Determination of the refractive index of insoluble organic extracts from atmospheric aerosol over the visible wavelength range using optical tweezers

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Optical trapping combined with Mie spectroscopy is a new technique used to record the refractive index of insoluble organic material extracted from atmospheric aerosol samples over a wide wavelength range with sub-nanometer resolution. The refractive index of the insoluble organic extracts was shown to follow a Cauchy equation between 460 to 700 nm for organic aerosol extracts collected from urban (London) and remote (Antarctica) locations. Cauchy coefficients for the remote sample were for the Austral summer and gave the Cauchy coefficients to be A = 1.467 and B = 1000 nm^2 with a real refractive index of 1.489 at a wavelength of 589 nm. Cauchy coefficients for the urban samples varied with season, with extracts collected during summer having Cauchy coefficients of A = 1.465±0.005 and B = 4625±1200 nm^2 with a representative real refractive index of 1.478 at a wavelength of 589 nm, whilst samples extracted during autumn had larger Cauchy coefficients of A=1.505 and B = 600 nm^2 with a representative real refractive index of 1.522 at a wavelength of 589 nm. The refractive index of absorbing aerosol was also recorded. The technique applied in the presented study allowed the absorption Ångstrom exponent to be determined for wood smoke and humic acid aerosol extract. Typical values of the Cauchy coefficient for the wood smoke aerosol extract were A = 1.541±0.03 and B = 14800±2900 nm^2 resulting in a real refractive index of 1.584±0.007 at a wavelength of 589 nm and an absorption Ångstrom exponent of 7.0. The measured values of refractive index compare well with previous monochromatic or very small wavelength range measurements of refractive index. A one-dimensional radiative-transfer calculation of the top of the atmosphere albedo was applied to model an atmosphere containing a 3 km thick layer of aerosol comprising of pure water, insoluble organic aerosol or an aerosol consisting of an aqueous core-with an insoluble organic shell. The calculation demonstrated that the top of the atmosphere albedo increases by 0.01 to 0.04 for pure organic particles relative to water particles of the same size and the top of the atmosphere albedo increases by 0.03 for aqueous core-shell particles as volume fraction of the shell material increases by 25 percent.

1. Introduction

Atmospheric aerosols affect the radiative balance of our planet e.g Pöschl (2005), Ramanathan (2001), Stocker (2013) and Wild (2009). Aerosols directly affect the radiative balance by absorbing or scattering incoming solar radiation e.g. Moise

(2015), and indirectly through their role as cloud condensation nuclei e.g Breon (2002), Lohmann and Feichter (2005), Rosenfeld (2008) and Charlson (2001). However, current understanding of the atmospheric aerosol radiative balance and the cloud albedo effect is currently regarded as low e.g. Stocker (2013) and Fuzzi (2005).

Owing to the complexity of material in the atmosphere, atmospheric aerosols often contain a mixture of different compounds e.g. Cappa (2011), Cai (2016) and Cochran (2016). The contrasting properties of the different compounds can result in atmospheric aerosols being coated in a film of organic material e.g. Gill (1983) and Donaldson and Vaida (2006). The presence of a film may alter the physical, chemical and optical properties of the cloud droplet or aerosol particle by (a) reducing the rate of evaporation from the droplets or particles e.g. Davies (2013), Eliason (2003), Gill (1983), Kaiser (1996) and McFiggans (2005), (b) altering the transport of chemicals between gas and liquid phase e.g. Donaldson and Anderson (1999) and Donaldson and Valsaraj (2010), (c) affecting gaseous uptake e.g. Enami, (2010), (d) reducing the scavenging by larger cloud droplets e.g. Andreaea and Rosenfeld (2008) and Feingold and Chuang (2002) and (e) altering the optical properties of the droplet e.g. Donaldson and Vaida (2006) and Li (2011). To quantify the consequences of film formation on atmospheric aerosol particles and cloud droplets, further understanding of aerosol films is urgently required. However, obstacles such as accurately quantifying anthropogenic and natural aerosol emissions (Kanakidou, 2005) or understanding the hugely varying chemistry of atmospheric aerosols (Jacobson and Hansson, 2000) means the current understanding of atmospheric aerosol remains low e.g. Stocker (2013) and Flores (2014).

Furthering the current understanding of film formation on cloud droplets or aerosols has largely been addressed by replicating the film with atmospheric proxy compounds such as oleic acid e.g. King (2009) and Jones (2015), methyl oleate e.g. Pfrang (2014) and Sebastiani (2015), pinonic acid e.g. Enami and Sakamoto (2016) or nonanoic acid e.g. Tinel (2016). However organic material extracted from the environment has only featured in a limited number of studies, e.g. Jones (2017) investigated the consequences of exposing organic films extracted from atmospheric aerosol and sea-water to ozone, whilst Zhou (2014) studied the heterogeneous chemistry of material collected from the surface of the sea. Research that focus on the sea-surface layer is highly relevant to atmospheric studies owing to sea-surface material often becoming aerosols e.g. Blanchard (1964).

The work presented describes the application of the optical trapping technique to measure the refractive index of organic material that may form an organic film on atmospheric aerosol. The organic material was extracted from atmospheric aerosol and the refractive index of the aerosol measured through the application of white light scattering in conjunction with Mie spectroscopy e.g. Bohren and Huffman (1983). The values of the refractive index were subsequently used to estimate the change in the top of the atmosphere albedo from radiative transfer calculations that modelled an aqueous aerosol with a thin film of the atmospheric aerosol extract.

Determining the refractive index of atmospheric aerosol is paramount to understanding the light scattering and absorption properties of atmospheric aerosol, and hence its contribution to global temperatures. Considerable work has focused on determining the real and imaginary component of the refractive indices of atmospheric aerosols as demonstrated by the work carried out by Liu (2013), Wex (2009), Barkey (2007), Meskhidze (2013), Nakayama (2010) and Lang-Yona

(2010) to list a few. The absorbing properties of atmospheric aerosols have been extensively studied e.g. Zhao (2013) studied the optical extinction properties of aerosols, Washenfelder (2013) studied aerosol extinction in the ultra-violet region and Liu (2016) investigated the absorbing properties of brown carbon. In the study presented, wavelength dependent real refractive indices were determined for common aerosol types such as organic atmospheric aerosol sourced from urban and remote

5 locations and from wood smoke aerosol. In addition, the wavelength-dependent refractive index of the proxy atmospheric aerosol humic acid was determined.

Application of the optical trapping technique was successfully employed to determine the refractive index of aerosol to an unparalleled level of accuracy over a wide wavelength range. The technique allowed the refractive index to be resolved to within 0.015 over a large wavelength range of 460 to 700 nm e.g. David (2016), Jones (2013) and Jones (2015).

10 Previous studies have determined the refractive index of aerosols either over a narrower or monochromatic wavelength range. Flores (2014) determined the refractive index for secondary organic aerosol over the wavelength range of 360 to 420 nm, whilst Lambe (2013), Guyon (2003) and Nakayama (2015) studied the refractive index of aerosols at individual wavelengths.

The technique also allowed the imaginary component of the refractive index and absorption Ångstrom exponent to

15 be calculated for the wood smoke aerosol extracts and aqueous humic acid aerosol owing to the samples absorbing at smaller wavelengths. The absorption Ångstrom exponent describes the wavelength dependence of the absorption of light by aerosols e.g. Moosmüller (2011). The absorption Ångstrom exponent of atmospheric aerosols has been shown to be sensitive to wavelength e.g. Chakrabarty (2010) and Lewis (2008), chemical composition e.g. Ajtai (2011), Chakrabarty (2010), Flowers (2010), Park and Yu (2016), Russell (2009) and Sandradewi (2008), morphology e.g Liu (2008) and Utry (2014) and size

20 e.g. Utry (2014) and Gyawali (2009).

2. Materials and Methods

To optically trap aerosol extracts, aerosol was collected from the atmosphere by pulling air through a pre-combusted quartz filter using an air pump. The aerosol material was then extracted from the filter and transferred to isopropanol from which airborne aerosols could by generated by ultrasonic nebulization. Additionally, a commercial sample of humic acid in an

25 aqueous solution was studied as an aerosol. The airborne aerosols were optically trapped and illuminated with white light, the backscattered white light was collected to generate a Mie spectrum of scattered light intensity as a function of wavelength. From the Mie spectrum the wavelength dependent refractive index and radius could be determined by simulating the spectrum with Mie calculations.

2.1. Collection of aerosol extracts

Three types of atmospheric aerosol were sampled to demonstrate the technique. Three samples were chosen to represent (a) a "dirty" sample from an urban environment, (b) a "clean" sample from a remote location and (c) samples with strong light absorbing properties. Wood smoke aerosol extract and aqueous humic acid aerosol were chosen for this purpose.

5   The urban sample was collected from the campus of Royal Holloway, University of London. The proximity of Central London (30 km), major motorways (M25, M40 and M4) and the large international airport Heathrow (8 km) meant the sample was categorized as urban for the purposes of the study. The urban atmospheric aerosol extracts were collected over 30-day periods and combined in the extraction process to allow seasonal (spring, summer, autumn and winter) analysis. Combining the urban aerosol extracts into seasons ensured enough material was present to create airborne aerosols and to

10   optically trap in a relatively inefficient process as described in Sect. 2.2.

       The remote atmospheric aerosol extract was collected at the Halley Clean Air Sector Laboratory operated by the British Antarctic Survey (Jones, 2008). The sample was collected over the Antarctic summer of 2015 for 60 consecutive days. Antarctica is situated far from human populated areas, and therefore the sample was called remote aerosol for the purpose of the study.

15   The wood smoke was collected over a six-hour time period from the smoke plume of a flaming log fire burning in a domestic wood burner. The firewood used in the wood burner was sourced from wild cherry trees. Two wood smoke samples were collected from two separate fires, and were labelled extract A and extract B.

       To determine the contamination for each sample, corresponding analytical filter paper blanks were collected. To ensure all possible contamination sources were accounted for, the remote and wood smoke analytical blanks travelled to the

20   field sites and back with the collected sample.

       The urban and wood smoke aerosols were sampled by using an air pump with a flow of 30 L min^{-1} through clean stainless steel pipelines into a PFA (perfluoroalkoxy) Savillex filter holder, whilst remote aerosols were sampled from Antarctic ambient air by using a short length of quarter inch O.D. PFA tubing at a flow rate of 20 L min^{-1} onto a filter holder using a Staplex low volume air sampler (Model VM-4). All filter holders contained pre-combusted quartz filters (SKC Ltd.)

25   with a diameter of 47 mm. The air was pulled through the filter for a known time period, after which the sample and filter were frozen in the dark at -18 °C until the sample could be extracted from the filter (typically days).

       After sample collection, the filter holder was dissembled in a clean glove box to prevent contamination. The filter encased in the filter holder was cut into two on clean PFA blocks with a stainless steel blade: one half was for analysis, the other for reference. The filter was placed in a glass conical flask with 10 ml of chloroform (Sigma-Aldrich, 0.5 to 1 % EtOH

30   as stabilizer) and 10 ml of ultrapure water (> 18 MΩm^{-1}), and the mixture sonicated for 10 minutes. After sonication, the mixture was filtered through pre-combusted quartz filters to remove filter debris. Sequentially, the filtrate was poured into a glass separating funnel and the chloroform layer drawn off. The atmospheric aerosol extract studied was soluble in chloroform. The chloroform was removed from the atmospheric aerosol extract by evaporation under dry nitrogen. Once all

the chloroform had been removed, 2 ml of isopropanol (Sigma-Aldrich, purity ≥ 99.8 %) was added to the sample and the sample was stored in the dark at -18 °C until use. All instrumentation used in the collection and extraction of the atmospheric aerosol extract was cleaned with ultrapure water and chloroform before use.

Every sample extracted from the atmosphere had a corresponding analytical blank to check for potential contamination of the filters. The analytical blanks for each sample were extracted following the same procedure above.

In addition to atmospheric aerosol extracts, aqueous humic acid aerosol (humic acid sodium salts, STBD5313V Sigma-Aldrich) was studied. The nebulised aqueous humic acid aerosol sample was prepared at a concentration of 0.0005 g cm^{-3}.

2.2. Optical trapping of the aerosols

A vertically aligned, counter propagating optical trap was used to optically catch and levitate the aerosols. The optical trapping description is described in full by Jones (2013), however a brief description will be given here. The optical trap consisted of two laser beams that were fibre coupled from a 1064 nm continuous wave Nd:YAG laser (Laser Quantum). The laser beams passed through beam expansion optics to two vertically opposed microscope objectives (Mitutoyo M Plan Apo 50 × NA 0.42). An aluminium sample cell (volume 38.4 cm^3) was placed between the two microscope objectives and used to contain the aerosols. Borosilicate coverslip windows allowed the focused laser beams to pass into the sample cell and form the optical trap. The aerosol could be held for more than 24 hours once trapped e.g. Rkiouak (2014). The relative humidity and the temperature of the trapping environment were held at ambient conditions (30 percent relative humidity and 20 °C).

A nebulizer (ultrasonic nebulizer, Omron) was used to create aerosols from either the atmospheric aerosol extract in isopropanol or aqueous humic acid aerosol. Inlet and exhaust ports allowed aerosol delivery into the sample cell. The solvent for the atmospheric aerosol extracts was exchanged from chloroform (removed by blowing down with nitrogen) to isopropanol prior to optically trapping as chloroform was found to be unsuitable for ultrasonic nebulisation. Isopropanol was added in the volume ratio 5:1 isopropanol to atmospheric extract, and this mixture was nebulised to deliver airborne droplets of the extract. Isopropanol evaporated from the aerosol both during transit and immediately upon capture in the optical trap.

2.3. Data analysis

The optically trapped aerosol droplet was illuminated with white light and the elastically backscattered light collected by a spectrometer (Acton SP2500i) as a function of wavelength. The resulting spectrum was a function of light intensity versus wavelength and will be called a Mie spectrum henceforth in the paper. The Mie spectrum covered the wavelength range 460 to 700 nm, with a resolution of 0.06 nm per pixel. The measured Mie spectrum was simulated through application of Bohren and Huffman formalism of Mie theory in conjunction with the Cauchy equation e.g. Bohren and Huffman (1983):

$$n = A + \frac{B}{\lambda^2} + \frac{C}{\lambda^4}, \tag{1}$$

to determine both size and a precise estimation of refractive index as a function of wavelength. The values in Eq. (1) represent the refractive index (n), Cauchy empirical constants (A, B and C) and wavelength (λ). The values of the three empirical constants and the radius of the trapped aerosol were iterated until a good comparison was achieved between the simulated and the experimentally obtained Mie spectrum. When simulating the Mie spectra of atmospheric aerosol extracts,

5   small adjustment of the empirical constant, C, did not alter the simulated Mie spectrum noticeably and this value was therefore held at zero. An estimation of the uncertainty in the derived values of the refractive index and radius of the aerosol could be determined by variation of radius, A and B in turn and comparing the experimental and simulated spectra.

2.4. Angstrom absorption coefficient

Samples including humic acid and those obtained from atmospheric sampling may have a measurable wavelength dependent
10   absorption that can be defined by a Ångstrom exponent. In the context of Mie scattering, absorption is observed as a decrease in spectral intensity of the Mie spectrum. Inclusion of a wavelength dependent imaginary refractive index term in the Bohren and Huffman formalism can simulate the intensity variations observed in the Mie spectra.

As well as determining the Ångstrom exponent from the Mie spectrum, the absorption Ångstrom exponent was also determined by fitting an Ångstrom equation (Moosmüller, 2011) to the absorbance spectra of the atmospheric aerosol extract
15   in isopropanol or humic acid in water obtained by using UV-VIS spectroscopy:

$$\frac{Abs}{Abs_0} = \left(\frac{\lambda}{\lambda_0}\right)^{-\alpha}, \tag{2}$$

where Abs is the absorbance measured by the UV-VIS spectrometer, λ is the wavelength and α is the absorption Ångstrom exponent. It should be noted that Abs_0 is the value of absorbance at the reference wavelength λ_0. The absorbance spectra of the bulk atmospheric aerosol extracts dissolved in isopropanol or the humic acid dissolved in water were recorded with a
20   spectrometer covering the wavelength range 460 to 640 nm. Wood smoke aerosol extract and aqueous humic acid both demonstrated measureable absorption at low wavelengths, however the spectra from the other samples were below the instrument detection limits.

By substitution of Eq. (3) (Petty, 2006) into Eq. (2), it was observed that the absorption Ångstrom exponent is related to the imaginary component of the refractive index by α-1 (see Appendix A).

25    $$Abs = \frac{4k\pi\rho_1 l}{\lambda\rho_2}, \tag{3}$$

In Eq. (3), Abs is the absorbance measured by the UV-VIS spectrometer, ρ_1 is the mass density of the sample in the solvent, ρ_2 is the mass density of the pure sample only, l is the path length of the UV-VIS sample cell, k is the imaginary component of the refractive index and λ is the wavelength. Once the two mass density values were determined for each sample, the mass absorption coefficient and then the imaginary component of the refractive index were calculated. For the aqueous humic acid
30   aerosol, the absorbance of the solvent water over the wavelength range considered was assumed to be negligible. For the wood smoke aerosol extract, the mass density of the wood smoke aerosol extract in isopropanol (p_1) was measured on an Anton Parr densitometer, whilst the mass density, ρ_2, was calculated gravimetrically by evaporating isopropanol from a pre-

weighed sample of the wood smoke aerosol extract. For the measurement of mass density obtained by the densitometer, a plot of the inverse of the density versus its corresponding weight fraction allowed the mass density to be determined.

3. Results

Aqueous humic acid aerosol and extracts of atmospheric aerosols were optically trapped and the real component of the refractive index determined through comparison of experimentally obtained Mie spectra to simulated Mie spectra by varying the radius and the Cauchy coefficients A and B. The Mie spectra for urban and remote atmospheric aerosol extracts are shown in Fig. 1, and the Mie spectra for the wood smoke aerosol extract and aqueous humic acid aerosols are shown in Fig. 2. Typically small aerosols (with a radius of approximately 0.600 μm) were trapped when studying the atmospheric aerosol extracts and consequently only a few resonances were observed in the Mie spectra depicted in Figs. 1 and 2. Table 1 displays the Cauchy coefficients, refractive index and radius if the aerosols studied. In general the real component of the refractive index increases from remote to urban to wood smoke.

The mass density of the two pure wood smoke aerosol extracts was determined to be 1.47 g cm^{-3} for extract A and 1.64 g cm^{-3} for extract B. The values are similar to the values Hoffer (2005) reported for humic like substances (HULIS) sourced from a biomass burning plume: 1.502 to 1.569 g cm^{-3}. The mass density of aqueous humic acid aerosol was 0.0005 g cm^{-3}, whilst the mass density of humic acid was reported from the supplier Sigma-Aldrich to be 1.52 g cm^{-3}. The absorption Ångstrom exponent and imaginary component of the refractive index over the wavelength range of 460 to 640 nm for the two samples are shown in Fig. 3. The absorption Ångstrom exponent of the wood smoke aerosol extracts was calculated to be 6, whilst the imaginary component of the refractive index was determined to be 0.0085 at 440 nm. The absorption Ångstrom exponent of the aqueous humic acid solution was calculated to be 2.2 and the imaginary component of the refractive index to be 0.0742 at 440 nm. The dependence of the Mie spectral intensity with and without contribution from the absorption are shown for the two absorbing samples in Fig. 2. Absorption attenuates the intensity of the Mie spectra and is most notable at shorter wavelengths where the mass absorption coefficient is largest.

Figure 2 demonstrates that it may be possible to determine the absorption spectra from Mie spectra recorded upon optically trapped aerosol. The solvent (isopropanol) was lost from the trapped aerosol extracts by experimental design to ensure the pure extract was studied. In contrast the aqueous humic acid droplet retained some of its water in equilibrium with the local humidity of the optical trapping cell. The trapped droplets were observed to loose water and consequently shrink in size. As shown in Fig. 2, the imaginary refractive index was varied until the simulated and measured Mie spectra matched. The mass density of humic acid in an aqueous droplet is proportional to the imaginary refractive index, allowing the concentration of the optically trapped humic acid droplet to be calculated. The concentration of the trapped humic acid was determined to be 0.0009 g cm^{-3}. The concentration of the aqueous humic acid droplet almost doubled upon trapping, thus demonstrating that water had evaporated from the droplet during the trapping and aerosol equilibration process.

4. Discussion

Studies reporting the refractive index of atmospheric aerosol extracts are predominantly conducted at individual wavelengths e.g. Guyon (2003), Hoffer (2005), Kim and Paulson (2013), Lambe (2013), Lang-Yona (2010), Nakayama (2013), Redemann (2000) and Stelson (1990). Yamasoe (1998) determined the real component of the refractive index of smoke

5 aerosol extracts to be 1.53, 1.55, 1.59, and 1.58, for wavelengths of 438, 670, 870, and 1020 nm respectively, whilst Shingler (2016) conducted in situ aerosol particle measurements of wildfire, biogenic, marine and urban air masses and discovered a refractive index of 1.52 to 1.54 at a wavelength of 532 nm. Contrastingly, the refractive index in the study presented here was not calculated at a single wavelength but over a large continuous wavelength range (460 to 700 nm).

4.1. Refractive index of atmospheric aerosol extracts

10 The variation in refractive index between the extracts investigated in the study indicates a distinctive difference between each sample from each location source. Figure 4 graphically compares the refractive index dispersion with wavelength obtained for the atmospheric aerosol extracts analysed in the study to selected values from literature. Large differences between the values of refractive index for remote, urban and wood smoke aerosol extracts can be easily observed in Fig. 4. Wood smoke aerosol extracts have the largest values of refractive index, followed by urban and then remote aerosol extracts.

15 Antarctica is considered a clean environment owing to the physical remoteness of the continent and air that reaches Antarctica is considered relatively cleansed of anthropogenic particles (Wolff, 1990). However, some particles do reach Antarctica, examples of such aerosol sources include sea spray, the transport of industrial emissions (McConnell, 2014) and particulate material from biomass burning and tropical forest fires (Tomasi, 2007). Aerosols from such sources have travelled far and have likely undergone chemical ageing, and are thus likely to be very different in chemical composition

20 than their initial composition. The review authored by Moise, Flores and Rudich (2015) demonstrates the importance of chemical reactions in the alteration of the optical properties of atmospheric aerosols during atmospheric transport.

The urban aerosol extract samples have a wide distribution of the values of refractive index with values ranging from 1.478 to 1.522 at 589 nm. From the small sample analysed in the study presented, the autumn and winter samples are at the larger end of the refractive index range, with spring and summer at the mid to low end. The wavelength dependent

25 refractive index values determined for atmospheric aerosol extracts lie in good agreement with previous monochromatic literature results. Studies focusing on anthropogenic aerosols determined values of refractive index varying from 1.498 to 1.653 nm at 532 nm; the refractive index range found in literature encompasses the urban and wood smoke aerosol extract wavelength dependent refractive indices determined in the study e.g. Adler (2011), Yamasoe (1998), Hoffer (2005) and Shingler (2016). Similarly, studies focused on aerosols sourced from the Antarctica demonstrate refractive index values

30 similar to the refractive index values determined for the aerosol extract sourced from Antarctica e.g. Virkkula (2006) measured a refractive index that generally lay between 1.4 and 1.5, but also reached as low as 1.3 for Antarctic aerosol extracts (these values are an average of measurements from the wavelengths 450, 550 and 700 nm).

Contrastingly, Guyon (2003) studied the refractive index of biomass burning aerosols collected from the Amazon tropical forest and determined a refractive index of 1.41 at 545 nm (0.1812 lower than the wavelength dependent refractive index determined in the study presented here at the same wavelength). A likely reason for the variation is that Guyon collected samples from a station suspended 54 m above ground level (and 22 m above the forest canopy), whereas in the study presented here samples were drawn directly from the smoke plume from a burning fire and consequently samples did not have the opportunity to chemically age or to mix with other material present in the atmosphere. Refractive index values from literature for secondary organic aerosols demonstrate a wide range of refractive index values, for example the work carried out by Kim (2010), Kim (2013), Lambe (2013), Lang-Yona (2010), Spindler (2007) and Yu (2008). The work indicates that a single refractive index value cannot be used to describe secondary organic aerosol, perhaps owing to the wide range of organics present in the aerosol e.g. Yu (2008).

4.2. Refractive index of aqueous humic acid aerosol

Aqueous humic acid was studied to demonstrate the ability of using optical trapping and Mie spectroscopy to study a known absorbing aerosol. Humic acid was dissolved in water to form a solution prior to nebulisation. The measured refractive index of the aqueous aerosol droplet will have a different refractive index than a pure sample of humic acid owing to the water content of the aerosol. The refractive index of humic-like substances has been reported to be quite large, for example Hoffer (2005) reported a refractive index of 1.653 for HULIS samples. However in the study presented, the aqueous humic acid droplets had a refractive index lower than any of the atmospheric aerosol extracts because the atmospheric aerosol extracts were trapped as concentrated aerosol extracts (the solvent, isopropanol, allowed the aerosol extracts to become airborne and then evaporated during nebulisation and trapping). .

4.3. Calculation of the absorption Ångstrom exponent

Unlike the urban and remote atmospheric aerosol extracts, the wood smoke aerosol extract and aqueous humic acid aerosol had strong absorption properties as shown by UV-VIS experiments on bulk samples. The imaginary component of the refractive index and absorption Ångstrom exponent could be determined for the two samples.

Previous studies in the field have determined values for the absorption Ångstrom exponents to range from 2 to 16 for carbonaceous aerosol over the visible wavelength range e.g. Hoffer (2005), Lewis (2008); Chakrabarty (2010), Flowers (2010), Moosmüller (2011), Utry (2013), Zhang (2013), He (2015), Garg (2016), Pokhrel (2016), Rathod (2016) and Shen (2017). More specifically, values in the range of 3.5 to 8.3 have been calculated for studies focusing on the absorption Ångstrom exponent for smoke aerosols. Lewis (2008) studied the combustion of a variety of fuels with a dual wavelength photo-acoustic instrument to determine an absorption Ångstrom exponent of 3.5. Contrastingly, Hoffer (2005) and Park and Yu (2016) obtained a much higher absorption Ångstrom exponents of 6 to 7 and 7.4 to 8.3 respectively for biomass burning aerosols.

The calculated absorption Ångstrom exponent for the wood smoke aerosol extract correlates with the absorption Ångstrom exponent measured in previous studies for biomass burning aerosols. Interestingly, it has been suggested that fire type plays a role in the amount of black carbon produced. A flaming fire has been shown to produce more particles e.g. Reid (2005), and in particular produce more black carbon than smouldering fires e.g. Hoffer (2005) and Yamasoe (2000). The fire

5   from which the wood smoke aerosol extracts were collected from was flaming and hence a high absorption Ångstrom exponent is more likely. It ought to be noted that the wood smoke extract was included in this work as an exploratory sample with a strong absorption and future work will explore smoke aerosol where the fuel and fire temperature are carefully controlled.

Considering the absorption Ångstrom exponent for the aqueous humic acid aerosol, it can be observed that the

10   exponent correlates with studies that determined the absorption Ångstrom exponent for biomass fuels. For example, Schnaiter (2006) deduced an absorption Ångstrom exponent between 2.2 and 3.5 for aerosols produced from the combustion of propane and Schnaiter (2003) determined an absorption Ångstrom exponent of 1 for emissions produced from the combustion of diesel.

4.4. Uncertainty in Mie spectra fitting

15   The collection technique applied to extract remote and urban aerosols from the atmosphere was limited by airflow and filter size and therefore sample was very limited. An air pump with a significantly larger flow rate was used, however the aerosol extracts that were collected contained contamination in their analytical blanks warranting the samples to not be used. The contamination was attributed to the quality of the filters used, demonstrating that pre-combusted filters are critical.

Owing to limited sample, only small aerosols were optically trapped causing the collected Mie spectra to have little

20   structure. A less structured Mie spectrum reduces the accuracy of the determined wavelength dependent refractive index, radius and absorption Ångstrom exponent. Despite the limitations in Mie spectra simulation, the typical uncertainty in radius and refractive index for a Mie spectra was typically ± 6 nm and ± 0.015 respectively, whilst the uncertainty for the absorption Ångstrom exponent was 7 percent for the wood smoke aerosol extract and 5 percent for the aqueous humic acid aerosol.

25   ### 4.5. Atmospheric Implications

Atmospheric aerosol can increase the top of the atmosphere albedo by scattering incoming solar radiation, and decrease the top of the atmosphere albedo by absorbing solar radiation. The material extracted from the atmospheric samples described in the study may form an organic shell at the air-water interface of an aqueous aerosol e.g. Gill (1983). An atmospheric radiative-transfer model (Stamnes, 1988) was applied to study an atmospheric aerosol layer consisting of core aqueous

30   aerosol coated in an organic shell with the optical properties of the atmospheric aerosol extract measured within the work presented here. The change in the top of the atmospheric albedo was calculated as the proportions of water and organic material were varied for different size aerosols.

The top of the atmosphere albedo was calculated for an aerosol layer with the composition of an aqueous core aerosol surrounded by a shell of either urban, wood smoke or remote atmospheric aerosol extract with the volume fraction varying from 0 to 1 (i.e. pure water to pure organic). The calculations represent only a small-scale study to simply identify potential effects on the top of the atmosphere albedo owing to the presence of pure core-shell particles in the atmosphere

5   versus no aerosol present. The change in the top of the atmosphere albedo is reported as an aerosol relative effect, following the approach of Mishra (2015).

The atmospheric radiative-transfer model uses the DISORT code (Stamnes, 1988). The model uses values of the scattering, absorption and the asymmetry parameter of aerosols to calculate the change in solar radiation through the atmosphere. To calculate the scattering and absorption parameters for coated spheres Mie calculations were performed for

10   the core-shell particles using BHCOAT, a code developed by Bohren and Huffman (1983) and which was later modified to also include a calculation of the asymmetry parameter. The scattering, absorption and asymmetry parameter for the particle were calculated from the refractive index of the core and shell. For all aerosol particles the refractive index of the core was a wavelength dependent value for water (IAPWS, 1997) and the refractive index of the surrounding medium a wavelength independent value for air of 1.00-0.0i. The shell of the aerosol had a wavelength dependent refractive index of the urban,

15   remote or wood smoke aerosol extracts, as displayed in Table 1. In addition, the absorption properties of the wood smoke aerosol extract were included in the calculation.

The core-shell Mie calculation was used to obtain scattering and absorption cross-sections and asymmetry parameters for particles with a radius of 100 to 10,000 nm (in 100 nm intervals from 100 to 1000 nm, and 1000 nm intervals from 1000 to 10,000 nm), and with the shell volume making up 0.01 to 0.99 of the whole particle volume. Calculations were

20   performed over wavelengths covering 350 to 750 nm. The ground albedo was set to 0.1. Aerosol of one size was placed in three consecutive 1 km thick layers at the surface, forming a 3 km thick aerosol layer. The aerosol optical depth for each of these layers was set to 0.126, the global average set by Mao (2014), and no aerosol or cloud was placed in any subsequent layers. The solar zenith angle was set at 60°. The albedo of the top of the atmosphere was calculated as the ratio of incoming to outgoing irradiance at 100km altitude and averaged over wavelengths from 350 to 750 nm for each particle size.

25   Calculations were also performed for no aerosol present in the atmosphere. The aerosol radiative effect was then calculated using Eq. (4).

$$ARE_{TOT} = TOA\ albedo_{aerosol} - TOA\ albedo_{no\ aerosol}\ , \tag{4}$$

where ARE_{TOT} stands for total aerosol radiative effect, $TOA\ albedo_{aerosol}$ stands for the top of the atmosphere albedo with aerosol present and $TOA\ albedo_{no\ aerosol}$ stands for the top of atmosphere albedo without aerosol present.

30   The results of these calculations are presented in Fig. 5. From Fig. 5, it can be observed that all aerosols have a positive effect on the total aerosol radiative effect, with the most positive effect observed for particle sizes of 600 and 800 nm for the urban and remote atmospheric aerosol extracts and 200 and 400 nm for the wood smoke aerosol extract. Note the change in top of the atmosphere albedo is most pronounced when the volume of shell increases from 0 to 25 percent of the total volume.

5. Conclusions

A new technique employing optical trapping techniques applied alongside Mie spectroscopy was employed to determine the real and imaginary components of the refractive index of insoluble organic material from atmospheric aerosol extracts over a wide wavelength range. The atmospheric aerosol extract was successfully trapped, demonstrating that the material forms

5   spherical liquid droplets onto which Mie theory could be applied. From application of Mie theory, the refractive indices of the atmospheric aerosol extract were determined to vary from 1.470 for aerosol extracted from Antarctica to 1.588 for wood smoke aerosol extracts at the wavelength 589 nm, whilst seasonal refractive index dependence was observed for atmospheric aerosol extracted from an urban environment.

Additionally, owing to the efficient light absorbing nature of the wood smoke aerosol extract and aqueous humic

10   acid extract, the absorption Ångstrom exponent could be determined with a high level of certainty for the extract; through applying optical trapping and Mie spectroscopy alongside UV-VIS spectroscopy it was possible to determine the real and imaginary component of the refractive index simultaneously.

The aerosol collected may exist as an aerosol in the atmosphere or may coagulate with other atmospheric aerosols to form a film. Use of a simple one dimensional radiative-transfer model to study a shell of atmospheric aerosol extracts on

15   an aqueous aerosol indicates that the albedo of the top of the atmosphere albedo may change by 0.03 relative to a pure aqueous droplet.

Data Availability

Data can be found at 10.5281/zenodo.834450.

Appendix A

20   The absorption Ångstrom exponent and imaginary refractive index were determined by using experimentally determined absorption in a series of equations. Substitution of Eq. (3) into Eq. (2) from Sect 2.4, the relationship between the two variables was determined:

$$\left(\frac{\frac{4\pi k}{\lambda}}{\frac{4\pi k_0}{\lambda_0}} \right) = \left(\frac{\lambda}{\lambda_0} \right)^{-\alpha}, \tag{A1}$$

$$\left(\frac{k}{k_0} \right) \left(\frac{\lambda_0}{\lambda} \right) = \left(\frac{\lambda}{\lambda_0} \right)^{-\alpha}, \tag{A2}$$

25   $$\left(\frac{k}{k_0} \right) = \left(\frac{\lambda}{\lambda_0} \right) \left(\frac{\lambda}{\lambda_0} \right)^{-\alpha}, \tag{A3}$$

$$\left(\frac{k}{k_0} \right) = \left(\frac{\lambda}{\lambda_0} \right)^{-(\alpha-1)}, \tag{A4}$$

where λ is the wavelength, α is the absorption Ångstrom exponent and k is the imaginary refractive index. It ought to be noted that k_0 is the imaginary refractive index at λ_0. Equation (A4) demonstrates that the relationship between the absorption Ångstrom exponent and imaginary refractive index occurs when the absorption Ångstrom exponent is α-1. Hence, throughout the paper the absorption Ångstrom exponent is α-1.

5 **Author Contributions**

Rosalie H. Shepherd conducted all experiments, extracted all atmospheric aerosol, analysed and interpreted the data collected and wrote the paper. Martin D. King and Andrew D. Ward conceived the experiment idea and assisted during the experiment. Additionally, Martin D. King collected the urban atmospheric aerosol extracts. Amelia Marks with the assistance of Martin D. King modelled a film of atmospheric aerosol extract on an aqueous aerosol. Neil Brough collected

10 aerosol samples from Antarctica.

Competing Interests

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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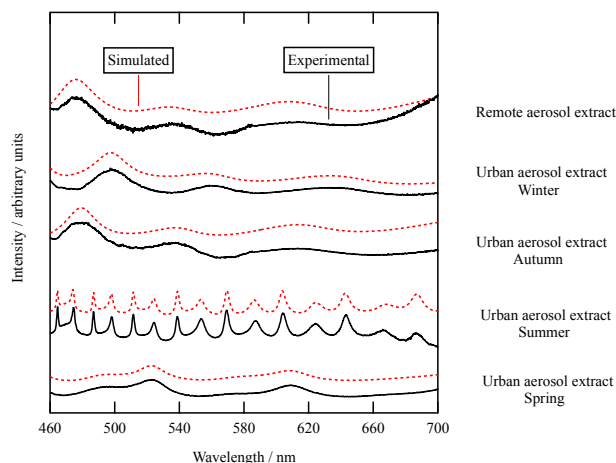
Figure 1: The typical Mie spectra as a function of wavelength obtained for the urban atmospheric aerosol extract collected over the four seasons and the remote atmospheric aerosol extract. From the Mie spectra, the refractive index and radius of the trapped 20 droplet could be determined. Simulated and measured Mie spectra are compared.
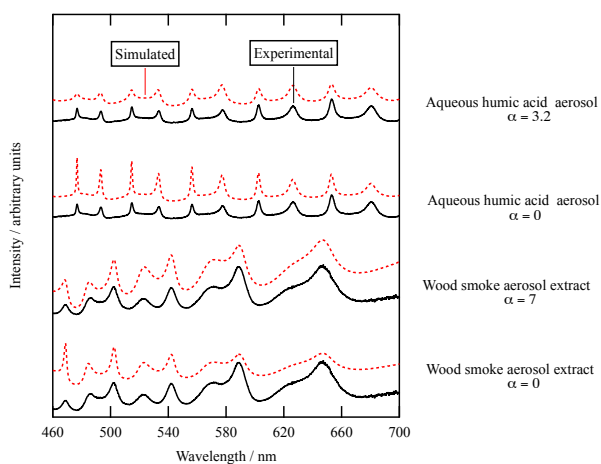
Figure 2: Typical Mie spectra for (a) the wood smoke aerosol extract B and (b) the humic acid aerosol with simulated Mie spectra with and without absorption. The simulated Mie spectra when the measured absorption Ångstrom exponent, α, was included or when the absorption Ångstrom exponent was held at zero are shown for wood smoke aerosol extract and humic acid aerosol. Note the absorption measured in Fig. 2 is required to provide a good fit to the intensity of the data, especially at short wavelength.
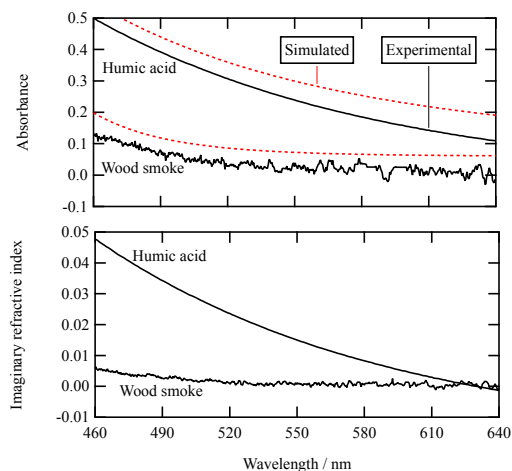
Figure 3: The absorbance and imaginary refractive index of the aqueous humic acid solution and wood smoke aerosol in isopropanol. The simulated absorbance is shown for the wood smoke aerosol extract and aqueous humic acid samples and has been purposefully displaced upwards for clarity.
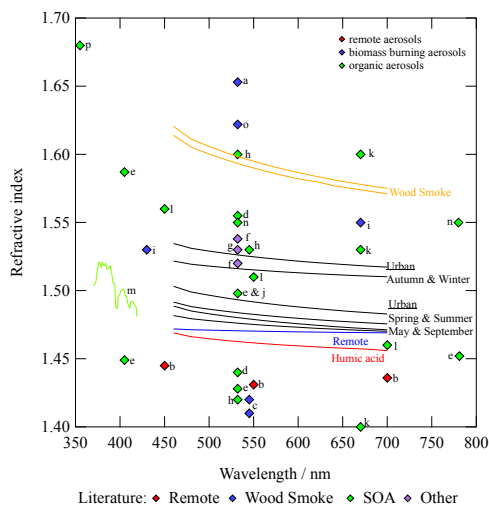
Figure 4: Refractive index dispersions for urban, remote and wood smoke atmospheric aerosol extracts and humic acid aerosol, compared to refractive index values from literature. A sample of literature studies investigated aerosols from (1) remote locations e.g. b Virkkula (2006), (2) biomass burning e.g. a: Hoffer (2005), c: Guyon (2003) i: Yamasoe (1998), n: Chakrabarty (2010) and 5 (o) Dinar (2008) and (3) organic aerosols e.g. d: Kim and Paulson (2013), e: Nakayama (2013), h: Lambe (2013), j: Spindler (2007), k: Kim (2010), l: Yu (2008), m: Flores (2014), n: Chakrabarty (2010) and p: Trainic (2011).
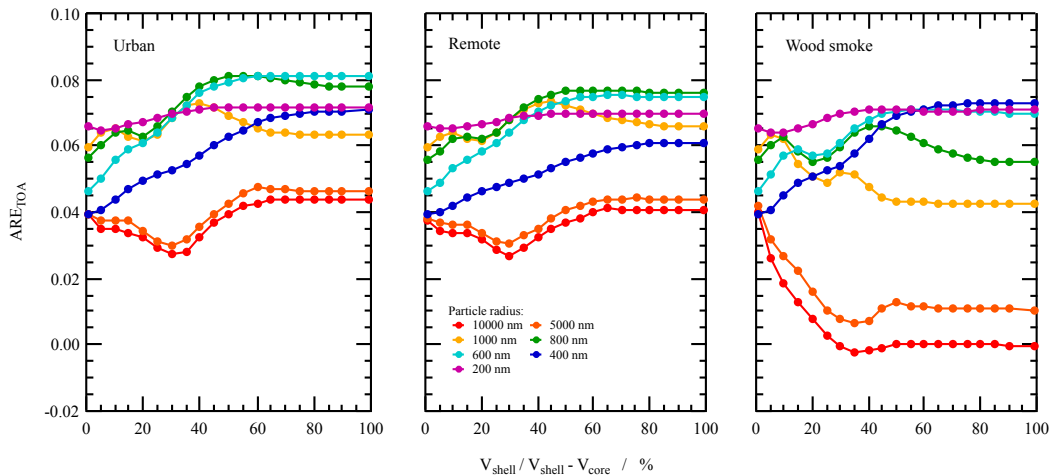
Figure 5: The aerosol radiative effect for the change in top of the atmosphere albedo upon core-shell morphology formation in 10 atmospheric aerosols. The shell material consists of the urban atmospheric aerosol extract (top), remote atmospheric aerosol

extract (middle) or wood smoke atmospheric aerosol extract (bottom), whilst the core for all calculations was water. The radius of the core was varied 7 times. The left hand side of the graph corresponds to pure aqueous droplets, the right hand side to pure organic droplets.

5 Table 1: Table 1 describes the number of aerosols studied, their determined Cauchy coefficients and the particle sizes. Many more particles were studied but were too small to produce Mie spectra that could be fitted with confidence (i.e. the Mie spectra lacked structure). A very limited amount of sample prevented a larger aerosol becoming optically trapped. Where more than one particle was analysed for a sample, the average and standard deviation are reported and the range in trapped sizes is shown. Note the wood smoke aerosol extract was plentiful and repeated experiments could be performed.

	Sample	Aerosols Analysed	A	B (nm^2)	C (nm^4)	Real Refractive Index (589 nm)	Radius Range (µm)
Urban	Spring	3	1.478±0.010	3750±3250	0	1.489	0.49-0.762
	Summer	4	1.465±0.005	4625±1200	0	1.478	0.474-1.252
	Autumn	1	1.505	6000	0	1.522	0.492
	Winter	2	1.495±0.007	4000	0	1.507	0.515
Remote	Antarctic Summer 2015	1	1.467	1000	0	1.470	0.503
Wood Smoke	Extract A	6	1.543	15700± 750	0	1.588± 0.002	0.500-0.723
	Extract B	6	1.541± 0.003	14800± 2900	0	1.584± 0.007	0.475-0.593
Test	Humic Acid (aqueous)	1	1.449	3425	1.25×10^{-8}	1.460	1.307