



# Techno-economic assessment of different routes for olefins production through the oxidative coupling of methane (OCM): Advances in benchmark technologies

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## ABSTRACT

This paper addresses the techno-economic assessment of two technologies for olefins production from naphtha and natural gas. The first technology is based on conventional naphtha steam cracking for the production of ethylene, propylene and BTX at polymer grade. The unused products are recovered in a boiler to produce electricity for the plant. The plant has been designed to produce 1 MTPY of ethylene.

In the second case, ethylene is produced from natural gas through the oxidative coupling of methane (OCM) in which natural gas is fed to the OCM reactor together with oxygen from a cryogenic air separation unit (ASU). The overall reactions are kinetically controlled and the system is designed to work at about 750–850 °C and close to 10 bar. Since the overall reaction system is exothermic, different layouts for the reactor temperature control are evaluated.

For the naphtha steam cracking plant, the energy analysis shows an overall conversion efficiency of 67% (with a naphtha-to-olefins conversion of 65.7%) due to the production of different products (including electricity), with a carbon conversion rate of 70%. The main equipment costs associated with naphtha steam cracking are represented by the cracker (about 30%), but the cost of ethylene depends almost entirely on the cost associated with the fuel feedstock.

In case of the OCM plant, the overall energy conversion efficiency drops to maximally 30%. In the studied plant design, CO<sub>2</sub> capture from the syngas is also considered (downstream of the OCM reactor) and therefore the final carbon/capture efficiency is above 20%. The cost of ethylene from OCM is higher than with the naphtha steam cracking plant and the CAPEX affects the final cost of ethylene significantly, as well as the large amount of electricity required.

## 1. Introduction

With more than 140–160 million tonnes per year [1,2], ethylene, the simplest olefin, is by far the most important raw material in the petrochemical industry. Direct applications include, among others, the three polyethylene plastics HDPE, LLDPE, and LDPE as well as petrochemical intermediates, which are in turn mainly used for the production of plastics. Other applications include the production of solvents, cosmetics, pneumatics, paints, packaging, etc. [3].

In Western Europe, liquid naphtha (from crude oil refining) is by far the most important raw material and contributes for 73% in the ethylene production capacity [4]. The cost of olefins follows the cost of

feedstock resulting in a considerable cash cost and return for a naphtha cracker plant and therefore in China coal-to-liquids (CTL) and methanol-to-olefins (MTO) [5–7] are becoming economically viable (especially with an oil price above 100 \$/bbl). Natural gas processes recover ethane from natural gas through cryogenic separation and then convert it to olefins via an ethane cracking process. Gas as feedstock is less significant in Western Europe mostly because liquid fuels are easy to transport so that it is not essential to co-locate ethylene with a suitable source of feed. Nevertheless, ethylene is also produced from gas-oil (10%), butane (6%), ethane (5%), propane (4%) and other sources (2%). Differently, in the US most of the ethylene plants use light gases cracking, thus reducing the capital costs [8].

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## Nomenclature

### Acronyms and symbols

ASU	Air Separation Unit
BEC	Bare Erected Cost, M€
BTX	Benzene, Toluene, Xylene
CAPEX	Capital expenditure
CCF	Capital charge factor
COO	Cost of ethylene, €/t <sub>C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub></sub>
HE	Heat exchangers
HP/IP/LP	High/Intermediate/Low pressure
HT/IT/LT	High/Intermediate/Low temperature
MDEA	methyl-diethanolamine
MTPY	Million tons per year
O&M	Operation and Maintenance

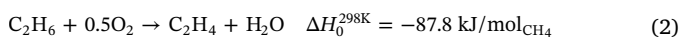
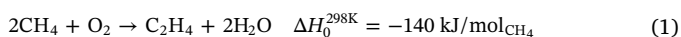
OCM	Oxidative Coupling of Methane
OPEX	Operating expenditure
S	Selectivity
TOC	Total Overnight Cost, M€
TSA	Temperature Swing Adsorption
X	Conversion
Y	yield

### Subscripts

Chem	chemicals
El	electricity
Feed	feedstock
FTC	Fuel-to-Chemicals
FTE	Fuel-to-Electricity
Th	thermal

Apart from the investment and the cost of the liquid fuel, the naphtha steam cracking process is high energy intensive (about 60% of the energy required in the ethylene production plant is consumed in the cracker [9]) and it is responsible of large CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (estimated between 2 and 3 t<sub>CO<sub>2</sub></sub>/t<sub>C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub></sub>) [3,10,11].

In the framework of a fuel switching scenario, natural gas represents an economically more attractive alternative and an environmentally more friendly feedstock due to the cheaper price (in particular in North America with shale gas) while the amount of equivalent CO<sub>2</sub> per energy is about 50% lower than liquid fuels and about 30% lower compared to coal. Natural gas to olefins is possible using two different processes: in the first case (indirect conversion), natural gas is converted into syngas to produce methanol, which is subsequently converted into olefins in a reactor operated at around 500 °C and 2.5 bar. This process can achieve yields in the range between 75% and 90% as in the UOP/Hydro MTO process [5]. A second alternative, and also a more attractive technology, is the direct conversion of CH<sub>4</sub> to C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub> through the oxidative coupling of methane (OCM) [12]. This reaction occurs by feeding CH<sub>4</sub> and O<sub>2</sub> according the reaction equations (1) and (2) producing C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub> and C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>6</sub> [12–16].



Since the 80s, the OCM process has been extensively studied [17]. Several studies have been performed to achieve the optimal catalyst formulation based on metals containing rare-earth oxides [18,19], resulting in some of the most promising catalysts for OCM: Li/MgO [20,21], La<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>/CaO [22] and Mn/Na<sub>2</sub>WO<sub>4</sub>/SiO<sub>2</sub> [23,24]. Mleczko and Baerns [15] proposed a high temperature kinetic model for applications ranging 700 < T < 950 °C and 2.5 < CH<sub>4</sub>/O<sub>2</sub> < 10 up to 10 bar in which a set of 10 different reactions were considered. Later, Stansch et al. [16] extended the validity of the kinetic model to a wider range of operating conditions for La<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>/CaO deriving the kinetic rate parameters using genetic algorithm optimization methods. Vatani et al. [25] discussed the kinetics of a Li/MgO catalyst extending also the number of reactions to include also the oxidation of ethane to propylene and propane (overall six more reactions) and using a CH<sub>4</sub>/O<sub>2</sub> ratio of 2. In their work, they measured CH<sub>4</sub> conversions up to 45% with a C<sub>2</sub> selectivity of 44%. Recently, Liu et al. [26] have scaled up the OCM process using a Mn/Na<sub>2</sub>WO<sub>4</sub>/SiO<sub>2</sub> catalyst to a volume of 200 ml. In their work, the feed gas was diluted with H<sub>2</sub>O and operation was maintained for 100 h reaction time leading to a C<sub>2</sub> selectivity of 61–66% and a C<sub>2</sub> yield of 24.2–25.4% in a single pass without any significant loss in catalytic performance. Due to the complicated temperature control inside the reactor, Lee et al. [27] have highlighted the risk of hot spot formation and subsequently the decrease in C<sub>2</sub>

selectivity (forming CO and CO<sub>2</sub> instead) using different amounts of Mn/Na<sub>2</sub>WO<sub>4</sub>/SiO<sub>2</sub> (up to 40 g) in the form of pellets. The heat management of the reactor was also discussed by Tiemersma et al. [28–30], who proposed a dual function catalyst to couple the OCM reaction with dry and steam methane reforming. The main issues associated to the reactor design for OCM are the low C<sub>2</sub> yields achieved and the heat management to accomplish the heat removal from the reactor [31–33]. In order to circumvent these drawbacks, the use of membranes (and membrane reactors) has received a lot of attention in recent years [13,28,34–37] showing already higher C<sub>2</sub> yields (up to 35%) by distributive feeding of O<sub>2</sub> along the reactor, which keeps the oxygen partial pressure always low, thus increasing the selectivity towards C<sub>2</sub> instead of CO and CO<sub>2</sub> [38], while also allowing better temperature control.

Up to now, despite the interest in OCM, only few works have been reported in the open literature providing a detailed energy analysis and sizing of large-scale C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub> production plants using OCM. Thiruvenkataswamy et al. [39] have performed a techno-economic and safety analysis and from their analysis it is concluded that the ethane cracking process is more efficient and economically superior while the gas to ethylene process is inherently safer. Godini et al. [34] have performed a techno-economic assessment comparing the classic OCM technology also integrated with dry reforming and an adsorption process in order to reduce the operating costs of CH<sub>4</sub> separation. Overall, it results in 4–5 years of payback time and 90% of CO<sub>2</sub> capture and conversion. Salkuyeh et al. [40] presented a poly-generation process to combine the production of ethylene and electricity with 100% CO<sub>2</sub> capture using chemical looping combustion for the energy recovery in the power generation plant. However, in order to make it advantageous compared with naphtha cracking a cost of CO<sub>2</sub> of 40–45 eur/ton should be considered. However, no details were presented in this work on the benchmark technologies. CO<sub>2</sub> separation from an OCM plant was also discussed in Stünkel et al. [41], who compared a conventional amine absorption process and a hybrid system where CO<sub>2</sub> selective membranes were used to reduce the absorption column size and the duty required for solvent regeneration resulting in a 20% reduction of the energy costs. The present work aims at a detailed techno-economic analysis for similar large-scale plant sizes for different technologies to produce ethylene under the same set of assumptions, which in its turn allows the discussion of the main drawbacks and strengths of the different technologies, as well as guidelines on how to further develop these new strategies towards future industrial deployment.

In the first part of the paper the technical and economic assumptions are presented, as well as a full description of the naphtha steam cracking plant; after that the OCM technology is introduced and the model for the simulation is described. A sensitivity analysis is discussed varying the operating conditions of the OCM unit including also the

heat management strategies, as well as the economic assumptions such as the natural gas and electricity costs.

The OCM configuration is optimized by varying the heat management strategy, syngas dilution, fuel composition, O<sub>2</sub> purity and CH<sub>4</sub>/O<sub>2</sub> ratio at the OCM reactor, where the developed OCM model is used for the reactor design and evaluation of its performance.

## 2. Assumptions and methodology

### 2.1. Assumptions

The main assumptions used for the calculation of the mass and energy balances are listed in this section. For the main components, the data used for the calculation, the procedure for the sizing and the cost assessment are given. In order to define each component costs, several literature sources have been used as references. Exponential scaling law has been used to calculate the equipment costs as function of scaling parameters as indicated in Table 1. Each cost has later been adapted to the current equipment size and the cost actualized according to the chemical engineering cost index.

- (1) Naphtha Cracker: the naphtha conversion is based on literature data [42]. In order to determine the size of the reactor, a residence time of 0.6 s has been considered from which the diameter and length and the total number of coils have been derived.
- (2) OCM reactor: the OCM reactor has been modelled according to the kinetic model proposed by Stansch et al. [16] as described in the OCM model (see below), while the cost of the single reactor and internals are derived from the work of Godini et al. [34].
- (3) Syngas Coolers: the syngas coolers are modelled as shell and tube heat exchangers in which the minimum pinch temperature difference is assumed equal to 10 °C (liquid-liquid), 10 °C (gas-liquid) and 25 °C (gas-gas) as suggested in the EBTF report [43].
- (4) Turbomachines: the blowers, pumps, compressors, expanders and steam turbines are calculated assuming isentropic and electro-mechanical efficiencies from which the thermodynamic conditions of the outlet streams and the energy balance is derived (Table 7).
- (5) Distillation columns: the calculation of the distillation columns is based on the RadFrac method using Aspen Plus. In this respect the number of stages, the distillate-to-feed ratio (D/F) and the reflux ratio (RF) are fixed to determine the mass and energy balances of the system. The size of the columns is based on the procedure described by Hassan [44], where the diameter of the distillation columns is calculated according to the maximum superficial velocity based on the gas volumetric flow rate. The maximum velocity is calculated as function of the plate spacing assuming that the maximum column length is never higher than 30 times the diameter of the column. The cost of the column depends on the column weight and the cost of the material chosen.
- (6) Air Separation Unit (ASU): the ASU has not been modelled but the mass and energy balances are derived from literature data [45–49]. The specific energy consumption for the production of oxygen with 95% purity is ranging from 200 to 300 kWh<sub>el</sub>/tO<sub>2</sub>. In this work the specific consumption has been selected equal to 250 kWh/tO<sub>2</sub>, corresponding to 0.9 MJ/kgO<sub>2</sub>. The sizing of the ASU is based on maximum plant capacity available (around 7000 tO<sub>2</sub>/d per unit).
- (7) Acid Gas Removal (AGR): the simulation of acid gas removal is based on aqueous (30%) methyl-diethanolamine (MDEA) solvent. The CO<sub>2</sub> separation efficiency is assumed 100%, while the reboiler heat duty, the electric consumptions of the pump for the solvent circulation, and the specific cost of the complete equipment have been taken from literature [50,51].
- (8) Boiler and Furnace: the combustion temperature has been assumed equal to 1100 °C. The amount of air for the combustion has been calculated in order to have 4% of O<sub>2</sub> (%vol.) in the exhaust gas to guarantee a complete combustion of the gases. The maximum steam

**Table 1**  
List of assumptions for the cost calculation of the plant components.

Equipment	Scaling parameter	Ref. Capacity, S <sub>0</sub>	Ref. erected cost, C <sub>0</sub> (M€)	Scale factor	Ref.
<i>Turbomachines</i>					
Syngas Compressors	Power, MW	39.7	12.14	0.7	[52]
Pumps	Power, MW	197	0.12	0.7	[51]
Air/syngas blower	Power, MW	1	0.23	0.7	[51]
CO <sub>2</sub> compressors	Power, MW	13	9.9	0.7	[51]
Steam turbine	Power, MW	200	33.7	0.7	[51]
<i>Heat exchangers</i>					
<i>Properties</i>					
Syngas coolers, evaporative	1000	W m <sup>-2</sup> K <sup>-1</sup>			
Syngas coolers, superheating	50	W m <sup>-2</sup> K <sup>-1</sup>			
Syngas coolers, gas-water	200	W m <sup>-2</sup> K <sup>-1</sup>			
Gas-Gas heat exchanger	50	W m <sup>-2</sup> K <sup>-1</sup>			
<i>Costs</i>					
IT-HT Shell & Tubes	Area, m <sup>2</sup>	1000	0.987	0.7	[53]
LT Shell & Tubes	Area, m <sup>2</sup>	1000	0.45	0.7	[53]
Condenser	Heat duty, MW <sub>th</sub>	54.54	0.75	0.66	[52]
Reboiler	Heat duty, MW <sub>th</sub>	5.7	0.2	0.66	[52]
Cooling tower	Heat duty, MW <sub>th</sub>	492	14	0.66	[52]
Cryogenic	Heat duty, MW <sub>th</sub>	32	0.479	0.7	[52]
Boiler	<i>Heat transfer</i>	57.2	1.8	0.9	[52]
Distillation columns	<i>Volume, m<sup>3</sup></i>	92.3	4.05	0.8	[52]
Refrigeration cycle					[54–56]
Compressors	Power, kW	100	17.87 × 10 <sup>-3</sup>	0.9	
Condenser	Duty, kW <sub>th</sub>	1	0.67 × 10 <sup>-3</sup>	0.9	
Evaporator	Refrigeration duty, kW <sub>ref</sub>	1	1.698 × 10 <sup>-3</sup>	0.9	
Other (valve, motor electric, etc.)	10% of tot. eq. cost				
Air separation unit	O <sub>2</sub> flow rate, kg s <sup>-1</sup>	28.9	26.6	0.7	[57]
OCM reactor	C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>4</sub> production, 10 <sup>6</sup> × t y s <sup>-1</sup>	0.135	11.6	1	[34]
Methanator	Flow rate, m <sup>3</sup> /s	6.96	64.6	0.67	[58]

temperature has been taken equal to 500 °C, while the maximum steam pressure is taken as 100 bar as conventionally used in refineries.

## 2.2. Indexes of performance

Each plant will convert the chemical energy from the fuel feedstock into chemical products (olefins or aromatics), electricity and heat, and will release to the environment part the carbons which are not converted or separated as CO<sub>2</sub>. Different indices have been selected to enable a fair comparison of the techno-economic and environmental performance of the studied plants. The plant performance is calculated using two different efficiencies related to the production of olefins (and aromatics)  $\eta_{FTC}$ , and the production/consumption of electricity  $\eta_{FTE}$  (Eqs. (3)–(7)). The carbon conversion (8) accounts for the amount of carbon contained in the feedstock which is converted into chemicals, while the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions ((9)–(11)) account for the direct emissions due to combustion of the gases in the plant and the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions associated with import/export of electricity and heat, assuming that electricity is produced with a natural gas combined cycle (with a net electric efficiency of 58.4%) and that the steam is produced with an industrial boiler from natural gas (with a net thermal efficiency equal to 90% [59,60]). The natural gas combined cycle is based on industrial heavy duty gas turbine (F-class) and HRSG with 3 pressure levels and maximum steam temperature of 565 °C [43].

The total overnight cost (TOC) (see Table 9) computes the specific cost for the production of C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub> using the capital charge rate factor (CCF) which defines a characteristic unit cost of the plant over the life of the plant accounting for all expenditures that occur in different periods on a common value basis. In order to determine the CCF different financial parameters have been used according to [43,61]. On the basis of the financial assumptions (see Table 8), the resulting CCF for the entire plant equals 0.10 (based on Rubin et al. [62]). The operating costs take into account: (i) the cost of the feedstock, and (ii) the credits obtained due to the additional products (such as C<sub>3</sub>H<sub>6</sub>, BTX) as proposed in Boulamanti, Moya [8], (iii) the variable O & M (as in Table 2) and (iv) the import/export of electricity. The plant availability is assumed equal to 90%.

Overall Energy Balance in the products, MW

$$W_{tot} = \sum W_{chem,i} + \sum W_{EL,in \leftrightarrow out} + \sum W_{TH} \quad (3)$$

Chemical Energy of the i component, MW

$$W_{chem} = \dot{m}_i \times LHV_i \quad (4)$$

With i = C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub>, C<sub>3</sub>H<sub>6</sub>, BTX, oil, H<sub>2</sub>, feedstocks  
Feedstock-to-Chemicals efficiency, %

$$\eta_{FTC} = \frac{\sum_i W_{chem,i}}{W_{feed}} \quad (5)$$

with i = olefins, aromatics

Feedstock-to-Electricity efficiency, %

$$\eta_{FTE} = \frac{\sum_i W_{EL,IN \leftrightarrow OUT}}{W_{feed}} \quad (6)$$

Overall Energy Efficiency, %

$$\eta_{tot} = \frac{W_{tot}}{W_{feed}} \quad (7)$$

Carbon Conversion, %

$$X_C = \frac{\sum_i \dot{N}_{C_i}}{\dot{N}_{C_{feedstock}}} \quad (8)$$

with i = olefins, aromatics

CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, kg/s

**Table 2**

Assumptions for the calculation of the O & M costs [8,51,63]

O & M -Fixed			
Labor costs	MC	1.5 (OCM) 5 (naphtha)	
Maintenance cost	% TOC	2.5	
Insurance	% TOC	2	
Catalyst and sorbent			
OCM catalyst cost	k€/m <sup>3</sup>	50	
Lifetime	years	5	
Consumables			
Process water cost	€/m <sup>3</sup>	2	
Natural Gas cost	€/GJ <sub>LHV</sub>	2.5	US
		5	EU
		1.2	Saudi Arabia
Naphtha cost	€/t	450	US
		450	EU
		460	Saudi Arabia
<i>Miscellaneous</i>			
Electricity cost	(€/MWh)	35	US
		85	EU
		24	Saudi Arabia
Propylene price	€/t	750	
BTX price	€/t	600	
Heavy oil price	€/t	470	

$$\dot{m}_{CO_2,em} = \sum_i \dot{m}_{CO_2,ex} \pm W_{el} \cdot E_{CO_2,CC} \pm W_{TH} \cdot E_{CO_2,TH}$$

$$E_{CO_2,CC} = 96 \frac{g_{CO_2}}{M_{Mol}} \text{ and } E_{CO_2,TH} = 63 \frac{g_{CO_2}}{MJ_{TH}} \quad (9)$$

Overall O<sub>2</sub> specific emissions,  $t_{CO_2}/t_{C_2H_4}$

$$E_{CO_2} = \frac{\sum_i \dot{m}_{CO_2,ex}}{\dot{m}_{C_2H_4}} \quad (10)$$

Cost of Ethylene, €/t<sub>C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub></sub>

$$COO = \frac{(CAPEX_{C_2H_4} + OPEX_{C_2H_4} + C_{O \& M_{fix}})_y}{(\dot{m}_{C_2H_4})_y} \quad (11)$$

CAPEX cost M€/y

$$CAPEX_{C_2H_4} = TOC \times CCF \quad (12)$$

See Table 9 for the calculation of the TOC.

OPEX cost M€/y

$$OPEX_{C_2H_4} = (OPEX_{feedstock} + \sum \pm OPEX_{chem} + OPEX_{el} + OPEX_{O \& M})_y \quad (13)$$

OPEX<sub>i</sub><sup>1</sup> M€/y

$$OPEX_i = C_i \times \dot{m}_i \times 3600 \times h_{year} \times 10^{-6} \quad (14)$$

where C<sub>i</sub> is the specific cost/price (€/kg), m<sub>i</sub> is the flow rate (kg/s) and h<sub>year</sub> are the number of hours per year.

## 3. Naphtha steam cracking

### 3.1. Plant description

Based on the current ethylene market share, naphtha has been selected as feedstock to carry out the techno-economic assessment of the plant as the benchmark technology. The process flow diagram is shown in Fig. 1.

For the process simulation of the plant, the selected PiONA (n-paraffins, iso-paraffins, olefins–naphthenes and aromatics) analysis of the naphtha composition as reported in Ullmann encyclopedia [42] and

<sup>1</sup> In case of OPEX<sub>el</sub> the power production is considered (instead of the total flowrate).

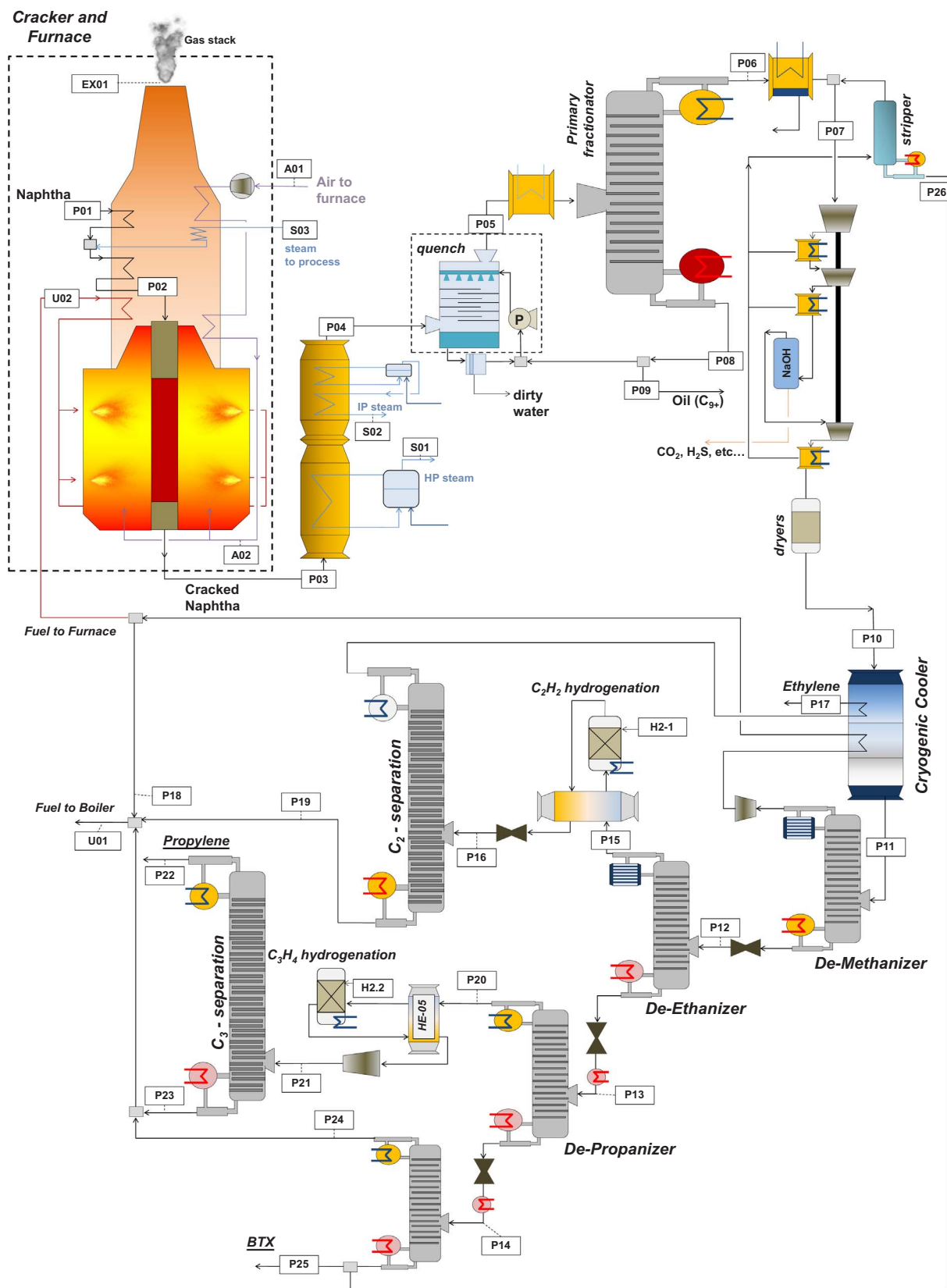


Fig. 1. Flowsheet of the Naphtha Steam Cracking plant. Naphtha conversion and separation units.

the resulting cracked gas are reported in Table 10. Similar results have been achieved also in Haghighi et al. [64].

A naphtha flow rate (stream #P01) equal to 97.22 kg/s (corresponding to 350 t/h and 3.07 MTPY) is pre-heated and mixed with

steam (#S03) in order to reach a steam-to naphtha ratio of 0.5 (wt. basis). The mixture is heated-up to 500 °C (#P02) and fed to the naphtha cracker, where a residence time of about 0.6 s has been selected in order to increase the olefins yields operated at 850 °C and



1 bar [42]. According to Zimmermann et al. [42], two furnaces operated in parallel with 200 coils each (with 10.5 cm diameter and 80 m length) are required in order to have the conversion in 0.5 s resulting in an overall volume of 277 m<sup>3</sup>. The cracked gas (which is leaving the cracker tubes at 850 °C in #P03) is cooled to 230 °C (#P04) by producing high pressure and intermediate pressure (HP/IP) steam (#S01 and #S02) for power generation. The syngas is then quenched using H<sub>2</sub>O and part of the recirculated oil. The resulting gas (#P05) is then cooled down and fed to the primary fractionator where heavy components (C<sub>9+</sub>) are separated (#P08), while the light components (#P06) are first cooled to ambient temperature and sent to a flash where the gas and liquid streams are separated. The gaseous stream (#P07) is then compressed in an inter-cooled multi-stage compressor up to 31 bar and the liquid knock-out is sent to a stripper for further BTX recovery (P26). During the gas compression (typically in the last stage), the gas is scrubbed with caustic soda (NaOH) to remove acid gas components. The cleaned gas (#P10) is subsequently dried with a molecular sieve and sent to the hydrocarbons fractionating section of the plant. The gas is first cooled down to cryogenic temperature (−50 °C) and fed to the de-methanizer. The incompressible species are released at the top of the columns, expanded to 1 bar and the cooled stream is used to supply part of the refrigeration duty and used as fuel in the furnace (#U02) and in the boiler (#U01). The bottom products are fed at 26 bar (#P12) to the de-ethanizer. The bottom products of the de-ethanizer are subsequently fed in the de-propanizer, and the resulting stream at the bottom is separated in the de-butanizer. The heavier components are finally sent to the BTX recovery (#P25), while the distillate (#P24) is mixed with the remaining incompressible gasses and used as fuel in the boiler. The distillate of the de-ethanizer is first sent to a hydrogenation reactor, where the acetylene (C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>2</sub>) is converted into ethylene. Subsequently, the mixture of C<sub>2</sub> species are split in a C<sub>2</sub> splitting column operated at 18 bar with more than 120 stages where ethylene is separated and after the heat recovery is available at polymer grade (#P17). The distillate of the de-propanizer is first sent to a hydrogenation reactor to convert the methyl-acetylene (C<sub>3</sub>H<sub>4</sub>) to propene (C<sub>3</sub>H<sub>6</sub>) and secondly sent to a C<sub>3</sub> splitter operated at 21 bar where more than 240 stages are required in order to reach the desired propylene purity (polymer grade) in the distillate stream (#P22). The plant is completely integrated with a steam cycle in which the steam (at different pressures) is produced and distributed around the plant. The heat recovery from the exhaust gas from the furnace is used to pre-heat the reactants at the desired temperature and for steam generation. The steam is generated at 100 bar

and superheated up to 500 °C. LP steam is used for the cracking reaction and for the reboilers in the plant. The remaining steam is expanded to 0.08 bar in a turbine (regulated as condensing turbine). The detailed mass balance of the plant can be found in Appendix A.3 (Tables 11 and 12).

### 3.2. Results and performance

In this process other by-products are produced. In particular, 13 kg/s of propylene, 17.5 kg/s of BTX and 3.8 kg/s of oil are produced, which increases the fuel to chemicals efficiency. In terms of performance, the  $\eta_{\text{FTC}}$  is equal to 65.7%. Specifically, the total fuel-to-chemicals is 51% towards C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub> (51%), C<sub>3</sub>H<sub>6</sub> (20%), BTX (24%) and heavy oil (6%). The combustion of the incompressible gases is used to produce electricity (gross power 324.9 MW<sub>el</sub>) to supply the required energy for the auxiliaries of the plant (overall 262.3 MW<sub>el</sub>). Overall the  $\eta_{\text{FTE}}$  equals 1.5%. In terms of electricity consumptions, most of the energy is consumed for the refrigeration cycles used in the cryogenic coolers, and the condenser of the de-methanizer and de-ethanizer (195.07 MW<sub>el</sub>, 73% of the total auxiliaries consumptions). Most of the remaining consumption is represented by the gas compressor and air fans (overall 22% of the total electricity consumption). The carbon conversion efficiency is 70%, therefore the remaining species are converted to CO<sub>2</sub> (boiler and furnace of the cracker) resulting in overall 2.83 t<sub>CO2</sub>/t<sub>C2H4</sub>.

## 4. Natural gas-to-ethylene

The conversion of natural gas-to-ethylene has been studied through oxidative coupling of methane using different plant layouts, which are explained in the following section.

### 4.1. OCM reactor model

The kinetic model used for the simulation of the OCM reactor is based on the reaction pathways proposed in the work of Stansch et al. [16], where 10 different reactions have been included (Table 3) and the kinetic parameters have been fitted with experimental results from Liu et al. [26], where 200 ml of 5%wt.Na<sub>2</sub>WO<sub>4</sub>-1.9wt.%Mn/SiO<sub>2</sub>(W-Mn/SiO<sub>2</sub>) of 250–600 μm particle was used. The obtained kinetic parameters are reported in Table 4 and it does not depend on the catalyst shape and size. The fitting of the kinetic model has been carried out for five different temperature (in the range of 640–800 °C) for the CH<sub>4</sub>

**Table 3**  
List of kinetic expressions for the OCM reaction system [16]

	Reactions	Reaction rate expression
1	CH <sub>4</sub> + 2O <sub>2</sub> → CO <sub>2</sub> + 2H <sub>2</sub> O	$r_1 = \frac{k_{0,1} e^{-E_{a,1}/RT} p_C^{m_1} p_{O_2}^{n_1}}{(1 + K_{j,CO_2} e^{-\Delta H_{ad,CO_2}/RT} p_{CO_2})^2}$
2	2CH <sub>4</sub> + 0.5O <sub>2</sub> → C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>6</sub> + H <sub>2</sub> O	$r_2 = \frac{k_{0,2} e^{-E_{a,2}/RT} (K_{0,O_2} e^{-\Delta H_{ad,O_2}/RT} p_{O_2})^{n_2} p_{CH_4}^{m_2}}{[1 + (K_{0,O_2} e^{-\Delta H_{ad,O_2}/RT} p_{O_2})^{n_2} + K_{j,CO_2} e^{-\Delta H_{ad,CO_2}/RT} p_{CO_2}]^2}$
3	CH <sub>4</sub> + O <sub>2</sub> → CO + H <sub>2</sub> + H <sub>2</sub> O	$r_3 = \frac{k_{0,3} e^{-E_{a,3}/RT} p_C^{m_3} p_{O_2}^{n_3}}{(1 + K_{j,CO_2} e^{-\Delta H_{ad,CO_2}/RT} p_{CO_2})^2}$
4	CO + 0.5O <sub>2</sub> → CO <sub>2</sub>	$r_4 = \frac{k_{0,4} e^{-E_{a,4}/RT} p_C^{m_4} p_{O_2}^{n_4}}{(1 + K_{j,CO_2} e^{-\Delta H_{ad,CO_2}/RT} p_{CO_2})^2}$
5	C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>6</sub> + 0.5O <sub>2</sub> → C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>4</sub> + H <sub>2</sub> O	$r_5 = \frac{k_{0,5} e^{-E_{a,5}/RT} p_C^{m_5} p_{O_2}^{n_5}}{(1 + K_{j,CO_2} e^{-\Delta H_{ad,CO_2}/RT} p_{CO_2})^2}$
6	C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>4</sub> + 2O <sub>2</sub> → 2CO + 2H <sub>2</sub> O	$r_6 = \frac{k_{0,6} e^{-E_{a,6}/RT} p_C^{m_6} p_{O_2}^{n_6}}{(1 + K_{j,CO_2} e^{-\Delta H_{ad,CO_2}/RT} p_{CO_2})^2}$
7	C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>6</sub> → C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>4</sub> + H <sub>2</sub>	$r_7 = k_{0,7} e^{-E_{a,7}/RT} p_{C_2H_6}^{m_7}$
8	C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>4</sub> + 2H <sub>2</sub> O → 2CO + 4H <sub>2</sub>	$r_8 = k_{0,8} e^{-E_{a,8}/RT} p_{C_2H_4}^{m_8} p_{H_2O}^{n_8}$
9	CO + H <sub>2</sub> O → CO <sub>2</sub> + H <sub>2</sub>	$r_9 = k_{0,9} e^{-E_{a,9}/RT} p_{CO}^{m_9} p_{H_2O}^{n_9}$
10	CO <sub>2</sub> + H <sub>2</sub> → CO + H <sub>2</sub> O	$r_{10} = k_{0,10} e^{-E_{a,10}/RT} p_{CO_2}^{m_{10}} p_{H_2}^{n_{10}}$

**Table 4**List of kinetic parameters for the NaWO<sub>3</sub>-Mn/SiO<sub>2</sub> catalyst.

Reactions Units	$k_{0,j}$ mol kg <sup>-1</sup> s <sup>-1</sup> Pa <sup>-(m+n)</sup>	$k_{0,j}^a$ mol m <sub>r</sub> <sup>3</sup> s <sup>-1</sup> Pa <sup>-(m+n)</sup>	$E_{a,j}$ kJ mol <sup>-1</sup>	$K_j$ , CO <sub>2</sub> Pa <sup>-1</sup>	$\Delta H_{ad,CO_2}$ kJ mol <sup>-1</sup>	$K_{O_2}$ Pa <sup>-1</sup>	$\Delta H_{ad,O_2}$ kJ mol <sup>-1</sup>	$m_j$ –	$n_j$ –
1	2.00E–03	1.24E–01	80.30	3.50E–13	–172.6			0.64	0.54
2	2.59E+00	1.61E+02	59.15	8.80E–14	–183.2	2.30E–12	–122	1	0.42
3	7.36E–03	4.58E–01	41.18	4.20E–14	–185.1			0.54	0.87
4	1.30E–01	8.09E+00	113.70	4.50E–13	166.3			0.94	0.55
5	9.39E–02	5.85E+00	40.39	5.30E–13	–164			0.92	0.39
6	6.00E+01	3.73E+03	173.70	1.60E–13	–211.5			0.91	0.99
7	1.13E+07 <sup>b</sup>	1.13E+07	358.10					0.93	–
8	4.60E+06	2.86E+08	377.70					0.97	–
9	5.81E–01	3.62E+01	142.90					1	1
10	3.98E+00	2.48E+02	145.85					1	1

<sup>a</sup> Assuming 2% active weight content, 60% void fraction.<sup>b</sup> In this case, the units are: mol m<sub>r</sub><sup>-3</sup> s<sup>-1</sup> Pa<sup>-(m+n)</sup>.

conversion (average error 8.9%), C<sub>2+</sub> and C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub> (average error of 3.3%), CO and CO<sub>2</sub> selectivity (error of 2.8%).

#### 4.2. OCM-based plant description

In this configuration, the natural gas (#P01) is first heated up to 280 °C in order to remove all sulphur compounds in a fixed bed reactor using ZnO. The desulphurized gas (#P02) is then mixed with the unconverted CH<sub>4</sub> and C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>6</sub> (and other species), and subsequently fed to the OCM reactor. The O<sub>2</sub> required for the OCM reactions is produced in a cryogenic Air Separation Unit (ASU), where air is first compressed up to 5.26 bar and after drying and CO<sub>2</sub> separation (in a TSA bed) the O<sub>2</sub>-N<sub>2</sub>-Ar mixture is cooled down to cryogenic temperature and O<sub>2</sub> is separated with 95% purity. Two separation columns are used: the bottom one is operated at high pressure while the one on the top is operated at 1.5 bar and the two columns are thermally integrated since the condenser of the HP columns acts as reboiler of the LP columns. The refrigeration duty of the column is supplied by the cooling effect obtained by two streams from the HP column (respectively, the first rich in N<sub>2</sub> and the second rich in O<sub>2</sub>) which are passed through Joule-Thomson valves reducing the pressure and the temperature. The O<sub>2</sub> (with a purity of 95%) is pumped to the OCM pressure and heated up (in which the liquid O<sub>2</sub> is evaporated) supplying part of the refrigeration duty to the cooling of the inlet air to the separation column(s). After that, the N<sub>2</sub> is used to remove the CO<sub>2</sub> from the TSA and vented to the atmosphere (#A02). In case a higher O<sub>2</sub> purity is required, an additional separation column is included to separate Ar-O<sub>2</sub> up to > 99% purity. The ASU modelling is beyond the scope of this work and therefore data from literature were taken from different Refs. [45–49]. In this system, the OCM reactor is considered as a network of different reactors operated in parallel. The reactor configuration is a combination of a cooled packed-bed reactor with additional gas recirculation to dilute the reactants and to avoid hot spot formation inside the reactor (see below). For the base case scenario, a temperature of 850 °C, 10 bar and a CH<sub>4</sub>/O<sub>2</sub> ratio equal to 3 have been selected. The internal cooling of the reactor is done by using water evaporation. Due to the very high heat of reaction of the OCM process, this is only possible by using a shell-and-tube configuration [65]. Syngas leaving the reactor is immediately quenched with recirculated cold syngas (#P09) to stop the reaction occurring and the resulting gas (#P04) is sent to syngas coolers, where HP steam at 500 °C is produced for the steam turbine(#W04). Depending on the configuration considered, part of this heat is used to pre-heat the gas used for the dilution inside the OCM reactor. After the complete cooling to ambient temperature, the syngas (#P08) is sent to the CO<sub>2</sub> separation unit with methyl-di-ethanol-amine (MDEA). The CO<sub>2</sub> is compressed and sent for final storage (#P21). The gas from the absorber (#P10) is compressed to 31.5 bar and cooled down to cryogenic temperature (–50 °C). The gas (#P11) is fed to the de-methanizer that operates between –120 and –10 °C. At the bottom of the column the C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub>-C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>6</sub>

rich stream (#P12) is fed to the de-ethanizer, which in its turn works between –32 °C and –15 °C. C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub> with a purity of 99.5% is obtained on the top of the column and after being heated up it is delivered at polymer grade (#P14). The C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>6</sub> obtained at the bottom (#P15) is also heated up and subsequently sent to the OCM feed. On the other hand, the top of the de-methanizer is first expanded to the OCM pressure, thus reaching a minimum temperature that is also used to supply part of the duty in the cryogenic cooler. A large part of the CH<sub>4</sub>-rich gas (#P17) is sent to the OCM process after a conversion step in which the H<sub>2</sub> and CO present in the stream are fed to a methanator reactor (which operates in a two stage methanator with an intermediate intercooler 400 °C) to increase the CH<sub>4</sub> while a small part is purged and sent to the boiler to avoid inert species accumulation (i.e. N<sub>2</sub>, Ar). For the steam cycle, the same operating conditions as in the naphtha steam cracking have been used. The complete mass balance of the plant for the Case #3 is reported in Appendix A.3.

Five different heat management strategies have been considered:

##### 4.2.1. Case #1: Adiabatic OCM

In this configuration, an adiabatic OCM reactor is considered in which the total amount of heat generated is removed by diluting the inlet feed with H<sub>2</sub>O or CO<sub>2</sub> (at 350 °C). No external cooling or internal tubes are considered in this configuration.

##### 4.2.2. Case #2: Cooled OCM

In this reactor configuration we assumed to have multiple tubes inside the reactor where HP water is evaporating to produce HP steam for power production. In this case no dilution is considered, but we have assumed a high heat transfer coefficient and heat transfer area from gas to the water to ensure that all the heat produced can be removed from the reactor.

##### 4.2.3. Case #3: Hybrid OCM

In this configuration, a combination of gas dilution (H<sub>2</sub>O and CO<sub>2</sub>) and internal cooling is considered in the reactor.

##### 4.2.4. Case #4: Dual-stage hybrid OCM

In the fourth scheme, the oxygen feeding to the reactor occurs at two different points in the reactor to perform the OCM reaction with a lower local CH<sub>4</sub>/O<sub>2</sub> ratio.

##### 4.2.5. Case #5: Highly selective catalyst

In the last scheme, the kinetics of the catalyst have been varied in order to increase the selectivity toward C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub>. In order to perform the simulation of the reactor, the reaction rate of reaction 2 (Table 3) has been increased by a factor 10.





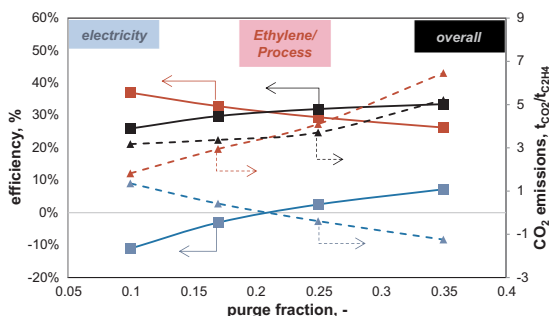


Fig. 3. Sensitivity analysis of Case#2 as a function of the purge fraction.

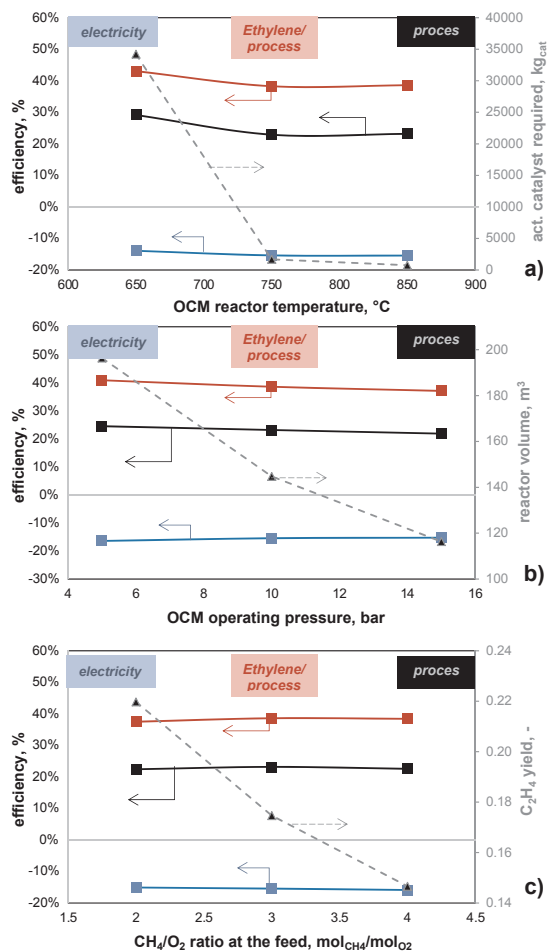


Fig. 4. Results of sensitivity analysis on OCM reactor operating conditions.

## 5. Results

The results of the techno-economic and environmental analyses will be discussed in two sections: in the first part, the comparison between the OCM plants is discussed, while in the second part, the techno-economic assessment is discussed including also the comparison with the naphtha steam cracking plant. The detailed mass balance of the plant depicted in Fig. 2 for the reference case (case#3) is provided in Appendix A.2 (Table 13).

### 5.1. Technical comparison

For Case#1, the adiabatic OCM, two different configurations have been considered, namely with and without a methanation process. In

the case the methanator is not considered in the plant, for a feed ratio CH<sub>4</sub>/O<sub>2</sub> equal to 3, the OCM inlet gas contains 40% H<sub>2</sub>O. Specifically, about 2.55 kg<sub>H2O</sub>/kg<sub>O2</sub> is fed to the OCM reactor. The inlet gas at the OCM reactor also contains 5% CO and 17% H<sub>2</sub> due to the recirculated gas from the de-methanizer (65% of the total flow rate). The ethylene mole fraction  $y_{C_2H_4}$  is 20%, which results from a  $X_{CH_4}$  of 39.28% and  $S_{C_2H_4}$  of 50.8% for a single pass, while the  $S_{CO_2}$  and  $S_{CO}$  are respectively 31.3% and 31%. The overall energy balance shows a  $\eta_{FTC}$  equal to 25.25% and a  $\eta_{FTE}$  equal to -1.3% for a feedstock flow rate of 129 kg/s of NG (5.95 GW<sub>LHV</sub>). In this case more than 1.2 GW<sub>el</sub> are generated by the steam cycle, whereas the energy cost for refrigeration at the condenser of the de-methanizer and the de-ethanizer requires almost 1 GW<sub>el</sub> (76.1% of the total consumption). This is explained because at the de-methanizer, the bottom/feed weight ratio is 0.11 (0.05 in vol.) and therefore a large cost of cooling is required at the condenser. The ASU and syngas compressor duties represent both in the order of 9–10% of the total auxiliaries, while the CO<sub>2</sub> separation and compression duties are marginal (2.1%). Finally, the cost of H<sub>2</sub>O production for the OCM reaction dilution consumes 68% of the total heat available at the gas coolers, thus reducing the amount of steam production for power generation. In case of using a methanator to convert the CH<sub>4</sub>-rich recirculation, 3.46 kg<sub>H2O</sub>/kg<sub>O2</sub> are required, and the H<sub>2</sub>O content is about 60% (vol.). The  $y_{C_2H_4}$  decreases to 19.5% because of a slightly lower  $S_{C_2H_4}$  (49.2%). In this case, the same CH<sub>4</sub>/O<sub>2</sub> ratio is used. However, the overall CH<sub>4</sub> and O<sub>2</sub> partial pressures increase inside the reactor (due to a lower dilution by other gases, viz. H<sub>2</sub>, CO), which leads to an increase in the  $\eta_{FTC}$  to 28% and a slightly positive  $\eta_{FTE}$  (0.84%) with an overall + 4.9% in the primary energy utilization. The CH<sub>4</sub> content after the methanator shows an increase of 19% and therefore the total amount of natural gas needed in the process is decreased to 116 kg/s (5.35 GW<sub>LHV</sub>). The cost of refrigeration decreases, mostly because the bottom/feed weight ratio at the de-methanizer is 0.155 (0.08 in vol.). In this case, the cost of H<sub>2</sub>O production for OCM dilution increases to 91.5% of the total amount of heat available at the syngas cooling (due to the larger amount of H<sub>2</sub>O required), reducing the steam generation. However, some recovery occurs in the intercooling stage of the methanator (2% of the total steam of the steam cycle).

The same adiabatic configuration has been initially considered also using CO<sub>2</sub> instead of H<sub>2</sub>O as diluent due to the lower cost of heating. For this case, the dilution required is 4 kg<sub>CO2</sub>/kg<sub>O2</sub>, which implies an amount of CO<sub>2</sub> at the inlet of 29.8% (and also a large amount of CO). The resulting  $\eta_{FTC}$  in this configuration decreases significantly to 17.9% compared to the other cases. The  $y_{C_2H_4}$  achieved in this case is just 14.2% because of a  $X_{CH_4}$  equal to 37.8% and a  $S_{C_2H_4}$  of 37.5%. When giving a closer look at the current kinetic model, it is observed that the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> at the reactor outlet decreases 19.2%, thus resulting in a negative  $S_{CO_2}$  and in a large production of CO (35% vol. at the reactor outlet). This is explained by the reverse WGS reaction which is close to equilibrium. In fact, the combination of high temperature and low CO/CO<sub>2</sub> molar ratio results in a net CO<sub>2</sub> consumption. In order to implement this configuration, a net amount of pure CO<sub>2</sub> should be produced in the plant and fed at the reactor in order to obtain the required cooling.

In presence of a cooled reactor (Case#2), the yield (per single pass) of the OCM reactor decreases from 20% to 18% due to a decrease in both  $X_{CH_4}$  and  $S_{C_2H_4}$ . This decrease is associated with the higher partial pressures of CH<sub>4</sub> and O<sub>2</sub> in the reactor (the vol. fraction of CH<sub>4</sub> increases to 64.3% and O<sub>2</sub> 21.1% compared to the 25.25% and 8.4% of the adiabatic reactor). The  $\eta_{FTC}$  for Case#2 is 26.3% (compared to 28% of Case#1) resulting directly from the low  $y_{C_2H_4}$  of the OCM reactor. However, the  $\eta_{FTE}$  increases to 7.22% (compared to 0.84% of the adiabatic case) because a large amount of electricity is produced (+52%) since no steam-to-process is required for the temperature control in the reactor. In terms of reactor design, the use of cooled reactor would require a lower reactor volume (99.7 m<sup>3</sup> vs. 157.1 m<sup>3</sup>) with

**Table 5**  
Energy balance of the C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub> production plants.

Note		NSC	Case#1		Case#2		Case#3		Case#4	Case#5
			No meth.	Methanator	Purge 35%	Purge 10%	Reference	Optimal	2stage O <sub>2</sub> feed	High selective
<i>Feedstock</i>										
Naphtha	kg/s	97.22	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Natural gas	kg/s	0.00	129.02	116	123.88	87.88	85	75.6	73.7	47.5
Thermal input	MW <sub>LHV</sub>	4274.96	5952.84	5352.11	5715.69	4054.63	3921.81	3488.10	3400.44	2191.60
<i>Chemical products</i>										
Ethylene	kg/s	31.86	31.87	31.82	31.91	31.90	32.17	31.92	31.96	31.98
Purity	%	99.87%	99.54%	99.54%	99.47%	99.42%	99.48%	99.68%	99.56%	99.23%
Propylene	kg/s	13.01	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
purity	%	99.43%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BTX	kg/s	17.48	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	kg/s	3.78	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fuel-to-chemicals	%, LHV	65.7%	25.25%	28.04%	26.32%	37.10%	38.69%	43.15%	44.32%	68.82%
Carbon conversion	%	70.1%	30.12%	33.45%	31.41%	44.26%	46.15%	51.48%	52.88%	82.10%
<i>Electricity</i>										
Steam cycle	MW	321.12	1226.13	939.5	1428.26	844.11	557.49	475.98	441.21	124.1
Expander	MW	2.97	17.23	9.96	10.09	12.45	12.18	9.97	9.45	3.32
Gas compressor	MW	-38.92	-124.24	-77.01	-82.82	-106.73	-98.19	-81.19	-77.52	-337.9
Refrigeration cycle	MW	-195.07	-991.47	-626.28	-740.90	-1005.08	-885.54	-731.51	-699.1	-309.15
O <sub>2</sub> production	MW	0.00	-115.54	-118.22	-128.32	-139.8	-133.47	-112.3	-107.87	-47.27
CO <sub>2</sub> sep. & cond.	MW	0.00	-27.74	-30.19	-20.35	-29.57	-32.16	-25.7	-24.21	-5.31
Air fans	MW	-20.71	-37.75	-29.96	-32.75	-10.37	-9.62	-7.85	-7.47	-2.48
Heat rejection	MW	-7.22	-23.78	-22.69	-20.76	-13.89	-15.5	-12.33	-12.21	-4.34
Net electricity	MW	62.17	-77.16	45.11	412.46	-448.88	-604.81	-484.93	-477.72	-274.92
Fuel-to-electricity	%, LHV	1.5%	-1.3%	0.8%	7.2%	-11.1%	-15.4%	-13.9%	-14.0%	-12.5%
Overall energy	%, LHV	67.2%	24.0%	28.9%	33.5%	26.0%	23.3%	29.3%	30.3%	56.3%
<i>Olefins production</i>										
Operating temperature	°C	850	850	850	850	850	850	650	850	850
Operating pressure	bar	1	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
CH <sub>4</sub> -to-O <sub>2</sub> ratio	mol. basis	0	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
X <sub>CH<sub>4</sub>,ss</sub> conversion		0	0.39	0.40	0.39	0.39	0.40	0.41	0.42	0.54
y <sub>C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub></sub> yield		0.33	0.20	0.20	0.2	0.165	0.175	0.206	0.215	0.488
Reactor volume	m <sup>3</sup>	-	157.10	157.1	126.7	117.8	157.1	603.2	137.4	98.2
C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>4</sub> @separation	%vol.	39.5%	4.6%	7.3%	4.7%	5.3%	5.8%	7.0%	7.3%	16.03%
H <sub>2</sub> O-to-fuel ratio	kg/kg	0.50	1.03	1.83	0.00	0.00	0.79	0.75	0.75	0.64
<i>CO<sub>2</sub> emissions</i>										
Direct CO <sub>2</sub> emissions	t <sub>CO<sub>2</sub></sub> /t <sub>C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub></sub>	2.83	5.27	6.46	4.05	1.82	1.36	1.10	1.05	0.32
CO <sub>2</sub> -from-electricity	t <sub>CO<sub>2</sub></sub> /t <sub>C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub></sub>	-0.19	0.23	-0.14	-1.24	1.35	1.80	1.46	1.44	0.83
Total CO <sub>2</sub> emissions	t <sub>CO<sub>2</sub></sub> /t <sub>C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub></sub>	2.64	5.51	6.33	2.81	3.17	3.16	2.56	2.49	1.15
CO <sub>2</sub> capture rate	%	0.0%	19.3%	23.4%	8.3%	30.3%	34.0%	30.6%	29.5%	45.8%

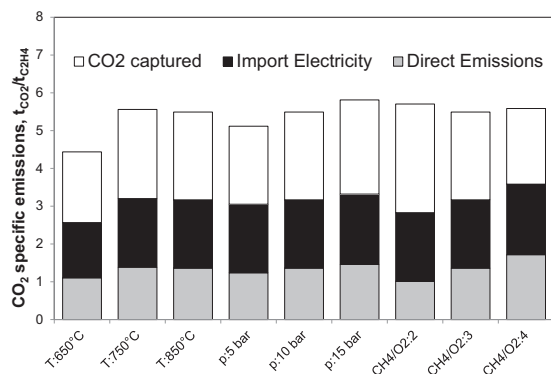


Fig. 5. Carbon conversion and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for Case#3.

a heat transfer surface area<sup>2</sup> per unit volume of 11 m<sub>HE</sub><sup>2</sup>/m<sub>r</sub><sup>3</sup>. In order to increase the  $\eta_{FTC}$ , a large fraction of the gas can be recirculated to the OCM reactor instead of using it in the boiler. This also implies that the

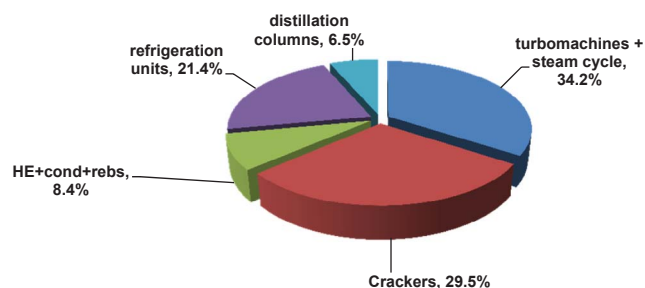
<sup>2</sup> The heat transfer area has been calculated assuming a constant global heat transfer coefficient  $U = 1000 \text{ W/m}^2\text{K}$ , constant temperature at the hot side (the reaction temperature) and constant temperature in the cold side  $T = T_{\text{sat,H}_2\text{O}}(100 \text{ bar}) \approx 350 \text{ }^\circ\text{C}$ .

purge fraction has to be decreased down to 0.1 (from 0.35), and the results of this analysis are presented in Fig. 3. By reducing the purge fraction, the  $\eta_{FTC}$  increases up to 37% because more CH<sub>4</sub> is recirculated to the reactor. However, this positive effects bring along a decrease in the  $\eta_{FTE}$  (-11%) because less fuel is used in the boiler (-40%) and all the electric consumptions increase. In particular, more O<sub>2</sub> is required from the ASU (+9%) and the refrigeration unit and syngas compressors consumptions (respectively +36% and +29%) increase due to the higher gas flow rate sent to the cryogenic distillation units. Overall, the energy efficiency decreases from 33.5% to 25.9%. Increasing the recirculation fraction to the reactor reduces the y<sub>C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub></sub> (from 18% to 16.5%) mostly because the S<sub>C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub></sub> drops from 46.3% to 42.1%. From an environmental point of view, the CO<sub>2</sub> specific emissions decrease at lower purge fraction: on the one hand, the lower electricity consumptions (and eventually net electricity production for a purge factor > 0.2) reduce the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions associated with the auxiliary consumptions. On the other hand, a large  $\eta_{FTC}$  increases the carbon conversion from 15.7% to 22.1% and increases also the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> captured from 14.8% to 30.2%.

In order to maximize the  $\eta_{FTC}$ , a different analysis has been carried out for Case#3 in which the purge fraction is kept at 10% and the cooling of the reactor is carried out partly with H<sub>2</sub>O/CO<sub>2</sub> recirculation (Case#1) and direct cooling (Case#2). The pure O<sub>2</sub>-to-dilutant ratio has

**Table 6**  
Detailed comparison of the economics of the selected plants (in Europe).

		Case#1	Case#1 + meth	Case#2	Case#3ref	Case#3opt	Case#4	Case#5	Naphtha
Turbomachines + steam cycle	% of BEC	34.5%	28.3%	20.6%	17.5%	17.5%	17.4%	10.6%	34.2%
Reactors		8.0%	25.3%	24.7%	25.6%	27.3%	27.3%	30.1%	29.5%
HE + cond + rebs		2.2%	2.2%	2.2%	2.6%	2.1%	2.6%	2.1%	8.4%
Refrigeration units		37.8%	25.7%	35.1%	34.7%	33.5%	33.1%	45.2%	21.4%
Distillation columns		2.0%	2.0%	1.8%	2.0%	2.3%	2.4%	1.9%	6.5%
Air Separation Unit		7.0%	7.4%	7.4%	7.9%	8.0%	8.0%	6.2%	
CO <sub>2</sub> separation		8.5%	9.1%	8.2%	9.7%	9.3%	9.1%	4.0%	
BEC	M€	1073.86	1043.20	1168.95	1055.25	922.05	895.87	654.45	409.88
TOC	M€	2534.09	2461.75	2758.50	2490.17	2175.85	2114.08	1544.38	967.24
Specific cost	M€/ (ton/h <sub>C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub></sub> )	9.35	9.08	10.18	9.19	8.03	7.80	5.70	3.57
<i>Operating costs</i>									
Feedstock	€/ton <sub>C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub></sub>	931.96	840.96	635.61	612.94	546.44	532.04	342.60	1373.16
Electricity/by-products		57.06	−33.49	332.43	446.36	357.25	352.97	184.18	−723.09
O & M		127.75	128.48	139.02	125.44	110.87	109.86	109.76	77.64
Cost of C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>4</sub>	€/ton <sub>C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub></sub>	1396.32	1208.52	1411.76	1458.89	1254.75	1234.76	876.22	834.68

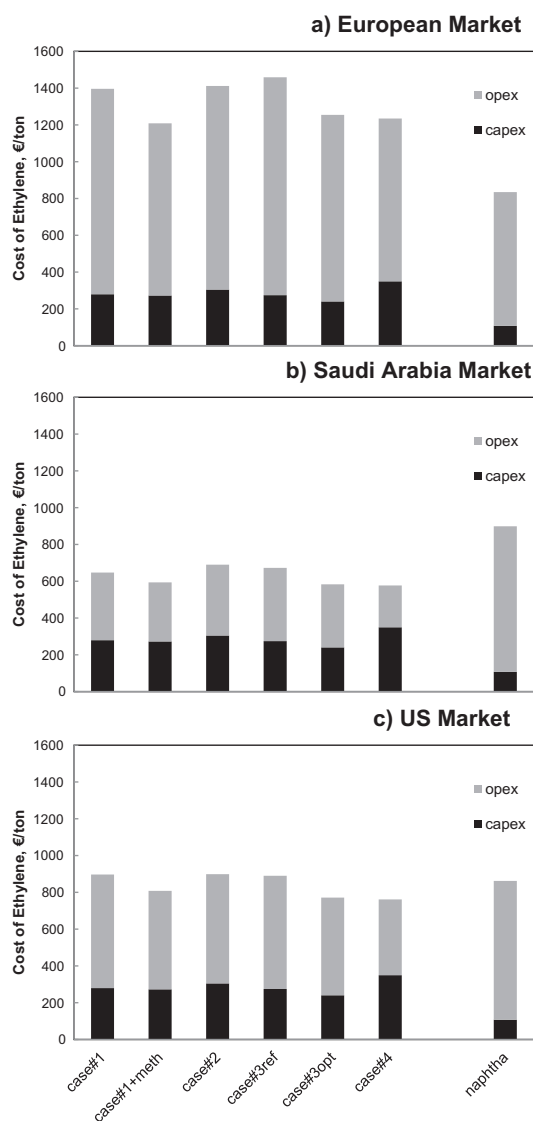


**Fig. 6.** Bare Erected Cost (BEC) for the Naphtha Steam Cracking plant, percentage of the total BEC.

been fixed equal to 2 kg<sub>O<sub>2</sub></sub>/kg<sub>(CO<sub>2</sub>+H<sub>2</sub>O)</sub>. In case only H<sub>2</sub>O is used, the  $y_{C_2H_4}$  is 16.2%. The amount of heat removed by the internal cooling decreases to 9.8 MJ<sub>th</sub>/kg<sub>C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub></sub> with respect to 17.6 MJ<sub>th</sub>/kg<sub>C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub></sub> of the equivalent Case#2. The total reactor volume is 133 m<sup>3</sup> which is respectively 12% higher than Case#2 (cooled) and 18% smaller than Case#1 (adiabatic). The  $\eta_{FTC}$  is 38.6% (+1.6% with respect to Case#2), while the  $\eta_{FTE}$  decreases to −15.4%.

Two other cases have been investigated adding CO<sub>2</sub> (respectively 20% and 40% on wt. basis) to the total mass flow rate of diluent to investigate its effect on the performance. While increasing the amount of CO<sub>2</sub>, the amount of heat to be removed decreases to 7.8 MJ<sub>th</sub>/kg<sub>C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub></sub>. This results from the combination of a higher gas flow rate and the higher heat capacity of CO<sub>2</sub> compared with H<sub>2</sub>O. While increasing the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> the overall volumetric flow rate decreases due to the different molecular weight of CO<sub>2</sub>/H<sub>2</sub>O ( $MW_{CO_2} > MW_{H_2O}$ ) as well as the CH<sub>4</sub> and O<sub>2</sub> partial pressures, decreasing slightly the  $y_{C_2H_4}$  (from 16.2% to 15.7%), which reduces consequently the  $\eta_{FTC}$  from 38.6% to 35.8%. In terms of energy performance, also the  $\eta_{FTE}$  decreases at high CO<sub>2</sub> fraction as a consequence of two different effects. On the one hand, the gross electricity production of the steam cycle increases due to a lower amount of heat required for the production of steam for the process. On the other hand, the LP steam required at the reboiler of the AGR units increases (from 73.8 MW<sub>th</sub> to 195.6 MW<sub>th</sub>) due to the higher CO<sub>2</sub> amount to be removed (the CO<sub>2</sub> mol. fraction increases from 7.7% to 16.5%), the cost of the refrigeration for the de-methanizer increases due to a larger dilution of C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub> which decreases from 5.8% to 5% at the inlet of the cryogenic units (lower yield) and, finally the cost of CO<sub>2</sub> re-compression increases significantly (+40.4 MW<sub>e</sub>).

The relevant effect of the OCM performance on the overall plant performance suggests a sensitivity analysis on the operating conditions of the OCM. The results of the sensitivity analysis are summarized in Fig. 4a–c and the following trends are highlighted:



**Fig. 7.** Economic comparison of different OCM technologies and naphtha steam cracking with three different scenarios.

- A decrease in the OCM temperature from 850 °C to 650 °C shows an increase (+4%) in the  $\eta_{FTC}$  as consequence of an increase in the selectivity towards C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub> from 0.44 to 0.5. Moreover, the  $\eta_{FTE}$

slightly decreases ( $-1\%$ ) since the cost of refrigeration at the de-methanizer decreases as the concentration of  $C_2H_4$  at the inlet of the cryogenic unit increases up to  $6.97\%$  (with respect to  $5.8\%$ ). Furthermore, it implies that the gross power production from the steam cycle decreases, since more fuel is converted to ethylene. In case of the LT OCM system, the amount of steam produced in the syngas cooler decreases significantly, since less gas is used to quench (from  $142$  to  $31$  kg/s), while the overall heat to be removed in the OCM through the HP steam production increases significantly<sup>3</sup> ( $2.7$  times higher). As shown in Fig. 4a, the lower temperature affects significantly the kinetics and therefore both an increase of the active weight content of the catalyst and an increase in the reactor volume are required to reach full conversion of the  $O_2$  along the reactor (more than  $44$  times). However, Case#3 at  $650^\circ C$  represents the optimal configuration in terms of performance compared to the other configurations.

- As previously described, a lower  $O_2$  partial pressure increases the  $S_{C_2H_4}$ . Therefore, by increasing the OCM operating pressure from  $5$  to  $15$  bar, the  $y_{C_2H_4}$  decreases (from  $0.19$  at  $5$  bar to  $0.16$  at  $15$  bar) and consequently also the  $\eta_{FTC}$  decreases from  $41\%$  to  $37\%$ . On the other hand, the  $\eta_{FTE}$  decreases ( $-1.2\%$ ) at lower pressures mostly because of the higher costs of syngas compression ( $2.1$  times higher) to the distillation units. In terms of OCM reactor design, the lower pressure decreases the gas density inside the reactor. Therefore, in order to limit the superficial gas velocity, the reactor volume increases up to  $70\%$  (relative to the case at  $15$  bar) as represented Fig. 4. Moreover, the lower pressure also shows an impact on the volume of the heat exchangers and  $CO_2$  separation columns, as well as in the cost of the syngas compressors.
- By varying the  $CH_4/O_2$  ratio from  $2$  to  $4$ , a decrease in the  $X_{CH_4}$  from  $58\%$  to  $30\%$  and an increase in the  $S_{C_2H_4}$  from  $38\%$  to  $48\%$  is measured, which overall results in a decrease in the  $y_{C_2H_4}$  (Fig. 4c). The  $\eta_{FTC}$  trend is not constant: this is associated with the fact that at higher  $CH_4/O_2$  ratios the amount of  $CH_4$  that is recirculated increases, thus decreasing the overall feedstock. In terms of energy consumptions several effects can be highlighted: (i) the gross production from the steam turbine remains more or less constant ( $557$ – $573$  MW depending on the case) because by increasing the  $CH_4/O_2$  ratio, more heat is available at the syngas coolers to produce HP steam for power generation (less  $H_2O$  is produced for the dilution), and low amount of heat of reaction in the OCM reactor is released; (ii) the consumptions of the ASU increases at the lower  $CH_4/O_2$  ratio, (from  $117$  MW to  $158$  MW); (iii) the consumption of the cryogenic cycles increases ( $+50$  MW) at a high  $CH_4/O_2$  ratio due to the high  $CH_4$  content to be separated. It must be noted that in case of a  $CH_4/O_2$  ratio equal to  $4$  the amount of heat to be removed in the OCM reactor is  $1.76$  MJ<sub>th</sub>/kg<sub>C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub></sub> (while in case of a  $CH_4/O_2$  ratio equal to  $2$  this value amounts  $15.9$  MJ<sub>th</sub>/kg<sub>C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub></sub>) making the heat management of the reactor simpler and easier to be controlled.

The  $CO_2$  emissions are resulting from the combustion of the purge gases ( $1.1$ – $1.7$  t<sub>CO<sub>2</sub></sub>/t<sub>C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub></sub>) and from the equivalent  $CO_2$  emissions produced due to the relatively large electricity import ( $1.46$ – $1.87$  t<sub>CO<sub>2</sub></sub>/t<sub>C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub></sub>). The  $CO_2$  capture rate of the total  $CO_2$  produced in the plant (including the electricity imported) is ranging between  $35.8\%$  and  $50.8\%$  (in case of a  $CH_4/O_2$  ratio equal to  $2$ ) and it is proportional to the  $CO_2$  selectivity of the OCM reaction system.

In Case#4 the OCM reactor is arranged as two units in series so that two different feeding points are considered. The  $CH_4/O_2$  ratio is locally always lower than  $6$ , which leads to an increase in the final  $S_{C_2H_4}$  up to  $51.6\%$  and a  $X_{CH_4}$  of  $41.7\%$  with a final  $y_{C_2H_4}$  equal to  $0.215$ . The

performance of the plant increases significantly; the  $\eta_{FTC}$  increases to  $44.2\%$  and also the power consumption decreases (overall  $\eta_{FTE}$  equal to  $-14.1\%$ ). The energy cost of the de-methanizer is reduced due to the high  $C_2H_4$  content ( $7.3\%$ ). The overall  $CO_2$  emissions are  $2.49$  t<sub>CO<sub>2</sub></sub>/t<sub>C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub></sub> ( $57.6\%$  resulting from the import of electricity) and the carbon capture rate is  $41.4\%$  ( $1.75$  t<sub>CO<sub>2</sub>,capt</sub>/t<sub>C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub></sub>). The detailed energy balance of the described plants are summarized in Table 5.

In Case#5, the improved kinetics increases the  $CH_4$  conversion (up to  $54\%$ ) and the  $C_2H_4$  yield goes to  $48.8\%$ . A larger amount of  $C_2H_6$  is also produced at the OCM reactor outlet ( $>5\%$ , compared to  $<0.4\%$  for the other cases) and the reduction of the cost of refrigeration is remarkable (about  $30\%$  of the corresponding Case#3) due to the higher amount of  $C_2H_4$  at the separation train ( $16\%$  respect to about  $5\%$  of the other cases) (see Fig. 5).

## 5.2. Cost assessment

The results of the economic analysis are presented in Table 6. The BEC has been listed for the main group of components. For the conventional naphtha steam cracker, the largest cost is associated with the cracker (except for the combined turbomachines and steam cycle). The bare erected cost (BEC) is  $409.9$  M€. The costs of the different equipment are shown in Fig. 6. The CAPEX impact to the final cost of ethylene is about  $13\%$  (as from Eqs. (11) and (12)).

On the basis of the financial model, the resulting cost of  $C_2H_4$  is  $861.8$  €/ton, which is higher than the cost predicted in Boalamenti et al. [8] mostly due to the different way used to account for the credits. The cost of the feedstock results in  $1373.2$  €/ton<sub>C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub></sub>. However, the presence of multiple products ( $C_3H_6$ , BTX) as well as the electricity production reduces the cost of ethylene production.

In the case of OCM plants, the refrigeration units also represent the highest part of the CAPEX ( $21.4$ – $35.1\%$  of BEC), which is related to the high energy requirements of the compressors to obtain the required cooling. An improvement in the  $C_2H_4$  yield as well as a more convenient  $CH_4$  separation technique would enhance also the economics of the OCM technology. The cost of the OCM reactor just accounts for about  $9\%$  of the total BEC, while the cost of the methanator is about twice higher. This is related to the large volumetric  $CH_4$  flow rate (almost  $50\%$ ) in the recirculating gas in which the  $H_2$  and  $CO$  are converted into  $CH_4$ . It should be noted that in this work the option to separate  $CH_4$  from the  $H_2$  and  $CO$  has not been considered in order to avoid additional costs of refrigeration (the temperature for a  $CH_4/CO$  separation is about  $-160^\circ C$ ). The cost of the power plant and the turbomachines is higher when a large purge fraction is considered. It must be noticed that the ASU and the  $CO_2$  separation system account for  $8\%$  and  $9\%$  respectively. The overall specific cost of the plant is between  $7.8$  and  $10.2$  €/ton<sub>C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub></sub>/h, which is more than double in comparison to the specific investment cost for the naphtha steam cracking ( $3.57$  €/ton<sub>C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub></sub>/h). The costs of the feedstock accounts for  $45\%$  (except for Case#1) of the total cost of ethylene, while the large electricity import required represents more than  $24\%$  of the total costs (except for Case#1). Finally, in case of a more reactive and selective catalyst (Case#5), and thus improved  $C_2H_4$  yield, the cost of  $C_2H_4$  becomes competitive with the cost of  $C_2H_4$  using naphtha also in the European market.

Based on these results, a sensitivity analysis has been carried out by varying the operating costs (feedstocks and utilities) based on three different markets, specifically in Europe (the reference scenario in Fig. 7a), Saudi Arabia and the United States. This analysis is required mainly due to the uncertainties associated with the cost of the feedstock (both naphtha and natural gas price are affected by several geo-political events). In case of Saudi Arabia (Fig. 7b), the low price of the natural gas ( $1.2$  vs  $5$  €/GJ of EU) and the electricity, the results are very advantageous for ethylene production through the OCM technology compared to the naphtha steam cracking process. This is partly confirmed by the fact that most of the  $C_2H_4$  production (about  $88\%$ ) in

<sup>3</sup> The heat of reaction in the OCM reactor depends on  $CH_4/O_2$  ratio and it is removed as sensible heat of the products, which depends on final temperature and flow rate, and heat used to evaporate HP steam.

Saudi Arabia is carried out using ethane and propane as feedstock. In the case of the United States (Fig. 7c) the cost of  $C_2H_4$  using OCM and naphtha is comparable (and therefore in the range of error which is typically  $\pm 30\%$  for the economic analysis). The results of the economic analysis demonstrate that in the presence of a large availability of natural gas at low price, the OCM technology can be competitive with the conventional naphtha steam cracker. However, the current technology readiness level and the high capital cost associated with the OCM plant hinder at the moment commercialization and deployment by chemical companies, especially for large-scale  $C_2H_4$  plants.

## 6. Conclusions

Two plants based on naphtha steam cracking and oxidative coupling of methane for the production of ethylene have been studied and compared in this work from a techno-economic point of view. The naphtha steam cracking has shown better performances over the OCM technology due to the higher yields and reduced electricity consumptions. In order to improve the fuel-to-olefins efficiencies in the OCM system, lower pressures and lower temperatures are beneficial. In the OCM plants the cost of refrigeration, in particular in the de-methanizer, is by far the most relevant energy cost due to the low concentration of  $C_2$  components and high amount of unconverted  $CH_4$  in the OCM reactor. The techno-economic analyses have shown that lower selectivity increases significantly the cost of  $C_2H_4$  production, mostly because of high electricity import. At a lower temperature (650 °C) or in the presence of a distributive feeding of oxygen (as for the two-stage OCM), the cost of  $C_2H_4$  decreases by 15%. In terms of economics, the classic OCM technologies are not competitive due to the large thermal input and high electricity consumption. In case of a relatively high natural gas

price scenario (as in the western European market), the OCM technology becomes competitive with the more established naphtha steam cracking only in case the  $C_2H_4$  yield is about 50%, which allows reaching a fuel-to-chemicals efficiency above 65% (as for the naphtha steam cracking), due to the reduction in the feedstock use and secondarily due to the reduced cost of electricity import. At medium and low natural gas price as in the case of Saudi Arabia and partly in the US, the OCM technologies may become more competitive and even more advantageous than the conventional naphtha steam cracking, although the ethane cracking technologies is the most preferred and used technology for  $C_2H_4$  production in these regions.

However, nowadays the high investment costs for the OCM technologies, the large difficulties to demonstrate the technology at large scale and the uncertainty in the performance of the OCM reactor and its long term stability limit its viability at industrial scale and further demonstration studies are required. Also, the expected higher capital cost associated with the OCM plants represents a strong limitation for the implementation of OCM technology, despite the fact that the resulting cost of ethylene may become competitive with that of the conventional naphtha steam cracking process. On the basis of these results, the impact of integrating membrane and membrane reactor with OCM reactor will be studied in a future work to assess the performance of the plant in presence of higher  $C_2H_4$  yield and cheaper air separation cost.

## Acknowledgements

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## Appendix A

### A.1. Assumptions

#### Tables 7–9

**Table 7**  
Main parameters used for the modelling of turbomachines.

Components	$\eta_{is}$	$\eta_{m-e}$	Cost reference
Blowers	0.75	0.95	[63]
Compressors	0.85	0.95	[53,66]
Pumps	0.85	0.95	[53,66]
Expander	0.85	0.99	[53,66]
HP steam turbine	0.85	0.99	[50]
LP steam turbine	0.75	0.99	[50]

**Table 8**  
Assumptions for the financial model.

Financial model	
Inflation	0.03
Taxation rate	0.35
Depreciation (Year)	20
Debt interest rate	0.05
Revenue interest rate	0.15
Revenue fraction	0.4
Debt fraction	0.6
Construction Payment Years	3
→payment 1st year	40%
→payment 2nd year	30%
→payment 3rd year	30%
Life time	25
Equivalent hrs	7884
Construction years	3



**Table 9**  
Methodology for the calculation of the TOC from NETL [67,51]

<i>Plant component</i>	Cost (M€)
Component W	A
Component X	B
Component Y	C
Component Z	D
Bare erected cost [BEC]	A + B + C + D
<i>Direct costs as percentage of BEC</i>	
Includes piping/valves, civil works, instrumentation, steel structure, erections, etc.	
Total Installation Cost [TIC]	80% BEC
Total Direct Plant Cost [TDPC]	BEC + TIC
<i>Indirect costs [IC]</i>	
Engineering procurement and construction [EPC]	14% TDPC
	TDPC + IC
<i>Contingencies and owner's costs (C &amp; OC)</i>	
Contingency	10% EPC
Owner's cost	5% EPC
Total contingencies & OC [C & OC]	15% EPC
Total Overnight Cost [TOC]	EPC + C & OC

## A.2. Naphtha steam cracking validation

Table 10

**Table 10**  
Naphtha composition selected for the plant analysis and comparison of the cracked syngas with Ullmann [42].

Species		H <sub>2</sub>	CH <sub>4</sub>	C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>4</sub>	C <sub>3</sub> H <sub>6</sub>	C <sub>3</sub> H <sub>8</sub>	C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>10</sub>	C <sub>5</sub> H <sub>12</sub>	C <sub>6</sub> H <sub>14</sub>	C <sub>7</sub> H <sub>16</sub>	C <sub>8</sub> H <sub>18</sub>	C <sub>9</sub> H <sub>20</sub>
<i>Naphtha composition</i>	wt%, dry					0.010	0.038	0.089	0.213	0.125	0.123	0.035
Syngas	wt%, dry	0.004	0.163	0.324	0.145	0.003	0.001		0.001			0.003
Syngas [42]	wt%, dry	0.009	0.169	0.303	0.136	0.004	0.002					
Deviation	%	50%	3%	−7%	−7%	19%	12%					
Species		C <sub>10</sub> H <sub>22</sub>	C <sub>11</sub> H <sub>24</sub>	C <sub>5</sub> H <sub>10</sub>	C <sub>6</sub> H <sub>12</sub>	C <sub>7</sub> H <sub>14</sub>	C <sub>8</sub> H <sub>16</sub>	C <sub>9</sub> H <sub>18</sub>	C <sub>10</sub> H <sub>20</sub>	C <sub>11</sub> H <sub>22</sub>	C <sub>6</sub> H <sub>6</sub>	C <sub>7</sub> H <sub>8</sub>
<i>Naphtha composition</i>	wt%, dry	0.025	0.070	0.050	0.061	0.050	0.020	0.015	0.010	0.005	0.037	0.018
Syngas	wt%, dry										0.096	0.034
Syngas [42]	wt%, dry										0.083	0.034
Deviation,%											−15%	−1%
Species		C <sub>8</sub> H <sub>10</sub> -EB	C <sub>8</sub> H <sub>10</sub> -X	C <sub>8</sub> H <sub>8</sub>	C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>2</sub>	C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>6</sub>	C <sub>3</sub> H <sub>4</sub> -MA	C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>4</sub> =	C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>6</sub> =	C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>8</sub> =	C <sub>12</sub> H <sub>26</sub>	C <sub>9</sub> H <sub>12</sub>
<i>Naphtha composition</i>	wt%, dry	0.001	0.003	500 PPM								
Syngas	wt%, dry	0.007	0.015	0.012	0.012	0.030	0.015	0.003	0.054	0.033	0.033	0.009
Syngas [42]	wt%, dry	0.004	0.011	0.014							0.052	
Deviation,%		−70%	−32%	17%								19%

## A.3. Naphtha steam cracking mass balance (refer to Fig. 1)

## Tables 11 and 12

Table 11

Mass balance of the naphtha steam cracking plant shown in Fig. 1 – part A.

#stream	T	p	LHV	Flowrate				Composition, mol.													
	°C	bar	MJ/kg	kmol/s	kg/s	MTPY	m <sup>3</sup> /s	H <sub>2</sub>	H <sub>2</sub> O	N <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	CO	CO <sub>2</sub>	CH <sub>4</sub>	C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>4</sub>	C <sub>3</sub> H <sub>6</sub>	C <sub>3</sub> H <sub>8</sub>	C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>10</sub>	C <sub>5</sub> H <sub>12</sub>	C <sub>6</sub> H <sub>14</sub>	
A01	15.0	1.0		8.59	247.83	7.82	205.7			0.790	0.210										
A02	450.0	1.3		8.59	247.83	7.82	397.5			0.790	0.210										
P01	25.0	1.0	44.0	1.06	97.22	3.07	0.1														
P02	500.0	1.0	29.3	3.76	145.83	4.60	241.1														
P03	850.0	1.0	30.9	5.93	145.84	4.60	553.6	0.036	0.455					0.167	0.189	0.057	0.001				
P04	230.0	1.0	30.9	5.93	145.84	4.60	247.4	0.036	0.455					0.167	0.189	0.057	0.001				
P05	216.6	1.0	32.0	6.02	159.73	5.04	244.3	0.036	0.449					0.165	0.187	0.056	0.001				
P06	43.0	1.0	30.5	5.90	142.06	4.48	90.6	0.036	0.457					0.168	0.190	0.057	0.001				
P07	43.2	1.0	44.2	3.51	100.19	3.16	91.7	0.061	0.074					0.283	0.322	0.099	0.002				
P08	200.4	1.0	43.6	0.11	17.67	0.56	0.03														
P09	200.4	1.0	43.6	0.02	3.78	0.12	0.01														
P10	35.0	31.4	47.5	3.03	78.20	2.47	2.06	0.071						0.327	0.371	0.111	0.002				
P11	−45.0	31.4	47.5	3.03	78.20	2.47	0.71	0.071						0.327	0.371	0.111	0.002				
P12	5.0	26.0	46.4	1.81	61.56	1.94	0.39								0.615	0.185	0.004	0.002			
P13	70.0	16.0	45.2	0.54	25.69	0.81	0.50									0.592	0.013	0.005			0.002
P14	50.0	3.0	44.4	0.18	10.28	0.32	1.15									0.087	0.003	0.012			0.005
P15	−16.8	25.0	47.2	1.27	35.87	1.13	0.74								0.878	0.012					
P16	−17.1	18.0	47.2	1.27	36.00	1.14	1.18								0.895	0.012					
P17	15.0	18.0	47.2	1.14	31.86	1.00	1.31								0.999						
P18	25.0	1.0	51.7	0.42	5.73	0.18	10.37					0.002		0.814	0.007						
P19	−7.5	18.0	47.3	0.13	4.14	0.13	0.01								0.003	0.111					
P20	40.5	14.0	45.8	0.36	15.41	0.49	0.52									0.847	0.018	0.002			
P21	68.0	21.0	45.8	0.36	15.49	0.49	0.36									0.883	0.054	0.002			
P22	41.4	17.0	45.8	0.31	13.01	0.41	0.35									0.994	0.006				
P23	65.2	17.0	45.7	0.05	2.48	0.08	0.01									0.208	0.351	0.013			
P24	30.3	2.7	45.5	0.15	8.04	0.25	1.34									0.104	0.004	0.015			
P25	95.6	2.0	40.7	0.21	17.48	0.55	0.04									0.003					0.009
P26	95.5	2.0	40.7	0.18	15.24	0.48	0.02									0.004					0.006
S01	296.1	100.0		8.33	150.00	4.73	3.71		1.0												
S02	178.8	7.0		0.64	11.50	0.36	3.30		1.0												
S03	230	7.0		2.70	48.61	1.52	15.7		1.0												
U01	257.8	1.0	47.6	1.13	20.38	0.64	30.71	0.065					0.001	0.301	0.003	0.036	0.016	0.003			
U02	25.0	1.0	51.7	0.80	10.91	0.34	19.76	0.177				0.002	0.814	0.007							
H2-1	50.0	20.0	120.0	0.06	0.13	0.004	0.09	1.000													
H2-2	75.0	14.0	120.0	0.04	0.08	0.003	0.08	1.000													
EX01	172.5	1.0		9.32	258.75	8.16	345.1		0.156	0.728	0.045		0.071								

**Table 12**  
Mass balance of the naphtha steam cracking plant shown in Fig. 1 – part B.

#stream	Composition mol.																
	C <sub>7</sub> H <sub>16</sub>	C <sub>8</sub> H <sub>18</sub>	C <sub>9</sub> H <sub>20</sub>	C <sub>6</sub> H <sub>6</sub>	C <sub>7</sub> H <sub>8</sub>	C <sub>8</sub> H <sub>10</sub> -EB	C <sub>8</sub> H <sub>10</sub> -X	C <sub>8</sub> H <sub>8</sub>	C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>2</sub>	C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>6</sub>	C <sub>3</sub> H <sub>4</sub> -MA	C <sub>3</sub> H <sub>4</sub> =	C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>4</sub> =	C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>6</sub> =	C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>8</sub> =	C <sub>12</sub> H <sub>26</sub>	C <sub>9</sub> H <sub>12</sub>
A01																	
A02																	
P01																	
P02																	
P03				0.020	0.006	0.001	0.002	0.002	0.007	0.016	0.006		0.001	0.016	0.010	0.003	0.001
P04				0.020	0.006	0.001	0.002	0.002	0.007	0.016	0.006		0.001	0.016	0.010	0.003	0.001
P05				0.020	0.006	0.001	0.002	0.002	0.007	0.016	0.006			0.016	0.009	0.015	0.004
P06				0.020	0.006	0.001	0.002	0.002	0.007	0.016	0.006		0.001	0.016	0.010		
P07				0.036	0.011	0.002	0.004	0.003	0.012	0.028	0.011		0.002	0.030	0.017		
P08																0.792	0.207
P09																0.792	0.207
P10				0.008					0.014	0.032	0.012		0.002	0.029	0.018		
P11				0.008					0.014	0.032	0.012		0.002	0.029	0.018		
P12				0.014					0.023	0.054	0.020		0.003	0.049	0.030		
P13				0.046	0.002						0.066		0.010	0.163	0.102		
P14				0.138	0.005						0.051		0.026	0.474	0.199		
P15									0.034	0.077							
P16										0.093							
P17										<b>0.001</b>							
P18																	
P19										0.886							
P20											0.073		0.002	0.005	0.052		
P21													0.002	0.005	0.052		
P22																	
P23													0.016	0.038	0.372		
P24											0.060		0.031	0.550	0.237		
P25			0.012	0.578	0.176	0.030	0.066	0.053			0.002		0.002	0.051	0.008		0.009
P26			0.014	0.531	0.199	0.035	0.077	0.061			0.002		0.002	0.048	0.009		0.010
S01																	
S02																	
S03																	
U01										0.103	0.008		0.005	0.076	0.049		
U02																	
H2-1																	
H2-2																	
EX01																	

## A.4. Oxidative coupling of methane plant Case#3-ref (refer to Fig. 2)

Table 13

Table 13

Mass balance of the OCM plant depicted in Fig. 2..

#stream	T	p	LHV	Flowrate				Composition, mol.									
	°C	bar	MJ/kg	kmol/s	kg/s	MTPY	m <sup>3</sup> /s	O <sub>2</sub>	N <sub>2</sub>	AR	CH <sub>4</sub>	C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>4</sub>	C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>6</sub>	CO	H <sub>2</sub>	CO <sub>2</sub>	H <sub>2</sub> O
A01	25.0	1.01	0.0	21.11	609.13	19.21	523.10	0.208	0.783	0.010							
A02	25.0	1.01	0.0	16.50	460.82	14.53	395.74	0.000	0.996	0.004							
A03	25.0	25	0.0	4.61	148.30	4.68	4.47	0.950	0.019	0.031							
A04	25.0	1.01	0.0	10.16	293.02	9.24	251.64	0.208	0.783	0.010							
EX01	152.9	1.01	0.0	11.68	324.67	10.24	413.57	0.017	0.707	0.012						0.085	0.179
P01	25.0	70	46.0	4.93	85.00	2.68	1.50	0.030			0.920		0.040			0.010	
P02	280.0	70	46.0	4.93	85.00	2.68	3.24	0.030			0.920		0.040			0.010	
P03	365.7	11.9	29.7	19.07	374.88	11.82	85.21	0.119	0.067	0.689	0.001	0.018	0.001	0.025	0.019	0.061	
P04	600.0	9	15.8	65.65	1253.49	39.53	530.01	0.072	0.044	0.242	0.036	0.005	0.061	0.156	0.052	0.332	
P05	600.0	9	15.8	23.53	449.27	14.17	189.96	0.072	0.044	0.242	0.036	0.005	0.061	0.156	0.052	0.332	
P06	305.0	9	15.8	23.53	449.27	14.17	125.28	0.072	0.044	0.242	0.036	0.005	0.061	0.156	0.052	0.332	
P07	183.0	9	15.8	42.12	804.22	25.36	175.83	0.072	0.044	0.242	0.036	0.005	0.061	0.156	0.052	0.332	
P08	40.0	9	22.9	21.98	431.21	13.60	63.11	0.107	0.065	0.360	0.053	0.007	0.091	0.232	0.077	0.007	
P09	51.6	10.1	22.9	22.19	435.30	13.73	58.90	0.107	0.065	0.360	0.053	0.007	0.091	0.232	0.077	0.007	
P10	40.0	9	27.9	20.12	353.70	11.15	57.91	0.117	0.071	0.393	0.058	0.008	0.099	0.254			
P11	-95.0	34	27.9	20.12	353.70	11.15	7.21	0.117	0.071	0.393	0.058	0.008	0.099	0.254			
P12	-30.6	18	47.2	1.32	37.27	1.18	0.33				0.883	0.117					
P13	-32.6	18	47.1	1.15	32.17	1.01	0.95				0.995	0.005					
P14	15.0	18	47.1	1.15	32.17	1.01	1.32				0.995	0.005					
P15	-15.2	18	47.5	0.17	5.10	0.16	0.01				0.135	0.865					
P16	35.0	13	25.7	18.81	316.43	9.98	36.86	0.125	0.076	0.421			0.106	0.272			
P17	35.0	13	25.7	16.93	284.79	8.98	33.17	0.125	0.076	0.421			0.106	0.272			
P18	409.7	13	24.6	13.97	284.79	8.98	66.75	0.152	0.092	0.616			0.0001	0.033	0.022	0.083	
P19	350.0	10.5	0.0	16.37	295	9.24	79.14										1.0
P20	38.0	110	25.7	1.88	31.64	0.99	3.69	0.125	0.076	0.421			0.106	0.272			
W01	305.0	105		9.82	176.92	5.58	0.28										1.0
W02	315.0	100		9.82	176.92	5.58	3.42										1.0
W03	305.0	105		11.72	211.06	6.66	0.33										1.0
W04	500.0	92		11.72	211.06	6.66	7.48										1.0
W05	305.0	105		4.29	77.20	2.43	0.12										1.0
W06	315.0	100		4.29	77.20	2.43	1.49										1.0
W07	140.0	120		3.23	58.11	1.83	0.07										1.0
W08	315.0	100		17.33	312.23	9.85	6.04										1.0
W09	500.0	92		29.05	523.29	16.50	18.56										1.0
W10	171.1	6		1.84	33.08	1.04	10.93										1.0
W11	44.5	0.08		27.21	490.21	15.46	7752.00										1.0

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