

# 1 Relative humidity-dependent viscosities of isoprene- 2 derived secondary organic material and atmospheric 3 implications for isoprene-dominant forests

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## 13 14 **Abstract**

15 Oxidation of isoprene is an important source of secondary organic material (SOM) in  
16 atmospheric particles, especially in areas such as the Amazon Basin. Information on the  
17 viscosities, diffusion rates, and mixing times within isoprene-derived SOM is needed for  
18 accurate predictions of air quality, visibility, and climate. Currently, however, this  
19 information is not available. Using a bead-mobility technique and a poke-flow technique  
20 combined with fluid simulations, the relative humidity (RH)-dependent viscosities of SOM  
21 produced from isoprene photo-oxidation were quantified for 20 – 60  $\mu\text{m}$  particles at  $295 \pm$   
22 1 K. From 84.5 to 0 % RH, the viscosities for isoprene-derived SOM varied from  $\sim 2 \times 10^{-1}$   
23 to  $\sim 3 \times 10^5$  Pa·s, implying that isoprene-derived SOM ranges from a liquid to a semisolid  
24 over this RH range. These viscosities correspond to diffusion coefficients of  $\sim 2 \times 10^{-8}$  to  
25  $\sim 2 \times 10^{-14}$   $\text{cm}^2 \cdot \text{s}^{-1}$  for large organic molecules that follow the Stokes-Einstein relation. Based  
26 on the diffusion coefficients, the mixing time of large organic molecules within 200 nm  
27 isoprene-derived SOM particles ranges from approximately 0.1 hr to less than 1 s. To

1 illustrate the atmospheric implications of this study's results, the Amazon Basin is used as  
2 a case study for an isoprene-dominant forest. Considering the RH and temperature range  
3 observed in the Amazon Basin and with some assumptions about the dominant chemical  
4 compositions of SOM particles in the region, it is likely that SOM particles in this area are  
5 liquid and reach equilibrium with large gas-phase organic molecules on short time scales,  
6 less than or equal to approximately 0.1 hr.

7

## 8 **1 Introduction**

9 Vegetation and urban environments emit large quantities of volatile organic compounds  
10 (e.g. isoprene,  $\alpha$ -pinene, and toluene) into the atmosphere (Guenther et al., 1995; Geron et  
11 al., 2000; Hakola et al., 2000; Henze et al., 2008). In the atmosphere these volatile organic  
12 compounds can be oxidized by OH radicals, NO<sub>3</sub> radicals, and ozone, ultimately  
13 contributing to the burden of secondary organic material (SOM) in atmospheric particles  
14 (Hallquist et al., 2009). SOM can account for 20 – 80 % of the mass of atmospheric aerosol  
15 particles depending on location (Zhang et al., 2007; Jimenez et al., 2009). Particles  
16 containing SOM are important since they can affect the Earth's energy budget directly by  
17 scattering and/or absorbing solar radiation and indirectly by serving as nuclei for cloud  
18 formation (IPCC, 2013). Moreover, they can influence air quality and human health (Jang  
19 et al., 2006; Baltensperger et al., 2008).

20 Recently, the phase (i.e. solid vs. semisolid vs. liquid), viscosity, and molecular diffusion  
21 within SOM have been an area of focus in the atmospheric community. This is because  
22 knowledge of these physical properties is needed for modeling the environmental impacts  
23 of SOM particles (Koop et al., 2011; Pfrang et al., 2011; Riipinen et al., 2011; Shiraiwa et  
24 al., 2011; Perraud et al., 2012; Riipinen et al., 2012; Shiraiwa and Seinfeld, 2012; Shiraiwa  
25 et al., 2013; Zelenyuk et al., 2012; Zhou et al., 2013). For example, if SOM particles are  
26 solid they may participate in heterogeneous ice nucleation in the atmosphere (Murray et  
27 al., 2010; Wang et al., 2012). As another example, researchers have shown that predictions  
28 of ultrafine particle number concentrations and size distributions depend on the diffusion  
29 rates of organics within SOM particles (Riipinen et al., 2011). In addition, researchers have

1 shown that predictions of total SOM mass concentrations in urban environments are  
2 dependent on the diffusion rates of organics in SOM (Shiraiwa and Seinfeld, 2012).  
3 Moreover, it has been demonstrated that long-range transport of polycyclic aromatic  
4 hydrocarbons can depend on diffusion rates in a particle (Zelenyuk et al., 2012; Zhou et  
5 al., 2013). Furthermore, if viscosities are high in particles containing SOM material, they  
6 can inhibit the efflorescence of crystalline salts by affecting nucleation rates and/or crystal  
7 growth rates (Bodsworth et al., 2010; Song et al., 2013).

8 The phase, viscosity, and molecular diffusion rate within SOM are closely related  
9 properties (Koop et al., 2011; Shiraiwa et al., 2011). An amorphous solid is defined as a  
10 material having a viscosity greater than  $10^{12}$  Pa·s, a semisolid is defined as a material  
11 having a viscosity between  $10^2$  Pa·s and  $10^{12}$  Pa·s, and a liquid is defined as a material  
12 having a viscosity less than  $10^2$  Pa·s. Viscosities and molecular diffusion rates are related  
13 with an increase in viscosity leading to a decrease in molecular diffusion rates. For the  
14 transport of large organic molecules in SOM, molecular diffusion rates may be related to  
15 viscosity through the Stokes-Einstein equation (Koop et al., 2011).

16 An important biogenic source of SOM is the oxidation of  $\alpha$ -pinene. Recently, there has  
17 been a significant amount of research on the phase, viscosity, and diffusion rates in SOM  
18 generated from the oxidation of  $\alpha$ -pinene (Virtanen et al., 2010; Cappa et al., 2011; Perraud  
19 et al., 2012; Saukko et al., 2012; Abramson et al., 2013; Renbaum-Wolff et al., 2013a;  
20 Robinson et al., 2013; Kidd et al., 2014; Pajunoja et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2014). These  
21 different studies have shown or inferred that viscosities can be higher than  $10^2$  Pa·s and  
22 diffusion rates of large organic molecules can be slower than  $\sim 10^{-10}$   $\text{cm}^2\cdot\text{s}^{-1}$  in SOM  
23 particles generated from  $\alpha$ -pinene oxidation at low relative humidity (RH), although there  
24 are still disagreements in the exact values of the viscosities and diffusion rates in these  
25 particles.

26 Another important biogenic source of SOM in the atmosphere is photo-oxidation of  
27 isoprene. In the southeast USA during the summer months in 2006 and 2011, up to 40 %  
28 of measured  $\text{PM}_{2.5}$  organic carbon was attributed to isoprene-derived SOM (Offenberg et  
29 al., 2011; Budisulistiorini et al., 2013). In central East China during the Mount Tai  
30 Experiment 2006 campaign (MTX2006) in early summer, isoprene-derived SOM was 7

1 times greater than monoterpene-derived SOM (Fu et al., 2010). In the maritime tropical  
2 forest in Danum Valley, Borneo, Malaysia during summer 2008, isoprene-derived SOM  
3 accounted for as much as one half of the mass concentrations of total submicron organic  
4 particles (Robinson et al., 2011). In the wet season of 2008 during the Amazonian Aerosol  
5 Characterization Experiment (AMAZE-08), mass spectra of submicron organic particles  
6 were consistent with reference spectra of SOM generated from isoprene and terpene  
7 oxidation (Chen et al., 2009; Pöschl et al., 2010; Pöhlker et al., 2012). Speciation studies  
8 using chromatography have also illustrated that isoprene oxidation is a major source of  
9 SOM in the Amazon Basin during clean conditions (Claeys et al., 2004). A recent study  
10 using positive matrix factorization of aerosol mass spectra has also shown that isoprene-  
11 derived SOM is an important component of submicron particles in the Amazon Basin  
12 (Chen et al., 2014).

13 Although isoprene is a major source of SOM in some regions of the atmosphere, such as  
14 the Amazon Basin, there have only been a few studies that have investigated the phase (i.e.  
15 liquid vs. semisolid or solid) of isoprene-derived SOM (Saukko et al., 2012; Bateman et  
16 al., 2014). In addition, there has only been one study that has addressed the viscosity in  
17 isoprene-derived SOM (Bateman et al., 2014). In the current study we focus on the  
18 viscosities and diffusion rates of organic molecules as a function of RH in SOM generated  
19 from photo-oxidation of isoprene. Studies as a function of RH are needed since as the RH  
20 varies in the atmosphere SOM particles can take up water, which can change the viscosities  
21 and diffusion rates in the particles (Koop et al., 2011; Shiraiwa et al., 2011; Power et al.,  
22 2013; Renbaum-Wolff et al., 2013a; Shiraiwa et al., 2013; Zhou et al., 2013). Our approach  
23 involves measuring the viscosity of isoprene-derived SOM and then relating the viscosity  
24 to diffusion rates of organic molecules in the SOM using the Stokes-Einstein relationship.  
25 Based on their laboratory experiments studying the RH dependence of particle rebound for  
26 different types of SOM, the results of Bateman et al. (2014) appear to explain why organic  
27 particles present in terpene-dominant conditions of a boreal forest at low RH are solid  
28 whereas organic particles for isoprene-dominant tropical forests at high RH are liquid. In  
29 addition to determining viscosities and diffusion rates, we also use the new data to assess  
30 whether SOM in the Amazon Basin during clean conditions will rapidly reach equilibrium

1 with large gas-phase organic molecules under RH-values typically encountered in the  
2 region.

3

## 4 **2 Methods**

5 Primary SOM particles having diameters  $< 5 \mu\text{m}$  were produced by photo-oxidation of  
6 isoprene compounds in an oxidation flow reactor (OFR) and then collected onto  
7 hydrophobic substrates (Sect. 2.1). The primary particles were collected (Sect. 2.1) and  
8 converted into larger particles having diameters between  $20 - 60 \mu\text{m}$  (Sect. 2.2). The  
9 viscosities of the supermicron-sized particles were determined at  $295 \pm 1 \text{ K}$ , both with the  
10 bead-mobility technique (Sect. 2.3) and the poke-flow technique (Sect. 2.4).

### 11 **2.1 Production of particles consisting of secondary organic material on** 12 **hydrophobic surfaces**

13 Particles consisting of SOM were produced by the photo-oxidation of isoprene compounds  
14 in an OFR (Kang et al., 2007). The procedures were described in detail in Liu et al. (2013)  
15 and Liu et al. (2014). Table 1 lists the experimental conditions used in this study. **The**  
16 **volume of the OFR was 13.3 L and the OFR was operated at a flow of 7.0 and 9.5 L min<sup>-1</sup>,**  
17 **resulting in residence times of 114 s and 84 s, respectively.** The temperature used in the  
18 OFR experiments was  $293 \pm 2 \text{ K}$ . RH in the reactor was maintained at  $13 \pm 3 \%$  during  
19 particle generation. For injection of isoprene vapor into the OFR, 2 mL of liquid isoprene  
20 (Sigma Aldrich, 99 %) was placed in an upright Teflon tube with the lower end sealed and  
21 the upper end connected to a T-fitting. The fitting was flushed by purified air, thereby  
22 producing a gas flow containing isoprene vapor. The injected isoprene concentration was  
23  $4 - 7 \text{ ppm}$ . Ozone was produced external to the flow reactor by irradiating pure air with the  
24 ultraviolet emission from an Hg lamp ( $\lambda = 185 \text{ nm}$ ). The injected ozone concentration was  
25  $15 \text{ ppm}$ . Hydroxyl radicals were produced inside the OFR by the following photochemical  
26 reactions:



1  
2 Although the OH concentration was not measured in the OFR in this study, an OH  
3 concentration in the OFR in the range of  $2 \times 10^8$  to  $2 \times 10^{10}$  molec  $\text{cm}^{-3}$  was expected based  
4 on previous experiments under similar conditions (Lambe et al., 2011a). This OH  
5 concentration corresponds to a lifetime of isoprene between 0.5 and 50 seconds. For  
6 comparison, the  $\text{O}_3$  concentrations used in these experiments correspond to a lifetime of  
7 isoprene of approximately 3.6 min. The OH concentration in the OFR was adjusted by  
8 changing the power of the UV lamps as described in Lambe et al. (2011a). For the  
9 experiments in this study, the lamp power was always full; therefore, the OH concentration  
10 in this study should have been close to  $2 \times 10^{10}$  molec  $\text{cm}^{-3}$ , and the OH pathway should  
11 have dominated the oxidation of isoprene.

12 Based on the flow tube residence times and the expected OH concentrations, OH exposures  
13 were expected to be in the range of  $2.0 \times 10^{10}$  to  $1.8 \times 10^{12}$  molec  $\text{cm}^{-3}$ . If one assumes an  
14 average atmospheric OH concentration of  $1.5 \times 10^6$  molec  $\text{cm}^{-3}$ , this range of exposures is  
15 equivalent to ~0.15 to ~15 days of atmospheric oxidation by OH (Lambe et al., 2011a).

16 The concentration of the major oxidants ( $\text{O}_3$ , OH, and  $\text{HO}_2$ ) in the OFR is higher than in  
17 environmental chambers or the atmosphere, but the ratios of  $\text{O}_3$  to OH and OH to  $\text{HO}_2$  are  
18 similar to those encountered in the atmosphere and in environmental chambers. As a result,  
19 the OFR is used to simulate oxidation processes in the atmosphere and environmental  
20 chambers. Recent measurements with an aerosol mass spectrometer have shown that the  
21 composition of isoprene-derived SOM produced with an OFR is the same, within the  
22 uncertainty of the measurements, as isoprene-derived SOM produced with an  
23 environmental chamber (Lambe et al., 2015).

24 In the current study, the O:C ratio of the isoprene-derived SOM was not measured.  
25 However, in previous studies using the Harvard OFR, an O:C value of 0.82 for isoprene-  
26 derived SOM was measured using lower concentrations of isoprene (700 ppb). In these  
27 previous studies the O:C was calculated using the explicit approach described by Chen et  
28 al. (2011). In addition, the average O:C values of isoprene-derived SOM was found to be  
29 0.64 to 0.79 by Chhabra et al. (2010) and 0.75 to 0.88 by Chen et al. (2011) in  
30 environmental chamber studies and 0.64 to 1.1 by Lambe et al. (2011b; 2015) in explicit  
31 studies using a similar OFR. The O:C values reported here for Chhabra et al. (2010) and

1 Lambe et al. (2011b) have been scaled up by a factor of 1.27 as suggested by Canagaratna  
2 et al. (2015). Based on this information, we estimate that the O:C of isoprene-derived SOM  
3 in the current experiments was in the range of 0.64 to 1.1.

4 Particles consisting of SOM produced from the photo-oxidation of isoprene were collected  
5 onto hydrophobic substrates using an electrostatic precipitator (TSI 3089, USA) connected  
6 to the outflow of the OFR. Shown in Fig. 1a is an example of an image of particles collected  
7 on a hydrophobic substrate using this process. Teflon substrates were used as the  
8 hydrophobic substrates for the bead-mobility experiments (see Sect. 2.3). Glass slides  
9 coated with trichloro(1*H*,1*H*,2*H*,2*H*-perfluorooctyl)silane (Sigma-Aldrich) were used as  
10 hydrophobic substrates for the poke-flow experiments (see Sect. 2.4). The method of  
11 coating glass slides with a silane is described in Knopf (2003).

## 12 **2.2 Production of 20 – 60 $\mu\text{m}$ particles**

13 Particles of 20 – 60  $\mu\text{m}$  were required to perform bead-mobility and poke-flow experiments  
14 (see Sects. 2.3 and 2.4). To make the appropriate particle sizes for these experiments, the  
15 hydrophobic substrates containing particles collected from the OFR were placed in a RH-  
16 controlled flow-cell coupled to a reflectance microscope (Zeiss AxioTech, magnification  
17 50 $\times$ ) (Pant et al., 2006; Bertram et al., 2011). The RH in this flow-cell was then increased  
18 to over 100 %, which resulted in growth of the SOM particles by water uptake. The RH  
19 was then maintained over 100 % for 30 – 60 min to grow and coagulate the SOM particles.  
20 After the growth and coagulation process, the RH was decreased to 80 – 90 % to evaporate  
21 the water. The activation, growth, and coagulation processes resulted in particles having  
22 diameters of 20 – 60  $\mu\text{m}$  (see Fig. 1b). This method of producing 20 - 60  $\mu\text{m}$  particles was  
23 introduced by Renbaum-Wolff et al. (2015).

## 24 **2.3 Bead-mobility experiments**

25 The bead-mobility technique has been described in detail by Renbaum-Wolff et al. (2013b).  
26 Insoluble melamine beads (~1  $\mu\text{m}$  in diameter, Sigma Aldrich Cat. #86296) were  
27 incorporated into the supermicron SOM particles deposited on a hydrophobic substrate by  
28 nebulizing a suspension of the melamine beads in water over the supermicron SOM  
29 particles. The hydrophobic substrate with the SOM particles was then placed in a flow-cell

1 coupled to a light-transmitting microscope (Zeiss Axio Observer, magnification 40×).  
2 Once the supermicron particles were located in the flow-cell, a continuous flow of N<sub>2</sub>/H<sub>2</sub>O  
3 gas (~1200 sccm) was passed over the supermicron particles. By adjusting the ratio of N<sub>2</sub>  
4 and H<sub>2</sub>O in the flow, the RH in the cell was controlled. The RH in the flow-cell was  
5 measured using a hygrometer with a chilled mirror sensor (General Eastern, Canada),  
6 which was calibrated by observing the deliquescence RH for pure ammonium sulfate  
7 particles (80.0 % RH at 293 K, Martin (2000)). The uncertainty of the RH was ± 0.5 %.

8 The continuous flow of N<sub>2</sub>/H<sub>2</sub>O gas caused a shear stress on the surfaces of the SOM  
9 particles and resulted in internal circulations within the SOM particles. These internal  
10 circulations were quantified by monitoring the movement of the beads within the SOM  
11 particles with the optical microscope. Images of the beads within the SOM particles were  
12 recorded with a CCD camera every 0.2 s – 10 min depending on the velocity of the beads.  
13 Typically 1 – 7 beads within a particle were observed over 50 – 100 frames. Within the  
14 same particle, bead speeds varied by a factor of 2 – 3 depending on the location within the  
15 particle. Shown in Fig. 2 are examples of optical images of an isoprene-derived SOM  
16 particle at 80 % RH recorded during a typical bead-mobility experiment. Three beads that  
17 were monitored during this experiment are marked with arrows. Also included are the *x*  
18 and *y* coordinates of the beads recorded at the three different times. From these coordinates  
19 the average speed of individual beads in a single particle was determined.

20 Once the average bead speeds were determined, the bead speeds were converted to  
21 viscosity using a calibration line, which was generated from measurements of bead speed  
22 as a function of viscosity in sucrose particles (see Fig. 3). Renbaum-Wolff et al. (2013b)  
23 showed that the calibration line for converting bead speed into viscosity is independent of  
24 the type of organic materials used to generate the line for a wide range of oxygen-to-carbon  
25 ratios, surface tensions, and molecular weights of the organic materials.

#### 26 **2.4 Poke-flow experiment in conjunction with fluid simulation**

27 The method of applying physical force to estimate the phase of a particle was introduced  
28 by Murray et al. (2012). The poke-flow method in conjunction with fluid simulations to  
29 determine viscosities of particles was introduced by Renbaum-Wolff et al. (2013a) and  
30 further extended and validated by Grayson et al. (2014). Supermicron SOM particles (20 –



1 60  $\mu\text{m}$  in diameter) suspended on a hydrophobic substrate were located inside a flow-cell  
2 with RH control. The flow-cell was similar to the one used for the bead-mobility technique  
3 except it contained a small hole on the top through which a sterilized sharp needle (0.9 mm  
4  $\times$  40 mm) (Becton-Dickson, USA) could be inserted. The needle was mounted to a  
5 micromanipulator (Narishige, model MO-202U, Japan) to allow precise control of the  
6 movement of the needle. The needle was first positioned over the top of a SOM particle  
7 and then moved down to pass through the center of the particle (i.e. poke the particle). The  
8 geometrical changes during and after poking a particle were recorded using a reflectance  
9 optical microscope (Zeiss Axio Observer, 40 $\times$  objective) equipped with a CCD camera.  
10 Figure 4 shows typical geometrical changes of the SOM particles that were observed  
11 optically. Prior to poking, the particles had a spherical cap (Fig. 4 a1, and b1). Just after  
12 poking, the particle had a half-torus geometry consisting of a ring of material with a hole  
13 at its center, which is energetically unfavourable (time  $t = 0$ , Fig. 4, a2 and b2). To minimize  
14 the surface energy, the material flowed to fill the central hole (Fig. 4, a3 and b3). The area  
15 of the inner hole of the half torus geometry was measured using Zen software (Zeiss,  
16 Canada). The diameter of the equivalent hole area was calculated based on the relationship  
17  $d = (4A/\pi)^{1/2}$ , where  $d$  is the equivalent area diameter of a hole of area,  $A$  (Reist, 1992). The  
18 experimental flow time,  $\tau_{(exp, flow)}$ , was determined as the time taken for the equivalent area  
19 diameter to reach 50 % of the initial value. For a3 and b3 in Fig. 4, the  $\tau_{(exp, flow)}$  was  
20 determined to be 1.3 s at 25.1 % RH and 273.9 s at 0 % RH. The  $\tau_{(exp, flow)}$  values were  
21 converted to viscosity using simulations of fluid flow.  
22 Fluid flow simulations were performed to obtain the relationship between viscosity and  
23 modeled flow time,  $\tau_{(mod, flow)}$ , which is the time when the inner hole of a poked particle  
24 reaches half of its initial diameter. Using the relationship between modeled flow time,  $\tau_{(mod,$   
25  $flow)}$ , and viscosity, we converted experimental flow time,  $\tau_{(exp, flow)}$ , to viscosity. Simulations  
26 of material flow were carried out using *COMSOL Multiphysics* (version 4.3a), which  
27 describes transport of mass and momentum, including the effects of surface tension. The  
28 Arbitrary Lagrangian Eulerian method was used to track the time evolution of the fluid as  
29 it flowed to minimize the surface energy of the system. In the simulation, a half-torus  
30 geometry consisting of air-fluid interface and fluid-substrate interface was used, which is  
31 similar to the geometry observed in the poke-flow experiments. The mesh size used in the

1 model was 4.04 – 90.9 nm. Details of the simulation were described by Grayson et al.  
2 (2014).

3 For the simulations, the following physical parameters were needed: slip length, surface  
4 tension, contact angle, and material density for isoprene-derived SOM. Table 2 shows the  
5 values used for these physical parameters in the simulations. The lower and upper limits of  
6 the slip length used in the simulations were 5 nm and 10  $\mu\text{m}$  based on literature data of the  
7 interactions between fluids and solid surfaces (Schnell, 1956; Churaev et al., 1984;  
8 Watanabe et al., 1999; Baudry et al., 2001; Craig et al., 2001; Cheng and Giordano, 2002;  
9 Tretheway and Meinhart, 2002; Jin et al., 2004; Joseph and Tabeling, 2005; Neto et al.,  
10 2005; Choi and Kim et al., 2006; Joly et al., 2006; Zhu et al., 2012; Li et al., 2014). The  
11 upper limit for surface tension of SOM was  $72 \text{ mN m}^{-1}$ , corresponding to the surface  
12 tension of pure water at 293 K (Engelhart et al., 2008), and the lower limit was  $17 \text{ mN m}^{-1}$ ,  
13 corresponding to the surface tension of liquid isoprene at 293 K  
14 (<http://cameochemicals.noaa.gov>). The density of isoprene-derived SOM used was based  
15 on the observed density of isoprene-derived SOM (Kuwata et al., 2011; Nakao et al., 2013).  
16 Contact angles were determined using 3-D fluorescence confocal images of the SOM  
17 particles on the substrates, which range from  $60^\circ$  and  $90^\circ$  (Fig. 5). In the simulation, the  
18 relationship between viscosity and contact angle was dependent on the ratio of tube radius  
19 to the inner hole radius (see Table 2). Other input to the simulations included the inner and  
20 outer diameter of the torus geometry, which was based on the optical images of the material  
21 after poking the particles.

22

### 23 **3 Results**

#### 24 **3.1 Viscosities of isoprene-derived SOM determined by the bead-mobility** 25 **technique**

26 Shown in Fig. 6a are the mean bead speeds as a function of RH at  $295 \pm 1 \text{ K}$  determined in  
27 the bead-mobility experiments. The different colors represent different samples (Table 1).  
28 Each symbol corresponds to the mean bead speed determined for one sample at one RH.  
29 The speeds of at least 3 beads were used to determine a mean bead speed. Fig. 6b shows

1 viscosities calculated from the mean bead speeds shown in Fig. 6a and the calibration line  
2 shown in Fig. 3. The y-error bars in Fig. 6b represent the 95 % prediction intervals from  
3 the calibration line. Figure 6b illustrates that the change in viscosities with a change in  
4 concentration of the SOM in the OFR (when going from 300 – 400  $\mu\text{g}\cdot\text{m}^{-3}$  to 500 – 1000  
5  $\mu\text{g}\cdot\text{m}^{-3}$ ) is less than the uncertainties in the measurements. Since the viscosities do not  
6 appear to vary with concentrations of the SOM in the OFR over the range studied, we group  
7 the data in Fig. 6b by RH to provide an overall summary from the bead-mobility technique  
8 (see Fig. 6c). Three data points were included in each group. Figure 6c also illustrates that  
9 the viscosity for isoprene-derived SOM increased from  $\sim 2 \times 10^{-1}$  to  $\sim 3 \times 10^1$  Pa·s. as the RH  
10 decreased from 84.5 to 63.7 %. Viscosities were not determined for  $\text{RH} < 60$  % using the  
11 bead-mobility technique because the circulation rate of beads in a particle became too slow  
12 to readily observe.

### 13 **3.2 Viscosities of isoprene-derived SOM determined by the poke-flow** 14 **technique combined with fluid simulations**

15 RH-dependent  $\tau_{(exp, flow)}$  values of three different isoprene-derived SOM samples measured  
16 at  $295 \pm 1$  K by the poke-flow technique are shown in Fig. 7a. Each symbol in Fig. 7a  
17 represents the measured  $\tau_{(exp, flow)}$  from one particle poked at one RH. Figure 7a illustrates  
18 that the variation from sample to sample is less than the variation within individual  
19 samples. Figure 7b presents the lower and upper limits of viscosities calculated from the  
20 individual  $\tau_{(exp, flow)}$  values shown in Fig. 7a. For each data point in Fig. 7b, the uncertainty  
21 in the viscosity is approximately two orders of magnitude. This uncertainty is due to the  
22 uncertainties in the physical parameters used in the simulations (See Table 2). In Fig. 7c,  
23 the viscosities of the particles were grouped by RH with at least 4 data points in each group.  
24 The x-error bars in Fig. 7b represent the range of RH values in the group as well as  
25 uncertainty of the RH measurements. The y-error bars represent the lower and upper limits  
26 of viscosity within the group. Figure 7c illustrates that the viscosity ranges from  
27 approximately  $2 \times 10^3$  to  $3 \times 10^5$  Pa·s as the RH changes from 25.1 to 0 % RH. Viscosities  
28 were not determined for  $\text{RH} > 30$  % using the poke-flow technique because the material  
29 flows too fast to observe.

## 1 **4 Discussion**

### 2 **4.1 Phase of isoprene-derived SOM as a function of relative humidity**

3 Figure 8a displays together the viscosities of isoprene-derived SOM (marked by purple)  
4 measured by the bead-mobility technique (Fig. 6c) and the viscosities of isoprene-derived  
5 SOM measured by the poke-flow technique (Fig. 7c). Based on our data, for RH > 60 %  
6 the isoprene-derived SOM falls into the range for a liquid phase (viscosity < 10<sup>2</sup> Pa·s) while  
7 for RH < 30 % the isoprene-derived SOM falls into the range for a semisolid phase (10<sup>2</sup>  
8 Pa·s < viscosity < 10<sup>12</sup> Pa·s). At no RH is the SOM studied a solid. Based on the rebound  
9 behavior of submicron isoprene-derived SOM particles, Bateman et al. (2014) show that  
10 the semisolid-to-liquid phase transition of these particles is in the range of 40 – 60 % RH  
11 for a viscosity transition in the range of 10<sup>2</sup> to 10<sup>0</sup> Pa·s (light blue in Fig. 8a). Saukko et al.  
12 (2012) measured the bounce fraction of SOM submicron particles derived from isoprene  
13 photo-oxidation and inferred from their results that the particles were semisolid or solid for  
14 < 55 % RH. Our results are consistent with these previous bounce and rebound experiments.

### 15 **4.2 Comparison of viscosities of isoprene-derived SOM and $\alpha$ -pinene- 16 derived SOM**

17 Viscosities of SOM generated from the ozonolysis of  $\alpha$ -pinene are shown in Fig. 8b based  
18 on values reported in the literature (Perraud et al., 2012; Abramson et al., 2013; Robinson  
19 et al., 2013; Bateman et al., 2014; Kidd et al., 2014; Pajunoja et al., 2014; Wang et al.,  
20 2014). The RH-dependent viscosities of the water-soluble component of SOM generated  
21 from the ozonolysis of  $\alpha$ -pinene are also included in Fig. 8b (Renbaum-Wolff et al., 2013a).  
22 The values plotted at RH-values  $\geq 70$  % and RH-values  $\leq 30$  % were taken directly from  
23 Renbaum-Wolff et al. (2013a). Between 40 % and 70 % we determined viscosities by  
24 converting  $\tau_{(exp, flow)}$  values reported in Renbaum-Wolff et al. (2013a) to viscosities using  
25 the simulation discussed above (Sect. 2.4) and presented in Grayson et al. (2014). For RH-  
26 values between 40 and 70 %, we did not take the viscosities directly from Renbaum-Wolff  
27 et al. (2013a) since they only used simulations to estimate upper limits to viscosities in this  
28 RH range.

1 Based on a comparison between Fig. 8a and 8b, the viscosity of isoprene-derived SOM  
2 (Fig. 8a) is on average lower than the viscosity of  $\alpha$ -pinene-derived SOM (Fig. 8b). This  
3 conclusion is consistent with work by O'Brien et al. (2014) who also concluded that the  
4 viscosity of isoprene-derived particles is lower than the viscosity of  $\alpha$ -pinene-derived  
5 particles based on the how much the particles flattened after impaction on a substrate. The  
6 differences may be due to a difference in the molecular weights of the two SOMs since  
7 viscosity can increase as the molecular weight of an organic compound increases (Zobrist  
8 et al., 2008; Koop et al., 2011). Although we do not have information on the characteristic  
9 range of molecular weights of the SOM, it is reasonable to expect that the median molecular  
10 weight of  $\alpha$ -pinene-derived SOM will be larger than that of isoprene-derived SOM since  
11 the molecular weight of the precursors differ roughly by a factor of 2. The O:C ratio is also  
12 expected to affect the viscosity of the SOM, with higher O:C values leading to higher  
13 viscosities and glass transition temperatures (Koop et al., 2011; Berkemeier et al., 2014).  
14 However, O:C alone is unlikely to explain the difference in viscosity between isoprene-  
15 derived SOM and  $\alpha$ -pinene-derived SOM since the O:C of isoprene-derived SOM in our  
16 experiments is expected to be between 0.64 and 1.1 (see Sect. 2.1) while the O:C of SOM  
17 from the ozonolysis of  $\alpha$ -pinene is typically in the range of 0.3 to 0.5 (Chen et al., 2011).

18

### 19 **4.3 Diffusion coefficients and mixing times of large organics within isoprene-** 20 **derived SOM particles**

21 Using the viscosities determined in this study, we calculated diffusion coefficients of large  
22 organic molecules ( $D_{org}$ ) within isoprene-derived SOM using the Stokes-Einstein  
23 relationship:

$$24 \quad D_{org} = \frac{kT}{6\pi\eta r} \quad (1)$$

25 where  $k$  is the Boltzmann constant,  $T$  is the temperature (K),  $r$  is the hydrodynamic radius  
26 of a representative molecule of SOM within the SOM bulk matrix, and  $\eta$  is the viscosity  
27 (Pa·s). The Stokes-Einstein relation is not expected to predict with high accuracy the  
28 diffusion rates of small gas molecules (e.g. O<sub>3</sub>, OH, NO<sub>x</sub>, H<sub>2</sub>O, etc.) close to the glass  
29 transition RH (Champion et al., 2000; Shiraiwa et al., 2011; Power et al., 2013). However,

1 the Stokes-Einstein relation should give a reasonable estimate of diffusion rates when the  
2 viscosity is lower than that of a glass and when the molecules undergoing diffusion are  
3 roughly the same size or larger than the molecules in the SOM matrix. If we assume the  
4 SOM matrix is dominated by molecules similar to 2-methyltetrol and 2-methylerythritol  
5 ( $C_5H_{12}O_4$ ), which have been identified as key oxidation products of isoprene and have  
6 an isoprene skeleton, (Cleaey et al., 2004; Carlton et al., 2009; Kleindienst et al., 2009)  
7 then the Stokes-Einstein equation should be applicable when the viscosity is lower than  
8 that of a glass ( $10^{12}$  Pa·s) and for organic molecules with a molecular weight approximately  
9  $\geq 136$  g mol<sup>-1</sup>, although additional work is required to confirm these assumptions.

10 Shown in Fig. 8a on a secondary y-axis are the diffusion coefficients calculated using this  
11 equation and assuming 0.4 nm for the hydrodynamic radius (Renbaum-Wolff et al., 2013a).  
12 Figure 8a suggests that the diffusion coefficients of organic molecules within the isoprene-  
13 derived SOM vary from  $\sim 2 \times 10^{-8}$  to  $\sim 2 \times 10^{-10}$  cm<sup>2</sup>·s<sup>-1</sup> between 84.5 and 63.7 % RH, and  
14 from  $\sim 2 \times 10^{-12}$  to  $\sim 2 \times 10^{-14}$  cm<sup>2</sup>·s<sup>-1</sup> between 25.1 and 0 % RH.

15 From the diffusion coefficients, we calculated the mixing times by diffusion,  $\tau_{mixing}$ , of large  
16 organic molecules within an SOM particle using the following equation (Shiraiwa et al.,  
17 2011; Bones et al., 2012; Renbaum-Wolff et al., 2013a):

$$18 \quad \tau_{mixing} = \frac{d^2}{4\pi^2 D_{org}} \quad (2)$$

19 where  $d$  is the particle diameter (taken as 200 nm which is typical for the accumulation  
20 mode of atmospheric particles (Shiraiwa et al., 2011)). After the mixing time, the  
21 concentration of the representative molecules anywhere in the particles deviates by less  
22 than  $e^{-1}$  from the equilibrium value. The mixing times calculated with Eq. (2) are plotted  
23 in Fig. 8a on a secondary y-axis. Between 84.5 and 0 % RH, the mixing times within the  
24 isoprene-derived SOM particles range from less than  $\sim 3.6 \times 10^{-4}$  s ( $\sim 1 \times 10^{-7}$  hr) to  $\sim 0.1$  hr.  
25 Compared to the total isoprene-derived SOM, water-soluble  $\alpha$ -pinene-derived SOM shows  
26 longer mixing times ranging from  $\sim 1.1 \times 10^{-2}$  s ( $\sim 3 \times 10^{-6}$  hr) to as high as  $\sim 5 \times 10^5$  hr over  
27 the RH range of 90 to 25 %. Both isoprene-derived and  $\alpha$ -pinene-derived SOM can be  
28 classified as biogenic SOM, yet they clearly have different viscosities and mixing times at  
29 a given RH.

1

## 2 **5 Atmospheric implications**

3 As an application of the data discussed above, we consider a case study for the Amazon  
4 Basin, which represents the largest isoprene-dominant forested region on Earth. We assess  
5  $\tau_{mixing}$  within SOM particles in the Amazon Basin during periods not strongly influenced  
6 by anthropogenic emissions (Martin et al., 2010b). The wet season in the Amazon Basin  
7 represents at times a clean environment having nearly pure biogenic aerosol particles. For  
8 clean conditions, SOM typically accounts for > 95 % of the mass of aerosol particles with  
9 diameters < 1  $\mu\text{m}$  in the Amazon Basin (Chen et al., 2009; Martin et al., 2010a). The dry  
10 season can also have periods dominated by biogenic aerosol particles, but periods strongly  
11 influenced by anthropogenic sources such as biomass burning are also common (Andreae  
12 et al., 2002; Martin et al., 2010a; Martin et al., 2010b).

13 To assess the  $\tau_{mixing}$  of SOM particles in the Amazon Basin during clean periods, the first  
14 piece of information needed is the range of RH values in this region. Figure 9 gives a  
15 frequency distribution of RH for eight ground-based observation stations in the Amazon  
16 Basin (located in Tabatinga, Barcelos, Itaituba, Monte Dourado, Iquitos, Labrea, Manicore  
17 and Manaus) for both the wet season (December to March, shown in blue bars) and the dry  
18 season (June to September, shown in red bars). The RH values used in these frequency  
19 distributions were taken from NOAA's National Climatic Data Center (NCDC)  
20 (<http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/>) and are 12-hour averages (daytime: 06:00 – 18:00, night time:  
21 18:00 – 06:00) calculated from hourly values reported several times daily for the years of  
22 2004 through 2014. All RH values taken from NOAA's NCDC were calculated from  
23 measured temperatures and dew points. The eight stations shown in Fig. 9 were chosen  
24 because they had good data records and were well spaced geographically throughout the  
25 Basin. As shown in Fig. 9, RH typically ranges between 60 - 100 % during both dry and  
26 wet seasons in the Amazon Basin although there is some variability with location and  
27 season. Fig. 8c shows a frequency distribution of 12-hour average RH in the Amazon Basin  
28 using the data from all eight ground-based stations from both the wet and dry seasons. Figs.  
29 9 and 8c illustrate that RH typically ranges from 60 to 100 % in the Amazon Basin. Values  
30 below 60 % RH are rare.

1 The second piece of information needed to assess  $\tau_{mixing}$  for SOM is temperature. For the  
2 eight ground-based stations shown in Fig. 9, for both the wet and dry seasons, the median  
3 temperature was 300 K and the 10<sup>th</sup> and 90<sup>th</sup> percentiles were 297 K and 303 K,  
4 respectively. These temperatures are above the estimated glass transition of a generic SOM  
5 (Koop et al., 2011). The viscosities shown in Fig. 8a were determined using a temperature  
6 of  $295 \pm 1$  K, which is at the lower end of the temperature range for the Amazon. As  
7 temperature increases the viscosity is expected to decrease for the same composition of  
8 water and SOM.

9 The third piece of information needed to assess  $\tau_{mixing}$  for SOM in the Amazon Basin during  
10 clean conditions is the chemical composition of the SOM during these periods. Previous  
11 studies have shown by multiple lines of evidence that during clean conditions the  
12 composition of submicron organic particles is largely consistent with SOM generated from  
13 isoprene and terpene oxidation as well as a sesquiterpene contribution (Chen et al., 2009;  
14 Martin et al., 2010a; Pöschl et al., 2010; Pöhlker et al., 2012; Chen et al., 2014). Based on  
15 these studies, we model SOM particles in the Amazon Basin during clean conditions as a  
16 mixture of isoprene-derived SOM,  $\alpha$ -pinene-derived SOM, and other VOC precursors-  
17 derived SOM. Furthermore, we make a first-order approximation for modeling that the  
18 SOM can be adequately described as a mix of isoprene-derived and  $\alpha$ -pinene-derived SOM  
19 since we have the necessary corresponding data on viscosity. We also assume that the  $\tau_{mixing}$   
20 in these particles lies somewhere between the  $\tau_{mixing}$  in isoprene-derived SOM and the  $\tau_{mixing}$   
21 in  $\alpha$ -pinene-derived SOM shown in Fig. 8a and 8b. Bateman et al. (2014) studied mixed  
22 SOM particles and found that the viscosity of single particles decreased with an increase  
23 in the ratio of gas phase isoprene to  $\alpha$ -pinene precursors. Based on these assumptions and  
24 the typical RH and temperature values found in the Amazon Basin, we estimate the  $\tau_{mixing}$   
25 of SOM particles in the Amazon Basin during clean conditions will be less than or equal  
26 to approximately 0.1 hr. Large-scale modeling studies often assume that gas-phase organic  
27 compounds are rapidly equilibrated within the bulk of SOM particles (Henze and Seinfeld,  
28 2006; Tsigaridis et al., 2007; Heald et al., 2008). Our results and conclusions are consistent  
29 with this assumption for the Amazon Basin during clean periods.

30 Using the data shown in Fig. 8 we also speculate on the phase of SOM in the Amazon  
31 Basin during clean periods. For this analysis we also make the first-order approximation



1 that the SOM in this region can be adequately described as a mix of isoprene-derived and  
2  $\alpha$ -pinene-derived SOM and that the viscosity of these particles lies somewhere between the  
3 viscosities of isoprene-derived SOM and  $\alpha$ -pinene-derived SOM shown in Fig. 8a and 8b.  
4 Based on these assumptions and typical RH values ( $> 60\%$ ) and temperature ranges (297  
5 - 303 K) found in the Amazon Basin (Fig. 8c), the SOM particles during clean conditions  
6 are likely liquid. This conclusion is consistent with the images of Amazonian particles  
7 collected by Pöschl et al. (2010) that illustrate the particles are liquid during the wet season  
8 (AMAZE-08). This conclusion is also consistent with results from Chen et al. (2014) who  
9 inferred that SOM particles in the Amazon Basin are liquid based on the absence of particle  
10 rebound when sampling with an aerosol mass spectrometer.

11 One caveat to the conclusions above is that the mass concentrations used in our studies  
12 differ from the mass concentrations observed in the Amazon Basin. The mass  
13 concentrations of SOM observed in the Amazon Basin during the wet season are on order  
14 of  $1\ \mu\text{g}\cdot\text{m}^{-3}$  for the submicron mode (Martin et al., 2010a), while we used mass  
15 concentrations of 100 to 1000  $\mu\text{g}\cdot\text{m}^{-3}$  when generating isoprene-derived SOM due to  
16 experimental constraints. We did not see any dependence on mass concentration across the  
17 studied range. Furthermore, the study of Bateman et al. (2014) was carried out at lower  
18 mass concentrations of 10 - 20  $\mu\text{g}\cdot\text{m}^{-3}$ , and those results appear to agree with our results in  
19 Fig. 8a. Even so, additional studies are needed to determine if lower mass concentrations  
20 of isoprene-derived SOM approaching  $1\ \mu\text{g}\cdot\text{m}^{-3}$  might lead to higher viscosities.

21

## 22 **6 Conclusions**

23 We investigated RH-dependent viscosities of micrometer-sized SOM particles produced  
24 from isoprene photo-oxidation and having mass concentrations of 100 to 1000  $\mu\text{g}\cdot\text{m}^{-3}$  using  
25 a bead-mobility technique and a poke-flow technique combined with fluid simulations. At  
26 room temperature, the bead-mobility experiments showed the viscosities of isoprene-  
27 derived SOM increased from  $\sim 2 \times 10^{-1}$  to  $\sim 3 \times 10^1$  Pa·s when the RH was decreased from  
28 84.5 to 63.7 %. The poke-flow experiments and fluid simulation showed viscosities of  
29 isoprene-derived SOM increased from  $\sim 2 \times 10^3$  to  $\sim 3 \times 10^5$  Pa·s when the RH decreased from

1 25.1 to 0 %. This suggests that the isoprene-derived SOM particles are a liquid at RH >  
2 ~60 % and a semisolid at RH < ~30 %. This result is in agreement with Bateman et al.  
3 (2014), who showed that the semisolid-to-liquid phase transition of these particles is in the  
4 range of 40 – 60 % RH, as well as with Saukko et al. (2012) who inferred that these particles  
5 are a semisolid or solid at RH < 55%. Using the viscosity data and the Stokes-Einstein  
6 equation, the diffusion coefficients of large gas-phase organic molecules within the  
7 isoprene-derived SOM particles were calculated to be  $\sim 2 \times 10^{-8}$  to  $\sim 2 \times 10^{-14}$   $\text{cm}^2 \cdot \text{s}^{-1}$  between  
8 84.5 and 0 % RH. Mixing time ( $\tau_{\text{mixing}}$ ) by diffusion of large organic molecules within 200  
9 nm isoprene-derived SOM particles was also estimated to range from less than 1 s to ~0.1  
10 hr across the RH range.

11 The Amazon Basin is an environment rich in biogenic SOM derived from isoprene and  $\alpha$ -  
12 pinene. Based on the distributions of RH and temperature seen at eight stations in the  
13 Amazon Basin, RH and temperature typically range from 60 to 100 % and 297 - 303 K,  
14 respectively, during wet and dry seasons in this region. Based on these RH and temperature  
15 values and assumptions about the dominant chemical compositions of SOM particles, we  
16 concur with the laboratory study of Bateman et al. (2014) and expect SOM particles to be  
17 liquid in the Amazon Basin during pristine conditions. In addition, we expect large gas-  
18 phase organic molecules to reach equilibrium with the bulk of these SOM particles on a  
19 short time scale.

20

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27

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20

1 Table 1. Experimental conditions for production of isoprene-derived SOM particles using  
 2 the oxidation flow reactor. Particles were deposited on substrates using an electrostatic  
 3 precipitator. SOMs from isoprene samples 1, 2, and 3 were collected on Teflon substrates  
 4 for the bead-mobility experiments, and SOMs from isoprene samples 4, 5, and 6 were  
 5 collected on salinized substrates for the poke-flow experiments.

SOM sample	Isoprene conc. (ppm)	Ozone conc. (ppm)	SOM mass conc. ( $\mu\text{g m}^{-3}$ )	Sampling flow rate ( $\text{L m}^{-1}$ )	Collection time (day)
Isoprene 1	$7 \pm 2$	$10 \pm 2$	300-400	$9.5 \pm 0.1$	2
Isoprene 2	$7 \pm 2$	$13 \pm 2$	500-1000	$7.0 \pm 0.1$	7
Isoprene 3	$7 \pm 2$	$13 \pm 2$	500-1000	$7.0 \pm 0.1$	7
Isoprene 4	$4 \pm 2$	$10 \pm 2$	100-200	$9.5 \pm 0.1$	3
Isoprene 5	$7 \pm 2$	$13 \pm 2$	500-1000	$7.0 \pm 0.1$	4
Isoprene 6	$7 \pm 2$	$13 \pm 2$	500-1000	$7.0 \pm 0.1$	4

1 Table 2. Physical parameters used to simulate material flow in the poke-flow experiments.  
 2  $R$  and  $r$  indicate the radius of a tube and the radius of an inner hole, respectively.

	Slip length (nm)	Surface tension (mN m <sup>-1</sup> )	Density (g cm <sup>-3</sup> )	Contact angle (°)
Values used to calculate lower limit	5 <sup>a</sup>	17 <sup>b</sup>	1.3 <sup>c</sup>	60 (if $r < 2R$ ), 90 (if $r > 2R$ )
Values used to calculate upper limit	10000 <sup>a</sup>	72 <sup>d</sup>	1.3 <sup>c</sup>	90 (if $r < 2R$ ), 60 (if $r > 2R$ )

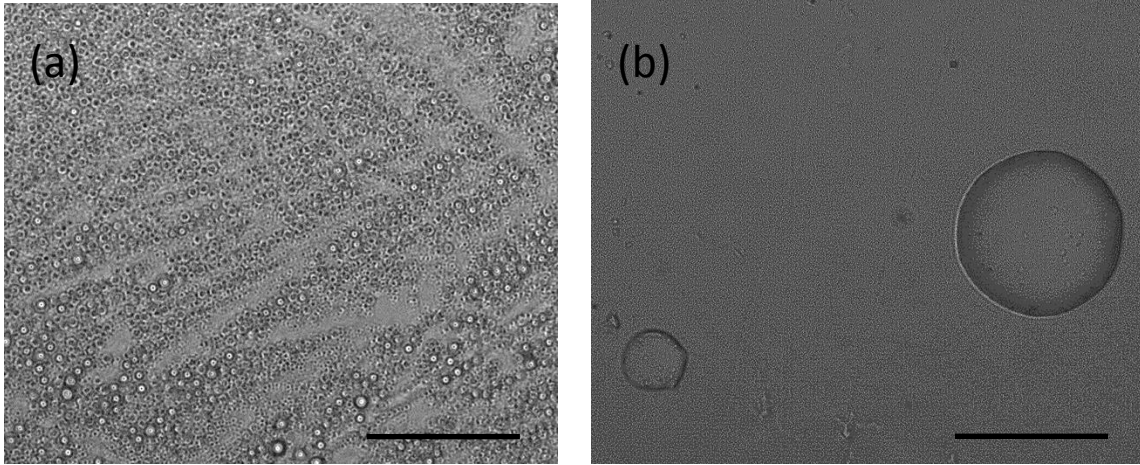
3 <sup>a</sup> The range of slip length, which is the interactions between fluids and solid surfaces, is  
 4 based on literature data (Schnell, 1956; Churaev et al., 1984; Watanabe et al., 1999; Baudry  
 5 et al., 2001; Craig et al., 2001; Tretheway and Meinhart, 2002; Cheng and Giordano, 2002;  
 6 Jin et al., 2004; Joseph and Tabeling, 2005; Neto et al., 2005; Choi and Kim et al., 2006;  
 7 Joly et al., 2006; Zhu et al., 2012; Li et al., 2014)

8 <sup>b</sup> <http://cameochemicals.noaa.gov>

9 <sup>c</sup> Kuwata et al., 2011; Nakao et al., 2013

10 <sup>d</sup> Engelhart et al., 2008

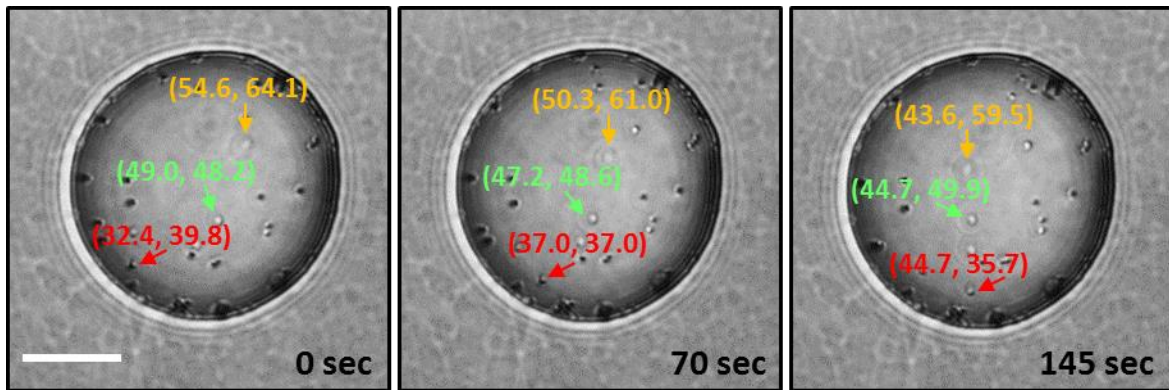




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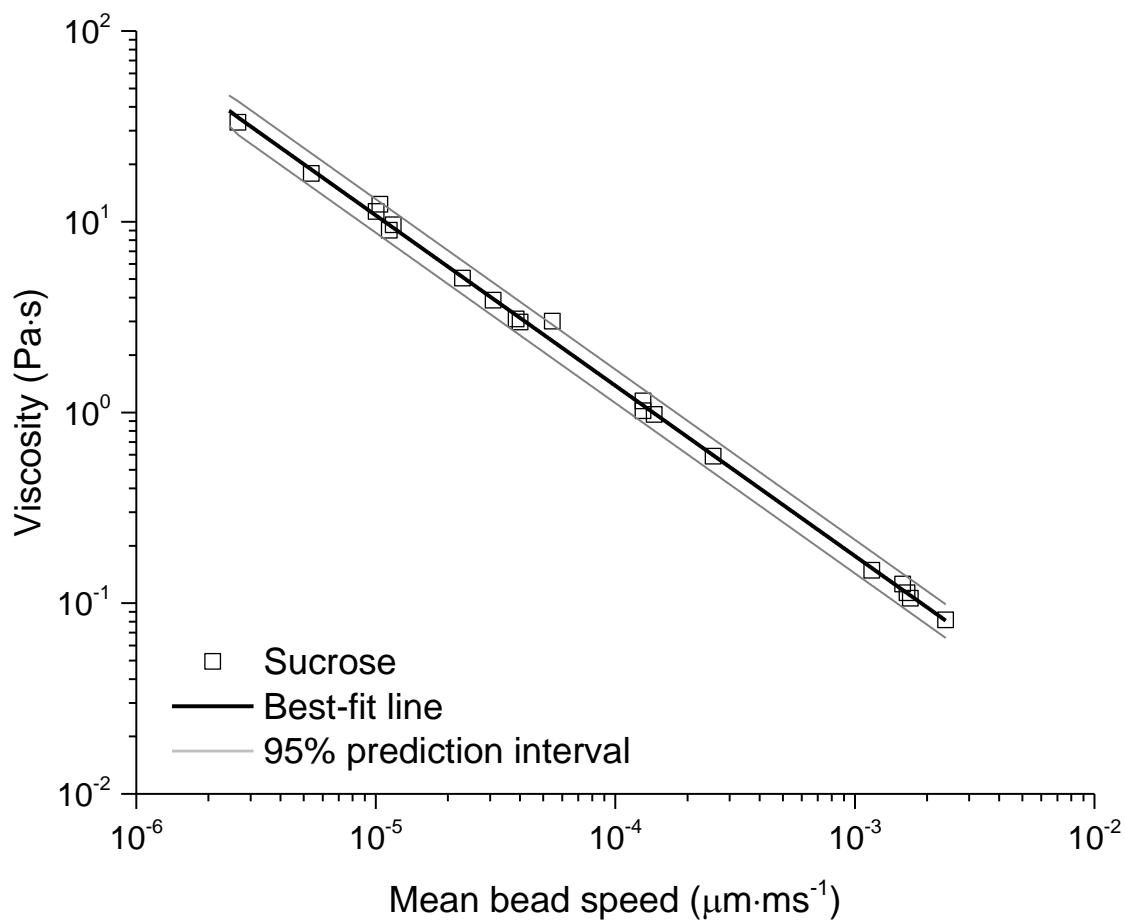
3 **Fig. 1.** Images of isoprene-derived SOM particles on a hydrophobic substrate. (a) SOM  
4 particles after collection from the OFR and (b) SOM particles after being exposed to a  
5 cycle droplet growth, coagulation, and evaporation (see text for further details). The  
6 samples shown here were produced in the OFR with a concentration of  $500 - 1000 \mu\text{g}\cdot\text{m}^{-3}$   
7  $^3$  (Isoprene sample 3 in Table 1). Particles in Panel A and B were exposed to 0 and 84 %  
8 RH, respectively, when the images were recorded. The size of the scale bar is  $50 \mu\text{m}$ .



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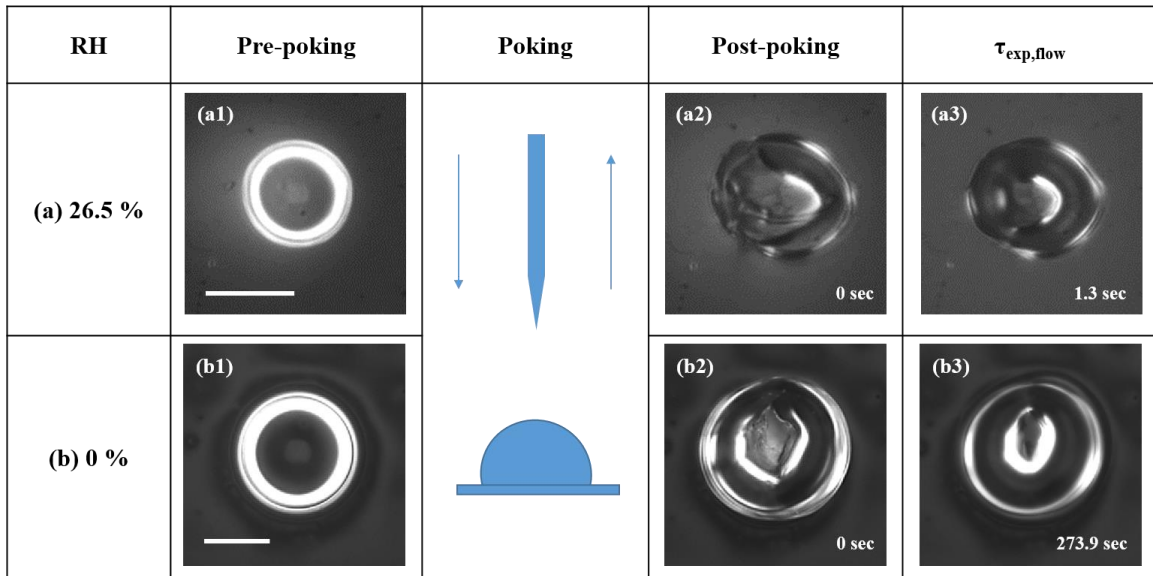
3 **Fig. 2.** Optical images of SOM particles (Isoprene sample 3 in Table 1) at 80 % RH  
4 recorded during a typical bead-mobility experiment. Three beads have been labelled in  
5 these panels with different colors. Included are the x and y coordinates of these three beads  
6 which are used to determine average bead speeds in the particles. The size of the scale bar  
7 is 20 μm.



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3 **Fig. 3.** Calibration line (black line) and 95 % prediction intervals (gray lines) that relate  
 4 mean bead speeds to viscosity. The calibration line was generated using particles consisting  
 5 of sucrose (squares). Each symbol corresponds to the mean bead speed in one particle  
 6 determined at the given RH. The speed of 1 – 3 beads was used to determine the mean in  
 7 each particle.

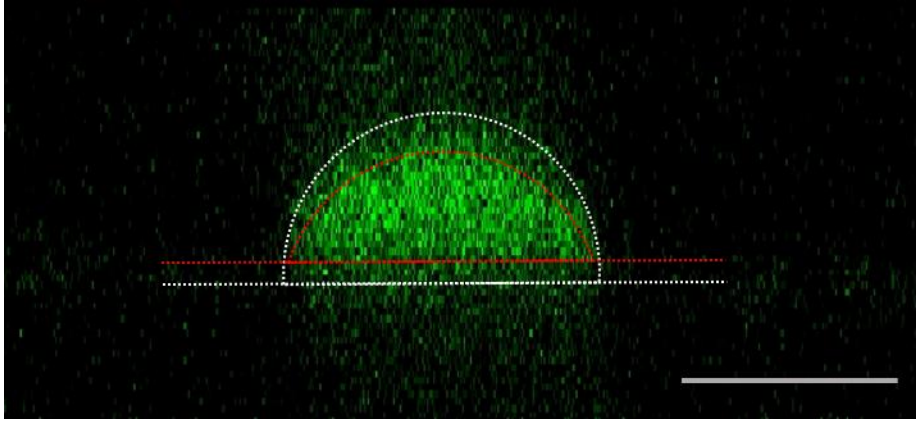


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3 **Fig. 4.** Optical images from typical poke-flow experiments on isoprene-derived SOM at  
 4 (a) 25.1 % RH and (b) 0 % RH. Panel a1 and b1; pre-poking, Panel a2 and b2; post-poking  
 5 immediately after the needle has been removed (time set = 0 sec); Panel a3 and b3; the  
 6 experimental flow time,  $\tau_{(exp, flow)}$ , when the diameter of the hole has decreased to 50 % of  
 7 its initial size. Size of the scale bar is 20  $\mu\text{m}$ .

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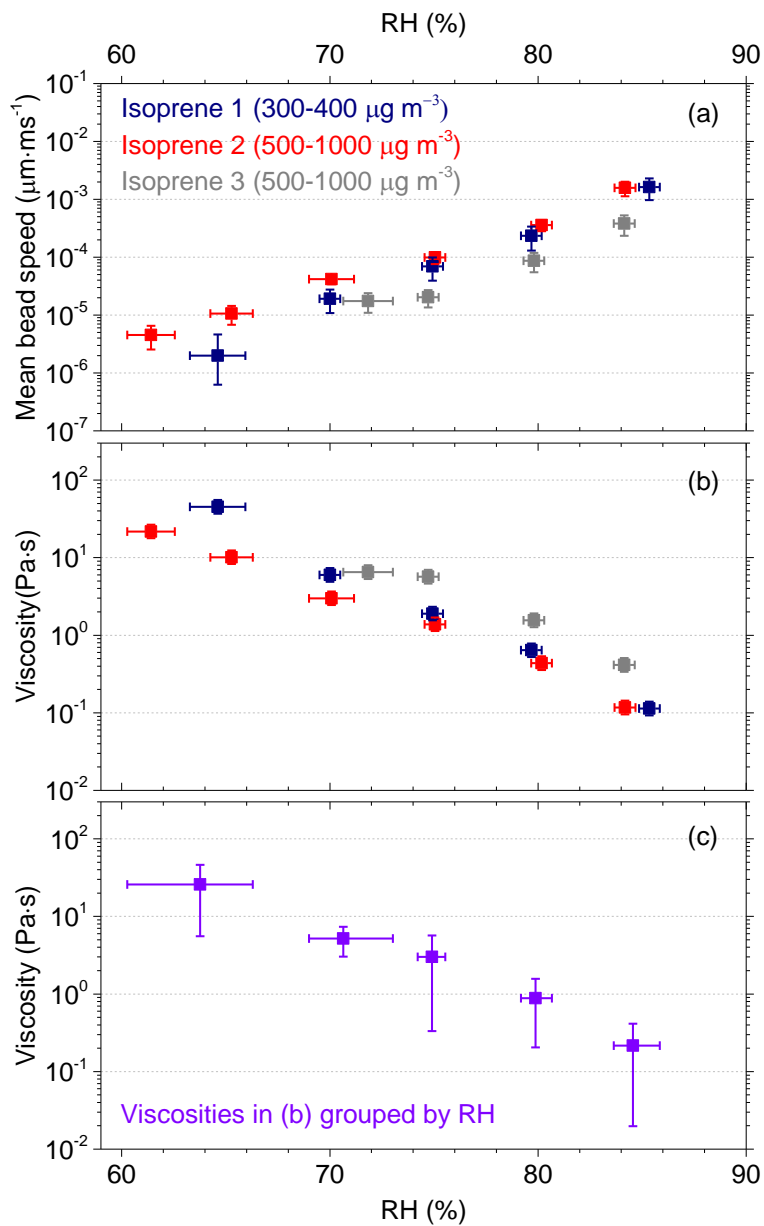


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3 **Fig. 5.** Side-view image of isoprene-derived SOM recorded with a confocal fluorescence  
4 microscope (Leica SP5 II, 10× objective). The image was generated with  $\lambda_{\text{excitation}} = 458$   
5 nm and  $\lambda_{\text{emission}} = 465 - 700$  nm at the temperature of  $293 \pm 1$  K. The two sets of dashed  
6 lines trace the boundaries of the particle from which the contact angle is measured. The  
7 white dashed lines encompass the maximum possible boundary with a contact angle of 90  
8 ° while the red dashed lines surround the brightest hence the minimum boundary of the  
9 particle with a contact angle of 60 °. Size of the scale bar is 20  $\mu\text{m}$ .

10



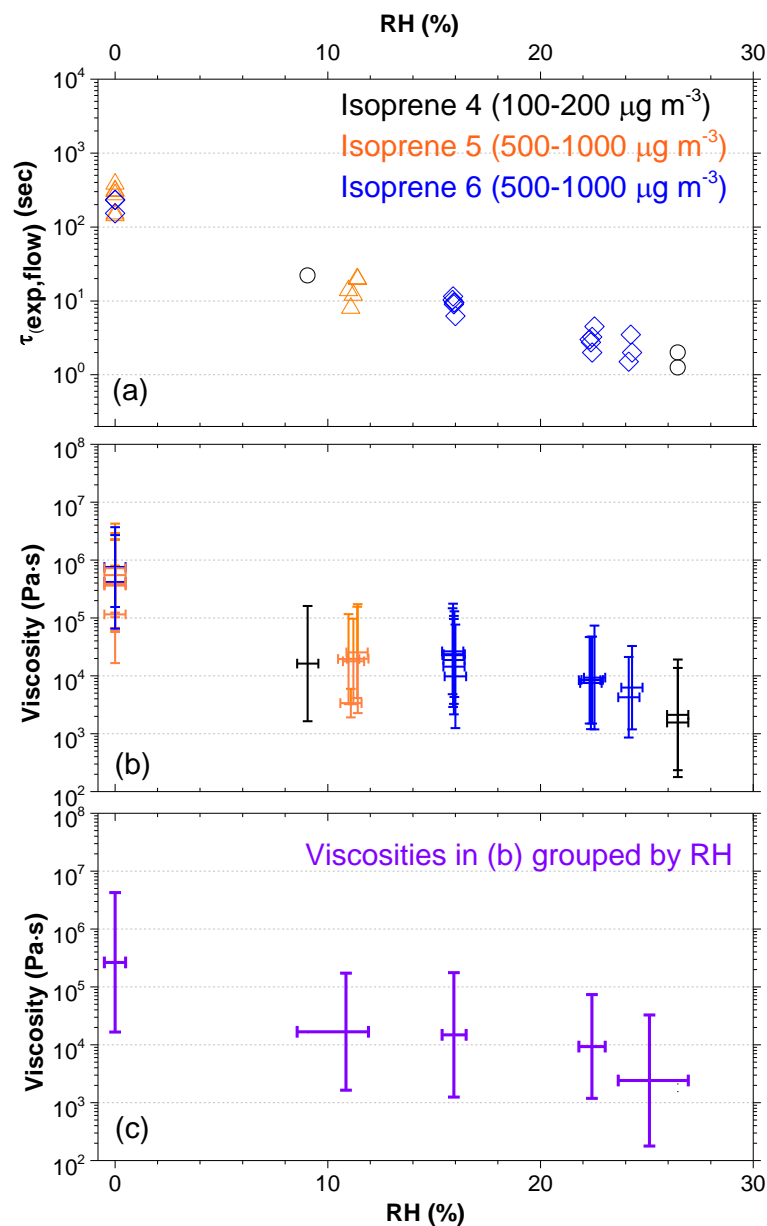
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3 **Fig. 6.** Results from bead-mobility experiments. (a) Mean bead speed of individual SOM  
 4 samples (i.e. Isoprene 1, 2 and 3). Table 1 lists the experimental conditions for each SOM  
 5 sample. (b) Viscosity, which was determined from the mean bead speeds and a calibration  
 6 line (Fig. 3). The *x*-error bars in (a) and (b) represent the RH range in a given experiment  
 7 and the uncertainty in RH measurements, and the *y*-error bars represent 95 % prediction  
 8 intervals. (c) Mean viscosities in (b) grouped by RH. Three data points were included in

1 each group. The  $y$ -error bars represent 95 % confidence intervals of viscosities in (b)  
2 grouped by RH and  $x$ -error bars indicate the lowest and highest RH ranges in the group  
3 and the uncertainty in the RH measurements.

4



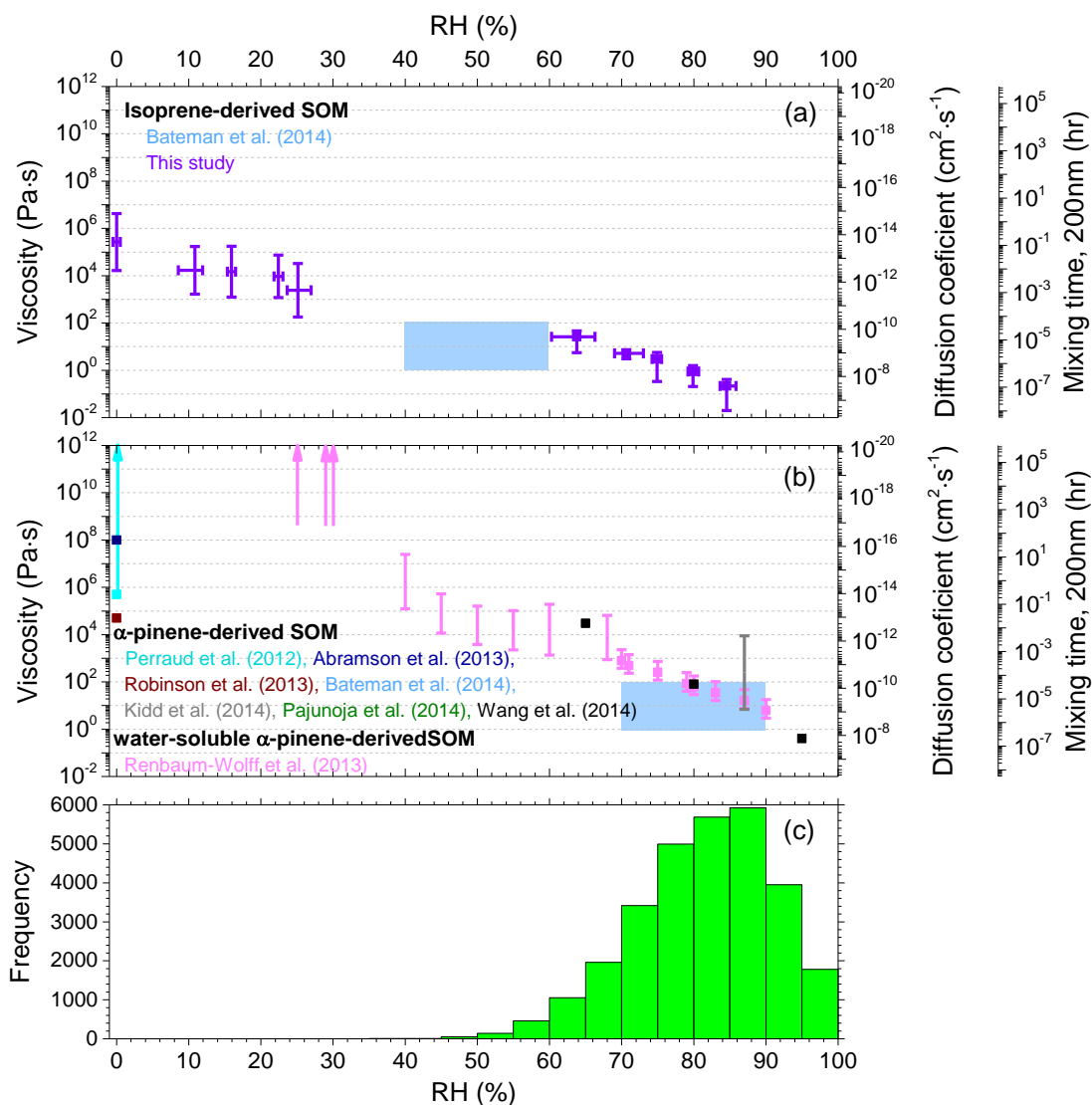
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3 **Fig. 7.** Results from the poke-flow experiments: (a)  $\tau_{(exp, flow)}$  measured for the different  
 4 samples. Each symbol represents the measured  $\tau_{(exp, flow)}$  from poking one particle at one  
 5 RH. (b) Viscosities calculated from  $\tau_{(exp, flow)}$  where y-error bars represent the calculated  
 6 lower and upper limits of viscosity using the simulations. The x-error bars shown in (b)  
 7 represent the range of RH-values in a given experiments and uncertainty in the RH  
 8 measurements. (c) Viscosities from the different samples grouped by RH. At least 4 data



- 1 points were included in each group. The  $x$ -error bars represent the lowest and highest RH
- 2 ranges in the group and the uncertainty in the RH measurements, and the  $y$ -error bars
- 3 represent the lower and upper limits of viscosity within the group.



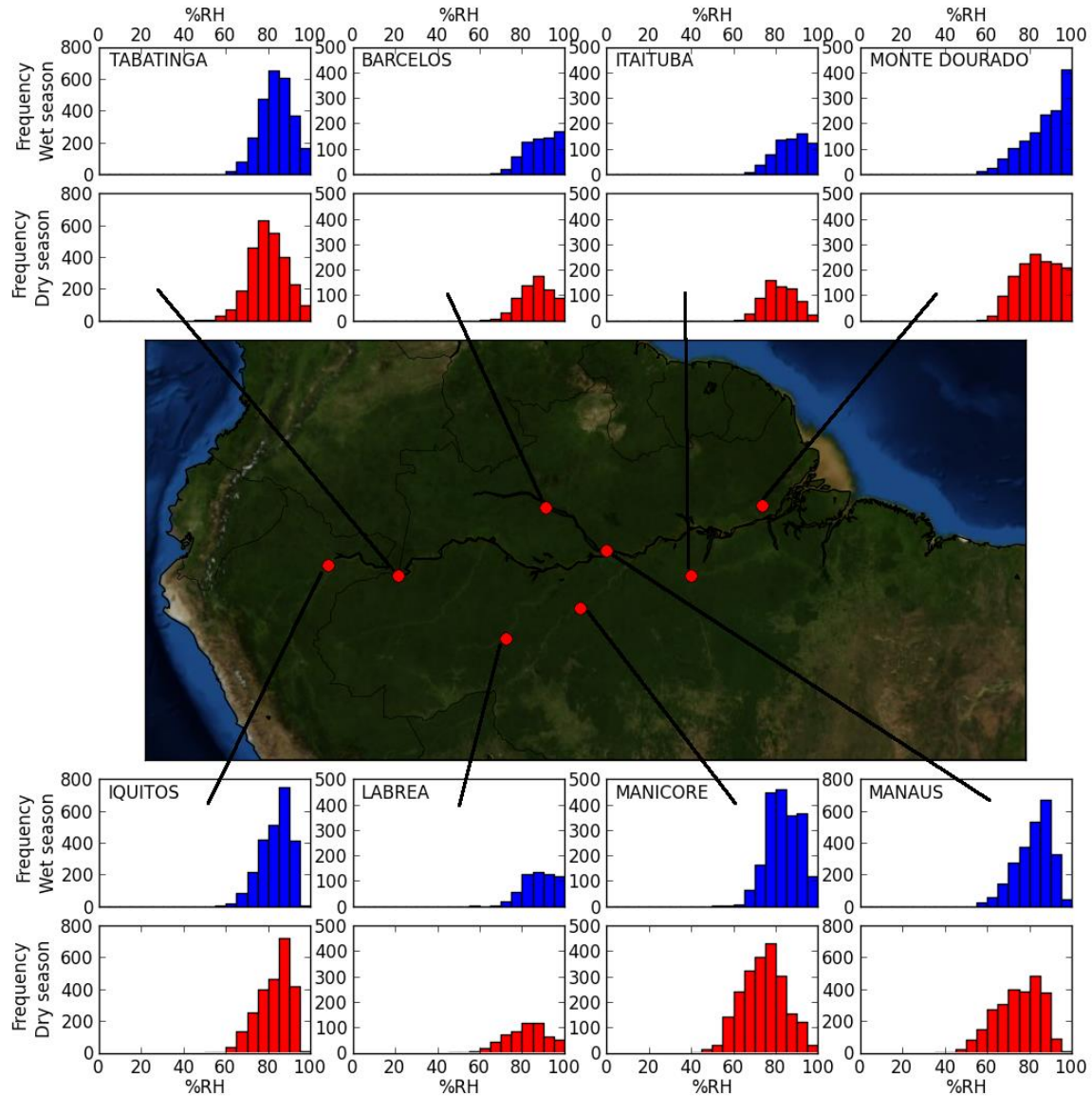
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3 **Fig. 8.** (a) Collection of viscosities of isoprene-derived SOM particles from this study  
 4 (purple) and Bateman et al. (2014) (light blue). Viscosities of isoprene-derived SOM from  
 5 this study are taken from values shown in Figs. 6c and 7c. (b) Viscosities of  $\alpha$ -pinene-  
 6 derived SOM particles from literature (Perraud et al., 2012; cyan, Abramson et al., 2013;  
 7 dark blue, Robinson et al., 2013; brown, Bateman et al., 2014; light blue, Kidd et al., 2014;  
 8 grey, Pajunoja et al., 2014; green, and Wang et al., 2014; black) and viscosities of water-  
 9 soluble  $\alpha$ -pinene-derived SOM particles from Renbaum-Wolff et al. (2013a) (pink). The  
 10 right-y axes present calculated diffusion coefficients of organic molecules in SOM and  
 11 calculated mixing times within 200 nm particles due to bulk diffusion. Diffusion

1 coefficients were calculated using the Stokes-Einstein relation and mixing times were  
2 calculated using Eq. (2) (see Sect. 4.3). (c) The average frequency distributions of RH from  
3 eight stations in the Amazon Basin (Tabatinga, Barcelos, Itaituba, Monte Dourado, Iquitos,  
4 Labrea, Manicore and Manaus). Frequency distributions of RH from the individual stations  
5 are shown in Fig. 9.

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**Fig. 9.** Frequency distributions of RH for the wet season (December - March, shown in blue) and the dry season (June - September, shown in red) at eight ground-based stations in the Amazon Basin. For the stations, hourly RH values (calculated from measured temperature and dew point) were retrieved from NOAA's National Climatic Data Center (<http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/>) for the years from 2004 - 2014. All data shown is 12-hour averages.