Weather Matters for Energy

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Editors

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ISBN 978-1-4614-9220-7 ISBN 978-1-4614-9221-4 (eBook)

DOI 10.1007/978-1-4614-9221-4

Springer New York Heidelberg Dordrecht London

Library of Congress Control Number: 2013958148

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Printed on acid-free paper

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Foreword 1

In France, the energy sector has been for a long time among the main users of meteorological, hydrological, and other climate information. Météo-France enjoys the benefit of a long-term strategic cooperation with this sector. This is why I am happy to congratulate the team of Editors of this International Conference Energy & Meteorology (ICEM) 2011 book and to contribute to it with this short introduction.

The public and the industry expect more secure and cleaner energy, which means that the vulnerability of energy systems has to be minimized in accordance with the possible hazards impacting them, in compliance with sustainable development. Meteorological, hydrological, and other climate data are indeed essential both in day-to-day energy management and for the definition of production and distribution infrastructures. For instance, provision of electricity to users can be endangered by extreme meteorological and hydrological events such as thunderstorms with unusually strong winds, flash floods, severe icing, severe colds, heat waves, sea-level elevation associated to storm surges, floods, or other hazards.

To be protected against such events, it is not sufficient to act after their impacts have happened. It is also necessary to identify precisely the potential impacts in advance and to assess their probabilities and manage the risk through regularly updated and seamless Weather-Water and Climate Services such as the ones identified within the World Meteorological Organization (WMO)-led World Climate Conference 3 (WCC-3, 2009) and now being implemented through the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS-2012).

The recent advances in atmospheric sciences and in the field of energy production and management offer a huge range of new possibilities. Considering that further developments will benefit essentially from the dialog between experts from both fields, Météo-France as a member of the world meteorological community is willing to take the lead and foster this dialog within the European energy and climate agenda and even more widely. The present book will be most useful both for meteorologists and for energy practitioners to get acquainted with the recent progresses in that direction and to learn for instance from the successful cooperation between EDF and Météo-France, and many others around the globe.

The weather, water and climate community coordinated under WMO is strongly committed to improve continuously its services to the energy sector. More generally, building on the WCC-3 recommendations, WMO and many partners

have agreed to establish a GFCS and are since October 2012 working on its implementation. The GFCS has the objective to ensure that climate information and predictions are made available to decision-makers enduring the increasing impacts of climate variability and change. A historic extraordinary session of the World Meteorological Congress took place on 29–31 October 2012, which approved the governance structure and implementation plan for the GFCS. This is a sweeping initiative to capitalize on scientific advances and roll out user-driven services starting from improved weather, water short-term forecasts to longer term climate predictions such as seasonal climate outlooks and El Niño watches, flood prediction and drought monitoring tools, and extreme events occurrence probabilities.

The GFCS is a necessary step in view to define and implement scientifically sound measures of adaptation to climate variability and climate change. It will contribute to improve the field observations in the world, to make them easily accessible under a readily utilizable form. It will also help to develop numerical modeling of the atmosphere and the Earth in general, and to produce information tailored to the users needs.

I take this opportunity to commend the work done by all the experts involved, then all the partners who contributed with resources and NATO for being the initiator and supporting the first workshop in 2008 and the first publication in 2010 which in 2011 provided the framework for the first international conference on Energy and Meteorology, conference which has assembled the material for the present publication. In view of the determination, commitment, and professionalism of the organizers of this Energy and Meteorology partnership process, I have no doubt that this endeavor, which started very simply in 2008 as an advanced research workshop will continue on a long term as a capacity building program. Météo-France was happy to host the ICEM 2013 conference, which took place in the Conference Centre of the “Meteopole” in South–West France (Toulouse, 25–28 June 2013, < <https://www.icem2013.org> >).

François Jacq

François Jacq studied at the École Polytechnique (Paris) and at the École Nationale Supérieure des Mines de Paris. He holds a Ph.D. in History and Sociology of Science. Before joining Météo-France in April 2009 as CEO, he was adviser to the Prime Minister on Sustainable Development, Research and Industry. He was previously a researcher at École des Mines de Paris, Director of the Department on Energy, Transportation, Environment and Natural resources in the Ministry of Research, Chief executive of the National Agency for the Management of Radioactive Waste, and Director for Energy demand and markets in the Ministry of Industry of France. Dr. Jacq is also a member of the Executive Council of the World Meteorological Organization.

Foreword 2

When Laurent Dubus asked me to write a foreword for the book he is editing, and contributing to, with Alberto Troccoli and Sue Ellen Haupt, I accepted at once. Indeed, this is a topic which is key in my mind! I do believe that the relationships between weather, weather forecast, climate, and our job, which is to deliver safe, reliable, and affordable electricity, will increase in the future.

The interactions make sense on all aspects of our business: production, transport and distribution, and consumption. My sense is that the effect that meteorology has on energy systems can be represented by four important categories, roughly related to different meteorological time scales. I believe these four categories are as follows.

Crisis management—By improving our knowledge of severe meteorological events such as floods, strong winds, heavy snowfalls, heat and cold waves, we can better manage both demand side (with DSM—Demand Side Management) and supply side and thus we can manage crises more effectively. This means being able to access short-term forecasts but with very high resolution especially around areas of critical interest like power plants, rivers, towns, and so on. It is particularly important to try to anticipate these severe events and provide appropriate alerts, when the risk of extreme events is above a tolerable threshold, even if this means accepting some false alarms.

Day-to-day operations—My understanding about the strong relationship between electricity production, electricity use, and weather initially came through my on the ground experience. I have gained a good appreciation about the limits of forecasts so as to be able to use them properly; I worked toward improving the forecast quality and reliability to reduce the gaps between predictions and observed weather, particularly for air temperature as linked to consumption, wind speed or rainfall as linked to production. In the future, the development of electricity from renewable sources will further increase the dependence of power systems on weather variability, and hence the importance of climate uncertainty.

Planning of production facilities—Power production requires having an idea of the weather in the middle term (warm or cold weather, drought or excess in river discharge). This means not only the use of forecasts of mean weather conditions but also their probabilities. More research is required to be able to produce reliable midterm forecasts. Exactly like farmers who would like to know what cereals they can grow under certain rain patterns, we need to know if the coming summer will

be sunny or rainy as this knowledge will shape the consumption (more or less cooling) and the balance between the different ways to produce electricity (e.g., do we need to “save” water in the reservoirs or can we release some?), also taking into account the necessary maintenance of power plants.

Facility construction and maintenance—We rely on climate knowledge to build our facilities: floods, temperature of rivers, winds etc... These data are critical in the dimensioning of plants. We use data from the past to assess the events and to define the characteristics of our plants. This point is certainly the most important for me as it requires a complete change in our relationship with stakeholders including people working on climate. The changing world, in which we currently live, including climate variations and changes, will require a serious rethinking of our “business as usual approach”. We will need to expand our knowledge and practice with an eye not only on the past but also critically, on the future. We built our infrastructures to resist to the extreme events we knew through past climate data; today we need to redefine the limits between resistance and resilience of our facilities and this will require understanding of interactions with meteorological variables under climate change.

The cooperation EDF develops with the scientific community, including meteorologists, to fulfill its needs on weather and climate forecasts is more alive than ever. We need meteorologist and climatologists to increase the knowledge, provide new and more accurate data, and develop new models, forecasts, and projection at all time scales, from the real time to the end of the century.

Fulfilling our needs is only possible with a close collaboration between the weather and climate sector on the one side, and the energy sector on the other side. I do believe that this volume, and the International Conference Energy and Meteorology (ICEM) conference cycle, is an important component of such an efficient partnership.

Claude Nahon

Claude Nahon was named Group’s Executive Vice President for Sustainable Development at Electricité de France (EDF) in January 2003. Prior to her appointment, she was Head of Hydro and Renewable Energies. A graduate of France’s prestigious École Polytechnique, Claude Nahon has been with EDF since 1978, holding managerial positions in both generation and distribution. In addition to her responsibilities at EDF, Claude Nahon represents EDF Group in different occasions and institutions. She is Liaison Delegate of Henri Proglio in the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD). She sits on Institut du Développement Durable et des Relations Internationales (IDDRI) and Entreprises pour l’Environnement (EPE).

Preface

A storm is mounting. You were alerted about the approaching severe weather conditions by the weather forecaster. You're now sitting in front of your monitors trying to decide how many power units to commit. The precise power mix, whether it is more economical to run more hydro instead of wind for instance, is also key but you don't have much time to take a decision. With a combination of modeling tools and expert knowledge, you're trying to figure out whether the thick deck of clouds will make the 100 MW solar power plant ramp down within minutes or hours. And can some of this shortfall be partly compensated by the newly installed 150 MW wind farm? Meanwhile, gas generators will most likely be safe, but will there be enough time to start them up and avoid that horrific black out?

It has been a long day, but luckily the effects of this weather event have been well handled, as many tools were available to assess this situation and act on it efficiently. The seasonal forecast had predicted that such storms would be likely this month; thus the maintenance department had performed preventive maintenance in advance. However, it makes you wonder whether storms like this will become more frequent and impactful in the future. Already we are seeing an increasing number of meteorologically derived disasters. Warmer temperatures, as projected decades from now by climate models, will very likely bring even more severe events. It is almost a no-brainer to factor these climate effects into energy sector risk management decision-making. But exactly how to do this may not be straightforward.

It is the purpose of this book to provide the meteorological knowledge and tools to improve the risk management of energy industry decisions, ranging from the long-term finance and engineering planning assessments to the short-term operational measures for scheduling and maintenance. Most of the chapters in this book are based on presentations given at the inaugural International Conference Energy and Meteorology (ICEM), held in the Gold Coast, Australia, 8–11 November 2011 (see <http://www.icem2011.org>). The main aim of the conference was to strengthen the link between Energy and Meteorology, so as to make meteorological information more relevant to the planning and operations of the energy sector. The ultimate goal would be to make the best use of weather and climate data in order to achieve a more efficient use of energy sources. This book seeks to realize the same objective.

It is worth highlighting the close connection, in terms of temporal and spatial scales, between decisions in the energy industry on the one hand and natural

meteorological events on the other. Indeed, decisions in the energy industry extend from the tiny temporal scales related to electrical instabilities, to the short-term typical of supply and demand balancing, to the longer terms typical of maintenance through to planning. Similarly, meteorological phenomena occur over essentially all time and space scales from the tiny scales of turbulence, to the short-term and small-scale events such as tornadoes, to the longer/larger hurricanes, through to climate change via El Niño. Often there is a strong link between a particular meteorological phenomenon and its implications for the energy sector. Thus, for instance, a hurricane, which typically lasts several days and affects an area of a few thousand kilometres, will be factored in energy operational and maintenance decisions over the span of a number of days, and with an advance notice of several days (hurricanes can be predicted several days in advance).

The book is structured to emphasize the role of the energy industry in terms of meteorological requirements. Indeed, unlike the more standard approach, which begins by presenting meteorological information, as if the latter was in search of a purpose, here we have genuinely attempted to put energy in the driver's seat. Such order is also reflected in the titles of the book parts, as with *Why Should the Energy Industry be Concerned About Weather Patterns?* of Part One.

There is no doubt that Energy and Meteorology is a burgeoning inter-sectoral discipline. It is also clear that the catalyst for the stronger interaction between these two sectors is the renewed and fervent interest in renewable energies, especially wind and solar power. This connection is also apparent from the content of the book. However, it must be realised that weather and climate information is also critical to managing the energy supply from other energy sectors (e.g., off-shore oil operations) as well as understanding and estimating energy demand. We have tried to stress this broader dependency in various parts of the book.

The book could not have come together without the ICEM 2011 meeting. Hence, we are indebted to the superb support of Elena Bertocco, the extraordinary organizational role of Aurélie Favennec, the efficient work of the steering and scientific organising committee, and the keen contributions of the conference delegates during an intense and fascinating week along the beautiful ocean shore of the Gold Coast of Australia.

It is a great pleasure to acknowledge the tremendous assistance of Danielle Stevens who has indefatigably and very diligently been assembling the book, even when prodding was needed to obtain responses from chapter authors. We are also indebted to Pierre Audinet for his strong support in shaping this book and for suggesting what we believe is an appropriate and attractive book title. We also wish to thank all the authors of the book for chipping in and helping to carry out thorough reviews of all chapters of this book.

We do hope you will enjoy this book. Happy reading!

Alberto Troccoli
Laurent Dubus
Sue Ellen Haupt

Contents

Part I Why Should the Energy Industry be Concerned About Weather Patterns?

A New Era for Energy and Meteorology	3
Beverley F. Ronalds, Alex Wonhas and Alberto Troccoli	
1 The Energy Picture Today	3
2 Vulnerability of Energy Systems to the Current Climate	6
3 Transforming Our Energy System: Challenges and Opportunities	8
4 A Step-Change in Meteorology and Energy Linkages	10
5 Conclusions	14
References	14
 Climate Risk Management Approaches in the Electricity Sector: Lessons from Early Adapters.	17
Pierre Audinet, Jean-Christophe Amado and Ben Rabb	
1 The Need to Strengthen the Resilience of Electricity Systems in Developing Countries	20
2 Existing Research on Climate Data and Information, Associated Risks, and Adaptation Solutions	23
3 Early Adaptation Efforts in the Electricity Sector	33
4 Current Focus of Adaptation Efforts and Gaps	49
5 Lessons Learnt and the Way Forward	56
6 Appendix	59
References	62
 Climatic Changes: Looking Back, Looking Forward.	65
Alberto Troccoli	
1 Introduction	65
2 Methodology	68
3 Historical Climate Relevant to Energy	73
4 Projected Climate Changes Relevant to Energy	79
5 Extreme Weather Events Relevant to Energy	85
6 Summary	86
References	87

Renewable Energy and Climate Change Mitigation: An Overview of the IPCC Special Report.	91
Ralph E. H. Sims	
1 Introduction	92
2 Trends and Future Scenarios	93
3 Climate Change Impacts on Renewable Resources	96
4 Costs	99
5 Integration	103
6 Sustainable Development	106
7 Co-Benefits, Barriers and Policies	108
8 Conclusions	109
References	110
 Part II How is the Energy Industry Meteorology-Proofing Itself?	
 Improving Resilience Challenges and Linkages of the Energy Industry in Changing Climate	113
Shanti Majithia	
1 Introduction	113
2 Energy	115
3 Infrastructure Components	117
4 Potential Risk to the Infrastructure.	119
5 Business Preparedness: Infrastructure and Corporate Resilience	121
6 Information Gap Analysis in Climate Science	127
7 Market Mitigation 2020/2050	127
8 Linking Meteorology, Climate and Energy	128
9 Conclusion	129
References	130
 Combining Meteorological and Electrical Engineering Expertise to Solve Energy Management Problems	133
Giovanni Pirovano, Paola Faggian, Paolo Bonelli, Matteo Lacavalla, Pietro Marcacci and Dario Ronzio	
1 Introduction	133
2 The Meteorological Demand from Energy Community	134
3 Climate Change Impact on the Electric System.	135
4 Forecasting “Weather Energy”	139
5 Weather Risks for the Power System	142
6 Conclusion	152
References	153

Weather and Climate Impacts on Australia's National Electricity Market (NEM)	155
Tim George and Magnus Hindsberger	
1 Introduction	155
2 Setting the Scene	157
3 Characteristics of Weather-Dependent Generation	158
4 Operational Considerations	164
5 Planning for the Longer Term	168
6 Conclusions	174
References	175
 Bioenergy, Weather and Climate Change in Africa:	
Leading Issues and Policy Options	177
Mersie Ejigu	
1 Introduction	177
2 Africa's Energy Profile and Vulnerability to Climate Change	178
3 Bioenergy Vis-à-Vis Other Renewables: The Significance of Weather.	183
4 Bioenergy: Climate Opportunities and Risks	184
5 The Direct and Indirect Impacts of Weather/Climate Change	187
6 Main Policy Issues and Options	191
7 Conclusion	196
References	196
 Part III What can Meteorology Offer to the Energy Industry?	
 Weather and Climate Information Delivery within	
National and International Frameworks	201
John W. Zillman	
1 Introduction	201
2 The Nature of Weather and Climate	202
3 Meteorological and Related Services	204
4 The National Meteorological Service System	208
5 The Global Framework for Meteorological Service Provision	211
6 Future Directions	214
7 Conclusion	218
References	218
 Meteorology and the Energy Sector	221
Geoff Love, Neil Plummer, Ian Muirhead, Ian Grant and Clinton Rakich	
1 Introduction	221
2 Factors Affecting Electricity Production	222

3	The Energy Sector's Requirement for Meteorological Services	224
4	Overview: Uses of Meteorological Information in the Energy Sector	227
5	An Energy Sector Case Study: Solar Resource Assessment	229
6	A New Global Information Service	232
7	Components of the Global Framework for Climate Services	233
8	Some Concluding Remarks	234
	References	234
	Earth Observation in Support of the Energy Sector	237
	Pierre-Philippe Mathieu	
1	The View from Space: A Unique Perspective to Help the Energy Sector	237
2	EO Demonstration Pilot Projects in Support of the Energy Sector . . .	242
3	Conclusions	253
	References	254
	Emerging Meteorological Requirements to Support High Penetrations of Variable Renewable Energy Sources: Solar Energy. . .	257
	David S. Renné	
1	Introduction	258
2	Global Trends in PV Development	258
3	Perspectives from the Utility Industry	260
4	Challenges for the Solar Resource Community	262
5	Summary and Conclusions	272
	References	273
	Current Status and Challenges in Wind Energy Assessment	275
	Sven-Erik Gryning, Jake Badger, Andrea N. Hahmann and Ekaterina Batchvarova	
1	Introduction	276
2	Global Wind Resources	276
3	Dynamical Downscaling for Wind Applications Using Meteorological Models	283
4	Summary and Outlook	291
	References	292
	Wind Power Forecasting	295
	Sue Ellen Haupt, William P. Mahoney and Keith Parks	
1	The Need for Renewable Energy Power Forecasts	295
2	A System's Approach to Forecasting	297
3	Numerical Weather Prediction	300
4	Statistical Postprocessing	302

5	Short-Term Forecasting	307
6	Utility Grid Integration.	310
7	Concluding Remarks	315
	References	316

Regional Climate Modelling for the Energy Sector 319

Jack Katzfey

1	Introduction	319
2	Methods/Techniques	323
3	Application of Regional Climate Models for the Energy Industry	329
4	Summary and Discussion	330
	References	331

In Search of the Best Possible Weather Forecast for the Energy Industry. 335

Pascal Mailier, Brian Peters, Devin Kilminster and Meghan Stephens

1	Introduction	335
2	What Makes a ‘Good’ Forecast?	336
3	The Fallacy of Accuracy	338
4	The Value of a Probability Forecast.	341
5	Best Versus Most Useful	347
6	Conclusions	348
	References	349

Part IV How is the Energy Industry Applying State-of-the-Science Meteorology?

A Probabilistic View of Weather, Climate, and the Energy Industry 353

John A. Dutton, Richard P. James and Jeremy D. Ross

1	Introduction	353
2	Probability Methods.	355
3	Probability Forecasts of Atmospheric Events	357
4	Modeling Probabilities of Business Results.	368
5	Atmospheric Informatics	373
6	Conclusion	377
	References	377

Weather and Climate and the Power Sector: Needs, Recent Developments and Challenges 379

Laurent Dubus

1	Introduction: The Power Sector is Increasingly Weather Dependent	380
---	---	-----

2 Probabilistic Temperature Forecasts of a Few Days to One Month . . .	383
3 Improvement in Monthly River Flow Forecasts.	387
4 Some Challenging Problems	390
5 Conclusion: Importance of Collaboration Between Users and Providers.	396
References	396
Unlocking the Potential of Renewable Energy with Storage	399
Peter Coppin, John Wood, Chris Price, Andreas Ernst and Lan Lam	
1 Introduction	399
2 The Technologies	405
3 A Case Study: Wind Farm Smoothing	407
4 A More Advanced Algorithm	410
5 Advanced Algorithm Results.	410
6 Conclusions	411
References	412
Improving NWP Forecasts for the Wind Energy Sector	413
Merlinde Kay and Iain MacGill	
1 Introduction	414
2 Wind Farm Data and the Forecast Model Used in This Study.	415
3 Bias Correction Methodology	418
4 Results	420
5 Conclusion	427
References	427
Overview of Irradiance and Photovoltaic Power Prediction	429
Elke Lorenz, Jan Kühnert and Detlev Heinemann	
1 Introduction	429
2 Typical Outline of PV Power Prediction Systems	431
3 Irradiance Forecasting	433
4 Evaluation of Irradiance Forecasts.	440
5 PV Power Forecasting	447
6 Evaluation of PV Power Forecasts.	450
7 Summary and Outlook	452
References	453
Spatial and Temporal Variability in the UK Wind Resource: Scales, Controlling Factors and Implications for Wind Power Output	455
Steve Dorling, Nick Earl and Chris Steele	
1 Introduction	455
2 Tools	456

3	Analysis of 10 m Station Measurements.	457
4	Sea Breeze modelling	458
5	Conclusions	464
	References	464

Reducing the Energy Consumption of Existing Residential Buildings, for Climate Change and Scarce Resource

Scenarios in 2050	467
------------------------------------	------------

John J. Shiel, Behdad Moghtaderi, Richard Aynsley and Adrian Page

1	Introduction	467
2	Method.	469
3	Results	478
4	Discussion	482
5	Conclusion	489
	References	490

Part V Concluding Chapter

Energy and Meteorology: Partnership for the Future	497
---	------------

Don Gunasekera, Alberto Troccoli and Mohammed S. Boulahya

1	Introduction	497
2	Current Forms of Meteorological Service Provision.	500
3	Challenges Faced by the National Meteorological and Hydrological Services	503
4	Energy Services: Current and Future Trends.	505
5	Energy and Meteorology Interaction	506
6	Way Forward	507
	References	509

Index	513
------------------------	------------