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1 Experimental studies of high-confinement mode plasma 2 response to non-axisymmetric magnetic perturbations in 3 ASDEX Upgrade

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16 **Abstract.** The interaction of externally applied small non-axisymmetric magnetic perturba-
17 tions (MP) with tokamak high-confinement mode (H-mode) plasmas is reviewed and illus-
18 trated by recent experiments in ASDEX Upgrade. The plasma response to the vacuum MP
19 field is amplified by stable ideal kink modes with low toroidal mode number n driven by the
20 H-mode edge pressure gradient (and associated bootstrap current) which is experimentally
21 evidenced by an observable shift of the poloidal mode number m away from field alignment
22 ($m = qn$, with q being the safety factor) at the response maximum. A torque scan experiment
23 demonstrates the importance of the perpendicular electron flow for shielding of the resonant
24 magnetic perturbation, as expected from a two-fluid MHD picture. Two significant effects of
25 MP occur in H-mode plasmas at low pedestal collisionality, $v_{\text{ped}}^* \leq 0.4$: (a) a reduction of the
26 global plasma density by up to 50% and (b) a reduction of the energy loss associated with edge
27 localised modes (ELMs) by a factor of up to 10. A comprehensive database of ELM mitigation
28 pulses at low v^* in ASDEX Upgrade shows that the degree of ELM mitigation correlates with
29 the reduction of pedestal pressure which in turn is limited and defined by the onset of ELMs,
30 i. e. a modification of the ELM stability limit by the magnetic perturbation.

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32 1. Introduction

33 Deviations from the nominally axisymmetric toroidal magnetic configuration of tokamaks,
 34 both by plasma internal helical modes and by static error fields [1], are a concern because
 35 they can compromise device performance in various ways. Collisionless (“ripple”) particle
 36 losses, especially those of energetic alpha particles in a reactor [2] may concentrate excessive
 37 power density onto small wall areas [3]. Unintended field errors can be of various origin such
 38 as tolerances in the mounting positions of toroidal and poloidal field coils, localised supply
 39 current feeds of magnetic field coils, non-axisymmetric ferromagnets, and (on a low level)
 40 the earth magnetic field. Detrimental effects of field errors can be reduced by compensating
 41 non-axisymmetric fields from suitably designed sets of actively driven correction coils [4],
 42 which have been implemented for a range of contemporary tokamaks [5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10]. If
 43 a magnetic perturbation (MP) is *resonant* with the plasma, i.e. Fourier components with
 44 toroidal mode number n and poloidal mode number m align with the safety factor $q(r)$ such
 45 that $q = m/n$, nested flux surfaces break up and magnetic islands form. The interaction of
 46 island chains with different m/n leads to various degrees of stochasticity, i.e. radial diffusion
 47 of magnetic field lines and a dissolution of local order [11, 12]. Fast radial transport parallel
 48 to the magnetic field [13, 14] leads to a reduction of the pressure gradient and thereby a
 49 reduction of tokamak confinement. The magnetic field topology change by MPs has been
 50 used to produce “ergodic divertor” configurations with significant parallel connection length
 51 between closed flux surfaces and the plasma-facing wall in Tore Supra [15] and TEXTOR-
 52 DED [16] which is advantageous compared to the limiter configuration used otherwise in
 53 these tokamaks.

54 Magnetic perturbations can also be purposely applied to control performance limiting
 55 MHD instabilities [17] and increase the attainable plasma beta (average kinetic pressure,
 56 normalised to central magnetic field pressure). The amplification of the external MP by stable
 57 modes is useful to diagnose the damping rate especially above the no-wall beta-limit where
 58 kinetic resonances can become important [18, 19, 20]. The Resistive Wall Mode (RWM,
 59 [21]) is particularly amenable for feed-back controlled stabilisation because its growth rate
 60 is controlled by the resistivity of the surrounding wall and can be adjusted to be within the
 61 bandwidth of the feedback system. In situations where the RWM imposes the beta limit, a
 62 significant increase of plasma beta has been achieved by RWM control in tokamaks [22, 23].
 63 In reversed-field-pinches (RFP) multiple unstable modes are stabilised simultaneously by
 64 using elaborate feedback systems with a large number of sensors and actuator coils [24, 25]
 65 leading to significant performance improvements and the possibility to retain in a so-called
 66 “quasi single-helicity” mode essentially only one island chain needed to produce the toroidal
 67 field reversal required for the RFP configuration [26]. Recent advances in the field of high-
 68 beta MHD stability limits are presented in a separate paper in this issue [27] and are not further
 69 discussed here.

70 A second main application of non-axisymmetric magnetic perturbations in tokamaks,
 71 and the main subject of this paper, is to control the Edge Localised Mode (ELM) instability
 72 [28, 29, 30]. It is driven by the edge pressure gradient and associated bootstrap current [31] in

73 the edge transport barrier in High-confinement Mode (H-mode) and causes repetitive outbursts
74 of plasma energy and particles. Shortly after the discovery of H-mode [32] the possibility of
75 ELM mitigation by magnetic perturbations was observed [33, 34]. The effect of the MP is
76 to reduce the ELM energy loss from the main plasma, and thereby the peak heat load onto
77 the surrounding wall with the side effect of increasing the repetition frequency of ELMs.
78 ELM mitigation by magnetic perturbations is now a robust observation [35] which has been
79 reproduced and studied in a variety of tokamaks [36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41]. The possibility to
80 eliminate ELM bursts altogether by MPs in favour of quiescent stationary H-mode plasmas
81 has been discovered in experiments in DIII-D [42, 43] and has later been reproduced in
82 KSTAR [44] and very recently in ASDEX Upgrade (see below). As long as predictions of
83 ELM losses are uncertain, suppression of ELMs may be the safest option to meet ITER's
84 challenging limitations for transient first wall heat loads [45]. An in-vessel coil set has been
85 designed for ITER that mimics the ones in DIII-D, KSTAR and ASDEX Upgrade but offers
86 more control over the toroidal and poloidal mode spectrum [46].

87 In parallel with the experimental progress, the understanding of the plasma response
88 to the external magnetic perturbation has evolved in the recent years. A large body of
89 work has been performed to study experimentally the modifications introduced by magnetic
90 perturbations to limiter plasmas [47] and poloidal divertors [48]. Ignoring non-axisymmetric
91 response currents in the plasma the total magnetic field can be described in the so-called
92 "vacuum approximation" by a superposition of the fields of the axisymmetric unperturbed
93 force equilibrium and the vacuum field produced by the perturbation coils. The vacuum
94 approximation works well if plasma response currents are weak, e.g. in the cold scrape-
95 off-layer [48]. However, in response to the external perturbation field, the plasma often
96 produces field-aligned non-axisymmetric response currents, for example thermo-electrical
97 currents [49] or currents induced by plasma flows across the magnetic field [50], which
98 are usually directed such that the associated field is opposite to the vacuum field inside the
99 flow region and therefore the resonant MP is shielded from the plasma core. Because of
100 strong flows and low resistivity this shielding effect is substantial in H-mode plasmas and will
101 normally lead to suppression of islands and restoration of intact flux surfaces already within
102 the narrow edge gradient region [51]. From two-fluid MHD [52, 50, 53, 54] the perpendicular
103 electron flow rather than the fluid (mass) velocity is expected to control field shielding, which
104 is demonstrated in a seminal experiment in TEXTOR that finds a minimum threshold for
105 field penetration if the difference of electron perpendicular flow and magnetic perturbation
106 rotation speed is minimised [55]. The electron perpendicular flow is always very strong (in
107 electron drift direction) in the H-mode edge transport barrier because of the strong negative
108 (inward-directed) radial electrical field and the strong electron diamagnetic flow [50], hence
109 the gradient region is in practice always shielding resonant field components very well. In
110 poloidal divertor geometry the safety factor diverges towards the separatrix and there are
111 typically many closely spaced resonant surfaces near the plasma edge. Despite the large
112 global shear the local shear near the outer midplane is usually small in the gradient region of
113 typical H-mode pulses. Hence for MP coils mounted close to the plasma at the outer midplane
114 the field-alignment condition is usually fulfilled for all (or no) resonant surfaces in the gradient

115 region simultaneously, which allows to select experimentally whether to couple to shielded
116 (resonant) or unshielded (non-resonant) modes [56].

117 The magnetic perturbation can also be amplified, both by ideal and resistive types of
118 plasma response [57]. Resistive response can originate from any process that drives tearing-
119 unstable plasma current profiles [34] or the reduction of bootstrap current in the interior
120 of already existing magnetic islands (“neoclassical tearing”). These processes are typically
121 non-linear which is experimentally observed as threshold behaviour for the onset of field
122 amplification, often dubbed “field penetration” [58]. The presence of a strong edge pressure
123 gradient in H-mode gives rise to MP amplification by an ideal kink response [59, 60, 53, 61]
124 in analogy to the beta-driven resonant field amplification in the core but by coupling to
125 stable eigenmodes that are radially localised to the gradient region and its near vicinity. An
126 amplification of plasma displacement above that expected in the vacuum approximation is
127 indeed observed in DIII-D [62, 63], ASDEX Upgrade [64], JET, NSTX and MAST [65].
128 Poloidal mode coupling due to toroidicity and plasma elongation causes the most strongly
129 responding modes (least stable eigenmodes) to contain resonant components [61, 66]. As
130 a consequence, excitation of unshielded non-resonant components by the MP field will
131 cause deformations that locally produce resonant fields which can possibly produce topology
132 changes even inside the shielding layer in the edge gradient region. Recent simulations
133 of an ELM mitigation scenario in ASDEX Upgrade with the non-linear, resistive MHD
134 code JOREK [67] suggest that resistive effects due to this mode coupling are particularly
135 pronounced near the X-point region as has been found before in linear MARS-F calculations
136 [60]. The consequences of these findings for ELM mitigation and ELM suppression, however,
137 are still a matter of ongoing research.

138 In this paper, we focus on ELM mitigation and ELM suppression at low edge
139 collisionality and examine in which way the plasma response in these H-mode regimes
140 appears in experimental practice. We mainly consider experiments in ASDEX Upgrade,
141 which has been retrofitted with a versatile set of in-vessel saddle coils [68] with independent
142 power supplies [69] that allow for a flexible perturbation field structure. ELM mitigation at
143 low [41] and high pedestal collisionality [38, 56] as well as ELM suppression scenarios are
144 accessible and studied intensively in ASDEX Upgrade. This paper is organised as follows.
145 We first review the effects of magnetic perturbations on H-mode plasmas and concentrate
146 on regimes at low pedestal collisionality. We then discuss an experimental scan of magnetic
147 perturbation field structure which demonstrates the importance of the edge kink response for
148 ELM mitigation. The plasma flow is varied by a dedicated torque scan experiment which
149 demonstrates the field shielding effect in H-mode, complementing the TEXTOR result which
150 was obtained in L-mode. We conclude with a discussion of our results and implications for
151 further investigation.

152 2. ELM mitigation and ELM suppression

153 We first inspect the phenomenology of ELM mitigation and ELM suppression by magnetic
 154 perturbations using examples from recent experiments in ASDEX Upgrade. Both regimes
 155 are obtained reproducibly in very similar H-mode plasmas. The plasma cross section of two
 156 example pulses is shown in figure 1 along with sightlines of some essential diagnostics and
 157 the position of upper and lower in-vessel coil rows, dubbed “Bu” and “BI”, respectively. Pulse
 158 31128 (ELM mitigation) is a low triangularity configuration (upper and lower triangularity:
 159 $\delta_u = 0.05$, $\delta_l = 0.43$, elongation: $\kappa = 1.63$), whereas pulse 33353 (ELM suppression) has
 160 increased upper triangularity ($\delta_u = 0.23$) while the other shaping parameters are similar
 161 ($\delta_l = 0.42$, $\kappa = 1.65$). Stronger plasma shaping is found essential to achieve ELM suppression,
 162 as well the precise value of the edge safety factor. For pulse 33353, $q_{95} = 3.65$, below a critical
 163 value of $q_{95} = 3.7$, above which only ELM mitigation is obtained, but not full suppression
 164 of ELMs. For the ELM mitigation pulse 31128, $q_{95} = 3.8$. Because of the different
 165 plasma shape, keeping q_{95} similar implies different plasma current in both discharges, namely
 166 $I_p = 0.885$ MA and $I_p = 0.8$ MA, respectively.

167 Figure 2 shows time traces for both shots during the H-mode plasma current flat top. Both
 168 discharges use very similar heating, 6 MW neutral beam power and 2.5 – 3 MW centrally
 169 deposited ECRH power (frequency 140 GHz) in third harmonic X-mode. The toroidal field
 170 $B_t = -1.8$ T is selected such that the second harmonic is also absorbed within the plasma

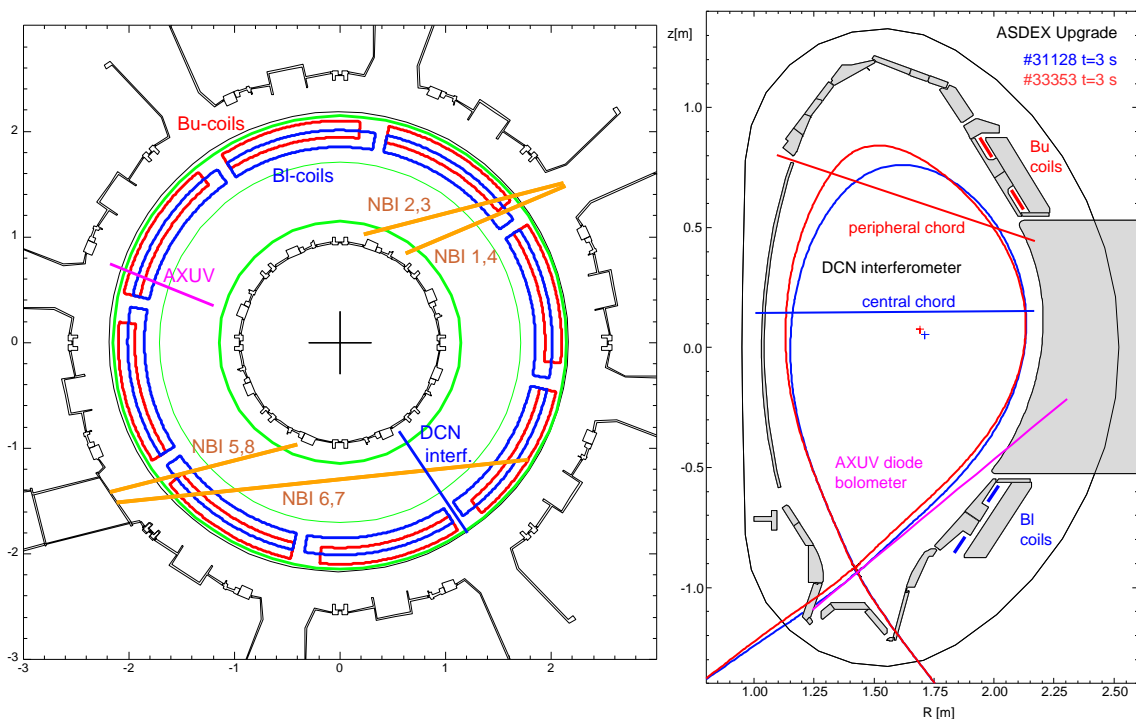


Figure 1. Left: Top view, Right: Poloidal cross section of ASDEX Upgrade with NBI geometry, location of upper (“Bu”) and lower (“BI”) magnetic perturbation coils, locations of selected diagnostics and plasma shapes for discharges 31128 and 33353

171 at a resonance on the high field side to effectively act as a beam dump for any radiation
 172 unabsorbed at the X3 resonance [70]. ASDEX Upgrade is equipped with a fully tungsten
 173 clad wall, and central ECRH is essential to maintain peaked electron temperature profiles
 174 to ensure outward transport of tungsten impurities in the plasma core to avoid accumulation
 175 and a radiative collapse [71] especially for these low density H-mode discharges. Soon after
 176 stable ELMy H-mode is set up, the gas puff is switched off (pulse 31128) or reduced to a very
 177 low level of 10^{21} D/s (pulse 33353) and the magnetic perturbation is switched on. In both
 178 cases an identical MP configuration is used with toroidal mode number $n = 2$, maximum DC
 179 MP coil current $I_{MP} = 1.3$ kA and a relative phase offset of the upper coil ring relative to the
 180 lower ring of $\Delta\Phi = +90^\circ$. This results in essentially identical mode number spectra for the
 181 two shots. A short reference phase without ELM mitigation in the case of low shaping at low
 182 density exists in shot 31128 for $t = 2.0 - 2.5$ s, before the MP is switched on. With stronger
 183 shaping such as in shot 33353, the ELM frequency (without MP) becomes low so that the
 184 tungsten influx in between ELMs is sufficient to reach accumulation and a radiative collapse,
 185 which takes the form of a very big ELM and back-transition to L-mode. For this reason, the
 186 MP is applied well before the gas feed is reduced, thereby keeping up a sufficiently large ELM
 187 frequency to avoid radiative collapse. ELM mitigation becomes effective in pulse 31128 after
 188 $t = 2.6$ s (Figure 2 a) and takes the form of a gradual reduction of ELM losses, peak divertor

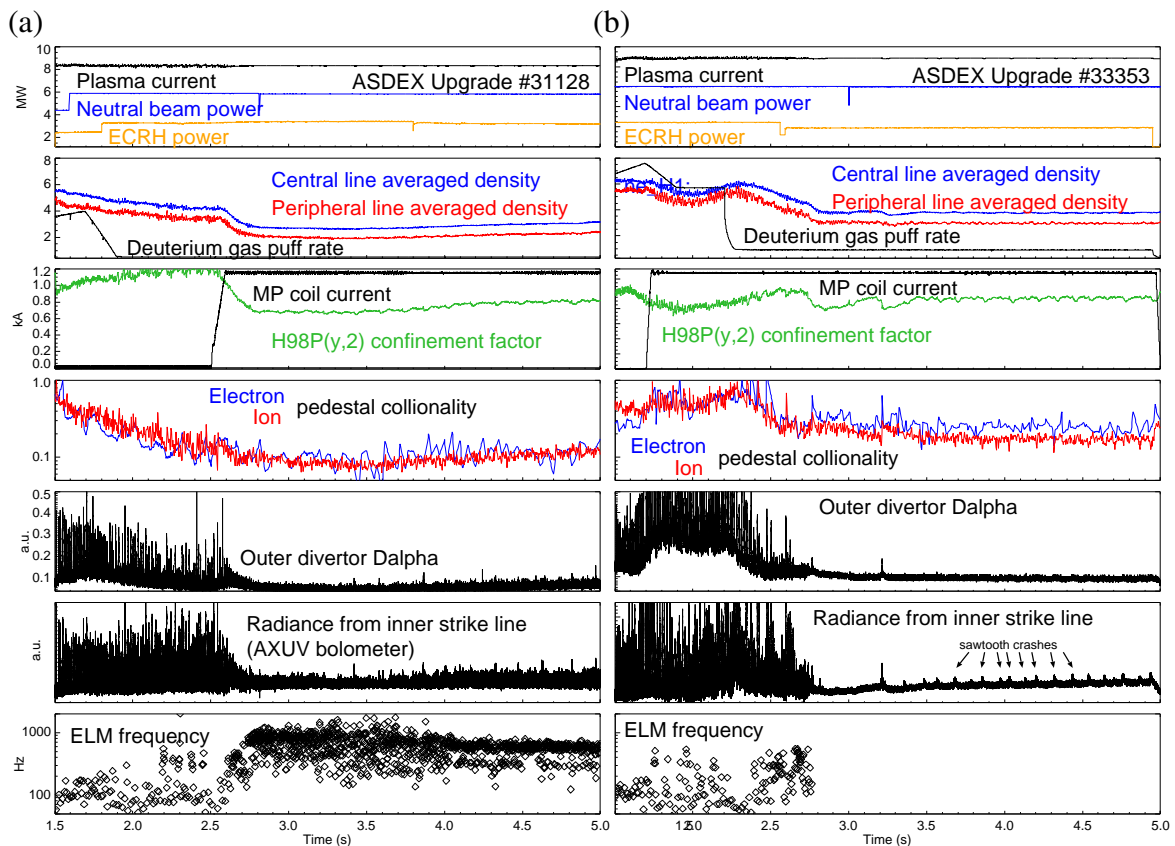


Figure 2. Time traces of H-mode discharges in ASDEX Upgrade showing (a) ELM mitigation and (b) ELM suppression by magnetic perturbations.

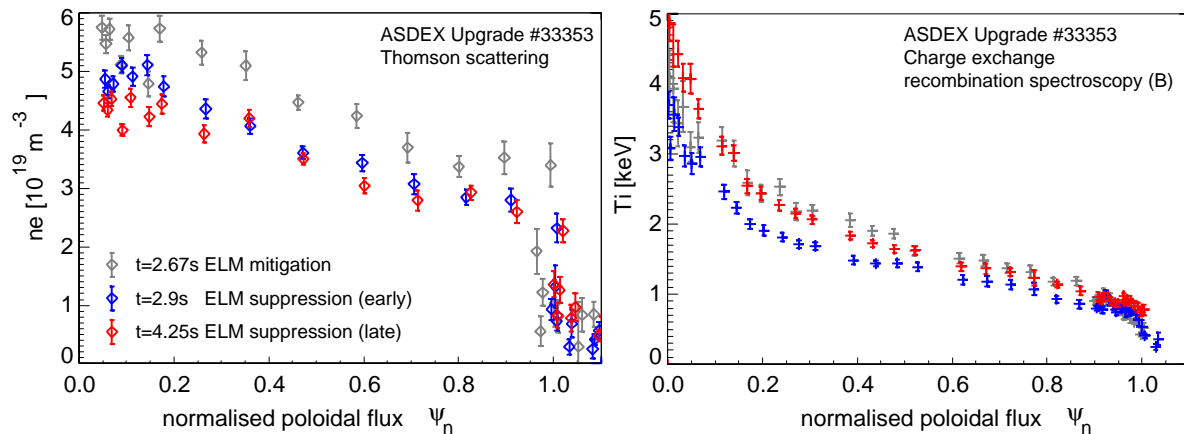


Figure 3. Profiles of electron density (left) and ion temperature (right) before and during ELM suppression in shot 33353

189 recycling as measured by the D_α intensity and a gradual increase of ELM frequency. The
 190 radiation originating from the inner divertor strike zone measured by AXUV bolometer diodes
 191 is particularly sensitive even to detect small ELMs, and in this phase small ELM crashes are
 192 detected. In pulse 33353 (Figure 2 b), ELM suppression is reached at $t = 2.75$ s, after a rapid
 193 transition from a preceding phase with various degrees of ELM mitigation. The decisive
 194 trigger appears to be the reduction of the plasma density and the pedestal electron and ion
 195 collisionalities (to below $v_{\text{ped},e,i}^* \sim 0.25$, using the definition in [72]) after the gas puff is
 196 reduced. Except for one event at $t = 3.2$ s, there is no indication of ELM crashes in midplane
 197 and divertor signals any longer. After $t = 3.2$ s small repetitive peaks in the divertor D_α are
 198 found, which are correlated with the arrival of sawtooth crash pressure pulses at the plasma
 199 edge. The absence of short-time broadband bursts in the magnetic signals suggests that no
 200 ELM is triggered by these sawtooth crashes. In both cases, a strong density reduction occurs
 201 as the MP is switched on, most strongly seen in the case of shot 31128 without gas puff at that
 202 time. Consequently the confinement, measured here by the ITER IPB- $H_{98P_{y,2}}$ confinement
 203 factor [73], drops in the ELM mitigated or ELM suppressed phases compared to phases with
 204 MP off, however in the ELM suppressed case it recovers from an initial $H_{98P_{y,2}} = 0.8$ after the
 205 transition to ELM suppression back to $H_{98P_{y,2}} = 0.95$, comparable with the confinement level
 206 during ELM mitigation ($t = 2.5 - 2.75$ s). Figure 3 shows electron density and ion temperature
 207 profiles of this discharge shortly before the transition to ELM suppression ($t = 2.67$ s), shortly
 208 afterwards ($t = 2.9$ s) and at a later time where $H_{98P_{y,2}}$ has recovered. While the density drop
 209 associated with ELM suppression persists, the ion temperature recovers approximately to its
 210 original value before the transition. The electron temperature (not shown) shows much weaker
 211 variation.

212 ELM suppression is a new finding in ASDEX Upgrade and to date only a few discharges
 213 have been made, leaving open the question of how far this scenario can potentially be
 214 optimised. A much larger database exists for ELM mitigation in ASDEX Upgrade at varying
 215 pedestal collisionality, with plasma shapes similar to that of shot 31128 (low triangularity)

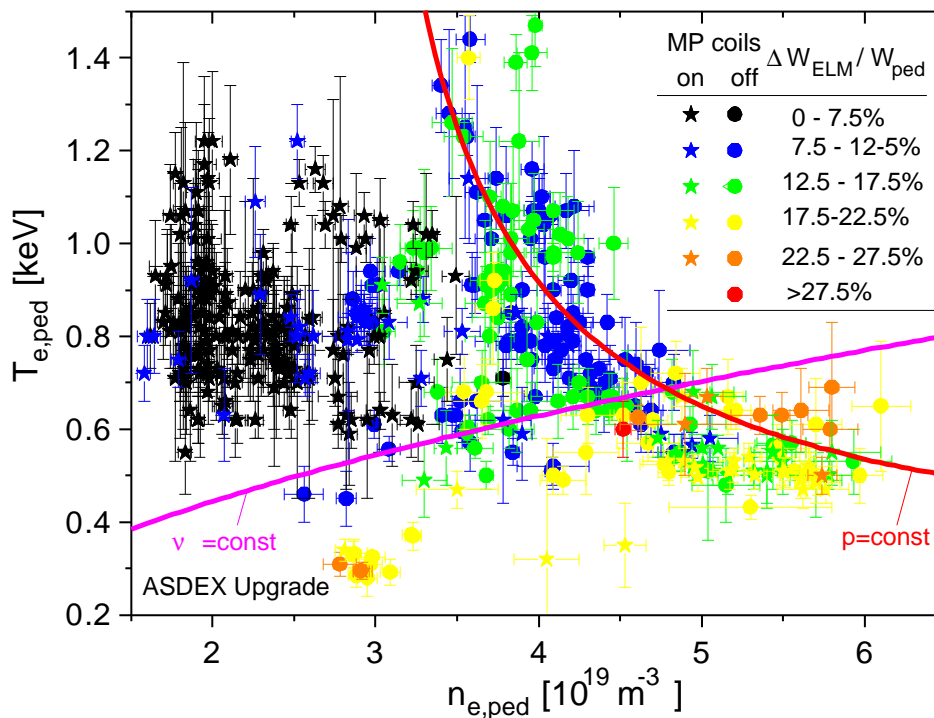


Figure 4. ELM losses $\Delta W_{\text{ELM}}/W_{\text{ped}}$ with MP on (asterisks) and off (circles) in pedestal $T_e - n_e$ space

216 and at varying safety factor. This database is used in a recent study to examine the pedestal
 217 parameter dependence of the degree of ELM mitigation [74]. Figure 4 shows the ELM energy
 218 loss ΔW_{ELM} , normalised to the pedestal stored energy $W_{\text{ped}} = 3/2 p_{\text{ped}} V$ (V : plasma volume),
 219 for a large set of time intervals in pedestal $T_e - n_e$ space, a representation similar to that
 220 introduced in [75]. Values of T_e and n_e are taken at the intersection of linear fits to profiles in
 221 the gradient region and the pedestal top region. Curves of constant pressure and collisionality
 222 are added to the figure. The largest ELMs are found at highest pedestal pressure, in-line with
 223 the ideal pressure limit imposed by type I ELMs on the pedestal. Phases with strong ELM
 224 mitigation by MP populate a region at low density and reduced pedestal pressure below a
 225 collisionality threshold which, without MP, is typically the locus of ELM free H-mode in
 226 ASDEX Upgrade [75]. High temperature forms of small ELMs populating this area in edge
 227 operational space have been observed before in DIII-D [76], JET [77] and MAST [78] albeit
 228 without explicit application of MPs.

229 It might be suspected that the ELM size is a mere function of pedestal pressure and
 230 collisionality and that the ELM mitigation effect of the magnetic perturbation comes in solely
 231 by the reduction of density. This can be studied by separating the time scales of the MP
 232 field variation and the density pump-out. In ASDEX Upgrade, the MP coils are mounted
 233 on a massive copper conductor (“passive stabilisation loop”, PSL) which is used to reduce
 234 the vertical growth rate, but which also partially shields fast MP transients produced by the
 235 MP coils. Figure 5 shows time traces of an experiment in which the MP is switched off
 236 quickly (within 10 ms, at $t = 2.5$ s) using an MP coil current trajectory which is designed to

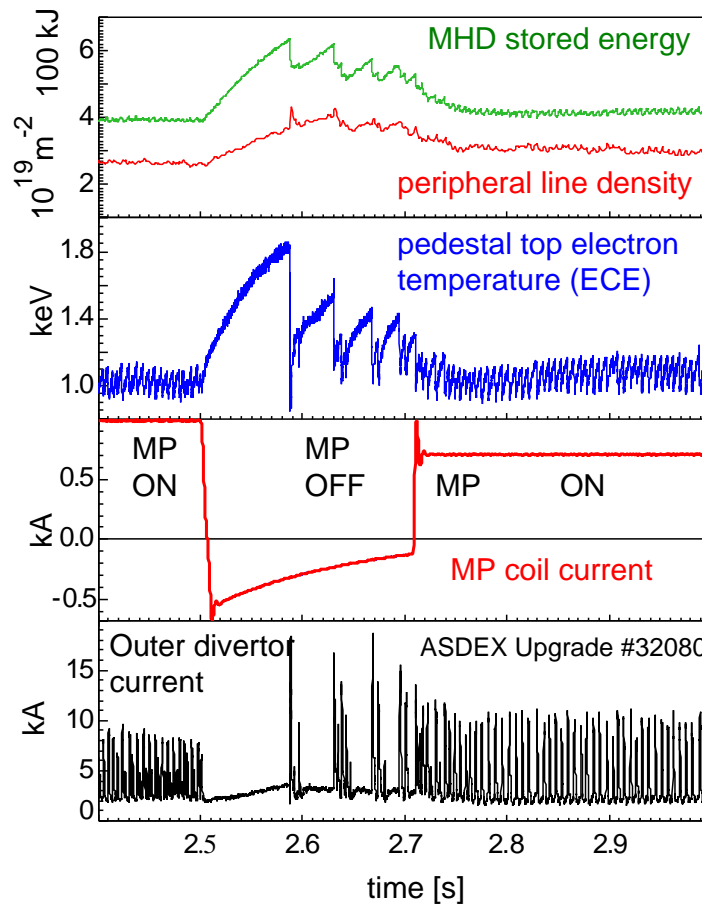


Figure 5. Time traces of an experiment to separate density recovery and MP turn-off time scales, showing that maintaining continuous mitigated ELM activity requires the presence of the MP.

237 compensate the field at the plasma surface produced by the image currents in the PSL. The
 238 mitigated ELMs observed in the phase before disappear immediately and an ELM-free phase
 239 is encountered during which the pedestal density and temperature increase until, at much
 240 larger pedestal pressure than with MP on, a sequence of large ELMs occurs. ELM mitigation
 241 is recovered at $t = 2.7$ s when the MP coils are switched on again. However, immediately after
 242 switching off the MP at $t = 2.5$ s, there are no ELMs at all despite the pedestal density and
 243 pressure being still near their values in the preceding phase with MP on and mitigated ELM
 244 activity. This finding demonstrates that with very similar pedestal parameters, the existence
 245 of ELMs depends explicitly on the presence of the MP. In other words, non-axisymmetry of
 246 the magnetic field is necessary to render the small ELMs unstable while the edge pressure
 247 is below that of type I ELMs. It is noteworthy that MP is not the only way to destabilise
 248 ELMs in this parameter regime, as for example type-IV ELMs in MAST have been obtained
 249 by modifications of the fuelling arrangement [78].

250 3. Effect of magnetic perturbation spectrum

251 The reaction of ELMs and plasma density to magnetic perturbations depends critically on the
 252 structure of the applied perturbation field. Fig. 6 shows time traces of two discharges similar
 253 to pulse 31128 (Fig. 2 a) except for the differential phase $\Delta\Phi$ between the $n = 2$ current
 254 pattern in upper and lower coil rings which is continuously varied. The plasma response is
 255 measured by the degree of ELM mitigation (reduction of divertor power, ELM frequency
 256 increase) and by the magnitude of density pump-out with no-MP reference values indicated
 257 by the dashed lines. The plasma response is maximised in the range of $\Delta\Phi = 90^\circ - 150^\circ$,
 258 well offset from $\Delta\Phi = 30^\circ$ which corresponds to alignment of the MP with the plasma edge
 259 magnetic field. It is interesting to note that at $\Delta\Phi \approx -90^\circ$, classical ELM free phases are
 260 triggered at $t = 2.85$ s (30682) and $t = 3.0$ s (30826), which lead to an accumulation of
 261 density and increase of impurity radiation. Once triggered, the intrinsic transport dynamics
 262 of the ELM-free phase overlays the effect of the $\Delta\Phi$ ramp, and if $\Delta\Phi$ is held constant (as in
 263 30682) it is self-terminating by big ELM activity and a collapse of the edge pedestal.

264 It is instructive to compare the vacuum and ideal plasma responses for the extreme
 265 cases, $\Delta\Phi = +90^\circ$ (optimum response and ELM mitigation) and $\Delta\Phi = -90^\circ$ (ELM-free
 266 trigger). The plasma response is approximated here by the three-dimensional ideal MHD
 267 equilibrium for the low triangularity case (shots 31128, 30682 and 30826) which is calculated
 268 with the NEMEC code as described in Refs. [79, 80], starting from a kinetically constrained
 269 axisymmetric free-boundary equilibrium and the vacuum perturbation field for each $\Delta\Phi$. In
 270 Figure 7 the normal field amplitude of $n = 2$ modes is plotted as a function of poloidal mode
 271 number m and normalised poloidal flux ψ_n as radial coordinate for the cases of strongest

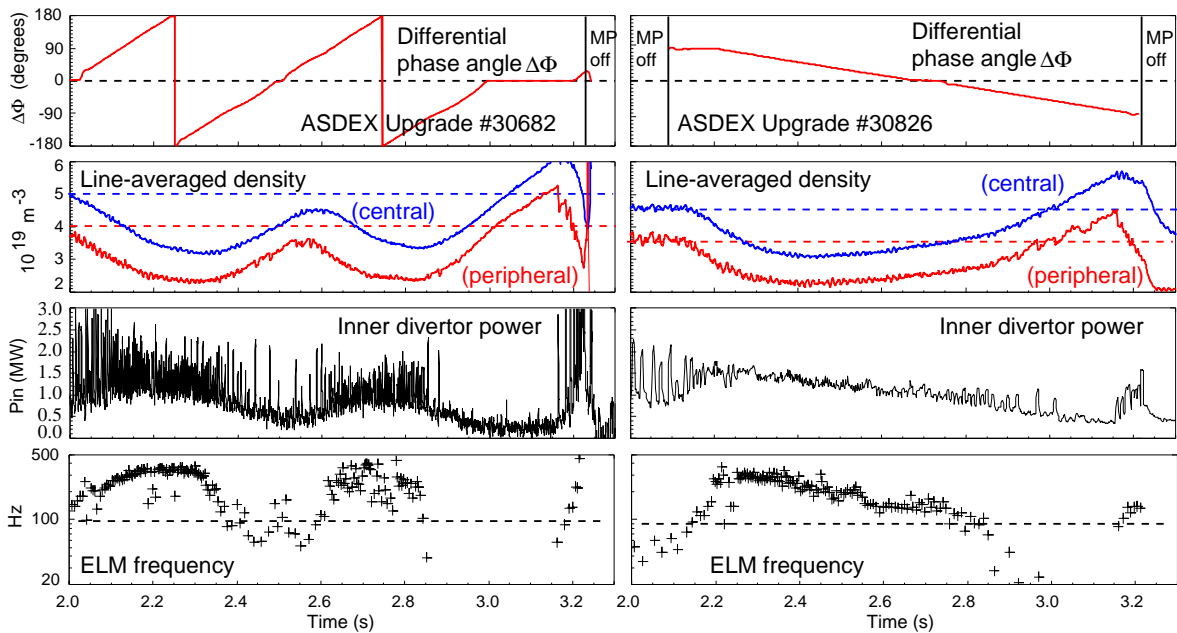


Figure 6. Time traces of shot 30682 (left) and shot 30826 (right) with $n = 2$ magnetic perturbation and continuously varied differential phase $\Delta\Phi$ between upper and lower coil rings.

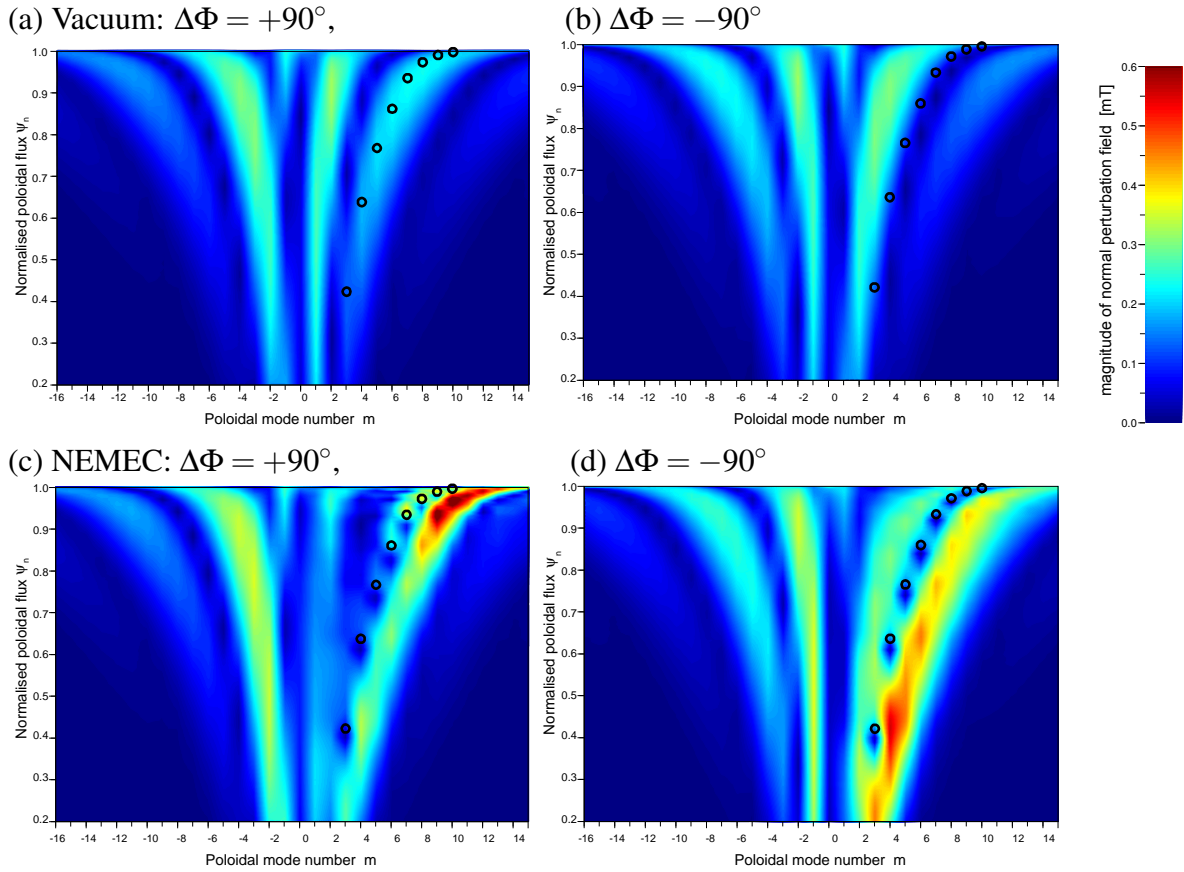


Figure 7. Poloidal spectrum of the normal perturbation field ($n = 2$) in vacuum (a, b) and as calculated by NEMEC (c, d) for $\Delta\Phi = +90^\circ$ (maximum response; a, c) and $\Delta\Phi = -90^\circ$ (ELM-free trigger; b, d) as a function of normalised poloidal flux. The black circles correspond to rational surfaces.

272 ELM mitigation, $\Delta\Phi = +90^\circ$ (a, b), and onset of ELM-free phases, $\Delta\Phi = -90^\circ$ (c, d). In
 273 all figures, the resonant $m = q(\psi_n) \cdot n$ on rational surfaces (half-integer q) is over-plotted as
 274 black circles. The vacuum field is moderately resonant with the plasma for $\Delta\Phi = +90^\circ$ and
 275 mostly non-resonant for $\Delta\Phi = -90^\circ$ (Figure 7 a, b). In the NEMEC solution (Figure 7 c,
 276 d), the resonant field components are strongly reduced and essentially suppressed just inside
 277 resonant surfaces. This is an effect of implicit sheet currents in the NEMEC solution which
 278 ensure intact nested flux surface topology in the 3D equilibrium. The plasma response leads
 279 to strong enhancement of non-resonant components at $m = q \cdot n + 2$ which are localised near
 280 the edge gradient region at $\psi_n > 0.9$ for $\Delta\Phi = +90^\circ$ and are global with a peak in the plasma
 281 core for $\Delta\Phi = -90^\circ$. These components are driven by the edge pressure gradient and the
 282 core pressure gradient, respectively. A poloidal cross section of the field produced by helical
 283 plasma currents in response to the MP (i.e. vacuum field subtracted) is shown in Fig. 8.
 284 The strongly edge-localised MP amplification ($\Delta\Phi = +90^\circ$, Fig. 8 a) is also concentrated
 285 at the plasma top and near the X-point while the core MP response ($\Delta\Phi = -90^\circ$, Fig. 8
 286 b) is strongest around the low field side mid-plane. Both radial and poloidal localisation
 287 of the amplifying plasma response for the various values of $\Delta\Phi$ agree fully with the results

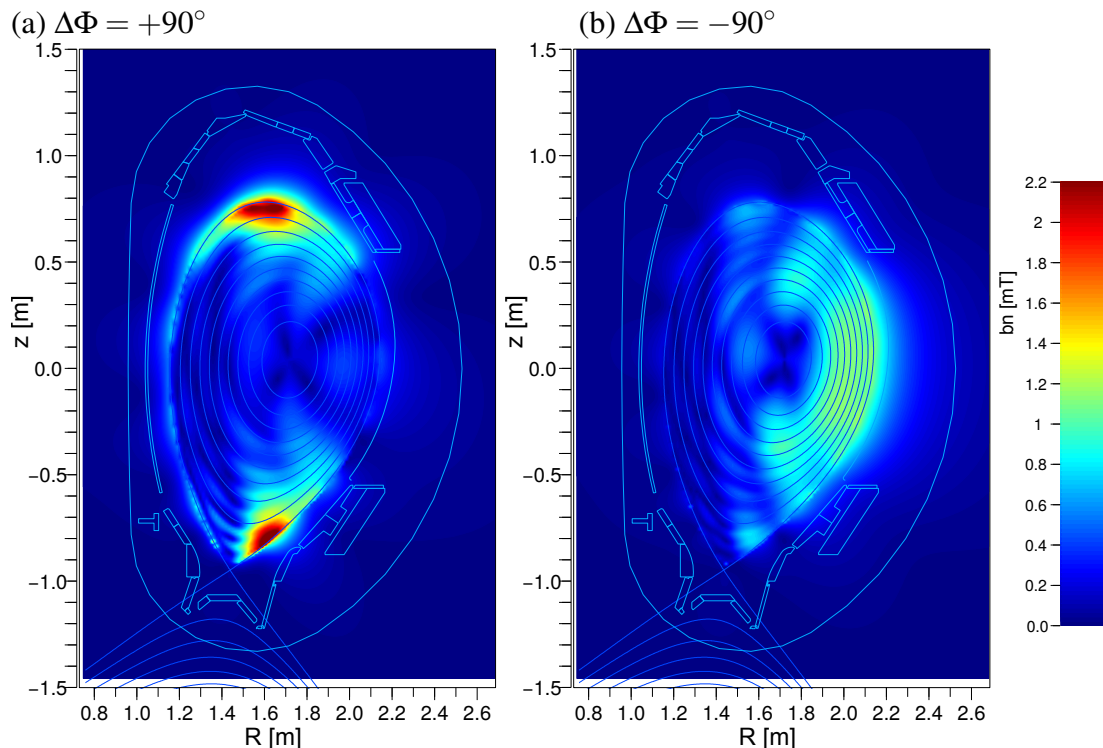


Figure 8. Poloidal distribution of the $n = 2$ plasma response (magnitude of perturbation field normal to unperturbed equilibrium minus non-axisymmetric vacuum field) for (a) $\Delta\Phi = +90^\circ$ and (b) $\Delta\Phi = -90^\circ$

288 obtained from resistive MHD simulations with MARS-F [81, 61] and JOREK [67] and its
 289 reproduction with the NEMEC 3D equilibrium code demonstrates the ideal MHD nature of
 290 the field amplification phenomenon.

291 4. Torque, plasma rotation and field shielding

292 Torque input and the effect of plasma rotation on field shielding is studied in plasmas with
 293 the same low triangularity shape as shown in Fig. 1 but with elevated safety factor $q_{95} = 5.2$
 294 ($B_t = -2.5$ T for central X2 ECRH heating). Figure 9 shows time traces of a discharge
 295 where a magnetic perturbation with $n = 1$ is applied with different values of $\Delta\Phi = 45^\circ$ and
 296 $\Delta\Phi = 225^\circ$ in successive phases and reference time intervals without MP in between. During
 297 a time interval of 200 ms at the end of each MP phase, the plasma is moved towards the MP
 298 coils (outer gap reduced) in order to enhance the strength of the MP. One can see that for
 299 $\Delta\Phi = 45^\circ$ during this time the ELM frequency increases and the plasma density decreases
 300 significantly while no such response is observed for $\Delta\Phi = 225^\circ$.

301 Fig. 10 shows poloidal mode number spectra for the $n = 1$ component of the vacuum
 302 perturbation field for both values of $\Delta\Phi$ at the $q = 2$ and $q = 5$ surface. For $\Delta\Phi = 45^\circ$, the
 303 field-aligned resonant component (marked in red) is minimised for the $q = 2$ surface (Fig. 10
 304 a), but not simultaneously for $q = 5$ (Fig. 10 b). Resonant components on surfaces in between
 305 have intermediate amplitudes (not shown). This variation is a consequence of the specific

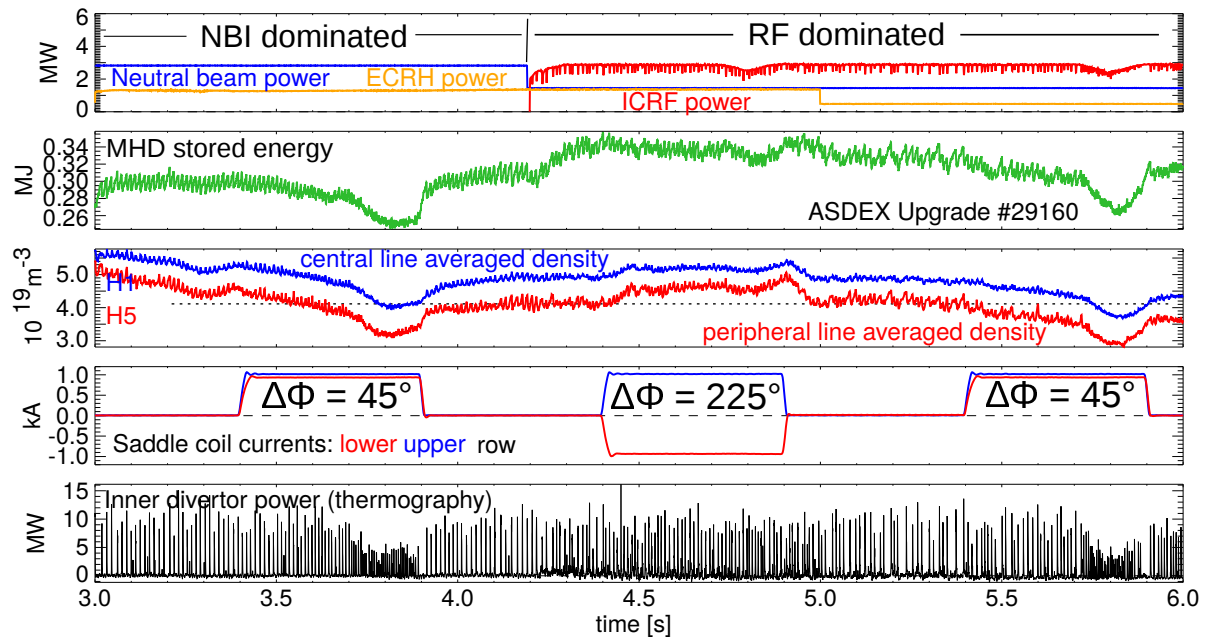


Figure 9. Time traces of shot 29160 with $n = 1$ magnetic perturbations varying the differential phase $\Delta\Phi = 45^\circ, 225^\circ$ and using two different heating schemes (see text).

306 plasma shape chosen which has finite local shear at the outboard side in between the upper
 307 and lower MP coils. Fig. 10 b) also shows that at $q = 5$ ($\Delta\Phi = 45^\circ$) the vacuum spectrum has
 308 maxima at $m = 2$ (far from resonance) and $m = 7 = q \cdot n + 2$ (marked in blue). We do not have
 309 a plasma response calculation for this case, but in analogy to the discussion in the previous
 310 section we conjecture that it is this later component that couples to the edge kink mode and
 311 causes the density reduction and ELM mitigation observed in this case. With $\Delta\Phi = 225^\circ$
 312 (differential phase shifted by 180°) the $m = 7$ component is minimised (Fig. 10 d).

313 We can study now the momentum source introduced by the MP for four different cases:
 314 maximum ($\Delta\phi = 45^\circ$) and minimum ($\Delta\phi = 225^\circ$) edge-kink response ($m = qn + 2$), as well
 315 as maximum ($\Delta\phi = 315^\circ$) and minimum ($\Delta\phi = 135^\circ$) vacuum resonant response ($m = qn$),
 316 This is done by square wave modulation of the MP (Fig. 11). A heating scheme with only
 317 $P_{\text{NBI}} = 1.4$ MW and supplementary ICRF heating is chosen to keep the average plasma flow
 318 in a range where a strong rotation response of the plasma rotation to the MP is obtained (see
 319 below). The time traces in Fig. 11 a) for the case of $\Delta\phi = 45^\circ$ show that both core and
 320 edge plasma rotation are clearly affected by the MP modulation, but also density and ELM
 321 frequency, albeit to a lower degree. Radial amplitude and phase profiles of the modulated
 322 toroidal impurity (boron) rotation measured by charge exchange recombination spectroscopy
 323 (CXRS) in response to the MP modulation in the time interval of $t = 4 - 6.5$ s are shown in
 324 Fig. 11 b). The phase is relative to the phase of the MP coil current, and increasing values
 325 correspond to increasing delay. Only the fundamental frequency at $f = 2$ Hz is considered.
 326 One should note that the MP field at the plasma surface at this frequency lags the coil current
 327 modulation by 20° (Bu-coils) or 14° (BI-coils) temporal phase [64]. The radial profiles show
 328 that in both cases a minimum of the phase is obtained at the plasma edge. For shot 29344,

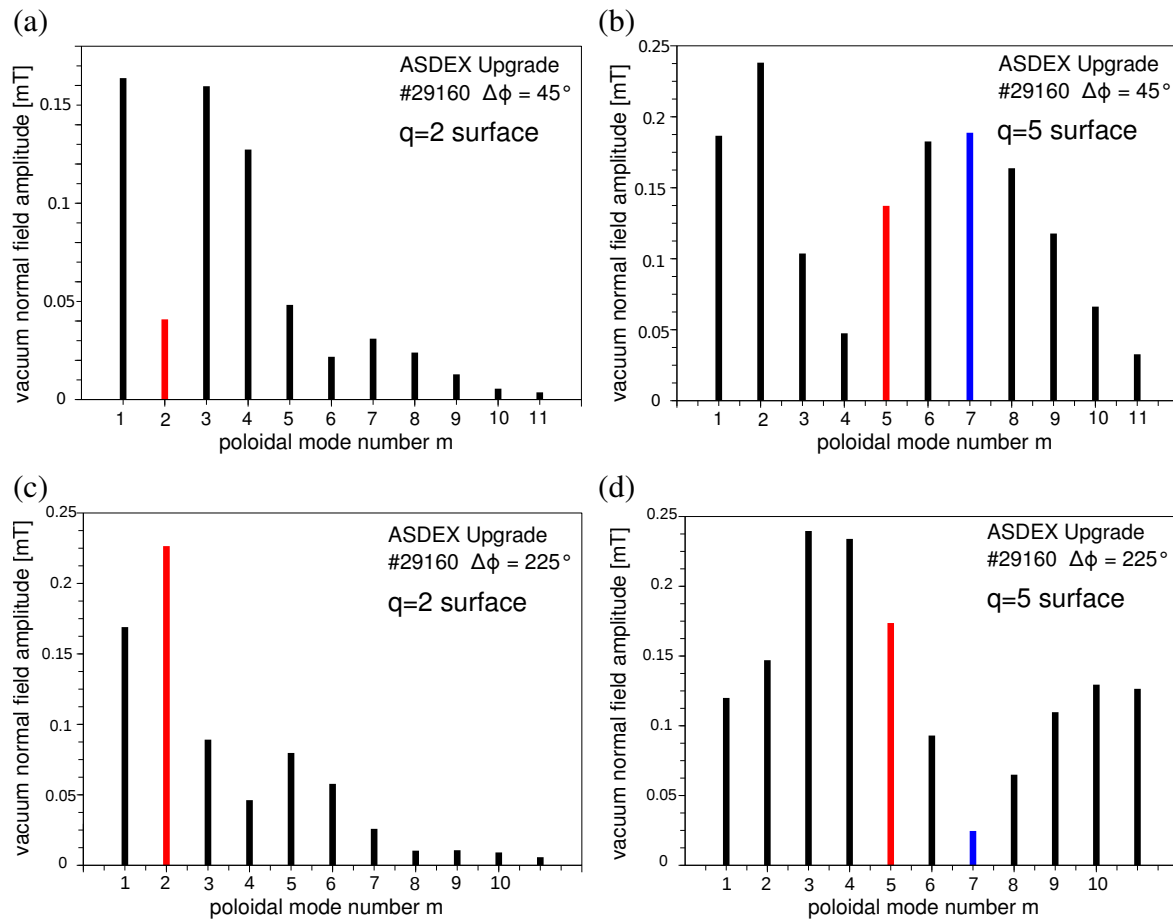


Figure 10. Poloidal mode number spectra for $\Delta\Phi = 45^\circ$ (a,b) and $\Delta\Phi = 225^\circ$ (c,d) for the $q = 2$ (a,c) and $q = 5$ (b,d) surfaces.

329 at $\Delta\Phi = 225^\circ$, the rotation increases slightly with MP on (spin-up), and consequently the
 330 phase assumes positive values. The amplitude profile is flat, just above the noise level,
 331 and the phase is monotonously increasing from edge to core, suggesting that there is one
 332 dominant momentum source at the plasma edge. In all other cases, the rotation decreases
 333 with MP on (rotation braking) corresponding to a phase of -180 degrees and above. The
 334 phase minimum is again at the plasma edge, however for shot 29342 ($\Delta\Phi = 45^\circ$) the phase
 335 flattens inside a normal poloidal flux radius $\rho_p = 0.6$. The amplitude is strongly peaked
 336 near the sawtooth inversion radius at $\rho_p = 0.33$ (obtained from electron cyclotron resonance
 337 measurements), suggesting that additional torque originates from the interaction with the
 338 $m = 1, n = 1$ sawtooth precursor oscillation. Rapid modulation of the sawtooth precursor
 339 frequency is observed in ECE measurements. For the cases with maximum ($\Delta\Phi = 315^\circ$)
 340 and minimum ($\Delta\Phi = 135^\circ$) vacuum resonant component, rotation braking from the plasma
 341 edge is observed like in the case of $\Delta\Phi = 45^\circ$ but with smaller amplitudes. The absence of
 342 rotation braking (and in fact a spin-up of rotation) only for $\Delta\Phi = 225^\circ$ suggests that not the
 343 field-aligned resonant component $m = q \cdot n$ governs rotation braking, but the shifted spectral
 344 component $m = q \cdot n + 2$ which can excite the edge kink response.

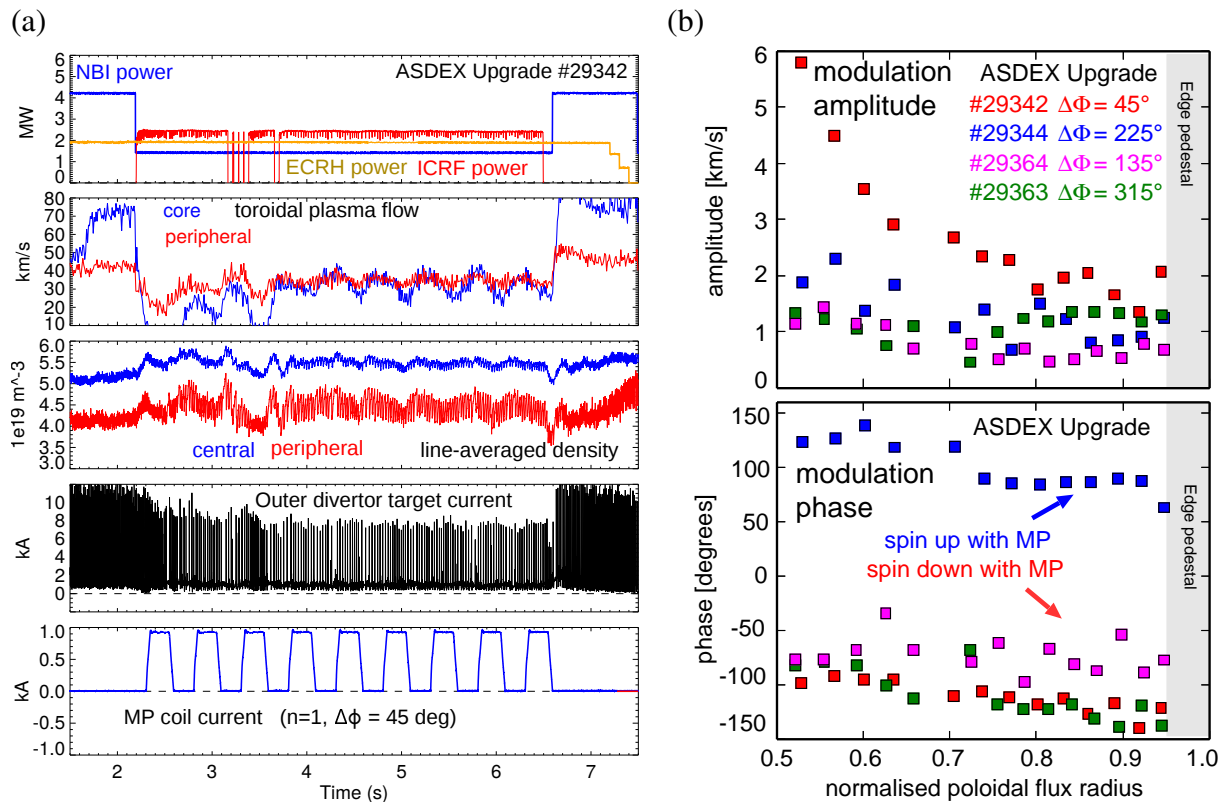


Figure 11. Modulation experiment to find torque deposition radius (a) time traces, (b) amplitude and phase of toroidal boron impurity rotation velocity modulation with $f = 2$ Hz.

345 The importance of shielding flows is demonstrated in a further experiment, again with
 346 $\Delta\phi = 45^\circ$ for maximum plasma response. In shot 29160 (Figure 9) and a series of similar
 347 shots the heating mix between NBI, ICRF and ECRH power is varied to vary the plasma
 348 co-current rotation velocity while maintaining about constant heating power level of at least
 349 4 MW well above the H-mode threshold which is below 2 MW for these shots. The toroidal
 350 rotation velocity of boron impurities, measured again by CXRS, is shown in Fig. 12 (a)
 351 for various levels of torque input and MP off or on with $\Delta\phi = 45^\circ$. Rotation braking is
 352 strongest for the case of one neutral beam, where the impurity flow slows down to about
 353 20 km/s in co-current direction in the entire plasma. The rotation velocity change is smaller
 354 at higher torque, and it is reversed, i.e. causes the impurities to spin up into co-current
 355 direction from essentially zero rotation at zero NBI torque (only NBI blips are used for the
 356 CXRS measurement). The radial electrical field E_r is obtained from the impurity flow and
 357 the impurity diamagnetic velocity using the impurity ion radial force balance. The electron
 358 perpendicular flow $v_{e,\perp}$ is then inferred from E_r and the electron diamagnetic velocity using
 359 the electron radial force balance. The poloidal impurity flow is not measured over the full
 360 profile in this experiment, but substituted by the neoclassical poloidal velocity calculated with
 361 NEOART [82, 83]. Previous studies [84, 85] have shown that the poloidal impurity flow in
 362 H-mode is essentially neoclassic. It contributes to the radial electrical field mainly in the edge
 363 gradient region and is small in the region of flat gradients at the pedestal top. Fig. 12 (b)

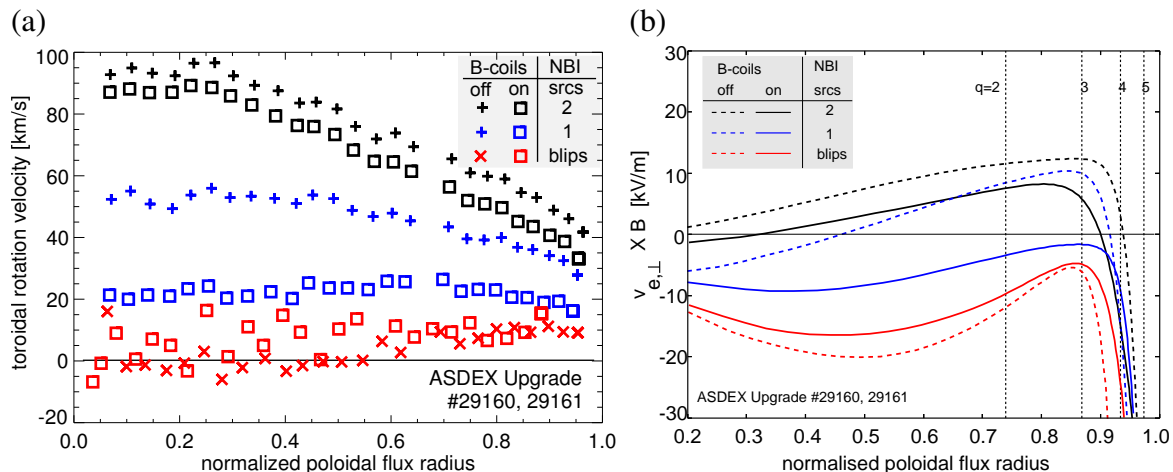


Figure 12. (a) Boron impurity rotation (CXRS at B^{5+}), (b) $v_{e,\perp} \times B$ for $\Delta\phi = 45^\circ$ with and without magnetic perturbations for varying input torque (numbers of NBI sources).

364 shows $v_{e,\perp} \times B$ for the cases of Fig. 12 (a). For the smallest absolute value of $v_{e,\perp} \times B$ near
 365 the $q = 2$ and $q = 3$ surfaces with MP on (blue solid curve), the rotation braking (dashed vs.
 366 solid curves) is strongest. Comparing impurity and electron flows, we can conclude that it
 367 is the minimum electron perpendicular flow that leads to weakest field shielding and largest
 368 plasma response, in agreement with the expected two-fluid nature of the shielding problem.

369 5. Summary and discussion

370 5.1. Plasma response in high-confinement mode

371 We have seen that torque at the plasma edge, near the top of the H-mode edge pedestal, is
 372 produced by magnetic perturbations that contain a kink-peeling resonant component and that
 373 the torque is towards a direction in which the perpendicular electron flow is reduced. The
 374 origin of this torque can be either of resonant or non-resonant nature, and both resonant and
 375 non-resonant spectral components are contained in the applied vacuum field and are produced
 376 by the plasma response. Non-resonant torque is expected from neoclassical toroidal viscosity
 377 (NTV, [86]), however it is predicted to be small in many cases in ASDEX Upgrade compared
 378 to neutral beam and resonant torque [87]. NTV torque is caused by non-ambipolarity of
 379 radial fluxes and is directed towards restoring ambipolarity. For the ELM mitigation scenario
 380 discussed here (shot 31128) the NTV intrinsic rotation is calculated to be in electron direction
 381 (inward-directed radial electrical field), because the radial flux of the ions is larger than that
 382 of the electrons [86]. In our torque scan experiment, however, the electron perpendicular flow
 383 is driven towards zero, independently of whether the initial flow is in ion or electron drift
 384 direction on the pedestal top. Resonant torque can be produced by the mode coupling which
 385 is intrinsic to kink-peeling amplification of the external perturbation field [61]. The vacuum
 386 resonant field is well shielded from rational surfaces on the pedestal top because of the very
 387 strong electron flow in the edge gradient region [67]. The maximum resonant response can

388 therefore not be produced by direct coupling to resonant components but only through the
 389 kink-peeling amplification mechanism. This appears in our modulation experiment as a shift
 390 of poloidal mode number for optimum edge torque by $\Delta m = 2$ with respect to field alignment.
 391 If this component is not present in the applied spectrum (but the field-aligned component is)
 392 then no rotation braking is observed. Instead, the plasma rotation spins up weakly in ion drift
 393 direction. At this stage we can speculate that the spin-up effect might be caused by interaction
 394 of the field-aligned MP with the shielding currents in the gradient region where many rational
 395 surfaces are closely spaced. The electron perpendicular flow there is strong and in electron
 396 direction, while the ion and impurity flows are small and in ion direction so that braking torque
 397 on the electrons will cause the ions to spin up.

398 *5.2. ELM mitigation at low pedestal collisionality*

399 We now discuss the implications of our study of plasma response for the ELM mitigation
 400 scenario. So far, ELM mitigation has been obtained with a large variation of heating power
 401 mix and therefore torque input. In many pulses, $v_{e,\perp}$ crosses zero near the pedestal top but
 402 there are also cases in which $v_{e,\perp}$ is negative everywhere and has no zero crossing point.
 403 Also there seems to be no limitations in edge safety factor q_{95} . Most of the existing data in
 404 ASDEX Upgrade is concentrated around $q_{95} = 3.7$ and $q_{95} = 5.2$ but a few q_{95} ramps have
 405 been made and no indication of limited access windows is seen, unlike ELM suppression in
 406 DIII-D [43] and ASDEX Upgrade (see below). Also, ELM mitigation is obtained to date with
 407 all toroidal mode numbers probed, $n = 1, 2, 4$, which give rise to differently spaced resonant
 408 surfaces. In MAST, the increase of ELM frequency [41] has the same dependence on X-
 409 point displacement for different toroidal mode numbers applied [88]. These observations
 410 suggests that the number and location of resonant surfaces near the pedestal top are not critical
 411 parameters for ELM mitigation. These access criteria are quite different from those to ELM
 412 suppression [43].

413 The mitigating effect on ELMs can still be of resistive nature because of the coupling of
 414 modes as predicted in MARS-F [61] and JOEUK [67] models. A route for ELM mitigation is
 415 suggested [89] based on recent time-dependent resistive JOEUK simulations of the non-linear
 416 ELM growth with [90] and without [91] presence of MPs. Toroidal coupling of most unstable
 417 medium- $n \approx 8$ ELM precursor modes to low- n mode numbers can cause interaction with the
 418 applied $n = 2$ MP causing intermediate $n = 4, 6$ modes to grow simultaneously which leads in
 419 the simulation to small relaxation events before a big ELM is triggered. It may be conjectured
 420 that these phenomena correspond to mitigated ELMs in the experiment. To date it is still
 421 unclear how this model corresponds to experimental observations. Small type-IV ELMs in
 422 MAST have in fact a higher mode number than type-I ELMs [41] and the dominating mode
 423 number remains essentially unchanged if type-I ELMs are mitigated in MAST [72]. As yet
 424 there is no systematic study on ASDEX Upgrade on this question. It may be noted that
 425 toroidal mode coupling is already a feature of ideal MHD and is in fact seen in the NEMEC
 426 equilibria described above, because of the full three-dimensional nature of the solution. A
 427 finite $n = 4$ perturbation amplitude (not present in the vacuum MP spectrum) appears in the

428 plasma response which originates from mixing of the applied $n = 2$ fundamental with the
 429 $n = 6$ aliasing component due to the finite number of eight coils in toroidal direction.

430 5.3. Prospects for reducing the divertor load due to ELMs

431 A main concern is the apparent reduction of pedestal pressure in the ELM mitigated regime
 432 (Ref. [74] and Fig. 4) which is connected to a confinement reduction compared to the case
 433 without MP. Deuterium pellets have been injected [92] to refuel the plasma. While the original
 434 plasma density can be restored, the pedestal pressure remains below that without MP due to a
 435 reduction of pedestal temperature. Also the ELM losses increase somewhat. Stability analysis
 436 for these shots which are of the type of 31128 (low triangularity) shows that the edge is at the
 437 peeling-ballooning limit without MP and well stable with MP on both without and with pellet
 438 injection [92]. Since there are obviously in all cases individual discernible ELM crash events,
 439 one can conjecture that the MP modifies the edge stability limit, which however is below the
 440 ideal peeling-ballooning limit of the unperturbed axisymmetric plasma. One may ask whether
 441 it is the particle loss related to mitigated ELMs that clamps the density to the reduced level
 442 because the ELM frequency increases as the ELM energy loss is reduced. A study of particle
 443 losses due to ELMs [93] using a subset of the data of Fig 4 however shows that the ELM
 444 particle losses decreases with increasing ELM frequency so that the average particle efflux is
 445 essentially independent of the ELM frequency and cannot explain the strong pump-out. One
 446 may note that the pump-out effect occurs as well in ELM-suppressed and low density L-mode
 447 conditions and therefore does not necessarily rely on the presence of ELMs.

448 A recent multi-machine scaling study [94] finds that the ELM divertor heat load ϵ ,
 449 the areal density of energy deposited by each individual ELM, is essentially proportional
 450 to the product of pedestal pressure and the square root of the ELM energy loss, $\epsilon \propto$
 451 $p_{\text{ped}} \times (\Delta W_{\text{ELM}}/W_{\text{plasma}})^{1/2}$. A small subset of the data contains cases with type-I ELM
 452 mitigation by MP in ASDEX Upgrade and this subset has been found in agreement with
 453 the scaling [94]. As one can see from Fig. 4, the normalised ELM energy loss from the
 454 plasma $\Delta W_{\text{ELM}}/W_{\text{ped}}$ (with $W_{\text{ped}} \propto p_{\text{ped}}$) drops with decreasing density, so the absolute energy
 455 loss ΔW_{ELM} drops even faster. If largest and smallest ELM heat losses are compared at
 456 fixed pedestal temperature, say $T_e = 1$ keV, $\Delta W_{\text{ELM}}/W_{\text{ped}}$ is reduced by a factor of ≈ 3 ,
 457 accompanied by a density or pressure reduction by a factor of 2. According to the scaling
 458 of Ref. [94] and assuming $W_{\text{plasma}} \propto W_{\text{ped}}$, the divertor heat load can expected to be reduced
 459 by only a factor $2 \times \sqrt{3} \sim 3.5$ which is smaller than the reduction of ΔW_{ELM} by about a factor
 460 of 6. The scaling of Ref. [94] predicts for unmitigated type-I ELM loads in the ITER Q=10
 461 reference scenario a power load of $0.5 - 1.5$ MJ/m². Extensive impulsive heat load testing
 462 (simulating ELMs) of tungsten monoblocks with realistic numbers of cycles [95] leads to
 463 serious microstructural disintegration of the surface above a load of about 0.2 GW/m². For an
 464 estimated ELM duration of $500 \mu\text{s}$ in ITER [45], this amounts to 0.1 MJ/m², a factor of $5 - 15$
 465 larger than predicted for unmitigated ELMs. It is unclear to date whether the ELM divertor
 466 load can be reduced by this factor by means of magnetic perturbations, and whether this can
 467 be achieved without unacceptable deterioration of the pedestal pressure. Therefore, scenarios

468 entirely without ELMs and associated divertor heat load transients are an attractive alternative
469 worthwhile to study. A stationary H-mode scenario with full suppression of ELMs has now
470 been established in ASDEX Upgrade and will be studied in detail in further experimentation.

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