

1 **Retrieval of Cloud Fraction using Machine Learning Algorithms**
2 **based on FY4A AGRI observations.**

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8
9 **Abstract**

10 Cloud fraction as a vital component of meteorological satellite products plays an
11 essential role in environmental monitoring, disaster detection, climate analysis, and
12 other research areas. Random Forest(RF) and Multilayer Perceptron(MLP) algorithms
13 were used in this paper to retrieve the cloud fraction of AGRI (Advanced
14 Geosynchronous Radiation Imager) onboard FY-4A satellite based on its full-disc level-
15 1 radiance observation. Corrections has been made subsequently to the retrieved cloud
16 fraction in areas where solar glint occurs using a correction curve fitted with sun-glint
17 angle as weight. The algorithm includes two steps: the cloud detection is conducted
18 firstly for each AGRI field of view to identify whether it is clear sky, partly cloudy or
19 overcast within the observation field. Then the cloud fraction is retrieved for the scene

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25 identified as partly cloudy. The 2B-CLDCLASS-LIDAR cloud fraction product from
26 Cloudsat& CALIPSO active remote sensing satellite is employed as the truth to assess
27 the accuracy of the retrieval algorithm. Comparison with the operational AGRI level 2
28 cloud fraction product is also conducted at the same time. The results indicate that both
29 the Random Forest (RF) and Multi-Layer Perceptron (MLP) cloud detection models
30 achieved high accuracy, surpassing that of operational products. However, both
31 algorithms demonstrated weaker discrimination capabilities for partly cloudy
32 conditions compared to clear sky and overcast situations. Specifically, they tended to
33 misclassify fields of view with low cloud fractions (e.g., cloud fraction = 0.16) as clear
34 sky and those with higher cloud fractions (e.g., cloud fraction = 0.83) as overcast.
35 Between the two models, RF exhibited higher overall accuracy. Both RF and MLP
36 models performed well in cloud fraction retrieval, showing lower mean error (ME),
37 mean absolute error (MAE), and root mean square error (RMSE) compared to
38 operational products. The ME for both RF and MLP cloud fraction retrieval models was
39 close to zero, while RF had slightly lower MAE and RMSE than MLP. During daytime,
40 the high reflectance in sun-glint areas led to larger retrieval errors for both RF and MLP
41 algorithms. However, after correction, the retrieval accuracy in these regions improved
42 significantly. At night, the absence of visible light observations from the AGRI
43 instrument resulted in lower classification accuracy compared to daytime, leading to
44 higher cloud fraction retrieval errors during nighttime.

45 **Key words:** Cloud detection; cloud fraction retrieval; FY-4A AGRI; CloudSat &

删除了: During daytime, the probability of detection (POD) for clear sky, partly cloudy, and overcast scenes in the operational cloud detection product were 0.5359, 0.7041, and 0.7826, respectively. The POD for cloud detection using the random forest algorithm were 0.6984, 0.8971, and 0.8613. While the operational product often misclassified clear sky scenes as cloudy, the random forest algorithm improved the discrimination of clear sky scenes. For partly cloudy scenes, the mean error (ME) and root-mean-square error (RMSE) of the operational product were 0.2374 and 0.3269. The random forest algorithm exhibited lower ME (0.1457) and RMSE (0.2022) than the operational product. The large reflectance in the sun-glint region resulted in significant cloud fraction retrieval errors using the random forest algorithm. However, after applying the correction, the accuracy of cloud cover retrieval in this region gets greatly improved. During nighttime, the random forest model demonstrated improved POD for clear sky and partly cloudy scenes compared to the operational product, while maintaining a similar POD value for overcast scenes and a lower FAR. For partly cloudy scenes at night, the operational product exhibited a positive mean error, indicating an overestimation of cloud cover, whereas the random forest model showed a negative mean error, indicating an underestimation of cloud cover. The random forest model also exhibited a lower RMSE compared to the operational product.

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72 CALIPSO; machine learning; deep learning,

删除了: Cloud detection, cloud fraction, FY-4A AGRI,
Random Forest.

73 **Introduction**

74 Clouds occupy a significant proportion within satellite remote sensing data
75 acquired for Earth observation. According to the statistics from the International
76 Satellite Cloud Climatology Project (ISCCP), the annual average global cloud coverage
77 within satellite remote sensing data is around 66% with even higher cloud coverage in
78 specific regions (such as the tropics) (Zhang, et al., 2004). The impact of clouds on the
79 radiation balance of the Earth's atmospheric system is influenced by the optical
80 properties of clouds. Cloud detection, as a vital component of remote sensing image
81 data processing, is considered a critical step for the subsequent identification, analysis,
82 and interpretation of remote sensing images. Therefore, accurately determining cloud
83 coverage is essential in various research domains, such as environmental monitoring,
84 disaster surveillance and climate analysis.

85 Fengyun-4A (FY-4A) is a comprehensive atmospheric observation satellite
86 launched by China in 2016. The uploaded AGRI (Advanced Geosynchronous Radiation
87 Imager) has 14 channels and captures full-disk observation every 15 minutes. In
88 addition to observing clouds, water vapor, vegetation and the Earth's surface, it also
89 possesses the capability to capture aerosols and snow. Moreover, it can clearly
90 distinguish different phases and particle size of clouds and obtain high- to mid-level

93 water vapor content. It is particularly suitable for cloud detection due to its
94 simultaneous use of visible, near-infrared, and long-wave infrared channels for
95 observation with 4km spatial resolution.

96 Numerous cloud detection algorithms have been provided based on observations
97 from satellite-borne imagers. The threshold method has been widely employed by
98 researchers, including the early ISCCP (International Satellite Cloud Climatology
99 Project) method (Rossow, 1993) and the proposed threshold methods based on different
100 spectral features or underlying surfaces (Kegelmeyer, 1994; Solvsteen, 1995; Baum and
101 Trepte, 1996). However, there is a significant subjectivity in selection of thresholds
102 whether it is the single and fixed threshold in the early days, multiple thresholds,
103 dynamic thresholds, or adaptive thresholds. The selection of thresholds is influenced
104 by season and climate. Surface reflectance varies significantly between different
105 seasons, such as increased reflectance from snow in winter and vegetation flourishing
106 in summer affecting reflectance. As a result, changes in surface features during different
107 seasons lead to variations in the distribution of grayscale values in images, requiring
108 adjustments to thresholds based on seasonal characteristics. Climate conditions like
109 cloud cover, atmospheric humidity, etc., impact the distinguishability of clouds and
110 other features. For instance, in humid or cloudy climates, the reflectance of the surface
111 and clouds may be similar, necessitating stricter thresholds for differentiation.
112 Therefore, climate conditions also influence threshold selection.

113 The other category of cloud detection algorithms is based on statistical probability

114 theory. For example the principal component discriminant analysis and quadratic
115 discriminant analysis methods were used to SEVIRI (Spinning Enhanced Visible and
116 Infrared Imager) cloud detection (Amato et al., 2008). The cloud detection algorithm
117 for Thermal Infrared (TIR) sensor was based on the Bayesian theory of total probability
118 (Merchant et al., 2010) and the naive Bayes algorithm for AGRI (Yan, et al., 2022).
119 The unsupervised clustering cloud detection algorithms for MERIS (Medium
120 Resolution Imaging Spectrometer) (GomezChova, et al., 2007) and the fuzzy C-means
121 clustering algorithms for MODIS (Pan, et al., 2009) all have achieved high accuracy in
122 cloud detection.

123 More and more machine learning algorithms are being utilized by researchers in
124 cloud detection studies with the development of machine learning. For instance, the
125 probabilistic neural networks, especially radial basis function networks was used for
126 AVHRR cloud detection (Zhang, et al., 2001). The utilization of convolutional neural
127 network methods (Hu, et al., 2020) offers important perspectives for cloud detection
128 research.

129 Currently, there is limited research literature on cloud detection and cloud fraction
130 retrieval algorithms for FY-4A/4B AGRI. The operational cloud fraction product of FY-
131 4A AGRI utilized a threshold method with 4 km spatial resolution. Differences in
132 climatic and environmental factors lead to varying albedo and brightness temperature
133 observations for the instrument at different times and locations. Therefore, the choice
134 of thresholds is easily influenced by factors such as season, latitude and land surface

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136 type (Gao and Jing, 2019). Using multiple sets of thresholds for discrimination would
137 significantly slow down the cloud detection process. Moreover, most algorithms focus
138 solely on cloud detection, which classified the observed scenes into cloud or clear-sky
139 without providing the specific cloud fraction information for the scenes. The use of
140 active remote sensing instruments carried by Cloudsat & Calypso is not influenced by
141 thresholds when retrieving cloud fraction, enabling a more accurate cloud fraction
142 retrieval. However, due to Cloudsat & Calypso being polar-orbiting satellites, the cloud
143 fraction over the full disk cannot be obtained. Utilizing the Cloudsat & Calypso Level
144 2 product 2B-CLDCLASS-LIDAR as the reference truth, a random forest model trained
145 based on FY4A AGRI full disk radiation data can address the shortcomings of threshold
146 methods and achieve a high accuracy of cloud fraction over the full disk. ▼

147 In summary, this paper established cloud detection and cloud fraction retrieval
148 models using a Multi-Layer Perceptron (MLP) and Random Forest (RF), based on FY-
149 4A AGRI full-disk level 1 observed radiance data. The cloud fraction from the CloudSat
150 & CALIPSO level 2 product 2B-CLDCLASS-LIDAR was used as the label. The results
151 were compared with the 2B-CLDCLASS-LIDAR product and the official AGRI
152 operational products for validation.

删除了: Moreover, the parallel processing during training, randomness in feature selection, and random sampling of samples in random forest make it have a faster training speed compared to other algorithms with similar performance.

删除了: In summary, a random forest machine learning algorithm for cloud fraction retrieval was established using level-1 radiation observations from FY-4A AGRI full-disk scanning in this paper. The cloud fraction of the level-2 product 2B-CLDCLASS-LIDAR from Cloudsat&CALIPSO was used as the reference label. The retrievals were compared against with the cloud fraction of 2B-CLDCLASS-LIDAR and the AGRI operational products to verify the algorithm accuracy

166 **1. Research Data and Preprocessing**

167 **1.1 FY-4A data**

168 FY-4A was successfully launched on December 11, 2016. Starting from May 25, 2017,
169 FY-4A drifted to a position near the main business location of the Fengyun
170 geostationary satellite at 104.7 degrees east longitude on the equator. Its successful
171 launch marked the beginning of a new era for China's next-generation geostationary
172 meteorological satellites as an advanced comprehensive atmospheric observation
173 satellite. The Advanced Geosynchronous Radiation Imager (AGRI), one of the main
174 payloads of the Fengyun-4 series geostationary meteorological satellites, can perform
175 large-disk scans and rapid regional scans at a minute level. It has 14 observation
176 channels in total with the main task of acquiring cloud images. The channel parameters
177 and main uses of AGRI are detailed in Table 1
178 (<https://www.nsmc.org.cn/nsmc/cn/instrument/AGRI.html>). The first six visible light
179 channels have no values at night, meaning that channels with a central wavelength less
180 than or equal to 2.225 μ m are unavailable during nighttime. FY-4A AGRI data was
181 downloaded from the official website of the China national satellite meteorological
182 center (<http://satellite.nsmc.org.cn>), including level-1 full disk radiation observation
183 data preprocessed through quality control, geolocation and radiation calibration as well
184 as level-2 cloud fraction product (CFR). The spatial resolution of these data is all 4 km
185 at nadir and the temporal resolution is 15 minutes.

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Table 1 FY-4A AGRI channel parameters

Channel Number	Band Range / μm	Central Wavelength / μm	Spatial resolution/km	Main Applications
1	0.45 ~ 0.49	0.47	1	clouds, dust, aerosols
2	0.55 ~ 0.75	0.65	0.5	clouds, sand dust, snow
3	0.75 ~ 0.90	0.825	1	vegetation
4	1.36 ~ 1.39	1.375	2	cirrus
5	1.58 ~ 1.64	1.61	2	clouds、 snow
6	2.10 ~ 2.35	2.225	2	cirrus、 aerosols
7	3.50 ~ 4.00	3.75H	2	fire point, the intense solar reflection signal
8	3.50 ~ 4.00	3.75L	4	low clouds, fog
9	5.80 ~ 6.70	6.25	4	upper-level water vapor
10	6.90 ~ 7.30	7.1	4	mid-level water vapor
11	8.00 ~ 9.00	8.5	4	subsurface water vapor
12	10.30 ~ 11.30	10.8	4	surface and cloud-top temperatures
13	11.50 ~ 12.50	12.0	4	surface and cloud-top temperatures
14	13.2 ~ 13.8	13.5	4	cloud-top height

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1.2 CloudSat & Calipso Cloud Product

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CALIPSO (Cloud-Aerosol Lidar and Infrared Pathfinder Satellite Observations) is a satellite jointly launched by NASA and CNES (the French National Center for Space Studies) in 2006. It is a member of the A-Train satellite observation system. CALIPSO is equipped with three payloads, among which CALIOP (the Cloud and Aerosol Lidar with Orthogonal Polarization) is a primary observational instrument. Observing with dual wavelengths (532 nm and 1064 nm) CALIOP can provide high-resolution vertical profiles of clouds and aerosols with 30 m vertical resolution. As the first satellite designed to observe global cloud characteristics in a sun-synchronous orbit

197 CloudSat is also among NASA's A-Train series satellites. The CPR (Cloud Profile
198 Radar) installed on it operates at 94 GHz millimeter-wave and is capable of detecting
199 the vertical structure of clouds and providing vertical profiles of cloud parameters. The
200 scanning wavelengths of CPR and CALIOP are different. CALIOP is capable of
201 observing the top of mid-to-high level clouds, whereas CPR can penetrate optically
202 thick clouds. Combining the strengths of these two instruments enables the acquisition
203 of precise and detailed information on cloud layers and cloud fraction.

204 The joint level 2 product 2B-CLDCLASS-LIDAR is mainly utilizing in this study.
205 It provides the cloud fraction at different heights with horizontal resolution 2.5 km
206 (along-track) \times 1.4 km (cross-track) through combining the observations from CPR and
207 CALIOP. Since the two instruments have different spatial domain such as vertical
208 resolution, spatial resolution and spatial frequency, the spatial domain of the output
209 products is defined in terms of the spatial grid of the CPR. In the algorithm, the cloud
210 fraction is calculated using a weighted scheme based on the spatial probability of
211 overlap between the radar and lidar observations. The calculation of the lidar cloud
212 fraction within a radar footprint is represented by the equation 1 (Mace, G. G., et al,
213 2007):

$$214 \quad C_l = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{\# \text{ of lidar obs}} w_i \delta_i}{\sum_{i=1}^{\# \text{ of lidar obs}} w_i} \quad (1)$$

215 Where:

216 C_l represents the lidar cloud fraction within a radar footprint.

217 w_i is the spatial probability of overlap for a particular lidar observation.

218 δ_i indicates the lidar hydrometeor occurrence, where a value of 1 signifies the
219 presence of hydrometeor and 0 indicates the absence.

220 i counts the lidar profile in a specific radar observational domain.

221 This calculation considers the contributions of multiple lidar observations within
222 a radar resolution volume to determine the cloud fraction within that volume. The
223 CloudSat product manual (Wang, 2019) can be referred for more detailed information
224 on 2B-CLDCLASS-LIDAR. The data used is available to download from the ICARE
225 data and services center ([https://www.icare.univ-lille.fr/data-access/data-archive-
226 access/](https://www.icare.univ-lille.fr/data-access/data-archive-access/)).

227 **1.3 Establishment of Training Data**

228 The crucial aspect of establishing a training data in machine learning algorithms
229 is how to obtain the cloud fraction values (ground truth) as labels. The error in cloud
230 fraction retrieved solely from passive remote sensing instruments is significant. Using
231 active remote sensing data can provide more accurate cloud fraction information in the
232 vertical direction. Therefore, the spatiotemporally matched 2B-CLDCLASS-LIDAR
233 cloud fraction are utilized as output labels in this paper.

234 The FY-4A AGRI and 2B-CLDCLASS-LIDAR data with a spatial difference
235 between fields of view within 1.5 km and a time difference within 15 minutes are
236 spatiotemporal matched. To make the 2B-CLDCLASS-LIDAR cloud fraction data
237 collocated within AGRI pixels more effective, at least two 2B-CLDCLASS-LIDAR

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238 pixels are required within each AGRI field of view. The cloud fraction average of these
239 pixels is used as the cloud fraction for that AGRI pixel. However, the errors in the
240 matched dataset are unavoidable. The AGRI scanning method operates from left to right
241 and top to bottom. Each complete scan of the full disk takes 15 minutes and generates
242 a dataset. It is impossible to determine the exact moment of a specific point within the
243 full disk. This limits the time range for matching datasets to within 15 minutes.
244 However, in areas with higher wind speeds, clouds can move a significant distance
245 within that 15-minute window. Therefore, errors arising from timing issues cannot be
246 avoided.

247 Cloud detection and cloud fraction label generation for 2B-CLDCLASS-LIDAR
248 are as follows. There may be multiple layers of clouds in each field of view. If there is
249 at least one layer cloud with cloud fraction of 1 in the 2B-CLDCLASS-LIDAR profile,
250 then the scene is labeled as overcast with a cloud fraction of 1. If all layers in the profile
251 are cloud-free, the scene is labeled as clear sky. The scene between the above two
252 situations is labeled as partly cloudy and the cloud fraction is the average of cloud
253 fractions at different layers.

254 The algorithm includes two steps: the cloud detection is conducted firstly for each
255 AGRI field of view to identify whether it is clear sky, partly cloudy or overcast within
256 the observation field. Then the cloud fraction is retrieved for the scene identified as
257 partly cloudy. So the training data include A dataset used for cloud detection and B
258 dataset for cloud fraction retrieval. The input variables in A dataset are the FY-4A

259 AGRI level-1 radiative observations from 14 channels and the output variable is the
260 temporally and spatially matched 2B-CLDCLASS-LIDAR cloud detection label. The
261 output is categorized into three types: overcast, partly cloudy and clear sky with values
262 1, 2 and 3 respectively. The cloud fraction product from 2B-CLDCLASS-LIDAR
263 consists of discrete values: 0, 0.16, 0.33, 0.50, 0.66, 0.83, and 1. Here, 0 indicates clear
264 sky, values from 0 to 1 represent varying cloud fractions for partly cloudy conditions,
265 and 1 signifies overcast. To ensure the balance and representativeness of the samples,
266 the proportions of different cloud fraction samples in dataset A are set at 5:1:1:1:1:5.
267 Regarding the samples for partly cloudy type in dataset A, the collocated 2B-
268 CLDCLASS-LIDAR cloud fraction products serve as output labels for cloud fraction
269 retrieval model B. The input of training dataset B remains the FY-4A AGRI level-1
270 radiative observations.

删除了: To ensure diversity and representativeness of the samples, the three conditions of overcast, partly cloudy, and clear sky each account for one-third of the sample size in dataset A.

271 Due to the instrument's limited lifespan, only 2B-CLDCLASS-LIDAR data up to
272 August 2019 can be obtained. The sample time range used in this paper is from August
273 2018 to July 2019. Five days were randomly selected each month as daytime samples
274 and five days as nighttime samples. A total of 120 days of time and space matched FY-
275 4A AGRI full-disk observations and 2B-CLDCLASS-LIDAR data were used as
276 training and testing samples. Among them, 80% of the data was used for training, and
277 20% was used for testing. The total number of daytime samples in dataset A is 91,073,
278 while dataset B contains 30,358 samples. The total number of nighttime samples in
279 dataset A is 95,493, and dataset B includes 31,831 samples.

删除了: Additionally, the latitude range for a single observation of FY-4A AGRI is -83.3~83.3. Within this latitude range, data from different seasons, climates, and surface types are included. In the training samples matched in space-time with 2B-CLDCLASS-LIDAR, seasons and climates vary with latitude. Therefore, there is no need to include data from a larger time range as training samples. The FY-4A AGRI observations and 2B-CLDLASS-LIDAR matched in time and space in May 2019 are used as training samples to build the algorithm model. The paired samples of whole June 2019 are served as the testing samples to assess the model's retrieval accuracy. The number of training samples in May are 12,420 for dataset A and 4140 for B. Testing samples in June are 15,459 for A and 5,153 for B.

298 Although the model was trained and tested using data from 2018 to 2019, to test
299 the universality of the algorithm, it was applied to real-time observations from FY-4A
300 and FY-4B AGRI in 2023.

删除了: Although the retrieval model was trained and tested using 2019 data, the algorithm was also applied to real-time observations of FY-4A and FY-4B AGRI in 2023 to verify its universality.

302 2 Algorithms

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303 Our preliminary experiments involved multiple algorithms, including LibSvm,
304 MLP, BP neural network, and Random Forest. These experiments highlighted that,
305 among the baselines, Random Forest and MLP achieved the highest overall accuracy.
306 For this reason, we selected them to perform additional experiments.

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307 2.1 Random Forest (RF)

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308 This algorithm integrates multiple trees based on the Bagging idea of ensemble
309 learning, with the basic element being the decision tree (Breiman, 1999). When building
310 a decision tree, N sets of independent and dependent variables are randomly sampled
311 with replacement from the original training samples to create a new training sample set;
312 m variables are randomly sampled without replacement from all independent variables,
313 the dependent variable data is split into two parts using the selected variables, and the
314 purity of the subsets is calculated for each split method. The variable utilized by the
315 split method with the highest purity is used to partition the data, completing the decision
316 at that node. This process of binary splitting continues to grow the decision tree until

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323 stopping criteria are met, completing the construction of a single decision tree. These
324 steps are repeated Ntree times to build a random forest model consisting of Ntree
325 decision trees (Breiman, 2001). Random Forest adopts ensemble algorithms, with the
326 advantage of high accuracy. It can handle both discrete and continuous data, without
327 the need for normalization, making it more efficient compared to other algorithms.

删除了: Quesada-Ruiz et al., 2022

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328 2.2 Multilayer Perceptron (MLP)

329 This algorithm consists of a fully connected artificial neural network(Duda, et al.,
330 2001). The classifier/regressor takes feature vectors or tensors as input. The input is
331 mapped through multiple fully connected hidden layers containing hidden weights,
332 which produce classifications/regressions at the output layer. A nonlinear activation
333 function (such as sigmoid or rectified linear unit (ReLU)) is applied in each hidden
334 layer to facilitate a nonlinear model. For classifiers, the output of the final hidden layer
335 is combined and passed through a softmax function to generate class predictions. The
336 model's weights are trained in a supervised manner, utilizing stochastic gradient descent
337 and backpropagation to achieve the desired classification/regression.

删除了: In this study, when using the trained model for prediction, observations from 14 channels are inputted into the model. Each decision tree independently predicts the outcome, with a majority vote determining the final classification category of overcast, partly cloudy, or clear sky. For regression tree models, the average of all tree outputs is taken as the final output, representing the specific cloud fraction.

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338 2.3 Hyperparameters

339 In this paper, a total of eight models were established, including daytime/nighttime
340 random forest classification/regression models and daytime/nighttime MLP
341 classification/regression models. For the random forest, we first conducted experiments

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351 using the following Hyperparameters ranges: Trees: [200, 300, 400, 500, 600,700],
352 minleaf: [1, 2, 5, 10], criterion: [Gini, entropy]. Ultimately, the best selections were: (1)
353 Daytime RF classification model: Trees=500, minleaf=1, criterion=gini; (2) Nighttime
354 RF classification model: Trees=600, minleaf=1, criterion=gini; (3) Daytime RF
355 regression model: Trees=400, minleaf=1, criterion=gini; (4) Nighttime RF regression
356 model: Trees=500, minleaf=1, criterion=gini.

357 For the MLP, experiments were conducted using the following hyperparameter
358 ranges: Hidden layer size: [2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9], Hidden layer neuron count:
359 [8,16,32,64,128], Activation hyperparameter: [logistic, tanh, relu], MaxEpochs:
360 [30,50,100], MiniBatchSize: [300,400,....,1500,1600], Solver hyperparameter: [lbfgs,
361 sgd, adam]. The optimal parameters found are as follows: (1) MLP classification model
362 for daytime: hidden layer size = 5, MiniBatchSize = 1500. (2) MLP classification model
363 for nighttime: hidden layer size = 7, MiniBatchSize = 800. (3) MLP regression model
364 for daytime: hidden layer size = 4, MiniBatchSize = 600. (4) MLP regression model for
365 nighttime: hidden layer size = 6, MiniBatchSize = 500. All four models have hidden
366 layer neuron count = 64, activation = relu, MaxEpochs = 50, solver = adam,
367 InitialLearnRate = 0.01, LearnRateSchedule = piecewise, LearnRateDropFactor = 0.1,
368 LearnRateDropPeriod = 10.

369 **3. Results and Analysis**

370 To assess the accuracy and stability of the retrieval model, two types of validation
371 methods are utilized. One way involves a direct comparison from images, qualitatively
372 comparing the model's retrieval results and official cloud fraction products with AGRI
373 observed cloud images. Another approach uses 2B-CLDCLASS-LIDAR as the ground
374 truth and introduces five parameters for quantitative comparison: recall, false alarm rate
375 (FAR), mean error (ME), mean absolute error (MAE), and root mean square error
376 (RMSE). To evaluate the ability of operational products, RF, and MLP cloud detection
377 models to distinguish overcast, partly cloudy, and clear sky, the recall is calculated using
378 the formula $POD=TP/(TP+FN)$, and the false alarm rate is calculated using the formula
379 $FAR=FP/(TP+FP)$. Taking the overcast scene as an example, TP represents the number
380 of correctly identified overcast conditions, FN represents the number of overcast
381 conditions misidentified as partly cloudy or clear sky, and FP represents the number of
382 clear sky or partly cloudy conditions misidentified as overcast. When assessing the
383 accuracy of operational products and cloud fraction models for the cloud fraction
384 retrieval results of partly cloudy scenes, mean error (ME), mean absolute error (MAE),
385 and root mean square error (RMSE) are used.

386 **3.1 Objective Analysis of Cloud Fraction Retrievals**

387 First, using the 2B-CLDCLASS-LIDAR cloud fraction product as the ground truth,

删除了: Two crucial parameters in the random forest model are the node splitting frequency Mtry and the number of decision trees Ntree, which directly impact the model's performance. A high Mtry value can increase model complexity, leading to overfitting; conversely, a low Mtry can result in a model that is too simple and underfits the data. A small Ntree value can result in underfitting, while a large Ntree significantly increases computational load, with minimal performance improvement beyond a certain threshold. Typically, setting Mtry to \sqrt{M} , where M represents the number of input variables, results in the lowest model error. For daytime models, M is 14, while for nighttime, it is 8. Mtry is set at 3 for daytime cloud detection and cloud fraction retrieval models, and at 2 for nighttime models. When determining the size of Ntree, it is necessary to do so through cross-validation. The dataset is divided into training and validation sets, using a different number of trees in each training iteration, and then evaluating the model's performance on the validation set. The best number of trees is selected by comparing the performance of the model with different numbers of trees. Both daytime and nighttime cloud detection models are configured with Ntree set to 380, while cloud fraction retrieval models have Ntree set to 300 for both daytime and nighttime scenarios.

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删除了: Another way is quantitative comparison using 2B-CLDCLASS-LIDAR as the true value. Four quantitative parameters, including possibility of detection (POD), false alarm rate (FAR), mean error (ME), and root mean square error (RMSE) are introduced. The POD is calculated using the formula $POD=TP/(TP+FN)$, and the FAR is calculated using the formula $FAR=FP/(TP+FP)$. Taking the overcast scenes as an example, TP represents the number of correctly identified overcast, FN represents the number of overcast scenes wrongly identified as partly cloudy or clear sky, and FP represents the number of clear sky or partly cloudy scenes wrongly identified as overcast. The ME (mean error) and RMSE (root mean square error) are utilized to assess the accuracy of the random forest cloud fraction model in

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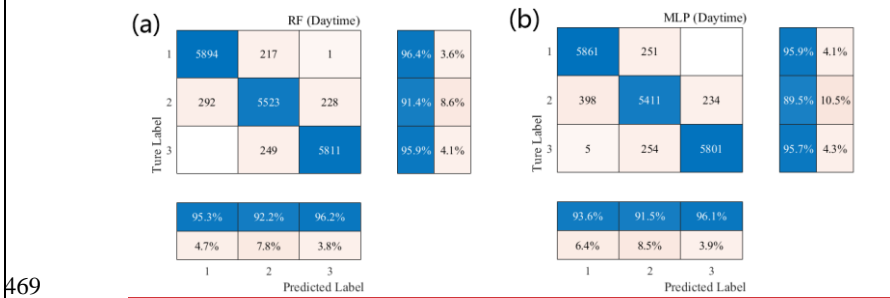
442 we calculated the accuracy of the operational cloud detection products. The results are
 443 shown in Table 2. The samples used for this statistic are the same as those for testing
 444 the model below (20% of dataset A).

445 Table 2: Recall Rate and FAR of Operational Cloud Detection Products

	<u>Sky Classification</u>	<u>Daytime Product</u>	<u>Nighttime Product</u>
	<u>Clear Sky</u>	<u>0.6359</u>	<u>0.5781</u>
<u>POD</u>	<u>Partly cloudy</u>	<u>0.7174</u>	<u>0.7449</u>
	<u>Overcast</u>	<u>0.7736</u>	<u>0.7384</u>
	<u>Clear Sky</u>	<u>0.1778</u>	<u>0.0934</u>
<u>FAR</u>	<u>Partly cloudy</u>	<u>0.1819</u>	<u>0.2117</u>
	<u>Overcast</u>	<u>0.2499</u>	<u>0.2683</u>

446 Based on the cloud detection model trained above, cloud detection experiments
 447 were conducted using the test samples from Dataset A. The time-space matched 2B
 448 CLDCLASS-LIDAR cloud fraction product served as the ground truth to assess the
 449 accuracy of cloud detection. Figure 1 shows the results: (a) Random Forest model
 450 results during the day, (b) MLP model results during the day, (c) Random Forest model
 451 results during the night, and (d) MLP model results during the night. The x-axis
 452 represents the model predictions, while the y-axis represents the ground truth. A value
 453 of 1 on both axes indicates clear skies, 2 indicates partly cloudy, and 3 indicates overcast.
 454 The blue area on the right side of each plot shows the recall rate for each type, while
 455 the light-colored area at the bottom represents the False Alarm Rate (FAR). During the

456 day, the Random Forest model achieved an overall accuracy of 94.2%, while the MLP
 457 model had an overall accuracy of 93.4%. The Random Forest model exhibited slightly
 458 higher recall rates for clear skies, partly cloudy, and overcast conditions compared to
 459 the MLP model, and its FAR was lower as well. Both models performed poorly in
 460 recognizing partly cloudy conditions, as the models tended to classify true cloud
 461 fractions of 0.16 as clear skies and those of 0.83 as overcast. At night, the Random
 462 Forest model achieved an overall accuracy of 89.4%, while the MLP model had an
 463 accuracy of 87.7%. The Random Forest model had higher recall rates for clear skies
 464 and partly cloudy conditions compared to the MLP, while the recall rates for overcast
 465 conditions were similar for both models. The FAR for the Random Forest model was
 466 lower than that of the MLP. Overall, both the Random Forest and MLP models showed
 467 higher classification accuracy for clear skies, partly cloudy, and overcast conditions
 468 compared to operational products, with the Random Forest model performing better.



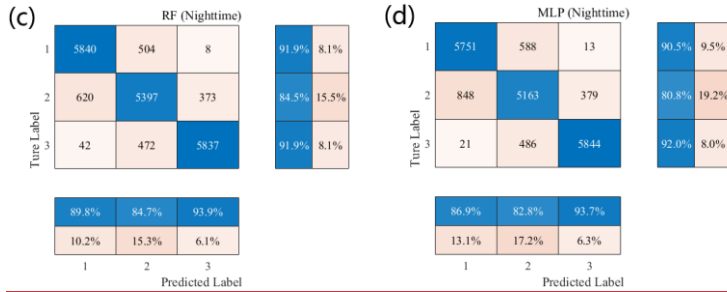


Figure 1 Model Cloud Detection Accuracy: (a) Daytime RF, (b) Daytime MLP,

(c) Nighttime RF, (d) Nighttime MLP (In the axis, 1 represents clear sky, 2 represents partly cloudy, and 3 represents overcast.)

Based on the previous model's assessment of the field of view as partly cloudy, the cloud fraction in this AGRI field of view is retrieved using the cloud fraction model established earlier. For model evaluation, both the operational product and the 2B-CLDCLASS-LIDAR cloud fraction product are classified as partly cloudy, with the matched 2B-CLDCLASS-LIDAR cloud fraction product considered as the ground truth. The average error, mean absolute error, and root mean square error for both daytime and nighttime operational products (Table 3) and cloud fraction model retrieval (Table 4) are calculated. It can be observed that the average errors of both models are close to 0 during both daytime and nighttime. The errors are smaller during the day than at night, with the RF model exhibiting lower errors than the MLP model. In summary, the errors of both models are smaller than those of the operational products, and the RF model performs better in the cloud fraction retrieval task.

Table 3: Errors of Operational Product Cloud Fraction

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删除了: The test samples from dataset A (i.e., June data) are used to perform cloud detection experiments based on the cloud detection model mentioned above. The temporally and spatially matched 2B CLDCLASS-LIDAR cloud mask products are used as reference to evaluate the accuracy of cloud detection. The POD and FAR for different view field classifications are shown in Table 2. Columns 2 and 4 represent the operational cloud detection products for daytime and nighttime respectively, for the same time and pixel. Columns 3 and 5 represent the random forest cloud detection results for daytime and nighttime respectively. The table indicates that during daytime, operational cloud detection products have a relatively low possibility of detection for clear sky view fields. However, the random forest model increases the possibility of detection for clear sky from 0.54 to 0.70. Moreover, for partly cloudy and overcast view fields, the POD is higher than operational cloud detection products. During nighttime, compared to operational cloud detection products, the random forest model increases the POD for clear sky from 0.51 to 0.67, with higher POD for partly cloudy view fields compared to the operational products, while the POD for overcast view fields is lower. During the day, the Operational product has a lower FAR for clear sky compared to the random forest model, while the random forest model has a lower FAR for partly cloudy and overcast conditions compared to the operational product. At night, the random forest model significantly reduces the FAR for overcast conditions compared to the Operational product.

Table 2 POD and FAR of Cloud Detection

删除了: For the field identified as partly cloudy by the previous model, the random forest cloud fraction model established in the preceding text is used to retrieve the cloud fraction in the AGRI field. For samples classified as partly cloudy by the model, and operational products, and 2B-CLDCLASS-LIDAR cloud fraction products, the mean error and root mean square error (RMSE) of the cloud fraction retrieval were calculated based on the matched 2B-CLDCLASS-LIDAR cloud fraction product as ground truth, separately for daytime and nighttime operational cloud fraction products (columns 2 and 4) and the random forest-retrieved cloud fraction (columns 3 and 5), as shown in Table 3.

删除了: Table 3 Errors in cloud fraction retrieval

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	<u>Daytime Operational</u>	<u>Nighttime Operational</u>
	<u>Product</u>	<u>Product</u>
<u>ME</u>	<u>0.1987</u>	<u>0.2121</u>
<u>MAE</u>	<u>0.2279</u>	<u>0.2441</u>
<u>RMSE</u>	<u>0.2776</u>	<u>0.2938</u>

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Table 4:Model Retrieval Error

	<u>Daytime</u>	<u>Daytime</u>	<u>Nighttime</u>	<u>Nighttime</u>
	<u>RF</u>	<u>MLP</u>	<u>RF</u>	<u>MLP</u>
<u>ME</u>	<u>0.0006</u>	<u>-0.0009</u>	<u>-0.0028</u>	<u>-0.0032</u>
<u>MAE</u>	<u>0.1011</u>	<u>0.1053</u>	<u>0.1221</u>	<u>0.1322</u>
<u>RMSE</u>	<u>0.1285</u>	<u>0.1332</u>	<u>0.151 0</u>	<u>0.1623</u>

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Daytime Operational Product

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Based on the experiments mentioned above, the performance of RF in cloud

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detection and cloud fraction retrieval slightly outperforms that of MLP. Therefore,

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subsequent experiments will utilize the RF algorithm.

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3.2 Cloud fraction correction in sun glint regions

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Sun glint refers to the bright areas created by the reflection of sunlight to the

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sensors of observation systems (satellites or aircrafts). This phenomenon usually occurs

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on extensive water surfaces, such as oceans lakes or rivers. This specular reflection of

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sunlight will cause an increase in the reflected solar radiation received by onboard

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sensors, manifested as an enhancement of white brightness in visible images. The

568 increase in visible channel observation albedo will affect various subsequent
569 applications of data, including cloud detection and cloud cover retrieval, etc.

570 The position of Sun glint area can be determined using the SunGlintAngle value
571 in the FY-4A GEO file. SunGlintAngle is defined as the angle between the satellite
572 observation direction or reflected radiation direction and the mirror reflection direction
573 on a calm surface (horizontal plane). It is generally accepted that the range of
574 SunGlintAngle $< 15^\circ$ is easily affected by sun glint (Kay S, et al., 2009). The positions
575 of the SunGlintAngle contour lines at 5 and 15° are marked in Figure 1(a). It can be
576 observed that the edge of sun glint in Figure 1(a) essentially overlaps with the position
577 of SunGlintAngle = 15° . Thus, the region where SunGlintAngle $< 15^\circ$ is defined as the
578 sun glint range in this paper and only the cloud fraction within this range will be
579 adjusted in the subsequent correction.

580 To correct the cloud fraction in the sun-glint areas, we first identified the fields of
581 view (FOVs) where sun-glint occurred during FY-4A AGRI observations from August
582 2018 to July 2019, totaling 1,476 FOVs. Subsequently, a direct least squares fitting
583 was conducted between the retrieved cloud fraction and the collocated 2B-
584 CLDCLASS-LIDAR cloud fraction (ground truth). The scatter plot is illustrated in
585 Figure 2(b), where x-axis is the 2B-CLDCLASS-LIDAR cloud fraction and y-axis is
586 the model-retrieved cloud fraction. The blue line represents the curve (namely Eq.2)
587 fitted by the least squares method between the retrievals and the truths. The thin dash
588 line is the $x=y$ line. It is evident that the retrieved cloud fraction is generally slightly

删除了: To correct the cloud fraction in the sun glint region, we initially identified 672 fields of view where sun glint occurred in the FY-4A AGRI observations between 1 June and 31 July 2019....

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594 overestimated.

595 Taking observations at 04:00 on 5 June 2019 as an example, Figure 2(c) presents

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596 the distribution of SunGlintAngle and the flight trajectory of the Cloudsat&Calypso

597 satellite. White circles denote the sun glint region with SunGlintAngle $< 15^\circ$ and the

598 white line represents the satellite flight track. As depicted in the figure, the majority of

599 Cloudsat&Calypso flight trajectories do not pass through the central position of sun

600 glint area but instead traverse locations with larger SunGlintAngle values. The

601 intensity of sun glint effect decreases with the increase of SunGlintAngle. This

602 suggests that the true values for spatial and temporal matching mostly do not fall within

603 the strongest sun glint region. From Figure 2(d), it can be seen that the impact of sun

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604 glint becomes stronger as SunGlintAngle decreasing, which results in a higher

605 observation albedo. This further leads to the overestimated cloud fraction values in the

606 retrieval. It is evident that the cloud fraction error is related to the value of

607 SunGlintAngle and this influence is not considered in Eq. (2). Directly applying

608 equation (2) to correct the cloud fraction retrievals would result in a too small correction

609 intensity for the FOVs near the center of sun glint and an excessively large correction

610 intensity for the FOVs in the Sun-glint edge region (even erroneous clear sky may

611 appear). Considering this, a correction formula (3)-(4) using SunGlintAngle as weight

612 is introduced, where W_i represents the angle weight for a certain pixel i in the sun glint

613 region, n is the number of pixels within the SunGlintAngle $< 15^\circ$ range, y_i is the initial

614 model retrieval of cloud cover for the field of view i and x_i is the final corrected cloud

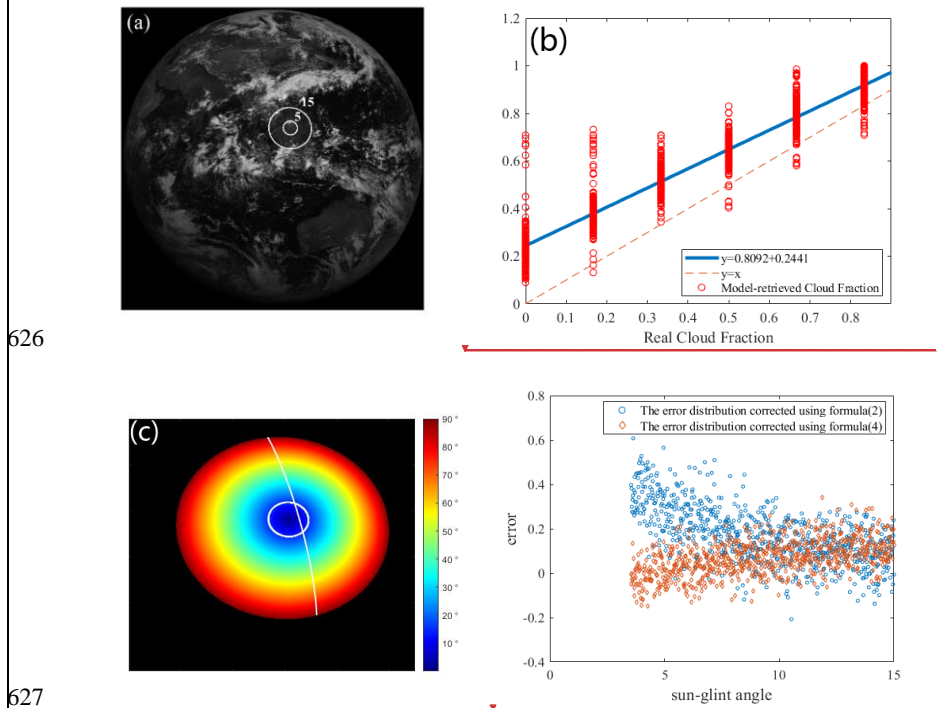
617 fraction.

618
$$x = (y - 0.2441)/0.8092 \quad (2)$$

619
$$W_i = \frac{glintangle_i}{\frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=0}^n glintangle_i} \quad (3)$$

620
$$x_i = W_i \left(\frac{y_i - 0.2441}{0.8092} \right) \quad (4)$$

621 Figure 2(d) shows the distribution of errors with respect to SunGlintAngle,
622 where the blue dots represent the error distribution corrected using formula
623 (2), and the orange dots represent the error distribution corrected using
624 formula (4). It can be seen from Figure 2(d) that after correction by formula
625 (4), the errors in the smaller range of SunGlintAngle are significantly reduced.



628 **Figure 2** (a) albedo image of 0.67μm channel (the circles are the contours of the sun-

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638 glint angle), (b) Scatter plot of cloud fraction in sun glint region (The blue line
639 represents the curve (namely Eq.2) fitted by the least squares method between the
640 retrievals and the truths.), (c) Distribution of SunGlintAngle and satellite flight track of
641 CloudSat & Calypso at 4:00 on June 5, 2019, (d) Distribution of cloud fraction retrieval
642 error with sun-glint angle.

643 **3.3. Algorithm universal applicability testing**

644 Although the retrieval model in this article was built based on data from May 2019
645 due to the limited lifespan of the instrument, how effective is it in real-time FY-4A
646 AGRI observations and even subsequent FY-4B AGRI applications? The algorithm's
647 universal applicability was tested using real-time observations from FY-4A and FY-4B
648 AGRI in 2023.

649 Taking the full-disk observation of FY-4A AGRI at 04:00 (UTC, the same below)
650 on 1 June 2023 as an example, the radiance observations from 14 channels are initially
651 fed into the random forest cloud detection model to determine the sky classification
652 (overcast, partly cloudy or clear sky) in each AGRI field. The random forest cloud
653 fraction retrieval model is utilized to retrieve the cloud fraction in scenes identified as
654 partly cloudy. Figure 3(a) is the observed albedo at $0.67\ \mu\text{m}$, where the circles represent
655 the contours of the sunglint angle, (b) is the cloud fraction retrievals from random forest
656 algorithm, (c) is the official operational cloud fraction product and (d) is random forest
657 cloud fraction retrievals with sun-glint correction. It can be seen from Figure 3 that

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660 many clear-sky scenes are erroneously identified as cloudy by the operational product
661 and the cloud fraction is generally overestimated with many scenes having a cloud
662 fraction of 1. The random forest algorithm identifies more regions as clear skies or
663 partly cloudy than the operational products, matching better with the observations in
664 the 0.67 μm albedo image. Brighter regions in the visible image correspond to cloud
665 cover areas and darker areas represent clear sky conditions. The sun glint region in the
666 central South China Sea (the circled area in Figure 3(a)) is depicted in Figure 3(b),
667 where the clear-sky scenes over the ocean are misidentified as partly cloudy by random
668 forest algorithm due to the increase in observed albedo. Although operational product
669 in this area also suffers from the impact of unremoved sun glint, it identifies more clear-
670 sky scenes and the cloud fraction is relatively low. Thus, it is evident that the random
671 forest algorithm exhibits significant cloud detection and cloud fraction errors in these
672 sun glint regions. Correction is necessary for the cloud fraction retrievals in the sun
673 glint region.

674 Figure 3(d) shows the cloud fraction distribution after correction using equation
675 (9) in the sun glint region., The correction eliminates the influence of sun glint
676 comparing to the cloud fraction in sun glint area before correction in Figure 3(b). The
677 scenes misjudged as partly cloudy are corrected to clear sky and match well with the
678 actual albedo observations in 3(a), which accurately restores the true cloud coverage
679 over the South China Sea.

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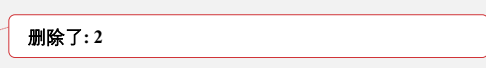
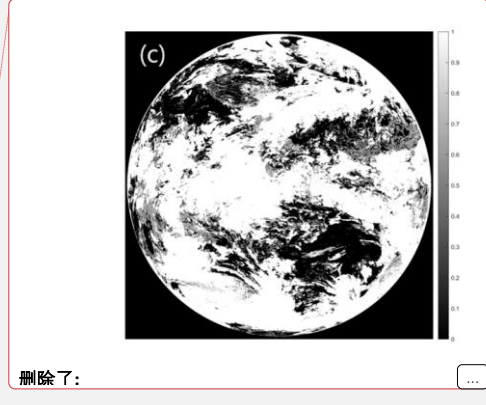
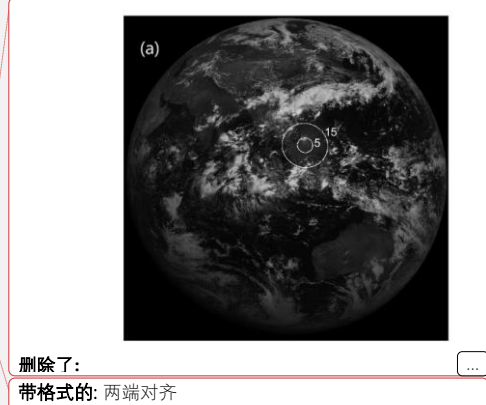
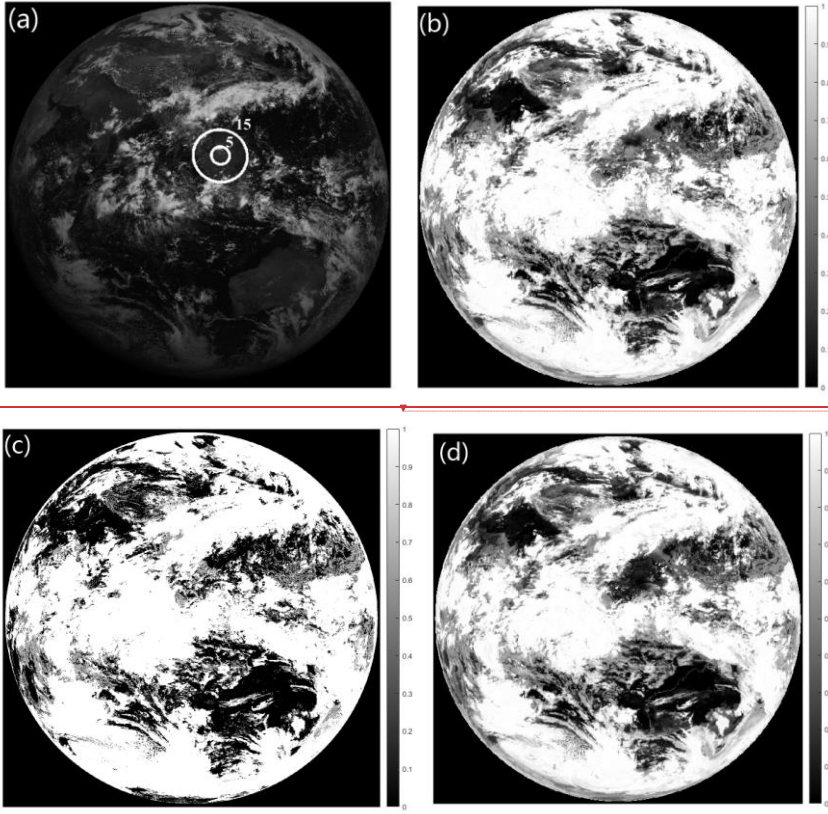
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Figure 3 FY-4A AGRI at 04:00 on 1 June 2023 (a) albedo image of 0.67 μ m channel (the circles are the contours of the sun-glint angle), (b) random forest cloud fraction retrieval without sun-glint correction, (c) operational cloud fraction product, (d) random forest cloud fraction retrieval with sun-glint correction.

Statistical analysis was conducted on the correction effect using samples with sun glint in the training data. The POD and FAR in sun glint area is listed in table 5 and the error is in table 6. It can be seen that after correcting for cloud fraction, the POD for clear skies has increased from 0.0987 to 0.9023. The FAR for partly cloudy has

708 decreased from 0.7943 to 0.0276. Both ME, MAE, and RMSE show significant
 709 reductions, and the results after correction outperform operational products.

710 Table 5 POD and FAR of Cloud Detection in sun glint area

	Sky Classification	Operational Product	RF	RF after Correction
POD	Clear Sky	0.4120	0.0987	0.9023
	Partly cloudy	0.7371	0.9663	0.9587
	Overcast	0.8856	0.9845	0.9845
FAR	Clear Sky	0.1229	0.1633	0.0938
	Partly cloudy	0.3332	0.7943	0.0276
	Overcast	0.2983	0.1321	0.1321

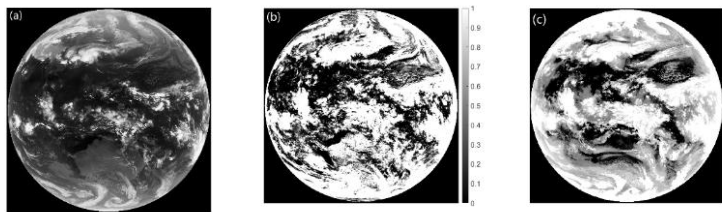
711
 712 Table 6 cloud fraction Errors in sun glint area

	Operational Product	RF Retrievals	RF after Correction
ME	0.2354	0.1741	0.0670
MAE	0.2511	0.1820	0.0849
RMSE	0.2771	0.2166	0.1041

713 FY-4B launched in 2021 has a total of 15 channels with an additional low-level
 714 water vapor channel at 7.42 μm compared to FY-4A. Taking the full-disk observation
 715 of FY-4B AGRI at 17:00 on April 18, 2023, as an example, The radiance observation

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783 data of the remaining eight channels (near-infrared and infrared channels) except for
784 the 7.42 μm channel and the visible light channels were input into the random forest
785 cloud detection model. Figure 4 (a) shows the brightness temperature distribution
786 observed in the 10.8 μm channel of FY-4B AGRI, (b) represents the operational cloud
787 fraction product for FY-4B AGRI and (c) shows the cloud fraction retrieved by this
788 algorithm. Figure 4 illustrates that the random forest algorithm identifies more regions
789 as clear skies or partly cloudy than the operational products, aligning better with the
790 brightness temperature observations in 10.8 μm . Especially in high latitude regions of
791 the southern hemisphere and areas with strong convection near the equator, the cloud
792 cover provided by operational products is too high and even misjudged. It can be seen
793 that the random forest algorithm is also suitable for cloud fraction retrieval of FY-4B
794 AGRI.



795
796 **Figure 4** FY-4B AGRI at 17:00 on 18 April 2023, (a) brightness temperature of
797 10.8 μm channel, (b) operational cloud fraction product, (c) random forest cloud
798 fraction retrieval.

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804 4 Conclusion

805 This paper used the random forest and multi-layer perceptron (MLP) algorithms
806 to retrieve cloud fraction from FY-4A AGRI full-disk Level-1 radiance observation data,
807 and verified the accuracy of the algorithms using the Cloudsat & Calypso active remote
808 sensing satellite's 2B CLDCLASS-LIDAR cloud fraction product. The following
809 conclusions were drawn:

810 (1) The random forest and MLP algorithms performed well in cloud detection and
811 cloud fraction retrieval tasks, and their accuracy was higher than that of operational
812 products. The accuracy of cloud detection can reach over 93%, and the error of cloud
813 fraction retrieval is close to zero. Compared with the MLP algorithm, the RF algorithm
814 has a slightly higher accuracy in cloud detection, and a slightly lower error in cloud
815 fraction retrieval, showing better performance.

816 (2) At night, the classification accuracy is lower than during the day due to the lack
817 of observations in the visible channel of AGRI, resulting in higher cloud fraction errors
818 at night.

819 (3) The accuracy of identifying partly cloudy scenes is lower than that of
820 identifying clear sky and overcast scenes for both RF and MLP algorithms. Scenes with
821 very low cloud fraction (0.16) are often misclassified as clear sky, while scenes with
822 high cloud fraction (0.83) are often misclassified as overcast.

823 (4) The sun-glint area cloud fraction correction curve, fitted with SunGlintAngle

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824 as the weight, greatly improves the accuracy of cloud fraction retrieval and reduces the
825 misclassification rate of clear sky scenes as partly cloudy or partly cloudy scenes as
826 overcast due to increased reflectance.

827
828 ***Data availability***

829 FY-4A AGRI data is available at <http://satellite.nsmc.org.cn> and the 2B-CLDCLASS-
830 LIDAR data at <https://www.icare.univ-lille.fr/data-access/data-archive-access/>

831
832 ***Author contributions***

833 JX: Formal analysis, Methodology, Software, Visualization and Writing – original draft
834 preparation. LG: Conceptualization, Data curation, Funding acquisition, Supervision,
835 Validation and Writing – review & editing.

836
837 ***Competing interests***

838 The contact author has declared that none of the authors has any competing interests.

839
840 ***Disclaimer***

841 ***Acknowledgements***

842 Funding: This work was supported by the National Natural Science Foundation of
843 China under grant no. 41975028.

844 *We acknowledge the High Performance Computing Center of Nanjing University of*

删除了: The random forest machine learning algorithm based on FY-4A AGRI full-disc level-1 radiance observations is developed to retrieve the cloud fraction for each field of view in this paper. The accuracy of the algorithm is validated using the 2B CLDCLASS-LIDAR cloud fraction product from the Cloudsat&Calypso active remote sensing satellite and FY-4A AGRI level 2 operational product. The following conclusions are drawn: Not only the cloud detection but also the cloud fraction within each FY-4A AGRI field of view can be retrieved by the random forest machine learning algorithm. The operational product has a relatively low POD for clear sky scenes, while the random forest algorithm improves the POD for clear sky scenes during the daytime from 0.54 to 0.69. The POD for clear sky scenes at night increases from 0.51 to 0.67, and the POD for partly cloudy and overcast scenes is comparable to the operational product. For partly cloudy fields, during the day, the ME and RMSE of the operational product are 0.2374 and 0.3269, respectively, while this algorithm exhibits lower ME (0.1475) and RMSE (0.2022) compared to the operational product. At night, the operational product tends to overestimate cloud cover, while this algorithm underestimates cloud cover, with a lower RMSE compared to the operational product. The cloud fraction correction curve for sun glint region fitted with SunGlintAngle as weight significantly improves the accuracy of the random forest cloud fraction retrievals. It reduces the misjudgment rate where increased albedo leads to the identification of clear-sky scene as partly cloudy or overcast.

876 *Information Science & Technology for their support of this work.*

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