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Hybrid simulation study of ion escape at Titan for different orbital positions

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Abstract

Titan, the largest moon of Saturn, forms a unique plasma interaction with the Kronian corotating plasma. Titan's dense and nitrogen rich atmosphere is the primary source of the nitrogen torus around Titan's orbit through the subsonic and super-Alfvénic interaction between the corotating plasma of the Kronian system and the exosphere and ionosphere of Titan. We have studied this magnetic interaction of Titan with a global hybrid simulation model and especially the effect of the orbital position of Titan with four different Saturn local time. The hybrid simulation includes the various drifts important in Titan's plasma environment. Under the assumption of uniform magnetospheric properties along Titan's orbit, differences were found in the tail structure while the net emission rates varied only little. For all four studied orbital positions the magnetic field maximum was located on the anti-Saturn side of Titan. The iono- and magnetotails were co-aligned and tilted towards Saturn up to 45°.

Keywords

Saturn's magnetosphere; Titan; Induced magnetospheres; Plasma–ionosphere interaction; Nitrogen torus of Titan; Hybrid simulation

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