



NOTVASK project meeting

28.6.2019

Agenda

- Biofouling control in Norwegian aquaculture (WP1)
- Novel net cleaning technology – test results (WP2)
- Development of future net cleaners (WP3)
 - Recommendations for industrial up-scaling
 - Cost-Benefit analysis
 - Feasibility of automation
- The future of biofouling control in aquaculture (WP4)
- Input project partners: "What are current challenges related to biofouling?
How should biofouling be controlled in the coming years?"
- Final discussion

Aim of the NOTVASK project

To develop knowledge, technology and operational methods for cleaning of biofouled net pens.

→ Improvement of net cleaning with regard to

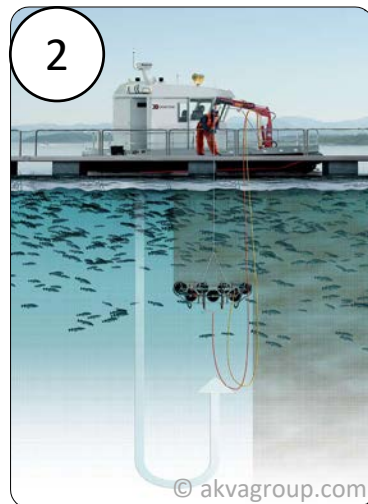
- Efficacy & frequency
- Energy and time efficiency
- Reduction of net and coating abrasion
- Reduction of emissions that affect fish health and the environment
- Compliance with the Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) Salmon Standard



Overview



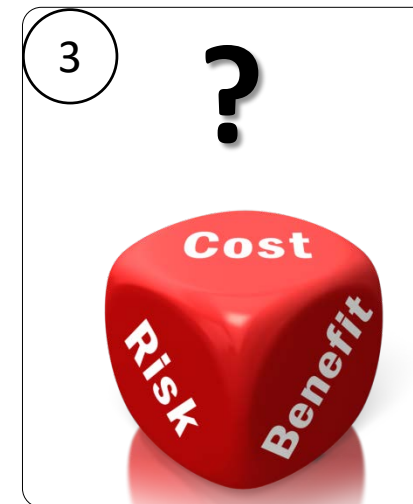
Survey of existing technologies and methods



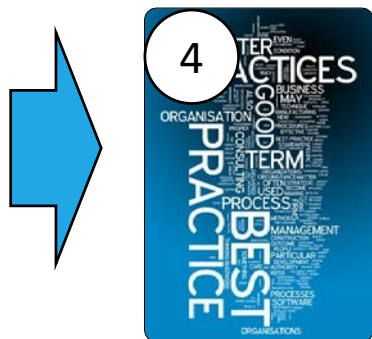
Testing of 4 alternative net cleaning methods

Comparison of high-pressure cleaning to technology based on

- Low-pressure
- Cavitation
- Suction
- Induction heating



Cost/benefit analysis and concept studies for **industrial up-scaling**



Best practice guide

that guides the selection of the most suitable biofouling management concept = combination of net material, coating, cleaning equipment and cleaning frequency

WP 1: Biofouling in Norwegian aquaculture

WP1: Survey of existing technologies and methods

Aim: Detailed mapping of existing technology and methods,
and identifying challenges and needs for improvement.

→ Survey of farm personnel & regional managers

74 Marine Harvest sites were contacted between Sept 2015 and June 2016.
Participants from 51 sites delivered answers (= 69 % participation)

43 questions on

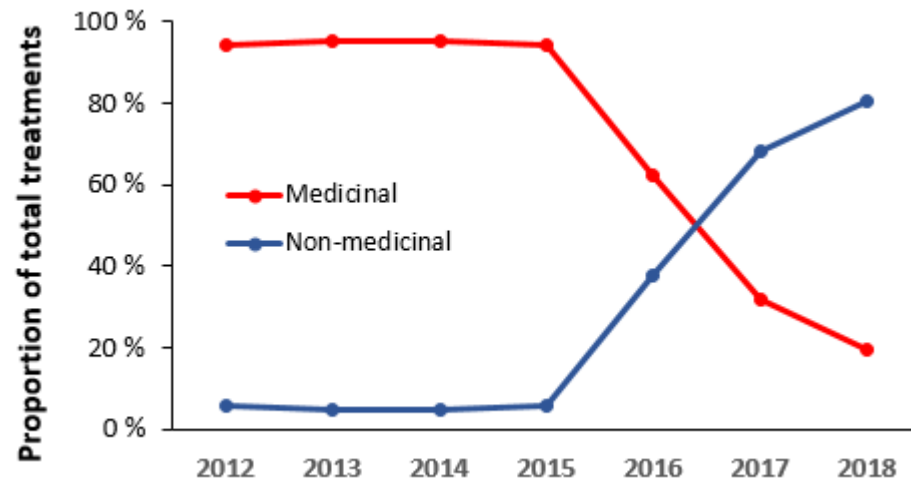
- Background data → site and the management etc.
- Sea lice situation and management
- Biofouling situation and management
- Fish gill health status

Sea lice

Treatment type:

(sites have used this method)

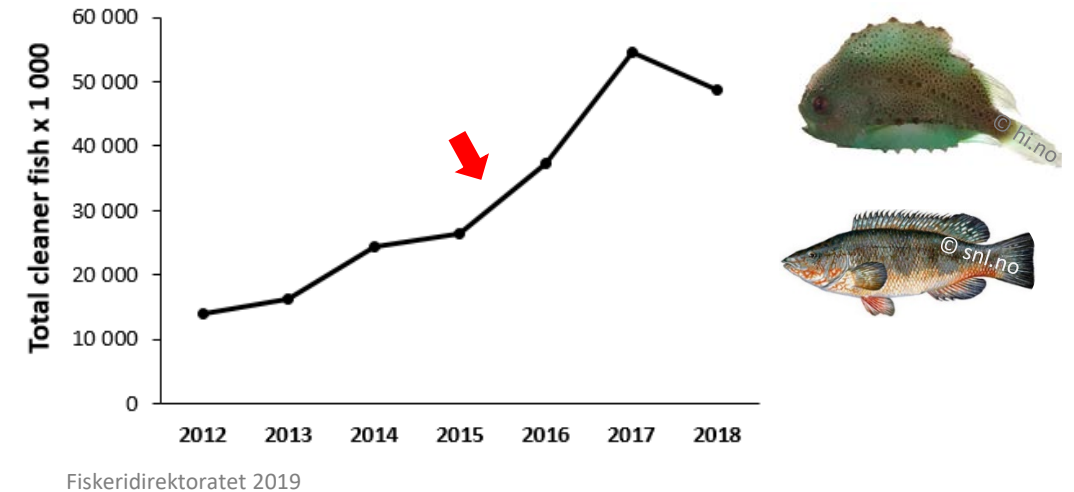
- 90 % medicinal bath
- 45 % medicinal feed
- 20 % non-medical delousing



Hjeltnes et al. 2019

Cleaner fish

88 % use cleaner fish (South: 100 %, North: 40 %)



The **main challenges** with cleaner fish are:

- **Survival (69 %)**
- Prevent that they feed on biofouling (29 %)
- Correct feeding (17 %)

Net coating

Copper coatings are used...:

- On all nets (58 %)
- On some nets (8 %)
- Not in use (34 %)



Increase of ASC certified sites

2015: 5 % (47 sites)
2018: 14 % (142 sites)

Exchange of nets:

86 % change nets *once* during the production cycle

→ On average after 10 months

← Net exchange is more common again!

Net cleaning

Main reason for net cleaning:
cleaner fish performance

First cleaning to take place:

With copper: 16 weeks

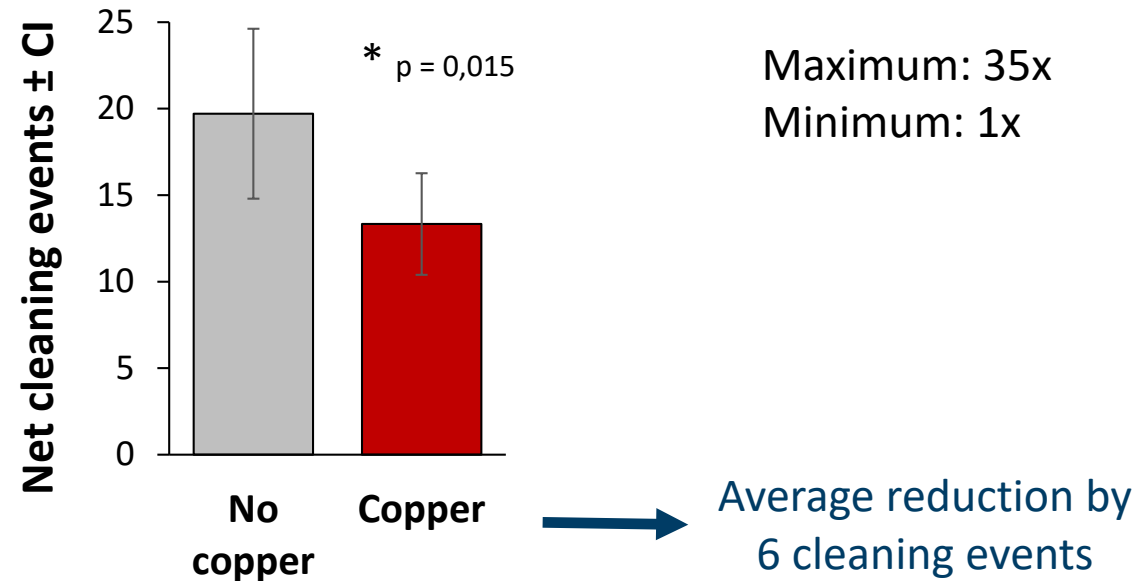
Without copper: 11 weeks

(Range: 2 weeks to 1 year)

Average cleaning timer (per cage): 5 hrs

→ 1-2 hrs

Average cleaning events per grow-out phase



! Only 3 sites collect information on the coating performance during the production cycle

→ Time it takes before the first cleaning

→ Cleaning interval

Effects of cleaning on fish welfare

Reaction to cleaning:

81 % report a reaction in the **cleaned cage**

43 % report a reaction in the **neighbour cage**

73 % report to alter the feeding regime

→ 44 % stop feeding

→ 29 % reduce feeding

→ Reactions include

- Reduced appetite (45 %)
- Jumping (37 %)
- Stress (32 %)
- Gill irritation (5 %)
- Avoidance behaviour (5 %)

➤ **Hydroids can cause gill damage** (Bloecher et al. 2018)

➤ **Net cleaning can lead to elevated stress levels in fish**
(Stene 2019)

WP 2: Testing of alternative net cleaning methods

WP 2: Testing of 4 cleaning technologies

Chosen technologies:

1. Induction-based cleaning
2. Low-pressure cleaning
3. Cavitation cleaning
4. Suction cleaning
5. High-pressure cleaning

Chosen net and coating types:

1. Uncoated nylon
2. Nylon + Notorius A (regular copper)
3. Nylon + Notorius 3 (copper + omadine)

↑ BF should be easier to clean off

Experiments:

1. Cleaning efficacy
2. Effects on cleaning waste
3. Effects on net strength
4. Effects on coating integrity
5. Energy + time consumption
6. Compatibility with ASC standard
7. Cleaning frequency / regrowth ✗
8. Collection efficacy ✗

WP 2: Induction-based cleaning

Induction heating is successful against blue mussels

Metal net with
blue mussel fouling



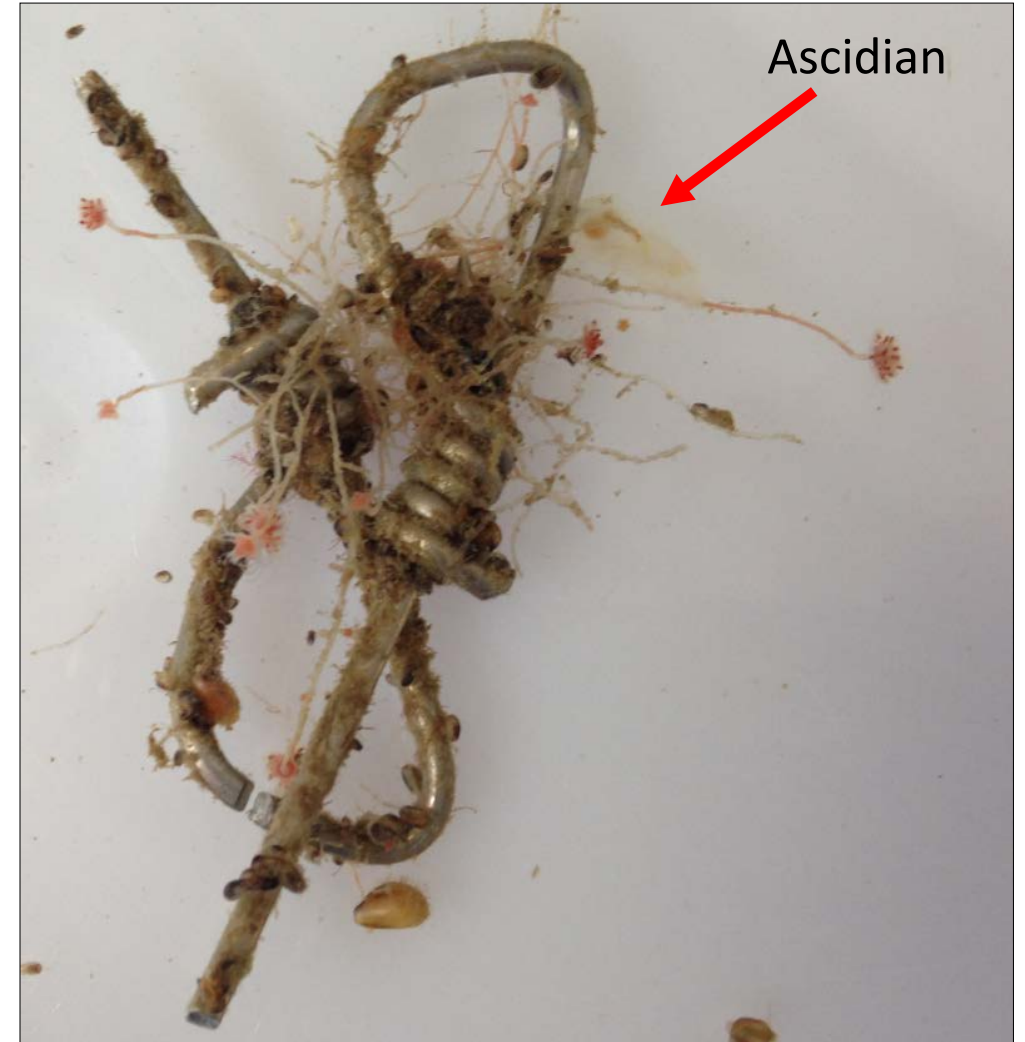
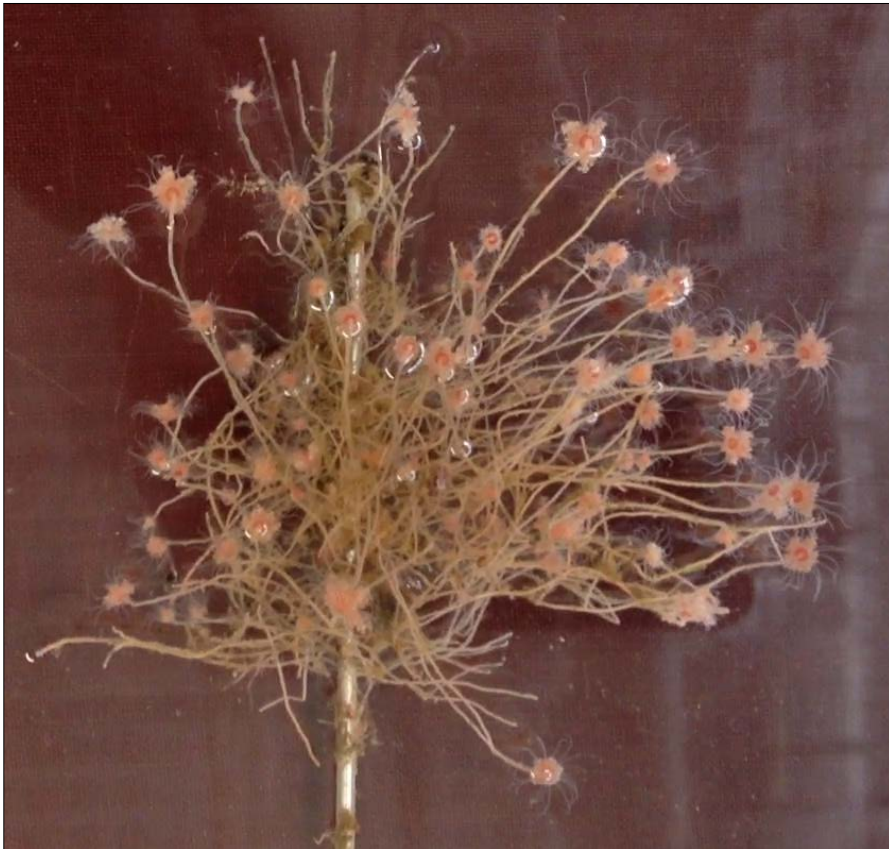
Best effect after
3 s exposure



- Mussels were "cooked" and fell off the metal or could be scraped off easily
- It seems the heat destroys the byssus thread (Mussels may fall off later, if not immediately.)

Treatment of other foulers was not successful

Hydroids



WP 2: Induction-based cleaning

Conditions for induction heat to be successful:

- Close contact/short distance between magnet and net
 - High iron content in the net
 - Young (=small) biofouling that sits close to the heat source (= net)
- Extensive testing with water proof unit in sea water needed

WP 2: Testing of

- High pressure
- Low pressure
- Cavitation
- Suction

Effects on

- Cleaning efficacy
- Cleaning waste
- Net strength
- Coating integrity

Experimental set-up

High pressure: 220 bar (220 L/min)

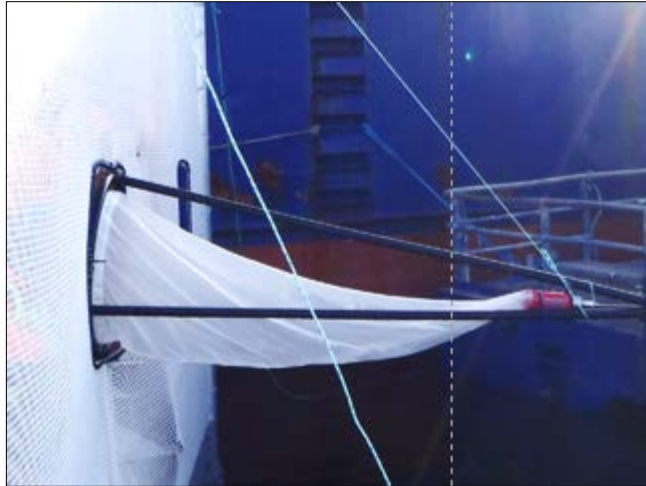
Low pressure: 80 bar (140 L/min)



Aluminium frame



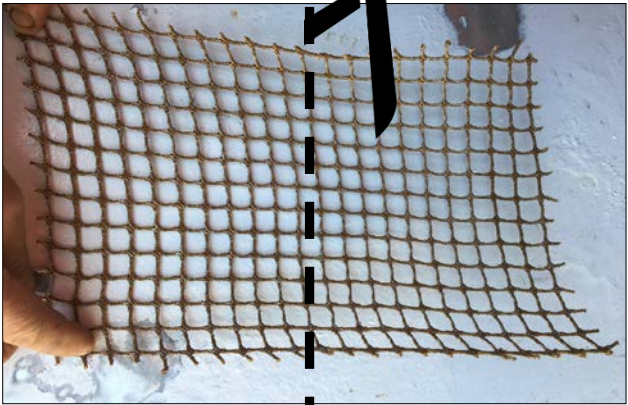
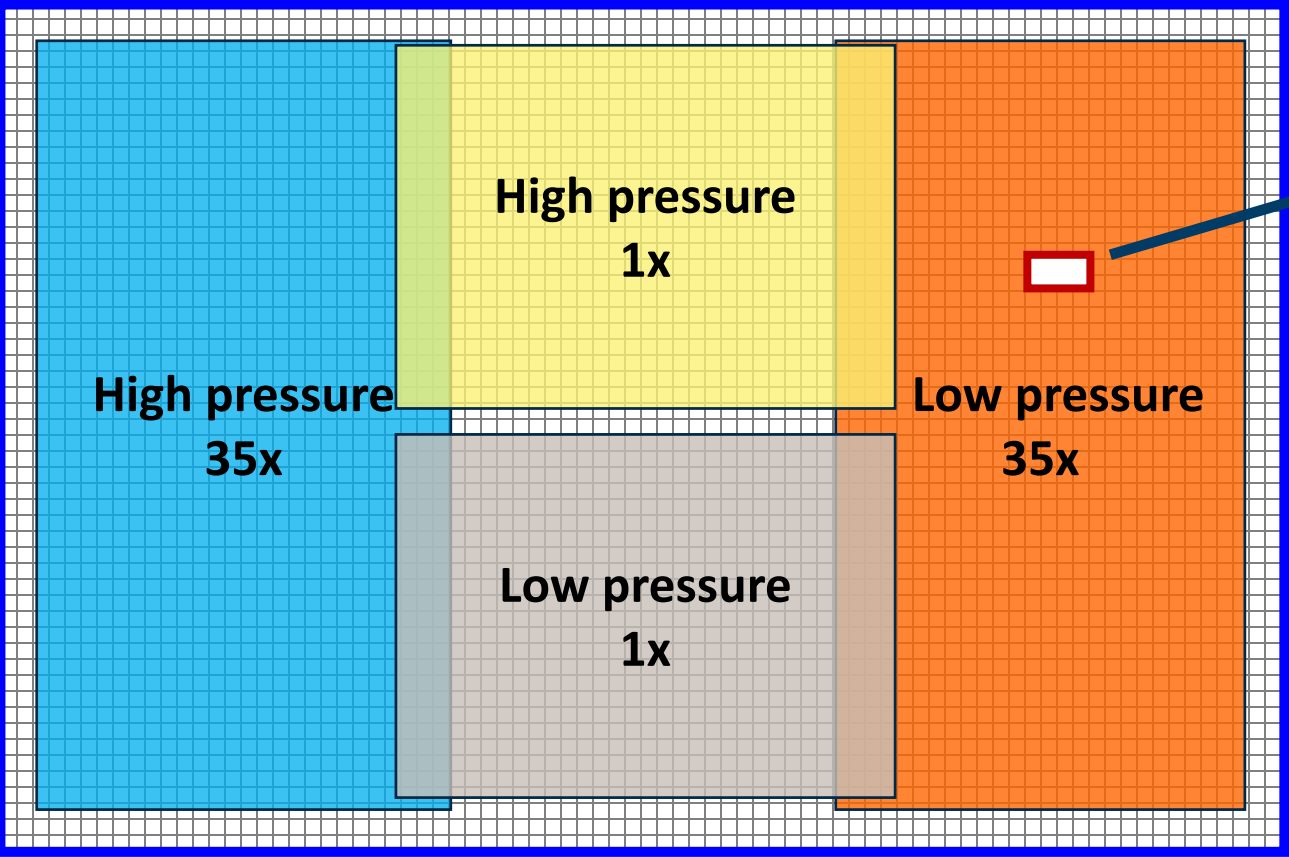
Washing of fouled samples + collection of cleaning waste



Cleaning waste was separated into 3 groups:

- Hydroid colonies → small or large (*20 mm), few or many (*10 polyps)
- Particles ≥ 2.4 mm
- Particles < 2.4 mm

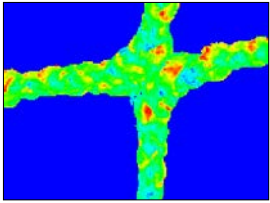
Analysis of coating integrity and net strength



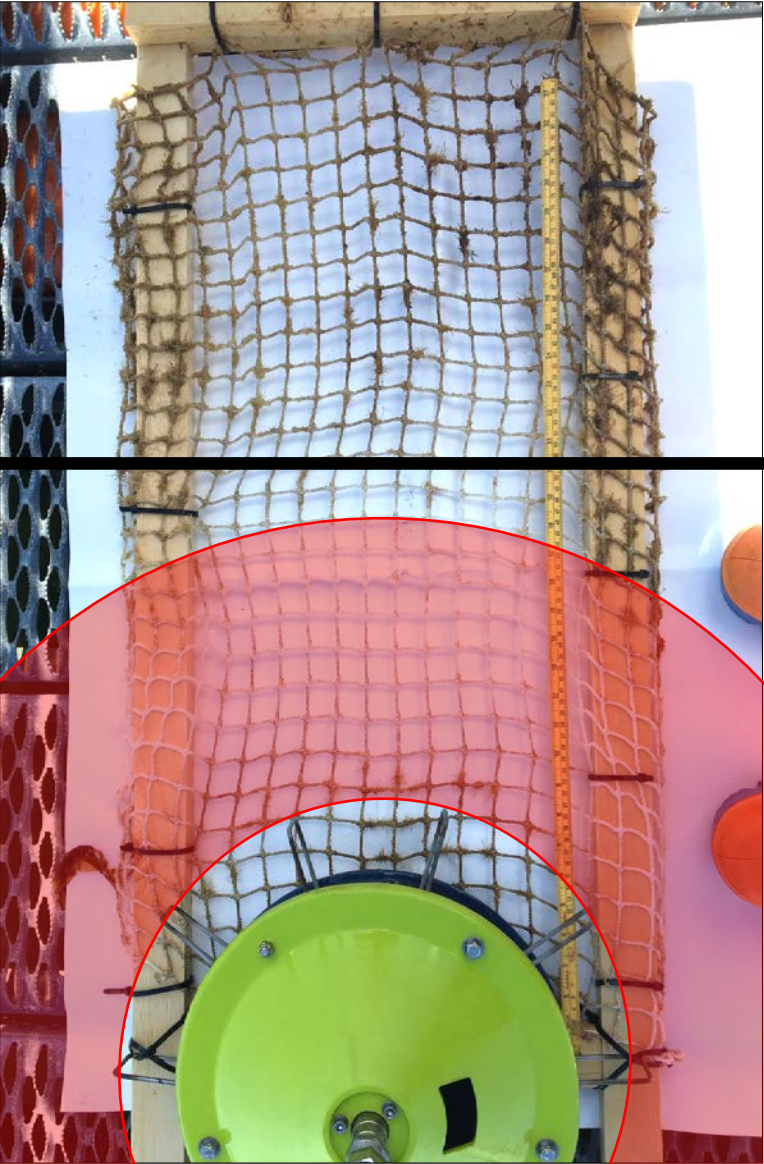
Testing of
breaking strength



Analysis of
coating integrity

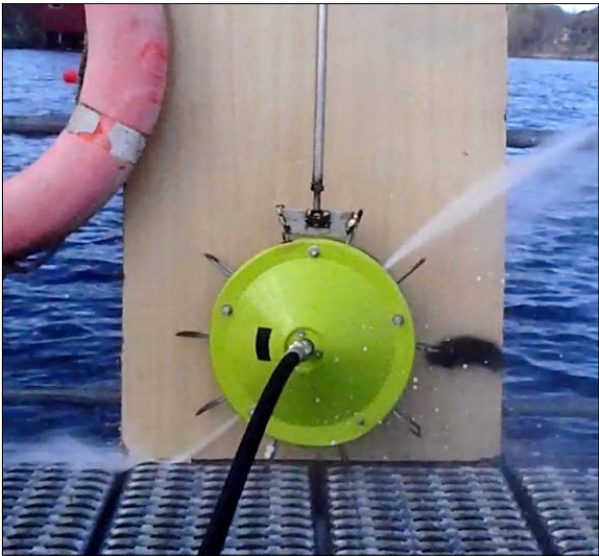
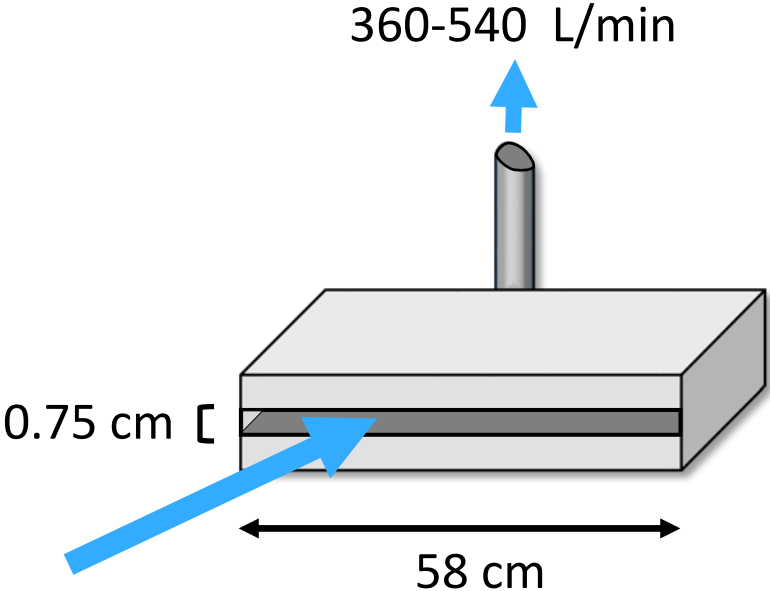


Cavitation & Suction

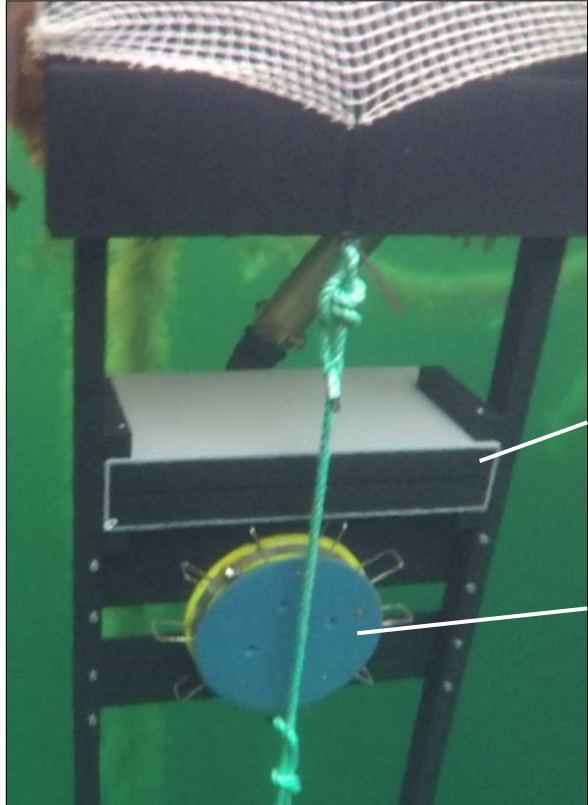
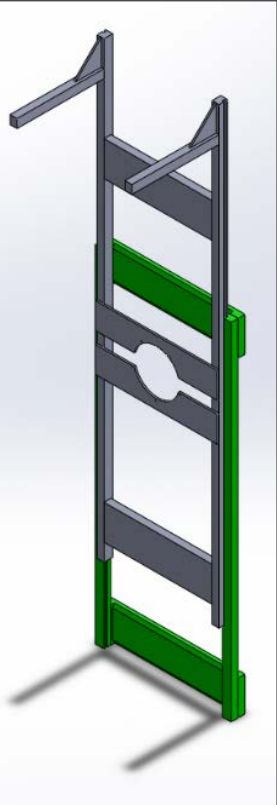


193 bar
46 L/min

Cleaning range
ø 90 cm



Cavitation & Suction



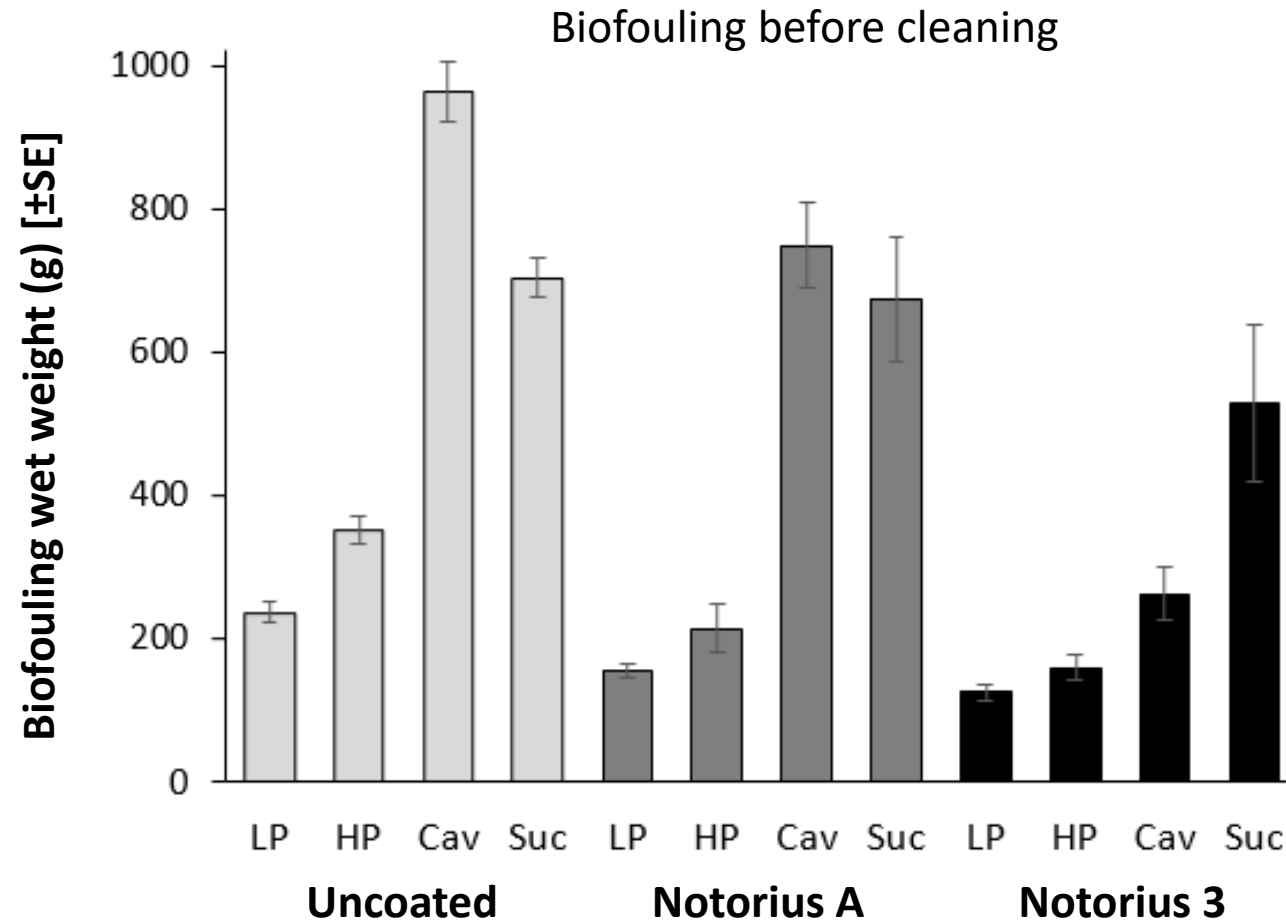
Suction cleaner

Cavitation cleaner



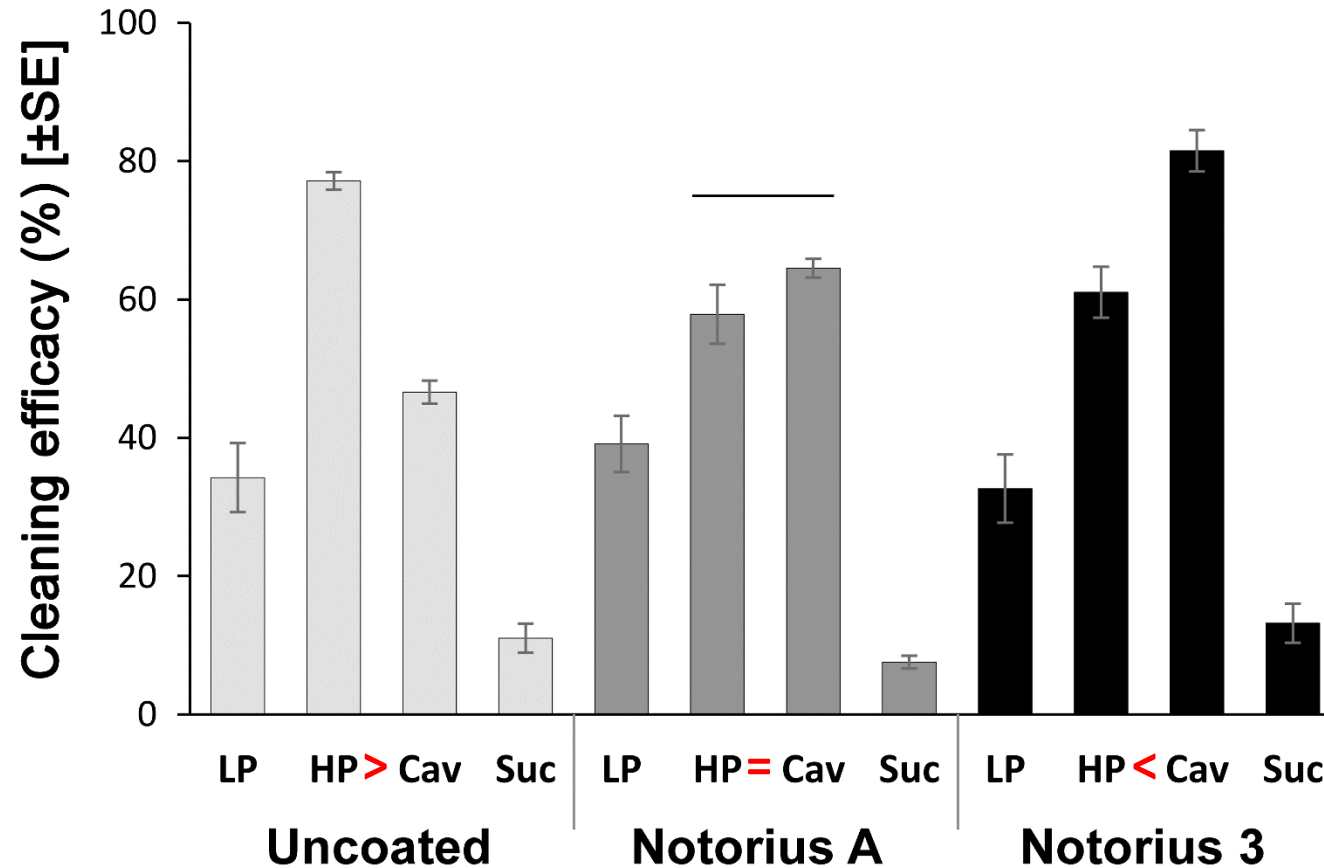
WP 2: Results

Biofouling growth



- **Challenge:** high variability in biofouling levels between samples

Cleaning efficacy

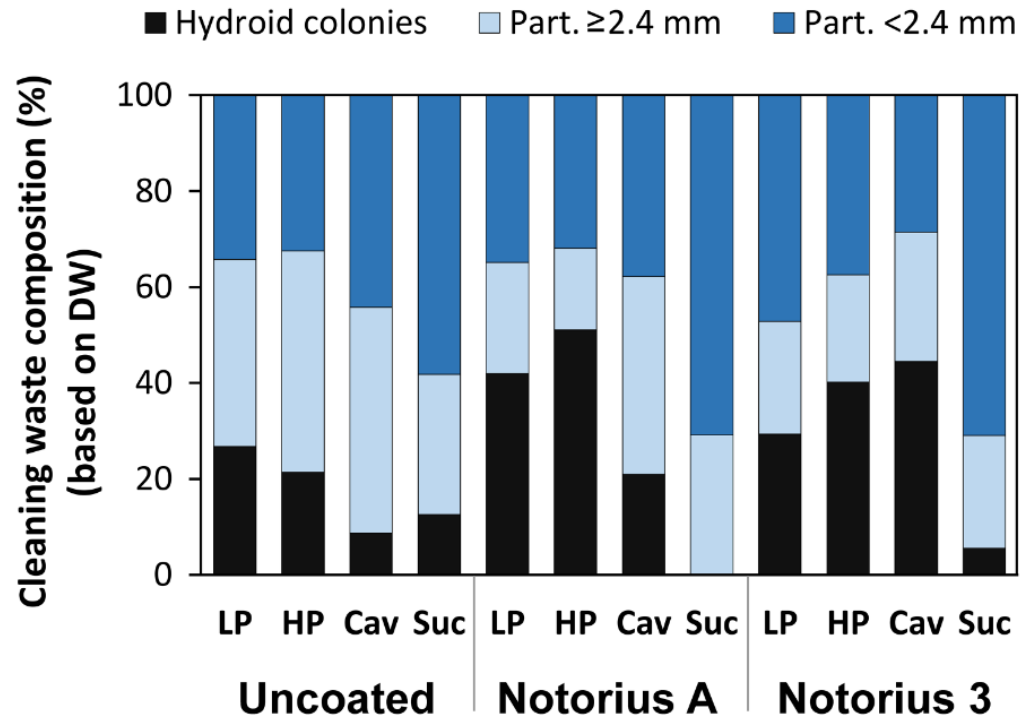


- Cavitation has similar efficacy to HP (maybe even better since there was more biofouling growth?)
- Low pressure has lower efficacy
- Suction cleaning did not work

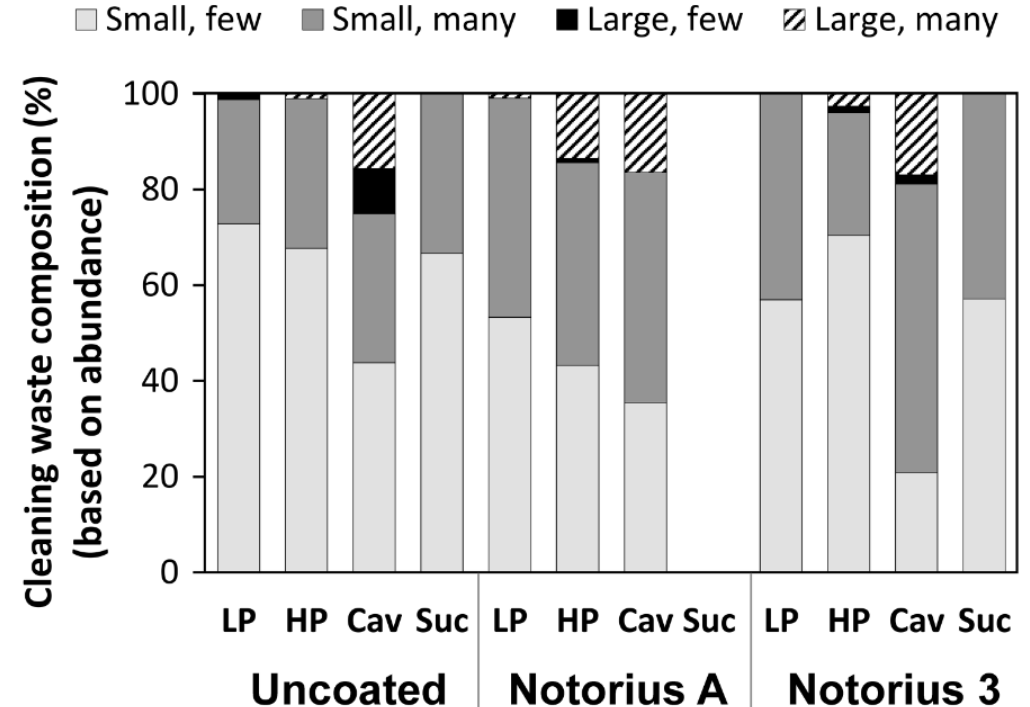
All samples differ significantly within net types, with exception of HP and Cav when cleaning Notorius A.

Cleaning waste particles

a) Particle category



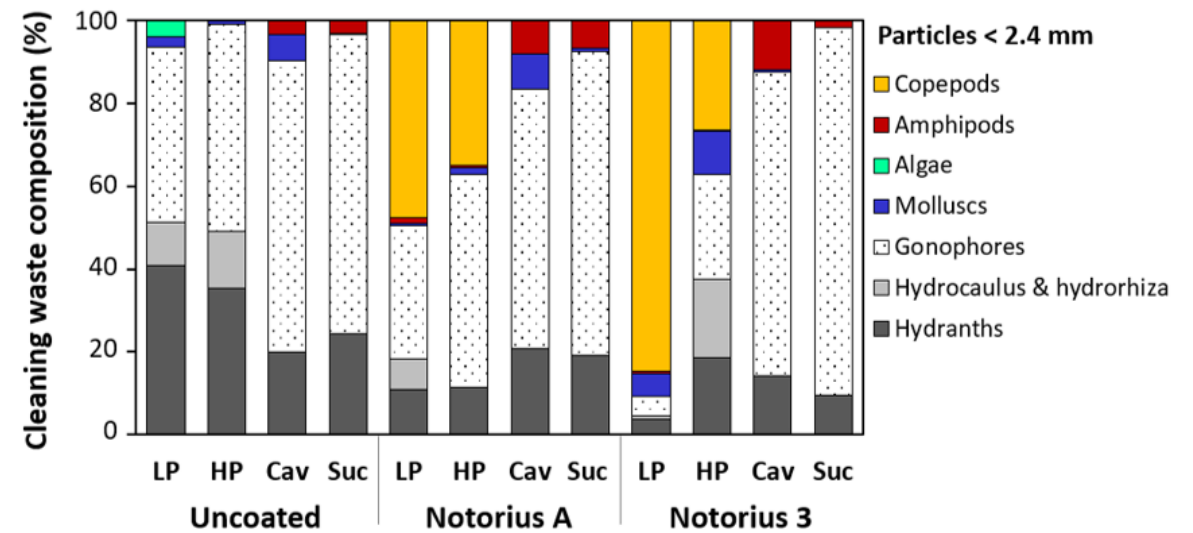
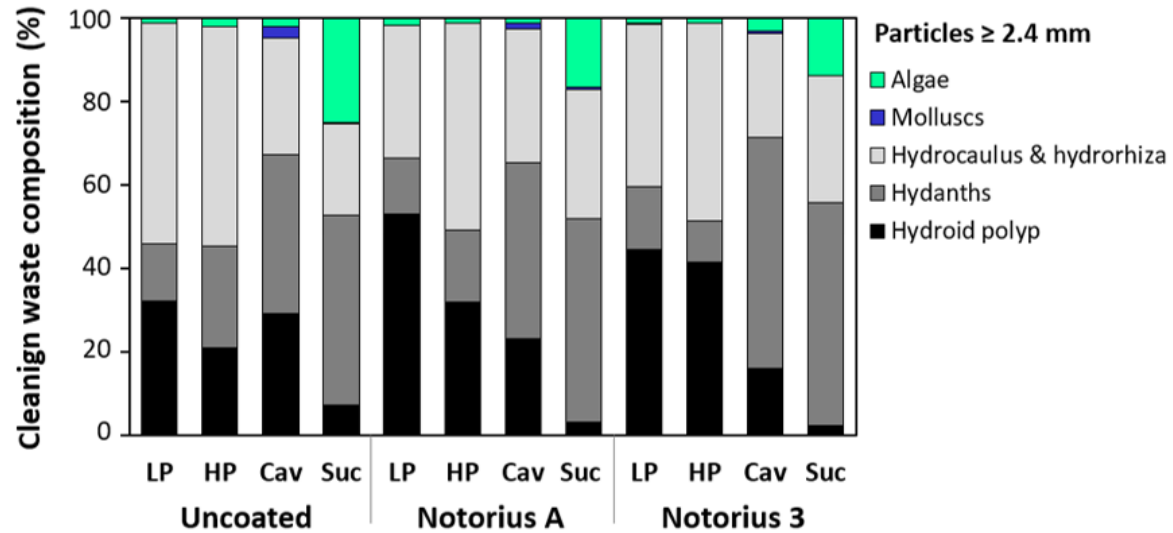
b) Hydroid colonies



- No large differences in cleaning waste composition
- Suction cleaning waste did not contain hydroid colonies
→ low cleaning efficacy or destruction during cleaning?

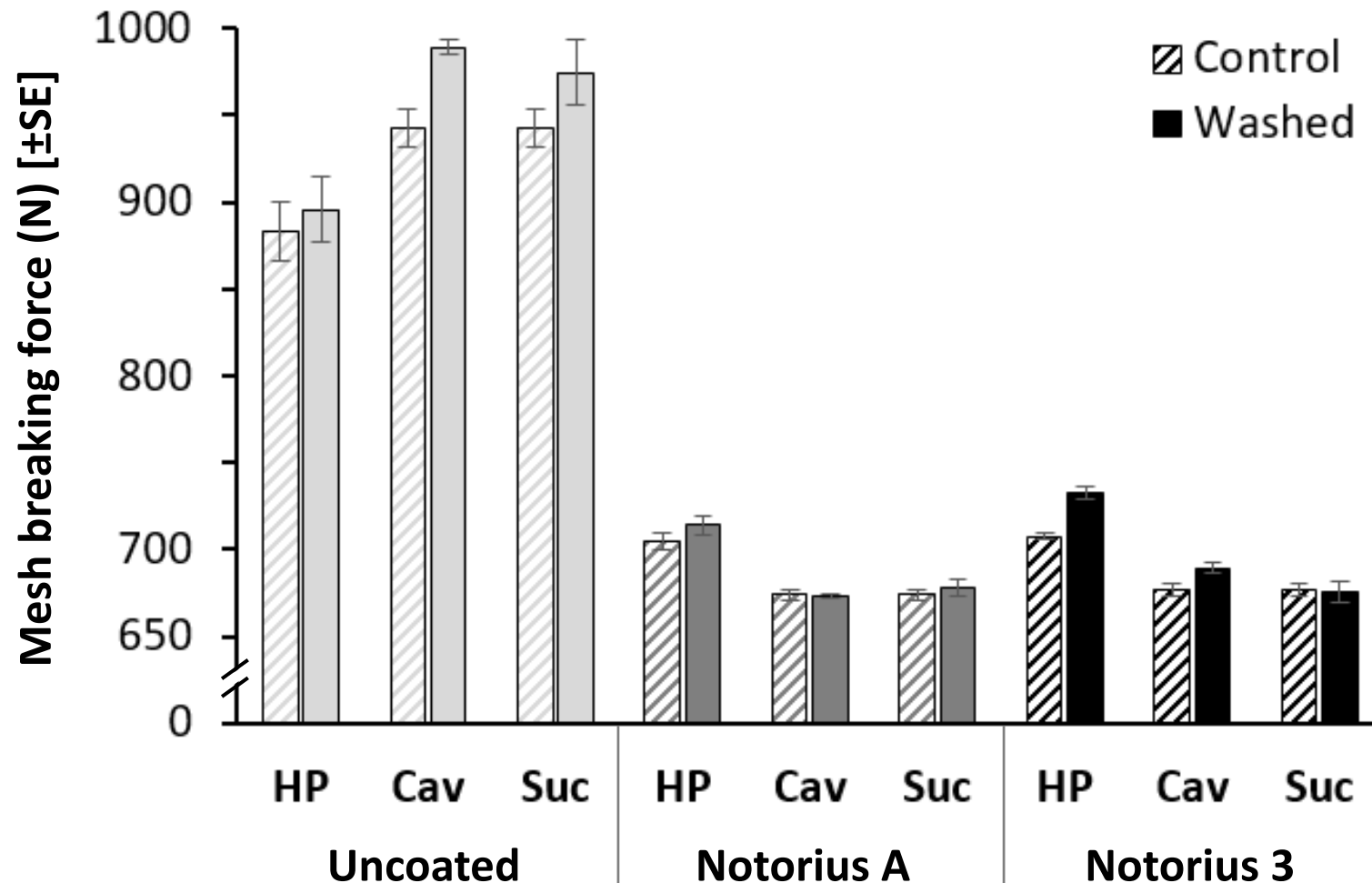
! Collection was not very efficient

Cleaning waste particles



➤ No clear patterns visible

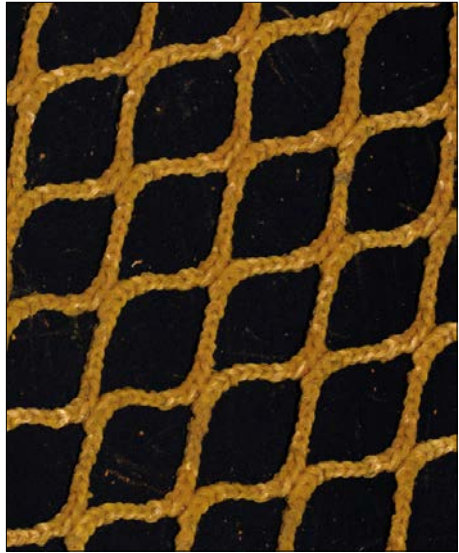
Net strength



- None of the cleaning technologies reduced net strength compared to the control
- Increase in net strength connected to the removal of the coating

Coating integrity

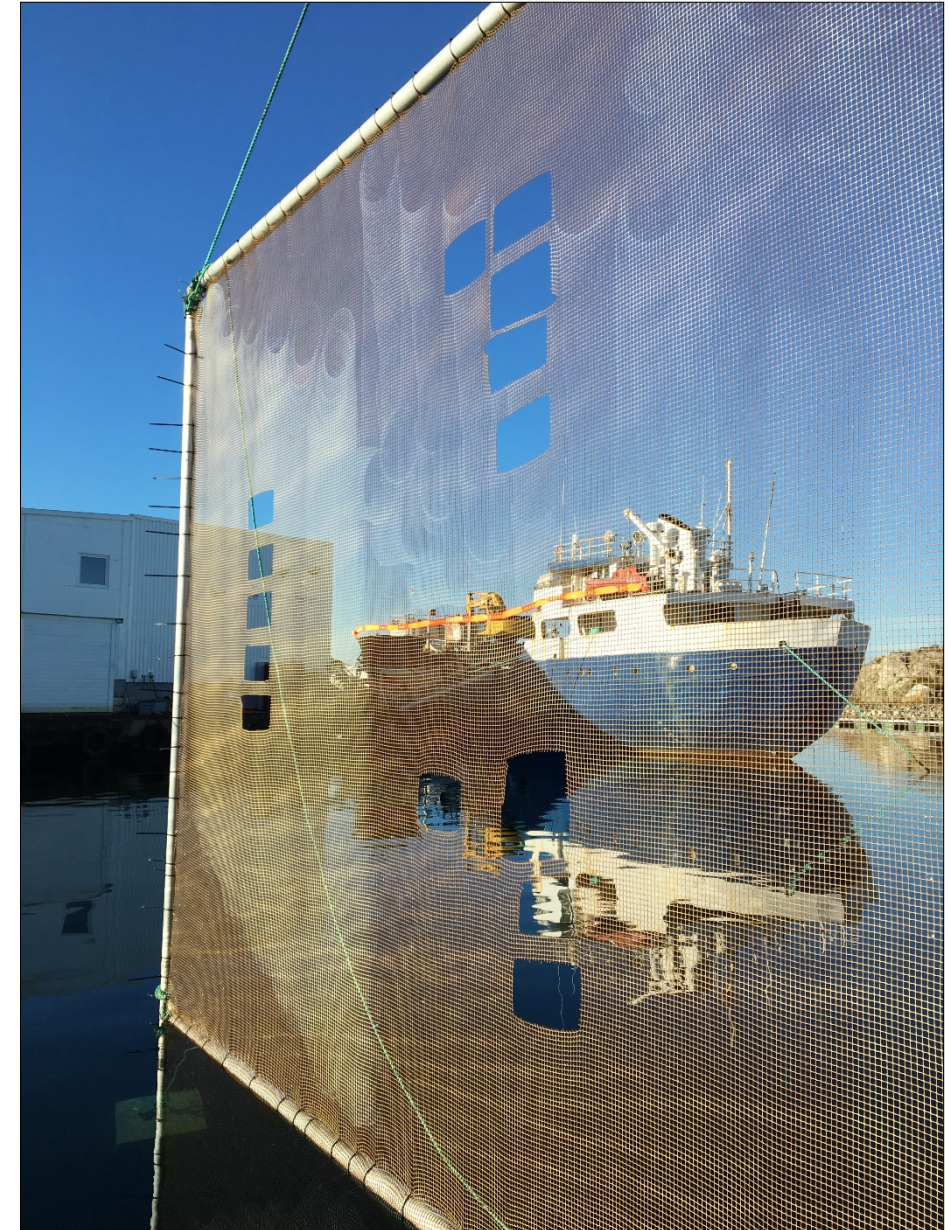
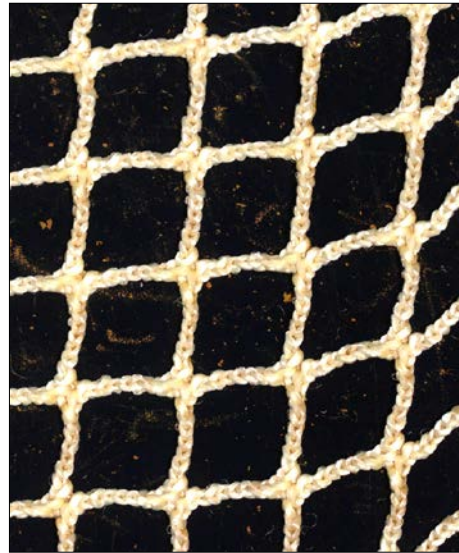
Unwashed



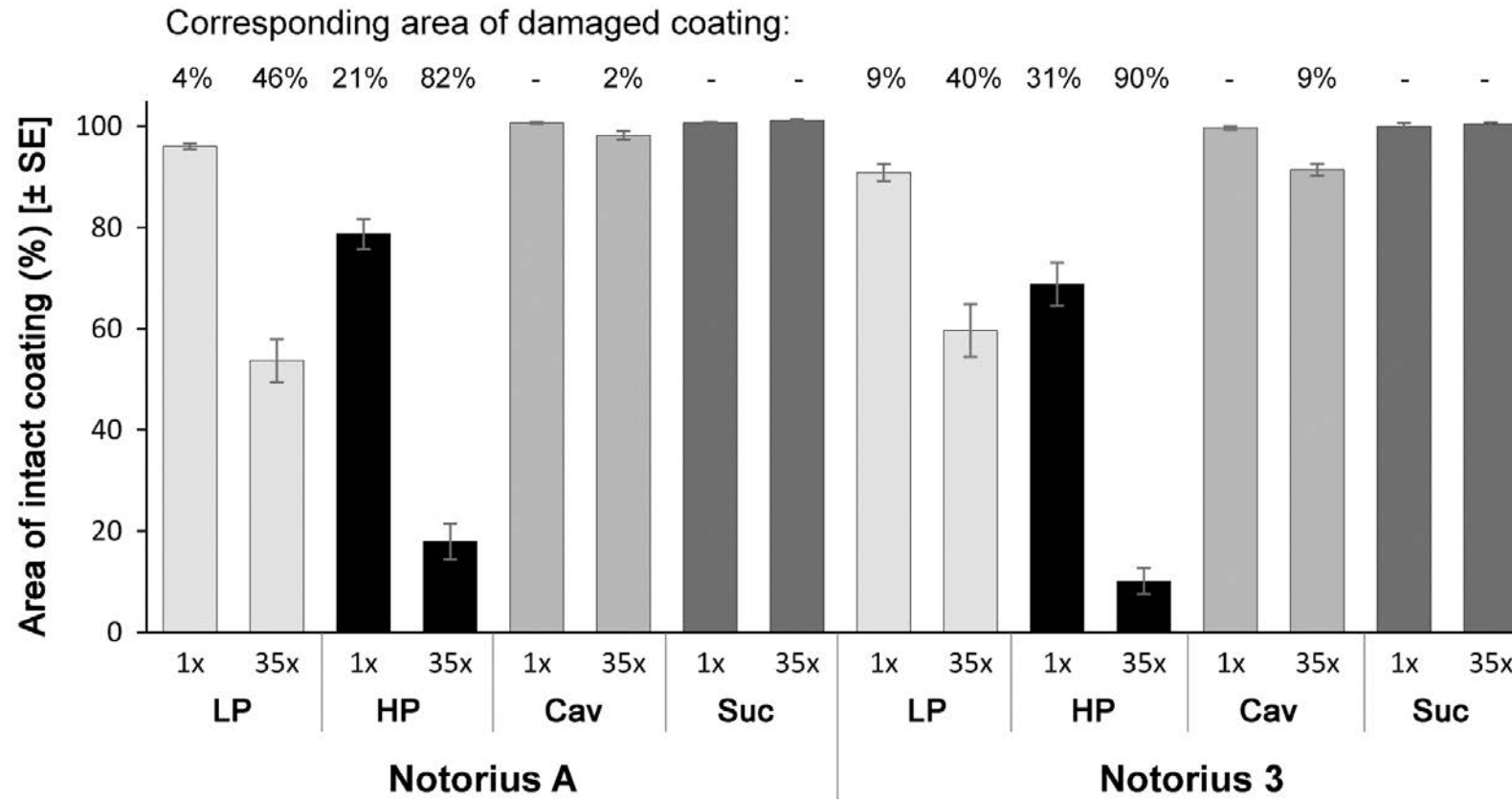
HP washed 1 x



HP washed 35 x



Coating integrity



- HP is most damaging!
- LP does lead to damage
- Single cavitation or suction cleaning do not lead to measurable damage

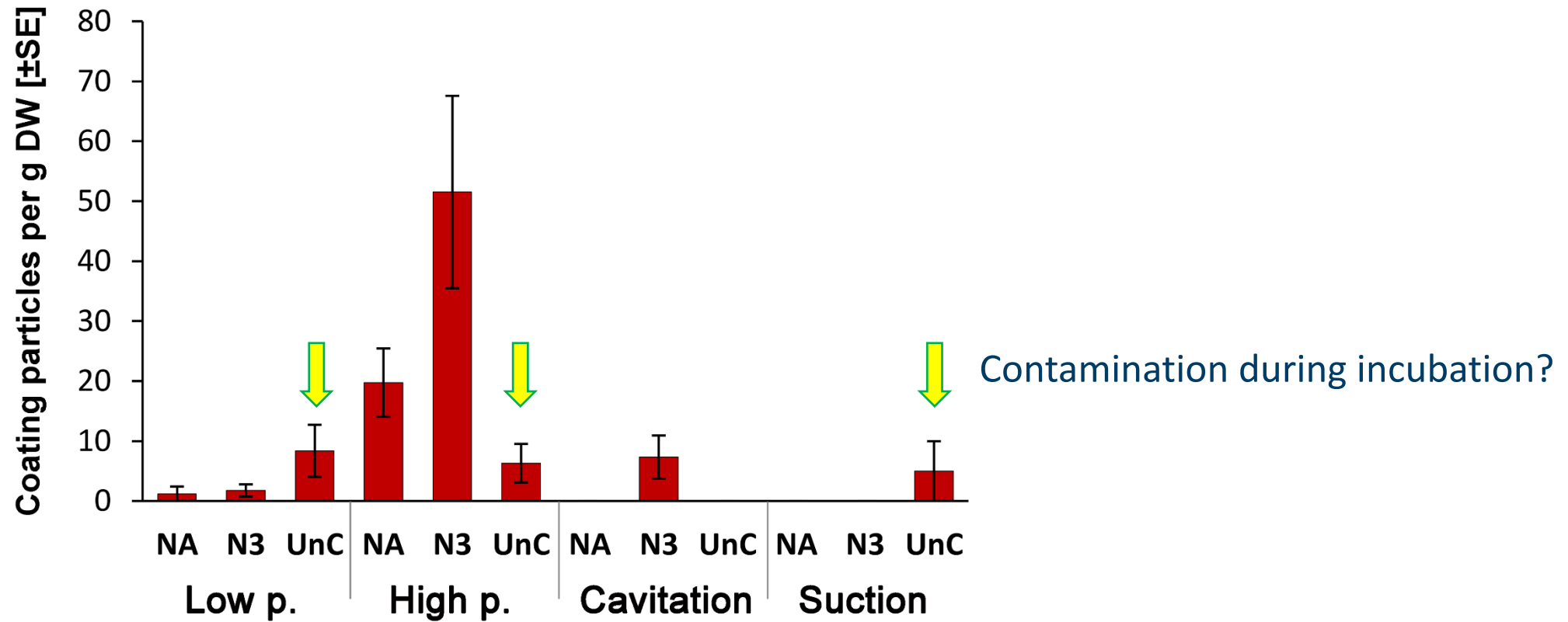
Maximum damage after single cleaning:

HP: 53 % Cav: 2 %

LP: 19 % Suc: 4 %

Copper particles

- Most particles were collected after high pressure cleaning



WP 2 – Summary

Induction heat

- Interesting but needs more testing

Cavitation cleaning

- Similar (or better?) cleaning efficacy than high pressure cleaning
- No negative impact on net strength
- Almost no damage to the coating (Cav: 2% vs. HP: 53% max. damage after single cleaning)

**Effective and gentle
alternative to
high pressure cleaning!**

Low pressure cleaning

- Lower efficacy than high pressure cleaning
- No negative impact on net strength
- Considerable damage to the coating (max. 19%)

Suction cleaning

- Very low cleaning efficacy

WP3 - Development of future net cleaners

Content

- WP3 – summary of findings and activities
- Recommendations for industrial up-scaling
- Results from cost-benefit analysis
- Feasibility of automation
- Recommendations for further work

WP 3 – summary of findings and activities

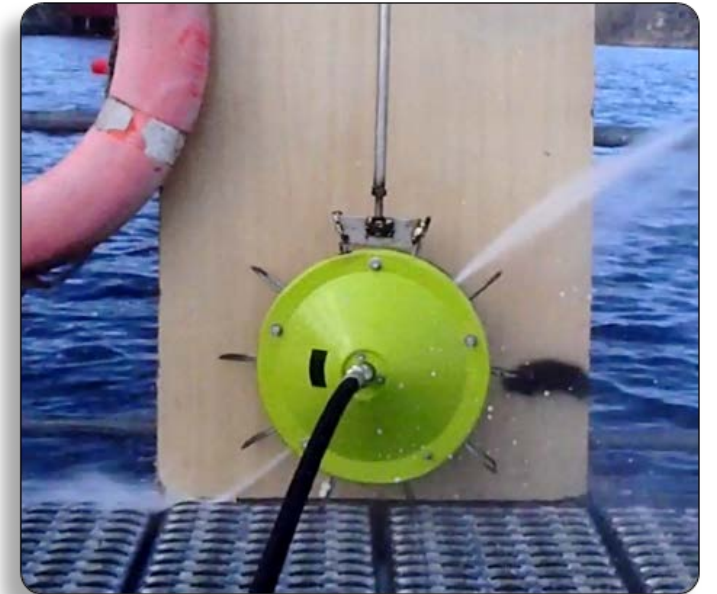
WP2 results: Cavitation cleaning may offer a less abrasive yet similarly effective alternative to high-pressure cleaning → give grounds for industrial up-scaling

- 1) **Industrial up-scaling** of cavitation net cleaner feasible. Design, arrangement, power supply, operational methods etc. similar to existing HP cleaners.
- 2) In the **cost-benefit analysis** cavitation cleaning is compared with HP cleaning. Results shows that cavitation cleaning will be competitive to HP cleaning.
- 3) **Increased level of automation** is beneficial both for existing and future cleaning technologies

Recommendations for industrial up-scaling

Content

- Cavitation cleaning: concept, principle and functioning
- Cavitation vs. HP cleaning: principal differences
- Industrial up-scaling: design, arrangement, cleaning speed, power requirement, operational methods



Cavitation phenomenon

- Cavitation is a phenomenon in which rapid changes of pressure in a liquid lead to the formation of small vapor-filled cavities ("cavitation bubbles"), in places where the pressure is relatively low (e.g. due to increased flow rate)
- When subjected to higher pressure (decreased flow rate), these **cavitation bubbles collapse** and can generate an intense shock wave.

$$\frac{1}{2}\rho_L v^2 + p = \text{const.}$$

Bernoulli's equation

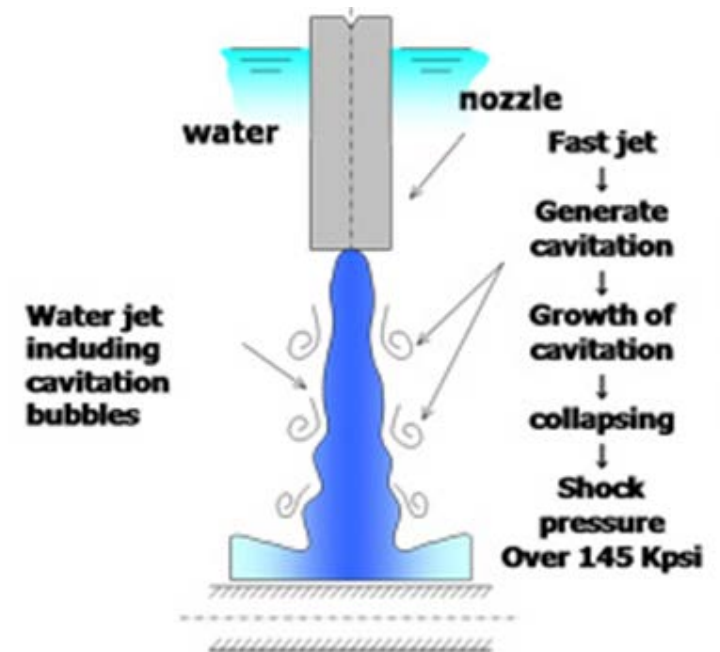
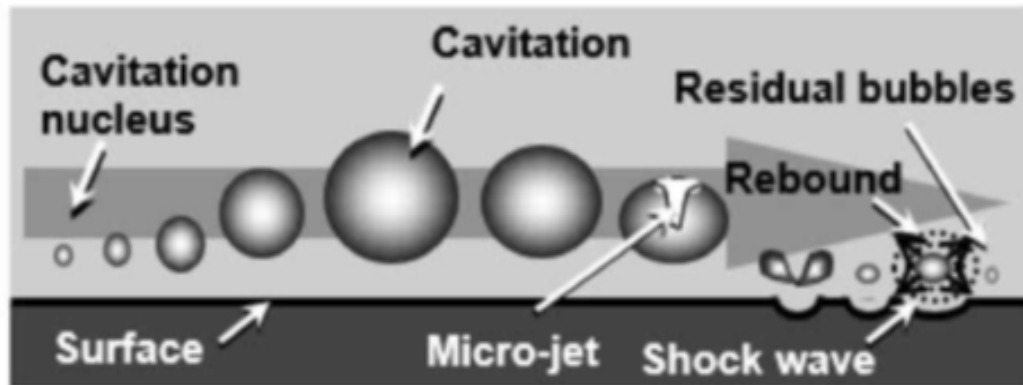
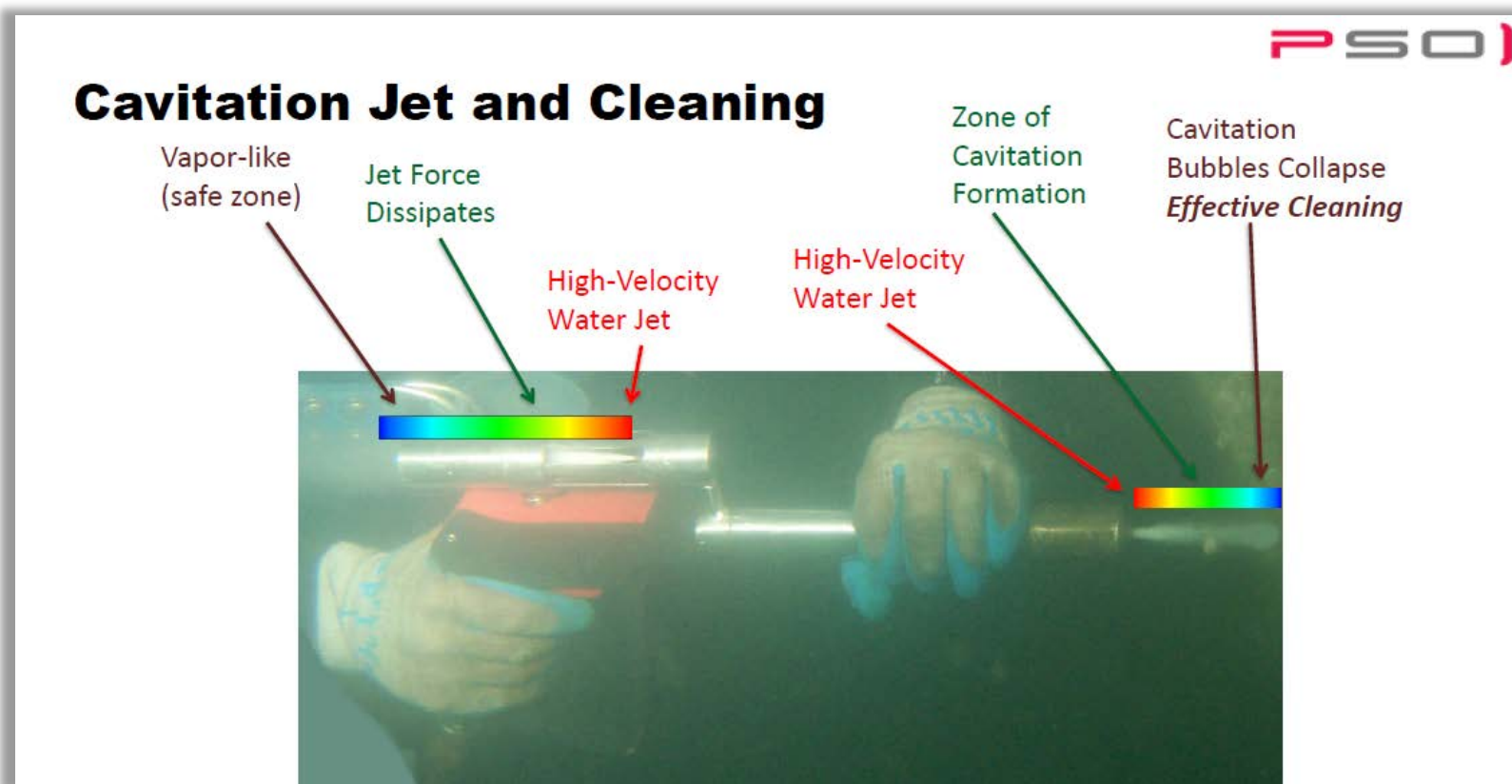


Figure: Mitsubishi Nuclear Energy Systems



- If the cavitation bubbles collapses near to a solid surface, this micro shock wave may cause undesirable erosion of metallic materials, but this release of energy may also be used for cleaning.
- By using specially designed nozzles in a high pressure water jet system it is possible to control the formation and collapse of the cavitation bubbles.

Cavitation intensity and cleaning efficiency

- The cavitation intensity (i.e. cleaning efficiency) depends on several parameters, the key factors are the **nozzle geometry/configuration** and **pressure differences**.
- The **cavitation number** has a strong influence on the cavitation intensity (distribution and strength of the bubbles) and influences the jet spreading angle.
- Cavitation depends on the actual pressure in the flowfield, hence there is no single empirical value for below which cavitation is guaranteed and above which it is not possible.

$$\sigma = \frac{p - p_v}{\frac{1}{2} \rho_L v^2} = \frac{p_2 - p_v}{p_1 - p_2} \approx \frac{p_2}{p_1}$$

Cavitation number: σ

Upstream pressure: p_1

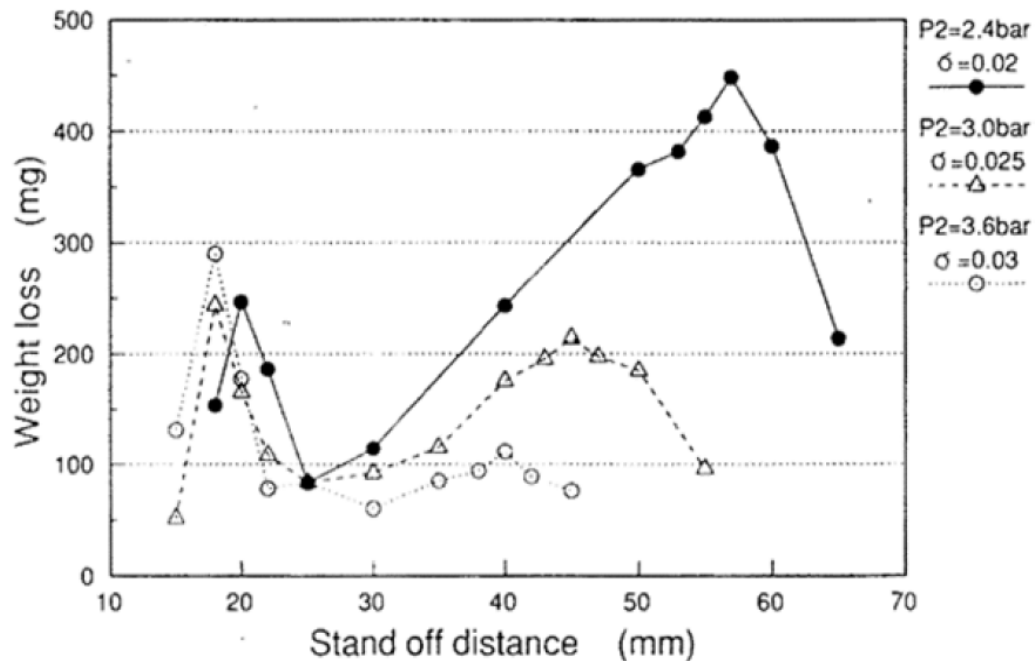
Downstream pressure: p_2

Cavitation intensity and cleaning efficiency

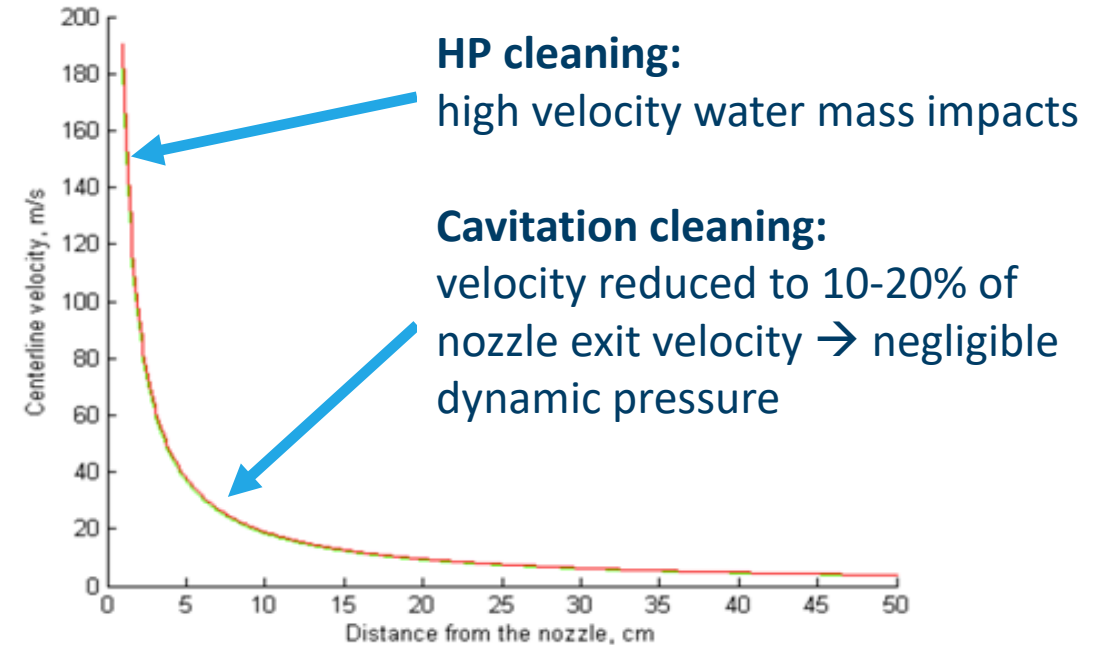
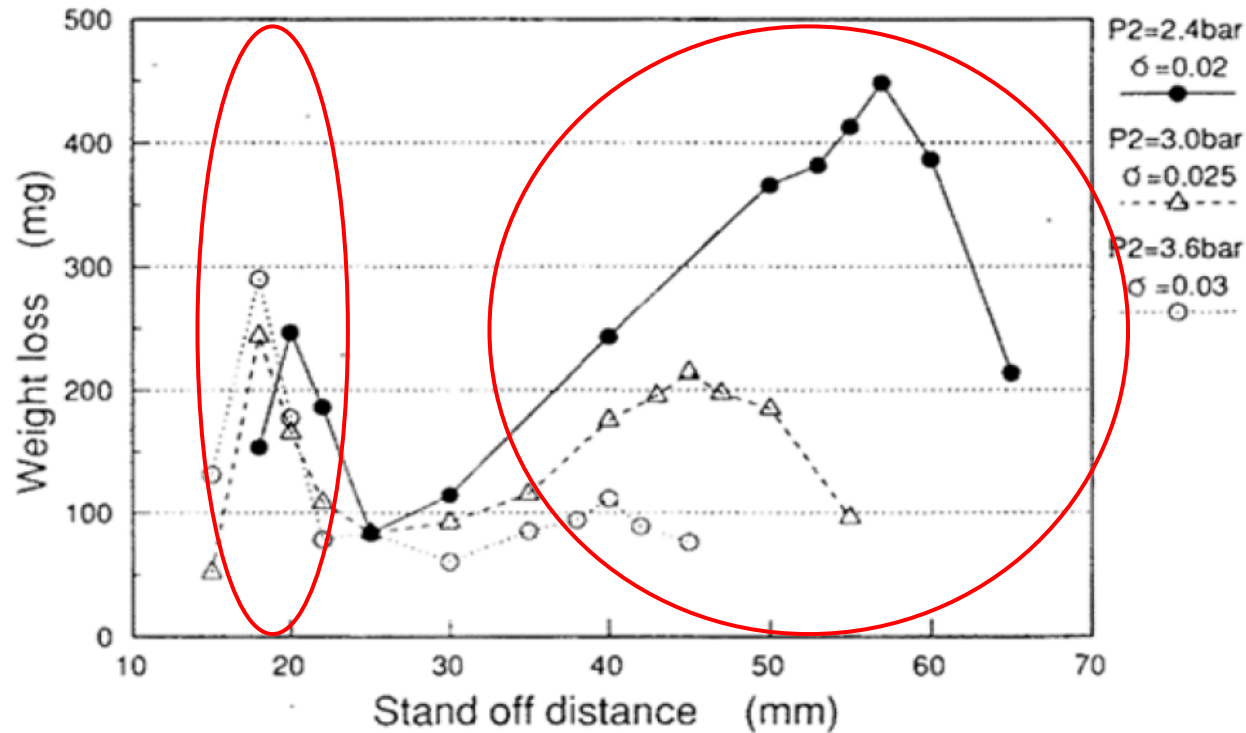
$$\sigma = \frac{p - p_v}{\frac{1}{2} \rho_L v^2} = \frac{p_2 - p_v}{p_1 - p_2} \approx \frac{p_2}{p_1}$$

Cavitation number: σ
Upstream pressure: p_1
Downstream pressure: p_2

- Cavitating flow with a **small cavitation number means that the cavitating region is large**, and a large cavitation number signifies that the cavitating region is reduced or has disappeared.
- **Cavitation intensity decreases with increasing water depth.**
- PSO cavitation cleaner suitable for 0-50 meter water depth.



Cavitation vs. HP cleaning – stand off distance



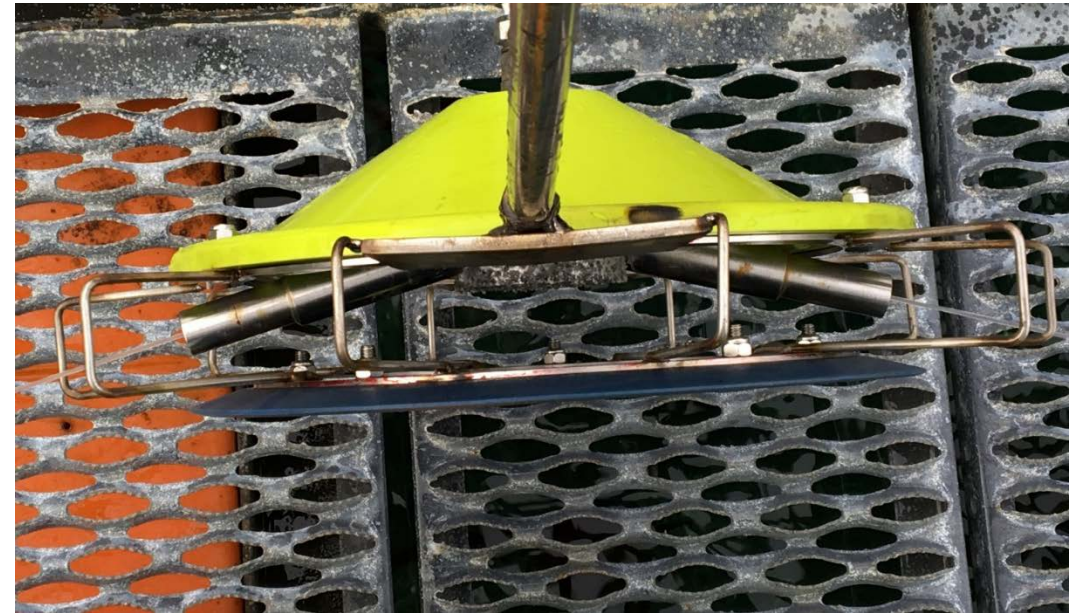
Suitable region for HP water jet cleaning (water mass impacts)

Suitable region for cavitation cleaning (cavitation impacts)

Cavitation cleaning gives longer reach and larger cleaning range compared to HP cleaning using similar pressure and flow rate.

Cavitation vs. HP cleaning – stand off distance

- Cavitation cleaning is based on similar pressure and flowrate as HP cleaning
- At the nozzle exit, the water jet effect is similar to HP water jet
- To prevent undesirable water jet effects (e.g. wear of coating) a minimum separation needs to be ensured.
- Alternative concepts for maintaining safe distance and/or encasing nozzles is possible

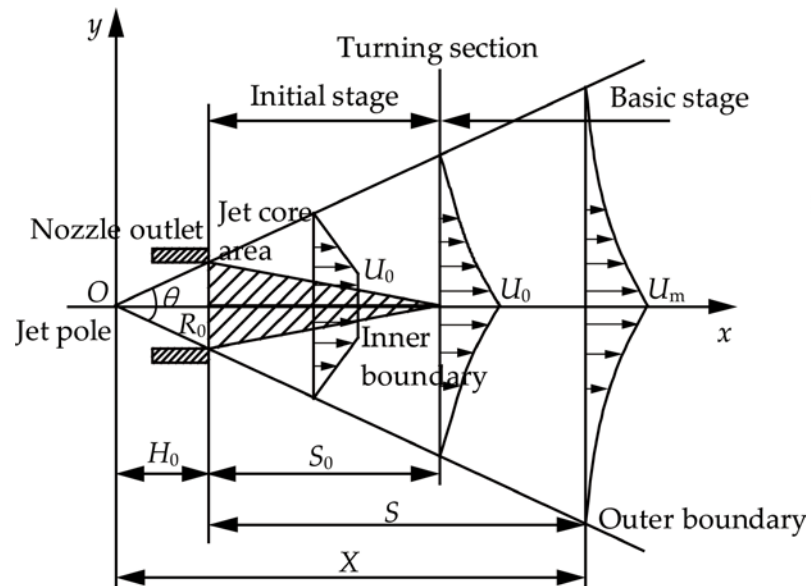


Cavitation cleaning – wear/erosion

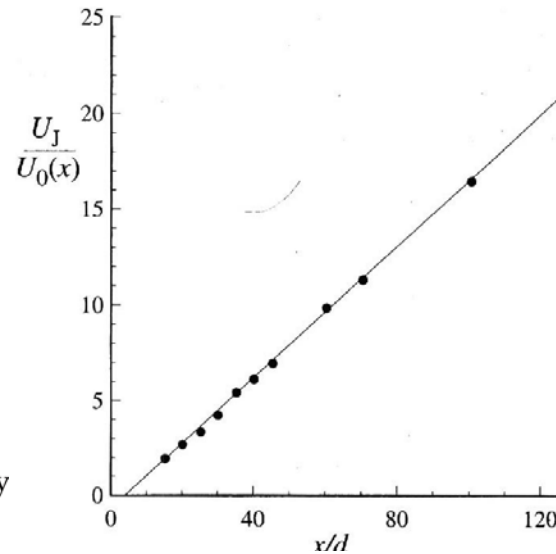
- The velocity of the microjet formed during cavitation bubble collapse is affected by the properties of the surface against which it is collapsing.
"Softer" surfaces lead to less violent collapse and less erosivity

Cavitation vs. HP cleaning

- Effective HP jet distance is 5-8 x nozzle diameter, and decays very rapidly



Schematic diagram of the submerged water jet (Wen, Chen, & Campos, 2018)

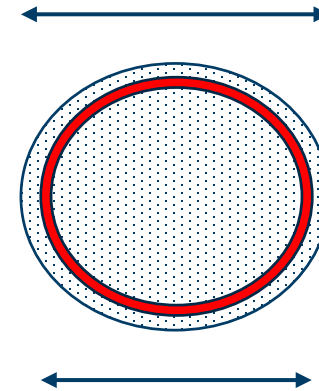


The variation with axial distance of the mean velocity along the centerline in a turbulent round jet (Pope, 2000)

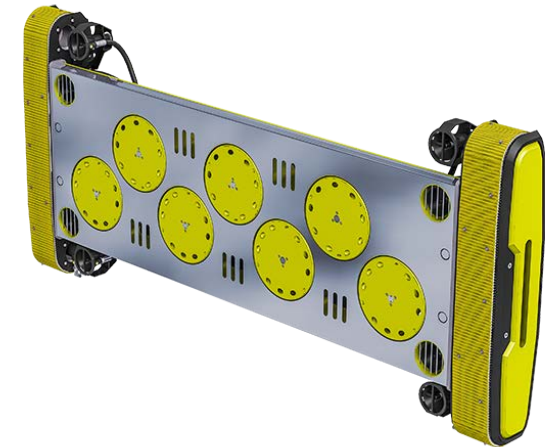
Cavitation vs. HP cleaning



39 cm – diameter HP disk



~ 37 cm – effective cleaning width,
red circle indicates cleaning range

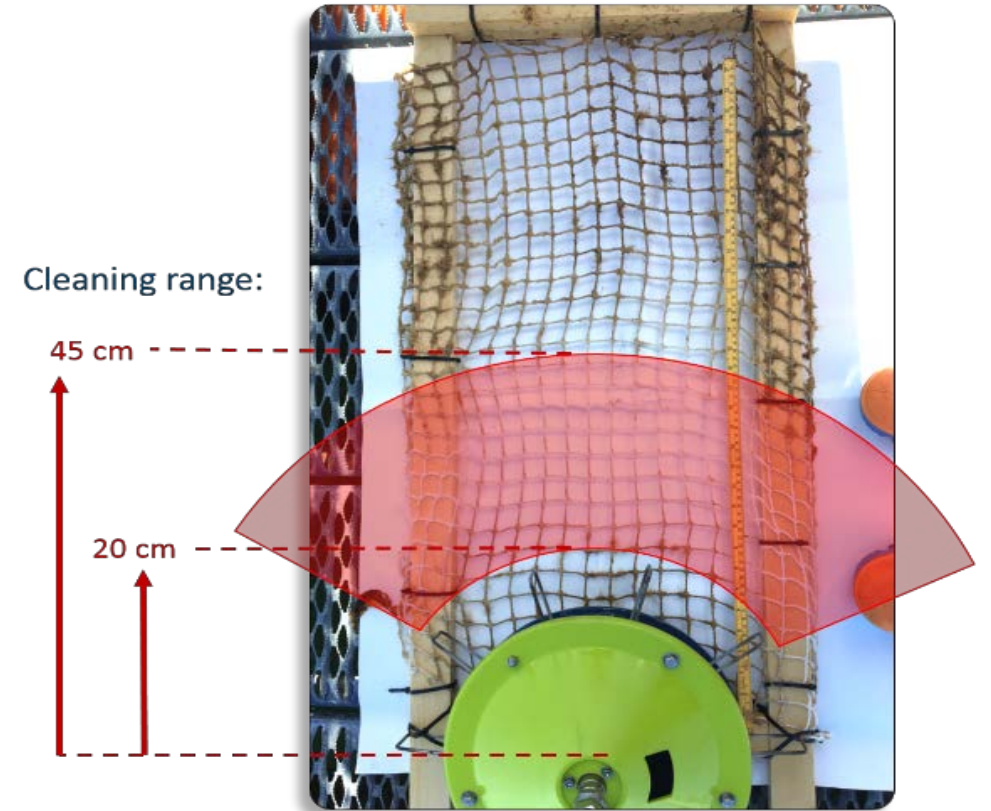


HP disk typical arrangement:

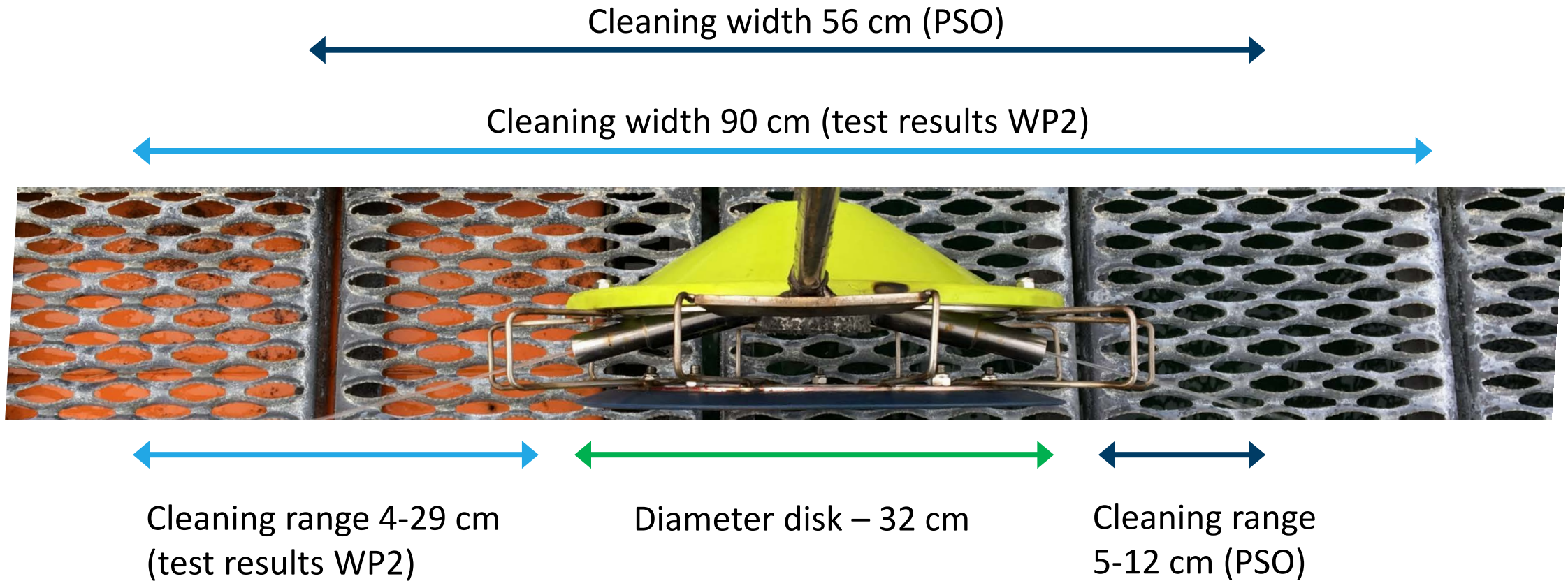
- 2-4 nozzles per disk
- Nozzles 45° to the disk surface in tangential direction, providing rotational speed, 750-1500 rpm

Cavitation cleaner - effective cleaning range

- Jet distance too short: cavitation bubbles not fully developed and lead to weak cavitation effects.
- Jet distance too long: cavitation bubbles are fully developed, but burst before they reach the materials' surface.
- Need for optimizing the distance from nozzle to material surface.
- PSO indicates an effective cleaning range 5-12cm from nozzle (56 cm width) for 0-50m water depth

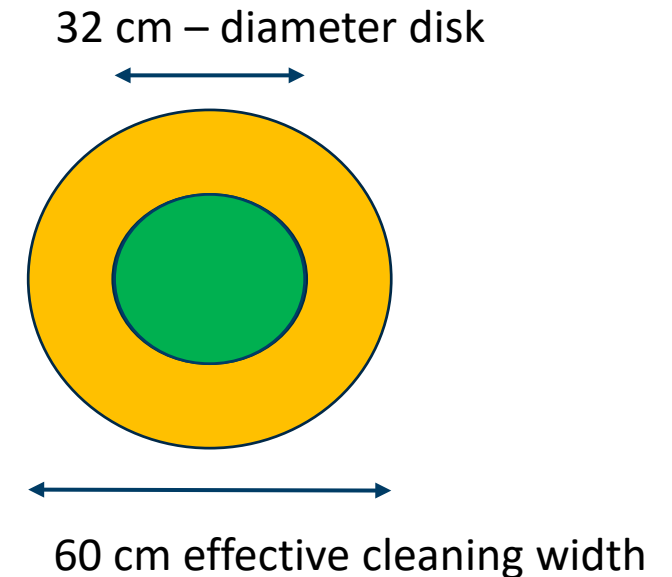
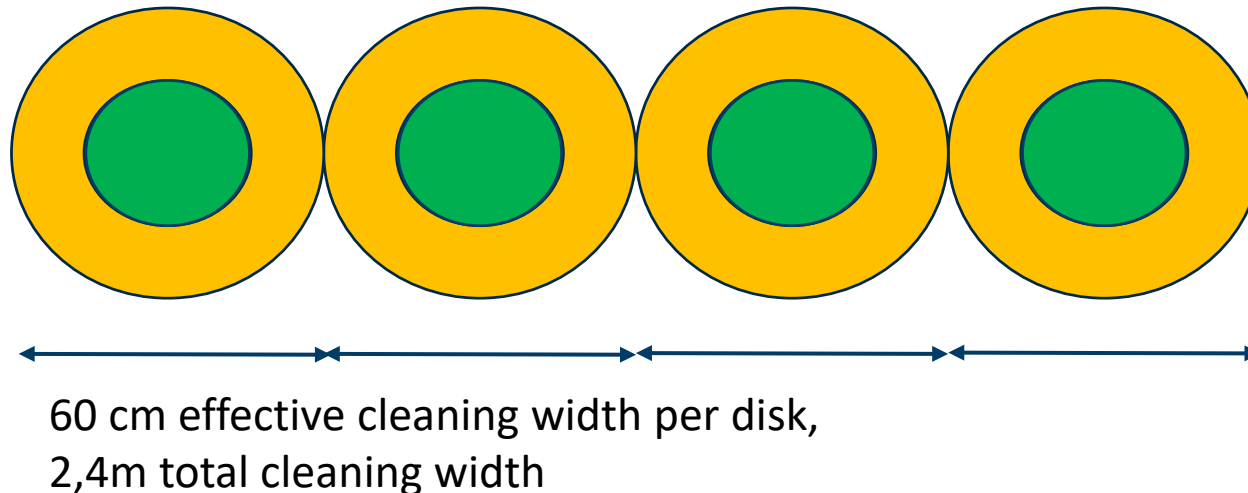


Cavitation cleaner: cleaning range & width



Cavitation cleaner: proposed arrangement

- Cavitation intensity decreases with increasing water depth, but the biofouling intensity also decreases with depth.
- 60 cm cleaning width assumed in this study
- Proposed arrangement:



Cavitation cleaner: cleaning speed

Assessment or optimization of cleaning speed has not been studied. However, execution of WP 2 tests indicates:

- Cavitation cleaner: 15 m²/min (1 disk)
- HP cleaner: 27-47 m²/min (6 disks)
- Cavitation cleaners also have larger cleaning range
- **It is assumed that cleaning speed of cavitation cleaners could be equal to or better than HP cleaners.**

Cavitation cleaner: power requirement

Cleaning width, arrangement and power requirement for selected HP net-cleaners

Model	Cleaning width	No of disks	No of nozzles	Power requirement
RONC 7 (MPI AS)	1,9m	7	21	218 kW
FNC 8 (Sperre AS)	2,6m	8	24	150 kW
Stealth cleaner (Ocein AS)	2,3m	7	21	N/A
Manta Net Cleaner (Stranda Prolog)	2,6m	7	21	N/A

WP 2 prototype: 16 kW.

Proposed rig with 4 disks: 64 kW

→ **Potential for more than 50% reduction in energy consumption**

Cavitation cleaner: operational methods

- All existing operational methods (hoist rig, belt rig, free flying) are considered feasible to cavitation based net-cleaners.



Results from cost-benefit analysis

Results from cost-benefit analysis

Results from cost-benefit analysis indicates the cavitation cleaning could be competitive compared to high-pressure cleaning:

- **Reduced total cleaning costs** – less cleaning events
- **Reduced energy consumption** - larger efficient cleaning area
- **Potential for cleaning of copper-treated nets in-situ in compliance with the ASC standard** - based on minimal damage to coating from cavitation cleaning.

Results from cost-benefit analysis, cont.

- **Better cleaning efficiency** – larger efficient cleaning area gives better efficiency at transitions and bends.
- **Time consumption:** moving speed similar to HP cleaning. Net with intact coating easier to clean?
- **Equipment cost:** pump system etc. similar to HP cleaning. Design, arrangement and operational method similar to HP cleaning.
- **Fish welfare:** reduced number of cleaning events, reduced exposure to biofouling waste.

Results from cost-benefit analysis, cont.

No significant difference found between cavitation cleaning and HP cleaning for other/non-quantifiable factors;

- Wear and damage to net
- Maintenance of equipment/downtime
- Operational methods
- Feasibility of automation
- Collection of cleaning waste

Cost-benefit analysis – reduced cleaning costs

- **65% total cost reduction is foreseen**
- Intact coating may give increased cleaning intervals, reduced number of cleaning events and reduced cleaning costs.
- Results from WP1;
 - average time to first cleaning 3,2 months for new coating
 - 14 cleaning events in average per production cycle (w/coating)
- $6 - 1$ (change from smolt net) = 5 cleaning events

Cost-benefit analysis – energy consumption

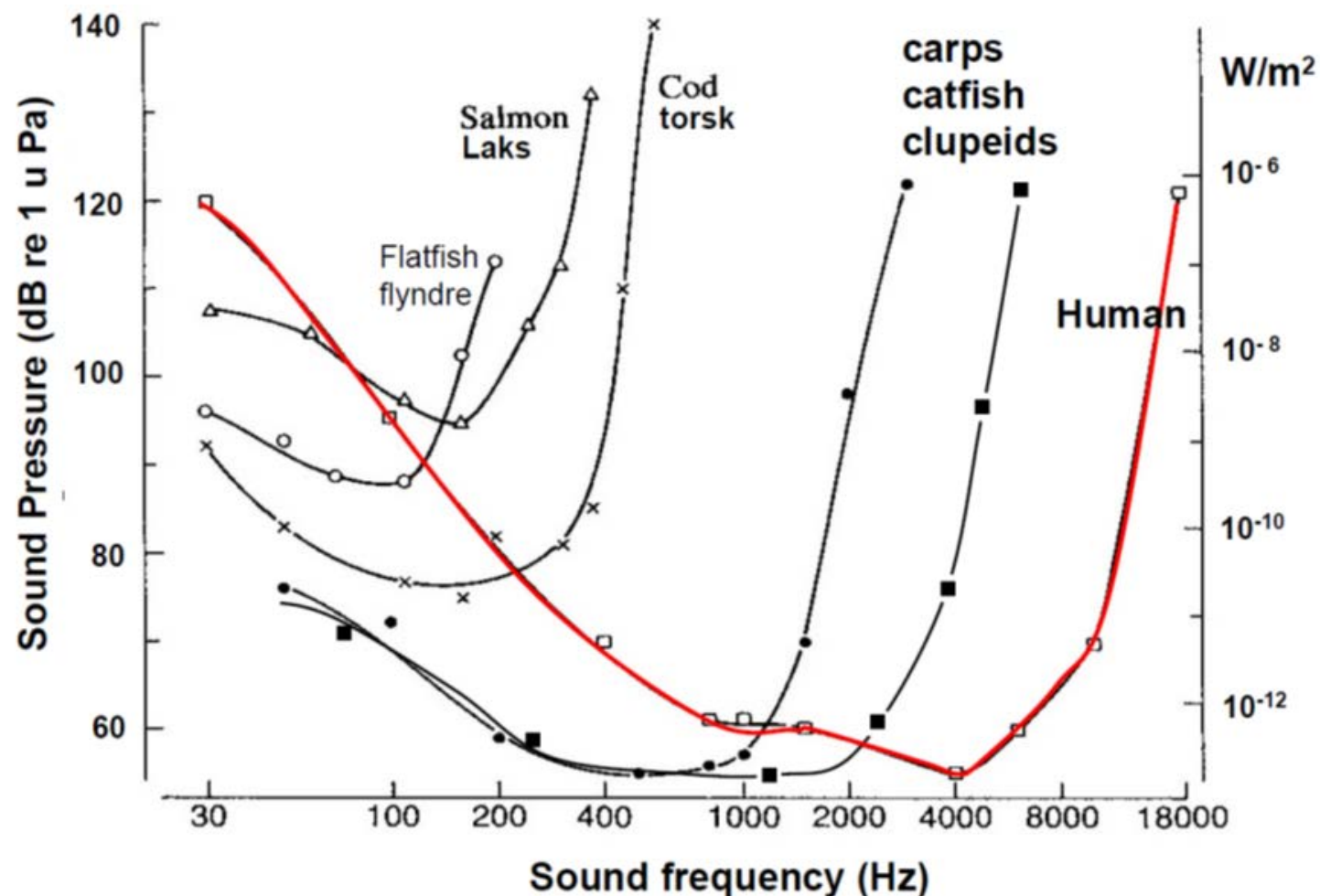
- Larger efficient cleaning area gives approx. 50% reduced power requirement.
- Service vessel contributes to energy consumption
- Example: cleaning 3 nets per day / 1 hour transit per day
 - HP cleaning: ~1000 kWh per net per cleaning event (vessel 400 kWh + HP cleaner 600 kWh)
 - Cavitation cleaning: ~650 kWh per net per cleaning event (vessel 400 kWh + cavitation cleaner 250 kWh)

Fish welfare

Possible factors that may affect fish welfare:

- **Biofouling waste:** Neither cavitation nor HP cleaners have the possibility for efficient collection of biofouling waste. However, cavitation cleaning may give fewer cleaning events and hence **reduced exposure to biofouling waste**.
- **Movement** of water (water jets and propellers) and moving equipment: similar type of exposure for both concepts
- **Noise:** cavitation generates high-frequent noise – above hearing range of Salmonoids?

Fish welfare – the hearing of *Salmo salar*

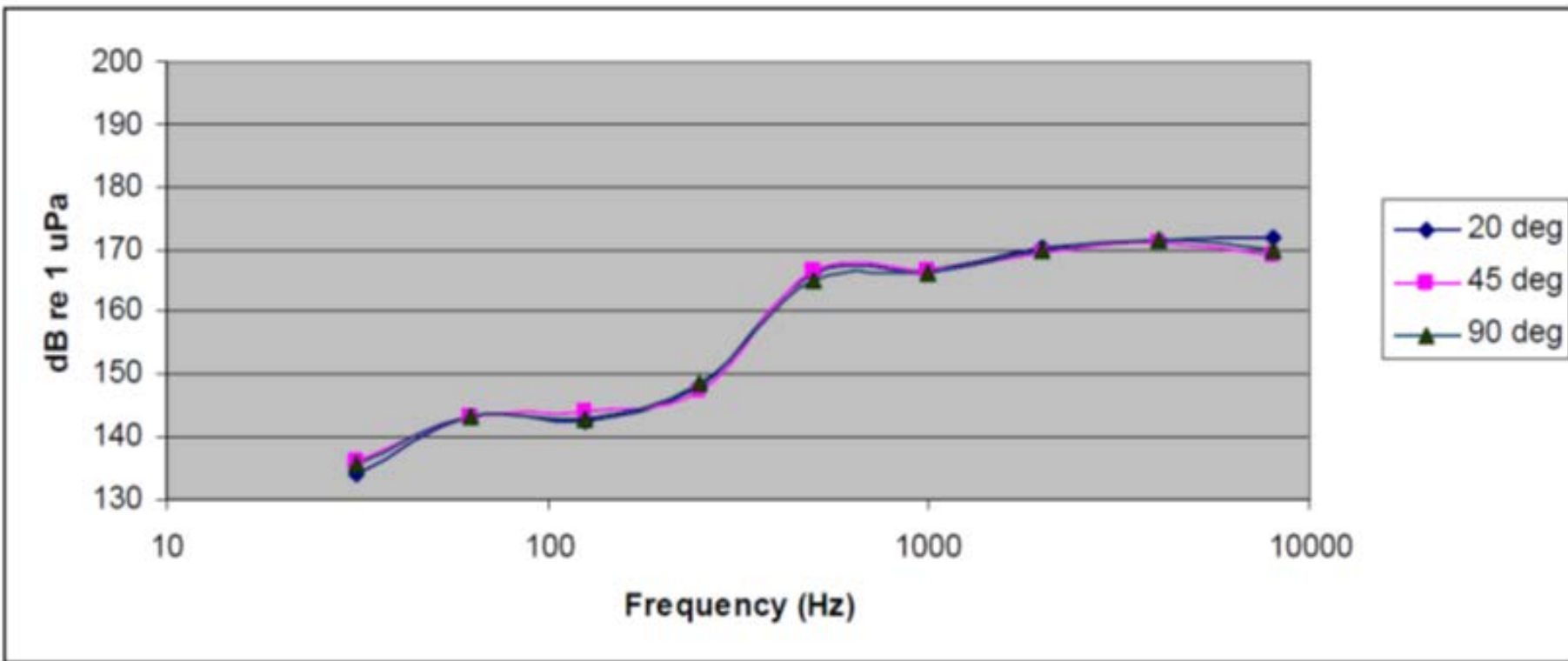


The Salmon has a low sensitivity and a narrow frequency band compared to other species

Fish welfare – noise levels in aquaculture

- Noise level in open sea net-pens?
- Noise level in RAS (Recirculating Aquaculture Systems): long term effects of sound levels up to 149 dB tested on Rainbow trouts
- This sound level is not likely to effect growth rate or survival rate
- 149 dB assumed to represent maximum sound level in RAS

Fish welfare – noise from cavitation cleaners



Cavitation cleaner – sound level and frequency, 5m water depth (Cudahy et al., 2010)

Feasibility of automation

Feasibility of automation

Increased level of automation, applied to existing net cleaning technology, has the potential to:

- Increase effectivity and quality of cleaning
- Detect holes and damages to net
- Higher level of automation / fully autonomous vehicles requires alternative cleaning technology (e.g. low energy net cleaners)

Recommendations for further work

Recommendations for further work

- Full scale test of cavitation cleaner
- Cleaning efficacy at increasing water depth
- Cleaning of copper-treated nets in-situ in relation to the ASC standard
- Low-pressure cleaning and damage to coating
- Noise levels from cavitation cleaners

WP4 - The future of biofouling control in aquaculture

Requirements for future biofouling control strategies

- Efficient prevention of biofouling growth
- Not harmful to the fish
- Environmentally benign
- Safe for the user
- Cost-efficient
- Sustainable (long lasting and recyclable)



Current biofouling management

Prevention

- Copper coatings
- Copper metal nets
- Alternative biocides
- Not efficient enough for regions with high biofouling pressure
- Impact on non-target species
- Environmental pollution
- Sustainability...?

Removal

- Net cleaning
 - Labour-intensive and costly
 - Fish health risk
 - Some emerging technologies
- Net exchange
 - Risk of fish escapes
 - Cleaning on land
 - Re-coating

Options for future biofouling management strategies

1

Efficient antifouling
without cleaning

2

Antifouling combined
with intermittent
cleaning

3

Grooming of nets
without antifouling

Strategy 1: Efficient antifouling without cleaning

Description

- Prevents ALL biofouling
- No cleaning needed

Advantages

- No biofouling = No cleaning
 - No impact on fish health
 - No coating abrasion
- Lasts at least one grow-out cycle
- Predictable cost

Challenges

- Biofouling is highly variable = high likelihood of resistance
- Efficient AF is often highly toxic, also to non-target organisms (→ TBT)
- Drifting (dead) material can still occlude the net

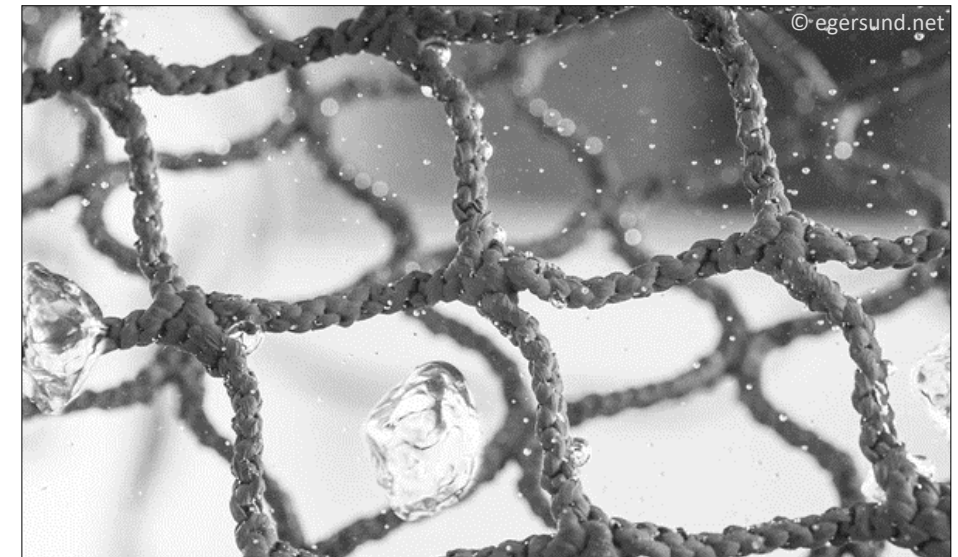
Strategy 1: Efficient antifouling without cleaning

Current status

- Current AF products offer insufficient protection (may work in low-intensity regions)
- Environmental & sustainability requirements not yet met

Research priorities

- Development of novel antifouling coating with
 - high efficacy (at least full grow-out cycle)
 - environmentally benign biocide
 - good leaching control
 - high robustness



Strategy 2: Antifouling combined with intermittent cleaning

Description

- (Non)Biocidal net/coating that prevents/delays most biofouling
- Robust net/coating
- Gentle cleaning w/o abrasion
- Collection of cleaning waste

Advantages

- Reduced cleaning frequency
- Reduced cleaning waste emission
 - No/reduced impacts on fish health
 - No/reduced coating abrasion
- Lasts at least one grow-out cycle

Challenges

- Variability of biofouling and toxicity of potent antifouling coatings
- Biofouling collection technically challenging

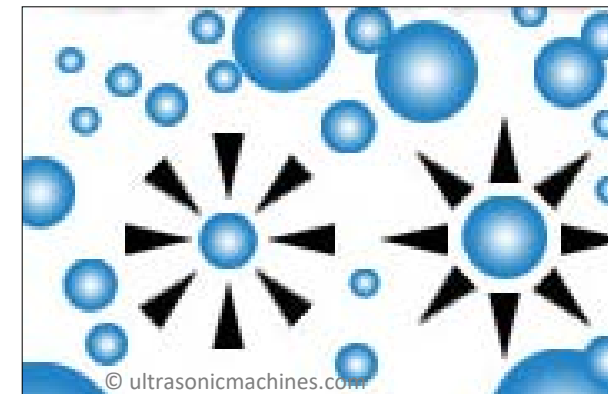
Strategy 2: Antifouling combined with intermittent cleaning

Current status

- Copper alloy metal nets potential option but need environmental & sustainability assessment
- Potential cleaners are low-pressure/high volume or cavitation based – need further assessment

Research priorities

- Development of efficient AF net or coating (non-biocidal or benign biocide)
- Development of gentle net cleaners that collect waste
- Evaluation of potential use of collected biofouling (fertiliser, biofuel, ...?)
- Cooperation between coating and net cleaning technology manufacturers → most efficient and robust combination.



Strategy 3: Grooming of nets without antifouling

Description

- Regular, frequent grooming of nets
- Uncoated nets or nets coated w/ protective coating (UV, abrasion) and good cleanability

Challenges

- Cost- and energy efficiency of high frequency cleaning

Advantages

- Prevention of biofouling growth
 - No release of cleaning waste
= no impact on fish health
 - Initial biofouling easier to remove
= no abrasive cleaning necessary
- No environmental contamination

Strategy 3: Grooming of nets without antifouling

Current status

- Durable nets (EcoNet, Dyneema) and coatings available
- Net grooming technology developed but not validated or automated

Research priorities

- Development of net materials/coatings that are
 - easy to clean
 - abrasion & UV resistant
- Development of foul-release coatings
- Novel net cleaning technology that
 - operates autonomously
 - has high cleaning efficacy
 - is energy-efficient
 - has no mechanical impact on nets/coatings
 - does not impact the fish



Which strategy to choose?

Efficient antifouling
without cleaning

Antifouling combined
with intermittent
cleaning

Grooming of nets
without antifouling

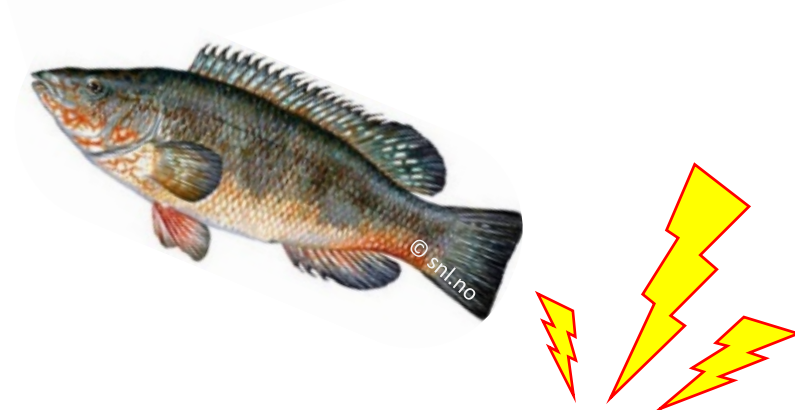
Local biofouling
pressure

Compliance
with standards

Cost
efficiency

Is there a future for net cleaning?

Current motivation: cleaner fish



Health and welfare challenges

Presence of biofouling has no influence on behaviour

(Leclercq et al. 2018)

Cleaner fish may benefit from biofouling

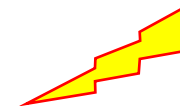
- Increased delousing motivation (Eliassen et al. 2018)
- Indications for increased skin health (Patursson 2019)

Use of cleaner fish may be prohibited...?



Less frequent cleaning?

Biofouling related health risks



Biofouling – current challenges and future developments

What's left to do...

Finalising the project

- Official project end: 30. June 2019
- Reporting to the research council: 31. August 2019
 - Economic report (→ in-kind contribution from partners)
 - Scientific report
- Planned publications after the project time:
 - Aquaculture Europe conference, Berlin, October 2019
 - AP2: "Testing of novel net cleaning technology for finfish aquaculture", *Biofouling*
 - AP3: Popular science article in Kyst.no / iLaks
 - AP4: "Future biofouling management in Norway's salmon aquaculture", *Aquaculture Environment Interactions* or similar.



Teknologi for et bedre samfunn