Prospective CO₂ saline resource estimation methodology: Refinement of existing US-DOE-NETL methods based on data availability

Angela Goodman*, Sean Sanguinito, Jonathan S. Levine

United States Department of Energy, National Energy Technology Laboratory, P.O. Box 10940, Pittsburgh, PA 15236, United States

A R T I C L E   I N F O

Article history:
Received 31 May 2016
Received in revised form 2 September 2016
Accepted 9 September 2016

Keywords:
CO₂ resource estimation
CO₂ sequestration
Geologic storage
Saline formations
Data availability

A B S T R A C T

Carbon storage resource estimation in subsurface saline formations plays an important role in establishing the scale of carbon capture and storage activities for governmental policy and commercial project decision-making. Prospective CO₂ resource estimation of large regions or sub-regions, such as a basin, occurs at the initial screening stages of a project using only limited publicly available geophysical data, i.e. prior to project-specific site selection data generation. As the scale of investigation is narrowed and selected areas and formations are identified, prospective CO₂ resource estimation can be refined and uncertainty narrowed when site-specific geophysical data are available. Here, we refine the United States Department of Energy – National Energy Technology Laboratory (US-DOE-NETL) methodology as the scale of investigation is narrowed from very large regional assessments down to selected areas and formations that may be developed for commercial storage. In addition, we present a new notation that explicitly identifies differences between data availability and data sources used for geologic parameters and efficiency factors as the scale of investigation is narrowed. This CO₂ resource estimation method is available for screening formations in a tool called CO₂-SCREEN.

Published by Elsevier Ltd.

1. Introduction

Since 2007, the United States Department of Energy – National Energy Technology Laboratory (US-DOE-NETL) Carbon Storage Program and the Regional Carbon Sequestration Partnerships (RCSPs) have developed a series of Carbon Atlases approximately biannually (US-DOE-NETL, 2007, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2015). Within each Carbon Atlas, prospective CO₂ storage resources are quantified for the United States and parts of Canada and Mexico. As stated in the first Carbon Atlas (US-DOE-NETL, 2007), “The purpose of storage estimates developed using these methodologies is to provide a high-level inventory of the subsurface volume to store CO₂ in the United States and Canada. This information can be used by the general public, elected officials, and planners.” Goodman et al. (2011) presented the US-DOE-NETL CO₂ storage resource estimation methodologies and methods for deep saline formations, depleted conventional oil and gas reservoirs, and unmineable coal seams, and Levine et al. (2016) presented a methodology for shale formations. Methods, their updates, and the overall methodologies are also contained in the Carbon Atlases, with revisions being adopted as improvements are made to reduce uncertainties in resource estimation. Extensive information regarding carbon storage practices can also be found in the US-DOE-NETL Carbon Storage Best Practices Manuals (US-DOE-NETL, 2013). Other groups such as the Unites States Geological Survey (USGS) and Carbon Sequestration Leadership Forum (CSLF) have also presented CO₂ storage assessment methods (Bachu, 2008; Zhou et al., 2008; Burruiss et al., 2009; Brennan et al., 2010; Szuńczewski et al., 2012; Blondes et al., 2013).

The US-DOE-NETL resource estimation methodology for saline formations uses a volumetric-based approach, whereby the maximum available pore volume is calculated from known or estimated geologic and reservoir parameters. This initial volume is then reduced by applying efficiency factors to represent practical and physical limitations, e.g. unfavorable geology or uncertainties in multiphase transport processes (Goodman et al., 2011). An efficiency factor is applied to gauge the fraction of the total pore volume that will be accessible to CO₂ storage.

The US-DOE-NETL methods are intended for application by interested users globally, and are therefore purposefully relatively simple. At initial stages of exploration of large regions or sub-regions, such as a sedimentary basin, prospective resource estimation relies on limited or unavailable geologic data. Therefore, assumptions must be made regarding formation and petrophysical
properties either from sparse geophysical data or by extrapolation from regional or national data. As the scale of investigation is narrowed down to a selected area that might be developed for commercial storage, more detailed geologic characteristics of the target storage formation may become available. These higher resolution geologic data provide the opportunity to refine prospective storage estimates and reduce associated uncertainty. A comparison study showed that uncertainties in geological properties cause greater impact on prospective storage resource estimates than the choice of estimation method (Goodman et al., 2013). Other research groups have worked to refine prospective storage estimates when detailed geologic properties are available and identified a need for procedures to reduce uncertainty in storage estimates as more geologic data are available (Frailley and Finley, 2009; Ellett et al., 2013; Liu et al., 2013; Peck et al., 2014). Currently no method or standard exists that quantifies and reduces uncertainty that comes with increased geological data as prospective storage resource is refined from large regional or sub-regional assessments to selected area or specific site assessments (Goodman et al., 2011; Blondes et al., 2013).

In this paper, we first provide an overview of the US-DOE-NETL saline resource estimation methodology for screening potential regions and sub-regions. Then, we emphasize how the availability of geologic data changes the choice of datasets used to generate petro-physical parameters and efficiency factor values. These underlying principles are then used to present refinements and improvements to the existing methodologies for prospective resource estimation. Specifically, we refine the United States Department of Energy – National Energy Technology Laboratory (US-DOE-NETL) methodology as the scale of investigation is narrowed from very large regional assessments down to selected areas and formations that may be developed for commercial storage. In addition, we present a new notation that explicitly identifies differences between data availability and data sources used for geologic parameters and efficiency factors as the scale of investigation is narrowed. Finally, this refined CO$_2$ storage resource estimation method is made publicly available in a tool named CO$_2$-SCREEN to calculate prospective CO$_2$ storage resource (Sanguinito et al., 2016).

2. Data availability and scale of investigation

Screening methods for large regions or sub-regions, such as a sedimentary basin, are designed to produce likely estimates of storage resource that are needed for broad energy-related requirements and climate stabilization (Bachu, 2015). As estimates are further refined based on improved geologic interpretation, resource assessments should progress from coarse volumetric screening approaches towards more precise numerical-based modeling to predict CO$_2$ storage resource. This is analogous to the methodology process used by the oil and gas industry. Gorecki et al. (2015) also advised parallels with the oil and gas industry for refining storage estimates. Initial CO$_2$ storage efficiency factors for regional scale assessments are designed to produce most likely estimates for the total region being assessed and are then refined as specific subsets of the total region are being assessed when more detailed information becomes available. Bachu (2015), Gorecki et al. (2015) and Thibeau et al. (2014) emphasized the fact that the oil and gas industry needed more than a hundred years to advance to secondary recovery (pressure maintenance), followed by tertiary recovery (enhanced oil recovery) and that CO$_2$ storage may follow a similar path, optimizing to commercial scale storage (Green and Willhite, 1998).

When estimating prospective CO$_2$ storage, regional geologic data, regional site data, and social data (defined below and detailed in Table 1) should be considered (US-DOE-NETL, 2013). Regional geologic data are analyzed to identify geologic formations suitable for storage at depths capable of maintaining CO$_2$ in a dense state with one or more impermeable confining layers to contain the CO$_2$ and protect Underground Sources of Drinking Water (USDW) (US-DOE-NETL, 2013). Regional site data should consider any proximity issues to the storage area in terms of protected and sensitive areas, population centers, and available resources (US-DOE-NETL, 2013). Social data considers public implications such as land ownership, pore space ownership, permitting and approval processes, and government structures (US-DOE-NETL, 2013). Specifically, demographic trends and land use should be evaluated and considered.

Data availability and specificity vary considerably from very large regional assessments down to selected areas that may be developed for commercial storage. While the framework for the volumetric equation and screening criteria are similar, the level of detail, data availability, and data sources at a selected area will be much greater than what is available for very large regions. For regional estimates, geologic data are typically limited, unavailable, or poorly distributed creating inherent uncertainty. Assumptions must be made regarding formation and petrophysical properties either from sparse, location-specific geophysical data or by geostatistical extrapolation from regional or national data. As selected areas and formations are identified, prospective resource estimates will be refined based on confirmation of existing data analysis and enhanced with additional subsurface geologic data analyzed by advanced geologic and geostatistical techniques.

3. Methodology vs. method

The distinction between a methodology and a method is important for the purposes of this paper. A methodology is a body of methods, rules, and conceptual modes of thinking that provide the theoretical basis underlying an analysis. By comparison, a method is a particular application of a methodology, with a specific and defined algorithm for computing a particular number. For example, the US-DOE-NETL resource estimation methodology for saline formations is a volumetric analysis, meaning that it is based on estimating the fraction of a given volume that can be filled with CO$_2$ while the method consists of a specific equation with specific geologic terms and efficiency values determined in a specific manner that are applied to estimate prospective storage (Goodman et al., 2011).

4. US-DOE-NETL methodology and method for screening potential regions and sub-regions

The US-DOE methodology and method is detailed in a previous paper and describes how to screen potential sub-regions, such as a sedimentary basin, by estimating the CO$_2$ prospective storage resource (Goodman et al., 2011). The method is intended to be applied to a region of interest when subsurface geologic data are sparse and limited. The total pore volume available for CO$_2$ storage is estimated by using average values for geologic properties such as total formation area, gross thickness, and total porosity. An efficiency factor is applied to gauge the fraction of the total pore volume that will be accessible to CO$_2$ storage at a regional to national scale.

For CO$_2$ storage, the region selected will contain saline formations which are composed of water-saturated, porous rock sealed by one or more regionally extensive low-permeability caprock formations. A saline aquifer is defined by the EPA as containing formation water with a total dissolved solids (TDS) content greater than 10,000 parts per million or ppm (EPA, 2010). The region defined for CO$_2$ storage may include one or multiple formations. Even with limited geologic characterization, there is a reasonable
Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Guidelines for site screening</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regional Geologic Data:</td>
<td>Injection Formation(s)</td>
<td>Identify regional and sub-regional injection formation types. Utilize readily accessible data from public sources (e.g., state geological surveys, NATCARB, the Regional Sequestration Partnerships, published and open-file literature, academic sources) or acquired from private firms. Data gathered should include regional lithology maps, injection zone data (thickness, porosity, permeability), structural maps, information about structure closure and features that might compartmentalize the reservoir such as stratigraphic pinch outs, regional type logs, offset logs, petrophysical data, and regional seismicity maps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsurface Data Analysis</td>
<td>Adequate Depth</td>
<td>Assessment of minimum depth of the injection zone to protect USDWs is required; in addition depths greater than 800 m generally indicate CO2 will be in a supercritical state and may be more cost-effectively stored. Shallow depths (generally &lt;800 m) may add to the risk profile because (1) CO2 could be in gas phase and (2) the injection zone may be closer to USDW.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Confining Zone</td>
<td>Candidate injection zones should be overlain by a confining zone comprised of one or more thick and impermeable confining intervals of sufficient lateral extent to cover the projected aerial extent of the injected CO2. Confining zones can be identified on a regional basis from the same types of information used to identify injection formations. Wells that penetrate potential confining zones should be identified and included in the risk assessment; this information can be obtained from state oil and gas regulatory agencies. Faulting and folding information that may impact confining zone integrity should be mapped along with potential communication pathways. Confining zone integrity may be validated by presence of nearby hydrocarbon accumulations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prospective Storage Resources</td>
<td>Candidate CO2 storage formations should contain sufficient Prospective Storage Resources beneath a robust confining zone for the volume of CO2 estimated during Project Definition and the displaced fluids while maintaining acceptable pressure limits. Prospective Storage Resources (and injectivity if permeability data are available) should be estimated at the sub-regional scale utilizing existing data (e.g., NATCARB, and state geological surveys) to populate basic numerical models.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Site Data:</td>
<td>Regional Proximity Analysis</td>
<td>Identify environmentally sensitive areas using U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Department of Interior, U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Bureau of Land Management GIS systems. Assess the potential for conflicts with siting of pipeline routes, field compressors and injection wells. In addition, evaluate potential for other surface sensitivities utilizing maps for other hazards (e.g., flood, landslide, and tsunami).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Protected and Sensitive Areas</td>
<td>Identify environmentally sensitive areas using U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Department of Interior, U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Bureau of Land Management GIS systems. Assess the potential for conflicts with siting of pipeline routes, field compressors and injection wells. In addition, evaluate potential for other surface sensitivities utilizing maps for other hazards (e.g., flood, landslide, and tsunami).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Population Centers</td>
<td>Identify population centers using state and federal census data. Assess the potential for conflicts with siting of carbon storage projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Existing Resource Development</td>
<td>Identify existing resource development, including wells that penetrate the confining zone, using data from state and federal oil and gas, coal, mining and UIC and natural resource management offices. Assess the potential for conflicts between siting of carbon storage projects and existing or prospective mineral leases as well as the availability of complementary or competing infrastructure. Identify all pipelines and gathering lines/systems. Assess potential for conflicts in routing of pipelines to carbon storage projects as well as the potential for use or access to existing pipeline right-of-ways (ROWs). Identify other ROWs (e.g., power lines, RR's highways) and assess potential for synergies or conflicts in siting carbon storage projects. This data can be found through government sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pipeline ROWs</td>
<td>Identify all pipelines and gathering lines/systems. Assess potential for conflicts in routing of pipelines to carbon storage projects as well as the potential for use or access to existing pipeline right-of-ways (ROWs). Identify other ROWs (e.g., power lines, RR's highways) and assess potential for synergies or conflicts in siting carbon storage projects. This data can be found through government sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Data:</td>
<td>Demographic Trends</td>
<td>Describe communities above and near candidate Sub-Regions by evaluating readily available demographic data and media sources. To the extent possible, assess public perceptions of carbon storage and related issues; develop an understanding of local economic and industrial trends; and begin to identify opinion leaders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Context Analysis</td>
<td>Land Use: Industrial and</td>
<td>Describe the trends in land use, industrial development and environmental impacts in communities above or near candidate Sub-Regions by evaluating sources such as online media sites, regulatory agencies, corporate websites, local environmental group websites, and other sources. Begin to assess community sensitivities to land use and the environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Environmental History</td>
<td>Describe the trends in land use, industrial development and environmental impacts in communities above or near candidate Sub-Regions by evaluating sources such as online media sites, regulatory agencies, corporate websites, local environmental group websites, and other sources. Begin to assess community sensitivities to land use and the environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete Site Screening</td>
<td>Selected Area</td>
<td>Develop a list of potential Selected Areas and rank based on criteria established in Project Definition.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The degree of confidence that the selected region will meet the following criteria: (1) pressure and temperature conditions in the saline formation are adequate to keep the CO2 in a supercritical state, which requires hydrostatic pressures that typically occur at or below a depth of 800 m; (2) a suitable seal system, such as a caprock, is present to limit vertical flow of the CO2 to the surface; and (3) a combination of hydrogeologic boundary and low flow conditions will isolate the CO2 within the saline formation as a limited plume.

The volumetric approach to estimate prospective mass CO2 storage resource (GCO2) for geologic storage in saline formations is described by Eq. (1) and Table 2:

\[ G_{CO2} = A_i h \phi_i \rho_{s}\text{saline} \]  

(1)
Table 2
Definition of parameters used in Eq. (1) for estimating prospective CO₂ storage resources in saline formations for potential regions and sub-regions (Goodman et al., 2011).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>Units</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G&lt;sub&gt;CO₂&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Mass estimate of saline formation CO₂ storage resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A&lt;sub&gt;t&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>L&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Geographical area that defines the basin or region being assessed for CO₂ storage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h&lt;sub&gt;s&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>Gross thickness of saline formations for which CO₂ storage is assessed within the basin or region defined by A&lt;sub&gt;t&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>φ&lt;sub&gt;s&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>L&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;/L&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Total porosity in volume defined by the net thickness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ρ</td>
<td>M/L&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Density of CO₂ evaluated at pressure and temperature that represents storage conditions anticipated for a specific geologic unit averaged over h&lt;sub&gt;s&lt;/sub&gt; and A&lt;sub&gt;t&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E&lt;sub&gt;saline&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>L&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;/L&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>CO₂ storage efficiency factor that reflects a fraction of the total pore volume that is filled by CO₂</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup> L is length; M is mass.

In this approach, geologic data are assumed to be limited, thus the total area (A<sub>t</sub>), gross thickness (h<sub>s</sub>), and total porosity (φ<sub>s</sub>) of the formation are multiplied to account for the total bulk volume of pore space available (Eq. (1) and Table 2). CO₂ density (ρ) is estimated at storage depth using temperature and pressure and converts the CO₂ reservoir volume to mass. At this level of screening, average, deterministic values for A<sub>t</sub>, h<sub>s</sub>, φ<sub>s</sub>, and ρ are applied in the equation. Storage efficiency (E<sub>saline</sub>) reduces the total pore volume that will be accessible to CO₂ storage at a regional to national scale. Efficiency factors were estimated by stochastic methods for the following three lithologic classes: clastics, dolomites, and limestones and range between 0.40 and 5.5% over the 10th–90th percent probability range. It is important to note that efficiency factors are not solely dependent upon lithology and that other factors such as depositional environment, formation structure, formation depth, and other parameters need to be considered when estimating storage efficiency (Blondes et al., 2013; Szulczewski and Juanes, 2009).

5. US-DOE-NETL methodology and method for screening selected areas

5.1. Methodology for estimating prospective CO₂ storage resource of selected areas

As presented here, the refined US-DOE-NETL methodology for selected areas, such as a formation, identifies pore space available for CO₂ storage based on increased data availability and advanced geologic interpretation. The volumetric approach to estimate prospective mass CO₂ storage resource (G) of the selected area, such as a formation, is described by Eqs. (2) and (3) and Table 3:

\[ G = A^4 h^1 \phi^1 \rho^1 E_{\text{saline}}^s \quad (2) \]

and

\[ E_{\text{saline}}^s = E_1^s E_2^s E_3^s E_4^s E_5^s \quad (3) \]

Superscripts (d) and (s) are used herein to denote whether a variable is treated deterministically (d) or stochastically (s). In this approach, geologic data are assumed to be available, allowing variables with sufficient data to be treated stochastically and be defined by the data available. Area (A<sup>4</sup>) defines the geophysical area of the formation that will be assessed for CO₂ storage, thickness (h<sup>1</sup>) defines the thickness of the formation for CO₂ storage defined by (A<sup>4</sup>), and porosity (φ<sup>1</sup>) is the pore space in the formation defined by (A<sup>4</sup>). CO₂ density (ρ<sup>1</sup>) is evaluated at h<sup>1</sup> pressure and temperature that represents storage conditions for A<sup>4</sup> and h<sup>1</sup>. Storage efficiency (E<sub>saline</sub>^s) reflects a fraction of the total pore volume that is filled by CO₂. The net-to-total area term (E<sub>1</sub>^s) represents the fraction of the geologic area accessible for CO₂ storage at the top of the formation, the net-to-gross thickness (E<sub>2</sub>^s) term represents the fraction of thickness of the formation of interest that will be accessible for CO₂ storage, the effective-to-total porosity (E<sub>3</sub>^s) term represents the fraction of total porosity that can effectively store CO₂, the volumetric displacement (E<sub>4</sub>^s) term represents the combined fraction of immediate volume surrounding an injection well that can be contacted by CO₂ and the fraction of net thickness that is contacted by CO₂ as a consequence of the density difference between CO₂ and in-situ water, and the microscopic displacement term (E<sub>5</sub>^s) represents the fraction of pore space unavailable due to immobile in-situ fluids which is typically residual water saturation.

In this refined method for selected areas, such as a formation, A<sup>4</sup> is treated deterministically and h<sup>1</sup>, φ<sup>1</sup>, ρ<sup>1</sup>, and E<sub>saline</sub>^s are treated stochastically. For h<sup>1</sup>, φ<sup>1</sup>, and ρ<sup>1</sup> the mean and standard deviation are calculated based on available geologic data and an appropriate distribution is selected that best represents the geologic interpretation (SPE/WPC, 2001). Storage efficiency (E<sub>saline</sub>^s) is estimated by Monte Carlo sampling where E<sub>1</sub>^s, E<sub>2</sub>^s, E<sub>3</sub>^s, E<sub>4</sub>^s, and E<sub>5</sub>^s are based on geologic properties of the formation instead of extrapolated values from national or regional data.

For selected areas (i.e. a formation) – area, thickness, and porosity can be constrained by more detailed geologic interpretation such as identifying zones of higher porosity within the formation and the presence of low porosity zones occluded by secondary minerals or non-mobile fluid saturation. The area (A<sup>4</sup>) of the potential storage unit is treated deterministically and should be well defined at this phase of a CO₂ storage project. Thickness (h<sup>1</sup>) and porosity (φ<sup>1</sup>) should be represented stochastically with a probability distribution (i.e. log-normal) that best represents available data and geologic interpretation. Thickness and porosity data points may not be evenly distributed across the formation and may be spatially grouped, requiring the use of geostatistics to interpolate between data points (Jensen et al., 2000; Diggle and Ribeiro, 2007; Webster and Oliver, 2007; Brennan et al., 2010). Oil and gas industry guidance on selecting distribution functions, recommends that distribution choice be based on the best fit to the geologic data (SPEE, 1988, 2001). Normal, lognormal, or other appropriate probability distributions are selected to reflect underlying uncertainty in the data. Triangular distributions are useful when data are extremely limited. A uniform distribution is applied when a probability distribution cannot be determined (SPE/WPC, 2001; Demirören, 2007). CO₂ density in the storage formation should be based on in-situ conditions of pressure and temperature and be treated stochastically (Ellis and Singer, 2008).

5.2. Storage efficiency

A recent review article by Bachu (2015) summarizes the development of CO₂ storage efficiency estimations in deep saline formations since 2007. Storage efficiency represents the pore space
Table 3
Definition of parameters used in Eqs. (2) and (3) for estimating prospective CO₂ storage resources in saline formations for selected areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Mass estimate of saline formation CO₂ storage resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A²</td>
<td>Geographical area that defines the formation being assessed for CO₂ storage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h²</td>
<td>Thickness of saline formation for which CO₂ storage is assessed as defined by A²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>φr</td>
<td>Porosity is the volume of void space per volume of rock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iρ</td>
<td>Density of CO₂ evaluated at pressure and temperature that represents storage conditions anticipated for a specific geologic unit averaged over h² and A²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E_v titan</td>
<td>CO₂ storage efficiency factor that reflects a fraction of the total pore volume that is filled by CO₂</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Geologic terms used to define the selected area pore volume

- **Eₐ¹**: Net-to-Total Area: Fraction of the geologic area accessible for CO₂ storage at the top of the formation
- **Eₚ¹**: Net-to-Total Thickness: Fraction of thickness of the formation of interest that will be accessible for CO₂ storage
- **Eₚ₂**: Effective-to-Total Porosity: fraction of total porosity that can effectively store CO₂

Displacement terms used to define the pore volume immediately surrounding a single well CO₂ injector

- **Eₚ⊥¹**: Volumetric Displacement Efficiency: Combined fraction of immediate volume surrounding an injection well that can be contacted by CO₂ and the fraction of net thickness that is contacted by CO₂ as a consequence of the density difference between CO₂ and in-situ water
- **Eₚ²**: Microscopic Displacement Efficiency: Fraction of pore space unavailable due to immobile in-situ fluids (typically residual water saturation)

accessible to CO₂. Not all pore space will come in contact with CO₂ or be saturated by CO₂ due to geologic heterogeneity, and occupied pore volume depends on properties of the storage formation and seal, storage operations, and regulatory and legal constraints. Efficiency factors also vary temporally and spatially, and it is important to note that the scale of the assessment also affects the storage efficiency. When screening large regions or sub-regions, efficiency factors are smaller as the region of interest is not well characterized. For selected areas and specific sites, efficiency factors will approach 1 as more detailed geologic analysis and tools are available to screen portions amenable to CO₂ storage and reductions in pore volume are incorporated in storage parameters A², h², and φr rather than corresponding efficiency factors. In general, efficiency factors should be based on documented geologic interpretation as there is not a standard set of efficiency factors available. Bachu (2015) concluded that storage efficiency values have a large range, between <1 to >10%.

In US-DOE-NETL storage methods, storage efficiency is estimated after CO₂ injection is completed by a log odds approach using Monte Carlo sampling where the low and high estimated probability values are based on the P₁₀ and P₉₀ confidence interval (Goodman et al., 2011). Statistical inputs to predict appropriate efficiency factors are currently available from the database created by the International Energy Agency (IEA) (GHC, 2009). This database supplies ranges of variables needed to calculate storage efficiency for different lithologies and depositional environments based on numerical simulations of oil and gas reservoir field data. It is important to note that while statistical ranges for efficiency factors are available for lithology and depositional environment, other factors such as geologic structure (i.e. anticlines, synclines, and domes), formation depth, and other parameters need to be considered when estimating prospective storage resources. It is best to rely on intrinsic geologic properties when assigning statistical ranges for storage efficiency.

For selected areas, the efficiency term Eₚ² includes any processes or limiting criteria that occur on the horizontal scale, while the thickness efficiency term, Eₚ¹, incorporates any vertical processes. Porosity efficiency (Eₚ²) modifies porosity for the selected area. The efficiency term Eₚ titan represents a reduction in the available storage area from a map view perspective of the formation after considering subsurface data analysis, regional proximity analysis, and social context analysis (see Table 1) (US-DOE-NETL, 2010). Factors to consider include: injection formation type, protected and sensitive areas, population centers, existing resource development, pipeline right-of-ways, demographic trends, and land use history (see Table 1). The efficiency term, Eₚ titan represents limits placed on storage as a function of depth. Factors to consider are as follows: injection formation characteristics such as porosity and permeability heterogeneities, lithology, structure, seismicity; depth requirements for supercritical or liquid CO₂ storage; and whether an adequate confining zone is present (See Table 1). These efficiency terms, therefore, include the large scale distinctions defined in Table 1 that are not already accounted for in the geologic analysis of area (A²), thickness (h²), and porosity (φr) which further reduce the volume accessible for CO₂ storage.

Based on the confidence and completeness of the geologic information available for (A²), (h²), and (φr), efficiency terms for (Eₚ¹), (Eₚ²), and (Eₚ titan) may not be needed. If the geologic analysis and interpretation is complete and the pore volume available to CO₂ storage has been identified, the efficiency term(s) can be eliminated by assigning the appropriate factor(s) equal to one. If the geologic data set and analysis are partially complete, a user specified efficiency range may be applied for area (Eₚ¹), thickness (Eₚ²), and porosity (Eₚ titan) based on the intrinsic geologic properties available and further geologic interpretation.

The volumetric efficiency term (Eₚ⊥¹) captures the “sweep efficiency” defined as the fraction of a given well-scale or multi-well field-scale volume efficiency relative to the ideal efficiency of perfect displacement of the connate fluid. It includes various complex processes occurring at a variety of scales including multi-well geometry and pressure management, gravity/buoyancy effects, multiphase fluid saturation gradients as a function of radial and vertical distance, pore-scale petrophysics, and wettability-controlled pore-scale fluid occupancy and saturation. All these processes are tied to relative permeability and fluid mobility, which are often hysteretic functions of brine drainage and post-drainage re-imbibition. The displacement efficiency term, Eₚ⊥², captures the fraction of the CO₂ contacted, water-filled pore volume that can be replaced by CO₂. Ranges for Eₚ⊥¹ and Eₚ⊥² should only be modified with detailed reservoir simulation results when well or field data are available.

5.3. Method for estimating prospective CO₂ storage resource of selected areas (CO₂-SCREEN method and tool)

CO₂-SCREEN (CO₂ Storage Prospective Resource Estimation Excel aNalysis) is an Excel based method and tool developed by the US-DOE-NETL to screen geologic formations by applying the aforementioned refined US-DOE-NETL methodology for selected areas.
CO₂-SCREEN is a tool designed to calculate prospective CO₂ storage resources for geologic formations from very large regional assessments down to selected areas that may be developed for commercial storage. This tool provides an interactive version of the US-DOE-NETL methodology described in this paper for refining prospective CO₂ storage resource in saline formations based on increased data availability and advanced geologic interpretation. CO₂-SCREEN is free and available for public use and can be accessed live on the NETL Energy Data eXchange (EDX) website (https://edx.netl.doe.gov/organization/co2-screen) (Sanguinito et al., 2016).
The following is a brief example of how to use the CO2-SCREEN tool but users are encouraged to see Sanguinito et al. (2016) for a comprehensive guide on using CO2-SCREEN and its capabilities. An example input scenario for a synthetic formation named the Example Formation is shown in Fig. 1. The first step in using CO2-SCREEN is entering general information (Fig. 1, Box 1). Next, a user has the option of choosing a lithology and depositional environment associated with their formation. Here, a clastics lithology and shallow shelf depositional environment are chosen for the Example Formation (Fig. 1, Box 2). This choice auto-populates P10 and P90 values for all five efficiency factors based on ranges calculated by the IEA (GHG, 2009). Users have the option of foregoing the auto-populated values and inputting their own P10 and P90 ranges for the storage efficiency factors. Finally, the user enters physical parameter data (Fig. 1, Box 3). The Example Formation was divided into four grids to account for geologic heterogeneity within the formation. Users have the ability to divide their formation between 1 and 300 grids based on the formation’s geologic heterogeneity and user’s preference. The results for the Example Formation generated from the GoldSim Player are shown in Fig. 2. Results are displayed as P10, P50, and P90 values for mass CO2 in megatons for each grid.

6. Summary

Prospective CO2 resource estimation of large regions or sub-regions, such as a basin, occurs at the initial screening stages of a project using only limited publicly available geophysical data. As the scale of investigation is narrowed and selected areas and formations are identified, prospective CO2 resource estimation can be refined when site-specific geophysical data are available. This paper refines existing US-DOE-NETL methodologies and methods based on data availability when a greater level of geologic characterization is available. The methodology builds upon the volumetric approach previously reported at the regional scale (Goodman et al., 2011). We refined the distinctions between existing US-DOE-NETL methodologies and presented new notation that explicitly identifies differences between data availability and data sources used for geologic parameters and efficiency factors as the scale of investigation is narrowed. The refined CO2 resource estimation method is made available in a publicly available tool named CO2-SCREEN to calculate prospective CO2 storage resource (Sanguinito et al., 2016).

Disclaimer

This report was prepared as an account of work sponsored by an agency of the United States Government. Neither the United States Government nor any agency thereof, nor any of their employees, makes any warranty, express or implied, or assumes any legal liability or responsibility for the accuracy, completeness, or usefulness of any information, apparatus, product, or process disclosed, or represents that its use would not infringe privately owned rights. Reference herein to any specific commercial product, process, or service by trade name, trademark, manufacturer, or otherwise does not necessarily constitute or imply its endorsement, recommendation, or favoring by the United States Government or any agency thereof. The views and opinions of authors expressed herein do not necessarily state or reflect those of the United States Government or any agency thereof.

Acknowledgements

This research was supported in part by appointments to the National Energy Technology Laboratory Research Participation Program, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy and administered by the Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education.

Appendix A. Supplementary data

Supplementary data associated with this article can be found, in the online version, at http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jggc.2016.09.009.

References


