

ISSM Mathematical Reference Guide

Ice-sheet and Sea-level System Model

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1 Overview & Architecture

ISSM solves the coupled ice-sheet system by composing **Analysis** objects. Each analysis contributes:

- element-level matrix/vector contributions (`CreateKMatrix`, `CreatePVector`)
- boundary conditions (`CreateConstraints`, `CreateLoads`)
- parameter updates (`UpdateParameters`, `UpdateInputFromSolution`)

The call chain is:

```
transient_core / stressbalance_core / ...
  ↪ FemModel::Solve(analysistype)
    ↪ solutionsequence_*(...)           ← solver strategy
      ↪ Analysis::*KMatrix / *PVector ← per element
        assembly
```

Table 1: Key source directories

Path	Content
<code>src/c/analyses/</code>	One <code>.cpp/.h</code> pair per governing equation
<code>src/c/solutionsequences/</code>	Linear, nonlinear, Newton, FCT, ... solvers
<code>src/c/cores/</code>	Top-level dispatchers (<code>stressbalance_core</code> , ...)
<code>src/c/classes/Elements/</code>	Tria, Penta, Seg FEM elements
<code>src/m/parameterization/</code>	MATLAB model-setup utilities
<code>src/m/classes/</code>	MATLAB model class definitions

2 Stress-Balance / Ice Dynamics

Primary source: `src/c/analyses/StressbalanceAnalysis.cpp`

Additional: `StressbalanceSIAAnalysis.cpp`, `StressbalanceVerticalAnalysis.cpp`

2.1 General Governing Equations

ISSM solves the **Stokes momentum balance** (or an approximation thereof):

$$\nabla \cdot \boldsymbol{\sigma} + \rho_{\text{ice}} \mathbf{g} = \mathbf{0} \quad (\text{momentum balance}) \quad (1)$$

$$\boldsymbol{\sigma} = -p\mathbf{I} + 2\eta \mathbf{D}(\mathbf{u}) \quad (\text{constitutive law}) \quad (2)$$

$$\mathbf{D}(\mathbf{u}) = \frac{1}{2}(\nabla \mathbf{u} + (\nabla \mathbf{u})^T) \quad (\text{strain-rate tensor}) \quad (3)$$

$$\nabla \cdot \mathbf{u} = 0 \quad (\text{incompressibility}) \quad (4)$$

where $\boldsymbol{\sigma}$ is the Cauchy stress tensor, p the isotropic pressure, η the effective viscosity, $\mathbf{u} = (v_x, v_y, v_z)$ the ice velocity, $\rho_{\text{ice}} \approx 917 \text{ kg m}^{-3}$ the ice density, and $\mathbf{g}$ the gravitational acceleration vector.

2.2 Flow Approximations

ISSM supports six flow-equation approximations, selected per element via `md.flowequation`.

2.2.1 SIA — Shallow Ice Approximation

DoFs: 2 per node (v_x, v_y). **Domain:** 2D horizontal (most common). **Physics:** Retains only vertical shear stress; neglects longitudinal stresses.

$$\frac{\partial \sigma_{xz}}{\partial z} = \rho_{\text{ice}} g \frac{\partial s}{\partial x} \quad (5)$$

$$\frac{\partial \sigma_{yz}}{\partial z} = \rho_{\text{ice}} g \frac{\partial s}{\partial y} \quad (6)$$

Depth-integrated basal velocity:

$$u_b = u_s - 2A (\rho_{\text{ice}} g)^n |\nabla s|^{n-1} \int_b^s (s - z)^n dz \quad (7)$$

2.2.2 SSA — Shallow Shelf Approximation

DoFs: 2 per node (v_x, v_y). **Domain:** Floating ice shelves, fast-flowing streams. **Physics:** Depth-averaged, hydrostatic vertical; retains longitudinal deviatoric stresses.

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial x} \left(2\eta H \left(2\frac{\partial u}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial v}{\partial y} \right) \right) + \frac{\partial}{\partial y} \left(\eta H \left(\frac{\partial u}{\partial y} + \frac{\partial v}{\partial x} \right) \right) - \tau_{bx} = \rho_{\text{ice}} g H \frac{\partial s}{\partial x} \quad (8)$$

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial y} \left(2\eta H \left(2\frac{\partial v}{\partial y} + \frac{\partial u}{\partial x} \right) \right) + \frac{\partial}{\partial x} \left(\eta H \left(\frac{\partial u}{\partial y} + \frac{\partial v}{\partial x} \right) \right) - \tau_{by} = \rho_{\text{ice}} g H \frac{\partial s}{\partial y} \quad (9)$$

Basal friction (Weertman sliding law):

$$\tau_b = -C |\mathbf{u}_b|^{m-1} \mathbf{u}_b \quad (10)$$

where C is the friction coefficient and m the sliding exponent.

SSA viscosity:

$$\eta = \frac{B}{2 |\dot{\epsilon}_e|^{1/n-1}} \quad (11)$$

where B is the ice rheology parameter (temperature-dependent), $n \approx 3$ (Glen's flow law), and the *effective strain rate* is:

$$|\dot{\epsilon}_e|^2 = \left(\frac{\partial u}{\partial x} \right)^2 + \left(\frac{\partial v}{\partial y} \right)^2 + \frac{\partial u}{\partial x} \frac{\partial v}{\partial y} + \frac{1}{4} \left(\frac{\partial u}{\partial y} + \frac{\partial v}{\partial x} \right)^2 \quad (12)$$

2.2.3 HO — Higher-Order (Blatter–Pattyn)

DoFs: 2 per node per vertical level (v_x, v_y). **Domain:** 3D meshes. **Physics:** Omits vertical momentum equation; retains vertical gradients of horizontal velocity.

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial x} \left(4\eta \frac{\partial u}{\partial x} + 2\eta \frac{\partial v}{\partial y} \right) + \frac{\partial}{\partial y} \left(\eta \left(\frac{\partial u}{\partial y} + \frac{\partial v}{\partial x} \right) \right) + \frac{\partial}{\partial z} \left(\eta \frac{\partial u}{\partial z} \right) = \rho g \frac{\partial s}{\partial x} \quad (13)$$

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial y} \left(4\eta \frac{\partial v}{\partial y} + 2\eta \frac{\partial u}{\partial x} \right) + \frac{\partial}{\partial x} \left(\eta \left(\frac{\partial u}{\partial y} + \frac{\partial v}{\partial x} \right) \right) + \frac{\partial}{\partial z} \left(\eta \frac{\partial v}{\partial z} \right) = \rho g \frac{\partial s}{\partial y} \quad (14)$$

2.2.4 L1L2 — Level-1.5 Approximation

DoFs: 2 per node. **Physics:** Blends SSA and HO; incorporates a vertical shear term through an analytical integration.

$$|\dot{\epsilon}_e|^2 = |\dot{\epsilon}_{\text{SSA}}|^2 + |\dot{\epsilon}_{\text{shear}}(z)|^2 \quad (15)$$

Viscosity function `ViscosityL1L2()` in `src/c/classes/Materials/`.

2.2.5 MOLHO — Multi-Layer Higher-Order

DoFs: 4 per node ($v_{x,\text{base}}$, $v_{y,\text{base}}$, $v_{x,\text{shear}}$, $v_{y,\text{shear}}$). **Physics:** Separates basal sliding and shear deformation components analytically.

$$u(z) = u_{\text{base}} + u_{\text{shear}}(z), \quad u_{\text{shear}}(z) = \int_b^z 2 A(T) \sigma_{xz}^n dz' \quad (16)$$

`ViscosityMOLHO()` returns four viscosity values for the base and shear components.

2.2.6 FS — Full Stokes

DoFs: 5 per node (v_x , v_y , v_z , p , optional). **Domain:** 3D. **Physics:** Complete Navier-Stokes for slow viscous flow ($\text{Re} \approx 0$).

Supported mixed FEM element pairs (configured via `md.flowequation.fe_FS`):

Table 2: Full Stokes mixed FEM element pairs

Code	Velocity	Pressure	Notes
P1P1	P1	P1	Equal-order, needs stabilisation
P1P1GLS	P1	P1	+ Galerkin Least Squares stab.
MINI	P1+bubble	P1	Stable mini element
MINIcondensed	P1+bubble	P1	Bubble condensed at element level
TaylorHood	P2	P1	Classical inf-sup stable
XTaylorHood	P2	P1	Extended Taylor-Hood
CrouzeixRaviart	CR	P1-DG	Non-conforming, locally conservative
LACrouzeixRaviart	LA-CR	P1-DG	Local assembly variant
OneLayerP4z	P4 vertical	P1	Spectral vertical treatment

2.3 Weak / Variational Form

Multiplying the momentum equation by test functions $\mathbf{v}$ (velocity) and q (pressure) and integrating by parts:

$$\int_{\Omega} 2\eta \mathbf{D}(\mathbf{u}) : \mathbf{D}(\mathbf{v}) d\Omega - \int_{\Omega} p \nabla \cdot \mathbf{v} d\Omega + \int_{\Omega} q \nabla \cdot \mathbf{u} d\Omega + \int_{\Gamma_b} \boldsymbol{\tau}_b \cdot \mathbf{v} d\Gamma = \int_{\Omega} \rho \mathbf{g} \cdot \mathbf{v} d\Omega + \int_{\Gamma_N} \mathbf{T}_{\text{ext}} \cdot \mathbf{v} d\Gamma \quad (17)$$

where Γ_b is the basal boundary and Γ_N the Neumann boundary (calving front, $\mathbf{T}_{\text{ext}} = -p_{\text{ocean}} \mathbf{n}$).

B matrix (strain-displacement, Voigt notation, 3D):

$$\mathbf{B} = \begin{pmatrix} \partial\phi/\partial x & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & \partial\phi/\partial y & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & \partial\phi/\partial z \\ \partial\phi/\partial y & \partial\phi/\partial x & 0 \\ \partial\phi/\partial z & 0 & \partial\phi/\partial x \\ 0 & \partial\phi/\partial z & \partial\phi/\partial y \end{pmatrix} \quad (18)$$

Assembled in `StressbalanceAnalysis.cpp` lines 6021–6232.

2.4 Boundary Conditions

Table 3: Stress-balance boundary conditions

Type	Variable	Description
Dirichlet	<code>md.stressbalance.spcvx/spcvy/spcvz</code>	Fixed velocity components
FS pressure	$p = \rho g(s - z)/F_{\text{recon}}$	Hydrostatic pressure at surface
Neumann (ocean)	$\mathbf{T} = -p_{\text{ocean}}\mathbf{n}$	Ocean pressure at calving front
Basal friction	$\boldsymbol{\tau}_b = -C \mathbf{u} ^{m-1}\mathbf{u}$	Applied as load term

Approximation coupling (e.g. SSA–HO, HO–FS) uses zero-velocity constraints at interface nodes flagged as `SSAHOApproximationEnum`, `HOFSAproximationEnum`, etc.

2.5 Glen’s Flow Law & Rheology

The ice rheology parameter $B(T)$ follows the Arrhenius relation:

$$A(T^*) = A_0 \exp\left(-\frac{Q}{RT^*}\right) \quad (19)$$

$$B = A^{-1/n} \quad (20)$$

$$T^* = T + \beta p \quad (\text{pressure-corrected temperature}) \quad (21)$$

where A_0 is the pre-exponential factor, Q the activation energy (60 kJ mol^{−1} for $T < 263$ K, otherwise 139 kJ mol^{−1}), R the gas constant, β the Clausius-Clapeyron gradient, and $n = 3$ (Glen exponent, default).

3 Mass Transport — Ice Thickness Evolution

Primary source: `src/c/analyses/MasstransportAnalysis.cpp`

3.1 Governing PDE

The **depth-integrated continuity equation** (thickness evolution):

$$\frac{\partial H}{\partial t} + \nabla_H \cdot (H\bar{\mathbf{u}}) = \dot{m}_s - \dot{m}_b \quad (22)$$

where H is the ice thickness, $\bar{\mathbf{u}} = (v_x, v_y)$ the depth-averaged horizontal velocity, $\dot{m}_s$ the surface mass balance (positive = accumulation), and $\dot{m}_b$ the basal melt rate (positive = melting). Expanded:

$$\frac{\partial H}{\partial t} + \frac{\partial(Hv_x)}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial(Hv_y)}{\partial y} = \dot{m}_s - \dot{m}_b \quad (23)$$

3.2 Weak Form

Multiplying by test function ϕ and integrating:

$$\int_{\Omega} \phi \frac{\partial H}{\partial t} d\Omega + \int_{\Omega} \phi \bar{\mathbf{u}} \cdot \nabla H d\Omega + \int_{\Omega} \phi H (\nabla \cdot \bar{\mathbf{u}}) d\Omega = \int_{\Omega} \phi (\dot{m}_s - \dot{m}_b) d\Omega \quad (24)$$

Implicit (backward Euler) discretisation:

$$\int_{\Omega} \frac{H^{n+1} - H^n}{\Delta t} \phi d\Omega + \int_{\Omega} \bar{\mathbf{u}} \cdot \nabla H^{n+1} \phi d\Omega + \int_{\Omega} H^{n+1} (\nabla \cdot \bar{\mathbf{u}}) \phi d\Omega = \int_{\Omega} \phi (\dot{m}_s - \dot{m}_b) d\Omega \quad (25)$$

Transient term assembled at `MasstransportAnalysis.cpp` lines ~420–422.

3.3 Stabilisation Options

Controlled by `md.masstransport.stabilization`:

Table 4: Mass-transport stabilisation schemes

Value	Method	Notes
0	None	Pure Galerkin (may oscillate)
1	SSA Anisotropic Diffusion	Diffusion along streamlines
2	Streamline Upwind	Classical SU scheme
3	Discontinuous Galerkin	DG with numerical flux
4	FCT	Flux Corrected Transport (monotone)
5	SUPG	Streamline Upwind Petrov-Galerkin

DG numerical flux (lines ~583–642):

$$F^* = \{H \bar{\mathbf{u}} \cdot \mathbf{n}\} + \frac{|\bar{\mathbf{u}} \cdot \mathbf{n}|}{2} [H] \quad (26)$$

where $\{\cdot\}$ is the average and $[\cdot]$ is the jump across element faces.

SUPG test function:

$$\psi_i = \phi_i + \tau_{\text{SUPG}} \bar{\mathbf{u}} \cdot \nabla \phi_i, \quad \tau_{\text{SUPG}} = \frac{h_e}{2|\bar{\mathbf{u}}|} \quad (27)$$

3.4 Key Variables

Table 5: Mass-transport code symbols

Code enum	Symbol	Description
<code>VxAverageEnum, VyAverageEnum</code>	$\bar{\mathbf{u}}$	Depth-averaged velocity
<code>ThicknessEnum</code>	H	Ice thickness
<code>SmbMassBalanceEnum</code>	$\dot{m}_s$	Surface mass balance
<code>BasalforcingsGroundediceMeltingRateEnum</code>	$\dot{m}_b$	Basal melt rate
<code>MasstransportMinThicknessEnum</code>	$H_{\min}$	Minimum thickness floor

4 Thermal & Enthalpy Analysis

Sources:

- `src/c/analyses/EnthalpyAnalysis.cpp` — enthalpy formulation
- `src/c/analyses/ThermalAnalysis.cpp` — classical temperature formulation

4.1 Enthalpy Formulation

The **enthalpy** is defined as:

$$E = \begin{cases} c_p (T - T_{\text{ref}}) & T < T_{\text{pmp}} \quad (\text{cold ice}) \\ c_p (T_{\text{pmp}} - T_{\text{ref}}) + L \omega & T = T_{\text{pmp}} \quad (\text{temperate ice}) \end{cases} \quad (28)$$

where $c_p \approx 2009 \text{ J kg}^{-1} \text{ K}^{-1}$ is the specific heat capacity, T_{pmp} the pressure-melting-point temperature, $L \approx 334 \text{ kJ kg}^{-1}$ the latent heat, and $\omega \in [0, 1]$ the water fraction.

4.2 Governing PDE

Enthalpy conservation:

$$\rho \frac{\partial E}{\partial t} + \rho \bar{\mathbf{u}} \cdot \nabla E - \nabla \cdot (\kappa \nabla T) = 2\eta |\dot{\epsilon}|^2 + Q_{\text{geo}} \quad (29)$$

where $\kappa \approx 2.1 \text{ W m}^{-1} \text{ K}^{-1}$ is the thermal conductivity (lower in temperate ice), $2\eta |\dot{\epsilon}|^2$ the viscous heating, and Q_{geo} the geothermal heat flux at the bed.

The pressure-melting point varies with pressure:

$$T_{\text{pmp}} = T_0 - \beta p \quad (\beta \approx 7.4 \times 10^{-8} \text{ K Pa}^{-1}) \quad (30)$$

4.3 Classical Temperature Formulation

`ThermalAnalysis.cpp` solves the simpler form (no water fraction):

$$\rho c_p \frac{\partial T}{\partial t} + \rho c_p \bar{\mathbf{u}} \cdot \nabla T - \nabla \cdot (\kappa \nabla T) = 2\eta |\dot{\epsilon}|^2 \quad (31)$$

4.4 Weak Form

$$\int_{\Omega} \rho c_p \phi \frac{\partial T}{\partial t} d\Omega + \int_{\Omega} \rho c_p \bar{\mathbf{u}} \cdot \nabla T \phi d\Omega + \int_{\Omega} \kappa \nabla T \cdot \nabla \phi d\Omega = \int_{\Omega} 2\eta |\dot{\epsilon}|^2 \phi d\Omega + \int_{\Gamma} q_n \phi d\Gamma \quad (32)$$

4.5 Boundary Conditions

Table 6: Thermal boundary conditions

Location	Condition	Code parameter
Ice surface	Dirichlet: $T = T_{\text{surface}}$	<code>md.thermal.spctemperature</code>
Ice base (frozen)	Dirichlet: $T = T_{\text{pmp}}$	<code>md.thermal.spctemperature</code>
Ice base (temperate)	Neumann: $\kappa \partial T / \partial n = Q_{\text{geo}} - Q_f$	Dynamic BC flag
Geothermal	Neumann: $q = Q_{\text{geo}}$	<code>BasalforcingsGeothermalfluxEnum</code>

A penalty load (`Pengrid`) prevents $T > T_{\text{pmp}}$ anywhere (`ThermalAnalysis.cpp` lines 78–91).

Table 7: Hydrology analysis files

File	Model
HydrologyGlaDSAnalysis.cpp	GlaDS (Glacier Drainage System)
HydrologyDCEfficientAnalysis.cpp	Distributed Channel — efficient
HydrologyDCInefficientAnalysis.cpp	Distributed Channel — inefficient
HydrologyShaktiAnalysis.cpp	SHAKTI (explicit lake drainage)
HydrologyShreveAnalysis.cpp	Shreve routing
HydrologyPismAnalysis.cpp	PISM hydrology
HydrologyArmapwAnalysis.cpp	ARMA subglacial lakes
HydrologyTwsAnalysis.cpp	Two-way Scheme
HydrologyPrescribeAnalysis.cpp	Prescribed hydraulics

5 Hydrology Models

5.1 GlaDS Model

Based on Werder et al. (2013). Solves a coupled sheet–channel system.

State variables: hydraulic potential Φ , sheet thickness h_s , channel cross-sectional area S (on mesh edges).

Hydraulic potential:

$$\Phi = \rho_w g z_b + p_w \quad (33)$$

Sheet flow equation (mass conservation):

$$\frac{\partial h_s}{\partial t} + \nabla \cdot \mathbf{q}_s = m_s + m_r - c_s h_s \quad (34)$$

$$\mathbf{q}_s = -k_s h_s^\alpha |\nabla \Phi|^{\beta-2} \nabla \Phi \quad (\text{Darcy-Weisbach type}) \quad (35)$$

Channel flow equation (on 1D edges):

$$\frac{\partial S}{\partial t} + \frac{\partial Q_c}{\partial s} = m_c - c_c(N) S \quad (36)$$

$$Q_c = -k_c S^{\alpha_c} \left| \frac{\partial \Phi}{\partial s} \right|^{\beta_c-2} \frac{\partial \Phi}{\partial s} \quad (37)$$

Closure by viscous creep:

$$c_c(N) = 2 A_s n^{-n} N^n S \quad (\text{channel creep closure}) \quad (38)$$

$$c_s h_s = A_s n^{-n} N^n h_s \quad (\text{sheet creep closure}) \quad (39)$$

Effective pressure: $N = p_{\text{ice}} - p_w = \rho_{\text{ice}} g H - (\Phi - \rho_w g z_b)$

Melt production (viscous + geothermal):

$$m = \frac{|\mathbf{q}_s| |\nabla \Phi| + G + \boldsymbol{\tau}_b \cdot \mathbf{u}_b}{L_{\text{heat}}} \quad (40)$$

Table 8: GlaDS model parameters (`HydrologyGlaDSAnalysis::UpdateParameters`)

Code name	Symbol	Description
<code>sheet_conductivity</code>	k_s	Sheet hydraulic conductivity
<code>channel_conductivity</code>	k_c	Channel hydraulic conductivity
<code>sheet_alpha/beta</code>	α, β	Sheet flow exponents
<code>channel_alpha/beta</code>	α_c, β_c	Channel flow exponents
<code>cavity_spacing</code>	l_c	Basal cavity spacing
<code>pressure_melt_coefficient</code>	c_t	$\partial T_{\text{pmp}} / \partial p$
<code>omega</code>	ω	Melt discharge exponent

5.2 Distributed Channel Model

Separates efficient (channelised) and inefficient (distributed) drainage.

Efficient system (lower pressure, channels):

$$\nabla \cdot (K_{\text{eff}} \nabla \Phi_{\text{eff}}) + \Lambda(\Phi_{\text{ineff}} - \Phi_{\text{eff}}) = 0 \quad (41)$$

Inefficient system (linked cavities / till):

$$S_s \frac{\partial \Phi_{\text{ineff}}}{\partial t} + \nabla \cdot (K_{\text{ineff}} \nabla \Phi_{\text{ineff}}) - \Lambda(\Phi_{\text{ineff}} - \Phi_{\text{eff}}) = m_{\text{input}} \quad (42)$$

where Λ is the exchange coefficient between the two systems.

5.3 SHAKTI Model

Explicit model for subglacial lake evolution (`HydrologyShaktiAnalysis.cpp`):

- Tracks lake extent and pressure as discrete drainage events
- Couples lake pressure to ice overburden: $p_{\text{lake}} = N_{\text{crit}} \rho_{\text{ice}} g H$
- Solves sediment transport and deformation thickness

Effective pressure fed to ice dynamics: $N = \rho_{\text{ice}} g H - p_w$

6 Elastic Sea-Level Adjustment (ESA/GIA)

Primary source: `src/c/analyses/EsaAnalysis.cpp`

Also: `LoveAnalysis.cpp`, `SealevelchangeAnalysis.cpp`

6.1 Love Number Formalism

The Earth's elastic response to surface ice-mass changes is computed using **spherical harmonic Green's functions**.

Vertical displacement:

$$U(\theta) = (M_e R_e)^{-1} \sum_{n=0}^{N_{\text{max}}} h_n G_U(\theta) \quad (43)$$

Geoid perturbation:

$$\mathcal{N}(\theta) = M_e^{-1} \sum_{n=0}^{N_{\text{max}}} (1 + k_n) G_{\mathcal{N}}(\theta) \quad (44)$$

Horizontal displacement:

$$H(\theta) = (M_e R_e)^{-1} \sum_{n=0}^{N_{\max}} l_n G_H(\theta) \quad (45)$$

where h_n , k_n , l_n are elastic Love numbers, $P_n(\cos \theta)$ Legendre polynomials, θ the angular distance, M_e and R_e Earth mass and radius.

Green function assembly (`EsaAnalysis.cpp` lines ~96–143):

$$\delta h_n = h_n - h_{N-1} \quad (46)$$

$$\delta k_n = k_n - k_{N-1} \quad (47)$$

$$\delta l_n = l_n - l_{N-1} \frac{N-1}{n+\varepsilon} \quad (48)$$

$$U_{\text{elastic}} += \delta h_n P_n(\cos \alpha) \quad (49)$$

$$H_{\text{elastic}} -= \sin(\alpha) \delta l_n \frac{dP_n}{d\alpha} \quad (50)$$

$$G_{\text{elastic}} -= [2\delta h_n - n\delta k_n - \delta k_n] P_n(\cos \alpha) \quad (51)$$

Legendre recursion:

$$P_n = \frac{(2n-1)\cos(\alpha)P_{n-1} - (n-1)P_{n-2}}{n} \quad (52)$$

$$\frac{dP_n}{d\alpha} = \frac{(2n-1)\left(P_{n-1} + \cos(\alpha)\frac{dP_{n-1}}{d\alpha}\right) - (n-1)\frac{dP_{n-2}}{d\alpha}}{n} \quad (53)$$

6.2 Sea-Level Fingerprints

Barystatic sea level change:

$$\Delta SL = -\frac{\Delta M}{\rho_{\text{ocean}} A_{\text{ocean}}} \quad (54)$$

Combined relative sea-level (RSL) fingerprint:

$$\text{RSL}(\theta) = -\frac{\Delta \Phi}{g} + U + \Delta SL \quad (55)$$

6.3 GIA Viscoelastic Component

`LoveAnalysis.cpp` computes time-dependent Love numbers for a Maxwell viscoelastic Earth model, enabling long-term glacial isostatic adjustment (GIA).

7 Damage Mechanics

Primary source: `src/c/analyses/DamageEvolutionAnalysis.cpp`

7.1 Governing Equation

The damage parameter $D \in [0, 1]$ (0 = intact, 1 = fully fractured) evolves by advection with a source/sink:

$$\frac{\partial D}{\partial t} + \bar{\mathbf{u}} \cdot \nabla D = F(\sigma_{\text{von}}, D) - \Gamma(N) D \quad (56)$$

where F is a stress-driven source, $\Gamma(N)D$ the pressure-driven healing term, and σ_{von} the von Mises stress invariant.

7.2 Damage Source Laws

Controlled by `md.damage.law`.

Law 0 — Threshold:

$$F = \begin{cases} 0 & \sigma_{\text{von}} < \sigma_{\text{th}} \\ c_1 & \sigma_{\text{von}} \geq \sigma_{\text{th}} \end{cases} \quad (57)$$

Law > 0 — Smooth arctan:

$$F = c_1 \cdot \frac{2}{\pi} \arctan \left[c_2 \frac{\sigma_{\text{von}} - \sigma_{\text{th}}}{\sigma_{\text{bound}}} \right] \quad (58)$$

Parameters (`DamageEvolutionAnalysis.cpp` lines 82–116):

Table 9: Damage model parameters

Parameter	Description
<code>c1</code> , <code>c2</code>	Damage rate coefficients
<code>stress_threshold</code> (σ_{th})	Yield stress for damage onset
<code>stress_ubound</code> (σ_{bound})	Saturation stress
<code>kappa</code>	Healing rate coefficient

7.3 Effect on Rheology

Damage reduces the effective viscosity:

$$\eta_{\text{eff}} = (1 - D) \eta_{\text{intact}} \quad (59)$$

8 Age Tracking

Primary source: `src/c/analyses/AgeAnalysis.cpp`

8.1 Governing Equation

The ice age τ satisfies the advection equation with a unit source:

$$\frac{\partial \tau}{\partial t} + \mathbf{u} \cdot \nabla \tau = 1 \quad (60)$$

Ice deposited at the surface has $\tau = 0$; it increases by 1 year per year as it advects downward and laterally.

8.2 Weak Form & Assembly

$$\int_{\Omega} \phi \frac{\tau^{n+1} - \tau^n}{\Delta t} d\Omega + \int_{\Omega} \phi \mathbf{u} \cdot \nabla \tau^{n+1} d\Omega = \int_{\Omega} \phi d\Omega \quad (61)$$

Convection matrix (lines 157–163):

$$A_{ij} = \int_{\Omega} \phi_i \left(v_x \frac{\partial \phi_j}{\partial x} + v_y \frac{\partial \phi_j}{\partial y} + v_z \frac{\partial \phi_j}{\partial z} \right) d\Omega \quad (62)$$

Mass matrix (transient) (lines 165–170):

$$M_{ij} = \int_{\Omega} \phi_i \phi_j d\Omega \quad (63)$$

8.3 Boundary Conditions

- **Surface:** $\tau = 0$ (fresh accumulation, `md.age.spcage`)
- **Inflow boundaries:** $\tau = \tau_{\text{inflow}}$

8.4 SUPG Stabilisation (lines 172–192)

$$\tau_{\text{SUPG}} = \frac{h_e}{2|\mathbf{u}|}, \quad \psi_i = \phi_i + \tau_{\text{SUPG}} \mathbf{u} \cdot \nabla \phi_i \quad (64)$$

9 Balance Thickness & Balance Velocity

Sources: `BalancethicknessAnalysis.cpp`, `Balancethickness2Analysis.cpp`, `BalancevelocityAnalysis.cpp`.

9.1 Steady-State Thickness

At **steady state**, the continuity equation becomes:

$$\nabla \cdot (H\mathbf{u}) = \dot{m}_s - \dot{m}_b \quad (65)$$

Given a known velocity field $\mathbf{u}$, the **balance thickness** H_{bal} satisfies:

$$\mathbf{u} \cdot \nabla H_{\text{bal}} + H_{\text{bal}}(\nabla \cdot \mathbf{u}) = \dot{m}_s - \dot{m}_b \quad (66)$$

9.2 Weak Form

$$\int_{\Omega} \phi \mathbf{u} \cdot \nabla H_{\text{bal}} d\Omega + \int_{\Omega} \phi H_{\text{bal}} (\nabla \cdot \mathbf{u}) d\Omega = \int_{\Omega} \phi (\dot{m}_s - \dot{m}_b) d\Omega \quad (67)$$

CG tangent matrix (`CreateKMatrixCG`, lines ~154–200):

$$K_{ij} = \int \phi_i \left(v_x \frac{\partial \phi_j}{\partial x} + v_y \frac{\partial \phi_j}{\partial y} \right) dA + \int \phi_i \phi_j \left(\frac{\partial v_x}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial v_y}{\partial y} \right) dA \quad (68)$$

9.3 Balance Velocity

The depth-averaged balance velocity $\bar{\mathbf{u}}_{\text{bal}}$ satisfying steady-state mass conservation:

$$\nabla \cdot (\bar{\mathbf{u}}_{\text{bal}} H) = \dot{m}_s - \dot{m}_b, \quad \bar{\mathbf{u}}_{\text{bal}} = - \frac{\int_{\text{upstream}} (\dot{m}_s - \dot{m}_b) dA}{H} \quad (69)$$

Solved using a flux-routing approach along the surface gradient.

10 Adjoint / Inverse Methods

Sources: `AdjointHorizAnalysis.cpp`, `AdjointBalancethicknessAnalysis.cpp`, `src/c/cores/control.cpp`.

10.1 Adjoint Formulation

ISSM uses adjoint-based data assimilation to infer basal friction C and rheology parameter B from observed surface velocities/strain rates.

Cost functional:

$$\mathcal{J}(m) = \frac{1}{2} \sum_{\text{obs}} \frac{(\mathbf{u}_{\text{obs}} - \mathbf{u}_{\text{mod}})^2}{\sigma_{\text{obs}}^2} + \mathcal{R}(m) \quad (70)$$

Tikhonov regularisation:

$$\mathcal{R}(m) = \frac{\alpha_1}{2} \int_{\Omega} (\nabla m)^2 d\Omega + \frac{\alpha_2}{2} \int_{\Omega} (m - m_{\text{prior}})^2 d\Omega \quad (71)$$

Adjoint equation:

$$\mathbf{K}^T \boldsymbol{\lambda} = -\frac{\partial \mathcal{J}}{\partial \mathbf{u}} \quad (72)$$

Gradient of cost:

$$\frac{\partial \mathcal{J}}{\partial m} = \frac{\partial (\mathbf{K} \mathbf{u})}{\partial m} \cdot \boldsymbol{\lambda} + \frac{\partial \mathcal{R}}{\partial m} \quad (73)$$

10.2 Optimisation Backends

Table 10: Optimisation backend files

Core file	Method
controladm1qn3_core.cpp	L-BFGS (m1qn3 variant)
controlm1qn3_core.cpp	M1QN3 solver
controltao_core.cpp	PETSc/TAO optimiser

11 Grounding Line & Free Surfaces

Sources: LevelsetAnalysis.cpp, FreeSurfaceTopAnalysis.cpp, FreeSurfaceBaseAnalysis.cpp, GLheightadvectionAnalysis.cpp

11.1 Level-Set Grounding Line

The grounding line position is tracked via a level-set function ϕ_{GL} :

$$\phi_{\text{GL}} \begin{cases} > 0 & \text{grounded ice (bed in contact)} \\ < 0 & \text{floating ice shelf} \\ = 0 & \text{grounding line} \end{cases} \quad (74)$$

Flotation criterion:

$$\rho_{\text{ice}} H + \rho_{\text{water}} z_b < 0 \implies \text{floating} \quad (75)$$

Level-set evolution:

$$\frac{\partial \phi_{\text{GL}}}{\partial t} + \bar{\mathbf{u}} \cdot \nabla \phi_{\text{GL}} = 0 \quad (76)$$

11.2 Free Surface Evolution

Top surface ($s = b + H$):

$$\frac{\partial s}{\partial t} = w_s - \bar{\mathbf{u}} \cdot \nabla s + \dot{m}_s \quad (\text{kinematic BC}) \quad (77)$$

Basal surface:

$$\frac{\partial b}{\partial t} = w_b - \bar{\mathbf{u}} \cdot \nabla b - \dot{m}_b \quad (\text{for marine ice; zero for bedrock}) \quad (78)$$

12 Solution Sequences & Solvers

Directory: src/c/solutionsequences/

12.1 Linear Solve (solutionsequence_linear.cpp)

```
1. Assemble K, f    (global stiffness matrix and load vector)
2. Partition:   Kffuf = ff - Kfsus (free/specified DoF split)
3. Solve:   Kffuf = pf (direct or iterative)
4. Merge:   u = [uf; us]
5. UpdateInputFromSolution(u)
```

12.2 Nonlinear Fixed-Point / Picard (solutionsequence_nonlinear.cpp)

```
u(0) = initial guess
for k = 0, 1, ..., max_iter:
    Assemble K(u(k)), f(u(k))
    Solve   K u(k+1) = f
    if ||u(k+1) - u(k)|| / ||u(k)|| < tol: break
```

12.3 Newton–Raphson (solutionsequence_newton.cpp lines 53–109)

```
u(0) = initial guess
for k = 0, 1, ..., max_iter:
    r(k) = K(u(k))u(k) - f(u(k)) (residual)
    J(k) = ∂r/∂u|u(k) (Jacobian = tangent stiffness)
    Solve J(k)Δu = -r(k)
    u(k+1) = u(k) + Δu
    if ||r(k)|| / ||f|| < εres AND
       ||Δu|| / ||u|| < εrel: break
```

12.4 Theta (θ) Method for Time Integration

Generalised trapezoidal rule:

$$\left(\frac{\mathbf{M}}{\Delta t} + \theta \mathbf{K}\right) \mathbf{u}^{n+1} = \left(\frac{\mathbf{M}}{\Delta t} - (1 - \theta) \mathbf{K}\right) \mathbf{u}^n + \theta \mathbf{f}^{n+1} + (1 - \theta) \mathbf{f}^n \quad (79)$$

Table 11: θ -method schemes

θ	Scheme	Order	Stability
0	Forward Euler	1st	Conditionally stable
0.5	Crank-Nicolson	2nd	Unconditionally stable
1	Backward Euler	1st	Unconditionally stable

12.5 Uzawa Pressure Iteration

For mixed saddle-point systems (Full Stokes velocity–pressure coupling):

$$\begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{K} & \mathbf{B}^T \\ \mathbf{B} & \mathbf{0} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{u} \\ p \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{f} \\ \mathbf{0} \end{pmatrix} \quad (80)$$

Uzawa iteration:

$$\mathbf{K} \mathbf{u}^{(k+1)} = \mathbf{f} - \mathbf{B}^T p^{(k)} \quad (\text{velocity sub-solve}) \quad (81)$$

$$p^{(k+1)} = p^{(k)} - \rho (\mathbf{B} \mathbf{u}^{(k+1)}) \quad (\text{pressure correction}) \quad (82)$$

Converges when $\rho \in (0, 2/\lambda_{\max}(\mathbf{K}^{-1}\mathbf{B}\mathbf{K}^{-1}\mathbf{B}^T))$.

12.6 FCT — Flux Corrected Transport (solutionsequence_fct.cpp)

Monotone transport scheme:

1. Compute low-order (diffusive) solution $\mathbf{u}_L$ (upwind scheme)
2. Compute high-order (Galerkin) solution $\mathbf{u}_H$
3. Anti-diffusive fluxes $\mathbf{F} = \mathbf{M}_L(\mathbf{u}_H - \mathbf{u}_L)$
4. Limit: $\mathbf{F}^* = \alpha \mathbf{F}$, $\alpha \in [0, 1]$ (Zalesak limiter)
5. $\mathbf{u} = \mathbf{u}_L + \mathbf{M}_L^{-1} \mathbf{F}^*$

12.7 Schur Complement CG (solutionsequence_schurcg.cpp)

For coupled 2×2 block systems (e.g., GlaDS sheet + channel):

$$\begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{A} & \mathbf{B} \\ \mathbf{C} & \mathbf{D} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{u} \\ p \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{f} \\ \mathbf{g} \end{pmatrix} \quad (83)$$

$$\mathbf{S} = \mathbf{D} - \mathbf{C}\mathbf{A}^{-1}\mathbf{B} \quad (\text{Schur complement}) \quad (84)$$

$$\mathbf{S}p = \mathbf{g} - \mathbf{C}\mathbf{A}^{-1}\mathbf{f} \quad (\text{reduced system, solved by CG}) \quad (85)$$

$$\mathbf{u} = \mathbf{A}^{-1}(\mathbf{f} - \mathbf{B}p) \quad (\text{back-substitute}) \quad (86)$$

12.8 Convergence Criteria

All nonlinear solvers check (any one criterion satisfied $\Rightarrow$ converged):

$$\varepsilon_{\text{rel}} = \frac{\|\mathbf{u}^{(k+1)} - \mathbf{u}^{(k)}\|_2}{\|\mathbf{u}^{(k+1)}\|_2} < \text{tol}_{\text{rel}} \quad (87)$$

$$\varepsilon_{\text{res}} = \frac{\|\mathbf{K}\mathbf{u} - \mathbf{f}\|_2}{\|\mathbf{f}\|_2} < \text{tol}_{\text{res}} \quad (88)$$

$$\varepsilon_{\text{abs}} = \|\mathbf{u}^{(k+1)} - \mathbf{u}^{(k)}\|_2 < \text{tol}_{\text{abs}} \quad (89)$$

13 Finite Element Infrastructure

Directory: `src/c/classes/Elements/`

13.1 Element Hierarchy

```
Element (base, abstract)
|-- Tria    -- 2D triangle (2D/basal problems)
|-- Penta   -- 3D 6-node prism (3D ice volume)
'-- Seg     -- 1D segment (boundary integrals, channels)
```

13.2 Reference Elements & Basis Functions

13.2.1 Linear Triangle (P1)

Natural coordinates (ξ, η) on the unit simplex:

$$\phi_1(\xi, \eta) = 1 - \xi - \eta \quad (90)$$

$$\phi_2(\xi, \eta) = \xi \quad (91)$$

$$\phi_3(\xi, \eta) = \eta \quad (92)$$

Physical gradients: $\nabla \phi = \mathbf{J}^{-T} \hat{\nabla} \phi$ where $\mathbf{J}$ is the Jacobian of the physical-to-reference map.

13.2.2 Quadratic Triangle (P2)

6 nodes (3 corner + 3 edge-midpoint); used for velocity in Taylor-Hood elements.

13.2.3 Prism Element (Penta, $\mathbf{P1} \times \mathbf{P1}$)

Tensor product of triangle and linear vertical:

$$\phi_{i,k}(\xi, \eta, \zeta) = \phi_i^{\text{tri}}(\xi, \eta) \cdot \phi_k^{1D}(\zeta) \quad (93)$$

Higher-order vertical: P1-P2 (9 nodes), P1-P4 (15 nodes), etc.

13.3 Quadrature Rules

Table 12: Gaussian quadrature for triangles (**GaussTria**)

Order	Points	Exactness
1	1 (centroid)	P1 polynomials
2	3	P2
3	4	P3
4	6	P4
5	7	P5

Prisms (**GaussPenta**) use a product rule: $n_{\text{tri}} \times n_{\text{vert}}$ Gauss points (typically $4 \times 3 = 12$ for P1-P2 approximations).

13.4 Jacobian Computation

Line element (1D):

$$|J| = \sqrt{\left(\frac{\partial x}{\partial \xi}\right)^2 + \left(\frac{\partial y}{\partial \xi}\right)^2 + \left(\frac{\partial z}{\partial \xi}\right)^2} \quad (94)$$

Surface element (2D):

$$\mathbf{J} = \begin{pmatrix} \partial x / \partial \xi & \partial x / \partial \eta \\ \partial y / \partial \xi & \partial y / \partial \eta \\ \partial z / \partial \xi & \partial z / \partial \eta \end{pmatrix}, \quad |J| = \left\| \frac{\partial \mathbf{r}}{\partial \xi} \times \frac{\partial \mathbf{r}}{\partial \eta} \right\| \quad (95)$$

Volume element (3D):

$$\mathbf{J} = \begin{pmatrix} \partial x / \partial \xi & \partial x / \partial \eta & \partial x / \partial \zeta \\ \partial y / \partial \xi & \partial y / \partial \eta & \partial y / \partial \zeta \\ \partial z / \partial \xi & \partial z / \partial \eta & \partial z / \partial \zeta \end{pmatrix}, \quad |J| = \det(\mathbf{J}) \quad (96)$$

13.5 Input Interpolation at Gauss Points

All physical fields are stored as Input objects:

```
Input* inp = element->GetInput(ThicknessEnum);
inp->GetInputValue(&H, gauss); // scalar at Gauss pt
inp->GetInputDerivativeValue(&grad[0], xyz, gauss); // gradient
```

Supports P0 (constant), P1 (linear), P2 (quadratic) and vertex-to-Gauss interpolation.

14 Parameterisation Layer (MATLAB/Python)

Directory: src/m/parameterization/

14.1 setflowequation.m — Assigning Flow Approximations

```
% Flag elements per approximation
SIAflag = FlagElements(md, 'SIA_domain');
SSAflag = FlagElements(md, 'SSA_domain');
H0flag = FlagElements(md, 'H0_domain');
FSflag = FlagElements(md, 'FS_domain');

% Fill unflagged elements with a default
SSAflag(~(SIAflag | H0flag | FSflag)) = 1;

% Validate: each element gets exactly one flag
assert(all(SIAflag + SSAflag + H0flag + FSflag == 1));

% Build coupling zones (e.g. H0-FS overlap)
nodeonH0FS = intersect(nodeonH0, nodeonFS);
H0FSflag(any(ismember(md.mesh.elements, nodeonH0FS), 2)) = 1;
```

Coupling modes: penalties (Lagrange multiplier) or tiling (element partitioning).

14.2 setmask.m — Grounded/Floating Ice

```
% Ocean levelset: negative = grounded, positive = floating
md.mask.ocean_levelset = md.geometry.base - md.geometry.bed;

% Floating base driven by hydrostasy
base_hydro = -rho_ice/rho_water * H;
md.mask.ocean_levelset(floating) = base_hydro - bed;
```

14.3 Effective Pressure

```
P_ice = rho_ice * g * H;
P_water = rho_water * g * max(0, z_sl - bed);
N = max(0, P_ice - P_water); % no tension
```

14.4 Geometry Conventions

s = surface elevation (top of ice)
 b = base elevation (bottom of ice)
 $H = s - b$ (ice thickness)
 bed = bedrock elevation
 $h = s - z$ (depth below surface)

For floating ice: $b = -(\rho_{\text{ice}}/\rho_{\text{water}}) H$ (hydrostatic equilibrium).

15 Summary Table

Table 13: Analysis summary

Analysis		Governing Equation	Domain	FEM Ba- sis	Time Scheme
Stress (SSA)	Balance	Depth-int. momentum	2D horiz	P1/P2	Steady (Newton)
Stress (HO)	Balance	Higher-order momentum	3D	P1 prism	Steady (Newton)
Stress Balance (FS)		Full Stokes	3D	Mixed P2	Steady (Newton/Uzawa)
Mass Transport		$\partial H/\partial t + \nabla \cdot (H\mathbf{u}) = \dot{m}_s - \dot{m}_b$	Basal 2D	P1/P1-DG	Implicit Euler
Enthalpy		$\rho \partial E/\partial t + \rho \mathbf{u} \cdot \nabla E - \nabla \cdot (\kappa \nabla T) = Q$	3D	P1	Implicit Euler
Temperature		$\rho c_p \partial T/\partial t + \dots = 2\eta \dot{\epsilon} ^2$	3D	P1	Implicit Euler
Age		$\partial \tau/\partial t + \mathbf{u} \cdot \nabla \tau = 1$	3D	P1	Implicit Euler
Balance Thickness		$\mathbf{u} \cdot \nabla H + H \nabla \cdot \mathbf{u} = \dot{m}_s - \dot{m}_b$	Basal 2D	P1/DG	Steady

continued on next page

Analysis	Governing Equation	Domain	FEM sis	Ba-	Time Scheme
GlaDS Hydrology	Sheet + channel potential	2D+1D edges	P1		Implicit
Damage	$\partial D/\partial t + \mathbf{u} \cdot \nabla D = F - \Gamma D$	3D	P0/P1		Implicit Euler
ESA/GIA	Elastic Love number series	Global spherical	Spectral		Steady
Sea-level Change	$RSL = -\Delta\Phi/g + U + \Delta SL$	Global	Spectral		Steady
Grounding Line	$\partial\phi/\partial t + \mathbf{u} \cdot \nabla\phi = 0$	Basal 2D	P1		Implicit
Adjoint	$\mathbf{K}^T \lambda = -\partial\mathcal{J}/\partial\mathbf{u}$	3D/2D	As forward		Steady

Complete Analyses Directory Listing

src/c/analyses/ — all 52 analysis files:

```

AdjointBalancethickness2Analysis.cpp/h
AdjointBalancethicknessAnalysis.cpp/h
AdjointHorizAnalysis.cpp/h
AgeAnalysis.cpp/h
Analysis.h
Balancethickness2Analysis.cpp/h
BalancethicknessAnalysis.cpp/h
BalancethicknessSoftAnalysis.cpp/h
BalancevelocityAnalysis.cpp/h
DamageEvolutionAnalysis.cpp/h
DebrisAnalysis.cpp/h
DepthAverageAnalysis.cpp/h
EnthalpyAnalysis.cpp/h
EnumToAnalysis.cpp/h
EsaAnalysis.cpp/h
ExtrapolationAnalysis.cpp/h
ExtrudeFromBaseAnalysis.cpp/h
ExtrudeFromTopAnalysis.cpp/h
FreeSurfaceBaseAnalysis.cpp/h
FreeSurfaceTopAnalysis.cpp/h
GLheightadvectionAnalysis.cpp/h
HydrologyArmapwAnalysis.cpp/h
HydrologyDCEfficientAnalysis.cpp/h
HydrologyDCInefficientAnalysis.cpp/h
HydrologyGlaDSAnalysis.cpp/h
HydrologyPismAnalysis.cpp/h
HydrologyPrescribeAnalysis.cpp/h
HydrologyShaktiAnalysis.cpp/h
HydrologyShreveAnalysis.cpp/h
HydrologyTwsAnalysis.cpp/h
L2ProjectionBaseAnalysis.cpp/h
L2ProjectionEPLAnalysis.cpp/h
LevelsetAnalysis.cpp/h
LoveAnalysis.cpp/h
MasstransportAnalysis.cpp/h
MeltingAnalysis.cpp/h
MmemasstransportAnalysis.cpp/h
OceantransportAnalysis.cpp/h
SamplingAnalysis.cpp/h

```

```
SealevelchangeAnalysis.cpp/h  
SmbAnalysis.cpp/h  
SmoothAnalysis.cpp/h  
StressbalanceAnalysis.cpp/h  
StressbalanceSIAAnalysis.cpp/h  
StressbalanceVerticalAnalysis.cpp/h  
ThermalAnalysis.cpp/h  
UzawaPressureAnalysis.cpp/h  
analyses.h
```

This guide was generated directly from the ISSM source code at `/g/data1b/au88/jh7060/ISSM/`. All equation numbers refer to the weak form as implemented in the corresponding C++ file. Source line references are approximate — use `grep` or your editor search to locate exact implementations.