

Pre-processing Algorithms

9.5 DPATC – Dual-Pol based Attenuation Correction

Concept

Due to precipitation, the radar radiation is attenuated. An algorithm to correct reflectivity for attenuation, based on the reflectivity data only, is described in chapter 9.4. That ZATC algorithm has the disadvantage that the attenuation correction might be too weak or might become instable, depending on the accuracy of the Z-R relation used therein. In case of polarimetric radar systems, the differential reflectivity (ZDR) also suffers from attenuation effects, since the horizontally polarized radiation usually is attenuated stronger than the vertical polarized attenuation, resulting in negatively biased ZDR data.

For a fully polarimetric radar system, the differential phase shift provides more stable measurement of the attenuation. Furthermore, ZDR bias from differential attenuation can also be corrected for. The dual-pol based attenuation correction algorithm (DPATC) performs the corresponding correction of dBZ and, if available, ZDR data.

The algorithm can be applied on any scan type (azimuth scan, volume scan, or elevation scan) which samples reflectivity data and differential phase data (PhiDP). The scan may also contain ZDR data, which then also are corrected. Note that the PhiDP data are usually already filtered according to the algorithm described in chapter 9.6.

Product Definition

Fig. 123: DPATC–General

Fig. 124: DPATC–dBZ Correction

Fig. 125: DPATC–ZDR Correction

A – General parameters**dBZ Correction** (\Rightarrow steps 1, 2 and 3)

<i>Linear PhiDP</i>	dBZ attenuation correction linear in PhiDP
<i>ZPHI Algorithm</i>	dBZ attenuation correction using the ZPHI-Algorithm (option)
<i>Iterative ZPHI Algorithm</i>	dBZ attenuation correction using an iterative ZPHI-Algorithm (option)

ZDR Correction (\Rightarrow steps 4 and 5)

<i>Linear PhiDP</i>	ZDR attenuation correction is linear in PhiDP
<i>Ah-scaled</i>	ZDR attenuation correction proportional to the dBZ correction

Attenuation Correction Area (\Rightarrow step 7)

<i>Atten Corr only below freezing level</i>	Perform attenuation correction only for rain (below freezing level)
	Height of freezing level:
"Select manually"	\Rightarrow by entering a value.
"Load from file"	\Rightarrow located in <code>sensordata/</code> .

B – dBZ Correction parameters**General** (\Rightarrow step 1)

<i>Alpha automatic</i>	Uses a fixed α for the attenuation relation (automatic for the radar wavelength)
<i>Alpha user-def</i>	Uses the given user-defined α for the attenuation relation

ZPHI and Iterative ZPHI Algorithm parameters (\Rightarrow steps 2 and 3)

<i>Exponent B</i>	The exponent b of the ZPHI attenuation equation
<i>PhiDP threshold</i>	The threshold of total path PhiDP, below which the iteration is not used

C – ZDR Correction parameters**Linear PhiDP Correction** (\Rightarrow step 4)

<i>Beta automatic</i>	Uses a fixed β for the ZDR attenuation relation (automatic for the radar wavelength)
<i>Beta user-def</i>	Uses the given user-defined β for the ZDR attenuation relation
<i>Optimize Beta</i>	Uses an optimization method for β based on far-range data (\Rightarrow step 6)

Ah-scaled parameters (\Rightarrow step 5)

<i>Gamma user-def</i>	Uses the given user-defined γ for the scaling relation
<i>Gamma from optimized Beta</i>	Calculates the scaling parameter γ from a ZDR attenuation relation parameter b which was optimized from far range data (\Rightarrow step 6)

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Algorithm

The correction of attenuation and differential attenuation using dual-polarization data follows the procedures described in the Gematronik Dual-Polarization Handbook (Gematronik, 2007). In particular, the following correction methods can be selected:

Correction of reflectivity:

- Linear PhiDP method (Gematronik, 2007; chapter 4.1) (⇒ step 1)
- ZPHI Algorithm (optional) (⇒ step 2)
- Iterative ZPHI Algorithm (optional) (⇒ step 3)

Correction of differential reflectivity:

- Linear PhiDP method (Gematronik, 2007; chapter 5.1) (⇒ step 4)
- Ah-scaled method (Gematronik, 2007; chapter 5.2) (⇒ step 5)

The correction methods are performed on ray basis, i.e. each ray of data is processed independently. Thus the correction can be applied to any scan: AZI, VOL, ELE.

All methods are based on filtered differential phase data (PhiDP). For such filtered PhiDP, data are only given in areas of sufficient PhiDP accuracy. Furthermore, the PhiDP system offset has been taken into account, i.e. PhiDP values start with 0 deg for small ranges. For details of the PhiDP filtering, please refer to chapter 9.6.

1) dBZ-Correction using the linear PhiDP method

For this correction, the total path attenuation of dBZ, i.e. the amount of correction along radar range r , is proportional to PhiDP:

$$dBZ_{Corr}(r) = dBZ(r) + \alpha \cdot \text{PhiDP}(r) \quad (1)$$

The proportionality factor α can be selected according to the “General” parameters of the “dBZ Correction” part:

- Automatic: α is selected automatically according to the radar frequency:
 - S-Band: $\alpha = 0.018$ dB/deg
 - C-Band: $\alpha = 0.08$ dB/deg
 - X-Band: $\alpha = 0.25$ dB/deg
- User-def: The selected (user-defined) value of α is used.

2) dBZ-Correction using the ZPHI Algorithm (optional)

ZPHI is an attenuation correction algorithm which uses a scheme described by Hitschfeld and Bordan (1954) (cf. chapter 9.4 of the Products and Algorithms Manual), and takes the total attenuation, derived from the total PhiDP, as a constraint.

According to Hitschfeld and Bordan (1954), the attenuation coefficient A (in dB/km) can be calculated from the true reflectivity factor Z (in mm^6/m^3) by

$$A(r) = a Z^b(r) \quad (2a)$$

The path attenuation P (in dB) is then the integrated attenuation coefficient, i.e.

$$P(r) = \int_{r_0}^r A(s) ds = 10 \log_{10} \left(\exp \left(0.46 \int_{r_0}^r A(s) ds \right) \right) \quad (2b)$$

The true reflectivity Z results from the measured reflectivity Z_{meas} and the path attenuation:

$$Z(r) = Z_{\text{meas}}(r) \exp\left(0.46 \int_{r_0}^r A(s) ds\right) = Z_{\text{meas}}(r) \exp\left(0.46 a \int_{r_0}^r Z^b(s) ds\right) \quad (2c)$$

This can be integrated to obtain an equation combining the total path attenuation $P_{\text{tot}} := \int_{r_0}^{r_1} A(s) ds$ with the distribution of the measured reflectivity Z_{meas} along range. Since the factor a in (2a) has some uncertainty and the radar may not always calibrated perfectly, the such calculated total path attenuation tends to be somewhat unstable.

On the other hand, the total path attenuation is related to the total differential phase shift, as e.g. in Ryzhkov and Zrnić (1995), their eq. (5):

$$P_{\text{tot}} = \alpha (\Phi_{\text{dp}}(r_0) - \Phi_{\text{dp}}(r_1)) \quad (2d)$$

Equation (2d) also results from integration of equation (1) in the above described linear PhiDP method.

This means that the total phase shift can be used as a constraint to adjust either a or Z_{meas} (which mathematically means the same) in equation (2c). By that, adjusted attenuation coefficients A' are obtained, which are then used in the central part of equation (2c) to obtain an adjusted distribution of corrected reflectivity $Z(r)$, fitting to the total path attenuation obtained from the total differential phase shift.

An early algorithm called ZPHI (Testud et al., 2000) was based on measured PhiDP data. However, measured data may be biased e.g. by non-meteorological targets or measurements with too low intensity. Furthermore, the measured PhiDP has limited accuracy, i.e. the measured total differential phase shift may significantly differ from theory and can even become negative. These shortcomings are overcome here by using different input data, namely filtered PhiDP data, in the ZPHI algorithm. The total differential phase shift therefore is obtained from sophisticated filtering and smoothing algorithms that are applied to the measured PhiDP data.

3) dBZ-Correction using the Iterative ZPHI Algorithm (optional)

Bringi et al. (2001) improved the attenuation correction using the ZPHI algorithm.

According to them, the parameter α should not be taken as fixed. Instead, using any value of α , a PhiDP(r) profile can be re-constructed, and an error function can be defined as the difference between the filtered and the re-constructed PhiDP(r) profile:

$$\text{Error} = \sum_{j=1}^N \left| \Phi_{\text{dp}}^{\text{flt}}(r_j) - \Phi_{\text{dp}}^c(r_j; \alpha) \right| \quad (3)$$

In an iterative approach, an optimum value of α can be found where the error function becomes minimal.

There are two caveats for this iteration:

- The iteration tends to become instable if the total PhiDP is small. Thus it is omitted (and the normal ZPHI algorithm is used with the initial α), when the total PhiDP is smaller than the 'PhiDP Threshold' from the PPDF parameters.
- It may happen that the iteration converges for values of α which are not meaningful. In that case, an optimized α is taken which is very close to the initial α .

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4) ZDR-Correction using the Linear PhiDP method

Due to oblate particles like medium-size or big raindrops, ZDR experiences a negative bias because the horizontal radiation is stronger attenuated than the vertical radiation. PhiDP can also be used to correct for that kind of attenuation.

For this the linear PhiDP, the total differential attenuation, i.e. the amount of ZDR correction along radar range r , is proportional to PhiDP:

$$ZDR_{Corr}(r) = ZDR(r) + \beta \cdot \text{PhiDP}(r) \quad (4)$$

The proportionality factor β can be selected according to the “Linear PhiDP correction” parameters of the “ZDR Correction” part:

- Automatic: β is selected automatically according to the radar frequency:
 - S-Band: $\beta = 0.0025$ dB/deg
 - C-Band: $\beta = 0.02$ dB/deg
 - X-Band: $\beta = 0.035$ dB/deg
- User-def: The selected (user-defined) value of β is used.

Observations have shown that the proportionality factor β is not constant. Thus the above scheme might cause an over- or under-correction of ZDR. For that reason β can be optimized if “Optimize beta from ray end” is selected. See step 4 for the detailed description.

5) ZDR-Correction using the Ah-scaled method

The assumption that both the dBZ and ZDR attenuation are proportional to PhiDP means that there is also a proportionality between the amount of dBZ correction and the amount of ZDR correction. Using eqs. (1) and (2), the proportionality factor between these two amounts is just $\gamma = \beta / \alpha$; i.e.

$$ZDR_{Corr}(r) - ZDR(r) = \gamma \cdot [dBZ_{Corr}(r) - dBZ(r)] \quad (5)$$

Such a method for the ZDR correction is called the “Ah-scaled” method (where “Ah” means the specific attenuation of horizontal reflectivity).

If both dBZ and ZDR are corrected using the Linear PhiDP method, this means also that the ZDR correction is “scaled” to the dBZ correction. However, if the dBZ correction is performed using the ZPHI or the iterative ZPHI algorithm, an “Ah-scaled” correction of ZDR according to eq. (5) means that the ZDR correction is not linear with PhiDP, but proportional to the amount of dBZ correction.

The proportionality factor γ is given from the PPDF parameters:

- User-def: The selected (user-defined) value of γ is used.
- From optimized beta: An optimized proportionality factor β_{Opt} is derived (see step 6), and γ is then calculated from this β_{Opt} and the previously given α (see step 1), using $\gamma = \beta_{Opt} / \alpha$.

6) Optimization of β and γ

According to a method proposed by Bringi et al. (2001) and as described in Gematronik (2007; see eq. (5.3) and figs. 5.1 to 5.3), theoretical values of ZDR can be estimated based on dBZ values: At the (ray’s) end of a precipitation system, i.e. in a rather stratiform area, the ZDR values should be close to zero dB for very weak rain, and can be related to

the (already corrected) dBZ values for light rain according to Figs. 5.1 to 5.3 of Gematronik (2007). This allows a calculation of theoretical estimates of the proportionality factors β and γ using eq. (5.3) of Gematronik (2007).

“Optimization” here means that a quality parameter (or: weight factor) w between 0.0 and 1.0 is determined together with the theoretical estimate β_{Est} according to eq. (5.3) of the DP-Handbook. The optimized proportionality factors β_{Opt} and γ_{Opt} for each ray are then calculated as a weighted average of the initial values and the theoretical estimates:

$$\beta_{Opt} = w \cdot \beta_{Est} + (1 - w) \cdot \beta \quad (4a)$$

$$\gamma_{Opt} = \beta_{Opt} / \alpha \quad (4b)$$

The weight factor w is the larger the “better” a ray-end with slight precipitation can be detected. A “good” ray end means e.g. that it is:

- at least, say, 5 km long,
- with small reflectivity (say, below 20 dBZ),
- but sufficiently above noise (SNR say > 10 dB),
- with small dBZ and ZDR variability (stddev say < 5dB for dBZ, < 2dB for ZDR),
- not too far away from the last (i.e. outmost) dBZ echoes,
- with total Phi being significant.

The weight factor w is calculated based on that parameters.

7) Attenuation Correction only for Rain

If *Attenuation Correction only below Freezing level* is selected, the attenuation correction is done only for range gates below the freezing level. With this selection, the correction is only applied for rain, where the parameters used in the above equations usually are selected for. In regions above the freezing level, where precipitation can be assumed to be snow, the specific attenuation $\delta A / \delta r$ is set to zero.

The freezing level can be selected in the PDF in km above MSL, or it can be read from a file. The second choice allows – by continuous update of the freezing level information file using external tools – to always use the correct freezing level information for the given time stamp of the radar data.

8) Format of freezing level data file

The freezing level data has to be located in the subdirectory **sensordata**. Valid filenames are ***.freezelevel1**. Such a file consists only of an ASCII part in XML format:

```
<?xml version="1.0"?>
<freezelevel>
  <!-- If this file is used, it must contain at least one <fl> entry -->
  <fl datetime="2004-10-12T00:30:00" height="2.120"/>
  <fl datetime="2004-10-12T06:30:00" height="2.423"/>
  <fl datetime="2004-10-12T12:30:00" height="3.225"/>
  <fl datetime="2004-10-12T18:30:00" height="3.021"/>
  <fl datetime="2004-10-13T00:30:00" height="2.530"/>
  <fl datetime="2004-10-13T06:30:00" height="2.346"/>
  <fl datetime="2004-10-13T12:30:11" height="3.125"/>
</freezelevel>
```

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Meaning of the parameters:

Tag/Attr./Cell	Description
fl	Freezing level data line
datetime	Date & time stamp of freezing level detection
height	Height of freezing level in [km]

Always that "fl" entry is used by the algorithm which is closest to the product time stamp. If the product time stamp is in between two "fl" entries of a time series, the freezing level height is calculated as a linear weighted mean of the two neighboring time stamps.

13 References

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