

*Expansion and Multi-use:  
Design and Economics of Co-located  
Seaweed Farms*

**Tobias Dewhurst**

Kelson Marine Co. 2 Portland Fish Pier Ste. 210, Portland, ME 04101

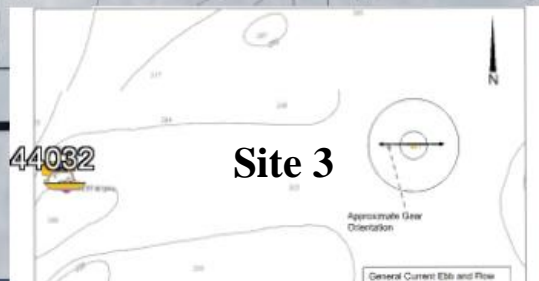
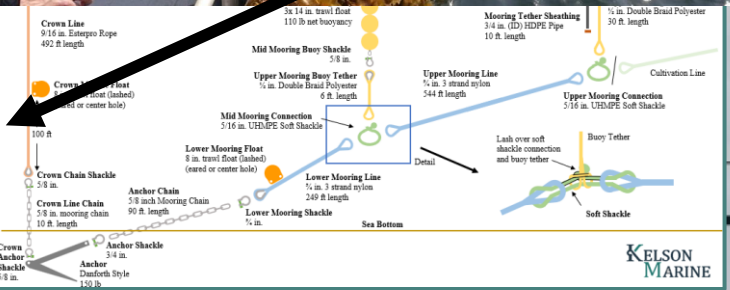
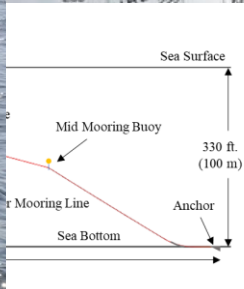
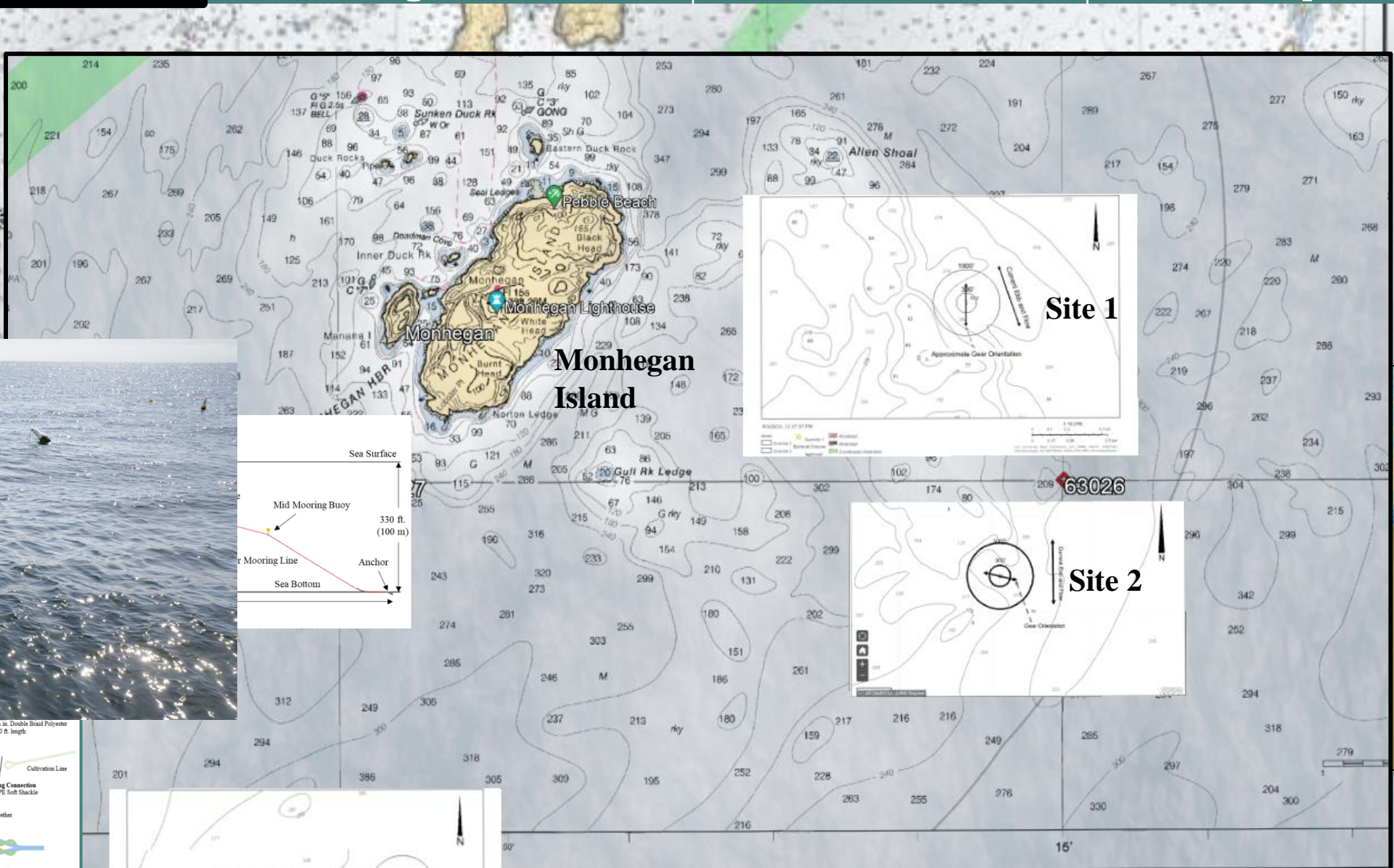
\*Toby@KelsonMarine.com

# Motivation: Co-location

# Challenges, Benefits

# Economics

# Next Steps



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION  
NATIONAL SYSTEMS DIVISION

SOUNDINGS IN FEET

FATHOMS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
FEET	6	12	18	24	30	36	42	48	54	60
METERS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

# Resolving “Offshore”: Distance vs. Exposure

## Specific factors

Degree of energy

### Main site conditions:

- Wave conditions (extreme values and regularity)
- Current conditions (extremne values and regularity)



### Effects

- wear on equipment
- operational challenges

### Solutions applied

- submersible or larger, more rigid structures
- larger and more specialized vessels

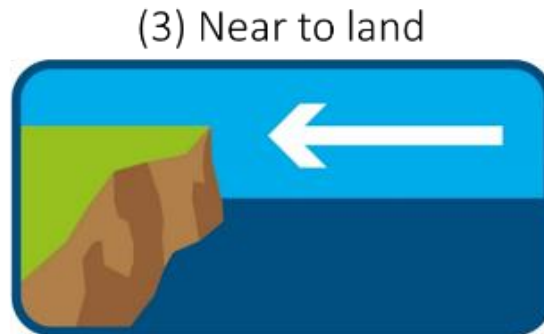
### (2) Exposed



Distance from coast

### Main site conditions:

- Proximity to infrastructure
- Regulatory regime



### Effects

- longer transit
- more farming area available
- lower nutrient concentration, less pollution

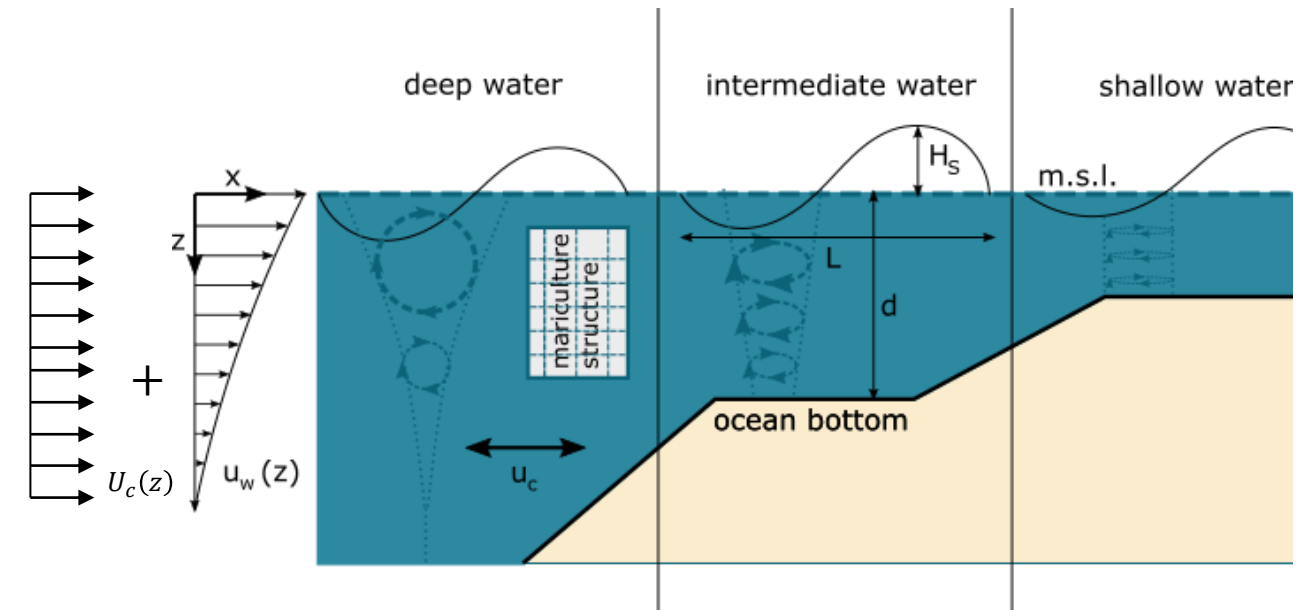
### Solutions applied

- automation and remote operations
- longer response times in emergencies

### (4) Far from land



# Exposure Index



$$1. \text{Exposure Velocity (EV)} = \sqrt{u_w(z)^2 + 2u_w(z)U_c(z) + U_c(z)^2} \\ = U_c(z) + u_w(z)$$

$$2. \text{Exposure Velocity at Reference Depth (EVRD)} = U_E = U_{c5} + u_{w5}$$

$$3. \text{Specific Exposure Energy (IEE)} = 1/2 (U_c(z) + u_w(z))^2$$

$$4. \text{Depth - integrated Energy Flux (DEF)} = \frac{\rho g^2 (H_s^2) T_E}{64\pi} + \frac{1}{2} \rho d (U_c)^3$$

$$5. \text{Structure - centered Depth - integrated Energy (SDE)} \\ = \left( \frac{1}{8} \cdot g \cdot H_s^2 + \frac{1}{2} \cdot d \cdot U^2 \right) \cdot \rho \cdot S \cdot A_{\text{structure}}$$

$$6. \text{Structure - centered Drag - to - buoyancy Ratio (SDBR)} = \frac{U^2}{2gD}$$

Lojek, O. Goseberg, N., Moe Fore, H., Dewhurst, T., Bölker, T., Heasman, K, Buck, B, Fredriksson, DW, Rickerich, S, A quantified approach to assessing hydrodynamic exposure of mariculture sites. Journal of the World Aquaculture Society. *In preparation.*

# Distance from Coast vs. Exposure Energy

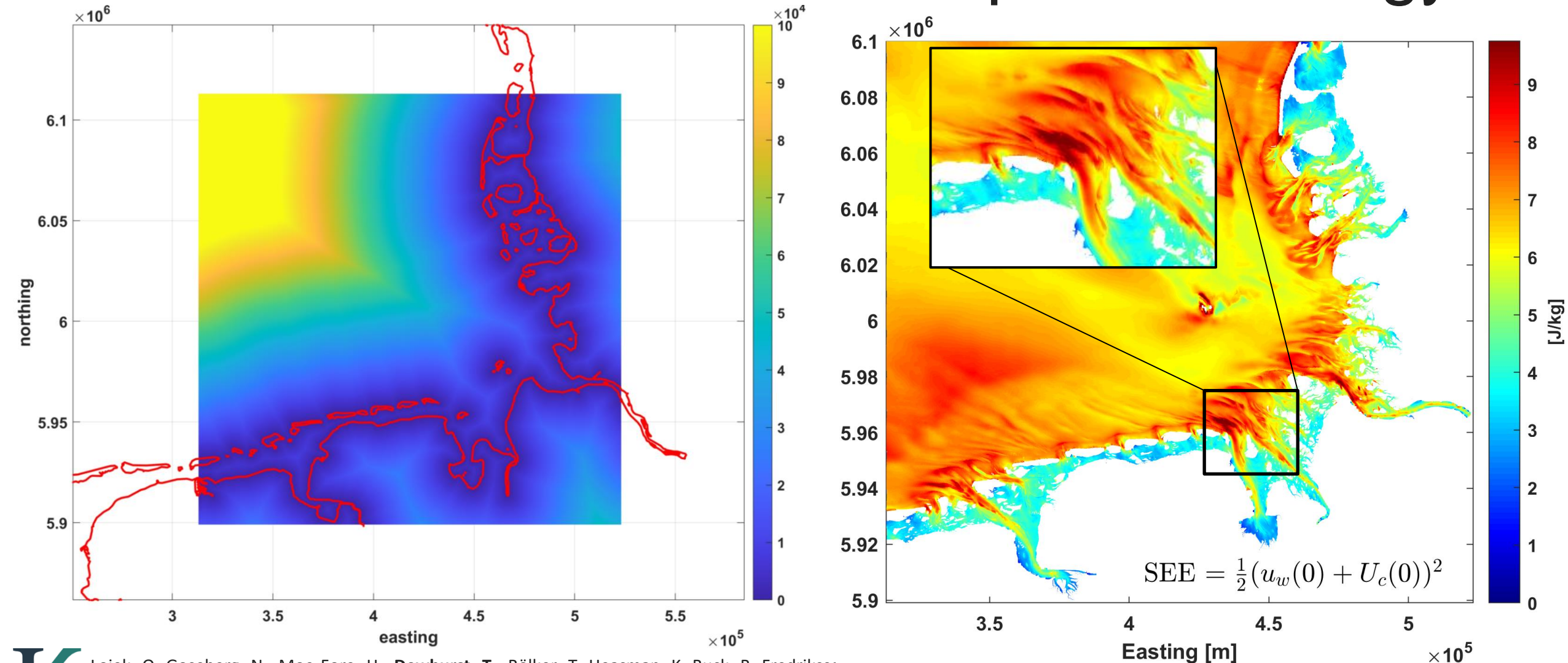


Figure 9: **Specific Exposure Energy (SEE)** for 50-year surface currents and wave induced velocities.

Enter values here...

## Hydrodynamic Exposure Calculator

Water Depth  m

Significant Wave Height  m

Peak Wave Period  s

Ocean Current Velocity  m/s

Distance Below Surface  m

Optional Inputs

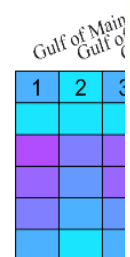
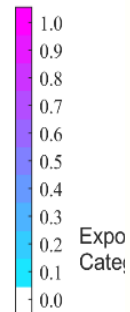
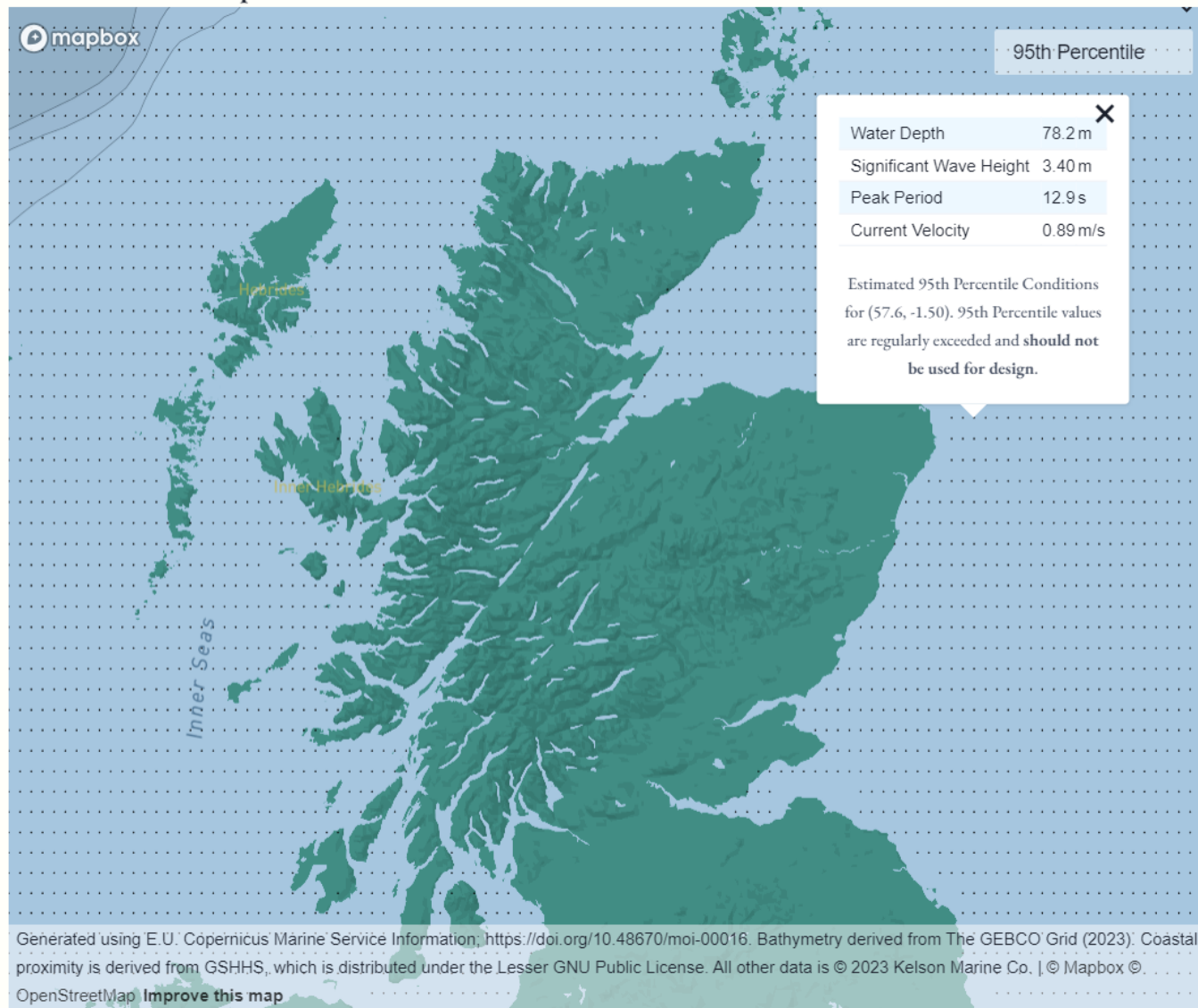
EXPOSURE VELOCITY: 1.76 m/s

EXPOSURE VELOCITY AT REFERENCE DEPTH OF 5M: 1.67 m/s

SPECIFIC EXPOSURE ENERGY: 1.55 J/kg

DEPTH-INTEGRATED ENERGY FLUX: 105 kW/m

...or click on the map to use estimated ocean conditions for the selected location.



m  
m  
s  
m/s  
m  
/s  
J kg/m<sup>3</sup>

# Kelson Marine

Enter values here...

## Hydrodynamic Exposure Calculator

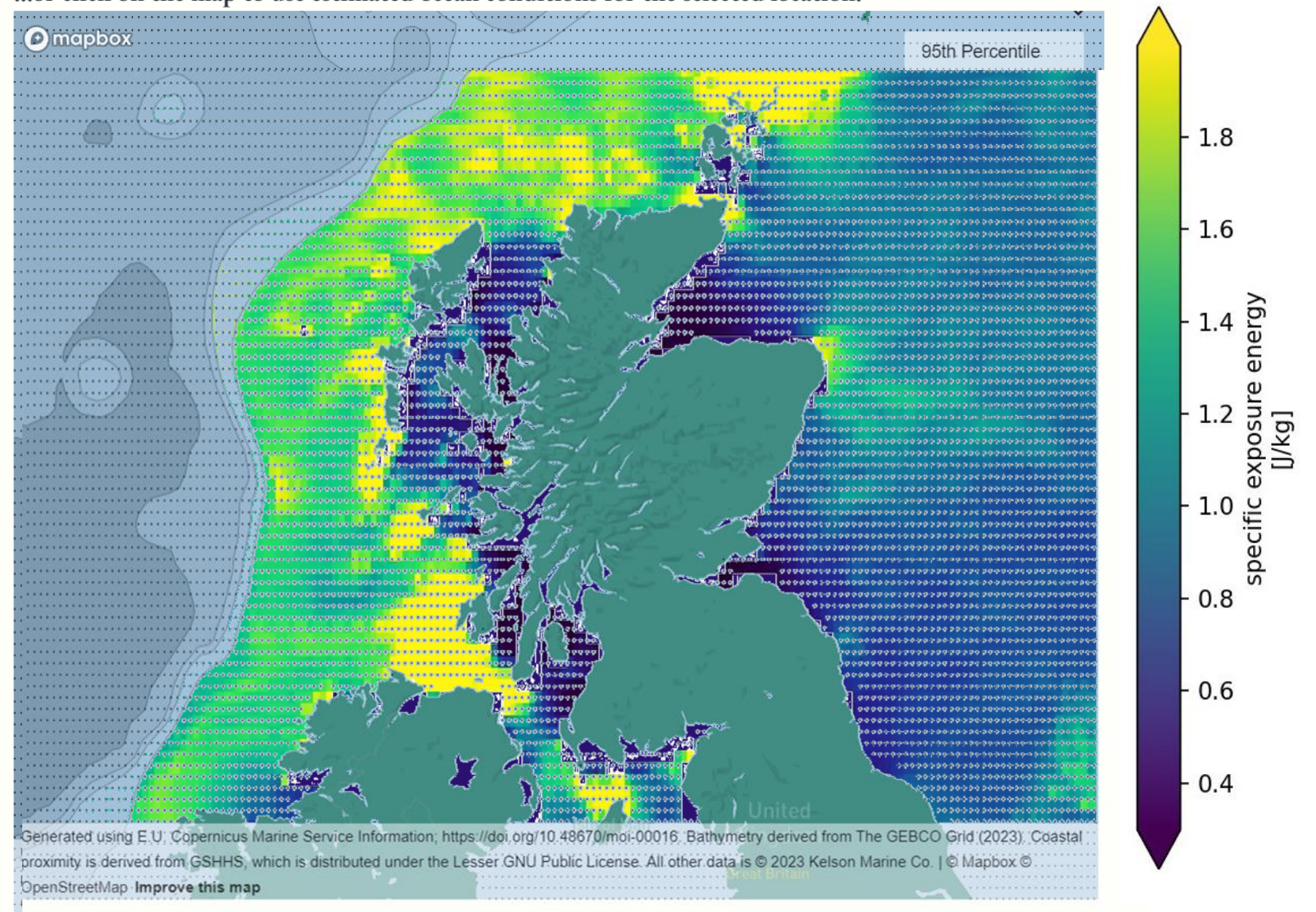
Water Depth	<input type="text" value="58.2"/>	m
Significant Wave Height	<input type="text" value="2.97"/>	m
Peak Wave Period	<input type="text" value="12.9"/>	s
Ocean Current Velocity	<input type="text" value="1.00"/>	m/s
Distance Below Surface	<input type="text" value="0"/>	m

Optional Inputs ▾

Calculate

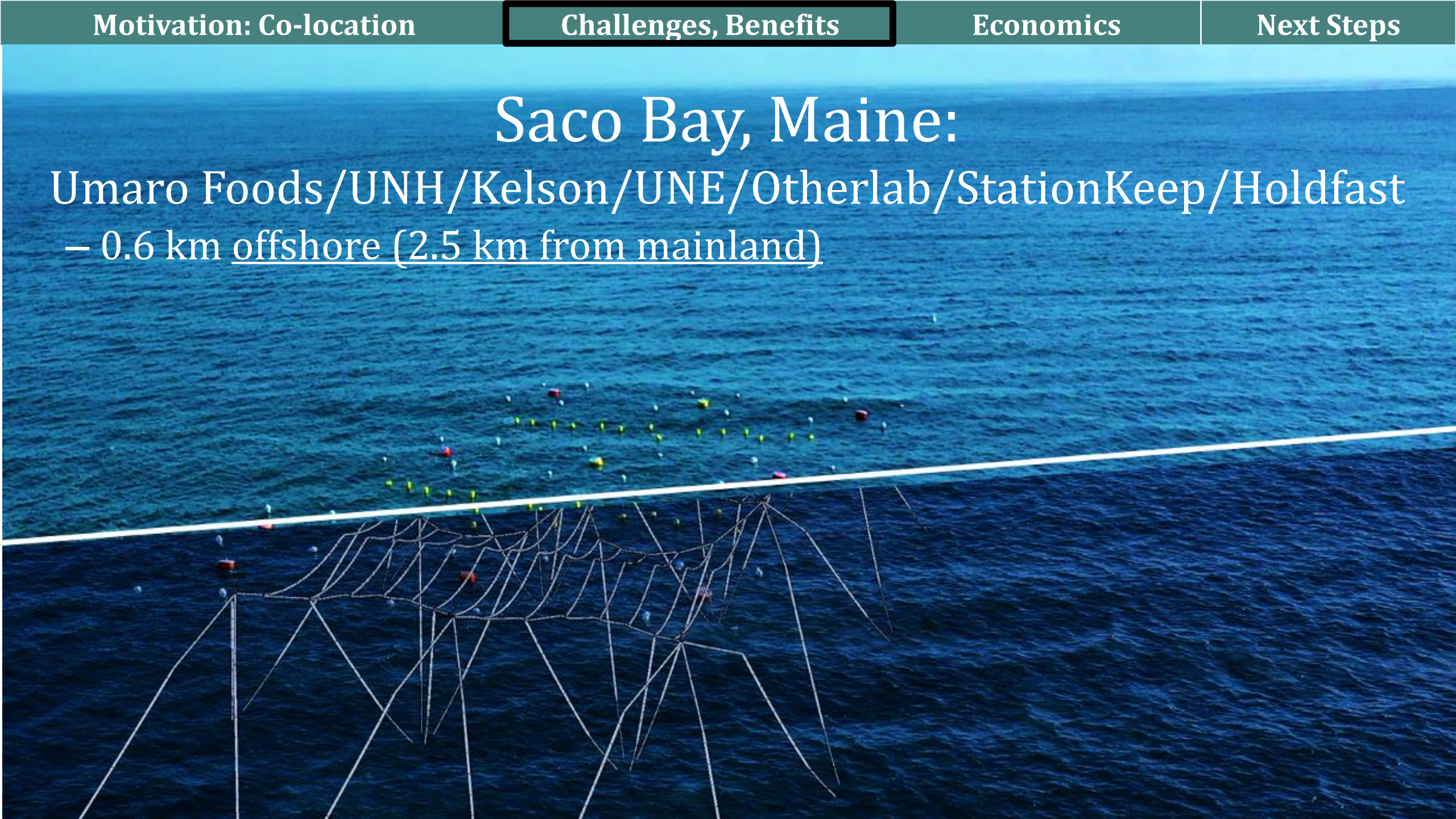
EXPOSURE VELOCITY:	1.79	m/s
EXPOSURE VELOCITY AT REFERENCE DEPTH OF 5M:	1.70	m/s
SPECIFIC EXPOSURE ENERGY:	1.61	J/kg
DEPTH-INTEGRATED	25.7	J/kg

...or click on the map to use estimated ocean conditions for the selected location.



# Saco Bay, Maine:

Umaro Foods/UNH/Kelson/UNE/Otherlab/StationKeep/Holdfast  
– 0.6 km offshore (2.5 km from mainland)





# Saco Bay, Maine:

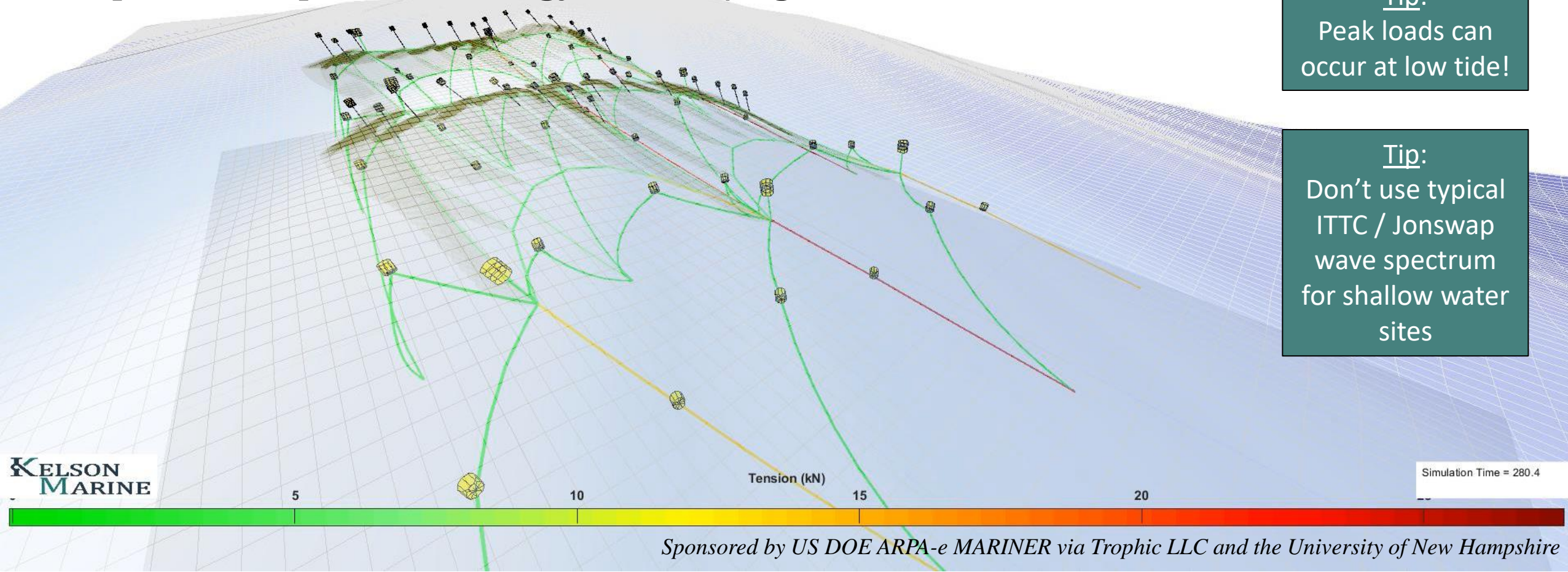
Umaro Foods/UNH/Kelson/UNE/Otherlab/StationKeep/Holdfast

– 0.6 km offshore (2.5 km from mainland)

– Specific Exposure Energy of 5.1 J/kg

Tip:  
Peak loads can occur at low tide!

Tip:  
Don't use typical ITTC / Jonswap wave spectrum for shallow water sites

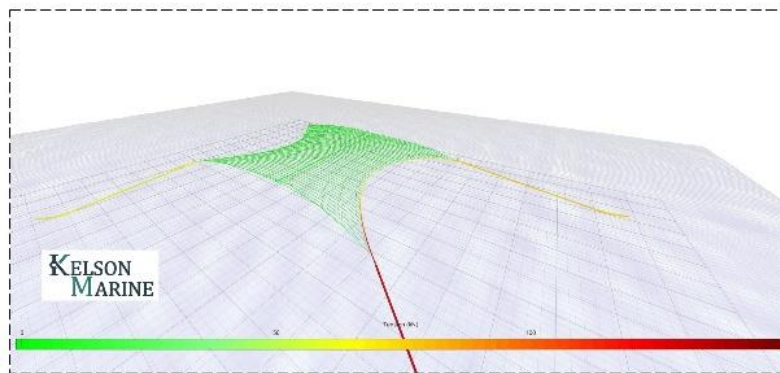
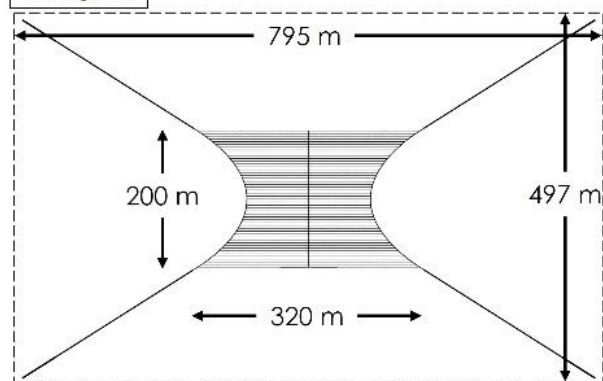


# Colocation—Floating Offshore Wind

- **5.5 km offshore**  
**(16km from  
mainland)**
- **Specific Exposure  
Energy of 7.1 J/kg**

# Engineering for Co-location

Design A



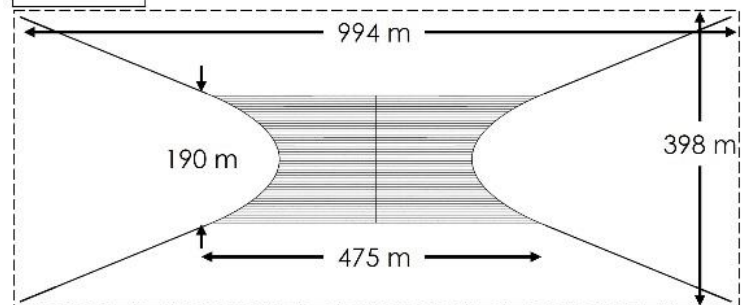
3 Aspect Ratios considered

- All farms have same area

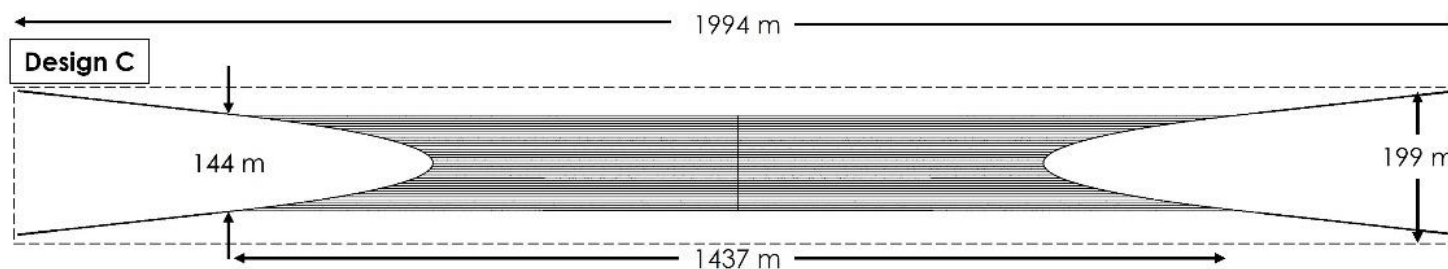
Design C has most growline

- Will produce most biomass
- Will experience highest loading

Design B



Design	Aspect Ratio	Total Grow-Line
A	1.6:1	10.7 km
B	2.5:1	14.7 km
C	10:1	35.9 km



Coleman, et al. 2022. "Quantifying baseline costs and cataloging potential optimization strategies for kelp aquaculture carbon dioxide removal." *Frontiers in Marine Science*.



Conscience Bay Research LLC

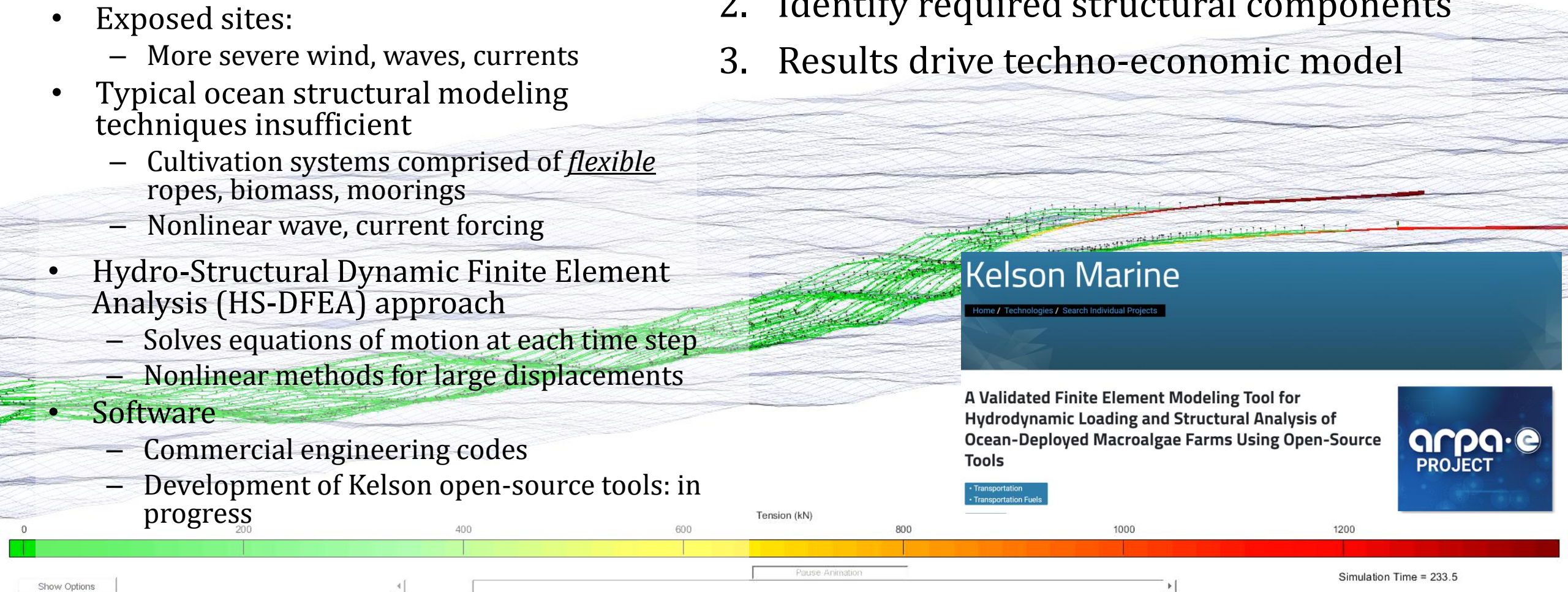


# Engineering for Co-location

- Offshore sites:
  - Deeper water
- Exposed sites:
  - More severe wind, waves, currents
- Typical ocean structural modeling techniques insufficient
  - Cultivation systems comprised of *flexible* ropes, biomass, moorings
  - Nonlinear wave, current forcing
- Hydro-Structural Dynamic Finite Element Analysis (HS-DFEA) approach
  - Solves equations of motion at each time step
  - Nonlinear methods for large displacements
- Software
  - Commercial engineering codes
  - Development of Kelson open-source tools: in progress

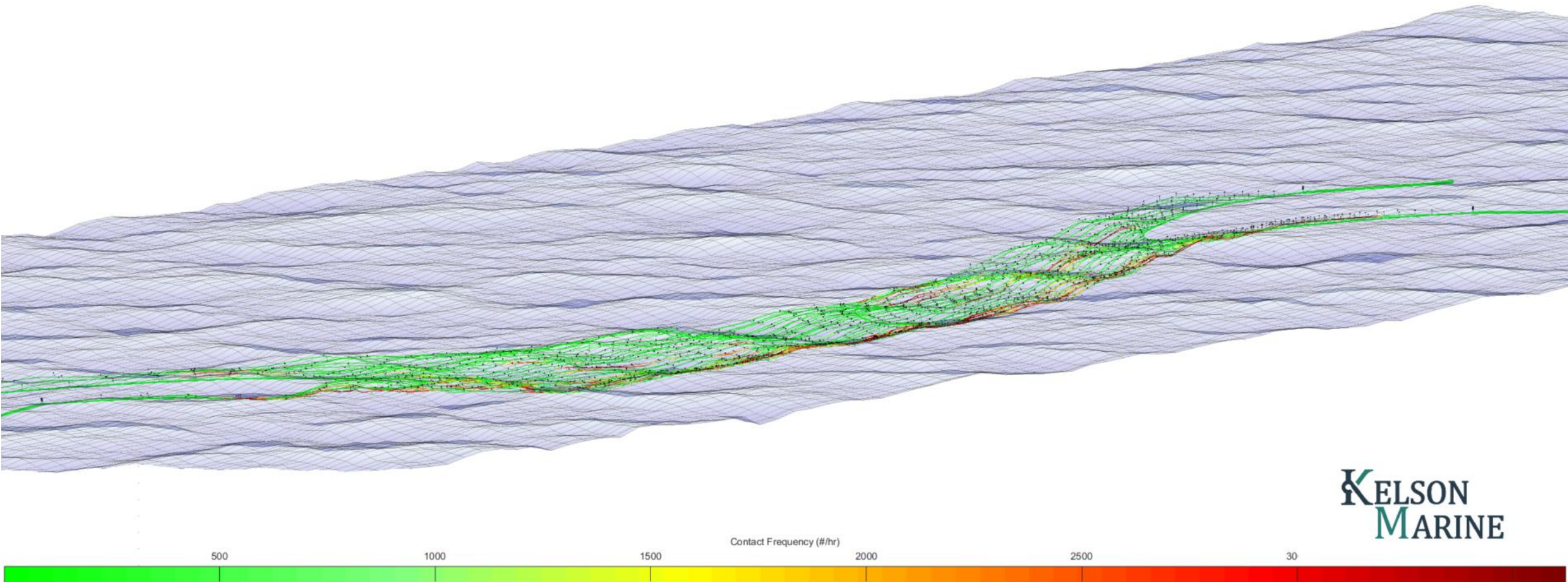
1. Calculate structural capacities
2. Identify required structural components
3. Results drive techno-economic model

**Design** 

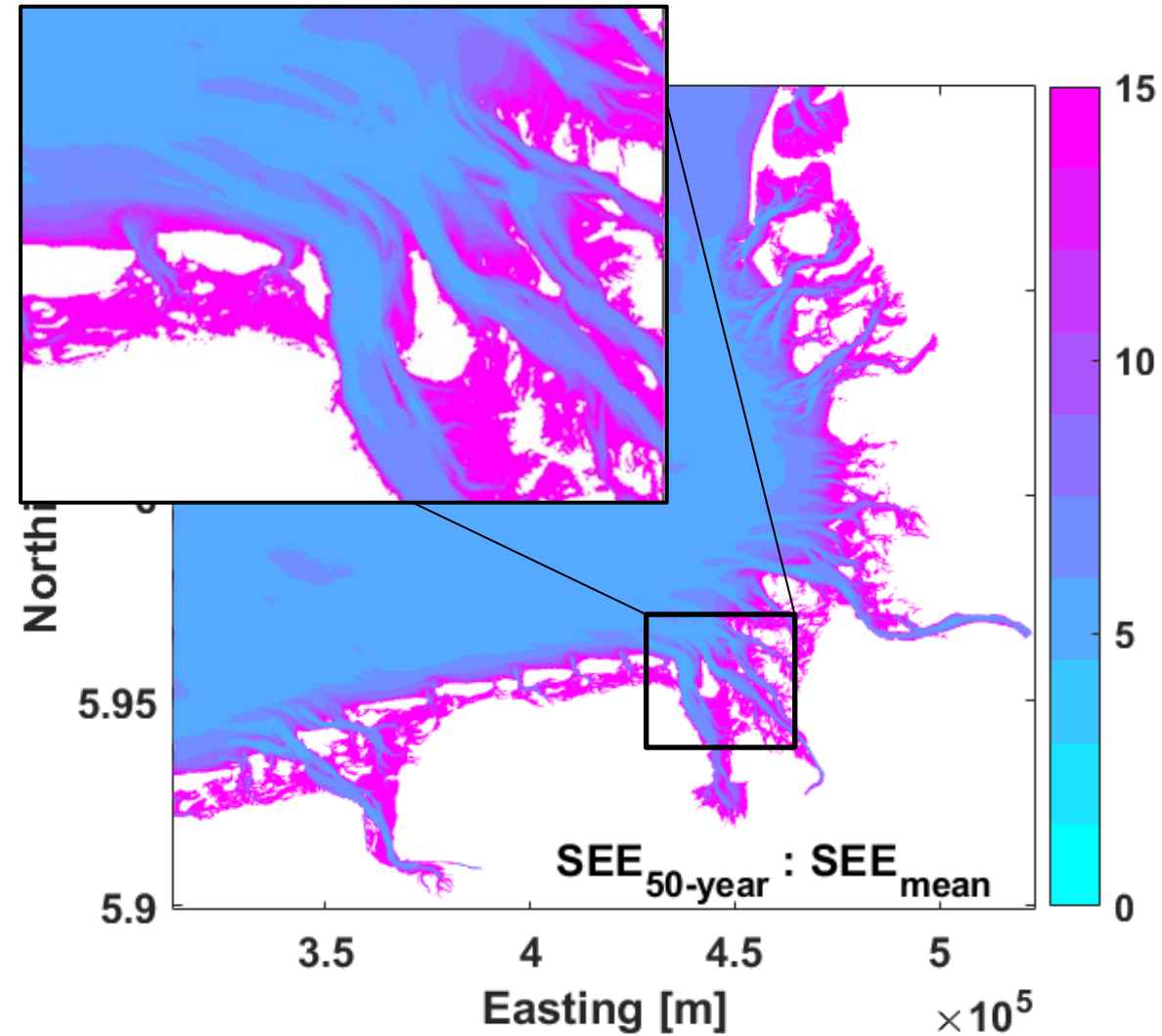
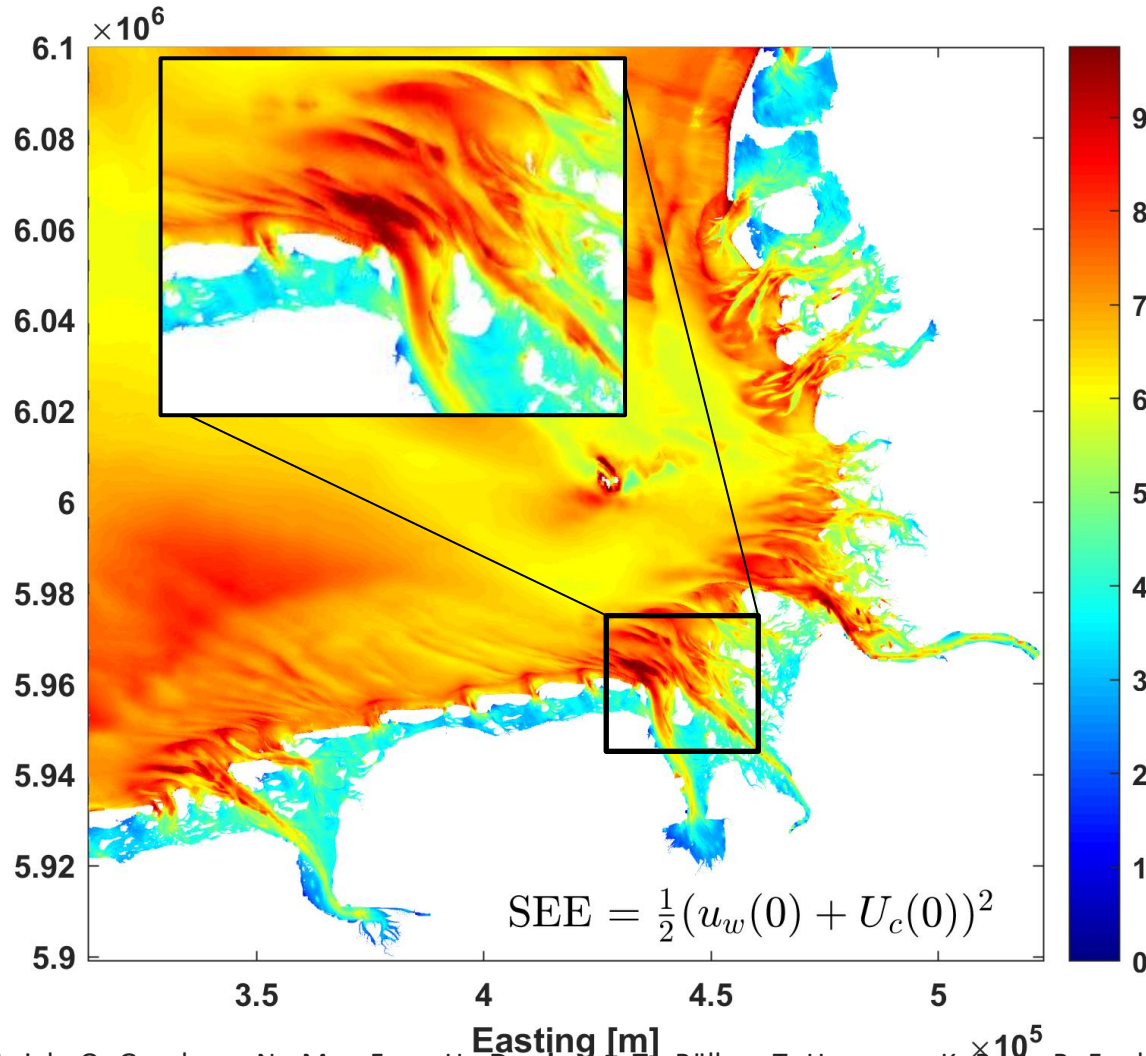


# Engineering for Co-location

## *Contact and Tangling*



# Exposure Energy—”Relative Risk Ratio”

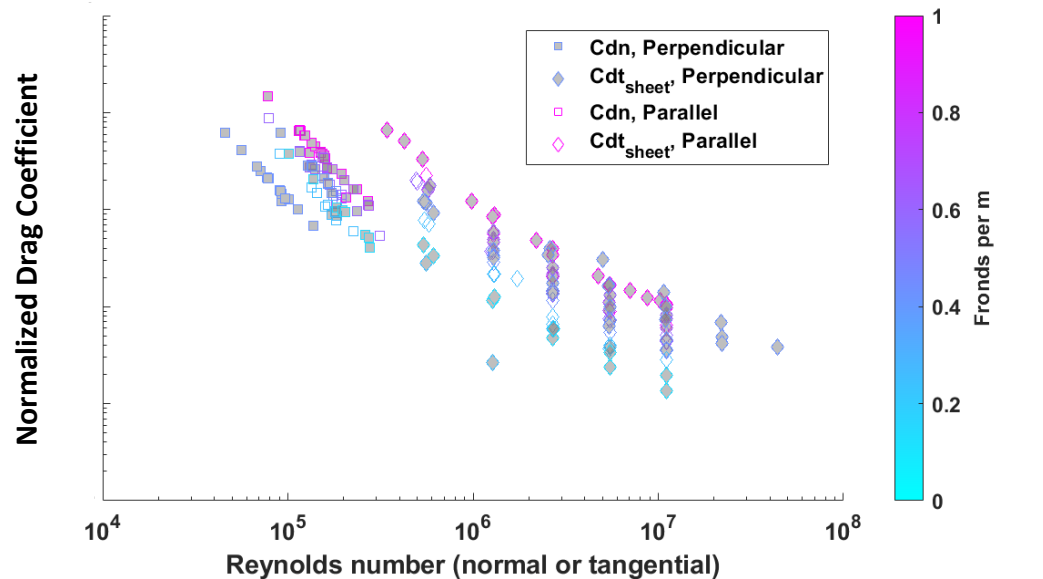


Relative Risk Ratio: 50-year Specific Exposure Energy (SEE) divided by Mean Specific Exposure Energy



# Macroalgae Hydrodynamics

$$f = \frac{1}{2} \rho D_n C_n |V_{Rn}| V_{Rn}^{\beta_n - 1} + \frac{1}{2} \rho D_t C_t |V_{Rt}| V_{Rt}^{\beta_t - 1} + \rho A \dot{V}_n + \rho A C_a \dot{V}_{Rn}.$$



*Drag and inertial characteristics of Macrocyctis as a function of:*

- Frond length
- Fronds per thallus
- Thallus spacing (clumps per meter)
- Frond tangling
- Incident angle (relative to current direction)
- Current speed
- Wave amplitude and period

Dewhurst TJ, Dewhurst TB, Fredriksson DW. 2023 Empirically Determined Hydrodynamic Characteristics of Giant Kelp (*Macrocyctis Pyrifera*). Journal of Ocean

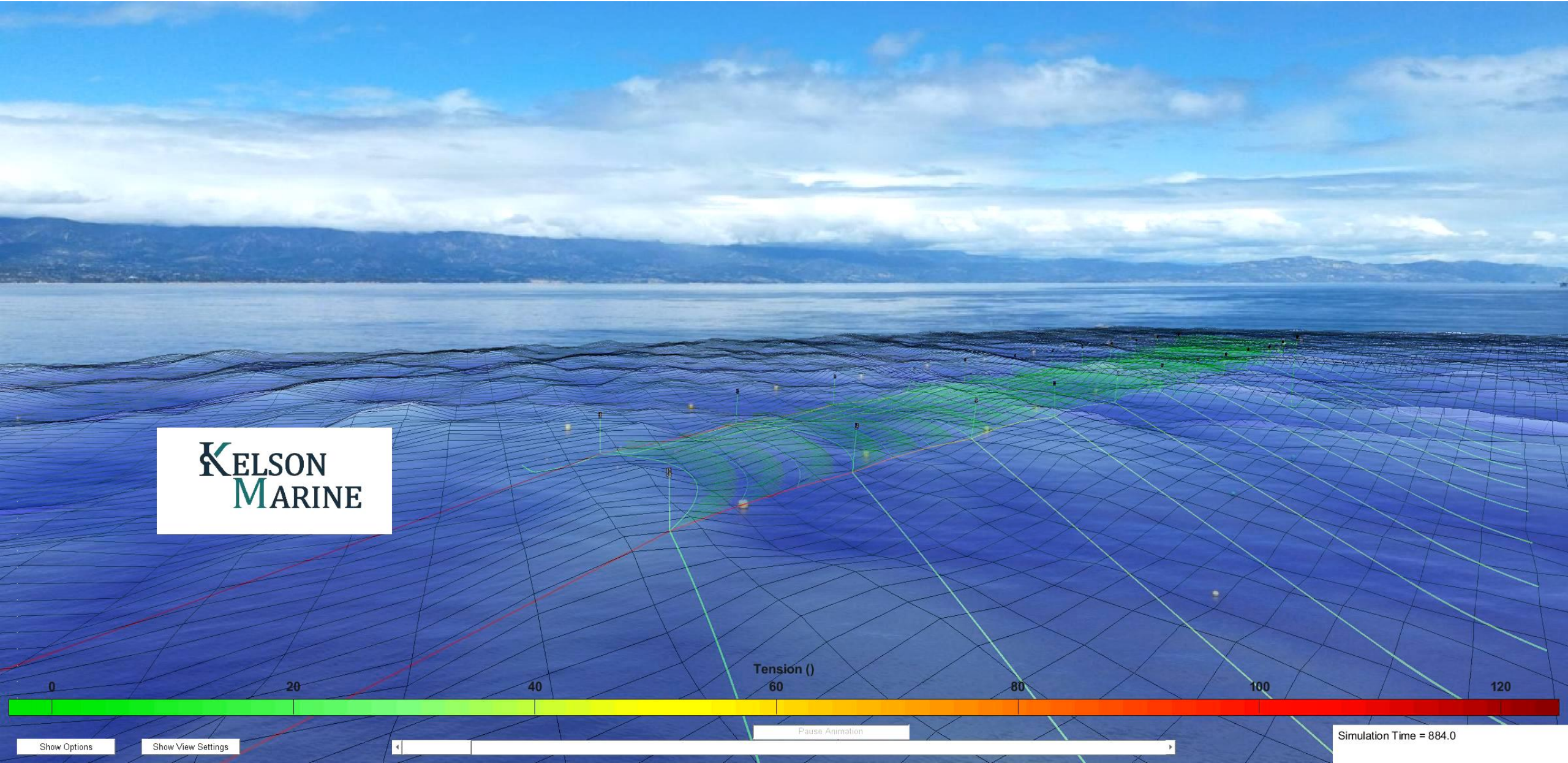
Sponsored by US DOE ARPA-e MARINER via Marine BioEnergy Inc. Engineering. In preparation [Inverted]

# Validation—Ocean Rainforest Inc





# Validation—Ocean Rainforest Inc



# Validation—Ocean Rainforest Inc



Photo Credit: William Ntsone, Kelson.. Sponsored by US DOE ARPA-e MARINER

Photo Credit: Ocean Rainforest.  
Sponsored by US DOE ARPA-e MARINER

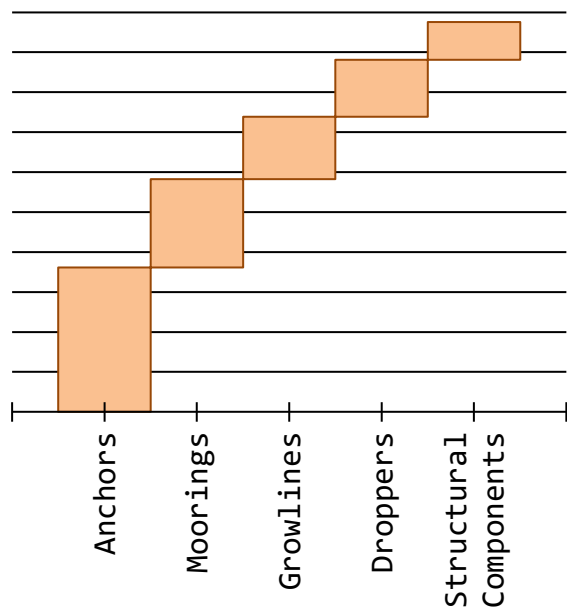
# Results: \$/kg biomass

## Total Normalized Clay Biomass

180 metric tons Biomass



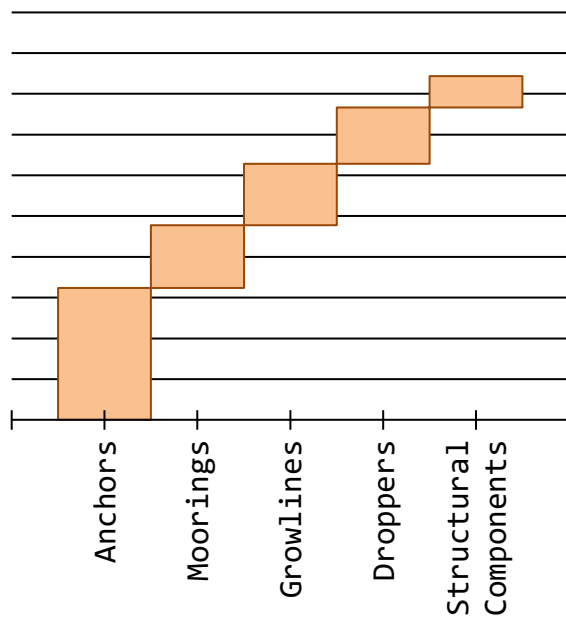
Design A



260 metric tons Biomass



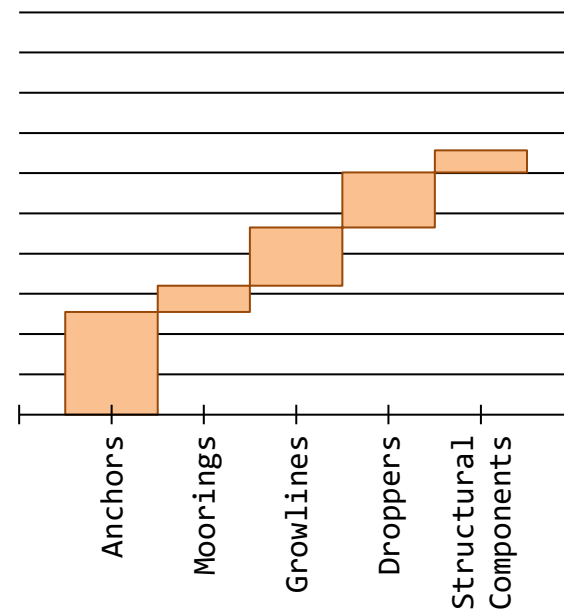
Design B



610 metric tons Biomass

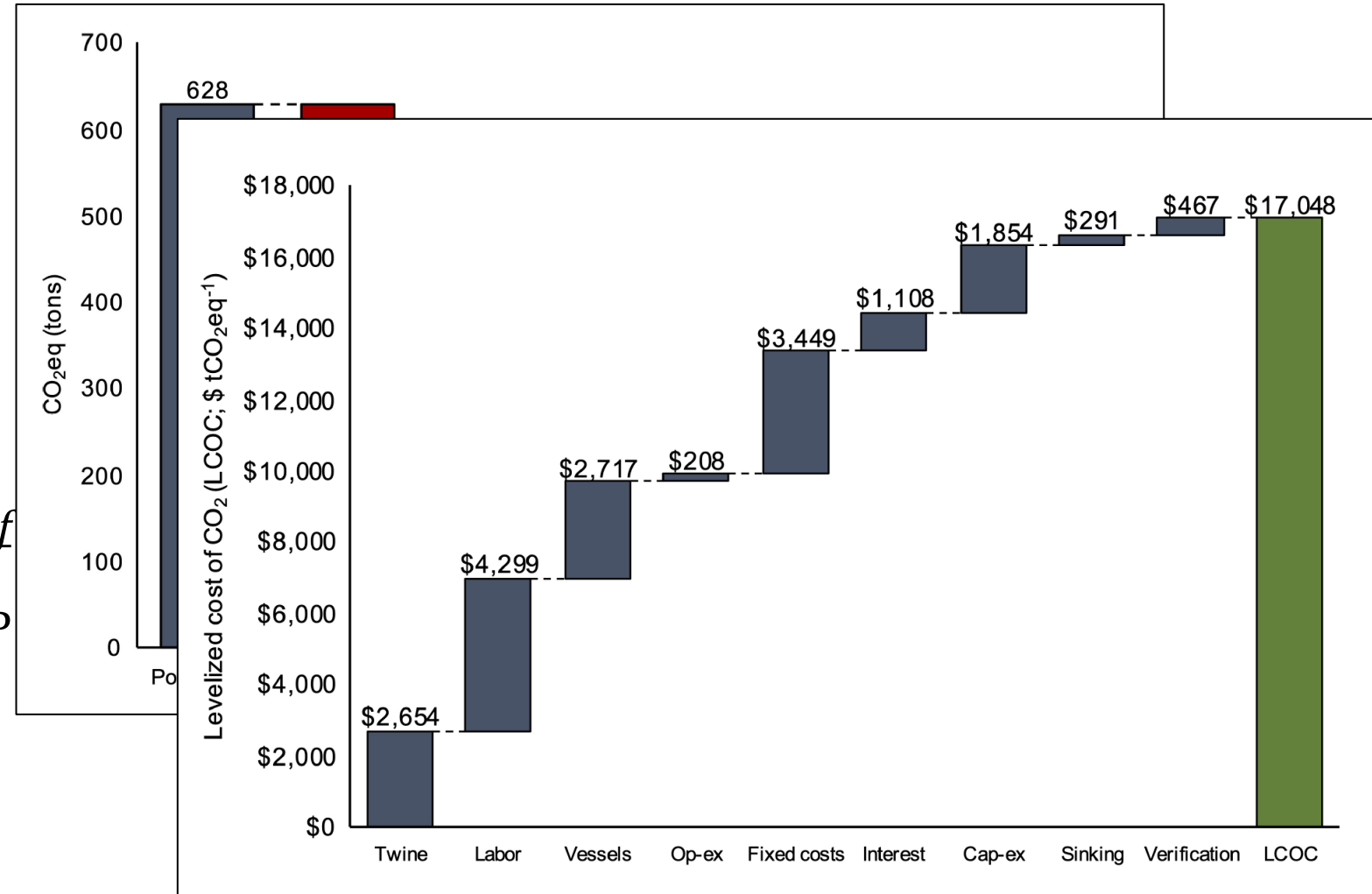


Design C



# (Kelp CDR Techno-Economics)

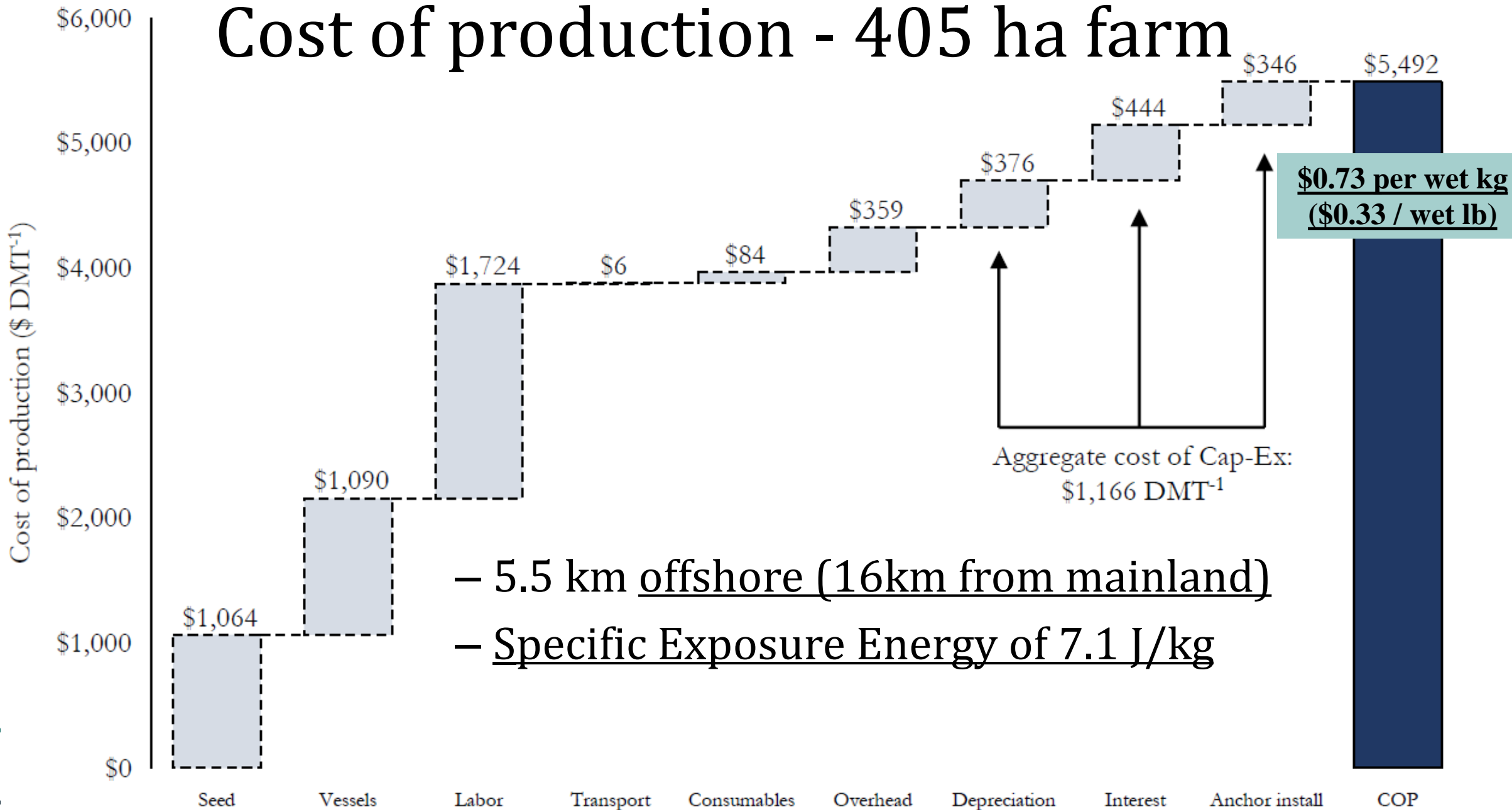
- Must account for emissions
  - Net 244 tCO<sub>2</sub>eq removed from atmosphere for 628 tCO<sub>2</sub>eq sequestered
    - Additionality rate 39%
    - Per 1000-acre farm
- Kelp farming as a means of carbon sequestration using today's farming technologies
  - Would cost near the upper end of range of CDR technologies
  - Would require ~20% global GDP to reach Gt-scale
  - Would require farm area ~1.5x the size of U.S. EEZ to reach Gt-scale



Coleman, S., Dewhurst, T., Fredriksson, D. W., St. Gelais, A. T., Cole, K. L., MacNicoll, M., Laufer, E., & Brady, D. C. (2022). Quantifying baseline costs and cataloging potential optimization strategies for kelp aquaculture carbon dioxide removal. *Frontiers*.

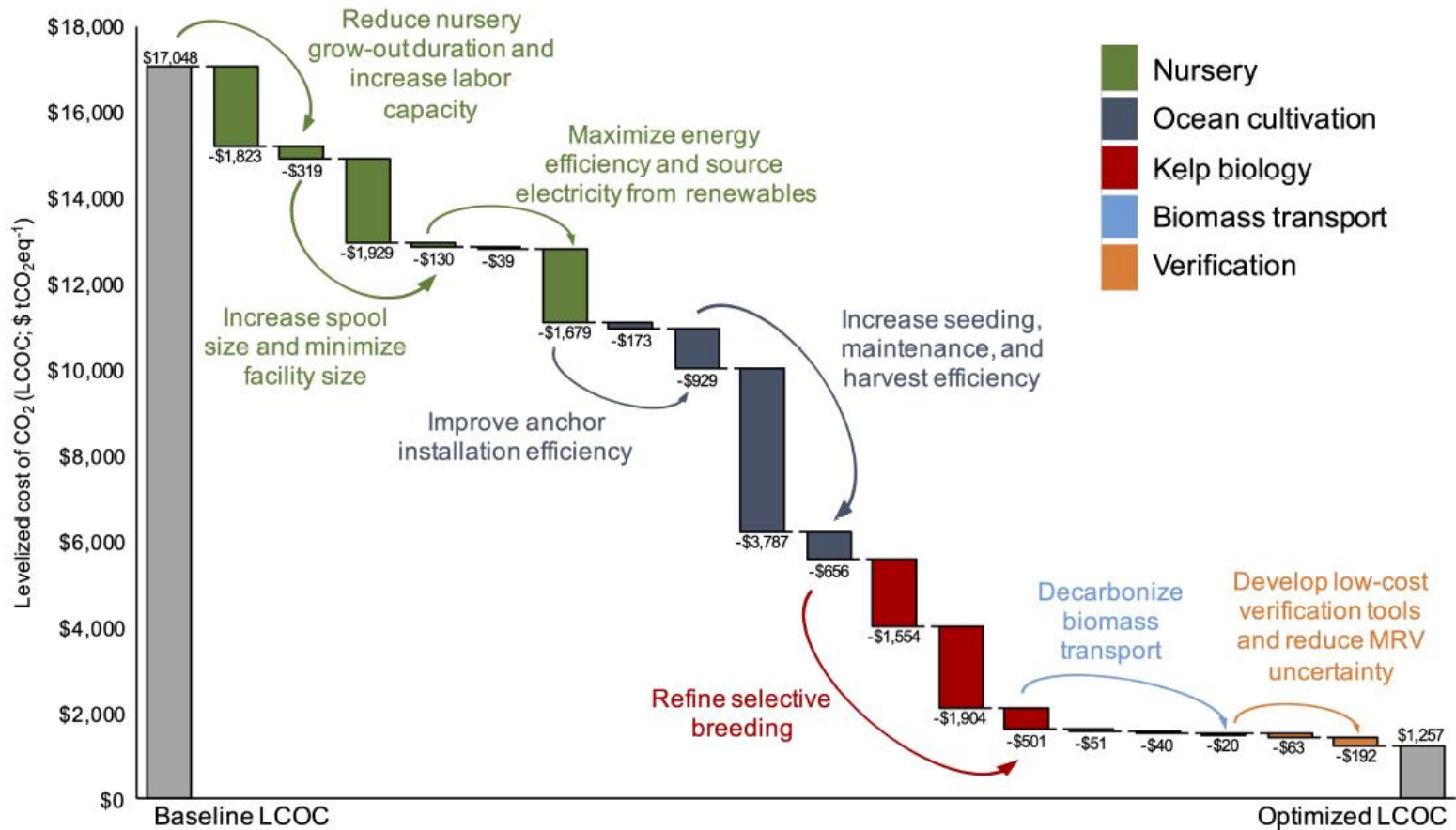


# Cost of production - 405 ha farm



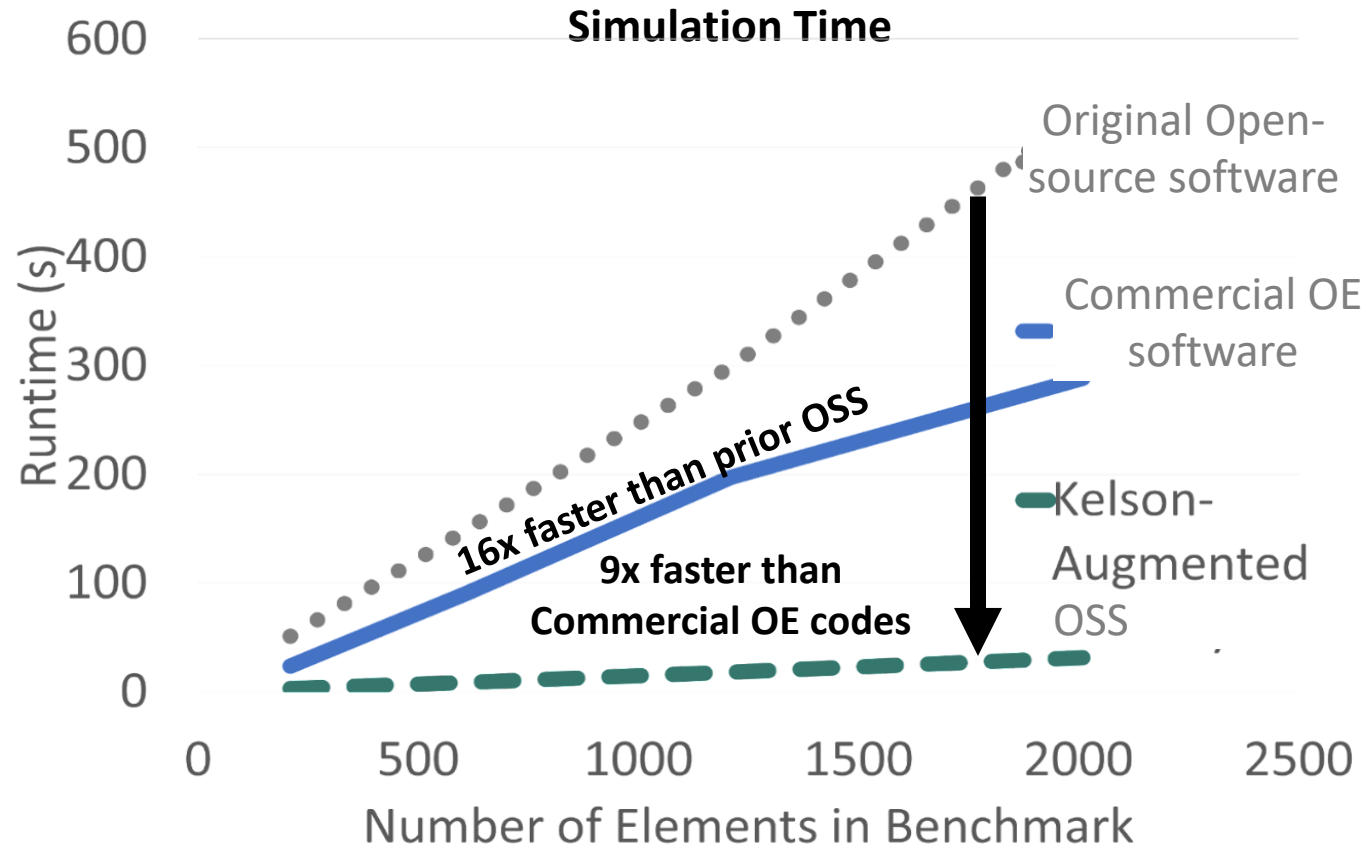
# \$/kg: Continuing Work

- Optimization Targets
  - De-risk farm designs and reduce CapEx
  - Automate seeding, harvest
  - Increase yields through selective breeding
  - Assess cost-benefit of gametophyte nursery culture
  - Decarbonize equipment supply chains and ocean cultivation
  - (Develop low-cost, accurate MRV technologies)



- **Summary:**
  - **Multiuse**
    - Design for deep water
    - Economies of scale appear to outweigh increased capital expenditures
  - **Uncertainty results in profit lost**
    - Validation, validation, validation
  - **Decouple “Distance from shore” and “exposure energy”**
  - $\epsilon_{\text{sheltered}} \neq \epsilon_{\text{exposed}} ; \text{Yield}_{\text{nearshore}} \neq \text{Yield}_{\text{nearshore}}$
- **Needs**
  - **Phycology: Influence of exposure energy on yield**
- **Next steps:**
  - **Interdisciplinary cost-optimization for offshore, exposed farms**
  - **Open-source Dynamic FEA**
  - **Comprehensive risk quantification -> Engineering Guidelines**
  - **Quantify Correlation between CapEx and Exposure Indices**

# Hydro-/Structural Dynamic FEA in Open-source Tools



- Advanced Features

- Non-quadratic drag equations
- 4-dimensional current variation (wakes)
- Realistic mixed directional seas
- Variable seafloor depth
- Kinematic stretching
- ...

## Kelson Marine

[Home](#) / [Technologies](#) / [Search Individual Projects](#)

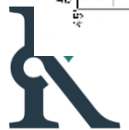
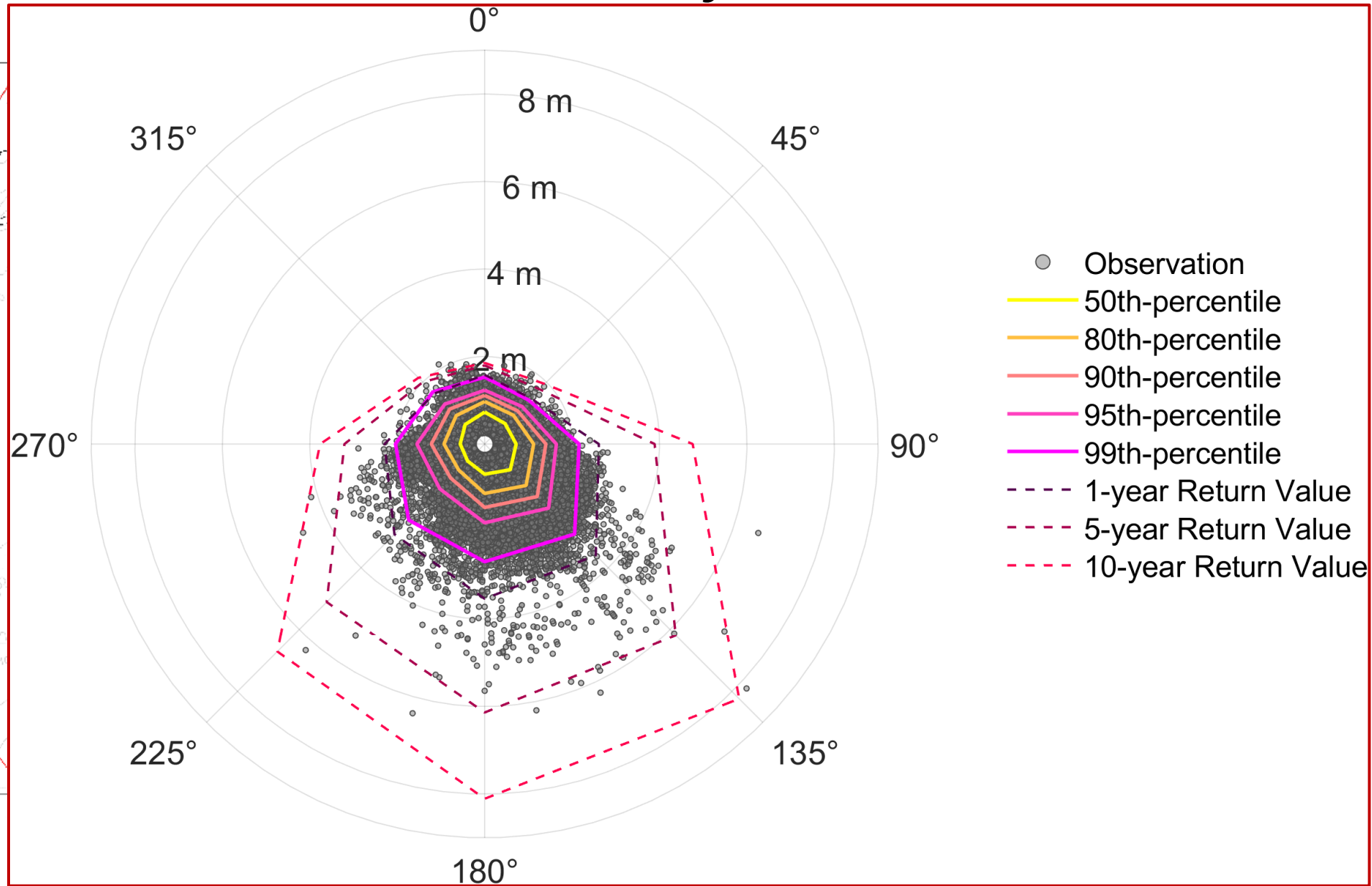
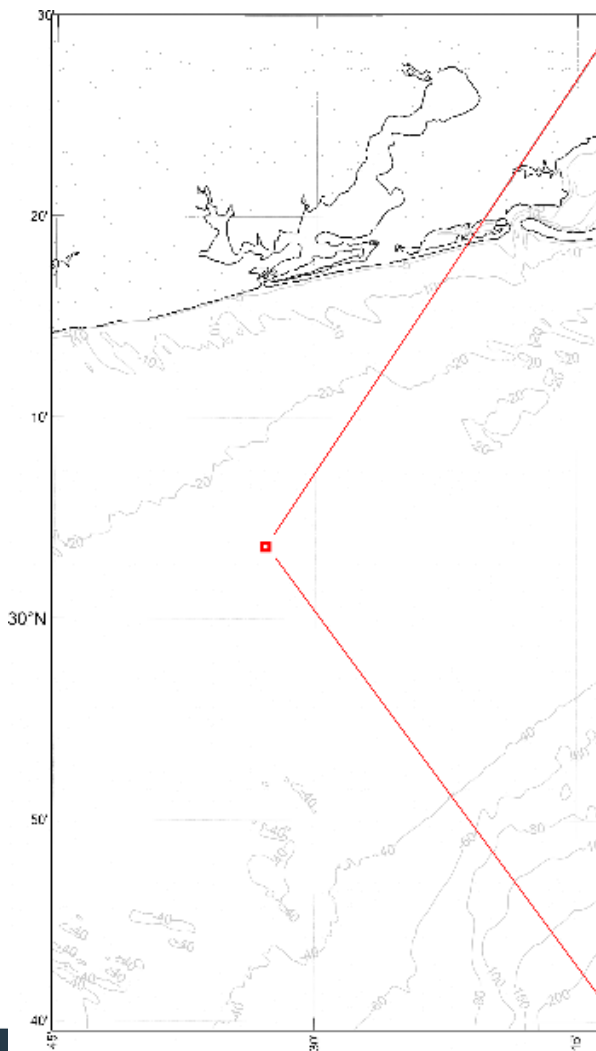
A Validated Finite Element Modeling Tool for Hydrodynamic Loading and Structural Analysis of Ocean-Deployed Macroalgae Farms Using Open-Source Tools

• Transportation  
• Transportation Fuels





# Metocean Risk Analysis



# Numerical Modeling—A brief history

Dewhurst (2016). Observed and predicted mooring line tensions for the submerged mussel raft

	Mean Tension, N	Standard deviation, N
	Line 2	Line 2
Field Experiment	1450	38
OrcaFlex	1920	84

Nicoll et al., 2011 (Fish Cage)

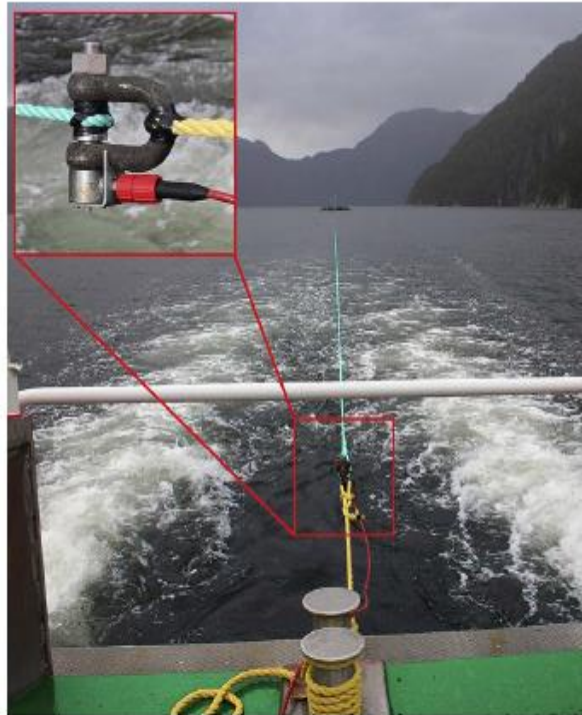
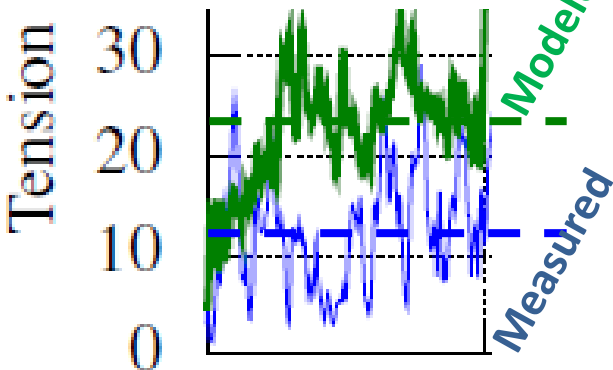


Fig. 3. Towing of the cage system. The cage was towed at a stable speed at which was ensured by monitoring a mobile network corrected GPS and the speed of the 350 m long tow rope and confirmed by a stable current velocity one meter upstream from the cage system. The detail frame shows the load shackle connection to the tow rope.

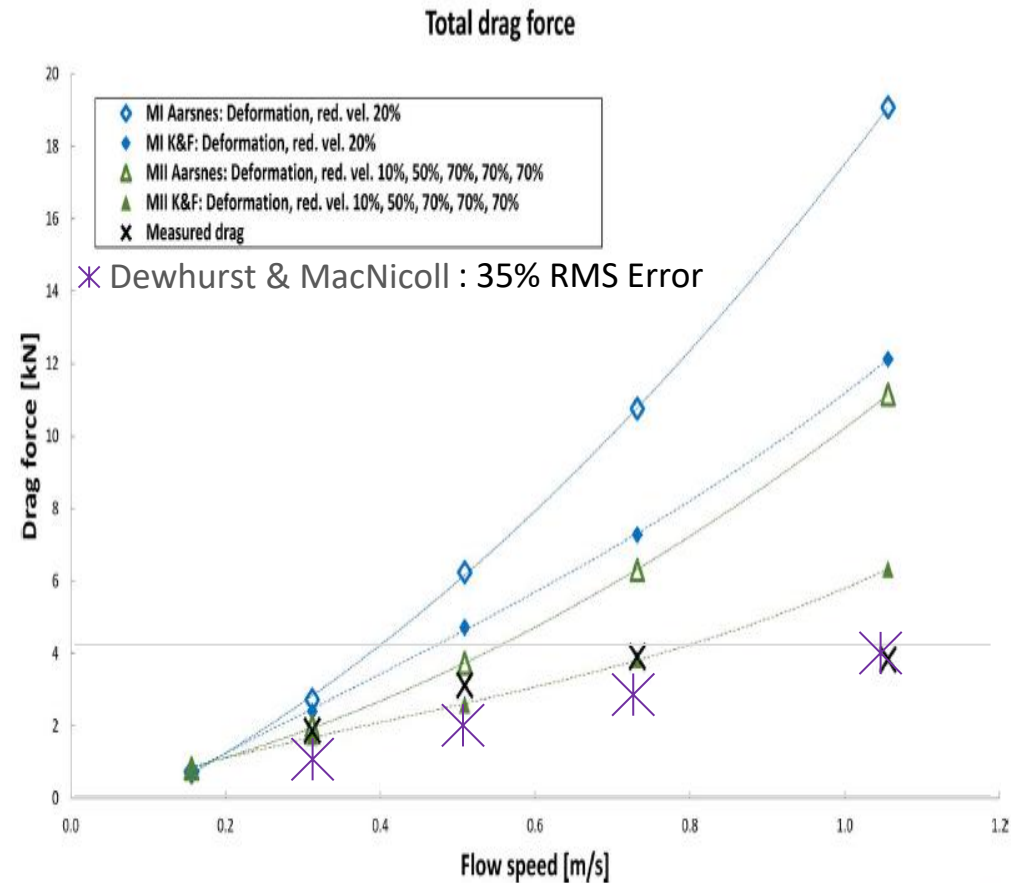


Fig. 9. Drag on the fish cage net at different flow speeds as measured and estimated by methods I (MI) and II (MII) and based on (Aarsnes et al., 1990) (Aarsnes) and (Kristiansen and Falinsen, 2012) (K&F). X marks the measured drag on the fish cage net, and (empty and filled)  $\diamond$  and  $\Delta$  mark the drag calculated using MI and MII, respectively.

# Resolving the term “Offshore”

## ICES Working Group on Open-Ocean Aquaculture

### Goals:

1. Promote common understanding and avoid misuse for different, partly arbitrary classifications, which can lead to misinterpretation and confusion among different actors, such as NGOs, licensers, and federal agencies;
2. Enable regulators to identify the characteristics of a marine aquaculture site;
3. Allow farmers to assess or quantitatively compare sites for development;
4. Equip developers and producers to identify operational parameters in which the equipment and vessels will need to be operating;
5. Provide insurers and investors with better means to assess risk and premiums;
6. Circumvent the emergence of narratives that root in different cognitive interpretations of the terminology in public discourse arenas.

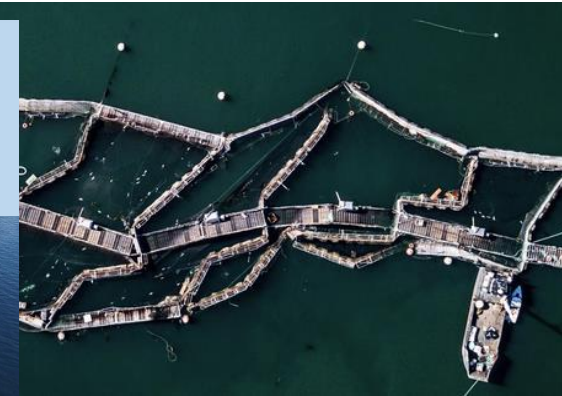


Buck, B. H., Bjelland, H., Bockus, A., Chambers, M., Costa-Pierce, B. A., Dewhurst, T., Ferreira, J., Føre, H. M., Fredriksson, D., Goseberg, N., Holmyard, J., Isbert, W., Krause, G., Markus, T., Papandroulakis, N., Scłodnick, T., Silkes, B., Strand, Å., Troell, M., Wiczorek, D., van den Burg, S., Heasman, K. . **Resolving the term ‘offshore aquaculture’ by decoupling ‘exposed’ and ‘distance from shore’ for managers and policy makers.** Journal of the World Aquaculture Society. *In preparation.*

# Engineering to:

- Prevent disaster
- Improve performance
  - Operations
    - Navigability
    - Ease of install
    - Weather windows
  - Yield
    - Maintain optimal depth
    - Limit storm loss
    - Avoid entanglement
- Reduce costs

## 2017 Cypress Island Atlantic Salmon Net Pen Failure: An Investigation and Review



- As a result of excessive loads on the net pen system created by:
  - currents and net sizes exceeding those specified by the net pen manufacturer,

### State kills Atlantic salmon farming in Washington

Originally published March 2, 2018 at 4:14 pm | Updated March 23, 2018 at 9:29 am The Seattle Times

Dewhurst, 2019

RNZ SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENT STORIES - NEW ZEALAND

## MUSSEL FARMERS MILLIONS OF DOLLARS OUT OF POCKET AFTER STORMS

JULY 30, 2021

VESSEL ACCIDENT REPORT		DEPARTMENT OF BOATING AND WATERWAYS		PAGE 25 OF 25
SUPPLEMENTAL / NARRATIVE (check one):	DATE OF ACCIDENT	TIME (2400)	REPORT NUMBER	CITATION NUMBER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Narrative Continuation Vessel Accident Report	1-3-19	1030	19-000290	
<input type="checkbox"/> Supplemental Vessel Accident Report	LOCATION			BEAT
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	Approximately 6 miles off of Huntington Beach			AGENCY
	CITY	Pacific Ocean	N/A	OCSD

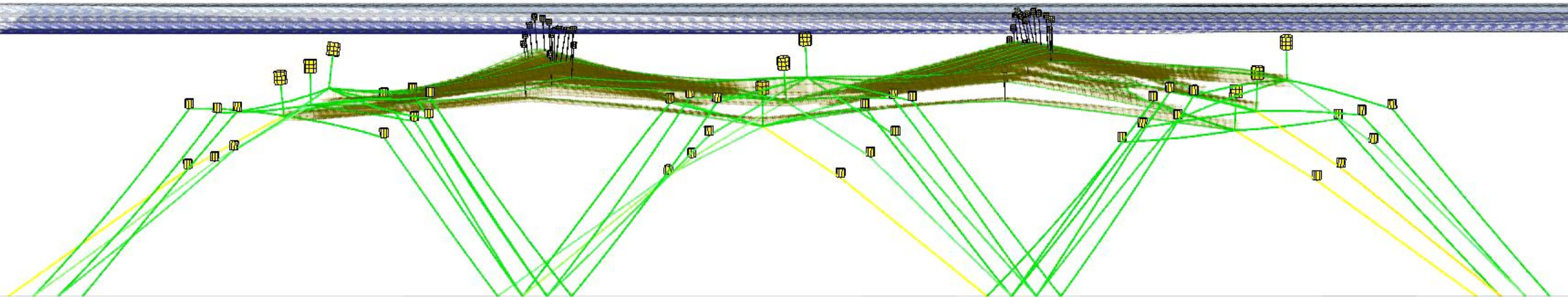
### CAUSE:

The primary cause of this accident was the approximate 400' section of broken coiled line that had been tied off to a section of the west side of the CSR. While the line was tied off to an adjacent line in an attempt to keep it out of the way, the buoyancy of the line created an unseen hazard that would have been very difficult to avoid.



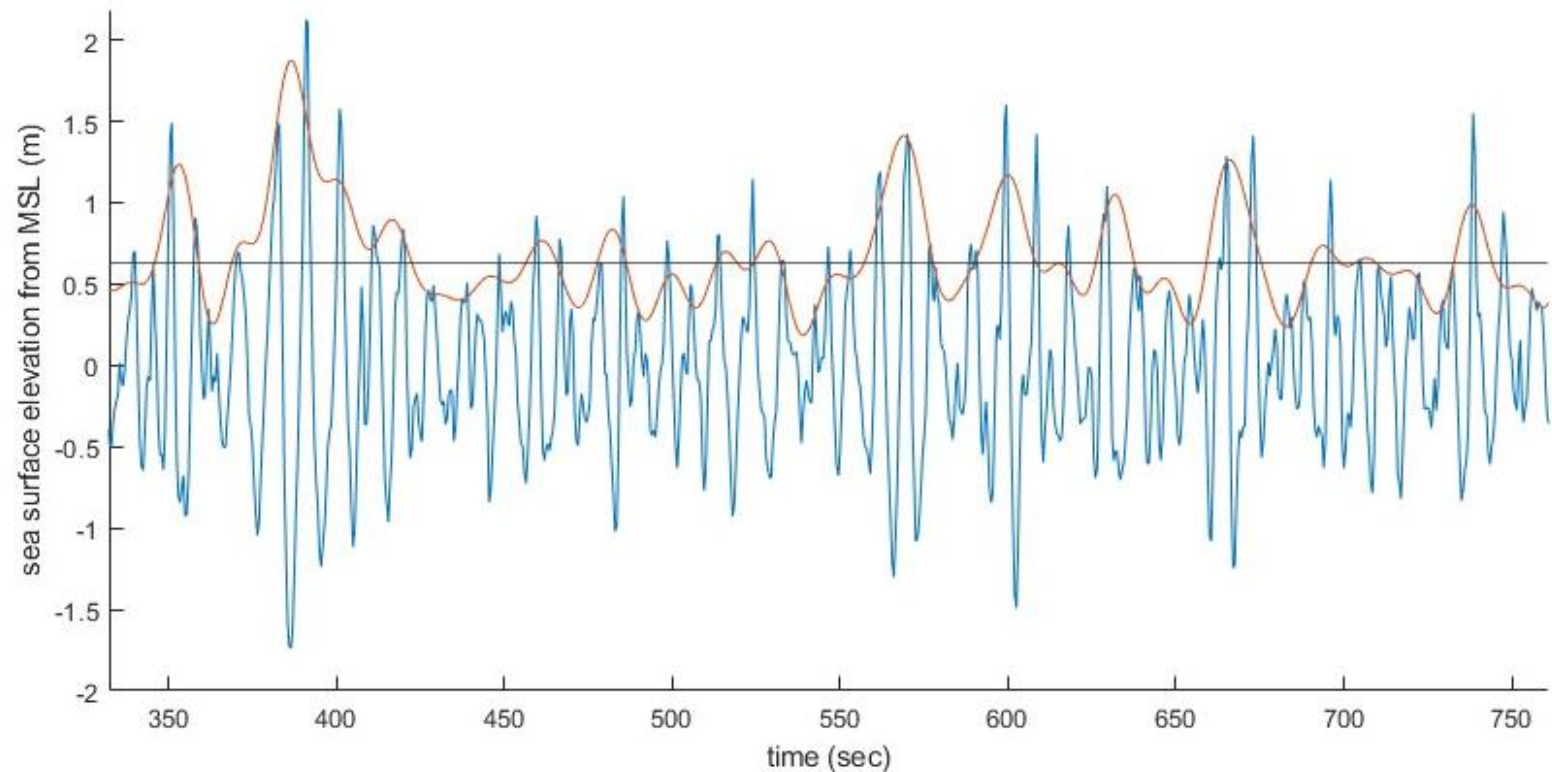
## Nonlinear Physics: Low-frequency Tension Oscillations

- Observed in both model predictions and full-scale, *in-situ* measurements



## Nonlinear Physics: Low-frequency Tension Oscillations

- Defined wave group envelope according to List (1991)
- Correlation of mean period of low frequency response and average envelope period
- Regression models showed correlation of low frequency tension response with wave group envelop heights



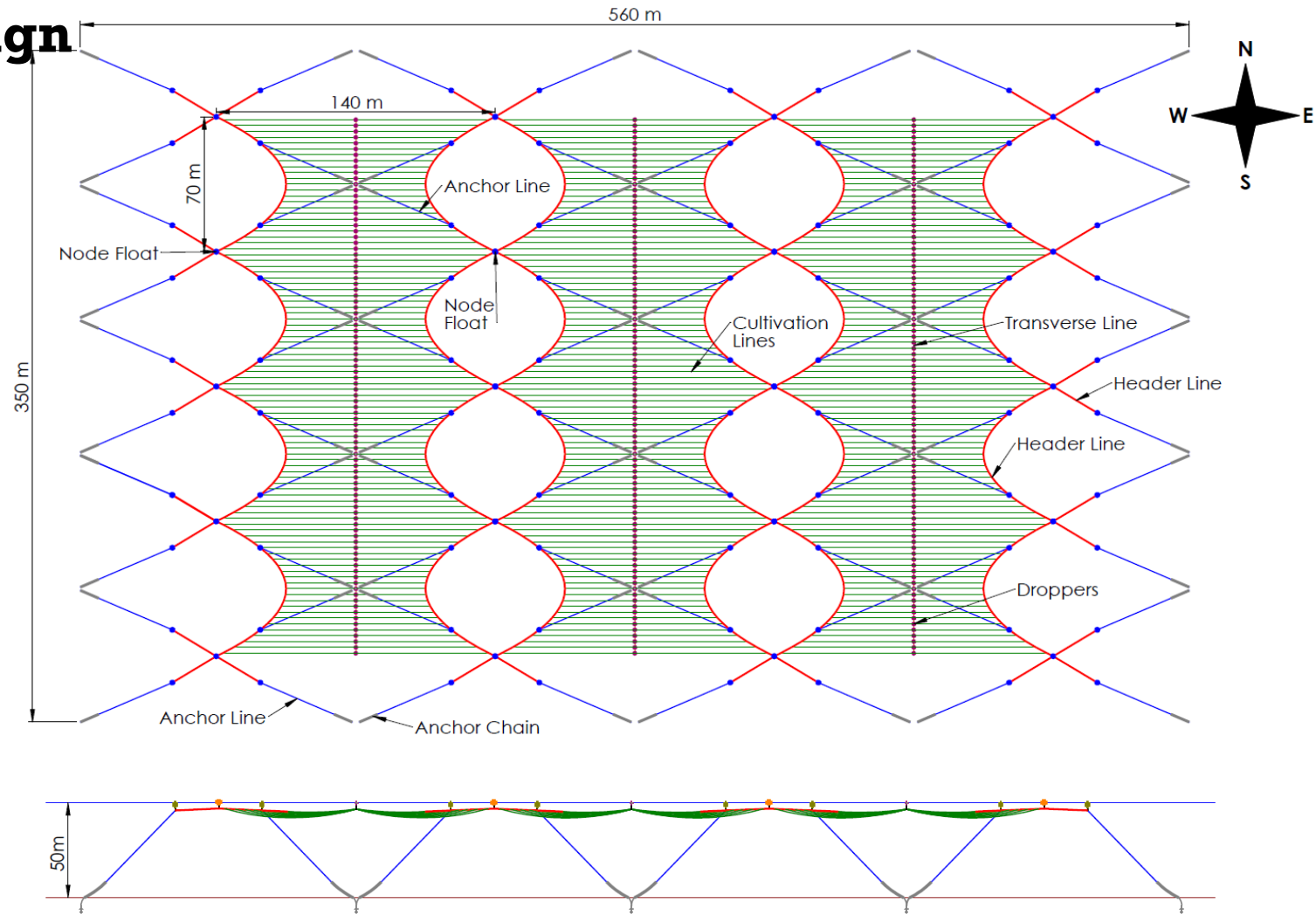
Load case Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Envelope mean period $T_{m,env}$ (sec)	28	31	25	23	29	31	21	24	29
Low frequency tension $T_{m,F,low}$ (sec)	26	32	26	28	31	30	26	28	28



# Commercial Scale Farm Design

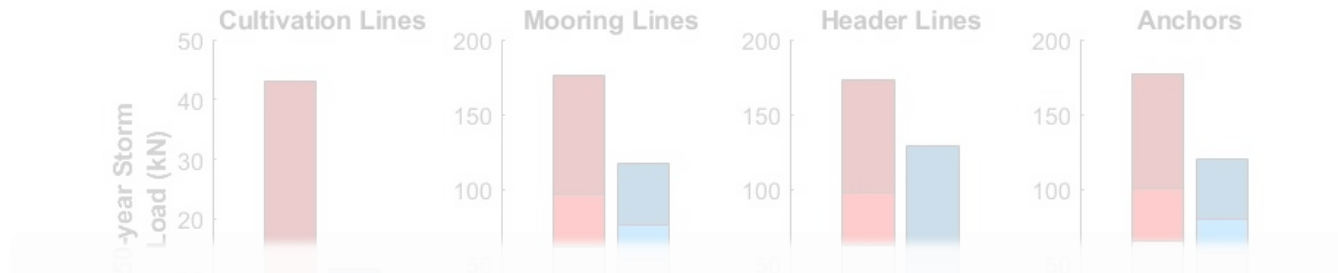
- 50 m water depth
- 140 x 70 m (~1 hectare) tiles
- 4 x 3 *tile* array
- 3 m cultivation line spacing

Farm Variant	Mooring Lines	Cultivation Lines
Composite Line Farm	fiberglass rebar	fiberglass rebar
Nylon Rope Farm	12 plait nylon rope	3 strand nylon rope

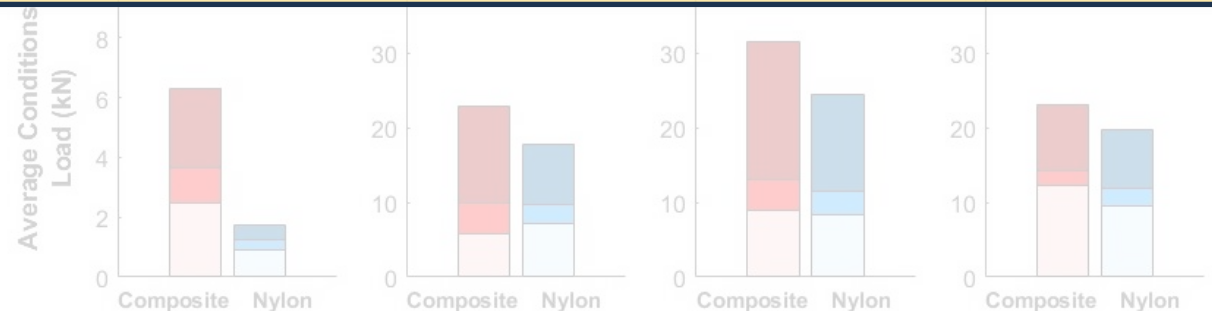


# Economic Analysis

- Extracted statistics for each component and load case type:
  - Extreme loads
  - Significant load magnitudes
  - Mean loads
- Loads higher for the composite line farm
- Annualized structural capital costs for the composite line farm were near parity



Components	Serviceable Life (years)	Composite Line Farm			Nylon Rope Farm		
		Annualized Cost	Annual. Cost per Tile	% Total Cost	Annualized Cost	Annual. Cost per Tile	% Total Cost
Cultivation Lines	6	\$ 26,174	\$ 2,181	19%	\$ 18,286	\$ 1,524	14%
Header Lines	10	\$ 16,864	\$ 1,405	12%	\$ 14,367	\$ 1,197	11%
Mooring Lines	10	\$ 9,570	\$ 798	7%	\$ 22,523	\$ 1,877	17%
Anchor Chain	10	\$ 7,160	\$ 597	5%	\$ 6,421	\$ 535	5%
Anchors	20	\$ 5,991	\$ 499	4%	\$ 3,251	\$ 271	2%
Tension Floats	15	\$ 31,904	\$ 2,659	23%	\$ 31,715	\$ 2,643	24%
Node Floats	15	\$ 18,056	\$ 1,505	13%	\$ 17,987	\$ 1,499	13%
Droppers	10	\$ 6,627	\$ 552	5%	\$ 5,644	\$ 470	4%
Connection Plates	10	\$ 12,404	\$ 1,034	9%	\$ 12,404	\$ 1,034	9%
Transverse Lines	6	\$ 2,329	\$ 194	2%	\$ 2,320	\$ 193	2%
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$ 137,080</b>	<b>\$ 11,423</b>		<b>\$ 134,918</b>	<b>\$ 11,243</b>	





# Validation – Ocean Rainforest Inc.

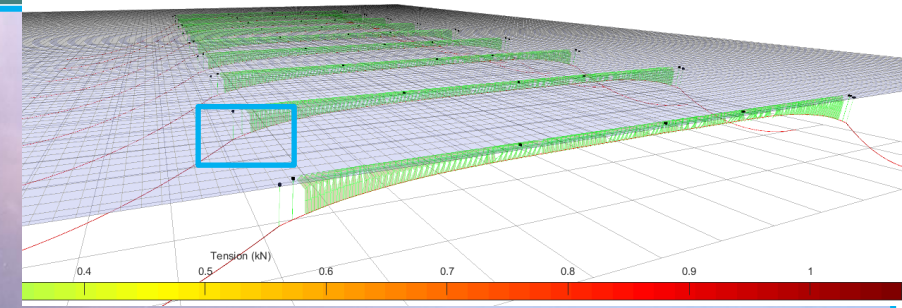
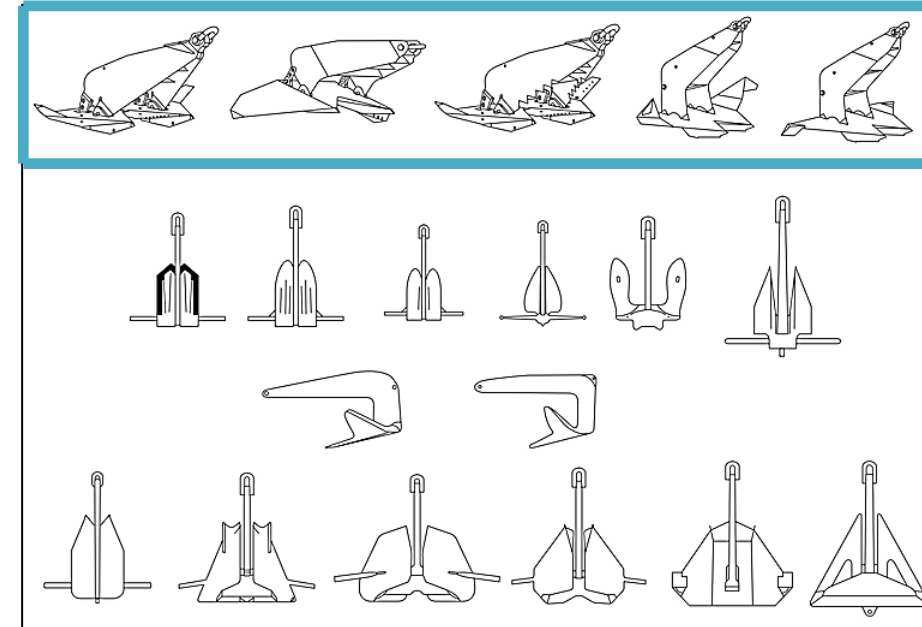


Photo Credit: William Klingbeil. Sponsored by US DOE ARPA-e MARINER via Ocean Rainforest

# Anchoring

1. Compute *design capacity*
  - Loads from simulation
  - Apply holding factor
2. Decide on anchor type
  - High efficiency drag embedment
3. Determine minimum anchor size
  - Account for *soil type*
  - Account for *uplift*
4. Installation is 12% of total project cost



	Anchor Mass
Design A	-
Design B	30% larger
Design C	85% larger

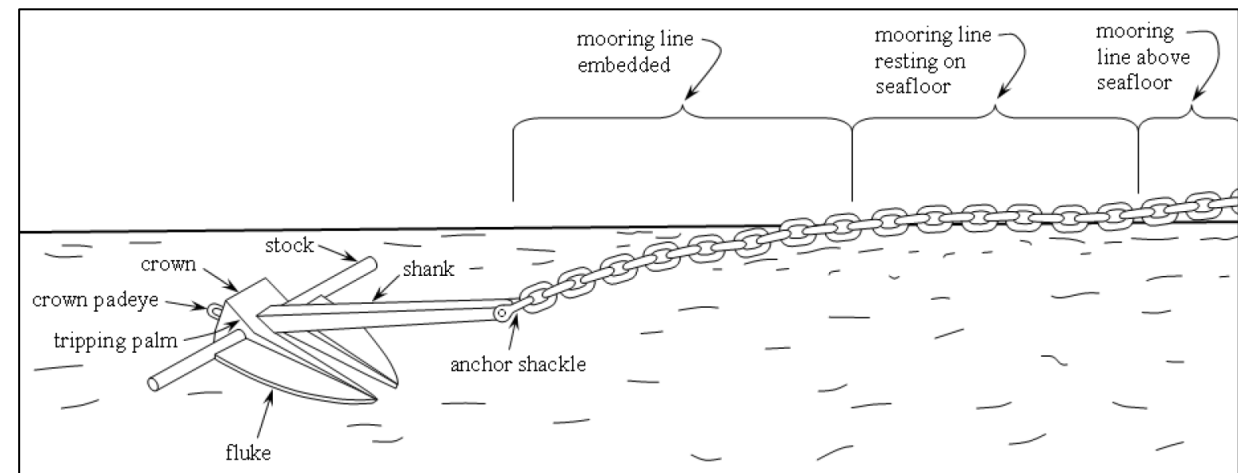
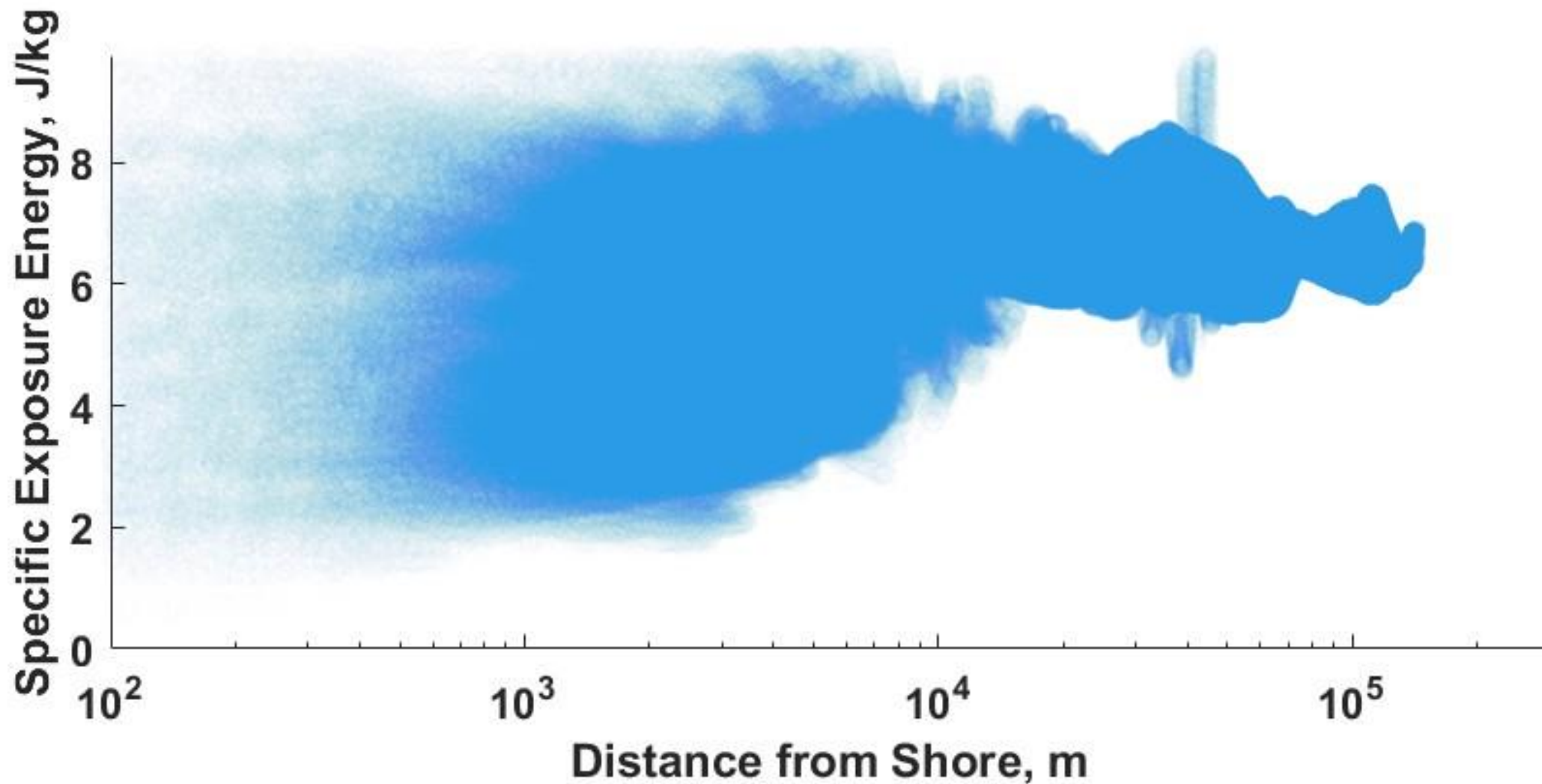


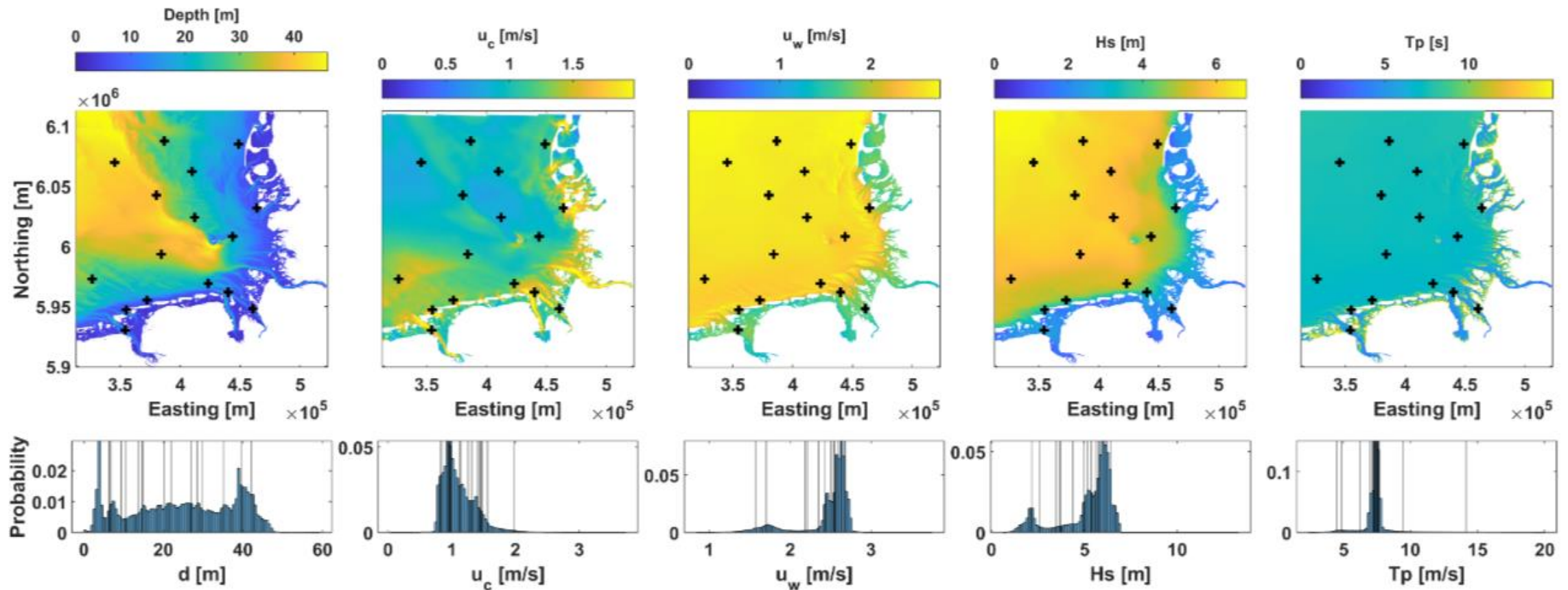
Figure source: American Petroleum Institute, 2008.



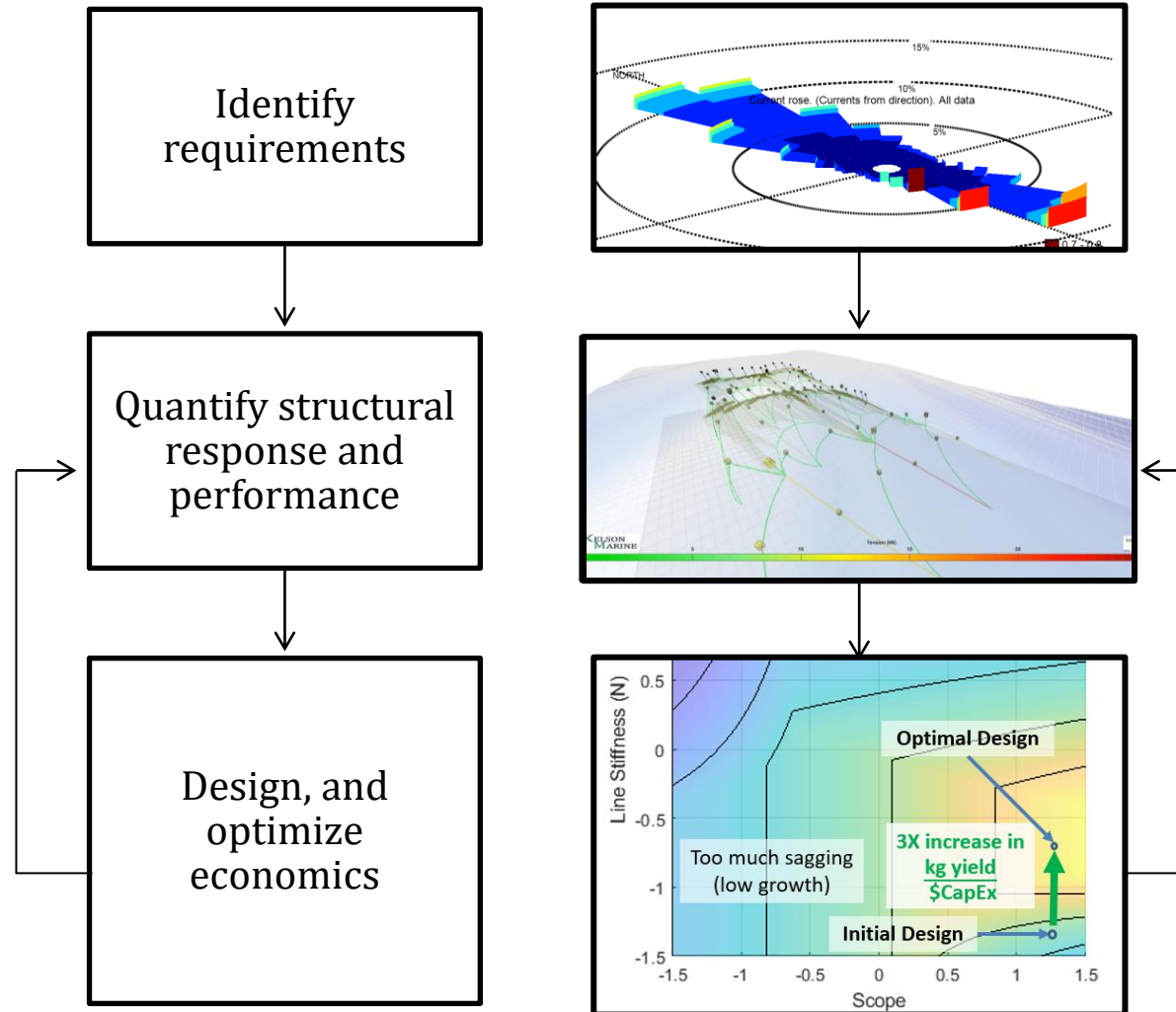
# Exposure vs. Distance



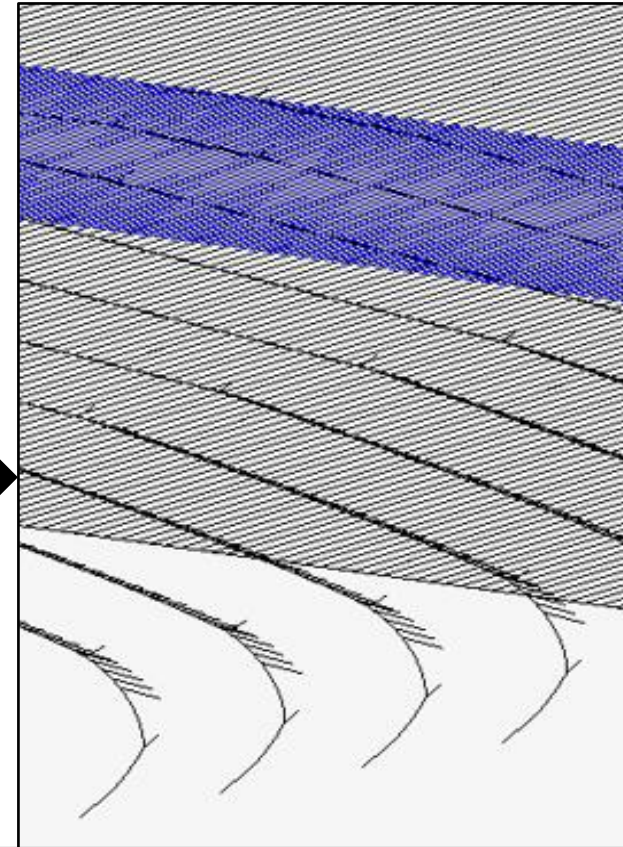
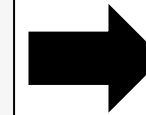
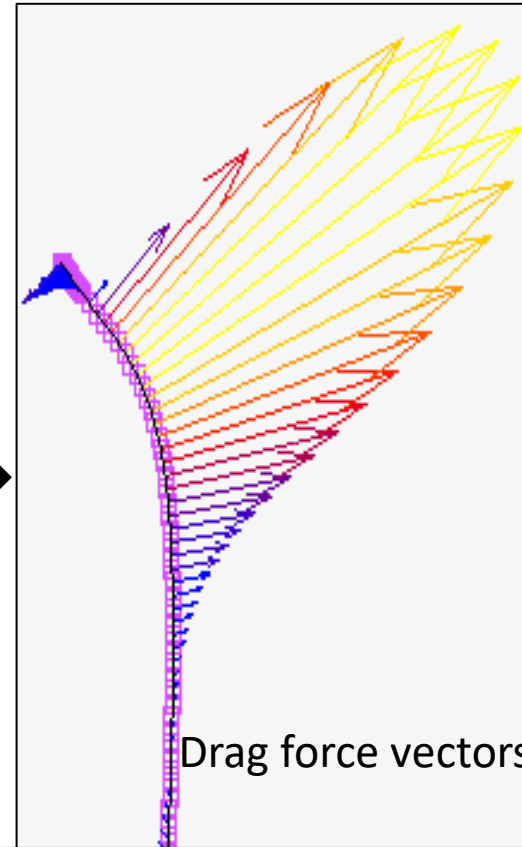
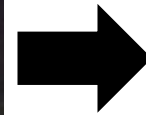
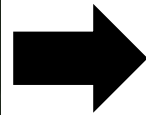
# The Cost of Exposure Energy: *Correlating Exposure Index to \$CapEx*



# Now we can engineer with *confidence*

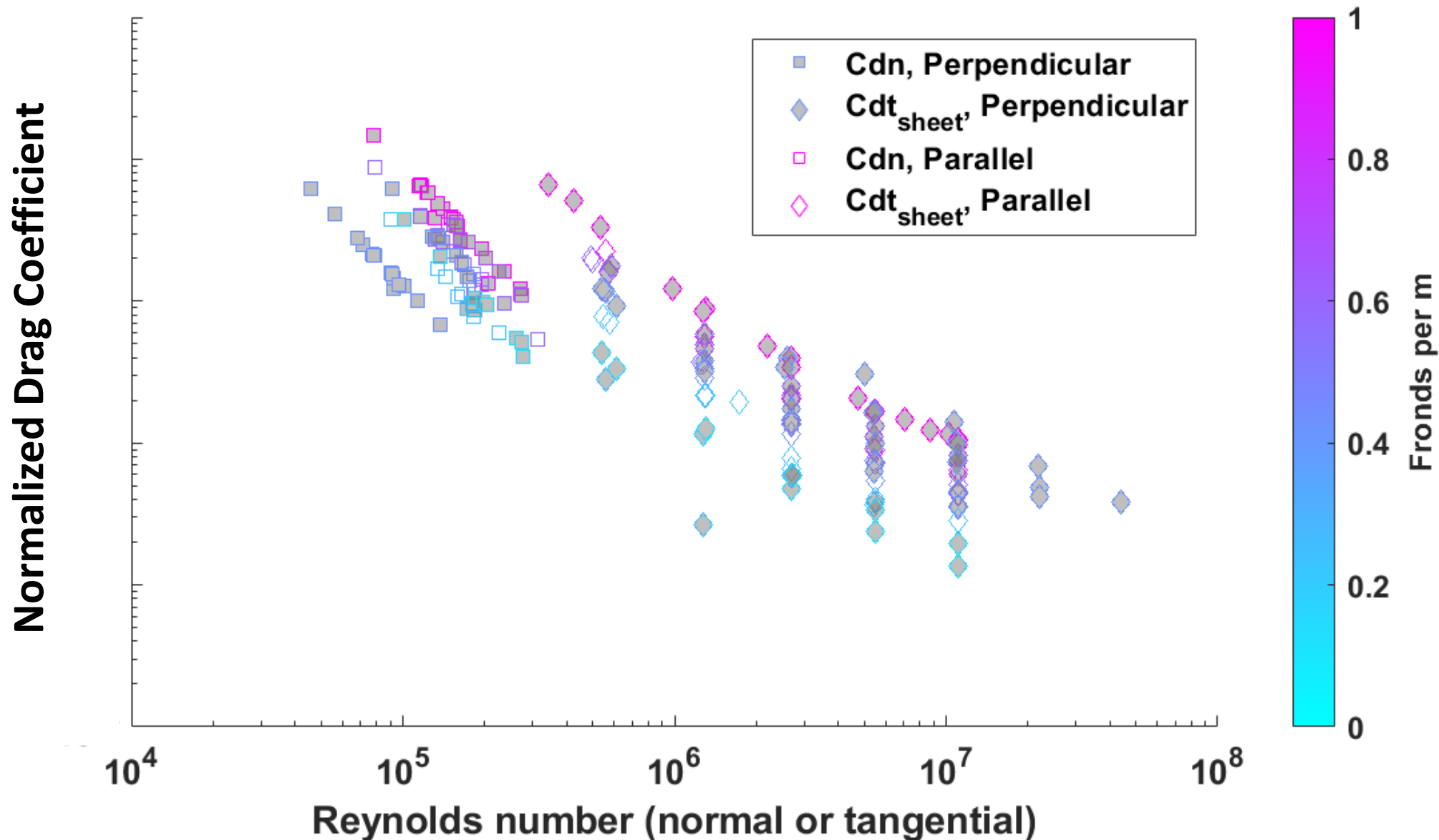


# Hydro-/Structural Dynamic FEA



$$\mathbf{f} = \frac{1}{2} \rho D_n C_n |\mathbf{V}_{Rn}| \mathbf{V}_{Rn}^{\beta_n - 1} + \frac{1}{2} \rho D_t C_t |\mathbf{V}_{Rt}| \mathbf{V}_{Rt}^{\beta_t - 1} + \rho A \dot{\mathbf{V}}_n + \rho A C_a \dot{\mathbf{V}}_{Rn} .$$

# Macrocystis Drag Coefficients



## Economic Analysis

- Applied specification procedures indicated by Norwegian Aquaculture Standard
- Estimated annualized costs, based on:
  - Quotes from vendors
  - Material use and 75% profit margin
  - Typical serviceable lifetimes

Components	Serviceable Life (years)	Composite Line Farm			Nylon Rope Farm		
		Annualized Cost	Annual. Cost per Tile	% Total Cost	Annualized Cost	Annual. Cost per Tile	% Total Cost
Cultivation Lines	6	\$ 26,174	\$ 2,181	19%	\$ 18,286	\$ 1,524	14%
Header Lines	10	\$ 16,864	\$ 1,405	12%	\$ 14,367	\$ 1,197	11%
Mooring Lines	10	\$ 9,570	\$ 798	7%	\$ 22,523	\$ 1,877	17%
Anchor Chain	10	\$ 7,160	\$ 597	5%	\$ 6,421	\$ 535	5%
Anchors	20	\$ 5,991	\$ 499	4%	\$ 3,251	\$ 271	2%
Tension Floats	15	\$ 31,904	\$ 2,659	23%	\$ 31,715	\$ 2,643	24%
Node Floats	15	\$ 18,056	\$ 1,505	13%	\$ 17,987	\$ 1,499	13%
Droppers	10	\$ 6,627	\$ 552	5%	\$ 5,644	\$ 470	4%
Connection Plates	10	\$ 12,404	\$ 1,034	9%	\$ 12,404	\$ 1,034	9%
Transverse Lines	6	\$ 2,329	\$ 194	2%	\$ 2,320	\$ 193	2%
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$ 137,080</b>	<b>\$ 11,423</b>		<b>\$ 134,918</b>	<b>\$ 11,243</b>	

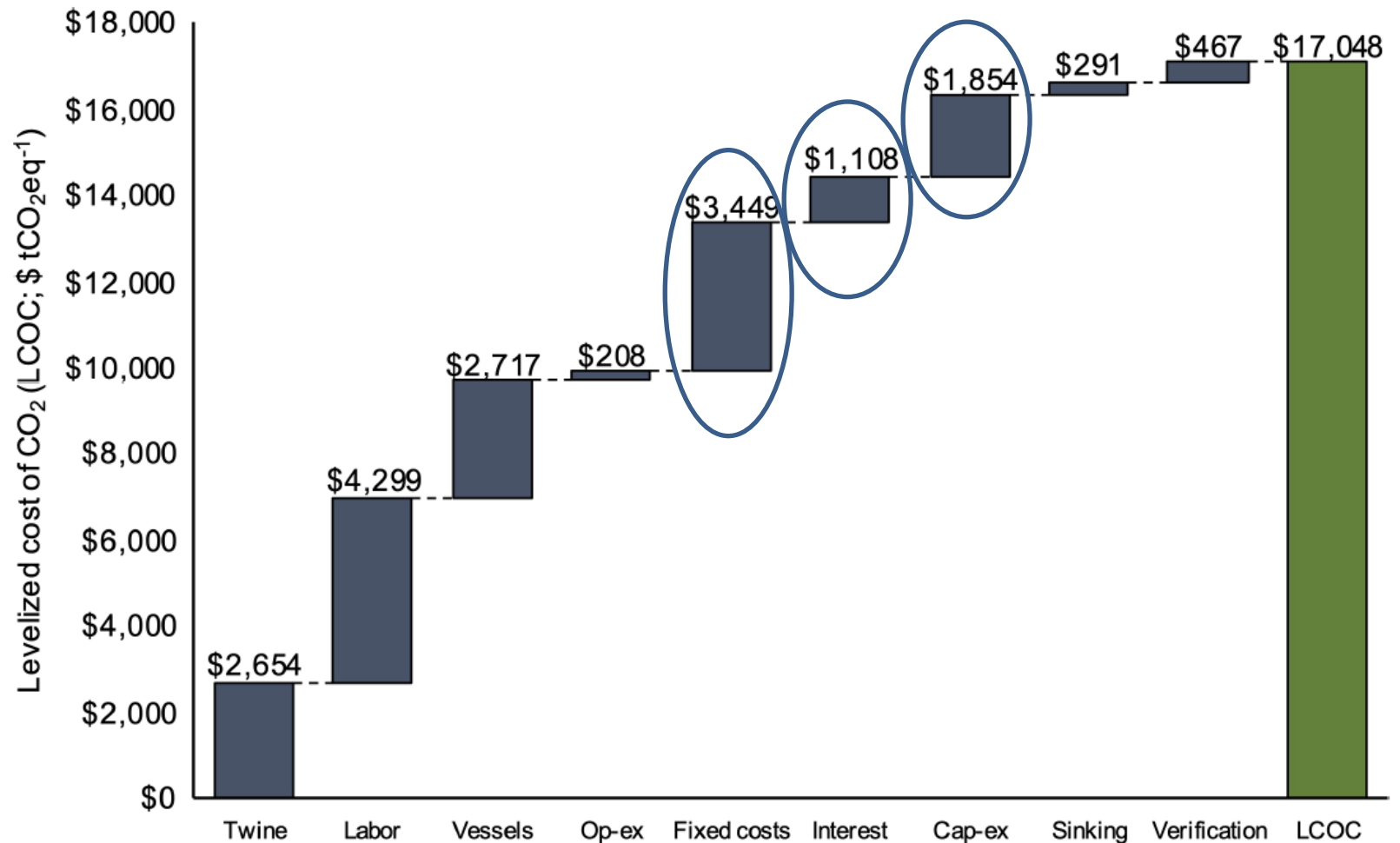
## Results





# Breakdown of annual expenses within the baseline BTEM for LCOC<sub>Carbon</sub> (\$ tCO<sub>2</sub>eq<sup>-1</sup>).

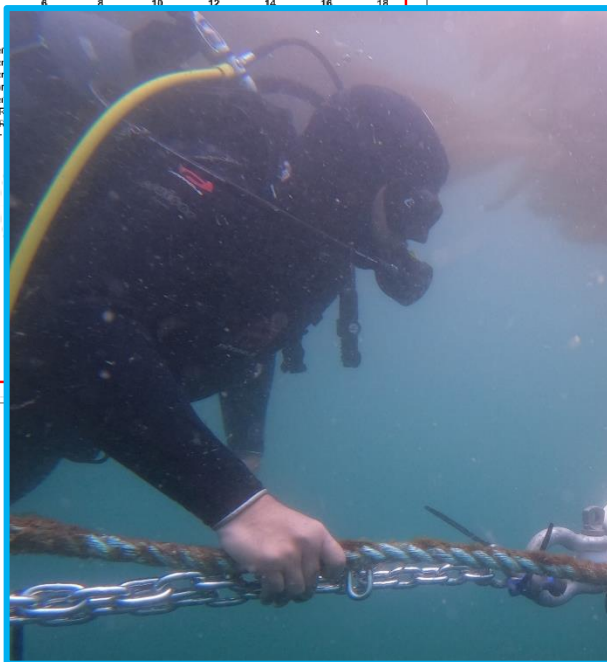
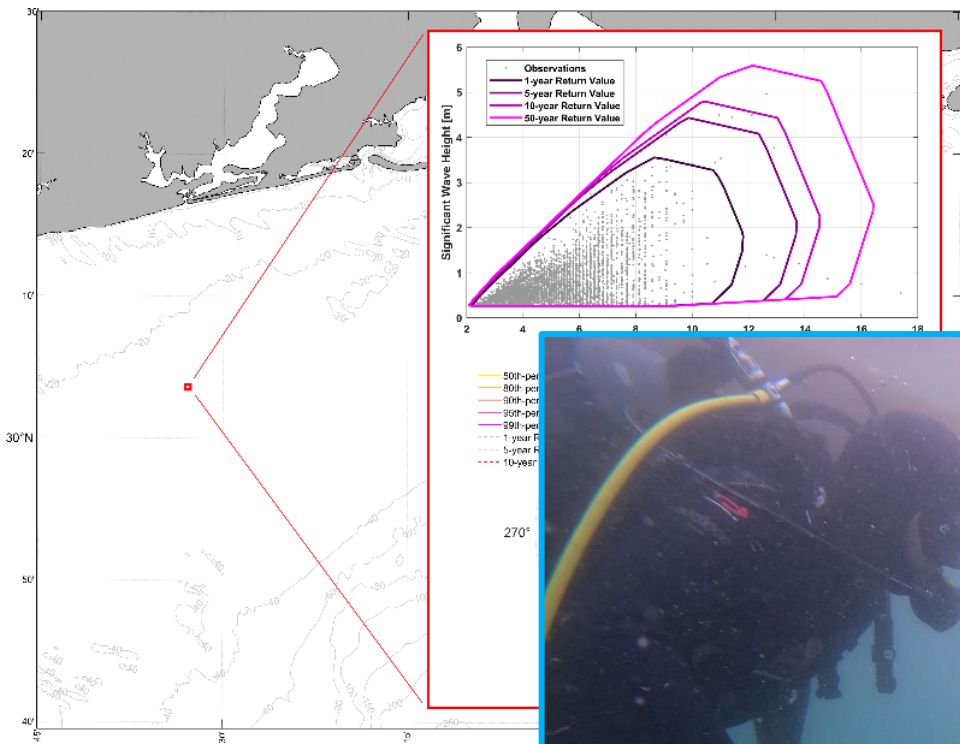
- Hyper-realistic costing with engineering analysis incorporated
- In Maine state waters
- Using baseline technology



Coleman, S., Dewhurst, T., Fredriksson, D. W., St. Gelais, A. T., Cole, K. L., MacNicoll, M., Laufer, E., & Brady, D. C. (2022). *Quantifying baseline costs and cataloging potential optimization strategies for kelp aquaculture carbon dioxide removal*. *Frontiers*.



*Rigorous ocean analysis and risk quantification* “Smart Farming”



**Recommended design practice**  
for offshore & nearshore  
**Seaweed growing systems**  
Version 1.0 2023



**Document information**

<b>Date</b>	: 30 March 2023
<b>Company</b>	: Aqitec
<b>Client</b>	: Invest-NL
<b>Version</b>	: 1.0
<b>Document status</b>	: Released version
<b>Classification</b>	: Report
<b>Nr of pages</b>	: 31
<b>Written by</b>	: I.W. Wieling, I.S. Wieling
<b>Project approval</b>	: North Sea Farmers E. Brouwers



**Detailed approval** : Van Oord Offshore



**Basic approval and verification** : DNV



# Exposure Index: Resources

