12-16-2015

Comparison of Coincident Rayleigh-Scatter and Sodium Resonance Lidar Temperature Measurements from the Mesosphere-Lower-Thermosphere Region

Leda Sox  
Utah State University

Vincent B. Wickwar  
Utah State University

Neal R. Criddle  
Utah State University

Tao Yuan  
Utah State University

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/physics_facpub  
Part of the Atmospheric Sciences Commons, and the Optics Commons

Recommended Citation
http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/physics_facpub/2020
Comparison of Coincident Rayleigh-Scatter and Sodium Resonance Lidar Temperature Measurements from the Mesosphere-Lower-Thermosphere Region

Leda Sox, Vincent B. Wickwar, Tao Yuan and Neal R. Cridde
Department of Physics and Center for Atmospheric and Space Sciences, Utah State University, Logan, Utah

Introduction

Light Detection and Ranging (lidar) is a ground-based remote sensing technique that has been used to study the middle and upper atmosphere for over four decades [1, 2]. Atmospheric systems transmit laser beams into the atmosphere and then use optical and electronic detector systems to measure backscatter resulting from the interaction between the transmitted photons and atmospheric particles. Two of the most widely used lidar techniques for the study the upper atmosphere are Rayleigh-scatter and sodium-resonance lidar measurements.

1. Lidar Systems’ Specifications

The original RS lidar system ran at a midlatitude site (42° N, 112° W), on the campus of Utah State University (USU), from 1993-2004 [4]. During this time, it gathered temperature data in the 45-90 km altitude range. It has since had an instrumentation upgrade (see Fig. 1) and has been used to collect temperature data from the 70-115 km range since summer 2014.

The Na lidar system ran on the campus of Colorado State University (41° N, 105° W) from 1990-2010 [5]. Since 2010, it has been operating at the same USU site as the RS lidar under the configuration [6] also shown in Figure 1.

2. Lidar Temperature Retrievals

To better compare the two lidar datasets, the temperatures from each lidar, at a given altitude, were plotted in a time series in Figure 3. They show that at and below 90 km, the RS temperatures were generally colder than the Na temperatures. At 95 km and above, the RS temperatures are on average warmer than the Na temperatures.

3. Temperature Comparison

Figure 3. Comparison plots of lidar temperatures versus altitude for the different lidars. Orange curves give Na lidar experiments and green curves give RS lidar temperatures.

The two lidars’ temperature retrievals are done using completely different methods. RS lidar temperatures were calculated using a modified version of the Chanin-Hauchecorne method based on the backscattered power [1, 4]. Na lidar temperatures were derived using the method described in Krueger et al., [2015] which is based on the spectral shape of the returned signal.

4. Discussion

In Figure 3, we see that over the full measurement year (June 2014-June 2015), the best agreement between the two techniques happens between about 83-90 km. This can also be seen in the lidars’ temperature variations in Figure 3 (a) & (b) and in Figure 5 (top) where the correlation between the two datasets is greater than 0.9 in this altitude range.

The best agreement across the full range of altitudes is seen on the nights of the fall and spring equinoxes (Fig. 2 (b) & (e)). A night close to the fall equinox (25 Sept 2014) was chosen to examine the hourly temperature perturbations from both lidars. The perturbation plots (Fig. 4) show good agreement from hour-to-hour and the same 8-9 hr wave can be seen in both datasets.

This comparison shows that the RS lidar temperature is shown to be colder than those of the Na lidar at 85 and 90 km (Fig. 3 (a) & (b)). A similar observation was made in Argall and Sica, [2007]. They compared RS and Na lidar climatologies from several different sites over an altitude range of about 80-95 km and found that on average, the RS temperatures were 7°C cooler. While our data show the RS temperatures being colder, our difference is not as strong—having an average of only about 2 K. At 95 km and above, our data shows that the RS temperatures are on average increasing warmer as one goes up in altitude, reaching an average maximum temperature difference of about 16 K at 105 km (Fig. 3 (c)-(e)).

Conclusions and Future Work

We have presented a comparison of simultaneous temperatures acquired by Rayleigh-scatter and sodium resonance lidars colocated at USU. Several conclusions can be reached from this work:

• The two datasets agree well to the best agreement between about 83 and 90 km.

• The best agreement, spanning all altitudes, is seen near the fall and spring equinoxes (Fig. 2 (b) & (d)).

• Below 90 km, RS lidar temperatures are on average slightly cooler than Na lidar temperatures. At 95 km and above the RS temperatures are significantly warmer than the Na temperatures.

• On an hourly scale, temperature perturbations calculated independently for each lidar’s dataset, show good agreement between the two techniques.

• The two sets of temperatures show better correlation as a function of altitude, than the Na temperatures showed.

• Occasionally, in summer months, the RS lidar observed a lower-altitude mesopause, which the Na lidar did not capture (Fig. 2 (g)).

These comparisons need to be continued with additional simultaneous observations. The apparent warmer RS temperatures above 95 km needs to be further investigated.

References

