Variability of Rivers Nutrient Discharge in the Arctic Basin

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Problem

River discharge is

✓ a main source of chemical substances including nutrients for the World ocean. It appreciably exerts on a forming of hydrological and hydrochemical conditions of coastal seas and nutrients carried by rivers influence the productivity of a shelf.

✓ a sensible indicators of changing climatic conditions in watersheds.

✓ only 1-2% of total river nutrients are carried out to open ocean.

Detailed studies of spatial-temporary variability in downstreams of carrying rivers are especially significant for high-latitude Arctic seas where the drain module exceeds its magnitude for the World ocean about 3 times.

It is assumed that the main changes of water chemical composition occur at the geochemical river-sea barriers, but the processes in the downstream of the rivers before the influence of sea water are usually neglected.

Goal

To estimate the relative role of the water chemical composition changes in the downstreams of the Arctic rivers just before their estuaries.
Position of the sampling points in the Ob’ and Yenisei mouths

- September, 1993, 49 cruise R/V “Dmitri Mendeleev”;
- June, 2000, coastal expedition;
- December, 2001, coastal expedition;
- September, 2002, M/V “Mechanic Kalashnikov”;
- December, 2003, coastal expedition;
- September, 2005, H/V “Ivan Kireev”;
- September, 2007, 54 cruise R/V “Academician Mstislav Keldysh”.
- Hidrometeorological stations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hydrochemical Parameter</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissolved inorganic phosphorous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissolved inorganic silicon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nitrates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nitrites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ammonium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total organic phosphorous</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total organic nitrogen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alkalinity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Methane</td>
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<td>T</td>
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<td>S</td>
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</table>
it is difficult to exact estimate value of nutrients river discharge

- analytical problems become a work connected with high turbid water samples from transition downstreams.
- problems, connected with sampling: as a rule the balance estimate of flow is based on data of hydrometeorological stations, which are situated far from really estuaries, meanwhile many characteristic features of downstreams waters are lost or distorted due to high degree of spatial-temporary variability of hydrochemical and hydrological parameters.

River downstream

We can exact some areas in the river downstream just before mixing zone till really outlet
Temporary variability of nutrient discharge by Ob’ river
- seasonal variability

Concentration of nutrients in surface water of the Ob’ river

In winter underground sources play the main role and could be considered as a steady component of river chemical discharge.
Averaged seasonal variability of ammonia and nitrates in rivers: 1 – Ob’, 2 - Yenisei, 3 - Lena 
dots mark the data of expeditions in 2000 and 2001 years: black – Ob’, white – Yenisei. 
(Makkaveev et al., 2002) 

Sharp increase of ammonium (more then 4 times) with moderate growth of nitrates probably 
connected with change of water composition inflowing into the river

Predesign of nutrients discharge by Ob’ and Yenisei rivers shows that in spite of useful 
increase of water discharge in summer nutrients discharge is increased only about 10%.
River run-off and estimates of current of dissolved inorganic compounds of nitrogen and phosphorous for some rivers flowing into the Arctic basin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>River</th>
<th>Mean annual $Q$ km$^3$/yr</th>
<th>Annual $Q$ 10$^3$ t</th>
<th>Dissolved inorganic nitrogen</th>
<th>Dissolved inorganic phosphorous</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yenisei</td>
<td>577.3$^1$ 513.0-689.0$^2$</td>
<td>74.0-135.0$^1$</td>
<td>6.2$^1$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lena</td>
<td>532.5$^1$ 401.0-729.0$^2$</td>
<td>34.0-170.0$^1$</td>
<td>3.5$^1$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ob’</td>
<td>404.1$^1$ 269.0-577.0$^2$</td>
<td>45.0-160.0$^1$</td>
<td>23.5$^1$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kolyma</td>
<td>70.8$^1$ 41.0-137.0$^2$</td>
<td>4.0-6.0$^1$</td>
<td>0.8$^1$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigirka</td>
<td>50.4$^1$ 31.0-80.0$^2$</td>
<td>2.0-3.0$^1$</td>
<td>0.4$^1$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yana</td>
<td>32.2$^1$ 20.0-56.0$^4$</td>
<td>1.0-2.0$^1$</td>
<td>0.4$^1$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olenek</td>
<td>31.5$^1$ 17.0-58.0$^3$</td>
<td>1.3-1.7$^1$</td>
<td>0.2$^1$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Changes of water discharge in the main Siberian rivers under same periods can exceed 50% from its annual value.

$^1$Holms et al., 2000; $^2$Savel’eva et al., 2000
Global tendency towards warming is reflected on a value of total discharge and on a chemical flow of high latitude rivers.

Annual discharge of Siberian rivers has obvious trend towards increase since beginning 30s till beginning 90s years against the background of significant annual fluctuations.

Analyses of river discharge data since 70s years till end 90s shows, that increasing of winter run-off played the main role at that time. Value of summer runoff grown minor. For some rivers its decrease had been observed. It connected with:

- increase of winter precipitation,
- total soil water retention
- growth of thickness of seasonal melted frozen subsoil layer in catchment areas.

Value of run-off and climatic changes in high latitudes lead to contraction difference between value of winter and summer run-off with little increase of total annual run-off.

Interannual variability of water discharge has an influence upon nutrients discharge.
Basing on the data receive in some Seasons but in different years mixing zone of river and sea waters drifted to the North for 1993 – 2005 – 2007. Although it should be noted that subject to hydrometeorological conditions and value of discharge the position of this zone can be changeable within very wide boundaries. Basing on three surveys we can only suppose of existence such trend in position of river-sea interaction zone.

The distribution of salinity in the Ob’ mouth
The distribution of dissolved oxygen and silicates in the Ob’ mouth.
Chemical composition of river discharge is individual for each river and it is generated by character of a catchment area. So flowing through low Ob’s waters consist nitrogen compounds and dissolved carbon dioxide more then Yenisei’s waters, which are enriched by silicates and carbonates compare with Ob’s waters.

High concentrations of nutrients (except phosphates) are clearly tracked to the deepest stream stations in summer. It is explained by more active development of photosynthetic processes near banks. In winter nutrients concentrations are considerable growth (especially silicates) and its maximums are displaced to bank stations.
In spite of essential mixing waters entered from other region of a catchment area retain their hydrochemical features in a main channel along some distance. That is stipulating the presence similar nutrients irregularities.

Significant changes of chemical compound of water are registered with stream.
Changes of hydrochemical characteristics are from 53 till 97%.
Reasons of spatial variability of hydrochemical parameters of the river discharge

✓ Changes of dynamic characteristics of the flow.
  At widening of a channel the flow velocity sharply falls. It leads to the mass setting the particular substances and to the changes of a chemical compound of waters connected with it.

✓ Influence of orography river laying down.
  In the bottom deeps there is a natural accumulation of organic substance

✓ Active development of photosynthetic processes

✓ Influence of technogenic and household sewage
The distribution of hydrochemical parameters in surface water the Ob’ river and Ob’ mouth on the results of fall-study 2002:

1 - Salekhard; 2 – New Port; 3 - Antipauta; 4 – Nadymski Bar; 5 – outlet of Ob’ river

Changes of hydrochemical composition of Ob’ river
Zonality of the nutrients distribution in river downstream

Mixing zone

Branch zone

Orographic influence

Hydrodynamic barrier

Technogenic influence

O2, pH

C, P, N

O2, pH
Conclusions

- To assess exactly run-off of the rivers nutrients is difficult enough. Interannual variability of discharge and its chemical composition is very large. Data of continuous observations over the chemical composition of waters are not always valid due to methodical problems.

- The chemical compound of river waters is non-uniform. The inflowing tributaries are originated from catchments areas with various conditions. And these streams keep their hydrochemical characteristics along some distance.

- A chemical composition of a river discharge undergoes significant changes even before mixing with sea water. These changes of waters in the rivers downstream are comparable with changes taking place in the waters with intermediate salinity.
Thank you for your time!

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