
Anonymous Referee #2

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The paper describes an analysis to use microwave based surficial estimates of soil moisture for annual water storage variations in medium scale catchments. The paper is very well structured, has a strong methodological set-up, written very clearly and scientifically novel. Furthermore, I liked the focus on the applicability of the current RS products for water resources research. To me, the main conclusion is that microwave based soil moisture seems a very good product to downscale GRACE water storage variations measurements to use in 10-fold smaller catchments then currently feasible.

I think the paper is thorough and the authors deserve compliments for their open, critical, step-wise analysis. I think the paper is ready to publish with only a few minor points to address. - Title: I think the title is somewhat too broad. I would prefer the title also states you are looking at medium scale catchments (just add in medium-scale catchments to the title) - Although you make several remarks on the use of a calendar year instead of a hydrological year and discuss it in section 5, I think especially this parts could benefit from some extra details. Maybe you could add some of the “Preliminary sensitivity analysis . . .” (P17L5) data to the paper. Maybe even a complete sub-section under section 4. Your approach (eq.4-6) is fully empirical, testing a pseudo-hydrological year and e.g. using less months (or add one month with more vegetation but with lower weight factor) seems so logical. - You clearly show the value of microwave soil moisture for downsampling GRACE information. Can you discuss whether there are other down-scaling possibilities to have the same effect on GRACE derived storage variations?

Minor edits: P1L18: “contain significant” maybe it is more accurate to say “contain statistically significant” P2L5: certain regions: please specify P2L12 steam > stream P2L19: Q and P are not products but ground based data. Please rephrase P7L18: closure of (1). For me it would be easier if you insert ‘equation’ between “of (1)”. P9L20: snow/could >snow/cold P11L9: suggestion to remove ( ) around “credible”