MPIDS Advances



The challenge of small-scale turbulence in planetary boundary layers

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Planetary boundary layers are important in a wide variety of contexts: in climatology, since they modulate the fluxes between atmosphere, land and ocean; in meteorology, since they influence weather conditions; in fluid mechanics, since they constitute a paradigm of multi-scale, complex systems. Despite their relevance, our understanding of how turbulence interacts with other phenomena in planetary boundary layers, such as density stratification, radiative transfer and cloud physics, remains limited in crucial ways, particularly at meter and submeter scales. During the last decade, however, direct numerical simulations have provided new insight into these interactions. I will use various examples to illustrate some of these recent advances and to indicate their potential development during the coming years.

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