SAND2017-11840C

Massively parallel frequency domain electromagnetic simulation codes

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***Abstract*—This paper provides an overview of the electromagnetic frequency domain simulation capabilities of the Electromagnetic Theory department at Sandia National Laboratories via a description of two of its codes. EIGER is a Method of Moments code for electromagnetic simulations, but it only runs on traditional CPUs, not on new architectures. A code is in development to replace EIGER and will run on many architectures, including CPUs, GPUs, and MICs, by leveraging the Kokkos library.**

Keywords*—*electromagnetics, moment method, performance portability, Kokkos, GPU, MIC

I. INTRODUCTION

The Electromagnetic (EM) Theory department at Sandia National Laboratories (SNL) requires several codes to support its analysists. The ideal code has a fast turnaround, can be applied to a wide variety of problems across an extreme band of frequencies, and produces high accuracy results. The Method of Moments (MoM), a boundary element method (BEM) for solving integral equations, satisfies these criteria by reducing the dimensionality of the problem to be solved while producing high accuracy results on the boundary, which yeild accurate results elsewhere with post processing. Next generation platforms (NGPs) promise the ability to further reduce the turnaround time without degrading the accuracy. As such, the present production code EIGER is being rewritten into a new the code (referred to as EIGER NGP here) to leverage the computational efficiency of the NGPs [1]. The rewrite will include the development of new algorithms that leverage the NGPs and better analytic models.

II. EIGER

EIGER (Electromagnetic Interactions GenERalized) is a massively parallel EM simulation code that uses MoM to solve electrodynamic and electrostatic problems. EIGER was originally written in FORTRAN 90 and underwent a partial rewrite in the early 2000's to leverage MPI for intra- and internode parallelism.

EIGER supports a wide variety of problems, including scattering, coupling, layered media, and 1D and 2D periodic problems [2]. Excitations can be from plane wave or voltage sources. Geometries can be made up of wires and/or bodies, which can be perfect electrical conductors (PECs) or dielectrics, following the PMCHWT formulation for dielectrics [3]. Specific examples where these features are used include modeling metamaterials and antennas as well as aircraft bodies [4].

EIGER utilizes RWG basis functions in filling a dense, complex-valued matrix for the electric field integral equation (EFIE), magnetic field integral equation (MFIE), or combined field integral equation (CFIE). It then solves the matrix via LU factorization, GMRES, or conjugate gradient. To obtain good results, the geometry to simulate is generally meshed using at least 10 elements per wavelength. Thus, storing the dense, complex-valued matrix becomes the limiting factor in how high of a frequency can be simulated.

III. EIGER NGP

EIGER NGP is a C++ rewrite of EIGER for NGPs. Using the Kokkos library for performance portability, it can be compiled for CPU, GPU, or MIC by changing a single flag [5]. Kokkos is a lightweight wrapper around OpenMP, CUDA, and other back-ends that implement thread level parallelism. It also provides a multidimensional array that is indexed layout left (column major) for GPUs or layout right (row major) for CPUs to ensure proper coalesced memory access and caching,

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Sandia National Laboratories is a multimission laboratory managed and operated by National Technology and Engineering Solutions of Sandia, LLC., a wholly owned subsidiary of Honeywell International, Inc., for the U.S. Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration under contract DE-NA-0003525.

respectively. Algorithms written with Kokkos can take advantage of multiple levels of parallelism and memory as well as utilize several different types of execution resources at the same time. While Kokkos manages parallel threads on a single node, MPI will be used for internode parallelism.

Currently, EIGER NGP can solve the dense, complex-valued matrix equation using LU factorization or an iterative solver, such as GMRES, from Trilinos's Belos library [6]. For the iterative solve, EIGER NGP uses a Sparse Approximate Inverse (SpAI) preconditioner [7]. The sparse approximation is constructed using an octree based on distance between unknowns; the matrix entries decay exponentially with distance. Calculating the inverse of the sparse approximation yields a suitable preconditioner for the linear system.

EIGER NGP can presently perform scattering calculations from an incident plane wave. Some examples are discussed below. Developing EIGER NGP will continue by first implementing the magnetic and combined field integral equations, dielectrics, and wire and slot subcell models needed for electromagnetic coupling problems. Broadly, EIGER NGP will include all the features in EIGER, though the algorithms will be modified where performance gains can be obtained for the new architectures. In addition, new features will be developed for EIGER NGP. These include interfacing with a circuit solver Xyce [8] and advanced solver technologies such as hybrid methods, fast multipole methods, and adaptive cross approximation.

IV. VALIDATION

The Electromagnetic Code Consortium (EMCC) provides a set of measurement data for specific geometries and incident plane waves for code validation [9]. The EMCC problems are run with EIGER, EIGER NGP, and FEKO's MoM solver, FEKO being used for comparison when agreement with EMCC data is poor. Being a partial reimplementation of EIGER, EIGER and EIGER NGP produce indistinguishable results, up to a prescribed level of numerical accuracy. Fig. 1 shows the measured and calculated radar cross section (RCS) for a cone-sphere with the mesh pictured at the center of the figure. For all three codes, the geometry was meshed with 10 elements per wavelength; FEKO was allowed to refine the mesh as it deemed necessary. Further refining did not change the character of the results. The figure shows EIGER and EIGER NGP obtaining excellent agreement with FEKO and good agreement with experiment.

V. SUMMARY

While EIGER meets the current needs of the EM theory department at SNL, it cannot run efficiently on MICs and it cannot run on GPUs. EIGER NGP meets future needs by utilizing the Kokkos library to run well on all desired high-performance computing (HPC) architectures. By using Kokkos, EIGER NGP will be low maintenance. First, it will be written once for all platforms. Second, Kokkos, not EIGER NGP, will implement any new architectures as a new backend that can be selected at compile time. In short, EIGER NGP will provide analysts with high accuracy results quickly on a variety of HPC architectures for a minimal amount of programming effort.

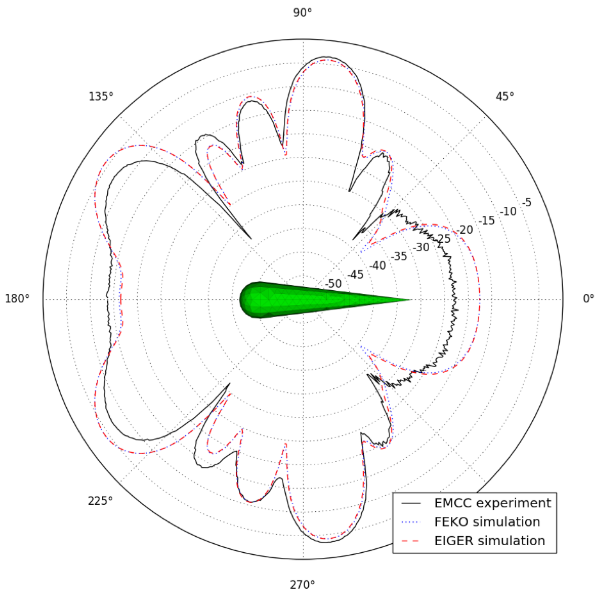

Fig. 2. Monostatic RCS (dB per square meter) of a cone-sphere from multiple angles due to an incident plane wave of 869 MHz. Being indistinguishable in this plot, EIGER and EIGER NGP are both represented by the red line.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We thank Rafael Schleder for his work projecting the RCS results on to a polar coordinate system.

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