

Joint optimization of regional water-power systems - DTU Orbit (08/11/2017)

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Energy and water resources systems are tightly coupled; energy is needed to deliver water and water is needed to extract or produce energy. Growing pressure on these resources has raised concerns about their long-term management and highlights the need to develop integrated solutions. A method for joint optimization of water and electric power systems was developed in order to identify methodologies to assess the broader interactions between water and energy systems. The proposed method is to include water users and power producers into an economic optimization problem that minimizes the cost of power production and maximizes the benefits of water allocation, subject to constraints from the power and hydrological systems. The method was tested on the Iberian Peninsula using simplified models of the seven major river basins and the power market. The optimization problem was successfully solved using stochastic dual dynamic programming. The results showed that current water allocation to hydropower producers in basins with high irrigation productivity, and to irrigation users in basins with high hydropower productivity was sub-optimal. Optimal allocation was achieved by managing reservoirs in very distinct ways, according to the local inflow, storage capacity, hydropower productivity, and irrigation demand and productivity. This highlights the importance of appropriately representing the water users' spatial distribution and marginal benefits and costs when allocating water resources optimally. The method can handle further spatial disaggregation and can be extended to include other aspects of the water-energy nexus.

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