



1 **Formation and sink of glyoxal and methylglyoxal in a polluted subtropical**
2 **environment: observation-based photochemical analysis and impact evaluation**

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13

14 **Abstract**

15 The dicarbonyls, glyoxal (Gly) and methylglyoxal (Mgly) have been recognized as
16 important precursors of secondary organic aerosols (SOAs) through the atmospheric
17 heterogeneous process. In this study, field measurement was conducted at a receptor
18 site in the Pearl River Delta (PRD) region in south China, and an observation based
19 photochemical box model was subsequently applied to investigate the production and
20 evolution of Gly and Mgly as well as their contributions to SOA formation. The model
21 was coupled with a detailed gas-phase oxidation mechanism of volatile organic
22 compounds (VOCs) (*i.e.*, MCM v3.2), heterogeneous processes of Gly and Mgly (*i.e.*,
23 reversible partitioning in aqueous phase, irreversible volume reactions and irreversible
24 surface uptake processes), and the gas-particle partitioning of oxidation products. The
25 results suggested that without considering the heterogeneous processes of Gly and
26 Mgly on aerosol surfaces would overpredict the mixing ratios of Gly and Mgly by
27 factors of 3.3 and 3.5 compared to the observed levels. The agreement between
28 observation and simulation improved significantly when the irreversible uptake and the
29 reversible partitioning were incorporated into the model, which in total contributed ~72
30 and ~73% to the destruction of Gly and Mgly, respectively. Further analysis on the
31 photochemical budget of Gly and Mgly showed that the oxidation of aromatics by the
32 OH radical was the major pathway producing Gly and Mgly, followed by degradation
33 of alkynes and alkenes. Furthermore, based on the improved model mechanism, the
34 contributions of VOCs oxidation to SOA formed from gas-particle partitioning (SOA_{gp})



35 and from heterogeneous processes of Gly and Mgly (SOA_{het}) were also quantified. It
36 was found that *o*-xylene was the most significant contributor to SOA_{gp} formation
37 (~29%), while *m/p*-xylene and toluene made dominant contributions to SOA_{het}
38 formation. Overall the heterogeneous processes of Gly and Mgly can explain ~21% of
39 SOA mass in the PRD region. The results of this study demonstrated the important roles
40 of heterogeneous processes of Gly and Mgly in SOA formation, and highlighted the
41 need for a better understanding of the evolution of intermediate oxidation products.

42

43 **Keywords:** Glyoxal, Methylglyoxal, Secondary organic aerosol, Pearl River Delta,
44 Volatile organic compound, Photochemical box-model

45

46 1. Introduction

47 Organic aerosols (OAs) are important components of atmospheric aerosols, with
48 important impacts on radiation balance, air quality, atmospheric oxidative capacity, and
49 climate change (Zhu et al., 2011; Carlton et al., 2009; Hoyle et al., 2009). In addition
50 to the primary organic components (primary OA, POA) directly emitted from various
51 sources in the particulate form, a large fraction of OAs are secondarily produced (SOA)
52 through the aging of POAs, and through complex homogenous/heterogeneous reactions
53 of volatile or semi-volatile organic compounds (VOCs, SVOCs) (Jimenez et al., 2009;
54 Steinfeld and Jeffrey, 1998). SOA has frequently been observed to dominate the OA in
55 many regions, particularly during severe haze pollution events (Guo et al., 2012; Zhang
56 et al., 2017). However, the characteristics of SOAs are still poorly understood because
57 of their complicated formation mechanisms, various chemical compositions, and
58 multitude of precursors from diverse emissions, thus making SOAs an important
59 research topic in the field of the atmospheric environment.

60 In addition to primary precursors including isoprene, terpene and aromatic
61 hydrocarbons, glyoxal (Gly) and methylglyoxal (Mgly) have been recognized to be of
62 critical importance to SOA formation, especially through heterogeneous and multiphase
63 processes, in many laboratory and model studies (Waxman, et al., 2013, 2015; McNeill
64 et al., 2012; De Haan et al., 2009; Fu et al., 2008). Many efforts have been made to
65 investigate the sources, evolution of Gly and Mgly and their contributions to SOA
66 (Benavent et al., 2019; Zhang et al., 2016; Sumner et al., 2014; DiGangi et al., 2012;



67 Stavarakou et al., 2009). As two smallest dicarbonyl compounds, the sources of Gly
68 and Mgly are complicated. The burning of biomass and biofuel combustion have been
69 considered as the primary emission sources of Gly and Mgly, although recent studies
70 have identified that vehicular emissions are also primary sources of these pollutants
71 (Grosjean et al., 2001; Zhang et al., 2016). Compared with primary emissions,
72 secondary formations from the oxidation of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) make
73 more dominant contributions to ambient Gly and Mgly concentrations in the
74 atmosphere (Lv et al., 2019). On a global scale, isoprene and ethyne are the most
75 important precursors of Gly and Mgly; on the local scale, however, degradation of
76 aromatics is the major pathway for the production of Gly and Mgly in urban and sub-
77 urban areas. For example, the oxidation of aromatics contributed to approximately 75%
78 of Gly formation in Mexico City (Li et al., 2014; Volkamer et al., 2007).

79 As for the atmospheric sink for Gly and Mgly, photolysis, reaction with OH, dry
80 deposition, and heterogenous processes are considered as the main loss pathways,
81 among which aerosol uptake is most complicated and needs more comprehensive
82 exploration (De Haan et al., 2018; McNeill, 2015; Knote et al., 2014; Fu et al., 2008).
83 The uptake of Gly and Mgly onto inorganic or organic particles has been studied in
84 laboratory experiments under controlled conditions (De Haan et al., 2018; Liggio et al.,
85 2005), and uptake coefficients (γ) were measured by the loss of gas phase concentration
86 or the increase of particle organic mass, within the range of $\sim 10^{-4}$ to 10^{-2} (De Haan et
87 al., 2018; Pye et al., 2017; Liggio et al., 2005). The lower γ value was probably related
88 to the kinetic limitations (Ervens and Volkman 2010), while the higher γ value may be
89 associated with the increased particle acidity (Liggio et al., 2005), relative humidity
90 (De Haan et al., 2018; Corrigan et al., 2008) and ionic strength (Kroll et al., 2005). In
91 addition, ammonium-catalyzed and OH reactions were found to have significant
92 influences on the surface uptake of dicarbonyls (Knote et al., 2014; Kampf et al., 2013;
93 Noziere et al., 2009), and the rate coefficients were found to increase with the increasing
94 ammonium ion activity ($a_{\text{NH}_4^+}$) and pH (Noziere et al., 2009). The “salting-in” effects
95 resulted from the increased ionic strength could cause significant increase (~ 3 orders
96 of magnitude) of Henry’s law constant for Gly, affecting the gas-aqueous partitioning of
97 Gly and enhanced the available Gly for aqueous reactions (Kampf et al., 2013; Knote
98 et al., 2014; Waxman et al., 2015).

99 The uptake processes of Gly and Mgly derived from the laboratory studies were



100 incorporated into different models to investigate their formation and destruction (Pye
101 et al., 2017 and references therein; Knote et al., 2014; Li et al., 2014; Ge et al., 2011).
102 It was found that solely incorporating the irreversible uptake pathways of dicarbonyls
103 could lead to high discrepancy between the observation and simulation results from the
104 global 3D model and other models (Hu et al., 2017; Li X et al., 2014; Li et al., 2013a),
105 highlighting the needs to consider more comprehensive processes including both
106 reversible and irreversible pathways for better simulating the dicarbonyls. Those
107 previous studies showed that the contribution of heterogeneous processes to the
108 destruction of dicarbonyls varied in the range of 0~80%, which depended on the relative
109 humidity, the precursors incorporated into the model as well as the aerosol
110 concentrations for the given region (Knote et al., 2014).

111 The Pearl River Delta (PRD) region has been experiencing rapid industrialization
112 and urbanization in the last three decades, making it one of the most developed regions
113 in China. The field measurement results suggested that OA contributed 30~40% to
114 PM_{2.5} mass, and SOA dominated the OA with fractions up to ~80% in PRD (Huang et
115 al., 2014; He et al., 2011). Furthermore, the contribution of SOA in PM_{2.5} has been
116 increasing in recent years, highlighting the necessity for better understanding the
117 formation of SOA in this region (Wu et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2019). However, model
118 simulation which provides robust information of the influence of physical processes
119 and chemical degradation in SOA formation still underpredict the SOA abundance with
120 only traditional VOC precursors incorporated, hindering the better understanding the
121 sources and formation mechanism of SOA in PRD (Wu et al., 2019; Fu et al., 2012;
122 Wang et al., 2009). It was found that incorporating emissions of Gly and Mgly, and their
123 degradation mechanisms could effectively narrow the gap between the measured and
124 modelled SOA (Fu et al., 2012; Li et al., 2013a). However, only the simple
125 parameterization of surface uptake of Gly and Mgly without detailed physical and
126 chemical processes (e.g., reversible partitioning of Gly and Mgly into deliquesced
127 droplets) in the model could bias the evolution of Gly and Mgly, leading to the poor
128 understanding on the budgets of Gly and Mgly, their relationship with precursors, and
129 the contributions of precursors to SOA formation in PRD (De Haan et al., 2018;
130 Waxman et al., 2015; Knote et al., 2014; Li et al., 2013a, 2014; Lu et al., 2013).



131 Therefore, to improve the model performance for the simulation of Gly and Mgly and
132 to investigate their evolution and contribution to SOA formation, the observation data
133 from a receptor site in the PRD region was analyzed by a photochemical box model
134 with near-explicit chemical mechanisms (*i.e.*, the master chemical mechanism, MCM),
135 and improvements with reversible and irreversible heterogeneous processes of Gly and
136 Mgly, and the gas-particle partitioning of oxidation products in the present study. The
137 production and evolution of Gly, Mgly, and other intermediate products were
138 investigated. The observed and simulated levels of Gly and Mgly were compared to
139 evaluate the performance of the model, which was further used to quantify the
140 contributions of individual VOCs to SOA formation at the receptor site of PRD.

141

142 **2. Methodology**

143 **2.1. Field measurement**

144 Field measurements were carried out at Guangdong provincial atmospheric
145 supersite located at Heshan (22.728°N, 112.929°E, 60 m above sea level) in Jiangmen
146 City of the PRD region. The sampling site is located about 50 km and 80 km southwest
147 from Foshan and Guangzhou City, respectively. The Heshan site is surrounded by
148 mountain areas with trees and subtropical plants, and the location of the site is showed
149 in Figure 1. Ambient measurement of VOCs, carbonyls and other trace gases was
150 conducted during January 02- 07, 2017, when the dominant wind was mainly from the
151 southeast where the center of PRD (*i.e.*, Zhuhai and Zhongshan) was located. A detailed
152 description of the Heshan site and the measurement methodology was provided in a
153 previous work (Chang et al., 2019).

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156

157 Figure. 1 The location of sampling site and its surrounding environment in the Pearl River Delta
158 region. The base map was from © Google Maps.

159

160 Briefly, mono-carbonyls and Gly and Mgly were collected with 2,4-
161 dinitrophenylhydrazine cartridges every 3 h and detected using a high-performance
162 liquid chromatography (HPLC) system (PerkinElmer 200 Series, US). The hourly
163 VOCs were measured using a cryogen-free automatic gas chromatograph system
164 equipped with a mass spectrometer and a flame ionization detector (GC-MS/FID)
165 (Wang et al., 2014). CO, SO₂, and O₃ was measured using a gas filter correlation
166 analyzer, a pulsed fluorescence analyzer, and a UV photometric analyzer, respectively
167 (Thermo Scientific 48i, 43i, 49i). NO and NO₂ were detected using a
168 chemiluminescence instrument (Thermo Scientific 42i) with a photolytic converter (Xu
169 et al., 2013). The method detection limits for non-methane hydrocarbons (NMHCs),
170 carbonyls, CO, SO₂, O₃, NO, and NO₂ were 20-300, 20-450, 4000, 100, 500, 60, and
171 300 pptv, respectively (Yun et al., 2018; Chang et al., 2019; Li et al., 2020). The
172 measurement method uncertainty of the retrieved Gly and Mgly mixing ratios was
173 estimated around 15% (Chang et al., 2019; Li et al., 2020). Furthermore, hourly
174 meteorological parameters including temperature, wind speed, wind direction, pressure,
175 and relative humidity were recorded using a pyranometer (CMP22, Kipp & Zonen B.V.,
176 Holland) and a portable weather station (Model WXT520, Vaisala, Finland).

177

178 **2.2. Photochemical box model with master chemical mechanism (PBM-MCM) and** 179 **gas-particle partitioning SOA scheme**

180 Photochemical box model (PBM) was employed in this study to simulate the
181 oxidation of Gly, Mgly and different VOCs, based on a master chemical mechanism



182 (MCM) coupled with a gas-particle partitioning module to represent the SOA formation
183 scheme. The MCM (version 3.2) is a near-explicit mechanism including ~16,500
184 reactions involving ~6,000 chemical species with the latest IUPAC inorganic
185 nomenclature, which described the chemical degradation of ~143 primary VOCs and
186 their oxidation products. The MCM scheme has been applied to different photochemical
187 box models to investigate the oxidation and reactivities of various VOCs, the formation
188 of photochemical O₃ and secondary organic products, atmospheric radical budget and
189 propagation, as well as the policy evaluation on mitigating the photochemical smog
190 (*e.g.*, Ling et al., 2014, 2019; Wang et al., 2017; Lyu et al., 2015; Xue et al., 2014a, b;).
191 The physical processes including dry deposition and atmospheric dilution due to the
192 variations of planetary boundary layer heights (configured according to the local
193 observation in the PRD region from previous studies (Li et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2013;
194 Fan et al., 2011) were considered in the model, but not the influence of horizontal and
195 vertical transport.

196 In addition to the gas-phase degradation of VOCs, a gas-particle partitioning
197 module for the oxidation products of VOCs and those compounds with an estimated
198 normal boiling temperature greater than 450 K, as developed by Johnson et al (2006),
199 were incorporated into the model to represent the SOA formation scheme (Johnson et
200 al., 2005, 2006; Kamens et al., 1999; Stein et al., 1994). In brief, the gas-to-particle
201 equilibrium partitioning of the species was described by the partitioning coefficient (K_p ,
202 unit: m³μg⁻¹) using Eq. 1 (Johnson et al., 2006).

$$203 \quad K_p = \frac{7.501 \times 10^{-9} RT}{MW_{om} \zeta P_L^0} \quad (\text{Eq.1})$$

204 where R , T , MW_{om} , and ζ are the ideal gas constant (8.314 J K⁻¹mol⁻¹), temperature (K),
205 the mean molecular weight of the absorbing particle organic matter (g mol⁻¹), and the
206 activity coefficient of species in the condensed organic-phase, respectively. P_L^0 is the
207 liquid vapor pressure and was estimated using a semi-empirical expression of the
208 Clausius-Clapeyron equation (Eq. 2):

$$209 \quad \ln\left(\frac{P_L^0}{760}\right) = -\frac{\Delta S_{vap}(T_b)}{R} \left[1.8\left(\frac{T_b}{T} - 1\right) - 0.8\left(\ln\left(\frac{T_b}{T}\right)\right)\right] \quad (\text{Eq.2})$$

210 where T_b was the boiling temperature of different species, which was estimated using a
211 previously described fragmentation method (Stein et al., 1994; Johnson et al., 2006).
212 $\Delta S_{vap}(T_b)$ was the vaporization entropy change at T_b , which was estimated using the



213 Trouton-Hildebrand-Everett rule with corrections for polar compounds and compounds
214 with hydrogen-bonding capacity (Baum 1997). The concentration of species j in the
215 condensed organic-phase ($F_{j,om}$) can be calculated as the following equation (Eq. 3):

$$216 \quad F_{j,om} = M_{om} \times (K_{p,j} \times A_j) \quad (\text{Eq.3})$$

217 where M_{om} is the total mass concentration of each condensed organic material from gas-
218 particle partitioning, A_j is its gas-phase concentration, and $K_{p,j}$ is its partitioning
219 coefficient of species j (Johnson et al., 2006).

220 The partitioning process was dynamically represented as an equilibrium between
221 absorption and desorption, as described by Kamens et al. (1999). Briefly, the species-
222 dependent K_p values were defined in terms of absorption (k_{in}) and desorption (k_{out}) rate
223 coefficients, with $K_p = k_{in}/k_{out}$. The value for k_{in} ($k_{in} = 6.2 \times 10^{-3} \text{ m}^3\mu\text{g}^{-1}\text{s}^{-1}$) was
224 configured as suggested by Johnson et al. (2006). Thus the K_p could be expressed in
225 terms of k_{out} . More detailed description of the equations and parameters are given by
226 Johnson et al. (2005, 2006) and Kamens et al. (1999).

227

228 **2.3. Partitioning and reactions of gas-phase dicarbonyls on particles**

229 The partitioning and reactions of dicarbonyls in the aerosol aqueous phase may
230 involve both irreversible and reversible processes (Ervens and Volkamer, 2010). In the
231 present study, we follow the mechanism proposed by Knote et al. (2014) and consider
232 the reversible partitioning in aqueous phase, the irreversible volume reactions and
233 irreversible surface uptake processes in our model.

234 The reversible partitioning of Gly and Mgly on aerosols aqueous phase is usually
235 described by the Henry's law equilibrium (Kampf et al., 2013) (Eq.4):

$$236 \quad [\text{Gly}(\text{Mgly})]_{\text{liquid}} = K_H \times [\text{Gly}(\text{Mgly})]_{\text{gas}} \quad (\text{Eq.4})$$

237 However, hydration of carbonyls function groups and salt-Gly interactions could have
238 significant influences on the K_H value of Gly (Kampf et al., 2013; Waxman et al., 2015),
239 and an effective Henry's law coefficient expressed by Eq.5 was often used.

$$240 \quad K_{H,\text{effective}} = \frac{K_{H,\text{water}}}{10^{(-0.24 \min(12.0, (C_{as} + C_{an})))}} \quad (\text{Eq.5})$$

241 where the C_{as} and C_{an} represent the concentrations of ammonium sulfate and nitrate.

242 The detailed information on each parameter in these equations have been provided in



243 Kampf et al. (2013), Waxman et al. (2015) and the supplementary of the present study.
244 As variations were found for the value of $K_{H, effective}$ under different concentrations of
245 ammonium sulfate and nitrate in previous studies (Knote et al., 2014; Kampf et al.,
246 2013; Erverns and Volkamer, 2010), the C_{as} and C_{an} were calculated every hour in the
247 present study from the measured ammonium sulfate (and ammonium nitrate)
248 concentrations (mol m^{-3}) divided by aerosol liquid water content (ALWC, kg m^{-3}),
249 which were determined by the aerosol inorganics model (AIM-IV,
250 <http://www.aim.env.uea.ac.uk/aim/model4/model4a.php>) with inputs of the observed
251 parameters (e.g., ambient relative humidity, temperature, and the moles of each ion) at
252 the Heshan site (Chang et al., 2019).

253 The reversible formation of monomer (i.e., glyoxal, glyoxal monohydrate, and
254 glyoxal dihydrate) and oligomers are considered with the two important reservoirs (i.e.,
255 monomer and oligomer pools, represented as pool1 and pool2) (Knote et al. 2014). The
256 variations of the glyoxal monomer ($[\text{Gly}_{p1}]$) and oligomer concentrations ($[\text{Gly}_{p2}]$) with
257 time can be represented by the following equations (Erverns and Volkamer, 2010;
258 Kampf et al., 2013; Knote et al., 2014):

$$259 \quad \frac{d([\text{Gly}_{p1}])}{dt} = \frac{1}{\tau_1} \times (\text{Gly}_{p1,eq} - \text{Gly}_{p1}) \quad (\text{Eq.6})$$

$$260 \quad \frac{d([\text{Gly}_{p2}])}{dt} = \frac{1}{\tau_2} \times (\text{Gly}_{p2,eq} - \text{Gly}_{p2}) \quad (\text{Eq.7})$$

$$261 \quad \frac{\text{Gly}_{p2,eq}}{\text{Gly}_{p1,eq}} = K_{olig} \quad (\text{Eq.8})$$

262 The equilibrium partitioning between monomers and oligomers was presented as K_{olig}
263 (Eq.8). The definition and configuration of each parameters above were provided in the
264 supplementary according to Knote et al. (2014) and Kampf et al. (2013).

265 In addition, three irreversible pathways of Gly, including 1) the ammonium-
266 catalyzed volume pathway, 2) the OH-reaction volume pathway, and 3) the irreversible
267 surface uptake, were parameterized in the model (Knote et al., 2014; Ervens and
268 Volkman 2010). The ammonium-catalyzed reactions, with rate constant depending on



269 both particle acidity (pH) and the activity of the ammonium ion (a_{NH_4}), were
270 parameterized as follows when the monomer and oligomer concentrations were in
271 equilibrium (Eq. 9):

$$272 \quad K = 2 \times 10^{-10} \times \exp(1.5 \times a_{\text{NH}_4}) \times \exp(2.5 \times \text{pH}) \times \text{Gly}_{p1} \quad (\text{Eq.9})$$

273 This parameterization was configured based on the assumption that only total
274 concentration in the monomer pool was the only particulate glyoxal available to the
275 ammonium-catalyzed reaction as the reversibly formed oligomers do not evaporate
276 easily (Knote et al., 2014; De Haan et al., 2009; Noziere et al., 2008).

277 For OH pathway, the gas-phase OH was in equilibrium with liquid-phase OH by
278 a Henry's law constant ($K_{L,\text{OH}} = 25 \text{ M atm}^{-1}$) with the consideration of the "salting-in"
279 impact (Ervens and Volkamer 2010), and constant of reactions between OH and Gly
280 was $1.1 \times 10^{-9} \text{ M}^{-1} \text{ s}^{-1}$ (Buxton et al., 1997). As suggested by Knote et al. (2014), the Gly
281 concentration available to the OH-reaction pathway was the total glyoxal concentration
282 in the monomer pool.

283 Surface-controlled irreversible uptake of Gly has been widely employed in
284 different modeling studies (Ervens et al., 2011; Li et al., 2014; Liu et al., 2007), was
285 parameterized as follows (Eq.10):

$$286 \quad K_r = - \frac{\gamma_{\text{gly(mgly)}} \times S_{aw} \times v_{\text{gly(mgly)}} \times C_{\text{gly(mgly)}}^*}{4} \quad (\text{Eq.10})$$

287 where C^* and v are the gas-phase concentration and mean molecular velocity,
288 respectively. γ represents the uptake coefficient for Gly and Mgly. Here we use the
289 surface uptake coefficients ($\gamma_{\text{gly}} = 1.0 \times 10^{-3}$ and $\gamma_{\text{Mgly}} = 2.6 \times 10^{-4}$) to account for the
290 irreversible surface uptake of Gly and Mgly, respectively. It is noted that the surface
291 uptake coefficient of Gly was configured according to the results of uptake kinetics
292 experiments from Schweitzer et al. (1998), which has been used in the model simulation
293 of Gly in the previous PRD study (Li et al., 2014). On the other hand, the surface uptake
294 coefficient of Mgly was obtained via scaling to glyoxal uptake coefficient by the
295 relative Henry's law coefficient suggested by Pye et al. (2017). S_{aw}
296 ($S_{aw} = S_a \times f(\text{RH}) = S_a \times (1 + a \times (\text{RH})^b)$) is the RH corrected aerosol surface area density (Li



297 et al., 2014). The value for a (2.06) was configured as those suggested previously (Liu
298 et al., 2007), while the dry aerosol surface concentration (S_a) was obtained from the
299 measurement at the Heshan site (Yun et al., 2018). In this study, the mean molecular
300 velocities of Gly were calculated by the HyperPhysics model ([http://hyperphysics.phy-
302 astr.gsu.edu/hbase](http://hyperphysics.phy-
301 astr.gsu.edu/hbase), last access date: 06 June 2019). The carbonaceous and insoluble
303 components were considered as an aqueous shell for aerosols, whereas the aerosol
304 surface was fully covered with an aqueous layer (Li et al., 2015).

304 On the other hand, though heterogeneous processes of Mgly are similar to those
305 of Gly, some difference between these two species were found. The Henry's law
306 constant for Mgly is not as effective as that for Gly. Hence, a Henry's law constant (3.7
307 $\times 10^3 \text{ M atm}^{-1}$) for Mgly we used (Zhou and Mopper 1990). In fact, Kroll et al. (2005)
308 suggested that no aerosol growth was observed from gas-phase Mgly presumably
309 because of its more stable (less electron deficient) ketone moiety, and a recent study
310 indicated that less Mgly would partition into the aerosols than expected according to
311 Henry's law (Waxman et al., 2015). In addition, the surface uptake coefficient ($\gamma_{\text{Mgly}} =$
312 2.6×10^{-4}) suggested by Pye et al. (2017) is lower than that extracted from the chamber
313 study (De Haan et al., 2018), which reported the value of γ_{Mgly} could increase to $3.7 \times$
314 10^{-3} at 95% RH and even larger than Gly in a high relative-humidity environment
315 ($\geq 95\%$). However, they also figured out that treating the surface uptake of Mgly on
316 aerosols as an irreversible pathway could probably overestimate its positive effect for
317 SOA formation via heterogeneous processes, because $\sim 20\%$ of SOA which were
318 formed from Mgly via aqueous processes would further hydrolyze.

319

320 **2.4. Model scenarios**

321 According to the discussion above, it could be seen that the heterogeneous
322 processes we described for Gly was more complicated than that for Mgly, as the
323 parameterization for the sink of Gly from laboratory and model studies were more
324 robust. Therefore, the present study put more emphasis on the evolution of Gly for
325 better understanding and evaluating the effects of the different sink pathways on
326 dicarbonyls and its influence on SOA formation. Table 1 provides detailed information



327 regarding all the model scenarios for the simulation of Gly, while the model scenarios
328 for Mgly are also given in Table S1 in the supplement.

329 Table 1. Model scenarios used for gas-phase Gly

Scenarios	Description	Purpose
INITIAL	Default MCMv3.2, without considering the reversible and irreversible uptake of Gly and the gas-particle partitioning of other oxidation products	Base run
scenario 1	As INITIAL, also considers ammonium-catalyzed reactions of Gly through monomers pool 1 without the reversible formation of oligomers pool 2.	Investigating the influence of Ammonium reactions on the destruction of Gly
scenario 2	As scenario 1, also considers OH reactions of Gly through monomers pool 1 without the reversible formation of oligomers pool 2.	Investigating the influence of OH reactions for the destruction of Gly
scenario 3	As scenario 2, and considers the aqueous oligomers formation (pool 2) and reversible process with monomers (pool 1).	Investigating the “salting in” impact
scenario 4	As scenario 3, and considers surface uptake by aerosols of Gly with the uptake coefficient of 1×10^{-3} suggested by Li et al. (2014).	Investigating the influence of surface uptake

330
331 In this study, hourly observation data of CO, SO₂, NO, NO₂, O₃, and all measured
332 NMHC and meteorological parameters were used as input and constraints in the model.
333 The photolysis rates, which were not measured, were modified in the model using the
334 photon fluxes from the Tropospheric Ultraviolet and Visible Radiation (TUV-v5) model
335 (Madronich and Flocke 1997) according to the sampling location and modeling period.
336 Model simulation was performed on January 07-08, 2017, when both daily Gly and
337 Mgly data were available, with 00:00 LT (local time) as the initial time. Before the
338 simulation, the model was pre-run for 5 days using the mean diurnal variability of the
339 input species during the whole sampling period to achieve a steady state for the
340 unmeasured species with a short lifetime, *i.e.*, OH and HO₂ radicals (Xue et al., 2014a,
341 b).

342 343 **2.5. Model uncertainty**

344 Uncertainties in the simulation of Gly and Mgly by the model were noted. The total



345 model errors could be calculated conservatively from 1) the uncertainties in the
346 measurement of trace gases and NMHCs; 2) the measured data of meteorological
347 parameters, *i.e.*, temperature T , pressure P , and the calculated photolysis frequencies J
348 based on meteorological conditions; 3) reaction rate constants k ; and 4) the dry
349 deposition. In this study, following Li et al. (2014) and Lu et al. (2013), the uncertainty
350 factors for the above parameters were adopted as suggested previously (Table S2), and
351 all parameters were divided into three groups (*i.e.*, physical parameters, radical and
352 trace gas concentrations, and reaction rate constants of non-photolytic reactions). Each
353 parameter was multiplied by its uncertainty factor first, and the gaussian error
354 propagation was then applied within each group. We run the model n times (n is the
355 number of parameters considered). The mean diurnal variation of the uncertainty of
356 modeled Gly and Mgly is shown in Figure S1. The total uncertainties of the modelled
357 Gly and Mgly were both estimated to be around 39% with the contributions from radical
358 and trace gas concentrations (~19%), physical parameters (~13%) (included photolysis
359 frequencies, deposition lifetime, T , etc.) and reaction rate constants of non-photolytic
360 reactions (~7%), respectively.

361

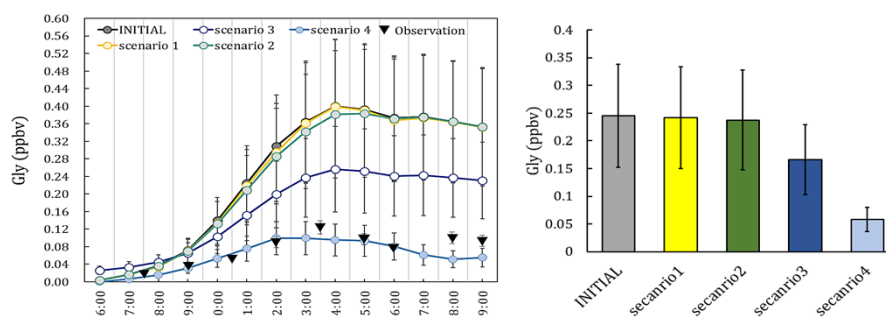
362 **3. Results and Discussion**

363 **3.1. Comparison between the simulation and observation**

364 The simulated dicarbonyls from the photochemical box model under different
365 scenarios were examined and compared with the observation. The predicted
366 dicarbonyls from in-situ formation in the INITIAL scenario was found to generally
367 overpredict the mixing ratios of Gly and Mgly, and were about 3.3 and 3.5 times of the
368 observed concentrations at the Heshan site, respectively. Similar overestimation has
369 been reported in previous modeling studies, for example, the simulations with only the
370 MCM gas-phases schemes overpredicted the Gly concentration by factors of 2-6 in both
371 urban Mexico City (Volkamer et al., 2007) and a semi-rural site of the PRD region (Li
372 et al., 2014). The significant overestimation in simulation results indicates that there
373 were important loss pathways for Gly and Mgly other than the oxidation reactions (*e.g.*,
374 by OH and NO₃ radicals). A sensitivity analysis was firstly conducted with twice the
375 dilution rate (and deposition velocities) in INITIAL scenario, which resulted in the
376 reduction of modeled concentrations of Gly and Mgly by 3.2% (2.8%) and 9.2% (7.9%),



377 respectively (Table S3). Though these enlarged rates were higher than the upper limits
378 of the dilution rate and deposition velocities in previous studies (Fan et al., 2011; Wang
379 et al., 2013; Li et al., 2014), the predicted mixing ratios of Gly and Mgly were still three
380 times higher than the measured levels, suggesting that the dilution and dry deposition
381 configuration could not be the main causes for the overestimation of modeled Gly and
382 Mgly mixing ratios (Volkamer et al., 2006, 2007).



383
384 Figure 2. The observation data, the concentrations and the daily average concentration of Gly
385 predicted from the different scenarios.
386

387 To identify the causes of discrepancy and improve model performance, sensitivity
388 analysis with different heterogeneous mechanisms incorporated in the model scheme (as
389 scenarios listed in Table 1) was conducted. The average diurnal patterns of Gly
390 simulated by different model scenarios are shown in Figure 2. It can be seen that in
391 the early morning (*i.e.*, 0600 to 0800 LT, local time), the predicted mixing ratios of Gly
392 in different scenarios were comparable to the observation. In contrast, the difference
393 became larger from 0900 LT onwards, though the predicted peaks of Gly by different
394 model scenarios were all presented at the early afternoon, following by a slow decrease
395 in the late afternoon. The model results from Scenario 4 were more consistent with the
396 observational data. The relative changes of modeled Gly concentrations by adding
397 additional heterogeneous processes to the model scenario INITIAL (*i.e.*, model
398 scenarios 1-4) were summarized in Table S4.

399 On average, by including additional irreversible and reversible pathways, the
400 modeled Gly concentrations during daytime (06:00-19:00) decrease by 72.3% of the
401 values predicted by the INITIAL scenario, and a significant decrease of Gly
402 concentration occurred by adding the effect of surface uptake pathway (*i.e.*, model
403 scenarios 3-4). Similar results have been obtained in a previous study in summer in the



404 PRD region (Li et al., 2014), which found that the simulated Gly concentration decrease
405 significantly (~45 %) in the daytime (*i.e.*, 0600 to 1900 LT) when heterogeneous uptake
406 process was considered with the incorporation of a single uptake coefficient.

407 The contribution of different heterogeneous sink pathways is calculated based on
408 the scenario 4 (Figure S2). The irreversible pathways of Gly (*i.e.*, surface uptake by
409 aerosols, OH and ammonium reactions) accounted for 67.3% of the total sink of Gly,
410 among which the surface uptake was a dominant pathway (61.7%) comparing to the
411 ammonium and OH reactions (2.5% and 2.9%, respectively). The reversible pathway
412 made a relatively lower contribution to the total sink of Gly (32.9%).

413 In addition, the heterogeneous irreversibly and reversibly pathways of Mgly was
414 also investigated in the sensitivity analysis (*i.e.*, model scenarios M1-2, listed in Table
415 S5), and the predicted Mgly concentrations during daytime (0600-1900 LT) decreased
416 by 73.0% of the values estimated in INITIAL model scenario. The surface uptake
417 pathway in the scenario M2 was found to be the most important heterogeneous pathway
418 for the loss of Mgly, and contributed to 64.1% of the total sink of Mgly. The
419 contributions of the reversible pathway to the destruction of Mgly was around 35.9%
420 (Figure S3).

421 Overall, by incorporating a more detailed heterogeneous processes of Gly and
422 Mgly, the results of scenarios 4 and M2 provided better agreement between the modeled
423 and measured Gly and Mgly. The results demonstrated the significance of
424 heterogeneous uptake processes on the destruction of Gly and Mgly, and adopting the
425 irreversible/reversible pathways (*i.e.*, the reversible partitioning, volume reactions, and
426 the surface uptake) could reasonably reproduce the variations of Gly and Mgly at the
427 Heshan site in the PRD region.

428

429 **3.2. Process analysis on the production and destruction of Gly and Mgly**

430 The scenario 4 simulation with the best agreement with measurement was further
431 analyzed to investigate the photochemical budget of Gly and Mgly at the Heshan site,
432 respectively (Table 2). It was found that OH oxidation of aromatics was the most
433 important contributor for the Gly and Mgly production, with mean contributions of ~80%
434 and ~94%, respectively. Among all the aromatic precursors, toluene and *m,p*-xylene
435 were the two major precursors for the formation of Gly and Mgly, with total
436 contributions of ~43% and ~56% of Gly and Mgly formation, respectively. In contrast,



437 because of the relatively low photochemical reactivity, benzene and alkanes had lower
438 contributions on the formation of Gly and Mgly in the present study, although they can
439 travel a long distance and contribute to secondary Gly and Mgly in areas far from their
440 emissions (Lv et al., 2019). Different from previous studies that found the isoprene as
441 the key precursors for Gly and Mgly formation (Li et al., 2014; Lou et al., 2010), the
442 contributions of isoprene oxidation at the Heshan site in the present study were much
443 lower than that of aromatics, with only mean contributions of ~2% and ~3%,
444 respectively. It can be attributed to the lower mixing ratios of isoprene (*i.e.*, 70 ± 10
445 pptv) observed at Heshan site because of the lower temperature in winter, comparing to
446 the much higher concentration observed during summer (average of ~1ppb and
447 maximum of ~4 ppbv in the afternoon) in the rural and forest areas in this region (Li
448 et al., 2014; Lou et al., 2010).

449 In addition, the relative contributions of different loss pathways of Gly and Mgly,
450 including physical processes (vertical dilution and dry deposition), and the
451 heterogeneous processes of Gly and Mgly on aerosols were also estimated from the
452 PBM-MCM model results (Table 2). Consistent with previous studies (Atkinson and
453 Arey, 2003; Ervens et al., 2011), heterogeneous processes were the most important
454 pathway for the destruction of Gly and Mgly (both with contributions of ~62%),
455 followed by photolysis (with contributions of ~26% and ~25%, respectively).

456

457 Table 2 Production and destruction of Gly and Mgly from model simulation

Precursor	Oxidant	Gly		Mgly	
		Molar yield (%) ^a	Contribution (%)	Molar yield (%) ^a	Contribution(%)
Aromatics					
benzene, %	OH	32	4.94	-	-
toluene, %	OH	30.6	23.41	21.5	23.80
<i>m, p</i> -xylene, %	OH	25.2	19.22	35.1	32.08
<i>o</i> -xylene, %	OH	12.7	15.04	33.1	14.49
1,2,4-trimethylbenzene, %	OH	7.2	1.40	27.2	5.98
1,2,3-trimethylbenzene, %	OH	7.8	1.43	15.1	4.54



1,3,5-trimethylbenzene, %	OH	- ^c	-	58.1	13.21
ethylbenzene, %	OH	55	6.62	-	-
<i>p</i> -ethyltoluene, %	OH	31.9	5.45	-	-
<i>m</i> -ethyltoluene, %	OH	7.9	1.52	-	-
<i>o</i> -ethyltoluene, %	OH	8	0.51	-	-
Sum			79.54		94.10
Alkanes					
propane, %	OH	-	-	11	0.73
> C3 alkanes ^b , %	OH	1	0.19	3.2	0.71
Sum			0.19		1.44
Alkenes					
	OH	6.2	0.43	25	0.57
isoprene, %	NO ₃	43.7	1.34	37.8	2.83
	O ₃	4	0.20	-	-
ethene, %	OH	5.7	1.08	-	-
	O ₃	0.44	1.15	-	-
> C2 alkenes ^b , %	OH	-	-	7.7	1.06
propene, %	O ₃	8.3	1.01	-	-
1-pentene, %	O ₃	2	0.73	-	-
Sum			5.94		4.46
Acetylene	OH	63.5	14.33	-	-
Loss pathways					
photolysis, %			26.2		25.1
NO ₃ , OH-reaction, %			4.06		7.87
dry deposition, %			2.23		1.73
dilution, %			5.71		3.30
heterogeneous ^d , %					
Irreversible processes, %			41.0		39.8
Reversible processes, %			20.8		22.2

458 ^a Molar yields were taken from previous studies (Fu et al., 2008) (Fick et al., 2003) (Nishino
 459 et al., 2010) (Calvert 2000; Volkamer et al., 2006).

460 ^b >2 alkenes (include 3 alkenes) and >3 alkanes (include 17 alkanes) are represented in this
 461 study as a single lumped species (Lv et al., 2019).

462 ^c “-” not applicable.

463 ^d Considered both irreversible and reversible parameterizations of the aerosol sinks (*i.e.*,
 464 scenario 4 and M2).

465

466 **3.3 Implications for secondary organic aerosol formation**



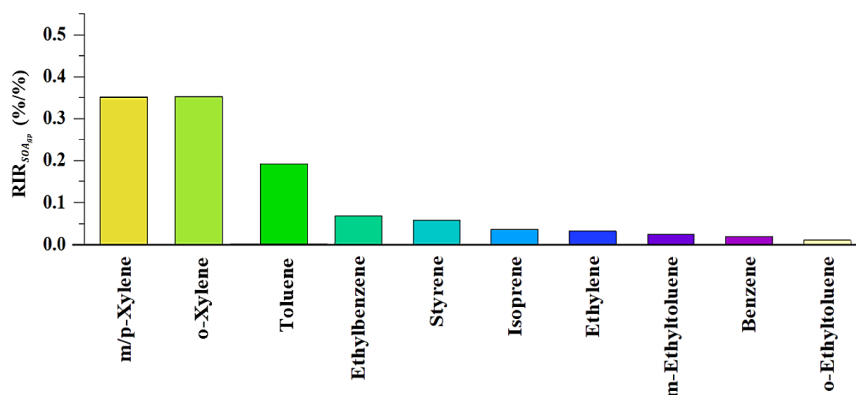
467 By incorporating both the traditional gas-particle partitioning (of VOC oxidation
468 products other than Gly and Mgly) and the heterogeneous processes (of Gly and Mgly)
469 into the model, we investigated the contributions of different mechanism in SOA
470 formation through sensitivity analysis. The contributions of VOC oxidations to SOA
471 formed from gas-particle partitioning (SOA_{gp}) and SOA formed from heterogeneous
472 processes of Gly and Mgly (SOA_{het}) were quantified.

473 On the other hand, based on the SOA_{gp} formation scheme (in scenario 4), the
474 relative importance of each VOC precursor in SOA_{gp} formation was further evaluated
475 to provide a complete picture for SOA_{gp} formation and its relationship with precursors.
476 As with O_3 formation, the roles of individual VOC precursors in SOA_{gp} formation were
477 calculated using relative increment reactivity ($RIR_{SOA_{gp}}$) method, which have been
478 widely used to present the percentage change in the production of secondary products
479 per percent change in precursors. The $RIR_{SOA_{gp}}$ of a specific precursor X at site Z is
480 given by Eq. 11:

$$481 \quad RIR_{SOA_{gp}}^Z(X) = \frac{[P_{SOA_{gp}}^Z(X) - P_{SOA_{gp}}^Z(X - \Delta X)] / P_{SOA_{gp}}^Z(X)}{\Delta Z(X) / Z(X)} \quad (\text{Eq. 11})$$

482 where $Z(X)$ represents the measured concentration of precursor X , including the
483 amounts emitted at the site and those transported to the site, and ΔX is the change in the
484 concentration of precursor X caused by a hypothetical change $\Delta Z(X)$ (10% $Z(X)$ in this
485 study). Here, $P_{SOA_{gp}}^Z(X)$ represents the SOA_{gp} formation potential. A large positive
486 $RIR_{SOA_{gp}}$ value of a specific precursor suggests that SOA_{gp} formation could be
487 significantly decreased if the emissions of this precursor were controlled. Figure 3
488 depicts the top 10 VOC precursors with high $RIR_{SOA_{gp}}$ values at Heshan site. Both m,p -
489 xylene and o -xylene had the highest $RIR_{SOA_{gp}}$ value (~ 0.35), followed by toluene (~ 0.2)
490 and ethylbenzene (~ 0.06). As m/p -xylene, o -xylene and toluene can also have a
491 significant impact on dicarbonyls production, they are likely to make a noticeable
492 contribution to both SOA_{gp} and SOA_{het} formation.

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Figure 3. Top 10 VOC precursors with high $RIR_{SOA_{gp}}$ values at Heshan site.

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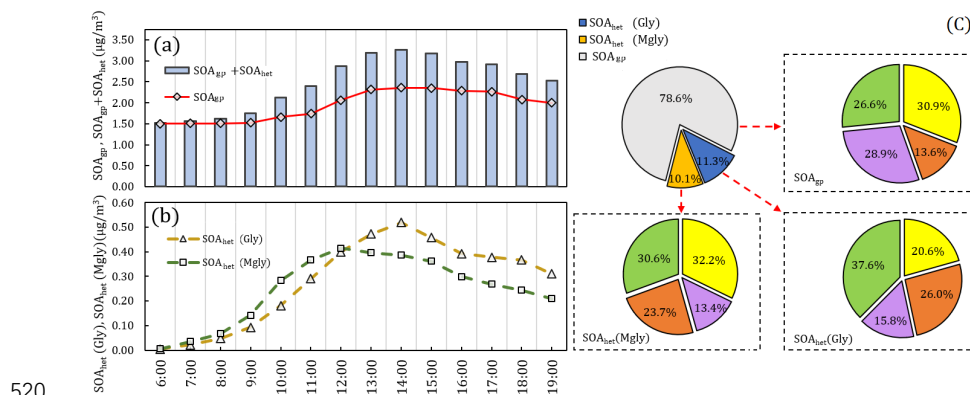
517

518

The average diurnal variations of SOA_{het} concentration formed from Gly and Mgly were showed in Figure 4. Both SOA_{het} (Gly) and SOA_{het} (Mgly) concentrations presented photochemistry-driven diurnal patterns, and started to increase in the morning before reaching the maximum value (0.52 and $0.42 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) at 1400 and 1200 LT, respectively. It is consistent with the diurnal pattern of SOA_{gp} , which could be formed from the oxidation of other VOCs due to the high photochemical reactivity at noon, which further converted to SOA_{gp} through gas-particle partitioning.-In general, SOA_{gp} made a higher contribution to total SOA (78.6%) than SOA_{het} (21.4%). Previous studies have indicated that the more abundant anthropogenic precursors than biogenic ones under NO_x saturated environment could lead to greater contribution of SOA_{gp} to total SOA despite that the oxidation of anthropogenic species (*i.e.*, aromatics) could lead to relatively higher yields of Gly and Mgly (Knote et al., 2014; Ervens et al., 2011). Ervens et al. (2011) has found that in areas with high concentrations of biogenic precursors at high relative humidity, the SOA_{het} and SOA_{gp} were equally important for total SOA, while in the anthropogenic dominated areas, the contribution of SOA_{het} to the total predicted SOA mass was around 30% . Similarly, the formation of SOA_{gp} and SOA_{het} were both dominated by xylenes and toluene, contributing to $\sim 74\%$, $\sim 62\%$ and $\sim 69\%$ of SOA_{gp} , SOA_{het} (Gly) and SOA_{het} (Mgly), respectively. Furthermore, *o*-xylene was the most important precursor to the SOA_{gp} ($\sim 29\%$), but only contributed $\sim 16\%$ and $\sim 13\%$ to SOA_{het} (Gly) and SOA_{het} (Mgly) formation, respectively. The toluene and *m,p*-xylene made the most significant contributions to the SOA_{het} (Gly) (26.0%) and SOA_{het} (Mgly) (32.2%) formation, consistent with the chamber results from the oxidations of



519 different precursors (Ervens et al., 2011).



520

521 Figure 4. The average diurnal variations of SOA_{gp}, SOA_{het} (Gly) (*i.e.*, SOA_{het} formed from
522 Gly), SOA_{het} (Mgly) (*i.e.*, SOA_{het} formed from Mgly) and total SOA formation were showed
523 in Figure 4a and 4b. The proportion of SOA_{gp}, SOA_{het} (Gly) and SOA_{het} (Mgly) in total SOA
524 as well as the contribution of VOCs precursors to SOA_{gp}, SOA_{het} (Gly) and SOA_{het} (Mgly)
525 formation, were represented in the pie charts in Figure 4c.

526

527 3.4 Comparison with previous studies in PRD

528 Previous studies have been conducted to investigate the evolution of Gly and/or
529 Mgly using observation and model simulation in the PRD region. However, one must
530 bear in mind that the mechanisms of the formation and evolution of Gly and/or Mgly
531 were more detailed in the present study, as previous studies in PRD only incorporated
532 the irreversible surface uptake process with a single coefficient for the heterogeneous
533 pathway for dicarbonyls. This may not reflect the current knowledge for the formation
534 and evolution of Gly and/or Mgly and their influence on SOA formation (Knote et al.,
535 2014; Waxman et al., 2015; Sumner et al., 2014).

536 Li et al. (2013a) used the regional air quality model CMAQ to investigate the
537 contributions of the aerosol surface uptake of Gly and Mgly to SOA formation in the
538 PRD region, and an uptake coefficient of 2.9×10^{-3} was used for both Gly and Mgly in
539 the model. Interestingly, the results from their model were about 30% higher than that
540 in our study (Table S6). For example, Li et al. (2013a) concluded that SOA formed from
541 dicarbonyls may contribute higher than 50% to the total SOA mass in the PRD region,
542 while our study showed that the contribution of SOA_{het} to total SOA mass was ~21%
543 (*i.e.*, ~11% of SOA_{het} formed from Gly; ~10% of SOA_{het} formed from Mgly). In
544 addition, the averaged concentration of SOA_{het} from Gly ($0.28 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) and Mgly (0.25
545 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) in our study is one order of magnitude lower than that in Li et al. (2013a) (*i.e.*,



546 2.33 and 2.51 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, respectively). The discrepancy was mainly due to the different
547 parameterizations of heterogeneous processes of dicarbonyls. The parameterization in
548 the Li et al. (2013a) and other previous studies did not consider the reversible processes
549 of dicarbonyls, but used one constant surface uptake coefficient to represent all the
550 heterogeneous processes, which could result in bias in SOA formation if there are
551 available aerosol surfaces without considering the influence of aerosols composition
552 and phase state. Moreover, most of the previous studies using higher surface uptake
553 coefficients intended to narrow the discrepancy between observed and simulated SOA
554 mass without direct comparison between observed and simulated concentrations of
555 dicarbonyls (i.e., Li et al., 2013a; Waxman et al., 2013; Fu et al., 2008; Vokalmer et al.,
556 2007). For example, Knote et al. (2014) conducted a total of seven simulations to
557 investigate the SOA formation from Gly over California. Their results showed that the
558 SOA concentration in SIMPLE scenario (characterized by a single uptake coefficient
559 of 3.3×10^{-3}) was an order of magnitude higher than that in HYBRID scenario
560 (characterized by an uptake coefficient of 1.0×10^{-3} and also considered more
561 comprehensive parameterization of heterogeneous processes). In fact, if we only
562 consider the surface uptake by aerosols for dicarbonyls using the same uptake coefficient
563 for dicarbonyls (2.9×10^{-3}) as Li et al., (2013a), the contribution of SOA_{het} to total SOA
564 mass would increase to 72% (i.e., 37% of SOA_{het} formed from Gly; 35% of SOA_{het}
565 formed from Mgly) (Table S6). However, this configuration may not reflect the real
566 evolution of dicarbonyls, resulting in the underestimation on the dicarbonyls
567 concentrations (i.e., the simulated concentration is at least one order of magnitude lower
568 than the observation) (Figure S4) and overprediction of the contribution of SOA_{het} to
569 total SOA mass in this study (~51%).

570 Table 3 compares the surface uptake coefficient derived from laboratory
571 experiments and those used in different model simulation. It could be found that there
572 was a large variation range for the surface uptake coefficients of Gly, while the studies
573 on Mgly were still limited. For example, the laboratory experiment reported the surface
574 uptake coefficients of Gly in the range of (0.8-6.6) and $(\leq 1 - 9) \times 10^{-3}$ on aqueous
575 inorganic aerosols and cloud droplet/ice crystals, respectively (Volkamer et al., 2007;
576 Loggio et al., 2005), and the coefficients were found to be $> 2.3 \times 10^{-3}$ for particles
577 with high acidity (pH values within the range of -0.44 to -1.3) (Loggio et al., 2005). On
578 the other hand, Schweitzer et al. (1998) reported that the uptake coefficient of > 0.001



579 was only observed for lower temperature conditions, and the experimentally measured
580 coefficient ranged from $(1.2 \pm 0.06) \times 10^{-2}$ to $(2.5 \pm 0.01) \times 10^{-3}$ on acidic solution (*i.e.*,
581 60-93 wt% H₂SO₄) at 253-273 k (Gomez et al., 2015; Zhang et al., 2015). It is suggested
582 that more accurate and comprehensive parameterization of heterogeneous processes of
583 dicarbonyls still needs deeper exploration for further model development. The
584 parameterization used in this study were mostly adopted from previous results, though
585 it may still have limitations and uncertainties, the results of simulation at this site show
586 better agreement with the observation.

587

588 Table 3 Surface uptake coefficient of Gly from laboratory experiments and used in the
589 model simulation in the present and previous studies

Coefficient	References
$(0.8-7.3) \times 10^{-3}$, on aqueous inorganic aerosols	Volkamer et al., 2007; Loggio et al., 2005;
$(\leq 1 - 9) \times 10^{-3}$, and on cloud droplet/ice crystals	Volkamer et al., 2007; Loggio et al., 2005;
$(1.2 \pm 0.06) \times 10^{-2} - (2.5 \pm 0.01) \times 10^{-3}$ on acidic solutions (<i>i.e.</i> , 60-93 wt% H ₂ SO ₄ at 253-273 k)	Gomez et al., 2015; Zhang et al., 2015
3.3×10^{-3}	Knote et al., 2014 and references therein; Waxman et al., 2013; Waxman et al., 2013
2.9×10^{-3}	Fu et al., 2008
1.0×10^{-3}	Knote et al., 2014 and references therein; this study; Li et al., 2014

590

591 4. Conclusion

592 A photochemical box model coupled with MCM (v3.2) (PBM-MCM) and further
593 improvements on the evolution of semi- and non-volatility oxidation products to a
594 condensed particle-phase, was used to investigate the production and heterogeneous
595 processes of Gly and Mgly, as well as the SOA-precursor relationship at a receptor site
596 (*i.e.*, the Heshan site) for the first time in the PRD region. Compared to the
597 measurements, the initial model configuration overestimated the Gly and Mgly
598 concentrations by a factor of 3.3 and 3.5, respectively. This discrepancy occurred
599 largely due to the absence of irreversible uptake and reversible partitioning. Model
600 investigation regarding the production of Gly and Mgly revealed that the oxidation of
601 aromatics by OH radicals was the most important contributor to the formation of Gly



602 and Mgly, with mean contributions of ~80% and ~94%, respectively, with toluene and
603 *m,p*-xylene acting as the most important precursors for Gly and Mgly. For SOA
604 formation, the heterogeneous processes of Gly and Mgly probably can explain ~21%
605 of SOA mass in PRD. Toluene and *m,p*-xylene were the main precursors for SOA_{het}
606 formation, while *o*-xylene was the most important precursor of SOA_{gp}. Moreover,
607 Overall, this study evaluated the formation and heterogeneous processes of Gly and
608 Mgly in a polluted subtropical environment and highlighted the important role of
609 intermediate products that are produced from photochemical oxidation of VOCs in SOA
610 formation. The results of this study are expected to provide a better understanding of
611 the evolution of VOC precursors, intermediate products, and heterogeneous process of
612 the dicarbonyls, and the developed model modules can provide a robust tool for
613 investigating SOA formation in the PRD and other regions in China.

614

615 ***Author contributions***

616 In this study, the model was developed by ZL and QX. The whole structure for the
617 paper was designed by ZL, XW and ZW. QX, ZL and ZW wrote the manuscript. ZW
618 provided the observed data. All the authors have made substantial contributions to the
619 work reported in the manuscript. ZL and QX contribute equally to this article.

620

621 ***Data availability***

622 The underlying research data and the newly developed MCM scheme of Gly and Mgly
623 in this study are available to the community and can be accessed by request to Zhenhao
624 Ling (lingzh3@mail.sysu.edu.cn) of Sun Yat-sen University.

625

626 ***Competing interests***

627 The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

628

629 ***Acknowledgements***

630 The authors thank the Collaborative Innovation Center of Climate Change, Jiangsu
631 Province, and also thank Barbara Ervens for her constructive comments for the
632 manuscript.

633

634 ***Funding Sources***

635 This research has been supported by the National Key Research and Development
636 Program of China (grant nos. 2017YFC0210106 and 2016YFC0203305), the National
637 Natural Science Foundation of China (grant nos. 91644215, 41775114, 91744204), and
638 Research Grant Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, China (grant
639 nos. 15265516 and 25221215). This work was also partly supported by the Pearl River
640 Science and Technology Nova Program of Guangzhou (grant no. 201806010146), the
641 Fundamental Research Funds for the Central Universities (grant no. 19lgzd06), the



642 Special Fund Project for Science and Technology Innovation Strategy of Guangdong
643 Province (Grant No.2019B121205004).

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