

Heliophysics: The Tonga Volcanic Eruption Reaches Space

When the Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai volcano erupted on Jan. 15, 2022, it sent atmospheric shock waves, sonic booms, and tsunami waves around the world. Now, scientists are finding the volcano's effects also reached space.

Analyzing data from NASA's Ionospheric Connection Explorer, or ICON, mission and ESA's (the European Space Agency) Swarm satellites, scientists found that in the hours after the eruption, hurricane-speed winds and unusual electric currents formed in the ionosphere – Earth's electrified upper atmospheric layer at the edge of space.

