

Adjusted Geopotential Height from Orogeny or Glaciation

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We can compute the geopotential height relative to the Earth's radius at sea level:

$$\Phi = \int g(z) dz \quad (1)$$

$$z = R_{\oplus} + h \quad (2)$$

$$\Phi = GM \int_0^h \frac{dr}{(R_{\oplus} + r)^2} \quad (3)$$

$$= -GM \left(\frac{1}{R_{\oplus} + r} \right) \Big|_0^h$$

$$= GM \left(\frac{1}{R_{\oplus}} - \frac{1}{R_{\oplus} + h} \right)$$

$$\Phi_0 = \frac{GM}{R_{\oplus}} \left(\frac{h}{R_{\oplus} + h} \right) \quad (4)$$

We thus consider a perturbed geopotential, such that instead of h we have $h + \delta z$. For simplicity, we'll express this using a Taylor series expansion.

$$\Phi' = \frac{GM}{R_{\oplus}} \left(\frac{h + \delta z}{R_{\oplus} + h + \delta z} \right) \quad (5)$$

$$\approx \Phi_0 + g_0 \delta z - \frac{g}{R_{\oplus} + h} \delta z^2 \quad (6)$$

We can get h by rearranging Equation 4 to get

$$h = \frac{R^2\Phi_0}{GM - R\Phi_0}. \quad (7)$$