Measurements and Modeling of Contemporary Carbon-14 Levels in the Stratosphere to Constrain Stratospheric Dynamics & the Global Carbon Cycle

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¹⁴CO₂ as a Tracer in the Stratosphere



Background is ⁷Be production from Koch & Rind 1998



Balloon Sampling _____ Fall 2003, 2004, & 2005



Accelerator Mass Spectrometry (LLNL CAMS)

Model Setup

- IMPACT: LLNL chemistry transport model,
- ✤ 1960-2006 simulations,
 - (many e-fold times needed for spinup),
- ✤ 3 different GCM metdata.
- ✤ 3 tracers:
 - ➢ ¹⁴C-trop (historical surface concentrations),
 - ➢ ¹⁴C-strat (cosmogenic prod. in strat; zero in trop),
 - > N_2O (historical surface concentrations + strat loss).



- Model vertical profiles generally match obs.
- ✤Note Seuss effect (2003->2004->2005).
- Deviations from model could be described by transport from other latitudes.



- Model vertical profiles generally match obs.
- $Note N_2O$ annual increase is small.
- ✤Path of chemical loss is longer than from ¹⁴C production.



N2O relation to 14C seems to be captured, except 2005 (signature of different transport?).



N₂O relation to ¹⁴C seems to be captured by different metdata corresponding to an extreme stratospheric circulation year.

Conclusions

- ✤IMPACT model seems to give reasonable simulation.
- ⁴¹⁴C observations give additional information about stratospheric dynamics.
- Results will help constrain natural ¹⁴C production rate, with implications for carbon cycle studies.

Future

- Run with assimilated (observed) meteorology.
- ✤Run with solar-cycle effect on ¹⁴C production.

The End

Archived CO₂ Samples at UCB: Spatial (5S-88N) and Temporal (1996-2007) Distribution







¹⁴CO₂ is a Fossil Fuel CO₂ Tracer



- Atmospheric CO₂, Δ^{13} C, and Δ^{14} C as reconstructed in tree-rings and ice cores for the pre-atmospheric weapons testing. The decrease in Δ^{14} C and Δ^{13} C is caused by the burning of fossil fuels.
- Present day atmospheric ¹⁴CO₂ has returned to near "pre-bomb" levels.

Carbon Cycle Partitioning of Bomb¹⁴C



Levin and Hesshaimer. Radiocarbon, 42 (1), 2000.

