68	22.86	15.02
C14:1				0.34	0.46		0.87	0.71	0.64	0.57	0.54	0.55	1.09	0.46	0.56	0.83	0.51
C16:1n9							0.66	0.57	0.76	0.75	0.63	0.78	1.09	0.66	0.54	0.90	0.72
C17:1							0.47	0.55	0.65	1.46	0.10	0.30	0.55	0.65		0.40	0.83
C18:1n9c							0.53		5.89	1.12	0.21	0.40	0.84				0.49
C18:1n9t							0.54				0.47	0.47		0.20		1.13	0.75
$\Sigma$ MUFA	6.41	6.24	4.77	6.51	5.73		12.63	10.36	20.12	16.04	12.90	15.32	20.04	15.75	19.78	26.12	18.33
C16:2	1.27			1.42	0.72		2.48	2.43	3.00	3.70	2.96	3.59	3.29	2.61	3.42	3.82	2.54
C18:2n6							0.79	0.43	1.11	0.93	0.96	1.04		0.51		0.60	1.11
$\Sigma$ PUFA	1.27			1.42	0.72		3.27	2.86	4.11	4.62	3.91	4.63	3.29	3.13	3.42	4.42	3.65
EPA	89.49	39.12	4.31	4.22	3.49	20.51	11.53	11.04	13.85	13.56	12.84	14.69	9.31	7.78	11.58	13.87	10.04
$\Sigma$ FA	105.46	52.57	17.27	20.04	17.43	37.87	38.99	34.11	51.01	48.34	39.71	45.26	45.02	36.10	47.97	63.16	44.89
%SFA	7.85	13.70	47.43	39.34	42.99	45.85	29.63	28.88	25.35	29.21	25.32	23.47	27.53	26.19	27.50	29.68	28.68
%MUFA	6.08	11.88	27.60	32.50	32.89		32.40	30.36	39.44	33.18	32.50	33.84	44.50	43.61	41.24	41.36	40.83
%PUFA	1.21			7.10	4.12		8.40	8.38	8.06	9.56	9.85	10.23	7.30	8.67	7.13	7.00	8.13
%EPA	84.86	74.42	24.96	21.06	20.00	54.15	29.57	32.38	27.15	28.04	32.33	32.46	20.67	21.54	24.13	21.96	22.36

### 3.3. Multivariate Analysis

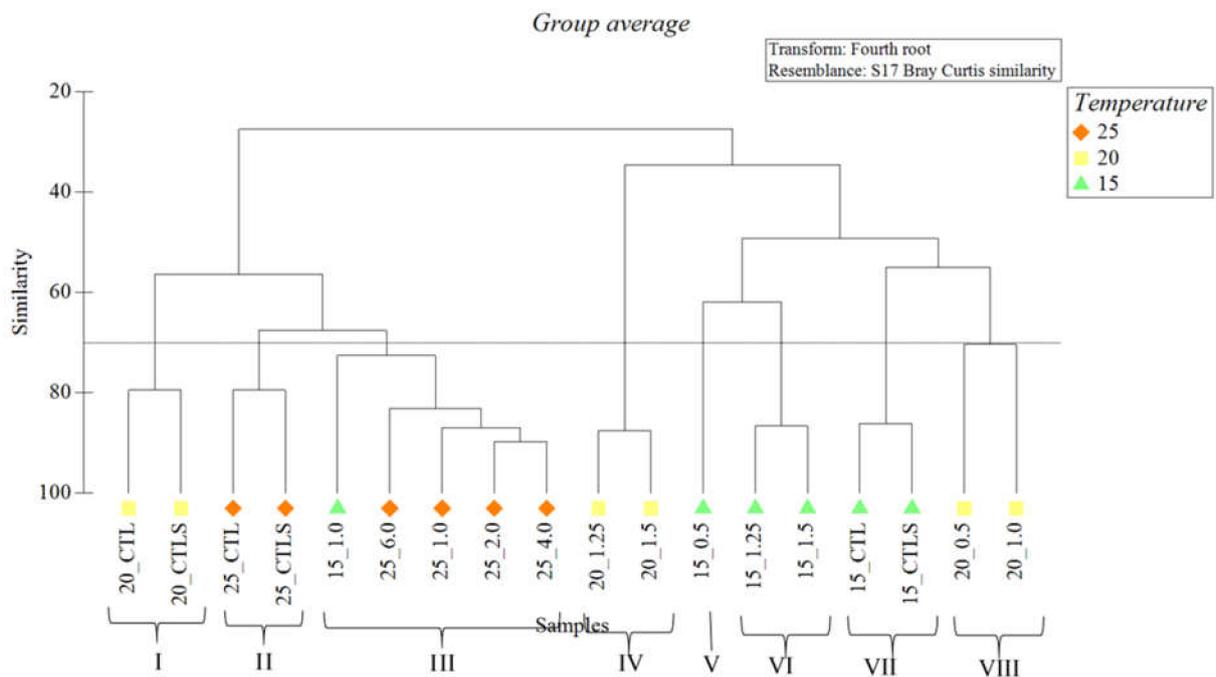
In the first analysis, considering both chemicals and the three temperatures (Figure 2), it was possible to observe a clear separation between the organisms exposed to copper sulfate and the organisms exposed to oxyfluorfen. Moreover, the organisms exposed to copper sulfate (group B) exhibited fatty acid profiles more similar among them than the organisms exposed to oxyfluorfen (group A), as demonstrated by the samples' aggregation.



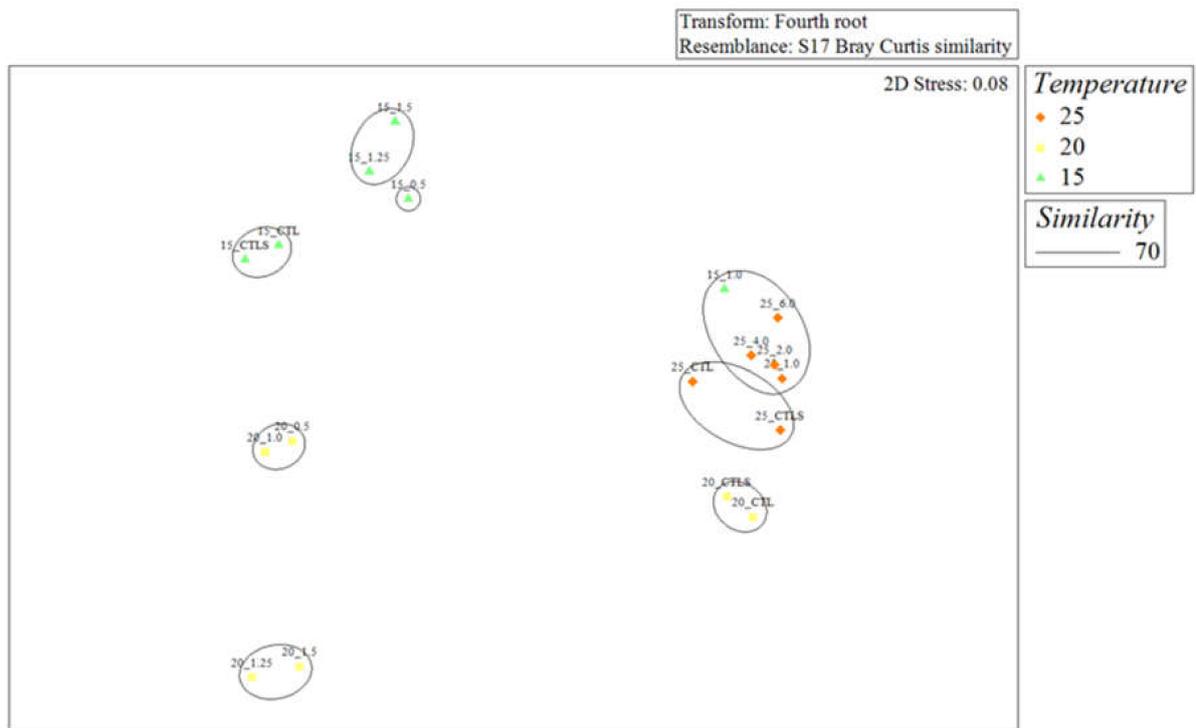
**Figure 2.** Two-dimensional non-metric MDS ordination plot of the FA contents of the organisms exposed to both chemicals (oxyfluorfen and copper sulfate) at the three temperatures (15 °C, 20 °C, and 25 °C). The full gray circles represent the organisms exposed to oxyfluorfen (Group A: 15 °C and 20 °C—CTL, CTLS, 0.50, 1.00, 1.25, and 1.50 µg/L; 25 °C—CTL, CTLS, 1.00, 2.00, 4.00, and 6.00 µg/L), and the empty circles represent the organisms exposed to copper sulfate (Group B: 15 °C—CTL, 25, 50, 75, 100, and 15 µg/L; 20 °C—CTL, 125, 250, 375, 500, and 625 µg/L; 25 °C—CTL, 250, 500, 625, and 750 µg/L).

### 3.4. Oxyfluorfen Exposure

Considering the organisms exposed to oxyfluorfen, it was observed by the cluster analysis that the organisms were grouped considering the abundance and diversity of the FAs (Figure 3), with a similarity of 70%. Eight groups were formed (Group I: composed of the organisms exposed to the control treatments at 20 °C; Group II: composed of the organisms exposed to the control treatments at 25 °C; Group III: organisms exposed to all concentrations at 25 °C and 1.0 µg/L of oxyfluorfen at 15 °C; Group IV: organisms exposed to the highest concentrations (1.25 and 1.5 µg/L) of the chemical at 20 °C; Group V: only composed of the organisms exposed to 0.5 µg/L of oxyfluorfen at 15 °C; Group VI: organisms exposed to the highest concentrations (1.25 and 1.5 µg/L) at 15 °C; Group VII: organisms exposed to the control treatments at 15 °C; and Group VIII: organisms exposed to the lowest concentrations (0.5 and 1.0 µg/L) at 20 °C). The n-MDS (Figure 4) grouped the organisms according to their FA contents (stress = 0.08). This analysis confirms the group formation on the cluster and gives us information about the spatial organization of the samples.



**Figure 3.** Cladogram (cluster analysis) grouping the diatom treatments related with the FA contents after exposure to oxyfluorfen at 15 °C, 20 °C, and 25 °C, respectively.



**Figure 4.** Two-dimensional non-metric MDS ordination plot of the FA contents of *T. weissflogii* exposed to oxyfluorfen at the three temperatures (15 °C, 20 °C, and 25 °C).

The ANOSIM suggested the presence of distinct groups ( $R = 0.581$ ;  $p = 0.001$ ). There were significant differences ( $p < 0.05$ ) between all temperatures. However, the temperatures exhibited poor segregation (15 °C vs. 20 °C— $R = 0.417$ ,  $p = 0.006$ ; 15 °C vs. 25 °C— $R = 0.739$ ,  $p = 0.004$ ; 20 °C vs. 25 °C— $R = 0.604$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ). Table 4 shows the main fatty acids that contributed to the similarity inside each temperature group (15 °C, 20 °C, and 25 °C), as well as the main FAs that contributed to the dissimilarities between the temperatures.

**Table 4.** SIMPER analyses showing the average similarity and dissimilarity among groups of samples, related with n-MDS analysis.

Temperatures	Similarity	Fatty Acids	Av. Abund	Av. Sim	Sim/SD	Contrib %	Cum %	
15 °C	54.09	C17:0	2.40	13.29	2.22	24.57	24.57	
		C17:1	1.78	8.48	2.41	15.67	40.24	
		C13:0	1.52	6.85	1.35	12.66	52.90	
20 °C	43.33	C18:0	1.87	12.06	1.77	27.84	27.84	
		C17:0	1.47	7.51	0.74	17.33	45.16	
		C14:0	1.21	4.89	1.23	11.29	56.45	
25 °C	77.06	C16:0	2.79	10.36	8.55	13.45	13.45	
		EPA	2.52	9.33	8.41	12.11	25.56	
		C16:1n9	2.50	9.24	8.63	11.99	37.55	
Dissimilarity				Av. Dis	Dis/SD			
15 °C/20 °C	65.75	C18:0	0.42	1.87	5.09	1.76	7.75	7.75
		C17:1	1.78	0.39	4.92	1.68	7.49	15.24
		C13:0	1.52	0.38	4.25	1.58	6.47	21.71
15 °C/25 °C	63.01	C16:0	0.39	2.79	5.96	2.56	9.46	9.46
		C17:0	2.40	0.56	5.00	1.78	7.94	17.40
		C20:2	1.42	0.00	3.60	1.75	5.71	23.11
20 °C/25 °C	65.91	C13:0	0.38	2.44	5.36	2.72	8.13	8.13
		C16:0	0.94	2.79	5.04	1.55	7.64	15.77
		EPA	0.83	2.52	4.90	1.57	7.44	23.21

### 3.5. Copper Sulfate Exposure

According to the cluster analysis, the organisms exposed to copper sulfate were grouped considering the abundance and diversity of the FA compositions (Figure 5) and to a similarity of 75%. Three groups were formed (Group I: only composed of the organisms exposed to the highest concentration of copper sulfate—125 µg/L—at 15 °C; Group II: composed of the organisms exposed to 20 °C and 25 °C; and Group III: composed of the organisms exposed at 15 °C). The n-MDS (Figure 6) showed the organisms grouped according to the FA contents (stress = 0.02). In group A, the organisms exposed to two temperatures (20 °C and 25 °C) are presented, whereas group B shows the organisms exposed at 15 °C. As observed in the cluster graph, the organisms exposed to 125 µg/L at 15 °C appeared in an independent position (group C), revealing a distinct content of FAs.

The ANOSIM suggests the presence of distinct groups ( $R = 0.515$ ;  $p = 0.001$ ). There were significant differences ( $p < 0.05$ ) between 15 °C vs. 20 °C and 15 °C vs. 25 °C, but not between 20 °C and 25 °C ( $p = 0.104$ ). The groups with significant differences also exhibited good segregation ( $R = 0.783$  and  $R = 0.709$ , respectively). The temperatures of 20 °C and 25 °C, as expected, presented low segregation ( $R = 0.163$ ;  $p = 0.104$ ). Table 5 shows the main fatty acids (EPA, C16:0 and C13:1) that contributed to the similarity inside each group of temperatures, as well as the main FAs that contributed to the dissimilarities between the temperatures.



**Table 5.** SIMPER analyses showing average similarity and dissimilarity among groups of samples, related with n-MDS analysis.

Temperatures	Similarity	Fatty Acids	Av. Abund		Av. Sim	Sim/SD	Contrib %	Cum %
15 °C	73.00	C16:0	2.00		26.49	9.77	36.28	36.28
		EPA	2.27		26.18	3.66	35.86	72.14
		C13:1	1.29		16.68	1.35	22.85	94.98
20 °C	92.30	EPA	1.89		14.92	29.64	16.17	16.17
		C16:0	1.82		14.27	26.12	15.46	31.63
		C13:1	1.82		14.22	35.28	15.41	47.04
25 °C	87.42	C13:1	2.04		16.84	12.50	19.26	19.26
		C16:0	1.89		15.53	12.98	17.76	37.02
		EPA	1.79		14.79	12.68	16.92	53.94
Dissimilarity					Av. Dis	Dis/SD		
15 °C/20 °C	42.27	C18:2n6	0.00	0.96	5.11	14.82	12.09	12.09
		C16:1	0.00	0.91	4.86	16.21	11.50	23.59
		EPA	2.27	1.89	4.45	1.70	10.52	34.11
15 °C/25 °C	40.17	C16:1	0.00	0.93	5.19	11.84	12.93	12.93
		EPA	2.27	1.79	4.62	1.45	11.51	24.44
		C16:2	0.51	1.33	4.62	1.49	11.50	35.94
20 °C/25 °C	10.82	C18:1n9c	0.82	0.36	2.60	1.30	24.05	24.05
		C18:1n9t	0.42	0.53	1.96	1.17	18.11	42.16
		C18:2n6	0.96	0.55	1.90	1.01	17.55	59.71

### Carbohydrate Content

Regarding the carbohydrate content, different temperatures and chemicals led to different responses. After exposure to the contaminants at the different temperatures, *T. weissflogii* showed a great decrease in carbohydrates when exposed to oxyfluorfen at 25 °C (Table 6) and when exposed to copper sulfate at 15 °C (Table 7), with an opposite trend to the remaining exposure conditions (i.e., the neutral sugars increasing) being observed. Considering the organisms' exposure to the organic herbicide (Table 6), the results showed an increase in the sugar content along with the concentrations when the organisms were exposed to temperatures of 15 °C and 25 °C, verifying an opposite trend when exposed at 20 °C. Considering the three temperatures, a decrease of the galactose and an increase of the glucose content with the temperature increase was observed. Moreover, a gradual increase of the glucose content along with the concentrations was notorious at the different temperatures. On the other hand, considering the organisms exposed to copper sulfate (Table 7), an increase in the amount of sugars, mainly of glucose, along with the concentrations was observed, except for the organisms exposed at 15 °C. Changes in the sugar diversity was also observed in the exposed temperatures, namely for the organisms exposed at 15 °C, the ones with lower varieties of neutral sugars, and glucose showed to be the dominant sugar regardless of the temperature.

**Table 6.** Neutral sugar quantification ( $\mu\text{g}/10^4$  cell) of *Thalassiosira weissflogii*, determined in organisms after 7 days of exposure to five concentrations of oxyfluorfen ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{L}$ ) at three different temperatures (15 °C (white); 20 °C (light gray); and 25 °C (dark gray)).

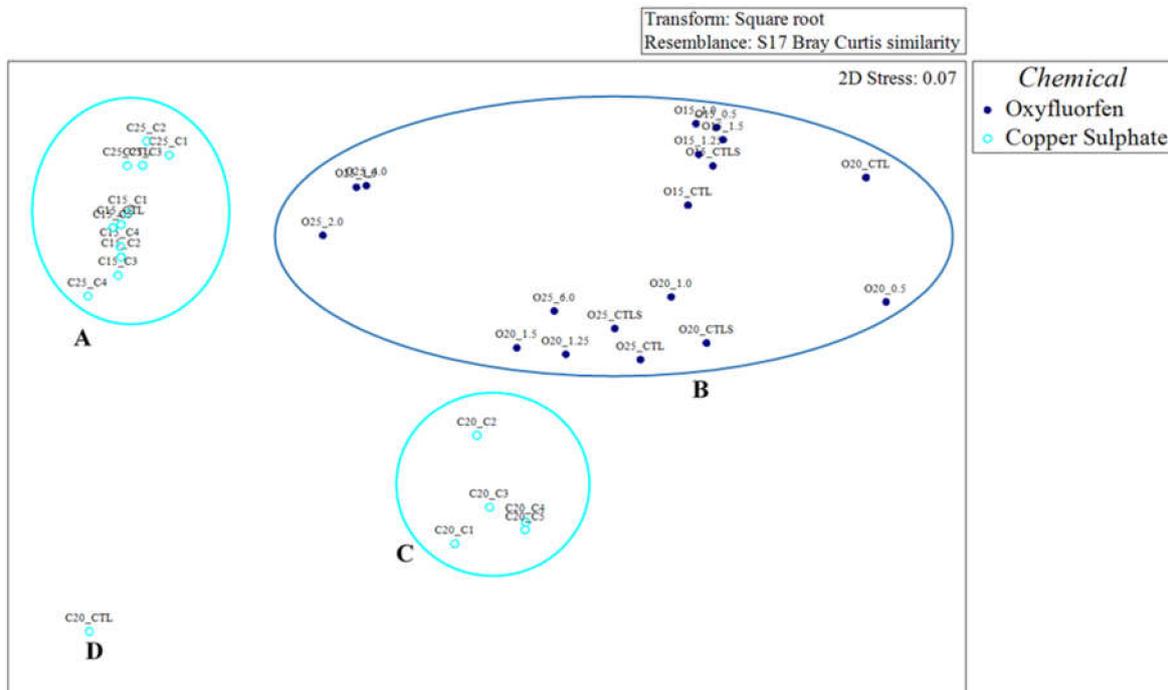
Neutral sugars	15 °C						20 °C						25 °C					
	CTL	CTLS	0.50	1.00	1.25	1.50	CTL	CTLS	0.50	1.00	1.25	1.50	CTL	CTLS	1.00	2.00	4.00	6.00
Rhamnose	0.784	0.567	0.795	0.565	0.824	1.479	1.606	0.511	12.362	0.889	0.625	0.320	0.484	0.561	0.182	0.133	0.167	0.310
Fucose	0.151	0.238	0.352	0.283	0.262	0.362	0.739	0.698	1.549	0.800	0.399	0.393	0.278	0.554	0.190	0.154	0.171	0.223
Ribose	0.192	0.193	0.226	0.192	0.175	0.205	0.028	0.518	2.522	0.843	0.570	0.355	0.427	0.457	0.236	0.126	0.179	0.512
Arabinose	0.449	0.736	0.915	0.815	0.734	0.888	0.837	1.018	0.726	0.408			0.278	0.335	0.263	0.171	0.287	0.307
Xylose	0.643	1.144	1.461	1.279	1.166	1.444	0.990	2.225	1.610	1.280	0.180	0.299	0.122	0.232	0.454	0.248	0.487	0.528
Manose	1.281	1.370	0.839	0.720	1.241	1.171	0.598	10.588	2.329	3.320	4.740	2.478	3.685	4.876	0.021	0.024	0.025	7.322
Galactose	2.737	5.956	8.280	7.899	6.912	7.490	0.965	0.324	1.767	1.086	0.801	0.438	0.767	1.069	0.176	0.086	0.178	0.433
Glucose	0.537	0.849	1.162	1.193	1.303	1.302	0.097	2.081	1.036	1.469	2.538	2.399	0.595	1.621	3.843	2.110	3.266	4.237

**Table 7.** Neutral sugar quantification ( $\mu\text{g}/10^4$  cell) of *Thalassiosira weissflogii*, determined in organisms after 7 days of exposure to different copper sulfate concentrations ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{L}$ ) and at three different temperatures (15 °C (white); 20 °C (light gray); and 25 °C (dark gray)).

Neutral Sugars	15 °C						20 °C						25 °C				
	CTL	25	50	75	100	125	CTL	125	205	375	500	625	CTL	250	500	625	750
Rhamnose							0.105	0.186	0.606	0.258	0.321	0.571					
Fucose	0.072	0.127	0.194	0.162	0.269	0.102	0.034	0.051	0.155				0.063	0.146	0.133	0.199	0.148
Ribose	0.177	0.222	0.140	0.146	0.170	0.222	0.095	0.093	0.394	0.150	0.127	0.102	0.056	0.083	0.105	0.107	0.060
Xylose	0.129	0.103	0.055	0.043	0.031	0.057	0.045	0.020	0.156	0.391	0.454	0.282	0.051	0.069	0.080	0.095	0.028
Manose								2.621	5.542	2.506	3.253	2.967	0.011	0.028			
Galactose													0.080	0.092	0.127	0.062	
Glucose	3.958	4.498	3.047	2.626	3.373	3.857	0.304	1.252	2.707	1.593	1.294	1.273	4.618	5.489	6.402	5.816	2.298

### 3.6. Multivariate Analysis

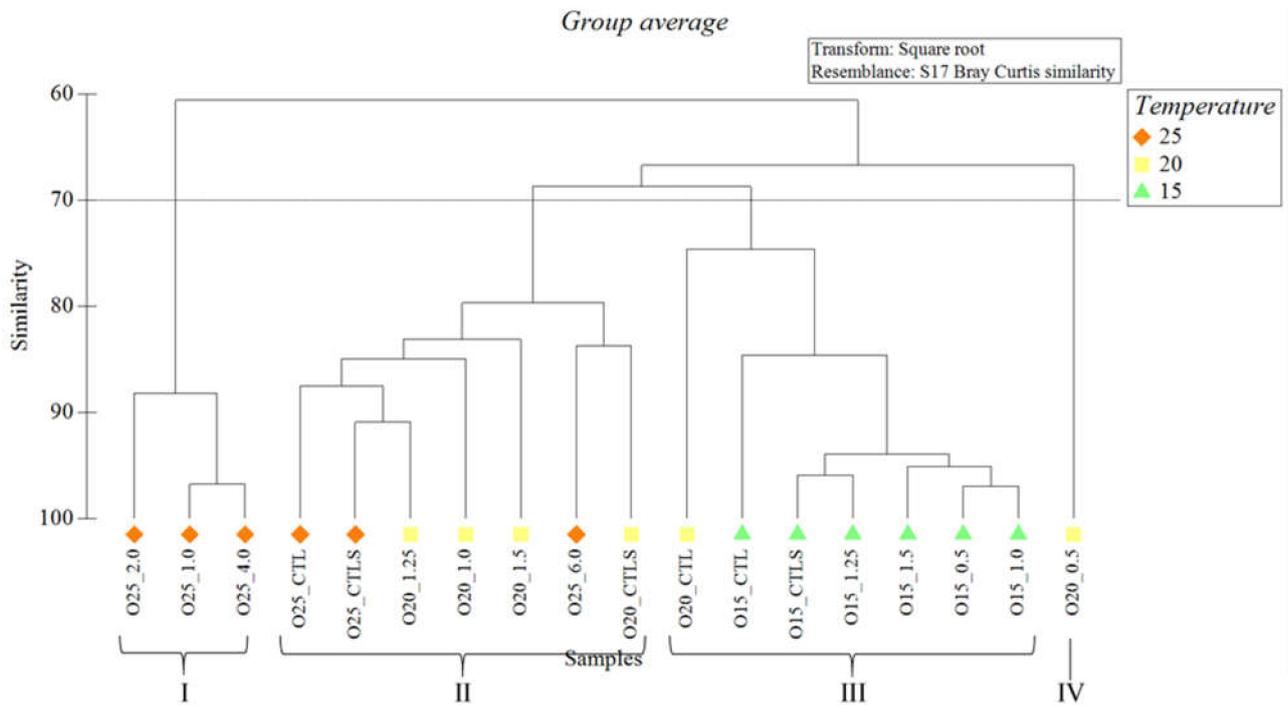
Considering both chemicals and the three temperatures (Figure 7), we observed a separation between the organisms exposed to copper sulfate and the organisms exposed to oxyfluorfen. Moreover, a larger dispersion was observed between the organisms exposed to copper sulfate, being clustered into three different groups.



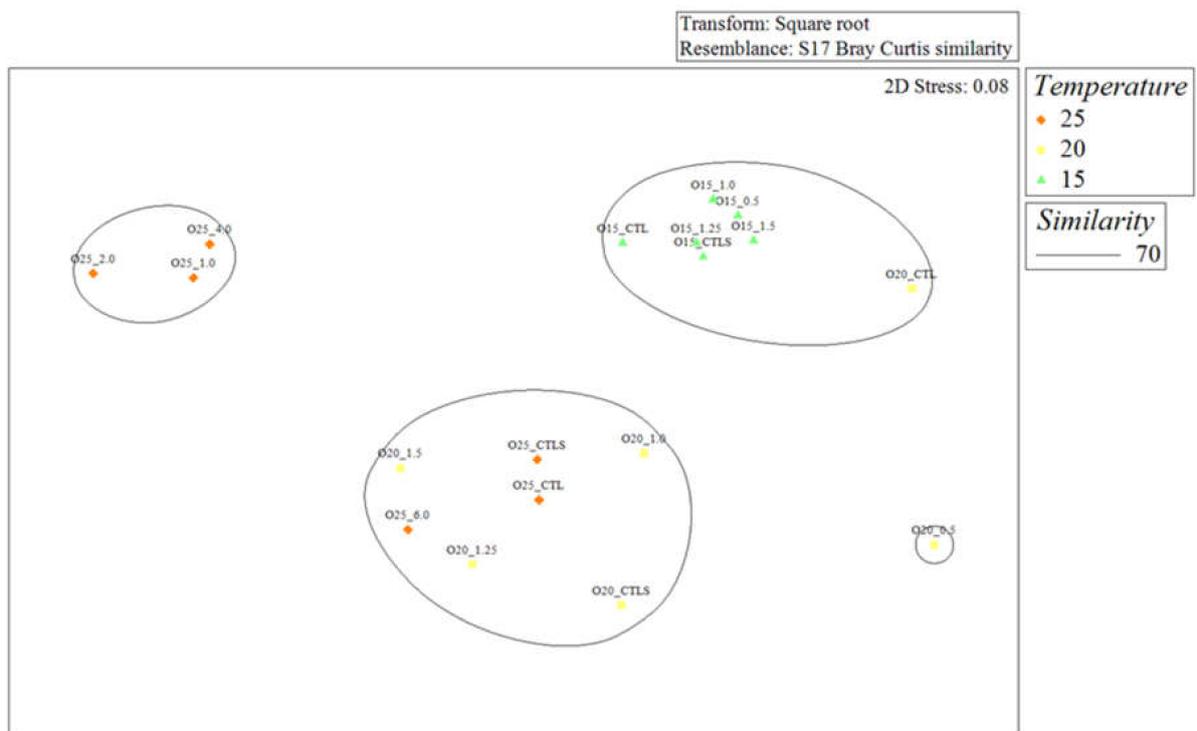
**Figure 7.** Two-dimensional non-metric MDS ordination plot of the polysaccharide content of *T. weissflogii* exposed to both contaminants at the three temperatures (15 °C, 20 °C, and 25 °C). Empty circles represent the organisms exposed to copper sulfate (Groups A, C, and D), and the full gray circles represent the organisms exposed to oxyfluorfen (Group B).

### 3.7. Oxyfluorfen Exposure

A cluster analysis grouped the organisms, considering the abundance and diversity of the neutral sugars (Figure 8) to a similarity of 70%. Four groups were formed (Group I: composed of the organisms exposed to oxyfluorfen concentrations of 1.0, 2.0, and 4.0 µg/L at 25 °C; Group II: composed of the organisms exposed to the control treatments and 6.0 µg/L of oxyfluorfen at 25 °C and exposed to CTLs and the highest oxyfluorfen concentrations (1.0, 1.25, and 1.5 µg/L) at 20 °C; Group III: organisms exposed at 15 °C and the control treatment at 20 °C; and Group IV: organisms exposed to the lowest concentrations of oxyfluorfen (0.5 µg/L) at 20 °C). The n-MDS (Figure 9) showed the organisms grouped according to the neutral sugar content (stress = 0.08). This analysis confirmed the group formation on the cluster and gave us information about the spatial organization of the samples.



**Figure 8.** Cladogram (cluster analysis) grouping the diatom’s treatments, related with the neutral sugar content after the exposure to oxyfluorfen at 15 °C, 20 °C, and 25 °C.



**Figure 9.** Two-dimensional non-metric MDS ordination plot of the neutral sugar content of the *T. weissflogii* exposed to oxyfluorfen at the three temperatures.

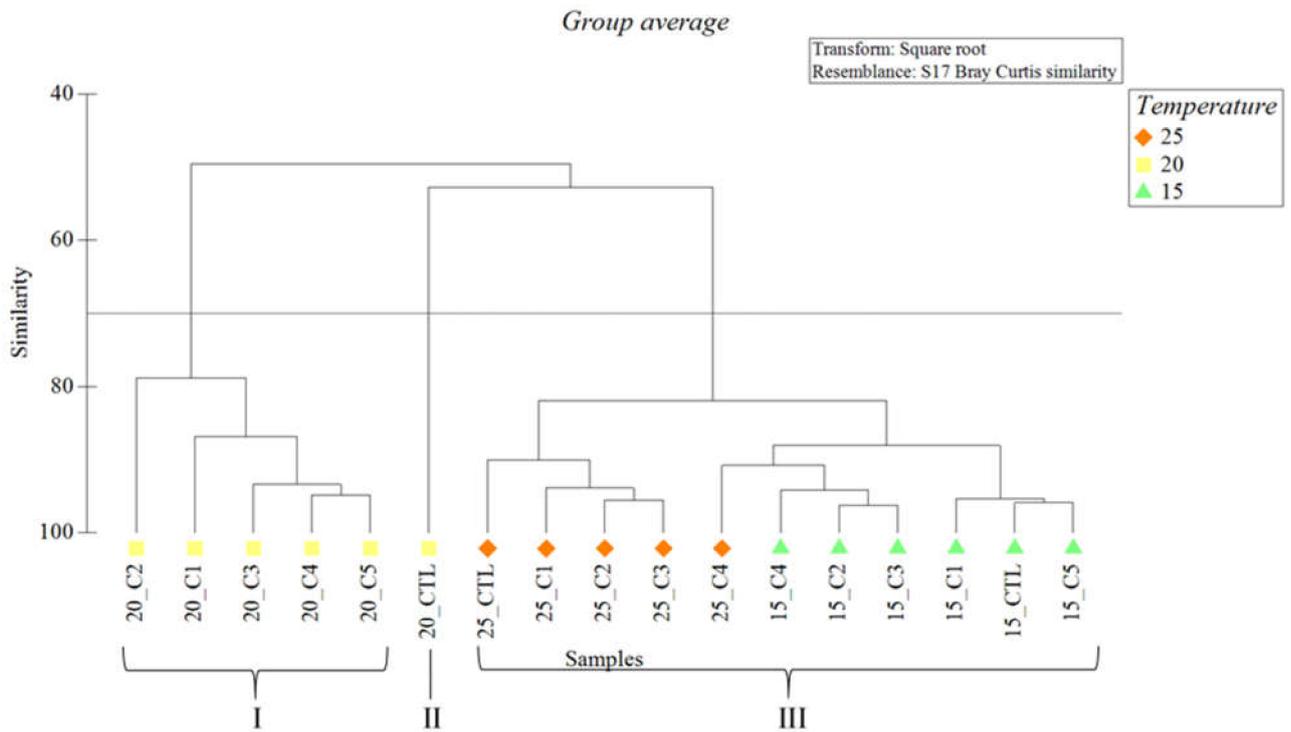
The ANOSIM suggested the presence of distinct groups ( $R = 0.49$ ;  $p = 0.001$ ). There were significant differences ( $p < 0.05$ ) between 15 °C vs. 20 °C and 15 °C vs. 25 °C. However, only the condition of 15 °C vs. 25 °C exhibited good segregation ( $R = 0.752$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ), while the temperatures of 20 °C vs. 15 °C presented low segregation ( $R = 0.531$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ) and 20 °C vs. 25 °C exhibited no significant differences and, consequently, poor segregation ( $R = 0.233$ ,  $p = 0.063$ ). Table 8 shows the main neutral sugars that most contributed to the similarity inside each temperature group (galactose, glucose, and mannose), as well as the main ones that contributed to the dissimilarities between the temperatures (galactose, mannose, glucose, and rhamnose).

**Table 8.** SIMPER analyses showing the average similarity and dissimilarity among temperatures, related with n-MDS analysis.

Temperatures	Similarity	Sugars	Av. Abund		Av. Sim	Sim/SD	Contrib %	Cum %
15 °C	91.37	Gal	2.52		26.94	6.49	29.48	29.48
		Xyl	1.08		11.85	10.65	12.97	42.45
		Man	1.04		11.60	6.33	12.69	55.14
20 °C	71.66	Man	1.85		16.30	2.99	22.74	22.74
		Glc	1.19		10.91	1.80	15.22	37.96
		Gal	0.91		9.06	3.60	12.64	50.60
25 °C	74.59	Glc	1.55		21.53	2.55	28.86	28.86
		Ara	0.52		8.19	7.50	10.98	39.84
		Xyl	0.57		8.18	3.16	10.97	50.81
Dissimilarity					Av. Diss	Diss/SD		
15 °C/20 °C	29.93	Gal	2.52	0.91	9.71	3.12	32.42	32.42
		Man	1.04	1.85	5.28	1.47	17.63	50.05
		Rha	0.90	1.30	3.35	0.77	11.18	61.23
15 °C/25 °C	35.44	Gal	2.52	0.62	13.40	3.35	37.81	37.81
		Man	1.04	1.22	7.30	4.55	20.60	58.41
		Glc	1.02	1.55	4.40	1.68	12.41	70.82
20 °C/25 °C	32.13	Man	1.85	1.22	8.98	1.49	27.96	27.96
		Rha	1.30	0.53	5.00	0.89	15.55	43.51
		Glc	1.19	1.55	4.23	1.20	13.15	56.66

### 3.8. Copper Sulfate Exposure

Regarding the organisms exposed to copper sulfate, cluster analysis showed the organisms grouped into three groups, considering the abundance and diversity of the neutral sugars (Figure 10) and a similarity of 70%. Group I was composed of the organisms exposed at concentrations of copper sulfate at 20 °C. Group II was composed of the organisms exposed to the control treatment at 20 °C, and in Group III were all the organisms exposed at 15 °C and 25 °C. The n-MDS (Figure 11) shows the organisms grouped according to the neutral sugar content (stress = 0). This analysis also shows the group formation on the cluster and gives us information about the spatial organization of the samples, observed a great distance between the groups.



**Figure 10.** Cladogram (cluster analysis) grouping the diatoms, related with the neutral sugar content after exposure to copper sulfate at 15 °C, 20 °C, and 25 °C.



**Figure 11.** Two-dimensional non-metric MDS ordination plot of the neutral sugar content of *T. weissflogii* exposed to copper sulfate at the three temperatures.

The ANOSIM suggested the presence of distinct groups ( $R = 0.667$ ;  $p = 0.001$ ). There were significant differences ( $p < 0.05$ ) between all temperatures. Moreover, all of them exhibited good segregation (20 °C vs. 15 °C— $R = 0.748$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ; 20 °C vs. 25 °C— $R = 0.776$ ,  $p = 0.004$ ; 15 °C vs. 25 °C— $R = 0.608$ ,  $p = 0.011$ ). Table 9 shows the neutral sugars, major contributors (glucose, fucose, and ribose among others) to the similarity inside each temperature group, as well as the main contributors (mannose, glucose, and rhamnose) to the dissimilarities between the temperatures.

**Table 9.** SIMPER analyses showing the average similarity and dissimilarity among temperatures, related with n-MDS analysis.

Temperatures	Similarity	Sugars	Av. Abund		Av. Sim	Sim/SD	Contrib %	Cum %
15 °C	92.00	Glc	1.88		60.04	23.15	65.25	65.25
		Rib	0.42		13.47	21.09	14.64	79.90
		Fuc	0.38		11.23	5.09	12.21	92.10
20 °C	72.85	Man	1.51		23.61	1.35	32.42	32.42
		Glc	1.14		22.34	5.65	30.67	63.09
		Rha	0.56		10.81	7.40	14.85	77.93
25 °C	85.86	Glc	2.19		57.48	9.84	66.95	66.98
		Fuc	0.37		9.69	4.44	11.29	78.24
		Rib	0.28		7.66	10.83	8.92	87.16
Dissimilarity					Av. Diss	Diss/SD		
15 °C/20 °C	48.06	Man	0.00	1.51	19.80	2.18	41.20	41.20
		Glc	1.88	1.14	11.90	1.38	24.76	65.96
		Rha	0.00	0.56	7.81	5.98	16.24	82.20
15 °C/25 °C	16.34	Glc	1.88	2.19	7.19	2.17	44.00	44.00
		Gal	0.00	0.24	3.62	1.89	22.13	66.13
		Rib	0.42	0.28	2.23	2.24	13.63	79.76
20 °C/25 °C	51.85	Man	1.51	0.05	18.42	2.23	35.53	35.53
		Glc	1.14	2.19	15.18	1.64	29.28	64.81
		Rha	0.56	0.00	7.38	5.22	14.24	79.05

#### 4. Discussion

This study highlights the highly toxic action of organic and inorganic chemicals on the diatom *T. weissflogii*. Considering the toxicological effects, the organisms exhibited higher sensitivity to the oxyfluorfen's action than to the copper sulfate's action. The highly toxic action of oxyfluorfen on the diatom compared with copper sulfate may be justified by the fact that herbicides are designed to control plants; therefore, the sensitivity of vegetal cells such as algae to these chemicals is extremely improved [64].

The optimal growth conditions, such as the temperature, vary for each species. In the present study, the greatest growth rate and cell density was observed for the organisms exposed to the highest temperatures (20 °C and 25 °C), as was already observed by other authors for *Thalassiosira* sp. [65,66]. The temperature of 25 °C was suggested to be the optimal temperature for diatom growth in [67]. As expected, a decrease in the growth rate along with the concentration range for both contaminants was exhibited upon exposure at the three temperature conditions. Few studies evaluated the effects of oxyfluorfen. Nevertheless, several studies that assessed the herbicide's exposure to *Thalassiosira* sp. observed the same pattern of growth inhibition with the increase of the toxic concentration [68–72]. Furthermore, considering the copper exposure, some recent studies also reported a trend of growth inhibition, mostly at higher concentrations of *T. weissflogii* [68,69] and *T. pseudonana* [73]. Regardless, the growth stimulation at the highest temperature (25 °C) could suggest a benefit of the temperature increase for the diatom. At the biochemical level, such a clear trend was not observed.

Changes in the fatty acid profiles have been reported as an adaptative response to fight against stressful conditions, such as contaminants, through the activation of defense

and repair mechanisms by the organisms' cells [74]. Regarding the different changes observed in the FA profiles dependent on the exposure temperature, few studies have focused on this interaction, but the authors of [75] reported an increase in the lipid peroxidation with the increase in the temperature of *Peridinium gatunense*. Moreover, the temperature presents a key role in biochemical and physiological processes [76–78], and structural adaptations when the algae cells were submitted to warmer water to adjust the membrane's fluidity, resulting in reduced amounts of PUFAs, were observed [79].

In the present study, a decrease in the PUFA percentage with an increase in temperature was observed in the diatoms exposed to both chemicals, also suggesting larger lipid peroxidation at higher temperatures. Moreover, when lipid peroxidation occurs, PUFAs act on free radical generation [74], with decreases in the PUFA and HUFA contents. That justifies the decrease in the PUFA and HUFA percentages in the diatom profiles with the temperature increase. When the organisms were exposed to oxyfluorfen, they exhibited a decrease in their fatty acid contents, with the lipid profile being dominated by SFAs. The dominance of the SFAs and the decrease in unsaturated fatty acids with the exposure to the herbicide may also be explained by the action mode, since oxyfluorfen acts by inhibiting protoporphyrinogen oxidase, an enzyme involved in chlorophyll synthesis and cytochrome. When the enzyme is inhibited, an accumulation of protoporphyrinogen in the cytoplasm occurs and the consequent generation of protoporphyrin X [80–82]. The reaction of this molecule with light and oxygen causes free radical production with consequent dangerous impacts on the cells, such as the production of ROS or membrane damage [83]. Considering the action mode of the herbicide and the formation of free radicals, namely singlet oxygen, oxyfluorfen has been reported to be an inductor of lipid peroxidation [84]. As mentioned above, lipid peroxidation is suggested as being responsible for the PUFA decrease observed in the exposed organisms.

Considering the biochemical response to the copper sulfate exposure, a decrease in the unsaturated FAs at 15 °C and an increase of these at 20 °C and 25 °C was observed. This difference of responses when compared with oxyfluorfen exposure may be due to the copper's action mode. Despite the lack of information about the copper mechanisms and the fatty acid profiles, it may include the effect of desaturation [85], leading to a decrease in SFAs and an increase in unsaturated fatty acids. Moreover, copper, like other metals, may be responsible for ROS generation via a Fenton reaction, inducing oxidative stress to the cells and compromising the metabolism [86].

The carbohydrate profiles also changed with the exposure to different temperatures and contaminants. It is known that macroalgae use different carbohydrates as energy sources and storage for carbon molecules [87]. Moreover, intracellular carbon flux is an important process for cell energy production and the other molecular composites needed for microalgae growth. Therefore, changes to the carbohydrate type and storage may affect several cell processes, such as carbon fixation, photosynthetic ability, carbon storage, or lipid accumulation [88]. There is a lack of studies evaluating the contaminants' effects on the carbohydrate compositions of marine algae. However, it is known that carbohydrate production by marine algae is variable, depending on factors such as the species, growth stage, or environmental conditions [89]. In this study, an increase in the glucose content with the increase in temperature was observed, the same trend observed by the authors of [90], who reported an increase in D-glucose production by *T. weissflogii* with the temperature's increase. Moreover, a dominance of glucose when the organisms were exposed to copper sulfate was observed for all the temperatures tested. When the organisms were exposed to oxyfluorfen, an increase in glucose with the increase of the temperature was also observed, whereas the galactose content decreased with the increase in temperature.

## 5. Conclusions

This study highlights the response of a marine diatom under scenarios of climatic events and chemical contaminations, revealing changes in the FA and carbohydrate profiles

of the primary producer species *T. weissflogii* when exposed to oxyfluorfen and copper sulfate under different temperature conditions. These variations in the FAs and carbohydrates may comprise and cause severe impacts at the nutritive value of this primary producer species and thus have consequences along the trophic food web. This work also underlines the importance of FAs and carbohydrates as relevant biomarker tools and early warning indicators to detect the presence of combined stressors, namely those induced by temperature change and contaminants in marine systems. With the increase in temperature, there is an increase in the diatom growth rate. However, this pattern is not so clear at the biochemical level. This study intends to also be an alert to call attention to the excessive growth of the primary producers and the reduction of their nutritive value. As a consequence of the temperature increase, the consumers will be negatively affected, with dangerous consequences to the communities and thus to the ecosystem and to human health, as some essential molecules like PUFAs are produced *de novo* by primary producers and further transferred to consumers at the trophic levels of the marine food chains.

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