The Dynamic Mesh Method in CFD Simulations of Flap-type Wave Energy Converters

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In this research, a Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) analysis is conducted in order to simulate the free-decay motion of a flap-type Wave Energy Converter (WEC) and, thus, quantifying viscous damping effects. The numerical model was set up in OpenFOAM, considering a rectangular flap and an elliptical flap similar to the one proposed in [1]. Within the context of COST Action CA17105, a Short Scientific Mission (STSM) was granted to the first author of this abstract for implementing the numerical set up of the CFD model.

The examined flap configurations are fully-submerged and their initial position is defined by applying an initial rotation to the flap. Several tests have been performed with different angles of release. Since the examined flap is rotating about a fixed axis, the mesh has to be adapted at every time step. Accordingly, the dynamic mesh method is selected for the CFD simulations along with the 'interDyMFoam' solver. This solver utilizes a Volume-Of-Fluid (VOF) phase-fraction based interface capturing approach and it can apply adaptive re-meshing for addressing the required mesh motion. The rotation of the flap is specified as a combination of constrains in the 'sixDoFRigidBodyMotion' library of the solver. Since the dynamic mesh is a complex process in CFD modelling, a series of trial simulations was implemented to address correctly the physical problem and achieve the required motion of the mesh. The results of this research will be further utilized for enhancing the numerical modelling of the system proposed in [1] and for optimizing its design.

References

[1] Sismani G and Loukogeorgaki E (2020). "Frequency-based investigation of a floating wave energy converter system with multiple flaps", Applied Mathematical Modelling Journal, 84C, pp. 522-535.

Acknowledgements

The present research was granted in terms of a STSM by COST Action CA17105 "WECANet: A pan-European Network for Marine Renewable Energy with a focus on Wave Energy". The aforementioned STSM was conducted by Georgia Sismani on October 16, 2019 – November 4, 2019 in collaboration with the Coastal Engineering Research Group of Ghent University. Minghao Wu has a PhD funding through a Special Research Fund (BOF) of Ghent University. Vasiliki Stratigaki is a postdoctoral researcher (fellowship 1267321N) of the FWO (Fonds Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek - Research Foundation Flanders), Belgium.

COST is supported by the EU Framework Programme Horizon 2020. COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology) is a funding agency for research and innovation networks. COST Actions help connect research initiatives across Europe and enable scientists to grow their ideas by sharing them with their peers.