Physical Principles of Passive Microwave Radiometry. Soil Moisture

Passive Microwaves. Introduction
Rayleigh-Jeans Law. Background
Factors Affecting Emissivity
Polarization
Estimation of Soil Moisture

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with contributions from Mike Schwank and Jean-Pierre Wigneron

What is remote sensing:

Observing an object with an instrument that is in a certain distance to this object.

Applications of remote sensing:

soil sciences
geology
climate, meteorology
cartography
dydrology
astronomy

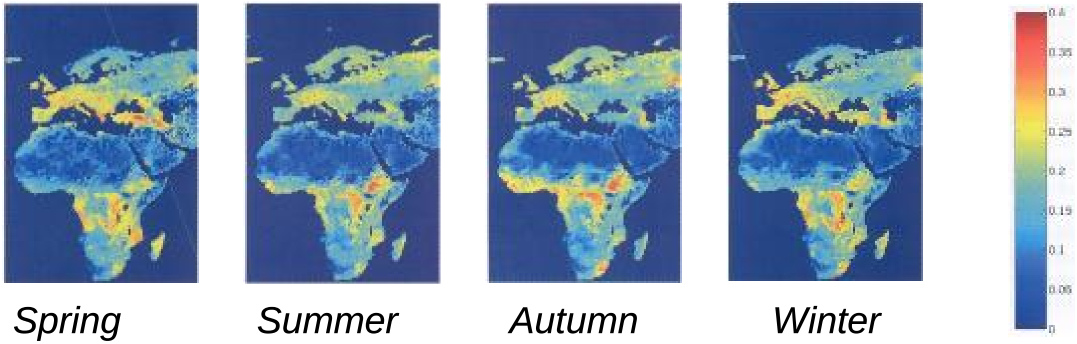
Why remote sensing:

large scale
accessibility
areal statistics
costs

Goal of SMOS mission:

Global water content and ocean salinity data.

q [m^{3}m^{-3}]



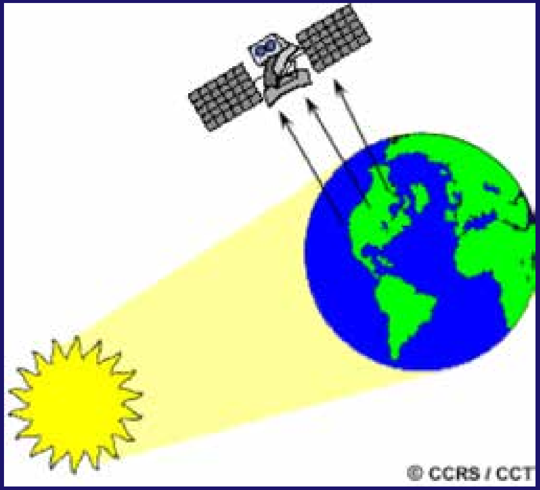
Spring *Summer* *Autumn* *Winter*

photo
Apollo 17, 1972

Introduction

Passive Sensors

Use reflected (external source) or emitted by the system energy
Different illumination and observation angle
Do not alter the conditions of the system
Sensitive to illumination conditions
Much simpler, less expensive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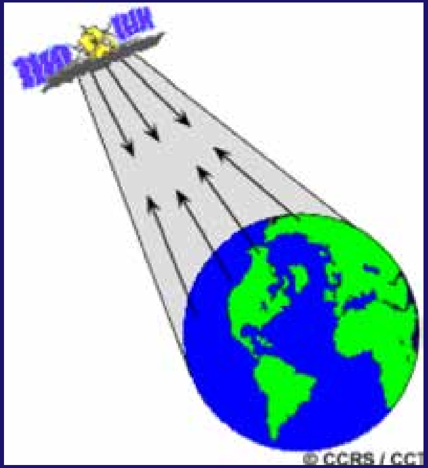
Active Sensors

Use reflected (own source) energy
Same illumination and observation angle
May alter the conditions of the system
Non sensitive to illumination conditions
More complex, more expensive because they need plenty of energy to work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Optical / IR remote sensing

- Uses the VIS / IR parts of the electromagnetic spectrum
- Human eye, cameras, telescopes, radiometers
- Problems with clouds, rain, fog, snow, smoke, smog, etc.
- Only from surface. Cannot penetrate soil, vegetation, snowpack, ice
- Relies on ambient light sources (e.g., sunlight)

Microwave remote sensing is less than 100 years old

- Uses the microwave and RF parts of the spectrum
- Radars and radiometers
- Is largely immune to clouds, precipitation, smoke, etc.
- Penetrates sand, soil, rock, vegetation, dry snow, ice, etc.
- Does not rely on sunlight – radar provides its own illumination, radiometers use the target's thermal emission

Data from microwave sensors complement data from optical sensors

Why this is interesting:

The global water cycle is the “motor” of the global climate.

Solution:

Microwave (L-band) measurements from a satellite.
Soil Moisture and Ocean Salinity mission (SMOS) launched on November 2th 2009.

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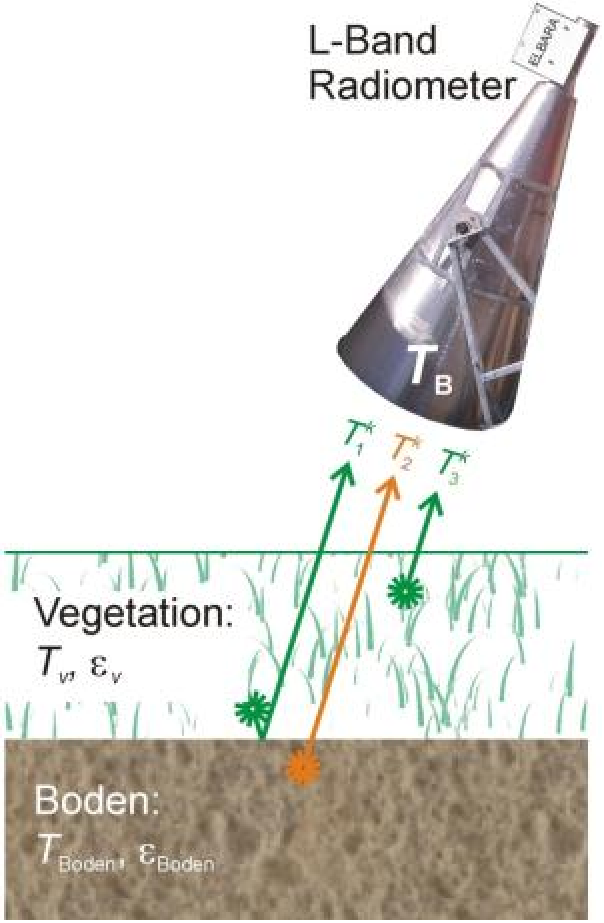
How it works:

The electromagnetic radiance T_B (brightness temperature) of an object is determined by:

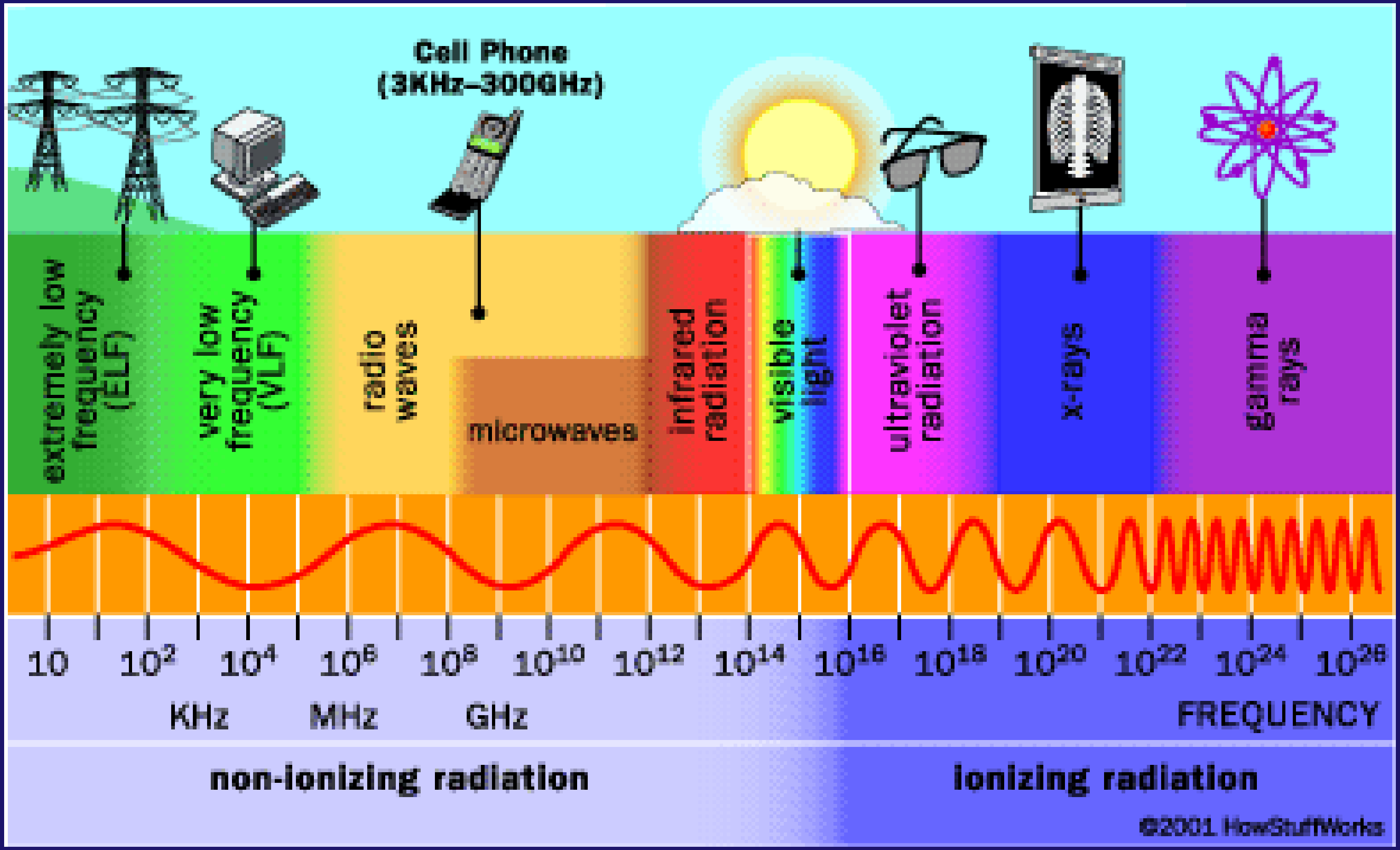
Temperature T and emissivity E.

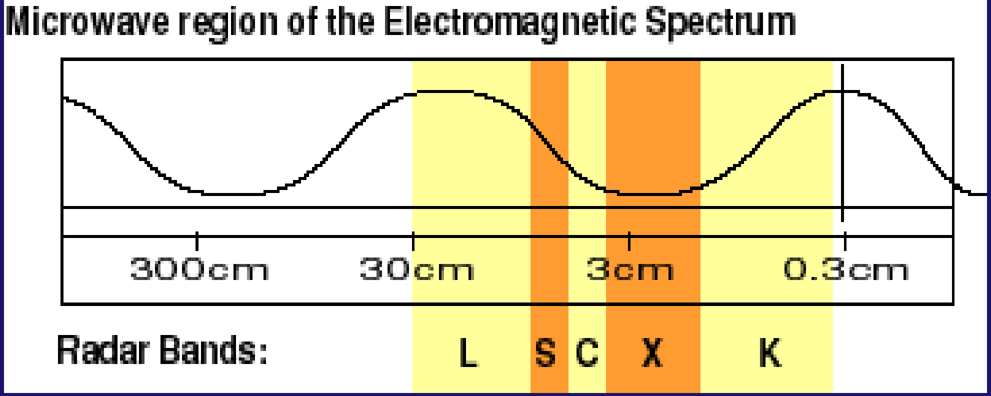
E depends on the dielectric constant e of the object, and therefore on the water content q.

measurement:		model:		result:
T_B	➡	**Radiative transfer** $T_B = f(T_i,E_i)$ and $E_i = f(e_i)$ **Dielectric mixing model** $e = f(q)$	➡	T_B Þ q



Radiative components in case of a soil covered with vegetation

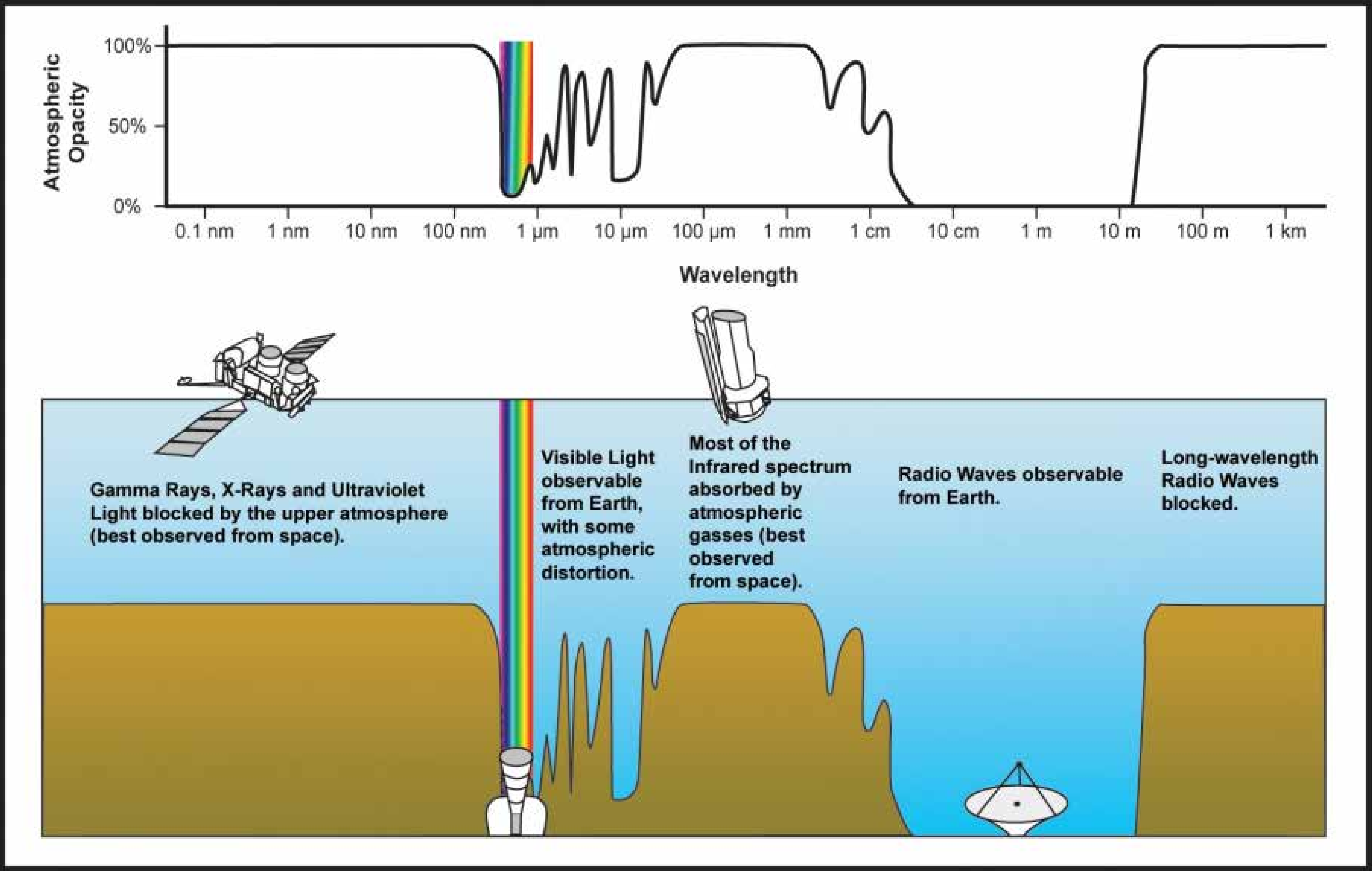

Cell Phone
(3KHz–300GHz)
extremely low frequency (ELF)
very low frequency (VLF)
radio waves
microwaves
infrared radiation
visible light
ultraviolet radiation
x-rays
gamma rays
10
10^2
10^4
10^6
10^8
10^{10}
10^{12}
10^{14}
10^{16}
10^{18}
10^{20}
10^{22}
10^{24}
10^{26}
KHz
MHz
GHz
FREQUENCY
non-ionizing radiation
ionizing radiation
©2001 HowStuffWorks



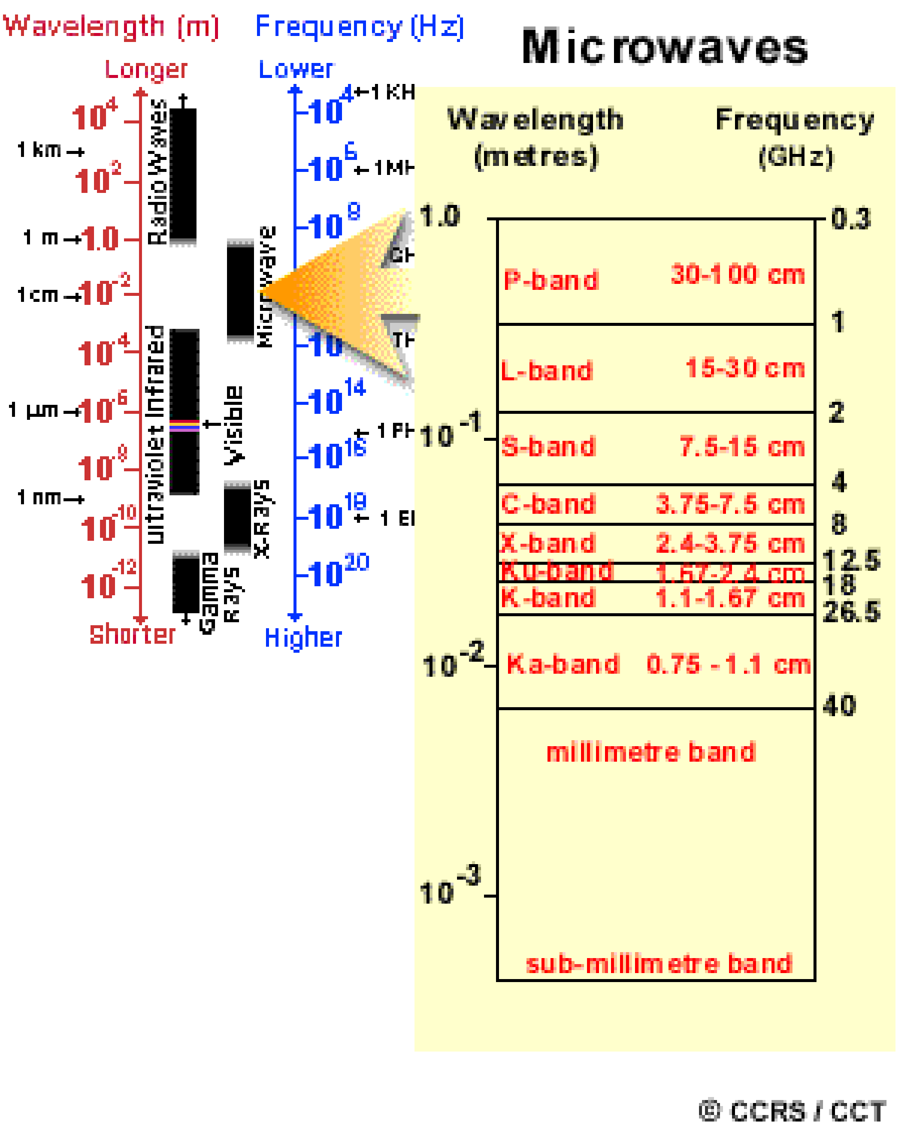
Microwaves have wavelengths that can be measured in centimeters! The longer microwaves, those closer to a foot (30 cm) in length, are the waves which heat our food in a microwave oven.

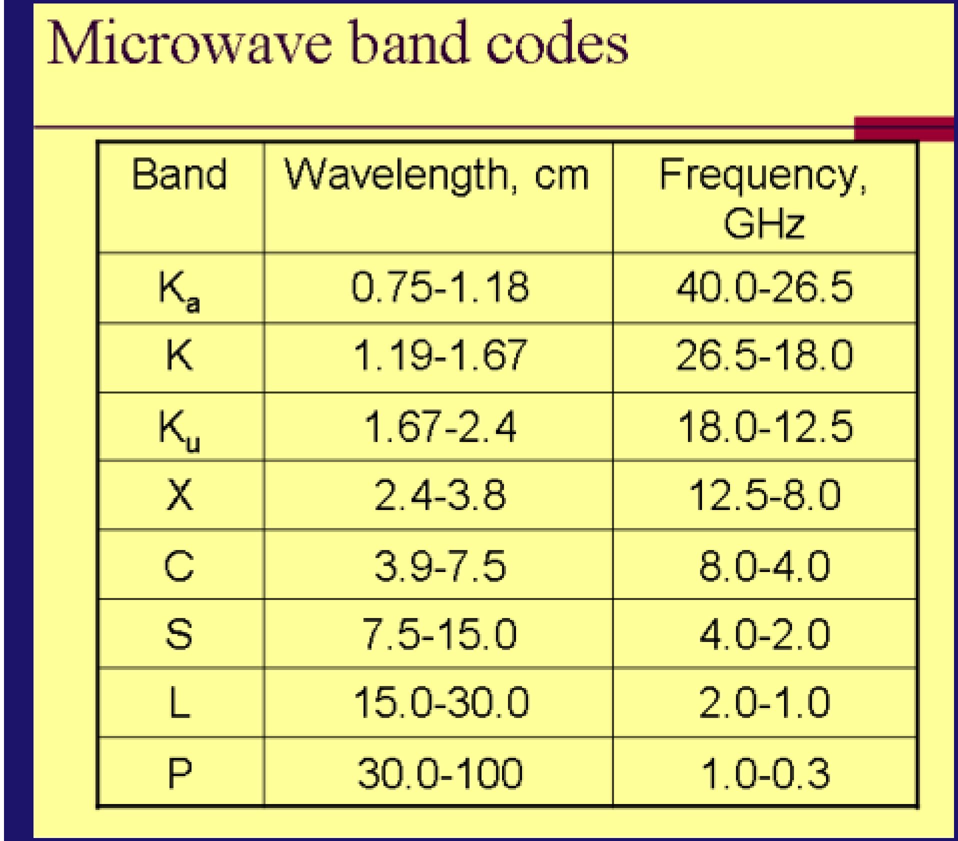
Microwaves are good for transmitting information from one place to another because microwave energy can penetrate haze, light rain and snow, clouds, and smoke.

Shorter microwaves are used in remote sensing. These microwaves are used for radar like the doppler radar used in weather forecasts. Microwaves, used for radar, are just a few inches (1 inch = 2,54 cm) long.


Atmospheric Opacity
100%
50%
0%
0.1 nm
1 nm
10 nm
100 nm
1 µm
10 µm
100 µm
1 mm
1 cm
10 cm
1 m
10 m
100 m
1 km
Wavelength
Gamma Rays, X-Rays and Ultraviolet Light blocked by the upper atmosphere (best observed from space).
Visible Light observable from Earth, with some atmospheric distortion.
Most of the Infrared spectrum absorbed by atmospheric gasses (best observed from space).
Radio Waves observable from Earth.
Long-wavelength Radio Waves blocked.

The Microwave Spectrum



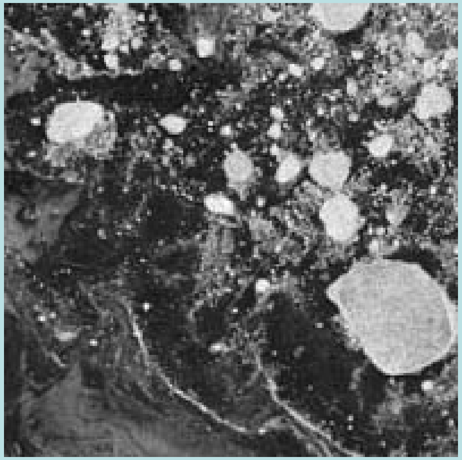


Microwave band codes

Band	Wavelength, cm	Frequency, GHz
K_a	0.75-1.18	40.0-26.5
K	1.19-1.67	26.5-18.0
K_u	1.67-2.4	18.0-12.5
X	2.4-3.8	12.5-8.0
C	3.9-7.5	8.0-4.0
S	7.5-15.0	4.0-2.0
L	15.0-30.0	2.0-1.0
P	30.0-100	1.0-0.3

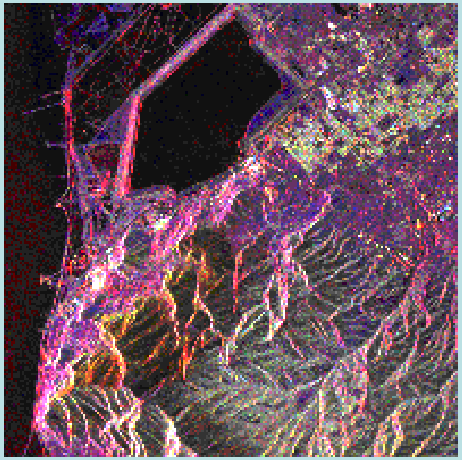
Canada Centre for Remote Sensing

What do Microwaves show us?



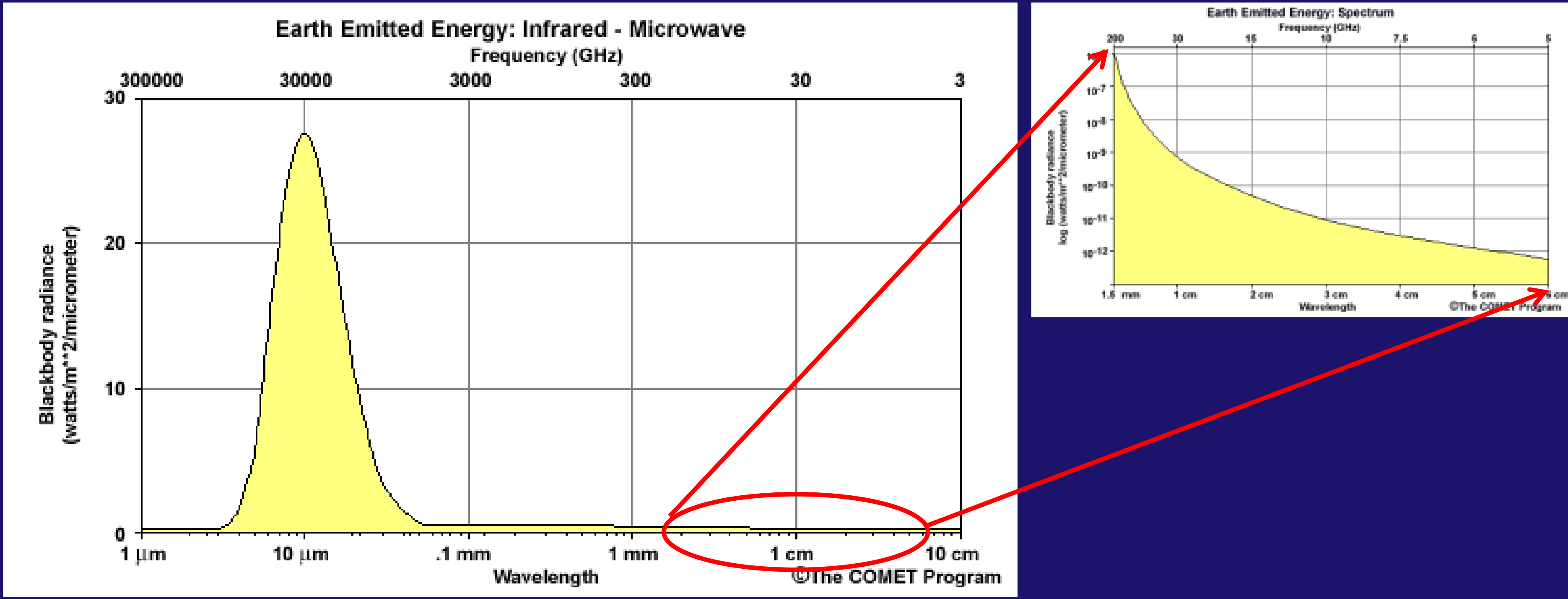
Because microwaves can penetrate haze, light rain and snow, clouds and smoke, these waves are good for viewing the Earth from space. The ERS-1 satellite sends out wavelengths about 5.7 cm long (C-band). This image shows sea ice breaking off the shores of Alaska.

The JERS satellite uses wavelengths about 20 cm in length (L-band). This is an image of the Amazon River in Brazil.

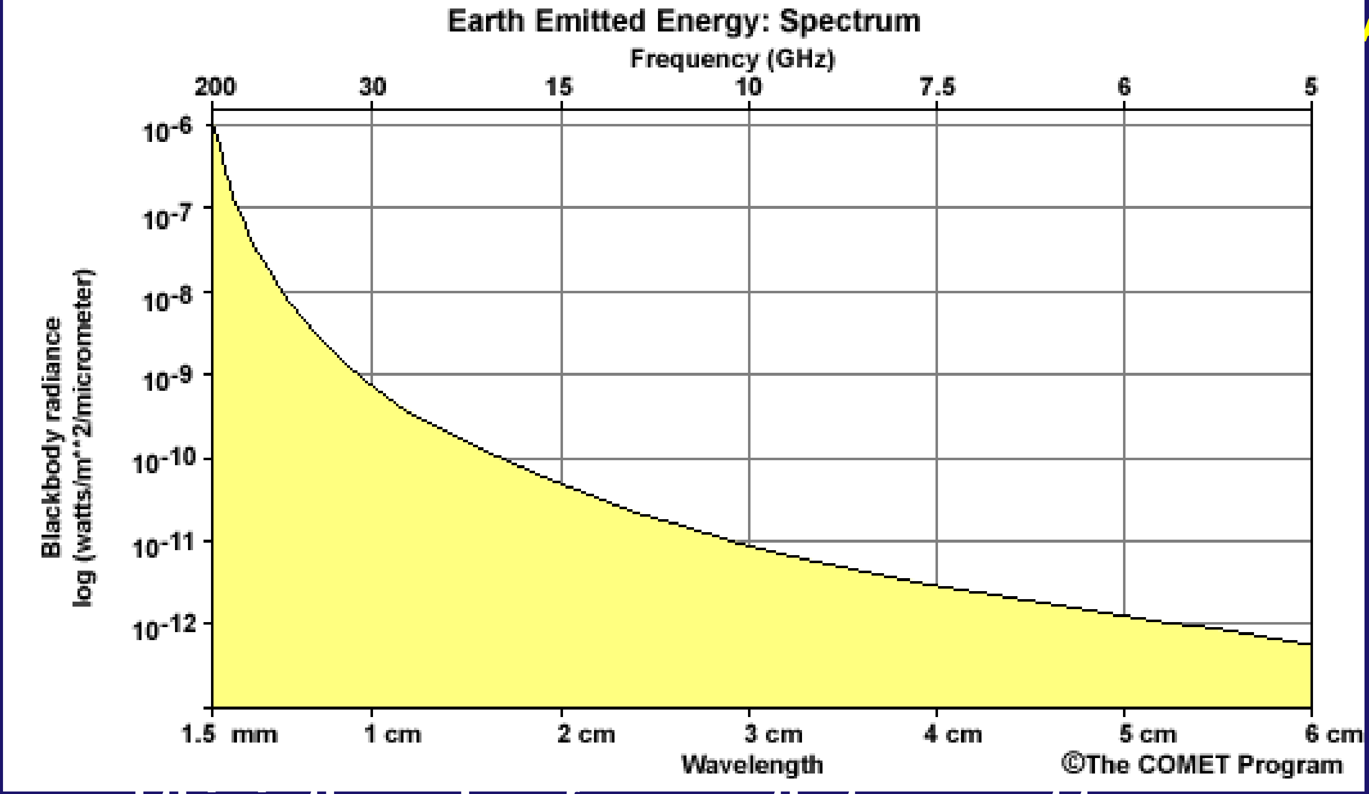


This is a radar image acquired from the Space Shuttle. It also used a wavelength in the L-band of the microwave spectrum. Here we see a computer enhanced radar image of some mountains on the edge of Salt Lake City, Utah.

Available Energy for Passive Sensors



Most weather satellites use the visible and infrared regions of the electromagnetic spectrum to collect data on the Earth and atmosphere. Visible channels use reflected sunlight to create images. In the infrared and microwave, satellites sense Earth-emitted energy to create images. The graph shows that Earth-emitted energy drops off sharply beyond the infrared region of the electromagnetic spectrum.



Available Energy for Passive Sensors

… and this is the order of energy that we want to measure …

$W = s\ T\ B$ □order of 10^{-13} W !!!

$s = 1.380658 \cdot 10^{-23}$ J K^{-1} (Boltzmann constant)

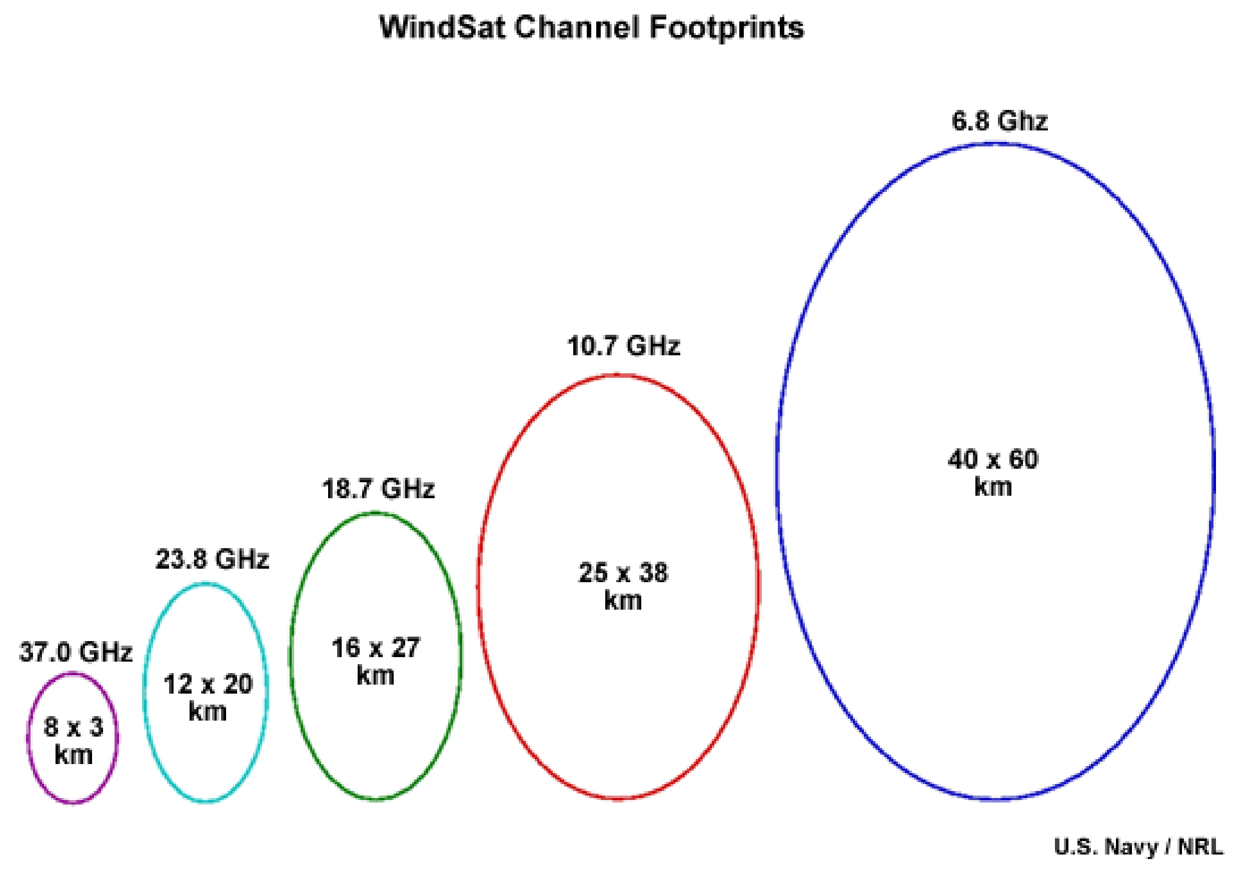
T = Physical temperature (K)

B = 27 MHz (bandwidth)

This decrease of energy with increasing wavelength continues into the microwave regions. Indeed, the energy per unit area in the microwave region is several orders of magnitude less than in the infrared.

Since we often use frequency units (Hertz) rather than wavelength when referring to microwave energy, we note that energy decreases as frequency decreases

Available Energy for Passive Sensors

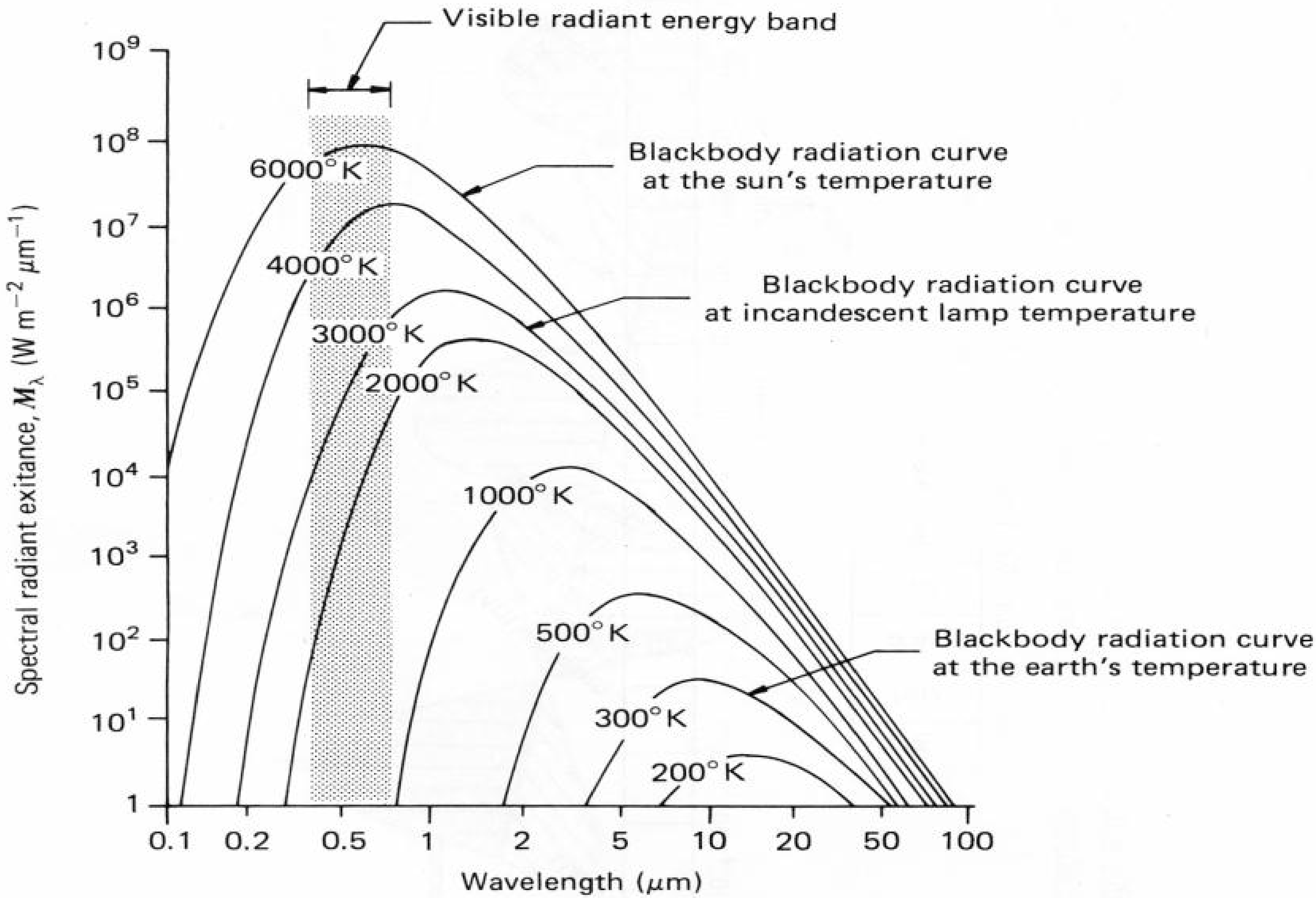


U.S. Navy / NRL

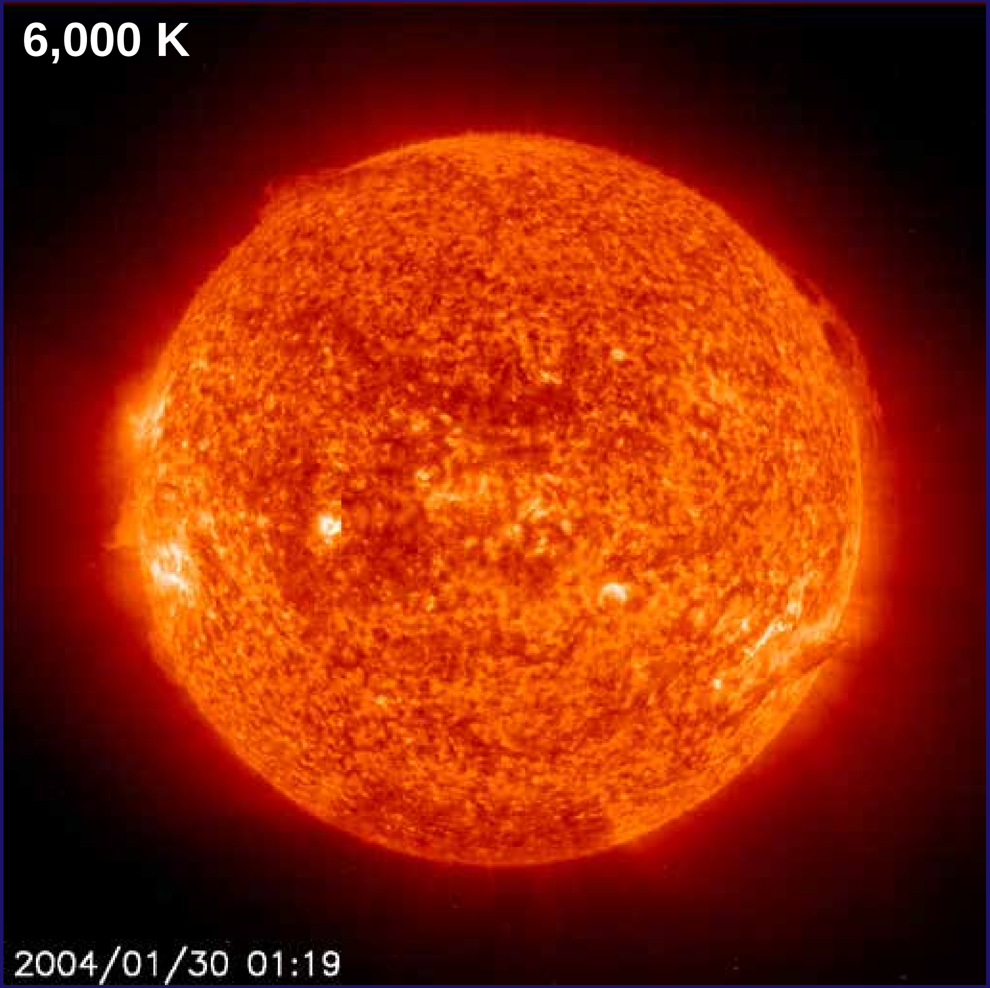
We can see how passive sensing of microwave energy impacts sensor resolution by looking at the five channels on WindSat. The lower the frequency (longer the wavelength) of the channel, the less energy available per unit area, and therefore larger fields-of-view are necessary to collect enough information to create imagery and derived products.

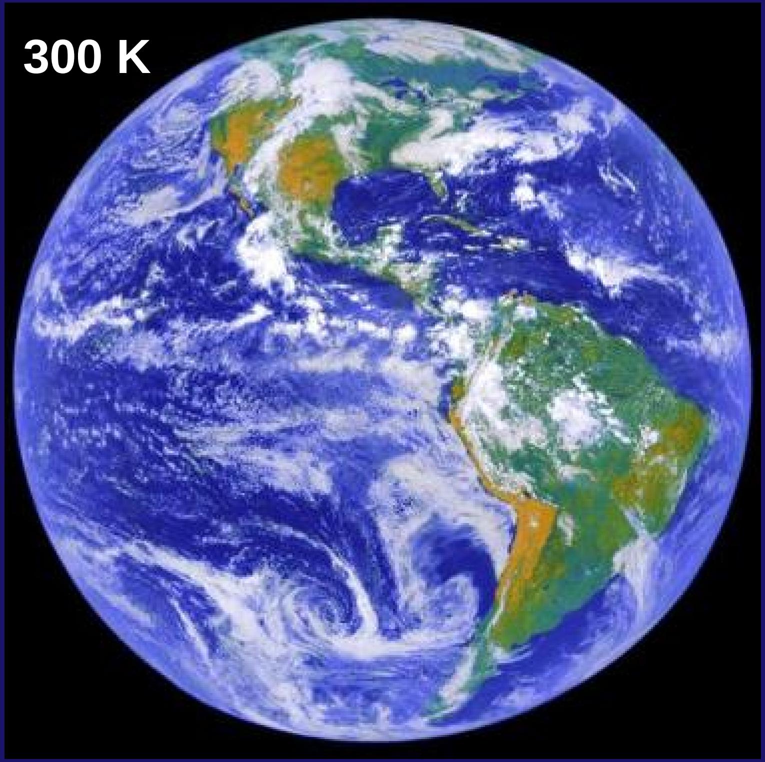
The relatively small amount of emitted microwave energy available to passive satellite sensors requires large fields-of-view to collect sufficient energy for a measurement. Thus, in contrast to visible or infrared sensors, where there is sufficient energy for relatively small fields-of-view on the scale of meters (hyperspectral) or kilometers, passive microwave sensors require larger fields-of-view on the scale of 10 km or more.

Spectral Distribution of Energy Radiated from Blackbodies at Various Temperatures



Wien's Law





Wien's Law

6000 K à VIS (0.4 mm)

300 K à IR (10 mm)

??? K à mwaves (ex. 20 cm)

the answer is coming up soon …

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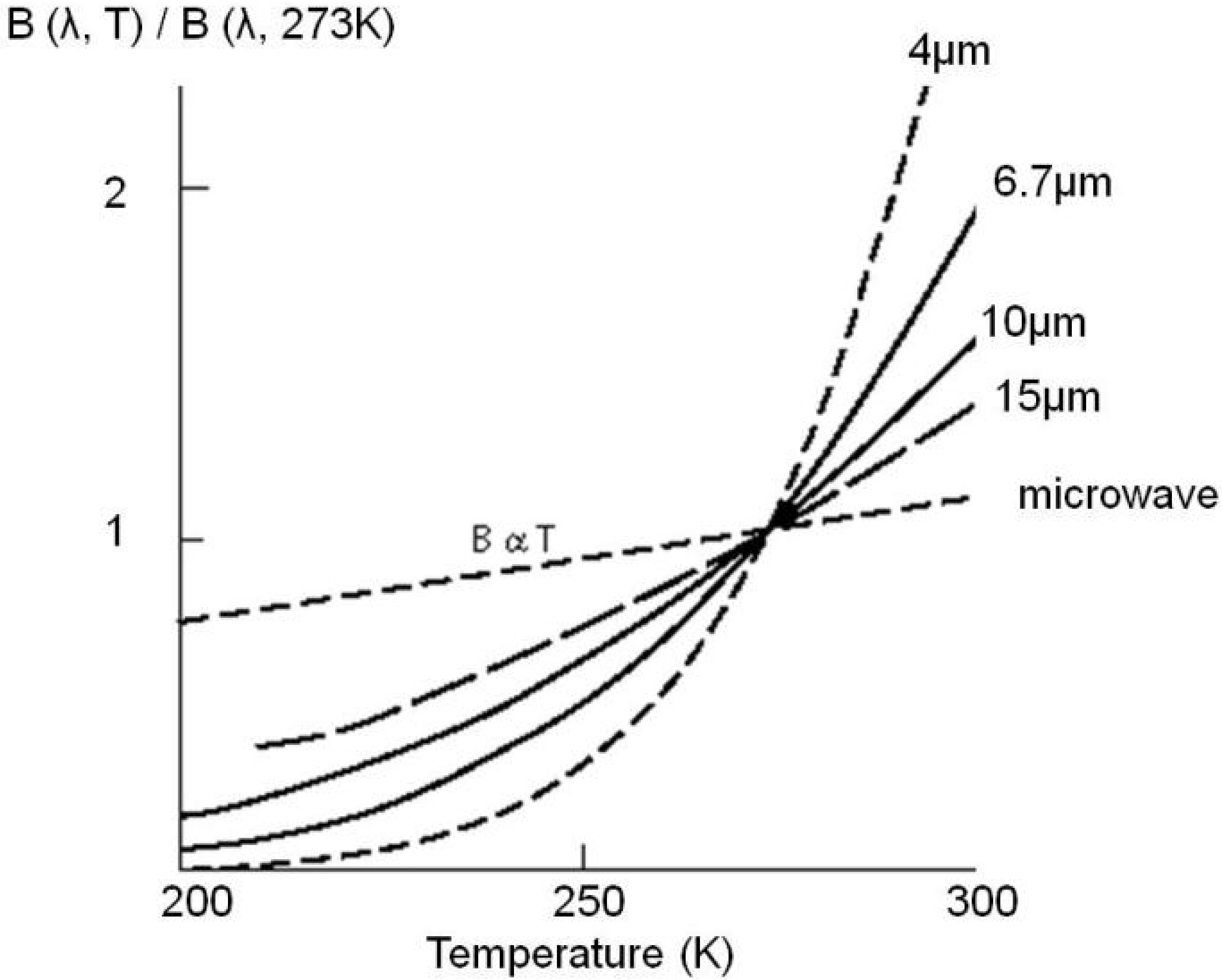
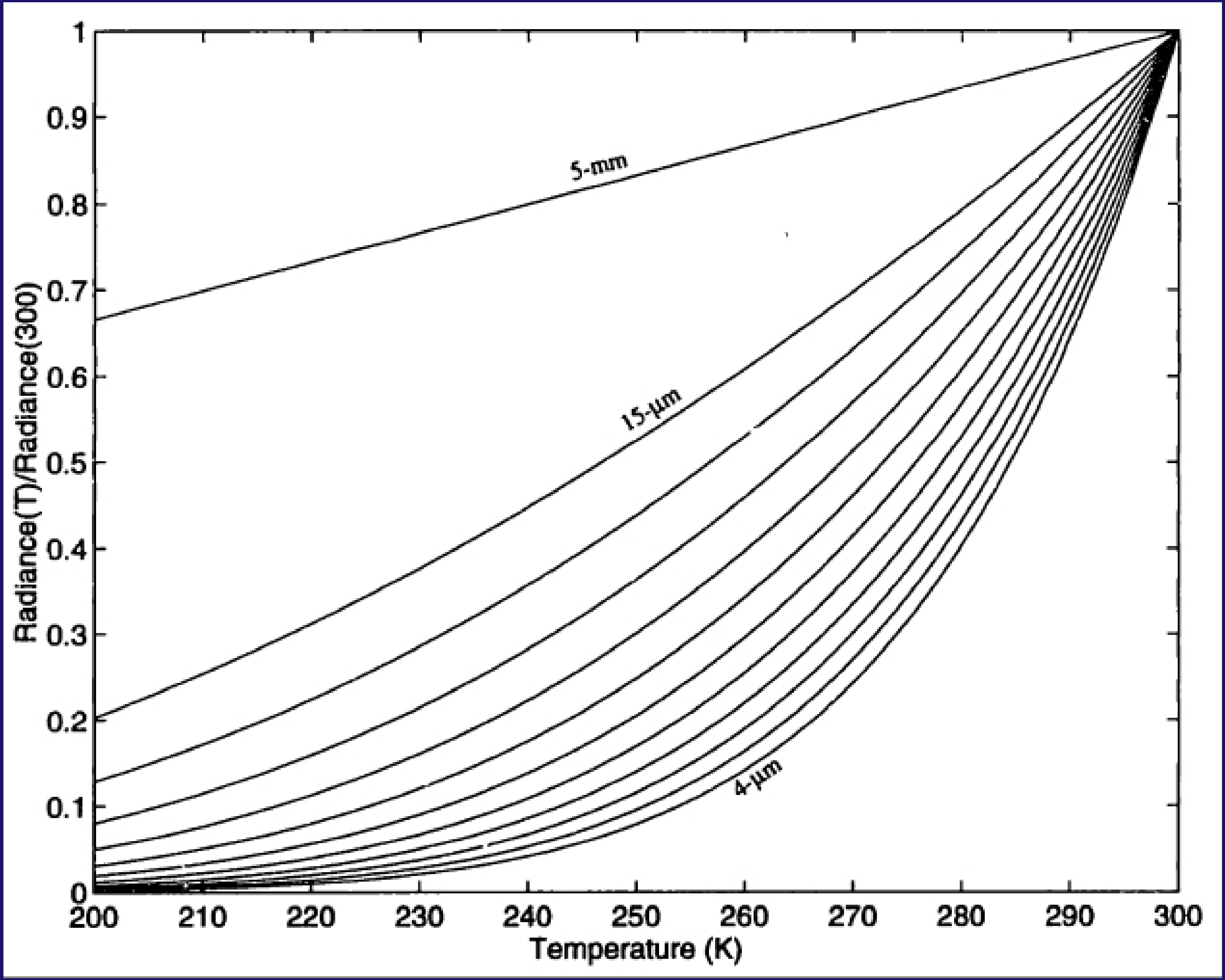
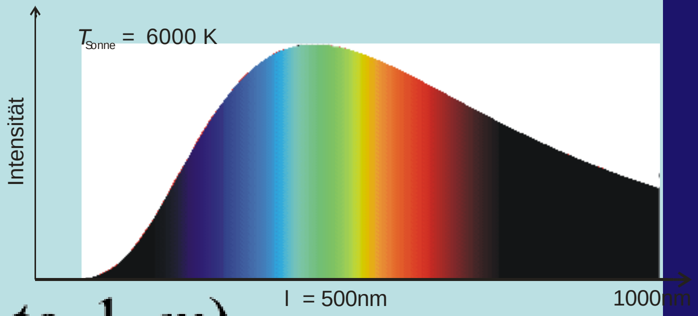
Temperature Sensitivity of B(λ,T) for typical earth scene temperatures




Radiance(T)/Radiance(300)
0
0.1
0.2
0.3
0.4
0.5
0.6
0.7
0.8
0.9
1
200
210
220
230
240
250
260
270
280
290
300
Temperature (K)
5-mm
15-μm
4-μm

Rayleigh – Jeans Approximation

$$B(\lambda,T) = \frac{c_1}{\lambda^5\left[\exp\left(\frac{c_2}{\lambda\ T}\right) - 1\right]}$$



In the μwave region (λ *from* 1 *mm to* 1 *m*),

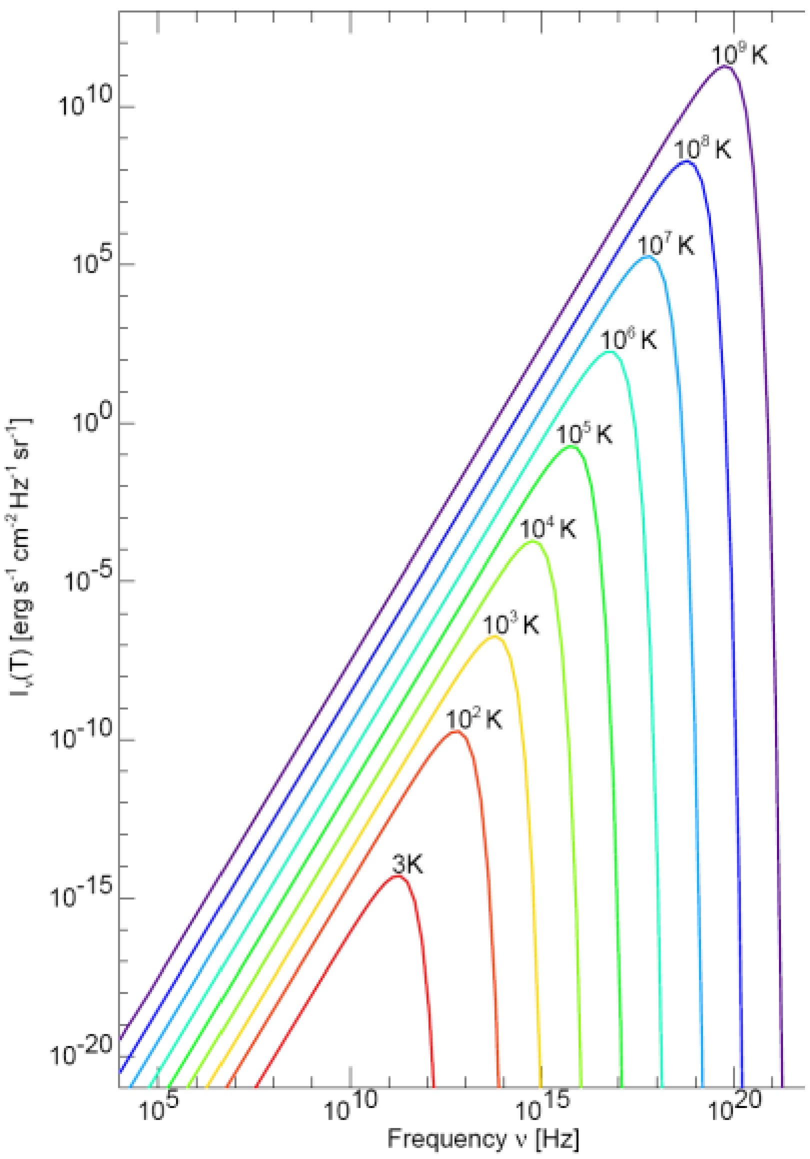
$$c_2/\lambda\ T \ll 1, \ \textit{so that}$$

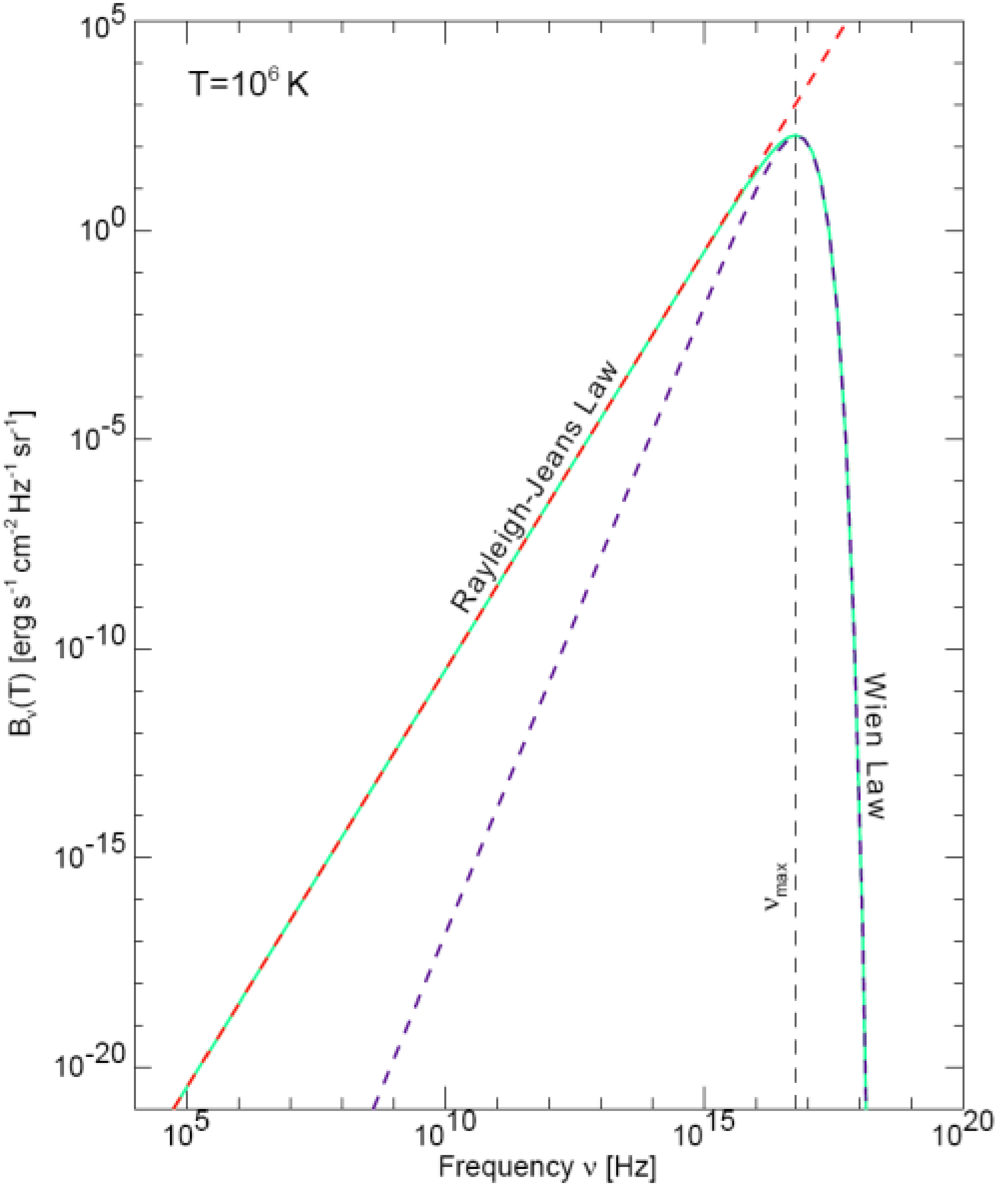
$$\exp\left(\frac{c_2}{\lambda\ T}\right) = 1 + \frac{c_2}{\lambda\ T} + \text{second order}$$

and classical Rayleigh – Jeans equation originates

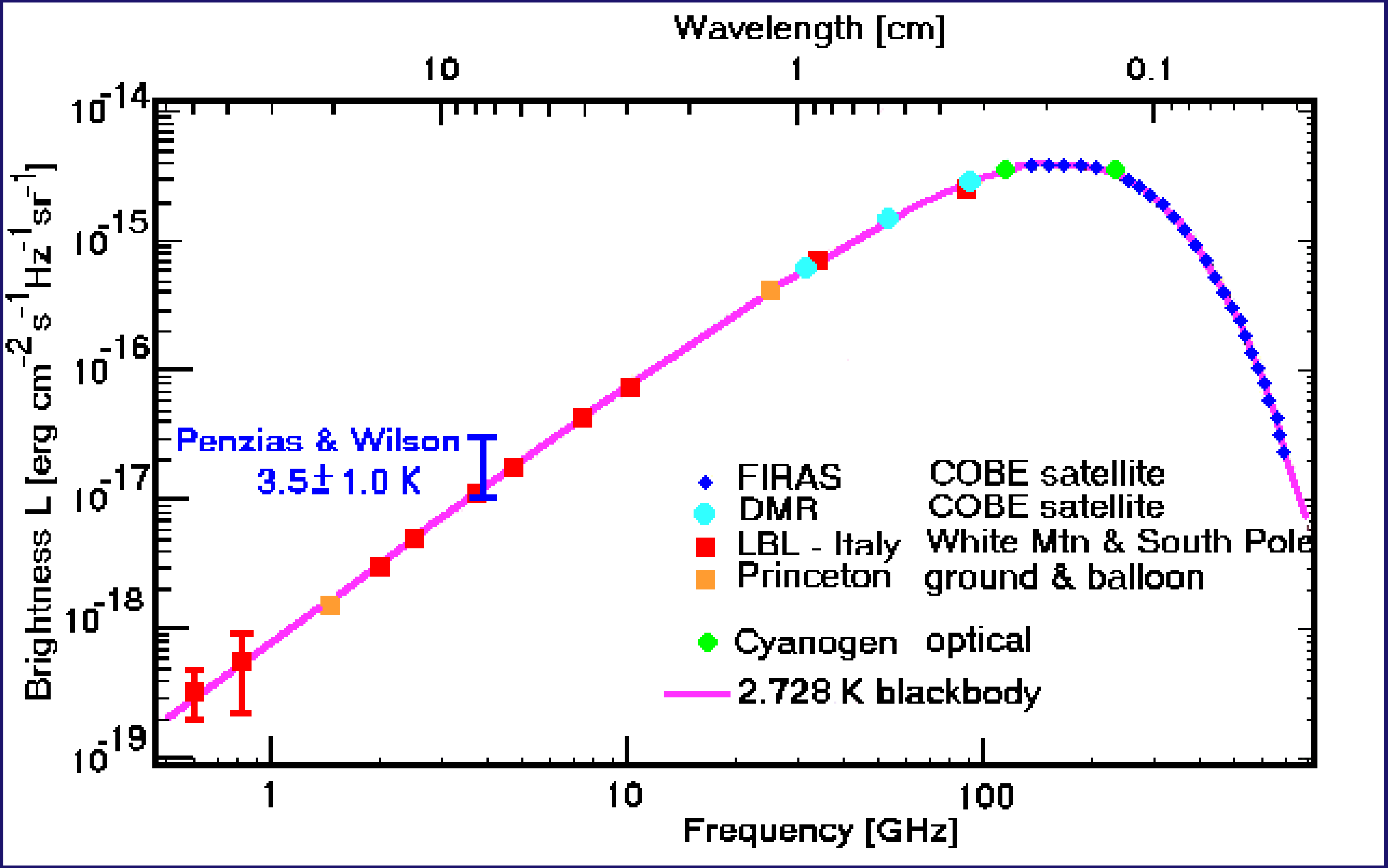
$$B_\lambda(T) \cong \left(\frac{c_1}{c_2}\right)\left(\frac{T}{\lambda^4}\right)$$

$\Rightarrow$ *radiance is a linear function of brightness temperature*


10^9 K
10^8 K
10^7 K
10^6 K
10^5 K
10^4 K
10^3 K
10^2 K
3K
10^10
10^5
10^0
10^-5
10^-10
10^-15
10^-20
I_ν(T) [erg s^-1 cm^-2 Hz^-1 sr^-1]
10^5
10^10
10^15
10^20
Frequency ν [Hz]

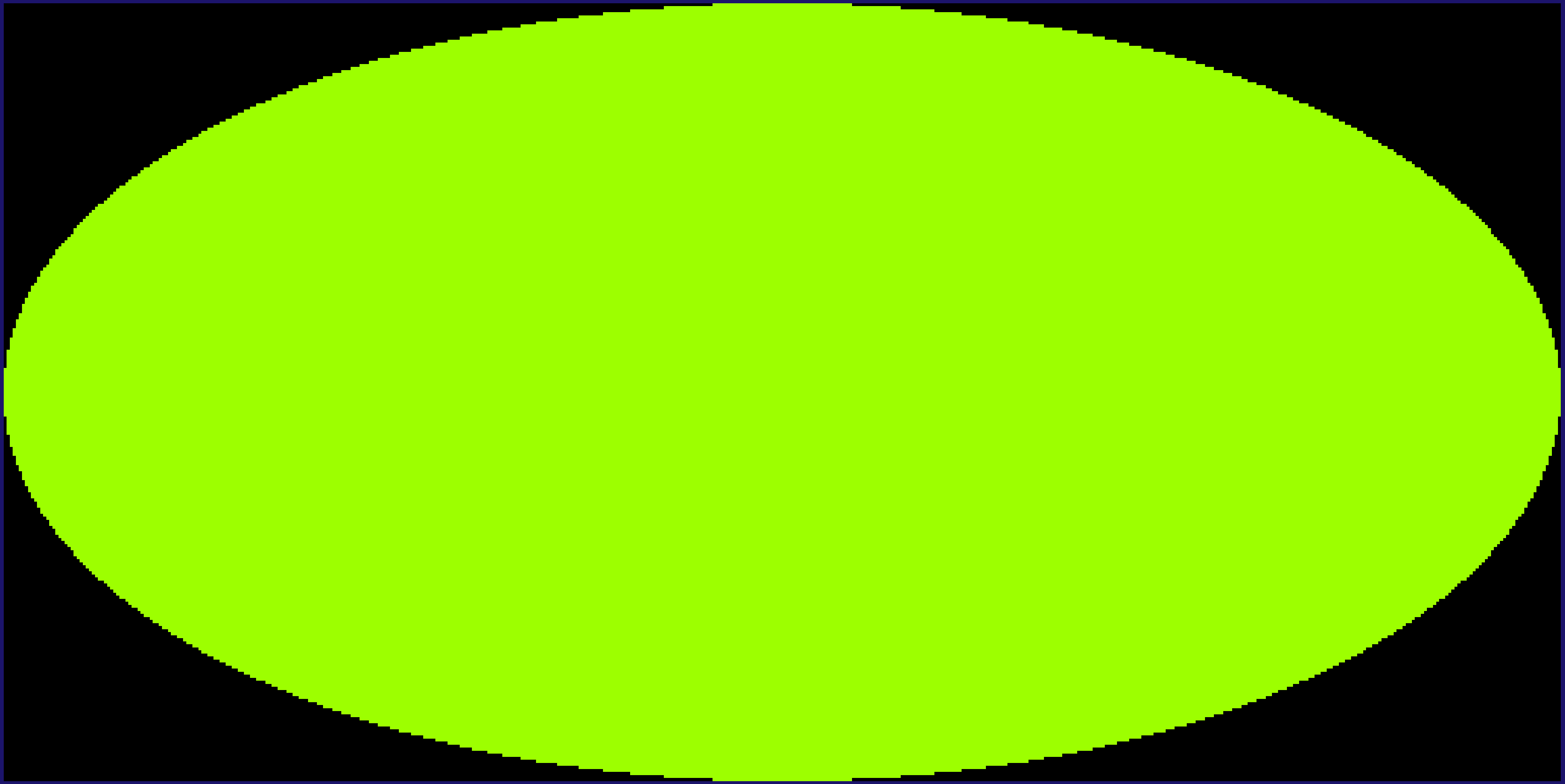

T=10^6 K
Rayleigh-Jeans Law
Wien Law
ν_max
10^5
10^0
10^-5
10^-10
10^-15
10^-20
B_ν(T) [erg s^-1 cm^-2 Hz^-1 sr^-1]
10^5
10^10
10^15
10^20
Frequency ν [Hz]

The 3K Cosmic Background Radiation



The COBE (*Cosmic Background Explorer*) satellite made very careful measurements of the shape of the spectrum of this emission. It is a perfect blackbody at a temperature of 2.728 K; it is often termed the "3K background". (From R. McCray)

The 3K Cosmic Background Radiation



The 3K radiation is remarkably uniform in all directions. The temperature in one direction is the same as in 180 deg the opposite direction to an accuracy of 1 part in 100,000! Here is a map of the whole sky from COBE, scaled so blue would be 0 K and red 4 K. The fact that it is all the same colour shows how uniform the 3K radiation is. This is why passive mwave radiometers can be calibrated against this temperature

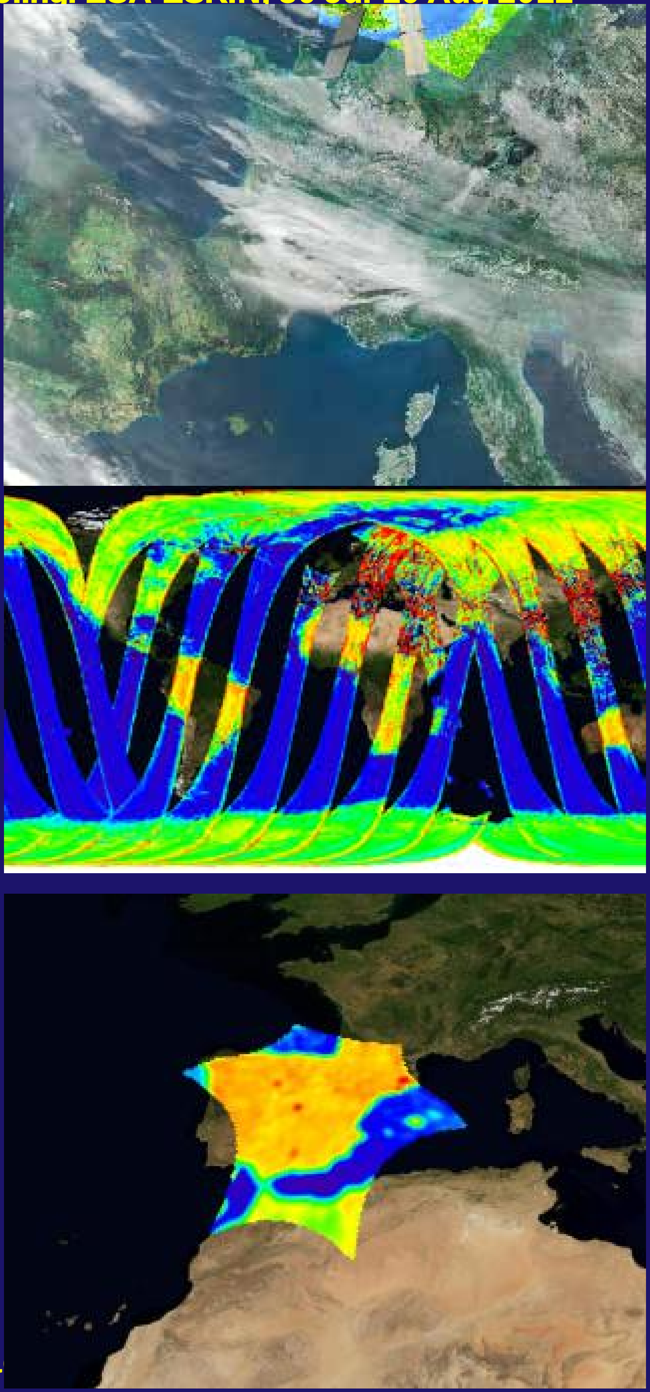
Satellite remote sensing is an important complementary tool for observing Earth’s land and ocean surfaces, especially where in-situ observations are scarce or nonexistent. Microwave remote sensing from polar-orbiting satellites plays a unique role:

•1. polar-orbiting satellites offer the unique capability to provide global coverage

•2. mwave radiation penetrates most clouds and allows for observation of surface features in the vast majority of weather conditions. This is especially important over the oceans, where cloud cover averages nearly 70%

•3. two important properties that impact mwave radiation, polarization and emissivity, vary depending on both wavelength/frequency and characteristics of the emitting material

As a result, satellite observation of mwave radiation and its variability makes it possible to identify and characterize specific surface properties important to weather and climate, such as soil moisture, snow cover and water equivalent, sea ice cover and age, and SST



Example of polarization dependent transmissivity:

M. Schwank

Background of L-band Microwave Radiometry

Direct Methods:

The demanded quantity is directly measured.

E.g. the soil water content results from the mass loss measured after drying a soil sample.

Indirect Methods:

An other physical quantity (a proxy-quantity) which can be related to the demanded quantity is deduced.

E.g. the dielectric constant (permittivity) is the well suited proxy for deriving soil moisture.

The Pros and Cons:

Direct methods are generally more accurate, but also more laborious.

Direct methods are important for calibrating indirect methods.

Indirect methods often require models.

Indirect methods allow for remote sensing of quantities.

M. Schwank

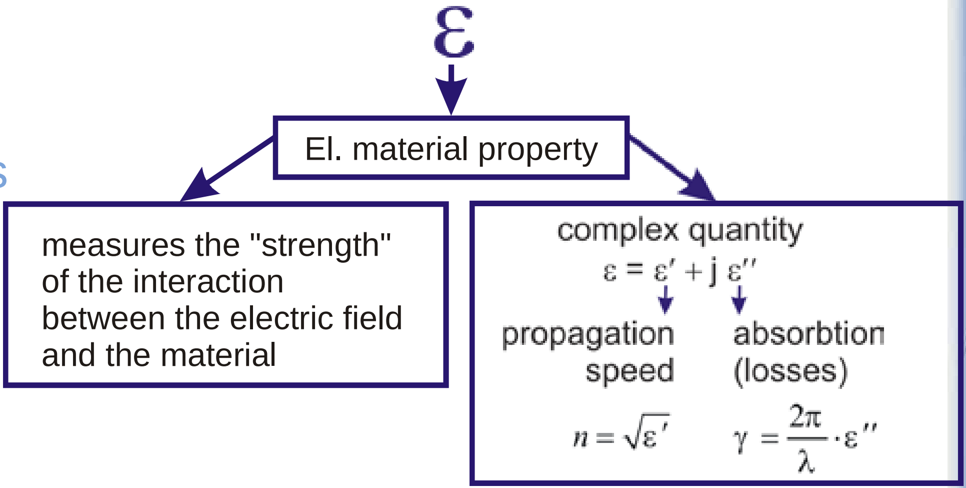
Permittivity; Dielectric Constant

The permittivity of water is e_W » 80 at frequencies < 2 GHz.
This is significantly larger than the permittivities of all the other soil components.

dry soil matrix:	e_M » *2-5*
Air:	e_A » 1
Ice:	e_{Ice} » 3

The soil permittivity e_S is highly sensitive with regard to changes in the soil water content.

Therefore e_S is the suited proxy for determining the volumetric soil moisture q in units of m^3m^{-3}.



ε

El. material property

measures the "strength" of the interaction between the electric field and the material

complex quantity

$\varepsilon = \varepsilon' + j\,\varepsilon''$

propagation speed

absorbtion (losses)

$n = \sqrt{\varepsilon'}$

$\gamma = \frac{2\pi}{\lambda} \cdot \varepsilon''$

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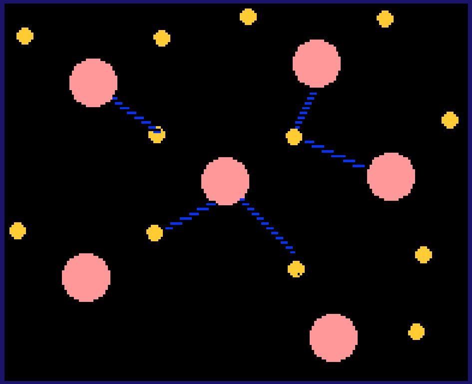
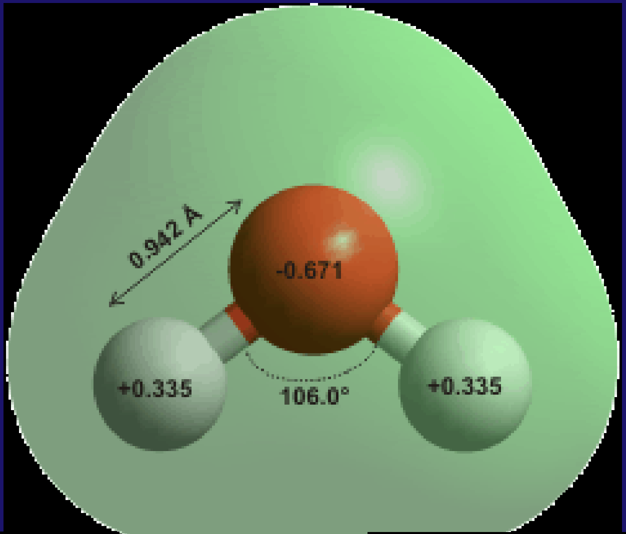
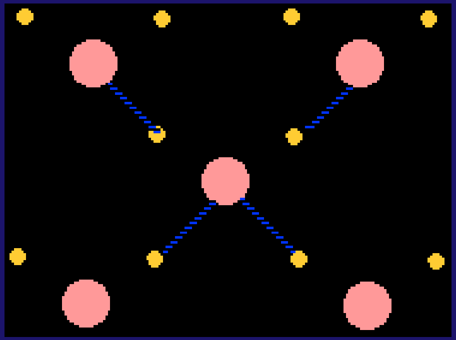
Water Molecule

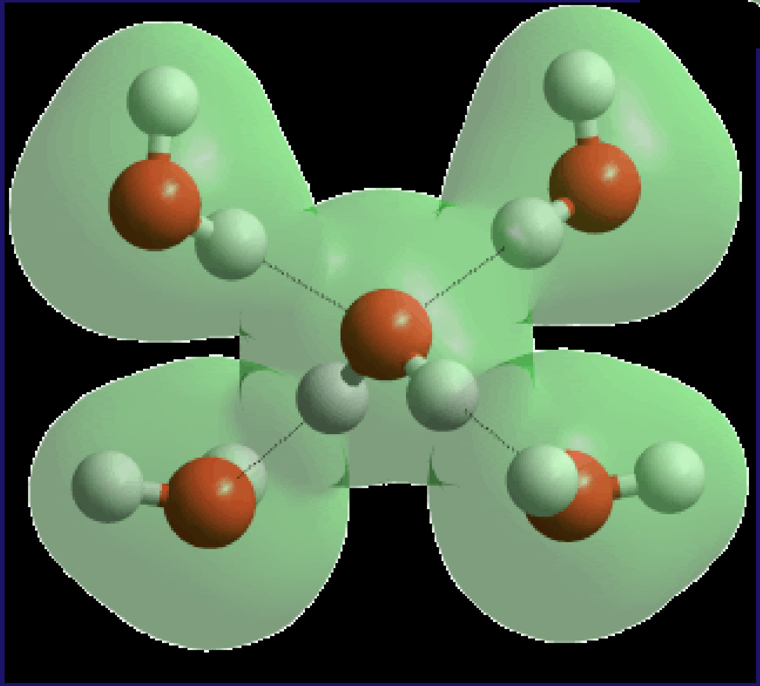
Liquid Water

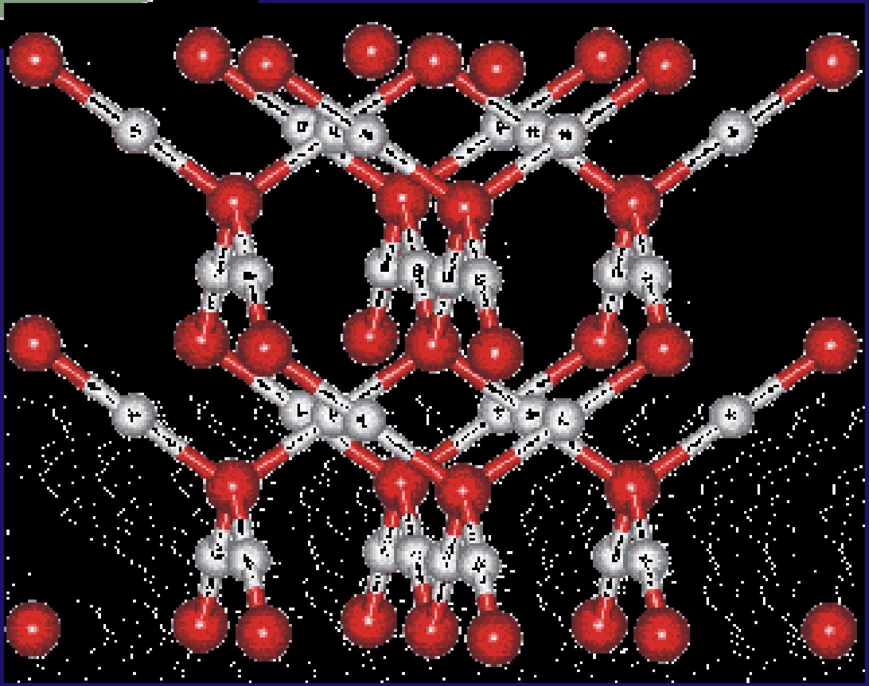




IceWater

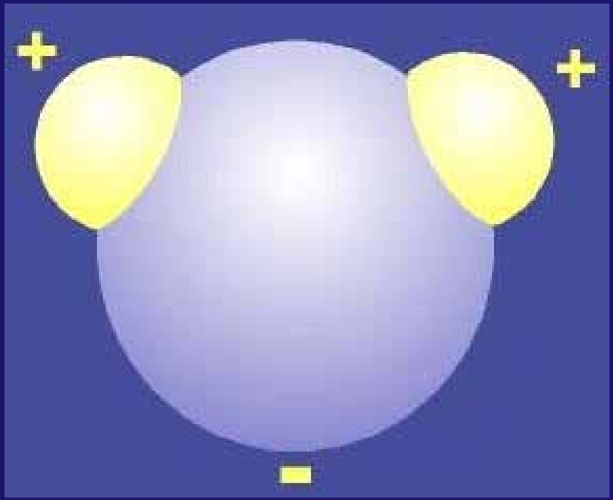






Water Molecule

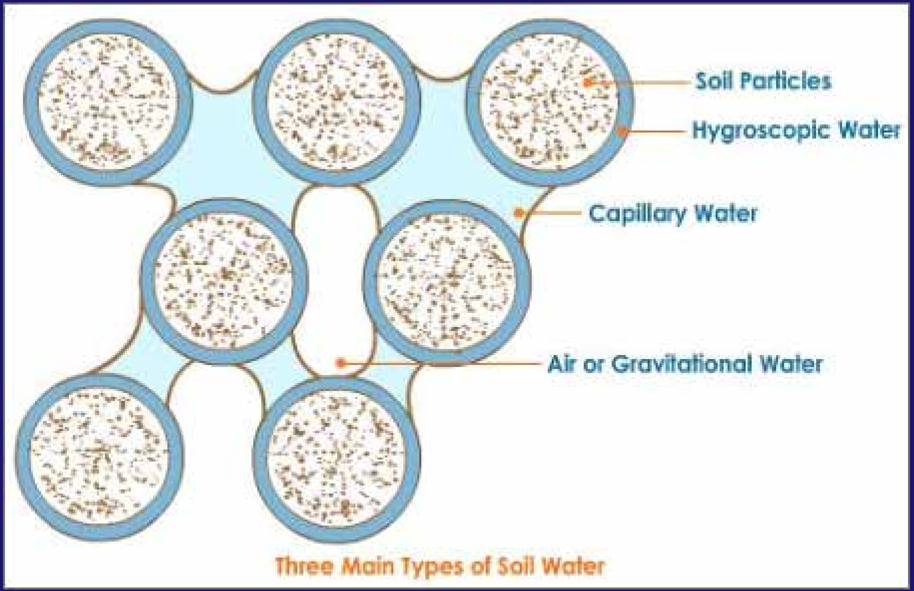
Greatly Enlarged Water Molecule



Water Molecules at the Surface in a Glass of Water

Cloud Drops within a Cloud

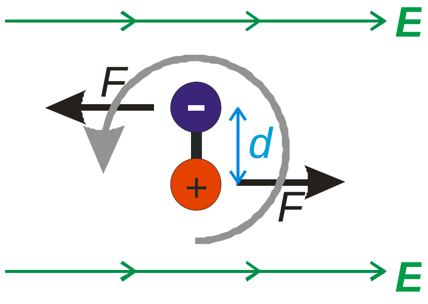
Water in the Soil



Three Main Types of Soil Water

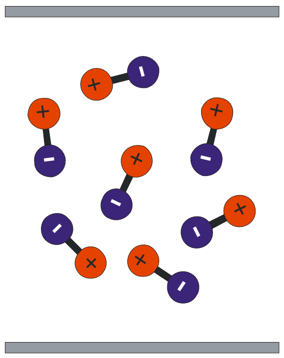
Permittivity; Dielectric Constant

A dipole experiences a torque *M* when a constant electric field ***E*** is applied.



$M = F \times d$

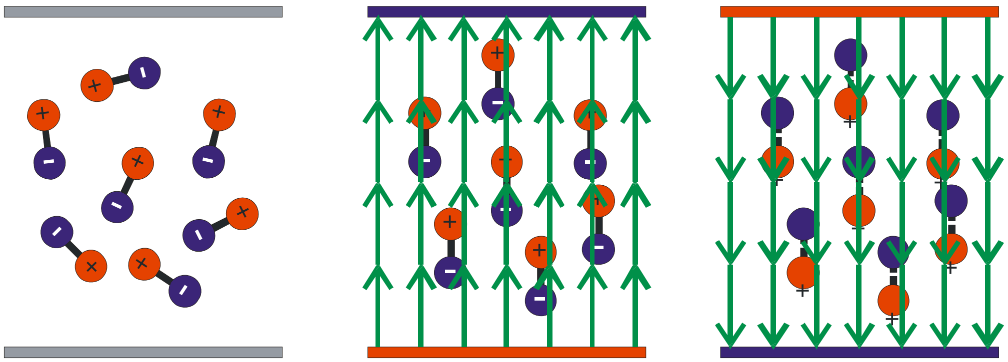
This causes to align the dipole along the field direction.

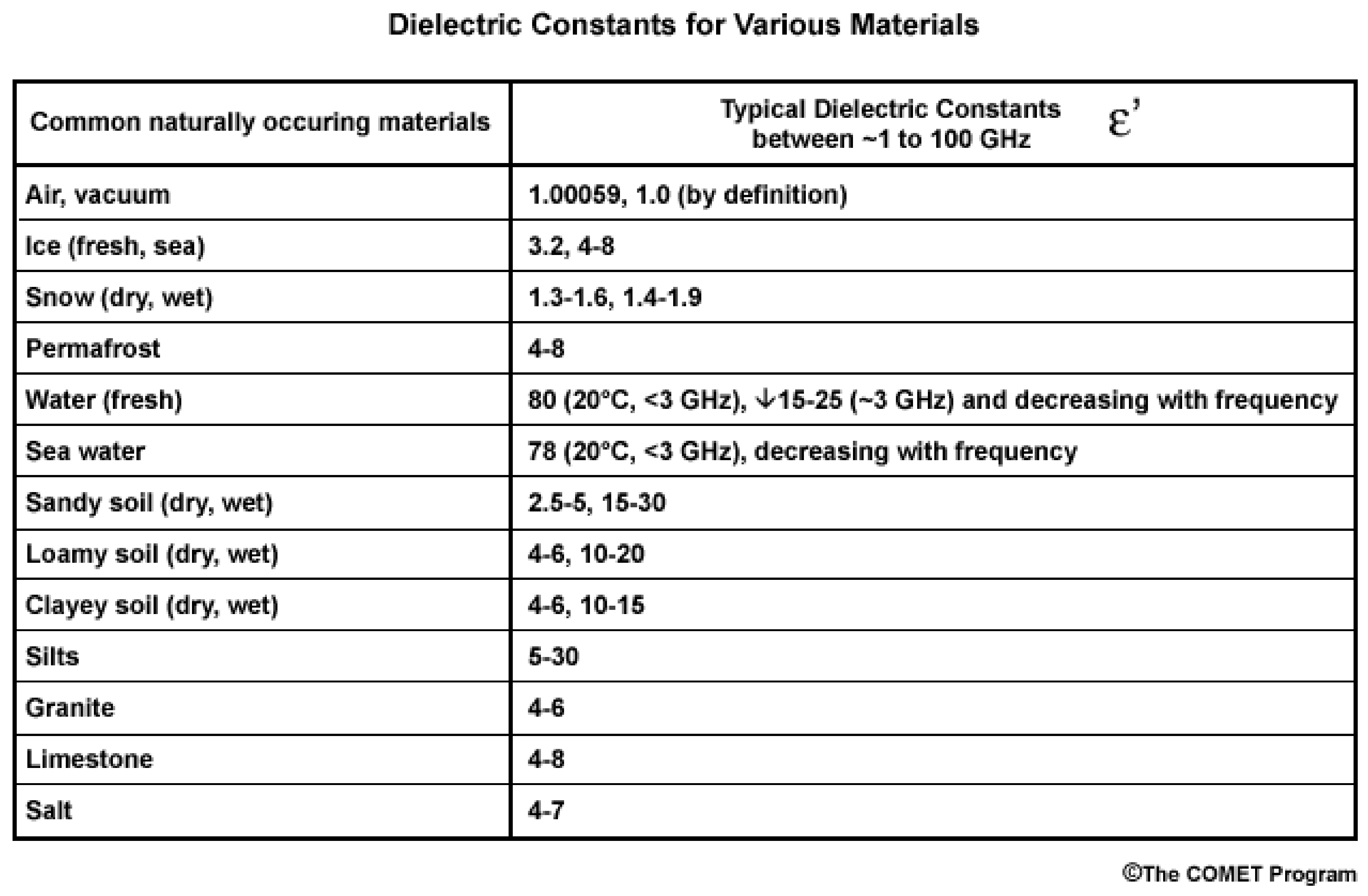


As the H_2O-molecule is highly polar, *M* is large and therefore:

Þ strong interaction with ***E***

Þ e_W is large!





Dielectric Constants for Various Materials

Common naturally occuring materials	Typical Dielectric Constants between ~1 to 100 GHz ε'
Air, vacuum	1.00059, 1.0 (by definition)
Ice (fresh, sea)	3.2, 4-8
Snow (dry, wet)	1.3-1.6, 1.4-1.9
Permafrost	4-8
Water (fresh)	80 (20°C, <3 GHz), ↓15-25 (~3 GHz) and decreasing with frequency
Sea water	78 (20°C, <3 GHz), decreasing with frequency
Sandy soil (dry, wet)	2.5-5, 15-30
Loamy soil (dry, wet)	4-6, 10-20
Clayey soil (dry, wet)	4-6, 10-15
Silts	5-30
Granite	4-6
Limestone	4-8
Salt	4-7

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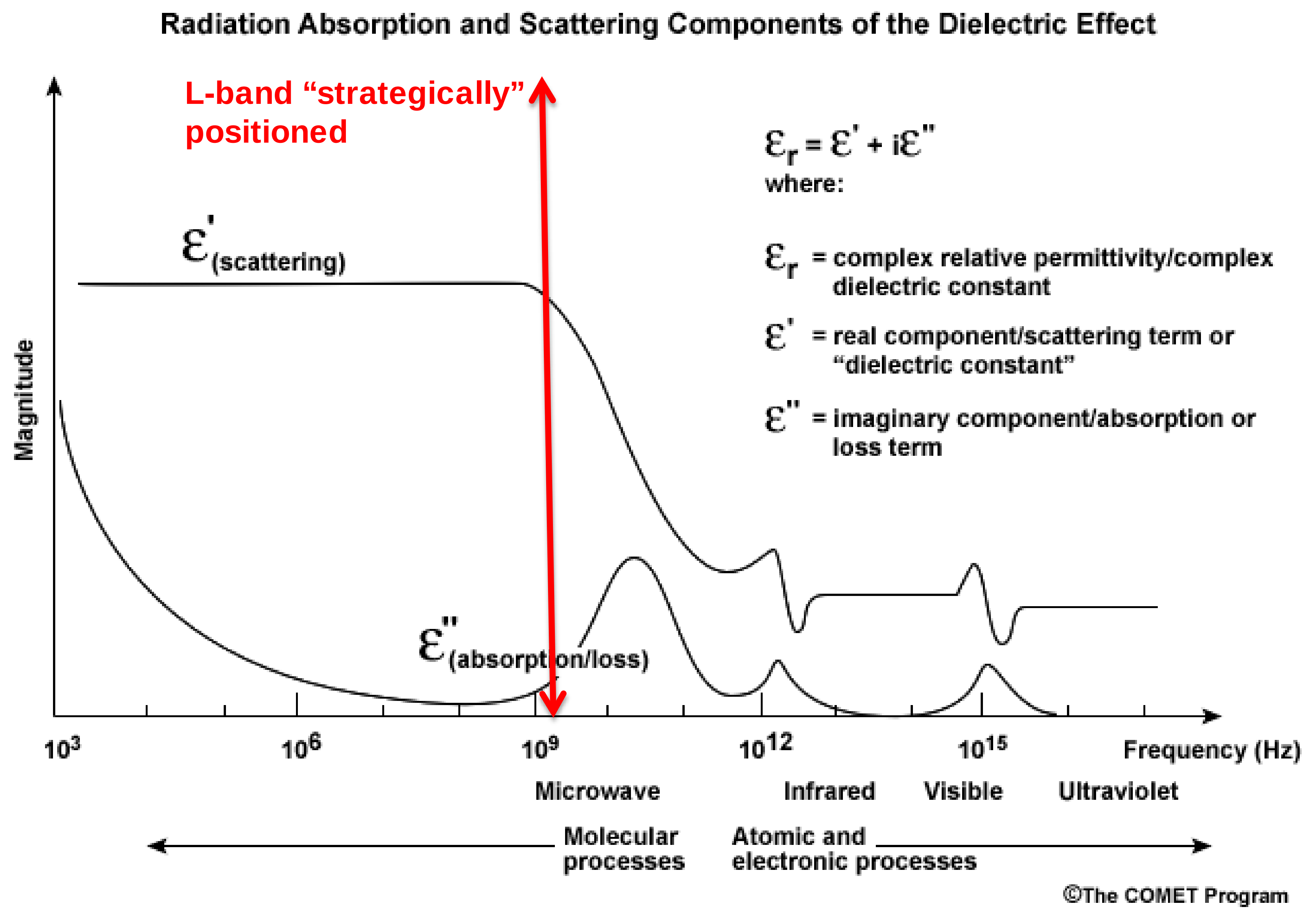

Radiation Absorption and Scattering Components of the Dielectric Effect

L-band “strategically” positioned

$\varepsilon_r = \varepsilon' + i\varepsilon''$

where:

ε_r = complex relative permittivity/complex dielectric constant

ε' = real component/scattering term or “dielectric constant”

ε'' = imaginary component/absorption or loss term

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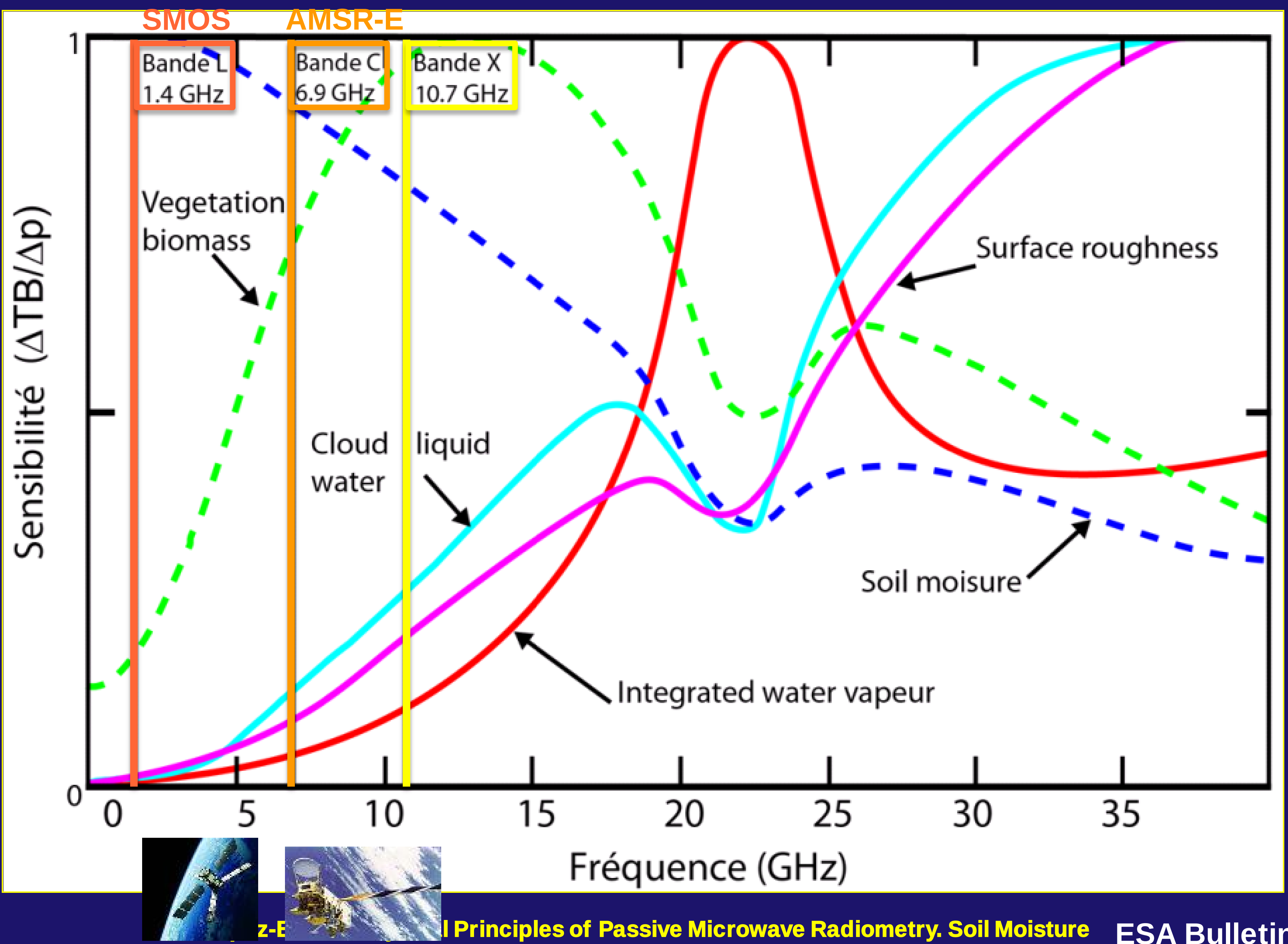
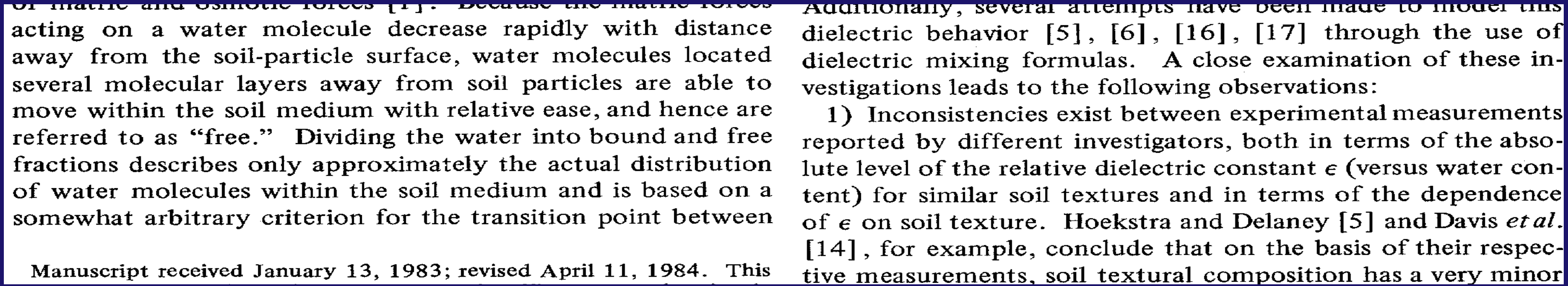


ESA Bulletin

Microwave Dielectric Behaviour of Wet Soil



of matric and osmotic forces [1]. Because the matric forces acting on a water molecule decrease rapidly with distance away from the soil-particle surface, water molecules located several molecular layers away from soil particles are able to move within the soil medium with relative ease, and hence are referred to as "free." Dividing the water into bound and free fractions describes only approximately the actual distribution of water molecules within the soil medium and is based on a somewhat arbitrary criterion for the transition point between

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Additionally, several attempts have been made to model this dielectric behavior [5], [6], [16], [17] through the use of dielectric mixing formulas. A close examination of these investigations leads to the following observations:

1) Inconsistencies exist between experimental measurements reported by different investigators, both in terms of the absolute level of the relative dielectric constant ϵ (versus water content) for similar soil textures and in terms of the dependence of ϵ on soil texture. Hoekstra and Delaney [5] and Davis *et al.* [14], for example, conclude that on the basis of their respective measurements, soil textural composition has a very minor

Evaluates the microwave dielectric behaviour of soil-water mixtures as a function of water content, temperature, and soil textural composition.

Results of dielectric constant measurements conducted for five different soil types at frequencies between 1.4 and 18 GHz.

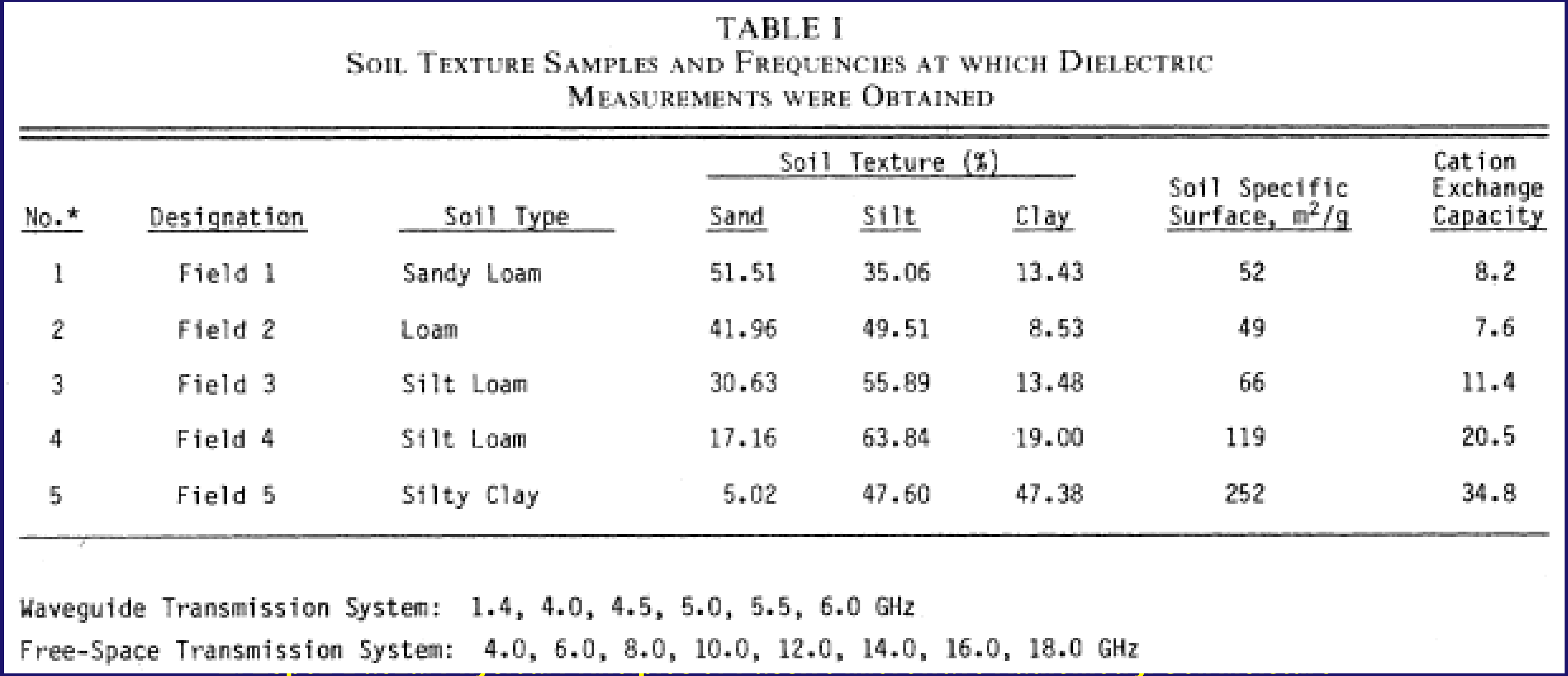

TABLE I

SOIL TEXTURE SAMPLES AND FREQUENCIES AT WHICH DIELECTRIC MEASUREMENTS WERE OBTAINED

No.*	Designation	Soil Type	Soil Texture (%) Sand	Silt	Clay	Soil Specific Surface, m^2/g	Cation Exchange Capacity
1	Field 1	Sandy Loam	51.51	35.06	13.43	52	8.2
2	Field 2	Loam	41.96	49.51	8.53	49	7.6
3	Field 3	Silt Loam	30.63	55.89	13.48	66	11.4
4	Field 4	Silt Loam	17.16	63.84	19.00	119	20.5
5	Field 5	Silty Clay	5.02	47.60	47.38	252	34.8

Waveguide Transmission System: 1.4, 4.0, 4.5, 5.0, 5.5, 6.0 GHz

Free-Space Transmission System: 4.0, 6.0, 8.0, 10.0, 12.0, 14.0, 16.0, 18.0 GHz

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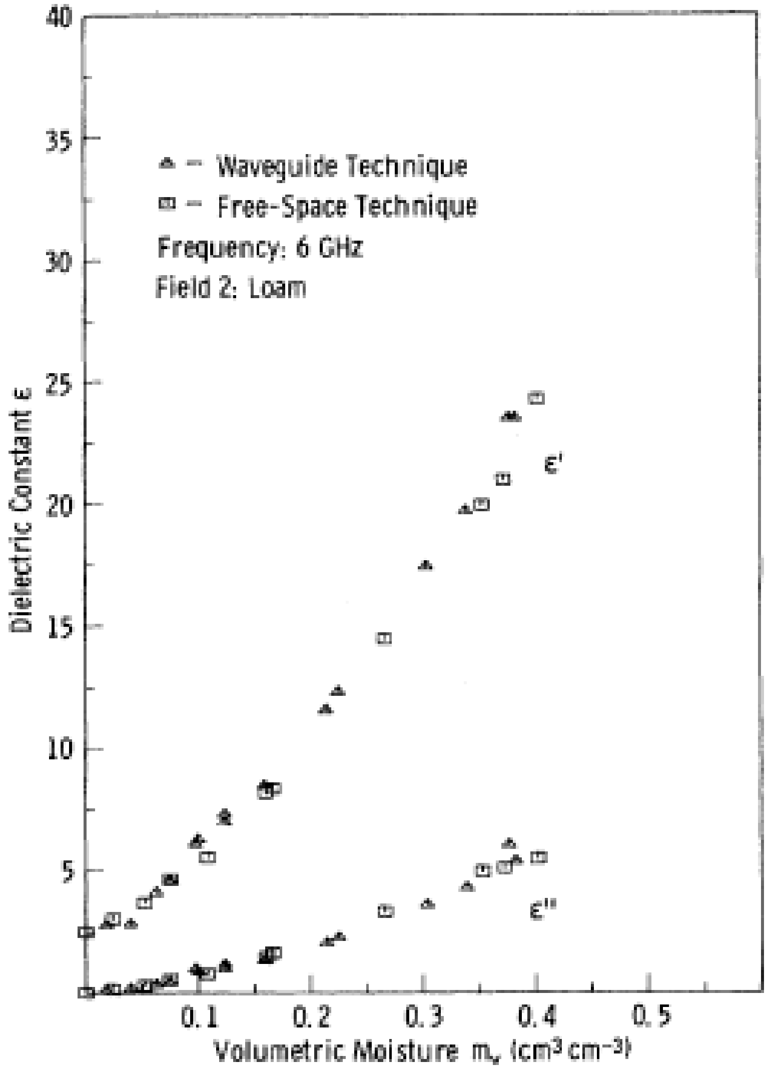


Comparison of soil dielectric measurements made by the wave-guide and free-space techniques at 6 GHz.

good agreement achieved for both e' and e'' over the range of m_v

Microwave Dielectric Behaviour of Wet Soil

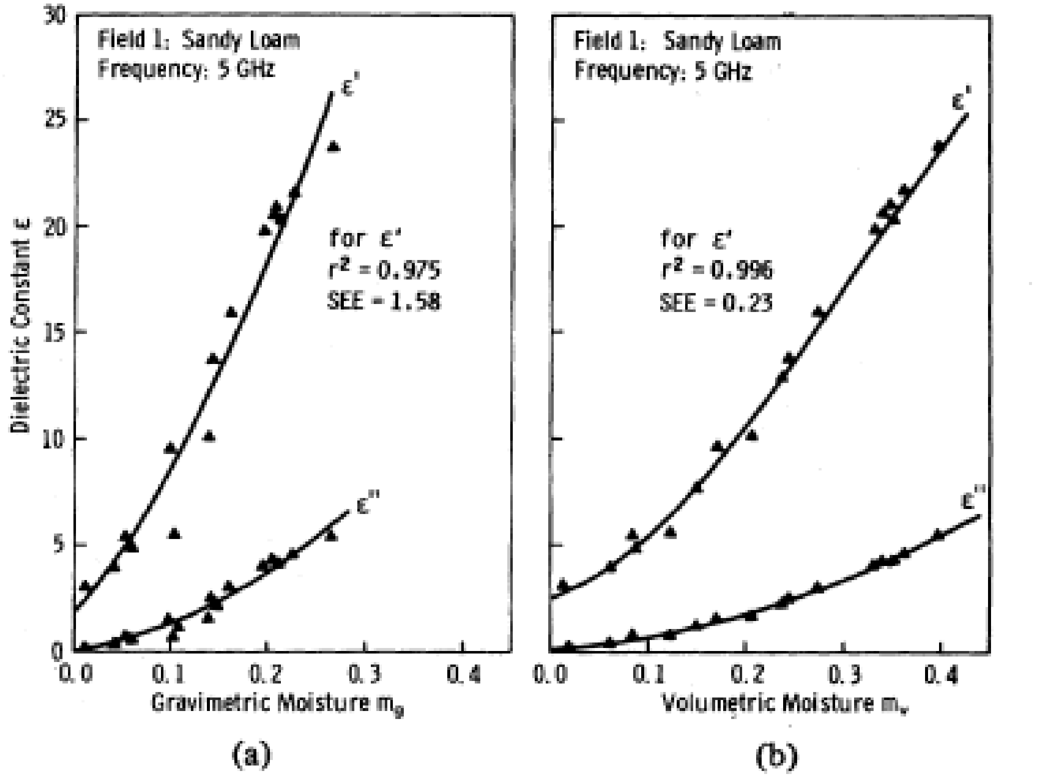


Fig. 5. Comparison of soil dielectric constants plotted as a function of (a) gravimetric moisture content and (b) volumetric moisture content.

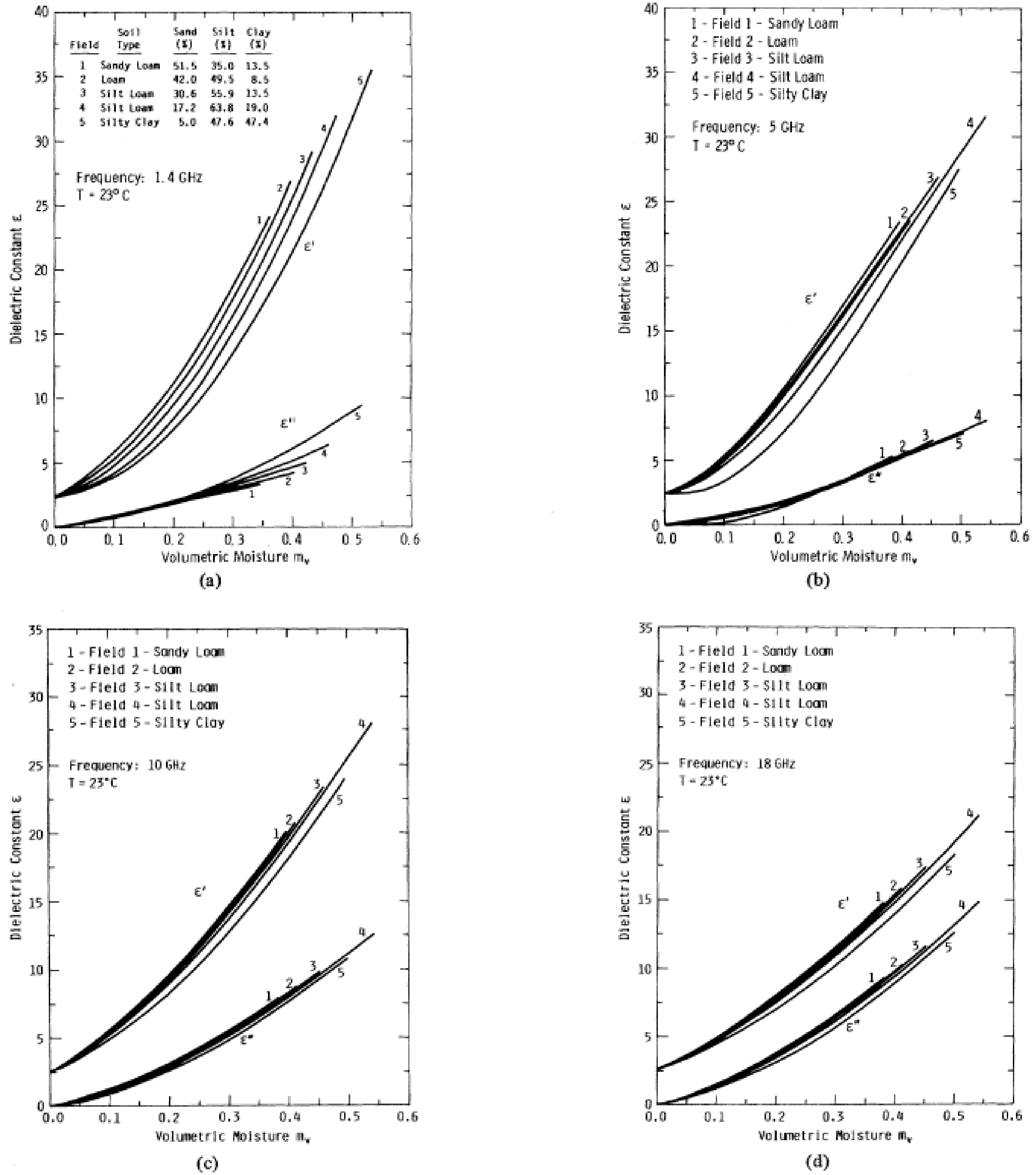
Bulk Density Effects

Soil-moisture content is commonly expressed in gravimetric or volumetric units. Electromagnetically, the volumetric measure is preferred because the dielectric constant of the soil-water mixture is a function of the water volume fraction in the mixture.

Measurements made for two soil samples with approximately the same m_g but significantly different bulk densities resulted in significantly different values for e' and e'', but samples with the same m_v, and different bulk densities resulted in approximately the same values for e' and e”.

Microwave Dielectric Behaviour of Wet Soil

Soil Texture Effects



Field	Soil Type	Sand (%)	Silt (%)	Clay (%)
1	Sandy Loam	51.5	35.0	13.5
2	Loam	42.0	49.5	8.5
3	Silt Loam	30.6	55.9	13.5
4	Silt Loam	17.2	63.8	19.0
5	Silty Clay	5.0	47.6	47.4

Fig. 6. Measured dielectric constant for five soils (see Table I for textural composition of the indicated soil types) at (a) 1.4 GHz, (b) 5 GHz, (c) 10 GHz, and (d) 18 GHz.

Microwave Dielectric Behaviour of Wet Soil

Soil Texture Effects

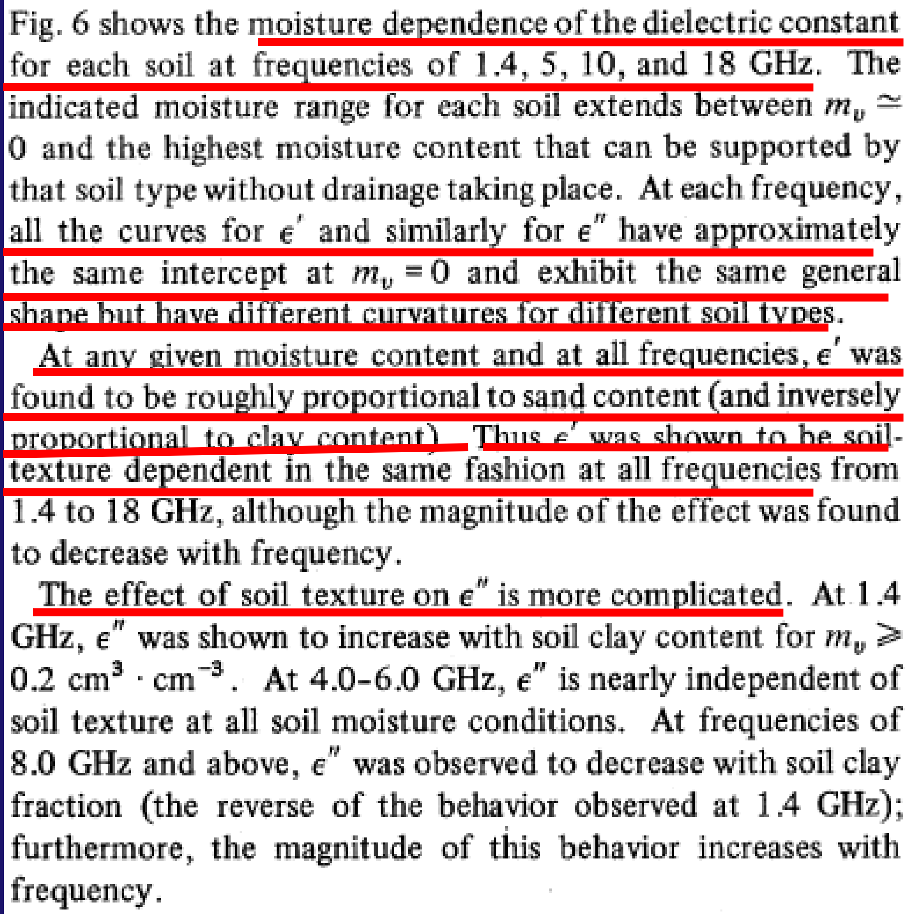
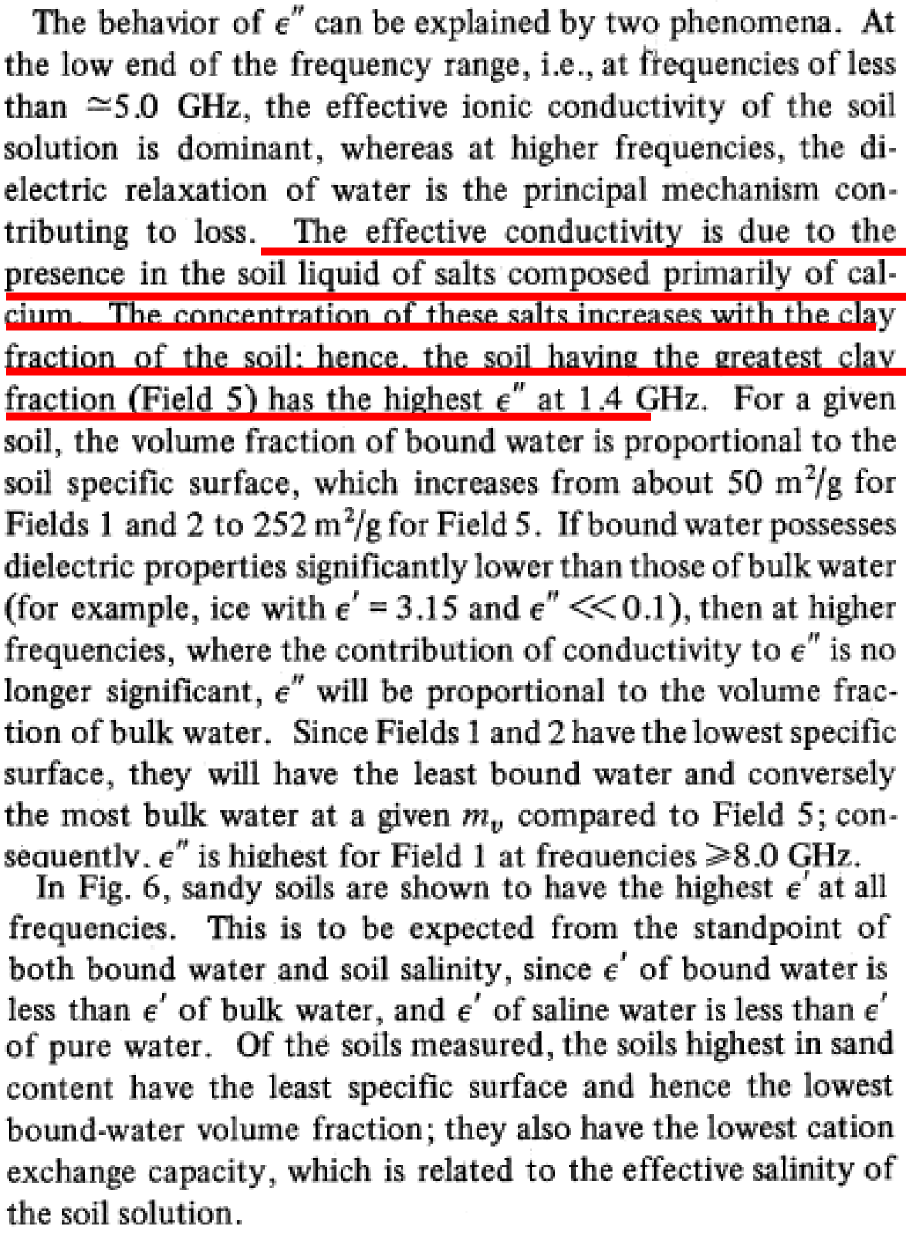


Fig. 6 shows the moisture dependence of the dielectric constant for each soil at frequencies of 1.4, 5, 10, and 18 GHz. The indicated moisture range for each soil extends between $m_v \simeq 0$ and the highest moisture content that can be supported by that soil type without drainage taking place. At each frequency, all the curves for ϵ' and similarly for ϵ'' have approximately the same intercept at $m_v = 0$ and exhibit the same general shape but have different curvatures for different soil types.

At any given moisture content and at all frequencies, ϵ' was found to be roughly proportional to sand content (and inversely proportional to clay content). Thus ϵ' was shown to be soil-texture dependent in the same fashion at all frequencies from 1.4 to 18 GHz, although the magnitude of the effect was found to decrease with frequency.

The effect of soil texture on ϵ'' is more complicated. At 1.4 GHz, ϵ'' was shown to increase with soil clay content for $m_v \geqslant 0.2\ \mathrm{cm}^3 \cdot \mathrm{cm}^{-3}$. At 4.0–6.0 GHz, ϵ'' is nearly independent of soil texture at all soil moisture conditions. At frequencies of 8.0 GHz and above, ϵ'' was observed to decrease with soil clay fraction (the reverse of the behavior observed at 1.4 GHz); furthermore, the magnitude of this behavior increases with frequency.



The behavior of ϵ'' can be explained by two phenomena. At the low end of the frequency range, i.e., at frequencies of less than $\simeq 5.0$ GHz, the effective ionic conductivity of the soil solution is dominant, whereas at higher frequencies, the dielectric relaxation of water is the principal mechanism contributing to loss. The effective conductivity is due to the presence in the soil liquid of salts composed primarily of calcium. The concentration of these salts increases with the clay fraction of the soil; hence, the soil having the greatest clay fraction (Field 5) has the highest ϵ'' at 1.4 GHz. For a given soil, the volume fraction of bound water is proportional to the soil specific surface, which increases from about 50 m^2/g for Fields 1 and 2 to 252 m^2/g for Field 5. If bound water possesses dielectric properties significantly lower than those of bulk water (for example, ice with $\epsilon' = 3.15$ and $\epsilon'' \ll 0.1$), then at higher frequencies, where the contribution of conductivity to ϵ'' is no longer significant, ϵ'' will be proportional to the volume fraction of bulk water. Since Fields 1 and 2 have the lowest specific surface, they will have the least bound water and conversely the most bulk water at a given m_v compared to Field 5; consequently, ϵ'' is highest for Field 1 at frequencies $\geqslant 8.0$ GHz.

In Fig. 6, sandy soils are shown to have the highest ϵ' at all frequencies. This is to be expected from the standpoint of both bound water and soil salinity, since ϵ' of bound water is less than ϵ' of bulk water, and ϵ' of saline water is less than ϵ' of pure water. Of the soils measured, the soils highest in sand content have the least specific surface and hence the lowest bound-water volume fraction; they also have the lowest cation exchange capacity, which is related to the effective salinity of the soil solution.

Microwave Dielectric Behaviour of Wet Soil

Frequency Behaviour

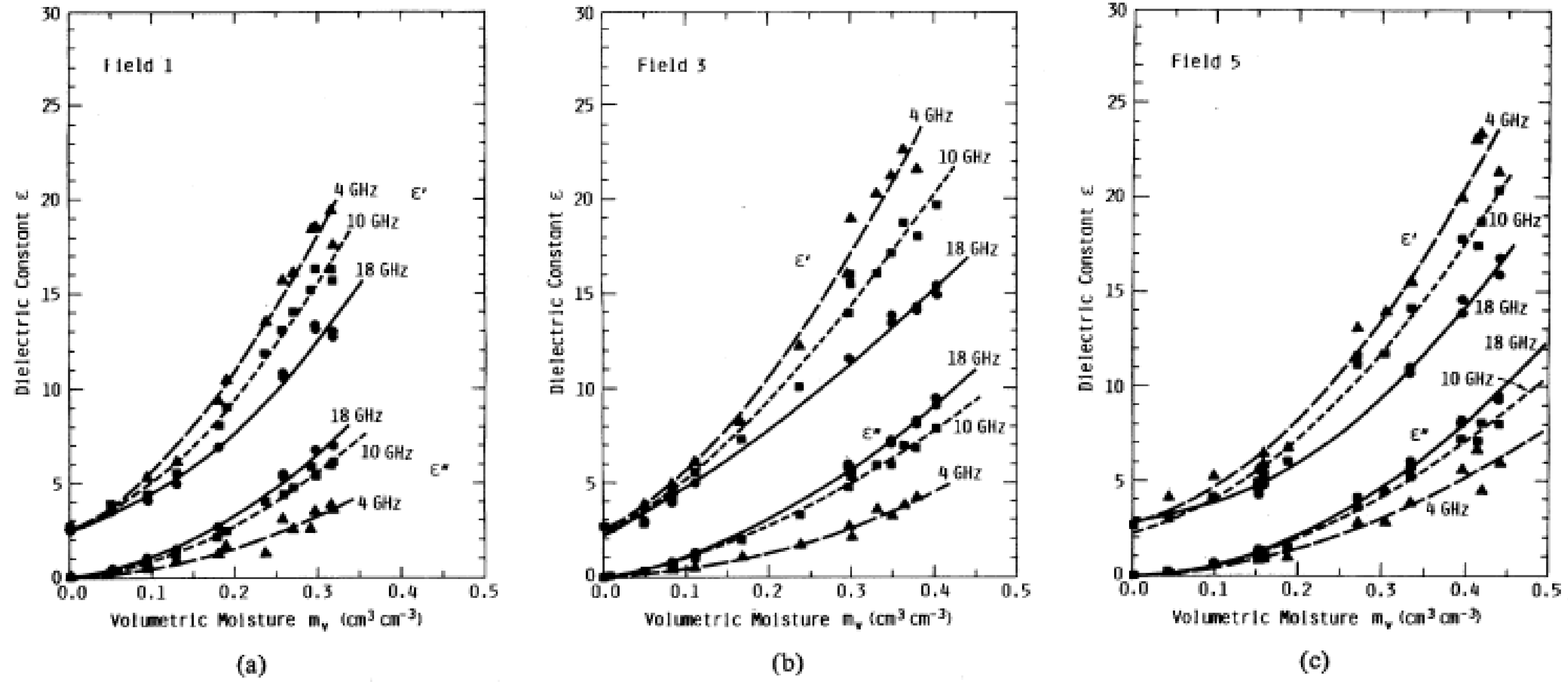
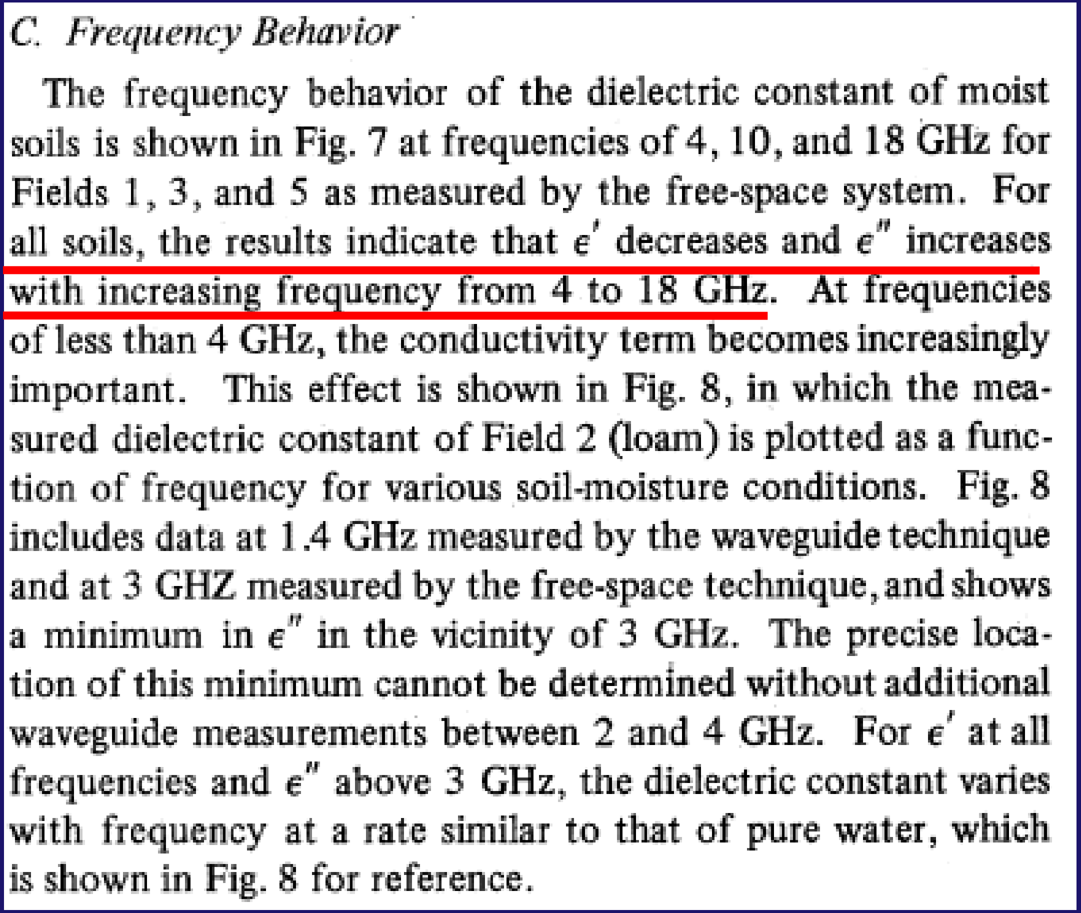


Fig. 7. Measured dielectric constant at 4, 10, and 18 GHz for (a) Field 1, (b) Field 3, and (c) Field 5. Polynomial regression fits are also shown.

Microwave Dielectric Behaviour of Wet Soil

Frequency Behaviour



C. Frequency Behavior

The frequency behavior of the dielectric constant of moist soils is shown in Fig. 7 at frequencies of 4, 10, and 18 GHz for Fields 1, 3, and 5 as measured by the free-space system. For all soils, the results indicate that ϵ' decreases and ϵ'' increases with increasing frequency from 4 to 18 GHz. At frequencies of less than 4 GHz, the conductivity term becomes increasingly important. This effect is shown in Fig. 8, in which the measured dielectric constant of Field 2 (loam) is plotted as a function of frequency for various soil-moisture conditions. Fig. 8 includes data at 1.4 GHz measured by the waveguide technique and at 3 GHZ measured by the free-space technique, and shows a minimum in ϵ'' in the vicinity of 3 GHz. The precise location of this minimum cannot be determined without additional waveguide measurements between 2 and 4 GHz. For ϵ' at all frequencies and ϵ'' above 3 GHz, the dielectric constant varies with frequency at a rate similar to that of pure water, which is shown in Fig. 8 for reference.

Effective Media Models (dielectric mixing approaches):

Such models are used to represent the effective permittivity "seen" by a electromagnetic field with a wavelength considerably larger than the dimension of the dielectric inhomogenities.

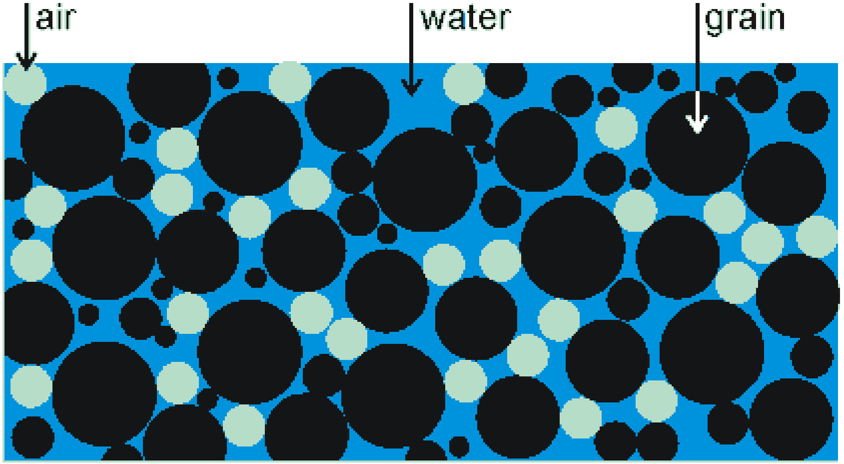
These methods can be used to model effective permittivities of:

- Canopies (Grass)
- Leaf litter
- Transition layers (roughness)
- Clouds
- Rain
- Effective media approaches can be applied in the regime of physical optics.

- Physical optics is an intermediate method between geometric optics, which ignores wave effects, and full wave electromagnetism, which is a precise theory.

Example of a physical mixing model for the effective permittivity of a moist soil:

Three phases: Spherical air bubbles and grains embedded in water:



Maxwell-Garnett formula:

$$\varepsilon_S = \varepsilon_w + 3\varepsilon_w \frac{(1-\eta)\dfrac{\varepsilon_M-\varepsilon_w}{\varepsilon_M+2\varepsilon_w} + (\eta-\theta)\dfrac{\varepsilon_A-\varepsilon_w}{\varepsilon_A+2\varepsilon_w}}{1-\left[(1-\eta)\dfrac{\varepsilon_M-\varepsilon_w}{\varepsilon_M+2\varepsilon_w} + (\eta-\theta)\dfrac{\varepsilon_A-\varepsilon_w}{\varepsilon_A+2\varepsilon_w}\right]}$$

h = porosity

q= volumetric water content

e_A, e_W, e_M, permittivities of air, water, and matrix (grains)

Not only the fractional amount of the phases determines the effective permittivity, but also the structure of phases!!

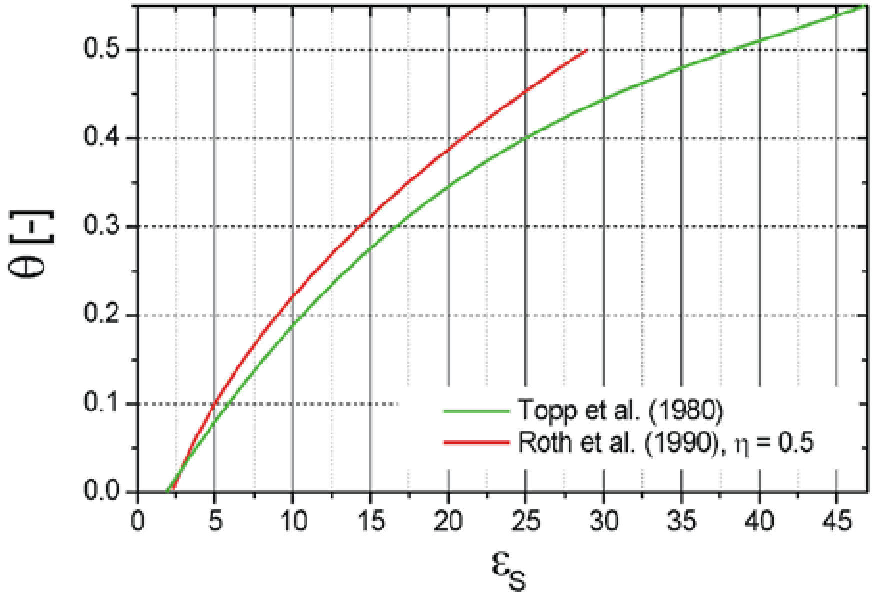
Example of empirical mixing models for the effective permittivity of a moist soil:

Polynomial fit to e_S measured for soils with different
moisture q

Topp et al. (1980): $\theta = 4.3\cdot10^{-6}\varepsilon_S'^3 - 5.5\cdot10^{-4}\varepsilon_S'^2 + 2.92\cdot10^{-2}\varepsilon_S' - 5.3\cdot10^{-2}$

Semi-empirical relation (three phases, parameter a =0.46)

Roth et al. (1990): $\varepsilon_S = \left[\theta\cdot\varepsilon_W^\alpha + (1-\eta)\cdot\varepsilon_M^\alpha + (\eta-\theta)\cdot\varepsilon_A^\alpha\right]^{1/\alpha}$



Brightness Temperature T_B^p (p = H, V)

The brightness temperature T_B^p of

a black body ($e = 1$) is:	$T_B^p = T$
a gray body ($0 < e < 1$) is:	$T_B^p = e\,T$
a perfectly reflecting body ($e = 0$) is:	$T_B^p = 0$

In thermal equilibrium emissivity and reflectivity are related via:

$$e = 1 - r$$

Reflectivity of a specular surface is given by the Fresnel equations:

$$r^H(\vartheta) = \left| \frac{\cos\vartheta - \sqrt{\varepsilon - \sin^2\vartheta}}{\cos\vartheta + \sqrt{\varepsilon - \sin^2\vartheta}} \right|^2 \qquad r^V(\vartheta) = \left| \frac{\varepsilon\cos\vartheta - \sqrt{\varepsilon - \sin^2\vartheta}}{\varepsilon\cos\vartheta + \sqrt{\varepsilon - \sin^2\vartheta}} \right|^2$$

This is why **$T_B^p = (1 - r^p)\,T$**

depends on the permittivity *e* which serves e.g. as a proxy for water content.

Nature is much more complex

Þ sophisticated models for r^p and T are needed!

Passive Microwaves. Introduction

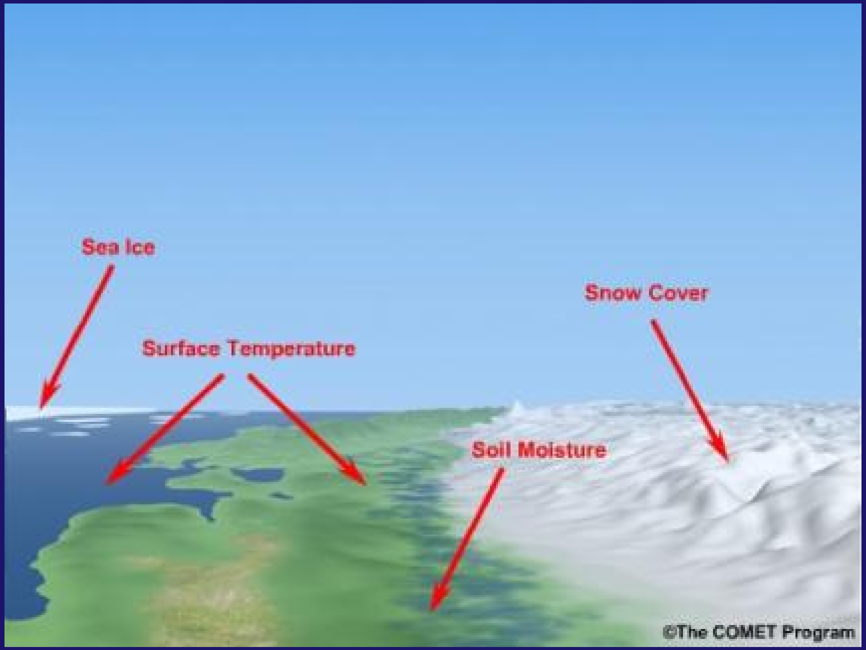
Rayleigh-Jeans Law. Background

Factors Affecting Emissivity

Polarization

Estimation of Soil Moisture

Microwave Emissivity



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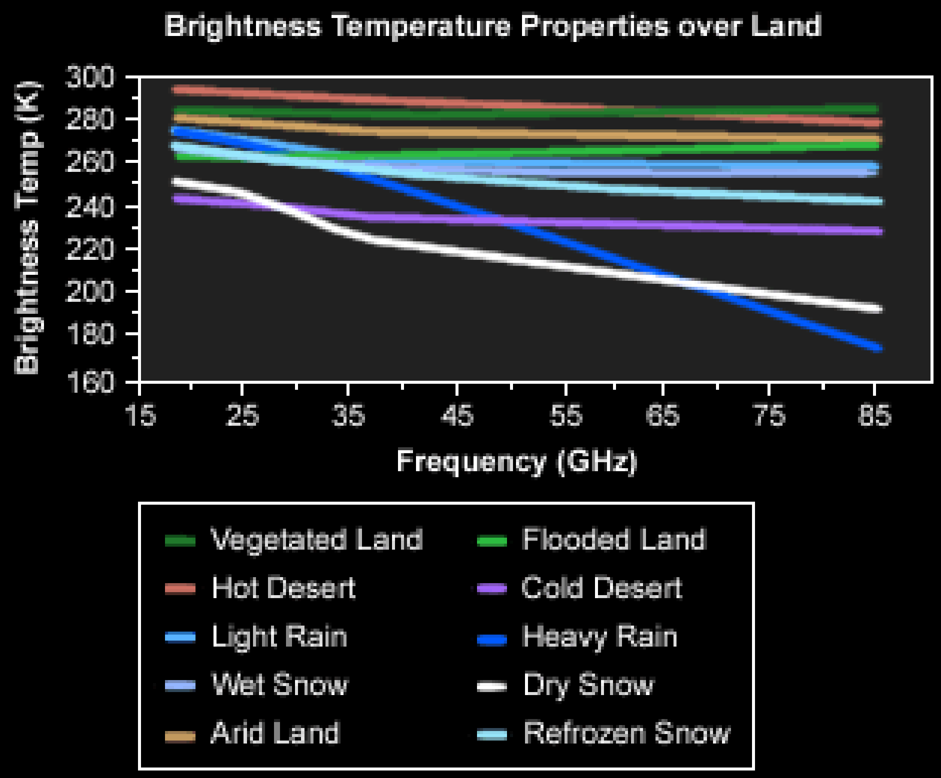
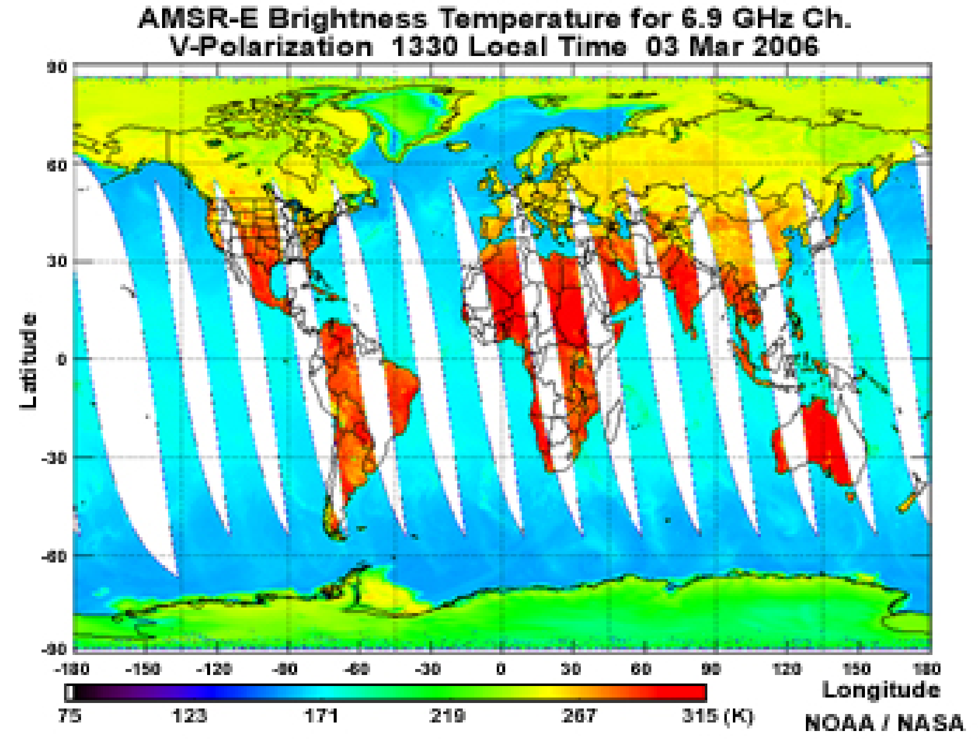
The amount of microwave radiation emitted by the Earth’s surface depends on interactions between energy and the various characteristics and elements that make up the surface.

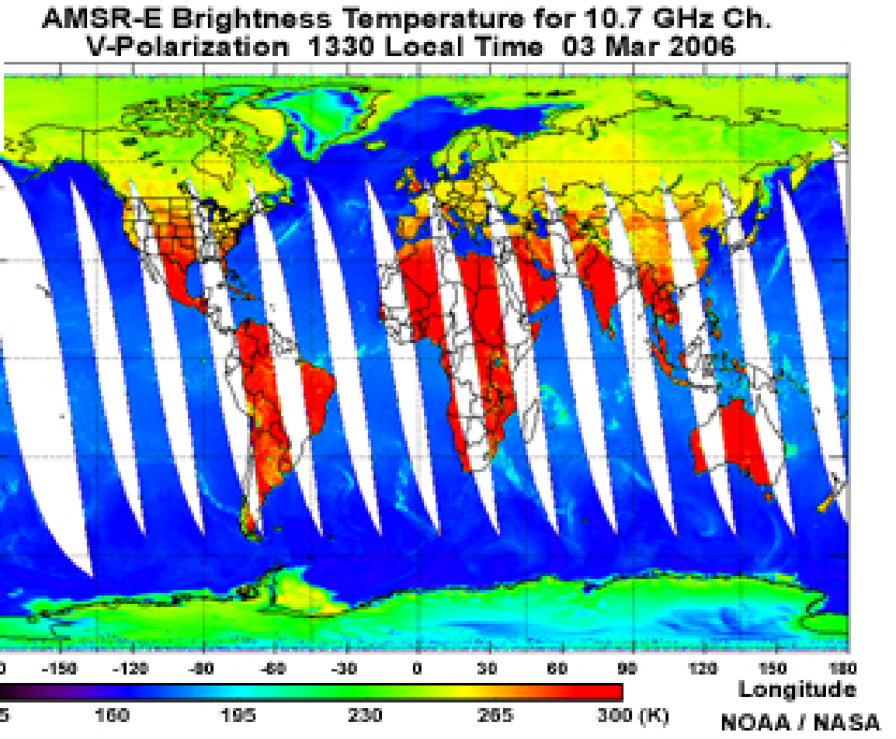
The two properties that have a significant impact on emitted microwave radiation are **polarization** and the **dielectric effect**. Each property varies by wavelength and the physical characteristics of the emitting and/or reflecting material. This makes it possible to discriminate between solid, liquid, and frozen elements on both land and ocean surfaces.



Adapted from R. Ferraro, 1999

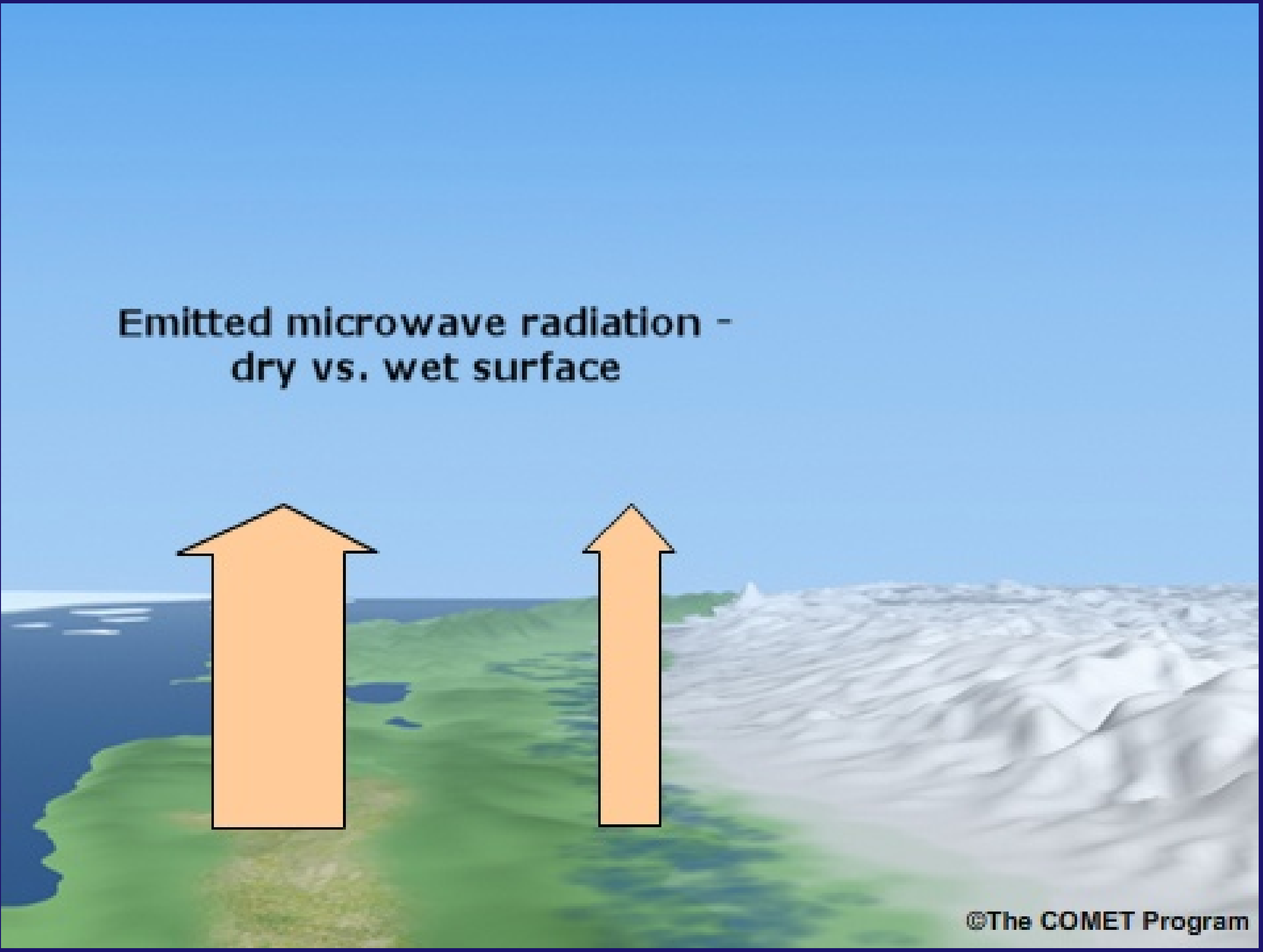


AMSR-E Brightness Temperature for 6.9 GHz Ch.
V-Polarization 1330 Local Time 03 Mar 2006



AMSR-E Brightness Temperature for 10.7 GHz Ch.
V-Polarization 1330 Local Time 03 Mar 2006

How does a Wet vs. Dry Surface Appear from Space? Dry vs. Wet Surface

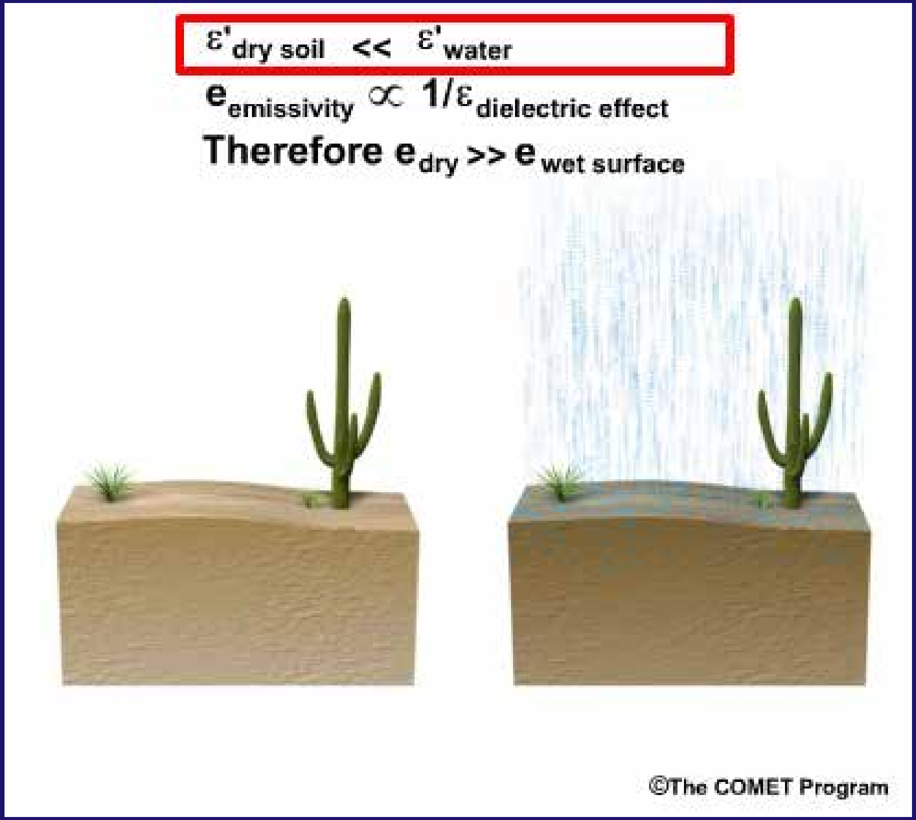


For open regions with relatively sparse vegetation, the moisture content of the surface soil is the dominant factor in the surface emission of microwave radiation.

One of the more important electromagnetic properties of a surface in the microwave region is the **dielectric effect**. The dielectric effect accounts for the majority of the reflection and scattering as radiation interacts with the surface molecules, and is commonly quantified by a term known as the **dielectric constant**.

How does a Wet vs. Dry Surface Appear from Space?

Dry vs. Wet Surface



$\varepsilon'_{\text{dry soil}} \ll \varepsilon'_{\text{water}}$

$e_{\text{emissivity}} \propto 1/\varepsilon_{\text{dielectric effect}}$

Therefore $e_{\text{dry}} \gg e_{\text{wet surface}}$

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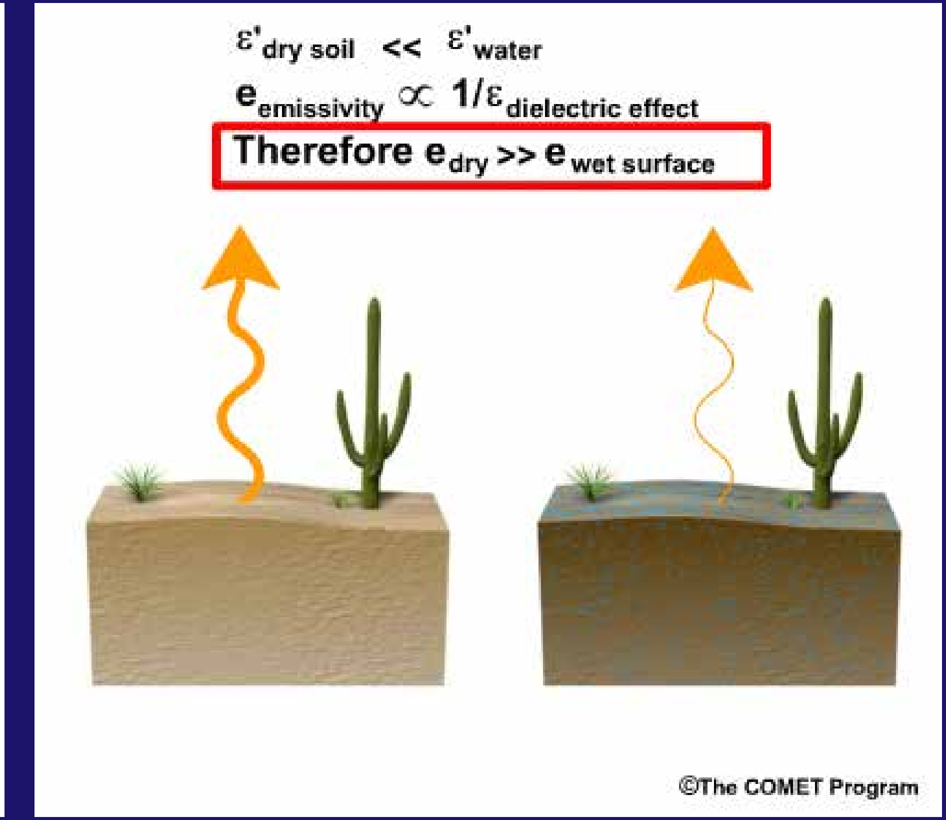

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Therefore $e_{\text{dry}} \gg e_{\text{wet surface}}$

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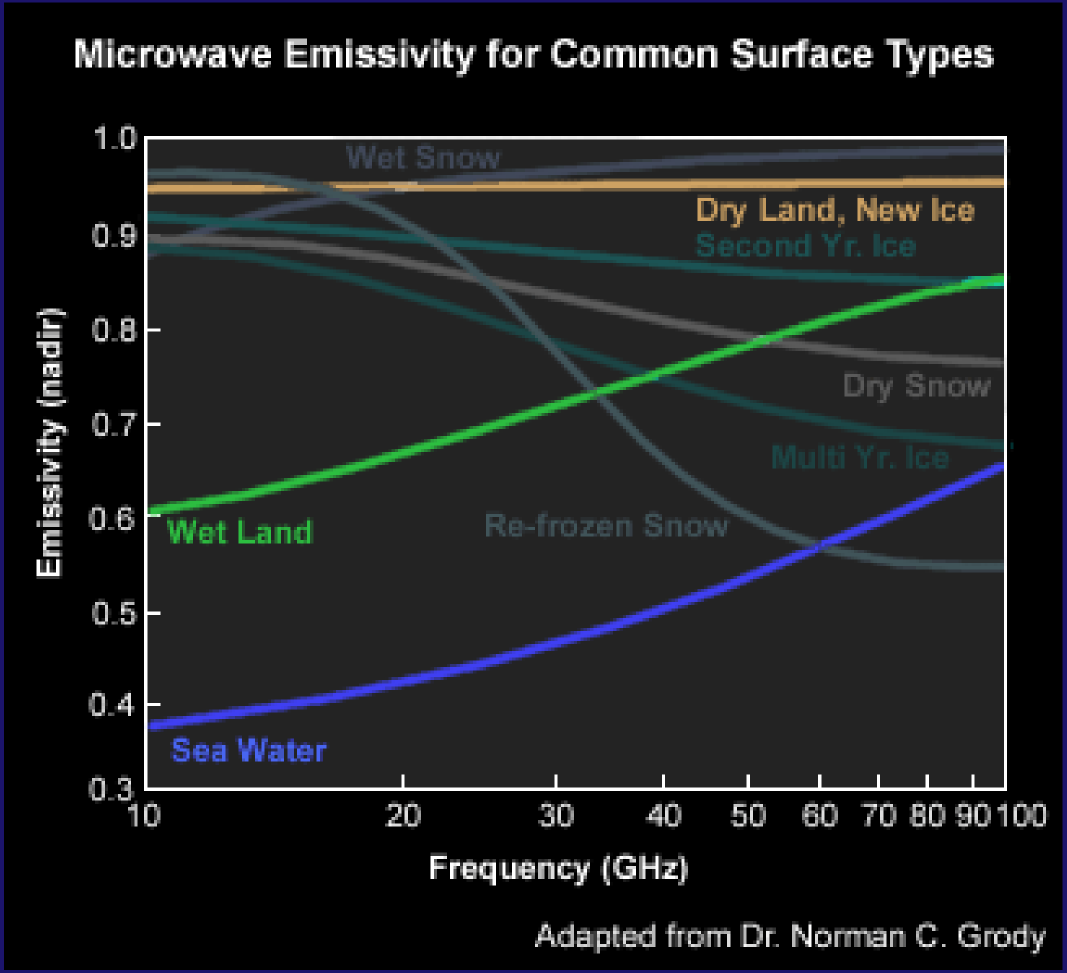
The introduction of water to soil results in a dramatic increase in the dielectric constant, and correspondingly a decrease in soil emissivity. This is easily detectable by a passive microwave remote sensor as a relatively cold brightness temperature, as we will see later in this section.

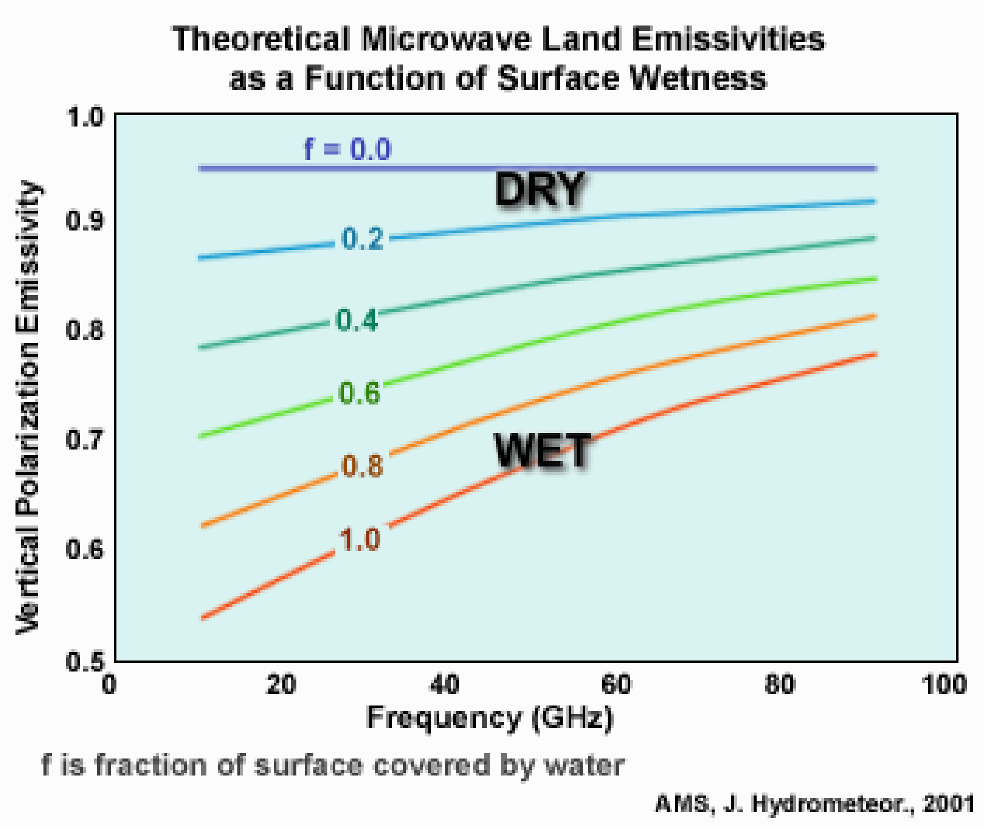
How does a Wet vs. Dry Surface Appear from Space?
Dry vs. Wet Surface



Adapted from Dr. Norman C. Grody

If we isolate the dry land, wet land, and sea water curves for a moment, we see dramatic differences between the three surface types. Emissivity over land can vary strongly, with surface type and frequency in the microwave between 10 and 100 GHz. Notice how much the emissivity is reduced for wet surfaces compared to dry land, especially at the lower frequencies.

How does a Wet vs. Dry Surface Appear from Space?
Dry vs. Wet Surface

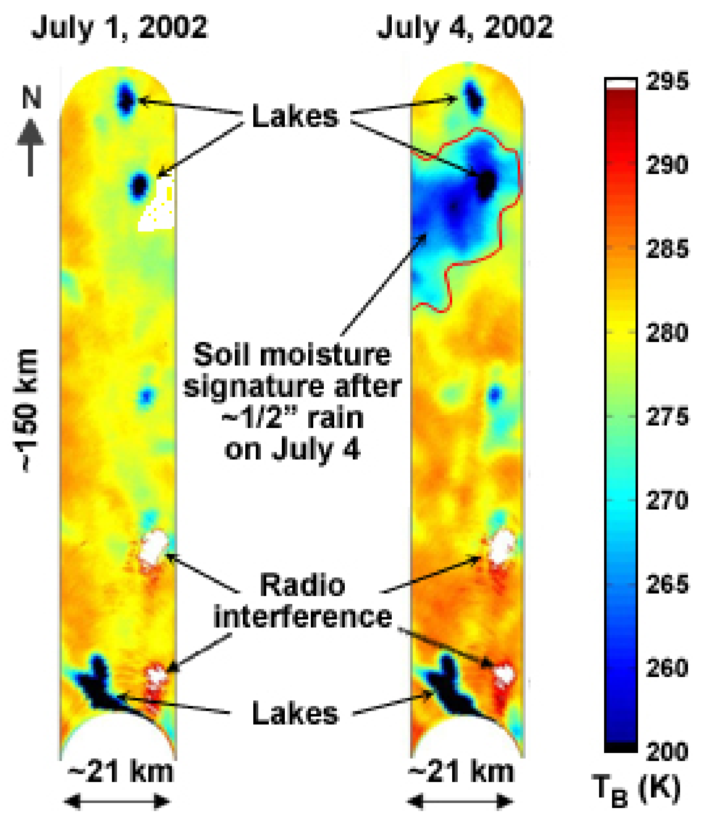


This graph plots emissivity for vertically polarized radiation as a function of different magnitudes of surface wetness. The curves help illustrate two important points. First, as more water is introduced to a surface, the smaller its emissivity, and second, the effect is more pronounced at lower frequencies. We should note that emissivity increases with increasing frequency and that this trend is especially pronounced for a wet surface. Most algorithms that compute some measure of surface wetness, like a wetness index, take advantage of the change in microwave emissivity as water is introduced.

This can be accomplished by calculating brightness temperature differences between high and low frequencies, or by comparing how a single frequency responds when compared to a reference observation for dry conditions. Derivation of soil moisture content is a more complex process that typically involves models and climatology information of the soil layer itself

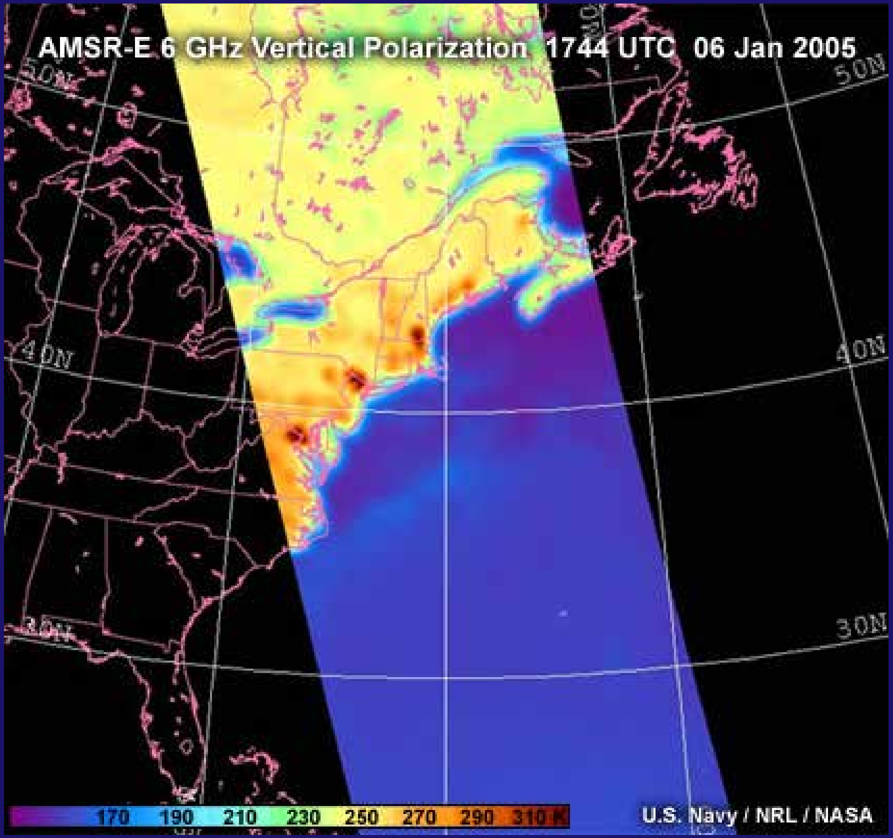
How does a Wet vs. Dry Surface Appear from Space? Dry vs. Wet Surface

Microwave Soil Moisture Signatures



Soil moisture signature observed ~150 km NNW of Des Moines, Iowa on July 4, 2002 using the NOAA PSR/CX imaging radiometer. Area shown was imaged using the C-band (6-8 GHz) radiometer.

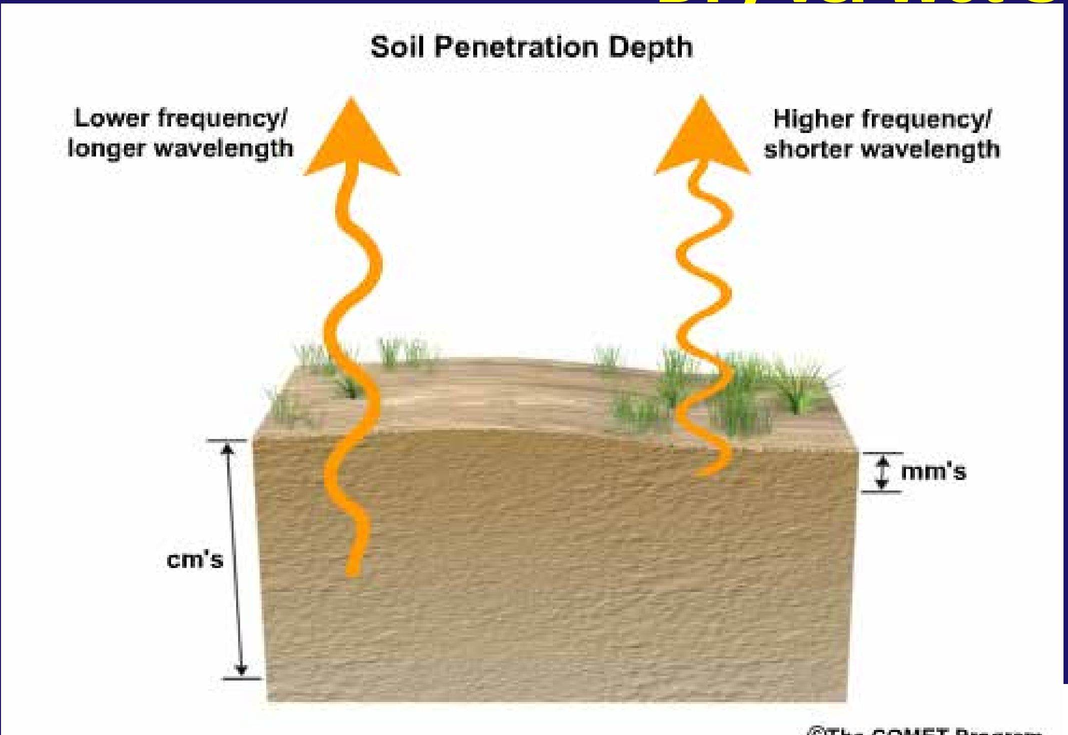
NOAA



U.S. Navy / NRL / NASA

How does a Wet vs. Dry Surface Appear from Space?

Dry vs. Wet Surface



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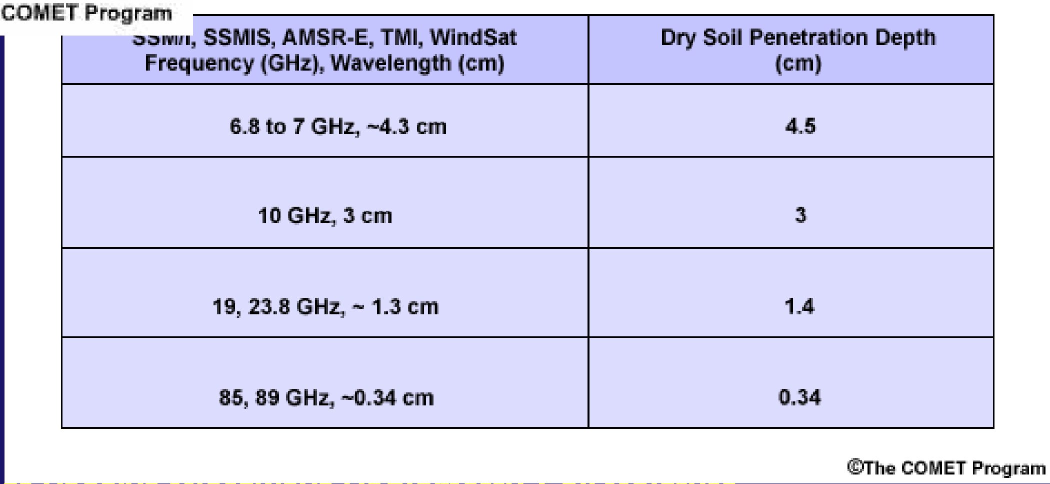
Soil Penetration Depth as a Function of Frequency



SSM/I, SSMIS, AMSR-E, TMI, WindSat Frequency (GHz), Wavelength (cm)	Dry Soil Penetration Depth (cm)
6.8 to 7 GHz, ~4.3 cm	4.5
10 GHz, 3 cm	3
19, 23.8 GHz, ~ 1.3 cm	1.4
85, 89 GHz, ~0.34 cm	0.34

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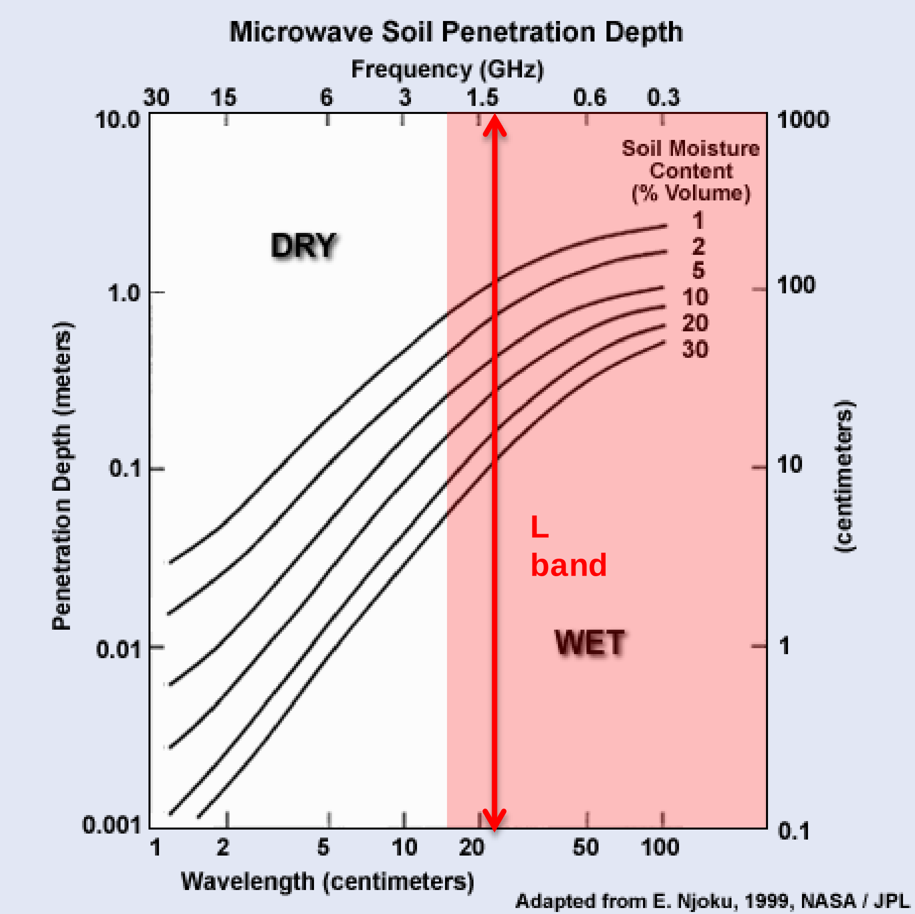
How does a Wet vs. Dry Surface Appear from Space?
Dry vs. Wet Surface



Adapted from E. Njoku, 1999, NASA / JPL

Soil Penetration Depth as a Function of Moisture Content

By increasing soil moisture content, the penetration depth decreases. Recall that a relatively wet layer of soil scatters and reflects more energy and thus has a lower emissivity than dry soil. This increased scattering and reflection blocks a portion of the radiation from reaching the surface so that a satellite senses less and less energy from progressively deeper layers.

Note that the figure also reinforces the advantage of using lower frequencies (longer wavelengths) because of their ability to penetrate deeper into the soil.

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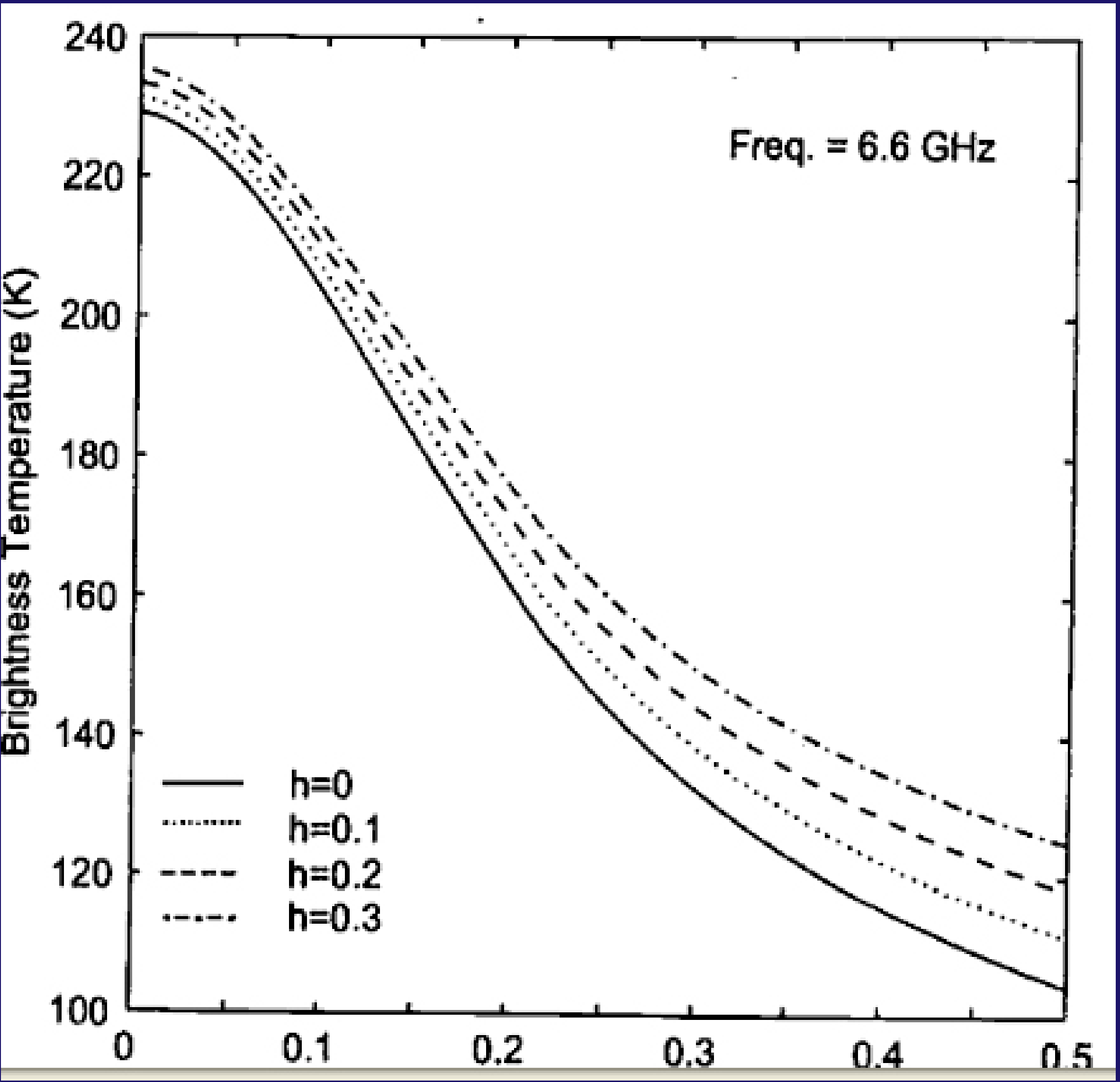
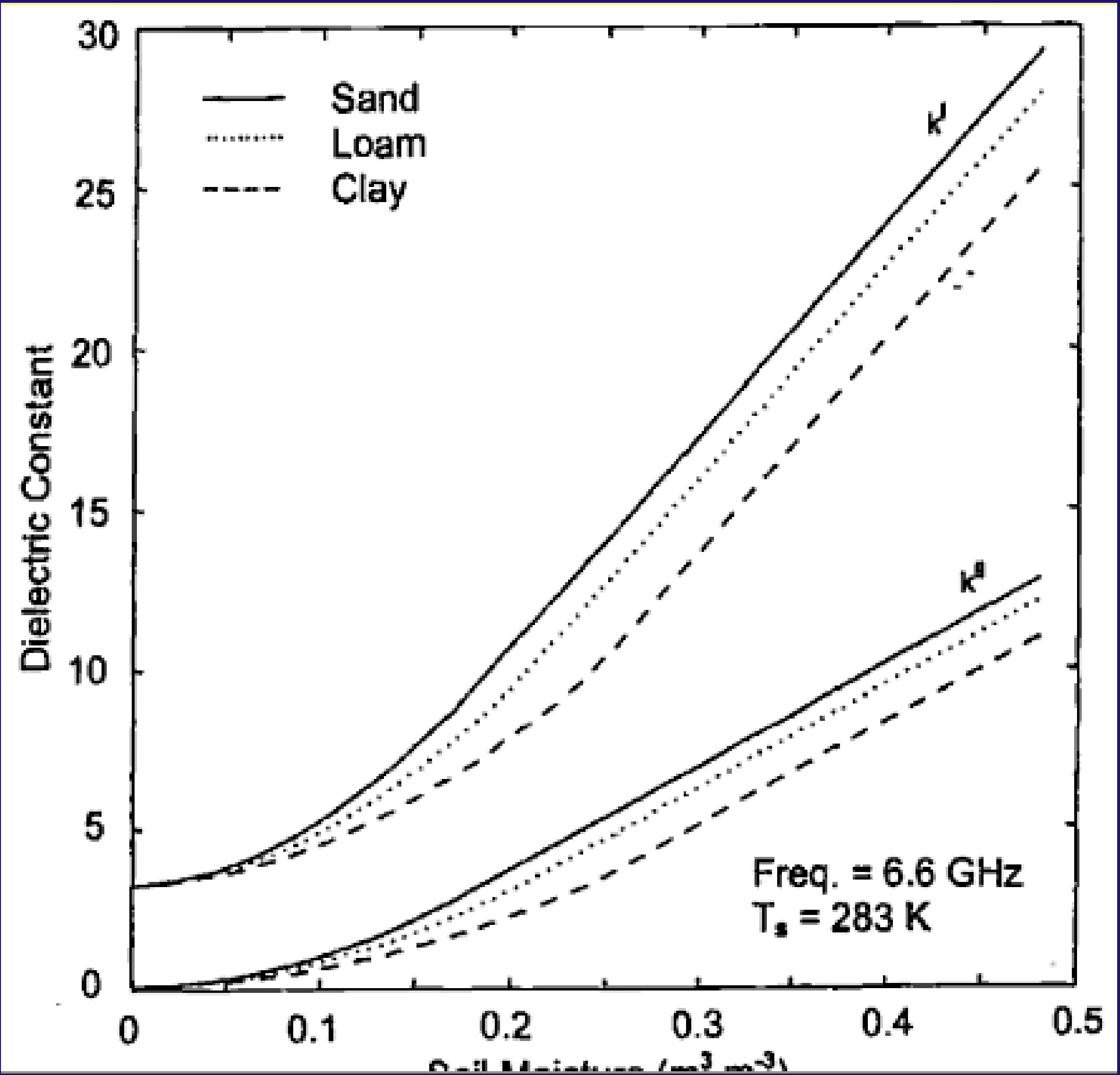


Surface Roughness Effects on Brightness Temperature

Surface roughness increases the emissivity of natural surfaces, and is caused by increasing scattering due to the increase in surface area of the emitting surfaces

Microwave Dielectric Behaviour of Wet Soil



Soil Type Effects

Soil dielectric constant as a function of soil moisture for three generic soils

The basis for microwave remote sensing of soil moisture follows from the large contrast in e for dry soil (~4) and water (~80) and the resulting dielectric properties of soil-water mixtures (~4 - 40) and their effect on the natural emission from the soil

e' (real part) determines propagation characteristics of the energy as it passes upward through the soil

e'' (imaginary part) determines energy losses

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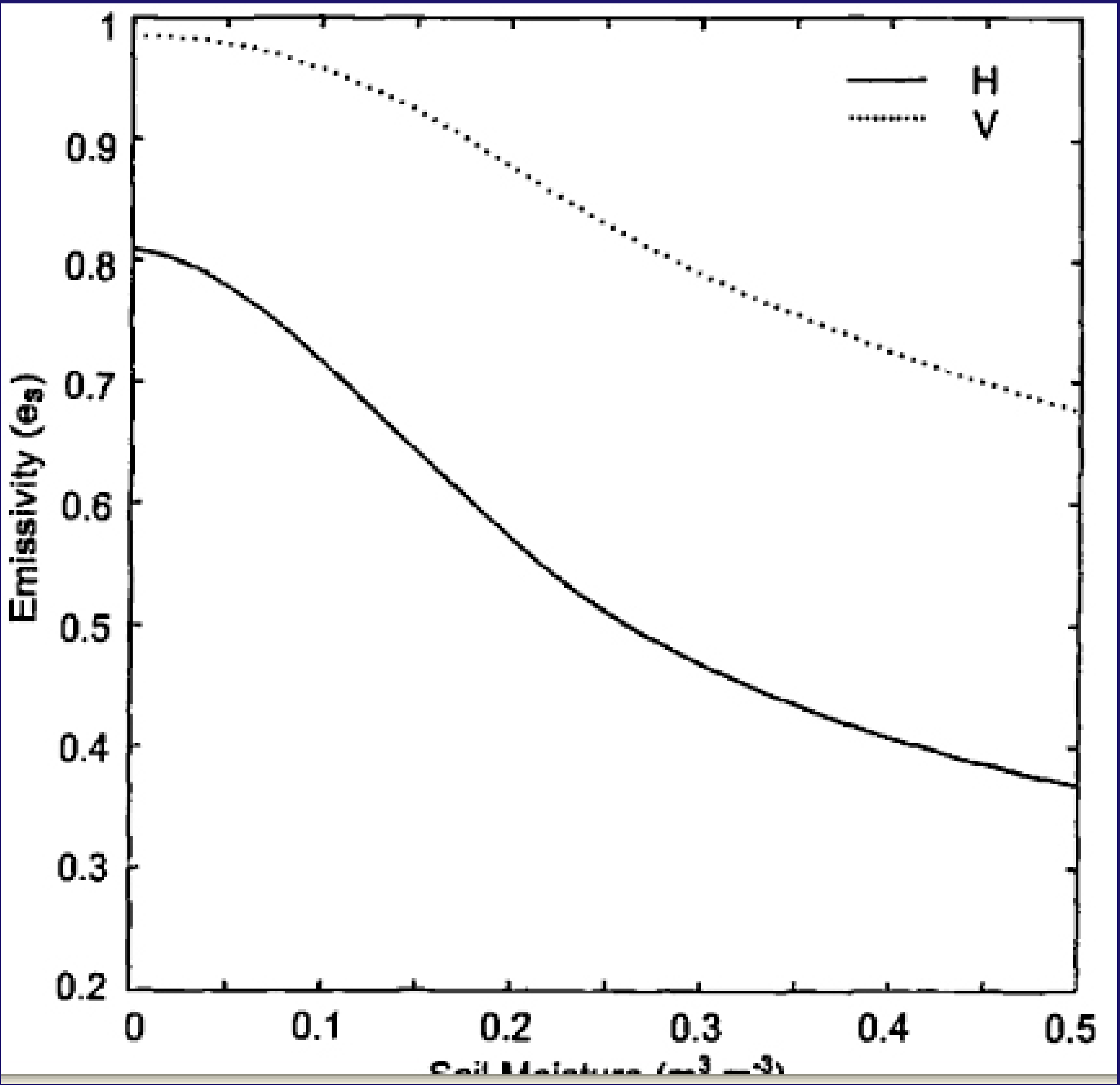
Microwave Dielectric Behaviour of Wet Soil



Polarization Effects

Soil emissivity at H and V at a frequency of 6.6. GHz and an incidence angle of 50º

While the emissivity is lower at H pol, the sensitivity to changes to SM is significantly greater than at V pol

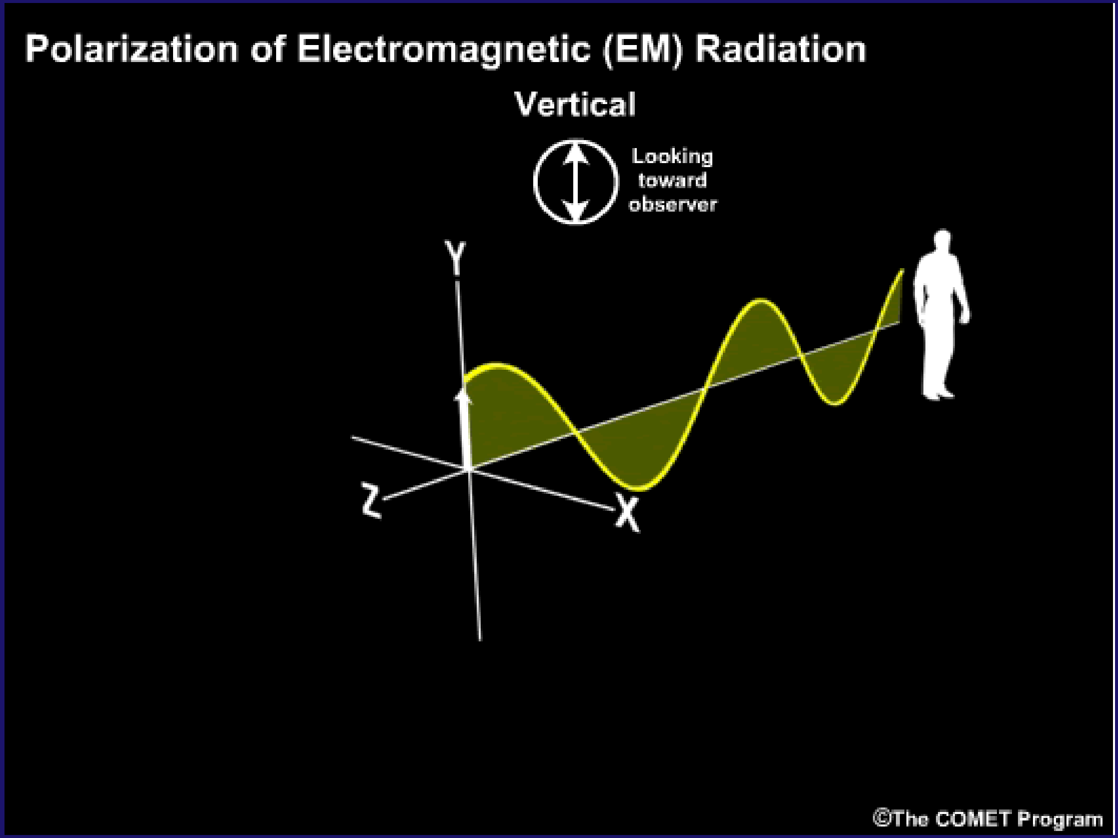
Polarization

One property important in the microwave region of the electromagnetic spectrum is polarization. Microwave remote sensing instruments take advantage of how materials differentially polarize microwave energy to observe and characterize atmospheric constituents like clouds and precipitation, land, and ocean surfaces.

Example of polarization dependent transmissivity

M. Schwank

Polarization



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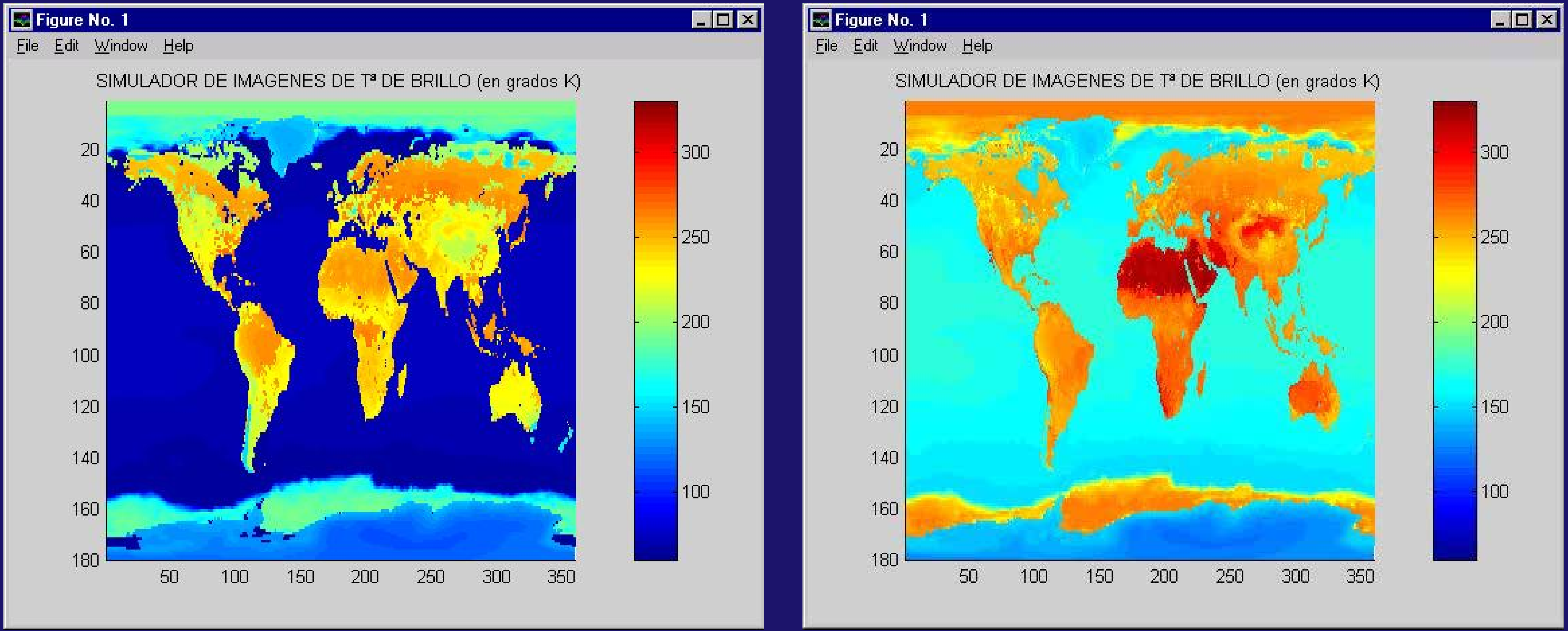
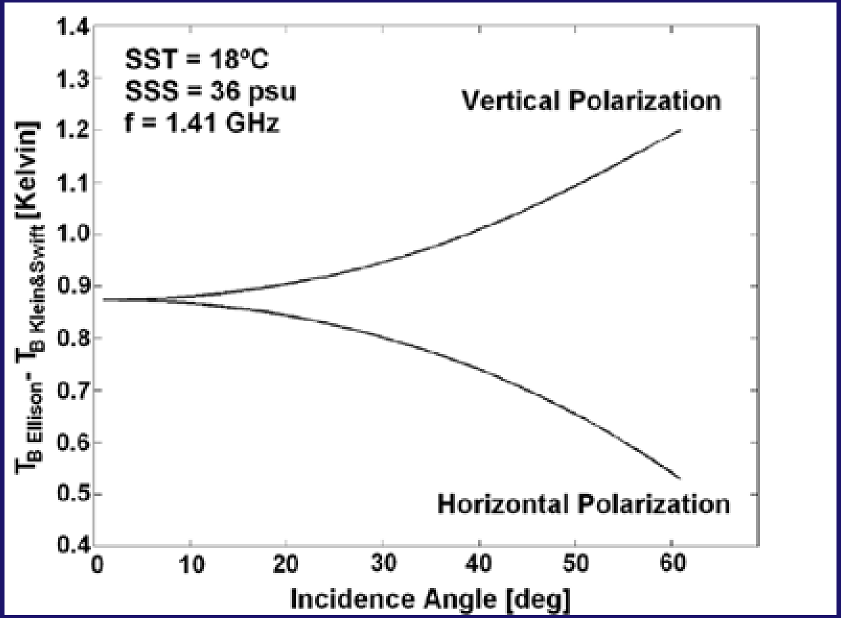
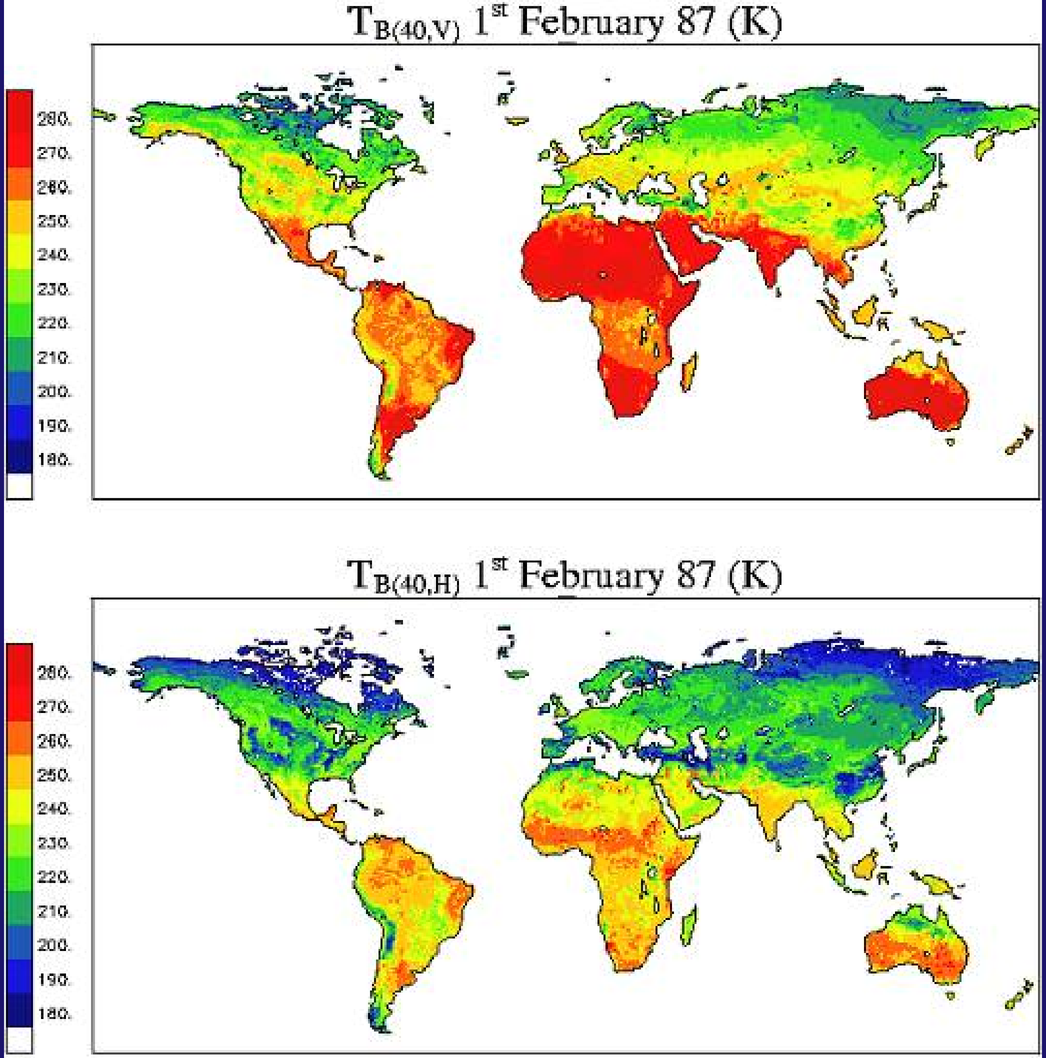
Polarization refers to the orientation of the electric field vector of an electromagnetic wave as it is emitted, reflected, or transmitted by a material or medium such as a gas. This graphic shows microwave energy polarized in a vertical orientation. Microwave energy can be emitted in six polarization states, vertical, horizontal +45 and -45 deg, and right hand and left hand circular. Observing the polarization state and how it changes provides important information to build a variety of products such as ocean surface wind speed, snow and ice cover, and to help distinguish between surface features such as soil moisture and vegetation.



Brightness temperature for September with the same incidence angle of q = 55º and with H polarization (left) and V polarization (right)

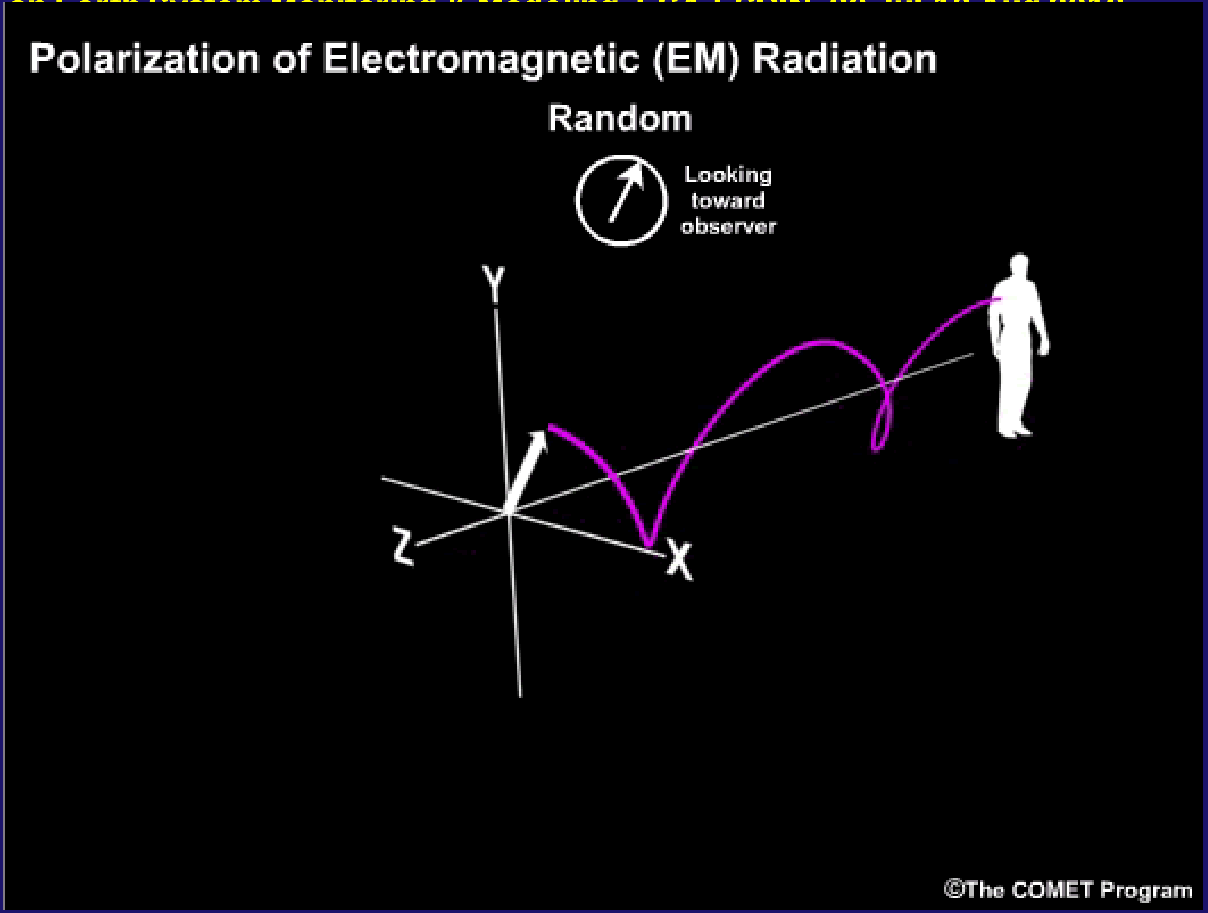
Polarization: Additional useful information to obtain geophysical variables





Pellarin et al.,

Random Polarization



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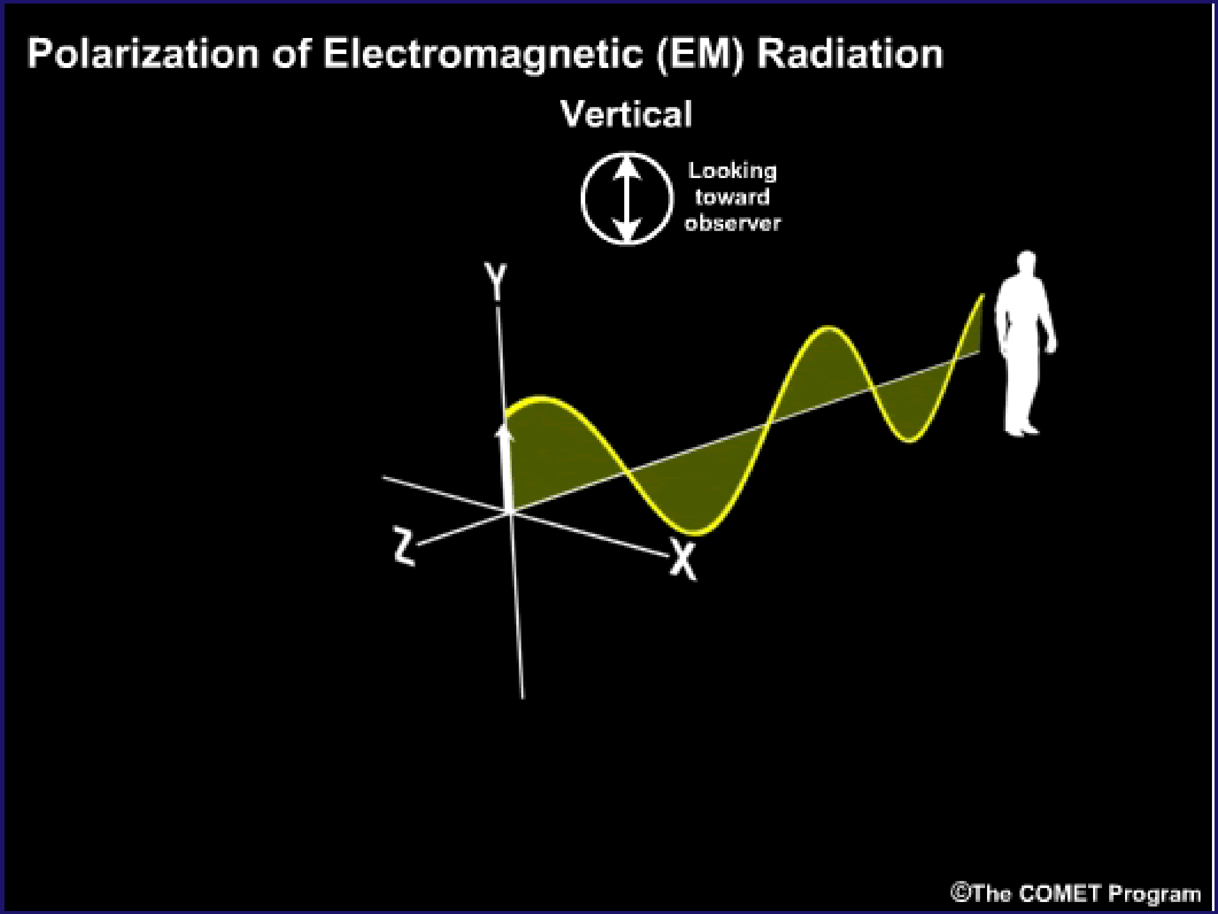
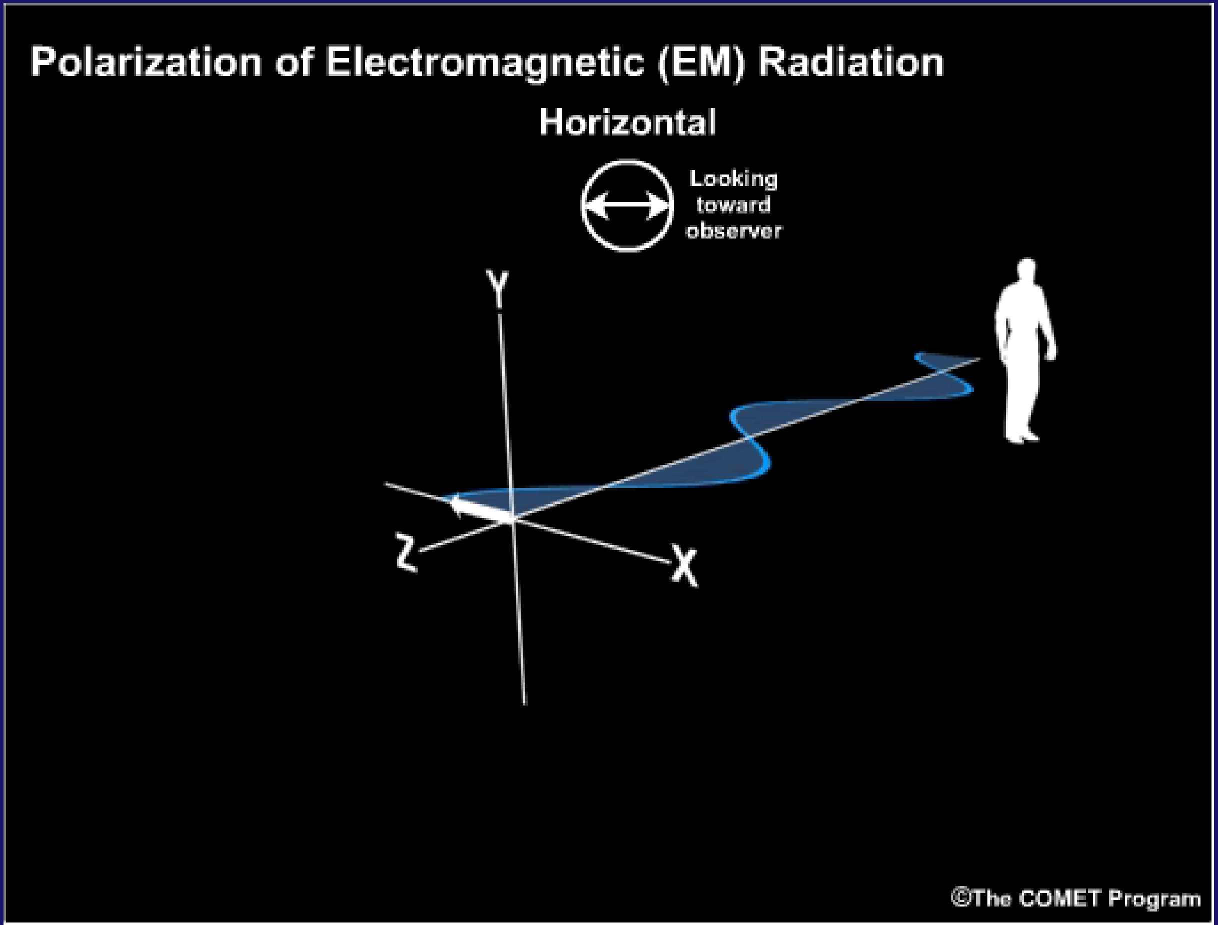
Most naturally emitted microwave energy is essentially unpolarized. That is, the electric field vector traces the motion of the electromagnetic wave, which oscillates randomly in all directions as it passes along the Z-axis. Energy can become partially polarized through interaction with various elements in the Earth-Atmosphere system. In other words, the oscillation of the electric field vector exhibits a predictable pattern of behavior that can be observed and used to infer specific properties of that element.

Horizontal and Vertical Polarization



Vertically polarized electromagnetic energy is characterized by an electromagnetic wave where the wave and its electric field vector, shown by the arrow, oscillate in only one plane, shown here as the Y direction.

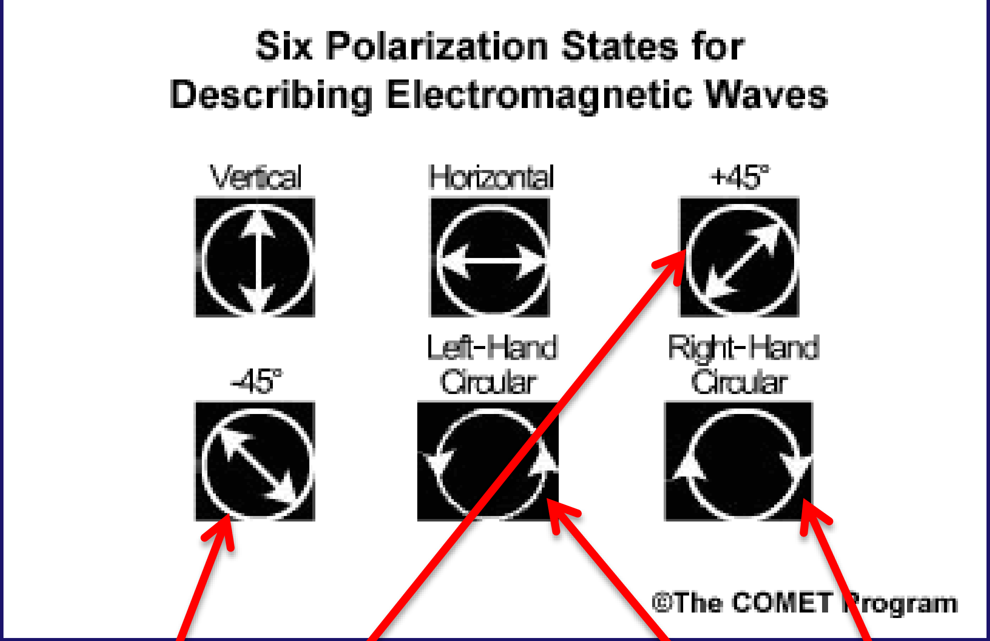
Horizontal and Vertical Polarization



For horizontally polarized electromagnetic energy, the wave and its electric field vector oscillate in a single horizontal plane, shown here in the X direction.

Horizontal and Vertical Polarization

http://www.meted.ucar.edu/npoess/microwave_topics/resources/s8flyout.htm



Six Polarization States for Describing Electromagnetic Waves

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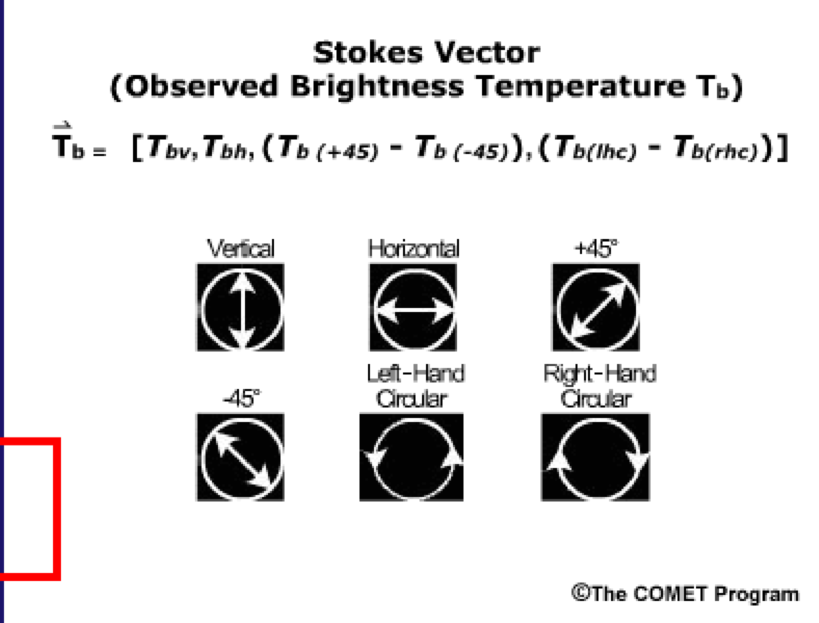
H and V composition on phase

H and V composition with 90 deg phase difference



Stokes Vector (Observed Brightness Temperature T_b)

$$\vec{T}_b = [T_{bv}, T_{bh}, (T_{b\,(+45)} - T_{b\,(-45)}), (T_{b(lhc)} - T_{b(rhc)})]$$

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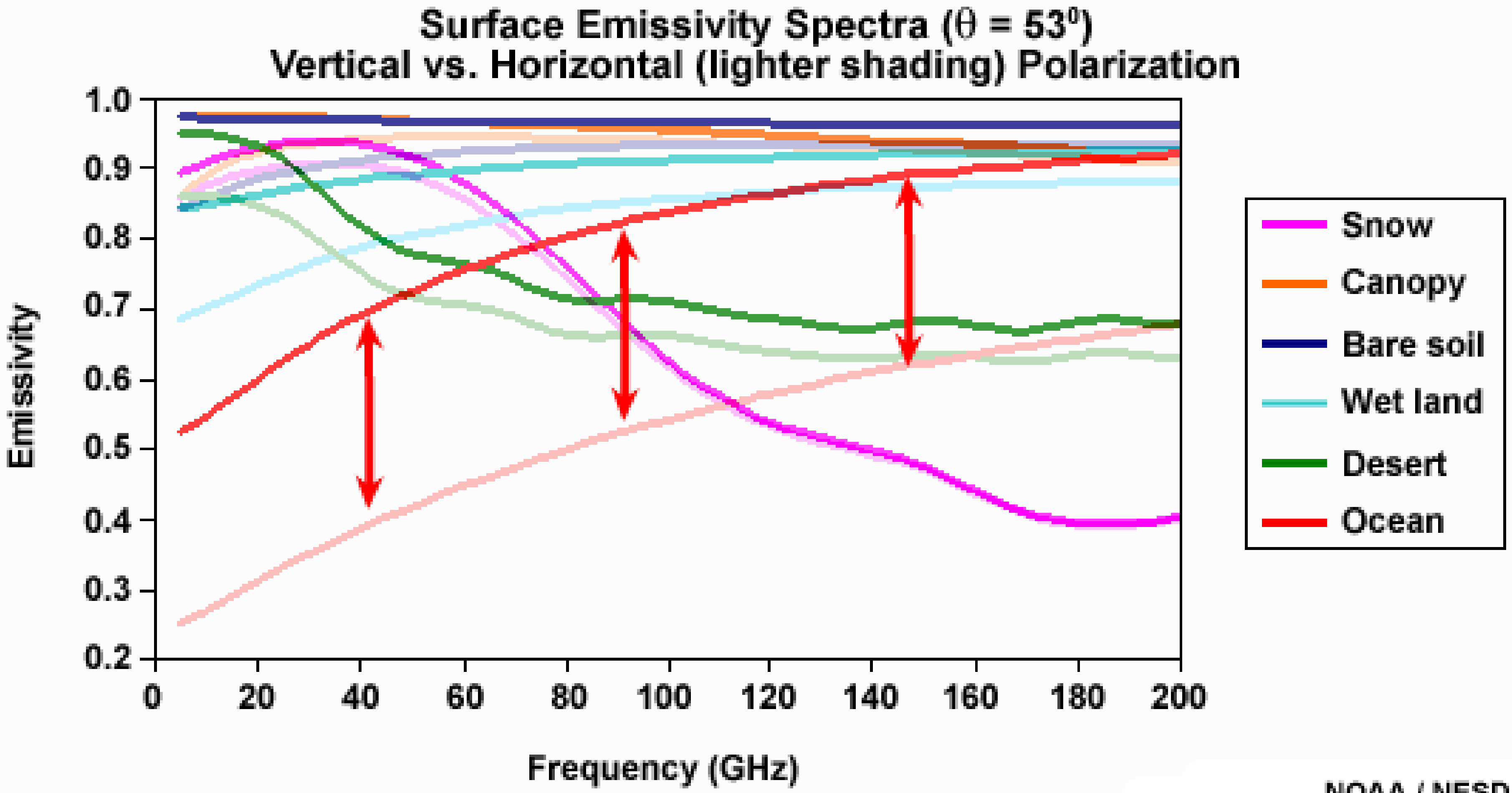
Polarization:

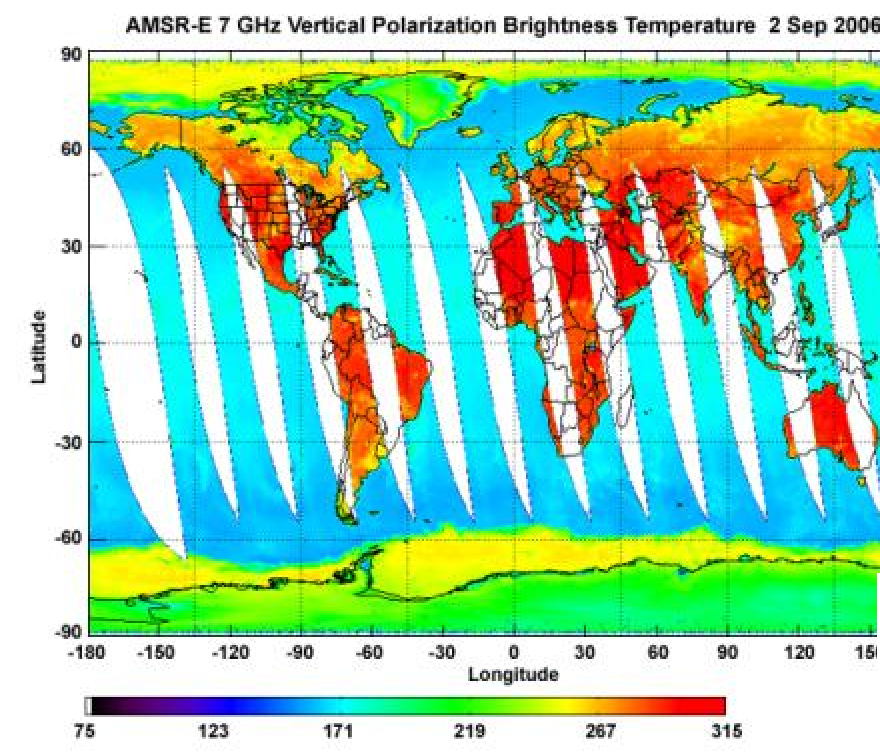
Additional useful information to obtain geophysical variables

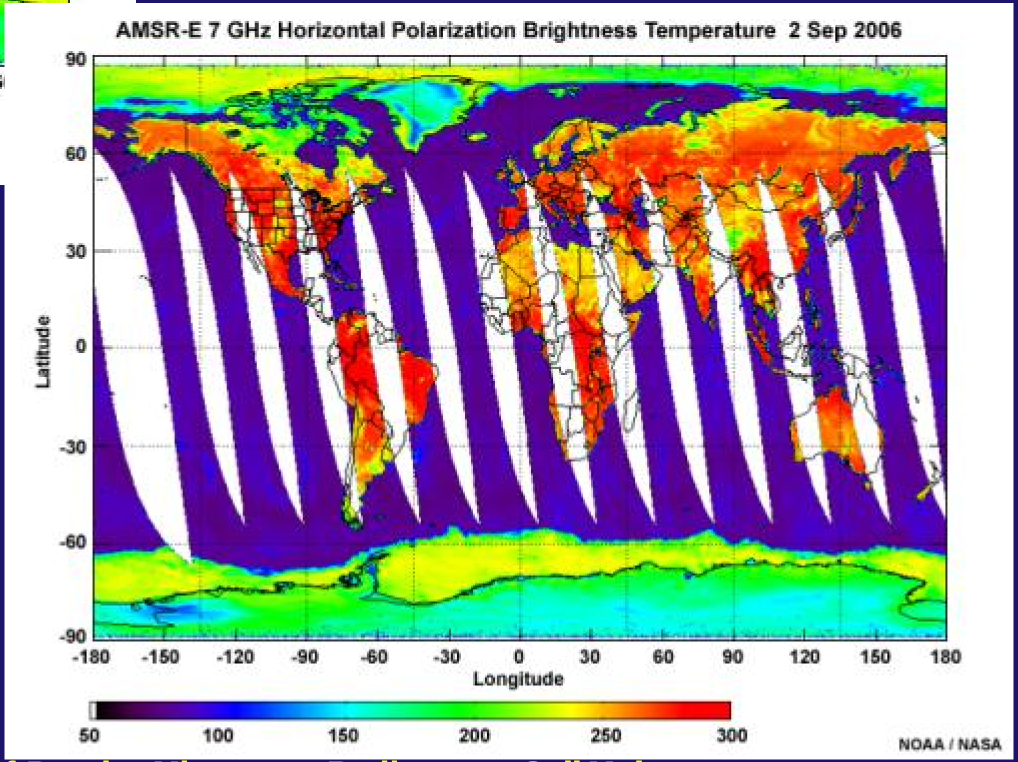


NOAA / NESDIS

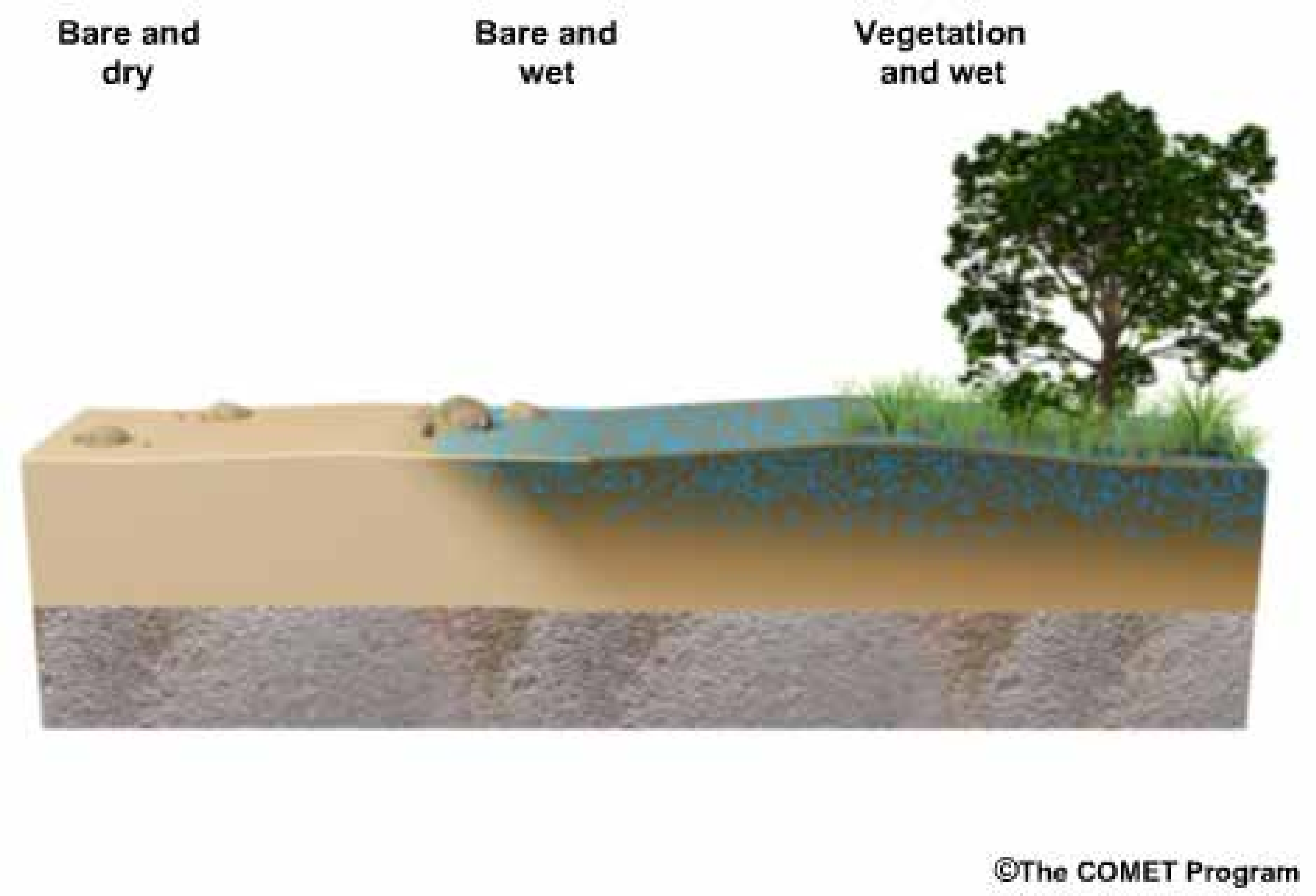
Polarization

additional useful information to obtain geophysical quantities





Vegetation



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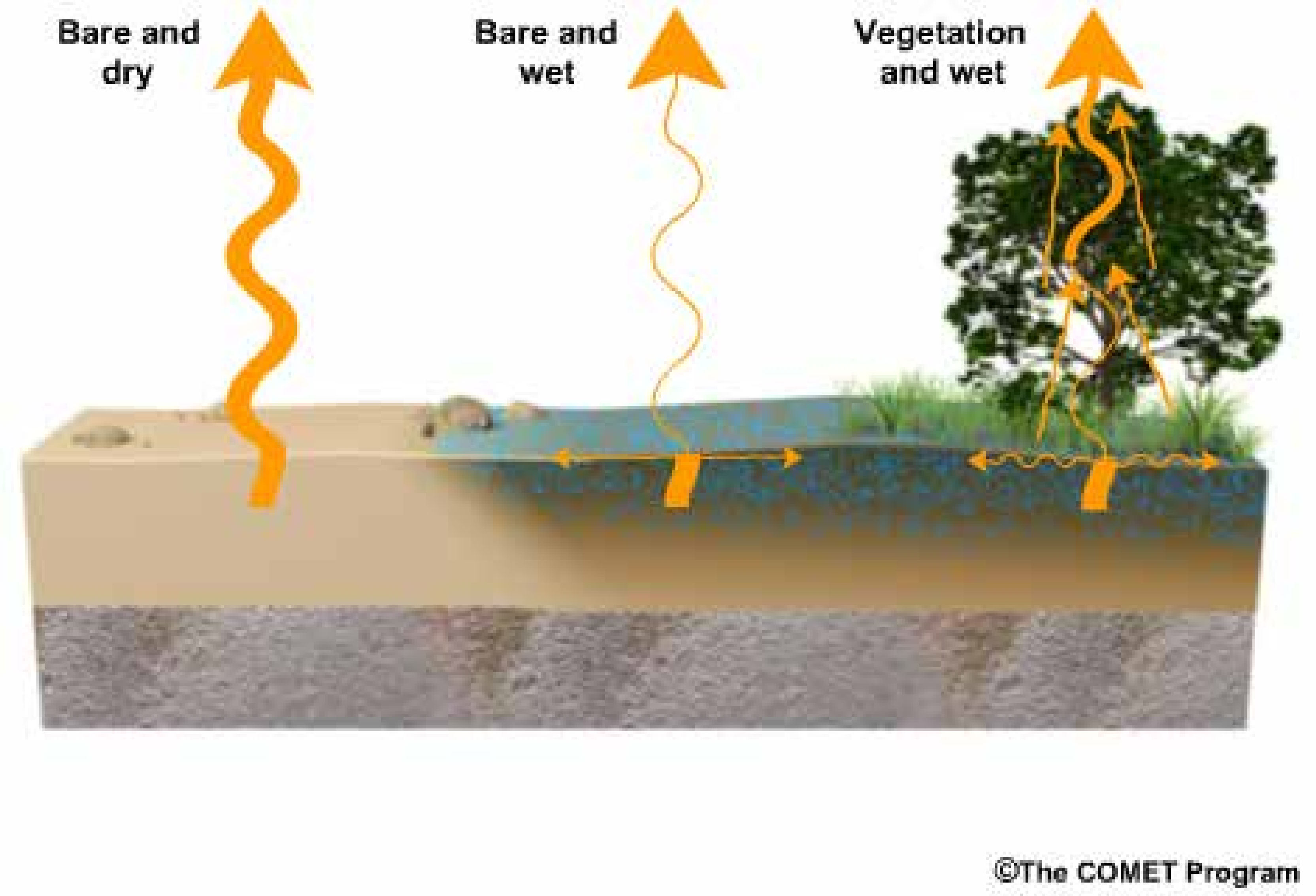
Vegetation



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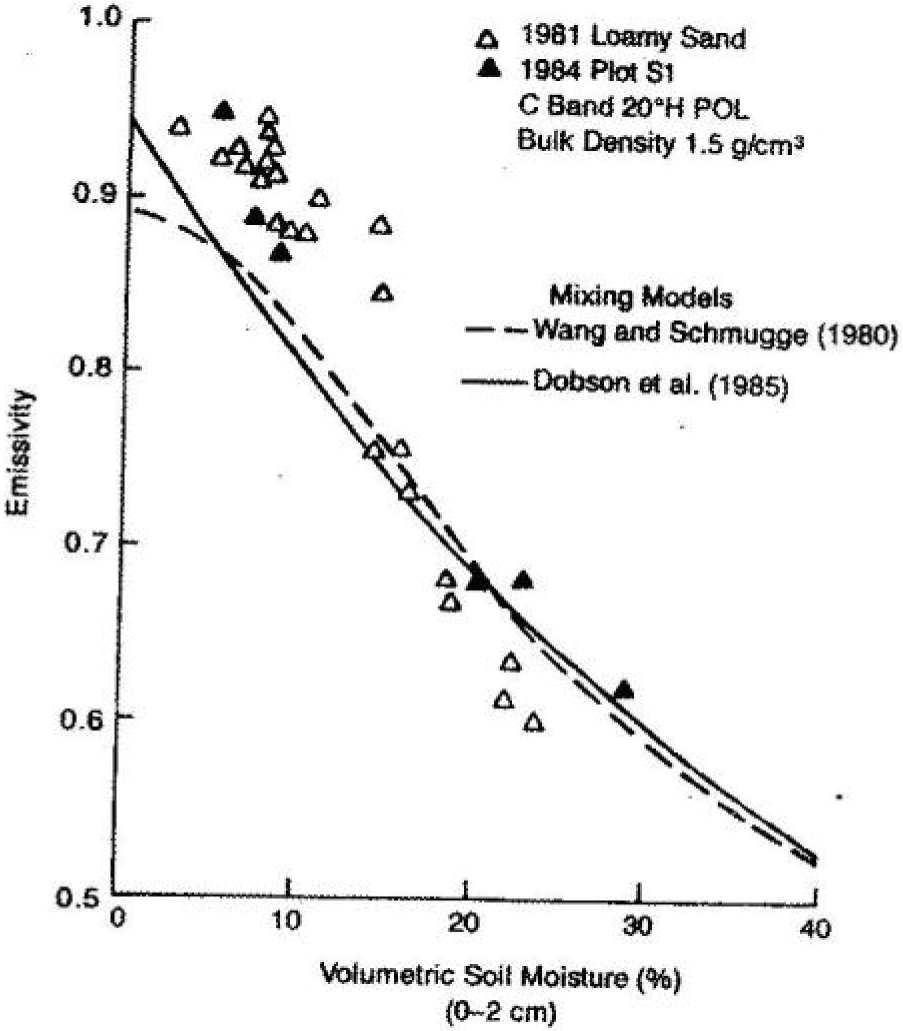
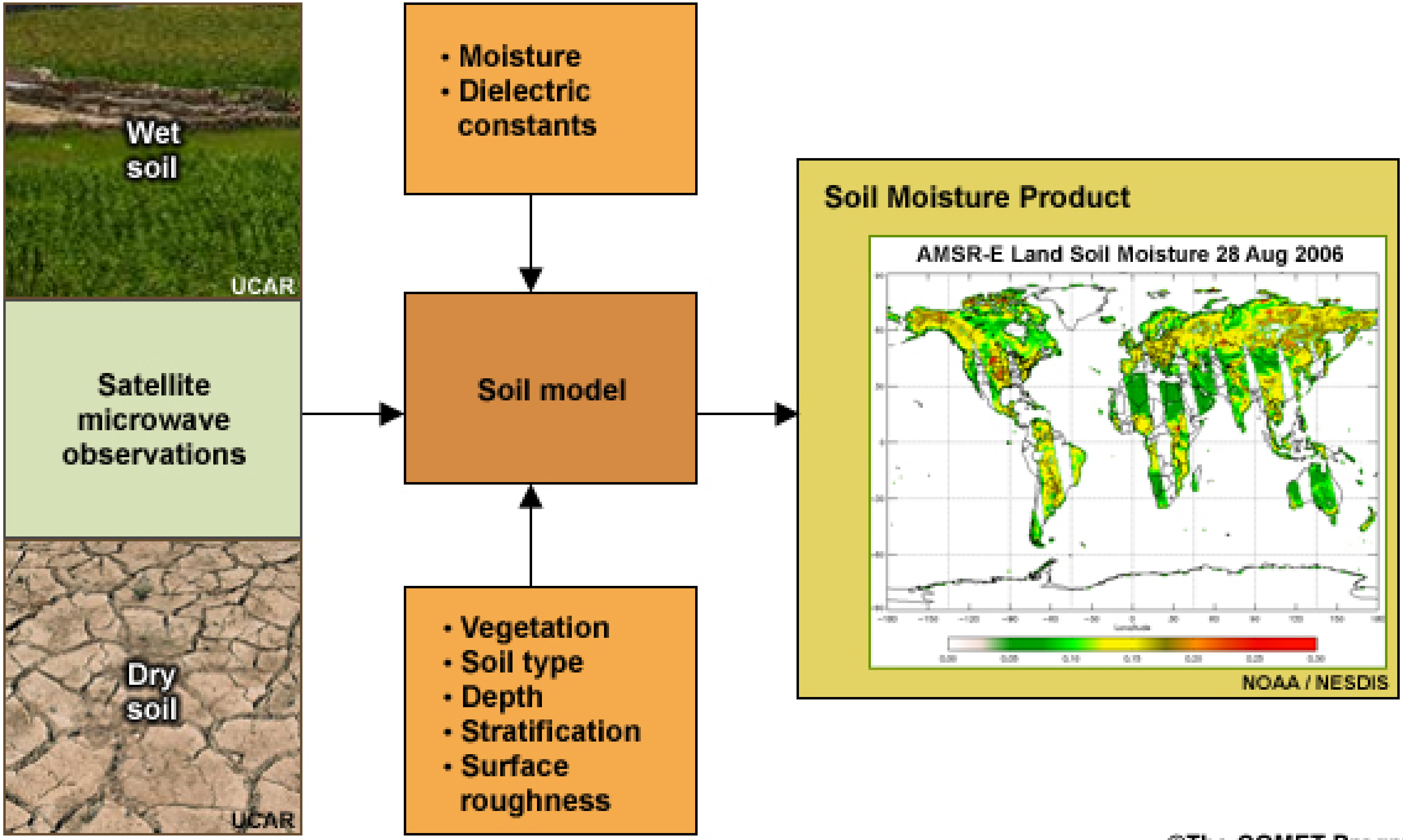


Figura 17

Relación entre la emisividad y el contenido en humedad volumétrico para una arena desnuda y muy poco rugosa a 1.4 GHz.

Passive Microwaves. Introduction
Rayleigh-Jeans Law. Background
Factors Affecting Emissivity
Polarization
Estimation of Soil Moisture

Generalized Microwave Soil Moisture Retrieval Process



Satellite microwave observations

- Moisture
- Dielectric constants

Soil model

- Vegetation
- Soil type
- Depth
- Stratification
- Surface roughness

Soil Moisture Product

AMSR-E Land Soil Moisture 28 Aug 2006

NOAA / NESDIS

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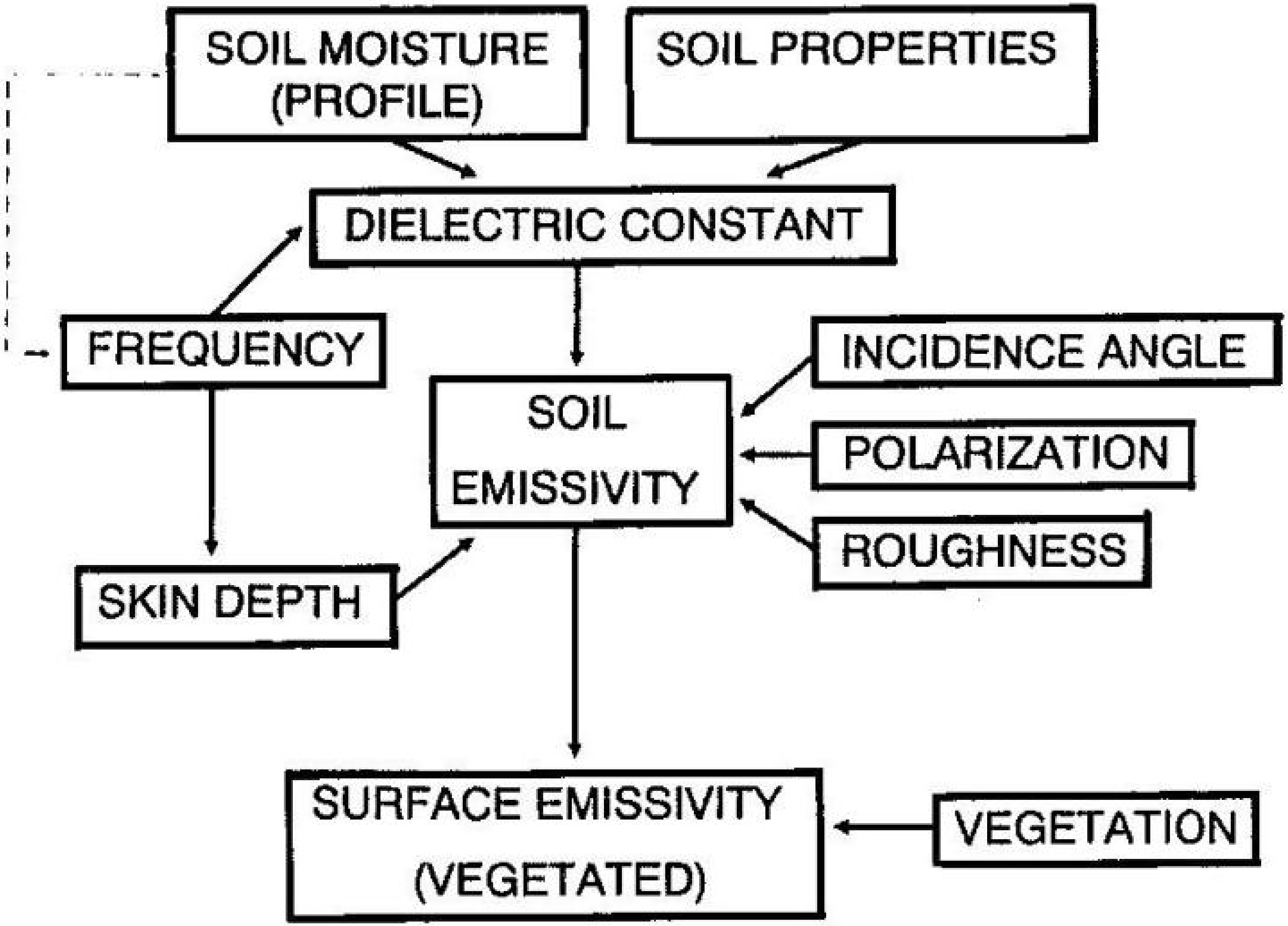

Figure 7

Schematic overview of factors influencing the brightness temperature of a complex, vegetation covered surface (from: Van de Griend and Owe, 1993b).