



Effects of global change during the 21st century on the nitrogen cycle

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# Effects of global change during the 21st century on the nitrogen cycle

D. Fowler<sup>1</sup>, C. E. Steadman<sup>1,2</sup>, D. Stevenson<sup>2</sup>, M. Coyle<sup>1</sup>, R. M. Rees<sup>3</sup>, U. M. Skiba<sup>1</sup>, M. A. Sutton<sup>1</sup>, J. N. Cape<sup>1</sup>, A. J. Dore<sup>1</sup>, M. Vieno<sup>1,2</sup>, D. Simpson<sup>4</sup>, S. Zaehle<sup>5</sup>, B. D. Stocker<sup>6</sup>, M. Rinaldi<sup>7</sup>, M. C. Facchini<sup>7</sup>, C. R. Flechard<sup>8</sup>, E. Nemitz<sup>1</sup>, M. Twigg<sup>1</sup>, J. W. Erisman<sup>9</sup>, and J. N. Galloway<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, Bush Estate, Penicuik, Midlothian, EH26 0QB, UK

<sup>2</sup>School of GeoSciences, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, UK

<sup>3</sup>Scotland's Rural College (SRUC), West Mains Road, Edinburgh, EH9 3JG, UK

<sup>4</sup>Norwegian Meteorological Institute, EMEP-MSC-W, P.O. Box 43, 0313 Blindern, Norway

<sup>5</sup>Biogeochemical Integration Department, Max Planck Institute for Biogeochemistry, Hans-Knöll-Strausse 10, 07745 Jena, Germany

<sup>6</sup>Imperial College, Department of Life Sciences, Silwood Park, Ascot, SL5 7PY, UK

<sup>7</sup>ISAC-CNR, via P. Gobetti 101, 40129 Bologna, Italy

<sup>8</sup>INRA, Agrocampus Ouest, UMR 1069 SAS, 35042 Rennes, France

<sup>9</sup>Louis Bolk Institute, Hoofdstraat 24, 3972 LA, Driebergen, The Netherlands

<sup>10</sup>Department of Environmental Sciences, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA, 22904-4123, USA

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Correspondence to: D. Fowler (dfo@ceh.ac.uk)

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## Abstract

The global nitrogen (N) cycle at the beginning of the 21st century has been shown to be strongly influenced by the inputs of reactive nitrogen ( $N_r$ ) from human activities, estimated to be  $193 \text{ Tg N yr}^{-1}$  in 2010 which is approximately equal to the sum of biological N fixation in terrestrial and marine ecosystems. According to current trajectories, changes in climate and land use during the 21st century will increase both biological and anthropogenic fixation, bringing the total to approximately  $600 \text{ Tg N yr}^{-1}$  by around 2100. The fraction contributed directly by human activities is unlikely to increase substantially if increases in nitrogen use efficiency in agriculture are achieved and control measures on combustion related emissions implemented.

Some N cycling processes emerge as particularly sensitive to climate change. One of the largest responses to climate in the processing of  $N_r$  is the emission to the atmosphere of  $\text{NH}_3$ , which is estimated to increase from  $65 \text{ Tg N yr}^{-1}$  in 2008 to  $93 \text{ Tg N yr}^{-1}$  in 2100 assuming a change in surface temperature of  $5^\circ\text{C}$  even in the absence of increased anthropogenic activity. With changes in emissions in response to increased demand for animal products the combined effect would be to increase  $\text{NH}_3$  emissions to  $132 \text{ Tg N yr}^{-1}$ . Another major change is the effect of changes in aerosol composition combined with changes in temperature. Inorganic aerosols over the polluted regions especially in Europe and North America were dominated by  $(\text{NH}_4)_2\text{SO}_4$  in the 1970s to 1980s, and large reductions in emissions of  $\text{SO}_2$  have removed most of the  $\text{SO}_4^{2-}$  from the atmosphere in these regions. Inorganic aerosols from anthropogenic emissions are now dominated by  $\text{NH}_4\text{NO}_3$ , a volatile aerosol which contributes substantially to  $\text{PM}_{10}$  and human health effects globally as well as eutrophication and climate effects. The volatility of  $\text{NH}_4\text{NO}_3$  and rapid dry deposition of the vapour phase dissociation products,  $\text{HNO}_3$  and  $\text{NH}_3$ , is estimated to be reducing the transport distances, deposition footprints and inter-country exchange of  $N_r$  in these regions.

There have been important policy initiatives on components of the global N cycle. For the most part they have been regional or country-based and have delivered sub-

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stantial reductions of inputs of  $N_r$  to sensitive soils, waters and the atmosphere. However, considering the magnitude of global  $N_r$  use, potential future increases, and the very large leakage of  $N_r$  in many forms to soils, waters and the atmosphere, there is a very long way to go before evidence for recovery from the effects of  $N_r$  deposition on sensitive ecosystems, or a decline in  $N_2O$  emissions to the global atmosphere are likely to be detected. Such changes would require substantial improvements in nitrogen use efficiency across the global economy combined with optimisation of transport and food consumption patterns. This would allow reductions in  $N_r$  use, inputs to the atmosphere and deposition to sensitive ecosystems. Such changes would offer substantial economic and environmental co-benefits which could help motivate the necessary actions.

## 1 Introduction

The global nitrogen (N) cycle has been perturbed extensively by human activity over the last 100 years with approximately two thirds of the annual flux of reactive nitrogen ( $N_r$ ) entering the atmosphere at the beginning of the 21st century being anthropogenic in origin (Galloway et al., 2004; Fowler et al., 2013). This has led to widespread negative consequences through directly contributing to radiative forcing of climate, reductions in biodiversity at regional scales in terrestrial ecosystems and in damage to human health through aerosols and ozone production (Erisman et al., 2013; Sutton et al., 2011). Human modification of the N cycle also has substantial benefits, through sustaining the food supply to a global human population of seven billion and stimulating global  $CO_2$  sequestration by terrestrial and marine ecosystems (Zaehle, 2013; Sutton et al., 2013b).

The negative effects of human N fixation, are substantial and have been estimated to be 70–320 billion Euros annually for Europe (Sutton et al., 2011; Brink et al., 2011). A comprehensive global assessment of the costs of human use of fixed N has yet to be made. However, the scale of European use, at  $\sim 17$  Tg N annually, represents only

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9 % of the total anthropogenic  $N_r$  fixed annually ( $193 \text{ Tg N yr}^{-1}$ ). As the local hot spots of  $N_r$  use in North America and especially in East and South Asia, show values of emission and deposition similar to or larger than in Europe, it is likely that the global costs of human use of  $N_r$  are therefore an order of magnitude greater than those for Europe. This would be consistent with a preliminary estimate of global damage costs associated with N pollution of 800 (200–2000) billion US dollars per year (Sutton et al., 2013b).

The damage by  $N_r$  to ecosystems, human health and climate result from leakage of N compounds from its use in agriculture, industry and transport (Erisman et al., 2013). A particular feature of the N cycle is the combination of the large number of forms, both oxidised and reduced, in which  $N_r$  exists, with biological and chemical transformations allowing the same emitted molecule of  $N_r$  to take part in a series of effects, both negative and positive, before being transformed back to molecular nitrogen and returned to the atmospheric reservoir. This has been termed the nitrogen cascade (Galloway et al., 2003) and substantially complicates an assessment of the pathways and effects of  $N_r$  in the environment.

Recent analyses of the global N cycle have focussed on the magnitude of current fluxes, effects of human activity on the processes and effects on human health, climate and ecosystems, especially in the European Nitrogen Assessment (ENA) and US assessments (Sutton et al., 2011, 2013b; Davidson et al., 2012; Fowler et al., 2013). The extensive conversions of  $N_r$  in the environment mediated by biological and chemical processes are sensitive to environmental conditions and thus are likely to respond to changes in climate over coming decades. Thus the current global N cycle is likely to change, regardless of future changes in human activities or human intervention to regulate losses to the environment.

The likely responses of the exchanges of  $N_r$  between major reservoirs in coming decades to changes in climate and land use have not been considered extensively and are the focus of this review. The paper focuses on the effects of global changes expected this century on the processes and fluxes within the global N cycle.

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The potential for consequences of changes in climate and land use on the global nitrogen cycle are considerable in both the range and magnitude of effects. The processes which regulate transfers between the atmosphere and terrestrial and marine reservoirs are generally sensitive to aspects of climate that are expected to change. Many of the major transfers are mediated by biological processes, especially microbial transformations, which are very sensitive to changes in climate, especially in temperature or humidity. The exchange fluxes of  $N_r$  compounds at the Earth's surface, including emission and deposition, are regulated by a combination of atmospheric transfer and surface reactions and biological regulation through stomatal exchange and soil microbiology. These processes therefore include physical, chemical and biological interactions combining to regulate the overall process. Most of the components of the pathway are sensitive to climate, and while the response of some components to specific changes in the environment may be predicted, the overall process relies on measurements to constrain the potential range of effects (Fowler et al., 2009; Monks et al., 2009).

Some of the effects appear straightforward, such as increases in emission fluxes of nitric oxide (NO) from soils and ammonia ( $NH_3$ ) from vegetation with temperature, but when the full range of expected changes in climate and the number and phase in which the  $N_r$  compounds reside are included, the responses become complex and harder to quantify. To consider the whole N cycle and interactions with climate and land use change requires a coupled global climate and global N cycle model, which to date has not been achieved. While parts of the biogeochemistry have been incorporated in global climate models, especially those linked to ozone chemistry and emissions of oxidised N (Stevenson et al., 2006), many of the interactions of reduced nitrogen compounds have yet to be included (Sutton et al., 2013b). In the absence of the global modelling needed to quantify the interactions there have been a number of investigations at regional scales. There have also been modelling studies of interactions between the carbon (C) and N cycles which provide useful insight to biogeochemical interactions.

This paper explores current knowledge of the sensitivity of emissions, atmospheric processing and removal of N compounds to changes in climate and land use from the

available literature. Discussion of the likely consequences for the overall functioning of the global N cycle is provided to the extent that this is currently feasible. Consequences for human health, ecosystems and food production of these likely responses are briefly considered.

The structure of the review follows the pathway from fixation of atmospheric nitrogen, by both biological and industrial processes to emission of gaseous  $N_r$  compounds through atmospheric processing and removal by dry and wet deposition. The review concludes with a discussion of the policy implications of climate-nitrogen cycle interactions.

## 2 Biological nitrogen fixation

Biological nitrogen fixation (BNF) is currently estimated to provide a global annual input of approximately  $300 \text{ Tg N yr}^{-1}$  to the biosphere making it the largest single global input of  $N_r$ , although there are significant uncertainties about the magnitude and spatial distribution of fluxes (Fig. 1). If we assume that the global N cycle was in an approximate equilibrium prior to industrialisation, BNF would have been balanced by the reductive processes of denitrification returning molecular nitrogen ( $N_2$ ) to the atmosphere, with estimates of around  $260 \text{ Tg N yr}^{-1}$  arising from terrestrial and oceanic sources (Galloway et al., 2004). The process of fixation is undertaken by a very limited range of highly specialised microorganisms that share an ability to use the nitrogenase enzyme to split the triple bond present in atmospheric  $N_2$  and combine it with hydrogen to produce a source of  $N_r$ . Although the process is highly energy demanding, it is performed at ambient temperature and pressure unlike the industrial Haber-Bosch process that requires the reactants to be combined in the presence of an iron catalyst at between  $300\text{--}500^\circ\text{C}$  in a reaction vessel at 20 MPa. Two main groups of organisms are responsible; free-living bacteria and algae (which are widespread in fresh water, oceans and uncultivated soils and often form mutualistic associations with a range of plant species)

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and the values proposed by Galloway et al. (2004) of  $128 \text{ Tg N yr}^{-1}$  is used here for 2010.

Biological N fixation provides a significant input of fixed N to agricultural systems. Prior to the development of synthetic fertilizers at the beginning of the 20th century, most of the N used to produce crops and livestock would have been derived from this source. The current input is estimated to be approximately  $60 \text{ Tg N yr}^{-1}$ , taken as the central value in the range  $50\text{--}70 \text{ Tg yr}^{-1}$  from Herridge et al. (2008). This value is divided mainly between the grain legumes (peas and beans) and forage legumes (such as clover and alfalfa) contributing 21 and  $19 \text{ Tg yr}^{-1}$  respectively (Herridge et al., 2008). Estimates of BNF by the grain legumes are generally considered to be more reliable than those from forage crops since comprehensive records of the former are maintained by FAO (FAO 2012). Other minor inputs of N by BNF in agriculture include symbiotic N fixation from tropical savannas used for grazing (14 Tg) free living micro-organisms associated with rice paddies (5 Tg), and sugar cane (0.5 Tg).

The uncertainties associated with global estimates of BNF make predictions of future changes particularly challenging. During the 20th century, there has been a rapid growth in the cultivation of leguminous crops contributing to an increase in associated BNF (Galloway et al., 2004). Future growth of legume crops will be constrained by the land area available to agriculture, and increases in production are most likely to occur when legumes are grown in place of other species. Emissions of nitrous oxide ( $\text{N}_2\text{O}$ ) resulting from the growth of legume crops is generally low by comparison with other crops, and the IPCC guidelines on greenhouse gas reporting assumes that the N input resulting from legume production is not associated with any  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  emissions (IPCC, 2006). For this reason, increases in legume cultivation have been promoted as an opportunity to reduce  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  emissions from agricultural systems by reducing emission intensity of fixed N inputs to agricultural systems (Luscher et al., 2014). Legumes also continue to provide the main source of N input to low input agricultural systems and organic farming globally.

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Biological N fixation associated with non-agricultural ecosystems is susceptible to changes in environmental conditions. A framework for understanding the environmental controls determining the rates of BNF in the biosphere has been proposed in which there is a coupling between N, C and Phosphorus (P) cycling (Houlton et al., 2008; Vitousek et al., 2002). Free-living and symbiotic organisms with the potential to fix N are at a selective advantage in environments with low P availability, however, the high energy costs of BNF require adequate supplies of available fixed C. Thus Net Primary Production (NPP) can be used as a proxy for changes in BNF, that can be useful for modelling purposes (Vitousek et al., 2002). The temperature sensitivity of the nitrogenase enzyme responsible for the fixation process has been clearly demonstrated in a global meta-analysis of fixation rates across dominant terrestrial biomes; the optimal temperature for fixation was found to be 25.2 °C with a very sharp decline in rates of fixation below 5 °C and above 40 °C (Houlton et al., 2008). Projected global increases in temperature are therefore likely to be associated with increases in BNF, providing that sufficient water is available to maintain NPP. However, other environmental changes may counteract increases resulting from climate change. The process of BNF is often down regulated by the presence of fixed N. Agricultural experiments have consistently shown lower rates of fixation in the presence of high concentrations of soil mineral N and organic N inputs (Ledgard and Steele, 1992). The biological responses to temperature are generally positive and  $Q_{10}$  values are often in the range 1.5 to 3 in the range of soil temperatures between 5 °C and 25 °C, outside which non-linearities are common. Taking a  $Q_{10}$  of 2 and temperature increases by 2100 of 4 °C, which appear probable (IPCC, 2013), the natural, terrestrial BNF in 2100 is likely to be 170 Tg N annually.

## 2.2 Marine biological nitrogen fixation in the 21st century

Marine N fixation is the biological conversion of dinitrogen gas ( $N_2$ ) into  $NH_3$ , and is performed by a diverse range of diazotrophs in plankton, microbial mat communities, sea grasses, coral reefs and sea sediments. Cyanobacteria of the genus *Trichodesmium* have been particularly well studied due to their prevalence and their formation of large

blooms. Biological N fixation rates vary by species, and can be limited by temperature, light, oxygen, salinity, molybdenum, iron, and P. As a result, there is a great deal of variability in both the species composition of diazotrophs present in the various ocean basins, as well as the rate of N fixation, which changes regionally and seasonally.

Estimates have been made for global N fixation in the oceans, both by extrapolating from biological measurements, and by modelling the biogeochemistry. However, there is a great deal of uncertainty, due to the difficulties in accounting for the large regional and seasonal differences. Recent reviews include Carpenter and Capone (2008), Moore et al. (2013) and Voss et al. (2013).

Future changes to the ocean including increasing carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) concentrations, increasing stratification, and increasing temperatures, will likely result in an increase in marine nitrogen fixation. Nitrogen fixation leads to an increase in bioavailable N present in the form of ammonium and dissolved organic N (Mulholland et al., 2006). An increase in N<sub>2</sub> fixation would therefore lead to an increase in the amount of N<sub>r</sub> available to enable further processes in the N cycle.

The objective of this section is to characterise the current state of knowledge about marine BNF, as well as the major areas of uncertainty regarding BNF trends in the 21st century. The various factors limiting marine N fixation, the regional differences, and the predicted future impacts of changing conditions are discussed in more detail below.

## 2.2.1 Factors affecting marine nitrogen fixation

### Light

Nitrogen fixers have strong preferences for specific light conditions. Depending upon the species, either light or darkness is required. Many non-heterocystous cyanobacteria fix nitrogen at night, however members of the genus *Trichodesmium* fix N only in the presence of light (Capone et al., 1997). *Trichodesmium* are therefore present at the surface of the ocean, and maximum fixation occurs at midday (Carpenter and Capone, 2008). Light sensitive diazotrophs like *Trichodesmium* could be affected by decreas-

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ing solar irradiance due to the presence of more clouds, resulting in a decrease in N<sub>2</sub> fixation.

## Temperature

Enzyme activity generally increases with temperature, and this is true for nitrogen-fixing enzymes (nitrogenases). Staal et al. (2003) found that on short time scales, three strains of cyanobacteria exhibited a Q<sub>10</sub> ranging from 1.08 to 4.72. *Trichodesmium* exhibited a Q<sub>10</sub> of 1.12 for N<sub>2</sub> fixation in darkness from 20–35 °C, and a Q<sub>10</sub> of 2.06 from 15–20 °C. In the presence of light, *Trichodesmium* exhibited a Q<sub>10</sub> of 1.64 for 15–20 °C, and 1.84 for 20–35 °C. Fu et al. (2014) exposed strains of *Trichodesmium* and *Crocospaera* to varying temperatures in the laboratory and found maximum N fixation to occur between 24–28 °C and 28–30 °C, respectively.

Increasing temperatures will likely cause the rate of N fixation to increase, both because enzyme activity increases at higher temperatures, and because the increase in sea surface temperatures will lead to an expansion of habitat suitable for diazotrophs (Hutchins et al., 2009). Boyd and Doney (2002) predict that habitat expansion will lead to an increase in N fixation of 27 %.

Until recently, there was little evidence of marine diazotrophic activity in the cooler waters present at high latitudes (> 50 degrees) (Carpenter and Capone, 2008). A recent study found substantial N fixation in the surface of the Canadian Arctic (Blais et al., 2012). These recent discoveries suggest diazotrophs may be fixing N in areas previously thought to be too cold for large levels of BNF.

## Oxygen

Most nitrogen-fixing enzymes are inactivated by oxygen. Diazotrophs generally deal with this by performing N fixation either at night to avoid oxygen produced during photosynthesis, or within thick walled cells called heterocysts which maintain a localised anaerobic environment.

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Nitrogen fixation has generally not been considered in oxygen minimum zone (OMZ) systems (Carpenter and Capone, 2008). Due to the removal of  $N_r$  by denitrification and anaerobic ammonium oxidation, OMZs have low concentrations of  $N_r$  relative to P (Canfield, 2006), and the conditions in these sites may be suitable for N fixation.

5 Modelling efforts have considered  $N_2$  fixation in OMZs (Canfield, 2006; Moore and Doney, 2007).

Expanding OMZs may increase areas conducive to denitrification and anaerobic ammonium oxidation. If nitrogen-fixing bacteria exist in balance with denitrification (Deutsch et al., 2007), then the increase in denitrification may lead to a corresponding  
10 increase in  $N_2$  fixation. Oxygen minimum zones may also lead to an increase in the release of trace metals (Noble et al., 2012) and P from sediments, which could stimulate increased  $N_2$  fixation.

## Salinity

Diazotrophs may be able to live in a variety of saline conditions. For example, a *Trichodesmium* isolate was found to grow over a salinity range of 22–43 psu, but maximum growth and nitrogenase activity occurred over a narrow range of 33–37 psu (Fu and Bell, 2003). Changes in salinity are not expected to have a large effect on N fixation.  
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## Trace metals and phosphorus

Nitrogenase requires both iron and molybdenum. Nitrogen fixation is limited by iron in approximately 35–75% of the oceans, globally (Moore et al., 2002; Berman-Frank et al., 2001). Molybdenum is generally not growth limiting (Paerl et al., 1987; Paulsen et al., 1991) as it is readily present in seawater. However, sulphate may inhibit the uptake of molybdenum, because sulphate is also present, and is stereochemically similar to  
20 molybdate (Howarth and Cole, 1985; Marino et al., 2003).  
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Phosphorus is necessary for organisms, however surface waters today are thought to be more limited by N rather than P over much of the oceans (Moore et al., 2007). Approximately 4 % of the world oceans are limited by P (Moore et al., 2002).

5 Aeolian dust deposition leads to higher levels of iron reaching the subtropical North Atlantic Ocean. Under present day conditions, P may therefore be more limiting for diazotrophs in the North Atlantic, and iron may be more limiting in the North Pacific Ocean (Prospero and Lamb, 2003). Climate change may affect the transport of aeolian dust. If drier areas become drier, or wind speed increases, the amount of dust transported from continents to the oceans may increase, which would increase nitrogen fixation in  
10 areas limited by iron. However, if the areas that receive the dust are limited by other nutrients, then the increase in dust transport would have little effect.

## Stratification

A strengthening of ocean stratification may lead to a decrease in nutrient upwelling, which would in turn lead to a shortage of N at the surface, which may cause an expansion of nitrogen-limited subtropical gyres (Sarmiento et al., 2004) and possibly encourage an increased rate of N fixation.  
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## Carbon dioxide

Both model and laboratory studies of *Trichodesmium* isolates have shown an increase in N<sub>2</sub> fixation associated with increasing atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations. Studies with  
20 *Trichodesmium* cultures have reported a range of measurements for the increase in N<sub>2</sub> fixation associated with increasing CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations from present day levels (375–380 ppm) to projected 2100 levels (~750–1000 ppm). Studies have reported an increase in rates of around 35–65 % (Hutchins et al., 2007; Barcelos e Ramos et al., 2007; Kranz et al., 2009), and as high as 100–121 % (Hutchins et al., 2007; Levitan et al., 2007). Barcelos e Ramos et al. (2007) predicted that N<sub>2</sub> fixation rates for *Tri-*  
25 *chodesmium* would increase by 50 % from 60–85 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup> in 2005 to 90–128 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup>

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by year 2100 with projected increases in CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations under a business-as-usual emission scenario (scenario IS92a).

Hutchins et al. (2009) estimated that N<sub>2</sub> fixation by *Trichodesmium* alone will rise from present day levels of 60 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup> (Mahaffey et al., 2005) to 80–100 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup> by 2100, based on the response of a *Trichodesmium* isolate to increasing CO<sub>2</sub> levels. Hutchins et al. (2007) found that N<sub>2</sub> fixation rates for *Trichodesmium* levelled off at 1250 and 1500 ppm, suggesting that N<sub>2</sub> fixation rates may stop increasing with increasing CO<sub>2</sub> levels by the year 2100.

Recent evidence indicates that unicellular cyanobacteria may fix at least as much N as *Trichodesmium* (Montoya et al., 2004). A laboratory study using the unicellular cyanobacterium *Crocospaera watsonii* found that elevating CO<sub>2</sub> levels from 380 to 750 ppm increased N<sub>2</sub> fixation rates by 40 % (Fu et al., 2008), when not limited by iron. Based on measurements of the increase in N<sub>2</sub> fixation rates associated with CO<sub>2</sub> increases for seven strains of *Trichodesmium* and *Crocospaera*, Hutchins et al. (2013) predict that over the next 100 years, N<sub>2</sub> fixation rates will increase by 4–23 % for these seven strains. More evidence is needed to determine if other diazotrophs will be similarly affected by rising CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations.

Increasing CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations will likely also lead to an increase in N fixation, although this increase may be offset by effects which decrease N<sub>2</sub> fixation. Barcelos e Ramos et al. (2007) predicted that N<sub>2</sub> fixation rates would increase by 50 % by year 2100 with projected increases in CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations, providing a strong negative feedback to increases in atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub>.

Anthropogenic N fertilization of the ocean leads to an increase in marine uptake of CO<sub>2</sub>, however this may lead to an increase in N<sub>2</sub>O emissions. Duce et al. (2008) applied Redfield stoichiometry to estimates of anthropogenic N<sub>r</sub> deposition of 54 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup> and anthropogenic CO<sub>2</sub> uptake by the ocean of  $\sim 2.2 \pm 0.5$  Pg C yr<sup>-1</sup> (IPCC, 2007), and calculated that the ocean may take up an additional 10 % of atmospheric anthropogenic CO<sub>2</sub> as a result of atmospheric deposition of N<sub>r</sub>. However, up to two-thirds of the decrease in radiative forcing generated by this drawdown of CO<sub>2</sub> may be offset by an

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increase in radiative forcing associated with an increase in the emissions of N<sub>2</sub>O (Duce et al, 2008). A decrease in pH due to ocean acidification from rising CO<sub>2</sub> levels may lead to a decrease in the bioavailability of iron (Shi et al., 2010), which may in turn lead to a decrease in N<sub>2</sub> fixation for diazotrophs in areas where iron is limiting.

5 Table 2 provides a summary of the factors influencing marine N fixation, and the expected effects on marine BNF in the 21st century.

## 2.2.2 Present-day and pre-industrial estimates

Estimates of global ocean N<sub>2</sub> fixation (shown in Fig. 2) range from 75 to 200 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup> (Galloway et al., 2004; Carpenter and Capone, 2008; Moore et al., 2006; Deutsch et al., 2007; Eugster and Gruber, 2012; Luo et al., 2012), with recent estimates at around 130–140 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup> (Deutsch et al., 2007; Eugster and Gruber, 2012; Luo et al., 2012). 10 Deutsch et al. (2007) estimated global ocean N fixation to be 140 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup>, using observed nutrient concentrations and an ocean circulation model. Eugster and Gruber (2012) used two methods to estimate the preindustrial global nitrogen fixation rate in the oceans to be 131 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup> (94, 175) and 134 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup> (117, 150), by combining 15 geochemical observations with a two-dimensional box model. Deutsch et al. (2007) and Eugster and Gruber (2012) found that the rates of N<sub>2</sub> fixation were higher in the Pacific Ocean than the Atlantic. Luo et al. (2012) compiled a global database of diazotroph abundances and N<sub>2</sub> fixation rates, and estimated the global pelagic (open ocean) N<sub>2</sub> 20 fixation rate to be 140 ± 9.2 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup> (arithmetic mean ± one standard error). One possible limitation of this data set is that 99 % of the data were collected within the range of 40° S to 55° N, and if substantial N<sub>2</sub> fixation is found to occur outside of this range, this estimate may be an underestimate. Luo et al. (2014) applied a multiple linear regression model to the same database of field observations and found an estimate of 25 N<sub>2</sub> fixation of 74 (51–110) Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup> for the open ocean.

Luo et al. (2012) note that the most common method for field measurements of N<sub>2</sub> fixation has recently been found to underestimate the rates for *Trichodesmium* by 62 % (Großkopf et al., 2012), so future estimates may be higher. Extrapolating from the

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differences found between the  $^{15}\text{N}_2$  tracer bubble-addition and dissolution methods, Großkopf et al. (2012) estimate that the global marine N fixation rate measured using the new method would be  $177 \pm 8 \text{ Tg N yr}^{-1}$ .

Although recent midpoint estimates appear to have coalesced at around 130–140  $\text{Tg N yr}^{-1}$ , there is still a great deal of uncertainty due to the large variance in measurements (5 to 8 orders of magnitude) (Luo et al., 2012), and recent measurements of nitrogen fixation rates in areas not previously thought to have high levels of diazotrophy.

### 2.2.3 Future impacts

Many factors will affect future rates of BNF. The most dramatic effects will likely be due to temperature and increasing  $\text{CO}_2$  concentrations. We estimate that marine BNF will increase from present day estimates of 140 (100–200)  $\text{Tg N yr}^{-1}$  to 166 (120–240)  $\text{Tg N yr}^{-1}$  due to temperature effects alone. Present day BNF estimates were scaled up using the  $Q_{10}$  of 1.64 for *Trichodesmium* (15–20°C) found by Staal et al. (2003).

The implications of the various factors affecting BNF for the future are described in more detail below.

Diazotrophs have a competitive advantage over nondiazotrophs under conditions when there is a shortage of  $\text{N}_r$  relative to iron and P (Dutkiewicz et al., 2012). The projected increase in atmospheric deposition and river export of  $\text{N}_r$  to the ocean may therefore lead to a decrease in N fixation.

In addition to the factors discussed above, estimates of N fixation may increase in the future even if the true rate remained constant. This is because the most common method for taking field measurements of marine N fixation has recently been found to underestimate the rate, so future estimates of N fixation may increase as the methods become more accurate (Großkopf et al., 2012). In addition, recent evidence suggests

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that regions such as coastal, aphotic, and arctic regions may exhibit more N<sub>2</sub> fixation that previously thought.

Taken together, the factors discussed above suggest that N fixation may increase in the future, which will likely lead to an increase in ocean drawdown of CO<sub>2</sub>. Several feedbacks may offset this increase. Increasing rates of N<sub>2</sub> fixation may drive areas to P and iron limitation, thereby limiting ultimate N<sub>2</sub> fixation rates. The many complex factors influencing N fixation make it difficult to draw strong conclusions about future rates of marine N fixation and its influence on the C cycle.

It appears likely that overall BNF will increase during this century in both managed and natural ecosystems. The total terrestrial natural N fixation by the end of this century suggested from these arguments is 168 Tg N annually, approximately 17 % larger than the value at the beginning of the 20th century. Marine BNF is projected to increase from 120 to 166 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup> by 2100, an increase of 38 % on 2010 values.

### 3 Anthropogenic fixation of nitrogen in the 21st century

The demand for fixed N through the 21st century will be driven by requirements for food and industrial N<sub>r</sub> use plus combustion related emissions and the extent of control measures to mitigate emissions and their effects. A range of authors have considered the available scenarios and possible development trajectories including most recently Winiwarter et al. (2013) and Bouwman et al. (2013). The scenarios and time scales used by these authors differ, with Bouwman et al. (2013) projecting trends only to 2050, rather than the end of the century. However, given the uncertainty in projections of this kind, they provide a useful guide for the likely trends. The projections from Winiwarter et al. (2013) are based on story lines and methodologies similar to those of the RCP (Representative Concentration Pathways) as used in the 2014 IPCC assessment of climate change through the 21st century. However, while based on the RCP scenarios, only the N<sub>r</sub> from combustion is taken directly from the IPCC methods as N<sub>r</sub> formation was not a focus of the scenario developments for the IPCC. Together with

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mineral fertilizer and industrial use of  $N_r$ , fixation is projected in the range  $140 \text{ Tg N yr}^{-1}$  to  $235 \text{ Tg N yr}^{-1}$  by 2100, depending on the RCP chosen and compares with their estimate of  $170 \text{ Tg N yr}^{-1}$  in 2000. The year 2000 value is smaller than the estimate of  $210 \text{ Tg N yr}^{-1}$  (Fowler et al., 2013), but within the uncertainties shown in each synthesis. The projections from Winiwarter et al. (2013) imply modest overall change in  $N_r$  production by human activity through the 21st century as a consequence of gradual increases in efficiency compensating for increases in demand for fertilizer and industrial  $N_r$  applications, combined with the considerable improvements expected for reductions in nitrogen oxide ( $\text{NO}_x$ ) emissions from combustion. Indeed there have been important reductions in emissions of combustion  $N_r$ , as  $\text{NO}_x$  to the atmosphere throughout Europe, North America and other highly developed economies. Typically these have reduced emissions by about 50 % over the last 30 years. Similar controls are likely for combustion emissions in the rapidly developing economies of Asia in the decades ahead. However, for reduced N, the global trend has been a monotonic increase in  $N_r$  fixation for most countries in the world outside Europe, and the social trends in rapidly developing economies towards increased meat consumption seem likely to continue the trend. Given these historical trends and the unwillingness of governments throughout the world to regulate the supply of reduced  $N_r$  for agriculture and industry, the assumption that  $N_r$  production will remain constant through the 21st century seems implausible.

A substantial increase in nitrogen use efficiency (NUE) seems likely, as has been achieved in European agriculture over the last 30 years, but this is unlikely to prevent a continued increase in global agricultural nitrogen use. Given that human  $N_r$  production doubled between 1980 and 2010, a period in which global population increased by 2.5 billion, and medium estimates project a similar population increase by the later years of the 21st century the demand for food and other nitrogen consuming activities (transport, heating and consumer good) will lead to more industrial N fixation. Assuming NUE increases, it is possible that anthropogenic N fixation only grows by 30 % be-

tween 2010 and 2100. This simplistic assumption would lead to 2100  $N_r$  production of 273 Tg  $N_{yr}^{-1}$ .

The global changes in fixation discussed above are summarised in Fig. 3, which show large increases in the total N fixed from 376 Tg  $N_{yr}^{-1}$  in 2010 to 584 Tg  $N_{yr}^{-1}$  in 2100 accompanied by substantial increases in the uncertainties of the component fluxes.

The  $N_r$  fixed by BNF and human activity is then used by and transformed within ecosystems and products of the chemical and biological processing cascade through terrestrial and marine ecosystems and the atmosphere. It is important now to consider the effect of changes in the environment this century on the fate of the  $N_r$ .

#### 4 Effects of environmental changes on the fate of $N_r$ in terrestrial and marine ecosystems

The total fixation of N through natural (BNF), combustion and Haber Bosch processes is projected to increase during the remainder of the 21st century, possibly to approximately 600 Tg N, an increase of 50 % over values at the beginning of the century, but subject to large uncertainties (Fig. 3). The subsequent fate of the  $N_r$  in terrestrial and marine ecosystems and the responses of the different pools of  $N_r$  to changes in climate, and especially temperature and hydrology, are now considered for terrestrial and marine ecosystems.

The fixed N, whether by natural processes in soils and the oceans or by human activities is predominantly in the reduced form as ammonia ( $NH_3$ ) or ammonium ( $NH_4^+$ ). Once formed,  $N_r$  is readily transformed in the environment and it is important to describe the likely effects of changes in the environment on the fate of  $N_r$ , and quantify, where possible the probable impacts due to climate and land use changes this century. In short, which are the components of the N cycle that are most responsive to expected changes in climate and land use this century?

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## 4.1 Terrestrial ecosystems: emissions of NH<sub>3</sub> from terrestrial ecosystems through the 21st century

The global total emissions of NH<sub>3</sub> at the beginning of the 21st century have been estimated by Sutton et al. (2013b), at 59.3 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup> of which 33 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup> is from livestock and crops. The N<sub>r</sub> fixed industrially through NH<sub>3</sub> manufacture, mainly for fertilizers, is currently 120 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup>, thus the emissions to the atmosphere from livestock and crops represent roughly a quarter of the annual fertilizer production annually, effectively fertilizing the atmosphere. This substantial quantity is of course simply the unintentional leakage of the N<sub>r</sub> from farming systems, due to the volatility of NH<sub>3</sub>. Also presented in this analysis of global emissions of NH<sub>3</sub> are values for emissions from all other major sources. Given the spatial and temporal variability in emission rates and the sensitivity to climate, and especially temperature, the range of different emission estimates is small among the seven different estimates (35 to 65 Tg yr<sup>-1</sup>) summarised, which reflects the fact that these estimates are not fully independent. It is suggested by Sutton et al. (2013b) that overall uncertainty is around ± 30 %, pointing to an uncertainty range for 2008 of 46 to 85 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup>.

The forces which have governed overall industrial production of fixed N have largely been economic, responding to the demand for food and the response functions between crop productivity and fertilizer use (Jensen et al., 2011) in which the economic benefits of increased yields have driven global N fertilizer use demand. At the same time, an increase in global meat consumption per capita (Erismann et al., 2008) will have magnified fertilizer requirements and NH<sub>3</sub> emissions (Westhoek et al., 2014). This includes both the NH<sub>3</sub> emissions from fertilizer in growing animal feeds and the ammonia emissions from livestock manures, in animal houses, manure storage, land application and from grazing animals, where the use of housed livestock substantially increases emissions compared with pasture-only systems.

Global projections for future N<sub>r</sub> use have not generally included possible control measures to reduce emissions of NH<sub>3</sub> to the atmosphere, which would increase the NUE.

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There are exceptions, in the case of the Netherlands and in Denmark, where policies to reduce the leakage of  $N_r$  to the environment led to substantial reductions in atmospheric emissions (EMEP, 2014). Although first NUE estimates have now been provided for each country in the world (Sutton et al., 2013a), it is a matter for ongoing and future analysis to show how these have evolved over time and to demonstrate the quantitative relationships between reduction between N emissions, including  $NH_3$ , and improvement of NUE. In the global projections of  $N_r$  use through the 21st century provided by both Erismann et al. (2008, using the SRES approach) and Winiwarter et al. (2013, using the RCP approach), scenarios including the potential to improve crop NUE, while Sutton et al. (2013a), examined the N savings possible also as a result of improving NUE across the full agri-food chain.

While subject to uncertainty, the global demand for food is likely to increase by 40% by 2050 due to population growth and a changing diet (Godfray et al., 2010), especially in the rapidly developing regions, unless additional actions are taken. The largest uncertainties in estimating future emissions of  $NH_3$  to the atmosphere are the consumption drivers (food amount, food choice), the amounts of fertilizer and manure N applied and the effect of climate on the fraction emitted (van Vuuren et al., 2011a; and Sutton et al., 2013b, respectively). Excluding the climatic interaction (which is addressed below), emissions resulting from demand for food and industrial uses, have been estimated by van Vuuren et al. (2011a) to increase from  $60 \text{ Tg N yr}^{-1}$  in 2000 to between 70 and  $80 \text{ Tg N yr}^{-1}$  by 2100.

### 4.1.1 Effects of changes in climate on terrestrial emissions of $NH_3$

The processes of exchange of  $NH_3$  between terrestrial ecosystems and the atmosphere have been subject to detailed field studies and intercomparisons of methods (Sutton et al., 1995, 1998, 2009; Flechard et al., 1999, 2013) and are discussed further in this review. The most recent estimates of the influence of climate change on emissions of  $NH_3$  are by Sutton et al. (2013b).

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The surface atmosphere exchange of  $\text{NH}_3$  is generally described numerically using a resistance analogy in which the vertical flux ( $F_t$ ), is given by the potential difference between the surface ( $\chi(z'_0)$ ) and a reference height in the atmosphere ( $\chi(z)$ ) divided by the sum of resistances in the pathway from the source to the reference height and comprising  $R_a(z)$  and  $R_b$ , the turbulent atmospheric and quasi-laminar boundary layer resistances respectively.

$$F_t = [\chi(z'_0) - \chi(z)] / [R_a(z) + R_b]. \quad (1)$$

In most ecosystems, the concentration at the surface, ( $\chi(z'_0)$ ) is non-zero, due to presence of  $\text{NH}_4^+$  in the apoplast of vegetation. In these conditions the value of  $\chi(z'_0)$  is proportional to a ratio  $\chi = [\text{NH}_4^+] / [\text{H}^+]$  of the canopy/ground surface, where according to the thermodynamics:

$$\chi = 161\,500 / T \exp^{(-10\,380/T)} [\text{NH}_4^+] / [\text{H}^+]. \quad (2)$$

Temperatures ( $T$ ) are in Kelvin and the scheme is represented schematically in Fig. 4.

Quantifying detailed changes in  $\text{NH}_3$  emission this century requires knowledge of apoplast and leaf litter  $\text{NH}_4^+$  and pH, scaled through the coming decades over global vegetation. The data to calculate net exchange fluxes in this way are not available. However, Sutton et al. (2013b) argue that by examining model ecosystems and their exchange of  $\text{NH}_3$  a surrogate for the likely change may be seen in empirical data. When it comes to global upscaling of  $\text{NH}_3$  emissions, this also needs to bear in mind that the wide range of different terrestrial  $\text{NH}_3$  sources are likely to have differing temperature responses, due to the role of different interacting factors.

To illustrate these effects, a model ecosystem was used for which both a global modelling framework and field measurements are uniquely available, namely  $\text{NH}_3$  emission from seabird colonies. In addition to the availability of measurements and modelling, they are also globally important sources of  $\text{NH}_3$  and are distributed geographically across a broad range of climates, with minimal human intervention, so that the effects of climate differences can be assessed without confounding management interactions

(Blackall et al., 2007; Riddick et al., 2012; Sutton et al., 2013b). This approach demonstrated a strong climate dependence in the ammonia emissions, with the modelling approach (incorporating Eq. 2), agreeing closely with the measured datasets.

Combining all sources of  $\text{NH}_3$  emission globally, studies provided the data to model likely responses of terrestrial  $\text{NH}_3$  emissions to a 5 degree increase in global temperature and showed that emissions in 2008 of 65 Tg- $\text{NH}_3$ -N (45–85), increased to 93 (64–125) Tg- $\text{NH}_3$ -N in 2100 (Sutton et al., 2013b), based on anthropogenic activity levels for 2008. This may be compared with an estimated increase in  $\text{NH}_3$  emissions based on increased anthropogenic activities (excluding the climatic response), and of no-change for natural sources, of 42 % (33–52 %) increase by 2100. Combining the increases in anthropogenic activity expected up to 2100 according to the RCP8.5 (Lamarque et al., 2011), with the estimated effect of climate warming on emissions, gives an overall estimate of  $\text{NH}_3$  emissions for 2100 of 132 (89–179) Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup>. As Sutton et al. (2013b, supplementary material) point out, this value is nearly a factor of three higher than that included in the currently mapped EDGAR database, which is a consequence of including: a) additional sources (including oceans, see further below), b) the effect of the climate change feedback and c) the anticipated increase in anthropogenic activities.

## 4.2 Ammonia exchange over the oceans in the 21st century

In marine ecosystems  $\text{NH}_3 / \text{NH}_4^+$  is produced by phytoplankton and other organisms. Although the aqueous-phase partitioning between  $\text{NH}_3$  and its protonated form  $\text{NH}_4^+$  is dominated by  $\text{NH}_4^+$ , the majority of emissions are in the form of  $\text{NH}_3$ . Ammonium is quickly assimilated by phytoplankton, so  $\text{NH}_3$  and  $\text{NH}_4^+$  are usually present in low concentrations in the surface ocean.

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## 4.2.1 Factors affecting the flux of ammonia between the atmosphere and the ocean

The exchange of ammonia between the ocean and the atmosphere depends on several factors: the concentrations of ammonia in the surface layer of the ocean and in the boundary layer of the atmosphere, temperature, and wind speed (Johnson et al., 2008). The flux across the atmosphere-ocean interface can be described by (Liss and Slater, 1974):

$$F = k_g \{ (\text{NH}_{3(\text{g})}) - K_H [\text{NH}_{(\text{sw})}] \}, \quad (3)$$

where  $F$  is the flux from the atmosphere to the ocean ( $\text{mol m}^{-2} \text{s}^{-1}$ ),  $k_g$  is the gas-phase transfer velocity ( $\text{m s}^{-1}$ ), the  $\text{NH}_3$  concentrations are given in  $\text{mol m}^{-3}$ , and  $K_H$  is the dimensionless Henry's Law coefficient for ammonia.

The Henry's law constant for ammonia can be calculated as follows (McKee, 2001):

$$K_H = (17.93(T / 273.15)e^{(4092/T) - 9.70})^{-1}, \quad (4)$$

where  $T$  is temperature in Kelvin.

The concentration of  $\text{NH}_3$  present in seawater depends on the partitioning between  $\text{NH}_3$  and  $\text{NH}_4^+$ , which is affected by pH, salinity, and temperature. This dissociation can be described by the logarithmic acid dissociation constant,  $\text{pKa}$  (Bell et al., 2007):

$$\text{pKa} = 10.0423 - (0.0315536T) + (0.003071 S), \quad (5)$$

where  $T$  is the temperature in  $^{\circ}\text{C}$ , and  $S$  is salinity in  $\text{g kg}^{-1}$ . Chemical reactions and transport of  $\text{NH}_3$  into the atmosphere (from terrestrial emissions) and the ocean (from biological activity, deposition and river export) also affect the levels of  $\text{NH}_3$  present.

## 4.2.2 Flux estimates

The present-day direction of  $\text{NH}_3$  flux is believed to be from the atmosphere to the oceans at high latitudes, where the oceans are colder, allowing more gases such as

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$\text{NH}_3$  to be dissolved. In contrast, the oceans are believed to be a source of  $\text{NH}_3$  emissions at lower latitudes, where the oceans are warmer, promoting a greater partitioning to the gas phase (Eq. 4) and Johnson et al., 2008). When considering the global oceans together, the net flux is believed to be a small emission from the oceans to the atmosphere (Bouwman et al., 1997; Dentener and Crutzen, 1994; Galloway et al., 2004).

Ocean-atmosphere  $\text{NH}_3$  fluxes vary across regions and seasons, and observations are limited, making it difficult to extrapolate regionally and temporally. As a result, there are only a few quantitative estimates of global flux, all of which are highly uncertain. Dentener and Crutzen (1994) estimated the flux to be  $7.0 \text{ Tg N yr}^{-1}$  from the oceans to the atmosphere. They did this by taking a distribution of dimethylsulphide (DMS) emissions modelled by Bates et al. (1987), and assuming equal molar emissions of  $\text{NH}_3$  and DMS. Although both DMS and  $\text{NH}_3$  are produced by phytoplankton, assuming an equal molar relationship is acknowledged by Dentener and Crutzen (1994) to be rather speculative. The relationship between  $\text{NH}_3$  and DMS may have been tightly coupled under pre-industrial conditions, but this is unlikely to be true under the present strong anthropogenic influences on the N cycle (Johnson and Bell, 2008).

An independent estimate of global ocean  $\text{NH}_3$  emissions was provided by Bouwman et al., (1997) who applied an ocean carbon cycle model to calculate an  $\text{NH}_3$  flux of  $8.2 \text{ Tg N yr}^{-1}$  for 1990. However, this did not account for non-zero atmospheric  $\text{NH}_3$  concentrations, and Bouwman et al. (1997) acknowledged that doing so might reduce the net sea-atmosphere emission flux by a factor of two. For comparison, Galloway et al. (2004) estimated preindustrial, present, and future marine  $\text{NH}_3$  emissions using a compensation point approach to be  $5.6 \text{ Tg N yr}^{-1}$ . However, it is unlikely that the flux would remain constant over these time periods, given the human perturbations to the N cycle.

Steadman et al. (in preparation), have improved on these estimates by implementing the bi-directional flux calculation method described by Johnson et al. (2008), following Eqs. (3–5). This accounts for both regional and temporal patterns in ocean and atmo-

spheric concentrations of  $\text{NH}_3$  and temperature. The flux is calculated by dividing the ocean surface into 5 degree grid squares, and determining the gas transfer velocity and the Henry's law constant for  $\text{NH}_3$  within each grid square, using temperature, pH, and wind speed. The resulting estimated  $\text{NH}_3$  flux for 2005 is  $5.7 \text{ Tg N yr}^{-1}$  from the ocean to the atmosphere. Atmospheric concentrations of  $\text{NH}_3$  were obtained from STOCHEM (Lamarque et al., 2013; Derwent et al., 2003) model output. Surface ocean  $\text{NH}_3$  and  $\text{NH}_4^+$  concentrations were obtained from the British Oceanographic Data Centre.

These recent analyses suggest that the global  $\text{NH}_3$  emission estimate of  $8.2 \text{ Tg N yr}^{-1}$  of Bouwman et al. (1997), which was incorporated into the global emissions estimates of Sutton et al. (2013b), summarised above, may be overestimated. If so, the estimates of Sutton et al. (2013b) should be reduced by around  $2.5 \text{ Tg N yr}^{-1}$  for 2008, giving total emissions of around  $63 (44\text{--}82) \text{ Tg N yr}^{-1}$ , again based on  $\pm 30\%$  uncertainty.

### 4.2.3 Future impacts

The future ocean-atmosphere flux of  $\text{NH}_3$  will be affected by increasing temperatures, increasing terrestrial  $\text{NH}_3$  emissions, and ocean acidification from elevated  $\text{CO}_2$  levels which lowers the pH of the water. The mechanism of both of these effects is an alteration of the partitioning of ammonia and ammonium in the ocean, as illustrated by Eq. (5). The lower pH results in a greater relative concentration of ammonium. The lower concentration of  $\text{NH}_3$  will therefore result in lower emissions. Climate change and ocean acidification will also have indirect effects on ocean ecosystems, leading to changes in plankton populations and species composition.

The decreased marine emissions of  $\text{NH}_3$  in the future, combined with increasing N deposition and export from rivers, suggest that the future oceans may accumulate more reactive N, leading to eutrophication and OMZs. Some of the additional  $\text{N}_r$  may result in an increase in denitrification and associated  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  emissions.

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The expected temperature and pH changes in the ocean associated with climate change and ocean acidification will likely have a large effect on the ammonia flux. Based on the estimates of Bouwman et al. (1997), Eq. (2) and a 5 °C warming scenario, Sutton et al. (2013b, Supplement) estimated that ocean NH<sub>3</sub> emissions would increase to 15 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup>. However, as noted above, the baseline may have been an overestimate, while the interaction with rising CO<sub>2</sub> levels was not included.

Preliminary model results suggest that after accounting for the increasing temperatures and terrestrial emissions associated with RCP8.5, and the expected ocean acidification (a decrease in mean surface ocean pH of 0.31, from 8.14 in 2000 to 7.83 in 2100 (IPCC, 2013)), the estimated future NH<sub>3</sub> flux for 2100 is 1.7 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup>. However, the flux depends greatly on temperature, ocean acidification, and terrestrial NH<sub>3</sub> emission estimates. If temperature increases and increasing terrestrial ammonia emissions are accounted for, but ocean acidification neglected (the effect of pH is excluded), the estimated emission for 2100 would be 9.2 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup>. If atmospheric NH<sub>3</sub> concentrations and ocean pH were to remain at 2000 levels, but temperatures increase as expected under RCP8.5, the estimated 2100 ammonia emission is 10.9 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup>. Comparison of the bars in Fig. 5 shows that in relative terms the effect of ocean acidification is the largest driver, providing more than a factor of three difference in the flux calculated by Eq. (3).

These varying estimates demonstrate the high level of uncertainty in the magnitude of future atmosphere-ocean fluxes, and show that climate change and terrestrial NH<sub>3</sub> emissions may lead to dramatic changes in global NH<sub>3</sub> processes. These estimates do not account for changes in oceanic NH<sub>3</sub> concentrations, which will likely increase due to increased biological activity, export of nutrients from rivers, and atmospheric deposition. These changes may be especially dramatic in coastal areas, which are strongly influenced by anthropogenic activity and would contribute to increased NH<sub>3</sub> emissions from the coastal zone. Databases of existing observations and projections from marine biogeochemical models will help improve our understanding of future fluxes.

## 4.3 Terrestrial emissions of nitric oxide and nitrous oxide

### 4.3.1 Global sources of NO and N<sub>2</sub>O in the atmosphere

#### NO<sub>x</sub>

Sources of atmospheric NO<sub>x</sub> (NO+NO<sub>2</sub>) are soils, natural fires, lightning, transport from the stratosphere and combustion of fossil fuels. The sinks are in both soil through microbial uptake and the atmosphere, through reactions with OH (Miyazaki et al., 2012; Logan et al., 1983). In the troposphere the highly reactive, short-lived molecule NO is in equilibrium with NO<sub>2</sub>, through photochemical formation and destruction of ozone (O<sub>3</sub>). Global NO<sub>x</sub> emissions have increased 3 to 6 fold since the industrial revolution due to increased fossil fuel and biomass burning (Prather and Ehhalt, 2001). Recent new estimates of global NO<sub>x</sub> emissions based on a combination of a top down inventory based on satellite observations, and bottom-up inventory, the a posteriori inventory, have constrained the global budget to 40 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup> (Jaeglé et al., 2005). Fuel combustion (fossil and biofuel) were the largest source, contributing 58 % to the total budget, followed by soils (22 %), biomass burning (14 %), lightning (8 %), stratospheric/tropospheric exchange (0.2 %) and aircraft (0.1 %) (Jaeglé et al., 2005; Martin et al., 2003). Largest soil contributions were from the African and Australian continents (39 % of total), whereas in the more industrialised and wealthier US and Europe soil emissions contributed only with 12 and 18 % to total emissions (Fig. 6). Discrepancies between the bottom-up inventory and the *a posteriori* inventory were largest for soil emissions, by 68 %. The monthly satellite NO<sub>x</sub> data, links peak soil derived NO<sub>x</sub> emissions with the onset of the rainy seasons in North equatorial Africa, and N fertilization of agricultural land in the northern and mid latitudes. These observations imply that the Yienger and Levy (1995) emission factors together with the Wang et al. (1998) algorithm for canopy exchange need to be revised upward substantially (Jaeglé et al., 2005).

Hudman et al. (2012) improved the presentation of soil NO<sub>x</sub> emissions in global models by replacing the simple emission factors (Yienger and Levy, 1995) with equations

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representing spatial and temporal patterns of soil moisture, temperature, pulsing, fertilizer, manure and atmospheric N deposition and biome. This BDSNP model (Berkeley-Dalhousie Soil NO<sub>x</sub> Parameterization) was coupled to global transport model GEOS-Chem, which normally used the Yienger and Levy (1995) (YL95) scheme for soil emissions (Wang et al., 1998), but retained the YL95 canopy reduction component. The new model calculated larger emissions for the below canopy emissions (10.7 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup>) relative to the YL95 approach (7.4 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup>). Total above canopy soil NO<sub>x</sub> emissions were calculated at 9 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup>, in good agreement with the Jaeglé et al. (2005) study. The new model was validated using satellite nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) data provided by OMI (Ozone Monitoring Instrument, Hudman et al., 2012). Their model was able to reproduce the monsoon induced soil NO peak in North equatorial Africa and the inter-annual variability of soil NO<sub>x</sub> fluxes over the Great Plains in the US.

## N<sub>2</sub>O

Nitrous oxide is a long-lived greenhouse gas, contributing to 10 % of the global radiative forcing (Denman et al., 2007), and in the stratosphere is now the main cause of stratospheric O<sub>3</sub> depletion (Ravishankara et al., 2009). Microbial denitrification and nitrification processes are responsible for 87 % of the annual global N<sub>2</sub>O budget (18.8 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup>; Syakila and Kroeze, 2011), with contributions from natural soils (35 %), agriculture (27 %) and oceans (25 %). Non biological sources are responsible for the remaining 13 % through fossil fuel combustion, biofuel and biomass burning and industrial processes. Atmospheric N<sub>2</sub>O concentrations have been rising since the industrial revolution from 270 ppb to over 319 ppb. It has always been assumed that increased N fertilizer use is responsible for this rise. Recent measurements of isotopic N<sub>2</sub>O composition (<sup>14/15</sup>N) in the atmosphere are consistent with this assumption (Park et al., 2012), and N fertilized agricultural soils are responsible for almost 16 % of global annual N<sub>2</sub>O emissions. All agricultural activities are responsible for two-thirds of the total

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anthropogenic N<sub>2</sub>O emissions (Davidson and Kanter, 2014), and more than one-third is associated with animal production.

Natural soil emissions are the largest single global source of N<sub>2</sub>O, with largest emissions from the warm wet regions in the Amazon, South-East Asia and Africa. Unfortunately these are also the regions for which data coverage is poor. Based on an artificial neural network approach and the few available field observations Zhuang et al. (2012) calculated that 30 % of the total natural soil contribution was from tropical evergreen broadleaved forests followed by 17 % for woody savannas. Their total estimate for global soil emissions was 3.4, ranging from 2.0–4.6 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup> for the year 2000. This is lower than the range 6–7 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup> used by Syakila and Kroeze (2011), but with the very large uncertainties these values are probably not significantly different from each other.

### 4.3.2 Soil processes responsible for NO and N<sub>2</sub>O emissions

#### Denitrification

Denitrification is the major N loss pathway for N<sub>r</sub> (Fig. 7). The ratio of the denitrification products N<sub>2</sub>O and N<sub>2</sub> depends on localised environmental conditions in the soil. This microbial process, performed by archaea, bacteria or fungi, using oxidised nitrogen compounds such as nitrate or nitrite as an alternative electron acceptor in the absence of oxygen (Butterbach-Bahl et al., 2013), removes approximately 30–40 % of N<sub>r</sub> inputs to watersheds (Seitzinger et al., 2006).

Microbial denitrification is a highly spatially distributed process occurring in soils, sediments or water bodies if environmental conditions become unfavourable for aerobic degradation of organic matter. It mostly occurs at aerobic/anaerobic interfaces in soils, e.g. in riparian zones where lateral water flow from upstream regions provides a steady influx of nitrogen oxides as well as dissolved organic C to the waterlogged and oxygen (O<sub>2</sub>) depleted soil zones in such topographic depressions. Thus, riparian areas are hotspots of denitrification (Pinay et al., 2007) as well as often hotspots of

soil  $N_2O$  emissions (Jungkunst et al., 2008; Butterbach-Bahl and Dannenmann, 2011). Denitrification is a heterotrophic process in which nitrate ( $NO_3^-$ ) is used as a terminal electron acceptor during the oxidation of C substrates (Groffman et al., 2006). Thus, at least three pre-conditions need to be fulfilled: (a) oxygen depletion, (b) availability of nitrogen oxides and (c) availability of easily degradable C substrates. Given these pre-conditions and the presence of an active denitrifying microbial community, thereby noting that many microbes are not only capable to breakdown organic matter under aerobic conditions, but can activate the denitrification enzyme chain under anaerobiosis, and the removal of nitrates by denitrification is a highly effective process. Denitrification is the key process in wastewater treatment plants to remove  $NO_3^-$ , but also a major loss pathway of N fertilizers provided to arable fields to increase crop production. Loss rates of  $N_2O$  from fertilized cropland due to denitrification have been reported to be up to  $240 \text{ kg N ha}^{-1} \text{ yr}^{-1}$  (Barton et al., 1999), thus, potentially even exceeding fertilization rates.

Denitrification is activated if soils become water-saturated or water-logged, e.g. due to heavy rainfall or irrigation. The sudden increase in soil moisture, blocking macro- and micropores with soil water, decreases  $O_2$  diffusion into soil by approximately a factor of four. Since microbial metabolism as well as plant root respiration continues, the soil becomes anaerobic. Thus, besides being spatial highly distributed, with certain hotspots such as riparian areas in the landscape, denitrification is also temporally highly discontinuous and is a so-called “hot-moment” phenomena (Groffman et al., 2006, 2009).

## Nitrification

Biological and abiotic processes in soils are responsible for the production and consumption of  $NO$  and  $N_2O$ . Principal microbial processes leading to  $NO$  /  $N_2O$  production are nitrification and denitrification, and nitrifier denitrification (Fig. 7). There may be other theoretically feasible processes, which have not yet been identified in soils (Medinets et al., 2015; Schreiber et al., 2012). Chemodenitrification, the chemical decomposition of  $NO_2$ , is an important source of  $NO$  in acid soils and soils rich in humic

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acids (Stevenson et al., 1970; Zumft, 1997). Reduction of nitrite ( $\text{NO}_2^-$ ) to  $\text{NH}_4^+$  is also known to be a source of  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  in some reduced environments (Fig. 7; Baggs, 2008)

Nitrification is the microbial oxidation of  $\text{NH}_4^+$  to nitrate ( $\text{NO}_3^-$ ), with hydroxylamine and  $\text{NO}_2^-$  as essential intermediates. This process occurs in all soils and aqueous systems and involved a wide range of microorganisms. Whereas in the denitrification pathway  $\text{NO}$  and  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  are obligate intermediates; they are by-products of nitrification and thought to operate when conditions are suboptimal for further oxidation to  $\text{NO}_3^-$  (Conrad, 1996; Baggs, 2008). Both processes take place in the same soil microsites, but even with modern technologies such as isotopic labelling, use of microelectrodes and molecular analysis, it is difficult to unravel the detailed biological pathways responsible for  $\text{NO}$  and  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  production under different conditions (Schreiber et al., 2012). Generally,  $\text{NO}$  emissions are considered to be associated with nitrification conditions and  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  emissions with denitrification conditions.

### 4.3.3 Effects of climate change on $\text{NO}$ and $\text{N}_2\text{O}$ emissions

How will  $\text{NO}$  and  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  emission rates change as a result of combined changes in land use, climate and atmospheric composition? This is a rather complex question, illustrated by Fig. 8, in which the very different process which combine to regulate these microbial transformations are overlain by larger scale processes and changes. With this complexity the answer will be different for different landscapes. To predict the potential for nitrification and denitrification and emissions of the pollutants  $\text{NO}$  and  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$ , effects of environmental change need to be established at local scales as they will depend on local effects of climate, land use and atmospheric composition changes:

1. *Climate change*: This refers to the change of the primarily environmental drivers temperature and rainfall (amount, frequency, seasonal distribution), both affecting soil environmental conditions but also site and landscape hydrology, vegetation cover and substrate supply. Finally, this will also affect land use, since it can be ex-

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pected that farmers will adapt land use and land management as climate changes (Kicklighter et al., 2014).

2. *Land use change*: This refers to changes in vegetation cover, land use and management resulting in changes in substrate supply to the soil microbial community, but also triggers changes in soil and catchment hydrology. Changes in land use can be driven by climate change (Kicklighter et al., 2014), but economic factors, such as e.g. the recent trend to bioenergy production (e.g. Leemans et al., 1996), might be of much greater importance on time scales of years to decades. Policy and economic drivers also influences the uptake of measures aimed at promoting mitigation in the agricultural sector (MacLeod et al., 2010).

3. *Atmospheric composition change*: this mainly links to rising CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations, resulting in reductions in plant transpiration and increasing levels of soil moisture (e.g. Long et al., 2004), but also to changes in regional O<sub>3</sub> concentrations - affecting plant performance and, thus, e.g. plant litter production or transpiration - or atmospheric deposition of reactive nitrogen (Sutton et al., 2011), which is not only an additional N<sub>r</sub> source for soil microbial processes but also drives forest C sequestration and changes in soil C and N stocks (De Vries et al., 2014), and by this affects soil environmental conditions.

### Climate change effects on NO and N<sub>2</sub>O emissions and the importance of changes in regional hydrology

Without doubt microbial activity will increase with increasing temperatures and the availability and supply of the respective substrate(s), such as easily degradable C and oxidised N compounds. If global and regional temperatures continue to increase, there is a potential for denitrification and nitrification rates also to increase. The study by Luo et al. (2014), for example, shows that in grassland soils undergoing experimental warming of 2 °C over a period of 10 years, key metabolic pathways related to C and N turnover accelerated. In the case of denitrification, this increase was 12 %. However, if

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summer temperatures increase whilst summer rainfall decreases, denitrification rates would decrease substantially, since the most important environmental precondition for denitrification, anaerobic conditions are not provided. These conditions would however be favourable for NO and N<sub>2</sub>O emissions via nitrification.

An additional consequence of rising temperature will be increased rates of transpiration and evaporation (Long et al., 2004). In conclusion, it can be assumed, that changes in soil moisture as driven by changes in rainfall patterns and amounts and evapotranspiration fluxes will very likely dominate the overall response and overwhelm any direct temperature effects on denitrification, nitrification and NO and N<sub>2</sub>O emissions. Moreover, expected changes in the hydrological cycle at regional to continental scales will affect not only the seasonality of soil moisture changes, catchment and watershed hydrology, and the size and temporal expansion and shrinking of riparian zones (Pinay et al., 2007). Thus, when considering climate change effects on NO and N<sub>2</sub>O emissions one must include changes in rainfall (amount, frequency and seasonality), evapotranspiration and associated changes in surface and subsurface water flows and catchment/watershed hydrology in the focus (Butterbach-Bahl and Dannenmann, 2011).

### Land use and land management effects on denitrification

Expected changes in climate are already triggering changes in land use and land management. The area of irrigated agricultural land is expanding quickly not only in semi-arid but also in humid temperate climates to adapt agriculture to predicted temporal water scarcity due to climate change (Trost et al., 2013). Reviewing the existing literature on irrigation effects on soil N<sub>2</sub>O emissions Trost et al. (2013) found that in most cases irrigation increased N<sub>2</sub>O emissions in a range from 50 to 150 %, which is very likely caused by increased denitrification activity in such soils. Irrigation may increase (Liu et al., 2010) or reduce NO emissions (Abalos et al., 2014), depending on the wetness of the soil.

The large scale introduction of no-till agriculture, especially in Latin America (Abdalla et al, 2013), may affect N<sub>2</sub>O and NO emissions. A study by Rosa et al. (2014) which

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to an increase in emissions of 28 % over the century to  $3.2 \text{ Tg N yr}^{-1}$  in 2100. An increase in soil NO emissions during the 21st century of similar magnitude to those for  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  seem likely, as emissions of both gases are primarily driven by agricultural and biofuel production. This would lead to soil emissions of NO in 2100 of  $11.5 \text{ Tg N yr}^{-1}$ .

It is clear that predicted changes in rainfall and regional hydrological cycles are more important than direct effects of temperature for large scale denitrification activity. Increases in precipitation at higher latitudes appear common to many climate model projections for the later decades of this century (IPCC, 2013), but the variability in magnitude and distribution precludes clear regional quantification. Likewise the drying of the Mediterranean basin is a common feature in some climate model simulations. Such a response would decrease  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  emissions, but could increase NO emissions. However if soils are irrigated  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  emissions may increase and NO emissions decrease. These expected changes are overlaid by changes in land use and land management, which are also partly triggered by climate change. Moreover, changes in atmospheric composition are indirectly feeding back on denitrification activity in soils too, e.g. by affecting plant performance and thus, nutrient and water flows. To better understand climate change effects on regional and global denitrification and nitrification activities multi-factorial climate (e.g. Mikkelsen et al., 2008) and land use/ land management change experiments are needed. Such studies have only been run for relatively short term, which hampers the detection of interactive and nonlinear effects, or the identification of thresholds and tipping points (Luo et al., 2011). Study data from multifactorial experiments are needed to test and improve process descriptions in biogeochemical and landscape models, which are finally the tools for assessing denitrification and nitrification rates including NO and  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  emissions at landscape to continental and global levels. Ultimately only such models, linked to hydrological, climate and dynamic land-use models, might allow us to get a better idea of how NO and  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  emissions may change under future environmental and land management conditions, even though modelling interactions at various temporal and spatial scales remains a major future challenge.

## 5 Atmospheric processing – chemistry

Higher temperatures increase the rates of almost all chemical conversions: the higher kinetic energies associated with warmer temperatures means reactions proceed faster. Temperature has particularly important effects on two equilibria involving reactive nitrogen (Cox and Roffey, 1977; Feick and Hainer, 1954):



Higher temperatures push both these equilibria towards the right, i.e. resulting in thermal decomposition of gaseous peroxyacetyl nitrate (PAN:  $\text{CH}_3\text{COO}_2\text{NO}_2$ ) and ammonium nitrate ( $\text{NH}_4\text{NO}_3$ ) aerosol particles, effectively reducing the atmospheric lifetimes of these two species. The impacts of 21st century climate change on global atmospheric composition, via reaction (Eq. 6), have been investigated by Doherty et al. (2013). For a temperature increase of +3 K (typical for 2100 relative to present-day), the PAN lifetime in the troposphere approximately halves (from 4 to 2.5 h at mean surface temperatures of 290 K; and from 6 to 3 months at mid- to upper-tropospheric temperatures of 250 K). PAN is the main component of tropospheric  $\text{NO}_y$ , so climate change significantly reduces the size of the  $\text{NO}_y$  reservoir, reducing the long-range (or intercontinental) transport of  $\text{NO}_y$  (Doherty et al., 2013).

Liao et al. (2006) find that climate change effects (specifically the SRES A1B scenario from 2000 to 2050) leads to reduced concentrations of  $\text{NH}_4^+$  aerosols over East Asia, and attribute this to temperature increases acting via Eq. (7). Similar results were found over the US (Pye et al., 2009).

Changes in the stratospheric source of  $\text{HNO}_3$  are also likely as a consequence of a changing climate. Much like the predicted increase in tropospheric  $\text{O}_3$  from enhanced stratosphere-troposphere exchange (STE), driven by a more intense Brewer-Dobson Circulation, the stratospheric  $\text{O}_3$  enters the troposphere with some  $\text{NO}_y$  as  $\text{HNO}_3$ . This is a small source currently estimated to be  $\sim 1 \text{ Tg N yr}^{-1}$ , but STE is projected to in-

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crease by 50-100 % over the 21st century, so this  $\text{NO}_y$  source may  $\sim$ double. Stratospheric  $\text{NO}_y$  and  $\text{O}_3$  may show different trends, so it may be more complicated than just knowing the STE air mass flux (most models just add  $\text{NO}_y$  with a fixed ratio to  $\text{O}_3$ ).

## 5.1 Lightning-climate interactions

Lightning NO is an important natural source of tropospheric  $\text{NO}_x$ , especially the tropical upper troposphere (Schumann and Huntrieser, 2007). Nitric oxide (NO) is formed following the dissociation of molecular oxygen and N by the lightning discharge in air. Atmospheric composition is modified as described in the companion paper by Monks et al. (2014).

The effects of climate change on lightning and  $\text{NO}_x$  production have been investigated by Toumi et al (1996), and by Reeve and Toumi, (1999) suggesting increases in both lightning and  $\text{NO}_x$  production. The estimates of increased  $\text{NO}_x$  production in a warmer climate are rather variable and range from 4 to 60 % per degree K (surface temperature change), Schumann and Huntrieser, 2007; and Williams, 2005).

Taking a value towards the lower end of the range of reported temperature responses, of  $10\% \text{K}^{-1}$  and a temperature change of  $4^\circ \text{K}$  by 2100, yields an increase in lightning  $\text{NO}_x$  production from 5 to  $7 \text{Tg N yr}^{-1}$ .

## 6 Organic nitrogen

Atmospheric organic nitrogen (ON) has received increasing attention in the last two decades, nevertheless its characterisation and understanding are far from complete and it represents by far the least understood component of the atmospheric N cycle.

Recently, Cape et al. (2011), Cornell et al. (2011) and Jickells et al. (2013) reviewed atmospheric ON and its atmospheric cycling, providing also a technical discussion on analytical methods, their comparability and statistical caveats for data treatment. Here we provide a brief and general description of atmospheric ON, its sources, relevant

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properties and relations to the N cycle, with a viewpoint coherent to the aims of this review.

## 6.1 Atmospheric relevance

Organic nitrogen is a ubiquitous component of the atmosphere, mainly found in aerosols and precipitation, although present also in the gas phase (Cape et al., 2011; Cornell et al., 2011; Jickells et al., 2013). Atmospheric concentration data for the aerosol fraction in literature often refer to the water-soluble fraction of ON (WSON), more frequently investigated as it is considered to be more bioavailable (Seitzinger and Sanders, 1999) and climate relevant. Aerosol WSON atmospheric concentrations range from a few to few tens of  $\text{nmol N m}^{-3}$  in a selection of remote sites by Jickells et al. (2013), reaching concentrations as high as  $\sim 150 \text{ nmol N m}^{-3}$  in the Po Valley (Montero-Martinez et al., 2014) and up to  $2 \mu\text{mol N m}^{-3}$  at Quingdao (China) (Shi et al., 2011). The above aerosol concentrations determine WSON in rainwater ranging between  $5 \mu\text{mol L}^{-1}$ , in remote regions, and  $> 100 \mu\text{mol L}^{-1}$  as measured in China (Cornell et al., 2011).

The water-soluble fraction of ON contribution to total N in aerosol and rainwater has been investigated in a number of studies, with results ranging from a few percent to more than 40% (Cornell et al., 2011). Jickells et al. (2013) reports a collection of rainwater WSON datasets from around the world from the studies of Cornell et al. (2003, 2011) and Zhang et al. (2012), resulting in an average ON contribution of 24%. Similar contributions, ranging from 19 to 26%, have been observed for aerosols in many other studies (Zhang et al., 2002; Chen et al., 2010; Lesworth et al., 2010; Kunwar and Kawamura, 2014; Miyazaki et al., 2014; Montero-Martinez et al., 2014). Nevertheless, lower WSON/TN contributions have been also reported: 6% in Delaware, USA (Russell et al., 2003), 13% in Crete (Violaki et al., 2010), 16% in the outflow from northeast India over the Bay of Bengal (Srinivas et al., 2011) and 10% in paired urban-rural sites in Georgia (Rastogi et al., 2011). Higher contributions seem, instead, typical of China

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(Shi et al., 2011; Zhang et al., 2012), likely due to the use of organic manures and urea as fertilizers in agriculture (Jickells et al., 2013).

It is worth highlighting that in one of the few studies in which total ON (and not WSON) was measured, the ON/TN ratio was of the order of 70 % (western North Pacific in summer) (Miyazaki et al., 2010), suggesting an important contribution from water-insoluble ON. Russell et al. (2003) also showed an important fraction of aerosol ON in water-insoluble form. Other investigators (Li and Yu, 2004; Duan et al., 2009) which measured the total ON have not confirmed such a result. Finally, the model approach of Kanakidou et al. (2012) estimated ON as 26 % of TN deposition, globally.

These numbers provide an insight into the importance of atmospheric ON in the N cycle, even though a full understanding is far from being achieved. In particular, ON can be considered important in the long-range transport of N (e.g., Singh and Hanst, 1981; Gorzelska and Galloway, 1990; Neff et al., 2002; Matsumoto and Uematsu, 2005) because its removal processes tend to be less effective than those for nitrate and ammonium, which are generally deposited closer to their sources (Cornell et al., 2011).

At least a fraction of ON is known to be bioavailable (Timperley et al., 1985; Peierls and Paerl, 1997; Seitzinger and Sanders, 1999) therefore its deposition can provide nutrients for land and marine ecosystems. Nevertheless, the effects of ON on the surface ocean are unclear due to the large uncertainty in the sources and magnitudes of deposition. Even less is known about the potential human and ecosystem toxicity of ON (Paumen et al., 2009).

Recently, atmospheric ON has received attention because of its light-absorbing properties (Desyaterik et al., 2013). Reactions leading to the formation of ON compounds in aerosol particles or evaporating droplets have been indicated as potentially important for the formation of atmospheric brown carbon (Nozière et al., 2007; 2009; Shapiro et al., 2009; Nguyen et al., 2012; Powelson et al., 2014; Lee et al., 2013).

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## 6.2 Chemical composition

Atmospheric ON is a sub-set of the organic carbon, and in analogy with the latter, is a complex mixture of compounds with different properties and origin (e.g., Saxena and Hildemann, 1996; Jacobson et al., 2000; Neff et al., 2002). Complementary to the total ON (or WSON) determination approach, many studies have focused on measuring the concentration of individual N compounds or groups of compounds in air, aerosols or rainwater. Given the difficulties of measuring total ON, this approach is the usual course in the gas phase.

Although this approach will never account for the whole ON, it can be useful in providing insights to sources and to clarify the contribution of single species to ON. Compounds analysed in individual studies include amines, amino acids, urea, nitrophenols, alkyl amides, N-heterocyclic alkaloids and organic nitrates (Cape et al., 2011; Jickells et al., 2013), none of which results dominated the ON composition. This suggests that a large fraction of ON is associated with high molecular weight polymers, constituting the humic-like materials (HULIS) (Chen et al., 2010).

This approach has shown that in certain environments and conditions, some compounds make up a consistent fraction of atmospheric ON. For instance, amino acids have been reported to account for up to 50 % in Tasmania (Mace et al., 2003a), while Facchini et al. (2008) reports dimethyl- and diethyl-amines contributing 35 % of aerosol ON over the Eastern North-Atlantic Ocean. On the contrary, in other studies these are only minor components (e.g., Mace et al., 2003b, c; Müller et al., 2009; Violaki et al., 2010). Urea was also shown as an important contributor (>20 %) by Cornell et al. (2001) and Mace et al. (2003a) in Hawaii and Tasmania, but was reported as a minor ON component in other sites (Mace et al., 2003b, c). Recently, Zhang et al. (2012) showed that urea represents more than 40 % of rainwater WSON in China where urea is widely used as a fertilizer.

Recently, ultrahigh resolution mass spectrometry has provided new insights into ON chemical composition in aerosol and rainwater. N-containing molecules have been re-

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ported, for instance, by Rincon et al. (2012), Cottrell et al. (2013), O'Brien et al. (2013), Zhao et al. (2013), and Kourtchev et al. (2014), accounting for 40 to more than 50 % of the total identified molecules in their samples, for a total of thousands of compounds. These studies suggest that ON is made of both oxidised (organonitrates, nitroxy-organosulfates) and reduced (amines, imines, imidazoles) N species. Altieri et al. (2009, 2012) found similar results, with more than two-thirds of the detected ON compounds containing reduced nitrogen. Moreover, they observed significant chemical composition differences between marine and continental samples, concluding that, although the concentrations and percent contribution of WSON to total N is fairly consistent across diverse geographic regions, the chemical composition of WSON varies strongly as a function of source region and atmospheric environment. LeClair et al. (2012) reported that approximately 63 % of the CHNO and 33 % of CHNOS compounds observed in Fresno radiation fog samples exhibited a loss of HNO<sub>3</sub>, suggesting that besides organonitrates, there might be other N containing functional groups present, such as amines, imines, and nitro groups.

These techniques detect ON compounds in a wide range of molecular weights with carbon number between 2 and 35 (Zhao et al., 2013; Cottrell et al., 2013). Nevertheless, Chen et al. (2010) has demonstrated that N containing molecules can have masses greater than 1 kDa.

### 6.3 Organic nitrogen sources

The complexity of ON chemical composition is reflected by its sources. ON source attribution was tentatively achieved in different studies based on size distribution, correlation with source tracers, multivariate analysis and isotopic ratios.

Many investigators report a significant spatial or temporal correlation between ON and inorganic N in aerosol and rainwater samples, with ON constituting roughly a quarter of total N in many environments (Cape et al., 2004; Zhang et al., 2012). Considering that inorganic N emissions are globally dominated by anthropogenic sources, ON has likely an important anthropogenic component (Zhang et al., 2012; Jickells et al., 2013).

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Many papers highlight important anthropogenic ON sources (e.g., Cornell et al., 2001; Mace et al., 2003c; Chen et al., 2010; Iinuma et al., 2010; Rastogi et al., 2011; Zamora et al., 2011; Zhang et al., 2012; Kourtchev et al., 2014; Violaki et al., 2010; Cape et al., 2004; Bencs et al., 2009). More in detail, ON seems to present higher correlation with  $\text{NH}_4^+$  than  $\text{NO}_3^-$  (Zhang et al., 2012; Cape et al., 2004; Srinivas et al., 2011). This points to an atmospheric processing of ON similar to that of reduced nitrogen, or to similar sources (Jickells et al., 2013). Indeed, several papers evidence ON formation processes via interactions between organic matter and reduced N (ammonia, amine compounds or HNCO and related gases) like Nguyen et al. (2012), Lee et al. (2013) and O'Brien et al. (2013). Nevertheless, also ON formation through  $\text{NO}_x$  or  $\text{NO}_3$  radical chemistry is reported in the literature (e.g., Zhao et al., 2013; Fry et al., 2013).

Notwithstanding the very likely global dominance of anthropogenic sources, natural sources of ON have been reported both in the marine (Spokes et al., 2000; Cornell et al., 2011; Mace et al., 2003a; Facchini et al., 2008; Müller et al., 2009; Miyazaki et al., 2010; Kunwar et al., 2014) and continental (Miyazaki et al., 2014; Kieloaho et al., 2014; Laitinen et al., 2014) environments.

As for formation processes, primary ON sources have been reported associated with soil suspension (Chen et al., 2010), sea spray (Miyazaki et al., 2010; Barbaro et al., 2011; Scalabrin et al., 2012) and biomass burning (Desyaterik et al., 2013; Zamora et al., 2011; Mace et al., 2003b; Srinivas et al., 2011; Violaki et al., 2011). Evidence of the importance of secondary ON formation has been presented for a range of environments, involving a number of precursors (De Haan et al., 2011; Nguyen et al., 2012; Rincon et al., 2012; Fry et al., 2013; Lee et al., 2013; Miyazaki et al., 2014; O'Brien et al., 2013; Zhao et al., 2013; Kourtchev et al., 2014). Furthermore, Organic N, amines in particular, is known to play a role in atmospheric new particle formation (Murphy et al., 2007; Kurten et al., 2008; Smith et al., 2010; Kirkby et al., 2011).

Concluding, Jickells et al. (2013) summarises atmospheric ON sources in: 1) Soil dust, including in this source both ON associated with soil organic matter itself and the adsorption of ON onto dust particles; 2) Biomass burning; 3) Marine emission

both direct and via emissions of gaseous precursors; 4) Anthropogenic and agricultural sources.

## 6.4 Effects of future climate change on ON

The current uncertainty about ON and its sources makes very difficult to estimate how the atmospheric ON contribution to the N cycle will evolve in a climate change scenario. Zamora et al. (2011) predicted that if N pollution emissions aerosols continue to increase as predicted, inorganic N will continue to be the most important source of soluble N to the subtropical North Atlantic, based on observations made at Miami and Barbados. The current interest in atmospheric ON raises hopes about our future understanding, but certainly further efforts are needed in order to improve our predictive capability.

Although predicting the effects of future changes in climate on ON is very uncertain, given the current state of knowledge of the relative contributions of the different sources of ON in the atmosphere, some general points can be made:

1. For material derived from resuspension of soils, periods of prolonged drought and/or increased wind speeds would lead to greater amounts of airborne material than at present;
2. For material derived from biomass burning, future patterns of biomass burning (whether natural, from increased drought, or man-made, from changes in land use) will affect ON emissions;
3. Increases in average temperatures would be expected to lead to increased atmospheric concentrations of volatile and semi-volatile organic compounds, including ON species, and in particular amines and urea, both of which are related to agricultural practices. Increased emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) would provide greater substrate concentrations for reactions which form atmo-

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spheric ON. Increased sea-surface temperatures would also lead to increased volatilisation of ON from the sea surface layer.

4. Increases in the oxidised nitrogen ( $\text{NO}_y$ ) content of the atmosphere would lead to faster reaction and conversion of organic matter into N-containing material, probably in the aerosol phase, leading in turn to increased aerosol concentrations of ON. Similarly, increased oxidising capacity would lead to faster conversion of hydrocarbons into oxidised organic matter which would be expected to act as a substrate for subsequent reaction with both reduced and oxidised forms of N.
5. Changes in agricultural practice, for whatever reason, could lead to large changes in ON emissions, e.g. changes in the use of urea as a fertilizer, or changes in the management of animal wastes.

The evidence, while largely qualitative suggests increases in the absolute quantity of ON in the atmosphere due to changes in climate and the amount of  $\text{N}_r$  fixed by natural and anthropogenic activity. The ON processes which are sensitive to changes in climate and land use are summarised in Fig. 9. However, the knowledge of atmospheric processing and lifetimes of the chemical components preclude quantitative estimates of the changes this century. Many more measurements and improvements in understanding are necessary to progress from the current, unsatisfactory position.

## 7 Impacts of global change on ecosystem/atmosphere reactive nitrogen exchange processes

A wide range of atmospheric  $\text{N}_r$  compounds (reduced  $\text{N}_r$  including gaseous  $\text{NH}_3$ , amines and aerosol  $\text{NH}_4^+$ ; and oxidised  $\text{N}_r$  including gaseous  $\text{NO}$ ,  $\text{NO}_2$ , HONO,  $\text{HNO}_3$ , PAN, PPN and aerosol  $\text{NO}_3^-$ ) are emitted by, and/or dry-deposited to, the Earth's surface (vegetation, soils, water bodies, built-up areas) (Flechard et al., 2011). The sign and magnitude of their exchange fluxes are governed not only by their chemical properties, but also by meteorological, physical, chemical and biological processes. For many

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of these species (e.g.  $\text{NH}_3$ , HONO,  $\text{NO}_2$ ) the exchange can be bi-directional (Flechard et al., 2013; Oswald et al., 2013; Neiryneck et al., 2007), with emissions occurring when the surface potential exceeds the atmospheric concentration, or vice-versa.

All transfer processes between the atmosphere and the surface (vertical turbulent transport, ecosystem air column chemistry, surface/vegetation sink or source strength) are potentially affected by global change, not just through altered climate and elevated  $\text{CO}_2$  and the knock-on effects on global vegetation and the ocean, but also (i) through changes in the mixing ratios of other pollutants such as  $\text{O}_3$  and sulfur dioxide ( $\text{SO}_2$ ) that affect stomatal function and/or surface chemical sinks, (ii) through changes in land use, land cover and agricultural as well as silvicultural practices, and even (iii) through the feed-back of elevated  $\text{N}_r$  deposition on ecosystem functioning.

## 7.1 Impacts on processes regulating surface $\text{N}_r$ sink/source strength

### 7.1.1 Vertical atmospheric transport

Deposition rates are not only governed by the surface properties, but further constrained by turbulence. By contrast, some emission processes are purely governed by the production process, and are thought to occur even when turbulence is low. Other emission processes are governed by the equilibrium between surface pools and the gas-phase concentration and are affected by the efficiency with which emitted molecules are dispersed vertically, thus lowering the concentration at the surface and promoting further emission.

Compounds whose deposition rates are particularly sensitive to atmospheric turbulence include those for which vegetation is thought to provide a perfect sink, including nitric acid, and those contained in aerosols. Thus, surface wind speed, friction velocity, atmospheric stability and surface roughness control the rates of vertical turbulent transport of  $\text{N}_r$  trace gases and aerosols through the surface layer and within the canopy. The aerodynamic ( $R_a$ ) and viscous sub-layer ( $R_b$ ) resistances to dry deposition are both inversely proportional to the friction velocity (Monteith and Unsworth, 2013). A

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comparison over the period 1988–2010 of recent linear trends in global surface wind speeds from satellite data, from in situ data and from atmospheric reanalyses, showed (i) a pattern of positive and negative trend bands across the North Atlantic Ocean and positive trends along the west coast of North America, and (ii) a strengthening of the Southern Ocean winds, consistent with the increasing trend in the Southern Annular Mode and with observed changes in wind stress fields (Fig. 2.38 in IPCC, 2013). The decadal trends in surface winds on land were mostly of the order of 0 to  $+0.2 \text{ m s}^{-1} \text{ decade}^{-1}$ , with large areas of the Southern Pacific experiencing increases of up to  $+0.5 \text{ m s}^{-1} \text{ decade}^{-1}$ . Future trends in surface wind speed are unclear, but it is clear that increases of such magnitudes could enhance atmospheric dry removal rates and shorten pollutant atmospheric lifetimes.

Similarly, changes in land cover and associated surface roughness are likely to affect the atmospheric lifetime of gases and aerosol compounds alike. Large-scale deforestation, for example, would reduce the deposition rate of aerosol significantly, while changes in crop types and tree species would have more subtle, but potentially important effects. For example, Davidson et al. (1982) showed that aerosol deposition rates to different grass species could differ by a factor of 10, in response to the microstructures (e.g. hairs) of the leaves.

### 7.1.2 Stomatal exchange

The flux of gaseous  $\text{N}_r$  pollutants into or out of sub-stomatal cavities of vascular plants is controlled primarily by the stoma-atmosphere concentration gradient and by stomatal conductance ( $G_s$ ) (Baldocchi et al., 1987). Free-air carbon dioxide enrichment (FACE) experiments have suggested that elevated  $\text{CO}_2$  concentrations result in a substantial reduction in ecosystem-scale  $G_s$  (typically  $-20$  to  $-30\%$ ) (Ainsworth and Rogers, 2007), while the projected elevations in tropospheric  $\text{O}_3$  will also reduce  $G_s$  by typically  $10\%$  to  $20\%$  (Wittig et al., 2007). The combined impacts on  $G_s$  of elevated  $\text{CO}_2$  and  $\text{O}_3$  in a future climate are less clear, however, due to nonlinear interactions between plant responses to  $\text{CO}_2$  and  $\text{O}_3$ . For example, the  $\text{CO}_2$ -induced reduction in  $G_s$  helps



alleviate future O<sub>3</sub> plant damage by mitigating stomatal phytotoxic O<sub>3</sub> uptake (Sitch et al., 2007).

Rising temperatures will on the other hand also impact  $G_s$  through a further reduction in stomatal opening under heat waves, or conversely through an increase in  $G_s$  in colder climates and an extension of the growing season. Changes in precipitation patterns will however likely affect  $G_s$  to a larger extent than temperature if they result in more frequent droughts during the growing season. The  $N_r$  species whose dry deposition is most affected by changes in  $G_s$  is probably NO<sub>2</sub>, due to its low affinity for non-stomatal sinks (Flechard et al., 2011), but the effect could also be significant for water insoluble organic N compounds such as peroxyacyl nitrates (PANs).

In the specific case of NH<sub>3</sub>, unlike other  $N_r$  species, another major control of the stomatal flux is the stomatal compensation point (Meyer, 1973), i.e. the leaf-level NH<sub>3</sub> concentration that reflects the thermodynamic equilibrium with apoplastic NH<sub>4</sub><sup>+</sup>, which itself results from cellular exchange and the balance of cytoplasmic consumption and production (Farquhar et al., 1980; Massad et al., 2010b). The combined temperature-dependent solubility (Henry's law) and dissociation constants result in an effective Q<sub>10</sub> of 3–4 (Sutton et al., 2013b), which would see the NH<sub>3</sub> compensation point approximately double with a temperature increase of 5 K. This is the same effect that will increase emissions from agricultural point sources in a future climate (cf Sect. 4.1.1). For vegetation this effect only holds, however, if the emission potential represented by the apoplastic  $\Gamma$  ratio ( $\Gamma = [\text{NH}_4^+] / [\text{H}^+]$ ) remains constant. Ecosystem modelling (e.g. Riedo et al., 2002) suggests that variations in apoplastic [NH<sub>4</sub><sup>+</sup>] might be expected in response to global change, e.g. with rising temperature and CO<sub>2</sub> affecting primary productivity and soil/plant N cycling. Apoplastic pH itself could also be affected by global change; a doubling of CO<sub>2</sub> (from 350 to 700 ppm) can alkalinise the apoplast by 0.2 pH units (Felle and Hanstein, 2002); similarly, droughts can induce increased apoplastic alkalinity by a few tenths of a pH unit (Sharp and Davies, 2009; Wilkinson and Davies, 2008). Because nitric oxide (NO) is an important internal signaling compound that is also released in response to ozone exposure (Velikova et al., 2005; Ederli et al., 2006),

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increased ozone exposure in a future chemical climate might lead to elevated compensation points for NO. This NO source is currently not usually represented in exchange models.

### 7.1.3 Non-stomatal plant surfaces

Vegetation surfaces other than stomatal apertures (leaf cuticle, stems, bark of tree trunk and branches, also senescent leaves) are generally considered efficient sinks for  $\text{NH}_3$  and especially  $\text{HNO}_3$ , particularly so if these surfaces are wet from rain or dew. Soluble  $\text{N}_r$  gases will readily be taken up by surface water films, although their affinity for  $\text{NH}_3$  is expected to decrease as pH increases beyond seven (Walker et al., 2013), or if the  $\text{NH}_x$  accumulated in surface wetness leads to a saturation effect, reducing the sink strength (Jones et al., 2007). The atmospheric  $\text{SO}_2$  to  $\text{NH}_3$  molar ratio, or the total acids ( $2 \cdot \text{SO}_2 + \text{HNO}_3 + \text{HCl}$ ) to  $\text{NH}_3$  ratio, have been used in some inferential or chemical transport models (CTM) to scale non-stomatal resistance to surface  $\text{NH}_3$  deposition (Massad et al., 2010a; Simpson et al., 2012).

Chemical composition and size of the wetness pool are thus key to the  $\text{N}_r$  gas removal efficiency (Flechard et al., 1999). It follows that global changes affecting the frequency and intensity of rain or dew, the subsequent evaporation rate of surface water, and the relative abundances of atmospheric alkaline compounds ( $\text{NH}_x$ , amines from agriculture; base cations from sea spray and soil erosion) versus acidic species ( $\text{NO}_y$ ,  $\text{SO}_x$ ,  $\text{HCl}$  from traffic, household and industrial sources) are likely to affect non-stomatal sink strengths for most water-soluble  $\text{N}_r$  species. Rising atmospheric  $\text{CO}_2$  itself will acidify rainfall and any plant or terrestrial surface wetness, as well as freshwater and the ocean. As an illustration, the pH of pure water in equilibrium with ambient  $\text{CO}_2$  at  $15^\circ\text{C}$  is 5.60 for current (399.5 ppm)  $\text{CO}_2$  concentrations; this would drop to 5.59, 5.53, 5.48 and 5.41 for the 2100  $\text{CO}_2$  levels, predicted in the Representative Concentration Pathway scenarios, of 420.9 ppm (RCP2.6), 538.4 ppm (RCP4.5), 669.7 ppm (RCP6.0) and 935.9 (RCP8.5), respectively (IPCC, 2013). In real solutions, buffering effects could mitigate the impact of  $\text{CO}_2$ , but global ocean surface pH projections for

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been shown over grassland to be both relative humidity- and temperature- dependent, roughly doubling with every additional 5 K (Flechard et al., 2010), consistent with solubility and dissociation thermodynamics of  $\text{NH}_3(\text{gas}) / \text{NH}_3 \cdot \text{H}_2\text{O} / \text{NH}_4^+$ .

Surface warming is thus generally expected to reduce the non-stomatal  $\text{N}_r$  sink strength, especially for  $\text{NH}_3$ , with the notable exception of frozen surfaces, over which the effect of warming could be opposite. Surface/atmosphere  $\text{NH}_3$  flux measurements over moorland have in fact shown that at sub-zero temperatures the non-stomatal sink is much reduced, but also that the canopy resistance decreases as surface ice or snow melts (Flechard and Fowler, 1998). Warming is expected to be strongest in the mid and especially higher latitudes (IPCC, 2013), such that vast regions in temperate to boreal climates could experience much shorter winters and significantly reduced numbers of frost days, increasing the wintertime  $\text{N}_r$  sink strength. Further, because ambient  $\text{NH}_3$  concentrations should increase globally (higher ground-based emissions, and a decreased volatile aerosol  $\text{NH}_4^+$ /total  $\text{NH}_x$  fraction), predicting the net impact on deposition fluxes is a challenge. Similarly, a reduced aerosol  $\text{NO}_3^-$  / total  $\text{NO}_y$  fraction, and relatively higher  $\text{HNO}_3$  concentration, ought to favour overall greater  $\text{NO}_y$  dry deposition, since  $\text{HNO}_3$  deposits much faster than  $\text{NH}_4\text{NO}_3$  aerosol (Nemitz et al., 2009; Fowler et al., 2009).

#### 7.1.4 Soil surface exchange

Soils and surface leaf litter are both sinks and sources of  $\text{N}_r$ . The expected impacts of global change on the soil-level source strength for  $\text{NH}_3$ ,  $\text{NO}$  and  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  are described in detail elsewhere in this review (Sect. 4.1.1), and are essentially controlled by changes in agricultural management and cropping practices (especially fertilizer inputs: form, quantity, technique and timing of application), and by changes in climate that affect soil temperature and moisture, impacting on the turnover of soil organic matter (heterotrophic respiration), fertilizer infiltration,  $\text{NH}_3$  volatilisation and the rates of nitrification and denitrification (Butterbach-Bahl and Dannenmann, 2011; Sutton et al., 2013b; Flechard et al., 2013). On the other hand, the  $\text{N}_r$  sink strength of soils and litter surfaces

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is governed by the same processes – and should be similarly impacted by changes in meteorological, physical and chemical drivers – as the canopy non-stomatal sink (see above). One essential difference, though, is that soil and decaying plant material in the litter layer are much more buffered media than is leaf surface wetness, such that smaller shifts in pH may be expected in response to the same atmospheric drivers. However, soil acidification may result from increased agricultural intensification in the 21st century, from increased N deposition onto semi-natural systems, and possibly from global hydrological changes impacting on soil oxygen availability and denitrification.

### 7.1.5 Chemical interactions during the exchange process

Global change may also impact air column chemical processing within and just above vegetation canopies, creating vertical flux divergence and altering the  $N_r$  sink (or source) strength. Here, for N, the main chemical interactions are those between  $NO$ ,  $O_3$  and  $NO_2$  as well as the gas / aerosol partitioning involving volatile ammonium salts, primarily  $NH_4NO_3$  and to a much lesser extent  $NH_4Cl$ .

Increasing global tropospheric  $O_3$  concentrations (Sitch et al., 2007) should raise the within-canopy oxidation capacity for soil-emitted  $NO$ , thereby transforming more soil  $NO$  into  $NO_2$  which can be at least partially recaptured by the overlying canopy, thus reducing total  $NO_x$  emission (or increasing net  $NO_x$  deposition) (Duyzer et al., 2004). Near and in-canopy chemistry are driven by the sharp gradients in concentrations and meteorological drivers near the ground. Thus they represent subgrid process for typical chemical transport models, where the bottom layer in which chemistry is calculated typically averages over tens of meters. Most models apply empirical formulations of the in-canopy chemical conversion and subsequent canopy reduction of the  $NO$  emission (Yienger and Levy, 1995) that do not mechanistically respond to changes in vegetation and chemical climate. Applying a subgrid model within a chemistry-climate model to analyse the impacts of land cover and land use changes on atmospheric chemistry at the global scale by 2050, Ganzeveld et al. (2010) calculated that changes in atmosphere-biosphere fluxes of  $NO_x$  would be small, pointing to compensating effects:

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although global soil NO emissions were expected to increase by  $\sim 1.2 \text{ Tg N yr}^{-1}$  (+ 9 %), decreases in soil NO emissions in deforested regions in Africa and elsewhere would be offset by a larger canopy release of  $\text{NO}_x$  caused by reduced foliage  $\text{NO}_2$  uptake. More studies of this type are needed provide a more robust basis for prediction.

Recent advances in instrumentation to measure surface/atmosphere exchange fluxes of individual aerosol chemical components with micrometeorological techniques have led to the revelation that while effective deposition rates of sulfate are of the magnitude predicted by mechanistic aerosol deposition models ( $< 2 \text{ mm s}^{-1}$  for short vegetation and 1 to  $10 \text{ mm s}^{-1}$  to forest), measured deposition rates of  $\text{NO}_3^-$  often reach daytime values in excess of  $50 \text{ mm s}^{-1}$  (Thomas, 2007; Wolff et al., 2007, 2011; Ryder, 2010). This observation is due to the fact that some of the aerosol  $\text{NH}_4\text{NO}_3$  that passes the measurement height dissociates into  $\text{NH}_3$  and  $\text{HNO}_3$  before interacting with the surface and therefore deposits at an apparent deposition rate that reflects gas-phase deposition rather than physical interaction of particles with vegetation. The volatilisation of  $\text{NH}_4\text{NO}_3$  is driven by the depletion of  $\text{NH}_3$  and  $\text{HNO}_3$  near and in canopies, due to their dry deposition, coupled with an increase in temperature which typically peaks at the top of the canopy during daytime.

The impact of near-surface column chemistry on the exchange flux actually depends (i) on the gradients in drivers of disequilibrium (relative mixing ratios of  $\text{N}_r$  species; gradients in temperature and relative humidity) and (ii) on the comparative time-scales of chemical reactions and turbulent transfer to/from the surface (Nemitz et al., 2000). Global warming will shift the  $\text{NH}_4\text{-HNO}_3\text{-NH}_4\text{NO}_3$  equilibrium further towards the gas phase, which will reduce the concentrations of  $\text{NH}_4\text{NO}_3$ . However, as discussed above and in Sect. 4.1.1,  $\text{NH}_3$  emissions are likely to increase.  $\text{NO}_x$  emissions might well decrease, but the oxidation capacity of the atmosphere that governs the conversion of  $\text{NO}_x$  to  $\text{HNO}_3$  is more likely to increase and the change in absolute  $\text{NH}_4\text{NO}_3$  concentrations is therefore difficult to predict accurately.

The contribution of  $\text{NH}_4\text{NO}_3$  to European total aerosol concentration is demonstrated in Fig. 10 which summarises campaign-based measurements of submicron aerosol

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composition across a coordinated network. During the colder seasons in particular,  $\text{NH}_4\text{NO}_3$  was the single largest contributor to  $\text{PM}_1$  in north-west Europe, often exceeding the importance of organic aerosol and sulfates. Exceptions were sites on Crete (higher temperature), in Finland (few local emissions) and at high elevations sites (long transport time, no local emissions). Even at fairly remote sites such as the Scottish EMEP Supersite ‐Auchencorth Moss‐,  $\text{NH}_4\text{NO}_3$  often accounts for the bulk of the  $\text{PM}_{10}$  aerosol mass during pollution events (Fig. 11). Thus, the effect of climate change on the evolution of  $\text{NH}_4\text{NO}_3$  has important consequences for exceedances of PM air quality objectives and for the climate system.

The impact of climate change on the interaction between aerosol volatility and surface exchange is less closely linked to changes in absolute temperature and humidity (these govern the overall atmospheric burden), but to changes in near-surface gradients in temperature, humidity and gas-phase concentrations. Increased solar radiation and reduction in evapotranspiration as a result of decreased stomatal conductance (see above) is likely to increase sensible heat fluxes and associated temperature gradients.

For the  $\text{NH}_3$  /  $\text{HNO}_3$  /  $\text{NH}_4\text{NO}_3$  and  $\text{NH}_3$  /  $\text{HCl}$  /  $\text{NH}_4\text{Cl}$  gas-aerosol equilibria, a surface warming and a lowering of relative humidity in a future climate would favour the faster depositing gas phase ( $\text{NH}_3$ ,  $\text{HNO}_3$ ) over the slower depositing  $\text{NH}_4^+$  and  $\text{NO}_3^-$  aerosol. In addition, reduced  $\text{NO}_x$  emissions by 2100 (van Vuuren et al., 2011a) may result in lower  $\text{HNO}_3$  concentrations and thus reduce the secondary inorganic aerosol sink for  $\text{NH}_3$ . The impact of these processes on the atmospheric lifetimes and travel distances for  $\text{NH}_3$  and  $\text{N}_r$  in general, however, must be set against the expected (temperature-induced) increase in both non-stomatal resistance and in stomatal compensation point for  $\text{NH}_3$ , which would have opposite effects.

### 7.2 Regional and global projections for nitrogen deposition

Future trends in total (wet and dry) atmospheric  $\text{N}_r$  deposition can be simulated on the basis of CTM runs forced by climate and emission scenarios (Lamarque et al.,

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2005, 2013; Engardt and Langner, 2013; Simpson et al., 2014). At the regional scale, European climate/chemistry/deposition studies suggest that with current emission projections the main driver of future  $N_r$  deposition changes is the specified future emission change (Engardt and Langner, 2013; Simpson et al., 2014). These two studies both found significant reductions in oxidised N concentrations and deposition over Europe, and much smaller changes (both increases and decreases) in reduced N deposition, with climatic changes in having only moderate impact on total deposition. These two studies also demonstrated that the lack of sulfur and oxidised N in the future atmosphere would result in a much larger fraction of  $NH_x$  being present in the form of gaseous  $NH_3$ . Simpson et al. (2014) predicted a large increase in gaseous  $NH_3$  deposition in most of Europe, but with large corresponding decreases in aerosol  $NH_4^+$ . Although not the focus of their study, the change of  $NH_4^+$  to  $NH_3$ , while not greatly reducing the European export, would result in shorter transport distances within Europe with likely important impacts on the protection of sensitive ecosystems.

A separate recent sensitivity study has revealed that the effect of  $NH_4NO_3$  volatilisation near and in plant canopies lowers European surface concentrations of fine  $NO_3^-$  by typically 30 % at the annual average (Nemitz et al., 2014). At the same time it increases the effective  $NO_3^-$  deposition by a factor of four. While some models are now able to account for some of this effect (e.g. the EMEP model; Simpson et al., 2012), it is not included in the majority of models. However, this effect has not yet been projected into the future to quantify the impacts of changes in climate.

Hemispheric  $N_r$  deposition projections (Hedegaard et al., 2013) also tend to show that the impact of emission changes dominates and is in some areas (e.g. over Europe) up to an order of magnitude higher than the signal from climate change. Nonetheless, trends in total nitrogen ( $NH_x + NO_y$ ) deposition in parts of the Arctic and at low latitudes are dominated by climatic impacts. At the global scale, Lamarque et al. (2013) simulated large regional increases in  $N_r$  deposition in Latin America, Africa and parts of Asia (under some of the scenarios considered) by 2100. Increases in South Asia were predicted to be especially large, and were seen in all scenarios, with 2100 values more



than double those of 2000 in some scenarios. Region-averaged values under scenarios RCP2.6 and RCP8.5 were typically ~30–50 % larger in 2100 than the current values in any region globally.

Most of these studies to date do not account for the full range of global change impacts on surface exchange processes. Surface exchange in most chemistry transport models (CTMs) is generally much simplified in dry deposition (downward-only) modules (Flecharad et al., 2011) that cannot respond mechanistically to changes in the physical, chemical and biological drivers of stomatal, non-stomatal and soil sources or sinks. For example, multiplicative algorithms widely used to simulate  $G_s$  (Jarvis, 1976) are still the norm in these models, while photosynthesis-based approaches (e.g. Anav et al., 2012) would be needed to quantify the future impacts of rising  $CO_2$  and  $O_3$  on  $G_s$  and stomatal pollutant uptake (or release). Similarly, surface chemical interactions and their impact on non-stomatal sinks are not accounted for in CTMs. Indeed, Simpson et al. (2014) noted that modelling for especially  $NH_x$  components is limited by many factors, including process-uncertainties (Massad et al., 2010a; Flecharad et al., 2013), problems of sub-grid heterogeneity (e.g. Loubet et al., 2001, 2009), bi-directional exchange (Wichink-Kruit et al., 2012, Bash et al., 2013), and lack of necessary and accurate input data. As one example, it may be argued that such models do not account for a likely increase in the overall (stomatal and non-stomatal) surface resistance to  $NH_3$  deposition, some of which may be attributed to feed-backs: higher  $NH_3$  exposure leads to more alkaline surfaces and higher plant N uptake and a higher  $NH_3$  compensation point, with deposition a self-limiting process. Improved models which incorporate both better process descriptions and better input-data, are clearly needed to improve confidence in predictions of future N-deposition.

Two further examples of impacts of climate change can be given, both through new sources (or forcing) of emissions: the possibility of new shipping routes in the Arctic regions, and temperature-induced changes in ammonia emission factors. With regard to shipping, the rapid retreat of the Arctic sea has been one of the most dramatic features of recent decades (Comiso, 2012; Corbett et al., 2010). According to Corbett et

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al. (2010) the  $\text{NO}_x$  emissions from Arctic shipping in high growth scenarios will increase by a factor of  $\sim 4$  by 2050 compared to 2004, or almost a factor of  $\sim 14$  if high global shipping routes are diverted into Arctic areas. The impacts of these changes on the phyto-toxic ozone dose, (POD) and N-deposition have been explored on the regional scale using the EMEP MSC-W model (Simpson et al., 2012) by Tuovinen et al. (2013). As illustrated in Fig. 12, the impact of shipping emissions is concentrated along the Norwegian coast. Although the changes are not large, e.g.  $50 \text{ mg (N)/m}^2$ , these values are comparable to base-case deposition amounts, and are likely to be important for the sensitive ecosystems in Arctic Europe. These aspects, and also the results found for POD, are discussed further in Tuovinen et al. (2013).

Simpson et al. (2014) made a first estimate of the impact of such  $\text{NH}_3$  emission increases over Europe for year 2050 simulations. They explored the impact of both 20 and 30% increases in  $\text{NH}_3$  and calculated the exceedance of critical-levels (CL) for N. Comparison of these runs against the CL data (Fig. 13) shows that even a 30% increase in  $\text{NH}_3$  will not bring exceedances back to 2000s levels, but such climate-induced increases cause CL exceedances that are substantially larger than those of the standard 2050 emission scenario. Policy studies in Europe and elsewhere have been unaware of this hidden potential for increases in  $\text{NH}_3$  emissions. As noted by Sutton et al. (2013b), the approaches used to calculate and report  $\text{NH}_3$  emissions for both CTM modelling and policy assessments need complete revision to cope this new paradigm.

**8 The effects of climate and land use changes on the wet removal of nitrogen compounds from the atmosphere**

The removal of N compounds from the atmosphere and their deposition to land surface by precipitation is known as ‘wet deposition’. Future climate change will cause changes in annual precipitation with some areas of the world being subject to increases in precipitation and others to decreases. Kjellstrom et al. (2011) used an ensemble of 16

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regional climate models to show that in the 21st century the precipitation in northern Europe will increase and in the south of Europe it will decrease, with a zone in between where the change is uncertain. Changes in wet deposition of N will be related to future changes in precipitation. However the degree of increase or decrease in wet deposition can be expected to be smaller than changes to precipitation. The reason for this is that the supply of particulate matter in the atmosphere which can be wet deposited is itself controlled by precipitation. Historically, dryer years have been associated with higher levels of  $\text{NH}_4^+$  and  $\text{NO}_3^-$  particulate concentrations in air. Therefore decreases in deposition due to reduced precipitation are expected to be partially offset by higher concentrations of  $\text{NH}_4^+$  and  $\text{NO}_3^-$  in precipitation.

Certain atmospheric chemical transformations have reaction rates which are dependent on meteorological properties including temperature, humidity and the presence of cloud water. A particular example of this is the equilibrium reaction between ammonia gas and nitric acid vapour to form ammonium nitrate aerosol. The dissociation constant of ammonium nitrate is a strong function of temperature and varies by two orders of magnitude for typical ambient conditions (Seinfeld and Pandis, 1998). Higher temperatures result in a shift towards the gas phase resulting in lower concentrations of ammonium nitrate, a pollutant which is associated with long range transport and contributes to N deposition through wet deposition. Changes in general circulation of air will also result in different patterns in the long range transport of N compounds and the areas in which N is wet deposited. Studies of the long range transport of particulate matter show that the natural inter-annual variation in circulation has a strong influence on N aerosol concentrations (Vieno et al., 2014). Kryza et al. (2012) found that inter-annual variation in annual precipitation could account for changes of 17% and wind direction variation for 14% in total annual N deposition for two European countries. Climate change may therefore lead to a re-balancing in the contributions to N deposition of long range transport and local sources as well as the relative contributions of dry and wet deposition.

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An additional wet deposition mechanism by which N can be transferred to the surface is direct cloud droplet deposition. Most types of cloud form in the middle atmosphere and do not come into direct contact with the land surface. However, in mid-latitude regions the formation of orographic clouds in hill areas is a common occurrence due to the forced ascent and condensation of humid air. Such clouds are frequently short lived and the cloud droplets do not grow large enough to form into rain drops. However, where orographic cloud does come into contact with surface vegetation, the cloud water can be deposited to the surface by direct deposition driven by air turbulence. The efficiency of this mechanism depends critically on vegetation type. In grassland areas cloud deposition is generally a much less efficient mechanism for N deposition than wet deposition by precipitation. However in regions of forested hills, cloud deposition can be the dominant process for the input of nitrogen to sensitive upland ecosystems (Błaś et al., 2008). The impact of future climate change is expected to result in a shift in climatic zones and could cause the migration of forests to higher altitude areas which were previously above the tree line. The consequence of this would be large increases in inputs of nitrogen due to the effect of cloud deposition.

### 9 Effects of climate and land use changes on C-N responses in terrestrial ecosystems

The close linkage between the terrestrial C and N cycles implies that perturbations of the C cycle, such as the anthropogenic increase in atmospheric  $\text{CO}_2$  (and ensuing changes in plant production), man-made climate change (affecting the turnover rates of terrestrial C), or anthropogenic land-use change invariably have repercussions on the terrestrial N cycle (Zaehle, 2013). The level of understanding of these repercussions is generally low, owing to the lack of globally representative empirical studies and sufficiently tested global models (Zaehle and Dalmonech, 2011).

Observational evidence from ecosystem scale  $\text{CO}_2$  manipulation experiments consistently shows that the magnitude and persistence of  $\text{CO}_2$  fertilization strongly depend

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on the ability of the vegetation to increase its N acquisition (Finzi et al 2007; Palmroth et al 2006; Norby et al., 2010; Hungate et al., 2013). The sustained increase of vegetation production observed at some experimental sites was associated with increased root exudation and soil organic matter turnover, effectively redistributing N from soils to vegetation (Drake et al., 2011; Hofmockel et al., 2011). Other factors such as increases in N inputs from fixation generally played only a small role in forest ecosystems (Norby et al., 2010; Hofmockel and Schlesinger, 2007). There is mixed evidence concerning the response of ecosystem N losses to elevated CO<sub>2</sub>. The response of gaseous N losses (e.g. as N<sub>2</sub>O) to elevated CO<sub>2</sub> is dependent on the response of ecosystem N turnover under elevated CO<sub>2</sub> and generally leads to an increase in N<sub>2</sub>O emissions in ecosystems where N availability does not strongly limit plant growth (van Groenigen et al., 2011; Butterbach-Bahl and Dannenmenn, 2011). The quantitative understanding of the above responses is limited, because of the difficulty of measuring small changes in the ecosystem's N cycle, in particular against a large spatial and interannual variation of the ecosystem N fluxes.

In agreement with the experimental evidence, global modelling studies generally show a strong attenuating effect of the CO<sub>2</sub> fertilization on plant growth and land C storage due to reduced N<sub>r</sub> availability (Sokolov et al., 2008; Thornton et al., 2009). Future projections of N cycle models that accounted for varying terrestrial N sources and losses (Xu-Ri and Prentice, 2008; Zaehle et al., 2010a) showed a wide range of responses of the terrestrial N cycle to increasing elevated CO<sub>2</sub> (Fig. 1). This is due to diverging representation of important N cycle processes, in particular those controlling in- and outflows of N from the ecosystem and the coupling of the C and N stoichiometry in plants and soils (Zaehle and Dalmonech, 2011; Zaehle et al., 2014). The increase in terrestrial N by up to 11 Pg N (+ 10 %) during the period 1860–2100 in the LPX model was mostly determined by increasing biological N fixation under elevated CO<sub>2</sub> (Stocker et al., 2013). Over the same time period, the response of the O-CN model was determined by an increase of the vegetation and soil C : N ratios as well as increases in terrestrial N (3 Pg N; +2.5 %) due to reduced N losses (Zaehle et al., 2010b). The

projections by the CN-TEM model (Sokolov et al., 2008), which assumes that the total terrestrial N store is time-invariant, suggested an increase in terrestrial C between 1860 and 2100 by  $\sim 250$  Pg C simply due to a prescribed increase in vegetation C:N and redistribution of N from soils to vegetation.

In response to increasing temperature, enhanced decomposition of soil organic matter consistently increases gross and net N mineralisation (Bai et al., 2013; Rustad et al., 2001). Increased mineralisation is generally, but not always, associated with increases in nitrification, and  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  emissions. There is ambiguous evidence as to the response of N leaching losses, which in some cases increased and in others declined (Bai et al., 2013). Observed growth responses to warming are more diverse, partly owing to difficulties in measuring plant growth and its interannual variability (Rustad et al., 2001). In N-limited ecosystems, increased N mineralisation increases N uptake of vegetation, which causes a long-term fertilization effect in N limited forests (Melillo et al., 2002, 2011). In consequence, despite likely N losses due to warming, the higher C:N ratio in woody vegetation compared to C:N ratio of soil organic matter causes increased ecosystem carbon storage due to the redistribution of N from soil to vegetation (Melillo et al., 2011).

Global models include these mechanisms and consistently suggest an attenuation of the C loss under higher temperatures due to C-N cycle interactions. However, the available climate change projections vary widely in terms of their global N cycle response, partly owing to differences in magnitude and regional patterns of temperature and precipitation changes (Stocker et al., 2013). In general, soil N stocks tend to decline in future projections, due to increased soil N mineralisation and increased ecosystem N losses (Fig. 13). These losses range between 5 and 10 Pg N (roughly 5–10 %) between 1860 and 2100, depending on the model and scenario applied (Stocker et al., 2013; Zscheile et al., 2010a). Although regionally there are increases in vegetation N associated with the redistribution of N from soils to vegetation, the models project a decline in the global vegetation N store, partly related to declining tropical forest biomass. It is worth noting that the N redistribution effect due to climate warming has important implications

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for the carbon-cycle - climate interaction, which is generally thought to be positive, i.e. amplifying climate change (Gregory et al., 2009). In two studies, which either assumed a closed N cycle with no losses, or had small positive carbon-cycle climate feedback, the response of vegetation growth was strong enough to turn the carbon-cycle – climate interaction into a small negative feedback (Sokolov et al., 2008; Thornton et al., 2009), whereas in another study that described C-N interactions (Zaehle et al., 2010a), the carbon-climate interaction was reduced but remained positive.

The response of the C and N cycles to land-use changes are diverse, and depend on many details of the conversion process, such that it is difficult to establish generic patterns. Converting the land-use type of an ecosystem causes a pronounced disruption of the N cycle, because typically the vegetation N (and C), and sometime fractions of the litter layer and soil organic material, are removed. This causes a phase of reduced vegetation N uptake and enhanced N losses. Forest regrowth is typically associated with an early phase of vigorous tree growth and associated high plant N demands, leading to a conservative N cycle with high N accumulation rates compared to pastures and croplands and consequently reduced N losses (e.g., Davidson et al., 2007). Associated with the forest-to-cropland of grassland-forest conversion are typically declines in soil organic matter stocks (Guo and Gifford, 2002). However, the intricate processes of the N cycle can overrule these trends under particular conditions (Kirschbaum et al., 2008). On a decadal to century time-scale, afforestation and reforestation are therefore typically associated with reduced N<sub>2</sub>O emission and N as well as C accumulation, whereas the inverse is true to forest to cropland conversions Davidson et al 2007; Kirschbaum et al., 2013).

Not much is known about the large-scale N cycle consequences of land use change per se, partly owing to the simplistic representation of land use and land use change in most global models (Brovkin et al., 2013). Global model simulations suggest (Fig. 13) that the changes in N storage will largely follow the trends in the C cycle (Zaehle, 2013; Stocker et al., 2013; Brovkin et al., 2013), implying that scenarios will lead to a decline in the vegetation N storage because of the removal of the above-ground

vegetation (Fig. 14), and vice versa. Using scenarios in which wide-spread increases in agricultural and pasture areas occur at the expense of forests, global soil C stocks decline with land-use change. However, given that croplands are typically extensively fertilized, the C : N ratio of the soil is often lower, given the higher N content of plant matter, such that the soil retains more N after conversion. The LPX model estimates this conversion effect to be in the order of 2 PgN for the RCP2.6 and 8.5 scenarios (Stocker et al., 2013). These estimates should be treated with due caution, given that these models do not account for a lot of the detailed processes, which affect in particular the change of soil N with time, such as the age-structure and age-dependent development of forests, or the effects of cropland management besides fertilizer additions.

Associated with the projected changes in the terrestrial N and C pools (Fig. 14) are large projected changes in the future net ecosystem N and C balance. Of these fluxes, the change in terrestrial N<sub>2</sub>O emission is likely the most climatically relevant factor. Figure 15 shows that projections of the effect of increasing atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> on the N<sub>2</sub>O emissions differ more strongly between models than alternative plausible scenarios of atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub>. This difference reflects the large impact of alternative hypotheses about the likely changes of biological N fixation with elevated CO<sub>2</sub>, which are large in LPX, but insignificant in the O-CN model. In O-CN, this leads to a progressively more conservative N cycle with reduced N losses, as vegetation growth and N sequestration increases due to CO<sub>2</sub> fertilization. Climate change consistently increases N<sub>2</sub>O emissions from terrestrial ecosystem. However, the magnitude of this change is both dependent on the model used (with the LPX model having a higher sensitivity to climate change (Ciais et al., 2013), and the particular climate change scenario. An assessment of the effect of diverging model projections of climate change patterns for a given climate change scenario based on the LPX model revealed large uncertainty in the response of the terrestrial N<sub>2</sub>O emissions, which is nonetheless smaller than the differences across alternative climate change scenarios (Stocker et al., 2013). Land use change per se has only little influence on the terrestrial N<sub>2</sub>O emissions. However, the historical increase in N fertilizer use has led to a significant increase in the terrestrial

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N source (Zaehle et al., 2011; Stocker et al., 2013). Importantly, there is a strong interaction between the climate response of terrestrial N<sub>2</sub>O emission and N fertilization, as the rate of N<sub>2</sub>O production for a given addition of fertilizer increases with climate warming (Butterbach-Bahl and Dannenmann, 2011; Stocker et al., 2013).

## 10 Discussion and policy implications of the responses of the nitrogen cycle to global change

### 10.1 Emissions and cycling

The changes in fluxes of N within the global cycle discussed in the main sections of this paper are summarised in Fig. 16. Biological fixation of molecular nitrogen (BNF) is expected to increase during the 21st century both in the oceans (120 to 166 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup>) and terrestrial environments (140 to 168 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup>) due mainly to changes in climate. Anthropogenic emissions of NH<sub>3</sub> are projected to increase substantially, from 60 to 135 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup>. The increase has two components, first the effect of climate, in which higher temperature increase terrestrial emissions and second the effect of increases in N<sub>r</sub> fixed by anthropogenic activity in part due to increased demand for food, driven by increases in both global population and changes in diet (especially global meat consumption per capita). By contrast, emissions of combustion related NO<sub>x</sub> are projected to decline as the widespread use of control technology (catalytic converters on vehicles and SCR on industrial plant) more than compensate for increases in transport and power production.

The changes in emissions are of course spatially very variable, reflecting both the current global hotspots of N<sub>r</sub> use in Europe, North American and Asia and the expected increases in South and East Asia, Africa and South America where the largest growth in N<sub>r</sub> use is expected.

Not all fluxes are projected to be larger at the end of the century, with smaller emissions of NO<sub>x</sub> from anthropogenic sources and reduced emission of NH<sub>3</sub> from the

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oceans ( $5.7$  declining to  $1.7 \text{ Tg N yr}^{-1}$ ) due to the effects of ocean acidification more than compensating the effects of higher water temperatures.

The two large cycles of  $N_r$  in terrestrial soils and in the oceans both increase substantially,  $240$  to  $320 \text{ Tg N yr}^{-1}$  for soils and  $230$  to  $290 \text{ Tg N yr}^{-1}$  in the oceans (Fig. 16).

## 10.2 Effects of changes in atmospheric composition on long range transport of $N_r$

The removal of sulfur from the atmospheres over Europe and North America has changed the aerosol composition in these regions, with the inorganic aerosol  $N_r$  dominated by  $(\text{NH}_4)_2\text{SO}_4$  prior to 1990 and by  $\text{NH}_4\text{NO}_3$  since then. Cool season episodes with high particulate matter (PM) concentrations occur widely in Europe in which  $\text{NH}_4\text{NO}_3$  is a major contributor (Vieno et al., 2014). Likewise in Beijing,  $\text{NH}_4\text{NO}_3$  is important in winter PM episodes, contributing on average approximately 30 % of the  $\text{PM}_{10}$  mass (Sun et al., 2013). The change in aerosol composition has changed the atmospheric lifetime, deposition footprint and transport distance of much of the emitted nitrogen. Aerosols comprising  $(\text{NH}_4)_2\text{SO}_4$  are largely non-volatile, once formed the aerosol stays in aerosol form until scavenged from the atmosphere by rain. By contrast,  $\text{NH}_4\text{NO}_3$  is volatile, and close to terrestrial surfaces the deposition of the gaseous  $\text{HNO}_3$  and  $\text{NH}_3$  to the surface drive the evaporation of the aerosol, especially in warm daytime conditions. These effects lead to increases in the rate of removal of  $\text{NH}_4\text{NO}_3$  relative to  $(\text{NH}_4)_2\text{SO}_4$  and a reduction in the lifetime and travel distance of  $N_r$  with time during the last 20 years in Europe and North America as the sulfur has been removed from emissions. The trends of increasing importance of  $\text{NO}_3^-$  aerosols is projected to continue through to the end of this century, with  $\text{NH}_4\text{NO}_3$  becoming a dominant inorganic component over many regions, despite reductions in  $\text{NO}_x$  emission due to the increased availability of  $\text{NH}_3$  (Hauglustaine et al., 2014). These changes raise the importance of control measures for emissions of both ammonia and nitrogen oxides.

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### 10.3 Costs

Emissions of  $N_r$  from farming activities to the atmosphere, soils and freshwaters are large per unit area relative to the fluxes involved in natural ecosystem BNF and are a substantial contributor to the emission and deposition hot spots, damage to ecosystems and effects on human health. The processing of  $N_r$  in soils and vegetation lead to a wide range of mobile gas and solution phase species and leaks to the wider environment. Only a small fraction of the  $N_r$  used in agriculture is consumed by humans in food, most is wasted either in reactive forms or transformed back to  $N_2$ . Current societal costs due to these losses of  $N_r$  to the environment are very large. Recent cost-benefit analyses of  $N_r$  have been attempted for the Chesapeake Bay in the US (Birch et al., 2011), for Europe (Brink et al., 2011) and as a broad overview for the US (Compton et al., 2011). Table 3 shows the ranges of estimated societal costs per  $N_r$  component loss and impact, based on the 'willingness to pay' method for EU27 (Brink et al., 2011). Based on these costs, the most important component of the  $N_r$  cycle is the emission of  $NO_x$ , due to the health impacts of both particulates and ozone. Ammonia is also important, but the health effects are less certain. There is a large uncertainty for the cost of  $N_r$  enhancement of surface- and groundwater. Brink et al. (2011) estimated that the agricultural benefits of  $N_r$  in Europe are €25 and €130 billion per year, while the total environmental costs based on the values in Table 3 is €13 and €65 billion per year and are approximately half the estimated benefits.

### 10.4 Policies to reduce the impacts of $N_r$

The overall mass balance for nitrogen compounds is constrained by mass conservation (what goes up must come down), thus the effect of the deposition rate by itself does not change the amount of  $N_r$  deposited globally, but the transport distance of the different compounds and regional import/export budgets are changed by changes in chemistry and deposition of the  $N_r$  forms present. Only changes to the emissions (and

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to a lesser extent denitrification losses to  $N_2$  during atmospheric transport) affect the total  $N_r$  amount deposited.

In Europe and the US there are examples of successful policies that led to the reduction of  $NO_x$  emission, through the Air Quality standards for  $O_3$  and  $NO_2$  in the US and through UN-ECE  $NO_x$  and Gothenburg protocols in Europe and large combustion plant directives of the EU. Successful technologies include the three-way catalysts in vehicle exhausts, the Selective Catalytic Converter systems in industry and energy production. Emissions of  $NO_x$  declined by 40 % in 2009 relative to 1990 in EU27 (EEA, 2012).  $NH_3$  policies have been less successful in Europe and the US. In the US there are no policies while in Europe the Gothenburg protocol (national  $NO_x$  and  $NH_3$  emission ceilings) has led to modest (10 %) reductions (EEA, 2012). There are, however, two countries that implemented substantial  $NH_3$  abatement measures and reduced emissions by 40 % in Denmark and 70 % in the Netherlands. Abatement technologies included: low emission housing systems, coverage of manure storage facilities and application of slurry injection technologies. Furthermore, total N inputs in agriculture were reduced by reducing N in feed and by reducing mineral fertilizer application.

The general options of policies to reduce the cascade effect of  $N_r$  are (Erisman et al., 2005):

1. Limit  $N_r$  production or limit import of N through animal concentrates
2. Increase  $N_r$  use efficiency
3. More evenly distribute N production over the country, over the EU or the world
4. Convert  $N_r$  to  $N_2$  catalytically or by stimulating de-nitrification.

Substantial reductions in  $N_r$  production by fossil fuels may be achieved by use of renewable energy such as solar, wind and water technologies. The use of biomass as an alternative energy source is not an effective strategy to reduce emissions of  $N_r$  (Erisman et al., 2008). Consumer changes in diet and lifestyle present potentially effective measures to reduce emissions, but have proved difficult to implement. Reductions in

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In intensive agricultural areas increasing NUE can be very effective in the short term, whereas in areas with low N inputs closing the nutrient balances is of major importance. The same holds for the difference in scale: globally the closing of nutrient balances has highest priority, whereas on the local scale other priorities might be set. The main target should be to optimise food production in the world and energy consumption with the lowest possible environmental consequences.

Policy instruments are needed to increase NUE. Sutton et al. (2013b) proposed increases in NUE of 20 % in agricultural N<sub>r</sub> excess areas of the world to reduce the effects of N<sub>r</sub> on human health, climate and ecosystems. This would represent a first step to work towards a global policy of nutrient management. However, agricultural subsidies and trade restrictions differ greatly between countries and regions. Such realities distort trade and complicate the introduction of measures designed to promote environmental protection through increases nitrogen use efficiency.

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**Table 1.** Global terrestrial contributions to biological N fixation in 2000. Values in Tg N per year with the range of estimates in brackets.

Agricultural system or ecosystem	Organism	Annual N fixation (Tg yr <sup>-1</sup> ) and range	References
Grain legumes	Legume rhizobia	21 (10–21)	Herridge et al. (2008); Smil (1999)
Forage legumes	Legume rhizobia	18.5 (12–25)	Herridge et al. (2008)
Rice	Azolla	5 (4–6)	Herridge et al. (2008); Smil (1999)
Other croplands	Endophytic and free living bacteria	3.5	Herridge et al. (2008)
Tropical savanas (used for agriculture)	Endophytic and free living bacteria	12 (5–42)	Cleveland et al. (1999); Herridge et al. (2008)
Non agricultural ecosystems	Legume rhizobia and free living bacteria and algae	128 (44–290)	Cleveland et al. (1999); Galloway et al. (2004); Vitousek et al. (2013)
Total		188 (77–387)	



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**Table 2.** Summary of future impacts of factors affecting marine nitrogen fixation.

Factor	Effect on N <sub>2</sub> fixation
CO <sub>2</sub> increase (and decrease in pH)	+ 35 to 121 % by 2100
Temperature increase leading to expansion of diazotroph habitat	+ 27 %
Temperature increase leading to faster enzyme activity	+
Stratification leading to shortage of nutrients in surface waters	+
Decreasing solar irradiance due to increased cloud cover	–
Dust containing iron	+ or –
Increase in oxygen minimum zones	+
Increase in nitrogen export from rivers	–
Increase in deposition of reactive nitrogen	–
Improved measurement methods	+
Phosphorus	Limiting nutrient

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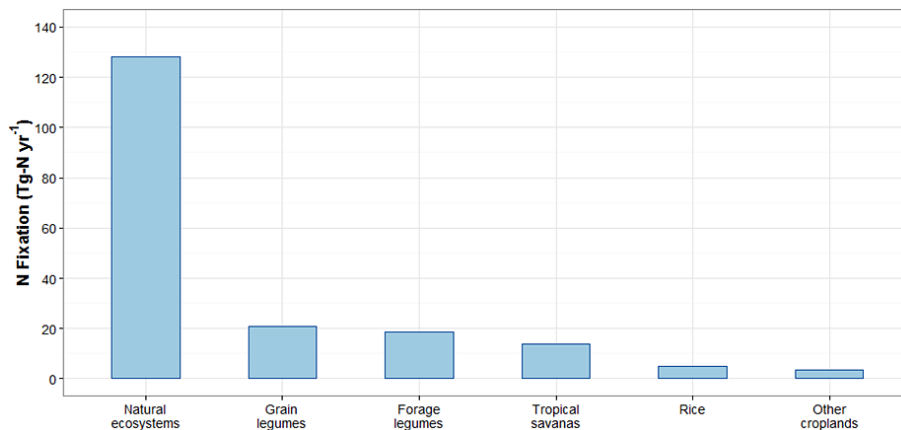


**Table 3.** Societal costs of nitrogen emissions in ranges based on Brink et al. (2011). Units are euro/kg  $N_r$ .

$N_r$ flux	Health	Ecosystem/coastal systems	crop decline	$O_3$	Climate	Total
$NO_x$ -N to air	10–30	2–10		1–3		13–43
$NH_3$ -N to air	1–20	2–10				3–30
$N_r$ to water	0–4	5–50				5–54
$N_2O$ -N to air	1–3				1–15	2–18

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**Figure 1.** Summary of estimated global terrestrial contributions to biological N fixation in 2000. Values in Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup> (based on Table 1 and activity projections).

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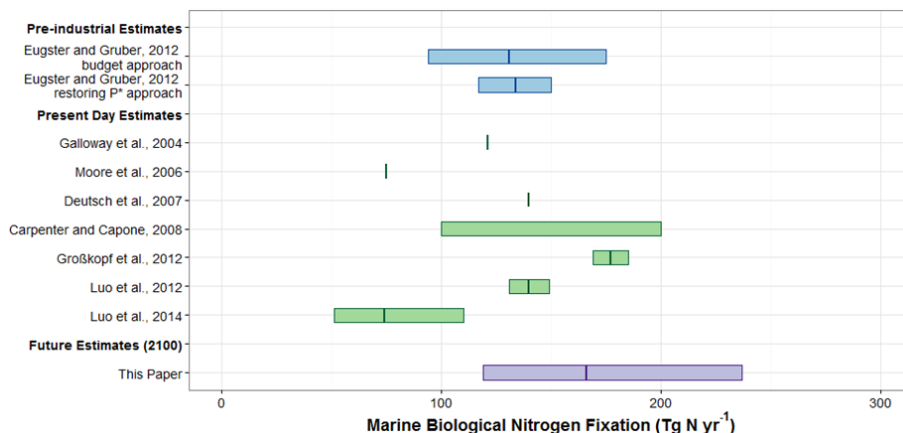
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**Figure 2.** Summary of pre-industrial (blue), present (green), and future (purple) estimates of marine biological nitrogen fixation (BNF). Estimate from Carpenter and Capone (2008) represents their summary of the range presented in the literature, and includes no midpoint. Luo et al., 2012 values are arithmetic mean  $\pm$  standard error, so range limits may not be directly comparable to other estimate range limits. Estimates for fixation by *Trichodesmium* alone by Barcelos e Ramos et al. (2007) (60–85 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup> in 2005, 900–128 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup> by year 2100) and Hutchins et al. (2009) (80–100 Tg N yr<sup>-1</sup> by 2100) are included in text but not presented in figure because the estimates in the figure are for total marine BNF.

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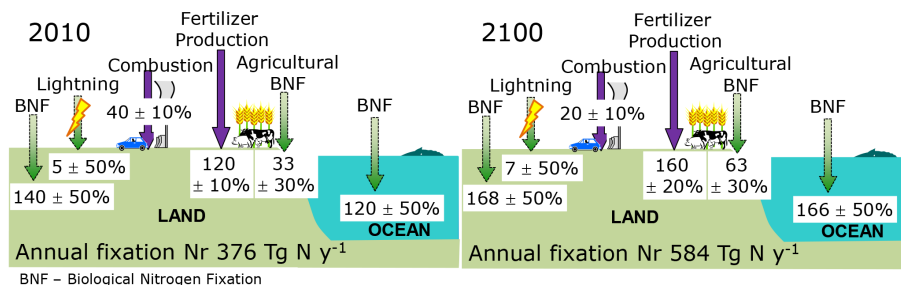
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**Figure 3.** Global biological nitrogen fixation in natural ecosystems and by human activity in 2010 (left) and 2100 (right).

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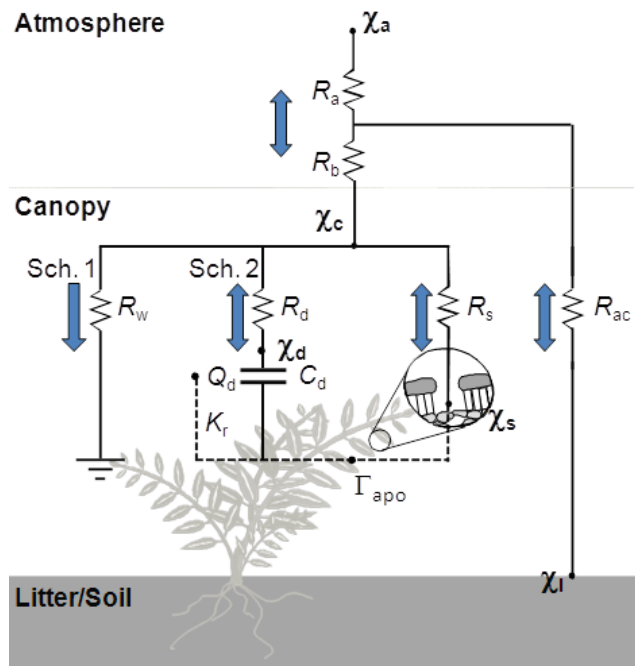
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**Figure 4.** A resistance analogue of  $\text{NH}_3$  exchange including cuticular, stomatal and pathways to soil (Sutton et al., 2013b). Two methods for cuticular exchange schemes are shown: 1, Steady-state uptake according to a varying cuticular resistance ( $R_w$ ); 2, Dynamic exchange with a reservoir of  $\text{NH}_4^+$  using a varying capacitance ( $C_d$ ) and charge ( $Q_d$ ). Within-canopy transfer ( $R_{ac}$ ), cuticular adsorption/desorption ( $R_d$ ) and stomatal exchange ( $R_s$ ). Also shown are the air concentration ( $\chi_a$ ), cuticular concentration ( $\chi_d$ ), stomatal compensation point ( $\chi_s$ ), litter/soil surface concentration ( $\chi_l$ ) and the canopy compensation point ( $\chi_c$ ).

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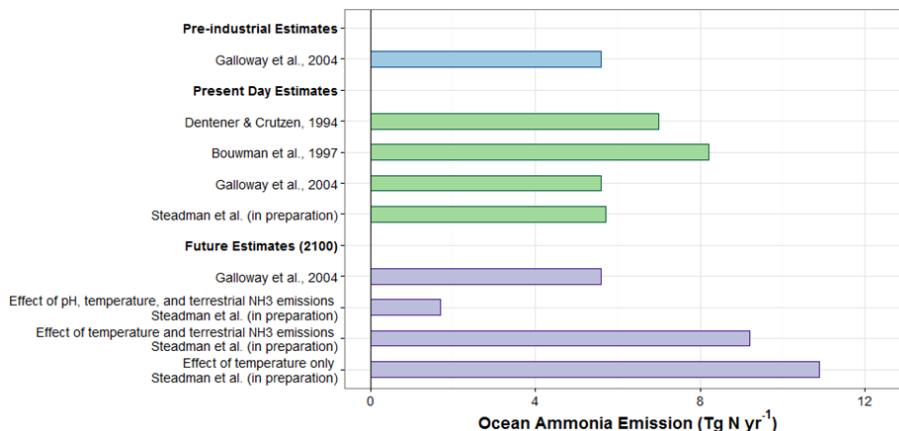
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**Figure 5.** Summary of pre-industrial (blue), present (green), and future (purple, for 2100) estimates of marine ammonia flux from ocean to atmosphere.

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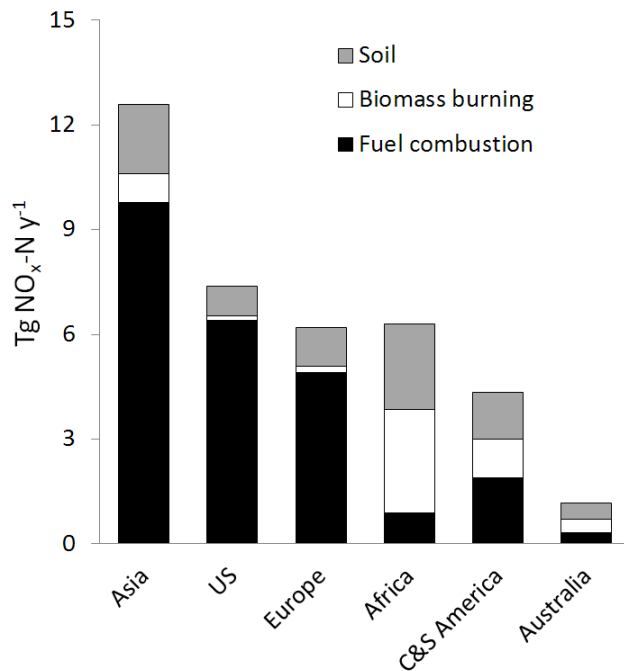
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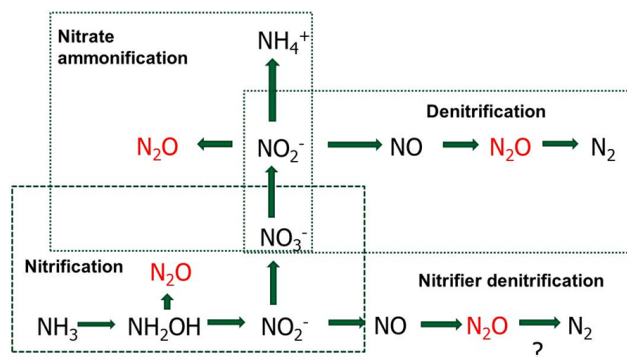


**Figure 6.** Spatial distribution of NO<sub>x</sub> emissions for the year 2000 from the main sources: Fossil and biofuel combustion, biomass burning and soils and main region. Data are the a posteriori data (top down and bottom-up NO<sub>x</sub> emission inventory from Jaeglé et al. (2005)). (Jaeglé's data were grouped into Asia = East Asia, Mid Asia, SE Asia/India, Japan in Jaeglé et al. (2005); Africa = S and N equatorial Africa and S Africa).



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**Figure 7.** A schematic diagram of the microbial processes contributing to N<sub>2</sub>O production (adapted from Baggs, 2008).

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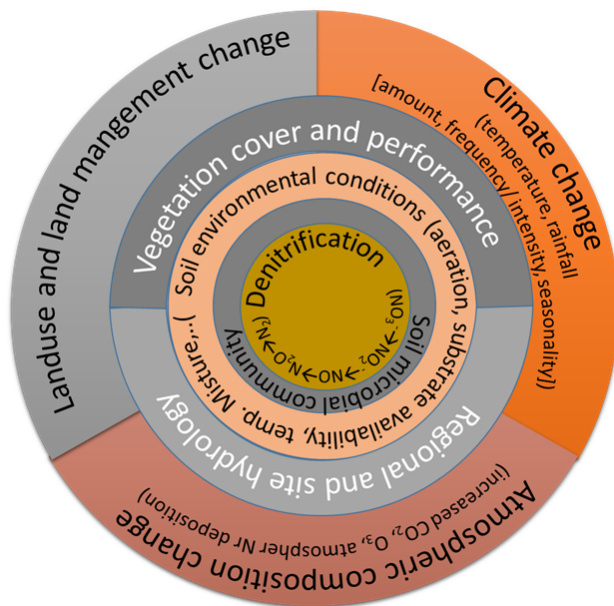
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**Figure 8.** A summary of the processes influencing the responses of NO and N<sub>2</sub>O emissions to changes in climate and land use.

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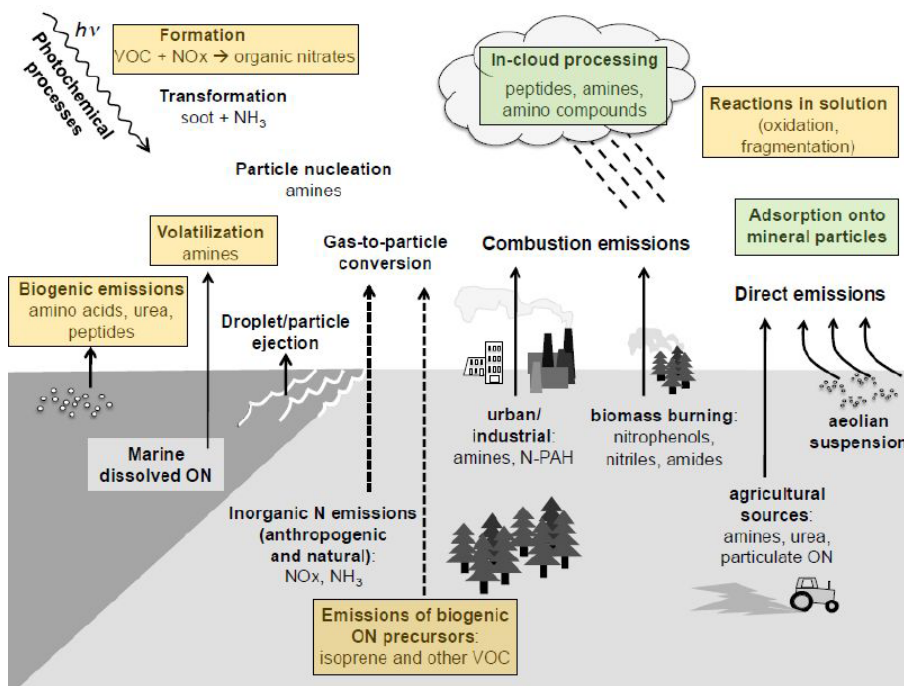
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**Figure 9.** Processes where increased temperatures would be expected to increase atmospheric ON (orange) or decrease ON (green); no colour code implies uncertain effects. Adapted from Jickells et al. (2013).

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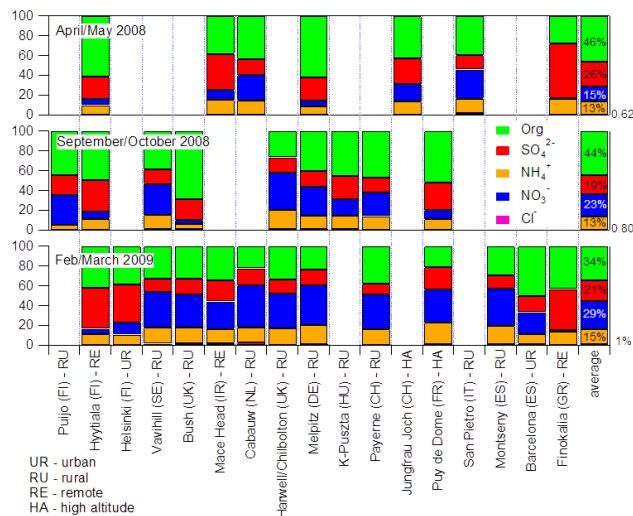
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**Figure 10.** Relative (non-refractory) submicron aerosol composition measured with an Aerosol Mass Spectrometer (AMS) network during three pan-European EMEP/EUCAARI campaigns. The sites are arranged from North to South.

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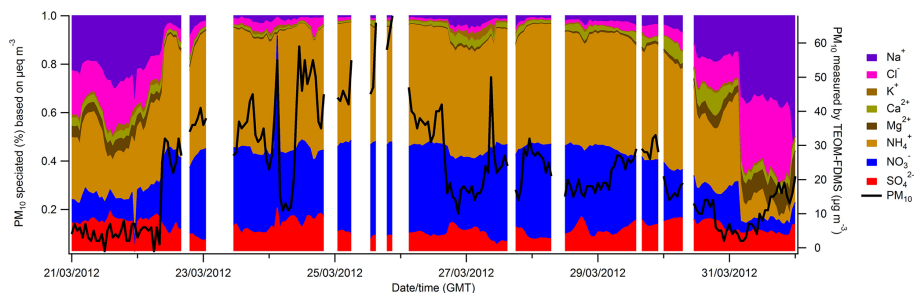
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**Figure 11.** Relative  $\text{PM}_{10}$  water soluble aerosol composition during an example pollution event observed at a rural Scottish EMEP site (Auchencorth Moss).

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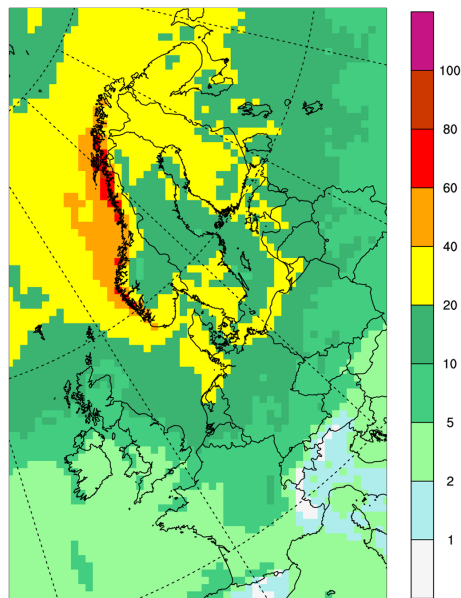
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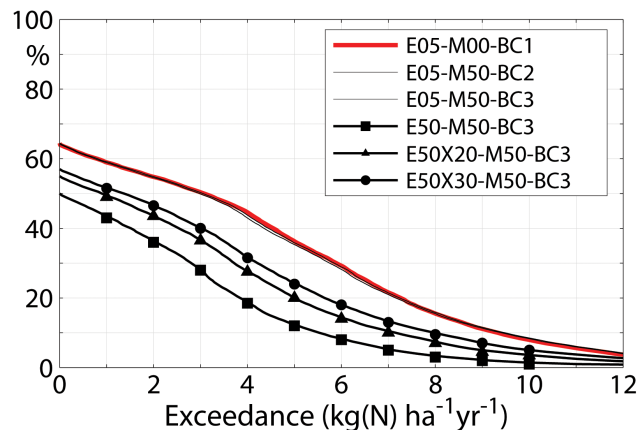
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**Figure 12.** Increases in total  $N_r$  deposition ( $\text{mg m}^{-2}$ ) due to increased Arctic shipping emissions, including diversion routes in 2030. Results are relative to a 2030 base-case. Calculations from EMEP MSC-W model, redrawn from Tuovinen et al. (2013).

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**Figure 13.** Frequency distribution of exceedances of the Critical Levels for eutrophying Nitrogen in Europe (EU28+). The red line (E05-M00-BC1) represents a year 2000 base-case and the E50-M50-BC3 scenario represents year 2050 with current emission estimates. The E50X20 and E50X30 scenarios illustrate calculations with 20 and 30% extra  $\text{NH}_3$  emission due to climate-induced evaporation. See Simpson et al., 2014 for more details.

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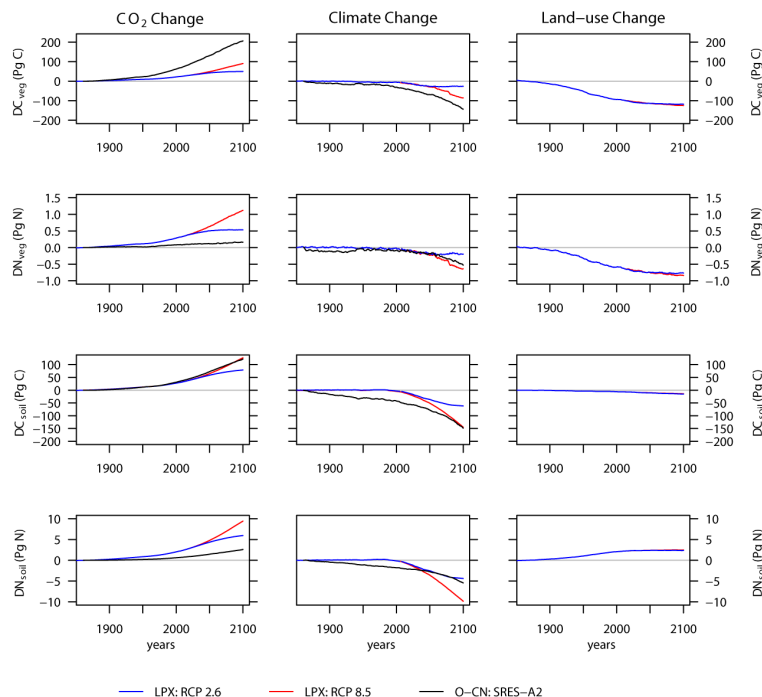
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**Figure 14.** Responses of the terrestrial vegetation and soil C and N pools to projected changes of the atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> burden, climate, and land-use between 1860 and 2100, as simulated by two global terrestrial biosphere models (LPX, Stocker et al., 2013; and O-CN, Zaehle et al., 2010a). The LPX simulations are based on the climate change projections of HadGEM2-ES model using atmospheric greenhouse gas and land-use forcing for the RCP2.6 and 8.5 scenarios. The O-CN simulations have been driven by climate change projections of the IPSL-CM4 model using the atmospheric greenhouse gas forcing of the SRES-A2 scenario.

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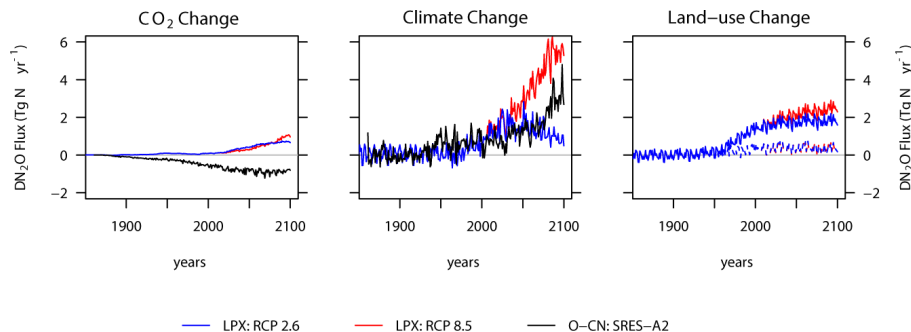
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**Figure 15.** Change in terrestrial  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  emissions from pre-industrial conditions to projected changes of the atmospheric  $\text{CO}_2$  burden, climate, and land-use, as simulated by the two global terrestrial biosphere models (LPX and O-CN), as in Fig. 13. Dashed lines in the land-use change panel refer to projected  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  emission without the change in fertilizer inputs associated with the RCP scenarios (Stocker et al., 2013).

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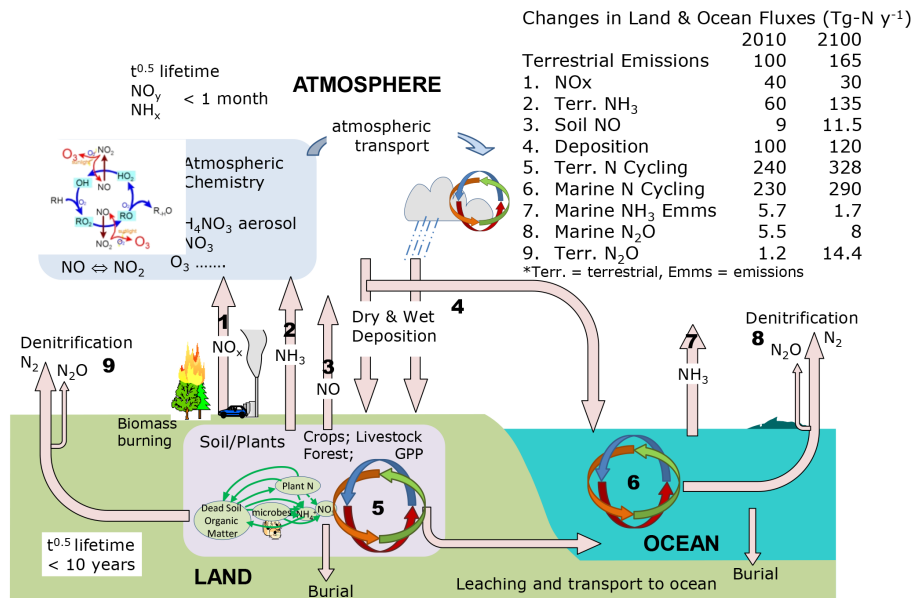
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**Figure 16.** Changes in the major fluxes and in the terrestrial, marine and atmospheric processing of reactive nitrogen (N<sub>r</sub>) between 2010 and 2100, adapted from Fowler et al., 2013).

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