VHDL-AMS BASED MODELING OF SIC-SCHOTTKY DIODE
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Abstract: Over the last few decades, several work has been done on behavioral models and simulation tools. However, there is always some place for improvements and enhancements for previous work. The VHDL-AMS language makes possible the description of semiconductor devices based on mathematical equations. Moreover, VHDL-AMS is a useful tool for the analog design community. Also, the efficient semiconductor device models must be investigated in order to finely predict and extract its technological and electrical parameters. In this sense, the authors in this paper demonstrate the potential merits of the VHDL-AMS in the field of modeling of a SiC power Schottky diode. The diode’s analytical model and its working principles are presented in this paper. This is carried out by taking into account the technological and electrical effects with VHDL-AMS, and with relevant parameters hitting a deep match between the simulated characteristics of the VHDL-AMS model and the measured characteristics of the SiC Schottky diode.

Key words: Semiconductor device doping, VHDL-AMS, Simulation, Behavioral model, Analytic Model, Static response, Transient response, Silicon Carbide, Schottky diode.

1. Introduction
Following the renovation made in the technology sector in recent decades, several semiconductor devices have emerged for its application in power electronics. The quality that the industry is seeking is at the physical performance limits. Until now, the semiconductors’ market is still dominated by the silicon type. The exceptional quality of such material, associated to the huge effort of the industry, has made from silicon the material that covers nearly all the requirements of the power electronics needs. Nevertheless, the increase of requirements from performance viewpoint has reached and perhaps exceeded those offered by the silicon type, hence reaching a limit.

Semiconductor devices find numerous applications in the industry where better performance is sought. Such performance is represented by but not limited to voltage drops under low forward bias in order to reduce losses for a given high current and high breakdown voltage all along with a quick switching behaviour to justify the ability of a proper working under high frequencies.

From another side of view and performing under severe temperature conditions; the silicon carbide (SiC) is considered the best candidate for the power electronic devices [1, 2, 3]. Silicon carbide is known as one of the best performance wide band gap materials. It is known for its small, fast and better performance characteristics [4].

In light of the above, the excellent properties of the SiC from one hand, and the requirements of the market from the other hand have motivated recent research trends to be toward putting a particular emphasis on modelling and characterizing such semiconductor material [5].

Typically, modelling of a power semiconductor device can be either based on semiconductor equations within circuit simulators such as SABER, PACTE, SIMPLORER and others [6], or on finite elements simulators such as DESSIS and MEDICI. Moreover, most models are based on the classical approaches implemented in PSpice simulator which builds on an equivalent circuit that represents the electrical behaviour of that particular device. Otherwise, the idea is to directly solve the semiconductor equations. Evidently, this latest method allows to a fine studying of the physics as well as the behaviour of the device. In fact, the designer should be able to predict the performance of his device and to provide models allowing the exploitation of the parameters of the entire
circuit.

In light of that, behavioural models seem evidently to be able to respond to such expectations. Such models can be coded using numerous programming languages such as VHDL-AMS, Verilog, C and C++.

However, it seems judicious to highlight a language allowing a simple interface with behavioural numerical models. That is why, VHDL-AMS has been judged as the most appropriate tool to model the SiC Schottky diode within the frame of this work.

2. Model Analysis

The PN junction is the origin of all semiconductors. Considering a P+N abrupt and asymmetric junction, the positive charge at the space charge zone is given as [7,8]:

\[ Q_j = AqN_e x \sqrt{N_D} \]  

(1)

Where \( A \) is the total surface area of the diode.

The space charge zone extends in the less-doped region (N) if we assume that the electric field is null at this zone.

\[ \int_{N}^{X_e} n(x) dx = \int_{0}^{X_e} p(x) dx = \text{constant} \]

Besides, the neutral zone can be regarded as a constant concentration of minority carriers.

Thus, if we assume that the neutral zone is as wide as holes can recombine before reaching the right limit of the SCZ, the simplest variational approximation that satisfies the static solution might be written as the following form:

\[ p(t,x) = p_0 + \left( p_1(t) - p_0 \right) \exp \left( - \frac{x}{L_D} \right) \]

(7)

Where \( L_D = \sqrt{\frac{P_\mu \tau_p}{P_0} \mu_p} \) is the length of the diffusion of holes.

The total charge in excess of the holes is calculated by the following relationship [10]:

\[ Q_p = qA \int_{X_e}^x (p - p_0) dx \]

(8)

Thus,

\[ Q_p = I_D \tau_p = qA L_D \left( p - p_0 \right) \]

(9)

The voltage drop across the diode is:

\[ V_d = V_j - U_B \]

(10)

Where \( V_j = U_T \ln \left( \frac{N_D N_A}{m^2} \right) \) is the construction voltage of the junction. It represents the voltages drops across the metal-semiconductor junction.

By combining (6), (9) and (10), the following equation can be written as:

\[ Q_j = A \sqrt{\frac{2eN}{N_D}} U_B \]

(4)

If we consider that the concentration of holes at zone N is much less than the doping, the diffusion equation of holes at the static regime can be written as:

\[ \frac{dQ}{dt} = \mu_p \mu T \frac{d^2P}{dx^2} \frac{P - P_0}{\tau_p} \]

(5)

Where \( P_0 = \frac{n^2}{N} \) is the concentration of minors at equilibrium, and \( \tau_p \) and \( \mu_p \) are the lifetime and mobility of holes respectively which is assumed to be constant.

The Boltzmann’s constant gives the concentration of holes at the right limit of the space charge zone:

\[ p(x,t) = p_1(t) = N_A \exp \left( \frac{U_B}{U_T} \right) \]

(6)

Fig. 1. Doping and concentrations of an abrupt junction.
\[ I_D = I_s \left( \exp \left( \frac{V_d}{U_t} \right) - 1 \right) \]  \hspace{1cm} (11)

Where \( I_s = \frac{qA n_i^2 \mu_p \mu_T}{N_o D_L D_p} \) is the diode's saturation current.

The equivalent schematic of the diode can be represented as follow:

![Diode Equivalent Circuit](image)

Fig. 2. Equivalent circuit of the diode.

The resistance \( R_s \) takes into account the different voltage drops (access to the junction).

The positive charge \( Q_j \) is represented by the electric capacitance \( C_j \) and is defined by the following equation:

\[ \frac{dQ_j}{dt} = \frac{dQ_j}{dU_B} \frac{dU_B}{dt} = \frac{dQ_j}{dV_d} \frac{dV_d}{dt} = C_j \frac{dV_d}{dt} \]  \hspace{1cm} (12)

That is to say:

\[ C_j = \frac{A}{2} \left( \frac{2e}{qN_o} \right) D_p \frac{1}{V_j^2} \sqrt{1 - \frac{V_d}{V_j}} \]  \hspace{1cm} (13)

In general, the expression of the capacitance \( C_j \) is given by the following:

\[ C_j = C_j 0 \left( 1 - \frac{V_d}{V_j} \right)^{-m} \]  \hspace{1cm} (14)

Where \( m \) is the gradual coefficient which is equal to 1/2 for an abrupt junction and 1/3 for a gradual junction \([11]\).

The excess positive charge \( Q_p \) stocked at the neutral zone is represented by means of the electric capacitance \( C_p \) given by:

\[ \frac{dQ_p}{dt} = \frac{I_D}{p} - \frac{1}{D_p} = \tau \frac{dI_D}{dt} = \frac{dV_D}{dV_d} \frac{dV_d}{dt} = C \frac{dV_d}{dt} \]  \hspace{1cm} (15)

Where \( C_p = \tau \frac{dI_D}{dV_d} \)

The forward current \( I_D \) is represented by a non-linear current source. The SPICE model takes into account the recombination phenomenon through an empirical parameter \( N \) called emission coefficient. Hence, the direct current of the diode is given as:

\[ I_D = I_s \left( \exp \left( \frac{V_d}{N V_t} \right) - 1 \right) \]  \hspace{1cm} (16)

In light of the above analysis and mathematical modulation, the VHDL-AMS model was experimentally studied in this study.

Since 2001, numerous semiconductor manufactures (Infineon, Microsemi & Cree, Fairchild…) started proposing their catalogues containing silicon carbide (SiC) Schottky diode as described in the table 1 \([12]\).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>First SiC Schottky diode introduced to the market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>Cree Started the production of 4” SiC wafer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>First SiC JFET Sold in low volumes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Hybrid SiC power module launched</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fall 2008</td>
<td>Semi-South releases first N-Off SiC FET, TranSiC launch SiC BJT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>end 2008</td>
<td>Full SiC power module introduced to the market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>4 inch SiC wafer costs drop to $1.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>ROHM SiC MOSFET in production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Cree SiC MOSFET introduced to the market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fall 2012</td>
<td>Infenion announces 1200V CoolSiC JFET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>end 2012</td>
<td>Cree launches 6 inch SiC wafer mass production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fall 2013</td>
<td>Devices mass produced on 6” wafers appear</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this paper, we have chosen the SiC Schottky diode SDB6S60 of Infineon technologies. Within the frame of this work, it was decided to estimate the technological and electrical parameters of the SPICE model of the above mentioned diode. To extract such parameters, several tests on \( I(V) \) and \( C(V) \) were done. To be able to do so, it was mandatory to know the effective surface of the diode.

Classically, a simple inspection of the diode’s chip might give an initial value of the effective surface of the diode. However, we could obtain an optimal value of such surface based on the current density given by the manufacture in the datasheet following the law:
Thus, the surface was found equal to $1.2 \mu m^2$. The effective surface as well as other parameters of the diode such as the doping $N_D$ of the weakly doped zone and the width $W$ of such zone will be identified and validated using a method originally developed in 1998 by Ghedira [13]. Such method helps to extract $N_D$, $W$, and $A$ based on the analysis of the transient signals of two to three reverse commutations starting from the resting state. Accordingly, a VHDL-AMS model was developed to verify the simulated waves with the experimental ones.

### 3. Static Forward Behavioral Analysis

The classic measurement method $I(V)$ and $C(V)$ have permitted to determine the parameters of the static responses at $300K$.

The curves $I(V)$ were done using TEKTRONIX drawers 370 and 371 while curves $C(V)$ were done using an RCL-meter HP4284A.

The classic measurement method $I(V)$ and $C(V)$ have permitted to determine the following parameters of the static responses at ambient temperature $300K$:

- Series resistance: $390 m\Omega$
- Ideality coefficient: $n=1.028$.
- Saturation current: $I_s=1.175 E^{-16}$ A
- Barrier Schottky extracted from $I(V)$: $\phi_e=1.2 eV$.
- Epitaxial thick: $2.5 \mu m$.
- Epitaxial doping $N_D=1.2E16 cm^{-3}$.

Figure 3 represents the $I(V)$ curve in forward bias at the ambient temperature. It helps to find the ideality factor $n$ given by:

$$n = \frac{q}{K T} \left( \frac{d (\ln I)}{d V} \right)^{-1}$$

and the barrier height given by:

$$\phi_e = \frac{K T}{q} \left( \frac{1}{A} \frac{S}{T^2} \right)$$

Where:

- $I_{sat}$: Exponential [ordinate at the origin ($\ln(I)=f(V)$)].
- $A^* = A.\mu m^2$ (0.763 for the SiC-4H).

Figure 4 shows the forward characteristic of the SiC diode, drawn in SWEEP mode using TEKTRONIX 371. It helps to estimate the value of the dynamic resistance to $390 m\Omega$. Such value is taken as the series resistance of the diode. It is given as:

$$R_s = \left( \frac{d I}{d V} \right)^{-1}$$

The above resistance can be assimilated to the resistance of the epitaxial layer + the resistance of the substratum, that is to say: $R_{sub} = \rho \frac{W_{sub}}{S_{chip}}$

And

$$R_s = R_{sub} + \frac{1}{N_D q \mu} \frac{W_{epi}}{S}$$

Therefore, the width of the epitaxial zone is given as follow:

$$W_{epi} = S \left( R_s - R_{sub} \right) N_D q \mu$$

Where $W_{sub}$ and $S_{chip}$ are provided in the datasheet, $S$ is the surface and $\mu$ is $800 cm^2/Vs$.

The width of the epitaxial zone $W_{epi}$ is around $2.5 \mu m$.

The doping is estimated from the curve $C(V)$ measured using the HP4284A. Its expression is given by the following relationship:

$$N_D = \frac{1}{S^2 q_e e} \left( \frac{1}{C^2} \right) d (\frac{1}{d V})$$
As a result of the above analysis and explanation, the experimental curve of figure 5 helps to find out a doping $N_D$ of $1.2 \times 10^{16} \text{ cm}^{-3}$.

4. TRANSIENT REVERSE BEHAVIORAL ANALYSIS

The idea now is to develop an analytical VHDL-AMS model of the SiC Schottky diode based on the SPICE model. Such model, implemented using the simulator SIMPLORER, helps to draw the transient curves of the reverse bias of the diode at the thermodynamic equilibrium. The electric parameters of the diode estimated previously by the classic method will be considered as the initial values used within VHDL-AMS. Such parameters are respectively the effective surface $A$, $N_D$, and $W$ of the diode.

To do so, we have developed an experimental test bench in order to measure the transient characteristics of the diode in the reverse switching mode starting from the resting state.

Starting from the previously mentioned characteristics, we can plot the maximum reverse voltage $V_{RM}$ as a function of the applied voltage $V_R$, the maximum reverse current $I_{RM}$ as a function of $V_R$ and the reverse recovery time $t_{RR}$ as a function of $V_R$. Figure 6 shows the simulated curves in transient mode of the SiC diode SDB6S60 using VHDL-AMS.

In reference to the simulated characteristics, we have defined the transient parameters of the diode as follow:

- $I_{RM}$: The maximum reverse current.
- $V_{RM}$: The maximum reverse voltage.
- $t_{RR}$: The reverse recovery time.
- $dV_R/dt$: Slope of the reverse voltage at the moment of passing to $I_{RM}$.
- $dI_R/dt$: Slope of the recovery current at the moment of passing to $V_{RM}$.

Figure 7 shows the test bench realized and curves given by figures 8 and 9 have been compared to those plotted from the VHDL-AMS model in order to estimate with high precision the technological parameters of the diode.

The given capacitance of the junction for a voltage equal to zero is $C_0=300 \text{ pF}$ and the gradual coefficient of the junction is $m=0.33$.

Based on those parameters as well as on the simulation MEDICI, we have identified the technological parameters of the SiC-Schottky diode for an inductance of $1.5 \mu\text{H}$.

![Fig. 4. Measured I(V) of the SiC diode SDB6S60 in order to estimate the series resistance.](image-url)

![Fig. 5. Measured curve derived from C(V) of the SiC diode SDB6S60 in order to estimate the doping $N_D$.](image-url)
the extraction the real parameters of the SiC diode SDB6S60.

The effective surface of the diode was found to be equal to 1.19 µm². The doping is 1.23E+16 cm⁻³ and the width of the zone weakly doped zone is W=2.56µm.

With regards to the plotted characteristics (simulated and measured), a comparison has been done in figures 8 and 9 and electrical as well as technological parameters of the investigated SiC diode have been extracted. In regards to the experimental results, two different techniques that complement each other have been used. The first is classical to study the static behaviour of the diode while the second is transient to figure out the technological and electrical parameters of the given diode.

The comparison between simulated and measured characteristics has led to a good match which leads to
5. CONCLUSION

This paper deals with a VHDL-AMS model of a SiC Schottky diode. The simulated results either in the static or in the transient domains were validated by means of experimental results. The VHDL-AMS model was based on mathematical equations that describe the behaviour of the schottky diode. In light of the above, the extraction of real parameters of the SiC diode SDB6S60 has been achieved; hence, providing the industry a better knowledge about the SiC to be a crucial alternative for the power electronic devices.

6. REFERENCES