Laser Spectroscopic Study on Oxygen Isotope Effects in Ozone Surface Decomposition

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The isotope kinetics of ozone formation in the Chapman reaction [1]

\[ \text{O} + \text{O}_2 + \text{M} \rightarrow \text{O}_3 + \text{M} \] (1)

provides the primary example for a chemically induced oxygen isotope anomaly and is associated with large [2] and mass independent [3] oxygen isotope enrichments in the product molecule, linked to a symmetry selection in the ozone formation kinetics [4–5]. The isotopic composition of ozone and its transfer to other molecules is a powerful tracer in the atmospheric and biogeochemical sciences [6] and serves as a primary model for a possible explanation of the oxygen isotopic heterogeneity in the Solar system [7–8]. Recently, the isotope fractionation in the photolytic decomposition process

\[ \text{O}_3 + h\nu \rightarrow \text{O}_2 + \text{O} \] (2)

using visible light has been studied in detail [9–10]. Much less is currently known about the isotope fractionation in the dry deposition or in the gas phase thermal decomposition of ozone

\[ \text{O}_3 + \text{M} \rightarrow \text{O}_2 + \text{O} + \text{M}. \] (3)

Here we report on first spectroscopic studies of non-photolytic ozone decomposition using a cw-quantum cascade laser at 9.5 µm. The concentration of individual ozone isotopomers (\(^{16}\text{O}_3\), \(^{16}\text{O}^{18}\text{O}^{17}\text{O}\), and \(^{16}\text{O}^{17}\text{O}^{16}\text{O}\)) in a teflon coated reaction cell is followed in real time at temperatures between 25 and 150 °C. Observed ozone decay rates depend on homogeneous (reaction (3)) processes in the gas phase and on heterogeneous reactions on the wall. A preliminary analysis reveals agreement with currently recommended ozone decay rates in the gas phase and the absence of a large symmetry selection in the surface decomposition process, indicating the absence of a mass independent fractionation effect. This result is in agreement with previous mass spectrometer (MS) studies on heterogeneous ozone formation on pyrex [11], but contradicts an earlier MS study [12] on ozone surface decomposition on pyrex and quartz. Implications for atmospheric chemistry will be discussed.