

1           **Stratospheric chlorine processing after the unprecedented Hunga Tonga  
2           eruption**

3  
4           **Authors:** Jun Zhang<sup>1\*</sup>, Peidong Wang<sup>2</sup>, Douglas Kinnison<sup>1</sup>, Susan Solomon<sup>2</sup>, Jian Guan<sup>2</sup>,  
5           Yunqian Zhu<sup>3,4</sup>

6           **Affiliations:**

7  
8           <sup>1</sup>Atmospheric Chemistry Observations & Modeling Laboratory, NSF National Center for  
9           Atmospheric Research, Boulder, CO, USA

10          <sup>2</sup> Department of Earth, Atmospheric, and Planetary Sciences, Massachusetts Institute of  
11          Technology, Cambridge, MA, USA, 02139

12          <sup>3</sup> Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences, University of Colorado Boulder,  
13          Boulder, CO, USA, 80309

14          <sup>4</sup>Chemical Sciences Laboratory, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Boulder,  
15          CO, USA, 80305

16  
17          \*Corresponding author: Jun Zhang (jzhan166@ucar.edu)

18  
19          **Key Points:**

- 20  
21          ● A significant reduction in stratospheric HCl was observed in the Southern Hemisphere  
22          mid-latitudes during the latter half of 2022.
- 23  
24          ● Analysis using both model and satellites suggest a significant role of chemical processing  
25          in the observed HCl reduction.
- 26  
27          ● Heterogeneous chemistry is the primary driver for the chemical HCl loss, with HOBr +  
28          HCl on sulfate aerosols as the dominant process.

29  
30  
31          **Abstract**

32  
33  
34          Following the Hunga Tonga–Hunga Ha’apai (HTHH) eruption in January 2022, a significant  
35          reduction in stratospheric hydrochloric acid (HCl) was observed in the Southern Hemisphere mid-  
36          latitudes during the latter half of 2022, suggesting potential chlorine activation. The objective of  
37          this study is to comprehensively understand the substantial loss of HCl in the aftermath of HTHH.  
38          Satellite measurements along with a global chemistry-climate model are employed for the analysis.  
39          We find strong agreement of 2022 anomalies between the modeled and the measured data. The  
40          observed tracer-tracer relations between N<sub>2</sub>O and HCl indicate a significant role of chemical  
41          processing in the observed HCl reduction, especially during the austral winter of 2022. Further  
42          examining the roles of chlorine gas-phase and heterogeneous chemistry, we find that  
43          heterogeneous chemistry emerges as the primary driver for the chemical loss of HCl, with the  
44          reaction between HOBr and HCl on sulfate aerosols identified as the dominant loss process.

45  
46

47 **Plain language summary**

48

49 After the eruption of Hunga Tonga–Hunga Ha’apai (HTHH) in January 2022, there was a  
50 substantial decrease in stratospheric hydrochloric acid (HCl) in the Southern Hemisphere mid-  
51 latitudes in the latter part of 2022, hinting at potential chlorine activation. This study aims to  
52 comprehensively understand the significant loss of HCl following the HTHH eruption, utilizing  
53 satellite measurements and a global chemistry-climate model for analysis. The anomalies in 2022  
54 show remarkable agreement between the modeled and measured data. Tracer-tracer relations  
55 between N<sub>2</sub>O and HCl suggest a substantial influence of chemical processing in the observed  
56 reduction of HCl, particularly during the austral winter of 2022. Upon further investigation into  
57 the role of chlorine gas-phase and heterogeneous chemistry, heterogeneous chemistry emerges as  
58 the primary driver for the chemical loss of HCl. The reaction between HOBr and HCl on sulfate  
59 aerosols is identified as the dominant process leading to this loss.

60

61 **1. Introduction**

62 The January 2022 Hunga Tonga–Hunga Ha’apai (HTHH) eruption (20.5°S, 175.4°W) was an  
63 unprecedented underwater volcanic event in the modern era. The eruption injected about 150 Tg  
64 of water (H<sub>2</sub>O) (Millán et al., 2022; Randel et al., 2023) along with a moderate amount of sulfur  
65 dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) into the stratosphere (Carn et al. 2022; Taha et al., 2022). Satellite observations  
66 (Santee et al., 2023) and model simulations (Zhang et al., 2023; Wilmouth et al., 2023), all found  
67 significant ozone decreases in the lower stratosphere at southern hemisphere (SH) mid-latitudes in  
68 2022 after the eruption. In particular, a record low ozone relative to the climatology (2004 to 2021)  
69 in the SH austral winter between 30 to 50 hPa was observed in the mid-latitudes (Zhang et al.,  
70 2023). While there is evidence for some dynamical contributions to the ozone variations observed  
71 in 2022 (Wang et al., 2023), anomalous reductions in mid-latitude chlorine (Cl) reservoir species  
72 hydrochloric acid (HCl) along with enhancements in reactive chlorine monoxide (ClO) (Santee et  
73 al., 2023), suggest that Cl chemistry is also likely to contribute to the record low ozone abundances  
74 in 2022.

75

76 It is well-known that the SO<sub>2</sub> emission from the volcanic eruptions can enhance aerosol surface  
77 areas for heterogeneous chemistry (e.g., Hofmann & Solomon, 1989; Solomon et al., 1999). As  
78 the dense volcanic aerosols of HTHH spread in the stratosphere, satellite measurements from  
79 Microwave Limb Sounder (MLS) and Optical Spectrograph and InfraRed Imager System  
80 (OSIRIS) reported large reductions in concentrations of stratospheric nitrogen oxide (NO<sub>x</sub>), via  
81 hydrolysis of dinitrogen pentoxide (N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>) on aerosols (Santee et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2023). In  
82 response, the concentration of ClO increases as less NO<sub>x</sub> is available to convert ClO into reservoir  
83 species chlorine nitrate (ClONO<sub>2</sub>). Despite the large impact on NO<sub>x</sub> and ClO, N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub> hydrolysis  
84 does not affect HCl to any significant degree. Previous study from Santee et al. (2023) has  
85 highlighted the role of dynamics in influencing HCl mixing ratio anomalies, particularly during  
86 the latter part of 2022. Further, tracer-tracer analysis from Wilmouth et al. (2023) shows deviations  
87 in MLS-observed HCl and N<sub>2</sub>O relations, suggesting that the chemical losses to HCl cannot be  
88 ignored. The underlying reasons behind the chemical loss of HCl are the subject of this study.

89

90 There are a few possible pathways for the HCl chemical loss. A major mechanism contributing to  
91 the reduction of HCl involves its heterogeneous reaction on and within particles, leading to the  
92 production of highly reactive chlorine forms such as Cl<sub>2</sub> and HOCl (Solomon et al., 2015).  
93 Therefore, these heterogeneous processes have the capability to "activate" chlorine from the  
94 reservoirs. In the polar region, where polar stratospheric clouds (PSC) form at cold temperatures,  
95 the following heterogeneous reaction HCl+ClONO<sub>2</sub> → Cl<sub>2</sub>+HNO<sub>3</sub> (Solomon et al., 1986) occurs  
96 on PSC surface and substantially depletes HCl. This heterogenous chlorine reaction is highly  
97 temperature dependent and is only effective on the surfaces of typical stratospheric aerosols at  
98 temperatures below 195 K (Hanson et al., 1994; Shi et al., 2001; Kawa et al., 1997; Solomon et  
99 al., 2015). The atmospheric temperatures are generally too warm (>200k) for this heterogeneous  
100 reaction to take place at mid-latitudes, although Solomon et al. (2023) demonstrated this reaction  
101 could happen at warmer temperatures on organic-rich wildfire aerosols. In addition, in the presence  
102 of substantial water injections, a moist stratosphere can modify conditions favoring heterogeneous  
103 processing, as noted by Solomon et al. (1999) and Anderson et al. (2012). In the case of the HTHH  
104 eruption, increased concentrations of water vapor and sulfate in the stratosphere have the potential  
105 to elevate the threshold temperature for chlorine activation, enabling polar processing and chlorine  
106 activation occurrence in mid-latitudes. Additionally, the importance of heterogeneous bromine  
107 reactions on the stratospheric sulfate aerosol has been examined by a number of groups (e.g.,  
108 Hanson et al., 1994; Hanson and Ravishankara, 1995; Abbatt, 1995; Tie and Brasseur, 1996;  
109 Slusser et al., 1997). These studies indicate that under conditions of high aerosol surface area, the  
110 reaction HOBr+HCl → BrCl+H<sub>2</sub>O could represent a significant loss process for HCl at mid-  
111 latitudes. Later measurements reported by Waschewsky and Abbatt (1999) and Hanson (2003)  
112 support and even suggest that under warm stratospheric conditions (205-220 K), HCl loss via  
113 reaction with HOBr could become significant. The hydrolysis of bromine nitrate (BrONO<sub>2</sub>) can  
114 serve as a significant source of HOBr under elevated aerosol loadings, and this reaction does not  
115 exhibit strong temperature dependence. Recent studies have also emphasized the ability of organic  
116 aerosols from wildfires to activate chlorine in the mid-latitude lower stratosphere (Santee et al.,  
117 2022; Bernath et al., 2022, Solomon et al., 2022, 2023). Thus, understanding this chemistry is also  
118 important for discriminating between volcanic and wildfire or other organic-aerosol chemistry at  
119 mid-latitudes.

120 Further, the conversion of HCl to reactive chlorine via the gas-phase reaction HCl+OH → Cl+H<sub>2</sub>O  
121 can also be accelerated due to the elevated OH level in the aftermath of the HTHH eruption. The  
122 massive injection of water vapor leads to a direct and rapid increase in stratospheric OH  
123 abundances (Zhu et al., 2022). In addition, photolysis of the gas-phase HNO<sub>3</sub>, HOCl and HOBr  
124 produced from the hydrolysis of N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>, ClONO<sub>2</sub>, and BrONO<sub>2</sub> is a source of reactive hydrogen,  
125 HOx (OH + HO<sub>2</sub>). The reduction in NO<sub>x</sub> concentration also contributes to an increase in HOx by  
126 impeding the rate of the reaction between NO<sub>2</sub> and OH.

127 This study aims to discern whether chlorine activation primarily occurs through gas-phase or  
128 heterogeneous chemistry in the wake of HTHH, and the processes that are responsible for the  
129 chemical loss of HCl. This work will not quantify the ozone loss; rather, it will be exclusively  
130 focused on the chlorine chemistry. The ozone loss and ozone chemistry has been discussed in  
131 Zhang et al., (2023).

132 **2. Data and Method**

136 **2.1 Satellite data**  
137 The study utilizes datasets from the Atmospheric Chemistry Experiment-Fourier Transform  
138 Spectrometer (ACE) and MLS. Level 2 satellite data from ACE version 5.2 are employed for H<sub>2</sub>O,  
139 N<sub>2</sub>O and HCl (Boone et al., 2005 and Boone, 2020). Additionally, daily level 3 satellite data from  
140 MLS version 5.0 are used for N<sub>2</sub>O and HCl (Livesey et al., 2020). Both datasets span from 2007  
141 to 2022 to match with the model simulation period. We exclude 2020-2021 because of the extreme  
142 Australian new year's wildfire in late 2019/early 2020 (Santee et al., 2022; Solomon et al., 2022,  
143 2023; Strahan et al., 2022; Bernath et al., 2022). Anomalies for N<sub>2</sub>O and HCl in 2022 (Figure 1)  
144 are calculated as deviations from the mean of the 2007-2019 climatological background. Livesey  
145 et al. (2021) pointed out the long-term trend of MLS N<sub>2</sub>O is suffering from a ~3-4% per decade  
146 drift in the lower stratosphere. Here, we detrend MLS daily data to allow an interannual  
147 comparison.

148

149 **2.2 Community Earth System Model Version 2 (CESM2)/Whole Atmosphere Community**  
150 **Climate Model (WACCM)**

151 The numerical experiments in this study were conducted using CESM2/WACCM6, a state-of-the-  
152 art chemistry-climate model that spans from the Earth's surface to approximately 140 km. The  
153 model incorporates a comprehensive representation of troposphere-stratosphere-mesosphere-  
154 lower-thermosphere (TSMLT) chemistry, with detailed descriptions available in Gettelman et al.  
155 (2019). WACCM6 features a prognostic stratospheric aerosol module (Mills et al., 2016) and has  
156 been extensively employed to investigate the impact of volcanic aerosols on heterogeneous  
157 processes and their impact on ozone loss (e.g., Mills et al., 2017; Stone et al., 2017; Zambri et al.,  
158 2019). The reaction probabilities for key stratospheric heterogeneous processes on sulfate aerosol  
159 used in WACCM are listed in Table S1.

160

161 For this study, the simulations are characterized by a horizontal resolution of 0.9° latitude × 1.25°  
162 longitude, utilizing the finite volume dynamical core (Lin & Rood, 1996). The model includes 110  
163 vertical levels, with a vertical resolution of approximately 500m in the upper troposphere and  
164 lower stratosphere. WACCM6 is operated in a specified dynamics configuration, where  
165 temperatures and horizontal winds (U, V) are relaxed, or nudged, to the Modern-Era Retrospective  
166 analysis for Research and Applications Version 2 (MERRA-2) reanalysis (Gelaro et al., 2017)  
167 using a relaxation timescale of 12 hours. The nudging method employed in this study follows the  
168 approach outlined by Davis et al. (2022). This configuration spans from 2007 until the end of 2022,  
169 initialized with conditions from a long historical simulation (Gettelman et al., 2019). The model  
170 setup incorporates major stratospheric volcanic injections from 2007 to 2021. Beginning in  
171 January 2022, two distinct cases are conducted: the volcano case with external forcing (SO<sub>2</sub> and  
172 H<sub>2</sub>O injection) from the HTHH eruption, and the control case with no external forcing (no SO<sub>2</sub> nor  
173 H<sub>2</sub>O injection) from the HTHH eruption. The disparity between these two nudged simulations  
174 provides insights into the chemistry-related changes post the HTHH eruption. This study assumes  
175 the emissions are 150 Tg H<sub>2</sub>O and 0.6 Tg SO<sub>2</sub> on January 15, 2022, from approximately 20 to 35  
176 km altitude. The injection profiles of H<sub>2</sub>O and SO<sub>2</sub> are similar to Zhu et al. (2022), however, with  
177 an adjustment of SO<sub>2</sub> injection. The SO<sub>2</sub> injection estimate ranges from 0.4 Tg to 1 Tg (e.g., Millan  
178 et al., 2022; Li et al., 2023; Sellitto et al., 2023) from different sources and approaches. Here an  
179 SO<sub>2</sub> injection of 0.6 Tg is utilized, leading to aerosol extinction that exhibits strong agreement with  
180 the Ozone Mapping and Profiler Suite Limb Profiler (OMPS-LP) observation, especially during  
181 the 2022 Austral winter (Figure S1).

182

183 **2.3 Tracer-tracer method**

184 Exploring the correlation among chemical species, commonly known as "tracer-tracer" analysis,  
 185 serves as a robust approach to dissect the interactions between dynamical and chemical processes  
 186 (e.g., Proffitt et al., 1990; Griffin et al., 2019). In this study, we construct a "no-chemistry" baseline  
 187 from the linear fit between N<sub>2</sub>O and HCl over January to March data, since no or little  
 188 heterogeneous chemistry normally occurs in these three months given warm conditions. The  
 189 foundation of this analysis lies in the expectation that dynamical transport should impact both N<sub>2</sub>O  
 190 and HCl in a similar manner. The deviations of HCl from this "no-chemistry" baseline are defined  
 191 as  $\Delta\text{HCl}$ , indicating the changes in HCl that are due to chemical processes. A detailed discussion  
 192 on this method can be found in Wang et al., (2023).

193

194 In this analysis, N<sub>2</sub>O serves as an inactive tracer for calculating  $\Delta\text{HCl}$ , given its availability in both  
 195 ACE and MLS observations. The distinct long-term trends of N<sub>2</sub>O and HCl resulting from  
 196 anthropogenic emissions could introduce a bias in the tracer-tracer correlation. Furthermore, the  
 197 drifting issue associated with MLS N<sub>2</sub>O adds complexity to the long-term trends. To address this,  
 198  $\Delta\text{HCl}$  for each year is computed based on the "no-chemistry" baseline established in that specific  
 199 year. This approach prevents long-term trends in N<sub>2</sub>O and HCl from affecting the calculations.

200

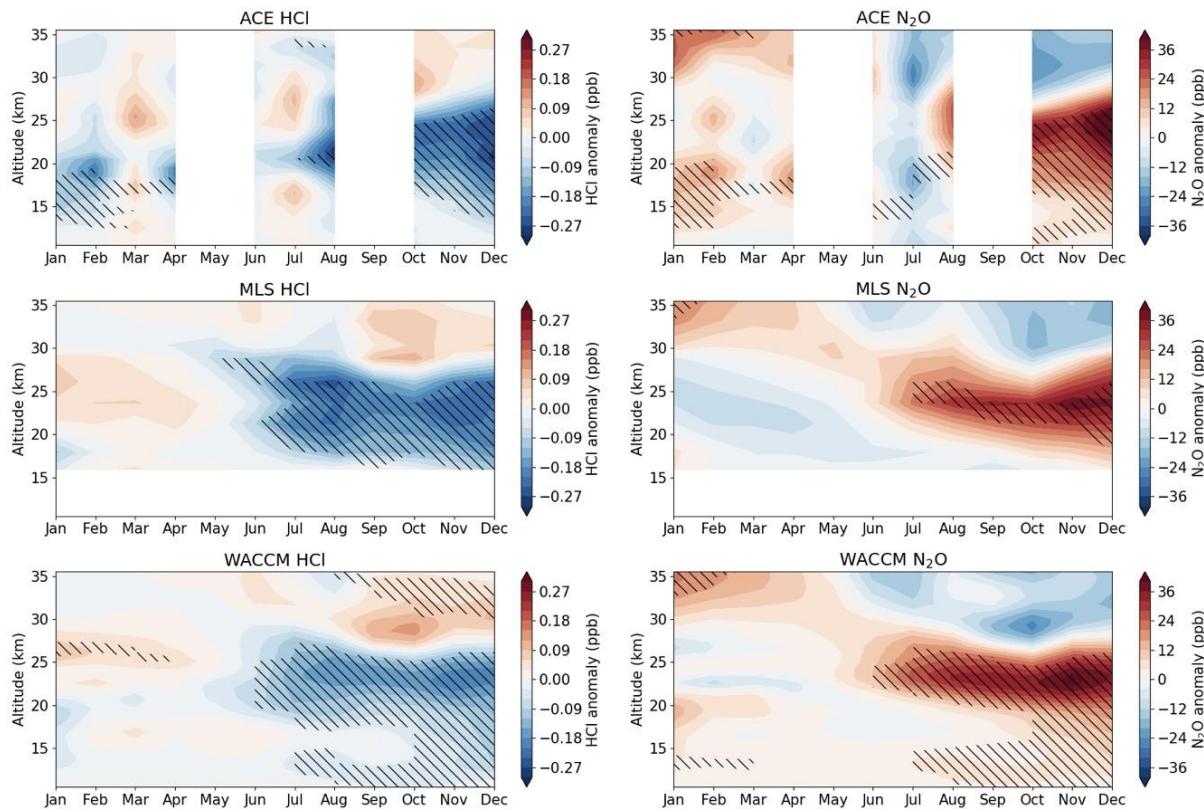
201 **3. Results and Discussions**202 **3.1 Chemical signal of HCl loss at mid-latitudes (30-55°S)**

203 The 2022 anomalies are computed as deviations from the climatological mean, shown in Figure 1.  
 204 We linearly detrend both satellite observations and model simulations using data from 2007 to  
 205 2019 to accommodate the long-term trends in N<sub>2</sub>O and HCl as well as additional instrumental drift  
 206 in MLS N<sub>2</sub>O. The climatology encompasses various phases of the Quasi-Biennial Oscillation  
 207 (QBO). Therefore, the derived stratospheric anomalies in HCl and N<sub>2</sub>O reflect both the influence  
 208 of the 2022 QBO phase and the forced changes after the HTHH eruption, including both dynamical  
 209 and chemical impacts. We use N<sub>2</sub>O, a long-lived transport tracer, to clarify the influence of  
 210 dynamics in shaping the distribution of trace gasses. Notably, in much of the lower stratosphere,  
 211 the vertical and meridional gradients of N<sub>2</sub>O exhibit an opposite pattern to HCl. As a result, N<sub>2</sub>O  
 212 is generally anticorrelated with HCl in the lower stratosphere. The hatched regions on the plot  
 213 denote areas where the 2022 anomalies fall outside the range of all variability during the period  
 214 2007-2019. Specifically, for N<sub>2</sub>O and HCl, the hatches indicate that the 2022 value represents the  
 215 maximum and minimum, respectively, compared to the climatological data. The WACCM N<sub>2</sub>O  
 216 anomaly is consistent with observations, suggesting that the dynamical transport on tracer  
 217 distribution is represented well in WACCM.

218

219 The WACCM HCl anomaly in 2022 closely aligns with ACE and MLS relative to the climatology.  
 220 These anomalies arise from a combination of internal variability and the forced dynamical and  
 221 chemical changes triggered by the HTHH eruption. The onset of the negative anomaly in HCl is  
 222 evident from May, corresponding to the arrival of substantial aerosols from the HTHH eruption in  
 223 this region (Santee et al., 2023). During the months of June, July, and August (JJA), ACE, MLS,  
 224 and WACCM consistently depict the lowest HCl levels compared to all years included in the  
 225 climatology (indicated by hatching in Figure 1), consistent with the large negative HCl anomaly  
 226 in winter reported in Wilmouth et al., (2023). In the latter part of the year, specifically between 17  
 227 to 27 km, both model and observations exhibit a substantial negative anomaly in HCl. Despite the

228 potential for chemical processing in this region, the signal of such processing is largely  
 229 overshadowed by significant countervailing positive anomalies in N<sub>2</sub>O, indicating the predominant  
 230 influence of transport effects. However, in the key altitude range of approximately 19 to 23 km  
 231 during JJA that we focus on here, the large HCl anomaly is not accompanied by a similarly large  
 232 N<sub>2</sub>O anomaly. This discrepancy suggests that dynamics alone cannot account for the low HCl  
 233 levels in that region, and chemical processing is highly likely taking place. The subsequent analysis  
 234 will focus on this specific region during the SH winter months.  
 235



236  
 237 **Figure 1.** Calculated 2022 HCl anomaly in ppbv (left panels) and N<sub>2</sub>O anomaly in ppbv (right  
 238 panels) relative to climatology (2007 to 2019) from ACE, MLS, and WACCM in the SH mid-  
 239 latitudes (30–55°S). Hatched regions indicate where the 2022 anomalies are outside the range of  
 240 all variability during 2007–2019.  
 241  
 242

### 243 **3.2 Significant stratospheric chlorine activation**

244 The top panel in Figure 2 depicts the tracer-tracer relationship of ACE N<sub>2</sub>O and HCl in June, July,  
 245 August and October at 20.5 km over 30 to 55°S, color-coded by water vapor concentration. ACE  
 246 doesn't have observations in May and September 2022 over this latitude range. The thick black  
 247 lines in the top panel of Figure 2 represent the “no-chemistry” baseline in 2022, and the shaded  
 248 area encompasses a conservative full range of baseline variability, bounded by the maximum and  
 249 minimum baselines between 2007 and 2019. Deviations from correlation observed in HCl suggest  
 250 the presence of chemical processes, as described in Wang et al. (2023). The intensity of chemical  
 251 processes becomes more pronounced with greater deviations of HCl from the baseline. Tracer-  
 252 tracer plots further confirm the strong chemical processing that occurs in June and intensifies in

253 July and August in 2022 compared to 2007 to 2019 (triangles in Figure 2). It is notable that  
254 deviations in HCl from their respective “no-chemistry” baseline occur in June to August from 2007  
255 to 2019 (round points in Figure 2), as chlorine activation happens every year in these months with  
256 a seasonal cycle. In October, Cl activation slows down as the polar spring advances with  
257 temperature rise, thus the HCl departure from the baseline reduces.

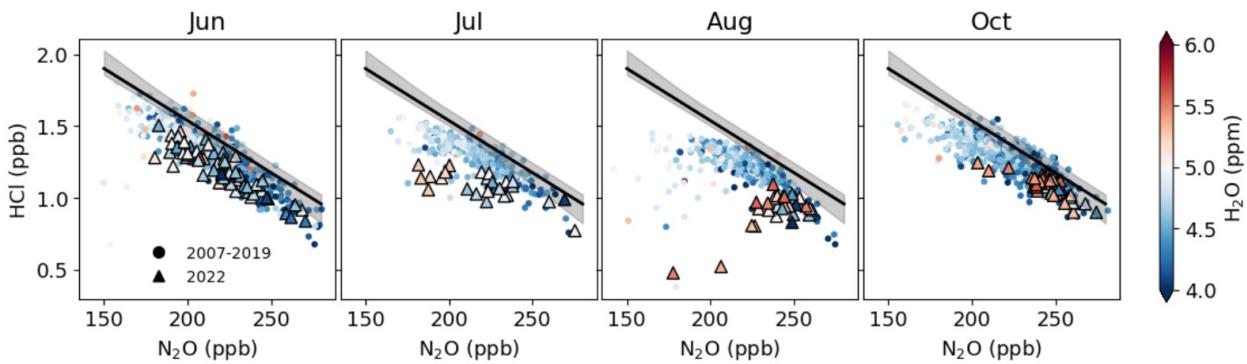
258

259 The bottom panel of Figure 2 displays the derived  $\Delta\text{HCl}$  resulting from chemical processes from  
260 MLS, ACE, and WACCM in 2022. ACE and MLS  $\Delta\text{HCl}$  is calculated by the deviations from the  
261 baseline, with the seasonal cycle removed. The shaded regions in blue and red represent the range  
262 of  $\pm 1$  standard deviation (std) for MLS and ACE, respectively, for each month from 2007 to 2019.  
263 The patterns of derived  $\Delta\text{HCl}$  from observations closely resemble those calculated by WACCM  
264 from the two nudged simulations (volcano minus control). Notably, the largest chemical induced  
265 HCl reduction occurs in the SH winter. Figure 2 further indicates that tracer-tracer analysis can  
266 effectively be employed to derive  $\Delta\text{HCl}$  due to chemical processes using MLS and ACE data, and  
267 the results exhibit comparability with those from the chemistry climate model. The differences  
268 between WACCM, ACE and MLS are within the uncertainty range ( $\pm 1$  std).

269

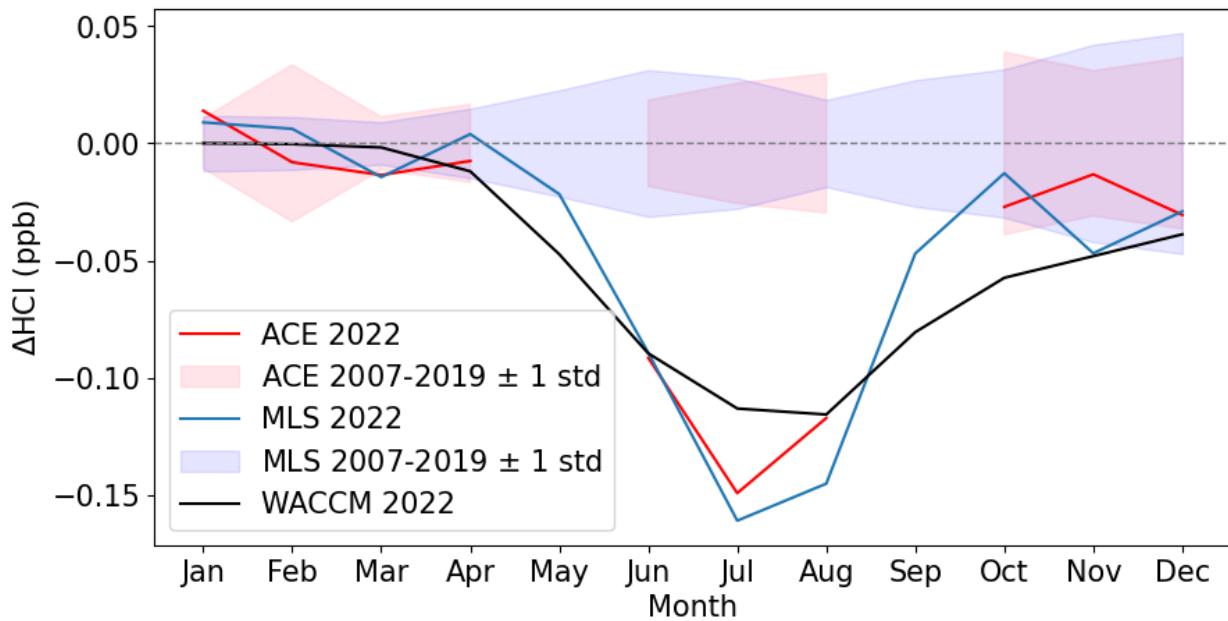
270

271



272

273



274

275

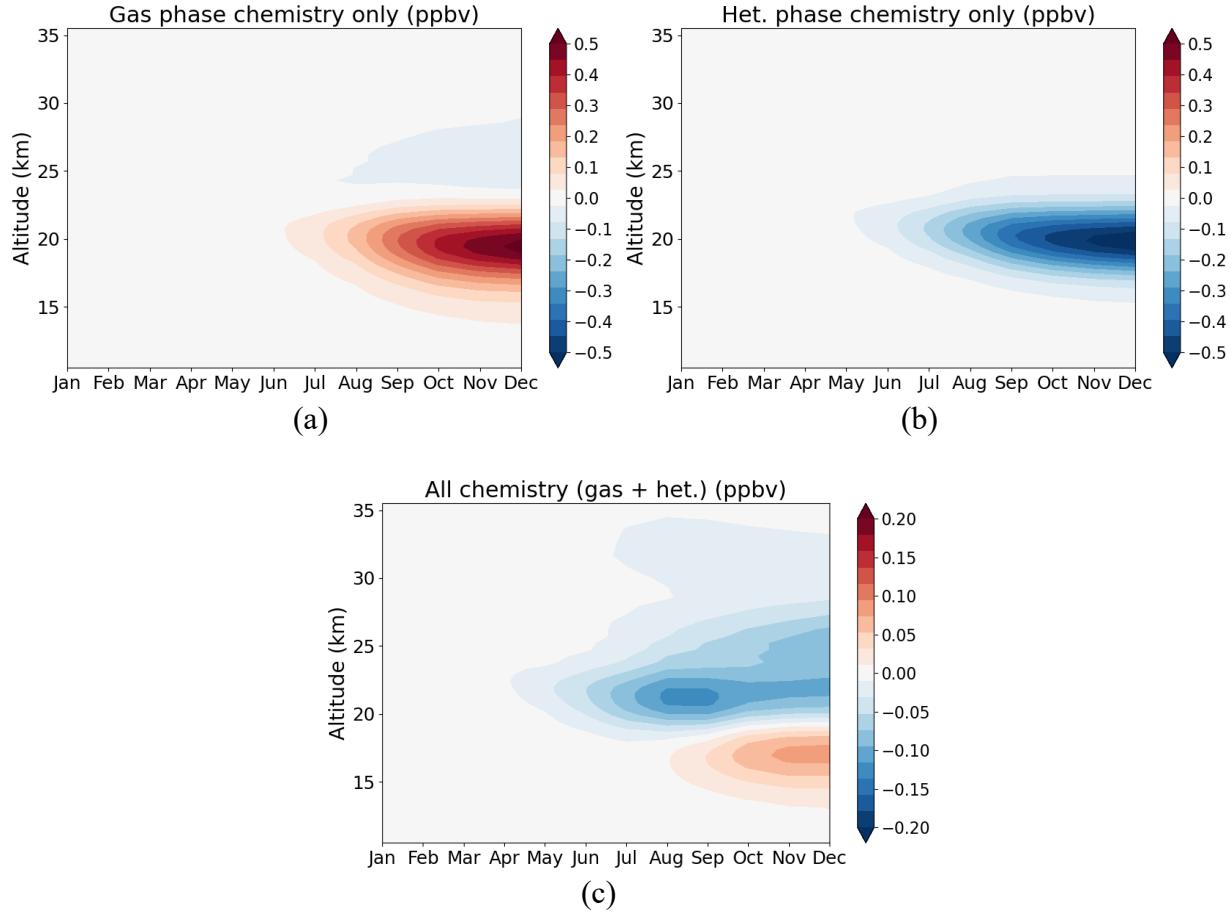
276 **Figure 2.** Top panel: Tracer-tracer correlation between ACE-measured N<sub>2</sub>O (x-axis) and HCl (y-axis), color-coded by water vapor concentration. Each dot represents a single measurement at 20.5  
 277 km over 30 to 55°S. The thick black lines represent the no-chemistry baseline, from the linear fit  
 278 over January to March 2022 data points. The shaded regions indicate a conservative full range of  
 279 baseline variability bounded by the maximum and minimum baselines constructed by data in  
 280 individual years from 2007 to 2019. Bottom panel: Calculated ΔHCl from ACE, MLS and  
 281 WACCM in 2022 averaging all points over 30 to 55°S. ACE and MLS ΔHCl is calculated from  
 282 departures from the baseline in the top panel but with the seasonal cycle removed, representing the  
 283 change in HCl due to anomalous chemical processes in 2022. The blue and red shaded regions  
 284 indicate ±1 standard deviation range for MLS and ACE in each month from 2007 to 2019.  
 285 WACCM ΔHCl is calculated from the difference in HCl between the volcano and the control run.  
 286  
 287

### 288 3.3 Role of gas and heterogenous phase chemistry in chlorine activation

289 To understand the chemical processes that give rise to the ΔHCl in Figure 2 following the HTHH  
 290 eruption, a thorough model examination is conducted. Figure 3 illustrates the changes in gas-phase

291 and heterogeneous-phase chemistry, along with the cumulative changes of all chemistry. The  
 292  $\Delta\text{HCl}$  is calculated from the volcano case compared to the control case. Gas-phase chemistry  
 293 (Figure 3a) results in an increase in HCl below 23 km over the 30 to 55°S, accompanied by a  
 294 decrease from 23 to 30 km. Heterogeneous chemistry (Figure 3b) induces HCl depletion from 15  
 295 to 25 km. Considering both gas and heterogeneous chemistry (Figure 3c), the  $\Delta\text{HCl}$  exhibits a net  
 296 reduction above 19 km from April to December, with the maximum reduction occurring in the  
 297 winter, consistent with Figure 2. There is an HCl increase below 18 km (Figure 3c), attributable to  
 298 enhanced gas-phase reactions, particularly  $\text{Cl}+\text{CH}_4$  and  $\text{ClO}+\text{OH}$  (discussed below).

299

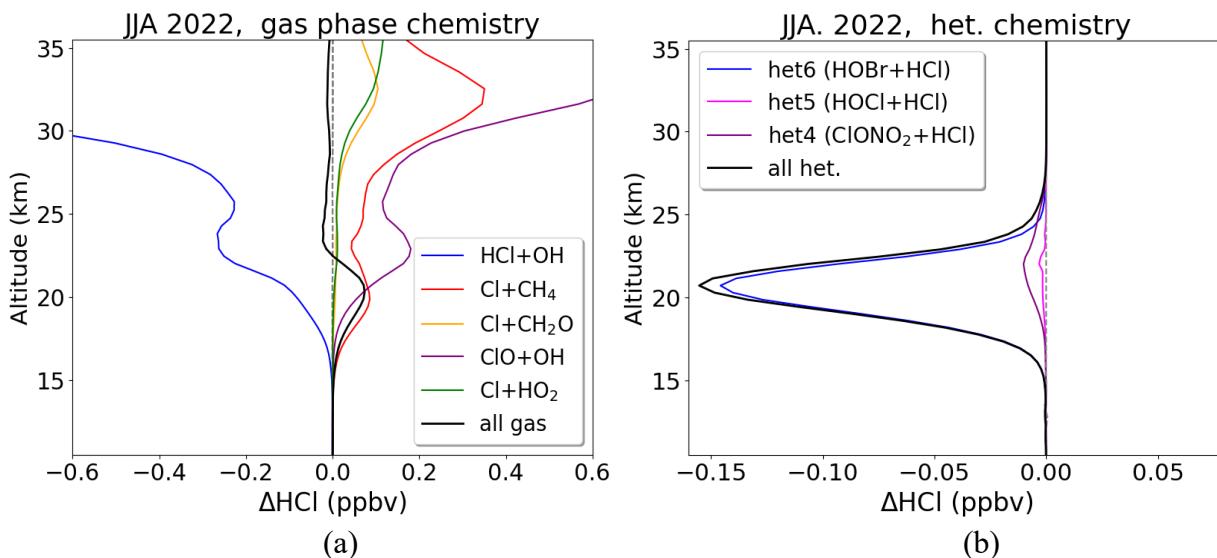


**Figure 3.** WACCM calculated  $\Delta\text{HCl}$  (ppbv) from the volcano minus the control case for (a) gas-phase chemistry only, (b) heterogeneous chemistry only and (c) the sum of all gas and heterogeneous chemistry over 30 to 55°S. Note that panels c has different color bar ranges from panels a and b.

Perturbations in individual reactions are investigated following the HTHH eruption, with a particular focus during JJA. The ones with important contributions to the  $\Delta\text{HCl}$  are plotted in Figure 4 with different colors. The rest of the reactions only affect less than 1% of  $\Delta\text{HCl}$ , thus are not shown here. A full list of HCl reactions examined can be found in Table S2. The “all gas” black line in Figure 4a adds up all the gas reactions, not just the gas terms plotted in the figures, and same for the “all het” black line in Figure 4b. In the realm of gas-phase chemistry (Figure 4a), the reaction between HCl and elevated OH acts as a significant sink for HCl from the simulated

318 perturbation due to HTHH. However, this loss is entirely compensated for by the heightened gas-  
319 phase production, particularly Cl+CH<sub>4</sub> and ClO+OH. Among heterogeneous reactions (Figure 4b),  
320 the primary sink for HCl is the reaction between HOBr and HCl on sulfate aerosols between 15 to  
321 25 km, with ClONO<sub>2</sub>+HCl contributing as well, albeit with a much smaller magnitude. This is  
322 mainly attributed to volcanic aerosols providing additional surface area density (SAD) for  
323 heterogeneous chemistry at these altitudes (Figure 4d). Here we conclude that, during the SH  
324 wintertime, the HCl chemical reduction from 15 to 24 km in the mid-latitudes is attributed to  
325 heterogeneous chemistry rather than gas-phase chemistry (Figure 4c). Our results for this season  
326 differ from the findings reported by Wilmouth et al. (2023), where they suggest that gas-phase  
327 chemistry is the primary cause of the chemical loss of HCl. They state that this is because of the  
328 enhanced HCl loss with elevated OH, as well as the slower HCl production from Cl+CH<sub>4</sub> reaction.  
329 Our findings support the former but not the latter, resulting in a different net effect for gas-phase  
330 reactions alone.  
331

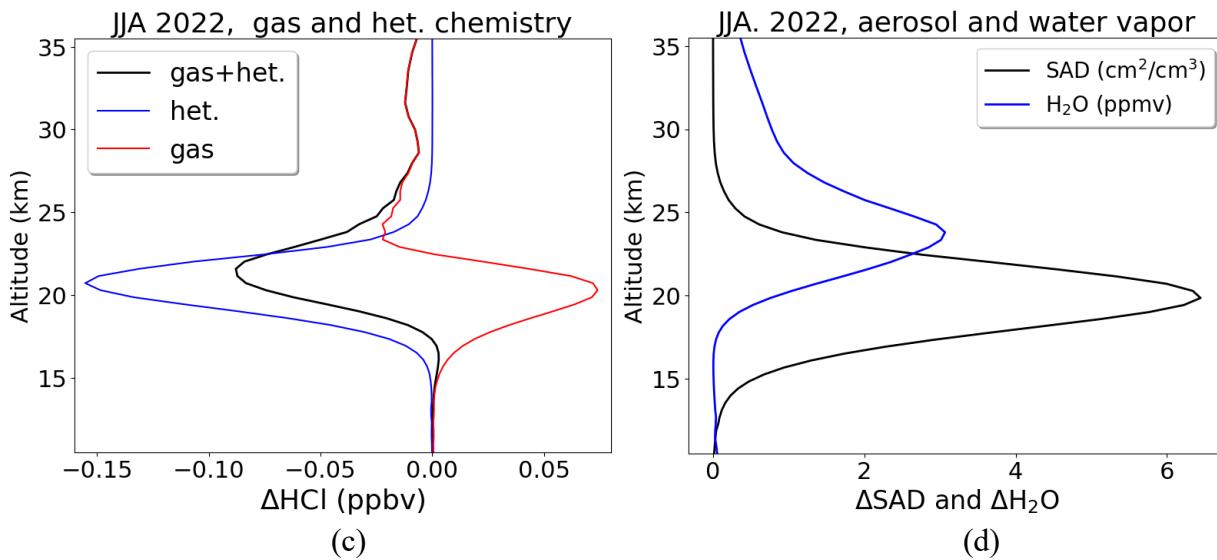
332



333

334

335



336

337

338

339

340

341

342

343

**Figure 4.**  $\Delta\text{HCl}$  (in ppbv) contribution from individual reactions for (a) gas chemistry, (b) heterogeneous chemistry and (c) the sum of all chemistry averaged over JJA in 2022 over 30 to 55°S.  $\Delta\text{HCl}$  is calculated from the volcano minus control case. (d) the modeled aerosol surface area density in  $\text{cm}^2/\text{cm}^3$  and water in ppmv.

344 The injection of volcanic water and aerosols from the HTHH eruption perturbs atmospheric  
345 conditions (e.g., surface area density, aerosol radiance and  $H_2SO_4$  content), which further impact  
346 the reactive probability of heterogeneous reactions. Comparative analysis between the volcano  
347 case and the control case reveals enhanced reactive probabilities for all examined heterogeneous  
348 reactions in the volcano scenario (Figure S2). Laboratory studies (Hanson and Ravishankara, 1995;  
349 Hanson et al., 1996, 2003) have demonstrated the highly efficient hydrolysis of  $BrONO_2$  in sulfuric  
350 acid solutions. Reaction probabilities of approximately 0.8 were documented for the uptake of  
351  $BrONO_2$  onto sulfuric acid solutions with  $H_2SO_4$  content ranging from 40 to 70 weight percentage  
352 (wt%) (Figure S2). The enhanced water concentration at mid-latitudes doesn't substantially  
353 decrease the sulfuric acid content during the SH winter, unlike immediately after the eruption when  
354 the massive influx of water reduces the weight percent of  $H_2SO_4$  from 70% to 35% (Zhu et al.,  
355 2023). Compared to other heterogeneous processes, hydrolysis of  $BrONO_2$  is relatively  
356 temperature-insensitive and can take place rapidly at various stratospheric conditions, making their  
357 influence important and widespread. The product resulting from the hydrolysis of  $BrONO_2$ ,  $HOBr$ ,  
358 undergoes another heterogeneous process with  $HCl$ , providing an additional pathway to chlorine  
359 activation. Under temperatures in the mid-latitudes ( $>200K$ ), the enhancement in the rate of  
360  $HOBr+HCl$  reactions after the HTHH eruption plays a dominant role in  $HCl$  depletion among all  
361 the heterogeneous processes.

362

#### 363 4. Summary and discussion

364

365 In summary, we have examined the mid-latitudes  $HCl$  reduction in the SH winter following the  
366 eruption of HTHH using satellite data and global chemistry-climate model. Our analysis indicates  
367 a significant role for heterogeneous chemical processing in the observed  $HCl$  reduction. The results  
368 confirm that the tracer-tracer method provides a good estimate of the chemical impacts distinct  
369 from dynamics. And the derived chemical  $HCl$  change is consistent among ACE, MLS and  
370 WACCM. Further delving into WACCM's detailed chemistry, we examine individual chlorine  
371 gas-phase and heterogeneous reactions. We find that despite a substantial increase in the reaction  
372 of  $HCl$  with elevated  $OH$  in the SH winter, this loss is entirely compensated for by heightened gas-  
373 phase production from  $Cl+CH_4$  and  $ClO+OH$ . Heterogeneous chemistry emerges as the primary  
374 driver for the chemical loss of  $HCl$ , with the reaction between  $HOBr$  and  $HCl$  on sulfate aerosols  
375 identified as the most crucial process. Our study provides useful information for understanding  
376 volcanic impacts on stratospheric chemistry, particularly their detailed breakdown among gas-  
377 phase and heterogeneous reactions at mid-latitudes.

378

#### 379 Acknowledgments

380

381 Jun Zhang is supported by the NSF via NCAR's Advanced Study Program Postdoctoral  
382 Fellowship. Douglas Kinnison is partially supported by NASA grant no. 80NSSC19K0952.  
383 Peidong Wang, Susan Solomon and Jian Guan gratefully acknowledge support by NSF-AGS  
384 [2316980]. NCAR's Community Earth System Model project is supported primarily by the  
385 National Science Foundation. This material is based upon work supported by the NSF National  
386 Center for Atmospheric Research, which is a major facility sponsored by the U.S. National Science  
387 Foundation under Cooperative Agreement No. 1852977. Computing and data storage resources,  
388 including the Cheyenne supercomputer (doi:10.5065/D6RX99HX), were provided by the  
389 Computational and Information Systems Laboratory (CISL) at NCAR. This project received

390 funding from NOAA's Earth Radiation Budget (ERB) Initiative (CPO #03-01-07-001). Yunqian  
391 Zhu is supported in part by NOAA cooperative agreements NA17OAR4320101 and  
392 NA22OAR4320151.

393

394

395

## 396 **Open Research**

397

398 CESM2/WACCM6 (described in Gettelman et al., 2019) is an open-source community model,  
399 which was developed with support primarily from the National Science Foundation. Figures in  
400 this study are plotted using an open-source software Python. The atmospheric modeling dataset  
401 used in the analysis is published (Zhang et al., 2024).

402

403

404

405

406

407      **References**

- 408
- 409    Abbatt, J. P. (1995). Interactions of HBr, HCl, and HOBr with supercooled sulfuric acid solutions  
410        of stratospheric composition. *Journal of Geophysical Research: Atmospheres*, 100(D7),  
411        14009-14017.
- 412
- 413    Anderson, J. G., Wilmouth, D. M., Smith, J. B., & Sayres, D. S. (2012). UV dosage levels in  
414        summer: Increased risk of ozone loss from convectively injected water vapor. *Science*,  
415        337(6096), 835-839.
- 416
- 417    Bernath, P., Boone, C., & Crouse, J. (2022). Wildfire smoke destroys stratospheric ozone. *Science*,  
418        375(6586), 1292-1295.
- 419
- 420    Carn, S. A., Krotkov, N. A., Fisher, B. L., & Li, C. (2022). Out of the blue: Volcanic SO<sub>2</sub> emissions  
421        during the 2021–2022 eruptions of Hunga Tonga—Hunga Ha’apai (Tonga). *Frontiers in*  
422        *Earth Science*, 10, 976962. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feart.2022.976962>
- 423
- 424    Davis, N. A., Callaghan, P., Simpson, I. R., & Tilmes, S. (2022). Specified dynamics scheme  
425        impacts on wave-mean flow dynamics, convection, and tracer transport in CESM2  
426        (WACCM6). *Atmospheric Chemistry and Physics*, 22(1), 197-214.  
427        <https://doi.org/10.5194/acp-22-197-2022>
- 428
- 429    Gelaro, R., McCarty, W., Suárez, M. J., Todling, R., Molod, A., Takacs, L., ... & Zhao, B. (2017).  
430        The modern-era retrospective analysis for research and applications, version 2 (MERRA-  
431        2). *Journal of climate*, 30(14), 5419-5454. <https://doi.org/10.1175/JCLI-D-16-0758.1>
- 432
- 433    Gettelman, A., Mills, M. J., Kinnison, D. E., Garcia, R. R., Smith, A. K., Marsh, D. R., ... &  
434        Randel, W. J. (2019). The whole atmosphere community climate model version 6  
435        (WACCM6). *Journal of Geophysical Research: Atmospheres*, 124(23), 12380-12403.  
436        <https://doi.org/10.1029/2019JD030943>
- 437
- 438    Griffin, D., Walker, K. A., Wohltmann, I., Dhomse, S. S., Rex, M., Chipperfield, M. P., ... &  
439        Tarasick, D. (2019). Stratospheric ozone loss in the Arctic winters between 2005 and 2013  
440        derived with ACE-FTS measurements. *Atmospheric Chemistry and Physics*, 19(1), 577-  
441        601.
- 442
- 443    Mills, M. J., Kinnison, D. E., Garcia, R. R., Smith, A. K., Marsh, D. R., ... & Randel, W. J. (2019).  
444        The whole atmosphere community climate model version 6 (WACCM6). *Journal of*  
445        *Geophysical Research: Atmospheres*, 124(23), 12380-12403.  
446        <https://doi.org/10.1029/2019JD030943>
- 447
- 448    Hanson, D. R., Ravishankara, A. R., & Solomon, S. (1994). Heterogeneous reactions in sulfuric  
449        acid aerosols: A framework for model calculations. *Journal of Geophysical Research: Atmospheres*,  
450        99(D2), 3615-3629.
- 451

- 452 Hanson, D. R., & Ravishankara, A. R. (1995). Heterogeneous chemistry of bromine species in  
453 sulfuric acid under stratospheric conditions. *Geophysical research letters*, 22(4), 385-388.  
454
- 455 Hanson, D. R., Ravishankara, A. R., & Lovejoy, E. R. (1996). Reaction of BrONO<sub>2</sub> with H<sub>2</sub>O on  
456 submicron sulfuric acid aerosol and the implications for the lower stratosphere. *Journal of*  
457 *Geophysical Research: Atmospheres*, 101(D4), 9063-9069.
- 458
- 459 Hanson, D. R. (2003). Reactivity of BrONO<sub>2</sub> and HOBr on sulfuric acid solutions at low  
460 temperatures. *Journal of Geophysical Research: Atmospheres*, 108(D8).
- 461
- 462 Hofmann, D. J., & Solomon, S. (1989). Ozone destruction through heterogeneous chemistry  
463 following the eruption of El Chichon. *Journal of Geophysical Research: Atmospheres*,  
464 94(D4), 5029-5041. <https://doi.org/10.1029/JD094iD04p05029>
- 465
- 466 Kawa, S. R., Newman, P. A., Lait, L. R., Schoeberl, M. R., Stimpfle, R. M., Kohn, D. W., ... &  
467 Loewenstein, M. (1997). Activation of chlorine in sulfate aerosol as inferred from aircraft  
468 observations. *Journal of Geophysical Research: Atmospheres*, 102(D3), 3921-3933.
- 469
- 470 Li, Z., Bi, J., Hu, Z., Ma, J., & Li, B. (2023). Regional transportation and influence of atmospheric  
471 aerosols triggered by Tonga volcanic eruption. *Environmental Pollution*, 325, 121429.
- 472
- 473 Lin, S. J., & Rood, R. B. (1996). Multidimensional flux-form semi-Lagrangian transport schemes.  
474 *Monthly Weather Review*, 124(9), 2046-2070. [https://doi.org/10.1175/1520-0493\(1996\)124<2046:MFFSLT>2.0.CO;2](https://doi.org/10.1175/1520-0493(1996)124<2046:MFFSLT>2.0.CO;2)
- 476
- 477 Livesey, N J, W G Read, P A Wagner, L Froidevaux, M L Santee, and M J Schwartz. 2020.  
478 “Version 5.0 x Level 2 and 3 Data Quality and Description Document (Tech. Rep. No. JPL  
479 D-105336 Rev. A).” *Jet Propulsion Laboratory*.
- 480
- 481 Livesey, N. J., Read, W. G., Froidevaux, L., Lambert, A., Santee, M. L., Schwartz, M. J., ... &  
482 Nedoluha, G. E. (2021). Investigation and amelioration of long-term instrumental drifts in  
483 water vapor and nitrous oxide measurements from the Aura Microwave Limb Sounder  
484 (MLS) and their implications for studies of variability and trends. *Atmospheric Chemistry  
485 and Physics*, 21(20), 15409-15430.
- 486
- 487 Millan, L., Santee, M. L., Lambert, A., Livesey, N. J., Werner, F., Schwartz, M. J., ... &  
488 Froidevaux, L. (2022). The Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai hydration of the stratosphere.  
489 *Geophysical Research Letters*, 49(13), e2022GL099381.  
490 <https://doi.org/10.1029/2022GL099381>
- 491
- 492 Mills, M. J., Schmidt, A., Easter, R., Solomon, S., Kinnison, D. E., Ghan, S. J., ... & Gettelman,  
493 A. (2016). Global volcanic aerosol properties derived from emissions, 1990–2014, using  
494 CESM1 (WACCM). *Journal of Geophysical Research: Atmospheres*, 121(5), 2332-2348.  
495 <https://doi.org/10.1002/2015JD024290>
- 496

- 497 Mills, M. J., Richter, J. H., Tilmes, S., Kravitz, B., MacMartin, D. G., Glanville, A. A., ... &  
498 Kinnison, D. E. (2017). Radiative and chemical response to interactive stratospheric sulfate  
499 aerosols in fully coupled CESM1 (WACCM). *Journal of Geophysical Research: Atmospheres*, 122(23), 13-061. <https://doi.org/10.1002/2017JD027006>
- 500
- 501 Proffitt, M. H., Margitan, J. J., Kelly, K. K., Loewenstein, M., Podolske, J. R., & Chan, K. R.  
502 (1990). Ozone loss in the Arctic polar vortex inferred from high-altitude aircraft  
503 measurements. *Nature*, 347(6288), 31-36.
- 504
- 505
- 506 Randel, W. J., Johnston, B. R., Braun, J. J., Sokolovskiy, S., Vömel, H., Podglajen, A., & Legras,  
507 B. (2023). Stratospheric Water Vapor from the Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai Volcanic  
508 Eruption Deduced from COSMIC-2 Radio Occultation. *Remote Sensing*, 15(8), 2167.  
509 <https://doi.org/10.3390/rs15082167>
- 510
- 511 Santee, M. L., Lambert, A., Froidevaux, L., Manney, G. L., Schwartz, M. J., Millán, L. F., et al.  
512 (2023). Strong evidence of heterogeneous processing on stratospheric sulfate aerosol in the  
513 extrapolar Southern Hemisphere following the 2022 Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai  
514 eruption. *Journal of Geophysical Research: Atmospheres*, 128, e2023JD039169.  
515 <https://doi.org/10.1029/2023JD039169>
- 516
- 517 Sellitto, P., Siddans, R., Belhadji, R., Carboni, E., Legras, B., Podglajen, A., ... & Kerridge, B.  
518 (2023). Observing the SO<sub>2</sub> and Sulphate Aerosol Plumes from the 2022 Hunga Tonga-  
519 Hunga Ha'apai Eruption with IASI. *Authorea Preprints*.
- 520
- 521 Shi, Q., Jayne, J. T., Kolb, C. E., Worsnop, D. R., & Davidovits, P. (2001). Kinetic model for  
522 reaction of ClONO<sub>2</sub> with H<sub>2</sub>O and HCl and HOCl with HCl in sulfuric acid solutions.  
523 *Journal of Geophysical Research: Atmospheres*, 106(D20), 24259-24274.
- 524
- 525 Slusser, J. R., Fish, D. J., Strong, E. K., Jones, R. L., Roscoe, H. K., & Sarkissian, A. (1997). Five  
526 years of NO<sub>2</sub> vertical column measurements at Faraday (65 S): Evidence for the hydrolysis  
527 of BrONO<sub>2</sub> on Pinatubo aerosols. *Journal of Geophysical Research: Atmospheres*, 102(D11), 12987-12993.
- 528
- 529
- 530 Solomon, S., Garcia, R. R., Rowland, F. S., & Wuebbles, D. J. (1986). On the depletion of  
531 Antarctic ozone. *Nature*, 321(6072), 755-758.
- 532
- 533 Solomon, S. (1999). Stratospheric ozone depletion: A review of concepts and history. *Reviews of*  
534 *geophysics*, 37(3), 275-316. <https://doi.org/10.1029/1999RG900008>
- 535
- 536 Solomon, S., Kinnison, D., Bandoro, J., & Garcia, R. (2015). Simulation of polar ozone depletion:  
537 An update. *Journal of Geophysical Research: Atmospheres*, 120(15), 7958-7974.  
538 <https://doi.org/10.1002/2015JD023365>
- 539
- 540 Solomon, S., Stone, K., Yu, P., Murphy, D. M., Kinnison, D., Ravishankara, A. R., &  
541 Wang, P. (2023). Chlorine activation and enhanced ozone depletion induced by wildfire  
542 aerosol. *Nature*, 615(7951), 259-264.

- 543  
544 Stone, K. A., Solomon, S., Kinnison, D. E., Pitts, M. C., Poole, L. R., Mills, M. J., ... & Hagiya,  
545 S. (2017). Observing the impact of Calbuco volcanic aerosols on South Polar ozone  
546 depletion in 2015. *Journal of Geophysical Research: Atmospheres*, 122(21), 11-862.  
547 <https://doi.org/10.1002/2017JD026987>
- 548  
549 Taha, G., Loughman, R., Colarco, P. R., Zhu, T., Thomason, L. W., & Jaross, G. (2022). Tracking  
550 the 2022 Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai aerosol cloud in the upper and middle stratosphere  
551 using space-based observations. *Geophysical Research Letters*, 49(19), e2022GL100091.  
552 <https://doi.org/10.1029/2022GL100091>
- 553  
554 Tie, X., & Brasseur, G. (1996). The importance of heterogeneous bromine chemistry in the lower  
555 stratosphere. *Geophysical research letters*, 23(18), 2505-2508.
- 556  
557 Wang, P., Solomon, S., & Stone, K. (2023). Stratospheric chlorine processing after the 2020  
558 Australian wildfires derived from satellite data. *Proceedings of the National Academy of  
559 Sciences*, 120(11), e2213910120.
- 560  
561 Wang, X., Randel, W., Zhu, Y., Tilmes, S., Starr, J., Yu, W., ... & Li, J. (2023). Stratospheric  
562 Climate Anomalies and Ozone Loss Caused by the Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai Volcanic  
563 Eruption. *Journal of Geophysical Research: Atmospheres*, 128(22), e2023JD039480.  
564 <https://doi.org/10.1029/2023JD039480>
- 565  
566 Waschewsky, G. C., & Abbatt, J. P. (1999). HOBr in sulfuric acid solutions: Solubility and  
567 reaction with HCl as a function of temperature and concentration. *The Journal of Physical  
568 Chemistry A*, 103(27), 5312-5320.
- 569  
570 Wilmouth, D. M., Østerstrøm, F. F., Smith, J. B., Anderson, J. G., & Salawitch, R. J. (2023).  
571 Impact of the Hunga Tonga volcanic eruption on stratospheric composition. *Proceedings  
572 of the National Academy of Sciences*, 120(46), e2301994120.
- 573  
574 Zambri, B., Solomon, S., Kinnison, D. E., Mills, M. J., Schmidt, A., Neely III, R. R., ... & Roth,  
575 C. Z. (2019). Modeled and observed volcanic aerosol control on stratospheric NOy and  
576 Cly. *Journal of Geophysical Research: Atmospheres*, 124(17-18), 10283-10303.  
577 <https://doi.org/10.1029/2019JD031111>
- 578  
579 Zhang, J., Kinnison, D. E., Zhu, Y., Wang, X., Tilmes, S., Dubé, K. R., & Randel, W. J. (2023).  
580 Chemistry contribution to stratospheric ozone depletion after the unprecedented water rich  
581 Hunga Tonga eruption. *Authorea Preprints*.
- 582  
583 Zhang, J., Kinnison, D., Zhu, Y., Wang, X., Tilmes, S., Dube, K., Randel, W., (Version 1.0.)  
584 [Dataset] (2023). UCAR/NCAR - GDEX. <https://doi.org/10.5065/nsar-fh76>
- 585  
586 Zhang, J., Wang, P., Kinnison, D., Solomon, S., Guan, J., Zhu, Y., (Version 1.0.) [Dataset] (2024).  
587 UCAR/NCAR - GDEX. <https://doi.org/10.5065/j6yg-a009>

- 588 Zhu, Y., Bardeen, C. G., Tilmes, S., Mills, M. J., Wang, X., Harvey, V. L., ... & Toon, O. B.  
589 (2022). Perturbations in stratospheric aerosol evolution due to the water-rich plume of the  
590 2022 Hunga-Tonga eruption. *Communications Earth & Environment*, 3(1), 248.  
591 <https://doi.org/10.1038/s43247-022-00580-w>
- 592
- 593 Zhu, Y., Portmann, R. W., Kinnison, D., Toon, O. B., Millán, L., Zhang, J., ... & Rosenlof, K. H.  
594 (2023). Stratospheric ozone depletion inside the volcanic plume shortly after the 2022  
595 Hunga Tonga eruption. *Atmospheric Chemistry and Physics*, 23(20), 13355-13367.
- 596
- 597
- 598