

Dear authors of “Evaporation loss estimation of river-lake continuum of arid inland river: Evidence from stable isotopes”, I had the pleasure to read your paper and in the following I provide some comments and suggestions aimed at improving your paper in a potential revision. I think that your paper has potential to advance the application and hydrological assessments using stable isotope tracing techniques to quantitatively estimate the evaporation loss from a flowing river system in the Shiyang River Basin, Northwest China. In this manuscript it is a key result that the evaporative loss of storage reservoirs (lakes, dams) and flowing river is calculated separately, which clarifies the priorities of future water management in arid and semi-arid regions and also would be a good addition to the field of water budgets in arid and semi-arid regions. Having said that, I have some suggestions you could consider incorporating into a revised paper:

Major comments:

1. Section 3.3: I would recommend adding more information on the calculations performed using the Hydrocalculator. I further encourage the authors to add a table showing the input parameters used for each section and explain in the main text how these values have been derived.

2. Section 5.1: The author should clarify the specific estimation error between δD and $\delta^{18}O$. More evidence/calculations should be provided in terms of the errors.

3. Section 5.2.3: It's great to run sensitivity tests of the calculated evaporation loss to the model input variables. However, the authors only analyzed the sensitivity of temperature, humidity, outflow water and precipitation. Please add the sensitivity analysis of inflow water to the model.

4. The paper should also be thoroughly edited for language, as I detected many odd wordings and grammatical errors. Some sentences are not clear and sometimes convey incorrect and confusing messages for readers.

Minor comments:

1. Lines 127-132: The datasets or sources of temperature and humidity used in the main text should be clarified.

2. Line 146: the "b" of "basin" should be capitalized.

4. Line 188: When using the abbreviation (C-G), it should be marked at the first occurrence of its full name.

5. Line 262: "temperatures" should be "temperature".

6. Line 281, 286: the "o" of "oasis" should be capitalized.

7. Line 282: "sampling O3 and O4" should be " sampling points O3 and O4".

8. Lines 312: "SWL" refers to the surface water lines?

9. Line 315: the "m" of "mountain" should be capitalized.

10. Line 318: " the lower relative humidity " should be " the lower the relative humidity ".

11. Line 325, 337: Citation format is not corrected.

12. Line 337: "point" should be "pointed".

13. Line 377: "enriched" should be "depleted".

14. Line 395: It might be more appropriate to revise "the water we collect downstream" to "the water collected downstream".

15. Line 427: There is no Fig. 8 in the manuscript.

16. Line 429: the "e" of "evaporation" should be capitalized.

17. Line 437, 438: The abscissa title is inconsistent with the description of Fig. 7.

18. Line 450: "are" should be "is".

19. Line 483: "estimation" should be "evaporation".