Seminar

Institute for Plasma Research

Title : Production and study of a plasma confined in a dipole magnetic field and Studies on plasma diffusion and transport using probe and optical diagnostics

Speaker: Dr. Anuj Ram Baitha
Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur

Date : 23rd June 2021 (Wednesday)

Time : 11.00 AM

Venue : Online - Join the talk: https://meet.ipr.res.in/CPP-PDFtalkbyDr.AnujRamBaitha23-06-2021

Abstract :

Dipole field is one of the most fundamental magnetic field configurations in the universe. There has been a long quest to understand charged particle generation, confinement, and underlying complex processes in a plasma confined by a dipole magnetic field. Planetary magnetospheres such as those of Earth and Jupiter are burning examples of such naturally occurring systems. The rather simple magnetic field structure holds together colossal plasmas in space, and high β (ratio of plasma to magnetic pressure) plasmas can be sustained. It is of interest to investigate such a magnetic confinement scheme and the resulting plasma behaviour, in the laboratory.

In my doctoral research work, a compact table-top experiment employing microwaves to create the plasma has been developed. The system employs a single water cooled cylindrical permanent magnet having surface magnetic field ~ 0.5 T to create the dipole magnetic field. The plasma is generated by electron cyclotron resonance heating. The experiment is unique in terms of low cost, simpler technology, easier plasma accessibility and allows steady-state operation.

Visual observations of the plasma indicate alternate bright and relatively less bright regions with structural resemblance to the earth's radiation belts that trap charged particles. Measurement of plasma parameters such as electron density, electron temperature, and space potentials have been carried out using Langmuir and emissive probes. The plasma was characterized in the polar directions employing special "y-shaped" probes. Optical diagnostics comprising of a photodiode, optical fiber, and a high-resolution spectrometer were utilized for the measurement of optical emissions from the plasma. Line integrated intensities were obtained along chords from near the center to the plasma edge, from which the local plasma emissivity has been determined using Abel inversion.

Particle balance which results from an inter-relationship between generation and loss was investigated, and dependence of production, loss, and plasma retention rates as a function of wave power and discharge pressure were determined. The developed mathematical model solves the particle balance equation, considering generation through ionization and losses through diffusion and recombination, and incorporates the measured values of plasma parameters and dipole fields in space. In general, the electron temperature and the plasma potential are higher at the polar cusp regions, and decreases toward the equatorial plane, with the profiles become more spherically symmetric away from the magnet. The location

of the mid-plane density peak seems to match closely with the region where plasma β starts to level off, and the space potential starts to decrease exponentially. The plasma retention rate is highest a little downstream from the magnet (~ 3 – 7 cm), can explain the density depletion close to the surface of the magnet. An investigation of diffusion-induced transport reveals that peaked density profiles, are realized as a natural outcome of the solution of diffusion equation, thereby confirming the phenomenon of inward diffusion as observed in earlier experiments. Two independent diffusion models are developed, and the plasma density profiles are determined and compared with those obtained experimentally. Diffusion is predominantly governed by the classical ($\sim 1/B^2$) scaling law. The compact device bears promise for basic studies on dipole plasmas, studying dusty plasmas, or even for plasma processing, because of the possibility of confining energetic electrons.

The second part of the presentation covers my postdoctoral research proposal, including the scheme for measurement. I will briefly explain my planned activities and flow chart of planned work.
