# Optical Inter-Satellite Link Analysis

Linzhe (Jeremy) Wang

Winter 2024

# Contents

1	Introduction	1
	1.1 Motivation	. 1
	1.2 Related Work	. 1
2	System Model	2
	2.1 Optical Inter-Satellite Link	. 2
	2.2 Path Loss	. 3
	2.3 Doppler Shift	
	2.4 Atmospheric Attenuation	
	2.4.1 Mie Scattering	
	2.4.2 Geometrical Scattering	
	2.5 Link Margin	
3	Results	8
	3.1 Optical Inter-Satellite Link vs. Transmission Power	. 8
	3.2 Slant Distance vs. Transmission Power	
	3.3 Elevation Angle vs. Transmission Power	
	3.4 Link Margin vs. Transmission Power	
4	Discussion	11
5	Conclusion	12

# List of Figures

1	Free space loss for chosen frequencies in VHF, UHF, and L-band	4
2	Doppler shift versus elevation angle in VHF, UHF, and L-band	5
3	Link distance vs. transmission power	9
4	Link distance vs. path loss	9
5	Slant distance vs. transmission power	10
6	Elevation angle vs. transmission power	11
7	Link margin vs. transmission power	11

# List of Tables

1	Link model parameters	8
2	Atmospheric attenuation parameters	9
3	Slant distance vs. transmission power	10
4	Elevation angle vs. transmission power	10
5	Link margin vs. transmission power	12

# 1 Introduction

This project focuses on analyzing the performance of optical inter-satellite links. Its objective is to develop and analyze a comprehensive system model tailored for these links. The model meticulously accounts for a broad range of factors crucial to satellite operations, including atmospheric attenuation, satellite velocity, Doppler shift, and the varying elevation angles encountered throughout satellite orbits. By integrating mathematical models for path loss, Doppler shift, atmospheric attenuation, and link margin into the simulation, the project aims to provide an in-depth understanding of the dynamics involved in optical inter-satellite communication.

#### 1.1 Motivation

The advancement of SpaceX's reusable rocket technology has significantly reduced the costs of delivering payloads to orbit, sparking renewed interest in satellite applications, especially in optical inter-satellite links. This interest is particularly pronounced in networks of Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellites. Due to their closer proximity to Earth, these satellites offer shorter path lengths and reduced round-trip times (RTT), advantages that have likely fueled research into refining satellite link analysis and simulation. The project aims to conduct a detailed examination of critical factors like atmospheric attenuation, satellite velocity, Doppler shift, and the impact of varying elevation angles on link performance. These considerations are vital for optimizing next-generation satellite communication systems.

#### 1.2 Related Work

Current research in the field of LEO satellite communication has made significant strides towards understanding and optimizing link budget analysis, a key factor in enhancing the reliability and efficiency of communications. Recent studies have notably contributed innovative methodologies for link budget analysis that accommodate the dynamic nature of LEO satellites. A significant development is the novel approach of modeling the variability of the elevation angle,  $\theta_E$ , as a gamma-distributed random variable. This methodology markedly enhances the precision of predicting received power  $(P_{rx})$  statistics, thereby enabling more accurate estimations of power levels above or below certain thresholds [1]. This advanced analytical framework not only underscores the evolving complexity of LEO satellite communications but also highlights ongoing efforts to refine link budget analysis, aiming for improved performance and reliability in space-based communication networks.

Another notable study offers a comprehensive evaluation of link budget for nano-satellite communications within LEO, shedding light on the crucial balance between data rates and power efficiency. This research advocates for the utilization of the UHF band, highlighting its effectiveness in minimizing RF propagation attenuations while adeptly managing the impacts of Doppler shift [2].

Further investigations into the realm of satellite communications reveal that transmission power requirements for both optical inter-satellite links and uplink/downlink communications inherently increase with link distance. However, a fascinating discovery within these studies is the inverse relationship between transmission power and the elevation angle for uplink and downlink transmissions [3]. This relationship suggests a promising avenue

for optimizing satellite communications by adjusting the elevation angle to reduce power requirements, thereby enhancing the overall efficiency of the link budget.

Additionally, the exploration of Frequency Reuse (FR) schemes within GEO/LEO New Radio systems, particularly within the Ka-band, underscores the effectiveness of FR3 and FR4 schemes in boosting system performance [4]. This advancement is achieved without the need for complex interference management strategies such as MMSE-IRC, highlighting the potential of FR schemes in significantly enhancing link budget performance in Non-Terrestrial Networks (NTNs).

Lastly, the feasibility study on the use of E-band frequencies for establishing high-speed broadband communication links between LEO satellites and ground stations represents a groundbreaking exploration. The study's realistic link budget calculations suggest the potential to achieve data rates up to 5.0 Gbit/s with high availability (98.39%), under specific conditions [5]. This finding opens up new possibilities for achieving unparalleled data transmission speeds in LEO satellite communications.

Collectively, these studies contribute to a deeper understanding and substantial improvement of link budget equations for satellite communication systems. By addressing various aspects of the link budget analysis, from power efficiency and frequency band selection to frequency reuse schemes and high-speed data transmission, this body of research lays the groundwork for future advancements in satellite communication technology, ensuring better performance and reliability in space-based networks.

# 2 System Model

The analysis of optical inter-satellite links demands a propagation model that accurately embodies the unique conditions of satellite operation. It must consider factors such as atmospheric attenuation, the satellite's relative proximity to Earth, high velocity, resulting Doppler shift, and the changing elevation angles encountered during the satellite's orbit. Accordingly, the section addresses mathematical models for optical inter-satellite link, path loss, Doppler shift, atmospheric attenuation, and link margin used in the simulation.

# 2.1 Optical Inter-Satellite Link

A link model represents a breakdown of the key power gains and losses (typically measured in dB) within a communication system, extending from a transmitter to a receiver. An optical inter-satellite link refers to the connection between two satellites, where the propagation medium is the vacuum of space, given that these links are established between satellites positioned in space [6].

$$P_R = P_T \eta_T \eta_R G_T G_R L_T L_R L_{PS} \tag{1}$$

- $P_R$  = received power in Watts
- $P_T$  = transmitted power in Watts
- $\eta_T$  = optics efficiency of the transmitter
- $\eta_R$  = optics efficiency of the receiver

- $G_T = \text{transmitter gain}$ 
  - $-G_T = \frac{16}{(\Theta_T)^2}$
  - $-\Theta_T$  = full transmitting divergence angle in radians
- $G_R$  = receiver gain
  - $-G_R = \left(\frac{D_R \pi}{\lambda}\right)^2$
  - $-D_R$  = receiver's telescope diameter in mm
- $L_T = \text{transmitter pointing loss}$ 
  - $-L_T = \exp\left(-G_T(\theta_T)^2\right)$
  - $-\theta_T$  = transmitter pointing error in radians
- $L_R$  = receiver pointing loss
  - $-L_R = \exp\left(-G_R(\theta_R)^2\right)$
  - $-\theta_R$  = receiver pointing error in radians
- $L_{PS}$  = free-space path loss for the optical link between satellites

#### 2.2 Path Loss

A widely used path loss model for satellite is the Free Space Path Loss (FSPL) model, particularly because it suits the line-of-sight communication typically found in satellite links. The equation, named after the radio pioneer Harald T. Friis [7], is given by

$$L_{PS} = \left(\frac{\lambda}{4\pi d_{SS}}\right)^2 \tag{2}$$

- $\lambda = \text{carrier wavelength}$
- $d_{SS} =$  distance between satellites. (lies in the far-field region of the antennas, the rule of thumb being  $d_{SS} \geq 2\frac{d^2}{\lambda}$ , where d is the largest physical dimension of either antenna)

For calculation purposes, VHF = 145 MHz, UHF = 435 MHz, and L-band = 1 GHz have been selected as the operating frequencies. Figure 1 suggests that higher frequency communication experiences greater free space loss, and thus requires more transmission power.

- VHF (Very High Frequency):
  - Frequency Range: 30 MHz to 300 MHz
  - Applications: FM radio broadcasting, television broadcasting, two-way land mobile radio systems (such as walkie-talkies and marine radio), and air traffic control communications
- UHF (Ultra High Frequency):

- Frequency Range: 300 MHz to 3 GHz
- Applications: television broadcasting, mobile phones, GPS, Bluetooth, Wi-Fi, and two-way radios

#### • L-band:

- Frequency Range: 1 GHz to 2 GHz
- Applications: satellite communications, including mobile satellite communications,
   GPS, and aircraft surveillance systems

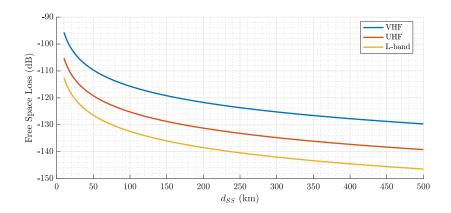


Figure 1: Free space loss for chosen frequencies in VHF, UHF, and L-band.

#### 2.3 Doppler Shift

Doppler shift, also known as the Doppler effect, is a change in the frequency or wavelength of a wave in relation to an observer who is moving relative to the wave source. In different orbits, the Doppler shift can be significant due to the high velocity of the satellites. When a satellite has a relative velocity of  $V_c$  along the line of sight, the frequency shift of the received signal is given by

$$f_{dopp} = \frac{V_r \cdot f}{c} \tag{3}$$

- f = carrier frequency
- $V_r$  = radial component of the circular velocity of the satellite

Assuming that the orbit is circular and the Earth is perfectly spherical, the circular velocity is given by

$$V_c = \sqrt{\frac{\mu}{R_E + h_S}} \tag{4}$$

- $\mu = \text{gravitational constant of the Earth}$
- $h_S$  = altitude of the satellites

The relative velocity,  $V_r$ , can be decomposed into two components in relation to the ground station: the tangential velocity and the radial velocity. The radial component can be determined using the equation below:

$$V_r = V_c \sin \beta \tag{5}$$

$$\frac{\sin(90 + \theta_E)}{R_E + h_S} = \sin\left(\frac{\beta}{R_E}\right) \tag{6}$$

•  $\theta_E$  = elevation angle

Therefore, the Doppler shift frequency is derived by substituting eq. 5 and eq. 6 in eq. 3:

$$f_{dopp} = \frac{V_c f}{c} \frac{R_E \cos \theta_E}{R_E + h_S} \tag{7}$$

Figure 2 suggests that the Doppler shift increases with frequency, resulting in a deviation of up to 56 kHz for the L-band. An elevation angle of 90° indicates that the satellite is directly above the ground station. Understanding the Doppler shift is crucial for accurate link budget calculations.

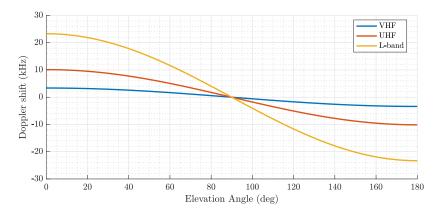


Figure 2: Doppler shift versus elevation angle in VHF, UHF, and L-band.

# 2.4 Atmospheric Attenuation

Optical uplink and downlink communications between satellites and ground stations are subject to attenuation due to atmospheric conditions. Scattering, which involves the redirection of beam energy by particles along the beam's propagation path, significantly contributes to this attenuation. This project focuses on Mie scattering and geometrical scattering as the main factors for atmospheric attenuation, as they are the primary sources of beam scattering and, consequently, beam fading within the atmosphere.

Thus, the received power with atmospheric attenuation is given by

$$P_R = P_T \eta_T \eta_R G_T G_R L_T L_R L_A L_{PG} \tag{8}$$

•  $L_A$  = atmospheric attenuation loss

•  $L_{PG}$  = free space path loss for links between ground stations and satellites [8]

The free space path loss,  $L_{PG}$ , can be expressed based on slant distance [9], (i.e., the distance between a ground station and a satellite) as

$$L_{PG} = \left(\frac{\lambda}{4\pi d_{GS}}\right)^2 \tag{9}$$

$$d_{GS} = R\left(\sqrt{\left(\frac{R+H}{R}\right)^2 - \left(\cos(\theta_E)\right)^2} - \sin(\theta_E)\right)$$
(10)

- $\theta_E$  = elevation angle
- $\bullet \ R = R_E + h_E$
- $\bullet \ H = h_S h_E$ 
  - $-R_E$  = radius of the Earth and is considered as 6378.1 km
  - $-h_E$  = height of ground station and is located at  $h_E$  km above the mean sea level
  - $-h_S$  = altitude of the satellites

#### 2.4.1 Mie Scattering

Mie scattering takes place when atmospheric particles have a diameter that matches or exceeds the wavelength of the optical beam. This phenomenon is predominantly observed in the lower atmosphere, where larger particles are more prevalent, with microscopic water particles being the primary contributors. The subsequent formula is adept at accurately modeling the Mie scattering effect, specifically for ground stations situated at altitudes ranging from 0 to 5 km above mean sea level:

$$\rho = a(h_E)^3 + b(h_E)^2 + c(h_E) + d \tag{11}$$

- $\rho$  = denotes the extinction ratio
- a, b, c, d = wavelength dependent empirical coefficients

$$-a = -0.000545\lambda^2 + 0.002\lambda - 0.0038$$

$$-b = 0.00628\lambda^2 - 0.0232\lambda + 0.00439$$

$$-c = -0.028\lambda^2 + 0.101\lambda - 0.18$$

$$-d = -0.228\lambda^3 + 0.922\lambda^2 - 1.26\lambda + 0.719$$

The atmospheric attenuation due to Mie scattering [10], can be expressed as

$$I_m = \exp\left(\frac{-\rho}{\sin(\theta_E)}\right) \tag{12}$$

#### 2.4.2 Geometrical Scattering

Geometrical scattering models the attenuation caused by atmospheric conditions near the Earth's surface, such as fog or dense clouds. The model includes the following formula to illustrate the impact of geometrical scattering.

$$V = \frac{1.002}{(L_W N)^{0.6473}} \tag{13}$$

- V = visibility in km
- $L_W$  = liquid water content in  $\frac{g}{m^{-3}}$
- $N = \text{cloud number concentration in } cm^{-3}$

The attenuation coefficient  $\theta_A$  can be expressed as

$$\theta_A = \left(\frac{3.91}{V}\right) \left(\frac{\lambda}{550}\right)^{-\phi} \tag{14}$$

- $\phi$  = particle size related coefficient according to Kim's model [11]
- The Beer-Lambert law [12], is given as  $I(z) = \exp(-\mu z)$ 
  - $-\mu$  = attenuation coefficient that depends on wavelength
  - -z = distance of the transmission path

For geometrical scattering, the atmospheric attenuation can be expressed using the Beer-Lambert law as

$$I_g = \exp\left(-\theta_A d_A\right) \tag{15}$$

- $d_A$  = distance of the optical beam through the troposphere layer of the atmosphere over which it encounters geometrical scattering
  - $d_A = (h_A h_E)\csc(\theta_E)$
  - $-h_A$  = height of the troposphere layer of atmosphere in km

The atmospheric attenuation loss considering both Mie scattering and geometrical scattering [13] can then be calculated as

$$L_A = I_m I_g = \exp\left(\frac{-\rho}{\sin(\theta_E)}\right) \exp\left(-\theta_A d_A\right) \tag{16}$$

# 2.5 Link Margin

The efficacy of an optical communication system is often measured using metrics such as link margin and bit error rate, among others. Link margin is the ratio between the power of the signal received and the minimum necessary signal power to attain a certain bit error rate at a predetermined data rate. This margin is essential for compensating unforeseen

losses and interferences, and it must remain positive to ensure the received signal is correctly interpreted. The calculation for link margin is represented by the following equation:

$$LM = \frac{P_R}{P_{req}} \tag{17}$$

- $P_R$  = received power in mW
- $P_{req}$  = receiver sensitivity in mW [8]

# 3 Results

The section presents the simulation results using the system model discussed in Section 2. The analysis aims to investigate the behavior of transmission power due to different factors, such as inter-satellite link distance, slant distance, elevation angle, and link margin.

# 3.1 Optical Inter-Satellite Link vs. Transmission Power

The optical link model parameters summarized in Table 1 are considered for evaluating optical inter-satellite links as well as uplink and downlink communications. These parameters are utilized in actual optical satellite communication systems. The link transmission power is computed using equations (1) and (2), which are based on the parameters listed in Table 1. Figure 3 suggests that the required transmission power increases as the link distance increases.

Parameter	Symbol	Units	Value
Laser wavelength [14]	λ	nm	1550
Transmitter optical efficiency [15]	$\eta_T$		0.8
Receiver optical efficiency [15]	$\eta_R$		0.8
Data rate [16]	$R_{data}$	Gbps	10
Receiver telescope diameter [14]	$D_R$	mm	80
Transmitter pointing error [15]	$ heta_T$	$\mu { m rad}$	1
Receiver pointing error [15]	$ heta_R$	$\mu { m rad}$	1
Full transmitting divergence angle [14]	$\Theta_T$	$\mu { m rad}$	15
Receiver sensitivity [16]	$P_{req}$	dBm	-35.5
Bit error rate [16]	•		$10^{-12}$
Link Margin	LM	dB	3

Table 1: Link model parameters

#### 3.2 Slant Distance vs. Transmission Power

The computation of optical uplink/downlink transmission power incorporates parameters related to atmospheric attenuation, as summarized in Table 2. Equations (11) and (12) are employed to calculate Mie scattering,  $I_m$ , which is influenced by the ground station altitude,  $h_E$ , elevation angle,  $\theta_E$ , and wavelength,  $\lambda$ . Geometrical scattering,  $I_g$ , is determined according to equations (13) to (15). Subsequently, atmospheric attenuation loss,  $L_A$ , is derived

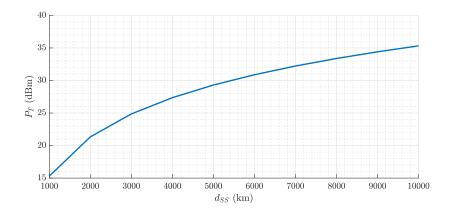


Figure 3: Link distance vs. transmission power

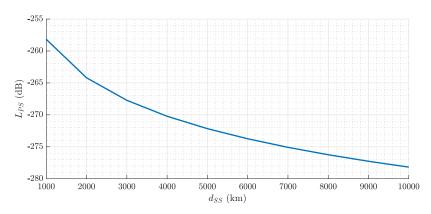


Figure 4: Link distance vs. path loss

using equation (16), and  $P_T$  for optical uplink/downlink is calculated as presented in Table 3 and Figure 5.

Parameter	Symbol	Units	Value
Ground station height [13]	$h_E$	km	1
Thin cirrus cloud concentration [11]	$L_w$	${ m cm}^{-3}$	0.5
Liquid water content [11]	N	$\mathrm{g}/\mathrm{m}^3$	$3.128 \times 10^{-4}$
Partial size coefficient [13]	$\phi$		1.6
Elevation angle [17]	$ heta_E$	degree	40
Troposphere layer height [18]	$h_A$	$\mathrm{km}$	20

Table 2: Atmospheric attenuation parameters

# 3.3 Elevation Angle vs. Transmission Power

Both Mie and geometrical scatterings are associated with the elevation angle,  $\theta_E$ , between the satellite and the ground station. Calculations of  $P_T$  are carried out for a range of elevation angles from 10° to 90°, while the altitude of the satellite,  $h_S$ , is maintained at 500 km. When the elevation angle,  $\theta_E$ , is at 90°, it signifies that the satellite is directly overhead the ground station, resulting in a slant distance  $d_{GS}$  equal to  $h_S - h_E$ . The findings presented in Table

$h_S \text{ (km)}$	$d_{GS}$ (km)	$L_{PG}$ (dB)	$I_m \text{ (dB)}$	$I_g$ (dB)	$L_A$ (dB)	$P_T$ (dBm)
100	152.4	-241.84	-0.15	-0.33	-0.48	-0.54
200	303.2	-247.81	-0.15	-0.33	-0.48	5.44
300	451.2	-251.27	-0.15	-0.33	-0.48	8.89
400	596.7	-253.69	-0.15	-0.33	-0.48	11.32
500	739.9	-255.56	-0.15	-0.33	-0.48	13.19
600	881.0	-257.08	-0.15	-0.33	-0.48	14.70
700	1020.1	-258.35	-0.15	-0.33	-0.48	15.98
800	1157.5	-259.45	-0.15	-0.33	-0.48	17.07
900	1293.2	-260.41	-0.15	-0.33	-0.48	18.04
1000	1427.4	-261.27	-0.15	-0.33	-0.48	18.90

Table 3: Slant distance vs. transmission power

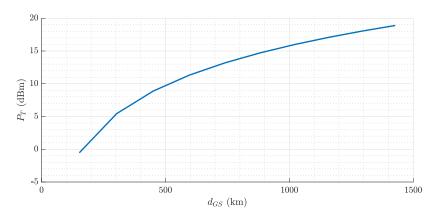


Figure 5: Slant distance vs. transmission power

4 and Figure 6 illustrate that  $P_T$  diminishes as  $\theta_E$  increases.

$\theta_E \text{ (deg)}$	$d_{GS}$ (km)	$L_{PG}$ (dB)	$I_m$ (dB)	$I_g$ (dB)	$L_A$ (dB)	$P_T  ext{ (dBm)}$
10	1692.7	-262.75	-0.57	-1.22	-1.79	21.68
20	1191.0	-259.70	-0.29	-0.62	-0.91	17.75
30	907.8	-257.34	-0.20	-0.42	-0.62	15.10
40	739.9	-255.56	-0.15	-0.33	-0.48	13.19
50	635.5	-254.24	-0.13	-0.28	-0.41	11.79
60	569.4	-253.29	-0.11	-0.24	-0.36	10.79
70	528.5	-252.64	-0.11	-0.22	-0.33	10.11
80	506.1	-252.26	-0.10	-0.21	-0.32	9.72
90	499	-252.14	-0.10	-0.21	-0.31	9.59

Table 4: Elevation angle vs. transmission power

# 3.4 Link Margin vs. Transmission Power

Table 5 presents the calculated values of  $P_T$  corresponding to various levels of LM and  $d_{SS}$ . For a specified  $d_{SS}$  within this table, an increase in LM leads to a higher  $P_T$ . The analysis also explores the requisite LM values corresponding to a given  $P_T$  across diverse

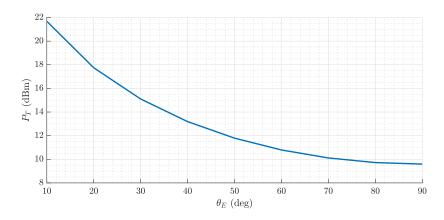


Figure 6: Elevation angle vs. transmission power

link distances. In the context of optical inter-satellite links, the study determines the feasible LM for establishing a connection between satellites when  $P_T$  is fixed at 1 W for different  $d_{SS}$  values. It is noted that the  $P_T$  for Mynaric's laser communication terminal does not exceed 1 W, as referenced in source [14].

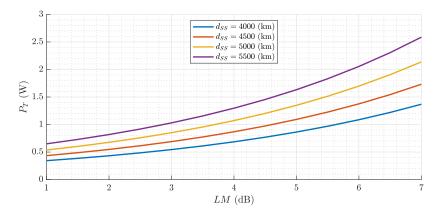


Figure 7: Link margin vs. transmission power

# 4 Discussion

For both optical inter-satellite links and optical uplinks/downlinks, the power transmission,  $P_T$ , exhibits an increase in conjunction with the growth of the slant distances,  $d_{GS}$ . This correlation highlights the strategic significance of satellite positioning to enhance operational longevity. It has been observed that the  $P_T$  requisite for optical uplinks/downlinks exceeds that of optical inter-satellite links for equivalent link distances. To illustrate, at a link distance of 1,000 km, the  $P_T$  for optical inter-satellite connectivity stands at 15.5 dBm, while optical uplinks/downlinks demand a  $P_T$  of 18.9 dBm.

Moreover, in the context of optical uplinks/downlinks, factors such as  $I_m$  and  $I_g$ , and subsequently  $L_A$ , are influenced by the elevation angle,  $\theta_E$ . However, this influence is not uniform;  $L_A$  exhibits significant variations at smaller values of  $\theta_E$ , with the rate of change diminishing markedly as  $\theta_E$  increases. For instance, a notable alteration in  $L_A$  is observed

$d_{SS}$ (km)	LM (dB)	$P_R$ (dBm)	$P_T$ (dBm)	$P_T$ (W)
	4	-31.5	28.36	0.686
	4.5	-31.0	28.86	0.769
	5	-30.5	29.36	0.863
4000	5.5	-30.0	29.86	0.968
	6	-29.5	30.36	1.087
	6.5	-29.0	30.86	1.219
	7	-28.5	31.36	1.369
	4	-31.5	29.38	0.686
	4.5	-31.0	29.88	0.769
	5	-30.5	30.38	0.863
4500	5.5	-30.0	30.88	0.968
	6	-29.5	31.38	1.087
	6.5	-29.0	31.88	1.219
	7	-28.5	32.38	1.369
	2	-33.5	28.30	0.676
	2.5	-33.0	28.80	0.758
	3	-32.5	29.30	0.851
5000	3.5	-32.0	29.80	0.955
	4	-31.5	30.30	1.071
	4.5	-31.0	30.80	1.202
	5	-30.5	31.30	1.349
	1	-34.5	28.12	0.649
	1.5	-34.0	28.62	0.729
	2.0	-33.5	29.12	0.818
5500	2.5	-33.0	29.62	0.918
	3.0	-32.5	30.12	1.030
	3.5	-32.0	30.62	1.155
	4	-31.5	31.12	1.296

Table 5: Link margin vs. transmission power

when  $\theta_E$  ascends from 10° to 20°, in contrast to the minimal shift from 70° to 80°.

As the slant distances,  $d_{GS}$ , extend at a constant power transmission,  $P_T$ , the link margin, LM, demonstrates a reciprocal trend, diminishing in response to the enlargement of  $d_{SS}$  and  $d_{GS}$ . This decrement in LM correlates with the amplification of  $L_{PS}$  and  $L_{PG}$ , which in turn diminishes the LM that can be sustained by a set  $P_T$ . Specifically for optical inter-satellite links, the available LM at a  $P_T$  of 1 W contracts as  $d_{SS}$  grows. Conversely, a greater LM is obtainable at lower satellite altitudes,  $h_S$ , hence a reduced  $d_{GS}$ , with a  $P_T$  of 1 W. However, this available LM tapers off as both  $h_S$  and  $d_{GS}$  increase for optical uplinks/downlinks.

# 5 Conclusion

This project explores the intricacies of optical inter-satellite links, focusing on essential aspects such as path loss, Doppler shift, atmospheric attenuation, and link margin. The mathematical models employed address the critical factors affecting satellite communication, including atmospheric conditions, satellite velocity, and elevation angles.

The analysis reveals a direct correlation between the increase in transmission power requirements and link distances, highlighting the importance of satellite positioning for communication efficiency. It also shows that optical uplinks/downlinks demand more transmission power than inter-satellite links for the same distances, pointing to the challenges in ground-to-satellite communications.

The examination of link margin versus transmission power uncovers an inverse relationship, underscoring the trade-offs between transmission power and link distance. This project illuminates the necessity of precise link budgeting to ensure reliable communication between satellites and between satellites and ground stations, emphasizing the balance needed for effective satellite communication systems.

# References

- [1] J. M. Gongora-Torres, C. Vargas-Rosales, A. Aragón-Zavala, and R. Villalpando-Hernandez, "Link budget analysis for LEO satellites based on the statistics of the elevation angle," *IEEE Access*, vol. 10, pp. 14518–14528, Jan 31 2022.
- [2] I. Latachi, M. Karim, A. Hanafi, T. Rachidi, A. Khalayoun, N. Assem, S. Dahbi, and S. Zouggar, "Link budget analysis for a LEO cubesat communication subsystem," in 2017 International Conference on Advanced Technologies for Signal and Image Processing (ATSIP), pp. 1–6, May 22 2017.
- [3] J. Liang, A. U. Chaudhry, E. Erdogan, and H. Yanikomeroglu, "Link budget analysis for free-space optical satellite networks," in 2022 IEEE 23rd International Symposium on a World of Wireless, Mobile and Multimedia Networks (WoWMoM), pp. 471–476, Jun 14 2022.
- [4] A. Guidotti, A. Vanelli-Coralli, A. Mengali, and S. Cioni, "Non-terrestrial networks: Link budget analysis," in *ICC 2020 2020 IEEE International Conference on Communications (ICC)*, pp. 1–7, Jun 7 2020.
- [5] U. J. Lewark, J. Antes, J. Walheim, J. Timmermann, T. Zwick, and I. Kallfass, "Link budget analysis for future e-band gigabit satellite communication links (71–76 and 81–84 ghz)," *CEAS Space Journal*, vol. 4, pp. 41–46, Jun 2013.
- [6] S. Arnon, "Performance of a laser  $\mu$ satellite network with an optical preamplifier," JOSA A, vol. 22, pp. 708–715, Apr 1 2005.
- [7] R. W. Heath Jr and A. Lozano, Foundations of MIMO communication. Cambridge University Press, Dec 6 2018.
- [8] H.-C. Lim, J. U. Park, M. Choi, C.-S. Choi, J.-D. Choi, J. Kim, et al., "Performance analysis of dpsk optical communication for LEO-to-ground relay link via a geo satellite," *Journal of Astronomy and Space Sciences*, vol. 37, pp. 11–18, Jan 31 2020.
- [9] S. Cakaj, B. Kamo, V. Koliçi, and O. Shurdi, "The range and horizon plane simulation for ground stations of low earth orbiting (LEO) satellites.," *Int. J. Commun. Netw. Syst. Sci.*, vol. 4, pp. 585–589, Sep 20 2011.
- [10] I. Recommendation, "618-10 propagation data and prediction methods required for the design of earth-space telecommunication systems," *ITU-R Recommendations*, Jul 2003.
- [11] M. S. Awan, E. Leitgeb, B. Hillbrand, F. Nadeem, M. Khan, et al., "Cloud attenuations for free-space optical links," in 2009 International workshop on satellite and Space communications, pp. 274–278, IEEE, Sep 9 2009.
- [12] Z. Ghassemlooy, W. Popoola, and S. Rajbhandari, Optical wireless communications: system and channel modelling with Matlab (2). CRC press, Apr 30 2019.
- [13] E. Erdogan, I. Altunbas, G. K. Kurt, M. Bellemare, G. Lamontagne, and H. Yanikomeroglu, "Site diversity in downlink optical satellite networks through ground station selection," *IEEE Access*, vol. 9, pp. 31179–31190, Feb 16 2021.

- [14] C. Carrizo, M. Knapek, J. Horwath, D. D. Gonzalez, and P. Cornwell, "Optical intersatellite link terminals for next generation satellite constellations," in *Free-Space Laser Communications XXXII*, vol. 11272, pp. 8–18, SPIE, Mar 2 2020.
- [15] B. Patnaik and P. K. Sahu, "Inter-satellite optical wireless communication system design and simulation," *IET Communications*, vol. 6, pp. 2561–2567, Nov 6 2012.
- [16] A. Maho, M. Faugeron, A. Le Kernec, K. Elayoubi, and M. Sotom, "Assessment of the effective performance of dpsk vs. ook in satellite-based optical communications," in *International Conference on Space Optics—ICSO 2018*, vol. 11180, pp. 2101–2107, SPIE, Jul 12 2019.
- [17] F. SpaceX, "update, nov. 2018, "spacex non-geostationary satellite system, attachment a, technical information to supplement schedule s,"," Nov 2018.
- [18] H. Guo, B. Luo, Y. Ren, S. Zhao, and A. Dang, "Influence of beam wander on uplink of ground-to-satellite laser communication and optimization for transmitter beam radius," Optics letters, vol. 35, pp. 1977–1979, Jun 15 2010.
- [19] Z. Xu, Y. Gao, G. Chen, R. Fernandez, V. Basavarajappa, and R. Tafazolli, "Enhancement of satellite-to-phone link budget: An approach using distributed beamforming," IEEE Vehicular Technology Magazine, vol. 18, pp. 85–93, Oct 16 2023.
- [20] E. Kang, W. Shin, Y. Park, Y. B. Park, J. Kim, and H. Choo, "Link budget analysis of low earth orbit satellites considering antenna patterns and wave propagation in interference situations," in 2022 International Symposium on Antennas and Propagation (ISAP), pp. 511–512, Oct 31 2022.

#### MATLAB Code

```
clc; clear; close all;
set(groot, 'defaultAxesTickLabelInterpreter', 'latex');
set(groot, 'defaulttextinterpreter', 'latex');
set(groot, 'defaultLegendInterpreter', 'latex');
set(groot, 'defaultAxesFontSize', 13);
%% FSPL Validation
D = 10e3:500e3; % distance in m
frequency = [145e6 435e6 1e9]; % frequency in Hz, e.g., 2.4 GHz for Wi-Fi
c = 3e8; % speed of light in vacuum in m/s
lambda = c ./ frequency; % calculate wavelength
FSPL_linear = FSPL(D, lambda);
FSPL_dB = linear2dB(FSPL_linear);
fig = figure;clf;
fig.Position = [50 50 700 300];
hold on; grid on; grid minor;
plot(D/(10<sup>3</sup>), FSPL_dB(:,1), 'LineWidth', 2, 'DisplayName',...
'VHF');
plot(D/(10<sup>3</sup>), FSPL_dB(:,2), 'LineWidth', 2, 'DisplayName',...
'UHF');
plot(D/(10<sup>3</sup>), FSPL_dB(:,3), 'LineWidth', 2, 'DisplayName',...
'L-band');
xlabel('$d_{SS}$ (km)');
ylabel('Free Space Loss (dB)');
legend('show', 'Location', 'best');
set(gcf,'renderer','painters')
print(fig, 'FSPL_Val.eps', '-depsc2');
%% Doppler Validation
                          % elevation angle
alpha = deg2rad(0:180);
R = 6371000 + 500000; % Earth's radius plus the satellite's altitude m
Vc = 7500; % Velocity of the satellite in m/s
h = 500e3; % Altitude of the satellite above Earth's surface in meters
fdopp_VHF = DopplerShift(Vc, frequency(1), R, alpha, h, c);
fdopp_UHF = DopplerShift(Vc, frequency(2), R, alpha, h, c);
fdopp_Lband = DopplerShift(Vc, frequency(3), R, alpha, h, c);
fig = figure;clf;
fig.Position = [50 50 700 300];
hold on; grid on; grid minor;
plot(rad2deg(alpha), fdopp_VHF / 10^3, 'LineWidth', 2, 'DisplayName',...
```

```
'VHF');
plot(rad2deg(alpha), fdopp_UHF / 10^3, 'LineWidth', 2, 'DisplayName',...
'UHF'):
plot(rad2deg(alpha), fdopp_Lband / 10^3, 'LineWidth', 2, 'DisplayName',...
'L-band');
xlabel('Elevation Angle (deg)');
ylabel('Doppler shift (kHz)');
legend('show', 'Location', 'best');
set(gcf,'renderer','painters')
print(fig, 'Doppler_Val.eps', '-depsc2');
%% Optical Inter-Satellite Link vs. Transmission Power
lambda = 1550;  % Laser wavelength nm
% Receiver optical efficiency
eta_R = 0.8;
D_R = 80;  % Receiver telescope diameter mm
P_req_linear = dBm2linear(-35.5); % Receiver sensitivity w
bit_error_rate = 10^-12;
LM = dB2linear(3); % Link margin
P_R = LM * P_req_linear;
D = 1000:1000:10000;
                    % km
L_PS_linear = FSPL(D * 10^3, lambda * 10^-9);
L_PS_dB = linear2dB(L_PS_linear);
P_T_linear = optical_links(lambda, eta_T, eta_R, D_R,...
theta_T, theta_R, Theta_T, P_R,...
L_PS_linear);
P_T_dBm = linear2dBm(P_T_linear);
fig = figure;clf;
fig.Position = [50 50 700 300];
hold on; grid on; grid minor;
plot(D, P_T_dBm, 'LineWidth', 2);
xlabel('$d_{SS}$ (km)');
ylabel('$P_T$ (dBm)');
set(gcf,'renderer','painters')
print(fig, 'D_vs_P_T.eps', '-depsc2');
fig = figure;clf;
fig.Position = [50 50 700 300];
hold on; grid on; grid minor;
plot(D, L_PS_dB, 'LineWidth', 2);
```

```
xlabel('$d_{SS}$ (km)');
ylabel('$L_{PS}$ (dB)');
set(gcf,'renderer','painters')
print(fig, 'D_vs_L_PS.eps', '-depsc2');
%% Atmospheric Attenuation Parameters
h_E = 1;
            % Ground station height km
L_W = 0.5; % Thin cirrus cloud concentration cm<sup>-3</sup>
N = 3.128 * 10^-4; % Liquid water content g/m<sup>-3</sup>
phi = 1.6; % Partial size coefficient
theta_E = 40; % Elevation angle deg
h_A = 20;  % Troposphere layer height km
               % radius of the Earth km
R_E = 6378.1;
h_S = 100:100:1000; % altitude of the satellites km
d_GS = slant_distance(R_E, h_E, h_S, theta_E); % Slant distance
L_PG_linear = FSPL(d_GS * 10^3, lambda * 10^-9);
L_PG_dB = linear2dB(L_PG_linear);
I_m_linear = mie_scattering(h_E, lambda * 10^-3, theta_E);
I_m_dB = linear2dB(I_m_linear);
I_g_linear = geo_scattering(L_W, N, phi, lambda, h_A, h_E, theta_E);
I_g_dB = linear2dB(I_g_linear);
L_A_dB = I_m_dB + I_g_dB;
L_A_linear = dB2linear(L_A_dB);
P_T_linear = optical_links_atm_atten(lambda, eta_T, eta_R, D_R,...
theta_T, theta_R, Theta_T, P_R,...
L_A_linear, L_PG_linear);
P_T_dBm = linear2dBm(P_T_linear);
fig = figure;clf;
fig.Position = [50 50 700 300];
hold on; grid on; grid minor;
plot(d_GS, P_T_dBm, 'LineWidth', 2);
xlabel('$d_{GS}$ (km)');
ylabel('$P_T$ (dBm)');
set(gcf,'renderer','painters')
print(fig, 'd_GSvs_P_T.eps', '-depsc2');
%% Elevation Angle vs. Transmission Power
theta_E = 10:10:90;
h_S = 500;
```

```
d_GS = slant_distance(R_E, h_E, h_S, theta_E);
L_PG_linear = FSPL(d_GS * 10^3, lambda * 10^-9);
L_PG_dB = linear2dB(L_PG_linear);
I_m_linear = mie_scattering(h_E, lambda * 10^-3, theta_E);
I_m_dB = linear2dB(I_m_linear);
I_g_linear = geo_scattering(L_W, N, phi, lambda, h_A, h_E, theta_E);
I_g_dB = linear2dB(I_g_linear);
L_A_dB = I_m_dB + I_g_dB;
L_A_{linear} = dB2linear(L_A_dB);
P_T_linear = optical_links_atm_atten(lambda, eta_T, eta_R, D_R,...
theta_T, theta_R, Theta_T, P_R,...
L_A_linear, L_PG_linear);
P_T_dBm = linear2dBm(P_T_linear);
fig = figure;clf;
fig.Position = [50 50 700 300];
hold on; grid on; grid minor;
plot(theta_E, P_T_dBm, 'LineWidth', 2);
xlabel('$\theta_E$ (deg)');
ylabel('$P_T$ (dBm)');
set(gcf,'renderer','painters')
print(fig, 'theta_Evs_P_T.eps', '-depsc2');
%% Link Margin vs. Transmission Power
LM_dB = 1:0.5:7;
LM_linear = dB2linear(LM_dB);
P_R_linear = received_power(LM_linear, P_req_linear);
P_R_dBm = linear2dBm(P_R_linear);
D = 4000:500:5500;
                      % km
P_T_dBm = zeros(length(LM_dB), length(D));
for i = 1:length(D)
L_PS_linear = FSPL(D(i) * 10^3, lambda * 10^-9);
L_PS_dB = linear2dB(L_PS_linear);
P_T_linear = optical_links(lambda, eta_T, eta_R, D_R,...
theta_T, theta_R, Theta_T, P_R_linear,...
L_PS_linear);
P_T_dBm(:,i) = linear2dBm(P_T_linear);
```

```
fig = figure;clf;
fig.Position = [50 50 700 300];
hold on; grid on; grid minor;
plot(LM_dB, dBm2linear(P_T_dBm(:,1)), 'LineWidth', 2, 'DisplayName',...
'$d_{SS} = 4000$ (km)');
plot(LM_dB, dBm2linear(P_T_dBm(:,2)), 'LineWidth', 2, 'DisplayName',...
^{\$}d_{SS} = 4500\$ (km)^{;}
plot(LM_dB, dBm2linear(P_T_dBm(:,3)), 'LineWidth', 2, 'DisplayName',...
^{\$}d_{SS} = 5000\$ (km)^{;}
plot(LM_dB, dBm2linear(P_T_dBm(:,4)), 'LineWidth', 2, 'DisplayName',...
^{\$}d_{SS} = 5500\$ (km)';
xlabel('$LM$ (dB)');
vlabel('$P_T$ (W)');
legend('show', 'Location', 'best');
set(gcf,'renderer','painters')
print(fig, 'LM_P_T.eps', '-depsc2');
%% Functions
function dB = linear2dB(linearValue)
% Check if the input is non-negative since power values can't be negative
if linearValue < 0
error('Input must be a non-negative value');
end
% Calculate the dB value from the linear scale input
dB = 10 * log10(linearValue);
end
function dBm = linear2dBm(linearPowerWatts)
% Ensure the power value is non-negative since power can't be negative
if linearPowerWatts < 0</pre>
error('Input power must be a non-negative value in Watts.');
end
% Convert the linear power in Watts to dBm
dBm = 10 * log10(linearPowerWatts) + 30;
end
function linearPowerWatts = dBm2linear(dBm)
% Convert the dBm value to linear power in Watts
linearPowerWatts = 10.^((dBm - 30)./10);
end
function linear = dB2linear(dB)
% Convert the dB value to a linear scale
linear = 10.^(dB./10);
```

end

```
function FSPL_linear = FSPL(D, lambda)
% calculateFSPL calculates the Free Space Path Loss (FSPL)
\% D is the distance between the transmitter and receiver in meters
% lambda is the wavelength of the signal in meters
% Calculate FSPL in dB
for i = 1:length(lambda)
FSPL_linear(:,i) = (lambda(i) ./ (4 * pi * D)).^2;
end
end
function fdopp = DopplerShift(Vc, f, R, alpha, h, c)
% Calculate Doppler shift
for i = 1:length(alpha)
fdopp(i) = (Vc * f / c) * (R * cos(alpha(i))) / (R + h);
end
end
function P_R = received_power(LM, P_req)
P_R = LM * P_{req};
end
function P_T = optical_links(lambda, eta_T, eta_R, D_R,...
theta_T, theta_R, Theta_T, P_R,...
L_PS)
% lambda = Laser wavelength mm
% eta_T = Transmitter optical efficiency
% eta_R = Receiver optical efficiency
% R_data = Data rate Gbps
% D_R = 80 Receiver telescope diameter mm
% theta_T = 1 Transmitter pointing error murad
% theta_R = 1 Receiver pointing error murad
% Theta_R = 15 Full transmitting divergence angle murad
% P_req = -35.5 Receiver sensitivity dBm
% The transmitter gain
G_T = 16 / (Theta_T)^2;
% The receiver gain
```

```
G_R = (D_R * pi / lambda)^2;
% The transmitter pointing loss
L_T = \exp(-G_T * (theta_T)^2);
% The receiver pointing loss
L_R = \exp(-G_R * (theta_R)^2);
den = eta_T * eta_R * G_T * G_R * L_T * L_R .* L_PS;
P_T = P_R ./ den;
P_T = P_T * 10^{-24}; % watts
end
function d_GS = slant_distance(R_E, h_E, h_S, theta_E)
% R_E = radius of earth km
% h_E = height of ground station km
% h_S = altitude of the satellites km
% theta_E = elevation angle deg
theta_E = deg2rad(theta_E);
R = R_E + h_E;
H = h_S - h_E;
A = ((R + H) ./ R).^2;
B = (\cos(\text{theta}_E)).^2;
C = sin(theta_E);
d_GS = R .* (sqrt(A - B) - C);
end
function I_m = mie_scattering(h_E, lambda, theta_E)
% lambda = micrometers
theta_E = deg2rad(theta_E);
a = -0.000545 * lambda^2 + 0.002 * lambda - 0.0038;
b = 0.00628 * lambda^2 - 0.0232 * lambda + 0.00439;
c = -0.028 * lambda^2 + 0.101 * lambda - 0.18;
d = -0.228 * lambda^3 + 0.922 * lambda^2 - 1.26 * lambda + 0.719;
rho = a * (h_E)^3 + b * (h_E)^2 + c * (h_E) + d;
I_m = exp(-rho ./ sin(theta_E));
end
```

```
function I_g = geo_scattering(L_W, N, phi, lambda, h_A, h_E, theta_E)
% lambda = nm
% L_W = liquid water content g/m^-3
% N = cloud number concentration cm^-3
% visibility in km
V = 1.002 / (L_W * N)^0.6473;
% attenuation coefficient
theta_A = (3.91 / V) * (lambda / 550)^(-phi);
% distance of the optical beam through the...
% troposphere layer of the atmosphere
d_A = (h_A - h_E) .* csc(deg2rad(theta_E));
I_g = \exp(-\text{theta_A} \cdot * d_A);
end
function P_T = optical_links_atm_atten(lambda, eta_T, eta_R, D_R,...
theta_T, theta_R, Theta_T, P_R,...
L_A, L_PG)
% lambda = Laser wavelength mm
% eta_T = Transmitter optical efficiency
% eta_R = Receiver optical efficiency
% R_data = Data rate Gbps
% D_R = 80 Receiver telescope diameter mm
% theta_T = 1 Transmitter pointing error murad
% theta_R = 1 Receiver pointing error murad
% Theta_R = 15 Full transmitting divergence angle murad
% P_req = -35.5 Receiver sensitivity dBm
% The transmitter gain
G_T = 16 / (Theta_T)^2;
% The receiver gain
G_R = (D_R * pi / lambda)^2;
% The transmitter pointing loss
L_T = \exp(-G_T * (theta_T)^2);
% The receiver pointing loss
L_R = \exp(-G_R * (theta_R)^2);
```

```
den = eta_T * eta_R * G_T * G_R * L_T * L_R .* L_A .* L_PG'; 
 P_T = P_R ./ den; 
 P_T = P_T * 10^-24; % watts
```