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# Intercontinental influence of NO[subscript x] and CO emissions on particulate matter air quality

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- 1 Intercontinental influence of NO<sub>x</sub> and CO emissions on particulate matter air
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### 23 Abstract

24 Anthropogenic emissions of nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>  $\equiv$  NO + NO<sub>2</sub>) and carbon monoxide (CO) 25 affect particulate matter (PM) air quality on an intercontinental scale by changing background 26 concentrations of oxidants (OH, ozone,  $H_2O_2$ ) and thus increasing the oxidation rate of sulfur 27 dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) to sulfate and NO<sub>x</sub> to nitrate. We conduct sensitivity simulations with the GEOS-28 Chem chemical transport model and find that these intercontinental influences of NO<sub>x</sub> and CO 29 emissions on PM can be greater than those from SO<sub>2</sub> emissions (a direct PM precursor). The 30 intercontinental impact of oxidant precursors is greatest in receptor regions with high domestic 31 SO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub>, and ammonia emissions and hence already high levels of PM. US NO<sub>x</sub> and CO 32 emissions increase annual mean PM in northern Europe and eastern China by up to 0.25  $\mu$ g m<sup>-3</sup>. 33 The increase in Europe is mostly as sulfate, whereas in China it is mostly as nitrate. East Asian  $NO_x$  and CO emissions have a weaker intercontinental influence (~0.2 µg m<sup>-3</sup> in northern Europe, 34 ~ 0.1  $\mu$ g m<sup>-3</sup> in the eastern US). These intercontinental effects of NO<sub>x</sub> and CO emissions on PM 35 36 depend in a complex way on the chemical environment of receptor regions. Intercomparison of 37 results from different models would be of great interest.

#### 39 1. Introduction

40 Developed countries worldwide regulate domestic sources of particulate matter (PM) to meet air 41 quality goals designed to protect public health and visibility. These regulations may involve 42 neighboring countries to address transboundary transport. However, PM can also be transported 43 on intercontinental scales with significant implications for air quality in the receptor continent 44 (Park et al., 2006; Liu et al., 2009a). Here we show that this intercontinental influence on PM 45 does not only involve emissions of PM and its direct precursors from the source continent, but 46 also emissions of nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>  $\equiv$  NO + NO<sub>2</sub>) and CO that affect PM through global 47 perturbations to oxidant concentrations. 48 49 There has been much recent interest in quantifying the intercontinental transport of PM pollution 50 (Jaffe et al., 1999; Park et al., 2004; Heald et al., 2006; Chin et al., 2007; Liu et al., 2009b). 51 Intercontinental transport of desert dust and of plumes from large forest fires has long been 52 recognized as a contributor to surface PM (Prospero, 1999; Forster et al., 2001; Husar et al., 53 2001; Fairlie et al., 2007). Surface, aircraft, and satellite observations have identified episodic 54 transport of anthropogenic PM across the Pacific (Jaffe et al., 1999; Jaffe et al., 2003; Yu et al., 55 2008). Global models indicate annual mean sulfate enhancements in US surface air of up to 0.2 ug m<sup>-3</sup> from anthropogenic Asian SO<sub>2</sub> emissions (Park et al., 2004; Heald et al., 2006; Chin et al., 56 57 2007). Direct intercontinental transport of anthropogenic organic and nitrate aerosols appears to 58 be far less important based on both observational and modeling evidence (Heald et al., 2006; 59 Peltier et al., 2008; van Donkelaar et al., 2008).

60

61	Sulfate, nitrate, and organic aerosol form in the atmosphere by oxidation of their precursor gases
62	$SO_2$ , $NO_x$ , and volatile organic compounds (VOCs). Oxidant levels affect the rate of aerosol
63	production. Previous global model studies have found that global changes in anthropogenic
64	emissions of oxidant precursors (NOx, CO, VOCs) affect surface PM concentrations and
65	radiative forcing by perturbing background concentrations of the oxidants OH, $H_2O_2$ , and ozone
66	(Unger et al., 2006; Rae et al., 2007; Kloster et al., 2008; Shindell et al., 2008; Shindell et al.,
67	2009). A recent study by Barrett et al. (2010) found that $NO_x$ emissions from aircraft at cruising
68	altitudes enhance surface sulfate PM production by increasing background oxidant levels such
69	that surface sulfate concentrations increase linearly with aircraft $NO_x$ emissions.
70	
71	Current understanding of intercontinental pollution influence on PM air quality has been
72	assessed by the Task Force on Hemispheric Transport of Air Pollutants (TF-HTAP, 2007) of the
73	United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP). The assessment presents global multi-model
74	estimates of intercontinental source-receptor relationships for PM and its precursors. These
75	estimates can be made with either of two methods. In the first, PM or precursors from a given
76	region are "tagged" and tracked as they undergo transport and chemical evolution. This method
77	is applicable only for linear problems. In the second, more general method, sensitivity
78	simulations with perturbed emissions in the source continent are compared to a control
79	simulation. The TF-HTAP (2007) multi-model assessment used the second method but did not
80	investigate the role of oxidant precursor emissions in contributing to intercontinental PM
81	influences. We do so here.
82	

### 83 2. Model Simulations

84	We conducted detailed simulations of coupled tropospheric ozone-NO <sub>x</sub> -VOC-aerosol chemistry
85	with the GEOS-Chem chemical transport model (version 8-01-01; http://geos-chem.org) driven
86	by assimilated meteorological data from the Goddard Earth Observing System (GEOS)-4. The
87	model has a horizontal resolution of 2° latitude x 2.5° longitude and 30 vertical levels. GEOS-
88	Chem simulates gas-phase oxidant chemistry together with the mass concentrations of the major
89	aerosol types including sulfate-nitrate-ammonium (SNA), black carbon, primary organic carbon,
90	secondary organic carbon, fine and coarse mode sea salt, and dust in four size classes (Park et al.,
91	2003; Alexander et al., 2005; Park et al., 2006; Fairlie et al., 2007; Liao et al., 2007). Gas-phase
92	and aerosol chemistry are coupled by in-cloud SO <sub>2</sub> oxidation, gas-aerosol thermodynamic
93	partitioning of SNA and secondary organic aerosol (SOA), aerosol effects on photolysis rates
94	(Martin et al., 2003), and heterogeneous chemistry (Jacob, 2000).
95	
96	The model forms sulfate aerosol from $SO_2$ through gas-phase oxidation by OH and in-cloud
97	oxidation by $H_2O_2$ and ozone (Park et al., 2004). The MARS-A aerosol thermodynamic
98	equilibrium model is used to calculate SNA aerosol formation (Binkowski and Roselle, 2003).
99	Nitric acid is formed by the gas phase reaction of NO <sub>2</sub> with OH and ozone, the latter leading to
100	formation of $N_2O_5$ which hydrolyzes to $HNO_3$ in aqueous aerosol (Evans and Jacob, 2005). SOA
101	is formed by oxidation of VOCs by ozone and OH, following the work of Chung and Seinfeld
102	(2002), as implemented in GEOS-Chem by Liao et al. (2007).
103	
104	Successive versions of GEOS-Chem have been extensively evaluated with surface, aircraft, and
105	satellite observations of tropospheric oxidants, aerosols, and related species. Recent worldwide

106 evaluations with satellite data are presented by Zhang et al. (2010) for ozone, Kopacz et al.

107 (2010) for CO, and van Donkelaar et al. (2010) for aerosol. Comparisons to OH and H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> 108 vertical profiles measured on aircraft missions have been presented by Hudman et al. (2007) and 109 Mao et al. (2010). Air quality relevant evaluations with surface data for ozone and aerosols have 110 been presented for North America and China (Choi et al., 2009; Wang et al., 2009). In addition, a 111 number of GEOS-Chem studies have evaluated the model with observations specifically in the 112 context of intercontinental influences on surface PM (Park et al., 2004; Heald et al., 2006; van 113 Donkelaar et al., 2008) and surface ozone (Fiore et al., 2009; Zhang et al., 2009a). GEOS-Chem 114 results contributed to the TF HTAP (2007) multi-model assessment were within the ranges of 115 results from other models.

116

117 We conducted a control simulation for year 2000 and six sensitivity simulations where we removed individually anthropogenic emissions of CO, NO<sub>x</sub>, and SO<sub>2</sub> from the contiguous US 118 119 and East Asia. Anthropogenic emissions include fuel and industry, not open fires. We define 120 East Asia as the emission inventory domain of Streets et al. (2003), which extends from Pakistan 121 to Japan in the west-east direction and from Indonesia to Mongolia in the south-north direction. 122 Each simulation used meteorological data for 2000-2001. The first year (2000) was used for 123 model initialization and the second year (2001) for analysis. The model does not allow for 124 aerosols or ozone to affect meteorology. Changes in PM concentrations are thus solely due to 125 atmospheric chemistry.

126

127 Anthropogenic emissions of  $NO_x$  and  $SO_2$  are from the EDGAR 3.2 FT inventory for 2000

128 (Olivier and Berdowski, 2001). These include 4.8 Tg N a<sup>-1</sup> and 7.5 Tg S a<sup>-1</sup> from the contiguous

129 US and 10 Tg N a<sup>-1</sup> and 27 Tg S a<sup>-1</sup> from East Asia. US anthropogenic emissions of CO are from

the EPA National Emissions Inventory 1999 (NEI99;

131 <u>http://www.epa.gov/ttn/chief/net/1999inventory.html</u>) and amount to 82 Tg CO a<sup>-1</sup>. East Asian

132 fossil anthropogenic emissions of CO are from Streets et al. (2006), and amount to 250 Tg CO a

<sup>1</sup>33 <sup>1</sup>. Ammonia emissions are from Bouwman et al. (1997). Additional source information for the

134 model is available from van Donkelaar et al. (2008).

135

136 **3. Intercontinental PM enhancements** 

#### 137 **3.1 Effect of US emissions**

Figure 1 shows the annual mean PM enhancements in Europe and Asia from US anthropogenic sources of  $SO_2$ ,  $NO_x$ , and CO as calculated by GEOS-Chem. PM enhancements are diagnosed as the differences in surface air concentrations of dry sulfate, nitrate, ammonium, and organic aerosol between the control simulation and a simulation with the corresponding emissions shut off. Figure 2 shows the SNA speciation and seasonality of this enhancement for receptor regions (outlined as boxes in Figure 1). Intercontinental enhancements in organic aerosol concentrations are small (< 5 ng m<sup>-3</sup>) and will not be discussed further.

145

The intercontinental effects of SO<sub>2</sub> emissions arise from the direct transport of SO<sub>2</sub> and sulfate, and decrease rapidly with distance downwind due to wet and dry removal. US SO<sub>2</sub> emissions thus mainly influence western Europe, by up to 0.2  $\mu$ g m<sup>-3</sup> on an annual mean basis. This enhancement is comparable to the results of Park et al. (2004), but larger than those of Chin et al. (2007) and Liu et al. (2009b). Increases in sulfate are partly offset by decreases in nitrate due to competition for ammonium (West et al., 1999; Park et al., 2004). US SO<sub>2</sub> emissions actually induce a net decrease in PM over eastern China in winter because the replacement of 2NH<sub>4</sub>NO<sub>3</sub>
by (NH<sub>4</sub>)<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> results in net loss of PM mass.

154

We find that US NO<sub>x</sub> emissions enhance European and Asian PM concentrations by up to 0.25  $\mu$ g m<sup>-3</sup> on an annual basis. The patterns in Figure 1 show that this is not due to direct intercontinental transport of nitrate and its precursors, but to an increase in background oxidant levels that promotes formation of sulfate and nitrate from local sources of SO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> in the receptor regions. US NO<sub>x</sub> emissions increase annual mean tropospheric ozone by 3.3%, OH by 3.3%, and H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> by 0.2% in the Northern Hemisphere, with larger effects in Europe, which is directly downwind.

162

163 Figure 2 shows that the intercontinental PM enhancement from US  $NO_x$  emissions is mostly 164 driven by sulfate in northern Europe but by nitrate in eastern China. Conversion of SO<sub>2</sub> to sulfate 165 in the model is mostly by in-cloud oxidation by  $H_2O_2$  and ozone. The process by  $H_2O_2$  is faster 166 than that by ozone, and in the presence of excess  $H_2O_2$ ,  $SO_2$  oxidation is insensitive to increases 167 in oxidants. At the high latitudes of northern Europe,  $H_2O_2$  production is slow so that SO<sub>2</sub> in-168 cloud oxidation is  $H_2O_2$ -limited over SO<sub>2</sub> source regions for most of the year; thus increases of 169 ozone and H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> result in increased sulfate. The sulfate increase is largest in fall due to a 170 combination of extensive cloud cover and significant enhancement of oxidants. Cloud cover is 171 also extensive in winter but the increase in oxidants is then less. In eastern China, by contrast to 172 northern Europe, H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>-limited conditions prevail only in winter, and cloud cover is then 173 infrequent due to the winter monsoon.

175	The large enhancement of nitrate PM in eastern China compared to northern Europe in Figure 2
176	reflects the regional presence of excess ammonia for $NH_4NO_3$ formation. We find that increases
177	in total inorganic nitrate (gas-phase HNO <sub>3</sub> plus aerosol nitrate) are comparable in the two
178	regions, but northern Europe has less excess ammonia so that this inorganic nitrate remains in the
179	gas phase as HNO <sub>3</sub> . The effect of increased oxidants on nitrate PM in eastern China is largest in
180	winter, when cold temperatures promote nitrate partitioning into the aerosol and when oxidation
181	of $NO_x$ is relatively slow. In summer, oxidation of $NO_x$ by OH in the region is sufficiently fast
182	that the effect of added oxidants is small. This is not the case for northern Europe where OH
183	concentrations are much lower because of the higher latitude.
184	
185	CO emissions in the US decrease annual mean tropospheric OH by 1.9% in the Northern
186	Hemisphere, but increase ozone by 1.3% and $H_2O_2$ by 3.4%. The effect on PM is qualitatively
187	similar to that of US $NO_x$ emissions, but not as large due to the decrease in OH concentrations.
188	Speciation and seasonal patterns in Figure 2 are similar to those for the effect of US $NO_x$
189	emissions. The decrease in OH, affecting $NO_x$ oxidation, results in some negative effects on
190	nitrate in northern Europe. Nitrate concentrations still increase over China in seasons outside of
191	summer, when oxidation of $NO_x$ by ozone is a significant nitrate formation pathway (Dentener
192	and Crutzen, 1993).

193

### 194 **3.2 Effect of Asian emissions**

Figure 3 shows the intercontinental increases in PM from Asian emissions. The intercontinental influence of Asian SO<sub>2</sub> emissions are strongest in the western US where subsidence from the free troposphere brings Asian outflow to the surface. The enhancement of 0.1-0.25  $\mu$ g m<sup>-3</sup> in this

region is comparable to the results of Park et al. (2004), Heald et al. (2006), and Chin et al.

199 (2007). The effect on Europe is weaker and more uniform than that of US SO<sub>2</sub> emissions, which

are closer upwind (Figure 1). Increases in sulfate cause lower levels of nitrate due to competition

- for ammonium, similar to the effects of US SO<sub>2</sub> emissions previously discussed.
- 202

203 The intercontinental influence of Asian  $NO_x$  on PM shown in Figure 3 is weaker than that of US 204 emissions (Figure 1). Asian NO<sub>x</sub> emissions increase annual mean tropospheric ozone by 8.8%, 205 OH by 12.7%, and  $H_2O_2$  by 1.1%. These increases are much larger than those from US emissions 206 (section 3.1), but the effect on PM is also contingent on emissions in the receptor continent. Thus the effect on the US is relatively weak, up to 0.1  $\mu$ g m<sup>-3</sup> over the central US where excess 207 208 ammonia from agricultural emissions promotes ammonium nitrate formation. The effect on northern Europe (up to  $0.2 \text{ µg m}^{-3}$ ) is also weaker than for US emissions, which are closer 209 210 upwind (Figure 1). Figure 4 shows that sulfate accounts for most of the overall increase in PM 211 over the eastern US and northern Europe. The increase is weakest in summer when Asian  $NO_x$ 212 emissions actually cause  $H_2O_2$  concentrations to decrease over the US and Europe. This reflects 213 the large Asian source of NO<sub>x</sub> and complicated effects of NO<sub>x</sub> emissions on  $H_2O_2$ . On the one 214 hand, NO<sub>x</sub> leads to ozone production and from there to  $H_2O_2$  production. On the other hand, NO<sub>x</sub> 215 increases OH, which is a major  $H_2O_2$  sink.

216

Asian CO emissions decrease annual mean tropospheric OH by 5.6% and increase ozone by

- 218 3.1% and H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> by 9.4%. Figures 3 and 4 show that Asian CO affects northern European PM in a
- 219 very similar manner to US CO emissions (Figures 1 and 2) and with a similar magnitude as
- 220 Asian NO<sub>x</sub>. Similar to the effect of US CO emissions, Asian CO emissions increase in-cloud

sulfate production by  $H_2O_2$  over Europe causing sulfate enhancements in all seasons. Changes in sulfate in the US are largely driven by increased production by  $H_2O_2$ . A reduction in gas-phase production of sulfate by OH detracts from increased aqueous production. Nitrate concentrations decrease in both northern Europe and the US because of the lower OH concentrations.

225

#### 226 4. Discussion

227 Anthropogenic emissions of NO<sub>x</sub> and CO perturb sulfate and nitrate PM concentrations on 228 intercontinental scales by affecting the background concentrations of oxidants and hence the 229 oxidation rates of SO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> emitted in receptor regions. NO<sub>x</sub> emissions cause OH, ozone, 230 and  $H_2O_2$  to increase on the hemispheric scale although  $H_2O_2$  can decrease in some regions and 231 seasons. CO emissions cause OH to decrease, but ozone and  $H_2O_2$  concentrations to increase. 232 CO increases  $H_2O_2$  formation in part by decreasing OH, a major sink of  $H_2O_2$  and in part by 233 decreasing the OH/HO<sub>2</sub> ratio and thus promoting H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> formation. Most of the intercontinental 234 effect on sulfate is through increases in ozone and H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>, which drive faster SO<sub>2</sub> in-cloud 235 oxidation under  $H_2O_2$ -limited conditions. Most of the effect of nitrate is through the increase in 236 ozone in winter and the shoulder seasons, when  $NO_x$  oxidation is otherwise slow and the cold 237 temperatures promote nitrate fractionation into the aerosol.

238

The intercontinental PM enhancement from  $NO_x$  and CO emissions tends to peak in receptor regions with the highest domestic sources of  $SO_2$ ,  $NO_x$ , and  $NH_3$ , and hence with the highest PM concentrations. It is thus of particular policy relevance. US emissions of  $NO_x$  and CO increase PM by over 0.25  $\mu$ g m<sup>-3</sup> (annual mean) in polluted regions of northern Europe and eastern China, a much larger effect than that of US SO<sub>2</sub> emissions. PM concentrations in the US are less

244	sensitive to intercontinental NO <sub>x</sub> and CO emissions because domestic PM sources are lower. The
245	effect of Asian NO <sub>x</sub> and CO on PM in the eastern US is still ~ 0.1 $\mu$ g m <sup>-3</sup> , comparable to the
246	effect of Asian SO <sub>2</sub> emissions. Northern Europe is more sensitive to US than to Asian emissions
247	of NO <sub>x</sub> and CO because of the greater upwind proximity.
248	
249	Our study used emission inventories for 2000. Emissions have changed over the past decade and
250	also have some uncertainty. The more recent EPA NEI 2005 inventory for the US
251	(http://www.epa.gov/ttnchie1/net/2005inventory.html) includes 2% more NO <sub>x</sub> , 20% less CO, and
252	57% less $SO_2$ than used in this work, while the East Asian 2006 inventory of Zhang et al.
253	(2009b) include 12% more NO <sub>x</sub> , 19% more CO, and 14% less SO <sub>2</sub> . These differences arise from
254	both actual trends and improved emission accounting. The emission changes would tend to
255	increase the importance of $NO_x$ and CO vs. $SO_2$ in driving intercontinental influence on PM.
256	
257	The intercontinental influence of $NO_x$ and CO emissions on PM through changes in background
258	oxidant fields depends in a complex way on the chemical environment in the receptor region
259	including (1) the relative importance of OH, ozone, and $H_2O_2$ as oxidants for SO <sub>2</sub> and NO <sub>x</sub> ; (2)
260	cloudiness; (3) $H_2O_2$ limitation of in-cloud SO <sub>2</sub> oxidation by $H_2O_2$ ; and (4) availability of
261	ammonia for nitrate PM formation. All of these factors have substantial uncertainty in models,
262	and the corresponding errors cannot easily be quantified using a single model. The
263	intercontinental influence on oxidant levels is itself uncertain. The HTAP multi-model
264	intercomparison of Fiore et al. (2009) shows good agreement between models for
265	intercontinental influences on ozone, but no such evaluations have been conducted for OH and
266	H <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub> . In view of the potential for significant impacts presented in this paper, it would be of great

interest to carry out a multi-model intercomparison of intercontinental influences of NO<sub>x</sub> and CO
 emissions on PM.

269

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#### 469 **Figure Captions**

470 Figure 1 - Annual mean enhancements of surface PM concentrations in Europe and Asia from

471 US anthropogenic emissions of SO<sub>2</sub> (top), NO<sub>x</sub> (middle), and CO (bottom). Values are

472 differences between the control GEOS-Chem simulation and a sensitivity simulation with US

anthropogenic emissions shut off. Boxes in the top panels outline receptor regions in northern

474 Europe and eastern China for which speciation and seasonality are shown in Figure 2.

475 Figure 2 – Speciation of sulfate-nitrate-ammonium (SNA) PM concentrations in surface air for

the receptor regions of Figure 1 (left panels) and corresponding intercontinental enhancements

477 from US anthropogenic emissions of SO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub>, and CO (right panels). Values are seasonal

478 means from the GEOS-Chem model. Seasonal concentrations have been divided by 100

479 (Northern Europe) and 200 (Eastern China) to fit on scale.

480 Figure 3 - Annual mean enhancements of surface PM concentrations in Europe and the United

481 States from Asian anthropogenic emissions of SO<sub>2</sub> (top), NO<sub>x</sub> (middle), and CO (bottom).

482 Values are differences between the control GEOS-Chem simulation and a sensitivity simulation

483 with Asian anthropogenic sources shut off. Boxes in the top panels outline the receptor region in

the United States for which speciation and seasonality are shown in Figure 4.

485 Figure 4 – Speciation of sulfate-nitrate-ammonium (SNA) PM concentrations in surface air for

the receptor regions of Figures 1 and 2 (left panels) and corresponding intercontinental

487 enhancements from US anthropogenic emissions of SO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub>, and CO (right panels). Values are

488 seasonal means from the GEOS-Chem model. Seasonal concentrations from the control

simulation have been divided by 100 to fit on scale.

Figure

 $\rm PM_{2.5}$  Enhancement from US  $\rm SO_2$ 





# Northern Europe







PM<sub>2.5</sub> Enhancement from Asian SO<sub>2</sub>

-0.05

# Northern Europe

