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Solar energy — Pyranometers — Recommended practice for use

Énergie solaire — Pyranomètres — Pratique recommandée pour l'emploi

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Contents

Page

Foreword ..... **iv**
Introduction ..... **v**
1 Scope **1**
2 Normative references **1**
3 Terms and definitions **1**
4 Selection of pyranometers and accessories **4**
4.1 General 4
4.2 Pyranometer selection based on accuracy class 4
4.3 Pyranometer and accessory selection based on other considerations 6
4.4 Measuring system redundancy and spatial resolution 6
4.5 Common pyranometer accessories 7
4.5.1 Electronics, data acquisition and power supply 7
4.5.2 Heating and ventilation systems 8
4.5.3 Mounting stands and supports 9
4.6 Personal safety 9
5 Recommended practice for use **10**
5.1 General 10
5.2 Pyranometers measuring plane of array and global horizontal irradiance 10
5.2.1 General 10
5.2.2 Installation 10
5.2.3 Heating and ventilation 13
5.2.4 Inspection and maintenance 13
5.2.5 Data acquisition and storage 16
5.2.6 Data quality control and correction 19
5.3 Pyranometers measuring diffuse radiation 20
5.3.1 General 20
5.3.2 Installation 22
5.3.3 Heating and ventilation 23
5.3.4 Inspection and maintenance 23
5.3.5 Data acquisition and storage 23
5.3.6 Data quality control and correction 23
5.4 Pyranometers measuring reflected radiation 24
5.4.1 General 24
5.4.2 Installation 24
5.4.3 Inspection and maintenance 25
5.4.4 Data acquisition and storage 25
5.4.5 Data quality control and correction 25
5.5 Pyranometer calibration and performance verification 26
5.5.1 Calibration 26
5.5.2 On-site performance verification/check 28
5.5.3 Introduction of a new pyranometer sensitivity 28
5.6 Uncertainty evaluation of the measurement 29
5.7 Indoor use of pyranometers 32
Annex A (informative) **Heating and ventilation systems** **34**
Annex B (informative) **Shading losses in reflected radiation measurement** **36**
Bibliography **38**

Foreword

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The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

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For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 180, *Solar energy*, Subcommittee SC 1, *Climate — Measurement and data*.

This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition (ISO/TR 9901:1990), which has been technically revised.

The main changes compared to the previous edition are as follows:

— adaptation of the terminology to the revised ISO 9060:2018 including reference to new “non-spectrally flat” and “fast response” instruments;

— added recommended practices for use of modern pyranometers with a digital output, including internal diagnostics;

— added recommended practices for use of pyranometers to measure “plane of array” and reflected radiation;

— added references to the main standards used in solar energy application of pyranometers: IEC 61724-1:2017, ASTM G213-17 and ASTM G183-15.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user’s national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

Introduction

This document contains recommendations for use of pyranometers in solar energy applications. It summarises the state of the art and updates the first edition of 1990. In recent years the application of solar radiation measurement, using pyranometers, has risen sharply. The main application of pyranometers now is no longer scientific research, but assessment of the performance of PV solar power plants, that is power plants employing photovoltaic solar modules. The reflected irradiance measurement also has become more relevant with the increasing application of bifacial modules.

Between 1990 and now the use of pyranometers has been further standardized. Two examples are the 2017 revision of IEC 61724, the group of standards governing use of PV system performance monitoring, and the 2018 revision of ISO 9060 covering pyranometer and pyrheliometer specification and classification. The IEC standard implicitly recognises that solar irradiance is a critical and often the least accurately known parameter in solar energy performance assessment. For those users that choose to work according to this standard, IEC 61724-1 now defines 3 monitoring system classes and offers detailed guidelines for use of pyranometers including requirements (not recommendations) for the pyranometer classes that must be used, for instrument heating and for inspection-, cleaning and recalibration intervals.

The solar community also has come to realize that a measurement without an uncertainty evaluation is meaningless. IEC 61724-1 requires this evaluation when measurement results are reported, usually as PV performance ratio and performance index. ASTM has issued the G213 standard in 2017 for uncertainty evaluation of the measurement with pyranometers.

The 1990 version of ISO TR 9901 included reference only to “spectrally flat” pyranometers. Now that ISO 9060 in its latest version also defines and classifies “non-spectrally flat” pyranometers, this document also refers to the use of these instruments.

As in all above documents, uncertainties mentioned in this document are expanded uncertainties with a coverage factor $k = 2$.