

1 Supplemental information to manuscript:

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3 **Suppression of new particle formation from monoterpene** 4 **oxidation by NO_x**

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9 This supplement is divided into 6 sections. In section S1 an overview on our treatment of the
10 photochemical system is given. Section S2 describes the way to determine P(O₃). Section S3
11 gives more details on power law dependencies mentioned in the manuscript. Section S4
12 describes determination of [RO₂] from deviation of $\frac{[NO_2]}{[NO]}$ from PSS and section S5 gives
13 details on our estimations of relative peroxy radical concentrations at low [NO_x]₀ conditions.
14 Section S6 aims to confirm that the formation of first generation permutation reaction
15 products is not the rate limiting step for new particle formation.

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18 **S1. Basic reactions and considerations regarding the power law dependence observed** 19 **between ozone production rates and new particle formation**

20 In the absence of volatile organic compounds (VOC) and hydroxyl radicals (OH), nitrogen
21 monoxide (NO), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), and ozone (O₃) reach equilibrium concentrations
22 within minutes in a photochemical system. The equilibrium conditions are termed as
23 photostationary steady state (PSS, Leighton, 1961):

24

$$25 \frac{[NO_2]}{[NO]} = \frac{k_1 \cdot [O_3]}{J(NO_2)} \quad (\text{ES1})$$

26

27 ($k_1 = 1.8 \times 10^{-14} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$ = rate constant for the reaction of NO with O₃, IUPAC, 2009, J(NO₂)
28 = NO₂ photolysis rate).

29

1 The ratio $\frac{[NO_2]}{[NO]}$ deviates from that in Equation ES1 when the chemical system contains VOC
 2 and OH. This deviation from PSS is due to reactions of NO with peroxy radicals (RO₂).
 3 Reactions of NO with RO₂ either form NO₂ in reaction R2a or organic nitrates in reaction
 4 R2b:



8
 9 Reaction R2a is the basic reaction for photochemical ozone formation. The rate of net ozone
 10 formation (P(O₃)) is written as:

$$11 \quad P(O_3) = \sum_i ([RO_2^i] \cdot k^i \cdot Y^i(O_3)) \cdot [NO] \quad (ES2)$$

12
 13 In Equation ES2, RO₂ⁱ is the specific peroxy radical, kⁱ the rate coefficient of RO₂ⁱ with NO,
 14 and Yⁱ(O₃) is the branching ratio of ozone formation in reaction R2 (reaction R2 = reaction
 15 R2a + reaction R2b) with the specific peroxy radical RO₂ⁱ. The production rate of organic
 16 nitrate formation (P(RONO₂)) is given by:

$$17 \quad P(RONO_2) = \sum_i ([RO_2^i] \cdot k^i \cdot Y^i(RONO_2)) \cdot [NO] \quad (ES3)$$

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 19 In Equation ES3 Yⁱ(RONO₂) is the branching ratio of organic nitrate formation in reaction
 20 R2.
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23
 24 For simplification we write Equations ES2 and ES3 in the form:

$$25 \quad P(O_3) = k_2 \cdot [NO] \cdot [RO_2] \cdot Y(O_3) \quad (ES2)$$

26
 27 and

$$28 \quad P(RONO_2) = k_2 \cdot [NO] \cdot [RO_2] \cdot Y(RONO_2) \quad (ES3)$$

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 31

1 k_2 ($= k_{2a} + k_{2b}$) is an average rate constant for reaction R2 ($9 \times 10^{-12} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$, IUPAC, 2009)
 2 and $Y(O_3)$ and $Y(RONO_2)$ are average branching ratios. Assuming that reactions R2a and
 3 R2b are the only pathways of $RO_2 + NO$ reactions, $Y(RONO_2) = 1 - Y(O_3)$.

4
 5 While reaction R2 is the dominant RO_2 loss at high NO_x conditions, reaction R3 (reaction R3
 6 = reaction R3a + reaction R3b) is the main loss for RO_2 radicals at low NO_x conditions.



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 11 Reaction R3a forms hydroperoxides. Reaction R3b forms various products including alkoxy
 12 radicals, diols, ketones (e.g. master chemical mechanism, MCM), and probably also
 13 alkylperoxides (e.g. Hallquist et al., 2009). We termed the sum of all products of reaction R3
 14 as permutation reaction products, PRP. Production rates of PRP, $P(\text{PRP})$ can be written as:

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 16 $P(\text{PRP}) = k_3 \cdot [RO_2] \cdot [NO]$ (ES4)

17
 18 where k_3 is an average rate constant for a given RO_2 mix. Note that the term RO_2 is used to
 19 include HO_2 . The ratio of the rates at which reaction R3 and R2 proceed is given by equation
 20 ES5:

21
 22 $\frac{k_3 \cdot [RO_2]}{k_2 \cdot [NO]}$ (ES5)

23
 24 This ratio is equal to the ratio $\frac{P(\text{PRP})}{P(O_3) + P(RONO_2)}$:

25
 26 $\frac{k_3 \cdot [RO_2]}{k_2 \cdot [NO]} = \frac{P(\text{PRP})}{P(O_3) + P(RONO_2)}$ (ES6)

27
 28 The derivative of $\frac{k_3 \cdot [RO_2]}{k_2 \cdot [NO]}$ versus NO is:

29
 30 $\frac{\partial \left(\frac{k_3 \cdot [RO_2]}{k_2 \cdot [NO]} \right)}{\partial [NO]} = - \frac{k_3 \cdot [RO_2]}{[NO]^2}$ (ES7)

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Hence the derivative of $\frac{P(PR\dot{P})}{P(O_3)+P(RONO_2)}$ versus [NO] is also given by the right term in

Equation ES7.

Considering that for a given photochemical system $P(O_3)$ and $P(RONO_2)$ are related by $\frac{Y(O_3)}{Y(RONO_2)}$, the sum $P(O_3) + P(RONO_2)$ can be expressed as:

$$P(O_3) + P(RONO_2) = P(O_3) + \frac{Y(RONO_2)}{Y(O_3)} \cdot P(O_3) \quad (ES8)$$

At constant contribution of HO_2 and other RO_2 radicals $\frac{Y(RONO_2)}{Y(O_3)}$ should be constant. If so, $P(O_3)$ may serve as a proxy for RO_2 consumption in reaction R2:

$$\frac{P(PR\dot{P})}{P(O_3)+P(RONO_2)} = \frac{P(PR\dot{P})}{\left(1 + \frac{Y(RONO_2)}{Y(O_3)}\right) \cdot P(O_3)} \quad (ES9)$$

It thus follows that $P(PR\dot{P})$ and $P(O_3)$ in dependence of [NO] is coupled according to:

$$-\frac{\partial \left(\frac{P(PR\dot{P})}{P(O_3)}\right)}{\partial [NO]} = \left(1 + \frac{Y(RONO_2)}{Y(O_3)}\right) \cdot \frac{\frac{k_3}{k_2} \cdot [RO_2]}{[NO]^2} \quad (ES10)$$

Branching ratios as well as the rate constants k_3 and k_2 are determined by the peroxy radical *pattern*. The RO_2 pattern itself is controlled by the BVOC mixture, by [OH] and by [NO]. In particular contributions of HO_2 are important because $Y(RONO_2)$ is essentially zero for HO_2 . For simplicity we assume that branching ratios and rate constants were constant from experiment to experiment because the same BVOC mixtures were added in all experiments. This assumption allowed to express the NO induced changes of the ratio $P(PR\dot{P})/P(O_3)$ by exchanging $\frac{k_3}{k_2} \cdot \left(1 + \frac{Y(RONO_2)}{Y(O_3)}\right)$ by a constant (*const*):

$$-\frac{\partial \left(\frac{P(PR\dot{P})}{P(O_3)}\right)}{\partial [NO]} = const \cdot \frac{[RO_2]}{[NO]^2} \quad (ES11)$$

1 with *const* being a proportionality factor. The results of our experiments *a posteriori* verified
2 the validity of the above given assumption.

3

4 In a photochemical system $\frac{P(PRP)}{P(O_3)}$ may change with varying $[NO]$ in a very complicated
5 manner because variations of $[NO]$ should result in variations of $[RO_2]$. Here we distinguish
6 two cases:

7 (1) The peroxy radical production rate, $P(RO_2)$, stays constant independent of NO . In this case
8 increasing $[NO]$ should cause a decrease of $[RO_2]$ and the power law dependence should
9 show an exponent below -2.

10 (2) $[RO_2]$ is independent of $[NO]$ and nearly constant. It follows that $\frac{\partial \left(\frac{P(PRP)}{P(O_3)} \right)}{\partial [NO]} = const \cdot$
11 $\frac{1}{[NO]^2}$ meaning that the ratio $\frac{P(PRP)}{P(O_3)}$ will change with varying $[NO]$ in a way describable by
12 power law dependence with an exponent of -2. One mechanism by which $[RO_2]$ can stay
13 constant and thus independent of $[NO]$ in an increasing production rate of RO_2 $P(RO_2)$ due to
14 increasing steady state $[OH]$.

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17 **S2: Determination of $P(O_3)$**

18 Rates of photochemical ozone production, $P(O_3)$, were determined considering the following
19 source and loss terms for O_3 .

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21 **Source terms for O_3 :**

22 a) Net addition to the chamber: $V \cdot \frac{\partial [O_3]}{\partial t} = F \cdot ([O_3]_{in} - [O_3])$ (ES12)

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24 with V = volume of the chamber, F = air flow through the chamber, $[O_3]_{in}$ =
25 concentration of O_3 in the ingoing and $[O_3]$ = concentration of O_3 in the outgoing air
26 stream. The reaction chamber was operated as continuously stirred tank reactor with air
27 mixing rates much higher than exchange rates of air. Thus the ozone concentration
28 measured at chamber outlet, $[O_3]$, is the average ozone concentration in the chamber.
29 Note that in case of photochemical ozone formation $[O_3]$ will be higher than $[O_3]_{in}$.
30 Process a) may switch from a source term to a loss term.

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1 b) NO₂ photolysis: $V \cdot \frac{\partial [O_3]}{\partial t} = V \cdot J(NO_2) \cdot [NO_2]$ (ES13)

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3 with $J(NO_2)$ = rate of NO₂ photolysis and assuming that $J(NO_2)$ limits the rate of process

4 b) because the subsequent reaction: $O^3P + O_2 + M \rightarrow O_3 + M$ is much faster than NO₂
5 photolysis.

6

7 **Loss terms for O₃:**

8 c) Reactions with NO: $V \cdot \frac{\partial [O_3]}{\partial t} = -V \cdot k_1 \cdot [NO] \cdot [O_3]$ (ES14)

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10 d) Ozone photolysis: $V \cdot \frac{\partial [O_3]}{\partial t} = -V \cdot J(O^1D) \cdot [O_3] \cdot f([H_2O])$ (ES15)

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12 with $f([H_2O])$ = branching ratio of O¹D + H₂O reactions over O¹D quenching to O³P by
13 O₂ and N₂ which leads to reformation of O₃.

14

15 e) Ozone reactions with BVOC: $V \cdot \frac{\partial [O_3]}{\partial t} = -V \cdot k_{BVOC} \cdot [O_3] \cdot [BVOC]$ (ES16)

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17 with k_{BVOC} = average rate constant for BVOC + O₃ reactions.

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19 f) Ozone reactions with OH: $V \cdot \frac{\partial [O_3]}{\partial t} = -V \cdot k_{OH} \cdot [O_3] \cdot [OH]$ (ES17)

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21 with k_{OH} = rate constant of OH + O₃ reactions.

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23 g) Ozone reactions with HO₂: $V \cdot \frac{\partial [O_3]}{\partial t} = -V \cdot k_{HO_2} \cdot [O_3] \cdot [HO_2]$ (ES18)

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25 with k_{HO_2} = rate constant of HO₂ + O₃ reactions.

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27 h) Wall losses: $V \cdot \frac{\partial [O_3]}{\partial t} = v^w \cdot A^w \cdot [O_3]$ (ES19)

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29 with v^w = deposition velocity of ozone to the walls of the chamber with the wall area
30 A^w .

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1 Dominant source term is NO₂ photolysis, dominant loss term is reaction of O₃ with NO. If the
2 system is in PSS, both rates are equal and cancel out. In the presence of VOC and OH, ozone
3 production by NO₂ photolysis exceeds ozone losses in reactions with NO. The difference
4 between (b) and (c) is attributed to reaction R2a and termed as ozone production rate:

5

$$6 \quad P(O_3) = k_2 \cdot [NO] \cdot [RO_2] \cdot Y(O_3) \quad (\text{ES2})$$

7

8 Under atmospheric conditions ozone losses due to ozone photolysis and reactions of O₃ with
9 OH, HO₂, and BVOC are quite low and can be neglected for estimation of P(O₃). In our
10 reaction chamber the situation was different because J(O¹D), [OH], [BVOC] and most
11 probably also [HO₂] were much higher than in the atmosphere. To calculate P(O₃) therefore
12 required consideration of ozone photolysis (d) and O₃ losses in processes *e* – *h*:

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14 Ozone photolysis: The branching ratio of O¹D + H₂O reactions in our chamber was: f([H₂O])
15 ~ 0.09 and ozone mixing ratios ranged between 46 and 85 ppb. At J(O¹D) = 9×10⁻⁴ s⁻¹
16 photolytic ozone losses ranged between 13 and 24 ppb h⁻¹.

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18 Compared to the high photolytic losses, ozone losses in processes *e* to *h* were of minor
19 importance. The following loss rates (or upper limits of loss rates) were estimated:

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21 e. Ozone losses in reactions with BVOC were estimated to be < 2 ppb h⁻¹:

22 BVOC concentrations in the reaction chamber were very low when the TUV lamp was
23 on and OH reactions were dominant. In such cases concentrations of myrcene, (*E*)-β-
24 ocimene exhibiting high reactivity towards OH were near to the detection limit or even
25 below. These were also the BVOC with the highest reactivity towards O₃ and thus
26 ozone losses due to these reactions were not reliably determinable. We therefore
27 estimated an upper limit of O₃ losses assuming that a hypothetical BVOC with a high
28 reactivity towards O₃ would be abundant at concentrations of 500 ppt. As rate constant
29 k_{BVOC} = 5.4×10⁻¹⁶ cm³ s⁻¹ was used (= rate constant of O₃ + (*E*)-β-ocimene reactions,
30 Atkinson, 1997).

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32 f. Using [OH] = 2.5×10⁷ cm⁻³ (see Fig. 6 of the manuscript) and k_{OH} = 7.3×10⁻¹⁴ cm³ s⁻¹
33 (Sander et al., 2006) losses in OH reactions were estimated to ~0.4 ppb h⁻¹.

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1 g. Assuming $[HO_2] < 0.3$ ppb ($\sim 8 \times 10^9 \text{ cm}^{-3}$) as an upper limit for HO_2 concentrations
2 (compare to Fig. S1) and using $k_{HO_2} = 2 \times 10^{-15} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$ (Sander et al., 2006), O_3 losses in
3 reactions with HO_2 were estimated to < 4 ppb h^{-1} .

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5 h. As reported before (e.g. Neubert et al., 1993; Fares et al., 2008) wall losses in our
6 chamber were very low. Less than 3% of the O_3 was lost within the residence time of
7 the air in the reaction chamber (~ 63 min.) leading to an upper limit for ozone wall
8 losses of < 2.6 ppb h^{-1} .

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10 Compared to photolytic O_3 losses and losses due to higher O_3 concentrations in the outgoing
11 air than in the ingoing air all the other losses (e-h) were low and therefore neglected.

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13 The term of interest, $P(O_3) = k_2 \cdot [NO] \cdot [RO_2] \cdot Y(O_3)$, was determined after setting the
14 differential equation for net ozone introduction, photochemical ozone production and ozone
15 photolysis to steady state conditions resulting in Equation ES20:

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$$P(O_3) = k_2 \cdot [NO] \cdot [RO_2] \cdot Y(O_3) = \frac{F}{V} \cdot ([O_3] - [O_3]_{in}) + J(O^1D) \cdot [O_3] \cdot f([H_2O]) \quad (\text{ES20})$$

18
19 For comparison with J_7 , $P(O_3)$ was determined for the point in time when new particle
20 formation appeared. For the high $[NO_x]_0$ experiments $P(O_3)$ was thus measured 2 to 5 h after
21 switching on the TUV lamp. For the low $[NO_x]_0$ experiments we used the data obtained about
22 an hour after switching on the TUV lamp when $[O_3]$ was near to steady state.

23 24 25 **S3: power law dependencies**

26 To check for power law dependencies between J_7 and BNR and between $P(O_3)$ and BNR,
27 respectively, logarithmic data of these data were plotted (Fig. S1).

28 As result we obtained a slope of: 2.3 ± 0.1 , for the fit of $\ln(J_7)$ versus $\ln(\text{BNR})$ indicating that
29 J_7 increased approximately in a squared manner with increasing BNR. Considering that
30 $[\text{BVOC}]_0$ was quite constant and at least did not vary systematically with $[NO_x]_0$, this
31 indicates that J_7 decreased with increasing $[NO_x]_0$ in an approximately squared manner.

32 As result of the fit of $\ln(P(O_3))$ versus $\ln(\text{BNR})$ we obtained -1.28 ± 0.3 indicating that $P(O_3)$
33 increased approximately linear with decreasing BNR. Again, considering that $[\text{BVOC}]_0$ was

1 quite constant, this also indicated an approximately linear increase of P(O₃) with increasing
2 [NO_x]₀.

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5 **S4: determination of [RO₂] from deviation from PSS**

6 In a chemical system with photochemical O₃ formation $\frac{[NO_2]}{[NO]}$ is given by:

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$$8 \quad \frac{[NO_2]}{[NO]} = \frac{k_1 \cdot [O_3] + k_2 \cdot [RO_2]}{J(NO_2)} \quad (ES21)$$

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10 The difference between measured $\frac{[NO_2]}{[NO]}$ and $\frac{[NO_2]}{[NO]}_{PSS}$ (Equation ES1) is: $\frac{k_2 \cdot [RO_2]}{J(NO_2)}$. The
11 concentration of [RO₂] can thus be estimated by using an average rate constant k_2 . In two of
12 our experiments it was possible to obtain data for [RO₂] from observed deviation of $\frac{[NO_2]}{[NO]}$
13 from PSS. We used $k_2 = 9 \times 10^{-12} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$ (IUPAC, 2009) and $J(NO_2) = 4.3 \times 10^{-3} \text{ s}^{-1}$ as
14 measured in the chamber with VOC free air and in the absence of O₃ photolysis by the TUV
15 lamp.

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17 Figure 9 of the manuscript shows the result obtained from the experiment with the highest
18 NO_x addition (first row of Table 1 in the manuscript). Figure S2 shows the result of the
19 second example where such estimation was possible (BNR = 3.2 ppbC/ppb, [NO_x]₀ = 39.4
20 ppb, [OH] increasing from 5.4×10^6 to $2.2 \times 10^7 \text{ cm}^{-3}$, third row in Table 1 of the manuscript).

21

22 With respect to the temporal development of the photochemical system, the same result was
23 obtained in both experiments. With proceeding photochemistry the deviation of observed
24 $\frac{[NO_2]}{[NO]}$ from PSS increased, indicating that peroxy radical concentrations increased with time.

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26 In the experiment shown in Figure S2, new particle formation became observable about 2
27 hours after starting OH production. At that time [NO] had decreased from ~9 ppb to ~0.85
28 ppb and estimated RO₂ concentrations had increased to ~200 ppt. In the experiment shown in
29 Figure 9 of the manuscript NPF became observable about 5 hours after starting OH
30 production. At that time [NO] had decreased from ~20 to ~1 ppb and estimated RO₂
31 concentrations had increased to ~ 300 ppt.

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While absolute concentrations of $[RO_2]$ depend critically on k_2 , and therefore have large systematic errors, the relative comparison of $[RO_2]$ for the two experiments is less error prone. In both experiments the chemical system, especially BVOC composition was similar. Thus also yields of organic nitrate formation should have been similar and similar RO_2 radicals should have been produced. Both make errors in k_2 less important for comparison. We therefore concluded that $[RO_2]$ was similar in both experiments. The observed difference in J_7 as measured in both experiments ($J_7 = 0.46 \text{ cm}^{-3} \text{ s}^{-1}$ for $[RO_2] \sim 200 \text{ ppt}$ and $J_7 = 0.02 \text{ cm}^{-3} \text{ s}^{-1}$ for $[RO_2] \sim 300 \text{ ppt}$) shows that J_7 was not related to the concentrations of the bulk of first generation peroxy radicals.

S5: Estimation of $[RO_2]$ for low NO_x conditions

As the squared relationship between J_7 and $P(O_3)$ was valid in the whole range $1.1 < \text{BNR} < 10$, it was necessary to compare $[RO_2]$ for all these experiments. Because it was impossible to use deviation from PSS in the medium to low NO_x experiments, relative data were determined. Reference case was the experiment with the highest $[NO_x]_0$ addition (Figure 9 in the manuscript).

Relative RO_2 concentrations were estimated assuming steady state conditions for peroxy radicals: Due to the high reactivity the lifetime of peroxy radicals is on the order of seconds. This is very short compared to the temporal changes of $[OH]$, $[O_3]$, $[NO]$ in the chamber (see Figs. 4 and 9 in the manuscript and Fig. S2). As production and loss rates changed on time scales of hours, assumption of steady state conditions for $[RO_2]$ was justified. This assumption allowed expressing $[RO_2]$ as ratio of RO_2 production rates $P(RO_2)$ over a loss rate $L(RO_2)$:

$$[RO_2] = \frac{P(RO_2)}{L(RO_2)} \tag{ES22}$$

with

$$L(RO_2) = k_2 \cdot [NO] + k_3 \cdot [RO_2] \tag{ES23}$$

1 At the conditions in the chamber, BVOC oxidation was dominated by OH reactions. Thus
 2 $P(\text{RO}_2)$ could be written as:

$$3$$

$$4 \quad P(\text{RO}_2) = [\text{BVOC}] \cdot [\text{OH}] \cdot k_4 \cdot Y(\text{RO}_2) \quad (\text{ES24})$$

5
 6 In Equation ES24, k_4 is an average rate constant for BVOC + OH reactions and $Y(\text{RO}_2)$ is the
 7 yield of peroxy radical formation from the BVOC mix. The BVOC mixtures during the
 8 respective experiments were similar. Therefore also k_4 and $Y(\text{RO}_2)$ were similar allowing
 9 expressing the ratio of peroxy radical production rates P(PRP) according to Equation ES25.

$$10$$

$$11 \quad \frac{P(\text{RO}_2)_R}{P(\text{RO}_2)_D} = \frac{[\text{OH}]_R \cdot [\text{BVOC}]_{0,R}}{[\text{OH}]_D \cdot [\text{BVOC}]_{0,D}} \quad (\text{ES25})$$

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 13 In Equation ES25, the index R represents the reference case, and the index D represents the
 14 data set for which $[\text{RO}_2]$ had to be determined. In all calculations we used $[\text{OH}]$ as measured
 15 during the onset of new particle formation. For the low NO_x experiments these were the OH
 16 concentrations measured during the first hour of the experiments (see Table 1 in the
 17 manuscript). For the high NO_x experiments these were the OH concentrations measured 2 – 5
 18 h after the TUV lamp was switched on.

19
 20 The ratio of RO_2 concentrations could be written as:

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$$22 \quad \frac{[\text{RO}_2]_D}{[\text{RO}_2]_R} = \frac{P(\text{RO}_2)_D \cdot ([k_2 \cdot [\text{NO}]_R + k_3 \cdot [\text{RO}_2]_R)}{P(\text{RO}_2)_R \cdot ([k_2 \cdot [\text{NO}]_D + k_3 \cdot [\text{RO}_2]_D)} \quad (\text{ES26})$$

23
 24 Rearrangement of Equation ES26 leads to Equation ES27:

$$25$$

$$26 \quad [\text{RO}_2]_D^2 + [\text{RO}_2]_D \cdot \frac{k_2}{k_3} [\text{NO}]_D - \frac{P(\text{RO}_2)_D}{P(\text{RO}_2)_R} \cdot [\text{RO}_2]_R \cdot \left(\frac{k_2}{k_3} [\text{NO}]_R + [\text{RO}_2]_R \right) = 0 \quad (\text{ES27})$$

27
 28 $[\text{RO}_2]_R$ was ~300 ppt (see Figure 9 in the manuscript), and $[\text{OH}]_R$ was $\sim 2.6 \times 10^7 \text{ cm}^{-3}$ (see
 29 red square in Fig. 6 of the manuscript). $[\text{OH}]_D$ was measured and k_2 was set to $9 \times 10^{-12} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$
 30 (IUPAC, 2009) i. e. identical to the value used in the estimations of $[\text{RO}_2]$ from deviation
 31 from PSS.

1 Most uncertain quantities in Equation ES27 were $[NO]_D$ and k_3 . Thus, we used upper and
2 lower limits for each of these quantities. As upper limit for $[NO]_D$ the NO concentration
3 estimated for PSS from the measured $[NO_x]$ and $[O_3]$ was used. As lower limit,
4 $[NO]_D$ was set to zero.

5 To estimate an upper limit for k_3 , it was assumed that $[HO_2]$ contributed to 90 % to $[RO_2]$;
6 to estimate a lower limit for k_3 , it was assumed that $[HO_2]$ contributed to 10 % to $[RO_2]$. As
7 can be seen from data given in the master chemical mechanism (MCM) for monoterpenes,
8 rate constants for reactions of first generation RO_2 radicals with HO_2 are much higher than
9 those of other $RO_2 - R'O_2$ reactions ($RO_2 + HO_2 \sim 3.1 \times 10^{-11} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$, $RO_2 + R'O_2 \sim 6.5 \times 10^{-15}$
10 $- 8.8 \times 10^{-13} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$). This allows neglecting $RO_2 + R'O_2$ reactions as important loss terms for
11 peroxy radicals. The relative abundance of HO_2 in the RO_2 mix is the main determining factor
12 for RO_2 loss rates at low NO_x conditions. We therefore assumed $k_3 = 2.8 \times 10^{-11} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$ (for
13 $[HO_2] \sim 90\%$ of $[RO_2]$) to be an upper limit for k_3 and $k_3 = 3.1 \times 10^{-12} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$ (for $[HO_2] \sim$
14 10% of $[RO_2]$) to be a lower limit for k_3 .

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16 Table S1 lists $[RO_2]$ estimated for the three combinations: $k_3 = 2.8 \times 10^{-11} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$ and
17 $[NO]_D$ from PSS termed as $[RO_2]_{rel}^a$, $k_3 = 3.1 \times 10^{-12} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$ and $[NO]_D$ from PSS termed as
18 $[RO_2]_{rel}^b$, and for $k_3 = 2.8 \times 10^{-11} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$ and $[NO]_D = 0$ termed as $[RO_2]_{rel}^c$. As obvious from
19 Equation ES27 the fourth of the possible combinations: $k_3 = 3.1 \times 10^{-12} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$ and $[NO]_D = 0$
20 gives the same result as $[RO_2]_{rel}^c$ because k_3 cancels out. For better comparison, Table S1
21 also lists the range of minimum and maximum relative $[RO_2]$ compared to the reference case
22 (~ 300 ppt).

23

24 Comparing maximum and minimum values for $[RO_2]$ for individual experiments it is obvious
25 that the data differ by roughly a factor of two. Hence the uncertainty in $[RO_2]$ caused by the
26 uncertainties in k_3 and in $[NO]$ had no substantial impact of results for individual
27 experiments. As the variations of $[NO]_D$ and k_3 were quite large, we believe that the
28 estimations on the ranges of relative $[RO_2]$ are realistic.

29 Comparing relative RO_2 concentrations between experiments starting at high $[NO_x]_0$
30 conditions and at low $[NO_x]_0$, respectively, it is obvious that also these numbers show
31 variability of roughly a factor of 2. Independent of the combination of k_3 and $[NO]$ used for
32 the estimations there was no systematic variation from high to low NO_x experiments (compare
33 numbers in columns).

1 Again, we put not too much attention to the absolute numbers. But the photochemical systems
2 were very similar from experiment to experiment allowing reliable comparison between
3 experiments. We therefore concluded that $[RO_2]$ at the onset of NPF was quite constant in all
4 experiments. Contrary, J_7 varied by 3 orders of magnitude over the whole BNR range. In the
5 range $1.1 < BNR < 10$ where comparison of J_7 and $P(O_3)$ was possible J_7 still varied by 2
6 orders of magnitude allowing the conclusion that J_7 was not related to $P(PR\dot{P})$.

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9 **S6 Sensitivity tests and general considerations**

10 Based on the similarity of $[RO_2]$ estimated for the high and low $[NO_x]_0$ experiments,
11 respectively, we conclude that production rates of first generation PRP were not the rate
12 limiting step for NPF. We further test the validity of this conclusion with the following
13 hypothesis. We assume that first permutation reactions of first generation RO_2 radicals are the
14 rate limiting step for NPF and estimate how high $[RO_2]$ should have been in that case during
15 the low $[NO_x]_0$ experiments:

16 If reaction R3 is the rate limiting step in new particle formation, J_7 should be proportional to
17 the rate of reaction R3:

18

$$19 \quad J_7 = x \cdot k_3 \cdot [RO_2] \cdot [RO_2] \quad (ES28)$$

20

21 with x = a proportionality factor.

22

23 As base we again use the high NO_x experiment as shown in Fig. 9 of the manuscript. When
24 particle formation started, RO_2 was estimated to be around 300 ppt and J_7 was in the range of
25 $0.02 \text{ cm}^{-3} \text{ s}^{-1}$. As typical value for J_7 at low NO_x conditions we use $J_7 = 42 \text{ cm}^{-3} \text{ s}^{-1}$ (average of
26 J_7 without NO_x addition, see Table 1 in the manuscript). Assuming the proportionality factor x
27 to be constant would mean that threshold RO_2 concentrations should increase with the square
28 root of J_7 . Using $J_7 = 42 \text{ cm}^{-3} \text{ s}^{-1}$ leads to a threshold RO_2 concentration of 13.7 ppb. This is an
29 unrealistic high concentration even when considering that the absolute numbers for RO_2 as
30 shown in Fig. 9 may be an order of magnitude too high.

31 The strong variations in J_7 cannot at all be explained by variations of $[RO_2]$.

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33 From our estimations in sections S4 to S6 we conclude that permutation reactions of first
34 generation RO_2 radicals cannot be the rate limiting step for new particle formation.

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Table S1: Results from estimations of relative peroxy radical concentrations. Data for $[RO_2]$ obtained for the experiment at BNR = 1.1 were taken as reference.

$[RO_2]_{rel}^a: k_3 = 2.8 \times 10^{-11} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}, [NO]_D$ from PSS,

$[RO_2]_{rel}^b: k_3 = 3.1 \times 10^{-12} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}, [NO]_D$ from PSS,

$[RO_2]_{rel}^{c,d}: k_3 = 2.8 \times 10^{-11} / 3.1 \times 10^{-12} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}, [NO]_D = 0.$

The last column lists the minimum and maximum $[RO_2]$ compared to 300 ppt, i.e. the reference case.

BNR [ppbC]/[ppb]	[BVOC] ₀ [ppbC]	[OH] [cm ⁻³] ×10 ⁷	$[RO_2]_{PSS}$ [ppt]	$[RO_2]_{rel}^a$ [ppt]	$[RO_2]_{rel}^b$ [ppt]	$[RO_2]_{rel}^{c,d}$ [ppt]	Range %
1.1	119	2.58	300	-	-	-	-
1.8	122	2.50	#	169	150	299	50 – 100
3.2	124.5	2.20	200	164	136	283	45 – 94
4.3	98.5	*	--	*	*	*	*
8.9	109.5	1.68	--	149	95	232	31 – 77
10.2	104.3	1.89	--	164	102	240	34 – 80
12.8	105	*	--	*	*	*	*
14.4	106.3	1.91	--	181	115	244	38 – 81
18.0	88.3	1.83	--	168	98	218	33 – 73
24.4	79.8	1.71	--	162	91	200	30 – 67
25.4	124.5	1.47	--	183	111	232	37 – 77
28.6	117	1.71	--	200	124	242	41 – 81
29.8	97.5	1.68	--	182	108	219	36 – 73
61.1	100	1.40	--	181	112	203	37 – 68
62.0	101.5	*	--	*	*	*	*
79.2	129.5	0.99	--	172	104	194	35 – 65
255.8	76.8	*	--	*	*	*	*
277.5	83.3	1.58	--	192	164	196	54 – 65
300.0	90	1.59	--	201	172	205	57 – 68
326.7	98	1.06	--	170	140	175	47 – 58
329.2	98.8	*	--	*	*	*	*
345.8	103.8	1.16	--	183	155	188	51 – 63
363.8	109	*	--	*	*	*	*
412.5	124	*	--	*	*	*	*
414.2	124.3	1.11	--	197	168	201	56 – 67
415.0	124.5	*	--	*	*	*	*

10 -- [NO] too low to allow reliably determination of deviation from PSS

11 # no $[RO_2]_{PSS}$ due to failure of NO_x analytics

12 * no data due to failure of OH measurement

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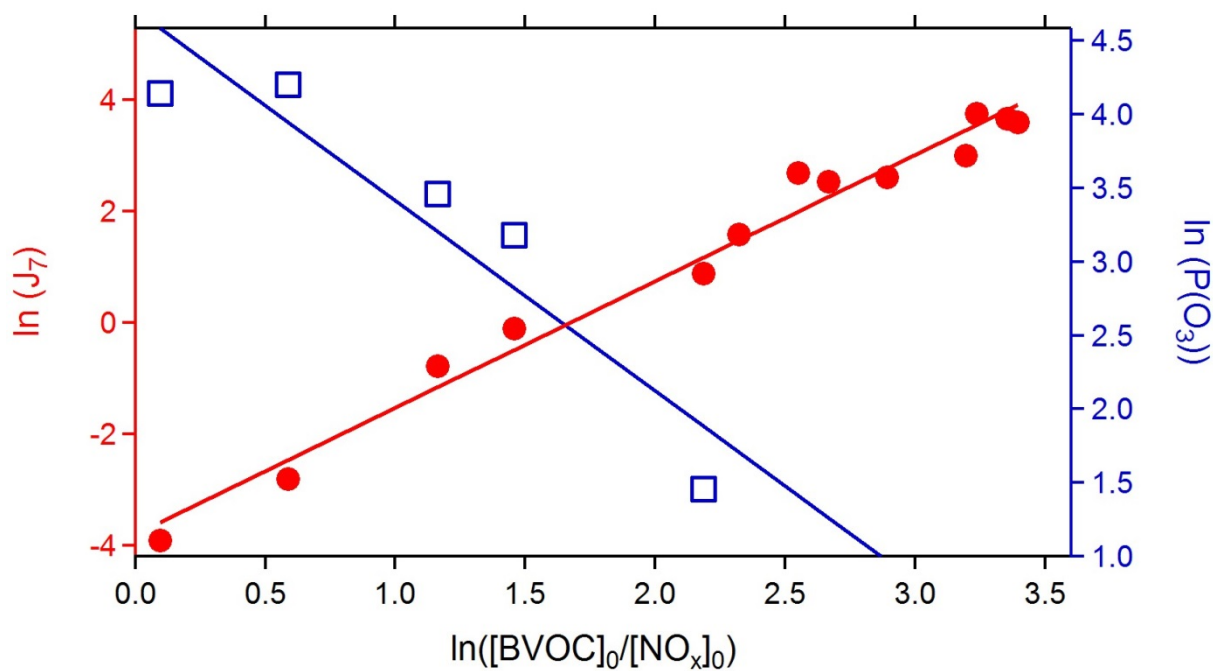


Fig. S1: double logarithmic plots of J_7 versus BNR (left scale, red circles) and of $P(O_3)$ versus BNR (blue squares, right scale). The red and blue lines show the results from the respective least square fits. Data used for the fit of $\ln(J_7)$ versus $\ln(BNR)$ were restricted to data points where impacts of NO_x were obvious ($BNR < 30$ [ppbC]/[ppb]). Data used for the fit of $\ln(P(O_3))$ versus $\ln(BNR)$ were restricted to reliable data for $P(O_3)$ ($P(O_3) > 2.5$ ppb h^{-1}). Note the different scales at both y-axes.

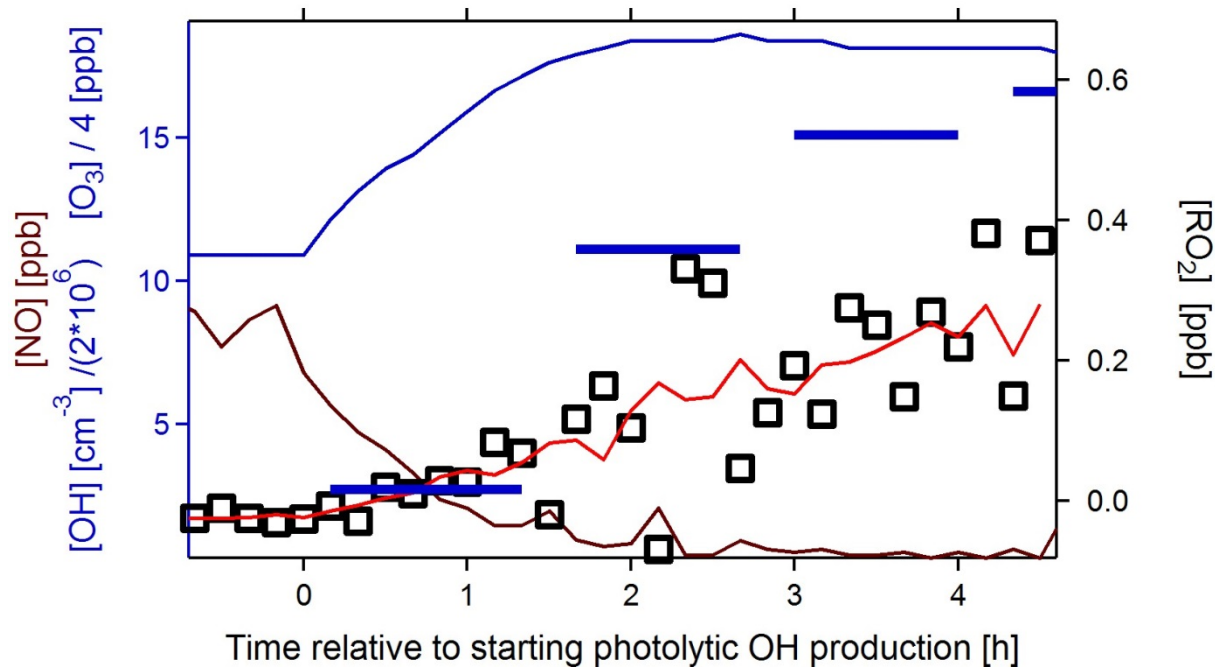


Fig. S2: Estimated $[RO_2]$ ($= \sum [RO_2^i]$) using deviation from PSS and an average rate constant $k_2 = 9 \times 10^{-12} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$ for reaction R2. The open squares (right hand y-scale) show the original data; the red line shows the five point moving average of the $[RO_2]$ data (right hand y-scale). The brown line shows NO concentrations measured during that experiment, the blue bars show OH concentrations divided by 2×10^6 for clarity, and the blue line shows the ozone concentrations divided by 4 for clarity (all data on left hand y-scale). New particle formation started about 2 h after the TUV lamp was switched on. At that point in time [NO] had decreased to ~ 0.8 ppb and $[RO_2]$ had increased to ~ 200 ppt.