

ANALYSIS OF NITROGEN AND PHOSPHORUS IN SETU LAGOON,  
TERENGGANU, SOUTH CHINA SEA.

CHIN HUA LIN

DEPARTMENT OF MARINE SCIENCE  
UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE  
SCHOOL OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE  
2005

KO181 U

LP 10 FST 2 2005



1100034621

## Distribution of nitrogen and phosphorus in setiu lagoon, Terengganu, South China Sea / Chung Wun Nei.



PERPUSTAKAAN

KOLEJ UNIVERSITI SAINS & TEKNOLOGI MALAYSIA  
21030 KUALA TERENGGANU

1100034621

**1100034621**

Lihat sebelah

DISTRIBUTION OF NITROGEN AND PHOSPHORUS IN SETIU LAGOON,  
TERENGGANU, SOUTH CHINA SEA.

By

Chung Wun Nei

Research Report submitted in partial fulfillment of  
the requirement of the degree of  
Bachelor of Science (Marine Biology)

Department of Marine Science  
Faculty of Science and Technology  
KOLEJ UNIVERSITI SAINS DAN TEKNOLOGI MALAYSIA  
2005

**1100034621**

This project report should be cited as:

Chung, W. N .2005. Distribution of Nitrogen and Phosphorus in Setiu Lagoon, Terengganu, South China Sea. Undergraduate Thesis, Bachelor of Science in Marine Biology, Faculty of Science and Technology, Kolej Universiti Sains dan Teknologi Malaysia, Terengganu. 107p.

No part of this project report may be reproduced by any mechanical, photographic, or electronic process, or in the form of phonographic recording, nor may it be stored in a retrieval system, transmitted, or otherwise copies for public or private use, without written permission from the author and supervisor(s) of the project.



# KOLEJ UNIVERSITI SAINS DAN TEKNOLOGI MALAYSIA [KUSTEM]

Mengabang Telipot  
21030 Kuala Terengganu

## PENGAKUAN DAN PENGESAHAN LAPORAN PROJEK PENYELIDIKAN I DAN II

Adalah ini diakui dan disahkan bahawa laporan penyelidikan bertajuk:

**Distribution Of Nitrogen And Phosphorus In Setiu Lagoon, Terengganu, South China Sea** oleh **Chung Wun Nei UK 6403** telah diperiksa dan semua pembetulan yang disarankan telah dilakukan. Laporan ini dikemukakan kepada Jabatan Sains Samudera sebagai memenuhi sebahagian daripada keperluan memperolehi Ijazah Sarjana Muda Sains (Biologi Marin), Fakulti Sains dan Teknologi, Kolej Universiti Sains dan Teknologi Malaysia.

Disahkan oleh:

PROF. DR. LAW AH THEEM  
Pensyarah  
Penyelia Utama Jabatan Perikanan dan Sains Samudera  
Nama: Fakulti Sains dan Teknologi  
Cop Rasmi: Kolej Universiti Sains dan Teknologi Malaysia  
21030 Mengabang Telipot  
Kuala Terengganu.

Tarikh: 21/3/05

DR. AHMAD SHAMSUDDIN B. AHMAD  
Ketua  
Jabatan Sains Samudera  
Nama:  
Cop rasmi:  
Fakulti Sains dan Teknologi  
Kolej Universiti Sains dan Teknologi Malaysia  
21030 Kuala Terengganu

Tarikh: 21/3/05

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thank you to Prof. Dr. Law Ah Theem, for your guidance and trust and your solid advice. Thank you for the opportunity and invaluable assistance.

I am very thankful for the cooperation and help from dedicated Oceanography laboratory assistants throughout this project. The facilities provided by faculty of Science and Technology were a great importance in completing this project.

I would like to express my thanks to my supportive friends; Mr. Chuah Lai Fatt, Mr. Yew Wooi Meng, Mr. Chin Kam Yew and Mr. Yong Jaw Chuen for their positive ideas and valuable support.

Beside this, I wanted to take this golden opportunity to express thanks to my family for their moral and financial support. Special thanks to Mr. Lee Chun Hoo for his patient and help in solving the problems I met when completing this project.

Finally, thanks to all individuals that have contributed in this project.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>PAGE</b>
<b>TITLE PAGE</b>	i
<b>APPROVAL FORM</b>	ii
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	iii
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	iv
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>	viii
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b>	ix
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS / SYMBOLS</b>	xi
<b>LIST OF APPENDICES</b>	xii
<b>ABSTRACT</b>	xiii
<b>ABSTRACT</b>	xiv
<b>CHAPTER 1</b>	
1.0    Introduction	1
1.1    Objectives	4
<b>CHAPTER 2</b>	
2.0    Literature Review	5
2.1    Sources of Nutrients Inputs in the Water	5
2.1.1 Sources of Nitrogen	5
2.1.2 Sources of Phosphorus	6
2.2.3 Sources of Total Organic carbon	6
2.2    Nitrogen Compounds in Water	7

2.3 Phosphorus Compounds in Water	11
2.4 Redfield Ratio in Water	15
2.5 Impact of Nutrients on Environments and Living Organisms	15

## CHAPTER 3

3.0 Methodology	18
3.1 Location of Sampling Sites	18
3.2 Hydrological Parameters	21
3.3 Glassware	21
3.4 Sampling Techniques	21
3.5 Analytical Techniques	21
3.5.1 Dissolved Nitrogen Analysis	22
3.5.1.1 Total Ammonium Analysis	22
3.5.1.1.1 Procedure for Total Ammonium Analysis	23
3.5.1.1.2 Preparation for the Standard Curve of Ammonium	23
3.5.1.1.3 Reagents for Ammonium Analysis	24
3.5.1.2 Total Dissolved Nitrogen Analysis	25
3.5.1.2.1 Procedure for Total Dissolved Nitrogen Analysis	26
3.5.1.2.2 Preparation for Standard Solution of Nitrite	29
3.5.1.2.3 Preparation of the Reduction Column	29
3.5.1.2.4 Reactivation of Cadmium-Copper Fillings	30
3.5.1.2.5 Recovery Test of Total Dissolved Nitrogen Analysis	31
3.5.1.2.6 Reagents for Total Nitrogen Analysis	31
3.5.2 Dissolved Phosphorus Analysis	34

3.5.2.1	Orthophosphate Analysis	34
3.5.2.1.1	Procedure of Orthophosphate Analysis	35
3.5.2.1.2	Preparation for the Standard Curve of Orthophosphate	35
3.5.2.1.3	Reagents for Orthophosphate Analysis	36
3.5.2.2	Total Phosphorus Analysis	37
3.5.2.2.1	Procedure for Total Phosphorus Analysis	37
3.5.2.2.2	Recovery Test for Total Phosphate Analysis	39
3.5.2.2.3	Reagents for Total Phosphorus Analysis	39
3.5.2	Total Organic Carbon	40
3.5.2.1	Procedure of Orthophosphate Analysis	40
3.5.2.1	Reagents for Total Organic Carbon Analysis	41
3.6	Analysis	42
3.6.1	Data Compilation	42
3.6.2	Statistical Analysis	42

## **CHAPTER 4**

4.0	Results	43
4.1	Location of Sampling Sites	43
4.2	Hydrological Parameters	43
4.3	Dissolved Nitrogen Distribution	44
4.3.1	Total ammonium	44
4.3.2	Nitrite	47
4.3.3	Total nitrogen	50

4.4	Dissolved Nitrogen Distribution	53
4.4.1	Orthophosphate	53
4.4.2	Total Phosphorus	56
4.5	Total Organic Carbon	59

## **CHAPTER 5**

5.0	Discussion	62
5.1	First sampling	69
5.2	Second sampling	69
5.3	Third sampling	71
5.4	Nitrogen And Phosphorus Ratio	73
5.5	Chlorophyll <i>a</i> and Primary Productivity	75
5.6	Mean N:P ratio	78
5.7	The relationship between nitrogen and phosphorus	80

## **CHAPTER 6**

6.0	Conclusion	83
-----	------------	----

<b>REFERENCES</b>	85
-------------------	----

<b>APPENDICES</b>	90
-------------------	----

<b>CURRICULUM VITAE</b>	107
-------------------------	-----

## **LIST OF TABLES**

	<b>PAGE</b>
Table 2.1      Ambient and safety level of substance in seawater.	11
Table 3.1      Date and season of Setiu Lagoon sampling.	19
Table 3.2      Range of hydrological parameter readings during the first, second and third sampling periods.	20
Table 3.3      Analytical techniques for nutrient analysis.	22
Table 4.1      The average values of nitrogen, phosphorus and total organic carbon species in the lagoon water during the first, second and third sampling periods.	44
Table 5.1      Chlorophyll a and Primary Productivity properties in Setiu Lagoon, Terengganu, South China Sea during first, second and third sampling.	76
Table 5.2      A comparison of C:N:P ratio ( $\mu\text{M}$ ) in surface water of world oceans with present study.	77
Table 5.3      A comparison of nutrient concentration ( $\mu\text{M}$ ) in the surface water of world oceans with present study.	82

## LIST OF FIGURES

	<b>PAGE</b>
Figure 2.1 Model of the pools and transformation of the nitrogen cycle.	10
Figure 2.2 The Phosphate Cycle in ocean waters	14
Figure 3.1 Map showing the sampling stations in Setiu Lagoon.	19
Figure 3.2 Construction of sand bar and fish cages in Setiu lagoon.	20
Figure 3.3 Pictures of reduction column of nitrite.	30
Figure 3.4 Picture of Total Organic Carbon analyzer	42
Figure 4.1 Distribution of total ammonium level in middle layer water at Setiu Lagoon, Terengganu for first, second and third sampling periods.	45
Figure 4.2 Surfer plot of Total Ammonium ( $\mu\text{M}$ ) in the middle layer water during first, second and third sampling periods.	46
Figure 4.3 Distribution of nitrite level in middle layer water at Setiu Lagoon, Terengganu for first, second and third sampling periods	48
Figure 4.4 Surfer plot of Nitrite ( $\mu\text{M}$ ) in the middle layer water during first, second and third sampling periods.	49
Figure 4.5 Distribution of total nitrogen level in middle layer water at Setiu Lagoon, Terengganu for first, second and third sampling periods	51
Figure 4.6 Surfer plot of Total Nitrogen ( $\mu\text{M}$ ) in the middle layer water during first, second and third sampling period.	52
Figure 4.7 Distribution of orthophosphate level in middle layer water at Setiu Lagoon, Terengganu for first, second and third sampling periods	54
Figure 4.8 . Surfer plot of Orthophosphate ( $\mu\text{M}$ ) in the middle layer water during first, second and third sampling periods.	55
Figure 4.9 Distribution of total phosphorus level in middle layer water at Setiu Lagoon, Terengganu for first, second and third sampling periods.	57
Figure 4.10 Surfer plot of Total Organic Carbon ( $\mu\text{M}$ ) in the middle layer water during first, second and third sampling periods.	58

Figure 4.11	Distribution of total organic carbon level in middle layer water at Setiu Lagoon, Terengganu for first, second and third sampling periods.	60
Figure 4.12	Surfer plot of Total Organic Carbon ( $\mu\text{M}$ ) in the middle layer water during first, second and third sampling periods.	61
Figure 5.1	Monthly rainfall and evaporation rates in Kuala Terengganu in different monsoon seasons for year of 2004.	64
Figure 5.2	Average mean concentration of total ammonium, nitrite and total nitrogen in middle layer water at Setiu Lagoon, Terengganu.	67
Figure 5.3	Average mean concentration of orthophosphate, total phosphate and total organic carbon in middle layer water at Setiu Lagoon, Terengganu.	68
Figure 5.4	The mean N:P ratio for each stations in Terengganu Setiu Lagoon during three sampling periods.	78
Figure 5.5	The relationship between nitrogen and phosphorus for each station in Terengganu Setiu Lagoon during South-West monsoon season.	80
Figure 5.6	The relationship between nitrogen and phosphorus for each station in Terengganu Setiu Lagoon during Inter- monsoon season.	80
Figure 5.7	The relationship between nitrogen and phosphorus for each station in Terengganu Setiu Lagoon during North- East season.	81

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

%	- percentage
°C	- degree centigrade
ppm	- part per million
ppt or ‰	- part per thousand
mg/L	- milligram per liter
mm/day	- millimeter per day
µM	- micromolarity
µg-at P.L <sup>-1</sup>	- microgram atom phosphorus per liter
µg-at N.L <sup>-1</sup>	- microgram atom nitrogen per liter
cm	- centimeter
g	- gram
mg	- milligram
kg	- kilogram
L	- liter
mL	- milliliter
M	- molarity
N	- normality
TN	- total nitrogen
TP	- total phosphorus
P	- phosphorus
TA	- total alkalinity
Ave.	- average
w/v	- weight per volume
C:N:P	- carbon: nitrogen: phosphorus molar ratio

## **LIST OF APPENDIES**

<b>APPENDIX</b>		<b>PAGE</b>
I	Standard Curve Of Ammonium, Nitrite And Orthophosphate Analysis In Water.	90
II	Recovery Tests of Total Dissolved Nitrogen And Total Dissolved Phosphorus Analysis In Water.	92
III	Tidal condition of Setiu Lagoon, Terengganu.	94
IV	Average range, maximum and minimum value for nitrogen, phosphorus and total organic carbon concentration in Setiu Lagoon, Terengganu	95
V	Data Collected during first, second and third sampling in Setiu Lagoon, Terengganu.	96
VI	Statistic Analysis ( Two - Way Anova Analysis Of Nitrogen And Phosphorus In Setiu Lagoon).	99

## **ABSTRACT**

The distribution of nitrogen and phosphorus in Setiu Lagoon, Terengganu were studied. Twelve sampling stations established from previous study were used in this study and they were visited three times from August to November 2004. The water samples of these stations were taken at mid-depth due to the shallowness of the lagoon. The first sampling, second and third sampling was carried out on 21 August, 23 October and 27 November on year 2004 respectively. The average values of total ammonium, nitrite, total nitrogen, orthophosphate, total phosphorus and total organic carbon during first, were 1.90 µM, 0.66 µM, 63.13 µM, 0.57 µM, 9.67 µM, second sampling were 73.63 µM and 5.03 µM, 0.26 µM, 32.63 µM, 0.40 µM, 13.74 µM, 71.44 µM and third sampling were 6.50 µM, 0.23 µM, 120.3 µM, 0.96 µM, 5.46 µM and 103.19 µM respectively. Nitrite, total nitrogen, orthophosphate, total phosphorus and total organic carbon showed no significant difference ( $p>0.05$ ) among stations. Total ammonium showed significant difference ( $p<0.05$ ) between stations. Total ammonium, total nitrogen, orthophosphate, total phosphorus and total organic carbon indicated a significant difference ( $p<0.05$ ) between the first, second and third samplings. Nitrite and total phosphorus revealed no significant difference ( $p>0.05$ ) between the first, second and third samplings. Nevertheless, the nitrogen concentration was higher than the phosphorus concentration throughout this study. The C:N:P ratio of sampling in Setiu Lagoon was 11: 10: 1.

## **ABSTRAK**

Taburan nitrogen dan phosphorus di lagun Setiu Terengganu telah dikaji sebanyak tiga kali dari Ogos hingga November, 2004. Sebanyak 12 stesen yang telah dipilih dan dikategorikan sebagai kawasan lagun pada kajian tahun lepas digunakan sebagai stesen dalam kajian ini. Sampel air diambil pada kedalaman pertengahan disebabkan kecetekan air lagun. Persampelan pertama , kedua dan ketiga telah dijalankan pada 21 Ogos, 23 Oktober dan 27 November pada tahun 2004 masing-masing. Purata kepekatan jumlah ammonium, nitrit, jumlah nitrogen, orthofostat, jumlah fosforus dan jumlah karbon organik persampelan pertama dengan  $1.90 \mu\text{M}$ ,  $0.66 \mu\text{M}$ ,  $63.13 \mu\text{M}$ ,  $0.57 \mu\text{M}$ ,  $9.67 \mu\text{M}$ ,  $73.63 \mu\text{M}$  masing-masing , kedua dengan  $5.03 \mu\text{M}$ ,  $0.26 \mu\text{M}$ ,  $32.63 \mu\text{M}$ ,  $0.40 \mu\text{M}$ ,  $13.74 \mu\text{M}$ ,  $71.44 \mu\text{M}$  masing-masing dan ketiga dengan  $6.50 \mu\text{M}$ ,  $0.23 \mu\text{M}$ ,  $120.3 \mu\text{M}$ ,  $0.96 \mu\text{M}$ ,  $5.46 \mu\text{M}$ ,  $103.19 \mu\text{M}$  masing-masing. Jumlah nitrogen, nitrite, orthofosfat, jumlah fosforus dan jumlah karbon organik tidak menunjukkan perbezaan yang ketara ( $p>0.05$ ) di antara stesen. Jumlah ammonium menunjukkan perbezaan ketara ( $p<0.05$ ) di antara stesen. Jumlah ammonium, jumlah nitrogen, orthofosfat dan jumlah karbon organik menunjukkan perbezaan yang ketara ( $p<0.05$ ) di antara ketiga-tiga persampelan. Nitrit dan jumlah fosforus tidak menunjukkan perbezaan yang ketara ( $p>0.05$ ) di antara ketiga-tiga persampelan. Kepekatan nitrogen di adalah lebih tinggi daripada kepekatan fosforus bagi ketiga-tiga kali persamplean. Nisbah C:N:P bagi persampelan di Lagun Setiu adalah 11: 10: 1.