Bohai sea front detection using BJ−1 small satellite data

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Abstract: Fronts in the Bohai sea are detected based on BJ-1 small satellite data using a gravitation model. We select the red band as the experimental band due to the characters of small satellite data. In addition the fronts south of the Bohai Bay and east of the Liaodong Bay are chosen as experimental areas because they are both eligible for front detection. In the experiments a linear stretch and band computation are first applied to data in order to protrude front information. The stretch intervals are set according to histograms. Then utilizing a gravitation model the fronts can be extracted from preprocessed data and the results show that fronts can be successfully extracted from BJ-1 small satellite data usingthe gravitation model. The detected fronts are continuous and obvious. Compared with traditional front detection algorithms the proposed algorithm can not only detect continuous and conspicuous fronts but can also suppress noises.

Key words: BJ-1 small satellite model of universal gravity front detection Bohai

1 INTRODUCTION

Fronts are narrow boundaries existing between two or more water masses that have characteristics that are clearly different. Fronts can be depicted by a horizontal gradient or higher order derivatives of temperature salinity density velocity color chlorophyll and so on. In other words a front can be detected based on one or more of the characteristics mentioned above (Li & Su 2000; Su et al. 2005). In recent times there have been very few of these studies. In addition front detection in the Bohai Sea is based mainlyon image interpretation or other methods that can be used for traditional satellite data such as Landsat SPOT and so on. Due to limitations faced by traditional satellites such as image quality temporal resolution data price and so forth front detection in the Bohai Sea is limited.

With the rapid development of small satellites small-satellite technology has developed from an exploration period to a scientific application period. Also small satellites have become a significant part of the satellite industry and have significantly complemented traditional satellites (Ji 2009; Wang 2002). Due to the characteristics of small satellites studies involving small satellites have always highlighted scientific studies. In particular the development of small-satellite asterisms and constellation will

replace some functions of many modern and large application satellites and this kind of replacement has led to significant revolutions in satellite applications and the development of space technology (Xie & Wei 2000). BJ-1 small satellite (BJ-1) which is a high-powered earth observation small satellite can provide timely reliable and quality data services for city planning ecological environment monitoring major engineering monitoring and land use monitoring etc. However ocean monitoring particularly front detection has still not been fully developed based on small satellites. Hence based on the characteristics of small satellites studies on front detection algorithms for small satellite data are important.

Sun et al. (2007) proposed an edge algorithm based on the gravitational method. In his algorithm every pixel in each image is regarded as an object and its pixel value is regarded as its mass. Every pixel and its 3 × 3 neighboring pixels can form a subarea. According to the law of gravity in each subarea we can calculate the gravitational forces that act on the central pixel due to neighboring pixels. Based on the Ostu algorithm a threshold can be set and an edge image can be acquired by comparing every pixel′s force and threshold. Zhang & Chen(2011) replaced the quality of the central pixel in each subarea with a function where two nonlinear gradients are regarded as variables and they

also used Sun's algorithm to extract edges. Lopez-Molina (2010) analyzed the influences from neighborhood selection gravitational formula transformations etc. in Sun's algorithm. Ping et al. (2013) proposed a gravitational model based on Sun's algorithm and utilized the model to detect a part of the Kuroshio front. In addition there sults in Ping's paper can prove the effectiveness and superiority of the gravitational model in front detection. However front detection based on small-satellite multi-spectral data obtained by using a gravitational model has not been fully developed and more focus is required in this field.

Hence based on the analyses mentioned above this paper presents some front detection results obtained in the Bohai sea based on BJ-1 data. The main research areas in this paper are south of the Bohai Bay and east of Liaodong Bay.

2　DATA ANALYSIS

2.1　Analysis of BJ-1 data

As a member of the international disaster monitoring constellation BJ-1's multi-spectral sensor is composed of two linear push-broom CCD imagers and each imager contains a near-infrared band a red band and a green band. In practice two imagers work simultaneously. The number of CCD photosensitive images acquired from each camera for each band is 9984 so the number of CCD photosensitive images acquired from the two cameras is 19400 (including 560 overlapped CCD photosensitive images). The spatial revolution of the multi-spectral data of the BJ-1 is 32 m and the image's multi-spectral data spans a 600 km area. This large image coverage can substantially shorten the satellite orbital period and is therefore promising for large-scale oceanic monitoring. Multi-spectral data with a spatial revolution of 32 m can be acquired within two days. The scroll angle of the satellite is 0.02° and the area spanned by each image is 458.656 × 319.488 km ((14333 × 32 = 458656 m) × (9984 × 32 = 319488 m)). The main specifications of the BJ-1 are shown in Table 1. BJ-1 carries a wide-view imager with a spatial revolution of 32 m and its bands correspond to band 2 band 3 and band 4 of Landsat TM. The specific bands ranges of BJ-1 are shown in Table 2.

Table 1　Main specifications of BJ-1 satellite

Name	Specifications
Orbit	Three axis stabilized sun synchronous orbit
Orbit height/km	686
Orbit inclination angle/(°)	98.1725
Imaging mode	Ascending node imaging local time 10:30—11:30
Useful load	Multi-spectral sensor
	Panchromatic sensor
Data transportation	Xband: 40/20 Mbps
	Sband: 8 Mbps
Satellite storage capacity	240 G hard disk +4 G solid state memory

Table 2　Comparison between BJ-1 and Landsat TM

Satellite	Spectral range/μm		
	Green	Red	Near-infrared
BJ-1	0.523—0.605	0.630—0.690	0.774—0.900
Landsat TM	0.520—0.600	0.630—0.690	0.760—0.900

2.2　Analysis of BJ-1 data in the Bohai sea

In this paper the areas south of the Bohai Bay and east of Liaodong Bay were selected as the experimental areas. The Bohai Bay area was obtained from multi-spectral small satellite data acquired on October 14 2007 and that of the Liaodong Bay area was obtained from data acquired on April 26 2009. The specific data are shown in Fig. 1 and Fig. 2 respectively. To the south of the Bohai Bay due to different silt contents an obvious front can be seen in the small satellite image; similarly the radial sand ridge in the Liaodong Bay is also conspicuous in small satellite images.
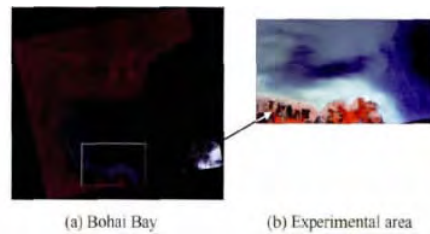

(a) Bohai Bay　　　　　(b) Experimental area

Fig. 1　Bohai Bay imaged on October 14　2007
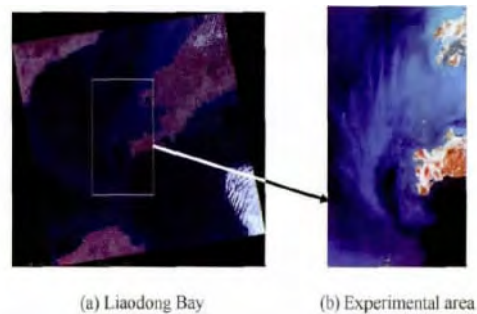

(a) Liaodong Bay　　　　　(b) Experimental area

Fig. 2　Liaodong Bay imaged on April 26　2009

In summary some main characters of BJ-1 small satellite data in the Bohai Sea are:

(1) There is an obvious front to the south of the Bohai Bay. From thearea selected by the rectangle frame we see that the shape of the front in this area is mainly arched. In the near shore area there is higher silt content relative to the peripheral sea; hence a conspicuous boundary can be seen in Fig. 1 and the boundary needs to be extracted. We can obtain this front by using visual interpretation based on image color.

(2) There is also an obvious front in the Liaodong Bay and its shape is radial. In addition the texture of this front is clear.

3　FRONT DETECTION BASED ON BJ-1 DATA

3.1　Data processing

Because of the correspondence between BJ-1 multi-spectral data and band 2 band 3 and band 4 of the Landsat TM data in order to select a suitable band for front detection we first need to analyze the characteristics of the Landsat TM data. The second Landsat TM data band is green and is sensitive to healthy and flourishing plants and can be used to explore the reflection of plants. Based on the reflection of the green band the condition of plants can be evaluated different forests can be distinguished

and underwater characteristics can be reflected; band 3 of the Landsat TM data is the red band which is the main absorption band of chlorophyll. This band is widely used in the detection of the lay of the land lithology soil plants silt and so on; band 4 of the Landsat TM data is the near-infrared band which is sensitive to green plants and can be used for plant surveys water area measurements crop condition measurements water area identification and so on. Based on the analyses mentioned above we select the red band of small-satellite data as the experimental band.

The experiment areas are show in Fig. 3. Fig. 4 shows the histograms of the red band forthe two experimental areas. We can see that in these two areas the small-satellite data are very concentrated（the pixel values to the south of the Bohai Bay range from 0 to 96 and the pixel values to the east of Liaodong Bay range from 14 to 103） so the widths of the red band are

narrow. Hence the contrast ratios of the two sets of experimental data are low. Based on the above analyses the data is processed to make the fronts prominent as well as suppress non-front information.

(a) South of Bohai Bay   (b) East of Liaodong Bay

Fig. 3   Experimental areas

(a) Red band histogram for south of Bohai Bay
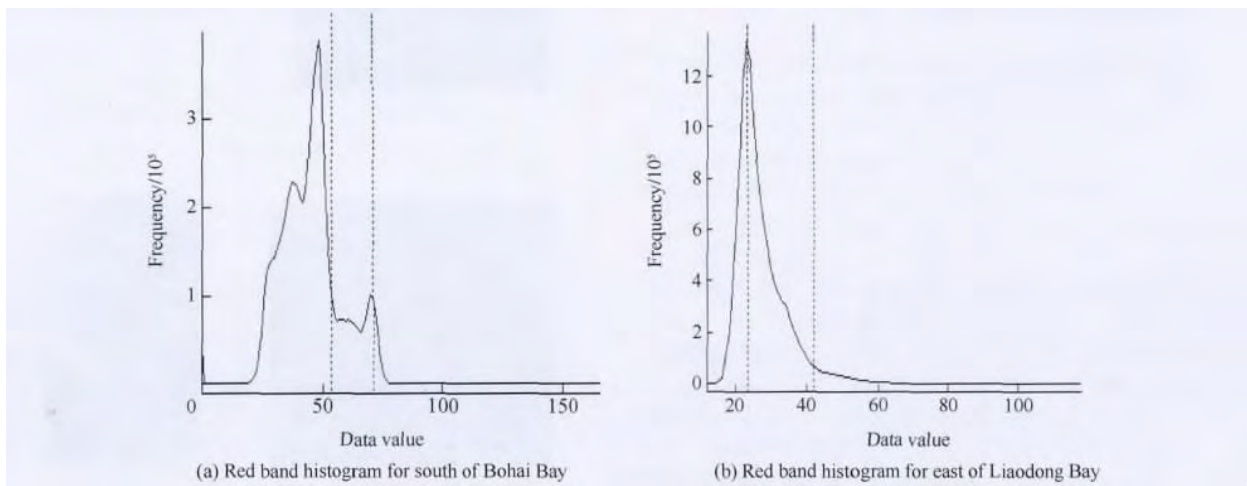
(b) Red band histogram for east of Liaodong Bay

Fig. 4   Red band histograms for regions south of the Bohai Bay and east of Liaodong Bay

Through careful analyses on the small-satellite data we can see that most of the pixels in each image are non-front data and so the peak of the histogram corresponds to these pixels; in addition fronts and boundaries between the land and sea contain edge information. These edges contain a great deal of information and the values of these pixels are high so these pixels may form the second peak after the first peak in the histogram. In order to enhance the contrast ratio and suppress noise Eq. (1) is applied for band calculation.

$$new\_pixel(i\ j)\ =$$
$$\begin{cases} Max\_pixel - (B2(i\ j) - B1(i\ j))\ B2(i\ j) \geqslant B1(i\ j) \\ B1(i\ j)\ B2(i\ j) < B1(i\ j) \end{cases} \quad (1)$$

where $new\_pixel(i\ j)$ is the result after band calculation Max_pixel is the maximum data value in the original image $B2(i\ j)$ is the image after local stretch $B1(i\ j)$ is the original image. The intervals for the stretch areset based on histograms. After several experiments we can see that when the stretch interval is set using low-value pixels the result will contain much noise; when the stretch interval is set using high-value pixels the result will suppress noises but some front information will be overlooked. Hence from the original images we can see that the front to the south of the Bohai Bay is obvious but non-front information has a serious effect on this area so the stretch

interval will be set by using high-value pixels. Similarly the front to the east of Liaodong Bay is weak so the stretch interval will be set using low-value pixels. The specific stretch intervals for the two images are shown in Fig. 4 using white lines. Fig. 5 shows results after data processing. From Fig. 5 we can see that fronts are prominent and conspicuous after data processing. The gravitational model for front detection is applied to these preprocessed images and the fronts can be extracted.
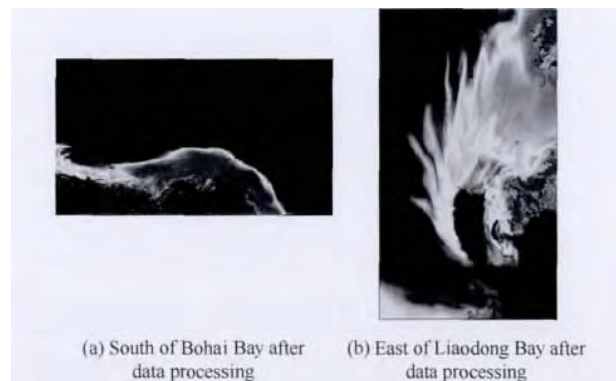

(a) South of Bohai Bay after   (b) East of Liaodong Bay after
      data processing   data processing

Fig. 5   South of Bohai Bay and east of Liaodong Bay
after data processing

3.2 Gravitational model

Front detection is easily affected by noises and image noises will generate some useless results. The median filter is a highly efficient digital filtering technique that removes isolated noise while preserving the edges in the data (Belkin & O'Reilly 2009). Hence the median filter is applied to all of the images to remove some noises and tiny edges.

For pixels whose values are equal to 0 i.e. their masses are equal to 0 based on the gravitational method; we know that regardless of the values of pixels surrounding these pixels in their 3×3 neighborhood the gravitational forces on these pixels are non-existent. These pixels therefore have an adverse effect on front detection. Hence according to Lopez-Molina et al. (2010) we modified these zero-value pixels using Eq. (2).

$$q_{new} = q_{old} + \xi q \qquad (2)$$

where q_{new} is the value after calculation q_{old} is the value of the zero-value pixel ξq is a tiny positive number and in this paper this positive number is equal to 0.001.

The gravitational algorithm introduced by Sun et al. (2007) requires original data. For example as shown in Fig. 6 Fig. 6(a) and Fig. 6(b) are both edges yet the gravitational forces on the central pixels in Fig. 6(a) and Fig. 6(b) are different and the force in Fig. 6(b) is almost 10 times larger than that in Fig. 6(a). Hence it is possible to regard image Fig. 6(a) as a non-front area by using a single threshold. Based on the above analysis we normalize each 3×3 neighborhood using Eq. (3).

$$X_{new} = \frac{X_{old}}{max} \qquad (3)$$

where X_{new} is the value after normalization X_{old} is the value of the original pixel and max is the maximum value in each 3×3 neighborhood.

2	3	2
2	3	2
20	30	20

(a) Small gravitation data

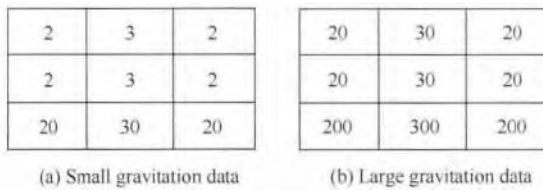| 20	30	20
20	30	20
200	300	200

(b) Large gravitation data

Fig. 6 An edge example

For each normalized 3×3 neighborhood non-linear transformation is applied by using Eq. (4) to enhance the data contrast ratio.

$$X_{new}(i\ j) = \begin{cases} 2X_{old}^2(i\ j) & 0 \leqslant X_{old}(i\ j) \leqslant 0.5 \\ 1 - 2(1 - X_{old}(i\ j))^2 & 0.5 \leqslant X_{old}(i\ j) \leqslant 1 \end{cases} \qquad (4)$$

where $X_{new}(i\ j)$ is the enhanced value of the pixel and $X_{old}(i\ j)$ is the value of the normalized pixel.
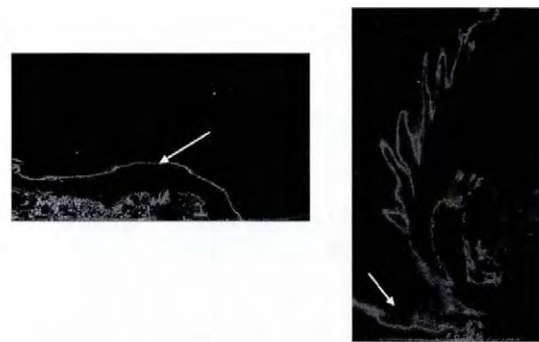
Gravitational forces can be calculated for enhanced data by using the gravitational method introduced by Sun et al. (2007). Then a threshold is set and the final fronts can be acquired.

4 EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Front detection results based on small-satellite data obtained using gravitational model

Front detection results for the area south of the Bohai Bay

and east of the Liaodong Bay are shown in Fig. 7. As shown in Fig. 7 the algorithm proposed in this paper can extract continuous front contours in both areas. Positioning accuracies are rather high and noises in images are suppressed. In Fig. 7(a) the white arrow indicates the extracted front. From the original data for the area south of the Bohai Bay we observe that this front is a near-shore front. Compared with the boundary between the land and sea this front is weak and is easily affected by noises and the boundary between land and sea. Using the proposed algorithm this front is precisely distinguished and this result is almost identical to the result obtained from visual interpretation. In Fig. 7(b) although the area indicated by the white arrow is affected by noises the entire shape of the radial sand ridge is extracted and each branch of the radial sand ridge is continuous and sealed. Hence from the above analyses the proposed algorithm is suitable for front detection based on small-satellite data.

(a) Result for Bohai Bay　　(b) Result for Liaodong Bay

Fig. 7 Results for the Bohai area obtained using BJ-1 data

4.2 Front detection results based on different algorithms

Fig. 8 shows front detection results for the south of Bohai Bay obtained using different algorithms. This front is nearshore so on the one hand compared with the boundary between the land and sea the strength of this front is weak and the front is easily affected by noises; on the other hand compared with peripheral sea water the nearshore area contains more silt so the strength of this front is strong. Hence the positioning accuracy is affected by nearshore silt. As shown in Fig. 8 these three algorithms can all detect front contours yet the Sobel algorithm and morphology algorithm are not as good as the proposed algorithm. As shown in Fig. 8(a) and Fig. 8(b) the positioning accuracies of the Sobel algorithm and morphology algorithm are low. In addition the extracted fronts in Fig. 8(a) and Fig. 8(b) are not single lines. White arrows indicate the nearshore silt and we can see that by using these two algorithms nearshore silt has an adverse effect on the final results. Furthermore the boundary between the land and sea is not clear in each final image. Due to normalization and enhancement processing in the proposed algorithm the contrast ratio in the front area is boosted and influences from non-front information are suppressed. As shown in Fig. 8(c) the front extracted using the proposed algorithm is continuous and the algorithm removes the influences caused by nearshore silt. In addition the positioning accuracy is high and the shape of the front is identical with that of the visual interpre-

tation. Hence the proposed algorithm is suitable for front detec-tion based on small satellite data.

(a) Result of Sobel algorithm

(b) Result of morphology algorithm
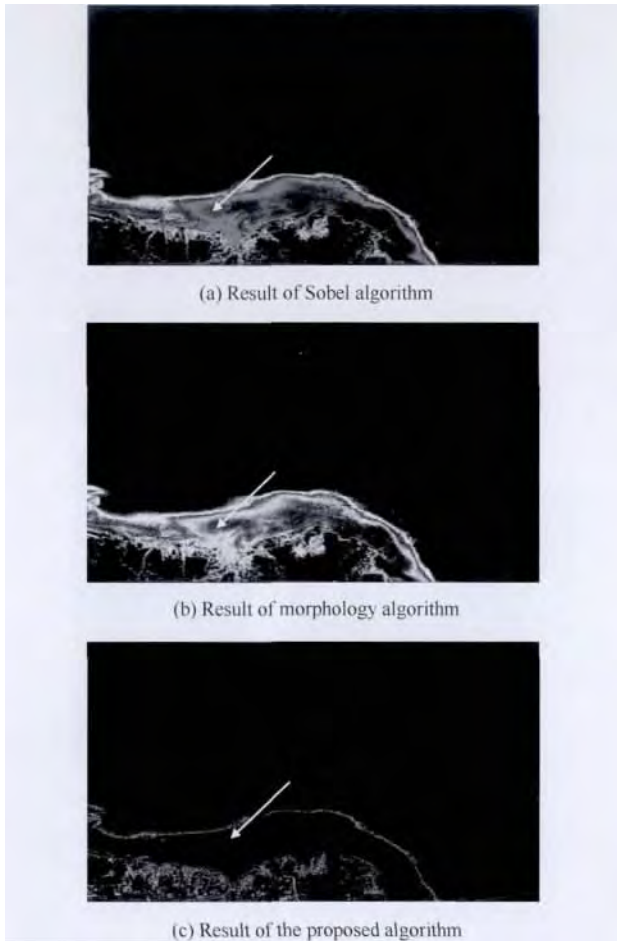
(c) Result of the proposed algorithm

Fig. 8　Results of BJ-1 small-satellite data based on different algorithms

5　CONCLUSION

BJ-1 data are widely used in land use monitoring city plan-ning and so on but there are few applications regarding front detection based on small-satellite data. Front detection in the Bohaisearelies mainly on traditional visual interpretation and automatic front detection based on satellite data thereforerequires more study. Hence in this paper an algorithm is developed and is used for BJ-1 data.

In this paper a gravitational model is applied to front detec-tion in the Bohai Sea. According to the characteristics of the BJ-1 data the red band is selected as an experimental band and be-cause of large quantities ofdata a stretch algorithm was proposed. After stretch and band calculation the gravitational model is applied for front detection. From our results we can see that the proposed algorithm is suitable for small-satellite data to detect fronts in the Bohai Sea. In addition the fronts detected are continuous and complete. Compared with traditional front-detection algorithms the proposed algorithm can obtain better results.

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(2010)

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2.1

CCD

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9984 CCD

19400 CCD   (

560 CCD)。

32 m   6 00 km

32 m   2

0.02°

14333 × 32 = 458656 m   458.

656 km   9984 × 32 = 319488 m   319.488 km。

1 。

32 m   Landsat TM

2、   3、   4   2

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表 1

/km	686
/(°)	98.1725
	10:30—11:30
	Xband: 40/20 Mbps
	Sband: 8 Mbps
	240 G +4 G

表 2   TM

	/μm		
	0.523—0.605	0.630—0.690	0.774—0.900
Landsat TM	0.520—0.600	0.630—0.690	0.760—0.900

2.2

2007 10 14

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26   1

2   。

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(a) 北京一号渤海湾数据   (b) 渤海湾实验区域

图 1 2007 10 14

(a) 北京一号辽东湾数据   (b) 辽东湾实验区域

图 2 2009 4 26

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(1)   1

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(2)

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图3 。 图4

3

3.1

(0—
96; 14—103)

Landsat TM

2、3、4 Landsat TM 2、
3、4
Landsat TM 2

; Landsat TM 3

; Landsat TM
4

(a) 渤海湾南岸区域　　　　(b) 辽东湾东岸区域

图3

(a) 渤海湾南岸红波段直方图　　　　(b) 辽东湾东岸红波段直方图

图4

$B1(i\ j)$　　　　　　$B2(i\ j)$

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2 。 。

(1) ;

$$new\_pixel(i\ j) =$$

$$\begin{cases} Max\_pixel - (B2(i\ j) - B1(i\ j)) & B2(i\ j) \geqslant B1(i\ j) \\ B1(i\ j) & B2(i\ j) < B1(i\ j) \end{cases}$$

4 。 5

5

(1)

$new\_pixel(i\ j)$　　　　　Max_pixel

$B2(i\ j)$ 。

(a) 预处理后渤海湾南岸图像　(b) 预处理后辽东湾东岸图像

图5

3.2

（Bel-kin 和 O'Reilly 2009）。

0　　　　　　　0

0

Lopez-Molina 等（2010）

（2）　　　0

$$q_{new} = q_{old} + \xi q \qquad (2)$$

q_{new} 　　　　q_{old} 　　0

ξq 　　　　0.001。

Sun 等（2007）

图6　　图6(a)

图6(b)　　　　　　　图6(a)　图6(b)

10

图6(a)

3×3

（3）

$$X_{new} = \frac{X_{old}}{max} \qquad (3)$$

X_{new} 　　　　　　X_{old}

max 　3×3

(a) 小引力边缘模拟数据　　　(b) 大引力边缘模拟数据

图6

3×3　　　　　　（4）

$$X_{new}(i \ j) =$$
$$\begin{cases} 2X_{old}^2(i \ j) & 0 \leqslant X_{old}(i \ j) \leqslant 0.5 \\ 1 - 2(1 - X_{old}(i \ j))^2 & 0.5 < X_{old}(i \ j) \leqslant 1 \end{cases} \qquad (4)$$
$$X_{new}(i \ j) \qquad\qquad X_{old}(i \ j)$$

Sun 等（2007）

4

4.1

图7　　　　。

。　　图7(a)

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；　　图7(b)

(a) 渤海湾南岸水色锋检测结果　(b) 辽东湾东岸辐射沙脊锋面检测结果

图7

4.2

图8

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Sobel

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。 8(c)

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(a) Sobel算子检测结果

(b) 形态学梯度检测结果

(c) 引力模型检测结果

8

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