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Abstract. Measurements of relative humidity (RH) and aerosol parameters (scattering cross section, size distributions and chemical composition), performed in ambient atmospheric conditions, have been used to study the influence of relative humidity on aerosol properties. The data were acquired in a suburban area south of Paris, between 18 and 24 July 2000, in the framework of the "Etude et Simulation de la Qualité de l'air en Ilede-France" (ESQUIF) program. According to the origin of the air masses arriving over the Paris area, the aerosol hygroscopicity is more or less pronounced. The aerosol chemical composition data were used as input of a thermodynamic model to simulate the variation of the aerosol water mass content with ambient RH and to determine the main inorganic salt compounds. The coupling of observations and modelling reveals the presence of deliquescence processes with hysteresis phenomenon in the hygroscopic growth cycle. Based on the Hänel model, parameterisations of the scattering cross section, the modal radius of the accumulation mode of the size distribution and the aerosol water mass content, as a function of increasing RH, have been assessed. For the first time, a crosscheck of these parameterisations has been performed and shows that the hygroscopic behaviour of the accumulation mode can be coherently characterized by combined optical, size distribution and chemical measurements.

■ <u>Final Revised Paper</u> (PDF, 1322 KB) ■ <u>Discussion Paper</u> (ACPD)

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