

Assimilation products of thermospheric and ionospheric measurements by the NASA Ionospheric Connection Explorer

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ICON is an orbiting NASA observatory built to simultaneously observe the characteristics of the ionosphere and thermosphere in order to understand the connection between conditions in space and energy sources in the atmosphere below. Ready for launch in 2019 into a 27 degree inclination, 575 km altitude orbit, it will provide neutral wind, density and temperature products as well as in-situ and remotely-sensed ionospheric densities. These products will inform the conditions of two models that assimilate the data in different ways, and be available on the ICON website. The first is the TIEGCM, where assimilation is accomplished through modification of the winds and temperatures at the lower boundary as prescribed by observations. The second is the IDA4D model, that through a Gauss-Markov scheme modifies a background ionosphere with actual observations that include many different sources including ICON. Given the expected sampling and data uncertainties from ICON, the expected performance of these models is reported. ICON expects a launch in 2019.

Keywords: ionosphere, thermosphere, atmospheric tides

