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Variability of mesospheric water vapor above Bern in relation to the 27-day solar rotation cycle

Martin Lainer, Klemens Hocke and Niklaus Kämpfer
Institute of Applied Physics
University of Bern

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Motivation

- Sun rotation triggers Lyman-α (121.56 nm) oscillations with a mean synodical period of 27.28 days
- Linking mechanisms (e.g. photolysis) between variability of mesospheric water and solar radiation are of interest
- Signatures of 27-day solar variability were found in tropical middle atmospheric OH, H_2O (Shapiro et al., 2012, ACP) and zonally averaged CO (Ruzmaikin et al., 2014, ASR)
- Extra-tropical investigations including observations of middle atmospheric water vapor found less attention, motivating our study

Mid-latitudes: 27-day solar variability ⇨ Effects on mesospheric water?

MIAWARA: Middle Atmospheric Water Vapor Radiometer

Located near Bern, Switzerland (46.88°N / 7.46°E)

Operational since 2002

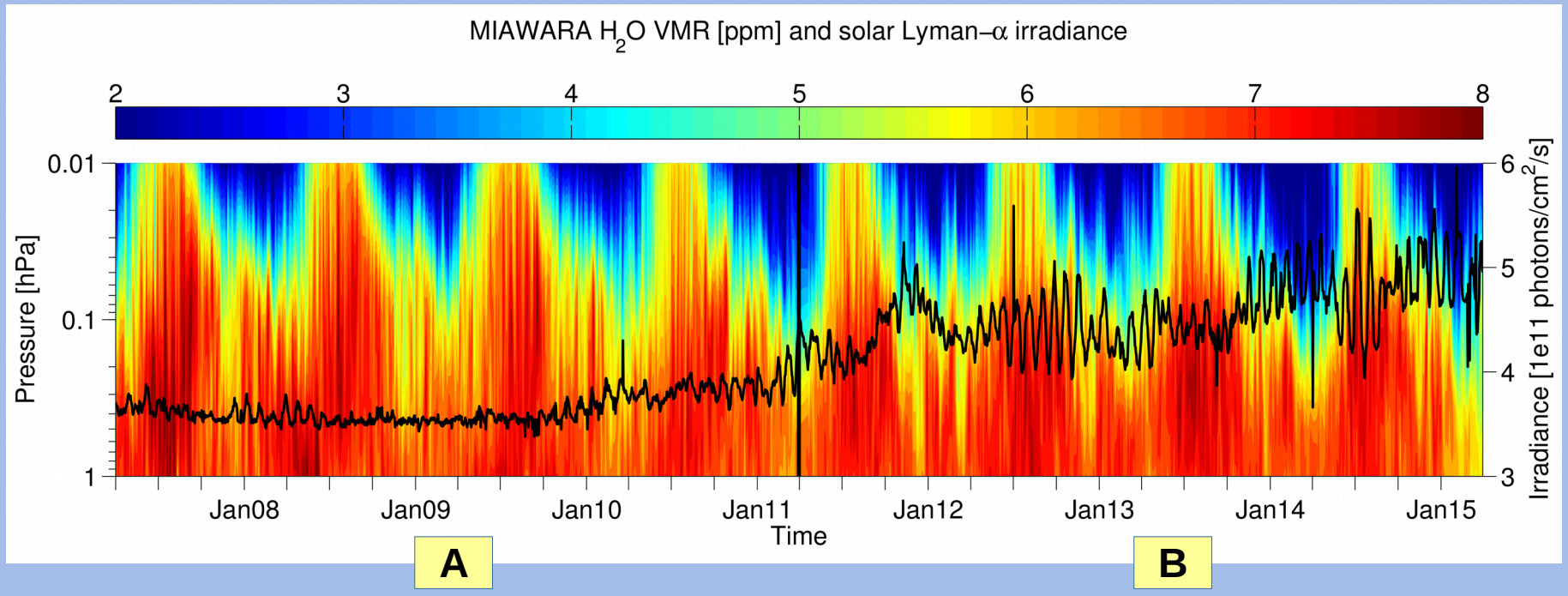
Operating during day and night at all weather conditions except precipitation (rain, snow)

Measures the pressure broadened rotational transition line of H_2O at 22.235 GHz

Vertical H_2O profile retrieval by the Optimal Estimation Method (OEM)

Lainer et al. (2016)

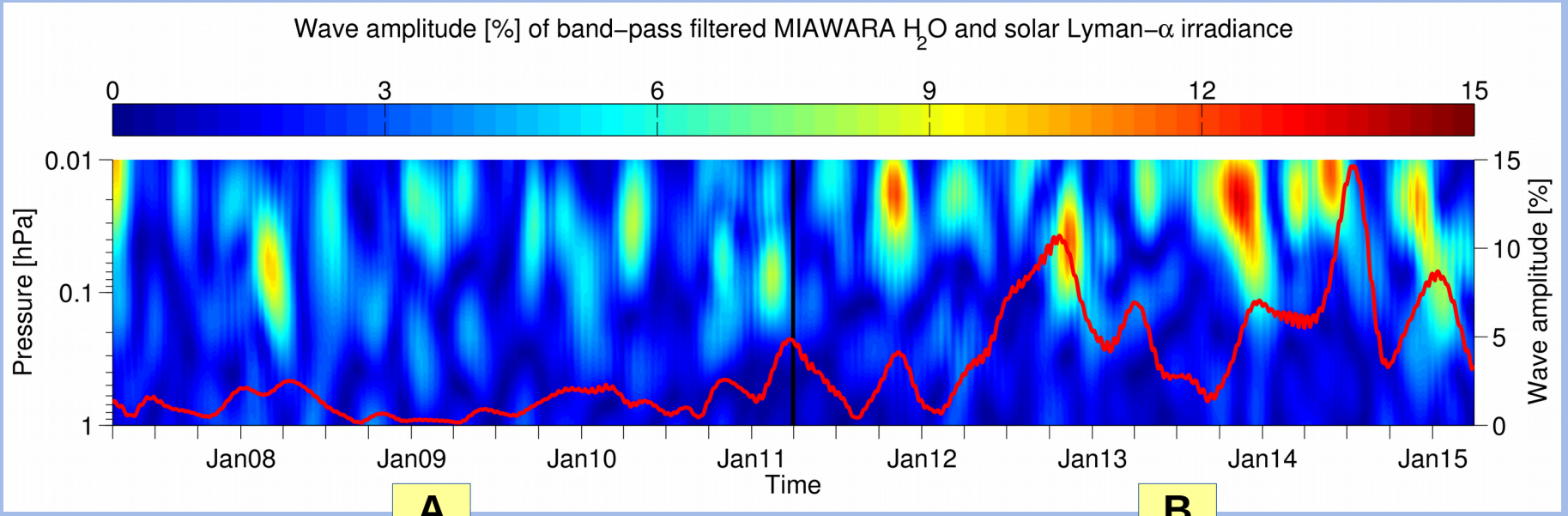
MIAWARA H_2O time series & solar Lyman-α composite



- MIAWARA H_2O time series (April 2007 until March 2015) between 50 and 80 km
- Composite Lyman-α time series from LISIRD (LASP Interactive Solar Irradiance Data Center)

Lainer et al. (2016)

27-day relative wave amplitudes



- Non-recursive FIR band-pass filter with Hamming window
- Central frequency $f_p = 1/27$ d; Cut-off frequency $f_c = f_p \pm 0.1 * f_p$
- Oscillations higher or shorter than f_c are suppressed
- Filter runs forward and backward along the data time series (zero phase lag)

Lainer et al. (2016)

Mean H_2O amplitude spectra (Bern)

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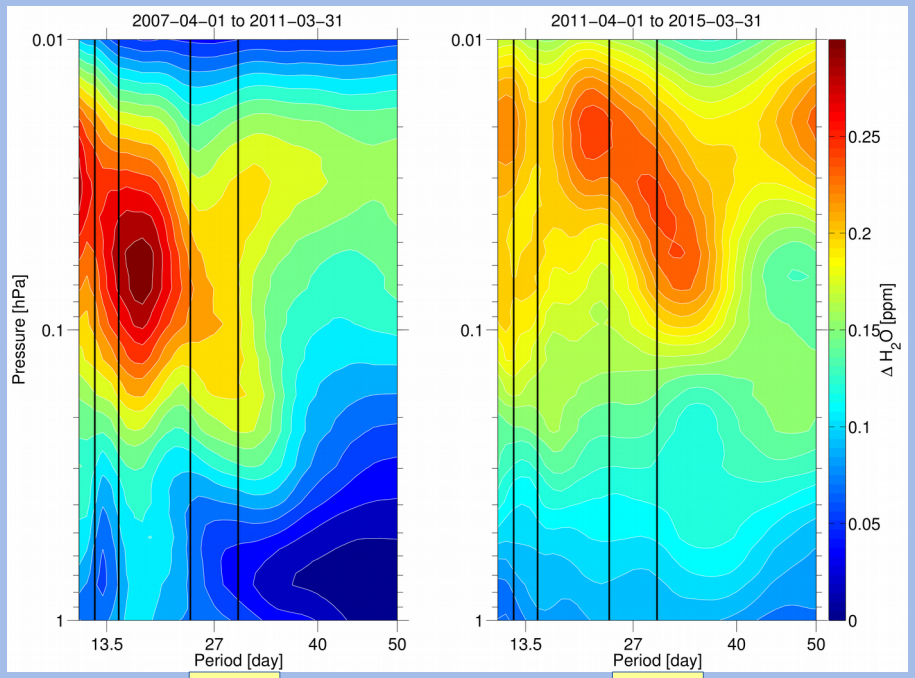
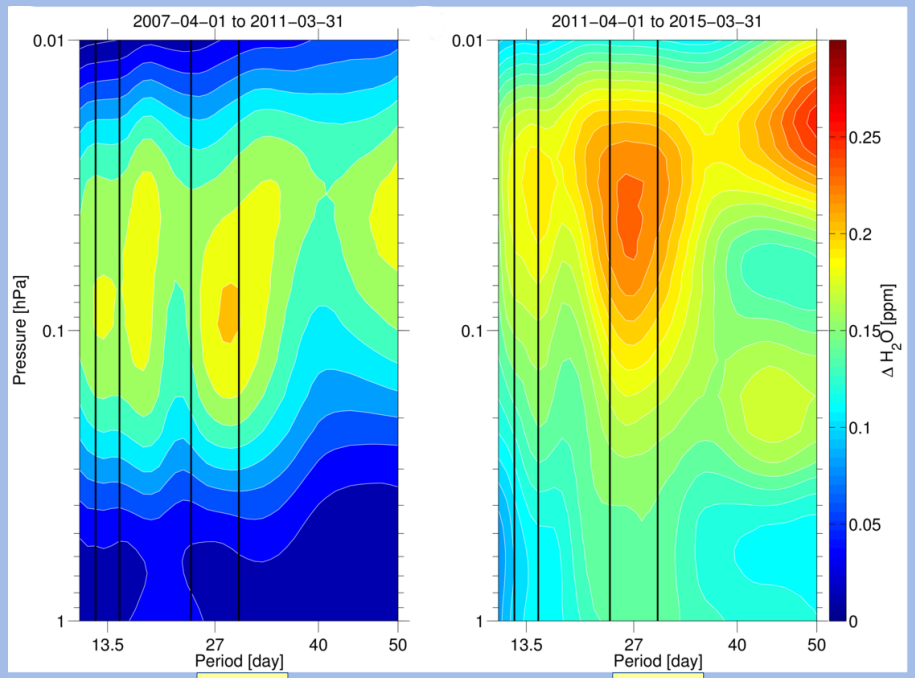
MIAWARA



A B

Aura MLS (v4.2)



A B

- Derived from band-pass filtering at frequencies between 1/10 d and 1/50 d
- Differences presumable due to horizontal inhomogeneity (limb vs. line of sight observation)

Lainer et al. (2016)

NH 27-day wave amplitude distribution at an altitude of 70 km

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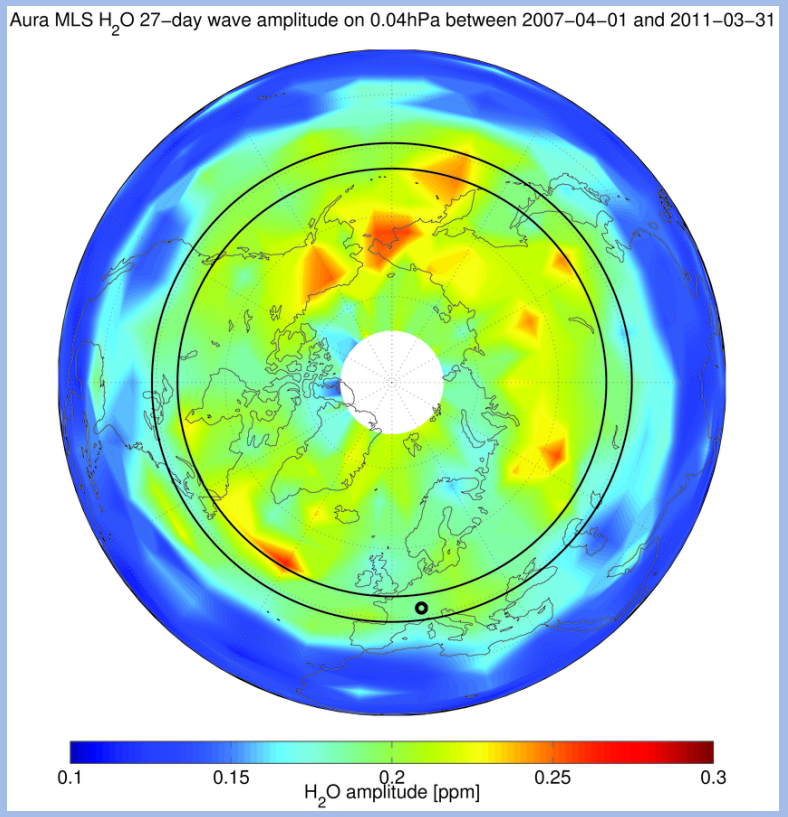
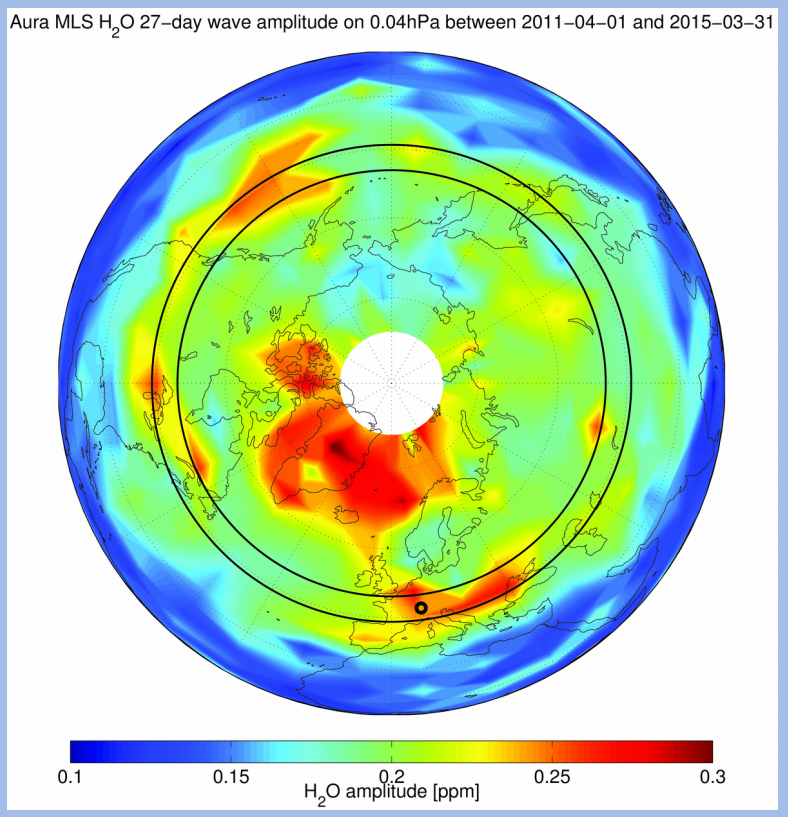
Weak Lyman-α variability



Strong Lyman-α variability



> Higher H_2O wave amplitudes during period of strong Lyman-α oscillations

Lainer et al. (2016)

Mean zonal mean H_2O amplitude spectra

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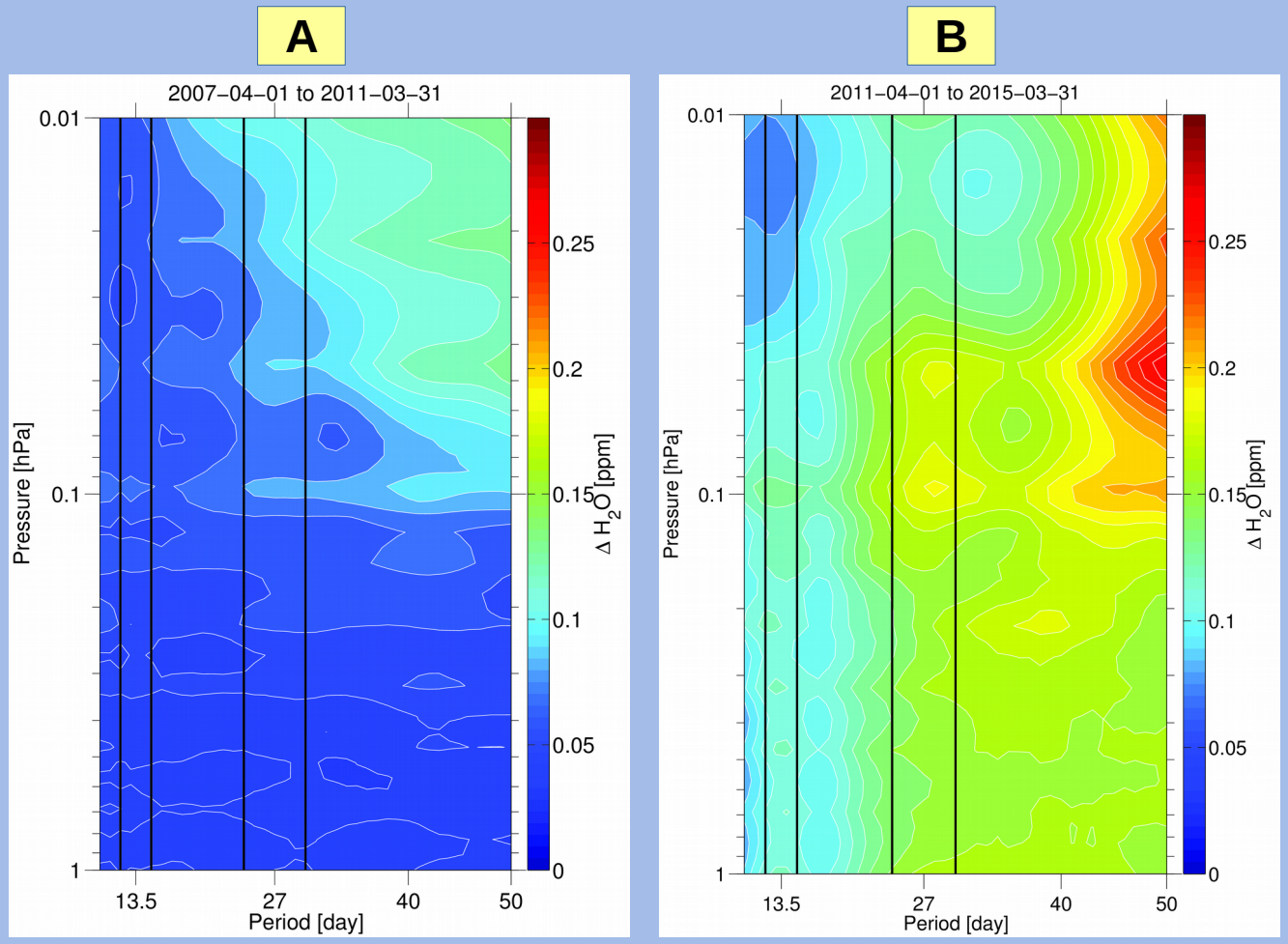
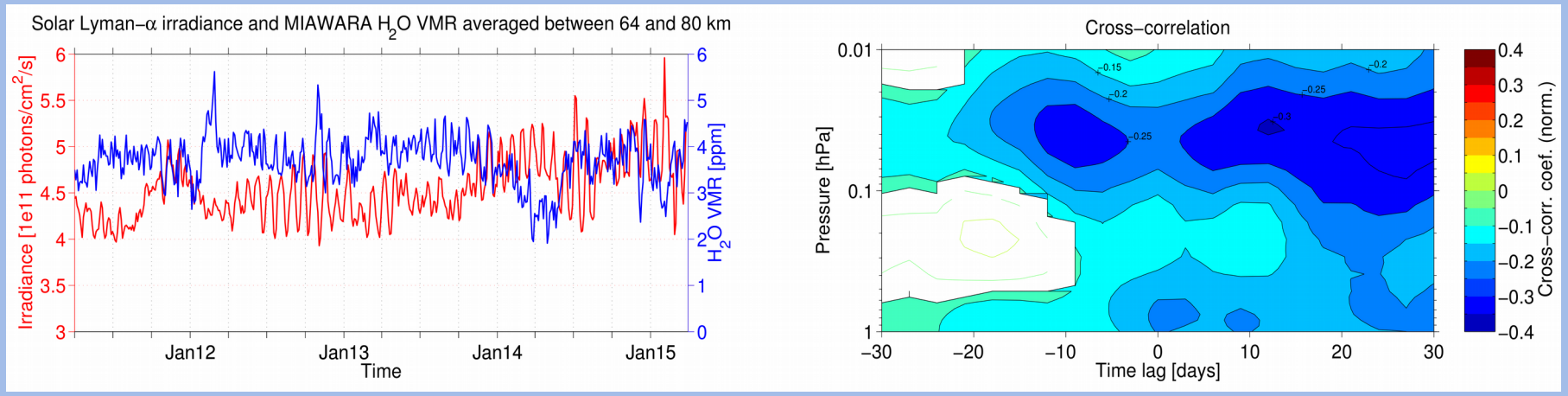


Aura MLS (v4.2) measurements within the latitude belt 44°-50°N are processed

Enhanced amplitudes in the 27-day and 13.5-day period band in time period B (in comparison to period A)

Lainer et al. (2016)

Time lagged cross-correlation between 1 and 0.01 hPa



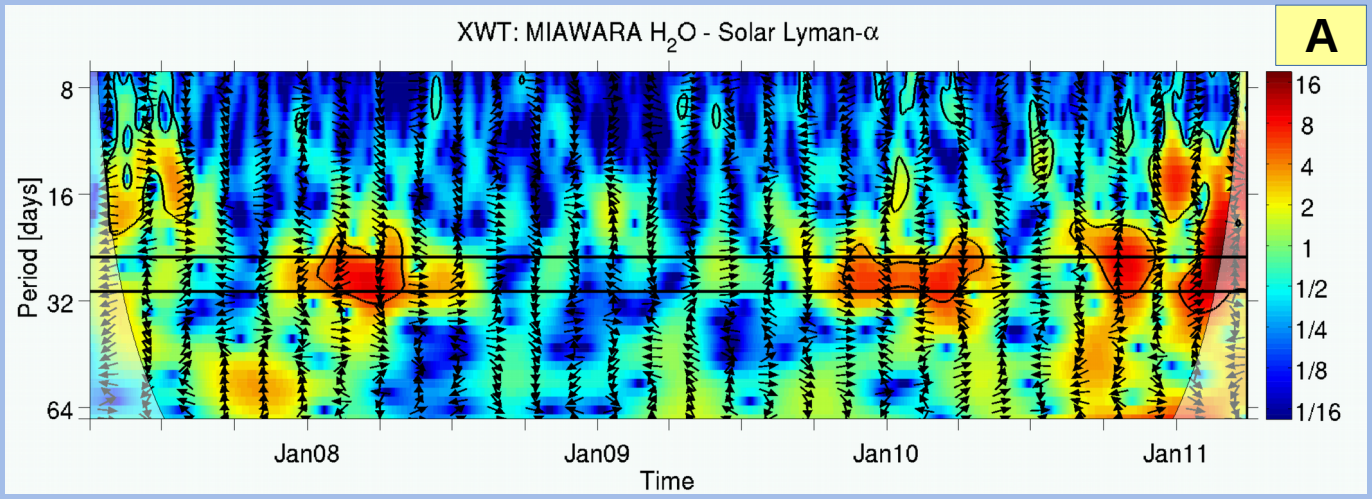
Negative cross-correlations
up to -0.3 (upper mesosphere)
Confidence ≥ 99 % (filled contours)

Phase lag: 6-10 days
Solar forcing leads
the H_2O response

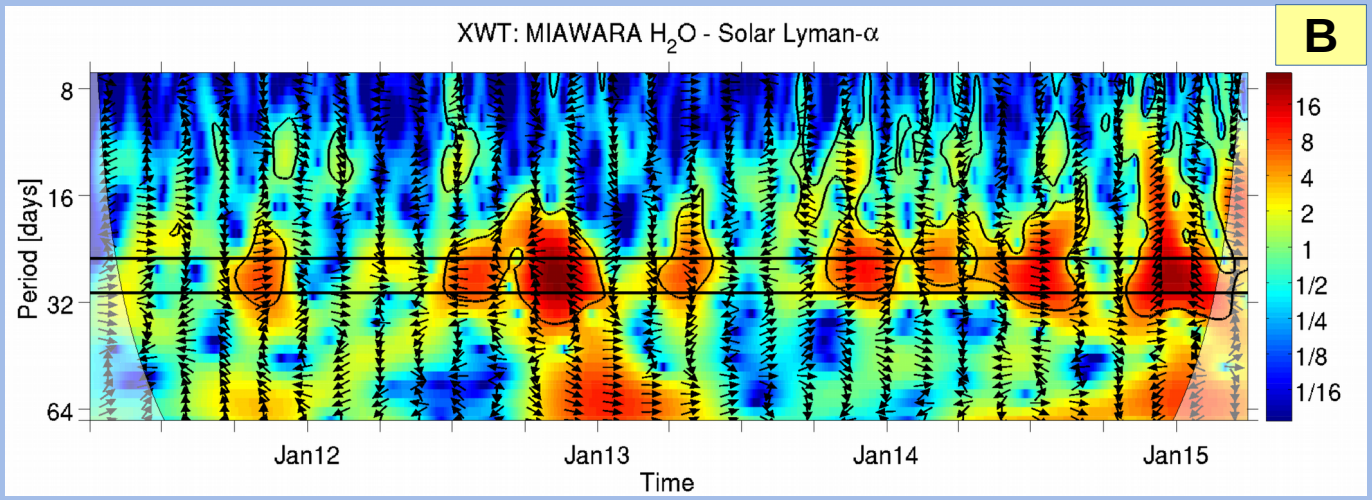
Lainer et al. (2016)

Cross-Wavelet Transform (XWT)

MIAWARA H_2O time series averaged between 64 and 80 km



Significant (two sigma level) high common wavelet power in the 27-day band when Lyman-α oscillations intensify

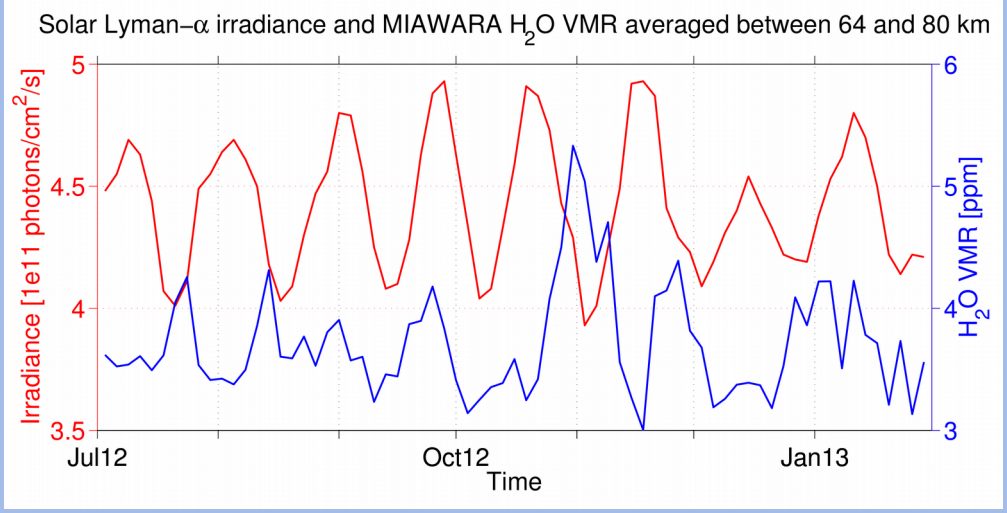


Variable phase relationship

Lainer et al. (2016)

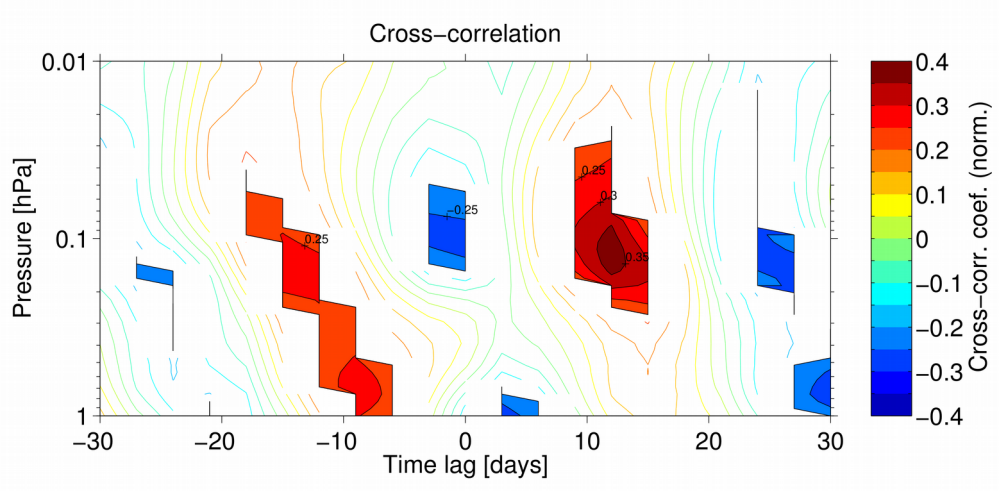
Solar superstorm 2012

Cross-correlation between MIAWARA H_2O and solar Lyman-α



Time series of Lyman-α and MIAWARA H_2O (deseasonalized, averaged between 64 and 80 km

Anti-correlation



Time lagged cross-correlation between Lyman-α and MIAWARA H_2O for pressure levels between 1 and 0.01 hPa

Confidence ≥ 95 % (filled contours)

Lainer et al. (2016)

Conclusions

- Enhanced H_2O wave activity above 0.1hPa in the 27-day band is present during the more active time of solar cycle 24 (period B from 2011-04-01 to 2015-03-31), not only locally for Bern but also at other places in the 44°-50°N latitude belt
- Cross-correlation coef. of about -0.3 between solar Lyman-α and MIAWARA H_2O (phase lag of 6 to 10 days)
- Cross-Wavelet analysis: Significant (two sigma level) high common wavelet power in the 27-day band with variable phase lock behavior
- The competition between advective transport and photo-dissociation loss of mesospheric H_2O may explain the sometimes variable phase relationship between mesospheric H_2O and solar Lyman-α oscillations

Solar variability on the 27-day periodicity scale causes observable photochemical and dynamical processes in the mid-latitude mesosphere

The End

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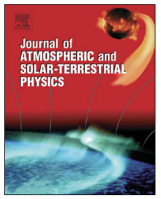

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Martin Lainer [a,*], Klemens Hocke [a,b], Niklaus Kämpfer [a,b]

[a] Institute of Applied Physics, University of Bern, Bern, Switzerland
[b] Oeschger Center for Climate Change Research, University of Bern, Bern, Switzerland

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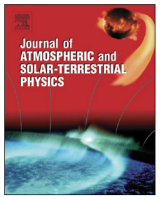

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Thank you for your attention!

Lainer et al. (2016)