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Agricultural SAR Images Despeckling Using Non-Local Mean Filtering

Raj Shree(1), Ashwani Kant Shukla(2) ,Ravi Prakash Pandey(3), Vivek Shukla(4)

(1) PI (CSTUP), DIT, Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University, (A Central University), Lucknow, U.P., India.

(2) RA (CSTUP), DIT, Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University, (A Central University), Lucknow, U.P., India.

(3) IET, Dr. Rammanohar Lohia Avadh University, Ayodhya, India.

(4) Department of IT, Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University, (A Central University), Lucknow, U.P., India.

Abstract

Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) is an active radar imaging technique that captures the images with high resolution without getting affected in inclement climate condition. SAR has very higher resolution remote sensing images from terrain wider region. When SAR captures the agricultural images the granular pattern get inherited with the images is known as speckle-noise. The SAR inheritance characteristic is speckle-noise i.e. multiplicative in nature which leads to reduce the quality of captured agricultural SAR images. The backscattered waves from target surface experience impedance helpfully and unhelpfully which gives outcome in image with speckled. The mechanism for removing the speckle-noise is known as despeckling. The fundamental characteristics for despeckling method are to efficiently filter identical surface while preserving the fine details of images such as textures and edges. We have made very efficiently deep leaning about the Non-local mean filter despeckling technique that's clearly represent the robustness and gives very precise results.

Keywords: *Synthetic Aperture Radar Speckle-Noise, NL Filter, Despeckled Agricultural SAR Images*

1. INTRODUCTION

The Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) is quite effective for carries the information about defined surface by employing the analogous motion between their target and antenna. It has several applications area where SAR works very efficiently such as object detection, object monitoring, land and air navigation, location and defense commanding, higher outcomes in mapping remote sensing, search and rescue operation, mine observation, surveillance purpose and automatic target detection [1]. It carries many pros in comparison to the optical satellite images; like, precisely function is obtained without regards of the inclement climate conditions and also has the capability in clouds penetration, soil and forest canopy. Despite all these pros, this is mostly being affected by signal relies noise called speckle-noise, which affects the radiometric resolution [2].

SAR is an active microwave satellite imaging aperture. The radar is set up with moving device like spacecraft. A single antenna function down the flight line designs a synthetic aperture Radar which is usually known as in short SAR. The SAR transmits the radio waves towards the target surface hits the targeted surface and backscattered to the spacecraft by carrying the surface informations [3]. The backscattered captured images from the earth surface are integrated and process for obtaining the information from the SAR images. The backscattering relies on the roughness of the surface, medium dielectric features, Radar frequency, angle of incidence and polarization [4][5].

SAR image capturing method is employed to get the high resolution 2-D image and dimensions are scale and azimuth. Scale is determined by calculating the distance between radar and target surface [6]. It is measured as the time from emission of waves to obtaining the waves from the target. Azimuth is obtained by the beam sharpness and is likely as a linear distance in a parallel direction to the spacecraft. SAR imaging often employs the electromagnetic spectrum [7] such as C band (8–4 GHz), L band (2–1 GHz), and X band (12.5–8 GHz).

The speckle-noise reduction can be implemented in frequency and spatial region. The spatial domain method performs to change the position of a window in each pixel and adding the central pixel value with mathematically proved value from the window pixels [8]. Spatial location leads the benefits to these methods and neighborhood of the pixels for removing the speckle-noise. The primary cons of this mechanism that image smoothening because of determining the pixels mean in the window and results edges and textures get blurred in the image. Both the techniques frequency and transform domain employing the thresholding in speckle-noise reduction. The characteristics of noises are high frequency elements and can be despeckled by applying thresholding mechanism [9]. Both the Bayesian and nonBayesian techniques have theirs itself pros and cons in speckle-noise reduction but comparatively nonBayesian techniques are more robust and gives very precise results because its works independently.

2. NOISE MODEL

SAR image capturing techniques employs a coherent imaging procedure, which results in a multiplicative noise known as speckle-noise. Speckle occurs because of signals impedance with the backscattered waves. The speckle-noise can be derives as an arbitrary variable employing a statistical prototypes which is pursue an exponential distribution in intensity images and Rayleigh distribution in amplitude images [10][11]. Due to multiplicative nature the speckle-noise is complex and hence is quite difficult to remove as compared to additive noise.

The mathematical expression of speckle-noise (Stochastic differential equation)

$$\boldsymbol{S}_{(\boldsymbol{ni})} = \boldsymbol{I_m} + \boldsymbol{n} * \boldsymbol{I_m} \quad \text{....(1.1)}$$

Where,

$\boldsymbol{S}_{(\boldsymbol{ni})}$= Speckle noise image

$\boldsymbol{I_m}$= The original image matrix
n = Uniformly distributed random noise
with mean 0 and variance v.

To apply the log transformation on speckle-noise (Stochastic differential equation) transforming from multiplicative noise to additive noise [12], this expressed as:

$$X[n] = S[n] + V[n] \quad \text{....(1.2)}$$

In the speckle-noise reduction to perform the preprocessing procedure which is including segmentation, SAR image detection and classification, and speckle existence leads to affects the radiometric resolution and makes it complex for human interpretation [13]. Therefore it is necessary to remove speckle-noise from agricultural SAR images and leads major benefits for performing better post-processing steps on SAR images also help efficiently in the human interpretation.

3. DESPECKLING USING NON-LOCAL MEAN FILTERING

Buades et al. [14] introduced the NL mean filter for despeckling agricultural SAR images which is relies on the fundamental mechanism for determining the despeckled image as a weighted speckle pixels mean. The derived mathematical expression [15] is following as:

$$\hat{f}(n) = \frac{\sum_m w(n,m)g(m)}{\sum_m w(n,m)} \quad \text{....(3.1)}$$

Where,
w(n. m) = likeness between both pixels *g(n)*and *g(m)*.
The NLM filter salient mechanism is that the weights *w(n. m)* are relies on the Euclidean distance from local patches gets focused from *g(n)* to *g(m)* [16], as following:

$$w(n,m) = exp\left(-\frac{1}{h}\sum_k \alpha_k |g(n+k) - g(m+k)|^2\right) \quad \text{....(3.2)}$$

Where,
α_k = Gaussian window,
h = operates the exponential process decompose.

In the additive white Gaussian noise existence the NL-mean filter gives very accurate outcomes and with the help of this technique we can determine the real likeness Euclidean distance [17]. However, in case of SAR images, the weights have to be simplified for the multiplicative and non-Gaussian noise. It is also simulating to integrate the fundamental of NL that help with greater benefits of the sparse characterization which can be achieved from the wavelet transform [18].

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3.1 THE PROBABILISTIC PATCH-BASED FILTER

Deledalle et al. [19] developed the probabilistic patch-based filter that enhanced to the NL-mean filter especially in the field of the SAR images by utilizing its characteristics to the weighted maxima likelihood estimator (WMLE) i.e. down the WMLE fundamental and the despeckled image which can be determined as the increasing value of a weighted likelihood function in identified data:

$$\hat{f}(n) = Max_{avg} \sum_m w(n,m) log p(g(m)|f) \quad \textbf{....(3.3)}$$

The weight *w (n, m)* can be viewed as a measure indicating the extent to which the pixel placed at location m has the similar distribution as the reference pixel placed at location *n*.

The differences in weights *w* (*n*, *m*) leads the challenging task for the WMLE technique. For resolving the problem and obtaining the precise outcomes taking the weights as the probability, obtaining from the identified image *g*, there are two patches placed at center i.e. *n* and *m* which can be specified with similar distribution [20]. To assume the independence of the patches pixels, the weights can be mathematically expressed as

$$w(n,k) = \prod_k p(f(n+k)|g(n+k), g(m+k)^{1/h}) \quad \textbf{....(3.4)}$$

Where,

k = varies over the image patch

h= Decomposition parameter.

In case of SAR images, taking pixel angle which defines a = g as independent and homogeneous which dispersed as the Nakagami-Rayleigh distribution.

The PPB weights represents as:

$$w(n,m) = exp\left[-\frac{1}{h}\sum_k log\left(\frac{a(n+k)}{a(m+k)} + \frac{a(m+k)}{a(n+k)}\right)\right] \quad \textbf{....(3.5)}$$

And, the removed speckle-noise image can be obtained as per the WMLE:

$$\hat{f}(n) = \frac{\sum_m w(n,m) a^2(m)}{\sum_m w(n,m)} \quad \textbf{....(3.6)}$$

This technique is additionally enhanced by stating the possibilities in equation (3.4) which relies too on an earlier evaluation of the despeckled SAR image which is based on the recursive filtering approach [21]. On the basis of earlier filter results the weights gets updated at every steps of recursion.

3.2 SAR BLOCK MATCHING 3-D FILTER

Parrilli et. al. [22] brought in the SAR block matching 3-D (SAR-BM3D) method which implements the NL filtering fundamental integration with a wavelet transformation. The BM3D filter salient feature is to develop the NL fundamental filtering for accumulating same characteristics patches groups and for obtaining the 3-D blocks that determine wavelet decomposition. The NL identical patches grouping is presumed to create a highly correlated 3-D signal, to be accepted a high sparse characterization in the wavelet domain, leading to effectively re

move the speckle-noise and noisy parameters. The BM3D filter operations can be outlined as following procedure [23][24] such as: 1) In the identified image the every reference patch, accumulate the similar featured patches groups as per the Euclidean distance principle, and create a 3-D group; 2) To deal with 3-D wavelet transform, wavelet coefficients despeckling, and inverse transform; 3) every filtered patches get back to their actual positions, and integrate them employing right weights.

The BM3D filter is achieved by the recursive of two procedure of discussed technique such as wavelet domain despeckling is obtained by easy hard-thresholding, in regards to allow a coarsely despeckled image and another employs the despeckled image achieved after the first step to enhance the 3-D grouping precision, and substitute by hard-thresholding with Wiener filtering, where the despeckled image power spectrum is determined from roughly obtain despeckled image [25].

To dealing with the speckle-noise reduction in SAR images the SAR-BM3D filter review with some salient feature enhancements i.e. the probability scope determined among patches as per the equation (3.5), put into use the same methods in hard-thresholding and Wiener filtering are substituted with an LMMSE performance evaluation which relies on the additive wave-oriented speckle prototype [26].

The filtered wavelet coefficients [27] are achieved as

$$\widehat{W_f}(n) = \frac{\widehat{W_{f,1}^2}(n)}{\widehat{W_{f,1}^2}(n)+\sigma_{w_v}^2} W_g(n) \qquad \textbf{….(3.7)}$$

Where,

$\widehat{W_{f,1}}$ = Despeckle wavelet elements

The wavelet coefficients variance of the waves-oriented speckle [28] is obtained from following equation

$$\sigma_{w_v}^2 = \frac{1}{\lfloor G \rfloor} \sum_{k \in G} [W_g(k) - \widehat{W_{f,1}}(k)]^2 \qquad \textbf{….(3.8)}$$

Where,

G = Set of wavelet coefficients related to a 3-D group

The final despeckled image is bringing about from the overlapped despeckled patches weighted mean [29][30], where the every patch weights are inversely proportional to the $\sigma_{w_v}^2$ complementary value [31].

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4. CONCLUSION

As per the characteristics of Nonlocal filter that clearly represents that it is quite efficient more robust system for the reduction of speckle-noise in agricultural SAR images which is relies on the data driven induction technique. There are the various techniques has been developed for removing the speckle-noise in agricultural SAR images but most of them only smoothened the edges not enhanced the edges but most significant approach for despeckling that to remove the speckle-noise, enhance the edges with the preservation of images fine details. After the deep learning about the NL filtering that clearly represent that it has greater capability to remove speckle-noise with better precision with preservation of fine detail of images such as edges, texture etc. and also if it is gets incorporated with Total Variation will obtain the more robust technique with greater precision.

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