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An Estimate of the Number and Emissions of
Forest Burnings in the Amazon With
Satellites - Initial Results

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Images of the NOAA-series satellites with a 1 km resolution covering July-August 1985 and April-October 1987 were used to detect large biomass burnings in the Amazon. About 6,000 independent fires were detected daily at the peak of the 1987 burning season, together with very dense clouds of smoke covering millions of km². Air chemistry measurements of the GTE/ABLE-2A and -2B experiments corroborated that significant changes in the Amazon troposphere are related to the forest burnings. The results also show that the role of biomass burning emission in global tropospheric chemistry will be difficult to evaluate.