README

Updates of WRF-urban in WRF 4.3: Local Climate Zones, Mitigation Strategies, building materials permeability and new buildings drag coefficient

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Main updates and new capabilities:
1. Incorporation of Local Climate Zone (LCZ), which expands the current three-category urban land-use classification to 11 categories;
2. A new solar photovoltaic-panel roof parameterization coupled to BEP/BEM;
3. A green roof parameterization coupled to BEP/BEM;
4. A new treatment of buildings drag coefficient used in BEP/BEM;

Introduction

The new version of WRF-urban and BEP+BEM urban multilayer scheme (6; 7), implemented in WRF, allows now to incorporate 11 urban classes corresponding to the WUDAPT (http://www.wudapt.org/) Local Climate Zones (LCZ) . The code still works with the traditional 3 urban classes, as shown in the next section. Moreover, we added novel parameterization schemes to BEP+BEM that model the effect of green roof (GR) and photovoltaic panels (PVP) on urban environment, along with a parameterization, similar to the SLUCM (4), which accounts for the permeability of urban materials, that now are sensible to precipitation and evaporation.

1. Incorporation of Local Climate Zones into WRF

While previous versions of WRF accounted only for 3 urban classes (31-33 in the USGS and MODIS classifications, describing ”Low Density Residential”, ”High Density Residential” and ”Industrial of Commercial”, respectively), now it allows to incorporate the Local Climate Zones created through the WUDAPT method, for example following the steps reported in http://www.wudapt.org/wudapt-to-wrf/ (5) or with the proper tool (https://wudapt.cs.purdue.edu/wudaptTools/default/city_for_wrf), and already adopted in several works (1; 3; 10). Following (9), the urban landuse is classified as follows:

31) LCZ 1: Compact high-rise;

32) LCZ 2: Compact midrise;

33) LCZ 3: Compact low-rise;

34) LCZ 4: Open high-rise;

35) LCZ 5: Open midrise;

36) LCZ 6: Open low-rise;

37) LCZ 7: Lightweight low-rise;

38) LCZ 8: Large low-rise;

39) LCZ 9: Sparsely built;

40) LCZ 10: Heavy industry;

41) LCZ E (LCZ 11): Rock and paved;

LCZ E (or LCZ 11) has been added to the traditional ten urban classes, to take into account large asphalt surfaces such as big parking lots or airstrips. WRF look-up tables have been modified to consider the new urban classes. In particular, LANDUSE.TBL, VEGPARM.TBL and MPTABLE.TBL MODIS and USGS tables have been extended from 33 to 41 classes, and a new URBPARM_LCZ.TBL has been added for the 11 urban classes.

From Traditional WRF urban classes to LCZ

LCZ urban classes should be substituted to the standard 33 urban classes during the WRF Preprocessing Systems (WPS), through the creation of a new folder, where the binary file containing the LCZ map should be present, along with the index file, with a maximum value equal to 41. By default, WRF still uses the standard 3 urban classes which are: 31 (Low Density Residential), 32 (High Density Residential), 33 (Industrial or commercial), reading the standard URBPARM.TBL look-up table. However, if it finds that the maximum of the landuse type is greater than 33, model will stop with error messages to remind users. If the user wishes to run the model with the extended 11 LCZ urban classes, a flag should be added into the “& physics” section of the WRF namelist.input: *use_wudapt_lcz* =1 (set to 0 by default). This flag allows WRF to use the new lookup table URBPARM_LCZ.TBL, which contains information of the 11 urban classes.

2. Rooftop Mitigation Strategies and building materials permeability

The new BEP+BEM schemes now allows to take into account the effect of Green Roof and Photovoltaic panels, as in (Zonato et al. 2022). Some new variables have been added in the URBPARM.TBL look-up table, in order to turn on and control these new schemes. The variables are:

- GR_TYPE (1 or 2): 1 is grass vegetation, 2 sedum vegetation;
- GR_FLAG (0 or 1): setting it to 1 turn on the green roof parameterization;
- GR_FRAC_ROOF (from 0 to 1): fraction of roof covered by green roof;
- PV_FRAC_ROOF (from 0 to 1): fraction of roof covered by photovoltaic panels;
- IRHO (from 0 to 1 for each hour of the day): it allows to turn on drip irrigation over the roof, for the hours of the day desired. The value of 1 correspond to an irrigation of 25 L/m2/week, and lower values to its fraction.

The photovoltaic panel and the green roof modules are coupled, so it is even possible to test a case of GRs shielded by PVPs. The following variables have been added to the Registry files:

- EP_PV_URB3D: Electricity produced by photovoltaic panels (W/m2)
- T_PV_URB3D: Temperature of the photovoltaic panel (K)
- TRV_URB4D: Temperature in each layer of the green roof (K)
- QR_URB4D: Soil moisture in each layer of the green roof (m3/m3)
- TGR_URB3D: Average Temperature of the green roof (K)
- QGR_URB3D: Average soil moisture in each layer of the green roof (m3/m3)
- DRAIN_URB4D: Drainage from the green roof (mm)
- DRAINGR_URB3D: Accumulated drainage from the green roof (mm)
- SFRV_URB3D: Sensible heat flux from the green roof (W/m2)
- LFRV_URB3D: Latent heat flux from the green roof (W/m2)
- DGR_URB3D: Roof layer depth water retention (mm)
- DG_URB3D: Ground layer depth water retention (mm)
- LFR_URB3D: Latent heat flux from roof surfaces (>0 only is DGR_URB3D is >0) (W/m2)
- LFG_URB3D: Latent heat flux from ground surfaces (>0 only is DG_URB3D is >0) (W/m2)

3. New buildings drag coefficient

In the BEP(+BEM) schemes in the previous WRF versions, the drag coefficient induced by buildings for mean wind speed and turbulent kinetic energy is $C_D = 0.4$, constant for all buildings packing density (or building plan area fraction). Following Santiago and Martilli (8) and Gutierrez et al. (2), now the drag coefficient is modeled as:

$$C_D(\lambda_p) = \begin{cases} 3.32\,\lambda_p^{0.47} & \text{for } \lambda_p \leq 0.29 \\ 1.85 & \text{for } \lambda_p > 0.29 \end{cases}$$

where λ_p is the buildings plan area fraction.

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