



CENTRE NATIONAL D'ETUDES SPATIALES



Direction du Centre de Toulouse
Sous-direction Missions et Exploitation de Données
Service Observation de la Terre

THEIA-MU-44-381-CNES


Edition : 01 Date : 08/12/2016

Révision : 00 Date : 08/12/2016

Code diffusion : E

Réf. :

GEOV2 GCM PRODUCT USER MANUAL

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Validé par :	le :	
Pour application :	le :	

BORDEREAU D'INDEXATION

CONFIDENTIALITE :

DLP

MOTS CLES :

TITRE DU DOCUMENT :

GEOV2 GCM Product User Manual

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RESUME :

DOCUMENTS RATTACHES : Ce document vit seul.

LOCALISATION :

VOLUME : 1

NBRE TOTAL DE PAGES : 15
DONT PAGES LIMINAIRES : 0
NBRE DE PAGES SUPPL. : 0

DOCUMENT COMPOSITE : N

LANGUE : FR

GESTION DE CONF. : NG

RESP. GEST. CONF. :

CAUSE D'EVOLUTION : Création du document

CONTRAT : Néant

SYSTEME HOTE :

Microsoft Word 14.0 (14.0.7174)

\\bacchus\GDOC\ModeleGDOC.dot

Version GDOC : v4.3.1.1

Base projet : \\to05res04\GdocBasesPartagees\Projets\CST\PTSC.mdb

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Ed.	Rév.	Date	Référence, Auteur(s), Causes d'évolution
01	00	08/12/2016	PACHOLCZYK Philippe DCT/ME/OT Création du document

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1. BACKGROUND

1.1. SUMMARY

The GEOV2 Global Change Monitoring product (GEOV2/GCM) is a global map of vegetation parameters (FAPAR, LAI and FCOVER) calculated every ten days since 1981 and derived from GEOV2/AVHRR products.

The GEOV2/AVHRR and GEOV2/GCM products are generated and distributed by CNES in the frame of the Theia land data center.

1.2. SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

The PUM document contains:

- a description of the algorithm
- a description of the product: file format, product content, product characteristics.

1.3. DOCUMENTS DE REFERENCE

DR1	<i>GEOV2/AVHRR validation report</i> VERGER Alexandre, Édité. 1, Rév. 0 THEIA-RP-44-371-CREAF (In Preparation)
DR2	GEOV2 AVHRR PRODUCT USER MANUAL PACHOLCZYK Philippe, VERGER Alexandre, 23/11/2016, Édité. 01, Rév. 00 THEIA-SB-44-369-CNES

2. ALGORITHM

1.1. THE CONSIDERED PRODUCTS

The considered products are called GEOV2/GCM and include leaf area index (LAI), the fraction of absorbed photosynthetically active radiation (FAPAR) and the fraction of vegetation cover (FCOVER). They are derived from the GEOV2/AVHRR products, themselves calculated from the AVHRR-LTDR data.

2.1.1. FAPAR

FAPAR corresponds to the fraction of photosynthetically active radiation absorbed by the canopy. The FAPAR value results directly from the radiative transfer model in the canopy which is computed instantaneously. It depends on canopy structure, vegetation element optical properties and illumination conditions. FAPAR is very useful as input to a number of primary productivity models based on simple efficiency considerations (Prince 1991). Most of the primary productivity models using this efficiency concept are running at the daily time step. Consequently, the product definition should correspond to the daily integrated FAPAR value that can be approached by computation of the clear sky daily integrated FAPAR values as well as the FAPAR value computed for diffuse conditions. To improve the consistency with other FAPAR products that are sometimes considering the instantaneous FAPAR value at the time of the satellite overpass under clear sky conditions (e.g. MODIS), a study investigated the differences between alternative FAPAR definitions (Baret et al. 2003). Results show that the instantaneous FAPAR value at 10:00 (or 14:00) solar time is very close to the daily integrated value under clear sky conditions. To keep a higher consistency with the FAPAR definition used in the CYCLOPES, and MODIS products, the instantaneous FAPAR value at 10:00 solar time under clear sky conditions (equivalent to black-sky conditions as defined also for albedo) was used.

FAPAR is relatively linearly related to reflectance values, and will be little sensitive to scaling issues. Note also that the FAPAR refers only to the green parts of the canopy.

2.1.2. Cover fraction (FCOVER)

It corresponds to one minus the gap fraction for nadir direction. FCOVER is used to separate vegetation and soil in energy balance processes, including temperature and evapotranspiration. It is computed from the leaf area index and other canopy structural variables and does not depend on variables such as the geometry of illumination as compared to FAPAR. For this reason, it is a very good candidate for the replacement of classical vegetation indices for the monitoring of green vegetation. Because of its quasi-linear relationship with reflectances, FCOVER will be only marginally scale dependent (Weiss et al. 2000). Note that similarly to LAI and FAPAR, only the green elements will be considered.

2.1.3. Leaf area index (LAI)

LAI is defined as half the developed area of photosynthetically active elements of the vegetation per unit horizontal ground area. It determines the size of the interface for exchange of energy (including radiation) and mass between the canopy and the atmosphere. This is an intrinsic canopy primary variable that should not depend on observation conditions. LAI is strongly non linearly related to reflectance. Therefore, its estimation from remote sensing observations will be scale dependent (Garrigues et al. 2006; Weiss et al. 2000). Note that vegetation LAI as estimated from remote sensing

will include all the green contributors such as the understory when existing under forests canopies. However, except when using directional observations (Chen et al. 2005), LAI is not directly accessible from remote sensing observations due to the possible heterogeneity in leaf distribution within the canopy volume. Therefore, remote sensing observations are rather sensitive to the 'effective' leaf area index, i.e. the value that provides the same diffuse gap fraction while assuming a random distribution of leaves. The difference between the actual LAI and the effective LAI may be quantified by the clumping index (Chen et al. 2005) that roughly varies between 0.5 (very clumped canopies) and 1.0 (randomly distributed leaves). Note that similarly to the other variables, the retrieved LAI is mainly corresponding to the green element: the correct term to be used would be GAI (Green Area Index) although we propose to still use LAI for the sake of simplicity.

2.2. THE AVHRR-LTDR DATA

The Advanced Very High Resolution Radiometer (AVHRR) sensor is an optical instrument that provides multi-spectral imaging by sensing reflected sunlight and thermal emissions.

Several AVHRR sensors have been launched since 1981 which allows getting a long time series. Table 1 gives the temporal coverage since NOAA-7 up to now, for the NOAA satellite used in GEOV2/AVHRR product.

NOAA Satellite Number	Launch date	Ascending Node	Descending Node
7	06/23/1981	1430	0230
9	12/12/1984	1420	0220
11	09/24/1988	1340	0140
14	12/30/1994	1340	0140
16	09/21/2000	1400	0200
18	05/20/2005	1400	0200
19	06/02/2009	2130	0930

Table 1: Historic of the AVHRR temporal coverage used for GEOV2/AVHRR.

The AVHRR sensor is nominally a five channel scanning sensor which images in the visible, near infrared and thermal infrared wavelength bands. Band 1 is the visible band, Band 2 is the near infrared band, and Bands 3, 4 and 5 are the thermal bands. Table 2 and Figure 1 indicate the differences of wavelength on each band for each satellite. Note that for the 7 sensors used (7, 9, 11, 14, 16, 18, 19) no SWIR band is available, preventing from improved atmospheric correction.

Band Name	NOAA 7,8,9,10,11,12,14	NOAA 15,16,17,18,19	IFOV (mRad)
1 (Red)	0.58 - 0.68 μm	0.58 - 0.68 μm	1.39
2 (NIR)	0.725- 1.10 μm	0.725-1.0 μm	1.41
3A		1.58-1.64 μm	1.3

Table 2: AVHRR spectral characteristics and instantaneous field of view.

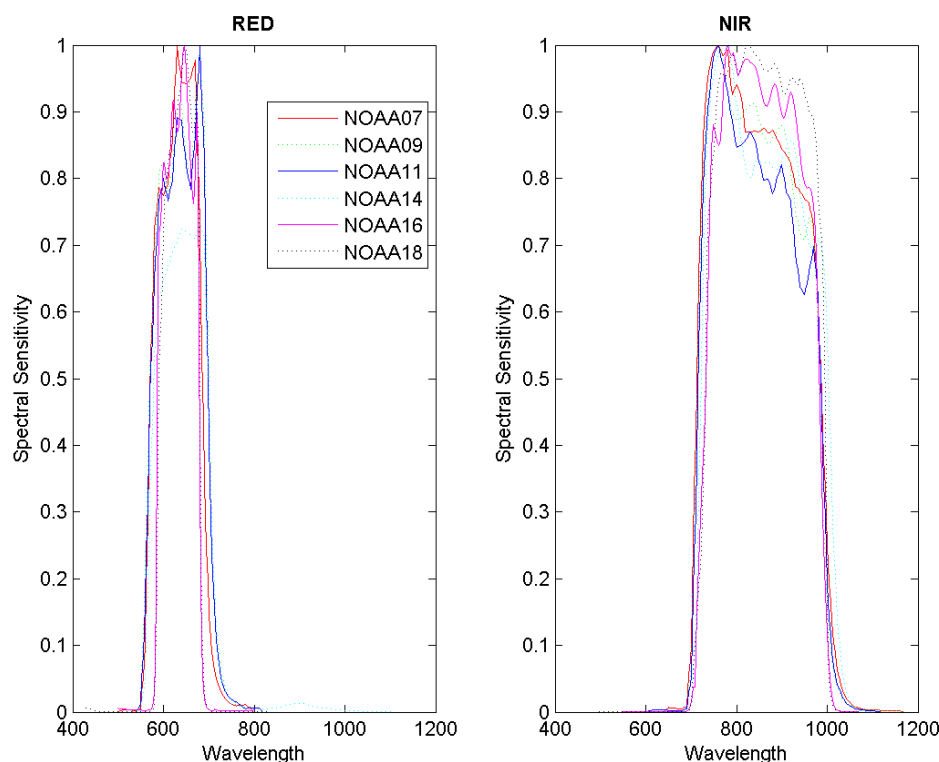


Figure 1: NOAA07 – NOAA14 spectral responses in the RED (left) and near infrared (right) bands.

The sensor has a small field of view, scanning across the Earth by the continuous 360 degree rotation of a flat scanning mirror. All the spectral channels are co-registered in order to measure energy from the same spot on the earth at the same time. The ground resolution is approximately 1.1 km at the satellite nadir from the nominal orbit altitude of about 850 km. The width of off-nadir pixels increases from 1.1 km to about 5 km at the most extreme viewing angle at the edge of the 3000 km imaging swath.

The orientation of the scan lines is perpendicular to the satellite orbit track and the speed of rotation of the scan mirror is selected so that adjacent scan lines are contiguous at the sub-satellite (nadir) position. The satellite speed and scan mirror rotation rate result in an along track pixel height of about 1.1 km. AVHRR data are broadcasted continually as well as tape-recorded onboard the spacecraft for readout at a NOAA receiving centre. The various forms of transmission and area coverage (LAC, GAC) are explained below.

- **LAC** (Local Area Coverage) is nominally 1 km resolution AVHRR imagery recorded with the on board tape recorder for subsequent transmission during the overpass of a station controlled by NOAA. Owing to the large number of data bits, only about 11 minutes of LAC can be accommodated on a single recorder. LAC imagery can only be obtained from NOAA/NESDIS and only in their formats.
- **GAC** (Global Area Coverage) data is lower resolution (4 km) AVHRR imagery. It is derived on board the NOAA satellite by subsampling and averaging the nominal 1 km resolution AVHRR imagery. Out of every 5 normal across track LAC pixels, the 5 bands of the first four are individually averaged and all the bands of the fifth pixel are ignored. In the along track direction, only every third normal line of LAC/HRPT pixels is considered; the two intervening lines are ignored. The GAC spatial resolution is loosely said to be 4 km resolution. It provides anyway a daily global coverage which is recorded on a satellite tape recorder and then transmitted to a ground station controlled by NOAA. 115 minutes of this lower resolution imagery can be stored on a recorder, enough to cover an entire orbit of data acquisition. GAC imagery can only be obtained from NOAA/NESDIS and only in their formats.

Recently, Vermote and collaborators reanalyzed the GAC data to provide a consistent Long Term Data Record (LTDR) (Vermote and Claverie 2013; Vermote et al. 2010). The LTDR (<http://ltdr.nascom.nasa.gov/ltdr/ltdr.html>) provides better performances than the original GAC data due to the preprocessing improvements identified in the AVHRR Pathfinder II project and the atmospheric corrections used for MODIS.

Top of atmospheric reflectance were first calibrated using the vicarious calibration algorithm (Vermote and Kaufman 1995), cloud screening was applied using the CLAVR-1 algorithm (Stowe et al. 1999) using MODIS thresholds. Atmospheric correction was then performed using water vapor from NCEP data, ozone from TOMS data, Rayleigh scattering from NCEP atmospheric pressure simulations, and aerosols using the red (CH1).

A BRDF normalization was then achieved by applying correction parameters from POLDER in Ross-Li-Maignan model (Maignan et al. 2004). Data are provided for nadir viewing and a 45° solar zenith angle.

LTDR data are provided in hdf format at a daily temporal step and at 0.05° (5.6 km at equator) sampling interval in a latitude/longitude climate modeling grid (CMG). They are dimensioned [7200, 3600].

They correspond to a reasonable hour of ascending crossing time (close to 14:00, see Table 1). Two versions (Version 3 and version 4) for LTDR data are available. LTDR4 geometric performances were improved as compared to LTDR3 and the period has been extended to 2013 (instead of 2000 for LTDR3). Six sensors were used to cover the 1981-2013 period as described in Table 3. In order to have the longest archive with the best accuracy, we used the version 4. However, the LTDR4 dataset presents a gap lasting around almost a year (from 1st January to 2nd November 2000). On the contrary LTDR3 is available for the entire year 2000. For the year 2000, we used all available LTDR3 and LTDR4 data.

Satellite	Start date (doy)	End date (doy)
NOAA07	1981 176	1985 033
NOAA09	1985 004	1988 312
NOAA11	1988 313	1994 365
NOAA14	1995 001	2000 366
NOAA16	2000 306	2005 365
NOAA18	2005 183	2009 365
NOAA 19	2009 164	2016 327

Table 3: Sensor used as a function of the year for LTDR data production.

2.3. INPUTS

The GEOV2/AVHRR products used as input are described in DR2 .

They consist of LAI, FAPAR and FCOVER global maps calculated for 36 decadal dates per year (5th, 15th and 25th of each month). Each map contains 7200 x 3600 pixels at a resolution of 0.05°.

The input product contains a pixel value and a quality flag (QFLAG) described as follow.

Bit #	Description if set to 0	Description if set to 1
0	Unused	
1 : processed	The pixel is processed (land)	The pixel is unprocessed (water)
2 : climatology value	A climatology value exist for the pixel	No climatology value for the pixel
3 : filling	No filling procedure	The number of valid observations at least on one side of the ± 60 -day period is lower than 6 and a gap filling procedure (Bit 13-14) is applied
4	Reserved	
5	Reserved	
6 : input status	At least one valid data within ± 60 days	No valid data within ± 60 days
7 : LAI status	OK	Out of range or invalid
8 : FAPAR status	OK	Out of range or invalid
9 : FCOVER status	OK	Out of range or invalid
10 : SZA status	SZA ≤ 70 or latitude ≤ 55	SZA > 70 and latitude > 55
11 : EBF status	Pixel is not recognized as Evergreen Broadleaf Forest	Pixel is recognized as Evergreen Broadleaf Forest
12 : BS status	Pixel is not recognized as Bare Soil	Pixel is recognized as Bare Soil
13 : climatology filled	Not filled	Filled with climatology
14 : gap filled	Not filled	Filled with interpolation
15	Unused	

Table 4: Description of the quality flag for LAI, FAPAR and FCOVER.

The QFLAG bits are calculated only if bit 1 is set to 0.

2.4. OUTPUT PRODUCT

The output product contains global maps of 720 x 360 0.5° pixels, calculated by application of a 10x10 pixel merging algorithm over each input global map at each decadal date. They include the LAI, FAPAR and FCOVER values as described previously.

2.5. ALGORITHM OUTLINE

The algorithm is very simple and calculates for each square of 10 by 10 input pixels :

- The mean value of the input parameter (LAI, FAPAR or FCOVER) for valid pixels
- The root mean square error of valid input values
- The percentage of land pixels (bit #1 of QFLAG)
- The percentage of valid pixels used for mean and RMSE calculation
- The percentage of suspect pixels (bit #3 of QFLAG)
- The percentage of climatology filled pixels (bit #13 of QFLAG)
- The percentage of gap filled pixels (bit #14 of QFLAG)

3. PRODUCT DESCRIPTION

The GEOV2/GCM AVHRR product files follow the name convention :

THEIA_GEOV2-GCM_Rnn_AVHRR_pppppp_yyyymmdd.h5

With :

- nn = version number with two digits
- pppppp = type of parameter : « LAI », « FAPAR » ou « FCOVER »
- yyyymmdd = product date,

Products are generated on day 5, 15 and 25 of each month.

3.1. FILE FORMAT

The LAI, FAPAR, FCOVER GEOV2/AVHRR Theia products are distributed in multi-band HDF-5 files containing the following layers, with pppppp = type of parameter : « LAI », « FAPAR » ou « FCOVER » :

- pppppp-MEAN : mean value of input parameter
- pppppp-STDEV : root mean square error
- FRAC-LAND : percentage of land pixels
- FRAC-VALID : percentage of valid pixels
- FRAC-SUSPECT : percentage of suspect pixels
- FRAC-CLIMATO : percentage of climatology filled pixels
- FRAC-FILLED : percentage of gap filled pixels.

Each file corresponds to a global map.

TIPS: You can download and install HDF5 library from <http://www.hdfgroup.org>.

The library comes with useful tools that could be used to discover the organization and contents of the hdf5 files.

You can also download a java viewer called HDFView from the same URL. This tool is more user friendly oriented than the line commands.

3.2. PRODUCT CONTENT

The physical range of LAI, FAPAR, and FCOVER is given in Table 5 and the physical range of the quality indicators in **Erreur ! Source du renvoi introuvable.**

The physical values are retrieved by:

$$DN = \text{PhyVal} * \text{ScalingFactor} + \text{Offset}$$

where the scaling factor and the offset are given in Table 5.

The range of variation and resolution proposed are presented in Table 5 The same conventions as for GEOV2/VGT are used here. Invalid value is set to 255.

Variable	Physical Minimum	Physical Maximum	Max DN value	Scaling factor	Offset
LAI	0.0	7.0	210	30	0
FAPAR	0.0	0.94	235	250	0
FCOVER	0.0	1.0	250	250	0

Table 5: Minimum, maximum values and associated resolution for LAI, FAPAR and FCOVER products.

The percentages are given between 0 to 100.

3.3. PRODUCT CHARACTERISTICS

3.3.1. Projection and grid information

The product is displayed in a regular latitude/longitude grid (plate carrée) with the ellipsoid WGS 1984 (Terrestrial radius=6378km). The resolution of the grid is 0.5°.

The reference is the centre of the pixel. It means that the longitude of the upper left corner of the pixel is (pixel_longitude – angular_resolution/2.)

Each file covers the entire globe which corresponds to an array of 720 lines by 360 columns.

3.3.2. Temporal information

The GEOV2/AVHRR products are updated every 10 days using a moving and flexible compositing window within \pm 60-days. The temporal information “YYYYMMDD” in the filename is the “actual” date corresponding to the product value. The “actual” date is the date to take in consideration for any analysis.

3.3.3. Data policies

Any use of the original GEOV2/GCM AVHRR Theia products implies the obligation to include in any publication or communication using these products the following citation:

“The GEOV2/GCM product was generated by CNES in the framework of the Theia land data center, a French national inter-agency organization. The GEOV2/GCM AVHRR algorithm was developed by CREAM and INRA. The product is based on AVHRR 1km data ((c) NOAA) and is distributed by Theia.”

The user accepts to inform Theia about the outcome of the use of the above-mentioned products and to send a copy of any publications that use these products to the following address : theia-land@cnes.fr

3.3.4. Contacts

Scientific contact : CREAM : Centre de Recerca Ecològica i Aplicacions Forestals, Barcelona, Spain.

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