

Experimental investigation of high-pressure phase transitions in AlOOH and FeOOH

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Hydrogen is transported into deep Earth's mantle regions as a form of hydrous minerals via subduction of oceanic plates. Recently discovered CaCl_2 -type hydroxides such as (Mg,Si)OOH phase H, delta-AlOOH, and their solid solutions were reported to have large P-T stability fields that encompass conditions representative of the lower mantle, implying the possibility that surface water may be transported as far as the core-mantle boundary. However, although Epsilon-FeOOH has CaCl_2 -type structure as well, the solid solution of FeOOH component in CaCl_2 -type structure has not been studied. Since FeOOH was recently reported to decompose under the lower-mantle conditions to form FeO_2 releasing H_2 , FeOOH could be a key component that strongly affect the stability of CaCl_2 -type hydroxide. Here, we report the results of in-situ X-ray diffraction and theoretical studies on AlOOH and FeOOH using a laser-heated diamond anvil cell technique at up to ~200 GPa. In contrast to the previous work suggesting the dehydration of FeOOH in the middle of the lower mantle, we report the formation of a pyrite-type FeOOH that is significantly denser than the surrounding mantle and stable to conditions representative of its base. Furthermore, delta-AlOOH and CaCl_2 -type (Al,Fe)OOH also transform to a pyrite-type structure at higher pressures. Based on these experimental and theoretical results, the stability of hydrous phase in the lower mantle and deep interiors of icy planets will be discussed.

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