# Multiscale simulation of radiofrequency wave scattering in the scrape-off layer

Bodhi Biswas

York Plasma Institute, University of York. York, UK.

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# Scattering is a problem for RF-driven heating and current drive actuators in tokamaks

**Objective**: localised resonant power deposition

- Increase fusion output
- Non-inductive operation
- Shape *q*-profile
- Suppress NTMs

#### Scattering modifies wave-spectrum, leading to:

- Decreased antenna-core coupling.
- Broadening and displacement of power deposition peak.
- Introduces large uncertainties in predictive models.

Lower hybrid current drive (LHCD) is sensitive to wave-trajectory

- Lower hybrid (LH) waves  $(\Omega_i^2 \ll \omega^2 \ll \Omega_e^2)$  efficiently drive current by electron Landau damping.
- Strong linear electron Landau damping (ELD) condition:  $N_{||} \equiv \frac{k_{||}c}{\omega} \gtrsim \frac{c}{3v_{te}}$
- N<sub>||</sub> evolves along the wave-trajectory. CD performance can be sensitive to initial launch and plasma parameters.

#### Theoretical model for LHCD:



#### Multi-pass regime in Alcator C-Mod

If 
$$N_{||0} < \frac{c}{3v_{te}} \rightarrow \text{long wave trajectories.}$$



# The multi-pass regime is notoriously difficult to model

- The spectral-gap problem:  $|N_{||_0}| < \frac{c}{3v_{te}}$
- Standard Ray-tracing/Fokker-Planck simulations cannot resolve the spectral gap.
  - Inaccurate
  - Not robust
- LH waves must propagate through the highly turbulence SOL region. Direct experimental evidence of scattering<sup>1</sup>.
- How does scattering affect the wavespectrum? Can it explain measurements in Alcator C-Mod?



C-Mod fully non-inductive plasma

### Nature of edge turbulence and scattering

- Turbulence is largely field-aligned  $(\nabla_{||}n \sim 0)$ ٠
- RF scattering rotates  $k_{\perp}$ , and breaks toroidal mode-number •  $(\mathcal{N} \equiv k_{\phi}R)$  conservation.
- Filaments are dense and spatially localized<sup>1,2</sup> •

$$\begin{array}{c} n_b/n_0 \approx 1-10 \\ a_b \approx 0.5-5 \ \mathrm{cm} \sim 1/k_\perp \\ k_\perp L_n {\sim} 1 \end{array}$$

- Highly intermittent<sup>2,3</sup> •
- Strongest at outer mid-plane<sup>4</sup>
- Ad-hoc introduction of  $k_{\perp}$  angle rotation can reproduce LHCD measurements in C-Mod.<sup>5</sup> Could edge turbulence account for this?

#### Gas puff imaging (GPI) in C-Mod



S Zweben, PPPL.

<sup>1</sup>Zweben et al., PPCF. 2016. <sup>4</sup>Terry et al., PoP. 2003. <sup>2</sup>Zweben et al., PoP. 2002. <sup>5</sup>Baek et al., NF. 2021. <sup>3</sup>Kube et al., PPCF. 2016.

# Spatial coherency and intermittency of turbulence impacts wave-scattering



 $\theta \equiv \sin^{-1}(k_y/k_x).$ 

Previous drift-wave-like models under-predict scattering.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Bonoli and Ott, PoF. 1982. <sup>2</sup>Biswas et al., PPCF. 2020.

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## Hierarchy of RF wave scattering models

Increasing fidelity and computational cost

#### **Reduced ray-tracing models**

#### **Drift-wave turbulence**

- Ray-tracing (diffusive broadening of  $k_{\perp}$ ) [1]
- Wave-kinetic approach [2,3] Fast solve

SOL turbulence is filamentary

#### **Filamentary turbulence**

- Ray-tracing over synthetic turbulence [4]
- Limited validity  $(k_{\perp}L_n \sim 1)$ Increased accuracy Limited validity



- [1] Bellan and Wong, PoF. 1978.
- [2] Bonoli and Ott, PoF. 1982.
- [3] Andrews and Perkins, PoF. 1983.
- [4] Biswas et al., PPCF. 2020.



## Hierarchy of RF wave scattering models



#### Single wave-filament interaction

Analytic solution available [1,2]
 Fast solve
 Only one filement

Only one filament

#### Multiple filaments or whole SOL

Numeric full-wave solvers [3,4]
 All optical effects
 Computationally expensive
 Coupling to core solver is non-trivial



## Hierarchy of RF wave scattering models

Increasing fidelity and computational cost

#### Multiscale full-wave/ray-tracing solver

At wave-filament interaction:

 $k_{\perp}L_n \sim 1$ . **Apply full-wave solver** Elsewhere:

 $k_{\perp}L_n \gg 1$ . Ray-tracing is acceptable

**Couple using radiative transfer theory** 

Fast solve Many optical effects Straightforward coupling to core solver



Single filament full-wave...

-0.8

-1.0

## A single wave-filament interaction

- Plane wave interacting with a field-aligned, infinitely long, cylindrical filament.
- Poloidally symmetric.
- Analytic, series solution to scattered waves (slow and fast branch).



#### Solution scheme for a radially tapered filament



Vector Helmholtz equation solved by separation of variables.

Known: Bessel coefficients for incident Lower Hybrid slow wave.Unknown: Bessel coefficients for slow and fast waves, both inside and outside filament.Boundary conditions: Maxwell BC's at the edge of each radial bin.

Leads to linear system of equations with unique solution. Very fast solve!

## Calculating scattering-width



<sup>1</sup>Shiraiwa et al., EPJ Web Conf. 2017.

### Parametric scan of filament parameters



**4.6GHz slow-wave launched at**  $N_{||} = 2$ .  $a_b = 0.85$ cm

### Asymmetric scattering not captured in ray-tracing



Symmetry broken by orientation of magnetic field. This is a higher-order (full-wave) effect.

## Averaging over filament statistics



# Multiple scattering events modeled with radiative transfer equation (RTE)

 $\Sigma_{eff}$  is the inverse mean free-path for a wave-packet to scatter with a filament.



This can be used to formulate the RTE

$$\begin{pmatrix} \frac{dP_j}{dt} \end{pmatrix}_r + 2\gamma(\mathbf{k}_j, \mathbf{r})P_j = \begin{pmatrix} \frac{dP_j}{dt} \end{pmatrix}_{\text{sct}} \qquad j = S, F$$

$$\hat{f} = \sum_{j'=S,F} -\sum_{\text{eff}, j \to j'} (k_{||}, \mathbf{r}) |\mathbf{v}_{gr\perp}(\mathbf{k}_j, \mathbf{r})|P_j \qquad \text{Out-scatter} \qquad \hat{\sigma}(\theta) \equiv \sigma(\theta)/\sigma$$

$$\text{In-scatter}$$

$$+ \sum_{j'=S,F} \sum_{\text{eff}, j' \to j} (k'_{||}, \mathbf{r}) |\mathbf{v}_{gr\perp}(\mathbf{k}_{j'}, \mathbf{r})| \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} \hat{\sigma}_{\text{eff}, j' \to j} (\theta - \theta'; k_{||}, \mathbf{r}) P_{j'}(\theta', k_{||}, \mathbf{r}) d\theta'$$

$$\text{In-scatter}$$

## First, a simple slab problem

Assumptions:

- Turbulent layer of width  $L_x$
- homogenous background and turbulence parameters
- initial slow wave at normal incidence
- neglect possibility of mode-conversion to fast wave

OK approximation for scatter in front of LH grill.

$$cos\theta \frac{dP(x,\theta)}{dx} = -\Sigma_{\rm eff}P(x,\theta) + \Sigma_{\rm eff} \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} \hat{\sigma}_{\rm eff}(\theta - \theta')P(x,\theta')d\theta'$$

Out-scatter

**This equation can be solved by a Markov Chain.** See Biswas et al., JPP. 2021.



# Solving RTE in slab geometry using an absorbing Markov chain

Similarities with radiation modeling in atmospheric science<sup>1</sup>.

Discretize turbulent layer width  $x = [0, L_x]$  and angle of photon trajectory  $\theta = [-\pi, \pi]$ .

Transmitted wave-spectrum:

$$P_{T}(\theta_{n'}) \approx \Pi \cdot (I - T)^{-1} \cdot R_{T}$$
Source of incident photons at  $(x_{i}, \theta_{l})$ 
Probability to transition from  $(x_{j}, \theta_{m}) \rightarrow (x_{j'}, \theta_{m'})$ 

Probability to **escape** via transmittance from  $(x_k, \theta_n) \rightarrow (L_x, \theta_{n'})$ 

Fast, deterministic method to solve the RTE.

## Markov Chain (MC) used to model LH scattering in front of antenna



#### Outputs:

 $P_{sct}(\theta)$ : angle-broadened wave-spectrum

 $F_{\text{bal}}$ : fraction of ballistic power.  $F_T$ : fraction of non-ballistic transmitted power.  $F_R$ : fraction of reflected power.



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## Model comparison against Petra-M

		Plasma parameters						F <sub>ref</sub>	
Simulation setup in finite-element code PETRA-M.	Case #	$n_0 \times 10^{19} [\mathrm{m}^{-3}]$	$\langle n_b/n_0 \rangle$	$\langle a_b \rangle$ [cm]	$f_p$	$L_x$ [cm]	$\Sigma_{\rm eff}L_x$	Petra-M	Multiscale
	1	0.55	2.60	0.48	0.02	5.0	0.26	0.01	0.02
	2	0.55	2.60	0.48	0.10	5.0	1.29	0.13	0.13
Periodic boundary	3	0.55	2.60	0.48	0.25	5.0	3.23	0.18	0.31
$\begin{array}{c c} PML & I_{ext} & v_{gr_{\perp}} \rightarrow & turbulent \\ \downarrow & \downarrow & layer & PML \\ \downarrow & \downarrow & e_{x} & \downarrow & Lx \end{array} PML PML$	4	0.55	2.60	0.48	0.50	5.0	6.45	0.29	0.48
	5	0.55	2.60	1.10	0.25	5.0	1.33	0.02	0.06
	6	0.55	1.80	0.48	0.25	5.0	1.42	0.04	0.13
	7	0.55	2.60	0.48	0.10	15.0	3.89	0.22	0.35
	8	2.25	2.60	0.48	0.02	5.0	0.40	0.04	0.04
	9	2.25	2.60	0.48	0.10	5.0	2.02	0.15	0.23
	10	2.25	2.60	0.48	0.25	5.0	5.06	0.34	0.46
	11	2.25	2.60	0.48	0.50	5.0	10.1	0.55	0.65

#### Accuracy:

- 1. Both models predict the same trends in  $F_{ref}$  vs. turbulence parameters.
- 2. Reasonable match at low  $f_p$  (~0.1).
- 3. Multiscale model generally over-predicts  $F_{ref}$ .
- 4. Error grows with  $f_p$ . This is as expected from theory [1].

#### **Computational cost:**

Each PETRA-M run: ~300GB RAM and ~25 CPU-hours. Each multiscale run: ~1 minute on a laptop with 8GB available RAM. [1] Mishchenko. *EM scattering by particles and particle groups*.2014.

### Broadened wave-spectrum coupled to RTFP code

Fully non-inductive, low-density ( $\bar{n}_e \approx 0.52 \times 10^{20} \text{m}^{-3}$ ) L-mode discharge.



axis peaks.

First-pass ray-trajectories

Modified wave-spectrum leads to increased on-axis damping on first-pass...

## Solution scheme for general RTE

Generalise to arbitrary geometry:

- Account for scattering along the entire ray-trajectory.
- Varying SOL background and turbulence profiles.
- Mode-conversion between slow (S) and fast (F) mode.

Ray-trajectory and damping calculated in GENRAY/CQL3D

$$\left(\frac{dP_j}{dt}\right)_r + 2\gamma(\mathbf{k}_j, \mathbf{r})P_j = \left(\frac{dP_j}{dt}\right)_{\rm sc}$$

Stochastic kicks to raytrajectory that rotate  ${m k}_\perp$ 

$$\begin{split} \left(\frac{dP_{j}}{dt}\right)_{\text{sct}} &= \sum_{j'=S,F} - \left[\Sigma_{\text{eff},j \to j'}(k_{||},\mathbf{r}) |\mathbf{v}_{gr\perp}(\mathbf{k}_{j},\mathbf{r})|P_{j} \right] \text{Look-up tables in GENRAY} \\ &+ \sum_{j'=S,F} \sum_{\text{eff},j' \to j} (k'_{||},\mathbf{r}) |\mathbf{v}_{gr\perp}(\mathbf{k}_{j'},\mathbf{r})| \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} \hat{\sigma}_{\text{eff},j' \to j}(\theta - \theta';k_{||},\mathbf{r}) P_{j'}(\theta',k_{||},\mathbf{r}) d\theta' \end{split}$$

# Prescribing scattering probabilities in a tokamak geometry



# Radial ( $\rho$ ) and poloidal ( $\theta_p$ ) tapering of filament PDFs in the SOL



For more detail, see Biswas et al., NF. 2023.

# Scattering is most prevalent in the far SOL at the outer mid-plane



### Scattering is preferentially in outward direction



## Parametric scan of turbulence parameters

3D scan:

 $\langle n_b/n_0 \rangle$ : mean relative filament density (at LH antenna)  $\langle a_b \rangle$ : mean filament radial width  $f_p$ : packing fraction

Metric for agreement with experiment:

$$\bar{\chi}^2 = \frac{\sum_i (J_{\phi, \text{sim}}(\rho_i) - J_{\phi, \exp}(\rho_i))^2}{\sum_i (J_{\phi, \text{refsim}}(\rho_i) - J_{\phi, \exp}(\rho_i))}$$

### Impact of scattering on LHCD saturates



### Impact of scattering on LHCD saturates

#### $\bar{\chi}^2$ current density



### Saturated case finds good match to experiment



## Scatter causes near-axis damping on first pass



## Simulating higher density discharges



Caveat: not modeling DC electric field.

## Saturation explained by filling in of phase-space



### How important is asymmetric scatter?

Reversed scattering parity:  $\sigma(\theta) \rightarrow \sigma(-\theta)$ 



## Conclusion

- For the first time, full-wave scattering effects on downstream damping and current drive modeled.
- Scattering can explain the spectral gap in Alcator C-Mod.
- Identified asymmetric scatter occurs, and is important.
- In C-Mod, effect of scattering is saturated. Exact filament PDF not important.

#### Mitigation strategies:

- Decrease SOL width/fluctuations
- HFS launch

#### Future work:

Can we directly measure RF scattering in the SOL? Can scattering resolve *large* spectral gaps (e.g. WEST)? Applications of ECCD. Impact on O-X mode conversion.



## Future work: large spectral gap in WEST

Assuming toroidal mode-number conservation, LH waves cannot Landau damp in WEST.

But experiments show significant Landau damping in core...

Scattering breaks toroidal mode-number conservation. Is this strong enough to bridge the spectral gap?



Peysson et al., Journal of Fusion Energy. 2020.

#### Lower hybrid current drive (LHCD)

Tokamaks require a steady-state source of current.

Lower hybrid (LH) waves  $(\Omega_i^2 \ll \omega^2 \ll \Omega_e^2)$ drive current by electron Landau damping.

$$N_{||} \equiv \frac{k_{||}c}{\omega} \gtrsim \frac{c}{3v_{te}}$$

Electrons preferentially accelerated in wave's parallel direction  $\rightarrow$  asymmetric distribution function  $\rightarrow$  net current

LHCD is sensitive to the phase-space trajectory of the wave



# Fully non-inductive C-Mod discharge summary



Figure 3.2: "Summary of Alcator C-Mod upper single-null L-Mode discharge #1101104011.  $\overline{n_e} = 0.52 \times 10^{20} \,\mathrm{m}^{-3}$ ,  $I_p = 530 \,\mathrm{kA}$ , and B=5.4 T. At t=1.10 sec, current is fully driven by 850 kW LH power launched at  $N_{||} = -1.6$ . Electron density  $(n_e)$  and temperature  $(T_e)$  profiles show experimental data from Thomson scattering (blue), and the fit profile (red) used in GENRAY/CQL3D runs."<sup>†</sup>

#### Ray-tracing equations

Cold plasma dispersion relation

$$D_{0} = P_{4}N_{\perp}^{4} + P_{2}N_{\perp}^{2} + P_{0} = 0$$
$$P_{0} = \epsilon_{||} \left[ \left( N_{||}^{2} - \epsilon_{\perp} \right)^{2} - \epsilon_{xy}^{2} \right]$$
$$P_{2} = \left( \epsilon_{\perp} + \epsilon_{||} \right) \left( N_{||}^{2} - \epsilon_{\perp} \right) + \epsilon_{xy}^{2}$$

$$P_4 = \epsilon_\perp$$

Ray evolution in phase-space

$$\frac{d\mathbf{r}}{dt} = -\frac{\frac{\partial D_0}{\partial \mathbf{k}}}{\frac{\partial D_0}{\partial \omega}}$$
$$\frac{d\mathbf{k}}{dt} = \frac{\frac{\partial D_0}{\partial \mathbf{r}}}{\frac{\partial D_0}{\partial \omega}}$$

Ray damping in phase-space

$$\frac{dP}{dt} = -2\omega_I P$$
$$\omega_I = \frac{1}{(\partial D_0 / \partial \omega)|_{\omega_r}} \sum_p D_I^{(p)}$$

#### Toroidal effects to ray trajectory

$$\frac{dm}{d\theta} = -\frac{\frac{\partial D_0}{\partial \theta}}{\frac{\partial D_0}{\partial m}} \approx -k_{||} R_0 q(r) \left(1 + \frac{\omega_{pe}^2 / \Omega_e^2}{\epsilon_{\perp}}\right) \frac{(r/R_0) sin\theta}{1 + (r/R_0) cos\theta}$$

$$k_{||} = (\mathbf{k} \cdot \mathbf{B}/B) \approx \frac{m}{r} \frac{B_{\theta}}{B_{\phi}} + \frac{\mathbb{N}}{R}$$

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#### Cold plasma dielectric tensor

$$\begin{split} \epsilon &= \begin{bmatrix} \epsilon_{\perp} & -i\epsilon_{xy} & 0 \\ +i\epsilon_{xy} & \epsilon_{\perp} & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & \epsilon_{||} \end{bmatrix} \\ \epsilon_{\perp} &= 1 - \sum_{s} \frac{\omega_{ps}^2}{\omega^2 - \Omega_s^2} \\ \epsilon_{xy} &= \sum_{s} \frac{\Omega_s}{\omega} \frac{\omega_{ps}^2}{\omega^2 - \Omega_s^2} \\ \epsilon_{||} &= 1 - \sum_{s} \frac{\omega_{ps}^2}{\omega^2} \end{split}$$

Ray-tracing validity limit (1)

$$\mathbf{E} = \tilde{\mathbf{E}}(\mathbf{r})e^{i(\mathbf{k}\cdot\mathbf{r}-\omega t)}$$

$$\boldsymbol{\nabla} \mathbf{E} = \left[ i \left( \boldsymbol{\nabla} S \right) \tilde{\mathbf{E}} + \boldsymbol{\nabla} \tilde{\mathbf{E}} \right] e^{i(\mathbf{k} \cdot \mathbf{r} - \omega t)} \qquad \boldsymbol{\nabla} S = \mathbf{k}$$

$$\frac{c^2}{\omega^2}(\mathbf{k} - i\mathbf{\nabla}) \times [(\mathbf{k} - i\mathbf{\nabla}) \times \tilde{\mathbf{E}}] + \epsilon \cdot \tilde{\mathbf{E}} = \mathbf{D} \cdot \tilde{\mathbf{E}} = 0$$

If 
$$\frac{|\nabla \tilde{\mathbf{E}}|}{|\tilde{\mathbf{E}}|} \ll \mathbf{k}$$
 then ray-tracing valid.

$$\left(\left|\epsilon_{xy}\right| + N_{||}^2\right) \frac{1}{k_{\perp}L} \ll 1$$

k-scattering model validity 1) if  $(k_{\perp}/\zeta_0)^2 \gg 1$  then  $(k_{\perp}/\zeta_0)^2 < \zeta_0 l_s$ 

2) if  $k_{\perp} \lesssim \zeta_0$  then  $\zeta_0 l_s > 1$ 



#### Ray trajectories on first-pass



Figure 5.19: Ray-trajectories during first pass through the core. Plotting rays launched with  $N_{||0} = 1.6 \pm 0.1$ . Ray color denotes  $\log_{10}$  of normalized ray power. Green patch denotes near-axis region ( $\rho \leq 0.2$ ).

#### Sensitivity to choice of EFIT



Figure 6.21: Sensitivity to equilibrium reconstruction model. Plotting simulated current (left) and HXR (right) profiles without scattering. C-Mod discharge #1120608016. Stars: experiment.

### Impact of scattering on LHCD saturates

 $ar{\chi}^2$  current density



#### Initial rotation of ray-trajectory

$$\hat{\mathbf{b}} \cdot (\hat{e}_{\nabla\psi} \times \mathbf{k}_{\perp}) = k_{\perp} \sin \chi$$

$$\begin{split} k_{\rho} &= k_{\perp} \cos \chi \\ k_{\theta} &= k_{||} \frac{B_{\theta}}{B} - k_{\perp} \sin \chi \frac{B_{\phi}}{B} \\ k_{\phi} &= k_{||} \frac{B_{\phi}}{B} + k_{\perp} \sin \chi \frac{B_{\theta}}{B} \end{split}$$



$$\left|\frac{v_{gr,\rho}}{v_{gr,\theta}}\right| \approx \left|\frac{\epsilon_{\perp}k_{\perp}\cos\chi}{\epsilon_{\parallel}k_{\parallel}\frac{B_{\theta}}{B} - \epsilon_{\perp}k_{\perp}\sin\chi\frac{B_{\phi}}{B}}\right|$$

Figure 4.13: Initial ray orientation versus  $\chi$ . For typical C-Mod launch parameters:  $N_{||} = -1.6, B_{\phi} = -4 \text{ T}, B_{\theta} = 0.4 \text{ T}, n_e = 10^{19} \text{ m}^{-3}.$