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Space-borne observations of pre-earthquake atmospheric signals associated with major seismicity in Xinjiang, China

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We are presenting the latest development in multi-sensor observations of short-term phenomena preceding major earthquakes. The purpose of this study is to verify if satellite thermal infrared radiation (STIR) anomalous can be found retrospectively in association with three major earthquakes in XinJiang province China (M6.9 of 02.12.14; M6.2 of 08.12.2012; M7.2 of 03.20.08) by systematically analyzing multi-sensor satellite and ground temperature/ humidity observations for the period of 2008-2014. Meteorological satellite data include NOAA polar orbit POES and Chinese geostationary satellite FY2D. In the case of M6.9 of 02.12.14, NOAA STIR data for January ?February shows building an atmospheric anomaly 10-20 days before the main shock. FY2D STIR data show similar trend by revealing anomalous value with persistency of more then 9 hours on Jan 31, 2014. The 2012 (M 6.2) and 2008 (M7.2) event shows similar STIR anomalies over the major Altyn Tagh fault lines within 10-15 days before the seismic event. This probably is connected with the geochemistry gas increase, which can provide additional source for flux emission near major faults in the area. The hourly in-situ atmospheric observation show similarly in the air temperature increases and drop in the relative humidity, probably as result of additional atmospheric ionization observed before the three earthquake events. Our initial results suggest that systematic use of multi-parameter observations can be used for additional physical validation of pre-seismic processes associated with the major earthquake events.

Keywords: short-term earthquake forecasting, pre-earthquake signals, Thermal amomaly, GPS/TEC, radon, LAIC