

# Photovoltaic System Reconfiguration strategy for mismatch condition

1<sup>st</sup> Dafang Zhao

*dept. name of organization (of Aff.)  
name of organization (of Aff.)*

2<sup>nd</sup> Given Name Surname

*dept. name of organization (of Aff.)  
name of organization (of Aff.)*

3<sup>rd</sup> Given Name Surname

*dept. name of organization (of Aff.)  
name of organization (of Aff.)*

**Abstract**—Power generation efficiency of photovoltaic(PV) system is reduced significantly under partial shading or solar cell damage conditions. This efficiency losses affected by turning on bypass diode of PV panels, which called mismatch losses. Reconfiguration technology to reconfigure electrical series or parallel connection among PV panels can maximize power generation. Recently, an efficient reconfiguration method of PV panel connection to optimize power generation is proposed. The method first list candidate configurations and applies precise power simulations to the candidates. However, some of candidates might not be realized by given PV panels and the paper does not show any systematic way to identify such a feasibility. In this paper, we propose a very fast algorithm to check the feasibility with high accuracy.

**Index Terms**—Photovoltaic system, mismatched power loss, reconfiguration, dynamical reconfiguration.

## I. INTRODUCTION

As constant fossil energy generation is increasing the crisis of fossil fuel depletion and serious pollution problems for the environment, research and utilization on a green and renewable energy have become necessary for sustainable society and environment. Photovoltaic (PV) energy has received a significant attention since it is unlimited and easy to be scaled up. Thanks to extensive technology and research on photovoltaic energy generation, large scale photovoltaic energy generation systems have been deployed into many practical applications. However, PV arrays are sensitive to shading and PV cell's fault or aging. This means that when PV cells or modules do not uniformly generate power or experience different irradiance conditions from one another, the PV array is in mismatch condition and could not efficiently generate power. In addition, the photovoltaic arrays under mismatched conditions will accelerate the aging and heating of PV cells and cause a short circuit of photovoltaic cells to further damage the PV array. In order to maximize power generation and also avoid damaging PV cells, we propose an algorithm that can reconfigure photovoltaic arrays.

In this paper, we use non-uniform irradiance levels to represent mismatch condition and analyze the efficiency of a PV system. Photovoltaic arrays operating in mismatch conditions could not efficiently generate power, and reconfiguration of panel connection has been widely investigated to solve this problem [2].

Some of works proposed optimized or efficient algorithms to reconfigure the connection of PV cells [3] [4]. However, these works assume a full reconfiguration ability among PV cells. In general, a PV array is a connection of multiple PV panels, each PV panel has multiple PV modules, and each PV module consists of multiple PV cells. One typical PV panel has 3 PV modules with 24 PV cells. To realize reconfiguration in PV cell level, a new PV panel architecture is required.

Recently, as practical solutions, reconfiguration in PV panels have been investigated [5] [10]. One PV panel typically has two (plus and minus) terminals, and a PV array is configured by connecting PV panels in series and/or parallel. Such a configuration is also realized using a switch among PV panels, and reconfigurations in PV panel level can be regarded as practical solutions. However, the reconfiguration in PV panel level is more difficult than that in PV cell level. PV modules in the same PV panel can be individually bypassed by bypass diodes when some mismatch condition occurs, and it causes multiple maximal power points (MPPs) for one PV panel.

A PV panel level reconfiguration using genetic algorithm is proposed in [5]. Though this can generate a new configuration, computing cost is too significant and the algorithm cannot generate the best configuration precisely. A fast reconfiguration strategy for minimizing power losses is presented in [10]. In this strategy, candidates for PV array configurations are first listed by some fast estimation method, and, for each candidates, precise power simulations are applied. However, some candidate configurations might not be feasible, that is, it is impossible to realize a designated PV array configuration with given PV panels, and there is no description of a systematic way to identify the feasibility.

In this paper, we propose an algorithm to identify feasibility for a given configuration with less computational time and high accuracy.

## II. PHOTOVOLTAIC ARRAY

In this paper, we use the following model of PV arrays, modules, strings and panels as showed in Fig. 1. A PV array is formed by several parallel connected (PV) strings, and a string is formed by several series-connected PV panels. A PV panel is formed by three PV modules ( $N_M = 3$ ). And each bypass diode is connected in parallel with a module.

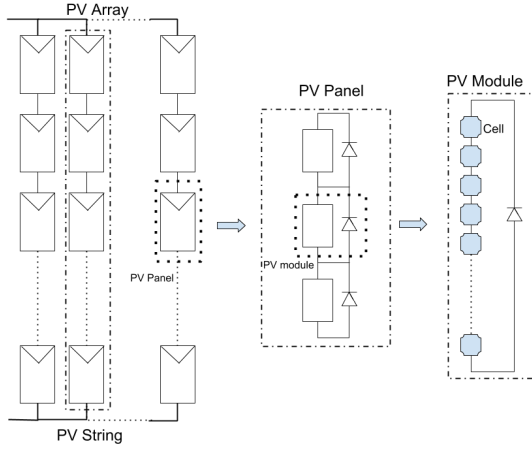


Fig. 1: PV arrays, strings, and panels.

Fig.2a shows I-V curves for PV panels. PV panel generates a currents according to a provided control voltage within some range. PV cells in a PV panel may have different conditions (irradiance or fault) and hence have different upper limits for their generated currents. Therefore, for lower control voltage, only PV cells that can generate higher currents can work and the other PV cells do not generate current with their bypass diodes switching on. As a result, PV panel might have multiple maximal power points (MPPs, points where power curve has extreme values). Fig.2b and 2c show I-V curves for series and parallel connections of two PV panels. The series connection accepts wider range of control voltage, and the parallel connection can generate higher current.

When understanding complete I-V characteristics of some parallel and/or series connection of PV panels, we may need I-V characteristics of the PV panels. However, to find out the (near) maximum generated power, it is enough to considers some restricted information including maximal power points (MPPs), a short circuit current, an open circuit voltage. These values form a fingerprint of the connection.

We assume that each panel follows: The current versus voltage ( $I$ - $V$ ) curve is acquired and calculated by algorithm presented in [6]. That algorithm will analyzes the panel  $I$ - $V$  curve sample by finding almost-constant-current and voltage regions and coordinate multiple maximum or minimum power point in the  $P$ - $V$  curve if PV array is working in mismatched conditions or not.

All the panels in PV array have the same number ( $N$ ) of modules. For particular module, using  $(V_{mpp_n}, I_{mpp_n})$  to identify voltage and current values on different maximum power point by index  $n$ . Those parameters can be directly estimated by the proress provided in [7].

Furthermore, it is also assumed that for each string it has same number of panels. Means every string in PV array have same length. String's length are identical based on when they connected in parallel, a string has more panels may cause current back flow into other strings which have less panels [8].

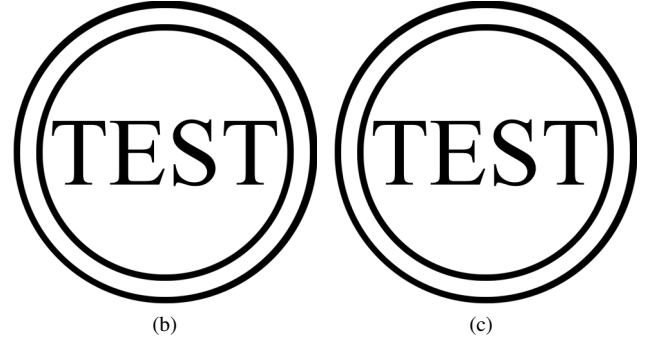
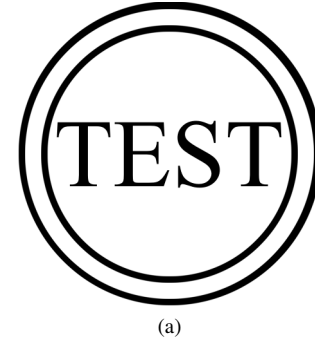


Fig. 2

### III. RECONFIGURATION ALGORITHM

#### A. Overview of the algorithm

In this section, we describe the overview of the reconfiguration algorithm in [10]. First, the reconfiguration algorithm determines MPPs for PV modules in the mismatched condition by using algorithms in [6] [7] [9]. As an example, we consider a PV panel where nine panels are connected in three strings. We assume that, in this example, the reconfiguration algorithm finds MPPs given in Table I. After that, the reconfiguration algorithm generates candidates of current assignments, where the current assignment specifies a current of each string. The reconfiguration algorithm treats the current of each MPP as a current candidate for string, and constructs a current assignment by assigning a current candidate to each string. The reconfiguration algorithm generates current assignments by considering all combinations of current candidates for string. Then, for each current assignment, the reconfiguration algorithm computes the number of working modules in each string. We define a configuration as a combination of a current assignment and the number of working modules in each string. By this algorithm, we obtain a set of candidate configurations. Since we can estimate the generated power of each candidate configuration, we can select the candidate configuration that maximizes the generated power. The general steps of Fast reconfiguration strategy as showed in Fig. 3.

#### B. Feasibility Problem

Due to a PV panel can not be used into different string, those MPP candidates may have some un-feasible configurations. Our proposed algorithm based on the method in [10] to

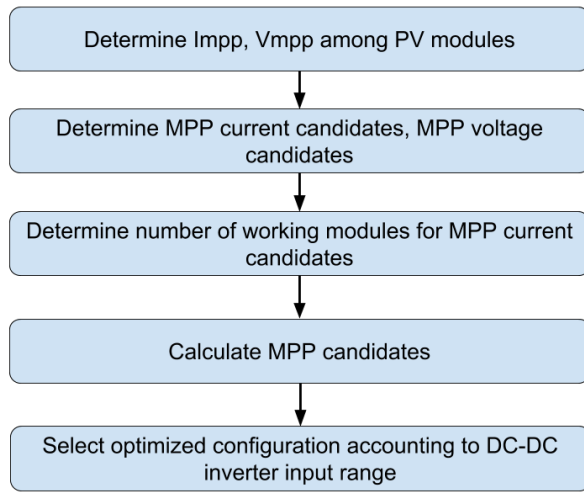


Fig. 3: Flowchart of reconfiguration algorithm in [10].

calculate MPP candidates and using unique panel selection technology to give optimal reconfiguration solution among partial-shading PV array.

In this example, though the procedure in Fast reconfiguration strategy, MPP candidates are presented in (1) and number of working modules in MPP candidates are presented in (2), respectively.

TABLE I

DATASET OF PARTIAL-SHADING PV ARRAY			
Panels	Vmpp(V)	Impp (A)	MPP(W)
P1	[0, 2.9, 11.4]	[0, 0.5, 2]	[0, 1.5, 22.8]
P2	[2.9, 17.1, 17.1]	[0.5, 3, 3]	[1.5, 51.3, 51.3]
P3	[2.9, 2.9, 2.9]	[0.5, 0.5, 0.5]	[1.5, 1.5, 1.5]
P4	[0, 11.4, 11.4]	[0, 2, 2]	[0, 22.8, 22.8]
P5	[0, 2.9, 11.4]	[0, 0.5, 2]	[0, 1.5, 22.8]
P6	[2.9, 11.4, 11.4]	[0.5, 2, 2]	[1.5, 22.8, 22.8]
P7	[2.9, 11.4, 17.1]	[0.5, 2, 3]	[1.5, 22.8, 51.3]
P8	[11.4, 11.4, 11.4]	[2, 2, 2]	[22.8, 22.8, 22.8]
P9	[2.9, 11.4, 17.1]	[0.5, 2, 3]	[1.5, 22.8, 51.3]

$$MPP \text{ candidates} = [\{0.5, 0.5, 2\}, \{0.5, 2, 2\}, \{2, 2, 2\}, \{2, 2, 3\}] \quad (1)$$

$$Q_{M_n} = [\{8, 8, 8\}, \{7, 7, 7\}, \{5, 5, 5\}, \{4, 4, 4\}] \quad (2)$$

### C. Feasibility

The feasibility of configuration based on the assumption of section II, each string in PV array must have same number of panels. Definition of feasibility in (3). When a configuration needs panels in a string ( $NP_n$ ) are over maximum number of panels per-string ( $NP_{stMAX}$ ) this configuration is unfeasible.

$$\begin{cases} NP_n > NP_{stMAX} & \text{Unfeasible} \\ NP_n \leq NP_{stMAX} & \text{Feasible} \end{cases} \quad (3)$$

For the first MPP candidate  $\{0.5, 0.5, 2\}$  need 8 modules for each string. According to Table I, for a string current on 2A at least need 4 panels and didn't meet feasible requirement,

thus, algorithm terminate. The second MPP candidate  $\{0.5, 2, 2\}$  as same as previous one also not feasible.

### D. Panel Selection Strategy

In order to give more precise reconfiguration strategy. Our proposed algorithm firstly sort panels in a particular order for MPP candidates. For the example of fourth MPP candidate  $\{2, 2, 3\}$ , by giving dataset in Table I generate a selection matrix in (4) that each column indicate panel's number and each row indicate to string number. Element in the matrix corresponding to number of module which be able to working on string current.

	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9
St1	1	2	0	2	1	2	2	3	2
St2	1	2	0	2	1	2	2	3	2
St3	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	1

Then calculate number of module difference among string currents. For panel 1, difference between string 3 and string 2 is 1 ( $Diff_1 = 1$ ) and difference between string 2 and string 1 is 0 ( $Diff_2 = 0$ ). Sort panels in lexicographic order by  $Diff_1$  and  $Diff_2$ . As showed in matrix (5).

	P2	P3	P1	P5	P7	P9	P4	P6	P8
St1	2	0	1	1	2	2	2	2	3
St2	2	0	1	1	2	2	2	2	3
St3	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
$Diff_1$	0	0	1	1	1	1	2	2	3
$Diff_2$	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

To find the best PV configuration, following steps are required:

- 1- Select panels in matrix (5) from left side to right.
- 2- If the element in matrix is 0, release corresponding panel
- 3- Replace selected panels if summations of selected panels' contain modules are equal to unselect panel. As the example of string 2, selected panels are [Panel 1, Panel 5], these panels contain modules are equal to next unselect panel [Panel 4]. Then swap [Panel 1, Panel 5] and [Panel 4], release [Panel 1, Panel 5].
- 4- If replacement approved, step 3 will be repeated till summations of selected panel contain modules are large or equal to  $Q_{M_n}$ .
- 5- Otherwise, none of the replacement will be approved. Evaluate selected panels with feasibility requirement and compare selected modules with the requirement of  $Q_{M_n}$ .
- 6- If there remain any unselect panel, set unselect panel to a string with minimum length.

### E. Panel Replace Strategy

In the section III-C, to obtain optimal panel selection need swap undesired panel. Based on section II, each panel only contain three identical PV modules. So the element in selection matrix in the range of 0 to 3. The replacement policy follows priorities are:

- (1) Swap a panel contain 3 working modules to **three** panels each contain 1 working module.

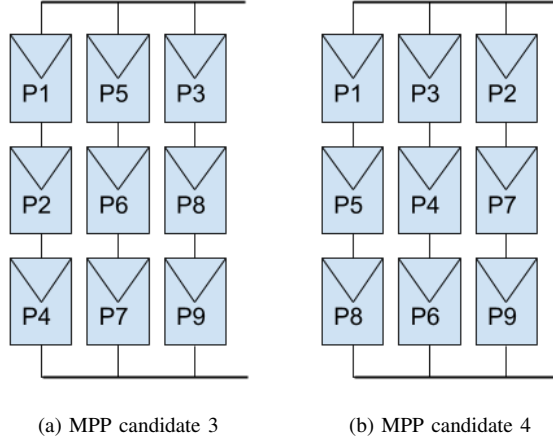


Fig. 4: Configuration of partial-shading PV array

- (2) Swap a panel contain 3 working modules to **one** panel contain 1 working module and **one** contain 2 working modules.
- (3) Swap a panel contain 2 working modules to **two** panels each contain 1 working module.

By inspecting the features of each module in Table I, there are no configuration for MPP candidate 1 and MPP candidate 2. Configuration for MPP candidate 3 is that first string include Panel 1, Panel 2 and Panel 4; the second string include Panel 5, Panel 6 and Panel 7; the third string include Panel 3, Panel 8 and Panel 9. Configuration for MPP candidate 4 is that first string include Panel 1, Panel 5 and Panel 8; the second string include Panel 3, Panel 4 and Panel 6; the third string include Panel 2, Panel 7 and Panel 9. Optimal configuration for this partial-shading PV array as showed in Fig. 4.

#### IV. EVALUATION OF OPTIMIZATION ALGORITHM

Although the pilot example refers to three strings only, the extension of the method to any number of parallel connected strings is the same. This section verifies the effectiveness of proposed algorithm using Matlab simulation. With pilot example presented in last section, shading scenario as showed in Fig.5a. To minimize power loss, the proposed algorithm, as described, is applied to reconfigure the system. The resulting configuration is depicted in Fig.5b and Fig.5c.

As shown, working module on each string are large or equal than required  $Q_{M_n}$ , which means mismatched power loss are minimized. The  $P$ - $V$  curve for this PV array before and after reconfiguration are showed in Fig.6. It can be seen that after reconfiguration maximum power (!!!!!! W and !!!!!W) are significantly higher than before reconfiguration maximum power (!!!!!!W).

To evaluate the performance of proposed algorithm, we compare the propose algorithm with exhaustive search algorithm for 300 different partial-shading PV arrays. For each PV array, contain 2~15 PV panels connected into 2~5 strings.

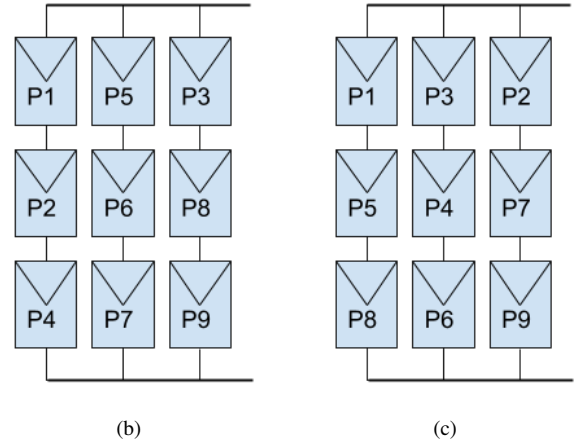
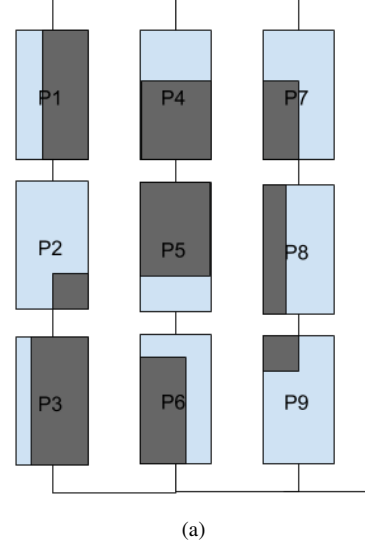


Fig. 5: The PV system under shading scenario (a) before reconfiguration, (b) after reconfiguration for MPP candidate {2, 2, 2} and (c) MPP candidate {2, 2, 3}

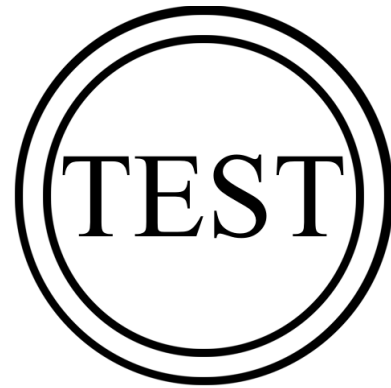


Fig. 6: The  $P$ - $V$  curves for the PV system under first shading scenario before and after reconfiguration.

The PV panels will have contain 2~20 different current candidates.

The computational time required to find the best configuration and accuracy of configuration in the proposed and exhaustive search algorithm are compared and summarized in Table II. As shown in Table II, proposed algorithm achieved high accuracy and less computing time compare with exhaustive search algorithm and methods described in [10].

TABLE II

COMPARISON BETWEEN EXISTED METHODS  
AND PROPOSED ALGORITHM

	Propose Algorithm	Exhaustive search Algorithm
Number of PV Array	300	
Number of MPP candidates	10961	
Feasible Candidates	1180	1278
Unfeasible Candidates	9781	9683
Error Rate	0.89%	0%
Ave. times per Array	0.157s	4370s

The calculation time used by the proposed algorithm for one MPP candidate was 157 ms, which is significantly lower compared with exhaustive search 1hour 12min 50s and accuracy are higher than methods proposed in [10] [12].

## V. CONCLUSIONS

The existing PV reconfiguration methods either have high accuracy but suffer from long computational time such as exhausted searching algorithm or GA, or they have short computational time but do not guarantee the best configuration as described in [10] [11] [12]. This paper proposed a new PV system reconfiguration algorithm with feasibility check function and have high accuracy and less computational time. Proposed algorithm's effectiveness has been validated using Matlab simulation. The algorithm was tested though un-uniform shadow distribution among PV array and shows its effectiveness in finding optimal configuration. The proposed algorithm also compared with existed method in terms of accuracy and computational time. The result shows that proposed algorithm has high accuracy and less computational time.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Koutroulis, Eftichios, and Frede Blaabjerg. "A new technique for tracking the global maximum power point of PV arrays operating under partial-shading conditions." *IEEE Journal of Photovoltaics* 2.2 (2012): 184-190.
- [2] La Manna, Damiano, et al. "Reconfigurable electrical interconnection strategies for photovoltaic arrays: A review." *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews* 33 (2014): 412-426.
- [3] Storey, Jonathan, Peter R. Wilson, and Darren Bagnall. "The optimized-string dynamic photovoltaic array." *IEEE Transactions on Power Electronics* 29.4 (2014): 1768-1776.
- [4] Storey, Jonathan P., Peter R. Wilson, and Darren Bagnall. "Improved optimization strategy for irradiance equalization in dynamic photovoltaic arrays." *IEEE transactions on power electronics* 28.6 (2013): 2946-2956.
- [5] P. Carotenuto, A. D. Cioppa, A. Marcelli, and G. Spagnuolo, An evolutionary approach to the dynamical reconfiguration of photovoltaic fields, *Neurocomputing*, vol. 170, pp. 393405, 2015.
- [6] Carotenuto, Pietro Luigi, et al. "Online recording a PV module fingerprint." *IEEE Journal of Photovoltaics* 4.2 (2014): 659-668.
- [7] Orozco-Gutierrez, M. L., et al. "Fast estimation of MPPs in mismatched PV arrays based on lossless model." *Clean Electrical Power (ICCEP), 2015 International Conference on*. IEEE, 2015.
- [8] Spagnuolo, Giovanni, et al. "Control of photovoltaic arrays: Dynamical reconfiguration for fighting mismatched conditions and meeting load requests." *IEEE Industrial Electronics Magazine* 9.1 (2015): 62-76.
- [9] Carotenuto, Pietro Luigi, et al. "Online recording a PV module fingerprint." *IEEE Journal of Photovoltaics* 4.2 (2014): 659-668.
- [10] Orozco-Gutierrez, M. L., et al. "Optimized configuration of mismatched photovoltaic arrays." *IEEE J. Photovolt* 6.5 (2016): 1210-1220.
- [11] El-Dein, MZ Shams, Mehrdad Kazerani, and M. M. A. Salama. "Optimal photovoltaic array reconfiguration to reduce partial shading losses." *IEEE Trans. Sustain. Energy* 4.1 (2013): 145-153.
- [12] Storey, Jonathan P., Peter R. Wilson, and Darren Bagnall. "Improved optimization strategy for irradiance equalization in dynamic photovoltaic arrays." *IEEE transactions on power electronics* 28.6 (2013): 2946-2956.