

# New technique to diagnose the geomagnetic field based on the single circular current loop model

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## Abstract

A quick and effective technique is developed to diagnose the geomagnetic dipole field based on an unstrained single circular current loop model. In comparison with previous studies, this technique is able to separate and solve the loop parameters successively. With this technique, one can search the optimum full loop parameters quickly, including the location of loop center, the loop orientation, the loop radius, and the electric current carried by the loop, which can roughly indicate the locations, sizes, orientations of the interior current sources. The technique tests and applications demonstrate that this technique is effective and applicable. This technique could be applied widely in the fields of geomagnetism, planetary magnetism and palaeomagnetism. The further applications and constrains are discussed and cautioned.

1     **New technique to diagnose the geomagnetic field based on**  
2                     **the single circular current loop model**

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21    loop, Dynamo currents, Planetary magnetic field

## 22 Abstract

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25 previous studies, this technique is able to separate and solve the loop parameters  
26 successively. With this technique, one can search the optimum full loop parameters  
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29 sizes, orientations of the interior current sources. The technique tests and applications  
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32 palaeomagnetism. The further applications and constrains are discussed and  
33 cautioned.

34

## 35 1. Introduction

36 The most frequently used method to analyze geomagnetic field is the spherical  
37 harmonic analysis (SHA), which is based on the solution of the Laplace equation with  
38 assumption of no electric current in the concerned domain, that is  $\nabla^2 U = 0$  and  
39  $\mathbf{B} = -\nabla U$ , where  $U$  is the magnetic potential and  $\mathbf{B}$  is the magnetic vector. With SHA,  
40 the solution of  $U$  can be expanded as the sum of Associated Legendre polynomials,

$$41 \quad U = r_0 \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \sum_{m=0}^n P_n^m(\cos \theta) \left[ \left( \frac{r_0}{r} \right)^{n+1} (g_n^m \cos m\lambda + h_n^m \sin m\lambda) + \left( \frac{r_0}{r} \right)^{-n} (A_n^m \cos m\lambda + B_n^m \sin m\lambda) \right]$$

42 , where  $r_0$ ,  $r$ ,  $\theta$ ,  $\lambda$  are the Earth's radius, radial distance, geocentric colatitude, and the  
43 longitude of a given location, respectively,  $P_n^m$  are the associated Legendre

44 polynomials,  $g_n^m$  and  $h_n^m$  are the Gauss coefficients are related with the internal  
45 magnetic sources, while  $A_n^m$  and  $B_n^m$  are the coefficients related with the external  
46 sources [Chapman & Bartels, 1940; Merrill, McElhinny, & McFadden, 1996]. The  
47 internal dipole moment  $\mathbf{M}$  is defined using the first three internal coefficients  $g_1^0, g_1^1$   
48 and  $h_1^1$ , that is,  $M = \frac{\mu_0}{4\pi r_0^3} \sqrt{(g_1^0)^2 + (g_1^1)^2 + (h_1^1)^2}$ , where  $\mu_0$  is the permeability in  
49 vacuum [e.g. Amit and Olson, 2008]. The other Gauss coefficients of the internal  
50 sources represent the multipole (quadrupole, octupole, etc.) components. Since the  
51 dipole component dominates the field, the geomagnetic field at Earth's surface can be  
52 well approximated as a geocentered dipole field model. To make the dipole model  
53 more accurate, the eccentric dipole approximation was also made in some  
54 studies [James & Winch, 1967; Cain, Schmitz, & Kluth, 1985; Fraser-Smith, 1987].

55 It has to be reminded that SHA has some assumptions and constraints though it is  
56 widely used: 1. The magnetic field in concerned spatial region should satisfy potential  
57 field, but the assumption would probably fail when electric currents present in  
58 concerned region. 2. The Gauss coefficients cannot indicate the “real” magnetic  
59 sources directly. For example, an offset of a dipole center is mathematically  
60 indistinguishable from a dipole plus a series of higher multipole field at Earth’s center  
61 [see page 42 of Merrill, McElhinny, & McFadden, 1996].

62 Alternatively, some physical models with idealized assumptions were developed to  
63 fit the geomagnetic field. In almost all these attempts, multiple magnetic dipoles were  
64 used to represent the sources of magnetic field (e.g. one centered axial dipole with  
65 several eccentric radial dipoles [McNish, 1940; Alldredge and Hurwitz, 1964;

66 Alldredge and Stearns,1969]; two horizontal dipoles [Lyakhov, 1960]; one to six  
67 unconstrained dipoles [Bochev,1975]; 93 dipoles constrained at the core-mantle  
68 boundaries [Mayhew and Estes, 1983]).

69 The magnetic dipole is only a special case of a circular current loop whose radius is  
70 zero, and models of single loop and also multiple loops have privously been proposed  
71 as more physical representations of geomagnetic field [e.g. Zidarov and Petrova, 1974;  
72 Peddie, 1979; Zidarov, 1985; Demina and Farafonova, 2016]. It is well-known that  
73 seven free parameters are required to characterize a circular current loop, that is, the  
74 location of loop center (three parameters), the orientation of loop axis (two  
75 parameters), the loop radius (one parameters), and the electric current (one parameters)  
76 carried by the loop. Those parameters are meaningful to indicate the equivalent  
77 geometric characteristics of interior currents, though the actual currents pattern could  
78 be far more complicated than a circular current loop.

79 Problem is that the simutaneous least-square fitting of these loop parameters would  
80 result in multiple solutions of parameter sets. To search the best set of parameters  
81 from the multiple solutions is not an easy task, even for a single current loop model.  
82 Because the optimum fitting is strongly dependent on the initial input parameters, no  
83 general technique exists for determining whether a particular minimum error  
84 corresponds to the best solution. The more loops involved, more parameters are  
85 required, and the worse the calculation becomes unless additional constrains and  
86 assumptions are made [Peddie, 1979; Zidarov, 1985; Alldredge, 1987; Demina and  
87 Farafonova, 2016]. Peddie [1979] tried to avoid this problem by making 20

88 preliminary computer runs using random initial parameters for his loop models.  
89 Zidarov [1985] chose a suitable initial “point” of loop parameters to iterate the  
90 calculation in his multiple loops model. In the study of Alldredge [1987], the initial  
91 values were chosen by referring to results obtained by Benton and Alldredge [1987].  
92 Demina and Farafonova [2016] selected 23 starting points to invert the seven  
93 parameters of single current loop.

94 Besides Earth, many planets in the solar system are found to possess an intrinsic  
95 global dipole-dominated field, e.g. Mercury, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune. In  
96 the past decades, the measurements of spacecraft orbiting these planets accumulated  
97 amounts of planetary magnetic field data. Since no magnetic observatories available  
98 on the planetary surface, the sampled field data by spacecraft usually couldn’t be the  
99 ideal potential field due to the presence of space currents; this makes it difficult to  
100 apply SHA to the non-potential field sampled by spacecraft, although planetary  
101 magnetic field models based on SHA are already existent [e.g. Connerney, 1993;  
102 Anderson et al., 2011; Schubert and Soderlund, 2011, and references therein]. Taking  
103 the magnetic field measurement of MErcury Surface, Space ENvironment,  
104 GEochemistry, and Ranging (MESSENGER) on Mercury as example, Johnson et al.  
105 [2012] argued that the fundamental assumption of a current-free region of SHA is  
106 violated, and the orbit geometry of spacecraft can result in covariance among the  
107 lowest degree and order internal and external fields.

108 Therefore, to diagnose the planetary dipole-dominated field generally with the  
109 magnetometer data of spacecraft, and to avoid the dilemma of fitting the full

110 parameters simultaneously, we are motivated to develop a new technique to invert the  
111 parameters of an unstrained single circular loop based on spacecraft's measurements  
112 along arbitrary trajectory. This technique could be applied widely not only to the  
113 measurements of geomagnetic observatories, but also the spacecraft's magnetometer  
114 data of planetary dipole-dominated field, to probe the complicated interior current  
115 sources [Constable and Constable, 2004]. In contrast to the fitting method, this  
116 inversion technique should be able to separate and solve the loop parameters  
117 successively without requirement of inputting the initial values.

118 To guarantee the inversion validity, the used field data is required to be unaffected  
119 significantly by the external sources, or the external field can be well evaluated and  
120 subtracted during the data-preprocesses.

121 In this paper, we first present the technique algorithm in Section 2. To show the  
122 technique validity, the applications to the sampled data from International  
123 Geomagnetic Reference Field (IGRF) model and from geomagnetic observatories are  
124 conducted in Section 3 and Section 4 respectively. We make comparisons with  
125 previous studies of the loop models in Section 5. We discuss the prospect of further  
126 applications in Section 6. Finally, we discuss the physical interpretations of inverted  
127 loop parameters in Section 7, and summarize this study in Section 8.

128

## 129 **2. Methodology**

130 Assuming a single circular current loop, we here describe the new technique to  
131 separate the full loop parameters from the sampled magnetic field dataset by

132 spacecraft or geomagnetic observatories. The sampled field data is assumed to be an  
 133 ideal field dataset from purely internal sources; otherwise the inferred parameters  
 134 would contain the contamination of external field.

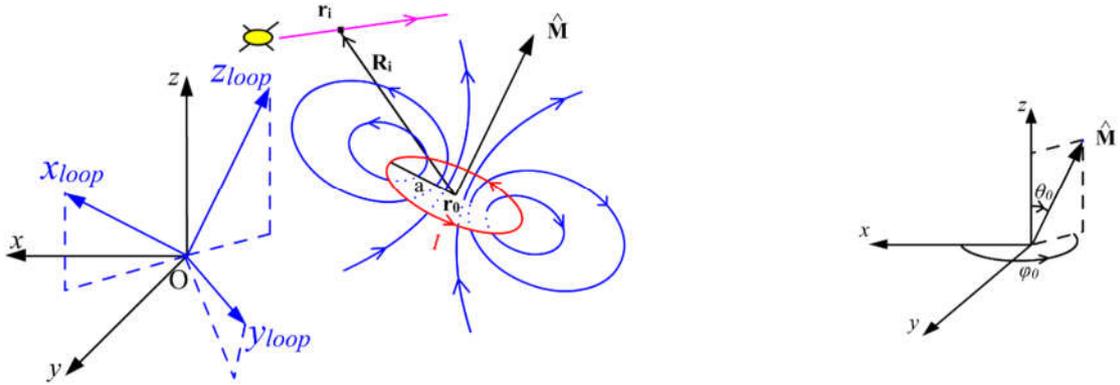
## 135 **2.1 The setup of coordinates**

136 Since the geomagnetic field is corotated with Earth's rotation, this technique is  
 137 convenient to be studied in the geocentric coordinates where the origin point is at  
 138 Earth's center, the x-axis points towards the intersection of the equator and the  
 139 Greenwich meridian, z-axis parallel to the Earth's rotation axis (positive to the north),  
 140 and y-axis completes a right-handed orthongonal set.

141 As shown in Figure 1, the source of the magnetic field is assumed to be a circular  
 142 current loop with radius  $a$  carrying electric current  $I$ . In the orthogonal geocentric  
 143 coordinates  $\{x,y,z\}$ , the loop center is located at  $\mathbf{r}_0(x_0\hat{\mathbf{x}},y_0\hat{\mathbf{y}},z_0\hat{\mathbf{z}})$ , where  $\hat{\mathbf{x}},\hat{\mathbf{y}}$ , and  $\hat{\mathbf{z}}$   
 144 are the unit vectors along the positive direction of x-axis, y-axis, and z-axis,  
 145 respectively. The loop axis-orientation is  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}(\sin\theta_0\cos\varphi_0\hat{\mathbf{x}},\sin\theta_0\sin\varphi_0\hat{\mathbf{y}},\cos\theta_0\hat{\mathbf{z}})$ ,  
 146 which is the unit direction of the dipole moment  $\mathbf{M}$  ( $\hat{\mathbf{M}}=\mathbf{M}/|\mathbf{M}|$ ), where  
 147  $\theta_0(0^\circ\leq\theta_0\leq 180^\circ)$  and  $\varphi_0(0^\circ\leq\varphi_0\leq 360^\circ)$  are the polar angle (colatitude) and  
 148 azimuthal angle of  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}$ , respectively.  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}$  is assumed to be fixed within the period of  
 149 sampling data. At the time of  $t_i$ , a spacecraft is located at  $\mathbf{r}_i(x_i\hat{\mathbf{x}},y_i\hat{\mathbf{y}},z_i\hat{\mathbf{z}})$  along the  
 150 trajectory, and the recorded magnetic field vector is  $\mathbf{B}_i$ . The position vector of the  
 151 spacecraft relative to the loop center is  $\mathbf{R}_i = \mathbf{r}_i - \mathbf{r}_0$ .

152 Our task is to use the sampled magnetic field  $\mathbf{B}_i$ , along the trajectory  $\mathbf{r}_i$ , by  
 153 spacecraft, to estimate the unknown parameters  $a, I, \mathbf{r}_0$ , and  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}$  of the current loop.

154



155

156 *Figure 1. The location of current loop in the geocentric coordinates  $\{x,y,z\}$ . The*  
 157 *circular loop with radius  $a$  and the carried electric current  $I$  is marked as a red circle*  
 158 *whose axis orientation is along  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}$ . The loop center is at  $\mathbf{r}_0$ . The loop plane and its*  
 159 *axis orientation constitute a geocentered loop coordinates  $\{x_{loop}, y_{loop}, z_{loop}\}$ : the loop*  
 160 *plane is in the plane constituted by  $x_{loop}$  and  $y_{loop}$ , the axis orientation is along the*  
 161 *direction of  $z_{loop}$ . The origin is at geocenter  $\mathbf{O}$  instead of loop center. The trajectory of*  
 162 *spacecraft is labelled as a magenta line.*

163

164 In the frame of geocentric coordinates, it is convenient to construct a geocentric

165 loop coordinates for the field. The loop coordinates are defined as:

$$166 \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \hat{\mathbf{z}}_{loop} = \hat{\mathbf{M}} \\ \hat{\mathbf{y}}_{loop} = \frac{\hat{\mathbf{z}}_{loop} \times \hat{\mathbf{x}}}{|\hat{\mathbf{z}}_{loop} \times \hat{\mathbf{x}}|} \\ \hat{\mathbf{x}}_{loop} = \hat{\mathbf{y}}_{loop} \times \hat{\mathbf{z}}_{loop} \end{array} \right. , \quad (1)$$

167 the origin point is at Earth's center  $\mathbf{O}$ . The loop plane is in the plane constituted by

168  $\hat{\mathbf{x}}_{loop}$  and  $\hat{\mathbf{y}}_{loop}$ , and the loop center  $\mathbf{r}_0$  is at  $(x_0' \hat{\mathbf{x}}_{loop}, y_0' \hat{\mathbf{y}}_{loop}, z_0' \hat{\mathbf{z}}_{loop})$  in this

169 coordinates. Note that, the superscript “' ”, unless otherwise stated, is the vector

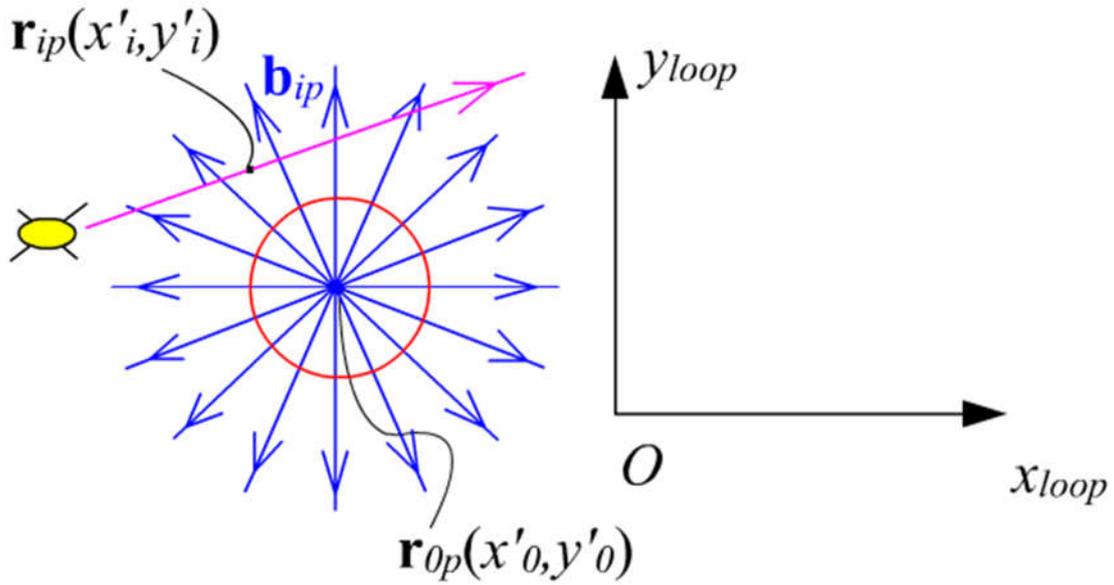
170 component that is expressed in the geocentric loop coordinates.

## 171 2.2. The loop axis and the loop center

172 Since the ideal loop field has no azimuthal component, the field lines that are

173 diverged from or converged into the loop center, should be radially orientated in the

174 equatorial plane of the loop coordinates. Therefore, the loop axis orientation should be  
 175 the direction along which the projected field lines are mostly radially orientated.  
 176 Therefore, we now consider 2D projection on the equatorial plane as shown in Figure 2.  
 177 At the time  $t_i$ , the projected spacecraft location is  $\mathbf{r}_{ip}(x'_i, y'_i)$ , and the  
 178 projected field orientation is  $\mathbf{b}_{ip}(b'_{xi}, b'_{yi})$ , where,  $x'_i = \mathbf{r}_i \cdot \hat{\mathbf{x}}_{loop}$ ,  $y'_i = \mathbf{r}_i \cdot \hat{\mathbf{y}}_{loop}$ ,  
 179  $b'_{xi} = \frac{\mathbf{B}_i \cdot \hat{\mathbf{x}}_{loop}}{|\mathbf{B}_i|}$ , and  $b'_{yi} = \frac{\mathbf{B}_i \cdot \hat{\mathbf{y}}_{loop}}{|\mathbf{B}_i|}$ .



180  
 181 *Figure 2. The projection of sampled magnetic field vectors on the equatorial plane of*  
 182 *loop coordinates. At time  $t_i$  the spacecraft is located at the point  $\mathbf{r}_{ip}(x'_i, y'_i)$*   
 183 *with the sampled magnetic vector  $\mathbf{b}_{ip}$ . The magenta line with arrow represents the*  
 184 *projected trajectory of the spacecraft. The blue lines with arrow represent the*  
 185 *projected directions of field lines. The red circle represents the current loop. The loop*  
 186 *center is located at  $\mathbf{r}_{op}(x'_0, y'_0)$ .*

187  
 188 Given an arbitrary axis orientation  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}$ , one can setup a corresponding loop  
 189 coordinates according to Eq.(1). The loop center is at  $\mathbf{r}_{op}(x'_0, y'_0)$ . As a result,  
 190 the angle  $\alpha_i$  between  $\mathbf{b}_{ip}$  and the radial orientation  $\mathbf{r}_{ip} - \mathbf{r}_{op}$  can be derived as

191 
$$\sin \alpha_i = \frac{(\mathbf{r}_{ip} - \mathbf{r}_{op}) \times \mathbf{b}_{ip}}{|\mathbf{r}_{ip} - \mathbf{r}_{op}| |\mathbf{b}_{ip}|} = \frac{(x'_i - x'_0) b'_{yi} - (y'_i - y'_0) b'_{xi}}{\sqrt{b'^2_{xi} + b'^2_{yi}} \sqrt{(x'_i - x'_0)^2 + (y'_i - y'_0)^2}} \quad (2)$$

192 If the projected field lines are perfectly radially orientated,  $\mathbf{b}_{ip}$  should be parallel or  
 193 anti-parallel to  $\mathbf{r}_{ip} - \mathbf{r}_{op}$ , and  $\sin \alpha_i$  should be equal to zero.

194 Thus one can construct a residue equation as

195 
$$\alpha = \frac{1}{N} \sum_i a \sin(|\sin \alpha_i|) \quad (3)$$

196 Where,  $N$  is total number of the sampled data points, and  $i=1, 2, \dots, N$ . Because  $x'_i$ ,  
 197  $y'_i$ ,  $b'_{xi}$ , and  $b'_{yi}$  are dependent on  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}(\theta, \varphi)$ ,  $\alpha$  is actually the function of four  
 198 parameters which depends on the axis orientation  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}(\theta, \varphi)$  and the loop center  $\mathbf{r}_{op}$   
 199  $(x'_0, y'_0)$ . In other words, the optimum of  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}$  and  $\mathbf{r}_{op}$  should make  $\alpha$  reach the global  
 200 minimum in the parameter space.

201 To search the global minimum of  $\alpha$  quickly, we further separate  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}$  and  $\mathbf{r}_{op}$  to  
 202 simplify the calculation of Eq.(3).

203 In the equatorial plane of loop coordinates, at time  $t_i$ , the linear equation for the  
 204 field line crossing the point  $\mathbf{r}_{ip}(x'_i \hat{\mathbf{x}}_{loop}, y'_i \hat{\mathbf{y}}_{loop})$  could be written as

205 
$$b'_{yi}(x - x'_i) - b'_{xi}(y - y'_i) = 0, \quad (4)$$

206 when the recorded field vector is  $\mathbf{b}_{ip}(b'_{xi} \hat{\mathbf{x}}_{loop}, b'_{yi} \hat{\mathbf{y}}_{loop})$ .

207 For the ideal loop field, all the lines should ideally intersect at the loop center  
 208  $\mathbf{r}_{op}(x'_0 \hat{\mathbf{x}}_{dipole}, y'_0 \hat{\mathbf{y}}_{dipole})$  in the equatorial plane. Thus, for any field line, we have

209 
$$b'_{yi}(x'_0 - x'_i) - b'_{xi}(y'_0 - y'_i) = 0. \quad (5)$$

210 Considering the similar formula of Eq. (5) for the other satellite positions, we could  
 211 generally write Eq. (5) as the form  $AX = Y$ , where,

$$212 \quad A = \begin{pmatrix} b'_{y1} & -b'_{x1} \\ b'_{y2} & -b'_{x2} \\ \dots & \dots \\ b'_{yN} & -b'_{xN} \end{pmatrix}, X = \begin{pmatrix} x'_0 \\ y'_0 \end{pmatrix}, Y = \begin{pmatrix} x'_1 b'_{y1} - y'_1 b'_{x1} \\ x'_2 b'_{y2} - y'_2 b'_{x2} \\ \dots \\ x'_N b'_{yN} - y'_N b'_{xN} \end{pmatrix} \quad (6)$$

213 The optimum solution of  $X$  is

$$214 \quad X = (A^T A)^{-1} A^T Y \quad (7)$$

215 , where  $A^T A$  is a  $2 \times 2$  matrix.

216 Obviously, the optimum  $X$  is a function of the axis orientation  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}(\theta_0, \varphi_0)$ .

217 Substituting  $X$  into Eq. (3), one can obtain the minimum of  $\alpha$ ,  $\alpha_{min}$ , for a given axis

218 orientation. In other words,  $\alpha_{min}$  is a function of axis orientation  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}(\theta_0, \varphi_0)$ . Thus,

219 one can search the global minimum of  $\alpha_{min}$  quickly in the 2-D map constituted by  $\theta_0$

220 and  $\varphi_0$  to find the optimum axis orientation  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}(\theta_0, \varphi_0)$  as well as the corresponding

221 loop center  $\mathbf{r}_{op} (x'_0 \hat{\mathbf{x}}_{loop}, y'_0 \hat{\mathbf{y}}_{loop})$ .

222 Since both the parallel and anti-parallel directions of  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}$  are valid axis orientations,

223 we choose the one as the final  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}$  along which the loop field satisfies the

224 right-handed system. Taking the geomagnetic field as example, the polar angle of  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}$

225 should be  $\theta_0 \geq 90^\circ$ , because the field diverges in southern hemisphere.

### 226 2.3.The loop radius

227 Once the axis orientation is determined, we can also solve the loop radius.

228 The ideal magnetic field of a circular current loop is analytically calculated in

229 textbooks [e.g. Knoepfel, 2000]. At time  $t_i$  along the trajectory, the analytic radial and

230 axial field components are written respectively as follows:

$$231 \quad \tilde{B}_r = \frac{\mu_0 I}{4\pi} \frac{2 \cos \theta_i}{\sin \theta_i \sqrt{a^2 + R_i^2 + 2aR_i \sin \theta_i}} \left[ \frac{a^2 + R_i^2}{a^2 + R_i^2 - 2aR_i \sin \theta_i} E - K \right], \quad (8)$$

$$232 \quad \tilde{B}_{iz} = \frac{\mu_0 I}{4\pi} \frac{2}{\sqrt{a^2 + R_i^2 + 2aR_i \sin \theta_i}} \left[ \frac{a^2 - R_i^2}{a^2 + R_i^2 - 2aR_i \sin \theta_i} E + K \right] \quad (9)$$

233 where,  $I$  is the electric current,  $a$  is the loop radius,  $R_i$  is the radial distance of  
 234 spacecraft to the loop center,  $\theta_i (0^\circ \leq \theta_i \leq 180^\circ)$  is the polar angle of  $\mathbf{R}_i$  deviated  
 235 from the loop axis orientation  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}$ , and the overhead “~” means that the field  
 236 components are expressed in the loop-centered cylindrical coordinates (it is the same  
 237 with the loop coordinates as defined in Eq.(1) but the origin becomes the loop center).  
 238  $E$  and  $K$  are the elliptical functions, that is,

$$239 \quad \left\{ \begin{array}{l} K = \int_0^{\pi/2} \frac{dx}{\sqrt{1 - k^2 \sin^2 x}} = \frac{\pi}{2} \left[ 1 + \left(\frac{1}{2}\right)^2 k^2 + \left(\frac{1 \cdot 3}{2 \cdot 4}\right)^2 k^4 + \left(\frac{1 \cdot 3 \cdot 5}{2 \cdot 4 \cdot 6}\right)^2 k^6 + \dots \right] \\ E = \int_0^{\pi/2} \sqrt{1 - k^2 \sin^2 x} dx = \frac{\pi}{2} \left[ 1 - \left(\frac{1}{2}\right)^2 k^2 + \left(\frac{1 \cdot 3}{2 \cdot 4}\right)^2 \frac{k^4}{3} + \left(\frac{1 \cdot 3 \cdot 5}{2 \cdot 4 \cdot 6}\right)^2 \frac{k^6}{5} + \dots \right] \\ k^2 = \frac{4aR_i \sin \theta_i}{a^2 + R_i^2 + 2aR_i \sin \theta_i} \end{array} \right. \quad (10)$$

240 In Eqs.(8-10), the radial distance  $R_i$  and the polar angle  $\theta_i$  are computed  
 241 respectively as

$$242 \quad R_i = |\mathbf{r}_i - \mathbf{r}_0| = \sqrt{(x'_i - x'_0)^2 + (y'_i - y'_0)^2 + (z'_i - z'_0)^2}, \quad (11)$$

$$243 \quad \text{and } \theta_i = a \cos \left( \frac{(\mathbf{r}_i - \mathbf{r}_0) \cdot \hat{\mathbf{M}}}{R_i} \right) \quad (12)$$

244 Since  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}$ ,  $x'_0$ , and  $y'_0$  have been derived in subsection 2.2, unknown parameters in

245  $\tilde{B}_{ir}$  and  $\tilde{B}_{iz}$  are  $a$ ,  $z'_0$ , and  $I$ , while  $I$  does not appear in the unit field vector  $\tilde{\mathbf{b}}_i$ :

$$246 \quad \tilde{\mathbf{b}}_i = \frac{\tilde{B}_{ir}}{B_i} \hat{\mathbf{r}} + \frac{\tilde{B}_{iz}}{B_i} \hat{\mathbf{M}}, \quad B_i = \sqrt{\tilde{B}_{ir}^2 + \tilde{B}_{iz}^2} \quad (13)$$

247 , where the unit radial vector is  $\hat{\mathbf{r}} = \hat{\mathbf{x}}_{loop} \cos \varphi_i + \hat{\mathbf{y}}_{loop} \sin \varphi_i$ , and the azimuthal angle is

$$248 \quad \varphi_i = a \cos \left( \frac{(x'_i - r'_{0x})}{\sqrt{(x'_i - r'_{0x})^2 + (y'_i - r'_{0y})^2}} \right) \quad \text{when} \quad y'_i - r'_{0y} > 0 \quad , \quad \text{and}$$

$$249 \quad \varphi_i = 2\pi - a \cos \left( \frac{(x'_i - r'_{0x})}{\sqrt{(x'_i - r'_{0x})^2 + (y'_i - r'_{0y})^2}} \right) \quad \text{when} \quad y'_i - r'_{0y} < 0.$$

250 On the other hands, the actually recorded unit field vector is  $\mathbf{b}_i = \frac{\mathbf{B}_i}{|\mathbf{B}_i|}$ , thus the  
 251 optimum loop radius,  $a$ , and the shift of loop center along axis,  $z'_0$ , should make  $\mathbf{b}_i$   
 252 parallel to  $\tilde{\mathbf{b}}_i$  for the best fit solution.

253 As a result, the angel between  $\mathbf{b}_i$  and  $\tilde{\mathbf{b}}_i$ , defined as  $\gamma_i$ , is a function of  $a$  and  $z'_0$ ,  
 254 that is,

$$255 \quad \gamma_i = a \cos(\mathbf{b}_i \cdot \tilde{\mathbf{b}}_i) \quad (14)$$

256 Thus, one can construct a residue function as

$$257 \quad \varepsilon(a, z'_0) = \frac{1}{N} \sum_i \gamma_i \quad (15)$$

258 Obviously,  $\varepsilon$  is a function of  $a$  and  $z'_0$ . The optimum  $a$  and  $z'_0$  should make  $\varepsilon$   
 259 reach the global minimum in the parameter space. Thus, one can search the global  
 260 minimum of  $\varepsilon$  quickly in the 2-D map constituted by  $a$  and  $z'_0$  to find the  
 261 correspondingly optimum values of  $a$  and  $z'_0$ .

262 Note that, with the knowledge of derived  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}$ , the inferred location of loop center  
 263  $\mathbf{r}_0(x'_0 \hat{\mathbf{x}}_{loop}, y'_0 \hat{\mathbf{y}}_{loop}, z'_0 \hat{\mathbf{z}}_{loop})$  in the geocentered dipole coordinates can be transformed  
 264 into the geographic coordinates  $\mathbf{r}_0(x_0 \hat{\mathbf{x}}, y_0 \hat{\mathbf{y}}, z_0 \hat{\mathbf{z}})$  via Eq. (1).

#### 265 2.4. The electric current of the loop

266 Considering the measured field vector  $\mathbf{B}_i$ , and the field vector induced by the  
 267 current loop

$$268 \quad \mathbf{B}_{i0} = \tilde{B}_{ix} \hat{\mathbf{x}}_{loop} + \tilde{B}_{iy} \hat{\mathbf{y}}_{loop} + \tilde{B}_{iz} \hat{\mathbf{M}}, \quad (16)$$

269 where  $\tilde{B}_{ix} = \tilde{B}_{ir} \cos \varphi_i$ ,  $\tilde{B}_{iy} = \tilde{B}_{ir} \sin \varphi_i$ , we can construct a dimensionless parameter

$$270 \quad \delta = \frac{1}{N} \sum_i \frac{|\mathbf{B}_i - \mathbf{B}_{i0}|}{|\mathbf{B}_i|}, \quad (17)$$

271 to evaluate the deviation of loop field  $\mathbf{B}_{i0}$ , from the actual recorded magnetic field  $\mathbf{B}_i$ .

272 Since the optimum axis-orientation, the loop center, and the loop radius have been  
273 inferred separately in the above subsections,  $\delta$  becomes the function of only current,  $I$ ,  
274 and the optimum current can be searched when  $\delta$  reaches the minimum.

275 The derived loop parameters  $\{x'_{0m}, y'_{0m}, z'_{0m}, \theta_{0m}, \varphi_{0m}, a_m, I_m\}$  indeed make  $\delta$  reach  
276 its extremum (see Text S1 in Supplement).

## 277 **2.5. The summary of technique**

278 Based on the above analysis, the technique steps can be simply summarized as the  
279 following:

- 280 1. The orientation of the field structure is determined by the loop axis orientation and  
281 the loop center. Thus, axis orientation and loop center  $(x'_{0m}, y'_{0m}, \theta_{0m}, \varphi_{0m})$  can be  
282 searched out firstly by the projection of the measured field vectors.
- 283 2. Once the loop axis is determined, the geometry configuration of loop field is only  
284 determined by the loop radius and the axis-shift of loop center. Thus, the loop  
285 radius  $(z'_{0m}, a_m)$  can be resolved by the analysis of field's geometry.
- 286 3. Once loop axis, loop center, and the loop radius are solved, the optimum electric  
287 current ( $I_m$ ) can be inverted finally by minimizing the deviation of loop field from  
288 the sampled field vectors.

289 Certainly, to make the inversion more reasonable, one may have to preprocess the  
290 data to guarantee that the sampled field data is least contaminated by the external

291 sources, e.g. ionospheric current, before applying the technique.

292 Test of this technique for, an ideal circular loop field is conducted in Supplement,  
293 where the technique successively reproduced the full loop parameters from data along  
294 arbitrary trajectory (see Text S2 and Figure S1 to S5 in Supplement). With the same  
295 field dataset, the comparison between our technique results and the traditional  
296 least-square fitting method demonstrates that our method indeed works better than the  
297 least-square fitting (see Text S3 in Supplement).

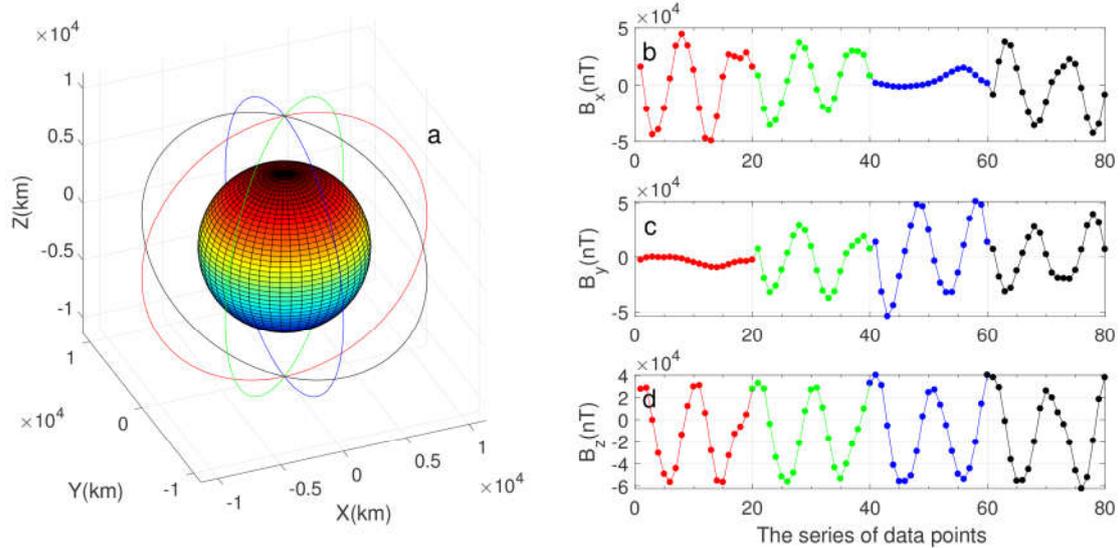
298

### 299 **3. Application to IGRF model**

300 The International Geomagnetic Reference Field (IGRF) is a series of mathematical  
301 models describing the large-scale internal part of the Earth's magnetic field between  
302 epochs 1900 A.D. and the present (Zmuda 1971). Here, to show the technique  
303 applicability and the specific inversion procedures, as an example, we apply the  
304 technique to the IGRF model of 12<sup>th</sup> generation [Thébault et al., 2015]. We could  
305 make the comparison of the yielded loop parameters with the well-known eccentric  
306 dipole parameters as inferred from the internal Gauss coefficients of IGRF model.

307 To make the sampled data evenly from IGRF, we construct four synthetic polar  
308 circular orbits with same controllable altitude. As shown in Figure 3a, the four polar  
309 orbits cross the same pole and cover the longitude  $0^{\circ}$ - $180^{\circ}$ ,  $45^{\circ}$ - $225^{\circ}$ ,  $90^{\circ}$ - $270^{\circ}$ , and  
310  $135^{\circ}$ - $315^{\circ}$ , respectively in the geocentric coordinates. Along each orbit, the spacecraft  
311 samples 20 data points evenly of geomagnetic field from IGRF model. In total, 80  
312 data points are obtained from the four orbits. Note that, we use all the Gauss

313 coefficients of IGRF model to compute the sampled field vectors. The IGRF model at  
 314 the time 2015-01-01 00:00:00 is arbitrarily adopted.



315  
 316 *Figure 3. The panel in left column shows the four circular polar orbits with*  
 317 *controallable altitude in geocentric coordinates(panel a). In the right column(panel*  
 318 *b-d), panels from top to bottom show the series of sampled Bx, By and Bz component,*  
 319 *respectly from IGRF model at the time 2015-01-01 00:00:00 when altitudes of the*  
 320 *four orbits are zero. The different colored data points correspond to the different*  
 321 *colored orbits shown in panel a.*

322

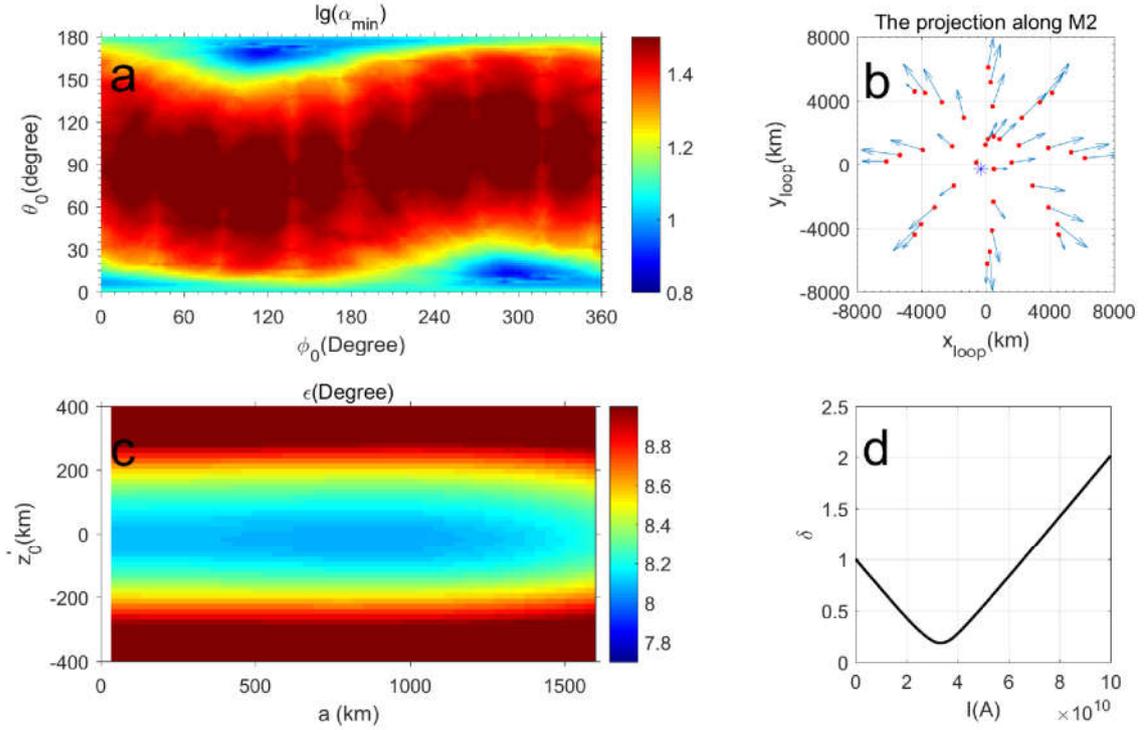
### 323 3.1. The case when orbit altitude is zero

324 We may first consider the case when altitude is zero. In this case, the obtained  
 325 geomagnetic field data from IGRF could be seen as being sampled on the Earth's  
 326 surface. Figure 3b shows the series of the sampled 80 magnetic vectors of the four  
 327 circular orbits in the geocentric coordinates.

328 With the sampled magnetic field, we calculate  $\alpha_{min}$  for all possible orientations of  
 329  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}(\theta_0, \varphi_0)$  using Eqs. (2-7). In Figure 4a, the 2-D distribution of  $\alpha_{min}$  is shown in the  
 330 map constituted by  $\theta_0$  and  $\varphi_0$ .

331 Obviously, as expected, there are two local minima of  $\alpha_{min}$  present in Figure 4a,  
 332 because the two minima should correspond to the parallel and anti-parallel direction  
 333 of  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}$ . After reading the initial values of  $\theta_0$  and  $\varphi_0$  around the two minima, the two

334 candidate directions of  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}$ ,  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}_1$  and  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}_2$ , as well as the corresponding loop centers  
 335  $(x'_0, y'_0)$  are derived. The yielded  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}_1$  is  $(\theta_0=12.2^\circ, \varphi_0=297.5^\circ)$ , and  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}_2$  is  
 336  $(\theta_0=167.7^\circ, \varphi_0=113.1^\circ)$ , and both of them are nearly anti-parallel to each other.



337  
 338 *Figure 4. Panel a: The distribution of  $\alpha_{\min}$  (unit is degree). The logarithm of  $\alpha_{\min}$*   
 339 *plot in this panel. Panel b: The projection of magnetic field direction on the*  
 340 *equatorial plane of loop coordinates. The red dots represent the location of the*  
 341 *spacecraft with  $z'_i > 0$ , the blue star represents the loop center. Panel c: The 2-D*  
 342 *distribution of  $\epsilon$ . Panel d: The variation of  $\delta$  against  $I$ .*  
 343

344 To determine which one is the final direction of  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}$ , in Figure 4b, we show the  
 345 projection of magnetic field vectors on the equatorial plane, i.e.  $\mathbf{b}_{ip}$ , according to the  
 346 two candidate axis directions. The projections are only shown when the spacecraft is  
 347 at the hemisphere in which  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}$  is pointing away ( $z'_i > 0$ , or  $\mathbf{r}_i \cdot \hat{\mathbf{M}} > 0$ ). It is clear that,  
 348 in this hemisphere, the magnetic field vectors basically point radially outward along  
 349  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}_2$ , but inward along  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}_1$  (not shown here). Thus, we choose  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}_2$  as the final  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}$ ,

350 that is  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}(\theta_0=167.7^\circ, \varphi_0=113.1^\circ)$ . Accordingly, the components of loop center via Eq.  
351 (7) are calculated as  $x'_0 = -288.6$  km and  $y'_0 = -325.2$  km.

352 With the derived  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}$ ,  $x'_0$  and  $y'_0$ , Figure 7 shows the distribution of  $\varepsilon$  via  
353 Eq.(15) as a function of  $a$  and  $z'_0$ . With the initial value of  $z'_0$  and  $a$  read from  
354 Figure 4c ( $z'_0=0$ km,  $a=800$ km), the optimum value of  $z'_0$  and  $a$ , corresponding to  
355 the global minimum of  $\varepsilon$ , is found to be  $z'_0 = -24.5$  km, and  $a= 856$  km, respectively.

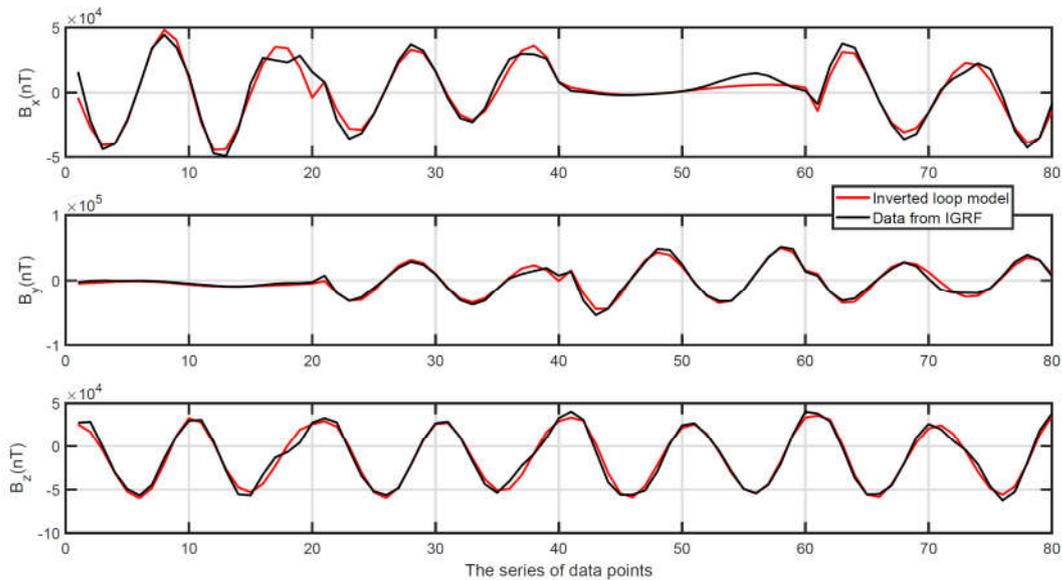
356 Finally, with the derived  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}$ ,  $x'_0, y'_0, z'_0$  and  $a$ , we calculate  $\delta$  via Eq. (17) with  
357 varied current  $I$ , and plot the variation of  $\delta$  against  $I$  in Figure 4d. The numerical  
358 calculation demonstrates that  $\delta$  reaches its minimum when  $I=3.32 \times 10^{10}$  A.

359 As a result, the estimated strength of magnetic moment is  $M=I\pi a^2=7.65 \times 10^{22}$  Am<sup>2</sup>,  
360 which is comparable to the dipole moment of IGRF ( $7.72 \times 10^{22}$  Am<sup>2</sup>). The minor  
361 discrepancy could owe to the impact of geomagnetic field anomaly on the sampled  
362 IGRF field at Earth's surface.

363 Using Eq. (1), the transformation of the loop center  $\mathbf{r}_0(x'_0 = -288.6, y'_0 = -325.2,$   
364  $z'_0 = -24.5)$  km in the loop coordinates into the Cartesian geographic coordinates  
365 yields  $\mathbf{r}_0(x_0 = -285.5, y_0 = 309.3, z_0 = 111.5)$  km.

366 Using the derived loop parameters, the loop field is calculated and shown in Figure  
367 5. Clearly, the inverted loop field shows well-consistence with the sampled IGRF field,  
368 which implies that the inverted parameters are reasonable.

369



370

371 *Figure 5. The comparison showing the sampled geomagnetic field from IGRF (black*  
 372 *lines) and the magnetic field inverted from the circular loop (red lines).*

373

374 The derived full loop parameters, the strength of magnetic moment, and the  
 375 inversion errors are tabulated in Table 1 respectively.

### 376 **3.2. The cases when orbit altitude is variable**

377 Considering the variable altitude, we repeat the same procedures to check how the  
 378 inversion results varied with orbit altitude. The calculated results for the other  
 379 altitudes are also tabulated in Table 1.

380 We find that, as the orbit altitude increases, the derived parameters are approaching  
 381 the values of eccentric dipole model with decreasing inversion errors. The results are  
 382 reasonable, because the field strength of the geomagnetic anomalies or non-dipole  
 383 components attenuates with altitude more quickly than that of dipole field, and the  
 384 field at the higher altitude is closer to the dipole field.

385 Nonetheless, at the very high altitude, as the case of the altitude of 50000km, the  
 386 sampled field is nearly identical to the dipole field with negligible loop radius. In this

387 case, the numerical inversion would probably fail. The solution of the negligible  
 388 radius cannot be achieved in the 2-D distribution of  $\varepsilon$ , unless the tolerance error of  
 389 numerical calculation is improved.

390

391 **Table 1.** The inverted loop parameters for the IGRF model of the year 2015

Altitude (km)	$x_0$ (km)	$y_0$ (km)	$z_0$ (km)	$a$ (km)	$I$ (*10 <sup>10</sup> A)	$M^a$ (*10 <sup>22</sup> Am <sup>2</sup> )	$\theta_0$ (°)	$\varphi_0$ (°)	$\alpha_{min}$ (°)	$\varepsilon$ (°)	$\delta$
0	-286	309	111	856	3.32	7.65	167.7	113.1	7.465	8.069	0.185
100	-274	320	95	817	3.66	7.67	167.8	118.0	7.261	7.917	0.179
500	-293	334	71	745	4.41	7.69	168.6	117.4	6.558	6.901	0.156
1000	-310	339	83	701	4.98	7.69	169.1	115.6	5.856	5.997	0.135
2000	-334	348	105	754	4.31	7.71	169.7	113.3	4.843	4.740	0.106
5000	-364	356	170	720	4.73	7.71	171.1	111.8	3.334	2.993	0.064
10000	-381	356	206	631	6.16	7.71	170.9	109.4	2.145	1.848	0.038
20000	-390	357	212	353	19.72	7.71	170.5	108.0	1.276	1.035	0.020
50000 <sup>b</sup>	~	~	~	~	~	~	170.4	107.5	0.581	~	~
ED <sup>c</sup>	-400	352	221	~	~	7.72	170.4	107.4	~	~	~

392 <sup>a</sup> The magnetic moment  $M$  is calculated as  $M=\pi I a^2$ .

393 <sup>b</sup> The inversion is failed, because the global minimum of  $\varepsilon$  cannot be found. Only the  
 394 derived axis-orientation is tabulated here.

395 <sup>c</sup> The eccentric dipole (ED) model is adopted, whose displacement of dipole center is  
 396 calculated only considering the first eight internal Gauss coefficients (See Eqs.(16-18)

397 in Fraser-Smith (1987)). Note, the direction of  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}$  is the same in both centered and  
 398 eccentric dipole models.

399

#### 400 **4. The application to geomagnetic field data of observatories**

401 Our method does not include the external field sources, such as the ionospheric and

402 magnetospheric currents (tens of nT), and the field induced by the internal induction

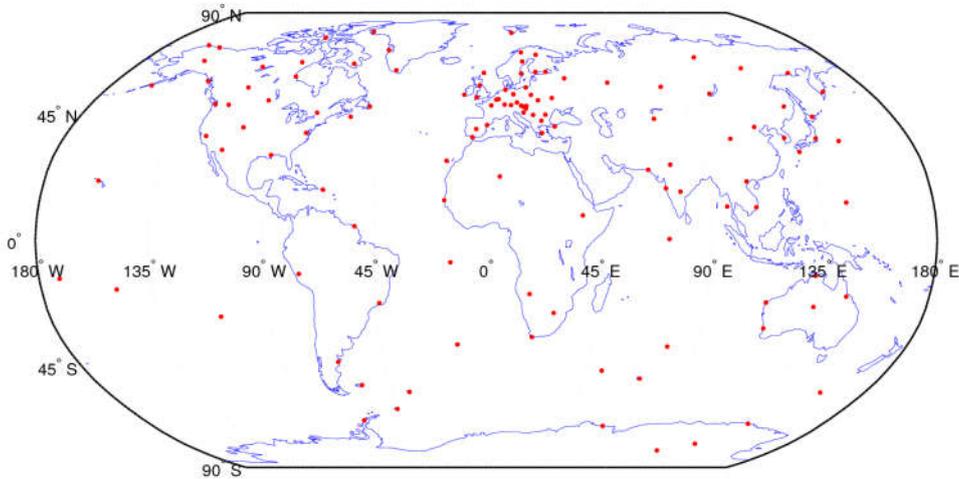
403 current due to transient temporal variation of external currents (amplitude is about

404 half of external field) [e.g. Chapman, 1919; Benkova, 1940]. These sources could be

405 seen as the data “noise” as recorded by geomagnetic observatories. Thus, we can

406 apply the technique to the original field data of geomagnetic observatories to check

407 the technique validity in the presence of “noise”.



408

409 *Figure 6. The distribution map of the used geomagnetic observatories.*

410

411 The used geomagnetic field dataset is from International Real-time Magnetic  
412 Observatory Network (INTERMAGNET) which can provide the geomagnetic field  
413 data of the global observatories. To facilitate the comparison with the inversion of  
414 IGRF field in Section 3, we set the time to sample the geomagnetic field data is at  
415 2015-01-01 00:00:00. The sampled dataset contains 123 data points from 123  
416 observatories (we sample one field vector at each observatory; see Table S2 in  
417 Supplement). The distribution map of these observatories is shown in Figure 6.

418 We tabulate the inverted parameters in Table 2 after performing the technique. The  
419 comparison with the test of IGRF’s field on Earth’s surface (see the fourth row of  
420 Table 2) shows that the inverted parameters from geomagnetic field data are basically  
421 the same with that from the test of IGRF model, which demonstrates that our  
422 technique is insensitive to the “noise” component of external currents. The results are  
423 reasonable, because the nominal “noise” amplitude due to the space current

424 disturbance is very minor, only about  $10^{-3}$  of the background geomagnetic field  
 425 strength.

426 Meanwhile, to check how much the inverted parameters being affected by the  
 427 regional distribution of observatories, as an example, we perform the technique only  
 428 considering the observatories in northern hemisphere. The inversion results  
 429 demonstrate that the loop parameters, especially the radius and current, are  
 430 significantly different from the parameters calculated from the global observatories  
 431 though the fitting errors are minor (see Table 2). The inversion results are  
 432 understandable, because the regional magnetic anomalies could become comparable  
 433 to the main dipole field, and the sampled data could be biased by these anomalies.

434 Therefore, to better apply the technique to geomagnetic field data, the sampled  
 435 geomagnetic observatories should distribute more evenly.

436

437 **Table 2.** The inverted single loop parameters based on the sampled dataset by  
 438 geomagnetic observatories at the moment of 2015-01-01 00:00:00. The format is the  
 439 same as Table 1.

Model case	$x_0$ (km)	$y_0$ (km)	$z_0$ (km)	$a$ (km)	$I$ (* $10^{10}$ A)	$M$ (* $10^{22}$ Am <sup>2</sup> )	$\theta_0$ (°)	$\varphi_0$ (°)	$\alpha_{min}$ (°)	$\varepsilon$ (°)	$\delta$
Global <sup>a</sup>	-213	403	128	892	3.08	7.71	172.3	109.2	5.313	8.414	0.175
Northern Hemisphere <sup>b</sup>	-105	127	348	1632	0.87	7.25	176.5	123.8	4.323	8.089	0.149
IGRF data <sup>c</sup>	-286	309	111	856	3.32	7.65	167.7	113.1	7.465	8.069	0.185

440 <sup>a</sup> The inversion from the dataset of global 123 magnetic observatories

441 <sup>b</sup> The inversion from the dataset of 95 magnetic observatories in Northern Hemisphere

442 <sup>c</sup> Same with the first row of Table 1.

443

## 444 5. Comparison with previous' studies

445 Zidarov and Petrova [1974] fitted the geomagnetic data of 61 magnetic

446 observatories during the period 1932-1960 with one loop model (see Table IV of  
 447 Zidarov [1985]). Peddie [1979] used 1236 magnetic field component values, or 412  
 448 magnetic field vectors near the surface of Earth at the year of 1975 to fit the current  
 449 loop models. Each field vector was computed from each local spherical harmonic  
 450 model. Because no specific information of the used dataset was provided by Zidarov  
 451 and Petrova [1974], and by Peddie [1979], it is difficult to get the same dataset and  
 452 make direct comparison with their results.

453

454 **Table 3.** The inverted loop parameters for the IGRF model of the year 1960

Method	$x_0$ (km)	$y_0$ (km)	$z_0$ (km)	$a$ (km)	$I$ (*10 <sup>10</sup> A)	$M$ (*10 <sup>22</sup> Am <sup>2</sup> )	$\theta_0$ (°)	$\varphi_0$ (°)	$\alpha$ (°)	$\varepsilon$ (°)	$\delta$
Our technique	-309	192	86	824	3.69	7.88	167.6	109.4	7.928	7.179	0.170
ZP <sup>a</sup>	-263	263	108	1391	1.33	8.51	169.2	106.8	8.248	7.054	0.169
ED <sup>b</sup>	-366	213	122	~	~	8.03	168.6	110.5	~		~

455 <sup>a</sup> The loop parameters are adopted from Zidarov and Petrova (ZP) [1974]. Using these  
 456 loop parameters, the errors  $\alpha$ ,  $\varepsilon$ , and  $\delta$  indicating the deviation of the loop field  
 457 from the sampled IGRF field are calculated by Eq. (3), Eq.(15), and Eq. (17),  
 458 respectively.

459 <sup>b</sup> The eccentric dipole (ED) center is adopted from Fraser-Smith using Gauss  
 460 coefficients[1987].

461

462 **Table 4.** The inverted loop parameters for the IGRF model of the year 1975. The  
 463 format is the same with Table 3.

Method	$x_0$ (km)	$y_0$ (km)	$z_0$ (km)	$a$ (km)	$I$ (*10 <sup>10</sup> A)	$M$ (*10 <sup>22</sup> Am <sup>2</sup> )	$\theta_0$ (°)	$\varphi_0$ (°)	$\alpha$ (°)	$\varepsilon$ (°)	$\delta$
Our technique	-300	210	108	643	6.01	7.81	167.7	110.8	8.020	7.321	0.174
Peddie <sup>a</sup>	-318	259	124	1021	2.43	7.95	169.2	108.7	8.25	7.229	0.171
ED <sup>b</sup>	-379	237	160	~	~	7.94	168.8	109.5	~		~

464 <sup>a</sup> The parameters are adopted from the unstrained single loop model of Peddie [1979].

465 <sup>b</sup> It is adopted from Fraser-Smith[1987] using Gauss coefficients.

466

467 Here, to show a simple comparison with Zidarov and Petrova [1974], and with

468 Peddie [1979], we just invert the loop parameters based on the IGRF field at the  
469 moment of 1960-01-01 00:00:00 and 1975-01-01 00:00:00. Our inversion results are  
470 tabulated in Table 3 and Table 4, respectively. In our inversion, the altitudes of the  
471 four circular orbits in Figure 3 are assumed to be zero, so that the sampled data could  
472 be seen as the measured field on Earth's surface.

473 From Table 3 and Table 4, we can see that our inverted parameters show some  
474 differences, especially the loop radius and current, with that derived by Zidarov and  
475 Petrova [1974], and by Peddie [1979]. The reasons for the difference, in addition to  
476 the inversion methods, we believe it could be induced also by the different field  
477 datasets since the bias of magnetic observatories distribution could significantly affect  
478 the inversion (see Section 4).

479 It is worthy to note that, by applying to the same sampled IGRF field dataset,  
480 although the parameters by Zidarov and Petrova [1974], and by Peddie [1979] yield  
481 comparable error  $\delta$  with ours, their derived  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}$  shows larger error  $\sigma$ . In other words,  
482 the different sets of loop parameters may yield comparable  $\delta$  for a same field dataset.  
483 Thus, it is insufficient to evaluate the fitting by minimizing error for only one  
484 criterion [e.g. Zidarov and Petrova, 1974; Zidarov, 1985; Peddie, 1979], but need  
485 comprehensively several criteria such as for axis orientation, field geometry, and the  
486 relative deviation of field strength.

487

## 488 **6. Prospect of further applications**

489 In the further technique applications, several tips below are worthy to be noticed:

- 490 1) The technique we presented based on Eqs. (2-7) to find the axis orientation could  
491 be also applied to the other internal magnetic sources whose current systems are  
492 azimuthally symmetric, e.g. the disk-like currents, the spherical shell-like, and the  
493 ball-like currents etc., because the field generated by such current systems has no  
494 azimuthal component in principle.
- 495 2) Our loop model can be reduced easily to the dipole model by reducing the loop  
496 radius  $a$  to zero. In this case, only six parameters are needed to be inverted (two  
497 parameters for the axis orientation, three parameters for the dipole center, and one  
498 parameter for the amplitude of dipole moment). Eqs. (2-7) to find the axis  
499 orientation still holds on for the dipole model, while the angle  $\gamma$  defined in Eq. (14)  
500 becomes function of only  $z'_0$ . After solving axis orientation and dipole center, the  
501 dipole moment strength can be determined similarly by Eq. (17). The dipole  
502 model could be considered when the optimum loop radius cannot be searched.
- 503 3) The algorithm can be extrapolated to the model of currents on a spherical surface,  
504 which could be closer to the real dynamo current systems than the loop model. It  
505 also needs seven parameters to characterize the spherical surface model (two  
506 parameters for the axis orientation, three parameters for the spherical center, one  
507 parameter for the spherical radius, and one parameter for the surface current  
508 density if it is only varied with latitude). The technique application to the spherical  
509 surface model will be studied in next step.
- 510 4) The single loop could be extrapolated to the multiple loops to include the  
511 contributions of crustal fields or local anomaly fields. If we label the measured

512 magnetic field vector as  $\mathbf{B}$ , the magnetic field vector expected from the single loop  
513 is  $\mathbf{B}_{L1}$ , then we would have the deviation  $\Delta_1 = \mathbf{B} - \mathbf{B}_{L1}$ . We can repeat the procedures  
514 to fit  $\Delta_1$  using the second current loop. If the field from the second loop is labeled  
515 as  $\mathbf{B}_{L2}$ , the resulted field deviation becomes  $\Delta_2 = \Delta_1 - \mathbf{B}_{L2}$ . We can iterate the  
516 algorithm until the deviation becomes acceptable. The technique of multiple loops  
517 could be applied also to model the planetary crustal fields or the regional anomaly  
518 fields, like the Lunar crustal fields and Martian crustal fields. We will try the  
519 model of multiple loops in next studies.

520 5) Our loop model also benefits the study of secular variation of geomagnetic field.  
521 By application to the field dataset of long period, the evolved loop parameters  
522 over the long period could probe the secular variation of geomagnetic or planetary  
523 field. We could survey the 100 years variation of geomagnetic field by continue  
524 the IGRF test in future study.

525 6) Geomagnetic palaeosecular variation based on current loop model were conducted  
526 in previous studies [e.g. Roy and Wagner, 1982], but the initial estimates of  
527 parameters are required in the fitting. Thus, it is expected that, with our new  
528 technique, the application into the paleomagnetic data is worth re-examining.

529

## 530 **7. Discussions**

531 We have to remind that the inverted parameters depend strongly on the sampled  
532 field dataset. Therefore, when deep dynamo (the poloidal field component) is  
533 modeled, field components of crustal field in the dataset should be negligible. In this

534 case, our technique could be better applied to the dataset with higher altitude, e.g. the  
535 magnetometer data of spacecraft (such as Swarm mission) after subtracting the  
536 external field, because the crustal fields would attenuate quickly with altitude.

537 It is noteworthy that, since the observed field is the integral product of all the  
538 current sources, the magnetic inversion usually has multi-solutions. One would  
539 probably never be able to separate the real interior current sources exactly, no matter  
540 how perfect and complete the magnetic field models above planetary surface are built  
541 [see page 42 of Merrill, McElhinny, & McFadden, 1996]. Therefore, although our  
542 technique works well to invert the loop model, it should be emphasized and cautioned  
543 that the current loop model we addressed here cannot be the absolute pattern of  
544 interior currents, and the obtained loop parameters could be only seen as the  
545 equivalent parameters of the whole internal current patterns.

546 Considering the nonuniqueness of inversion solution, we have to interpret the  
547 physical meanings of the yielded loop parameters carefully. Our inversion results  
548 show that the loop center is eccentric, and displaced towards Eastern Hemisphere. The  
549 yielded displacement of loop center could not be a trivial output. The dynamo  
550 simulations showed that the displacement could be caused by the lopsided inner core  
551 growth [Olson and Deguen, 2012], and the displacement of loop center may indicate  
552 that Earth's inner core is solidifying in the western hemisphere and melting in the east  
553 [Bergman, 2010].

554 Both tests of IGRF field and geomagnetic field of observatories show that the  
555 inferred equivalent loop radius is about 700-900 km (see Tables 1-3). This result

556 appears unreasonable, because it may indicate that the geodynamo currents can extend  
557 deeper into the inner solid core (the radius of solid core is about 1265km). Our test  
558 shows that the inversion with source of current flowing on a spherical surface would  
559 result in loop radius smaller than the spherical radius, and the successful run of  
560 inversion implies that the surface current should concentrate more in magnetic  
561 equator than that regulated by  $\sin\theta$  ( $\theta$  is magnetic colatitude) (see Text S4, Figure S6  
562 and Table S1 in Supplement). Thus, if the real dynamo currents can be well-seen  
563 flowing on spherical surface (e.g. the surface of inner core), the loop with radius  
564 smaller than the inner core radius could make sense. Meanwhile, the successful  
565 inversion of loop radius may indicate that the surface current would concentrate more  
566 near the spherical equator than that regulated by  $\sin\theta$ .

567 To develop the inversion technique of more plausible spherical surface model  
568 should be considered in next study.

569

## 570 **8. Conclusions**

571 In this paper, we developed a new technique to invert the geomagnetic field based  
572 on a single circular current loop model. The inverted loop parameters are meaningful  
573 to interpret the geometric characteristics of deep dynamo currents. This technique is  
574 able to effectively separate and solve the loop parameters successively, that is, the full  
575 optimum parameters can be quickly searched, showing advantage over the previous  
576 least-square fitting method. Model is examined against geomagnetic field (both IGRF  
577 models and the measured geomagnetic field of observatories) to demonstrate the

578 reasonability and feasibility of this technique. To reduce the influence of the local  
579 magnetic anomaly, the technique is suggested to be applied at higher altitude. Not  
580 only is the loop algorithm flexible to be reduced to a dipole model, but also it is able  
581 to be extrapolated to a spherical surface model.

582

## 583 **Declarations**

584

### 585 **List of abbreviations**

586 SHA: Apherical Harmonic Analysis

587 IGRF: International Geomagnetic Reference Field

588 ED: Eccentric Dipole

589 INTERMAGNET: International Real-time Magnetic Observatory Network

590

### 591 **Availability of data and materials**

592 The IGRF model used in this paper is available at the website

593 <https://www.ngdc.noaa.gov/IAGA/vmod/igrf.html>. The global geomagnetic field data

594 in INTERMAGNET can be accessed at <http://www.intermagnet.org/index-eng.php>.

595 The Matlab code used in this study are available on request.

596

### 597 **Competing interests**

598 The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

599

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606

607 **Authors' contributions**

608 ZR designed and conducted this study. MY, DK, and JC helped to edit the text. All  
609 authors read and approved the final manuscript.

610

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612 The IGRF model used in this paper is available at the website  
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619

620 **Supplementary Information**

621 **Additional file 1:**

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624 **Text S3.** Comparison with the non-linear fitting method.

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629 **Figure S3.** The projection of magnetic field direction on the equatorial plane of loop  
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631 arrows are the projected directions of sampled field vectors, and the red square  
632 represents the loop center.

633 **Figure S4.** The 2-D distribution of  $\varepsilon$ .

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640 on 2015-01-01 00:00:00. The columns from left to the right show the IAGA name of  
641 observatories, the latitude and longitude of observatories, the northward (X), the  
642 eastward (Y), the downward (Z) component, and the field strength (F) of geomagnetic  
643 field in the local geographic coordinates, respectively. The unavailable data is  
644 assigned as 99999. The field data can be also accessible at the website  
645 <http://www.intermagnet.org/index-eng.php>

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# Supporting Information for

## New technique to diagnose the geomagnetic field based on the single circular current loop model

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Table S1

Table S2

### Introduction

This supplementary information contains additional details of the technique tests and the geomagnetic field dataset that we present in the paper. We provide the theoretic proof that the inverted parameters from our technique can make  $\delta$  reach its extremum (Text S1). We apply the technique to the ideal circular loop field, and show that this technique is able to invert the full loop parameters exactly (Text S2, Figure S1 to S5). We compare the inversion results with the traditional least-square fitting method (Text S3). We test the

technique when the magnetic source is current flowing on a spherical surface (Text S4, Table S1). Table S2 lists the geomagnetic field dataset used in Section 4.

### Text S1.

#### **The mathematical proof of the extremum of $\delta$**

The dimensionless error  $\delta$  defined in Eq. (17) of body text is, in principle, the function of the full loop parameters  $\{x'_0, y'_0, z'_0, \theta_0, \varphi_0, a, I\}$ . Here, we show that, the derived loop parameters  $\{x'_{0m}, y'_{0m}, z'_{0m}, \theta_{0m}, \varphi_{0m}, a_m, I_m\}$  from our technique indeed make  $\delta$  reach its extremum.

Because  $\alpha$  in Eq.(3) is the function of  $\{x'_0, y'_0, \theta_0, \varphi_0\}$ ,  $\alpha_{\min}$  is the function of  $\{\theta_0, \varphi_0\}$ , and  $\varepsilon$  in Eq.(15) is the function of  $\{z'_0, a\}$ ,  $\delta$  is actually the function of  $\{\sigma, \varepsilon, I\}$ . The extremum of  $\delta$  is reached when all the partial differential solutions of  $\delta$  equal zero.

Obviously, when  $x'_0 = x'_{0m}$ ,  $y'_0 = y'_{0m}$ , we have  $\frac{\partial \delta}{\partial x'_0} = \frac{\partial \delta}{\partial \alpha} \frac{\partial \alpha}{\partial x'_0} = 0$  and  $\frac{\partial \delta}{\partial y'_0} = \frac{\partial \delta}{\partial \alpha} \frac{\partial \alpha}{\partial y'_0} = 0$ .

Similarly, when  $x'_0 = x'_{0m}$ ,  $y'_0 = y'_{0m}$ ,  $\theta_0 = \theta_{0m}$ ,  $\varphi_0 = \varphi_{0m}$ , we have  $\frac{\partial \delta}{\partial \theta_0} = \frac{\partial \delta}{\partial \alpha} \frac{\partial \alpha}{\partial \alpha_{\min}} \frac{\partial \alpha_{\min}}{\partial \theta_0} = 0$ , and  $\frac{\partial \delta}{\partial \varphi_0} = \frac{\partial \delta}{\partial \alpha} \frac{\partial \alpha}{\partial \alpha_{\min}} \frac{\partial \alpha_{\min}}{\partial \varphi_0} = 0$ . In the same way, when

$x'_0 = x'_{0m}$ ,  $y'_0 = y'_{0m}$ ,  $\theta_0 = \theta_{0m}$ ,  $\varphi_0 = \varphi_{0m}$ ,  $z'_0 = z'_{0m}$ ,  $a = a_m$ , we have  $\frac{\partial \delta}{\partial z'_0} = \frac{\partial \delta}{\partial \varepsilon} \frac{\partial \varepsilon}{\partial z'_0} = 0$  and

$\frac{\partial \delta}{\partial a} = \frac{\partial \delta}{\partial \varepsilon} \frac{\partial \varepsilon}{\partial a} = 0$ . Finally, when  $x'_0 = x'_{0m}$ ,  $y'_0 = y'_{0m}$ ,  $\theta_0 = \theta_{0m}$ ,  $\varphi_0 = \varphi_{0m}$ ,  $z'_0 = z'_{0m}$ ,  $a = a_m$ ,

$I = I_m$ , we have  $\frac{\partial \delta}{\partial I} = 0$ .

In other words, the loop parameters  $\{x'_{0m}, y'_{0m}, z'_{0m}, \theta_{0m}, \varphi_{0m}, a_m, I_m\}$  from our technique can make all the partial differential solutions of  $\delta$  equal zero, and  $\delta$  must reach its extremum with the derived loop parameters.

### Text S2.

#### **Inversion with magnetic source of single loop**

To test the validity of this technique, we construct a circular current loop model with given parameters to generate the loop field which is sampled by a virtual spacecraft along

an arbitrary trajectory. If the algorithm of technique is valid, the application to the sampled dataset should be able to invert the loop parameters exactly.

The input loop parameters are like this: the location of loop center is at  $\mathbf{r}_0$  ( $x_0=0.1$ ,  $y_0=0.2$ ,  $z_0=0.5$ ) m, the loop radius is  $a=0.5$ m, the carried electric current is  $I=0.35$ A, and the loop axis orientation is  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}(\theta_0=60^\circ, \varphi_0=40^\circ)$ .

Using these loop parameters, the sampled magnetic field data can be analytically computed via Eqs. (8-12). The test here is to apply our technique with the sampled magnetic field to invert the input parameters  $\mathbf{r}_0$ ,  $a$ ,  $I$ , and  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}$ .

The spacecraft's trajectory is arbitrarily assumed to be linearly varied from ( $x=-2$ ,  $y=-2$ ,  $z=-2$ ) m to ( $x=2$ ,  $y=2$ ,  $z=2$ ) m, and spacecraft evenly records the magnetic field with, arbitrarily, 20 data points. The time series of the sampled magnetic field are shown in Figure S1.

Using Eqs. (2)-(7), we calculate  $\alpha_{\min}$  for all possible orientations of  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}(\theta_0, \varphi_0)$ . In Figure S2, we show the 2-D distribution of  $\alpha_{\min}$  in the map constituted by  $\theta_0$  and  $\varphi_0$ . Obviously, as expected, there are two global minima of  $\alpha_{\min}$  present in Figure S2. One is about at  $(\theta_0=60^\circ, \varphi_0=45^\circ)$ , the other one is about at  $(\theta_0=120^\circ, \varphi_0=225^\circ)$ . The two minima should correspond to the parallel and anti-parallel direction of  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}$ . With the reading of the initial values of  $\theta_0$  and  $\varphi_0$  around the two minima, the two optimum candidate directions of  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}$ ,  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}_1$  and  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}_2$ , as well as the corresponding loop centers  $(x'_0, y'_0)$  are derived. The yielded  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}_1$  is  $(\theta_0=60^\circ, \varphi_0=40^\circ)$ , and  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}_2$  is  $(\theta_0=120^\circ, \varphi_0=220^\circ)$ , and both of them are nearly anti-parallel to each other.

To determine which one is the final direction of  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}$ , in Figure S3, we show the projection of magnetic field vectors on the equatorial plane, i.e.  $\mathbf{b}_{ip}$ , according to the two candidate axis directions. In Figure S3, the projections are only shown when spacecraft is at the hemisphere  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}$  pointing away ( $z'_i > 0$ , or  $\mathbf{r}_i \cdot \hat{\mathbf{M}} > 0$ ). It is clear that, in this hemisphere, the magnetic field vectors basically point radially outward along  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}_1$  (see Figure S3a, one inward magnetic vector is actually induced by the axis shift of the loop center), but inward along  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}_2$  (see Figure S3b). Thus, we choose  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}_1$  as the final

optimum direction of  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}$ , that is  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}(\theta_0=60^\circ, \phi_0=40^\circ)$ . Accordingly, the components of loop center via Eq. (7) are calculated as  $x'_0 = -0.2455$  m and  $y'_0 = -0.2383$  m.

Further, as shown in Figure S4, with the derived  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}$ ,  $x'_0$  and  $y'_0$ , the distribution of  $\varepsilon$  can be plotted as a function of  $z'_0$  and  $a$  via Eq.(15). Consequently, with the initial optimum value of  $z'_0$  and  $a$  from Figure S4 ( $z'_0 = a = 0.5$  m), the optimum value of  $z'_0$  and  $a$ , corresponding to the global minimum of  $\varepsilon$ , is found to be  $z'_0 = 0.4277$  m, and  $a = 0.5$  m, respectively.

Finally, with the derived  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}$ ,  $x'_0, y'_0, z'_0$  and  $a$ , we calculate  $\delta$  via Eq. (17) with varied current  $I$ , and plot the variation of  $\delta$  against  $I$  in Figure S5. The numerical calculation demonstrates that  $\delta$  reaches its minimum when  $I = 0.35$  A via Eq. (17).

Using Eq. (1), the transformation of the loop center  $\mathbf{r}_0$  ( $x'_0 = -0.2455, y'_0 = -0.2383, z'_0 = 0.4277$ ) m in the loop coordinates into the Cartesian coordinates yields  $\mathbf{r}_0 = (x_0 = 0.1, y_0 = 0.2, z_0 = 0.5)$  m. Considering the inverted  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}(\theta_0=60^\circ, \phi_0=40^\circ)$ ,  $a = 0.5$  m, and  $I = 0.35$  A, obviously, our technique can exactly invert the full parameters of a circular current loop model if the sampled magnetic field is the ideal loop field.

### **Text S3.**

#### **Comparison with the non-linear fitting method**

In the ‘‘Introduction’’ of text body, we state that all the past methods employed the least-square fitting methods to fit the loop parameters simultaneously. Here, with the same sampled field dataset in **Text S2**, we show the comparison of our technique with the fitting method.

The three Cartesian components of the sampled magnetic field vectors are denoted as  $B_{ix}, B_{iy}$ , and  $B_{iz}$ . While, the field components predicted by the loop model are  $B_{iX}, B_{iY}$ , and  $B_{iZ}$ , which are the functions of the loop parameters  $\mathbf{r}_0, a, I$ , and  $\hat{\mathbf{M}}$ .  $B_{iX}, B_{iY}$ , and  $B_{iZ}$  can be calculated via Eqs.(8-12). We can construct a least-square residual error as

$$Res(\mathbf{r}_0, a, I, \mathbf{M}) = \sum_i \left[ \frac{(B_{ix} - B_{iX})^2 + (B_{iy} - B_{iY})^2 + (B_{iz} - B_{iZ})^2}{B_{ix}^2 + B_{iy}^2 + B_{iz}^2} \right]^{1/2}$$

The optimum parameters should make the residual error,  $Res$ , reach the minimum, which could be solved by the function demand “**fminsearch**” of **Matlab**.

As expected, the yielded fitting parameters is indeed strongly dependent on the initial input parameters we chosen. If the initial parameter set is not far from the real parameters, for example, chosen as  $\{\mathbf{r}_0 (x_0=0.08, y_0=0.1, z_0=0.4) \text{ m}; a=0.4\text{m}; I=0.3\text{A}; \mathbf{M}=(\theta_0=65^\circ, \varphi_0=45^\circ)\}$ , then the real parameters can be well fitted by the optimization, that is  $\{\mathbf{r}_0 = (x_0=0.1, y_0=0.2, z_0=0.5) \text{ m}; a=0.5\text{m}; I=0.35\text{A}; \mathbf{M}(\theta_0=60^\circ, \varphi_0=40^\circ)\}$ .

In contrast, if the initial parameters are set as  $\{\mathbf{r}_0 (x_0=0, y_0=0, z_0=0) \text{ m}; a=0.5\text{m}; I=0.35\text{A}; \mathbf{M}(\theta_0=60^\circ, \varphi_0=40^\circ)\}$ , then the output shows that optimization calculation quits due to exceeding the iteration times, and the returned parameters yields  $\{\mathbf{r}_0 (x_0=0.14, y_0=0.40, z_0=0.08) \text{ m}; a=0.61\text{m}; I=0.21\text{A}; \mathbf{M}(\theta_0=61.99^\circ, \varphi_0=46.33^\circ)\}$ .

Obviously, in comparison with the least-square fitting, our technique can effectively avoid the dilemma of setting initial values.

#### **Text S4.**

##### **Inversion with magnetic source of current on a spherical surface**

Although our technique works well for the ideal loop currents, it is still unknown whether it works well for the other more complicated current patterns. To test the technique ability for the complicated currents pattern, the pattern of dynamo current could be more plausible seen as the current flowing on a spherical surface instead of the loop current.

According to the Biot-Savart law, the magnetic field generated by the current flowing on a spherical surface can be calculated as

$$\mathbf{B}(x, y, z) = \frac{\mu_0}{4\pi} \iint \frac{j d\mathbf{s} \times \mathbf{R}}{R^3}$$

Where,  $j$  is the surface current density, and  $\mathbf{R}$  is the displacement vector to the spherical center.

Here, to simplify the calculation, we assume that  $j$  is only dependent on the polar angle (colatitude), and considered the cases when  $j=j_0 \cos^2\theta, j_0 (\cos^2\theta)^{1/2}, j_0, j_0 \sin\theta, j_0 \sin^2\theta, j_0 \sin^5\theta, j_0 \sin^{10}\theta, j_0 \sin^{20}\theta$ , and  $j_0 \sin^{50}\theta$ , respectively.

As shown in Figure S6, in a given Cartesian coordinate, the input parameters are arbitrarily specified, that is,  $\mathbf{r}_0 = (x_0=0, y_0=0.2, z_0=0.3)$  m,  $a=0.5$  m,  $j_0=0.2 \text{ Am}^{-2}$ , and  $\hat{\mathbf{M}} = (\theta_0=45^\circ, \varphi_0=150^\circ)$ . To make the sampled data evenly, four polar circular orbits with radius being 1 m are constructed. The longitude coverage of the four orbits are the same as that studied in Section 3.1. Along each orbit, 20 data points are sampled. In total, 80 field vectors are obtained from the four orbits.

After performing our technique for the different cases of surface current density distributions, the yielded loop parameters are tabulated correspondingly in Table S1.

It is clear from Table S1 that the loop model can well recover the displacement of sphere center and the magnetic axis orientation if the surface currents are flowing purely azimuthally. Interestingly to note that, for the cases of  $j = j_0 \cos^2 \theta$ ,  $j_0 (\cos^2 \theta)^{1/2}$ ,  $j_0$  and  $j_0 \sin \theta$ , the optimum loop radius cannot be found, and the inversion calculation is aborted. The failure of inversion in these cases is understandable, because the external field of  $j = j_0 \sin \theta$  is the ideal dipole field whose loop radius is zero (see <http://photonics101.com/magnetostatic-fields-in-matter/surface-current-on-sphere>). As  $j$  increases with the latitude, e.g.  $j = j_0$ ,  $j_0 (\cos^2 \theta)^{1/2}$ ,  $j_0 \cos^2 \theta$ , the induced external fields are more elongated than the dipole field along magnetic axis orientation, thus the optimum loop radius cannot be inverted also.

In contrast, as  $j$  becomes concentrated more than  $j_0 \sin \theta$  towards magnetic equatorial plane, e.g.  $j = j_0 \sin^2 \theta$ ,  $j_0 \sin^5 \theta$ ,  $j_0 \sin^{10} \theta$ ,  $j_0 \sin^{20} \theta$ , and  $j_0 \sin^{50} \theta$ , our inversion calculation can be performed successfully. The inversion results demonstrate that: 1. the equivalent loop radius is smaller than the real spherical radius; 2. the loop radius is approaching the real spherical radius as  $j$  concentrates more in magnetic equatorial plane.

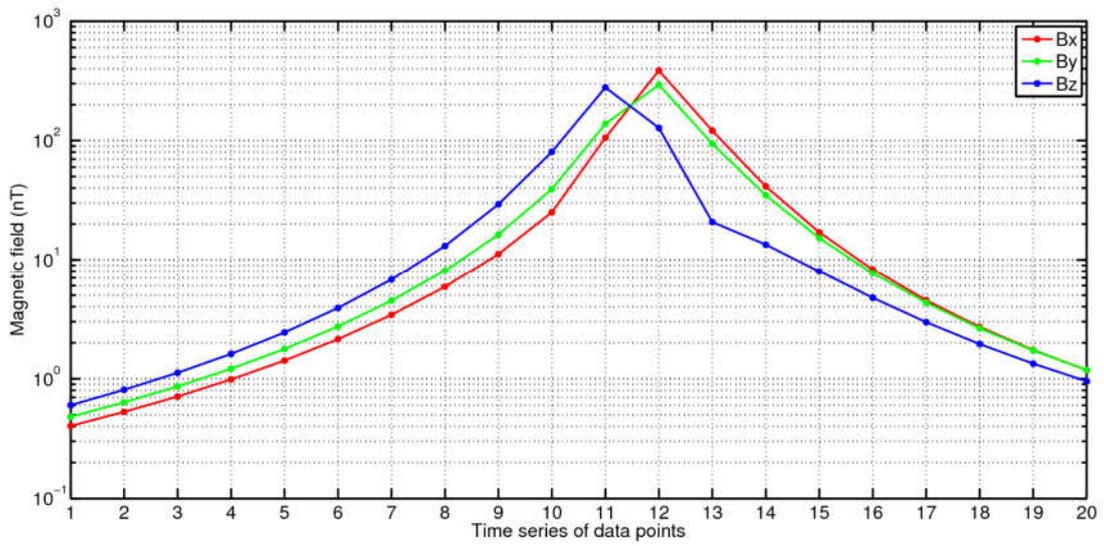


Figure S1. The time series of magnetic field along spacecraft's trajectory.

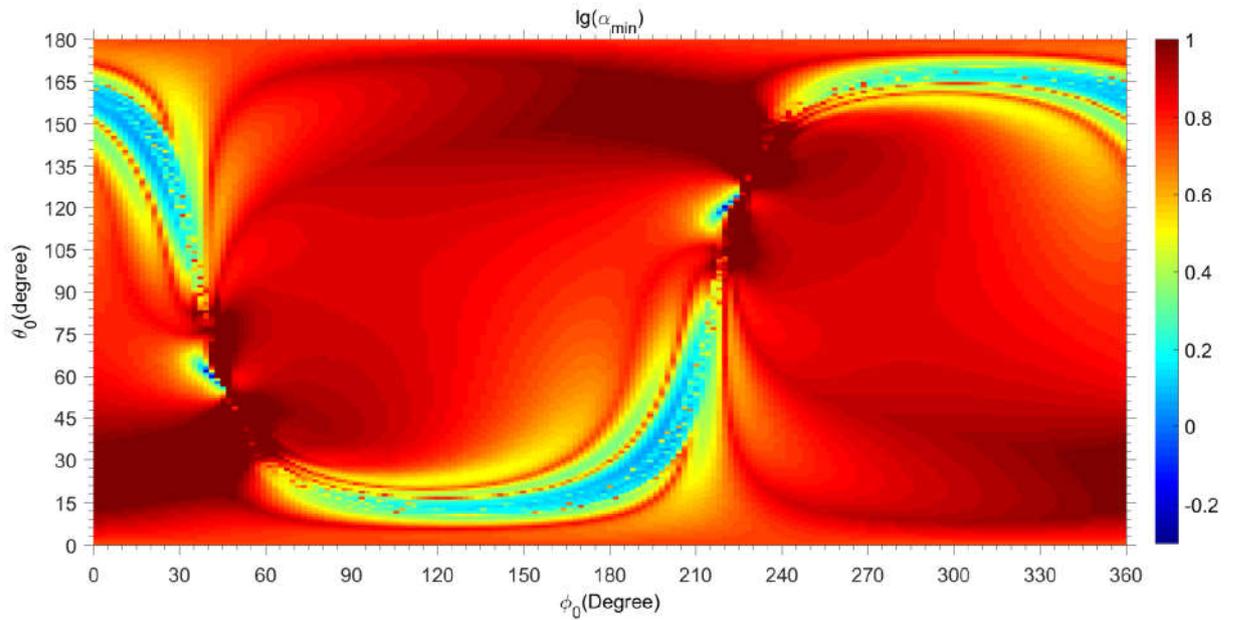


Figure S2. The distribution of  $\alpha_{\min}$ . To identify the global minimum easily, we show the distribution of  $\lg(\alpha_{\min})$  in this plot.

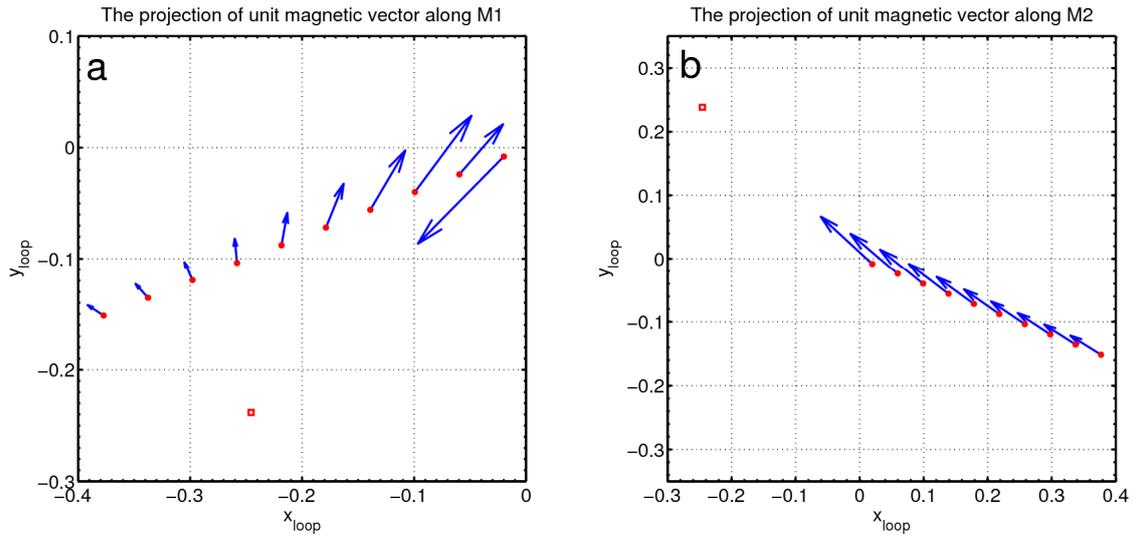


Figure S3. The projection of magnetic field direction on the equatorial plane of loop coordinates. The red dots represent the location of spacecraft with  $z'_i > 0$ , the blue arrows are the projected directions of sampled field vectors, and the red square represents the loop center.

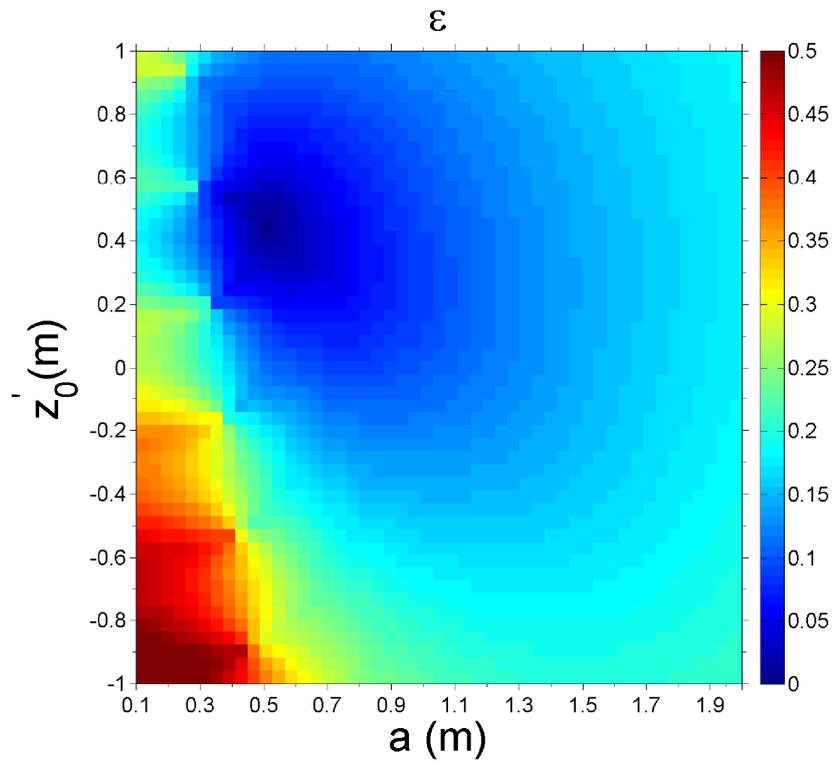


Figure S4. The 2-D distribution of  $\varepsilon$

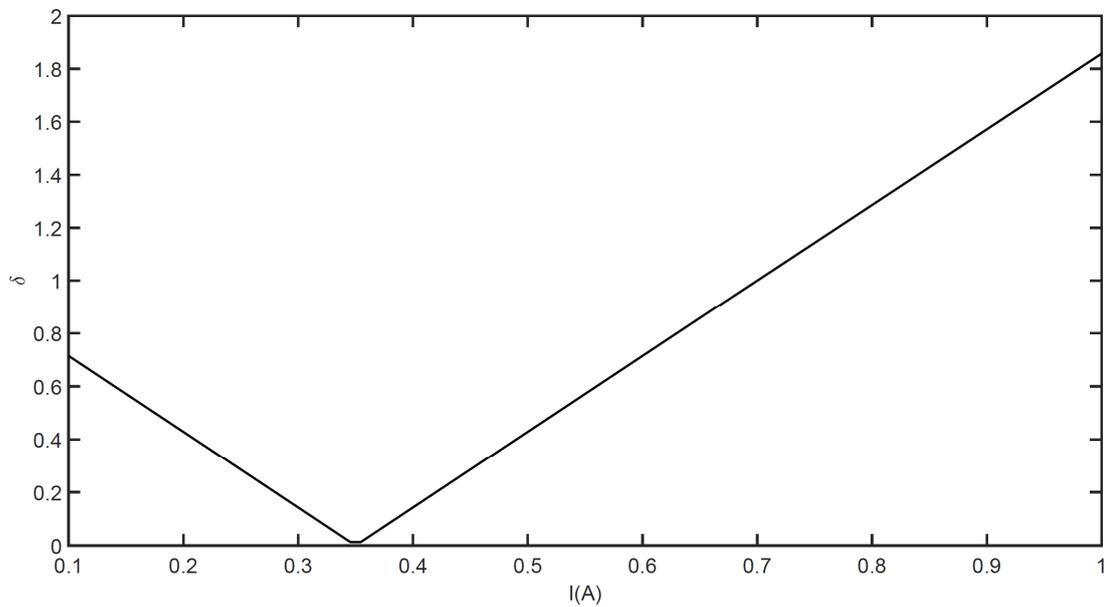


Figure S5. The variation of  $\delta$  against  $I$ .

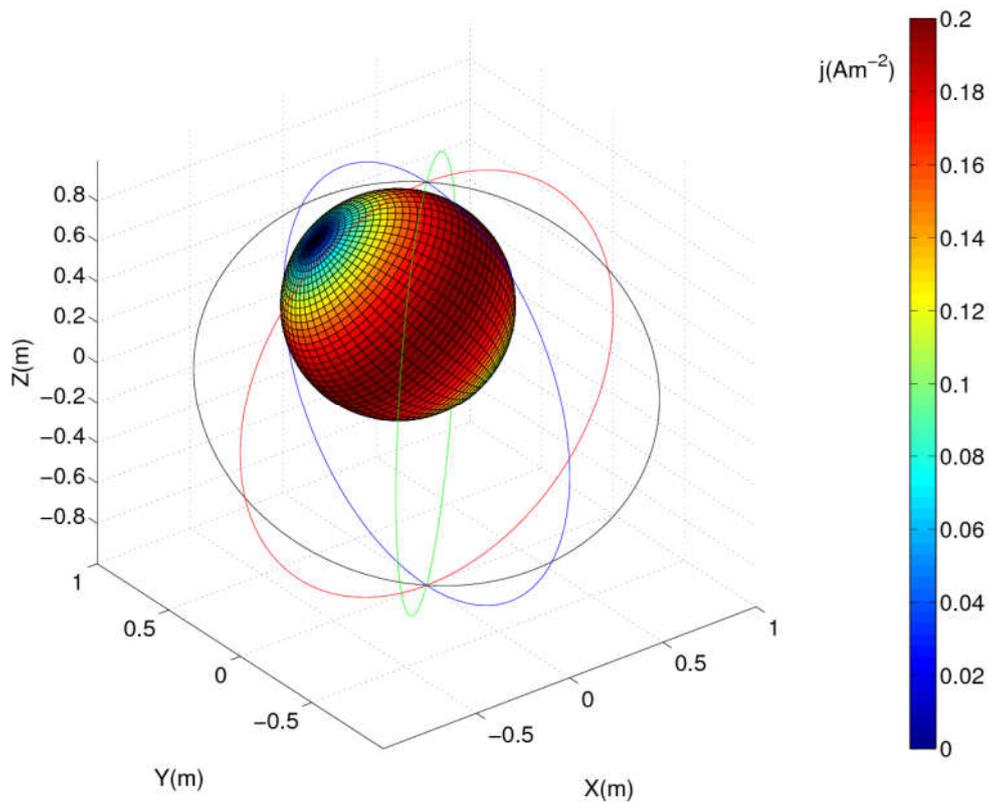


Figure S6. Test with four orbits on the magnetic field whose source is the current on a spherical surface. The distribution of surface current density  $j=0.2*\sin\theta$  is colored.

Table S1. The inversed single loop parameters when magnetic source is the current flowing on a spherical surface.

Models	$x_0$ (m)	$y_0$ (m)	$z_0$ (m)	$a$ (m)	$I$ (A)	$M$ (Am2)	$\theta_0$ (°)	$\varphi_0$ (°)	$\alpha_{\min}$ (°)	$\varepsilon$ (°)	$\delta$
$j_0 \cdot \cos^2 \theta$	~	~	~	~	~	~	45	150	0	~	~
$j_0 \cdot (\cos^2 \theta)^{1/2}$	~	~	~	~	~	~	45	150	0	~	~
$j_0$	~	~	~	~	~	~	45	150	0	~	~
$j_0 \cdot \sin \theta$	~	~	~	~	~	~	45	150	0	~	~
$j_0 \cdot \sin^2 \theta$	-0.0002	0.2001	0.3002	0.1980	0.7522	0.0926	45	150	0	0.1310	0.0040
$j_0 \cdot \sin^5 \theta$	-0.0004	0.2003	0.3005	0.3245	0.2177	0.0720	45	150	0	0.3438	0.0101
$j_0 \cdot \sin^{10} \theta$	-0.0006	0.2003	0.3006	0.3919	0.1157	0.0558	45	150	0	0.4229	0.0123
$j_0 \cdot \sin^{20} \theta$	-0.0004	0.2002	0.3005	0.4389	0.0687	0.0416	45	150	0	0.3741	0.0111
$j_0 \cdot \sin^{50} \theta$	-0.0002	0.2001	0.3002	0.4743	0.0385	0.0272	45	150	0	0.2290	0.0069

Table S2. The geomagnetic field data of global geomagnetic observatories recorded on 2015-01-01 00:00:00. The columns from left to the right show the IAGA name of observatories, the latitude and longitude of observatories, the northward (X), the eastward (Y), the downward (Z) component, and the field strength (F) of geomagnetic field in the local geographic coordinates, respectively. The unavailable data is assigned as 99999. The field data can be also accessible at the website <http://www.intermagnet.org/index-eng.php>

IAGA code	Latitude(Deg.)	Longitude(Deg.)	X(nT)	Y(nT)	Z(nT)	F(nT)
AAA	43.2	73.9	24668.5	2177.4	49102.2	54993.05
AAE	9.03	38.7	36252.54	1240.1	1954.29	36326.32
ABG	18.62	72.87	38119.1	140.1	19810.8	42960
ABK	68.358	18.823	11335.7	1617.8	51892.1	53140.63
AIA	-65.25	295.75	19954.7	5694.2	-32135.8	99999
AMS	-37.8	77.57	13805.42	-11710	-49494.34	52697.46
API	-13.8	188.22	32655	6915.6	-20051	38938.23
ARS	56.433	58.567	15650.6	3709.3	53880.1	56229.18
ASC	-7.95	345.62	19931.6	-5472	-19684.1	28542.21
ASP	-23.77	133.88	30086	2477.8	-43767.5	53168.61
BDV	49.08	14.02	20382.5	1201.2	44139.2	48632.69
BEL	51.84	20.79	18922.5	1902.3	46474.3	50214.84
BFO	48.331	8.325	20943.6	677.3	43306.1	48109.37
BLC	64.318	263.988	6707	-369.4	58424.6	58809.48
BMT	40.3	116.2	28024.1	-3868.1	47270.5	55088.83
BOU	40.14	254.76	20550.2	3183.4	48047.5	52354.62
BOX	58.07	38.23	15257.3	3235.8	50272	52635.92
BRD	49.87	260.0261	15038.3	1420.3	55142	57173.39

BRW	71.34	203.38	8704	2444.3	56745.3	57460.77
BSL	30.35	270.36	23936.6	-325	41303.7	47739.52
CKI	12.1875	96.8336	34568.1	-1405.4	-32752	47640.55
CLF	48.02	2.27	21182.9	61.6	42863.4	47812.03
CMO	64.87	212.14	11883.6	4023.5	55425.9	56827.95
CNB	35.32	149.36	23179.3	5135	-52954.3	58032.5
CSY	66.283	110.533	-979.1	-9134.7	-63394.6	64056.32
CTA	-20.1	146.3	31501.2	4092.2	-37470.4	49123.04
CYG	36.37	126.854	30083.6	-4088.4	40104.3	50299.93
CZT	-46.43	51.87	10455.1	-12388.9	-34451.3	38074.95
DED	70.36	211.21	8438.4	2931.1	56861.7	57558.41
DLT	11.94	108.48	40778.7	-458	8164.1	41590.64
DMC	-75.25	124.167	-8247.96	-6407.33	-61822.25	62702.75
DOU	50.1	4.6	20103.6	261.4	44184.9	99999
DRV	-66.67	140.01	-1868.96	169.21	-69110.94	69140.11
EBR	40.957	0.333	25189.8	18.7	37497.7	45173.14
ESK	55.32	356.8	17512.3	-834.1	46449.5	49648.29
EYR	-43.474	172.393	99999	99999	99999	99999
FCC	58.759	265.912	9400.2	-286.9	57838.6	58598.11
FRD	38.2	282.63	21012	-3920.5	46700.2	51359.35
FRN	37.09	240.28	22772.5	5304.4	42388.9	48410.14
FUR	48.17	11.28	20951.4	982.2	43458.2	48254.66
GAN	0.6946	73.1537	37647.7	-2856.2	-13130.3	39974.49
GCK	44.6	20.8	22677.8	1713.6	42039.3	47796.87
GDH	69.252	306.467	7400.4	-4996.1	55745.6	99999
GNG	-31.356	115.715	23945.2	-712.1	-52701.6	57891.34
GUA	13.59	144.87	35784.3	687.9	7943.1	36661.62
GUI	28.32	343.57	27540.5	-3705	22732	35901.85
HAD	51	355.52	19709.7	-817	44330.4	48521.48
HBK	-25.88	27.71	12360.2	-3997.4	-25171.8	28325.29
HER	-34.43	19.23	9569.2	-4581.8	-23325.3	25624.83
HLP	54.61	18.82	17505.7	1436.1	47141.7	50306.77
HON	21.32	202	26997.3	4645.8	21217	34649.66
HRB	47.86	18.19	20986.3	1554.2	43795.2	99999
HRN	77	15.37	7821.1	1002.5	53989.7	99999
HUA	-12.05	284.67	24974.2	-1143.6	-106	99999
HYB	17.4	78.6	39421.5	-516.9	17637.6	43190.25
IPM	-27.2	250.58	25046.2	7052.7	-19454.9	32489.57
IQA	63.753	291.482	8260.1	-4241.1	56300	57060.45
IRT	52.27	104.45	18554.6	-1127.4	57411.9	99999
IZN	40.5	29.72	25063.1	2232.3	40205.6	47430.39
JAI	26.92	75.8	35233.2	35.6	31190.1	99999
JCO	70.356	211.201	8451.4	2954.2	56862	57561.79
KAK	36.23	140.18	29709.5	-3827.8	35694.1	46598.02
KDU	-12.69	132.47	35421.7	1972.5	-29611.6	46210.76
KEP	-54.282	323.5071	15630.5	-1968.4	-23076.7	27941.29

KHB	47.61	134.69	23334	-5251.5	49170.3	99999
KIV	50.72	30.3	19170.7	2545.9	46676.3	99999
KMH	-26.54	18.11	99999	99999	99999	99999
KNY	31.42	130.88	32475.8	-3662	33146.3	46548.52
KOU	5.21	307.27	26564.8	-8593.8	7606.4	28937.75
LER	60.13	358.82	15018.5	-505.9	48610.8	50880.46
LON	45.4081	16.6592	22343.9	1460.8	42199.7	99999
LRM	-22.22	114.1	30128	156.4	-43457.9	52879.75
LVV	49.9	23.75	19907.8	2113.1	45628	99999
LYC	64.6	18.8	13016.5	1539.8	50573.1	52243.93
LZH	36.1	103.84	30550.9	-1228.2	43962.5	53549.87
MAB	50.298	5.682	19972.2	377	44444.2	99999
MAW	-67.6	62.88	6918.8	-17189.4	-45572.9	49196.27
MBO	14.38	343.03	32193.1	-4218.1	4072.6	32722.88
MCQ	-54.5	158.95	10756	6701.9	-62844.8	64109.48
MEA	54.616	246.653	13509.2	3607.2	55739.9	57466.92
MGD	60.051	150.728	16797.6	-3995.4	53468	56186.54
MMB	43.91	144.19	25801.7	-4016.1	42401.5	49797.03
NAQ	61.16	314.558	11844.1	-5087.9	52878.4	99999
NCK	47.63	16.72	21120	1448.5	43529.3	99999
NEW	48.27	242.88	17465.2	4788	51731.1	54809.35
NGK	52.07	12.68	18853	1054	45560.5	49318.41
NUR	60.51	24.66	14815.3	2054.7	50050.1	99999
NVS	54.85	83.23	16208	2358.1	57418.5	59709.03
ORC	-60.737	315.26	17817.8	-304.27	-26857.2	32484.9
OTT	45.4003	284.448	17703.2	-4353.3	51384.4	54522.88
PAF	-49.35	70.26	10094.95	-14707.92	-45849.94	49198.65
PAG	42.5	24.2	23692.8	1804.8	40799	47213.83
PEG	38.1	23.9	26416	1987.4	37500.8	45916.1
PET	52.971	158.248	21491.9	-2282.2	47153.5	51870.84
PHU	21.03	105.95	38825	-960.7	23103.6	45189.48
PPT	-17.57	210.42	29268.5	5877.5	-19094.9	35436.95
PST	-51.7	302.11	18341.3	964.2	-21702	28430.79
RES	74.69	265.105	2409.2	-1079.3	57614.3	57674.65
SBA	-77.85	166.78	99999	99999	99999	99999
SBL	43.9321	299.9905	19745.5	-6350.9	46362	50789.99
SFS	36.667	354.055	27509.3	-801.5	33020.9	42985.86
SHU	55.35	199.54	19407.8	3928.3	48428	52320.24
SIT	57.06	224.67	14876.5	5275	53497	55776.82
SJG	18.11	293.85	26302.6	-5978.9	25642.4	37217.12
SOD	67.37	26.63	11302.4	2255.5	51560.7	52833.21
SON	25.1168	66.4487	34794.98	419.15	27940.2	44626.3
SPG	60.542	29.716	14542.3	2548.3	50257	52381.11
SPT	39.55	355.65	25994.4	-560.7	35894.6	44322.17
STJ	47.595	307.323	18799.1	-6286.3	47138.2	51136.42
SUA	44.68	26.25	22590.4	2086.4	42662.6	48319.23

TAM	22.79	5.53	33686.3	6.7	17095.3	37775.97
TDC	-37.067	347.685	9461.3	-3793.6	-22426.8	24635.01
THL	77.47	290.773	2734.2	-3087.2	56189.7	99999
THY	46.9	17.89	21495.1	1533.4	43213.1	48288.33
TRW	-43.3	294.7	19655.84	1734.3	-17790.3	26567.7
TSU	-19.202	17.584	14052.7	-2288.8	-25835.5	99999
TUC	32.18	249.27	24052.2	3988.2	40782.5	47514.29
UPS	59.903	17.353	15130.4	1430	49050.8	51351.29
VAL	51.933	349.75	19379.5	-1664.3	44733.1	99999
VIC	48.52	236.58	18081.6	5374.9	50457.8	53867.68
VNA	-70.683	351.718	99999	99999	99999	99999
VOS	-78.464	106.835	-7519.2	-11337.8	-57798	99999
VSS	-22.4	316.35	16896.58	-6989.06	-14428.1	23290.67
WIC	47.9305	15.8657	20989.4	1377	43659.1	48461.93
WNG	53.74	9.07	18158	713.1	46133.6	49583.27
YAK	61.96	129.66	13457	-4944.6	58145.1	59882.7
YKC	62.48	245.518	8800.7	2715.9	57798.2	58527.63