**Vibrational Spectra and Structure of CH₃Cl:NO Complex: IR Matrix Isolation and DFT Study**

Nadia Dozova, Lahouari Krim,* M. Esmail Alikhani, and Nelly Lacome

Université Pierre et Marie Curie, CNRS UMR 7075/Ladir, Bâtiment F74, case 49, 4 place Jussieu, 75252 Paris, Cedex 05, France

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Infrared spectra of the CH₃Cl:NO complex isolated in solid neon have been investigated. Most of the vibrational modes of the complex have been detected. The weak interaction between NO and CH₃Cl in CH₃Cl:NO is responsible for small shifts of the vibrational mode frequencies of both CH₃Cl and NO molecules. The measured frequency shifts range between −3.2 and +3.8 cm⁻¹. On the basis of DFT calculations, different geometries have been explored for the complex, and it has been shown that the most stable structure is of C₁ symmetry. The calculated frequency shifts match well the experimental data.

**Introduction**

A fraction of methyl chloride (CH₃Cl) molecules (atmospheric lifetime 2–3 years) produced by photosynthetic algae reaches the stratosphere and is then oxidized by various molecules or radicals. CH₃Cl oxidation mechanisms have been the subject of different studies. Recent studies showed that the oxidation of CH₃Cl yields different products depending on whether the reaction is done in the presence or absence of molecules of NO.

The goal of this work is to try to understand if there is any interaction between NO and CH₃Cl. Rare gas matrix isolation technique coupled with infrared spectroscopy (IR) is well adapted for the observation of a system like this one because it makes possible the detection of both intermediates and products of reaction, in particular if the lifetimes of these species are short.

Infrared spectra of NO + CH₃Cl isolated in solid neon at low temperature have been recorded. The NO + CH₃Cl system has a remarkable propensity to form (NO)₂, CH₃Cl:NO, CH₃Cl:(NO)₂, and (CH₃Cl)₂ and IR spectroscopy reveals a variety of phenomena far from being fully understood.

We will focus here only on the CH₃Cl:NO species. Low concentration studies and subsequent annealing lead to the formation of 1:1 CH₃Cl:NO van der Waals complex. The vibrational modes of this complex have been detected. Density functional calculations of the geometric and vibrational properties of the complex will be also presented and compared to experimental values.

**Experimental Technique**

The CH₃Cl + NO samples were prepared by co-condensing CH₃Cl/NO/Ne mixtures onto a cryogenic metal mirror maintained at 5 K. Molar ratios (X/Ne: X = CH₃Cl or NO) ranged from 0.001% to 1%. The experimental methods and setup have been previously described in detail. Deposition times were around 60 mn. Neon, CH₃Cl, and ¹⁵NO gases were obtained from L’Air liquide with purities of 99.9995%, 99.8%, and 99.9%, respectively. ¹⁵NO gas was provided by Isotec with an isotopic purity of 97.8%. ¹⁴N¹⁸O was prepared in the laboratory by addition of ¹⁸O₂ to ¹⁴N¹⁶O gas to form ¹⁴N¹⁶¹⁸O₂ which was subsequently reduced to ¹⁴N¹⁸O and ¹⁴N¹⁶O by reaction with mercury. In all samples, NO gas, its isotopomers, and CH₃Cl were purified by using trap-to-trap vacuum distillations. The purity of samples was confirmed spectroscopically.

Infrared spectra of the resulting samples were recorded in the transmission-reflection mode between 4500 and 500 cm⁻¹ using a Bruker 120 FTIR spectrometer equipped with a KBr/Ge beam splitter and a liquid N₂ cooled narrow band HgCdTe photoconductor. A resolution of 0.1 cm⁻¹ was used. Bare mirror backgrounds, recorded from 4500 to 500 cm⁻¹ prior to sample deposition, were used as references in processing the sample spectra. Absorption spectra in the midinfrared were collected on samples through a KBr window mounted on a rotatable flange separating the interferometer vacuum (10⁻³ mbar) from that of the cryostatic cell (10⁻² mbar). The spectra were subsequently subjected to baseline correction to compensate for infrared light scattering and interference patterns.

For each sample, corresponding to different concentrations of CH₃Cl and NO, or different isotopic precursors, three kinds of spectra were recorded at 5 K after each of the following procedures: (1) after sample deposition; (2) after warming the matrix at several steps to 12 K to vary and monitor the formation of higher stoichiometry complexes; (3) after irradiating the sample using a 200 W mercury–xenon high-pressure arc lamp and either interference narrow (5 nm full width at half-maximum) or broad-band filters to find if some photoprocesses could be initiated by UV–visible or near-infrared light.

**Experimental Results**

**NO in Ne Matrix.** The spectrum of NO in neon matrix has been extensively studied by Kometer et al. In our experiments NO/Ne was deposited at 5 K. The stretching of the NO monomer consists of two bands: peak I (intense) at 1874.6 cm⁻¹ and peak II (weaker) at 1877.5 cm⁻¹ (Figure 1a). These peaks correspond to NO in single and NO in double or triple substitutional sites of the neon matrix, respectively. Upon annealing other bands...
new peaks grow in the region of peak C (Figure 2b,c). They annealing changes the relative intensities of peaks A, B, and B are equally intense, and peak C is weaker (Figure 2a). Other broad absorptions belonging to cis-(NO)₂ are together, but hindered by the matrix cage from forming the NO other bands show a strong dependence on the temperature of the matrix. Annealing from 5 to 9 K shows the growth of a three-peak structure in the region of CH₃Cl:NO and CH₃Cl:NO (Figure 3b). They are located at 729.9, 729.5, and 727.6 cm⁻¹ for CH₃Cl:NO and at 724.1, 723.7, and 721.9 cm⁻¹ for CH₃Cl(NO). The distribution of these peaks is similar to the structure of the absorption bands of CH₃Cl in neon matrix where the three peaks A, B, and C belong to different sites in the matrix occupied by CH₃Cl. To the absorption peaks A (733.0 cm⁻¹), B (732.7 cm⁻¹), and C (731.0 cm⁻¹) of CH₃Cl NO correspond to the CH₃Cl:NO, three peaks are observed; each peak corresponds to the isotopic abundance of chlorine (¹³C/³⁵Cl). These bands grow linearly with both CH₃Cl and NO concentrations and may be assigned to the complex CH₃Cl: NO. These bands show a strong dependence on the temperature of the matrix. At higher concentration other peaks appear between 726 and 722 cm⁻¹. The behavior of their intensities suggests that they belong to (CH₃Cl)₂.

In the region of C─H symmetric stretching (and also for other vibrational modes of CH₃Cl), three peaks are observed; each of them is correlated with one of the peaks A, B, and C in the C─Cl stretching mode region. The frequencies of the modes of CH₃Cl trapped in the most stable site in neon matrix (site B) are given in Table 1.

**CH₃Cl:NO Complex in Ne Matrix. C─Cl Stretching Region.** When CH₃Cl and NO are co-deposited in neon matrix, two new bands appear in the C─Cl stretching region (Figure 3c). The ratio of their relative intensities is equal to 3/1 and corresponds to the isotopic abundance of chlorine (³⁵Cl/³⁷Cl). The distribution of these peaks is similar to the structure of the absorption bands of CH₃Cl in neon matrix where the three peaks A, B, and C belong to different sites in the matrix occupied by CH₃Cl. To the absorption peaks A (733.0 cm⁻¹), B (732.7 cm⁻¹), and C (731.0 cm⁻¹) of CH₃Cl NO correspond to the CH₃Cl:NO, three peaks are observed; each peak corresponds to the isotopic abundance of chlorine (¹³C/³⁵Cl). These bands grow linearly with both CH₃Cl and NO concentrations and may be assigned to the complex CH₃Cl:NO. These bands show a strong dependence on the temperature of the matrix. At higher concentration other peaks appear between 726 and 722 cm⁻¹. The behavior of their intensities suggests that they belong to (CH₃Cl)₂.

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vibrations of NO, CH$_3$Cl, and CH$_3$Cl:NO in neon matrix in the most stable site (site B).

Upon co-deposition of CH$_3$Cl with $^{15}$NO, with a mixture of $^{14}$NO and $^{15}$NO or with a mixture of N$^{16}$O and N$^{18}$O, no change of the frequencies of the bands in the regions of the CH$_3$Cl modes was observed. The structure of the bands of CH$_3$Cl: $^{15}$NO and CH$_3$Cl:N$^{18}$O in the $^{15}$NO and N$^{18}$O stretching regions, respectively, is the same as the one of CH$_3$Cl: $^{14}$N$^{16}$O in the $^{14}$N$^{16}$O stretching region. The same shifts between the bands of the complexes and free NO molecules are observed for each isotopomer. Figure 6 shows a comparison of the complex bands in the $^{14}$NO and $^{15}$NO stretching modes regions for a $^{14}$NO/$^{15}$NO/CH$_3$Cl/Ne mixture after annealing to 9 K.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>mode</th>
<th>CH$_3$Cl/Ne</th>
<th>NO/Ne</th>
<th>CH$_3$Cl:NO/Ne</th>
<th>shift$^a$</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C–Cl stretching</td>
<td>$v_1(A_1)$</td>
<td>732.7 $^{35}$Cl, 726.9 $^{37}$Cl</td>
<td>729.5 $^{35}$Cl, 723.7 $^{37}$Cl</td>
<td>−3.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>C–Cl rocking</td>
<td>$v_3(E)$</td>
<td>1019.4</td>
<td>1022.2</td>
<td>+2.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>C–H symmetric bending</td>
<td>$v_5(A_3)$</td>
<td>1354.8</td>
<td>1354.3</td>
<td>−0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C–H antisymmetric bending</td>
<td>$v_5(E)$</td>
<td>1450.1</td>
<td>1448.4</td>
<td>−1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C–H symmetric stretching</td>
<td>$v_7(A_3)$</td>
<td>2967.4</td>
<td>2969.8</td>
<td>+2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C–H antisymmetric stretching</td>
<td>$v_7(E)$</td>
<td>3036.8</td>
<td>$b$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N–O stretching</td>
<td>$v_{NO}$</td>
<td>1874.6 (peak I), 1877.5 (peak II)</td>
<td>1878.4</td>
<td>+3.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$^a$ Shift = $v_{\text{complex}} - v_{\text{free molecule}}$.

| Figure 3. | Annealing effects on CH$_3$Cl:NO bands in the C–Cl stretching mode ($v_3$) region: (α) after deposition at 5 K; (β) after annealing to 9–10 K; (γ) after annealing to 11–12 K. All spectra were recorded at 5 K. I panel: ---, CH$_3$Cl/NO/Ne = 5/10/10000; −−, CH$_3$Cl/Ne = 5/10000. II panel: ---, CH$_3$Cl/NO/Ne = 5/5/10000; −−, CH$_3$Cl/Ne = 5/10000.
| Figure 4. | Annealing effects on CH$_3$Cl:NO bands in the NO stretching mode ($v_{NO}$) region: (α) after deposition at 5 K; (β) after annealing to 9 K; (γ) after annealing to 11 K. All spectra were recorded at 5 K. −−, NO/Ne = 5/10000; ---, CH$_3$Cl/NO/Ne = 5/5/10000; ⋯⋯, CH$_3$Cl/NO/Ne = 20/5/10000.complex.
| Figure 5. | Effects of NO concentration on CH$_3$Cl:NO bands in the NO stretching mode ($v_{NO}$) region: (a) NO/CH$_3$Cl/Ne = 5/5/10000; (b) NO/CH$_3$Cl/Ne = 10/5/10000; (c) NO/CH$_3$Cl/Ne = 20/5/10000; (d) NO/CH$_3$Cl/Ne = 40/5/10000; (e) NO/CH$_3$Cl/Ne = 100/5/10000. of the frequencies of the bands in the regions of the CH$_3$Cl modes was observed. The structure of the bands of CH$_3$Cl:$^{15}$NO and CH$_3$Cl:N$^{18}$O in the $^{15}$NO and N$^{18}$O stretching regions, respectively, is the same as the one of CH$_3$Cl:$^{14}$N$^{16}$O in the $^{14}$N$^{16}$O stretching region. The same shifts between the bands of the complexes and free NO molecules are observed for each isotopomer. Figure 6 shows a comparison of the complex bands in the $^{14}$NO and $^{15}$NO stretching modes regions for a $^{14}$NO/$^{15}$NO/CH$_3$Cl/Ne mixture after annealing to 9 K.
Finally, CH$_3$Cl:NO complex was irradiated by UV-visible or near-infrared light to initiate some photoprocesses, but no photochemical reactions were observed.

**Discussion**

CH$_3$Cl occupies three different sites labeled A, B, and C in the neon matrix. When CH$_3$Cl and NO are co-deposited in neon matrix, the complex CH$_3$Cl:NO also occupies three sites A, B, and C. The bands of the complex in the CH$_3$Cl and NO vibrational mode regions are observed for each site (A, B, and C). At the temperature of deposition the complex occupies mainly site B. After annealing (6–10 K) the NO molecules diffuse through the matrix to CH$_3$Cl trapped in different sites: the complex CH$_3$Cl:NO is formed in sites A, B, and C and the bands corresponding to these sites grow. Beyond 10 K the intensity of the peak corresponding to site B increases considerably. By considering site B to be the most stable site in the neon matrix, the shifts of the vibrational mode frequencies of the CH$_3$Cl:NO and CH$_3$Cl trapped in site B are given in Table 1. In the CH$_3$Cl absorption region, the C–Cl ($v_3$ at 732.7 cm$^{-1}$) and C–H ($v_1$ at 2967.4 cm$^{-1}$) symmetric modes are shifted by −3.2 and +2.4 cm$^{-1}$, respectively, and the CH symmetric bending mode ($v_2$ at 1354.8 cm$^{-1}$) is shifted by −0.5 cm$^{-1}$. The bands of the modes of symmetry E are shifted by +2.8 cm$^{-1}$ for the C–Cl rocking mode ($v_6$ at 1019.4 cm$^{-1}$) and by −1.7 cm$^{-1}$ for the C–H antisymmetric bending mode ($v_5$ at 1450.1 cm$^{-1}$). For the C–H antisymmetric stretching mode ($v_4$ at 3036.8 cm$^{-1}$), no shift could be measured but only a broadening of the band of CH$_3$Cl was observed.

The annealing of the matrix promotes the phenomenon of diffusion to form the CH$_3$Cl:NO complex starting from free molecules CH$_3$Cl and NO. Between 5 and 10 K the intensity of peak I of the NO monomer decreases considerably, whereas that of peak II remains constant (as shown in Figure 4b). This shows that, in this temperature range, the complex is formed mainly from the NO molecules trapped in site I, corresponding to the principal absorption band of NO. The frequency of the NO stretching mode in the complex trapped in site B is shifted by +3.8 cm$^{-1}$ compared to that of NO:Ne ($v_{NO}$ at 1874.6 cm$^{-1}$).

Three very weak peaks appear at deposition of the mixture of CH$_3$Cl and NO in neon matrix: in the C–Cl stretching region at 727.9 cm$^{-1}$, in the symmetric C–H stretching region at 2976.2 cm$^{-1}$, and in the NO stretching region at 1876.2 cm$^{-1}$. When the matrix is annealed to 9 K, these peaks disappear. They could be attributed to an unstable form of the complex CH$_3$Cl:NO. Corresponding bands for this species in the other modes of CH$_3$Cl are not observed. They are probably hidden by the CH$_3$Cl absorptions.

The three bands in the NO stretching region at 1877.9, 1876.7, and 1876.5 cm$^{-1}$ (Figure 4) do not have corresponding bands in the CH$_3$Cl vibrational modes regions (probably hidden by the CH$_3$Cl bands), even though they depend linearly on the concentration of CH$_3$Cl. These bands are probably due to NO molecules interacting weakly with CH$_3$Cl.

**Theoretical Calculations**

All calculations have been performed with the Gaussian 03 quantum chemical package using various levels of theory with the unrestricted wave function: second-order Møller–Plesset perturbation theory (denoted as MP2), and density functional (DFT) approaches. In this paper, two functionals, well adapted to the study of weakly bound systems, have been used: the one-parameter hybrid functional due to Barone’s modified functional (labeled as MPWB1K), and a recent hybrid DFT-type functional, developed in the Truhlar group (labeled as MPW1PW91), available with Gaussian 03 using the following keywords: “&mpw1pw91/ basis IOP(3/76=056000440)”.

As shown in Table 2, the calculated frequencies for the free molecules are in good agreement with the experimental ones, except the MP2 result for free NO. This is why in the following we consider only the energetic properties of the complexes at the MP2 level.

To determine the most stable structure of the CH$_3$Cl:NO complex, two global geometries have been considered: the first one is of C$_1$ symmetry in which the NO axis is nearly parallel with the CCI one, and the second one has a C$_2v$ symmetry in which the NO and CCI axes are collinear. For each geometry, two structures with respect to NO have been taken into account (see Figure 7). It should be noted that the Cl-ending approach was found to be unbound and thus is not presented here. In the case of the C$_1$ structure, the optimization has been made without symmetry constraint. This means that the NO and CCI axes were initially chosen to form a small dihedral angle.

The most important geometric parameters of the four studied complexes (see Figure 7) are reported in Table 3. One can easily note that the geometric perturbations induced upon complexation are very small, indicating a very loose binding between NO and CH$_3$Cl, for all the studied cases. These changes are in line with the calculated binding energies (corrected for the basis set superposition error (BSSE)), which range from 0.6 to 3.5 kJ mol$^{-1}$. Accordingly, the most stable geometry formed from the NO + CH$_3$Cl interaction should be considered as a van der Waals complex. Inspecting the results, reported in Table 3, reveals that the geometric and energetic properties calculated with the new functional of Truhlar are closer to those obtained by MP2 and CCSD(T) than those obtained with the MPW1PW91 functional.
two most stable forms of HNO and ClNO molecules. For instance, the angles in the complex (−HNO = 149°, −HON = 23°, −ClNO = 112°, and −ClON = 53°) are similar to those of free HNO and ClNO molecules (−HNO = 109°, −HON = 33° and −ClNO = 114°, −ClON = 43°) and not those of the NOCl and NOH molecules (−HNO = 28°, −HON = 112° and −ClNO = 40°, −ClON = 121°).

The harmonic frequency shifts calculated with the MPW1PW91 method for structure 1 of the complex and the experimental shifts in neon matrix are listed in Table 4.

It has already been shown that experimental shifts of the vibrational mode frequencies of the complex are small. Since the calculations show that the interaction between CH3Cl and NO is very weak, it is to be expected that the calculated shifts will also be small. Indeed, the largest calculated shift is around 3 cm⁻¹. We will be mostly interested in the sign of the shifts and not in their absolute value. The frequencies of the C−Cl stretching and the C−H symmetric bending modes are both red shifted upon complexation. The calculated shifts ∆ω₁ (C−Cl) = −2.5 cm⁻¹ and ∆ω₂ (C−H symmetric bending) = −0.1 cm⁻¹ are close to the experimental values ∆ω₁ = −3.2 cm⁻¹ and ∆ω₂ = −0.5 cm⁻¹. By contrast, the frequencies of the N−O stretching and the C−H symmetric stretching modes are blue shifted. The calculated values ∆ω₅ι (C−H symmetric stretching) = +1.0 cm⁻¹ and ∆ω₁ (C−H antisymmetric stretching) = +0.5 cm⁻¹ are again in good agreement with the values measured in neon matrix, ∆ω₅ι = +3.8 cm⁻¹ and ∆ω₁ = +2.4 cm⁻¹.

Since the complex belongs to the C₃v symmetry group, the modes of symmetry E (in free CH3Cl) are not degenerate anymore and two different frequencies are calculated for the rocking, C−H antisymmetric bending, and C−H antisymmetric stretching modes. However, only one frequency was experimentally observed for each mode in the complex, except for the C−H antisymmetric stretching where only a broadening of the bands was detected. Furthermore, the absorption bands of CH3Cl trapped in neon matrix corresponding to these modes are broad and could hide the other absorption bands of the complex. Finally, we note that the experimental frequency shifts for the C−Cl rocking (±2.8 cm⁻¹) and C−H antisymmetric
bending ($-1.7 \text{ cm}^{-1}$) modes are well reproduced by DFT calculations ($C-\text{Cl}$ rocking $+2.3 \text{ cm}^{-1}$ and $C-H$ bending $-0.8 \text{ cm}^{-1}$).

**Conclusion**

The infrared spectra of NO + CH$_3$Cl isolated in solid neon at low temperature have been investigated. We focused here on the CH$_3$Cl:NO species. Low concentration studies and subsequent annealing lead to the formation of 1:1 NO:CH$_3$Cl van der Waals complex. The vibrational modes of this complex have been detected.

It has been shown that the experimentally observed complex is a van der Waals complex (the binding energy is around 200 cm$^{-1}$) and that the most stable structure of CH$_3$Cl:NO (in which NO is nearly parallel to the CCl axis and N is pointing to the carbon atom) belongs to the $C_1$ group. Observed frequency shifts are well reproduced by use of the hybrid functional (MPW1PW91). According to the experimental and theoretical results, vibrational frequencies are very slightly shifted upon formation of the complex, but with opposite signs: blue and red shifts for the N–O and C–Cl stretching modes, respectively.

**References and Notes**


