

The Sun-Earth System: CONTENTS

AN OVERVIEW

The Stars Around Us	1
Our Dependence on the Sun	3
The Sun's Inconstancy	3
Intruders from Afar	5
What Gets By	5
Voyages of Discovery in an Age of Exploration	6
A New Appreciation	7
The Consequences	8
An Interconnected System	9

THE SUN

The Sun as a Star	13
A Voyage to the Sun	13
Perpetual Combustion	14
The Hidden Source of Solar Energy	16
Delayed Delivery	16
Radiant Energy from the Sun	17
How Constant Is and Was the Sun?	18
Metered Sunshine	19
The First Who Saw the Face of the Sun	20
The Long Watch	23
The Sun That We Can See	24
The Photosphere	24
Sunspots	26
Bright Faculae	28
Beneath the Shining Surface: The Bubble Machine	30
Lifting the Veil: The Unseen Sun	31
The Sun's Chromosphere and Corona	34
How We See the Corona and Chromosphere	38

THE SOLAR WIND & SOLAR VARIABILITY

The Solar Wind	45
Sources and Characteristics of the Solar Wind	47
Solar Variability	50
Why the Sun Varies	52
Short- and Long-Term Changes in Solar Activity	56
Solar Explosions and Eruptions	57
Explosive Solar Flares	57

Solar Prominences and Filaments	60
Coronal Mass Ejections	64

THE NEAR-EARTH ENVIRONMENT

A Protected Planet	71
The Air Above Us	72
Changes on the Way to the Top	72
The Troposphere	75
The Stratosphere	76
The Mesosphere and Thermosphere	77
The Ionized Upper Atmosphere	79
The End of the Atmosphere	81
Into the Magnetosphere	82
The Form and Function of the Magnetosphere	84
The Paths that Particles Follow	85
Captive Particles in the Magnetosphere	86
The Earth's Radiation Belts	88
The Plasmasphere	91
The Heliosphere	92
Cruising the Heliosphere	94

FLUCTUATIONS IN SOLAR RADIATION AT THE EARTH

Changes in Total Solar Irradiance	99
Variability in Different Parts of the Spectrum	102
Effects of the Sun's Rotation	104
Effects of the Earth's Orbit	105
Lost in Transit: The Fate of Solar Radiation in the Earth's Atmosphere	107

VARIATION IN THE FLOW OF PARTICLES AT THE EARTH

The Nature of Arriving Particles	111
Solar Sources	113
Particles Borne Outward in CMEs	113
Particles from Solar Flare	115
The Solar Wind Plasma	117
Characteristics of Slow Solar Wind Streams	118
High-Speed Solar Wind Streams	118
Sectors in the Sun's Extended Magnetic Field	119
Pushing and Shoving on the Way to the Earth	121
When Solar Particles Strike the Earth	122

Through the Guarded Gates	124
Magnetic Reconnection	126
Effects of Changes in the Earth's Magnetic Field	129
Cosmic Rays	131
The Fate of Cosmic Rays	132

IMPACTS OF SOLAR VARIABILITY

Solar Causes, Terrestrial Impacts, and Societal Effects	139
Impacts on Near-Earth Space	141
Magnetic Storms	143
The Aurora	146
Impacts on the Upper Atmosphere	153
Perturbing the Earth's Electric Field	155
Restructuring the Ionosphere	156
Disturbing the Biosphere: The Lower Atmosphere, Oceans, and Land Surface	159

EFFECTS ON HUMAN LIFE AND ENDEAVOR

What is Affected	165
Some Specific Societal Effects	165
Exposure of Aircraft Passengers and Crews	167
Risks to Manned Space Flight	171
The Ocean of Air	171
Enhanced Ultraviolet And X-Ray Radiation	172
Solar X-rays	172
A Sun Intensely Bright	172
Solar Energetic Particles and Cosmic Rays	173
The Physiological Effects of Ionizing Radiation	176
The Importance of Dosage	176
The Disaster That Almost Happened	178
Impacts on Spacecraft, Space Equipment and on Observations of the Earth From Space	182
Times of Particular Hazard	184
Flight Paths of Greatest Risk	184
Spacecraft at the Lagrangian Points of the Sun-Earth System	185
Polar Orbits and the South Atlantic Anomaly	186
Geosynchronous and Geostationary Orbits	186
Destructive Particles From the Sun and the Earth's Radiation Belts	187
Cosmic Rays	188
Atmospheric Drag	189
Impacts on Micro-Circuits and Computer Systems	191
Damage to Other Space Equipment	192

Protecting Against Damage From High-Energy Particles	193
Impacts on Telecommunications, GPS, and Navigation	195
Direct and Indirect Reception of Radio Waves	196
Role of the Sun and Solar Variations	197
Impacts on GPS and Other Navigation Systems	198
Effects on Electric Power Transmission	199
The Power Blackout of 1989	200
How Magnetic Storms Disrupt Power Systems	201
Where Solar-Driven Power Outages Most Often Occur	201
Effects of Geomagnetically-induced Currents on the Cost of Electricity	203
Early Signs of Solar Interference in Communications	203
Effects of GICS on Telecommunications Cables	204
Damage to Pipelines	205
Impacts of Geomagnetic Storms on Geological Surveys and Explorations	205

EFFECTS OF THE SUN ON WEATHER AND CLIMATE

A Brief History	209
The Missing Pieces	212
Metering the Energy the Earth Receives	213
Recovering the Past History of the Sun	217
Effects of Solar Spectral Radiation	219
Sensitivity of Climate to Solar Fluctuations	221
11-year Solar Forcing	223
Solar Forcing of the Oceans	224
Hidden Diaries of the Ancient Sun	225
The Fate of Carbon-14	227
Beryllium-10 in Ice Cores	228
Marks of the Sun on North Atlantic Climate During the Last 11,000 Years	230

FORECASTING SPACE WEATHER AT THE EARTH AND BEYOND

Space Weather	235
Predictions	236
Sources of Needed Data	238
Available Warning Times	240
Especial Needs for Manned Space Exploration	242
Current Capabilities	245
Operational Facilities	246
The Heliophysics System Observatory	249

REFLECTIONS

Solar Misbehavior	255
What Has Changed?	256
The Sun and Global Warming	258

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

261

APPENDICES

Glossary of Technical Terms	263
Sources for Additional Information	291
Tables	295
Images and Illustrations	297
Index	301