



# PV Performance Modeling Methods and Practices

**Joshua S. Stein (Sandia National Laboratories, USA)**



# PV Performance Modeling Collaborative (PVPMC)

- Model agnostic, focus on algorithms, methods, data, etc.
- Three Pillars of Communication and Collaboration
  1. **Website ([PVPMC.sandia.gov](http://PVPMC.sandia.gov))** (>10,000 visits per month)
    - Detailed Modeling Steps (~150 technical webpages)
    - Past workshop presentations (over 300 available for download)
    - Document library, datasets, blog, events, ...
  2. **Open Source Software**
    - **PVLIB** - Modeling function libraries for Matlab and Python (50+ functions), BSD 3-clause licenses
    - **Wavelet Variability Model** – calculates geographic smoothing of PV plant power.
    - **GridPV** – Matlab code for analysis of distribution systems with PV
  3. **Workshops**
    - Planning for the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Workshops in China and US is underway



## PV Performance Modeling Steps

**1. Irradiance and Weather** – Available sunlight, temperature, and wind speed all affect PV performance. Data sources include typical years (TMY), satellite and ground measurements.

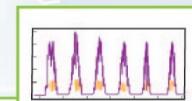
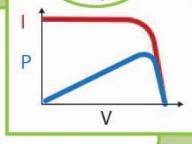
**2. Incidence Irradiance** – Translation of irradiance to the plane of array. Includes effects of orientation and tracking, beam and diffuse irradiance, and ground surface reflections.

**3. Shading and Soiling** – Accounts for reductions in the light reaching the PV cell material.

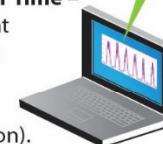


**4. Cell Temperature** – Cell temperature is influenced by module materials, array mounting, incident irradiance, ambient air temperature, and wind speed and direction.

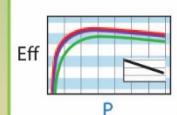
**5. Module Output** – Module output is described by the IV curve, which varies as a function of irradiance, temperature, and cell material.



**10. System Performance Over Time** – Monitoring of plant output can help to identify system problems (e.g., failures, degradation).



**9. AC Losses** – For large plants, there may be significant losses between the AC side of the inverter and the point of interconnection (e.g., transformer).



**8. DC to AC Conversion** – The conversion efficiency of the inverter can vary with power level and environmental conditions.

**7. DC to DC Max Power Point Tracking** – A portion of the available DC power from the array is lost due to inexact tracking of the maximum power point.

**6. DC and Mismatch Losses** – DC string and array IV curves are affected by wiring losses and mismatch between series connected modules and parallel strings.



# PVLIB for Matlab : Irradiance and Weather

- **pvl\_readtmy3, pvl\_readtmy2** – Reads TMY formatted weather files
- **pvl\_getISDdata, pvl\_readISH** – Reads data from the Integrated Surface Database (source of global weather data)
- **pvl\_ephemeris, pvl\_spa** – Calculates Sun position
- **pvl\_extraradiation** – Calculates extraterrestrial radiation
- **pvl\_alt2pres, pvl\_pres2alt** – Converts between altitude and air pressure
- **pvl\_relativeairmass, pvl\_absoluteairmass** – Calculates air mass both relative and absolute
- **pvl\_disc, pvl\_dirint, pvl\_erbs, pvl\_louche, pvl\_orgill\_Hollands, pvl\_reindl\_1, pvl\_reindl\_2** – Estimates DNI from GHI
- **pvl\_clearsky\_haurwitz, pvl\_clearsky\_ineichen** – Calculates clear sky irradiance
- **pvl\_calcPwat** – Estimates precipitable water in the atmosphere from air temperature and relative humidity

Download PVLIB for Matlab (1.3.2) at

- [https://pvpmc.sandia.gov/applications/pv\\_lib-toolbox/](https://pvpmc.sandia.gov/applications/pv_lib-toolbox/)
- [https://github.com/sandialabs/MATLAB\\_PV\\_LIB](https://github.com/sandialabs/MATLAB_PV_LIB)

Report issues, submit code, etc. via github



# PVLIB for Matlab : Incident Irradiance (POA)

- **pvl\_grounddiffuse** – Calculates ground reflected irradiance
- **pvl\_isotropicsky** – Isotropic model for sky diffuse irradiance on POA
- **pvl\_perez**, **pvl\_reindl1990**, **pvl\_kingdiffuse**, **pvl\_klucher1979**,  
**pvl\_haydavies1980** - models for sky diffuse irradiance on POA
- **pvl\_getaoi** – Calculates to the angle of incidence on a tilted plane.

- **pvl\_detect\_clear\_times** – Identify clear periods in irradiance time series
- **pvl\_detect\_shadows** – Detect the effect of shadows in measured irradiance data (e.g., overhead wires, trees, poles, etc.)

Download PVLIB for Matlab (1.3.2) at

- [https://pvpmc.sandia.gov/applications/pv\\_lib-toolbox/](https://pvpmc.sandia.gov/applications/pv_lib-toolbox/)
- [https://github.com/sandialabs/MATLAB\\_PV\\_LIB](https://github.com/sandialabs/MATLAB_PV_LIB)

Report issues, submit code, etc. via github



# PVLIB for Matlab : PV Models

- **pvl\_sapmmoduledb, pvl\_SAMLibraryReader\_CECModules, pvl\_SAMLibraryReader\_SNLIverters** – Reads in PV module coefficients
- **pvl\_physicaliam, pvl\_martinruiziam, pvl\_ashraeiam** – Models for estimating incident angle modifiers
- **pvl\_Fsspeccorr** – First Solar model for spectral corrections
- **pvl\_calcparms\_Desoto & pvl\_calcparms\_CEC & pvl\_calcparms\_Pvsyst** – Calculates PV module parameters for the single diode model
- **pvl\_singlediode** – Implements the single diode model
- **pvl\_sapm** – implements the Sandia PV Array Performance Model
- **pvl\_huld** – Implements the Huld performance model
- **pvl\_snlinverter, pvl\_adrinverter** – inverter performance models
- **pvl\_singleaxis** – Calculates single axis tracker positions and angles
- **pvl\_sapmcelltemp** – Calculates PV cell temperatures from air temp, irradiance, and wind speed.

Download PVLIB for Matlab (1.3.2) at

- [https://pvpmc.sandia.gov/applications/pv\\_lib-toolbox/](https://pvpmc.sandia.gov/applications/pv_lib-toolbox/)
- [https://github.com/sandialabs/MATLAB\\_PV\\_LIB](https://github.com/sandialabs/MATLAB_PV_LIB)

Report issues, submit code, etc. via github



# pvlib-python

- Object-oriented implementation of PV modeling functions
- Location class:
  - Container for latitude, longitude, altitude, timezone data
  - Methods for solar position, clear sky models, air mass models, TMY readers
- PVSystem class:
  - Container for system description data, e.g.: tilt, azimuth, albedo, module and inverter, system topology
  - Methods for POA irradiance, module and inverter performance models
- ModelChain class:
  - Container for a Location and a PVSystem object
  - Specify choice of models using keywords, e.g., `clearsky_model='ineichen'`
  - Methods for power and energy simulations, e.g., `'prepare_inputs()'`, `'run_model()'`

Pvlib-python v0.5.0 at

➤ <https://github.com/pvlib/pvlib-python>

Report issues, submit code, etc. via github



# PVPMC Workshops

- 1<sup>st</sup> PVPMC Workshop (Albuquerque, NM, Sept. 2010)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> PVPMC Workshop (Santa Clara, CA, May 2013)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> PVPMC Workshop (Santa Clara, CA, May 2014)
- 4<sup>th</sup> PVPMC Workshop (Cologne, Germany Oct 2015)
- 5<sup>th</sup> PVPMC Workshop (Santa Clara, CA, May 2016)
- 6<sup>th</sup> PVPMC Workshop (Freiburg, Germany, Oct 2016)
- 7<sup>th</sup> PVPMC Workshop (Lugano, Switzerland, March 2017)
- 8<sup>th</sup> PVPMC Workshop (Albuquerque, NM, May 2017)
- **9<sup>th</sup> PVPMC Workshop (Weihai, China, Dec 5-7, 2017)**
- **10<sup>th</sup> PVPMC Workshop (Albuquerque, NM, April or May 2018)**



# 4<sup>th</sup> PV Performance Modelling Workshop

TÜV Rheinland, Cologne, Germany, 22-23 October, 2015.

- 220 attendees from over 30 countries
- ~45 presentations
- Sessions
  - Solar Resource and Uncertainty
  - Effects of spectrum on PV performance
  - Soiling
  - Bifacial PV
  - Modelling tools
  - Monitoring PV



Presentations are available  
on [pvpmc.sandia.gov](http://pvpmc.sandia.gov)



# PV Performance Modeling Methods and Practices

- Report completed and approved March 7, 2017
- Report is divided into two parts:
  - Introduction to PV performance modeling methods
  - Workshop report with summaries of each presentation made in Cologne
    - Most speakers contributed summaries of their presentations for the report.

IEA INTERNATIONAL ENERGY AGENCY

IEA-PVPS

**PV Performance Modeling Methods and Practices**

**Results from the 4<sup>th</sup> PV Performance Modeling Collaborative Workshop**



PHOTOVOLTAIC POWER SYSTEMS PROGRAMME

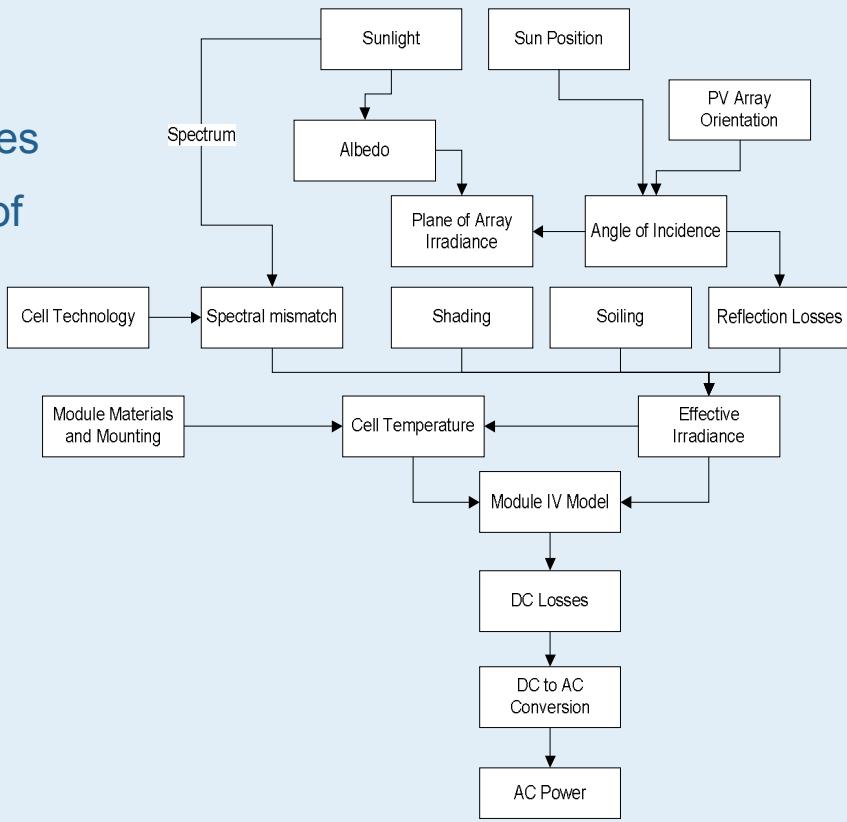
Report IEA-PVPS T13-06:2017



# Report Outline (Section 1-2)

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Performance Modeling of PV Systems
  - 2.1 Standard Sequence of PV Performance Modeling Steps
  - 2.2 PV System Design Parameters
  - 2.3 Irradiance and Weather Data Sources
  - 2.4 Translating Irradiance to the Plane of the Array
  - 2.5 Estimation of Shading, Soiling, and Reflection Losses
  - 2.6 Effective Irradiance
  - 2.7 Estimation of Cell Temperature
  - 2.8 Current and Voltage (I-V) Models
  - 2.9 DC Wiring and Mismatch Losses
  - 2.10 DC to AC Conversion Efficiency
  - 2.11 AC Wiring and Transformer Losses

PV performance modeling process for a grid-connected PV system from sunlight to AC power.





# Report Outline (Section 3)

- 3 Workshop Presentation Summaries
- 3.1 Session 1: Solar Resource Data and Uncertainty
- 3.2 Session 2: Spectral Corrections for PV Performance Modelling
- 3.3 Session 3: Soiling and Snow, and Other System Derates
- 3.4 Session 4: Bifacial PV Modeling Challenges
- 3.5 Session 5: PV Modelling Applications: Modelling Tool Updates
- 3.6 Session 6: Field Monitoring and Validation of PV Performance Models
- 3.7 Poster Session (summary and table; no written descriptions).



# 5<sup>th</sup> PV Performance Modelling Workshop

Organized in collaboration with EPRI in Santa Clara, CA; 9 May, 2016.

- 165+ attendees, ~21 presentations, international audience
- Sessions
  - Solar Resource and Uncertainty
  - PV Performance Modeling
  - Modeling Tools Update
  - Bifacial Modeling
  - PV Performance During Operations



## 1<sup>st</sup> PVLIB Users Group meeting (May 10)

- Room full (~40 participants)



# 6<sup>th</sup> PV Performance Modelling Workshop

Fraunhofer ISE, Freiburg, Germany; 24-26 Oct., 2016.

- 150 attendees, international audience
- Sessions

- Solar Resource Data and Uncertainty
- Forecasting for PV Grid Integration
- PV Modeling Applications: Modeling Tool Updates
- Field Monitoring and Model Validation
- Ray-tracing to Address Bifacial PV Arrays and Shade
- PV Performance Characteristics

- Technical tours:

- Fraunhofer ISE
- Rappenecker Hütte





# 7<sup>th</sup> PV Performance Modelling Workshop

- SUPSI, Lugano, Switzerland; 30-31 March., 2017
- 100 attendees, international audience
- Sessions
  - Energy rating standards and methods
    - Focus on IEC 61853 standard
  - PV module modeling methods
  - Cell and module calibration methods and uncertainties
  - Energy prediction of new technologies or features





# 8<sup>th</sup> PV Performance Modelling Workshop

CFV Solar Laboratory, Albuquerque, NM USA; 9-10 May, 2017.

- ~115 Participants, international audience.
- Sessions
  - Energy rating standards and methods
    - Focus on IEC 61853 standard
  - PV module modeling methods
  - Cell and module calibration methods and uncertainties
  - Energy prediction of new technologies or features





# Future Workshops

- Dec 5-7, 2017: 9<sup>th</sup> PVPMC Workshop (7-Sept is technical tour)
  - Weihai, China (hosted by Harbin Institute of Technology, Fraunhofer ISE, and Sandia National Labs)
  - Abstracts due **October 2, 2017**
  - [pvpmc.hitwh.edu.cn](http://pvpmc.hitwh.edu.cn)
  - Confirmed speakers from: PVsyst, SunPower, First Solar, Trina, Meyer Berger, Sandia, Fraunhofer ISE, NREL, and others...
- April or May 2018: 10<sup>th</sup> PVPMC Workshop
  - Sandia/CFV Solar, Albuquerque, NM USA
  - Abstract call out soon.
- Future workshop in Europe



# How to Get Involved?

- Visit website ([pvpmc.sandia.gov](http://pvpmc.sandia.gov))
  - Sign up for email alerts (~1 per month)
  - Contribute news items, content
- Use PVLIB, GridPV, WVM
  - Contribute new functionality to these packages.
- Attend PVPMC workshop
  - Consider presenting your work