1 # Influence of Photochemical Loss of VOCs on Understanding Ozone

2 # Formation Mechanism

3   Wei Ma[1], Zemin Feng[1], Junlei Zhan[1], Yongchun Liu[1*], Pengfei Liu[2,4,5], Chengtang Liu[2,4,5], Qingxin Ma[2,4,5],

4   Kang Yang[3], Yafei Wang[3], Hong He[2,4,5], Markku Kulmala[1,6], Yujing Mu[2,4,5], Junfeng Liu[2,4,5*]

5   1. Aerosol and Haze Laboratory, Advanced Innovation Center for Soft Matter Science and Engineering,

6   Beijing University of Chemical Technology, Beijing, 100029, China

7   2. Research Center for Eco-Environmental Sciences, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing, 100085, China

8   3. Beijing Institute of Petrochemical Technology, Beijing 102617, China

9   4. Center for Excellence in Regional Atmospheric Environment, Institute of Urban Environment, Chinese

10 Academy of Sciences, Xiamen 361021, China

11 5. University of Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing 100049, China

12 6. Institute for Atmospheric and Earth System Research, Faculty of Science, University of Helsinki, Helsinki,

13 00014, Finland

14 *Corresponding to: Yongchun liu (liuyc@buct.edu.cn) and Junfeng Liu (junfengliu@rcees.ac.cn)

16 **Abstract**

17   Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) tend to be consumed by atmospheric oxidants,

18   resulting in substantial photochemical loss during transport. An observation-based model is

19   used to evaluate the influence of photochemical loss of VOCs on the sensitivity regime and

20   mechanisms of ozone formation. Our results showed that a VOC-limited regime based on the

21   observed VOC concentrations shifted to a transition regime with the photochemical initial

22   concentration of VOCs (PIC-VOCs) in the morning. The net ozone formation rate was

23   underestimated by 3 ppb h^{-1} (36 ppb day^{-1}) based on the PIC-VOCs. The relative contribution

24   of the RO$_2$ path to ozone production based on the PIC-VOCs accordingly increased by 13.4%,

25   particularly, the contribution of alkenes derived RO$_2$ increased around 10.2%. The contribution

26   of local photochemistry might be underestimated to both local and regional ozone pollution if

27   the consumed VOCs was not accounted for, and policy-making on ozone pollution prevention

28   should focus on high-reactivity VOCs.

29

1. Introduction

Ground surface ozone (O_3) is an important atmospheric pollutant that is harmful to human health, such as connecting with respiratory, cardiovascular diseases and premature mortality (Cohen et al., 2017). It is also harmful to vegetation growth. For example, it led to annual reduction of the yield of rice and wheat by 8% and 6%, respectively, and the forest biomass growth by 11-13% in China (Feng et al., 2019). Surface O_3 concentrations have increased by 11.9% over eastern China under the air pollution control measures implemented in China from 2012 to 2017 (Dang and Liao, 2019). An economic loss will be 0.09% of the Chinese gross domestic products (78 billion CNY) in 2030 if the policies against O_3 pollution are not properly implemented (Xie et al., 2019). Therefore, it is urgent to take actions on O_3 pollution in China.

Tropospheric O_3 is mainly produced from photochemical reactions between volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and nitrogen oxides (NOx: $NO+NO_2$) (Seinfeld and Johnh, 2006; Zhang et al., 2021c). O_3 is generated from the collision of O_2 and $O(3P)$ that are produced from the photolysis of NO_2 in the atmosphere. Peroxyl radicals (HO_2 and RO_2), which produced from oxidation of VOCs by OH radical, can efficiently convert NO (from the photolysis of NO_2) to NO_2, then lead to net O_3 production by compensating the titration of O_3 by NO(Monks, 2005; Zhang et al., 2021a). Over past two decades, a number of field observations focused on the pollution level of O_3 and its precursors have been carried out in Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei (BTH), the Yangtze River Delta (YRD), and Pearl River Delt (PRD) regions (Wang et al., 2017; Li et al., 2019; Xue et al., 2014; Zhang et al., 2019). Due to the nonlinear relationship between O_3 and its precursors and the variations of meteorological conditions, numerous studies have

51 been performed for understanding the sensitivity regime (Ling and Guo, 2014; Zhang et al.,

52 2020) and the photochemical process of O_3 formation based on box model or observation-based

53 model (OBM) (He et al., 2019; Tan et al., 2019), and the source-receptor relationship of O_3

54 using a regional chemical transport mode (Li et al., 2016b; Li et al., 2016c). Recently, O_3

55 formation process, from the perspective of the instantaneous production rate, has attracted more

56 attention, such as the radical recycle (OH-RO$_2$-RO-HO$_2$-OH) relating to production of O_3 (Lu

57 et al., 2017; Tan et al., 2017; Whalley et al., 2018). It has been found that HCHO photolysis

58 and alkene ozonolysis contributed about 85 % of the primary production of HO_2 and HO

59 radicals in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou (Tan et al., 2019; Yang et al., 2017). The

60 importance of HONO and HCHO photolysis for primary radical production has also been

61 proposed in suburban and rural areas (Tan et al., 2017; Lu et al., 2012; Lu et al., 2013).

62   It should be pointed out that all of the OBM studies were based on the measured dataset

63 when investigating the relationship between O_3 and VOCs. However, VOCs is highly reactive

64 to atmospheric oxidants, such as OH, NO_3, and O_3, in which OH is the dominant one. The

65 lifetimes of some highly reactive VOCs such as isoprene are only as short as several ten minutes

66 under the typical daytime atmospheric conditions. Thus, the mixing ratio of VOCs observed at

67 a sampling site may differ from that at the source regions because of the photochemical loss

68 even during a short-range of transport. This may mislead the O_3 formation sensitivity, net O_3

69 production, subsequently, the policy-making on O_3 pollution prevention. Thus, the

70 photochemical-age-based approach has been applied to evaluate the effect of photochemical

71 process on VOC measurements (Shao et al., 2011). This method was used to qualitatively or

72   semi-quantitatively estimate the O_3 formation process of the source-receptor (Gao et al., 2018),

73   such as calculating O_3 formation potential (OFP) (Han et al., 2017), identifying the critical

74   species for O_3 formation (Gao et al., 2021), and evaluating the VOCs emission ratio (Yuan et

75   al., 2013). However, it is unclear how the highly reactive VOCs, which has degraded during

76   transport from the source to the receptor site, will affect the instantaneous formation process

77   of O_3.

78   In this study, an OBM is used to evaluate the local O_3 formation process in summer in

79   Beijing based on the concentrations of the observed and photochemical initial concentrations

80   of VOCs (PIC-VOCs). The O_3-NOx-VOCs sensitivity, the instantaneous O_3 formation rate and

81   the in-situ O_3 formation process are discussed. The aim of this study is to understand the

82   possible influence of photochemical loss of VOCs on the diagnosis of the formation sensitivity

83   regime of O_3. This study can provide a new insight for better understanding atmospheric O_3

84   pollution.

85   2. Methodology

86   2.1 Experimental section

87   Field observations were carried out in the Qingyuan campus of Beijing Institute of

88   Petrochemical Technology (BIPT, 39.73°N and 116.33°E) (Figure S1). The details about the

89   observation site has been described in our previous work (Zhan et al., 2021). Briefly, the site is

90   a typical suburb site in Daxing District between the 5th ring road and the 6th ring road. The field

91   campaign was carried out during August 1st-28th in 2019 when photochemistry was the most

92   active while rainfall was rare in Beijing.

93   The concentrations of non-methane hydrocarbons (NMHCs) were detected by both a gas

94   chromatography-flame ionization detector (GC/FID) and a single photon ionization (SPI) TOF-

95   MS (SPI-MS 3000, Guangzhou Hexin Instrument Co., Ltd., China). A detailed description of

96   instrumentation can be found in previous publications (Zhan et al., 2021; Chen et al., 2020).

97   The SPI-MS was also deployed to detect halohydrocarbons. More details of this instrument

98   and the parameter-setting have been described in previous studies(Zhang et al., 2019; Liu et al.,

99   2020a).. Briefly, a polydimethylsiloxane (PDMS; thickness of 0.002 int; Technical Products

100   Inc., USA) membrane was used to gathering VOCs and diffuse from the sample side to the

101   detector side under high vacuum conditions. A vacuum ultraviolet (VUV) light generated by a

102   commercial D2 lamp (Hamamatsu, Japan) was utilized for ionization at 10.8 eV. For ion

103   detection, two microchannel plates (MCPs, Hamamatsu, Japan) assembled with a chevron-type

104   configuration are employed. This TOF-MS has an LOD varied from 50 ppt to 1 ppb with 1

105   minute of time resolution for most trace gases without any pre-concentration procedure. To

106   verify the data compatibility of the SPIMS and GC/FID, we compared the concentrations of

107   toluene measured using these two different instruments (Figure S2). The correlation coefficient

108   is 0.92, indicating that the concentrations of NMHCs are comparable using these two

109   measurement techniques.

110   Oxygenated VOCs (OVOCs) were collected and analyzed using a high-performance

111   liquid chromatography (HPLC, Inertsil ODS-P 5 μm 4.6 × 250 mm column, GL Sciences) with

112   acetonitrile-water binary mobile phase(Ma et al., 2019). OVOCs were collected into 2,4-

113   dinitrophenylhydrazine (DNPH)-coated silica gel cartridges (Sep-Pak, Waters) by an automatic

114   sampling device, with the sampling flow rate of 1.2 L min-1 and the duration of 2 h for each

115   sample. To avoid possible contamination or desorption after sampling, cartridges were capped,

116   placed into tightly closed plastic bags and kept in a refrigerator before analysis. The sampled

117   cartridges were eluted by 5 mL acetonitrile and analyzed by HPLC as soon as possible after

118   they were shipped back to the laboratory. This system was calibrated through 8-gradient

119   standard solutions (TO11/IP-6A Aldehyde/Ketone-DNPH Mix, SUPELCO). The correlation

120   coefficients were all greater than 0.999. The LOD for most OVOCs is about 10 ppt.

121   Trace gases, including NO_x, SO_2, CO, and O_3, were measured using the corresponding

122   analyzer (Thermo Scientific, 42i, 43i, 48i, and 49i, respectively). The HONO concentration

123   was measured using a home-made long path absorption photometer (LOPAP) (Liu et al.,

124   2020c). The meteorological parameters, including temperature (T), pressure (P), relative

125   humidity (RH), wind speed, and wind direction, were measured using a weather station

126   (AWS310, Vaisala). The photolysis rate (J_{NO2}) was measured via a continuous measurement of

127   the actinic flux in the wavelength range of 285-375 nm using a J_{NO2} filter-radiometer (J_{NO2}

128   radiometer, Metcon).

129   **2.2 Calculation of photochemical loss of VOCs.**

130   The photochemical loss of VOC was calculated using the ratio method (Wiedinmyer et

131   al., 2001; Yuan et al., 2013). The initial mixing ratio of a specific VOC was calculated using

132   the equations(Mckeen et al., 1996):

133     $$[VOC_i]_t = [VOC_i]_{t0} \times \exp(-k_i \times [OH] \times \Delta t) \quad (1)$$

134     $$\Delta t = \frac{1}{[OH] \times (k_X - k_E)} \times \left\{ ln\left(\frac{X_0}{E_0}\right) - ln\left(\frac{X_t}{E_t}\right) \right\} \quad (2)$$

135   where $[VOC_i]_t$ and $[VOC_i]_{t0}$ are the observation concentration and the initial concentration of

136   VOC_i; k_i is the second-order reaction rates between the compound i and $[OH]$; $[OH]$ and Δt are

137   the concentration of OH radical and photochemical aging time, respectively. k_X and k_E are rate

138   constant for the reaction between OH radicals and xylene (7.00×10^{-12} cm^3 molecule^{-1} s^{-1}) and

139   ethylbenzene (1.87×10^{-11} cm^3 molecule^{-1} s^{-1}) (Atkinson and Arey, 2003), respectively. (X_0/E_0)

140   is the ratio between the initial xylene and ethylbenzene mixing ratios, and (X_t/E_t) is the ratio

141   between the observed xylene and ethylbenzene mixing ratios at time. In this study, we chose

142   the mean concentrations of xylene and ethylbenzene at 05:00-06:00 as the initial concentrations

143   (no photochemical loss) to calculate the photochemical loss of OH exposure. As can be seen

144   from Figure S3, the concentrations of xylene and ethylbenzene are well correlated, which

145   indicates that they are homologous emitted simultaneously. The calculated OH exposure ($[OH]$

146    $\times\Delta t$) was $4.3\pm1.9\times10^6$ molecule cm^{-3} h. Accordingly, the mean photochemical ages were 1.7

147   ±0.9 h using the mean daytime (8:00-17:00 LT) OH concentrations ($4.3\pm3.1\times10^6$ molecules

148   cm^{-3}) estimated using our previous method (Liu et al., 2020b; Liu et al., 2020c). This means

149   that the VOCs would undergo obvious degradation even in a short-range of transport in the

150   atmosphere.

151   It should be noted that the k_{OH} of isoprene is 9.98×10^{-11} cm^3 molecule^{-1} s^{-1} at 298.15 K

152   (Atkinson and Arey, 2003), almost two orders than other VOCs. The ratio method assumes

153   constant emissions for VOCs. However, the emission of isoprene greatly depends on

154   temperature and solar irradiation intensity (Zhang et al., 2021b). Besides the photochemical

155   loss, additional correction of daytime isoprene concentrations was performed using the average

156   diurnal flux of isoprene emissions (Figure S4) (Zhang et al., 2021b). The emission of isoprene

157   shows a clear unimodal curve, and the volume concentration of isoprene is calculated based on

158   the daily emission curve using Eq. (S1).

159   **2.3 Observation-based model simulation**

160   A box model based on the Master Chemical Mechanism (MCM3.3.1) and the Regional

161   Atmospheric Chemical Mechanism (RACM2) were used in this study. The MCM3.3.1 was

162   used to understand the instantaneous ozone formation process, and the RACM2 was used to

163   depict the ozone isopleth due to the high computational efficiency (Sect. 2.4). Table S1 shows

164   the model inputs. The model calculation is constrained with the measured meteorological

165   parameters (RH, T, P, and J_{NO2}) and the concentrations of trace gases, including inorganic

166   species (NO, NO_2, CO, SO_2, and HONO) and 61 organic species (NMHCs (46), OVOCs (8),

167   and halohydrocarbons (7)). The model was validated using the observed and simulated O_3

168   concentrations, which showed good consistency as shown in Figure. S5. The slope and

169   correlation coefficient were 0.90 and 0.82 (Figure. S6), respectively, indicating the rationality

170   of model simulation.

171   The ozone formation rate $P(O_3)$ can be quantified by the oxidation rate of NO to NO_2 by

172   peroxyl radicals (Tan et al., 2019), as expressed in Eq. (3). In this study, the modeled peroxyl

173   radical concentrations are used to calculate the ozone production rate.

174     $$P(O_3) = k_{HO_2+NO}[HO_2][NO] + k_{RO_2+NO}[RO_2][NO] \quad (3)$$

175   where $P(O_3)$ is the ozone formation rate; $[HO_2]$ and $[RO_2]$ are the number concentrations of

176   HO_2 and RO_2 radicals; k_{HO2+NO} and k_{RO_2+NO} are the second reaction rates between the HO_2 and

177   RO_2 and NO. Once ozone formed, it will be consumed by OH, HO_2, and alkenes. Also, a part

178   of NO_2 can react with OH, resulting in the formation of nitrate before photolysis. The chemical

179   loss of both O_3 and NO_2 is considered in the calculation of the net ozone production rate (Tan

180   et al., 2019),

181    $$L(O_3) = \left(k_{O_3+OH}[OH] + k_{O_3+HO_2}[HO_2] + k_{O_3+alkenes}[alkenes]\right)[O_3] +$$

182    $$k_{NO_2+OH}[NO_2][OH] \quad (4)$$

183   where $L(O_3)$ is the ozone chemical loss rate; $[HO]$ is the number concentration of HO radical;

184   k_{O3+OH}, k_{O3+HO2}, and $k_{O3+alkenes}$ are the second reaction rate between the O_3 and OH, HO_2 and

185   alkenes, respectively; and k_{NO2+OH} is the second reaction rate between the NO_2 and OH. Finally,

186    $F(O_3)$ is the net ozone formation rate by the difference between the $P(O_3)$ and $L(O_3)$ as

187   expressed in Eq. (5),

188    $$F(O_3) = P(O_3) - L(O_3) \quad (5)$$

189   **2.4 Empirical Kinetic Modeling Approach**

190   The empirical kinetic modeling approach (EKMA) used in this work is a set of imaginary

191   tests to reveal the dependence of photochemical oxidation products on the change in precursors.

192   We set up 30 × 30 matrixes by reducing or increasing the measured VOCs and NOx

193   concentrations to the model input. The resulting radical concentrations and ozone production

194   rates are calculated correspondingly.

195   In this stage, the observed VOCs are grouped into different parcels according to the

196   classification of RACM2, and more details can be found in the previous publication (Tan et al.,

197   2017). The chemical model simulates the photochemical reactions with the parameters at a

198   time interval of 5 minutes, which is enough for the NO, NO_2, OH, HO_2, and RO_2 reaching

199   steady state due to the typical relaxation time of the chemical system is 5-10 minutes in summer

200   (Tan et al., 2018). The ozone production rate is calculated as described in Sect. 2.3.

201   3. Results and discussion

202   3.1 Overview of diurnal variation of O_3, NOx, TVOC

203   Figure 1 shows the average diurnal variation of O_3, NOx, and TVOCs (includes alkanes,

204   alkenes, OVOCs, and halohydrocarbons), driven by the emissions, photochemical reactions

205   and the evolution of the mixing layer height (MLH). The ozone concentration during the

206   observation period was 44.8 ± 27.2 ppb with a maximum of 119.1 ppb as reported in our

207   previous study (Zhan et al., 2021), which is generally comparable with the O_3 concentrations

208   during 2014-2018 (Ma et al., 2020). O_3 followed a unimodal curve with a minimum (18.8 ± 15.4

209   ppb) at 07:00, then increased to the maximum (69.6 ppb) at 15:00 as photochemical ozone

210   formation. On the contrary, NOx was up to the maximum concentration (39.7 ± 14.2 ppb) at

211   07:00, and then decreased. After 07:00, the mixing ratio of NO went down all the time, while

212   the concentration of NO_2 decreased at first, while started to grow at 14:00. The diurnal

213   variations of the observed TVOCs were generally consistent with NO_2. The observed TVOCs

214   concentrations ranged from 2.2 to 23.2 ppb, with a mean value of 18.6 ± 2.6 ppb. Compared to

215   the same period (45.4 ± 15.2 ppb) in August 2015 (Li et al., 2016a), the concentration of VOCs

216   in Beijing has been effectively reduced. However, the photochemical initial concentrations

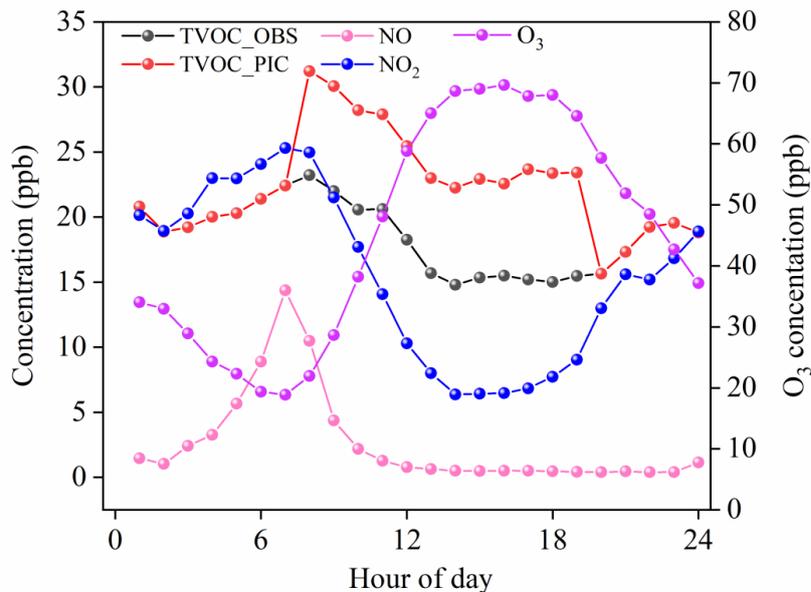
217   (PICs) of TVOCs, which varied from 2.2 to 31.2 ppb with a mean value of 22.4 ± 3.8 ppb,

218   showed a different diurnal curve compared with the observed one. It slightly increased from

219   14:00 to 17:00, which is similar with the diurnal variation of the VOCs in previous work (Zhan

220   et al., 2021). The daytime PIC-VOCs was 7.7±0.46 ppb higher than the observed concentration

221   of TVOCs, indicating an underestimated contribution of local photochemistry of VOCs to O_3

222   and organic aerosol formation.

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224   **Figure. 1.** Overview of diurnal variations of O_3, NOx, and TVOC

225   **3.2 Influence of photochemical loss of VOCs on O_3 formation sensitivity regime**

226   The sensitivity of O_3 formation is analyzed using the isopleth diagram which was

227   generated from the EKMA model, which is widely use to study O_3-NOx-VOCs sensitivity

228   qualitatively. As described in Sect. 2.4, the concentrations of NO_2 and VOCs were artificially

229   scaled ±75% of the observed values to disclose the response of O_3 concentration to an

230   imaginary change in the concentrations of NO_2 and VOC with other constrained conditions

231   unchanged. Figure. 2 shows the typical EKMA curves during our observations. The black full

232 star and pentagon denote the observed concentrations of NOx and VOCs in the morning and at

233 noon, respectively, while the blue symbols are the corresponding values of PICs. Based on the

234 measured data, the O$_3$ formation was in a VOCs-limited regime in the morning and a NOx-

235 limited regime at noon. The black arrow indicated a linearly decreasing trend of NOx and VOCs

236 from 08:00 to 15:00 in the chemical coordinates system, and the ozone production shifted from

237 VOC-limited to NOx-limited conditions from morning to noon, which was consistent with the

238 mean diurnal profiles (Figure. 1). This is similar to that reported in Wangdu (Tan et al., 2018).

239 As expected, the ozone production shifted from a VOC-limited regime (the observed VOCs)

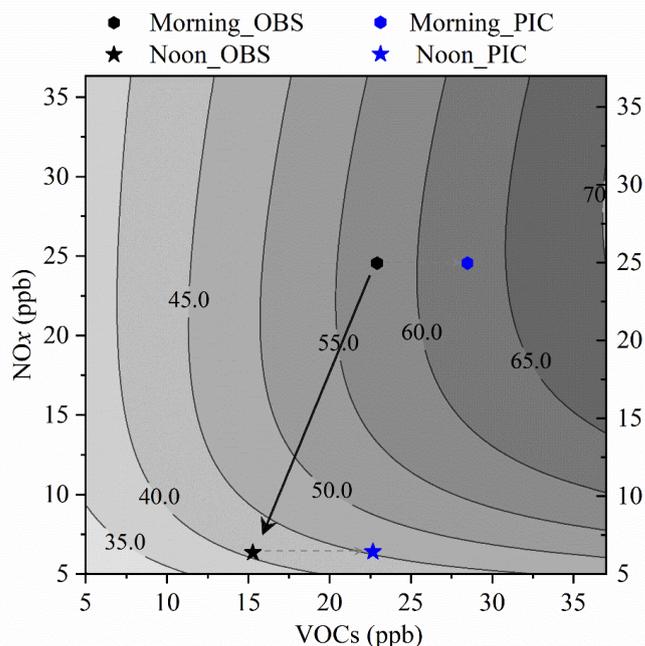
240 to a transition one based on the PIC-VOCs in the morning. It further obviously moved to a

241 NOx-limited regime at noon after the photochemically consumed NOx and VOCs had been

242 accounted for (Figure. 2). These results denoted that the O$_3$ formation mechanism might be

243 misdiagnosed, misleading the mitigation measures for O$_3$ prevention if not considering the

244 consumed VOCs in the real atmospheric condition because the average photochemical aging

245 time was only 1.7±0.9 h.

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247 **Figure 2.** Isopleth diagram of the ozone concentration as functions of the concentration of
248 NOx and VOCs derived from an empirical kinetic modeling approach. The pentagons and
249 starts indicate the status in the morning and at noon, respectively. The black-filled and blue
250 filled are the observed and corrected status, respectively.

251 **3.3 Contribution of VOC species to O$_3$ production**

252   The time series of simulated OH, HO$_2$, and RO$_2$ concentrations are used to calculate the

253 $P(O_3)$ and $L(O_3)$. The diurnal averaged $P(O_3)$ and $L(O_3)$ are shown in Figure 3. The ozone

254 formation can be divided into RO$_2$+NO and HO$_2$+NO related processes (Sect. 2.3). According

255 to VOC precursors, the peroxyl radical groups are divided into alkane-derived (ALKAP),

256 alkene-derived (AlKEP), aromatic-derived (AROMP), isoprene-derived (ISOP), oxygenated-

257 VOC-derived (OVOCP), and halohydrocarbon-derived (HALOP) RO$_2$ and HO2P. The ozone

258 destruction processes include the reaction between O$_3$ and HOx (O3D1), the reaction between

259 O1D and H$_2$O (O3D2), alkenes (O3D3), and the reaction between NO$_2$ and OH (O3D4).

260   Based on the observed VOCs (or PIC-VOCs), the fast O_3 production rate was observed at

261   14:00 (or 13:00), with a diurnal maximum value of 16.1 (or 25.6) ppb h^{-1} (Figure 3a and 3b),

262   while the peaked destruction rate was 6.4 (or 8.6) ppb h^{-1} at 15:00 (or 13:00) (Figure 3c and

263   3d). The average daytime $P(O_3)$ based on the initial concentrations of VOCs was 4.0±3.1 ppb

264   h^{-1} higher than that based on the measured concentrations (Figure 3b). At the same time, the

265    $F(O_3)$ based on the initial concentrations of VOCs was also 3.0±2.1 ppb h^{-1} higher than the

266   counterpart (Figure S7). Thus, the net O_3 production can accumulatively be underestimated by

267   36 ppb day^{-1} if the consumption of VOCs was not considered. This means the contribution of

268   local formation of O_3 should be underestimated using the directly measured VOCs

269   concentrations.

270   The HO_2 path contributed 64.8% to the total ozone formation on average, which is slightly

271   higher than the reported value (57.0%) in Wangdu (Tan et al., 2018); whereas, the RO_2 path

272   contributed to the rest part, in which aromatics (9.4%), alkenes (8.4%), isoprene (7.8%),

273   alkanes (4.7%), OVOCs (4.3%) and halohydrocarbons (0.6%) were the main contributors. As

274   for the PIC-VOCs, the dominant path of production of O_3 (51.7%) was still the HO_2 path,

275   followed by the RO_2 path related to alkenes (14.7%), aromatics (12.8%), and isoprene (11.7%).

276   The relative contribution of the RO_2 path to $P(O_3)$ increased by 13.4% compared with the

277   measured-VOCs, particularly alkenes derived RO_2 increased 10.2%. As shown in Figure 3c

278   and 3d, the destruction of total oxidants was dominated by the reaction between O_3 and alkenes

279   (O3D3) in the morning. It gradually shifted to the reaction between NO_2 and OH (O3D4) from

280   11:00 to 16:00, the photolysis of O_3 followed by reaction with water (O3D2) from 12:00 to

281 15:00 because O_3 concentration increased while NO_2 decreased (Figure 3c). The O_3 destruction

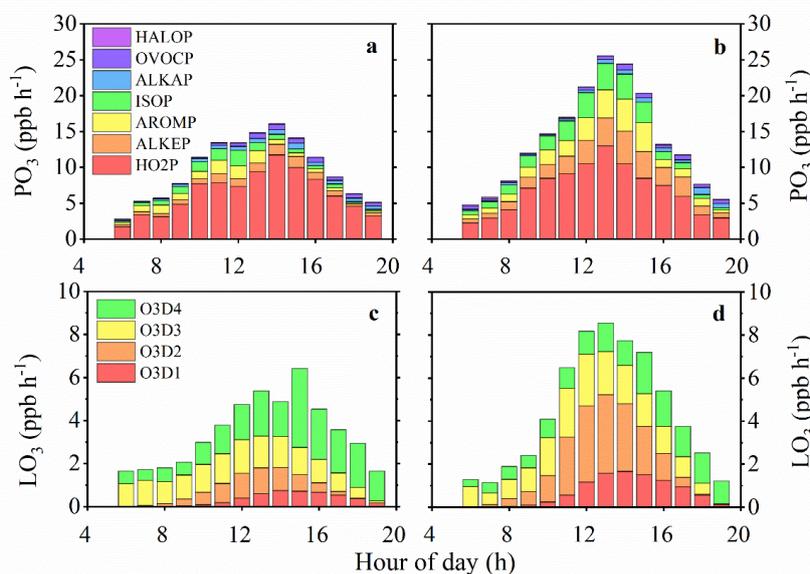
282 of HOx and O_3 reaction (O3D1) gradually increased with the continuous photochemical

283 reaction. In addition, the maximum O_3 formation rate of the RO_2 derived from OVOCs and

284 halohydrocarbons were 0.75 and 0.18 ppb h^{-1}. These values could be underestimated due to the

285 incomplete gas reaction mechanism of OVOCs and halohydrocarbons in the MCM3.3.1. In

286 general, the measured VOCs as model input could not truly reflect the oxidation capacity and

287 underestimate the local formation of O_3 and organic aerosol (Zhan et al., 2021).

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289 **Figure 3.** Mean diurnal profile of the instantaneous ozone production and destruction rate
290 calculated from the MCM-OBM model (instantaneous ozone rate derived from observed VOCs
291 in a and c, and from PIC-VOCs in b and d). The upper panel presents the speciation ozone
292 formation rate. The lower panel presents the speciation ozone destruction rate.

293 The budget of OH-HO$_2$-RO$_2$ radicals was further analyzed to understand the

294 photochemical O_3 formation process. All radical cycles are divided into four groups (source,

295 sink, propagation, and equilibrium between radical and reservoir species) based on the different

296   radical reaction processes (Tan et al., 2019). The comparison of radical budget derived from

297   the observed and PIC-VOCs is shown in Figure 4. The values of different radical paths based

298   on observed VOCs are in the range of radical budget analysis reported in Beijing, Shanghai,

299   and Guangzhou(Tan et al., 2019). The average formation rates (the numbers in Figure 4) of

300   these four processes (OH, HO_2, RCO_3, and RO_2) derived from PIC-VOCs were higher than

301   that from the observed VOCs. In particular, the reaction between NO and RO_2 and HO_2

302   increased by 1.6 and 1.3 ppb h^{-1}, respectively, which was equal to average $F(O_3)$ in the process

303   analysis above. The contribution for the reaction between O_3 and alkenes to HO and HO_2

304   radical increased 14% and 6%, respectively. As for the radical sink, radical propagation, and

305   equilibrium, they were consistent with the radical source. Furthermore, the O_3 formation from

306   the RO_2 path based on the radical budget analysis increased 4.1% from 39.5% (observed-VOCs)

307   to 43.6% (PIC-VOCs). These results denote that the O_3 formation process between the

308   observed and initial VOCs showed no significant difference, while the formation rate should

309   be underestimated if the consumed VOCs was not considered.
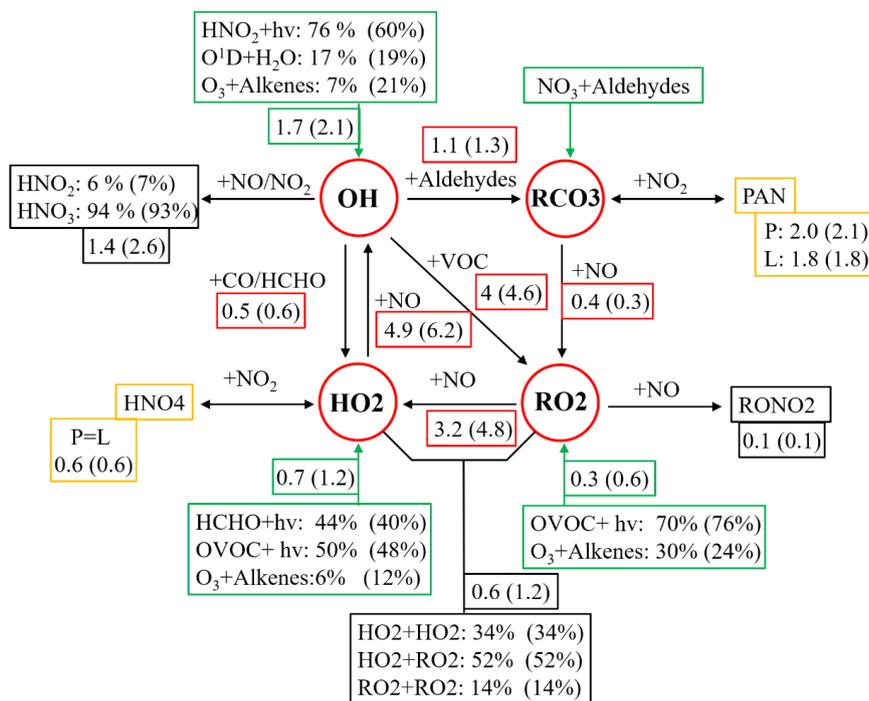
Figure 4. Comparison of the OH-HO$_2$-RO$_2$ radical budget derived from the observed and PIC-VOCs under the daytime conditions (07:00 to 19:00 LT). The green, black, red and yellow boxes denote the sources of radicals, radical sink, radical propagation, and the racial equilibrium, respectively. The numbers outside and inside the brackets in the boxes are the average formation rates (ppb h^{-1}) from the observed and PIC-VOCs.

3.4 In-situ O$_3$ formation process

Besides chemical processes, which can be simulated using the OBM-MCM model, the transport processes includes horizontal, vertical transportation and dry deposition processes (Tan et al., 2019) also have important influence on the O$_3$ concentration. Thus, the change of instantaneous ozone concentration can reflect the combination effect between the photochemical and the physical transport processes (Tan et al., 2019) . It can be expressed as,

$$\frac{dO_x}{dt} = F(O_3) + R(O_3) \quad (6)$$

where dOx/dt is the O$_3$ concentration change rate based on the measured data (ppb h^{-1}); $F(O_3)$

324   is the net O_3 formation rate (ppb h^{-1}), and $R(O_3)$ indicates the transportation (ppb h^{-1}). The

325   positive value of $R(O_3)$ means the inflow of O_3 with the airmass, and vice versa. O_3 was

326   replaced with Ox (O_3+NO_2) to correct the titration of O_3 by NO(Pan et al., 2015) .

327
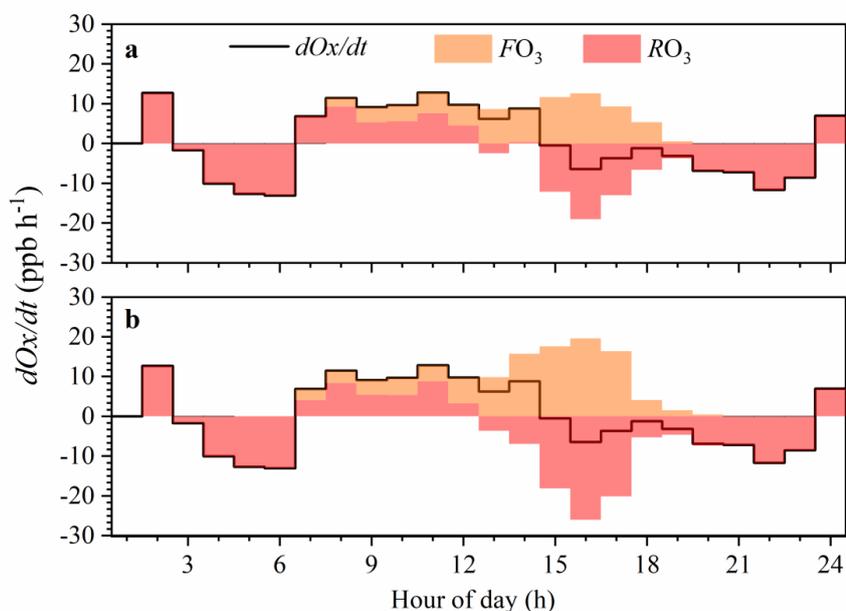
Fig. 5. The variation of Ox concentration and formation rate on O_3 pollution episode (1st Aug).
(a and b present the local ozone formation process of the measured and PIC-VOCs,
respectively.)

331   Here shows the O_3 budget analysis occurred on a O_3 pollution episode (1st Aug). Figure 5

332   shows the simulated local ozone formation process based on the measured and PIC-VOCs. The

333   hourly variation of O_3 concentrations from 19:00 to 6:00 in the next day was dominated by the

334   regional transportation without O_3 formation, while the local photochemical O_3 formation

335   could explain all or a part of the O_3 concentration change during the time window from 07:00

336   to 19:00. The $d(O_3)/dt$ shows an increase from 07:00 to 15:00 LT. However, the $d(O_3)/dt$ sharply

337   changed to negative values at 16:00, which was consistent with the diurnal of O_3 (the O_3 peaks

338   at 15:00) in Figure 1.

339   The average daytime F(O₃) based on the observed and photochemical initial concentration

340   was 6.4±4.0 and 8.9±6.7 ppb h⁻¹, respectively. The photochemical O₃ formation under both

341   conditions started at 07:00 and reached the maximum value of 12.6 and 19.6 ppb h⁻¹ at 15:00,

342   respectively. The maximum daily value of P(O₃) is higher than the urban of Japan, America,

343   and England (Whalley et al., 2018; Ren et al., 2006; Griffith et al., 2016; Kanaya et al., 2009),

344   lower than the suburb in Guangzhou (Lu et al., 2012), the urban and suburb of Beijing (Lu et

345   al., 2013). Before 12:00, the O₃ formation rate based on the PIC-VOCs was slightly higher than

346   that based on the measured ones, while both of them were within the range of 2.0~6.5 ppb h⁻¹.

347   From 12:00 to 17:00, the O₃ formation rate based on the PIC-VOCs and the observed

348   concentration of VOCs greatly increased due to the active photochemistry.

349   As shown in Figure 5, the increased O₃ concentration was larger than the local O₃

350   photochemical production from 07:00 to 14:00 (R(O₃) was positive). This implied an additional

351   O₃ source from the outside regions. However, the R(O₃) was negative in the afternoon, which

352   meant that the local O₃ formation at the measure site contributed to not only the changes of in-

353   situ O₃ concentration but also the O₃ source of the downwind regions. This is more obviously

354   observed in Figure 4B in the condition of the PIC-VOCs. These results illustrated that local O₃

355   photochemistry plays a crucial role in both the local and regional O₃ concentrations, that will

356   be underestimated if the consumed VOCs with high reactivities are ignored.

357   **4. Conclusions**

358   In this study, we present the local O₃ formation process in August 2019 in Beijing based

359   on the concentrations of the observed and PIC-VOCs. The mean diurnal profile of O_3 was

360   unimodal with peaks at 15:00, while NOx and observed TVOCs showed an opposite diurnal

361   curve, and the PICs of TVOCs showed a different diurnal curve compared with the observed

362   one with slight increase from 14:00 to 17:00. The EKMA curve indicated that the instantaneous

363   O_3 production was dependent on the real-time concentrations of NOx and VOCs, i.e., VOCs-

364   limited regime in the morning and NOx-limited regime at noon. The sensitivity regime of O_3

365   formation could be misdiagnosed without considering the consumed VOCs, such as a VOC-

366   limited regime (observed) shifting to a transition regime (PIC-VOCs) in the morning. The mean

367   $F(O_3)$ based on PIC- VOCs was 3.0 ppb h^{-1} higher than that based on the measured VOCs,

368   indicating that the underestimation of local photochemistry to local O_3 concentration could

369   reached 36 ppb day^{-1} if the consumed VOCs were not accounted for. The radical budget analysis

370   illustrated that the O_3 formation processes between the observed and photochemical initial

371   VOCs showed no significant difference, but the former one underestimated the O_3 production

372   rate obviously. Finally, the results of in-situ O_3 formation process denoted that local O_3

373   photochemical formation plays a key role in both local and regional O_3 concentrations. In a

374   conclusion, our results suggest that the PIC-VOCs should be more suitable to diagnose the O_3

375   formation sensitivity than the observed VOCs concentrations.

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379 **Author contributions:** Wei Ma: Methodology, Data curation, Writing-original draft; Zemin

380 Feng: Methodology, Investigation, Data curation, Writing-original draft; Junlei Zhan:

381 Methodology, Investigation, Data curation; Yongchun Liu: Conceptualization, Investigation,

382 Data curation, Writing-review & editing, Supervision, Funding Acquisition; Pengfei Liu:

383 Methodology, Investigation, Data curation, Writing-review & editing; Chengtang Liu:

384 Methodology, Investigation, Data curation, Writing-review & editing; Qingxin Ma:

385 Methodology, Investigation, Data curation; Kang Yang: Methodology, Investigation, Data

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