Deterministic radio propagation modeling and ray tracing

- 1) Introduction to deterministic propagation modelling
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Deterministic ray models $(1/3)$

"*Numerical simulation of multipath propagation according to GTP*"

• Ray models compute (some of the) rays linking the two terminals through free space propagation and multiple interactions with buildings. The geometry and the field of such rays must satisfy GTP rules

• Interactions, i.e. reflections, diffractions, scatterings are also called "*events*". Usually all rays experiencing up to a pre-set number of events, N_{ev} are computed

• *Nev* also defines the so-called *prediction order*

• Ray models can be fully 3-Dimensional (3D) or can resort to simplified 2 dimensional modelling (2D)

• Ray models' s output can be the field (before the Rx antenna) or the received signal (after the Rx antenna). In the latter case, Rx antenna parameters must be input to the model.

Deterministic ray models (2/3)

- Sometimes beams (tubes of flux) instead of "real" rays are considered. Rays have a null transverse dimension. Beams have a finite transverse dimension and therefore a space discretization is adopted \rightarrow a limit to space resolution is posed.
- Models adopting rays are usually referred to as *Ray Tracing* (*RT*) models. Models adopting beams are usually referred to as *Ray* (or *beam*) *Launching* (*RL*) models
- Ray models require in input a detailed description of the environment (*environment database*)
- Usually two different computation steps can be identified: geometric ray tracing and field computation. The former is by far the most CPU-time consuming

Deterministic ray models (3/3)

Advantages over empirical-statistical models:

- Multipath simulation \rightarrow multidimensional prediction
- High accuracy
-
- Great versatility

Drawbacks:

Environment database "cost"

High CPU time (of the order of hours for urban prediction over a cell or area)

Performance

- Prediction accuracy first of all depends on the accuracy of environment database
- Prediction accuracy also depends on N_{ev} : the greater N_{ev} , the better the accuracy. Usually $N_{ev} = 3-4$ for outdoor, $N_{ev} = 2$ for indoor prediction are chosen.
- Unfortunately, CPU time grows more than linearly with N_{ev}

Environment databases

• Deterministic models require detailed environment databases

Environment database issues

- Good environment databases can be expensive (not true for the future)
- Environment databases are difficult to handle by non-expert personnel
- Environment databases are often not very accurate (precision of 0.5m for horizontal coordinates and 1 to 5 m for vertical coordinates)

Major limitation for ray models

Simplified ray models

- "Simplified ray models" are derived from deterministic ray models. however, the geometry of the multipath pattern is somehow simplified to ease the computational burden while still taking major rays into account
- Usually, the problem is simplified by identifying planes where most rays lie, thus resorting to a 2-dimensional (2D) approach. Such simplifications however are not rigorous since multipath propagation in urban environment is intrinsically 3D
- Of course 2D computation is much simpler and faster than 3D computation
- 2 different approaches can be identified: $2D+2D$ (lateral plane+vertical plane ray tracing) and *quasi-3D* (Vertical Plane Launch, VPL ray tracing)

Ex: 2D+2D ray model

• In the vertical plane either a real 2D ray tracing or an ORT model is applied

• In the lateral plane a 2D ray tracing is performed

Deterministic ray models: trends

- Speed up techniques to decrease CPU time, e.g. parallelization on Graphical Processing Units
- A-priori determination of computation parameters, "active" database area and ray selection
- Exploitation of the multidimensional prediction potential
- Integration of statistical elements into the deterministic model such as diffuse scattering

Impact of diffuse scattering

·Diffuse scattering dramatically increases signal contribution from far obstacles

·Diffuse scattering is crucial for time and angle dispersion

·Diffuse scattering is important in roof to street propagation

· Diffuse scattering can be modelled in ray models: ex: Effective Roughness model (see further on)

Rx

Ray Tracing Example

- **Input files, database format**
- **The view tree the concept of visibility**
- **Field Computation**
- **Example of output file**

Scheme of a ray tracing program

Inputs

"Slow" inputs "Fast" inputs

- Environment database
- Antenna parameters
- Most run parameters
- Terminal positions
- Antenna orientation
- Some run parameters (es:Nev)

Slow inputs generally do not change during a work session

Fast inputs are generally changed multiple times during a work session

Environment database

Often the *"PLANET"[*] format* is used for Environment database Also the *"SHAPE" format*, used by public administrations is adopted

The *UTM system* is used as a global geographic coordinate system (the one used by GPS)

The *terrain database* is a raster data file usually with a pixel of 5x5 m and a vertical resolution of 1 m

The *urban database* in PLANET format is composed of the following files:

.map file $\vert \vert$ bld file $\vert \vert$ atr file $\vert \vert$ elm file $\vert \vert$ bin file

[*] PLANET is a field prediction software developed by the MSI company, UK, http://www.msiuk.com

The .map file (ex: Helsinki.map)

The .bld file

The .atr file

Other input files

• **The Tx file**

• **The Rx file**

The Run file

• **(Param.dat)**

computation mode parameters DEBUG 0 DOUBLE_PRECISION 1.e-6 DOUBLE_AREA_PRECISION 1.e-6 GPC_EPSILON 1.e-12 **VERBOSE_RAY 0** MAP_2D 0 MAP_3D 1 NORM 0 TX_RX 0 ANTENNA 0 **COHERENT_MODE 1** COHERENT_SCAT 0 COHERENT_ORT 0 PATTERN_EXTRAPOLATION 1 SCAT_AND_DIFF 1 **UTD_DIEL 1 S 0.3 SCAT_S_MODEL 1 SCAT_PATTERN_MODEL 1** SCAT_ALPHA_R 3 SCAT_ALPHA_I 3 SCAT_K 0.95 **K_FAR 2**

RCS 0 ENABLE_TERRAIN 1 SIGMA_TERRAIN 1.e-3 EPSILON_TERRAIN 15 RAY_SELECTION 0 # power threshold to cut weak rays (dBunit) **POWER_THRESHOLD_DB -150** BOX_DIM 3 K_FRESNEL 3 EDGE_LENGTH_MIN 1 PARAX_DIST 300 SIGMA 0.001 EPS 8 STEP 10 WALL_WIDTH 50 ORT SCAT 0 PROFILE 2 REAL_ANGLE 1 # absolute/relative height flag **RELATIVE_H 0**

The control string

- The control string includes some *fast inputs* which are fundamental *run parameters*
- It is conceived as a command-line parameter to be given when the ray tracing program is run from the operating system prompt

$$
\underbrace{N_{ev}}_{\text{mandatory}} \underbrace{@[set1][set2]...[setN_{ev}]}_{\text{optional}} @ \underbrace{N_{ev}^r r N_{ev}^d N_{ev}^s s}_{\text{optional}}
$$

- (a) is a separator
- set1 to set N_{ev} are N_{ev} sets of interaction identifiers whose elements can be r (reflection) d(diffraction) s(scattering): the i-th set defines the interaction kinds allowed for the i-th interaction along a ray. Each set can be replaced by the wildcard '*', with obvious meaning
- $N_{ev}^r N_{ev}^d N_{ev}^s$ are the maximum number of successive reflections, diffractions, scatterings, respectively, regardless of the order of them.

For example:

$$
3@^{**}[rs]@2d1s]
$$

means: 3 events, the first can be any kind as the second, the third can only be a reflection or a Scattering, and overall each ray can undergo max 2 diffractions and 1 scattering

The antenna input file (1/3)

The antenna input file (2/3)

Azimuth (f) on H-plane (deg)

The antenna input file (3/3)

- The antenna pattern is given only in two planes (H and V). This reflects what is usually supplied by manufacturers.
- The complete pattern in 3D can however be input to the ray tracing program if necessary (Poincaré's sphere data).
- Interpolation is used to get the 3D pattern from the two 2D patterns.
- For convention, *the maximum of the radiation pattern always corresponds to the positive direction of the x axis, i.e.* $\theta = \pi/2$ *,* $\phi = 0$ *.*
- The actual antenna orientation with respect to the global reference system is given in the Tx and Rx files.

The computation steps

The big problem is how to find all possible ray trajectories… Efficient algorithms must be adopted 'cause the task is demanding. The visibility concept and the corresponding view tree are adopted here.

Computation is carried out in two steps:

- Geometric Ray Tracing
	- The concept of "view-tree"
	- Visibility and view-tree computation
- Field computation
	- Adjustment of ray geometry
	- Computation of the e.m. field

The view tree $(1/5)$

Environment *objects* are radio-terminals, walls, edges or parts of them

Visibility refer to the existence of a radio propagation path between two objects according to a given interaction on the first one.

The *view tree* contains all relevant visibility information for the actual geometrical tracing of rays in a given environment.

Visibility relations do not correspond to exact geometric information. Therefore, after the view tree is constructed, other steps are necessary for the actual computation of both ray geometry and ray field.

The view tree $(2/5)$

- The environment is decomposed into *objects* (walls, edges) + radio teminals
- The view tree is fill-up starting from the Tx on the base of *visibility relations*
- The tree is layered and the number of layers is equal to $Nev+1$ (root included)
- The Tx is the root, objects are nodes, interactions are branches, the Rx leaves

The view tree $(3/5)$

- Actually nodes correspond to objects or parts of them
- The view tree stores all major information for ray tracing to be carried out, however the exact trajectory of rays is still partly undefined, and so is the field. A further "refinement" is therefore necessary
- View tree computation is by far the most time-comsuming part of ray tracing

If N_v is the average number of objects viewed from a previous one then it can be shown that the view tree is composed of M objects with

$$
\boxed{\mathbf{M} \approx N_V^{(N_{ev}+1)}}
$$

 N_v depends on the kind of enabled events (see further on)

For example if N_v=10 and N_{ev}=3 \rightarrow M=10⁴ This figure is of course proportional to the computation time involved in creating the view tree.

Each time a new object is added to the tree, then the whole environment must be scanned for visibility. It is therefore important to identify 'smart' scanning strategies.

The view tree $(4/5)$

• One smart technique is *environment pre-processing:* objects that cannot be viewed from a given one are a-priori identified on the base of simple geometric considerations

The actual value of N_v depends on the kind of interaction involved Simple 2D model to estimate N_v :

 $N_V \approx \gamma \cdot \Delta s \cdot \delta_w$ as

where γ γ is *view angle*, Δs *average distance* and δ_{w} is *linear object density*.

The view angle changes very much with the considered interaction. In particular:

where K is a constant and l is *unrolled ray length* (from Tx). γ_r is generally much lower then $γ_d$ and $γ_s$, and plus descreases with d, i.e. with tree depth.

The view tree (5/5)

- It is therefore evident that N_{ev} alone does not determine CPU time. It is mainly the number of successive diffraction or scattering events out of $N_{\rm ev}$ total successive events, that determines CPU time.
- It is advisable to set separate upper limits to the different kinds of events, and keep the diffraction or scattering ones as low as possible (see "The control string")
- The radio link is reciprocal but ray tracing is not. Since the number of traced rays is limited, then starting tree computation from one terminal can lead to a different computing path than starting from the other terminal \rightarrow different CPU time and slightly different output results
- Environment size, i.e. the total number of buildings or objects determines the shape of the tree, in particular the growing rate of the tree for large values of N_{ev} .
- Moreover, the greater environment size, the higher visibility scanning time, thus total view-tree computation time

RT Computation Basics

The Ray Tracing (RT) algorithm is organised in 4 different steps:

Pre-processing of objects

removal from the environment of all objects which are certainly invisible and selection of the "potentially" visible objects

Visibility of selected objects

These two steps are repeated *recursively* each time that a new node

(i.e. a "Virtual TX", see further) is added to the "view tree".

Then, the following steps are:

- The *RT refinement* procedure
- The *computation* of the *field* carried by the current ray

These last two steps are executed each time that a Rx is found (i.e. a "leaf" of the view tree is created).

Pre-processing for outdoor (1)

- Some "visibility relations" between the walls (or between the TX and each wall) of the scenario are a priori known.
- The knowledge of these relations can be exploited in wall order to simplify the visibility L in the manufacture. $L = \frac{\hat{\mathbf{n}}_4 \times \hat{\mathbf{n}}_5}{\text{wall 4}}$ $\hat{\mathbf{n}}_{5}$ $\sqrt{\text{wall}^2}$ w all 3 w all^{5} not visible if For istance: $-\frac{\pi}{2} < \arccos(\hat{\mathbf{n}}_i \cdot \hat{\mathbf{n}}_i) < 0$ in L

 wall 3 and wall 4 are not visible from wall 1, while wall 2 and wall 5 are visible

• wall 2 is visible from the TX $(\hat{\mathbf{n}}_{TX}$ is obtained connecting the TX and the barycentre of wall 2)

Pre-processing for outdoor

- Reflection and scattering: all the objects which do not lie in the *half space* pointed to by the normal are not visible, and then are not considered in the visibility algorithm.
- Diffraction: all the objects which do not lie in the zone external to the (convex) edge are not visible.

The Problem of 3D Visibility

- 3D visibility is a quite complex problem
- Each wall can be modelled as a polygon, and the *visible portion* of a wall is the result of the superposition of many obstructing objects
- The *visible portion* of a single wall (i.e. the "visible polygon") depends not only on the size of the wall, but also on the distance from the view point (i.e. the TX or a Virtual TX) \rightarrow "*Polygon clipping*" algorithms

Virtual TX

- When a new object is seen, a new node is inserted in the view tree.
- According to the "Image RT" method, each node of the view tree corresponds to a Virtual TX (VTX).
- Whenever a node is processed, the spherical reference system (r, θ, φ) centred in the VTX is adopted.
- The position of the VTX w.r.t. the visible object depends on the interaction mechanism. For instance:
	- \triangleright The reflection VTX is the reflected image of the previous (V)TX w.r.t. the wall plane.
	- \triangleright The diffraction VTX lies on the edge, and conventionally can be positioned in the middle point of the edge (the actual diffraction point is determined at the end of the process…)
	- \triangleright The scattering VTX is assumed conventionally in the barycentre of the considered portion of the wall.

Virtual TXs and Visibility Angles for different propagation mechanisms

The "RT refinement" Procedure

- **c** diffraction points on edges can only be exactly determined after view-tree fill-up (when a Rx is reached)
- •• If the considered ray undergos diffractions and reflections, then also reflection points can only be determined after visibility.

If is then necessary to exactly determine the cited interaction points starting from the Rx and backtracking the ray until the Tx is reached. (*backtracking*)

- There are known, fixed points:
	- \triangleright Tx and Rx positions
	- \triangleright Scattering points (conventionally in the barycentre of each wall element)

The field computation Procedure (1)

- Once all interaction points have been determined then ray field can be computed.
- The far field emitted in the generic point $P(r,\theta,\varphi)$ from the Tx antenna can be computed through the input signal (not only power) as:

$$
\vec{E}_T(r, \theta_T, \phi_T) = I_T \cdot \sqrt{\frac{Z_T \cdot \eta \cdot g_T(\theta_T, \phi_T)}{16\pi}} \cdot \frac{e^{-j\beta r}}{r} \cdot \hat{p}_T(\theta_T, \phi_T) = \vec{E}_{T0}(\theta_T, \phi_T) \cdot \frac{e^{-j\beta r}}{r} \tag{2}
$$

where Z_T is the impedance of the antenna, I_T is the current phasor feeding the antenna, g_T the antenna gain function, h is the intrinsic impedance of the medium, $\beta = 2\pi/\lambda$ is the wave number and \hat{p}_T is the antenna polarization vector.

- Formula (2) is only valid in free space, can therefore be applied only to the direct ray, with no interactions.
- When interactions occur the already explained procedure of multiplication with the interaction dyadic and re-formulation of the spreading factor must be applied, see following slide.

The field computation Procedure (2)

Considering also interactions the k-th ray field is:

$$
\vec{E}_{R}^{k} = A_{k} \left(s_{\ell}, \ell = 0, 1, 2, ..., N_{EV}^{k} \right) \cdot \left[\prod_{\ell = \min \{1, N_{EV}^{k}\}}^{N_{EV}^{k}} \underline{\underline{D}}_{\ell} \right] \cdot \vec{E}_{T0}^{k} \left(\theta_{T}^{k}, \phi_{T}^{k} \right) e^{-j\beta s^{k}} \quad (*)
$$

where:

 $\triangleright N_{EV}^k$ is the number of events experienced by the k-th ray \triangleright s_l is the length of the l-th segment composing the k-th path $\sum_{s^k = \sum_{i=1}^{N_E V} s_i^k}$ is the total, unfolded length of the k-th ray *k*=1 N_{EV}^{k} \sum

- $\triangleright \underline{D}_{\ell}$ is the appropriate dyadic to decompose the field into orthogonal polarizations at the ℓ -th interaction point, and includes the interaction coefficients $\frac{D}{\cdot}$
- \triangleright A_k is the overall *spreading factor*

The field computation Procedure (3)

• Once the field for each ray has been computed it is necessary to take into account pattern and polarization of the Rx antenna to compute the Rx signal

k-th ray
$$
\left(\theta_R^k, \phi_R^k\right)
$$
 \longrightarrow \longrightarrow $\begin{array}{c}\n\mathbf{X} \\
\mathbf{X}\n\end{array}$ \equiv $I_R^k \left(\vec{E}_R^k\right) \downarrow \longrightarrow \begin{array}{c}\n\mathbf{X} \\
\downarrow \\
\mathbf{Y}_R\n\end{array}$

The current phasor induced in the RX antenna by the k-th ray can be computed as (Reciprocity Theorem):

$$
I_R^k = -j\lambda \sqrt{\frac{\Re e(Y_R)g_R(\theta_R^k, \phi_R^k)}{\pi \eta}} \left\{ \vec{p}_R(\theta_R^k, \phi_R^k) \cdot \vec{E}_R^k \right\}
$$

where $Y_R = 1/Z_R$ and the subscript "R" refers to the Rx antenna. are the arrival angles of the considered ray in the Rx-based local coordinate system. $\left(\theta_R^k, \phi_R^k \right)$

The field computation Procedure (4)

• If there is perfect impedance matching between the Rx antenna and the Rx circuitry then received power becomes:

$$
P_R = \frac{\left|I_R^{TOT}\right|^2}{8 \cdot \Re e\left(Y_R\right)}
$$

Therefore, the total coherent power can be expressed as:

$$
P_R = \frac{\left|I_R^{tot}\right|^2}{8 \cdot \Re e\left(Y_R\right)} = \frac{\left|\sum_{k=1}^N I_R^k\right|^2}{8 \cdot \Re e\left(Y_R\right)} = \frac{\left|\sum_{k=1}^N \left(-j\lambda \sqrt{\frac{\Re e\left(Y_R\right)g_R\left(\theta_R^k, \phi_R^k\right)}{\pi \eta}} \left\{\bar{p}_R\left(\theta_R^k, \phi_R^k\right) \cdot \vec{E}_R^k\right\}\right|^2}{8 \cdot \Re e\left(Y_R\right)}
$$

where g_R and \vec{p}_R are the antenna gain and the polarization vector of the RX antenna evaluated in the arrival direction of each incoming ray.

The field computation Procedure (5)

Developing the above expression, and simplifying the RX antenna conductance, we obtain:

$$
P_R = \frac{\lambda^2}{8\pi\eta} \cdot \left| \sum_{k=1}^N \left(f_R \left(\theta_R^k, \phi_R^k \right) \cdot \left\{ \vec{p}_R \left(\theta_R^k, \phi_R^k \right) \cdot \vec{E}_R^k \right\} \right) \right|^2 \tag{1}
$$

where $f_R(\theta, \phi) = \sqrt{g(\theta, \phi)}$ is the "radiation function" of the RX antenna. Assuming a 2-ray model (i.e. direct ray + terrain reflection) and supposing perfect polarization matching between the incident field and the RX antenna eq. (1) becomes:

$$
P_R = \frac{1}{2\eta} \cdot \left| \vec{E}_1 f_R(\theta_1, \phi_1) + \vec{E}_2 f_R(\theta_2, \phi_2) \right|^2 \cdot \frac{\lambda^2}{4\pi}
$$

If only the direct path exists, the eq. 1 reduces to the well known equation:

$$
P_R = \frac{\left|\vec{E}\right|^2}{2\eta} \cdot \frac{\lambda^2}{4\pi} g\left(\theta_R, \phi_R\right) = \frac{\left|\vec{E}\right|^2}{2\eta} \cdot A_{\text{eff}}\left(\theta_R, \phi_R\right)
$$

The field computation Procedure (6)

Due to the incoherent nature of ORT and diffused rays, ORT rays and all rays undergoing at least one diffuse scattering interaction are usually assumed "incoherent".

For incoherent rays, only the module of the field carried by the ray can be estimated (through an incoherent version of formula (**), using incoherent scattering coefficients).

The overall incoherent power can be computed as :

$$
P_{incoherent} = \sum_{k=1}^{N_{inc}} \frac{\left| E_{inc}^k \left(\theta_R^k, \phi_R^k \right) \right|^2}{2\eta} A_{eff} \left(\theta_R^k, \phi_R^k \right)
$$

Finally, the incoherent rays power $P_{\text{incoherent}}$ is summed to the coherent rays power PR (see previous slides) obtaining therefore the total received power:

$$
P_R^{tot}(Rx) = P_R + P_{incoherent}
$$

Example of output file

File *pdp* gives all the useful geometric and electromagnetic information for each ray, including ray trajectory, field, power, delay, angle of arrival and departure, etc.

