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A kinetic analysis of leaf uptake of COS and its relation to transpiration, photosynthesis and carbon isotope fractionation

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Abstract

Carbonyl sulfide (COS) is an atmospheric trace gas that holds great promise for studies of terrestrial carbon and water exchange. In leaves, COS follows the same pathway as CO₂ during photosynthesis. Both gases are taken up in enzyme reactions, making COS and CO₂ uptake closely coupled at the leaf scale. The biological background of leaf COS uptake is a hydrolysis reaction catalyzed by the enzyme carbonic anhydrase. Based on this, we derive and test a simple kinetic model of leaf COS uptake, and relate COS to CO₂ and water fluxes at the leaf scale. The equation was found to predict realistic COS fluxes compared to observations from field and laboratory chambers. We confirm that COS uptake at the leaf level is directly linked to stomatal conductance. As a consequence, the ratio of deposition velocities (uptake rate divided by ambient mole fraction) for leaf COS and CO₂ fluxes can provide an estimate of C_i/C_a , the ratio of intercellular to atmospheric CO₂, an important plant gas exchange parameter that cannot be measured directly. The majority of published deposition velocity ratios for leaf studies on a variety of species fall in the range of 1.5 to 4, corresponding to C_i/C_a ratios of 0.5 to 0.8. In addition, we utilize the coupling of C_i/C_a and photosynthetic ¹³C discrimination to derive an estimate of 2.8 ± 0.3 for the global mean ratio of deposition velocities. This corresponds to a global vegetation sink of COS in the order of 900 ± 100 Gg S yr⁻¹. COS can now be implemented in the same model framework as CO₂ and water vapour. Atmospheric COS measurements can then provide independent constraints on CO₂ and water cycles at ecosystem, regional and global scales.

1 Introduction

Carbonyl sulfide (COS) is a source of stratospheric sulfate aerosols and plays an important role in stratospheric ozone chemistry (Crutzen, 1976; Andreae and Crutzen, 1997). Globally, the main source of COS is the ocean, and uptake by leaves and soil are the main sinks (Kettle et al., 2002; Kesselmeier et al., 1999; van Diest et al., 2008).

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The seasonality of COS in the northern extratropical atmosphere is dominated by COS uptake by terrestrial vegetation (Montzka et al., 2007; Suntharalingam et al., 2008). This is because COS is taken up in enzyme reactions in leaves, similar to CO₂. But in contrast to CO₂, there is no concurrent COS release from terrestrial ecosystems.

Monitoring atmospheric COS concentration can thus provide valuable information on terrestrial gross carbon fluxes that cannot be obtained by measuring CO₂ alone.

Based on the close coupling of leaf COS and CO₂ uptake, the global COS sink by vegetation has been often derived from estimates of CO₂ fluxes (Chin and Davis, 1993; Kesselmeier et al., 1993; Andreae and Crutzen, 1997; Watts, 2000; Kettle et al., 2002; Sandoval-Soto et al., 2005). Recently, it has been proposed to invert this approach, with the aim to obtain estimates of global terrestrial gross CO₂ uptake from atmospheric COS measurements (Montzka et al., 2007; Campbell et al., 2008; Suntharalingam et al., 2008). COS fluxes have been converted into CO₂ fluxes, or vice versa, using the ratio of COS to CO₂ deposition velocities ($v_{\text{COS}}/v_{\text{CO}_2}$, uptake rates divided by ambient mole fraction) observed during chamber experiments (Sandoval-Soto et al., 2005). Most $v_{\text{COS}}/v_{\text{CO}_2}$ are > 1, with typical values between 2 and 3. This has been interpreted as a preferential reaction for COS over CO₂ by carbonic anhydrase (CA), the enzyme responsible for the irreversible reaction of COS in leaves (Kesselmeier and Merk, 1993; Protoschill-Krebs et al., 1996).

Here, we introduce a process-oriented description of COS uptake at the leaf level, analogous to that for leaf CO₂ and water fluxes. To test the equation, we compare predicted COS uptake to data obtained in field and laboratory chambers (Kuhn et al., 1999; Sandoval-Soto et al., 2005). The new description directly relates COS uptake at the leaf level to stomatal conductance. As a consequence, the ratio of deposition velocities (uptake rate divided by ambient mole fraction) for leaf COS and CO₂ fluxes can provide an estimate of C_i/C_a , the ratio of intercellular to atmospheric CO₂, an important plant gas exchange parameter that cannot be measured directly.

2 Expressing leaf exchange of COS in analogy to CO₂ and water vapour

Based on Fick's law of diffusion, leaf fluxes can be described as the product of a conductance and concentration gradient (Penman and Schofield, 1951; Cowan, 1977). For example, the transpiration flux, F_w (mmol m⁻² s⁻¹), is calculated from:

$$F_w = g_w(w_i - w_a) \quad (1)$$

where w_a and w_i (mmol mol⁻¹) are the vapour mole fractions of ambient air and intercellular spaces, respectively, and g_w (mol m⁻² s⁻¹) is the leaf conductance to water vapour diffusion. For ecosystem studies, g_w is composed of leaf boundary layer (g_{bw}) and stomatal conductance (g_{sw}): $g_w = (1/g_{sw} + 1/g_{bw})^{-1}$. In chamber studies, fans often provide enough ventilation to render the boundary layer component negligible, and $g_w \approx g_{sw}$. Leaf conductance is usually obtained from measured values of transpiration (F_w), vapour mole fraction at measured air temperature and relative humidity (w_a), and assuming saturated air at measured leaf temperature (w_i).

Similarly, photosynthetic CO₂ uptake, F_c (μmol m⁻² s⁻¹), can be calculated from:

$$F_c = g_{sc}(C_{a,c} - C_{i,c}) \quad (2)$$

where $C_{a,c}$ and $C_{i,c}$ (μmol mol⁻¹) are the mole fractions of CO₂ in ambient air and intercellular spaces, respectively, and g_{sc} (mol m⁻² s⁻¹) is the stomatal conductance to CO₂ (again, for well ventilated chamber measurements). In contrast to water vapour, it is impossible to directly estimate $C_{i,c}$, and hence to obtain g_{sc} from measurements of F_c and $C_{a,c}$. Thus, g_{sc} is usually derived from g_{sw} based on the known relationship between CO₂ and water vapour conductances: $g_{sc} = g_{sw}/R_{w-c}$, where $R_{w-c} \approx 1.6$ (Lide, 2008).

In analogy to the above, the equation for leaf COS uptake, F_{COS} (pmol m⁻² s⁻¹), can be written as:

$$F_{\text{COS}} = g_{\text{COS}}(C_{a,\text{COS}} - C_{m,\text{COS}}) \quad (3)$$

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where $C_{a,\text{COS}}$ and $C_{m,\text{COS}}$ (pmol mol^{-1}) are the mole fractions of COS in ambient air and at the reaction sites with the enzyme carbonic anhydrase (CA), respectively. The above combines two diffusion steps: from $C_{a,\text{COS}}$ to $C_{i,\text{COS}}$ in the intercellular spaces (equivalent to $C_{i,c}$ in Eq. 2), and from $C_{i,\text{COS}}$ to $C_{m,\text{COS}}$ within the mesophyll cells. In other words, we consider a different diffusion endpoint for COS (C_a to C_m) than for CO_2 (C_a to C_i). Accordingly, the leaf conductance to COS (g_{COS}) includes both stomatal conductance ($g_{s,\text{COS}}$) and internal conductance ($g_{i,\text{COS}}$: $F_{\text{COS}} = g_{i,\text{COS}}(C_{i,\text{COS}} - C_{m,\text{COS}})$) to account for the transfer of COS into the mesophyll cells: $g_{\text{COS}} = (1/g_{s,\text{COS}} + 1/g_{i,\text{COS}})^{-1}$. The spatial distribution of CA in leaf mesophyll cells is not known. We expect a location “upstream” of Rubisco, the enzyme responsible for the reaction with CO_2 in the chloroplasts. This is because CA enhances the solution of CO_2 and thus its supply to Rubisco. Hence, we hypothesize that CA is located directly adjacent to the intercellular spaces, so that $g_{i,\text{COS}}$ is probably much larger than $g_{s,\text{COS}}$.

Carbonic anhydrase is a very efficient catalyst for the reaction $\text{COS} + \text{H}_2\text{O} \rightarrow \text{H}_2\text{S} + \text{CO}_2$ (Protoschill-Krebs et al., 1996; Notni et al., 2007). COS release has not been observed even at low ambient COS (Sandoval-Soto et al., 2005). Thus, we assume that $C_{m,\text{COS}} \ll C_{a,\text{COS}}$, so that Eq. (3) can be written to a good approximation as:

$$F_{\text{COS}} = g_{\text{COS}} C_{a,\text{COS}} \quad (4)$$

The value of $g_{i,\text{COS}}$ is not known, but as $g_{i,\text{COS}} \gg g_{s,\text{COS}}$, we can obtain a reasonable approximation by assuming either a constant $g_{i,\text{COS}}$, or a constant ratio of $g_{i,\text{COS}}$ to $g_{s,\text{COS}}$ in $g_{\text{COS}} = g_{s,\text{COS}}(1 + g_{s,\text{COS}}/g_{i,\text{COS}})^{-1}$.

Similar to CO_2 fluxes, COS fluxes can now be derived from $C_{a,\text{COS}}$ and g_{sw} based on the relationship between COS and water vapour conductances: $g_{s,\text{COS}} = g_{sw}/R_{w-\text{COS}}$. The ratio $R_{w-\text{COS}}$ has not been determined experimentally yet.

3 Ratios of diffusivities of COS, CO₂ and water vapour

The relationships between stomatal conductances correspond to the diffusivity ratios: $R_{w-c} = D_{a,w} / D_{a,c}$, $R_{w-COS} = D_{a,w} / D_{a,COS}$, and $R_{c-COS} = D_{a,c} / D_{a,COS}$, where $D_{a,w}$, $D_{a,c}$, and $D_{a,COS}$ are the diffusion coefficients of water vapour, CO₂ and COS in air.

5 The coefficient $D_{a,g}$ (cm² s⁻¹) for binary diffusion of a gas (subscript g) in ambient air (subscript a) can be calculated from Chapman-Enskog theory (Bird et al., 2007):

$$D_{a,g} = \frac{3}{16} \sqrt{\frac{2(RT)^3}{\pi} \left(\frac{1}{M_a} + \frac{1}{M_g} \right)} \frac{1}{N_A \rho \sigma_{a,g}^2 \Omega_{a,g}} \quad (5)$$

10 where R (8.31 J K⁻¹ mol⁻¹) is the gas constant, T (K) is temperature, M (g mol⁻¹) is the molar mass of the gas, N_A (6.022 10²³ mol⁻¹) is the Avogadro constant, p (atm) is ambient pressure, $\sigma_{a,g} = (\sigma_a + \sigma_g) / 2$ (Å) is the collision diameter of the molecules, and $\Omega_{a,g}$ is the dimensionless collision integral for diffusion. This approach was chosen because it provides molecular parameters for all three gases (Bird et al., 2007).

15 Theoretical values of binary diffusion coefficients for water vapour, CO₂ and COS in air are summarized in Table 1. The theoretical diffusivity ratio for CO₂ and water is 1.65, somewhat higher than the empirical estimate of 1.58 (Massman, 1998). Based on the difference between theoretical and empirical estimate, as well as the analysis of uncertainties presented in Massman (1998), theoretically predicted diffusivity ratios are probably within 10 % of the empirical values. Thus, the resulting diffusivity ratios for COS are $R_{w-COS} = 2.0 \pm 0.2$ with respect to water vapour, and $R_{c-COS} = 1.2 \pm 0.1$ with respect to CO₂.

4 Testing the leaf COS equation with chamber observations

To evaluate the relationships developed in the previous section, we calculate leaf COS uptake using Eq. (4) with the theoretical estimate of R_{w-COS} , and compare the pre-

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dicted to observed COS fluxes. We use concurrent data on transpiration, COS and CO₂ fluxes from leaf-scale chamber measurements (Kuhn et al., 1999; Sandoval-Soto et al., 2005). Briefly, experiments were carried out with an automated system consisting of two dynamic (flow-through) chambers, one with enclosed tree branch, and an empty reference chamber. COS mole fractions were quantified by consecutive sampling in both chambers, and COS uptake determined from their differences. Transpiration and net CO₂ fluxes were determined from differential measurements of sample vs reference chamber air. We then obtained g_{sw} values from transpiration rates Eq. (1). In this context, it is important to note that the appropriate values for use in Eqs. (1), (2) and (4) are w_a , $C_{a,c}$ and $C_{a,COS}$ in the sample chamber. Often, they first need to be calculated from reference chamber values and flux rates.

One data set was obtained on branches of *Fagus sylvatica* (European beech) in laboratory chambers (Sandoval-Soto et al., 2005). COS mole fractions were quantified using an automated setup (von Hobe et al., 2000) with an analytical precision of about 8 pmol mol⁻¹, plus any uncertainties in the chamber system (Sandoval-Soto et al., 2005). Rates of leaf COS uptake were predicted from Eq. (4) using g_{sw} and $C_{a,COS}$ data, and based on $R_{w-COS} = 2$. The predicted fluxes are in good agreement with the observed COS uptake rates over three days of measurements (Fig. 1). As the enzyme reaction of CA with COS is light independent (Protoschill-Krebs et al., 1996), COS uptake can continue in the dark as long as stomata remain open. However, the uncertainties in observed COS fluxes were often larger than the fluxes in the dark.

The second data set was obtained on branches of *Quercus agrifolia* (live oak) in field chambers (Kuhn et al., 1999). COS mole fractions were quantified using cryogenic trapping and a gas chromatograph system, with an overall precision of about 25 pmol mol⁻¹ (Kuhn et al., 1999). The predicted COS fluxes are reasonable compared to the measured COS uptake, and mostly within the limits of uncertainties of the measurements (Fig. 2). We only show the results for times where the observed COS fluxes were larger than their uncertainties.

Using Eqs. (1) and (4), and observed chamber mole fractions and flux rates, we

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also obtained first empirical estimates of R_{w-COS} , the ratio of conductances of COS and water vapour. We assumed a constant $g_{i,COS}$ of $0.2 \text{ mol m}^{-2} \text{ s}^{-1}$, relating it to the mean $g_{s,COS}$ for day-time measurements by a factor of ten ($g_{s,COS}/g_{i,COS} \approx 0.1$). As a test, we also used $g_{i,COS}$ of $20 \text{ mol m}^{-2} \text{ s}^{-1}$ ($g_{s,COS}/g_{i,COS} \approx 0.001$), i.e. effectively neglecting the internal part of the diffusion pathway. For the re-analysed laboratory data on *Fagus sylvatica*, the mean ratio was $R_{w-COS} = 2.0 \pm 0.3$ (or 2.2 for $g_{i,COS} = 20$). For the re-analysed field data on *Quercus agrifolia*, the mean ratio was $R_{w-COS} = 2.2 \pm 0.8$ (or 2.4 for $g_{i,COS} = 20$). Both values are close to the theoretical estimate of 2, but the uncertainties are still large due to the high uncertainties in the measurements of COS and vapour fluxes.

5 The ratio of COS to CO₂ deposition velocities as a proxy for C_i/C_a

Uptake rates of COS can be directly compared to those of CO₂ by expressing them as deposition velocities, v_{COS} and v_{CO_2} ($\text{mol m}^{-2} \text{ s}^{-1}$), i.e. fluxes normalized by the ambient mole fraction of each gas (Sandoval-Soto et al., 2005):

$$v_{CO_2} = F_c / C_{a,c}$$

$$v_{COS} = F_{COS} / C_{a,COS}$$

This relationship was also used in a recent analysis of atmospheric COS data (Campbell et al., 2008) to calculate global COS uptake by vegetation from modelled leaf CO₂ fluxes: $F_{COS} = F_c (C_{a,COS} / C_{a,c}) (v_{COS} / v_{CO_2})$, where F_c corresponds to gross primary production (GPP, see Eq. (1) in Campbell et al., 2008).

Using Eqs. (2) and (4), we can rewrite the above definitions as:

$$v_{CO_2} = F_c / C_{a,c} = g_{sc} (1 - C_{i,c} / C_{a,c}) \tag{6}$$

$$v_{COS} = F_{COS} / C_{a,COS} = g_{COS} \tag{7}$$

Thus, the ratio of COS to CO₂ deposition velocities, $v_{\text{COS}}/v_{\text{CO}_2}$, can be written as:

$$\begin{aligned} v_{\text{COS}}/v_{\text{CO}_2} &= \frac{g_{\text{COS}}}{g_{\text{sc}}} \frac{1}{1 - C_i/C_a} \\ &= \frac{1}{R_{\text{c-COS}}(1 + g_{\text{s,COS}}/g_{\text{i,COS}})(1 - C_i/C_a)} \end{aligned} \quad (8)$$

where we use C_i/C_a (instead of $C_{i,c}/C_{a,c}$) from hereon for simplicity. The C_i/C_a ratio is an important plant parameter that cannot be measured directly. It is an expression for the balance between the CO₂ supply (limited by stomatal conductance) and demand (limited by light and the efficiency of enzyme reactions). Based on Eq. (8) and the theoretical estimate of the stomatal conductance ratio ($g_{\text{sc}}/g_{\text{s,COS}} = R_{\text{c-COS}} = 1.2 \pm 0.1$), it should be possible to determine C_i/C_a from observed fluxes and mole fractions of COS and CO₂:

$$\frac{C_i}{C_a} = 1 - \frac{1}{R_{\text{c-COS}}(1 + g_{\text{s,COS}}/g_{\text{i,COS}})v_{\text{COS}}/v_{\text{CO}_2}} \quad (9)$$

For the best guess estimate of internal COS conductance ($g_{\text{s,COS}}/g_{\text{i,COS}} = 0.1$) from the laboratory experiments, Eq. (9) can be simplified to: $C_i/C_a \approx 1 - 0.75(v_{\text{COS}}/v_{\text{CO}_2})^{-1}$.

The relationship between $v_{\text{COS}}/v_{\text{CO}_2}$ and C_i/C_a ratios is illustrated in Fig. 3. Values of $v_{\text{COS}}/v_{\text{CO}_2}$ between 2 and 3 correspond to C_i/C_a from 0.63 to 0.75, typical mean C_i/C_a ratios of C₃ plants under field conditions. In contrast, $v_{\text{COS}}/v_{\text{CO}_2}$ ratios below 1 or above 6 may indicate that processes other than photosynthetic uptake are contributing to the observed COS and/or CO₂ fluxes (for example, $10 \pm 1.7 \text{ pmol } \mu\text{mol}^{-1}$ for ecosystem scale uptake, Xu et al., 2002). Neglecting internal resistance ($g_{\text{s,COS}}/g_{\text{i,COS}} = 0.001$) has little effect on the relationship between $v_{\text{COS}}/v_{\text{CO}_2}$ and C_i/C_a . On the other

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hand, if $g_{i,\text{COS}}$ is a much stronger component of the diffusion pathway ($g_{s,\text{COS}}/g_{i,\text{COS}} = 0.5$), we would expect slightly lower $v_{\text{COS}}/v_{\text{CO}_2}$ of 1.5 to 2 for typical C_i/C_a values.

Ratios of $v_{\text{COS}}/v_{\text{CO}_2}$ and corresponding C_i/C_a for published data are listed in Table 2. Several values are above the typical C_i/C_a range, probably because relative humidity and stomatal conductances are often higher in cuvettes compared to ambient conditions. Most $v_{\text{COS}}/v_{\text{CO}_2}$ ratios were calculated from COS and CO_2 mole fractions in atmospheric air, but the conditions relevant for gas exchange in cuvettes are those of the chamber air. Recalculating with chamber air mole fractions usually leads to higher $v_{\text{COS}}/v_{\text{CO}_2}$. For example, for the laboratory data on *Fagus sylvatica* (Sandoval-Soto et al., 2005), we obtained a mean $v_{\text{COS}}/v_{\text{CO}_2}$ of 2.4 based on air in the sample cuvette, substantially higher than the $v_{\text{COS}}/v_{\text{CO}_2}$ of 2.0 calculated from reference air. In addition, air supplied to chambers can have a very different composition than typical atmospheric air, particularly during laboratory experiments.

We assume that the enzyme CA is very efficient at converting the COS reaching the sites of reaction (Protoschill-Krebs et al., 1996), so that leaf COS uptake is primarily limited by diffusion. Biochemical studies are needed to resolve the extent to which CA activity may limit the overall rate. We implicitly include the CA reaction with the physical diffusion limitation in $g_{i,\text{COS}}$. As a consequence, even if there is an enzymatic preference of CA for COS over CO_2 , it is not expressed in $v_{\text{COS}}/v_{\text{CO}_2}$ values. Instead, the higher deposition velocity of COS compared to CO_2 results from the higher reaction efficiency of CA, relevant for COS, compared to Rubisco, relevant for CO_2 , associated with back diffusion of non-assimilated CO_2 (see Montzka et al., 2007). This is expressed in the small internal concentration of COS compared to CO_2 (Eqs. 2 and 4), and the coupling of $v_{\text{COS}}/v_{\text{CO}_2}$ to C_i/C_a Eq. (9).

Also listed in Table 2 are the $v_{\text{COS}}/v_{\text{CO}_2}$ values for a range of ecosystem types used to estimate global COS uptake by vegetation (Campbell et al., 2008). The global mean $v_{\text{COS}}/v_{\text{CO}_2}$ is 2.2 which corresponds to a C_i/C_a of 0.66, a typical ratio for C_3 vegetation. Most ecosystem specific values are close to the global mean, except for one lower

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value of 0.44 for C_i/C_a of boreal forests. The relationships developed here should also hold for C_4 plants, where CA is distributed throughout the mesophyll cells (Burnell and Hatch, 1988), but there is not enough data available for evaluation of Eq. (4).

Because of the direct coupling with transpiration, measurements of COS fluxes could provide a valuable alternative to determine C_i/C_a at high humidity. As an illustration, we calculate C_i/C_a for *Fagus sylvatica* from stomatal conductance to COS ($g_{s,COS}$) and water vapour (g_{sw}). Over three days, we found $C_i/C_a = 0.67 \pm 0.07$ from $g_{s,COS}$, and $C_i/C_a = 0.69 \pm 0.01$ from g_{sw} (original data from Sandoval-Soto et al., 2005). The mean values are in good agreement, but the COS based estimate has larger uncertainties than the g_{sw} based estimate.

6 Estimating the ratio of COS to CO_2 deposition velocity from carbon isotopes

The relationships described above Eq. (8) can also be used to obtain v_{COS}/v_{CO_2} ratios from independent estimates of C_i/C_a . One possibility is to utilize the coupling of C_i/C_a and photosynthetic ^{13}C discrimination to determine v_{COS}/v_{CO_2} ratios. Indeed, the use of COS to investigate CO_2 gas exchange is quite similar to the more traditional use of isotopic tracers in this context.

In its simplest form, ^{13}C discrimination (Δ , ‰) during photosynthesis can be written as (Farquhar et al., 1982; Farquhar and Richards, 1984):

$$\Delta = a + (\bar{b} - a) \frac{C_i}{C_a} \quad (10)$$

where a is the fractionation during CO_2 diffusion through the stomata (4.4‰, Craig 1953), and \bar{b} is the weighted fractionation during internal transfer of CO_2 and fixation by Rubisco and PEPc. Using Eq. (10) to substitute Δ for C_i/C_a in Eq. (8) yields:

$$v_{COS}/v_{CO_2} = \frac{1}{R_{c-COS}(1 + g_{s,COS}/g_{i,COS})} \frac{\bar{b} - a}{\bar{b} - \Delta} \quad (11)$$

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This relationship has the advantage that measurements of the $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ of leaf samples, ecosystem exchange, or the results of atmospheric inversion studies, can be used to derive $v_{\text{COS}}/v_{\text{CO}_2}$ ratios independent of CO_2 flux measurements. Here, we apply this approach to obtain $v_{\text{COS}}/v_{\text{CO}_2}$ for a global range of biomes (data from Table 2 in Lloyd and Farquhar (1994)). To be consistent with the original calculations, we derive C_i/C_a from their equation (Eq. 4 of Lloyd and Farquhar (1994), $\bar{b} = 27.5$, and including photorespiration) instead of Eq. (10). Most of the resulting $v_{\text{COS}}/v_{\text{CO}_2}$ ratios Eq. (8) fall between 2 and 3 (Table 3, for the best guess $g_{s,\text{COS}}/g_{i,\text{COS}} = 0.1$). The lowest ratios are derived for dry biomes such as semi-desert (1.7), whereas tropical forests tend to have the highest ratios, >3 (Table 3), reflecting the increase in stomatal conductance with decreasing evaporative demand.

Taking into account possible variations in $g_{s,\text{COS}}/g_{i,\text{COS}}$ Eqs. (8) and (11), we calculate a GPP weighted global mean $v_{\text{COS}}/v_{\text{CO}_2}$ ratio of 2.8 ± 0.3 (for C_3 plants), larger or in the upper range of previous estimates (Sandoval-Soto et al., 2005; Montzka et al., 2007). With a global GPP estimate of $109.3 \text{ Pg C yr}^{-1}$ for 2001–2003 (Zhao et al., 2005), we estimate a global vegetation sink of COS in the order of $900 \pm 100 \text{ Gg S yr}^{-1}$. This is in the lower range of $730\text{--}1500 \text{ Gg S yr}^{-1}$ (Sandoval-Soto et al., 2005) and $1200 \pm 300 \text{ Gg S yr}^{-1}$ (Xu et al., 2002), but much higher than the estimate of 490 Gg S yr^{-1} (Suntharalingam et al., 2008).

7 Conclusions

We have developed a simple model of leaf COS uptake, analogous to the equations for leaf CO_2 and water fluxes. We describe these equations as process-oriented (not process-based) because they all require estimates of stomatal conductance, for which we do not yet have a fully mechanistic understanding. Leaf COS uptake predicted from the new equation was in good agreement with data from field and laboratory chambers (Kuhn et al., 1999; Sandoval-Soto et al., 2005), although with large uncertainties.

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As a consequence of the close coupling of leaf COS and CO₂ uptake, the ratio of deposition velocities of COS and CO₂ can be used to provide estimates of C_i/C_a , the ratio of intercellular to atmospheric CO₂, an important plant gas exchange parameter that cannot be measured directly. In addition, COS and ¹³C discrimination can be combined to obtain independent estimates of photosynthesis (GPP). We propose to incorporate the new process-oriented description into model studies to use concurrent COS and CO₂ measurements to obtain gross photosynthesis rates at ecosystem to global scales.

To develop COS into a reliable proxy for C_i/C_a and GPP, we now need to reduce the experimental uncertainties, and evaluate the assumptions and parameters of the new COS model Eq. (4) under a wide range of environmental conditions. With better analytical precision, COS could also become a valuable addition to measurements at the ecosystem scale, particularly when water measurements are difficult or impossible due to high humidity, for example in tropical ecosystems. Thus, COS has the potential to provide new constraints on stomatal conductance, one of the most fundamental – and difficult to measure – plant parameters.

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Table 1. Theoretical values of diffusivities $D_{a,g}$ ($\text{cm}^2 \text{s}^{-1}$) of water vapour, CO_2 and COS in air (parameters taken from Bird et al. (2007)). Empirical estimates of $D_{a,w}$ and $D_{a,c}$ from Massman (1998).

gas	M	σ	$\Omega_{a,g}$	$D_{a,g}$	$R_{w-\text{CO}_2}$ $R_{w-\text{COS}}$	$R_{c-\text{COS}}$	$D_{a,g}$ emp.	$R_{w-\text{CO}_2}$ emp.
air	28.96	3.62						
H ₂ O	18.01	2.60	1.18	0.248			0.252	
CO ₂	44.01	4.00	1.04	0.150	1.66		0.160	1.58
COS	60.08	4.13	1.15	0.124	2.01	1.21		

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Table 2. Ratios of COS to CO₂ deposition velocities ($v_{\text{COS}}/v_{\text{CO}_2}$) and their corresponding C_i/C_a ratios (based on Eq. (9), $g_{s,\text{COS}}/g_{i,\text{COS}}=0.1$) for published data (Sandoval-Soto et al., 2005), and ecosystem types used to estimate global COS uptake by vegetation (Campbell et al., 2008). Note that for published data (except those recalculated from original data, indicated by *), $v_{\text{COS}}/v_{\text{CO}_2}$ was calculated from reference (or atmospheric) COS and CO₂ mole fractions. As the mole fractions of chamber air should be used instead, their actual $v_{\text{COS}}/v_{\text{CO}_2}$ values could differ by 10 to 15 % from those listed in the table.

Species	$v_{\text{COS}}/v_{\text{CO}_2}$	C_i/C_a	reference
crops, lab enclosures			
<i>Brassica napus</i>	1.3	0.42	Kesselmeier and Merk 1993
<i>Pisum sativum</i>	3.8	0.80	
	3.1	0.76	Hofmann 1993
<i>Triticum aestivum</i>	3.2	0.77	
trees, lab enclosures			
<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	2.6*	0.71	Sandoval-Soto et al. 2005
<i>Quercus ilex</i>	2.4*	0.69	
<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>	2.6*	0.71	
<i>Picea abies</i>	1.4*	0.46	
trees, field enclosures			
<i>Picea abies</i>	8.7–10.3	0.91–0.93	Huber 1993
<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	1.8*	0.58	Kuhn et al. 1999
<i>Porterandia cladantha</i>	2.4	0.69	Kesselmeier et al. 1993
<i>Sacoglottis gabonensis</i>	1.7–5.5	0.56–0.86	
values used in global analysis			
boreal forest, taiga	1.35	0.44	Campbell et al. 2008
flooded grasslands, savannas	2.0	0.63	
temperate mixed forests	2.35	0.68	
tropical and subtrop. forests	2.65	0.72	
global mean	2.2	0.66	

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Table 3. Ratios of COS to CO₂ deposition velocities ($v_{\text{COS}}/v_{\text{CO}_2}$) and C_i/C_a obtained from estimates of ¹³C discrimination (Δ) during photosynthesis (Lloyd and Farquhar, 1994), assuming that internal conductance is a negligible ($g_{s,\text{COS}}/g_{i,\text{COS}}=0.001$), intermediate (0.1, 0.2), or large (0.5) limitation in the diffusional pathway of COS.

Biome	GPP (Pmol yr ⁻¹)	Δ (‰)	C_i/C_a	$v_{\text{COS}}/v_{\text{CO}_2}$			
				(0.001)	(0.1)	(0.2)	(0.5)
Tropical rain forest	3.46	18.4	0.76	3.40	3.09	2.83	2.27
Tropical seasonal forest	0.77	18.9	0.78	3.71	3.38	3.10	2.48
Tropical savannah	1.28	18.6	0.77	3.51	3.20	2.93	2.35
Evergreen warm mixed forest	0.14	19.0	0.77	3.63	3.31	3.03	2.42
Cool/cold deciduous forest	0.28	19.6	0.79	3.96	3.60	3.30	2.64
Cool/cold mixed forest	0.20	18.3	0.73	3.08	2.80	2.57	2.05
Cool/cold conifer forest	0.47	15.4	0.60	2.08	1.89	1.74	1.39
Taiga	0.12	15.6	0.61	2.14	1.94	1.78	1.43
Xerophytic woods and scrub	0.07	12.9	0.52	1.70	1.55	1.42	1.14
Grasslands and shrub	0.51	15.5	0.62	2.19	2.00	1.83	1.46
Grasslands	0.82	17.4	0.70	2.77	2.53	2.31	1.85
Dryland agronomy	0.80	17.0	0.69	2.62	2.39	2.19	1.75
Irrigated agronomy/ horticulture	0.07	16.4	0.67	2.48	2.26	2.07	1.66
Dryland tropical horticulture	0.05	15.0	0.61	2.12	1.93	1.77	1.41
Tundra	0.25	16.1	0.63	2.22	2.02	1.86	1.48
Semi-desert	0.06	14.2	0.57	1.92	1.75	1.60	1.28
Paddy rice	0.33	18.0	0.74	3.16	2.87	2.63	2.11
Mangroves	0.05	15.5	0.64	2.26	2.06	1.89	1.51
GPP weighted mean		17.8	0.73	3.11	2.83	2.60	2.08

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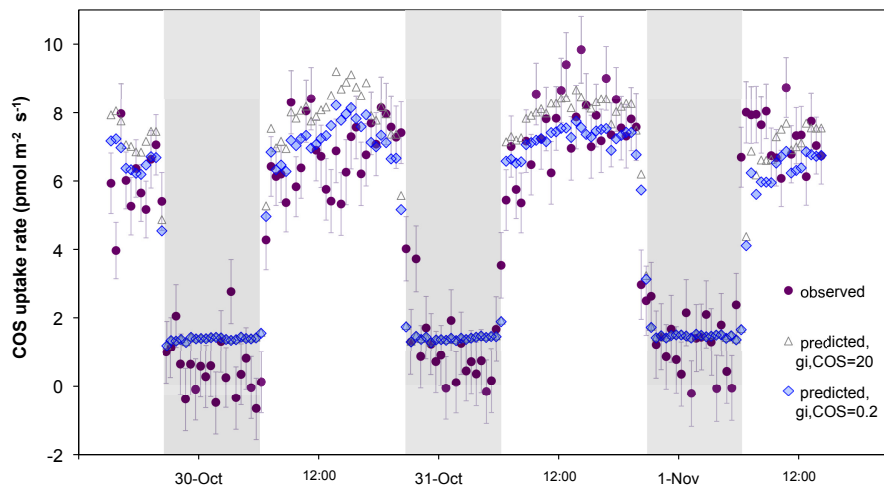


Fig. 1. Leaf COS uptake predicted from transpiration data (Eq. (4), assuming $R_{w-COS}=2$ and constant internal conductance, $g_{i,COS}=0.2$), and observed uptake rates from measurements on *Fagus sylvatica* in laboratory chambers (original data from Sandoval-Soto et al., 2005). For comparison, we also show predicted rates where internal conductance is assumed to be a negligible limitation to COS diffusion ($g_{i,COS}=20$). Shaded areas indicate measurements in the dark.

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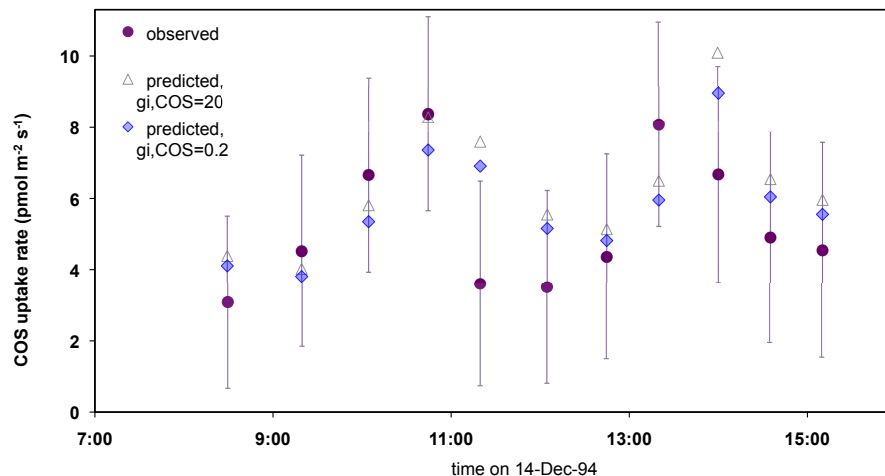


Fig. 2. Leaf COS uptake predicted from transpiration data (Eq. (4), assuming $R_{w-COS}=2$ and constant internal conductance, $g_{i,COS}=0.2$), and observed COS uptake from measurements on *Quercus agrifolia* in field chambers (original data from Kuhn et al., 1999). For comparison, we also show predicted rates where internal conductance is assumed to be a negligible limitation to COS diffusion ($g_{i,COS}=20$).

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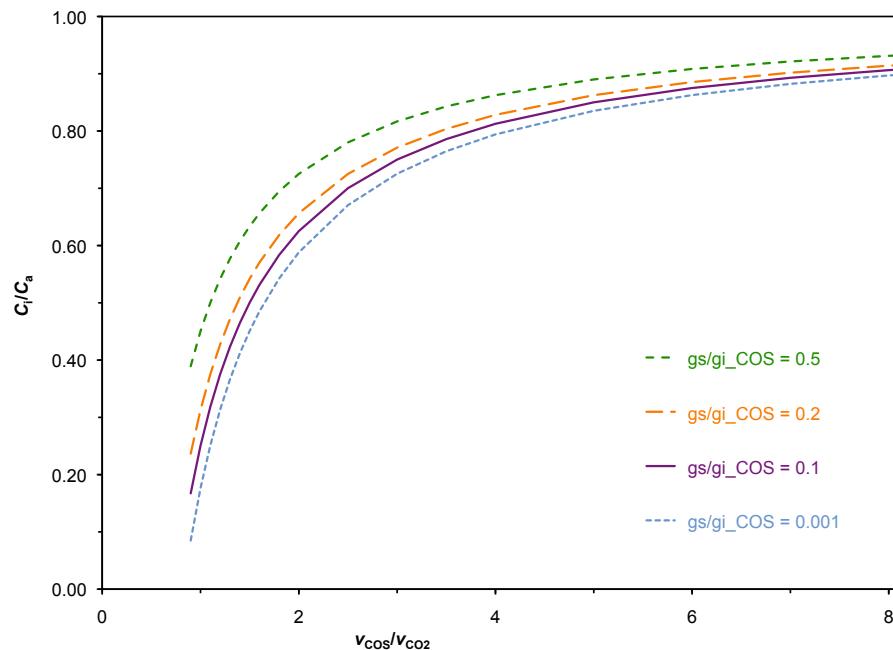


Fig. 3. Ratios of intercellular to ambient CO_2 mole fraction, C_i/C_a , can be obtained from the ratios of COS to CO_2 deposition velocities, $v_{\text{COS}}/v_{\text{CO}_2}$, based on Eq. (9) and $R_{\text{CO}_2-\text{COS}}=1.2$. We assume that leaf internal conductance is much higher than stomatal conductance ($g_{s,\text{COS}}/g_{i,\text{COS}}=0.1$ or 0.2). Thus, neglecting this component (0.001) does not make a large difference compared to including it. It is also possible that $g_{i,\text{COS}}$ is a more limiting part of the diffusional pathway (0.5), with a narrower range of $v_{\text{COS}}/v_{\text{CO}_2}$ corresponding to typical C_i/C_a ratios.

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