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Surface pressure retrieval from SCIAMACHY measurements in the O₂ A Band: validation of the measurements and sensitivity on aerosols

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Abstract. We perform surface pressure retrievals from cloud-free Oxygen A band measurements of SCIAMACHY. These retrievals can be well validated because surface pressure is a quantity that is, in general, accurately known from meteorological models. Therefore, surface pressure retrievals and their validation provide important insight into the quality of the instrument calibration. Furthermore, they can provide insight into retrievals which are affected by similar radiation transport processes, for example the retrieval of total columns of H_2O , CO, CO_2 and CH_4 . In our retrieval aerosols are neglected. Using synthetic measurements, it is shown that for low to moderate surface albedos this leads to an underestimation of the retrieved surface pressures. For high surface albedos this generally leads to an overestimation of the retrieved surface pressures. The surface pressures retrieved from the SCIAMACHY measurements indeed show this dependence on surface albedo, when compared to the corresponding pressures from a meteorological database. However, an offset of about 20 hPa was found, which can not be caused by neglecting aerosols in the retrieval. The same offset was found when comparing the retrieved surface pressures to those retrieved from co-located GOME Oxygen A band measurements. This implies a calibration error in the SCIAMACHY measurements. By adding an offset of 0.86% of the continuum reflectance at 756 nm to the SCIAMACHY reflectance measurements, this systematic bias vanishes.

■ Final Revised Paper (PDF, 1176 KB) ■ Discussion Paper (ACPD)

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