CLAIMS

1. A communication method, comprising:

receiving, by an access network device, first information from an access and mobility management function network element, wherein the first information carries a data size of downlink data of a terminal device buffered in a user plane function network element or a session management function network element, the terminal device is in an inactive state, and an extended discontinuous reception eDRX cycle is configured by the access network device for the terminal device;

determining, by the access network device based on the data size of the downlink data, that the downlink data is small data;

sending, by the access network device, a first indication to the terminal device, wherein the first indication indicates the terminal device to perform small data transmission; and

sending, by the access network device, a second indication to the access and mobility management function network element or the user plane function network element, wherein the second indication indicates the user plane function network element to send the small data to the access network device.

2. The communication method according to claim 1, wherein before the sending, by the access network device, a second indication to the access and mobility management function network element or the user plane function network element, the method further comprises:

receiving, by the access network device, second information from the terminal device, wherein the second information is used to confirm that the terminal device is able to perform data transmission with a core network device, or is used to confirm that the terminal device performs connection resumption.

3. The communication method according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the eDRX cycle is greater than or equal to 10.24 seconds.

4. A communication method, comprising:

receiving, by an access and mobility management function network element, third information from a session management function network element, wherein the third information carries a data size of downlink data of a terminal device buffered in a user plane function network element or the session management function network element, the terminal device is in an inactive state, and an eDRX cycle is configured by an access network device for the terminal device; and

sending, by the access and mobility management function network element, first information to the access network device, wherein the first information carries the data size of the downlink data.

5. The communication method according to claim 4, wherein after the sending, by the access and mobility management function network element, first information to the access network device, the method further comprises:

receiving, by the access and mobility management function network element, a second indication from the access network device, wherein the second indication indicates the user plane function network element to send the downlink data used as small data to the access network device.

6. The communication method according to claim 4 or 5, wherein the eDRX cycle is greater than or equal to 10.24 seconds.

7. A communication method, comprising:

receiving, by an access network device when buffering duration of downlink data of a terminal device buffered in a user plane function network element or a session management function network element expires, the downlink data from the user plane function network element, wherein the terminal device is in an inactive state, and an eDRX cycle is configured by the access network device for the terminal device;

determining, by the access network device, that the downlink data is small data; and

sending, by the access network device, a first indication to the terminal device, wherein the first indication indicates the terminal device to perform small data transmission.

8. The communication method according to claim 7, wherein the eDRX cycle is greater than or equal to 10.24 seconds.

9. A communication method, comprising:

receiving, by a user plane function network element, a third indication from a session management function network element, wherein the third indication indicates to send, when buffering duration of downlink data of a terminal device buffered in the user plane function network element or the session management function network element expires, the downlink data to an access network device, the terminal device is in an inactive state, and an eDRX cycle is configured by the access network device for the terminal device; and

sending, by the user plane function network element, the downlink data to the access network device when the buffering duration expires.

10. The communication method according to claim 9, wherein the eDRX cycle is greater than or equal to 10.24 seconds.

11. A communication method, comprising:

obtaining, by an access and mobility management function network element, buffering duration of downlink data of a terminal device buffered in a user plane function network element or a session management function network element; and

sending, by the access and mobility management function network element, fourth information to the session management function network element, wherein the fourth information carries the buffering duration.

12. The communication method according to claim 11, wherein the obtaining, by an access and mobility management function network element, buffering duration of downlink data of a terminal device buffered in a user plane function network element or a session management function network element comprises:

obtaining, by the access and mobility management function network element based on an eDRX configuration of the terminal device, the buffering duration of the downlink data of the terminal device buffered in the user plane function network element or the session management function network element, wherein the eDRX configuration comprises an eDRX cycle configured by an access network device.

13. The communication method according to claim 12, wherein the eDRX cycle is greater than or equal to 10.24 seconds.

14. A communication method, comprising:

receiving, by an access and mobility management function network element, fifth information from an access network device, wherein the fifth information carries an eDRX cycle configured by the access network device for a terminal device when the terminal device is in an inactive state, and the fifth information is used to determine that the terminal device and the access network device support small data transmission;

receiving, by the access and mobility management function network element, sixth information from a session management function network element, wherein the sixth information is used to determine that downlink data of the terminal device buffered in a user plane function network element or the session management function network element is small data; and

sending, by the access and mobility management function network element, a fourth indication to the access network device, wherein the fourth indication indicates the access network device to perform small data transmission.

15. The communication method according to claim 14, wherein the fifth information further carries capability information of the terminal device, and after the receiving, by an access and mobility management function network element, fifth information from an access network device, the method further comprises:

determining, by the access and mobility management function network element based on the capability information of the terminal device, that the user plane function network element supports buffering the small data of the terminal device.

16. The communication method according to claim 14 or 15, wherein the sixth information carries a data size of the downlink data.

17. The communication method according to any one of claims 14 to 16, wherein after the sending, by the access and mobility management function network element, a fourth indication to the access network device, the method further comprises:

receiving, by the access and mobility management function network element, a second indication from the access network device, wherein the second indication indicates the user plane function network element to send the downlink data used as small data to the access network device.

18. The communication method according to any one of claims 14 to 16, wherein the eDRX cycle is greater than or equal to 10.24 seconds.

19. A communication method, comprising:

sending, by an access network device, fifth information to an access and mobility management function network element, wherein the fifth information carries an eDRX cycle configured by the access network device for a terminal device when the terminal device is in an inactive state, and the fifth information is used to determine that the terminal device and the access network device support small data transmission; and

receiving, by the access network device, a fourth indication from the access and mobility management function network element, wherein the fourth indication indicates the access network device to perform small data transmission.

20. The communication method according to claim 19, wherein after the receiving, by the access network device, a fourth indication from the access and mobility management function network element, the method further comprises:

sending, by the access network device, a first indication to the terminal device, wherein the first indication indicates the terminal device to perform small data transmission.

21. The communication method according to claim 19 or 20, wherein after the receiving, by the access network device, a fourth indication from the access and mobility management function network element, the method further comprises:

sending, by the access network device, a second indication to the access and mobility management function network element or a user plane function network element, wherein the second indication indicates the user plane function network element to send downlink data used as small data to the access network device.

22. The communication method according to any one of claims 19 to 21, further comprising:

receiving, by the access network device, second information from the terminal device, wherein the second information is used to confirm that the terminal device is able to perform data

transmission with a core network device, or is used to confirm that the terminal device performs connection resumption.

23. The communication method according to any one of claims 19 to 22, wherein the eDRX cycle is greater than or equal to 10.24 seconds.

24. A communication apparatus, comprising a processor, wherein the processor is configured to execute instructions stored in a memory, and when the instructions are executed, the communication method according to any one of claims 1 to 23 is implemented.

25. A computer-readable storage medium, wherein the computer-readable storage medium stores a computer program, and when the computer program is run on one or more processors, the method according to any one of claims 1 to 23 is implemented.