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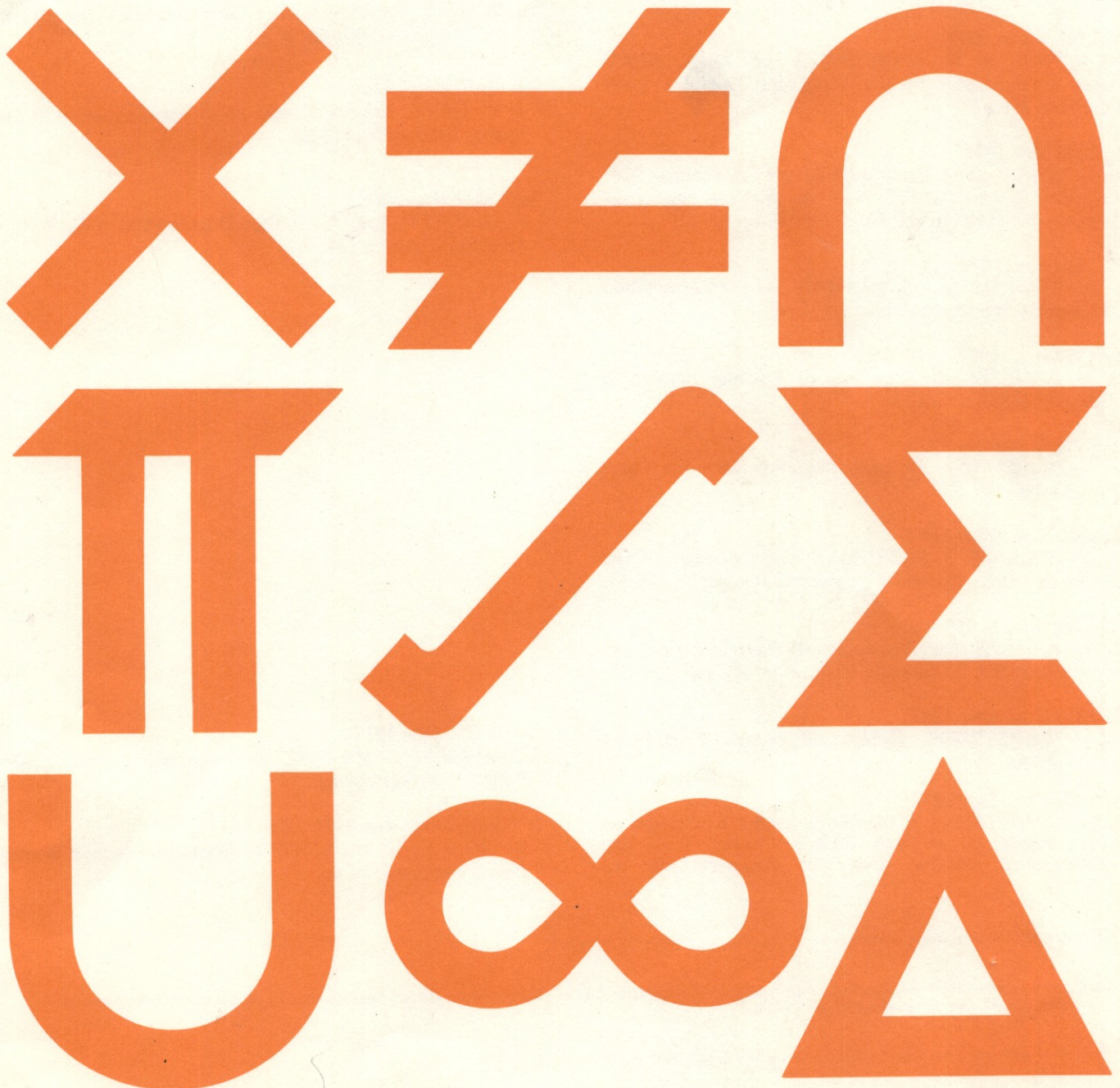
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SHORT-TERM REAL-TIME CONTROL OF  
AIR POLLUTION EPISODES IN VENICE

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## Abstract

This paper reviews the available methodologies for short-term forecasting of air pollution episodes. The study is oriented to define and test suitable algorithms which perform real-time air quality control in an industrialized-urban area. In particular, after a definition of the problem (control of the episodes) with respect to the general air quality problem (analysis, control and planning of the atmospheric environment), the paper shows some applications of the proposed methodologies to the city of Venice, whose artistic patrimony is seriously damaged by air pollution due to both domestic and industrial local emissions. By analyzing meteorological and air quality data collected by two monitoring networks installed in the Venetian area, it has been possible to test the different algorithms and validate the most suitable of them. Results show the different performances of the models and suggest a real-time alert methodology, to be used by local Industrial Committee, in order to temporarily reduce their pollutants emissions in the area.

- a) only the most sophisticated models (K-models) show good results<sup>3</sup> in episode real-time control;
- b) K-models are generally tested and calibrated during a limited period of time, related to the availability of a good set of meteorological and emission data, whose knowledge requires a big effort sometimes impossible in real-time;
- c) K-models require a big computer and large amounts of computer time; and
- d) deterministic models cannot handle unknown variation of input parameters (e.g. emissions) which is often the main reason for computational errors.

In conclusion, even a good K-model can hardly work during periods different from those in which it has been calibrated and tested. However, its application remains very important when a deterministic understanding of the complex real world is necessary (e.g., planning or *a-posteriori* episode evaluation).

As a consequence of previous remarks, stochastic or mixed predictors can be better used for episode control. This approach has the important feature of taking into account all the available past data (emission, meteorology and concentration) for the forecasting of the concentration at any future time. In this way the predictor can use the additional information of the actual concentration data measured at times close to the forecasting time. Such information is often more relevant than that obtained by the always insufficient physical understanding of transport and diffusion phenomena.

The following paragraphs will develop these points both with a more complete description of the available mathematical models for episode prediction, and by showing the results obtained in the Venice area with the proposed approaches.

## II. MATHEMATICAL MODELS FOR EPISODE PREDICTION

According to previous categorization work<sup>2</sup> in this field and by considering the remarks developed in the previous paragraph, the following numerical models can be applied to air pollution episode real-time forecasting:

a) Gaussian model<sup>4,5</sup> :  $(E+M)_t \rightarrow (M_d) \rightarrow [\hat{C}]_t;$

b) K-model<sup>3,6</sup> :  $(E+M)_t + [\hat{C}]_{t-1} \rightarrow (M_d) \rightarrow [\hat{C}]_t;$

c) Autoregressive model<sup>7,8,9</sup> :  $\{C\}_{t-i} \rightarrow (M_s) \rightarrow \{\hat{C}\}_{t+j};$

d) Multiple regression model<sup>10,11,12</sup> :  $\{E+M+C\}_{t-i} \rightarrow (M_s) \rightarrow \{\hat{C}\}_{t+j};$

and

e) Mixed model<sup>13</sup> :  $\{E+M+C+[\hat{C}]\}_{t-i} \rightarrow (M_d+M_s) \rightarrow \{[\hat{C}]\}_{t+j};$

where:

E : emission data;

M : meteorological data;

C : concentration measured data;

$\hat{C}$  : concentration predicted data;

$M_d$  : deterministic model;

$M_s$  : stochastic model;

$(.)_t$  : variable at time t;

$[.]_t$  : position dependent variable in all the domain at time t;

$\{.\}_{t-i}$  : time-dependent variable at time t-i with  $i=1,2,\dots,i_{\max}$ ;

and

$\{.\}_{t+j}$  : time-dependent variable at time t+j with  $j=0,1,2,\dots,j_{\max}$



(Local Industrial Committee) consists of 21 stations measuring ground level  $\text{SO}_2$  and four meteorological stations in the industrial area (thirty-minute averages). In this paper, after a short description of previous results obtained by analyzing the whole data base, a subset of the data has been used to test the proposed statistical models. In fact, one year of 30-minute average data at Stations 3,4,5,8,10,11 (EZI), located all around the industrial area, and one year of hourly data at Station 10 (ISS), located in the urban center of Marghera, have been used. In particular, many stochastic predictors have been applied to data collected at Station 3, located in the northern boundary of the industrial area, which shows the highest pollution measures in the region.

Important characteristics of the area have been pointed out in previous work<sup>17</sup>. The total  $\text{SO}_2$  emission due to industrial activity has been estimated at about 160,000 metric tons per year for the period 1973-74; in the same period the emission due to domestic heating and other urban activities was about 10,000 tons per year. Monthly averaged  $\text{SO}_2$  values are between 10 and 50 ppb (summer) and between 60 and 120 ppb (winter); the substantial increase in pollution levels during winter is due both to the presence of local domestic emissions and to a meteorological situation which is favorable to high pollution levels. The diurnal variation of  $\text{SO}_2$  concentration was analyzed by computing seasonally averaged  $\text{SO}_2$  concentration as a function of time of day at every monitoring station. In the winter, the combined effect of domestic heating and of polluted winds blowing from the industrial area causes a peak of concentration in all the stations between 9 and 11 a.m.. Moreover, all the stations, except those located in the historical center of Venice, show another peak at night. In the summer, the influence of the diurnal cycle of wind direction frequency (sea-breeze effect) is predominant and completely explains the patterns of the diurnal cycle at every station. The pollution level in the city of Venice is considerable lower than on the mainland. Nevertheless, particular

meteorological conditions occurring in winter, as well as the influence of both urban and industrial sources, produce a limited number of episodes (concentration higher than 200 ppb) in which pollution levels are reached comparable to those in the industrial area. These situations most frequently occur in conjunction with very light westerly winds, i.e., winds blowing from the industrial area towards Venice.

### III.3 Data Fitting

Box-Jenkins<sup>15</sup> ARIMA autoregressive integrated moving average) models and seasonal ARIMA models have been applied to both 30-minute  $SO_2$  measurements and to 4-hour, daily, and weekly average  $SO_2$  values during the period of analysis. The application of several models of this type has led to the following general conclusion: AR(1) model (first order autoregressive process) shows good forecasting performance and, in any case, an efficiency comparable with that of more complex ARIMA models. The stationary AR(1) process can be expressed as

$$x_t - \mu = \phi(x_{t-1} - \mu) + \varepsilon_t \quad (1)$$

where

$x_t$  is the average  $SO_2$  concentration in the t-th time step (ppb);

$\mu = E\{x_t\}$  is the average concentration (ppb) (E is the expectation);

$\varepsilon_t$  is white noise (ppb);

$\phi$  is the model parameter estimated by  $\gamma_{xx}(1)/\gamma_{xx}(0)$ ;

and

$\gamma_{xx}(\ell) = E\{(x_t - \mu)(x_{t+\ell} - \mu)\}$  is the autocovariance function (ppb<sup>2</sup>).

30-minute average. The forecasting of the next 30-minute  $SO_2$  average on the basis of previously observed pollution levels has given the satisfactory results summarized in Table I (columns 1 to 6) in which the AR(1) model forecasting performance (column 6) is compared with that of the persistence model (next 30-minute average is predicted to be the previous 30-minute average, column 5). These comparisons show the general improvement obtained with AR(1) predictor.

4-hour, daily and weekly average. The most polluted station in the area (Station 3) has been used as a pilot station for an accurate analysis of average  $SO_2$  pollution levels. Table II (columns 1 to 6) shows the efficient application of the AR(1) predictor, with the exception of the weekly average which presents a non-correlated behavior ( $\phi=0.02$ ).

Cyclostationary predictor models. The presence of a daily cycle in the  $SO_2$  measured data, has suggested applying cyclostationary (CS) processes.<sup>18</sup> Precisely, the AR(1)CS process has been considered, namely the model described by

$$\tilde{x}_{i+1}(k) = \phi_i \tilde{x}_i(k) + \varepsilon_i(k) \quad (2)$$

where:

$\tilde{x}_i(k) = [x_i(k) - \mu_i] / \sigma_i$  is the cyclo-standardized concentration;

$x_i(k)$  is the concentration at the  $i$ -th time step of the  $k$ -th day (ppb);

$\mu_i = E\{x_i(k)\}$  is the average concentration at the  $i$ -th time step of the day (ppb);

$\sigma_i = [E\{(x_i(k) - \mu_i)^2\}]^{1/2}$  is the standard deviation at the  $i$ -th time step of the day (ppb);



$N$  is the number of time steps in which the day is divided;

$\phi_i$  is the model parameter to be used at the  $i$ -th time step of each day; it is estimated by  $\gamma_{xx}^i(1)/\gamma_{xx}^i(0)$ ;

$\gamma_{xx}^i(l) = E\{(x_i(k) - \mu_i)(x_{i+l}(k) - \mu_{i+l})\}$  where  $x_{i+l}(k) = x_{i+l-N}(k+1)$  and  $\mu_{i+l} = \mu_{i+l-N}$  in the case when  $i+l > N$  (ppb<sup>2</sup>);

and

$\epsilon_i(k)$  is white noise (ppb).

With respect to the variance of the white noise, the cyclostationary model exhibits a substantial improvement if compared with the AR(1) (Table I and Table II, last column). In particular, it should be noted that the cyclostationary models take into account the daily cycle better than the best representative of the seasonal ARIMA models.

#### III.4 Real Time Forecasting

Adaptive models. All the above described predictors show a general decrease of forecasting accuracy when used during periods different from those in which their parameters were calibrated. This is a typical behavior of statistical models. In order to remove this shortcoming, an application has been carried out of adaptive AR(1) and AR(1)CS models, whose parameters are estimated on a learning period of given fixed length immediately preceding the forecasting time. In this way the learning period moves along the SO<sub>2</sub> times series. The adaptive models can be used to represent the entire process, without distinguishing from season to season, using their adaptive ability. The application of such a method allows the use of the predictors without distinguishing between "data fitting" (i.e., forecasting in the same period used for parameter estimation) and "real time forecasting". Nevertheless,

they provide results comparable with those shown in Table I and Table II, as can be seen in Figure 3 where adaptive AR(1) and AR(1)CS are even better than the predictors in the fitting cases.

Multiple linear regression models. In order to improve the performance of the  $SO_2$  forecast, account has been taken of the meteorological input by using two simple regression models including  $SO_2$  average data and the following meteorological parameters: temperature, wind speed and percentage of polluting wind direction occurrence. Precisely, daily and 4-hour average  $SO_2$  values at Station 3 (EZI), and the corresponding meteorological measurements, have been used by the following models:

$$\text{model I : } C_t = aT_t + bP_t + cS_t + d + e_t ; \text{ and} \quad (3)$$

$$\text{model II : } C_t = a'T_t + b'(P_t/S_t) + c' + e'_t ; \quad (4)$$

where:

$C_t$  is the average  $SO_2$  concentration (ppb);

$T_t$  is the average temperature ( $^{\circ}C$ );

$P_t$  is the percentage of polluting winds (from S and SE for Station 3(EZI));

$S_t$  is the average wind speed (m/s);

$a, b, c, d, a', b', c'$  are the parameters of the models; and

$e_t, e'_t$  are the errors of the models (ppb).

By least squares estimation of the parameters it is possible to obtain the series  $\{e_t\}_t$ ,  $\{e'_t\}_t$  which can be described with an AR(1) model in order to decrease the variance of the white noise. By this separation between the "meteorological" and the "stochastic"



contribution a predictor has been obtained which can be used as a first alert tool in forecasting pollution episodes. Computation of model parameters shows the validity of the approach according to the physics of transport and diffusion of pollutants ( $b$  and  $b' > 0$ , and  $c < 0$ ). Table III shows the forecasting improvement obtained especially by applying model I. Figure 4 shows the winter measured and forecast (model I) daily  $SO_2$  average values. These models have been applied using the measured meteorological parameters which, in general, are unknown in advance. Moreover, the same period has been used for the evaluation of the regression parameters and the forecasting computation. In this way models I and II show, in Table III and in Figure 4, their best "theoretical" performance, although an efficient use of this methodology needs an estimation of the meteorological trend and the usage of a dynamic adaptive estimation of the regression parameters. However, the above results show the potential efficiency and the adaptive ability of this approach.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

The preceding results have shown the validity of the proposed methodologies in short-term real-time forecasting of air pollution episodes. In particular, in order to install a working alert system for episode control in the Venice area, it is necessary:

- a) to have a real-time storage of the monitoring station data;
- b) to improve the forecasting of the time evolution of meteorological factors;
- c) to define an intervention procedure for an optimized emission reduction strategy.

In this way it will be possible to operate with the proposed models in order to avoid, in the study area, the violation of air pollution standards.



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Table I. For each station and for two seasons are shown the average  $SO_2$  value, the variance of the data, the AR(1) model parameter, the noise variance of: persistence model, AR(1) model, and cyclostationary AR(1) model.

Station number (EZI)	$\mu$ (ppb)	Variance of the data (ppb <sup>2</sup> )	AR(1) $\phi$	$\sigma_{\epsilon}^2$ variance of white noise (ppb <sup>2</sup> )			
				Persistence model	AR(1)	CS	
Winter 74-75	03	97	6241	0.83	2104	1927	1693
	04	87	7609	0.78	3313	2954	2772
	05	52	3613	0.89	808	763	711
	08	86	6866	0.83	2346	2146	1932
	10	22	1913	0.89	417	394	354
	11	74	4391	0.81	1638	1486	1358
Summer 75	03	97	22686	0.86	6234	5806	5251
	04	14	439	0.74	232	201	176
	05	--	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	08	14	514	0.72	291	250	226
	10	40	2962	0.70	1763	1501	1284
	11	27	1426	0.75	723	631	563



Table II. 4-hour, daily and weekly average  $\text{SO}_2$  values measured at Station 3 (EZI) during the period November 1974-October 1975. The table shows the variance of the data, the AR(1) model parameter, the noise variance of: persistence model, AR(1) model, and cyclostationary AR(1) model.

Averaging time	$\mu$ (ppb)	Variance of the data (ppb <sup>2</sup> )	AR(1) $\phi$	$\sigma_\epsilon^2$ variance of the white noise (ppb <sup>2</sup> )		
				Persistence model	AR(1)	AR(1)CS
4-hour	94	13362	0.55	12124	9375	8237
daily	94	6115	0.53	5768	4413	----
weekly	94	2634	0.02	5256	2683	----

Table III. Analysis of 4-hour and daily average  $\text{SO}_2$  values. Comparison of the variances of the white noise of the persistence model, AR(1) model, model I and model II (Station 3, EZI).

Season		$\mu$ (ppb)	Variance of the data (ppb <sup>2</sup> )	$\sigma_{\epsilon}^2$ variance of the white noise (ppb <sup>2</sup> )			
				Persistence model	AR(1) model I +AR(1)	model II +AR(1)	model II +AR(1)
4-hour	winter 74-75	97	4111	2799	2325	2168	2344
	summer 75	97	16284	17348	12736	7647	11129
daily	winter 74-75	97	2487	1929	1546	1017	1235
	summer 75	97	5144	7947	4939	2430	2762

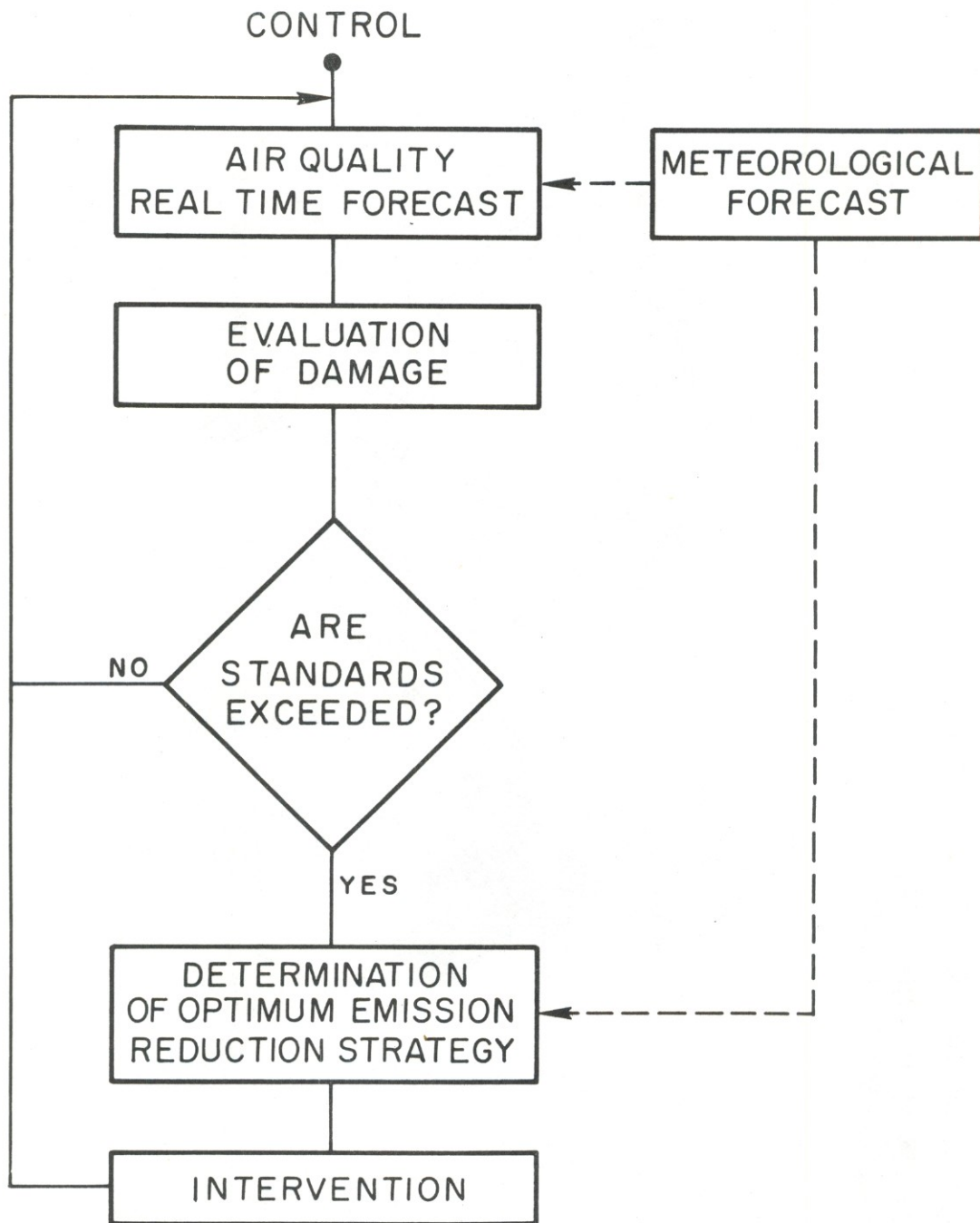


Figure 1. Control of air pollution episodes.



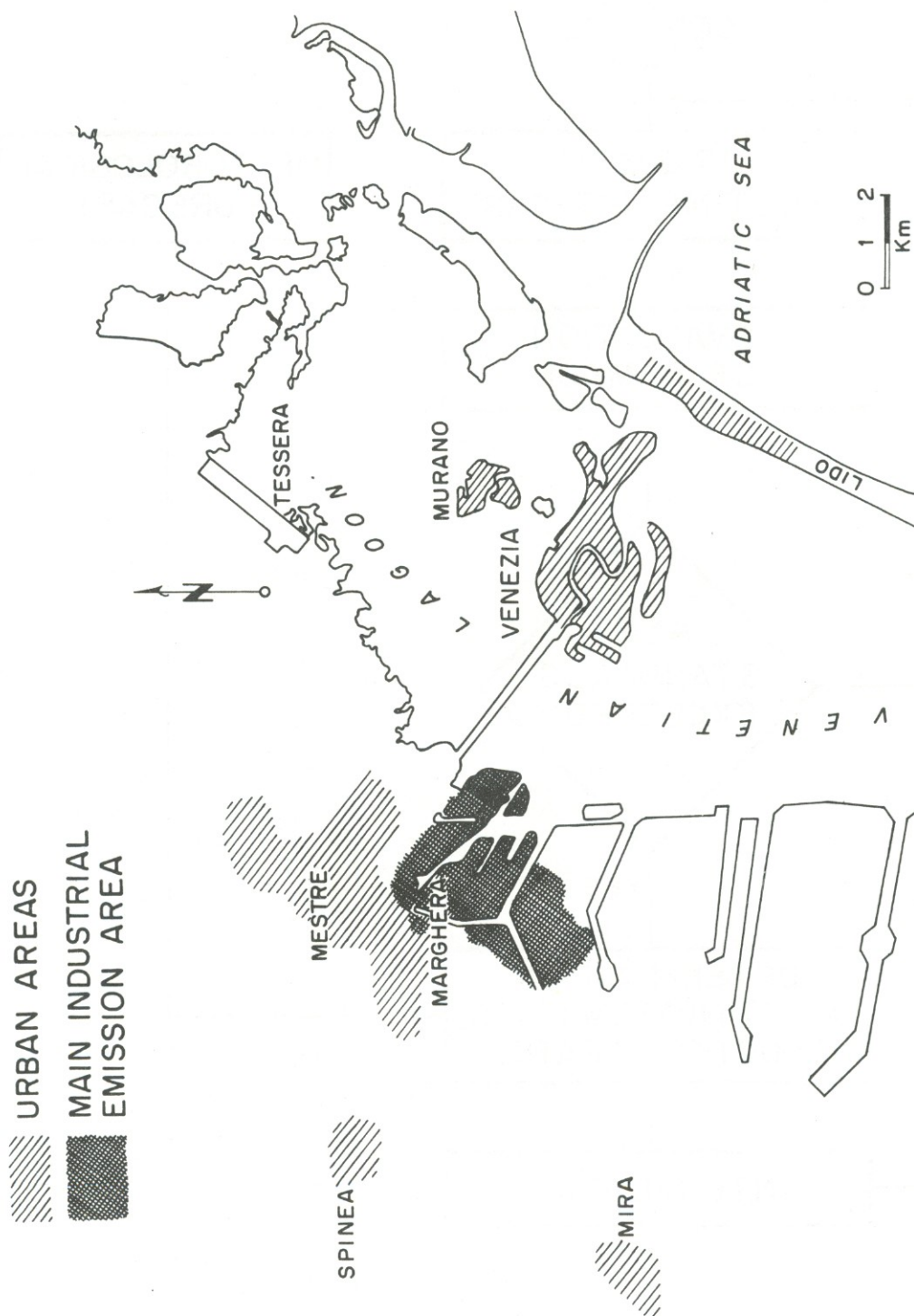


Figure 2. The Venetian Lagoon area.

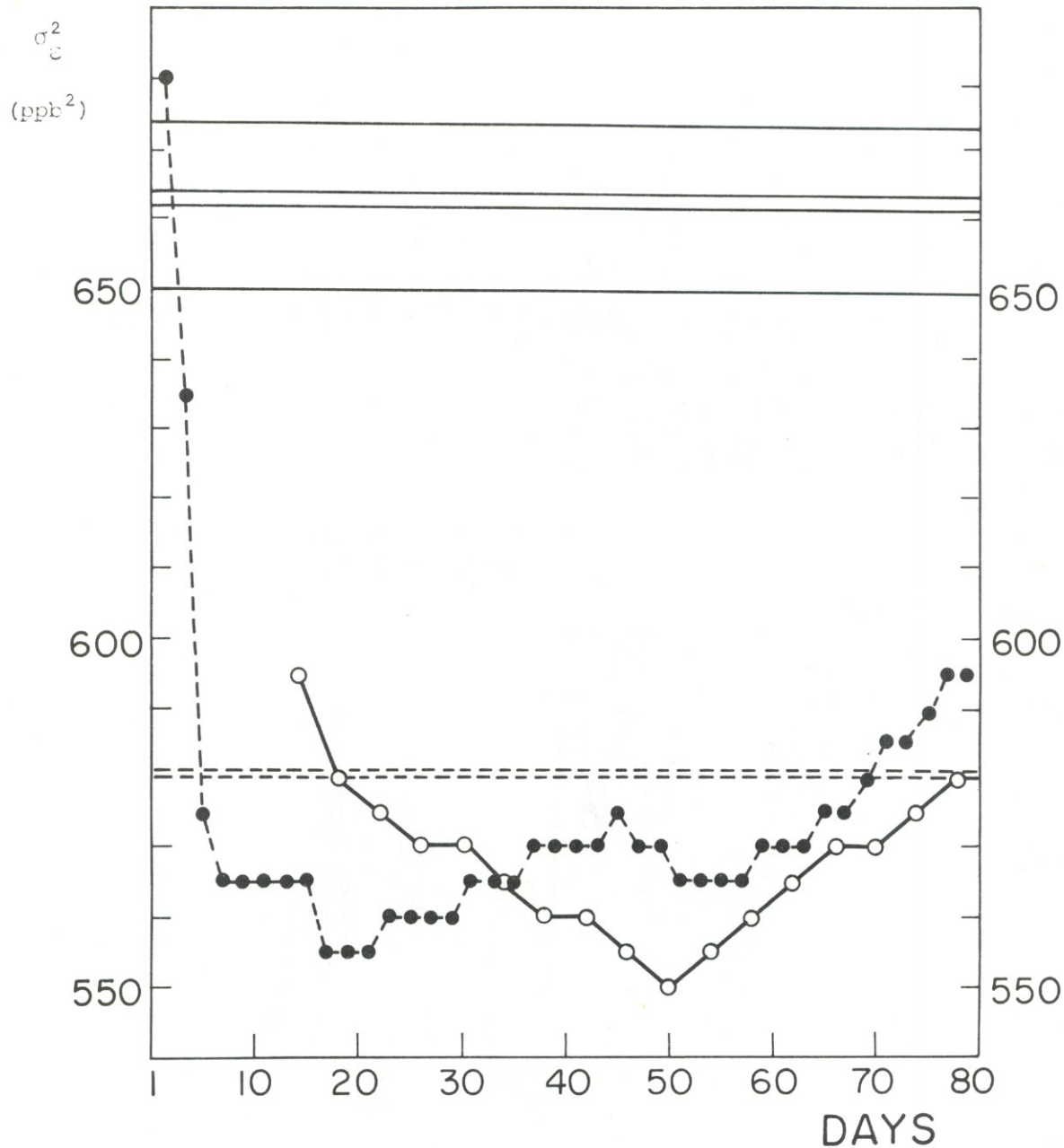


Figure 3. Values of  $\sigma_{\epsilon}^2$  for AR(1) (dots) and AR(1)CS (circles) adaptive models applied to data recorded at Station 10 (ISS) during 1974 (one year analysis). The values are plotted versus the learning period. Horizontal lines show comparable  $\sigma_{\epsilon}^2$  values of non-adaptive models for the fitting (dashed lines) and forecasting (solid lines) cases (forecasting obtained by using the parameters estimated during the same season one year before).

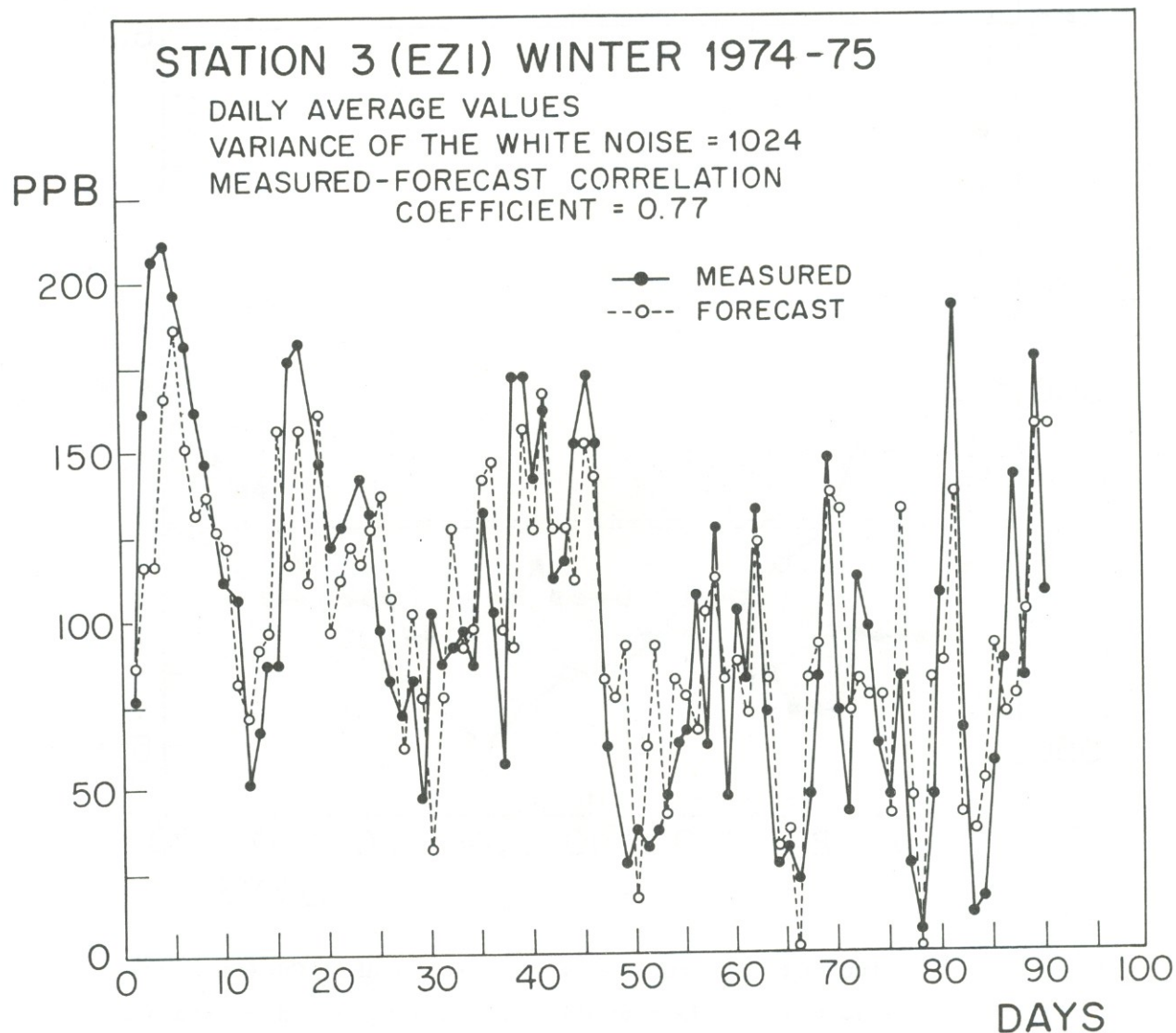


Figure 4.

Measured and forecasted (model I+AR(1)) daily  
 $\text{SO}_2$  average values during the winter 1974-75  
 (correlation coefficient of the persistence model  
 = 0.60).



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