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-NEW JOURNALS----

Renewable hopes in energy

Brian Norton

Solar and Wind Technology. Editor-inchief A.A.M. Sayigh. Pergamon. 4/yr. UK £70 (institutional), £31 (individual); North America \$115 (institutional), \$51 (individual); elsewhere DM 330 (institutional), DM 143 (individual).

EVEN before the recent fall in the price of oil, governments in the developed countries had reduced their funding of research into effective ways to harness renewable forms of energy. The time may thus seem inopportune to launch a new journal in this apparently already oversubscribed field. This is not, however, the case. In many developing countries, the reduction in dollar-denominated prices for crude oil have been offset by local currency devaluations and by comparatively high distribution costs for fuel. The consequent high energy-costs in many parts of the Third World, combined with sunny climates, therefore, favour the economic viability of many solar applications, and have stimulated significant research there. The focus of these efforts is on the use of solar and wind energy for power generation, drying, irrigation and refrigeration. The work tends to be applied or developmental and is often specific to a particular geographical area. The diffi-

Turning numbers on their head

R.E. Burge

Inverse Problems: An International Journal of Inverse Problems, Inverse Methods and Computerized Inversion of Data. Honorary editor P.C. Sabatier. Institute of Physics. 4/yr. UK £130; North America \$220.

IN RECENT years there have been numerous international conferences on topics directly or indirectly concerned with inverse problems. As further evidence of the rise in interest in the subject, this new journal was launched in February 1985.

The inverse problem, or the determination of cause from effect, is universal in physics. It has an obvious expression in the interpretation of an image from which the nature and properties of a scatterer are to be inferred, but the journal's scope is wider than this. The intended audience is pure and applied mathematicians and physicists, but also included are articles on culty has been to find an appropriate avenue for the publication of the fruits of this research.

Solar and Wind Technology aims to provide this group with a means of rapid, peer-reviewed publication. In this it can be considered a success: in the first four issues, over 64 per cent of the papers originated in developing countries. That this well-produced journal is published for the Arab Section of the International Solar Energy Society with the financial assistance of UNESCO is reflected in the make-up of the editorial board. Together with the absence of page charges, this should help attract papers from the Third World.

Papers are generally accepted within two months of receipt, and subsequently published within six months. This would seem to preclude adequate peer-review: however the quality of the papers, although variable, is generally good. Most issues comprise full papers and technical notes: the criteria for deciding into which category an item should fall is unclear, however, as many of both are five or six pages long.

Solar and Wind Technology fills a need and should do well if those libraries that serve its intended readership in the developing world can afford the foreign exchange to purchase it. I wish it well.

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topics of interest to specialists (for example the investigation of ocean flow by its acoustic properties, or the interpretation of small-angle inelastic electron scattering as related to electron energy-loss spectra).

A criticism of the material published to date is that the problems are divorced from their usual context in, for example, acoustic imaging, tomographic reconstruction or super-resolution. On the other hand, one of the journal's strengths is that it does provide a focus for a range of

Inverse Problems

mathematical approaches and their applications to problems with a common root, thereby providing a place for discussion of analogies and correspondences between different inverse problems and different approaches to their solution. Apart from formal papers, the journal includes brief letters to the editor on technical points. The date of receipt of contributions is noted, and thus far the record for speed of publication is respectable.

From a technical point of view, work involving inverse problems has two