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R Consortium Report

volcalc: Calculate Volatility of Chemical Compounds

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Summary

This report includes progress updates on milestones 1 and 2 of our proposed work. The GitHub repository for the development version of `volcalc` can be found at: https://github.com/Meredith-Lab/volcalc.

We have completed milestone 1 to set up continuous integration, a package website, and automated test coverage tracking. Milestone 2 is near completion resulting in a fairly major re-factoring of the main functions in the package to allow `volcalc` to work not only with compounds in the KEGG database, but any compound that can be represented as a .mol file or a SMILES string.

Milestone 1: Setup phase

We've completed all of our goals for milestone 1 including:

- Set up continuous integration with GitHub actions
- Track test coverage with codecov
- Brainstorm package API/UI

At the conclusion of milestone 1, we released v1.0.0 of volcalc on GitHub. We went on to release v1.0.1 and v1.0.2 with minor bug fixes in how calculations were done.

Currently the package is installable from GitHub and is also built on r-universe at https://cct-datascience.r-universe.dev/volcalc. The pkgdown website for the package is https://meredith-lab.github.io/volcalc/

Milestone 2: Refactoring

The main functions in `volcalc` underwent major re-factoring during milestone 2. Now, the main function `calc_vol()` is no longer tied to downloading compounds from the KEGG database and instead accepts a path to a .mol file or a SMILES string as input. Downloading .mol files from KEGG is still possible with the new `get_mol_kegg()` function. We also split out some of the code in `calc_vol()` into the separate function `simpol1()` to allow for easier extension to other methods in the future.

The full changelog can be viewed on the release page.

There are currently two issues that we view as part of milestone 2 still open at the time of writing this report:

- Allowing users to specify the environment (air or soil) for categorizing relative volatility into "low", "medium", and "high"
- Allowing users to specify the method of calculation as the original SIMPOL.1 method or the version modified by Meredith et al. This has an open pull request waiting for review.

After these last two elements are completed, we plan to make a v2.1.0 release. Then, we hope to distribute the package to a small group of chemoinformatics and metabolomics researchers to get feedback on the user interface, functionality, and documentation of the package.