Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS..... V

ESRA IN A NUTSHELL..... 3

1 The ESRA-concept..... 3

2 Data Base..... 4

3 Solar Algorithms..... 5

4 Use of the Tool Box to assess solar system Performance..... 6

5 The CD-ROM..... 6

6 The Atlas Book..... 7

1 INTRODUCTION..... 9

1.1 The new project in the context of previous work..... 9
1.2 The concept of the new European Solar Radiation Atlas «ESRA»..... 9
1.3 User needs and the availability of data..... 10
1.4 The Task..... 11
1.5 Computational task..... 11
1.6 The work programme..... 12
1.7 The project team..... 14

References..... 16

2 The DATABASE..... 17

Summary..... 17

2.1 Introduction 18

2.2 Contents of the database on the CD-ROM 20
2.2.1 Time-series of observed data for selected ground measuring stations 20
2.2.1.1 Time-series of hourly and half-hourly values 20
2.2.1.2 Time-series of daily values 21
2.2.1.3 Time-series of monthly values 21
2.2.2 Climatological means for measuring stations 21
2.2.3 Reference Years 21
2.2.4 Ångström coefficients 22
2.2.5 Ancillary information in text files 22
2.2.6 Digital maps for radiation data 22
2.2.7 Digital maps with ancillary information 23

2.3 Structure of the data base 23
2.3.1 File Structure for time-series and climatological means 24
2.3.2 File structure for the Reference Years 24
2.3.3 File structure for maps 25
2.3.4 Links between the different types of data (maps, time series,...) 25

2.4 Format of each type of data 28
2.4.1 Format of stations data 28
2.4.2 Format of ground-measured data files 29
2.4.3 Format of ASCII files 31
2.4.4 Fomat of maps 32
2.4.5 How to add information into the database 33

2.5 Data used for the construction of the database and sources of data 34
2.5.1 Introduction 34
2.5.2 Ground measured and derived data 34
2.5.3 Satellite derived data 35
2.5.4 Sources of data 35
2.5.5 Data guarantee and property rights 37

2.6 Quality control and confidence 37
2.6.1 Sources of errors in measurements 37
2.6.1.1 Global solar radiation 37
2.6.1.2 Sunshine duration 38
2.6.2 Ground-measured data: quality control and confidence 38
2.6.2.1 Introduction 38
2.6.2.2 The qualilty control procedure 39
2.6.2.3 Quality control for maximum values of daily sums of global solar irradiation 39
2.6.2.4 Quality control for minimum values of daily sums of global solar irradiation. The case of low sun elevations 40
2.6.2.5 Cross-validation of daily sums of global solar irradiation between sites 40
2.6.2.6 Quality control for daily sums of sunshine duration 41
2.6.2.7 Quality control for monthly means of daily sums of sunshine duration 41
2.6.2.8 Quality control by means of the Angström formula 42

I

2.6.2.9 Qality control of other ground-measured parameters, and insertion of missing values 44
2.6.3 Satellite-derived data: quality control, confidence, and processing 44

2.7 Maps of solar radiation components 45
2.7.1 The datasets 45
2.7.2 Mapping techniques 45
2.7.3 Maps of monthly means 47
2.7.4 Quality of the maps 48
2.7.4.1 Geographical quality 48
2.7.4.2 Radiometric quality 49
2.7.5 Detailed maps of global radiation for the Upper Rhine valley 49
2.7.5.1 Introduction 49
2.7.5.2 Database and methods 50
2.7.5.3 The solar radiation for the Upper Rhine valley 51

2.8 Zones of similar clearness index parameters 52
2.8.1 Introduction 52
2.8.2 Zoning procedures 53
2.8.3 The climatology of solar radiation in Europe 53
2.8.3.1 General atmospheric circulation and European climates 54
2.8.3.2 Solar radiation climates in Europe 56
2.8.4 Defining areas of similar cleaness index for the European region 57
2.8.4.1 Description of the solar radiation climate areas in Europe based on clearness index zoning 61
2.8.4.2 Description of selected meteorological sites. Area 1 (maritime Type): Bergen, Norway 64
2.8.4.3 Description of selected meteorological sites 66
2.8.4.4 Description of selected meteorological sites. Area 2: Praha, Czech Republic 67
2.8.4.5 Description of selected meteorological sites. Area 3: Stockholm, Sweden 68
2.8.4.6 Description of selected meteorological sites. Area 4: Trappes, France 69
2.8.4.7 Description of selected meteorological sites. Area 5: Geneve, Switzerland 70
2.8.4.8 Description of selected meteorological sites. Area 6: Kiev, Ukraine 71
2.8.4.9 Description of selected meteorological sites. Area 7: Ankara, Turkey 72
2.8.4.10 Description of selected meteorological sites. Area 8: Brindisi, Italy 73
2.8.4.11 Description of selected meteorological sites. Area 9: Saentis, Switzerland 74

2.9 Zones of similar biomass parameters 74

2.10 Test, Design and Biomass Reference Years 78
2.10.1 Test Reference Years 79
2.10.1.1 Purpose of Test Reference Years and their construction 79
2.10.1.2 Format of the Test Reference Years files 80
2.10.2 Design Reference Years 81
2.10.3 Biomass Reference Years 83
2.10.3.1 Purpose of Biomass Reference Years and their construction 83
2.10.3.2 Format of the Biomass Reference Years files 84

2.11 Where to Find Test and Design Reference Years 85

References 91

3 SOLAR RADIATION MODELS 94

Summary 94

3.1 Introduction 96

3.2 Testing and Selecting Appopriate Algorithms 103

3.3 Solar Geometry 105
3.3.1 Geometry of the solar beam 106
3.3.1.1 Basic paramters 106
3.3.1.2 Position of the Sun in the sky 108
3.3.1.4 Incidence on slopes 110
3.3.1.5 Sun path 110
3.3.1.6 Changing the time system 111
3.3.2 Solid geometry of the sky and ground, area sources 111
3.3.3 Extraterrestrial radiation 112

3.4 Solar Radiation at the Daily Level 114
3.4.1 The clearness nex 114
3.4.2 Daily global horizontal radiation 115
3.4.2.1 Estimating daily radiation from sunshine data 115
3.4.2.2 The use of the daily clearness index in quality control 116
3.4.3 Estimating daily horizontal diffuse radiation 116
3.4.3.1 Estimating the monthly average daily diffuse horizontal irradiation 116
3.4.3.2 Estimating the daily diffuse horizontal irradiation 118

3.5 Estimating Hourly Horizonal Irradiation 119
3.5.1 The computation process 119
3.5.2 Estimating hourly horizontal irradiation for cloudless skies 120
3.5.2.1 The beam attenuation under cloudless skies 120
3.5.2.2 Selectin the Linke turbidity factor 122
3.5.2.3 The horizontal beam irradiation under cloudless skies 123
3.5.2.4 The horizontal diffuse irradiation under cloudless skies 125
3.5.3 Estimating monthly average hourly horizontal irradiation, any sky type 127
3.5.3.1 Estimating the monthly mean daily profile of $G_h(t)$ 127
3.5.3.2 Estimating the monthly mean daily profile of $D_h(t)$ 128
3.5.4 Estimating hourly horizontal irradtion from times series of daily sums, any sky type 128
3.5.4.1 Estimating average daily profiles of $G_h(t)$ 128
3.5.4.2 Estimating average daily profiles of $D_h(t)$ 129
3.5.4.3 Estimating average daily profiles of $B_h(t)$ 129
3.5.5 Performance of the algorithmic chains for estimating hourly horizontal irradiation 129
3.5.5.1 Performance of algorithms for estimating hourly global horizontal irradiation 130

3.5.5.2 Performance of algorithms for estimating hourly diffuse horizontal irradiation 131

3.6 Estimating Irradiation on Inclined Surfaces 138
3.6.1 Basic slope irradiance prediction procedures 138
3.6.2 Estimating monthly average hourly irradiation on slopes 139
3.6.2.1 Estimating the monthly mean daily profile of $B_h(\beta,\alpha, t)$ 139
3.6.2.2 Estimating the monthly mean daily profile of $Rg_h(\beta,\alpha, t)$ 140
3.6.2.3 Estimating the monthly mean daily profile of $D_h(\beta,\alpha, t)$ 141
3.6.3 Estimating time series of hourly irradiation on slopes 143
3.6.3.1 Estimating the mean daily profiles of $B_h(\beta,\alpha, t)$ 143
3.6.3.2 Estimating the mean daily profiles of $Rg_h(\beta,\alpha, t)$ 143
3.6.3.3 Estimating the mean daily profiles of $D_h(\beta,\alpha, t)$ 143
3.6.4 Performance of the algorithmic chains for estimating hourly irradiation on slopoes 144
3.6.5 Estimting the clear sky diffuse hourly irradiance mean daily profile on vertical surfaces, $D_{hc}(\beta,\alpha, t)$ 152

3.7 Estimation of hourly global radiation for overcast days 153
3.7.1 Estimation of mean overcast irradiance values 153
3.7.2 The impact of cloud type on overcast day irradiation 153
3.7.3 Extremes of diffuse radiation under partially cloudy conditions 154

3.8 Statistical descriptions of irradiation data 155
3.8.1 Sum, average, variance and extremes 155
3.8.2 Probability density and cumulative probability curves 156
3.8.3 Utilizability and available energy 157

3.9 Other algorithmic facilities provided 158
3.9.1 Spectral characteristics of sunlight 158
3.9.2 Daylighting 159
3.9.2.1 Luminous efficacy of the beam irradiance 160
3.9.2.2 Luminous efficacy of the sky diffuse irradiance 160
3.9.2.3 Luminous efficacy of the ground reflected diffuse irradiance 161
3.9.2.4 Illuminance on inclined planes 161

3.9.3 Long wave radiation 161
3.9.3.1 Long wave radiation emitted by the atmosphere 163
3.9.3.2 Long wave radiation emitted from level ground 164
3.9.3.3 Long wave radiation balance, horizontal surfaces 164
3.9.3.4 Long wave radiation balance on slopes 165
3.9.4 Temperature 166

3.10 Algorithmic chains implemented in the ESRA Atlas 167
3.10.1 Introduction 167
3.10.2 Description of the algorithmic chains implemented in the ESRA Atlas 168
3.10.3 Input data files 171
3.10.4 Output data files 173

3.11 Advanced user implementation of algorithms and algorithmic chains 176
3.11.1 The Standard Set of Algorithms 176

I
3.11. User support 176
2

References 177

4 THE ESRA SOFTWARE 174

4.1 Starting the ESRA software 174
4.1.1 Installation procedure 174
4.1.2 Problems and tips 175

4.2 Consulting the maps: the map mode 176
4.2.1 Map selection 177
4.2.2 The colour legend band 178
4.2.3 Selecting a point on the maps 179
4.2.4 The map menu 179

4.3 Consulting the station data: the station mode 181
4.3.1 Selecting a station 182
4.3.2 The station meue 183

4.4 Station mode: the «Database» sub-menu 189
4.4.1 The «Climatological» option 189
4.4.2 The «Monthly» option 189
4.4.3 The «Daily» option 190
4.4.4 The «Hourly» and «Half-hourly» options 191

4.5 Station mode: the «Calculation» sub-menu 191
4.5.1 The «Solar irradiation» option 191
4.5.2 The «Clear sky irradiation» option 193
4.5.3 The «Illuminance» option 193
4.5.4 The «Sky downward longwave irradiation» option 193
4.5.5 The «Spectral irradiation» option 193
4.5.6 The «Temperature» option 194
4.5.7 The «Statistics» option 194
4.5.8 The «Use your own data» option 196
4.5.9 The «Radiation summary» option 197
4.5.1 General remarks on «Calculation» sub-menu 197
0

4.6 Station mode: the «Applications» sub-menu 198
4.6.1 Application 1: «Yearly energy output from a solar water heater» 199
4.6.2 Application 2: «PV grid connecteed system» 199
4.6.3 Application 3: «PV stand-alone system with batteries» 200
4.6.4 Application 4: «Daily energy output from a solar water heater» 201
4.6.5 Application 5: «Passive solar heating (direct gains)» 202

4.7 Station mode: the «Draw» sub-menu 203
4.7.1 Drawing data coming from «Database» or «Test Reference Year) 204
4.7.2 Drawing data coming from «Calculation» menu 205

4.8 Time systems, unit systems and graphical plots 208

I

5 USING ESRA DATA AND TOOLBOX TO PREDICT THE PERFORMANCE OF SOLAR SYSTEMS 216

Introduction 216

5.1 Solar radiation data from European Solar Radiation Atlas and their accuracy 216
5.1.1 ESRA solar radiation and weather data: book, CD-ROM and software 217
5.1.2 Uncertainty of ESRA solar radiation data 218
5.1.2.1 Solar radiation measurement errors 218
5.1.2.2 ESRA maps uncertainties 218
5.1.2.3 Time sampling errors: the year to year variability 218
5.1.3 Uncertainty propagation through computation chains 219
5.1.3.1 Uncertainty propagation process 220
5.1.3.2 Propagation of uncertainties by solar processor algorithms 221

5.2 Computation methods and their required solar radiation and weather data inputs: an overview 222
5.2.1 Simulation programmes of solar energy applications: Examples; suitable ESRA data 222
5.2.1.1 Simulation programmes: Types and examples; future trends 223
5.2.1.2 Input solar radion and weather data files for simulation programmes 223
5.2.1.3 Using ESRA time-seris as an input to simulation programmes 225
5.2.2 Simplified methods for solar systm design: Examples and suitable ESRA input data 226
5.2.2.1 Simplified methods: Types and examples; future trends 226
5.2.2.2 Aggregate solar radiation and weather data for simplified methods 227
5.2.2.3 Using ESRA data as an input to simplified methods 227

5.3 Solar Water heaters and active solar thermal systems 228
5.3.1 A typical solar water heater 228
5.3.2 Predicting the efficiency of a solar collector 229
5.3.2.1 Thermal balance of a solar collector 229
5.3.2.2 Collector efficiency 230
5.3.2.3 Threshold phenomenon 231
5.3.2.4 Average collector efficiency 231
5.3.3 Long term energy output from a solar water heater: principles and examples of dynamic simulation 232
5.3.3.1 Principles of dynamic simulation 232
5.3.3.2 Examples of simulation programmes and climatic input data 233
5.3.4 Predicting the long term energy output from solar water heaters: simplified methods 234
5.3.4.1 An example of simple and fast computation 234
5.3.4.2 Other simplified methods 235

5.4 Photovoltaic systems 236
5.4.1 Photovoltaic cells and their applications 236
5.4.2 Grid connected PV modules: a simple and fast computation 237
5.4.3 Stand alone PV systems: a simple and fast computation 238
5.4.4 Stand alone PV systems: principles of dynamic simulation methods 240
5.4.4.1 Basic component models 240
5.4.4.2 Simulation programmes 241

5.5 Passive Solar Buildings 242

I

5.5.1 Building thermal behaviour and passive solar systems 242
5.5.1.1 From passive solar space heating to integrated comfort and energy approaches 242
5.5.1.2 Thermal behaviour of buildings: Basic models 243
5.5.2 Passive solar gains: a simple and fast computation procedure 244
5.5.2.1 The computation procedure 244
5.5.2.2 Passive solar space heating: other simpliefied methods 245
5.5.3 Passive solar buildings: dynamic simulation methods 246
5.5.3.1 Buidling thermal simulation programmes 246
5.5.3.2 Reduced simulation models 247
5.5.4 Other aspects of solar energy in building 247
5.5.4.1 Passive cooling and summer comfort 247
5.5.4.2 Daylighting 248
Appendix: Computation of monthly degree-days 250
Definitions 250
A simple correlation method for estimating degree-days 251

5.6 Biomass production 252
5.6.1 Biomass processes 252
5.6.2 One example: lucerne crop. Basic models 252
5.6.3 Daily time-step simulation and climatic input data 253

5.7 Sensitivity analysis of the performance of ESRA chains in solar system design 254
5.7.1 Effects of synthetic solar radiation time-series for simulation programmes 254
5.7.1.1 Reference time-series and synthetic data sets 255
5.7.1.2 Simulation of active solar water heaters 255
5.7.1.3 Simulation of passive space heating (direct gain systems) 258
5.7.1.4 Simulation of photovoltaic systems (stand-alone systems) 259
5.7.1.5 Effects of synthetic solar radiation time-series: conclusion 261
5.7.2 Propagation of uncertainties in system performance prediction by system computation methods 261
5.7.2.1 Available energy and utilizability above threshold radiation 261
5.7.2.2 Solar water heater design methods 262
5.7.3 Overall accuracy of using ESRA data 263
5.7.4 What´s new with ESRA solar radiation and weather data? 265

References 267

Annex 1 - Symbols and Definitions

A1.1 Introduction 1
A1.2 Basic concepts and Generaal Rules 1
A1.3 Definitons 2

References 267

Annex 2 - LIST OF STATIONS