

Interactive comment on “Tropical cirrus and water vapor: an effective Earth infrared iris feedback?” by “Q. Fu et al.”

Anonymous Referee #2

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This Fu et al. paper usefully discusses some problems with the recent paper by Lindzen et al. (LCH) regarding the consistency of the assumptions they used to translate their observed "iris effect" into a quantitative feedback. LCH did not do this in a way that is consistent with information from ERBE and other sources.

However, there are much more fundamental issues with LCH than the criticisms being aired here. First, the statistic chosen by LCH for determining SST allows atmospherically-driven changes in cloud cover to alias onto the computed SST, producing a spurious signal as described in another paper by Hartman and others. That paper will be far more important than this one in refuting the claims made by LCH. Second, LCH assume a direction of causality in interpreting their correlation that is unfounded and probably opposite to the real one.

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Thus the present paper is somewhat moot since even the existence of the "iris" effect whose importance is being requantified, is itself doubtful.

Interactive comment on Atmos. Chem. Phys. Discuss., 1, 221, 2001.

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