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Published in:
Environmental Modelling and Software

DOI:
[10.1016/j.envsoft.2016.03.015](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envsoft.2016.03.015)

Publication date:
2016

Citation for published version (APA):
Petropoulos, G., & Anagnostopoulos, V. (2016). SEVIRI PrePro: A Novel Software Tool for the Pre-processing of SEVIRI Geostationary Orbit EO Data Products. *Environmental Modelling and Software*, 82, 321-329.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envsoft.2016.03.015>

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SEVIRI PrePro: A Novel Software Tool for the Pre-processing of SEVIRI Geostationary Orbit EO Data Products

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ABSTRACT

The Spinning Enhanced Visible and Infrared Imager (SEVIRI) is a geostationary orbit multispectral sensor on-board the MSG Earth Observation (EO) platform, acquiring data over Earth's land surface from the optical to infrared parts of electromagnetic spectrum every 15 minutes. SEVIRI data include also a number of operational products that are all provided to the user's community at no cost via EUMETSAT or LSA SAF portals.

Herein an open access stand-alone software product developed in Java programming language is presented for automating key pre-processing to all the operationally distributed products distributed by the SEVIRI radiometer. The software tool, named Seviri PrePro, makes use of present day multi-core processors, and is being able to process very large datasets in a short time period, making it appropriate as well for use in a High Performance Computing (HPC) environment. The practical usefulness of this toolkit is demonstrated herein as well using as a case study the SEVIRI evapotranspiration (ET) product.

The development and distribution of SEVIRI PrePro is of significant importance to the SEVIRI users' community and is also very timely given that, to our knowledge, no similar software tool is openly available at present. Use of this tool aims at supporting the wider dissemination and implementation of SEVIRI all operational products in general. It is anticipated to make a significant contribution to a large number of practical applications requiring use of SEVIRI data, including, but not limited, weather forecasting and global climate monitoring at a range of geographical scales.

KEYWORDS: *Earth Observation, SEVIRI, pre-processing, geostationary, operational products, software tool*

35 1. INTRODUCTION

36 Monitoring the inter-related processes, feedbacks and exchanges between the biosphere,
37 atmosphere and hydrosphere that inherently shape the physical environments within our planet is
38 a topic of key research priority today to be addressed (Mason and Calow, 2012; North et al., 2015).
39 These complex land-surface-atmosphere interactions are important drivers of weather and climate
40 systems and govern the terrestrial hydrological, energy and biogeochemical cycles which are
41 responsible for the existence of life in the planet (Wood et al., 2011; Destouni et al. 2013).

42 In the last decades, Earth Observation (EO) technology has played an increasingly important role in
43 determining various parameters characterising the land surface from space. This is because of its
44 advantages related to the speed at which data can be acquired (instantaneous updating of
45 information) by EO over large areas (synoptic views in a spatially contiguous fashion). Also, EO
46 overcomes many problems inherent to traditional data collection methods (e.g. access to otherwise
47 inaccessible areas). Additionally, remote sensing provides an efficient and cost-effective approach
48 for the systematic repeat-coverage of areas of interest without a disturbing influence on the area
49 (Kalivas et al., 2013). The advent of satellite-based EO, particularly over the last few decades, has
50 even reached a significant milestone in maturity that has allowed obtaining several land surface
51 parameters from spaceborne EO systems at an operational level (Srivastava et al., 2015).
52 Geostationary orbit satellites are of particular interest to studying and monitoring Earth's physical
53 environment and the changes which occur by either anthropogenic activities or natural hazards.
54 The principal advantage of those satellites is that they are able to provide a width of spectral
55 information over large areas and at a time step compatible with the dynamics of several physical
56 processes of the Earth system.

57 The Spinning Enhanced Visible and Infrared Imager (SEVIRI) is a geostationary orbit imaging
58 radiometer which serves as the main payload on-board the Meteosat Second Generation (MSG)
59 satellite. This is a co-funded space mission between the European Space Agency (ESA) and
60 EUMETSAT. SEVIRI has 12 spectral channels, consisting of three Visible and Near-InfraRed (VNIR)
61 channels (centred at 0.6, 0.8 and 1.6 μm), eight InfraRed (IR) channels (centred at 3.9, 6.2, 7.3, 8.7,
62 9.7, 10.8, 12.0 and 13.4 μm) and one visible broadband channel (at 0.5–0.9 μm) called the High
63 Resolution Visible channel (HRV). The satellite provides image data at 3 km spatial resolution at the
64 sub-satellite point (nadir) for standard channels, and down to 1 km for the HRV channel, over 4
65 specific geographical regions (Europe, Africa - North_Africa and South_Africa- and South America),
66 with a baseline repeat cycle of 15 minutes. A series of operational products from SEVIRI are
67 provided by EUMETSAT and distributed by the Satellite Application Facility (SAF) on Land Surface
68 Analysis (LSA) (<http://landsaf.meteo.pt/>). SEVIRI data are have been used in a range of
69 applications for example, solar modeling (Boojanowski et al., 2013) agriculture studies (Eerens et al.,
70 2014) and wildfires (Carvalho et al., 2010), meteorological studies (Ginoux et al., 2004). Yet,
71 despite the large geographical coverage of SEVIRI data acquisition globally, to our knowledge, at
72 present there is no software platform available to assist with the pre-processing of those
73 operational products, which would in turn allow their dissemination to a wider spectrum of
74 prospective users.

75 In purview of the above, herein we present an open source and stand-alone software tool,
76 developed in Java, which allows performing basic, yet of key importance, pre-processing steps to
77 the SEVIRI operationally distributed products. Our software platform, named "SEVIRI PrePro",
78 makes also use of present day multi-core processors, being able to process fast very large datasets,
79 making it also suitable for use in a High Performance Computing (HPC) environment. Furthermore,

80 we demonstrate the practical applicability of this tool using as an example an operationally
81 distributed product from SEVIRI, although equally any other operational product could be used.

82 **2. THE SEVIRI PRE-PRO TOOLKIT**

83 **2.1 Introduction to the toolkit**

84 The SEVIRI PrePro tool is a Java 8 (Gosling et al., 2014) based cross-platform tool that enables the
85 user to extract information (i.e. geophysical quantities of interest) from a SEVIRI product file.
86 SEVIRI product files come in HDF5 hierarchical format and each granule contains an image but
87 instead of typical RGB imaging which assigns a vector of R, G and B values per image site, a vector of
88 values corresponding to geophysical parameters is contained in this image. These values are
89 sampled per image site which is part of the image grid. There can be four grids, one per region. The
90 sites on the grid correspond to pairs of latitude and longitude and are indexed as in a typical image
91 by image coordinates constrained by the width and height of the image. The translation from the
92 grid (image) co-ordinates to region specific WGS84 coordinates is implemented through a list of
93 region specific files that one has to download from the LSA SAF site after registration. The user of
94 the tool can select various geographical sites from which can export, in batch mode, from near
95 image sites, the corresponding image vector irrespective of operational product. This is facilitated
96 by a convenient GUI. For HPC (High Performance Computing) reasons, a headless option has also
97 been developed and is also available which comes through a Command Line Interface (CLI).
98 Moreover the user can export via a Region of Interest (ROI) parts of the image. In SEVIRI PrePro the
99 exporting is done in the native format of BEAM/VISAT open source software platform (Brockman,
100 2003), namely BEAM DIMAP format, for compatibility reasons. The tool automates the batch
101 exporting through a ROI defined by a shape file (.shp). The user workflow is also easy to implement.
102 Thanks also to recent Java releases, SEVIRI PrePro is able to take advantage of all processors
103 installed in a given computer system. This way, the pre-processing is multithreaded and efficient in
104 performance.

105 **2.2 Software Installation Requirements**

106 To execute SEVIRI PrePro, first the static HDF5 (Folk et al., 2011) files for the region of interest
107 need to be downloaded, which are provided by LSA-SAF (Cihlar et al., 1999), subject to registration
108 to their site. Once this step is completed, the user will need to authorise their account before they
109 can request the necessary static files. Using this authorisation the user can download the necessary
110 files located in the “Auxiliary Data” tab. On the website is a list of .bz2 files in HDF5 format. The user
111 is advised to download all available files and store them in a folder since it can be used for further
112 reference. The structure of the folder is illustrated in Figure 1. After the HDF5 data have been
113 acquired, Java 8 needs to be installed to take advantage of speed and Graphical User Interface (GUI)
114 available through Java FX improvements. The installation has been tested with the corresponding
115 JDK (at time of writing JDK 8u60 was the most up to date version and used in implementation).

116

117 **2.3 Installation of the SEVIRI PrePro Toolkit**

118 The SEVIRI PrePro has been developed as open source software, released under the terms of the
119 GNU General Public Licence, distributed by Aberystwyth University, United Kingdom
120 (www.aber.ac.uk/seviriPrePro). The software tool is under GPLv3 and the user can either
121 download the source code or build it using Eclipse (for Java developers) or download a binary

122 release from the same site. In order to build it from source, the user needs a BEAM/VISAT compiled
123 in Java 8 by using the corresponding build. The preferred way is to use a pre-compiled binary,
124 which is available as a 7z file download. The toolkit download contains three launchers, the main
125 .jar file, a sample file in the Comma-Separated Values (CSV) (Shafranovich, 2005) format for pixel
126 extraction, a folder with jar dependencies and a folder with shape files (Figure 2).

127

128 **2.4 SEVIRI PrePro Implementation**

129 **2.4.1 The Graphical User Interface (GUI)**

130 The user should first update (if necessary) the runGUI.bat file. Java location and assigned memory
131 can be modified. The defaults are a user wide installation of Java and 2048 MB of assigned memory.
132 If the environment is Linux, the user can copy and paste the instruction at the shell prompt and
133 execute it. A GUI appears as shown in Figure 3. One can immediately see that the tabbed interface
134 at the bottom offers two utilities. The first is the “Country Export” and the other one is “Pixel
135 Extraction”. The generic part of the application allows one to re-project the whole products in the
136 Equirectangular, plate carrée projection (Snyder, 1993) which is a slow process. In the next
137 sections each of the three interfaces of the main toolkit menu shown in Figure 3 will be explained.

138 **2.4.2 Inputs Requirements**

139 In the generic part of the toolkit application the user needs to fill some input parameters (Figure 4).
140 The user must first specify the folder where the re-projected BEAM DIMAP files will be saved. The
141 user has also to provide the folder of the LSA SAF static files in order to achieve the grid translation.
142 Then the user must specify where the SEVIRI product files reside. The folder must have a flat
143 structure as no recursive searching has been implemented. Finally, the region the files belong must
144 be given. The assumption is that all the files in the folder have to do with the same region. One can
145 start the re-projection process which is very slow. We re-use the procedure in the BEAM VISAT API
146 which is similarly slow. If the user needs a specific country re-projection, he should consult the next
147 sub-section. It does not matter if in the folder there is a mix of operational products. The BEAM
148 output files preserve this information in their filename.

149 **2.4.3 Country Export Option**

150 In order to export country specific information, the generic section must be already configured as
151 above. Country specific re-projection and export can be accomplished by loading the list of
152 countries from the CountriesSHP folder in the distribution. One has to select the shape file as shown
153 in Figure 5. The drop down list of countries is populated and the user can localize the re-projection
154 to the specific selected country. These countries through the grid translation, act as ROIs. A list of
155 BEAM DIMAP files will be the result containing only the part of the image that corresponds to the
156 country as opposed to the full region re-projection of the generic section. A typical run of the toolkit
157 is shown in Figure 5.

158 **2.4.4 Pixel Extraction Option**

159 In order to export country specific information, the generic section must be already configured as
160 above. Pixel extraction is another functionality provided by the SEVIRI tool. Each operational
161 product can be viewed as a vector sampled at grid sites. The aim is to find samples close to the
162 samples and extract the vectors as extracted site values. Figure 6 shows the main parametrisation.

163 One has to load a CSV file containing sites for which to extract values. The format of this file is given
164 in Table 1, where an example (included in the distribution) is displayed. These sites maybe far away
165 from sites. In order to determine the “farness” rule we resorted to a simple heuristic. The Vincenty
166 distance (Vincenty, 1975) is calculated between this site and all the samples. The closest sample is
167 selected. If the distance is less than 1 km then the site is included in the output with the values of
168 this closest sample. The input CSV format required to be followed is shown in the code listing of
169 Figure 7. The output is stored in a series of CSV files, each for every type of operational product in
170 the SEVIRI files folder. This is necessary because of the uniformity of CSV file format. In this respect
171 an ET or LST (for example) CSV file is created. This tool is also offered as a CLI tool option. The CLI
172 tool serves for pixel extraction without using a GUI. For this reason, it can run in HPC environments
173 in parallel in order to accelerate the pixel extraction process. Pixel extraction workflows are offered
174 for both SEVIRI and ASCAT products. Two batch files are provided as customization guides to the
175 user. They share similar concepts. Table 2 shows the user provided customisations to the
176 command line SEVIRI pixel extraction.

177

178 **3. SEVIRI Pre-Pro DEMONSTRATION**

179 In this part, the use of SEVIRI PrePro is demonstrated in a real case study. The case study
180 demonstrates how the SEVIRI PrePro software tool can be used to perform basic pre-processing in
181 this particular operational product. It further demonstrates how a robust validation of the product
182 accuracy can be conducted using our tool (and HPC facilities if available), provided that reference
183 observations are available from ground measurements. As an example is used the SEVIRI
184 Evapotranspiration (ET) operationally distributed product (Ghilain et al., 2011), although equally
185 any other SEVIRI operational product distributed from LSASAF can be used. Concurrent ground
186 measurements of ET from a selected European site belonging to the CarboEurope ground
187 observational network (Baldocchi et al., 2003) are also used to demonstrate how comparison
188 against some reference data, if available, can easily be done.

189 **3.1 Datasets Description**

190 *3.1.1 SEVIRI ET Product*

191 For the purposes of the demonstration of SEVIRI PrePro capabilities the SEVIRI instantaneous ET
192 product (MET) was acquired for the Euro region of the Meteosat disk for the years 2010 and 2011.
193 This is one of the operational products from SEVIRI, which are all readily distributed at no cost, by
194 the Satellite Application Facility (SAF) on Land Surface Analysis (LSA) (<http://landsaf.meteo.pt/>).
195 In this product, ET is operationally estimated every 15 minutes from the SEVIRI radiometer,
196 whereas a daily ET flux operational product is also generated with a lag time of one day at a spatial
197 resolution of 1 km. These two products are provided for the full disk divided in four sub regions
198 through the LSA-SAF or via EUMETCast. The technical details concerning the technique
199 implemented for computing ET in this operational product can be found in Ghilain et al., (2011).

200 *3.1.2 Study Site Characteristics & In-Situ*

201 In-situ data for the complete years 2010 and 2011 were also acquired from the Spanish ES_Agu
202 *open shrubland* CarboEurope site (36.9406N, -2.0329E). This site is located at an elevation of ~ 200
203 m asl and is situated in an area of arid steppe climate. Fr this particular site *in-situ* data was
204 obtained from the CarboEurope website (<http://gaia.agraria.unitus.it/>). For the purpose of this

205 demonstration, those included primarily the *in-situ* measurements of ET and air temperature (Tair)
206 as well as a number of other micrometeorological parameters acquired for the same period (i.e. full
207 years 2010 and 2011 at 30' time step).

208 **3.2 SEVIRI ET Dataset Pre-Processing**

209 Using SEVIRI Pre-Pro tool, the ET product acquired for the Euro region of the Meteosat disk was
210 first reprojected from Normalized Geostationary Projection (NGP) to a regular latitude/longitude
211 grid and tailored from the full disk image to the study region (34°-45°N, 11°W-5°E). Subsequently,
212 using again SEVIRI PrePro each image granule was clipped into the European country on which our
213 experimental site was located. Following this, periods for which more than 10 % of each of the half-
214 hour SEVIRI estimated ET (granules) were missing from a “site-day” were omitted from the
215 comparisons. The data was further refined by excluding granules with negative values from the
216 dataset. These values corresponded to flags or no-data values which were inappropriate for use in
217 assessing the agreement between both datasets. In addition, a scaling factor was applied to each
218 MET 30' product to derive the actual ET value from it (MSG-2 ET Product ATBD, 2008).
219 Subsequently, the *in-situ* ET values that corresponded to the date/time of the SEVIRI ET product
220 overpass were extracted (using an Excel MacroVBA), and assigned to point shapefiles of the test
221 sites, where there was one shapefile per country (tabular join in ArcMap 10.1). These shapefiles
222 were overlaid to the pre-processed SEVIRI images in the SEVIRI PrePro tool. Subsequently, the *in-*
223 *situ* ET was matched against the SEVIRI ET of the pixel containing the site point. These pixels were
224 then extracted using SEVIRI PrePro to excel for further analysis and comparisons against the *in-situ*
225 data. An example of finally pre-processed products using SEVIRI PrePro are shown in Figure 7.

226 **3.1.3 SEVIRI ET vs in-situ Results**

227 Agreement between the SEVIRI ET operational product estimates and the corresponding *in-situ*
228 data was evaluated based on direct point by point comparisons. Several statistical performance
229 assessment metrics were used to evaluate the agreement between the compared datasets (Table 3)
230 These statistical metrics have been prominently used in analogous validation experiments of
231 relevant operational products validation studies (e.g. LSA-SAF Validation Report
232 Evapotranspiration Products, 2010). Table 4 shows the key statistics related to comparisons of
233 predicted and observed rates of ET over the ES_Agu experimental site for all days of comparison for
234 the years 2010 and 2011 individually, and also when the study days for both years were combined.
235 Figure 8 illustrates the agreement between the two datasets for years 2010 and 2011 separately,
236 displaying the annual trends in the data. In general, the error metrics (Table 4) returned a low
237 RMSD and MAE of 0.035 mm h⁻¹ and 0.021 mm h⁻¹ respectively, suggesting the SEVIRI ET product
238 was able to estimate the *in-situ* measurements to a high degree of accuracy. Evidently, the low bias
239 (-0.01 mm h⁻¹) and scatter (0.035 mm h⁻¹) results indicate a stable estimation of the observed by
240 SEVIRI and suggest that the RMSD is derived predominantly from the scatter and not the bias.
241 Correlation coefficient results, although not as strong as the error metrics results, indicated a
242 strong correlation between the compared datasets (R = 0.655). In the 2010 comparisons (Table 4
243 and Figure 8), the bias is low for the ES_Agu site (0.03 mm h⁻¹) with almost no divergence from the
244 *in-situ*. In contrast, for the 2011 results (Table 4 and Figure 8) a much larger underestimation is
245 evident (-0.024 mm h⁻¹). However, results from both individual years indicate a stable and precise
246 product estimation of the observed ET. RMSDs for both years are 0.036 mm h⁻¹ and 0.045 mm h⁻¹
247 for 2010 and 2011 respectively, with the product again performing better during 2010. Adversely
248 to all other statistical metrics, the correlation coefficient was indeed greater for the 2011 results.
249 Previous examinations into the performance of the SEVIRI algorithm over a range of land cover

250 types in Europe have also returned comparable results to those presented herein. For example,
251 Ghilain et al. (2011) evaluated the performance of the operational products algorithm over six
252 European sites. Their study showed comparable results sites of short vegetation cover (RMSD
253 ranging between 0.07 to 0.1 mm h⁻¹). More recently, Petropoulos et al., (2015b) evaluated the
254 SEVIRI ET estimates against *in-situ* data for 9 sites from the CarboEurope network.

255 The results reported here illustrate the successful implementation of the SEVIRI PrePro software
256 tool in providing a simple, fast and efficient way to undertake the usually complex pre-processing of
257 SEVIRI ET operational data. The fact that comparable, or even improved results have been reported
258 within the case study illustrate that there is no-loss of accuracy when the tool is used in place of the
259 more general methodologies usually implemented to pre-process the SEVIRI data, with the added
260 benefit of ease of use and the fact it is more time-efficient and computationally less expensive.

261

262 **4. CONCLUDING REMARKS**

263 In this short communication paper a new software tool for the pre-processing EO data of
264 geostationary orbit acquired from the SEVIRI sensor, named SEVIRI PrePro, was presented.
265 Following the presentation of the software functionalities, a demonstration of its use in practice
266 was furnished using actual data from the SEVIRI ET product acquired for 2 years worth of data as
267 well as corresponding *in-situ* observations acquired at an experimental site in Spain.

268 The product, developed in Java, is able to perform simple, yet of key importance, pre-processing
269 steps which make the use of SEVIRI products much easier to use than ever before in many practical
270 applications and research alike. The tool, which is also offered open access, makes use of present
271 day multicore processors, being able to process fast very large datasets even for personal
272 computers, making it also suitable for use in a High Performance Computing (HPC) environment.
273 From an algorithmic and software development perspective, a further advantage is the tools' ability
274 for inclusion of key functionalities such as shapefile incorporation for points or areas extraction,
275 which also results in highly robust and accurate results from the tool implementation. Its
276 application also allows for the analysis of a large amount of data from a single or multiple
277 operational products, developing a long time series analysis of those data yet requiring much less
278 effort and user expertise in comparison to more general methodologies (e.g. by a Matlab routine).
279 Finally, SEVIRI PrePro is robust and adaptable to be potentially integrated with other EO data, and,
280 as it is realised under GPL v3, in theory anybody can contribute changes or suggest features, which
281 consists a further advantage of the tool.

282

283 **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

284 This work has been funded by the FP7-People project "TRANSFORM-EO" as well as the High
285 Performance Computing Facilities of Wales (HPCW) project "PREMIER-EO". Dr Petropoulos, as the
286 PI of both projects, wishes to thank the funding bodies for supporting the implementation of this
287 work. Authors are also grateful to the CarboEurope site managers and to the SEVIRI LSA-SAF team
288 for the provision of the data supported the implementation of this study.

289

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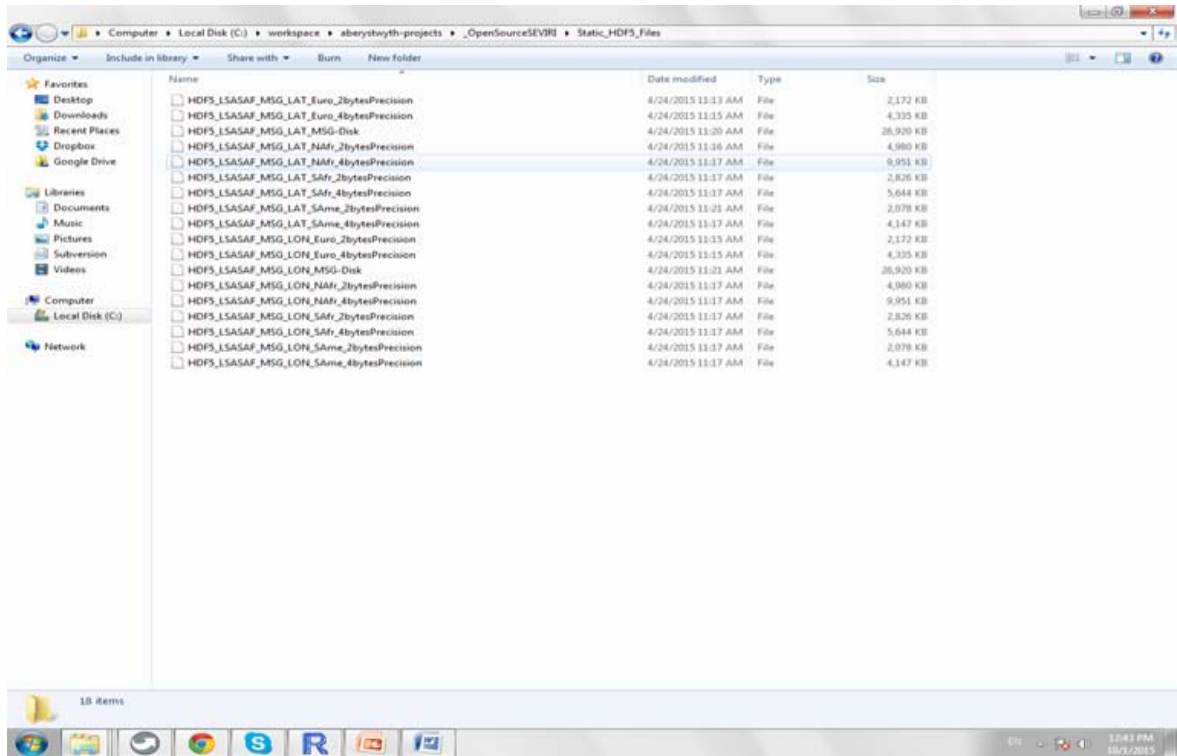


Figure 1: Folder structure of static HDF5 translation files in SEVIRI PrePro

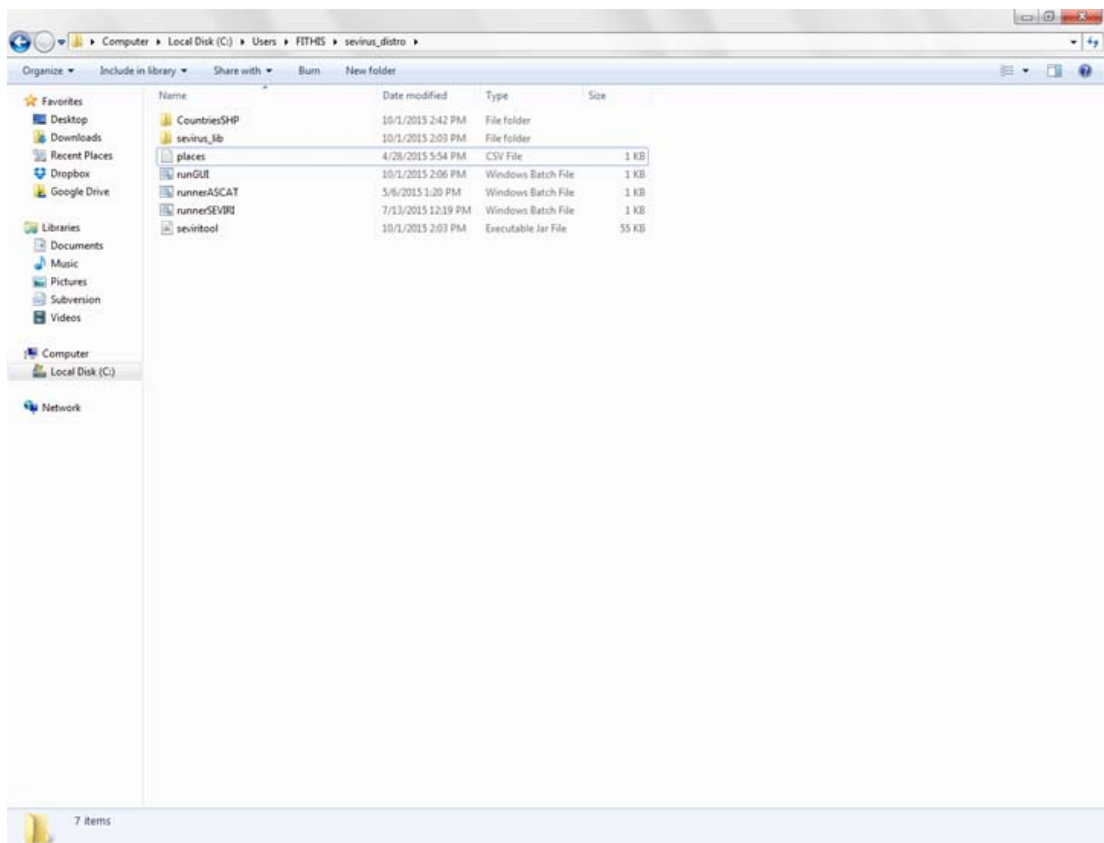


Figure 2: SEVIRI PrePro Toolkit Download Layout



Figure 3: SEVIRI Pre-Pro toolkit initial screen menu

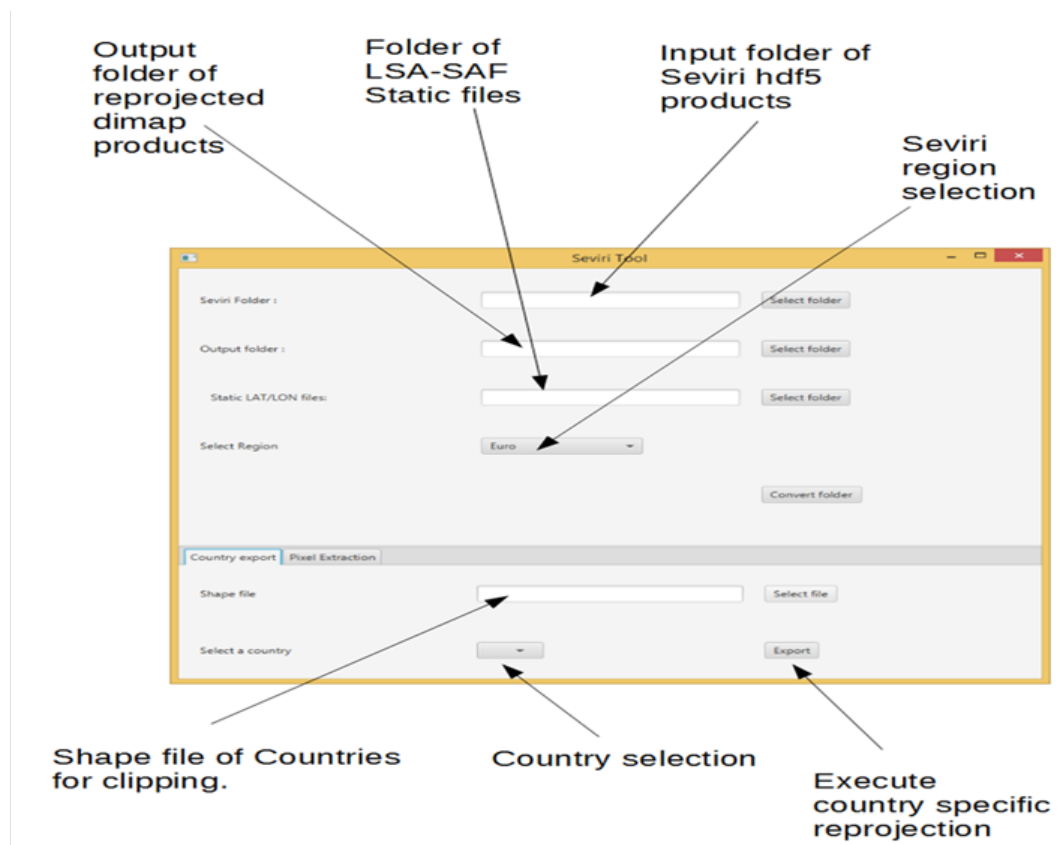


Figure 4: Parameters for reprojection under the SEVIRI PrePro toolkit

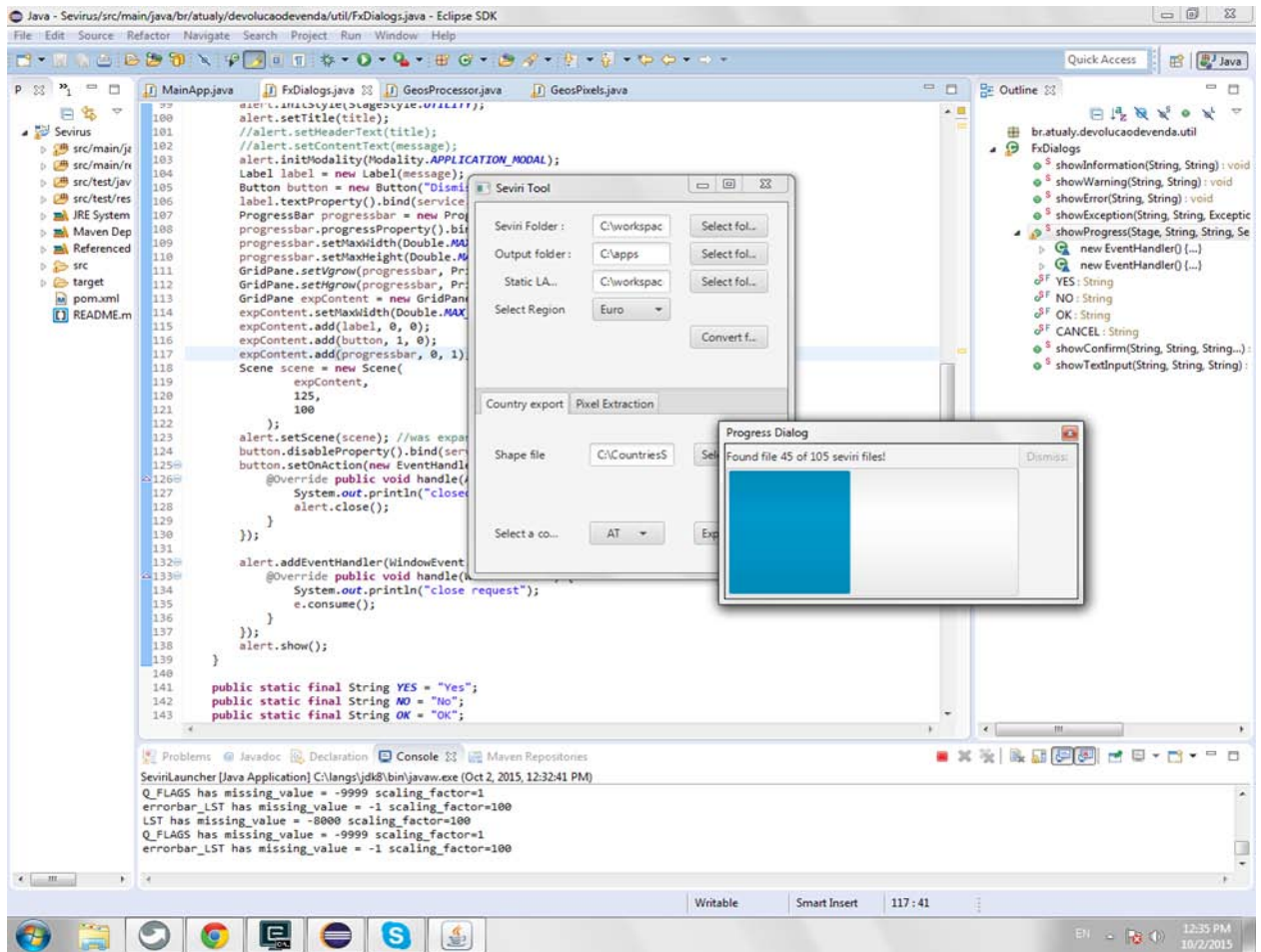


Figure 5: Country export using the SEVIRI PrePro toolkit

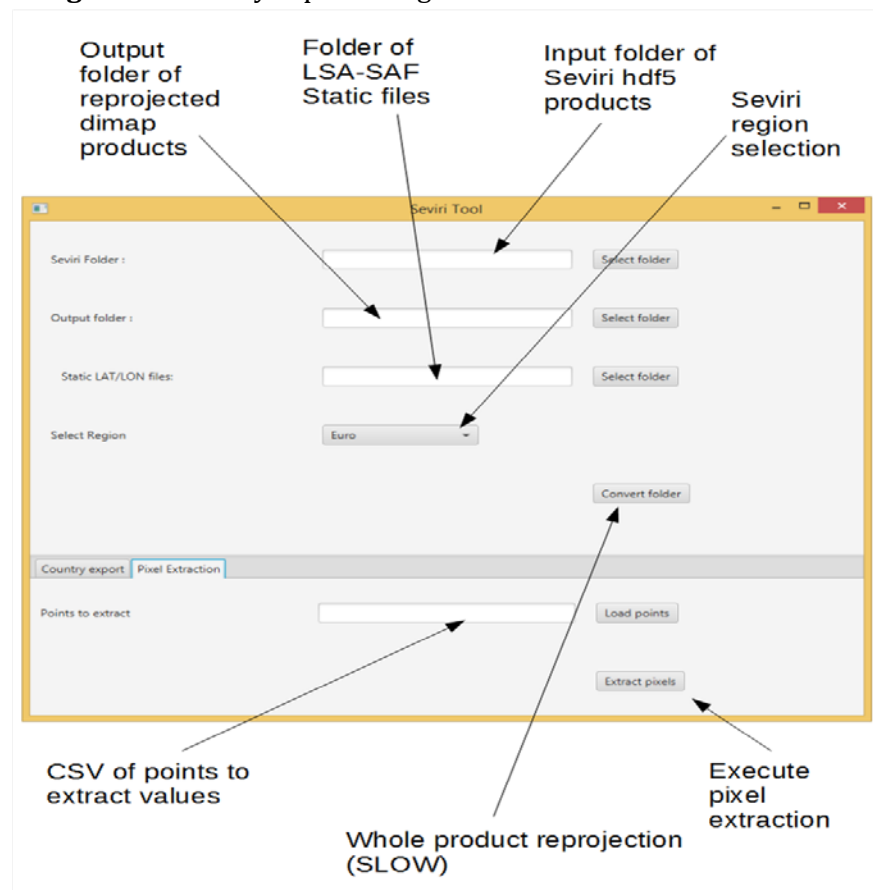


Figure 6: Pixel extraction with the GUI SEVIRI PrePro toolkit

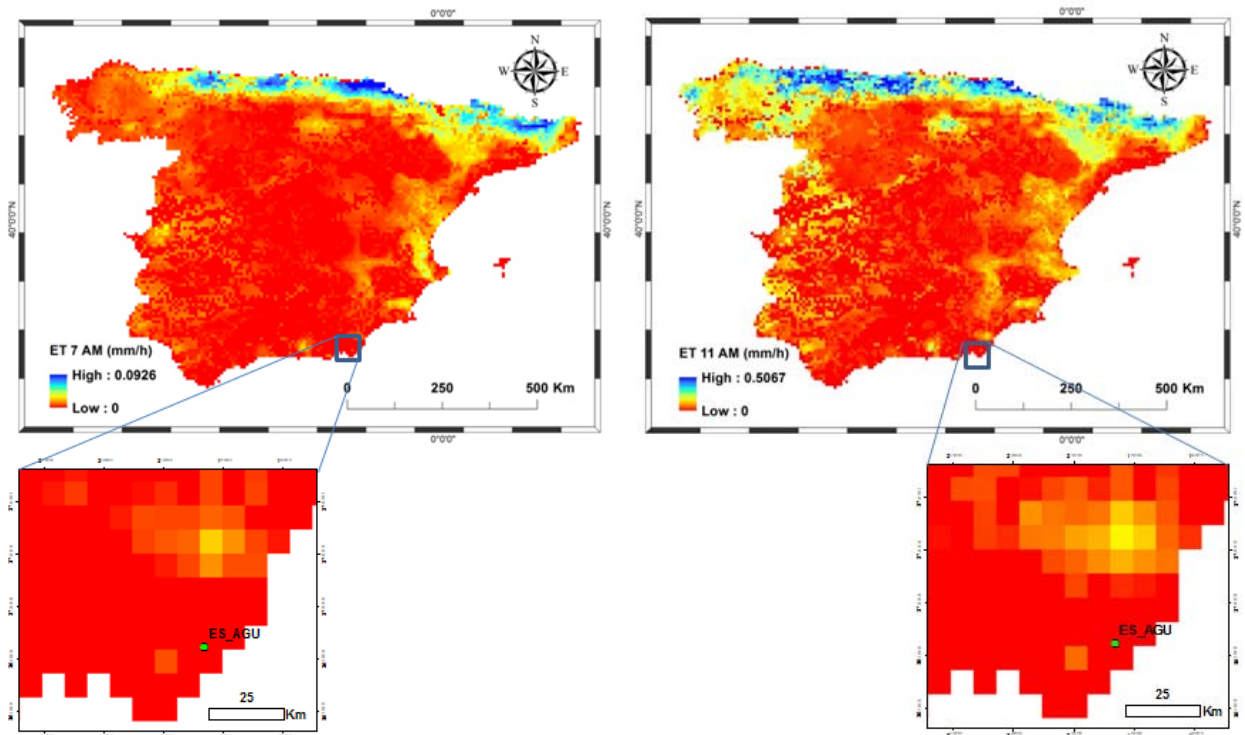


Figure 7: Maps of the SEVIRI ET final pre-processed product using our SEVIRI Pre-Pro software here for August 6th, 2011 acquired at 2 different times of the day (7 am pm left and 11am right) for the ES_AGU site in Spain in the zoomed area.

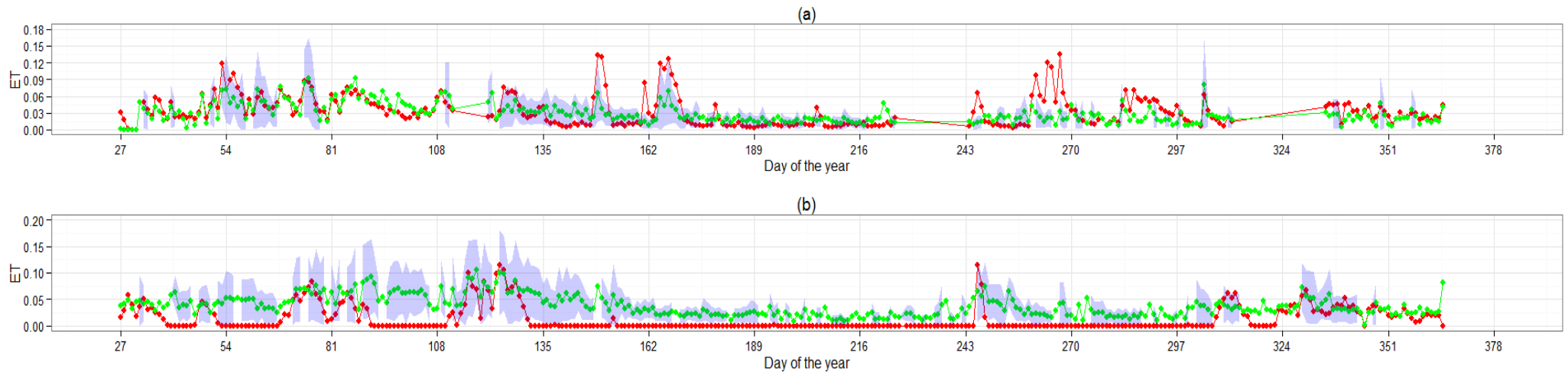


Figure 8: A comparison between in-situ and predicted ET from SEVIRI for the different seasons for ES_AGU site years 2010 (top) and 2011 (bottom). Green represents the in-situ ET daily mean, Red is the SEVIRI-predicted ET, Blue is daily standard deviation of the in-situ ET.

List of Tables

Table 1: Sample pixel extraction specification in CSV format

site,lat,lon
ES_AGU,36.9406,-2.0329
ES_LJU,36.9283,-2.7505
IT_CAS,45.0700,8.7175
FR_MAU,43.3853,1.2922
IT_REN,46.5878,11.4347
UK_EBU,55.8660,-3.2058
IT_MBO,46.0296,11.0029
US_ELM,25.5519,-80.782
US_ME2,44.4523,-121.5574
US_NE3,41.1797,-96.4396
US_WHS,31.7438,-110.0522
US_TON,38.4316,-120.9660
US_VAR,38.4067,-120.9507
Howard_Springs,-12.495,131.15
Daly_Pasture,-14.06333,131.318056
Sturt_Plains,-17.15076,133.350317
Wallaby,-37.426222,145.18725
Tumbarumba,-35.489144,148.151667

Table 2: Example specification of sites for pixel extraction

<p>The SEVIRI pixel extraction follows the same concepts like the GUI pixel extraction. The next listing Error! Reference source not found. of the batch file shows the similarity./*</p> <pre>args[0] the data folder args[1] the csv of places args[2] the output folder args[3] static files */ set args_0=c:/downloads/SEVIRI set args_1=C:/downloads/places.csv set args_2=C:/downloads/output set args_3=C:/downloads/Static_HDF5_Files java -Xmx2048m -jar SEVIRItool.jar %args_0% %args_1% %args_2% %args_3%</pre>

Table 3: An overview of the statistical measures implemented in this study to evaluate SEVIRI ET operational product predictions against the corresponding in-situ data for the ES_AGU experimental site used in this study

Name	Description	Mathematical Definition
Bias/MBE	Bias (accuracy) or Mean Bias Error	$bias = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N (P_i - O_i)$
R	Linear Correlation Coefficient of Determination of P_i to O_i	$R = \left[\frac{\sum_{i=1}^N (P_i - \bar{P})(O_i - \bar{O})}{\left[\sum_{i=1}^N (O_i - \bar{O})^2 \sum_{i=1}^N (P_i - \bar{P})^2 \right]^{0.5}} \right]$
Scatter/MSD	Scatter (precision) or Mean Standard Deviation	$scatter = \frac{1}{(N-1)} \sum_{i=1}^N (P_i - O_i - \overline{(P_i - O_i)})^2$
RMSD	Root Mean Square Difference	$RMSD = \sqrt{bias^2 + scatter^2}$
MAE	Mean Absolute Error	$MAD = N^{-1} \sum_{i=1}^N P_i - O_i $

Table 4: Results from comparison between SEVIRI-predicted and in-situ ET estimates for ES_Agu site in 2010, 2011.

Year	Bias	Scatter	RMSD	MAE	R
2010	0.003	0.035	0.036	0.022	0.684
2011	-0.024	0.038	0.045	0.030	0.546