

ICES Cooperative Research Report

Rapport des Recherches Collectives

No. 266

August 2004

Mesh Size Measurement Revisited

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Recommended format for purposes of citation:

ICES. 2004. Mesh Size Measurement Revisited. ICES Cooperative Research Report, No. 266. 56 pp.

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ISBN 87-7482-016-8
ISSN 1017-6195

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1 Introduction

In 1291 Philip IV the Fair, King of France, forbade “*de pescher avec engins de file de quoy la maille (n ait) la moule d’un gros tournois d’argent*” or, to fish with nets with meshes smaller than the size of a silver coin of that time (Hovart, 1985). This silver coin can be seen as a predecessor of the present-day wedge gauge used to check whether the meshes of fishing nets comply with modern technical regulations.

A mesh gauge developed by C. J. W. Westhoff under the auspices of the ICES Comparative Fishing Committee became the standard gauge for research activities in ICES countries in 1962 (ICES, 1962a) and became known as the ICES gauge (Figure 1). To make a measurement the ICES gauge exerts a fixed longitudinal measuring force on the mesh. The recommended measuring force is 4 kilogramforce (kgf). When the ICES gauge is correctly used, the measurements are free of human influence. Since its introduction the ICES gauge has been generally used in selectivity experiments, to provide scientific advice on minimum regulated mesh sizes. However, since 1962 a wide range of new twines and netting types have been adopted in the fishing industry. These modern twines vary significantly in thickness and stiffness, characteristics which affect both mesh size and selectivity.

For fisheries inspection the legal mesh gauge is the much simpler wedge gauge (Figure 2). The wedge gauge is normally operated by hand force and this makes the measurements liable to human influences. Therefore, a weight or dynamometer is used to control the measuring force in case the measurements are contested. Because this procedure generally yields lower mesh openings than the hand force, it is hardly ever requested by the fishermen.

It is generally acknowledged that the measurements made with the ICES gauge yield lower mesh openings than the wedge gauge used by fisheries inspectors (Ferro and Xu, 1996; Fonteyne *et al.*, 1998). This difference implies that a codend with the legal minimum mesh size, measured with the wedge gauge, will have a lower selectivity than anticipated, since the proposed minimum mesh size was based on experiments carried out with the ICES gauge.

The question as to whether a 4 kgf load is still appropriate to exert sufficient force to stretch the mesh fully lengthwise in modern netting types was first raised during an EU-sponsored Concerted Action Project to evaluate mesh measurement methodologies (Fonteyne *et al.*, 1998). The participants in this project (scientists, fisheries inspectors, fishermen representatives, netting manufacturers) recognized the need to consider the adoption of a standard mesh measurement method for use by enforcement agencies, scientists and the fishing industry. In 1998/1999 the ICES Working Group on Fishing Technology and Fish Behaviour (WGFTFB) established the need to refine mesh measurement methodologies to take account of the wider range of

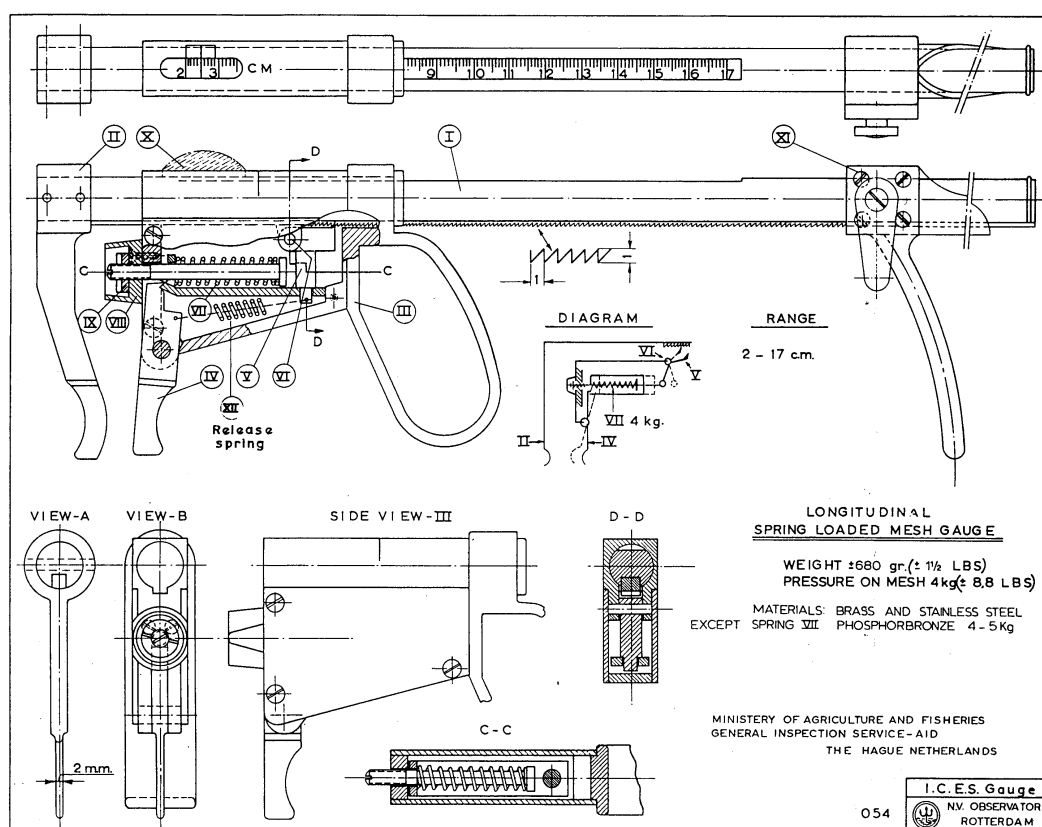


Figure 1. ICES Mesh Gauge.

twines and netting types used in the fishing industry since 1962. To deal with this request, ICES adopted Council Resolution 1999/2B02 and established a Study Group on Mesh Measurement Methodology (SGMESH) under the Fisheries Technology Committee with the following Terms of Reference:

- a) advise on improvements and further standardization of current mesh measurement practices in view of the netting types now in use in ICES Member Countries;
- b) consider whether the current definition of mesh size is still appropriate for scientific and industrial purposes;
- c) compile an inventory of commercially available netting associated with the selectivity process, identifying the fisheries in which they are used;
- d) consider the need to define groups of netting types for which the same measurement conditions (e.g., tension) can be applied; and
- e) propose the specification of a suitable mesh measurement methodology and the conditions under which mesh measurements for all fishing gears in ICES areas are made.

The Study Group was active from 2000 till 2003 and had four meetings:

Ijmuiden, The Netherlands, 8–9 April 2000;
Seattle, USA, 21–22 April 2001;
Sète, France, 3–5 June 2002; and
Oostende, Belgium, 19–21 March 2003.

A list of all participants in these four meetings is included at the end of the report.

The 2003 meeting concentrated on the analysis and discussion of the inter-laboratory tests made to determine the most appropriate measuring force, the proposal for a new mesh measurement methodology and the need for further standardization. The ultimate aim of the SGMESH was that the new methodology will be used by all: scientists, fisheries inspectors and the industry. With the general acceptance of the proposed methodology in mind, the Study Group was of the opinion that advice from inspection services and netting manufacturers should be sought in this matter and invited representatives of these services to its final meeting.

This *ICES Cooperative Research Report* reviews relevant definitions and current mesh measurement practices and reviews the activities of SGMESH that ultimately led to the proposals for a new mesh measurement methodology.

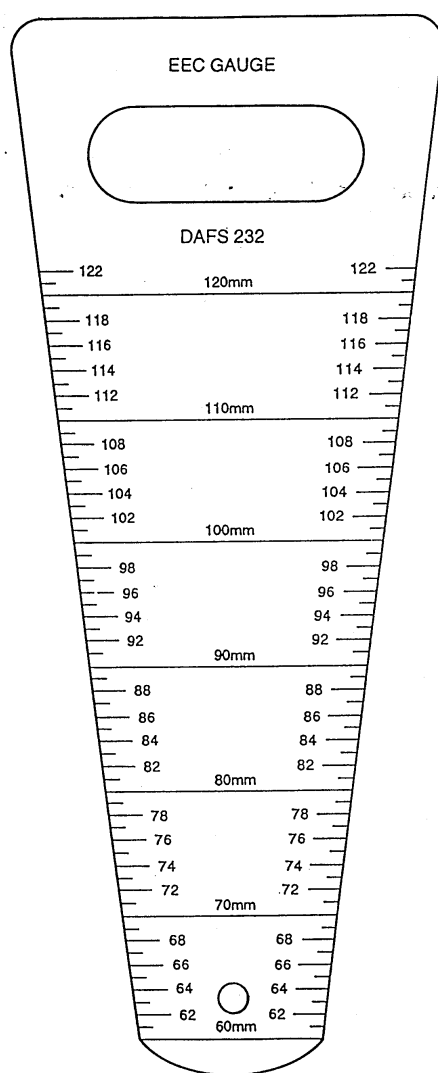
The work in preparing this report was carried out by a core group responsible for the numerous measurements and for analysing the data. The following persons have contributed to the core group's activities:

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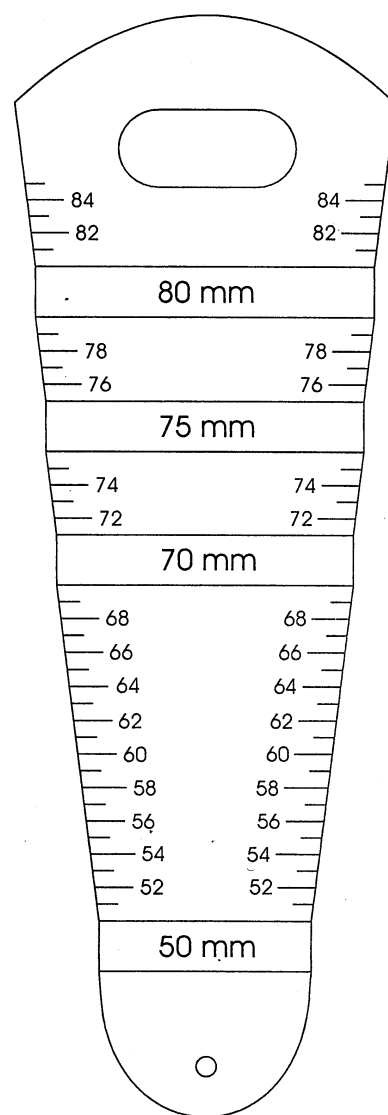
Acknowledgements

Special thanks to Rene Holst from Constat (Hjørring, Denmark) for the statistical analysis of the measurement data.

The editors are grateful to José Gramaxo, EUROCORD, Barry O'Neill, Fisheries Research Services - Marine Laboratory, Aberdeen, UK, and Stephen J. Walsh, Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Centre, Newfoundland, Canada, who provided valuable comments on a draft of this report and to Ian Penny, who carried out the twine thickness measurements at the Fisheries Research Services - Marine Laboratory, Aberdeen, UK.



a



b

Figure 2. Wedge gauges.

2 Definitions and units

2.1 Definitions

The principal terms relating to netting for fishing nets are given in the International Standard EN ISO 1107- Fishing nets – Netting – Basic terms and definitions (Anon., 2003a). The terms of interest for the present publication are listed below:

netting: a meshed structure of indefinite shape and size composed of one yarn or of one or more systems of yarns interlaced or joined, or obtained by any other means, for example by stamping or cutting from sheet material or by extrusion;

netting yarn: all type of yarns suitable for the manufacturing of netting;

the principal types of netting yarns are twines;

netting twine: the product of one twisting operation embracing two or more single yarns or monofilaments;

cabled netting twine: the product of further twisting operations embracing two or more netting twines;

braided netting twine: the product of braiding or plaiting netting yarns and/or netting twines;

linear density: designation of the fineness (or coarseness) of a yarn expressed as mass per unit length. According to the International Standard ISO 858 (Anon., 1973) netting yarns should be designated in the Tex System. The linear density in “tex” expresses the mass in grammes of 1000 m of yarn: 1 tex = 1 g / 1000 m. The complete designation of a netting yarn includes information on the linear density of the single yarn and on the number of single and folded yarns and twisting direction in each twisting operation. In practice, mostly only the linear density of the finished yarn is given, indicated as “resultant linear density” or Rtex;

mesh: a design-formed opening, surrounded by netting material;

diamond mesh: a mesh composed of four sides of the same length;

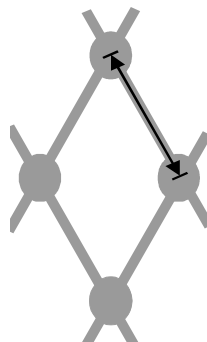
square mesh: a diamond mesh in which adjacent sides are at right angles;

N-direction: the direction at right angles to the general course of the netting yarn;

T-direction: the direction parallel to the general course of the netting yarn;

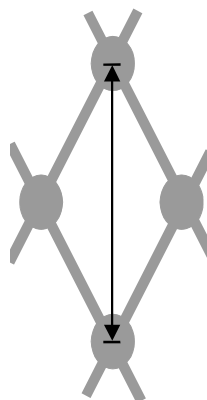
Three different measures are used to indicate the mesh size:

- length of mesh side (bar length)
- length of mesh
- opening of mesh.



length of mesh side:

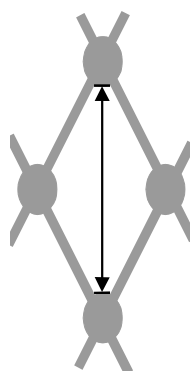
the distance between two sequential knots or joints, measured from centre to centre when the yarn between those points is fully extended.



length of mesh:

for knotted netting, the distance between the centres of two opposite knots in the same mesh when fully extended in the N-direction,

for knotless netting, the distance between the centres of two opposite joints in the same mesh when fully extended along its longest possible axis.



opening of mesh:

for knotted netting, the longest distance between two opposite knots in the same mesh when fully extended in the N-direction,

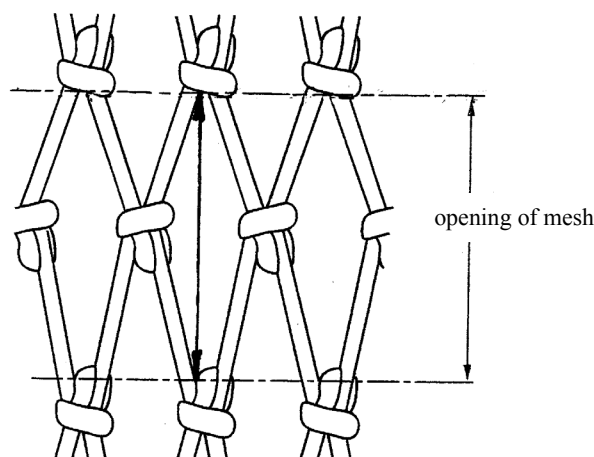
for knotless netting, the inside distance between two opposite joints in the same mesh when fully extended along its longest possible axis.

Comments

- 1) Since the mesh selection of fishing nets is directly related to the opening of mesh (Reeves *et al.*, 1992; Wileman *et al.*, 1996), it is the opening of mesh that is measured for all scientific and control purposes. The netting industry, manufacturers and suppliers, often use the length of mesh (or the numbers of rows per metre) which is more appropriate from an engi-

neering point of view. There is frequently confusion over the netting industry measuring the length of mesh and the regulatory bodies measuring the opening of mesh. The length of mesh side is often an alternative to the length of mesh for fishermen and net makers when ordering netting. The term mesh size is often used to denote opening of mesh, e.g., as stated in Commission Regulation (EC) No 129/2003 (Anon., 2003b).

- 2) In knotted netting any mesh gauge can be positioned in two different ways relative to the knot, viz. on the knot or next to the knot. Especially in heavy netting these two possibilities may lead to a significant difference in measured mesh opening. Neither the measurement procedure recommended by ICES (ICES, 1962b) nor the different regulations give a decisive solution to this problem. The new standard EN ISO 1107 (Anon., 2003a) defines “opening of mesh” as “the longest distance between two opposite knots” and from this definition it follows that the mesh gauge should be inserted next to the knot as illustrated below.



- 3) In knotless netting, the netting yarns and the joints in the mesh are manufactured by the same machine in only one manufacturing process. Examples are Raschel netting, generally with small mesh sizes, and braided knotless netting. Direction in knotless netting can usually be related to the general course of the netting yarn, but not always because the general course of the netting yarn cannot in every case be determined. Usually, the direction of the longest possible axis of the mesh is parallel to the general course of the netting yarn. If the two axes are equal, the direction of the netting cannot be determined and the mesh size may be determined in either direction.

2.2 Units

Linear measurements are given in mm, unless otherwise stated.

Both kilogramforce (kgf) and Newton (N) are used as units of force in the national and European legislation. The relation between these units is: 1 kgf = 9.80665 N.

3 Review of current mesh measurement practices

Mesh measurements are performed by fisheries inspectors, fisheries scientists, netting manufacturers and fishermen. Unfortunately, these groups often use different gauges and measure different dimensions. For example, fisheries inspectors employ the flat wedge gauge (Figure 2) to control the mesh opening, whereas scientists make use of the ICES mesh gauge (Figure 1). The measure used for indicating the mesh size during the manufacturing process is the length of mesh. To check the opening of mesh a wedge gauge is used. Fishermen also use wedge gauges to control the mesh opening of their nets. This diversity creates a problem because the wedge gauge and the ICES gauge use a different measurement principle generally leading to a different outcome. A comprehensive evaluation of both instruments was made in the EU Concerted Action Project MESH (Fonteyne *et al.*, 1998), which forms the basis for the following review.

3.1 The wedge gauge

3.1.1 Description and measurement procedure

Wedge gauges used for enforcement practices are described in the relevant fisheries regulations, e.g., Commission Regulation (EC) No 129/2003 of the European Communities (Anon., 2003b). The gauges are usually made of 2 mm thick plates of durable material capable of retaining its shape. They have either tapering edges only (Figure 2a), or a series of parallel edged sides connected by intermediate tapering edges (Figure 2b). The taper is 1:8 on each side. The width in mm is inscribed on the gauge at 1 mm intervals. In the USA, wedge gauges are marked in 2.5 mm intervals on one edge, and in 1/8th inch intervals on the other.

To measure the opening of a mesh, the net is stretched in the N-direction of the meshes. The gauge is inserted into the mesh opening in a direction perpendicular to the plane of the net. The gauge is inserted either by manual force or by using a weight or dynamometer, until the resistance of the mesh stops further insertion. In the USA, only a 5 kg weight is used. The opening of each mesh corresponds to the width of the gauge at the point where further insertion of the gauge is prevented. The mesh size is expressed in mm and is the arithmetic mean of the total number of meshes measured, rounded up to the nearest mm. In the USA, the mesh size is expressed in eighths of inches, and the arithmetic mean of the total number of meshes is rounded to the nearest eighth.

According to the European regulation (Anon., 2003b) a series of 20 meshes is measured manually, without using a weight or dynamometer. If the mean mesh opening does not appear to comply with the rules in force, then two additional rows of 20 meshes each are measured. The mesh size is subsequently recalculated by taking into account all 60 meshes already measured. The result is considered the mesh opening of the net. If the captain of the vessel contests the mesh size thus determined, this

measurement is ignored and the net is subjected to a new series of measurements. For this purpose the net is re-measured with a weight or dynamometer attached to the gauge. The choice of weight or dynamometer is at the discretion of the inspector. The mesh opening is determined by measuring only one series of 20 meshes. The weight is fixed by a hook to the hole at the narrow end of the gauge. The dynamometer can either be fixed to the hole at the narrow end of the gauge or to the handle.

For nets with a mesh size of 35 mm or less a force of 19.61 Newton (equivalent to a force of 2 kgf) is applied; for other nets the force is 49.03 Newton (equivalent to a force of 5 kgf). The accuracy of the weight or the dynamometer is certified by the competent national authority.

Wedge gauges are also used to check the opening of mesh during the netting manufacturing process. An international standard specifying a method for the determination of the mesh opening of fishing nets using a flat wedge gauge with measuring weights has recently been published (see Section 3.4 for details).

Fishermen use diverse wedge gauges to control the mesh opening of their nets. Fishermen are unlikely to use weights, only hand force.

3.1.2 Problems encountered with the wedge gauge

The description of the mesh gauges as given in the relevant regulations allows for differences in the final form of the gauge. The most striking possible differences are:

- 1) Different materials can be used as long as they are durable and capable of retaining the shape of the gauge.
- 2) There is not a unique plan shape: a choice can be made between a wedge gauge with tapered sides only and a gauge with alternating tapered and parallel sections.
- 3) The range of the mesh gauges to suit different ranges of mesh sizes is not standardized.
- 4) The weight of the gauges is not specified. The MESH project indicated a ratio of 1:5 between the lightest and the heaviest gauge for a given range.
- 5) The finishing of the edges is not specified.
- 6) Scale markings may extend to the edge of the gauge thus making these edges notched and likely to snag in the twine.

Post (1987) showed that different measurements are obtained with mesh gauges used by different fisheries inspection services, because they used different versions of the EU gauge. The measurement procedure given in the regulation gives less room for variation. In Europe little use is made of the 2 or 5 kg weight or a dynamometer. On the other hand, the standard measurement procedure of the US Coast Guard requires the insertion of the wedge gauge with a 5 kg weight (D. Gibson, Chief, Northeast Fisheries Training Center, USCG, personal communication).

Different reasons for not using the weight or dynamometer are given by EU inspectors:

- fishermen rarely contest the outcome of the measurements made by hand as they fear that the average mesh size derived from measurements with the use of a weight will be lower
- some inspectors consider that the weights are impractical and unsafe to use on board fishing vessels
- in most countries dynamometers are not type approved and the use of a spring to exert the force may not be accepted by the Courts.

The EU Regulation specifies that the accuracy of the weight or dynamometer shall be certified by the appropriate national authority but does not give directions for regular calibration of weights and dynamometers. In most countries re-calibration does not take place. If it is carried out, then the frequency differs between countries.

3.2 The ICES mesh gauge

3.2.1 Description and measurement procedure

The ICES gauge is the standard gauge for research activities, recommended by the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES, 1962a, b). The gauge is used with a pretension of 4 kgf. A similar instrument, the MARFISH Net Gauge, has been developed in the USA (Caruso and Carr, 1991).

The ICES mesh gauge was developed by C. J. W. Westhoff under the auspices of the Comparative Fishing Committee of the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea. The construction of the ICES gauge (ICES, 1962b; Anon., 1966) is given in Figure 1. The two jaws (components II and IV of Figure 1) which have a thickness of 2 mm are inserted into the diagonal of the mesh to be measured. The sliding hinged jaw IV is then pulled steadily away from the fixed jaw II by the handle III, thus stretching the mesh. The handle III is pulled further until the resistance of the stretched mesh against the sliding jaw IV is sufficient to cause the latter to pivot and compress the spring VII. The moment this happens the pawl V is actuated and engages in the rack on the underside of bar I thus locking the gauge and preventing any further movement of the jaw IV. Force on the handle is maintained to keep the gauge in the locked position while the mesh size is read from the position of jaw IV on the scale on the upper side of bar I. The precision is 1 mm. More consistent measurements are obtained if the gauge is operated twice in succession without removing the jaws from the mesh and the second reading taken as the mesh size. As soon as the force on the handles is released, the spring XII begins to return the sliding jaw IV to its closed position, the pawl disengages from the rack, and the gauge is ready for the next measurement.

It will be seen that the tension at which the gauge operates, i.e. the stretching force on the mesh when its size is measured, is determined automatically by the degree of compression of spring VII, which can be adjusted by screw VIII. The recommended tension is 4 kgf.

To test the gauge, a short, rigid test spring is used. It is provided with an eye at each end of sufficient size to allow it to fit easily over jaws II and IV. This spring is of a known length when under a tensile load of 4 kgf. The eyes of the test spring are fitted on jaws II and IV and the gauge is operated in the normal way. When the pawl engages in the rack and locks the gauge, the length is read off the scale. This length should correspond with the predetermined length of the spring under a load of 4 kgf. If the length from the scale is less then the gauge is not applying sufficient force; similarly, if the length is greater, the gauge is applying too much force. The force applied by the gauge can be corrected by removing the securing device at IX and adjusting the setscrew at IX until the gauge locks at the predetermined 4 kgf length of the test spring. Finally the setscrew must be secured. The scale reading can be checked by a simple standard measure to be sure that the jaws are not deformed, e.g., by a heavy knock. The test spring itself can be checked by measuring its length under the required load.

One noticeable outcome of the MESH project was that the procedure for selecting the meshes to be measured differs from one country to another. In general the meshes are selected in the wet codend, mostly in the upper panel, and measured in the N-direction. The number of meshes measured often depends on the time available. In general more meshes are measured on board research vessels than on board chartered commercial ships.

The ICES gauge is usually operated as described in the manual. The parallel jaws are inserted in the mesh and the mesh is then stretched diagonally under constant force until the pretension, usually 4 kgf, is exerted. Some users do not operate the gauge twice in succession as recommended (ICES, 1962b). As a rule the average mesh opening and the standard deviation are calculated.

3.2.2 Problems encountered with the ICES gauge

The MESH project came to the conclusion that mesh measurements for scientific purposes are characterized by a lack of uniformity. This is true for both the measuring instruments and the measurement procedures. This lack of uniformity occurs because no clear directives exist. The only existing written recommendations for measuring the mesh opening of codend meshes can be read in the report of the ICES Mesh Selection Working Group 1959–1960, published in 1964 (ICES, 1964). These recommendations leave room for interpretation and are only rarely applied nowadays.

The ICES mesh gauge can be considered as the standard mesh gauge in fisheries research. Due to the set force applied to the mesh, the measurements are close to being free of human bias. Also the ICES gauge can be calibrated easily. The wedge gauge is often used for comparison. The wedge gauges are the same as those used for inspection. Hence the comments made in Section 3.1.2 also apply.

The selection of the meshes to be measured is based on the selective performance of the gear. Hence the meshes are mostly chosen in the upper panel of the codend since this is the part of the gear where most mesh selection takes place (Wileman *et al.*, 1996). The number of meshes measured is usually much larger than for in-

spection but the reason for choosing a certain number is not always clear.

3.3 Comparison of the wedge and ICES mesh gauges

The MESH project identified the advantages and disadvantages of the wedge and ICES gauge as follows:

Wedge gauge

Pro	Contra
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • simple • cheap • internationally accepted • generally accepted in legislation • durable • easy to maintain • portable • well tested 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • human influence • instrument not well defined, i.e.: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. material 2. finish 3. weight 4. ranges • not suitable for fine and heavy twines • attachments needed for reproducible measurement • several instruments needed for a range of measurements • results biased by friction between gauge and netting • results biased by angle of insertion • poor ergonomics

ICES gauge

Pro	Contra
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consistent • simple to operate • minor human influence • portable • well tested • direct reading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • calibration frequently needed • acceptance by court questionable • constant need for maintenance • danger of wear • poor ergonomics • rather expensive

After reviewing the positive and negative features of these gauges a list of requirements for an “ideal” mesh gauge was drawn up. The requirements can be grouped in three categories:

- 1) Measuring principle and objective;
- 2) Design; and
- 3) Legal aspects.

1) Measuring principle and objective

- mesh opening when fully extended by a controlled force
- all types of netting
- range 10–300 mm
- precision: 1 mm
- calibration of measuring force and distance measured
- direct reading of measuring force applied

- direct reading of mesh opening

2) Design

- minimal human influence
- no bias from material characteristics
- simple to operate
- portable, especially for safe boarding of fishing vessels
- easy maintenance
- automatic recording/logging of measurement data possible

- good ergonomics

- easy to calibrate

3) Legal aspects

- acceptability throughout the EU
- type approved
- unambiguous measurement procedure

Whether these requirements are met by the EU wedge gauge or the ICES gauge is indicated in the table below.

Requirement	Wedge gauge	ICES gauge
Measuring principle and objective		
• mesh opening	✓	✓
• all types of netting	no	no
• range 10–300 mm	✓	no
• precision: 1 mm	✓	✓
• calibration of measuring force and distance measured	(1)	✓
• direct reading of measuring force applied	(2)	no
DIRECT READING OF MESH OPENING	no	✓
Design		
• minimal human influence	no	(3)
• no bias from material characteristics	no	✓
• simple to operate	✓	✓
• robust and durable	✓	(✓)
• portable	✓	✓
• easy maintenance	✓	no
• automatic recording/logging possible	no	no
• good ergonomics	no	no
• easy to calibrate	(1)	✓
Legal aspects		
• acceptability all over the EU	✓	no
• type approved	✓	no
• unambiguous measurement procedure	no	no

- (1) If the wedge gauge is used with hand force calibration of the force is impossible. It is, however, possible to calibrate a dynamometer.
- (2) When using a dynamometer the force perpendicular to the netting is measured, not the force in the plane of the netting.
- (3) The human influence is minimal if used in the correct way (see Section 3.2.1).

The MESH project report concluded: “It is clear that neither gauge is wholly satisfactory. Both gauges meet the requirements of simplicity and robustness. Only the wedge gauge is specified in the EU regulations for enforcement. Its major drawback is that the measurement is not free of human influence and consequently is not objective.” and “The ICES mesh gauge meets the requirement of minimal human influence since it operates with a pre-defined force which can easily be calibrated, though again a spring is used for this calibration. The disadvantage of gauges with springs (ICES and dynamometer types) is that the Courts question the accuracy of springs and are not readily convinced of the reliability of calibration procedures.”

Since none of the existing mesh gauges fulfils all the essential requirements listed above, it was recommended that a new, advanced instrument be developed. An EU project with the cooperation of professional instrument builders was thought to be the best approach to achieve this aim. This recommendation finally resulted in the EU Combined R&D and Demonstration Project “Development and testing of an objective mesh gauge” (OMEGA) (www.dvz.be/omega). This project started in October 2002 and will be finalized in February 2005, after which the OMEGA mesh gauge will become commercially available.

3.4 Standardization

Attempts have been made by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) to adopt the ICES gauge as the standard gauge for mesh measurements on fishing nets. These attempts failed, mainly because the measuring force is controlled by a spring whose characteristics may change over time. Moreover, a test spring is used to calibrate the gauge.

Recently the Working Group CEN/TC 248/WG 3 Fishing Nets of the European Committee for Standardization (CEN), in collaboration with Technical Committee ISO/TC 38 “Textiles”, edited an international standard for a method of test for the determination of mesh size (Anon., 2003c,d). The standard has two parts:

- Part 1 – Mesh opening (Anon., 2003c); and
- Part 2 – Length of mesh (Anon., 2003d).

Part 1 specifies a method for the determination of the mesh opening using a flat wedge gauge. It is applicable to active fishing gears. The draft standard is based upon international legislation for fisheries inspection. However, both the wedge gauge and the measuring procedure are more precisely described. The most important differences are:

- the gauge shall be made of an aluminium alloy;
- tapering sides only;
- edges must be rounded;
- printed or engraved markings shall end 2 mm from the edges;
- 4 size ranges are defined;

- no measurement by hand force;
- the measuring forces are:
 - 2 kgf for mesh sizes of 50 mm or less;
 - 5 kgf for mesh sizes above 50 mm up to 120 mm;
 - 8 kgf for mesh sizes above 120 mm;
- a minimum of 20 consecutive meshes (in the N-direction) shall be measured.

The draft standard has an important Informative Annex which recognises the limitations of the use of the wedge gauge as follows:

“The method of test for the determination of the mesh opening is basically drawn upon international legislation for the purpose of fisheries inspection (e.g., Commission Regulation (EEC) No 2108/84 of 23 July 1984 laying down detailed rules for determining the mesh size of fishing nets). Recently the methodology using the flat wedge mesh gauge has been questioned. The method is considered as not sufficiently precise and objective, especially when using hand force to operate the mesh gauge.

The present European Standard has taken account of the criticism towards the wedge gauge by giving a more precise description of the mesh gauges and by using a weight only to exert the measuring force. The method described in the standard is appropriate for the determination of the mesh opening under controlled laboratory conditions but is considered as being less suitable for use at sea.

It is the intention to modify the present European standard as soon as a method suitable for all environmental conditions becomes available.”

Part 2 of the draft standard deals with the determination of the length of mesh using a ruler. It is applicable to passive fishing gears. Since the present document focuses on the measurement of the mesh opening, this part of the standard is not further discussed here.

3.5 Related regulations

To improve the selectivity of towed gears the EU has recently legislated maximum permitted twine thicknesses for several fishing gears (Anon., 2000a; 2001a; 2001b; 2001c). To control the twine thickness a pair of pliers (Figure 3) is used with semi-circular holes milled towards the front end of each jaw such that, when the gauge is fully closed, circular holes are formed having diameters equal to the relevant maxima set out in the rules in force (Anon., 2003b). When the thickness of the twine prevents the closure of the jaws or the twine does not pass easily through the whole when the jaws are closed, the twine thickness is considered to be too large.

4 Inventory of towed gear codend materials

At present most problems in measuring the opening of mesh are related to codend meshes of towed gears. Static gears are generally made of finer twines and require a modified measuring technique. Mesh selection in purse seines is of minor importance and hence mesh measurements are seldom carried out. As a consequence SGMESH decided to concentrate only on the codends of towed gears. The Study Group began by collecting an inventory of materials used in codends by different ICES countries.

A codend material inventory format with the following parameters was discussed and agreed upon by the Study Group:

- country
- gear type
- netting material
- netting construction
- number of twines (single/double/triple)
- length of mesh
- opening of mesh
- yarn type (e.g., monofilament, multifilament; the diameter of monofilament yarns is between 0.1 mm and 1.0 mm, the diameter of multifilament yarns is < 0.05 mm (Klust, 1982)).
- twine construction (twisted/braided)
- runnage (m/kg)/Rtex (g/1000 m)
- twine thickness (mm)
- frequency of use.

An overview of typical codend materials used in the following countries was obtained: Belgium, Canada, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, the USA and the UK. The European Association of Netting Manufacturers also supplied information on the netting materials manufactured for codend construction.

The characteristics of the 128 codends in the inventory (Table 1) can be summarized as follows:

Material: 78% of the netting types are made of polyethylene (PE) yarns, 19% is of polyamide (PA) and only 3% of polyester (PES).

Mesh openings and gears: most entries (81%) in the list are codends for demersal fish or *Nephrops* trawls or seines. The mesh opening ranges from 70 to 165 mm, but one otter board trawl for skate has a mesh size of 300 mm. The remaining 19% codends are used in a variety of trawls for shrimp, pelagic fish, Mediterranean demersal fish, squid and molluscs. The mesh opening varies from 15 to 60 mm.

Netting construction: 92% of the codends are made of knotted netting, only 8% are knotless. The netting types are made of single (34%), double (65%) or triple twine (1%).

Twine construction: the netting twines are mostly braided (85%), 10% are twisted and 5% codends are made of Raschel knotless netting. The twisted twines and Raschel netting are generally made of polyamide fibres. Incomplete information was given on the fibre types, but it can be assumed that most PE twines are made of monofilaments (two were reported as split fibre). PA twines in netting for trawls are generally made of multifilaments.

Twine thickness and runnage / linear density: the nominal twine thickness varied from 1.8 to 9.4 mm. Data on the runnage and/or linear density was only available for a limited number of entries.

The Study Group noted the existence of specific netting materials for which the current mesh measurement techniques, i.e. wedge or ICES gauges, may not be appropriate. Examples of such materials include:

- stiff netting used in the Baltic cod trawl exit windows;
- some knotless netting constructions; and
- netting constructions to reduce the effective mesh opening such as K-meshes (meshes with unequal bar lengths), netting with inverted (twisted) knots and hexagonal meshes.

Due to new legislation aiming at the improvement of species and length selectivity of towed gears, the use of square mesh netting has increased recently. The other netting constructions listed above, however, are not thought to be widely used.

5 Experimental work

5.1 Introduction

The main twine characteristics which may effect mesh opening and hence selectivity are elongation and flexural rigidity (Ferro and O'Neill, 1994). These two characteristics also affect longitudinal mesh opening.

It is generally assumed that up to a certain load, Hooke's law holds for netting yarns. The slope of the stress-strain curve usually remains constant over the initial part of the curve. Effects in this region are normally described as elastic, in that stress is proportional to strain, and if the fibre is only deformed by a small extension, or load, it should recover to the original dimension. This linear relationship is true as long as the deformations are not too large. For higher loads the deformation becomes plastic.

Table 1. Inventory of codend materials in use in the ICES area.

Country	Gear	Netting			Yarn			Origin/ Application		
		Material	Construc- tion	No of Yarns	Length of Mesh	Opening of Mesh	Twine Type		Construction	Runnag
B	TBB-Crangan	PA	Knotted	Single	22		multi	Twisted		100%
B	TBB-flatfish	PE	Knotted	Double		80	mono	Braided		4.0
B	TBB-flatfish	PE	Knotted	Double		80	mono	Braided		4.0
B	TBB-flatfish	PES	Knotted	Double		80	multi	Braided		3.0
B	TBB-flatfish	PES	Knotted	Double		80	multi	Braided		4.0
B	TBB-flatfish	PE	Knotted	Double		80	mono	Braided		4.0
B	TBB-flatfish	PES	Knotted	Single		82	multi	Braided		4.5
B	TBB-flatfish	PE	Knotted	Double		82	mono	Braided		3.5
B	TBB-flatfish	PE	Knotted	Double		82	mono	Braided		3.5
B	TBB-flatfish	PE	Knotted	Single		82	mono	Braided		6.0
B	TBB-flatfish	PE	Knotted	Double		82	mono	Braided		4.0
B	TBB-flatfish	PE	Knotted	Double		82	mono	Braided		4.0
B	TBB-flatfish	PE	Knotted	Double		84	mono	Braided		4.0
B	TBB-flatfish	PE	Knotted	Double		82	mono	Braided		4.0
B	OTB-Nephrops	PE	Knotted	Double		105	mono	Braided		4.0
B	OTB	PE	Knotted	Single		105	mono	Braided		roundfish
B	OTB	PE	Knotted	Double		110	mono	Braided		roundfish, BREZLINE 90%
CA	OTB-Cod	PE	Knotted	Double		155		Braided		cod, haddock, saithe
CA	OTB-Cod	PE	Knotted	Double		155		Braided		cod, haddock, saithe
CA	OTB-shrimp	PE	Knotted	Double	50	45		Braided		shrimp
CA	OTB-shrimp	PE	Knotted	Double	50	43		Twisted	210/72	shrimp
CA	OTB-redfish	PE	Knotted	Double		105		Braided		redfish
CA	OTB-redfish	PE	Knotted	Double		105		Braided		redfish
CA	OTB-redfish	PE	Knotted	Double		105		Braided		redfish
CA	OTB-skate	PE	Knotted	Double		300		Braided		skate
CA	OTB-Cod	PE	Knotted	Double	92	76		Braided		cod, sole, rockfish
CA	TBB	PE	Knotted	Single	38	30		Twisted	380/48	No.30
D	OTM	PE	Knotted	Double		100	mono	Braided	86	Reykjanes
D	OTB	PE	Knotted	Double		105	mono	Braided	185	Baltic Sea
D	OTB	PE	Knotted	Single		105	mono	Braided	185	Baltic Sea
D	OTB	PE	Knotted	Double		117	mono	Braided	86	NW Atlantic
D	OTB	PE	Knotted	Single		110	mono	Braided	36	N Pacific, EUROLINE Premium
D	OTB	PE	Knotted	Double		120		Braided	60	EUROLINE, Baltic Sea
D	OTB	PE	Knotted	Double		142	splitfibre	Braided	75	Cotesi
D	OTB	PE	Knotted	Single		35	splitfibre	Braided		Cotesi
D	OTB	PE	Knotted	Double			mono	Braided	165	
E	OTB	PA	Knotted	Double	100	80	multi	Braided	R5555tex	monkfish, megrim and demersal spp.
E	OTB	PA	Knotted	Double	120	100	multi	Braided	R5555tex	hake fishery
E	PTM	PE	Knotted	Double	120	100	multi	Braided		hake fishery
E	PTM	PE	Knotted	Single	120	100	multi	Braided		hake fishery

Table 1. Continued. Inventory of codend materials in use in the ICES area.

Country	Gear	Netting			Yarn		Origin/ Application					
		Material	Construc- tion	No of Yarns	Opening of Mesh	Length of Mesh		Twine Type	Construc- tion	Runnage	Thickness (mm)	
E	OTB	PE	Knotted	Single			90	multi	Braided	125 m/kg	5.0	Grand Sole fisheries
UK	PTB	PE	Knotted	Double	120		102		Braided		5.0	haddock, cod, whiting, flatfish
UK	MTB	PE	Knotted	Double	120		103		Braided		6.0	haddock, cod, whiting, flatfish
UK	MTB	PE	Knotted	Single	80		72		Braided		4.0	<i>Nephrops</i>
UK	MTB	PE	Knotted	Single	80		74		Braided		3.0	<i>Nephrops</i>
UK	OTB	PE	Knotted	Single	80		72		Braided		4.0	<i>Nephrops</i>
UK	STM	PES	Knottless	Single	50		40		Braided		3.0	herring
UK	OTB	PA	Knotted	Single	40		36		Twisted	210/15		shrimps
UK	OTB	PA	Knotted	Single	40		36		Twisted	210/20		shrimps
UK	OTB	PE	Knotted	Double	120		100		Braided		6.0	haddock, cod, whiting, flatfish
UK	OTB	PE	Knotted	Double	130		110		Braided		6.0	haddock, cod, whiting, flatfish
UK	OTB	PE	Knotted	Double	120		100		Braided		5.0	haddock, cod, whiting, flatfish
UK	SSC	PE	Knotted	Double	120		100		Braided		5.0	haddock, cod, whiting, flatfish
UK	SSC	PE	Knotted	Double	120		100		Braided		6.0	haddock, cod, whiting, flatfish
UK	Pair gears	PE	Knotted	Double	120		100		Braided		5.0	haddock, cod, whiting, flatfish
UK	Pair gears	PE	Knotted	Double	120		100		Braided		6.0	haddock, cod, whiting, flatfish
UK	MTB	PE	Knotted	Double	120		100		Braided		5.0	haddock, cod, whiting, flatfish
UK	MTB	PE	Knotted	Double	120		100		Braided		5.0	haddock, cod, whiting, flatfish
UK	MTB	PE	Knotted	Double	120		100		Braided		5.0	haddock, cod, whiting, flatfish
UK	MTB	PE	Knotted	Double	120		100		Braided		5.0	<i>Nephrops</i>
UK	MTB	PE	Knotted	Single			70		Braided		5.0	<i>Nephrops</i>
UK	OTB/twinOTB	PE	Knotted	Single			70		Braided		5.0	<i>Nephrops</i>
UK	OTB/twinOTB	PE	Knotted	Single			70		Braided		4.0	<i>Nephrops</i>
UK	OTB/twinOTB	PE	Knotted	Single		77	70		Braided		3.0	<i>Nephrops</i>
UK	STM/PTM	PA	Knotted	Double	50		40		Twisted	210/96		mackerel, herring
UK	STM/PTM	PA	Knotted	Treble	40		30		Twisted	210/72		blue whiting
UK	STM/PTM	PA	Knotted	Single	22		15		Twisted	210/72		sprat
UK	TBB	PE	Knotted	Double	130		115		Braided		6.0	haddock, cod, whiting, flatfish
UK	SSC	PE	Knotted	Double	125		100		Braided		6.0	haddock, cod, whiting, flatfish
UK	OTB	PE	Knotted	Double			105		Braided	80.66	5.0	haddock, cod, whiting, flatfish COMPACT twine
UK	OTB	PE	Knotted	Double			105		Braided	54.49	6.0	haddock, cod, whiting, flatfish COMPACT twine
UK	OTB	PE	Knotted	Double			105		Braided	122.00	5.0	haddock, cod, whiting, flatfish
UK	SSC	PE	Knotted	Double			105		Braided	183.45	4.0	haddock, cod, whiting, flatfish
UK	Pair gears	PE	Knotted	Double			105		Braided	59.49	6.0	haddock, cod, whiting, flatfish COMPACT twine
UK	Twin OTB	PE	Knotted	Double			105		Braided	80.66	5.0	haddock, cod, whiting, flatfish COMPACT twine
UK	Twin OTB	PE	Knotted	Single			73		Braided	183.45	4.0	<i>Nephrops</i>
UK	Twin OTB	PE	Knotted	Single			73		Braided	132.55	4.0	COMPACT twine, <i>Nephrops</i>
UK	OTB	PE	Knotted	Single			73		Braided	183.45	4.0	<i>Nephrops</i>
USA	trawl	Euroline	Knotted	Double	7.25"		6.5"	Mono	Braided		5.0	cod
USA	trawl	Euroline	Knotted	Single	60		1 7/8"	Mono	Braided		3.0	squid
USA	trawl	poly?	Knotted	Single	2.25"		1 7/8"	Mono	Twisted		2.0	squid

Table 1. Continued. Inventory of codend materials in use in the ICES area.

Country	Gear	Netting			Opening of Mesh	Yarn			Origin/ Application	
		Material	Construc- tion	No of Yarns		Length of Mesh	Twine Type	Construc- tion		Runnage
EUROCORD										
NO	OTB	HDPE	Knotted	Double	169	140	Mono	Braided	75	6.0
NO	OTB	PA	Knotted	Double	169	140	Multi	Braided	75(65**)	6.0
IS	OTB	HDPE	Knotted	Single	165	135	Mono	Braided	40	8.0
UK	OTB	HDPE	Knotted	Double	125	100	Mono	Braided	75	6.0
	trawls	euroline	Knotted	Double	x	x	Mono	Braided	x	x
	trawls	premium	Knotted	Double	x	x	Mono	Braided	x	x
USA	trawls	euroline	Knotted	Double	x	x	Mono	Braided	x	x
USA	trawls	premium	Knotted	Double	x	x	Mono	Braided	x	x
RU	trawls	premium	Knotted	Double	X	x	Mono	Braided	x	x
PT	trawls	euroline	Knotted	Double	X	x	Mono	Braided	x	x
IS	trawls	PE	Knotted	Double	X	x	Mono	Braided	x	x
ES	trawls	euroline	Knotted	Double	X	x	Mono	Braided	x	x
UK	trawls	PE	Knotted	Double	X	x	Mono	Braided	x	x
ES	trawls	euroline	Knotted	Double	X	x	Mono	Braided	x	x
x: differs from area to area ***: after treatment						PA: polyamide PE: polyethylene PES: polyester HDPE: high density polyethylene multi: multifilament Mono: Monofilament				
TBB: beam trawl OTB: bottom otter trawl OTM: midwater otter trawl PTM: midwater pair trawl SDB: Danish seine MTB: multiple bottom trawl STM: single midwater trawl (= OTM) SSC: Scottish seine										

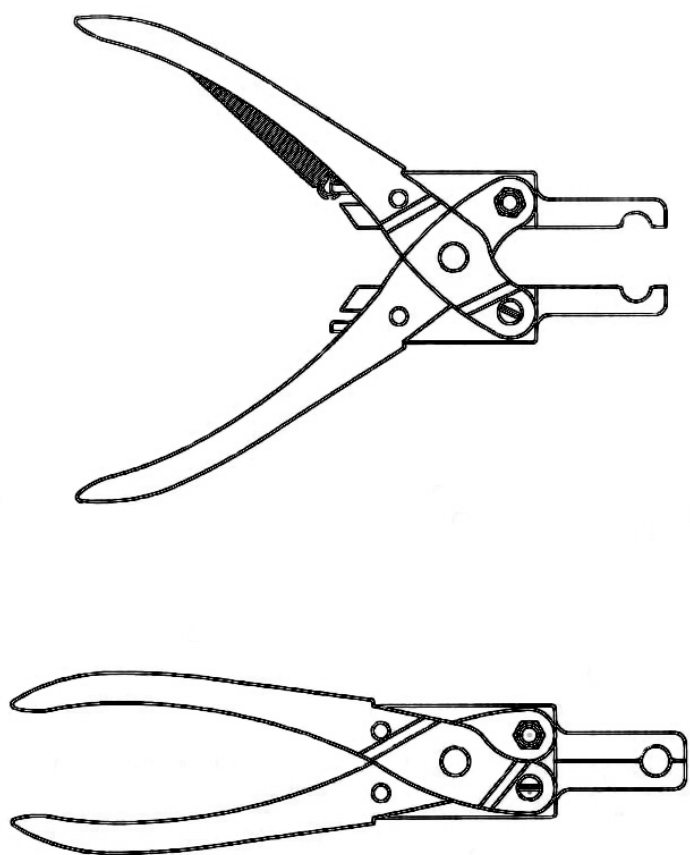


Figure 3. Pliers gauge for twine thickness measurement.

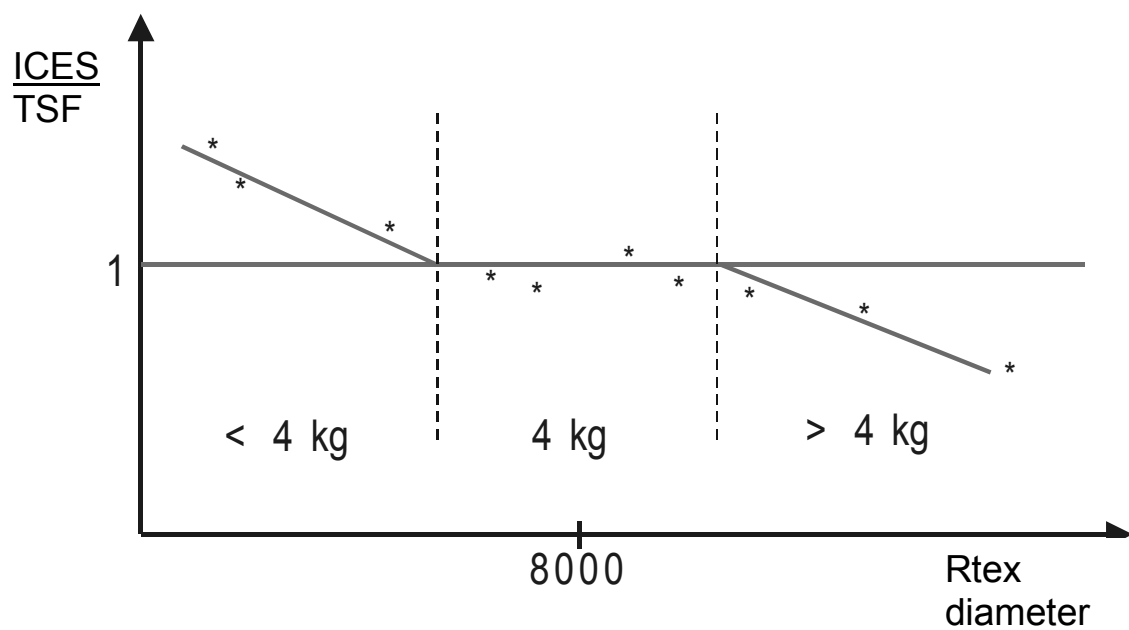


Figure 4. Ratio between the mesh size obtained with a 4 kgf measuring force (ICES) and with the Textile Standard Force (TSF) in relation to the twine thickness for all mesh constructions.

The point at which this occurs is the *yield point*. Klust (1982) states that for netting yarns made of polyethylene (PE), polyester (PES) and polypropylene (PP) the load-elongation curves are almost linear. For netting yarns made of polyamide (PA) the load elongation curves are more parabolic. A more recent study (Anon., 2000b) demonstrated that knotted netting had greater elongation than the original twine, and only at high load values did the differences become significant. It may be assumed that the netting materials are elastic within the range of loads applied to the meshes in the present study.

Several publications report on the effect of twine thickness on selectivity (Anon., 2000b; Lowry and Robertson, 1996) but studies on the effect of stiffness on mesh size measurement are rare. O'Neill (2003) made a theoretical investigation of mesh size measurement. The effect of twine bending stiffness, frictional resistance, boundary slope and gauge force were examined. The measurement method which the analysis most approximates was that of the ICES gauge. It was found that in relation to twine bending stiffness the magnitude of the measuring force is critical. At low measuring forces, changes in these forces will yield relatively large variations in the measured mesh opening. With increasing twine stiffness, higher measuring forces will also be subject to this higher variation. The influence of mesh gauge force was presented for a number of specific examples representative of mesh types used by the industry. Most variation of mesh size occurs in the range 0 to 50 N. The ICES gauge exerts 20 N on each mesh bar and so any variation in the parameters studied is likely to lead to appreciable variation in measured mesh size.

For a specific measuring force the elongation of netting yarns naturally increases with decreasing twine thickness. The ICES gauge is calibrated to deliver a constant measuring force of 4 kgf. This means a varying stress (force per unit area) on the twine for different twine thicknesses. This variation is in conflict with common practice for length measurement of textile yarns, which is performed under constant stress. The International Organisation for Standardization establishes a pre-tension corresponding to the weight of 250 ± 25 m of the netting yarn to be measured (Anon., 1974; Anon., 1976; Klust, 1982). This measuring force is referred to as the Textile Standard Force (TSF).

The TSF is equal to the 4 kgf force used with the ICES gauge for single twine meshes of R8000tex. For meshes with twines of around R8000tex the ratio between the mesh openings measured with a 4 kgf measuring force and a force based on the TSF will be around 1. For lower Rtex values the ICES gauge overestimates the mesh size while underestimation occurs for values over 8000. This relationship is graphically represented in Figure 4.

In order to address the Study Group's Term of Reference d)

"consider the need to define groups of netting types for which the same measurement conditions (e.g., tension) can be applied;"

the group decided to investigate the difference between measurements with constant force and with constant

stress (ICES, 2000). It was recommended to perform opening of mesh measurements on representative codend netting materials used today in ICES countries. The opening of mesh should be measured with the ICES gauge with a constant force of 4 kgf and a stretching force corresponding to the TSF.

To deal with the Study Group's Term of Reference e)

"propose the specification of a suitable mesh measurement methodology and the conditions under which mesh measurements for all fishing gears in ICES areas are made;"

the group carried out a comparison of the ICES 4 kgf gauge with the wedge gauge used for fisheries inspection and new measuring forces were tested in order to establish the most suitable value for currently used nettings.

This leads to the following set of mesh size measurements:

- a) with the ICES mesh gauge with a load of 4 kgf;
- b) with a load corresponding to the Textile Standard Force;
- c) with a flat wedge gauge and hand force;
- d) with a flat wedge gauge with a weight of 2 kgf (meshes ≤ 35 mm) or 5 kgf (meshes > 35 mm) or a dynamometer;
- e) with a 10 kgf load (meshes < 55 mm); and
- f) with a 13 kgf load (meshes < 55 mm).

5.2 Selection of new measuring forces to be tested

Ideally the measuring force for a specific netting twine should be related to the linear density. Alternatively the twine thickness could be used if a significant correlation exists between twine thickness and linear density. This relationship was studied for the netting materials involved in the mesh measurements.

The option of a measuring force depending on the linear density of the netting twine was discussed in length by the Study Group. It was realised that both twine thickness and linear density can only be measured accurately under laboratory conditions. Since mesh measurements are generally carried out at sea, values of the linear density or the twine thickness are not easily obtainable. Therefore the Study Group decided to test measuring forces based on single values (ICES, 2002). The rationale for defining these measuring forces is set out hereafter.

The most frequently used twine thicknesses in the ICES area, as derived from the netting materials inventory (Table 1), are given in Table 2. PE is preferred for the larger twine thicknesses (and meshes), whereas PA is more commonly used for smaller twine thicknesses (and smaller meshes). Since larger mesh codend netting is generally constructed from PE twines, a measuring force should be selected appropriate to the range of twine thicknesses for that material. Smaller meshes are mostly

constructed from PA twines and consequently the appropriate measuring force should be applicable to that material. Table 3 gives the Textile Standard Forces required for these twines.

To improve the selectivity of towed fishing gears the EU has legislated maximum permitted twines for several fishing areas:

- 1) Irish Sea (ICES area VIIa): 6 mm for single twine; multiple-twine netting is prohibited (Anon., 2000a);
- 2) ICES areas VIIb, c, f, g, h, j, k and VIIIa, b, d, e: for mesh sizes > 55 mm: 6 mm single twine and 4 mm double twine (Anon., 2001a);
- 3) North Sea (ICES area IV and IIa, b) and West of Scotland (ICES area VI): for mesh sizes > 55 mm: 8 mm single twine and 5 mm double twine (Anon., 2001b); and
- 4) Baltic Sea: for 130 mm mesh: 6 mm single twine and 4 mm double twine (proposal for an amendment to Council Regulation (EC) No 2555/2001 (Anon., 2001c).

The Study Group anticipated that for the North Sea and West of Scotland fisheries areas this restriction would lead to replacement of the heavier twines by 5 mm double twine and possibly 8 mm single twine (ICES, 2002).

A recent proposal for a Council Resolution (Anon., 2002) incorporates former Council and Commission Resolutions regarding technical measures for the protection of juvenile marine organisms. The area covered is the Community waters outside the Baltic and the Mediterranean. The document stipulates for the codend and extension piece with a mesh size > 55 mm, a maximum twine thickness of 6 mm for single-twine netting and of 4 mm for double-twine netting.

In selecting new measuring forces, it is important that the transition should not be detrimental to codend selectivity and therefore deliver results similar to the present procedures set down in technical measures legislation. Current enforcement legislation is based on the use of the wedge gauge operated by hand or with a 5 kg weight to be used when measurements are contested (2 kg for meshes < 35 mm). According to Schwalbe and Werner (1977) a weight of 5 kgf would theoretically impose a longitudinal force of 20 kgf on the mesh being measured. Friction between gauge and netting, however, may considerably reduce the resulting measuring force. Ferro and Xu (1996) demonstrated that for four PE netting samples with a twine thickness between 2.7 mm and 4.5 mm, readings equivalent to the 5 kgf wedge gauge can only be obtained with an ICES gauge having more than 8 kgf spring force.

The data in Table 3 indicate that a measuring force of 10 kgf would be appropriate for PE nettings of double 5 mm twines or single 7 mm twines. At its 2002 meeting, (ICES, 2002) the Study Group considered that mesh opening measurements made with a longitudinal measuring force of around 100 N (10 kgf) would also approximate those obtained with a wedge gauge used with a 5 kgf weight. A measuring force of 100 N would probably underestimate the mesh opening of single 8 mm PE

twines, which at that moment (2002) was thought to become more widely used. In this case a measuring force of 130 N would be more appropriate (Table 3). The Study Group therefore decided to conduct mesh opening measurements using 100 N and 130 N longitudinal forces.

Proportionally, the present 2 kg weight used with the wedge gauge for the measurement of smaller meshes corresponds to the 4 kgf longitudinal force provided by the ICES gauge. The Study Group therefore decided to test the smaller mesh materials (< 55 mm) with a 40 N measuring force.

5.3 Material and methods

Netting materials

Thirty-four samples of netting used for the construction of codends were measured. These samples are representative of the most important towed fishing gears employed in the ICES areas. The main characteristics are summarized in Table 4. The selected netting materials are used in Belgium (3), Canada (5), Denmark (3), Germany (5), Iceland (1), the Netherlands (4), Norway (5), Sweden (3), the United Kingdom (3) and the United States (2). Eleven netting samples were made of twisted or braided multifilament polyamide twines, 21 of braided polyethylene, and 2 samples consisted of knotless, twisted polyethylene. The nominal twine thickness ranged from 1.2 to 10.8 mm, the nominal linear density from R780tex to R53500tex. The nominal mesh size varied from 18 mm to 190 mm.

Twine thickness measurement

The accuracy of the nominal twine thickness was verified by measuring the thickness of twine samples using an optical instrument recently developed through collaboration between Fisheries Research Services – Marine Laboratory Aberdeen, Yarn Engineering Services UK and Lawson-Hemphill USA. The optical method was originally developed in the 1980s (Ferro, 1989) and adopted by the ICES Study Group on Twine Thickness Measurement (Ferro, 1983). The instrument developed in 2001 uses a 1mm wide laser beam to illuminate the twine. The instrument detects the position of the twine edges and the thickness is taken as the difference between these two readings. Cylindrical steel rods are used for calibration.

All twine samples were sent to Fisheries Research Services – Marine Laboratory in Aberdeen where twine measurements were performed. The measurements were made on 2 m lengths of spooled twine. Each twine was stretched across the measurement area, one end secured with a V-notch to grip the twine and the other end placed around a pulley and tensioned by suspending a weight.

Table 2. Most frequently used twine thicknesses.

Material	Twine thickness (mm)	Frequency in the inventory	
		Single twine	Double twine
PA (14 samples)	<= 2	7	
	2 – 6		7
PE (74 samples)	<4	3	5
	4	7	14
	5	2	16
	5.5		2
	6	4	18
	>6	3	

PA: polyamide; PE: polyethylene.

Table 3. Textile Standard Force (TSF) for most commonly used PE and PA netting twines.

PE		TSF (gr)	
Twine thickness	Rtex	Single twine	Double twine
4	6 824	3 412	6 824
5	10 659	5 329	10 659
6	15 345	7 673	15 345
7	20 883	10 441	20 883
8	27 271	13 636	27 271

PA		TSF (gr)	
Twine thickness	Rtex	Single twine	Double twine
2	2 580	1 290	2 580
3	5 721	2 861	5 721
4	10 067	5 034	10 067
5	15 605	7 802	15 605
6	22 325	11 162	22 325

PA: polyamide; PE: polyethylene.

Table 4. Characteristics of measured netting samples.

Country	Sample designation	Material	Nominal twine thickness (mm)	Nominal linear density (Rtex)	Braided/ twisted / knotless netting	Single/ double/ triple twine	Nominal mesh opening (mm)
BE	DVZ 1.2 SIN	PA	1.2	780	Twisted	Single	18
BE	DVZ 4 DBL	PE	4.0	6 250	Braided	Double	82
BE	DVZ 5 SIN	PE	5.0	8 000 ¹	Braided	Single	82
CA	DFO 1.8 SIN	PE	1.8	1 700	Braided	Single	50
CA	DFO 4 DBL	PE	4.0	5 600	Braided	Double	150
CA	DFO 5 DBL	PE	5.0	8 100	Braided	Double	80
CA	DFO 5.5 DBL	PE	5.5	10 940	Braided	Double	105
CA	DFO 6 DBL	PE	6.0	11 140	Braided	Double	140
D	BFAFi 2.2 DBL	PA	2.2	3 400	Braided	Double	40
D	BFAFi 2.6 SIN	PA	2.6	4 800	Braided	Single	40
D	BFAFi 4 DBL	PA	4.0	12 000	Braided	Double	110
D	BFAFi 6 DBL	PA	6.0	20 000	Braided	Double	130
D	BFAFi 8 SIN	PA	8.0	35 800	Braided	Single	120
DK	DIFRES 1.5 SIN	PA	1.5	1 211 ¹	Twisted	Single	35
DK	DIFRES 4 SIN 75	PE	4.0	5 263 ¹	Braided	Single	75
DK	DIFRES 4 SIN 105	PE	4.0	5 263 ¹	Braided	Single	105
IS	IMR-IS 6 DBL	PE	6.0	10 800	Braided	Double	135
N	IMR-N 5 DBL PA	PA	5.0	15 400	Braided	Double	138
N	IMR-N 3.2 TRI	PE	3.2	5 300	Braided	Triple	137
N	IMR-N 5 DBL PE	PE	5.0	13 900	Braided	Double	138
N	IMR-N 7.1 UC	PE	7.1	21 170	Knotless	Single	133
N	IMR-N 10.8 UC	PE	10.8	53 500	Knotless	Single	139
NL	RIVO 2 SIN	PA	2.0	2 450	Twisted	Single	40
NL	RIVO 2 DBL	PA	2.0	2 450	Twisted	Double	40
NL	RIVO 4 DBL	PE	4.0	5 208 ¹	Braided	Double	80
NL	RIVO 6 DBL	PE	6.0	12 500	Braided	Double	80
S	IMR-S 1.5 SIN	PA	1.5	1 632 ¹	Twisted	Single	36
S	IMR-S 3.5 SIN	PE	3.5	3 915	Braided	Single	70
S	IMR-S 4 SIN	PE	4.0	5 400	Braided	Single	107
UK	MARLAB 3 SIN	PE	3.0	4 060	Braided	Single	74
UK	MARLAB 5 SIN	PE	5.0	13 632	Braided	Single	70
UK	MARLAB 6 DBL	PE	6.0	14 225	Braided	Double	100
US	MDMF 6 DBL	PE	6.0	13 333 ¹	Braided	Double	152
US	MDMF 8 SIN	PE	8.0	27 027 ¹	Braided	Single	190

¹Runnage: linear density derived from runnage.

A load of 25% of the nominal Rtex was applied during the measurement. The twine was then allowed to settle for a period of time dependent on the material and construction type. Two measurements were then taken at 10 mm intervals along the twine length, the second reading being at ninety degrees to the first to provide an average thickness (this dual measurement is especially useful in twines where the cross-section may not be circular). Approximately forty measurements were taken for each sample.

Since no spooled twine samples could be obtained for the German PA and the Icelandic PE nettings, the twine thickness was measured directly on the netting using a calliper.

Linear density measurement

The linear density of the twines used for the thickness measurements was derived by weighing a known length of the twine. The length of the twine to be weighed was marked under a load equal to 25% of the nominal Rtex value. An apparatus as described in Klust (1982) and recommended by the International Organisation for Standardization (Anon., 1974) was used for measuring the length.

Mesh opening measurement

The mesh opening was measured with either the ICES or the flat wedge gauge. An alternative method was developed for mesh measurements with the TSF and the newly proposed measuring forces. A list of experiments made is given in Section 5.1.

ICES mesh gauge

The ICES gauge is described in Section 3.1. Measurements on netting with large knots may cause problems since the jaws of the ICES gauge can be placed under or at the side of the knot. In the present measurements the jaw was positioned to the side of the knot. This gives the largest mesh opening, corresponding to the definition given in Section 2.1.

Flat wedge gauge

The measurements were made with the flat wedge gauges used by fisheries inspectors for minimum mesh size control. Where possible, fisheries inspectors were recruited to make the measurements. See Section 3.2 for a description of the gauges. The wedge gauge was either pushed into the mesh to be measured by hand force or a

weight of 5 or 2 kgf was used. Some samples were measured using a dynamometer instead of a weight.

Measurements with a load corresponding to the Textile Standard Force (TSF) or the 10/13 kgf measuring force

The TSF was calculated from the nominal R_{tex} value. Since the load that can be applied with the ICES gauge is limited to about 6 kgf, a modified method had to be used for measurements with the TSF and the 10 and 13 kgf measurement forces. The method is based on the use of an ICES mesh gauge for which the blocking mechanism has been disabled so that the movable jaw can move freely along the bar with the length scale (Figure 5). With the instrument held in a vertical position, the mesh to be measured is mounted over the jaws and a weight corresponding to the measuring force (TSF) minus the weight of the movable jaw is attached to the handle of the movable jaw. The mesh opening is read on the scale of the ICES gauge.

State of the netting

All measurements were made on dry netting under normal laboratory conditions with no extremes of temperature and humidity. The rationale for measuring on dry netting was:

- the effect of the measuring force is investigated, not the changes in mesh size due to the state of the netting (dry or wet)
- to avoid bias due to samples being more or less wet, it is easier to maintain the same measuring conditions in the dry state.

Number of measurements

Sixty meshes were measured in each series of measurements. Preliminary tests on a number of netting samples showed that measuring 60 meshes will yield a mean mesh size with a precision of 1 mm at the 95% level and mostly at the 99% level. For legislative purposes 60 meshes are also used (if the average of the first 20 meshes is below the minimum mesh size, see Section 3.1.1). It is logical to select, as for inspection, 3 rows of 20 meshes.

Statistical analysis

To establish the relationship between twine thickness and linear density several trend line types were calculated, using the statistical tools provided with the Microsoft® Excel 2002 software. Based on the r^2 value, the best model was chosen.

Scatter plots comparing individual mesh measurements obtained by different methods (ICES 4kgf, wedge hand, wedge 5 kg weight) were obtained using STATISTICA data analysis software system version 6 (StatSoft, Inc, 2003). An in depth analysis of these data was the subject of a separate study. The details of this study are given in Annex 1.

To detect groups of netting types for which the same measurement conditions can be applied, similarities among the sample twine thicknesses were evaluated by means of the Hierarchical Cluster Analysis (Anderberg, 1973). Starting with the total R_{tex} (R_{tex} of a single twine

multiplied by the number of twines) and the variation between the ICES and TSF method (%) (calculated by dividing the difference between the ICES and the TSF value by the TSF value), clustering was performed using the squared Euclidean distance and single linkage. All the statistical procedures were performed using the SPSS Rel. 10.0 software package (Anon., 1999). For multiple twine nettings the equivalent single twine thickness was calculated from the calculated twine thickness/ R_{tex} relationships. For single twine netting the measured twine thickness was used.

5.4 Results and analysis

5.4.1 Twine thickness and linear density

Twine thickness

The results of the twine thickness measurements are given in Table 5. For the PA samples of 2 mm or less, measured by the optical method, the difference between the measured and the nominal values can be ignored. The measured value of the 5 mm PA twine, however, was 0.5 mm larger than the nominal value.

The PE twines, ranging from 1.8 to 10.8 mm, showed greater differences, varying between 0.02 mm and 0.85 mm. The measured twine thickness was smaller than the nominal value in 15 out of 20 samples.

Linear density

Of the 23 samples for which comparisons could be made, 15 had a measured value that was larger than the nominal value (Table 5).

Comparison between twine thickness and linear density

A power trend line gave the best fit between the linear density and the twine thickness for both PA (Figure 6) and PE twines (Figure 7). Nominal values were used where measured values were not available.

The nearly quadratic relations are:

$$\text{for PA twines: } R_{tex} = 672.32 \text{ thickness}^{1.9297} \quad (r^2 = 0.9918) \quad (1)$$

$$\text{for PE twines: } R_{tex} = 438.71 \text{ thickness}^{1.9748} \quad (r^2 = 0.9521). \quad (2)$$

The different coefficients are explained by the difference in density of PA and PE.

5.4.2 Mesh opening

A summary of the average mesh openings obtained by the different methods and measuring forces is given in Table 6.

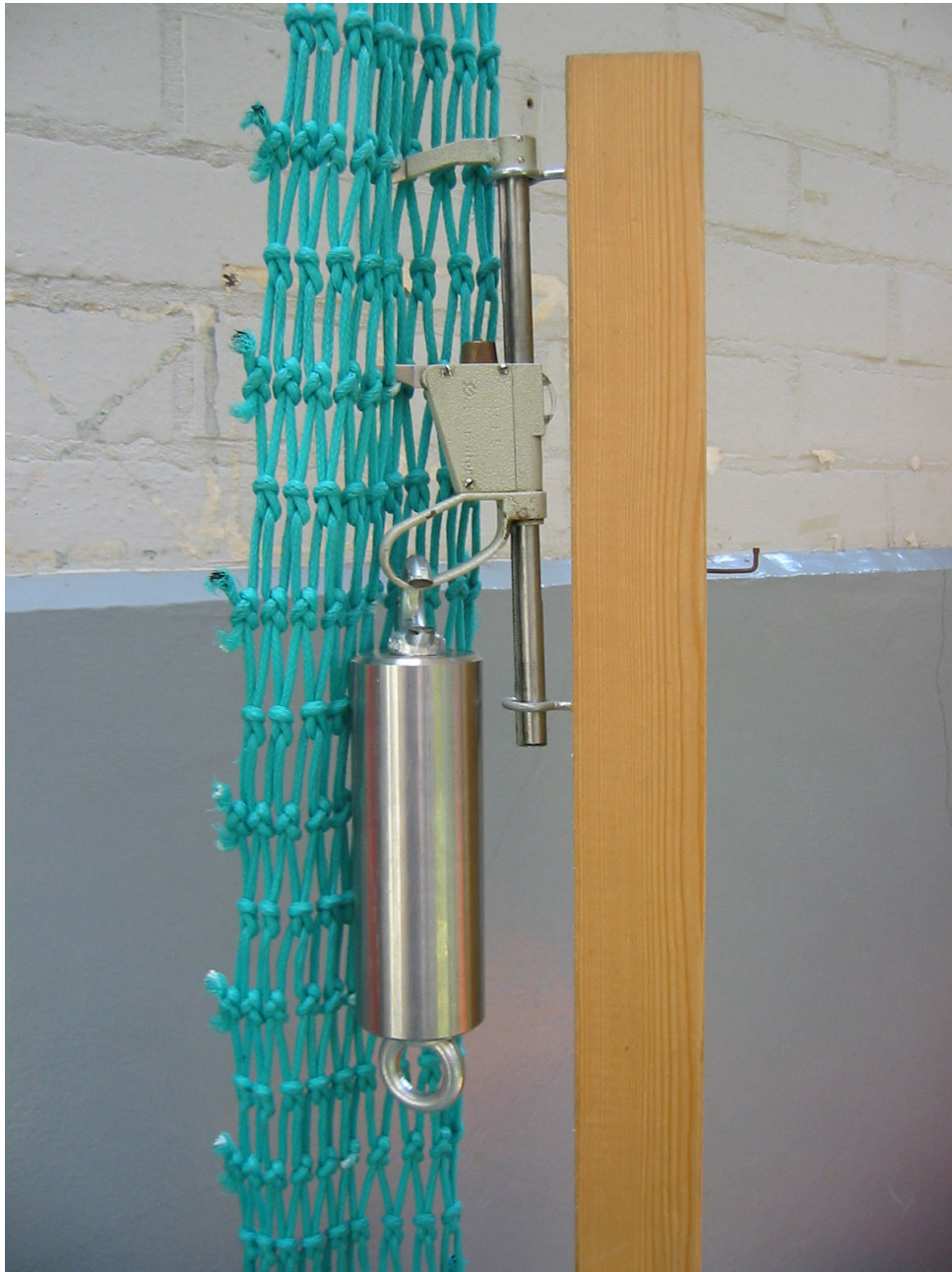


Figure 5. Experimental setup for TSF measurements.

Table 5. Comparison of measured and nominal twine thicknesses and linear densities.

Sample Designation	Material	Braided /twisted / knotless netting	Nominal twine thickness (mm)	Measured twine thickness (mm)	Difference measured -nominal thickness	Nominal linear density (Rtex)	Measured linear density (Rtex)	Difference measured-nominal linear density
DVZ 1.2 SIN	PA	Twisted	1.2	1.23	0.03	780	812	32
IMR-S 1.5 SIN	PA	Twisted	1.5	1.53	0.03	1 632 ¹	1 450	-182
DIFRES 1.5 SIN	PA	Twisted	1.5	1.49	-0.01	1 211 ¹	1 414	203
RIVO 2 SIN/DBL	PA	Twisted	2.0	2.01	0.01		2 450	
IMR-N 5 DBL PA	PA	Braided	5.0	5.52	0.52	15 385	15 520	135
DFO 1.8 SIN	PE	Braided	1.8	2.01	0.21	1 700	1 800	100
MARLAB 3 SIN	PE	Braided	3.0	3.19	0.19	4 060	4 077	17
IMR-N 3.2 TRI	PE	Braided	3.2	3.07	-0.13	5 300	4 733	-567
IMR-S 3.5 SIN	PE	Braided	3.5	2.92	-0.58	3 915	3 883	-32
DFO 4 DBL	PE	Braided	4.0	3.75	-0.25	5 600	5 687	87
DIFRES 4 SIN 75/105	PE	Braided	4.0	3.65	-0.35	5 263 ¹	5 578	315
DVZ 4 DBL	PE	Braided	4.0	3.98	-0.02	6 250 ¹	6 953	703
RIVO 4 DBL	PE	Braided	4.0	3.94	-0.06	5 208 ¹	5 998	790
DFO 5 DBL	PE	Braided	5.0	4.77	-0.23	8 100	8 197	97
IMR-N 5 DBL PE	PE	Braided	5.0	5.66	0.66	13 900	14 463	563
MARLAB 5 SIN	PE	Braided	5.0	5.68	0.68	13 632	13 830	298
DVZ 5 SIN	PE	Braided	5.0	4.43	-0.57	8 000	7 918	-82
DFO 5.5 DBL	PE	Braided	5.5	5.15	-0.35	10 940	11 170	230
RIVO 6 DBL	PE	Braided	6.0	5.70	-0.30	12 500	11 068	-1 432
DFO 6 DBL	PE	Braided	6.0	5.15	-0.85	11 140	11 175	35
MDMF 6 DBL	PE	Braided	6.0	6.08	0.08	13 333 ¹	12 813	-520
MARLAB 6 DBL	PE	Braided	6.0	5.62	-0.38	14 225	14 467	242
IMR-N 7.1 UC	PE	Braided	7.1	6.26	-0.84	21 170	21 020	-150
MDMF 8 SIN	PE	Braided	8.0	7.66	-0.34	27 027 ¹	24 510	-2 517
IMR-N 10.8 UC	PE	Braided	10.8	9.98	-0.82	53 500	59 545	6 045

¹Runnage: linear density derived from runnage.

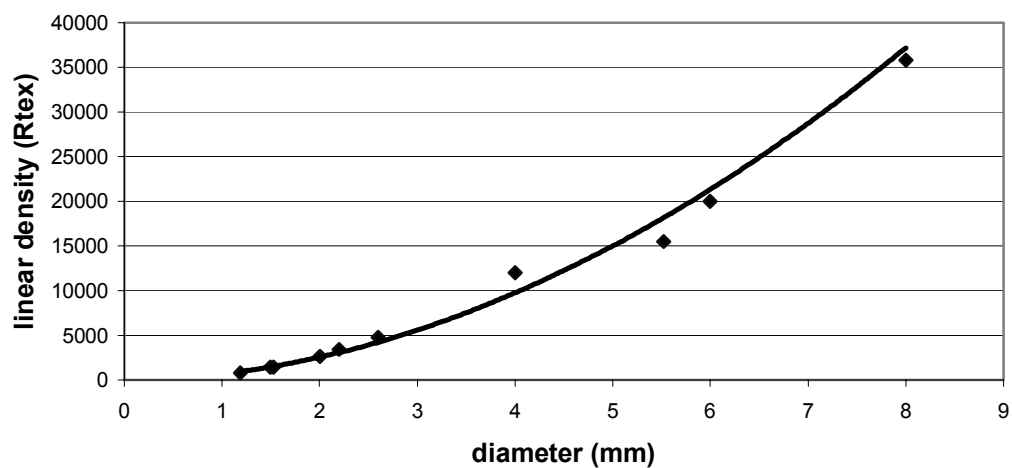


Figure 6. Linear density in relation to the twine thickness for PA twines.

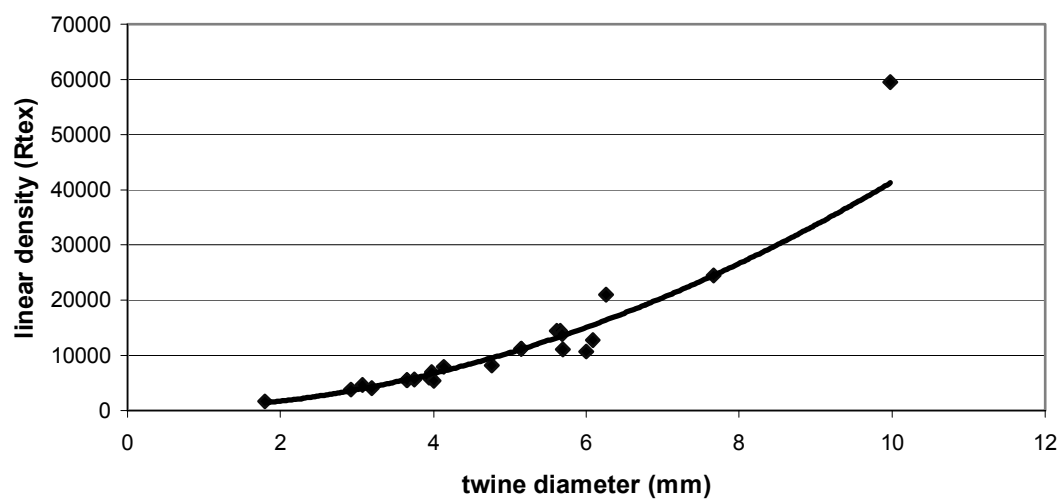


Figure 7. Linear density in relation to the twine thickness for PE twines.

Table 6. Results of mesh opening measurements¹.

Sample designation	Material	Twine thickness (mm)	Single Double Triple	Rtex	Average Mesh Opening (mm)					
					ICES gauge 4 kgf	TSF x no of yarns	Wedge gauge hand force	Wedge gauge 5 or 2 kgf	10 kgf	13 kgf
BFAFi 2,2 DBL	PA	2.2	DBL	<i>3 400</i>	41.9	42.8	39.2	40.8		
BFAFi 2,6 SIN	PA	2.6	SIN	<i>4 800</i>	47.1	45.7	42	45.3		
BFAFi 4 DBL	PA	<i>4.0</i>	DBL	<i>12 000</i>	113.0	118.8	109.5	112.1	113.4	114.7
BFAFi 6 DBL	PA	<i>6.0</i>	DBL	<i>20 000</i>	132.1	143.1	134.5	134.6	140.1	139.5
BFAFi 8 SIN	PA	<i>8.0</i>	SIN	<i>35 800</i>	119.9	127.0	119.8	120.1	124.2	125.2
DFO 1,8 SIN	PE	2.0	SIN	<i>1 700</i>	50.9	47.2	49.2	54.7		
DFO 4 DBL	PE	3.746	DBL	5 687	146.5	147.1	148.9	148.4	148.3	149.6
DFO 5 DBL	PE	4.765	DBL	8 197	82.3	83.7	87.7	86.8	84.1	85.2
DFO 5,5 DBL	PE	5.149	DBL	11 170	105.3	108.3	110.6	111.2	108.2	109.1
DFO 6 DBL	PE	5.146	DBL	11 175	131.6	134.3	134.6	136.3	133.9	134.7
DIFRES 4 SIN 75	PE	3.653	SIN	5 578	106.5	104.4	109.7	108.4	108.7	109.9
DIFRES 4 SIN 105	PE	3.653	SIN	5 578	70.5	68.8	75	72.6	73.0	74.0
DIFRES1,5 SIN	PA	1.493	SIN	1 414	34.1	30.5	34.9	32.7		
DVZ 4 DBL	PE	3.976	DBL	6 953	81.0	81.7	84.0	83.1	83.4	84.2
DVZ 5 SIN	PE	4.132	SIN	7 918	86.9	86.9	90.9	89.6	90.9	91.7
DVZ 1,2 SIN	PA	1.19	SIN	812	21.5	18.7	18.3	20.3		
IMR-N 3,2 TRI	PE	3.066	TRI	4 733	135.2	142.2	141.8	137.7	142.8	143.6
IMR-N 5 DBL	PE	5.661	DBL	14 463	137.7	147.1	141.4	140.0		
IMR-IS 6 DBL	PE	<i>6.0</i>	DBL	<i>10 800</i>	134.1	140.8	137.2	136.3	141.0	143.5
IMR-N 7,1 UC	PE	6.26	SIN	21 020	133.2	138.7	137.2	135.2	138.7	140.5
IMR-N 10,8 UC	PE	9.981	SIN	59 545	133.7	143.1	137.6	137.0	140.8	142.5
IMR-N 8 DBL	PA	5.517	DBL	15 520	136.8	146.6	137.5	137.5	143.5	146.0
IMR-S 3,5 SIN	PE	2.924	SIN	3 883	71.6	71.0	74.8	76.2	75.6	77.8
IMR-S 4 SIN	PE	<i>4.0</i>	SIN	<i>5 400</i>	107.1	106.1	107.3	111.7		
IMR-S 1,5 SIN	PA	1.528	SIN	1 450	37.0	35.6	38	36.4		
MARLAB 3 SIN	PE	3.191	SIN	4 077	68.6	68.0	76.1	75.0	76.3	78.4
MARLAB 5 SIN	PE	5.682	SIN	13 830	74.7	78.8	81.2	79.4	81.0	82.6
MARLAB 6 DBL	PE	5.615	DBL	14 467	99.5	104.3	104.6	101.9	101.4	103.0
MDMF 6 DBL	PE	6.083	DBL	13 333	149.8	158.3		165.9	156.3	158.3
MDMF 8 SIN	PE	7.662	SIN	27 028	184.6	191.2		189.3	190.0	191.2
RIVO 4 DBL	PE	3.944	DBL	5 998	75.2	77.0	82.6	80.9	80.4	81.0
RIVO 6 DBL	PE	5.695	DBL	11 068	76.6	83.5	89.4	84.2	84.1	84.8
RIVO 2 SIN	PA	2.005	SIN	2 650	37.8	36.6	37.7	42.5		
RIVO 2 DBL	PA	2.005	DBL	2 650	35.2	34.7	35.4	39.9		

¹Twine thickness and linear densities printed in *italics* are nominal values.

Comparison of existing methodologies

Figure 8 compares the mesh openings as measured with respectively the ICES 4 kgf gauge, the hand operated wedge gauge and the wedge gauge loaded with a weight. Differences in terms of percentages are given in Table 7. Throughout the following comparisons two groups of netting samples can be distinguished:

- small mesh netting (<55 mm mesh opening) made of thin twines (< 3 mm twine thickness)
- large mesh netting of larger meshes (\Rightarrow 55 mm mesh opening) and heavier twines (\Rightarrow 3 mm twine thickness).

Scatter plots for the methodologies compared are presented in Figure 9. The measuring methods are abbreviated as ICES: ICES 4 kgf gauge; WH: hand operated wedge gauge; WW: wedge gauge with a 2/5 kg weight or dynamometer.

ICES 4 kgf – Wedge gauge hand force

The results for the netting samples with large meshes are quite clear. In all cases but two, the ICES gauge yields smaller average mesh openings than the wedge gauge, operated by hand. The differences range from -14.3 to +3.2%.

The small mesh netting samples give a more variable picture. The ICES gauge gives lower average mesh openings for three samples (-2.3 to -0.6%), and higher values for the five others (0.3 to 17.5%).

ICES 4 kgf – Wedge gauge 2/5 kg weight

Again the ICES gauge gives lower average mesh openings for all but one sample of the large mesh netting samples, and differences ranging from -9.7 to 0.8%. For most samples the differences are smaller than with the hand operated wedge gauge.

The small mesh samples give again a mixed picture. The differences vary between -1.8 and +5.9%.

Wedge gauge hand operated – wedge gauge 2/5 kg weight

In general the wedge gauge used with a weight gives smaller average mesh openings than the hand operated wedge gauge for the large mesh netting samples. For seven samples the mesh openings were larger if measured with the weight. The differences range from -5.8 to 4.1%.

The tendency was again less clear for the small mesh samples, with differences between both methods varying between -6.3 and 12.7%.

A detailed statistical analysis of the data was made and is given in Annex 1. Due to the lack of data for all possible categories of netting samples, the group of small meshes had to be restricted to netting samples of single, twisted PA twines. The netting samples retained for the group of large meshes consisted of single and double braided PE twines. The modelling approach used is known as a “mixed effects model”. An exploratory analysis suggests that for the small mesh netting samples the ICES gauge and the wedge-hand appear to be similar in variation, the wedge-hand yielding slightly higher values than the ICES gauge. The wedge-weight method

seems to display a larger variation. However, the analysis of the three samples with a nominal mesh size of 35–36 mm, summarized in Table 8, revealed that there is a considerable overlap between the confidence intervals and it is not possible to detect any statistical difference between the three methods. The results for the large mesh data set are displayed in Table 9. They demonstrate that the ICES gauge gives significantly smaller mesh openings than both the wedge-hand and wedge-weight methods. The latter two methods do not appear to be significantly different. An analysis was also made of the main factors affecting the mesh measurements. For the small mesh group the effect of Rtex could be investigated (Rtex and twine thickness are strongly correlated and since Rtex provided the best fit, this parameter was retained in the model). Interaction effects Method:Sqrt(Rtex) were significant for all three methods, meaning that Rtex has different impacts upon the three methods (Table 10). For the large mesh group twine thickness yielded a better fit than Rtex. Both Sqrt(thickness) and the “twine” factor (single/double) appeared to be significant, together with different interaction effects (Table 11).

Comparison between the 4 kgf ICES gauge and the TSF measuring force

Table 12 compares the average mesh sizes obtained with both measuring forces. A t-test for paired samples was performed for each data set. The difference between the two averages was statistically significant for all netting samples for which the TSF was different from 4 kgf.

Because of the different density of PA and PE, and hence the different relationship between linear density and twine thickness of PA and PE (see equations (1) and (2)), the analyses were made separately for the netting samples of both materials.

The ratio between the mean mesh opening obtained with the 4 kgf ICES gauge and the mean mesh opening obtained with the TSF measuring force for the PA nettings is graphically presented in Figure 10. The ICES gauge overestimates the mesh opening for practically all twine thicknesses under 3 mm. The largest difference was 15% for a 1.2 mm twine thickness. From a twine thickness of 4 mm the ICES gauge underestimated the mesh opening. The difference was 5–8%.

A similar situation occurs for PE netting (Figure 11). For twine thicknesses under 3 mm the mean mesh openings are overestimated by the 4 kgf ICES gauge (by 8% for a twine thickness of 1.8 mm). For twine thicknesses of 3–4 mm the difference is \pm 2%. For larger twine thicknesses the mesh openings are underestimated by 4–8%.

The cluster analysis yielded the dendrograms shown in Figures 12 and 13. It appears that a two-cluster solution may be appropriate for both PA and PE nettings. For PA nettings the upper group in the plot includes the samples from 1.2 mm single twine to 2.2 mm double twine (equivalent of 3.3 mm single). The lower group includes meshes from 4.0 mm double (equivalent of 6.2 mm single) to 8.0 mm single).

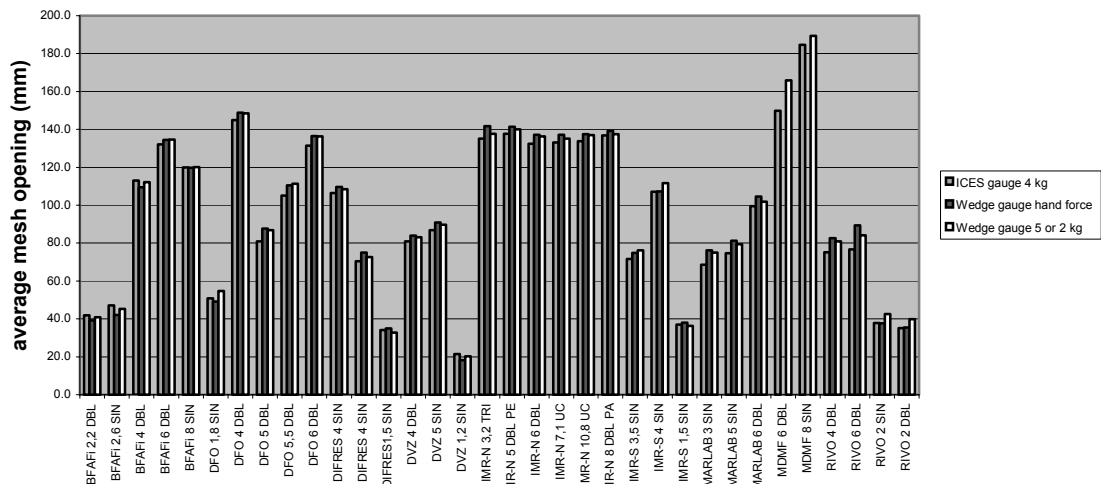


Figure 8. Comparison of existing methodologies.

Table 7. Comparison between different gauges.

					Mean Mesh Opening (mm) – (standard deviation)					
Sample designation	Material	Twine thickness (mm)	Single Double Triple	Rtex	ICES gauge 4 kgf (ICES)	Wedge gauge hand force (WH)	Wedge gauge 5 or 2 kgf (WW)	(ICES-WH)/ WH	(ICES-WW) /WW	(WW-WH)/ WH
Smaller meshes, smaller twine thicknesses										
BFAFi 2,2 DBL	PA	2.2	DBL	3 400	41.9 (1.54)	39.2 (1.20)	40.8 (1.46)	6.9%	2.7%	4.1%
BFAFi 2,6 SIN	PA	2.6	SIN	4 800	47.1 (1.55)	42 (1.80)	45.3 (1.84)	12.1%	4.0%	7.9%
DFO 1,8 SIN	PE	2.0	SIN	1 700	50.9 (1.73)	49.2 (1.11)	54.7 (2.15)	3.5%	-6.9%	11.2%
DIFRES1,5 SIN	PA	1.493	SIN	1 414	34.1 (0.67)	34.9 (1.00)	32.7 (0.85)	-2.3%	4.3%	-6.3%
DVZ 1,2 SIN	PA	1.19	SIN	812	21.5 (0.72)	18.30.51)	20.3 (0.65)	17.5%	5.9%	10.9%
IMR-S 1,5 SIN	PA	1.528	SIN	1 450	37.0 (0.57)	38 (0.79)	36.4 (1.12)	-2.6%	1.6%	-4.2%
RIVO 2 DBL	PA	2.005	DBL	2 650	35.2 (1.27)	35.4 (1.25)	38.9 (1.55)	-0.6%	-11.8%	12.7%
RIVO 2 SIN	PA	2.005	SIN	2 650	37.8 (0.98)	37.7 (1.21)	42.5 (1.16)	0.3%	-11.1%	12.7%
Larger meshes, larger twine thicknesses										
BFAFi 4 DBL	PA	4.0	DBL	12 000	113.0 (3.57)	109.5 (3.24)	112.1 (3.11)	3.2%	0.8%	2.4%
BFAFi 6 DBL	PA	6.0	DBL	20 000	132.1 (2.76)	134.5 (3.23)	134.6 (3.00)	-1.8%	-1.9%	0.1%
BFAFi 8 SIN	PA	8.0	SIN	35 800	119.9 (3.56)	119.8 (3.56)	120.1 (2.52)	0.1%	-0.2%	0.3%
DFO 4 DBL	PE	3.746	DBL	5 687	146.5 (2.22)	148.9 (1.83)	148.4 (2.00)	-1.6%	-1.3%	-0.3%
DFO 5 DBL	PE	4.765	DBL	8 197	82.3 (1.88)	87.7 (1.70)	86.8 (1.75)	-6.1%	-5.2%	-0.9%
DFO 5,5 DBL	PE	5.149	DBL	11 170	105.3 (2.76)	110.6 (2.73)	111.2 (2.53)	-4.7%	-5.3	0.6%
DFO 6 DBL	PE	5.146	DBL	11 175	131.6 (3.73)	134.3 (3.71)	136.3 (3.53)	-2.0%	-3.5	1.5%
DIFRES 4 SIN 75	PE	3.653	SIN	5 578	70.5 (1.51)	75 (2.15)	72.6 (2.15)	-6.0%	-2.9%	-3.2%
DIFRES 4 SIN 105	PE	3.653	SIN	5 578	106.5 (1.20)	109.7 (1.19)	108.4 (1.15)	-2.9%	-1.8%	-1.2%
DVZ 4 DBL	PE	3.976	DBL	6 953	81.0 (3.01)	84.0 (2.65)	83.1 (2.92)	-3.6%	-2.6%	-1.1%
DVZ 5 SIN	PE	4.132	SIN	7 918	86.9 (1.90)	90.9(1.79)	89.6 (2.11)	-4.4%	-3.1%	-1.4%
IMR-N 10,8 UC	PE	9.981	SIN	59 545	133.7 (1.28)	137.6 (1.12)	137.0 (1.41)	-2.8%	-2.4%	-0.4%
IMR-N 3,2 TRI	PE	3.066	TRI	4 733	135.2 (2.16)	141.8 (2.19)	137.7 (2.27)	-4.6%	-1.8%	-2.9%
IMR-N 5 DBL	PE	5.661	DBL	14 463	137.7 (2.99)	141.4 (2.38)	140.0 (2.60)	-2.6%	-1.7%	-1.0%
IMR-IS 6 DBL	PE	6.0	DBL	10 800	134.1 (3.37)	137.2 (2.99)	136.3 (3.14)	-2.3%	-1.6%	-0.7%
IMR-N 7,1 UC	PE	6.26	SIN	21 020	133.2 (0.81)	137.2 (0.76)	135.2 (0.94)	-3.0%	-1.5%	-1.5%
IMR-N 8 DBL	PA	5.517	DBL	15 520	136.8 (2.03)	138.9 (1.68)	137.5 (1.89)	-1.5%	-0.5%	-1.0%
IMR-S 3,5 SIN	PE	2.924	SIN	3 883	71.6 (1.38)	74.8 (1.62)	76.2 (1.47)	-4.3%	-6.0%	1.9%
IMR-S 4 SIN	PE	4.0	SIN	5 400	107.1 (1.27)	107.3 (1.14)	111.7 (1.13)	-0.2%	-4.1%	4.1%
MARLAB 3 SIN	PE	3.191	SIN	4 077	68.6 (2.78)	76.1 (3.28)	75.0 (2.95)	-9.9%	-8.6%	-1.4%
MARLAB 5 SIN	PE	5.682	SIN	13 830	74.7 (1.73)	81.2 (2.88)	79.4 (2.54)	-8.1%	-6.0%	-2.2%
MARLAB 6 DBL	PE	5.615	DBL	14 467	99.5 (2.19)	104.6 (2.64)	101.9 (2.94)	-4.9%	-2.4%	-2.6%
MDMF 6 DBL	PE	6.083	DBL	13 333	149.8 (3.19)		165.9 (3.19)		-9.7%	
MDMF 8 SIN	PE	7.662	SIN	27 028	184.6 (4.68)		189.3 (6.81)		-2.5%	
RIVO 4 DBL	PE	3.944	DBL	5 998	75.2 (2.24)	82.6 (2.01)	80.9 (2.20)	-9.0%	-7.1%	-2.1%
RIVO 6 DBL	PE	5.695	DBL	11 068	76.6 (3.60)	89.4 (2.90)	84.2 (3.08)	-14.3%	-9.0%	-5.8%

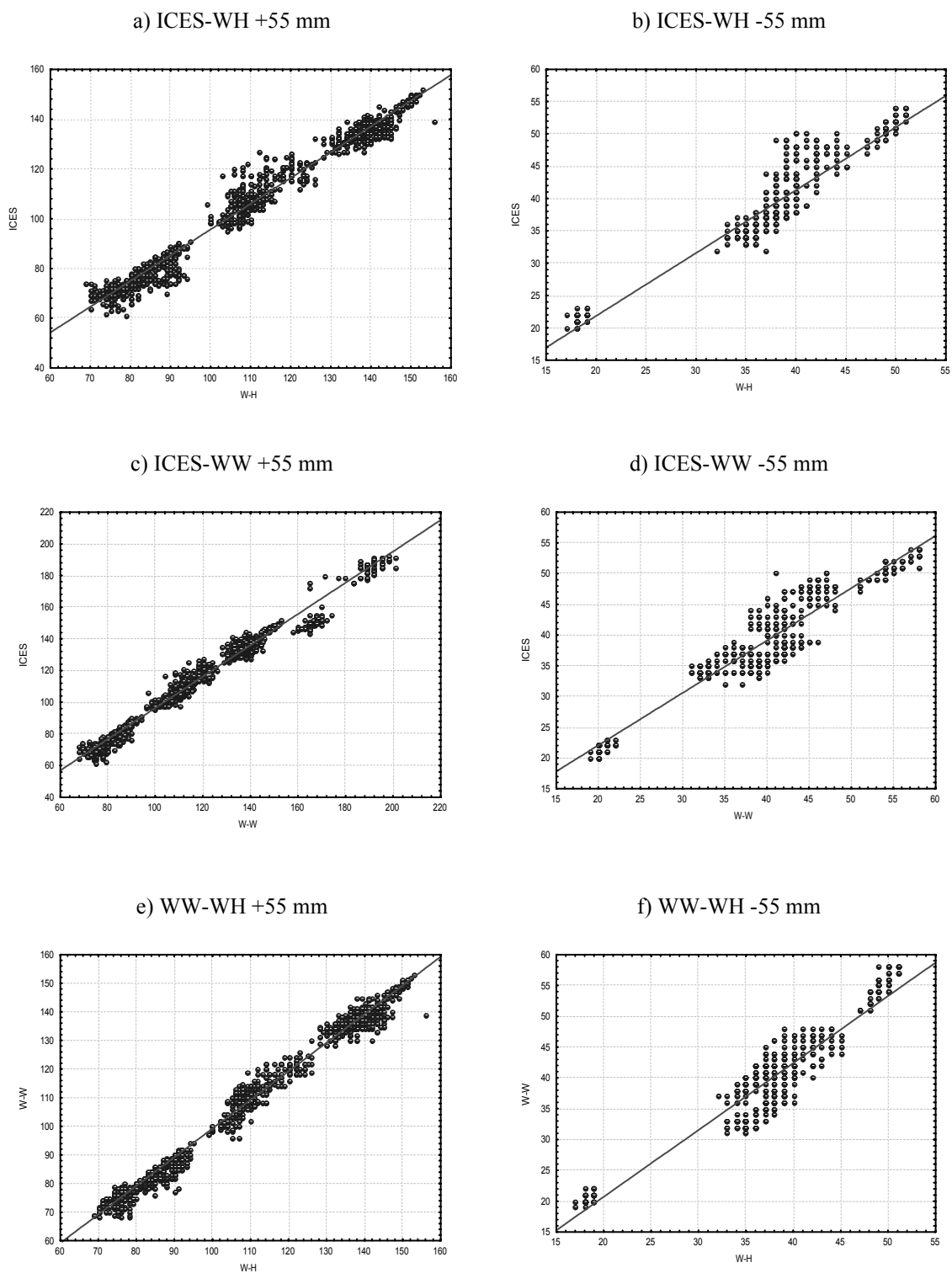


Figure 9. Comparison of existing methodologies – Scatter plots of individual measurements.

Table 8. Small mesh data analysis.

Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	df	t-value	p-value	95% confidence intervals	
						Lo	Hi
ICES	32.625	3.765	714	8.664370	<0.0001	25.25	40.00
WH	32.213	3.765	714	8.554820	<0.0001	24.84	39.59
WW	32.983	3.765	714	8.759534	<0.0001	25.61	40.36

Table 9. Large mesh data analysis.

The results in the first 14 lines of following table gives the expected mesh sizes for the range of nominal mesh sizes represented in the data when measured with the ICES gauge. The last two lines gives the estimated contrasts (adjustments) when measured by the “WH” and “WW” method.

Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	df	t-value	p-value	Lo	Hi
Nom. Mesh 70	73.0856	1.038096	2748	70.4035	<0.0001	71.055	75.116
Nom. Mesh 74	67.9113	1.065989	2748	63.7073	<0.0001	65.826	69.996
Nom. Mesh 75	69.8879	1.065989	2748	65.5616	<0.0001	67.803	71.973
Nom. Mesh 80	81.9833	1.065989	2748	76.9082	<0.0001	79.898	84.068
Nom. Mesh 82	80.4773	1.030905	6	78.0647	<0.0001	77.961	82.994
Nom. Mesh 100	96.6947	1.065989	2748	90.7089	<0.0001	94.610	98.780
Nom. Mesh 105	105.3828	1.038096	2748	101.5155	<0.0001	103.352	107.413
Nom. Mesh 107	107.5210	1.065989	2748	100.8650	<0.0001	105.436	109.606
Nom. Mesh 135	132.6662	1.465892	6	90.5020	<0.0001	129.088	136.244
Nom. Mesh 138	136.4662	1.465892	6	93.0943	<0.0001	132.888	140.044
Nom. Mesh 140	130.4333	1.065989	2748	122.3590	<0.0001	128.348	132.518
Nom. Mesh 150	144.3000	1.065989	2748	135.3672	<0.0001	142.215	146.385
Nom. Mesh 152	155.5585	1.475414	2748	105.4338	<0.0001	152.672	158.445
Nom. Mesh 190	184.6721	1.475414	2748	125.1663	<0.0001	181.786	187.558
Method WH	5.0518	0.143012	2748	35.3242	<0.0001	4.772	5.332
Method WW	4.5997	0.137092	2748	33.5517	<0.0001	4.332	4.868

Table 10. Small mesh model.

M: fixed~ method+ method:sqrt(Rtex)

Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	df	t-value	p-value
Intercept	7.23799	9.547382	711	0.75811	0.4486
WH	-4.88662	0.603206	711	-8.10108	<.0001
WW	-10.30566	0.603206	711	-17.08482	<.0001
ICES_sqrt(Rtex)	0.65239	0.240077	711	2.71742	0.0067
WH_sqrt(Rtex)	0.76736	0.240077	711	3.19633	0.0015
WW_sqrt(Rtex)	0.92643	0.240077	711	3.85889	0.0001

Table 11. Large mesh model.

M: fixed~ method*sqrt(dia)*Twine

Parameter	Estimate	Std.Error	df	t-value	p-value
Intercept	158.3278	11.94311	2 749	13.25684	<.0001
WH	-16.0561	10.23822	2 749	-1.56825	0.1169
WW	-13.5162	9.76109	2 749	-1.38471	0.1663
Sqrt(dia)	-20.7422	3.48686	2 749	-5.94868	<.0001
Twine	-132.2997	8.95710	2 749	-14.77038	<.0001
WH_sqrt(dia)	9.8903	4.57957	2 749	2.15965	0.0309
WW_sqrt(dia)	8.2788	4.33466	2 749	1.90990	0.0563
WH_Twine	35.8510	13.05468	2 749	2.74622	0.0061
WW_Twine	16.3268	11.46217	2 749	1.42441	0.1544
Sqrt(dia)_Twine	58.3751	3.98794	2 749	14.63790	<.0001
WH_sqrt(dia)_Twine	-18.1206	6.12022	2 749	-2.96077	0.0031
WW_sqrt(dia)_Twine	-7.7207	5.20246	2 749	-1.48405	0.1379

Table 12. Comparison between ICES 4 kgf mesh gauge and TSF.

Sample designation	Material	Rtex	TSF x no of yarns (g)	Average Mesh Size (mm)		p	ICES/TSF
				ICES gauge 4 kgf	TSF		
BFAFi 2,2 DBL	PA	3 400	3 400	41.9 (1.54)	42.8 (1.54)	2.07653E-09	0.98
BFAFi 2,6 SIN	PA	4 800	2 400	47.1 (1.55)	45.7 (1.82)	7.14395E-06	1.03
BFAFi 4 DBL	PA	12 000	12 000	113.0 (3.57)	118.8 (3.23)	1.13873E-26	0.95
BFAFi 6 DBL	PA	20 000	2 000	132.1 (2.76)	143.1 (2.52)	2.5055E-39	0.92
BFAFi 8 SIN	PA	35 800	17 900	119.9 (3.56)	127.0 (2.27)	4.96539E-19	0.94
DFO 1,8 SIN	PE	1 700	850	50.9 (1.73)	47.2 (1.67)	8.21833E-50	1.08
DFO 4 DBL	PE	5 687	5 600	146.5 (2.22)	147.1 (2.18)	2.40847E-13	1.00
DFO 5 DBL	PE	8 197	8 100	82.3 (1.88)	83.7 (1.95)	7.46004E-30	0.98
DFO 5,5 DBL	PE	11 170	10 940	105.3 (2.76)	108.3 (2.81)	2.82555E-39	0.97
DFO 6 DBL	PE	11 175	11 140	131.6 (3.73)	134.3 (3.71)	3.39801E-46	0.98
DIFRES 4 SIN 105	PE	5 578	2 735	106.5 (1.20)	104.4 (1.61)	3.07453E-11	1.02
DIFRES 4 SIN 75	PE	5 578	2 735	70.5 (1.51)	68.8 (1.76)	1.30332E-07	1.02
DIFRES1,5 SIN	PA	1 414	698	34.1 (0.67)	30.5 (0.75)	2.81792E-36	1.12
DVZ 4 DBL	PE	6 953	7 174	81.0 (3.01)	81.7 (3.14)	1.3624E-09	0.99
DVZ 5 SIN	PE	7 918	4 000	86.9 (1.90)	86.9 (1.98)	1	1.00
DVZ 1,2 SIN	PA	812	406	21.5 (0.72)	18.7 (0.77)	4.16334E-36	1.15
IMR-N 3,2 TRI	PE	4 733	7 950	135.2 (2.16)	142.2 (2.03)	4.23493E-27	0.95
IMR-N 5 DBL	PE	14 463	13 900	137.7 (2.99)	147.1 (2.60)	6.38877E-28	0.94
IMR-IS 6 DBL	PE	10 800	10 800	134.1 (3.37)	140.8 (3.56)	1.95891E-29	0.95
IMR-N 7,1 UC	PE	21 020	10 600	133.2 (0.81)	138.7 (0.80)	2.287E-46	0.96
IMR-N 10,8 UC	PE	59 545	26 750	133.7 (1.28)	143.1 (1.12)	1.06979E-46	0.93
IMR-N 8 DBL	PA	15 520	15 400	136.8 (2.03)	146.6 (2.09)	1.84219E-43	0.93
IMR-S 3,5 SIN	PE	3 883	1 957	71.6 (1.38)	71.0 (1.48)	6.85818E-07	1.01
IMR-S 4 SIN	PE	5 400	2 700	107.1 (1.27)	106.1 (0.99)	2.23951E-12	1.01
IMR-S 1,5 SIN	PA	1 450	816	37.0 (0.57)	35.6 (0.66)	4.74876E-18	1.04
MARLAB 3 SIN	PE	4 077	2 030	68.6 (2.78)	68.0 (2.62)	1.68884E-06	1.01
MARLAB 5 SIN	PE	13 830	6 816	74.7 (1.73)	78.8 (2.05)	3.85695E-32	0.95
MARLAB 6 DBL	PE	14 467	14 225	99.5 (2.19)	104.3 (2.72)	1.59198E-31	0.95
MDMF 6 DBL	PE	13 333	12 813	149.8 (3.19)	158.3 (3.21)	2.27534E-41	0.95
MDMF 8 SIN	PE	27 028	12 255	184.6 (4.68)	191.2 (4.98)	8.78829E-32	0.97
RIVO 4 DBL	PE	5 998	5 200	75.2 (2.24)	77.0 (2.61)	1.79107E-18	0.98
RIVO 6 DBL	PE	11 068	12 500	76.6 (3.60)	83.5 (3.50)	1.41865E-29	0.92
RIVO 2 SIN	PA	2 650	1 225	37.8 (0.98)	36.6 (1.06)	8.3824E-27	1.03
RIVO 2 DBL	PA	2 650	2 450	35.2 (1.27)	34.7 (1.14)	0.00206892	1.01

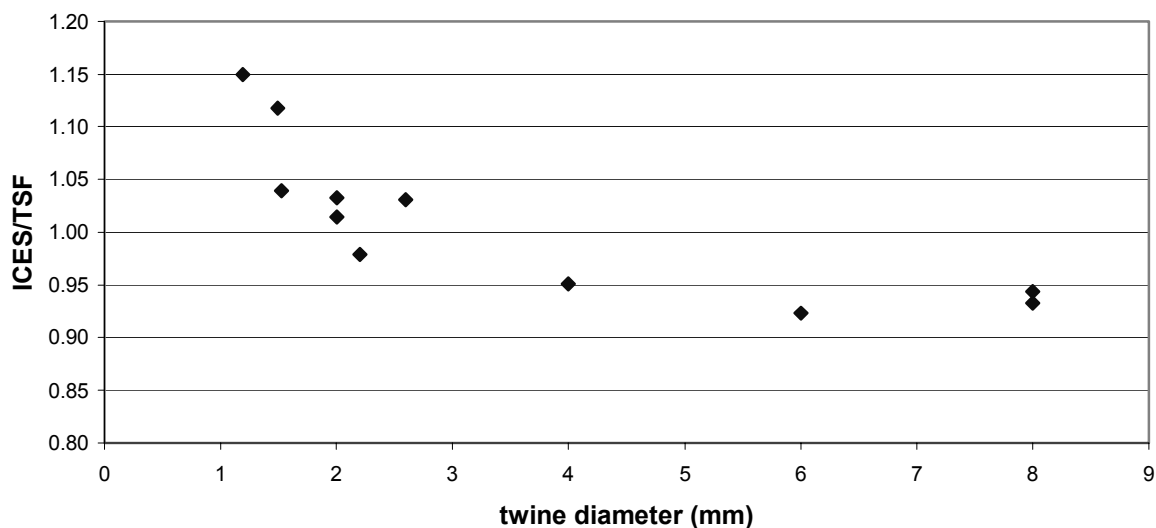


Figure 10. Ratio ICES/TSF in relation to the twine thickness for all PA nettings.

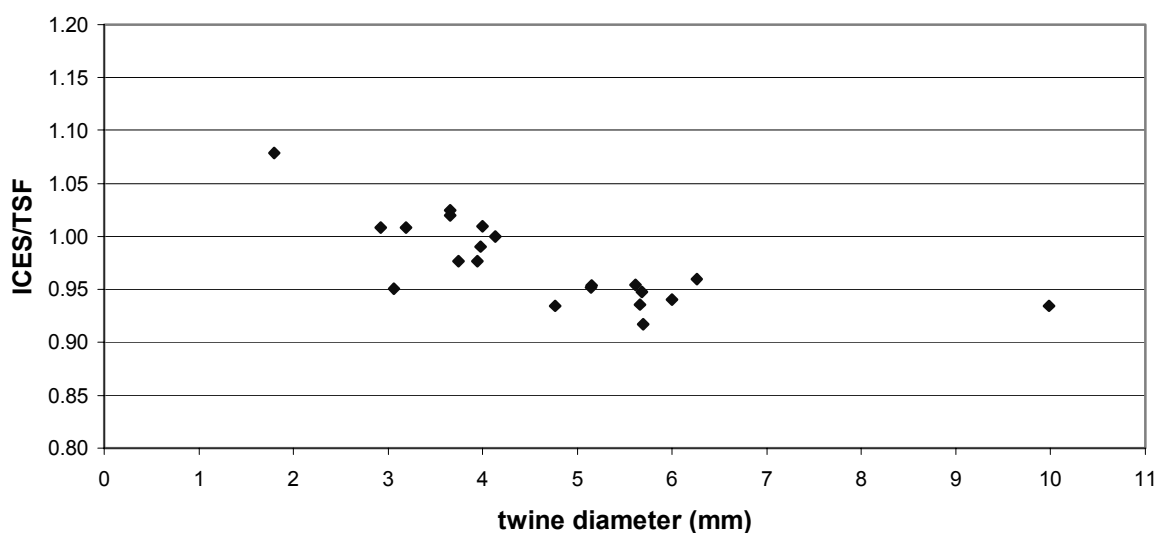


Figure 11. Ratio ICES/TSF in relation to the twine thickness for all PE nettings.

For PE nettings the upper group in the plot includes the samples from 1.8 mm single twine to 4.1 mm single twine. The lower group consists of the samples from 3.7 mm double (equivalent of 5.2 mm single) to 5.6 mm double twine (equivalent of 8.5 mm single).

Mesh measurements with 10 and 13 kgf longitudinal measuring forces

The average mesh openings obtained with 10 and 13 kgf measuring forces are given in Table 6. For reasons explained in Section 5.2, these measurements were only performed on the netting samples with a mesh opening > 55 mm.

The results from all measurements made with a longitudinal force (i.e. ICES 4 kgf, TSF, 10 and 13 kgf) were used to calculate for each sample the stretching force needed to obtain the same mesh opening as obtained with the wedge gauge, either operated by hand or with a 5 kgf weight. To make these calculations a linear relationship between mesh opening and measuring force was assumed. An example is given in Figure 14. A linear regression was calculated and by substituting the mesh opening from the wedge gauge measurements the “equivalent longitudinal force” was obtained. The results for all netting samples are given in Table 13.

Data variables: $Var = (ICES - TSF)/TSF$
 $RtexT = Rtex \times N \text{ of twines}$

Number of complete cases: 10

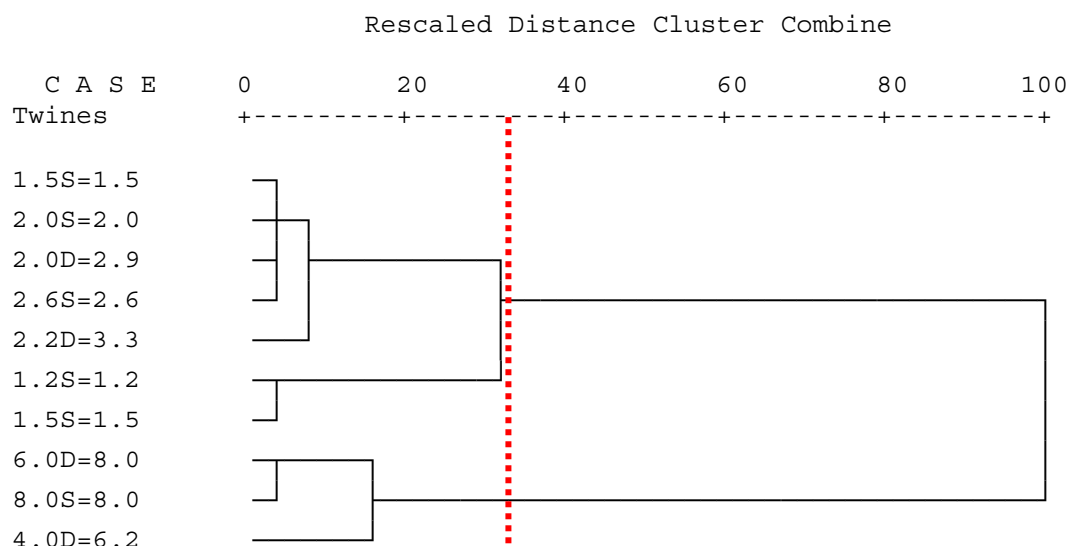


Figure 12. Hierarchical Cluster Analysis - Dendrogram for the PA netting samples.

The equivalent longitudinal force showed a great variability with 2.9 kgf as a minimum and 21.1 kgf as maximum value for the hand operated wedge gauge. Surprisingly the wedge gauge used with a 5 kg weight showed the same range of variability (3.5 kgf – 21.9 kgf).

The histograms in Figures 15 and 16 show the occurrence of the calculated longitudinal forces equivalent to the wedge gauge hand force and the wedge gauge 5 kgf respectively for all samples. The histogram based on the wedge gauge with 5 kgf force shows two peaks, one at 4-6 kgf and one at 8-10 kgf, in contrast with one peak at 10-12 kgf for the wedge gauge with hand force.

The occurrence of equivalent forces, for both wedge hand force and wedge with a 5 kg weight, covering 10, 11, 12, 13 and 15 kgf are presented in Table 14, together with median and mean for each case. As most large mesh codends (>55 mm) are made of PE yarns results for PE netting samples only are given separately.

The relationship between measurements made with longitudinal measuring forces of 10 kgf (Mesh10) and 4 kgf (ICES4) is dealt with in Annex 1.

The simplest model does not take account of the parameters linear density, twine thickness and netting material:

$$\text{Mesh10KGF} = 11.440 + 0.8984 * \text{ICES4KGF} + 0.00034 * \text{ICES4KGF}^2 \quad (3)$$

Taking account of the twine thickness and netting material the model becomes:

$$\text{Mesh10KGF} = 4.551 + 0.8977 * \text{ICES4KGF} + 0.0000334 * \text{ICES4KGF}^2 + 8.6544 * \text{Mat} + 1.0265 * \text{dia} - 1.3297 * \text{mat} * \text{dia} \quad (4)$$

in which dia = twine thickness and mat = 0 for PE and mat = 1 for PA.

By including the linear density and netting material the model now becomes:

$$\text{Mesh10KGF} = 8.0499 + 0.8858 * \text{ICES4KGF} + 0.000414 * \text{ICES4KGF}^2 + 5.01989 * \text{Mat} + 0.000114 * \text{Rtex} - 0.000217 * \text{Mat} * \text{Rtex} \quad (5)$$

The model using the twine thickness gives the best fit, but it is believed that for practical purposes the two models perform equally well.

5.5 Discussion

In general the nominal values of the twine thicknesses do not correspond well with the measured values. A similar result was obtained for the linear density: measured values tend to be larger than the nominal values. Unfortunately there is no uniformity in the determination of the linear density of netting twines and this makes it difficult to compare different values. According to ISO, netting yarns should be designated in the Tex System (Anon., 1973) but this system is rarely used by the netting industry.

Data variables: $\text{Var} = (\text{ICES} - \text{TSF})/\text{TSF}$
 $\text{RtexT} = \text{Rtex} \times \text{N of twines}$

Number of complete cases: 20

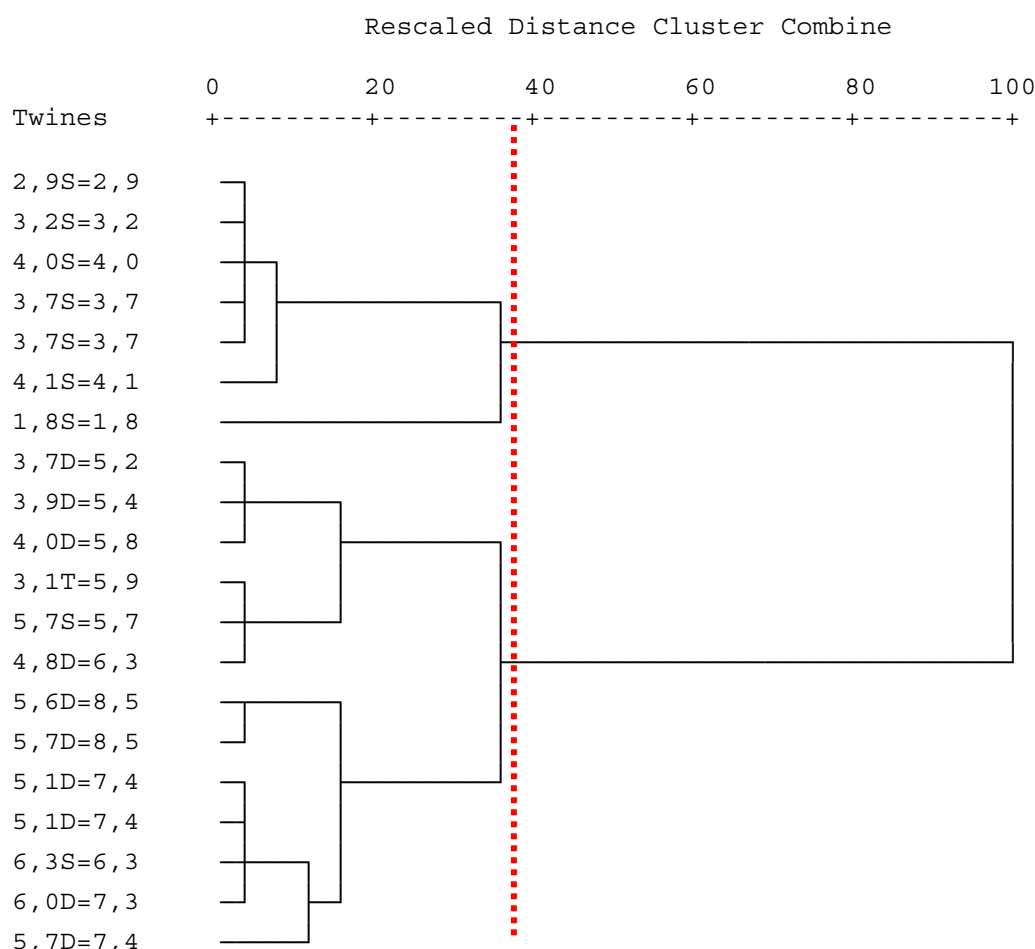


Figure 13. Hierarchical Cluster Analysis - Dendrogram for the PE netting samples

Other designations, such as the runnage (metres per kilogram) or the twine thickness are more frequently used. As a consequence care should be taken when using nominal values of twine thickness or linear density as a basis to calculate the pre-tension (i.e. the TSF) in certain tests (e.g., determination of elongation of netting yarns). Good correlation was found between the linear density and twine thickness and the formulas (1) and (2) can be used to convert one parameter to the other.

From the measurements with current mesh gauges and measuring forces on the netting samples with large meshes it was found that the mesh opening obtained with the ICES 4 kgf gauge is lower than wedge gauge measurements, whether they are made with hand force or a 5 kg weight. The difference is statistically significant. These conclusions confirm the results from earlier comparative studies (e.g., Ferro and Xu, 1996; Fonteyne *et al.*, 1998). The wedge gauge with a 5 kg weight is known to give smaller mesh openings than when operated by

hand force (Fonteyne *et al.*, 1998). In the present series of measurements this difference was true for most netting samples but for seven samples the wedge gauge operated with a 5 kg weight yielded larger mesh openings. The difference between both methods was not significant. It is reasonable to assume that the latter results are biased by human influences when measuring with the wedge gauge by hand. An analysis of the forces exerted on the netting twines when using the wedge gauge showed a large variability for both hand force and the 5 kg weight. Differences in the value of the friction coefficient (between netting material and the wedge gauge) may also have played a role.

The small mesh netting samples gave a less clear picture for all three methods. The differences between methods was often quite large but without clear trends in the data. Former comparative mesh measurement studies on this type of nettings are unknown.

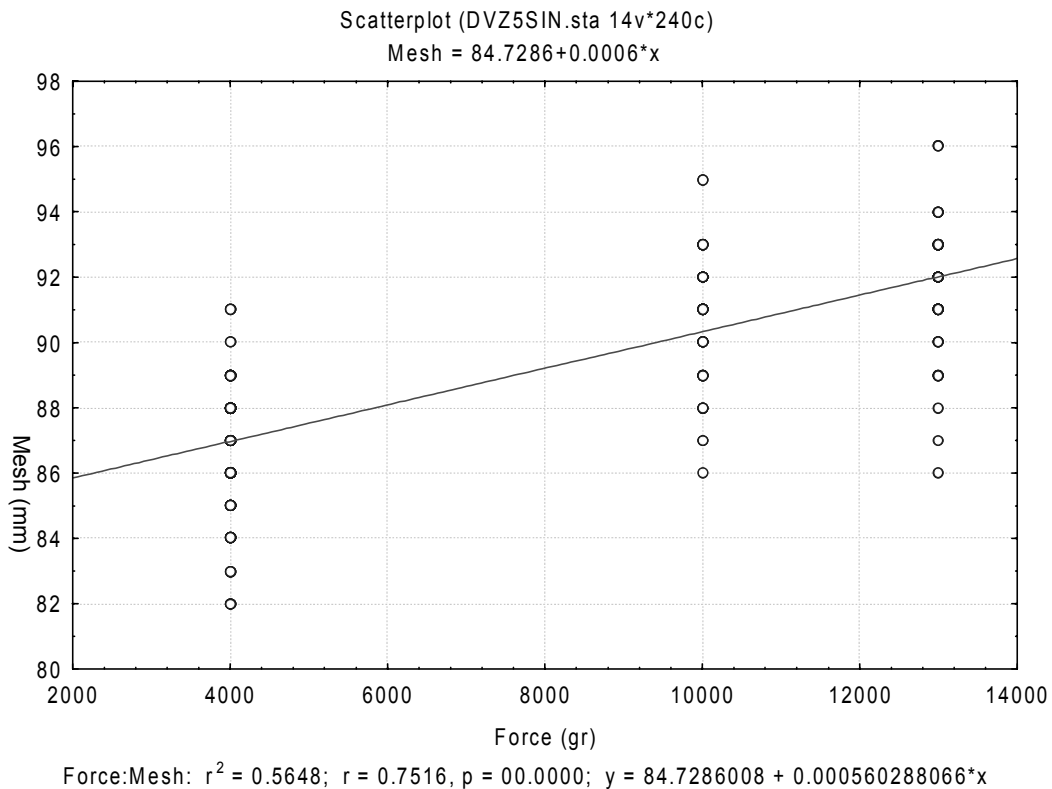


Figure 14. Linear relationship between mesh opening and measuring force (sample DVZ 5 SIN).

The standard deviation of the measured values differed from one sample to another, but seemed to be independent of the measurement method used. This result confirms the conclusion made by Ferro and Xu (1996) that the variance is caused less by the method and more by the characteristics of the netting and twine, e.g., variation in mesh size due to manufacture.

The hypothesis that the ICES gauge with a 4 kgf measuring force, compared with the Textile Standard Force, would overestimate the mesh opening of netting samples with small twine thicknesses and underestimate netting samples with large twine thicknesses proved to be true. This finding was to be expected since a 4 kgf measuring force corresponds to a TSF for netting made of single twine with a linear density of R8000tex. Consequently this force is too low to stretch modern netting made of heavier, often double, twines.

The measuring principle of the wedge gauge is based on a perpendicular measuring force transformed by the action of a wedge into a longitudinal force, which stretches the mesh to be measured. As set out in Section 5.2 a 5 kg weight attached to a wedge gauge with a taper of 1:8 will theoretically exert a longitudinal stretching force of 20 kgf, assuming that there is no friction between gauge and netting. The calculations of the longitudinal force exerted by a wedge gauge on the mesh showed a very large variation, apart from whether hand force or the 5 kg weight was used. This variation can be attributed to the human element, friction between gauge and netting and deviations from the vertical position of the gauge (Schwalbe and Werner, 1977; Post, 1987). The resulting longitudinal force may also have been influ-

enced by movements of the netting and/or the mesh gauge with the attached weight. The results of the measurements made in the present study confirm the proposition that this instrument is unsuitable for scientific measurements of the opening of mesh. The international standard for the measurement of the opening of mesh (Anon., 2003c) makes severe reservations for the use of the instrument in non-laboratory conditions (see also Section 3.5). Recently the use of the wedge gauge for fisheries inspection has also been questioned from a legal point of view (Fonteyne *et al.*, 2002).

The ICES gauge uses a fixed longitudinal force to stretch the mesh and minimises human influence and effects of friction between gauge and netting. The Study Group was of the opinion that this principle should be maintained. The comparison with the Textile Standard Force showed that a 4 kgf measuring force is too small for modern netting. Ideally the measuring force should be related to the linear density or twine thickness of the netting material. However, such a methodology is impractical due to the difficulties related to the measurement of linear density and/or twine thickness, especially at sea. Nominal values are often imprecise and should not be used without verification. Furthermore, absorption of sediments in the netting of bottom trawls will change their physical dimensions with time. The present study justifies making a distinction between small mesh netting, made of thin twines and large mesh netting made of heavier twines. For the reasons set out above a division based on linear density or twine thickness is inappropriate. The international standard EN ISO 16663 (Anon., 2003c) set a division between small and large meshes

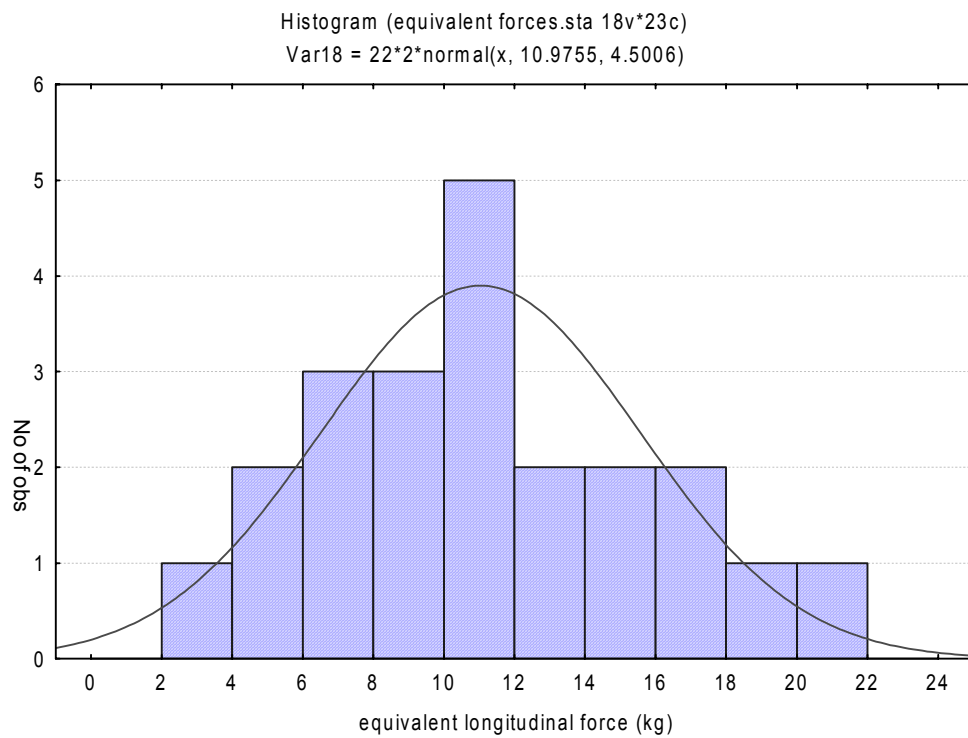


Figure 15. Occurrence of calculated longitudinal forces equivalent to wedge gauge hand force – all samples.

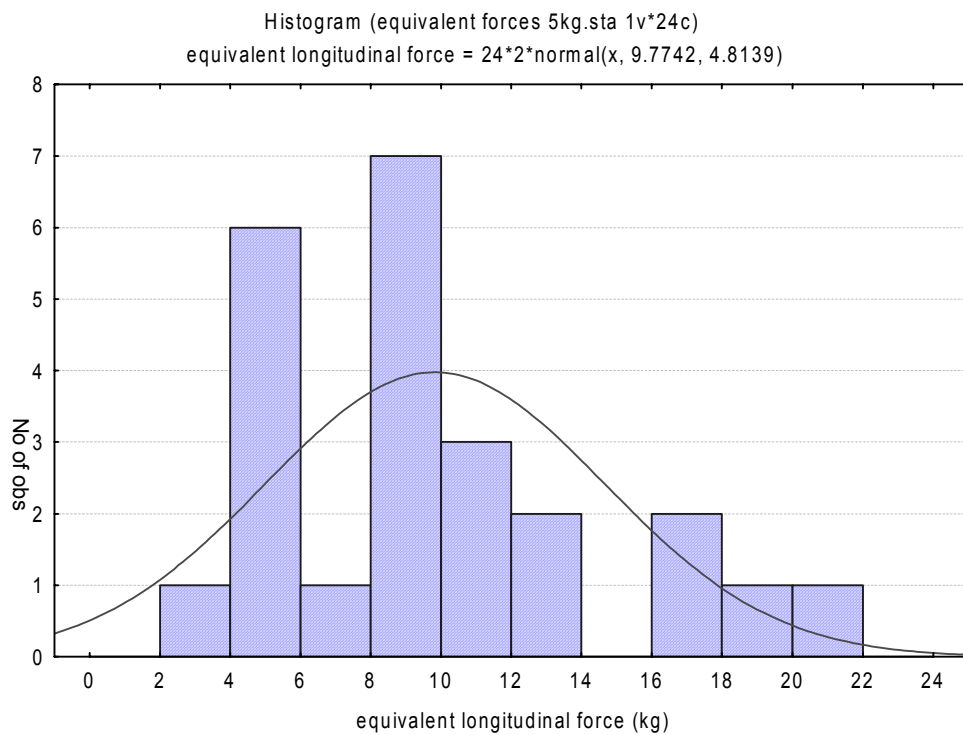


Figure 16. Occurrence of calculated longitudinal forces equivalent to wedge gauge 5 kgf – all samples.

Table 13. Longitudinal forces needed to obtain wedge gauge average mesh sizes.

Sample	Material	Equivalent Force (kgf)	
		Wedge hand	Wedge 5 kgf
BFAFi 4 DBL	PA	-16.89	-0.75
BFAFi 6 DBL	PA	5.25	5.4
BFAFi 8 SIN	PA	2.91	3.5
DFO 4 DBL	PE	11.3	9.83
DFO 5 DBL	PE	21.08	18.23
DFO 5,5 DBL	PE	16.11	17.5
DFO 6 DBL	PE	11.51	17.13
DIFRES 4 SIN 105	PE	12.29	9.60
DIFRES 4 SIN 75	PE	14.66	9.58
DVZ 4 DBL	PE	12.42	10.02
DVZ 5 SIN	PE	10.29	8.12
IMR-N 3,2 TRI	PE	9.65	5.23
IMR-N 5 DBL	PE	7.11	5.71
IMR-IS 6 DBL	PE	6.92	5.00
IMR-N 7,1 UC	PE	8.73	6.50
IMR-N 10,8 UC	PE	6.54	4.81
IMR-N 8 DBL	PA	5.79	4.23
IMR-S 3,5 SIN	PE	8.53	10.75
MARLAB 3 SIN	PE	10.47	9.40
MARLAB 5 SIN	PE	10.72	8.62
MARLAB 6 DBL	PE	16.16	10.05
MDMF 6 DBL	PE		21.90
MDMF 8 SIN	PE		9.33
RIVO 4 DBL	PE	14.71	12.03
RIVO 6 DBL	PE	18.10	12.11

Table 14. Occurrence of equivalent longitudinal forces with respect to longitudinal measuring forces in the range 10–15 kgf.

All samples		Measuring Forces					Median	Mean
		10 kgf	11 kgf	12 kgf	13 kgf	15 kgf		
Equivalent force; wedge by hand	Numbers below	41%	55%	64%	73%	82%	10.6	11.0
	Numbers above	59%	45%	36%	27%	18%		
Equivalent force; wedge 5 kgf	Numbers below	63%	75%	75%	83%	83%	9.5	9.8
	Numbers above	37%	25%	25%	17%	17%		

PE samples only		Measuring Forces					Median	Mean
		10 kgf	11 kgf	12kgf	13 kgf	15 kgf		
Equivalent force; wedge by hand	Numbers below	32%	47%	58%	68%	79%	11.3	12.0
	Numbers above	68%	53%	42%	32%	21%		
Equivalent force; wedge 5 kgf	Numbers below	57%	71%	71%	81%	81%	9.6	10.5
	Numbers above	43%	29%	29%	19%	19%		

at 50 mm using existing wedge gauges. European legislation related to twine thickness applies to netting of mesh size of 55mm and above. With a view to a future standardization between methodologies for science and inspection, the Study Group supports 55 mm as a borderline. The decision, for inspection purposes, on whether the meshes to be measured should be regarded as smaller or larger than 55 mm depends on the legislation on regulated mesh sizes for specified target species and on any declaration by the skipper concerning the species he is targeting.

As already mentioned in Section 5.2, the Study Group postulated that the transition to the use of a new measuring force should not be detrimental to codend selectivity and therefore should deliver results similar to the present procedures set down in technical measures legislation. Ferro and Xu (1996) suggested that a force of at least 8 kgf is required to achieve similar mesh openings in dry PE netting to a wedge gauge with a 5 kg weight, but this relationship was based on much thinner twines. Table 14 suggests that appropriate values for the longitudinal measuring force would be closer to 10 kgf if based on the wedge gauge with 5 kgf and 11 kgf if based on the wedge gauge with hand force. Fisheries inspectors consider the wedge gauge with a 5 kg weight as the reference and this was also the opinion of the Study Group in the light of present conservation concerns. Taking further into account that the difference between 10 and 11 kgf would be minimal and that most existing selectivity data are based on measurements with the ICES gauge, which uses only 4 kgf measuring force, the Study Group agreed on 100 N (10.197 kgf) as the value for the new measuring force. The imposition of a 100 N measuring force may well result in some existing codends becoming illegal, and having to be removed from their respective fisheries. Based on the outcome of the measurements made in the present study, about 30% of the codends that pass the inspection with the hand operated wedge gauge will become illegal if the new force is used. This theoretical number is raised to 40% if the wedge gauge with a 5 kg weight is taken as a reference. In practice, codends are usually constructed from webbing with mesh sizes at least slightly larger than the minimum mesh size, as a prudent measure. Hence, the percentage of codends that will need to be replaced will be lower than suggested here.

The measuring force proposed for meshes less than 55 mm opening of mesh is 40 N (4.079 kgf). This choice is mainly based on theoretical assumptions. For the moment a 2 kg weight is used by inspectors for the measurement of small meshes using a wedge gauge. A 1:8 taper will convert this weight into an 8 kgf longitudinal force. It is reasonable to allow for a 50% reduction for friction forces as was done for a 5 kg weight. There were not enough measured netting samples to demonstrate this conclusively but a 40 N measuring force would retain the status quo with no detriment to selectivity.

The proposed measuring force of 100 N cannot be exerted by the present ICES gauge. The Study Group was notified that a new measuring gauge is being developed with a capacity of 150 N in the EU shared cost

OMEGA project Q5CO-2002-01335, but this instrument will not be available until 2005. It was recommended that in the meantime for scientific work the ICES gauge with 4 kgf measuring force be used but the results should be converted to 100 N using conversion formulae (3), (4) or (5) given in Section 5.4.

6 Conclusions

The Study Group on Mesh Measurement Methodology formulated its response to the general Terms of Reference at its final meeting:

- a) Advise on improvements and further standardization of current mesh measurement practices in view of the netting types now in use in ICES Member Countries

The Study Group recommends that all parties concerned should adhere to the specification of a suitable mesh measurement methodology set out in Term of Reference e) below, whether they are scientists, inspectors, netting manufacturers, net makers or fishermen. As advice derived from selectivity data determines mesh size regulations, it is logical that all stakeholders should use the same system of mesh measurement.

Until an instrument capable of making objective measurements, not subject to human influence, becomes widely available the Group recommends that for scientific purposes the existing ICES gauge with 4 kgf measuring force should continue to be used. In this interim period one of the following conversion formulas should be applied:

- when both the linear density and the netting material are known

$$\text{Mesh10KGF} = 8.0499 + 0.8858 * \text{ICES4KGF} + 0.000414 * \text{ICES4KGF}^2 + 5.01989 * \text{Mat} + 0.000114 * \text{Rtex} - 0.000217 * \text{Mat} * \text{Rtex}$$

- when the twine thickness and netting material are known

$$\text{Mesh10KGF} = 4.551 + 0.8977 * \text{ICES4KGF} + 0.0000334 * \text{ICES4KGF}^2 + 8.6544 * \text{Mat} + 1.0265 * \text{dia} - 1.3297 * \text{mat} * \text{dia}$$

In these expression “dia” is the twine thickness and Mat = 0 for PE and Mat = 1 for PA.

- when the value of these parameters is unknown

$$\text{Mesh10KGF} = 11.440 + 0.8984 * \text{ICES4KGF} + 0.00034 * \text{ICES4KGF}^2$$

These expressions deliver a mesh opening equivalent to that obtained using a longitudinal force of 100N. It should be noted that the conversion is based on the measurements with the ICES gauge with 4 kgf and 10 kgf measuring forces. 10 kgf corresponds to 98.07 N which is slightly lower than the proposed 100 N measur-

ing force. This difference is considered insignificant for mesh measurements.

For inspection purposes use of the wedge gauge with 5 kg weight must continue until the necessary changes are made to regulations.

The Study Group also recommends that the same methods and conditions should be used for all areas of the gear as well as attachments, although this uniformity will not always be possible, e.g., for lifting bags with a limited number of meshes available for measurement. In some circumstances a certain amount of discretion will be required.

- b) Consider whether the current definition of mesh size is still appropriate for scientific and industrial purposes

The Study Group considers the current definition of mesh size appropriate for scientific and industrial purposes. The Study Group agrees with the definition in the European Standard EN ISO 1107 standard on basic terms and definitions for fishing nets (Anon., 2003a). This standard defines the mesh opening for knotted netting as the longest distance between two opposite knots in the same mesh. This definition eliminates the difficulty encountered with the measurement of netting with large knots.

- c) Compile an inventory of commercially available netting associated with the selectivity process, identifying the fisheries in which they are used

The inventory is presented in Table 1.

- d) Consider the need to define groups of netting types for which the same measurement conditions (e.g., tension) can be applied

Ideally the measuring force for a specific netting twine should be related to the linear density. Alternatively twine thickness can be used to determine linear density using the relationships (1) or (2) in Section 5.4. However, both linear density and twine thickness can only be measured accurately under laboratory conditions. Since mesh measurements are generally carried out at sea, values of the linear density or the twine thickness are not easily obtainable. The measurements of linear density and twine thickness made by the Study Group indicated that nominal values are insufficiently precise. Therefore the Study Group is of the opinion that the best option is to base the mesh measuring force on single values for smaller and larger meshes. Based on mesh measurement data analysis and present legislation, a mesh opening of 55 mm is considered as the most appropriate value to separate these mesh size groups.

- e) Propose the specification of a suitable mesh measurement methodology and the conditions under which mesh measurements for all fishing gears in ICES areas are made

The Study Group recommends:

- 1) A longitudinal force of either 40 or 100 N must be used, depending on whether the mesh opening is smaller than 55 mm or equal or larger than 55 mm. The decision, for inspection purposes, on whether the meshes to be measured should be regarded as smaller or larger than 55 mm depends on the legislation on regulated mesh sizes for specified target species and on any declaration by the skipper concerning the species he is targeting.

- 2) For scientific purposes a minimum of 40 meshes is required to be measured.

For fisheries inspections the numbers of meshes to be measured may remain at 20 and 60 (as set out in e.g., Anon., 2003b).

- 3) When measuring codends or extensions care must be taken to observe previous recommendations (Wileman *et al.*, 1996; Anon., 2003b) with regard to nearness of selvages, mendings, etc. For scientific purposes it is recommended that two rows of 20 meshes should be measured in an area where fish are known to escape, e.g., aft upper part of codend when targeting roundfish.
- 4) State whether netting is measured in a wet or dry state.
- 5) Meshes must be unfrozen.
- 6) For scientific work the area measured must be clean and as free from sediment as possible. For inspection such matters are left to the discretion of Fisheries Inspectors.
- 7) Netting must be stretched in the direction of the long diagonal of the meshes (as per Anon., 2003b).
- 8) Square mesh netting will be measured on the longest diagonal (as per Anon., 2003b).
- 9) 90° turned netting will be measured on the longest diagonal.

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Annex 1: Analysis of data obtained within the ICES SGMESH

by

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Objectives

The analyses presented in this report aim to address the following questions:

- Compare the three main methods “ICES” “WH” and “WW”
- Assess main factors affecting the mesh measurements and potential differences between the three main methods
- Find an appropriate conversion formula between “ICES” and “ICES10KGF”

Data

The data consist of measurements of mesh sizes conducted by a number of institutes each using 6 different methods (ICES, WW, WH, TSF, ICES10KGF and ICES 13KGF). The analysis will primarily focus on the first three methods. The response variable is consequently considered a vector with dimensions corresponding to the number of methods. Each institute measured a number of samples of netting and 60 meshes were measured from each sample. Each mesh was only measured once by each method. The same pieces of netting were not measured by the different institutes. In effect this forms a hierarchical structure of measurements of Mesh within Sample and Sample within Institute. The Method variable is called the primary covariate and Mesh, Sample and Institute are classification variables. In addition the data contain other variables:

Name	Type	Explanation
Rtex	Continuous	A measurement of the twine-density
Diameter	Continuous	Twine diameter
NomMesh	Continuous	Nominal mesh size
Twine	Factor	SINGLE, DOUBLE, TRIPLE
Material	Factor	PA, PE
Construct	Factor	BRAIDED, TWISTED, KNOTLESS

See the main-report for further explanation of these variables. These can all potentially be entered into models for assessing the variability in the response variables. See however the note below on multi-collinearity.

Data are separated into two groups:

- “SMALL”: Nominal mesh size ≤ 55 mm
- “LARGE”: Nominal mesh size > 55 mm

The separate analysis of the two groups is motivated by the fact that they are essentially composed of different materials. Since the material is suspected to influence the measurements it would not make much sense to combine measurements from the two groups.

It could be considered to conduct a combined analysis of the two groups, in which interaction effects allow for differences between the two, wherever deemed relevant or necessary.

SMALL

Twine: single

<i>Institute</i>	<i>braided</i>	<i>twisted</i>	<i>knotless</i>
BFAFi	360	0	0
DFO	360	0	0
DIFRES	0	360	0
DVZ	0	360	0
IMRIS	0	0	0
IMRNO	0	0	0
IMRS	0	360	0
MARLAB	0	0	0
MDMF	0	0	0
RIVO	0	360	0

Twine: double

<i>Institute</i>	<i>braided</i>	<i>twisted</i>	<i>knotless</i>
BFAFi	360	0	0
DFO	0	0	0
DIFRES	0	0	0
DVZ	0	0	0
IMRIS	0	0	0
IMRNO	0	0	0
IMRS	0	0	0
MARLAB	0	0	0
MDMF	0	0	0
RIVO	0	360	0

There were no measurements of triple twine netting samples within the “SMALL” group and no samples made of knotless netting. It is seen that the data are unbalanced with the majority of measurements made on twisted single twine. There are very limited observations of both single and double twine with the same treatment within the same institute (only RIVO). No institute measured both “braided” and “twisted” and four institutes had no measurements at all in this group. Finally all nettings from the SMALL group were made of material of type PA (PolyAmide).

The analysis for this group will consequently be restricted to single twine, twisted PA netting samples. Only four institutes generated these data.

LARGE

Twine: single

<i>Institute</i>	<i>braided</i>	<i>Twisted</i>	<i>knotless</i>
BFAFi	360	0	0
DFO	0	0	0
DIFRES	720	0	0
DVZ	360	0	0
IMRIS	0	0	0
IMRNO	0	0	720
IMRS	720	0	0
MARLAB	720	0	0
MDMF	360	0	0
RIVO	0	0	0

Twine: double

<i>Institute</i>	<i>braided</i>	<i>twisted</i>	<i>knotless</i>
BFAFi	720	0	0
DFO	1440	0	0
DIFRES	0	0	0
DVZ	360	0	0
IMRIS	360	0	0
IMRNO	720	0	0
IMRS	0	0	0
MARLAB	360	0	0
MDMF	360	0	0
RIVO	720	0	0

Twine: triple

<i>Institute</i>	<i>braided</i>	<i>twisted</i>	<i>knotless</i>
BFAFi	0	0	0
DFO	0	0	0
DIFRES	0	0	0
DVZ	0	0	0
IMRIS	0	0	0
IMRNO	360	0	0
IMRS	0	0	0
MARLAB	0	0	0
MDMF	0	0	0
RIVO	0	0	0

Only one institute made measurements on triple twine and only on the "braided" type. Similarly only one institute made measurements on knotless netting. Single twine and double twine are both well represented. There were however only four institutes which took measurements on both. One institute only measured PA material. For this group the analysis will consequently be restricted to the braided netting of PE, single or double twine.

The total numbers of measurements distributed over institutes and twine-types is listed in the following table.

<i>Institute</i>	<i>Single</i>	<i>Double</i>
BFAFi	360	720
DFO	0	1440
DIFRES	720	0
DVZ	360	360
IMRIS	0	360
IMRNO	0	720
IMRS	720	0
MARLAB	720	360
MDMF	360	360
RIVO	0	720

Statistical Models and Methods

A statistical model for the data

The modelling approach used here is commonly known as mixed effects models (or random effects models). See (Pinheiro and Bates, 2000) for a more quantitative description of the general modelling framework.

It is essential that a statistical model reflects the process by which the data has been sampled. To some extent the sampling process therefore drives the modelling. In particular it is important for proper inference that the model gives a realistic description of the random variation in the data.

For the present data the following assumptions and structures have been used:

Measurements of the meshes are assumed to be observations from independent normally distributed random variables. These are sampled in a hierarchical structure with 60 meshes measured from each of a number of samples of netting, each taken within a number of institutes. It is noted that the data are not balanced. The hierarchical structure of the random effects is presented as:

$$random \sim I | Institute / Sample / Mesh$$

(read: Mesh within Sample, sample within institute and a random effect associated with each institute.) A variance component is associated with each level of this hierarchy. Variants of this structure can be argued (and will be used; see below) based on the data.

Another aspect of modelling concerns the objective of the analysis. In this respect the model is driven by the question which the analysis aims to answer. This is not always unambiguous and data sets may allow for a multitude of different models to be analysed. This part typically addresses the so-called fixed effects.

An example of the notation for the fixed effects part is:

$$fixed \sim Method + Rtex$$

with an obvious interpretation.

The data allow for a range of different models to be fitted. The variation of models mainly concerns the choice of fixed effects.

A comment on fixed and random effects:

Factors affecting the value of a response can be classified as either a fixed or a random effect. The actual choice is not un-ambiguous but depends on the question the analysis aims to answer. A factor for which the interest focuses on the effect of the actual levels will be classified as fixed. On the other hand a factor where the levels are not of specific interest, but (can be) considered a random sample from a larger population will be classified as a random effect. In other words a variable, which is suspected to influence the response but which is not of interest in itself, will be deemed random, provided its levels can be considered a random selection from a larger population.

For the particular case, consider the Institute variable. If the aim of a model is to describe the mesh size as provided by the various methods and to assess the levels and potential differences of the particular institutes represented in the data this variable would be considered a fixed effect. If however the particular institutes are of no interest by themselves, but merely considered a random selection from a larger population, the Institute variable would then be considered a random effect.

A comment on multi-collinearity:

Another ambiguous aspect of building a model is the selection of variables. Sometimes two or more background variables are strongly correlated, and hence es-

entially contain the same information about the variation in the data. Using more than one of these in a model leads to multi-collinearity: Overlap of information. Whenever one of them is included in the model, including another will not provide additional information to the model. The choice among the competing candidates depends on various issues: If one of the candidates can be considered the cause for the other it would be natural to choose this one. If however the interest is on assessing the effect of a particular variable, this one would obviously be chosen. In many cases there is however not an obvious preference to one of the candidates. The natural choice will then be to choose the one which provides the best fit. This can be determined by various statistics such as AIC (Akaike's Information Criterion) or BIC (Bayes Information Criterion). Both give preference to the model with smallest value of the statistics.

For this particular case, Rtex and dia are strongly correlated. There are no obvious reasons for choosing one in front of the other. Consequently this will be determined by the use of AIC and BIC.

Results

The following sections contain a number of analyses, which aim to answer the questions described above. The focus has been on presenting the main results. Consequently intermediate models are described in less detail and results of model checks are omitted.

Exploratory analysis

Before addressing the particular questions of this analysis, it is of interest to do an exploratory analysis. This serves to provide an overview of the data and can help in guiding the subsequent modelling.

Plots of the mesh size measurements adjusted for nominal mesh size and grouped by Method obtain a first assessment of the variability in the data. These are given in Figures 1 and 2 for the SMALL and LARGE group respectively.

SMALL

The "ICES" and the "WH" methods appear to be similar in variation and with "WH" at a slightly higher level than the "ICES" method. The "WW" method seems to display a larger variation. All three methods seem to overestimate the mesh size in comparison with the nominal mesh size.

LARGE

The "ICES" method appears to be at a lower level than the two other methods and the plot indicates that this method measures below the nominal mesh size. The "WW" method seems to display a larger variation

These plots cover however the potential different levels at which the institutes measure. Figures 3 and 4 give the observed measurements grouped by Method and Institute. The larger variation within the "WW" group is now less apparent. Instead it is seen for groups that the Institute factor accounts for a considerable amount of the variation, both in levels and variation for the different methods.

A more quantitative assessment is provided by standard linear regressions for each institute. The two tables below give the estimated ratio of measurement to nominal mesh size.

SMALL

	RIVO	DVZ	DIFRES	IMR-S
ICES	1.081	1.1963	0.9748	1.0282
WH	1.0776	1.0139	0.9971	1.0551
WW	1.2143	1.1287	0.9343	1.0116

LARGE

	RIVO	DVZ	MAR-LAB	DIFRES	IMR-S
ICES	0.9257	1.0234	0.9937	0.989	1.0074
WH	1.0488	1.0662	1.0686	1.0297	1.0223
WW	1.0067	1.0533	1.045	1.0105	1.0568

	IMR-IS	IMR-NO	DFO	MDMF
ICES	0.9932	0.9977	0.9749	0.9771
WH	1.0165	1.0244	1.0039	1.0336
WW	1.0099	1.0145	1.0074	NA

The conclusions from these tables support the conclusions from the plots.

Plots of all combinations of factors continuous co-variables and the response variable are given in Figures 5 and 6 for the SMALL and LARGE group respectively. A number of observations can be made from these figures and in particular from Figure 6 which present far more data:

- There is more overlapping of Nominal mesh sizes between the institutes for the "LARGE" data set than for the "SMALL" one.
- Rtex and dia are close to linearly related
- Nominal mesh size and observed mesh size are close to linearly related for all three methods
- Double twine tends to have a larger diameter (and Rtex-value) than single twine (not unexpected)
- A similar conclusion for the relation between Nominal mesh size and Twine

Comparison of the three main methods "ICES" "WH" and "WW"

Considerations for incorporation of nominal mesh size into the model.

It is expected that the result of any reasonable mesh measurement method is closely related to the nominal mesh size of the meshes being measured. A given sample of netting is characterized by a nominal mesh size. When only a few samples are measured and they are almost all of different nominal mesh sizes, the nominal mesh size and sample become confounded effects. In this case it can become difficult or impossible to include both in the model.

SMALL: Each of the four institutes represented measured (effectively) only one sample each. It is there-

fore not possible to estimate a variance component for the sample. A total of 3 mesh sizes (18 mm, 35 mm, and 36 mm) were measured. The smallest was however only measured by a single institute. The majority of the measurements are consequently concentrated on two adjacent nominal mesh sizes. This may affect the possibilities of detecting an effect of nominal mesh size.

LARGE: Nine institutes are represented in the “LARGE” data set. Only two of these made repetitive measurements of the same nominal mesh size on two different samples. For the remaining institutes different netting samples represented different nominal mesh sizes. Consequently the nominal mesh size (within institute) is considerably confounded with the sample (within institute). Since the nominal mesh sizes span a considerable range it will be incorporated into the fixed effects part of the model. This enables us to isolate the effect caused by the choice of method. The nominal mesh size will enter the model as a factor. This way the estimates associated with the method parameters can be interpreted as method specific adjustments to the nominal mesh sizes at any particular level.

SMALL

The fixed effects part used in this part of the analysis is given by:

$$\text{fixed} \sim \text{method} - 1$$

The *-1* removes the intercept. This fits an estimate for each method rather than a base level (= the “ICES” method) and fitting the other methods by contrasts to the base level.

First a simple model was fitted including only the “Method” as fixed effect and with $\text{random} \sim 1 | \text{Inst} / \text{Mesh}$. This was compared with a model with a more simple random effects structure: $\text{random} \sim 1 | \text{Inst}$. A likelihood ratio test gave preference to the simpler model. (Note however that by convention random effects are normally not tested for, but in this particular case the variance component attributed to the mesh within institute was very small. Furthermore inclusion of this component impeded the estimation of confidence intervals).

Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	df	t-value	p-value
ICES	32.625	3.765	714	8.664370	<0.0001
WH	32.213	3.765	714	8.554820	<0.0001
WW	32.983	3.765	714	8.759534	<0.0001

$$\hat{\sigma}_{\text{Inst}} = 7.51 \text{ and } \hat{\sigma} = 1.64$$

These variance components are estimates of the between-Institute and within-Institute variances.

The 95% confidence intervals for the fixed effects parameter estimates are:

	Lo	Hi
ICES	25.25	40.00
WH	24.84	39.59
WW	25.61	40.36

It is seen that there is a considerable overlap between the confidence intervals and it is not possible to detect any difference between the three methods. With the overall objective in mind (and because the data cover a relatively wide range of nominal mesh sizes) it does however not serve any purpose to fit a common level for the three methods.

Instead it could be asked if the variation and imbalance in nominal mesh sizes prevents the detection of differences. A model based on a data set with the smallest nominal mesh size removed was fitted. It did however not detect any difference. Finally a model was fitted with separate levels for each combination of nominal mesh size and method. This model could also not detect any difference between methods within any of the three levels of nominal mesh size.

LARGE

For the large mesh data the fixed effects part used is given by:

$$\text{fixed} \sim \text{NomMesh} + \text{method} - 1$$

The results in the first 14 lines of the following table gives the expected mesh sizes for the range of nominal mesh sizes represented in the data when measured with the “ICES” gauge. The last two lines give the estimated contrasts (adjustments) when measured by the “WH” and “WW” method.

Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	df	t-value	p-value
Nom. Mesh 70	73.0856	1.038096	2748	70.4035	<0.0001
Nom. Mesh 74	67.9113	1.065989	2748	63.7073	<0.0001
Nom. Mesh 75	69.8879	1.065989	2748	65.5616	<0.0001
Nom. Mesh 80	81.9833	1.065989	2748	76.9082	<0.0001
Nom. Mesh 82	80.4773	1.030905	6	78.0647	<0.0001
Nom. Mesh 100	96.6947	1.065989	2748	90.7089	<0.0001
Nom. Mesh 105	105.3828	1.038096	2748	101.5155	<0.0001
Nom. Mesh 107	107.5210	1.065989	2748	100.8650	<0.0001
Nom. Mesh 135	132.6662	1.465892	6	90.5020	<0.0001
Nom. Mesh 138	136.4662	1.465892	6	93.0943	<0.0001
Nom. Mesh 140	130.4333	1.065989	2748	122.3590	<0.0001
Nom. Mesh 150	144.3000	1.065989	2748	135.3672	<0.0001
Nom. Mesh 152	155.5585	1.475414	2748	105.4338	<0.0001
Nom. Mesh 190	184.6721	1.475414	2748	125.1663	<0.0001
Method WH	5.0518	0.143012	2748	35.3242	<0.0001
Method WW	4.5997	0.137092	2748	33.5517	<0.0001

$$\hat{\sigma}_{Inst} = 1.435, \hat{\sigma}_{Sample} = 0.8864 \text{ and } \hat{\sigma} = 3.265$$

The 95% confidence intervals for the fixed effects parameter estimates are:

Parameter	Lo	Hi
Nom. Mesh 70	71.055	75.116
Nom. Mesh 74	65.826	69.996
Nom. Mesh 75	67.803	71.973
Nom. Mesh 80	79.898	84.068
Nom. Mesh 82	77.961	82.994
Nom. Mesh 100	94.610	98.780
Nom. Mesh 105	103.352	107.413
Nom. Mesh 107	105.436	109.606
Nom. Mesh 135	129.088	136.244
Nom. Mesh 138	132.888	140.044
Nom. Mesh 140	128.348	132.518
Nom. Mesh 150	142.215	146.385
Nom. Mesh 152	152.672	158.445
Nom. Mesh 190	181.786	187.558
Method WH	4.772	5.332
Method WW	4.332	4.868

Only the last two lines are of interest in terms of the objective. They demonstrate that the “ICES” is significantly smaller than both the “WH” and “WW” method. These two methods, on the other hand, do not appear to be significantly different.

It should be noted that these models (SMALL and LARGE) were designed to assess potential differences between the three measurement methods rather than for the purpose of describing actual mesh sizes. The models are fitted across different magnitudes of actual mesh sizes and thereby average the differences across these spans. Consequently they should not be used for predicting actual mesh size measurements with any of the three methods.

Main factors affecting the mesh measurements

The analyses conducted here take the models used in the previous section as an offset. The purpose is to describe the variability observed in the data by including additional (fixed) effects. “Rtex” and “diameter” will not enter the models simultaneously (c.f. notes above). The plots in Figures 5 and 6 suggest that the observed mesh size be described by a non-linear relationship with either of the two variables. Preliminary tests showed that the square root of Rtex (or diameter) provided a better fit. “Twine” will be tested for in the “LARGE” data set.

SMALL

First, two models were fitted to identify which of the two competing covariates to include for further analysis:

$$\begin{aligned} M1: & \text{fixed} \sim \text{method} * \sqrt{\text{Rtex}} \\ M2: & \text{fixed} \sim \text{method} * \sqrt{\text{dia}} \end{aligned}$$

(Note that these models include both main effects as well as interaction effects.) Rtex was chosen based on a lower value for both the AIC and the BIC statistics.

Next it was investigated if M1 could be reduced.

The results of fitting M1 is given in the following table:

Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	df	t-value	p-value
Intercept	7.23799	9.547382	712	0.75811	0.4486
WH	-4.88662	0.603206	712	-8.10108	<.0001
WW	-10.30566	0.603206	712	-17.08482	<.0001
Sqrt (Rtex)	0.65239	0.240077	2	2.71742	0.1129
WH_sqrt (Rtex)	0.11497	0.015168	712	7.58003	<.0001
WW_sqrt (Rtex)	0.27404	0.015168	712	18.06691	<.0001

The Intercept corresponds to the “ICES” method, whereas “WH” and “WW” are contrasts. The table suggests that the main effect of Sqrt(Rtex) is insignificant. A likelihood-ratio test for removing the effect of Sqrt(Rtex) altogether was rejected. Therefore a model with only interaction effects (and individual levels for the three methods) was fitted:

$$M3: \text{fixed} \sim \text{method} + \text{method} : \sqrt{\text{Rtex}}$$

With the following result:

Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	df	t-value	P-value
Intercept	7.23799	9.547382	711	0.75811	0.4486
WH	-4.88662	0.603206	711	-8.10108	<.0001
WW	-10.30566	0.603206	711	-17.08482	<.0001
ICES_sqrt (Rtex)	0.65239	0.240077	711	2.71742	0.0067
WH_sqrt (Rtex)	0.76736	0.240077	711	3.19633	0.0015
WW_sqrt (Rtex)	0.92643	0.240077	711	3.85889	0.0001

The model could not be reduced any further.

The interaction terms imply that Rtex (or rather sqrt(Rtex) acts differently upon the three methods. By way of example consider a sample of netting with an Rtex value of 1325. The expected mesh size measurement given by the three methods would then be:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{ICES: } & 7.23799 + 0.65239 * \sqrt{1325} = 30.99 \\ \text{WH: } & 7.23799 - 4.88662 + 0.76736 * \sqrt{1325} = 30.28 \\ \text{WW: } & 7.23799 - 10.30566 + 0.92643 * \sqrt{1325} = 30.65 \end{aligned}$$

LARGE

Similarly to the “SMALL” data set two models were fitted. This time however also including the “Twine” effect

$$\begin{aligned} M1: & \text{fixed} \sim \text{method} * \sqrt{\text{Rtex}} * \text{Twine} \\ M2: & \text{fixed} \sim \text{method} * \sqrt{\text{dia}} * \text{Twine} \end{aligned}$$

Contrary to the “SMALL” data set the AIC and BIC statistics gave preference to “Diameter” as explanatory variable. The results of fitting M2 are given in the following table:

Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	df	t-value	p-value
Intercept	158.3278	11.94311	2749	13.25684	<.0001
WH	-16.0561	10.23822	2749	-1.56825	0.1169
WW	-13.5162	9.76109	2749	-1.38471	0.1663
sqrt(dia)	-20.7422	3.48686	2749	-5.94868	<.0001
Twine	-132.2997	8.95710	2749	-14.77038	<.0001
WH_sqrt (dia)	9.8903	4.57957	2749	2.15965	0.0309
WW_sqrt (dia)	8.2788	4.33466	2749	1.90990	0.0563
WH_ Twine	35.8510	13.05468	2749	2.74622	0.0061
WW_ Twine	16.3268	11.46217	2749	1.42441	0.1544
sqrt (dia) _Twine	58.3751	3.98794	2749	14.63790	<.0001
WH_sqrt (dia) _Twine	-18.1206	6.12022	2749	-2.96077	0.0031
WW_sqrt (dia) _Twine	-7.7207	5.20246	2749	-1.48405	0.1379

Tests for removing the triple interaction effect Method:Sqrt(dia):Twine were rejected. This was also the case for a test for removing one of the dual interaction effects Method:Twine and Sqrt(dia):Twine and Method:Sqrt(dia):Twine.

To find a suitable conversion formula between measurements with “ICES” and “ICES10KGF”

Some exploratory plots first assess the relation between measurements taken with the “ICES” and the “ICES10KGF” method. A histogram of all differences between the two methods suggests an asymmetric distribution (Figure 7). This plot makes no distinction between the Institutes. When plotting histograms for each institute, the distribution within these seems however closer to normal, but with considerable variation in location and variance. In analogy with the above analyses it is therefore reasonable to use the institute as a random effect. The variation between samples is mainly accounted for by the mesh size measurements themselves and therefore deemed unnecessary here:

$$random \sim I | Institute$$

In Figure 9 the measurements taken with “ICES10KGF” are plotted against measurements taken with “ICES” along with the identity line. It is seen that for the vast majority of measurement the “ICES10KGF” measurement is larger than the “ICES” measurement. In Figure 10 the same plots are done by Institute. These plots also contain simple linear regression lines along with the estimated coefficients. These plots reveal a considerable

variation in the regressions and in particular for the slopes. Regression lines parallel with the identity line suggest the difference between the two models to be modeled as a constant. Institutes with measurements well represented over a larger range show regression lines close to parallel with the identity line, whereas the cases with larger departure from parallelism all cover a very narrow range. These cases should therefore not disturb a hypothesis of a constant difference. A closer inspection of Figure 9 reveals a slight curvature, with larger differences for both small and large values. A second order polynomial relation will therefore be used as a starting point:

$$ICES10KGF \sim ICES + ICES^2$$

The following table lists the results of fitting this model:

Parameter	Value	Std. Error	df	t-value	p-value
Intercept	11.44031	1.642558	1288	6.96494	<.0001
ICES	0.89837	0.026501	1288	33.89884	<.0001
ICES^2	0.00034	0.000112	1288	3.01690	0.0026

$$\hat{\sigma}_{Inst} = 2.137, \hat{\sigma} = 3.012$$

Likelihood ratio tests for reduction of the model by removing one of the three terms one at a time were all rejected. This will therefore also be the final model:

$$ICES10KGF = 11.4403 + 0.8984 * ICES + 0.00034 * ICES^2$$

The curve predicted from the model is plotted with the observed measurements in Figure 11.

An extended conversion formula with additional variables

For the purpose of obtaining a more precise conversion formula, it was assessed whether additional variables could improve the model. Three candidates were tested in two separate competing models, which are extensions of the model above. The first includes “diameter” and “Material” and the second includes “Rtex” and “Material”. The models will have both main effects as well as interaction effects. Likelihood ratio test were used for potential reductions of the models:

Diameter and Material:

The fit provided by this model is given in the following table:

Parameter	Value	Std. Error	df	t-value	p-value
Intercept	4.550772	1.890687	1285	2.40694	0.0162
ICES	0.897686	0.025918	1285	34.63595	<.0001
ICES^2	0.000334	0.000110	1285	3.04658	0.0024
Material	8.654418	1.171618	1285	7.38672	<.0001
dia	1.026483	0.134343	1285	7.64077	<.0001
Material: dia	-1.329681	0.187891	1285	-7.07688	<.0001

$$\hat{\sigma}_{Inst} = 2.581, \hat{\sigma} = 2.930$$

PE is used as the default level for the “Material” factor. By way of example a measurement of 80 mm taken with the standard ICES gauge on a mesh made of PA with a diameter of 3.5 mm is expected to give a value of:

$$4.550772+0.897686*80+0.000334*80^2+8.654418+1.026483*3.5-1.329681*3.5=86.10$$

with the ICES10KGF gauge.

Whereas the same measurement on a PE mesh with the same twine-diameter is expected to give:

$$4.550772+0.897686*80+0.000334*80^2+1.026483*3.5=80.22$$

Rtex and Material:

The fit provided by this model is given in the following table:

Para-meter	Value	Std. Error	df	t-value	p-value
Intercept)	8.049990	1.797714	1285	4.47790	<.0001
ICES	0.885842	0.026356	1285	33.61055	<.0001
ICES^2	0.000414	0.000113	1285	3.66244	0.0003
Material	5.019889	0.821939	1285	6.10737	<.0001
Rtex	0.000114	0.000022	1285	5.07902	<.0001
Material: Rtex	-0.000217	0.000038	1285	-5.67832	<.0001

$$\hat{\sigma}_{Inst} = 2.512, \hat{\sigma} = 2.960$$

In both cases the additional term showed a significant improvement by likelihood-ratio test against the previous model. Tests for reduction of the models were also rejected. A comparison of the two extended model, by the use of AIC and BIC statistics gave preference to the model using diameter. For practical purposes it is however believed that the two models perform equally well.

References

Pinheiro, J. C. and Bates, D. M. 2000. Mixed-Effects Models in S and S-PLUS. Springer. pp.529.

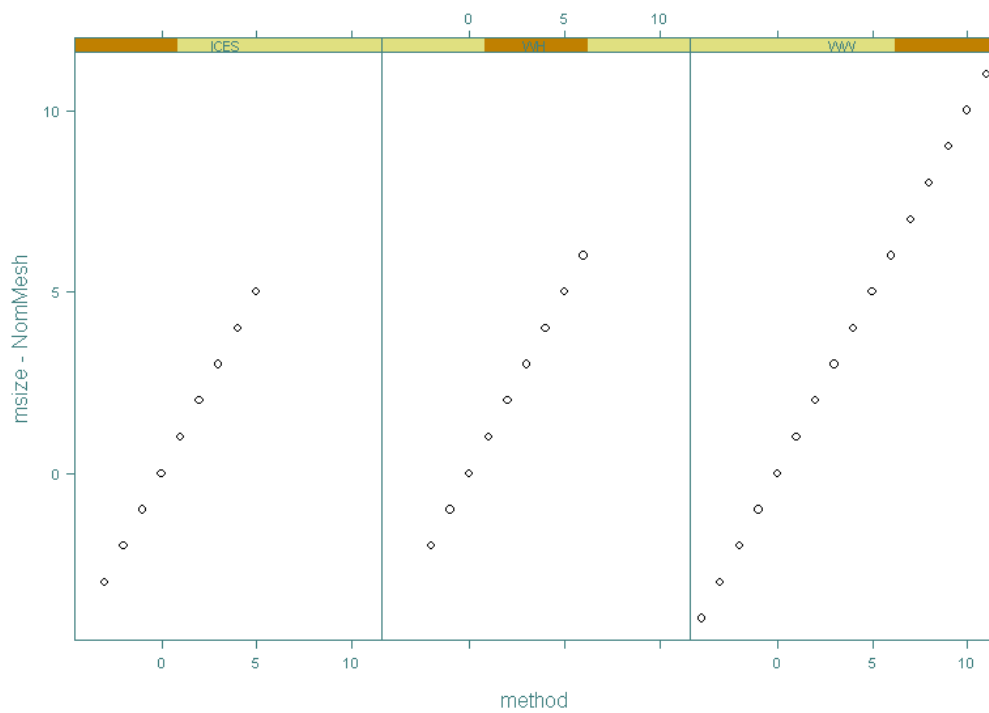


Figure 1. Panel plots of observed measurements adjusted for nominal mesh sizes and grouped by methods. SMALL group.

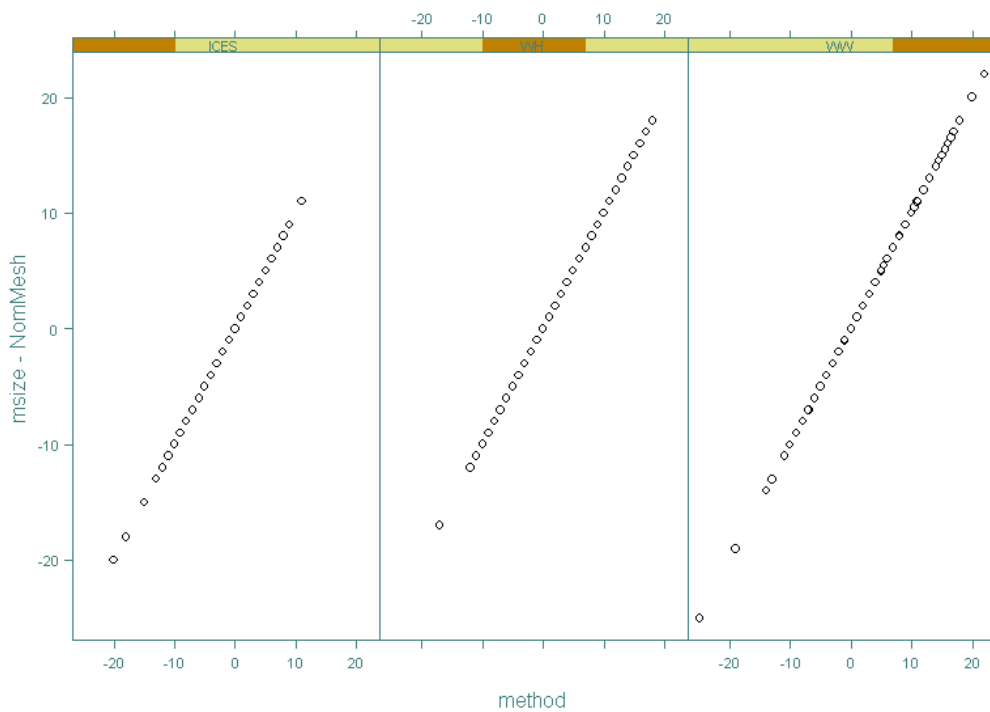


Figure 2. Panel plots of observed measurements adjusted for nominal mesh sizes and grouped by methods. LARGE group.

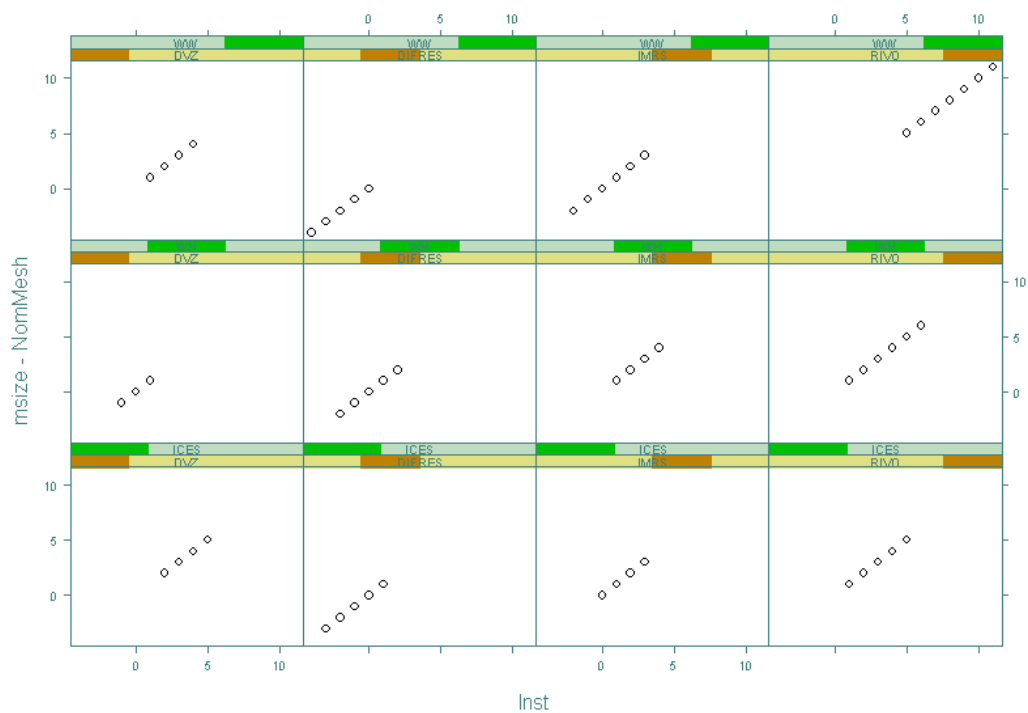


Figure 3. Panel plots of observed measurements adjusted for nominal mesh sizes and grouped by methods and institutes. SMALL group.

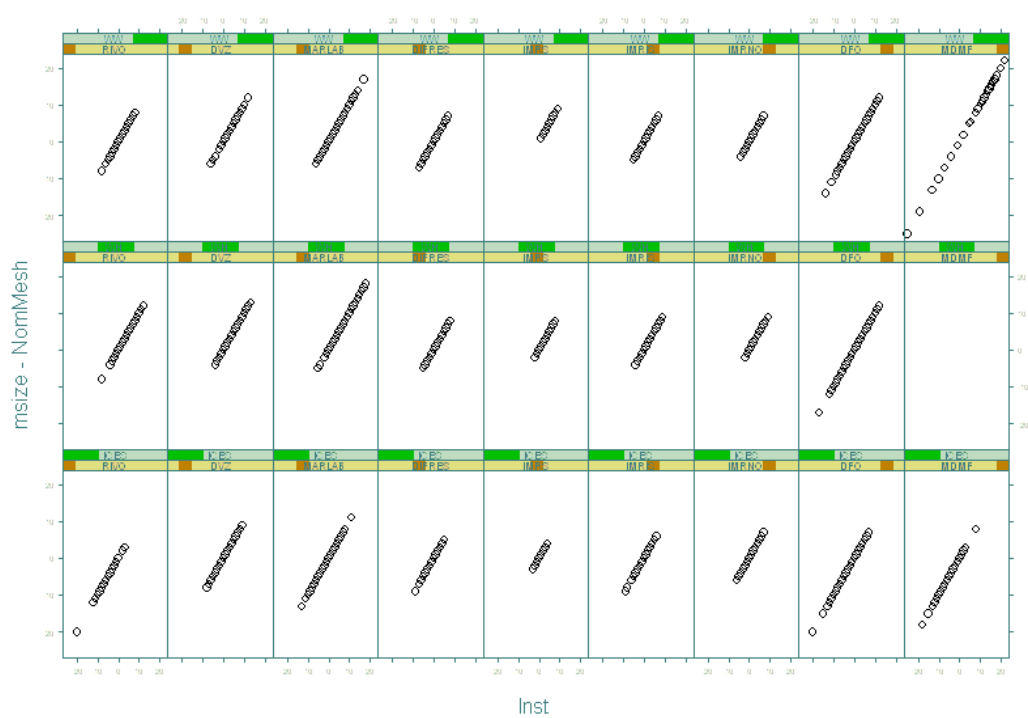


Figure 4. Panel plots of observed measurements adjusted for nominal mesh sizes and grouped by methods and institutes. LARGE group.

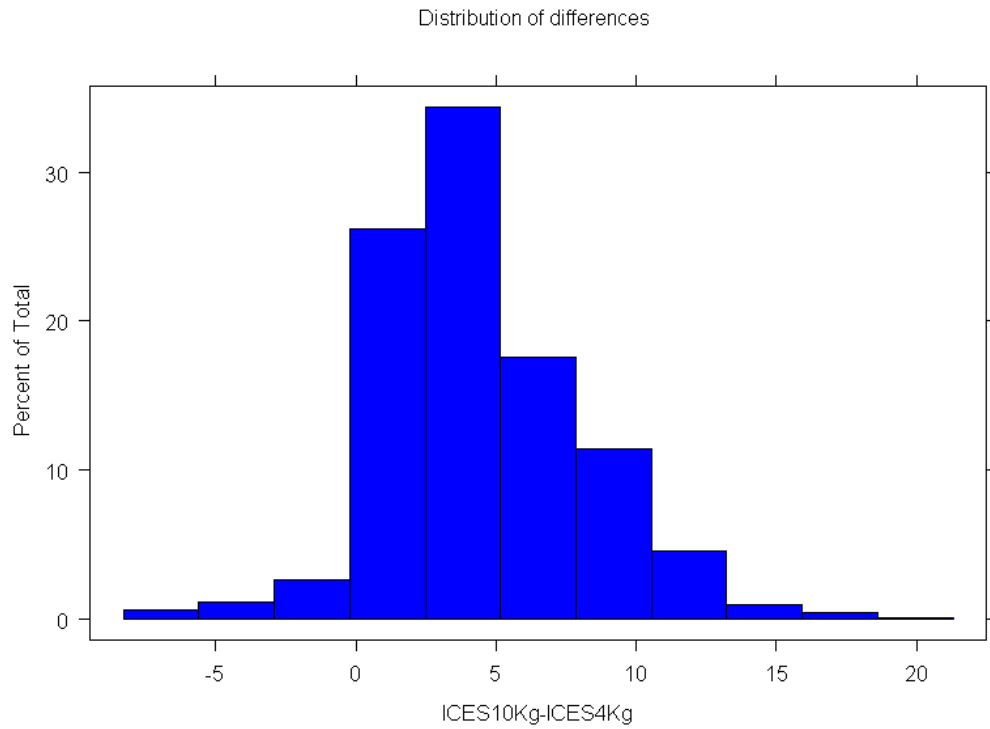


Figure 7. Histogram of all differences between ICES10KGF and ICEKGF measurements. LARGE group.

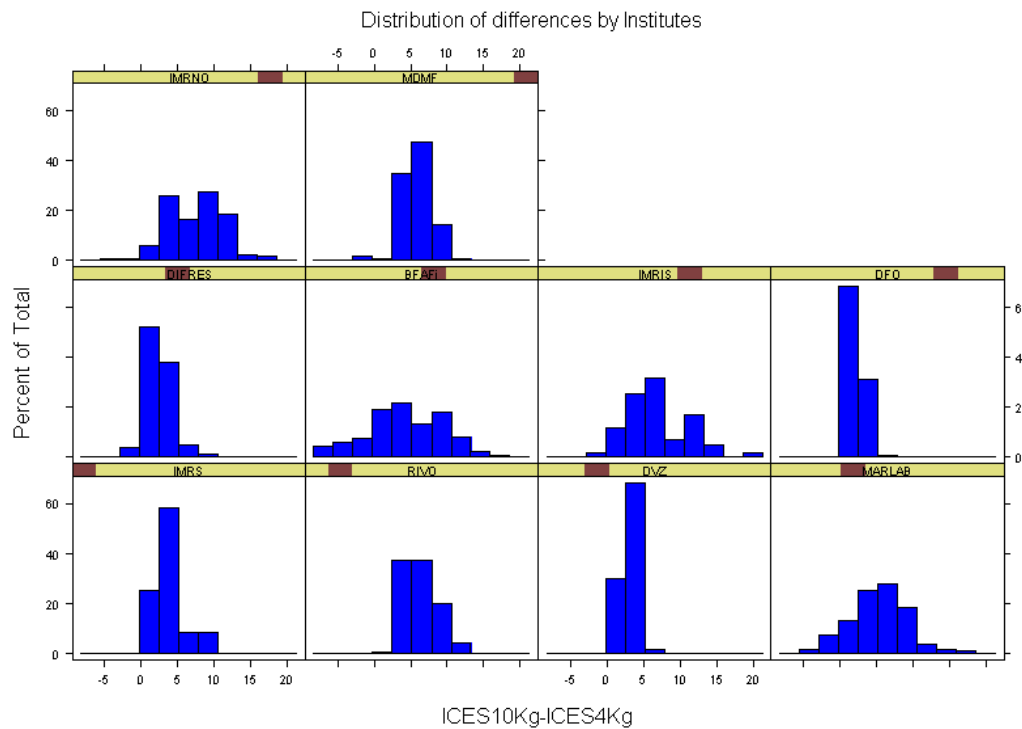


Figure 8. Histogram of all differences between ICES10KGF and ICEKGF grouped by institute. LARGE group.

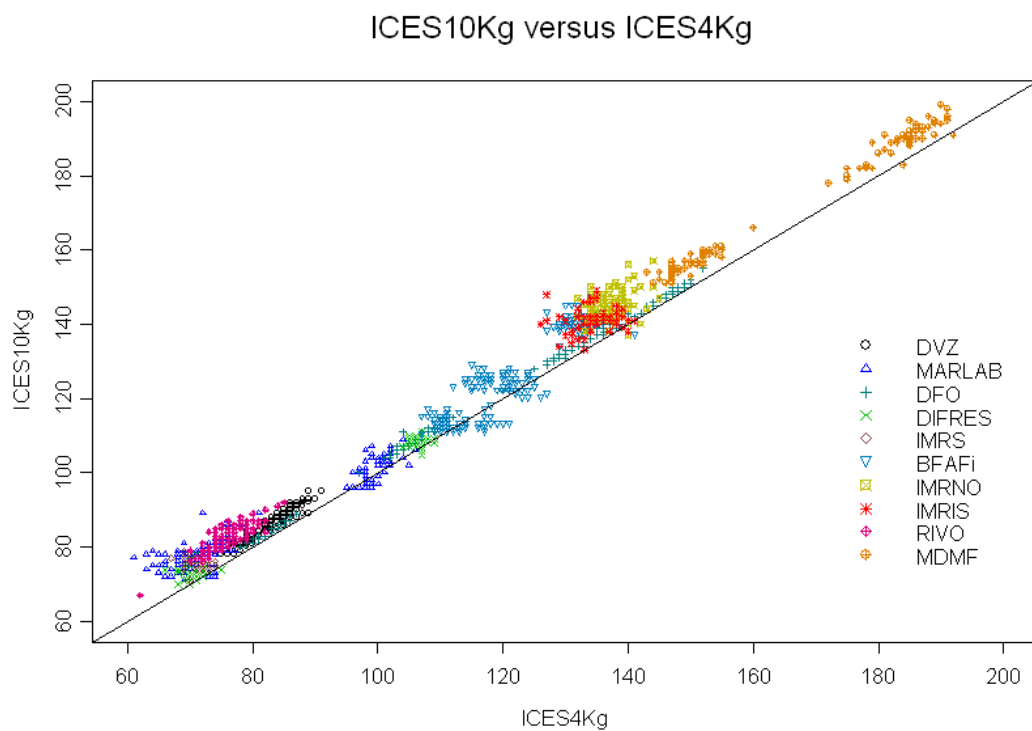


Figure 9. ICES10KGF measurements plotted against ICES4KGF measurements along with the identity line.

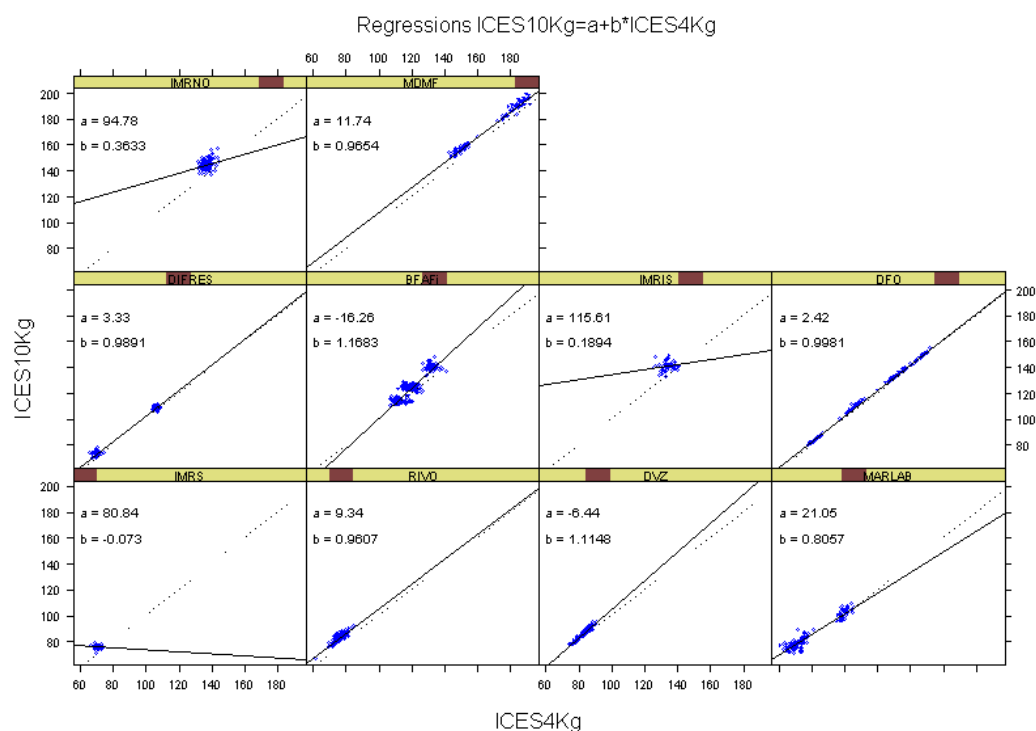


Figure 10. Observations of ICES10KGF against ICES4KGF measurements with simple regressions and grouped by institutes. LARGE group.

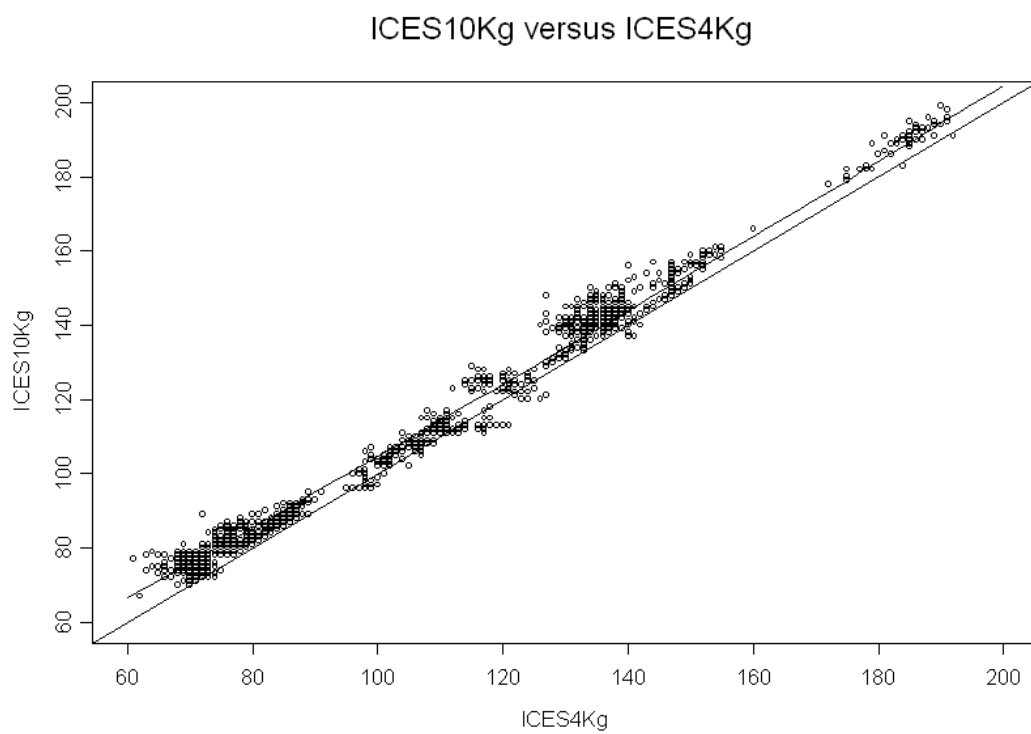


Figure 11. Observed values along with the identity line and the fitted regression curve.

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