

# 6.

## Sediment Transport



## Series of waves during dune erosion tests

(Old & new) Delta flume:

- (Almost) prototype scale
- Regular and irregular waves ( $H_s$  up to 1.6m / 2.2m)
- Wave generator with reflection compensation
- Measuring frame fixed to mobile carriage



## Coastal Dynamics 1

### Contents

1. Introduction
2. Large-scale coastal variation
3. Oceanic wind waves and tide
4. Global wave and tidal environments
5. Coastal hydrodynamics
6. **Sediment transport (Chapter 6)**
7. Cross-shore transport and profile development
8. Longshore transport and coastline changes
9. Coastal inlets and tidal basins
10. Coastal protection

# Sediment transport

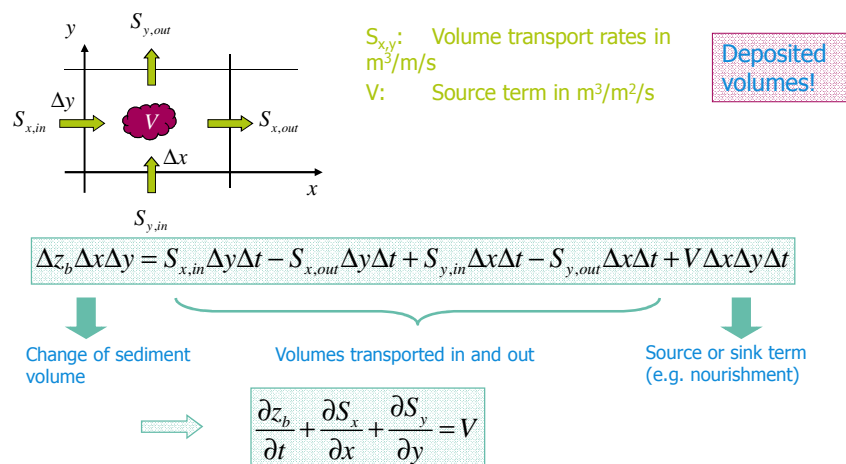
## Chapter 6 of lecture notes

### A. Introduction

- B. Complexity in predictions
- C. Practical transport modelling
- D. (Critical) bed shear stress
- E. Bed load transport
- F. Suspended load transport
- G. Energetics approach
- H. Discussion

## 6-A Introduction

Erosion and deposition are determined by sediment transport rates



## 6-A Introduction

### Transport definitions

$$\frac{\partial z_b}{\partial t} + \frac{\partial S_{ip,x}}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial S_{ip,y}}{\partial y} = 0$$

$S_{ip,x,y}$

Deposited volume transport (transport including pores, in-situ) in m<sup>3</sup>/m/s

$$(1-p) \frac{\partial z_b}{\partial t} + \frac{\partial S_{ep,x}}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial S_{ep,y}}{\partial y} = 0$$

$S_{ep,x,y}$

Volume transport of solid material in m<sup>3</sup>/m/s

$p \approx 0.4$

Porosity

$$\rho_s \approx 2650 \text{ kg/m}^3$$



$$I_m = (\rho_s - \rho)(1-p)S_{ip}$$

Immersed (under water) mass transport in kg/m/s

$$I = gI_m$$

Immersed (under water) weight transport in N/m/s

## 6-A Introduction

### Using measured bathymetric changes and the sediment balance, sediment transport rates can be estimated?

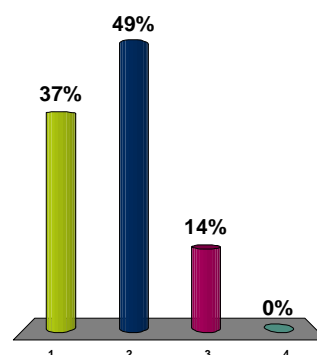
1. True as long as there are no sinks or sources
- ✓ 2. Possibly true for a 1D problem
3. Never true
4. Abstain

$$\frac{\partial z_b}{\partial t} + \frac{\partial S_{ip,x}}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial S_{ip,y}}{\partial y} = V$$

**Problem is under-determined.**

But...1D situation of wave tunnel/flume => no 'alongshore' transport gradients and V=0

Also: assuming no losses in cross-shore direction, bulk longshore transport rates may be estimated from local accretion/erosion near structures

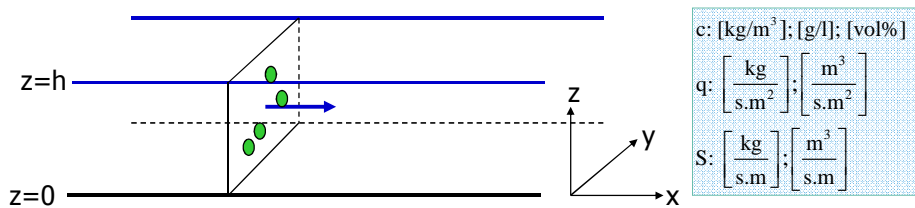


## 6-A Introduction

Sediment transport as the depth-integral of velocity times sediment concentration

$$S_x(t) = \int_{z=0}^{z=h} q(z,t) dz = \int_0^h c(z,t) u(z,t) dz$$

$$u = U + \tilde{u} \quad \text{and} \quad c = C + \tilde{c} \quad \Rightarrow \quad \underbrace{\langle S_x \rangle}_{\text{time-averaged sediment transport rate}} = \underbrace{\int_0^h UC dz}_{\text{current-related part}} + \underbrace{\int_0^h \tilde{u}\tilde{c} dz}_{\text{wave-related part}}$$



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## 6-B Complexity in predictions

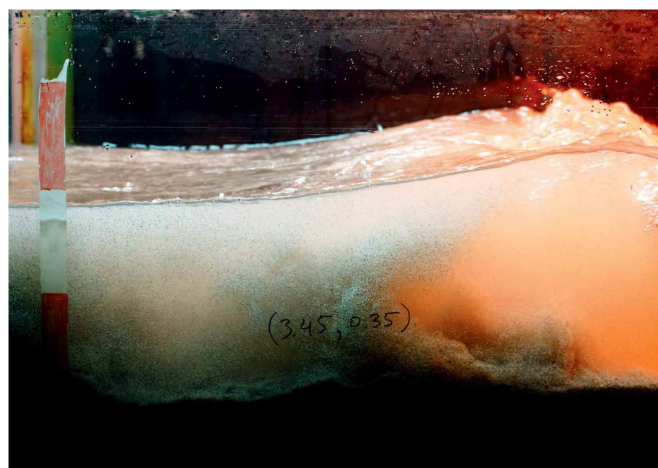
Albert Einstein advised his son against taking up sediment transport research...(too complicated)



Urban legend?!

## 6-B Complexity in predictions

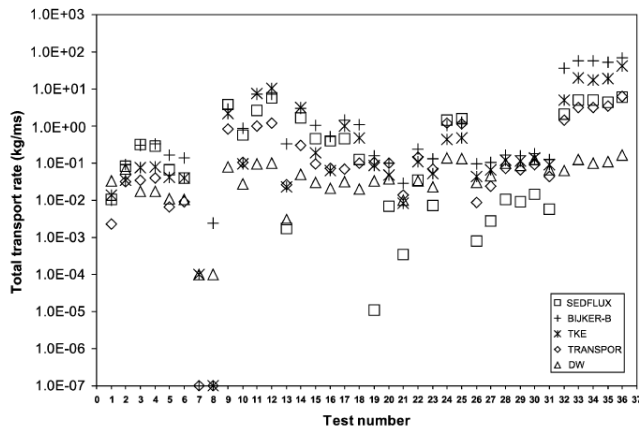
Detailed process research



PhD research by  
Martijn Henriquez

## 6-B Complexity in predictions

### Spread in predictions of various transport models

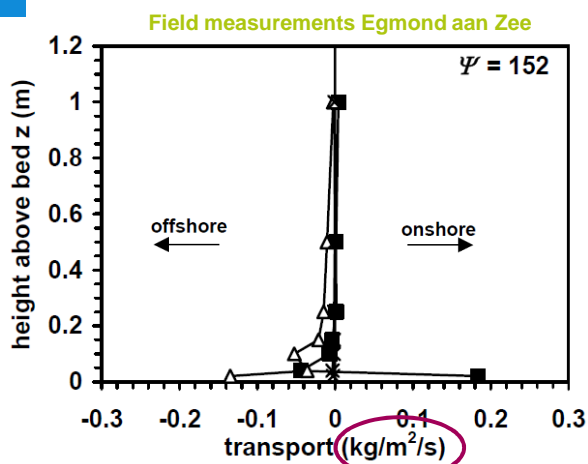


- Five models differing by factors of 5 to  $10^4$
- Typically, spread over a **factor of 100**
- Field sites with range of conditions

See Davies et al. (2002)

## 6-B Complexity in predictions

### Field transport measurements

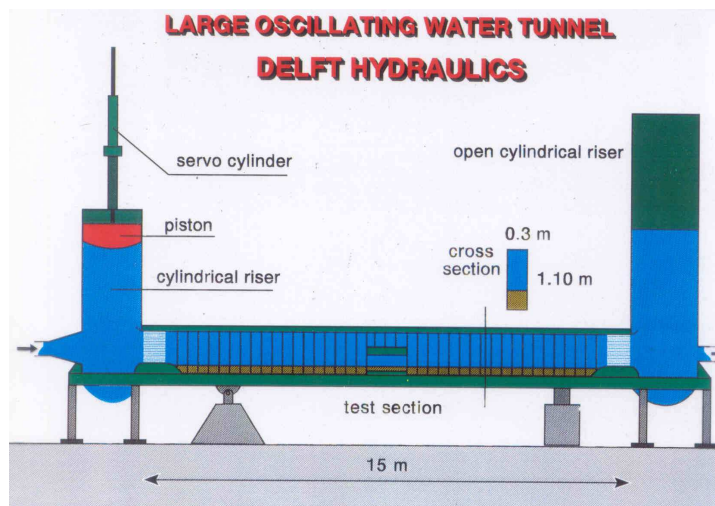


- Large near-bed gradients of concentration (and flow)
- Insufficient resolution near bed
- Wave-related transport direction reverses in vertical
- Opposite transport contributions due to waves and currents

- △— current-related
- ×— low-freq. wave-related
- high-freq. wave-related

## 6-B Complexity in predictions

Full-scale facility simulating near-bed region



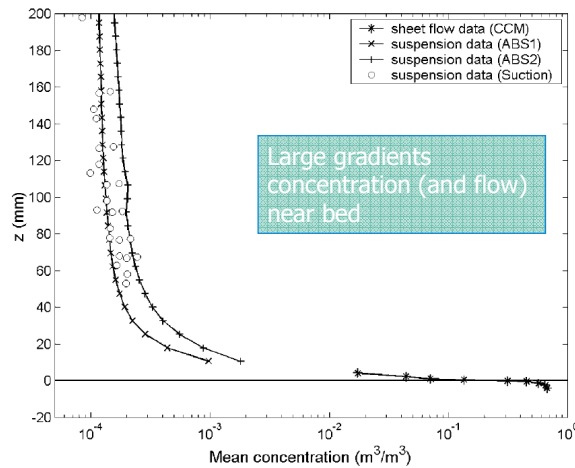
## 6-B Complexity in predictions





## 6-B Complexity in predictions

### Detailed near-bed and total transport measurements in wave tunnel

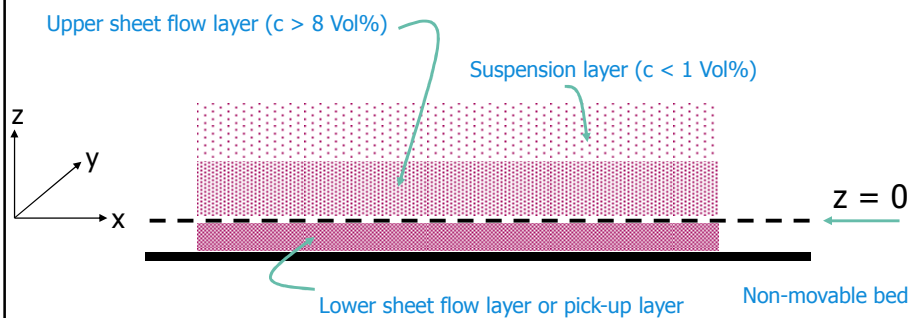


See Dohmen-Janssen & Hanes (2002)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vpDHDAK53A8>

## 6-B Complexity in predictions

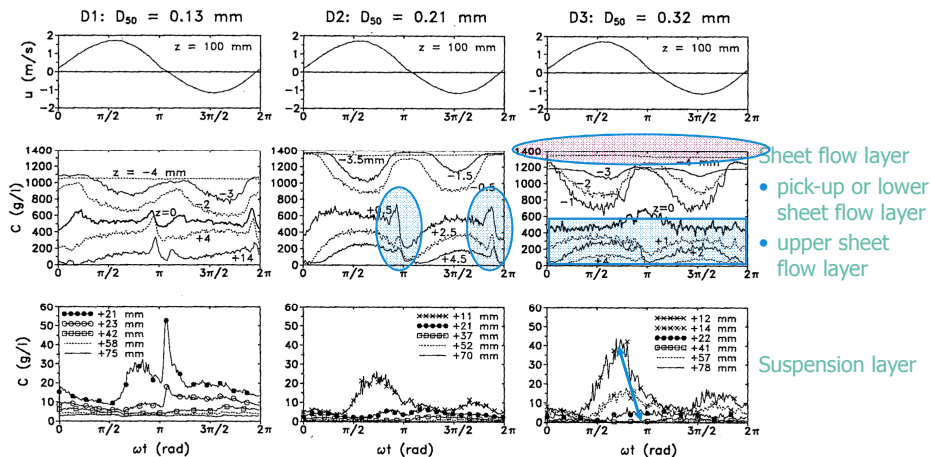
### Detailed intra-wave resolution of velocity and concentration (1DV) from $z = 0$ upwards



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vpDHDAK53A8>

## 6-B Complexity in predictions

### Detailed near-bed and total transport measurements in wave tunnel



## 5-D Wave skewness and asymmetry

### Sediment transport due to wave skewness

- Wave skewness in shoaling waves
  - higher on-shore velocities at the crest
  - lower off-shore velocities at the trough
- Near-bed sediment concentration

For normal to coarse sediment.  
True for finer sediment?

$$c_s(t) \approx A|\tau_b(t)|$$

$$\tau_b(t) \approx \rho c_{f,w}|u_0(t)|u_0(t)$$

$$\Rightarrow c_s(t) \approx Bu_0^2$$

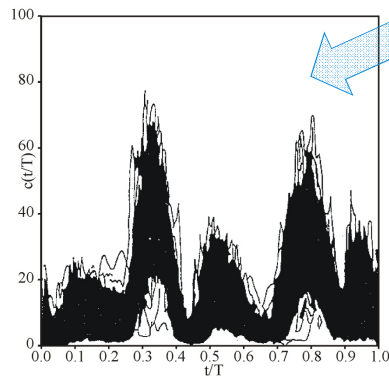
- Sediment transport  $S(t) \approx u_0 c_s \approx Bu_0^3 \Rightarrow \langle S \rangle = B \langle u_0^3 \rangle$

for a sine wave:  $\langle S \rangle = 0$

for a positively skewed signal:  $\langle S \rangle > 0$

## 6-B Complexity in predictions

### Intra-wave sediment concentrations



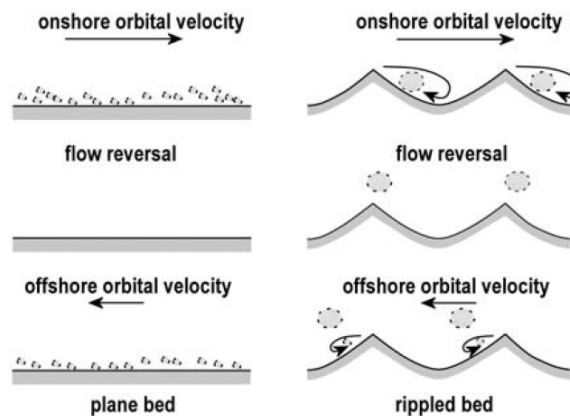
Many realizations!  
Why are they so variable?

- Two peaks just after maximum onshore and offshore velocity ( $t/T=0.25$  and  $0.75$ )
- Two secondary peaks just after flow reversal
  - => associated with vortices developing over a rippled bed

## 6-B Complexity in predictions

### Wave-related transport against wave propagation direction due to ripples

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zVPvyzkNAIc&feature=player\\_detailpage](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zVPvyzkNAIc&feature=player_detailpage)



## 6-B Complexity in predictions

### Contributing factors:

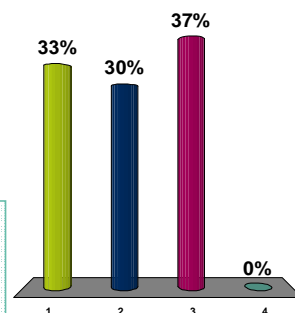
- Sediment suspension and transport respond non-linearly to the forcing
- Velocity field in the nearshore is oscillatory
- Vortex shedding due to the existence of bed forms
- Suspension ejection events at flow reversal
- Lagged response to forcing and phase differences in vertical
- Different transport contributions in opposite directions
- ...

## 6-B Complexity in predictions

In a quasi-steady approach it is assumed that sediment transport reacts instantaneously (immediately) to a change in flow conditions. Such a direct response of the sediment can be expected for:

1. Fairly large orbital velocities
- ✓ 2. Relatively coarse sediment
3. Small enough wave periods
4. Abstain

- Response time of sediment compared to oscillation period
- Large flow velocities and fine sediment increase response time
- Rouse number large => quasi-steady



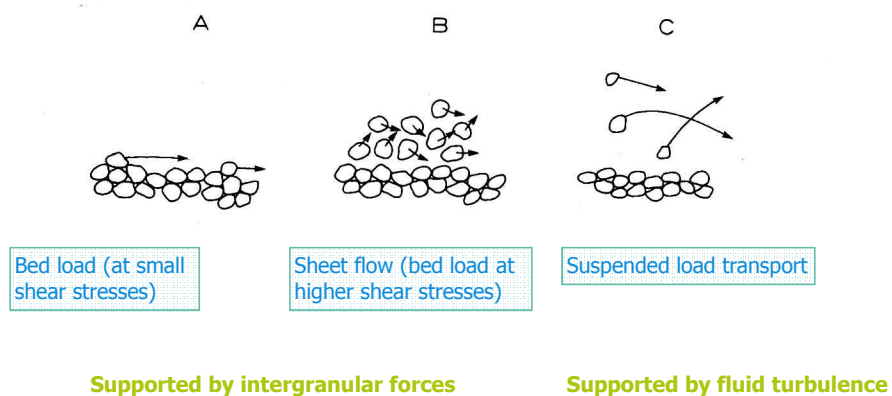
## Sediment transport

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## 6-C Practical transport modelling

Transport modes: bed load and suspended load (and wash load)



## 6-C Practical transport modelling

Bed load transport at low stresses: particles roll and slide (and jump)

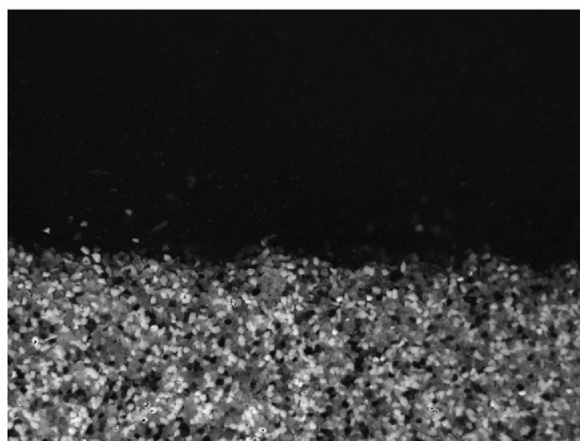


## 6-C Practical transport modelling

Intermittent sediment suspension above mobile bed

Sheet flow: entire bed  
( $\approx 0.01$  m) moves  
with oscillating motion

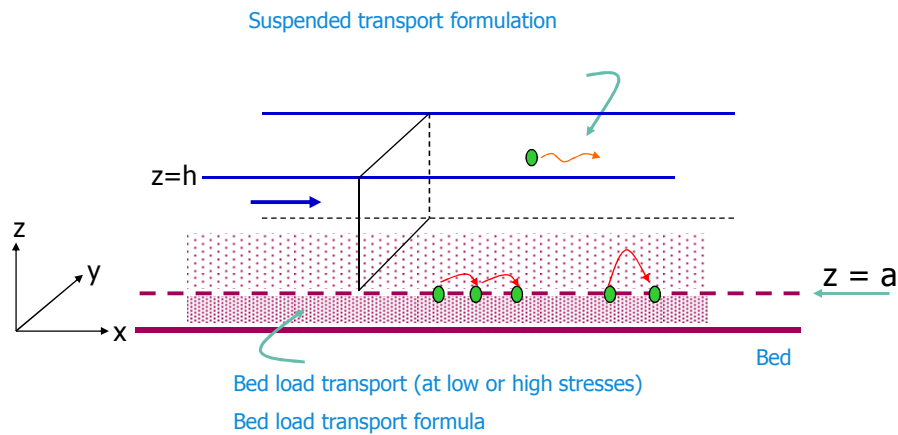
For high (orbital)  
velocities



PhD research by  
Martijn Henriquez

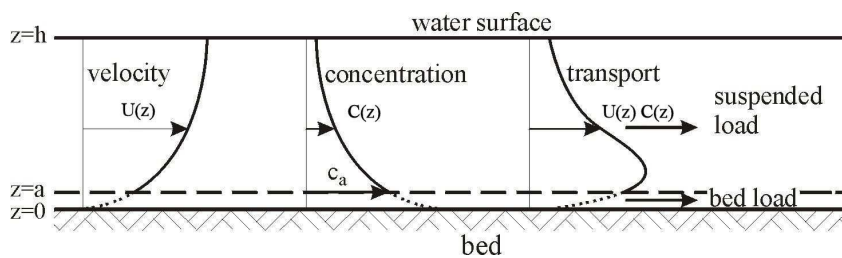
## 6-C Practical transport modelling

Practical transport modelling (as opposed to detailed intra-wave resolution of velocity and concentration)



## 6-C Practical transport modelling

Total load = quasi-steady bed load transport + current-related suspended sediment transport



Bed load transport responds instantaneously to time-varying (intra-wave) velocity or shear stress

Suspended sediment transport only current-related contribution (wave-related contribution neglected)  $\Rightarrow$  time-averaged velocity times concentration

$$S_t = S_b + S_s$$

## Sediment transport

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## 6-D (Critical) bed shear stress

### Forces on grains

#### Total driving force

$$F_{D,L} \propto \rho u^2 D^2$$

#### Resisting force

$$F_G \propto (\rho_s - \rho) g D^3$$

#### Horizontal, vertical or moment equilibrium

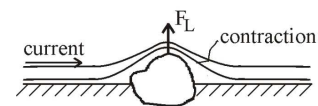
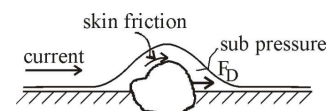
$$(\rho_s - \rho) g D^3 \propto \rho u_{cr}^2 D^2$$

← Critical velocity

$$(\rho_s - \rho) g D \propto \tau_{b,cr} = \rho u_{*,cr}^2$$

← Critical shear stress

Compare Appendix D: Iribarren and Hudson criterion for stone stability of rubble mound breakwater



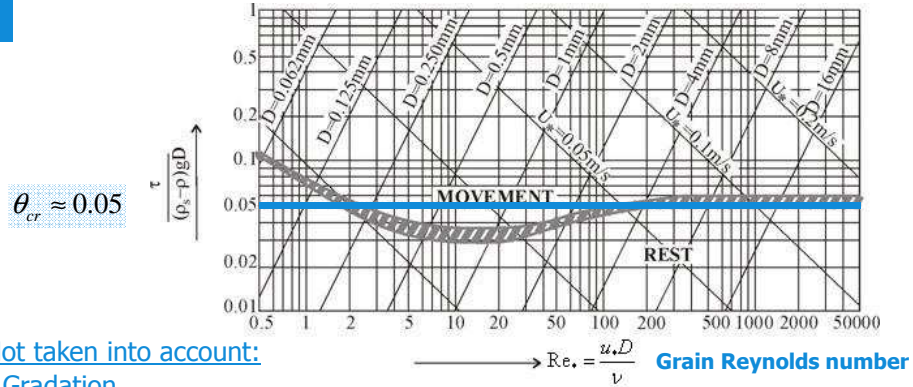
#### Critical Shields parameter

$$\theta_{cr} = \frac{\tau_{b,cr}}{(\rho_s - \rho) g D} = \text{constant}$$



## 6-D (Critical) bed shear stress

### Shields curve for initiation of motion



## Sediment transport

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## 6-E Bed load transport

### Quasi-steady approach to bed load transport

#### Assumption:

Instantaneous response to bed shear stress (or free-stream velocity) above a threshold or critical value (initiation of motion)

#### Dimensionless parameters:

**Shields parameter**  
(forcing on the grains)

$$\theta' = \frac{\tau'_b}{(\rho_s - \rho) g D_{50}}$$

**Critical Shields parameter**  
(threshold of motion)

$$\theta_{cr}$$

**Transport parameter**

$$\Phi_b(t) = \frac{S_b(t)}{\sqrt{(s-1) g D_{50}^3}}$$

**Einstein!**

**Effective** bed shear stress

$$\Phi_b(t) = f(\theta'(t), \theta_{cr})$$

## 6-E Bed load transport

### Time-averaged bed load sediment transport

$$1 \quad \langle \Phi_b(t) \rangle = \langle f(\theta'(t), \theta_{cr}) \rangle$$

**For instance formulation of Ribberink:**

$$\Phi_b(t) = \frac{S_b(t)}{\sqrt{(s-1) g D_{50}^3}} = 9.1 \frac{\beta_s}{(1-p)} \left\{ \left[ \theta'(t) - \theta_{cr} \right]^{1.8} \frac{\theta'(t)}{|\theta'(t)|} \right\}$$

- Based on water tunnel data
- Shields parameter using quadratic friction law
- Including a slope effect

$$2 \quad \langle \Phi_b(t) \rangle = f(\langle |\theta'(t)| \rangle, \theta_{cr})$$

• e.g. using adapted river transport formulas

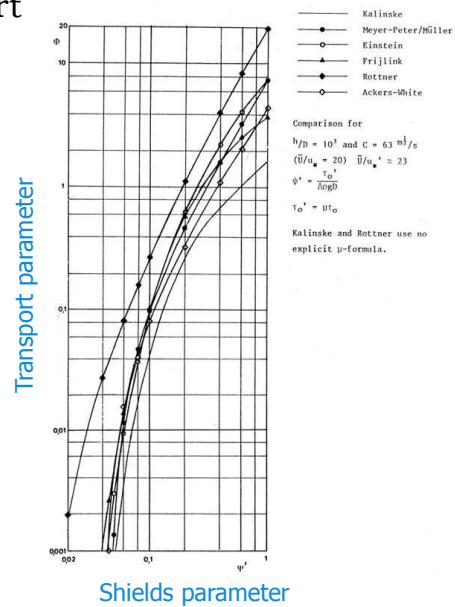
**For instance Bijker formula:**

$$S_b = B D_{50} \underbrace{\frac{U}{C} \sqrt{g}}_{\text{current only transports the sediment}} \exp \left[ \frac{-0.27 (s-1) D_{50} \rho g}{\mu \langle |\tau_{cw}| \rangle} \right]$$

sediment load mobilised by wave-current shear stress

## 6-E Bed load transport

### Comparison of bed load formulas



## 6-E Bed load transport

### Interpretation of (quasi-steady) bed load formulations

$$S(t) \propto \text{sign}(\tau_{cw}) |\tau_{cw}|^m \Rightarrow \begin{aligned} S(t) &\propto \text{sign}(u) |u|^{2m} \\ S(t) &\propto u |u|^{2m-1} \end{aligned}$$

$m=1.5-2$

with  $n = 2m$ :  $S(t) \propto u |u|^{n-1}$

**Sediment load mobilised by waves and currents**

**Transporting velocity (mean and oscillatory)**

$m=1.5/n=3 \Rightarrow \langle S \rangle \propto \langle |u|^2 u \rangle$

**Cf. bed load transport according to energetics approach**

## Sediment transport

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- F. **Suspended load transport**
- G. Energetics approach
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## 6-F Suspended load transport

### Wave versus current-related suspended sediment transport

$$S_s(t) = \int_{z=a}^h c(z,t) u(z,t) dz$$

$$u = U + \tilde{u} \quad \text{and} \quad c = C + \tilde{c}$$

$$\underbrace{\langle S_s \rangle}_{\text{time-averaged suspended sediment transport rate}} = \underbrace{\int_a^h UC dz}_{\text{current-related part}} + \underbrace{\int_a^h \tilde{u} \tilde{c} dz}_{\text{wave-related part}}$$

Neglected in the following

Wave-induced:  
• Undertow  
• Longshore current  
• LH streaming

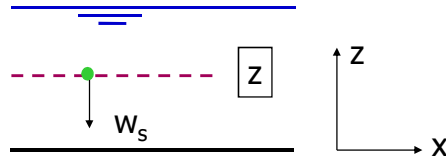
Transport by the oscillatory water motion:  
• Short wave asymmetry  
• Bound long waves

## 6-F Suspended load transport

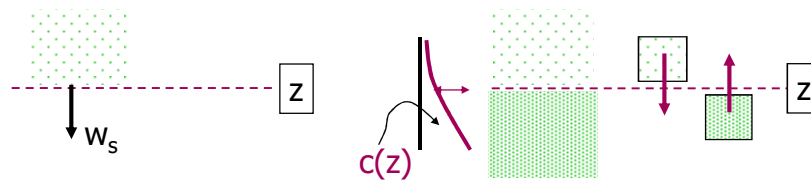
### Sediment concentration via sediment mass balance

Sediment concentration:

- steady state
- no gradients in x/y-directions



Sediment concentration  $c(z)$  at level  $z$  above the bed



down:  $w_s c(z)$

up:  $\epsilon_s(z) dc(z)/dz$

## 6-F Suspended load transport

### Steady sediment mass balance

$$w_s C(z) \downarrow + \epsilon_s(z) \frac{dC(z)}{dz} \uparrow = 0$$

$$C(z) = \underbrace{C(a)}_{\text{integration constant (reference concentration)}} \exp \left[ - \underbrace{w_s}_{\text{settling velocity}} \int_a^z \frac{dz}{\underbrace{\epsilon_s(z)}} \right]$$

Reference concentration:

- Function of bed shear stress
- Via empirical formulation

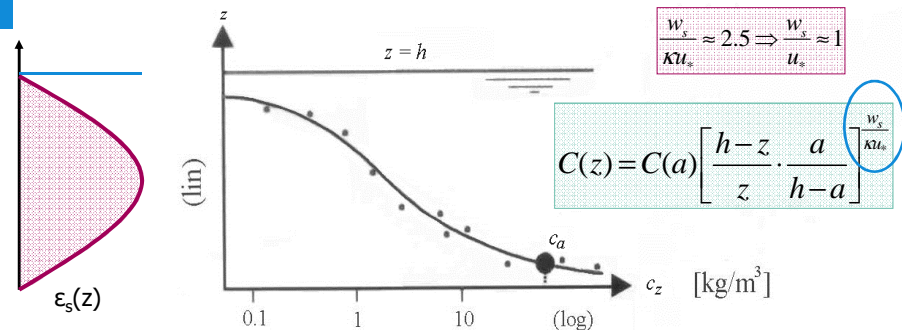
Diffusion or mixing coefficient:

- Related to eddy viscosity of the fluid
- Effects of wave boundary layer, mean current, wave breaking)

## 6-F Suspended load transport

### Time-averaged sediment concentration

Coarse/fine  
Bed load/suspended load  
Quasi-steady/time-lags



$$\varepsilon_s(z) = \kappa u_* \frac{z}{h} (h-z)$$

parabolic mixing (Rouse / Einstein):

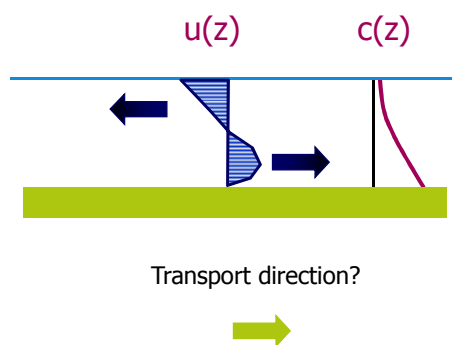
- infinitely small  $c$  at water level;  $\rightarrow 0$
- infinite  $c$  at bed level;  $\rightarrow \infty$
- s-curve at log. paper

## 6-F Suspended load transport

### What if depth-averaged current velocity is zero?

Combination of:

- Secondary current pattern (river bend, undertow profile)
- Uneven distribution of sediment over the water column

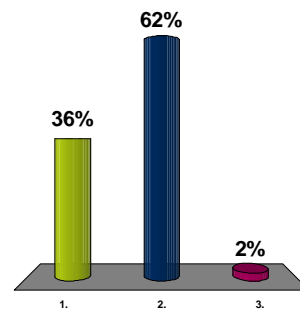


Net current-related sediment transport may occur even for a zero depth-averaged velocity

## 6-F Suspended load transport

Which of the statements is correct? For small ratios of fall velocity over shear velocity (say smaller than 1), ...

1. ... a quasi-steady transport model is appropriate
- ✓ 2. ... suspended sediment transport is the dominant mode of transport
3. Abstain



## Exam questions 22 june 2010

The Rouse number is defined as  $\frac{w_s}{\kappa u_*}$  (with  $w_s$  is the sediment fall velocity,  $\kappa = 0.4$  is the von Karman constant and  $u_*$  is the shear velocity). Note that the shear velocity is related to the bed shear stress through  $\tau_b = \rho u_* |u_*|$ .

- b. [3] Assume a large Rouse number (say larger than 2.5). What is the dominant transport mode in this case? Explain your answer.
- c. [3] Discuss the validity of the above described quasi-steady approach for small and large Rouse numbers respectively.

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## 6-G Energetics approach

### Sediment transport proportional to the rate of energy dissipation

- First developed by Bagnold (1963, 1966) for rivers
- Underlying idea:
  - Certain amount of 'work' is required to keep the bed load moving and the suspended load at a certain height above the bed;
  - Fluid acts as a machine expending energy (ability to do work) at a prescribed efficiency rate to offset the work done in transporting sediment
  - Power (work done per unit time) = efficiency factor x dissipated fluid power (rate of energy dissipation)



## 6-G Energetics approach

### Down-slope bed load in uni-directional flow

Immersed weight bed load transport:

$$I_b = W U_b \cos \alpha$$

Frictional resistance for downslope transport:

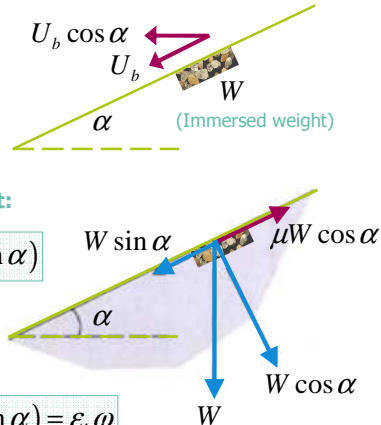
$$W (\mu \cos \alpha - \sin \alpha) = W \cos \alpha (\tan \phi - \tan \alpha)$$

Work done per unit time (power):

$$W \cos \alpha (\tan \phi - \tan \alpha) U_b = I_b (\tan \phi - \tan \alpha) = \varepsilon_b \omega$$

$$I_b = \varepsilon_b \frac{\omega}{(\tan \phi - \tan \alpha)}$$

dissipated fluid power /  
rate of energy dissipation



## 6-G Energetics approach

### Time-varying bed load transport

Uni-directional flow along downsloping bed:

$$I_b = \varepsilon_b \frac{\omega}{(\tan \phi - \tan \alpha)}$$

$\tan \alpha \rightarrow \tan \phi$ : avalanching or slumping

With dissipated fluid power due to bottom friction:

$$\omega = D_f = \tau_b u = \rho c_f |u| u^2$$

**Bailard:**  
more generalised

Bowen writes for cross-shore transport due to normally incident waves:

$$I_b(t) = \frac{\varepsilon_b \rho c_f u^3}{(\tan \phi - u/|u| \tan \alpha)}$$

$u$  positive seaward

$$I_s(t) = \frac{\varepsilon_s \rho c_f u^3 |u|}{(w_s - u \tan \alpha)}$$

$\tan \alpha \rightarrow w_s/u$ : autosuspension

## 6-G Energetics approach

Bailard's energetics formulation has components in direction of velocity and downslope

For slope aligned with velocity vector:

$$S(t) = \underbrace{C_1 u(t) |u(t)|^{n-1}}_{\text{quasi-steady response to time-varying flow}} + \underbrace{C_2 |u(t)|^m \tan \alpha}_{\text{response to downslope gravity force}}$$

- Bed load:  $n = m = 3$
- Suspended load:  $n=4; m=5$

Time-averaging:

$$\langle S_b \rangle \text{ is proportional to } \langle u |u|^2 \rangle \text{ and } \langle |u|^3 \rangle$$
$$\langle S_s \rangle \text{ is proportional to } \langle u |u|^3 \rangle \text{ and } \langle |u|^5 \rangle$$

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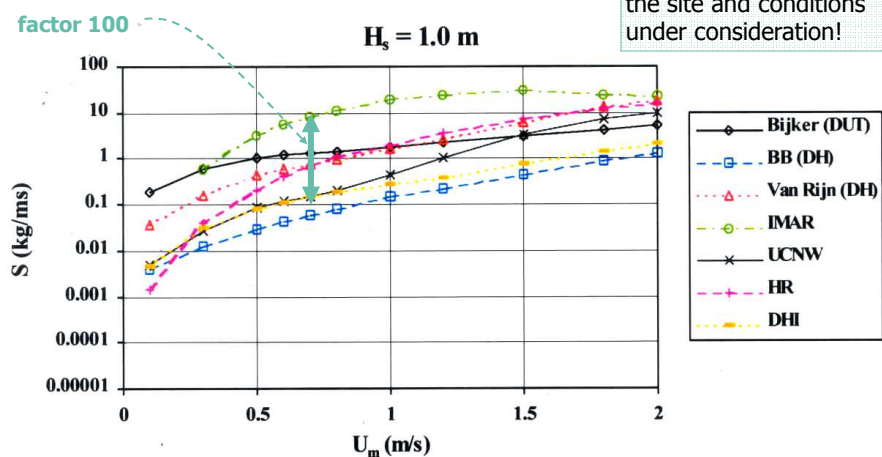
## 6-H Discussion

### Present stage of research

- Quantitative transport descriptions still largely empirical
- Often large discrepancies with measurements and large differences between models (especially for rippled beds)
- More complex models not necessarily better than simpler models (e.g. energetics approach)
- Important part of coastal engineering practice: how to deal with uncertainties?

## 6-G Discussion

### Considerable uncertainty if untuned models are used for absolute predictions for field conditions



## 6-H Discussion

### Dealing with uncertainty in morphodynamic computations

- Absolute predictions require calibration:
  - For the site and conditions under consideration
  - Prerequisite is correct qualitative behaviour
  - The more complex the model, the more calibration is required and the smaller the application range (data restrictions)
- What-if scenario's in morphodynamics modelling

## 6-H Discussion

### Energetics approach at several places in lecture notes:

- Section 7.5:
  - Decomposition of cross-shore transport into components due to mean flow, short wave skewness and bound long waves
  - Equilibrium shoreface shapes by balancing onshore and offshore transport
- Section 8.2.3:
  - Bulk longshore transport by applying the energetics concept to the littoral zone
- Section 9.7.2:
  - Decomposition of tide-averaged sediment transport into contributions of residual currents, M2, M4 and M6 tidal constituents