

Characteristics of natural gas hydrate retrieved at northern central Baikal basin

HACHIKUBO, Akihiro^{1*}; KHLYSTOV, Oleg²; KALMYCHKOV, Gennadiy³; SAKAGAMI, Hirotoshi¹; MINAMI, Hirotugu¹; YAMASHITA, Satoshi¹; TAKAHASHI, Nobuo¹; SHOJI, Hitoshi¹; DE BATIST, Marc⁴

¹Kitami Institute of Technology, ²Limnological Institute, SB RAS, ³Vinogradov Institute of Geochemistry, SB RAS, ⁴Ghent University

Lake Baikal (Russia) is the solitary example of hydrate-bearing area in the environment of fresh water. Gas hydrate samples in sandy turbidites were first obtained at the southern Baikal basin in the Baikal Drilling Project in 1997. Multi-phase Gas Hydrate Project (MHP, 2009-2014), the international collaboration between Japan, Russia, and Belgium, has revealed distribution of gas hydrate in sub-bottom sediment at the southern and central Baikal basins. In the last cruise (MHP-14) we obtained gas hydrate crystals from four new places (Kukuy K-5, Khoboy, Akadem Ridge, and Barguzin) at the central Baikal basin. We report the characteristics of hydrate-bound gases at these sites.

Samples of hydrate-bound gas were obtained onboard and stored in 5-mL vials. We measured molecular and stable isotope compositions of the samples. According to the $C_1/C_2 - C_1\delta^{13}C$ diagram (Bernard *et al.*, 1976), the $\delta^{13}C$ - δD diagram for C_1 (Whiticar, 1999), and the $C_1\delta^{13}C - C_2\delta^{13}C$ diagram (Milkov, 2005), the gas characteristics show the following information:

1) Hydrocarbons at the Khoboy, Akadem Ridge, and Barguzin are microbial origin, and those of Kukuy K-5 is in the field of mixed-gas between microbial and thermogenic gases.

2) In the "Bernard diagram", hydrate-bound hydrocarbons of Kukuy K-5 locate on the mixing line of microbial gas at the Kukuy K-9 and thermogenic gas at the Kukuy K-4, those are the end members at the Kukuy Canyon area.

3) $C_2 \delta^{13}C$ of the hydrate-bound gas at the the Khoboy, Akadem Ridge, and Barguzin are low (less than -50 ‰), indicating microbial C_2 . Microbial C_2 in the hydrate-bound gas has been observed at the Krasnyi Yar and Peschanka P-2 at the southern Baikal basin, and the Ukhan and Unshuy at the central Baikal basin.

4) The site Barguzin locates only 7 km distance from the site Gorevoy Utes, where oil-stained gas hydrate with thermogenic gas was retrieved.

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