



Models for large-scale Simulation of CO₂-Storage in geological Formations

Holger Class and Lena Walter

Institute of Hydraulic Engineering, University of Stuttgart, Stuttgart, Germany (holger.class@iws.uni-stuttgart.de)

Carbon dioxide Capture and Storage (CCS) is a technology that is currently developed for mitigating global greenhouse gas emissions while fossil fuel combustion still is a main pillar for energy production in the next couple of decades.

CO₂ is captured from large fossil-fuelled (mostly coal) power plants, then transported to a storage site, and eventually injected into a deep geological formation.

Modelling CO₂ storage in saline aquifers on a reservoir scale is demanding with respect to the complexity of the non-linear processes occurring on different spatial and temporal scales as well as with respect to computational costs. Large and complex geometries need to be described for a realistic scenario. The models need to be able to describe non-isothermal, multiphase and compositional processes that occur during CO₂ storage.

In most cases, it is not necessary to describe all the physical processes for the entire simulation time period. Especially for CO₂ storage the dominating processes vary over time.

During and shortly after the injection, the plume evolution in the formation is dominated by advective multiphase processes driven by viscous and buoyant forces. Moreover, the non-isothermal behaviour in the vicinity of the expanding plume due to the Joule Thompson effect needs to be described. With increasing time scale, the dissolution of CO₂ into the brine, compositional effects, diffusion and density-driven brine-convection become more and more important and cannot be neglected when modelling over large time periods.

Considering this time-dependent behaviour, it is possible to describe a certain time scale with models of reduced/adapted complexity. For the simulation of the short-term behaviour a non-isothermal two-phase model can be applied whereas the long-term behaviour can be described with a two-phase two-component model, neglecting non-isothermal effects. By coupling these models of reduced complexity, the model efficiency is increased without neglecting the relevant phenomena.