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$^{12}CO_2$ transition frequencies with kHz-accuracy by saturation spectroscopy in the 1.99-2.09 µm region

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Key words

Frequency measurements; carbon dioxide; saturation spectroscopy; CRDS; coherence transfer

Abstract

Saturation spectroscopy has been used to determine absolute frequencies of 107 ro-vibrational transitions of the two strongest $^{12}CO_2$ bands of the 2 μm region. The considered 20012-00001 and 20013-00001 bands are of importance for the CO_2 monitoring in our atmosphere. Lamb dips were measured using a cavity ring-down spectrometer linked to an optical frequency comb referenced to a GPS-disciplined Rb oscillator or to an ultra-stable optical frequency. The comb-coherence transfer (CCT) technique was applied to obtain a RF tunable narrow-line laser comb-disciplined source using an external cavity diode laser and a simple electro-optic modulator. This setup allows obtaining transition frequency measurements with kHz-level accuracy. The resulting accurate values of the energy levels of the 20012 and 20013 vibrational states are reproduced with a (1σ)-*rms* of about 1 kHz using the standard polynomial model. The two upper vibrational states appear thus to be highly isolated except for a local perturbation of the 20012 state leading to an energy shift of 15 kHz at *J*= 43. A recommended list of 145 transition frequencies with kHz accuracy is obtained providing secondary frequency standards across the 1.99-2.09 μm range. The reported frequencies will be valuable to constrain the zero-pressure frequencies of the considered transitions in $^{12}CO_2$ retrieval from atmospheric spectra.

1. Introduction

Carbon dioxide, CO_2, is the most important anthropogenic greenhouse gas and several satellite missions like GOSAT, GOSAT-2 (JAXA), OCO-2 (NASA), TanSat (CAS), and the upcoming MicroCarb (CNES) and CO2M (ESA) missions, as well as ground-based networks like TCCON[1], are dedicated to the monitoring of its column-averaged dry-air mole fraction in the Earth's atmosphere. These missions are increasingly demanding in terms of high quality spectroscopic data for the CO_2 absorption bands in the 1.6 and 2.0 µm regions used for these measurements. In the former spectral region, numerous line profile studies[2,3,4,5,6] as well as highly accurate frequency measurements[7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14] have been reported so far. In particular, transition frequencies with kHz-accuracy were determined both in the Doppler limited regime[8,9,12,13] and in the saturation regime[10,14].

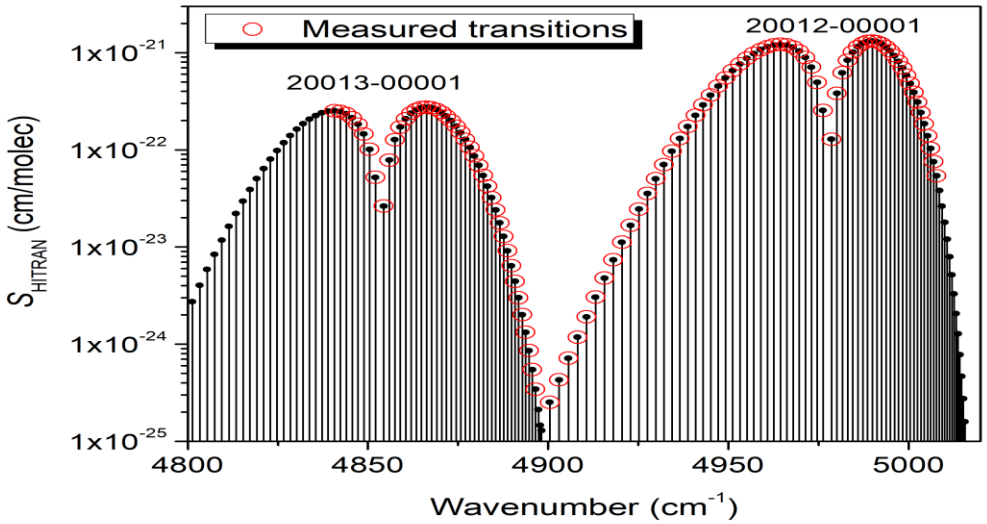

***Fig. 1**. Overview of the 20012-00001 and 20013-00001 bands of $^{12}CO_2$ as provided by the HITRAN database. Transitions presently measured by saturation spectroscopy are highlighted (red open circles).*

The 2 µm region is dominated by the 20013-00001 and 20012-00001 bands of $^{12}CO_2$ centered at 2.06 and 2.01 µm, respectively **(Fig. 1)**. Here we adopt the HITRAN convention for the vibrational labelling (so-called AFGL notation) described in Rothman and Young[15]. These bands have been the subject of several spectroscopic studies using Fourier transform spectroscopy (FTS)[16,17,18,19,20,21,22,23], laser diode absorption spectroscopy[24,25,26,27,28,29] and cavity ring down spectroscopy (CRDS)[30,31,32]. In particular, the latter CRDS studies were dedicated to accurate measurements of the line profiles broadened by air (and their temperature dependence) in support of missions devoted to CO_2 atmospheric retrieval. Regarding transition frequencies, to the best of our knowledge, only the very recent (zero-pressure) frequencies reported with 100 kHz accuracy for four lines measured by CRDS of CO_2 in air were referenced to an absolute frequency standard[32]. Let us also mention that the

absolute positions of five lines of the 21113-01101 band were reported with 300 kHz accuracy in the 2.09 µm spectral region[33]. However, these latter measurements were performed only at 13.3 mbar (of pure CO_2) and transition frequencies (i.e. line centre at zero-pressure) could not be provided.

We report here the frequencies of most of the strongest transitions of the 20013-00001 and 20012-00001 bands with kHz-level accuracy. This provides a series of secondary frequency standards with kHz-level uncertainties across the wide 4788-5015 cm^{-1} frequency range (i.e. 1994-2089 nm) where frequency standards are scarce[7]. Carbon dioxide, a non-toxic and easy-to-manipulate gas with regularly spaced strong (up to 10^{-21} cm/molecule) transitions, is particularly well adapted for that purpose. The achieved uncertainty will be valuable for fixing the positions at pressure equal to zero in the multi-spectrum fit procedures used to analyze spectra of CO_2 diluted in air, allowing for the improvement of the other line profile parameters, especially the pressure-shift coefficients (see *e.g.* Mondelain *et al.*[4]). The obtained frequency values will be also valuable for spectra calibration purposes as for instance for frequency referencing differential absorption LIDAR (LIght Detecting And Ranging) dedicated to CO_2 measurements[34]. Finally, transition frequencies measured at the kHz level can also be used to increase the accuracy of several other transition frequencies through the application of the Ritz principle or effective Hamiltonian models[35].

Regarding the experiment, in order to circumvent the Doppler line broadening, the measurements were performed by CRDS in saturation regime[36]. The CRDS technique is well-adapted for Lamb-dip frequency measurements thanks to the narrow (kHz level) resonances of the high-finesse optical cavities and the high intracavity power[37,38]. After a description of the experimental set-up and recorded transitions (Part 2), we will detail the data analysis and error budget (Part 3). The spectroscopic constants of the two bands studied will be derived from a fit of the measured upper energy levels and the final set of recommended position values will be compared to available literature data in Part 4, before the concluding remarks (Part 5).

2. Experimental set-up and recorded transitions

Measurements were performed with an improved version of the comb-referenced cavity ring down spectrometer described in Mondelain *et al.*[32] and shown in **Fig. 2**. This spectrometer is based on an extended cavity diode laser (ECDL) (New Focus; Model TLB 6736) covering the 1975-2075 nm range. A large part (90%) of the emitted laser power is coupled to a temperature regulated high finesse cavity (HFC) described in Vasilchenko *et al.*[39] *via* an acousto-optic modulator (AOM) (to produce the ring down (RD) events) and an electro-optic modulator (EOM) to correct from laser jitter and phase noise (DC to >40 MHz correction bandwidth) as explained below. The 45 cm-long high finesse cavity is made of two high reflectivity mirrors (from Layertec, with a reflection coefficient R>99.99% over the 1950-2250 nm range). Periodic resonances between the laser light and the cavity

modes are achieved by applying a voltage triangular ramp on the PZT tube on which the output cavity mirror is mounted. At resonance, theAOM (model ACM-1002AA1 from IntraAction Corp.) is used to switch off the injection of photons in the cavity and generate a RD event detected by an extended InGaAs PIN photodiode (G12183 series from Hamamatsu). Typical RD times of the evacuated cell are τ = 55 µs at 4875 cm^{-1} and 48 µs at 4953 cm^{-1}.

In our previous works[4,32,39], a beat note (BN) signal, between the laser source and the closest tooth of a frequency comb (FC), was used to accurately determine the absolute frequency of the laser source, limited by a laser line width of a few hundred kHz. Here, this signal is used to transfer the coherence of the comb to a fraction of the ECDL output using the feed-forward technique, described in Votava *et al.*[40] and in Gotti *et al.*[41], providing a driftless and spectrally narrower source directly tunable using a RF synthesizer. In more detail, the BN signal is first low-pass filtered (BLP-150+ from Mini-Circuits; 150 MHz cutt-off) to select only the BN with the closest comb tooth, amplified with a series of three amplifiers (ZFL500LN+ from Mini-Circuits; 28 dB of gain), and then separated with a power splitter (PSC-2-1 from Mini-Circuits; 0.1 to 400 MHz). The first output channel is digitized by a fast acquisition card (250 MHz-16 bits, by GAGE) which gives the BN frequency, f_{BN}, after Fourier transform of this signal and a peak determination procedure over the 0 to 125 MHz RF range at a 350 Hz repetition rate with a 15 kHz resolution. The BN linewidth is a combination of comb tooth and ECDL linewidths (which dominates) and is typically 200 kHz FWHM. This BN frequency measurement, previously used for frequency calibration, is only used here to stabilize the ECDL frequency around f_{BN}= 55 MHz via the *Current modulation* input of the controller. The second output channel is mixed with a signal from a RF synthesizer (SMA100B from Rohde&Schwarz ; 8 kHz - 20 GHz) in a single-side band modulator (TRF370417 50-MHz to 6-GHz Quadrature Modulator from Texas Instruments), then amplified to feed the RF input of the EOM (MPZ-LN-10 from iXBlue ; electro-optical bandwidth > 10 GHz; central wavelength: 1550 nm). This latter generates a corrected and an uncorrected side band in addition to the carrier frequency with the following frequencies:

$$\nu_{carrier} = nf_{rep} + f_{CEO} + signf_{BN} \quad (1)$$

$$\nu_{side\ band\_nc} = nf_{rep} + f_{CEO} + sign\ f_{BN} - sign(f_{synth} - f_{BN}) \quad (2)$$

$$\nu_{side\ band\_c} = nf_{rep} + f_{CEO} + signf_{BN} + sign(f_{synth} - f_{BN}) \quad (3)$$

where f_{rep}=250 MHz and f_{CEO}=–20 MHz are the repetition rate and the carrier-envelope offset of the FC referenced to a 10 MHz rubidium frequency standard (Model PRS 10 from SRS) (hereafter called *RF* lock) which is phase-locked to a GPS timing receiver. *n* is the comb tooth number determined with a commercial wavelength meter (HighFinesse WS7-60 IR-II). *Sign* is equal to + or – and corresponds to the sign of the BN. f_{synth} is the frequency generated by the RF synthesizer to add a programmable

shift to f_{BN} (which is kept close to 55 MHz). Note that, as indicated in **Table 1** and **Table 2** part of the measurements were performed with the comb *optically* locked *via* an intra-cavity EOM to an ultra-stable optical frequency (known with accuracy at the 10^{-16} level) at 1542 nm (~194 417 936 MHz) (hereafter called *Optical* lock). This frequency standard is transferred to our laboratory from the LNE-SYRTE in Paris over about 1000 km through a dedicated line of the RENATER academic fiber network thanks to the French Equipex project REFIMEVE+[42].

As can be seen from Eq. (3), the BN frequency is eliminated for the corrected sideband frequency. This means that the jitter and also higher frequency phase noise of the laser source (*i.e.* the ECDL) is suppressed for this sideband making it a frequency-shifted clone of a comb tooth, with the programmable offset given by f_{synth}. This clone possess the comb tooth linewidth which is typically 100 kHz and 5 kHz for the *RF* and *Optical* locks, respectively instead of a few hundred kHz (at a 1 ms time scale) for the ECDL emission width. On the other hand, Eq. (2) shows that for the uncorrected frequency we have two times the BN frequency, leading to a broadening of this side band relative to the carrier.

The output of the EOM is then amplified by a cw –Thulium -doped fiber amplifier (CTFA-PB-PM-20-BW4 from Keopsys; central wavelength: 2004 nm; saturated output power: 17 to 40 dBm) before passing through the AOM and the high finesse cavity. The RF signal (94.15 MHz) applied to the AOM is generated by a direct digital synthesizer (DDS) referenced to the 10 MHz rubidium frequency standard as well as the RF synthesizer. Note that the laser frequency in the cavity has to be corrected from the AOM frequency used here in its order -1. The feed-forward "correction" is optimized by placing an optical delay line (i.e. a 5 m long optical fiber) before the EOM.

Note that in the previous works[40,41] a telecom dual Mach-Zehnder modulator (MZM) was used. Unfortunately, this optical component is not available in the 2 µm spectral range, leading us to use an EOM. This latter has the drawback of having both side bands and the carrier sent in the HFC instead of only one side band for the MZM (the carrier and the other side band being suppressed in this case). This leads to potential frequency crossing between the corrected side band and the carrier and other side bands, since the latter become resonant with the HFC if they are separated by a multiple of the free spectral range, complicating the (large) tuning. Note that even if the operating wavelength of the EOM is 1.55 µm, it works in the 2 µm region only with small additional losses which illustrates the large spectral coverage of this optical component. Unfortunately, integrated MZM devices do not appear to be so versatile.

Spectra are acquired step by step by changing f_{synth} which can be tuned in our setup between 2 and 6 GHz (due to technical limitation of our RF electronics). In the case of Lamb dip acquisitions, each spectrum corresponds to a scan over 4 MHz with spectral steps of 20 kHz. At each spectral step, 150 or 200 RD events are averaged. The scan duration is about 5 min.

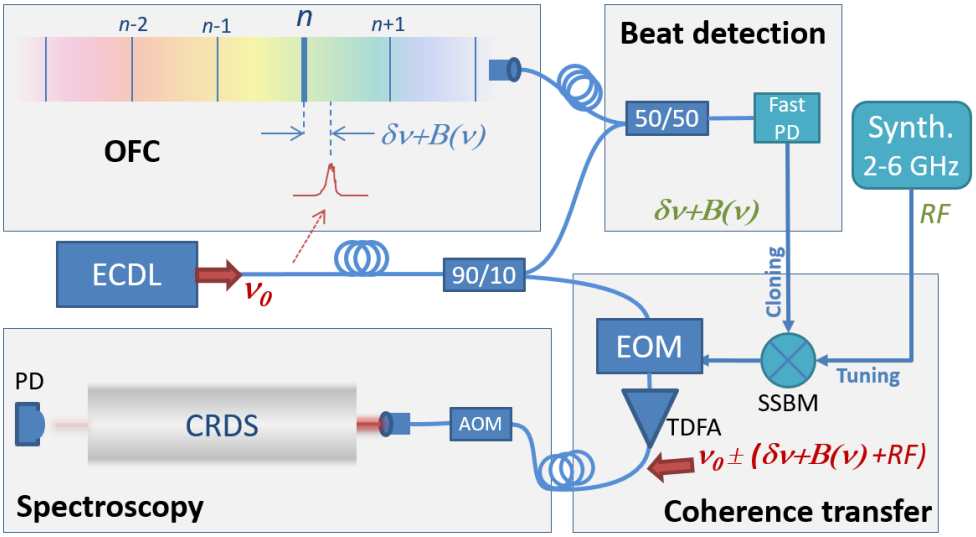

Fig. 2. *Scheme of the experimental set-up. OFC: Optical frequency comb, AOM: acousto-optic modulator, EOM: electro-optic modulator, ECDL: external cavity diode laser, SSBM: single side band modulator, TDFA: Thulium doped fiber amplifier, PD: photo-diode. B(ν) and δ(ν) represent the beat note frequency and its noise, respectively.*

The HFC is filled by a flow of pure CO_2 (from Air Liquide; 99.995% of purity). The pressure inside the cell is measured thanks to a MKS Baratron 626B absolute pressure transducer (1.33 mbar full scale; 0.25% uncertainty of reading) and controlled with an electro-valve (2871 series from Burkert; 0.3 mm orifice dia.) and homemade PID software. The temperature of the sounded gas is measured with an accuracy of 0.04 K and the temperature homogeneity of the gas in the HFC is better than 0.05 K (see Vasilchenko *et al.* [39] for the details).

In this work, 63 transitions up to J''= 74 and 43 transitions up to J''= 70 have been studied from Lamb dip spectra for the 20012-00001 and 20013-00001 band, respectively. The measured transitions are highlighted in **Fig. 1.** Several examples of Lamb dips spectra are presented in **Fig. 3**.

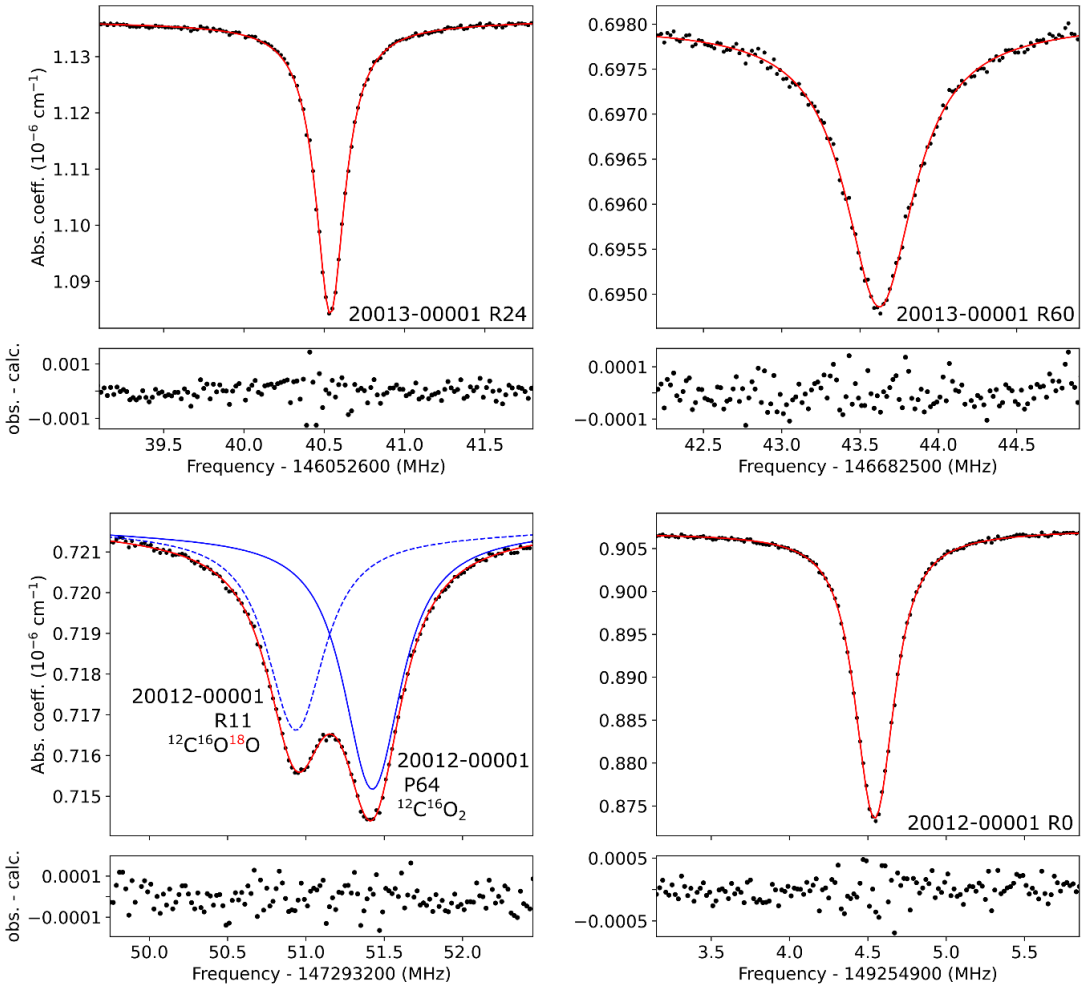

Fig. 3. *Examples of Lamb dips (dotted points) for the R(24) (upper left panel) and R(60) (upper right panel) transitions of the 20013-00001 band of $^{12}CO_2$, and the P(64) (lower left panel) and R(0) (lower right panel) transitions of the 20012-00001 band of $^{12}CO_2$ The frequency step is 20 kHz and the indicative pressure values P_{CO2} are about 0.04, 13, 7 and 0.03 Pa, respectively. Note that for the P(64) transition, an additional Lamb dip is visible, due to the R(11) transition of the 20012-00001 band for the $^{12}C^{16}O^{18}O$ isotopologue. The fits using a Voigt profile (red solid line) are also shown on the figure as well as the residuals (obs. – calc.) plotted on the small panels below each graph.*

3. Data analysis and error budget

A. Data analysis

As already reported[37,40,43,44] in the case of a saturated line profile, the ring down signals are no more a purely decreasing exponential with time. In Giusfredi *et al.*[37], a non-exponential model was proposed to fit the ring down events and to obtain more reliable Lamb dip profiles. However, in the studies dedicated to transition frequency retrievals from Lamb dips, a simple exponential treatment is generally adopted[10,12,38,45] arguing that this should not bias the determination of the center frequency of the absorption line due to the symmetry of the saturation spectrum.

The four examples of Lamb dips displayed on **Fig. 3** result from the RD fit with a purely exponential function. The Lamb dip profiles are then fitted with a Voigt function for which the Lorentzian widths as well as the dip amplitude and a second order polynomial baseline are free to float. This results in residuals at the noise level (lower panels of **Fig. 3**). Typical fitted values of Lorentzian widths are between 130 and 250 kHz (FWHM). Interestingly, no Gaussian contribution was necessary for the Lamb dips recorded for the 20013-00001 band while for the 20012-00001 band, a Gaussian contribution with a typical width of 110 kHz (FWHM) had to be added. **Fig. 3** illustrates the very good quality factor (QF defined as the ratio of the change of absorption of the dip to the *rms* of the residuals) that can be achieved with a value close to 200 for the R(0) transition, as well as the pressure broadening which was observed for the higher *J* transitions such as R(60) for which a larger pressure value was used. The lower left panel shows an interesting feature with two Lamb dips accidentally close to each other, one corresponding to the P(64) transition of the 20012-00001 band of $^{12}CO_2$, as expected, and the second one to the R(11) transition for the same band but for the $^{12}C^{16}O^{18}O$ isotopologue (the assignment of the P(64) 20012-00001 dip of $^{12}CO_2$ was established using combination difference relation – see below). The frequency of the R(11) transition of the $^{12}C^{16}O^{18}O$ isotopologue is also reported in the Supplementary Material, as well as for the P(12) transition.

For each transition, 10 spectra are generally recorded showing a statistical dispersion on the line centers below 2 kHz for all the transitions with $J'' \leq 70$ for the 20012-00001 band and $J'' \leq 62$ for the 20013-00001 band. **Table 1** and **Table 2** list the studied transitions with their measured frequencies, estimated final uncertainties and the number of recorded spectra for each of them, as well as the indicative pressure value.

Assig.	Freq. (kHz)	Pres. (Pa)	# of spectra	Lock	Final unc. (kHz)
P16	145119049920.6	0.13	3	RF	3.0
P14	145169371981.4	0.13	6	RF	3.4
P12	145219201993.0	0.13	9	RF	3.5
P10	145268542644.7	0.07	8	RF	3.4
P8	145317396075.5	0.07	7	RF	3.6
P6	145365763879.6	0.14	9	RF	3.2
P4	145413647096.5	0.03	10	Opt.	3.1
P2	145461046214.5	1.20	9	RF	3.4
R0	145531236890.1	2.00	21	RF	3.4
R2	145577424223.3	0.73	6	RF	3.1
R4	145623124768.3	0.03	10	Opt.	2.9
R6	145668336501.3	0.03	10	Opt.	3.0
R8	145713056851.0	0.03	9	Opt.	2.9
R10	145757282685.6	0.03	6	Opt.	3.4
R12	145801010333.2	0.03	10	Opt.	3.0

R14	145844235571.7	0.03	10	Opt.	2.9
R16	145886953640.9	0.03	10	Opt.	2.9
R18	145929159249.7	0.03	10	Opt.	3.0
R20	145970846578.6	0.03	10	Opt.	2.9
R22	146012009289.8	0.03	11	Opt.	2.9
R24	146052640536.8	0.04	10	Opt.	2.9
R26	146092732967.0	0.07	10	Opt.	3.1
R28	146132278738.5	0.07	10	Opt.	3.0
R30	146171269531.1	0.12	30	Opt.	3.3
R32	146209696545.2	0.12	20	Opt.	3.1
R34	146247550532.3	0.12	20	Opt.	3.0
R36	146284821792.1	0.16	168	Opt.	2.9
R38	146321500193.2	0.18	21	Opt.	3.0
R40	146357575182.8	0.19	16	Opt.	2.9
R42	146393035800.0	0.20	10	Opt.	3.0
R44	146427870697.5	0.16	10	Opt.	3.0
R46	146462068137.7	0.16	10	Opt.	2.9
R48	146495616036.8	0.16	10	Opt.	3.0
R50	146528501949.4	1.41	20	Opt.&RF	3.2
R52	146560713096.8	2.67	6	RF	3.3
R54	146592236384.6	2.67	9	RF	3.5
R56	146623058410.3	2.67	9	RF	3.2
R58	146653165481.7	6.67	9	RF	3.8
R60	146682543621.6	13.33	9	RF	3.4
R62	146711178600.3	13.33	10	RF	3.4
R64	146739055925.1	20	10	RF	7.7
R66	146766160861.4	16.29	18	RF	6.5
R68	146792478469.7	26.66	10	RF	14.6

Table 1. *Frequencies of the transitions of the 20013-00001 band of $^{12}CO_2$ determined in this work with their final uncertainties (see text and* ***Table 3****). The frequencies are given after correction of the 90 Hz second-order Doppler shift. RF and Opt correspond to the RF lock and optical lock (see text for details), respectively.*

Assig.	Freq. (kHz)	Pres. (Pa)	# of spectra	Lock	Final unc. (kHz)
P74	146911623361.5	20	10	RF	8.7
P72	146989515840.3	13.33	10	RF	4.0
P70	147066640733.3	13.33	10	RF	3.5
P68	147142980565.8	6.67	10	RF	3.5
P66	147218521294.3	6.67	18	RF	3.4
P64	147293251422.9	6.67	12	RF	3.7
P62	147367161400.9	6.67	9	RF	3.3
P60	147440243211.6	6.67	10	RF	3.3
P58	147512490048.1	6.67	10	RF	3.3
P56	147583896096.4	6.67	10	RF	3.3
P54	147654456358.4	6.66	10	RF	3.3
P52	147724166519.3	0.07	10	RF	3.0
P50	147793022842.6	0.03	10	RF	3.1
P48	147861022080.7	0.03	10	RF	3.0
P46	147928161407.1	0.03	10	RF	3.1
P44	147994438380.1	0.03	10	Opt.	3.3

P42	148059850796.9	0.03	10	Opt.	3.0
P40	148124396819.3	0.03	10	Opt.	2.9
P38	148188074787.2	0.03	10	Opt.	2.9
P36	148250883255.1	0.03	9	Opt.	2.8
P34	148312820947.2	0.03	10	Opt.	2.9
P32	148373886735.5	0.03	10	Opt.	2.9
P30	148434079613.5	0.03	10	Opt.	2.9
P28	148493398682.7	0.03	10	Opt.	3.9
P26	148551843131.1	0.03	10	Opt.	2.9
P24	148609412204.0	0.03	10	Opt.	3.0
P22	148666105210.8	0.02	13	RF	3.1
P20	148721921498.3	0.02	10	RF	3.0
P18	148776860436.3	0.02	10	RF	3.0
P16	148830921417.8	0.02	10	RF	3.0
P14	148884103839.8	0.02	10	RF	3.2
P12	148936407097.7	0.02	3	RF	3.1
P10	148987830579.6	0.02	20	RF	3.6
P8	149038373657.5	0.03	14	Opt.	2.9
P6	149088035683.0	0.03	10	Opt.	2.9
P4	149136815987.3	0.03	7	Opt.	2.9
P2	149184713867.3	0.03	10	Opt.	3.0
R0	149254904543.6	0.03	10	Opt.	3.1
R2	149300593110.5	0.03	8	Opt.	2.9
R4	149345396570.0	0.03	10	Opt.	2.9
R6	149389314083.5	0.03	10	Opt.	2.9
R8	149432344784.5	0.02	20	RF	3.1
R10	149474487792.4	0.02	5	RF	3.1
R12	149515742194.7	0.02	10	RF	3.0
R14	149556107069.8	0.01	16	RF	3.2
R16	149595581482.8	0.01	9	RF	3.1
R18	149634164511.2	0.01	6	RF	3.0
R20	149671855220.4	0.01	10	RF	3.1
R22	149708652707.4	0.01	5	RF	2.9
R24	149744556091.7	0.01	9	RF	3.1
R26	149779564532.6	0.01	9	RF	3.2
R28	149813677243.6	0.01	10	RF	3.1
R30	149846893508.5	0.01	10	RF	3.1
R32	149879212692.8	0.01	10	RF	3.0
R34	149910634270.4	0.01	10	RF	3.0
R36	149941157834.1	0.01	9	RF	3.3
R38	149970783128.6	0.01	10	RF	3.1
R40	149999510067.7	0.01	9	RF	3.2
R42	150027338777.9	0.01	10	RF	3.2
R44	150054269570.1	0.01	9	RF	3.2
R46	150080303113.5	0.01	10	RF	3.3
R48	150105440317.6	0.01	10	RF	3.1
R50	150129682483.6	0.01	9	RF	3.2

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Table 2. *Same as* ***Table 1*** *for the 20012-00001 band of* $^{12}CO_2$.

B. Error budget

The different sources of uncertainties on the zero-pressure line frequencies reported in **Table 1** and **Table 2** are discussed below and summarized in **Table 3**.

Table 3. *Uncertainty budget of the low pressure transition frequencies reported in* ***Table 1*** *for the 20013-00001 band and in* ***Table 2*** *for the 20012-00001 band. The Freq. shift column corresponds to the correction applied to the measured frequencies.*

Source of uncertainty	Freq. shift (kHz)	Uncertainty (kHz)
Statistics		<2.0[a]
RF comb lock		0.73
Optical comb lock		<0.001
1st order Doppler shift		0.6
2nd order Doppler shift	0.09	<0.001
AC and DC Stark shift		<0.01
Power shift		2
Pressure shift		<1[b]
RD treatment		2
Total	**0.09**	**<4[b]**

Notes:
[a] *For all the transitions with J≤70 for the 20012-00001 band and J≤62 for the 20013-00001 band.*
[b] *For 102 over 107 transitions.*

According to Eq. (3), the frequency of the laser light injected in the cavity only depends on f_{rep}, f_{CEO}, f_{synth} and f_{AOM}. All these frequencies are referenced to a 10 MHz Rb frequency standard (Model PRS 10 from SRS) which is phase-locked to a GPS timing receiver leading to a (short-term and long-term) stability $<5\times10^{-12}$. This leads to negligible uncertainties on the four frequencies but as f_{rep} has to be multiplied by the tooth number (between ~581 200 and 587 700 in our studied range) when the comb is *RF* locked, it leads to uncertainties between 726 and 734 Hz. Note that for the *optical* lock the reference frequency is known with an accuracy at the 10^{-16} level, reducing drastically the uncertainty on the corrected side-band frequency. To check the impact of the *RF* and *optical* locks, we recorded 36 spectra of the P(12) transition in the 20012-00001 band with the comb *optically*-locked followed by 46 spectra with the comb *RF*-locked. We observe a decrease of 760 Hz of the mean frequency value in the *RF*-lock case compared to the *Optical*-lock case (with standard error of the mean of 138 and 130 Hz, respectively). This difference is close to the estimated uncertainty of the *RF*-lock. Additionally, the QF of the Lamb dip is improved with the optical lock from 175 to 253 in average.

The possible impact of the pressure shift on the Lamp dip center values has to be considered as it might affect the frequency at zero-pressure. For this purpose, we measured several Lamb dip spectra for the weak P(60) transition in the 20012-00001 band at pressure values of about 7, 13, 20 and ~30

Pa (Note that most of our measurements rely on spectra recorded at much lower pressure, below 1 Pa – see **Table 1** and **Table 2**). The pressure dependence of the Lamb dip centers averaged over all the spectra at a given pressure are plotted on **Fig. 4**. As expected from Fig 2 (case *a*) of Alekseev *et al.*[46] and from Fig. 2 of Bagaev *et al.*[47] (or identically Fig. 4.35 of Letokhov[48]), a non-linear dependence of the pressure-shift with the pressure is observed. This is due to the transition from the low pressure regime towards the usual high pressure collisional regime. As a result, the pressure-shift is observed to evolve from a value of ~-0.23 kHz/Pa (or -7.8×10^{-4} cm^{-1} atm^{-1}) at very low pressure to an high pressure value which has a 10 times larger amplitude (-2.24 kHz/Pa or -7.57×10^{-3} cm^{-1}/atm) according to HITRAN2020[49]. This variation is similar to that reported in Tan *et al.*[14] for the P(10) transition of the 30012-00001 band of $^{12}CO_2$: a pressure shift of -0.35±0.08 kHz/Pa was measured below 4 Pa, *i.e.* a four times smaller amplitude than the -1.7 kHz/Pa pressure-shift coefficient recommended in the HITRAN database. The uncertainty due to the pressure shift was estimated by fitting a second order polynomial function to the data points of **Fig. 4**. Thanks to the very low pressures adopted for most of the Lamb dip measurements (**Table 1** and **Table 2**), the pressure-shift has a negligible contribution (< 1 kHz) for most of the transitions. Note that if the usual pressure-shift values are used to get zero-pressure frequencies from measurements in the low pressure *regime*[8,12], errors could be introduced.

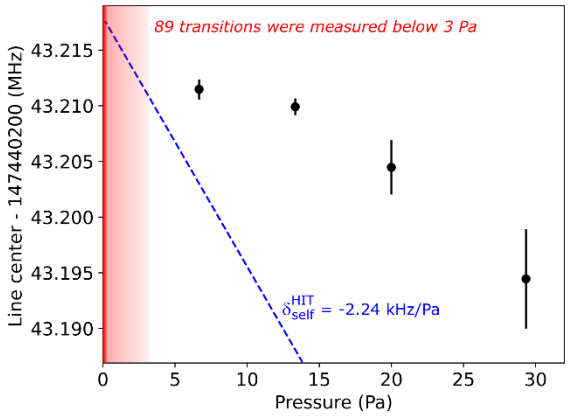

Fig. 4. *Pressure dependence of the Lamb dip center for the P(60) transition of the 20012-00001 band of $^{12}CO_2$. The dashed blue line represents the self-pressure shift coefficient reported in HITRAN2020 for the same transition.*

Another source of uncertainty in our experimental set-up could be due to the Doppler frequency shift, induced by the moving speed of the output mirror mounted on the piezo-actuator and accumulated during the recorded light decays. To quantify this possible bias we have slightly modified the acquisition software and the set-up to distinguish between the RD events obtained for the increasing part of the triangular voltage function applied to the piezo actuator (RD_i) and those

obtained for the decreasing part (RD_d).). As shown on **Fig. 5**, a shift between the Lamb dips retrieved from RD_i and RD_d is clearly visible. For the triangular function parameters applied during all the measurements, the observed shift is typically equal to 80 kHz. A bias could occur if the number of RD_i and RD_d differs. From several Lamb dip spectra, differences of a few percent can be observed between the number of RD_i and RD_d. This leads to a small bias between the "true" frequency corresponding to the mean of the two Lamb dip frequencies and the one retrieved when all RDs are considered. From these measurements, an estimated uncertainty of 0.6 kHz due to this 1st order Doppler shift effect is adopted in the budget error.

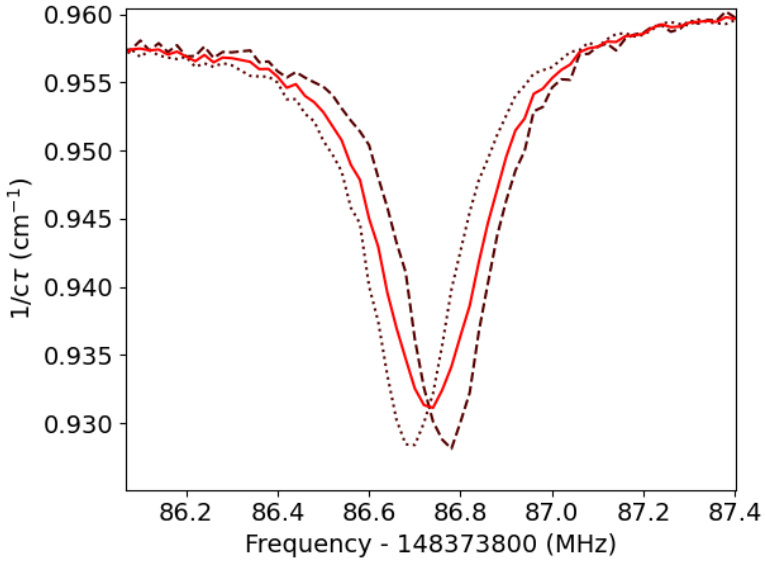

Fig. 5. *Example of Lamb dips for the P(32) transition of the 20012-00001 band. The Lamb dips are obtained from the RDs corresponding to the increasing (dashed line) and decreasing (dotted line) part of the triangular voltage function applied to the piezo actuator on which the output mirror is mounted. Note the shift of 77 kHz between the two Lamb dips due to the 1st order Doppler effect. The red solid line corresponds to the Lamb dip retrieved from all the RD events.*

Measured absolute frequencies have to be corrected from the 2nd order Doppler shift by $\nu_0 = \nu_{meas} + \frac{\nu_0}{c^2}\frac{k_B T}{m}$ [36] with c the speed of light in vacuum, k_B the Boltzmann constant, T the gas temperature in K and m the molecular mass of $^{12}C^{16}O_2$ mass. The correction that we applied to the measured frequencies is between 90.5 and 93.5 Hz depending on the transition with an uncertainty of ~15 mHz due to the gas temperature uncertainty.

The AC Stark shift due to the intracavity optical field, as well as the DC Stark shift which could be due to the static charge buildup on the cavity mirrors, have to be considered[12,43]. Based on the isotropic, $\tilde{\alpha}$, and anisotropic, $\Delta\tilde{\alpha}$, polarizabilities of the CO_2 molecule in its ground state and excited vibrational states[50], we obtain the DC Stark shift from Eq. 1 of Cai *et al.*[51] and the AC Stark shift from

$\delta\nu_{AC\ Stark} = -\frac{1}{4}\delta\tilde{\alpha}E^2$ [52]. The calculated impact on the measured frequencies is at the Hz level (taking a static field strength of 30 kV/m as in Reed *et al.*[12] and an intracavity optical field strength of 19.6 kV/m), so completely negligible.

In addition, we investigated experimentally the potential shift due to intra-cavity power by recording series of Lamb dip spectra for the P(40) transition of the 20012-00001 band with four levels of RD threshold corresponding to different intra-cavity power at the RD starting point (between 0.15 and 0.45 W). A maximum variation of ~2 kHz is observed between the four data points. This value is consistent with what is obtained by adopting different thresholds in the analysis of the RDs. An uncertainty of 2 kHz due to the power shift is thus integrated in the budget error for all the transitions.

As a test of our modeling of the RD signal with a standard exponential function, we considered a treatment using a non-linear exponential function in order to take into account the fact that, in the saturation regime, the absorption coefficient depends on the light intensity in the form[37]:

$$\alpha(I) = \alpha_{cav} + \alpha_{gas}\frac{1}{\sqrt{1+I/I_S^*}} \quad (4)$$

where α_{cav} is the empty-cavity loss, α_{gas} is the unsaturated molecular absorption and I_S^* is the saturation intensity. The non-linear exponential function was calculated in a recursive manner and led to residuals of the RD fit at the noise level. Due to correlations, the obtained parameters were very noisy if floated all together. Fixing α_{cav} which can reasonably be expected to be constant over the range of a given spectrum, has led to frequency shifts on the order of 2 kHz when fitting the obtained I_S^* as compared to the frequency values reported here using a purely exponential fit. The origin of these shifts needs further investigations. An additional uncertainty of 2 kHz was thus added for all the transitions to take into account the impact of the ring-down treatment.

4. Spectroscopic analysis and comparison to literature

For an isolated vibrational state, the energy values of the rotational levels can be reproduced with the standard expression:

$$E(J) = G_v + B_vJ(J+1) - D_vJ^2(J+1)^2 + H_vJ^3(J+1)^3 + L_vJ^4(J+1)^4 + M_vJ^5(J+1)^5 + N_vJ^6(J+1)^6 + O_vJ^7(J+1)^7 + \ldots \quad (5)$$

where G_v is the vibrational term and B_v…O_v are the rotational and centrifugal distortion constants. The experimental value of the energy of the upper rotational levels in the 20012 and 20013 vibrational states was obtained by adding the lower state energy values to the measured transition frequencies. The $^{12}CO_2$ ground state rotational constants determined in Wu *et al.*[10] with a very high accuracy were used to calculate the ground state energy levels. The spectroscopic constants of the 20012 and 20013 upper states were derived from a fit of the obtained upper state energy values.

(Note that each energy level has generally two experimental determinations from the *R(J-1)* and *P(J+1)* transitions). Applying Eq. (5) of Wu *et al.*[10] to the transitions measured in this work for the 20012-00001 and 20013-00001 bands and fixing the *B*", *D*", *H*" and *L*" constants to the values reported in the Table 2 of Wu *et al.*[10], we are able to reproduce our experimental ground combination differences at the kHz level (mean difference of 1.0 kHz; 1σ-standard deviation of 1.2 kHz), confirming the work of Wu *et al.*[10] up to *J*= 63. Energy levels up to *J*≤ 63 were thus included in our fit. The fitted spectroscopic constants listed in **Table 4** allow reproducing the energy levels of the 20012 and 20013 states with a (meas.- calc.) standard deviation of 1.1 kHz and 0.8 kHz, respectively.

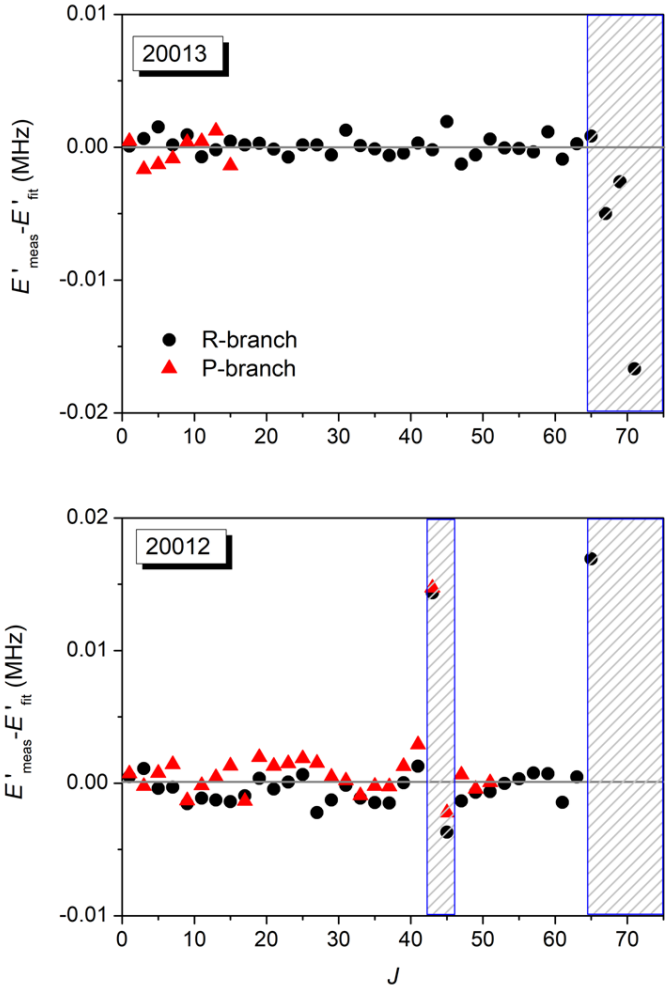

***Fig. 6**. Difference between the measured rotational energy levels, E'_{meas} and the values fitted using Eq. (5), E'_{fit}, for the 20013 and 20012 vibrational states (upper and lower panel, respectively). Red triangles and black dots correspond to energy levels obtained from P- and R-transitions, respectively. The dashed zones correspond to J values excluded from the fit.*

Table 4. *Ro-vibrational constants (in MHz) of the 20012 and 20013 vibrational states of $^{12}CO_2$. The fit was limited to J ≤ 63 excluding the perturbed J= 43 and 45 energy levels of the 20012 state (see text). N_{fit} and N_{meas} represent the number of levels included in the fit and measured, respectively.*

Parameter (MHz)	**20012**	**20013**
G	$1.492317285961(5)\times10^{8}$	$1.455079611574(3)\times10^{8}$
B	$1.1587981508(6)\times10^{4}$	$1.1637877181(4)\times10^{4}$
D	$4.08036(2)\times10^{-3}$	$5.45134(1)\times10^{-3}$
H	$2.187(3)\times10^{-8}$	$1.818(1)\times10^{-8}$
L	$1.4(2)\times10^{-13}$	$-3.2(5)\times10^{-14}$
M	$1.38(9)\times10^{-16}$	$-2.5(1)\times10^{-17}$
N	$-2.1(2)\times10^{-20}$	$9.8(10)\times10^{-22}$
O	$3.1(1)\times10^{-24}$	
N_{fit}/N_{meas}	54/63	40/43
rms (Hz)	1100	808

The residuals of the fit plotted in **Fig. 6** indicate that the *J*= 43 and 45 rotational energy levels of the 20012 state (excluded from the fit) are affected by a local resonance interaction around *J*= 43. The very small energy perturbation on the order of 15 kHz at *J*= 43 is confirmed by the very close value of the residuals obtained from the P(44) and R(42) Lamb dip centers. By consideration of the theoretical calculations of the $^{12}CO_2$ spectrum by the Ames group[53] and in the Carbon Dioxide Spectroscopic Databank (CDSD)[35], the perturber state could be identified as the 04411 vibrational state. Both calculations predict that the rotational levels of the 20012 and 04411 exhibit an energy crossing with an energy separation of only 0.15 cm^{-1} at *J*= 43. The 20012 *J*= 43 energy level being larger than its 04411 counterpart, the perturbation leads to a shift to higher energy of the 20012 *J*= 43 level, in agreement with experiment. Note that the energy separation between the next *J*= 45 level is predicted to be significantly larger (0.47 cm^{-1}) and of opposite sign, in agreement with the observation of a more reduced and negative shift of the 20012 *J*= 43 level from its unperturbed position (about -3 kHz). We present in **Fig. 7,** the spectrum of the 20012-00001 and 04411-00001 bands as provided by the CDSD and Ames line lists. According to these calculations, the evidenced interaction leads to a weak intensity transfer from the 20012-00001 band to the dark 04411-00001 band around *J*= 43. Both calculations indicate that the strongest 04411-00001 lines, P(44) and R(42), have a predicted intensity of a few 10^{-28} cm/molecule which makes them detectable by high sensitivity CRDS [see *e.g.* Čermák *et al.*[54] and Karlovets *et al.*[55]]. These intensity values are six orders of magnitude smaller than the intensity of the corresponding 20012-00001 lines, illustrating the weakness of the evidenced interaction. Let us note that the level of convergence of the Ames calculations and the accuracy of the CDSD calculations are not sufficient to account for the 15 kHz (or 5×10^{-7} cm^{-1}) perturbation of the 20012 *J*= 43 level but the very faint interaction evidenced by our measurements is convincingly revealed by the intensity transfer predicted by both calculations. Although the Ames and CDSD intensities of the 04411-00001 extra lines differ by up to 50%, the

agreement of the CDSD and Ames predictions obtained with quite different theoretical approaches is remarkable (**Fig. 7**). Finally, let us mention that the 20012 and 04411 states belong to the same $P = 2V_1+V_2+3V_3 = 7$ polyad (V_1, V_2, and V_3 are the quantum numbers of the harmonic oscillators). The interaction mechanism is thus a $\Delta l_2 = 4$ intrapolyad interaction accounted for by the effective Hamiltonian model used for the CDSD (In fact, the original version of the CDSD[56] was restricted to $\Delta l_2 < 4$ bands but the $\Delta l_2 = 4$ bands were added in the updated version adopted for the HITRAN2020 line list).

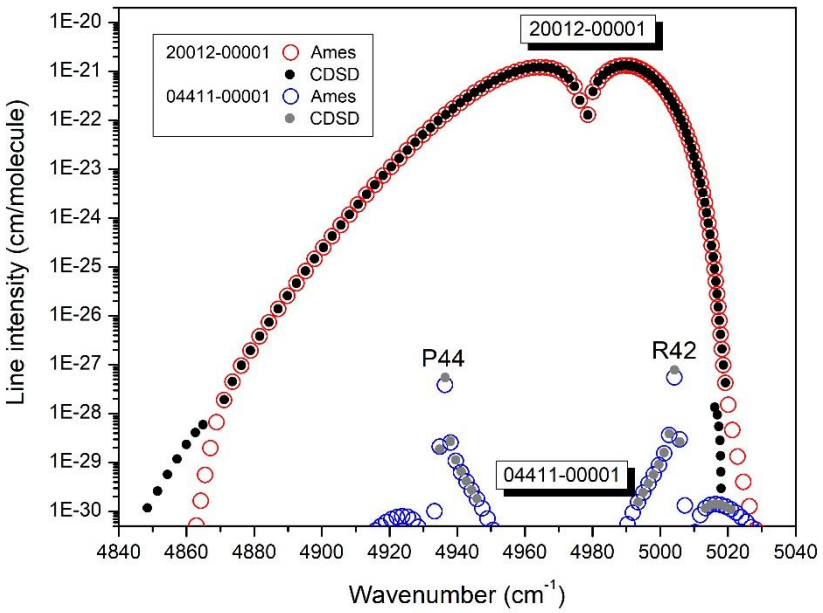

Fig. 7. *The 20012-00001 and the 04411-00001 bands of $^{12}CO_2$ as provided by the CDSD[35] and Ames[53] databases. The 04411-00001 lines are induced by an intensity transfer from the 20012-00001 band for upper J values around 43.*

From a detailed consideration of the 20012-00001 residuals presented in **Fig. 6**, it appears that residuals associated to *P(J+1)* transitions are in general larger than those of the *R(J-1)* transitions reaching the same *J* upper level. With an average difference of about 1 kHz and a similar value for the standard deviation, the effect is small. Nevertheless, it seems to reveal some small deviations between the *R(J-1)-P(J+1)* ground state combination differences (GSCD) obtained from the measured frequencies and those calculated using the ground state spectroscopic constants adopted from Wu *et al.*[10]. Consequently, together with literature data, the present measurements might be valuable to slightly refine the ground state spectroscopic constants of $^{12}CO_2$.

As main output of the present study, we provide as Supplementary Material a recommended list of accurate $^{12}CO_2$ transition frequencies for the 20012-00001 and 20013-00001 bands. It was obtained as follows.

(i) for upper state *J* values smaller than 63 (e.g. P(64)-R(62) transitions), the recommended frequencies are values calculated using the spectroscopic constants of **Table 4**, except for the P(44), P(46), R(42) and R(44) perturbed transitions of the 200012-00001 band for which experimental values were kept.

(ii) for *J* values larger than 63, experimental values are available only for R(64)-R(68) of the 200012-00001 band and P(64)-P(74) of the 200012-00001 band. The experimental values were kept and complemented with their GSCD counterpart allowing extending the set of accurate frequencies beyond the observations. Finally, the recommended list, including 145 accurate transition frequencies is obtained while 107 transition frequencies were measured. This set of secondary reference standards with kHz-accuracy samples regularly the large 4788-5015 cm^{-1} interval (from 1994 to 2089 nm).

The uncertainty attached to the recommended transition frequencies derived from the fitted spectroscopic constants was obtained as the square root of the quadratic sum of the *rms* of the fit, indicated in **Table 4** for the statistical error, and of the other sources of uncertainties reported in **Table 3**.

The recommended frequencies can be used for comparison with literature data (**Fig. 8**). We will consider the position values included in CDSD[35] as reproduced in the HITRAN2020 database[49] and measurements by Fourier transform spectroscopy (FTS) by Benner *et al.*[16] and Toth *et al.*[21], hereafter called Benner2016 and Toth2008, respectively. For both FTS datasets, the transition frequencies are values calculated from spectroscopic constants fitted on the corresponding FTS measurements.

Overall, the deviations range between -4 and 7 MHz with a strong *m* dependence for Toth2008 (*m* is defined as *m= -J* and *m= J+1* for *P* and *R*-branch transitions, respectively). In his publication, Toth estimated the frequency uncertainties to 1.5 MHz and 15 MHz for the strong lines and the weak high *J* lines of strong bands, respectively. This is mostly consistent with the observations if we consider as strong lines those with $|m| < 35$.

A quite constant difference of about 6 MHz is observed for the FTS data of Benner2016, up to *J* values of about 60. Benner *et al.* reported their positions of the 20013-00001 band with uncertainties $<1\times10^{-6}$ cm^{-1} (30 kHz) for $0\leq J \leq 40$, $<1\times10^{-5}$ cm^{-1} for $40< J \leq 60$ and $<1\times10^{-4}$ cm^{-1} for $60< J \leq 80$. These values correspond to the statistical error obtained from the fit of the theoretical quantum mechanical formulae and does not include systematic errors. The evidenced 6 MHz shift (about 2×10^{-4} cm^{-1}) thus measures the error of the frequency axis calibration of the used FTS spectra.

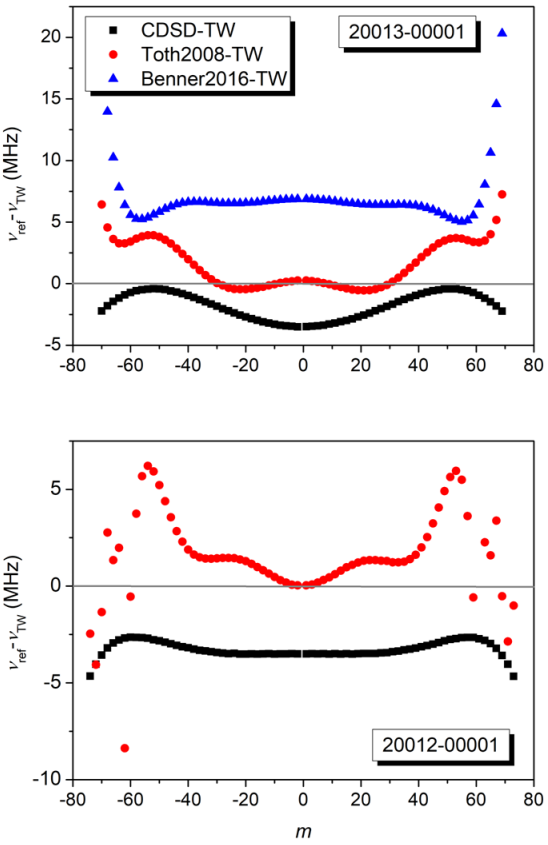

Fig. 8. *Comparison between the transition frequencies reported in HITRAN2020[49], derived from CDSD, Toth2008[21] and Benner2016[16] with values obtained in this work (TW) versus m for the 20012-00001 and 20013-00001 bands. Note the different scale of the y-axis.*

The CDSD positions (adopted in HITRAN2020) are systematically lower than our values for both bands. The CDSD deviations show weak *m* dependence with an amplitude limited to 3.5 MHz even for high *J* values, which is largely below the 300 MHz uncertainty attached to the considered positions in the HITRAN2020 database.

Finally, when comparing the four frequency values reported in Mondelain *et al.*[32] to this work, differences between 6 to 150 kHz are found, in agreement with the 90 kHz 1σ-uncertainty of this reference.

5. Conclusion

Frequencies of 107 transitions have been determined by saturation spectroscopy for the two strongest bands of $^{12}CO_2$ in the 2 µm region which are of particular importance for remote sensing retrievals. Compared to the most accurate literature data, the achieved kHz-accuracy represents a gain of three orders of magnitude. These measurements, which are the first ones of the considered bands referenced to absolute frequency reference standard, were performed by recording series of Lamb dip spectra with a comb-referenced cavity ring down spectrometer and applying the feed-

forward technique *via* an electro-optic modulator to transfer the coherence of an optical comb tooth to an extended cavity laser source. The amplitude of the self-pressure shift of the Lamb-dip was evaluated for the P(60) transition of the 20012-00001 band and found significantly smaller than its usual value at higher pressure. The sub-Pa pressure values adopted for the recordings made the Lamb dip pressure shifts totally negligible in our experimental conditions.

The fitted values of the spectroscopic constants of the 20012 and 20013 vibrational states allow reproducing their rotational energy levels (for $J \leq 63$) with an *rms* deviation of 1.1 and 0.8 kHz, respectively, the ground state spectroscopic constants being constrained to the values reported by Wu *et al*.[10]. A 15 kHz shift of the J= 43 level of the 20012 state from its unperturbed energy value reveals a very faint interaction with a dark state. On the basis of Ames[53] and CDSD[35] theoretical calculations of the $^{12}CO_2$ absorption spectrum, the perturber could be identified as the 04411 dark state. Interestingly, the measured 15 kHz energy shift is beyond the accuracy of both calculations but the existence of the coupling between the 20012 and 04411 states is theoretically predicted and shows up as an intensity transfer to the 04411-00001 band around the J= 43 value of the energy crossing between the 20012 and 04411 states. Note that the predicted intensity of the 04411-00001 extra lines are more than six orders of magnitude smaller than those of the 20012-00001.

Combining frequencies calculated from the determined spectroscopic constants, measurements and GSCD relations, a recommended list of 145 transition frequencies spanning the large 1.99-2.09 µm interval (4788-5015 cm^{-1}) is provided. Most of these frequencies are given with a combined standard uncertainty on the order of 4 kHz that we believe to be conservative. They will be valuable as secondary reference standards for a number of atmospheric remote sensing.

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