

CFD investigation of flow in scour protection around a mono-pile with the volume-averaged  $k\mathchar`\omega$  model

Zhai, Yanyan; Christensen, Erik Damgaard

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1	CFD investigation of flow in scour protection around a mono-pile with the volume-
2	averaged $k$ - $\omega$ model
3	Yanyan Zhai <sup>a,*</sup> and Erik Damgaard Christensen <sup>a</sup>
4	<sup>a</sup> Department of Mechanical Technology, Technical University of Denmark, DK-2800 Kgs. Lyngby, Denmark
5	*Corresponding author.
6	E-mail address: yzhai@mek.dtu.dk (Y. Zhai)
7	Abstract
8	The study numerically investigates the flow behaviour around a mono-pile with scour protection under steady and
9	oscillatory flow conditions. A hydrodynamic model based on volume-averaged Reynolds-averaged Navier-Stokes
10	(VARANS) equations with the volume-averaged $k$ - $\omega$ turbulence closure is developed and implemented in
11	OpenFOAM. Three porosity transition types, i.e., constant, linear and parabolic, near the interface between stone cover
12	and free flow are firstly evaluated in two-dimensional models. The simulated results, i.e., flow velocities, turbulence
13	levels and bed shear stresses, are compared to previous experiments under steady and oscillatory flow conditions. The
14	parabolic transition shows the best agreement with the measurements and is therefore used in the developed model.
15	Under steady current, a three-dimensional model is validated against experimental measurements including flow
16	features both inside and outside of the scour protection around a mono-pile and it exhibits relatively good performance.
17	Further, the volume-averaged $k$ - $\omega$ model shows better agreement to experiments in porous medium compared to
18	results from $k-\omega$ SST and volume-averaged $k-\varepsilon$ models. The model is applied to investigate the flow patterns under
19	oscillatory flow condition. The results show that a horseshoe vortex is formed and it penetrates the entire scour
20	protection, which generates high flow velocities and bed shear stresses; erosion is most likely to occur at the area in
21	the presence of vortex, which poses a threat to the pile stability. The simulations demonstrate the ability of the
22	developed model to evaluate the flow behaviour in scour protection.
23	<b>Keywords:</b> monopile, scour protection, volume-averaged $k$ - $\omega$ turbulence model, porous flow, OpenFOAM

# 24 1. Introduction

- Offshore wind energy is developing rapidly as a principal source of renewable energy. Over the years, large quantities of offshore wind farms have been installed. For the stability of the structure, its foundation is a crucial component that still needs to be optimized. In the marine environment, the seabed in the vicinity of the foundation is often composed of sand or silt, where severe erosion occurs easily. Subjected to waves and currents, the increased hydrodynamic loads on the fine sediments result in local erosion around a pile foundation [1–3]. Without protection, the generated erosion would threaten the stability of the foundation.
- Over the past few decades, a large number of studies are carried out to investigate the scour around the
  unprotected pile foundations through experiments and field studies. Most of the results have been compiled in Breusers
  and Raudkivi [4], Hoffmans and Verheij [5], Whitehouse [6], Melville and Coleman [7] and Sumer and Fredsøe [3].

34 They reveal that the surrounding seabed without protection suffers from erosion, and scour holes are thereby formed

in some cases. To predict the evolution of scour holes, extensive numerical models have been established [8–17]. It is

- 36 indicated that, with the elapse of time, the scour depth has a tendency of gradual increase. As a result, the scour would
- affect the stability of the foundation if countermeasures are not properly taken.

38 To protect the seabed from scouring, a submarine porous medium system, i.e., scour protection, as one 39 practical approach is commonly designed and installed. The scour protection, composed of stone layers, is placed 40 around the piles. The layers usually consist of both a filter layer and an armour layer. The latter ensures the stability 41 of the piles under storm conditions, while the former prevents fine sediment from winnowing out of the scour 42 protection through the large armour stones. In the presence of scour protections, the flow patterns and the sediment 43 transport around the pile are altered, whereby the scouring issue is somehow alleviated. However, significant local 44 sinking is observed during surveys of submarine scour protections in service [18–22]. Previous studies primarily 45 investigate the sinking problem [23–26], in which the failure mode of scour protections is mostly predicted in an 46 empirical way. Hansen et al. [18] also concluded that the sinking is induced by the removal of the base sediment. 47 Through extensive physical model measurements, Nielsen et al. [27, 28] indicated that the horseshoe vortex is a key 48 flow feature governing the sinking process of the scour protection, and it is also the essential element to cause erosion 49 around unprotected piles [16, 29]. If the horseshoe vortex is strong enough to cause sediment transport in the scour 50 protection, and as a result, the sinking of the scour protection occurs. The development of sinking increases free length 51 of the monopile, which brings about the structural fatigue and damage. To figure out these processes, a detailed 52 understanding of the flow inside the scour protections is thus necessary.

53 The flow behaviour inside the scour protections such as flow velocity, turbulence level and bed shear stress 54 have been experimentally investigated [1, 27, 30, 31, 32]. Limitations do exist with numerical models to accurately 55 describe these flow features. That is due to the fact that a complete resolution of the porous structure in scour protection 56 is not yet feasible. To simulate porous flow, several resistance-type porosity models without turbulence model have 57 been developed and applied without resolving the actual pores [33–36]. Later, Jensen et al. [37] derived volume-58 averaged flow equations to model the porous flow without using a turbulence closure, and the resistance force was 59 added to account for the effect of the porous medium. A shortcoming is that the turbulent kinetic energy inside the 60 porous media is not studied. These models assume that turbulence inside the porous media is negligible, and the 61 assumption is only applicable when the permeability of the medium is comparatively small. However, in some cases 62 the turbulent levels are of great importance [38, 39], and therefore, the turbulence closure is supposed to be taken into 63 account.

To simulate turbulence in scour protection, some researchers used the LES model to closure the volumeaveraged Reynolds-averaged Navier-Stokes equations (VARANS) [40–45]. However, the LES is time consuming and expensive computationally. Due to the limited computing resources, the standard turbulence models, e.g.,  $k-\omega$ ,  $k-\omega$ -SST and  $k-\varepsilon$  described in Wilcox [46], are typically applied. These closure models have to be modified in order to account for the porous media [37]. An example of the turbulent closure model for porous media is volume-averaged  $k-\varepsilon$  model [47]. However, the  $k-\varepsilon$  model is not suitable to simulate the adverse-pressure gradient flows [48, 49], which are induced by the interaction between the local hydrodynamics and the complex geometries of scour protection. 71 In this regard, we applied the volume-averaged method to the  $k-\omega$  turbulence model [50], and validated the 72 model against the experiments under steady current [51] and oscillatory flow [31, 51]. The computed results in the 2D 73 cases are reasonably in line with the existing experiments and the model can accurately estimate the porous flow. 74 However, in the presence of a monopile with scour protection, it is unclear whether the developed model is suitable 75 for 3D cases due to the complex flow features, e.g., horseshoe vortex and lee-wake vortices. Moreover, a constant 76 porosity of the porous medium is often assumed in existing numerical models for simplification, while it is not 77 representative of real scenarios. In engineering practice, the porosity varies significantly near the interface between 78 scour protection and free flow, but there are few studies analyzing the effect of porosity variations. These are the 79 motivations of the present work, which will evaluate the porosity transition types near the interface, demonstrate the 80 model performance and gives a detailed description of the flow pattern around a monopile with scour protection. For 81 illustration, both steady and oscillatory flow conditions are taken into account.

82 The present paper is organized as follows. In Section 2, the numerical model is described briefly. The 83 volume-averaged Reynolds-averaged Navier-Stokes equations (VARANS) developed by Jensen et al. [37] are 84 rewritten and implemented as the governing equations. The volume-averaged k- $\omega$  equations, proposed by Zhai and 85 Christensen [50], are employed as the closure. Section 3 analyses the effects of porosity transitions near the interface 86 in 2D cases. In Section 4, the 3D model under steady current is validated against the existing experiments [27], and 87 the results are also compared with those from the volume-averaged k- $\varepsilon$  and the k- $\omega$  SST models. Application of the 88 3D model under oscillatory flow is subsequently presented and discussed in Section 5. Some main conclusions and 89 remarks of the paper are finally given in Section 6.

# 90 2. Porous media model

### 91 2.1 Hydrodynamic equations

92 In the porous media model, the flow is governed by the volume-averaged continuity equation [52] and the93 VARANS equations [37]:

$$\frac{\partial \langle \bar{u}_i \rangle}{\partial x_i} = 0 \tag{1}$$

$$(1+C_m)\frac{\partial}{\partial t}\frac{\rho\langle\bar{u}_i\rangle}{n} + \frac{1}{n}\frac{\partial}{\partial x_j}\frac{\rho\langle\bar{u}_i\rangle\langle\bar{u}_j\rangle}{n} + \frac{1}{n}\frac{\partial\rho\langle\overline{u}_i'u_j'\rangle}{\partial x_j} = -\frac{\partial\langle\rho\rangle^f}{\partial x_i} + g_jx_j\frac{\partial\rho}{\partial x_i} + \frac{1}{n}\frac{\partial}{\partial x_j}\mu\left(\frac{\partial\langle\bar{u}_i\rangle}{\partial x_j} + \frac{\partial\langle\bar{u}_j\rangle}{\partial x_i}\right) + F_i \qquad (2)$$

94

For an oscillatory flow, the oscillating body force 
$$(B_i)$$
 is introduced into the Eq. (2) expressed as:

$$(1+C_m)\frac{\partial}{\partial t}\frac{\langle \bar{u}_i \rangle}{n} + \frac{1}{n}\frac{\partial}{\partial x_j}\frac{\langle \bar{u}_i \rangle \langle \bar{u}_j \rangle}{n} + \frac{1}{n}\frac{\partial}{\partial x_j}\frac{\langle \bar{u}_i' \bar{u}_j' \rangle}{\partial x_j} = -\frac{1}{\rho}\frac{\partial \langle \rho \rangle^f}{\partial x_i} + g_j + \frac{1}{n}\frac{\partial}{\partial x_j}\nu\left(\frac{\partial \langle \bar{u}_i \rangle}{\partial x_j} + \frac{\partial \langle \bar{u}_j \rangle}{\partial x_i}\right) + \frac{F_i + B_i}{\rho}$$
(3)

where  $x_i$  = the Cartesian coordinates system, fluid density  $\rho = 1000 \text{ kg/m}^3$ ,  $F_i$  is introduced by volume-averaging process and consists of convective term, drag term and friction drag term,  $C_m$  = the inertial resistance force considering the transient effects of fluid accelerating around solid particles, t = time, n = the porosity, v = the kinematic molecular viscosity,  $B_i$  = the body force,  $g_j$  = the acceleration of gravity, p = the pressure,  $\bar{u}_i$ = the mean component of the

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99 velocity  $(\bar{u}, \bar{v}, \bar{w})$ . The fluctuating component of the velocity is  $u'_i$  and  $\diamond$  is the superficial volume averaging operator

100 defined by:

$$\langle C \rangle = \frac{1}{V} \int_{V_f} C dV \tag{4}$$

where *C* is a scalar, vector, or tensor, *V* represents the total volume of solid and fluid phase and  $V_f$  is the volume of fluid phase.

103 The intrinsic average denoted by  $\diamond^{f}$  is defined as:

$$\langle C \rangle^f = \frac{1}{V_f} \int_{V_f} C dV \tag{5}$$

104 The relationship between these two averages is:

$$\langle C \rangle = n \langle C \rangle^f \tag{6}$$

105 where the *n* is given by:

$$n = \frac{V_f}{V} \tag{7}$$

106 According to the extended Darcy-Forchheimer relation, the  $C_m$  and the porous medium resistance force  $F_i$ 107 are obtained. For  $C_m$ , the formulation proposed by van Gent [35] is adopted:

$$C_m = \gamma_p \frac{1-n}{n} \tag{8}$$

108 where  $\gamma_p = 0.34$ .

109  $F_i$  is composed of the linear and non-linear resistance force, given by:

$$F_{i} = a\rho\langle \bar{u}_{i}\rangle + b\rho \sqrt{\langle \bar{u}_{j}\rangle\langle \bar{u}_{j}\rangle}\langle \bar{u}_{i}\rangle$$
(9)

110 where the *a* and *b* for oscillatory flow are expressed separately as:

$$a = \alpha \frac{(1-n)^2}{n^3} \frac{\nu}{D_{50}^2} \tag{10}$$

$$b = \beta \left(1 + \frac{7.5}{KC_s}\right) \frac{1 - n}{n^3} \frac{1}{D_{50}}$$
(11)

where  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  are empirical resistance parameters for resistance term, in this paper  $\alpha = 500$  and  $\beta = 2.0$  [50],  $D_{50} =$ the median diameter of the porous medium,  $KC_s = U_m T/(nD_{50})$  is the Keulegan-Carpenter number for stones, representing the ratio of the characteristic length scale of fluid particle motion to that of porous media [33, 37], in which,  $U_m$  = the maximum free stream velocity and T = the time period.

115  $B_i$  is implemented to drive the flow and determined by differentiating the horizontal velocity. For oscillating 116 flow, the periodic velocity is given by:

$$u(t) = U_m \sin(\omega_0 t) \tag{12}$$

117 where  $\omega_0 = \frac{2\pi}{T}$ .  $B_i$  is determined by:

$$B_i = \frac{du}{dt} = \omega_0 U_m \cos(\omega_0 t) \tag{13}$$

# **118** 2.2 Volume-averaged k- $\omega$ equations

The VARANS equations are solved by utilizing the volume-averaged k-ω turbulence model as the closure.
The turbulence closure model involves transport equations for the turbulent kinetic energy (k) and the specific dissipation rate (ω) [50]:

$$\frac{\partial\langle k\rangle}{\partial t} + \frac{1}{n} \frac{\partial\langle k\rangle \langle \bar{u}_j \rangle}{\partial x_j} = \frac{\partial}{\partial x_j} \left[ (\nu + \langle \nu_T \rangle \sigma^*) \frac{\partial\langle k\rangle}{\partial x_j} \right] - \frac{\langle \overline{u'_i u'_j} \rangle}{n} \frac{\partial\langle \bar{u}_i \rangle}{\partial x_j} - \frac{1}{\rho^* \langle \omega \rangle \langle k \rangle + n\beta^* \omega_{\infty} k_{\infty}}$$
(14)

$$\frac{\partial \langle \omega \rangle}{\partial t} + \frac{1}{n} \frac{\partial \langle \omega \rangle \langle \bar{u}_j \rangle}{\partial x_j} = \frac{\partial}{\partial x_j} \left[ (\nu + \langle \nu_T \rangle \sigma) \frac{\partial \langle \omega \rangle}{\partial x_j} \right] - \frac{1}{n} \frac{\gamma \langle \omega \rangle}{\langle k \rangle} \langle \overline{u'_i u'_j} \rangle \frac{\partial \langle \bar{u}_i \rangle}{\partial x_j} - \frac{1}{n} \beta_1 \langle \omega \rangle^2 + n \beta_1 \omega_{\omega}^2$$
(15)

122 where the superficial averaged eddy viscosity read:

$$\langle v_T \rangle = \gamma^* \frac{\langle k \rangle}{n \langle \omega \rangle} \tag{16}$$

123 where  $\gamma^* = 1$ . The model constants,  $k_{\infty}$  and  $\omega_{\infty}$ , are defined separately by:

$$k_{\infty} = 0.85 \frac{(1-n)}{\sqrt{n}} \left( \langle \bar{u}_j \rangle^2 \right)$$
(17)

$$\omega_{\infty} = 117 \frac{(1-n)^{1.5}}{D_{50}\sqrt{n}} \left( (\bar{u}_j)^2 \right)^{1/2}$$
(18)

and the closure coefficients are:  $\gamma = 0.52$ ,  $\sigma^* = 0.5$ ,  $\beta^* = 0.09$ ,  $\sigma = 0.5$  and  $\beta_1 = 0.075$ . For a detailed description of the process, see our recent paper [50].

# 126 **3.** Analysis of porosity transition near the interface

127 The scour protection is usually modelled as a homogeneous medium with constant properties in the entire 128 porous zone, which does not in a realistic way accommodate variations near the interface between free flow and porous 129 medium. To illustrate the variations, Fig. 1 shows a sketch of a realistic interface with multi-layer stones. Near the 130 interface, the porosity, *n*, is not a constant and we can assume a transition from the value in porous zones to 1 in free 131 flow. Let  $h_s$  = the height of the stone cover. Larger ratio of  $D_{50}/h_s$  increases the transition effect. For a single layer 132 with large stones,  $D_{50}/h_s = 1$  the concept of porosity loses its meaning as it is intended for a medium with individual 133 solids smaller than the scale of the entire medium.

To illustrate the effect of the porosity variation near the interface, we analyse three transition types, i.e., constant, linear variation and parabolic variation. The transition height  $h_v$  is associated with the geometry of stones and is described as a linear relation with  $D_{50}$ ,  $h_v = \lambda D_{50}$ . For stone cover with one, two and three layers, the  $\lambda$  was determined empirically by Stevanato et al. [31] according to the measured velocity profiles inside stone cover. Assuming that the porosity variation follows the velocity variation, then  $\lambda = 0.45$  for a single layer of stones and  $\lambda =$ 1.05 for two and three layers.



140

141 Fig. 1 Sketch of a realistic interface between porous medium and free flow.

Data from previous experimental studies are used to determine the variation of porosity, *n*, near the interface. Sumer et al. [1] and Stevanato et al. [31] conducted flow experiments over stone covers under steady and oscillatory flow conditions. The measured results in terms of velocity profile, bed shear stress and turbulent kinetic energy are utilized for the analysis of the porosity transition type.

#### 146 *3.1 Steady current*

147 Under steady state, the experiments of Sumer et al. [1] were carried out in a flume with cyclical water supply. 148 Fig. 2 sketches the experimental layout in terms of geometry and dimensions. Its length, width and height were 28.0, 0.6 and 0.8 m. A 9.2 m long and 0.09 m high false bottom was placed on the flume bottom as the working section, to 149 150 get a complete side view for flow visualization. The false bottom was covered by stones ( $D_{50} = 38.5$  mm and n = 0.4). 151 In the working section, the water depth was 0.4 m. The Laser Doppler Anemometer (LDA) was used to measure 152 velocity at five cross-sections, and the mean flow velocity U (averaged over water depth) = 38.7 cm/s. The parameter 153 of friction velocity  $U_f = 5.22$  cm/s based on the logarithmic profile of the flow above the stones. More detailed 154 information is given by Sumer et al. [1] and Fredsøe et al. [53].

155 Our numerical model in 2D is set up to match the experiment. The computational domain is resolved with 156 65,709 non-uniform computational cells to ensure that the distance  $y_c^+$  from the wall-adjacent cell centers to the wall 157 is about 30. The computational mesh is automatically constructed by the snappyHexMesh tool. Grid convergence is 158 made through three sets of mesh (coarse, medium and fine) with reference to the velocity, and the medium mesh 159 (65,709 cells) is shown to be the optimum. The boundary conditions are defined at the inlet, outlet and walls. For 160 velocity, a uniform U = 33 cm/s is specified at the inlet resulting in a mean velocity of U = 38.7 cm/s at the working section. A zero normal gradient condition  $\left(\frac{\partial u}{\partial x}=0\right)$  is used at the outlet; a slip boundary condition is imposed at the 161 top wall to model the flow with free surface and a non-slip condition is specified at the bottom wall. In regards to 162 163 pressure, zero pressure is specified at both inlet and outlet; a zero pressure gradient is given at the top and bottom 164 walls. At the inlet,  $k = 1.36 \times 10^{-4} \text{ m}^2/\text{s}^2$  and  $\omega = 0.16 \text{ s}^{-1}$ , which are based on the turbulent intensity of 5% of the inlet velocity, with a length scale of 20% of the channel width; at the outlet, k and  $\omega$  are both specified with a zero gradient 165 166 condition. The timestep is set as 0.0001 s and the total simulation time is 1000 s, which is found to provide a stationary 167 solution. The selected timestep is determined by calculating the Courant number (preferably  $\leq 0.4$ ), so that the

168 information propagation of the physical flow is captured. About 15.2 m of the inlet, the simulated results are extracted







171 Fig. 2 Sketch of the experimental layout for steady current through a porous medium.

To illustrate the effect of the porosity transition on the velocity distribution, the simulated velocity profiles with three different transitions and the measured velocities are depicted in Fig.3. All computed velocity profiles follow a similar pattern and are in line with the measured results outside the porous media. With a constant porosity, the velocities inside the porous medium tend to be underestimated, while in the free flow they are slightly overestimated. Compared to measured values, the velocity profile from the linear porosity exhibits some slight deviations, but still better than the results with the constant porosity.

178 Turbulence is essential for sediment transport in the porous medium, and turbulent kinetic energy k is the 179 crucial parameter to estimate the turbulence level. In the porous medium, the k is related to turbulence fluctuation  $U_s$ 180 by  $U_s = \sqrt{0.6k}$  according to Zhai and Christensen [50]. The ratio between the turbulent fluctuation and the friction 181 velocity,  $U_{\checkmark}/U_{\rm f}$  is compared to experimental results in Fig. 4. In the vertical direction, the profiles in simulated  $U_{\checkmark}/U_{\rm f}$ 182 for all porosity transitions are similar to the measured one.  $U_s/U_f$  increases from the free flow towards the to the porous 183 medium and peaks closely to the interface. From the interface it decreases further down into the media. In the porous 184 medium, the  $U_{\rm s}/U_{\rm f}$  profiles from parabolic and linear porosity transitions show good agreement with measurements, 185 while the profile for constant porosity presents obvious deviations from the measurements. In the outer flow, the 186 computed  $U_{\rm s}/U_{\rm f}$  results with the parabolic transition match well with the measured data, while the results for the linear 187 transition and constant porosity have appreciable deviations. Therefore, for steady current, the numerical model 188 provides better velocity and turbulence calculations when the parabolic transition in the porosity zone is implemented.



190 Fig. 3 Comparisons of simulated and measured velocity profiles.



#### 191



# 193 *3.2 Oscillatory flow*

Under oscillatory flow condition, Stevanato et al. [31] carried out the flow experiments over stone covers.
 The measured results that included velocity profile, bed shear stress and turbulent kinetic energy are utilized for the analysis of the porosity transition type.

197 The experiments were performed in an oscillatory U-tube device with risers installed at the tube's both ends 198 to generate the oscillatory flow. The horizontal rectangular working section was 15.8 m long, 0.39 m wide and 0.29 199 m high. Stones were placed on the bottom to form a 8.6 m long and 0.108 m high stone cover. The median stone 200 diameter was,  $D_{50} = 36$  mm, and the porosity n = 0.4. The maximum free stream velocity was,  $U_m = 0.96$  m/s with a 201 period of T = 9.73 s. Based on the expression given in Section 2.1, the  $KC_s = 648.67$ .

LDA was used to measure the flow velocities. The velocities above the stones were measured at the centreline of the tube to reduce effects of secondary flows. To avoid the laser beams being blocked by stones, the velocities in the pores were measured nearby the sidewall. A Dantec hot-film probe measured the bed shear stress beneath the stone layer. Further details are given in Stevanato et al. [31] and Sumer et al. [54].

206 The numerical model reproduces the experiment with the same geometry of the horizontal working section. 207 Fig. 5 shows the sketch of the numerical setup. The model in 2D domain is resolved by 56,588 non-uniform 208 computational cells. For the velocity, the applied oscillatory body force is imposed over the domain after an iterative 209 process to reach the experimental  $U_m$ , a no-slip boundary is specified at the walls and a zero gradient at the inlet and 210 outlet. For the turbulent quantities, zero gradients are specified at the inlet and outlet; the wall functions are used at 211 the walls. For pressure, we use zero gradients at walls; the cyclic boundary conditions at the inlet and outlet based on 212 the analysis of pressure boundary conditions in Schippers et al. [55]. To achieve stable results, the time step is 0.0001 213 s and the total simulation time is set to 350 s. The results in the period 291.9 s < t < 301.6 s are selected for analysis 214 according to Zhai and Christensen [50].

Under the oscillatory flow conditions, the influence of porosity transition on the velocity distribution is analysed. Fig. 6 shows the velocity profiles at four different phases ( $\omega_0 t = 45^\circ, 90^\circ, 135^\circ$  and  $180^\circ$ ). In the lower layer ( $y \le 7$  cm), the profiles from the three porosity transitions are almost straight lines and coincide with each other at each phase, which implies that the velocities are almost constant. The computed profiles, irrespective of any transition type, fit well with the measured ones, especially at the phase of  $45^\circ, 90^\circ$  and  $135^\circ$ . In the upper layer (y > 7

- 220 cm), the velocity profile with the parabolic transition shows a better agreement with measured results for all four
- phases. The model with the linear transition apparently under-predicts the velocity although it gives a similar profile
- to the measurements. At all four phases, the velocity profiles with the constant porosity deviate from the experimental
- results. In the case of the constant porosity, the velocity decreases quickly from the free flow to the top of the porous
- 224 medium, which is mainly attributed to the sharp porosity transition. In addition, the velocity at the interface with
- constant porosity is about 70% smaller than that with the parabolic transition.





— Parabolic porosity transition —— Linear porosity transition —— Constant porosity …🗙… Measurements





226

Fig. 6 Comparisons of velocity profiles with different porosity transitions near the interface.

At the interface, the turbulent kinetic energy is mainly induced by the velocity gradients. To illustrate the effect of porosity transition on turbulent level, the numerical and experimental results of  $U_s$  over the depth at the same four phases are depicted for comparison in Fig. 7. The experimental results show the  $U_s$  varies noticeably from the interface to y = 7 cm, implying that the turbulence dissipates in a swift manner, which is also confirmed by the simulations.



235

Fig. 7 Comparisons of turbulent fluctuations with different porosity transitions near the interface.

237 For  $y \leq 7$  cm, the simulated U<sub>s</sub> are roughly in a line with the experimental results, which illustrates the 238 porosity transition type has probably no effect on the turbulence variation in the deeper part. For y > 7 cm, the 239 simulations with parabolic and linear transitions show similar  $U_s$  profiles with measurements, although the magnitude 240 differs by and large. The  $U_s$  is overestimated under the two transition types, and the former seems to be better 241 especially at the interface in terms of 45° and 90°. However, with the constant porosity, the  $U_s$  is underestimated for 7 242  $cm < y \le 10$  cm and is overestimated for y > 10 cm, presenting a significant deviation from the measured profile. It 243 is also noted that in the deeper part, it has relatively small velocities and thereby producing less turbulence. Near the 244 interface, the porosity transitions affect the flow resistance and result in the larger velocity gradients, which generate 245 large turbulence dispassion.

As the porosity transition changes from constant to linear to parabolic, the peak position of  $U_s$  gradually moves downward (Fig. 7) at the four phases. For instance, with  $\omega_0 t = 45^\circ$ , the maximum locates at  $y \approx 11$  cm for the constant porosity and at  $y \approx 9$  cm for the parabolic transition. A similar change is also observed in the places where the constant velocity occurs (Fig. 6), for example,  $y \approx 10$  cm for the constant porosity and  $y \approx 7$  cm for the parabolic transition at  $\omega_0 t = 45^\circ$ . This is related to the increased porosity in the upper layer during this process. It indicates that the greater the porosity, the deeper the turbulent flow penetrates into the porous medium.

To further illustrate the effect of porosity transitions on flow, the induced bed shear stress  $\tau_b$ , as a basis for describing the sediment transport, is analyzed. Fig. 8 shows the comparison of the simulated and measured  $\tau_b$ . In the experiment, the  $\tau_b$  was measured in three different layouts of the stones. Pore 1 and 2 were measured at the center of a pore, and in the case of pore 3 there was a streamwise offset in the measured location. It presents that the  $\tau_b$ calculated with the three porosity transitions is in the right order of magnitude with measurements and is well represented over all phases of a time period. The model produces similar  $\tau_b$  profiles irrespective of any transition type

- 258 considered, and the difference is minor. This is explained by the fact that the  $\tau_b$  is associated with the velocity gradients
- and turbulence level, at the bed they are unaffected by the porosity transitions, as illustrated in Figs. 6 and 7.
- 260 Based on these analyses, the model with parabolic transition considered shows better agreement to the
- 261 measurements in terms of porous flow velocity, bed shear stress and turbulence levels. Therefore, the parabolic
- transition near the interface is adopted in Section 4.



263

Fig. 8 Comparisons of bed shear stresses with different porosity transitions near the interface.

**4. Validation of the model under steady current** 

To validate the proposed volume-averaged k- $\infty$  turbulence model in the presence of a mono-pile, a 3D model is set up under a steady current. The parabolic porosity variation is applied near the interface between the free flow and the porous media. The calculated velocity profile and turbulence level are compared to experiments conducted by Nielsen [27].

270 The experiments were conducted in a flume with recirculation pump to provide a steady flow. Fig. 9 shows 271 a sketch of the experimental layout. The flume was 23.0 m long, 2.0 m wide and 0.5 m high. About 15.0 m downstream 272 of the inlet, a false bottom (white plastic plate) was installed in the wave tank. Its length, width and height were 3.05 273 m, 2.0 m and 5.0 mm, respectively. The plate had a 15.0 cm long taper on the upstream end with a slope of 1:6. A pile 274 with a diameter of 14.0 cm was placed on the plate, whose centre point was approximately 0.9 m to the plate 275 downstream end and 1.0 m to the sidewall. The scour protection with a diameter of 78.0 cm was placed around the pile and consisted of one layer of irregular crushed stones. The median diameter of the crushed stones was  $D_{50} = 4.3$ 276 277 cm and the porosity n = 0.4. The water depth was 0.50 m and the incoming U = 0.40 m/s. To measure the velocity, 278 the submerged pen-size LDA probe was adopted. More details are available in Nielsen et al. [28, 30].





Fig. 9 A schematic layout of the experiment.

The numerical model has the same dimensions as the experiment with respect to the flume width and height, while the length is shortened to 12.0 m to save computational resources. The shortening is made mainly on the seaside of the structure. Fig. 10 shows a sketch of the model domain and boundary type. The pile and the scour protection with the same dimensions as the experiment, are placed about 7.0 m downstream of the inlet. In view of the size of the pile and scour protection, the up-and downstream distances are sufficient to remove any dependency of the boundaries in the results.

In order to analyse the grid dependence on the numerical solutions, three different discretizations have been adopted including a fine grid with 2,334,778 cells, a medium grid with 1,254,508 cells and a coarse grid with 702,576 cells. The computational mesh is constructed using snappyHexMesh generator. The results show that the force on the pile obtained for the first two grids is almost identical, except for very small scale details. Therefore, in order to save computational resources, the model domain is resolved with a total of 1,254,508 non-uniform cells, see Fig 11. These cells are distributed over 16 computational cores on a high performance cluster. The grid refines toward the bottom and the pile surface, where the wall-adjacent cell thickness is 0.0036 m and 0.0018 m.



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Fig. 10 Sketch of the numerical model domain and boundary definitions.





Fig. 11 Computational mesh with pile: (a) side view and (b) bird view.

The boundary conditions are defined at the inlet, outlet and walls including the pile surface. A uniform velocity of U = 0.40 m/s is specified at the inlet, and the zero normal gradient condition is used at the outlet; a slip boundary condition is imposed at the top wall to model the flow with free surface and a non-slip condition is specified at the bottom wall as well as the pile surface. In regards to pressure, a zero pressure gradient is given at both inlet and outlet, and the top, bottom and sides' walls. At the inlet,  $k = 2 \times 10^{-4} \text{ m}^2/\text{s}^2$  and  $\omega = 0.258 \text{ s}^{-1}$ ; at the outlet, *k* and  $\omega$  are both specified with a zero gradient condition. At the walls, the wall functions for *k* and  $\omega$  are used. To obtain a stationary solution, the time step is 0.0001 s and the total simulation time is 1000 s.

305 To compare the simulated velocity profiles with the measurements, Fig. 12 shows the profiles at six cross-306 sections upstream of the pile. The Figs. 12a, b correspond to the measured results and the simulated ones with the 307 volume-averaged k- $\omega$  model, respectively. In general it shows a good agreement between model results and measured 308 velocity profiles by Nielsen [27], although their magnitudes differ in a minor way inside the scour protection. An 309 apparent return flow in the porous medium is observed up to about 10.0 cm from the edge of the pile, which is 310 consistent with the flow measurements. In addition, the return flow exhibits a first increase and then decrease pattern, 311 which is also visualized in the experiments. It is also noted that, in the range of -28.0 cm < x < -7.0 cm below z = 3.5312 cm, the measured velocities (Fig. 12a) are slightly larger than the simulated ones (Fig. 12b). This implies that the 313 present model does not prevent the horseshoe vortex in penetrating into the stone cover. The flow pattern upstream of 314 the pile also coincides with that observed by, for example, Roulund et al. [16] and Graf and Yulistiyanto [56] for an 315 unprotected pile.

The upstream directed flow near the bottom is generated by the horseshoe vortex that penetrates into the porous medium. The comparison in the Figs. 12a, b indicates that the vortex is predicted well by the numerical model. 318 In the present case, the horizontal size of the horseshoe vortex is approximately 13.0 cm, as shown in Fig. 12b, and it 319 is a little smaller than the pile diameter (14.0 cm). That is because the size and strength of the vortex are determined 320 by both pile diameter and flow velocity [27]. The horseshoe vortex is almost completely embedded in the porous 321 medium due to the relatively thin protection layers. According to Roulund et al. [16], the vortex is believed to generate 322 high bed shear stresses that cause sediment transport. This can also be illustrated by the high flow velocities near the 323 bottom beneath the stone cover (Fig. 12). The vortex penetrating into the porous medium transports the sediment 324 adjacent to the pile upstream. If it is strong enough, the scoured particles will be winnowed by the main flow and 325 transported downstream, causing the sinking of scour protection. Otherwise, these particles will deposit in between 326 the stones.

327 The results from the volume-averaged  $k \in$  model are also included for illustration (Fig. 12c). In comparison 328 to the measurements (Fig. 12a), the numerical model also reproduces the similar flow patterns around the pile, 329 especially outside the porous medium. However, inside the porous medium, the flow magnitudes differ appreciably 330 although the horizontal flow directions are identical. For example, the simulated velocities at x = -20 cm are larger 331 than the measured ones, and the opposite is the case for the other cross-sections. It indicates that the simulated 332 horseshoe vortex in size is comparatively larger than the measured one, while its intensity is relatively smaller. By 333 comparing the results from the two volume-averaged models (Fig. 12b, c), they both reasonably capture the flow 334 features, while regarding the return flow inside the porous medium, the volume-averaged k- $\omega$  model gives a better 335 picture with reference to the measurements.





Fig. 12 Velocity profiles at six cross-sections upstream of the pile: (a) measurements, adapted from Nielsen et al. [28]; (b) simulations with the volume-averaged k- $\omega$  model; (c) simulations with the volume-averaged k- $\varepsilon$  model; (d) simulations with the k- $\omega$  SST model.

Moreover, one more simulation is carried out in which the  $k-\omega$  SST model is considered, and the velocity profiles are shown in Fig.12d. The results show a much weaker return flow from the horseshoe vortex than the measurements (Fig.12a) and the results with both volume-averaged models (Fig.12b, c). Without using the volumeaveraged procedures in the porous medium, too much resistance would be introduced for the horseshoe vortex, leading to a smaller vortex in size and intensity. This further illustrates the improvement of the volume-averaged  $k-\omega$  model in the prediction of the horseshoe vortex.

345 To further elaborate the flow features around the pile, Fig. 13 shows the horizontal and vertical velocity fields 346 corresponding to  $\bar{u}$  and  $\bar{w}$  from the volume-averaged k- $\omega$  model. In Fig. 13a, positive values denote the streamwise flow and negative ones return flow. In Fig. 13b, positive values denote the upflow and negative ones downflow. The 347 348 Fig. 13a presents that the return flow occurs both in the scour protection and immediately downstream the pile. The 349 former is a result of horseshoe vortex penetration from the free flow to the protection layer; the latter is attributed to 350 the lee-wake vortices. The simulated downstream  $\bar{u}$  is in general lower than the upstream one, and the  $\bar{u}$  in the scour 351 protection is also relatively small compared to that in the outer flow. The overall flow patterns are almost consistent 352 with the patterns observed by Nielsen et al. [28].





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Fig. 13 Velocity fields around the mono-pile with scour protection: (a)  $\bar{u}$ -component in m/s, (b)  $\bar{w}$ -component in m/s.

In Fig. 13b, it appears that there is an obvious downflow in front of the pile, while it only exists on the top of the scour protection. The reason is the porous resistance quickly dampens the downflow into the scour protection. The downflow is driven by the deceleration of the flow, and it adds to the rotation of the horseshoe vortex. The upflow is observed behind the pile and it becomes weak gradually along the streamwise direction, which is in relation to the development of the lee-wake vortices.

363 In addition to the velocity profile, the k as the other essential quantity associated with sediment transport, is 364 also presented for analysis. Sumer et al. [57] pointed out that the sediment transport is augmented by a factor of 6 365 when the k near the bottom ascends by 20%. Together with the measured k, Fig. 14 plots the simulated k profiles at 366 the same six cross-sections upstream of the pile. In the figure, the black dots represent the measured values, the red 367 and blue lines refer to the simulated results with the volume-averaged k- $\omega$  and k- $\varepsilon$  models, respectively. The black 368 lines denote the simulated results with the  $k - \omega$  SST model. It illustrates that the numerical results with the two volume-369 averaged turbulence models exhibit similar profiles and follow the distribution of the measured values. The k reaches 370 a peak roughly near the interface and it declines gradually towards the free flow and the bottom. However, the  $k-\omega$ 371 SST model significantly overestimates the k values near the interface; the peak positions move upward and deviate 372 from the measurements, especially at x = -14.0 and -8.0 cm. This suggests that both volume-averaged models produce 373 reasonable turbulence levels in comparison with the measurements.



Fig. 14 Turbulent kinetic energy profiles at six cross-sections upstream of the pile. The black dots represent the measured values; the red and blue lines refer to the simulated results with the volume-averaged  $k-\omega$  and  $k-\varepsilon$  models, respectively; black lines denote the simulated results with the  $k-\omega$  SST model.

378 At the undisturbed flow area, e.g., x = -70.0 cm, the simulated results from both models agree with the 379 measurements. As the incoming flow comes close to the medium, the turbulent kinetic energy,  $k_{i}$  is slightly 380 underestimated. This is understandable as the model mainly induces turbulence at the interface with the free flow 381 owing to the flow shearing. The induced turbulence is transported downwards from the interface to the bottom, as the 382 flow moves along the streamwise direction. At the upstream end of the porous medium, i.e., x = -38.0 cm, the flow is 383 not very sheared and as a result, and less turbulence is generated compared to the measurements. When the flow 384 approaches the pile, e.g., at x = -27.0 cm, -20.0 cm, -14.0 cm and -8.0 cm, the simulated k from the volume-averaged 385 k- $\varepsilon$  model is significantly over predicted, especially near the interface. While, the result from the volume-averaged k-386  $\omega$  model is generally in the right order of magnitude compared to the measurement, apart from minor local 387 overestimation at x = -27.0 cm and -8.0 cm. This implies that the latter could evaluate the turbulence levels more 388 accurately than the former. It is also observed that the k has relatively large values upstream of the pile, e.g., between 389 x = -20.0 and -14.0 cm, which is likely coupled with the fact that the flow at this locations is subjected to the horseshoe 390 vortex. These are also confirmed by Zhai and Christensen [50] with 2D validation cases involving a scour protection. 391 It appears that no previous experimental results are available with respect to the  $\tau_b$  in the surrounding of the 392 pile. However, the  $\tau_b$  is a key parameter that is closely associated with sediment transport. The distribution of  $\tau_b$  from 393 the numerical model is presented in Fig. 15a. The enlargement view presenting the  $\tau_b$  in the scour protection is shown

in Fig. 15b. In the figure, it is visualized by contours of  $\tau_b$  magnitude. The white circular area at the center is the mono-pile and the dashed circle is the porous medium. As expected, the  $\tau_b$  reduces considerably inside the porous medium, and also in the separation zones in front of and in the lee-wake side of the porous medium. Additionally, it shows that there is a concentration of bed shear stress between the front and the side edges of the pile. This is due to the strong presence of the horseshoe vortex.





402 Taking the Figs. 12–15 into account, the velocities, turbulence levels and bed shear stresses upstream of the 403 pile are relatively high due to the penetration of horseshoe vortex into the protection layer. To conclude, the volume-404 averaged k- $\omega$  model has a relatively good performance for studying the flow around a pile both inside and outside of 405 the scour protection.

# 406 5. 3D model application under oscillatory flow

407 After validation of the model under steady state, it is used to investigate the flow around a full-scale pile with 408 scour protection under oscillatory flow. The schematic layout of the numerical setup is shown in Fig. 16. The model 409 domain is 20 m long, 20 m wide and 6 m high. The pile is placed centrally in the domain and its diameter,  $D_p$ , is 3 m. 410 The scour protection with three stone layers is modelled in the shape of a truncated conical section; its bottom diameter 411 is 11 m and top diameter 8.6 m. The median stone diameter is,  $D_{50} = 0.40$  m and the porosity is, n = 0.4. Similar to 412 Section 4, three discretizations, i.e., 2,000,000 cells, 2,259,600 cells and 3,390,400 cells, are considered to analyse the 413 grid convergence in terms of the force on the pile. The force obtained for the last two grids is almost identical, except 414 for very small scale details. Therefore, in order to save computational resources, the computational domain is resolved with 2,259,600 non-uniform cells, see Fig. 17. These cells are distributed over 24 computational cores on a high 415 416 performance cluster. The grid refines toward the bottom and the pile surface where the wall-adjacent cell thickness is 417 0.0050 m and 0.0015 m.



419 Fig. 16 Schematic layout of the numerical setup and boundary definitions.





421 Fig. 17 Computational mesh with pile: (a) side view and (b) bird view.

422 Same boundary conditions are defined at the inlet, outlet and walls as the ones in the 3D steady state model, 423 while for the oscillatory flow, two kinds of flows with the same period T = 12 s, are studied. One is the  $U_m = 1.50$  m/s 424 and the other is  $U_m = 1.95$  m/s. The corresponding KCs values are 112.50 and 146.25, respectively. The boundary 425 definitions are also illustrated in Fig. 16. At the inlet,  $k = 1.36 \times 10^{-4} \text{ m}^2/\text{s}^2$  and  $\omega = 0.16 \text{ s}^{-1}$ ; at the outlet, k and  $\omega$  are 426 both specified with a zero gradient condition. When the pile is placed in oscillatory flow, the Keulegan-Carpenter 427 number for pile,  $KC_p$ , has to be introduced. It defines the oscillatory motion related to the diameter of the pile,  $D_p$ , 428 which is calculated with  $KC_p = U_m T/D_p$ . Based on the given flow conditions and mono-pile diameter, the  $KC_p = 6.0$ and 7.8, respectively, which meet the critical limit ( $KC_p = 6.0$ ) for the formation of a horseshoe vortex in the front of 429 430 a pile without scour protection [58]. To achieve stable results, the time step is 0.0001 s and the total simulation time 431 is 500 s.

For the two flow cases, the undisturbed flows are sampled after they reach stability. Fig. 18 depicts the time series of the outer flow velocity, sampled at x = -10.0 m and z = 5.0 m in the plane of symmetry y = 0. It shows that the signal follows a sinusoidal variation for the two cases. The symmetry in the oscillatory flows causes the symmetry of flow features between the crest and trough half-periods, thereby the results of the crest half-period are selected for analysis.





438 Fig. 18. Time series of the undisturbed free-stream velocity with T = 12 s. (a)  $U_m = 1.50$  m/s; (b)  $U_m = 1.95$  m/s.

To examine the periodical flow patterns ( $U_m = 1.50$  m/s and T = 12 s), eight phases, i.e.,  $\omega_0 t = 45^\circ$ ,  $75^\circ$ ,  $90^\circ$ , 439 440  $105^{\circ}$ ,  $120^{\circ}$ ,  $135^{\circ}$ ,  $150^{\circ}$  and  $165^{\circ}$  in a crest half-period ( $0^{\circ} - 180^{\circ}$ ) are selected for illustration, as presented in Fig. 19. The water flows from left to right. On the left side of the pile a horseshoe vortex emerges for phases at  $\omega_0 t = 105^\circ$ , 441 120°, 135°, 150° and 165°. This is almost in line with the predictions that the vortex is expected to appear in the phase 442 interval  $110^{\circ} < \omega_0 t < 170^{\circ}$  without scour protection [3]. The size and strength of the vortex grows as the flow 443 develops  $(105^{\circ} < \omega_0 t < 165^{\circ})$ . As the vortex strengthens inside the porous medium the return flow in terms of range 444 445 and size also increases. In front of the pile, we see that the near-bed flow velocity at the right hand side of the porous medium edge first declines  $(45^{\circ} < \omega_0 t < 135^{\circ})$  and then increases  $(150^{\circ} < \omega_0 t < 165^{\circ})$  in the reverse direction. After 446  $\omega_0 t$  reaches about 165°, the vortex breaks down and washed out prior to the flow reversal ( $\omega_0 t = 180^\circ$ ), and 447 448 eventually disappear.

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450 Fig. 19 Velocity fields around the pile with scour protection at different phases for the crest half-period ( $U_m = 1.50$ 451 m/s, T = 12 s and  $KC_p = 6.0$ ).

452 No wave and combined wave-current measurements are made around a pile within the scour protection. 453 Therefore, we draw an analogy to flow around a pile without scour protection [58], where we expect the horseshoe 454 vortex in the case of waves to be small. In such a case, the size and strength of the horseshoe vortex are determined 455 by both flow velocity and pile size. The vortex system is in a form of one dominating vortex, i.e., single horseshoe 456 vortex system. The reason is that the thickness of scour protection is smaller than the pile diameter, otherwise, two 457 clockwise rotating vortices might appear in the vicinity of the pile, which is revealed through experiments by Nielsen 458 et al. [28]. Similarly to the steady current in Section 4, the vortex penetrates into the entire scour protection. The down-459 flow adjacent to the pile decreases from the interface to the bottom due to the porous resistance, and only a small 460 amount continues up and out from the porous medium.

Immediately behind the pile, there occurs reverse flow with the increased phase, implying the occurrence of lee-wake vortex. Compared to the horseshoe vortex, the attached lee-wake vortex near the porous medium first emerges earlier at  $\omega_0 t = 90^\circ$ , while it in the free flow first appears later at  $\omega_0 t = 120^\circ$ . Similar to the horseshoe vortex, the lee wake vortex grows in size and intensity gradually after its generation ( $\omega_0 t < 165^\circ$ ), which can be observed from the increased reverse velocity behind the pile (Fig. 19). This results in that as  $\omega_0 t$  increases from 75° to 165°, the near-bed wake vortex penetrates deeper into the porous medium. Fig. 19 shows that the near-bed velocity first decreases ( $45^\circ < \omega_0 t < 105^\circ$ ), and then increases inversely ( $105^\circ < \omega_0 t < 165^\circ$ ) behind the pile. At the downstream 468 edge of the scour protection, a distinct vortex rotating in clockwise direction occurs at  $\omega_0 t = 105^\circ$ ,  $135^\circ$ , 469 150° and 165°.

470 Corresponding to the same phases, the bed shear stress field,  $\tau_b$ , around the pile and scour protection is 471 analyzed, as shown in Fig. 20a. The  $\tau_h$  distribution in the domain is symmetric with reference to y = 0. Outside the 472 porous medium, the bed shear stress,  $\tau_b$  is relatively large compared with bed shear stress in inside. The  $\tau_b$  shows an 473 increase from  $\omega_0 t = 45^\circ$  to 90°, followed with a decrease from  $\omega_0 t = 90^\circ$  to 165°. This is consistent with the variation 474 of flow velocity during the first half-period. The flow runs from left to right, and it is noted that behind the porous medium, the location of  $\tau_b$  with minor values moves along the streamwise direction at a certain distance. Adjacent to 475 476 the scour protection on the right side, the area with enhanced  $\tau_b$  appears at  $\omega_0 t = 105^\circ$  and it amplifies obviously with the increasing  $\omega_0 t$  from 105° to 165°, which coincides with development of vortices observed in Fig. 19. 477





482 Fig. 20 Bed shear stress around the pile with scour protection at different phases for the crest half-period ( $U_m = 1.50$ 483 m/s, T = 12 s and  $KC_p = 6.0$ : (a) in the whole domain and (b) enlargement view inside the porous medium.

484 Inside the porous medium, the enlargement view of the bed shear stress,  $\tau_b$ , distribution is presented in Fig. 485 20b. From  $\omega_0 t = 45^\circ$  to 90°, the area directly in front of the pile features a small  $\tau_b$  and its range expands 486 symmetrically with reference to y = 0. A similar phenomenon is also observed at the lee-wake side of the pile. We 487 observe high bed shear stresses,  $\tau_b$ , between the front and the side edges of the pile, and its amplification at the lee-488 wake side of the pile is small. This distribution is similar to the experimental enhanced  $\tau_b$  values with a symmetrical 489 distribution to the sides, which is attributed to the changes in size and intensity of the horseshoe vortex. At both sides 490 downstream of the pile, the  $\tau_b$  shows a symmetric distribution and its values increases significantly  $(90^\circ < \omega_0 t <$ 491  $165^\circ$ ). This also illustrates that, behind the pile, a pair of symmetric attached vortices are formed.

492 Exposed to oscillatory flows, the flow features around a pile with scour protection is primarily related to the 493  $KC_p$ , and in influence on generation of the horseshoe vortex. To further understand the effect of  $KC_p$  on the flow 494 patterns, Fig. 21 presents a sequence of panels illustrating the development of the velocity fields during approximately 495 one half-period of the oscillatory flow for  $KC_p = 7.8$ . It shows that, in front of the pile, a horseshoe vortex exists at  $\omega_0 t = 90^\circ$  and it is not formed at  $\omega_0 t = 75^\circ$ , which is inferred that the vortex begins to emerge between 75° and 90°. 496 497 Once the vortex has emerged, it becomes enhanced with the increased phase (e.g., from 90° to 165°) and eventually 498 disrupted and washed just prior to the reversed flow at  $\omega_0 t = 180^{\circ}$ . Without the scour protection, Sumer et al. [58] predicted that the vortex appears in the phase interval  $90^{\circ} < \omega_0 t < 170^{\circ}$  for  $KC_p = 7.8$ . The vortex appears at a slightly 499 500 earlier phase in the case with scour protection, which obviously leads to larger lifespans. The reason is that, in front 501 of the pile, the flow velocity is increased due to the presence of the scour protection and large adverse pressure gradient

502 is generated at an earlier phase.



Fig. 21 Velocity fields around the pile with scour protection at different phases for the crest half-period ( $U_m = 1.95$ m/s, T = 12 s and  $KC_p = 7.8$ ).

506 The lee-wake vortex near the porous medium occurs first at  $\omega_0 t = 75^\circ$  and it in the free flow emerges first at 507  $\omega_0 t = 105^\circ$ . Besides, at the downstream edge of the scour protection, a clockwise vortex emerges in the interval of  $\omega_0 t = 90^\circ - 165^\circ$ , and it grows in size with the phase. The vortices shift their locations in each half-period, and the 508 509 horseshoe vortex in front of the pile is supposed to be symmetric to that at the back of the pile, due to the symmetric 510 oscillatory flow. Compared to the case where  $KC_p = 6.0$ , the vortices inclusive of the horseshoe vortex, the lee-wake 511 vortices and the clockwise vortex all emerge earlier, and are maintained over a larger span of  $\omega_0 t$ . Similarly, their size 512 and intensity also increases with increasing  $\omega_0 t$ . This illustrates the variations of the vortices as the  $KC_p$  increases from 6.0 to 7.8. These findings are in line with Sumer and Fredsøe [3], who made visualization of horseshoe vortex 513 514 in front of a pile without scour protection, and found the horseshoe vortex to increase in both size and lifespan as the 515  $KC_p$  increases.

To further illustrate the effect of  $KC_p$  variations on the flow features, during the course of the same crest halfperiod (0° - 180°), the  $\tau_b$  for  $KC_p = 7.8$  around the pile and scour protection are analyzed, as shown in Fig. 22a. The close-up of its distribution inside the porous medium is presented in Fig. 22b. Similar to the  $\tau_b$  distributions for  $KC_p$ = 6.0, symmetry of the  $\tau_b$  distribution, with reference to y = 0, is also observed under all phases for  $KC_p = 7.8$ . In the front of and in the lee-wake side of the pile, the  $\tau_b$  amplifies symmetrically with the development of the vortices. The  $\tau_b$  is significantly influenced by the  $KC_p$ , increasing the  $KC_p$  from 6.0 to 7.8, its value becomes large, which is expected according to the flow fields.





Fig. 22 Bed shear stress around the pile with scour protection at different phases for the crest half-period ( $U_m = 1.95$ m/s, T = 12 s and  $KC_p = 7.8$ ): (a) in the whole domain and (b) enlargement view inside the porous medium.

## 529 6. Conclusions

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530 The present study investigates, using 2D and 3D numerical models, the flow around a mono-pile with scour 531 protection. Both steady and oscillatory flow conditions are examined. In the model, the volume-averaged Reynolds-532 averaged Navier-Stokes (VARANS) equations are solved with the volume-averaged k- $\omega$  turbulence closure. The main 533 conclusions are as follows:

(1) Near the interface between free flow and porous medium, the effect of porosity transition type on flow velocity,
turbulence kinetic energy and bed shear stress is analysed, which is based on the experiments performed by Sumer et
al. [1] and Stevanato et al. [31]. In comparison to the constant porosity and linear transition, the parabolic transition
shows better agreement with the measurements.

- (2) In the presence of monopile with scour protection, the model with parabolic transition considered is validated against the existing experiments [28]. The simulated flow patterns and turbulence levels are both consistent with the measurements, illustrating a good performance of the model. It is shown that the horseshoe vortex in the upstream of pile can penetrate into the scour protection, which induces high bed shear stress. As a result, the sediment particles are supposed to be transported upstream, causing the sinking of the protection layer.
- (3) The model subsequently studies the oscillatory porous flow features around a pile. It is found that the horseshoe
  vortex and attached lee-wake vortices are formed at two sides of the pile, respectively. They penetrate into the entire
  scour protection layer, generating high flow velocities and bed shear stresses.
- 546 (4) In oscillatory flow, the horseshoe vortex in front of a pile emerges later than the lee-wake vortices near the porous
- 547 medium. The lee-wake vortices first occur near the porous medium and gradually amplify to the free flow. At the right
- 548 toe of the scour protection, an distinct local vortex rotating in a clockwise direction is also observed. The vortices all
- 549 increase in both size and intensity with increasing phase in each half-period. The bed shear stress inside the scour
- 550 protection is smaller compared to outside. Under the protection, it reaches the maximum at the side edges of the pile.

- (5) The flow features under oscillatory condition are strongly influenced by  $KC_p$ . As the  $KC_p$  increases, the vortices
- 552 inclusive of the horseshoe vortex and the lee-wake vortices, both in size and lifespan augments; the bed shear stress
- both inside and outside the scour protection also amplifies.

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