



Thermal Neutron Scattering Law (TSL) Data In ENDF/B-VIII

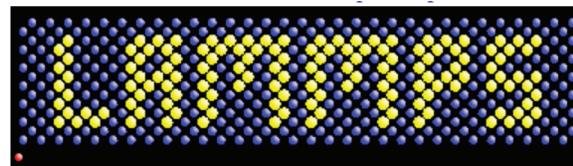
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Thermal Scattering Law Analysis

- ❑ Key development in the last 20 years is the use of atomistic simulations methods to support the evaluation process
 - Produce data necessary to calculate the TSL including
 - ❑ DOS for evaluation of TSL
 - ❑ Direct access to TSL using correlation analysis



Thermal Scattering Law Analysis

Ayman I. Hawari et al, "Ab Initio Generation of Thermal Neutron Scattering Cross Sections,"
Proceedings of the PHYSOR conference, Chicago, IL, 2004. (Invited)

PHYSOR 2004 - The Physics of Fuel Cycles and Advanced Nuclear Systems: Global Developments
Chicago, Illinois, April 25-29, 2004, on CD-ROM, American Nuclear Society, LaGrange Park, IL, (2004)

Ab Initio Generation of Thermal Neutron Scattering Cross Sections

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Quantum mechanical ab initio (i.e., first principle) methods are applied in generating the thermal neutron scattering cross sections of moderators and reflectors that are of interest in nuclear technology. Specifically, this work focuses on graphite and beryllium. In both cases, the ab initio code VASP and the lattice dynamics code PHONON were used to generate the dispersion relations and phonon frequencies (degree of freedom of atoms). This information was then utilized in the LEAPW module of the NILOY code to calculate the thermal neutron scattering cross sections at various temperatures. The use of the ab initio approach represents a major departure from previously applied methods, which depended mainly on simpler dynamical models to extrapolate data to lower energy. The phonon frequency distribution function in this case, makes more complicated models of the atomic system of interest can be set up, which allows the establishment of a more complete dynamical matrix. As opposed to the semi-empirical methods used previously, this method represents a fundamental and predictive approach for estimating materials' properties including ones that are of interest in nuclear reactor design.

KEYWORDS: neutron, thermal neutron, slow neutron, ab initio, graphite, beryllium, moderator, phonon frequency distribution, thermal neutron scattering cross section, nuclear reactor

1. Introduction

Due to advances in computational power, the possibility now exists to perform detailed quantum mechanical ab initio (i.e., first principle) calculations of atomic structures that are currently used in fields such as plasma chemistry, and materials science to characterize and predict the behavior of new and exotic materials [1]. Using this approach, it is possible to establish the equilibrium atomic positions of a given material and predict the various properties of the material starting from such basic information as the coordinates of the atoms. Consequently, ab initio simulations seek to gain insight into the bonding forces in the material, which are usually variations of the Coulomb force as result in the formation of ionic, covalent, molecular, and metallic bonding.

In addition, as the energy of the atom or molecule bonding becomes important as the neutrons slow down and enter the thermal (or slow) region (neutron energy < 1 eV), the microscopic interaction (i.e., absorption, scattering, etc.) of slow neutrons with the reactor core defines the thermal neutron energy spectrum, which affects several global (macroscopic) properties such as criticality, and safety of reactor response. Therefore, the accuracy of the thermal neutron scattering cross sections that are used in reactor core design calculations are important for operating the reactor as an optimized and safe manner.

In the past, the thermal neutron scattering cross sections were derived from structure dynamics models that were fitted to experimental data in order to quantify the forces between the atoms and calculate the required excitation density of states [2]. However, by using the ab initio approach, the ability now exists to treat much larger systems of atoms, and arrive at more accurate and complete dynamical models that

Ayman I. Hawari, "Modern Techniques for Inelastic Thermal Neutron Scattering Analysis,"
Nuclear Data Sheets, vol. 118, 172, 2014.



Modern Techniques for Inelastic Thermal Neutron Scattering Analysis

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A predictive approach based on ab initio quantum mechanics and/or classical molecular dynamics simulations has been formulated to calculate the scattering law, $S(\vec{r}, \omega)$, and the thermal neutron scattering cross section of materials. In principle, these atomistic methods make it possible to generate the scattering law of a material directly from its atomic structure, thereby correctly reflecting the physical conditions of the medium (i.e., temperature, pressure, etc.). In addition, the generated scattering law can be used to predict the thermal neutron scattering cross section using theory and, in the case of solids, crystalline perfection. As a result, new and improved thermal neutron scattering data libraries have been generated for a variety of materials. Among these are materials of interest in nuclear applications such as graphite, beryllium, and silicon carbide (including the coherent inelastic scattering component), silicon carbide, cold neutron media such as solid deuterium, and liquid deuterium. The use of these new data libraries in reactor design is anticipated that the above approach will play a major role in providing the nuclear science and engineering community with its needs of thermal neutron scattering data especially when considering new materials where experimental information may be scarce or nonexistent.

1. INTRODUCTION

Low energy or "thermal" neutrons are characterized by energies that are on the order of the excitation (vibration, rotation, etc.) energy in the medium in which they are scattered. The mean free path of a thermal neutron is on the order of the separation distance in solids. Consequently, such neutrons are highly sensitized to the atomic structure of the medium, and thus to the scattering of the medium's atoms and molecules. In fact, the structural and dynamic properties of the atomic system are reflected in the thermal neutron scattering cross sections of the system's atoms and molecules and the neutrons. The scattering of low energy neutrons in an atomic system is generally described by the sum of two types of cross sections. Traditionally, the cross sections are quantified based on Rutherford scattering theory combined with Fermi's range rule calculation of the effect of the short-range (range of the potential) nuclear potential [3]. The difference of the cross sections is an effect of the double differential scattering cross section given by

$$\frac{d^2\sigma}{d\Omega dE} = \frac{1}{4\pi} \frac{k'}{k} (\sigma_{coh} S(\vec{r}, \omega) + \sigma_{inv} S_0(\vec{r}, \omega)), \quad (1)$$

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where $S(\vec{r}, \omega)$ is known as the scattering law, \vec{r} is the scattering vector, ω is the frequency, k and k' represent the incident and scattered wave vectors, respectively, σ_{coh} is the bound atom coherent scattering cross section, and σ_{inv} is the bound atom incoherent scattering cross section. In general, S is composed of two terms as follows:

$$S(\vec{r}, \omega) = S_c(\vec{r}, \omega) + S_d(\vec{r}, \omega), \quad (2)$$

where S_c is known as the self-scattering law, which accounts for non-interference (incoherent) effects, while S_d accounts for the interference (coherent) effects for interference (coherent) effects. Examination of Eq. 1 shows that the thermal neutron scattering cross section depends on the sum of the coherent and incoherent scattering cross sections. A factor k'/k represents the dynamics of the scattering law, i.e., the ratio of the scattering law as represented by the scattering law.

Previously, the calculation of the thermal neutron scattering cross section made the incoherent approximation where S_d is set equal to zero in Eq. 2. Based on this assumption, Eq. 1 is developed to give (e.g., see Ref. [2])

$$\frac{d^2\sigma}{d\Omega dE} = \frac{1}{4\pi} \frac{k'}{k} (\sigma_{coh} + \sigma_{inv}) S_c(\vec{r}, \omega). \quad (3)$$

However, for some important neutron materials such as graphite and beryllium, this assumption can introduce

2000 - Present

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KEYWORDS: neutron, thermal neutron, slow neutron, ab initio, VASP, graphite, beryllium, moderator, phonon frequency distribution, thermal neutron scattering cross section, nuclear reactor

1. Introduction

Due to advances in computational power, the possibility now exists to perform detailed quantum mechanical calculations (i.e., first-principle calculations) that are currently used in fields such as chemistry and materials science to characterize and predict the behavior of new and exotic materials [1]. Using this approach, it is possible to establish the equilibrium atomic positions of a given material and predict the various properties of the material starting from such basic information as the coordinates of the atoms. Consequently, ab initio simulations seek to gain insight into the bonding forces in the material, which are usually variations of the Coulomb force that result in the formation of ionic, covalent, molecular, and metallic bonds.

In the past, the thermal neutron scattering cross sections of atoms or molecular bonding became important as the neutrons slow down and enter the thermal (or slow) region (neutron energy $\approx 1 \text{ eV}$). The microscopic interaction (i.e., absorption, scattering, etc.) of slow neutrons within the reactor core defines the thermal neutron energy spectrum, which affects several global (macroscopic) properties such as criticality, and safety and health response. Therefore, the accuracy of the thermal neutron scattering cross sections that are used in reactor core design calculations are important for operating the reactor safely and cost effective.

In the past, the thermal neutron scattering cross sections were derived from structure dynamics models that were fitted to experimental data in order to quantify the forces between the atoms and calculate the required excitation density of states [2]. However, by using the ab initio approach, the ability now exists to treat much larger systems of atoms, and arrive at more accurate and complete dynamical models from

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A predictive approach based on ab initio quantum mechanics and/or classical molecular dynamics simulations has been formulated to calculate the scattering law, $S(\vec{v},\omega)$, and the thermal neutron scattering cross section of materials. In principle, these atomistic methods make it possible to generate the scattering law for a material at any temperature and any energy, which directly reflect the physical conditions of the medium (i.e., temperature, pressure, etc.). In addition, the generated scattering law can be used to predict the thermal neutron scattering cross section of the material and, in the case of solids, crystalline perfection. As a result, new and improved thermal neutron scattering data libraries have been generated for a variety of materials. Among these are materials of interest in nuclear technology such as graphite, beryllium, and silicon carbide (including the coherent inelastic scattering component), silicon carbide, cold neutron media such as solid deuterium, and the like. The use of these improved scattering data libraries in reactor design is anticipated that the above approach will play a major role in providing the nuclear science and engineering community with the needs of thermal neutron scattering data especially when considering new materials where experimental information may be scarce or nonexistent.

1. INTRODUCTION

Low energy or "thermal" neutrons are characterized by energies that are on the order of the excitation (vibration, rotation, etc.) energy in the medium in which they are scattered. The scattering vector, \vec{v} , is the wave vector of the scattered neutron respectively, σ_{coh} is the bound atom coherent scattering cross section, and σ_{inco} is the bound atom incoherent scattering cross section. In general, S is composed of two terms as follows:

$$S(\vec{v},\omega) = S_c(\vec{v},\omega) + S_i(\vec{v},\omega), \quad (2)$$

where S_c is known as the self-scattering law, which accounts for non-interference (incoherent) effects, while S_i accounts for the interference (coherent) effects. Examination of Eq. 1 shows that the thermal neutron scattering cross section depends on the total scattering cross section, σ_{tot} , which is represented by the bound atom cross sections, and second, a factor χ , that represents the dynamics of the scattering (i.e., the ratio of the scattering law as represented by the scattering vector).

For the purposes of calculation of the thermal neutron scattering cross section, we take the incident approximation where χ is set equal to zero in Eq. 2. Based on this assumption, Eq. 1 is developed to give (e.g., see Ref. [2])

$$\frac{d^2\sigma}{d\Omega dE} = \frac{1}{4\pi} \frac{V}{k} (\sigma_{coh} S_c(\vec{v},\omega) + \sigma_{inco} S_i(\vec{v},\omega)), \quad (1)$$

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2000 - Present

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ENDF/B-VIII.0: The 8th Major Release of the Nuclear Reaction Data Library with CIELO-project Cross Sections, New Standards and Thermal Scattering Data

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We describe the ENDF/B-VIII.0 nuclear reaction data library. ENDF/B-VIII.0 incorporates the new IAEA standards, includes updated thermal neutron scattering data and uses new evaluated data from the CIELO project for neutron reactions on 1H , 2H , 3He , 37Cl , 40K and 90Sr . The new data are based on the latest available experimental data and benefit from recent experimental data obtained in the U.S. and Europe, and improvements in theory and simulation. Notable advances include updated evaluated data for light nuclei, structural materials, actinides, and fission products. The new data are used to evaluate the ENDF/B-VII.0 thermal scattering and charged-particle reactions. Integral validation testing is shown for a wide range of criticality, reactor, and shielding applications. The overall integral validation performance of the library is improved relative to the previous ENDF/B-VII.1 library.

Neutron Thermalization

Using first Born approximation combined with Fermi pseudopotential, it can be shown that the double differential scattering cross section has the form

$$\frac{d^2\sigma}{d\Omega dE'} = \frac{1}{4\pi} \sqrt{\frac{E'}{E}} \left\{ \sigma_{coh} S(\vec{k}, \omega) + \sigma_{incoh} S_s(\vec{k}, \omega) \right\}$$

The scattering law $S(\vec{k}, \omega)$ is composed of two parts

$$S(\vec{k}, \omega) = S_s(\vec{k}, \omega) + S_d(\vec{k}, \omega)$$

Van Hove's space-time formulation

$$I(\vec{k}, t) = \int G(\vec{r}, t) \exp(i\vec{k} \cdot \vec{r}) d\vec{r}$$

$$S(\vec{k}, \omega) = \frac{1}{2\pi\hbar} \iint_{-\infty}^{\infty} \iint_{-\infty}^{\infty} G(\vec{r}, t) e^{i(\vec{k} \cdot \vec{r} - \omega t)} d\vec{r} dt$$

where $G(\vec{r}, t)$ is the *dynamic pair correlation function* and can be expressed in terms of time dependent atomic positions.

$$S_s(\alpha, \beta) = k_B T \cdot S_s(\vec{\kappa}, \omega)$$

$$\left. \frac{d^2\sigma}{d\Omega dE'} \right|_{inelastic} = \frac{\sigma}{2k_B T} \sqrt{\frac{E'}{E}} S_s(\alpha, \beta)$$

$$\beta = \frac{E - E'}{k_B T} \quad \text{Energy transfer}$$

$$\alpha = \frac{(E + E' - 2\sqrt{EE'} \cos \theta)}{k_B T} \quad \text{Momentum transfer}$$

The scattering law (TSL) is the Fourier transform of a Gaussian correlation function – **INCOHERENT APPROXIMATION**

$$S_s(\alpha, \beta) = \frac{1}{2\pi} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} e^{-i\beta t} e^{-\gamma(t)} dt$$

$$\gamma(t) = \frac{\alpha}{2} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \frac{\rho(\beta)}{\beta \sinh(\beta/2)} [1 - e^{-i\beta t}] e^{\beta/2} d\beta$$

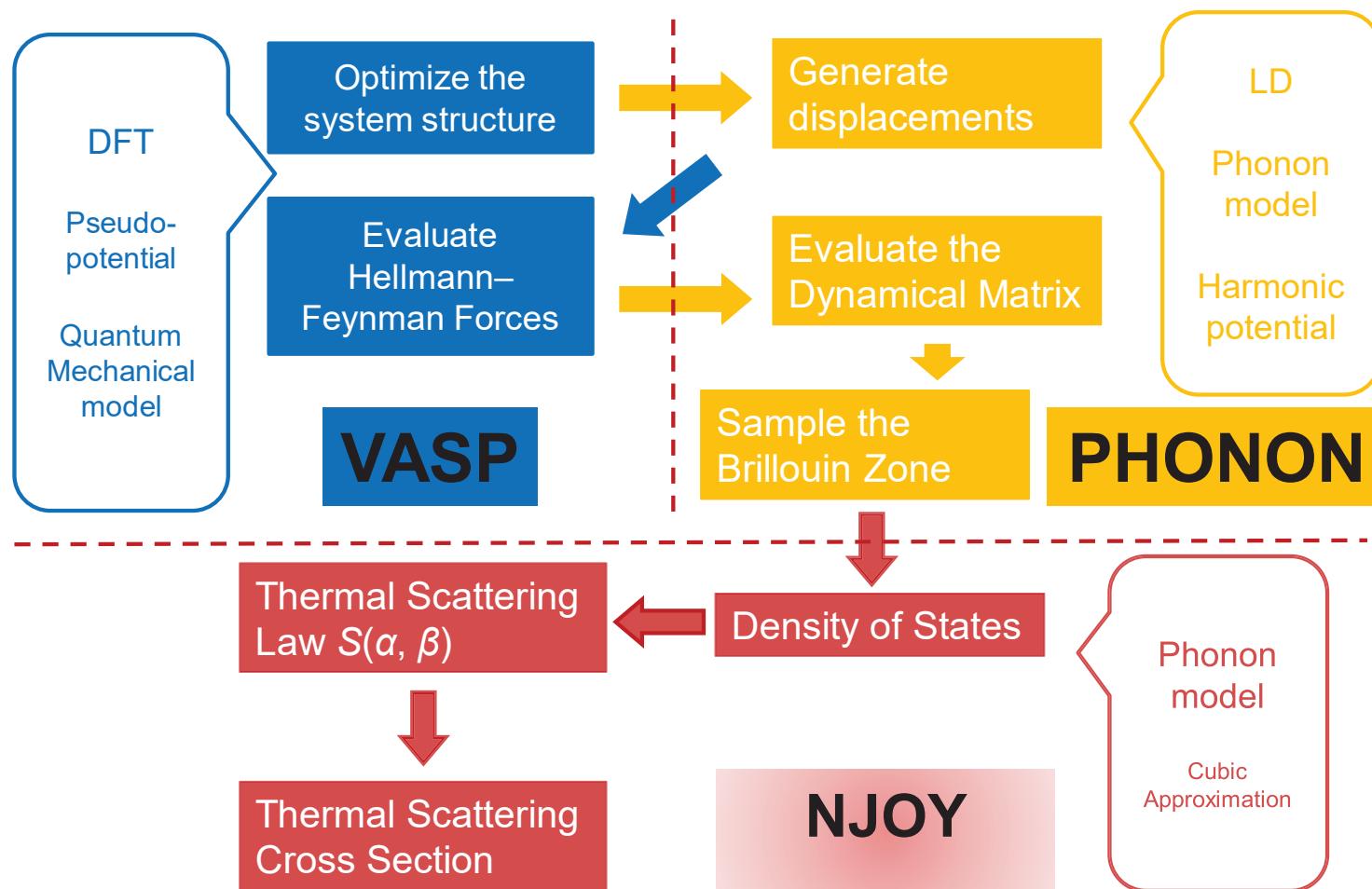
$\rho(\beta)$ – density of states (e.g., phonon frequency distribution)

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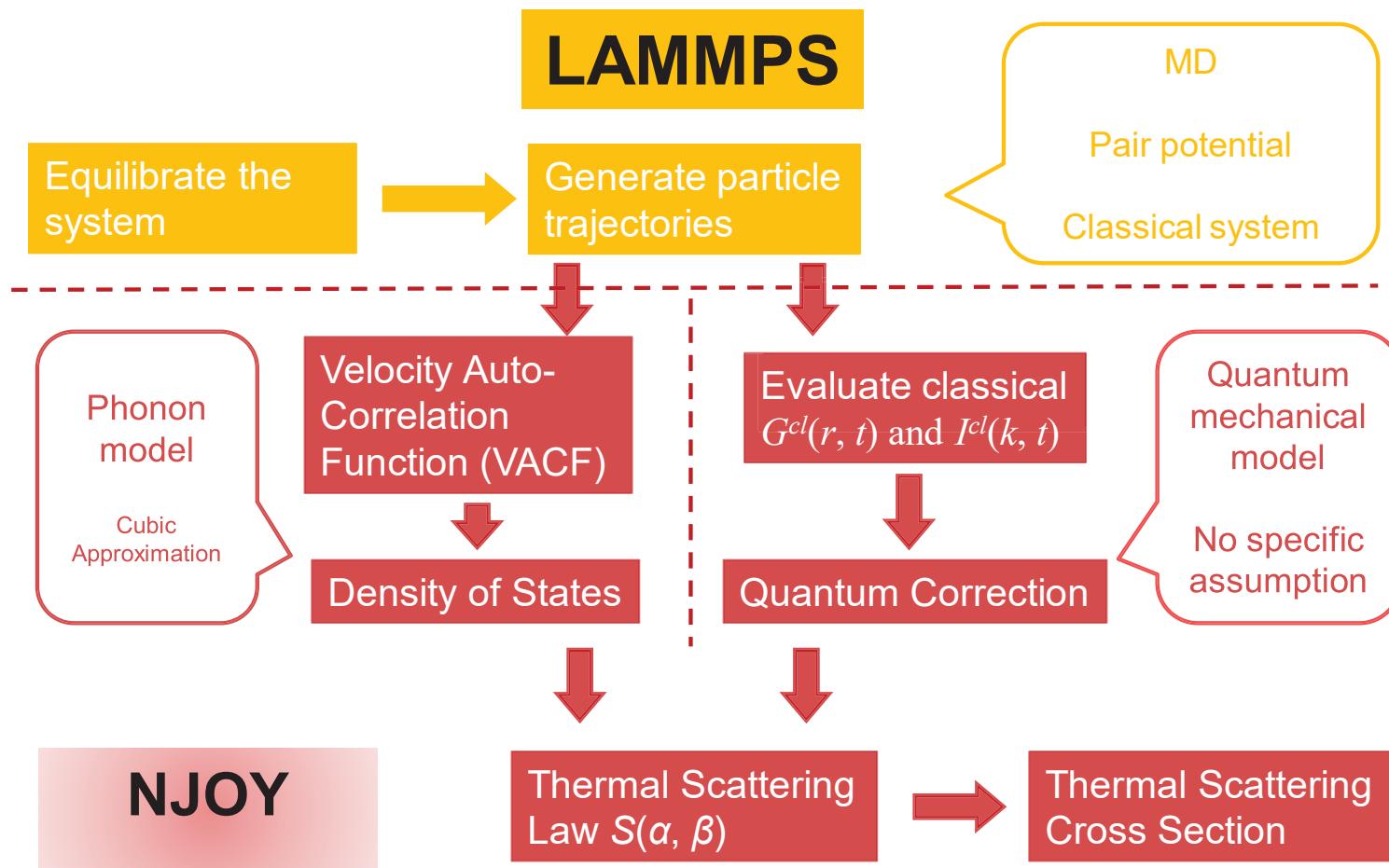
Evaluation Approach

- Construct atomistic model of a material
- Verify ability of model to reproduce physical properties of the material (equilibrium conditions)
 - Density, thermal expansion, thermal conductivity,...
 - Ergodic behavior, correlations,...
- Generate input (DOS, ...) for TSL calculations
- Calculate TSL and produce thermal scattering cross sections
 - Check consistency of results with computational assumptions/models
 - Compare to experimental data

Thermal Scattering Cross-Sections Evaluation DFT/LD



Thermal Scattering Cross-Sections Evaluation MD/QM



ENDF/B-VIII TSL Evaluations

Material	ENDF Library Name	Evaluation Basis	Institution
Beryllium metal	tsl-Be-metal.endf	DFT/LD	NCSU
Beryllium oxide (beryllium)	tsl-BeinBeO.endf	DFT/LD	NCSU
Beryllium oxide (oxygen)	tsl-OinBeO.endf	DFT/LD	NCSU
Light water (hydrogen)	tsl-HinH2O.endf	MD	CAB
Light water ice (hydrogen)	tsl-HinIceIh.endf	DFT/LD	BAPL
Light water ice (oxygen)	tsl-OinIceIh.endf	DFT/LD	BAPL
Heavy water (deuterium)	tsl-DinD2O.endf	MD	CAB
Heavy water (oxygen)	tsl-OinD2O.endf	MD	CAB
Polymethyl Methacrylate (Lucite)	tsl-HinC5O2H8.endf	MD	NCSU
Polyethylene	tsl-HinCH2.endf	MD	NCSU
Crystalline graphite	tsl-graphite.endf	MD	NCSU
Reactor graphite (10% porosity)	tsl-reactor-graphite-10P.endf	MD	NCSU
Reactor graphite (30% porosity)	tsl-reactor-graphite-30P.endf	MD	NCSU
Silicon carbide (silicon)	tsl-CinSiC.endf	DFT/LD	NCSU
Silicon carbide (carbon)	tsl-SiinSiC.endf	DFT/LD	NCSU
Silicon dioxide (alpha phase)	tsl-SiO2-alpha.endf	DFT/LD	NCSU
Silicon dioxide (beta phase)	tsl-SiO2-beta.endf	DFT/LD	NCSU
Yttrium hydride (hydrogen)	tsl-HinYH2.endf	DFT/LD	BAPL
Yttrium hydride (yttrium)	tsl-YinYH2.endf	DFT/LD	BAPL
Uranium dioxide (oxygen)	tsl-OinUO2.endf	DFT/LD	NCSU
Uranium dioxide (uranium)	tsl-UinUO2.endf	DFT/LD	NCSU
Uranium nitride (nitrogen)	tsl-NinUN.endf	DFT/LD	NCSU
Uranium nitride (uranium)	tsl-UinUN.endf	DFT/LD	NCSU

ENDF/B-VIII TSL Evaluations

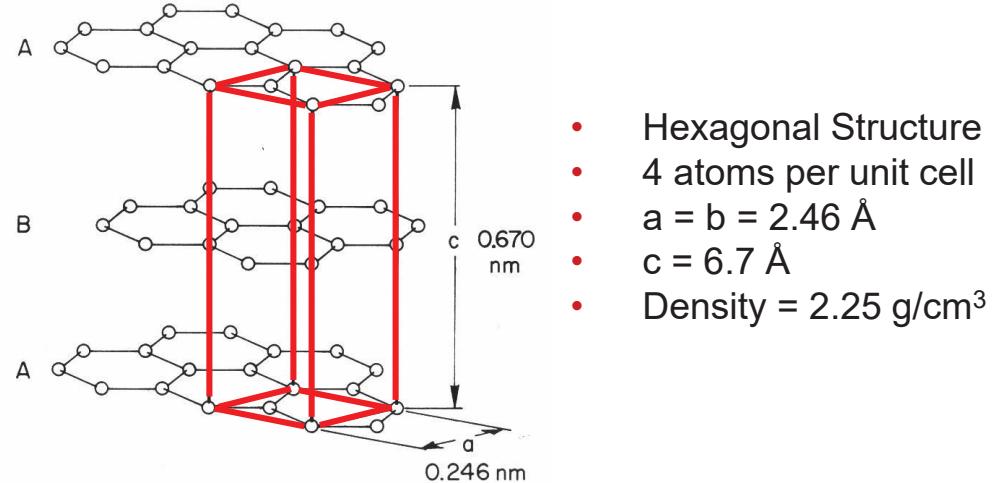
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Beryllium metal	tsl-Be-metal.endf	DFT/LD	NCSU
Beryllium oxide (beryllium)	tsl-BeinBeO.endf	DFT/LD	NCSU
Beryllium oxide (oxygen)	tsl-OinBeO.endf	DFT/LD	NCSU
Light water (hydrogen)	tsl-HinH2O.endf	MD	CAB
Light water ice (hydrogen)	tsl-HinIceIh.endf	DFT/LD	BAPL
Light water ice (oxygen)	tsl-OinIceIh.endf	DFT/LD	BAPL
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Silicon carbide (carbon)	tsl-SiinSiC.endf	DFT/LD	NCSU
Silicon dioxide (alpha phase)	tsl-SiO2-alpha.endf	DFT/LD	NCSU
Silicon dioxide (beta phase)	tsl-SiO2-beta.endf	DFT/LD	NCSU
Yttrium hydride (hydrogen)	tsl-HinYH2.endf	DFT/LD	BAPL
Yttrium hydride (yttrium)	tsl-YinYH2.endf	DFT/LD	BAPL
Uranium dioxide (oxygen)	tsl-OinUO2.endf	DFT/LD	NCSU
Uranium dioxide (uranium)	tsl-UinUO2.endf	DFT/LD	NCSU
Uranium nitride (nitrogen)	tsl-NinUN.endf	DFT/LD	NCSU
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Silicon dioxide (alpha phase)	tsl-SiO2-alpha.endf	DFT/LD	NCSU
Silicon dioxide (beta phase)	tsl-SiO2-beta.endf	DFT/LD	NCSU
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Uranium dioxide (oxygen)	tsl-OinUO2.endf	DFT/LD	NCSU
Uranium dioxide (uranium)	tsl-UinUO2.endf	DFT/LD	NCSU
Uranium nitride (nitrogen)	tsl-NinUN.endf	DFT/LD	NCSU
Uranium nitride (uranium)	tsl-UinUN.endf	DFT/LD	NCSU

Graphite

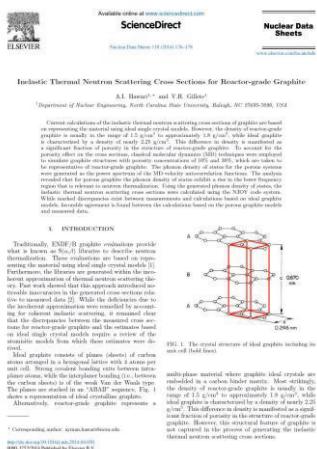
Ideal “crystalline” graphite consists of planes (sheets) of carbon atoms arranged in a hexagonal lattice. Covalent bonding exists between intraplaner atoms, while the interplaner bonding is of the weak Van der Waals type. The planes are stacked in an “abab” sequence.



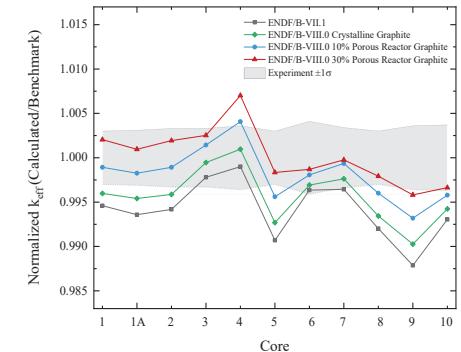
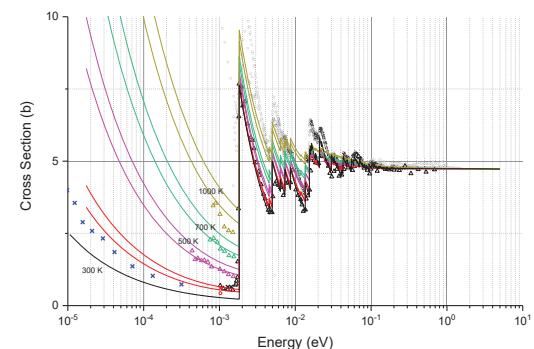
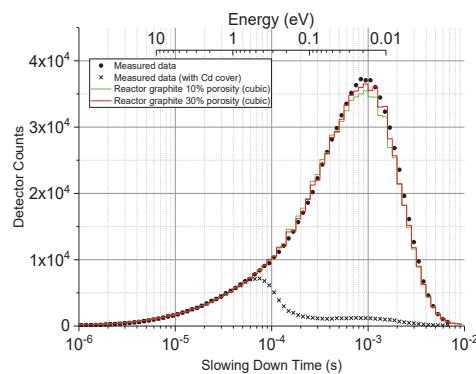
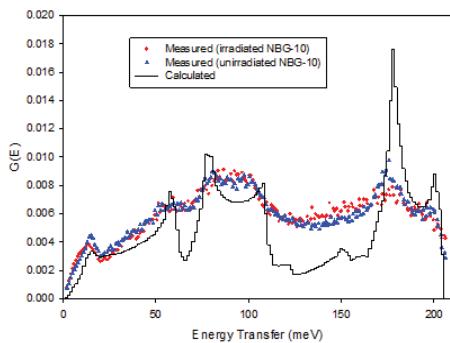
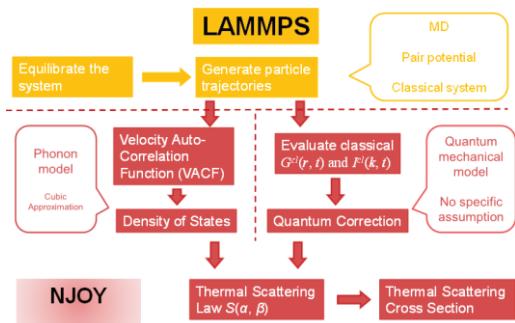
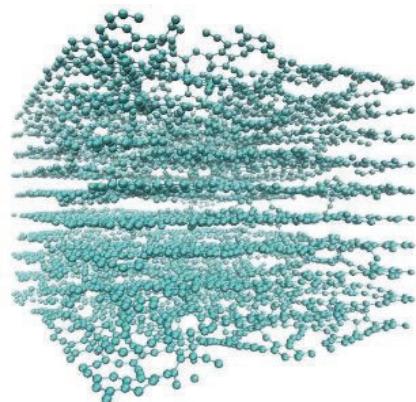
Reactor/Nuclear graphite consists of ideal graphite crystallites (randomly oriented) in a carbon binder. It is highly porous structure with porosity level ranging between 10% and 30%.



Nuclear Graphite (SEM at NCSU)
Density = $1.5 - 1.8 \text{ g/cm}^3$



Reactor/Nuclear Graphite



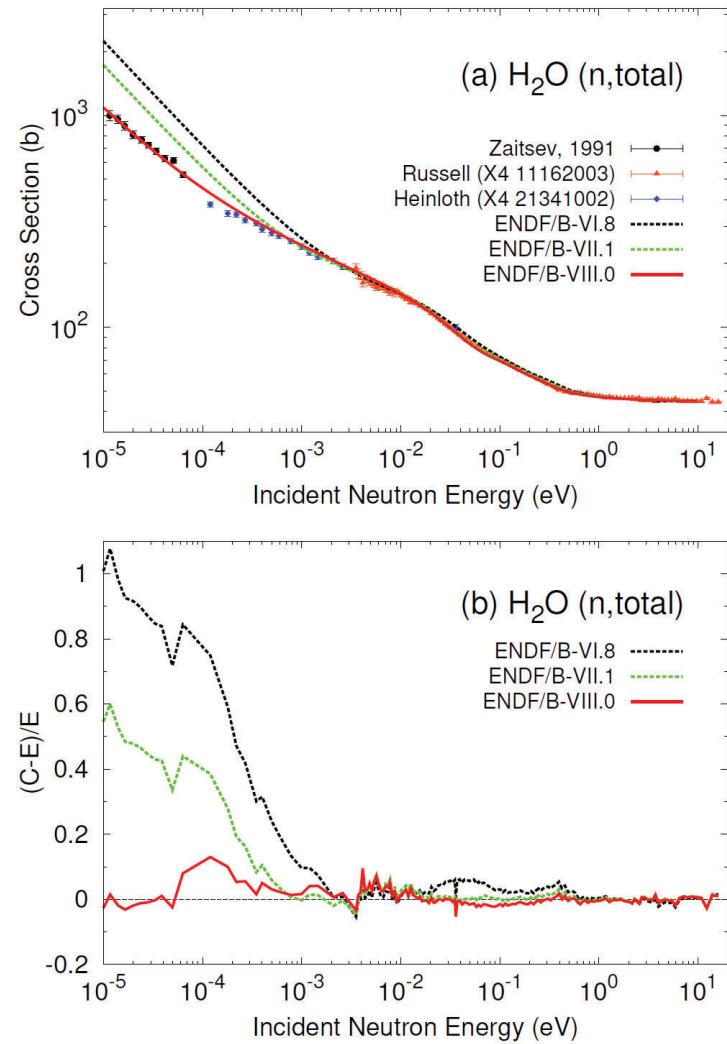
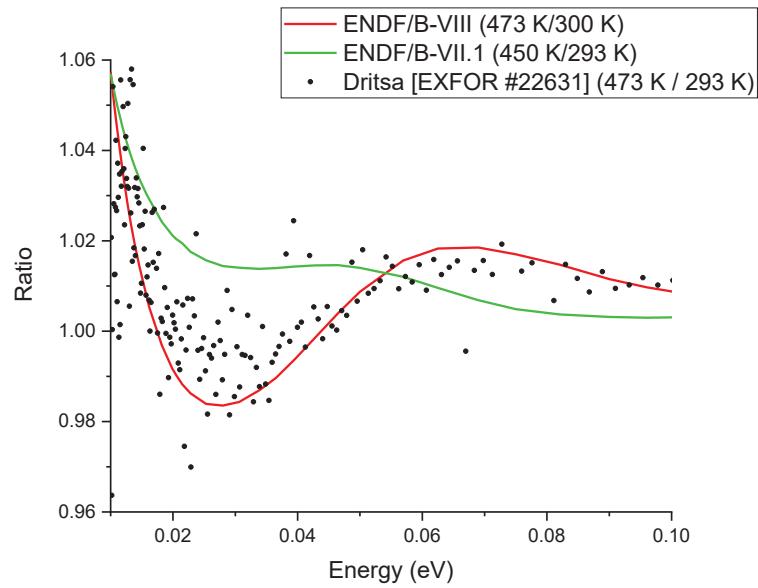
Evaluation

Measurements/Benchmarks

Light Water (H in H₂O)

ENDF/B-VIII evaluation used
MD techniques to generate
the temperature dependent
DOS

Benchmark studies continue!



Neutron Thermalization

Using first Born approximation combined with Fermi pseudopotential, it can be shown that the double differential scattering cross section has the form

$$\frac{d^2\sigma}{d\Omega dE'} = \frac{1}{4\pi} \sqrt{\frac{E'}{E}} \left\{ \sigma_{coh} S(\vec{k}, \omega) + \sigma_{incoh} S_s(\vec{k}, \omega) \right\}$$

The scattering law $S(\vec{k}, \omega)$ is composed of two parts

$$S(\vec{k}, \omega) = S_s(\vec{k}, \omega) + S_d(\vec{k}, \omega)$$

Van Hove's space-time formulation

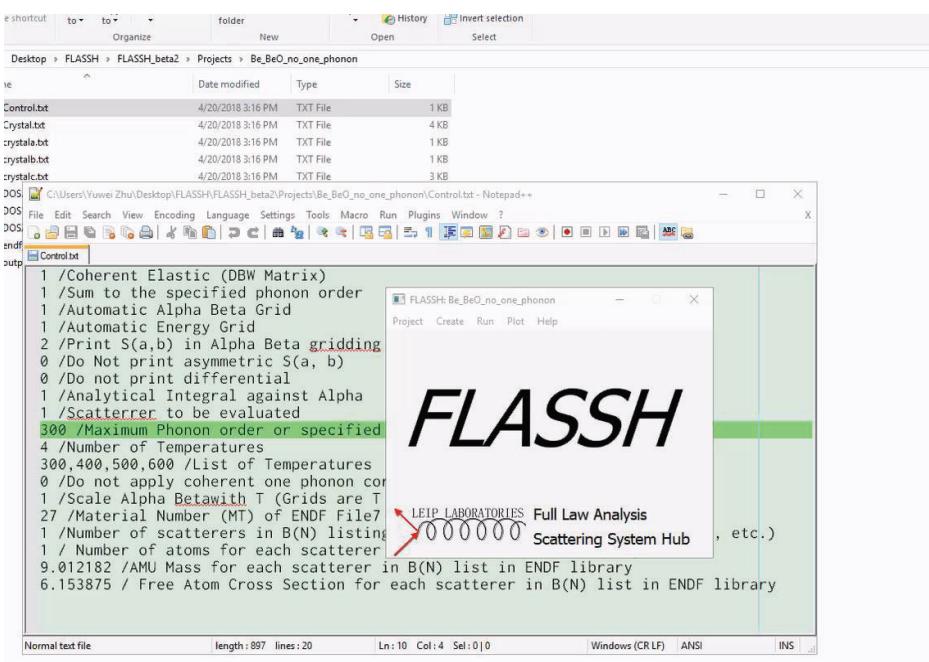
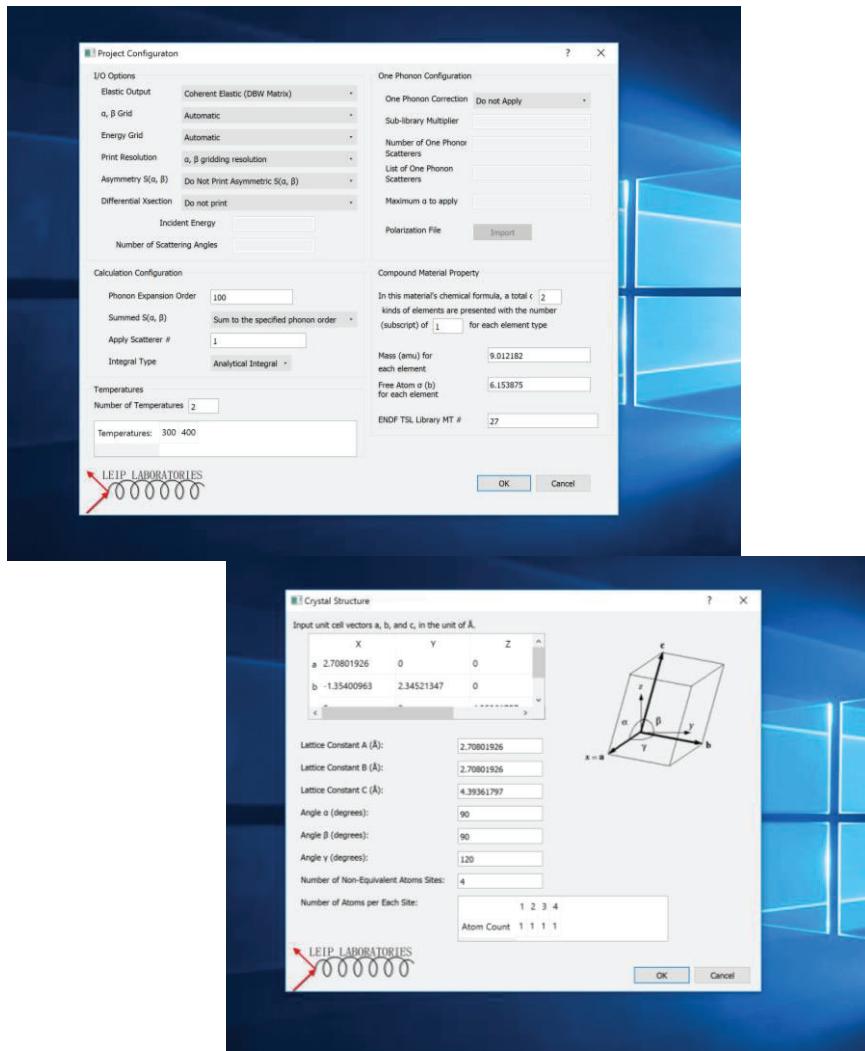
$$I(\vec{k}, t) = \int G(\vec{r}, t) \exp(i\vec{k} \cdot \vec{r}) d\vec{r}$$

$$S(\vec{k}, \omega) = \frac{1}{2\pi\hbar} \iint_{-\infty}^{\infty} \iint_{-\infty}^{\infty} G(\vec{r}, t) e^{i(\vec{k} \cdot \vec{r} - \omega t)} d\vec{r} dt$$

where $G(\vec{r}, t)$ is the *dynamic pair correlation function* and can be expressed in terms of time dependent atomic positions.

**21st
Century**

FLASSH Code

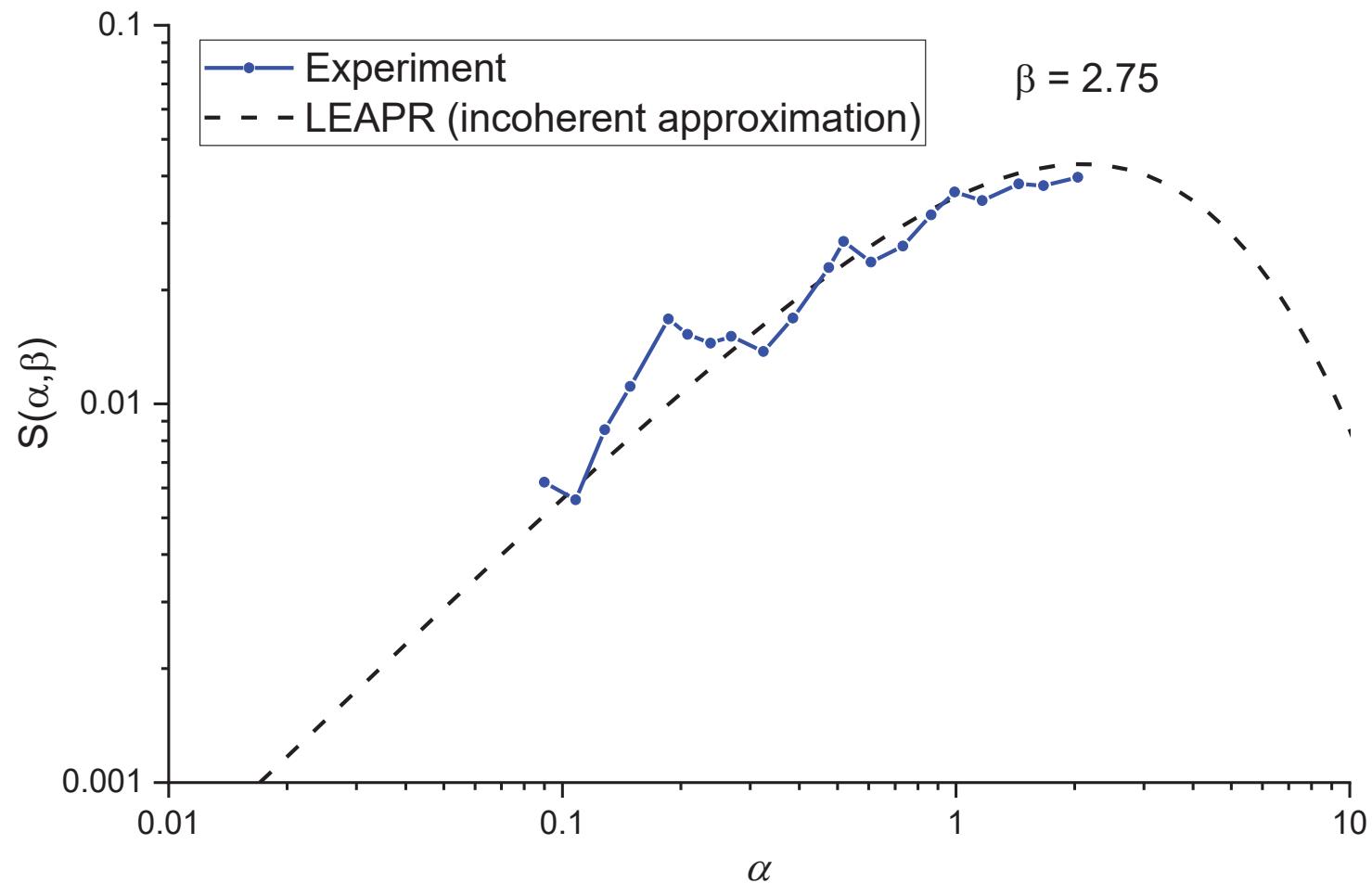


FLASSTH Code Features

	NJOY (LEAPR and THERMR)	<i>FLASSTH</i>
Incoherent approximation	Yes	No
Cubic approximation	Yes	No
One atom per unit cell	Yes	No
Short Collision Time (SCT) Approximation	Yes	No
Coherent elastic scattering	Approximate (and hard coded for selected materials)	Exact formulation (any material based on user input)
Integral against α	Numerical	Analytical (optional numerical)
α, β grid	User input	Automatic (optional user input)
Parallel computing	N/A	Yes
Input syntax check	N/A	Yes
Graphical user interface	N/A	Yes

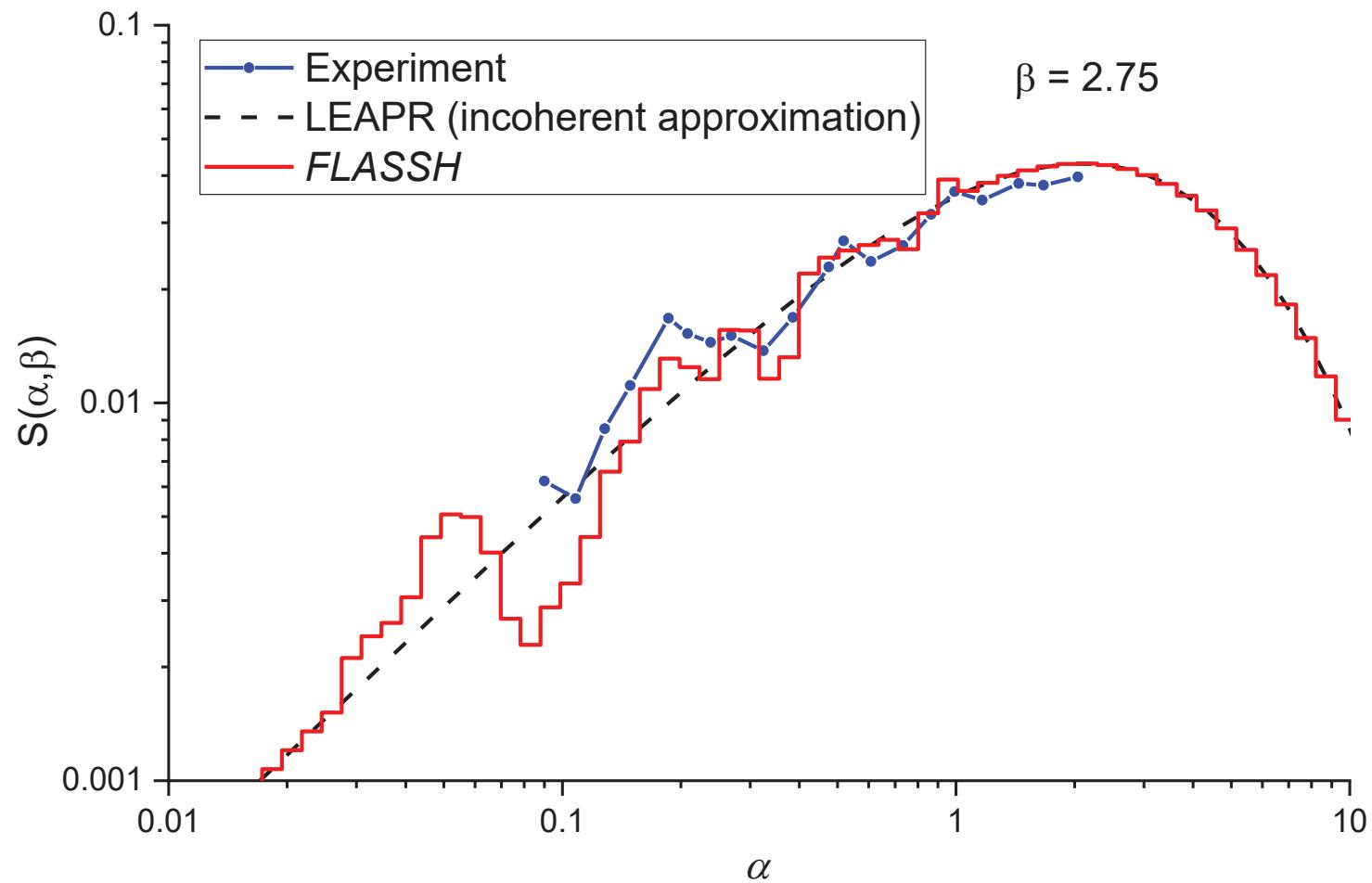
NJOY

Be Scattering Law $S(\alpha, \beta)$



FLASSH

Be Scattering Law $S(\alpha, \beta)$



Summary

- ENDF/B-VIII is released with significant additions and modifications to the TSL sub-library
- The “new” TSL evaluations in ENDF/B-VIII all implemented atomistic simulations methods to support the evaluation process
- The use of new methods and performing first-of-kind evaluations highlighted the need to address issues such as
 - TSL measurements and benchmarks
 - TSL uncertainty quantification
 - TSL file structure (content and format)
 - Use of GNDS