



Research Progress and Prospect of Solar-Induced Chlorophyll Fluorescence (SIF) in Remote Sensing

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Commentary

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Understanding of Solar-induced Chlorophyll Fluorescence (SIF) Remote Sensing

To date, assorted optical-based remote sensing instruments and techniques have been developed vigorously to monitor ecosystem physiological functions and matter-energy exchange status [1-4]. Although numerous studies have investigated remotely sensed reflectance-based vegetation indices (VIs) which characterize the greenness of terrestrial vegetation, have been utilized to estimate vegetation physiological parameters at larger scales, there is still intrinsic limitation that VIs cannot reflect the live photosynthetic rate. As the most crucial physiological activity of plant, photosynthesis comprises a series of complex and intricate electrochemical reactions in chloroplasts [5]. Firstly, light energy was consumed by leaf chloroplasts in three pathways: photochemical reaction, heat dissipation and fluorescence emission which occur simultaneously and compete with each other [6-8]. And then, chlorophyll a molecules enter an excited state after absorbing photons and release excess energy through vibrational relaxation, after that fluorescence emerged during this process within 650-800 nm and characterized by two peaks (the first peak at 690 nm and the second peak at 760 nm) [7,9,10]. As a by-product of photosynthesis, fluorescence is inextricably linked to photosynthesis which is a sensitive, non-invasive and relatively simple method to observe vegetation photosynthetic status. Therefore, SIF has become a promising tool to detect variable photosynthetic physiological patterns, which may be due to changes of vegetation structure and functional activities, or upscale from canopy to ecosystem and then to global scale [11-14].

Various SIF Observation Platforms and Research Advances

SIF observation platforms are divided into three categories: ground-based, UAV-based and satellite-based observation platforms [15-17]. The satellite-based SIF observations mainly focus on the monitoring of global carbon dioxide cycle, marine ecosystem and climate change, which were usually conducted in rainforests, needleleaf forests, savannas, and croplands according to seasonal variations [18-20]. In addition to the ongoing satellites for SIF and carbon measurement, such as GOSAT (Global Greenhouse Gas Observation by Satellite), GOME-2 (Global Ozone Monitoring Experiment-2) and OCO-2 (Orbiting Carbon Observatory-2), another fluorescence detector (FLEX) dedicated to measure SIF signal exclusively will be in operation since 2023, which will greatly promote global SIF probe [21]. However, UAV-based and ground-based SIF measurements generally benchmark on small scale forest and farmland ecosystems with higher spectral and spatial resolution, which have become popularized among scientists, compared with satellite-based observation platforms [15,22]. Similar to satellite-based observation platform, UAV-based SIF measurements can be imaging data or non-imaging data, which also need rigorous and accurate atmospheric and geometric correction processes due to sensitive atmospheric interference [23]. Owing to limited distance from crop canopy (from centimeter to meter) to sensor which is hardly affected by various atmospheric disturbances (such as dust particles, aerosols, water vapor, etc.), there is no need to carry out strict atmospheric correction for ground-based SIF observation [24]. And also, ground-based SIF signal is

an ideal marker for calibration and verification of UAV-based and space-based platforms. Some studies have demonstrated that SIF are sensitive to various stresses (such as drought, heatwave, nitrogen and others), which will be helpful for early warning of natural disasters in agricultural production [25-28]. In addition, there are some new findings in the phenological observation of evergreen broad-leaved forest, deciduous broad-leaved forest and snow covered vegetation on plateau, which also confirmed that SIF can represent the seasonality effect on leaf pigment content in advance than commonly used VIs [29,30].

Challenges and Prospects of SIF in Future Studies

Although various SIF observation platforms can provide promising methodologies for vegetation physiological dynamics monitoring, there are still some challenges in investigating plant growth status in a physical mechanism interpretable way, such as fast and noninvasive acquisition of canopy photosynthesis related traits. And also, associations and combination of SIF signal from different observation platforms remain fully exploration [31,32]. Finally, efforts are urgently required to develop affordable and effective SIF observation sensors for high throughput crop phenotyping in the future.

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