

1 **Observations of iodine monoxide over three summers at the Indian Antarctic bases, Bharati**  
2 **and Maitri**

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15

16 **Abstract**

17 Iodine plays a vital role in oxidation chemistry over Antarctica, with past observations showing  
18 highly elevated levels of iodine oxide (IO) leading to severe depletion of boundary layer ozone in  
19 West Antarctica. Here, we present multi axis differential absorption spectroscopy (MAX-DOAS)  
20 based observations of IO over three summers (2015-2017) at the Indian Antarctic bases, Bharati  
21 and Maitri. IO was observed during all the campaigns, with mixing ratios below 2 pptv for the  
22 three summers, which are lower than the peak levels observed in West Antarctica. This suggests  
23 that sources in West Antarctica are different or stronger than sources of iodine compounds in East  
24 Antarctica, the nature of which are still uncertain. Vertical profiles estimated using a profile  
25 retrieval algorithm showed decreasing gradients, with a peak in the lower boundary layer. The  
26 ground-based instrument retrieved vertical column densities (VCDs) were approximately a factor  
27 of three-five higher than the VCDs reported using satellite-based instruments, which is most likely  
28 related to the sensitivities of the measurement techniques. Airmass back-trajectory analysis failed  
29 to highlight a source region, with most of the airmasses coming from coastal or continental regions.  
30 This study highlights the variation in iodine chemistry in different regions in Antarctica and the  
31 importance of a long-term dataset to validate models estimating the impacts of iodine chemistry.

32

33 **Keywords:** Iodine; Antarctica; halogens; DOAS

## 34 **1. Introduction**

35 Reactive halogen species (RHS) have been shown to play a critical role in causing ozone depletion  
36 events in the polar boundary layer (BL) (Barrie et al., 1988; Bottenheim et al., 1986; Kreher et al.,  
37 1997; Oltmans and Komhyr, 1986) and could contribute to new particle formation in this remote  
38 environment (Allan et al., 2015; Atkinson et al., 2012; O'Dowd et al., 2004). Observations of RHS  
39 have been made in the Antarctic BL for almost two decades. Early observations focused on  
40 bromine oxide (BrO), the presence of which was observed in the Antarctic using ground based  
41 instruments (Kreher et al., 1997) and via satellites (Hollwedel et al., 2004). The presence of iodine  
42 oxide (IO) in the Antarctic atmosphere was also confirmed through integrated column  
43 measurements from the ground (Frieß et al., 2001). Later, year-long ground-based observations of  
44 RHS made at Halley Bay showed the critical role that bromine and iodine compounds play in  
45 regulating the oxidizing capacity, causing ozone depletion and new particle formation in the  
46 Antarctic BL (Saiz-Lopez et al., 2007a). These ground-based observations showed that both IO  
47 and BrO, are present at elevated concentrations (from 1 pptv to as high as 20 pptv) in certain parts  
48 of the Antarctic BL, and show a significant seasonal variation peaking in the spring, with elevated  
49 concentrations observed through the summer (Saiz-Lopez et al., 2008). Satellite-based  
50 observations of both IO and BrO reported a similar annual cycle, although with large geographical  
51 differences (Hollwedel et al., 2004; Richter et al., 2002; Saiz-Lopez et al., 2007b; Schönhardt et  
52 al., 2008, 2012; Theys et al., 2011; Wagner et al., 2001). These satellite observations have been  
53 validated by ground-based observations, although most of them have hitherto focused around the  
54 Weddell Sea (Atkinson et al., 2012; Buys et al., 2013; Frieß et al., 2001, 2010; Saiz-Lopez et al.,  
55 2007a, 2008). Previous studies show that similar levels of BrO have been observed between the  
56 Arctic and Antarctic while much lower levels of atmospheric iodine have been reported in the

57 Arctic compared to the Antarctic (Hönninger et al., 2004; Raso et al., 2017; Schönhardt et al.,  
58 2008; Tuckermann et al., 1997). The satellite observations also show a difference in the  
59 geographical distribution of IO over Antarctica, with the Weddell sea being an iodine hotspot, the  
60 reasons for which are still not completely clear (Saiz-Lopez and Blaszcak-boxe, 2016). Ground-  
61 based observations have also been made at McMurdo Sound, near the Ross Sea, where lower  
62 concentrations of IO were observed (Hay, 2010). Additional observations over the 2011-2012  
63 summer were made at Dumont d'Urville using a cavity enhanced absorption spectroscopy based  
64 instrument and showed a maximum of 0.15 pptv of IO (Grilli et al., 2013). However, observations  
65 of IO have not been reported in the Indian Ocean sector of the Antarctic peninsula to date (Saiz-  
66 Lopez et al., 2012; Saiz-Lopez and von Glasow, 2012).

67 Ground based observations at Halley Bay and in the Weddell Sea suggest that the main source of  
68 iodine compounds is the sea ice region based on observations of iodocarbons and back trajectory  
69 analysis (Atkinson et al., 2012; Saiz-Lopez et al., 2007a). Other studies have also measured  
70 iodocarbons in Antarctica, although their levels are too low to explain the high levels of IO  
71 observed in the Weddell Sea region (Carpenter et al., 2007; Fogelqvist and Tanhua, 1995;  
72 Reifenhäuser and Heumann, 1992). The exact process is still not known, although a mechanism  
73 for biologically-induced iodine emissions from sea-ice has been suggested based on the idea that  
74 micro-algae (Garrison and Buck, 1989) are the primary source of iodine emissions in this  
75 environment (Saiz-Lopez et al., 2015a) with halogen compounds then moving up brine channels  
76 in the sea ice to finally get released into the atmosphere. There are further questions regarding the  
77 propagation of reactive iodine chemistry across the continent because satellite observations show  
78 the presence of IO deep within the Antarctic continent, even as far as the South Pole (Saiz-Lopez  
79 et al., 2007b; Schönhardt et al., 2008). However, although enhanced, the observed IO column

80 densities are close to the detection limit of the satellite instrument ( $\sim 7 \times 10^{12}$  molecules  $\text{cm}^{-2}$  for a  
81 single measurement) and are therefore subject to uncertainties. The study by Frieß et al. (2010)  
82 suggested a strong source within the snowpack, which hints at active recycling and re-emission of  
83 IO aiding the long transport inland. However, questions remain about why such a source would  
84 function only in parts of the continent and why the primary source is different from the Arctic,  
85 where much lower peak concentrations are sporadically observed (Mahajan et al., 2010; Saiz-  
86 Lopez and Blaszcak-boxe, 2016). To further understand the sources of iodine in the polar  
87 environment, understanding the geographical distribution is critical. Satellite observations play a  
88 useful role for this, although validation of the satellite observations using ground-based  
89 instruments is necessary to ascertain their accuracy to observe IO in the Antarctic troposphere.

90 Questions also remain about the vertical profiles of iodine compounds within and above the  
91 Antarctic boundary layer. Modelling based studies using the one-dimensional Tropospheric  
92 Halogen Chemistry MOdel (THAMO) have suggested a strong gradient in IO from the surface to  
93 the edge of the boundary layer (Saiz-Lopez et al., 2008). Only once in the past have vertical profiles  
94 of IO been measured in Antarctica using the MAX-DOAS instrument. These measurements were  
95 made at McMurdo Sound in East Antarctica (Hay, 2010). Observations over two “golden days” in  
96 2006 and 2007 show surface concentrations of about 1 pptv, decreasing to  $\sim 0.2$  pptv at about 200  
97 m, before reaching a second maximum of 0.6 pptv at  $\sim 700$  m. The detection limit was estimated  
98 to be about  $\sim 0.5$  pptv. However, models did not reproduce this measured IO vertical profile shape  
99 and there are also large uncertainties associated with the a priori (Hay, 2010). In most models, the  
100 assumption is that the source of iodine compounds is from the snowpack, with photochemistry in  
101 the atmosphere resulting in a steady decrease with altitude. However, considerable challenges  
102 remain in reproducing the surface variation and vertical gradients in addition to the geographical

103 distribution (Fernandez et al., 2019). More recent modelling studies combined with aircraft  
104 observations suggest that the gradient is not very sharp all the latitudes, with a significant free  
105 tropospheric and stratospheric contribution to the total column of IO (Koenig et al., 2020; Saiz-  
106 Lopez et al., 2015b), although such observations have still not been done in the Antarctic. One of  
107 the main reasons for the uncertainties in models is the lack of consistent measurements of vertical  
108 gradients across the world, especially in the Polar Regions, to validate these model simulations.

109 Considering the uncertainties in the satellite observations and questions regarding the sources and  
110 vertical and geographical distribution of IO, further observations are necessary. Here we present  
111 observations made at two new locations in Antarctica over three summers and compare them with  
112 the satellite-based retrievals and past observations.

113

## 114 **2. Methodology**

115 Figure 1 shows the location of the two Indian Antarctic stations, Maitri (11.73 °E , 70.77 °S) and  
116 Bharati (76.19 °E, 69.41 °S). The other stations where observations of IO have been reported in  
117 the past are also marked on the map. Observations of IO and the oxygen dimer (O<sub>4</sub>) were made  
118 using the Multi-Axis Differential Optical Absorption Spectroscopy technique (MAX-DOAS) over  
119 three summers: February-March 2015 as a part of the 34<sup>th</sup> Indian Scientific Expedition to  
120 Antarctica (ISEA-34), November 2015 – February 2016 as a part of ISEA-35 and January-  
121 February 2017 as a part of ISEA-36.

122 Observations at the Maitri station were made over a short span of 9 days (9<sup>th</sup> March – 17<sup>th</sup> March  
123 2015) and only during ISEA-34. The research station is in the ice-free rocky area on the  
124 Schirmacher Oasis. The MAX-DOAS instrument was installed in a summer-time residential

125 container, ~150 m north the station, about 120 m above sea level during the ISEA-34. The scanner  
126 unit was mounted on top of the container with the clear line of sight to the horizon. The scanner  
127 pointed  $\sim 60.0^\circ$  with respect to magnetic north. The spectrometer unit was kept inside the container,  
128 which was temperature controlled. The open ocean is 125 km north of Maitri.

129 Observations at the Bharati station were made for 10 days (9<sup>th</sup> February-18<sup>th</sup> February 2015) during  
130 ISEA-34, for 63 days (30<sup>th</sup> November 2015 – 1<sup>st</sup> February 2016) during ISEA-35 and for 35 days  
131 (5<sup>th</sup> January-11<sup>th</sup> February 2017) during ISEA-36. The station is located between the Thala Fjord  
132 and Quilty Bay, east of the Stornes Peninsula. The MAX-DOAS instrument was installed in a hut  
133 on top of a ridge around 200 m south-west of the Bharati station and was approximately 56 m  
134 above sea level. The scanner unit was mounted on the wall of the hut and had a clear line of sight  
135 to the horizon, pointing  $-23.2^\circ$  with respect to the north, overlooking the open ocean. The coastline  
136 is within 500 m of the hut, but it becomes ice free from mid-January to late March. Depending on  
137 the sea ice conditions, the open ocean is within 8-10 km north from the end of November.

138 The MAX-DOAS instrument (EnviMes) makes use of scattered sunlight along different elevation  
139 angles and by combination of several lines of sight including the zenith. The concentration of an  
140 absorber in the boundary layer can be obtained either in a first approximation by a simple  
141 geometric approach or by simulating the light path with a radiative transfer model taking into  
142 account also multiple scattering effects and the correct treatment of the aerosol loading in the  
143 atmosphere (Hönninger et al., 2004; Platt and Stutz, 2008; Wagner et al., 2004). The instrument  
144 consists of an indoor unit, housing a spectrometer with a spectral resolution of 0.7 nm (UV: 301.20-  
145 463.69), which is connected to an outdoor unit, containing a scanning telescope. Discrete elevation  
146 angles ( $1^\circ$ ,  $2^\circ$ ,  $3^\circ$ ,  $5^\circ$ ,  $7^\circ$ ,  $10^\circ$ ,  $20^\circ$ ,  $40^\circ$ , and  $90^\circ$ ) were recorded for a total exposure time of 1  
147 minute each during all the four campaigns. The spectra were recalibrated before analysis using

148 mercury emission lines recorded at the end of each day. For DOAS retrieval, the QDOAS 3.2  
149 software was used (Fayt and Van Roozendael, 2013). For estimation of the O<sub>4</sub> Differential Slant  
150 Column Densities (DSCDs), the cross-sections of O<sub>4</sub> (Thalman and Volkamer, 2013) at 293K;  
151 NO<sub>2</sub> (Vandaele et al., 1998a) at 220 K and 298 K (220 K orthogonalized to 294 K); O<sub>3</sub> (Bogumil  
152 et al., 2003) at 223 K and 243 K (orthogonalized to O<sub>3</sub> at 243 K); HCHO (Meller and Moortgat,  
153 2000) at 298 K; HONO (Stutz et al., 2000) at 296 K were used in the 351-390 nm window. The  
154 cross-sections used for IO retrieval in the 417-440 nm spectral window were: IO (Gómez Martín  
155 et al., 2005), NO<sub>2</sub> 220 K and 298 K (Vandaele et al., 1998b), H<sub>2</sub>O (Rothman et al., 2013), O<sub>4</sub>  
156 (Thalman and Volkamer, 2013) and O<sub>3</sub> (Bogumil et al., 2003). In addition to these cross-sections  
157 a ring spectrum (Chance and Spurr, 1997), a second ring spectrum following Wagner et al. (2009),  
158 and the 3<sup>rd</sup> order polynomial were used for both windows. The zenith spectrum from each scan  
159 was used as a reference to remove contribution from possible free tropospheric or stratospheric  
160 absorption. An example of a DOAS fit for O<sub>4</sub> and IO are given in Figure S1. Surface mixing ratios  
161 and the total vertical column densities (VCDs) were retrieved from the MAX-DOAS DSCDs of  
162 IO and O<sub>4</sub> by employing the Mainz Profile Algorithm (MAPA) (Beirle et al., 2018). Only  
163 observations with solar zenith angles (SZA) less than 75° were used for the profile retrievals due  
164 to the large path lengths through the stratosphere for large SZA angles. This algorithm uses a two-  
165 step approach to determine the trace gas vertical profiles. In the first step, the aerosol profiles are  
166 retrieved using the measured O<sub>4</sub> DSCDs. A Monte Carlo approach is utilized to identify the best  
167 ensemble of the forward model parameters (column parameters (c) (VCD for trace gases and  
168 aerosol optical depth for aerosol), height parameter (h) and shape parameter (s)), which fit the  
169 measured O<sub>4</sub> DSCDs for the sequence of elevation angles. In the second step, the aerosol profiles  
170 retrieved from the O<sub>4</sub> inversion are used as an input to retrieve similar model parameters (c, h, and



171 s) for IO. The state of the atmosphere was calculated using the pressure and temperature profiles  
172 observed by the in-situ radiosondes, which were launched once a week at both stations. An  
173 angstrom exponent of 1 was used for the difference in the retrieval wavelengths as per observations  
174 made at Bharati in the past (Prakash Chaubey et al., 2011). Within MAPA, the differential air mass  
175 factors (AMFs) are calculated offline with the radiative transfer model McArtim (Deutschmann et  
176 al., 2011) for fixed nodes for each parameter and stored as a lookup table (LUT) for quick analysis.  
177 To assess the quality of the retrievals, MAPA provides “valid”, “warning” or “error” flags for each  
178 measurement sequence, which are calculated based on pre-defined thresholds for various fit  
179 parameters. For further details about MAPA, please refer to the description paper by Beirle et al.  
180 (2018). Additionally, MAPA provides the option to use a scaling factor for significant mismatch  
181 between the modelled and measured O<sub>4</sub> DSCDs, which has been shown to be close to 0.8 in the  
182 past (Wagner et al., 2019). Using the variable option, where the model **estimated scaling factor**  
183 **ranged between** 0.75 and 0.9. Therefore, a scaling factor of 0.8 was applied for all the campaigns.  
184 We also make use of the IO vertical column densities retrieved using the SCanning Imaging  
185 Absorption spectroMeter for Atmospheric CHartography (SCIAMACHY), a UV-vis-NIR  
186 spectrometer onboard the ENVISAT satellite (Burrows et al., 1995). Observations from  
187 SCIAMACHY stopped due to instrumental problems in April 2012. Here we make use of the mean  
188 from 2004-2011 to look at the geographical distribution and compare it with the ground-based  
189 observations made during the study period. Further details about the IO retrieval algorithm and the  
190 SCIAMACHY instrumental setup can be found elsewhere (Schönhardt et al., 2008, 2012).

191

192 **3. Results and Discussion**

### 193 3.1 Meteorological parameters

194 Figure 2 shows the 5-day back-trajectories arriving every hour at the two stations at a height of 10  
195 m on the days that the DOAS measurements were conducted as a part of the three ISEA  
196 expeditions. The back-trajectories were calculated using the HYbrid Single-Particle Lagrangian  
197 Integrated Trajectory (HYSPLIT) using the EDAS-40 km database (Draxler and Rolph, 2003).  
198 The trajectories show that the airmasses sampled throughout the three expeditions were from either  
199 a remote oceanic region, coastal Antarctica, or the continental shelf. In general, most of the  
200 trajectories show that the airmasses had travelled over hundreds of kilometres over the last five  
201 days. For the local meteorological conditions, Figure 3 (top panels) show the wind direction at the  
202 Bharati station. Most of the time, the wind was from the ocean, with the winds coming from the  
203 north-west sector and a few instances of northern and north eastern winds (although during ISEA-  
204 34 the winds were mostly from east to north-east). This was during all the three expeditions at the  
205 Bharati station. The wind speed was mostly below 20 knots ( $\sim 10 \text{ m s}^{-1}$ ) for all the campaigns,  
206 although periods of high winds were observed during ISEA-35 and ISEA-36, which were of a  
207 longer duration than ISEA-34. The temperature at the station hovered between  $-5 \text{ }^\circ\text{C}$  and  $+5 \text{ }^\circ\text{C}$ ,  
208 through the summer period, with higher values closer to noon (Figure 3, middle panels). The  
209 humidity fluctuated from 40% to above 90%. The radiation followed a clear diurnal pattern, with  
210 the highest values seen around local noon and minima at local midnight. Considering that this  
211 region experiences continuous light for 24 hours, the radiation also showed a non-zero minima  
212 between November to January (Figure 3, bottom panels). However, in February, a clear night-time  
213 is seen in the radiation data. Finally, a measure of the cloudiness was also tracked using visual full  
214 sky cloud cover observations. Any cloud cover of more than 30% was considered to be cloudy  
215 (cloud flag value of 1), which helps in filtering the MAX-DOAS observations. In addition to the

216 visual inspection of the sky, which was performed once an hour, a second cloud index was  
217 calculated based on the ratios of the radiances at 320 nm and 440 nm from the 3° and zenith spectra  
218 (Mahajan et al., 2012; Wagner et al., 2014). Both manual and radiance-based indices showed a  
219 close match, indicating that cloudy conditions were well discerned by the cloud index calculation.  
220 Meteorological data was unfortunately not available at the Maitri station.

### 221 **3.2 Differential Slant Column Densities (DSCDs)**

222 Figure 4 shows the observed O<sub>4</sub> DSCDs at different elevation angles for all the campaigns. O<sub>4</sub>  
223 DSCDs were found to be higher at lower elevation angles, as expected, which is because the O<sub>4</sub>  
224 concentration is proportional to the square of the oxygen pressure and thus increases towards the  
225 surface. This also suggests that the aerosol loading was low in the atmosphere. Photons travel  
226 longer paths at lower elevation angles and interact more with tropospheric absorbing species before  
227 reaching the instrument resulting in a decreasing profile with increasing elevation angles. The  
228 average residual root mean square (RMS) and 2σ detection limit for the O<sub>4</sub> DSCDs were 4.46×10<sup>-</sup>  
229 <sup>4</sup> (range: 1.56-10.01×10<sup>-4</sup>) and 2.11 × 10<sup>42</sup> molecules<sup>2</sup> cm<sup>-5</sup> (range: 0.72-4.66 × 10<sup>42</sup> molecules<sup>2</sup>  
230 cm<sup>-5</sup>), respectively (Figure 4). The O<sub>4</sub> DSCDs were then used to estimate the aerosol profiles and  
231 hence the IO mixing ratios, as described earlier in section 2.

232 Figure 5 shows the observed IO DSCDs at different elevation angles for all the campaigns. The  
233 IO DSCDs were found to be higher at lower elevation angles, which indicates a decreasing gradient  
234 in the IO vertical profile. The residual RMS was in the 1.15-9.73×10<sup>-4</sup> range (mean: 3.46×10<sup>-4</sup>),  
235 resulting in 2σ IO DSCD detection limits of 6.57×10<sup>12</sup> to 5.71×10<sup>13</sup> molecules cm<sup>-2</sup> (mean  
236 1.88×10<sup>13</sup> molecules cm<sup>-2</sup>) (Figure 5). For several days, only the lowermost elevation angles were  
237 found to be above the two-sigma detection limit of the instrument. Higher IO DSCDs were

238 observed at large SZAs, which is related to an increase in the path length. However, only  
239 observations with  $SZA < 75^\circ$  were used to estimate the vertical profiles and surface mixing ratios  
240 using the aerosol profiles derived using the O<sub>4</sub> DSCDs, as described earlier in section 2. A zoomed  
241 in view of two example days for both the O<sub>4</sub> and IO DSCDs is shown in Figure S2, which clearly  
242 shows the decreasing gradient with increasing elevation angles.

### 243 3.3 IO Vertical Column Densities (VCDs) and mixing ratio profiles

244 The O<sub>4</sub> and IO DSCDs were used to retrieve the vertical column densities and the vertical profiles  
245 for aerosols and IO. A comparison of the MAX-DOAS observed O<sub>4</sub> DSCDs with the MAPA  
246 modelled DSCDs for all the four campaigns are shown in Figure S3, and Figure S4 shows a similar  
247 plot for the IO DSCDs. Figure 6 and 7 show the MAPA calculated AODs and IO VCDs,  
248 respectively, for all the campaigns. Several datapoints are flagged as error or warnings, with a few  
249 scans giving a ‘valid’ flag. In the case of aerosols, the warning or error flags are mainly for scans  
250 which were during cloudy weather (Figure S5 shows the data, which were flagged as ‘bad’ and  
251 ‘warning’ along with the valid scans). As mentioned above, the cloud cover was regularly  
252 measured throughout the campaigns as a part of the meteorological observations. In addition to  
253 visual observations, we also computed the cloud index following past works based on MAX-  
254 DOAS observations (Mahajan et al., 2012; Wagner et al., 2014), which confirmed that the error  
255 and warning flags were during cloud cover periods. For the valid scans, the aerosol optical depth  
256 (AOD) ranged between 0.002 and 0.016, with a mean value of 0.003 for ISEA-34 at Bharati;  
257 between 0.001 and 0.067, with a mean value of 0.011 for ISEA-34 at Maitri; between 0.001 and  
258 1.866, with a mean value of 0.037 for ISEA-35 at Bharati; and between 0.001 and 0.878, with a  
259 mean value of 0.016 for ISEA-36 at Bharati (Figure 6). The low values are expected considering  
260 the pristine conditions in Antarctica, although during a couple of scans elevated levels were

261 observed as demonstrated by the maximum value during ISEA-35 and ISEA-36. In the case of IO,  
262 there were far fewer valid retrieved profiles as can be seen in Figure 7 (Figure S6 shows the all  
263 scans, including the ‘bad’ and ‘warning’). Only 343 valid total scans were retrieved for the vertical  
264 profiles of IO. One of the main reasons is that for most of the scans the IO DSCDs at higher  
265 elevation angles are below the detection limit and not enough information is available for the  
266 model to retrieve a valid vertical profile. In the case of IO VCDs, there were only two scans that  
267 showed a valid flag over the 10-day period during the ISEA-34 campaign at Bharati due to adverse  
268 weather conditions leading to mostly cloudy weather. Thus, the mean VCD value of  $2.83 \times 10^{12}$   
269 molecules  $\text{cm}^{-2}$ , should be treated with some caution. In Maitri during ISEA-34, the IO VCD  
270 ranged between  $2.37 \times 10^{12}$  molecules  $\text{cm}^{-2}$  and  $4.25 \times 10^{12}$  molecules  $\text{cm}^{-2}$ , with a mean value of  
271  $3.40 \pm 0.57 \times 10^{12}$  molecules  $\text{cm}^{-2}$ . During ISEA-35 at Bharati, which had the highest number of  
272 valid scans over the four campaigns, the IO VCDs ranged between  $0.01 \times 10^{12}$  and  $5.86 \times 10^{12}$   
273 molecules  $\text{cm}^{-2}$ , with a mean value of  $2.62 \pm 1.16 \times 10^{12}$  molecules  $\text{cm}^{-2}$ . During ISEA-36, the IO  
274 VCDs ranged between  $2.78 \times 10^{12}$  molecules  $\text{cm}^{-2}$  and  $4.90 \times 10^{12}$  molecules  $\text{cm}^{-2}$ , with a mean value  
275 of  $3.92 \pm 0.79 \times 10^{12}$  molecules  $\text{cm}^{-2}$  at Bharati (Table S1).

276 In addition to the VCDs, vertical profiles of aerosols (Figure S7) and IO were estimated using  
277 MAPA. Figure 8 shows the typical vertical profiles of IO mixing ratios over the four expeditions.  
278 The surface mixing ratios for the valid scans across all the campaigns range between 0.2 and 1.3  
279 pptv (Table S1). The surface (<30 m) concentrations observed at both Maitri and Bharati are lower  
280 than observations in the Weddell Sea region, where summer time concentrations exceeding 6 pptv  
281 have been reported in the past (Atkinson et al., 2012; Saiz-Lopez et al., 2007a), or at the Neumayer  
282 station, where long-term zenith sky DOAS measurements of IO suggest mixing ratios as high as  
283 ~10 pptv during the summer (Frieß et al., 2001). It should be noted that although elevated

284 concentrations were observed at Halley, the average summer concentration, measured only 4 m  
285 above the snowpack using a Long-Path DOAS instrument, was about 3 pptv, approximately a  
286 factor of three higher than the observations at Bharati and Maitri. Considering that the MAX-  
287 DOAS retrieved profiles are not very sensitive to the lowermost few meters, this difference is  
288 expected. This is because the source of IO is expected to be from the surface and remote sensing  
289 estimates have suggested that high IO concentrations in the order of 50 ppbv are present in the  
290 snow interstitial air (Frieß et al., 2010), suggesting that snowpack is indeed the source for iodine  
291 compounds. If this is the case, a strong gradient would be observed considering the short lifetime  
292 of IO in the atmosphere, and hence the MAX-DOAS observations would be lower than the LP-  
293 DOAS observations. However, this does not explain the large difference compared to Neumayer,  
294 where the estimated value was 10 pptv. Indeed, Maitri is close to Neumayer, and the reasons for  
295 the large difference between the two sites remains a mystery. The observations reported in this  
296 study are also similar to measurements at McMurdo Sound, near the Ross Sea, where MAX-DOAS  
297 observations reported a maximum of  $2.6 \pm 0.1$  pptv with most of the observations below 1 pptv  
298 during 2006 and 2007 (Hay, 2010). It should be noted that the surface values were not highly  
299 weighted by the a priori. McMurdo Sound is also located in the East Antarctic, which shows lower  
300 levels of IO in the satellite estimates (Schönhardt et al., 2008) and in models (Fernandez et al.,  
301 2019).

302 Vertical profiles of IO have been reported only once in the past from Antarctica. These  
303 measurements were made at McMurdo Sound in East Antarctica (Hay, 2010). IO over two days in  
304 2006 and 2007 show typical surface concentrations of  $\sim 1$  pptv (with a maximum of 2.6 pptv),  
305 decreasing to  $\sim 0.2$  pptv at about 200 m. A second maximum of 0.6 pptv at  $\sim 700$  m was also  
306 observed, but the models do not reproduce this profile shape and the observations were subject to

307 large uncertainties with the vertical profile above 200 m dominated by the a priori (Hay, 2010).  
308 During the four campaigns studied here, elevated concentrations, similar to the surface, were  
309 usually observed until about 400 m. Above this height, there is a decrease, with the retrievals  
310 reducing to below 0.1 pptv (Figure 8). Although the boundary layer height was not available for  
311 most of the days, radiosonde observations (not shown), show that the boundary layer height ranged  
312 between 300-700 m. The means and their standard deviations for the lowest 400 m for the different  
313 campaigns are given in Table S1. The reducing standard deviations in the profile retrieval with  
314 altitude show that all the profiles which reproduce elevated IO close to the ground approach zero  
315 for higher altitudes, suggesting that most of the IO is within the lower part of the troposphere.  
316 However, this gradient is much more gradual than estimates predicted using the THAMO one-  
317 dimensional model at Halley Bay (Saiz-Lopez et al., 2008). In most models, the assumption is that  
318 the source is from the snowpack, and hence a strong decreasing gradient with altitude has been  
319 predicted (Saiz-Lopez et al., 2008). The gradient of this decrease depends on the photolysis of the  
320 higher oxides, and on the recycling of iodine reservoir species on aerosols, both of which have  
321 uncertainties. When the gradient was estimated in 2008 (Saiz-Lopez et al., 2008), the photolysis  
322 rates for the higher iodine oxides were not available but this has recently been measured in the  
323 laboratory (Lewis et al., 2020) and THAMO needs to be updated accordingly. Another important  
324 point to consider is that the MAX-DOAS observation-based profile retrievals typically get only a  
325 couple of points of information in the boundary layer and are hence not expected to capture this  
326 strong decrease.

### 327 **3.4 Comparison with satellite-based estimates**

328 The satellite-based vertical column densities of IO across the Weddell Sea region, and the region  
329 encompassing Bharati and Maitri are shown in Figure 9. The averaged satellite based VCD

330 observations suggest that lower levels of IO are expected at both the Indian bases as compared to  
331 places where ground-based observations have been reported in the past, such as Halley Bay and  
332 Neumayer. The mean and standard deviation over the eight years of observations for Bharati is  $0.6$   
333  $\pm 0.5 \times 10^{12}$  molecules  $\text{cm}^{-2}$ , while for Maitri the amount is  $0.5 \pm 0.5 \times 10^{12}$  molecules  $\text{cm}^{-2}$ , each  
334 for the whole time series. For single months the values can be higher: the mean IO VCD for Bharati  
335 is  $0.8$  or  $0.4 \times 10^{12}$  molecules  $\text{cm}^{-2}$  in December or February, respectively, and  $0.6 \times 10^{12}$  molecules  
336  $\text{cm}^{-2}$  in March for Maitri. This is lower than mean value of  $2.62 \pm 1.16 \times 10^{12}$  molecules  $\text{cm}^{-2}$   
337 observed at Bharati during ISEA-35, which was the longest dataset available in this study which  
338 suggests that the ground-based instruments observe larger VCDs as compared to the satellite based  
339 instruments. However, it should be noted that the SCIAMACHY data is an average over all the  
340 seasons, and individual daily datapoints as high as  $2.1 \times 10^{12}$  molecules  $\text{cm}^{-2}$  have been observed.  
341 Figure 10 shows the timeseries for Bharati and Maitri with daily averages (red dots) as well as  
342 monthly averages (blue triangles) for the years 2004 to 2011. Satellite measurements from within  
343 500 km around the stations were included in the analysis. It should be mentioned that this spatial  
344 averaging could cause introduction of larger uncertainties due to the heterogeneity in the IO  
345 distribution, but are necessary to improve the signal to noise.

346 When the whole IO column is constrained to the lower 400 m, the satellite retrieved VCDs translate  
347 to a range between  $0.6 - 1.3$  pptv. The daily satellite VCDs tend to exceed these averaged values  
348 and result in mixing ratios as high as 2 pptv. This is similar to the range observed through the four  
349 campaigns reported here. However, observations during the spring time were not made over these  
350 four campaigns, when emissions of iodine species have been shown to peak at Halley Bay (Saiz-  
351 Lopez et al., 2007a). During the spring season, values as high as 20 pptv was observed at Halley  
352 Bay, a factor of ten higher than during the summer at the Indian stations. However, the satellite



353 observations do not show a large peak over the springtime over both Indian stations. Another  
354 outstanding question is whether the satellites are sensitive to the lower 100-200 m, considering the  
355 strong gradient in IO. Figure S8 shows the block AMFs for satellite retrievals showing a significant  
356 difference between the block AMFs over Antarctica at different albedo values. Over the ice-  
357 covered regions in Antarctica, the satellite is sensitive to the lower troposphere as the albedo is  
358 usually 0.9 or above. Observations have shown that open water has an albedo of 0.05–0.2 (Jin et  
359 al., 2004), whereas the albedo of sea ice ranges between 0.6 and 0.7 for bare ice and 0.8–0.9 for  
360 snow-covered ice (Perovich et al., 2002). In the case of Bharati, the Quilty Bay is not ice covered  
361 during the summer and hence along the light path in Bharati, the sensitivity of the satellite is much  
362 lower. Use of a higher albedo would result in an underestimation of the VCD by the satellite, which  
363 is the case when compared to the ground-based instruments. At Mairti this should not be the case  
364 considering that Mairti is 125 km inland from the coast, and the ice shelf is less than 1 km from  
365 the station along the light path. It should be noted that the MAPA LUTs are calculated for a low  
366 surface albedo (5%) and hence, at least for some of the measurements, the surface albedo is  
367 probably much higher, especially at Mairti. As far as we understand, the effect of the surface  
368 albedo mainly cancels out in the MAX-DOAS analysis, but it could be one possible uncertainty  
369 on the retrieval results. Another reason for the discrepancy between the ground based and satellite  
370 retrieved VCDs could be the overpass time, which was approximately 09:00 am local time.  
371 Although this should not be a large factor during the summer months due to long sunlit hours, and  
372 that the numbers given above were averages through the entire campaign for the ground-based  
373 observations, measurements at Halley Bay have shown a strong diurnal profile peaking at noon  
374 (Saiz-Lopez et al., 2007a). Hence, it is possible that the ground-based observations, which are  
375 filtered for  $SZA > 75^\circ$ , capture higher values than the satellite.

376 Finally, a point to consider is that the satellite data available from SCIAMACHY is for the period  
377 of 2004-2011, whereas the MAX-DOAS observations were conducted over three summers from  
378 2015. This temporal discrepancy, although small considering the long satellite dataset, could  
379 contribute to the difference in the retrieved VCDs. Recent observations of iodine in ice-cores in  
380 the Alpine region and over Greenland have shown an increasing trend for atmospheric iodine in  
381 the northern hemisphere (Cuevas et al., 2018; Legrand et al., 2018). In the Antarctic only seasonal  
382 and geographical variations in halogens in the ice have been studied and no long term dataset is  
383 available (Vallelonga et al., 2017). The main cause for this increase is suggested to be an increase  
384 in tropospheric ozone, which drives the emission of iodine compounds from the ocean surface  
385 through heterogenous chemistry at the ocean interstitial surface (Carpenter et al., 2013). Although  
386 questions regarding the strength of this inorganic source in affecting IO concentrations in the  
387 Southern Ocean remain (Inamdar et al., 2020; Mahajan et al., 2019), it is possible that the  
388 discrepancy between the satellite and ground based data is because of a different time period.  
389 However, no increasing trend was observed in the satellite data for the period between 2004-2011  
390 (Figure 10), which suggests that a factor of three increase in the VCDs is most likely due to a  
391 difference in the measurement technique and sensitivities rather than a change in the emissions.

392

### 393 **3.5 Airmass origin dependence**

394 Year-long observations at Halley Bay in West Antarctica, which were made using the LP-DOAS  
395 instrument, suggested a oceanic primary source (Saiz-Lopez et al., 2007a). The authors showed  
396 through the tracking of airmass back-trajectories, which displayed that elevated levels of IO were  
397 present in airmasses that passed over the coastal and oceanic regions compared to the airmasses

398 that had only continental exposures. However, even in airmasses that had passed only over the  
399 continent for the past five days, the IO levels were still above the detection limit, which suggested  
400 that even if the primary source is oceanic, a secondary source from the snow pack contributed to  
401 the atmospheric IO. Indeed, subsequent studies have tried to explain the snowpack source through  
402 recycling of primary emissions from the ocean (Fernandez et al., 2019) and one study has even  
403 suggested a strong snowpack source based on simulated observations (Frieß et al., 2010). Although  
404 the levels of IO are much lower than the peak concentrations seen at Halley Bay, we studied the  
405 back-trajectories to see if the origin of airmasses lead to a difference in the observed IO levels at  
406 both Bharati and Maitri. Considering the short lifetime of reactive iodine compounds in the  
407 atmosphere, we calculated the exposure of each HYSPLIT calculated back-trajectory according to  
408 the region it passed over the last 12 hours. Depending on where the trajectories spend the most  
409 amount of time, they were classified into coastal, continental, and oceanic airmasses. The coastal  
410 region was defined as a  $0.5^\circ$  belt along the Antarctic coastline, with regions to the north and south  
411 of this belt considered to be oceanic and continental, even though most of them had coastal origin  
412 when the 5 day trajectories are considered (Figure S9). Using the profiles which were valid, no  
413 clear dependence on the airmass origin was observed. Indeed, most of the data points at both  
414 stations corresponded to airmasses which were either coastal or continental (Figure S10) and is  
415 representative of the typical wind patterns during the summer season. Thus, using this dataset, it  
416 was not possible to draw any conclusions regarding the possible sources of IO in this region, and  
417 a longer study is needed in the future.

418

#### 419 **4. Conclusions**

420 This study presents observations of iodine oxide (IO) at the Indian Antarctic bases Maitri and  
421 Bharati made over three summers from 2015 through 2017. IO was observed intermittently during  
422 all the campaigns, with mixing ratios below 2 pptv. Using a profile retrieval algorithm, vertical  
423 gradients of IO were estimated, and these showed a decreasing profile with a peak in the boundary  
424 layer. The vertical profiles confirmed past hypothesis of a source from the ground considering a  
425 sharp gradient. The vertical columns observed using the ground-based instrument are  
426 approximately a factor of three-five higher than the climatological mean observed by the satellite,  
427 which could be due to a difference in the measurement techniques and sensitivities. Airmass origin  
428 analysis using back-trajectories did not lead to a conclusive answer about the source regions.  
429 Indeed, it raises new questions on comparison with past observations, which show that we still do  
430 not understand iodine chemistry in the polar regions. This study suggests that a longer dataset over  
431 different seasons and regions of Antarctica is necessary to answer the outstanding questions  
432 regarding the sources and seasonal importance of IO in the Indian Ocean sector of Antarctica.

433

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#### 439 **6. Author contributions:**

440 ASM conceptualised the research plan and methodology, did the analysis and wrote the  
441 manuscript. MSB did the field observations. SB, TW, NB and ASL helped with the interpretation  
442 of the observations and AS provided the satellite observations and helped interpret them.

443

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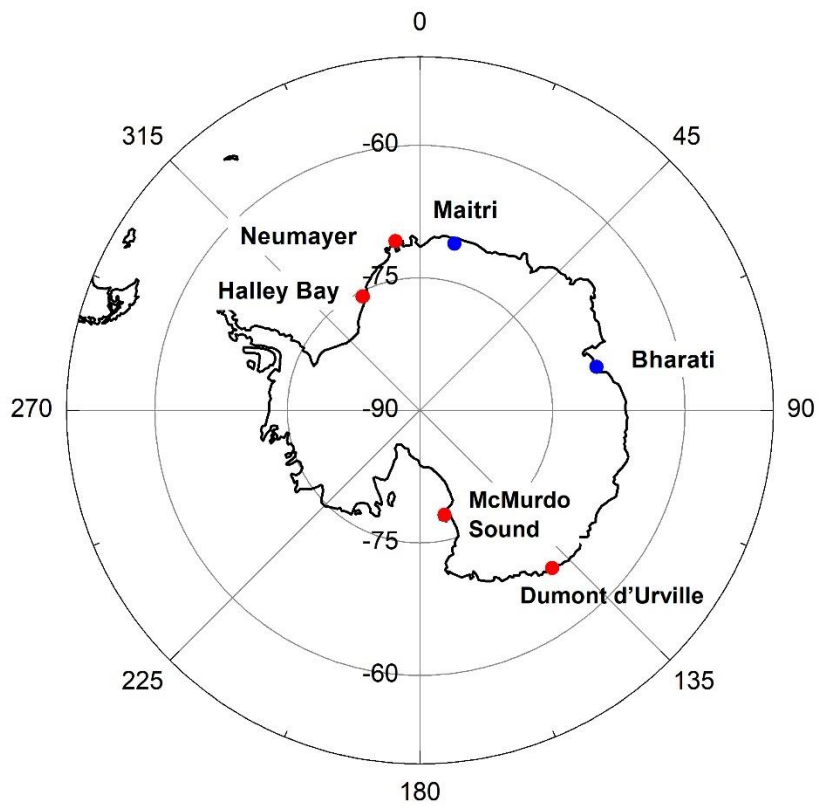
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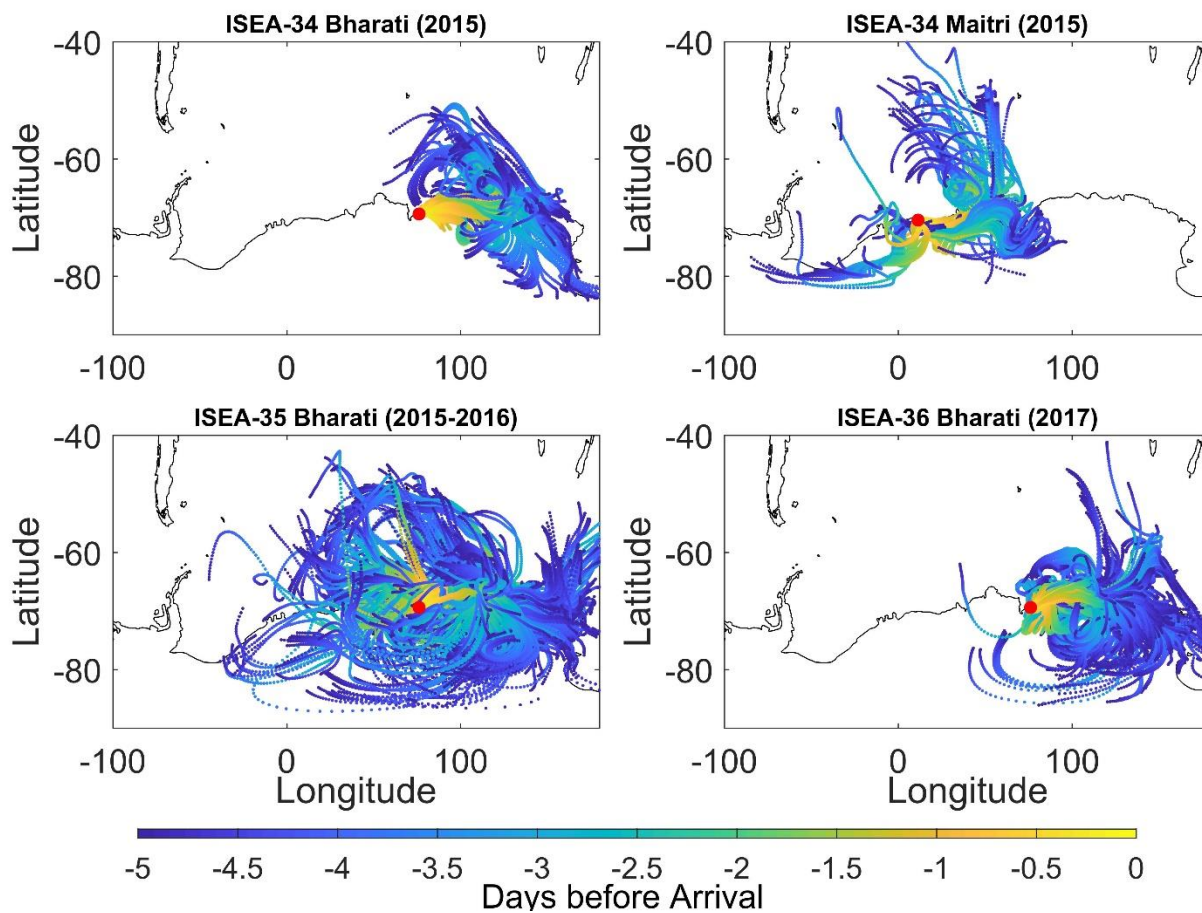




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677 **Figure 1:** Map showing the location of the two Indian Antarctic stations, Maitri and Bharati, where  
678 observations of IO were performed during this study (blue dots). Previous locations that have  
679 reported observations of IO (Frieß et al., 2001; Grilli et al., 2013; Hay, 2010; Saiz-Lopez et al.,  
680 2007a) are also marked on the map (red dots).

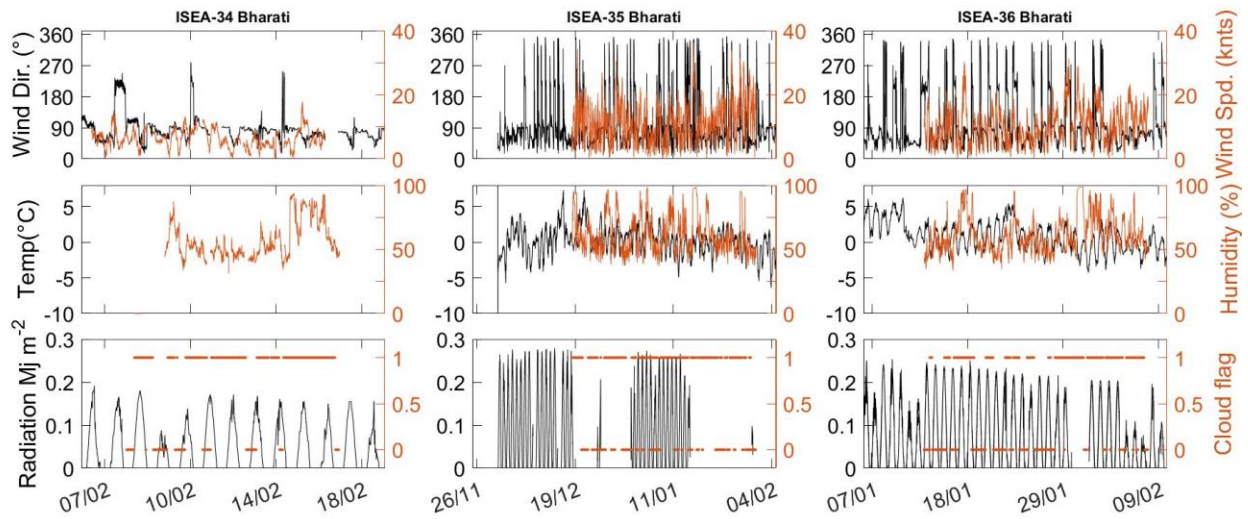
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683 **Figure 2:** 5-day back-trajectories arriving at the two stations on the days that the measurements of  
 684 IO were conducted as a part of the 34<sup>th</sup>, 35<sup>th</sup> and 36<sup>th</sup> ISEA expeditions are shown. The back-  
 685 trajectories were calculated using the HYbrid Single-Particle Lagrangian Integrated Trajectory  
 686 (HYSPLIT) model, arriving every hour (Draxler and Rolph, 2003).

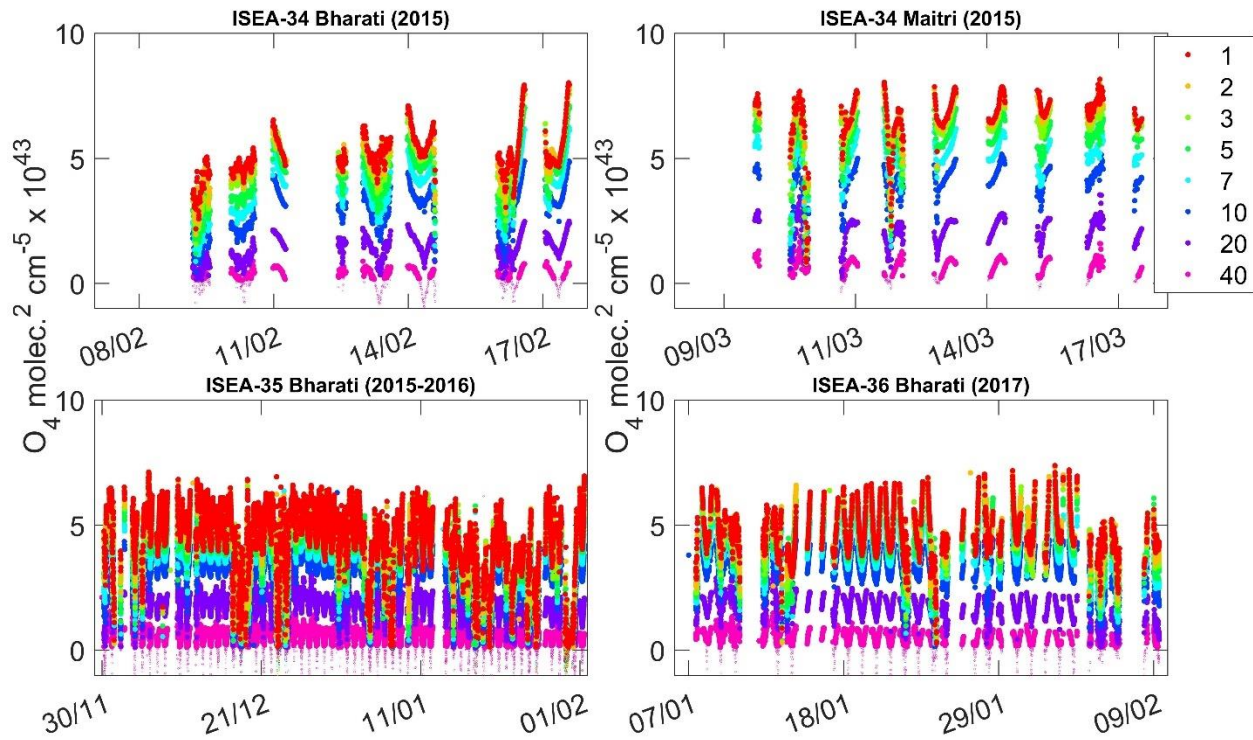
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689 **Figure 3:** Observations of different meteorological parameters that were measured during the  
 690 various summer campaigns are shown here. The top panels show the wind direction and speed; the  
 691 middle panels show the temperature and humidity; and the bottom panels show the radiation and  
 692 cloudiness (1 is defined as 30% cloudy skies and above). Observations of these parameters were  
 693 not made during the 34<sup>th</sup> ISEA at Maitri and the gaps indicate instrumental or observational issues.  
 694 The data had a time resolution of 5 min. **The times are in UTC.**

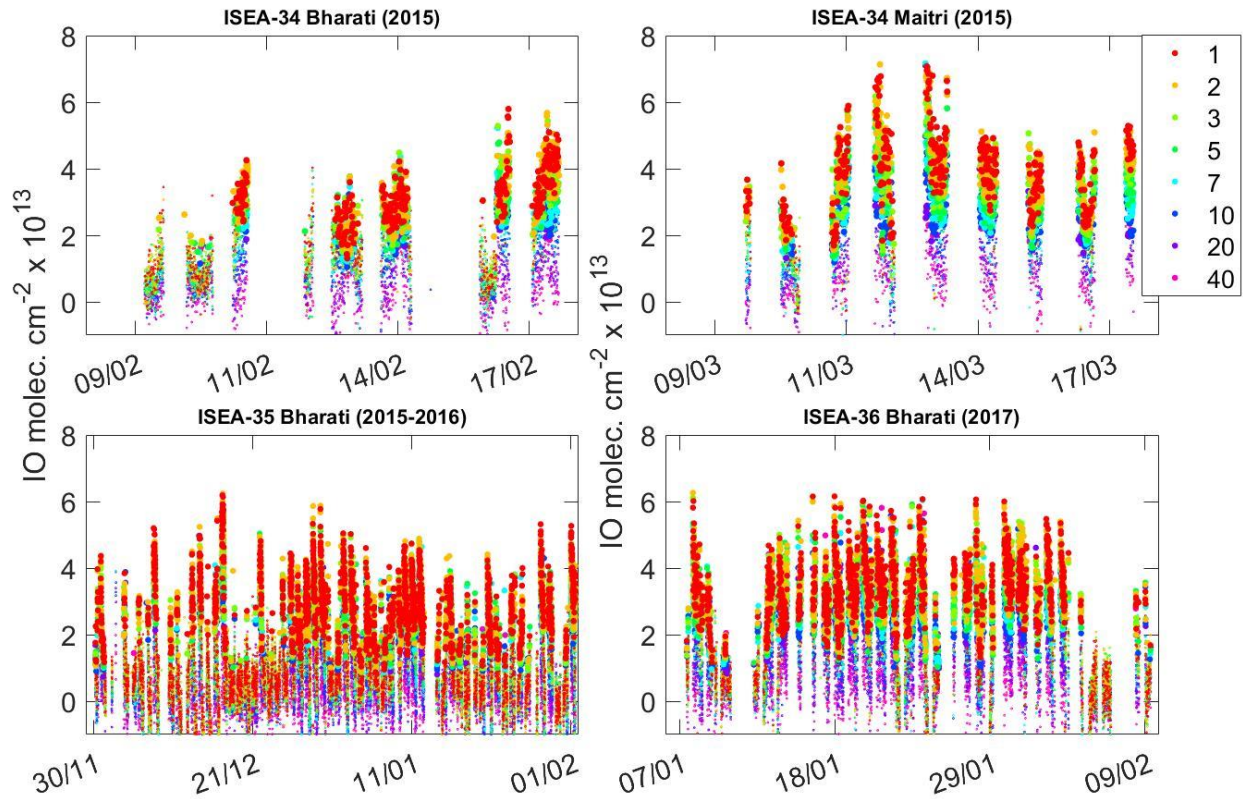
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697 **Figure 4:** O<sub>4</sub> DSCDs observed during the four campaigns are shown. The empty circles represent  
 698 values below the 2σ detection limit of the instrument, while the filled circles are values above the  
 699 2σ detection limit. The data are color-coded according to elevation angles. The times are in UTC.

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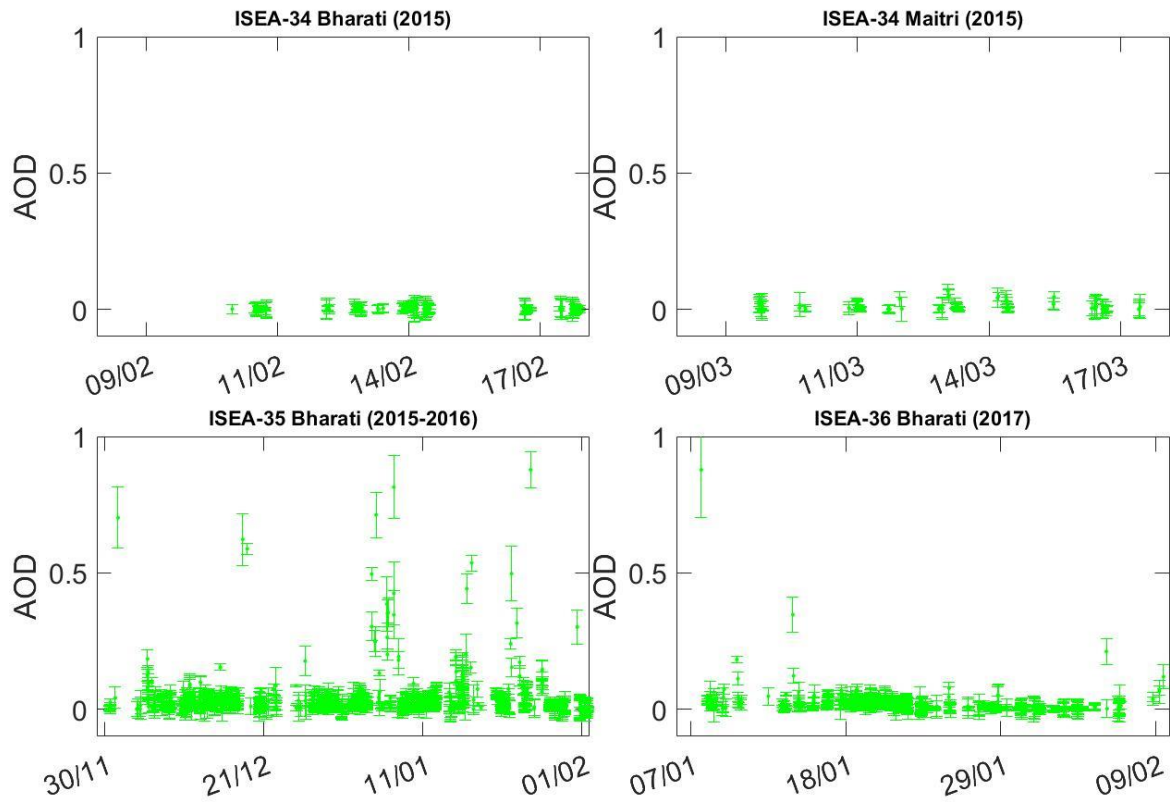
702 **Figure 5:** IO DSCDs observed during the four campaigns are shown. The smaller circles represent

703 values below the 2σ detection limit of the instrument, while the bigger circles are values above the

704 2σ detection limit. The data are color-coded according to elevation angles. **The times are in UTC.**

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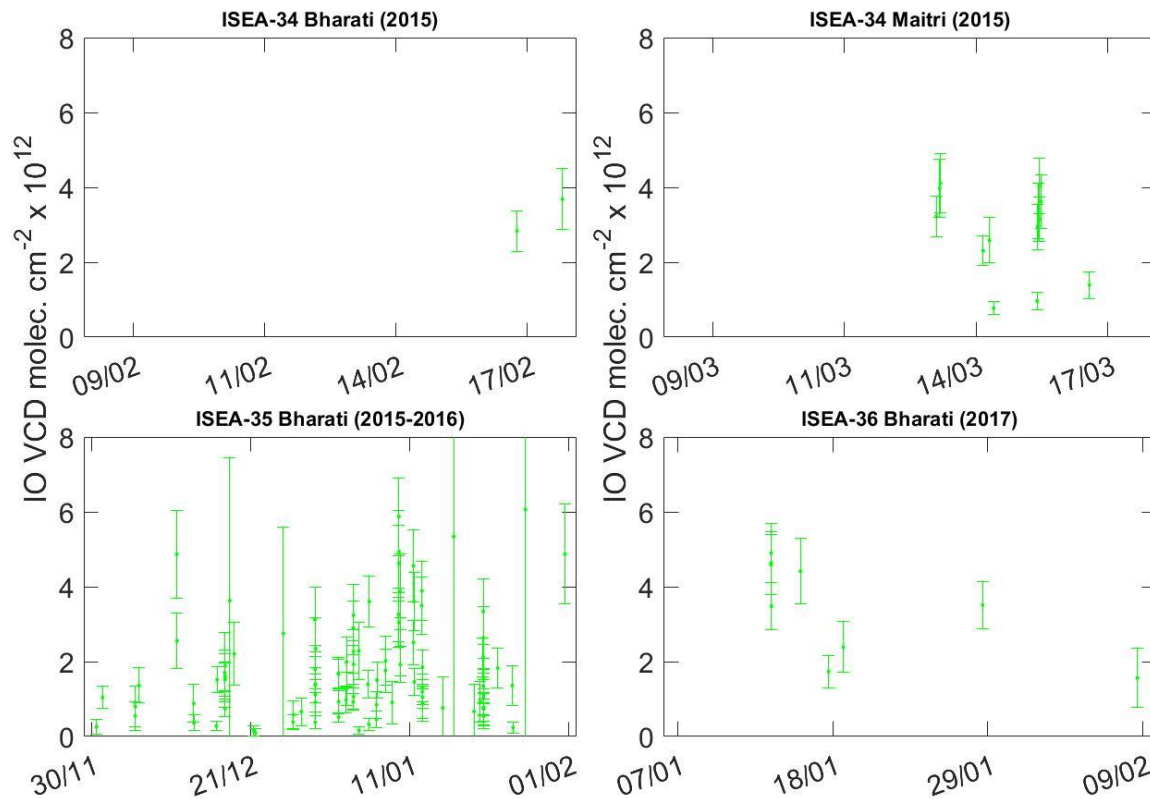
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708 **Figure 6:** AOD timeseries retrieved using the O<sub>4</sub> DSCDs for all the four campaigns are shown.

709 The data show only the 'good' datapoints, which are reliable and were mostly during clear sky

710 conditions. The times are in UTC.

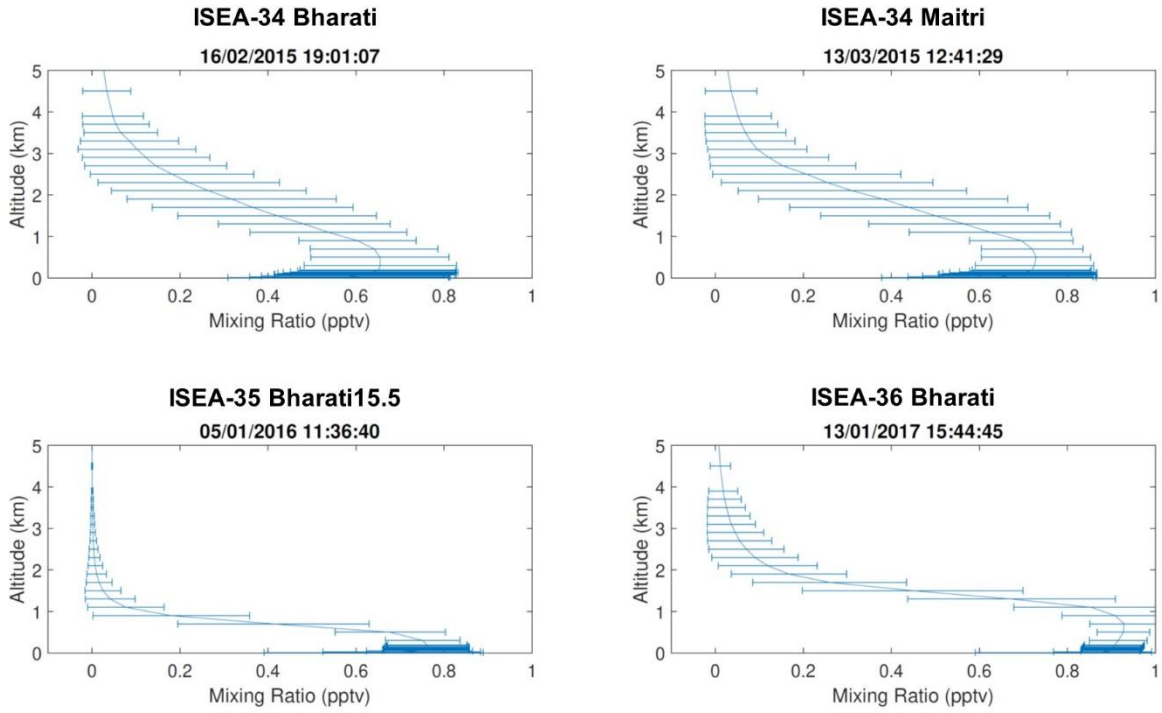
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713 **Figure 7:** Observations of IO vertical column densities observed through all the four campaigns  
 714 are shown. These data were mostly during periods of clear sky, and where IO was observed above  
 715 the detection limit for most of the set elevation angles, enabling a reliable profile retrieval. **The**  
 716 **times are in UTC.**

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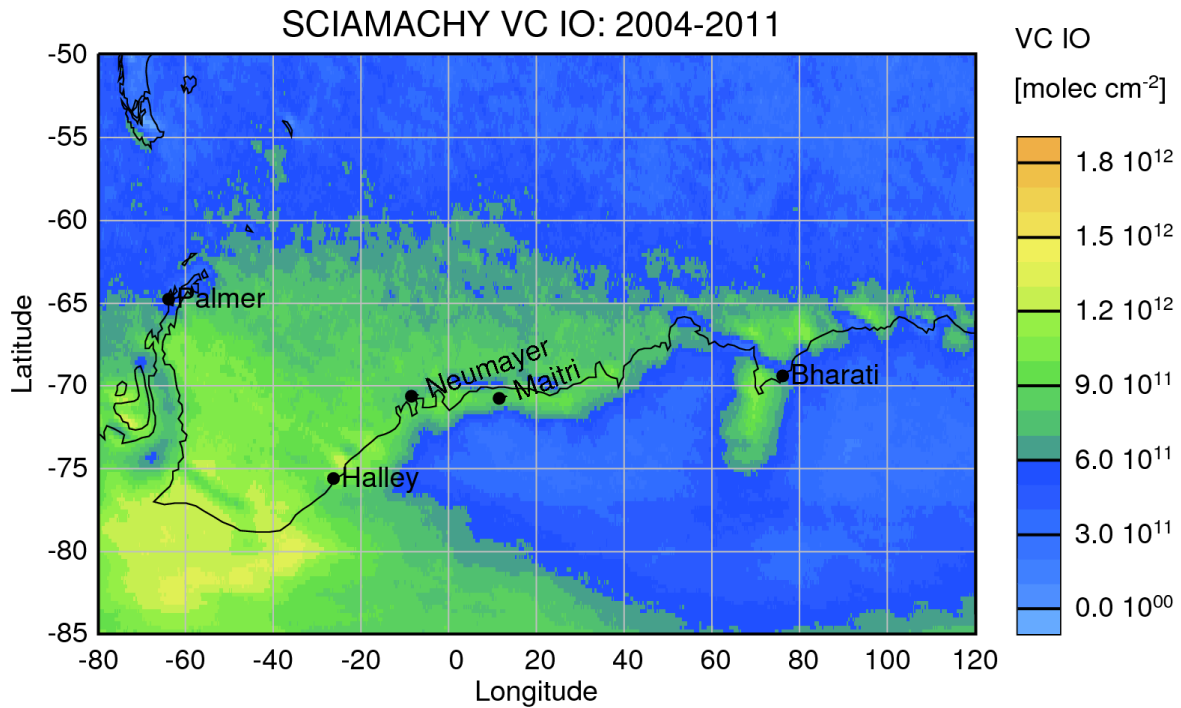


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719 **Figure 8:** Typical examples of IO vertical profiles retrieved during all the four campaigns are  
 720 shown.

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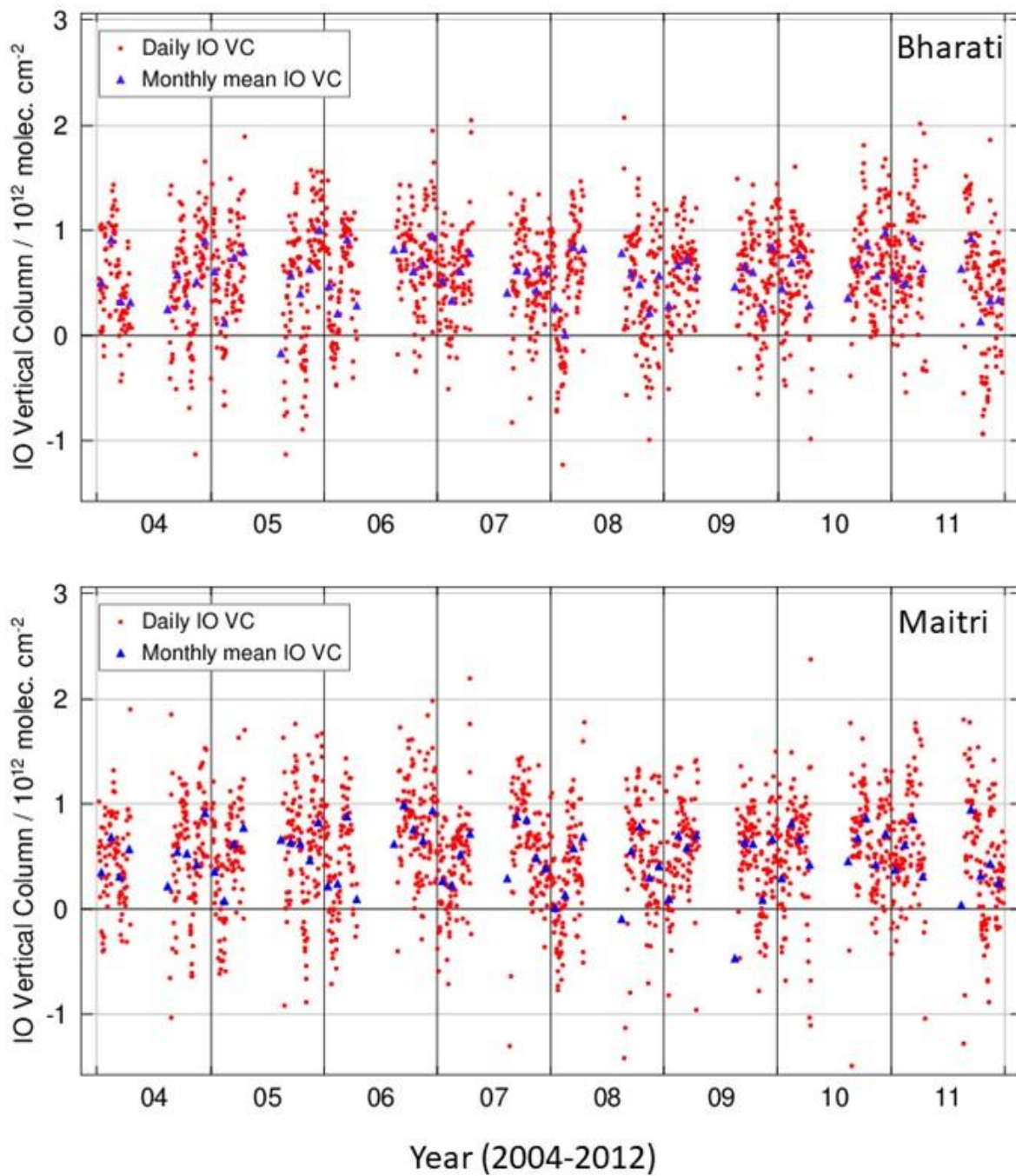




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723 **Figure 9:** Averaged VCDs of IO as retrieved by SCIAMACHY between 2004-2011 are shown.  
 724 Observations suggest that lower levels of IO are expected at Bharati and Maitri, as compared to  
 725 Halley Bay and Neumayer.

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727

728 **Figure 10:** Timeseries of IO VCD observations at the Bharati station as retrieved by  
 729 SCIAMACHY. The monthly mean values are shown in blue, and the daily datapoints are shown  
 730 in red.