



19 **Impacts of Sea Ice Leads on Sea Salt Aerosols and Atmospheric Chemistry in the Arctic**

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27

28 **Abstract.** Sea salt aerosols (SSA) alter Arctic climate through interactions with radiation and
29 clouds. The processes contributing to Arctic cold season (November-April) SSA remain
30 uncertain. Observations from coastal Alaska suggest emissions from open leads in sea ice,
31 which are not included in climate models, may play a dominant role. Their Arctic-wide
32 significance has not yet been quantified. Here, we combine satellite data of lead area (the
33 AMSR-E product) and a chemical transport model (GEOS-Chem) to quantify pan-Arctic SSA
34 emissions from leads during the cold season from 2002-2008 and predict their impacts on
35 atmospheric chemistry. Lead emissions vary seasonally and interannually. Total monthly SSA
36 emissions increase by 1.0-1.8% ($\geq 60^\circ\text{N}$ latitude) and 5.8-8.4% ($\geq 75^\circ\text{N}$). The AMSR-E product
37 detects at least 50% of total lead area as compared to optical MODIS satellite images. SSA
38 concentrations increase primarily at the location of leads, where standard model concentrations
39 are low. GEOS-Chem overestimates SSA concentrations at Arctic sites even when lead
40 emissions are not included, suggesting underestimation of SSA sinks and/or uncertainties in
41 SSA emissions from blowing snow and open leads. Multi-year monthly mean surface bromine
42 atom (Br) concentrations increase 2.8-8.8% due to SSAs from leads. Changes in ozone
43 concentrations are negligible. While leads contribute $<10\%$ to Arctic-wide SSA emissions in the
44 years 2002-2008, these emissions occur in regions of low background aerosol concentrations.
45 Leads are also expected to increase in frequency under future climate change. Thus, lead SSA
46 emissions could have significant impacts on Arctic climate.

47

48 **Short Summary**

49 There is uncertainty in the sources of Arctic cold season (November-April) sea salt aerosols.
50 Using a chemical transport model and satellite observations, we quantify Arctic-wide sea salt
51 aerosol emissions from fractures in sea ice, called open sea ice leads, and their atmospheric



52 chemistry impacts for the cold season. We show sea ice leads contribute to Arctic sea salt
53 aerosols and bromine, especially in under-observed regions.

54

55 **1. Introduction**

56

57 Sea salt aerosols (SSA) affect Arctic climate by scattering incoming solar radiation and acting as
58 cloud condensation nuclei and ice nuclei (DeMott et al., 2016; Pierce and Adams, 2006; Quinn et
59 al., 1998). Long-term measurements have shown that peak SSA concentrations in the Arctic
60 occur during the cold season (Leaitch et al., 2018; Quinn et al., 2002; Schmale et al., 2021).
61 However, the sources and mechanisms of cold season SSA emissions are uncertain, which
62 hinders atmospheric chemistry and climate models from accurately representing polar regions.
63 Recent observations from Utqiagvik, Alaska have suggested that open leads, or open sea ice
64 fractures, are an important source of cold season SSA emissions (Kirpes et al., 2019; May et al.,
65 2016). Climate change has impacted the Arctic by rapidly decreasing sea ice age and thickness
66 (Intergovernmental Panel On Climate Change, 2023; Sumata et al., 2023; Vaughan et al., 2013),
67 and future projections indicate this will continue (Intergovernmental Panel On Climate Change,
68 2023), suggesting the amount of open leads will increase in the future due to thinner ice that is
69 prone to fracture. More work is needed to discern the Arctic-wide importance and impacts of SSA
70 emissions from sea ice leads (“lead emissions”) on atmospheric chemistry and climate. By
71 combining satellite observations and chemical transport modeling, we quantify the significance
72 and impacts of lead emissions on atmospheric concentrations of SSA and bromine and evaluate
73 simulated SSA against in-situ observations.

74

75 Several observational studies have investigated the importance of lead-based SSA. Key
76 observations in the 1970s in Utqiagvik, Alaska, by Scott & Levin (1972) and Radke et al. (1976)
77 demonstrated an increase in sodium-containing particles in the presence of open water leads.
78 More recently, a multi-year study of observed SSA at Utqiagvik (May et al., 2016), conducted over
79 all seasons, found that leads are a significant contributor to SSA through wind-driven production;
80 Nilsson et al. (2001) estimate that leads contribute an order of magnitude less than the open
81 ocean to the Arctic SSA flux during the summer months. Held et al. (2011) found that leads do
82 not contribute significantly to Arctic summertime SSA under low wind speeds below the threshold
83 for open sea spray aerosol production ($\sim 4 \text{ m s}^{-1}$). Kirpes et al. (2019) identified SSA produced by
84 local leads as the dominant aerosol source in the coastal Alaskan Arctic during winter months. In
85 addition, Willis et al. (2018) suggest that lead emissions are more important in winter and early



86 spring as winds over the Northern oceans are at their highest. Chen et al. (2022) also shows in a
87 recent study during the month of April at Utqiagvik, that leads were present locally throughout the
88 study, and that they contributed to sea spray aerosol production. As ground-based observations
89 in the Arctic are mainly limited to coastal stations, it is difficult to estimate the significance and
90 impacts of lead emissions over the entire Arctic. Representing Arctic-wide emissions from leads
91 in a global chemical transport model, especially during the cold season, will help discern whether
92 lead emissions and their impacts on atmospheric chemistry are significant enough to warrant
93 inclusion in chemistry as well as climate models.

94

95 Other modeling studies in the Arctic and observations primarily from Antarctica suggest blowing
96 snow, where saline snow over sea ice is swept up by wind, is a potential major contributor of cold
97 season SSA in polar regions. In two chemical transport models, the inclusion of additional SSA
98 emissions from blowing snow brought simulated SSA mass concentrations closer to what was
99 observed (Confer et al., 2023; Huang et al., 2018; Huang and Jaeglé, 2017; Rhodes et al., 2017).
100 Other potential sources of cold season SSA, such as frost flowers, have been found to be
101 insignificant (Alvarez-Aviles et al., 2008; Roscoe et al., 2011; Yang et al., 2017). Incorporating
102 blowing snow SSA emissions into models has shown how missing sources of SSA in the Arctic
103 can have a significant impact on atmospheric chemistry (Huang et al., 2020), emphasizing the
104 need to assess the potential impacts of lead emissions, which are currently missing from global
105 chemistry and climate models. One study incorporates SSA emissions from leads in a chemical
106 transport model (WRF-Chem), but the study was limited to the 400 km² area surrounding
107 Utqiagvik, Alaska and used ERA-5 reanalysis sea ice fraction to define the presence of leads
108 (Ioannidis et al., 2022). They find open leads are the primary source of fresh and aged SSA in
109 Utqiagvik, Alaska during the cold season, consistent with the observational analysis by May et al.
110 (2016) and Kirpes et al. (2019).

111

112 SSA play a critical role in Arctic tropospheric chemistry. SSA debromination is the main global
113 source of reactive bromine in the troposphere (Wang et al., 2021). Reactive bromine chemistry
114 has been attributed to the rapid depletion of ozone in the Arctic springtime, which reaches a
115 maximum in March-April (Simpson et al., 2007). In particular, bromine atom (Br) is key to these
116 ozone depletion events; it is produced through the photolysis of Br₂, which is sourced from SSA
117 debromination and snowpack chemistry (Abbatt et al., 2012; Dibb et al., 2010; Pratt et al., 2013;
118 Stutz et al., 2011). Swanson et al. (2022) show improved springtime model-observation
119 agreement of BrO by including a snowpack photochemistry mechanism based on multiple field



120 observations in a global chemical transport model. While on a global scale, reaction of OH with
121 other SSA-sourced bromine species can also produce Br (Wang et al., 2021), this is minor in
122 polar regions due to low OH concentrations. Br rapidly depletes ozone through heterogeneous
123 reactions, which produce BrO that can photolyze to reform Br, creating a catalytic ozone-depletion
124 cycle (Simpson et al., 2007).

125

126 Here, we estimate the pan-Arctic contribution of leads to total SSA emissions during the cold
127 season for the years 2002-2008, by using satellite observations of lead area to parameterize lead-
128 based SSA production in the global chemical transport model GEOS-Chem. We evaluate
129 simulated SSA concentrations against observations and predict the impacts of lead SSA
130 emissions on atmospheric chemistry, including concentrations of Br and ozone.

131

132 **2. Methods**

133

134 *2.1 Satellite Data of Lead Area Fractions*

135

136 In this study, we use satellite data of lead area fractions to inform the GEOS-Chem chemical
137 transport model (next section) of where leads are present. The Advanced Microwave Scanning
138 Radiometer-Earth Observation System (AMSR-E) sensor aboard NASA's Aqua satellite records
139 brightness temperatures from Earth at six different frequencies ([https://www.cen.uni-](https://www.cen.uni-hamburg.de/en/icdc/data/cryosphere/lead-area-fraction-amsre.html)
140 [hamburg.de/en/icdc/data/cryosphere/lead-area-fraction-amsre.html](https://www.cen.uni-hamburg.de/en/icdc/data/cryosphere/lead-area-fraction-amsre.html)) (Integrated Climate Data
141 Center (ICDC) et al., n.d.), which are converted to lead area fractions following the algorithm of
142 Röhrs and Kaleschke (2012). This method of detection can only be applied to the Arctic freezing
143 season (November-April) due to surface melt of the sea ice May-October. Daily data is available
144 at 6.25 km horizontal resolution, as the algorithm is not limited by cloud cover. For the rare
145 individual days with missing data in the dataset (0.8%), we use the average lead area fraction for
146 that month. The lead area fraction includes open water leads and thin ice-covered leads 3 km and
147 wider. The data spans latitudes 41° to 90°N, though a majority of Arctic sea ice lies above 60°N
148 and leads are therefore unlikely to be present at lower latitudes.

149

150 We choose the AMSR-E product for this study as it avoids cloud interference and provides nearly
151 consistent daily resolution. Röhrs and Kaleschke (2012) qualitatively validated this lead dataset
152 against the Moderate Resolution Image Spectroradiometer (MODIS) and found that more than
153 50% of the total lead area visible in 500 m MODIS images was detected. However, the MODIS



154 sea surface temperature product is constrained to clear-sky conditions, with Arctic winter
155 conditions affecting cloud identification techniques (Hoffman et al., 2022); it is also difficult to
156 discern the thermal contrast and shape of cloud edges and shadows from the temperature
157 contrast of leads (Reiser et al., 2020).

158

159 *2.2 GEOS-Chem: global chemical transport model*

160

161 Here we use the 3-D atmospheric transport model GEOS-Chem (geos-chem.org) version 13.2.1
162 <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.5500717> (Community, 2021). Within GEOS-Chem, the
163 Harmonized Emissions Component (HEMCO) computes emissions for different sources, regions,
164 and species (Keller et al., 2014). GEOS-Chem and HEMCO are driven by Modern-Era
165 Retrospective Analysis for Research and Applications (MERRA-2) (Gelaro et al., 2017)
166 meteorological fields from NASA Global Modeling and Assimilation Office (GMAO).

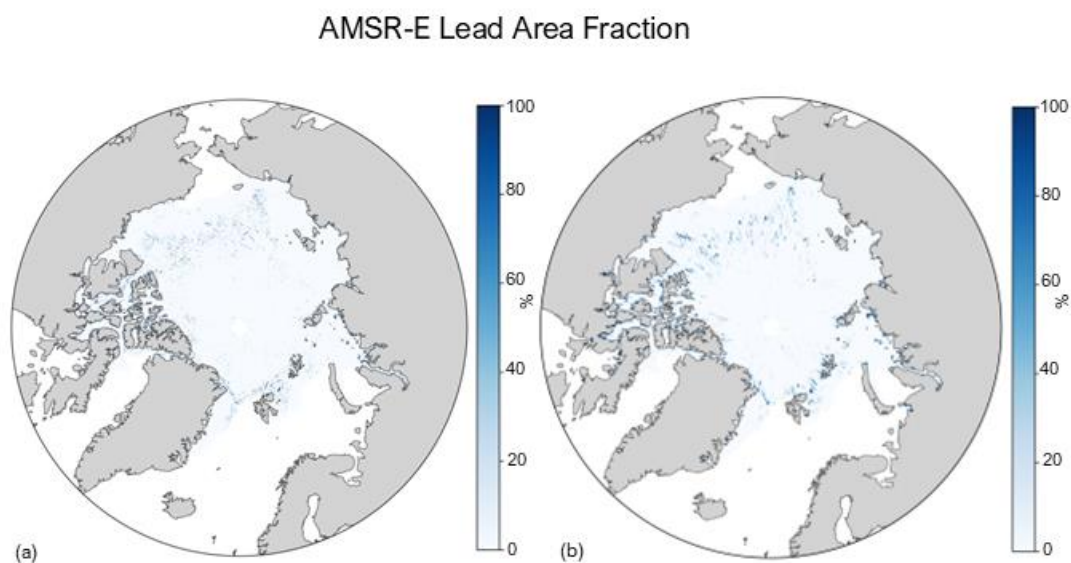
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168 SSA emissions calculations for the open ocean use a wind (Gong, 2003; Monahan et al., 1986)-
169 and sea surface temperature-dependent (Jaeglé et al., 2011) source function. In polar regions,
170 SSA emissions from blowing snow are also included (Huang and Jaeglé, 2017). SSA have two
171 size bins: coarse mode (SALC; $r = 0.5$ to $10 \mu\text{m}$) and accumulation mode (SALA; $r = 0.1$ to 0.5
172 μm). For gas and aerosol species, wet deposition includes washout and rainout in convective and
173 large-scale stratiform precipitation (Amos et al., 2012; Liu et al., 2001; Wang et al., 2014). Dry
174 deposition of gas and aerosol species follows a resistance-in-series approach, and includes
175 gravitational settling of sea salt (Jaeglé et al., 2011; Pound et al., 2020; Wang et al., 1998; Zhang
176 et al., 2001). Coupled gas- and multiphase-reactive halogen chemistry, including sea salt
177 debromination, acid displacement, and photolysis and oxidation of gas-phase inorganic bromine
178 and chlorine species, is described in Wang et al. (2021). This version of GEOS-Chem does not
179 include snowpack chemistry as a source of reactive bromine in the standard model. We
180 parameterize SSA emissions from leads with the same function as the open ocean emissions
181 from Jaegle et al. (2011) (Eq. (S.1) in the Supplemental Information (SI)), scaled by the fractional
182 area of leads in each grid cell from the AMSR-E satellite data. The AMSR-E satellite data is
183 regridded to $0.5^\circ \times 0.625^\circ$ from 6.25×6.25 km using a distance-weighted average remapping. This
184 is a unique wind- and SST-dependent source function for calculating lead emissions, driven by
185 satellite observations defining the presence of leads. Nilsson et al. (2001) derive an empirical lead
186 emissions flux with an exponential dependence on windspeed and no consideration of SST (Eq.
187 (S.2) in SI), and for a given windspeed find lower emissions from than the open ocean due to a



188 lower fetch. Ioannidis et al. (2022) use a similar source function to this study which has slight
189 differences in the exact SST and wind speed dependencies compared to GEOS-Chem; emissions
190 from leads follow the same function as the open ocean and they define the presence of leads as
191 the fraction of each grid cell which is ice-free. Figure 1 shows an example of the daily temporal
192 frequency and spatial resolution of the AMSR-E satellite data (both the raw (a) and regridded (b))
193 used to drive the model.

194



195

196 **Figure 1-** Map of AMSR-E daily lead area fraction in percent (%) for November 1, 2002, both
197 raw (6.25-km resolution) (a) and re-gridded (0.5°x0.625° resolution) (b).

198

199 We perform simulations to quantify lead emissions and their impact on atmospheric chemistry at
200 the highest global horizontal (2° latitude x 2.5° longitude) and vertical (72 vertical levels)
201 resolution. We first calculate SSA emissions at the highest resolution of HEMCO (0.5°x0.625°),
202 which is the native resolution of MERRA-2. Emissions are then implemented into GEOS-Chem
203 “offline” to ensure total SSA emissions are properly scaled and not influenced by the resolution-
204 dependence of the wind speed (Lin et al., 2021). We calculate two sets of emissions for two
205 simulations: (1) the standard emissions only (i.e., open ocean and blowing snow SSA emissions,
206 the “standard” case); (2) SSA emissions with lead emissions added (“standard + leads” case).
207 The absolute difference between the two is the SSA emissions from leads, and we present the
208 percent change due to leads (%) as calculated with Eq. (1).



209

$$210 \quad \text{Percent change due to leads (\%)} = \frac{(\text{Standard+leads})_{\text{simulation}} - (\text{Standard})_{\text{simulation}}}{(\text{Standard})_{\text{simulation}}} \times 100 \quad (1)$$

211

212 Simulations are performed for the years 2002-2008, when there is overlap between the AMSR-E
213 satellite data and available observed Arctic SSA concentrations at multiple sites, following one
214 year of initialization. Because satellite observations of lead area fractions begin November 1,
215 2002, we initialize the standard + leads case for GEOS-Chem with standard + leads SSA
216 emissions for one year (November 1, 2002 to November 1, 2003) and then start the simulation
217 for analysis on November 1, 2002, with the spun-up November 1, 2003, initial conditions. For the
218 standard case, the initialization year begins November 1, 2001. For both cases, we simulate SSA
219 concentrations, evaluate against observed concentrations, and assess the impacts of additional
220 lead emissions on atmospheric chemistry. This includes analysis of the change in atmospheric
221 concentrations of bromine atom (Br) and ozone (O₃). For model evaluation, GEOS-Chem does
222 not track sodium (Na⁺) content for SSA, so we convert simulated SSA to Na⁺ mass concentrations
223 using a factor of $\frac{1}{3.256}$, which is based on the mass ratio of Na⁺ in seawater (Confer et al., 2023;
224 Huang and Jaeglé, 2017; Riley and Chester, 1971).

225

226 *2.3 In-Situ Observations of Arctic Sea Salt Aerosol Concentrations*

227

228 We evaluate simulated concentrations of SSA from GEOS-Chem, converted to Na⁺
229 concentrations, against in situ observations of Na⁺ concentrations at 3 Arctic sampling sites:
230 Utqiagvik, Alaska (71.3°N, 156.6°W; 11m a.s.l.) (Quinn et al., 2002); Zeppelin Mountain, Svalbard,
231 Norway (78.9°N, 11.9°E; 475m a.s.l.) (World Meteorological Organization (WMO), 2003); Alert,
232 Nunavut, Canada (82.5°N, 62.5°W; 210m a.s.l.) (World Meteorological Organization (WMO),
233 2003). In winter months, these coastal sites border mostly ice-covered ocean (Huang and Jaeglé,
234 2017). At Utqiagvik, mass concentrations of Na⁺ for submicron and supermicron aerosols are
235 separated, while the other two sites measure the total mass concentration without size distinction.
236 The Na⁺ mass concentrations are determined from ion chromatography with uncertainties of 5-
237 11%, or an absolute uncertainty of 0.01 µg/m³ (Quinn et al., 2000; World Meteorological
238 Organization (WMO), 2003). The aerosol sampling frequency is daily at Zeppelin and Utqiagvik
239 (submicron) and weekly at Alert and Utqiagvik (supermicron).

240

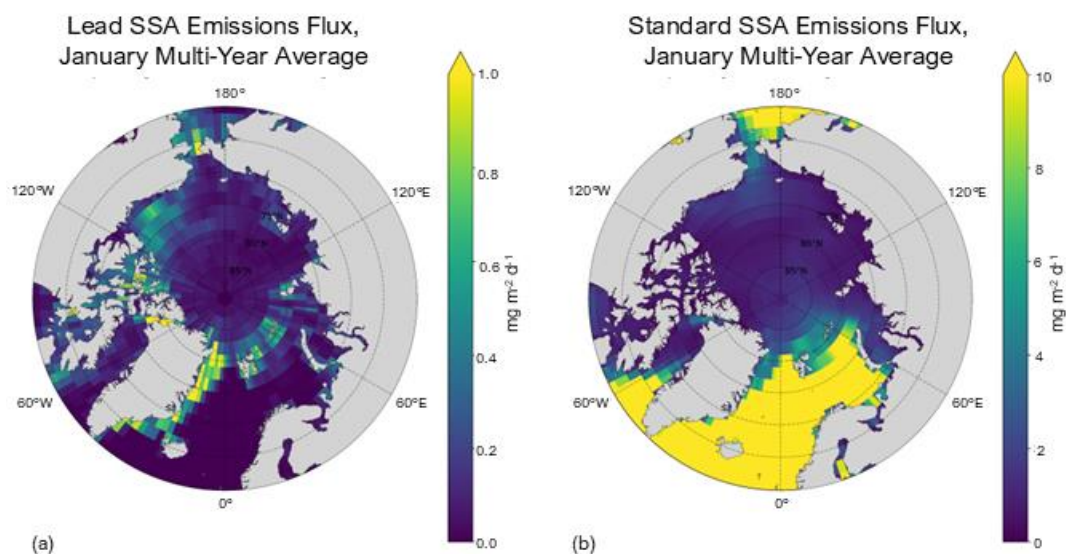
241 **3. Results**



242

243 3.1 Emissions of Sea Salt Aerosols from Leads

244



245

246 **Figure 2-** Total (coarse + accumulation mode) lead SSA emissions (a) and standard SSA
247 emissions (b), averaged over 2002-2008 for January. Note the difference in magnitude of the
248 colorbar of (a) and (b).

249

250 Figure 2a shows the spatial distribution of multi-year (2002-2008) average lead emissions for the
251 month of January, which is a climatology based on model simulations that use daily resolution
252 lead data (e.g., Fig. 1). We focus Figs. 2 and 4 on the month of January as it is the month with
253 the highest relative increase in SSA emissions for latitudes 75°N and higher (Table 1). Alongside
254 Fig. 2a is the standard model, which includes open ocean and blowing snow emissions (Fig. 2b;
255 see Sect. 2.2). Total emissions are resolution independent and are shown in Fig. 2 for the
256 2.0°x2.5° resolution of the online atmospheric chemistry simulation. We find the lead emissions
257 are concentrated in regions where leads are present and occur in regions where the standard
258 SSA emissions are low (e.g., in the Greenland Sea and parts of the Barents Sea). The percent
259 change in SSA emissions due to leads (calculated with Eq. (1)) is detailed in Table 1 and Fig. 2;
260 Figs. 4, 5, and S.4 show the percent change in SSA concentration due to leads. Generally,
261 emissions tend to be higher from 70° to 80° N and more concentrated off the coasts of Northern
262 Canada and Greenland, as opposed to off the coast of Northern Russia and Europe. Month to



263 month, regions where emissions are higher remains similar while the magnitude varies (see Fig.
264 S.1 in SI).
265

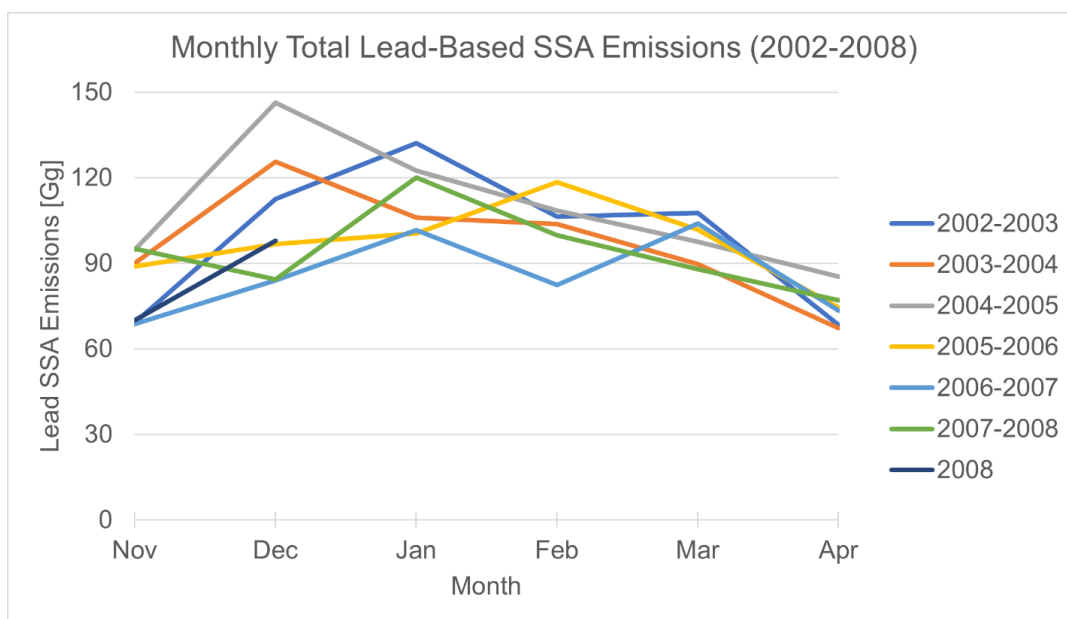
Month	Multi-Year (2002-2008) Average Monthly Percent Change in SSA Emissions due to Leads	
	≥60°N	≥75°N
November	1.1% ± 0.18%	7.6% ± 2.4%
December	1.3% ± 0.26%	7.6% ± 2.5%
January	1.4% ± 0.19%	8.4% ± 4.2%
February	1.6% ± 0.32%	7.5% ± 2.2%
March	1.7% ± 0.19%	7.3% ± 1.7%
April	1.8% ± 0.20%	5.8% ± 1.5%

266 **Table 1-** Monthly average percent change in SSA emissions due to leads (calculated using Eq.
267 (1)) ±1 standard deviation, averaged for 2002-2008, for ≥60°N and ≥75°N.

268

269 Table 1 shows the percent change in multi-year monthly average SSA emissions due to leads for
270 60° to 90°N latitude (≥60°N) and 75° to 90°N (≥75°N). Leads are more important to total SSA
271 emissions at higher latitudes due to large open ocean emissions in the North Atlantic at lower
272 latitudes (see Fig. 2b) and the spatial variability of the lead emissions (Fig. 2a). The percent
273 increase due to leads is ~4-6% higher for ≥75° N than for ≥60° N latitude. The month with the
274 highest contribution to SSA emissions from leads varies with the region being analyzed. Poleward
275 of 75°N, SSA emissions increase most from leads in January, whereas poleward of 60°N,
276 emissions increase most in April. As shown from the standard deviations in Table 1, there is
277 interannual variability in the percent increases.

278



279

280 **Figure 3-** Monthly variations of total (coarse + accumulation mode) lead emissions of SSA
281 during the cold season for 2002-2008. Each line includes November and December of the first
282 year and January through April of the following year, except for the year 2008, which only
283 includes November and December of 2008.

284

285 We find that the magnitude of lead emissions varies by month and year, as well as seasonally
286 (see Fig. 3 and Figs. S.1 and S.2). Monthly total lead emissions and lead area have low correlation
287 ($R^2= 0.13$, see Fig. S.3), indicating the variance in monthly total lead emissions is dominated by
288 the nonlinear dependencies on wind speed and sea surface temperature (see Sect. 2.2). In most
289 years, lead emissions decrease from January-April, but there is no single month when lead
290 emissions peak each year (Fig. 3). There is also no clear interannual trend in cold season total
291 lead emissions (see Fig. S.2). Lead emissions are lowest in the 2006-2007 cold season and
292 highest in the 2004-2005 cold season (Fig. S.2). We find that the annual total lead area in the
293 Arctic over the full period of the AMSR-E satellite data (2002-2011) has statistically significantly
294 increased (see Fig. S.4 (b) and Text S.2 in the SI). Based on satellite observations of leads using
295 methods of detection such as AMSR-2 and thermal-infrared satellite imagery, it is unclear if there
296 is a significant observable trend in Arctic lead area from 2011 to the present (Li et al., 2022; Reiser
297 et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2016), especially due to cloud interference with lead detection (Hoffman
298 et al., 2022). However, climate models consistently predict Arctic sea ice will continue to thin (high
299 confidence) and the presence of first year sea ice vs. multi-year sea ice will increase (very high

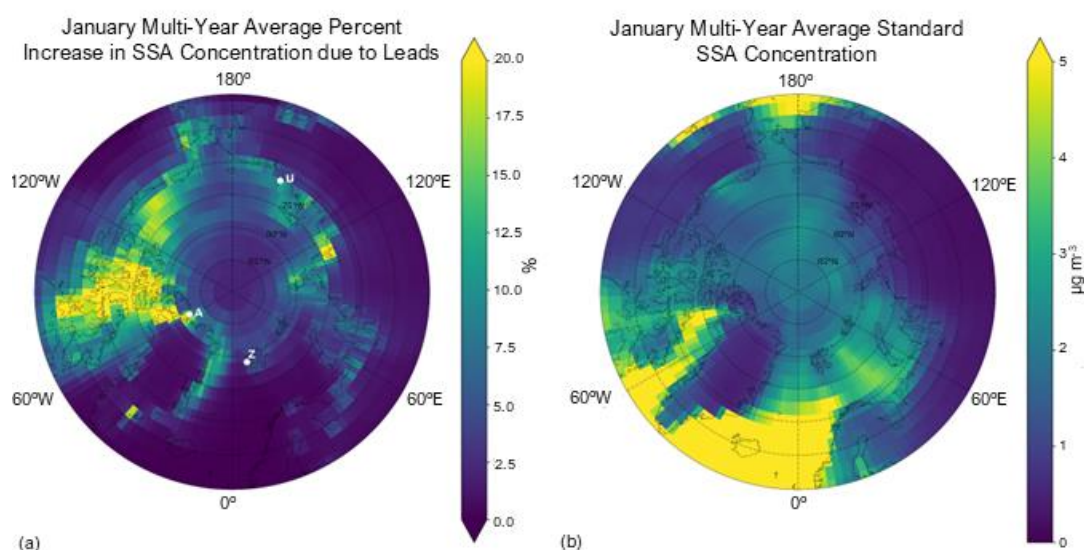


300 confidence) (Intergovernmental Panel On Climate Change, 2023). This suggests there could be
301 an increasing trend in lead area in the future, which would increase lead emissions.

302

303 3.2 Atmospheric Chemistry Impacts of Sea Ice Leads

304



305

306 **Figure 4-** Percent change due to leads (calculated with Eq. (1)) in SSA mass concentration (a)
307 and the standard surface SSA mass concentration in $\mu\text{g m}^{-3}$ (b) for the January multi-year (2002-
308 2008) average. White points in (a) represent the respective locations of each observational site:
309 Alert, Nunavut, Canada (A); Utqiagvik, Alaska (U); Zeppelin Mountain, Svalbard, Norway (Z).

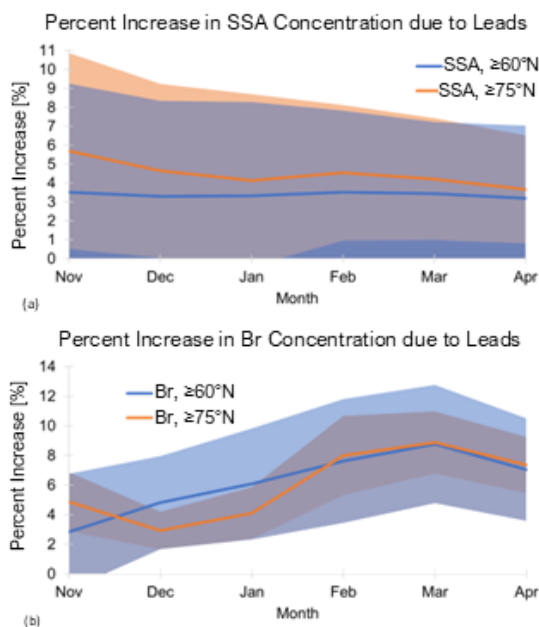
310

311 Figure 4a shows the spatial distribution of the multi-year (2002-2008) average percent change
312 due to leads in surface SSA mass concentration, alongside the standard simulated SSA mass
313 concentration (Fig. 4b) for the month of January. With the addition of leads, the average Arctic-
314 wide ($\geq 60^\circ\text{N}$) percent increase in multi-year mean January SSA mass concentrations is 3.3%,
315 and the maximum percent increase in an individual model gridbox is 60.5%. We find that the
316 greatest percent increases due to leads in SSA mass concentrations occur at the location of lead
317 emissions (see Fig. 2a), where the standard concentrations are also very low, except off the
318 eastern coast of Greenland, where the percent increase is reduced due to the high background
319 SSA concentrations in the Greenland Sea (Fig. 4b) from open ocean emissions (Fig. 2b).

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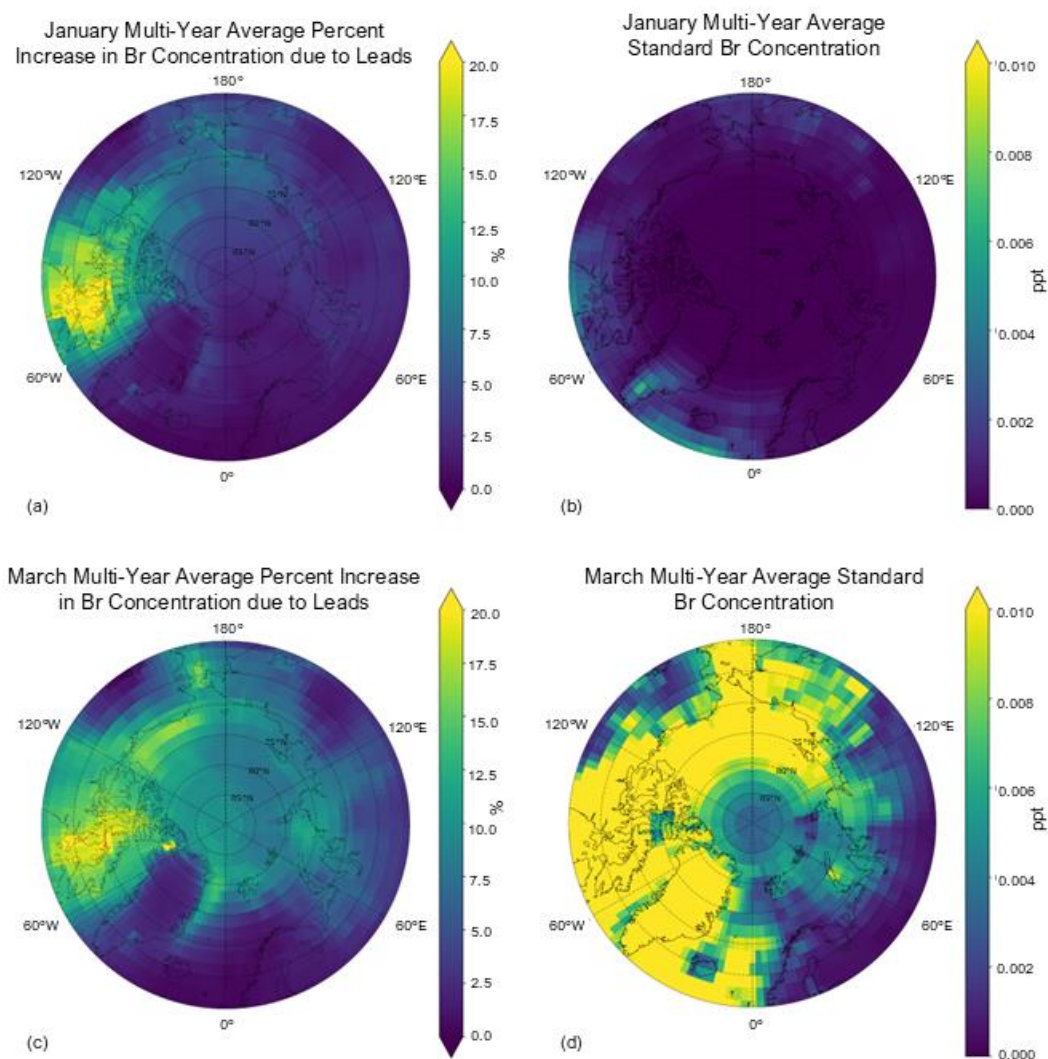


321 Figure 5a shows the average Arctic-wide percent increase due leads in multi-year monthly mean
 322 SSA mass concentration for each cold season month. Averaged poleward of 60°N, the percent
 323 increase due to leads in SSA mass concentration remains relatively constant throughout the cold
 324 season, but there is a slight decreasing trend from November-April when averaged poleward of
 325 75°N (Fig. 5a). Changes in SSA mass concentration are also higher poleward of 75°N. However,
 326 the percent increase in SSA mass concentration for both latitudinal ranges have large spatial
 327 variability, as seen in the standard deviation in Fig. 5a. The spatial distribution of the percent
 328 increase in SSA mass concentration due to leads remains similar month to month (see Fig. S.5
 329 in SI).
 330



331
 332 **Figure 5.** Multi-year (2002-2008) monthly mean percent increase due leads (calculated with Eq.
 333 (1)) in surface (a) SSA and (b) Br concentrations averaged across different Arctic regions (blue
 334 line: $\geq 60^\circ\text{N}$; orange line: $\geq 75^\circ\text{N}$). Shaded area represents ± 1 standard deviation.

335
 336 As described in Sect. 1, SSA contribute to the production of tropospheric reactive bromine and
 337 thereby bromine atom (Br). Here we examine changes in Br due to its role in ozone depletion
 338 events.



339

340 **Figure 6-** Multi-year (2002-2008) mean January (a and b) and March (c and d) percent increase
341 due to leads in surface Br concentration (a and c) and the standard model surface Br
342 concentration in ppt (b and d).

343

344 Figure 6 shows the multi-year (2002-2008) mean percent increase due to leads in surface Br
345 concentrations and the standard Br concentration (in parts per trillion, or ppt) for the month of
346 January (Fig. 6a and 6b) and March (Fig. 6c and 6d), respectively. Increased SSA from leads
347 increases surface levels of Br across all months during the cold season (Fig. 6a and 6c, Fig. S.7
348 in the SI for other months). These increased concentrations spatially follow the increased SSA



349 mass concentrations from leads (Fig. 4a) with differences due to where Br can be produced
350 photochemically from the precursors released from SSA. The spatial distribution of increased Br
351 from leads remains relatively similar month to month during the cold season. However, the
352 changes in Br concentration in February to April occur over a larger area (Fig. 6c and Fig. S.7),
353 likely due to the seasonality of Arctic bromine chemistry, which is influenced by increasing area
354 where sunlight is available to photolyze Br-sourced SSA species. The average Arctic-wide
355 ($\geq 60^\circ\text{N}$) percent increase due to leads in multi-year January mean surface Br concentration is
356 6.1% and the maximum increase in an individual gridbox is 35%; for March, it is 8.8% and 20.4%,
357 respectively. Overall, the average monthly percent increase in Br concentration is higher than the
358 corresponding increases in SSA concentration, particularly after January, and reaches a
359 maximum in March (see Fig. 5). The percent change due to leads in Br concentrations increases
360 from November-March poleward of 60°N and from December-March poleward of 75°N (Fig. 5b).
361 This does not strictly follow the seasonality of lead emissions (Fig. 3) or the percent increase in
362 SSA concentrations due to leads (Fig. 5a), likely due to more available sunlight for photochemical
363 reactions that produce Br later in the cold season. Increases in surface Br concentration could
364 lead to decreased surface ozone concentrations. We find that the percent decrease due to leads
365 in average surface ozone concentrations during the Arctic cold season, however, are negligible
366 ($< -0.25\%$).

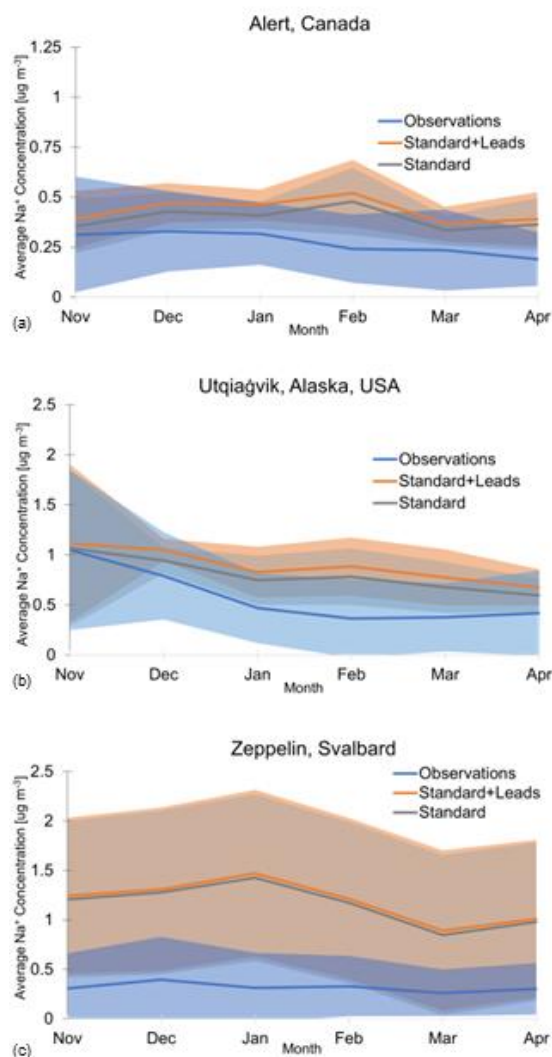
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368 *3.3 Evaluation Against Sea Salt Aerosol Observations*

369

370 We compare modeled and observed sodium (Na^+) mass concentrations at three long-term
371 monitoring stations to evaluate the performance of the simulation with and without additional lead
372 emissions. The locations of each observational site are shown in Fig. 4a.

373



374

375 **Figure 7-** Observed (blue line) and simulated (gray and orange lines) multi-year monthly mean
376 sodium mass concentrations at (a) Alert, Canada, (b) Utqiagvik, Alaska, and (c) Zeppelin, Norway
377 for the cold seasons of 2002-2008. Shaded regions are ± 1 standard deviation. Note the y-axis for
378 Alert (a) is half as large as Utqiagvik (b) and Zeppelin (c).

379

380 Figure 7 shows multi-year (2002-2008) monthly mean Na⁺ concentrations in the observations
381 (blue), standard + leads simulation (orange), and standard simulation (grey) for Alert (7a),
382 Utqiagvik (7b), and Zeppelin (7c) during the cold season. We sample the model simulations in the
383 gridbox that encompasses the latitude, longitude, and altitude of each monitoring station (see



384 Sect. 2.3) and convert the simulated SSA to Na⁺ concentrations. For all sites and months during
385 the cold season, the simulated and observed Na⁺ mass concentrations overlap within ± 1 standard
386 deviation (shaded regions in Fig. 7). We find mean concentrations are overpredicted in both the
387 standard and standard + leads simulations at all sites and months during the cold season, apart
388 from the standard model at Utqiagvik and Alert in November which agree closest with
389 observations.

390

391 The model overpredicts Na⁺ concentrations the most at Zeppelin, with the standard + leads and
392 standard mean concentrations a factor of 3.35 to 4.71 higher than observations across all months
393 during the cold season. Confer et al. (2023) similarly find an overprediction of SSA at Zeppelin,
394 which they find is exacerbated by including blowing snow emissions. Additionally, Zeppelin is at
395 high elevation (located on a mountain at 475m) and has been found to be more impacted by the
396 free troposphere and aerosol-cloud interactions than other Arctic sites (Freud et al., 2017); the
397 chemical transport model cannot represent two-way aerosol-cloud interactions. The model
398 overestimate is less at Utqiagvik, where the standard + leads simulation still overpredicts
399 observed concentrations by a factor of 1.06 to 2.43, and least at Alert, with observed
400 concentrations overestimated by a factor of 1.18 to 2.15 for the standard + leads model. Lead
401 emissions do not change the simulated seasonality of cold season surface SSA concentrations.
402 The timing of cold season maximum and minimum concentrations at Alert and Zeppelin differs
403 between the observed and simulated, for both the standard + leads and standard models. At
404 Utqiagvik, the maximum mass concentration in the observations and both model simulations
405 occurs in November. However, the minimum observed cold season mass concentration occurs in
406 February at Utqiagvik, whereas the standard + leads and standard mean concentrations reach a
407 minimum in April.

408

409 Figure 4a places the differences seen at each of the three sites in Fig. 7 into broader context, with
410 a map of the relative increase in SSA mass concentrations for the month of January. The most
411 significant relative increase in SSA concentration from leads out of the three sites occurs at Alert
412 (Fig. 7a). However, regions with the highest percent increases in SSA mass concentration due to
413 leads in Fig. 4a for the month of January (i.e., parts of Northern Canada southwest of Alert), which
414 are consistent throughout the cold season (Fig. S.4 in SI), are not sampled by ground monitoring
415 sites, which would help constrain lead impacts on SSA. In our simulation, lead emissions have
416 the same size distribution as the open ocean, with most of the mass in the coarse mode (82-
417 90%). Despite this, there are increases in SSA concentration over land (Fig. 4a) indicating



418 transport (see also Text S.3 and Fig. S.6). This is consistent with observed inland transport of
419 SSA across the North Slope of Alaska (Simpson et al., 2005). It is likely that leads emit smaller
420 SSA particles relative to open ocean emissions (Nilsson et al., 2001), which would increase their
421 lifetime, so non-local impacts from leads may be greater than simulated here. This further
422 highlights the need for observations in other regions to better understand the impacts of lead
423 emissions.

424

425 There is strong observational evidence that lead emissions contribute to cold season SSA (see
426 Sect. 1), but the standard model consistently overpredicts observed SSA concentrations prior to
427 inclusion of additional lead emissions. This suggests other sources of SSA may be overpredicted
428 or sinks of SSA may be underpredicted. Ongoing work to improve the treatment of aerosol wet
429 removal processes in GEOS-Chem has not specifically investigated the impacts on sea salt
430 aerosol (Luo et al., 2020; Luo and Yu, 2023). Additionally, a recent observational study (Chen et
431 al., 2022) suggests that the GEOS-Chem blowing snow emissions parameterization may
432 overpredict the frequency of blowing snow events, therefore possibly contributing to the
433 overprediction of Arctic SSA mass concentrations.

434

435 To test these possible sources of uncertainty, we run two additional sensitivity simulations for
436 one cold season (November 2002-April 2003): (1) using the Luo et al. (2020) wet deposition
437 scheme with the standard + leads SSA emissions (“standard + leads + Luo Wet Deposition”)
438 and (2) turning off blowing snow emissions in the standard model for an “open ocean only” case
439 (see Text S.4 for further description). We find that the Luo wet deposition scheme improves
440 model agreement most at Zeppelin (see Fig. S.8(c) in SI), especially in the months of
441 November, December, and April. However, at Utqiaġvik, the Luo wet deposition scheme results
442 in underestimates in Na^+ concentrations compared to observations (Fig. S.8(b)). At Alert, the
443 Luo wet deposition scheme decreases the model overestimate of the standard + leads
444 simulation when compared to the observations for the 2002-2003 cold season (Fig. S.8(a)), but
445 still overestimates Na^+ concentrations in each month. As the 2002-2003 observations at Alert
446 are particularly low, we also include the observed multi-year (2002-2008) monthly average Na^+
447 concentrations for comparison. The Luo wet deposition scheme improves model evaluation from
448 February-March compared to the multi-year average observed concentrations at Alert, but
449 otherwise underpredicts concentrations.

450



451 At Utqiagvik, too-low Na⁺ concentrations with only open ocean emissions suggest that this site
452 is influenced by blowing snow emissions and/or lead emissions. Of the three sites, blowing
453 snow is most important and well-represented here, as it also improves the modeled seasonality;
454 there may be larger uncertainty in the emissions parameterization in other regions. At Zeppelin
455 and Alert, even with open ocean emissions only and the standard wet deposition, the model
456 overestimates Na⁺ concentrations for all months during the cold season for 2002-2003. The
457 results of these sensitivity tests suggest that changes to wet scavenging may be more important
458 at higher altitudes, given the improvement in model evaluation at Zeppelin. Yet, the inclusion of
459 the Luo wet deposition scheme to the standard+leads simulation still overestimates
460 concentrations at Alert, highlighting there are remaining uncertainties associated with the
461 scheme; Luo & Yu (2023) find that it overestimates wet scavenging on a global scale. There
462 may be a need for improved representation of the model deposition processes to resolve SSA
463 overestimates.

464

465 4. Conclusions

466

467 Observational evidence (Chen et al., 2022; Kirpes et al., 2019; May et al., 2016; Radke et al.,
468 1976; Scott and Levin, 1972; Willis et al., 2018) and one modeling study of the 400 km² region
469 around Utqiagvik, Alaska (Ioannidis et al., 2022) have shown that leads may be an important
470 source of cold season SSA for the coastal Arctic. Here, we evaluate their importance as an Arctic-
471 wide source of cold season SSA emissions and their potential atmospheric chemistry impacts in
472 the global chemical transport model GEOS-Chem.

473

474 We find that lead SSA emissions occur primarily in regions where other SSA emissions sources
475 are very low, mainly within the Canadian archipelago and the eastern Greenland Sea. Poleward
476 of 75° N, leads increase total monthly cold-season SSA emissions by 5.8 to 8.4%, with the highest
477 contribution of SSA emissions from leads in January and the lowest in April. Lead emissions vary
478 in magnitude by month and year, mainly due to variations in lead area. Future trends in Arctic sea
479 ice predicted by climate models suggest a possible future increasing trend in lead area
480 (Intergovernmental Panel On Climate Change, 2023), which would increase lead emissions.
481 Therefore, we expect present-day and future lead emissions to be more significant than the time
482 period analyzed in this study (years 2002-2008), which could increase atmospheric chemistry
483 impacts. The additional SSA from leads in regions where the background aerosol concentrations
484 are low could also affect aerosol-cloud interactions, which largely have a warming effect in the



485 Arctic from trapping of longwave radiation during the cold season (Cox et al., 2015; Stramler et
486 al., 2011). This could potentially lead to additional climate feedbacks from expected future climate
487 change-driven increases in sea ice lead emissions.

488

489 SSA mass concentrations increase primarily at the location of lead emissions, in regions where
490 the standard concentration is very low ($\leq 1.2 \mu\text{g m}^{-3}$). Throughout the cold season, the increased
491 SSA mass concentrations from leads remain relatively constant in magnitude and spatial
492 distribution. The highest increase in multi-year average SSA mass concentrations due to leads,
493 spatially averaged for $\geq 75^\circ\text{N}$, occurs in November (5.7%) and the lowest occurs in April (3.7%).
494 Increased SSA from leads increases surface Br concentrations during the cold season. The
495 percent increase due to leads in SSA and Br concentrations are spatially coherent. We find total
496 Arctic-wide ($\geq 60^\circ\text{N}$) increases in multi-year mean surface Br concentration range from 2.8 to
497 8.8%. The increases in Br are not sufficient to have an impact on ozone; subsequent decreases
498 in average surface ozone concentrations in the Arctic are negligible ($< -0.25\%$).

499

500 Our model evaluation reveals SSA is overestimated in the standard and standard+leads model
501 at each of the 3 Arctic sampling sites, which points to possible sources of uncertainty. First,
502 Nilsson et al. (2001) suggest leads emit smaller SSA particles relative to the open ocean, but only
503 Utqiagvik provides aerosol size distinction. There are also no available ground observations
504 where we predict the highest relative increases in SSA mass concentrations. To better constrain
505 lead impacts on SSA and reduce uncertainty in the SSA size distribution, additional ground
506 observations with size distribution information in the Canadian archipelago, such as off the
507 northern coast of Baffin Island and the eastern coast of Victoria Island, would be beneficial. Next,
508 we attempt to better understand the overprediction of SSA mass concentrations with two
509 additional sensitivity simulations but are unable to ultimately confirm the source(s) of
510 overprediction. Ongoing improvements in the representation of aerosol wet deposition processes
511 could significantly impact simulated SSA mass concentrations (Luo et al., 2020; Luo and Yu,
512 2023). Additionally, there are uncertainties associated with blowing snow emissions and its
513 GEOS-Chem parameterization, suggesting the need for more blowing snow observational
514 measurements (such as in the suggested regions for lead emissions measurements) and more
515 modeling sensitivity studies. Finally, up to 50% of leads may not be captured in the AMSR-E
516 satellite-derive lead area product as compared to the MODIS product, while leads covered by thin
517 ice, which would not lead to emissions, are included. The net effect of these uncertainties could
518 either lead to an underestimate or overestimate of lead SSA emissions in this study. This satellite



519 data also covers a past time period (2002-2011), which is not necessarily representative of current
520 conditions, so the location and relative importance of lead emissions could have changed.

521

522 Overall, we predict sea ice leads may impact Arctic-wide cold-season SSA concentrations and Br
523 concentrations by up to 5-10% on average during the 2002-2008 period. As leads are likely to
524 increase in prevalence under climate change, including this source of SSA in chemistry and
525 climate models will become more important for future predictions.

526

527 **Author Contribution**

528 EJE was responsible for data curation, model simulations, validation, visualization, and analysis
529 with expert advice from HMM. HMM is responsible for conceptualization. EJE drafted the
530 manuscript which was revised by HMM.

531

532 **Competing Interests**

533 The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

534

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540

541 **Supplemental Information**

542 Equations of SSA flux from Jaegle et al. (2011) and Nilsson et al. (2001); Additional figures of lead
543 SSA emissions for months other than January during the cold season; Cold season total lead
544 SSA emissions; Description and figure of the correlation between lead area and lead SSA
545 emissions; long-term trends in lead area (2002-2011) and relevant statistical testing; additional
546 figures of multi-year (2002-2008) mean percent increase due to leads in SSA and bromine
547 concentration for months other than January during the cold season; Description and figures of
548 correlation between lead emissions and coarse and accumulation mode SSA concentration;
549 Sensitivity simulations.

550

551 **5. References**

552



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