Conjoint Analysis of the Surface and Atmospheric Water Balances of the Andes-Amazon System

Alejandro Builes-Jaramillo\textsuperscript{1,2} and Germán Poveda\textsuperscript{1}
\textsuperscript{1}Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Sede Medellín. \textsuperscript{2} Institución Universitaria Colegio Mayor de Antioquia. luis.builes@colmayor.edu.co

1. Introduction and theoretical background

Water balance equations

\[ \frac{dS(t)}{dt} = P(t) - E(t) - R(t) \quad (1) \]
\[ \frac{dC(t)}{dt} = -P(t) + E(t) + C(t) \quad (2) \]
\[ \frac{dC(t)}{dt} = \left( \frac{C(t)}{R(t)} \right) \frac{dR(t)}{dt} - 1 \quad (3) \]

Water imbalance equations

\[ I = \frac{C}{R} - 1 \quad (4) \]
\[ CI(t) = \frac{C(t) - \frac{dW(t)}{dt}}{R(t) + \frac{dR(t)}{dt}} - 1 \quad (5) \]

2. Water balances and imbalances for each spatial scale

- Surface balance $P-E-R = \%$ of $P$
- Atmospheric balance $P-E-C = \%$ of $P$
- Long-term monthly means of imbalance always negative ($R>C$), higher imbalances in the dry season
- Higher values of $P$ and $R$ for unit area in the Andean region of the Amazon River basin

3. Concluding remarks

- There is no such thing as balance in the sub-catchment analysis of surface and atmospheric water budgets
- The imbalance between the two water budgets (14%-16%) is driven by higher values of runoff and by an abrupt change in runoff when changing from dry to wet seasons in the Amazon
- The separated analysis performed to the Andes and low-lying Amazonia subsystems unveils two shortcomings of the available data, namely a poor quality of the representation of surface processes in the reanalysis models (including precipitation and evapotranspiration), and the limitations that high altitudes and scarcity of information induce in capturing the dynamics of hydrological processes over the Andean region.
- Our results confirm the paramount importance of a joint analysis between the atmospheric and surface water budgets at the river basin level, in order to achieve a complete understanding of the hydrologic dynamics.
- The results of the present study highlight the importance of the Andean region for the hydrological integrity of the entire Amazon River basin.

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5. References