

DAY-NIGHT CLOUD ASYMMETRY PREVENTS THE FORMATION OF OCEANS ON EXOPLANETS

Martin Turbet, Thomas Fauchez, Jeremy Leconte, Franck Selsis, Emeline Bolmont, Benjamin Charnay, Guillaume Chaverot, David Ehrenreich, François Forget, Christophe Lovis, Emmanuel Marcq, Ehouarn Millour

I will show new results obtained using 3-D Global Climate Model simulations (building on Turbet et al. 2021) of very hot, water-rich dominated planetary atmospheres designed to evaluate the ability of initially hot terrestrial/super-Earth-sized planets (typical of post-magma-ocean conditions) to form primordial surface liquid water oceans.

This work shows that a significant fraction of exoplanets located within the so-called "Habitable Zone" (HZ) should be unable to host water oceans, because their primordial water reservoir never had the opportunity to condense at the surface due to day-night asymmetric distribution of water clouds. This defines a surface liquid water "Condensation Zone" (CZ).

We will show – using the inner planets of the TRAPPIST-1 system (b,c,d) as a proof of concept – how to use JWST observations to test this day-night cloud feedback and thus the CZ.

References

Turbet et al. 2021 - <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-021-03873-w>