



# Stream Sediments Geochemistry of the Nyambaka Drainage System Northern Cameroon (Central Africa): A Target for Mining Exploration

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**Abstract:** Mining exploration in the Nyambaka area Northern Cameroon still at reconnaissance stage. In this study, ten active stream sediments samples were collected for geochemical survey. These stream sediments were analyzed by inductively coupled Plasma/ Mass Spectrometry (ICP/MS), the data set obtained was transformed into a standard formation an excel database, and was subject to statistical treatment using IBM SPSS statistics 21 for 33 chemical elements to highlight the relationship between the stream sediments geochemistry, the region lithology, the geological processes and eventual primary mineralization. The data were analyzed using multivariate statistics. R-mode analysis produced a five-factor model behind multi-elements associations which account for 93.40% of the total variance in the data with the following metals associations: Sc-Mo-V-In-Ga-Cu-Cr, Ba-Sr-Ag-Cr-Cu-Co-Be-Ni-Y-Zn-V, Ga-Hf-Zr, Sn-Au, As-Cd. Sn-Au association indicates that Au mineralization is link to Sn mineralization. As-Cd, Cu Ga, In, Mo suggested that the paragenesis represent others sulphidation events that is barren with respect to Au. The spatial distribution of Sn-Au and As-Cd factors show that these factors are more express in the centre part of the study area; they can be link to granitic rocks, defining a primary gold target. A detail mining investigation have to me carry out in that area to highlight the primary mineralizations.

**Keywords:** Stream Sediments, Nyambaka Area, Northern Cameroon

## 1. Introduction

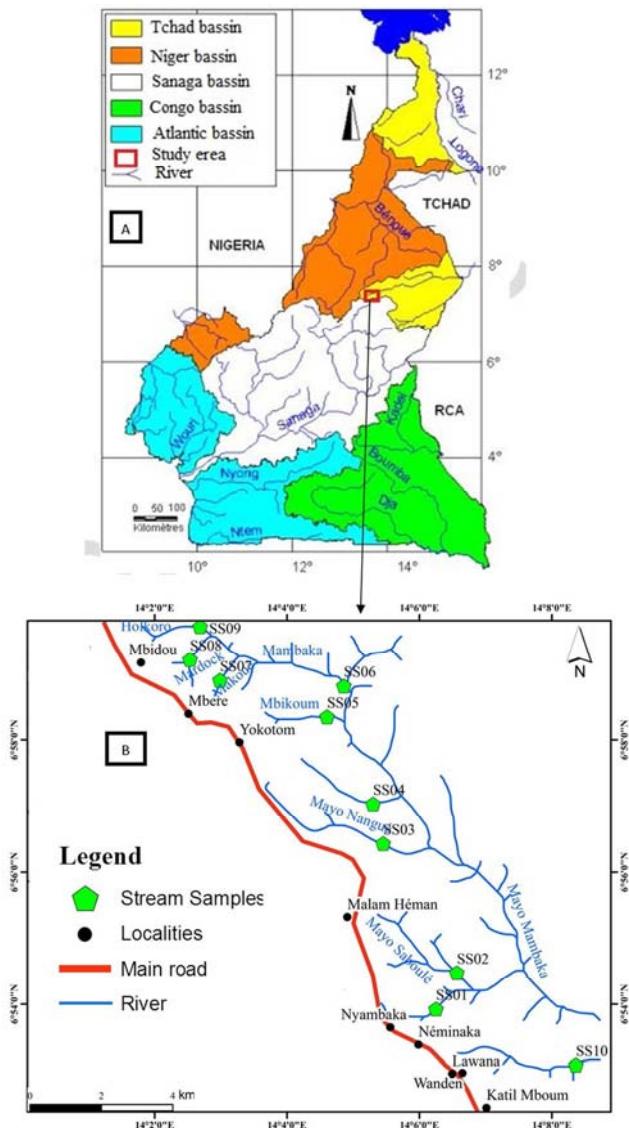
Geochemical mapping surveys have been conducted in different parts of the word at various scales to booster geochemical prospecting [1]. Acceptance of sediments composition is representative of the geochemistry of the catchment basin upstream [2]. The spatial display of stream

sediment geochemical data, and statistical treatment of the data can unravel element associations relevant to primary exploration in a region [3], and high mining potential area. these associations are useful in speculating on the source region lithology, geological processes and the nature of the primary (rock-hosted) mineralization, if any is present [4, 5, 1].

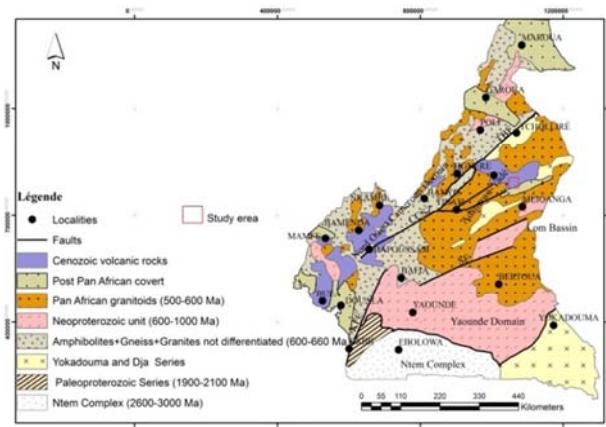
The study area is a part of the Adamawa-Yadé domain, and was subject to geochemical, petrological, and geochronological studies of the basement rocks [6-9]. A few is known about mining index in the Adamawa-Yadé; and the study area is not yet subject to a geochemical exploration of stream sediments. The aim of this study is to do the mapping of the distribution of chemical elements in the study area watershed, to identify area of high mining potential for the boosting of mining exploration.

## 2. Geographical and Geological Setting

The study area is located in the Adamawa region, and lies between longitudes  $10^{\circ}0' E$  and  $14^{\circ}0' E$ , and latitudes  $6^{\circ}60' N$  and  $6^{\circ}52' N$  respectively. It's hydrographic system belong to two main hydrographic basins known in Cameroon the Tchad Basin and the Sanaga Basin (Olivry, 1986) (figure 1A); and to the Mayo Mambaka Wathershed (figure 1B).



**Figure 1.** Maps: A- Hydrographic bassins of Cameroon (Olivry, 1986); B- The Mayo Mambaka Wathershed and Stream sediment sampling.



**Figure 2.** Geological map of the Central African Orogenic Belt (CAOB) in Cameroon.

Geologically, the study area belongs to the Adamawa-Yadé domain, which is a part of the Central Africa, Orogenic Belt (CAOB) [10]. In Cameroon, the Central African Orogenic Belt (CAOB) is subdivided into three geological domains, from the North to the South (figure 2): the Northern domain, the Adamawa-Yadé Domain, the Southern nappes (figure 2). The Adamawa-Yadé domain is made up of various low-to high-grade metamorphic rocks and abundant pan-african granites, bearing Archaean to palaeoproterozoic isotopic signatures [11, 12]. Reference [13] suggest that the Adamawa-Yadé domain represents an Archaean/palaeoproterozoic microcontinent, which was detached from the northern margin of the Congo Craton in the early Neoproterozoic, but became reaccreted together with the Mayo Kebbi magmatic arc during the Pan-African orogeny.

## 3. Material and Methods

Ten active stream sediments samples were collected within the drainage system (figure 1B). First and second tributaries rivers were sampled. These samples were weighed with an electronic balance (Sartorius et Kitchen scale SF-400), and air dry in the "Laboratory of Mineral Treatment"; after drying, samples were crushed using a "Fritsch Pulverizer", and 30g of  $180\mu m$  fraction was retained for further geochemical analysis.

In the laboratory, a 0.2g of each sample was analyzed for 65 chemical elements by inductively coupled Plasma/ Mass Spectrometry (ICP/MS) at "Bureau Veritas Laboratories Canada". Replicates samples chosen from the sample batch were randomly place in each analysis to test for analytical precision.

The data set obtained was transformed into a standard formation an excel database, and was subject to statistical treatment using IBM SPSS statistics 21 for 33 chemical elements (table 6). Statistical parameters like minimum, median, mean, maximum were measured to have central tendency; while standard deviation, variance, give statistical dispersion. The asymmetry is given by Skewness and

Kurtosis index. Correlation matrix, factor analysis were performed to obtain trends and relationship between variables, and deduce the factors influencing the stream sediment geochemistry.

Colored geochemical maps of the data were drawn using ArcGis 10.2 software. Symbol plots of factor scores of the elements associations obtained after factor analysis, were produced to analyze their relationship with the geological catchment of the area. These factor scores were projected on a map along the watershed system to present sectors of high

mining potentials.

#### 4. Results and Discussion

Ten samples were analyzed for a whole suite of elements; only 33 elements with concentrations above the detection limit are reported (table 1). The descriptive statistics are presented in table 2. Twenty elements present positive skewed distribution.

**Table 1.** Detections limits of 33 elements concentrations.

Elements	Unit	DL	Elements	Unit	DL	Elements	Unit	DL
Mo	ppm	0.01	Cd	ppm	0.01	Cs	Ppm	0.02
Cu	ppm	0.01	Sb	ppm	0.02	Hf	Ppm	0.02
Pb	ppm	0.01	Bi	ppm	0.02	Nb	Ppm	0.02
Zn	ppm	0.1	V	ppm	1	Rb	Ppm	0.1
Ag	ppb	2	Ca	%	0.01	Sn	Ppm	0.1
Ni	ppm	0.1	Cr	ppm	0.5	Zr	Ppm	0.1
Co	ppm	0.1	Ba	ppm	0.5	Y	Ppm	0.01
As	ppm	0.1	Sc	ppm	0.1	In	Ppm	0.02
U	ppm	0.1	Tl	ppm	0.02	Be	Ppm	0.1
Au	ppb	0.2	Hg	ppb	5	Sr	Ppm	0.5
Th	ppm	0.1	Se	ppm	0.1	Ga	Ppm	0.1

**Table 2.** The descriptive statistics ( $N=10$ ).

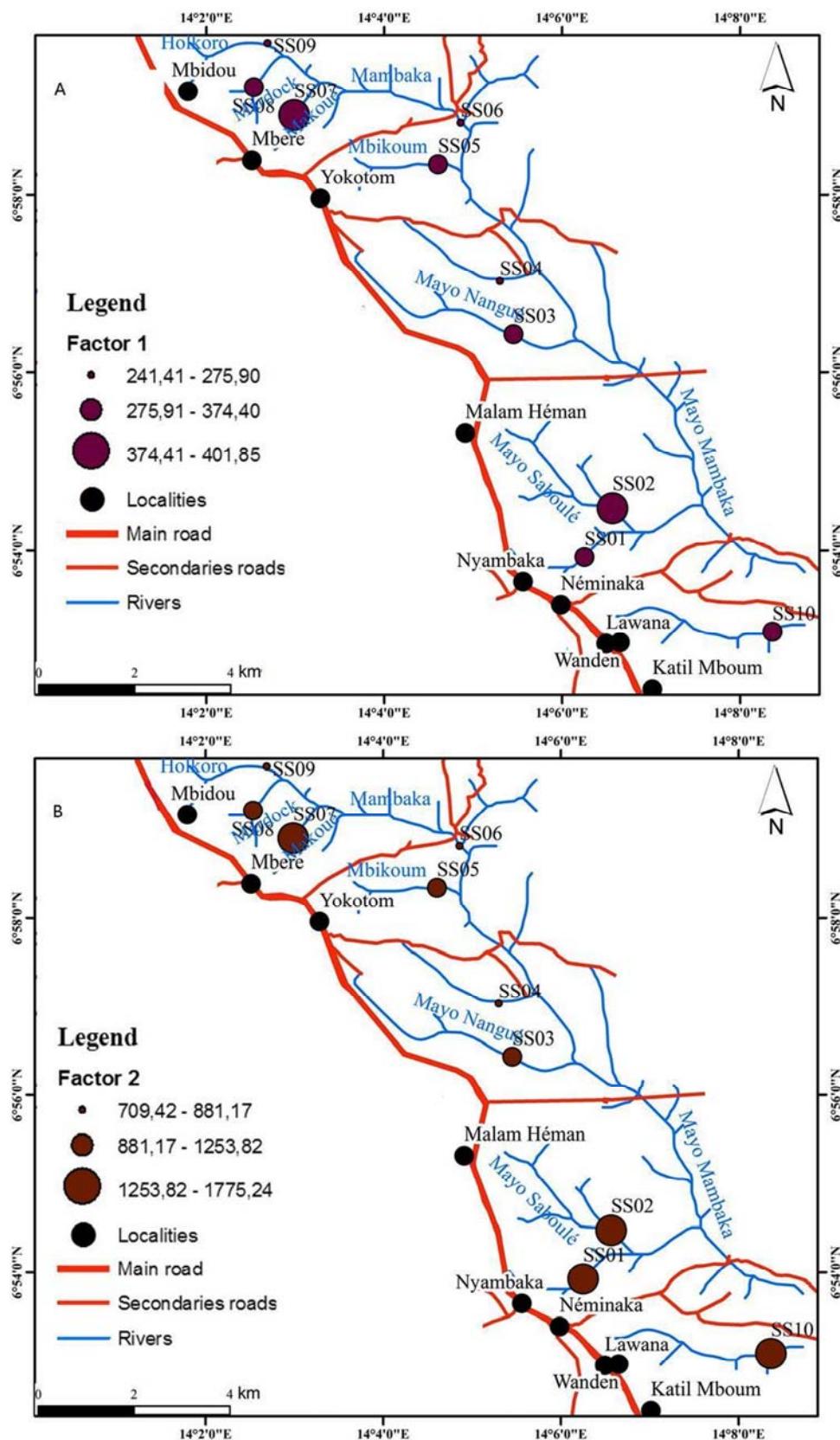
Minimum Statistic	Maximum Statistic	Mean Statistic	Variance Statistic	Skewness Statistic	Erreur std	Kurtosis Statistic	Erreur std
Mo 1.42	2.06	1.77	0.042	-0.51	0.68	-0.692	1.33
Cu 22.54	54.21	41.12	143.43	-0.67	0.68	-1.19	1.33
Pb 5.81	13.31	8.24	6.98	1.24	0.68	0.47	1.33
Zn 29.20	89.60	62.23	385.62	-0.20	0.68	-0.98	1.33
Ag 15.00	24.00	20.5	9.61	-0.89	0.68	-0.55	1.33
Ni 36.40	231.10	134.29	3615.35	-0.00	0.68	-0.74	1.33
Co 12.90	65.70	38.19	314.64	0.32	0.68	-0.89	1.33
As 1.20	2.60	1.47	0.17	2.70	0.68	7.92	1.33
U 2.20	4.00	2.69	0.42	1.43	0.68	0.82	1.33
Au 0.40	1.00	0.79	0.04	-0.63	0.68	-0.34	1.33
Th 9.80	25.60	15.19	21.31	1.47	0.68	2.11	1.33
Sr 7.10	105.00	32.36	764.96	2.32	0.68	6.27	1.33
Cd 0.01	0.06	0.03	0.00	0.19	0.68	-0.14	1.33
Sb 0.00	0.06	0.02	0.00	0.03	0.68	-1.22	1.33
Bi 0.00	0.08	0.04	0.00	-0.69	0.68	-0.29	1.33
V 142.00	312.00	247.70	3380.90	-0.89	0.68	-0.45	1.33
Ca 0.00	0.25	0.07	0.00	1.78	0.68	3.49	1.33
Cr 202.70	763.00	443.20	32084.82	0.23	0.68	-0.51	1.33
Ba 43.20	325.20	134.45	5997.41	1.74	0.68	4.26	1.33
Sc 15.20	34.50	28.23	39.44	-1.28	0.68	0.74	1.33
Tl 0.05	0.22	0.09	0.00	1.69	0.68	1.25	1.33
Hg 17.00	54.00	26.40	121.15	1.95	0.68	4.61	1.33
Se 0.00	0.20	0.08	0.00	0.13	0.68	0.17	1.33
Ga 20.40	34.60	27.50	17.93	0.05	0.68	-0.36	1.33
Cs 0.44	1.12	0.73	0.06	0.44	0.68	-1.36	1.33
Hf 0.34	0.89	0.60	0.03	0.00	0.68	-1.61	1.33
Nb 0.91	4.04	1.92	0.89	1.29	0.68	1.76	1.33
Rb 2.30	18.1	5.94	38.12	1.75	0.68	1.37	1.33
Sn 2.80	3.80	3.08	0.08	1.75	0.68	3.98	1.33
Zr 27.00	61.50	42.86	158.32	0.16	0.68	-1.41	1.33
Y 12.20	27.88	23.15	24.69	-1.21	0.68	1.43	1.33
In 0.08	0.15	0.12	0.00	-0.78	0.68	0.39	1.33
Be 0.60	2.60	1.86	0.32	-1.29	0.68	1.90	1.33

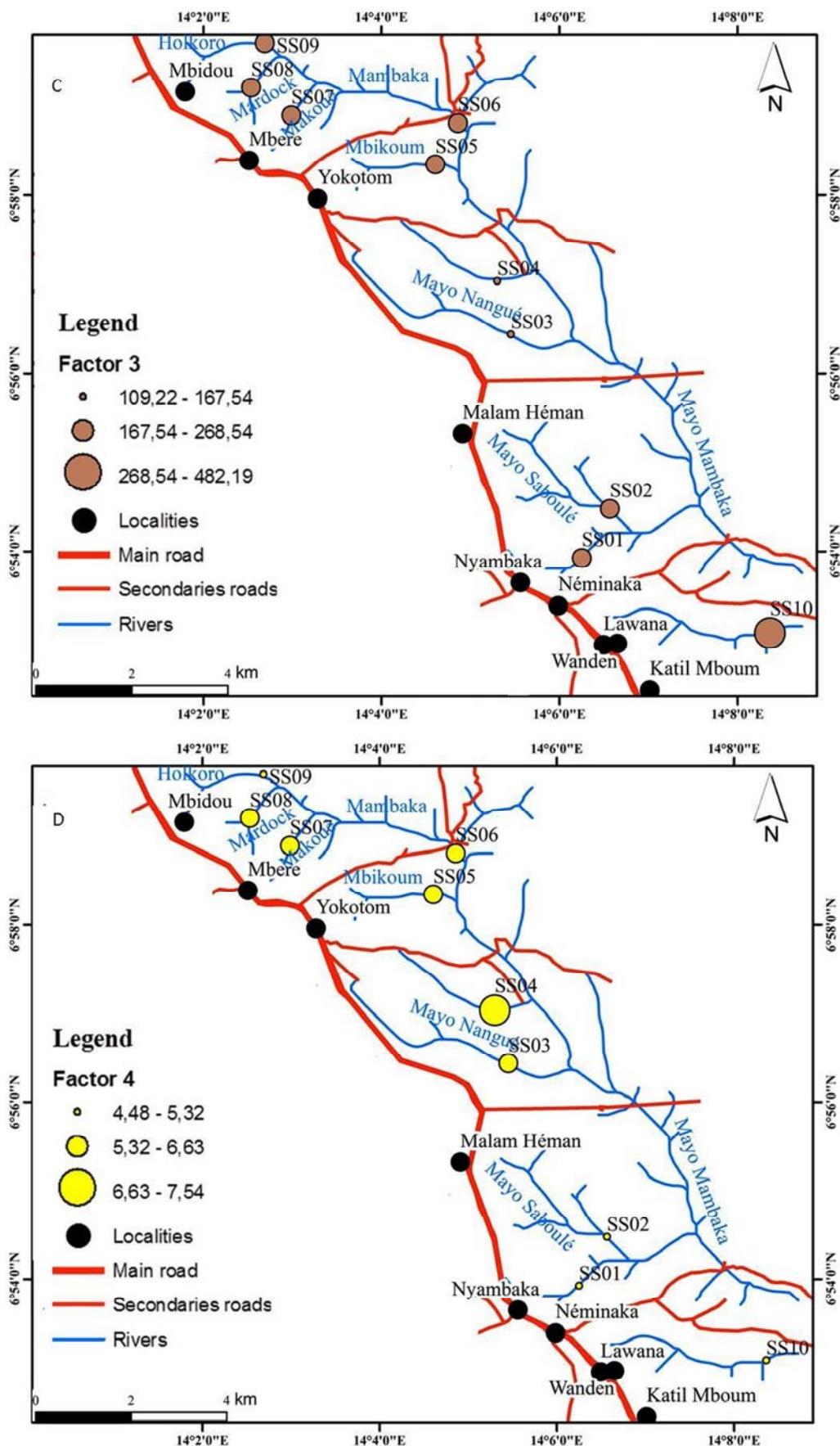
Elements relationship was investigated using a Pearson's correlation matrix (table 3) the correlation values ( $r$ ) display a wide range from -0.4 between Au and Se, to 0.9 between Au and U, and between Au and Zn. other elements pairs with a high positive  $r$  values ( $\geq 0.9$ ) include V-Cr, Mo-Ni, Ni-Zn, U-Th, Sc-V (table 3).





respect to Au. This factor is more express in the central part of the study area, on the Mayo Nangue river (figure 3).





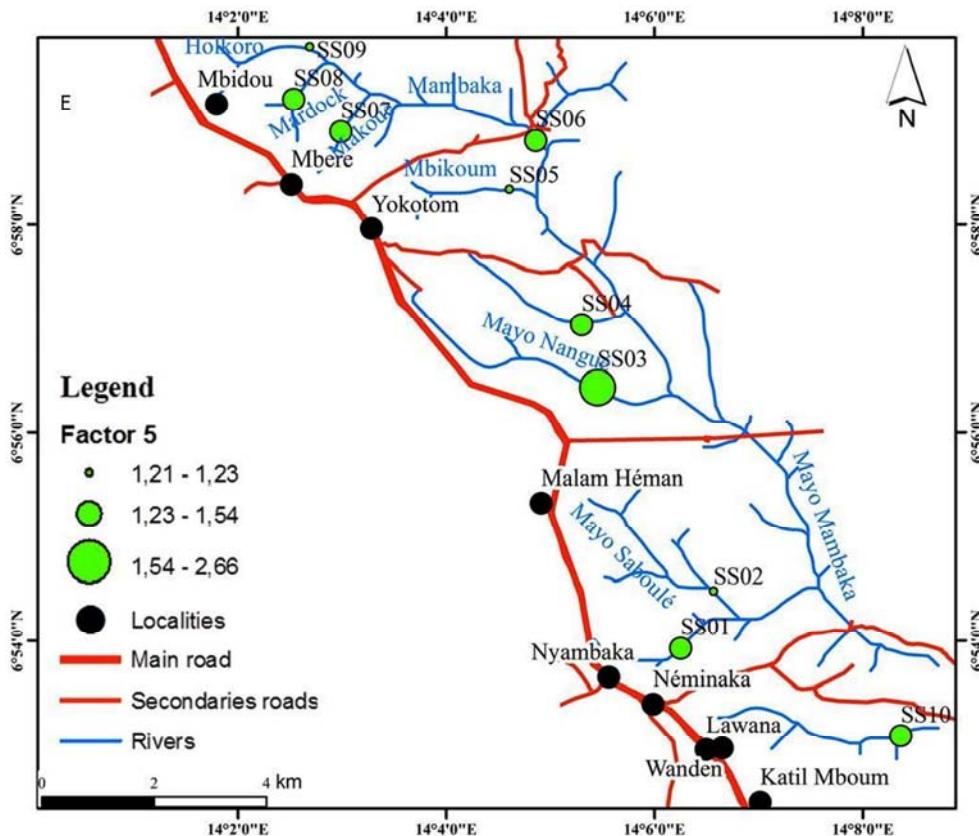


Figure 3. Spatial distribution of the factors over the watershed of the studied area.

## 5. Conclusion

As conclusion, we can say that:

Statistical and spatial analysis was carried out to relate the concentration and the distribution of chemical elements in stream sediments to lithology and mineralizations.

The factor analysis applied to the data defines five factors that explained about 93.2% of the total variance. Factor 1 accommodate elements Sc-Mo-V-In-Ga-Cu-Cr. this association reflect an hydrothermal alteration leading to the development of Ga; Cu, In and Mo. this suggest that the paragenesis represent another sulphidation event that is barren with respect to Au.

Factor 2 (Ba-Sr-Ag-Cr-Cu-Co-Be-Ni-Y-Zn-V) These associations can be attributed to the catchment weathering, and disseminated sulfides such as chalcopyrite, pyrite, and sphalerite.

Factor 3 (Ga-Hf-Zr) explains 13.04% of the total variance. This factor indicates a granitic origin.

Factor 4 (Sn-Au) explains 7.7% of the total variance and indicate that gold and cassiterite mineralizations are contemporaneous and link to granitic rocks context and associated veins.

Factor 5 (As-Cd) explains about 6.47%, and also indicates another sulphidation event that is barren with respect to Au.

These results highlight the fact that gold mineralization is link to granitic rocks.

Table 6. Geochemical data of the concentration of elements in stream sediments from Nyambaka area.

Elements	Unit	DL	SS01	SS02	SS03	SS04	SS05	SS06	SS07	SS08	SS09	SS10
Mo	PPM	0.01	1.81	1.71	1.93	1.95	1.86	1.50	1.86	2.06	1.42	1.62
Cu	PPM	0.01	50.86	53.45	42.86	22.54	42.70	27.57	46.42	46.35	24.30	54.21
Pb	PPM	0.01	5.81	6.00	8.27	7.56	8.52	12.49	7.77	6.75	13.31	5.96
Zn	PPM	0.1	73.70	89.60	57.10	29.20	44.70	52.90	72.10	73.30	44.30	85.40
Ag	PPB	2.00	24.00	23.00	21.00	16.00	22.00	22.00	18.00	23.00	15.00	21.00
Ni	PPM	0.1	170.70	231.10	110.50	36.40	108.40	86.20	160.90	162.50	78.20	198.00
Co	PPM	0.1	45.20	63.80	21.70	12.90	34.60	41.10	26.40	47.10	23.40	65.70
As	PPM	0.1	1.40	1.20	2.60	1.40	1.20	1.50	1.40	1.50	1.20	1.30
U	PPM	0.1	2.30	2.20	2.70	2.20	2.80	3.70	2.40	2.20	4.00	2.40
Au	PPB	0.2	0.70	0.40	1.00	0.60	1.00	0.70	0.90	0.90	0.70	1.00
Th	PPM	0.1	12.30	12.50	13.10	9.80	16.70	20.30	14.60	13.60	25.60	13.40
Sr	PPM	0.5	38.20	39.10	14.50	7.10	20.10	34.40	16.90	28.80	19.50	105.00
Cd	PPM	0.01	0.03	0.03	0.06	0.03	0.01	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.02	0.06
Sb	PPM	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.06	0.06	0.04	0.03	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.00
Bi	PPM	0.02	0.03	0.00	0.07	0.07	0.08	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.06	0.02

Elements	Unit	DL	SS01	SS02	SS03	SS04	SS05	SS06	SS07	SS08	SS09	SS10
V	PPM	1	266.00	312.00	277.00	197.00	271.00	168.00	308.00	269.00	142.00	267.00
Ca	%	0.01	0.08	0.05	0.02	0.00	0.04	0.14	0.02	0.06	0.07	0.25
Cr	PPM	0.5	548.10	763.00	393.80	273.30	487.00	221.90	614.70	412.80	202.70	514.70
Ba	PPM	0.5	137.70	151.50	73.40	43.20	83.40	171.90	100.60	131.80	125.80	325.20
Sc	PPM	0.1	31.70	31.20	29.70	24.90	34.50	20.00	33.40	29.50	15.20	32.20
Tl	PPM	0.02	0.07	0.07	0.08	0.07	0.08	0.22	0.05	0.07	0.22	0.06
Hg	PPB	5.00	29.00	18.00	32.00	54.00	18.00	24.00	17.00	27.00	19.00	26.00
Se	PPM	0.1	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.20	0.00	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.00	0.00
Ga	PPM	0.1	26.60	25.40	31.90	28.80	34.60	23.80	30.70	28.40	20.40	24.40
Cs	PPM	0.02	0.51	0.44	0.84	0.81	0.89	1.12	0.53	0.53	1.08	0.58
Hf	PPM	0.02	0.44	0.66	0.72	0.42	0.78	0.6	0.89	0.82	0.42	0.34
Nb	PPM	0.02	1.41	1.28	2.43	4.04	0.91	2.67	1.69	2.21	1.52	1.05
Rb	PPM	0.1	3.50	2.60	3.30	2.70	3.30	17.10	2.40	2.30	18.10	4.10
Sn	PPM	0.1	3.00	2.80	3.20	2.90	3.80	2.80	3.20	3.10	3.10	2.90
Zr	PPM	0.1	38.10	47.20	47.00	29.70	52.90	37.70	59.00	61.50	28.50	27.00
Y	PPM	0.01	27.88	26.37	19.22	12.2	22.1	25.52	22.75	27.36	20.37	27.82
In	PPM	0.02	0.14	0.12	0.13	0.11	0.15	0.10	0.14	0.13	0.08	0.12
Be	PPM	0.1	2.20	2.60	2.30	0.60	1.20	1.80	2.00	2.00	1.90	2.00

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