Other

Fusion Energy Spheromak Turbulent Plasma Experiment-STPX

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Description: The Florida A&M University's Center for Plasma Science and Technology (CePaST) has nearly completed the construction of a spheromak fusion reactor. A spheromak is one of a general class of experiments used to investigate key plasma physics principles relevant for the development of magnetically confined, controlled thermonuclear fusion as a source of electrical power. This project involves collaboration between Florida A&M University CePaST, West Virginia University, and Auburn University. The spheromak turbulent plasma physics experiment (STPX) is being constructed at FAMU in a facility especially built for the STPX experiment. Fusion research is a key element in the nation's long term energy supply strategy, The spheromak concept may be a possible alternative to the tokamak concept (deployed at ITER) which affords access to fundamental fusion science issues supportive of fusion while allowing us to maintain and nurture an American fusion scientific workforce. This project will determine, using a fast duty cycle between theory, experiment, and simulation, the essential elements required for full kinetic modeling of an entire spheromak plasma using *ab initio* MHD with direct modifications from new turbulence physics. The project will focus on the management of fluctuations and transport in a spheromak plasma using new turbulence physics models and comprehensive helicity control. We will employ high time- and spatial- resolution measurements of electron temperatures, ion temperatures, and magnetic field fluctuations to investigate, understand, and eventually control reconnection driven heating as a means of increasing the plasma temperature of spheromak plasmas. We will use divertor diagnostics of radiation and particle transport along with edge biasing for electric field control to explore the effects of driven flows on confinement and heating in spheromak plasmas with microparticles and will investigate the effects of MW pulses coupled to protons on the plasma current and confinement.

Budget: $950,000
University: FAMU
Universities and External Collaborators:
Dr. Earl Scime, West Virginia University
Dr. Ed Thomas, Auburn University
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