

# Modeling and Optimization of a Photovoltaic Generator with Matlab/Simulink

Ahmed Yahfdhou, Abel Kader Mahmoud, Issakha Youm

**Abstract**—The output power of a photovoltaic generator is related to many climatic factors like temperature and solar illumination; it is then necessary to track the maximum power point in real time to optimize the photovoltaic system efficiency. This work presents the modeling of a photovoltaic system with a maximum power point tracking (MPPT).

The operating of the photovoltaic system and the improvement of its efficiency taking into account rapid variations of meteorological conditions is presented with a MPPT based on perturb and observe (P&O) strategy, both implemented using Matlab. Simulation results showed that operating point oscillates around maximum power point and these oscillations are proportional to the variations of the incident illumination.

**Index Terms** — photovoltaic generator, MPPT, Matlab

## I. INTRODUCTION

Electrical energy needs are still increasing over these last years but production constraints like pollution [1] and global warming [2] lead to development of renewable energy sources, particularly photovoltaic energy. Due to very limited conversion efficiency [3], it is necessary to optimize all the conversion chain and specifically DC-DC converters by use to maximum power point tracking strategies [4] (figure 1).

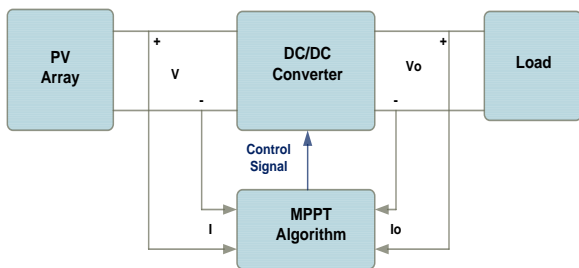


Figure 1: Block diagram of typical MPPT system.

## II. PHOTOVOLTAIC GENERATOR MODELING

Photovoltaic generators consist usually of several modules interconnected in series and parallel for a given operating voltage and output power [5]. Photovoltaic generators modeling can then be deduced from those of solar cells; many studies have been already proposed using one diode or more precise two diodes models. In this paper we use the conventional single diode model presented on (figure 2).

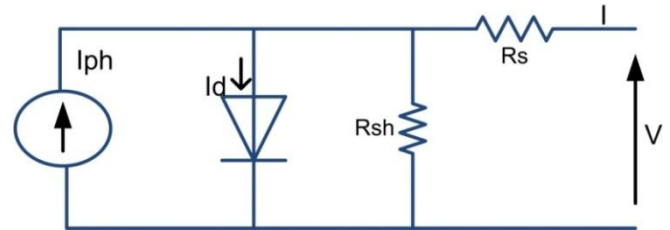


Figure 2: Conventional single diode model.

$I_{ph}$  is the photogenerated current related to the illumination level,  $I_d$  the diode current,  $R_{sh}$  and  $R_s$  are respectively the shunt and series resistances.

Based on (figure 2), the output voltage and current dependence can be written in the form [6]:

$$I = I_{ph} - I_0 \left( e^{\frac{V + R_s I}{V_t}} - 1 \right) - \frac{V + R_s I}{R_{sh}} \quad (1)$$

- $V_t$  is the thermal voltage written as:  $V_t = (A \cdot K \cdot T) / q$  where  $A$  is the ideality factor,  $K$  the Boltzmann constant,  $T$  the temperature of the cell and  $q$  the elementary charge.
- $I_0$  is the dark current.

Compared to the measured photocurrent  $I_{ph,ref}$  at standard tests conditions (STC:  $G_{ref} = 1000 \text{ W/m}^2$ ,  $T_{ref} = 25^\circ \text{C}$ ), the photocurrent at another operating conditions can be expressed as:

$$I_{ph} = \frac{G}{G_{REF}} \left[ I_{PH,REF} + \alpha (T - T_{REF}) \right] \quad (2)$$

$G$  is the solar irradiance,  $\alpha$  is the short circuit current temperature coefficient.

$I_{ph,ref}$  can be taken to be the short current at STC ( $I_{cc,ref}$ ),  $I_{cc,ref}$  and  $\alpha$  are generally given by solar module manufacturer. In the case where the cell temperature  $T_{amb}$  is not determined directly by a temperature sensor, it can be deduced from the following relation:

$$T = T_{amb} + \left[ \frac{N_{oct} - 20}{800} \right] G \quad (3)$$

$T_{amb}$  is the ambient temperature,  $N_{oct}$  is the normal operating cell temperature given in most cases by the manufacturer. For the dark current  $I_0$  and we can write:

$$I_0 = I_{0,REF} \left( \frac{T}{T_{REF}} \right)^{\frac{3}{A}} \exp \left[ \frac{q E_g}{AK} \left( \frac{1}{T_{REF}} - \frac{1}{T} \right) \right] \quad (4)$$

$I_{0,ref}$  is the dark current at STC and  $E_g$  is the forbidden band energy.

Manuscript received September, 2013.

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In the single diode model, we assumed  $R_{sh}$  to be infinite; the series resistance can be derived in the form [6]:

$$R_s = -\frac{dV}{dI(V_{oc})} - \frac{AKT/q}{I_0 \exp\left(\frac{qV_{oc}}{AKT}\right)} \quad (5)$$

Equation (1) can be solved by numerical method like Newton Raphsons [5].

$$X_{n+1} = X_n - \frac{f(X_n)}{f'(X_n)} \quad (6)$$

### III. MAXIMUM POWER POINT TRACKING

The maximum power point tracking is a very difficult task essentially because the photovoltaic generator I-V curve depends on both incident power and operating temperature. Many methods have been proposed [6]-[8], but perturb & observe (P&O) method seems to be most used one [9]-[11]. The P&O is an iterative technique that perturbs photovoltage  $V_{pv}$  and analyses the behavior of the resulting power as presented on figure 3.

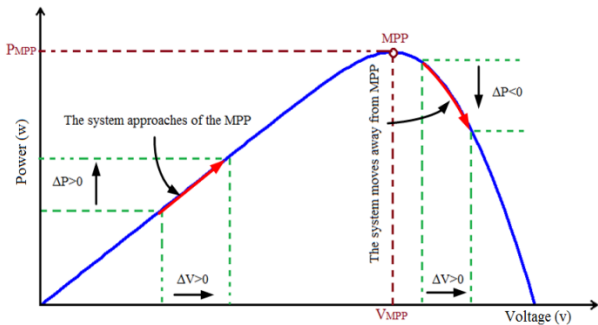


Figure 3: Behavior of P&O MPPT algorithm with P-V curve.

For an increment in  $V_{pv}$ , if the output power  $\Delta P$  is greater than zero ( $\Delta P > 0$ ), we are moving to maximum power point MPP; if  $\Delta P < 0$  then we are moving away of the MPP. In each case, the control algorithm is presented on figure 4.

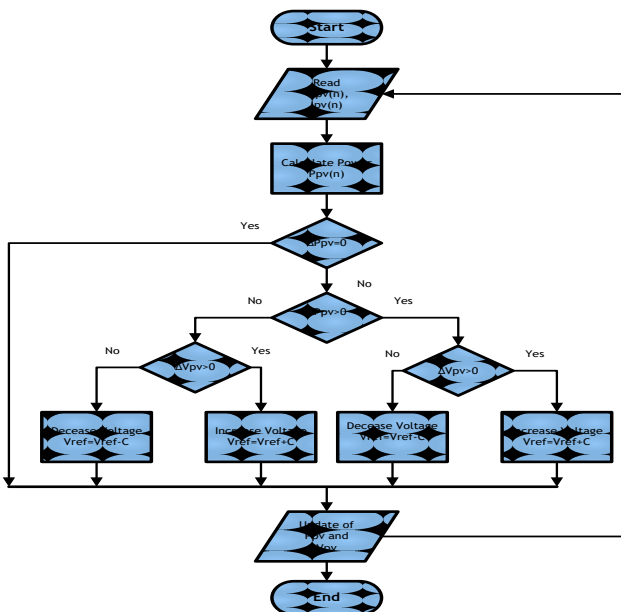


Figure 4: Algorithm diagram of perturb & observe (P&O) method.

### IV. SIMULATION RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The whole simulation is based on experimental data of solar irradiance and temperature for a day at Nouakchott (fig. 5).

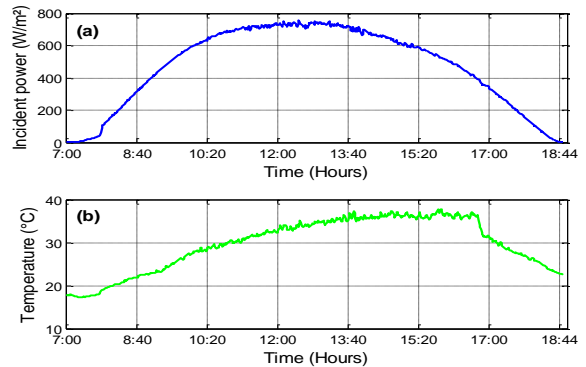


Figure 5: Solar irradiance (a) and temperature (b) at Nouakchott in February.

Figure 6: Shows the I-V and P-V curves of the photovoltaic generator under different levels of illumination.

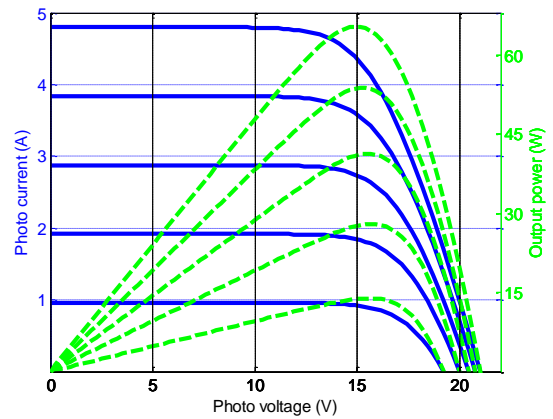


Figure 6: Irradiance dependence of I-V and P-V characteristics of a PV generator.

As it can be seen from this figure, the short circuit current is directly proportional to the irradiance contrary to the open circuit voltage variation much smaller (it depends logarithmically on the irradiance).

Figure 7 illustrates the influence of the operating temperature on the I-V curve.

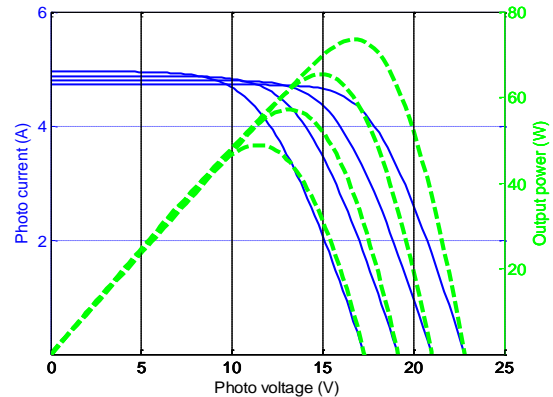


Figure 7: Temperature effect on the I-V and P-V curves.

The most significant is the temperature dependence the open circuit voltage which decreases with increasing temperature. The transmission of electric current produced by the PV generator involves ohmic losses. These can be grouped together and included as a resistance in the equivalent circuit (fig. 2). It is seen that the series resistance affects the PV generator operation mainly by reducing the fill factor (figure. 8).

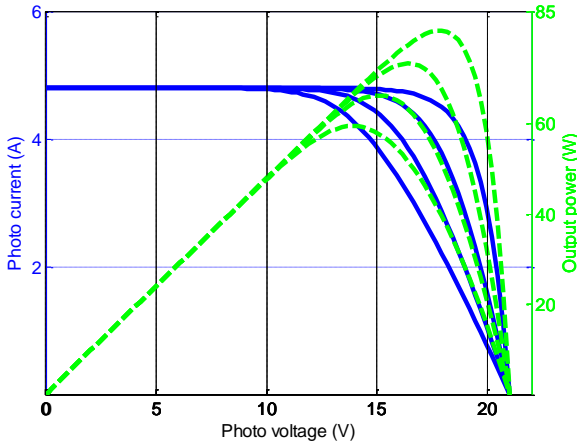


Figure 8: effect of the series resistance on the I-V and P-V curves.

This also explains when increasing series resistance, the voltage across the cell decreases rapidly. The profile of the P-V curve and the I-V curve is presented to exhibit the efficiency of the control algorithm (figures 9 and 10) when tracking the MPP.

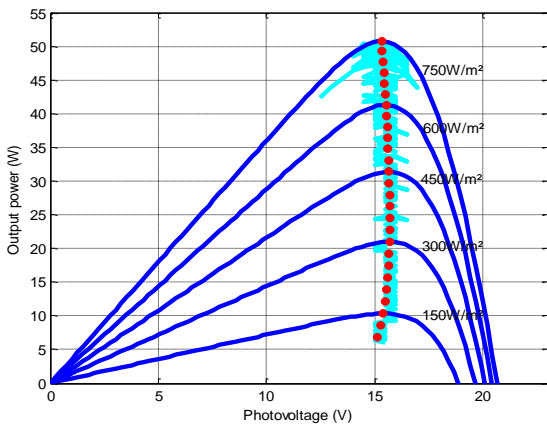


Figure 9: P-V curve and calculated maximum power point (MPP).

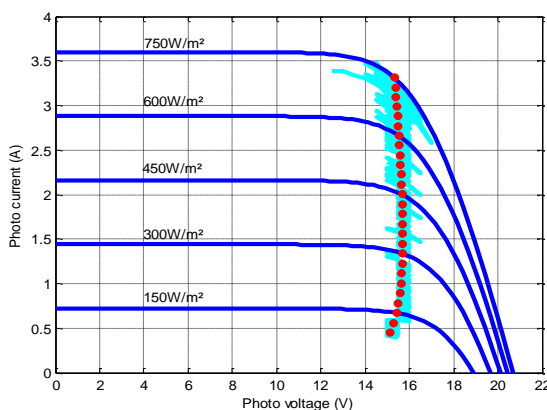


Figure 10: I-V curve and calculated  $V_{MPP}$  and  $I_{MPP}$ .

According to these figure, it can be seen that despite variation of operating conditions, our technique tracks is very efficiency the maximum power point. This efficiency can be calculated from equation following [12]:

$$\alpha_{MPP} = \frac{\int_0^t P_{act}(t) dt}{\int_0^t P_{max}(t) dt} \quad (7)$$

$P_{act}$  is the output power of the photovoltaic generator with P&O algorithm and  $P_{max}$  is the maximum theoretical power that can be produced by the photovoltaic generator. Figure 11 exhibits the comparison between  $P_{act}$  (P&O) and  $P_{max}$ .

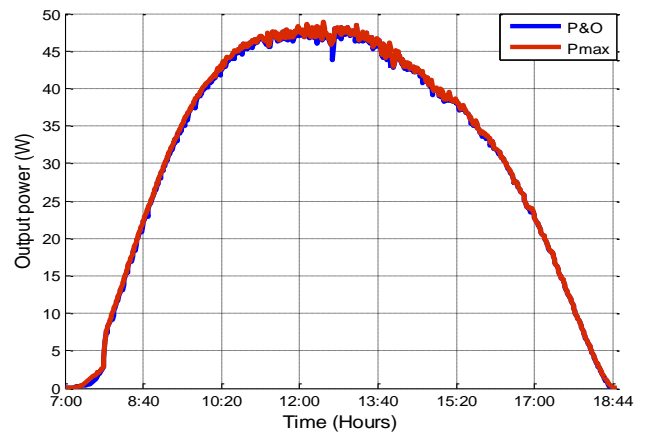


Figure 11: Comparison of the theoretical maximum power and the maximum power (P&O).

A very good agreement is obtained between the theoretical maximum output power and the maximum power calculated by mean of the P&O technique based on Nouakchott meteorological conditions. This agreement can be seen directly with the efficiency of the control algorithm on figure 12.

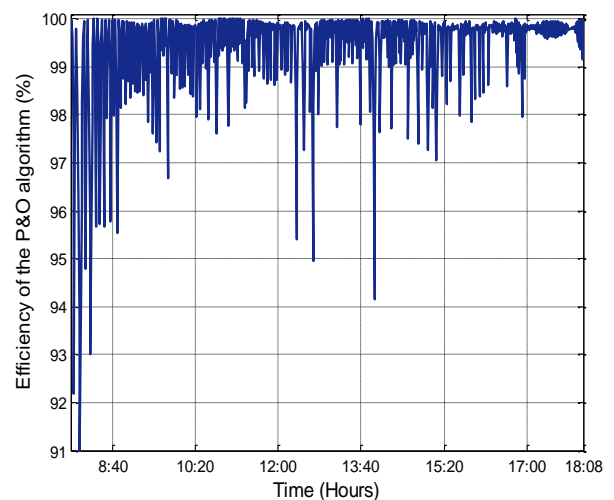


Figure 12: Efficiency of the maximum power point tracking (P&O).



The obtained efficiency is near 99, 5% leading to a very efficiency control technique.

### V. CONCLUSION

We presented in this study a mathematical model in order to simulate the behavior of a photovoltaic generator in a reel operating conditions.

Based on this model, we exhibited the effects of incident power, temperature and series resistance on both I-V curve and P-V curve. We also proved that perturb and observe algorithm is an efficient technique to optimize the operating of a photovoltaic generator.

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