



Dinitrogen pentoxide (N_2O_5): A nighttime artefact in denuder measurements of nitric acid

Gavin Phillips (1), Ulla Makkonen (2), Nicolas Sobanski (1), Gerhard Schuster (1), Hannele Hakola (2), and John Crowley (1)

(1) Max Planck Institute for Chemistry, Mainz, Atmospheric Chemistry, Mainz, Germany (gavin.phillips@mpic.de), (2) Finnish Meteorological Institute, Helsinki, Finland

A MARGA (Monitor for Reactive Gases and Aerosols, Metrohm Applikon BV, Netherlands) wet-rotation denuder/steam-jet aerosol collector-ion chromatography system for reactive gases and particles was deployed alongside a cavity ring-down spectroscopy (CRDS) system for the measurement of dinitrogen pentoxide (N_2O_5) at the Taunus Observatory, Kleiner Feldberg in SW Germany during August 2012.

The measurements show a strong indication that the well-known heterogeneous reaction, $\text{N}_2\text{O}_5(\text{g}) + \text{H}_2\text{O}(\text{l}) \rightarrow 2\text{HNO}_3$ results in the detection of a significant proportion of N_2O_5 as NO_3^- in the MARGA system. This process, which is likely to affect analytical systems using similar denuder technologies, results in the over estimation of HNO_3 and will bias assessments of chemistry in regions where N_2O_5 is a large proportion of $\Sigma[\text{HNO}_3 + 2\text{N}_2\text{O}_5]$. The chemistry of N_2O_5 differs markedly from that of HNO_3 not least as a significant chemical loss of N_2O_5 in regions affected by particulate chloride is the formation of ClNO_2 , a relatively unreactive photolabile species which regenerates NO_x on photolysis in addition to the production of Cl radical. The differing loss pathways of N_2O_5 and HNO_3 may result in the misdiagnoses of model output using denuder-based estimates of HNO_3 to assess N-deposition. Denuder and filter-based methods should be assessed for the size of the N_2O_5 bias and the likely result of using these techniques should be estimated.