

# Titan' s Equatorial Belt: Surface Composition and Geomorphology from Cassini's VIMS and RADAR data

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In thirteen years, infrared observations from the Visual and Infrared Mapping Spectrometer (VIMS) onboard Cassini provided significant hints about the spectral and geological diversity of Titan' s surface. The analysis of the infrared signature of spectral units enables constraining the surface composition, which is essential to understand possible interactions between Titan' s interior, surface and atmosphere. Here, we investigate a selection of areas in Titan's low-latitudes imaged by Cassini's VIMS IR spectrometer, which exhibit an apparent transition from the VIMS IR-bright to the IR-blue and IR-brown spectral units (from false-color composites using red: 1.57/1.27  $\mu\text{m}$ , green: 2.01/1.27  $\mu\text{m}$ , and blue: 1.27/1.08  $\mu\text{m}$ ). By applying an updated radiative transfer model [1-3], we extract the surface albedo of IR-units identified in these regions. Then, we compare them with synthetic spectra of mixtures of the two most expected components of Titan' s surface, namely water ice and laboratory tholins. This allows us to reconnect the derived composition and grain size information to the geomorphology observed from Cassini's RADAR/SAR images. Hence, we interpret IR-bright terrains as hills and plains coated by organic material and incised by fluvial networks. The erosion products are transported downstream to areas where IR-blue terrains are seen near the IR-bright terrains. These areas, enriched in water ice, are most likely outwash plains hosting icy and organic debris from fluvial erosion. Farther away from the IR-bright terrains, the IR-brown terrains are dominantly made of organics with varied grain sizes ranging from dust- to sand-sized particles that form the dunes fields. In this work, we show that transition areas exhibit trends in terms of water ice content and grain size supported by geomorphological observations [4].

**References:** [1] Hirtzig, M. et al. (2013) *Icarus*, 226. [2] Solomonidou, A. et al. (2014) *JGR*, 119. [3] Maltagliati, L. et al. (2015) *EPSC*. [4] Brossier, J. F. et al. (*under review in JGR Planet*).

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