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Evolution of HCl concentrations in the lower stratosphere from 1991 to 1996 following the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo

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Abstract. In situ measurements of hydrochloric acid in the lower stratosphere reveal that its mean abundance relative to that of total inorganic chlorine (Cl_y) has evolved upwards from HCl/Cl_y=40% in late 1991 to 70% in 1996. This fraction is generally anticorrelated with aerosol surface area concentration, which has been diminishing since the 1991 volcanic eruption of Mt. Pinatubo. Calculations incorporating new laboratory results of faster heterogeneous chemistry show that air parcels with high aerosol loading exposed to temperatures below 205 K can experience enough chlorine activation to drive the HCl/Cl_y below 50%, but overestimate observed ClO/Cl_y.

Introduction

The massive enhancement in aerosol loading of the lower stratosphere following the June 1991 eruption of Mt. Pinatubo [McCormick et al., 1995; Jonsson et al., 1996] provided an opportunity to expand our understanding of the role of heterogeneous chemistry on sulfate aerosol particles. As the dense volcanic aerosol of Pinatubo spread into a relatively clean atmosphere, aircraft, balloon, ground-based, and space measurements reported large reductions in concentrations of stratospheric NO, [Fahey et al., 1993; Koike et al., 1994; Webster et al., 1994a], and in response, a doubling of concentrations of chlorine monoxide (CIO) [Avallone et al., 1993]. Solomon et al. [1993] attributed high OCIO observed over Antarctica to sulfate aerosol processing at temperatures ~203 K, well above PSC threshold. Despite the large impact on NO_x and ClO_x amounts [Salawitch et al., 1994; Hanson et al., 1994], photochemical model calculations incorporating the heterogeneous hydrolysis of N2O3 and ClONO2 predicted only small changes (≤15%) in HCl amounts. Column HCl abundance showed no volcanic injection into the stratosphere [Mankin et al., 1992]. Space-based measurements of either HCl or ClONO₂ were limited to altitudes above the dense volcanic cloud.

Although HCl is recognized as the principal reservoir of chlorine in the middle and upper stratosphere, discrepancies exist between models and measurements of HCl both above 24 km where models tend to under-predict HCl abundances [Michelsen et al., 1996], and below 24

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Paper number 98GL00548. 0094-8534/98/98GL-00548\$05.00 km where models over-predict HCl abundances [Webster et al., 1994b]. Since 1991, JPL's Aircraft Laser Infrared Absorption Spectrometer (ALIAS) instrument [Webster et al., 1994c] has flown more than 150 times on NASA's ER-2 aircraft. HCl mixing ratios first measured by this instrument [Webster et al., 1993] from 15-20 km were about a factor of two lower than model predictions [Salawitch et al., 1994]. Results from 1993 illustrated the difficulties in balancing the inorganic chlorine budget using the low HCl measurements. In the absence of in situ measurements of ClONO2, simultaneous measurements of CIO, NO2, and O3 were used to infer CIONO2 abundances [Stimpfle et al., 1994]. With an inferred fraction of CIONO₂/Cl, =14% (ranging from 6 to 28%), the measured CIO amounts implied that if Cl, comprised mainly HCl and ClONO₂, HCl/Cl, should be ~86%, compared to the observed value of 40%. The aircraft measurements of 1993 therefore left ≥30% of inorganic chlorine apparently unaccounted for. An analysis of MarkIV FTIR balloon data from a September 1993 flight yielded the proposal that 20-30% of Cl, may be sequestered as perchloric acid (HClO₄) produced from the heterogeneous reaction of ClO and H₂SO₄ on sulfate aerosols [Jaeglé et al., 1995]. Two other studies reported HCI/CL ratios of 60±20%, consistent with either the aircraft ALIAS measurements of 50% in 1993, or with the model predictions of 80%: balloon measurements of CIO at 20 km [Avallone et al., 1993]; and a recent analysis of HALOE HCl and CLAES ClONO₂ measurements from the UARS satellite [Dessler et al., 1995]. In an intercomparison with overflights of ATMOS in Nov. 1994, and with an earlier flight of MarkIV in May 1994, the ALIAS data lay midway between the two FTIR data sets for N₂O values ≤ 210 ppbv, where HCl mixing ratios were ≥ 1 ppbv. ALIAS measurements were $\approx 10\%$ lower than that of ATMOS [Chang et al., 1996], and ~10% higher than those of the MarkIV [G. Toon, private communication] for similar O3 amounts.

This paper brings together six years of HCl measurements made during the years of gradual decay of the Mt. Pinatubo aerosol loading of the stratosphere. Model results incorporating new laboratory results of faster heterogeneous chemistry are presented, which show that air masses with high aerosol loading exposed to temperatures typical of the midlatitude lower stratosphere (200-210 K) can experience enough chlorine activation to drive HCI/Cl, below 60%, as observed, although a discrepancy remains between model and observed partitioning between HCl and ClO.

A recent analysis of HALOE satellite data [Dessler et al., 1997], has also identified a significant increase $(16\pm9\%)$ in HCI/Cl, over a 3year period from late 1992 at somewhat higher altitudes than the ER-2 data. While these authors conclude that there is no evidence to support the larger increase observed by ALIAS, they recognize that their observed increase is 4 times larger than their model prediction, and that they cannot attribute the observed change to any cause.

The aircraft measurements

The ALIAS instrument is a 4-channel scanning tunable diode laser spectrometer that uses high-resolution laser absorption in the 3-8 μ m

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wavelength region [Webster et al., 1994c] to directly and simultaneously measure any four of the gases HCl, NO₂, CH₄, CO, and N₂O. The instrument samples the atmosphere using a fast flow system with all interior surfaces coated with halocarbon wax. Extensive calibration and testing, including post-flight ion-analysis of the inlet residue, has revealed no systematic instrument or sampling error that could result in HCl loss of > 10%. The fidelity of the measurement of HCl in the multipass cell is checked by simultaneous recording of strong CH₄ lines close to the HCl absorption line. The precision of the data varies from flight to flight, with a 1 σ precision of typically ±50 to ±100 pptv. The accuracy of the measurement is about 5-7%, producing total rootsum-squared measurement uncertainties of ~10-15% for 1 ppbv.

The aerosol number, SA, and volume concentrations reported here were determined from three particle size spectrometers flown simultaneously as part of the ER-2 aircraft payload, with overall uncertainties of 35%: the condensation nucleus counter (CNC) measured particle concentrations \geq .008 µm dia. [Wilson et al., 1983]; the focused cavity aerosol spectrometer (FCAS) instrument measured size distributions from .06 to 2 µm dia. (Jonnson et al. [1992]); the forward scattering spectrometer probe (FSSP-300) detected particles between 0.4 and 20 µm dia. [Baumgardner et al., 1992] and flew on the ER-2 during 1991/2 and 1993. We used measurements from FSSP for AASE (Airborne Arctic Stratospheric Expedition)-II, from FCAS for ASHOE/MAESA (Airborne Southern Hemisphere Ozone Expedition/ Measurements of the Atmospheric Effects of Stratospheric Aircraft) and STRAT (Stratospheric Tracers of Atmospheric Transport), and from all three spectrometers for SPADE (Stratospheric Photochemistry and Dynamics Experiment). N₂O was measured directly by the ALIAS instrument., except for a few flights in which N2O measurements from the ATLAS instrument [Podolske and Loewenstein, 1993] were used. CIO was measured using resonance fluorescence detection of Cl atoms at 118.9 nm, generated by chemical conversion of ambient CIO to CI by addition of NO [Stimpfle et al., 1994], with a measurement uncertainty of $\pm 30\%$. O₃ was measured using UV absorption [Proffitt et al., 1983].

Figure 1 shows plots of HCl vs. N₂O recorded by ALIAS during four missions: in 1991/2 (AASE-II), 1993 (SPADE), 1994 (ASHOE/ MAESA), and in 1996 (STRAT). These data are principally from latitudes 20-70° N and are restricted to pressures < 67 mbar and ClO <150 pptv to remove data from air masses that have undergone very low temperature processing. The AASE-II data collected from a series of flights from 4 Oct. 1991 through 22 March 1992 fall mainly within a single correlation group except for the striking anomalies from the two earliest flights of 4 Oct. and 6 Oct. 1991. These flights covered the latitude range 37-85 °N and were sufficiently close in time to the June Pinatubo eruption to sample regions of rapidly-changing aerosol loading [Jonsson et al., 1996]. The data appear divided into two populations of low and high HCl values. The 1993 SPADE HCl values are generally more tightly correlated with measured N₂O, except for the flights of 11 May and 1 May 1993, which are not included in the least-squares correlation fit. From tracer correlations, these flights have been identified as sampling air more typical of midlatitudes than of polar origin [Michelsen et al., 1997b], which is more typical of most of the HCl data from the SPADE mission. Leastsquares fits of data from Fig. 1 are plotted in Fig. 2A, where an evolution with time of the HCl/CL ratio is apparent. Data from 1991/2 (AASE-II), 1993 (SPADE), 1994 (ASHOE/MAESA), and 1996 (STRAT) show HCI/Cl, fractions of typically 40%, 50%, 55-60%, and 70%, a trend that is maintained within the latitude range 40-60 °N, as shown in Fig. 2B.

Chlorine activation on sulfate aerosols

The chemistry responsible for the formation of the ozone hole is initiated by the heterogeneous conversion of reservoir species such as HCl and ClONO₂ to reactive radicals (such as Cl and ClO), a process known to occur on the surfaces of polar stratospheric cloud (PSC) particles and supercooled liquid sulfate aerosols (see the review by *Fahey et al.* [1995]). Heterogeneous loss of HCl [Webster et al., 1993] is associated with temperatures < 195 K. Building on the earlier work of Hofmann and Solomon [1989], the reactions

(1) N ₂ O ₅ +H ₂ O→2HNO ₃	(2) BrONO ₂ +H ₂ O→HOBr+HNO ₃
(3) CIONO2+H2O -HOCI+HNO3	(4) ClONO ₂ +HCl →Cl ₂ +HNO ₃
(5) HOCI+HCI -CL +H2O	(6) HOBr+HCl-BrCl+H ₂ O.

on sulfate aerosols are significant under volcanic conditions (see Jones et al., [1995]). From 200 to 210 K, 1996/97 measurements of reaction rates now available are as much as a factor of three higher than 1994 rates used in previous studies for reactions (3)-(5). Using these higher rates in a recent study of ATMOS, SAGE II, and UARS data from the northern hemisphere polar vortex, Michelsen et al. [1997b] concluded that reactions mediated by liquid sulfate aerosols (60% wt) could have a greater effect than previously believed on the midlatitude partitioning of Cl, and NO, species. These authors also studied correlations of CH₄, N₂O, NO₉, H₂O, and aerosol abundances from ATMOS, SAGE, and ER-2 data sets to discriminate between vortex, midlatitude, and tropical air masses. From this framework, it was identified [Michelsen et al., 1997b] that much of the air sampled during SPADE had tracer signatures of polar air, i.e. low CH₄, low NO₉, low O₃, high aerosol SA, low HCl, and low H₂O amounts.

We have tailored the heterogeneous model results of Michelsen et al. [1997a,b] to estimate the sensitivity of HCI/CL, to aerosol SA concentration and temperature, for comparison with the aircraft data. We here compare the flight-average HCl/Cl, and ClO/Cl, ratios vs. aerosol surface concentration with those calculated assuming photochemical steady state and incorporating the full set of heterogeneous reactions (1) -(6). At temperatures < 206 K, these reactions proceed rapidly enough on liquid sulfuric acid (60 wt%) aerosol particles to provide a significant channel for Cl production at the expense of HCl. Within 16-19 km, our model calculations show that reactions (4) and (5) account for 40-50% each of the repartitioning, with reactions (1), (2), (3), and (6) making little ($\leq 15\%$) contribution. Under these conditions, the 1996/97 rates of reactions (4), and (5), are higher than those from 1994 by about 20%, and 220%, respectively. Since HCI/CL, has a significant dependence on O3 abundance, we restrict data to points lying in the range 1500 < O₃ < 2500 ppbv (with the additional restrictions of N₂O \leq 260 ppbv, pressure \leq 67 mbar, ClO \leq 150 pptv, and sza ≤82°). A plot of HCI/CI, against aerosol SA concentration shows that with important exceptions (4 and 6 Oct. 1991; 1 and 11 May 1993; and 13 Dec. 1996), flights from 1991-96 appear to demonstrate a smooth decay in HCI/Cl, with increasing SA, as shown in Fig. 3. In Fig. 4, the flight averages of Fig. 3 are included with those of 4 and 6 Oct. 1991, of 1 and 11 May 1993, and of 13 Dec. 1996, for comparison with model calculations run at several temperatures initialized with values of NO_v, CH₄, O₃, H₂O, and N₂O measured during the flight of 2 Nov.1994. For high SA concentrations, the observed decay in HCI/Cl, is best represented by model calculations with temperatures of ~203 K. There is a tendency, however, for the observed decay to be steeper at lower SA, and flatter at larger surface areas. Analysis based on flight conditions is more consistent with the measurements than results of previous modeling studies, but still shows disagreement with measured values when photochemical steady-state is assumed for the instantaneous temperatures measured during the flight. For the high SA flight of 17 Feb 1992, for example, in which temperatures of 210-225 K were encountered with a mean HCVC1, value close to 0.4, flight-tailored model calculations produce HCI/Cl, values of 0.36, 0.51, and 0.62 for temperatures of 205 K, 207 K, and 221 K, respectively, with corresponding values of 0.006, 0.05, and 0.046 for CIO/Cl,.



Figure 1. HCl vs. N₂O from 1991 through 1996, compared with expected total inorganic chlorine (Cl₂) [Woodbridge et al., 1995]. Dashed lines are polynomial fits to the data, where the flights of 4 and 6 Oct. 1991, and those of 1 and 11 May 1993 are not included.

The time scales for both the development of low HCl through sulfate processing and its recovery vary with season. In summer near 20 km, this timescale is a few days, while in winter it is as long as several weeks. Model results are therefore sensitive to the duration of low temperatures recently encountered, and back-trajectory calculations of the temperatures experienced by the sampled air masses are not reliable over timescales of greater than about 10 days. During the AASE-II, ASHOE/MAESA, and STRAT missions, flight temperatures were rarely lower than 210-215 K, but during the SPADE mission flight temperatures in the range 203-208 K were often recorded; this range therefore represents an upper value for the minimum temperatures experienced over the last few days. The flights of 1 and 11 May 1993 were recorded at the higher temperatures of 215-220 K, and 220 K, respectively, and the flight average HCI/Cl, ratios are seen in Fig. 4 to be higher than the 1992-96 fit. Tracer correlations indicate that



Figure 2. A. Superposition of the polynomial fits to the ALIAS HCl vs. N₂O mixing ratios, showing the apparent time evolution. B. Measured HCl/Cl, vs. latitude over the range 40-60 °N for data constrained by: pressure ≤ 67 mbar, N₂O ≤ 260 ppbv, ClO ≤ 150 pptv, and $1500 \leq O_3 \leq 2500$ ppbv. Solid lines are average values over the given latitude range.



Figure 3. Measured HCl/Cl, vs. aerosol SA concentration. All data are constrained as in Fig. 2. The lower panel shows the flight-average values and an exponential least-squares fit to these points. Error bars represent the root-square-sum of the 1 σ deviation from the mean and the measurement accuracy (±35% for SA>2 μ m²/cm³, ±50% for SA<2 μ m²/cm³; and 7% for HCl).

these flights should be in photochemical steady-state for midlatitude conditions, consistent with the model results.

The data from each of the October 1991 flights appear to be separated into two distinct distributions, characterized by different SA concentrations and HCI/Cl, fractions (and are therefore assigned two points in Fig. 4). The fractions observed at the higher SA values fall within the range of the 200 K and 203 K model calculations, whereas those observed at the lower SA values are significantly lower than both model calculations and other data. This discrepancy is currently not understood unless this air experienced temperatures ≤ 201 K, which is unlikely for this time of year at these latitudes; temperatures this low are not generated from back trajectory calculations. The striking fractionation of the HCl vs. N₂O correlation plot seen for October



Figure 4. Comparison between theory and measurements. Flightaverage values of HCl/Cl, and ClO/Cl, vs. aerosol SA are constrained as in Fig. 3. In addition to the flights of Fig. 3, flights of 4 and 6 Oct. 1991, 1 and 11 May 1993, and 13 Dec. 1996, are included. Calculated values at 18 km are plotted for temperatures of 200, 201, 203, 205, and 210 K.

1991 (Fig. 1A) appears to represent a case intermediate between the SPADE (high aerosol) and STRAT (low aerosol) correlation data.

The dependence of measured CIO/Cl, on aerosol surface concentration is also compared with model predictions in Fig. 4. These data were selected to cover a narrow range of solar zenith angles (62-82°) and have been normalized to O3 amount by a small correction term generated from the observed dependence of CIO/CI, on measured ozone. The SPADE CIO data of May 1993 [Stimpfle et al., 1994] are significantly lower than the 1991/2 CIO data [Toohey et al., 1993] for similar particle SA concentrations of $\approx 2-6 \,\mu m^2/cm^3$ due to higher NO_x values. When dependence on NO_x is taken into account, the consistency in the ClO/Cl, measurements is very good. The model results do show that low HCI/CI, values can be expected in a high aerosol environment at only moderately low (<203 K) temperatures. Lower HCI/CI, ratios are usually associated with increased reactive chlorine, which may contribute to the underestimation by atmospheric models [Solomon et al., 1996] of observed ozone loss in volcanic aerosol conditions. However, a discrepancy between ClO/Cl, and HCl/Cl, still remains, in that the temperatures needed to match the HCI/CI, observations are somewhat lower than those needed for CIO/CL. Simultaneous in situ measurements of HCl and CIONO, in volcanic aerosol conditions are needed to resolve these differences and to determine the extent to which other processes such as the production of HCIO₄ [Jaeglé et al., 1995] may be contributing.

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