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# Geochemistry of the Lake Chad tributaries under strongly varying hydro-climatic conditions

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## Abstract

The Lake Chad Basin (LCB) is one of the main endorheic basins in the world and has undergone large level and surface variations during the last decades, particularly during the Sahelian dry period in the 1970s and the 1980s. The Chari-Logone River system covers 25% of the LCB but accounts for up to 82% of the Lake Chad water supply. The aim of this study is to investigate the dissolved phase transported by the Chari-Logone system, in order (i) to elucidate the origin and the behavior of major elements and the weathering processes in the watershed; (ii) to estimate the total dissolved flux, its variability over the last decades and the driving factors. To do so, samples were collected monthly between January 2013 and November 2016 at three representative sites of the basin: in the Chari River in “Chagoua”, in the Logone River in “Ngueli” just before the confluence of both rivers, and at a downstream site in “Douguia”, 30 km after the confluence. Concentrations in major elements displayed significant seasonal variations in the Chari and Logone waters. At the seasonal time scale, the comparison between the concentrations of chemical elements and the flow rates showed a hysteresis loop. This hysteresis behavior correspond to a variable contribution over time of two water bodies, fast surface water, and slow groundwater, the latter carrying higher concentrations and Ca/Na ratio, which may result from the contribution of pedogenic carbonate weathering to the dominant signature of silicate weathering. On the other hand, similar average concentrations are observed in the Chari and Logone rivers, despite contrasted annual runoff. In addition, an interannual stability of ionic concentrations was observed in the Chari-Logone river during the flood regime, both during the years covered by our monitoring (2013-2016) and during the pre-drought period (1969, 1972 et 1973). This situation corresponds to a chemostatic behavior, where the annual river discharge is the main factor controlling the interannual variation of chemical fluxes.

**Keywords:** Lake Chad basin, chemical fluxes, silicate weathering, strontium

## 40 **Introduction**

41 Located at the southern edge of the Sahara, in the central Sahel, Lake Chad is a large freshwater  
42 body that provides resources for 49 million people living around. This lake has a long history  
43 of alternating wet and dry periods spanning from millennia to the annual and seasonal time  
44 scales (Schuster et al. 2005; Sylvestre 2014). The high variability of the lake level, and  
45 associated lake extension, reflects its high sensitivity to climatic conditions, mainly due to its  
46 endorheic context. Located in the southern part of the Lake Chad Basin (LCB), the Chari -  
47 Logone River system is today the only active hydrological catchment. It represents 25% of the  
48 total LCB surface, but accounts for up to 82% of the Lake Chad water supply (Bouchez et al.  
49 2016). Therefore, as Lake Chad is the outlet of elemental fluxes carried by the Chari-Logone  
50 River, understanding its hydro-geochemical behavior and what control these fluxes is crucial  
51 to better characterize the chemical evolution of the lake.

52 River geochemistry reflects the various weathering processes that affect the Earth's surface (e.g.  
53 Probst et al. 1992; Louvat and Allègre 1997; Viers et al. 2000; Meybeck 2003; Ollivier et al.  
54 2010; Chorover et al. 2017; Koger et al. 2018). Among the numerous studies that aimed at  
55 quantify weathering rates and understanding the parameters that control their variations, special  
56 attention was paid to silicate weathering, which, while pumping atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub>, plays a  
57 particular role in the global carbon cycle (e.g. Gaillardet et al. 1999; Amiotte Suchet et al. 2003;  
58 Hartmann et al. 2009; Mortatti & Probst 2003).

59 Tropical environments occupy nearly a third of the total area of the continents; but they are  
60 under-represented in regional geochemical studies. Especially in Tropical Africa, only a few  
61 studies have focused on such geochemical processes i.e. weathering. The only African basins  
62 that have been investigated are those of Congo (Probst et al. 1992; Nègrelet et al. 1993), Nyong  
63 (Viers et al. 2000), Niger (Picouet et al. 2002), South Africa (Meybeck et al. 1996) and  
64 Sassandra (Agri et al. 2010). These studies have estimated weathering fluxes generally below  
65 the world average rate. However, tropical environments are expected to encounter large  
66 hydrological perturbations in the coming decades with unknown consequences on weathering  
67 fluxes.

68 From Sahel band, very few studies have been carried out and especially on the Chari-Logone  
69 River system, which is one of the main water networks. Roche (1980) provided the first  
70 observations describing the water physico-chemistry of Chari and Logone. Carmouze (1976)  
71 and Gac (1980) also studied the transport of salt, in order to describe the lake's chemical

72 equilibrium and to identify the mechanisms that regulate it. But since these early works, no  
73 significant study has attempted to characterize the dissolved load of the Chari-Logone system.  
74 The aim of the present study was to characterize the weathering processes that control the  
75 chemical load and fluxes towards Lake Chad, and to analyze their link with climate variations.  
76 Monthly sampling was conducted in each of the main sub-basins of the lake, the Logone and  
77 the Chari sub-basins. The dominant contribution of silicate weathering was assessed, and the  
78 contribution of each sub-basin was estimated. The estimated total weathering flux was  
79 compared to data obtained in the early 1970s and to other neighboring African watersheds.

80

## 81 **1. Study area**

### 82 **1.1. Geological and geomorphological context**

83 The Chari-Logone catchment ( $613 \cdot 10^3 \text{ km}^2$ ) is bordered by moderate elevation mountain ranges  
84 (285 - 1400m): Adamaoua (South-West), Kaggas (South), Ouaddai (East) and Guera (North),  
85 and remains mainly flat elsewhere, with areas seasonally flooded along the river courses (Fig.  
86 1). The main geological features of the Chari and Logone basins show two main units (Louis  
87 1970; Gac 1980). In the South and North-East, the Precambrian basement outcrops, mainly  
88 represented by granites (46%), and different metamorphic rocks (e.g. migmatites, quartzites,  
89 gneiss, schists and micaschists). Ferralitic sesquioxide soils are derived from these formations  
90 (Pias 1968). The Center and North-Western parts are covered with sedimentary series of the  
91 Tertiary (Continental Terminal sandstone formation) and late Quaternary (fluvial or fluvial-  
92 lacustrine formations). While the sedimentary formations constitute the main aquifer systems  
93 (Schneider & Wolf 1992), groundwater also circulates in hard rocks of the Precambrian  
94 basement (Schneider & Wolf 1992) supporting baseflow in the upper part of the Chari-Logone  
95 catchment (Bouchez et al. 2019).

### 96 **1.2. Climate and hydrography**

97 Dominated by the seasonal variation of the intertropical convergence zone (ITCZ), the climate  
98 of the Chari-Logone catchment area reflects the confluence between two air masses: the south-  
99 western humid monsoon of oceanic origin and the north-easterly dry Harmattan of continental  
100 origin. Thus, depending on the season, from south to north, the Chari-Logone basin shows a  
101 gradual transition from humid to semi-arid conditions. The average precipitation rate,  
102 calculated from the General Directorate of National Meteorology of Chad (DGMN) dataset, is

103 544 mm at N'Djamena, between 1984 and 2014. The rainy season starts in May and ends in  
104 October and most precipitation falls in July and August (Fig. 2a). The evaporation rates show  
105 a well-marked seasonal cycle following the air temperature cycle (Fig.2b).  
106 The basin is drained by two main hydrographic networks, the Logone and the Chari rivers. The  
107 Logone river, with a length of 1000 km, originates in the Adamawa plateau in Cameroon, with  
108 an altitude ranging from 305 to 835 m (Cabot 1965; Gac 1980). The Chari Basin covers an area  
109 of approximately  $523 \cdot 10^3 \text{ km}^2$ . The convergence of the Chari and the Logone rivers is located  
110 in N'Djamena, 110 km upstream of Lake Chad, (Fig. 1). The total area of the Logone catchment  
111 is  $90 \cdot 10^3 \text{ km}^2$  at the confluence with the Chari. The Chari starts in the Central African Republic  
112 at an altitude between 500 and 600 m. It flows nearly 1200 km from the Central African  
113 Republic to the Lake Chad. The Chari-Logone receives water input from groundwaters of the  
114 Precambrian basement upper basin while in the lower part the Chari-Logone water flows from  
115 the river towards the Quaternary Aquifer (Bouchez et al. 2019). The Chari-Logone baseflow  
116 discharge is supported by only 12% of the catchment (Bouchez et al. 2019).

117

## 118 **2. Data acquisition**

### 119 **2.1. Sampling**

120 River waters were sampled every month during two periods, between January 2013 and August  
121 2014, and between July 2015 and November 2016. They were collected at three sites (Fig. 1):  
122 (i) the Chari at Chagoua (N'Djamena,  $12^{\circ}05'16''\text{N}$  and  $15^{\circ}04'52''\text{E}$ ), (ii) the Logone at Nguéli  
123 (N'Djamena,  $12^{\circ}04'08''\text{N}$  and  $15^{\circ}03'14''\text{E}$ ), both sites located upstream of the confluence, and  
124 (iii) the Chari-Logone at Douguia ( $12^{\circ}38'24''\text{N}$  and  $14^{\circ}49'37''\text{E}$ ), located 30 km downstream  
125 of the confluence.

126 The physico-chemical parameters (T, pH and electrical conductivity) were measured in situ  
127 (Table 1-3). The waters were first filtered on a  $0.45\mu\text{m}$  nylon membrane and cellulose  
128 membrane and stored in pre-cleaned HDPE bottles kept in the dark and in a cold room. Water  
129 samples for cation analysis were then acidified with ultra-pure nitric acid. Alkalinity was  
130 measured few hours after sampling for all samples by colorimetric titration, and three replicates  
131 were performed for each sample, which allowed a reproducibility better than 5%. In table 1-3  
132 we have the values.

133

## 134 **2.2. Geochemical analysis**

135 Major dissolved elements and Sr concentration were analyzed at the Institute of Environmental  
136 Geosciences (IGE) in Grenoble by ion chromatography, calibrated to measure low  
137 concentrations as well as at the European Center for Research and Education in Environmental  
138 Geosciences (CEREGE). Strontium isotopes were analyzed with a Neptune + plasma-source  
139 multi-collector mass spectrometer (MC ICP-MS) on sixty river samples. A preliminary  
140 separation and purification of the strontium was carried out. For each sample, a volume of water  
141 corresponding to about 200 ng of Sr was evaporated. The strontium preparation and separation  
142 steps were carried out using the Sr-Spec specific resin on a 200  $\mu\text{l}$  column. The fraction was  
143 evaporated and then attack with  $\text{HNO}_3 + \text{H}_2\text{O}_2$  to mineralize any organic residues of the Sr-  
144 Spec resin. Then, for the MC-ICP-MS analysis, dry samples were taken up and dissolved with  
145  $\text{HNO}_3$  1%. The internal measurement accuracy of the  $^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr}$  ratio is  $\pm 8 \times 10^{-6}$  ( $2\sigma$ ). The  
146 reproducibility of the  $^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr}$  ratio measurements was tested by repetitive analysis of the  
147 international standard NBS 987 ( $^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr}$  ratio:  $0.710240 \pm 0.00002$ ,  $2\sigma$ ,  $n = 59$ ). This value is  
148 similar to the accepted value of  $0.710248 \pm 0.000011$  (Thirlwall 1991). Repeated preparations  
149 and measurements of a water sample from Lake Chad labelled TCH2 were also carried out to  
150 check long term consistency of the overall Sr isotope procedure.

151

152

## 153 **2.3. Hydrological data**

154 Daily river flows were measured by the Water Resource Directorate (DRE) between 2013 and  
155 2016 at the same locations as the sampling sites: N'Djamena TP on the Chari-Logone, Chagoua  
156 on the Chari and Ngueli on the Logone. No data were available for the Logone at Ngueli  
157 between 2013 and 2014. The Chari -Logone regime is characterized by a flood period that starts  
158 with the rainy season in August and lasts until October when it reaches its maximum (Fig. 2b).  
159 The recession starts at the end of October and lasts until December, and low discharges continue  
160 from January to June. There is a time lag of two months between the maximum of rainfall and  
161 the maximum of discharge measured for the Chari-Logone at N'Djamena (Fig. 2b). The average  
162 annual flows in 2013 and 2014 were respectively 804 and 862  $\text{m}^3\cdot\text{s}^{-1}$  at the N'Djamena station  
163 (i.e. runoff of 41 and 44 mm/y respectively). These two years are considered "wet" compared  
164 to the inter-annual average of 689  $\text{m}^3\cdot\text{s}^{-1}$  (value calculated for the period 1985 to 2015, data  
165 source: DRE).

166

## 167 **2.4. Reconstruction and validation of discharge data**

168 Discharge data are essential to interpret hydro-geochemical behavior, to calculate weighted  
169 annual average concentrations, and to estimate chemical fluxes. A linear interpolation was used  
170 to fill the gaps in the Chari river discharge time series at the Chagoua station, in order to have  
171 a complete daily record for a hydrological year (2013-2014). These gaps occur mainly during  
172 low flow periods.

173 For the Logone, in the absence of gauging stations before the confluence of the two rivers, the  
174 flow data were reconstructed from a mass balance based on the Sr isotopic signature:

$$175 \quad \left( \frac{^{87}\text{Sr}}{^{86}\text{Sr}} \right)_{CL} = \alpha \left( \frac{^{87}\text{Sr}}{^{86}\text{Sr}} \right)_L + (1 - \alpha) \left( \frac{^{87}\text{Sr}}{^{86}\text{Sr}} \right)_C$$

177 where the subscripts CL, C and L point to the Chari-Logone, Chari and Logone respectively.

178  $\alpha$  is the proportion of the Chari-Logone Sr isotopic signature coming from the Logone river,  
179 also corresponding to the Sr fluxes balance as follows:

$$180 \quad \alpha = \frac{[\text{Sr}]_L * Q_L}{[\text{Sr}]_{CL} * Q_{CL}}$$

181 where Q is the river discharge. This method assumes that chemical fluxes are conservative. The  
182 Logone river discharge is then calculated as a function of  $\alpha$ ,  $Q_{CL}$ , and Sr concentrations  
183 measured in the Logone and in the Chari-Logone river water. This method is also used to  
184 calculate an independent Chari discharge value.

185

186

## 187 **3. Results**

### 188 **3.1. Chemical and isotopic compositions**

189 The conductivity measured on the field is well correlated with the alkalinity. However, the  
190 alkalinity obtained from the Chari in April 2013 appeared as an outlier, 20% above the value  
191 expected from the correlation and was ruled out, suspecting a possible sample pollution after  
192 the water collection. The results of ionic and molecular concentrations and strontium isotopic  
193 composition of the Chari, Logone and Chari-Logone rivers are shown in Fig. 3 and in Tables  
194 1, 2 and 3. Ionic proportions (Fig. 3) show that anion concentrations are largely dominated by  
195  $\text{HCO}_3$ , which represents, whatever the station, more than 97% of the sum of the anions (in  
196  $\text{meq.L}^{-1}$ ), the remaining being represented by chloride (about 2.5% of the anion charge), while  
197 other anions  $\text{NO}_3$  and  $\text{SO}_4$  are often under the detection limit (Fig. 3). Cation concentrations (in



198 meq/L) are slightly dominated by Ca (34%), closely followed by Mg (29%), and Na (25%). K  
199 represents between 11 and 14% of the cationic composition. Dissolved silica represents an  
200 average of  $0.152 \pm 0.014$  mmol/L.

201 Strontium data show higher concentrations and lower radiogenic signatures ( $0.0012 \pm 0.0003$   
202 meq/L,  $n = 20$ ;  $0.7120 \pm 0.0002$ ,  $n = 20$ ) for the Logone, compared to the Chari river ( $0.0009 \pm$   
203  $0.0003$  meq/L,  $n = 20$ ;  $0.7170 \pm 0.0005$ ,  $n = 20$ ) (Tables 1 to 3). The average for the Chari-  
204 Logone is  $0.0010 \pm 0.0003$  meq/L ( $n = 20$ ) and  $0.7145 \pm 0.0008$  ( $n = 20$ ).

205

### 206 **3.2. Seasonal variations**

207 Considering its dominance in anion concentration,  $\text{HCO}_3$  can be considered as a good proxy of  
208 the global dissolved load.  $\text{HCO}_3$  shows a minimum concentration during the rainfall season  
209 (July-August) (Fig. 4b). Then it increases until November-December and remains at high levels  
210 until the end of the dry season (March-April). Despite a higher average concentration compared  
211 to the other cations (Fig. 4c and 4d), Ca undergoes the strongest decrease during the rainfall  
212 season. This is particularly evident in the Chari river. In addition, the Ca/Na molar ratio shows  
213 a sharp drop during the beginning of the rainfall season, and then increases during the flood rise  
214 and the flood recession. In both rivers, the Ca/Na ratio also displays a small decrease  
215 synchronous with the maximum discharge (Fig.4e et a).

216 The strontium content shows the same pattern as other dissolved elements in the Chari and  
217 Logone rivers, and most particularly with a behavior similar to that of other alkaline earths  
218 elements (Ca and Mg): the highest values are observed in April and the lowest in July (Fig. 5a).

219 The isotopic signature is rather stable over the period in the Logone and in the Chari. In contrast,  
220 the Chari-Logone isotopic signature is highly variable, as a result of the mixing between the  
221 two tributaries, with variable contributions along the year (Fig. 5b).

222 The Chari and Logone flow rates calculated using the Sr isotopic mass balance method are  
223 shown in Figure 5c. It led to values consistent with the Chari and the Chari-Logone measured  
224 river discharge.

225

226

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228

229

## 230 4. Discussion

### 231 4.1. Contribution of silicate weathering to the dissolved load

#### 232 233 4.1.1. Atmospheric contributions

234 The atmospheric contribution to the dissolved load is classically based on marine elemental  
235 ratios, assuming that chloride comes exclusively from atmospheric inputs. Thus, atmospheric  
236 contributions are estimated by:

$$237 X_{atm} = Cl_{riv} * \left( \frac{X}{Cl} \right)_{sea}$$

238 where X corresponds to any elemental concentrations, in seawater (*sea*), river water (*riv*) and  
239 atmospheric inputs (*atm*).

240 In the Chari and Logone rivers (Table 4), this calculation yields atmospheric Na concentrations  
241 between 12 and 14  $\mu\text{mol/L}$  (i.e. 9.1 % of the total Na concentration), and low atmospheric input  
242 concentrations of other elements: 1 to 1.7  $\mu\text{mol/L}$  for Mg (1.9%); 0.2 to 0.3  $\mu\text{mol/L}$  for K  
243 (0.4%) and Ca (0.3%). These low atmospheric inputs show that the river geochemistry is  
244 dominated by continental weathering. The low atmospheric inputs together with the absence of  
245 saline rocks in the basin explain the very low Cl concentrations measured over the basin and in  
246 the Chari Logone (Bouchez et al. 2016).

#### 247 248 4.1.2. A silicate weathering signature

249 In this section we attempt to elucidate the geological nature and the reservoirs responsible for  
250 the chemistry of the Chari-Logone basin.

251 Several studies implemented mixing methods based on the relationships between molar ratios  
252 (Ca/Na, Mg/Na,  $\text{HCO}_3/\text{Na}$ ) to characterize the different poles (end-members) that can  
253 contribute to the dissolved charge of a river, namely the chemical weathering of the different  
254 lithological facies (carbonate rocks, silicate rocks and evaporitic rocks) (Négrel et al. 1993;  
255 Gaillardet et al. 1999; Picouet et al. 2002). This method relies on the idea that the water  
256 chemical composition carries a specific signature attributed to each altering rock, characterized  
257 by ionic ratios, which are conservative during evaporation and dilution processes. The river  
258 water composition results from the simple combination of these weathering signatures,  
259 depending on the lithological facies within a watershed (Négrel et al. 1993, Picouet et al. 2002),  
260 after removing the atmospheric contribution. The geochemical signatures of carbonate rocks,

261 silicate rocks or evaporitic rocks results from literature databases, and a global synthesis was  
262 proposed by Gaillardet et al. (1999).

263 Therefore, the proportion of the geological nature of the rocks presently weathered in the Chari-  
264 Logone catchment can be estimated using the annual average ratios of Ca/Na, Mg/Na and  
265 HCO<sub>3</sub>/Na of river water, compared to predefined end-members compositions based on the  
266 synthesis of Gaillardet et al. (1999). Mixing diagrams of ionic ratios corrected from atmospheric  
267 contributions were plotted and compared to worldwide river data (Fig. 6). The mean molar  
268 ratios of the Chari, the Logone and the Chari-Logone rivers are very low (e.g. for the Chari-  
269 Logone: Ca/Na = 0.85±0.19; Mg/Na = 0.63±0.10; HCO<sub>3</sub>/Na = 4.2±0.58 and close to the  
270 composition of the silicate endmember taken from the synthesis of Gaillardet *et al* (1999):  
271 Ca/Na = 0.35 ± 0.15; Mg/Na = 0.24 ± 0.12; HCO<sub>3</sub>/Na = 2 ± 1, despite a slight shift towards the  
272 carbonate endmember (Fig. 6). This could be due to the expected variability of the silicate end-  
273 member composition, as Gaillardet et al. (1999) underlined that the natural variations of silicate  
274 lithological facies could overcome the range defined by this end-member composition. In  
275 addition, although no carbonate formation outcrops in the southern part of the watershed, the  
276 presence of pedogenic carbonate nodules in the north of Cameroon has been observed, which  
277 formation relies on local sources of Ca coming from in situ weathering (Dietrich et al. 2017).  
278 These carbonate nodules are widespread in the Chari-Logone basin, and their dissolution, which  
279 could modify the molar ratio without modification of the Sr isotopic signature, may also explain  
280 this slight shift towards higher Ca/Na. Therefore, even if silicate weathering appears as the  
281 dominant process controlling the chemistry of the Chari-Logone River, in agreement with the  
282 geology, one could not rule out the contribution of secondary carbonate dissolution. This would  
283 imply a “local carbon cycle”, in which atmospheric carbon consumption associated with the  
284 classical mechanism of silicate weathering, would be partly released during the weathering of  
285 secondary minerals.

286

#### 287 **4.1.3. Comparison with other African systems**

288 Total dissolved solid (TDS: sum of SiO<sub>2</sub>, Ca, Mg, Na, K, HCO<sub>3</sub>, Cl and SO<sub>4</sub>) represents 55 and  
289 56 mg/L for the Chari and Logone respectively (Table 5). These values are very low, with the  
290 same magnitude as those of the Niger (Table 5), which watershed also corresponds to silicate  
291 geological formations. Table 6 shows the mean values in µmol/L and µeq/L of all dissolved  
292 chemical elements in relation to global and African river values. All these values of African  
293 rivers are below the world mean values obtained by Meybeck (2003).

294 The  $\text{HCO}_3$  content of the Chari-Logone system is similar to that of the downstream Niger River,  
295 but higher than that of the Congo River and of the upper part of the Niger basin (Table 6).  
296 Dissolved silica is important to consider when estimating chemical denudation and  $\text{CO}_2$   
297 consumption, because its presence in solution is almost entirely due to silicate weathering  
298 (Négrel et al. 1993; Gaillardet et al. 1997; Amiotte Suchet et al. 2003; Harmon et al. 2016). It  
299 is predominant in the Chari and Logone rivers, with a mean annual value of 159 to 153  $\mu\text{mol/L}$   
300 respectively, which is similar to the average world river concentration of silica, but lower than  
301 for the Niger river. Except for the K concentration, the annual average levels of the other  
302 dissolved elements (Ca, Mg, Na) are lower than the overall mean value (Table 6). This low  
303 dissolved mineral value can be explained by the morphology of the flattened watershed and the  
304 nature of the already leached bedrock.

#### 305 **4.2. Concentration-discharge relationship at the seasonal scale**

306

307 As described previously, there are strong seasonal variations in the concentrations of dissolved  
308 chemical elements in the Chari and Logone waters. The lowest concentrations are observed  
309 during the rainy season, suggesting a dilution effect by rainfall and rapid runoff, while the  
310 highest values are observed during the dry season, when the influence of evaporation is strong.  
311 When chemical concentrations are compared with river discharge, the relation shows a  
312 hysteresis loop, suggesting a non-linear behavior of the catchment (Fig. 7). This hysteresis  
313 behavior is well observed for Ca and Mg in the Chari and Logone rivers, and for Na in the  
314 Logone River while K shows constant concentrations throughout the year, except during the  
315 months of lowest discharge in April and May. Hysteresis behaviors between chemical elements  
316 and river flows are observed in several basins around the world (Walling and Foster 1975;  
317 Walling and Webb 1980; Probst et al. 1992; Evans and Davies 1998; Bravard and Petit 2000;  
318 Picouet et al. 2002; Calmels et al. 2011; Moquet et al. 2016; Bouchez et al. 2017; Ibarra et al.  
319 2017). Some explanations involve the contribution of different reservoirs. For example, in the  
320 Niger Basin (Picouet et al. 2002) the hysteresis behavior was interpreted as: (1) a variable  
321 seasonal contribution of different flow sources (runoff, hypodermic flow, groundwater), (2) a  
322 delayed contribution of the various branches of the hydrographic network and (3) a flushing  
323 effect of the ponds with the new flood, which brings water that has been concentrated during  
324 the dry season. In addition, this flushing effect can also lead to the mobilization of soluble  
325 minerals deposited in the minor bed during the dry season, and on leaching of soil horizons.

326 For the Chari and Logone basins, the seasonal variations of the Ca/Na ratio indicate that  
327 different water sources are involved, in addition to the combined effects of dilution by rainfall  
328 and of concentration by evaporation. Nevertheless, the relationship between Ca/Na and  
329 discharge is more complex than a simple hysteresis loop: the discharge rising months p are  
330 characterized by an increase of Ca/Na, followed by a slight decrease at the flood maximum,  
331 and thereafter, the Ca/Na ratio remains constant during the flood recession, leading to a “double  
332 loop” (Fig. 7).

333 The highest constant Ca/Na ratios are observed during the low flow period (January-March),  
334 when river flow is supported by groundwater, while the lowest ratios are observed during the  
335 rainfall season, when rapid runoff dominates the water flow. Therefore, the variations of Ca/Na  
336 could result from the different residence time of water in the catchment.

337 As discussed above, the Ca/Na ratio reflects the geological nature of weathered formations.  
338 During the rainfall season, Ca/Na reaches a low value similar to that of the silicate end-member  
339 defined by Gaillardet et al. 1999 (Fig. 4-d). The increase of Ca/Na above this value may result  
340 from to the contribution of pedogenic carbonates weathering, thus more intense for longer  
341 residence time.

342 Then, the two-fold peak of Ca/Na could be attributed to the dual effect of 1) leaching and  
343 mobilisation of water that remained stored in the catchment, during the flood formation; and 2)  
344 groundwater signature, during the flood recession and low flow period. In between these two  
345 peaks, during the maximum discharge, the Ca/Na ratio displays intermediate values, resulting  
346 from the mixing between the two water sources.

347 The influence of groundwater signature during the flood recession in November-December,  
348 when the baseflow dominates river discharge, is also visible through stable elemental  
349 concentrations. From January until the beginning of the rainfall season, concentrations increase  
350 under the influence of evaporation. Then, when the rainfall season begins (April in the upper  
351 catchment), the persistent effect of evaporation compensates the dilution by rainfall. This  
352 explains that the Ca/Na ratio decreases together with the elemental concentrations, while the  
353 discharge remains low. The concentration of dissolved chemicals continue to decrease until  
354 July-August, consistently with the increase in discharge. This corresponds to the dilution of the  
355 river water by less concentrated water coming from precipitation. Discharge continues to  
356 increase until October while concentrations also increase. This can be attributed to the  
357 increasing contribution of more concentrated groundwaters, but also to the remobilization of  
358 chemical elements by the effect of land leaching by rains in the floodplains of Massenya for the  
359 Chari, and of Bongor and Yaéré for the Logone (Fig. 1).

360 This anti-clockwise hysteresis behavior well pronounced for Ca and Mg and less for Na and K  
361 is thus mainly driven by the contribution of two main water sources, rapid surface and  
362 subsurface water flow on one hand, and groundwater on other hand, i.e. “pre-event water”,  
363 which carry a higher Ca/Na signature.

### 364 **4.3. Driving factors of silicate weathering fluxes**

#### 365 **4.3.1. Annual average weathering fluxes in Chari and Logone sub-basins**

366 The annual weighted average concentrations for 2013 were multiplied by the annual river  
367 discharge to calculate the annual total flux expressed in ton/y and specific flux ( $\text{g}/\text{m}^2/\text{y}$ ) (Table  
368 7). For the entire Chari-Logone basin, the TDS flux was estimated at  $2.21 \text{ g}/\text{m}^2/\text{y}$ . Despite its  
369 higher contribution, i.e.  $1.38 \times 10^6 \text{ t}/\text{y}$ , while the Logone provides  $0.58 \times 10^6 \text{ t}/\text{y}$ , the Chari river  
370 has a lower TDS specific flux, i.e.  $1.59 \text{ g}/\text{m}^2/\text{y}$ , compared to  $6.16 \text{ g}/\text{m}^2/\text{y}$  for the Logone. Our  
371 data similar geochemical concentrations between the two rivers. Therefore, the observed  
372 difference in specific weathering flux is mainly due to runoff differences between the Chari (29  
373 mm/y) and Logone (112 mm/y) river basins. This situation corresponds to transport-limited  
374 weathering regimes, also referred to as chemostatic behaviors, in which the runoff rate is the  
375 only factor controlling chemical fluxes (Godsey et al. 2009 and Koger et al. 2018).

376

#### 377 **4.3.2. Comparison with historical data on the Chari-Logone**

378 To elucidate the question of the direct link between chemical and water fluxes, i.e. chemostatic  
379 behavior, it is interesting to compare our data with different magnitudes of runoff conditions,  
380 such as those that occurred during previous periods during the last 50 years. Dissolved loads  
381 and chemical fluxes were compared to data obtained in 1969, 1972 and 1973 (Gac 1980 and  
382 from Bouchez et al. 2016). The corresponding average annual flows (measured at station of  
383 N'Djamena on the Chari-Logone) were  $1076 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$ ,  $577 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$  and  $576 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$  in 1969, 1972 and  
384 1973 respectively (Carmouze, 1976, Gac, 1980, Roche, 1980, Olivry et al., 1996). The year  
385 1969 is the wettest of our data set and corresponds to the beginning of the so-called “Great  
386 Sahelian drought” of the 1970-1980 period. Fig. 8 presents a comparative study of dissolved  
387 loads between these pre-drought period and present day conditions. The sum of the cations (Ca  
388 + Mg + Na + K) varied in the range 8.7 to 14.4 mg/L in 1969 (Gac 1980; Roche 1980); 8.7 to  
389 14.6 mg/L in 1972 (Carmouze 1976, Gac 1980) and 8.7 to 19.9 mg/L in 2013 (this study). The  
390 most variable concentrations are those encountered during the dry season (March-June), which

391 showed higher values in recent years, while the flood season (September-November) displayed  
392 surprisingly constant values, independently of the discharge magnitude (Fig. 8). The annual  
393 chemical flux is dominated by the flood season: even with higher concentrations during the low  
394 water period, the March-June period only contributes to 11% of the annual flux. Thus, the  
395 concentration variations observed during low flow periods have little effect on the annual flux.  
396 The comparison between historical and recent data shows that for the Chari-Logone system,  
397 the inter-annual variability of high flow concentrations is very low, even during the more humid  
398 years prior to the 1970s Sahelian drought. As the flood period dominates the total annual export,  
399 it can thus be concluded that the annual weathering load exported is directly related to the  
400 runoff.

401

#### 402 **4.3.3. Impact of semi-arid environments on the carbon cycle**

403 In the strongly contrasted climatic context of the Chari basin, the very low average runoff (29  
404 mm/y in 2013) is due to the fact that some sub-basins do not contribute to the runoff, especially  
405 in the Sahelian part of the catchment. Indeed, the chloride mass balance of the Chari-Logone  
406 basin showed that only  $12 \pm 8\%$  of the catchment is connected to the main rivers (Bouchez et  
407 al. 2019). In many parts of the basin, evaporation encompasses all other fluxes, leading to  
408 endorheic situations where dissolved load is not exported to the outflow. These disconnected  
409 areas become productive during more humid periods, leading to a significant increase in  
410 chemical fluxes. In addition, the precipitation of secondary minerals, such as pedogenic  
411 carbonate nodules, may be enhanced in these endorheic areas.

412 Therefore, the impact of semi-arid areas on the carbon cycle are two-fold. First, there is a direct  
413 positive relationship between hydrological fluxes and atmospheric carbon consumption by  
414 silicate weathering. As the hydrological response to climate change is particularly amplified in  
415 semi-arid environments, the carbon flux response to climate may also be enhanced. Second, the  
416 hydrological closure, either local or at the catchment scale, implies that atmospheric carbon  
417 consumed by silicate weathering is stored inside the catchment, either in soils (e.g. pedogenic  
418 carbonates), either in lakes (e.g. secondary minerals produced by reverse weathering). Although  
419 evident, this assertion may have important global implication, since endorheic areas represent  
420 an important part of continental surfaces.

421

422

423 **Conclusions**

424 The Chari and Logone basins cover an area of approximately 613 000 km<sup>2</sup> and drain water from  
425 the northern flank of Adamaoua (Cameroon) and the Central African ridge, towards Lake Chad.  
426 The analysis of the distribution of the major elements showed that the Chari and Logone rivers  
427 are very poorly mineralized and that the dissolved load mainly comes from the weathering of  
428 silicates, although the Ca/Na ratio may reflect the influence of pedogenic carbonate dissolution.  
429 The isotope compositions of strontium confirm the absence of a significant primary carbonate  
430 pole on the basin. Substantial seasonal variations of river concentrations are observed, with  
431 higher concentrations during the dry season and lower concentrations during the rainy season,  
432 but with a delay of about 2 months between the rainfall peak and the flood peak. In the Chari-  
433 Logone basin, we observed that concentrations follow an annual hysteresis, related to a variable  
434 contribution over time of surface water and groundwater.  
435 Based on the <sup>87</sup>Sr/<sup>86</sup>Sr ratios, we estimated that the Chari and the Logone rivers respectively  
436 contributed to 59 % and 41% of the total dissolved load to Lake Chad. Silicate weathering  
437 largely dominated the dissolved load. A flux of 5.9 \* 10<sup>5</sup> tons/y of dissolved materials  
438 transported to Lake Chad was estimated downstream of N'Djamena for the year 2013. The  
439 Chari Logone Basin follows a chemostatic behavior. Therefore, the inter-annual variations of  
440 dissolved loads reaching Lake Chad are directly related to the variations in the Chari-Logone  
441 discharge.

442

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452

453



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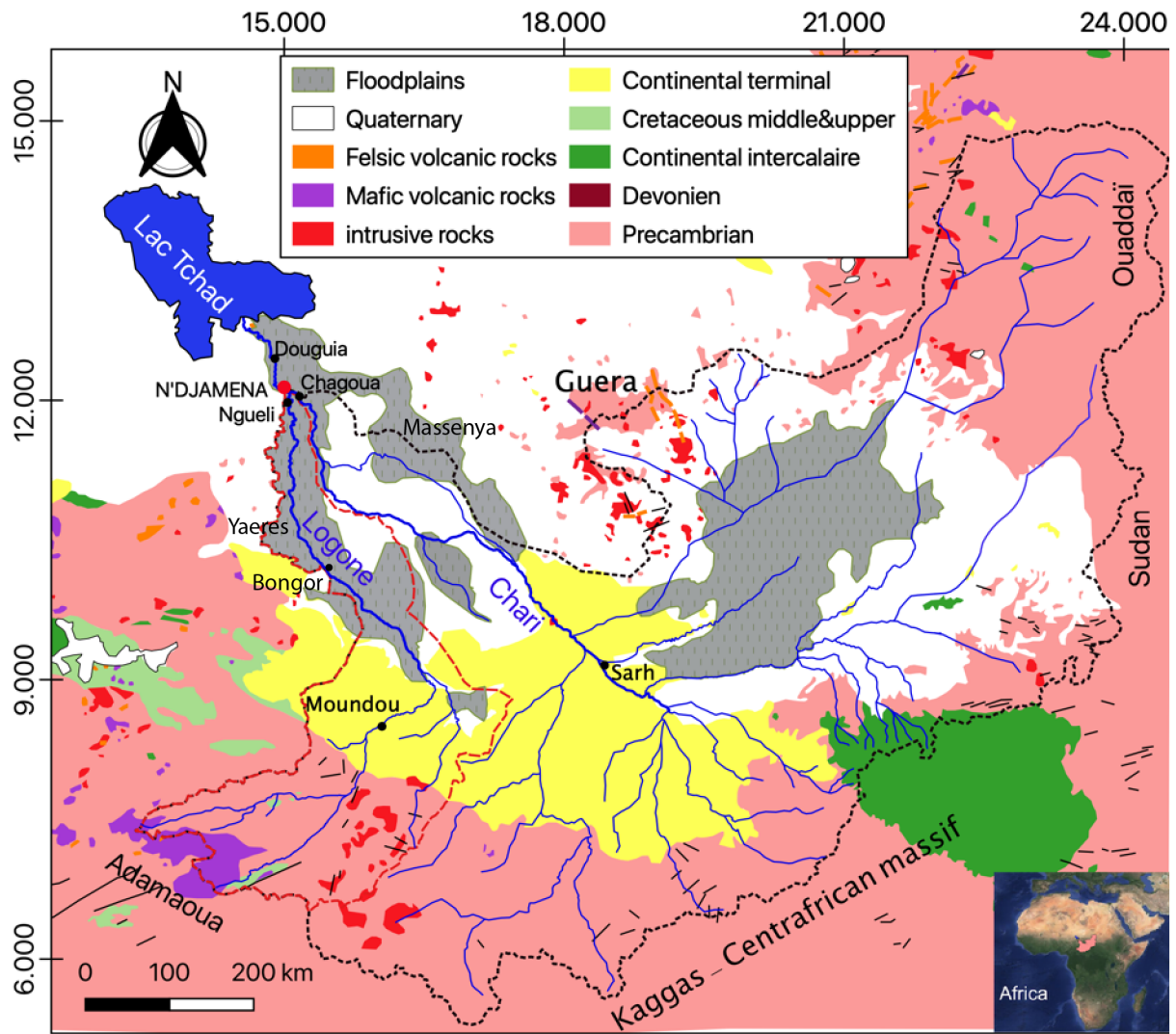
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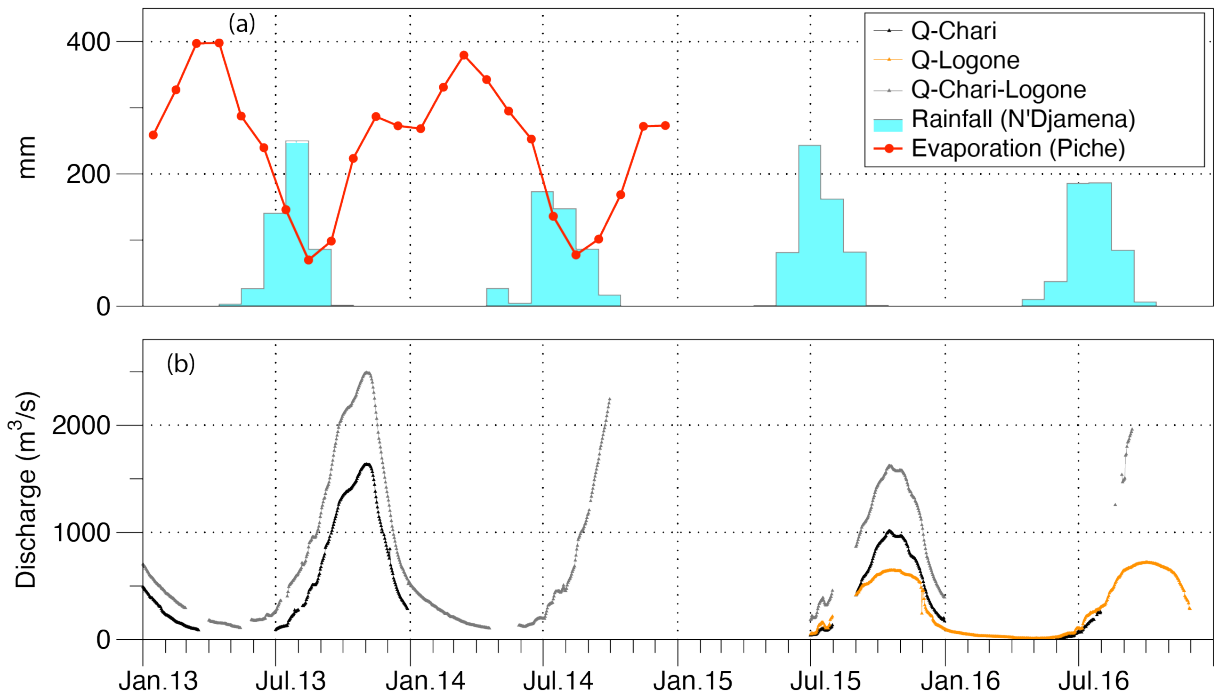


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595 Figure 1. Geological map of the Chari-Logone basin (Louis 1970), with sample locations  
 596 (Ngueli, Chagoua and Douguia). The black dotted line represents the boundary of the Chari-  
 597 Logone basin and the red dotted line the boundary of the Logone basin.

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601 Figure 2: Monthly rainfall and evaporation (Piche method) at the N'Djamena station (a); daily  
 602 discharge (b): the black dotted curve represents the flow of the Chari river at Chagoua before  
 603 the confluence, the yellow curve represents the flow of Logone river at Ngueli and the grey  
 604 curve is the flow of Chari - Logone river after the confluence of the two rivers Chari and Logone  
 605 measured at N'Djamena.

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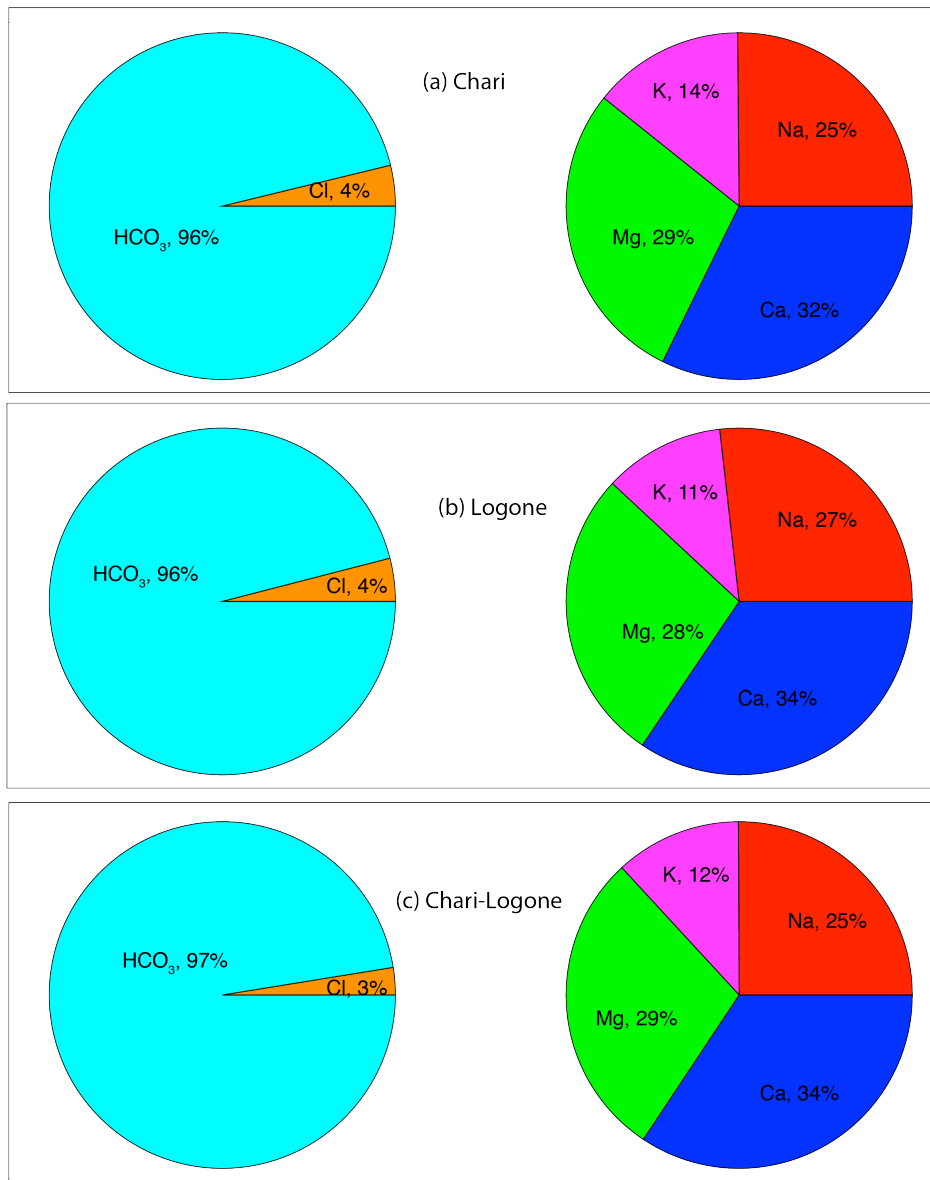
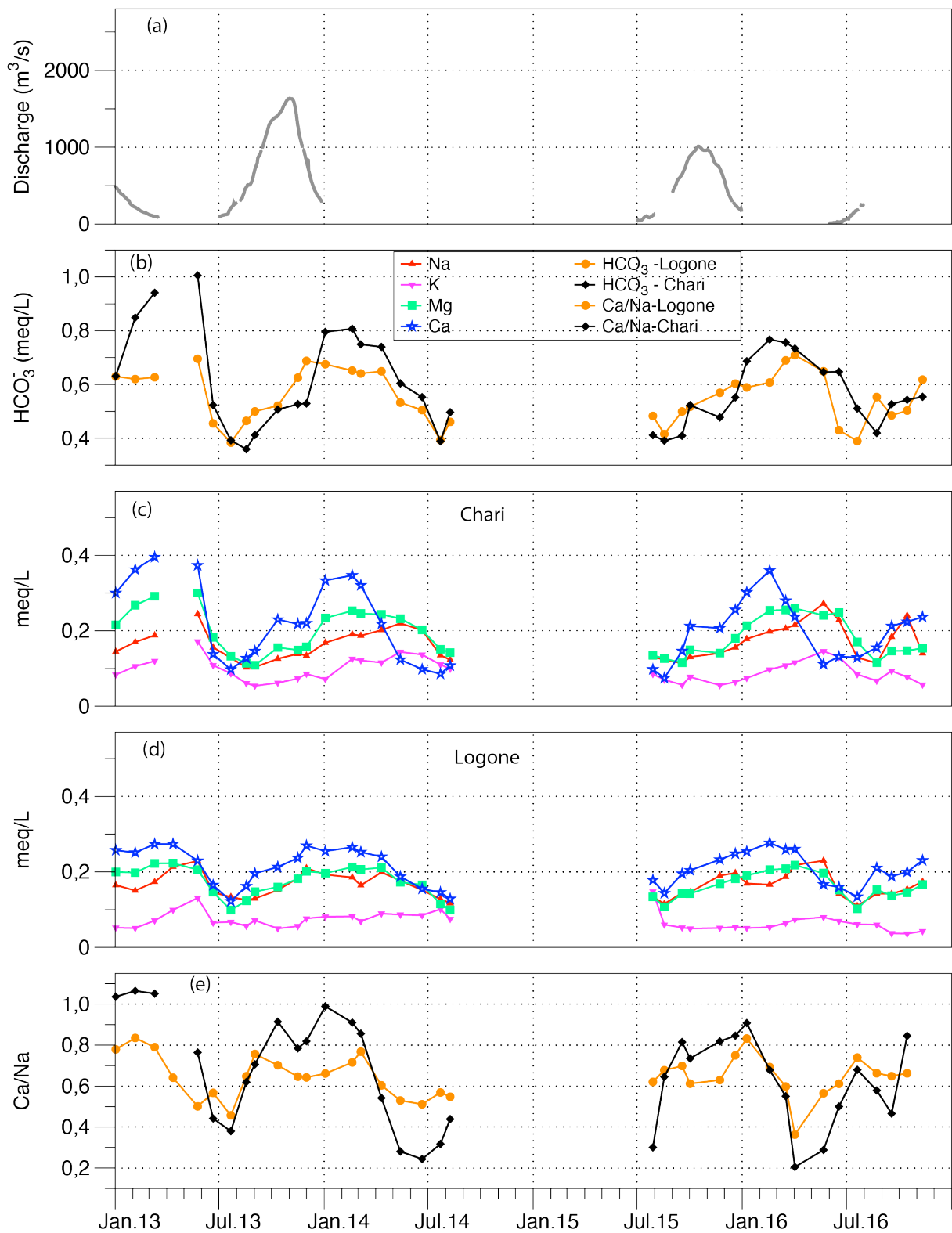


Figure 3. Ionic compositions (average annual proportion of each anion and cation in meq/L) of the Logone, Chari and Chari-Logone waters.

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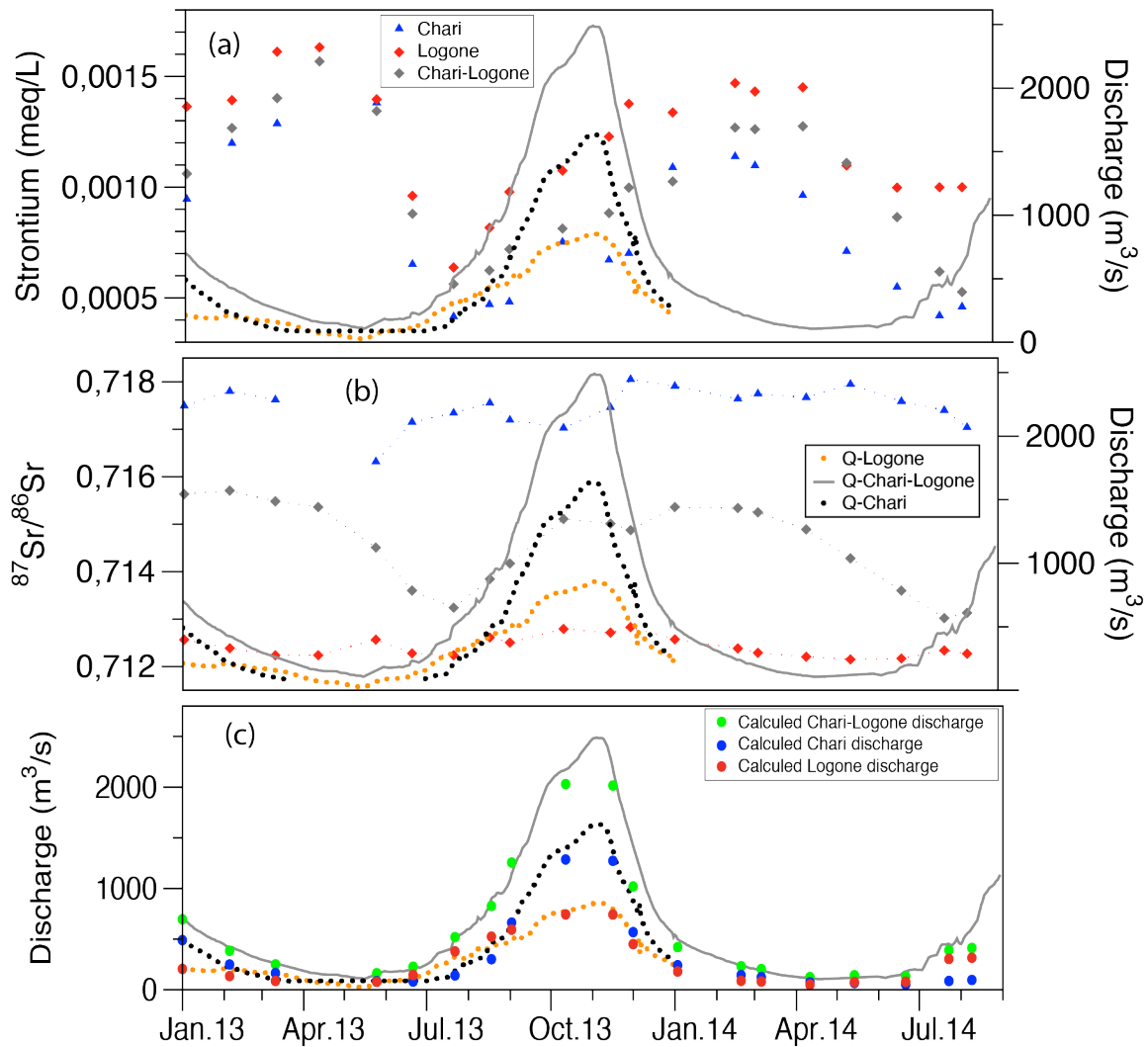
623 Figure 4 : Seasonnal evolution of ionic concentrations and Ca/Na molar ratio in the Chari and  
 624 Logone rivers between 2013 and 2016. The Chari-Logone discharge provides the seasonal flood  
 625 framework.

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630 Figure 5: Concentration (a) and isotopic composition (b) of strontium in the Chari (blue),  
631 Logone (red) and Chari – Logone (grey) water. As in Fig. 2, the grey curve and the black dotted  
632 curve are the measured Chari-Logone and Chari river discharges, respectively. The grey dotted  
633 curve is the Logone discharge deduced from the difference between the Chari - Logone and  
634 Chari data. The colored circles are the flows rates calculated from the strontium isotope ratios  
635 mass balance for the Logone (red), Chari (blue), and sum of both values (green).

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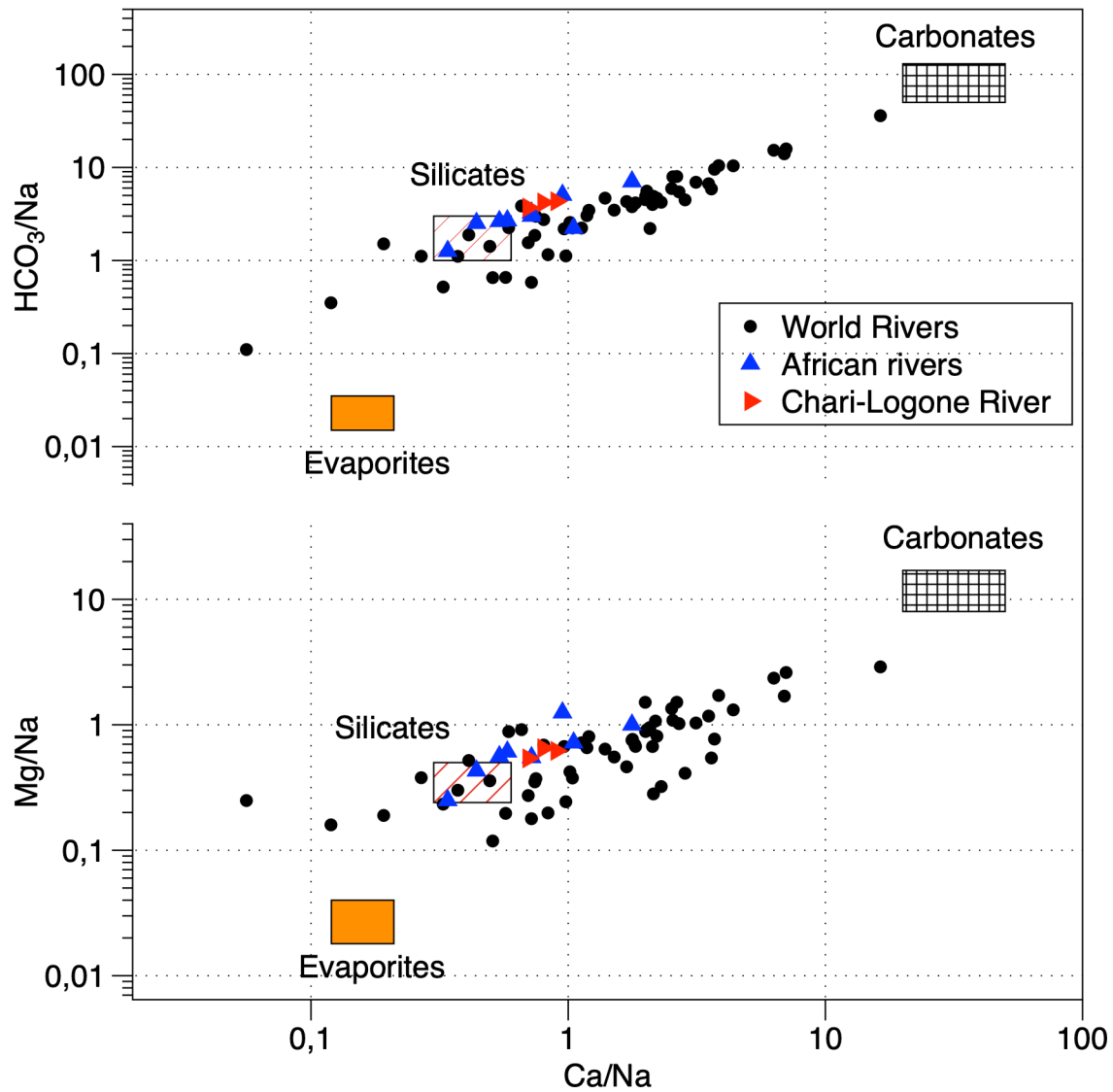
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643 Figure 6: Mixing diagram showing concentration ratios in river water, and in weathering end-

644 members defined in previous studies. The values of the Ca/Na, Mg/Na and HCO<sub>3</sub>/Na ratios of

645 the silicate, carbonate, and evaporitic end-members are taken from Gaillardet et al. (1999). The

646 data of the various world and African rivers plotted in this diagram are taken from Gaillardet et

647 al. (1997), Meybeck (2003), Picouet et al. (2002), Orange (1996) and Agbri et al. (2010).

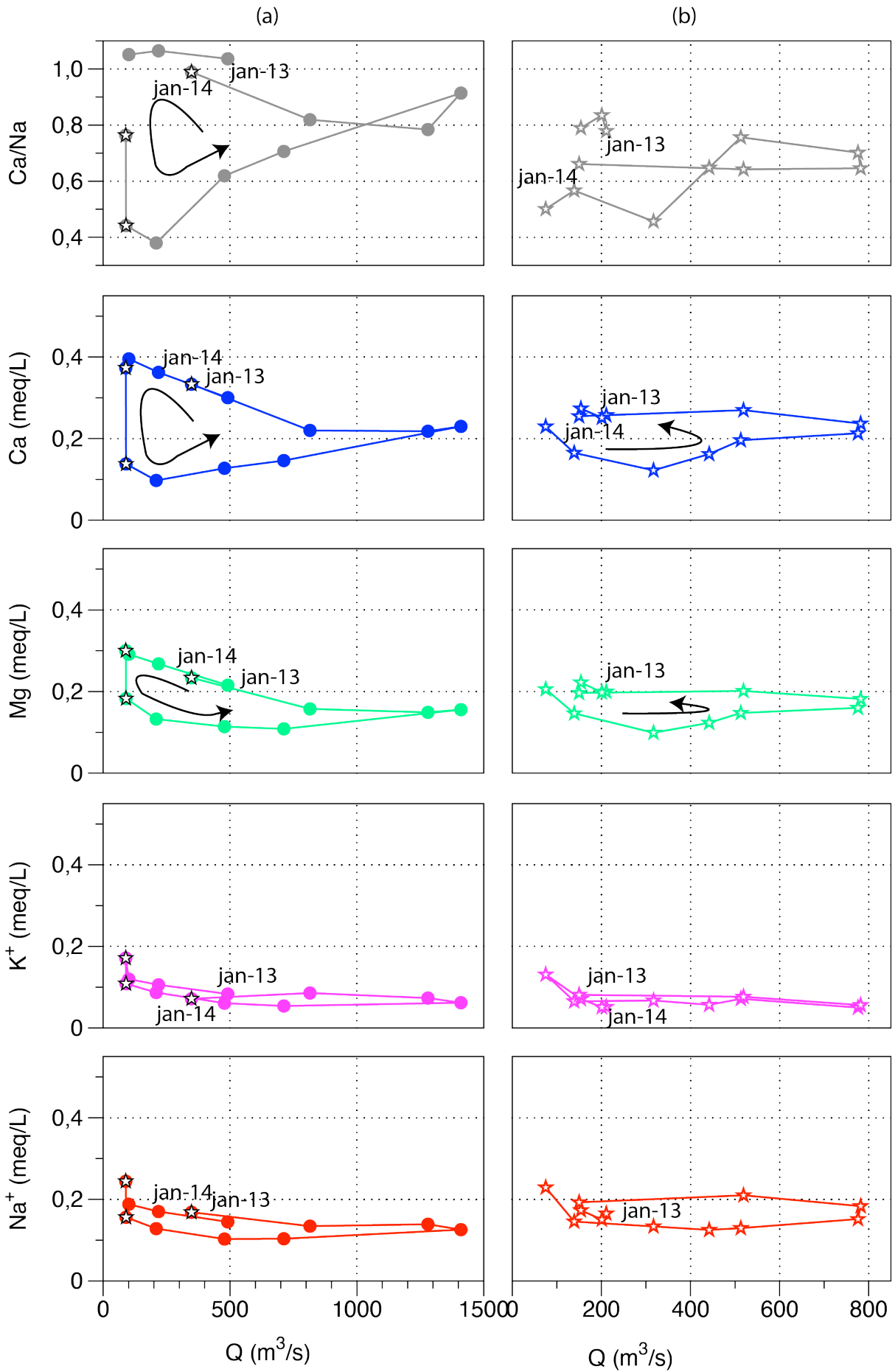
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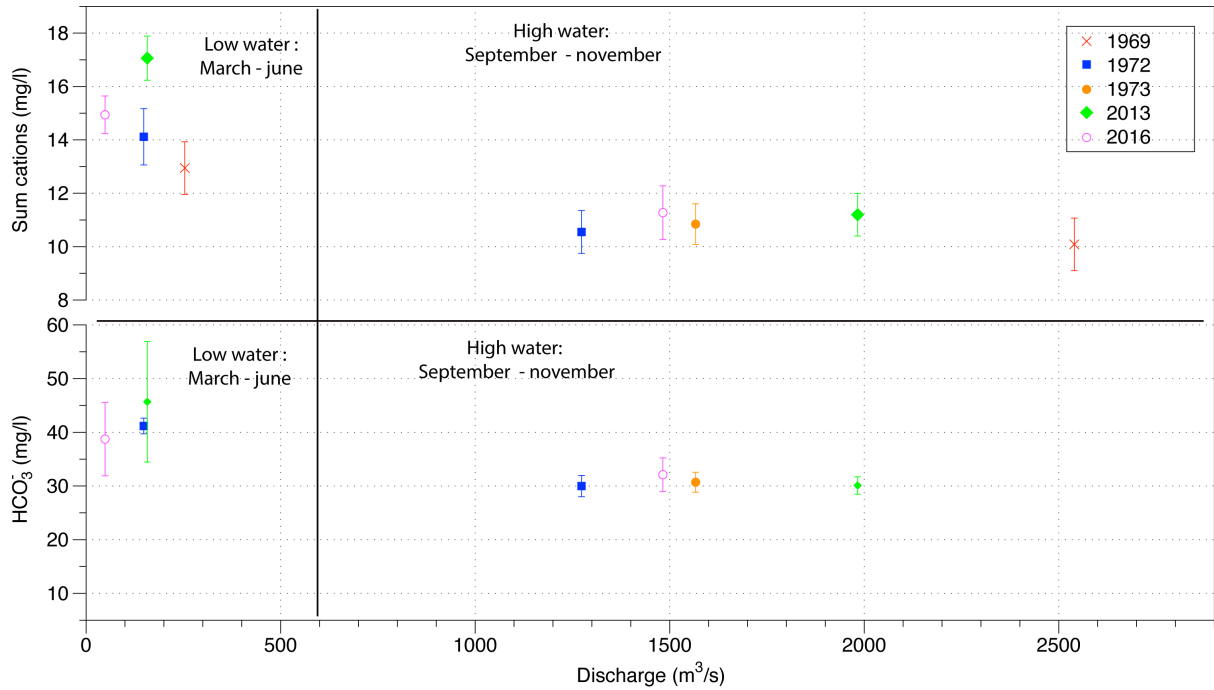
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654 Figure 7: Evolution of ionic concentrations (Ca, Mg, K and Na) as a function of the discharge  
 655 flow of the Chari (a) and the Logone (b) rivers over the 2013-2014 period. Stars correspond to  
 656 reconstituted flows.

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 660 Figure 8: Average concentrations of the Chari-Logone river corresponding to the two main  
 661 periods of an annual cycle: low water period (March-June) and high water (flood) period  
 662 (September-November), compared to 1969, 1972 and 1973 data (from Gac 1980).

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Table 1: Measured concentrations in Chari River monthly water samples

Dates	Q -measured (m <sup>3</sup> /s)	Q -calculated (m <sup>3</sup> /s)	EC µs/cm	pH	T °C	<sup>87</sup> Sr/ <sup>86</sup> Sr	SiO <sub>2</sub>	Na <sup>+</sup>	K <sup>+</sup>	Mg <sup>2+</sup>	Ca <sup>2+</sup>	Sr <sup>2+</sup>	Cl <sup>-</sup>	SO <sub>4</sub> <sup>2-</sup>	HCO <sub>3</sub> <sup>-</sup>	Ionic B.
02/01/2013	365	490	74	8,3	22,0	0,7175	155	145	83	215	300	0,9	11	2	631	8,2
05/02/2013	177	250	89	7,9	24,0	0,7178	136	170	106	268	362	1,2	17	1	849	3,3
11/03/2013	104	165	98	8,3	26,8	0,7176	142	188	120	291	395	1,3	26	2	941	2,8
12/04/2013	79		108	8,4	29,0											
25/05/2013	54	85	98	9,1	32,0	0,7163	161	244	172	300	373	1,4	65	12	1006	4,0
21/06/2013	113	81	57	10,8	29,1	0,7172	103	156	109	183	138	0,7	22	8	523	5,6
22/07/2013	164	142	43	8,5	30,6	0,7173	70	128	87	133	97	0,4	18	6	392	6,3
18/08/2013	459	302	38	8,1	29,7	0,7176	161	103	61	114	127	0,5	10	7	359	6,0
02/09/2013	1022	663	41	8,1	29,3	0,7172	163	104	54	109	146	0,5	8	7	412	0,0
12/10/2013	1472	1286	57	7,6	29,3	0,7170	143	126	62	156	230	0,8	11	2	506	6,2
16/11/2013	1312	1273	55	8,1	25,1	0,7175	150	139	73	149	218	0,7	19	0	527	4,7
01/12/2013	499	569	62	8,2	26,9	0,7181	147	134	86	157	220	0,7	14	5	529	6,1
03/01/2014	384	242	81	7,7	23,9	0,7179	140	168	72	234	333	1,1	13	0	796	0,7
19/02/2014	159	145	85	8,5	23,7	0,7176	165	191	125	253	347	1,1	43	3	807	6,3
06/03/2014	71	125	84	8,9	24,7	0,7178	161	187	121	246	321	1,1	41	1	749	7,8
11/04/2014	51	74	78	7,4		0,7177	160	202	116	243	219	1,0	29	5	740	2,6
14/05/2014	47	68	69	9,0	28,7	0,7180	102	220	144	232	124	0,7	30	3	604	8,7
21/06/2014	64	52	59	8,9	29,2	0,7176	159	201	137	202	98	0,5	51	6	553	7,2
23/07/2014	59	87	47	8,8	29,2	0,7174	146	135	110	151	86	0,4	12	13	389	10,8
09/08/2014	681	97	44	8,8	28,0	0,7170	71	123	99	142	108	0,5	38	16	497	-2,5
29/07/2015			88	7,3	27,2			129	85	135	98	0,5	21	8	411	0,7
18/08/2015			57	7,3	30,7			124	70	126	75	0,4	16	5	391	-2,0
18/09/2015			51	7,6	31,8			114	57	115	146	0,5	7	6	410	1,1
02/10/2015			63	8,0	31,0			130	78	149	213	0,7	9	3	523	3,1
23/11/2015			74	7,5	24,3			141	56	141	207	0,7	8	0	478	5,7
20/12/2015			77	7,8	21,2			156	64	180	256	0,8	10	3	552	7,5
09/01/2016			89	8,1	22,8			179	75	213	302	0,9	11	5	687	4,4
18/02/2016			97	8,4	25,0			198	98	254	360	1,1	13	2	767	7,5
17/03/2016			85	8,7	27,1			206	108	255	280	1,1	22	3	756	4,0
02/04/2016			84	8,8	24,4			216	116	260	237	1,1	27	4	734	4,0
22/05/2016			77	9,0	34,8			272	146	241	111	0,6	30	6	646	5,8
18/06/2016			75	9,0	32,6			228	131	248	131	0,8	33	8	647	3,5
20/07/2016			74	8,3	31,0			129	85	170	129	0,8	20	8	511	-2,3
23/08/2016			56	7,6	32,8			114	67	116	155	0,6	9	7	420	1,8
18/09/2016			65	7,2	31,0			184	94	146	213	0,7	35	6	527	5,7
15/10/2016			76	7,2	31,9			240	77	147	224	0,7	67	3	543	5,8
11/11/2016			62	9,2	27,8			140	57	154	237	0,8	8	4	554	1,9

Table 2: Measured concentrations in Logone River monthly water samples

Dates	Q -calculated (m <sup>3</sup> /s)	EC μs/cm	pH	T °C	<sup>87</sup> Sr/ <sup>86</sup> Sr	SiO <sub>2</sub>	Na <sup>+</sup>	K <sup>+</sup>	Mg <sup>2+</sup>	Ca <sup>2+</sup>	Si <sup>2+</sup>	Cl <sup>-</sup>	SO <sub>4</sub> <sup>2-</sup>	HCO <sub>3</sub> <sup>-</sup>	Ionic B.
02/01/2013	206	66	8,5	21,3	0,7126	151	165	52	200	257	1,4	10	2	630	3,4
05/02/2013	135	64	8,2	22,7	0,7124	164	150	51	198	251	1,4	14	4	620	2,4
11/03/2013	87	69	7,9	26,0	0,7122	179	173	71	222	274	1,6	19	1	627	8,3
12/04/2013		72	8,4	29,0	0,7122	185	214	99	223	274	1,6	52	3		
25/05/2013	78	72	8,4	31,7	0,7126	178	229	131	206	230	1,4	66	4	696	6,7
21/06/2013	147	55	8,5	29,1	0,7123	130	146	65	146	165	1,0	21	11	455	6,9
22/07/2013	379	37	8,2	30,1	0,7122	139	134	67	99	122	0,6	26	8	384	4,8
18/08/2013	525	48	8,4	29,2	0,7126	146	125	57	123	162	0,8	10	8	465	0,3
02/09/2013	593	53	8,1	29,0	0,7125	142	130	72	148	196	1,0	18	3	500	4,3
12/10/2013	744	55	7,5	29,8	0,7128	133	152	50	160	213	1,1	13	1	521	4,9
16/11/2013	743	63	8,7	26,8	0,7127	157	183	56	182	237	1,2	14	1	625	2,6
01/12/2013	451	72	7,5	27,3	0,7128	159	210	77	202	270	1,4	23	7	688	4,9
03/01/2014	180	83	8,3	22,9	0,7126	170	193	81	197	255	1,3	35	0	675	3,6
19/02/2014	88	66	7,4	23,1	0,7124	180	186	82	213	265	1,5	44	0	652	6,8
06/03/2014	81	68	8,4	24,0	0,7123	175	164	69	207	252	1,4	27	3	641	3,9
11/04/2014	51	77	8,7	29,1	0,7122	184	199	90	211	240	1,5	36	5	649	6,5
14/05/2014	76	59	8,8	29,4	0,7122	160	177	87	172	188	1,1	49	9	533	7,9
21/06/2014	80	55	8,5	30,7	0,7122	167	152	85	166	155	1,0	38	6	505	5,0
23/07/2014	304	46	8,2	31,5	0,7123	146	128	101	115	146	0,8	43	12	393	11,0
09/08/2014	316	41	9,1	28,2	0,7123	132	117	75	99	129	0,6	28	10	461	-4,6
29/07/2015		65	7,3	28,3			134	148	134	178	1,0	81	15	483	0,1
18/08/2015		92	7,4	30,2			116	60	107	143	0,8	12	3	416	-0,5
18/09/2015		66	7,1	30,4			144	52	143	195	1,0	7	2	499	2,5
02/10/2015		59	10,4	33,0			146	50	143	204	0,9	7	4	517	1,3
23/11/2015		80	7,3	24,7			190	52	169	233	1,0	10	2	569	5,0
20/12/2015		80	8,6	21,1			197	54	182	249	1,0	14	8	603	4,3
09/01/2016		74	8,2	22,5			169	51	190	254	1,2	12	6	589	4,6
18/02/2016							166	54	206	277	1,2	15	2	607	5,9
17/03/2016		74	8,4	27,8			187	65	208	259	1,3	19	4	690	0,5
02/04/2016		76	8,3	25,1			218	74	218	261	1,3	21	6	709	2,3
22/05/2016		68	8,8	31,2			230	80	197	167	1,1	25	7	649	-0,5
18/06/2016		54	8,4	29,3			141	70	152	160	0,9	18	9	430	6,7
20/07/2016		56	8,2	29,9			110	61	102	134	0,7	12	10	389	-0,6
23/08/2016		61	7,3	31,4			142	60	153	211	1,0	8	1	553	0,3
18/09/2016		64	7,8	32,0			142	37	137	188	1,0	6	0	485	1,4
15/10/2016		65	7,1	31,5			154	36	145	200	0,9	6	0	503	2,5
11/11/2016		76	7,9	27,1			174	43	166	231	1,1	6	2	618	-1,0

Table 3: Measured concentrations in Chari-Logone River monthly water samples

Dates	Q -measured (m <sup>3</sup> /s)	Q -calculated (m <sup>3</sup> /s)	EC μs/cm	pH	T °C	<sup>87</sup> Sr/ <sup>86</sup> Sr	SiO <sub>2</sub>	Na <sup>+</sup>	K <sup>+</sup>	Mg <sup>2+</sup>	Ca <sup>2+</sup>	Sr <sup>2+</sup>	Cl <sup>-</sup>	SO <sub>4</sub> <sup>2-</sup>	HCO <sub>3</sub> <sup>-</sup>	Ionic Balance %
mmol/L (SiO <sub>2</sub> ) and μeq/L (other elements)																
01/01/2013	702	696	70	8,2	20,7	0,7156	158	145	72	207	282	1,1	9	2	650	4,2
11/02/2013	385	385	84	8,0	22,5	0,7157	160	167	93	250	336	1,3	16	4	791	3,3
12/03/2013	251	251	87	8,1	24,3	0,7155	153	182	99	269	347	1,4	21	2	851	2,7
07/04/2013	165		92	8,0	28,5	0,7154	163	192	111	296	356	1,6	24	3	891	3,4
26/05/2013	169	164	80	8,1	30,3	0,7145	172	220	107	256	242	1,3	26	3	770	3,5
23/06/2013	221	228	54	8,3	28,4	0,7136	164	149	83	169	156	0,9	21	8	483	7,2
23/07/2013	534	520	39	8,0	29,1	0,7132	128	111	62	105	116	0,6	15	4	378	2,1
17/08/2013	915	827	43	8,2	28,2	0,7138	147	117	60	114	138	0,6	12	0	399	3,7
03/09/2013	1251	1256	46	8,2	28,6	0,7142	147	115	69	128	170	0,7	20	5	468	1,4
10/10/2013	2174	2030	53	7,5	29,9	0,7151	145	116	53	150	211	0,8	3	3	492	3,8
17/11/2013	2001	2016	56	7,6	26,3	0,7150	156	145	52	161	221	0,9	4	0	520	5,2
08/12/2013	1022	1020	62	7,0	26,9	0,7149	171	154	57	181	241	1,0	6	2	579	4,5
04/01/2014	491	421	66	8,3	21,0	0,7154	163	148	64	197	259	1,0	10	0	642	2,0
22/02/2014	232	233	79	8,4	21,7	0,7153	169	167	83	238	308	1,3	16	0	736	3,9
03/03/2014	200	205	79	7,8	23,3	0,7153	170	167	83	235	297	1,3	17	0	748	2,2
12/04/2014	114	125	75	8,2	27,5	0,7149	170	189	93	241	235	1,3	21	3	655	7,3
11/05/2014	119	144	68	8,4	29,0	0,7143	118	192	93	226	174	1,1	4	1	614	5,4
08/06/2014	126	133	56	7,6	30,0	0,7136	164	162	90	187	123	0,9	23	7	491	6,7
20/07/2014	448	391	39	8,1	28,2	0,7130	140	112	63	107	114	0,6	42	5	327	9,5
02/08/2014	475	413	44	8,1	28,3	0,7131	98	95	55	96	104	0,5	12	11	385	-4,9
30/07/2015			50	7,2	28,0			125	77	124	150	0,7	21	15	470	-3,1
19/08/2015			66	7,1	29,5			118	62	103	130	0,6	13	7	412	-2,3
19/09/2015			60	7,2	30,7			132	56	130	173	0,8	11	4	458	1,9
03/10/2015			63	7,6	31,0			137	64	145	204	0,8	8	2	516	2,3
22/11/2015			73	7,5	24,1			167	53	152	215	0,8	9	3	526	4,3
21/12/2015			73	7,9	19,0			170	60	180	249	0,9	11	6	582	4,8
10/01/2016			76	8,3	20,5			174	66	204	287	1,1	12	8	637	5,4
19/02/2016			82	8,4	23,8			188	79	232	311	1,2	15	3	708	5,4
18/03/2016			79	8,8	27,2			197	86	231	261	1,1	20	4	716	2,2
04/04/2016			81	8,5	25,4			219	93	239	234	1,2	24	2	731	1,8
22/05/2016			69	8,5	29,9			251	103	202	127	0,7	30	5	602	3,4
22/06/2016			57	8,5	29,4			161	82	167	145	0,9	24	10	491	2,8
22/07/2016			60	8,4	29,2			114	65	107	131	0,7	14	13	417	-3,0
24/08/2016			57	7,9	30,2			122	64	127	172	0,7	6	6	480	-0,8
19/09/2016			58	6,6	31,2			125	49	133	195	0,7	7	0	474	2,3
16/10/2016			71	7,6	33,6			134	49	138	204	0,7	4	0	529	-0,9
12/11/2016			70	8,3	26,3			149	50	155	231	0,8	5	1	576	0,2

681 Table 4: Contribution of rainfall inputs in the Chari-Logone water.

	Na	K	Ca	Mg
	%			
Logone	9.2	0.5	0.3	2.1
Chari	9.0	0.3	0.2	1.8

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683 Table 5: Synthesis of dissolved flux of water, and total dissolved solids (TDS) in the upper  
684 Niger basin (Picouet et al 2002) and in the Chari-Logone basin.

Rivers	Runoff (mm/y)	TDS (mg/L)	TDS (g/m <sup>2</sup> /y)
Douna (Niger)	70	45.6	3.2
Banankoro (Niger)	331	41.9	13.9
Chari	29	55.4	1.6
Logone	112	55.5	6.2
Chari-Logone	41	54	2.2

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687 Table 6: Ionic elemental concentration ( $\mu\text{eq/L}$ ) and ( $\mu\text{mol/L}$ ) for silica of the Chari-Logone  
688 basin, the Upper Niger (Picouet *et al.*, 2002), the Congo basin and the world weighted  
689 average (Meybeck & Ragu, 1987; Meybeck, 2003).

Rivers	Area	Discharge	Runoff	SiO <sub>2</sub>	Na	K	Mg	Ca	Cl	SO <sub>4</sub>	HCO <sub>3</sub>	$\Sigma^+$	$\Sigma^-$	Data source
	km <sup>2</sup>	km <sup>3</sup> /y	mm/y	$\mu\text{mol/L}$	$\mu\text{eq/L}$	$\mu\text{eq/L}$	$\mu\text{eq/L}$	$\mu\text{eq/L}$	$\mu\text{eq/L}$	$\mu\text{eq/L}$	$\mu\text{eq/L}$	$\mu\text{eq/L}$	$\mu\text{eq/L}$	
World weighted average of rivers				145	240	44	245	594	167	175	798	1123	1140	Meybeck 2003
Niger (Niamey)	1 200 000	154	128	233	78	28	156	276	26	5	549	538	580	Meybeck et Ragu 1987
Logone (Ngueli)	90 000	10	112	148	159	62	164	213	17		539	598	556	This work
Chari (Chagoua)	523 000	15	29	148	133	73	156	215	14		524	577	538	This work
Chari-Logone (Douguia)	613000	25	41	152	133	62	159	210	10		523	564	533	This work
Upper Niger (Koulikoro)	120 000	33	273	203	124	45	86	114	23		360	370	383	Picouet et al. 2002
Congo (Zaire)	3 700 000	1200	324	157	96	43	118	112	37	15	258	369	310	Meybeck et Ragu 1987

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692 Table 7: Total dissolved solid (TDS) specific fluxes (SiO<sub>2</sub> + Na + K + Ca + Mg + HCO<sub>3</sub>) and  
693 specific weathering rates (SiO<sub>2</sub> + Na + K + Ca + Mg) in African rivers. Logone, Chari and  
694 Chari-Logone data are obtained from this study and data for other rivers are from Meybeck and  
695 Ragu (1987), Picouet *et al.* (2002) and Meybeck (2003).

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Rivers	Area	Discharge	Runoff	SiO <sub>2</sub>	Na	K	Mg	Ca	Cl	SO <sub>4</sub>	HCO <sub>3</sub>	Total dissolved specific flux	Specific altération	Data source
	(km <sup>2</sup> )	(km <sup>3</sup> /y)	mm/y	g/m <sup>2</sup> /y	g/m <sup>2</sup> /y	g/m <sup>2</sup> /y	g/m <sup>2</sup> /y	g/m <sup>2</sup> /y	g/m <sup>2</sup> /y	g/m <sup>2</sup> /y	g/m <sup>2</sup> /y	g/m <sup>2</sup> /y	g/m <sup>2</sup> /y	
World weighted average of rivers	-	-	-	2.98	1.88	0.6	1.01	4.04	2	2.87	16.54	31.92	15.38	Meybeck 2003
Upper Niger (Koulikoro)	120 000	32.76	273	3.48	0.78	0.48	0.56	1.33	0.23	-	5.99	12.87	6.88	Picouet et al. 2002
Congo (Zaire)	3 700 000	1200	324.32	3.05	0.72	0.54	0.46	0.78	0.43	0.48	5.10	11.56	6.45	Meybeck et Ragu 1987
Niger (Niamey)	1 200 000	154.1	128.42	1.80	0.23	0.14	0.24	0.76	0.12	0.06	4.30	7.65	3.35	Meybeck et Ragu 1987
Logone (Nguéli)	90 000	10.04	111.56	1.00	0.41	0.27	0.22	0.51	0.07	0.02	3.66	6.16	2.50	This work
Chari-Logone (Douguia)	613000	25.34	41.34	0.38	0.13	0.1	0.08	0.19	0.01	-	1.32	2.21	0.89	This work
Chari (Chagoua)	523 000	15.3	29.25	0.26	0.09	0.083	0.06	0.14	0.01	0.01	0.93	1.59	0.66	This work

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