



Coupling of Atmospheric Layers – EU FP5 RTN Project: Training and Outreach Programme

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In 2002 the four year Coupling of Atmospheric Layers (CAL) research training network (RTN) project was funded by the European Commission to study sprites, jets and elves, also referred to as “Transient Luminous Events”. In order to study these phenomena the CAL project concerns thunderstorms, electrical- and space radiation effects in the stratosphere, mesosphere and lower thermosphere. CAL consists of ten scientific work-packages and two work-packages specifically dedicated to the training and outreach programme of the project. The educational “training” programme work-package is a key ingredient in the CAL project and covers the implementation of the training activities aimed at the young researchers hired through the CAL project, as well as participating senior scientists. Educational activities are based on the following elements: national Ph.D. programmes, activities at CAL and other meetings, European observational campaigns and a dedicated summer school. Spectacular images of high-altitude discharges (e.g. sprites) make the subject matter of the CAL network ideal as outreach material for the general public. Activities of the outreach programme work-package include articles, press releases, interviews and web-sites. The CAL web-site services both the network teams and the public. The outreach programme also includes talks and presentations for the general public and production of material for educational purposes at middle school level. This presentation will show how training and outreach activities have been implemented into the CAL project and is intended to be an example and inspiration of how an EU RTN project can be a unique opportunity to provide such types of learning activities.