

SC4 - Statistical issues in the design and analysis of ecotox experiments

John Green, DuPont, USA
Timothy Springer, Wildlife International, USA
Chen Teel, DuPont, USA
Henrik Holbech, University of Southern Denmark, Denmark

Abstract

This course covers statistical considerations of experimental design and statistical analysis used to evaluate toxicity of chemicals in the environment. Both hypothesis testing to determine a NOEC and regression modeling to determine an EC_x are developed in detail. Discussion will include advantages and disadvantages of both approaches and their use in risk assessment. The lead instructor works closely with OECD & USEPA, is an active member of the OECD Validation Management Group for Ecotoxicity and was instrumental in developing several new OECD Test Guidelines and new methodology and these will be discussed. The instructors have worked on several other multi-disciplinary teams developing regulatory statistical guidance. Continuous, quantal, and severity score (histopath) data and both normal and Poisson models will be explored. The instructors have decades of practical experience designing and analyzing ecotoxicity experiments, performing risk assessments, and dealing with related regulatory issues and drew on that experience in developing this class. Underlying principles will be discussed, but the focus will be on practical issues. All topics will include illustration by real laboratory ecotoxicity data examples illustrating the relevant points and techniques. Logical flow-charts and some discussion of software for NOEC determination and for regression model fitting will be presented.

Course objectives

The course is intended to identify and explore techniques both statistically sound and acceptable to the regulatory communities for analyzing laboratory ecotoxicity experiments to meet current or near-term future guidelines. The course will identify problematic data that may call for specialized approaches. It is intended to provide practical advice and make specific recommendations, as well as alternatives and when they might be appropriate. It will also introduce statistical methods in recently adopted OECD Test Guidelines.

Course level

Intermediate