

# 1    **Potential Sources of Nitrous Acid (HONO) and Their Impacts on Ozone: A** 2                                    **WRF-Chem study in a Polluted Subtropical Region**

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## 16    **Key Points:**

- 17    1. Comprehensive HONO sources are incorporated into WRF-Chem.
- 18    2. HONO from soil bacteria and oceans are important in forested and coastal areas.
- 19    3. The added HONO sources improved ozone predictions and increased 8-hourly maximum ozone.

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## 21    **Abstract**

22    Current chemical transport models commonly under-simulate the atmospheric concentration of  
23    nitrous acid (HONO), which plays an important role in atmospheric chemistry, due to the lack or  
24    inappropriate representations of some sources in the models. In the present study, we parameterized

up-to-date HONO sources into a state-of-the-art three-dimensional chemical transport model (WRF-Chem). These sources included (1) heterogeneous reactions on ground surfaces with the photo-enhanced effect on HONO production, (2) photo-enhanced reactions on aerosol surfaces, (3) direct vehicle and vessel emissions, (4) potential conversion of NO<sub>2</sub> at the ocean surface, and (5) emissions from soil bacteria. The revised WRF-Chem was applied to explore the sources of the high HONO concentrations (0.45-2.71 ppb) observed at a suburban site located within complex land types (with artificial land covers, ocean, and forests) in Hong Kong. With the addition of these sources, the revised model substantially reproduced the observed HONO levels. The heterogeneous conversions of NO<sub>2</sub> on ground surfaces dominated HONO sources contributing about 42% to the observed HONO mixing ratios, with emissions from soil bacterial contributing around 29%, followed by the oceanic source (~9%), photochemical formation via NO and OH (~6%), conversion on aerosol surfaces (~3%), and traffic emissions (~2%). The results suggest that HONO sources in suburban areas could be more complex and diverse than those in urban or rural areas and that the bacterial and/or ocean processes need to be considered in HONO production in forested and/or coastal areas. Sensitivity tests showed that the simulated HONO was sensitive to the uptake coefficient of NO<sub>2</sub> on the surfaces. Incorporation of the aforementioned HONO sources significantly improved the simulations of ozone, resulting in increases of ground-level ozone concentrations by 6-12% over urban areas in Hong Kong and the Pearl River Delta region. This result highlights the importance of accurately representing HONO sources in simulations of secondary pollutants over polluted regions.

## Introduction

Nitrous acid (HONO) is an important source of the hydroxyl radical (OH)—the principal oxidant in the atmosphere—in the morning hours in polluted regions and thus has significant effects on secondary oxidation products such as ozone [Alicke *et al.*, 2003; Kleffmann, 2007; Volkamer *et al.*, 2010]. For a long time, the gas-phase reaction between nitric oxide (NO) and OH was considered to be the only important source of HONO during daytime hours. More recent field studies using newly available instruments have observed much higher daytime HONO concentrations than those calculated merely from the aforementioned gas-phase reaction in both rural and urban areas, implying a missing source or sources [Kleffmann *et al.*, 2005; Li *et al.*, 2014b; Wong *et al.*, 2013]. To



53 explain the observed HONO levels, several production pathways for HONO have been proposed,  
54 including heterogeneous formation on humid surfaces, traffic emissions, gas-phase photolysis, and  
55 biological sources. The most commonly accepted new HONO source is the heterogeneous  
56 conversion from NO<sub>2</sub> to HONO on humid ground and particle surfaces, but whether the conversion  
57 mainly occurs on ground surfaces or on aerosol surfaces remains a subject of debate [Kleffmann,  
58 2007]. A recent study observed faster conversions of NO<sub>2</sub> in air passing over the sea surface,  
59 suggesting that oceans may contribute to the production of HONO [Zha *et al.*, 2014]. Direct  
60 emission from vehicles has also been identified as a source of HONO, with a molar emission ratio of  
61 HONO to nitrogen oxide (NO<sub>x</sub>) ranging from 10<sup>-4</sup> to 10<sup>-2</sup> [Kurtenbach *et al.*, 2001]. Several new  
62 gas-phase formations of HONO have been proposed, including the photolysis of nitric acid [Huber,  
63 2004], photolysis of ortho-substituted nitroaromatics [Bejan *et al.*, 2006; Kleffmann, 2007], reaction  
64 of photo-excited NO<sub>2</sub> with water vapor oxide [Li *et al.*, 2008], and reactions of NO<sub>x</sub> with hydrogen  
65 oxide radicals (HO<sub>x</sub>) (Note: the claim for the last source was later withdrawn) [Li *et al.*, 2014b; 2015;  
66 Ye *et al.*, 2015]. Emission from biological processes such as those of soil bacteria has been also  
67 suggested to be a potentially important source of HONO in forested regions [Maljanen *et al.*, 2013;  
68 Oswald *et al.*, 2013; Su *et al.*, 2011].

69 Earlier versions of chemical models only considered one or several homogenous pathways of HONO  
70 formation and thus gave low daytime HONO concentrations [Lei *et al.*, 2004; Vogel *et al.*, 2003].  
71 More recent investigations incorporated additional direct and/or secondary HONO sources into  
72 models, which have improved simulations of HONO, ozone production, and secondary aerosols in  
73 polluted urban areas. Sarwar *et al.* [2008] included vehicle emissions, heterogeneous productions on  
74 ground and aerosol surfaces, and surface photolysis of absorbed HNO<sub>3</sub> into the CMAQ model and  
75 explained 60% of the averaged concentration of HONO observed in urban Philadelphia. Their  
76 modeling result suggested that the heterogeneous source on the ground was the dominant one  
77 (contributing ~36% to the observed HONO). Li *et al.* [2010] added similar sources and additional  
78 photo-dependent NO<sub>2</sub> heterogeneous reaction with semi-volatile organics into the WRF-Chem model,  
79 which significantly improved the simulation of HONO in Mexico City. Their results indicated that  
80 the NO<sub>2</sub> heterogeneous reactions with semi-volatile organics and on ground surfaces contributed 75%  
81 and 18% of the simulation, respectively, whereas the contribution from heterogeneous reaction on

82 aerosol surfaces was negligible. *An et al.* [2011] and *Li et al.* [2011] considered the reaction of  
83 photo-excited  $\text{NO}_2$  with water, vehicle emissions, and heterogeneous reactions on aerosols in  
84 WRF-Chem and reproduced 72% and 55% of the observed HONO in urban Beijing, respectively.  
85 They suggested that the heterogeneous reaction of  $\text{NO}_2$  on aerosol surfaces was the largest  
86 contributor to the simulated HONO concentration. Similar sources with the photo-enhanced  
87 formation on ground surfaces were parameterized into CMAQ by *Czader et al.* [2012] which  
88 improved the HONO observed at different altitudes in urban Houston and suggested that the  
89 formation on surfaces was the most important source of HONO. By including vehicle emissions and  
90 heterogeneous sources on ground and aerosol surfaces, *Gonçalves et al.* [2012] explained about 45%  
91 of the mean observed HONO concentration in urban Spain.

92 Despite advances in the understanding of HONO sources, uncertainties remain in representing them  
93 in the current state-of-the-art models. Because the exact mechanisms of the non-gaseous HONO  
94 pathways are still not well understood, parameterizations of these sources in the models are highly  
95 simplified with large variations in key parameters adopted by different modeling studies.  
96 Heterogeneous production on wet surfaces has been treated as a first-order process with the reaction  
97 rate proportional to the uptake coefficient of  $\text{NO}_2$  ( $\gamma_{\text{NO}_2}$ ). Laboratory-determined  $\gamma_{\text{NO}_2}$  so far varies  
98 significantly for different surfaces and from different experimental set-ups. The majority of lab  
99 experiments have suggested a  $\gamma_{\text{NO}_2}$  in the range of  $10^{-7}$ - $10^{-5}$  on surfaces of organics, dust, soot, and  
100 inorganic acid [*Ammann et al.*, 2005; *George et al.*, 2005; *Kleffmann et al.*, 1998; *Monge et al.*, 2010;  
101 *Ndour et al.*, 2008; *Wong et al.*, 2011] and of  $10^{-6}$ - $10^{-5}$  on ground surface [*Kurtenbach et al.*, 2001;  
102 *VandenBoer et al.*, 2013]. However, several other studies reported much larger values of  $10^{-4}$ - $10^{-3}$  on  
103 lab-generated droplets and aerosols, which were attributed to catalytic reactions by inorganic and  
104 organic anions [*Colussi et al.*, 2013; *Yabushita et al.*, 2009]. It is unclear whether these large values  
105 are applicable to atmospheric conditions due to the different compositions of droplets/aerosols used  
106 in the experiments and those encountered in the real atmosphere. Previous modeling investigations  
107 of HONO adopted a  $\gamma_{\text{NO}_2}$  on aerosol surfaces varying on the order of  $10^{-6}$  to  $10^{-4}$ , leading to  
108 different conclusions on the importance of aerosols in HONO formation [*An et al.*, 2013; *Aumont et*  
109 *al.*, 2003; *Li et al.*, 2010; *Li et al.*, 2011; *Sarwar et al.*, 2008]. Other uncertainties in simulating  
110 HONO concentrations in current chemical transport models arise from the lack of representations of

emissions from soil microbial processes and the conversion of NO<sub>2</sub> on the ocean surface, yet these sources/processes could be important in rural and coastal areas.

In the present study, up-to-date HONO sources, including the recently proposed gaseous formations, emissions from soil bacteria, and heterogeneous formations of HONO on ocean, aerosols, urban, and vegetation surfaces, are incorporated into a widely used regional chemistry transport model (WRF-Chem). The revised WRF-Chem model is applied to simulate the HONO sources at a suburban site in Hong Kong during a multiday photochemical episode when the HONO levels reached 1-3 ppb. The main goals of this study are to explore the potential source or sources of such high levels of HONO measured at the suburban site and their effects on regional ozone concentrations over the Hong Kong and Pearl River Delta region (HK-PRD).

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1. WRF-Chem Model and Configurations

The three-dimensional Weather Research and Forecasting model coupled with Chemistry (WRF-Chem, version 3.4.1), which simulates the transport, mixing, and chemical transformation of trace gases and aerosols simultaneously with meteorology [Grell *et al.*, 2005], was applied in this study. The chemical mechanism used to simulate concentrations of gases and aerosols is based on the Carbon-Bond Mechanism version Z (CBMZ) [Zaveri and Peters, 1999] coupled with the 4-bin sectional Model for Simulating Aerosol Interactions and Chemistry (MOSAIC) [Zaveri *et al.*, 2008]. The CBMZ gas-phase mechanism treats 67 species and 164 reactions using a lumped-structure approach that categorizes organic compounds according to the types of bonds present in their molecular structures. MOSAIC considers sulfate, nitrate, chloride, carbonate, ammonium, methanesulfonate, sodium, calcium, black carbon (BC), primary organic carbon (OC), liquid water, and other inorganic mass within 4 size bins ranging between 3 nm and 10 μm. Aqueous-phase chemistry based on the work of Fahey and Pandis [2001] was used. Other major physical and chemical schemes adopted in this study are listed in Table 1. Aerosol-meteorology interactions in the model were turned off. Three two-way nested modeling domains were used with the horizontal resolution of the three nested domains being 27, 9, and 3 km, respectively. The outermost and innermost domains covering the PRD region and Hong Kong are illustrated in Figure 1. The vertical

139 resolution includes 31 layers with a fixed-model top pressure of 100 hpa, and the first layer is set to  
140 be about 35 m above ground surface. Initial and boundary conditions for WRF-Chem were provided  
141 by the simulations of MOZART-4 driven by GEOS-5 fields [Emmons *et al.*, 2010]. The simulation  
142 period was 19-31 August 2011, with the first 32 hours considered as a spin-up time.

143 A multiscale assimilation method combining observational and analytical nudging was used  
144 throughout the simulation period. This method has been found to effectively improve the  
145 meteorological performance of WRF-Chem by Zhang *et al.* [2015]. Meteorological observations at  
146 2513 surface stations (tri-hourly) and 251 sounding stations (12-hourly) were obtained from the  
147 China Meteorological Administration and integrated in the simulations through observational  
148 nudging (Figure 1a). Hourly surface observations at 40 weather stations in Hong Kong were also  
149 assimilated (Figure 1b). NCEP final reanalysis data was used in analytical nudging. Details of the  
150 method are given in Zhang *et al.* [2015]. The meteorological predictions were evaluated following  
151 Zhang *et al.* [2015], which shows satisfactory model performances (Table S1).

152 Four sets of anthropogenic emission inventories covering different regions were applied (Table 2) for  
153 the three nested model domains used in our simulations. For the outmost domain, the  
154 Multi-resolution Emission Inventory for China (MEIC) in 2010, covering mainland China, was used.  
155 The MEIC inventory, containing monthly anthropogenic emissions of SO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub>, CO, NH<sub>3</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub>,  
156 PM<sub>coarse</sub>, BC, OC, and non-methane volatile organic compounds (NMVOCs) in five sectors  
157 (agriculture, industry, power plants, residential, and transportation), was developed by Tsinghua  
158 University based on a technology-based emission model [Lei *et al.*, 2011; Zhang *et al.*, 2009b]. It  
159 was used to simulate the PM<sub>2.5</sub> in multiple cities around China in 2010-2014 and found to provide  
160 reasonable results [Zhang *et al.*, 2015]. For other Asian regions, we used the 2006 INTEX-B  
161 emission inventory [Zhang *et al.*, 2009b]. For the PRD region, we used a more recent inventory of  
162 2010 with a fine resolution of 3 km developed by the South China University of Technology. This  
163 emission inventory contains major pollutants including CO, NO<sub>x</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub>, and NMVOCs  
164 in agriculture, power plant and industry, residential, river and marine vessel, and vehicle  
165 transportation sectors. The 2010 emission inventory for Hong Kong was developed by the Hong  
166 Kong Environmental Protection Department (HKEPD), comprising the emissions for CO, NO, SO<sub>2</sub>,  
167 BC, OC, sulfate, nitrate, ammonium, and NMVOCs in the power plant, industry, residential, marine

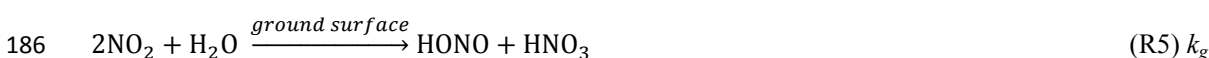
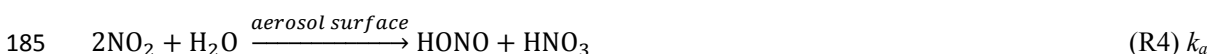
168 vessel, aviation, and on-road transportation sectors. NMVOCs in the PRD and Hong Kong were  
 169 mapped into the CBMZ chemical mechanism by using a similar approach to that in *Li et al.* [2014a].  
 170 Seasonal variations derived from the MEIC were applied to the other three inventories. Diurnal,  
 171 day-of-week, and vertical allocations of the emissions were the same as in *Zhang et al.* [2015].  
 172 Biogenic emissions were estimated online by the Model of Emissions of Gases and Aerosols from  
 173 Nature (MEGAN v2.01) [*Guenther et al.*, 2006].

## 174 **2.2. Additional Sources of HONO**

175 The CBMZ chemical mechanism in WRF-Chem does not contain any direct emissions or secondary  
 176 pathways of HONO except for the well-known homogeneous formation via OH and NO. In this  
 177 work, the following new sources of HONO were added into the model and evaluated through  
 178 sensitivity simulations.

### 179 **2.2.1. Heterogeneous sources on ground and aerosol surfaces**

180 To consider the potential heterogeneous sources of HONO from ground and aerosol surfaces, we  
 181 included the following reactions involving HONO proposed in previous studies into WRF-Chem:



187 The reaction rates for reactions R1-R3 were obtained from *Foley et al.* [2009]. The first-order  
 188 reaction rate for R4 is estimated following the recommendations in *Li et al.* [2010] as follows:

$$189 \quad k_a = \frac{1}{4} \cdot v_{\text{NO}_2} \cdot \left( \frac{S_a}{V} \right) \cdot \gamma_{a-\text{NO}_2} \quad (1)$$

190 where  $v_{\text{NO}_2}$  is the mean molecular velocity of  $\text{NO}_2$  ( $\text{m s}^{-1}$ ),  $S_a/V$  is the aerosol surface to volume

ratio ( $\text{m}^{-1}$ ) representing the surfaces available for heterogeneous reaction, and  $\gamma_{\text{a-NO}_2}$  is the uptake coefficient of  $\text{NO}_2$  at the aerosol surface.  $\gamma_{\text{a-NO}_2}$  was set to be  $1 \times 10^{-6}$  for nighttime [Aumont *et al.*, 2003; Kurtenbach *et al.*, 2001]. It has been reported that sunlight dramatically boosts the conversion of  $\text{NO}_2$  into HONO on the surfaces of organics, soot, and dust [George *et al.*, 2005; Monge *et al.*, 2010; Ndour *et al.*, 2008; Stemmler *et al.*, 2006]. To consider this photo-enhancing effect, we applied a higher value of  $2 \times 10^{-5}$  for  $\gamma_{\text{a-NO}_2}$  during the daytime when the light intensity was lower than  $400 \text{ W m}^{-2}$ , whereas we linearly scaled it with solar radiation when the light intensity was higher than  $400 \text{ W m}^{-2}$  (equation 2).

$$\gamma_{\text{a-NO}_2} = 2 \times 10^{-5} \cdot \left( \frac{\text{light intensity}}{400} \right) \quad (2)$$

$S_{\text{a}}$  is the total aerosol surface per volume of air and is calculated by the MOSAIC aerosol module in WRF-Chem. The reaction rate at the ground surface is calculated by equation 3 following the method in Li *et al.* [2010]:

$$k_{\text{g}} = \frac{1}{8} \cdot v_{\text{NO}_2} \cdot \left( \frac{S_{\text{g}}}{V} \right) \cdot \gamma_{\text{g-NO}_2} \quad (3)$$

where  $S_{\text{g}}/V$  represents the ground surface to volume ratio, and  $\gamma_{\text{g-NO}_2}$  is the uptake coefficient of  $\text{NO}_2$  at the ground surface, which we assume to be the same as that for aerosol surfaces and is calculated by applying the method described in Li *et al.* [2010]. Over the urban areas as defined by the MODIS land-use data, we adopted a constant  $S_{\text{g}}/V$  value of  $0.3 \text{ m}^{-1}$ . For the vegetation-covered areas, the leaf area index (LAI,  $\text{m}^2/\text{m}^2$ ) was used to estimate the surface area to volume ratio (equation 4) following the method in Sarwar *et al.* [2008]:

$$\frac{S_{\text{g}}}{V} = \frac{2 \times \text{LAI}}{H} \quad (4)$$

where  $H$  is the height of the first model layer, and LAI is multiplied by a factor of 2 to take account of the areas on both sides of the leaves [Sarwar *et al.*, 2008; Zhang *et al.*, 2012]. Since the LAI can vary significantly with the seasons, 8-day averages of MODIS-measured LAI during 21-29 August 2011 at a resolution of  $0.1^\circ$  were used to represent the mean condition during our simulation period (data was obtained from NASS at <http://neo.sci.gsfc.nasa.gov/>). The heterogeneous conversion of  $\text{NO}_2$  on the ground surface was only considered within the first model layer, whereas that on the

aerosol surface was treated in all model layers. In view of the fact that a wide range of uptake coefficients of NO<sub>2</sub> have been adopted in other studies as discussed previously, we conduct sensitivity tests to evaluate the impacts of different uptake coefficients on the simulated HONO in section 3.3.

#### 2.2.2. Direct traffic emissions

HONO to NO<sub>x</sub> ratios in vehicle exhausts are found within a range of 0.29-1.7% [Kirchstetter *et al.*, 1996; Kurtenbach *et al.*, 2001; Rappenglück *et al.*, 2013; Xu *et al.*, 2015], and a ratio of 0.8% has been commonly used in previous modeling studies [Gonçalves *et al.*, 2012; Sarwar *et al.*, 2008]. In our study, we applied an emission ratio of 0.8% for gasoline vehicles in our emission inventories and 2.3% for the diesel vehicles to take account of the promotion of HONO formation by semi-volatile organics in diesel exhausts [Gutzwiller *et al.*, 2002]. All marine and river vessels were assumed to use diesel engines and hence were applied the same emission factor as diesel vehicles. Figure 2a illustrates the hourly emission of HONO for the transport sector over the HK-PRD region on a weekday. In view of large variations in the traffic emission factor of HONO, in Section 3.3, we conduct sensitivity runs to test different emission ratios.

#### 2.2.3. Heterogeneous source from sea surface

Zha *et al.* [2014] recently reported a NO<sub>2</sub>-to-HONO conversion rate of  $3.17\text{-}3.36 \times 10^{-2} \text{ h}^{-1}$  in air masses passing over sea surfaces, which is almost three times the rate over land surfaces ( $1.20\text{-}1.30 \times 10^{-2} \text{ h}^{-1}$ ), at a clean coastal site in Hong Kong. Although the exact mechanism is not yet clear, formation of HONO on the ocean surface could be a non-negligible contributor to atmospheric HONO in areas adjacent to the ocean such as Hong Kong. In previous modeling studies, sea surface has usually been considered as a sink rather than a source of HONO. The only study treating sea surface as a source was that by Elshorbany *et al.* [2012], who used a uniform ratio of HONO/NO<sub>x</sub> over land and sea in a global model. In the present study, a NO<sub>2</sub>-to-HONO conversion rate of  $3.17 \times 10^{-2} \text{ h}^{-1}$  is adopted over the ocean surface in the first model layer of WRF-Chem to consider this possible oceanic source in a regional model for the first time.

#### 2.2.4. Direct emissions from soil bacteria

244 It has been proposed that direct releases from soil in equilibrium with nitrite could be an important  
 245 source of atmospheric HONO in natural and agricultural areas [Maljanen et al., 2013; Oswald et al.,  
 246 2013; Su et al., 2011]. Maljanen et al. [2013] took soil cores samples from 11 boreal ecosystems and  
 247 measured the production rates of HONO, NO, and N<sub>2</sub>O from the soils in the laboratory and found  
 248 that HONO emission peaked in drained boreal peatlands, which cover a large area over the Northern  
 249 Hemisphere. Oswald et al. [2013] investigated soil samples collected from various ecosystem across  
 250 the world and showed that ammonia-oxidizing bacteria emit HONO in unexpectedly large quantities  
 251 from different soil types, which might account for up to 50% of the reactive nitrogen released from  
 252 soils. To the best of our knowledge, this potentially important source has not been considered in any  
 253 previous global or regional models. In this study, the emissions of HONO from soil bacteria with  
 254 consideration of the dependence on land category, soil humidity, and temperature were parameterized  
 255 into WRF-Chem. To do this, we first mapped the soil categories measured in Oswald et al. [2013]  
 256 (collected from 17 ecosystems in Table S2) into the most closely matching USGS land categories in  
 257 the WRF-Chem model following the mapping schemes described in Table S3 in the supplementary  
 258 materials. The optimum emission flux for each USGS land-use type was then calculated as the  
 259 aggregation of the measured fluxes from the measured category/categories that was/were mapped  
 260 into the specific USGS classifications (Table S3). After that, the optimum fluxes over the nested  
 261 domains were digested into the model and further scaled online according to the soil temperature and  
 262 water content in each model grid at each time step throughout the simulation period by the following  
 263 equation:

$$264 \quad F_N(\text{HONO}) = F_{N,opt}(\text{HONO}) \cdot e^{\frac{E_a}{R} \left( \frac{1}{T_{opt}} - \frac{1}{T} \right)} \cdot f(\text{SWC}) \quad (5)$$

265 where  $F_{N,opt}$  is the optimum flux of HONO in terms of N,  $E_a$  is the activation energy for HONO,  
 266 which is set to be 80 kJ mol<sup>-1</sup>,  $R$  is the gas constant,  $T_{opt}$  is the temperature at which optimum flux is  
 267 emitted and is 298.15 K in the experiments of Oswald et al. [2013],  $T$  and  $\text{SWC}$  are the soil  
 268 temperature and soil water content, respectively, which are estimated by WRF online, and  $f(\text{SWC})$  is  
 269 a scaling function related to soil water content and is fitted based on the data curves in Figures 1 and  
 270 3 in Oswald et al. [2013]. Figure 2b gives an example of the optimum emission flux of bacterial  
 271 HONO from soil over our innermost model domain. It should be noted that large uncertainties may  
 272 exist in the parameterization of soil emission of HONO due to the limited number of measured soil  
 10



types, ignorance of the differences between the soil categories measured in *Oswald et al.* [2013] and those in the model, and relatively simple treatments of the dependences of soil water content and temperature.

#### **2.2.5. Gas-phase formation**

As previously discussed, several gas-phase formation pathways of HONO have been proposed, including the reaction of photo-exited NO<sub>2</sub> with water vapor and photolysis of gas-phase nitric acid. However, modeling studies indicate that these two sources are of minor importance due to small rate constants [Huber, 2004; Tyndall *et al.*, 1995]. Our simulations also confirmed the negligible contributions of these sources (results not shown), and thus they were not considered in the revised WRF-Chem model. For HONO production from the photolysis of organic nitrates, due to insufficient information on their reaction rates, it is difficult to quantify these sources in numerical models at present [Kleffmann, 2007]. Therefore, they were not included in our revised model. For the new gas-phase source via the reaction between NO<sub>x</sub> and HO<sub>x</sub> proposed by *Li et al.* [2014b], we have added a series of reactions shown in Table S4 to test its importance at our study site.

#### **2.2.6. Simulation cases**

Seven simulation cases were designed as listed in Table 3, including: (1) BASE case: only considering the default photochemical reaction of OH and NO; (2) L case: with additional heterogeneous sources of HONO from land surfaces; (3) LO case: similar to L, but considering the potential source from the ocean surface; (4) LOA case: similar to LO, but with the heterogeneous source at the aerosol surface in all vertical model layers; (5) LOAE case: similar to LOA, but with direct emissions of HONO from transportation added; (6) LOAES: similar to LOAE, but including parameterized emissions of HONO from soil bacteria into the model with consideration of land type, temperature, and soil water content; and (7) LOAESG: similar to LOAES, but including additional gas-phase formation.

### **2.3 Field measurements**

Field measurements of HONO and many other chemical constituents were conducted at the Tung Chung (TC) air-quality monitoring station in Hong Kong. The present study used the data over the

period of 20-31 August 2011, during which a severe multiple-day episode occurred in the region. The TC site (22.30°N, 113.93°E, Figure 3) is located in a residential suburban area in the northern part of Lantau Island and is surrounded by the South China Sea in the north, Hong Kong International Airport in the northwest, and vegetation-covered hilly areas on other sides. A detailed description of the site and the surroundings can be found in [Xu *et al.*, 2015]. HONO was measured using a commercial long-path absorption photometer (model LOPAP-03, QUMA) [Heland *et al.*, 2001; Kleffmann and Wiesen, 2008]. NO and NO<sub>2</sub> concentrations were measured with a chemiluminescence instrument (model 42i, TEI) coupled with a photolytic converter (model BLC, Droplet Measurement Technologies). CO was measured using a nondispersive analyzer (model 300, API). PM<sub>2.5</sub> was measured by a tapered-element oscillating microbalance (TEOM 1405-DF, Thermo Scientific) with a Filter Dynamic Measurement System, and the particle number and size distribution in the range of 5 nm to 10 μm were measured with a wide-range particle spectrometer (model 1000XP, MSP Corporation). The total aerosol surface density was calculated based on the measured particle number size distributions by assuming the particles to be ideal spheres. O<sub>3</sub> was measured by a UV photometric analyzer (model 49i, TEI), and the same instrument and method were applied by the HKEPD to measure the O<sub>3</sub> levels at other air-quality monitoring stations over Hong Kong (Figure 3). All instruments were set up on the roof of the 4-story Tung Chung Health Center with sample inlets installed at ~20 m above ground level, whereas the LOPAP-03 sampling unit was installed at ~15 m above ground level.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1. The severe episode

Figure 4 shows the observed and simulated (BASE and LOAES cases) concentrations of several major pollutants (CO, NO<sub>2</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub>) at the TC site. During 20-24 August, the PRD and Hong Kong were south of low-pressure systems that created predominated southerly winds, which brought in relatively clean air masses from the ocean (Figure S1a). Consequently, the observed mean concentrations of CO, NO<sub>2</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub> were only 138.9 ppb, 14.7 ppb, 3.2 ppb, and 8.5 μg m<sup>-3</sup>, respectively during this period. After that, the winds abruptly changed to northerly, and the concentrations of all major pollutants surged by 4-6 times as shown in Figure 4 and remained at high

328 levels during 25-31 August. The maximum hourly ozone concentrations were 80-160 ppb over Hong  
329 Kong, with high concentrations also observed in the upwind stations such as Yuen Long and Tai Po  
330 (see results in section 3.4). The simulated results shown in Figure 4 indicate that the model well  
331 captured the concurrent sharp increases in the pollutants' levels. It is worth noting that CO and SO<sub>2</sub>,  
332 which are less related to HONO chemistry, had negligible discrepancies in different simulated cases  
333 (Figure 4).

334 Surface weather charts (Figure S1) showed that this severe episode was associated with a strong  
335 typhoon (Super Typhoon Nanmadol). As Nanmadol moved closer to the South China Sea (Figure  
336 S1b), the PRD region, which is to the northwest of the typhoon, was affected by the anticlockwise  
337 circulation of typhoon with northerly winds. Consequently, large amounts of pollutants were  
338 continuously transported downwind from the highly industrialized PRD region to Hong Kong.  
339 Meanwhile, the typhoon caused downward motions over the region due to the large-scale subsidence  
340 at its outskirts [Ding *et al.*, 2004; Lam *et al.*, 2005], and as a result, the PRD experienced strong solar  
341 radiation and high temperature (see measurements at TC in Figure S2), facilitating photochemical  
342 formations of ozone. Besides, the subsiding air motion resulted in a shallow boundary layer over  
343 Hong Kong (Figure S3) favoring the build-up of the pollutants.

### 344 **3.2. HONO measurements and simulations**

345 Figure 5 illustrates the observed and simulated HONO in each case during the study period. Before  
346 the episode, measured HONO levels were at 200-1500 ppt. After August 25, the HONO abruptly  
347 increased to 1-3 ppb along with the concurrent jump in other pollutants. As depicted, with only the  
348 HONO source from NO + OH, the BASE case underestimated the concentration by a factor of  
349 10-100 (Figure 5), which is similar to the findings in previous modeling studies [Gonçalves *et al.*,  
350 2012; Li *et al.*, 2010; Li *et al.*, 2011]. With the consideration of the heterogeneous conversion of NO<sub>2</sub>  
351 on land surfaces, the simulated HONO in the L case increased the HONO level by almost an order of  
352 magnitude (Figures 5 and 6). The oceanic source in the LO case further increased the averaged  
353 HONO from 386 ppt in the L case to 466 ppt. Figure S4a shows the differences between the L and  
354 LO cases, which indicates that the oceanic source contributed more than 100 ppt of HONO over the  
355 immediate coastal areas along eastern China. Compared with the LO case, adding the heterogeneous

356 source on aerosol surfaces only enhanced the HONO by 28 ppt on average, whereas the direct traffic  
357 emissions led to an increase of 18 ppt in mean HONO in the LOAE case (compared with the LOA  
358 case).

359 Including emissions from soil bacteria from vegetation-covered surfaces in the LOAES case further  
360 narrowed the gap between the modeled and observed HONO (Figures 5 and 6). Compared with the  
361 results in the LOAE case, this newly-added source increased the simulated HONO by 266 ppt on  
362 average with a minimum daily increase of 95 ppt on 28 August and a maximum increase of 373 ppt  
363 on 30 August. Since the soil bacteria emission in the model grid where TC is located is zero, the  
364 HONO from soil bacteria at TC was mainly transported from surroundings and thus the wind  
365 directions and speeds would significantly affect the contributions of this source at TC. Besides,  
366 compared with daytime, the lifetime of HONO was much longer during nighttime and thus the “soil”  
367 HONO can be continuously transported from surrounding source regions. As shown in Figure 2b,  
368 TC is surrounded by large HONO emissions from soil bacteria in the northeast and west. So during  
369 the nighttime of 20 and 21 August, large contributions from soil occurred when weak northeasterly  
370 and westerly winds dominated (Figure S2). Similarly, during the nighttime of 29 and 30 August,  
371 westerly winds transported large amounts of HONO to TC from source regions in the west and the  
372 HONO accumulated there. In contrast, when the northwesterly winds dominated, less “soil” HONO  
373 were transported from the urban areas of PRD to TC (Figure S2). Figure S5a also suggests that  
374 emissions from soil bacterial can be a substantial HONO source over the areas covered by or  
375 adjacent to vegetation and soil lands.

376 In the LOAESG case, the gas-phase source via reactions between  $\text{HO}_2 \cdot \text{H}_2\text{O}$  and  $\text{NO}_2$  significantly  
377 enhanced the simulated HONO concentrations especially at noon and during the nighttime (Figures 6  
378 and 7). Overall, this source did slightly improve the HONO simulation during the daytime,  
379 supporting the suggestion of a potential  $\text{NO}_x$ -consuming gas-phase source [Li *et al.*, 2015]. However,  
380 Ye *et al.* [2015] pointed out that the assumption of a HONO yield of 100% from the reactions  
381 between  $\text{HO}_2 \cdot \text{H}_2\text{O}$  and  $\text{NO}_2$  (Table S4) is inappropriate (i.e., the yield is too high). As the exact  
382 mechanism of this  $\text{NO}_x$ -consuming gas-phase formation has not been identified [Li *et al.*, 2015], we  
383 do not consider it hereafter. On average, the LOAES, LOAE, LOA, LO, L, and BASE cases  
384 reproduced 85%, 56%, 54%, 51%, 42%, and 6% of the observed HONO, respectively (Figure 7).

385 The sources included in the comprehensive LOAES case could explain 65% of the observed daytime  
386 HONO concentrations. The underestimate of HONO might be due to several reasons. First, our  
387 model underestimated a main precursor of HONO,  $\text{NO}_2$ , in the daytime by 31% (Figure S6a). As  
388 described in section 2.3, our measurement site is close to the TC expressway and the airport. Due to  
389 the relatively low model resolution ( $3 \times 3$  km), the traffic emission of  $\text{NO}_x$  was averaged into the grid  
390 where TC is located, and thus the model under-simulated the concentration of  $\text{NO}_2$  at TC. Secondly,  
391 the direct emissions of HONO from traffic might also be underestimated at the TC site in the model.  
392 A third reason for the under-simulation of HONO might be that there are some missing daytime  
393 sources that we have not considered or adequately accounted for in our model. The uncertainty in  
394 each source and possible missing HONO processes are discussed later in section 3.3.

395 With the adopted parameters, our model results suggest that the heterogeneous conversion of  $\text{NO}_2$  on  
396 land surface was the dominant source (~42%) of the HONO observed at the TC site as shown in  
397 Figure 7b, and this conclusion is similar to those inferred in previous field measurements [Kleffmann  
398 *et al.*, 2003; Li *et al.*, 2012; Michoud *et al.*, 2013; Zhang *et al.*, 2009a] and from modeling studies  
399 [Czader *et al.*, 2012; Sarwar *et al.*, 2008; Zhang *et al.*, 2012]. The second largest source of HONO  
400 was the emission from soil bacteria, which contributed around 23% to the observed HONO on  
401 average. The oceanic source and the gaseous formation via photochemical reaction consuming OH  
402 and NO contributed approximately 9% and 6% of the mean HONO concentration, respectively,  
403 whereas the heterogeneous reaction on aerosol surfaces only contributed about 3% (Figure 7b). The  
404 important contributions from soil bacteria and from conversion of  $\text{NO}_2$  on the ocean surface were  
405 illustrated for the first time in our study. The finding on a small contribution from aerosol is  
406 consistent with those in many previous modeling studies, which can be explained by the fact that  
407 aerosol surface areas are generally much smaller than ground surface areas and therefore should be  
408 much less effective in producing HONO via the heterogeneous reaction compared to the ground  
409 surface [Aumont *et al.*, 2003; Li *et al.*, 2010; Sarwar *et al.*, 2008; Vogel *et al.*, 2003].

### 410 **3.3 Uncertainties in the HONO simulations by the revised WRF-Chem model**

#### 411 **3.3.1 Uncertainties in heterogeneous conversions of $\text{NO}_2$ on land and aerosol surfaces**

412 The production rates of HONO on the surface (R4 and R5) are affected by the surface area to volume

ratio ( $S/V$ ) and the uptake coefficient of  $\text{NO}_2$  ( $\gamma_{\text{NO}_2}$ ) on surfaces (Equations 1 and 3), both of which are subject to uncertainties. The ground surface area to volume ratio ( $S_g/V$ ) strongly depends on the physical properties of land covers, and values in the range of  $0.1\text{--}0.3\text{ m}^{-1}$  have been used in previous studies on urban surfaces [Li *et al.*, 2010; Svensson *et al.*, 1987; Vogel *et al.*, 2003]. Sarwar *et al.* [2008] used a value of 0.3 for urban model grids and scaled the value according to the percentage of urban area in each model grid. A value of  $0.3\text{ m}^{-1}$  over urban areas used in our study is comparable with the ones suggested in previous modeling studies and is believed to be reasonable as the mega-cities in PRD such as Guangzhou and Hong Kong are highly urbanized. For the vegetation-covered areas, we used the LAI to estimate the  $S_g/V$ , which is a more accurate way than applying a constant value over the whole model domain. The surface to volume ratio of aerosols ( $S_a/V$ ), in the range of  $10^{-4}\text{--}10^{-3}$  in a typical polluted urban atmosphere of China [Gao *et al.*, 2009; Liu *et al.*, 2012], is much smaller than that of the ground surface, and in our case, the model calculated  $S_a/V$  to be  $3.86 \times 10^{-4}\text{ m}^{-1}$  on average (slightly smaller than the observed value of  $6.25 \times 10^{-4}\text{ m}^{-1}$ ). We conducted a sensitivity test by doubling the aerosol surface area in the MOSAIC module, which only led to an increase of 10.1 ppt in mean HONO concentration, indicating that the simulated HONO is not sensitive to the aerosol surface area density at TC (figures not shown).

In comparison,  $\gamma_{\text{NO}_2}$  has a much wider range, with measurement-derived values from  $10^{-7}$  to  $10^{-3}$  on different surfaces, and the values of  $10^{-6}$  to  $10^{-4}$  have been used in previous modeling studies. Therefore, the choice of this parameter would have a large effect on the model assessment of importance of a heterogeneous source of HONO. In our study, the four sensitivity tests listed in Table 4 were conducted: use of a relatively large  $\gamma_{\text{NO}_2}$  of  $1 \times 10^{-4}$  on land surfaces (LOAES\_LL) and on aerosol surfaces (LOAES\_AL); use of a smaller  $\gamma_{\text{NO}_2}$  of  $1 \times 10^{-6}$  on land surfaces (LOAES\_LS) and on aerosol surfaces (LOAES\_AS). Due to limited computation sources, these sensitivity runs were performed over the outermost domain (Domain 1) at a resolution of  $27 \times 27\text{ km}$  and were based on the comprehensive LOAES case. As illustrated in Figure 8, the simulated HONO in LOAES\_LS and LOAES\_AS, that is, using the smaller uptake coefficient, had small discrepancies (-14% and -15%, respectively) compared with the results in LOAES. However, using a larger  $\gamma_{\text{NO}_2}$  (in LOAES\_LL and LOAES\_AL) led to an unrealistic overestimate in the nighttime HONO by a factor of 3-6 because of the adoption of a  $\gamma_{\text{NO}_2}$  two orders of magnitude larger than that used in the LOAES case

at nighttime. The changes in HONO during noontime (10:00-14:00 LTC) were unnoticeable because the photo-enhancing scaling factor used to calculate the daytime  $\gamma_{NO_2}$  could increase by a factor of 2.5 at the TC site according to Equation (2) when the simulated solar radiation varies from 0 to around 1000 W/m<sup>2</sup> during the daytime. In summary, based on the available experimental data and the simulation results in our study, we believe that our choice of the values of  $\gamma_{NO_2}$  for ground and aerosol surfaces could be reasonable.

### 3.3.2. Uncertainties in direct traffic emissions

Two sensitivity runs were conducted with the use of different traffic emission ratios (see Table 4). The LOAESG\_2E case doubled the direct emissions of HONO from transportation, and in LOAESG\_TCE we applied an empirical relationship between the emission ratio of HONO/NO<sub>x</sub> and BC derived from the measurements at the TC site by *Xu et al.* [2015] as follows:

$$\frac{E_{HONO}}{E_{NO_x}} = 0.0050 + 0.003 \times E_{BC} (\mu\text{g m}^{-2} \text{ s}^{-1}) \cdot \tau (\text{s})/H(\text{m}), \quad (6)$$

where  $E_{HONO}$ ,  $E_{NO_x}$ , and  $E_{BC}$  are the emission intensities of HONO, NO<sub>x</sub>, and BC in the transportation sectors of emission inventories, respectively,  $\tau$  is the emitting time and is assumed to be 3600 s, and H is the height of first model layer (~35 m).

As shown in Figure 9, the doubling of traffic emissions led to slight increases in the diurnal HONO levels, with a larger enhancement of 21.2-24.9 ppt during morning rush hours (05:00-08:00 LTC) and a negligible increase during 10:00-15:00 LTC due to the stronger photolysis of HONO during that period. Compared with LOAESG, the mean daily change in LOAESG\_2E was only 10.4 ppt (1.7%). However, the HONO level was slightly lower in LOAES\_TCE due to a smaller averaged emission ratio of 0.6% over our simulation domain. Overall, the simulated HONO concentrations at suburban TC, with discrepancies ranging from -1.6% to 7.0% between the different cases, were not sensitive to the emission ratio of HONO from transportation. This result is different from that in *Czader et al.* [2015] in urban Houston. In their study, doubling the traffic emission ratio to 1.6% which was close to the measurement-derived ratio of 1.7% in the city [*Rappenglück et al.*, 2013] significantly increased the simulated HONO by 36% at a urban site in Houston.

### 3.3.3. Uncertainties in emissions from soil bacteria

Large uncertainties may exist in the parameterization of soil emissions of HONO. One has to do with the mapping of limited soil types for which emission fluxes have been measured in *Oswald et al.* [2013] into the land categories that are used in the model. To assess the uncertainties with this process, two sensitivity runs, LOAES\_SMAX and LOAES\_SMIN using the soil types that have the maximum or the minimum emission flux within the ones mapped into each model land category, were performed (Table S3). The simulated HONO in these two sensitivity runs only had -10% to 9% changes compared with the result in the LOAES case during the early morning (Figure S7). Another uncertainty may come from the relatively simple treatments of the dependences of HONO emission on soil water content and temperature. In addition, the emission fluxes from soils measured in the laboratory may not accurately represent those in the real environment as the emitting processes vary with nutrient contents in soils over regions and are potentially influenced by background HONO concentration in the atmosphere [*Oswald et al.*, 2013]. Additional measurements of emission fluxes under different soil humidity and temperature for soil samples collected in various ecosystems are needed to further refine the treatment of this source of HONO.

#### **3.3.4. Possible ignorance of other potential processes of HONO**

Our modeling results show that the HONO level was slightly overestimated during midnight (23:00-03:00 LTC) in the LOAES case (Figure 6). This might be due to insufficient account of the uptake of HONO by the ground surface, which could be an important sink for HONO but received little consideration [*Donaldson et al.*, 2013; *VandenBoer et al.*, 2014]. The HONO concentrations during the early morning (04:00-07:00 LTC), on the other hand, were underestimated by 50%-70% despite that NO<sub>2</sub> was well simulated as illustrated in Figure S6a. For daytime, the HONO and NO<sub>2</sub> values during 08:00-11:00 were well simulated (Figure 6 and Figure S6a). Therefore, the underestimates of HONO during the early morning are unlikely due to the imperfect representation of its main heterogeneous sources. Several previous studies suggest that gaseous HONO could be released from the surface during the morning in response to chemical and physical changes such as the evaporation of dew, release from soil pore water, and/or bacterial processes [*He et al.*, 2006; *Rubio et al.*, 2008; *Rubio et al.*, 2009]. Dew water can serve as a reservoir of HONO during the nighttime and as a source in the morning with the evaporation of dew droplets. It can be seen in Figure S6b that the RH did peak during that period presumably from the evaporation of dew droplets



498 and/or soil water. Therefore, there is likely a source of emission of HONO from dew evaporations,  
499 and our tests in Figure S8 suggest that this emission flux is within a range of 100-500 ng/m<sup>2</sup>/s at the  
500 TC site.

### 501 **3.4 Effects on ozone**

#### 502 **3.4.1. Improvement of ozone predictions over Hong Kong**

503 We next assessed the effects of adding the additional HONO sources in WRF-Chem on the simulated  
504 ambient ozone concentrations in the HK-PRD region. Because LOAES case reproduced HONO  
505 observations fairly well, the evaluations were carried out based on this case. Figure 10a and b show  
506 the differences in simulated O<sub>3</sub> and OH at the TC site between the LOAES and BASE cases,  
507 respectively. HONO built up during the nighttime and quickly was photolyzed into OH after sunrise.  
508 As a result of the much higher level of HONO in the LOAES case, daytime OH increased by 86% at  
509 the TC site (from 0.07 ppt in the BASE to 0.13 ppt in the LOAES case, on average). Similar  
510 increases in simulated OH (50%-100%) were suggested in *Aumont et al.* [2003] and *Li et al.* [2010].  
511 The large increase in OH is not only the direct result of photolysis of additional HONO, but it is also  
512 due to the OH production from the photolysis of additional secondary VOCs from the oxidation of  
513 primary VOCs by additional OH [*Aumont et al.*, 2003]. The enhancements in OH lead to more  
514 production of O<sub>3</sub> especially during noontime, with the largest O<sub>3</sub> increases during 10:00-12:00 LTC,  
515 as shown in Figure 10a. The maximum hourly ozone enhancement reached 27.4 ppb on 27 August  
516 with the mean ozone concentration increased by 8.2% over the whole simulation period at the TC  
517 site.

518 Overall, the simulated O<sub>3</sub> concentrations were in very good agreement with the observations at  
519 different monitoring stations across Hong Kong although the model underestimated at noontime at  
520 urban and suburban sites such as Central and TC (Figure 11). Compared with the BASE case, the  
521 LOAES case had noticeable enhancements in simulated O<sub>3</sub> especially during noontime at these sites.  
522 The additional sources of HONO initiated the O<sub>3</sub> production 1-2 hours earlier in the morning at most  
523 of the stations, similar to the findings in *Lei et al.* [2004] and *Li et al.* [2010]. After 14:00, as HONO  
524 no longer promoted the production of OH, the additional O<sub>3</sub> production in the LOAES case became  
525 negligible (Figure 11).

The inclusion of HONO sources have improved the WRF-Chem simulations of both daily and peak O<sub>3</sub> concentrations during noontime at multiple stations over Hong Kong. As shown in Table 5, the mean biases between the simulated and observed values of 8-hour and 1-hour maxima O<sub>3</sub> in the LOAES case have appreciable improvements, decreasing from -10.03 ppb in the BASE case to -0.53 ppb and from -21.77 ppb in the BASE case to -9.17 ppb, respectively. The daily average O<sub>3</sub> concentration at the measurement stations also increased from 30.34 ppb in the BASE case to 31.99 ppb in the LOAES case, much closer to the actual observations.

### 3.4.2. Enhancements in regional ozone levels over the HK-PRD region

Figure 12 presents the distribution of modeled O<sub>3</sub> at 14:00 LTC in the BASE and LOAES cases over the PRD region for the episode period. As shown, high levels of O<sub>3</sub> of up to 80-100 ppb occurred over the northern parts of the PRD. As evidenced, higher O<sub>3</sub> concentrations were shown over the downwind areas of the PRD in the LOAES case, especially over Hong Kong (Figure 12c and f). We also separately examined the impact of the source from ocean surface and from soil bacterial emissions. The results show that the oceanic HONO had unneglectable impacts on O<sub>3</sub> concentrations (0.2-1.0 ppb) over the PRD and the coastal areas of Yangtze River Delta region (Figure S4b) and that the HONO from soil bacteria enhanced O<sub>3</sub> levels by 0.5-2.0 ppb over the PRD region (Figure S5b).

We next examine O<sub>3</sub> enhancements in the LOAES case in different urban areas of the PRD region. The urban areas were identified based on MODIS land-use data. As shown in Table 6, compared with the BASE case, increases in O<sub>3</sub> at 14:00 LTC in the LOAES case were up to 12 ppb in urban Hong Kong (Figure 12f) with an average of 7.7 ppb. The O<sub>3</sub> changes in other major cities of the PRD were also noticeable as shown in Table 6. Over urban Guangzhou (GZ) and Shenzhen (SZ), where abundant anthropogenic emissions exist, the respective increases in daily O<sub>3</sub> level reached nearly 12% (4.1 ppb) and 10% (3.2 ppb) on average. In Huizhou (HZ), which is less industrialized, the daily ozone enhancement also reached nearly 6%. These results indicate the considerable contribution of the additional HONO sources to O<sub>3</sub> formation in the urban areas of the whole PRD region.

## 4. Summary and conclusions

In this study, comprehensive HONO sources were incorporated into the WRF-Chem model and the

revised model showed significant improvements in the simulation of atmospheric HONO concentrations observed at a suburban site that is surrounded by complex land coverages. Although the well-recognized heterogeneous conversions of NO<sub>2</sub> on the ground surface made the largest contribution to the observed HONO, soil biological activities and oceanic sources, with contributions of ~29% and ~9%, respectively, were also shown to be important at the suburban site. Our modeling results suggest that the soil biological activities and/or oceanic source could contribute substantial fractions of HONO in the atmosphere and there is a need to consider these two new sources over specific regions: in the areas covered with abundant natural or artificial vegetation (such as cotton and wheat fields that are abundant in China and have large emission fluxes of HONO [Oswald *et al.*, 2013]) and/or areas adjacent to ocean (such as coastal areas along the eastern China that are home to most of this country's megacities such as Tianjin, Shanghai, and Guangzhou). The incorporation of the additional HONO sources has appreciably improved the predictions of ozone at multiple monitoring stations and led to a 6-12% enhancement in averaged ozone over the urban areas of the HK-PRD region. Our study highlights the need to include these sources into regional air quality models before using the models to refine ozone control policies.

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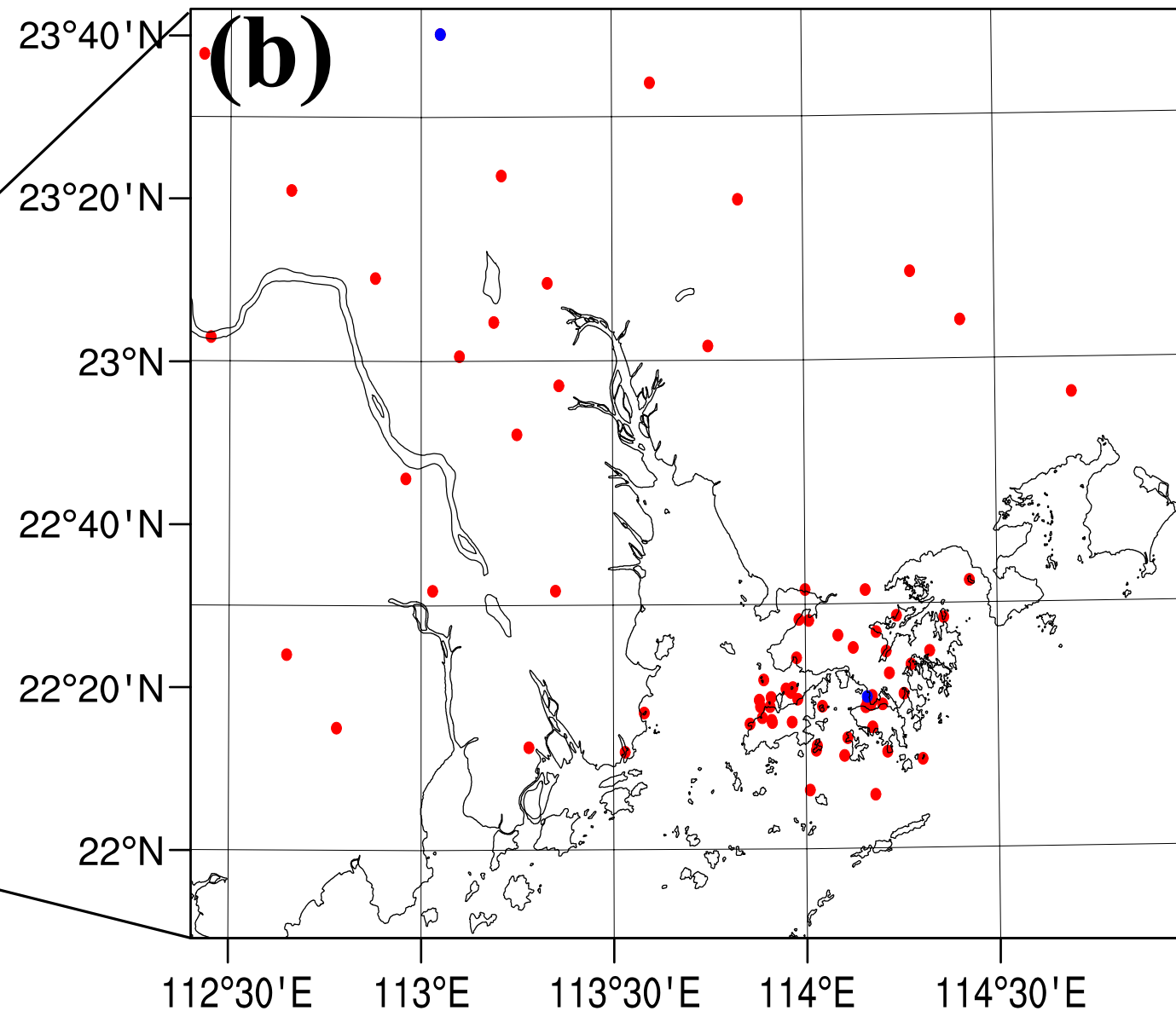
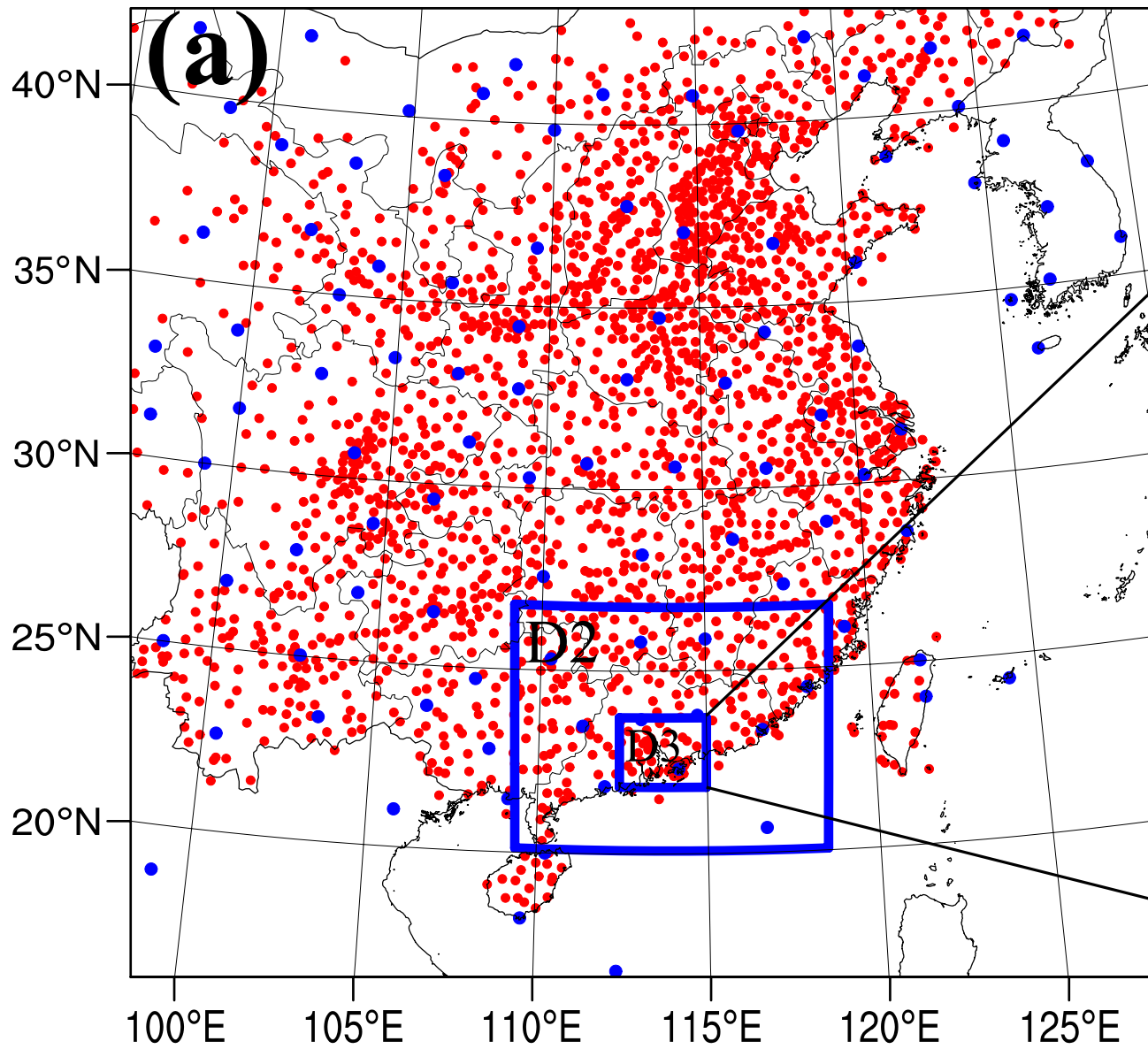
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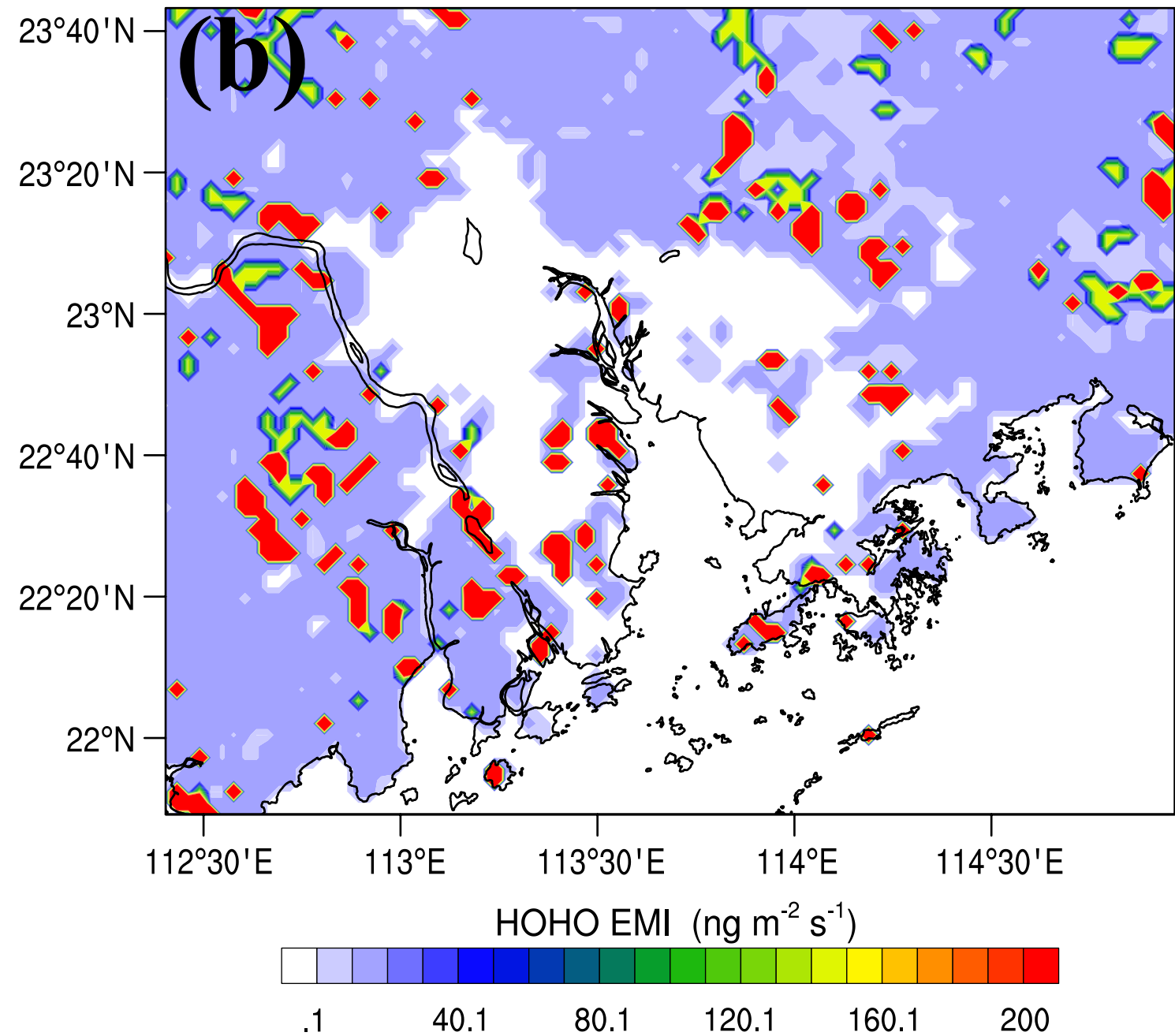
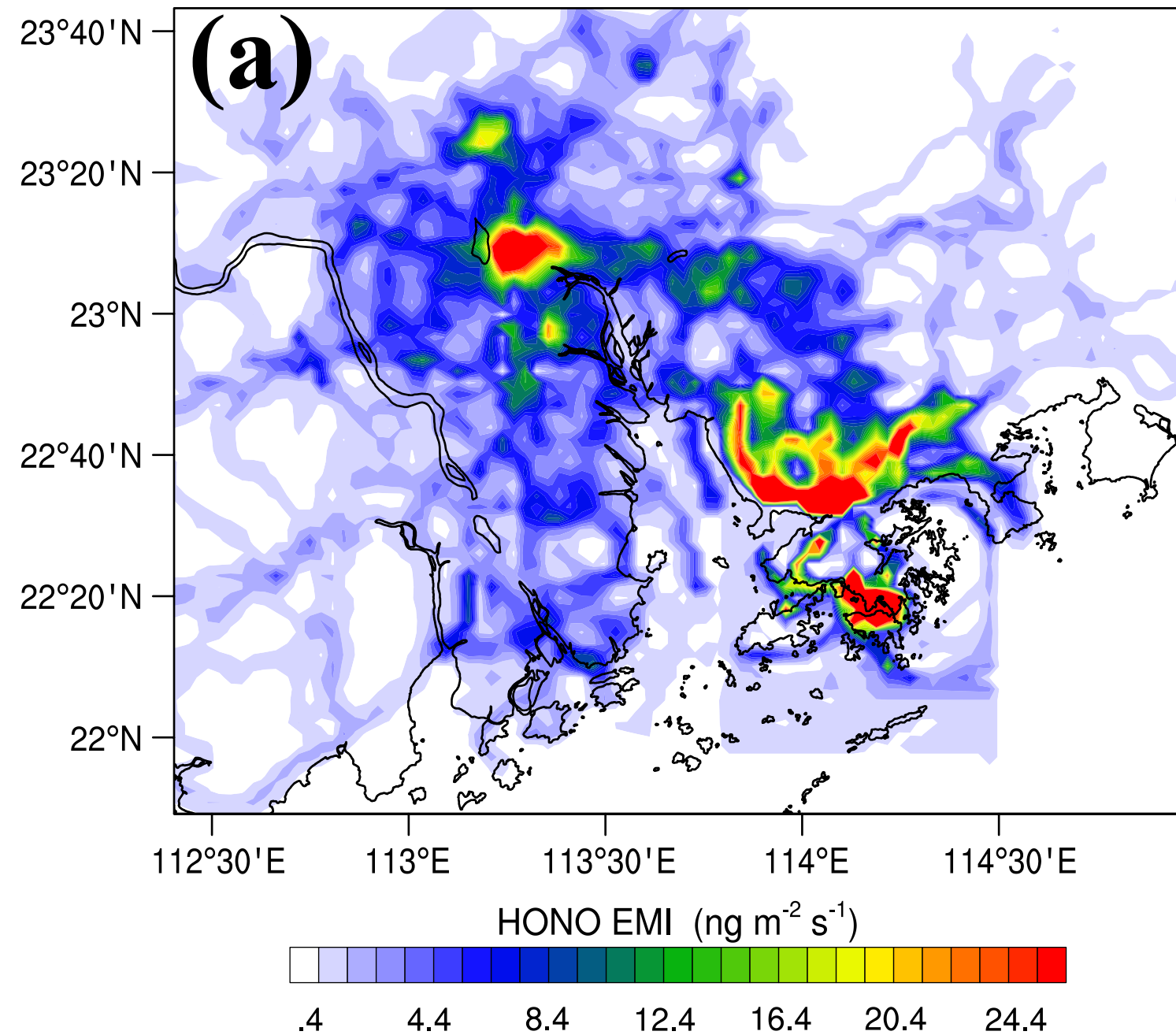
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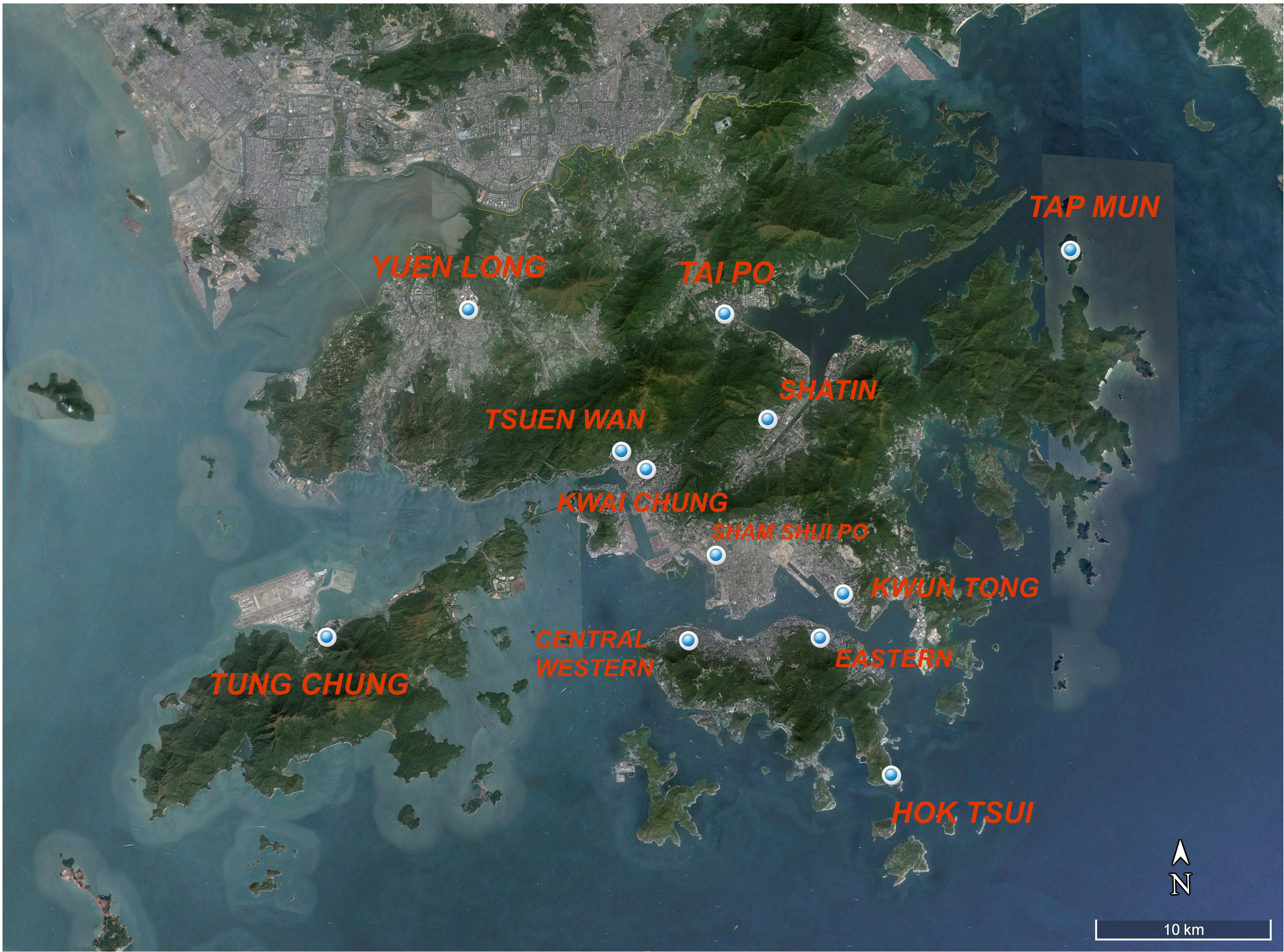


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**YUEN LONG**

**TAI PO**

**TAP MUN**

**SHATIN**

**TSUEN WAN**

**KWAI CHUNG**

**SHAM SHUI PO**

**KWUN TONG**

**TUNG CHUNG**

**CENTRAL  
WESTERN**

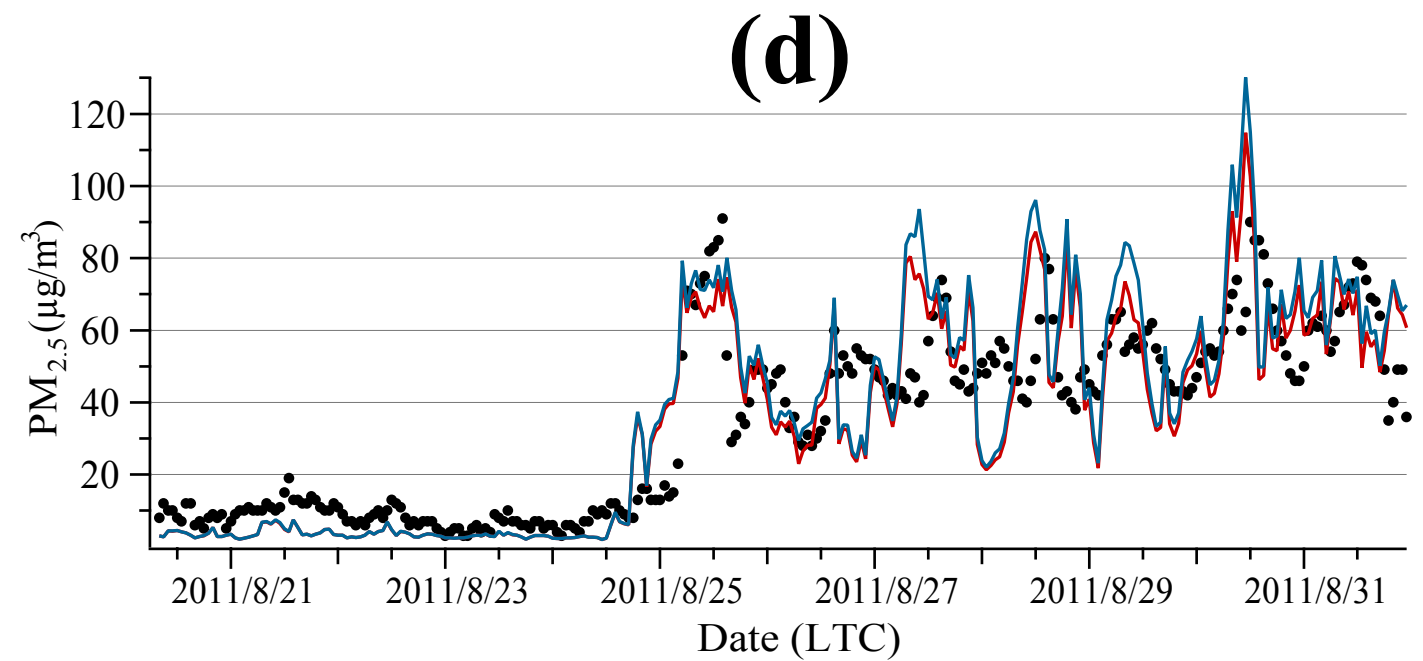
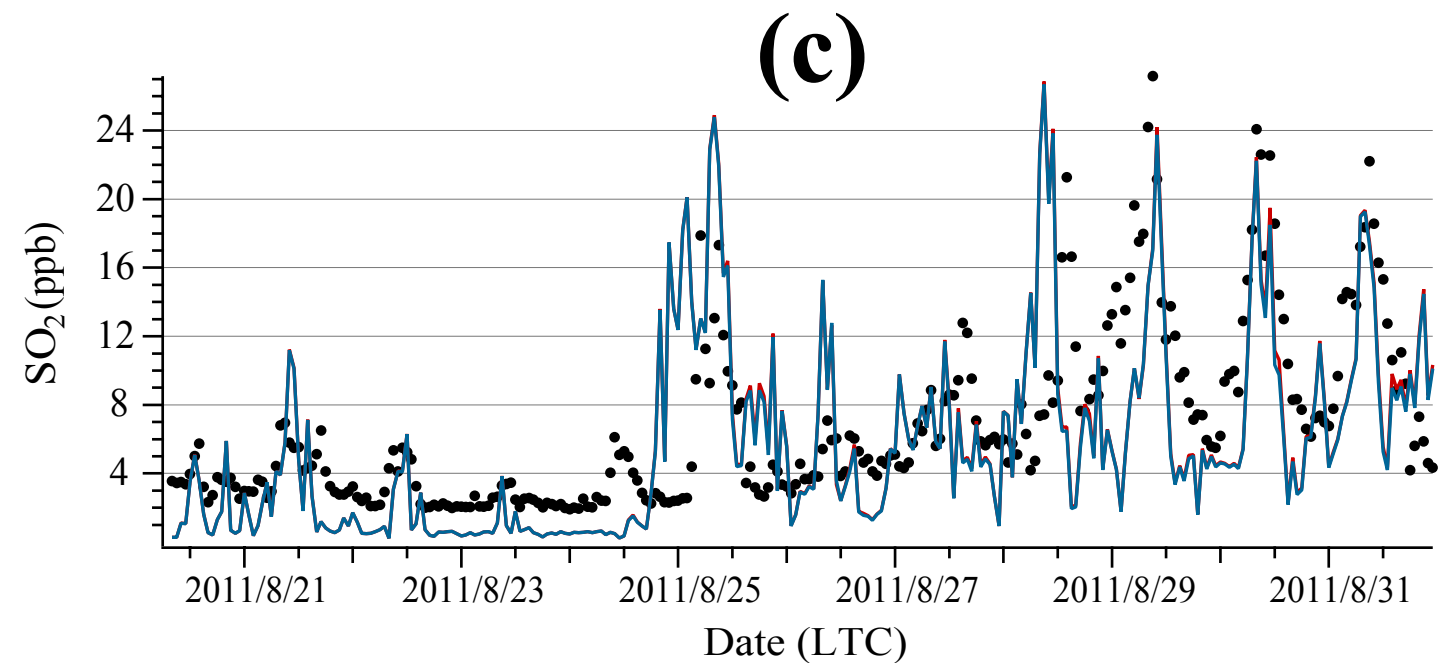
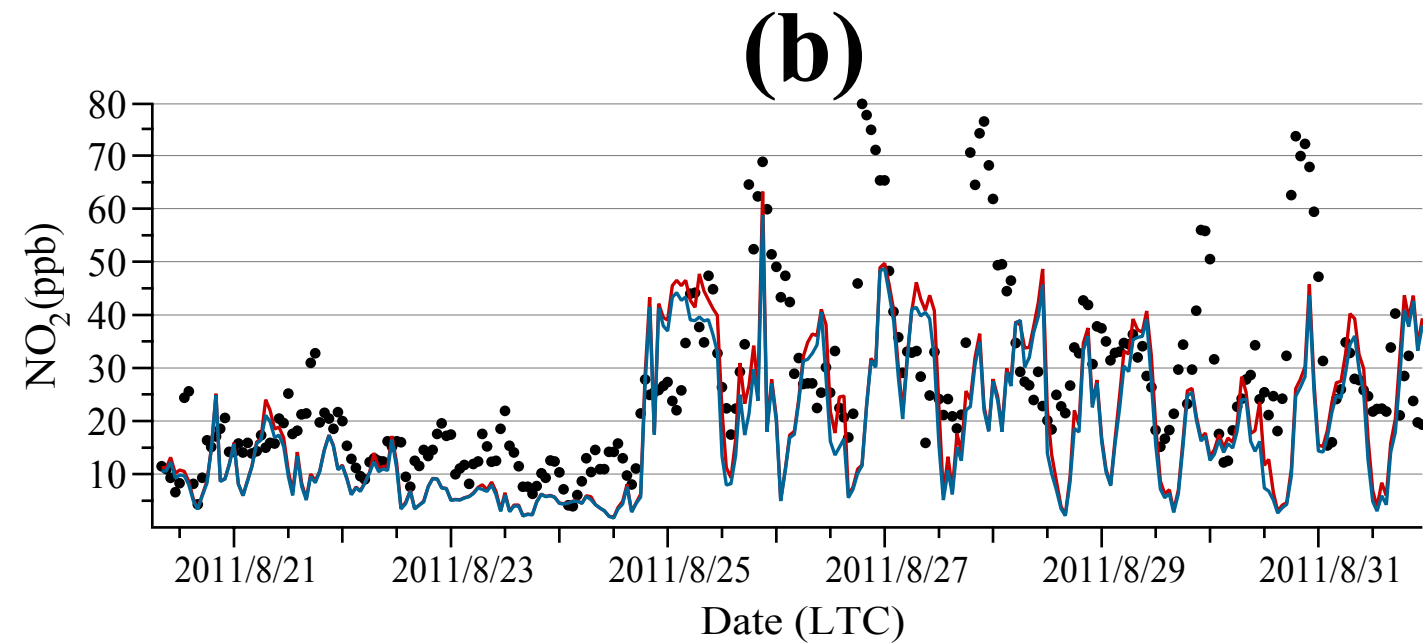
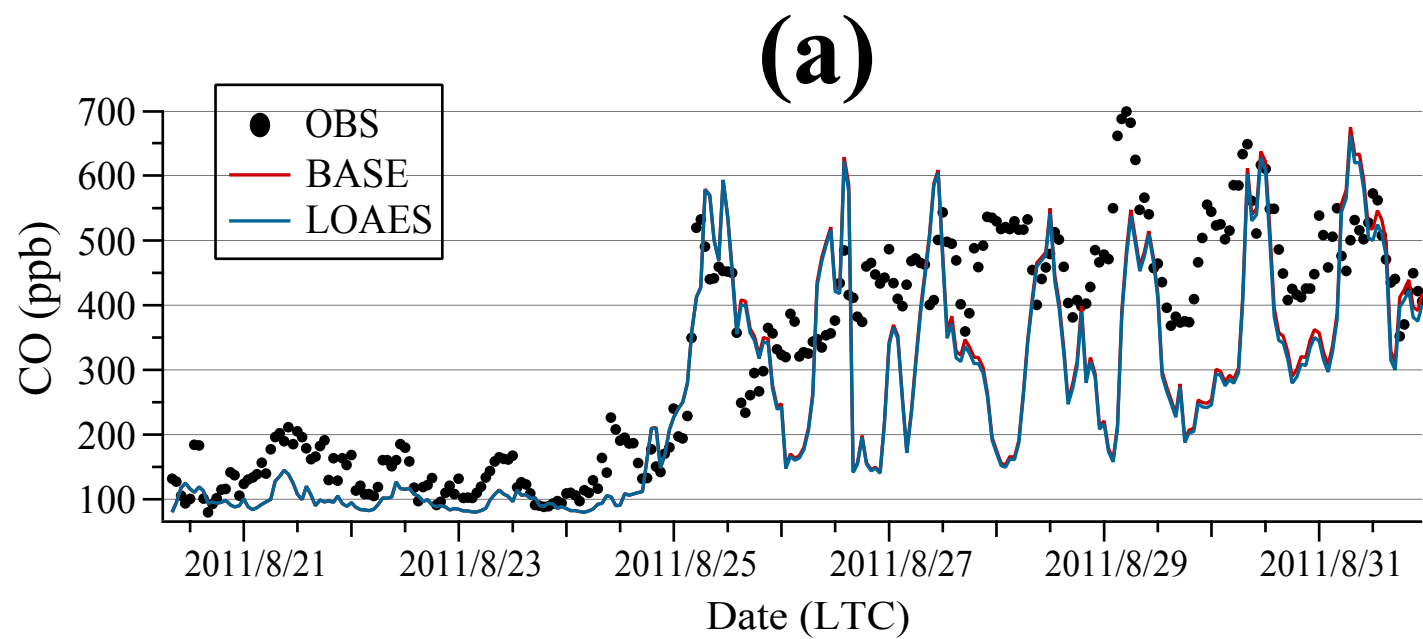
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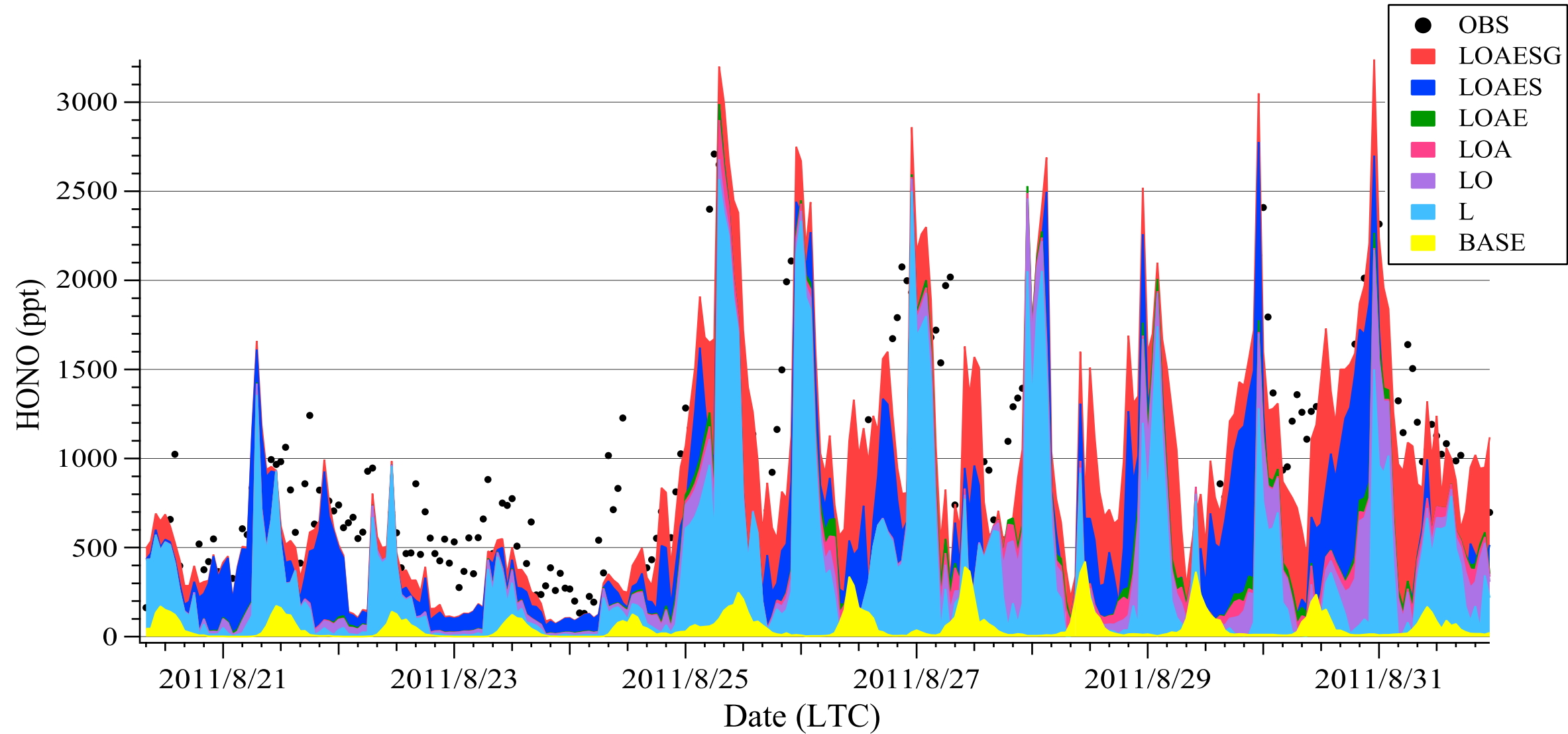
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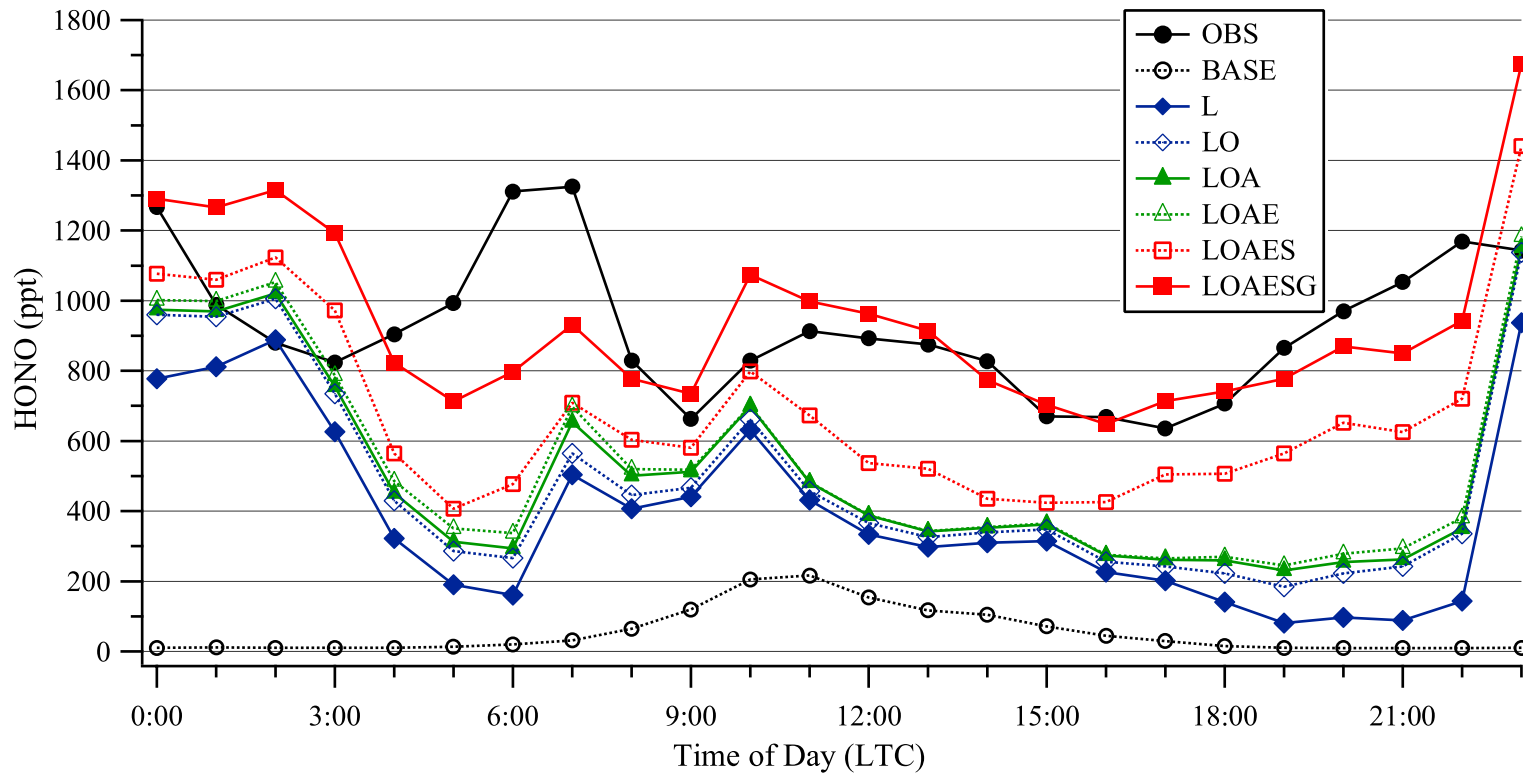


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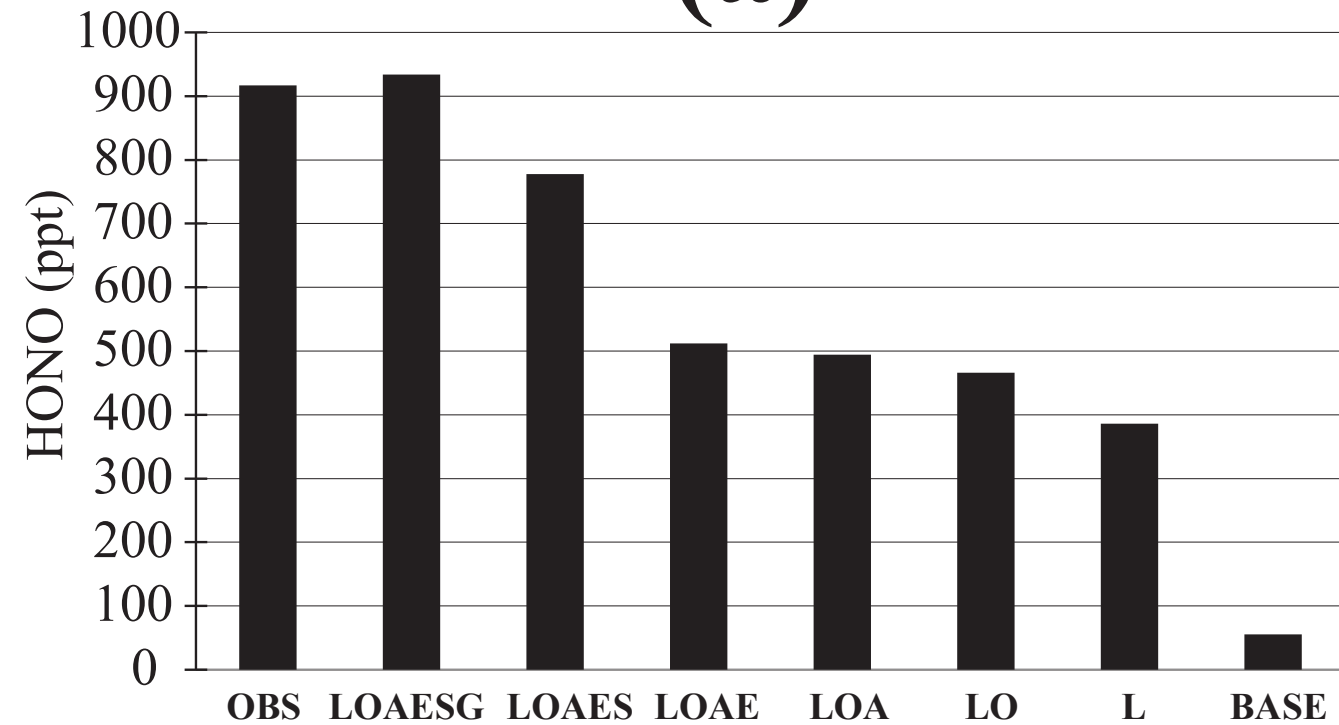








**(a)**



**(b)**

