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Abstract: This study seeks to provide insights into the design and operation of full-scale post-combustion CO₂ capture for a 500MWe subcritical power plant through dynamic modelling and simulation. The development and validation of the dynamic models of the power plant and CO₂ capture plant is described. In addition, the scale-up of the CO₂ capture plant from pilot plant scale (where it was validated) to full scale is discussed. Subsequently the manner in which the two plant models were linked is discussed. A floating IP/LP crossover pressure configuration is used. A throttling valve is included between the LP turbine and draw-off point to prevent pressures at the crossover from dropping below required levels in the reboiler for solvent regeneration. The flue gas from the power plant is treated before it is sent to the CO₂ capture plant. Four case studies are considered. The first investigates the effect of increasing solvent concentration on the performance of the whole plant. The second investigates which absorber packing height offers a good balance between capital and operating costs. The two dynamic case studies show that the CO₂ capture plant has a slower response than the power plant. They also reveal an interaction of CO₂ capture level and power plant output control loops making it difficult to achieve steady power output levels quickly.

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1 **Demonstrating full-scale post-combustion CO₂ capture for coal-fired power plants through** 2 **dynamic modelling and simulation**

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7 **Abstract**

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10 dynamic models of the power plant and CO₂ capture plant is described. In addition, the scale-up of the CO₂ capture
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19 output control loops making it difficult to achieve steady power output levels quickly.

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21 up

23 **1. Introduction**

24 *1.1 Background*

25 Chemical absorption of CO₂ using MEA solvent has been recommended as a suitable technology for post-
26 combustion plants especially for retrofit purposes. Although the process technology has been applied in natural gas
27 sweetening, the scale of process required to achieve up to 90% CO₂ capture in fossil fuel-fired power plants is

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28 typically several times larger than what is commercially available at present. For instance Mitsubishi Heavy
29 Industries (MHI) has built some of the largest plants that process up to 450 tonnes of CO₂ per day from natural gas
30 fired boilers [1]. A 500MWe supercritical coal-fired power plant operating at 46% efficiency (LHV basis) [2] would
31 release over 8000tonnes of CO₂ per day. To separate CO₂ from flue gas at that scale, a relatively large chemical
32 absorption facility is required which would be a significant capital investment to the operator.

33 The operation of a power plant integrated with a chemical absorption process would present additional challenges.
34 The efficiency of such plants would drop significantly because steam that would have been used to generate
35 electricity is drawn off to regenerate the solvent. Several studies have demonstrated that significant energy penalties
36 would be incurred with the inclusion of carbon capture technology [3-5]. In addition, resultant reduced steam flows
37 to the low pressure (LP) turbines would ultimately result in reduced pressures upstream of this point in the turbine.
38 This and the possible process modifications required are described in the study. Another concern is whether such
39 power plants could continue to play their role in meeting electricity demand. Coal-fired power plants currently
40 operate flexibly in meeting varying electricity demand. Having power generation processes that could operate
41 flexibly would be increasingly important with the growth of renewable power generation. Though renewable sources
42 are virtually carbon neutral, they suffer the drawback of being intermittent in nature. Such variations in power
43 generation increase the requirement for flexible operation in other plants on the same electricity grid. Hence both the
44 coal-fired power plant itself and the downstream CO₂ chemical absorption process would have to be capable of
45 flexible operation.

46 *1.2 Motivation*

47 Design and operational studies are typically carried out with pilot and larger scale demonstration plants. Current
48 pilot plant studies worldwide are on a much smaller scale than would be required for CCS. Even at such scales
49 (typically less than 5MWe), the cost of construction for these facilities typically runs up to several million dollars [6].
50 Once built, these plants are limited in the range of studies that could be carried out. Full scale demonstration projects
51 are estimated to cost over a billion dollars [6]. A lot of useful insights could be derived from accurate dynamic
52 models of the post-combustion capture process at a much lower cost.

53 Most process models developed to study cost and performance implications of CCS have been steady state models
54 which cannot account for the various transients associated in the power generation process. Transients occur during
55 plant start-up and shutdown operations. Load-following operations are common in coal-fired power plants.
56 Operational problems could be further compounded if there are tight restrictions on CO₂ emissions. The downstream

57 absorption plant may have to closely follow load changes. Finally, to improve overall efficiency, increased process
58 integration of the power generation process and capture process would be required. This would likely further
59 complicate the operation of the integrated facility. Insights regarding the integrated plant operation could also be
60 provided through studies using dynamic modelling and simulation.

61 1.3 Previous Research

62 A number of studies have been carried out on dynamic model development of the chemical absorption plant. [7] and
63 [8] present the dynamic model development and simulation of the absorber only. [8] also discusses different types of
64 models used for modelling reactive absorption and the developments made in this regard. Rate-based models are
65 shown to be more accurate than equilibrium-based ones. [9] describes the dynamic model development and
66 simulation of the regenerator only while [10] extends this to the two stand-alone absorber and regenerator column
67 models. Analysis on stand-alone columns may be inaccurate due to the inevitable coupling of the two columns linked
68 with a recycle loop. [11] describes the dynamic model development of the chemical absorption process (absorber
69 and regenerator linked by recycling the solvent). This model, however, was developed and validated at pilot plant
70 scale, three orders of magnitude smaller than what is required for processing flue gas from a coal-fired power plant
71 generating 500MWe. [12] investigated the performance and dynamic response of the chemical absorption process
72 downstream an enhanced oxygen coal power plant and demonstrated how there was room for further improvement
73 of performance by addressing the increased absorber temperatures.

74 A number of studies explored the dynamic response of power plants. [13] combined a dynamic model with steady
75 state correlations to simulate power plant component dynamics in MATLAB/SIMULINK. The components could be
76 linked to form a power plant. The dynamic model developed was not validated though some simulation results for a
77 whole plant were shown. [14] derived a model from first principles to describe the drum, downcomer, and riser
78 components of a natural circulation drum-boiler. [15] modelled from first principles a 250MW coal-fired natural
79 circulation boiler. The boiler system was divided into seven submodels: downcomer, riser, waterwall, drum,
80 superheater and reheater, attemperator, and furnace. [16] developed a dynamic model of a sub-critical once-through
81 Benson type boiler based on the experimental data obtained from a complete set of field experiments. Genetic
82 algorithm (GA) was executed to estimate the model parameters and fit the models response on the real system
83 dynamics. [17] developed dynamic models of a subcritical coal-fired power plant in gPROMS and validated the
84 results with plant data. These power plant models described by these authors do not include integration with a CO₂
85 capture plant.

86 Steady state models of the CO₂ capture plant integrated with the power plant have been developed. A steady state,
87 in-house model was used by [18] to compare the performance of different process configurations and different
88 solvents (including solvent blends) for the chemical absorption plant integrated with a supercritical power plant. [19]
89 carried out a study of the integration of the two plants using a steady state model. The model also considered CO₂
90 compression. Another steady state integration study was carried out by [20]. In this study, the impact of CO₂
91 compression was considered as well and efficiency penalties estimated were up to 16%.

92 *1.4 Scope of the study and novelties of the paper*

93 This study was conducted with a modelling and simulation approach. The gPROMS (Process Systems Enterprise
94 Ltd.) advanced process modelling environment has been used to implement the proposed work. Dynamic models of
95 the CO₂ chemical absorption and power generation processes were developed for a 500MWe subcritical coal-fired
96 power plant. A subcritical plant was used and not supercritical one because there was plant data available for
97 dynamic validation obtained from one of the plants RWE npower operates. The two dynamic process models were
98 linked together to carry out a unique study of their integrated operation.

99 **2. CO₂ capture model development and validation**

100 Rate-based dynamic models of the CO₂ absorption process consist mainly of the absorber and regenerator column
101 model. Mass transfer rates in the columns were modelled based on the two-film theory using the Maxwell-Stefan
102 formulation while the reactions were assumed to attain equilibrium. Dynamic validation of the CO₂ absorption
103 model was carried out at pilot plant scale. The model was subsequently scaled up to full scale and therefore able to
104 process the flue gas from a 500MWe subcritical power plant.

105 *2.1 Model assumptions*

106 The following assumptions were used in developing this dynamic model:

- 107 a. All reactions are assumed to attain equilibrium
- 108 b. Plug flow regime and linear pressure drop along the column
- 109 c. Phase equilibrium at interface between liquid and vapour films
- 110 d. Negligible holdup in the vapour bulk
- 111 e. Negligible solvent degradation
- 112 f. Negligible heat loss in the absorber column

113 *2.2 Model Equations*

114 The amine plant consists of two main packed columns – the absorber and regenerator. More details of the absorber

115 and regenerator dynamic model are described in [11]. In the packed column section, the main models include the
 116 vapour and liquid bulk models, the vapour and liquid film models and the interface (Figure 1).

117 The main equations are listed for the convenience of readers.

118 For the liquid bulk, the mass and energy balance equations are listed.

119 Mass Balance:
$$\frac{dM_i}{dt} = \frac{-1}{L \cdot A} \frac{\partial F_i^L}{\partial y} + N_i \cdot Sp \cdot MW_i \cdot \omega \quad (1)$$

120 Energy Balance:
$$\frac{dU}{dt} = \frac{-1}{L \cdot A} \frac{\partial F_H^L}{\partial y} + Sp \cdot \omega \cdot (H_{liq}^{cond} + H_{liq}^{conv} + H_{abs}) + HL \quad (2)$$

121 The change in component mass holdup, M_i , with respect to time is determined by the differential change of the

122 component mass flow along the axis of the column $\frac{\partial F_i^L}{\partial y}$ and the estimated component molar fluxes to and from

123 the liquid bulk N_i . Molar fluxes are determined using the Maxwell-Stefan formulation in the liquid and vapour film

124 models.

125 The change in energy holdup with respect to time, $\frac{dU}{dt}$, is determined by the differential change of 'energy flow'

126 along the axis of the column, $\frac{\partial F_H^L}{\partial y}$ and the liquid heat fluxes at the liquid film-liquid bulk interface due to

127 conduction, H_{liq}^{cond} , convection, H_{liq}^{conv} as well as the heat flux due to chemical absorption of CO₂, H_{abs} . Heat

128 fluxes due to conduction and convection are accounted for in the film models.

129 Heat Loss (HL) =
$$\frac{131.64 \times \text{Column Surface Area} \times (T_{regen_bottom} - T_{ambient})}{\text{Height} \times \text{Cross Sectional Area} \times NAE} \quad (3)$$

130 The Heat Loss (HL) in the regenerator is calculated based on the temperature difference between the regenerator

131 bottoms temperature (T_{regen_bottom}) and the ambient temperature ($T_{ambient}$). It is calculated per unit volume and

132 distributed evenly along the axial length of the column by dividing by the Number of Axial Elements modelled in

133 the column section (NAE). The constant value was derived from a correlation from the University of Texas at

134 Austin test results [21].

135 Heat of absorption (or desorption):
$$H_{abs} = N_{CO_2} \cdot h_{abs} \quad (4)$$

136
$$h_{abs} = R \cdot \left(-14281 - \left(\frac{1092554 \cdot \gamma^2}{T} \right) - \left(\frac{6800882 \cdot \gamma}{T} \right) + 32670.01 \cdot \gamma \right)$$
 (5)

137 The specific heat of absorption, h_{abs} , was estimated based on the temperature, T , and the CO₂ loading of the solvent,
 138 γ . R is the universal gas constant [22].

139 The vapour bulk model has a similar structure to that of the liquid bulk model with the exception of the mass and
 140 energy accumulation terms which are assumed to be negligible in the vapour phase. At the interface between the
 141 liquid and vapour films, phase equilibrium is assumed to exist such that:

142
$$f_i^L \cdot x_i^{M,L} = f_i^V \cdot x_i^{M,V}$$
 (6)

143 Phase equilibrium between liquid and vapour phases is assumed at the interface. The equilibrium molar
 144 compositions of the components in the vapour and liquid phases, x_i^M , are estimated based on the vapour and liquid
 145 fugacity coefficients, f_i .

146 *2.3 Controllers for the process*

147 Control schemes are illustrated in Figure 9. More details are presented in [11].

148 *2.4 Model Validation at pilot plant scale*

149 The steady-state validation of the chemical absorption plant model was carried out using data from one of the cases
 150 of the Separations Research Program at the University of Texas at Austin [21]. The absorber and regenerator
 151 columns of the pilot plant were both packed columns with diameters of 0.427m and total packing height of 6.1m. It
 152 is shown that the models give good predictions of the shape of the temperature profiles for both absorber and
 153 regenerator (referred to as the rate-based stand-alone model) [8]. Further validation studies have been carried out for
 154 the amine plant set-up (where the absorber and regenerator columns have been linked with recycle referred to as the
 155 rate-based integrated model) [10,11]. Validation results are shown for the absorber and regenerator in Figure 2.

156 The steady state predictions of the integrated model were found to be slightly better than the standalone models. In
 157 the latter, estimates of the input to the column had to be made and errors in such guesses would affect overall results.
 158 This suggests that the model predicts the interaction between the component parts of the plant (mainly the two
 159 columns) fairly well. It should be noted that the pilot plant in the study used to validate these results did not have a
 160 cross heat exchanger but used a combination of a heater and cooler [11]. Dynamic validation of the model could not
 161 be carried out because of the unavailability of dynamic plant test data.

162 2.5 *Scale-up for Absorber and Stripper*

163 Based on the experience gained from pilot plant studies and Chemical Engineering principles, the sizes, heat duties,
164 configurations etc of the unit operations required to process the flue gas from a 500MWe subcritical power plant
165 were determined. This design would also suffice for a 600MWe supercritical power plant which would have similar
166 flue gas flows and composition. The system was designed to capture 90% of the CO₂ from 600kg/s of flue gas from
167 the power plant using a 30wt% MEA solution. Preliminary design calculations were carried out with the following
168 assumptions, providing the “Initial guess”. The following assumptions were used:

- 169 a. Similar operating pressures for the absorber and regenerator used in the pilot plant study were used at full
170 scale (1bar and 1.6bar respectively).
- 171 b. MEA solvent absorption capacity was assumed to be 0.18mol CO₂ / mol MEA which was used to calculate
172 the solvent circulation rate.
- 173 c. All SO₂ and NO_x have been removed from the flue gas stream
- 174 d. There is no water wash section in the absorber
- 175 e. Water balance is achieved using a water makeup control system

176 To process increased volumes of flue gas, the column diameters must be correspondingly increased. The approach
177 used to determine the required column diameters of the absorber and the regenerator is described in Sections 2.5.1
178 and 2.5.2 respectively.

179 2.5.1 *Number of Absorber columns and Absorber Diameter based on the generalized pressure drop correlation*

180 Due to the structural limitations, [23] suggests that column diameters should not exceed 12.2m (40feet). To process
181 the large volumes of flue gas from the power plant, more than one absorber column may be required. In addition,
182 using more than one absorber column could help improve the turndown ratio of the process. Coal-fired power plants
183 traditionally operate flexibly to meet varying demand. If such plants are fitted with post-combustion capture, it
184 would be of advantage if they could continue to play such a role. The CO₂ capture process may therefore need to be
185 designed to accommodate a large turndown ratio which would be easier to achieve with more than one column.

186 On the other hand, [3] reports that the absorber would most likely be the largest equipment in the capture plant since
187 it would process huge volumes of flue gas. To provide a balance, therefore, the minimum number of columns
188 required should be selected to keep capital costs down and minimize footprint requirements. The capacity of the
189 absorber is largely based on its cross-sectional area. The column is usually designed to operate at the highest
190 economical pressure drop to ensure good liquid and gas distribution [24].

191 The operating region of the packed column is limited by two main mechanisms: flooding and minimum liquid load
 192 [25]. Flooding sets the upper capacity of limit of the packed column. At this point, the pressure drop of the gas flow
 193 increases to an extent that the liquid is no longer able to flow downward against the gas flow [25]. The minimum
 194 liquid load refers to ensure lowest liquid flow rate sufficient mass transfer. Beyond this point, only a small
 195 proportion of the packing surface is wetted [25]. Figure 3 illustrates these limits.

196 The required solvent flow rate (liquid load) was estimated based on the estimates specified in Table 1.
 197 [24] gives the recommended pressure drop per m packing for absorbers and strippers as 15 to 50mm of water per
 198 metre of packing height typically away from the flooding line (Figure 4). 42mm of water per metre of packing
 199 height was used for the design of both the absorber and stripper columns based on the recommendation of operating
 200 at the highest economical pressure drop [24].

201 F_{LV} is a flow parameter dependent on the L/G ratio of the column while K_4 is a modified gas load [25]. Based on the
 202 estimated F_{LV} flow parameter and the pressure drop parameter value chosen, the K_4 value is obtained from Figure 4.

$$203 \quad K_4 = \frac{13.1(V_w^*)^2 \cdot F_p \cdot \left(\frac{\mu_L}{\rho_L}\right)^{0.1}}{\rho_v \cdot (\rho_L - \rho_v)} \quad (7)$$

204 μ_L = Liquid viscosity

205 F_p = Packing factor (dependent on the packing size and type)

206 The V_w^* term is estimated from equation 7 and is then used to estimate the required cross sectional area of the
 207 column and thus the diameter. These values were used to estimate required column diameters for the process. The
 208 estimated absorber diameters required for 1 to 4 absorber columns in parallel are displayed in Figure 5.

209 From Figure 5, one absorber column would require a diameter of over 12m which would exceed 40feet. In addition,
 210 the turndown ratio of such a column may be significantly limited. Two or three columns could be selected with
 211 diameters of 9m and 7m respectively. For this study, a two-column absorber configuration was selected to minimize
 212 the footprint required for the columns. Selecting three or four columns may not provide significant returns in
 213 comparison with the large capital cost and footprint requirements this would demand.

214 2.5.2 Regenerator Diameter

215 Earlier simulation studies have shown that the regenerator processes much less volumetric vapour flow than the
 216 absorber; thus, a single column could be used. From the generalized pressure drop correlation method used above,
 217 the regenerator diameter was estimated as 8.39m, thus a single 9m diameter column would suffice.

218 It was impossible to validate the chemical absorption plant model at 500 MWe scale because no plant existed at the

219 time of this study. The summary of the specifications for the two columns in the CO₂ capture plant are shown in
 220 Table 2.

221 3. Subcritical coal-fired power plant model development and validation

222 Dynamic models for the furnace, boiler, 3-stage steam turbine, condenser and feed-water system were developed.
 223 The model was dynamically validated using plant data. The power plant model consists of various unit operations –
 224 including a furnace, various heaters, heat exchangers, pumps and a 3-stage turbine.

225 3.1 Model Development

226 The block flow diagram of the power plant model is shown in Figure 6.

227 3.1.1 Furnace model

228 Pulverized fuel (coal) is supplied to the furnace with the aid of primary air. The coal specification is given in Table 3.
 229 The furnace model includes only the air/gas side and as such it was assumed to be steady state since variables would
 230 adjust very quickly to any changes in inlet or boundary conditions. The overall heat balance is given in equation 8.

$$231 \quad h_{in}m_{air,in} + h_{fuel}m_{fuel} + Q_{NCV}m_{fuel} = h_{out}m_{g,out} + h_{ash}m_{ash} + Q_{evap} + Q_{fr} \quad (8)$$

232 The heat generated in the furnace by the combustion of pulverized fuel supplied at the fuel mass flow rate (fuel burn
 233 rate), m_{fuel} , is estimated based on the coal Net Calorific Value, Q_{NCV} . The heat generated in addition to the total
 234 enthalpy of the combustion air ($h_{in}m_{air,in}$) and fuel ($h_{fuel}m_{fuel}$) determine the total enthalpy of the outlet streams
 235 (flue gas and ash) as well as the heat transferred to the evaporative circuit, Q_{evap} and the thrown-forward radiation,
 236 Q_{fr} . The air and gas enthalpies (h_{in} and h_{out}) are obtained from Multiflash physical property package that uses Lee-
 237 Kesler-Plöcker equation of state. To calculate Q_{evap} and Q_{fr} it is necessary to calculate the adiabatic flame
 238 temperature. This is done from a heat balance equation similar to that given earlier, but with the outlet temperatures
 239 and enthalpies equal to the adiabatic flame temperature and with Q_{evap} and Q_{fr} both equal to zero. An effective gas
 240 temperature is then found from the adiabatic and outlet temperatures:

$$241 \quad T_{eff} = \beta T_{g,ad} + (1 - \beta)T_{out} \quad (9)$$

242 Here, $T_{g,ad}$ is the adiabatic flame temperature and β is a user-input constant.

243 Then the evaporative heat is found based on κ_{evap} , a user-input constant; V_{furn} , the furnace volume; σ , the Stefan-
 244 Boltzman constant and $\rho_{g,out}$, the gas density at furnace outlet as shown in equation 10.

$$245 \quad Q_{evap} = \frac{\kappa_{evap} V_{furn} \sigma (T_{eff})^4}{\rho_{g,out}} \quad (10)$$

246 The thrown-forward radiation, Q_{ffr} , is found from a similar equation; the only difference is the use of a different
 247 constant, κ_{ffr} .

248 3.1.2 Downcomer, Riser and Drum models

249 Heat generated in the furnace is transferred to the water walls (downcomer and risers), superheaters, reheaters and
 250 economisers. The mass flow rate of water in downcomer, \dot{m}_{WDC} was modelled as proportional to the pressure drop
 251 in the downcomer [26].

$$252 \quad \dot{m}_{WDC} = K_{DC} \sqrt{(P + \rho_{WDC} g Z - P_{DCB}) \rho_{WDC}} \quad (11)$$

253 K_{DC} is an empirical constant that relates the pressure drop (estimated from the top (P) pressure, the hydrostatic
 254 pressure exerted by the water in the downcomer ($\rho_{WDC} g Z$) and the bottom downcomer pressure, P_{DCB}) and water
 255 density in downcomer, ρ_{WDC} to the mass flow rate.

256 Heat transfer is modelled in the riser section. The mass balance of fluid in the riser is given as [26]:

$$257 \quad \dot{m}_{WDC} - \dot{m}_{WRO} = V_R \frac{d\rho_{WR}}{dt} \quad (12)$$

258 Enthalpy balance for water/steam in riser [26]:

$$259 \quad V_R \frac{dh_{WR}}{dt} = Q_{WR} + \dot{m}_{WRO} (h_{WDC} - h_{WR}) \quad (13)$$

260 The heat transferred to the water in the riser tubes, Q_{WR} is given as

$$261 \quad Q_{WR} = K_{WR} \cdot (T_{MR} - T_{WR})^3 \quad (14)$$

262 K_{WR} is an empirical constant that estimates the heat transfer based on the cube of the temperature difference
 263 between the riser tube walls (T_{MR}) and the steam temperature at the riser exit (T_{WR}). \dot{m}_{WRO} , the mass flow of water
 264 at riser exit is estimated in a similar manner to the \dot{m}_{WDC} in equation 11

265 The fluid at the riser exit is a mixture of vapour and liquid phases. The fraction of liquid in the mixture entering the
 266 drum, XR is estimated based on the exit specific enthalpy (h_{WR}) and density (ρ_{WR}) based on the liquid and vapour
 267 specific enthalpies and densities.

268 Dynamic mass balance for steam in drum is [26]:

$$269 \quad \dot{m}_{WRO} \cdot XR - \dot{m}_{DO}^V = (V_{TD} - V_{WD}) \frac{d\rho_D^V}{dt} \quad (15)$$

270 This equation determines the mass flow of steam out of the drum, \dot{m}_{DO}^V . It is assumed that there is no heat loss from
 271 the drum to the surroundings.

272 Mass balance for water in drum is [26]:

273
$$\frac{dM_{WD}}{dt} = \dot{m}_{FW} + \dot{m}_{WRO}(1 - XR) - \dot{m}_{WDC} \quad (16)$$

274 \dot{m}_{FW} is the mass flow of feed water into drum.

275 *3.1.3 Heat exchanger-type models (Superheater and Reheater)*

276 A transient heat exchanger model was used to model convective heat transfer in the superheater and reheater. The
 277 superheater platens and secondary superheater also accounted for radiative heat transfer. The model accounts for
 278 changes on the steam side as well as the gas side.

279 Mass balance for steam side

280
$$\dot{m}_{s,out} = \dot{m}_{s,in} - V_s \frac{d\rho_s}{dt} \quad (17)$$

281 Here, $\dot{m}_{s,out}$ and $\dot{m}_{s,in}$ are the mass flow rates of steam in and out of the tube. ρ_s is the steam density. V_s is the
 282 volume of steam in the tube.

283 Enthalpy balance for steam side (h_s)

284
$$\rho_s V_s \frac{dh_{s,out}}{dt} = \dot{m}_{s,in} h_{s,in} - \dot{m}_{s,out} h_{s,out} + U_s (T_w - T_{s,ave}) \quad (18)$$

285 Here, the overall admittance factor U_s is a function of the overall heat transfer coefficient. $T_{s,ave}$, is the average
 286 steam temperature.

287 Radiative heat transfer, q_{rad} is estimated based on the Stefan-Boltzmann law.

288
$$q_{rad} = \frac{K_{wall} V_g \sigma \cdot T^4}{\rho_g} \quad (19)$$

289 *3.2 Important control systems*

290 Superheater temperatures are controlled using spray water attemperators. These essentially mix the steam streams
 291 with controlled flows of spray water to achieve required temperatures. Reheater temperatures are controlled by using
 292 rear gas pass biasing dampers which control the flow of flue gas along the divided rear pass. The fuel burn rate and
 293 governor valve both control power plant power output. The target power plant output is directly controlled by the
 294 governor valve; this target also sets the target drum pressure. The drum pressure is controlled by the fuel burn rate.

295 *3.3 Turbine models*

296 These models apply generally to the High, Intermediate and Low Pressure turbines. The

297 Overall pressure ratio, r : governing their operation is given:

298
$$r = \frac{P_{out}}{P_{in}} \quad (20)$$

299 *3.4 Model Validation of power plant model*

300 The steady state results for the power plant model in gPROMS were validated on a steady state and dynamic basis.
301 The steady state model results were compared with the plant design data shows satisfactory agreement. Details of
302 the validation are discussed in [17]. It should be noted that recent plant data from Didcot suggests lower thermal
303 efficiency compared with design values [17].

304 The model was also validated against plant data. The plant data chosen for validation was as follows:

- 305 1. frequency-following operation at nominally 417 MW_e gross, 146 bar drum pressure
306 2. transient with the gross MW_e rising linearly to nominally 469 MW_e gross, 163 bar drum pressure
307 corresponding to an increase of 51 MW_e in 32 mins, ie 0.3% of full load per minute
308 3. frequency-following operation at nominally 469 MW_e gross, 163 bars drum pressure

309 A comparison between plant data and power plant model predictions for the transients is given in [17] showing that
310 the gPROMS model predicted flows fairly well through the course of the test.

311 **4. Linking the power plant model with the CO₂ capture model**

312 Three main links are included between the power plant and the CO₂ capture plant, as follows.

- 313 a. The flue gas stream which is to be processed.
314 b. The steam draw-off from the power plant to regenerate solvent in the reboiler
315 c. The condensate return from the reboiler to the power plant.

316 The linked power plant and CO₂ capture plant models is subsequently referred to as the whole plant model.

317 *4.1 Flue gas pre-processing*

318 Flue gas from the power plant must be cooled down to between 40 – 50°C for best absorption performance in the
319 absorber. Gases like sulphur oxides and nitrous oxides form heat stable salts with MEA solvent (which cannot be
320 regenerated). SO₂ concentrations of less than 10ppm are recommended. SO₂ removal is usually achieved in a Flue
321 Gas Desulphurization (FGD) unit. NO_x is removed using Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR), Selective
322 Noncatalytic Reduction (SCNR) or low NO_x burners. Particulates in the flue gas could clog the column packings
323 and increase problems due to foaming. Particulate matter such as fly ash is removed by either electrostatic
324 precipitators or bag house filters.

325 In the whole plant model, it is assumed that all the SO₂ and NO_x is removed upstream of the absorber and a Direct
326 Contact Cooler (DCC) reduces the flue gas temperature to 40°C. All the particulate matter is assumed removed. In
327 addition, the effect of oxygen in the degradation of MEA solvent is neglected. Thus oxygen is considered inert and
328 its composition is simply incorporated in the nitrogen composition (Figure 7).

329 A blower adds the required head necessary to feed the flue gas to the absorber at just above atmospheric pressure. A
330 splitter splits the flue gas flow into two equal streams that feed the two identical absorber columns as shown in
331 Figure 7.

332 4.2 *Steam draw-off*

333 Steam is drawn off at the IP/LP crossover as recommended by [23] and [27] amongst other authors. Due to the
334 reduced flow through the turbine, the pressure upstream the LP turbine drops with the draw-off as shown in Figure 8.
335 This drop in pressure could be estimated by Stodola's Ellipse law [28]. The floating IP/LP crossover pressure
336 configuration was employed [19,27]. This would accommodate a variable flow rate of steam draw-off. A throttling
337 valve between the steam draw-off point and the LP turbine adds an additional pressure drop to raise the crossover
338 pressure by about 1bar. This ensures that the pressure across the IP/LP crossover does not drop below the required
339 pressure needed in the reboiler (at least 3bar). To employ this configuration, it is assumed that the IP turbine can
340 accommodate the reduced exit pressures encountered with the steam draw-off [27].

341 A temperature controller measures the temperature of the lean solvent steam from the reboiler and controls the
342 amount of steam drawn-off for regeneration using a control valve as shown in Figure 8. A water spray is used to
343 cool down the steam temperature to just above saturation. It is assumed that there is no loss of total enthalpy in the
344 process as the additional sensible heat was converted to latent heat of the vaporized spray water. This stream is then
345 supplied to the reboiler where it exchanges heat with the solvent. It is assumed that all steam supplied condenses in
346 the reboiler leaving saturated liquid condensate at the outlet. It is assumed that there are no heat losses and all the
347 latent heat of vaporization is transferred to the reboiler fluid.

348 4.3 *Condensate return*

349 The condensate returned to the low pressure feedheater before being sent to the boiler feed pump. These two links
350 between the power plant and CO₂ capture plant are shown in Figure 8.

351 4.4 *Whole plant model topology*

352 The whole plant model topology is shown in Figure 9.

353 5. **Case Studies**

354 Two steady state and two dynamic case studies are presented based on simulation results from the whole plant
355 model described in Section 4:

356 Steady State Cases

- 357 • Plant performance with different absorber heights
- 358 • Plant performance with and without CO₂ capture and at different concentrations of MEA

359 Dynamic Cases

- 360 • Reducing power plant output
- 361 • Increasing Capture Level set point from 90% to 95%

362 5.1 Case Study 1 Increasing absorber packing height

363 Different packing heights of each of the absorber columns were tested to study the effect of increasing absorber
364 packing height on the performance of the system. The parameter used to determine the effectiveness of each case
365 was the heat requirement for CO₂ capture – the amount of heat required to separate 1kg of CO₂ from the flue gas
366 mixture. The same design parameters summarized in Table 2 were used and absorber packing heights ranging from
367 17 to 37m were tested. [20] estimated that the absorber column design should be performed with a minimum height
368 of 17m for the random packing IMTP50 packing considered. For each case, the capture level controller was set to
369 capture 90% of the CO₂ in the flue gas. The results are presented in Figure 10. It is shown that significant savings of
370 about 0.7MJ/kg CO₂ could be achieved whilst increasing absorber packing heights from 17 to 25m. There appears to
371 be diminishing returns in the reduction in heat requirement over the range (which corresponds to the decrease in
372 solvent circulation rates required to achieve 90% CO₂ capture). Relatively marginal savings could be achieved from
373 27m and above. There could be considerable operational savings with such packing heights that would compensate
374 for the additional capital costs required.

375 5.2 Case Study 2 Plant performance with different concentrations of MEA

376 The whole plant performance with different concentrations of MEA is shown in Table 4 and compared to the base
377 case without CO₂ capture. As discussed in Section 3.2, the fuel burn rate in the power plant is manipulated to control
378 the drum pressure. The set point of the drum pressure is set to achieve a certain power output. In all cases presented
379 in Table 4, the target power output was set to 500MW. However, due to the amount of steam drawn off for
380 regeneration in the CO₂ capture cases, it was impossible to achieve the target and the actual power plant output
381 depended on the amount of steam drawn off.

382 Power plant efficiency, η , is calculated as follows:

383
$$\eta = \frac{\text{net power output}}{\text{fuel burn rate} \times \text{NCV}} \quad (21)$$

384 The net power output was estimated by accounting for the power consumption of the various auxiliaries (estimated
385 as 15MW). This power output corresponds to the electrical power generated.

386 With carbon capture, the power plant efficiency drops from 37.2% to the values given in Table 4 (it should be noted
387 that the power requirement for CO₂ product compression is not considered in this study).

388 In summary, an increase in MEA concentration leads to easier CO₂ capture and less requirement for steam draw-off.

389 The power plant efficiency is seen to increase with MEA concentration. For comparison, the fuel burn rate was set
390 to a constant value of 56.8kg/s (which produced 500MW in the base case without capture) for all three cases. 30wt%

391 MEA is typically employed in the chemical absorption process. 20wt% concentration would necessitate relatively
392 higher solvent circulation rates which would increase the heat duty demanded by the reboiler to raise the
393 temperature of the solvent circulated to the set point. On the other hand, this configuration required the least amount

394 of pure MEA solvent (about 727kg/s) and at that concentration, would pose the least challenge in terms of corrosion.

395 40wt% MEA concentration would require the most solvent (1149kg/s compared to 912kg/s at 30wt%) and would
396 have the most severe corrosion challenges. With increased MEA concentration, more heat of reaction is released
397 whilst absorbing CO₂ with less solvent circulation. As a result, the absorber temperatures increase as shown in Table
398 4 and the efficiency of the absorption process thus reduces. Some savings could be achieved if temperatures are
399 lowered in the column through techniques such as inter-cooling especially at higher concentrations of MEA solvent.

400 5.3 Case Study 3 – Reducing power plant output

401 This case simulates the effect of a decrease in power plant output over a period of 10 minutes. Power plant target
402 output was ramped down from 440MW to 415MW over the aforementioned time period. The actual power plant
403 power output is determined by the power plant power output controller which manipulates the fuel burn rate and
404 governor valve opening to meet the target power output. The capture level controller set point was maintained at

405 90% CO₂ capture. Base case conditions were maintained for 4 hours before the disturbance was introduced. The
406 whole plant model was then simulated for another 10 hours. Results of the simulation are shown in Figures 11 and
407 12.

408 Figure 11a shows the drop in actual power plant power output with time. The fuel burn rate is adjusted to achieve
409 this drop (Figure 11b). With a reduced fuel burn rate, the flue gas produced reduces correspondingly and thus the
410 flow of gas to the absorber column reduces. With less gas to process in the absorber, less solvent circulation is
411 required (Figure 11d). The heat duty required in the reboiler to regenerate solvent thus decreases correspondingly

412 and there is therefore a reduced demand for steam from the power generation process (Figure 11c). The power plant
413 efficiency (Figure 11e) shows some initial perturbations before settling down to roughly the same steady state value.
414 The CO₂ capture level (Figure 11f) also oscillates and steadies out to the controller's set point of 90%.
415 Figure 12 shows the same results in terms of their percentage deviation from their original values (before the onset
416 of the disturbance). By mere observation, certain features become more apparent. For instance, the solvent
417 circulation rate shows the largest deviation perhaps because its settings provide tight control of the capture level –
418 from the same Figure, the capture level does not vary much. Even as such, there are periods where the capture level
419 is above the set point and more importantly below the set point as well. If emission regulations are such that the
420 capture level must not go below a certain value at any point in time, it is advisable to operate the capture plant
421 sufficiently above the minimum value so that disturbances from the power plant do not drop the capture level below
422 it. From Section 5.2, it is shown that achieving higher capture levels becomes increasingly difficult as 100% capture
423 is approached so care must be taken to select appropriate operating capture levels.

424 In addition, because of the tight controls on capture level and the resulting oscillations in solvent circulation rates,
425 the power plant power output oscillates in response to changing steam draw-off rates from the IP/LP crossover.
426 From Figure 11a and 12, the power plant output drops below the set point and takes a while to settle at the set point
427 making it difficult to achieve steady power output levels quickly. In this case, it appears that the tight control on
428 capture level is interfering with the power plant power output control.

429 The response of the power plant to operational changes is relatively fast. From the onset of the disturbance (reducing
430 the power plant output) the change in fuel burn rate and subsequently flue gas flow rate is relatively fast. In addition,
431 the capture level and solvent circulation rates also change soon after this disturbance is introduced. However, the
432 response of the amine plant is much slower. For instance, with a reduction in the solvent circulation rate, a lower
433 heat duty is demanded in the reboiler. However, from Figure 12, there is clearly a delay in the response of the steam
434 draw-off rate compared with that of the solvent circulation rate. This shows that the process dynamics of CO₂
435 capture plant is relatively slow response compared to that of the power plant. The manipulation of solvent
436 circulation rate (and subsequently steam draw-off rate) in turn imposes some disturbances on the power generation
437 process. It is therefore, not advisable to have such tight control on the capture level considering the interaction of
438 this control loop with the power plant power output control.

439 5.4 Case study 4 – Increasing CO₂ capture level set point to 95%

440 This case simulates the change in CO₂ capture level set point in the capture level controller from the base case value

441 of 90% to 95%. Power output targets were maintained. Base case conditions were maintained for 4 hours before the
442 disturbance was introduced. The whole plant model was then simulated for another 10 hours. Results of the
443 simulation are shown in Figures 13 and 14.

444 Figure 13a shows the power plant power output changes with time. Roughly, a 1.8% reduction in power plant output
445 is observed after the disturbance (Figure 14). The fuel burn rate increases to compensate for the loss in power output
446 (Figure 13b). It then steadies out at a slightly higher value than before the disturbance. Increasing the capture level
447 set point would imply increased solvent circulation rates (Figure 13d). This increase attains a maximum of 34%
448 (Figure 14) before it steadies out to almost 16% although the CO₂ capture level was increased by only 5% points
449 (Figure 13f). This confirms that as 100% capture level is approached, CO₂ capture becomes increasingly difficult.
450 This is clearly seen from Figure 14g where there is an increase in heat requirement for CO₂ capture after the
451 disturbance was introduced. This value measures how much heat is required to separate 1kg of CO₂. It increases by
452 just over 5% and appears to correspond to the increase in capture level at steady state (Figure 14).

453 The power plant efficiency reduces by almost 2.5% before attaining a steady state value 1.7% less than original due
454 to the disturbance (Figure 13e and 14). From observing Figures 13c and 13e, it could be concluded that the
455 efficiency reduction follows the response of the steam draw-off.

456 Both dynamic case studies show possible negative effects a poor control system or strategy could have on the
457 integrated operation of a post combustion capture plant. Better process control could be achieved with improved
458 controller tuning.

459 **6. Conclusions**

460 Dynamic models of the power plant and CO₂ capture plant have been developed, validated and linked. The scale-up
461 of the CO₂ capture plant from pilot plant scale (where it was validated) to the scale required for processing flue gas
462 from a 500MWe subcritical power plant was described. Four case studies were considered. The first involved
463 investigating the whole plant performance with and without CO₂ capture. For the cases with CO₂ capture, 20, 30 and
464 40wt% MEA solution was utilized. The power plant efficiency was highest with the 40wt% case as expected and
465 further improvements may be possible with the application of techniques such as inter-cooling. At such high solvent
466 concentrations, more quantities of corrosion inhibitors would be required. From the investigations carried out,
467 selecting 27m of absorber packing height offered a good balance between increasing column costs and reducing heat
468 requirement in the reboiler. The two dynamic case studies showed that the CO₂ capture plant has a slower response
469 than the power plant. Dynamic case studies reveal interaction of CO₂ capture level and power plant output control

470 loops. As the CO₂ capture level set point was increased from 90 to 95%, the thermal efficiency of the capture
471 process reduced.

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Table 1 Calculation of required lean solvent flow

Description	Value
Flue gas mass flow rate (kg/s)	600
Flue gas mass composition (N ₂)	0.748
Flue gas mass composition (CO ₂)	0.209
Flue gas mass composition (H ₂ O)	0.042
Lean solvent mass fraction (MEA)	0.3048
Lean solvent mass fraction (CO ₂)	0.0618
Lean solvent mass fraction (H ₂ O)	0.6334
Estimated required lean solvent mass flow (kg/s)	2900

Table 2 Summary of preliminary design parameters for chemical absorption plant

Description	Value
Design flue gas mass flow rate (kg/s)	600
CO ₂ mass fraction in flue gas	0.21
CO ₂ capture level (%)	90
Absorber Column Number	2
Absorber Diameter (m)	9
Absorber Height (m)	17
Regenerator Column Number	1
Regenerator Column Diameter (m)	9
Absorber operating pressure (10 ⁵ Pa)	1.01
Regenerator operating pressure (10 ⁵ Pa)	1.62
Lean solvent mass fraction (MEA)	0.3048
Lean solvent CO ₂ loading (mol CO ₂ /mol MEA)	0.29

Table 3 Coal specification for power plant model

Composition % mass, as received basis	
Moisture	8
Ash	20
C	59.11
H	3.99
N	1
S	2.0
O	5.9
	CV, MJ/kg, as received basis
GCV	24.51
NCV	23.33

Table 4 Summary of parameters for the whole plant model with and without CO₂ capture and at different MEA concentrations

Description	Without CO₂ Capture	With CO₂ Capture (20 wt% MEA)	With CO₂ Capture (30 wt% MEA)	With CO₂ Capture (40 wt% MEA)
CO ₂ capture level (%)	0	90	90	90
Solvent Circulation Rate (kg/s)	0	3663	3122	2964
Flue gas flow rate (kg/s)	589.6	589.6	589.6	589.6
Power Plant Output (MW)	500	437	453	467
Fuel burn rate (kg/s)	56.8	56.8	56.8	56.8
Power Plant efficiency	37.2	30.0	31.1	32
Steam draw-off flow rate (% of steam flow rate from IP turbine exit)	0	54	42	34
Maximum Absorber Temperature (K)	N/A	335	338	340

Figure 1

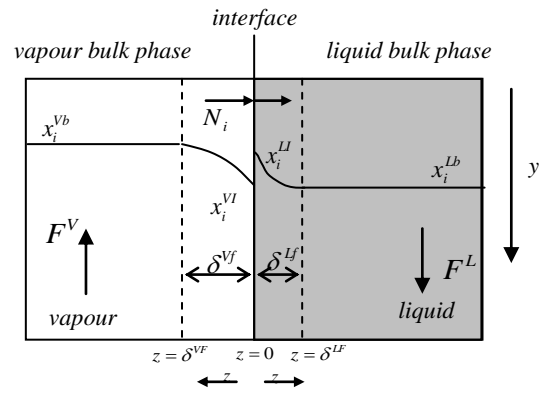
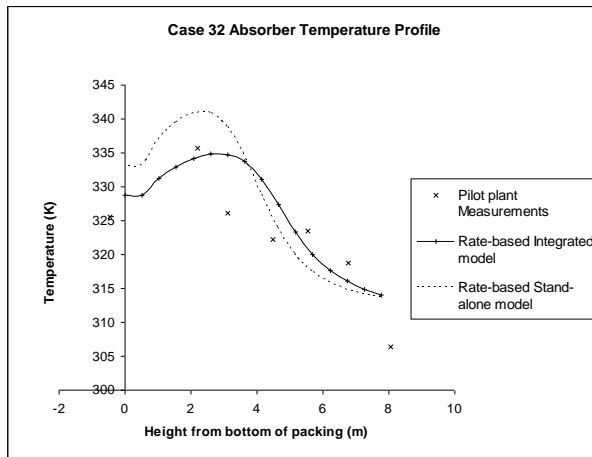
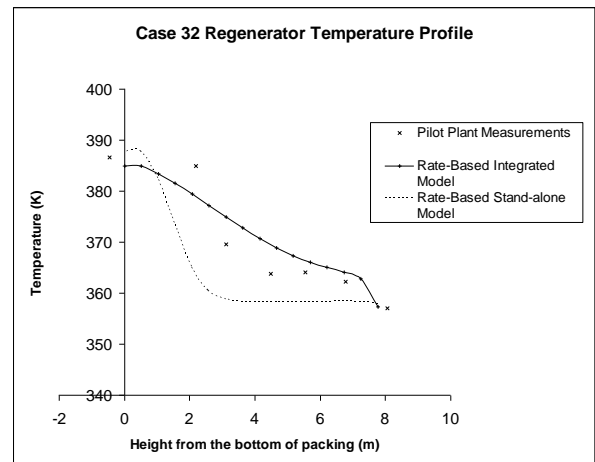


Figure 1 Liquid and vapour bulks, films and interface



(a)



(b)

Figure 2 (a) Absorber and (b) Regenerator temperature profile of columns for Case 32

Figure3

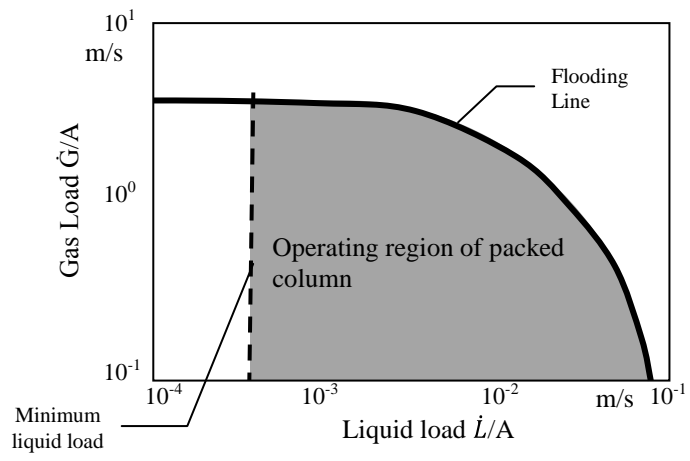


Figure 3 Operating region of a packed column adapted from [25]

Figure 4

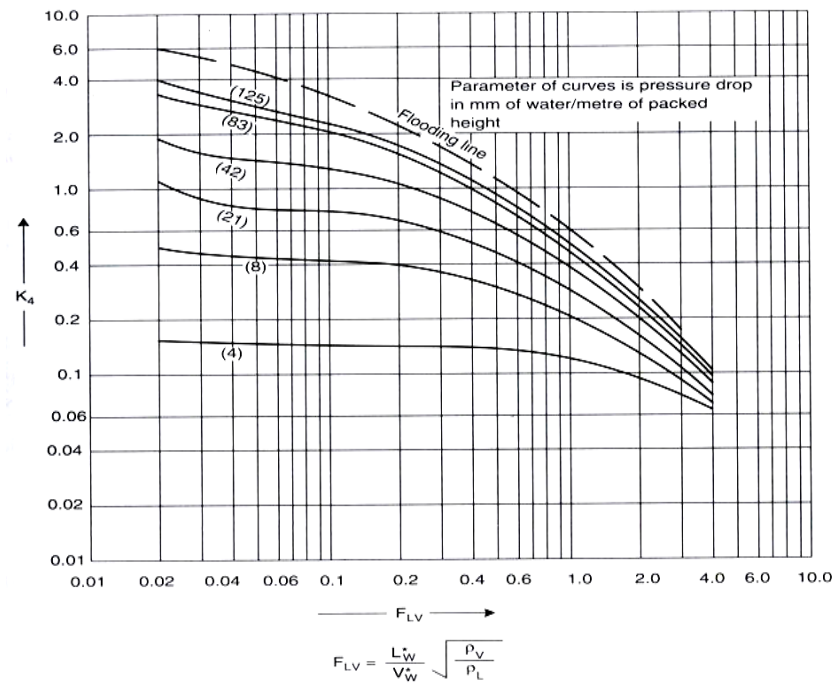


Figure 4 Generalized pressure drop correlation from [24]

Figure5

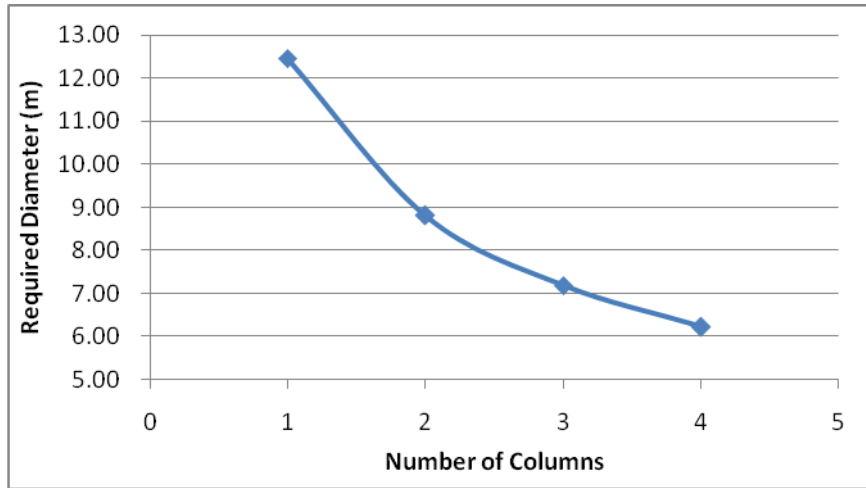


Figure 5 Required absorber diameter based on the number of absorber columns

Figure6

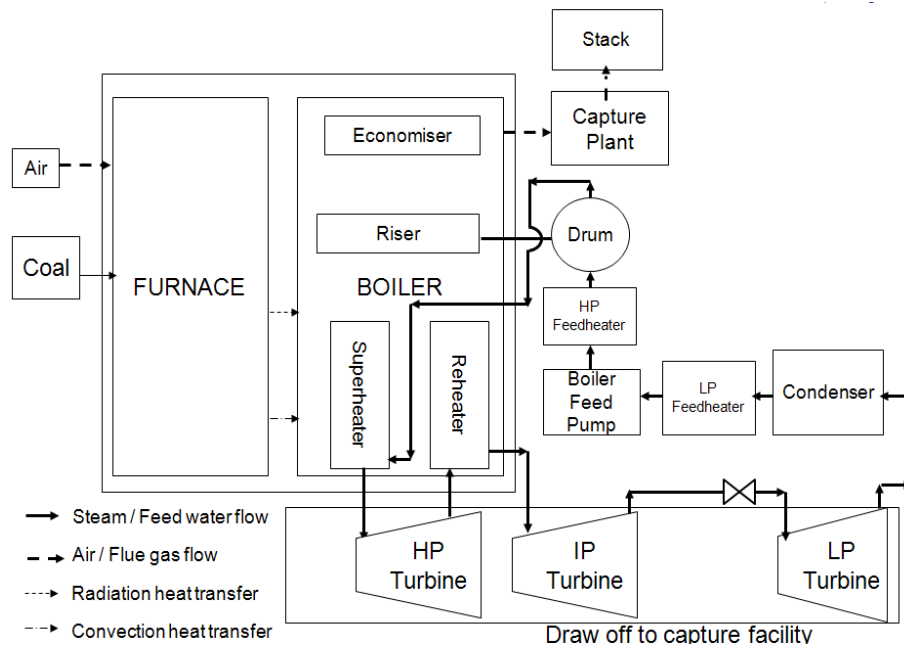


Figure 6 Power plant model block flow diagram

Figure7

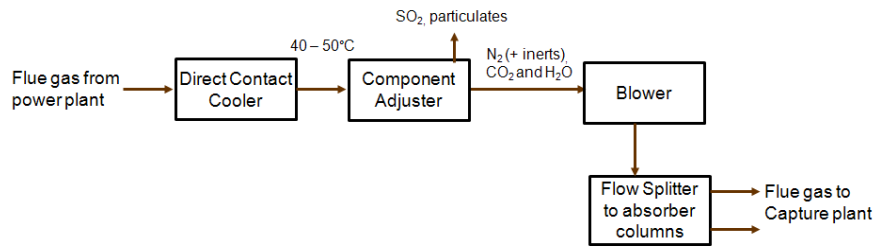


Figure 7 Linking the flue gas from the power plant with the CO₂ capture plant model

Figure8

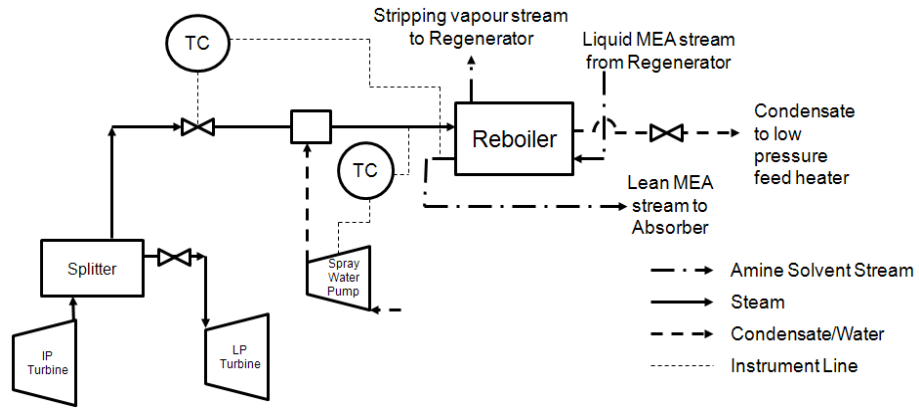


Figure 8 Steam draw-off and Condensate return

Figure9

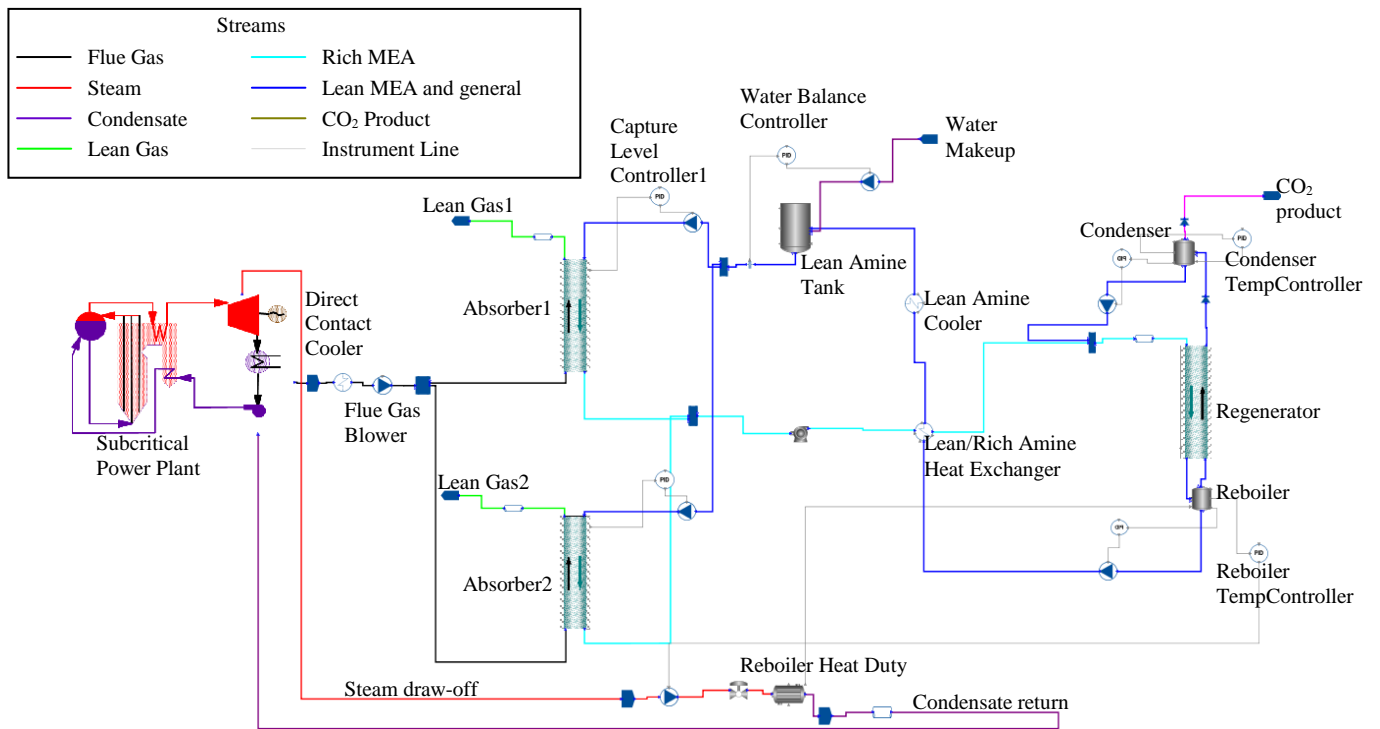


Figure 9 Whole Plant Model Topology

Figure10

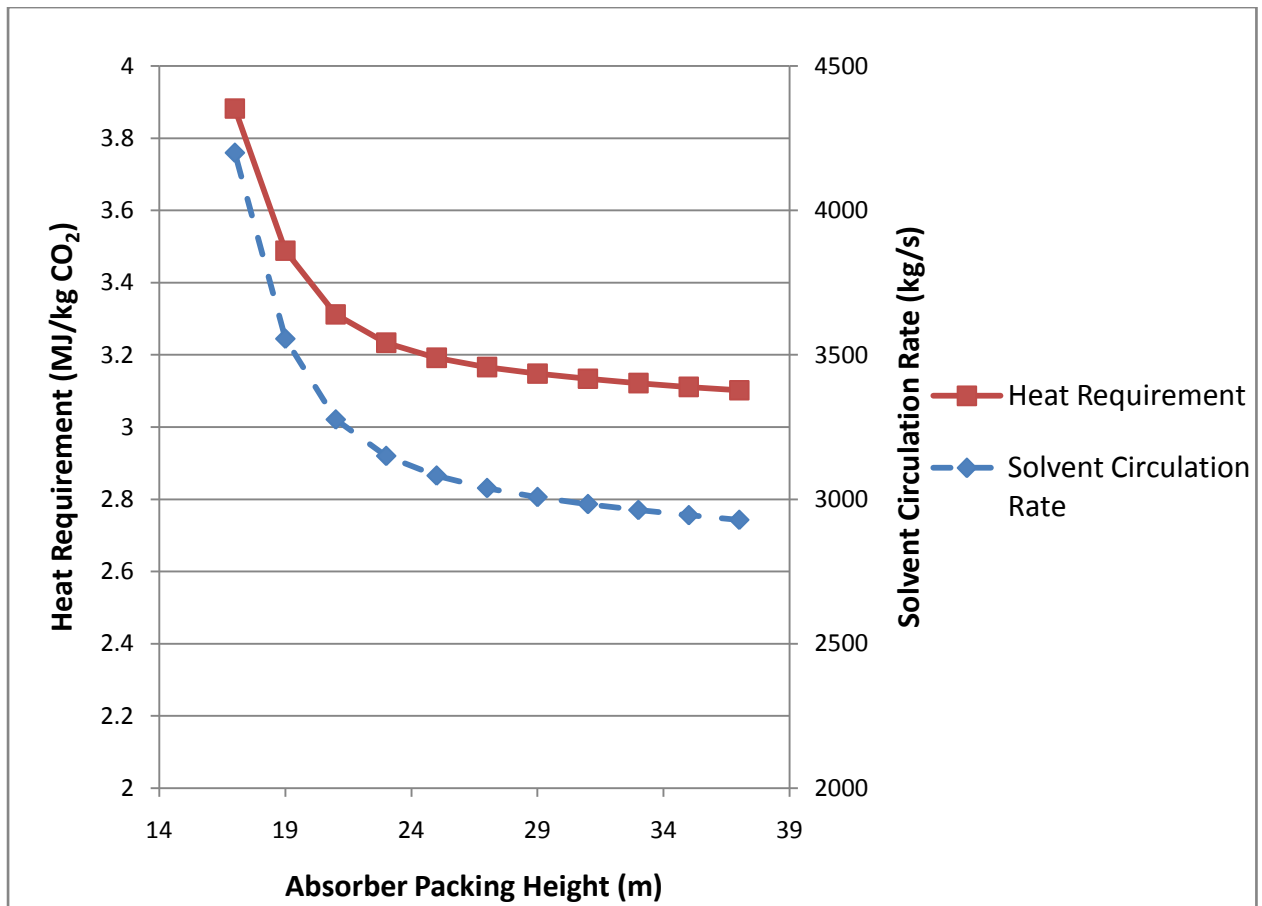


Figure 10 Plant performance with different Absorber packing heights

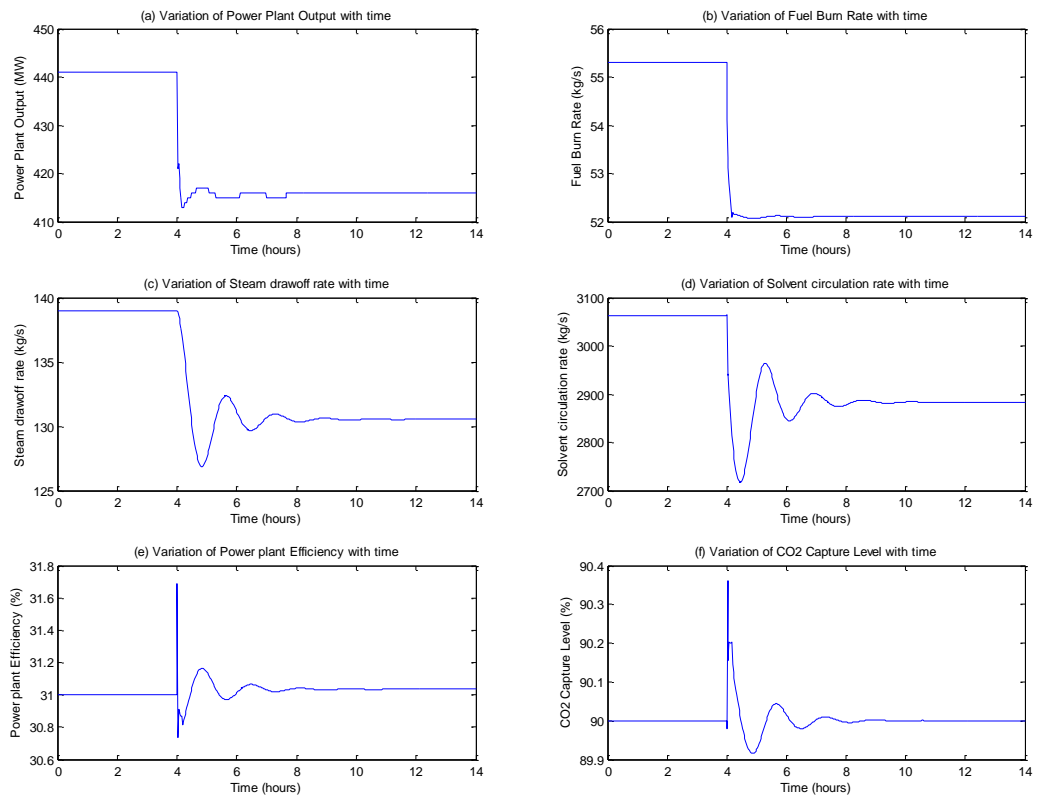


Figure 11 Effects of decreasing target power plant output

Figure12

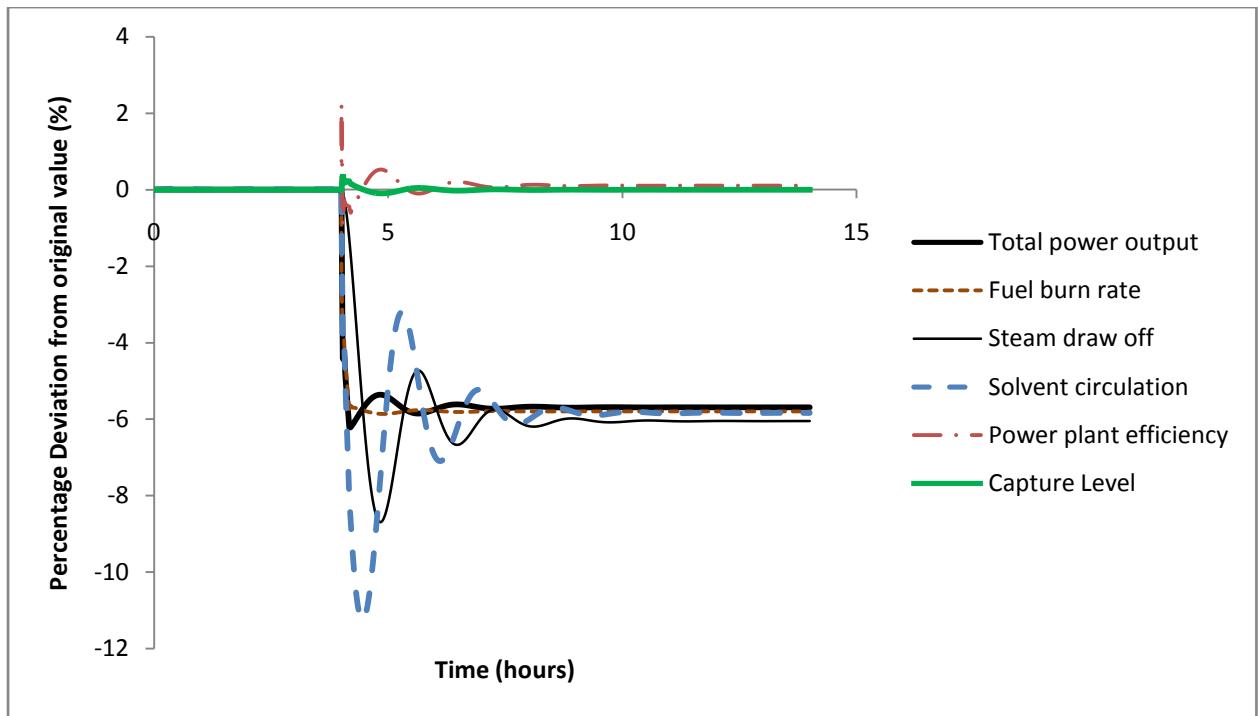


Figure 12 Percentage deviations with decreasing target power plant output

Figure13

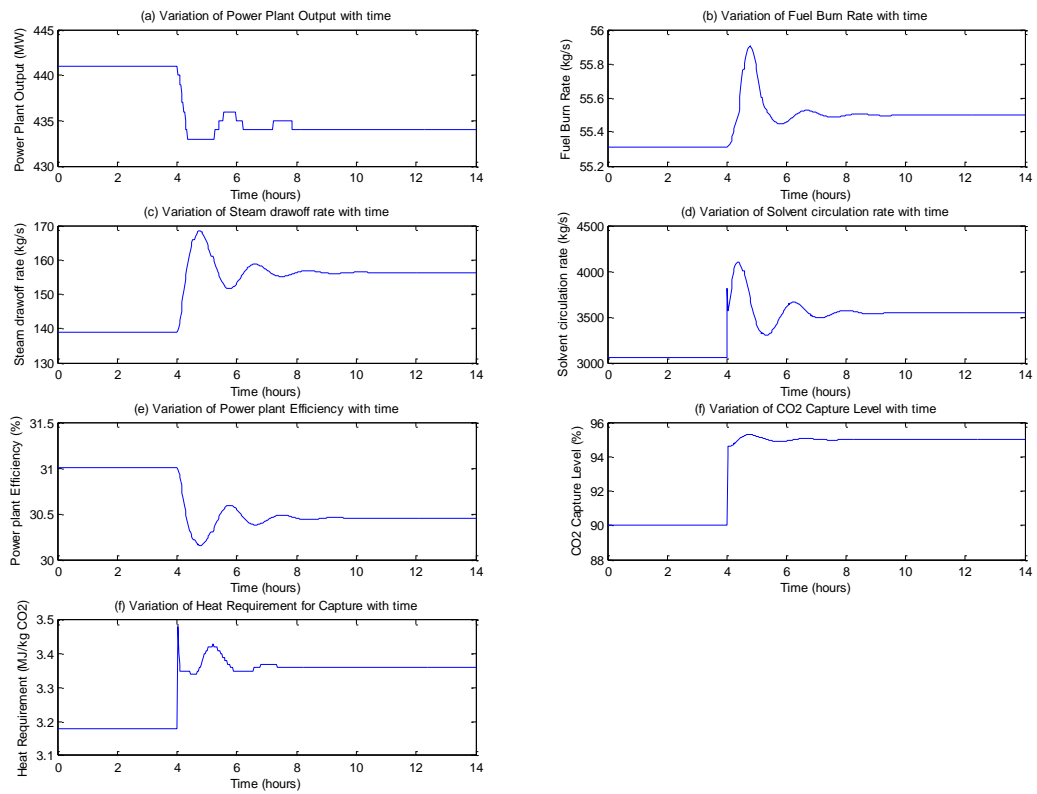


Figure 13 Effects of Increasing CO₂ Capture Level Set point

Figure14

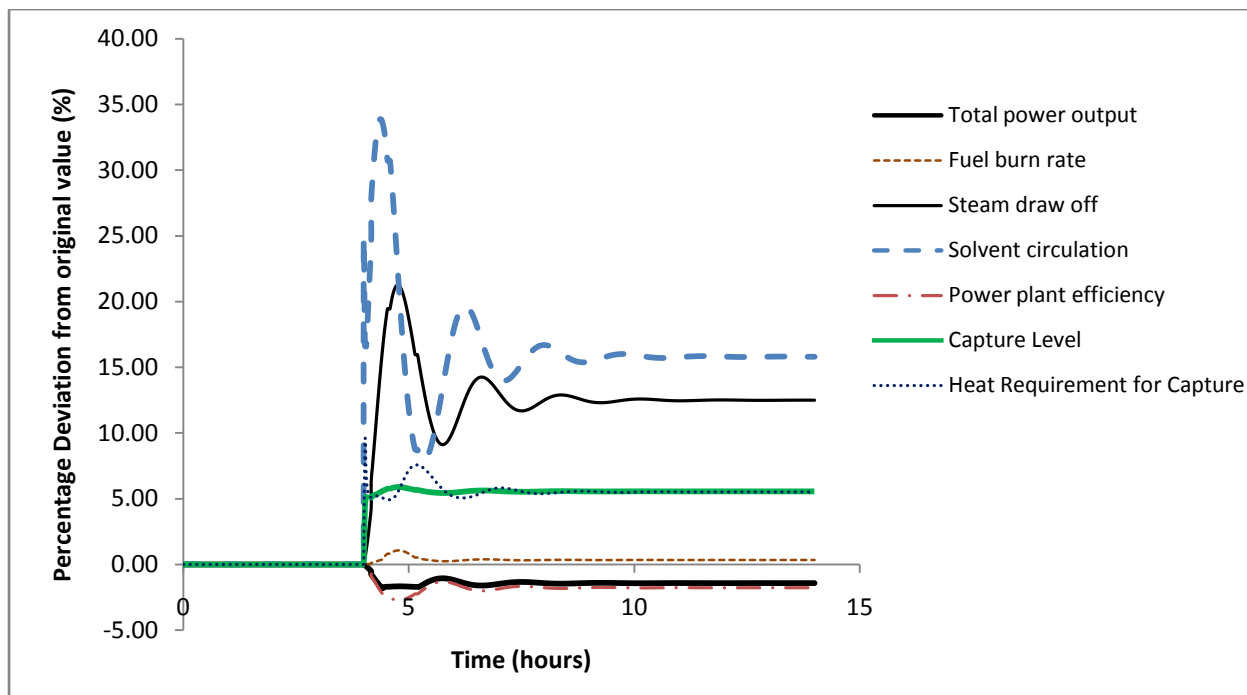


Figure 14 Percentage deviations with increasing CO₂ Capture Level Set point

Supplementary Material

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