On Mon, 17 Dec 2006, kuyper@wizard.net wrote:

> I only know about one instrument (MODIS) on two Earth-pointing
> satellites (Terra and Aqua), but I'm personally responsible for the
> geolocation on the MODIS data from those satellites. The file
> attributes summarizing the location of a granule are just as accurate
> as the geolocation which is provided in the MOD03 files for every 1km
> pixel: the RMS error is nominally 50 meters, though we're actually
> doing a bit better than that, with our smallest pixel size being 250
> meters. Except during a maneuver, the actual orientation of the
> satellite is used, not the planned orientation.
>
> The software I'm responsible for was modified from software for earlier
> instruments, and has been borrowed as the basis for sofware for the
> VIIRS instrument on NPP, so I suspect this is not uncommon for
> earth-pointing satellite imagery.

I work with AVHRR and SeaWiFS as well as MODIS. With the older data,
each image must be registered using ground control points. This can be
done manually in Terascan and SeaDAS, and there are various automated
systems. MODIS geolocation eliminates this (tedious and much hated) step.

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