

Geosynthetics for Reinforcement

Pietro Rimoldi, Yoshihisa Miyata, Ivan Puig Damians
IGS TC-Soil Reinforcement



INTERNATIONAL
GEOSYNTHETICS
SOCIETY

About the lecturer

Pietro Rimoldi

- Degree in Civil Engineer in 1984, he started to work in the Geosynthetics sector in 1986.
- He has been involved in the development of new products and in many research projects related to geosynthetics.
- He has designed several important projects around the world, for soil reinforcement and stabilization, landfills, hydraulic applications and erosion control.
- He is the author of more than 250 national and international publications and he has written books and design manuals for reinforced slopes and walls, basal reinforcement, veneer reinforcement, road and railway base stabilization, geosynthetic drainage systems and erosion control.
- He is Member of the International Council of the IGS, and he is presently the Chair of IGS Technical Committee on Reinforcement (TC-R).



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About the lecturer

Yoshihisa Miyata

- Dr. Miyata is Prof. of Civil Eng. Dept at the National Defense Academy of Japan.
- He received his D.Eng from Kyushu Univ in 1999. He has published more than 230 technical papers on soil reinforcement, geosynthetics engineering and ground improvement, etc.
- He is a council member, co-chair of TC-R of IGS, and vice chair of Japan chapter of IGS. He is also a board member of Geosynthetics International.
- He has received many awards from CGS, ICE, IGS, and JGS.
<https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Yoshihisa-Miyata>

miyata@geotech-research.jp



About the lecturer

Ivan Puig Damians

- Dr. Damians (B.Eng., B.A., M.Eng., M.A., Ph.D.) is a *Researcher* at the International Centre for Numerical Methods in Engineering (CIMNE[®]), *Geotechnical Engineer* at VSL International Ltd (a member of Bouygues Construction Group), and *Ass.Prof.* of the Civil and Environmental Eng. Dept. at the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya · BarcelonaTech (UPC) with teaching activity regarding Soil Mechanics, Geotech. Eng., and Sustainability assessment fields.
- He participates in research projects funded by national and international programs and agencies (e.g., DECOVALEX-2023 by ANDRA, FE-Experiment by NAGRA) as well as research projects from industry (e.g., GECO).
- He is member of several national and international technical committees and societies (TC250-SC7 developing Eurocode7, TC218 and TC307 from the ISSMGE, CTN 140/SC7, SEMSIG, CGS) and is currently Secretary of IGS Technical Committee on Reinforcement (TC-R).

ivan.puig@upc.edu



Outline

1. Introduction
2. Sustainability of reinforced soil structures
3. Soil reinforcement conceptual mechanism
4. Reinforced soil walls and slopes
5. Veneer reinforcement
6. Basal reinforcement
7. Seismic resistance of reinforced soil structures
8. Summary

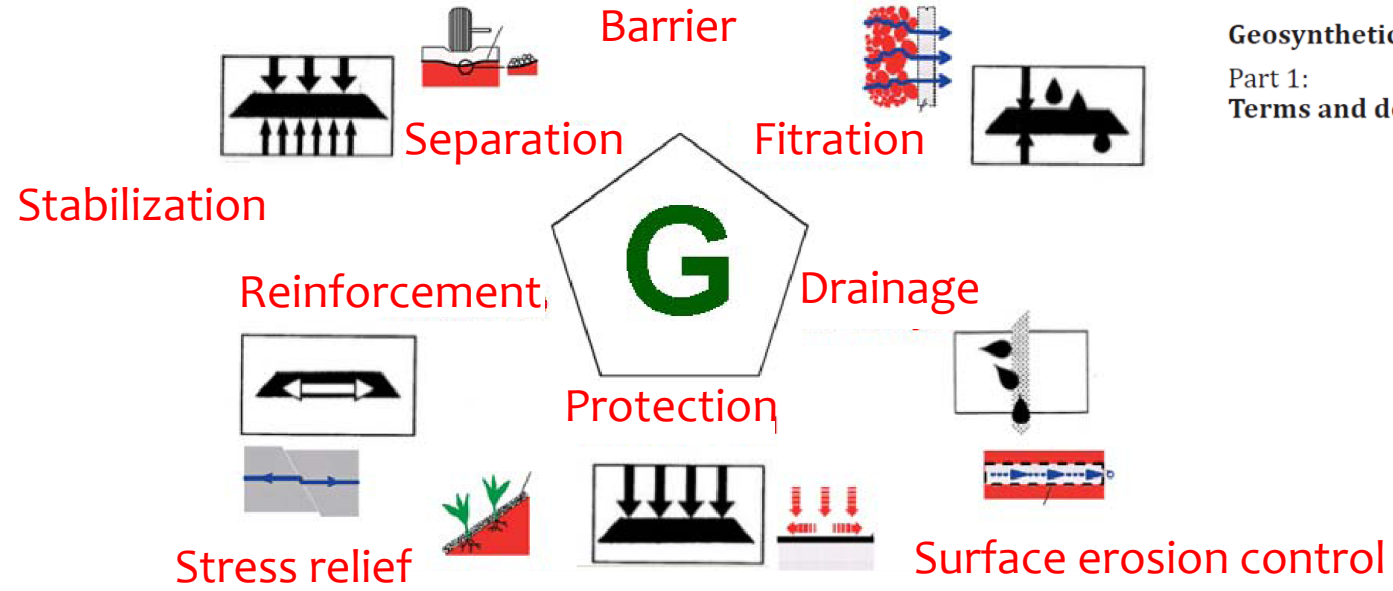
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Introduction

INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD

ISO
10318-1

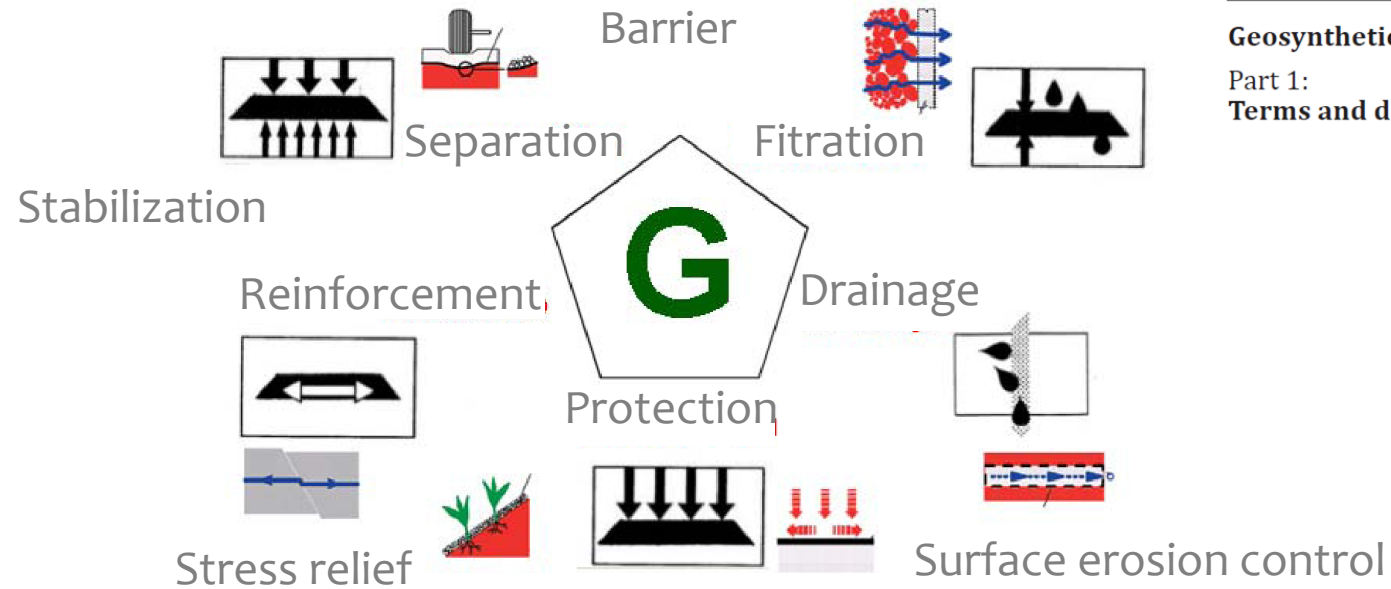


Geosynthetics —
Part 1:
Terms and definitions

Introduction

INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD

ISO
10318-1



Geosynthetics —
Part 1:
Terms and definitions



International Geosynthetics Society

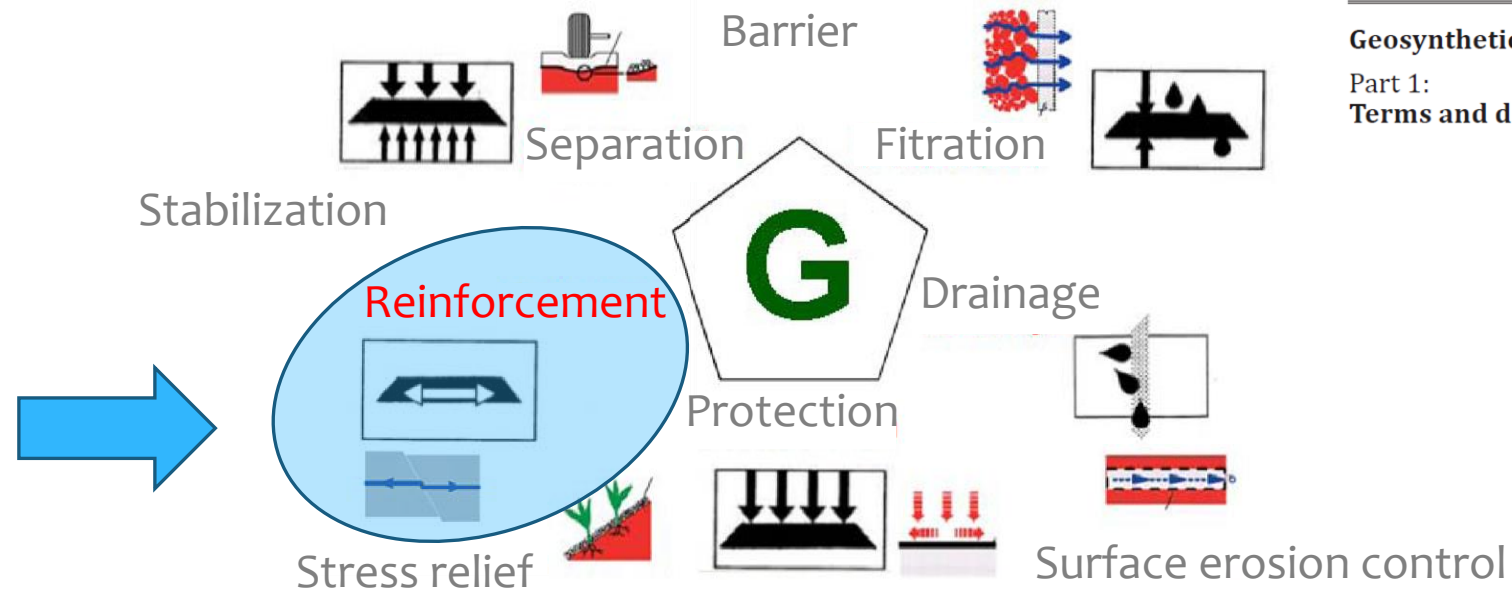


- Barrier Systems
- Hydraulics
- Soil Reinforcement
- Stabilization

Introduction

INTERNATIONAL
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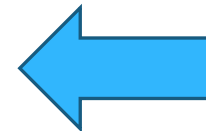
Geosynthetics —
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International Geosynthetics Society



- Barrier Systems
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Introduction

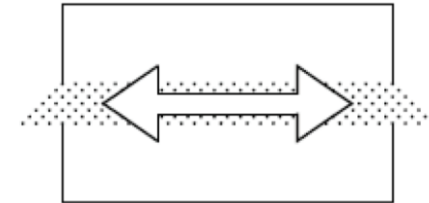
- ✓ Geosynthetics include a variety of polymeric materials that are specially fabricated to be used in geotechnical, environmental, hydraulic and transportation engineering applications.
- ✓ **In this presentation we will illustrate the use of geosynthetics for the function of Reinforcement**



- ✓ ISO 10318-1 definition of the function of Reinforcement:

- ✓ Use of the stress-strain behaviour of a geosynthetic material to improve the mechanical properties of soil or other construction materials.

- ✓ ISO 10318-2 pictogram of the Reinforcement function



- ✓ In practical terms, the geosynthetic acts as a reinforcement element within a soil mass to produce a composite that has improved mechanical performance over the unreinforced soil.

Main applications

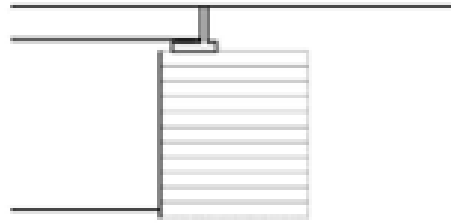
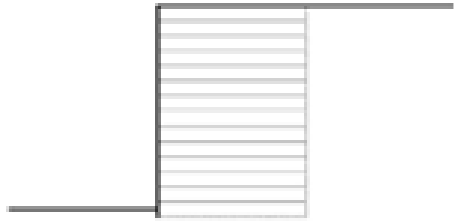
Geosynthetics fulfill the function of **reinforcement** in the following main application areas:

- **Reinforced soil walls**
- **Reinforced soil slopes**
- **Basal reinforcement of embankments:**
 - over soft soil
 - over piles
 - over voids
- **Soil veneer reinforcement**

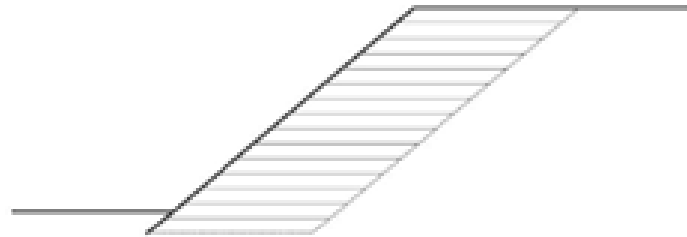
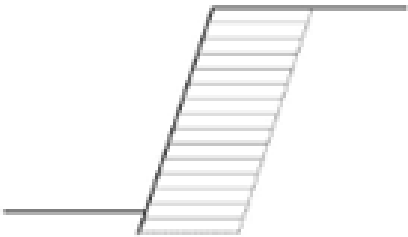
Applications

ISO/TR 18228-7

Design using geosynthetics — Part 7: Reinforcement



Walls and Abutments



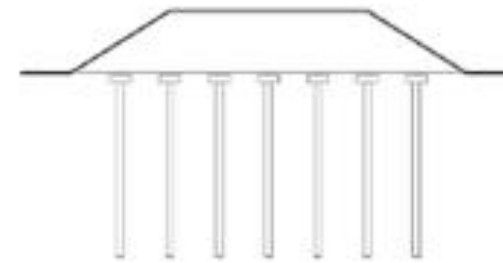
Reinforced Slopes



Basal Reinforcement



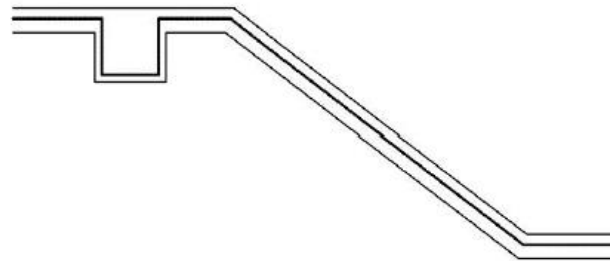
Basal Mattress



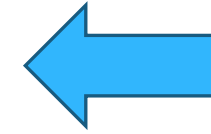
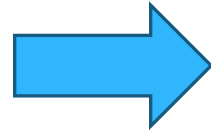
Piled Embankments



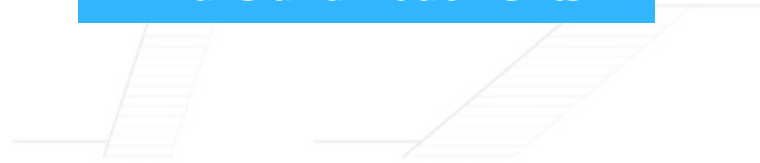
Reinforcement over areas prone to subsidence



Veneer Reinforcement



Walls and Abutments



Reinforced Slopes

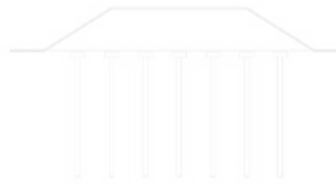
- Basal reinforcement for embankments in various situations:
 - Embankments in soft soils
 - Embankments on network of vertical inclusions of multiple nature
 - Embankments overbridging voids



Basal Reinforcement



Basal Mattress



Piled Embankments

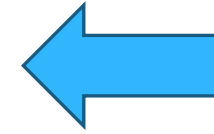
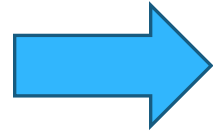


Reinforcement over areas prone to subsidence

- Veneer reinforcement:
 - Landfill closures
 - Shallow slope remediation

Applications

ISO/TR 18228-7:2021



Walls and Abutments



Reinforced Slopes



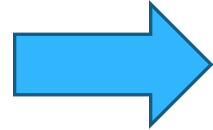
Reinforcement over areas prone to subsidence

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Applications

ISO/TR 18228-7:2021



Walls and Abutments



Slopes

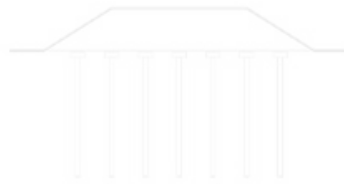
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Basal Reinforcement



Basal Mattress



Piled Embankments

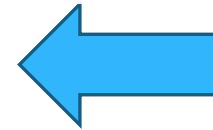
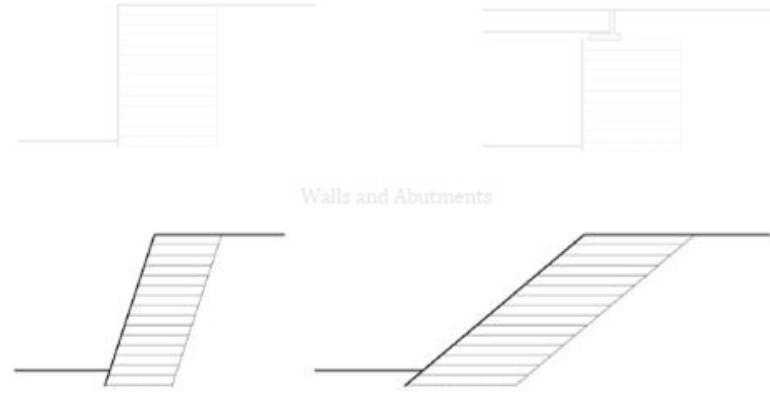
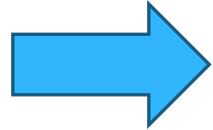


Reinforcement over areas prone to subsidence

- Veneer reinforcement
 - Landfill closures
 - Shallow slope remediation

Applications

ISO/TR 18228-7:2021



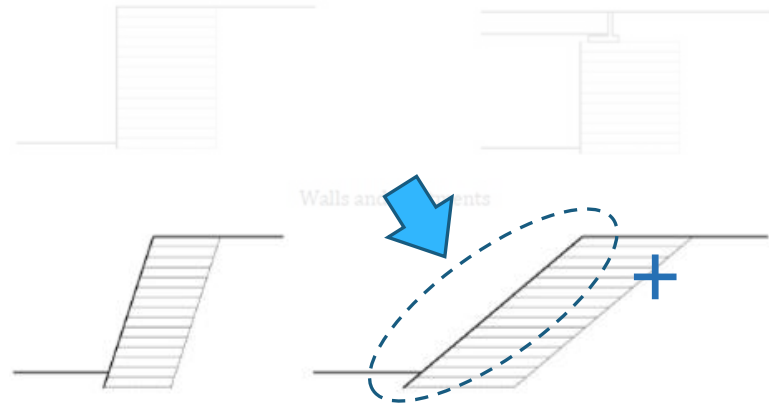
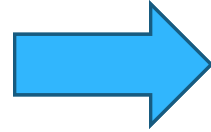
Slopes

- Basal reinforcement for
 - Embankments in soft soils
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Applications

ISO/TR 18228-7:2021



Slopes

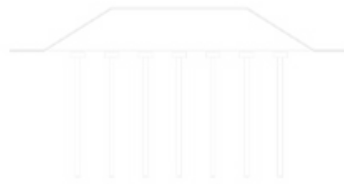
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Basal Reinforcement



Basal Mattress



Piled Embankments

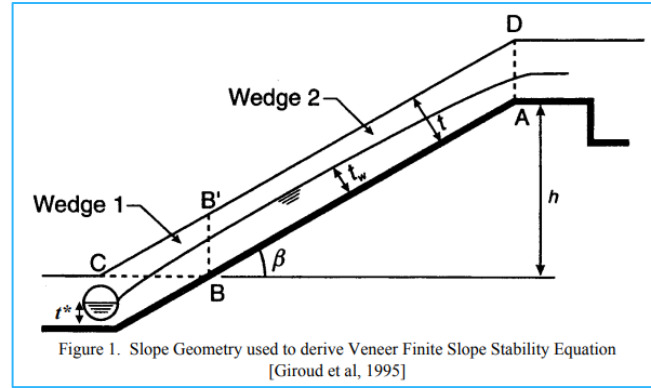


Reinforcement over areas prone to subsidence

- Veneer reinforcement
 - Landfill closures
 - Shallow slope remediation

Applications

... +



Veneer reinforcement



Applications

ISO/TR 18228-7:2021

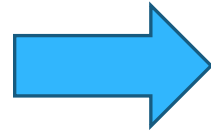


Walls and Abutments



Reinforced Slopes

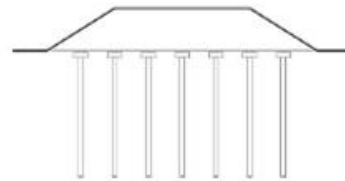
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Basal Reinforcement



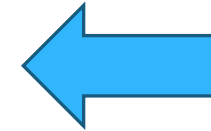
Basal Mattress



Piled Embankments



Reinforcement over areas prone to subsidence

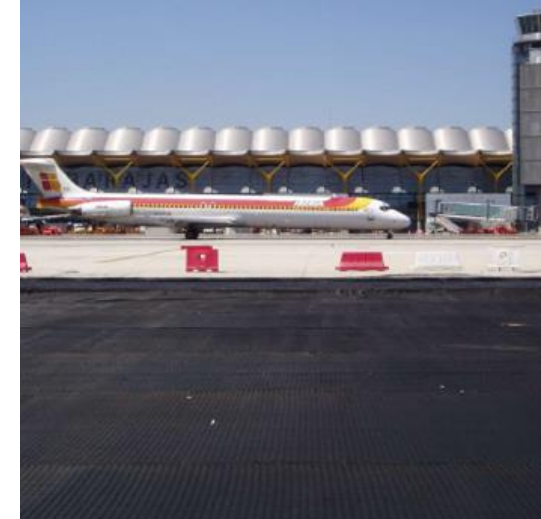


**Basal
reinforcement**

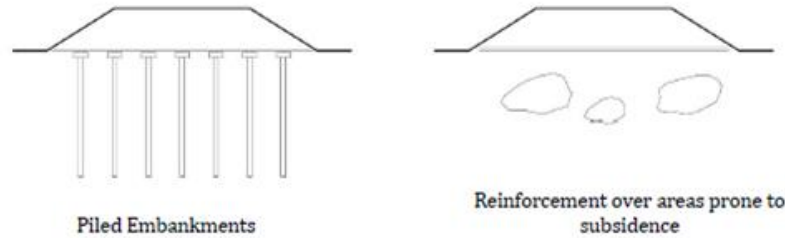
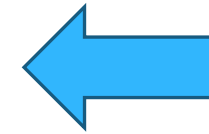
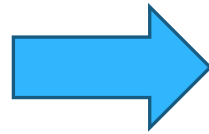
- Veneer reinforcement
 - Landfill closure
 - Shallow slopes

Applications

ISO/TR 18228-7:2021



- Basal
- Embankments on network of vertical inclusions of multiple nature
- Embankments overbridging voids



- Veneer reinfor
- Landfi
- Shallo

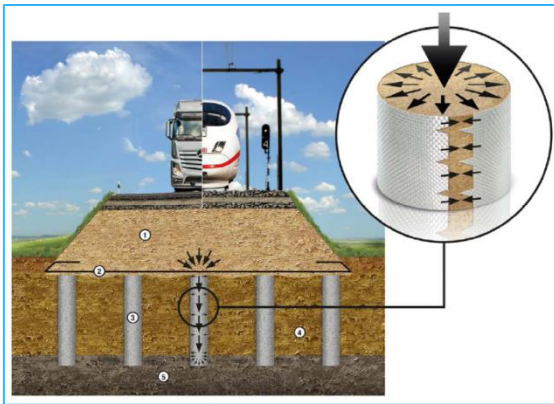
Basal reinforcement



Applications

ISO/TR 18228-7:2021

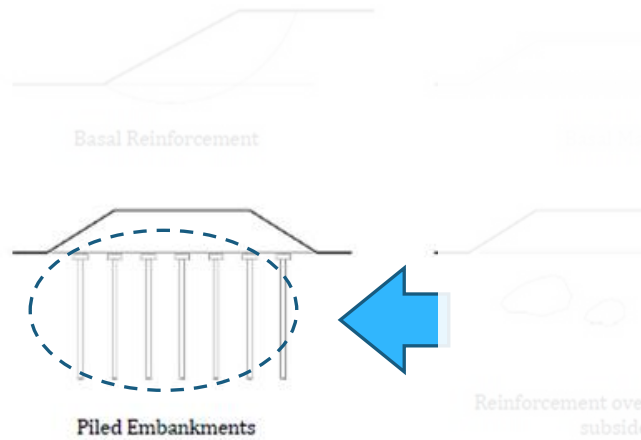
+



Geosynthetic encased columns (GEC)



- Basal reinforcement for embankments in various conditions
 - Embankments in soft soils
 - Embankments on network of vertical cracks
 - Embankments overbridging voids



Basal reinforcement

- Veneer reinforcement
 - Landfills
 - Shallow



General/brief history of soil reinforcement

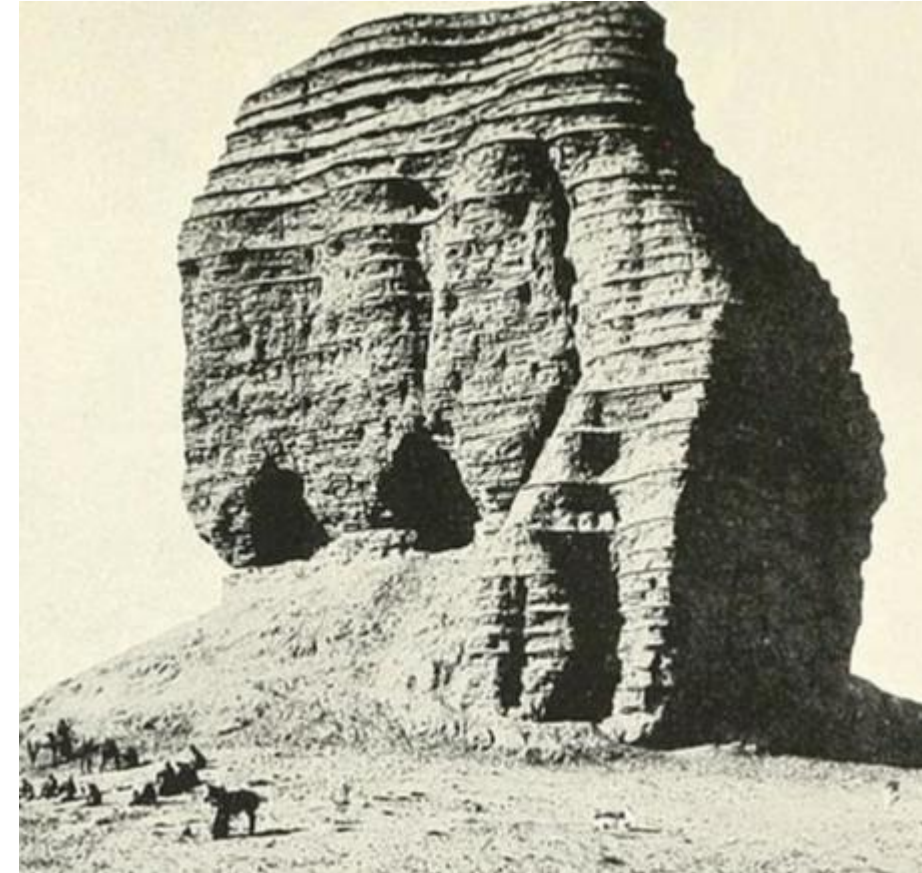
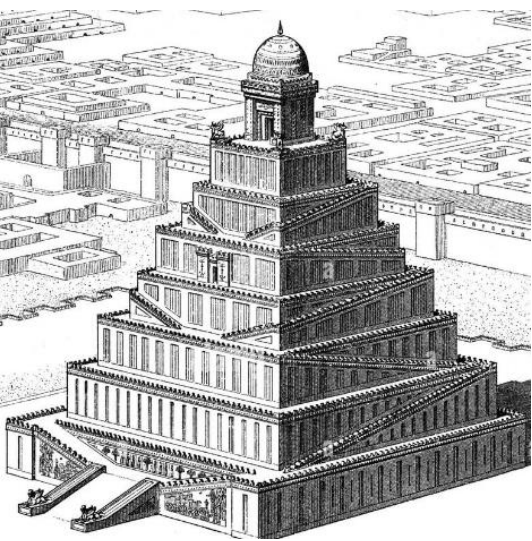
- Soil reinforcement is an ancient concept, examples are the Ziqqurat in Mesopotamia and the Great Wall in China
- Only the advent of geosynthetics allowed to engineer the concept of soil reinforcement, thanks to the availability of industrialized products with constant and predictable technical characteristics
- 40 years of successful projects and positive experiences, extensive testing and research, development and validation of design methods, have demonstrated the superior performance of reinforced soil structures subjected to all types of permanent and accidental loads
- Structures built in highly seismic areas have demonstrated the superior resistance of reinforced soil structures that sustained extremely strong earthquake without major damages

General/brief history of soil reinforcement

Ziggurat of Dur-Kurigalzu at Aqar Quf, Iraq

built in the 14th century BC by the Kassite King Kurigalzu

60 m high, built with sand and clay reinforced with reeds placed in horizontal lines



General/brief history of soil reinforcement



GREAT WALL OF CHINA (200 B.C.)

8.5 m high, 8,800 km long

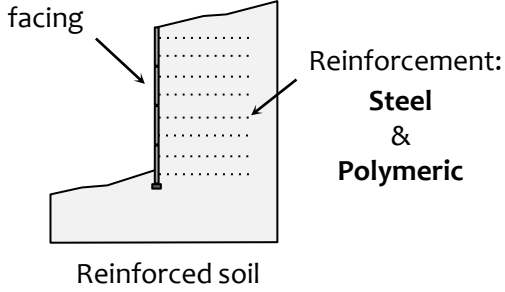
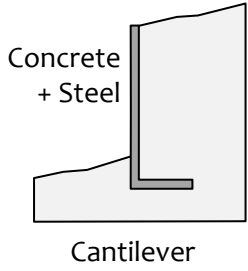
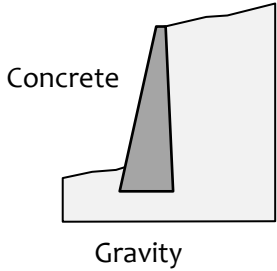
**Sand and clay reinforced with dried
branches of red willow**



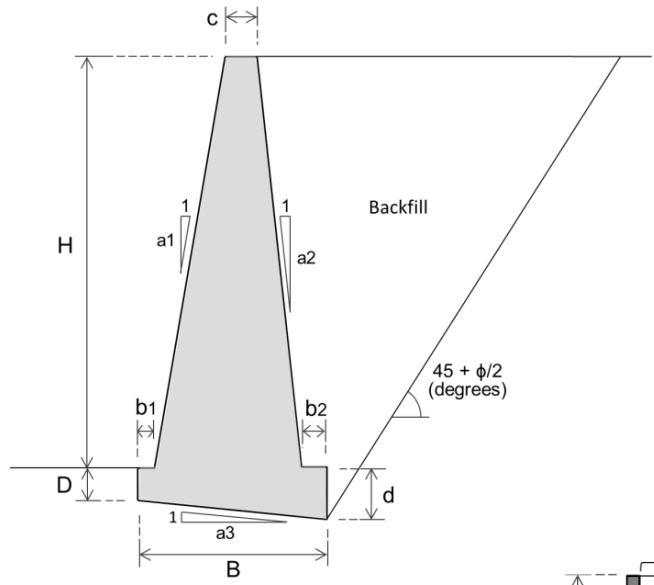
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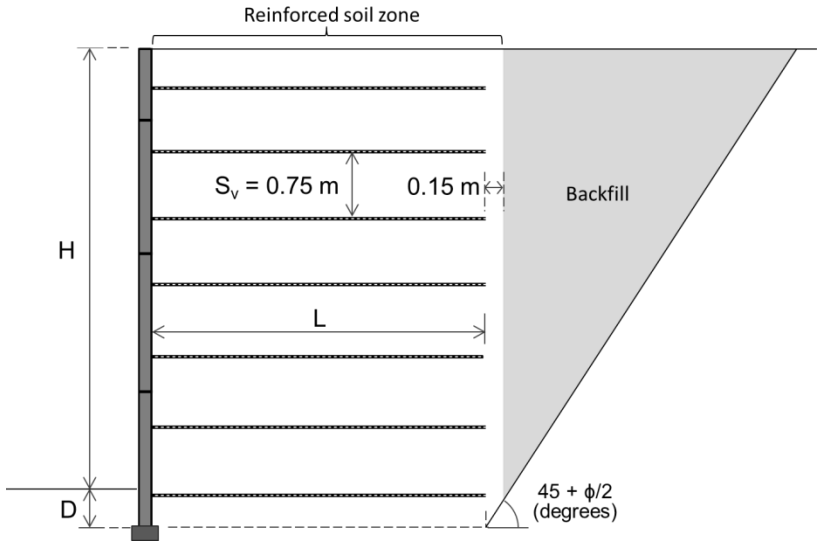
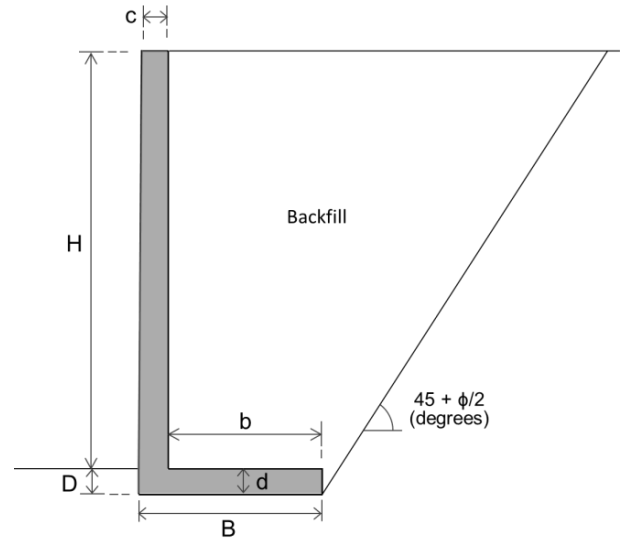
Sustainability of reinforced soil structures



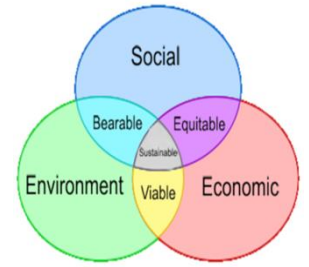
Sustainability of reinforced soil structures



¿optimal?



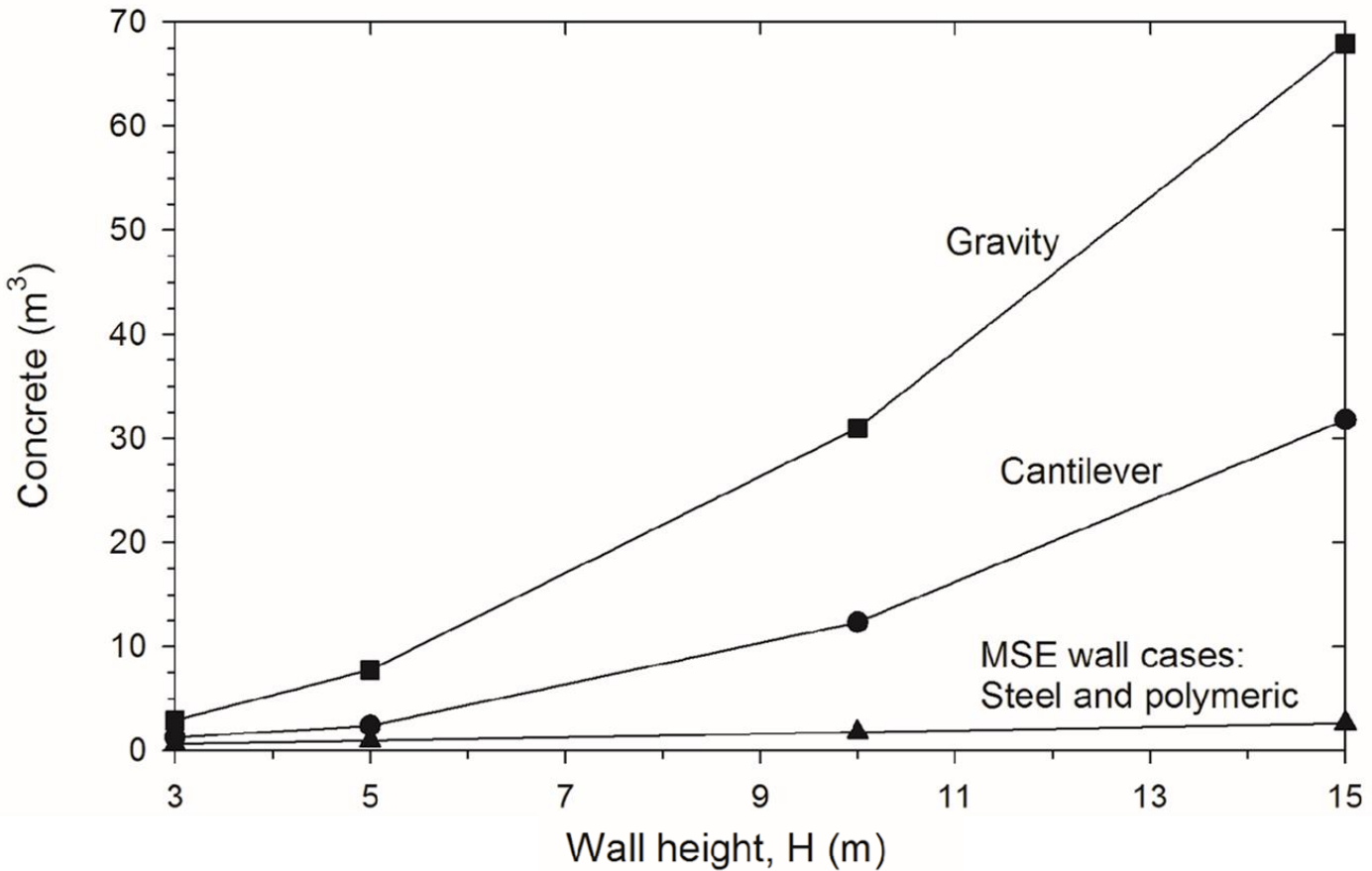
... in terms of Sustainability!



Sustainability of reinforced soil structures

Construction material required for each wall option (for unit length of the wall)

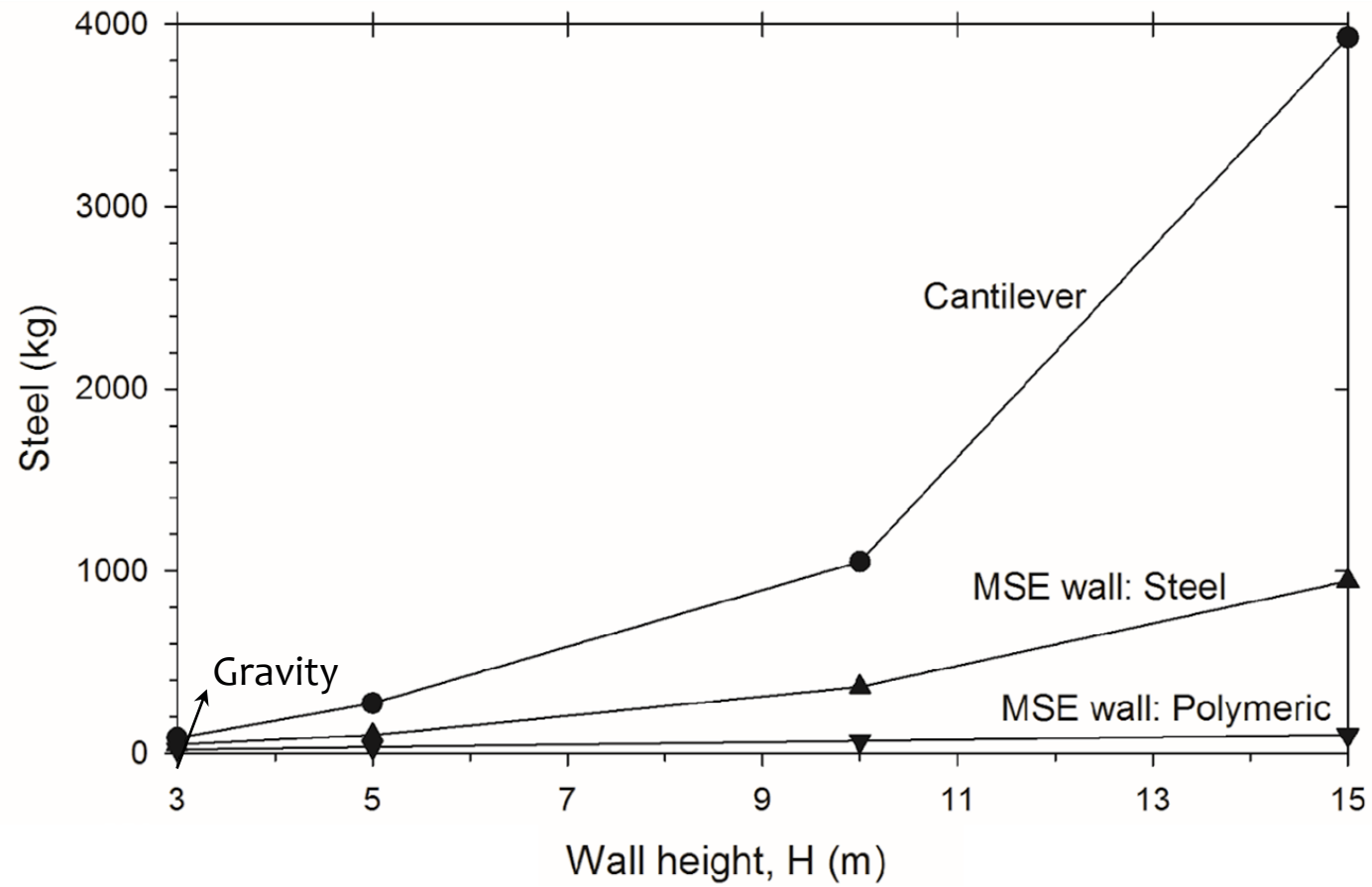
Concrete



Sustainability of reinforced soil structures

Construction material required for each wall option (for unit length of the wall)

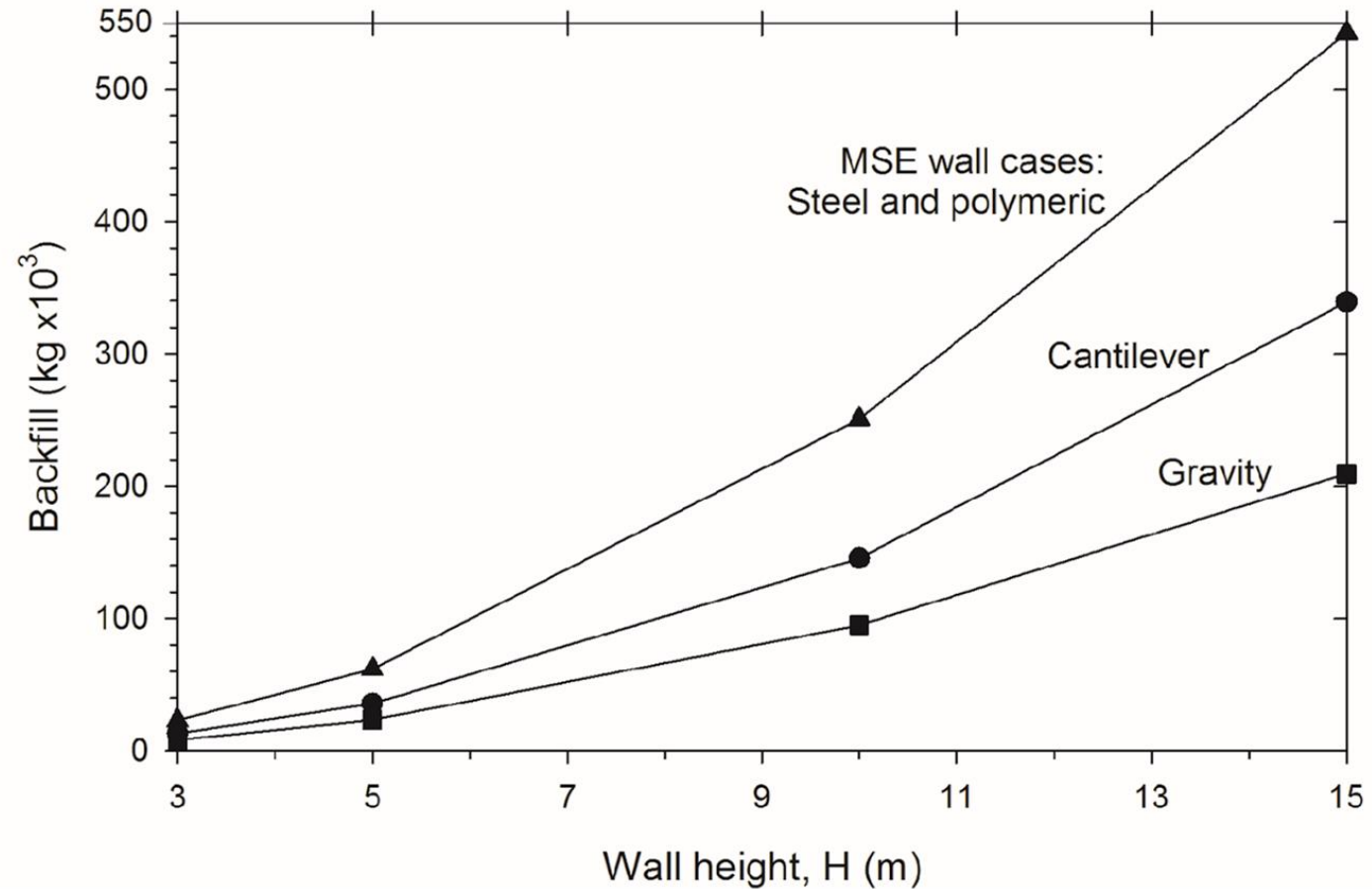
Steel



Sustainability of reinforced soil structures

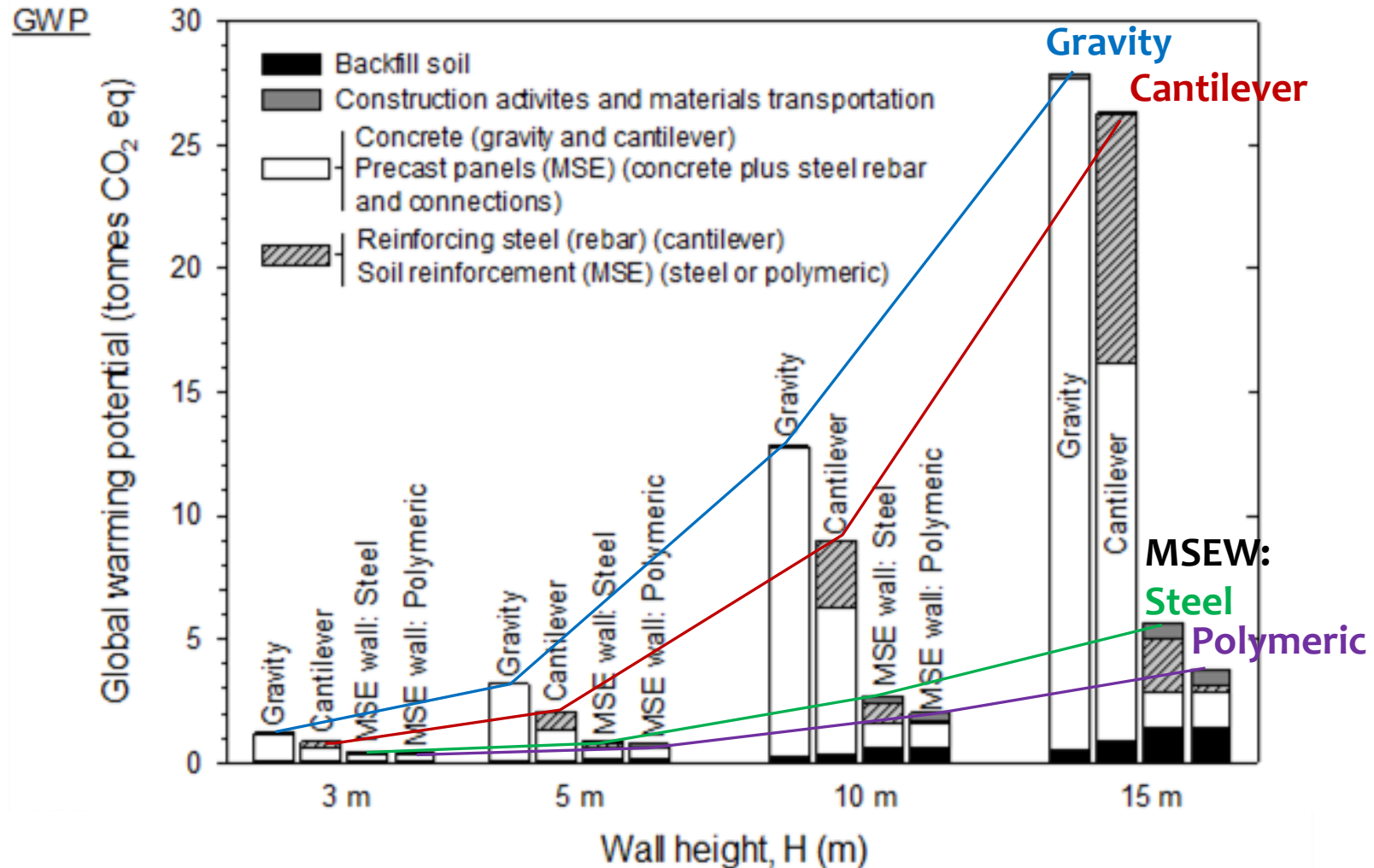
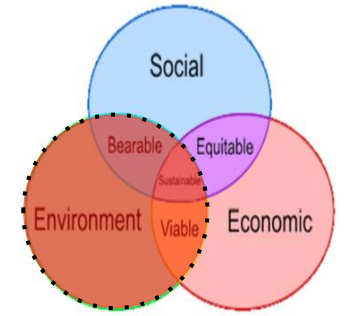
Construction material required for each wall option (for unit length of the wall)

Backfill



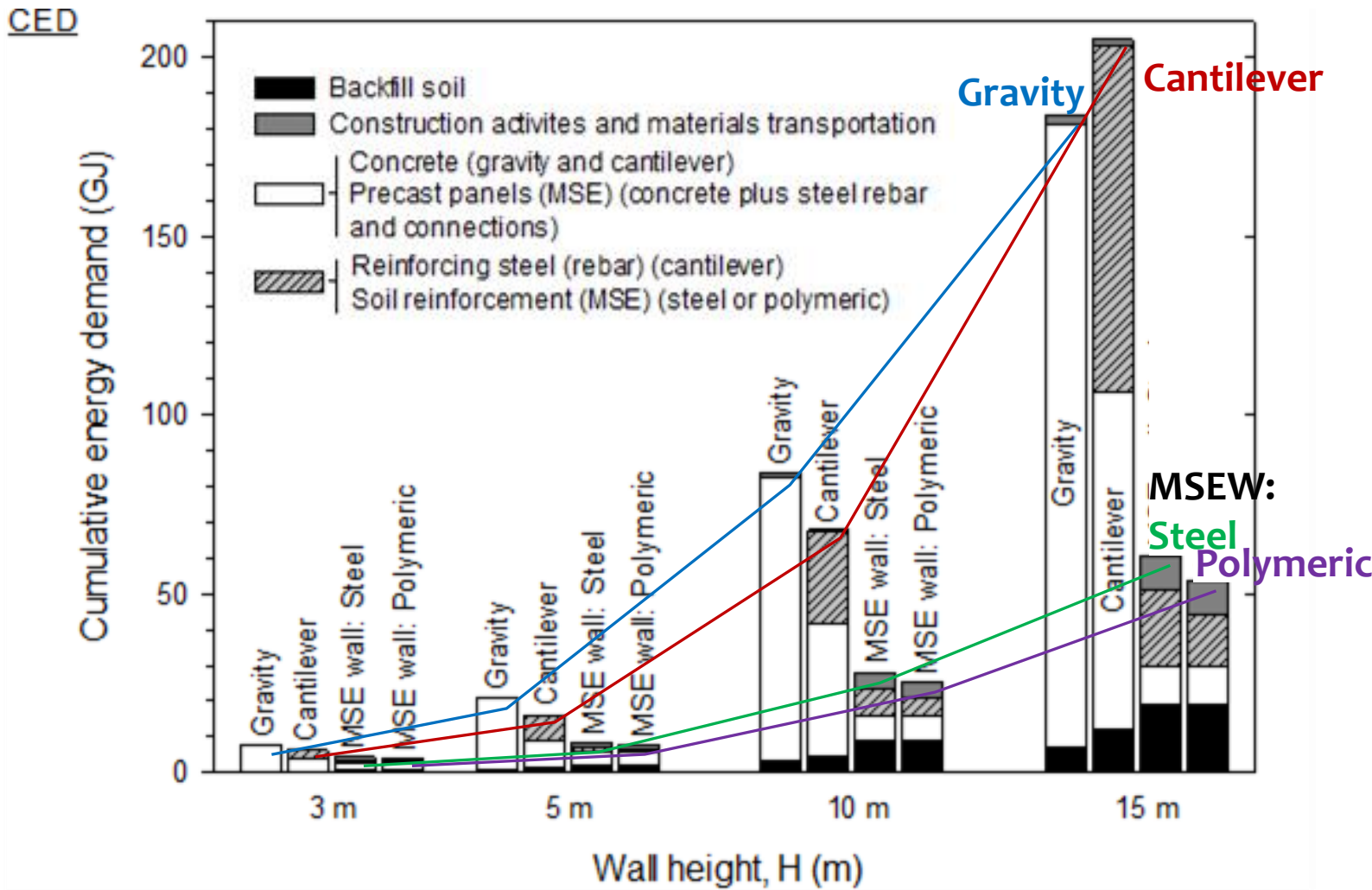
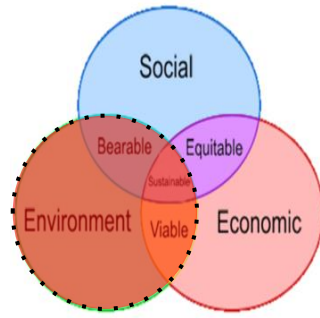
Sustainability of reinforced soil structures

Global warming potential (CO₂ equivalent), for unit length of the wall:

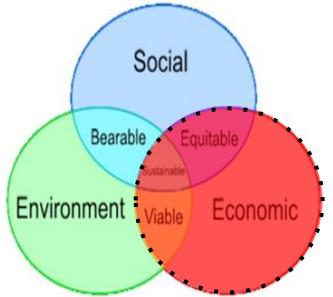


Sustainability of reinforced soil structures

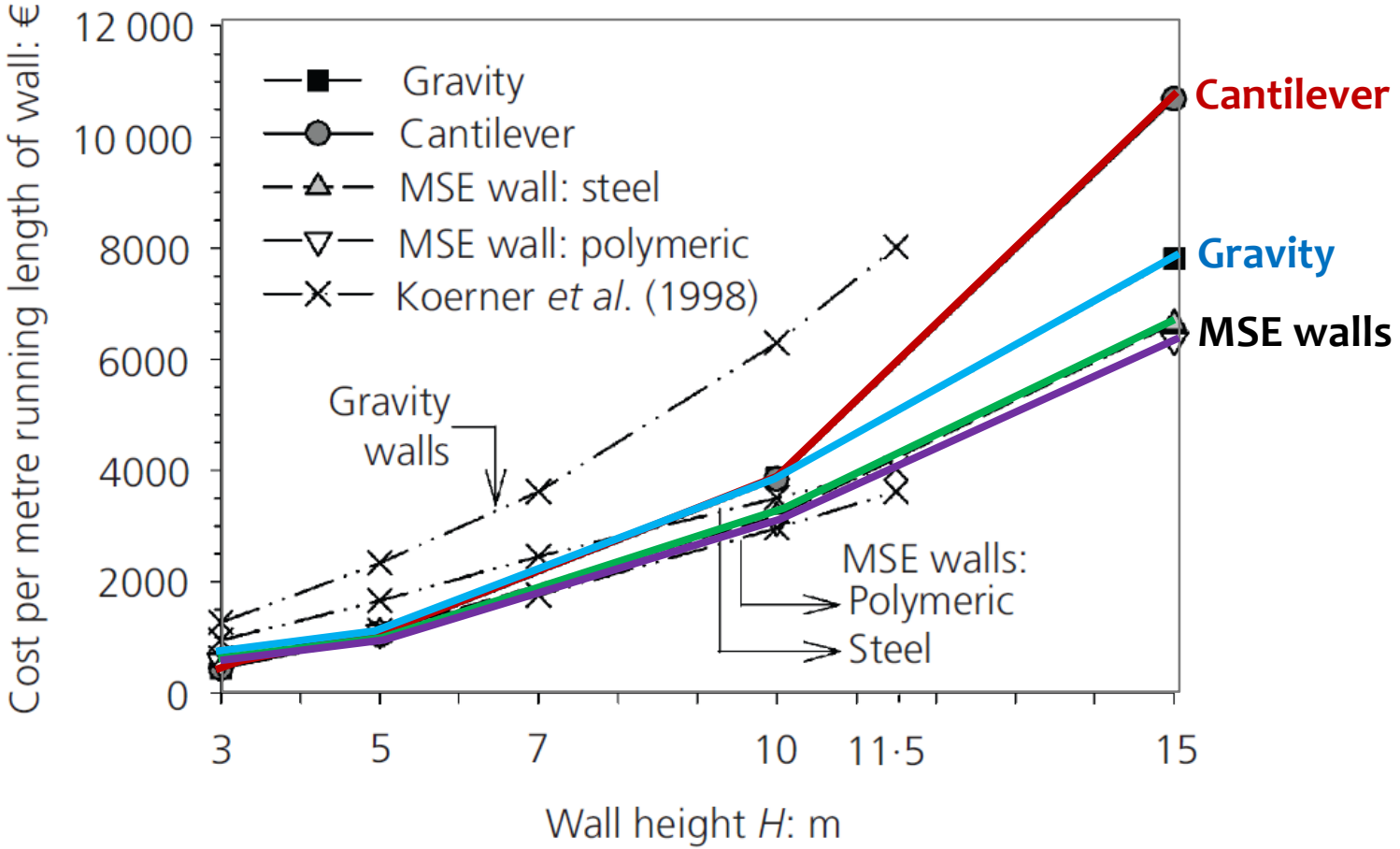
Cumulative energy demand (G Joules), for unit length of the wall:



Sustainability of reinforced soil structures

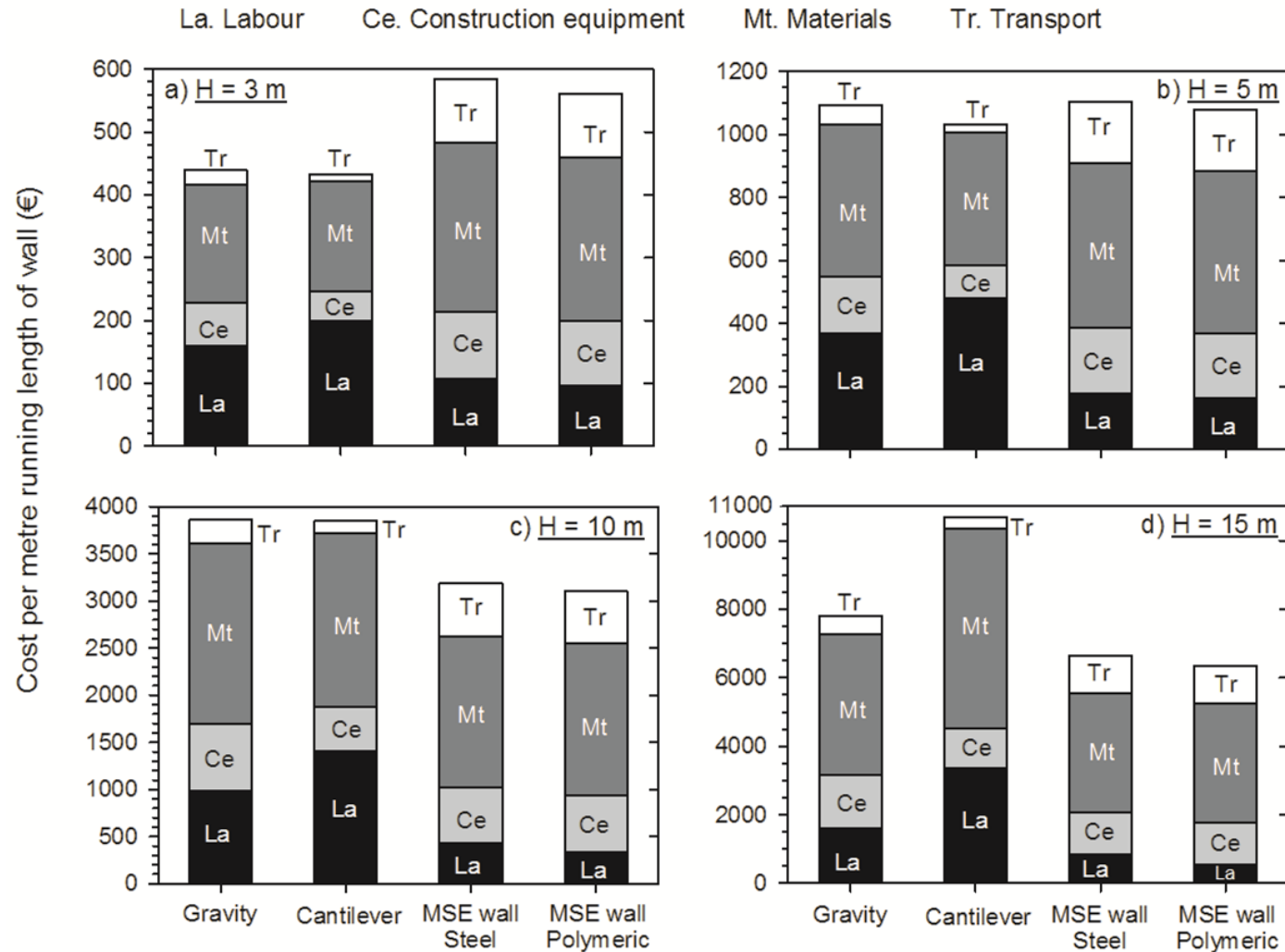
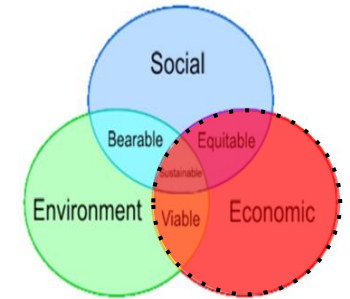


Total cost of each wall option:



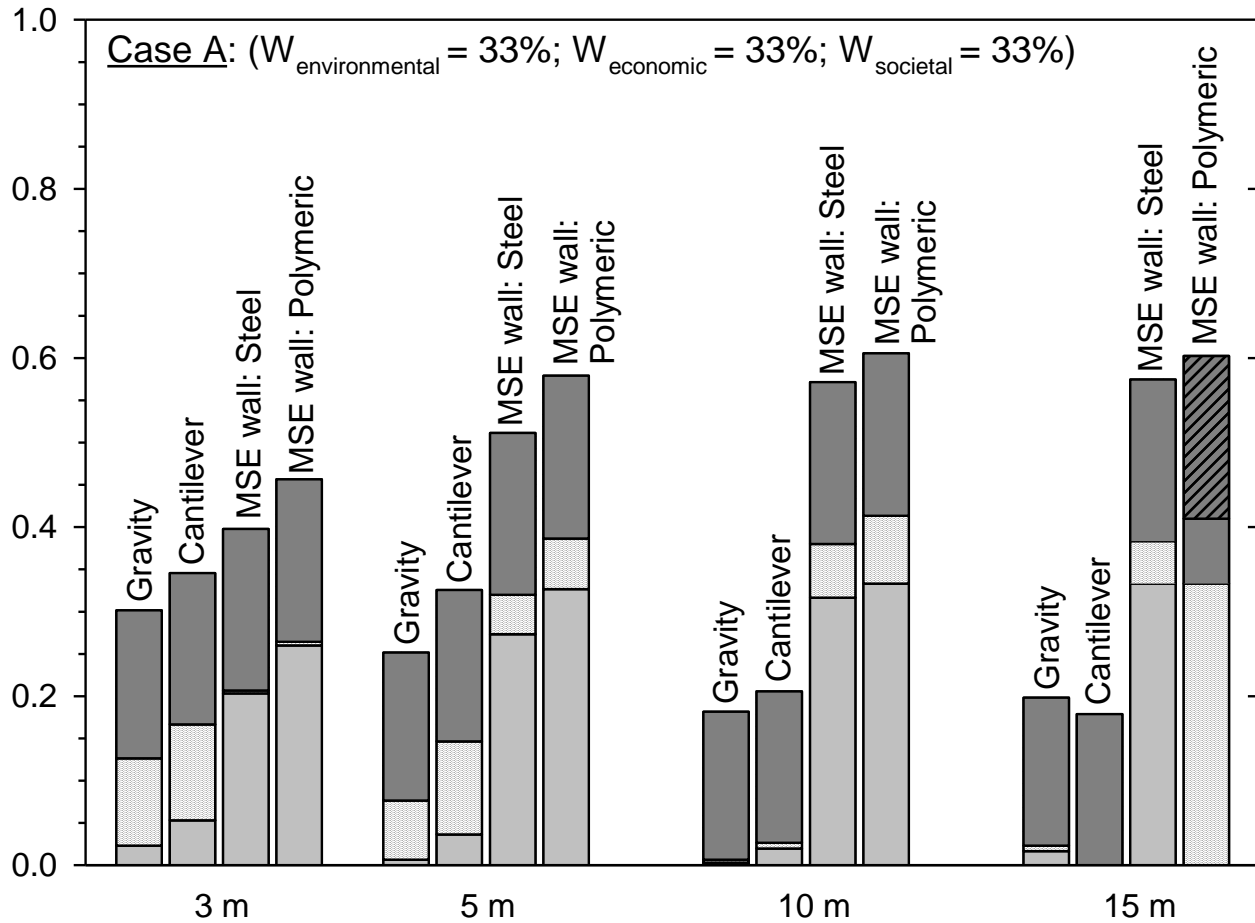
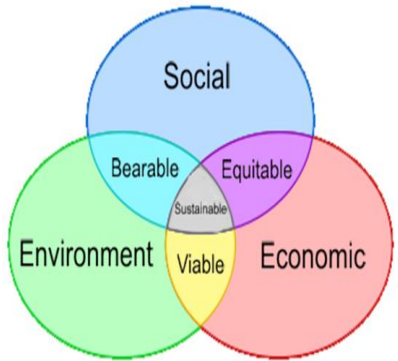
Sustainability of reinforced soil structures

Economic inventory of materials and construction/fabrication processes



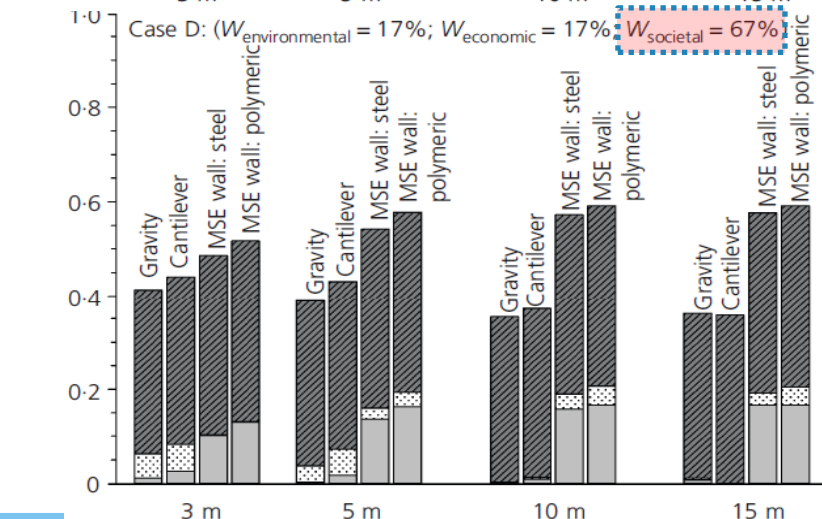
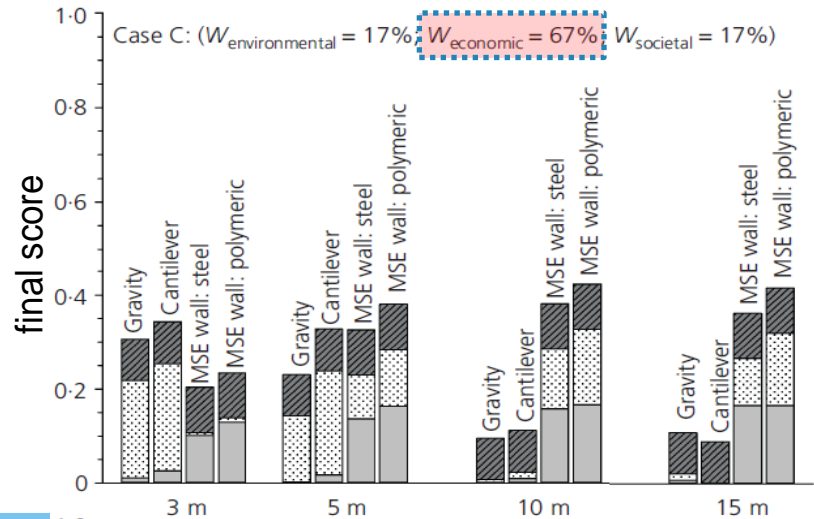
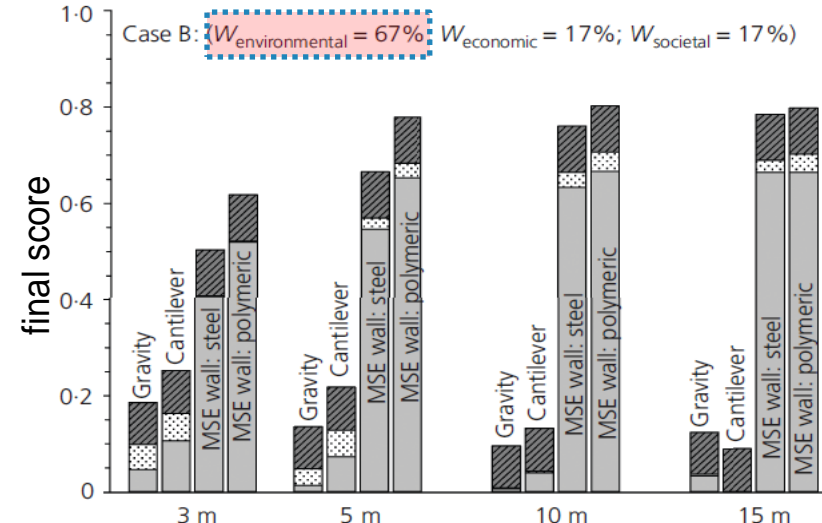
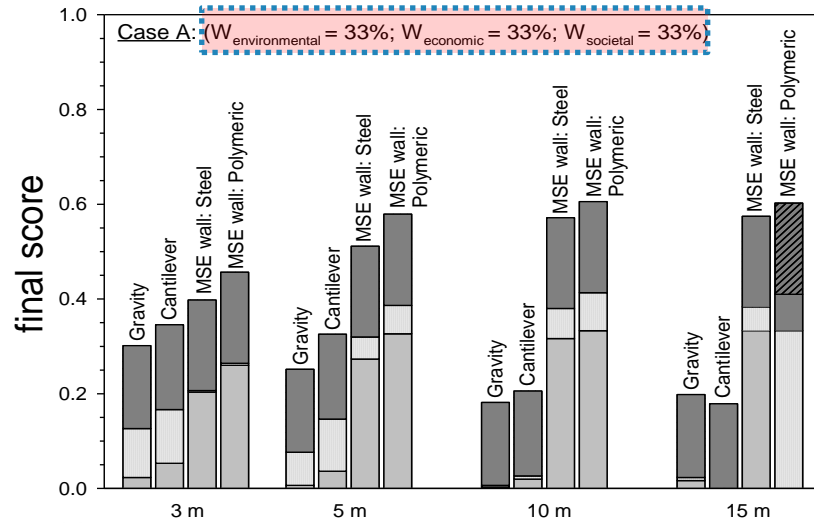
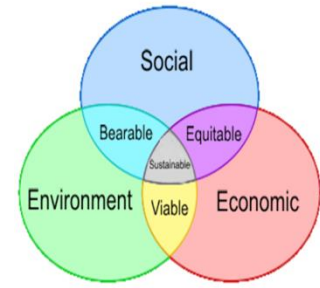
Sustainability of reinforced soil structures

SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT RESULTS:



Sustainability of reinforced soil structures

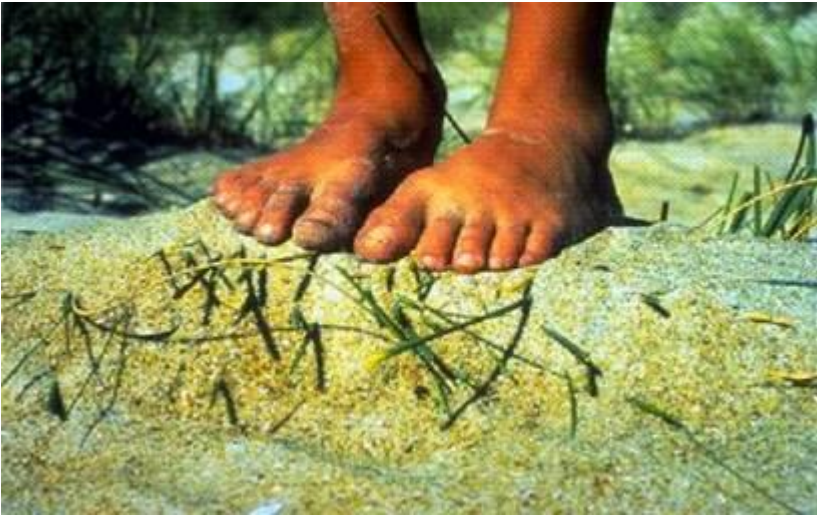
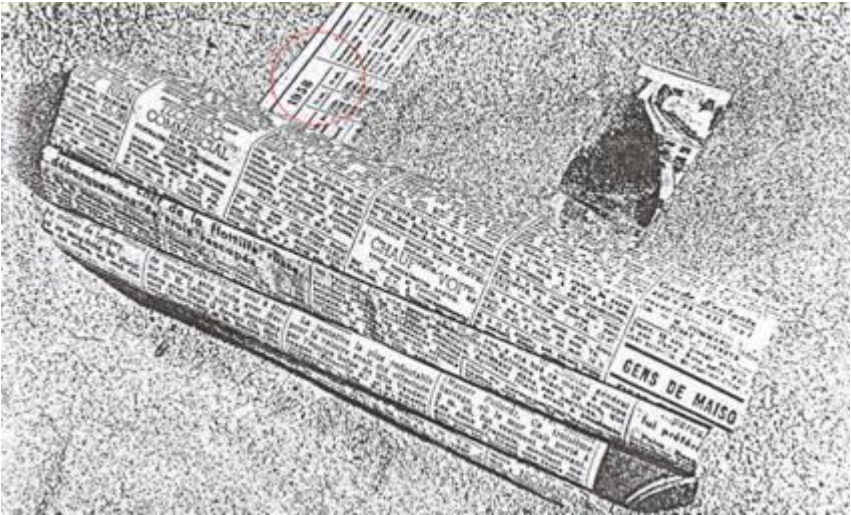
SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT RESULTS:



Outline

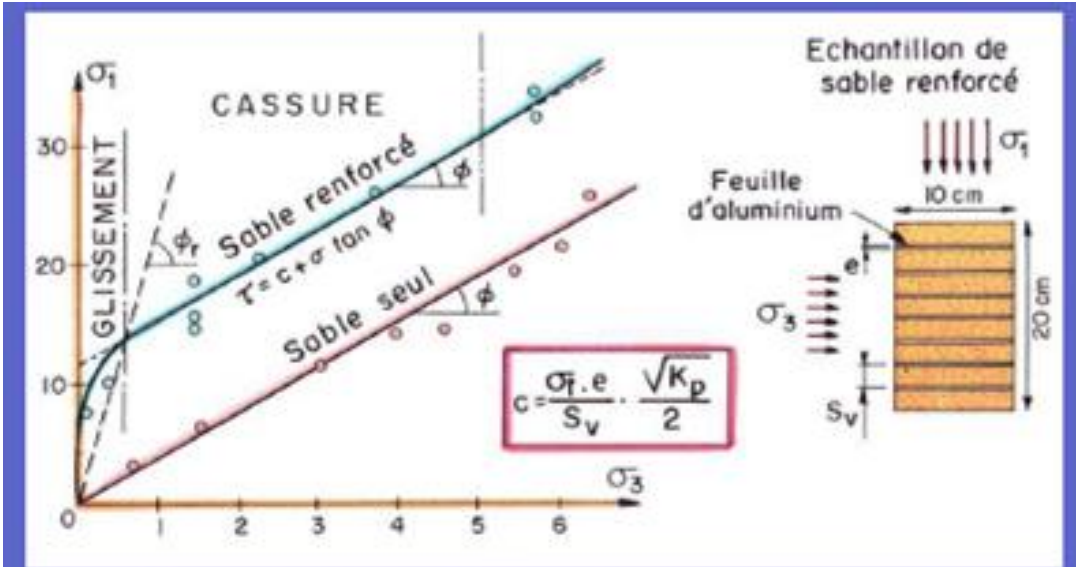
1. Introduction
2. Sustainability of reinforced soil structures
- 3. Soil reinforcement conceptual mechanism**
4. Reinforced soil walls and slopes
5. Veneer reinforcement
6. Basal reinforcement
7. Seismic resistance of reinforced soil structures
8. Summary

Soil reinforcement conceptual mechanism



Soil reinforcement conceptual mechanism

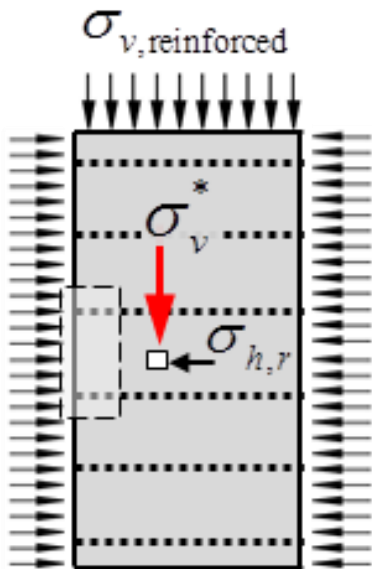
Vidal (1963)



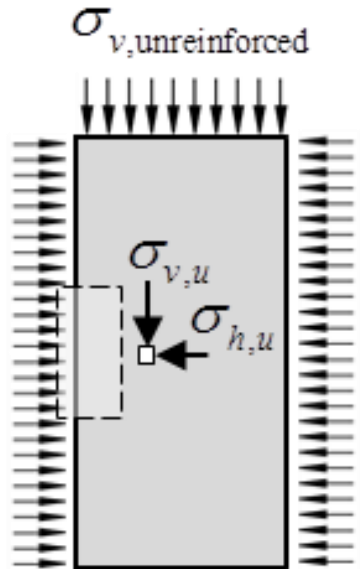
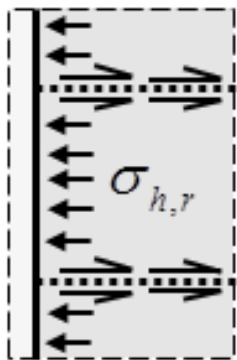
$$c = \frac{\sigma_1 \cdot e}{S_v} \cdot \frac{\sqrt{K_p}}{2}$$



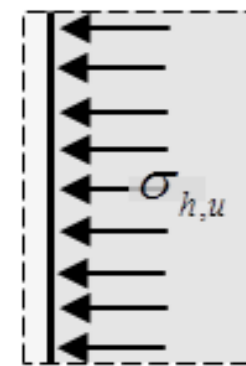
Soil reinforcement conceptual mechanism



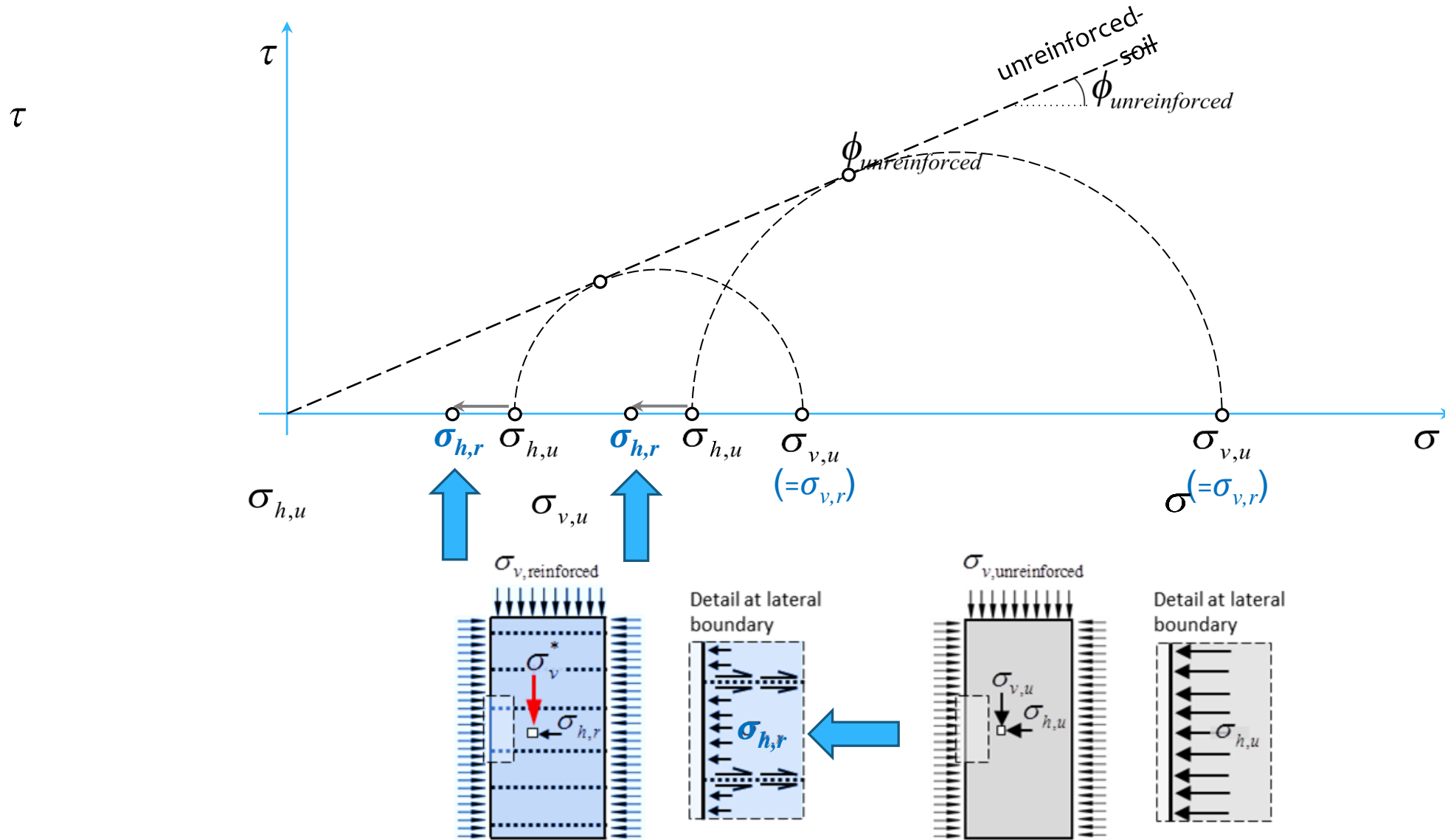
Detail at lateral boundary



Detail at lateral boundary



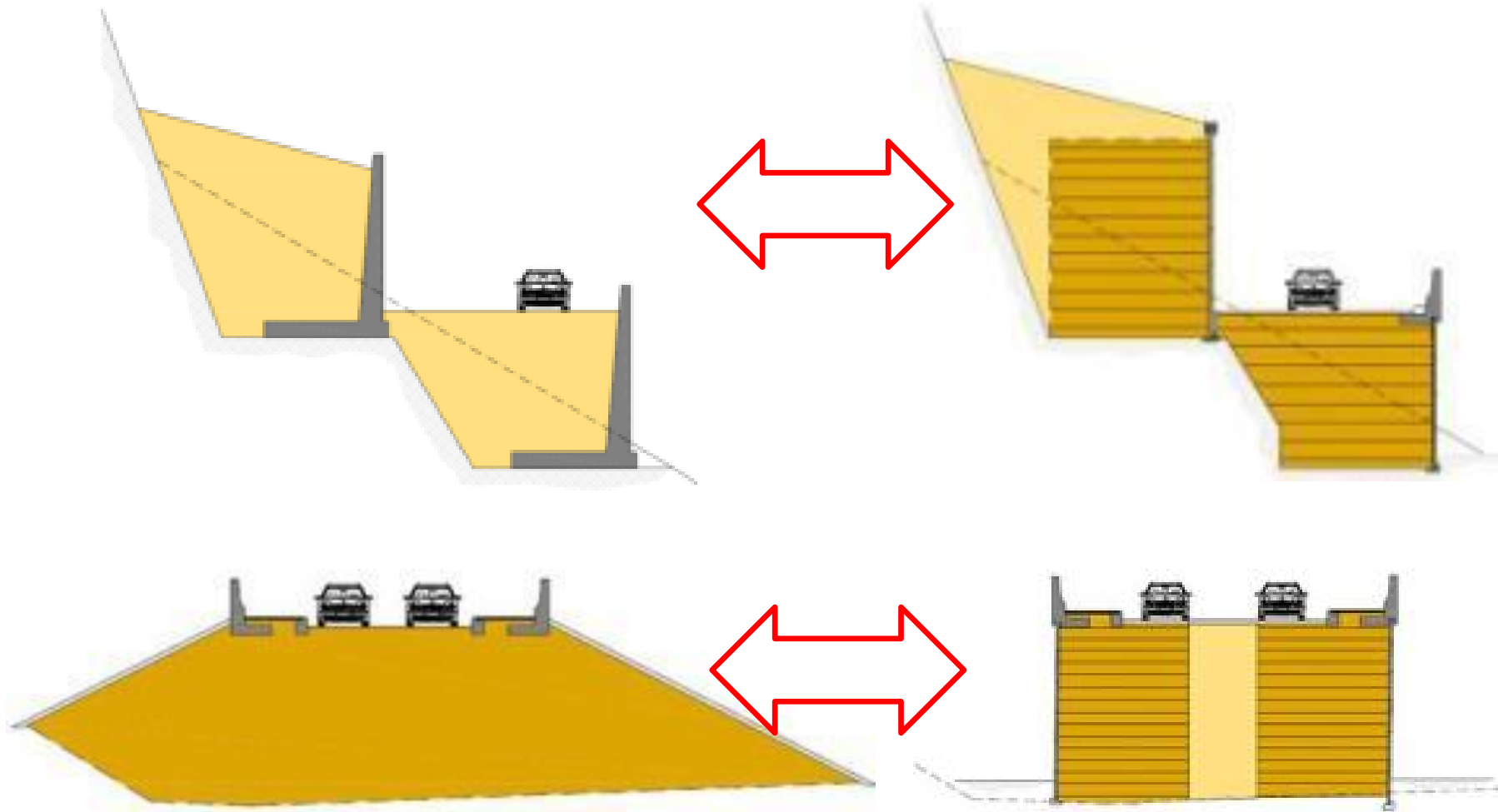
Soil reinforcement conceptual mechanism



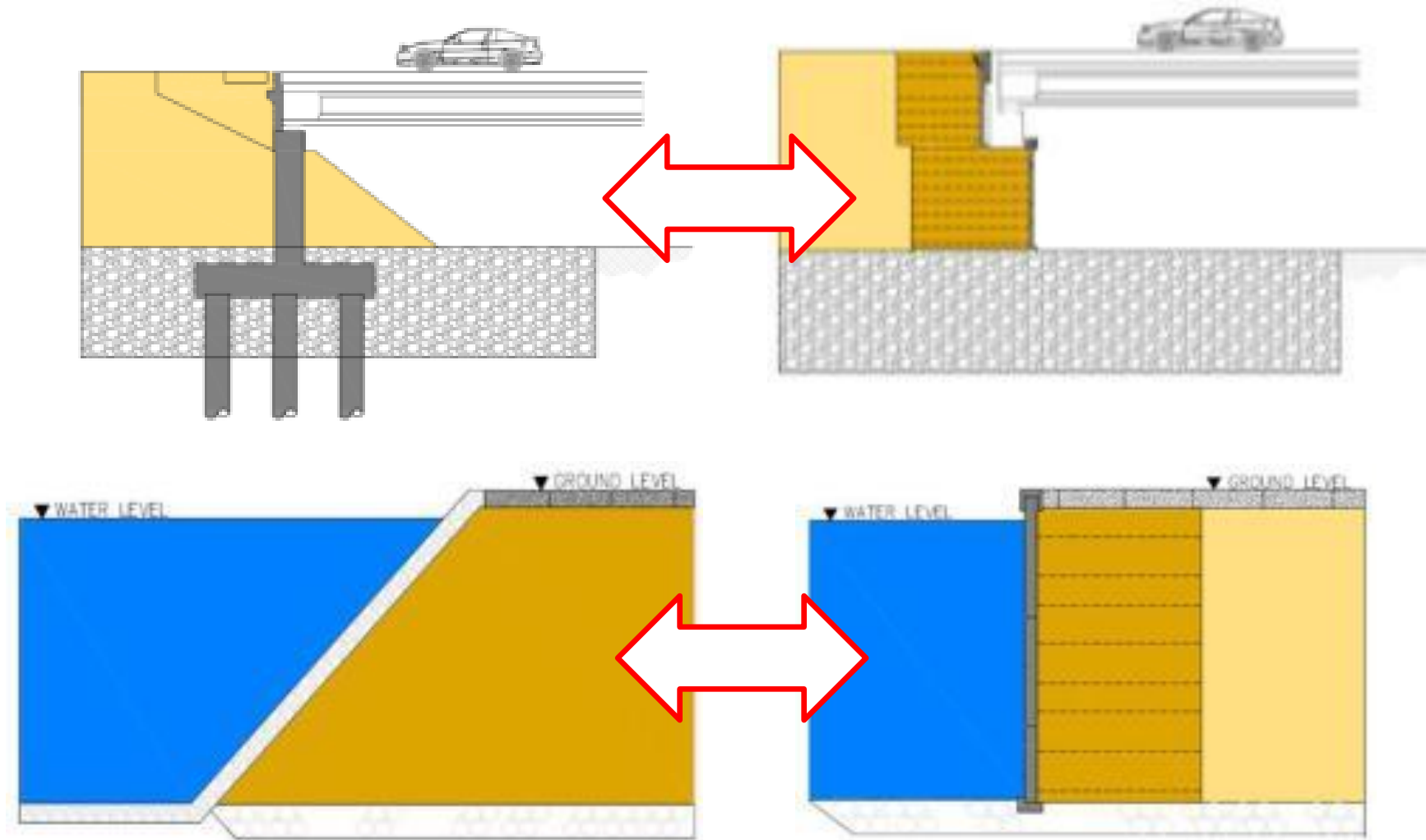
Outline

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Reinforced soil walls



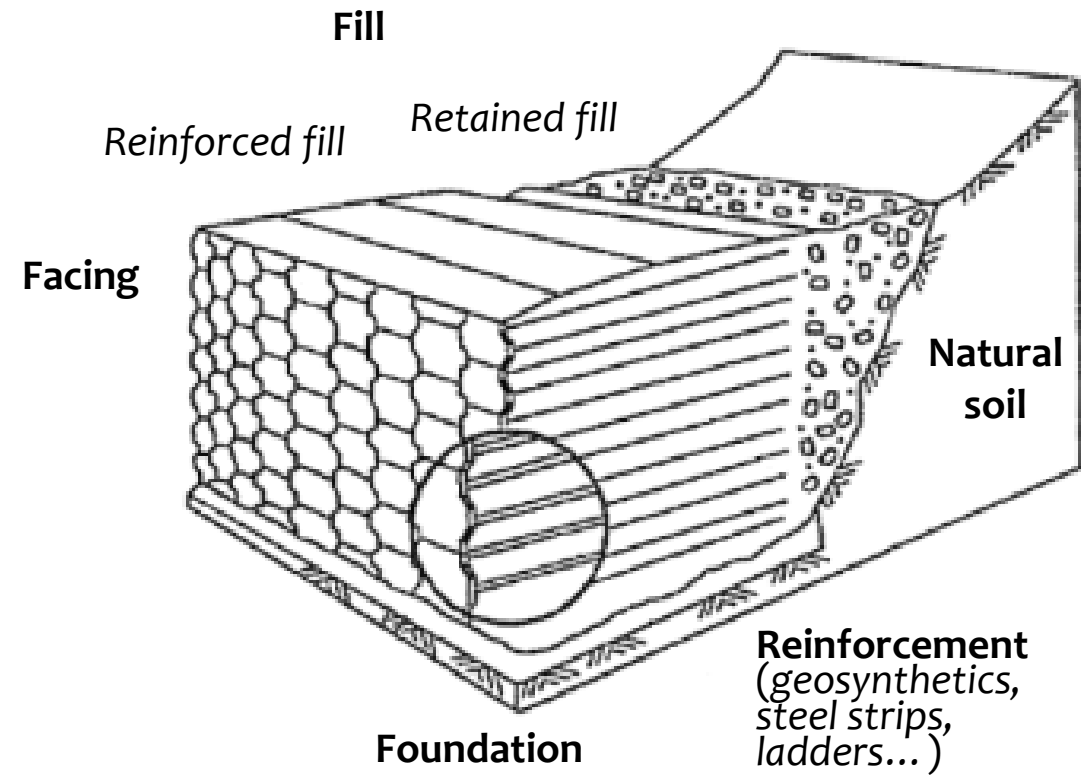
Reinforced soil walls



Reinforced soil walls

Generalities of the Reinforced soil walls

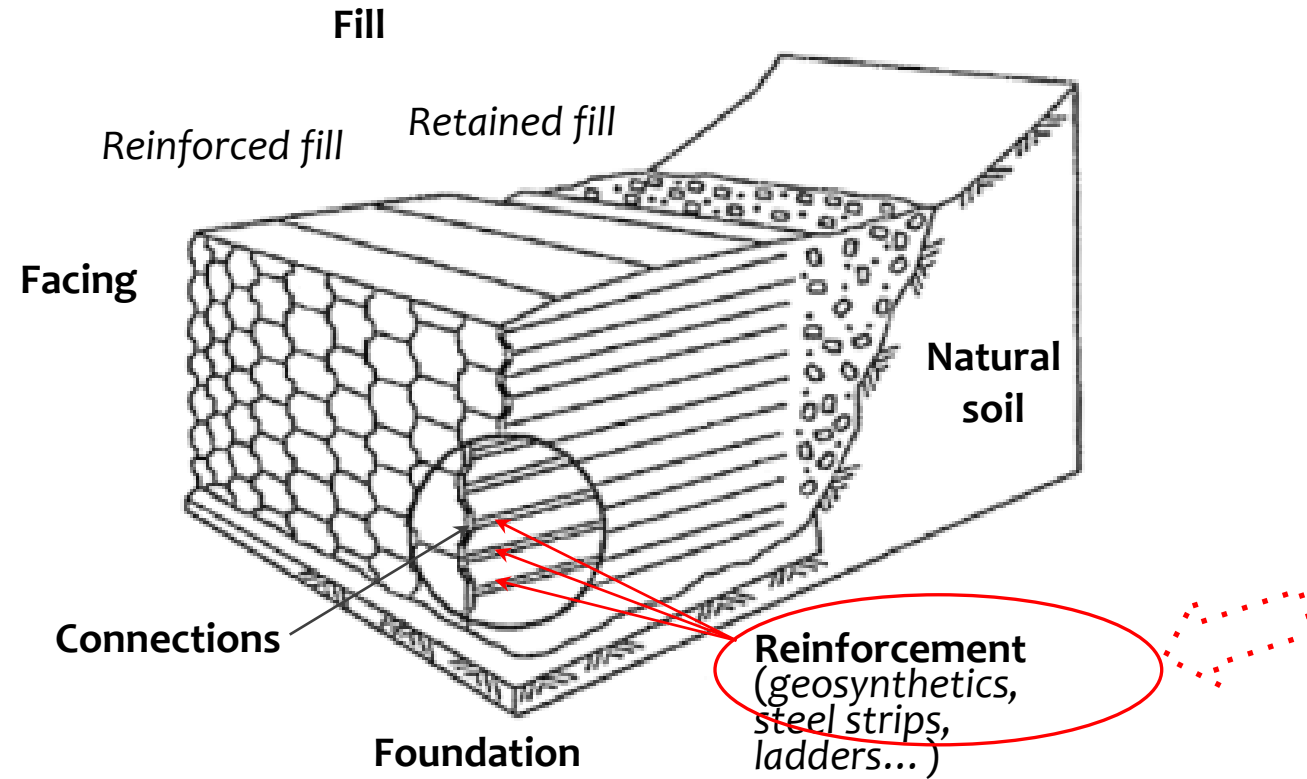
Main components



Reinforced soil walls

Generalities of the Reinforced soil walls

Main components

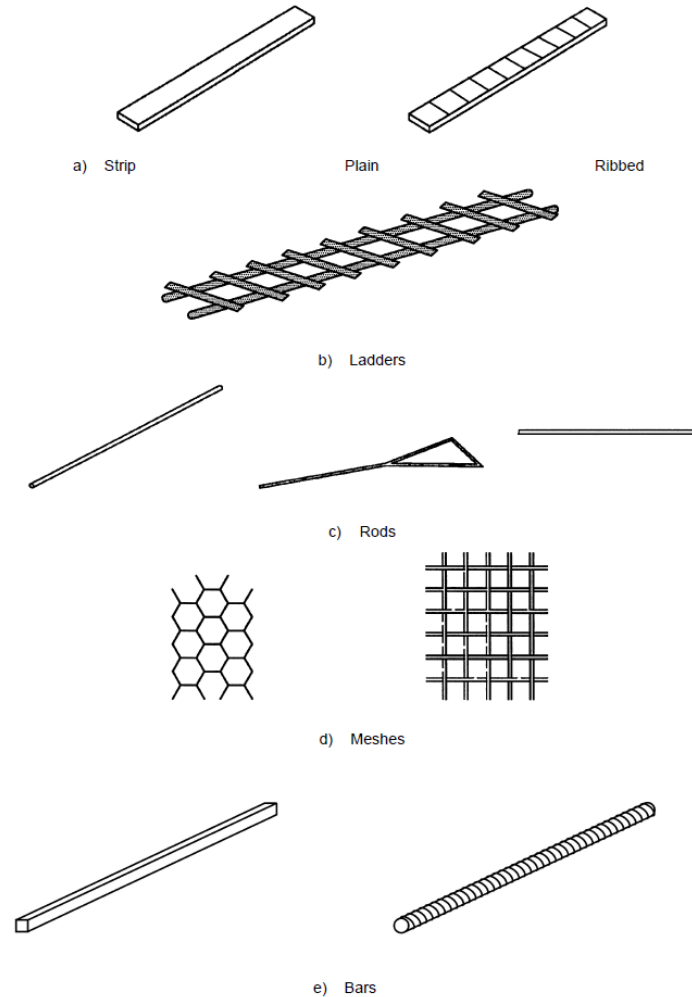


Reinforced soil walls: types of reinforcement

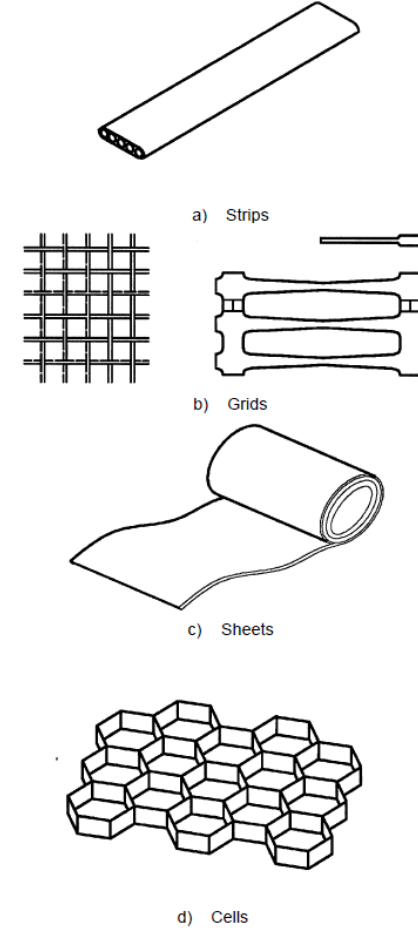
EN 14475:2006

EN 14475:2006
Execution of special
geotechnical works -
Reinforced fill

Steel reinforcements



Polymeric reinforcements

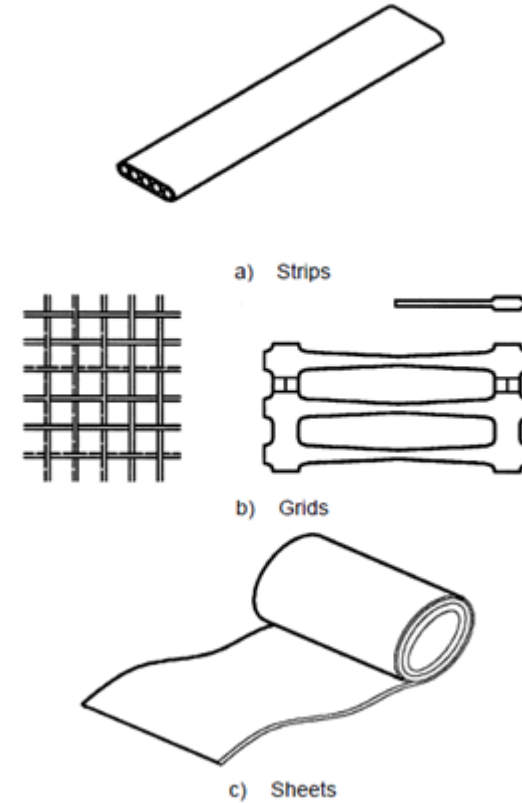


Reinforced soil walls

EN 14475:2006



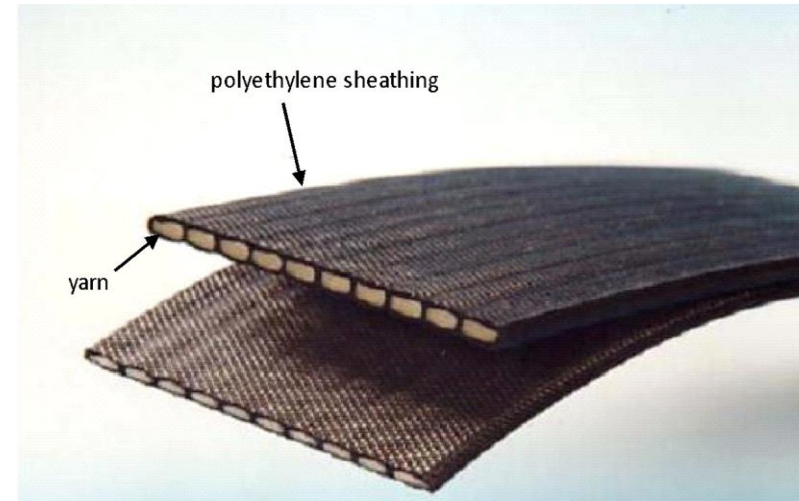
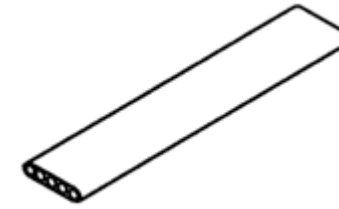
Polymeric reinforcements



Reinforced soil walls

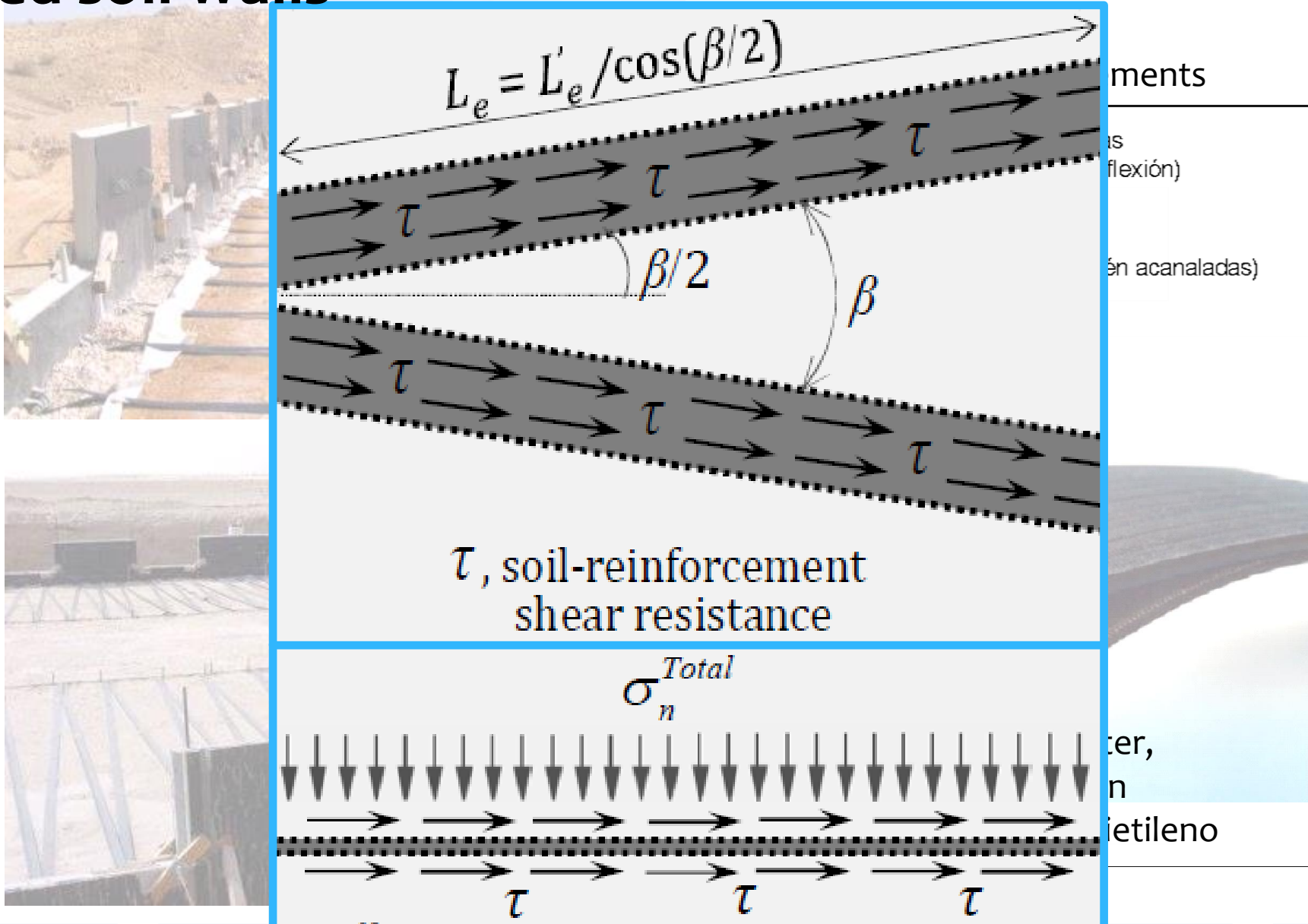


Polymeric reinforcements
Geostrips



Example: Polyester yarns core,
encased in polyethylene sheathing

Reinforced soil walls

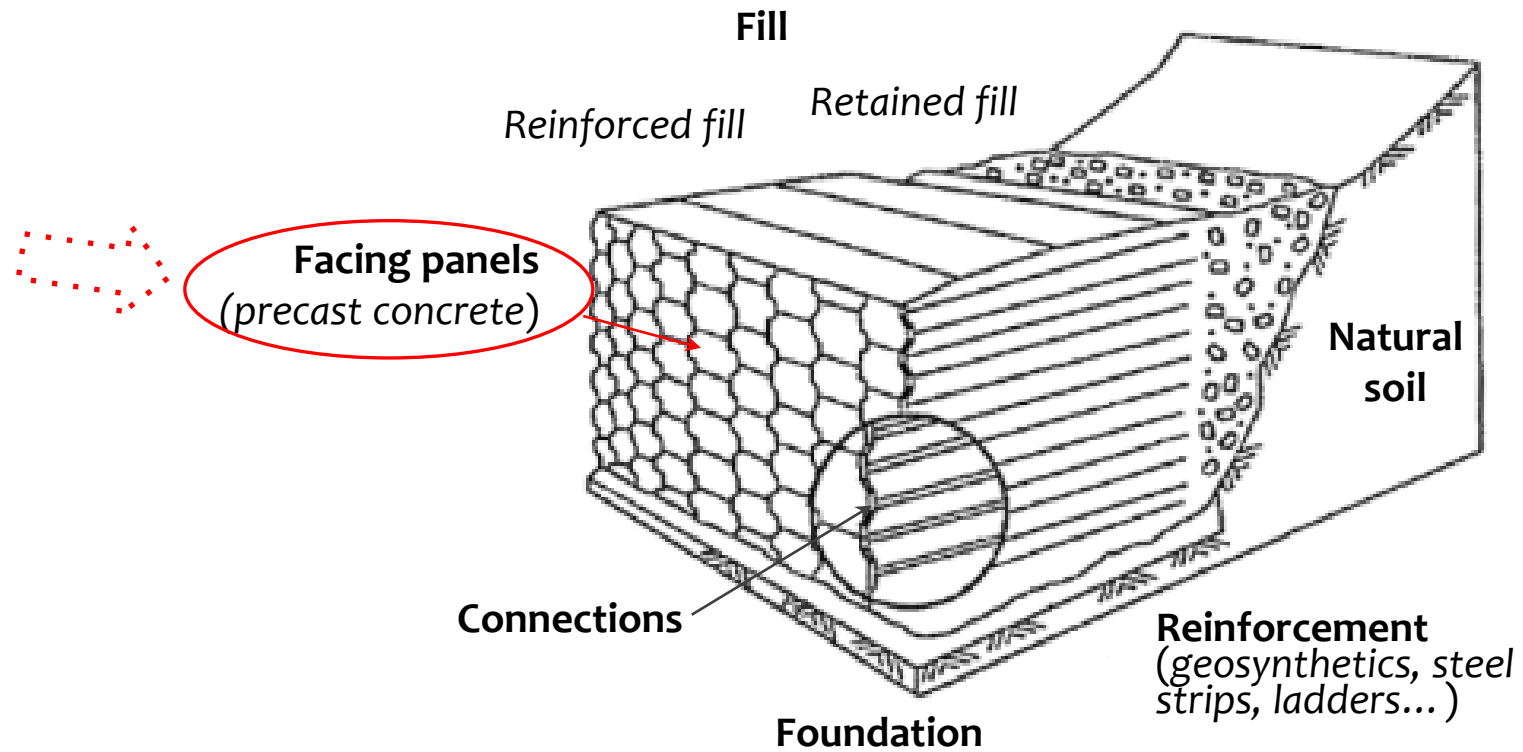


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Reinforced soil walls

Generalities of the Reinforced soil walls

Main components



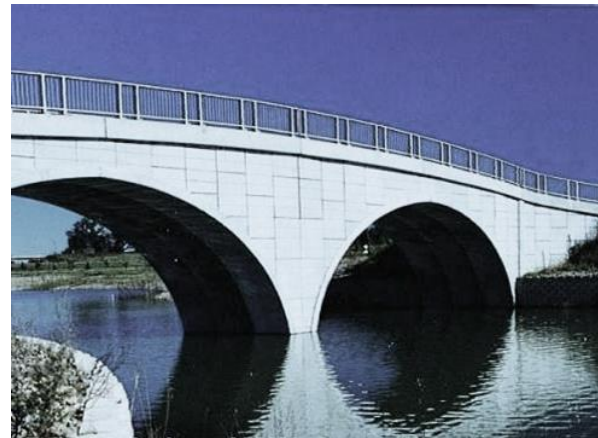
Reinforced soil walls

Precast concrete panels (partial or full-height panels)



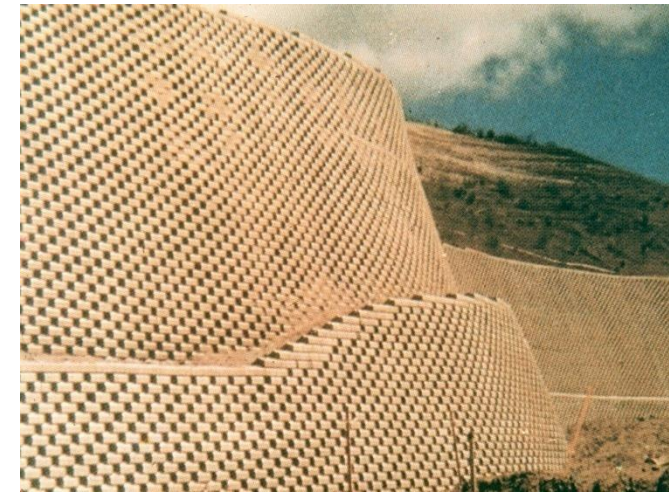
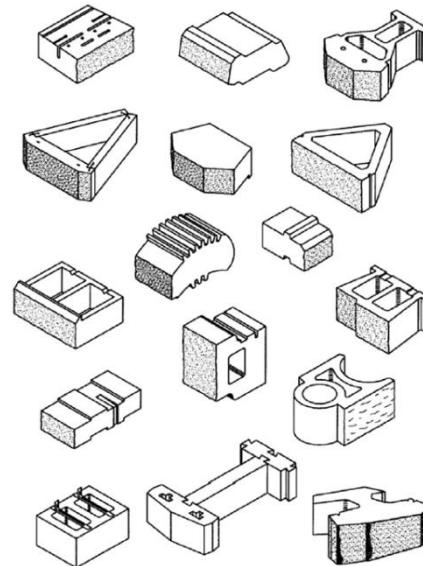
Reinforced soil walls

Precast concrete panels (partial or full-height panels)



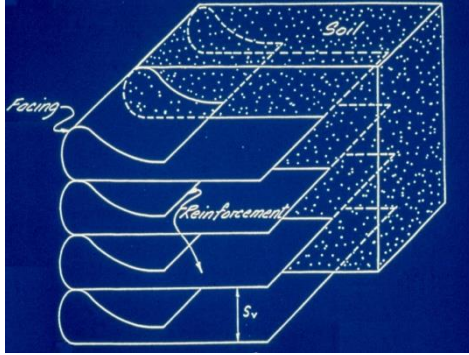
Reinforced soil walls

Segmental masonry blocks facing



Reinforced soil walls

Wrapped facing (geotextile sheets)



Key
1 Bags

Figure C.12 - Soft facing units

Reinforced soil walls

Woven and Welded
wire mesh (WWM)
facing

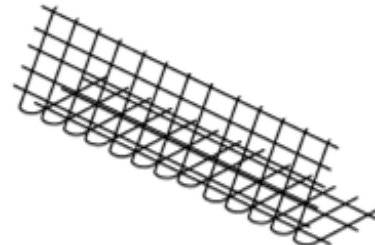
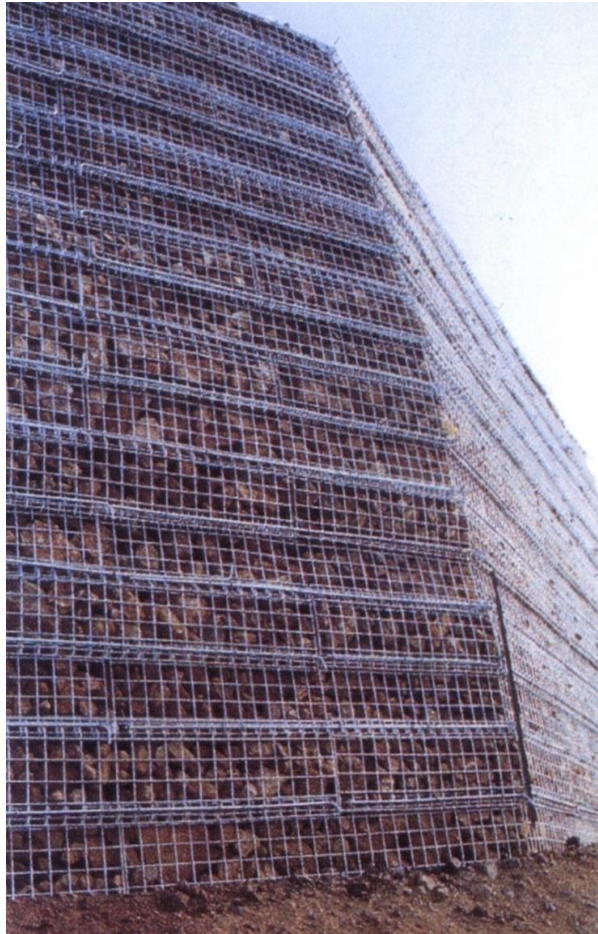


Figure C.10 - Steel welded wire mesh

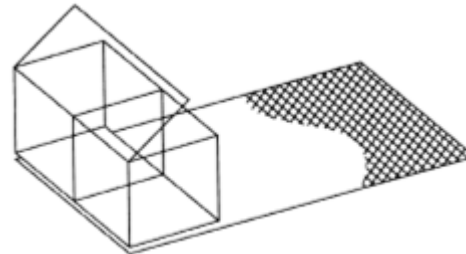


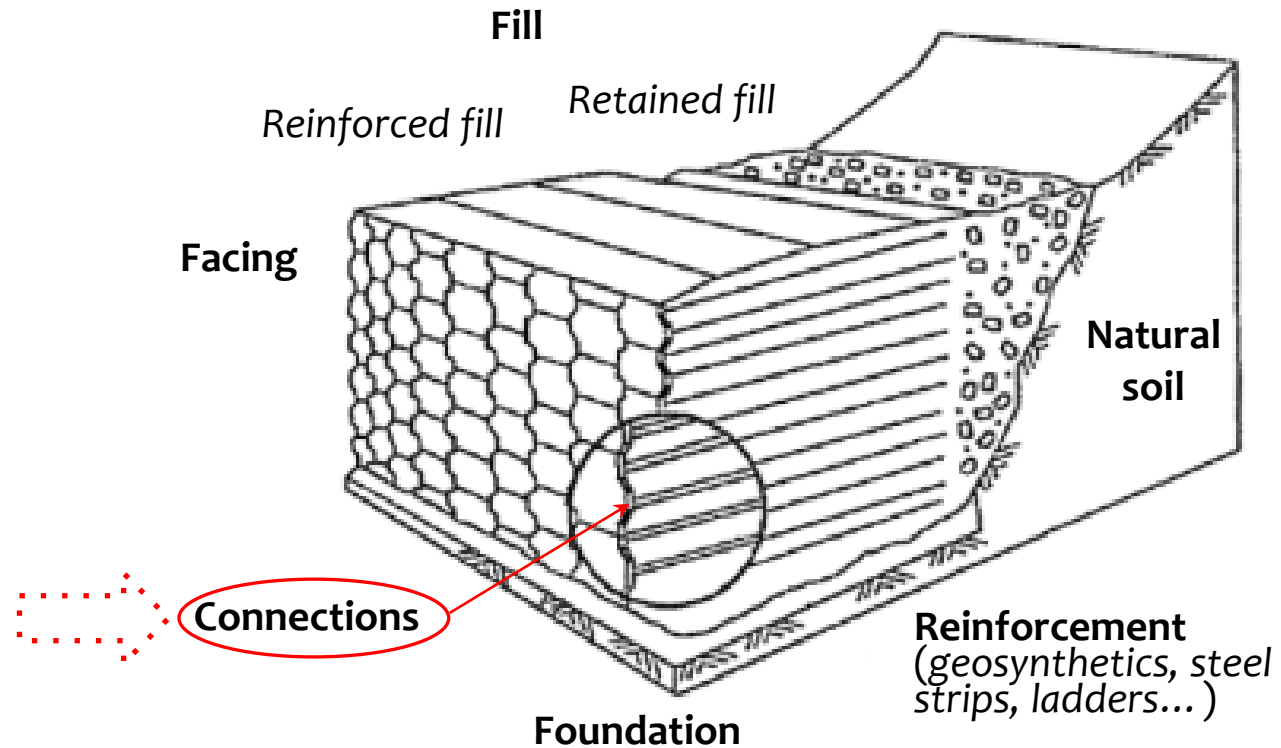
Figure C.11 - Gabion baskets



Reinforced soil walls

Generalities of the Reinforced soil walls

Main components



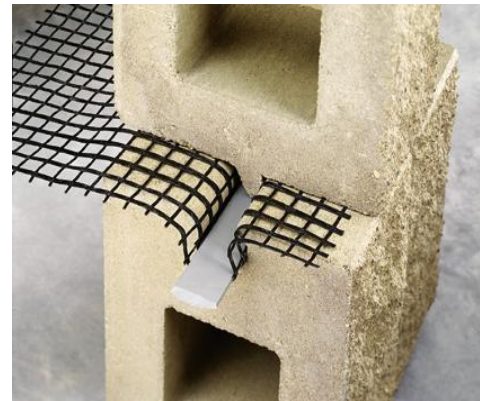
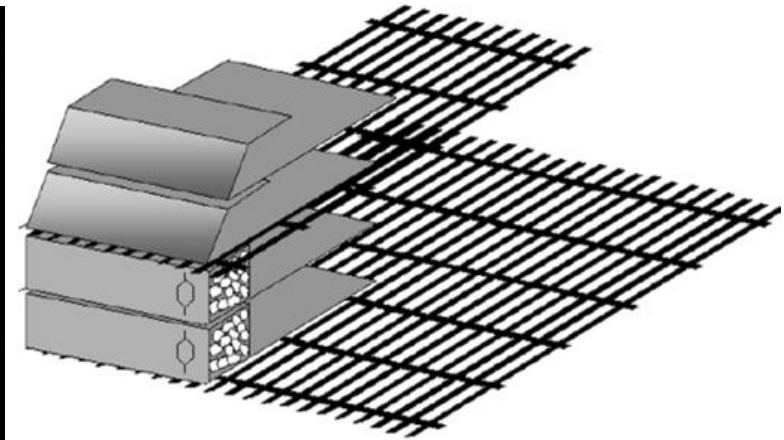
Reinforced soil walls

Connection types depend on facing and reinforcement system



Reinforced soil walls

Connection types depend on facing and reinforcement system



Outline

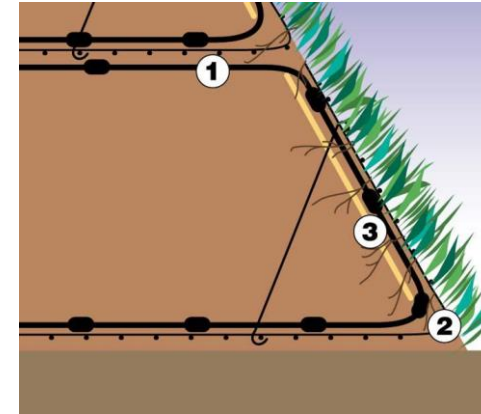
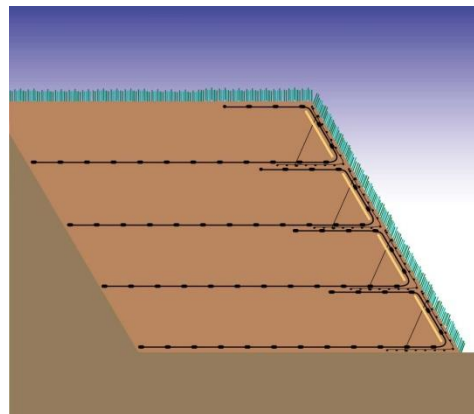
1. Introduction
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Reinforced soil slopes - Applications

Reinforced soil slopes are retaining structures with non-vertical facing.

Advantages of reinforced soil slopes:

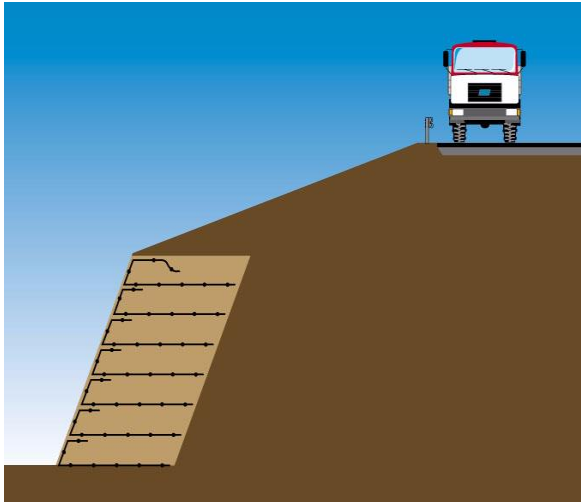
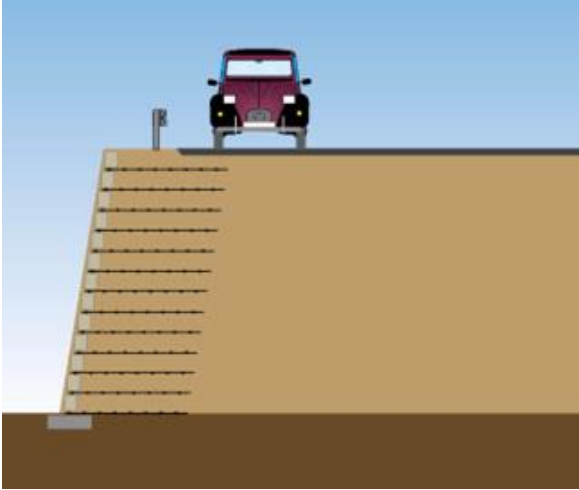
- Superior stability compared to unreinforced slopes
- Easy and fast construction
- Machinery works inside the footprint of the structure
- the locally available / marginal soil can be used, with important environmental benefits
- Facing can be easily vegetated for good aesthetics with low environmental and visual impact



1. Geogrid
2. Geomat/Geoblanket
3. Steel mesh formwork

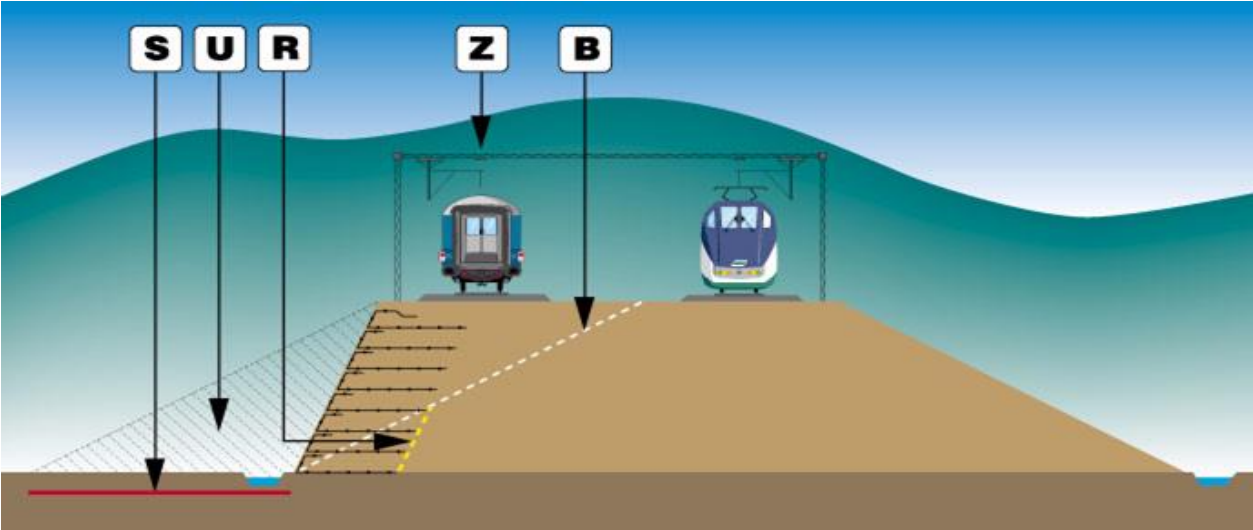
Reinforced soil slopes - Applications

- Road support



Reinforced soil slopes - Applications

- Railway embankments



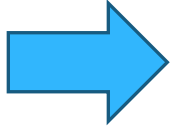
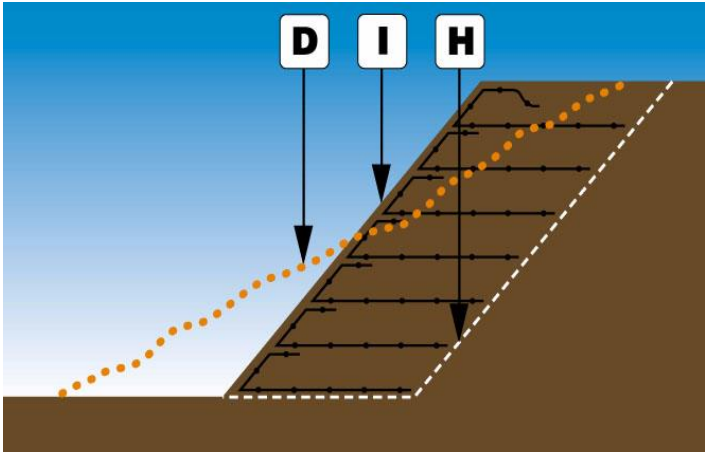
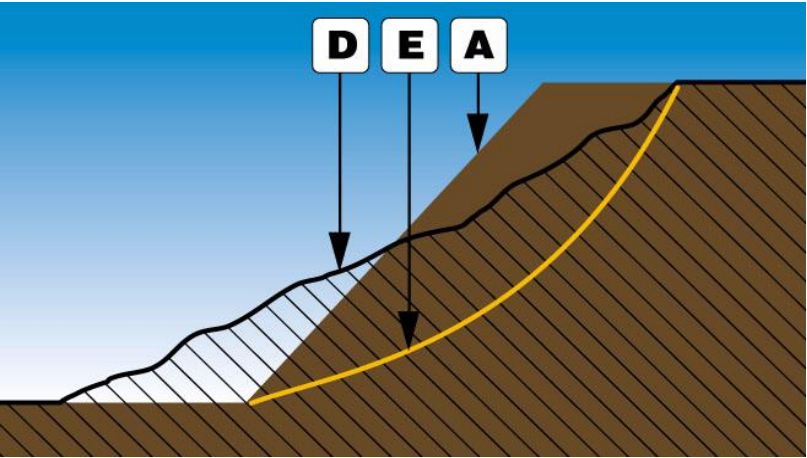
Reinforced soil slopes - Applications

- Embankments dikes



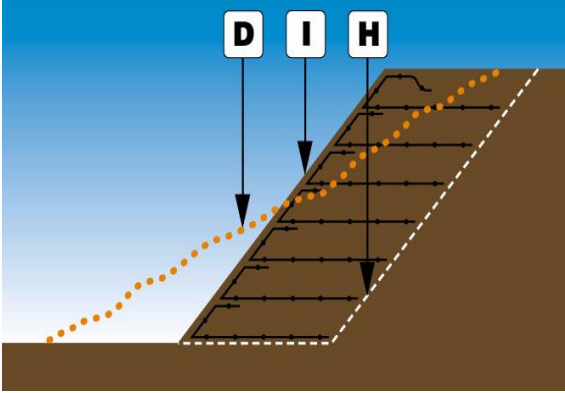
Reinforced soil slopes - Applications

- Repair of failed slopes



Reinforced soil slopes - Applications

- Repair of failed slopes



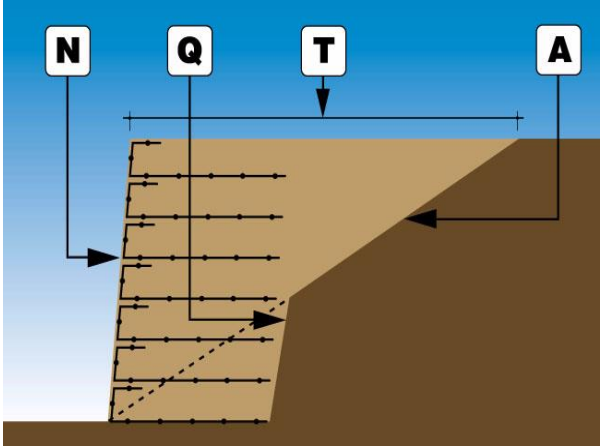
Reinforced soil slopes - Applications

- Repair of failed slopes



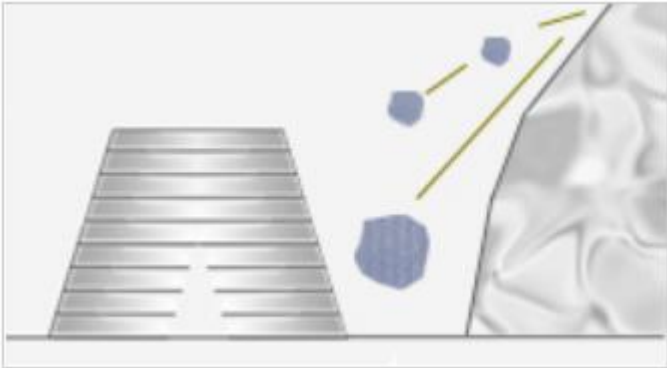
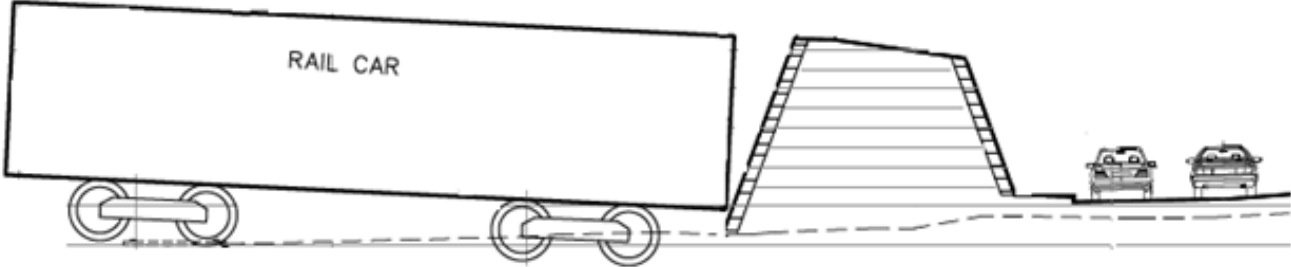
Reinforced soil slopes - Applications

- Steepening of shallow slopes



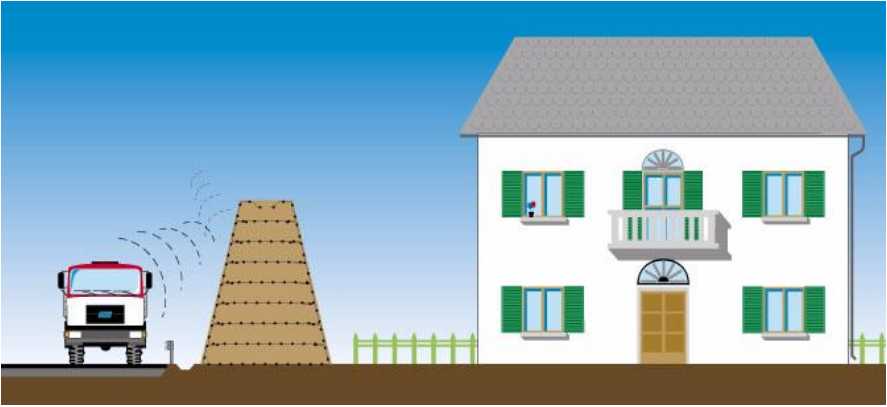
Reinforced soil slopes - Applications

- Impact barriers



Reinforced soil slopes - Applications

- Sound barriers



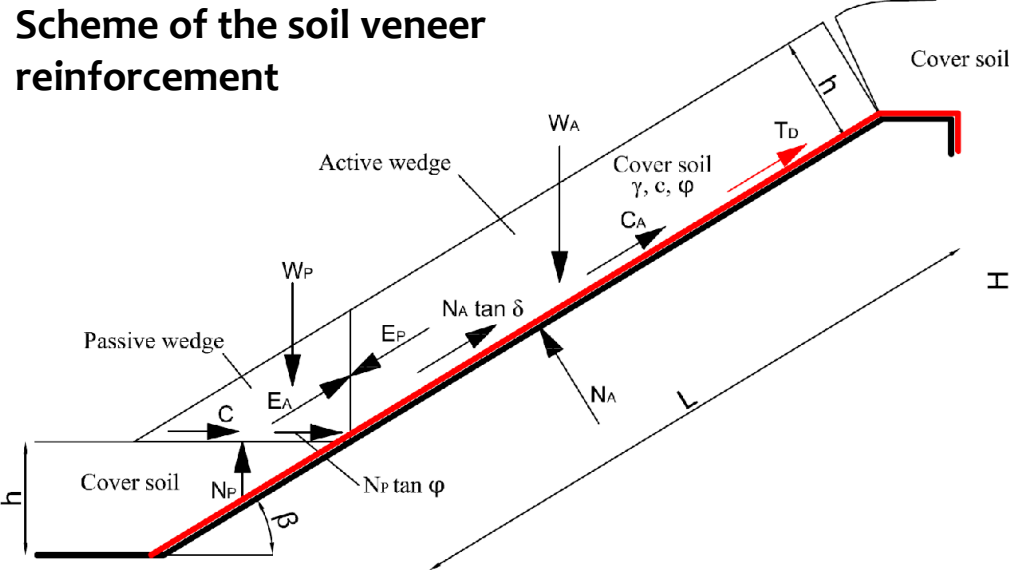
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Veneer reinforcement

Veneer is intended as a relatively thin cover soil layer placed on a slope.

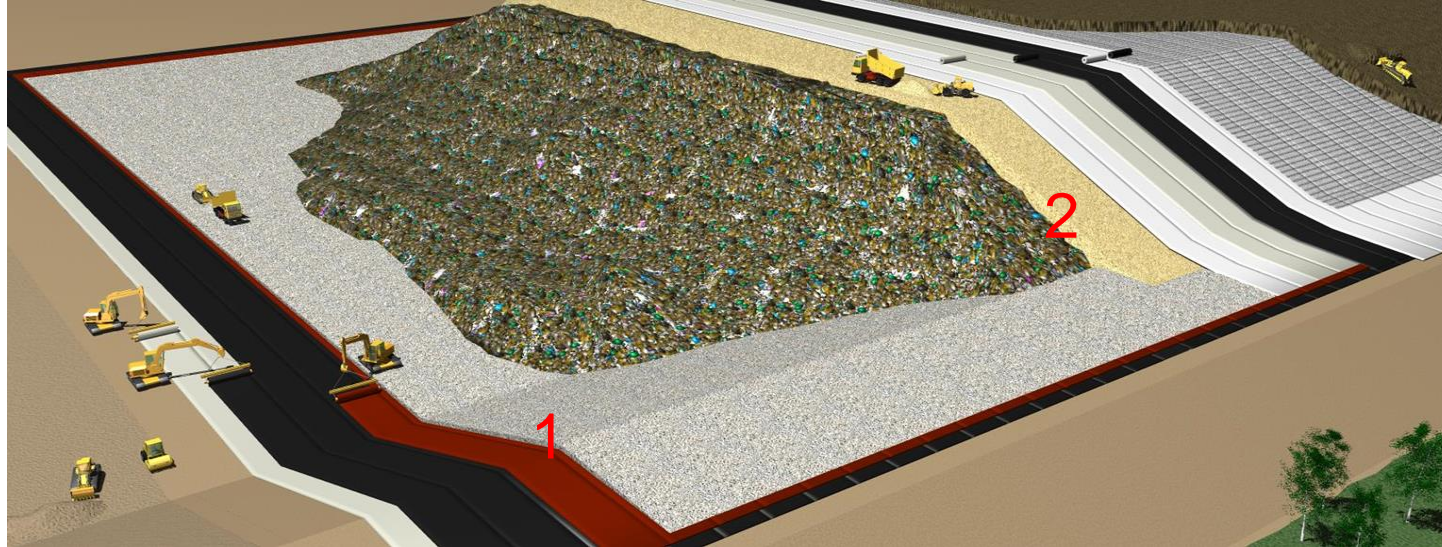
Soil veneer reinforcement is the only reinforcement application where reinforcement is not placed horizontally but sloping.



Veneer reinforcement

There are two main applications in which cover soil stability needs to be checked:

1. Leachate collection soil placed above a Geomembrane (GBR), Geosynthetic Clay Liner (GCL) and/or Compacted Clay Liner (CCL) along the sides of a landfill or a heap leach pad before waste or ore is placed and stability achieved accordingly.
2. Final cover soil placed above a GBR, GCL and/or CCL in the cap or closure of a landfill or a heap leach pad.



Veneer reinforcement

- As the veneer layer becomes longer and steeper, the tensile strength required for the geosynthetic reinforcement becomes quickly very high, of the order of hundreds kN/m.
- Such high tensile strength have to be transferred to the veneer layer, hence the interface properties soil – geosynthetic are very important.
- Below the reinforcing geosynthetic usually there is the lining system, hence interlocking between soil and geogrid becomes very limited, while the friction angle soil – geotextile may be too small for transferring high tensile forces.
- Hence a reinforced geomat, made up by a tridimensional geomat factory bonded to a high strength geogrid or geotextile, is usually the preferred choice.



Veneer reinforcement

Main advantages of soil veneer reinforcement are:

- Superior stability compared to unreinforced veneers
- Slopes of a landfill or mining tailing capping can be designed at higher inclination, thus affording much more storage volume
- High Factors of Safety can be achieved even in highly seismic areas
- Easy and fast construction

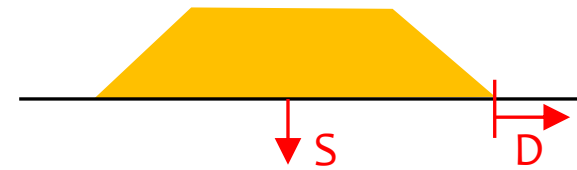
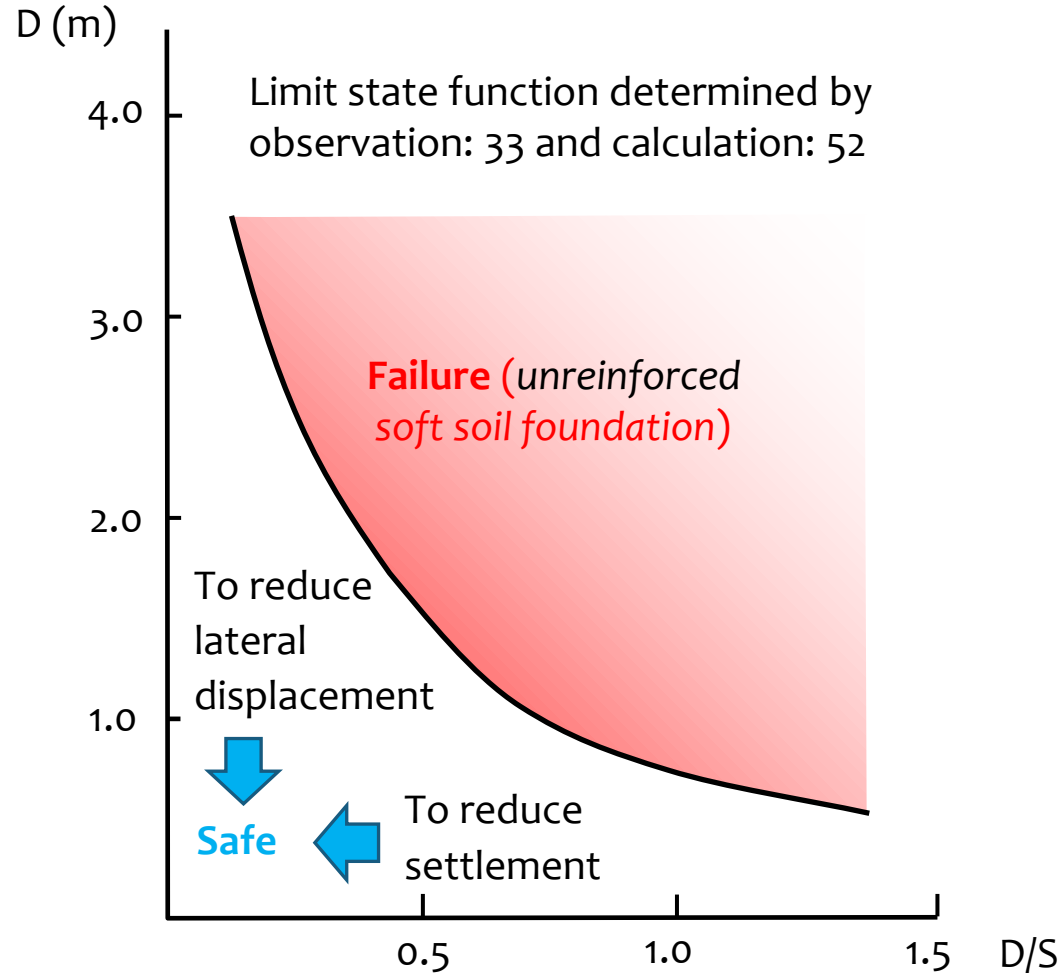


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Basal reinforcement

Lessons Learn from Failures of **Unreinforced** Embankments on Soft Soil Foundation



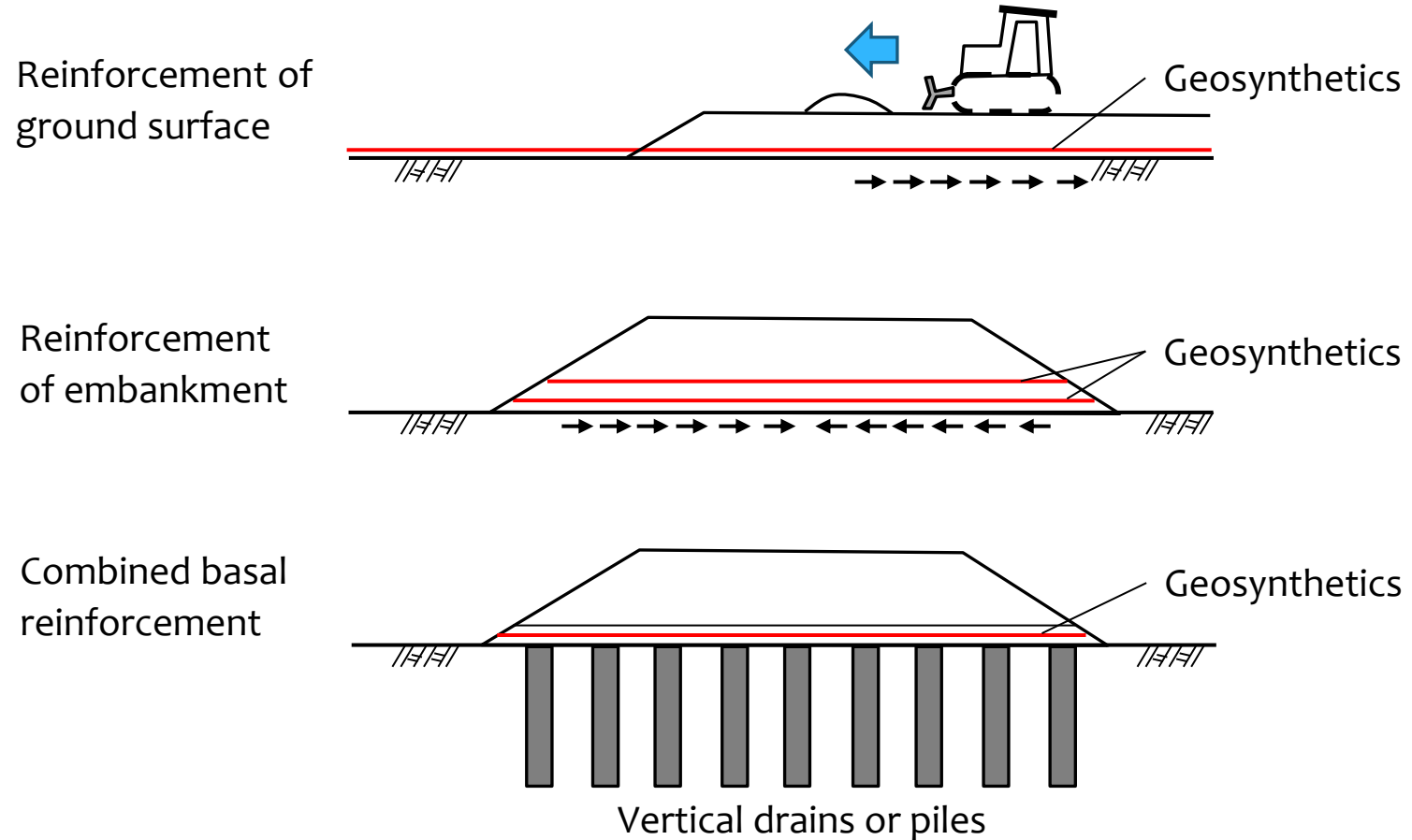
S : Settlement at the center of embankment
 D : Lateral deformation of the toe

In the case of unreinforced embankment, the limit state can be shown by single function. This means that the stability of the embankment can be ensured by reducing the lateral displacement or the settlement.

Matsuo and Kawamura (S&F, 1977)

Basal reinforcement

Geosynthetics Basal Reinforcement for Soft Soil Foundation



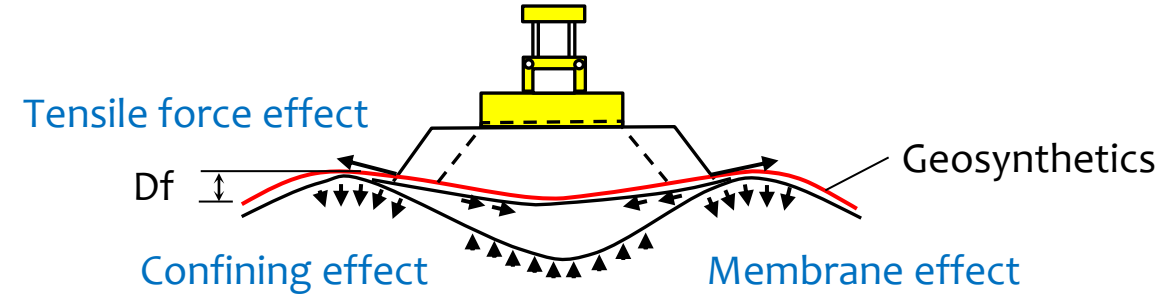
These are effective to reduce settlement and horizontal displacement.

Basal reinforcement

Reinforcement of Ground Surface of Soft Soil Foundation



by courtesy of Dr. Hironaka



This technique enables the operation of construction machinery on soft ground.

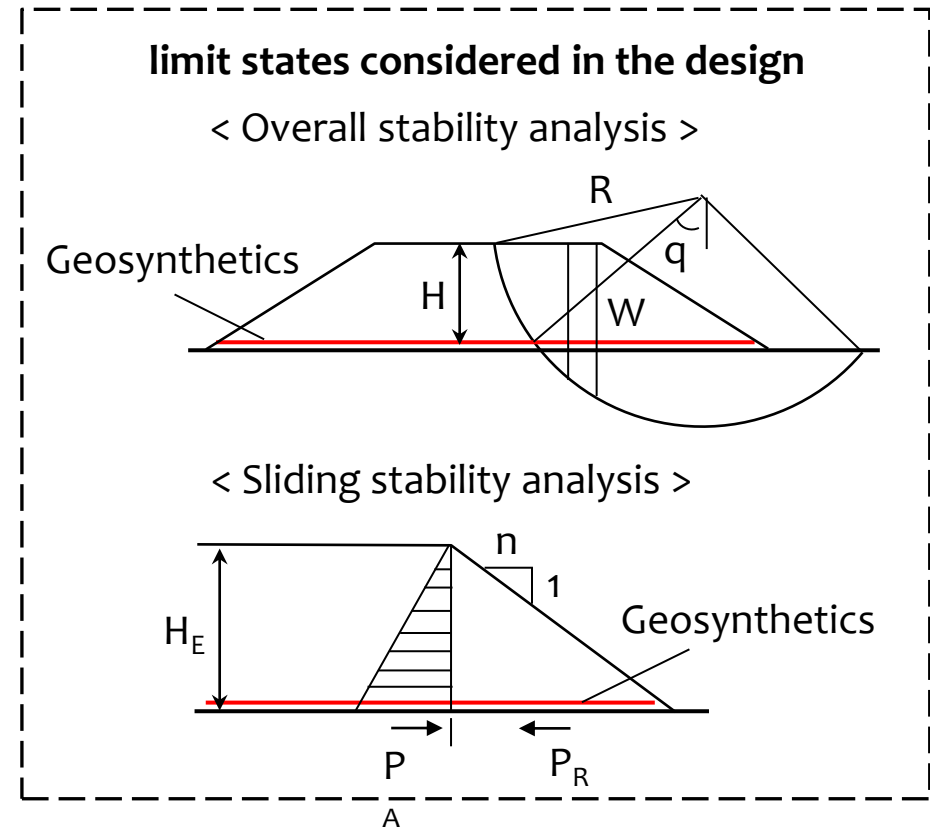
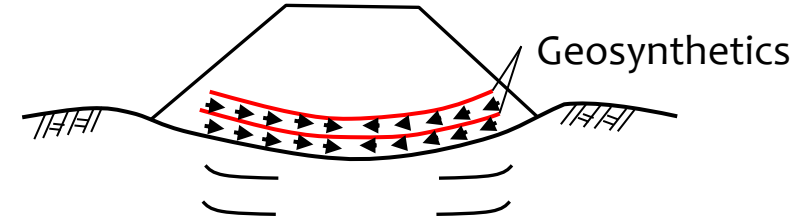
Basal reinforcement

Reinforcement of Embankment on Soft Soil Foundation



by courtesy of Dr. Hironaka

This technique is effective to construct high embankment on soft ground.

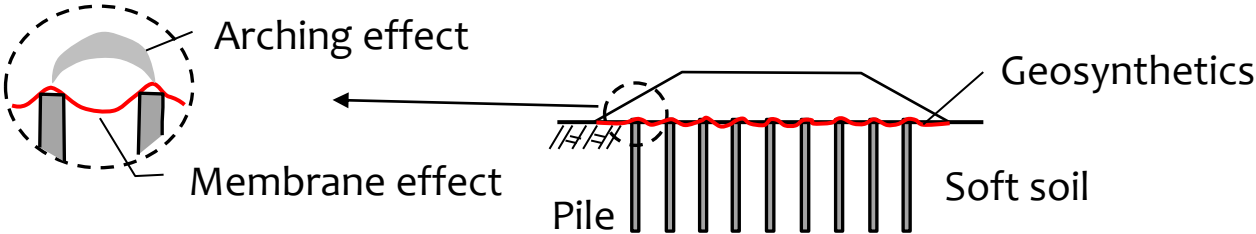


Basal reinforcement

Combined Basal Reinforcement



by courtesy of Dr. Hironaka



This technique ensures not only “stability” but also “serviceability” of embankment.

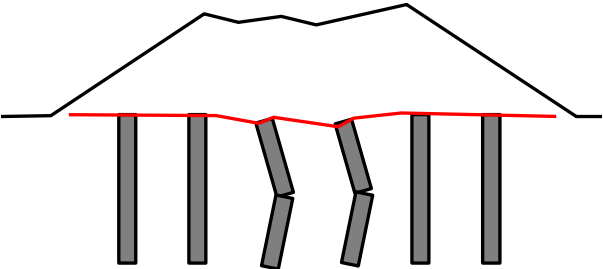
Basal reinforcement

Design of Combined Basal Reinforcement

< Limit states of basal reinforced embankment with piles and Design >

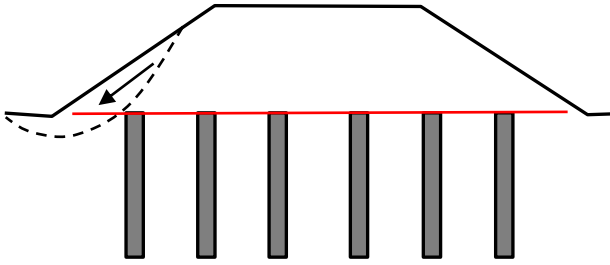
a) Pile group capacity

Design of piles



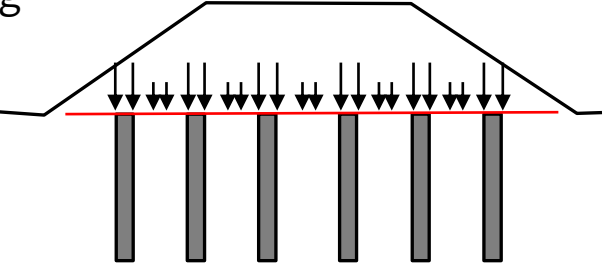
b) Pile group extent

Layout of piles



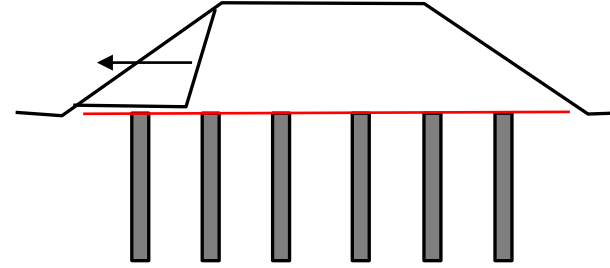
c) Vertical load shedding

Layout of piles



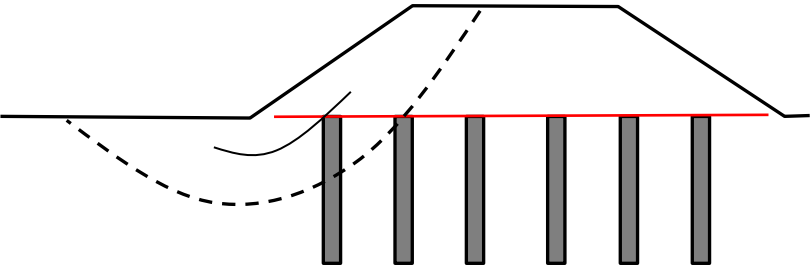
d) Lateral sliding

Geometry of embankment



e) Overall stability

Selection of geosynthetics



Basal reinforcement

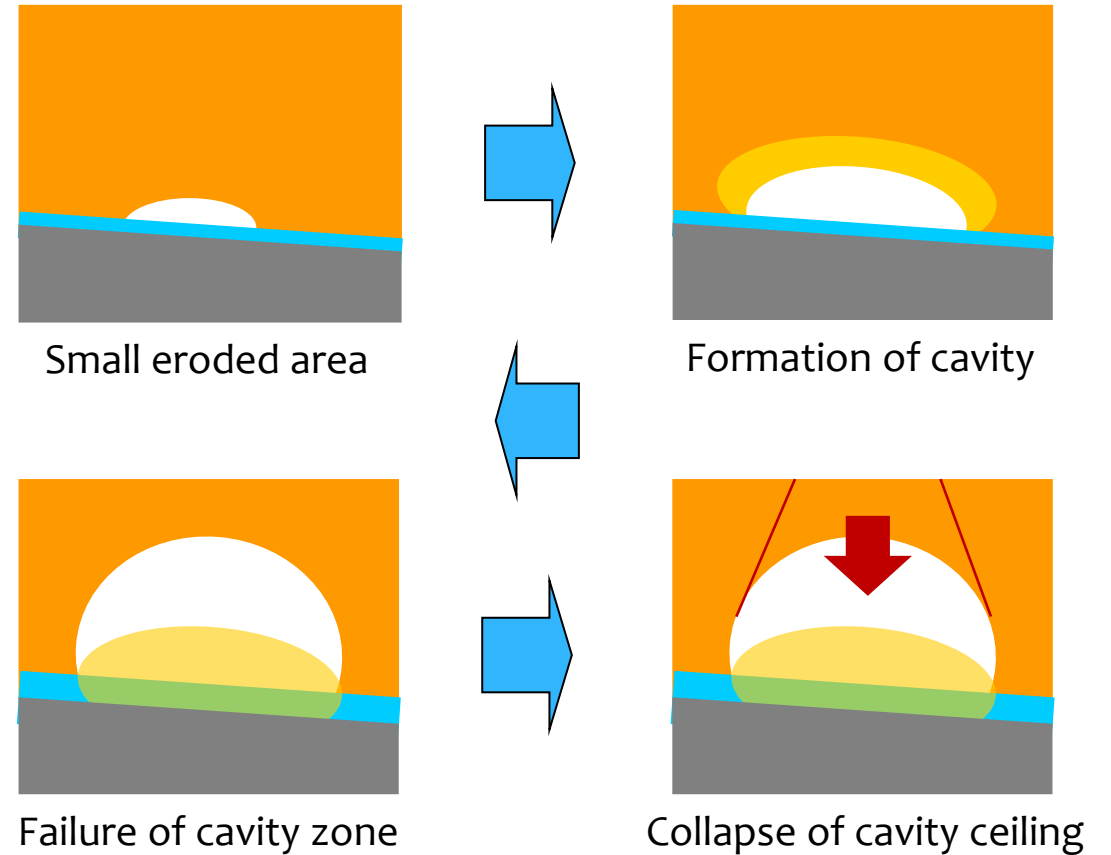
Lessons Learn from Failures of Embankments Overlying Voids



by courtesy of Dr. Kohata

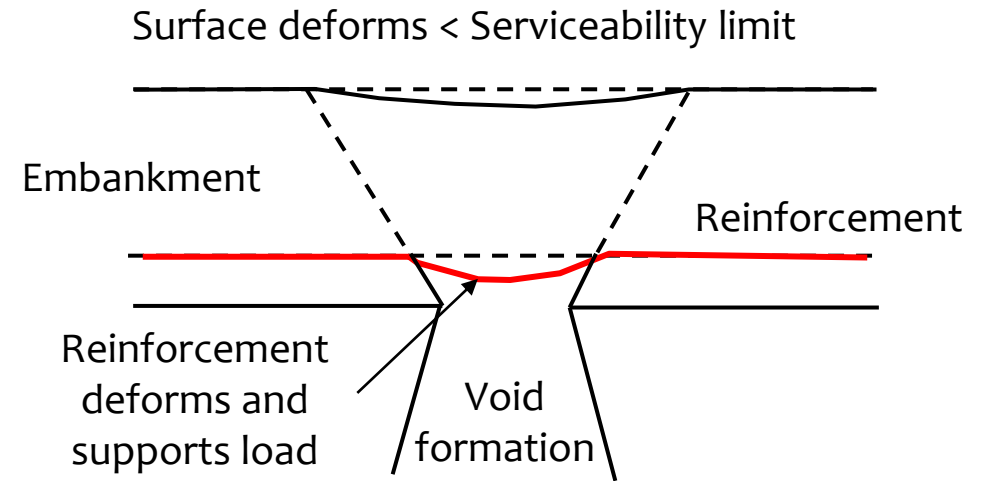
Progressive formation of void causes serious geotechnical damage in social infrastructure.

A mechanism of void formation: Internal Erosion



Basal reinforcement

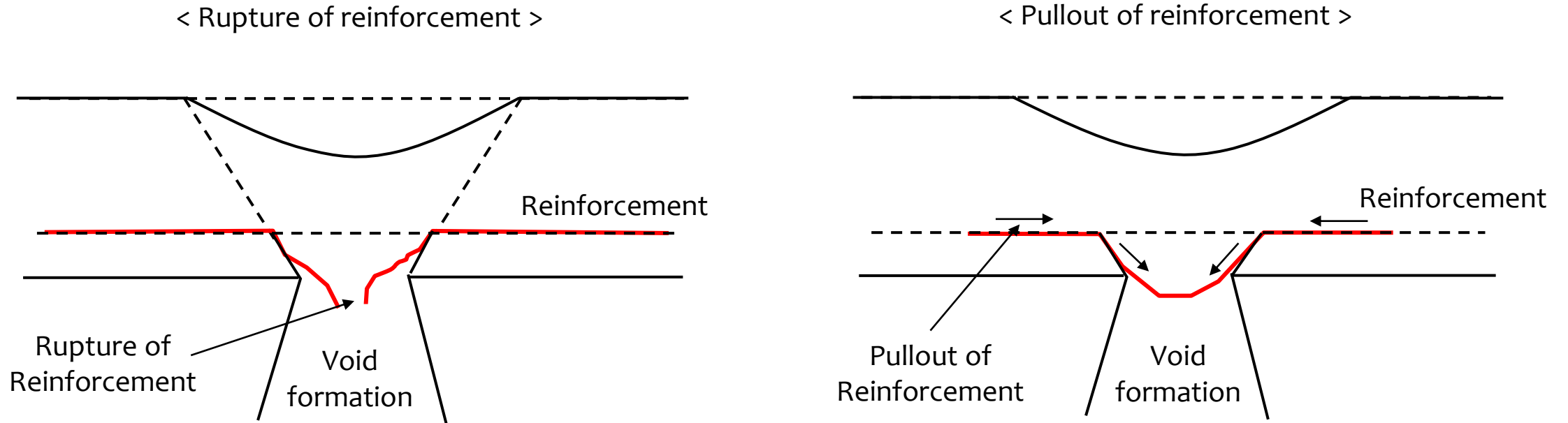
Basal Reinforcement for Embankments Overlying Voids



The void formation causes serious damage on roads. Applying basal reinforcement, the geosynthetic reinforcement deforms across the void and supports the fill in the embankment, then the deformation of the ground surface is maintained below the serviceability limit.

Basal reinforcement

Ultimate limit states considered in the design



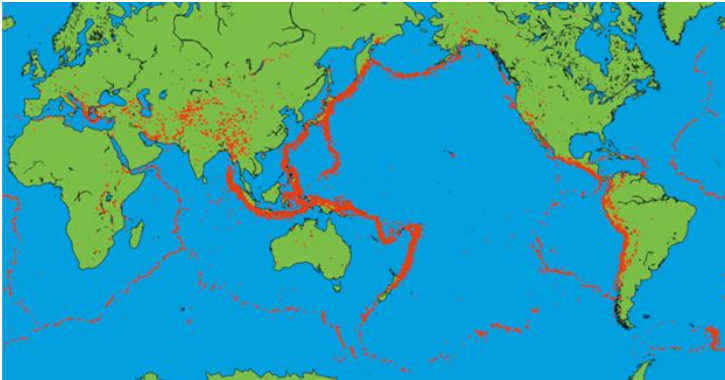
Applying basal reinforcement, the geosynthetic reinforcement deforms across the void and supports the fill in the embankment, then the deformation of the ground surface is maintained below the serviceability limit.

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Seismic resistance of reinforced soil structures

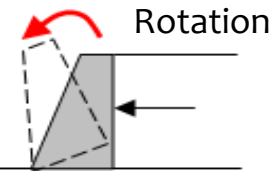
Global seismic map



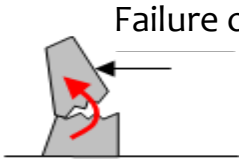
Peak Ground Acceleration in recent notable earthquakes

Earthquake	PGA
2011 Tohoku earthquake and tsunami	2.7g
2011 Christchurch earthquake	2.2g
1994 Los Angeles earthquake	1.7g
2016 Kumamoto earthquake	1.6g
1999 Jiji earthquake	1.0g
1999 Athens earthquake	0.6g

Earthquake Damage of Geotechnical Structures



Classical gravity-structures collapse by seismic actions.

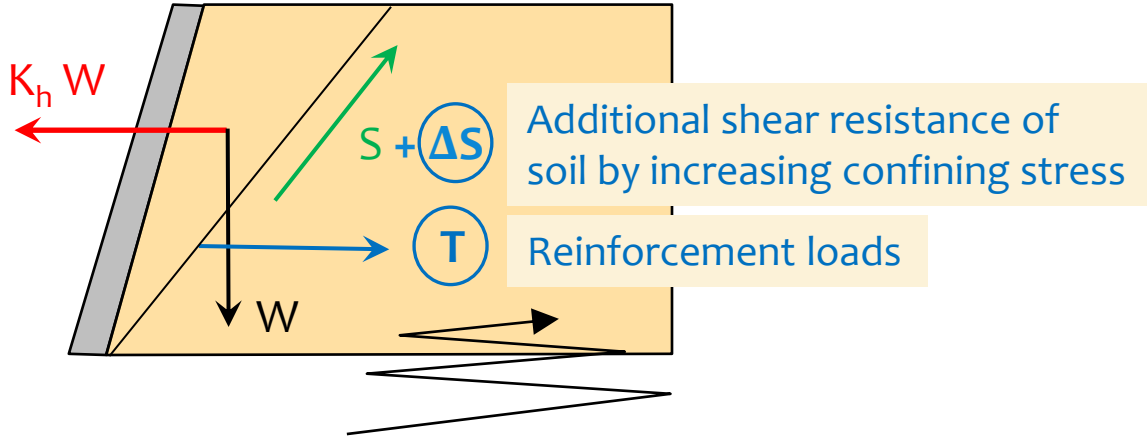
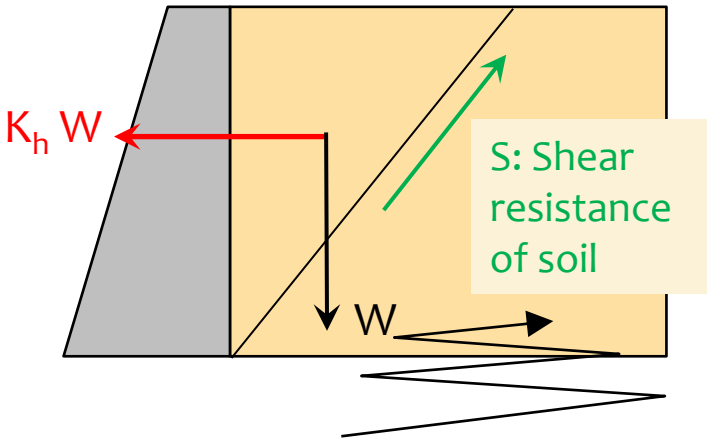
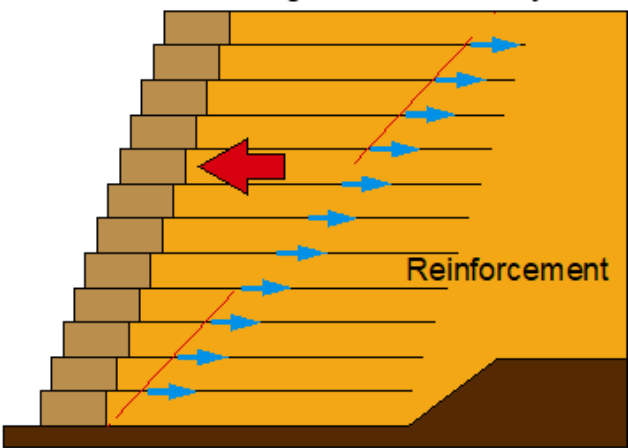
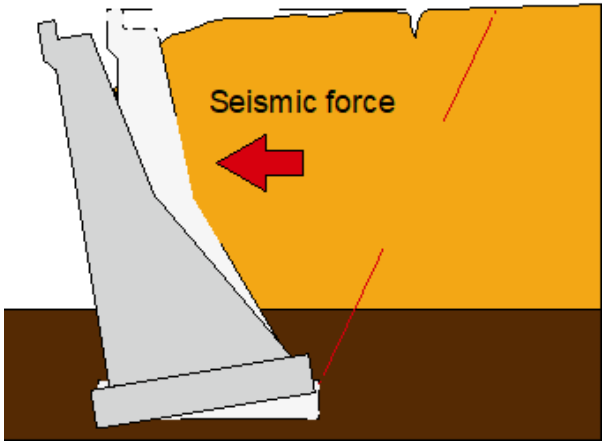


Failure of Reinforced Concrete Structure

by courtesy of Dr. Shinoda

Seismic resistance of reinforced soil structures

Seismic performance comparison of Gravity-type and Reinforced Soil walls



Poor performance of gravity-type walls

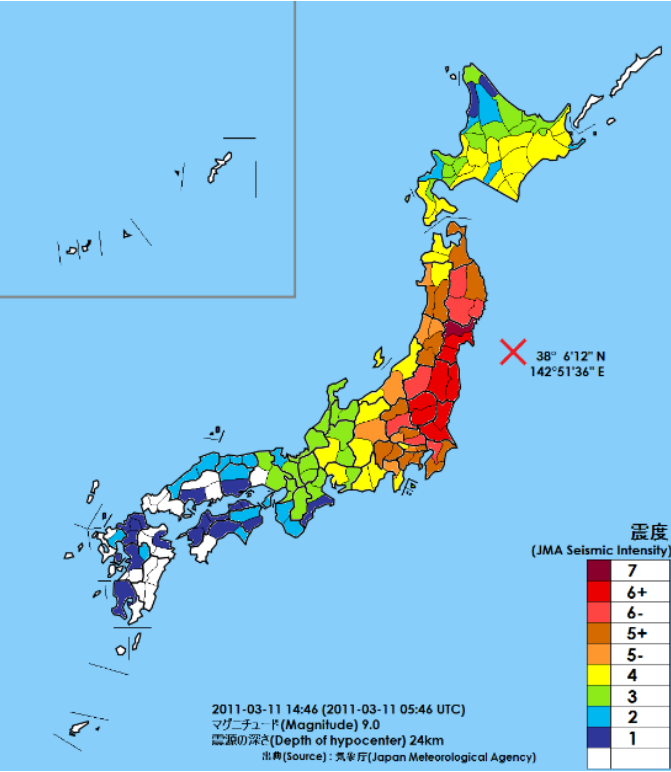
Excellent performance of reinforced walls

Seismic resistance of reinforced soil structures

Actual Performance of Geosynthetic-Reinforced Walls

Example of Tohoku earthquake (2011)

... how did Geosynthetic-Reinforced Walls behave during earthquakes?



Ultimate limit state



Restorability limit state



Serviceability limit State

Miyata (2012), Kuwano, Miyata and Koseki (2014)

Seismic resistance of reinforced soil structures

Actual Performance of Geosynthetic-Reinforced Walls

Summary of investigation of **1595 walls** in Tohoku earthquake (SI > 5+)

	Steel Strip walls	Geosyn walls	Multi-anchor walls
Ultimate limit state	0.3%	0.7%	0%
Restorability limit state	1.0%	4.3%	0%
Serviceability limit State	7.0%	0.7%	3.0%
No damage	91.7%	94.3%	97.0%

Miyata (2012), Kuwano, Miyata and Koseki (2014)

Actual seismic actions are much higher than design value.
However, GRWs show good performance.

Seismic resistance of reinforced soil structures

Actual Performance of Geosynthetic-Reinforced Walls



Chilean earthquake (27 February 2010) - 8.8 Richter

RC bridge collapsed, but Geosynthetic-reinforced wall survived.

Seismic resistance of reinforced soil structures

Disaster recovery and reconstruction measures by geosynthetics

Damaged geo-structures due to earthquake



Reconstructed geo-structures by soil reinforcement technology



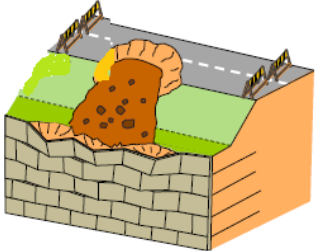
by courtesy of Dr. Hirai

Smooth and rapid recovery, and reconstruction from disaster

Seismic resistance of reinforced soil structures

Performance Based Seismic Design of Geosynthetic-Reinforced Walls

Target performance = F (Magnitude of actions, Importance of structure)

Actions		Importance	
		High	Normal
		H > 8m	H ≤ 8m
Permanent	L1: Frequently (Statistics base)	Performance Level 1 To keep the normal operation	Performance Level 2 To recover quickly
			
Seismic	L2: Accidental (Scenario based)	Performance Level 2 To recover quickly	Performance Level 3 To recover using some time
			

Technical standard on road earthwork structure (Japan, 2015)

Outline

1. Introduction
2. Sustainability of reinforced soil structures
3. Soil reinforcement conceptual mechanism
4. Reinforced soil walls and slopes
5. Veneer reinforcement
6. Basal reinforcement
7. Seismic resistance of reinforced soil structures
- 8. Summary**

1. Geosynthetics for soil reinforcement can be used for the following applications:
 - Reinforced soil walls
 - Reinforced soil slopes
 - Veneer reinforcement
 - Basal reinforcement
2. Reliable design methods and construction procedures are available for each application
3. Reinforced soil structures provide higher sustainability and lower carbon footprint than traditional structures
4. Reinforced soil structures have shown to be stable, flexible and resilient, easy to build and construction time saving
5. Reinforced soil structures afford high seismic resistance both in ultimate and serviceability limit states

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Thanks for your attention



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