

## Molten carbonate fuel cell

Consider a molten carbonate fuel cell (MCFC) with an active area of  $0.5 \text{ m}^2$  and an electrolyte thickness of  $1.5 \text{ mm}$ .

At anode, it is fed with reformed natural gas, which is composed<sup>1</sup> by 50%  $\text{H}_2$ , 30%  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$ , 10%  $\text{CO}_2$ , and 10% of other gases ( $\text{CO}$ ,  $\text{CH}_4$ , and  $\text{N}_2$ ). A mix of 70% air and 30%  $\text{CO}_2$  is injected at cathode.

The MCFC is analysed under the following operating conditions:

$637^\circ\text{C}$ , 1 atm pressure,  $\lambda_a = 2$  (air excess flow), 90% fuel utilization ( $\text{H}_2$ -based), operating current density  $250 \text{ mA/cm}^2$ .

Under these conditions, the cell voltage amounts to  $0.75 \text{ V}$  and the specific conductivity of the electrolyte is  $\sigma = 0.4 \text{ S/cm}$

Given these data and operating conditions, compute the:

1. Standard redox potential  $E^\ominus$ ;
2. Redox potential at inlet  $E_{\text{inlet}}$ ;
3. Redox potential at outlet  $E_{\text{outlet}}$ ;
4. Ohmic loss at operating current density;
5. Non-ohmic (non-linear) voltage losses at operating current density;
6. Electrical power;
7. LHV-based electrical efficiency;
8. Amount of water (liquid) produced each day.

### *Useful information:*

To simplify the analysis, it can be admitted that only  $\text{H}_2$  is subject to the electrochemical oxidation. Indeed, the kinetics of the “water-gas-shift” and of the “methane-steam-reforming” chemical reactions is rather fast in comparison with the electrochemical oxidations of  $\text{CO}$  and  $\text{CH}_4$ . Accounting also that the chemical equilibrium is displaced when  $\text{H}_2$  is consumed, it leads that in presence of  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$ ,  $\text{CO}$  and  $\text{CH}_4$  are converted into  $\text{H}_2$  and  $\text{CO}_2$ .

It can be admitted for simplicity that the average redox potential is:  $E = 0.5 (E_{\text{inlet}} + E_{\text{outlet}})$ .

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<sup>1</sup> Molar fractions. The actual composition of reformed NG depends on many parameters.