Validation of the DNDC-Rice model to evaluate nitrogen balance at a paddy-field for single-cropping of rice in Japan

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Abstract: The DNDC (DeNitrification-DeComposition)-Rice model simulates the processes of carbon and nitrogen turnover in ecosystems for estimating greenhouse gas emissions from paddy fields, and can be used to simulate the N balance of a paddy field. In this study, we validated DNDC-Rice using field observation data, including N balance data, to reveal problems when using DNDC-Rice to evaluate a paddy field's N balance. To validate the N balance components of DNDC-Rice, we used data collected at the Mase paddy flux site (36.0536°N, 140.0272°E), in the middle of the Kanto Plain of Japan's Ibaraki Prefecture, in 2009. Before the validation, a process for adsorption of ammonium (NH_4^+) ions by clay was modified based on the results reported by Katayanagi et al. (2012) *Soil Sci. Plant Nutr.* 58:360-372. The modified DNDC-Rice simulated the dry weight of roots, stems, and grains well, but overestimated leaf dry weight. The normalized root-mean-square errors (nRMSEs) for the root, stem, grain, and leaf dry weights were 13, 16, 7, and 60%, respectively. DNDC-Rice also overestimated the leaf area index (LAI) and leaf N content, with nRMSEs of 125 and 37%, respectively. The overestimation of leaf dry weight and LAI resulted from overestimation of N uptake by rice and of N allocation to leaves. The high N uptake could be due to either a high available soil N content, crop N recovery from the soil or both. At harvesting, the simulated N balance (= N input – N output) was –38.8 kg ha^{-1}, which was much lower than the N balance determined by observations and from relevant literature (12.8 kg ha^{-1}). The underestimation of the N balance resulted mostly from the model's inability to calculate dry N deposition and N fixation as inputs and from overestimation of grain N uptake and underestimation of N_2 emissions through denitrification as outputs.

Keywords: DNDC-Rice, nitrogen balance, paddy field.