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The SCOUT-O3 Darwin Aircraft Campaign: rationale and meteorology

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Abstract. An aircraft measurement campaign involving the Russian highaltitude aircraft M55 Geophysica and the German DLR Falcon was conducted in Darwin, Australia in November and December 2005 as part of the European integrated project SCOUT-03. The overall objectives of the campaign were to study the transport of trace gases through the tropical tropopause layer (TTL), mechanisms of dehydration close to the tropopause, and the role of deep convection in these processes. In this paper a detailed roadmap of the campaign is presented, including rationales for each flight, and an analysis of the local and large-scale meteorological context in which they were embedded. The campaign took place during the pre-monsoon season which is characterized by a pronounced diurnal evolution of deep convection including a mesoscale system over the Tiwi Islands north of Darwin known as "Hector". This allowed studying in detail the role of deep convection in structuring the tropical tropopause region, in situ sampling convective overshoots above storm anvils, and probing the structure of anvils and cirrus clouds by Lidar and a suite of in situ instruments onboard the two aircraft. The large-scale flow during the first half of the campaign was such that local flights, away from convection, sampled air masses downstream of the "cold trap" region over Indonesia. Abundant cirrus clouds enabled the study of active dehydration, in particular during two TTL survey flights. The campaign period also encompassed a Rossby wave breaking event transporting stratospheric air to the tropical middle troposphere and an equatorial Kelvin wave modulating tropopause temperatures and hence the conditions for dehydration.

■ Final Revised Paper (PDF, 9067 KB)
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