

“What is the heliosphere and how can we measure it?”



The sun warms the Earth, making it habitable for people and animals. But that’s not all it does, and it affects a much larger area of space. The heliosphere, the area of space influenced by the sun, is over a hundred times larger than the distance from the sun to the Earth.

The sun is a star that constantly emits a steady stream of plasma – highly energized ionized gas – called the solar wind. In addition to the constant solar wind, the sun also occasionally releases eruptions of plasma called coronal mass ejections, or CMEs.

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