SBUV/2 Long-Term Measurements of Solar Spectral Variability

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The NOAA-11 SBUV/2 spectral solar data have been corrected for long-term instrument changes to produce a 5.5 year data record during solar cycle 22 (December 1988 - October 1994). Residual drifts in the data at long wavelengths are ±1% or less. At 200-205 nm, where solar variations drive stratospheric photochemistry, these data indicate long-term solar changes of 5-7% from the maximum of Cycle 22 in April 1991 through the end of the NOAA-11 data record. Comparisons of NOAA-11 data with UARS SUSIM and SOLSTICE for the period October 1991 - October 1994, when all 3 instruments were operating simultaneously, show that the observed long-term variations in 200-205 nm irradiance agree to within 2%. This result is consistent with predictions from the Mg II proxy index.

The SBUV/2 instruments represent a valuable resource for long-term solar UV activity studies because of their overlapping data records. In addition to the NOAA-11 data presented here, the NOAA-9 SBUV/2 instrument began taking data in March 1985 and is still operating, providing a complete record of Cycle 22 behavior from a single instrument. Three additional SBUV/2 instruments are scheduled to be launched between 1997 and 2003, which should permit full coverage of solar cycle 23.

On-board calibration system corrects for diffuser reflectivity change only.

Coincident observations with SSBUV flights used to characterize long-term instrument throughput changes as functions of time, wavelength.

NOAA-11 irradiance data show long-term drift ≤ 1% for λ > 300 nm; This is consistent with expectation of little/no solar activity, indicates accuracy of corrections.

Shorter wavelengths show regular rotational modulation (up to 5-6% at 200-208 nm, 2-3% at 240-250 nm) during maximum and decline of Cycle 22; Periods of 13-day variability in Fall 1991, late 1992 also present.

NOAA-11 Solar Irradiance Results
NOAA-11 IRRADIANCE Data: 380–390 nm

Normalized Irradiance


NOAA-11 IRRADIANCE Data: 330–340 nm

Normalized Irradiance

NOAA-11 IRRADIANCE Data: 240–250 nm

27-day average

NOAA-11 IRRADIANCE Data: 200–208 nm

27-day average
Plot of all data in 10 nm bands (81-day average) shows $\Delta F < \pm 1\%$ [darker green] for $\lambda > 270$ nm, more long-term change shortward of Mg edge at 210-250 nm [lighter green], largest change below Al edge at $\lambda < 210$ nm [yellow, orange]; End of Cycle 22 maximum in Spring 1992 visible at $\lambda < 270$ nm.

Long-term changes at short wavelengths determined from smoothed data are approximately 6% at 200-208 nm, 3-3.5% at 240-250 nm; How can we evaluate instrument drift at these wavelengths?
Solar irradiance variations modeled using NOAA-11 Mg II index, scale factors; NOAA-11 Mg II agrees with NOAA-9 Mg II, SUSIM Mg II to within 1% during overlap periods.

"Desolarized" NOAA-11 irradiance data has long-term drift of +2% at 200-208 nm, < 1% at 240-250 nm.

If (Mg II + scale factor) result is correct for long-term change, $\Delta F_{\text{solar}} \approx -(6-7)\%$ at 200-208 nm, -(3-4)% at 240-250 nm during 1989-1994; Compare with other instruments for validation.
NOAA-11 CLASSICAL DISCRETE Mg II Index

Mg II Index [core-to-wing ratio]

UARS data

Mg II Scale Factors

Sensitivity to ΔMgII [percent]

Wavelength [nm]
NOAA-11 DESOLARIZED Data: 240–250 nm

NOAA-11 DESOLARIZED Data: 200–208 nm
NOAA-11 data overlap UARS solar instruments (SUSIM, SOLSTICE) during Oct 1991 - Oct 1994; Results shown here use SUSIM V19 data, SOLSTICE V8 data

Long wavelengths ($\lambda > 300$ nm) generally have $\Delta F < \pm 1\%$; Raw data at short wavelengths ($\lambda < 260$ nm) show similar rotational activity, long-term decrease

Evaluate drift at short wavelengths by removing predicted solar change from all data; Results good to 1-2\% for selected bands; No indication of long-term bias in Mg II-based solar change values

Comparisons with UARS Irradiiances
Solar Irradiance Data at 380–390 nm

NOAA-11

SUSIM [V19]

SOLSTICE [V8]
Solar Irradiance Data at 330–340 nm

NOAA-11

SUSIM [V19]

SOLSTICE [V8]

DATE

Jan 1992
Jan 1993
Jan 1994
Jan 1995
Solar Irradiance Data at 240–250 nm

NOAA-11

SUSIM [V19]

SOLSTICE [V8]

DATE
Solar Irradiance Data at 200–208 nm

NOAA-11

SUSIM [V19]

SOLSTICE [V8]

DATE

Irradiance Data at 240–250 nm
PREDICTED SOLAR CHANGE Removed

NOAA–11

SUSIM [V19]

SOLSTICE [V8]
Irradiance Data at 200–208 nm
PREDICTED SOLAR CHANGE Removed

NOAA–11

SUSIM [V19]

SOLSTICE [V8]
For full comparison, remove predicted solar change from all 10 nm bands and plot together

- **NOAA-11** data mostly within ±1% range, with drift of +1-2% at $\lambda < 200$ nm [*light green*]; These data represent later part of NOAA-11 data record

- **SUSIM** data fall in ±1% range, except for early dip at $\lambda < 230$ nm [*yellow*] and additional drift at 170-190 nm

- **SOLSTICE** data good to ~1% at 300-380, 220-260 nm; Drifts of -2% or more present in 260-300 nm region, particularly 290 nm [*yellow*]; Data for $\lambda < 210$ nm have positive drift, reaching $\Delta F = 3-4\%$ at 180-190 nm [*blue*]
NOAA-11 solar spectral irradiance data [170-400 nm, December 1988 - October 1994] have been processed with full corrections based on SSBUV coincident data.

Results have long-term accuracy of ±1% at most wavelengths; Solar change from late 1989 (maximum of Cycle 22) to October 1994 (close to minimum) ≈ -(6-7)% at 200-208 nm, -(3-4)% at 240-250 nm.


NOAA-11, NOAA-9 discrete Mg II index data and Mg II scale factors now available at anonymous FTP site [ssbuv.gsfc.nasa.gov]; NOAA-11 spectral irradiance data will be available on-line in Summer 1997.

CONCLUSIONS