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## MASTER: Suomi-NPP Airborne Campaign, Greenland, 2015

### Get Data

Documentation Revision Date: 2023-04-11

Dataset Version: 1

### Summary

This dataset includes Level 1B (L1B) and Level 2 (L2) data products from the MODIS/ASTER Airborne Simulator (MASTER) instrument. The spectral data were collected for the Suomi National Polar-orbiting Partnership (Suomi-NPP) instrument validation airborne campaign during 10 flights aboard a NASA ER-2 aircraft over Greenland, portions of the conterminous U.S., and Canada from 2015-02-23 to 2015-03-31. Data products include L1B georeferenced multispectral imagery of calibrated radiance in 50 bands covering wavelengths of 0.460 to 12.879 micrometers at approximately 50-meter spatial resolution. Derived L2 data products are emissivity in 5 bands in thermal infrared range (8.58 to 12.13 micrometers) and land surface temperature. The L1B file format is HDF-4, and L2 products are provided in ENVI and KMZ formats. In addition, the dataset includes flight paths, spectral band information, instrument configuration, ancillary notes, and summary information for each flight, and browse images derived from each L1B data file.

The MASTER instrument is a modified Daedalus Wildfire scanning spectrometer that flies on a variety of multi-altitude research aircraft and provides spectral information similar to that provided by the Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer (MODIS) and the Advanced Spaceborne Thermal Emission and Reflection Radiometer (ASTER), which are aboard two NASA Earth Observing System satellites: Terra and Aqua. The primary goal of this airborne campaign was to collect data for validating Suomi-NPP satellite measurements.

[Suomi National Polar-orbiting Partnership](#) (Suomi-NPP) serves as a bridge between the Earth Observing System (EOS) satellites and the series of Joint Polar Satellite System (JPSS) satellites. The Suomi-NPP satellite, deployed in 2011, carries five science instruments and tests key technologies for the JPSS missions. Suomi-NPP addresses the challenge of acquiring a wide range of land, ocean, and atmospheric measurements for Earth system science while simultaneously preparing to address operational requirements for weather forecasting.

This dataset includes a total of 347 data files: 95 files in Hierarchical Data Format (HDF-4; \*.hdf) format, 4 ENVI raster files (\*.dat and \*.hdr) that are compressed (\*.zip), 91 files in Keyhole Markup Language Zipped (KMZ; \*.kmz) format, 1 Portable Network Graphics (PNG; \*.png) files that are compressed (\*.zip), 40 text (\*.txt) files, 10 archives of text files that are zipped (\*.zip), 10 flight maps as GIF (\*.gif) images, and 95 browse images in JPEG (\*.jpg) format.

ASTER/MODIS Airborne Simulator Browse Imagery  
 SNPP-2 Campaign – 15 Mar 2015  
 Greenland  
 Flight #15-924-00 Track #7

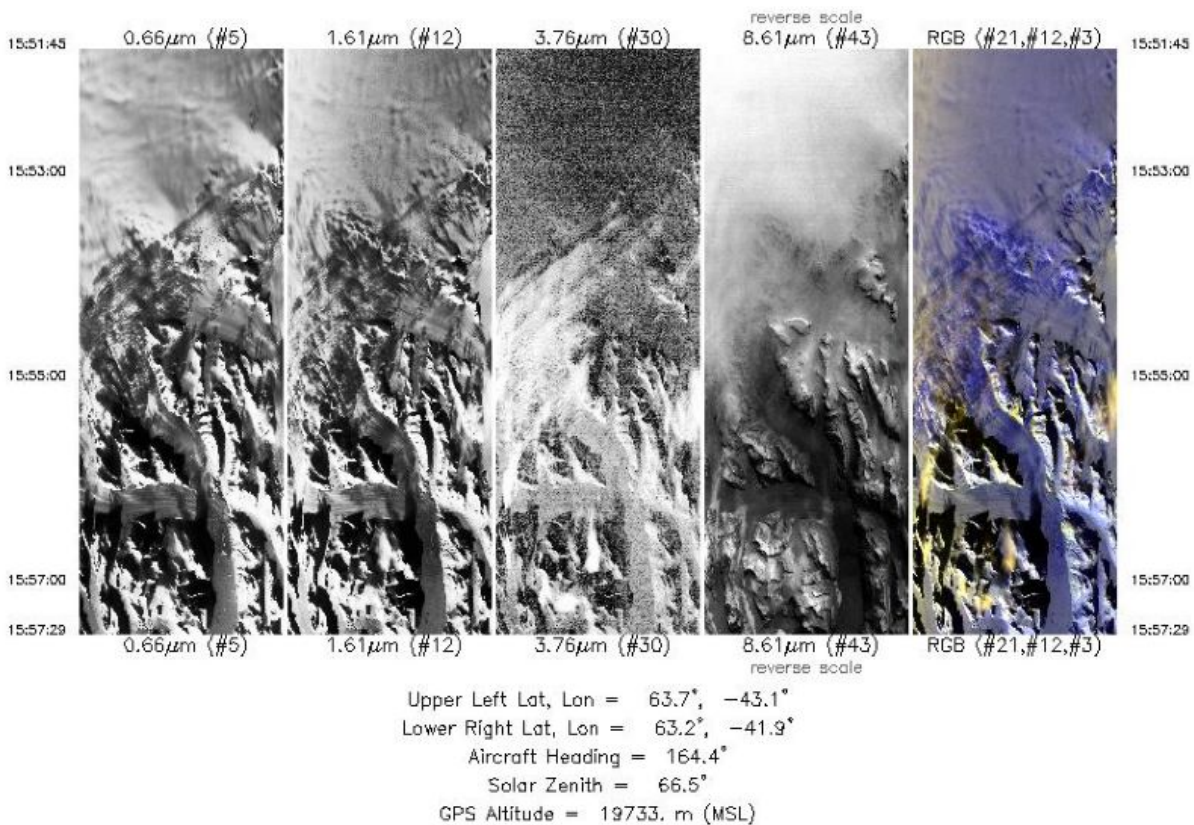


Figure 1. Single band images and an RGB composite image from flight track 07 acquired on 15 March 2013 over Greenland. Source: MASTERL1B\_1592400\_07\_20150315\_1551\_1557\_V01.jpg

## Citation

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## 1. Dataset Overview

This dataset includes Level 1B (L1B) and Level 2 (L2) data products from the MODIS/ASTER Airborne Simulator (MASTER) instrument. The spectral data were collected for the Suomi National Polar-orbiting Partnership (Suomi-NPP) instrument validation airborne campaign during 10 flights aboard a NASA ER-2 aircraft over Greenland, portions of the conterminous U.S., and Canada from 2015-02-23 to 2015-03-31. Data products include L1B georeferenced multispectral imagery of calibrated radiance in 50 bands covering wavelengths of 0.460 to 12.879 micrometers at approximately 50-meter spatial resolution. Derived L2 data products are emissivity in 5 bands in thermal infrared range (8.58 to 12.13 micrometers) and land surface temperature. The L1B file format is HDF-4, and L2 products are provided in ENVI and KMZ formats. In addition, the dataset includes flight paths, spectral band information, instrument configuration, ancillary notes, and summary information for each flight, and browse images derived from each L1B data file.

The MASTER instrument is a modified Daedalus Wildfire scanning spectrometer that flies on a variety of multi-altitude research aircraft and provides spectral information similar to that provided by the Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer (MODIS) and the Advanced Spaceborne Thermal Emission and Reflection Radiometer (ASTER), which are aboard two NASA Earth Observing System satellites: Terra and Aqua. The primary goal of this airborne campaign was to collect data for validating Suomi-NPP satellite measurements.

[Suomi National Polar-orbiting Partnership](#) (Suomi-NPP) serves as a bridge between the Earth Observing System (EOS) satellites and the forthcoming series of Joint Polar Satellite System (JPSS) satellites. Suomi-NPP, deployed in 2011, carries five science instruments and tests key technologies for the JPSS missions. Suomi-NPP addresses the challenge of acquiring a wide range of land, ocean, and atmospheric measurements for Earth system science while simultaneously preparing to address operational requirements for weather forecasting.

**Project:** [MODIS/ASTER Airborne Simulator](#)

The MODIS/ASTER Airborne Simulator (MASTER) is a scanning spectrometer which flies on a variety of multi-altitude research aircraft and provides data similar to the Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer (MODIS) and the Advanced Spaceborne Thermal Emission and Reflection Radiometer (ASTER). MASTER first flew in 1998 and has ongoing deployments as a Facility Instrument in the NASA Airborne Science Program (ASP). MASTER is a joint project involving the Airborne Sensor Facility (ASF) at the Ames Research Center, the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), and the Earth Resources Observation and Science Center (EROS).

### Related Publication

Hook, S.J. Myers, J.J., Thome, K.J., Fitzgerald, M. and A.B. Kahle. 2001. The MODIS/ASTER airborne simulator (MASTER) - a new instrument for earth science studies. *Remote Sensing of Environment* 76:93–102. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0034-4257\(00\)00195-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0034-4257(00)00195-4)

### Related Datasets

Additional MASTER datasets are available on the ORNL DAAC [MASTER](#) project page.

### Acknowledgments

The MASTER instrument is maintained and operated by the Airborne Sensor Facility (ASF) at NASA Ames Research Center in Mountain View, California, under the oversight of the EOS Project Science Office at NASA Goddard. Data processing was conducted at NASA Ames Research Center and the Jet Propulsion Laboratory at the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena, California.

## 2. Data Characteristics

**Spatial Coverage:** Greenland with portions of California, the conterminous U.S., and Canada

**Spatial Resolution:** 50 m

**Temporal Coverage:** 2015-02-23 to 2015-03-31

**Temporal Resolution:** One-time estimate

**Study Area:** All latitudes and longitudes given in decimal degrees.

Site	Westernmost Longitude	Easternmost Longitude	Northernmost Latitude	Southernmost Latitude
Greenland; California; conterminous U.S.	-125.157	0.000	79.172	31.952

### Data File Information

This dataset includes a total of 347 data files: 95 files in Hierarchical Data Format (HDF-4; \*.hdf) format, 4 ENVI raster files (\*.dat and \*.hdr) that are compressed (\*.zip), 91 files in Keyhole Markup Language Zipped (KMZ; \*.kmz) format, 1 Portable Network Graphics (PNG; \*.png) files that are compressed (\*.zip), 40 text (\*.txt) files, 10 archives of text files that are zipped (\*.zip), 10 flight maps as GIF (\*.gif) images, and 95 browse images in JPEG (\*.jpg) format (Table 1).

There are different numbers of each type of file, which corresponds to the number of "flights" and "flight tracks. A "flight" is flown on a single day, and a "flight track" typically refers to a segment of a given flight. The number of flight tracks varies among flights (Table 2).

- There are 10 flights with 95 flight tracks (Table 2).
- For each of 95 flight tracks, there is one L1B data file in HDF format and one auxiliary browse image (\*.jpg).
- There are L1B-derived KMZ files for 91 of the 95 tracks.
- L2 data are included for 1 of the 95 flight tracks. For each track, there is one L2 data file in KMZ format and five L2 data files in ZIP format.
  - Four of the ZIP files contain L2 ENVI data for emissivity, land surface temperature, geographic coordinates, and quality assurance status. Each ZIP includes a binary data file (\*.dat) and its header file (\*.hdr).
  - One ZIP file contains three L2 PNG files: RGB composite, single-band emissivity, and land surface temperature.
- For each flight, there is a collection of auxiliary files providing information about the flight and instrument configuration.

The primary data files are named MASTERLAA\_BBBBBBBB\_CC\_YYYYMMDD\_EEFF\_GGHH\_V0J-X.ext (e.g., MASTERL1B\_1592700\_02\_20150324\_1138\_1234\_V01.hdf).

The flight track-level browse images are named MASTERLAA\_BBBBBBBB\_CC\_YYYYMMDD\_EEFF\_GGHH\_V0J.jpg (e.g., MASTERL1B\_1592700\_02\_20150324\_1138\_1234\_V01.jpg).

The deployment-level auxiliary files are named MASTER\_BBBBBBBB\_YYYYMMDD\_X.ext (e.g., MASTER\_1592700\_20150324\_config.txt).

Elements of file names are described as:

AA = "1B" or "2", indicating L1B or L2 data level,  
 BBBBBBBB = flight number (Table 2),  
 CC = flight track,  
 YYYYMMDD = date of sampling,  
 EEFF = starting time at EE hour and FF minute,  
 GGHH = ending time at GG hour and HH minute,  
 J = version number for file,  
 X = the file content (see Table 1), and  
 ext = "hdf", "kmz", "gif", "jpg", "txt", or "zip", indicating the file extension.

Table 1. File names and descriptions.

File Name	Level	File Type	Total Files	Description
<b>Primary Data Files</b>				

File Name	Level	File Type	Total Files	Description
MASTERL1B_BBBBBBBB_CC_YYYYmmDD_EEFF_GGHH_V0J.hdf	L1B	HDF-4	95	Multispectral radiance in 50 bands, pixel coordinates, sensor configuration, aircraft platform data, analysis parameters. The "CalibratedData" variable provides estimates of radiance in units of $W\ m^{-2}\ sr^{-1}$ per micron.
MASTERL1B_BBBBBBBB_CC_YYYYmmDD_EEFF_GGHHV0J-RGB.kmz	L1B	KMZ	91	RGB composite browse image (in KMZ format) derived from corresponding bands of RGB wavelengths of L1B data.
MASTERL2_BBBBBBBB_CC_YYYYmmDD_EEFF_GGHH_V0J-emissivity_tes.zip	L2	ENVI	1	Map of atmospheric corrected emissivity; Temperature and Emissivity Separation (TES) corrected data in 5 bands (wavelengths: 8.58, 9.02, 10.62, 11.32, and 12.13 $\mu m$ ).
MASTERL2_BBBBBBBB_CC_YYYYmmDD_EEFF_GGHH_V0J-images.zip	L2	PNG	1	Three non-georeferenced images depicting (a) RGB composite using selected bands, (b) emissivity from a single band, and (c) land surface temperature.
MASTERL2_BBBBBBBB_CC_YYYYmmDD_EEFF_GGHH_V0J-location.zip	L2	ENVI	1	Latitude and longitude coordinates for pixels in ENVI files.
MASTERL2_BBBBBBBB_CC_YYYYmmDD_EEFF_GGHH_V0J-LST.kmz	L2	KMZ	1	Map of land surface temperature in degrees Kelvin.
MASTERL2_BBBBBBBB_CC_YYYYmmDD_EEFF_GGHH_V0J-QAmap.zip	L2	ENVI	1	QA status for each pixel from TES algorithm, where 1 = divergence and 0 = convergence.
MASTERL2_BBBBBBBB_CC_YYYYmmDD_EEFF_GGHH_V0J-surface_temp.zip	L2	ENVI	1	Map of land surface temperature (TES LST) in degrees Kelvin.
<b>Auxiliary Files</b>				
MASTERLAA_BBBBBBBB_CC_YYYYMMDD_EEFF_GGHH_V0J.jpg	L1B	JPEG	95	Browse figures; one image per flight track; multiple tracks per flight.
MASTER_BBBBBBBB_YYYYMMDD_ancillary.txt	-	Text	10	Ancillary information about flight including notes on aircraft platform, mission objective, and data evaluation.
MASTER_BBBBBBBB_YYYYMMDD_config.txt	-	Text	10	Instrument configuration information for flight.
MASTER_BBBBBBBB_YYYYMMDD_flightpath.gif	-	GIF	10	Map showing flight paths.
MASTER_BBBBBBBB_YYYYMMDD_spectral_band_info.txt	-	Text	10	Spectral band information for flight.
MASTER_BBBBBBBB_YYYYMMDD_spectral_response_table.zip	-	Text	10	Spectral response tables by band (ZIP archive of 50 text files).
MASTER_BBBBBBBB_YYYYMMDD_summary.txt	-	Text	10	Time and coordinates for start and end of flight tracks along with the number of scan lines, solar and instrument angles, and aircraft altitude. FTLT = flight track number.

#### Data File Details

The HDF and ENVI files contain swath trajectory data using longitude and latitude coordinates. The spatial resolution is 43 to 51 m and is a function of aircraft altitude.

Table 2. Number of flight tracks per file data level for each MASTER flight during this 2015 campaign.

Date	Flight Number	Locations	Flight Tracks	
			Data Level	
			L1B	L2
2015-02-23	1592200	California / Pacific Ocean (Functional Check Flight)	8	
2015-03-07	1592300	Ferry: California to Iceland	12	
2015-03-15	1592400	Greenland	9	
2015-03-19	1592500	Greenland	6	
2015-03-23	1592600	Greenland	9	

Date	Flight Number	Locations	Flight Tracks	
2015-03-24	1592700	Greenland	6	1
2015-03-25	1592800	Greenland	11	
2015-03-28	1592900	Greenland	13	
2015-03-29	1593000	Greenland	10	
2015-03-31	1593100	Ferry: Iceland to California	11	
<b>Total</b>			95	1

### 3. Application and Derivation

The primary objective of MASTER is to: (a) collect ASTER-like and MODIS-like land datasets to support the validation of the ASTER and MODIS geophysical retrieval algorithms; (b) collect these datasets at a higher resolution than the spaceborne datasets to permit scaling studies and comparisons with in situ measurements; and (c) under fly the EOS-AM1 ASTER and MODIS sensors to provide an additional radiometric calibration to assist with in-flight instrument performance characterization. Calibration is particularly important for ASTER where on-board calibration is dependent on a single black body in the TIR and only partial aperture illumination in the VNIR.

A secondary objective of MASTER is to: (a) provide both a backup instrument and backup modules for the current MODIS Airborne simulator, which is committed to a program of atmospheric and oceanic measurements; and (b) provide a wider spectral and dynamic range alternative to the use of the Thematic Mapper (TM) airborne simulator and Thermal Infrared Multispectral Scanner (TIMS) airborne scanners (JPL, 2021b).

MASTER imagery has been used for mapping wildfires and their impacts (Veraverbeke et al., 2011), land cover (Li and Moon, 2004), coral reefs (Capolsini et al., 2003), and urban heat islands (Zhao and Wentz, 2016).

### 4. Quality Assessment

The MASTER instrument channels are calibrated spectrally and radiometrically in the laboratory preflight and postflight. The mid-infrared and thermal infrared channels (26–50) are also radiometrically calibrated in-flight by viewing an internal hot and cold blackbody with each scanline (Hook et al., 2001). Three calibration and validation experiments were conducted in 1998–2001 (Hook et al., 2001; JPL, 2021a). Spectral response information for this deployment is included in the files named MASTER\_BBBBBBBB\_YYYYMMDD\_spectral\_response\_table.zip.

### 5. Data Acquisition, Materials, and Methods

The MASTER instrument was developed by the NASA Ames Research Center in conjunction with the Jet Propulsion Laboratory. The instrument consists of three key components: the scanning spectrometer, the digitizer, and the storage system. The scanning unit was built by Sensys Technology (formerly Daedalus Enterprises) and the digitizer was a collaborative effort between Berkeley Camera Engineering and the Ames Airborne Sensor Facility (ASF, 2021). The data storage system and overall system integration were also provided by the ASF.

The MASTER instrument is similar to the MODIS Airborne Simulator (MAS) developed by the MODIS project (King et al., 1996). However, it has two key differences. First, MASTER supports a variety of scan speeds allowing it to acquire contiguous imagery from a variety of altitudes with different pixel sizes. Second, the channel positions are configured to closely match those of ASTER and MODIS. A detailed description of the instrument and optical system are provided by Hook et al. (2001) and King et al. (1996), respectively.

For this deployment, the MASTER instrument was flown on NASA's ER-2 aircraft at altitudes of 17,189–20,297 m above sea level. The primary study area was Greenland; however, L1B data are available from a functional check flight over California and ferry flights over the conterminous US and Canada (Fig. 2).

The L2 data are derived from the L1B files, and the primary L2 products are emissivity in five bands (wavelengths: 8.58, 9.02, 10.62, 11.32, and 12.13  $\mu\text{m}$ ) and land surface temperature (LST). Emissivity and LST were corrected using a Temperature and Emissivity Separation (TES) algorithm (Coll et al., 2001).



Contact for Data Center Access Information:

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