

# USER MANUAL FOR MOLPOP-CEP

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May 16, 2008

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# Disclaimer

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This code is copyrighted, 1976–2008 by Moshe Elitzur and Andrés Asensio Ramos, and may not be copied without acknowledging its origin. Use of this code is not restricted, provided that acknowledgement is made in each publication. The bibliographic reference to this version of MOLPOP-CEP Elitzur & Asensio Ramos 2006, MNRAS 365, 779. Send bug reports, comments and questions to any of the authors.

# 1 Introduction

MOLPOP-CEP is a code for the exact solution of radiative transfer problems in multi-level atomic systems. The novel contribution of the code is that the radiative transfer equations are analytically integrated so that the final problem is reduced to the solution of a non-linear algebraic system of equations in the level populations. The radiative transfer is solved analytically using the Coupled Escape Probability formalism presented by Elitzur & Asensio Ramos (2006) and summarized in the last chapter of this manual. The current version of the code is limited to plane-parallel slabs that can present arbitrary spatial variations of the physical conditions.

The code is written in standard Fortran 90. It is based on the MOLPOP code written by M. Elitzur that used single-zone escape probabilities for the solution of the radiative transfer problem. The original MOLPOP code, written in Fortran 77, has been ported to Fortran 90. During the translation, the code has been modularized and all common blocks have been moved to external modules that are used only where necessary. All the machinery present in MOLPOP for reading the input file and carry out all the needed calculations (interpolation of the collisional rates, selection of the active levels, etc.) are still present. The fundamental idea when merging together the MOLPOP code and the CEP code was to maintain the large flexibility of the input already present in MOLPOP. When the solution method chosen in the input file is the single-zone escape probability, the original MOLPOP code is executed. When CEP is chosen as the method, the routines belonging to the CEP code are used. Although the resulting code is a mixture of two existing codes, the interface between both is simple and robust.

## 2 Uncompressing and compiling MOLPOP-CEP

The latest version of the code is placed on the Github repository at

<https://github.com/aasensio/molpop-cep>

You can download it in two different ways. The most convenient is using `git`, if installed in your system. Just type:

```
git clone https://github.com/aasensio/molpop-cep
```

and the code will be downloaded on the `molpop-cep` directory in the current directory. An alternative way is by pressing the button “Download ZIP” on the repository webpage and uncompress it. In any case, the MOLPOP-CEP directory will contain the master input file `molpop.inp` (see below) and the following subdirectories:

1. **Source** contains the Fortran 90 sources and a simple makefile.
2. **DataBase** contains molecular data files with energy levels, A-coefficients and collision rates
3. **Samples** contains sample input files in separate directories for the respective molecular species. Each of these directories includes a sub-directory **OutputTest** with the output files these inputs produce. **Manual** contains this manual.

The code has been tested on several Linux platforms using the Intel Fortran Compiler (**ifort**) and the GNU Fortran Compiler (**gfortran**). The source code is in the **Source/** directory. The compilation is performed with the supplied **makefile**. It is quite simple and easy to modify, and contains additional comments about compiling and pre-processing flags. The default compiler is the free **gfortran** and you can use any other compiler through the variable **COMPILER**. To compile the code, type:

```
make clean
make
```

After compiling and linking, the executable is copied to the MOLPOP-CEP directory that contains the master input **molpop.inp**. Running the program should produce output in the subdirectories of **Samples**. You can check your output against those in the corresponding **OutputTest** subdirectory.

**Note:** The MOLPOP-CEP executable can be placed anywhere as long as it is run from a directory that contains **molpop.inp**.

## 3 General input

### 3.1 General considerations

A single MOLPOP-CEP run can process an unlimited number of models, each of which can correspond to a different molecular species. To accomplish this, MOLPOP-CEP's input is always the master input file **molpop.inp**, which lists the names of the actual input files for all models. These filenames must have the form **fname.inp**, where **fname** is arbitrary and can include a full path, so that a single run may produce output models in different directories (as is the case with the distribution). In **molpop.inp**, each input filename must be listed on a separate line, with the implied extension **.inp** omitted. Make sure you press the "Enter" key after every filename you enter, especially if it is in the last line of **molpop.inp**. Empty lines are ignored, as is all text following the "%" sign. This enables you to enter comments and conveniently switch on and off the running of any particular model.

The input files have a free format, text and empty lines can be entered arbitrarily. All lines in these files that start with the "\*" sign are echoed in the output, and can be used to print out notes and comments. This option can also be useful when the program fails for some mysterious reason and you want to compare its output with an exact copy of the input line as it was read in before processing by MOLPOP-CEP. The occurrence of relevant numerical input, which is entered in standard Fortran conventions, is flagged by the equal sign "=". The only restrictions are that all required input entries must be specified, and in the correct order; the most likely source of an input error is failure to comply with these requirements. Recall, also, that Fortran requires a carriage return termination of the file's last line if it contains relevant input. Single entries are always preceded by the equal sign, "=", and terminated by a blank, which can be optionally preceded with a punctuation mark. For example: **T = 10,000 K** as well as **Temperature = 1.E4 degrees** and simply **t = 10000.00** are all equivalent, legal input entries (note that comma separations of long numbers are permitted). Because of the special role of "=" as a flag for input entry, care must be taken not to introduce any "=" except when required. All text following the "%" sign is ignored and this can be used to comment out material that includes "=" signs. For

example, different options for the same physical property may require a different number of input entries. By commenting out with “%”, all options may be retained in the input file with only the relevant one switched on.

## 3.2 Directory structure

The following is the directory structure.

```

molpop/
├── Basecol/
├── DataBase/
│   ├── Coll/
│   └── DataBaseBasecol/
│       ├── Coll/
│       └── Manual/
├── Samples/
│   ├── C+/
│   ├── CO/
│   ├── H2O/
│   ├── OH/
│   ├── SiO/
│   └── Source/

```

We recommend the input files defined in `molpop.inp` to be located in the `Samples` directory, separated in subdirectories for a better organization.

## 4 Input files

The input contains three types of data — physical parameters, numerical accuracy parameters and output control. You can use the supplied input files as templates. In order to show the structure of an input file, we take `Samples/CO/Flower_rates.inp` as example and consider all the input parameters one by one.

### 4.1 Solution Method

MOLPOP-CEP can solve the level population problem either in the standard escape probability approximation or with the exact CEP method. The actual method is chosen as the first input:

```
Method (LVG, LVGPP, slab, CEP-NEWTON, CEP-NAG or CEP-ALI) = CEP-ALI
```

The first three options use the escape probability approximation for large velocity gradients (in spherical and plane-parallel geometries) or a quiescent slab. The other options invoke the full CEP technique with three different solution methods. CEP-NEWTON uses a standard Newton method for directly solving the nonlinear statistical equilibrium equations 1 of the CEP formalism. CEP-NAG is similar, but uses a convex combination of Newton and scaled gradient directions to ensure global convergence. In both cases, the derivatives of the Jacobian are calculated analytically as a consequence of the analytical treatment of

the CEP method. CEP-ALI uses the accelerated  $\Lambda$ -iteration approach, iterating from the calculation of the radiation field at each zone with the aid of eqs. (17) and the solution of the preconditioned linearized statistical equilibrium eqs. (1).

## 4.2 Molecular Database

Enter the path to the directory `DataBase`, containing all the molecular data, from where MOLPOP-CEP is run. For example, if `DataBase` is a subdirectory of the directory containing `molpop.inp` (which is the case for the zipped package) then the input is

```
Data directory = DataBase
```

## 4.3 The Molecule

The list of available molecules can be found in the file `DataBase/mol_list.dat` (see §7). Choose one name from that list and enter the number of energy levels to be included in the run; this number should not exceed the maximum listed in `DataBase/mol_list.dat`:

```
Molecule = CO      Number of energy levels = 11
```

Most listed molecules do not include vib-rot transitions, and the next entry in this case should be

```
vib_max = 0
```

Currently, the database contains one species, SiO, with data for the lowest 19 rotational levels in the first four vibration states. In this case MOLPOP-CEP corrects for the finite number of rotational levels in the ground vibrational level, as described in Lockett & Elitzur (1992). The input is then

```
vib_max = 4      jmax = 19      rot_const = 1.04 K
```

where the third input parameter is the rotational constant in temperature units.

## 4.4 Physical Conditions

When the CEP method is invoked, the code can handle a slab with variable physical conditions. The parameters for each zone of the slab are read from a specified input file. The file contains a header of arbitrary length limited by a line containing just the “>” symbol. Subsequent lines list for each zone the (1) width in cm; (2) overall density in  $\text{cm}^{-3}$ ; (3) temperature in K; (4) molecular abundance; (5) local linewidth in  $\text{km s}^{-1}$ . The last quantity accounts for the local value of  $\Delta\nu_D$  in the Doppler profile  $e^{-[(\nu-\nu_0)/\Delta\nu_D]^2}$ . If the local thermal velocity  $\sqrt{2kT/m}$  exceeds  $c\Delta\nu_D/\nu_0$ , the code will use it instead.

Example: the following input

File listing physical conditions = Samples/CO/Flower\_rates.physical

invokes entry of physical conditions from the file Samples/CO/Flower\_rates.physical listed here:

Sample file with a slab with variable physical conditions

>

Number of zones = 5

Width [cm]	n [cm <sup>-3</sup> ]	T [K]	Abundance	Linewidth [km/s]	n(o-H2)/n	n(p-H2)/n
2.d15	1.d4	100.d0	1.d-4	1.d0	0.75	0.25
2.d15	1.d4	110.d0	1.d-4	1.d0	0.75	0.25
2.d15	1.d4	120.d0	1.d-4	1.d0	0.75	0.25
2.d15	1.d4	110.d0	1.d-4	1.d0	0.75	0.25
2.d15	1.d4	100.d0	1.d-4	1.d0	0.75	0.25

Note that the density  $n$  enters the calculation in two ways: (1) The collision rate ( $s^{-1}$ ) between levels  $i$  and  $j$  is  $C_{ij} = nK_{ij}$ , where  $K_{ij}$  ( $cm^3 s^{-1}$ ) is the rate coefficient for the transition (see §4.7 below). (2) The molecular number density ( $cm^{-3}$ ) is the product of  $n$ , listed in the second column, and the abundance, which is listed in the fourth. The columns from the sixth and above display the relative abundance of the colliders that will be considered in the collisions. The number of columns have to be equal to the number of colliders.

When the code is invoked in the escape probability approximation (solution method is either LVG or slab), the physical conditions are uniform. In that case it is possible to use

File listing physical conditions = none

and enter the physical conditions directly in the input file as follows:

```
Gas Temperature = 100 K
n = 1.0e4 cm-3
Molecular abundance (n_mol/n) = 1.0e-4
Velocity = 1 km/sec (linewidth for slab)
```

In the case of LVG calculations, the last entry becomes the expansion velocity instead of the local linewidth and one must specify an additional entry, the logarithmic velocity gradient:

```
dlogV/dlogr = 1.0 (in effect only for LVG)
```

You can use this input method for physical conditions also in the case of CEP calculations if the physical conditions in the slab are uniform.

**Note:** If the physical conditions are entered from a file, make sure your input *DOES NOT* contain the last four (or five) entries. You can leave them in the input file and just comment them out with the symbol %.



## 4.5 Line Overlap

Photons generated in a certain transition can be sometimes absorbed in another if the linewidths exceed the frequency separation between the lines. This process is known as line overlap or line fluorescence, and plays an important role in OH transitions and the Bowen fluorescence phenomenon. Currently, MOLPOP-CEP can handle this effect only when invoked in the escape probability mode (**LVG** or **slab**). The method of calculation is described in Lockett & Elitzur (1989). To invoke this calculation use

```
overlap = on
```

For example, the input file **Samples/OH/Ofier\_rates.inp** carries out a calculation taking into account the effect of line overlap. Otherwise, enter **overlap = off**.

## 4.6 Maser Lines

When the optical depth of a line becomes negative, the intensity at this transition is amplified by the medium in a maser effect. The following input determines whether the effect of the maser radiation on the level populations (the “saturation effect”) is taken into account:

```
Include maser saturation (yes/no) = no
```

Selecting **yes** invokes an escape probability calculation for the saturation effect (see §5.3 in Elitzur, 1992). This calculation can be selected only if the solution method is **LVG** or **slab**. All CEP calculations must have **no** for the saturation entry. Calculations with the **no** option produce the maser pump and loss rates that can be used to estimate maser emission from the standard phenomenological maser model (see §6 below).

## 4.7 Collision Rates

As noted above (4.4), the collision rate between any two levels is  $nK_{ij}$ , where  $K_{ij}$  ( $\text{cm}^3 \text{s}^{-1}$ ) is the rate coefficient for the transition and  $n$  is the overall density. MOLPOP-CEP can handle an arbitrary number of collisional partners. The contribution of each one to the overall collision rate is  $f n K_{ij}$ , where  $f$  is the fractional contribution of the particular collider, i.e.,  $f n$  is the collider density (in  $\text{cm}^{-3}$ ). These fractional abundances are entered as weight factors with arbitrary scale, and MOLPOP-CEP takes care that the normalizations add up to 1. It is also possible to scale each collisional rate independently by a factor so that it is possible to experiment what happens when one of the collisional partners is neglected or its collisional efficiency is increased by an arbitrary factor. There are a number of options for entering the individual rate coefficients  $K_{ij}$  themselves.

### 4.7.1 Tabulated Cross Sections

The most common entry of collision rates is from tabulations in files; this option is selected with the keyword **TABLE**. The next entry specifies the name of the data file listing the collisional rate between each pair of levels at a set of different temperatures; a file with this name must exist in subdirectory **Coll** of the database directory specified in the second

input entry (see §7 below). MOLPOP-CEP interpolates between these temperatures if the input value falls between two tabulated ones. If the prescribed temperature is outside the tabulated range, MOLPOP-CEP will extrapolate according to the selection made with the next keyword. When `CONST` is selected, MOLPOP-CEP will use the same value as the largest or smallest tabulated temperature, as appropriate. Selecting `SQRT(T)` invokes an extrapolation proportional to  $\sqrt{T}$  from the appropriate border. Example:

```

Number of collision partners = 2
  weight / columns for CEP = 1
    collision rates option = table
      data file = CO_H2o.kij
extrapolation (SQRT(T) or CONST) = sqrt(T)
  scaling factor = 1.0
  weight / columns for CEP = 1
    collision rates option = table
      data file = CO_H2p.kij
extrapolation (SQRT(T) or CONST) = sqrt(T)
  scaling factor = 1.0

```

This input will produce collisions with an equal mix of ortho- and para-H<sub>2</sub>, with collision rates from Flower (2001). The option `weight / columns for CEP` indicates the weighting applied to each individual collider. In case of CEP, you can select the column of the collider from the file.

#### 4.7.2 Hard-Sphere Collisions

This collision law, invoked with the keyword `HARD_SPHERE` is available for all molecules. In this analytic approximation, all downward collision rate per sub-level are equal to the the same value  $\sigma v_T$ , where  $\sigma$  is a common input cross section and  $v_T$  is the local thermal speed. The sample input file `OH/Hard_Sphere.inp` is an example:

```

Number of collision partners = 1
  weight = 1
  collision rates option = hard_sphere
    x-section = 1.e-15 cm^2
  scaling factor = 1.0

```

#### 4.7.3 SiO Rotation-Vibrations

This collision law, invoked with the keyword `SiO_ROVIB` is available only for SiO. It involves SiO excitations in collisions with H<sub>2</sub>, using the approximate theory of Bieniek & Green (1983). This option is utilized in the sample input file `SiO/SiO.inp`:

```

Number of collision partners = 1
  weight = 1
  collision rates option = SiO_ROVIB
  scaling factor = 1.0

```

## 4.8 External Radiation

The cosmic microwave background (CMB) blackbody radiation at a temperature of  $T_{\text{CMB}} = 2.725$  K is always included. In addition, a number of other radiation fields can be added and in each case the radiation can illuminate either side of the source or both. Furthermore, the molecules can be immersed in a radiation bath with the specified spectral shape. This is specified with the keywords `left`, `right`, `both` and `internal`. Note that distances into the slab are measured from its left side.

### 4.8.1 Diluted Blackbody

An arbitrary number of external diluted blackbody terms,  $WB_\nu(T)$ , can be specified. Each term is parameterized by its temperature `T_bb` and dilution factor `W`. When several radiation fields are used, remember to always end the list with the `W = 0`:

```
W = 0.1
T_bb = 2500 K
Illumination from (left/right/both/internal) = left
W = 0.
```

### 4.8.2 Single-Temperature Dust

The radiation field of dust with the uniform temperature  $T$  is  $B_\nu(T)(1 - e^{-\tau_\nu})$ , where  $\tau_\nu$  is the dust overall optical depth at frequency  $\nu$ . You specify such a radiation field by its temperature  $T$  and dust optical depth at visual. From the latter, MOLPOP-CEP determines the optical depth at every wavelength from a tabulation in the file `dust.dat`, which must be kept in the parent directory, together with `molpop.inp`. The dust properties correspond to standard ISM dust. You can use a different dust by substituting the provided tabulation with one of your own.

MOLPOP-CEP can handle an arbitrary number of such radiation fields. The list is terminated by an entry with zero optical depth:

```
Dust tau at visual = 3.
Dust temperature = 100 K
Illumination from (left/right/both/internal) = internal
Dust tau at visual = 0.
```

### 4.8.3 Radiation Field from a File

Any spectral shape for the radiation field can be entered as a tabulation in a file, whose name is specified as input. The tabulation should list the normalized spectral shape  $\lambda F_\lambda / F_{\text{bol}}$  ( $= \nu F_\nu / F_{\text{bol}}$ ), where  $F_{\text{bol}} = \int F_\lambda d\lambda$  is the bolometric flux, as a function of wavelength  $\lambda$  in  $\mu\text{m}$ . The flux level at the molecular source is specified through the overall luminosity of the radiation source and the distance to it:

```
Radiation from file = spectral.dat
```

```

Luminosity = 1.E4 Lo
Distance from source = 1.E15 cm
Illumination from (left/right/both) = left

```

To signal the end of spectral input files or that there is no input from a file altogether enter

```

Radiation from file = none

```

## 4.9 Solution Controls

Whichever solution method is invoked, MOLPOP-CEP solves the non-linear level population equations with an iteration method—either Newton or accelerated  $\Lambda$ -iterations. The solution accuracy and an upper bound on the number of allowed iterations are controlled as follows:

```

Accuracy in solution of the equations = 1.0e-3
Maximum number of iterations to solve = 50

```

You may try to solve the level populations for a desired input straightforward without any attempt to improve the convergence. In that case, enter

```

Solution strategy = fixed

```

However, this may cause numerical difficulties. To aid convergence, MOLPOP-CEP offers a step-by-step strategy. Starting from a situation in which the solution is known, the code changes the column density in small increments using the solution from the previous step as the initial guess for the next one. The exact solution is readily obtained in two limiting cases. When all optical depths are zero (the optically thin limit) the statistical rate equations for the level populations are linear and can be easily inverted. The solutions serve as the starting point for an **increasing** strategy, in which the column density increases up to a desired value. When all optical depths are very large, all the level populations thermalize, following the Boltzmann distribution at the local temperature. Thermal populations serve as the starting point for the **decreasing** strategy, in which the column density decreases until the desired value is reached. In each case you have to specify an initial target that serves as the smallest/largest value for all optical depths of the initial solution. The next three entries control the sizes of the steps. The initial step size, entered as the number of steps per decade, controls also the intervals for output printing. If at any point the step size is too large, MOLPOP-CEP will keep decreasing it until it either achieves a successful solution<sup>1</sup> or bumps against either of the two limits set in the input: a lower limit on the step size, entered through the maximum number of steps allowed per decade, and an upper limit on the total number of steps allowed throughout the entire run. The variation of column density is terminated when either physical dimension or the overall column density reaches a prescribed upper/lower limit. Here's an example of the **increasing** strategy:

```

Solution strategy = increasing
start with all optical depths less than tau_m      = 1

```

---

<sup>1</sup>If a successful solution is achieved with a smaller step size than originally prescribed, MOLPOP-CEP will attempt to gradually increase the step size once it has passed the rough spot that caused problems. The number of steps per decade will never be smaller than the initial one.

Initial number of steps per decade	= 4
Maximum number of dimension steps allowed per decade	= 20
Total number of steps allowed to reach any limit	= 100
stop when dimension exceeds R_m	= 1.0E20 cm
or total column exceeds N_col	= 1.E26 cm <sup>-2</sup>

In a decreasing input, tau\_m would be a large optical depth providing a lower limit for all transitions in the initial solution while R\_m and N\_col, the stopping criteria for the convergence process, would have values smaller than the desired target.

When solving the radiative transfer problem using the CEP method, it is possible to let the code use a grid refinement technique to approach the exact solution of the problem. This grid refinement systematically increases the number of zones in which each original zone is subdivided until the maximum relative change in the level populations between one grid and the next finer grid falls below a given threshold. The code also allows the user not to apply the grid refinement technique and solve the radiative transfer problem in the given grid. This strategy is chosen by using a zero:

Precision in CEP grid convergence (0 to ignore convergence) = 1.d-1

## 5 Which files call each other

- molpop.inp defines the input file for the calculation, usually found in the directory Samples.
- The keyword Data directory defines the root directory where the molecular data is stored.
- The keyword Molecule inside each configuration file defines the file that contains the molecular information, which is found in the directory defined by the previous keyword.
- The keyword File listing physical conditions defines the physical properties of the slab when a CEP calculation with variable physical conditions is carried out.
- The keyword data file in the definition of the collision partners refers to the specific table with collisional data in the Coll directory inside the directory defined by the Data directory keyword.
- The keyword Radiation from file defines the spectral shape of the boundary condition.

## 6 Output

MOLPOP-CEP offers a printout of parts, or all, of the molecular data. This allows you to check that the data were entered properly. Printing is controlled with on and off switches:

Print energy level data	= off
statistical weights g_i	= on

```

energy in cm-1          = on
energy in GHz           = on
energy in K             = on
quantum numbers        = on
Print transition data   = on
wavelength in micron   = on
energy in GHz           = on
energy in K             = off
Einstein coefficients Aij = on
collision rates Cij      = on
Stop after printing molecular data = off

```

In this example, the energy level data will *not* be printed, even though individual switches are on, because the master switch for these data is off. The last switch even allows you to just produce a data tabulation without running MOLPOP-CEP at all. Also, when the physical conditions vary in the slab, a printout of the collision rates, if requested, will cover only the first zone.

Next you control the amount of output the program produces during the run. The different printing options are controlled with `on` and `off` switches; in the following example, all options are turned off by the master switch:

```

Progress print control      = off
Messages from NEWTON        = on
Messages from step-size selector = on
Messages from CEP progress  = on
Printing output for initial guess = on

```

Note that whenever the CEP method is selected, MOLPOP-CEP will report its progress on the screen irrespective of the output switches; that is, the above listed switch only controls the printed output.

The default output, always produced by MOLPOP-CEP, contains a summary as follows:

R	Tot column	mol column	emission
cm	cm <sup>-2</sup>	cm <sup>-2</sup>	erg/s/mol
1.000E+16	1.000E+20	1.000E+16	8.557E-21
1.778E+16	1.778E+20	1.778E+16	8.288E-21
3.162E+16	3.162E+20	3.162E+16	7.928E-21

The last column is the overall cooling rate from all the transitions included in the calculation. Additional output can be produced by turning on appropriate switches. For every printing step, you can output: (1) Detailed level populations for all the transitions. (2) Information on all inverted lines, if any exist. This output will include the optical depth, excitation temperature and inversion efficiency. (3) Information on the prescribed number of top thermal emitting lines (note, there are no more than  $\frac{1}{2}N \times N$  transitions among  $N$  levels!):

```

Information on each step      = on
print detailed populations    = off
information on all inverted lines = on
Number of cooling lines to print (0 to bypass) = 15

```

Finally, you can select some specific transitions for special output that will be listed at the end of the run in summary form. Enter a number different from 0 (up to 10) for the number of transitions and then enter a pair of level identifier numbers for each transition. The following example selects a summary output for the  $J = 1 \rightarrow 0$  and  $J = 7 \rightarrow 6$  rotational transitions of CO:

```
the number of transitions = 2
  i =  2      j =  1
  i =  8      j =  7
```

For each transition, the output lists the excitation temperature, optical depth and the line emission (erg/s/mol). If the transition is inverted, the last quantity is listed as zero. Instead, the output lists quantities relevant for the standard, phenomenological maser model (see Elitzur, 1992): The inversion efficiency, pump rate for each level, loss rate for each level and their average. Note that all optical depths in the outputs are at line center, so that if you want the total optical depth, you have to multiply it by  $\sqrt{\pi}$ .

The input file `fname.inp` produces the output file `fname.out` in the same directory. This is the only output file produced in the single-zone escape probability case. When the CEP option is used, additional files are generated as output, with the intermediate extension CEP added to the name of the input file. For instance, for the `Samples/CO/Flower_rates.inp` input file, the following output files are generated:

- `Samples/CO/Flower_rates.out` — main output file
- `Samples/CO/Flower_rates.CEP.trad` — equivalent radiation temperature for each transition and zone
- `Samples/CO/Flower_rates.CEP.pop` — population of each level for each zone
- `Samples/CO/Flower_rates.CEP.slabs` — final slab partitioning in the converged solution
- `Samples/CO/Flower_rates.CEP.flux` — line profiles of emergent flux in each selected transition

## 7 Molecular Data and the BASECOL Database

As explained above, molecular data can be placed anywhere provided the root directory where the file is located is indicated in each input file. The directory `DataBase` contains a set of files with data for a few molecules.

### 7.1 Energy levels and radiative transitions

The energy levels and radiative transitions of a model molecule are specified in the corresponding file `mol_name.molecule`. For example, here we shown an extract of `CO.molecule`:

Rotational energy levels for the ground state of CO  
Reference: CDMS

N. levels and molecular mass

```
>
41 28.d0
```

	N	g	Energy in cm <sup>-1</sup>	Level details
>				
	1	1	0.0000	'J = 0'
	2	3	3.8450	'J = 1'
	3	5	11.5350	'J = 2'
	4	7	23.0695	'J = 3'
	5	9	38.4481	'J = 4'
	6	11	57.6704	'J = 5'
...				
	39	77	2835.7627	'J = 38'
	40	79	2984.2707	'J = 39'
	41	81	3136.5095	'J = 40'

Einstein coefficients A<sub>ij</sub> for CO  
Reference: CDMS

i	j	A <sub>ij</sub> in s <sup>-1</sup>
>		
2	1	7.203e-08
3	2	6.910e-07
4	3	2.497e-06
5	4	6.126e-06
6	5	1.221e-05
7	6	2.137e-05
8	7	3.422e-05
...		
39	38	4.120e-03
40	39	4.365e-03
41	40	4.613e-03

The listing must be ascending in energy. The statistical weight  $g$  is entered as integer, energy is in cm<sup>-1</sup>. Each level is internally identified in MOLPOP-CEP by the running number listed in the first column. The level details are all read by MOLPOP-CEP as a single string and used only for information in the output. All the lines before the line containing only the symbol ">" are treated as header. The same applies to the rest of files defining the energy levels, radiative and collisional transitions. After the energy levels, we find a header for the radiative transitions and the list of Einstein coefficients for spontaneous emission ( $A_{ij}$ ).



## 7.2 Collisional Rates

As already mentioned (see §4.7), there are several options for specifying collision rates. The most common is to supply tabulations in a file. The files with the collisional rates are typically placed inside the directory `Coll/`. You can use a Python program to generate the file `list_collisions.dat` with all the collisional files in the directory:

```
python listCollisions.py
```

As an example, here are the first few lines from `OH_H2o.kij`:

```
Collision rate coefficients for OH-H2_ortho collisions.  
Reference: Offer et al., 1994, J. Chem.Phys., 100, 362
```

```
>
```

```
Number of temperature columns = 5
```

I	J	TEMPERATURE (K)				
		15.0	50.0	100.0	150.0	200.0
2	1	0.40E-10	0.39E-10	0.34E-10	0.31E-10	0.28E-10
3	1	0.17E-09	0.24E-09	0.26E-09	0.25E-09	0.24E-09
3	2	0.58E-10	0.71E-10	0.72E-10	0.69E-10	0.65E-10
4	1	0.35E-10	0.43E-10	0.43E-10	0.41E-10	0.39E-10

The rate coefficients are entered in  $\text{cm}^3\text{s}^{-1}$ . Only downward (de-excitation) rates need be specified. The program accounts for excitation rates via the Boltzmann detailed-balance relation. Elastic collisions are ignored.

## 7.3 The LAMBDA Database

We provide a Python script to download data from the Leiden Atomic and Molecular Database (LAMDA)<sup>2</sup> and transform it to the MOLPOP-CEP format. This way, adding new molecules to perform calculations with our code turns out to be straightforward. The LAMDA database contains information for 3 atomic and 29 molecular species. The script is placed on the `DataBase` directory and can be invoked as:

```
python lamda.py
```

It will list the molecules currently available in the database and ask for which ones to download.

## 7.4 The Basecol Database

The Basecol bibliographic and numerical database was established at Meudon Observatory to address the community needs for data on molecular excitations. Accessible at

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<sup>2</sup>Accessible at <http://home.strw.leidenuniv.nl/~moldata/>.

<http://basecol.obspm.fr/>, Basecol stores extensive information on molecular frequencies, transition rates and collisional excitations. The Basecol team has a web tool that remotely accesses their database and creates atomic and molecular data files in the MOLPOP-CEP input format on the user's local computer. Since the automatic access to the database is not simple, we distributed the code with the database downloaded in 2009.

# A APPENDIX

## A.1 Formulation of the problem

The standard multilevel radiative transfer problem in a given domain requires the joint solution of the radiative transfer (RT) equation (which describes the radiation field) and the kinetic equations (KE) for the atomic or molecular level populations (which describe the excitation state). In the most general case, the numerical solution of this non-local and non-linear problem requires to discretize the model atmosphere in  $NP$  zones where the physical properties are assumed to be known. The standard multilevel RT problem consists in obtaining the populations,  $n_j$ , of each of the  $j = 1, 2, \dots, NL$  levels included in the atomic or molecular model that are consistent with the radiation field created inside the complete domain. This radiation field contains contributions from possible background sources and from the radiative transitions in the given atomic/molecular model.

Making the usual assumption of statistical equilibrium, the rate equation for each level  $i$  at each spatial point reduces to (e.g., Socas-Navarro & Trujillo Bueno, 1997):

$$\sum_{j<i} \Gamma_{ji} - \sum_{j>i} \Gamma_{ij} + \sum_{j \neq i} n_j C_{ji} - n_i \sum_{j \neq i} C_{ij} = 0, \quad (1)$$

where  $C_{ij}$  is the so-called collisional rate that quantifies the number of transitions per unit volume and unit time between levels  $i$  and  $j$ . The symbol  $\Gamma_{lu}$  stands for the net radiative rate, which quantifies the net number of radiative transitions between a bound lower level  $l$  to an upper level  $u$ . Its expression in terms of the populations of the upper and lower levels is:

$$\Gamma_{lu} = n_l R_{lu} - n_u R_{ul}, \quad (2)$$

where  $R_{ij}$  are the radiative rates.

The collisional rates are assumed to be known and given by the local physical conditions of the atmosphere. On the other hand, the net radiative rates  $\Gamma_{lu}$  depend on the radiation field that is present in the domain. For bound-bound transitions, the following expression holds:

$$\Gamma_{lu} = (n_l B_{lu} - n_u B_{ul}) \bar{J}_{lu} - n_u A_{ul}, \quad (3)$$

where  $A_{ul}$ ,  $B_{ul}$  and  $B_{lu}$  are the spontaneous emission, stimulated emission and absorption Einstein coefficients, respectively. The radiation field is parameterized in terms of the mean intensity  $\bar{J}_{lu}$ , which is the frequency averaged mean intensity weighted by the line absorption profile:

$$\bar{J}_{lu} = \frac{1}{4\pi} \int d\Omega \int d\nu \phi_{lu}(\nu, \Omega) I_{\nu\Omega}, \quad (4)$$

where  $\phi_{lu}(\nu, \Omega)$  and  $I_{\nu\Omega}$  are, respectively, the normalized line profile and the specific intensity at frequency  $\nu$  and direction  $\Omega$ . The specific intensity is governed by the radiative transfer equation, which can be formally solved if we know the variation of the opacity ( $\chi_\nu$ ) and of the source function ( $\epsilon_\nu/\chi_\nu$ , being  $\epsilon_\nu$  the emission coefficient) in the medium. Once the stellar atmosphere is discretized, the specific intensity can be written formally as

$$\mathbf{I}_{\nu\Omega} = \mathbf{\Lambda}_{\nu\Omega} [\mathbf{S}_\nu] + \mathbf{T}_{\nu\Omega}, \quad (5)$$

where  $\mathbf{T}_{\nu\Omega}$  is a vector that accounts for the contribution of the boundary conditions to the intensity at each spatial point of the discretized medium,  $\mathbf{S}_\nu$  is the source function vector

and  $\Lambda_{\nu\Omega}$  is an operator whose element  $\Lambda_{\nu\Omega}(i, j)$  gives the response of the radiation field at point “ $i$ ” due to a unit-pulse perturbation in the source function at point “ $j$ ”.

Since the radiative transfer equation couples different parts of the atmosphere and the absorption and emission properties at all the spatial points depend on the level populations, the RT problem is both *non-local* and *non-linear*. Therefore, the system of Eqs. (1) represents a highly non-linear problem. This non-linearity makes it necessary to apply suitable iterative methods. Among them, the simplest one is the  $\Lambda$ -iteration (e.g., Mihalas, 1978), in which, starting from an initial estimation of the populations, the mean intensity at each transition is obtained through Eq. (4) and plugged into Eqs. (1). The resulting linear system is solved and the iteration is repeated. This scheme works correctly when the optical depth of all transitions is less than unity but the convergence time increases dramatically if any transition is optically thick. The reason is that the iterative scheme transfers information in the domain in steps of the order of  $\tau \approx 1$ . In optically thick cases, it takes many iterations to transfer information from one part of the domain to the others. The accelerated  $\Lambda$ -iteration (Rybicki & Hummer, 1991, 1992) overcomes many of the convergence problems of the simple  $\Lambda$ -iteration by rewriting the net radiative rates of Eq. (3) using a suitable combination of population from the previous and the new iterative step, thus leading to an important improvement in the convergence properties. A modification of this method by Trujillo Bueno & Fabiani Bendicho (1995) leads to the Gauss-Seidel and Successive Overrelaxation methods that produce an improvement in the convergence rate of up to an order of magnitude. Finally, methods based on multigrid iterations Steiner (1991); Fabiani Bendicho et al. (1997) have also been applied to the radiative transfer problem with success.

### A.1.1 Coupled Escape Probability

Our code solves the radiative transfer problem under the approximation of a plane-parallel slab whose physical properties vary only perpendicular to the surface. The optical depth along a ray slanted at  $\theta = \cos^{-1} \mu$  from normal is  $\tau_{\nu}(\mu) = \tau\Phi(x)/\mu$ , and the intensity along the ray obeys the radiative transfer equation:

$$\mu \frac{dI_{\nu}(\tau, \mu)}{d\tau} = \Phi(x)[S(\tau) - I_{\nu}(\tau, \mu)]. \quad (6)$$

It is useful to introduce a quantity called the net radiative bracket (Athay & Skumanich, 1971), defined by:

$$p(\tau) = 1 - \frac{\bar{J}(\tau)}{S(\tau)}, \quad (7)$$

which plays the role of a escape probability so that the mean intensity at one point is just  $(1 - p)$  times the local source function. In the standard one-zone case, this is equivalent to the well-known escape probability. If the slab is divided into many zones, this factor takes into account correctly the no-local character of the radiative transfer. From the formal solution of the radiative transfer equation,

$$p(\tau) = 1 - \frac{1}{2S(\tau)} \int_0^{\tau} S(t) dt \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \Phi^2 dx \int_0^1 e^{-|\tau-t|\Phi/\mu} \frac{d\mu}{\mu} \quad (8)$$

when there is no external radiation entering the slab.

Instead of the usual iterative scheme that consider separately the radiative transfer equation and the statistical equilibrium equations, it is possible to substitute Eq. (8) into the

net radiative rate, resulting in:

$$\Gamma_{lu} = -n_u A_{ul} p(\tau), \quad (9)$$

which demonstrates that the only radiative quantity actually needed for the calculation of level populations at every position is the net radiative bracket  $p(\tau)$ . Once this factor is known at each zone of the domain, we could compute the level populations that are consistent with the radiation they produce without solving for the intensity. It is evident from Eq. 8 that the factor  $p(\tau)$  itself can be computed from the level populations, again without solving for the intensity. Therefore, inserting  $p(\tau)$  from equation 8 into the radiative rate terms produces *level population equations that properly account for all the effects of radiative transfer without actually calculating the intensity itself*.

## B Numerical implementation

A numerical solution of the resulting level population equations requires a spatial grid, partitioning the source into zones such that all properties can be considered uniform within each zone. The degree of actual deviations from uniformity, and the accuracy of the solution, can be controlled by decreasing each zone size through finer divisions with an increasing number of zones. Assume that the slab is partitioned into  $z$  zones. The  $i$ -th zone,  $i = 1 \dots z$ , occupies the range  $\tau_{i-1} < \tau \leq \tau_i$ , with  $\tau_0 = 0$  and  $\tau_z = \tau_t$ , with  $\tau_t$  the total optical depth. The optical depth between any pair of zone boundaries is

$$\tau^{i,j} = |\tau_i - \tau_j| \quad (10)$$

so that the optical thickness of the  $i$ -th zone is  $\tau^{i,i-1}$ . One has to remind that the optical thickness of the  $i$ -th zone in a given bound-bound transition under the assumption of complete redistribution is given by the following linear combination of the populations of the upper and lower levels:

$$\tau_i(\nu) = \frac{h\nu}{4\pi} (n_l B_{lu} - n_u B_{ul}) \Phi \left( \frac{\nu - \nu_0}{\Delta\nu_D^i} \right) \quad (11)$$

Since the temperature and the density of colliders ( $\text{H}_2$ ,  $\text{H}$  or  $\text{e}^-$ ) is assumed to be constant within each zone, the collisional rates  $C_{ij}$  are constant in the zone. Correspondingly, the net radiative rate is just given by

$$\Gamma_{lu}^i = -n_u^i A_{ul} p^i, \quad (12)$$

where the population of the upper level in each zone is also constant and the superscript  $i$  is used as a zone label. Since the factor  $p(\tau)$  varies in the zone, it has to be replaced by a constant  $p^i$  that should adequately represent its value there, for example  $p^i = \frac{1}{2} [p(\tau_i) + p(\tau_{i-1})]$  or  $p^i = p\left(\frac{1}{2}[\tau_i + \tau_{i-1}]\right)$ . There are no set rules for this replacement other than it must obey  $p^i \rightarrow p(\tau_i)$  when  $\tau^{i,i-1} \rightarrow 0$ . We choose for  $p^i$  the zone average

$$p^i = \frac{1}{\tau^{i,i-1}} \int_{\tau_{i-1}}^{\tau_i} p(\tau) d\tau, \quad (13)$$

which turns out to be one of the key ingredients of the success of the coupled escape probability. The reason is that the value of  $p^i$  used in each zone is obtained as an average value inside the zone of the *true* variation of  $p(\tau)$ . The other possibilities assume a simple behavior (linear) of the  $p(\tau)$  function inside the zone.

## B.1 Internal radiation

From Eq. (8), calculation of  $p^i$  requires an integration over the entire slab, which can be broken into a sum of integrals over the zones. In each term of the sum, the zone source function can be pulled out of the  $\tau$ -integration so that

$$p^i = 1 - \frac{1}{2\tau^{i,i-1}S^i} \sum_{j=1}^z S^j \times \int_{\tau_{i-1}}^{\tau_i} d\tau \int_{\tau_{j-1}}^{\tau_j} dt \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \Phi^2 dx \int_0^1 e^{-|\tau-t|\Phi/\mu} \frac{d\mu}{\mu} \quad (14)$$

The remaining integrals can be expressed in terms of common functions. Consider for example

$$\beta^i = 1 - \frac{1}{2\tau^{i,i-1}} \times \int_{\tau_{i-1}}^{\tau_i} d\tau \int_{\tau_{i-1}}^{\tau_i} dt \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \Phi^2 dx \int_0^1 e^{-|\tau-t|\Phi/\mu} \frac{d\mu}{\mu}, \quad (15)$$

the contribution of zone  $i$  itself to  $p^i$ . It is straightforward to show that  $\beta^i = \beta(\tau^{i,i-1})$ , where

$$\beta(\tau) = \frac{1}{\tau} \int_0^\tau dt \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \Phi(x) dx \int_0^1 d\mu e^{-t\Phi(x)/\mu} \quad (16)$$

This function was first introduced by Capriotti (1965). It represents the probability for photon escape from a slab of thickness  $\tau$ , averaged over the photon direction, frequency and position in the slab. The contribution of zone  $j \neq i$  to the remaining sum can be handled similarly, and the final expression for the coefficient  $p^i$  turns out to be very simple:

$$p^i = \beta^i + \frac{1}{\tau^{i,i-1}} \sum_{\substack{j=1 \\ j \neq i}}^z \frac{S^j}{S^i} M^{ij} \quad (17)$$

where

$$M^{ij} = -\frac{1}{2}(\alpha^{i,j} - \alpha^{i-1,j} - \alpha^{i,j-1} + \alpha^{i-1,j-1}) \quad (18)$$

and where  $\alpha^{i,j} = \tau^{i,j} \beta(\tau^{i,j})$ . The quantity  $\alpha^{i,j}$  obeys  $\alpha^{i,j} = \alpha^{j,i}$  and  $\alpha^{i,i} = 0$ , therefore  $M^{ij} = M^{ji}$  and  $M^{ii} = \alpha^{i,i-1}$ . The first term in the expression for  $p^i$  is the average probability for photon escape from zone  $i$ , reproducing one of the common variants of the escape probability method in which the whole slab is treated as a single zone (e.g., Krolik & McKee, 1978). The subsequent sum describes the effect on the level populations in zone  $i$  of radiation produced in all other zones. Each term in the sum has a simple interpretation in terms of the probability that photons generated elsewhere in the slab traverse every other zone and get absorbed in zone  $i$ , where their effect on the level populations is similar to that of radiation external to the slab.

Inserting the final expression for  $p^i$  from Eq. (17) into the rate terms of Eq. (9) in every zone produces a set of non-linear algebraic equations for the unknown level populations  $n_k^i$ . The solution of these equations yields the full solution of the line transfer problem by considering only level populations. The computed populations are self-consistent with their internally generated radiation even though the radiative transfer equation is not handled at all.

## B.2 Numerical evaluation of the auxiliary functions

Although the couple escape probability overcomes the solution of the radiative transfer equation, it is necessary to evaluate the  $\tau$ -dependent auxiliary function  $\beta(\tau)$ . In order to speed up the evaluation of these functions, we tabulated it for 1000 points in  $\tau$  and a spline interpolation routine is used to calculate its values at any other value of  $\tau$  not in the database. We have verified that this approach gives computational times comparable to those given by using the approximate formula of Krolik & McKee (1978) but the reached precision is much larger.

## B.3 External radiation

The only effect of external radiation on the rate equations is to modify the net radiative rate of the  $i$ -th zone as a consequence of the modification of the radiation field. If  $\bar{J}_{\text{int}}^i$  is the mean intensity in the  $i$ -th zone produced by the slab itself, the total radiation field is given by:

$$\bar{J}^i = \bar{J}_{\text{int}}^i + \bar{J}_{\text{ext}}^i \quad (19)$$

where  $\bar{J}_{\text{ext}}^i$  is the zone average of the contribution of the external radiation. When the external radiation corresponds to the emission from dust which permeates the source,  $\bar{J}_{\text{ext}}^i$  is simply the angle-averaged intensity of the local dust emission in the  $i$ -th zone. When the external radiation originates from outside the slab and has an isotropic distribution with intensity  $I_e$  ( $= J_e$ ) in contact with the  $\tau = 0$  face, then

$$\bar{J}_{\text{ext}}^i = \frac{1}{2} J_e \frac{1}{\tau^{i,i-1}} \left( \alpha^{i,0} - \alpha^{i-1,0} \right). \quad (20)$$

If the radiation is in contact with the  $\tau = \tau_t$ , the expression turns out to be:

$$\bar{J}_{\text{ext}}^i = \frac{1}{2} J_e \frac{1}{\tau^{i,i-1}} \left( \alpha^{i,z} - \alpha^{i-1,z} \right). \quad (21)$$

## B.4 Solution of the final equations

The solution method just described is exact in the sense that the discretized equations are mathematically identical to the original ones when  $\tau^{i,i-1} \rightarrow 0$  for every  $i$ . As is usually the case, the only approximation in actual numerical calculations is the finite size of the discretization, i.e., the finite number of zones. As a consequence, if one is interested in solving the problem up to a given precision in the level populations, one should start with an initial number of zones and stop when the relative change between one grid and a refined one in which a suitable regridding strategy is applied is below a predefined tolerance. MOLPOP-CEP allows the user to select whether to converge the solution using grid refinement or just converge the problem in a predefined grid.

The actual numerical solution of the set of Eqs. (1) can be carried out using two different techniques. The most straightforward is to use a Newton method to solve the non-linear equations. The interesting key point is that the Jacobian matrix can be calculated analytically because the dependence of the radiation field on the population is known analytically. The second possibility is to apply the  $\Lambda$ -iteration method. The diagonal of the  $\Lambda$  operator, that gives the response of the radiation field at zone  $j$  to a unitary perturbation of the source function at point  $i$ , can be easily calculated under the previous formalism. This

second method of solution can be competitive when the numerical inversion of the Jacobian turns out to be too time consuming.

In order to improve the convergence properties of the code, the following strategy is applied the solution of the statistical equilibrium equations. This is of special interest for the case in which the physical conditions are constant. Two possible possibilities exist: start from a molecular column density in which all the lines are optically thin ( $\tau < 1$ ) or start from a molecular column density in which all the lines are optically thick ( $\tau \gg 1$ ). In the first case, the level populations should be close to the optically thin solution and this can be chosen as the initial condition. In the second case, the level populations should be close to local thermodynamical equilibrium (LTE) and the Boltzmann distribution can be assumed as an initial condition. Then, the molecular column density is either reduced or increased in steps until some suitable limits in the column density are reached. This strategy allows the code to increase the convergence behavior and, as a subproduct, the solution is obtained for many intermediate problems.

If the final solution is far from any of the limiting cases (optically thin or LTE populations), the Newton method can suffer from convergence problems. Another remedy for this difficulty that we plan to investigate in the future is to carry out several accelerated  $\Lambda$ -iterations starting from one of the limiting cases (hopefully the closer to the final solution) and then apply the Newton method for the solution refinement. Although the accelerated  $\Lambda$ -iteration can also suffer from convergence problems if started far from the solution, they are less important than for the Newton scheme.

## C Cooling and emergent radiation

Once the populations are found, radiative quantities can be calculated in a straightforward manner from summations over the zones. The emerging intensity at direction  $\mu$  is

$$I_\nu(\tau_t, \mu) = \sum_{i=1}^z \left( e^{-\tau^{z,i}\Phi/\mu} - e^{-\tau^{z,i-1}\Phi/\mu} \right) S^i. \quad (22)$$

The flux density emerging from each face of the slab obeys

$$\begin{aligned} F_\nu(\tau_t) &= 2\pi \sum_{i=1}^z \left[ E_3(\tau^{z,i}\Phi^i) - E_3(\tau^{z,i-1}\Phi^i) \right] S^i \\ -F_\nu(0) &= 2\pi \sum_{i=1}^z \left[ E_3(\tau^{i-1,0}\Phi^i) - E_3(\tau^{i,0}\Phi^i) \right] S^i \end{aligned} \quad (23)$$

where  $E_3$  is the third exponential integral (e.g., Abramowitz & Stegun, 1972). The line profile is given by:

$$\Phi^i = \Phi \left( \frac{\nu - \nu_0}{\Delta\nu_D^i} \right) \quad (24)$$

The slab luminosity, given by the expression:

$$\Lambda = 4\pi \int_0^{\tau_t} \Delta\nu_D S(\tau) p(\tau) d\tau, \quad (25)$$

is calculated after discretization with the following summation:

$$\Lambda = 4\pi \sum_{i=1}^z \left( \alpha^{i,0} - \alpha^{i-1,0} - \alpha^{z,i} + \alpha^{z,i-1} \right) S^i. \quad (26)$$



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