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基于放射性碳同位素分析的黑碳分离方法研究进展

王晓^{1,2}, 李军^{1*}, 姜鸿兴^{1,2}, 莫扬之¹, 张向云¹, 张干¹

(1. 中国科学院广州地球化学研究所, 有机地球化学国家重点实验室,

广东省环境资源利用与保护重点实验室, 广东 广州 510640;

2. 中国科学院大学, 北京 100049)

摘要: 黑碳是生物质和化石燃料不完全燃烧产生的含碳连续统一体, 因其复杂的化学结构和特殊的理化性质, 涉及碳循环、全球气候、人类健康等诸多问题。放射性碳同位素(^{14}C)是一种区分生物源和化石源的有效手段, 而黑碳的分离和纯化则是制约 ^{14}C 示踪技术广泛应用的瓶颈。文章系统介绍了常用于 ^{14}C 分析的黑碳分离方法, 总结了每种方法的优缺点及其研究进展。认为改良后的热光法是一种常见的快速分离方法, 具有相对误差小和可重复性高的优势。而催化加氢法是一种较为理想的分离方法, 稳定且不受基质限制。同时指出: 未来需要加强分离方法的标准化, 提高方法内和方法间的可比性。特别是需要提供一种具有“真实的” ^{14}C 值的标准参考物, 以判别分离方法的可靠性。

关键词: 黑碳; 放射性碳同位素; 分离方法

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Development of Isolated Methods of Black Carbon Based on Analysis of Radiocarbon (^{14}C): a Review

WANG Xiao^{1,2}, LI Jun^{1*}, JIANG Hongxing^{1,2}, MO Yangzhi¹,

ZHANG Xiangyun¹, ZHANG Gan¹

(1. State Key Laboratory of Organic Geochemistry and Guangdong Provincial Key Laboratory of Environmental Protection

and Resources Utilization, Guangzhou Institute of Geochemistry, Chinese Academy of Sciences,

Guangzhou 510640, China; 2. University of Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing 100049, China)

Abstract: Black carbon (BC) is the broad continuum of carbonaceous material produced by the incomplete combustion of biomass and fossil fuels. Due to its complex chemical structure and special physical and chemical properties, BC has a significant impact on the carbon cycle, global climate and human health. Radiocarbon (^{14}C) has been proven to be a powerful tool of qualification and quantification of fossil and non-fossil contributions. However, one of the great challenges is to isolate and purify BC for ^{14}C analysis. The state of art in isolation methods commonly used in ^{14}C analysis of BC was systematically introduced, and the advantages and disadvantages of each method were summarized. Thermal-optical method is a rapid approach with the advantages of small relative error and low variability for ^{14}C analysis. Hydropyrolysis is an effective and stable pretreatment approach for matrix-independent ^{14}C analysis of BC. Finally, further studies on the standardization of isolation methods should be enhanced to improve the comparability between intra-method and inter-methods, especially defining and producing reference material with the “true” ^{14}C value are urgently needed.

Key words: black carbon; radiocarbon (^{14}C); isolative method

黑碳(black carbon, BC)目前仍没有统一的定义, 一般由不同的分离手段而给出定义^[1]。通常认为BC是指燃料不完全燃烧或岩石风化产生的一类碳含量

>60%的连续统一体。主要包括微焦化的生物质、焦炭(char)、木炭(charcoal)、烟炱(soot)和惰性石墨态黑碳(graphite BC)^[2,3]。作为一类富碳贫氢化合物,

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作者简介:王晓(1994-),女,硕士研究生,主要从事黑碳来源解析的研究,(电子信箱)wangxiao176@mails.ucas.edu.cn;*通讯作者,男,研究员,(电子信箱)junli@gig.ac.cn

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BC的主体部分和特征结构是稠环芳香簇,稠环芳烃簇片的尺寸大小和稠环浓缩程度均由温度控制^[4,5]。在高温下生成以相对规则的层状石墨结构为主的烟炱(soot);较低温度下则生成以无规则结构为主的木炭(charcoal)^[4,6]。化学结构的复杂性导致BC具有特殊的理化性质^[3,7-9],对生态、气候、环境和健康产生重大的影响。例如BC较强的稳定性,使其一旦形成难以被氧化或微生物分解,最终可在土壤和沉积物中长期存在,是全球碳循环中的一个重要环节^[3,10-12]。其非常宽的吸收波段,又可对红外至部分可见光波段的太阳辐射进行有效的吸收,现已成为全球大气系统中仅次于CO₂的增温组分^[13-15]。而较大的比表面积又使BC极易吸附多环芳烃、重金属以及其他有毒有害污染物,进而通过呼吸道进入人体并长期滞留,严重危害人体的健康^[16]。因此,控制和消除BC的污染水平刻不容缓。

BC的人为源主要是生物质和化石燃料的不完全燃烧,放射性碳同位素(¹⁴C)能够有效的对二者进行区分^[17-20]。¹⁴C半衰期为(5 730±40) a,化石燃料(煤、石油、天然气等)形成的时间远大于¹⁴C的半衰期,所以燃烧所排放的BC不存在¹⁴C^[17,18];相反,生物体由于受光合作用、呼吸作用等生命活动的影响,体内碳元素不断地与外界环境进行交换,二者所含的¹⁴C含量应非常接近,即生物质燃烧所排放BC的¹⁴C值近似于大气中的¹⁴C值^[17,18]。因此通过加速器质谱技术(AMS-¹⁴C)测定样品中BC的¹⁴C值,可定性区分并定量估算每个源的贡献率^[17-24]。近年来,¹⁴C技术被认为是BC源解析最有效和最准确的方法之一,用于雪冰^[25]、沉积物^[26]、土壤^[27]和大气^[24,28-30]等介质中BC来源的解析。

然而将¹⁴C技术用于源解析的关键问题是如何实现BC组分的有效分离。目前大部分方法仅能定量或表征BC,如显微镜法^[31,32]、光学分析方法^[33-38]、波谱法^[39-41]等^[42-47],但不能将其从样品基质中真正的分离和纯化,收集用于¹⁴C分析。本文将介绍可直接用于¹⁴C分析的BC分离方法及其研究进展,分析和总结每种方法的优缺点以及未来的发展趋势。

1 BC的分离方法

1.1 化学法

化学法是根据BC连续统一体中不同组分的化学氧化性不同而进行分离。包括重铬酸钾氧化法^[48,49]、硝酸氧化法^[50,51]、碱性过氧化氢法^[35]和苯多羧酸法^[52-55]等多种方法,这里重点介绍2种常用的方法。

I(I) 199重铬酸钾氧化法

重铬酸钾氧化法主要是指利用酸性重铬酸钾(K₂CrO₇和H₂SO₄的混合液)对样品中的BC进行分离的方法。实验处理步骤通常包括:采用HCl直接去除样品中碳酸盐、Fe、Mn等物质^[51,56];HCl和HF反复处理去除硅类物质^[49,57,58];最关键的一步是活性有机碳的去除,采用的是K₂CrO₇和H₂SO₄的混合液。也有研究采用H₂O₂和HNO₃进行处理,但H₂O₂易发生分解,反应很难控制^[56];氮氧化物在高温下具有强氧化性,采用HNO₃处理,会使部分有机碳或碳酸盐被炭化,结果存在较大的正偏差^[59]。而K₂CrO₇和H₂SO₄的混合液分离得到的BC误差较小,目前应用最为广泛^[48,49]。

重铬酸盐氧化法最早是用于氧化和分析土壤中的TOC^[60],1989年Wolbach等^[56]首次提出将其用于土壤和沉积物中BC的分离和测定。随后Chan等^[61]在澳大利亚格里菲斯大学将该方法用于大气领域,分离和定量城市气溶胶样品中的BC,但结果重现性较差,因此在气溶胶研究方面,仅有少量工作沿用了此方法^[62,63]。2001年Masiello等^[57]采用气溶胶和海洋沉积物样品以及标准样品1649a,测试该方法在基于放射性¹⁴C分析上BC的分离和纯化效果。通过对氧化剂浓度、氧化时间和氧化温度等条件进行对比优化,发现该方法具有一定的可行性,可再进行深入的研究和探讨。

化学法是较早用于¹⁴C分析的前处理方法之一,对实验条件要求很低,可在大多数实验室中进行,对烟灰、焦炭和烟煤样品均具有较好的重现性^[49,57,64-66]。但其假设在氧化处理中剩余的所有碳都是BC,实际上某些特定物理化学结构的OC难以被完全氧化,如有研究表明干酪根在处理过程中可与BC一起被分离^[3,61]。其次,这种方法测定的是特定时间内化学氧化剂氧化后的剩余碳含量,不同的氧化条件导致实验室之间BC分离结果存在显着的差异^[56,67,68],极有可能影响¹⁴C的分析结果。故该方法仍需建立统一的分析标准,使测定结果具有可比性。

1.1.2 苯多羧酸法

苯多羧酸法是指将BC经硝酸高温氧化后可消解成含单一苯环的苯多羧酸和硝基苯多羧酸,虽然消解的机理和途径至今未知^[69,70],但通过测定一系列具有不同羧化度的BPCAs,可间接获取BC的相关信息,也被称为一种分子标志物法^[52-55]。焦炭(char)等低温燃烧形成的BC,一般会消解生成含有较少羧基基团的BPCAs(如B₃CA,B₄CA或B₅CA),而烟炱(soot)等高温燃烧形成的BC,主要生成完全替换的苯六甲酸(B₆CA)^[69,71,72]。该方法的实质将样品中所有浓缩稠环芳香簇结构定义为BC,是基于化学结构的另一种分

离方法,不受物质形态的限制^[47,53,73-75]。主要分析步骤是用三氟乙酸对样品进行预处理,去除Fe³⁺、Al³⁺等高价离子和次生物质,再用65% HNO₃进行热氧化,将样品中BC转化为BPCAs进行分析^[47,73]。

1998年Glaser等^[53]首次提出用BPCA法对BC进行分离和测定。2005年Brodowski等^[73]改进了该方法的分析条件(前处理方法、衍生化时间和进样量),消除了原方法因浓HNO₃稀释导致的BPCAs含量低估,以及人工合成BPCAs引起的高估。近年来BPCA法也被用于¹⁴C分析之前的EC分离,如2015年Lehndorff等^[27]通过分析土壤BC的¹⁴C结果,发现德国哈雷市褐煤开采和工业高度活跃期间(1958-1971年),化石燃料排放占总BC贡献率的75%。由于不受物质形态限制的独特优势,BPCA法也已成为当前海洋中溶解性黑碳(DBC)分离测定的首选方法^[55,69,74,75]。如2010年Ziolkowski等^[55]尝试利用BPCA法分离用于¹⁴C分析的DBC,发现河流中DBC的¹⁴C年龄远小于海洋中的DBC,加深了人们对BC生物地球化学循环过程的了解。

BPCA方法是目前适用范围最广的BC分离方法,可用于各个环境中各种形态的BC。它能从分子水平上分离BC,获得BC定量信息的同时也获得了结构信息^[47,53,73-75]。由于可分离和制备含有不同羧基数目的BPCAs,该方法也为BC单体化合物分子的¹⁴C分析提供了可能^[55,70]。但不同实验室用于¹⁴C分析的BC不同,有全部单体合并或部分单体合并,使¹⁴C结果存在差异^[71,72]。消解过程中,不同的温度^[53,66,70,71]、时间^[53,74,75]和加热方式^[53,74,75]均会影响BPCAs的产率。且当样品中OC大于一定含量时,消解产生的BPCAs也可能来自有机质的氧化^[74,75]。故最终得到的分析结果能否代表整个BC的¹⁴C信号仍需进一步的探讨。

1.2 热学法

根据热力学特性,碳元素主要被分为有机碳(organic carbon, OC)和元素碳(elemental carbon, EC),EC通常认为等同于光学特性划分的BC^[76,77]。热学法是根据EC连续统一体中不同组分的热氧化性不同而达到分离的目的。是较早用于分析OC和EC的方法之一^[78-81],根据处理方式的不同,可分为直接热分析法和间接热分析法。

1.2.1 两步加热法

直接热分析法仅通过升温加热,使不同的碳质成分在不同的温度和气体条件下挥发、氧化及热解等,其中决定性参数为温度程序与气氛选用。该方法的理论前提是认为样品中所有的OC组分均可通过热氧化过程被完全去除,氧化处理剩余的所有碳都是EC,通常被用来作为量化EC的基准参照技术手段^[82,83]。

其中最为经典的是“两步加热法”^[78]。

两步加热法主要用来分离气溶胶和雪冰样品中的OC和EC^[78-81,84-86]。2004年Szidat等^[87]首次提出将其用于¹⁴C分析之前OC和EC的分离和纯化。OC成分可在温度300~350℃时挥发形成CO₂,而EC需在400~850℃范围内且氧气氛围下才能被氧化成CO₂。分别收集产生的CO₂可用于¹⁴C的分析。近期Zenker等^[88]对包括两步加热法在内的3种基于O₂的EC分离方法研究对比发现,两步加热法的¹⁴C结果普遍偏高,极有可能是少量残留的OC对¹⁴C值产生的影响,但仍需要更多的比较研究深入探讨。

两步加热法是较早的EC分离方法之一,能够更加方便、快捷的分离用于¹⁴C分析的EC^[87]。但在加热过程中,OC会发生烧焦即炭化现象,从而会引起对样品中EC含量的高估^[18,87];同时生物质或者低温环境中产生的EC,在较高加热温度时也有可能与OC一同燃烧分解^[80,87],但上述二者所产生正、负误差不能简单的相互抵消。因此使用两步加热法分离用于¹⁴C分析的EC并非最佳选择。

1.2.2 热化学氧化法

间接热分析法即将化学处理与热氧化相结合,更充分的去除部分有机物和矿物组分,减少热氧化过程中OC的炭化现象。目前在实际研究中普遍采用的是Gustafsson等^[58]创建的CTO-375,该方法将375℃规定为OC和BC的临界温度,无论升温程序如何选择,其最高的温度均为375℃,故又称为CTO-375。研究者们可根据实际需要将化学处理用于热处理步骤之前或之后,2个处理阶段没有固定顺序^[89-92]。化学处理指利用化学氧化剂去除样品中的部分干扰物质,减小因炭化作用而带来的偏差。常用的化学氧化剂在1.1节化学法已详细列举,此处不再赘述,其中有机碳的去除仍是实验的关键步骤^[49]。热氧化是指在空气中将样品程序升温至375℃,通过较长时间的加热燃烧,达到分离BC的目的。

CTO-375对最浓缩的BC具有更强的可操作和更为合理的测量值^[58,66,89,90,93,94],最早是用于测定土壤和沉积物中的soot-BC^[95,96],后来也被用于分离和提取气溶胶中soot-BC^[97],目前是作为一种常规手段用于量化和分离¹⁴C分析的BC。例如2008年Chang等^[26]利用该方法提取了韩国3个岩溶洞穴内沉积物表面上的BC,通过¹⁴C的分析发现,其化石燃料和生物质的相对贡献基本相同。2009年Gustafsson等^[24]利用该方法分离得到气溶胶样品中的soot-BC,并将提取的soot-BC利用AMS-¹⁴C进行分析,明确了亚洲冬季季风时期“棕色雾霾”是化石燃料和生物质燃烧

共同作用的结果,生物质略高于化石燃料贡献,进一步提高了人们在碳质气溶胶来源和气候变化上的认识。

CTO-375可操作性强,是实验室最为常用的分离和提取BC的方法之一^[58,89,90,93,94]。它能较好的区分soot-BC和char-BC,对soot-BC分析结果的重现性高与其他方法^[66]。但它不能像一些温和的氧化方法那样分离出整个BC的连续体,只能量化那些高度致密的BC,如果存在低致密结构的BC,则很难被检测到^[66]。且因化学处理步骤较多不可避免地会造成样品损失^[91],对¹⁴C分析结果准确性的影响仍需进一步的研究和探讨。

1.3 热光法

为了修正上述热学法因OC炭化产生的分析误差,1993年Chow等^[98]提出将热学法与光学法结合,更准确地测定出各部分含碳物质的量。该方法主要用于大气气溶胶的滤膜样品^[99-105]和雪冰^[106,107]中EC的定量。近年来也常与其它方法结合用于土壤和沉积物样品^[51,108]。分离测定原理是利用633 nm的氦-氖激光在热分析过程中全程照射样品,监测滤膜对激光的投射或者反射信号。当发生炭化作用时,其光信号会因生成相同吸光属性的含碳物质而发生改变,随之又恢复,该时刻即确定为OC与EC的分割点,用以校正热学法因炭化所引起的误差^[20,68]。这种校正是建立在数学意义上的一种校正,并非OC、EC物理化学上的分离。

近年来,研究者们开始尝试建立一些方法去改善这种不足^[109,110]。如2012年Zhang等^[109]优化了热光法的分析条件包括载气、温度程序和前处理方法,将OC/EC分析仪与制样系统耦合,使其能在线测定、分离和收集EC部分用于¹⁴C分析。2017年Liu等^[111]在国内建立了一套类似的装置,系统性分析了¹⁴C测定水平与OC和EC质量回收之间的相关性,进一步探究其¹⁴C测定结果的准确性和代表性。通过对城市气溶胶样品和参考物质RM 8785的测试发现,该方法收集的OC部分和剩余EC部分足以代表整个OC和EC的¹⁴C信号,各馏分相对误差较小且平均回收率高。随后Zenker等^[88]对包括热光法在内的3种基于O₂的EC分离方法对比研究也应证了上述结论。3个独立实验室的¹⁴C结果显示出良好的一致性(标准偏差在0.01~0.04),且¹⁴C值与EC回收率和非水溶性有机碳(WIOC)之间无直接关系进一步表明EC的¹⁴C分析基本不受OC去除不足的影响。

在大气EC分离测定的研究中,改良后的热光法具有明显的优势。首先结合光学校正以及进样前的水萃取等操作^[109],大大降低了由炭化部分引起的偏

差。其次该方法本身具有分析误差小和可重复性高的特点,在较好分离OC、EC的同时,可将各个温度释放的OC、EC收集以进行¹⁴C的分析测定,大大优化了¹⁴C测定的气溶胶源解析结果^[65]。但对土壤和沉积物等颜色较深的样品,无法直接利用透射率和反射率来准确分辨OC/EC分割点,需与其他方法结合使用,具有一定的局限性。而且受周围环境性质和样品结构的影响,整个EC连续统一体的特性如热力学非均质性,氧化性和光吸收能力都比较复杂,如何使热光法处理后获得的¹⁴C结果与其它方法具有可比性,仍需进一步的研究和探索^[66]。

1.4 催化加氢法

上述方法均为氧化法,它们能被用作分离BC的实质是将样品中的其他碳组分在氧化条件下逐步去除^[66]。与之相反,还原法的本质是在还原氛围下用高温裂解的方式分离不同碳组分,其代表方法是催化加氢还原法^[112]。催化加氢法是指在高压氢气流条件下,通过高温裂解将样品中热不稳定的大分子有机物质释放出来,留下一种耐热的、高度芳香的含碳物质,定义为BC_{hyp}^[112,113]。分离过程主要分为两步:首先采用钼酸铵和硫酸铵的混合水溶液形成钼催化剂(一般占总重的5%),然后在15 MPa的氢气压力下,对样品进行程序加热,直至达到最高热解温度(一般为400~600 ℃)。过程中用5 L/min的氢吹扫气流,使挥发组分能从反应容器中快速移出并在冷阱收集,最终留在石英管中的残余物即为BC。

hypy法早期是用于分离石油烃源岩中高含量的生物标志物以及不稳定的大分子有机质^[114,115],最近才被提出用作分离和量化BC的一种新手段。Ascough等^[113]在2008年首次利用该方法分离用于¹⁴C分析的BC。他们率先使用一系列土壤标准样品测试该方法,结果显示hypy法具有较好的分离效果且可重复性高,而热解过程释放的非BC组分也可定量回收。随后Meredith等^[112]用国际BC试验(the International BC Ring Trial)的12种参考材料,包括实验室样品,环境样品和干扰物质等多种类型全面评估hypy法分离和定量BC的潜力,结果进一步证实,所有材料中的质量和碳损失都很稳定,BC数据可靠且具有较好的重复性($\pm 2\%$)。近期Zhang等^[116]选取生物质燃烧、燃煤和机动车尾气样品,通过测定碳含量、¹⁴C和碳结构(固定核磁共振),验证了hypy法分离气溶胶样品中BC的实验条件和参数。随后利用环境气溶胶样品,进一步对比了CTO-375法、热光法和催化加氢法分离BC后测定的¹⁴C结果发现,CTO-375处理后BC的¹⁴C值远小于hypy法,说明对生物质燃烧产生的

BC, CTO-375在处理过程中可能产生了很高的损失。而热光法测定的¹⁴C结果与其它2种方法截然相反,生物质燃烧北京(35%)反而高于广州(30%),再次证明热光法分离的BC形态和热稳定性可能会受原料宏观结构的影响,而hypy法在克服OC炭化的问题上具有很强的优势,且对不同的样本基质都能有较好的分离效果。

由此可以看出,hypy法具有很大的优势和发展前景。相比于传统的氧化法,其能有效的避免OC炭化引起的偏差。且不受基质限制,是一种有效且稳定的量化BC的理想方法。但目前关于该方法的研究仍比较少,操作繁琐,方法和设备都有待完善。

2 结语及展望

上述列举的4类BC分离方法,每种方法在适用性上都有各自的优势和局限性,如表1所示。催化加

氢法是一种放射性¹⁴C分析的理想前处理技术,对不同的样品基质都有较好的分离效果,数据可靠且重复性高。但设备昂贵、操作繁琐,大大限制了其应用和发展。热光法是一种基于¹⁴C分析的快速分离方法,多用于气溶胶样品中EC的分离和测定,具有相对误差小和重复性高的优势。但EC的热力学非均质性,氧化性和光吸收能力会受到周围环境和原材料结构的影响,增加了¹⁴C分析的不确定性。苯多羧酸法是较为特殊的分离方法,因其不受物质形态的限制,可用于不同环境中各种形态的BC分离和测定。而基于分子水平的分离,使其可获得BC结构和定量的双重信息。但不同的温度、时间和加热方式在消解过程中均会影响BPCAs的产率。化学法和热学法可操作性强,是2类较早用于BC分离的方法。但仅能对BC连续统一体中某一范围的组分进行分离,最后用于¹⁴C分析的BC难以代表整个BC的¹⁴C信号。

表1 环境基质中BC分离方法汇总表
Table 1 Summary of methods used in isolating black carbon

方法	应用范围	处理方式	优点	缺点	参考文献
重铬酸钾法	土壤 沉积物 大气	酸预处理后在酸性重铬酸钾溶液中氧化	可操作性强	无统一方法标准,重复性差	[49,56,57]
苯多羧酸法	土壤 沉积物 水体	酸预处理后在浓硝酸中高温氧化	适用于各个环境各种形态的BC 提供BC定量信息和BC结构信息	受消解条件影响大,无统一方法标准 非BC来源的BPCAs的干扰	[53,55,69]
两步加热法	大气 雪冰	在氮气或氧气条件下分段加热氧化	可操作性强	炭化现象产生正偏差 低浓缩性BC易提早被氧化而产生负偏差	[23,78,80]
热化学氧化法	土壤 沉积物 大气	酸预处理和空气中375 °C 高温氧化相结合	可操作性强 对soot-BC分离和测定重现性高	化学处理步骤较多造成损失 难以分离代表完整 ¹⁴ C信号的BC	[58,89,112]
热光法	大气 雪冰	在氮气或氧气条件下逐步加热到850~900 °C	基本消除炭化作用 分析误差小,重复性高 优化了 ¹⁴ C的分析结果	受样品基质限制,适用性低 受周围环境性质和样品结构的影响大, 与其他方法可比性差	[98,109,111]
催化加氢法	土壤 沉积物 大气	在高压氢气流条件下逐步加热至500~550 °C	分离过程中能防止碳质焦化 不受基质限制,重复性高。	操作繁琐,方法和设备都有待完善	[112,113,116]

我国20世纪70年代后期开始将AMS-¹⁴C技术用于环境领域的研究,由于制样技术、AMS测试精度和测试费用等问题的限制,仅有少数研究利用¹⁴C技术对BC进行示踪,且局限在相对较小的范围内^[117~120]。近年来,技术的进步使AMS检出限和灵敏度逐步改善,现只需样品量≤100 μgC,这进一步促进了AMS技术的普及^[121,122]。目前北京大学核物理与核技术国家重点实验室、中国科学院地球环境研究所、中国科学院广州地球化学研究所、青岛海洋科学与技术试点国家实验室、天津大学、南京大学和河南大学等国内多个单位已具备¹⁴C-AMS测定的技术条件,¹⁴C技术在BC示踪方面的应用日益受到重视。但进一步提高¹⁴C分析结果的重复性和准确性,本文认为未来还有以下

工作有待完善。

(1)每种BC分离方法对分析程序的变化都很敏感。例如改变实验过程温度或者酸强度,都可能会造成实验结果的差异,相同的方法在不同实验室之间使用,最终结果的可比性可能并不理想。这给利用¹⁴C技术判断BC来源,特别是估算BC的来源贡献带来很大的困难。因此应结合国内外实验室之间的对比实验和分析合作,尽快建立分离方法的标准化,降低方法内的可变性和源解析的不确定性。尤其是优化和改进方法内的哪些条件,可将BC的高估和低估控制在最佳范围内,将是今后研究者们的重点方向之一。

(2)不同BC分离方法间得到的结果之间差异性较大,存在着相互可比性的问题。目前不同方法各有

侧重,分别对BC连续统一体内不同范围的组分进行提取。即使是同一样品,最后¹⁴C技术的分析结果也很难相互比较,相互验证。因此需要利用标准参考材料对不同BC分离方法进行评估,提高和改进方法之间的可比性。同时催化加氢法和改良的热光法代表了相对较新的进展,有助于建立可商榷的基准方案,进一步规范基于¹⁴C分析的BC分离流程。

(3)具有“真实的”¹⁴C值的标准物质尚未建立。目前国内外实验室对¹⁴C的相互比较主要限于环境样品,其中OC和EC真实的¹⁴C值仍是未知。即如果方法给出类似的研究结果,仍然不清楚它们是否准确;如果方法给出不同的研究结果,则也无法确定哪种方法给出了正确的值,或者二者给出的结果均有误差。因此方法内和方法间具有可比性的关键在于是否准确定义或形成可用于EC的¹⁴C分析的合适参考材料。

(4)将¹⁴C技术与其他技术如稳定碳同位素(¹³C)技术、分子标志物的测定、源解析模型、形态特征分析、卫星火点监测资料和大气后向轨迹分析模式等相结合,联用多种技术手段和分析方法对BC来源进行解析,势必能提供更准确和更完善的来源信息,进一步减小源解析的不确定性。

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