

1 The land surface water and energy budgets over the Tibetan

2 Plateau

3 -A quantitative investigation based on the GLDAS

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9

10 Abstract

11 Tibetan Plateau plays an important role in the Asian Monsoon and global general  
12 circulation system. Due to the lack of quantitative observations and complicate cold  
13 season processes in high elevation terrain, however, the land surface water and energy  
14 budgets are still unexplored over this special region. In this study, the water and energy  
15 balances are detail analyzed based on recent released land surface “reanalysis” data  
16 produced by NASA Global Land Data Assimilation System by three different land  
17 models, which first ingest all available ground and satellite data into the data assimilation  
18 system over the Tibetan Plateau. The major land surface energy and water components in  
19 the annual variability are compared. The model and data assimilation skills and  
20 deficiencies are also discussed. The total heat fluxes transition from heat source to heat

21 sink is observed at west edge of the TP during winter. But, the area and intensive is far  
22 less than the previous hypothesized. The Budyko curve for hydrology indicates the TP is  
23 a typical dry and arid climate where the evaporation is mainly controlled by the  
24 precipitation.

25

26

## 27 1. Introduction

28 The Tibetan Plateau (TP), located at the southwest part of China with an average  
29 elevation higher than 4000 meters above sea level, is often called “the roof of the world.”  
30 Within this most prominent and complicated terrain of the world, the land surface  
31 processes over TP plays a very important role in general atmospheric circulation, water  
32 resource management and global climate system (Yasunari, 2007).

33 In general, the TP is a vital water source for East Asia. The largest rivers of East  
34 Asia, such as the Yangtze River, Yellow River and Yalong Zangbo River, etc., have their  
35 headwaters there. A large amount of water is stored in this highest and largest plateau, in  
36 the forms of glaciers, snow-packs, lakes, and rivers. The Tibetan Plateau serves as "the  
37 world water tower". It is critical to understand where these waters come from and  
38 whether the supply to these water resources has been experiencing any changes during  
39 recent global warming. In addition, land-atmosphere interaction over TP provides a  
40 profound impact on the monsoon system. Previous studies have shown that winter snow  
41 cover over the TP has a strong link with monsoon systems during spring and

42 summer(Hahn and Shukla, 1976; Wu and Qian, 2003), even further impacting the  
43 typhoon genesis over the west Pacific(Xie et al., 2005) .

44         The lack of quantitative observations of the land surface processes over TP makes  
45 it difficult to understand the energy and water cycles over this special region. There are  
46 only 115 ground weather stations over Tibetan region in the meteorological observational  
47 network managed by China Meteorological Administration. Unfortunately, these stations  
48 focus on the meteorological variables and lack observation in the land states, such as soil  
49 moisture, evapotranspiration, snow water equivalent, sensible and latent heat fluxes.  
50 There are very few field studies in the land-atmosphere interaction over the Tibetan  
51 Plateau in recent years (Xu et al., 2008). However, these field experiments have been  
52 limited in few locations and short observational periods. Most of these studies cannot  
53 give a whole accurate image about water and energy cycles over the TP because of  
54 limited observations for key land state variables. As far as the authors know, there are no  
55 complete and detailed studies on the energy and water budget over the whole Tibetan  
56 region until now.

57         With the advancement in the remote sensing, land surface modeling and data  
58 assimilation techniques in the recent years, NASA Global Land Data Assimilation  
59 System (GLDAS) (Rodell et al., 2004) provides a potential to study this special region  
60 where there are no traditional observations available. The goal of the GLDAS is to  
61 generate optimal fields of land surface states and fluxes by using advanced land surface  
62 model and data assimilation techniques with available satellite and ground based  
63 observational data. The GLADS reanalyzed key land surface states and fluxes by

64 different land surface models by constraining with all available observational data from  
65 1979 to present, especially the satellite retrievals from NASA.

66 Comparing to offline simulations, such as Global Soil Wetness Project (GSWP-2)  
67 data set, the GLDAS applied two constraints to optimal merge model and observation  
68 data to obtain the best estimation. First, by forcing the land surface models with  
69 observation based meteorological fields, bias on the atmospheric model-based forcing  
70 can be avoided. Second, by employing data assimilation techniques, observations of land  
71 surface states can be used to curb unrealistic model state. It has a longer period than the  
72 GSWP-2 data set, which only covers 1986–1995 (Dirmeyer et al., 2006).

73 This paper attempts to unveil the characteristics of surface water and energy  
74 budgets over the Tibetan Plateau using newly produced GLDAS reanalysis data to  
75 evaluate the ability of land surface models to characterize the water and energy budgets  
76 over this special region and hence to gain insight into its thermal forcing to the general  
77 circulation and Asian Monsoon.

78

## 79 2. GLDAS reanalysis

80 In this study, authors use 1x1 degree, 3-hourly output from a 1979-present run of  
81 the Mosaic (Koster and Suarez, 1996), Noah (Chen et al., 1996; Ek et al., 2003a) and the  
82 Community Land Model (Dai et al., 2003) driven by GLDAS. The cold season processes  
83 are critical for the modeling of land surface water and energy balance over the TP where  
84 exist the largest snow-covered and glacier region outside of the Polar Regions. The detail  
85 cold season processes in the Mosaic, Noah and CLM model are brief described as below:

## 86 2.1 Mosaic model

87 Mosaic is a biophysically based land surface model developed for providing energy  
88 and water budget to general circulation and regional models at NASA. The model was  
89 originally derived from the SiB model (Sellers et al., 1996). The model's main innovation  
90 is its attempt to account for sub-grid variability in surface characteristics through the  
91 "mosaic" approach. A grid square area containing several different vegetation regimes is  
92 divided into relatively homogeneous sub-regions ("tiles" of the mosaic), each containing  
93 a single vegetation or bare soil type. Observed vegetation distributions are used to  
94 determine the partitioning. In this version of Mosaic model, a complete snow budget is  
95 included. Snow is accumulated on the ground and canopy when the surface air  
96 temperature is below freezing. Snow albedo is controlled by the spectral and angular  
97 distribution of solar radiation incident on the surface, surface type and snow cover. Snow  
98 starts to melt on the ground or canopy if ground/canopy temperature is above or below  
99 freezing point respectively.

100

## 101 2.2 Noah model

102 The Noah land model is original developed in the 1980s by Oregon State University  
103 (OSU) and significant improve in recently (Ek et al., 2003b). In particular, the Cold  
104 season physics has been dramatically improved, including frozen soil and snowpack  
105 physics. Snow schemes in this version are based on the energy and mass balance of  
106 snowpack with snow compaction and sub-grid variability components. The model  
107 explicitly solves liquid water retention and percolation with the snowpack. Snow albedo

108 is computed based on the snow-covered fraction. The shading of vegetation is also taken  
109 account into the albedo. The upper limit of snow albedo is set to a maximum 0.44 at  
110 snow conditions. However, snow interception, drip and melt on canopy are neglected in  
111 the Noah model(Koren et al., 1999). This version of Noah model was evaluated in the  
112 GSWP-2, and its simulation skill of soil moisture was found among the best of the  
113 models ((Dirmeyer et al., 2006)

114

### 115 2.3 CLM model

116 CLM (Oleson et al. 2008) is the so called “ third generation” land surface model  
117 which explicit represent the role of carbon and nitrogen in the model compared with  
118 “second generation” model, such as SSiB and Noah which are built only explicit  
119 description of soil and vegetation process involved in the closure of the surface energy  
120 and water budgets. The model has 10 soil layers and 5 snow layers depending on snow  
121 depth. CLM 3.5 applies a two-stream approximation for radiative transfer calculation.  
122 Snow albedo is based on the diffuse, direct band separate and snow age (Oleson et al.,  
123 2004). The vegetation effect is account for in snow accumulation, melt and interception  
124 through fall and drip by canopy. CLM calculates the water transfer between snow layers,  
125 infiltration, runoff, and sub-surface drainage although the water vapor transport within  
126 the snowpack is neglected.

127

### 128 2.4 Signal-to-Noise Ratio of multi-model results

129           The usefulness of the GLDAS data set has been demonstrated in weather and sub-  
130 seasonal forecasts (de Goncalves et al., 2006; Koster et al., 2004). Previous evaluations  
131 by Berg et al. (2005) suggested that soil moisture estimates using Mosaic with bias-  
132 corrected hydro-meteorological forcing data are in good agreement with in situ  
133 measurements at 1-m depth, and in general statistical agreement with satellite  
134 observations of surface soil moisture. However, the quality and accuracy of GLDAS over  
135 the TP has not been validated even before due to lack of field observations in this tough  
136 region where there are almost no available systematic observations in land surface states  
137 and fluxes.

138           As the main bridge of land-atmosphere interaction, the sensible and latent heat  
139 fluxes play very important roles at land surface processes. Interannual variation of these  
140 fluxes is an important issue in the study of climate dynamics. However, lack of  
141 observation makes it difficult to quantitative studies this issue over the TP. Field  
142 observations of fluxes at northern Tibet during GAME/Tibet (GEWEX Asian Monsoon  
143 Experiment on the Tibetan Plateau) and the CAMP/Tibet (CEOP Asia-Australia  
144 Monsoon Project (CAMP) on the Tibetan Plateau) (Ma and Ma, 2006; Ma et al., 2005)  
145 can only provide limited information for annual variability.

146           Inspired by ensemble forecast or super ensemble forecast (ensemble forecast based  
147 on different models), We try to analyze GLDAS data as “Super data assimilation” to  
148 evaluate the model skills and deficiencies over the TP where there are almost no  
149 traditional data available for validation.

150 Let the analysis matrix be  $X_{nk}$ , where k is the number of verification times( here  
 151 are 30 years) and n is the different model ( here are 3 models, CLM, Noah and Mosaic).  
 152 Then the analysis mean is

153 
$$\tilde{\mu}_f(k) = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{n=1}^N X_{nk}$$

154 the Grand or Climatological mean is

155 
$$\tilde{\mu}_c = \frac{1}{NK} \sum_{k=1}^K \sum_{n=1}^N X_{nk}$$

156 The difference between the ensemble mean and climatological mean is the estimated  
 157 signal. The estimated signal variance is

158 
$$\langle (\tilde{\mu}_f - \tilde{\mu}_c)^2 \rangle = \frac{1}{K} \sum_k (\tilde{\mu}_f(k) - \tilde{\mu}_c)^2$$

159 The difference between an individual member and its corresponding ensemble mean is  
 160 called the noise. The estimated noise variance is

161 
$$\langle (\hat{\sigma}_f^2) \rangle = \frac{1}{NK} \sum_n \sum_k (X_{kn} - \tilde{\mu}_f(k))^2$$

162 this implies that the estimated signal-to noise ratio is

163 
$$SNR = \frac{N \sum_k (\tilde{\mu}_f(k) - \tilde{\mu}_c)^2}{\sum_n \sum_k (X_{nk} - \tilde{\mu}_f(k))^2}$$



164 the f-statistic under the null hypothesis of no predictability (utilities) has  
 165 distribution(DelSole and Tippett, 2008)

166 
$$SNR \frac{K(N-1)}{K-1} \sim F_{K-1, K(N-1)}$$

167 the critical values reject the null hypothesis for 5% and 1% significance are list as below:

168 N: number of ensemble members = 3 K: number of years = 30

Confidence interval (Pval)	F-statistic	Signal-to-Noise Ratio (SNR)	Signal-to-Total Ratio (STR)
5%	1.75	0.84	0.46
1%	2.23	1.07	0.51

169

170 Figure 1 shows the Signal-to-Noise Ratio (SNR) for latent heating and sensible  
 171 heating reanalysis over Tibetan Plateau during spring (MAM). The dash line indicates  
 172 3000m elevation. The SNR is estimated by CLM, Noah, and Mosaic model during 1979-  
 173 2008. In the most area of the TP, the SNR for LE are larger than 1% significance in null  
 174 hypothesis testing. In particular, there are significant signals in the internal part of the TP  
 175 and northern part of TP. Only few regions in the south-east part of TP have no significant  
 176 signal. Similar to the LE, the SNR of SH are larger than 1% significance except some  
 177 regions in the west and south part of the TP. The SNR analysis implies the signals from  
 178 interannual change are large than noise within the different models. As a result, the  
 179 GLDAS reanalysis could be used to analyze the interannual variability over the TP.

180

181 3. Annual variability of water and energy budget over the TP

182 In this study, we define the area of the TP as the region with an elevation higher  
183 than 3000m. This overall area occurs in a domain between 70-110°E longitude and 25-  
184 45°N latitude. Major mountains in this region include the Himalayas in the southern edge  
185 of the TP, and the Karakoram and Kunlun mountains in the western and northern edges.  
186 The Pamir, Karakoram, Kunlun and Tianshan ridges are adjacent in the west part of the  
187 TP. The Qilian Mountain separates the Gobi desert from the TP in the northeastern edge.  
188 Two large subregions, the Qaidam basin and Yarlung Zangbo Valley, are located in the  
189 north-eastern and southeastern part of the TP, respectively.

190

191 3.1 water balance

192 The land surface water balance is expressed as

193 
$$W = P - E - R$$

194 
$$R = QS + QSB$$

195 where  $W$  denotes surface water storage, which includes soil moisture, snow water  
196 equivalent and canopy water;  $P$  is precipitation;  $E$  represents evapotranspiration from  
197 bare soil, lakes and vegetation as well as surface snowpack sublimation;  $R$  is runoff  
198 including the surface ( $QS$ ) and subsurface flow ( $QSB$ ).

199 Figure 2 shows the annual cycle of evapotranspiration, surface runoff, subsurface  
200 runoff, and surface water storage over the TP based on three models during 1979-2008.

201 Precipitation forcing (rainfall rate and snowfall rate) is not shown since it's same for all  
202 three models.

203 The monthly mean evapotranspiration shows a prominent seasonal cycle with  
204 precipitation change. In the winter months (December–February), the Evapotranspiration  
205 is less than 0.5 mm/day. During the summer (June–August) maxima, it reaches over 1.5  
206 mm/day exhibiting a significant magnitude change in annual cycle. The three models  
207 show some differences in the estimation of evapotranspiration. The Mosaic model tends  
208 to overestimate and Noah model tends to underestimate.

209 In the estimation of surface runoff, the three models show a pretty large departure  
210 with each other. The Noah model tends to overestimate the surface runoff with a  
211 maximum 0.7mm/day during June-July. On the other hand, the Mosaic model  
212 underestimates the runoff only to 0.2 mm/day at maximum.

213 The Subsurface runoff (QSB) also shows a similar large difference with the surface  
214 runoff. However, the maximum of subsurface runoff shows a rough 2 months delay  
215 comparing with the surface runoff. The huge difference in both surface and subsurface  
216 runoffs demonstrates the large model bias in the runoff parameterization in this region.  
217 Due to lack of the in-situ observation of river discharge, we cannot judge which model is  
218 more realistic. Based on the analysis of Feng and Houser (2008), CLM model  
219 demonstrates more accurately over the Mississippi river basin during GSWP-2 project.

220 Surprisingly, the three models show consistent analysis of surface water storage  
221 with a remarkable two-peak feature of the seasonal surface water storage. The surface  
222 water stores as snow pack in winter with a maximum and depletes in spring, and then the

223 surface is recharged with convection rainfall in the summer and discharged by subsurface  
224 runoff in the autumn.

225 Although the models show pretty big differences at runoff, the simulated ET and  
226 surface water storage as the main components for land-climate interaction are good  
227 agreed and balanced over the annual cycle.

### 228 3.2 Energy balance

229 The surface energy equation is written as

$$230 \quad R = SW_{net} + LW_{net} - SH - LE - G - U$$

231 Where R represents the energy balance residual; SW<sub>net</sub> and LW<sub>net</sub> are the net shortwave  
232 and longwave radiation, respectively; LE represents the surface latent heat flux, SH the  
233 sensible heat flux, G the ground heat flux, and U the miscellaneous term such as snow  
234 phase change heat flux. The magnitudes of the annual averages of R is close to zero, thus  
235 only the net radiations, heat fluxes, and miscellaneous term are shown in Figure 3.

236 All models are similar in capturing the strong seasonal cycle in each energy budget  
237 component. The net shortwave radiation, SW<sub>net</sub>, gains a peak in May-June over the TP  
238 instead of in summer over the most regions in northern hemisphere. All models show  
239 almost same cycle in the net shortwave radiation. This implies the treatment of surface  
240 albedo is quite agreed in each model while the large discrepancy is noted in CLM model.  
241 This difference in CLM models indicates the model's uncertainty in snow albedo  
242 parameterization when it presents snow.

243           The simulated net longwave radiation varies considerably in three models. Mosaic  
244 model produces less negative net longwave radiation indicating a colder surface; CLM  
245 has the largest negative net longwave radiation in the summer as a result of the warmer  
246 surface. Positive bias in net shortwave radiation in CLM is partially compensated by the  
247 negative bias at the longwave radiation.

248           The seasonal cycle of sensible and latent heat fluxes appear to follow the seasonal  
249 variation of the surface net radiation (SWnet+LWnet). However, the maximum sensible  
250 heating appears in May, whereas the maximum latent heating locates in July. The strong  
251 latent heat flux in Mosaic is consistent with its largest evaporation (Figure 2). All models  
252 show the same transience of ground heat flux from negative to positive, and vice versa  
253 during summer to winter.

254           Although the magnitude of miscellaneous term is small, Noah model show pretty  
255 significant differences with other two models. In the CLM and MOS, the heat flux of  
256 snow phase change is very small (rough  $10^{-2}$  W/m<sup>2</sup>) indicating that most of the snow  
257 is removed by sublimation. However, the Noah model simulates a realistic snow-melting  
258 peak at April.

### 259 3.3 Summary

260           Based on the analysis above, the characteristic of the annual cycle of energy  
261 balance over the TP could be summarized as: located at mid-latitude (29-43N), the  
262 Tibetan Plateau receive a strong annual cycle in net shortwave radiation comparing to the  
263 relative flat change in net long wave radiation. The sensible heating is much larger than  
264 latent heating over the Tibetan Plateau. The sensible heating has a peak at May,

265 distinguishing with the latent heating maximum at July-August. From February to  
266 August, the grand flux is positive which means the net energy budget is warm up the soil;  
267 whereas the heat is take out from soil during September to January. These characteristics  
268 are well agreed with the field observations of fluxes at northern Tibet during  
269 GAME/Tibet GEWEX Asian Monsoon Experiment on the Tibetan Plateau) and the  
270 CAMP/Tibet (CEOP Asia-Australia Monsoon Project (CAMP) on the Tibetan Plateau)  
271 (Ma and Ma, 2006; Ma et al., 2005).

272 The latitude-time sections of the sensible and latent fluxes are also analyzed (figure  
273 not show). From winter to summer, the sensible flux is intensified from the south and  
274 gradually moves to the north part of the TP. There are two distinguished maximums of  
275 sensible heating: The first one exists near 30°N in May although the intensity is relatively  
276 weak; the second one locates near 40°N during July-August with a magnitude more than  
277 100 w/m<sup>2</sup>. On the other hand, there is only one peak of the latent heat flux during  
278 summer. The maximum of latent flux located at the south part of the TP, whereas there is  
279 no significant latent flux at the north part of the TP.

280 The annual cycle of water balance over the TP could be summarized as: the rainfall  
281 rate from atmospheric forcing shows a peak in July with rough 2.5 mm/day and a  
282 minimum close to zero during wintertime. In contract, the snowfall rate shows a large  
283 value during winter and a minimum in the summer. The peak of snowfall is in March that  
284 agrees with observations: more frequently serious snowstorm happens at early spring  
285 since the warm moist air from the southern region frequently invades to the north during  
286 season transience. Due to high elevation, there are still some snowfalls during summer

287 over the TP (rough 0.1mm/day). Correspondingly, the evapotranspiration and runoff also  
288 show similar pattern with rainfall rate during the annual cycle. In the whole year, the  
289 water loss due to evapotranspiration is much larger than runoff. Since the sublimation of  
290 snowpack, there is still significant evaporation over the TP during the wintertime.

291

#### 292 4 Heat source/sink transition

293 In the decades before, Chinese distinguished scientist Ye Duzhen firstly found that  
294 the land surface processes over the Tibetan Plateau act as a strong “elevated” heat source  
295 to the atmosphere in summer based on the analysis from limited meteorological data  
296 available over Tibet. This conclusion confirmed by the analysis of Asian monsoon  
297 processes by Flohn (1957). Ye and Gao (1979) further inferred the land surface over  
298 Tibetan Plateau acts as a heat sink in winter due to snow albedo effect similar to the Polar  
299 Regions. This famous hypothesis plays an important role to explain the mechanism of  
300 winter Asian monsoon circulation, but it has never been observed in-situ.

301 From the GLDAS three model’s reanalysis, either monthly mean total heat flux to  
302 atmosphere (SH+LW) or sensible heat flux over the TP is positive during all season.  
303 However, there are 11 grid points in the west edge of the TP where the monthly mean  
304 sensible heat fluxes are negative in January. Similarly, there are 4 grid points where the  
305 monthly mean latent heat flux is negative. The monthly mean total fluxes (sensible plus  
306 latent heat) are negative at 7 grid points during January (figure 4). These grid points are  
307 mainly located at the joint region of Himalaya and Karakoram Mountain in the west edge  
308 of the TP where exists the largest glaciated region outside of the Polar Regions.

309           General speaking, the land surface experienced the shift between heat source/sink  
310 daily with the diurnal change of incident solar radiations. When sun illustrates on the land  
311 surface, the net radiation is positive that requires the sensible heat and latent heat to  
312 convey the extra energy to the atmosphere. During the night, however, the net radiation  
313 on the land surface is negative which must be compensated by the heat fluxes from  
314 atmosphere. Whereas in the monthly scale, in the same latitude regions (25-45°N) the  
315 monthly mean sensible flux and latent flux are positive even during winter. Due to the  
316 atmospheric column is pure radiative cooling (net radiative loss) at troposphere, without  
317 surface heat flux or deficient surface heat flux will make the whole atmosphere is net heat  
318 loss. This net heat loss relative to its surrounding will result horizontal temperature  
319 gradients and induce a vertical circulation that converge heat aloft and maintain thermal  
320 equilibrium through sinking motion and adiabatic compression On the other hand, the net  
321 heat gain due to large surface heating will introduce the ascend motion in vertical. The  
322 shift between heat sink and source are basic for the hypothesis of the plateau monsoon,  
323 the seasonal shift of the vertical motion around the TP (Tang and Reiter, 1984).

324

325   5 Budyko diagram

326           The characters of annual water balance are represented on the so-called Budyko  
327 diagram that presents the ratio of evaporation/precipitation ( $E/P$ ) as a function of the ratio  
328 of potential evaporation/precipitation ( $E_p/P$ ). Budyko (1974) assumed that actual  
329 evaporation is controlled by both water and energy availabilities. At the annual time



330 scale, the water availability is the amount of annual precipitation and the energy  
331 availability can be measured by the potential evaporation.

332 Ratio  $E/P$  measures the way that rainfall is partitioned into evaporation and runoff.  
333 On the other hand, the ratio  $E_p/P$  is a measure of climate, also called the dryness index  
334 (or index of dryness). Large  $E_p/P$  ( $>1$ ) represents dry or arid climate, while small  $E_p/P$   
335 ( $<1$ ) represents a wet or humid climate. Thus the Budyko diagram encapsulates a major  
336 climatic control on annual water balance.

337 Figure 5 shows the Budyko diagram over the TP. The green plus signs represent  
338 each grid point at the TP. The red dash line is Budyko curve. The dryness index in most  
339 of part of the TP are greater than 1 except a few points in the southern edge. This  
340 indicates the TP has a typical dry or arid climate where the evaporation is mainly  
341 controlled by the precipitation. The only few grid points with dryness index less than 1  
342 are located in the south-east edge of The TP where the moist air from the south climbs  
343 along the Yalung Zangbo village producing relatively large amount of precipitation.

344

## 345 6. Conclusions

346 Based on newly produced reanalysis land surface states and fluxes by Global  
347 Land Data Assimilation System, the energy and water budget over the TP are quantitative  
348 studied in this paper. Three different models, CLM, Mosaic and Noah model's reanalysis  
349 data are compared over this special region TP, the largest and highest plateau around the  
350 world.

351 All three models well catch the annual cycle over the TP both in the water and  
352 energy budget. However, it still shows pretty large difference in the hydrological  
353 component, including the surface and subsurface runoff. In the most of the TP, Signal-  
354 Noise-Ratios estimated by three models during 1979-2008 are larger than 1%  
355 significance in null hypothesis testing. In particular, there are significant signals in the  
356 internal part of the TP and northern part of TP. The GLDAS reanalysis data could be  
357 used to analyze the interannual variability over the TP.

358 Located at mid-latitude (29-43N), the Tibetan Plateau receive a strong annual cycle  
359 in net shortwave radiation comparing to the relative flat change in net long wave  
360 radiation. The sensible heating is much larger than latent heating over the Tibetan  
361 Plateau. The sensible heating has two peaks: one is at May near 30N and another is  
362 during summer in the north part of the TP. It is distinguishing with the only maximum of  
363 latent heating at July-August. From February to August, the ground flux is positive which  
364 means the net energy budget is warm up the soil; whereas the heat is take out from soil  
365 during September to January.

366 There are some grid points that the monthly mean of total fluxes (sensible plus  
367 latent) are negative during winter. These grid points are mainly located at the joint region  
368 of Himalaya and Karakoram Mountain in the west edge of the TP where exists the largest  
369 glaciated region outside of the Polar Regions. The GLDAS provide another prove for the  
370 famous hypothesis: the TP acts as a heat sink during winter. This special character of the  
371 land thermal forcing would induce the large-scale descending motion as suggested by  
372 plateau monsoon.

373 At the annual hydrological cycle, the rainfall from atmospheric shows a single peak  
374 in July and the minimum close to zero during wintertime. In contract, the snowfall shows  
375 a large value during winter and a minimum in the summer. Due to the high elevation,  
376 there are still some snowfalls during summer over the TP. In the whole year, the water  
377 loss due to evapotranspiration is much larger than runoff. Since the sublimation of  
378 snowpack, there is still significant evaporation over the TP during the wintertime.

379 The TP is a typical dry or arid climate where the evaporation is mainly controlled  
380 by the precipitation. Based on the budyko diagram, the only few grid points with dryness  
381 index less than 1 are located in the south-east edge of the TP where the moist air from the  
382 south climbs along the Yalung Zangbo village producing relatively large amount of  
383 precipitation. Over the most of TP, the Bowen ratios are far larger than 1.

384

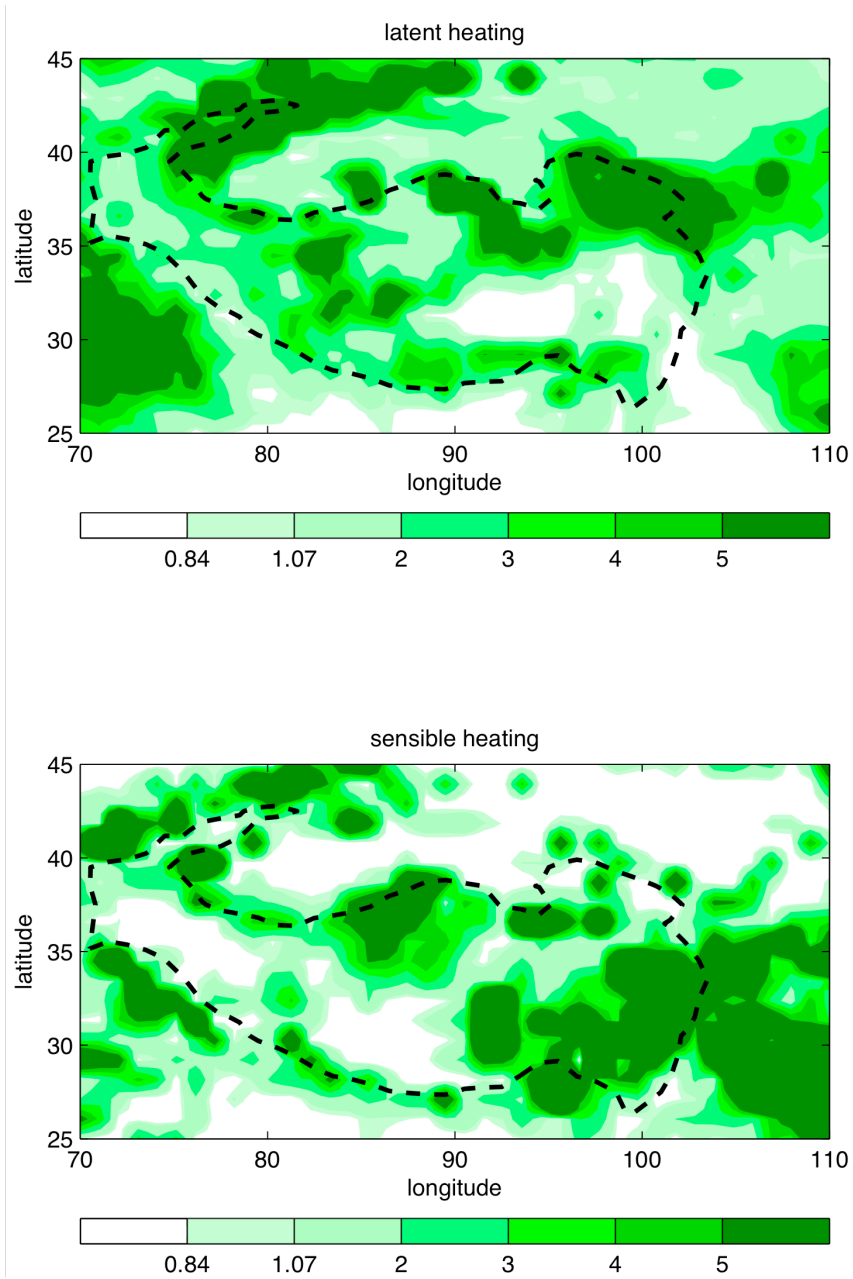
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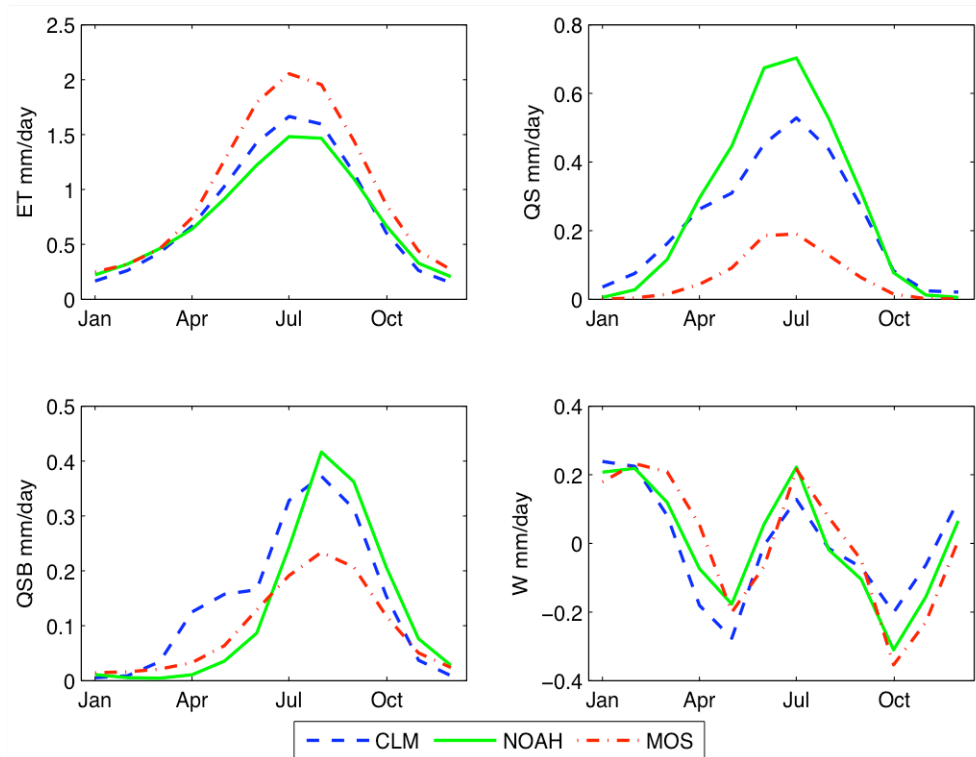
395

396 Figure 1. Signal-to-Noise Ratio (SNR) for GLDAS latent heating and sensible heating  
 397 over the Tibetan Plateau during spring (MAM). The dash line indicates 3000m  
 398 elevation. The SNR is estimated by CLM, Noah and Mosaic model during 1979-2008.

399 The f-statistics testing for null hypothesis is 0.84 and 1.07 for 95% and 99%  
400 significance.

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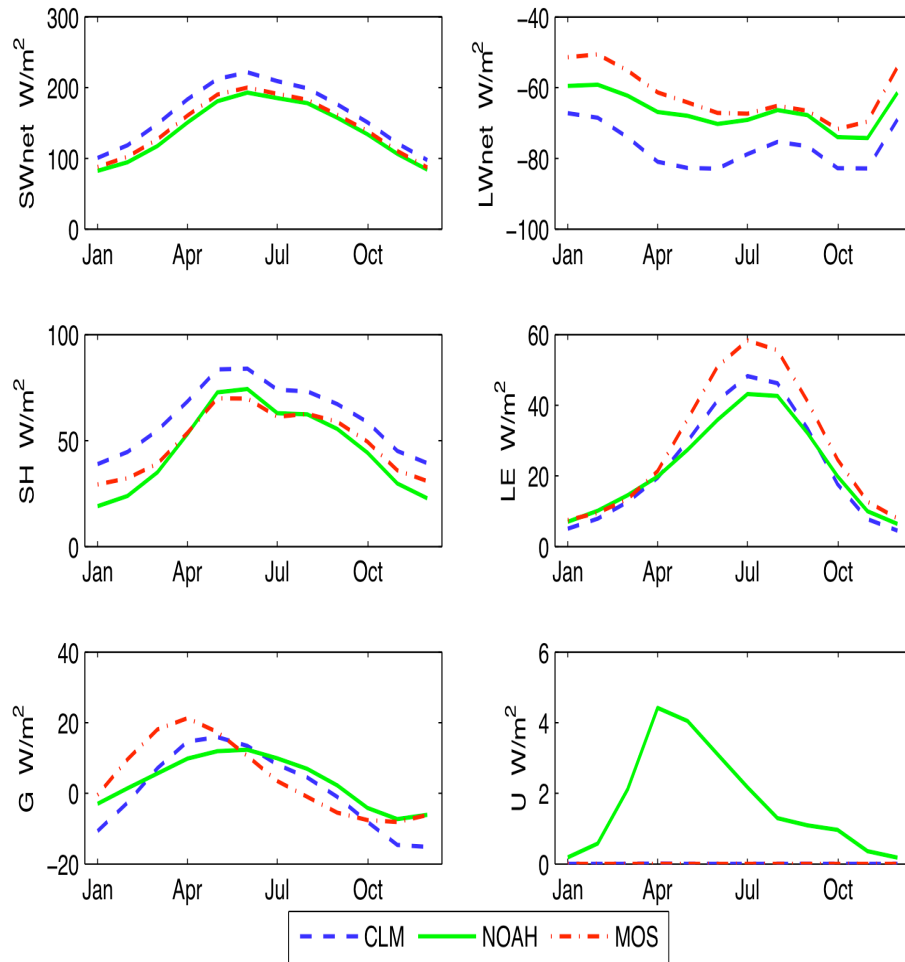
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405 Figure 2. The annual cycle of each component of water budget over the Tibetan  
406 Plateau: total evapotranspiration (ET, upper-left), surface runoff (QS, upper-right)  
407 ,subsurface runoff (QSB, bottom-left) and water storage at land surface (W, bottom-  
408 right).

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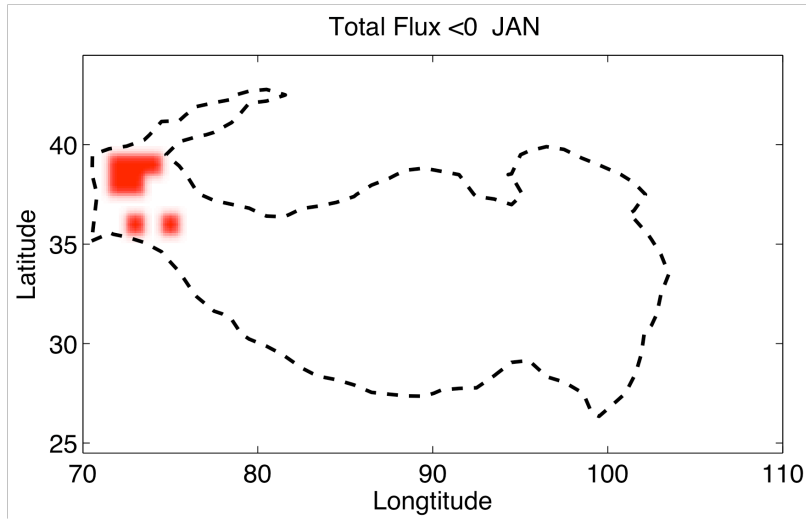
412 Figure 3. The annual cycle of each component of energy budget over the Tibetan  
413 Plateau: net shortwave radiation (SWnet, upper-left), net longwave radiation  
414 (LWnet, upper-right), Sensible heat flux (SH, center-left), Latent heat flux (LE,  
415 center-right), Ground heat flux( G, bottom-left) and miscellaneous term such as  
416 snow phase change caused heat flux (U, bottom-right).

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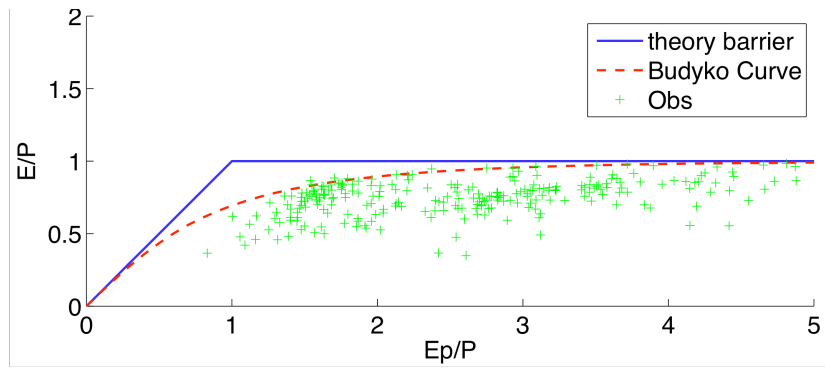
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423 Figure 4. Monthly mean total heat flux (sensible +latent) is negative in January (total  
424 7 grid points). These grid points locate at the joint region of Himalaya and  
425 Karakoram maintain in the west edge of the TP where exist the largest glaciated  
426 region outside of the Polar Regions. There are also 5 grid points are negative at  
427 December and February respectively.

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431 Figure 5. Budyko diagram over the Tibetan Plateau. The green plus signs represent  
432 the each grid point at the TP. The red dash line is Budyko curve.

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