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Transient solidification and melting numerical simulation of lauric acid PCM filled stepped solar still basin used in water desalination process

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Abstract

It is crucial to produce potable water from salt water in arid places using a stepped solar still desalination process. This work presents the temperature distribution and phase transformation of lauric acid PCM in inclined stepped solar still desalination system. A second-order finite volume method is employed for discretizing the two-dimensional geometry, while energy, continuity, and momentum equations are solved and then coupled using the second-order PRESTO algorithm. The solidification and melting CFD models have been used to capture the melting stages of lauric acid PCM. Four steps with an inclination of 30° to ground and two different cases with saline water levels of 10 mm and 40 mm have been reported. The results reveal that the temperature and mass fraction of lauric acid PCM strongly depends on the saline water level at each step, the number of steps, the angle of inclination, and the location of the solar still step. The maximum percentage increase in PCM melting fraction is 50%, and a PCM temperature rise of 4 °C is observed in the case of SWL-max compared to SWL-min. The total enthalpy of lauric acid PCM is increased by 30% for the SWL-max water level compared to the SWL-min water level. © 2023 The Authors

Author Keywords

FVM; Inclined stepped solar still; Lauric acid; PCM; PRESTO; Solar desalination

Index Keywords

Desalination, Distillation, Finite volume method, Melting, Potable water, Saline water, Solar heating, Solidification, Water filtration; FVM, Inclined stepped solar still, Lauric acid, Phases transformation, PRESTO, Second orders, Solar desalination, Solar stills, Solidification and melting, Water desalination; Water levels

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