Modelling HNO$_3$ and N$_2$O enhancements due to Solar Proton Events

A. J. G. Baumgaertner (1), P. Jöckel (1), H. Riede (1), B. Funke (2), and G. Stiller (3)
(1) Max Planck Institute for Chemistry, Department of Atmospheric Chemistry, Mainz, Germany
(a.baumgaertner@gmail.com), (2) Instituto de Astrofísica de Andalucía, Granada, Spain, (3) Institute for Meteorology and Climate Research, Forschungszentrum Karlsruhe, Germany

Solar Proton Events perturb middle atmospheric chemistry and are interesting natural experiments that allow us to test and improve our understanding of atmospheric chemistry, our observational capabilities, and numerical models. Models now reproduce NOx, HOx and related ozone chemistry relatively well. However, instruments such as MIPAS on the ENVISAT satellite now measure SPE-induced changes for a large variety of other species, and for several of them, e.g. HNO$_3$ and N$_2$O, discrepancies between measurements and some models have been found. Here, we present model results for stratospheric HNO$_3$ and mesospheric N$_2$O using the atmospheric chemistry general circulation model EMAC (ECHAM5/MESSy) and the atmospheric chemistry box model CAABA (Chemistry of the Atmosphere As a Box model Application). For HNO$_3$, a simple parameterization is introduced which is coupled to the standard SPE-induced HOx/NOx production parameterization. For N$_2$O, a modification of the standard NOx production scheme, where 0.85 NOx molecules instead of 1.25 are produced per ion pair, is suggested and shown to yield results that match MIPAS measurements.