# 10 remote sensing of surface water springerlink

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Remote Sensing of Water\*\*

Remote sensing is a technique used to gather information about objects or areas from a distance, without direct physical contact. When applied to water, remote sensing can provide valuable insights into various aspects of water resources, such as water quality, surface water extent, and groundwater levels.

# **Remote Sensing of Water Turbidity**

Water turbidity refers to the cloudiness or haziness of water caused by the presence of suspended particles. Remote sensing techniques can be used to measure water turbidity by analyzing the way light interacts with water bodies. Sensors mounted on satellites or aircraft can detect changes in water absorption and scattering properties, which can be used to estimate turbidity levels.

# **Applications of Remote Sensing in Water Resources**

Remote sensing plays a crucial role in various applications related to water resources management:

- Water Quality Monitoring: Remote sensing can detect and monitor water pollutants, such as sediments, nutrients, and harmful algal blooms.
- Surface Water Detection: Remote sensing techniques, such as optical and radar imagery, can identify and delineate surface water bodies, including rivers, lakes, and wetlands.

- **Groundwater Exploration:** Remote sensing data can provide information about subsurface aquifers and groundwater recharge zones.
- Water Use Efficiency: Remote sensing can be used to monitor crop water use and identify areas with inefficient irrigation practices.

# **Physical Basis of Remote Sensing of Water**

The physical basis of remote sensing of water lies in the interaction between electromagnetic radiation and water molecules. Water absorbs and scatters light in specific wavelengths, depending on its properties, such as temperature, salinity, and the presence of suspended particles. These interactions can be detected and analyzed by remote sensing sensors.

# Remote Sensing Techniques for Water Quality

Various remote sensing techniques are employed to assess water quality:

- Optical Imagery: Sensors record visible, near-infrared, and thermal infrared wavelengths to identify water bodies and detect pollution indicators, such as sediment plumes and algae blooms.
- Multispectral Imagery: Sensors measure reflectance in multiple wavelengths to distinguish between different types of water bodies and pollutants.
- Hyperspectral Imagery: Sensors collect data in hundreds to thousands of narrow wavelength bands, providing detailed information about water composition.

#### Method of Surface Water Detection

Surface water detection using remote sensing involves analyzing the spectral characteristics of objects on the Earth's surface. Water bodies typically have a high reflectance in the near-infrared (NIR) and mid-infrared (MIR) bands and a low reflectance in the visible band. By comparing these reflectance values, algorithms can differentiate between water and other land cover types.

#### **How is Remote Sensing Used in Hydrology?**

Remote sensing techniques are widely used in hydrology to study various aspects of water systems:

- **Precipitation Estimation:** Satellite-based sensors measure the properties of clouds to estimate rainfall and snowfall.
- **Streamflow Monitoring:** Remote sensing data can be used to track water levels in rivers and estimate streamflow.
- **Snowpack Monitoring:** Remote sensing images help map the extent and depth of snowpack, which is crucial for predicting water availability in spring.

# **How is Remote Sensing Used in Groundwater?**

Remote sensing can provide valuable information about groundwater resources:

- Aquifer Exploration: Satellite gravity and magnetic data can help identify potential aquifers and recharge zones.
- Groundwater Level Monitoring: Interferometric synthetic aperture radar (InSAR) can measure ground subsidence, which can indicate groundwater depletion.
- Groundwater Quality Assessment: Remote sensing techniques can detect land use changes and identify potential sources of groundwater contamination.

### Water Use Efficiency Using Remote Sensing

Remote sensing can be used to assess water use efficiency in agriculture:

- Crop Water Stress Monitoring: Remote sensing data can detect crop water stress by analyzing vegetation indices, which reflect plant health.
- Irrigation Optimization: Remote sensing can help farmers optimize irrigation schedules by providing information about soil moisture and evapotranspiration.
- **Drought Monitoring:** Satellite-based remote sensing can track the onset and severity of droughts.

# **Use of Remote Sensing in Hydrology**

Remote sensing has numerous applications in hydrology:

- Flood Mapping: Remote sensing data can be used to create flood inundation maps and identify areas at risk of flooding.
- **Erosion Monitoring:** Remote sensing techniques can monitor changes in land cover and detect areas prone to soil erosion.
- Water Resource Planning: Remote sensing data provides a comprehensive view of water resources, enabling informed decision-making.

# **Use of Remote Sensing in Water Pollution**

Remote sensing plays a vital role in water pollution monitoring:

- Oil Spill Detection: Satellite-based sensors can detect oil spills on water surfaces by analyzing changes in surface reflectivity.
- Pollution Source Identification: Remote sensing data can identify land use features and activities that contribute to water pollution.
- Water Quality Regulatory Enforcement: Remote sensing data can be used for enforcing water quality standards and regulations.

#### **Ocean Remote Sensing**

Ocean remote sensing involves the use of satellites and sensors to study the oceans:

- Sea Surface Temperature Measurement: Satellite-based infrared sensors measure sea surface temperature to monitor ocean currents and detect El Niño events.
- **Sea Ice Monitoring:** Remote sensing data can map sea ice extent and thickness, providing insights into climate change and polar ecosystems.
- Ocean Color Measurement: Sensors mounted on satellites record the color of the ocean to estimate phytoplankton abundance and ocean productivity.

# **Remote Sensing of Water Vapor**

Remote sensing techniques can detect and measure water vapor in the atmosphere:

- Microwave Radiometers: Satellite-based microwave radiometers measure the thermal radiation emitted by water vapor to determine its concentration and distribution.
- Lidar Systems: Lidar (Light Detection and Ranging) systems use pulses of laser light to measure the range to water vapor molecules in the atmosphere.
- Raman Spectroscopy: Remote sensing sensors can measure the Raman scattering signal from water vapor to retrieve its concentration and isotopic composition.

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