

# Package ‘blackmarbler’

May 7, 2026

**Title** Black Marble Data and Statistics

**Version** 0.2.5

**Description** Geographically referenced data and statistics of nighttime lights from NASA Black Marble <<https://blackmarble.gsfc.nasa.gov/>>.

**License** MIT + file LICENSE

**Encoding** UTF-8

**RoxygenNote** 7.3.1

**URL** <https://worldbank.github.io/blackmarbler/>

**BugReports** <https://github.com/worldbank/blackmarbler/issues>

**Imports** readr, dplyr, purrr, lubridate, tidyr, terra, sf,  
exactextractr, stringr, httr2

**Suggests** geodata, ggplot2, knitr, tidyterra, testthat (>= 3.0.0)

**Config/testthat/edition** 3

**NeedsCompilation** no

**Author** Robert Marty [aut, cre] (ORCID:  
<<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3164-3813>>),  
Gabriel Stefanini Vicente [aut] (ORCID:  
<<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6530-3780>>)

**Maintainer** Robert Marty <[rmarty@worldbank.org](mailto:rmarty@worldbank.org)>

**Repository** CRAN

**Date/Publication** 2025-07-29 21:00:03 UTC

## Contents

bm_extract . . . . .	2
bm_raster . . . . .	5
get_nasa_token . . . . .	9
wget_h5_files . . . . .	9

<b>Index</b>	<b>12</b>
--------------	-----------

---

 bm\_extract

*Extract and Aggregate Black Marble Data*


---

## Description

Extract and aggregate nighttime lights data from [NASA Black Marble data](#)

## Usage

```

bm_extract(
  roi_sf,
  product_id,
  date,
  bearer,
  aggregation_fun = c("mean"),
  add_n_pixels = TRUE,
  variable = NULL,
  quality_flag_rm = NULL,
  check_all_tiles_exist = TRUE,
  interpol_na = FALSE,
  output_location_type = "memory",
  file_dir = NULL,
  file_prefix = NULL,
  file_skip_if_exists = TRUE,
  file_return_null = FALSE,
  h5_dir = NULL,
  download_method = "httr",
  quiet = FALSE,
  ...
)

```

## Arguments

roi_sf	Region of interest; sf polygon. Must be in the <a href="#">WGS 84 (epsg:4326)</a> coordinate reference system.
product_id	One of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"VNP46A1": Daily (raw)</li> <li>"VNP46A2": Daily (corrected)</li> <li>"VNP46A3": Monthly</li> <li>"VNP46A4": Annual</li> </ul>
date	Date of raster data. Entering one date will produce a SpatRaster object. Entering multiple dates will produce a SpatRaster object with multiple bands; one band per date. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For product_ids "VNP46A1" and "VNP46A2", a date (eg, "2021-10-03").</li> </ul>

- For product\_id "VNP46A3", a date or year-month (e.g., "2021-10-01", where the day will be ignored, or "2021-10").
- For product\_id "VNP46A4", year or date (e.g., "2021-10-01", where the month and day will be ignored, or 2021).

bearer NASA bearer token. For instructions on how to create a token, see [here](#).

aggregation\_fun Function used to aggregate nighttime lights data to polygons; this values is passed to the fun argument in `exactextractr::exact_extract` (Default: mean).

add\_n\_pixels Whether to add a variable indicating the number of nighttime light pixels used to compute nighttime lights statistics (eg, number of pixels used to compute average of nighttime lights). When TRUE, it adds three values: `n_non_na_pixels` (the number of non-NA pixels used for computing nighttime light statistics); `n_pixels` (the total number of pixels); and `prop_non_na_pixels` the proportion of the two. (Default: TRUE).

variable Variable to used to create raster (default: NULL). If NULL, uses the following default variables:

- For product\_id : "VNP46A1", uses `DNB_At_Sensor_Radiance_500m`.
- For product\_id "VNP46A2", uses `Gap_Filled_DNB_BRDF-Corrected_NTL`.
- For product\_ids "VNP46A3" and "VNP46A4", uses `NearNadir_Composite_Snow_Free`. To see all variable choices, set `variable = ""` (this will create an error message that lists all valid variables). For additional information on variable choices, see [here](#); for VNP46A1, see Table 3; for VNP46A2 see Table 6; for VNP46A3 and VNP46A4, see Table 9.

quality\_flag\_rm Quality flag values to use to set values to NA. Each pixel has a quality flag value, where low quality values can be removed. Values are set to NA for each value in the `quality_flag_rm` vector. Note that `quality_flag_rm` does not apply for VNP46A1. (Default: NULL).

For VNP46A2 (daily data):

- 0: High-quality, Persistent nighttime lights
- 1: High-quality, Ephemeral nighttime Lights
- 2: Poor-quality, Outlier, potential cloud contamination, or other issues

For VNP46A3 and VNP46A4 (monthly and annual data):

- 0: Good-quality, The number of observations used for the composite is larger than 3
- 1: Poor-quality, The number of observations used for the composite is less than or equal to 3
- 2: Gap filled NTL based on historical data

check\_all\_tiles\_exist Check whether all Black Marble nighttime light tiles exist for the region of interest. Sometimes not all tiles are available, so the full region of interest may not be covered. If TRUE, skips cases where not all tiles are available. (Default: TRUE).

interpol_na	When data for more than one date is downloaded, whether to interpolate NA values in rasters using the <code>terra::approximate</code> function. Additional arguments for the <code>terra::approximate</code> function can also be passed into <code>bm_extract</code> (eg, <code>method</code> , <code>rule</code> , <code>f</code> , <code>ties</code> , <code>z</code> , <code>NA_rule</code> ). (Default: <code>FALSE</code> ).
output_location_type	Where to produce output; either memory or file. If memory, function returns a dataframe in R. If file, function exports a <code>.csv</code> file and returns <code>NULL</code> .
file_dir	(If <code>output_location_type = file</code> ). The directory where data should be exported (default: <code>NULL</code> , so the working directory will be used)
file_prefix	(If <code>output_location_type = file</code> ). Prefix to add to the file to be saved. The file will be saved as the following: <code>[file_prefix][product_id]_t[date].csv</code>
file_skip_if_exists	(If <code>output_location_type = file</code> ). Whether the function should first check whether the file already exists, and to skip downloading or extracting data if the data for that date if the file already exists (default: <code>TRUE</code> ).
file_return_null	Whether to return <code>NULL</code> instead of a dataframe. When <code>output_location_type = 'file'</code> , the function will export data to the <code>file_dir</code> directory. When <code>file_return_null = FALSE</code> , the function will also return a dataframe of the queried data—so the data is available in R memory. Setting <code>file_return_null = TRUE</code> , data will be saved to <code>file_dir</code> but no data will be returned by the function to R memory (default: <code>FALSE</code> ).
h5_dir	Black Marble data are originally downloaded as h5 files. If <code>h5_dir = NULL</code> , the function downloads to a temporary directory then deletes the directory. If <code>h5_dir</code> is set to a path, h5 files are saved to that directory and not deleted. The function will then check if the needed h5 file already exists in the directory; if it exists, the function will not re-download the h5 file.
download_method	Method to download data from NASA LAADS Archive: <code>"httr"</code> or <code>"wget"</code> . If <code>httr</code> , uses the <code>httr2</code> R package to download data. If <code>wget</code> , uses the <code>wget</code> command line tool. <code>httr</code> is fully integrated in R, while <code>wget</code> requires the <code>wget</code> system command. <code>wget</code> can be more efficient and can help avoid network issues. (Default: <code>"httr"</code> ).
quiet	Suppress output that show downloading progress and other messages. (Default: <code>FALSE</code> ).
...	Additional arguments for <code>terra::approximate</code> , if <code>interpol_na = TRUE</code>

**Value**

Raster

**Author(s)**Robert Marty [rmarty@worldbank.org](mailto:rmarty@worldbank.org)

## Examples

```
## Not run:
# Define bearer token
bearer <- "BEARER-TOKEN-HERE"

# sf polygon of Ghana
library(geodata)
roi_sf <- gadm(country = "GHA", level=1, path = tempdir()) %>% st_as_sf()

# Daily data: raster for October 3, 2021
ken_20210205_r <- bm_extract(roi_sf = roi_sf,
                           product_id = "VNP46A2",
                           date = "2021-10-03",
                           bearer = bearer)

# Monthly data: raster for March 2021
ken_202103_r <- bm_extract(roi_sf = roi_sf,
                          product_id = "VNP46A3",
                          date = "2021-03-01",
                          bearer = bearer)

# Annual data: raster for 2021
ken_2021_r <- bm_extract(roi_sf = roi_sf,
                        product_id = "VNP46A4",
                        date = 2021,
                        bearer = bearer)

## End(Not run)
```

---

bm\_raster

*Make Black Marble Raster*

---

## Description

Make a raster of nighttime lights from [NASA Black Marble data](#)

## Usage

```
bm_raster(
  roi_sf,
  product_id,
  date,
  bearer,
  variable = NULL,
  quality_flag_rm = NULL,
  check_all_tiles_exist = TRUE,
  interpol_na = FALSE,
  output_location_type = "memory",
```

```

file_dir = NULL,
file_prefix = NULL,
file_skip_if_exists = TRUE,
file_return_null = FALSE,
h5_dir = NULL,
download_method = "httr",
quiet = FALSE,
...
)

```

## Arguments

roi_sf	Region of interest; sf polygon. Must be in the <b>WGS 84 (epsg:4326)</b> coordinate reference system.
product_id	One of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "VNP46A1": Daily (raw)</li> <li>• "VNP46A2": Daily (corrected)</li> <li>• "VNP46A3": Monthly</li> <li>• "VNP46A4": Annual</li> </ul>
date	Date of raster data. Entering one date will produce a SpatRaster object. Entering multiple dates will produce a SpatRaster object with multiple bands; one band per date. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For product_ids "VNP46A1" and "VNP46A2", a date (eg, "2021-10-03").</li> <li>• For product_id "VNP46A3", a date or year-month (e.g., "2021-10-01", where the day will be ignored, or "2021-10").</li> <li>• For product_id "VNP46A4", year or date (e.g., "2021-10-01", where the month and day will be ignored, or 2021).</li> </ul>
bearer	NASA bearer token. For instructions on how to create a token, see <a href="#">here</a> .
variable	Variable to used to create raster (default: NULL). If NULL, uses the following default variables: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For product_id :VNP46A1", uses DNB_At_Sensor_Radiance_500m.</li> <li>• For product_id "VNP46A2", uses Gap_Filled_DNB_BRDF-Corrected_NTL.</li> <li>• For product_ids "VNP46A3" and "VNP46A4", uses NearNadir_Composite_Snow_Free.</li> </ul> To see all variable choices, set variable = "" (this will create an error message that lists all valid variables). For additional information on variable choices, see <a href="#">here</a> ; for VNP46A1, see Table 3; for VNP46A2 see Table 6; for VNP46A3 and VNP46A4, see Table 9.
quality_flag_rm	Quality flag values to use to set values to NA. Each pixel has a quality flag value, where low quality values can be removed. Values are set to NA for each value in the quality_flag_rm vector. Note that quality_flag_rm does not apply for VNP46A1. (Default: NULL). For VNP46A2 (daily data): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0: High-quality</li> </ul>

- 1: Poor-quality - Main Algorithm (Outlier, Potential cloud contamination or other issues)
- 2: Poor-quality - Main Algorithm (high solar zenith angle 102-108 degrees)
- 3: Poor-quality - Main Algorithm (Lunar eclipse)
- 4: Poor-quality - Main Algorithm (Aurora)
- 5: Poor-quality - Main Algorithm (Glint)

For VNP46A3 and VNP46A4 (monthly and annual data):

- 0: Good-quality, The number of observations used for the composite is larger than 3
- 1: Poor-quality, The number of observations used for the composite is less than or equal to 3
- 2: Gap filled NTL based on historical data

check\_all\_tiles\_exist

Check whether all Black Marble nighttime light tiles exist for the region of interest. Sometimes not all tiles are available, so the full region of interest may not be covered. If TRUE, skips cases where not all tiles are available. (Default: TRUE).

interpol\_na

When data for more than one date is downloaded, whether to interpolate NA values using the `terra::approximate` function. Additional arguments for the `terra::approximate` function can also be passed into `bm_raster` (eg, `method`, `rule`, `f`, `ties`, `z`, `NA_rule`). (Default: FALSE).

output\_location\_type

Where to produce output; either `memory` or `file`. If `memory`, function returns a raster in R. If `file`, function exports a `.tif` file and returns NULL. For `output_location_type = file`:

file\_dir

The directory where data should be exported (default: NULL, so the working directory will be used)

file\_prefix

Prefix to add to the file to be saved. The file will be saved as the following: `[file_prefix][product_id]_t[date].tif`

file\_skip\_if\_exists

Whether the function should first check whether the file already exists, and to skip downloading or extracting data if the data for that date if the file already exists (default: TRUE).

file\_return\_null

Whether to return NULL instead of a `SpatRaster`. When `output_location_type = 'file'`, the function will export data to the `file_dir` directory. When `file_return_null = FALSE`, the function will also return a `SpatRaster` of the queried data—so the data is available in R memory. Setting `file_return_null = TRUE`, data will be saved to `file_dir` but no data will be returned by the function to R memory (default: FALSE).

h5\_dir

Black Marble data are originally downloaded as `h5` files. If `h5_dir = NULL`, the function downloads to a temporary directory then deletes the directory. If `h5_dir` is set to a path, `h5` files are saved to that directory and not deleted. The function will then check if the needed `h5` file already exists in the directory; if it exists, the function will not re-download the `h5` file.



---

get_nasa_token	<i>Get a NASA Earthdata bearer token</i>
----------------	--

---

### Description

Fetch a NASA Earthdata bearer token from using the Earthdata API. If none exist, this will create one, or if one already exists it will fetch that one instead.

### Usage

```
get_nasa_token(username, password)
```

### Arguments

username	character. NASA Earthdata username
password	character. NASA Earthdata password

### Value

character

### Author(s)

Simon E. H. Smart [simon.smart@cantab.net](mailto:simon.smart@cantab.net)

---

wget_h5_files	<i>Download h5 files using wget</i>
---------------	-------------------------------------

---

### Description

Download h5 files from from [NASA Black Marble data](#) using wget. The wget\_h5\_files() function requires the wget command line tool to be installed on your system. If you do not have wget installed, please install it from <https://www.gnu.org/software/wget/>.

### Usage

```
wget_h5_files(roi_sf = NULL, product_id, date, h5_dir, bearer)
```

**Arguments**

roi_sf	Region of interest; sf polygon. Must be in the <b>WGS 84 (epsg:4326)</b> coordinate reference system. If NULL, all h5 files for the inputted date(s) are downloaded.
product_id	One of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "VNP46A1": Daily (raw)</li> <li>• "VNP46A2": Daily (corrected)</li> <li>• "VNP46A3": Monthly</li> <li>• "VNP46A4": Annual</li> </ul>
date	Date(s) to download h5 files. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For product_ids "VNP46A1" and "VNP46A2", a date (eg, "2021-10-03").</li> <li>• For product_id "VNP46A3", a date or year-month (e.g., "2021-10-01", where the day will be ignored, or "2021-10").</li> <li>• For product_id "VNP46A4", year or date (e.g., "2021-10-01", where the month and day will be ignored, or 2021).</li> </ul>
h5_dir	Path to download h5 files to.
bearer	NASA bearer token. For instructions on how to create a token, see <a href="#">here</a> .

**Value**

NULL

**Author(s)**Robert Marty [rmarty@worldbank.org](mailto:rmarty@worldbank.org)**Examples**

```
## Not run:
# Define bearer token
bearer <- "BEARER-TOKEN-HERE"

# sf polygon of Ghana
library(geodata)
roi_sf <- gadm(country = "GHA", level=0, path = tempdir()) %>% st_as_sf()

# h5 files for Ghana for October 3, 2021
download_h5_files(roi_sf = roi_sf,
                  product_id = "VNP46A2",
                  date = "2021-10-03",
                  h5_dir = getwd(),
                  bearer = bearer)

# Make raster using h5_files
ken_202103_r <- bm_raster(roi_sf = roi_sf,
                        product_id = "VNP46A3",
                        date = "2021-03-01",
                        bearer = bearer,
                        h5_dir = getwd())
```

wget\_h5\_files

11

## End(Not run)

# Index

`bm_extract`, [2](#)

`bm_raster`, [5](#)

`get_nasa_token`, [9](#)

`wget_h5_files`, [9](#)