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ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT

THERMO-ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OF A MULTIPLE-EFFECT DESALINATION SYSTEM WITH EJECTOR VAPOUR COMPRESSION

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Abstract

A new formulation for the evaporation, flashing, condensation processes taking place in the effects of thermal desalination systems which simulates the operation of both forward and parallel/cross configurations is coupled with an exergo-economic model based on the SPECO method. The thermo-economic model uses accurate properties for the seawater, brine, pure water and vapour and is solved with an equation solver which does not require the development of a specific solution algorithm as in most previous studies. This flexible model is used to analyze the influence of the number of effects N and the temperature difference ΔT_e between effects on the technical and economic performance of multi-effect desalination systems with ejector vapour compression. In particular, it is shown that the performance calculated by an earlier black-box approach is not attainable by technically and economically realistic systems. It is also shown that for each feed configuration and a given number of effects there exists an optimum value of ΔT_e which minimizes the cost of the produced potable water. This last result forms the basis of a procedure that combines black-box results with the optimum value of ΔT_e and can be used to select the appropriate system for any specific application.

Keywords: multiple effect evaporation; vapour compression; exergo-economic analysis; system design; forward feed; parallel/cross feed

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