

Non-Conventional Energy Resources

Unit-III

Geothermal Energy: Resources of geothermal energy, thermodynamics of geo-thermal energy conversion-electrical conversion, non-electrical conversion, environmental considerations.

Magneto-hydrodynamics (MHD): Principle of working of MHD Power plant, performance considerations.

Fuel Cells: Principle of working of various types of fuel cells and their working, performance and limitations

GEOTHERMAL ENERGY

Geothermal Energy: Geothermal energy comes from two source. It includes primordial thermal energy which was present when the earth was formed as well as the thermal energy produced from the decay of heavy radioisotopes within the earth. Geothermal energy source are generally comes in following categories

- i) Hydrothermal energy sources are those associated with steam and hot.
- ii) Petro thermal energy source that are associated with hot rocks.
- iii) Geo presumed system occur high temperature water under high pressure

Geothermal energy is a form of renewable energy, having the source of natural heat inside the earth. It is renewable since the earth's interior will continue to energy having high energy density. It is inexhaustible like solar or wind energy. The geothermal energy in the form of heat energy can be utilized economically and efficiently for power generation and other applications with the existing available technologies. Though the amount of thermal energy within the earth is very large, useful geothermal energy is limited to certain site only in the world because of the feasibility to access and extract heat. The sites from where the thermal energy can be extracted are called **geothermal fields**.

steam production in J&K belt. The thermal springs are found in different parts of India *i.e.* Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Cambay of Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh and some parts of Bihar and near Jawai in Assam

Origin of Geothermal Energy:

- 1)The earth's interior having mass of hot liquids, gases and steam is cooling slowly and the temperature of the earth's core is estimated to be about 40000C.
- 2)The average geothermal heat dissipated from the land is about 0.06 W/m² as compare to solar heat energy of 1 kW/m².
- 3) Below the solid crust is the molten mass called magma which is still in the process of cooling.
- 4)The earth's vibrations caused the magma to come near the earth surface thus causes active volcanoes, hot springs and geysers water exists.
- 4)The hot magma near the surface solidifies into igneous rock. The heat of magma is conducted upwards into this rock and ground water that find sits way down to this rock through fissures in it will be by the heat of the rock or by mixing with hot gases and steam emanating from the magma.
- 5) The heated water will then rise upward by convection into porous and permeable reservoir above the igneous rock. It is covered by the layer of solid impermeable rock. It traps the hot water in the reservoir called hydrothermal field.
- 6) A well made by drilling hole in the upper crust in the region of geothermal field can be used to trap steam for use in a conventional power plant. The steam originating from magma is called meteoritic steam, largest source of geothermal steam.

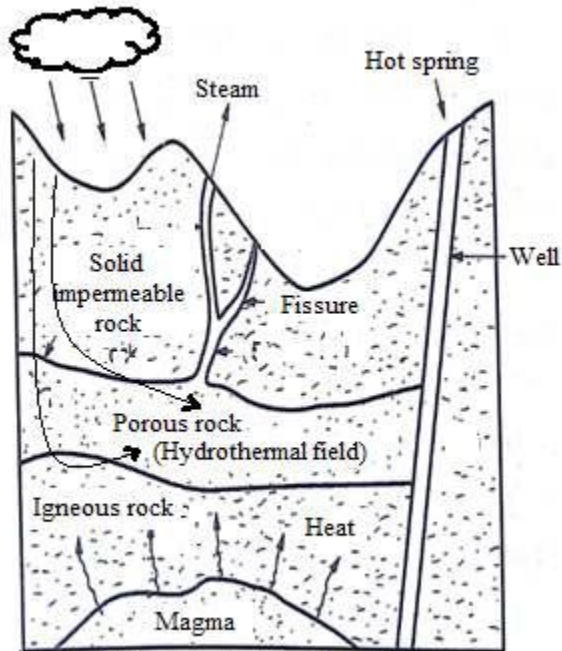


Fig. A typical geothermal field

Classifications of Geothermal Energy Resources/Systems:

Geothermal resources vary in temperature from 30-350 °C and consist of dry, a mixture of steam and water or hot water only. The water is the transfer medium in order to extract geothermal heat from the earth. Table given below lists the basic technologies normally utilized according to resources temperature.

Reservoir Temperature	Reservoir Fluid	Common Use	Technology Commonly Used
High Temperature >180-200 °C	Water or steam	Power Generation	Flash Steam; Combined (Flash & Binary) Cycle Direct Fluid Use; heat Exchangers; Heat Pumps
Medium Temperature 100-180 °C	Water	Power Generation	Binary Cycle Direct Fluid Use; heat Exchangers; Heat Pumps
Low Temperature	Water	Direct Use	Direct Fluid Use; heat Exchangers; Heat Pumps

Resources of Geothermal Energy:

- 1) Hydrothermal or hydro-geothermal energy resources
- 2) Petro-thermal or Petro-Geothermal energy resources
- 3) Geopressure resources
- 4) Magma Resources
- 5) Volcanoes

The geothermal energy systems may be classified as:

1. Hydrothermal; 2. Hot dry rock (HDR); 3. Geo-pressured system

Hydrothermal (Convective) Resources: These resources are located at shallow to moderate depths of 100 m to 5 km and in such, water is heated by contact with the hot rock and high pressurized steam is generated up to about 350°C. These resources further divided into following categories, depending upon whether steam or hot water is the dominating product.

1. Dry steam fields (Vapour dominated); 2. Wet steam fields (Liquid dominated)

i) Dry Steam / Vapor Dominated Systems: Such system delivers steam with little or no water of high pressure and temperature up to 2000C. This steam is used to generate electrical energy by electromechanical energy conversion. The steam extracted from such fields may contain some amount of water and solid particles; those are removed in a centrifugal separator. This pure dry steam is then directly supplied to a steam turbine, which is coupled to a generator. The condenser is used to condense the exhaust steam from the turbine for recirculation purpose of cold water. This cold water is either sent to chemical recovery or it is re injected into hot field with the help of condensate pump. The main drawbacks of these plants are the presence of corrosive gases and abrasive materials which cause the environmental problems.

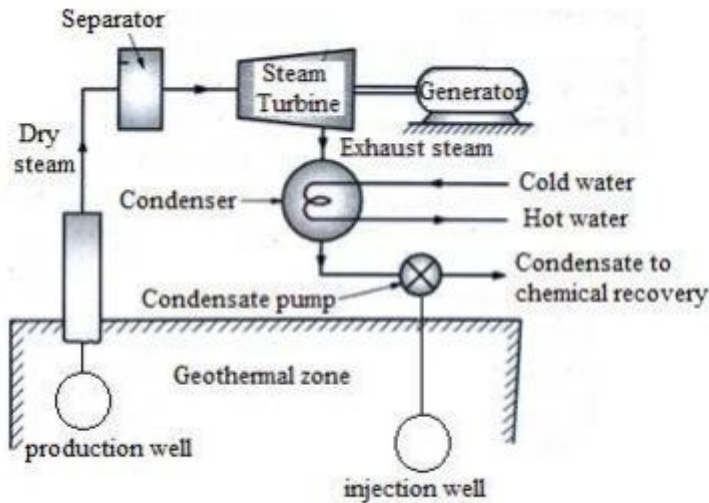


Fig. Dry steam power plant

(ii) Low Temperature-Binary Fluid System:

- 1) These hydrothermal resources are available in the temperature range of 900 – 1700C which is not suitable for production of two phase mixture of steam.
- 2) In such situation to utilize this geothermal heat, a fluid of low boiling point (*e.g.* isobutane) is used under pressure in a primary heat exchanger.
- 3) The fluid vapour so generated is passed through a turbine where it expands and this mechanical power of turbine is converted into electrical energy by a generator.
- 4) The exhaust of the turbine is passed through a heat exchanger and condenser where it is cooled and then condensed.
- 5) The thermal fluid after transferring heat is re-injected through a well into the ground

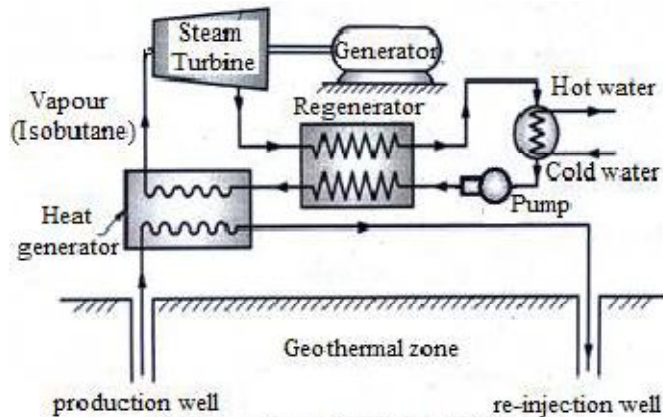


Fig. Low temperature binary fluid system

iii) Hot Dry Rock (HDR) or Petro-Geothermal Systems:

- 1) Hot dry rock receives heat energy from molten rock (magma).
- 2) These reservoirs are artificially created by fracturing deep compact rocks up to depth of 8 -15 km by hydraulically / chemically or by nuclear explosion for injecting high pressure water.
- 3) The water is pumped into the fractured well (injection well) and withdrawn from another well (production well) to extract heat to generate steam for power production.
- 4) To prevent mixing of water in the reservoir the depth of production well is kept slightly less than reinjection well.

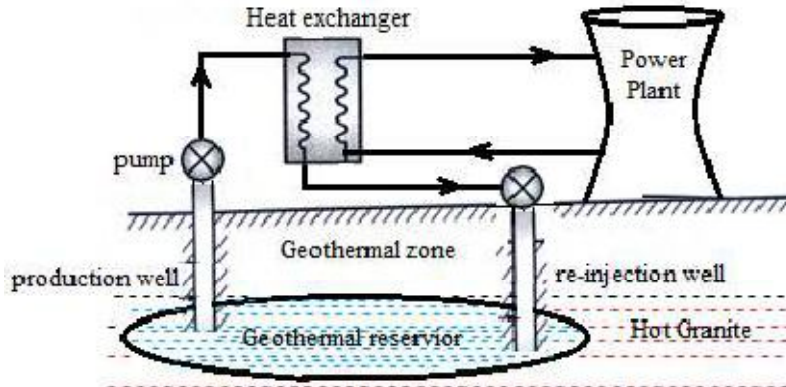


Fig. Hot Dry Rock (HDR) or Petro-Geothermal Systems

Geo-pressured Systems:

- 1) These reservoirs were developed by sand deposits carried down by rivers and entrapped brine and natural gas at depth of 4-6 km and are located at different levels and at different places.
- 2) These systems comprise of heavily compressed sediments that contain heat, methane and pressurized hot water.
- 3) When well is drilled in this zone the reserve energy comes out in the form of high pressurized water having temperature about 160°C, heat and natural gas (methane) which are useful for power generation.
- 4) These sources have been found in offshore wells in Texas and US Gulf Coast areas.

Main Features of Geo-thermal Energy:

1. It may be used in both energy supply, with power generation and direct heat use.	1. Causes corrosion, erosion, and chemical deposition due to the presence of sufficient amount of CO ₂ , CH ₄ , N ₂ , NH ₃ and H ₂ S.
2. It is an inexhaustible source of energy.	2. Noise pollution because of well drilling, centrifugal separators.
3. It is almost free of pollution.	3. Proper re-filling of water is necessary.
4. Independent of weather condition	4. It causes settlement of land.
5. More reliable source of power generation than other renewable energy sources.	5. Life of plant is low compared to conventional power plants

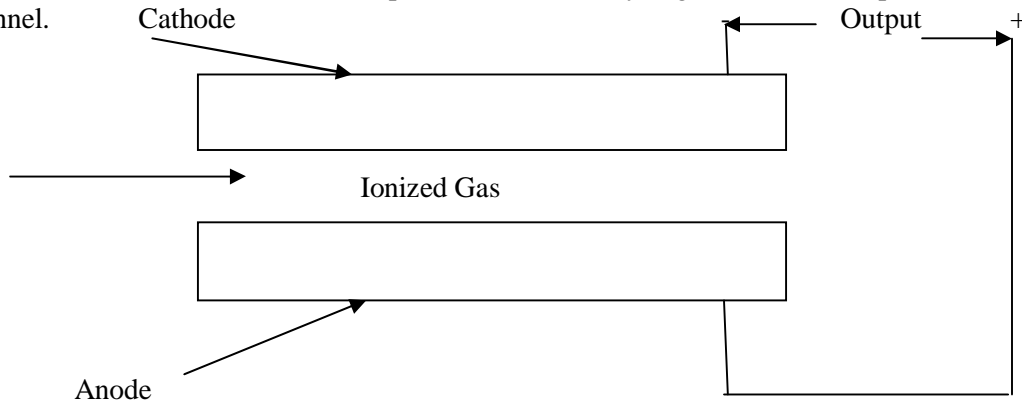
(iii) Environmental impact:

- 1) Some part of condensable gases (CO₂, H₂S, NH₃, CH₄, N₂ and H₂) and radio actives are escaped to environment at various points and cause air pollution.
- 2) There is possibilities of seismic disturbance because of extraction and re-injection of saline.
- 3) Water pollution of rivers and lakes is a potential hazard as geo water contains high amount of dissolved solid with silica.
- 4) The heat energy of turbine exhaust steam is rejected to atmosphere in cooling towers. It causes dense fog, increase in moisture.

- 5) In such systems soil erosion takes place due to drilling of wells in geothermal fields.
 6) The exploitation of geothermal energy may cause earthquakes also.

MAGNETO HYDRODYNAMIC (MHD)

Magneto Hydrodynamic Generator: MHD is a device which converts heat energy of an ionized fluid at high temperature directly through the applied magnetic field, without a conventional electric generator. In such systems power generation is based on the Faraday's law of electromagnetic induction. In such condition when plasma passes through a strong magnetic field then force begin to act on its ions, this force act on plate P1 for +ions and towards P2 for -ions. Due to migration of these charges a potential difference creates between the plates. If a load is connected between these plates then electricity begin to flow. This process takes place in MHD channel.



In an MHD generator, electrically conducting gas at a very high temperature is passed at high velocity through a strong magnetic field at right angles to the direction of flow, thereby generating electrical energy. The electrical energy is then collected from stationary electrodes placed on the opposite sides of channel as above. The current so obtained is direct current dc which can be converted into a.c. by using an inverter.

Working Principle: When a charged particle moving in a magnetic field, having charge q and velocity v , then the force acting on it:

3.2(b) Working Principle:

When a charged particle moving in a magnetic field having charge q and velocity v , then the force acting on it:

$$\vec{F} = q(\vec{v} \times \vec{B})$$

If \vec{E} is the electric field acts, then the total force:

$$\vec{F} = q(\vec{E} + \vec{v} \times \vec{B}) \dots (1)$$

The velocity to be used in above equation (1) is the vector sum of gas velocity v and the particle drift velocity u . Thus force is given by:

$$\vec{F} = q(\vec{E} + \vec{v} \times \vec{B} + \vec{u} \times \vec{B}) \dots (2)$$

can be written as: $\vec{F} = q(\vec{E}' + \vec{u} \times \vec{B})$

where $\vec{E}' = (\vec{E} + \vec{v} \times \vec{B}) \dots (3)$

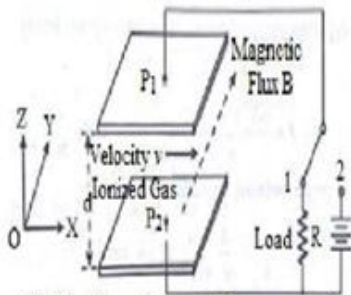


Fig. Directions of magnetic flux, gas velocity and force in MHD system

From figure, the motion of gas is in x -direction, magnetic field B is in y -direction and the force on the particle is in z -direction.

If the distance between the plates be d , then the electric intensity b/w the plates is $\vec{E}_z = -V/d \dots (4)$

The total electric field is $\vec{E}' = -\vec{E}_z + B\vec{v} = \frac{1}{d}(Bvd - V) \dots (5)$

The electromagnetic fields \vec{E} and \vec{B} acting on the moving gas produce the same force on the ions as the electromagnetic field Ez' and B produce on gas with zero average velocity. The term Bvd gives the internal e.m.f. (or open circuit voltage) of the MHD generator.

If R_0 and R_L be the internal resistance of generator and load resistance respectively, then the current I through the circuit be:

$$I = \frac{V_0}{R_0 + R_L} \dots (6)$$

So the power output: $P = V_0 I - I^2 R_0 = \left(\frac{V_0}{R_0 + R_L}\right)^2 R_0$

The power delivered to the load is maximum when load resistance = $R_L = R_0$

$$P_{max} = \frac{V_0^2}{4R_0} = \frac{(Bvd)^2}{4R_0} = \frac{B^2 v^2 d \sigma A}{4} \dots (7)$$

σ - conductivity of gas (Ω^{-1}/m); A - electrode surface area (m^2)

So maximum power output per unit volume = $\frac{B^2 v^2 \sigma}{4}$

The maximum current

$$I_{max} = \frac{V_0}{R_0 + R_L} = \frac{Bvd}{2R_0} = \frac{ABv\sigma}{2}$$

MHD SYSTEM:

MHD system may be classified as

- 1) Open cycle system
- 2) Closed cycle system

Open cycle system: In an open cycle system the working fluid is used on the once through basis. The working fluid after generating electrical energy is discharged to the atmosphere through a stack. Generally coal is used as fuel as it produces more conductive plasma; this is because of more carbon atom as compared to hydrogen atom. The working temperature of such MHD generators lies approximately in the range above 23000C.

The different parts of open cycle generator are:

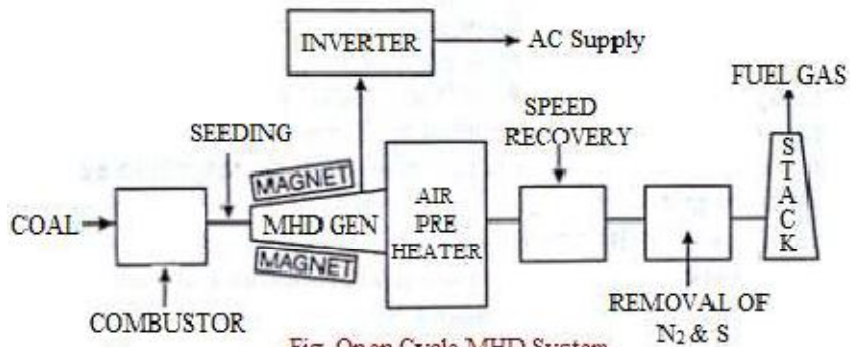


Fig. Open Cycle MHD System

Compressor: Compressor is used to raise the pressure of the air supplied in combustion chamber for efficient burning of fuel. The pre-cooled air is compressed in compressor before being supplied in the pre-cooler.

(b) Pre-heater: The compressed air pre-heated in the pre-heater at 11000C from the exhaust gases of the generator to increase the combustion efficiency of working fluid.

(c) Combustor: The fluid is burnt in this section of generator in the presence of hot air coming from pre-heater & gas is seeded with cesium to ionize the gas.

(d) Nozzle: The high temperature gases after combustor pass through convergent-divergent nozzle to increase its velocity of order of 1000 m/s.

(e) Generator Duct: It is made of heat resisting & insulating material. The high magnetic flux is applied in this section of the duct at perpendicular to flow direction of gases. As the moving gas cuts the line of magnetic flux the induced electric field produces DC current through generator in this section. The duct is water cooled to remove the heat.

(f) Inverter: The generated DC is converted into AC by using the inverter before supply to grid.

(g) Gas Chamber: The exhaust hot gasses passes through the air cleaner to control the pollution & remove harmful gases.

(h) Speed Recovery System: Seed material is expensive & need recovery system along with open MHD power cycle for further use.

The removed seeds are supplied back in the combustor.

Closed Cycle MHD System:

- 1) In this system the very high thermal efficiency is achieved with low cycle cost in closed plant & provides More useful power at low temperature at 16000C. The ducts of these units are small because of high pressure.
- 2) Helium or argon is used as working fluid, heated in heat exchanger & get ionized, alkali metals is mixed with inert gas to provide the necessary conductivity is closed cycle plant, where recovery is possible.
- 3) The working fluid in closed cycle is seeded with Cesium and circulated in a closed loop. Gas is burned in the combustor is supplied in the heat exchanger, where the heat is transferred to the working fluid.
- 4)The ionized gas passes through the magnetic field to produce DC power.
- 5) The combustion products are discharged to the atmosphere after removal of heat in heat exchanger
- 6)It shows the schematic of liquid metal MHD generator. The superheated metallic vapor is expanded through the supersonic nozzle and enters in the generator in liquid form with velocity of 150 m/s.
- 7)The electrical conductivity of metallic vapor is poor. That brings the overall conversion efficiency lower than that of gas as a working substance.

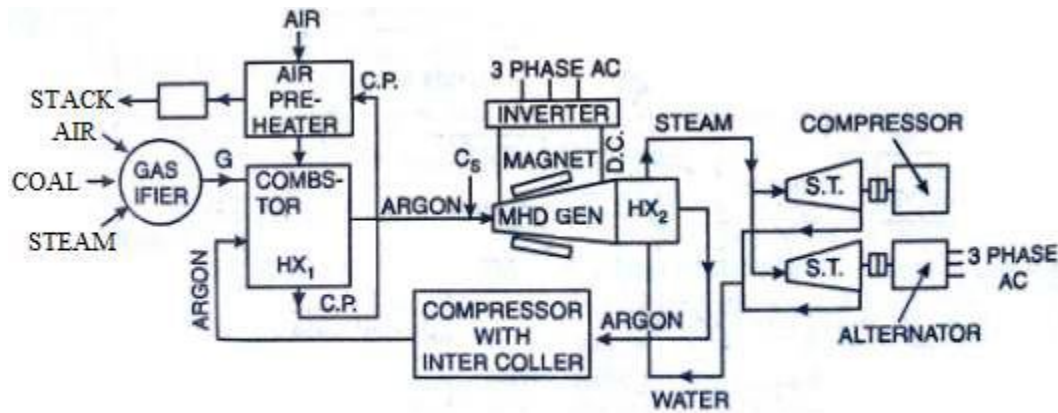


Fig. Closed Cycle MHD System

HX₁ - Heat Exchanger 1, HX₂ - Heat Exchanger 2, G- Gas, C.P- Combustion products, Cs-Cesium injection, ST- Steam turbine, P- removal of nitrogen and sulphur

Advantages & Disadvantages of MHD System:

Advantages	Disadvantages
1. These systems having higher efficiency (60-65%) because of higher operating temperature.	1. Power generation in MHD is directly proportional to square of magnetic flux, it needs very large power to create it which increases to cost of the system.
2. Requires less area and maintenance as compare to conventional power plants of same capacity	2. High temperature gases causes corrosion and chemical erosion.
3. Less pollution to the environment because of less fuel consumption as compared to other conventional power plants.	3. It is difficult to built equipments to withstand very high temperature, used in MHD.
4. They are compact in size, have low specific weight and high power density, having instant operation and suitable as peak load.	4. High initial cost due to large sized magnets and equipments.
5. Provides direct conversion of heat directly into electrical energy.	5. High thermal and frictional losses.

Advantages of MHD power generation:

- 1) High temperature are involved, operation efficiency is high
- 2) Here only working fluid is circulated, and there are no moving mechanical parts. This reduces the mechanical losses to nil and makes the operation more dependable.
- 2) The temperature of working fluid is maintained the walls of MHD.
- 3) It has the ability to reach full power level almost directly.
- 4) The price of MHD generators is much lower than conventional generators.
- 5) MHD has very high efficiency, which is higher than most of the other conventional or non-conventional method of generation.

FUEL CELLS

Fuel Cells: A fuel cell is a device that converts the chemical energy from a fuel into electricity through a chemical reaction with oxygen or another oxidizing agent. . Fuel cells are different from batteries in that they require a constant source of fuel and oxygen/air to sustain the chemical reaction; however, fuel cells can produce electricity continuously for as long as these inputs are supplied. There are many types of fuel cells, but they all consist of an anode, a cathode and an electrolyte that allows charges to move between the two sides of the fuel cell. Electrons are drawn from the anode to the cathode through an external circuit, producing direct current electricity. As the main difference among fuel cell types is the electrolyte, fuel cells are classified by the type of electrolyte they use.

Working Principle of Fuel Cells:

The basic design features of a fuel cell are:

- 1)The electrolyte substance. The electrolyte substance usually defines the type of fuel cell.
- 2)The fuel that is used. The most common fuel is hydrogen.
- 3)The anode catalyst breaks down the fuel into electrons and ions. The anode catalyst is usually made up of very fine platinum powder.
- 4) The cathode catalyst turns the ions into the waste chemicals like water or carbon dioxide. The cathode catalyst is often made up of nickel but it can also be a nano material based catalyst.

Its working may be explained as:

- 1)The cell consists of two electrodes between which electrolyte (40% KOH) is filled and serves as a carrying media for charged ions.
- 2)The fuel (usually hydrogen) is supplied at anode side and oxidant (oxygen or air) at the cathode side.
- 3)The electrolyte between the inner face of the both electrodes is kept stirred to prevent stay of ions for long time at the surface.
- 4)The formed ions migrate through electrolyte to the opposite side of electrodes because of pressure difference between the reactant gases and the electrolyte.
- 5)Sometimes catalysts (generally Platinum) are used to increase the reactivity at electrodes for breaking the fuel molecules.
- 6)During chemical reaction H^+ and OH^- ions are produced as an intermediate product.
The H^+ ions migrate to the cathode and reacts with oxygen to form water and vice-versa for oxygen ions.
The electrons released at a anode travels through the external circuit to form the oxidizing products and the reactions are taken place as:

Types of Fuel Cells:

(i) Phosphoric acid fuel cell (PAFC):

- 1)In these cells **phosphoric acid (H_3PO_4)** is used as a nonconductive electrolyte to pass positive hydrogen ions from the anode to the cathode. PAFC is a non-conductive liquid acid which forces electrons to travel from anode to cathode through an external electrical circuit.
- 2)The hydrogen ion production rate on the anode is small so platinum is used as catalyst to increase this ionization rate.
- 3)These cells commonly work in temperatures of **150 to 200** degrees Celsius.
- 4) This high temperature will cause heat and energy loss if the heat is not removed and used properly.
- 5) This heat can be used to produce steam for air conditioning systems or any other thermal energy consuming system.
- 6) The chemical reaction in this fuel cell are as follows:

Anode Reaction: $H_2 \rightarrow 2H^+ + 2e$

Cathode Reaction: $(1/2) O_2 + 2H^+ + 2e \rightarrow H_2O$

Overall reaction: $H_2 + (1/2)O_2 \rightarrow H_2O + \Delta E$

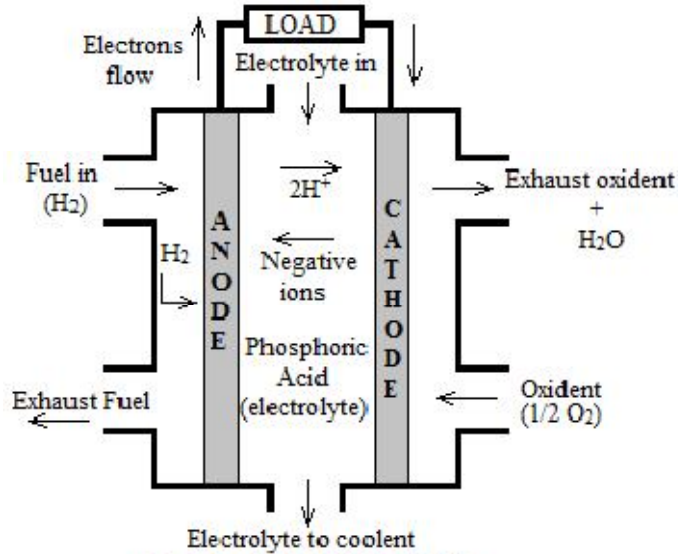
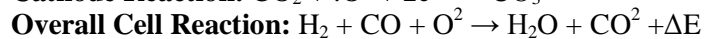
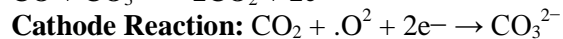
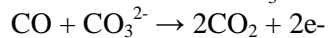
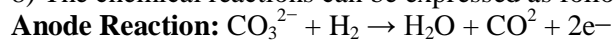


Fig. Phosphoric Acid Fuel Cell

(ii) Molten Carbonate Fuel Cell (MCFC):

- 1) In these fuel cells mixture of H₂ and CO is used as fuel and O₂ or air as oxidant.
- 2) MCFCs use lithium potassium carbonate salt as an electrolyte, and this salt liquefies at high temperatures, allowing for the movement of charge within the cell
- 3) in this case, negative carbonate ions.
- 4) Working range of such fuel cells is 6500C – 7000C.
- 5) The hydrogen in the gas reacts with carbonate ions from the electrolyte to produce water, carbon dioxide, electrons and small amounts of other chemicals.
- 6) The electrons travel through an external circuit creating electricity and return to the cathode.
- 7) Oxygen from the air and carbon dioxide recycled from the anode react with the electrons to form carbonate ions that replenish the electrolyte, completing the circuit.
- 8) The chemical reactions can be expressed as follows.



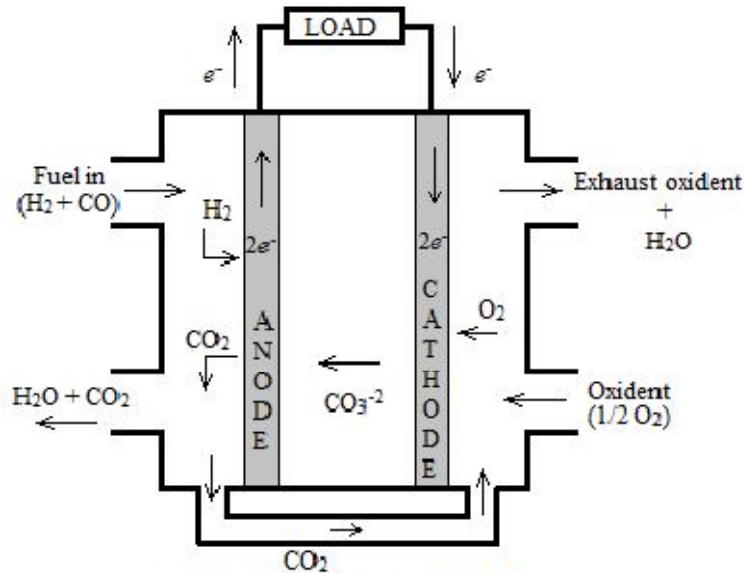


Fig. Molten Carbonated Fuel Cell

(iii) Proton Exchange Membrane Fuel Cells (PEMFCs):

- 1) These are also known as a "solid polymer electrolyte fuel cell" (SPEFC). In this type of fuel cell, solid polymer membrane of an organic material such as polystyrene is used as electrolyte.
- 2) On the anode side the H^+ ions are conducted through the membrane to the cathode, but the electrons are forced to travel in an external circuit (supplying power) because the membrane is electrically insulating.
- 3) On the cathode catalyst, oxygen molecules react with the electrons (which have traveled through the external circuit) and protons to form water.
- 4) The chemical reactions can be expressed as follows.

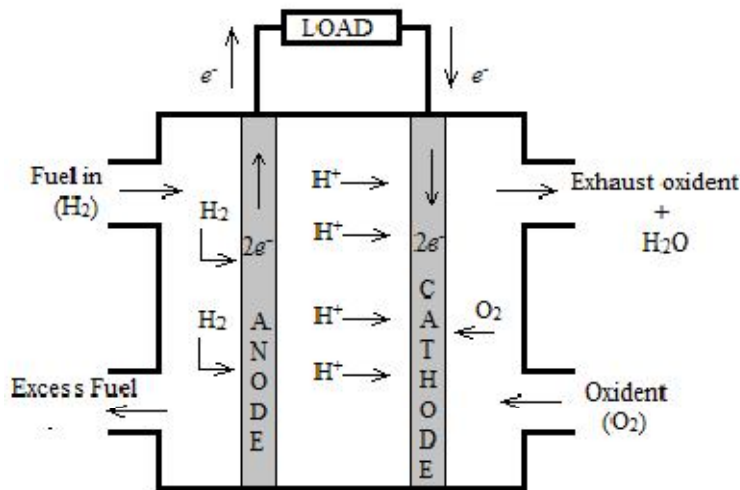
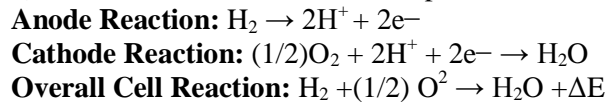


Fig. Proton exchange membrane fuel cells (PEMFCs)

(iv) Solid Oxide Fuel Cell (SOFC):

- 1) Solid oxide fuel cells (SOFCs) use a solid material, most commonly a ceramic material (e.g. zirconium dioxide) as the electrolyte.
- 2) They require high operating temperatures (800–1000 °C), due to which no catalyst is required.
- 3) The anode in such cells is made up of porous nickel and cathode is of metal oxide.

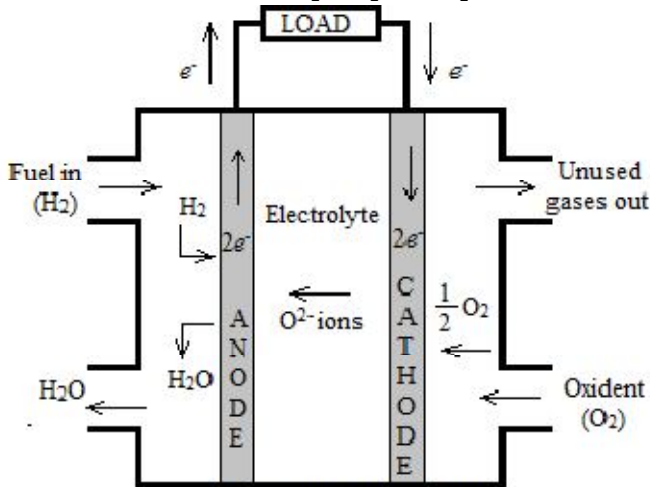
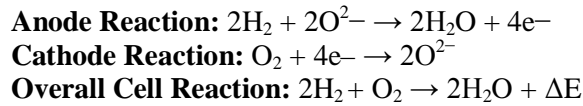
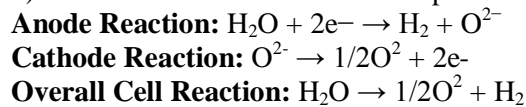


Fig. Solid oxide fuel cells

- 4) The output voltage is about 0.65V at about 8000C.
- 5) Generally H₂ is uses as fuel in this cells but other fuel may be methanol, ammonia and hydrazine (N₂H₄).
- 6) These cells having efficiency about 60%-70%.

(v) Regenerative Fuel Cells (RFC):

- 1) A regenerative fuel cell or reverse fuel cell (RFC) is a fuel cell operate and run in a closed loop, where reactants are regenerated from the products.
- 2) These cells produce electricity from fuel (H₂) and oxygen and generate energy and water as by a product.
- 3) The excess water is divided into H₂ and O₂ by electrolysis using electricity from other sources like solar, wind etc.
- 4) The chemical reactions can be expressed as follows.



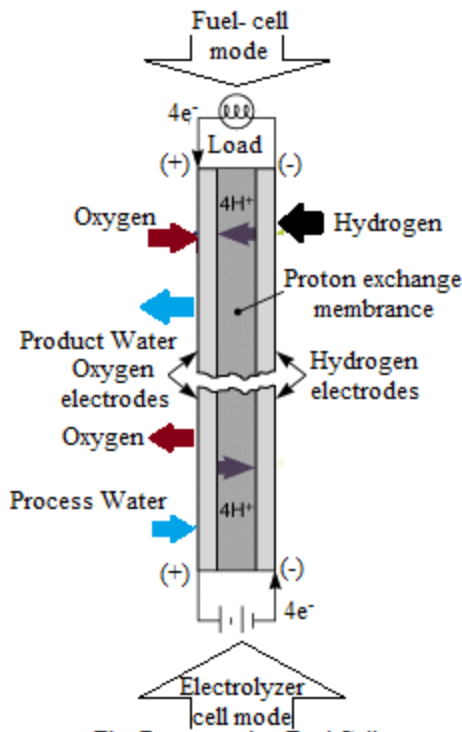


Fig. Regenerative Fuel Cell

Performance Analysis of Fuel Cell:

3.3 (d) Performance Analysis of Fuel Cell:

In fuel cell the electro-chemical reaction takes place and electrical power and produced. Fuel cell's performance may be describes with the help of Gibbs energy equation. The energy balanced equation may be describes as: $G = H - T.S$... (1) or for a constant temperature process:

$$\Delta G = \Delta H - T\Delta S \dots\dots\dots(2)$$

but from the first law of thermodynamics: $Q + W = \Delta H$ (3) (where W is work in, and is negative)

From second law of thermodynamics: $Q = T\Delta S$(4)

So from equations (3) & (4): $W = \Delta H - T\Delta S$(5)

This applies for a chemical process at constant temperature and pressure, and is the maximum possible useful work or available energy, known as the "free energy".

So it is clear from equations (2) & (5):

$$W_{max} = - \Delta G \dots\dots(6)$$

The ratio of work output to the energy supplied to the fuel cell is defined as the efficiency, η of energy conversion of fuel

cell. Therefore: $\eta = \frac{\text{output work}}{\text{energy supplied}} = \frac{W}{-\Delta H}$ and its maximum efficiency: $\eta_{max} = \frac{W_{max}}{-\Delta H} = \frac{-\Delta G}{-\Delta H}$

At room temperature (25°C), for H₂-O₂ fuel cell $\Delta G = -237191 \text{ kJ/kg mol}$ (approx), and $\Delta H = -285838 \text{ kJ/kg mol}$ (approx).

⇒ Maximum efficiency of H₂-O₂ cell is: $\eta_{max} = \frac{237191}{285838} = 0.829$ or 83%.

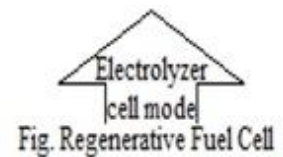


Fig. Regenerative Fuel Cell

Advantages, Disadvantages & Applications of Fuel Cells:

Advantages	Disadvantages	Applications of Fuel Cells
1. Less pollution and higher efficiency	1. High initial cost.	1. Used in automotive vehicles.
2. Less maintenance required.	2. Short life because of degrading of electrodes.	2. Power generation upto 1 MW.
3. Since there is direct conversion of energy so efficiency is high.	3. Proper handling is required due to operate with hydrogen and oxygen.	3. Used for space applications.
4. Water is formed as product which may be used for many other applications.	4. Efficiency goes down with time.	4. Used for military applications.
5. Having fast starting time.		5. Used for submarine applications.