



1 **Factors controlling marine aerosol size distributions and**
2 **their climate effects over the Northwest Atlantic Ocean**
3 **region**

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5 Betty Croft¹, Randall V. Martin^{2,1}, Richard H. Moore³, Luke D. Ziemba³, Ewan C. Crosbie^{3,4},
6 Hongyu Liu⁵, Lynn M. Russell⁶, Georges Saliba⁶, Armin Wisthaler^{7,8}, Markus Müller⁷,
7 Arne Schiller⁷, Martí Galí⁹, Rachel Y.-W. Chang¹, Erin E. McDuffie^{1,2}, Kelsey R. Bilsback¹⁰,
8 and Jeffrey R. Pierce¹⁰

9
10 ¹Department of Physics and Atmospheric Science, Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS, Canada

11 ²McKelvey School of Engineering, Washington University in St. Louis, St. Louis, MO, USA

12 ³NASA Langley Research Center, Hampton, VA, USA

13 ⁴Science Systems and Applications, Inc., Hampton, VA, USA

14 ⁵National Institute of Aerospace, Hampton, VA, USA

15 ⁶Scripps Institute of Oceanography, University of California, San Diego, La Jolla, CA, USA

16 ⁷Institute for Ion Physics and Applied Physics, University of Innsbruck, Technikerstrasse 25,
17 6020 Innsbruck, Austria

18 ⁸Department of Chemistry, University of Oslo, P.O. 1033 – Blindern, 0315 Oslo, Norway

19 ⁹Barcelona Supercomputing Center (BSC)

20 ¹⁰Department of Atmospheric Science, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO, USA

21 *Correspondence to:* Betty Croft (betty.croft@dal.ca)

22

23 **Abstract.**

24 Aerosols over Earth's remote and spatially extensive ocean surfaces have important influences on
25 planetary climate. However, these aerosols and their effects remain poorly understood, in part due
26 to the remoteness and limited observations over these regions. In this study, we seek to understand
27 factors that shape marine aerosol size distributions and composition in the Northwest Atlantic
28 Ocean region. We use the GEOS-Chem-TOMAS model to interpret measurements collected from
29 ship and aircraft during the four seasonal campaigns of the North Atlantic Aerosols and Marine
30 Ecosystems Study (NAAMES) conducted between 2015 and 2018. Observations from the
31 NAAMES campaigns show enhancements in aerosol total number concentration at atmospheric



32 altitudes of about 1 km, most pronounced during the phytoplankton bloom maxima (May/June).
33 Our simulations, combined with NAAMES ship and aircraft measurements, suggest several key
34 factors contribute to aerosol number and size in the Northwest Atlantic lower troposphere, with
35 significant regional-mean (40-60 °N, 20-50 °W) aerosol-cloud albedo indirect effects (AIE) and
36 direct radiative effects (DRE) during the phytoplankton bloom. These key factors and their
37 associated radiative effects in the region are: (1) particle formation above/near the marine
38 boundary layer (MBL) top (AIE: -3.37 W m^{-2} , DRE: -0.62 W m^{-2}), (2) particle growth due to
39 marine secondary organic aerosol (MSOA) as the nascent particles subside into the MBL, enabling
40 them to become cloud-condensation-nuclei-size particles (AIE: -2.27 W m^{-2} , DRE: -0.10 W m^{-2}),
41 (3) particle formation/growth due to the products of dimethyl sulfide, above/within the MBL ($-$
42 1.29 W m^{-2} , DRE: -0.06 W m^{-2}), and (4) ship emissions (AIE: -0.62 W m^{-2} , DRE: -0.05 W m^{-2}).
43 Our results suggest a synergy of particle formation near the MBL top and growth by MSOA that
44 contributes strongly to cloud-condensation-nuclei-sized particles with significant regional
45 radiative effects in the Northwest Atlantic. Future work is needed to understand the sources and
46 temperature-dependence of condensable marine vapors forming MSOA and to understand the
47 species that can form new particles at the boundary layer top and grow these particles as they
48 descend into the marine boundary layer.

49

50 **1. Introduction**

51

52 Marine atmospheric particles have important roles in Earth's climate system. Similar to particles
53 in other regions, marine aerosols scatter and absorb solar radiation (Charlson et al., 1992), and
54 modify cloud properties by acting as the seeds for cloud droplet formation (Boucher and Haywood,
55 2000; Lohmann and Feichter, 2005). Aerosols in the atmosphere's marine boundary layer (MBL)
56 strongly influence the highly prevalent, low-altitude marine clouds, which have key climate
57 cooling effects due to their reflection of incoming solar radiation (Wood, 2012; Chen et al., 2014).
58 However, there remains high uncertainty about the magnitude of these aerosol effects (IPCC,
59 2013), due in part to limited understanding about the processes that control aerosols over Earth's
60 expansive and remote ocean surfaces (Willis et al., 2018). Marine aerosols are strongly influenced
61 by natural, but poorly understood sources, making a large contribution to uncertainty in aerosol-
62 climate effects (Carslaw et al., 2010; Carslaw et al., 2013). Limited observations of aerosols and
63 their precursors over Earth's remote marine regions contribute to these knowledge gaps. In this



64 study, we focus on investigation of factors controlling the seasonal cycle of aerosol size and
65 number and the resultant climate effects over the Northwest Atlantic Ocean.

66

67 Aerosol particles in the remote MBL have several seasonally varying sources (O'Dowd et al.,
68 2004; Leck and Bigg, 2005; de Leeuw et al., 2011; Karl et al., 2012). Primary particles are emitted
69 through wave breaking and bubble bursting processes that eject sea spray aerosols (SSA) of sea
70 salt and organic composition (Russell et al., 2010; de Leeuw et al., 2011; Ovadnevaite et al., 2011;
71 Gantt and Meskhidze, 2013; Prather et al., 2013; Hamacher-Barth et al., 2016; Brooks and
72 Thornton, 2018). SSA have a dependence on wind speed (Monahan et al., 1983; O'Dowd et al.,
73 1997; Ovadnevaite et al., 2012; Grassian et al., 2015; Brooks and Thornton, 2018; Saliba et al.,
74 2019) and sea surface temperature (Mårtensson et al., 2003; Jaeglé et al., 2011; Kasparian et al.,
75 2017; Saliba et al., 2019). For the North Atlantic, observations indicate that primary SSA make a
76 limited (less than 30%) contribution to cloud condensation nuclei (CCN) (Quinn et al., 2017,
77 Zheng et al., 2018; Quinn et al., 2019) with no direct connection between SSA emissions and
78 plankton ecosystems because the organic SSA appears to arise from the ocean's large pool of
79 dissolved organic carbon (Quinn et al., 2014; Bates et al., 2020). SSA, however, could modify the
80 CCN number that activate to form cloud droplets (Fossum et al., 2020), act as ice nuclei (Wilson
81 et al., 2015; DeMott et al., 2016; Irish et al., 2017), and be more closely linked with biogenic
82 activity in other regions (Ault et al., 2013; Cravigan et al., 2015; O'Dowd et al., 2015; Quinn et
83 al., 2015; Wang et al., 2015; Schiffer et al., 2018; Cravigan et al., 2019). For the North Atlantic,
84 secondary aerosol of biogenic origin is observed to be an important seasonally varying contributor
85 to marine particles and their growth to yield CCN (Sanchez et al., 2018). Marine secondary aerosol
86 can arise from the condensation of a variety of marine-vapor-oxidation products, which form and
87 grow particles (Ceburnis et al., 2008; Rinaldi et al., 2010; Decesari et al., 2011). Formation of new
88 aerosol particles in the marine environment is observed to be favored in clean atmospheric layers
89 just below the marine inversion and also above the MBL top (Kazil et al., 2011; Takegawa et al.,
90 2020). Newly formed particles can grow to CCN sizes (diameters larger than about 50 nm) through
91 the condensation of available organic and sulfur-containing vapors while descending in the MBL
92 (Korhonen et al., 2008). Once the particles reach CCN sizes, cloud processing (including aqueous
93 phase aerosol production, and cloud droplet coagulation with other droplets and interstitial
94 aerosols) also contributes to shaping the size distribution (Hoppel et al., 1986; Hoose et al., 2008;



95 Pierce et al., 2015). For the North Atlantic MBL, entrainment of growing new particles formed in
96 the relatively cleaner free troposphere is an important contributor to MBL particle number (Quinn
97 et al., 2017; Sanchez et al., 2018; Zheng et al., 2018). In the pristine conditions of the summertime
98 Arctic, both new particle formation (NPF) and growth (by condensation of organic and sulfur-
99 containing vapors) are frequently observed within the boundary layer itself (Leaitch et al., 2013;
100 Croft et al., 2016a; Willis et al., 2016; Collins et al., 2017; Burkart et al., 2017b). In addition to
101 sulfuric acid, other vapors including amines, methane sulfonic acid (MSA), ammonia, and iodine
102 all contribute to NPF in marine regions (O'Dowd, 2002; Facchini et al., 2008; Allan et al., 2015,
103 Chen et al., 2016; Croft et al., 2016a; Dall'Osto et al., 2018). Interpretation of a combination of
104 aircraft and ship-board observations with a size-resolved aerosol microphysics model is needed to
105 develop understanding of the relative importance of above-/near-MBL-top NPF as a contributor
106 to aerosol size distributions in the Northwest Atlantic MBL.

107

108 Dimethyl sulfide (DMS) is one of the key contributors to secondary particle formation and growth
109 that is released from the oceans as a result of marine biogenic activity (Lana et al., 2012a; Galí and
110 Simó, 2015; Sanchez et al., 2018). The oxidation products of DMS include sulfuric acid and MSA
111 (Barnes et al., 2006), which can form new particles and grow existing particles to sizes that can
112 act as CCN (Hoffman et al., 2016; Hodshire et al., 2019). As well, hydroperoxymethyl thioformate
113 (HPMTF) is a recently discovered DMS-oxidation product, which could also contribute to NPF
114 and growth (Veres et al., 2020). The role of DMS in the climate system has undergone much debate
115 since 1987 when the CLAW hypothesis proposed that DMS could act as a regulator in a warming
116 climate (Charlson et al., 1987). For the North Atlantic and Arctic, observations have linked DMS
117 to the formation of aerosols during the times of phytoplankton blooms (Rempillo et al., 2011;
118 Chang et al., 2011; Park et al., 2017; Sanchez et al., 2018; Abbatt et al., 2019; Quinn et al., 2019).
119 As well, modelling studies have supported a role for DMS, linked to phytoplankton blooms, as a
120 contributor to CCN number concentrations in the North Atlantic and Arctic MBLs (Woodhouse et
121 al., 2013; Zheng et al., 2018; Ghahremaninezhad et al., 2019; Mahmood et al., 2019) and Southern
122 Ocean MBL (Korhonen et al., 2008; McCoy et al., 2015; Revell et al., 2019). However, the extent
123 to which DMS can act as a climate regulator remains unclear (Schwinger et al., 2017; Fiddes et
124 al., 2018), and this role has been refuted (Quinn and Bates, 2011). Analysis of in situ observations



125 of DMS and its products across the seasonal cycle of marine biogenic activity and in various ocean
126 regions is needed to improve understanding related to the role of DMS in Earth's climate system.

127

128 Marine secondary organic aerosol (SOA) is another important contributor to sub-micron diameter
129 marine aerosols, but is not well characterized (Rinaldi et al., 2010). The oceans are a source of a
130 variety of organic vapors that could lead to SOA formation (O'Dowd and de Leeuw, 2007; Yassaa
131 et al., 2008; Carpenter et al., 2012; Lana et al. 2012b; Hu et al., 2013; Carpenter and Nightingale,
132 2015; Kim et al., 2017; Rodríguez-Ros et al., 2020a). Oxygenated volatile organic compounds
133 (OVOCs) recently linked to photochemical oxidative processes at the sea surface microlayer are
134 possible contributors to marine SOA (Mungall et al., 2017). Isoprene and monoterpenes appear to
135 make relatively minor contributions to marine SOA by mass, less than 1% for particles with
136 diameters smaller than 10 μm at Cape Grim (Cui et al., 2019). The global, annual source of organic
137 vapors from the oceans is highly uncertain, but current estimates are about 23.2 to 91.9 Tg C yr⁻¹
138 (Brüggemann et al., 2018). Laboratory studies indicate that emissions of marine organic vapors
139 increase with both temperature and incident radiation for temperatures up to about 26 °C
140 (Meskhidze et al., 2015). Recent observations and modeling studies support a role for Arctic
141 marine secondary organic aerosol (AMSOA) as a contributor to particle growth to CCN sizes
142 (Burkart et al., 2017a; Collins et al., 2017; Willis et al., 2017; Willis et al., 2018; Tremblay et al.,
143 2018; Leaitch et al., 2018; Croft et al., 2019; Abbatt et al., 2019). For the North Atlantic, organics
144 are also found to make a large contribution to particle growth to CCN sizes. (Sanchez et al., 2018;
145 Zheng et al., 2020a). The result of the above-noted processes is a large and complex pool of organic
146 aerosol in the marine environment with sources that vary seasonally and regionally (Cavalli et al.,
147 2004; Decesari et al., 2011; Cravigan et al., 2015; Liu et al., 2018; Leaitch et al., 2018).

148

149 Anthropogenic activity is also an important source of aerosols over the portions of the Earth's
150 oceans. For the North Atlantic, several previous studies (e.g. Savoie et al., 2002; Stohl et al., 2003;
151 Huntrieser et al., 2005; Fast et al., 2016) found a key role for synoptic scale motions in lifting
152 aerosols arising from North American continental emissions and transporting them in layers over
153 the North Atlantic with intrusions into the MBL. As well, ship traffic is an important source of
154 both particles and oxidants in the MBL (Corbett et al., 2007; Zanatta et al., 2019; Bilsback et al.,



155 submitted). Ship emissions of nitrogen oxides have a significant control on levels of oxidants such
156 as ozone, the hydroxyl radical (OH) and NO_3 in the MBL (Vinken et al., 2011; Holmes et al.,
157 2014). In the remote MBL, both OH and NO_3 are key oxidants of DMS, along with natural-source
158 halogens such as BrO, with an important role for multiphase chemistry (Chen et al., 2018).
159 Interpretation of aerosol observations across several seasons is needed to better understand the
160 relative contribution of ship emissions to marine particles in the Northwest Atlantic region.

161

162 In this study, as part of the Ocean Frontier Institute (www.oceanfrontierinstitute.com), we address
163 the knowledge gaps that were identified above, concerning several key factors shaping Northwest
164 Atlantic MBL aerosol size distributions and their seasonal cycle. We consider the role of (1) new
165 particle formation in clean atmospheric layers near/above the MBL top, (2) particle growth by
166 marine SOA (MSOA) on descent into the MBL, (3) DMS contributions and (4) ship traffic
167 emissions. Aerosol measurements from the North Atlantic Aerosols and Marine Ecosystems Study
168 (NAAMES) (Behrenfeld et al., 2019) provide an excellent basis for addressing the role of these
169 four factors in the Northwest Atlantic Ocean region. The NAAMES aircraft and ship campaigns
170 were conducted during four phases of the Northwest Atlantic annual plankton cycle from 2015-
171 2018. We interpret the NAAMES aerosol measurements using a state-of-the-science size-resolved
172 global aerosol microphysics model, GEOS-Chem-TOMAS (www.geos-chem.org). Our
173 synergistic approach in bringing together NAAMES measurements and size-resolved aerosol
174 process modeling enables a unique consideration of factors shaping Northwest Atlantic MBL
175 aerosol size distributions and their annual cycle. We also quantify the impact of these factors on
176 aerosol radiative effects over the North Atlantic.

177

178 The second section provides an overview of our measurement and modeling methodology. The
179 third section presents results using the GEOS-Chem-TOMAS model to interpret NAAMES
180 aerosol measurements and their seasonal cycle with a focus on the roles of above/near-MBL-top
181 NPF, MSOA, DMS and ship emissions. We also quantify the direct and cloud-albedo indirect
182 aerosol radiative effects attributed to each of these factors during the seasonal cycle. The final
183 section gives our summary and outlook.

184

185 **2. Methodology**

186



187 **2.1 Aerosol measurements during the NAAMES campaigns**

188

189 NAAMES campaigns were conducted during four key periods in the annual cycle of marine
190 biogenic activity, namely: the winter transition (November 2015), the accumulating phase
191 (March/April 2018), the climax transition (May/June 2016), and the declining phase
192 (August/September 2017) (Behrenfeld et al., 2019). These periods are defined by shifts in net
193 phytoplankton growth rates and span a wide range in phytoplankton biomass, here estimated from
194 chlorophyll-*a* concentrations (Chl-*a*). The winter transition is characterized by the annual
195 minimum in Chl-*a* concentrations (generally $< 1 \text{ mg m}^{-3}$) and a shift to favor phytoplankton growth
196 over loss as the increasing ocean mixed-layer depth leads to fewer encounters between
197 phytoplankton and their grazers. The accumulation phase occurs in early springtime when
198 increasing sunlight and decreasing ocean mixed layer depths promote increasing phytoplankton
199 growth rates and concentrations (Chl-*a* between 1 and 2 mg m^{-3}). The climax transition is the time
200 of the annual maximum in phytoplankton biomass (Chl-*a* between 2 and 9 mg m^{-3}) and marks the
201 shift from positive to negative growth rates owing to high grazing rates and depletion of nutrients.
202 The declining phase (Chl-*a* between 1 and 2 mg m^{-3}) occurs later in the summertime when the
203 ocean mixed layer depth increases and incident sunlight decreases, leading to further declines in
204 phytoplankton growth and concentrations. Behrenfeld et al. (2019) provide an overview of the four
205 measurement campaigns, and further details about Chl-*a* during NAAMES. The R/V Atlantis
206 cruise tracks and NASA C130 flight paths are shown in Figure 1. Due to aircraft mechanical
207 problems, there were no flights in 2018 during the accumulating phase.

208

209 In this study, we examine the NAAMES size-resolved aerosol measurements (particle diameters
210 20 to 500 nm) from the Scanning Electrical Mobility Sizer (SEMS, Model 138, 2002, BMI,
211 Hayward, CA) aboard the R/V Atlantis ship. Aerosol particles were isokinetically drawn through
212 an inlet positioned 18 m above sea level (Bates et al. 2002) and were subsequently dried below
213 20% relative humidity using silica diffusion driers prior to sampling by the SEMS. Clean marine
214 periods were identified with criteria of relative wind directions within 90° of the bow, condensation
215 nuclei number concentrations less than 2000 cm^{-3} , ammonium and organic aerosol not covarying,
216 ammonium $< 100 \text{ ng m}^{-3}$ and having back trajectories primarily over the ocean surface. We also
217 consider aerosol size-resolved measurements (particle diameters 10 to 282 nm) from the Scanning



218 Mobility Particle Sizer (SMPS, TSI Inc., Shoreview, MN) aboard the C130 aircraft. As well, we
219 give attention to measurements of total particle number concentration from the Condensation
220 Particle Counters (CPCs) with differing nominal lower detection diameters: 3 nm for the CPC
221 3025 and 10 nm for the CPC 3772 (TSI Inc., St. Paul, MN) aboard the C130 aircraft. We also
222 consider submicron, non-refractory sulfate (SO_4^-) and organic mass (OM) concentrations from an
223 Aerodyne High Resolution Time-of-Flight Aerosol Mass Spectrometer (HR-ToF-AMS, DeCarlo
224 et al., 2006) and refractory black carbon from the Single Particle Soot Photometer (SP2, Schwarz
225 et al., 2006) aboard the aircraft. HR-ToF-AMS and SP2 measurements are restricted to
226 accumulation-mode aerosol (60-600 nm and 105-600 nm diameter, respectively). All aircraft
227 observations are made behind a forward-facing, shrouded, solid diffuser inlet that efficiently
228 transmits particles with aerodynamic diameter less than $5.0 \mu\text{m}$ to cabin-mounted instrumentation
229 (McNaughton et al., 2007). Cloud-contaminated aerosol observations have been removed using a
230 combination of wing-mounted cloud probe and relative humidity measurements. This filtering may
231 possibly obscure some NPF events in proximity to clouds and remove some cloud-processed
232 samples from the vertical profiles. Aerosol number and mass concentrations are reported at
233 standard temperature and pressure. A Proton-Transfer-Reaction Time-of-Flight Mass
234 Spectrometer (PTR-ToF-MS) (Müller et al, 2014; Schiller, 2018) was used aboard the NASA C-
235 130 to measure volatile organic compounds including DMS and acetonitrile. Both observational
236 and model data for periods where acetonitrile concentrations exceed 200 ppt are filtered out
237 following Singh et al. (2012) to remove significant biomass burning contributions that are not the
238 focus of this study.

239

240 **2.2 GEOS-Chem-TOMAS model description**

241

242 We use the GEOS-Chem model (v12.1.1) (<http://www.geos-chem.org>) coupled to the Two
243 Moment Aerosol Sectional (TOMAS) microphysics scheme (Adams and Seinfeld, 2002; Lee and
244 Adams, 2012; Kodros and Pierce, 2017), with 15 sections, representing particle sizes from 3 nm
245 to $10 \mu\text{m}$. All simulations in this study are at a $4^\circ \times 5^\circ$ resolution with 47 vertical levels extending
246 to 0.01 hPa. The meteorological fields are from the GEOS Forward Processing off-line fields
247 (GEOS-FP; https://gmao.gsfc.nasa.gov/GMAO_products/). Our size-resolved aerosol simulations



248 parameterize the processes of particle nucleation, coagulation, condensation, along with wet and
249 dry deposition and include the in-cloud aerosol coagulation scheme of Pierce et al. (2015). Sulfate,
250 organic and black carbon, sea salt, dust and aerosol water are simulated. TOMAS is coupled to the
251 full tropospheric aerosol/chemistry scheme of GEOS-Chem. Wet deposition follows Liu et al.
252 (2001), Wang et al. (2011) and Wang et al. (2014). To represent efficient wet removal by North
253 Atlantic drizzle in October and November, we implement a fixed in-cloud removal efficiency of
254 0.001 s^{-1} in the lowest 2 km of the model atmosphere over the ice-free ocean and enable wet
255 removal of sulfate and organic aerosol in clouds with temperatures between 237 K and 258 K. In
256 all seasons, we use the GEOS-FP cloud fraction as the precipitation fraction in the model layers
257 where precipitation occurs for a closer connection with the meteorological fields (Croft et al.,
258 2016b; Luo et al., 2019; Luo et al., 2020). Dry deposition uses the resistance in series approach of
259 Wesley (1989). Simulated gas-phase species are also removed by dry and wet deposition as
260 described in Amos et al. (2012).

261 Particle nucleation is parameterized with the ternary ($\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4\text{-NH}_3\text{-H}_2\text{O}$) scheme of Napari et al.
262 (2002), which was scaled by 10^{-5} to better match boundary-layer measurements (Westervelt, 2013)
263 and the binary ($\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4\text{-H}_2\text{O}$) scheme of Vehkamäki et al. (2002) at low NH_3 concentrations.
264 Growth and loss of particles smaller than 3 nm are approximated following Kerminen et al. (2004).
265 As a surrogate for unparameterized processes near the MBL top, we also employ an activation-
266 type nucleation parameterization from the MBL top to about 2 km altitude. This activation-type
267 scheme parameterizes nucleation rates as a linear function of sulfuric acid concentrations, using
268 an empirical factor ($A = 2 \times 10^{-6} \text{ s}^{-1}$) (Kulmala et al., 2006; Sihto et al., 2006), and serves as a
269 proxy representing the following unknown/unparameterized mechanisms related to NPF. Pockets
270 of very clean air with low condensation sink near MBL clouds, which favor new particle formation
271 (Kazil et al., 2011), are not resolved by large-scale models such as ours, with grid boxes on the
272 scale of 100s km^2 . Efficient wet removal by drizzling MBL clouds contributes to these pristine
273 conditions (Wood et al., 2017). As well, MBL clouds reflect ultraviolet (UV) radiation and create
274 pockets of enhanced UV, which favors photochemical production of aerosol precursor vapors
275 (Weber et al., 2001; Wehner et al., 2015), and are not resolved by our model. Additionally, the
276 particle nucleating capacity of MSA is unclear and particle formation parameterizations are not
277 yet developed to represent NPF when several gas-phase precursors interact. These precursors



278 include, but are not limited to, MSA (Chen et al., 2016), HPMTF (Veres et al., 2020), amines
279 (Facchini et al., 2008), iodine (Allan et al., 2015), and other extremely low-volatility organic
280 compounds (ELVOCs) (Riccobono et al., 2014).

281

282 For emissions, we use the GEOS-Chem v 12.1.1 default setup for gas-phase and primary aerosol
283 emissions. We use emissions from the Community Emissions Data System (CEDS) for global
284 anthropogenic sources of NO_x, CO, SO₂, NH₃, non-methane VOCs, black carbon, and organic
285 carbon, including from international shipping as a source of both primary and secondary particles.
286 Primary particles are emitted with a lognormal distribution (Lee et al., 2013). The most recent
287 CEDS emissions dataset extends to the year 2017, as described in McDuffie et al. (2020). In this
288 work, monthly CEDS emission totals for each compound are spatially gridded by source sector,
289 according to the 0.1° × 0.1° gridded EDGAR v4.2 emissions inventory (EC-JRC/PBL, 2012) and
290 population, as described in Hoesly et al. (2018). To account for in-plume chemical processing of
291 ship emissions, we use the PARANOX scheme of Holmes et al. (2014). CEDS emissions are
292 overwritten over the United States by the National Emissions Inventory (NEI11) with updated
293 scale factors for our simulation years (2015-2018). We calculated these factors based on emission
294 data for these years from the United States Environmental Protection Agency. Over Canada, we
295 use the Air Pollutant Emissions Inventory (APEI). The Global Fire Emissions Database (GFED4s)
296 is used for biomass burning emissions (van der Werf et al., 2017) for the years 2015-2016, with
297 GFED4s climatological values for 2017 and 2018 since exact-year emissions were not available
298 when we conducted our simulations. Sea salt emissions follow Jaeglé et al. (2011). A coupled
299 parameterization for primary organic aerosol from sea spray was not available for our aerosol size-
300 resolved GEOS-Chem-TOMAS simulations, such that some organics could be misrepresented as
301 sea salt. Such primary organic emissions are expected to have no seasonal cycle when averaged
302 over the NAAMES region (Bates et al., 2020). Dust emissions are from the scheme of Zender et
303 al. (2003).

304

305 Exchange of DMS between the ocean and atmosphere is parameterized using the default GEOS-
306 Chem parameterization, which follows Johnson (2010), largely based on Nightingale et al. (2000a;
307 2000b). We use the 8-day mean satellite-retrieval seawater DMS dataset of Galí et al. (2019)
308 developed using the methodology of Galí et al. (2018), for available years (2015 and 2016) for the



309 region north of about 40 °N. The Lana et al. (2011) DMS climatology is used elsewhere. Terrestrial
310 biogenic emissions are from MEGAN2.1 as described in Guenther et al. (2012). Following Croft
311 et al. (2019), we add a source of MSOA coupled to the simple SOA scheme described in Pai et al.
312 (2020). Emissions of MSOA-precursor vapors have been found to increase with temperature
313 (Meskhidze et al., 2015; Rodríguez-Ros et al., 2020a; Rodríguez-Ros et al., 2020b). Here, we use
314 a temperature-dependent simulated source of MSOA-precursor emissions (S_{MSOA}), $S_{\text{MSOA}} = 70T$
315 $+ 350 \text{ kg m}^{-2} \text{ d}^{-1}$, where T is atmospheric temperature (°C) at 2 m altitude. The values of 70 and
316 350 are found to yield acceptable model-measurement agreement for the campaign-median ship-
317 track aerosol size distributions (Supplementary Fig. S1 and Table S1). The selected
318 parameterization also yielded agreement generally within the 25th to 75th percentiles of
319 measurements in the lowest 1 km of the atmosphere for the campaign-median vertical profiles of
320 total aerosol number (diameters larger than 3 nm, 10 nm, and between 3 and 10 nm) and integrated
321 SMPS number, as well as in the near-surface OM concentrations (Figs. S2-S4). This simulated
322 source of condensable vapors is emitted with a 50/50 split between vapors that are immediately
323 available to form MSOA and vapors with 1-day aging prior to availability (and not susceptible to
324 wet removal). MSOA contributes to particle growth in our simulations (in agreement with
325 observational-based studies e.g. Sanchez et al., 2018; Zheng et al., 2020a), along with sulfuric
326 acid, but since the particle nucleating abilities of MSOA are unclear, it does not contribute to new-
327 particle formation.

328

329 We also conduct off-line radiative transfer calculations using the Rapid Radiative Transfer Model
330 for Global Climate Models (RRTMG) (Iacono et al., 2008) to assess the direct radiative effect
331 (DRE) and cloud-albedo aerosol indirect effect (AIE). The aerosol optical properties are calculated
332 using the Mie code of Bohren and Hoffman (1983) to find the extinction efficiency, single
333 scattering albedo, and asymmetry factor. Then, these optical properties, along with the monthly
334 mean cloud fraction and surface albedo from the GEOS-FP meteorology fields, are input to the
335 RRTMG to determine the change in top-of-the-atmosphere solar flux (DRE) between two
336 simulations (our control simulation and one of the sensitivity simulations, Sect. 2.3). Our DRE
337 calculations follow Kodros et al. (2016), with updates to include ammonium nitrate as described
338 in Bilsback et al. (submitted). All particles except black carbon are treated as internally mixed
339 within each size section. We also calculate the cloud-albedo aerosol indirect effect (AIE) as



340 described in Kodros et al. (2016), Croft et al. (2016a) and Ramnarine et al. (2019). The Abdul-
341 Razzak and Ghan (2002) parameterization is used to calculate offline cloud droplet number
342 concentrations (CDNC) using the aerosol mass and number concentrations from our simulations.
343 We assume an updraft velocity of 0.5 m s^{-1} and the hygroscopicity parameters used by Kodros et
344 al. (2016) and Kodros and Pierce (2017), assuming aerosol internal mixture, including ammonium
345 nitrate following Bilsback et al. (submitted). For each model grid box, we assume cloud droplet
346 radii of $10 \mu\text{m}$ and perturb this value with the ratio of the monthly mean CDNC between two
347 simulations (our control simulation and one of the sensitivity simulations, Sect. 2.3), assuming
348 constant cloud liquid water content. The RRTMG is used to calculate the change in the top-of-the-
349 atmosphere solar flux (AIE) due to changes in cloud droplet radii.

350

351 As one evaluation of simulation performance, we calculate the mean fractional error (MFE) of the
352 0th to 3rd moments between the simulated and observed MBL aerosol size distributions, following
353 Boylan and Russell (2006) and using the same methodology as Hodshire et al. (2019) and Croft et
354 al., (2019). The MFE is defined as a mean over the N aerosol size distribution moments,

355

$$356 \quad \text{MFE} = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=0}^{N-1} \frac{\text{abs}|C_m(i) - C_o(i)|}{(C_m(i) + C_o(i))/2} \quad (1)$$

357

358 where $C_m(i)$ is the integrated value of the i^{th} moment of the simulated aerosol size distribution and
359 $C_o(i)$ is the integrated value of the i^{th} moment of the observed aerosol size distribution. The MFE
360 can range from 0 to +2. A MFE less than 0.5 is considered acceptable (Boylan and Russell, 2006).

361

362 **2.3 Summary of GEOS-Chem-TOMAS simulations**

363

364 Table 1 summarizes the simulations conducted. Simulation BASE is our control simulation and
365 includes all emissions and process parameterizations described above. We conduct four sensitivity
366 simulations to examine the role of several key factors involved in shaping the aerosol distributions
367 within the NAAMES study region. Simulation noABLNUC is the same as BASE, except without
368 the sulfuric acid-dependent activation-type surrogate nucleation parameterization, which we
369 implemented from the MBL top to about 2 km. Simulation noMSOA is the same as BASE, but
370 without the source of temperature-dependent condensable marine organic vapors, forming MSOA.



371 Simulation noDMS is the same as BASE, but without DMS. Finally, simulation noSHIPS is the
372 same as BASE, but without any ship emissions. All simulations are sampled using hourly output
373 along the NAAMES aircraft and ship tracks, using the NAAMES campaigns' 1-minute-resolution
374 navigation data.

375

376 **3. Results and Discussion**

377

378 **3.1 Key features of aerosols observed during NAAMES**

379

380 Aerosol observations made during the NAAMES campaigns were in four seasons, capturing
381 different stages of the annual cycle of Northwest Atlantic marine biogenic activity (Behrenfeld et
382 al., 2019). Figure 2 shows the campaign-median marine-influenced aerosol size distributions from
383 SEMS for the four R/V Atlantis cruises. November 2015 (winter transition, bloom minima) is
384 characterized by the lowest aerosol number concentrations. The peak of the Northwest Atlantic
385 drizzle season occurs at this time, with efficient wet removal of accumulation-sized aerosol
386 (diameters larger than about 50 to 100 nm) (Browse et al., 2012). As well, relative to other the
387 seasons, marine biogenic emissions are low at this time of minimal phytoplankton biomass. The
388 summertime observations during both May/June 2016 (climax transition, phytoplankton bloom
389 maxima) and August/September 2017 (declining phase) are characterized by a weakly dominant
390 Aitken mode (particle diameters < 100 nm). The winter transition (November 2015) and early
391 spring accumulation phase observations (March/April 2018) are characterized by the dominance
392 of accumulation-mode aerosols (particle diameters > 100 nm).

393

394 The vertical profiles of campaign-median integrated-SMPS (particle diameters of 10 to 282 nm)
395 observations are shown in Fig. 3. There are several key features of the observed aerosol vertical
396 profiles for the three NAAMES flight campaigns. These profiles exhibit particle number maxima
397 at about 1 km altitude during the May/June climax transition period. However, as shown in Fig. 3,
398 the aerosol surface and volume have a relative minimum at about 1-2 km. Lower particle surface
399 area favors new-particle formation over growth of pre-existing particles as available vapors
400 condense in these relatively cleaner atmospheric layers (Kazil et al., 2011). Transport of aerosols
401 (in part associated with continental emissions) is evident in all seasons at about 4-5 km altitude.



402 This is similar to the altitude of North Atlantic transport layers found by Fast et al. (2016). The
403 late fall (November 2015) is characterized by the lowest aerosol number, surface and volume
404 concentrations, similar to the findings shown in Fig. 2.

405

406 Figure 4 shows the vertical-profile campaign-median total particle number concentrations from
407 CPC, for aerosols with diameters larger than 3 nm (N3), larger than 10 nm (N10), and the
408 difference between the two (N3-N10). For the May/June 2016 climax transition (phytoplankton
409 bloom maximum), there is a strong enhancement in observed number concentration and variability
410 of sub-10 nm particles (N3-N10) between about 1 and 2 km altitude, indicating NPF at these
411 altitudes (Fig. 4, right column). This feature is near the MBL top, which ranged from about 0.5 to
412 2 km for the NAAMES cruises (Behrenfeld et al., 2019). Previous studies based on observations
413 from other marine regions have also found a cloud-processed ultra-clean layer with weak
414 condensation/coagulation sinks at about 1 km altitude, where NPF is favored (Kazil et al., 2011;
415 Takegawa et al., 2020). Figure 4 also shows enhancements in the observed N3 and N10
416 concentrations near and below 2 km during the summer months (climax transition and declining
417 phase). There is a relatively weaker N3, N10 and N3-N10 enhancement at about 2-3 km during
418 the winter transition (bloom minima). These low-altitude total number concentration
419 enhancements are most pronounced for during the phytoplankton bloom maximum, illustrating the
420 close connection between particle number and the level of marine biogenic activity.

421

422 SO_4^- and OM are dominant non-refractory components of the submicron-diameter aerosols, and
423 vertical profiles of campaign-median observations are shown on Fig. 5. During the summertime
424 (May/June 2016, climax transition and August/September 2017, declining phase), the OM
425 contribution exceeds that of SO_4^- at all altitudes up to 6 km. Non-refractory SO_4^- has its peak
426 contribution during the climax transition season. This May/June phytoplankton bloom maxima
427 period is the time of peak observed near-surface atmospheric DMS mixing ratios, as shown in Fig.
428 6. During the climax transition (bloom maxima), non-refractory SO_4^- concentrations increase
429 towards the surface, suggesting a marine surface source, similar to summertime Arctic marine
430 profile observations (Willis et al., 2017). Black carbon (BC) concentrations are also shown in Fig.
431 5 and are highest in the free troposphere for each NAAMES season, consistent with a long-range
432 transport source. BC concentrations peak in May/June, likely associated with greater transport of



433 anthropogenic continental pollution and biomass burning during this time, relative to other
434 seasons. Springtime has also been associated with peak BC concentrations in the Arctic due to
435 long-range transport (Sharma et al., 2004; Sharma et al., 2006; Fisher et al., 2010; Wang et al.,
436 2011; Xu et al., 2017). All aerosol mass concentrations in the lowest 2 km of the atmosphere (Fig.
437 5) are lowest in the November 2015 winter transition, which is a time of efficient wet removal by
438 drizzle (Browse et al., 2012; Wood et al., 2017), diminishing marine emissions due to diminishing
439 phytoplankton biomass, and outbreaks of relatively less polluted polar air advected down the
440 Labrador Strait (Behrenfeld et al., 2019). For the Arctic, the fall season has also been associated
441 with a relative minimum in aerosol number concentrations (Tunved et al., 2013; Croft et al.,
442 2016b).

443

444 The GEOS-Chem-TOMAS model (described in Sect. 2.2 and 2.3) is generally able to simulate the
445 above-noted features of the aerosols over the Northwest Atlantic. Simulation BASE captures key
446 aspects of the MBL size distributions including the minimum in aerosol number during the
447 November winter transition, the weakly dominant Aitken mode during the May/June climax
448 transition and August/September declining phase and the maximum in number of accumulation-
449 mode particles (diameters greater than 100 nm) during the March/April accumulation phase (Fig.
450 2). As well, the BASE simulation captures the lower tropospheric enhancements in particle number
451 concentration, although the simulated altitude for the maximum is sometimes displaced by a few
452 100 m (Figs. 3 and 4). In the lowest 2 km of the atmosphere, SO_4^- , OM, and BC mass
453 concentrations for simulation BASE are generally within the 25th to 75th measurement percentiles,
454 except for BC and OM underpredictions in May/June 2016, and OM overprediction in November
455 2015. All simulated SO_4^- presented in this study is non-sea-salt SO_4^- . Simulation BASE also
456 captures that the near-surface SO_4^- is greatest during the May/June climax transition and the near-
457 surface OM has its maximum value during the August/September declining phase. In the next four
458 sub-sections, we use the GEOS-Chem-TOMAS BASE simulation, relative to a set of sensitivity
459 simulations, to examine the potential of four key factors to shape aerosol size distributions in the
460 Northwest Atlantic during four stages of the annual cycle of marine biogenic activity.

461

462 **3.2 Role of new particle formation (NPF) near the MBL top**

463



464 Our simulations (BASE relative to noABLNUC, Fig. 4) suggest that NPF near/above the MBL has
465 a strong control on the development of the total particle number maxima near 1 km altitude, with
466 peak magnitude during the phytoplankton bloom maxima. This is particularly evident when
467 considering the N3-N10 concentrations in May/June (right column, Fig. 4). Figure 3 shows that
468 this NPF makes a significant contribution to simulated particle number concentrations for aerosol
469 diameters of 10 to 282 nm in the lowest 2 km of the atmosphere, most strongly in May/June (BASE
470 relative to noABLNUC). There is very little impact on aerosol mass concentrations for simulation
471 noABLNUC relative to BASE (Fig. 5).

472

473 NPF near/above the MBL top also makes a very strong indirect contribution to the simulated
474 aerosol size distributions within the MBL near the ocean surface (BASE versus noABLNUC, Fig.
475 2). In our simulations, NPF occurs near and above the MBL top, then the resultant particles grow
476 by condensation of available vapors and cloud processing while descending into the MBL. As a
477 result, the MBL-top NPF process contributes indirectly to near-ocean-surface particles, with
478 diameters from 20 to 200 nm. Table 2 shows that for all seasons, the MFE is acceptable (< 0.5 ,
479 following Boylan and Russell, (2006) with the surrogate nucleation (simulation BASE), and BASE
480 represents an improvement over simulation noABLNUC (without this surrogate NPF
481 parameterization).

482

483 **3.3 Role of particle growth by condensing marine organic vapors**

484

485 Condensing marine organic vapors forming MSOA are needed in our simulations (in addition to
486 H_2SO_4) for sufficient particle growth to yield satisfactory model-measurement agreement for MBL
487 size distributions (BASE versus noMSOA, Fig. 2). For simulation noMSOA, the model
488 overpredicts the number of particles with diameters smaller than about 30 nm in the MBL. Due to
489 insufficient particle growth of these sub-30 nm particles, the number of particles with diameters
490 between about 30 to 200 nm is underpredicted by more than 50% for simulation noMSOA.

491

492 In our simulations, MSOA enables particle growth to CCN sizes (diameters of about 50 nm or
493 larger). After particles reach CCN sizes, cloud processing can also contribute to simulated particle
494 growth towards accumulation-mode particles (diameters of 100-1000 nm) due to aqueous-phase



495 aerosol production. Other cloud processes include coagulation of cloud droplets with each other
496 and with interstitial aerosols (Hoose et al., 2008; Pierce et al., 2015). Our simulations include the
497 latter and aqueous-phase sulfate production. As clouds evaporate, cloud processing leads to
498 development of the ‘Hoppel minima’ of the MBL aerosol size distributions (Hoppel et al., 1987),
499 which the minimum aerosol diameter that activates to form a cloud droplet (about 50-70 nm for
500 the observations in Fig. 2). This minimum diameter is smallest in the winter transition (November
501 2015), suggesting that smaller particles activated under the very clean condition of this season
502 relative to the other seasons. As shown by Table 2, simulation noMSOA has an unacceptable
503 annual-mean MFE of 0.63, larger than the MFE of 0.23 for simulation BASE, which includes
504 particle growth due to MSOA.

505

506 The nature and flux of marine vapors forming MSOA are not well understood. As a result, we
507 developed a simplistic MSOA parameterization for use in this study, such that the MSOA
508 precursors vapor emissions are an increasing function of temperature. This approach yields a
509 seasonal cycle, and is in agreement with the temperature dependence trend found by previous
510 studies, including Meskhidze et al. (2015), Rodríguez-Ros et al. (2020a) and Rodríguez-Ros et al.,
511 2020b). However, future work is needed to examine the impact of this parameterization on the
512 simulated aerosol number, size and seasonal cycle in other ocean regions. We caution that the
513 current parameterization was developed for the NAAMES study region. We find that the simulated
514 NAAMES cruise-track median aerosol size distributions are sensitive to the coefficients used in
515 the parameterization ($S_{\text{MSOA}} = 70T - 350 \text{ kg m}^{-2} \text{ d}^{-1}$) (Supplemental Fig. S1 and Table S1). For
516 example, varying the temperature sensitivity between 50-100 and the intercept between 300-500
517 change the simulated number concentration of particles with diameters larger than 50 nm in the
518 MBL by up to a factor of two, with the greatest sensitivity during the summertime (Supplemental
519 Fig. S1). The vertical profiles also have a seasonally varying sensitivity of up to a factor of about
520 2 for aerosol number (N3, N10, and N3-N10), surface area, volume and OM on average in the
521 lowest 2 km of the atmosphere (Supplemental Figs. S2-4).

522

523 The near-surface campaign-median climax transition and declining phase OM concentrations are
524 within the 25th to 75th measurement percentiles for simulation BASE, and below the 25th percentile
525 of the observations for simulation noMSOA (Fig. 5). On average over the lowest 2 km of the



526 atmosphere during the May/June climax transition and August/September declining phase,
527 simulation BASE relative to noMSOA indicates that MSOA contributes about 200-400 ng m⁻³ to
528 simulated OM. Saliba et al. (submitted) suggest that MBL-measurement non-refractory OM during
529 NAAMES clean marine periods provides a good estimate of MSOA. Their seasonal-average non-
530 refractory OM of about 300-400 ng m⁻³ for the 2016 May/June climax transition and 2017
531 August/September declining phase is similar to our model result. The model-measurement
532 agreement for OM for 2017 is influenced by significant biomass burning with high altitude
533 emission injections during this time (Zheng et al., 2020b; Saliba et al., submitted). Errors in the
534 simulated emissions due to use of a GFED climatological-year emissions and injection-height
535 errors could account for some of the model-measurement bias at high altitudes. As well, despite
536 our implementation of a filter to remove measurement and model samples with strong in-plume
537 aerosol enhancements during times of high acetonitrile concentrations, some biomass burning
538 influence still affects the presented vertical profiles. Below 500 m altitude, condensing organic
539 vapors yielding MSOA also increase the simulated aerosol surface area and volume by a factor of
540 about 2-3 in all seasons (noMSOA versus BASE, Fig. 3), to be slightly over the 75th percentile of
541 the observations (Fig. 3). Surface area and volume results from the simulation are very sensitive
542 to the size-distribution simulation near the 282 nm diameter cut-off contributes to differences
543 between these simulations.

544

545 Figure 4 demonstrates that MSOA has a feedback on NPF. With lower aerosol surface area and
546 lower condensation sink (noMSOA), the N3 and N3-N10 below 2 km altitude are strongly
547 overpredicted because NPF increases and a lack of growth to larger sizes impacting N3-N10.
548 During November, the N3 and N3-N10 overprediction also occurs at altitudes above 2 km because
549 MSOA has a relatively greater influence on aerosol surface area at those altitudes in this season
550 (Fig. 3). In this less-polluted late fall season, the influence of MSOA is relatively stronger at higher
551 altitudes than in other seasons. Model-measurement agreement improves for N3 and N3-N10 with
552 the addition of MSOA (simulation BASE relative to noMSOA, Fig. 4). Kazil et al. (2011) also
553 found that condensing vapors generate a condensation sink that moderates the level of NPF in the
554 marine environment. As well, recent studies from the Arctic indicate a key contribution to particles
555 from condensing marine organic vapors (Burkart et al., 2017a; Willis et al., 2017; Croft et al.,
556 2019). The impact of MSOA on the simulated N10 vertical profiles is small. The cloud filtering,



557 which we applied to the model and measurement aerosol samples along the flight track,
558 preferentially removes some of the cloud-processed samples, and contributes to this result.

559

560 **3.4 Role of DMS**

561

562 Figure 2 shows that DMS also has a significant control on the simulated MBL aerosol size
563 distributions (BASE versus noDMS) for the four seasons of the NAAMES campaigns. The relative
564 impact of DMS is greatest during the times of greater marine biogenic activity (May/June climax
565 transition and August/September declining phase). Sulfuric acid from the oxidation of DMS has a
566 two-fold role in both NPF and in growing particles. However, as indicated by simulations
567 noABLNUC and noMSOA relative to BASE (Fig. 2), the DMS contribution is in concert with
568 both (1) a source of condensable marine organic vapors and (2) NPF near/above the MBL top. The
569 contribution of DMS to MBL particles is consistent with the findings of many previous studies,
570 including Chang et al. (2011), Ghahremaninezhad et al. (2016), Park et al. (2018), Sanchez et al.
571 (2018), Mahmood et al. (2019), Quinn et al. (2019) and Veres et al. (2020).

572

573 Simulation noABLNUC relative to noDMS for the marine-influenced MBL size distributions (Fig.
574 2) suggests that anthropogenic influences make a contribution as a source of particle-precursor
575 vapors for NPF, in addition to DMS. This relative contribution is particularly strong during the
576 accumulation phase (March/April 2018). In our simulations, anthropogenic SO₂ is oxidized to
577 H₂SO₄ and contributes to the particle precursors for NPF above/near the MBL top (in addition to
578 DMS oxidation products), followed by particle growth on descent into the MBL. As a result, Fig.
579 2 shows a greater underprediction of aerosol number for simulation noABLNUC versus noDMS.

580

581 Figure 6 indicates that the simulated DMS is generally consistent (within 10-50%) with the
582 observed DMS mixing ratio vertical profiles and their seasonal cycle for the NAAMES campaigns.
583 DMS makes the strongest contribution to simulated sulfate mass concentrations in the lowest 2 km
584 during the May/June climax transition, reducing model-measurement bias from about 40% to 10%
585 (Fig. 5). Figures 3 and 4 suggest that in the lowest 2 km of the atmosphere, DMS contributes to
586 both NPF and particle growth as there are increases in N₃, N₁₀, N₃-N₁₀, particle surface area and



587 volume for simulations BASE versus noDMS. However, this behavior is co-dependent on
588 conditions favorable to NPF near the MBL top and a source of MSOA.

589

590 **3.5 Role of ship traffic emissions**

591

592 Ship emissions are a source of primary and secondary particles, as well as a control on oxidants
593 (Corbett et al., 2010; Vinken et al., 2011; Holmes et al., 2014). Our simulations suggest that ship
594 emissions have a modest control on the NAAMES-region MBL marine-influenced aerosol size
595 distributions (Fig. 2, noSHIPS versus BASE), versus the factors discussed in the previous three
596 sub-sections. Ship emissions make about a 50% contribution to the simulated sulfate campaign-
597 median near-surface mass concentration in vertical profiles over the NAAMES study region (Fig.
598 5). For our simulations the impact of ship emissions on particle number is mostly limited to the
599 lowest 2 km. Simulation BASE relative to noSHIPS suggest that about 10% of the N10 in the
600 lowest 500 m of the atmosphere is attributed to ship emissions (Fig. 4). Figure 4 (right column)
601 indicates that among the four factors considered by our sensitivity studies, ship emissions have the
602 smallest influence on the NPF. Major trans-Atlantic ship traffic routes (Corbett et al. (2007) are
603 included in the NAMES study region. Enhancements in observed benzene mixing ratios in the
604 MBL (Fig. S5) relative to other long-lived tracers of anthropogenic emissions such as acetone (not
605 associated with ship traffic) (Fig. S6) are observational evidence that ship emissions influence the
606 study region.

607

608 Figure 6 demonstrates that atmospheric DMS mixing ratios are also sensitive to ship emissions.
609 This effect occurs because ship emissions are a control on oxidants in the MBL, and enhance OH
610 and NO₃, which are chemical sinks of DMS. As a result, simulated DMS mixing ratios increase
611 when ship emissions are removed. As ship traffic is expected to change in future years with
612 changes to routes and regulations (Gilgen et al., 2018; Bilsback et al. (submitted)), the relative
613 importance of ship emissions in the North Atlantic MBL will likely change.

614

615 **3.6 Radiative effects attributed to NPF near MBL top, MSOA, DMS and ship emissions**

616



617 Figure 7 shows the simulated two-monthly mean direct radiative effect (DRE) attributed to the
618 four factors we consider, (1) NPF near/above the MBL top, (2) MSOA, (3) DMS and (4) ship
619 emissions and magnitude of the regional-mean DREs over a region of the North Atlantic (40-60
620 °N, 20-50 °W). We note that the radiative effects attributed to the separate factors are not linearly
621 additive because the factors impact each other non-linearly. For example, turning off either MSOA
622 or nucleation above the boundary layer would shut down the majority of the production of
623 accumulation-mode particles in the MBL (Fig. 2) since these particles require both nucleation and
624 growth. Hence, adding the radiative effects from these two factors would result in double counting
625 some radiative effects.

626

627 The strongest DRE values attributed to the four considered factors are during the summer season
628 (climax transition (bloom maxima) and declining phase). This result highlights the link between
629 the level of marine biogenic activity and aerosol climate effects. Figure 7 indicates that the
630 strongest calculated DRE is attributed to condensing marine organic vapors, yielding MSOA. In
631 our simulations, MSOA contributes significantly to particle growth to diameters of about 100 to
632 200 nm, which can then interact directly with radiation (Fig. 2). This effect is greatest in the
633 declining phase because we used a temperature-dependent parameterization and sea surface
634 temperatures are warmest during the late summer. The DRE geographic distribution suggests an
635 increasing role for MSOA towards southern latitudes, again due to the temperature-dependent
636 parameterization. Further work is needed to examine the role of MSOA in the more southerly
637 latitudes as we cannot explicitly test this result across the annual cycle with the NAAMES
638 observations.

639

640 Among the factors considered, Figure 7 shows that during the time of the May/June phytoplankton
641 bloom, the aerosols produced and grown by the oxidation products of DMS have the second
642 strongest impact on the DRE, greatest over the regions where the bloom is located. This simulated
643 impact of DMS relies in part on (1) conditions favoring NPF processes above/near the MBL top,
644 and (2) growth by MSOA as the nascent DMS-related particles descend in the MBL.

645

646 The DRE attributed to the above/near-MBL-top NPF factor (Fig. 7, top row, ABLNUC) is
647 strongest in summertime, during the May/June climax transition (bloom maxima) and



648 August/September declining phase. Summertime is the season of the greatest photochemical
649 production of particle precursors for NPF. In order to contribute to the DRE, this NPF factor acts
650 in synergy with the other factors, particularly DMS as a source of particle precursors and MSOA
651 for particle growth, such that during the May/June climax transition season the DREs for those
652 factors dominate over the NPF factor (ABLNUC, Fig. 7).

653

654 The DREs for ship emissions have a similar geographic distribution as those for DMS. In these
655 regions, major international ship traffic routes are coincident with regions of higher biogenic
656 activity, enabling an interaction of biogenic and anthropogenic emissions. Ships enhance oxidant
657 levels, which promote formation of biogenic aerosol precursors such as sulfuric acid and MSA,
658 which arise from oxidation of DMS. Figure 6 shows that there is a ship-emission-related control
659 on atmospheric DMS mixing ratios, which increase when the ship-source oxidants are removed.
660 We caution that these DRE calculations should be viewed as an examination of the relative
661 contribution of the considered factors to climate effects in the North Atlantic. However, further
662 work is needed to gain confidence in the absolute magnitudes.

663

664 Figure 8 shows the calculated two-monthly mean cloud-albedo aerosol indirect effect (AIE)
665 attributed to each of the same four factors that we considered for the DREs. The AIEs are about
666 an order-of-magnitude larger than the calculated DRE for each respective factor. The AIE is
667 strongly controlled by changes to highly reflective MBL clouds, which are in turn very sensitive
668 to the aerosol number concentrations (diameters larger than about 50 to 70 nm that can act as
669 CCN), which are controlled by the MBL-related factors examined here. On the other hand, the
670 DRE is relatively more sensitive to aerosol abundance in mid-tropospheric layers, which are less
671 influenced by the considered processes.

672

673 The strongest simulated AIEs for all considered factors are during the May/June climax transition
674 (Fig. 8). There is a strong synergy among all factors that reach their maxima during May/June
675 when the effective combination of sources, photochemistry and particle production/growth
676 processes peak. As well, during summertime, the magnitude of the AIE for all factors is greater in
677 the more northward regions of the North Atlantic relative to more southerly latitudes. These more
678 northerly regions are less influenced by continental pollution and have lower CCN concentrations,



679 coupled with persistent low cloud cover. These conditions make these regions quite sensitive to
680 the factors controlling MBL aerosol size distributions studied here.

681

682 In all seasons, we calculated a stronger AIE related to (1) NPF near/above the MBL top (ABLNUC,
683 top row, Fig. 8) and (2) MSOA (contributor to particle growth) than to (1) DMS and (2) ship
684 emissions. In our simulations, the major source of CCN-sized particles in the North Atlantic MBL
685 during the summer is particle nucleation near/above the MBL top with growth by MSOA. Without
686 either of these factors, the number concentration of CCN-sized particles in the simulations drops
687 dramatically (Fig. 2). Hence, it is unsurprising that the largest simulated AIEs are due to these two
688 factors during the summertime (climate transition and declining phase). The stronger AIEs
689 attributed to NPF near/above the MBL top (Fig. 8, top row, ABLNUC) relative to DMS and ship
690 emissions indicate that near/above-MBL NPF in our simulations is controlled not only by the
691 sulfuric acid from the oxidation of DMS or ship SO₂, but also arising from other sources, including
692 SO₂ transported from continental sources. However, the maximum North Atlantic regional-mean
693 AIE attributed to ship emissions (-0.62 W m⁻² for the May/June climax transition) still exceeds the
694 global mean effect of -0.155 W m⁻² attributed to international shipping calculated by Jin et al.
695 (2018), showing the strong location-dependence and seasonality of this factor.

696

697 Similar to the DRE, we consider that these AIE calculations indicate the relative importance of the
698 considered factors, further work is needed to gain confidence in the absolute magnitudes. Like the
699 DRE estimates, the separate AIEs are not linearly additive. Other aerosol indirect effects related
700 to changes in cloud lifetime and precipitation are the subject of future work. In summary, these
701 calculated DREs and AIEs suggest that aerosol-climate impacts for North Atlantic regions are
702 controlled by a combination of strong biogenic and anthropogenic influences and that the
703 nucleation near/above the MBL top contributes to important radiative effects.

704

705 **4. Conclusions**

706

707 In this study, we examined aerosol size distribution and composition measurements from the
708 NAAMES campaigns. These ship and aircraft campaigns took place over four separate stages of
709 the annual cycle of marine biogenic activity in the Northwest Atlantic during 2015-2018. We used



710 the GEOS-Chem-TOMAS model with size-resolved aerosol microphysics to interpret these
711 NAAMES measurements. Observations showed enhancements in total aerosol number
712 concentrations (diameters between 3-10 nm, as well as greater than 3 and 10 nm) and variability
713 near 1 km altitude, indicative of new particle formation and most pronounced during the May/June
714 2016 climax transition (phytoplankton bloom maxima). The November 2015 winter transition
715 (phytoplankton bloom minima) was characterized by the lowest particle number concentrations.
716 During the summer months, OM, followed by sulfate mass concentrations dominated the total
717 aerosol loading in the lowest 2 km. Peak near-surface sulfate concentrations occurred in May/June
718 during the phytoplankton bloom, whereas peak near-surface OM concentrations were in
719 August/September. Campaign-median MBL aerosol size distributions were dominated by Aitken
720 mode particles (diameters 10-100 nm) during the summertime (May/June climax transition and
721 August/September declining phase). The larger accumulation mode particles were dominant in the
722 November winter transition and March/April accumulation phase.

723

724 Our simulations suggested that a synergy of key factors contributed to Northwest Atlantic MBL
725 aerosol size distributions, including (1) new particle formation (NPF) near/above the MBL top, (2)
726 growth of the newly formed particles by condensation of marine organic vapors, forming marine
727 secondary organic aerosol (MSOA), which yields more abundant CCN-sized particles that descend
728 into the MBL while continuing to grow and being subject to cloud processing (e.g. aqueous-phase
729 aerosol production, which does not add to particle number), (3) DMS-oxidation products that
730 contribute to particle formation and growth, and (4) ship emissions, which are a source of primary
731 and secondary particles and also contribute to atmospheric oxidants. These findings are in
732 agreement with previous observational-based studies for the North Atlantic region (e.g. Sanchez
733 et al., 2018; Zheng et al., 2020)

734

735 We calculated the aerosol direct (DRE) and cloud-albedo indirect (AIE) radiative effects over the
736 North Atlantic attributed to four key factors controlling MBL aerosols. The cooling effects were
737 about a factor of 10 larger for the AIEs than the respective DREs. The strong AIE response was
738 attributed to the strong sensitivity of the MBL cloud reflectivity to the MBL-related factors that
739 we examined. Mid-tropospheric aerosol (altitude of transport of continental pollution) has a strong
740 impact on the DRE and the factors that we considered had less impact at these altitudes. The



741 maximum regional-mean (40-60 °N, 20-50 °W) DRE for our simulations was -0.26 W m^{-2} , for the
742 August/September declining phase. This DRE was connected to the temperature-dependent source
743 of MSOA, which had a key role in growing simulated particles to large enough (diameters of 100-
744 200 nm) to strongly reflect incoming solar radiation. The maximum AIE was -3.37 W m^{-2} , for the
745 May/June climax transition phase (peak phytoplankton bloom). This AIE was related to the role
746 MSOA in growing new particles to CCN sizes as they descend into the MBL and are subject to
747 further growth in clouds after their formation near the MBL top. The AIE attributed to the NPF
748 factor was nearly as large (-2.27 W m^{-2}) during May/June. The NPF and MSOA factors act in
749 concert with each other and removal of either of these factors contributed to shutdown the
750 production of cloud-condensation-nuclei-size particles.

751

752 This study highlighted the importance of processes connected to both marine biogenic activity and
753 anthropogenic activity in controlling aerosol size distributions in the Northwest Atlantic MBL. We
754 identified key factors, which could be the focus of future work. Particularly, work is needed to
755 better understand the nature, flux, and chemistry of marine organic vapors that can form MSOA.
756 As well, work is needed to better understand the contributors to NPF near and above the MBL top.
757 Further work is also needed to understand the interactions of the considered factors with cloud
758 processing of aerosols and its relative importance in particle growth. As the Earth's climate
759 changes and shipping traffic/regulations/routes change, work to understand the source strength of
760 DMS, MSOA, and shipping emissions is highly relevant. Such work will bridge the knowledge
761 gaps related to factors controlling aerosols in the marine MBL and their climate impacts.

762

763 **Code and data availability.** The NAAMES project website is at <https://naames.larc.nasa.gov>. The
764 NAAMES airborne and ship datasets used in this paper are publicly available and permanently
765 archived in the NASA Atmospheric Science Data Center (ASDC;
766 <https://doi.org/10.5067/Suborbital/NAAMES/DATA001>) and the SeaWiFS Bio-Optical Archive
767 and Storage System (SeaBASS; <https://doi.org/10.5067/SeaBASS/NAAMES/DATA001>). The
768 ship datasets generated during and analyzed for NAAMES studies are also available in the UCSD
769 Library Digital Collection repository, <https://doi.org/10.6075/J04T6GJ6>. The GEOS-Chem model
770 is freely available for download at <https://github.com/geoschem/geos-chem> (last access 19 July
771 2020).



772

773 **Supplement link.**

774

775 **Author contributions.** BC, RVM and JRP designed the study. BC conducted the GEOS-Chem-
776 TOMAS simulations, led the related analysis, and wrote the manuscript with contributions from
777 all coauthors. RHM, ECC, and LDZ contributed the aerosol measurements from aboard the NASA
778 C130 aircraft. AW, MM and AS contributed the gas-phase measurements from aboard the NASA
779 C130 aircraft. LMR and GS contributed the aerosol measurements from aboard the R/V Atlantis.
780 RYWC and HL contributed to the interpretation of model-measurement comparisons. EEM
781 contributed the CEDS data set. KRB contributed to the off-line radiative calculations, MG
782 contributed the satellite DMS data set.

783

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785

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804 **References.**

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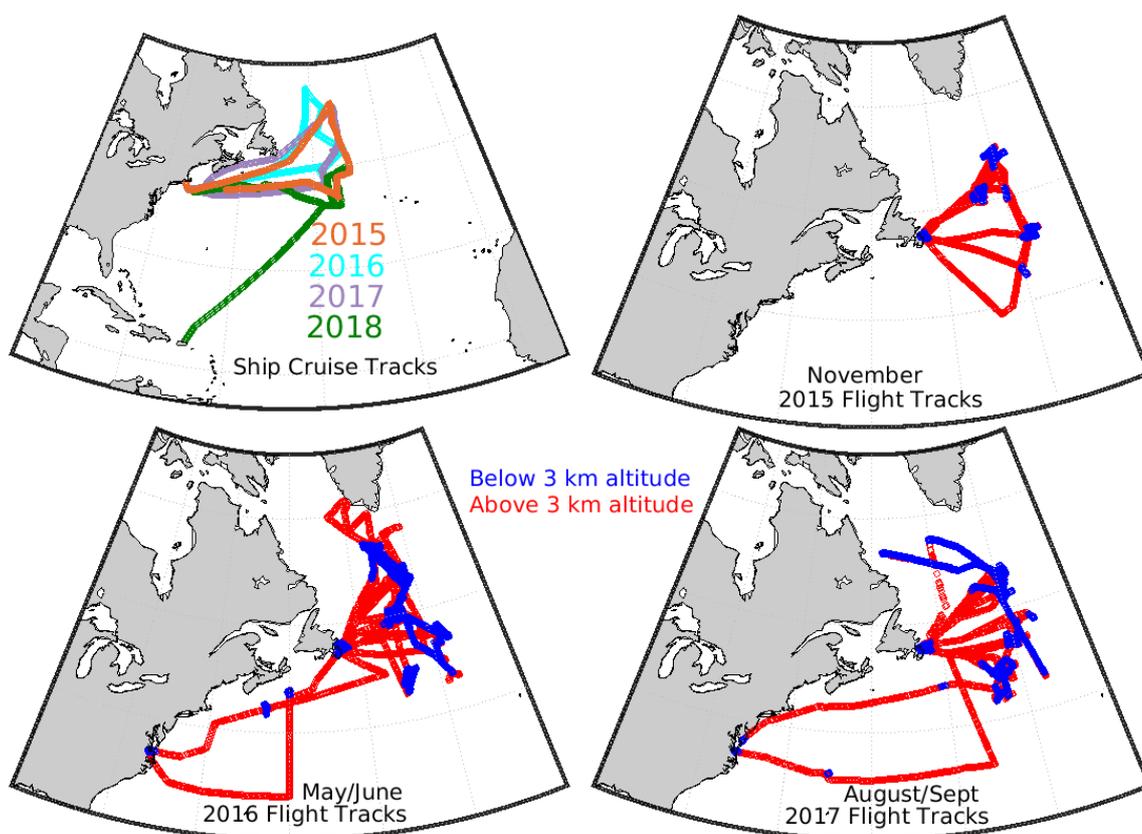
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- 1550 **Figures and tables**



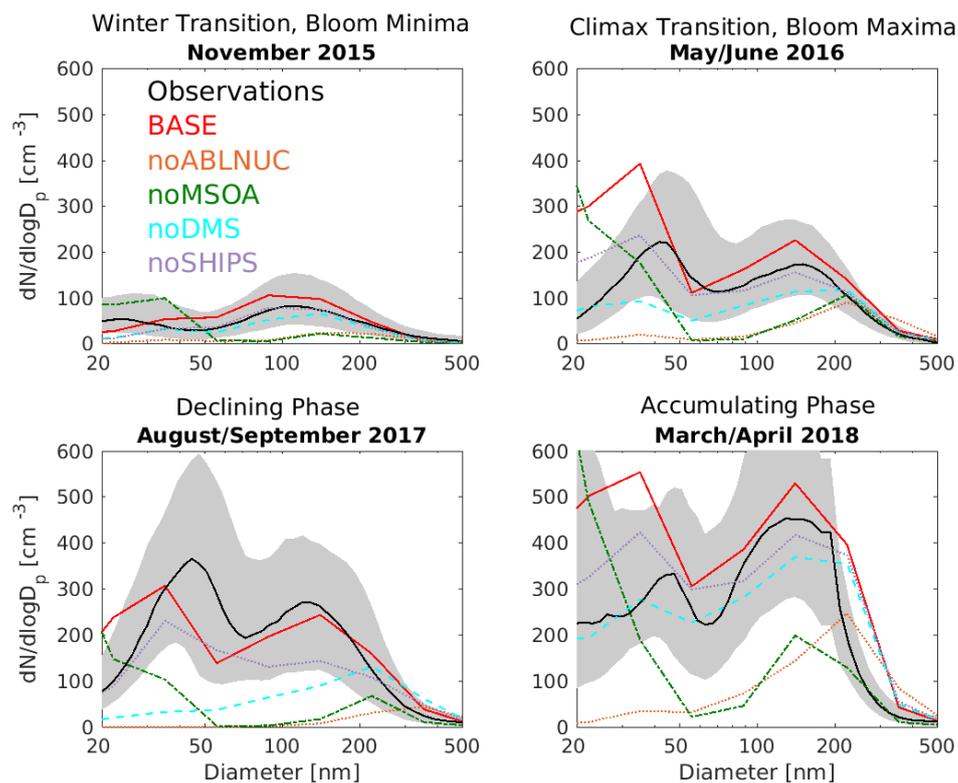
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1552 **Figure 1:** Cruise and aircraft tracks for the 2015-2018 NAAMES campaigns. Flight altitudes
1553 below 3 km are color-coded in medium blue and above 3 km in red. Ship tracks campaigns are
1554 color-coded for each year as shown by the legend, and as follows: Orange: November 2015
1555 winter transition (bloom minima); Cyan: May/June 2016 climax transition (bloom maxima);
1556 Purple: August/September 2017 declining phase; Green: March/April 2018 accumulation phase.

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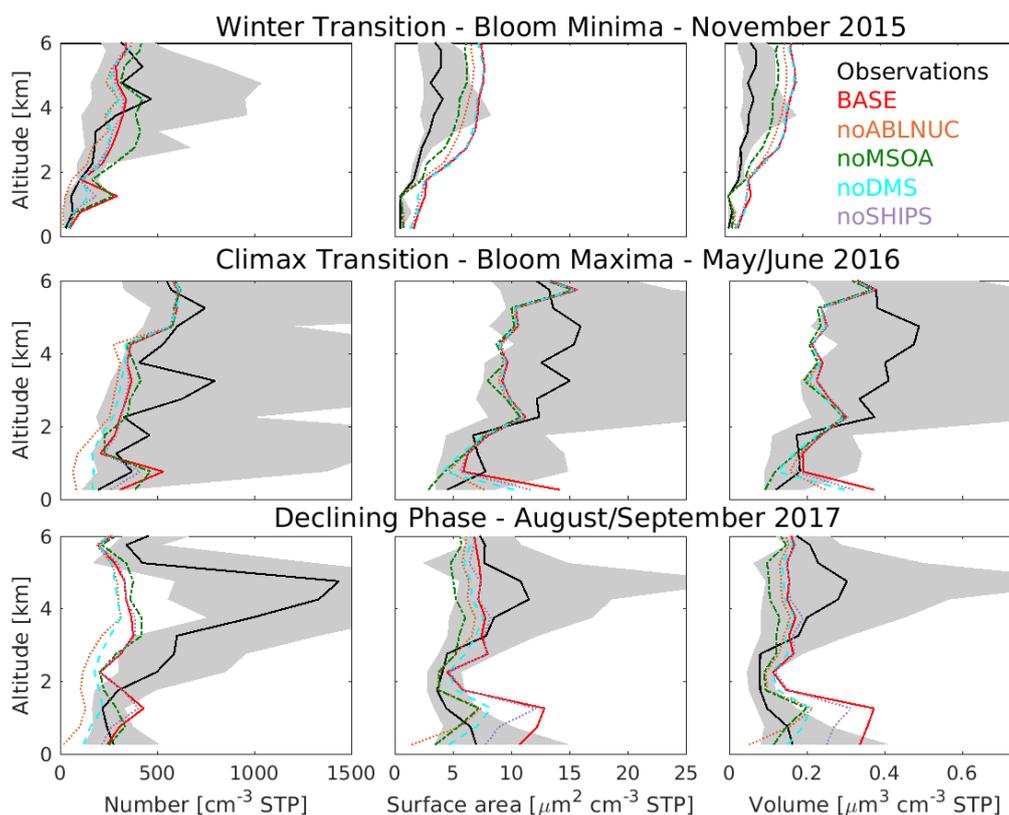
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1562 **Figure 2:** NAAMES cruise-track campaign-median marine boundary layer aerosol size
1563 distributions from marine-influenced SEMS observations (black, with 25th to 75th percentiles in
1564 grey) and for the five GEOS-Chem-TOMAS simulations as described in Table 1 (color-coded as
1565 shown in legend). Linestyles: Solid: Observations, BASE; Dotted: noABLNUC, noSHIPS; Dash-
1566 dot: noMSOA; Dashed: noDMS.

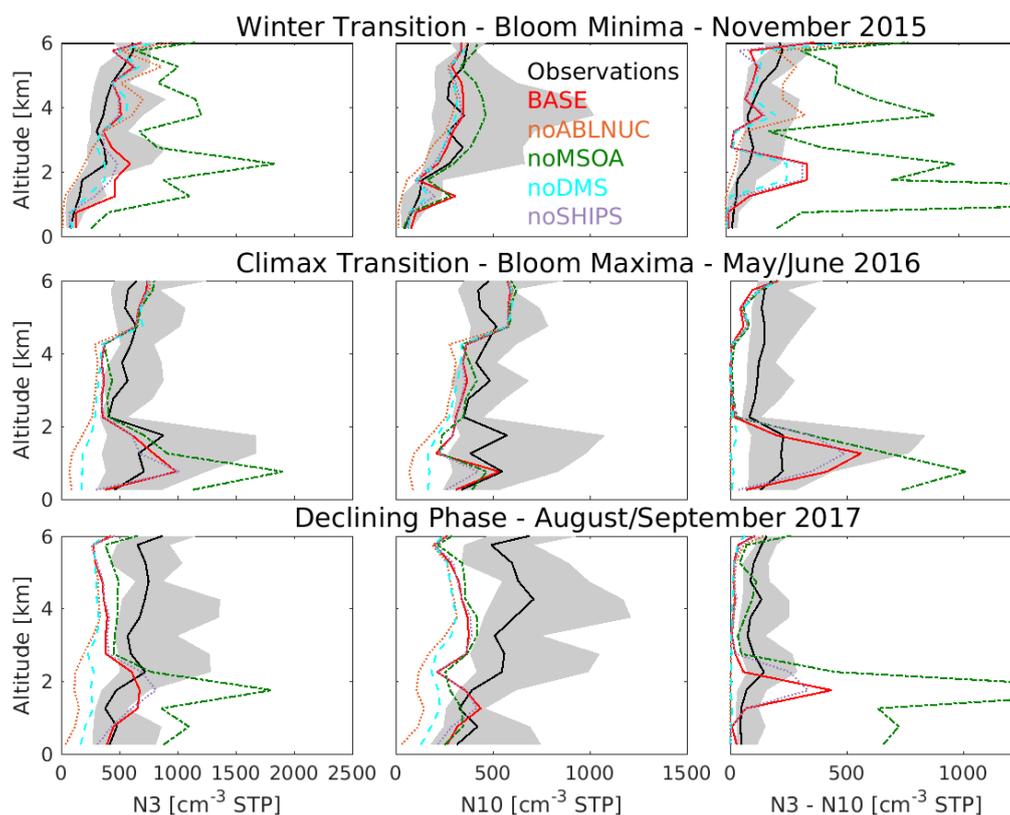
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1576 **Figure 3:** Vertical profiles of NAAMES campaign-median integrated SMPS observations at
1577 standard temperature and pressure (STP) for particles with diameters of 10 to 282 nm (black, with
1578 25th-75th percentiles in grey) and for the five GEOS-Chem-TOMAS simulations described in Table
1579 1 (color-coded as shown in legend). Linestyles: Solid: Observations, BASE; Dotted: noABLNUC,
1580 noSHIPS; Dash-dot: noMSOA; Dashed: noDMS.

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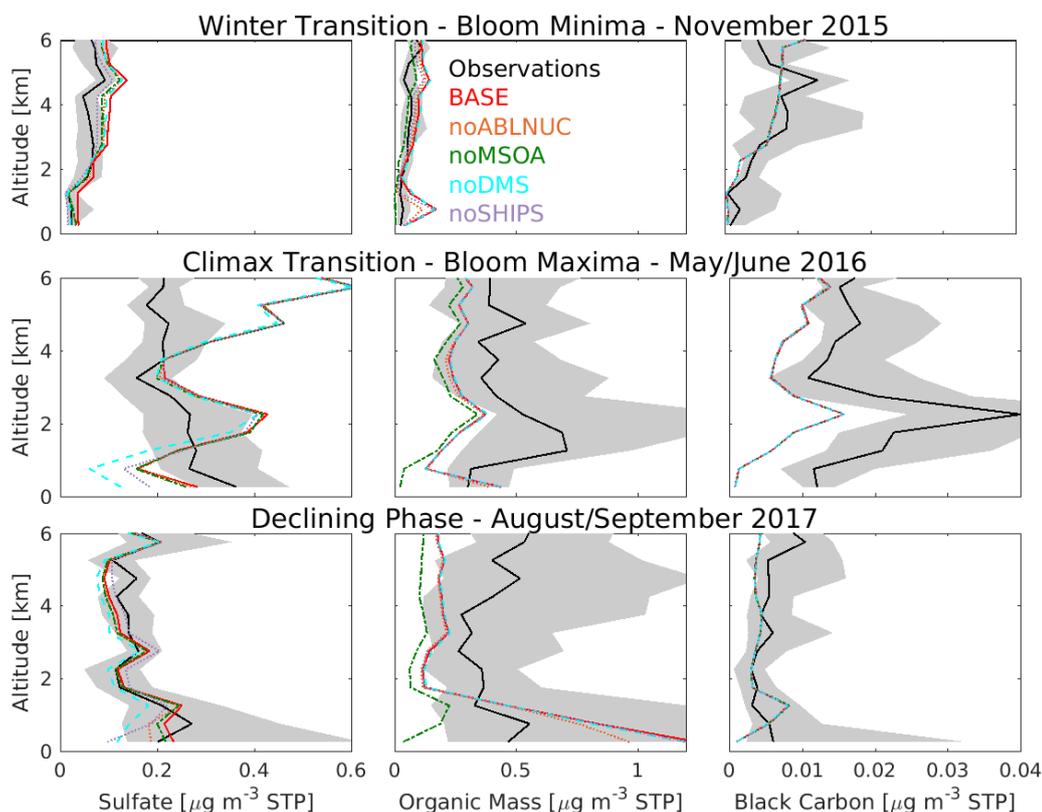


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Figure 4: Vertical profiles of NAAMES campaign-median total number concentrations for particles with diameters larger than 3 nm (N3), 10 nm (N10) and between 3 to 10 nm (N3-N10) from CPC observations at standard temperature and pressure (STP) (black, with 25th-75th percentiles in grey) and for the five GEOS-Chem-TOMAS simulations described in Table 1 (color-coded as shown in legend). Linestyles: Solid: Observations, BASE; Dotted: noABLNUC, noSHIPS; Dash-dot: noMSOA; Dashed: noDMS.



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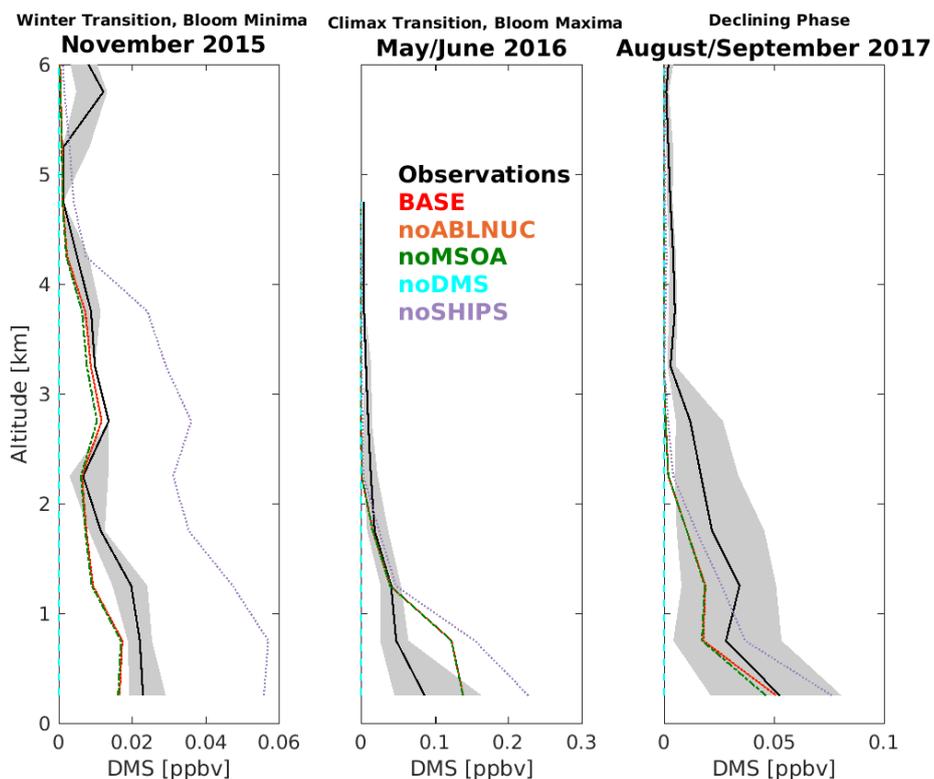


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Figure 5: Vertical profiles of NAAMES campaign-median aerosol non-refractory sulfate and organic mass concentrations at standard temperature and pressure (STP) from Aerosol Mass Spectrometer and refractory black carbon from Single Particle Soot Photometer observations (black, with 25th-75th percentiles in grey) and for the five GEOS-Chem-TOMAS simulations described in Table 1 (color-coded as shown in legend). Simulated sulfate shown is non-sea-salt-sulfate. Linestyles: Solid: Observations, BASE; Dotted: noABLNUC, noSHIPS; Dash-dot: noMSOA; Dashed: noDMS.

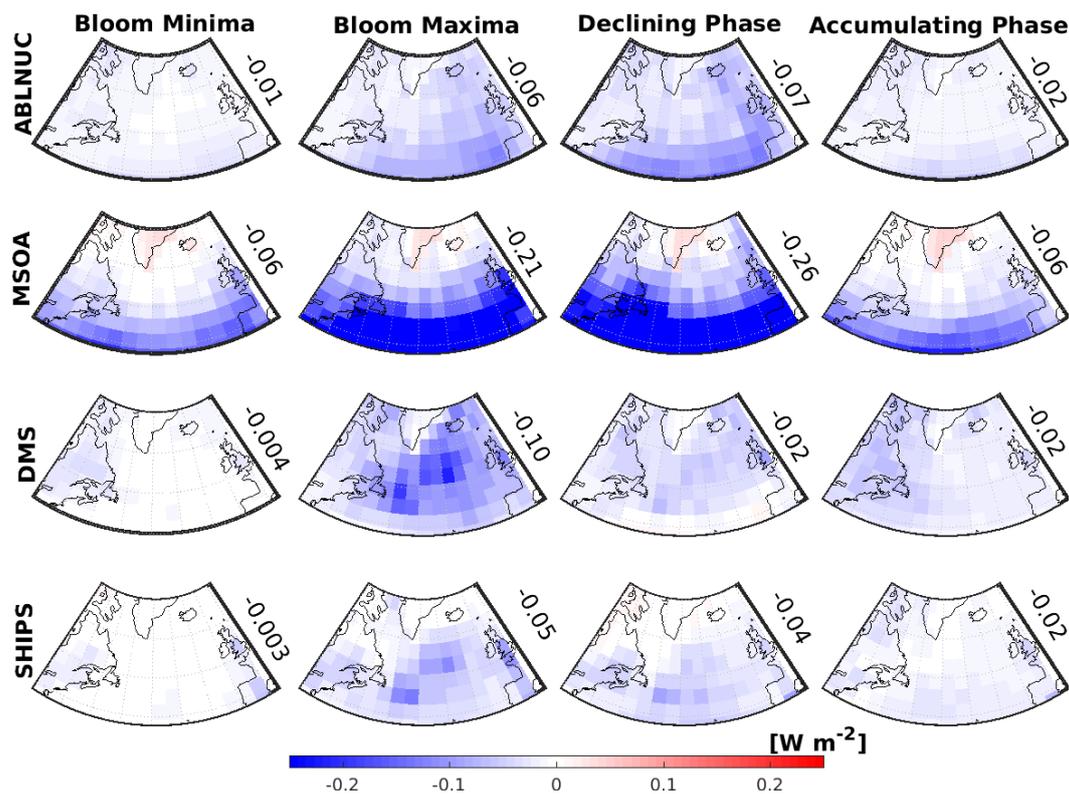


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Figure 6: Vertical profiles of NAAMES cruise-track campaign-median observed dimethyl sulfide (DMS) mixing ratios (black, 25th-75th percentiles in grey) and for the five GEOS-Chem-TOMAS simulations described in Table 1 (color-coded as shown in legend). Simulations BASE, noABLNUC and noMSOA are nearly coincident. Linestyles: Solid: Observations, BASE; Dotted: noABLNUC, noSHIPS; Dash-dot: noMSOA; Dashed: noDMS.

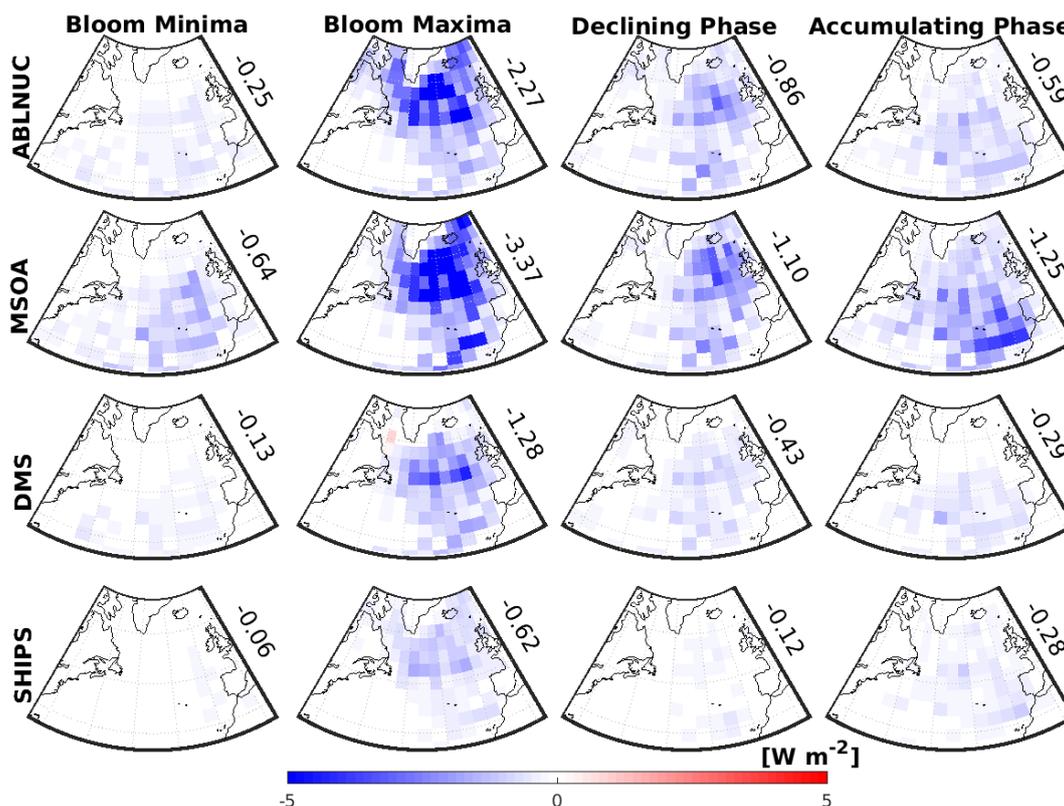


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Figure 7: GEOS-Chem-TOMAS-simulated two-monthly-mean aerosol direct radiative effect (DRE) attributed to four key factors. Top row: Above boundary layer particle nucleation (ABLNUC); Second row: Particle growth by marine secondary organic aerosol (MSOA); Third row: Particle formation/growth due to DMS-oxidation products (DMS); Bottom row: Shipping emissions contribution to particles (SHIPS). DREs are in columns for the following time periods, October/November 2015 (Winter Transition, Bloom Minima), May/June 2016 (Climax Transition, Bloom Maxima), August/September 2017 (Declining Phase), and March/April 2018 (Accumulating Phase). DREs for ABLNUC, MSOA, DMS and SHIPS are calculated using the differences in the top-of-the-atmosphere solar flux between simulation BASE and respective sensitivity simulations (noABLNUC, noMSOA, noDMS, noSHIPS). Values shown are area-weighted-mean DREs over the region bounded by 40-60 °N, 20-50 °W.



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1659 Figure 8: GEOS-Chem-TOMAS-simulated two-monthly-mean aerosol cloud-albedo indirect
1660 radiative effect (AIE) attributed to four key factors. Top row: Above boundary layer particle
1661 nucleation (ABLNUC); Second row: Particle growth by marine secondary organic aerosol
1662 (MSOA); Third row: Particle formation/growth due to DMS-oxidation products (DMS); Bottom
1663 row: Shipping emissions contribution to particles (SHIPS). AIEs are in columns for the following
1664 time periods, October/November 2015 (Winter Transition, Bloom Minima), May/June 2016
1665 (Climax Transition, Bloom Maxima), August/September 2017 (Declining Phase), and
1666 March/April 2018 (Accumulating Phase). AIEs for ABLNUC, MSOA, DMS and SHIPS are
1667 calculated using the differences in the top-of-the-atmosphere solar flux between simulation BASE
1668 and respective sensitivity simulations (noABLNUC, noMSOA, noDMS, noSHIPS). Values shown
1669 are area-weighted-mean AIEs over the region bounded by 40-60 °N, 20-50 °W.

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Simulation	Description
BASE	Control simulation with GEOS-Chem-TOMAS model (GCT12.1.1) as described in Sect. 2.2
noABLNUC	Same as BASE, excluding the surrogate activation-type particle nucleation parameterization above the marine boundary layer to about 2 km altitude, as described in Sect. 2.2
noMSOA	Same as BASE, excluding the temperature-dependent marine organic vapors, forming marine secondary organic aerosol (MSOA)
noDMS	Same as BASE, excluding all emissions of DMS
noSHIPS	Same as BASE, excluding all ship emissions

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1674 **Table 1:** GEOS-Chem-TOMAS simulation acronyms. Simulations and methodology are
1675 described in detail in Sect. 2.2 and 2.3.

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Simulation	Nov 2015 Bloom Minima	May/June 2016 Bloom Maxima	Aug/Sept 2017 Declining Phase	Mar/Apr 2018 Accumulating	Annual Mean
BASE	0.17	0.40	0.12	0.31	0.23
noABLNUC	0.84	0.53	0.87	0.44	0.66
noMSOA	0.76	0.31	0.86	0.39	0.63
noDMS	0.43	0.20	0.43	0.11	0.29
noSHIPS	0.31	0.13	0.23	0.21	0.22

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1681 **Table 2:** Mean fractional error (MFE) between observations and the five GEOS-Chem-TOMAS
1682 simulations described in Sect. 2.2 and Table 1 for the ship-track campaign-median aerosol size
1683 distributions shown in Fig. 2. A MFE of 0.50 or less indicates acceptable model-measurement
1684 agreement.