The use of Hediste diversicolor in the study of emerging contaminants

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26 Abstract

27 The contamination of aquatic environments has been the focus of research to understand effects on ecosystems and its species. Benthic organisms are 28 considered potential targets since sediments act as sources and sinks for 29 environmental contaminants. This review presents information on the effects 30 of emerging contaminants: pharmaceuticals (tested 31 of three types concentrations between 0.1 ng/L – 250 mg/L and 0.01 ng/g – 2.5  $\mu$ g/g), metal-32 based nanoparticles (< 100 nm) (tested concentrations between 10  $\mu$ g/L – 1 33 mg/L and 5 – 140  $\mu$ g/g) and micro(nano)plastics (tested concentrations 34 between 5  $\mu$ g/L – 50 mg/L and 10 – 50 mg/kg), on the polychaete Hediste 35 *diversicolor*, a key species in estuarine/coastal ecosystems. Data shows that 36 these contaminants promote alterations in burrowing activity (lowest 37 38 concentration inducing effects: 10 ng/L), neurotransmission and damage related parameters (lowest concentration inducing effects: 100 ng/L). The 39 characteristics of this polychaete, such as regeneration capacity, make the 40 use this species in biomedical studies involving environmental contaminants 41 valuable. 42 43 44

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- 46
- 47 **Keywords:** polychaete, drugs, nanoparticles, plastics, bioindicator

#### 48 **1. Introduction**

The contamination of aquatic environments has, for many years, been the 49 focus of intense research to understand the deleterious impact in the 50 ecosystems (Borgwardt et al., 2019; Halpern et al., 2015). The available data 51 points to sediments as particular targets for accumulation of contaminants and 52 as a source of contamination throughout the food web (Herrero et al., 2018; 53 Wilkinson et al., 2018). In this perspective, species inhabiting the sediments of 54 reservoirs and estuaries, like polychaetes, can be valuable tools to assess the 55 impact of contaminants including emerging contaminants of concern like 56 pharmaceuticals, nanoparticles and small plastic particles (Lewis and Watson, 57 2012; Silva et al., 2020a, b; Wilkinson et al., 2016). Recent studies have been 58 using Hediste diversicolor as a biological model in ecotoxicity studies 59 60 addressing the impact of contaminants like pharmaceuticals (Nunes et al., 2016; Pires et al., 2016a), metals, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), 61 62 polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), pesticides (Dean, 2008; Gomiero et al., 2018) and micro(nano)plastics (Gomiero et al., 2018; Muller-Karanassos et al., 63 2019; Silva et al., 2020a, b) due to their sensitivity and quick response to 64 contamination. Oxidative stress parameters have been shown responsive in H. 65 co npsdiversicolor exposed to pharmaceutical drugs, such as caffeine (Pires et 66 al., 2016a), nanoparticles, like copper oxide nanoparticles (Buffet et al., 67 2012a), and microplastics, such as polyvinyl chloride (PVC) (Gomiero et al., 68 2018). Studies addressing the effects of silver nanoparticles (Cong et al., 69 2014) and nanoplastics of polystyrene (PS) (Silva et al., 2020a) demonstrated 70 a systematic impairment in behavior, a very relevant endpoint, considering that 71

behavioral changes may reflect alterations at lower levels of biological 72 organization, with potential considerable impact on animal fitness and survival. 73 Studies have also demonstrated the effects of pharmaceutical drugs, 74 nanoparticles and plastics on other polychaete species, such as Diopatra 75 neapolitana and Arenicola marina. Pires et al. (2016b) reported that exposure 76 to caffeine led to alterations in oxidative stress related enzymes, decreased 77 glycogen content and increased cell membrane damage in D. neapolitana, 78 79 whereas in A. marina only increased cell membrane damage was found. D. neapolitana exposed to carbamazepine presented a decreased regenerative 80 capacity, as well as an increase in the number of days necessary to fully 81 regenerate the lost segments, which was exacerbated when it was exposed to 82 caffeine (Pires et al., 2016c). 83

Regarding nanoparticles, borrowing time decreased in the polychaete A. 84 marina exposed to single walled carbon nanotubes but increased in this 85 species when organisms were exposed to titanium dioxide nanoparticles 86 (Galloway et al., 2010). In the polychaete Perinereis aibuhitensis exposed to 87 polystyrene microplastics (8-12 µm and 32-38 µm), regardless 88 of concentration (100 and 1000 beads/mL) and size tested, the regenerative 89 capacity was reduced to half of its normal percentage (Leung and Chan, 90 2018). 91

The easy capture and maintenance in laboratory conditions, and the high degree of responsivity make *H. diversicolor* particularly suitable to ecotoxicological studies. The present review aims to present information on laboratorial and field studies addressing the problem of environmental contamination, in terms of emerging contaminants, using *H. diversicolor* as the

model species, emphasizing the importance of this model, relevant endpointsthat may be addressed, and future applications.

99

100 *1.1. Habitat* 

101 Hediste diversicolor (O.F. Müller, 1776), commonly called ragworm, is a polychaete species belonging to the phylum Annelida, family Nereididae. This 102 species lives in shallow marine and brackish water ecosystems, in muddy 103 104 sands, but can also be found in gravel, clay and even turf (Scaps, 2002). H. diversicolor has a wide distribution along the North temperate zones of the 105 Atlantic Ocean, in Europe (from Norway to Morocco, including also the Baltic, 106 Mediterranean, Black and Caspian Seas (Fauvel, 1923; Clay, 1967; Smith, 107 1977, Read)) and the eastern North American coast (Fauvel, 1923; Clay, 108 109 1967; Smith, 1977), being also reported in the Pacific Ocean (Caribbean sea, (Miloslavich et al., 2010)). 110

111

112 *1.2. Biology* 

H. diversicolor reproduces only once in their lifetime and presents sexes 113 separated throughout their life cycle (Dales, 1950; Scaps, 2002). The 114 115 immature organisms have a reddish-brown color that changes to green upon maturation. Females become dark green and males have a lighter grass-green 116 due to the production of sperm (among others Andries, 2001; Durou & 117 Mouneyrac, 2007). These organisms reach maturity after one to two years, 118 although in the natural environment it has been shown that individuals can live 119 up to three years before spawning (among others Möller, 1985; Nithart, 1998). 120 This species presents a high tolerance to salinity variations. However, at 121

salinities lower than 10% of normal seawater salinity, osmoregulation and
viability of offspring is compromised due to larval sensibility (Scaps, 2002;
Smith, 1955, 1956).

H. diversicolor plays a key role in the ecosystems where it inhabits, 125 influencing the biogeochemical cycle of nutrients, sediment oxygenation and 126 (endo-)benthic fauna (among others Banta & Andersen, 2003; Davey, 1994; 127 Gillet, 2012). They create U- or Y-shaped burrows, in which they live, only 128 leaving it to search for food (Dales, 1950; Esselink and Zwarts, 1989; 129 Kristensen and Mikkelsen, 2003). The body size and seasonal variance of 130 water temperature influence the depth of the burrow (Esselink and Zwarts, 131 1989; Scaps, 2002). The ragworms are highly territorial concerning their 132 burrows, carefully constructing them to avoid contact with others. 133

134 H. diversicolor is omnivorous and may act as a predator, actively searching for food, or as a deposit-feeder, by capturing food within the mucous 135 136 secretions it produces (Fauchald and Jumars, 1979; Reise, 1979; Riisgård and Larsen, 2010). This species is highly predated by small fishes, birds, shrimps 137 and larger crabs (Evans et al., 1979; Scaps, 2002). Predators may take only 138 part of this animal and H. diversicolor has the ability to regenerate the 139 140 posterior part of its body, as do other polychaete species (Bely, 2006). However, few studies have focused on the repercussions of environmental 141 contamination on this capacity. 142

In addition to their ecological importance, *H. diversicolor* is also one of the
polychaete species used as fish bait in recreational fishing and in aquaculture,
in an integrated multitrophic approach (e.g. Pombo et al., 2018; Wang et al.,
2019).

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- 148
- 149 **2. Ecotoxicological studies**

The easy laboratorial maintenance, broad tolerance to temperature, salinity 150 and oxygen levels, and quick response to environmental stressors, like metals, 151 make *H. diversicolor* a good potential biological model for toxicological studies 152 (e.g. Banta & Andersen, 2003; Dhainaut & Scaps, 2001; Gomes et al., 2013; 153 Kristensen, 1983). However, so far, little is known about their response to 154 emerging contaminants. In this context, emerging contaminants are defined as 155 new natural or synthetic compounds but also those recently detected in the 156 environment due to new detection methods and compounds only recently 157 categorized as contaminants, and that have the potential to cause harm to 158 159 ecosystems and human health (Barreto et al., 2018; Dey et al., 2019). In this review the focus will be centered on pharmaceuticals, nanoparticles (e.g. 160 161 metal-based nanoparticles) and micro(nano)plastics, which have attracted an 162 increasing number of studies aiming to assess their environmental impact (Figure 1). 163

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165 2.1. Pharmaceutical drugs

Pharmaceutical drugs are substantially used not only for human medicine but also veterinarian, with aquaculture and livestock production the biggest contributors to their environmental release (Gomes et al., 2019; Hird et al., 2016). These compounds may reach aquatic environments in their native state (parental compound) or in the form of active secondary metabolites. Ineffective treatment of waste waters by sewage plants has been classified as a major

cause for their environmental presence. Pharmaceuticals are expected to be
persistent enough to reach the target site before becoming inactive and this
constitutes a problem once these compounds reach the environment (Oliveira
et al., 2018). Although most pharmaceuticals are designed to act on specific
metabolic pathways, they may display unforeseen effects to non-target
organisms, especially to invertebrates (e.g. Gomes et al., 2019; Oliveira et al.,
2018).

Acetylsalicylic acid (ASA) is among the oldest and most commonly 179 prescribed analgesics worldwide (Mahdi et al., 2006) being frequently detected 180 in effluents and natural environments around the world in concentrations in the 181 µg/L range and in sediments, in Europe, it was found at a concentration of 182 9.49 µg/kg (Ebele et al., 2017). This drug has been previously reported to 183 184 cause histological alterations and oxidative stress in Salmo trutta fario (Nunes et al., 2015). Recently, the biochemical and histological alterations induced by 185 186 this pharmaceutical on H. diversicolor were assessed by Gomes and colleagues (2019) after acute (96h) and chronic (28 days) exposures 187 (Supplementary data - Table 1). The study revealed an alteration of 188 antioxidant parameters after 96h (250 mg/L) although no peroxidative damage 189 190 was reported, which may indicate that organisms were capable of counteracting the effects of this drug (Gomes et al., 2019). Additionally, these 191 organisms demonstrated the ability to alter the levels of mucous production 192 upon chronic exposure, as a result of increased mucous cells (Gomes et al., 193 2019). Although this increased mucous may constitute a good defense against 194 some chemicals, it may lead to a heightened susceptibility to other 195

contaminants, such as micro- and nanoparticles, that organisms may havedifficulties expelling (Revel et al., 2018).

Ibuprofen is a commonly prescribed non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug 198 (NSAID) and as such can be frequently found in the environment. In Europe it 199 was found with concentrations ranging from 8 ng/L up to 3.5 µg/L (Ebele et al., 200 2017). In order to assess the effects of ibuprofen on marine organisms, 201 Maranho et al. (2014, 2015) chronically exposed the common ragworm to 202 203 sediment contaminated with ibuprofen (Supplementary data - Table 1). Maranho et al. (2014) reported increased activity of dibenzylfluorescein 204 dealkylase (DBF), a phase I enzyme linked to the cytochrome P450 3A4 205 (CYP3A4). Acetylcholinesterase (AChE) activity, an enzyme frequently used to 206 assess effects on neurotransmission, increased in the highest concentration 207 208 tested (500 ng/g), which may reflect processes of apoptosis (Zhang et al., 2012; Zhang et al., 2002). Peroxidative damage assessed as lipid peroxidation 209 210 (LPO) was reported in 5 ng/g despite the lack of effects on enzymes 211 associated with antioxidant defenses. DNA damage increased in organisms exposed to ibuprofen via spiked sediment (5 and 500 ng/g). Following studies 212 by Maranho and colleagues (2015) demonstrated that an energy related 213 214 parameter (mitochondrial electron transport (MET)) was significantly decreased in 5 ng/g and the activity of an enzyme related to inflammation 215 (cyclooxygenase (COX)) was significantly decreased for all concentrations 216 tested (Supplementary data – Table 1). 217

Carbamazepine (CBZ) is a frequently used antiepileptic drug found, in the water, in concentrations between 53 ng/L and 6.3  $\mu$ g/L (among others Claessens et al., 2013; Ebele et al., 2017). Studies performed by Maranho et

al. (2014) demonstrated that antioxidant enzymes respond to the exposure of 221 CBZ (Supplementary data - Table 1). Results revealed that concentrations of 222 0.05, 50 and 500 ng/g increased the activity of glutathione peroxidase (GPx), 223 responsible for catalyzing the reduction of hidrogen peroxide (H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>) into water 224 oxygen, and glutathione S-transferase (GST), involved in the 225 and biotransformation of compounds (Oliveira et al., 2008). However, glutathione 226 redutase (GR) activity, responsible for reducing oxidized glutathione to 227 reduced glutathione, and that plays a major role in the reactions of GPx and 228 GST (Bompart et al., 1990; Oliveira et al., 2009), was slightly inhibited in most 229 concentrations (0.5 to 500 ng/g). Nonetheless, LPO was significanly 230 increased in the highest concentration (500 ng/g). Subsequent studies by 231 Maranho et al. (2015), testing the same concentrations, reported a significant 232 233 increase in energy related parameters (lipids and MET) in the two lowest and two highest concentrations (Supplementary data - Table 1). CBZ was reported 234 235 to interfere with the activity of COX in all concentrations. Pires et al. (2016a) 236 also exposed H. diversicolor for 28 days to CBZ (0.3 to 9.0 µg/L) but the via of exposure was water (Supplementary data – Table 1). Nonetheless, authors 237 reported similar results to Maranho et al. (2014). Markers of oxidative stress 238 239 (the ratio between reduced (GSH) and oxidized (GSSG) glutathione, GSH/GSSG) demonstrated a decrease in ratio, possibly leading to the 240 increase in cell membrane damage (measured by LPO levels), in all studied 241 concentrations. Enzymes related to biotransformation, GST and CYP3A4, 242 were also increased in all concentrations. Energy related parameters, revealed 243 a concentration-dependent alteration, the electron transport system (ETS) 244

increased and glycogen content decreased, demonstrating that organismsused their energy reserves for cell functions.

Caffeine, the most consumed stimulant in the world, found in concentrations 247 from ng/L up to 500 µg/L in water (among others Metcalfe et al., 2003; Smith 248 et al., 2015) and 7.21 µg/kg in sediments (Ebele et al., 2017), affected 249 parameters related to oxidative stress (Pires et al., 2016a). Pires and 250 colleages (2016a) chronically exposed the common ragworm to three caffeine 251 concentrations (from 0.5 to 18 µg/L) and found an increase in catalase activity 252 (3.0 and 18.0 µg of caffeine/L) (Supplementary data – Table 1). However, the 253 GSH/GSSG ratio was significantly decreased in all analyzed concentrations. 254 Nonetheless, oxidative stress, measured by superoxide dismutase (SOD) 255 increased. Energy related parameters displayed similar responses to those 256 257 reported by Pires et al. (2016a) when organisms were exposed to CBZ, in which ETS and glycogen content decreased. Biotransformation-related 258 259 enzymes, GST and CYP3A4, were only significantly increased in the highest 260 concentration (18.0  $\mu$ g/L).

The effects of the combined exposure to caffeine and CBZ on H. 261 diversicolor were also evaluated by Pires and colleages 262 (2016a) 263 (Supplementary data - Table 1). Oxidative stress enzymes such as SOD and catalase, as observed for the individual exposures, were highly responsive to 264 contamination. SOD was found to increase, while catalase and the 265 GSH/GSSG ratio decreased in both concentrations tested (0.3 µg CBZ/L + 0.5 266  $\mu$ g caffeine/L and 6.0  $\mu$ g CBZ/L + 3.0 caffeine/L), which demonstrated an 267 increase in the overall oxidative stress. However, LPO levels were found to 268 have a concentration-dependent decrease. GST and CYP3A4 also 269

demonstrated a concentration-dependent decrease. Organims exposed to both contaminants exhibited an increase in ETS but a decrease in glycogen content. However, the combination of these two susbtances induced similar effects to those observed at the highest concentrations in individual exposures.

Cisplatin, or c -diammine-dichloroplatinum II, is one of the most prominent 275 and widely used platinum-based anti-cancer drugs, in which 28±4% is 276 excreted in the form of platinum complexes and 40% in the form of 277 monoaquacisplatin (Arnesano and Natile, 2009; Gómez-Ruiz et al., 2012; 278 Vermorken et al., 1986). When investigating the effects of this drug on the 279 polychaete *H. diversicolor*, by exposing organisms to concentrations between 280 0.1 and 100 ng/L, Fonseca and colleagues (2017) found that the highest 281 282 concentration of cisplatin had the most severe effects (Supplementary data -Table 1). An important yet not often analyzed parameter is the behavior. The 283 284 authors reported an impaired burrowing activity in the highest concentration, with organisms unable to fully burrow. Despite the results demonstrating an 285 increase in AChE activity in the lowest concentrations (0.1 and 10 ng/L), which 286 may indicate cell apoptosis, a strong inhibition of this enzyme was reported in 287 288 100 ng/L, possibly explaining the impairment in burrowing behavior. As with the previous pharmaceuticals reviewed here, oxidative stress enzymes 289 demonstrated altered responses when organisms were exposed to cisplatin, in 290 this case in 100 ng/L. SOD and catalase were significantly decreased, while 291 GPx was found to have an increased activity. Damage to cell membranes, 292 293 reported through increased LPO levels, was found in the highest concentration

294 of cisplatin tested. Biotransformation enzyme GST demonstrated a decreased 295 activity when organisms were exposed to the highest concentration.

Another drug used in cancer treatments, one of the oldest and most 296 routinely prescribed, is cyclophosphamide (CP) (Buerge et al., 2006; Česen et 297 al., 2016; Gilard et al., 1994). About 80% of the dose taken is excreted as 298 metabolites, frequently ending in aquatic environments where it can impact 299 non-target organisms (Bagley et al., 1973; Steger-Hartmann et al., 1996). In 300 order to study the effects of CP on invertebrates, Fonseca and colleagues 301 (2018) exposed H. diversicolor specimens to concentrations between 10 and 302 1000 ng/L for 14 days (Supplementary data - Table 1). The authors reported 303 an impairment in burrowing activity in organisms exposed to CP 304 concentrations between 10 and 500 ng/L. However, this alteration in behavior 305 306 was not accompanied by neurotoxic effects (AChE). As previously reported for other drugs, enzymes related with oxidative stress are very responsive. 307 308 Although SOD activity was significantly lower in the two highest 309 concentrations, catalase activity was increased only in 10 and 500 ng/L. GST activity was significantly decreased in organisms exposed to 310 CP concentrations 100 up to 1000 ng/L. LPO reflected the oxidative damage 311 312 caused by CP in concentrations between 100 up to 1000 ng/L. Regardless of concentration tested, organisms exposed to CP presented higher DNA 313 314 damage.

One of the most commonly used contraceptive methods is the pill, which frequently contains synthetic estrogen, 17α-Ethinylestradiol (EE2). EE2 is one of the most potent estrogenic substances released into the environment, which can affect non-target species (Miyagawa et al., 2016). EE2 has been found in

sewage sludge in concentrations of 48.1 µg/kg (Ebele et al., 2017). To 319 understand the effects of EE2 in marine invertebrates, Maranho et al. (2014, 320 321 2015) exposed for 14 days the polychaete H. diversicolor to sediment spiked by this drug (Supplementary data - Table 1). An enzyme of the phase I of 322 biotransformation, ethoxyresorufin O-deethylase (EROD), was found to be the 323 main enzyme to degrade EE2, demonstrating an increased activity in 324 organisms exposed to concentrations between 0.01 and 10 ng/g. Enzymes 325 326 related to oxidative stress (GST, GR and GPx) were not very responsive to EE2 exposure. Nonetheless, LPO levels increased in the lowest concentration 327 tested (0.01 ng/g), which may indicate an inability to prevent damage when 328 exposed to low concentrations of EE2. An increase in AChE activity was 329 reported in the lowest concentrations (0.01 to 1 ng/g), indicating that low 330 331 concentrations of EE2 may promote cell apoptosis (Maranho et al., 2014). Later studies performed by Maranho et al. (2015) demonstrated that EE2 332 333 inhibited the activity an enzyme related with the anti-inflammatory process, 334 COX, in all concentrations (Supplementary data - Table 1).

Cases of depression have increased over the years (WHO, 2017) and a 335 highly prescribed selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SSRI) used in these 336 337 cases is fluoxetine (Hird et al., 2016). As such, fluoxetine is persistingly found in the environment due to ineficient clearing in sewage plants (Arnold et al., 338 2014; Gardner et al., 2012), similarly to what happens with other drugs. This 339 pharmaceutical has been found in concentrations between 2.5 and 109.2 ng/L 340 in aquatic environments (Fekadu et al., 2019). Hird and colleagues (2016) 341 investigated the effects of this drug on the commom ragworm by 342 exposingspecimens, for 72 hours, to concentrations between 10 and 500 µg/L 343

in the water, and 0.01 and 2.5 µg/g in the sediment (Supplementary data -344 Table 1). Fluoxetine was reported to be more bioavailable to organisms in the 345 sediment treatment. However, regardless of treatment similar responses were 346 reported. Polychaetes presented increased seratonin levels, which has various 347 impacts at cell and individual levels. Organisms demonstrated altered 348 metabolic homeostasis, reduced lipid stores and decreased feeding ability, 349 which led to weight loss. Consequently, this can have repercussions at 350 population level since smaller organisms may originate a smaller offspring, 351 which may lead to a decrease of sediment bioturbation, affecting other 352 organisms that depend of this activity. 353

Maranho et al. (2014) also studied the effects of fluoxetine on this 354 polychaete by exposing organisms for 14 days to concentrations varying 355 356 between 0.01 and 100 ng/g (Supplementary data – Table 1). Despite the lack of significant alterations on the oxidative stress related enzymes analyzed 357 358 (GST, GPx and GR), peroxidative damage (LPO) was reported for 100 ng/g. A 359 phase I of biotransformation enzyme, EROD, presented increased activity in all tested concentrations and the activity of AChE was significantly increased 360 in the two highest concentrations (10 and 100 ng/g). 361

Propranolol is a β-blocker commonly used to treat, among others, heart diseases. Similarly to what happens with other highly prescribed drugs, propranolol is frequently found in waste water and natural environments, where it can be detected in concentrations ranging from 8 ng/L to 0.59  $\mu$ g/L in water and 3.37  $\mu$ g/kg in sewage sludge (Ebele et al., 2017). In order to understand the effects of this drug on the polychaete *H. diversicolor*, Maranho and team (2014, 2015) exposed specimens to sediments spiked with

concentrations between 0.05 to 500 ng/g for 14 days (Supplementary data -369 Table 1). Phase I enzymes (EROD and DBF), related to biotransformation of 370 pharmaceuticals, were negatively correlated. EROD activity was significantly 371 increased in exposed organisms, while DBF had lower activity than control. Of 372 the analyzed antioxidant enzymes (GST, GR and GPx), only GST was 373 responsive to contamination from propranolol (0.5, 5 and 500 ng/g). LPO 374 levels demonstrated peroxidative damage to cell membranes (0.05-5 ng/g). 375 Lipid reserves were overall increased, a reported side effect of propranolol 376 (England et al., 2014), and COX activity was inhibited in all tested 377 concentrations. 378

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Sediments act as sink, concentrating contaminants, and pharmaceuticals 380 381 are no exception. Sulfamethoxazole, carbamazepine, triclosan and ciprofloxacin have been found to be more persistent in sediments that in water 382 383 (Ebele et al., 2017). Such findings suggest that (endo-)benthic species are persistently exposed to pharmaceuticals. 384

Of the analyzed pharmaceutical drugs, *H. diversicolor* demonstrated to be 385 more sensitive to CBZ, caffeine and fluoxetine, which promoted alterations in 386 387 most of the studied parameters. The majority of pharmaceutical drugs analyzed in the scope of this review affect important biochemical parameters 388 on *H. diversicolor*. Damages to cellular membranes and altered biochemical 389 parameters, such as mitochondrial respiration and glycogen content, have a 390 deleterious effect in cellular homeostasis, possibly leading to alterations at the 391 behavioral level. In addition to lower energy production/reserves, oxidative 392 393 stress and AChE increase may also contribute to behavioral changes, since

an increase in AChE may be related to slower movements and thus lead to alterations in behavior. The lack of behavioral data concerning pharmaceutical drugs reveals to be a major deficiency in the field, preventing a global assessment of the impact of this type of contaminant in (endo-)benthic organisms.

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2.2. Nanoparticles

Nanoparticles (NPs) are defined as particles with at least one dimension 401 between 1 to 100 nm (ASTM, 2012). NPs found in the environment can 402 originate from multiple sources since these particles are added to several 403 everyday items like paints, sunscreen and cosmetics (Baker et al., 2014), 404 although ash and desert dust are natural sources of NPs (Baker et al., 2014). 405 406 These particles may enter marine systems directly, via areal deposition, effluents, dumping and run-off, or indirectly, via river systems (Baker et al., 407 408 2014).

Silver nanoparticles (Ag NPs) can be found in a number of products used in the everyday life, such as deodorants, cosmetics, textiles, detergents, among others (Baker et al., 2014; Mcgillicuddy et al., 2017). These particles can also be part of the sewage sludge that is later used as fertilizer, leading to run-off of NPs to aquatic environments (Mcgillicuddy et al., 2017). As these particles find their way to marine ecosystems, they can sediment and affect (endo-)benthic organisms.

Various studies have focused on the effects of Ag NPs on polychaetes. Buffet and colleagues (2014a) analyzed the effects of the chronic exposure to ionic Ag and Ag NPs (40-45 nm) on *H. diversicolor* (Supplementary data –

Table 2). Enzymes related to the immune system (laccase-type phenoloxidase 419 (PO) and acid phosphatase (AP)) presented increased activities in organisms 420 exposed to both forms of Ag, which highlights the danger to the health of 421 organisms exposed to NPs. Both forms of Ag (ionic and NPs) were found able 422 to promote increased activities of enzymes involved in defense mechanisms, 423 leading to increased oxidative damage in the ionic Ag treatment. Caspase 3-424 like (CSP 3-like) has a central role in the apoptotic process and when 425 organisms were exposed to either Ag form its activity was increased, which 426 demonstrates that Ag promotes cellular instability. Burrowing activity was also 427 reduced in both treatments. 428

Cong and team (2014) tested the effects of sediments spiked with two sizes 429 of Ag NPs (20 and 80 nm) and ionic Ag, at concentrations between 5 and 100 430 431  $\mu$ g/g, on the common ragworm (Supplementary data – Table 2). Analogously to the results reported for other NPs, Ag NPs promoted burrowing impairment, 432 433 especially Ag NP<sub>20</sub>. This study also demonstrated that a parameter related to cell function, lysosomal membrane stability (LMS), had a concentration-434 dependent decrease, which shows a great lysosomal toxicity of all the Ag 435 forms analyzed. Similarly to the results yielded in previous studies by Cong et 436 437 al. (2011), both Ag forms induced DNA damage. Such results may be more severe in smaller, and thus possibly younger, polychaetes since Cong and 438 colleagues (2014) reported that bigger worms accumulated less Ag per body 439 weight than smaller worms, demonstrating that size influences uptake and 440 bioaccumulation. 441

442 Quantum dots (QDs) are a special class of NPs as they are nanoparticles 443 with a heavy metal core (Pawar et al., 2018). Cadmium-based QDs (Cd QDs)

are used, for example, in medical imaging and solar energy (Hardman, 2006). 444 Around 15% of Cd in Cd QDs is released into the water, where they exert high 445 toxicity levels. In order to understand the effects of cadmium sulfide (CdS) 446 QDs, Buffet and team (2014b) analyzed the behavior and biochemical 447 parameters of *H. diversicolor* specimens after 14 days exposure to 10 µg/L of 448 CdS QDs and ionic Cd (Supplementary data – Table 2). Authors demonstrated 449 that these particles promote movement impairment, which may have 450 ecological consequences, both via waterborne and dietary exposure. Analyzed 451 oxidative stress parameters (catalase and GST) were responsive to CdS QDs 452 exposure, increasing their activities, and an enzyme related to the apoptotic 453 process (CSP) had an increased activity in the waterborne and dietary 454 treatments. Both Cd forms revealed a high bioaccumulation in tissues. 455

456 Carbon nanotubes (CNTs) are rolled up sheets of graphene and can be 457 single-walled or have multiple concentric circles, known as multi-walled CNTs 458 (MWCNTs) (Lawal, 2016). MWCNTs are considered one of the most 459 interesting nanomaterials in nanotechnology due to its many chemical and 460 physical properties (Lawal, 2016). The heightened interest may lead to 461 environmental risks, since aquatic environments are the end destination for 462 various contaminants, as well as human health risks.

De Marchi and colleagues (2018) analyzed how the effects of salinity changes (28 and 21) and MWCNTs (0.10 and 1.00 mg/L) affected the common ragworm (Supplementary data – Table 2). Results demonstrated that several parameters were concentration-dependent, regardless of salinity. Analyzed parameters related to energy were overall decreased, with the exception of ETS, which increased, potentially denoting an allocation of

energy to defenses. Oxidative stress enzymes analyzed (SOD, catalase, GPx
and GST) predominantly demonstrated an increase in activity, indicating the
attempt of the organism to counteract oxidative damage. Nonetheless, LPO
levels increased, particularly in salinity 28. Burrowing behavior was not
analyzed but a decrease on AChE activity was observed, which suggests that
MWCNTs may affect behavior.

De Marchi et al. (2019) evaluated the impact of chronic (28 days) exposure 475 to MWCNTs, pristine and carboxylated (-COOH), in combination with an 476 ocean acidification model (pH 7.60) on H. diversicolor (Supplementary data -477 Table 2). Pristine and functionalized MWCNTs induced neurotoxicity in both 478 concentrations tested, revealed by a decrease in AChE activity. Functionalized 479 MWCNTs have an increased toxicity manifested through the increase in LPO 480 481 and an activation of SOD compared to pristine MWCNTs. The authors hypothesize that the oxidative stress may be due to the higher solubilization 482 483 conferred by the functionalization of MWCNTs. The low pH tested (7.60) exacerbated these results and promoted a greater toxic effect of these 484 particles, demonstrating a diminished metabolic rate. 485

Copper oxide nanoparticles (CuO NPs) are commonly 486 used as bacteriocides and can be found in aquatic environments (Zhou et al., 2006). 487 These particles have a low dissolution rate and potentially high toxicity for 488 organisms. Buffet and colleagues (2011) analyzed the effects on behavioral 489 and biochemical parameters of *H. diversicolor* specimens exposed for 7 days 490 to CuO NPs and ionic Cu (10 µg/L) (Supplementary data - Table 2). Results 491 492 demonstrated that oxidative stress related enzymes, catalase and GST, activities were significantly higher in organisms exposed to NPs. These 493

494 particles did not cause behavioral alterations even though ionic Cu induced495 burrowing impairments.

Subsequent studies by Buffet and collegues (2012a) analyzed the effects of CuO NPs and ionic Cu (10 µg/L) on the polychaete *H. diversicolor* after 21 days exposure (Supplementary data – Table 2). Results demonstrated that Cu bioaccumulation was dependent on form, with uptake being higher in organisms exposed to CuO NPs. The analyzed oxidative stress endpoints (GST and LPO) were very responsive to CuO NPs and CSP was triggered by CuO NPs.

In order to analyze the effects of sediments spiked with CuO NPs, Thit and 503 504 team (2015) exposed the polychaete H. diversicolor to three shapes of NPs (spindles, rods and spheres) and ionic Cu (7-140 µg/g) (Supplementary data -505 506 Table 2). Authors demonstrated that ionic Cu affects organisms more than CuO NPs. Although CuO NPs appeared to be accumulated in the gut of 507 508 exposed organisms, these particles had little effect on bioaccumulation, 509 behavior or mortality, regardless of the shape and size of the NPs. Ionic Cu was more bioavailable to organisms, and thus accumulated in the tissues, and 510 promoted concentration-dependent impairment in burrowing, in which 511 512 organisms spent less time inside the sediment, which makes H. diversicolor 513 more vulnerable to predators.

Zinc oxide NPs (ZnO NPs) are widely used for a variety of applications: from improving toughness in polymers to products such as cosmetics and sunscreens (Jiang et al., 2018). For that reason, Buffet and team (2012b) analyzed the impact of these particles on *H. diversicolor* by exposing organisms to spiked sediments (3 mg/Kg) for 16 days (Supplementary data –

Table 2). Authors reported a significantly increased activity of GST, despite
other enzymes related to oxidative stress (catalase and SOD) showing no
significant alteration. Nonetheless, LPO levels were increased in organisms
exposed to ZnO NPs. Apoptosis-related enzyme CSP 3-like was decreased.
Although no neurotoxicity (AChE) was found due to the NPs, an impairment in
the burrowing behavior was demonstrated.

525

Many of the NPs analyzed in this review impact behavior, which can cause 526 severe ecological problems, but they also impact important biochemical 527 parameters. Behavioral alterations may have serious impacts on the 528 ecosystem, as organisms may not only be unable to perform their function in 529 the system but also be more vulnerable to predators, risking population 530 531 maintenance. Moreover, other organisms are dependent on the burrowing behavior of *H. diversicolor*, either for food or oxygen, and slower polychaetes 532 533 may have negative impacts on (endo-)benthic organisms as well as on the oxygenation of the sediment itself. Metals in NPs, to which the organisms are 534 more sensitive, are highly bioaccumulated in the tissues of organisms, which 535 may interfere with functions of cells. GST and antioxidant defense catalase 536 537 activities are frequently impacted by these contaminants, as well as CSP 3-like activity. Overall, data shows that these organisms are sensitive to different 538 forms of NPs and have proven the importance of the nature of the xenobiotic 539 (ionic versus NP) on the effects. 540

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542 2.3. *Micro(Nano)Plastics* 

Plastics are synthetic polymers based in organic polymers, usually fossil 543 fuel, cheap and easy to manufacture. There is a wide array of plastic 544 polymers, such as polystyrene (PS) and polyethylene (PE). They have 545 become a part of products used in the everyday life, from packaging to 546 cosmetics (Avio et al., 2017; de Sá et al., 2018), since plastic production 547 began, in the 1950's (PlasticsEurope, 2019). One of the most concerning 548 problems about plastic is its slow degradation process. In aquatic 549 environments, where they have become ubiquitous across the globe 550 (Bergmann et al., 2017; Eriksen et al., 2014; Waller et al., 2017), biotic and 551 abiotic degradation processes are slow. Plastics are thus available to marine 552 organisms, who may confuse them for food. Moreover, plastics can become 553 brittle and break down over time: big plastic items originate microplastics (< 5 554 555 mm) and eventually nanoplastics (1-100 nm) (Oliveira and Almeida, 2019). Microplastics (MPs) and nanoplastics (NPs) can agglomerate/aggregate in 556 557 seawater, leading to increased sizes and densities, which in turn leads to their 558 sedimentation (Gigault et al., 2018; Oliveira and Almeida, 2019; Revel et al., 2018; Tallec et al., 2019). Such behavior in marine environments allows these 559 contaminants to possibly affect (endo-)benthic fauna. Despite the increased 560 561 focus on this contaminant, there are few studies focused on the effects of micro(nano)plastics on marine invertebrates, especially (endo-)benthic 562 organisms. 563

Recent studies by Revel et al. (2018) analyzed the acute (96h) and chronic
(10 days) effects of the combined exposure of *H. diversicolor* to PE and
polypropylene (PP) MPs in water and sediment matrices (Supplementary data
Table 3). The most relevant data in this study was the higher accumulation

568 of waterborne MPs in the guts of organisms when compared to those exposed 569 to spiked sediments in both exposure periods. Organisms exposed via water 570 demonstrated an increase in mucous production, leading to an increased 571 difficulty in expelling the particles, while those exposed via sediment had the 572 contrary response. In both treatments, authors demonstrated a decrease in 573 immune cell viability and a decrease trend of the activity of enzymes related to 574 the immune system, AP and PO.

Plastics can adsorb and concentrate contaminants existent in natural environments (Oliveira et al., 2019), including PAHs, which tend to accumulate in sediments in aquatic environments (Gomiero et al., 2018). An example of PAHs is benzo(a)pyrene (B[a]P), which is mutagenic and carcinogenic. Among the most frequently used plastics worldwide is PVC, used for window frames and pipes, for example. PVC is denser than seawater and sinks to the ocean floor, where it can expose (endo-)benthic organisms to contaminants.

582 In order to understand the single and combined effects of sediment spiked with B[a]P and PVC on the common ragworm, Gomiero and colleagues (2018) 583 exposed organisms, for 10 and 28 days, to 5 µg/L of B[a]P and two 584 concentrations particles/Kg 585 of PVC (200 and 2000 of sediment) (Supplementary data – Table 3). Results demonstrated that the combination of 586 B[a]P and plastics had a time- and dose-dependent accumulation, which 587 further highlights the dangers of plastics to marine organisms. In organisms 588 exposed only to B[a]P, cell function parameters, mitochondrial (MtO) and LMS 589 activities, were reduced. In the combined treatment, these parameters (MtO 590 and LMS) also presented a decreased activity and cell membrane damage, 591 measured by lipofuscins content, was increased. An analysis of immune 592

system parameters (phagocytosis assay and MtO) revealed a depression in 593 the immune response in organisms exposed to PVC pre-incubated with B[a]P. 594 Contrary to the results found in the combined exposure, virgin PVC particles 595 stimulated the immune system, which may be due to the presence of natural 596 occurring microorganisms in the sediments that may colonize virgin PVC 597 particles (Zettler et al., 2013). Oxidative status was increased in the combined 598 exposure, although catalase activity was only increased at the 10 days 599 exposure period. DNA damage was significantly higher in organisms exposed 600 to B[a]P and pre-incubated PVC. 601

A significant number of published studies have focused on laboratory 602 experiments to understand effects of various contaminants on organisms. 603 Muller-Karanassos et al. (2019) focused on analyzing environmental samples 604 605 of sediment and H. diversicolor specimens exposed to anti-fouling paint particles (APPs) (Supplementary data - Table 3), which are composed of 606 607 plastics with different metals associated to them (Muller-Karanassos et al., 608 2019; Turner et al., 2008a; Turner & Rees, 2016). Those particles can still leach their biocidal metals not only to the water but also to sediments, where 609 they accumulate (Soroldoni et al., 2018; Thomas et al., 2003; Turner et al., 610 611 2008b).

Muller-Karanassos and colleagues (2019) analyzed sediment samples from two estuaries in the UK, one heavily impacted by marinas, boatyards, and abandoned boats, thus more impacted by APPs, and another a clean reference site (control). Results demonstrated that organisms had high concentrations of copper (Cu), zinc (Zn), tin (Sn) and lead (Pb) in their tissues. Similarly to what was reported by Revel and collegues (2018), organisms had

APPs of varied sizes and chemical compositions in their guts, related to a non-selective ingestion of the particles.

Very few studies have focused on the effects of NPs on marine 620 invertebrates, particularly polychaetes. Recently Silva et al. (2020a) evaluated 621 622 the chronic effects of PS NPs on H. diversicolor by exposing organisms to concentrations between 0.005 and 50 mg/L (Supplementary data - Table 3). 623 Results demonstrated an increase in burrowing time in the lowest 624 concentrations (0.005-0.5 mg/L) as well as an overall decrease in AChE 625 activity in exposed organisms. Antioxidant enzymes were found to be less 626 responsive than expected. Activity of SOD was increased from 0.05 to 50 627 mg/L, however the rest of the enzymes related to oxidative stress analyzed 628 (GST, catalase and non-protein thiols (NPTs)) were reported to have 629 630 concentration-dependent decreases. Oxidative damage measured as protein carbonylation, which was possibly a better biomarker to evaluate oxidative 631 632 damage induced by PS NPs, was significantly increased from 0.05-50 mg/L. Subsequent studies by Silva et al. (2020b) demonstrated that exposure to PS 633 NPs (0.0005-5 mg/L) significantly decreased the regenerative capacity of H. 634 diversicolor exposed to 0.005-5 mg/L (Supplementary data – Table 3). 635

636

There is a big gap in knowledge when it comes to understanding the effects of plastic particles on marine invertebrates. An even bigger gap is related to comprehending the interaction of plastics with contaminants known to exist in marine habitats and their combined effects on marine organisms. Efficient methodologies to evaluate the concentrations of NPs in the oceans have yet to be created, but it is still important to understand how invertebrates, who are at

the base of food webs, react to them, since NPs can accumulate along thefood webs.

645

#### 646 **3. Conclusion**

In this review studies with *H. diversicolor* referring to nine pharmaceutical 647 drugs, five types of nanoparticles, and five plastic polymers were analyzed. A 648 649 review of the literature from 2010 to 2019 was performed using the database Scopus and using the following combination of terms: Hediste diversicolor 650 AND drugs; Hediste diversicolor AND nanoparticles; Hediste diversicolor AND 651 plastics. The available data does not allow comparison of the role of exposure 652 pathways on the magnitude of effects as several different non-coinciding 653 654 biomarkers have been assessed. Nonetheless, these studies have shown that the polychaete H. diversicolor is very responsive to these emerging 655 contaminants and thus is a good biological model to assess the effects of 656 657 contaminants expected to reach the estuarine/marine environments.

658 Among the most frequently affected biochemical endpoints, regardless of the exposure period or contaminant, are oxidative stress related endpoints and 659 660 behavior. These are important biomarkers to assess, although behavior related parameters should be more often analyzed considering its ecological 661 662 importance. Alterations in the behavior of these organisms, as a result of contamination, can have serious consequences to the ecosystem and its 663 664 function, possibly leading to alterations in (endo-)benthic diversity due to a 665 reduction in sediment oxygenation. Future studies should include environmentally relevant endpoints of behavior to allow a more comprehensive 666 understanding of the effects of contaminants. Among the endpoints scarcely 667

evaluated on *H. diversicolor* but with promising results is regeneration. This
endpoint can also provide relevant data on potential impacts on population
dynamics. Moreover, *in vitro* cell culture using cells from these organisms may
allow a better understanding of regeneration mechanisms as well as the
impact of xenobiotic exposure on this ability.

No studies have, so far, addressed how contaminants can affect offspring in terms of number of organisms generated, organisms' size, and even if the offspring has an altered sensitivity to the contaminants to which the parents were exposed. The study of the effects on these endpoints can considerably improve the knowledge of the consequences of long-term environmental exposure.

There is a large gap in knowledge concerning the effects of plastic 679 680 contamination on invertebrates, despite plastic pollution being a concerning problem. Few studies have analyzed the effects of small plastic particles on 681 682 polychaetes and fewer focused on NPs, even though plastic particles tend to sediment over time and can thus affect (endo-)benthic organisms. This lack of 683 studies may be associated with the difficulty in quantification and 684 characterization of these particles. Detection methods are still unable to allow 685 686 accurate identification and quantification of small plastic particles in water and sediment matrices. Considering the recent findings of studies with nanoplastic 687 particles (e.g. Silva et al., 2020a), it becomes highly relevant to perform 688 studies with behavior, which is a very sensitive endpoint. This approach may 689 include feeding, avoidance of contaminated sediments, among others. 690 691 Considering that in the environment organisms are exposed to a variety of contaminants, future studies should consider combined effects of more than 692

one contaminant as they may interact and modulate toxic responses. This 693 694 aspect is particularly relevant for nanoparticles that have their characteristics influenced by their surrounding environment (e.g. presence of contaminants, 695 products of metabolism, pH, nutrients and organic matter). As authors De 696 Marchi et al. (2019) demonstrated, alterations in pH may affect the response 697 of *H. diversicolor* to nanoparticles. Substances linked to plastic have also been 698 proved to elicit a worsening in the condition of the animal than in independent 699 700 treatments (e.g. Gomiero et al., 2018). The ability of organisms to depurate environmental contaminants should also be assessed, since it has been 701 already demonstrated that H. diversicolor specimens in clean sediment are 702 able to expel environmental contaminants, like microplastic particles, when 703 exposed via spiked sediment (Revel et al., 2018). 704

The available studies show that this species can be a valuable tool to assess the effects of environmental contaminants. It may be expected that, ethical considerations regarding the use of vertebrate organisms associated with sensitivity, low laboratory maintenance requirements and environmental relevance make these organisms widely used in the field of Ecotoxicology.

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### **Highlights**

Hediste diversicolor is a good model for the study of emerging contaminants.

Exposure to emerging contaminants induced oxidative stress.

Emerging contaminants affected burrowing behavior on *H. diversicolor*.

Studies on the effects of plastic contamination in marine invertebrates are scarce.

Conflict of interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

With the submission of this manuscript the authors would like to declare: that the reported work is original and has not been published elsewhere, accepted for publication elsewhere or under editorial review for publication elsewhere; and that the content and authorship of the manuscript has been approved by all authors.