Remote sensing of clouds and calibration using Fujifilm Finepix S1 digital camera

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1 Introduction

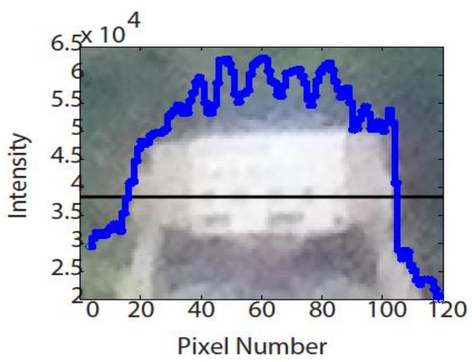
- Clouds exert important radiative effects on climate.
- Clouds are commonly characterized by cloud fraction in measurements and models.
- We undertook high resolution photography from the surface to examine cloud structure at high resolution.

2 Camera Specs

Fujifilm Finepix S1 digital camera specifications		
Focal length = 215 mm , f# = 5.6, Effective aperture diameter = 38.4 mm, 35 mm Equivalent focal length = 1200 mm		
Output: 3456 x 4608 pixels; 16 bit of red green and blue		
	λ = 450 nm	λ = 532 nm	λ = 650 nm
Rayleigh criterion, μrad (mm @ 1 km)	29	34	41
Pixel FOV, μrad (mm @1 km)	6.3		

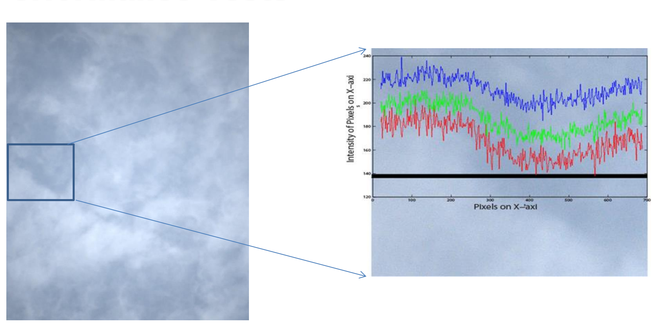
Resolution Tests

Set up of camera for the resolution test.



Target at 1 km, line profile of red channel intensity over the 4 cm bars of target at 1 km.

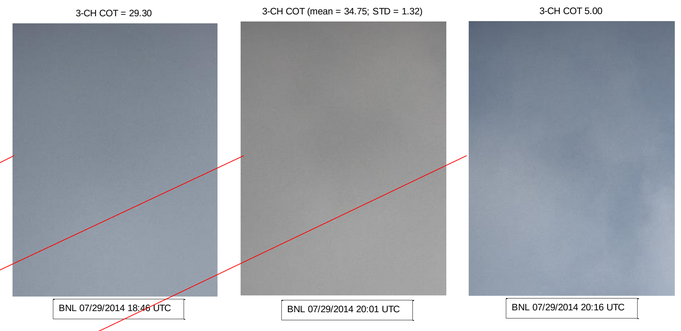
Performance Tests

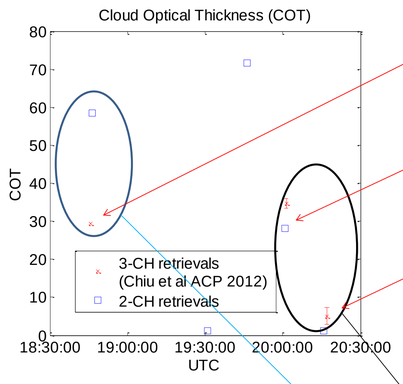


- Field of view of each image is 22 x 29 mrad. (22 x 29 m at cloud height of 1 km)
- Can resolve cloud images at small scale with each pixel (29-41 μrad from table)!
- Shown with line profile of red, green and blue channels of an enlarged sample cloud image taken with the Fujifilm digital camera.

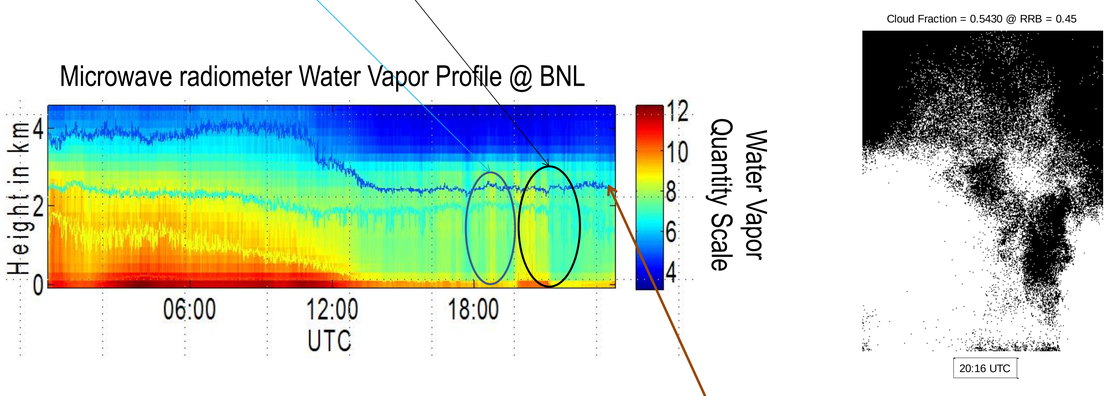
3 Example of Cloud Analysis

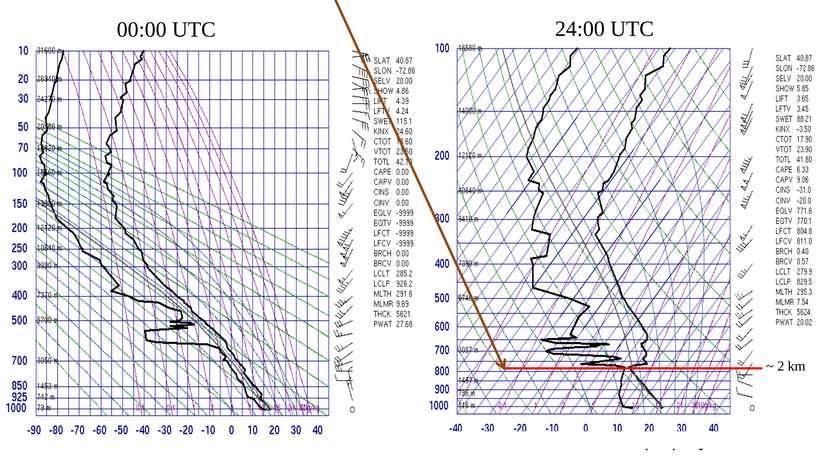
True Color Cloud Images





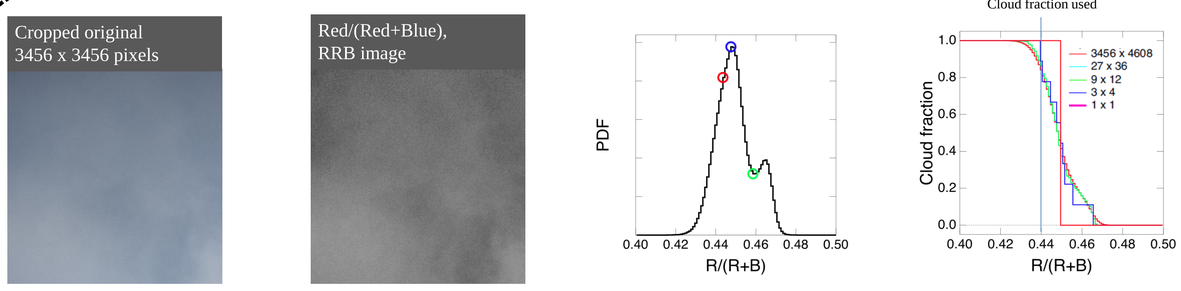
[Left] Cimel sky photometry cloud-mode 3 channel and NASA's 2 channel Cloud Optical Thickness retrievals on 07/29/2014 at Brookhaven National Laboratory (BNL), Upton, Long Island, NY. [Lat: 40° 49' 20" N Lon: 72° 52' 24" W]
[Above] Cloud images at times of COT data.
[Below] Sample cloud mask and fraction at 20:16 UTC.
(Local Standard Time = UTC – 5 hours)





- [Above] Microwave radiometer water vapor vertical profiles.
- [Right] Radiosondes vertical profiles of temperature and dew point temperature; launched at 00 UTC and 24 UTC.
- High water vapor concentration from Microwave radiometer shows clouds at ~2 km from ~13 -24 UTC and is inconsistent around 20 UTC.
- Close temperature and dew point temperature of radiosonde confirms cloud formation at ~2 km.

4 Cloud Fraction



- Cloud fractions of the same image are highly arbitrary and depend on the Red/(Red+Blue), RRB, threshold.
- Cloud fraction of Δ54% with Δ0.015 threshold.
- As resolution decreases, cloud fraction tends to increase if the threshold is below the mean, and vice versa.

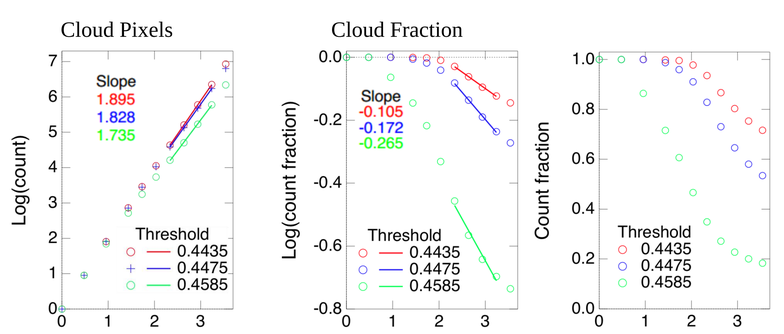
5 Fractal Analysis

Goal:
- Measure fractal dimensions to associate with clouds and its cloud fraction.

Fractal dimension:

$$\frac{d \log(\#\text{ of exceeding threshold element})}{d \log(\#\text{ of boxes on the side})}$$

- Pixel with **any** cloud is considered cloud.

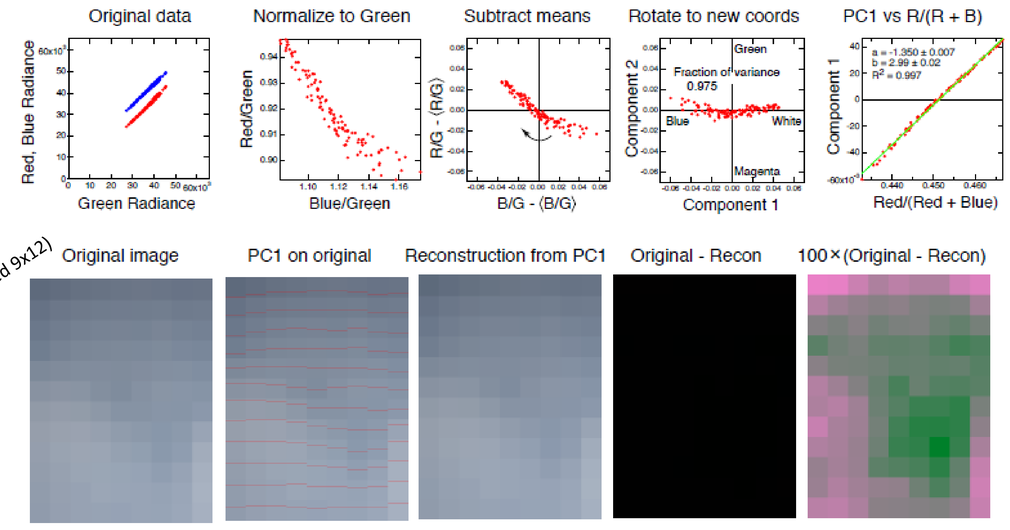


Results:
- Slopes in log(count) versus log(dimensions) being near 2 shows fitting of the data. The slope of log(cloud fraction) versus log(dimensions) shows that the data is distinctly different.
- Cloud fractal dimension still varies on the threshold; fractal dimensions almost double with Δ0.0040 threshold.
- This shows that cloud fraction cannot be uniquely defined or measured.

Method	Threshold	Slope	Uncertainty
Box counting	0.4435	1.895	0.003
	0.4475	1.828	0.005
	0.4585	1.735	0.029
Fractional area	0.4435	-0.105	0.003
	0.4475	-0.172	0.005
	0.4585	-0.265	0.029

- Conventional box-counting method versus fractional method.
- Uncertainties are same for either method.
- Both methods are equivalent.

6 Principal Component Analysis



- The color of the degraded 9x12 original image is accurately reconstructed by a single component.
- The first principal component is linearly related to Red/(Red + Blue), which thus serves as a quantitative measure of cloud contribution to zenith radiance.

7 Conclusions

- Surface-based high resolution photography provides a new and interesting view of clouds.
- Cloud fraction cannot be uniquely defined or measured: Inherently depends on threshold and resolution.
- As resolution decreases, cloud fraction tends to increase if the threshold is below the mean, and vice versa.
- These findings raise concerns over ability to characterize clouds by cloud fraction or fractal dimensions.
- Principal component analysis may lead to a robust means of quantifying cloud contribution to radiance.

Acknowledgments: We thank Dong Huang, Laurie Gregory, Rick Wagener, Ivan Kotov, Peter Takacs, Mary Jane Bartholomew and all of BNL for helpful discussions. Supported in part by the U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Science, Office of Workforce Development for Teachers and Scientists (WDTS) under the Visiting Faculty Program (VFP).