

The status and future of directional recoil detection

Ciaran O'Hare

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[2102.04596] - a review of directional detection

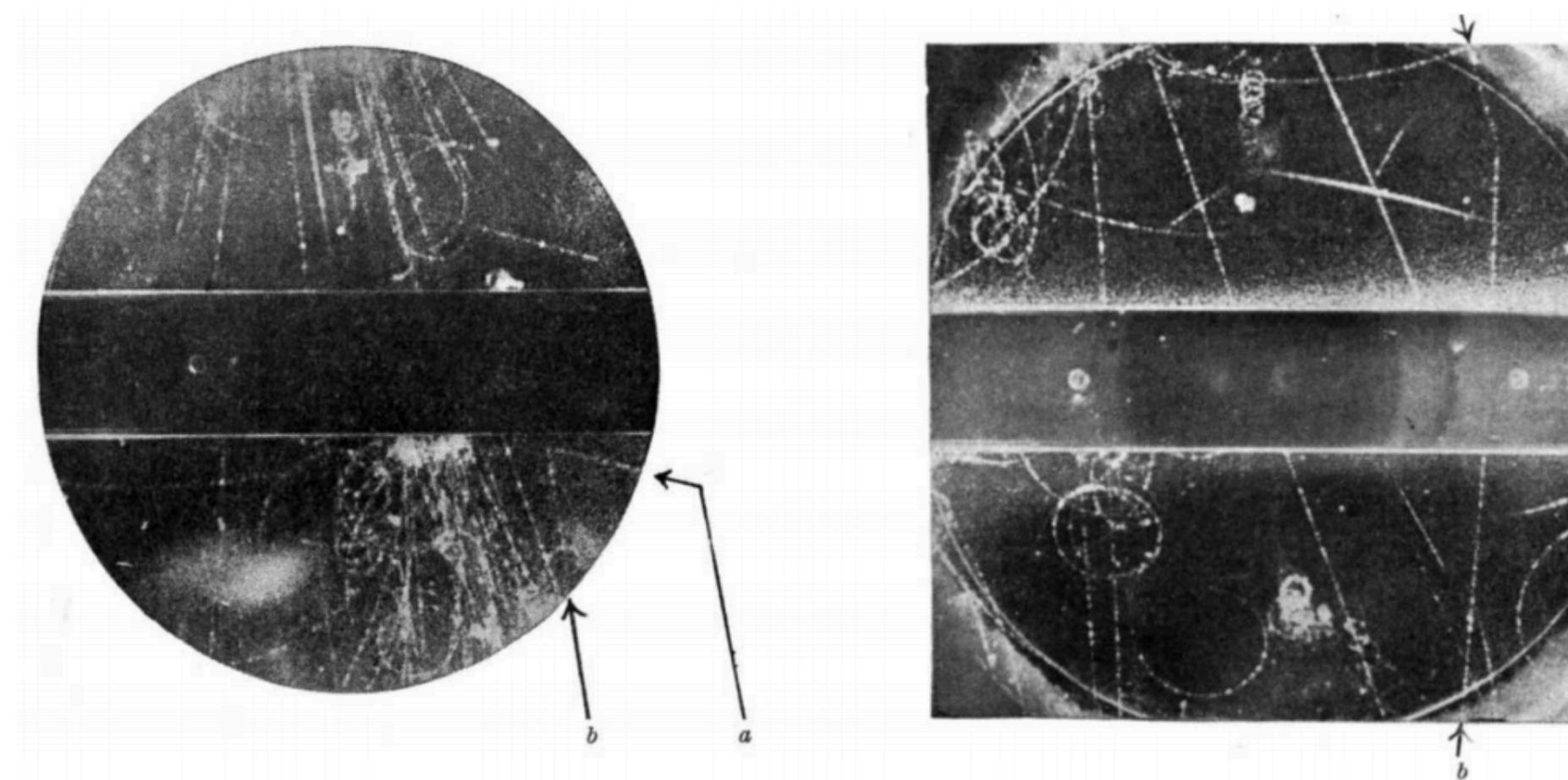
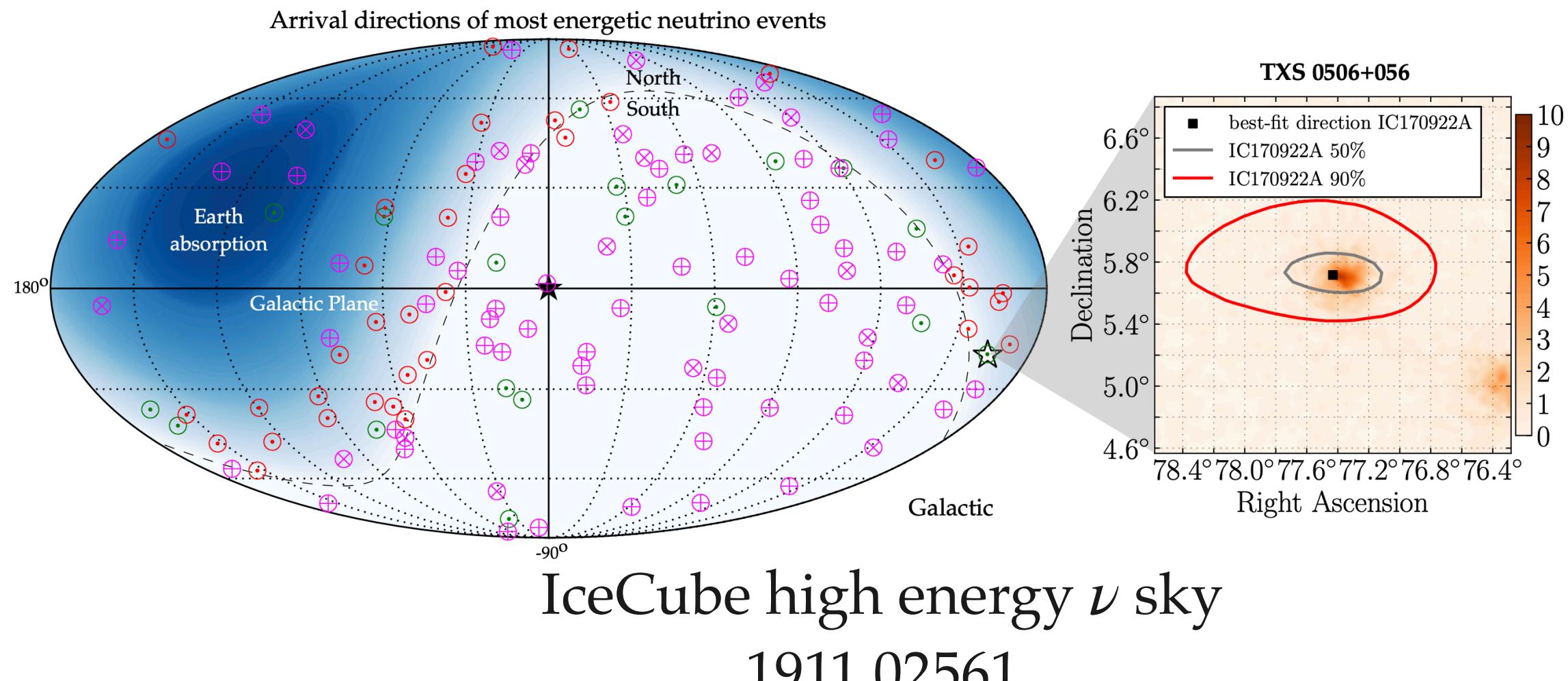
[2002.07499] - directional detection in Xe / Ar

[2008.12587] - directional detection with gas TPCs

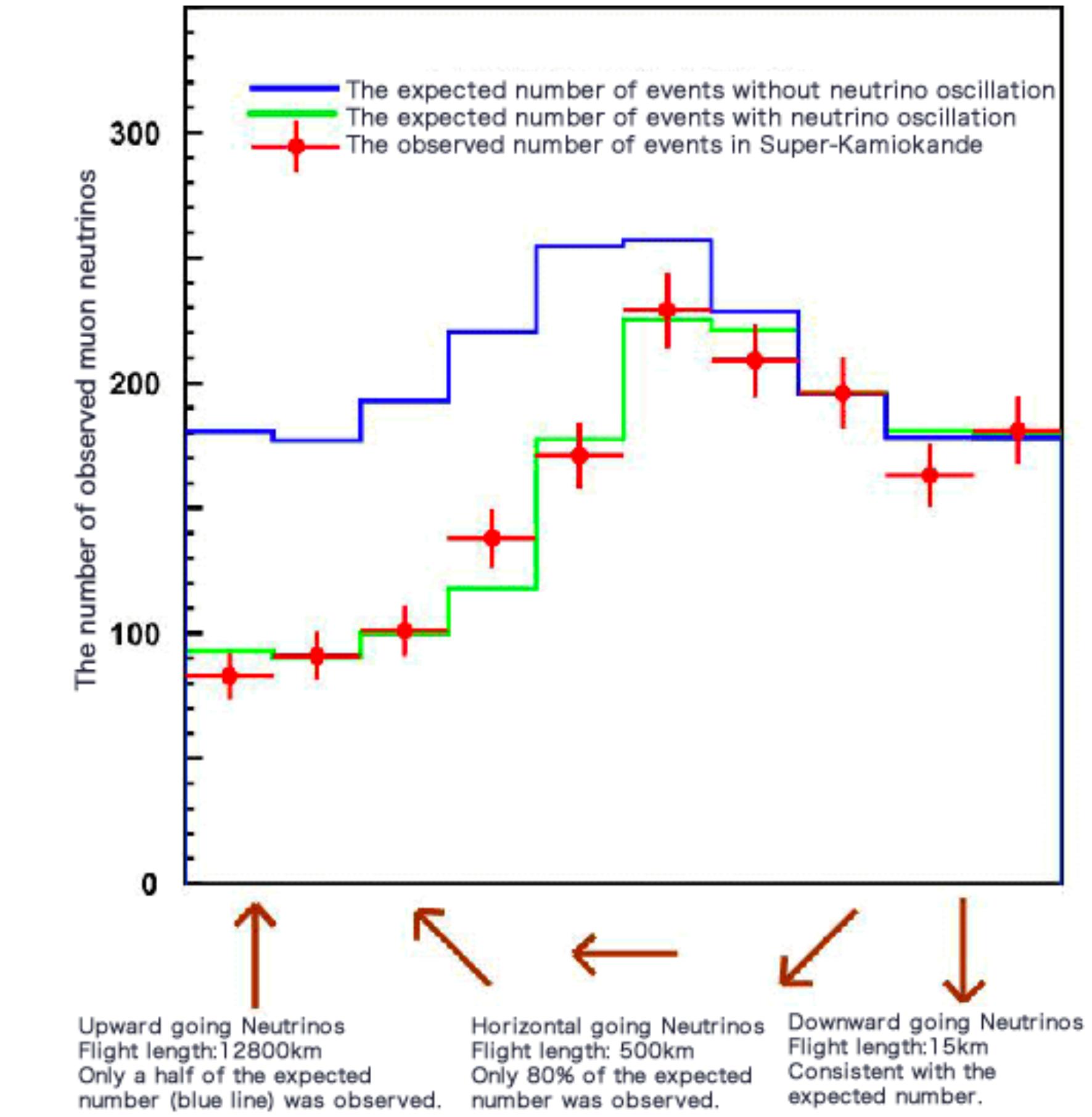
[2105.11949] - directional detection with DNA

Basic message: detecting particle directions is useful for astroparticle physics, but hard to do at low energies

Detecting particle directions is useful

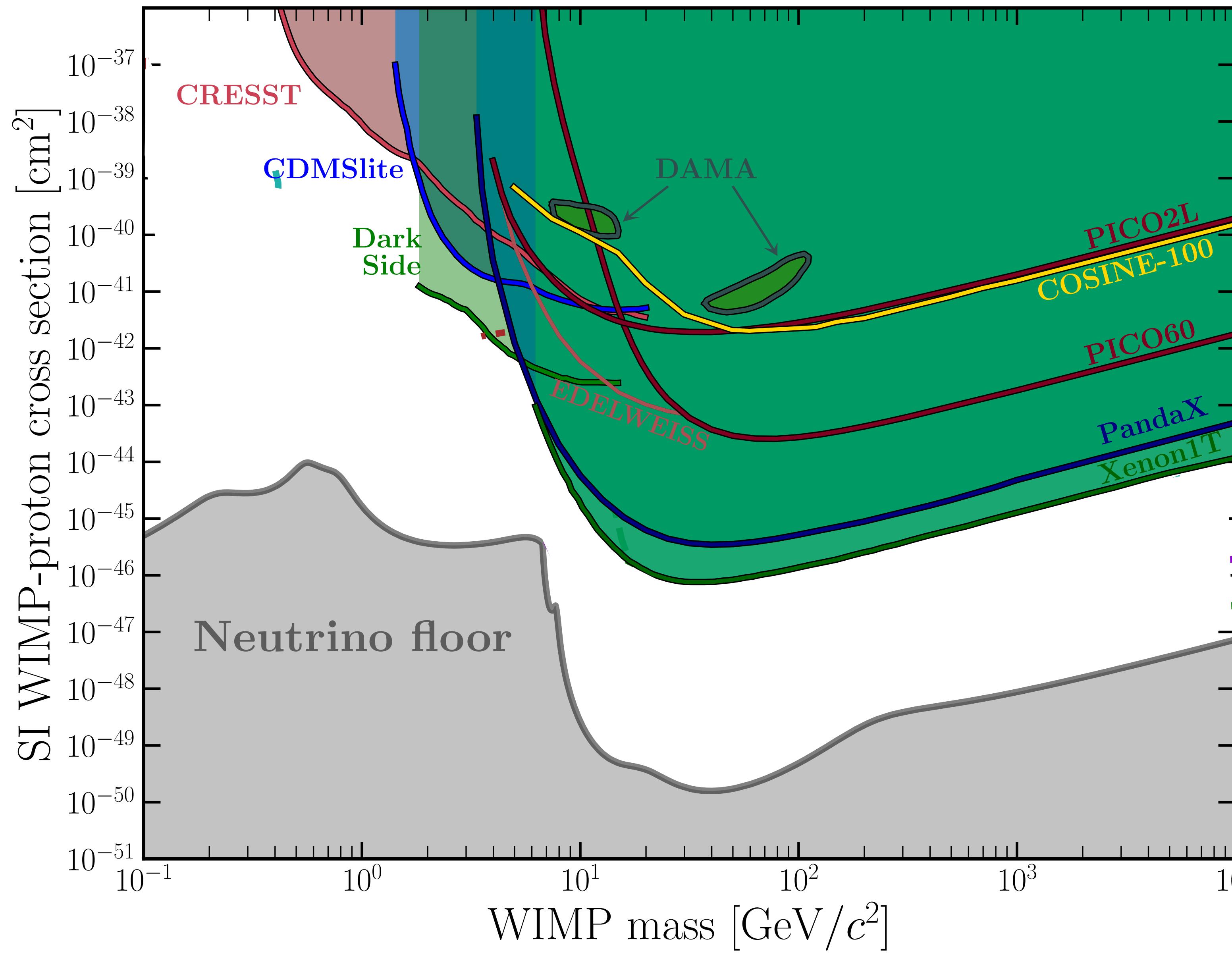


Discovery of Kaon in a cloud chamber
Rochester & Butler (1947)

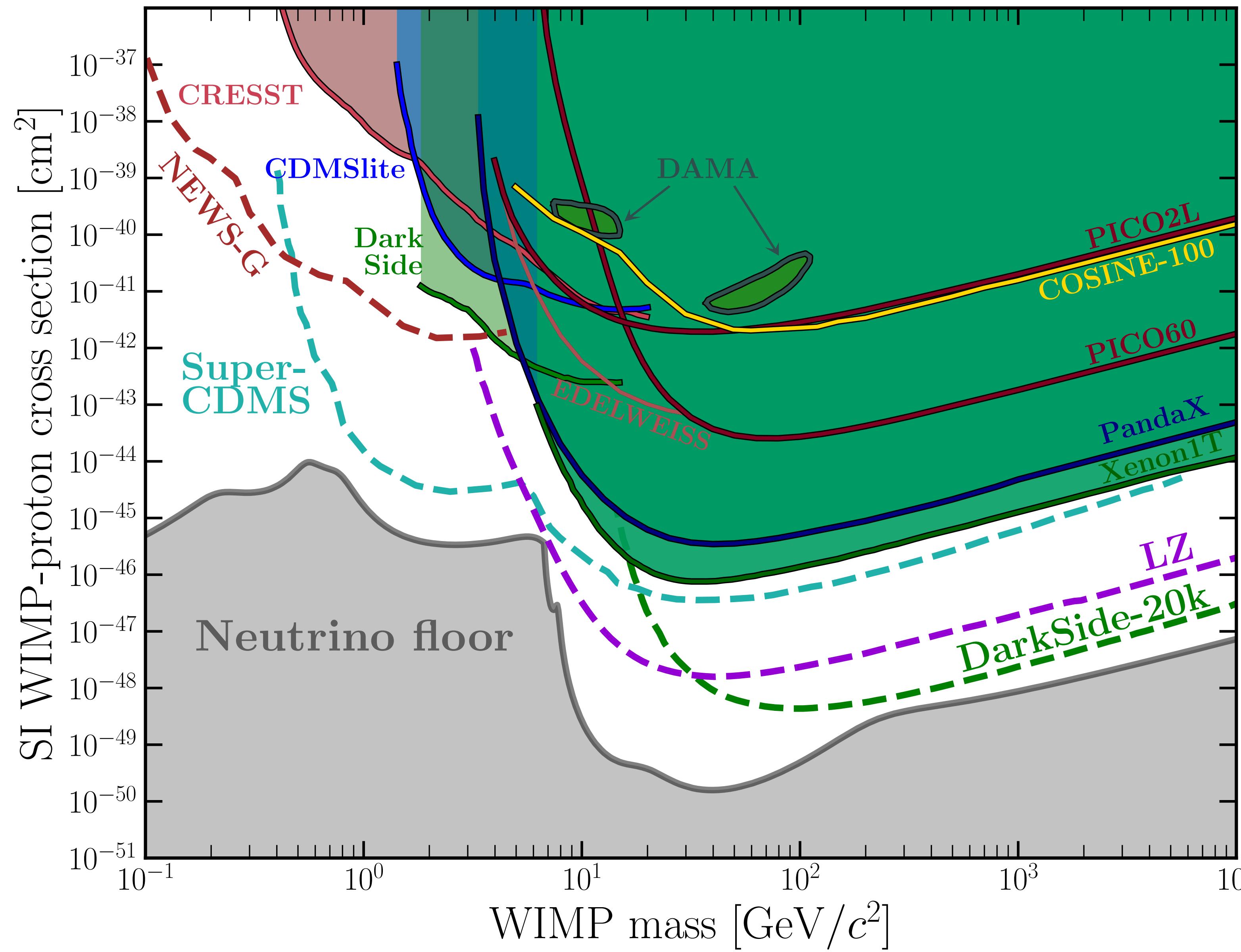


Atmospheric ν_μ
(Super-K)

Outstanding problem of today: search for dark matter

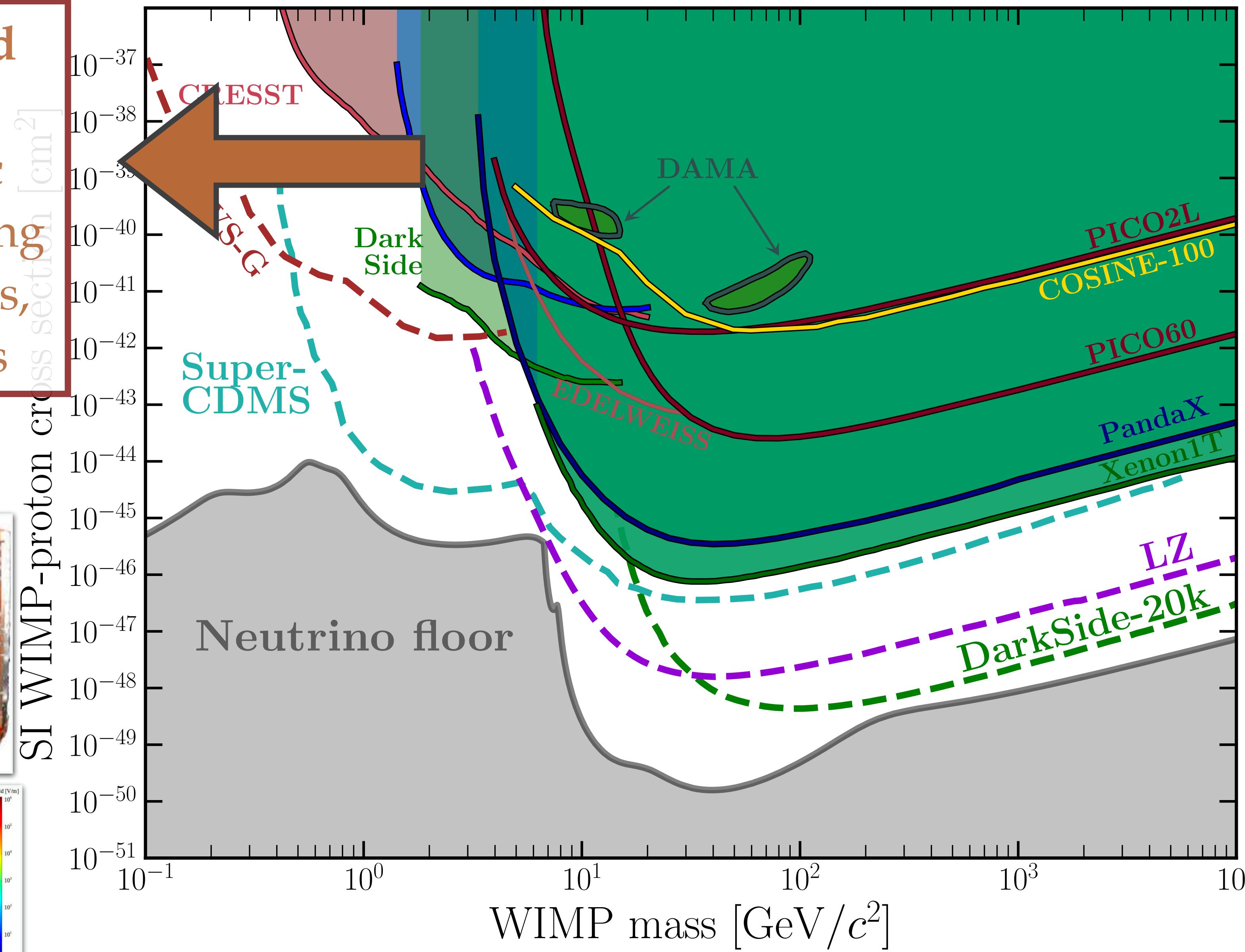
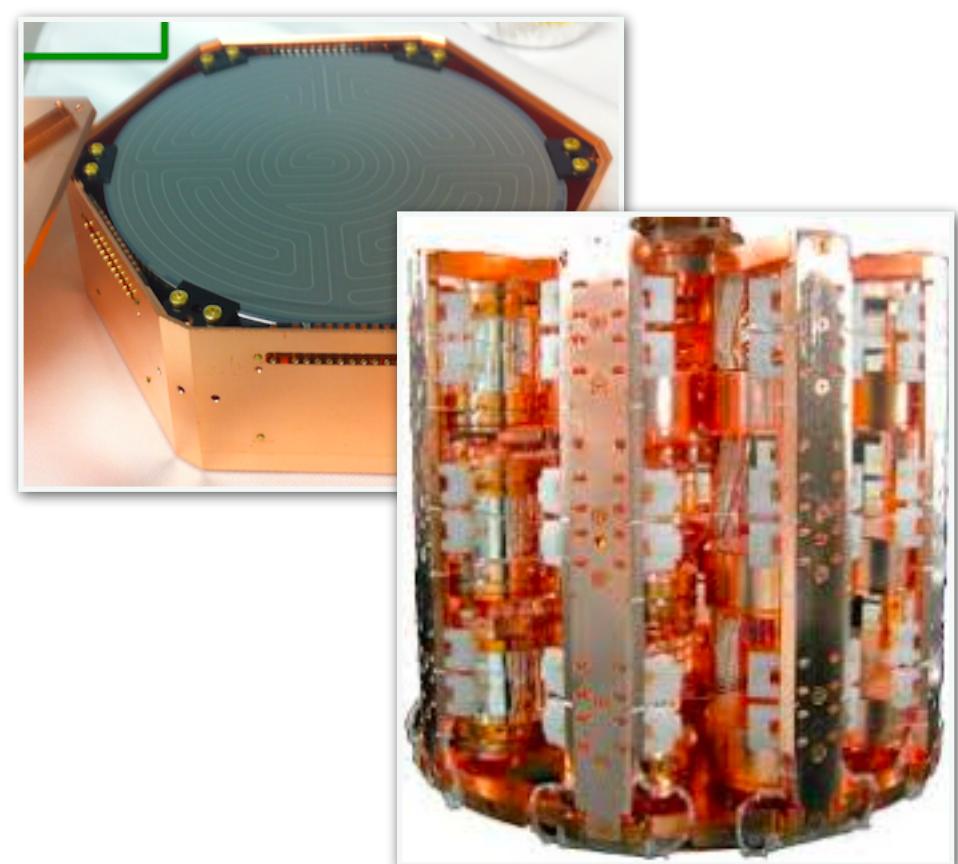


Outstanding problem of today: search for dark matter



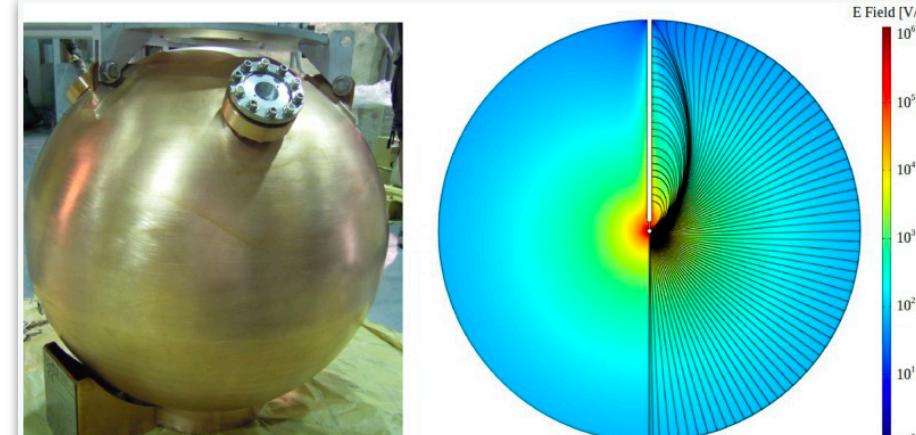
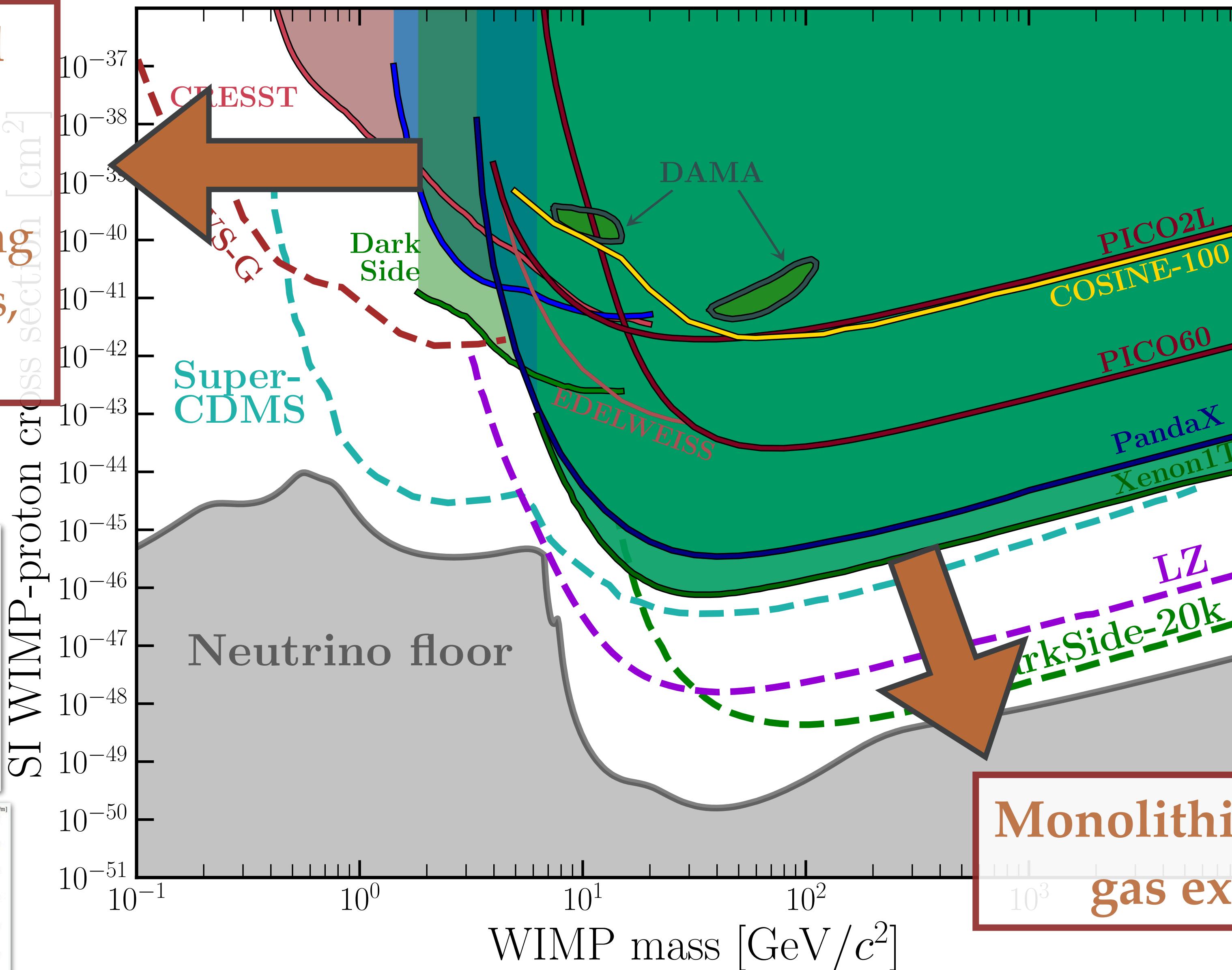
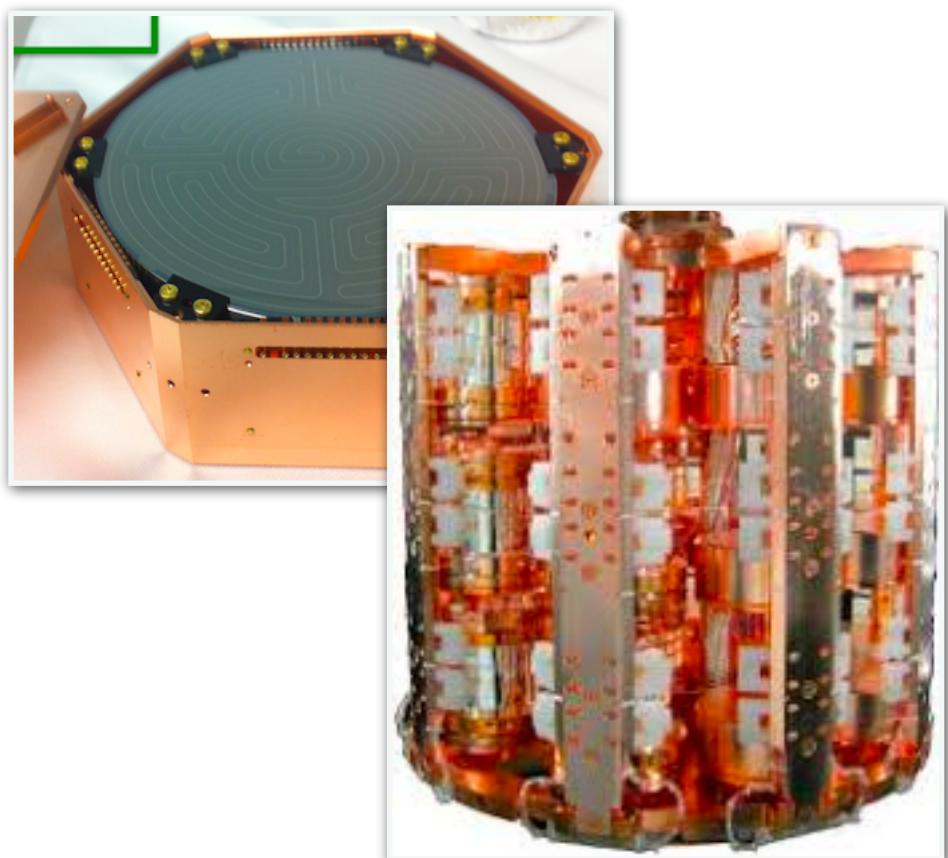
Outstanding problem of today: search for dark matter

Low threshold
detectors
e.g. cryogenic
scintillators using
semiconductors,
light gas SPCs



Outstanding problem of today: search for dark matter

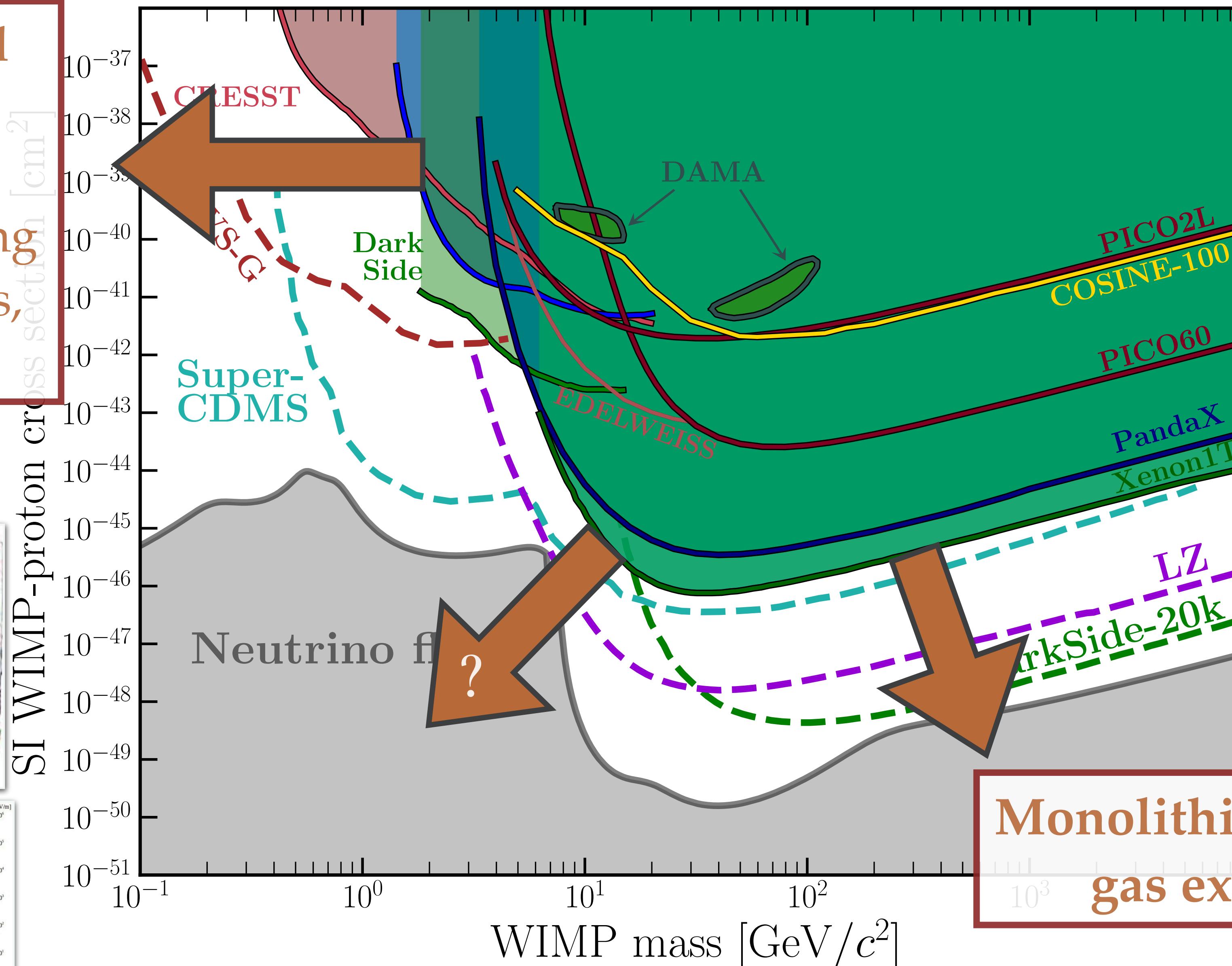
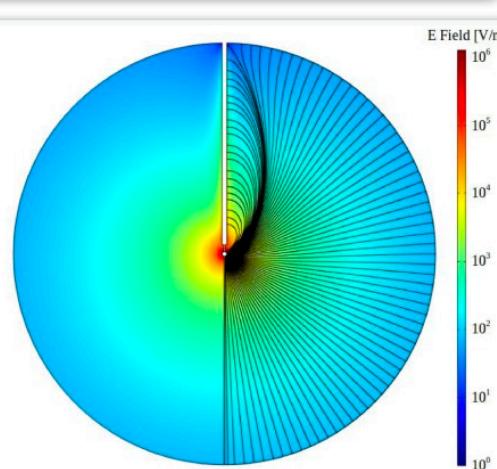
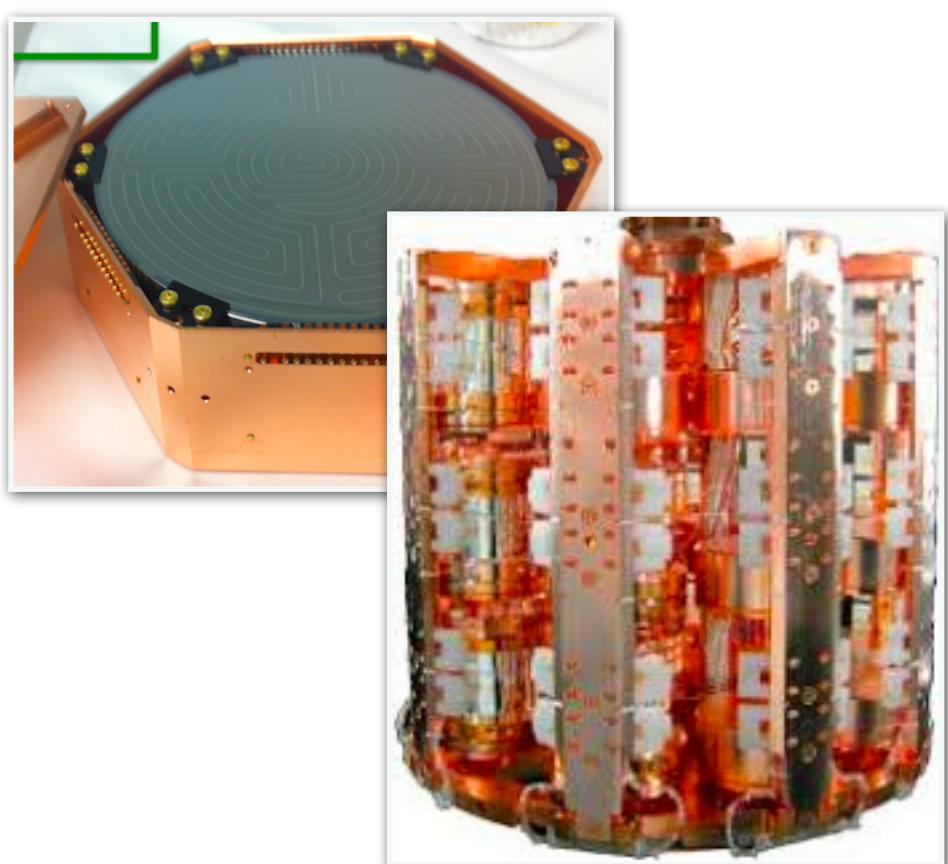
Low threshold detectors
e.g. cryogenic scintillators using semiconductors, light gas SPCs



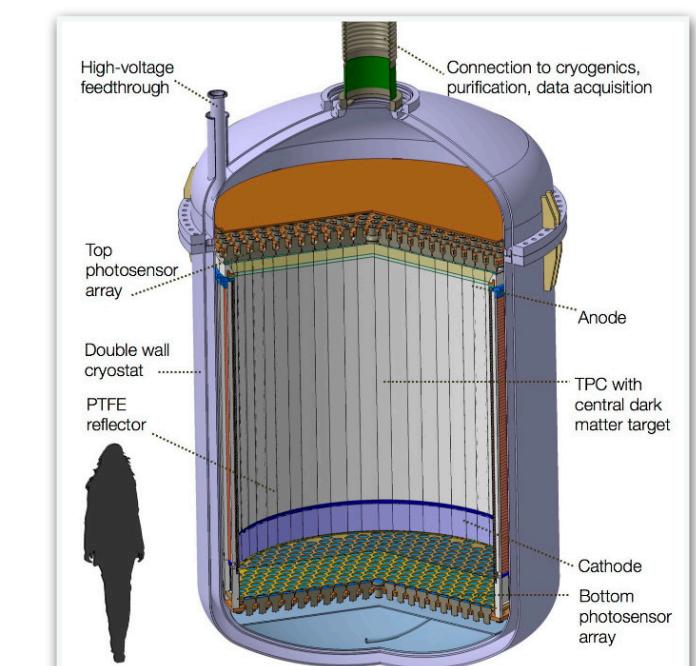
Monolithic liquid noble gas experiments

Outstanding problem of today: search for dark matter

Low threshold detectors
e.g. cryogenic scintillators using semiconductors, light gas SPCs

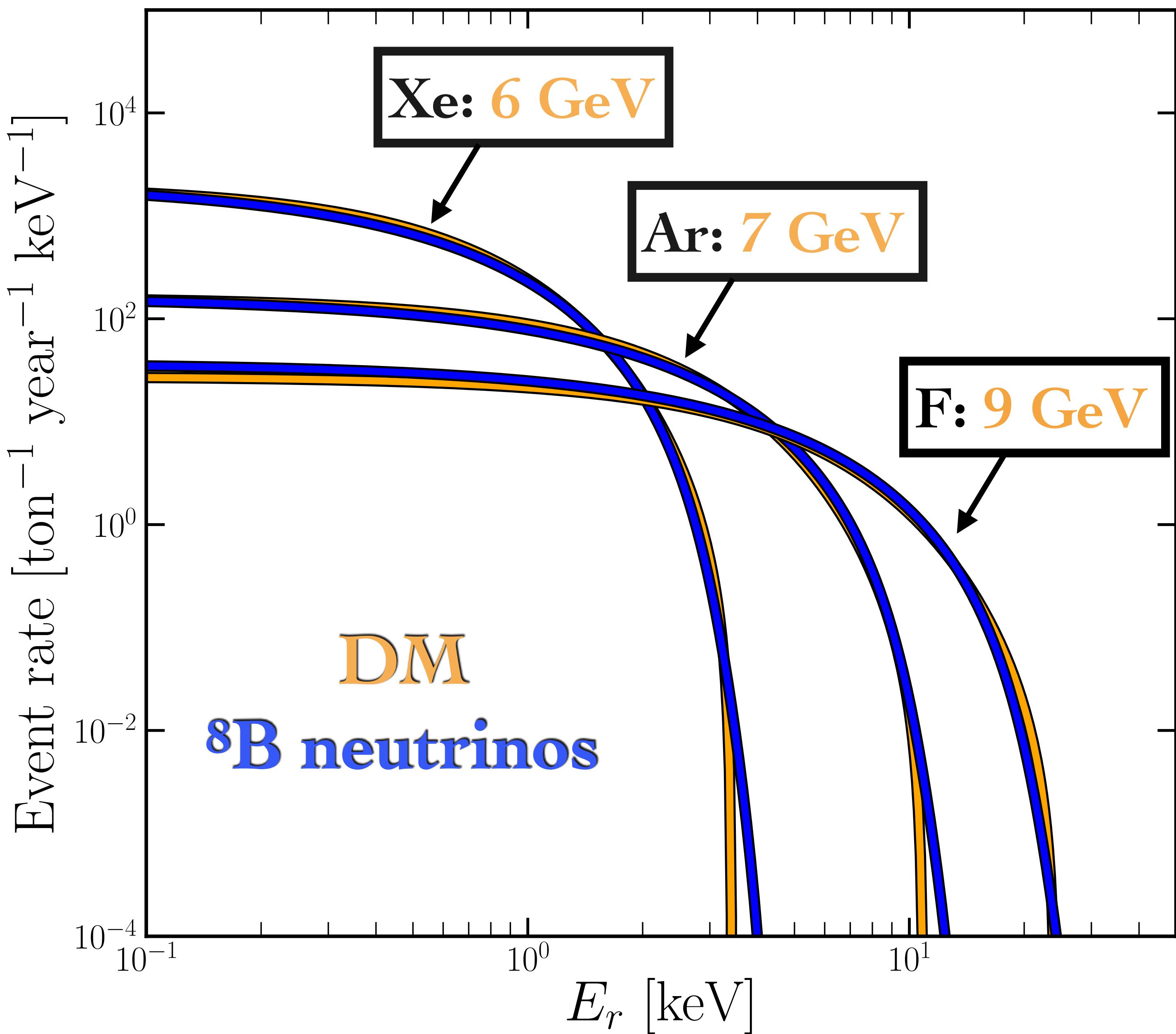


Monolithic liquid noble gas experiments

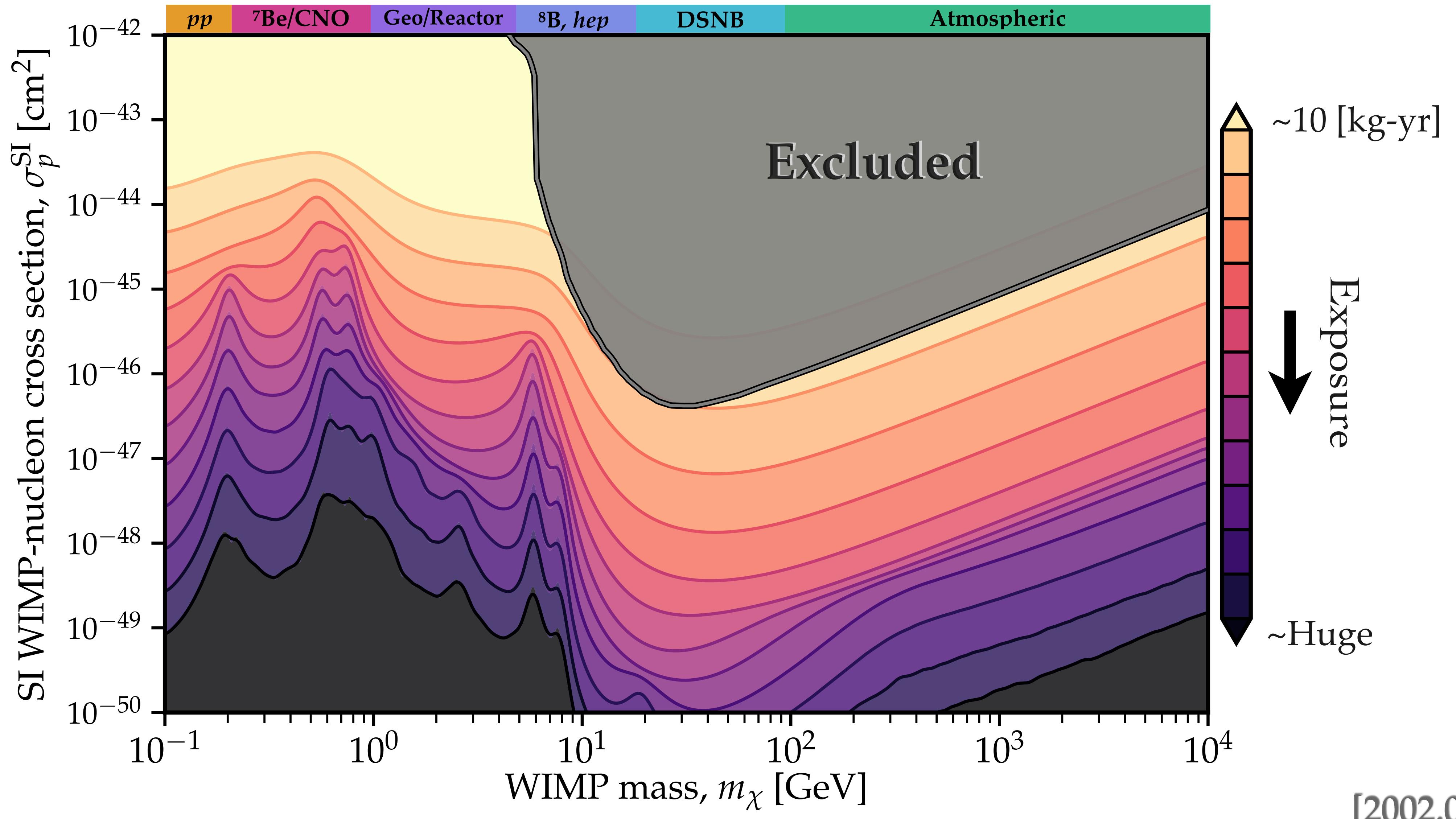


Why is there a neutrino floor?

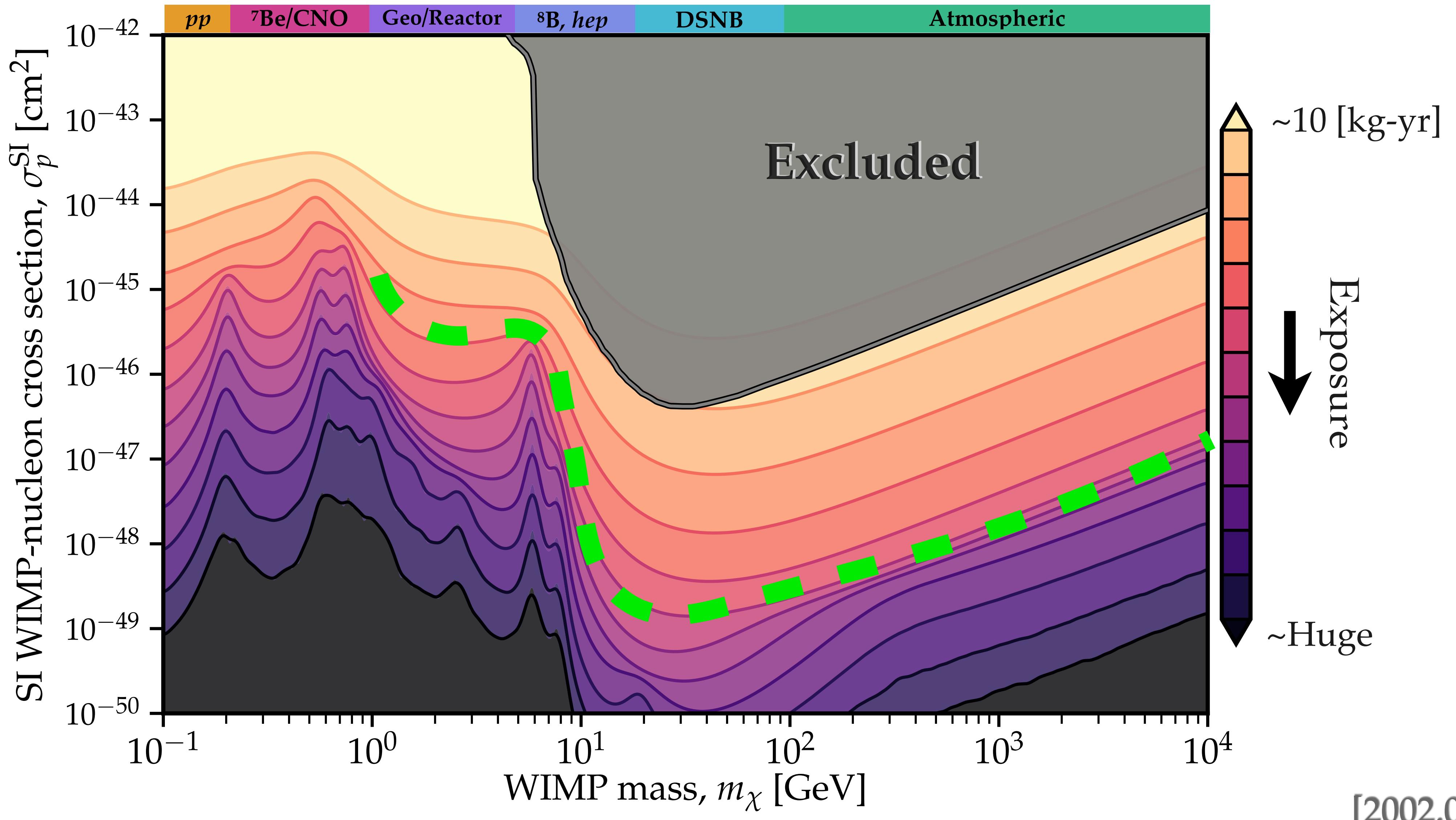
→ spectral match
between DM and solar
neutrinos recoil energy
signal in direct
searches



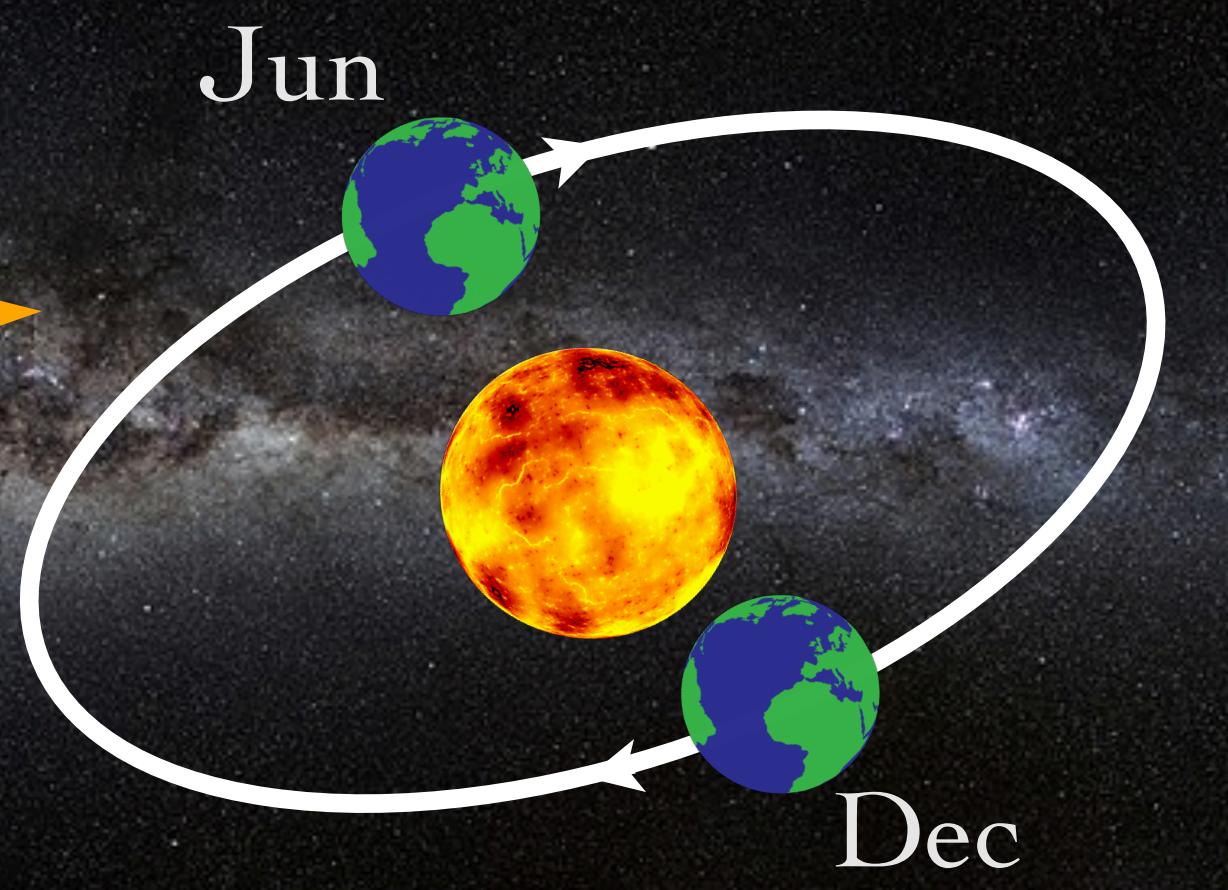
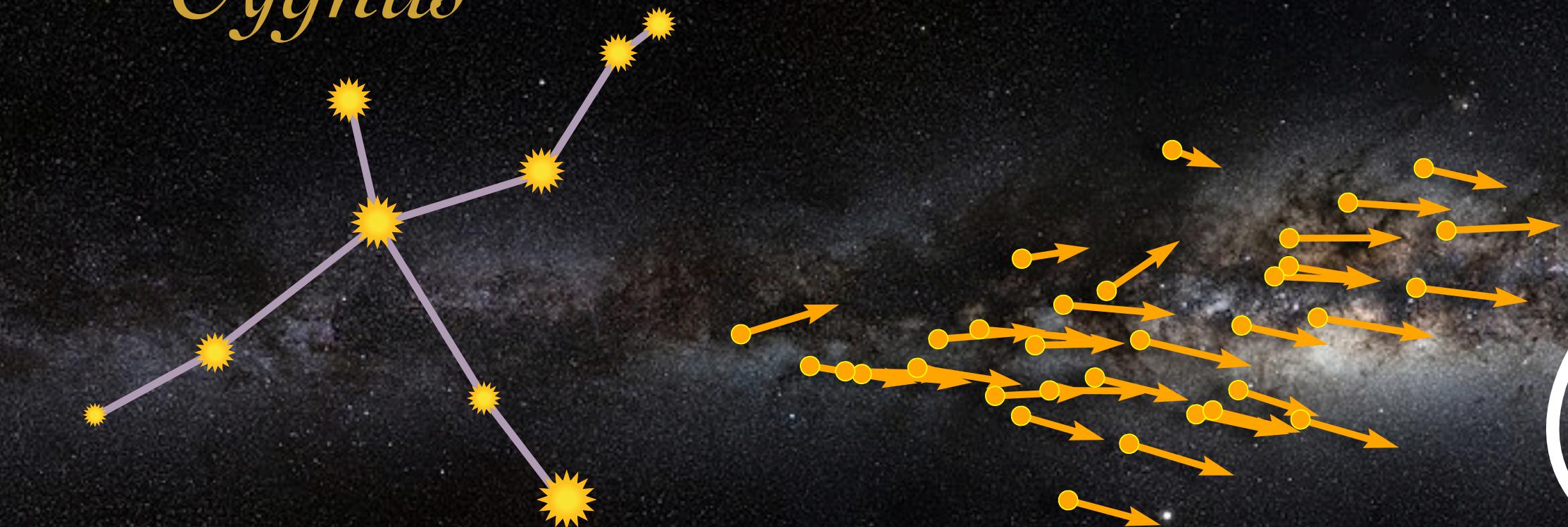
The “neutrino fog”

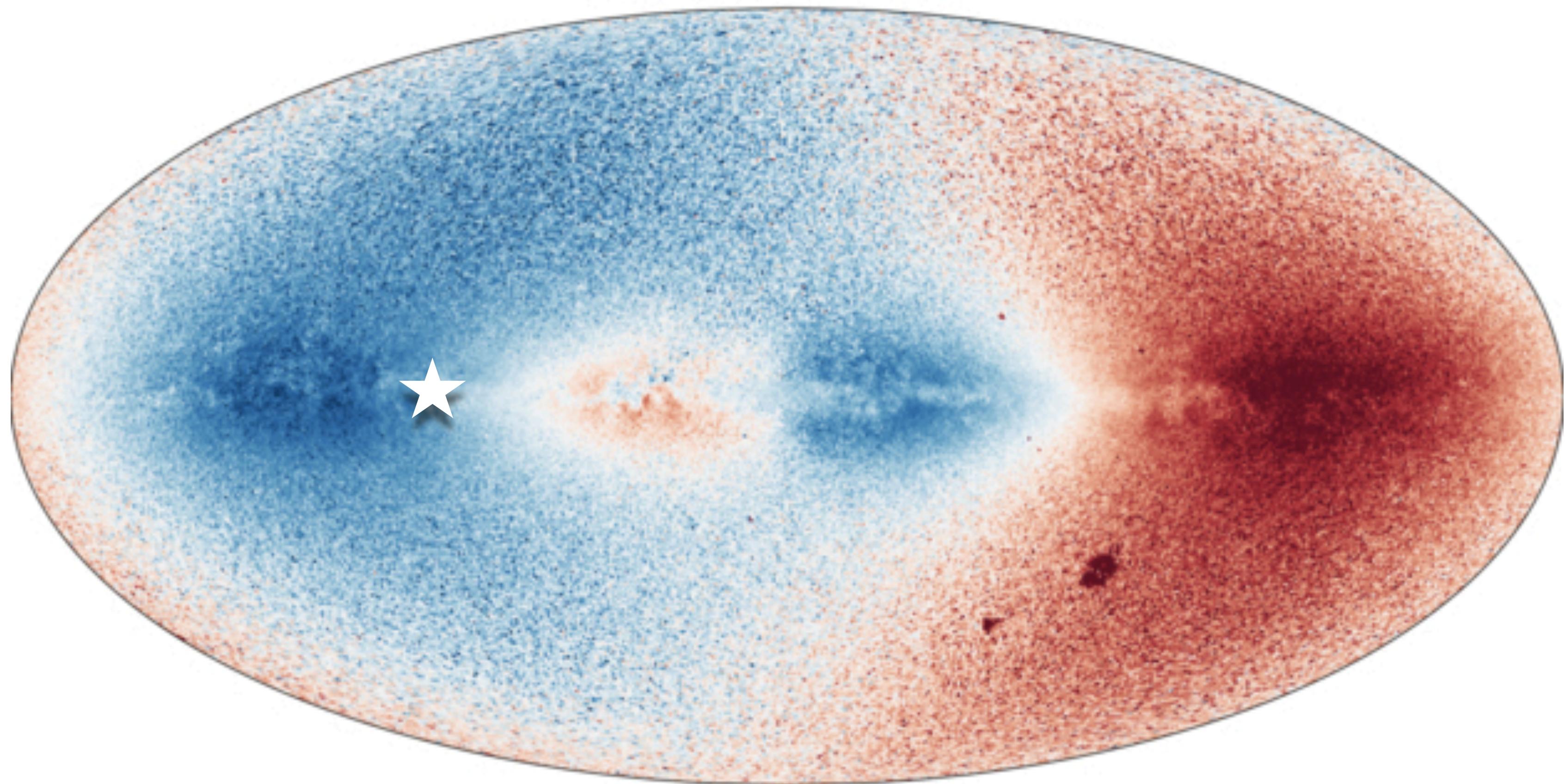


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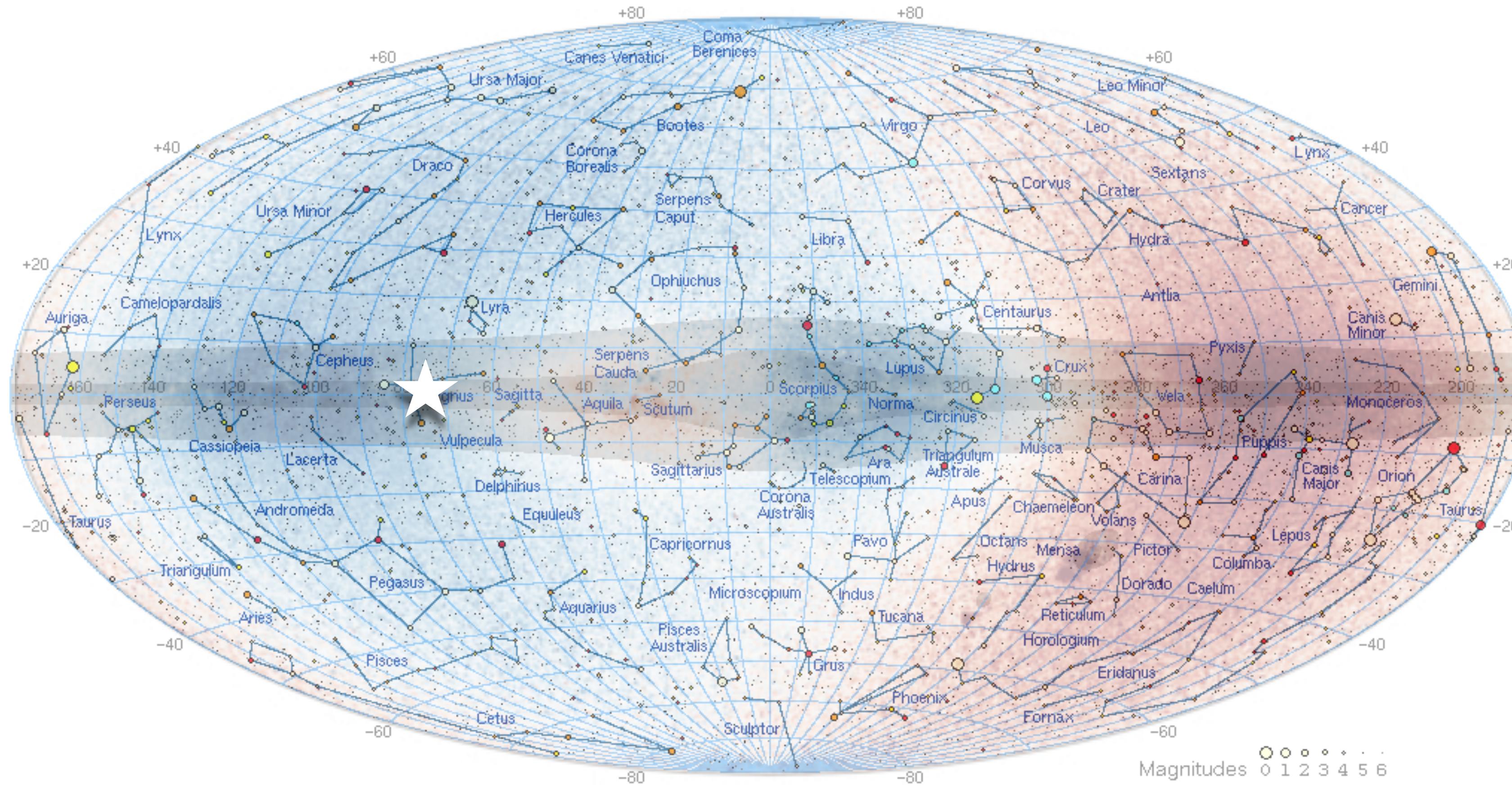


Cygnus

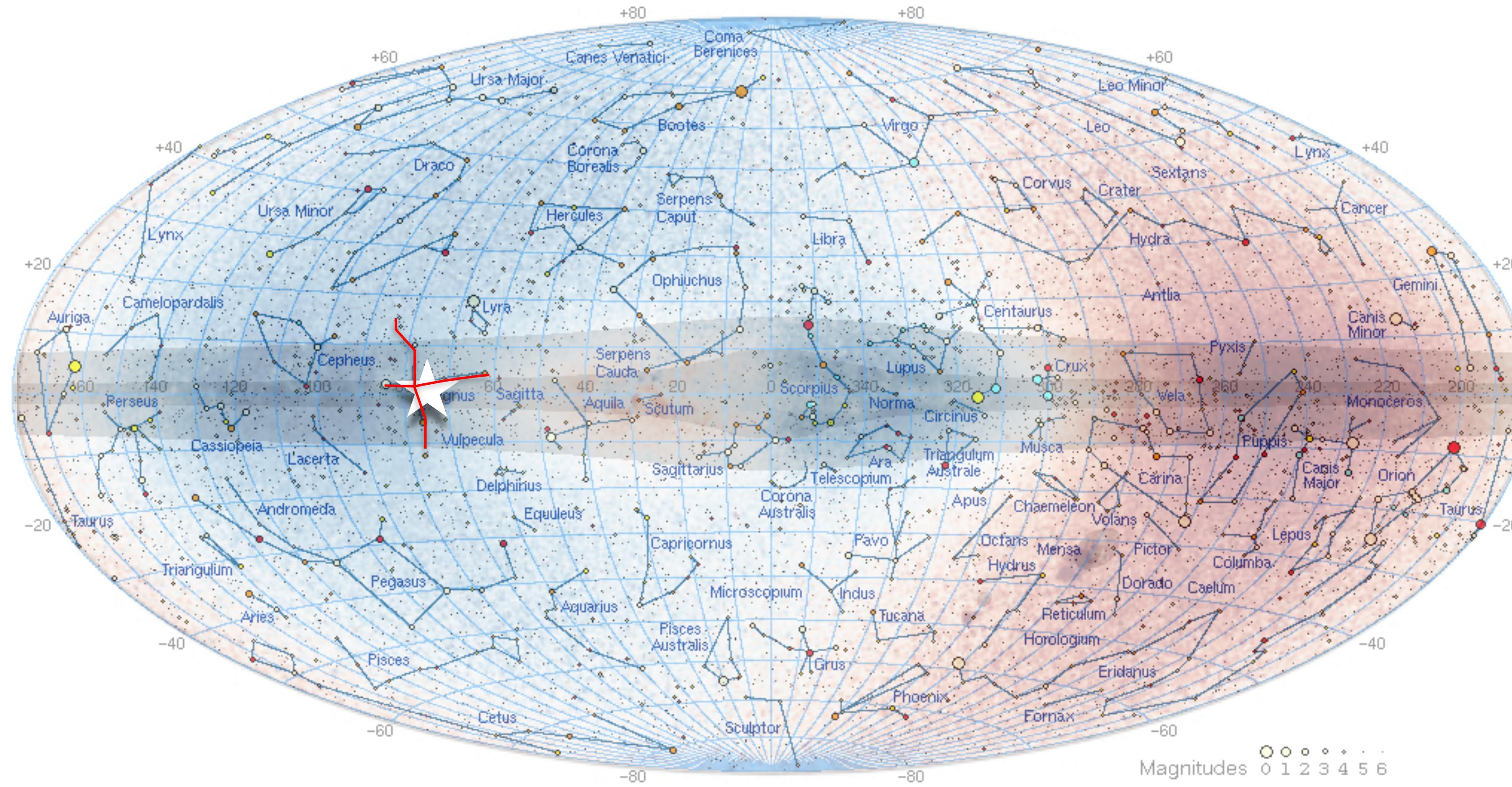




Gaia RVS skymap of line of sight velocities
Blue = moving towards us (relatively)
Red = moving away from us

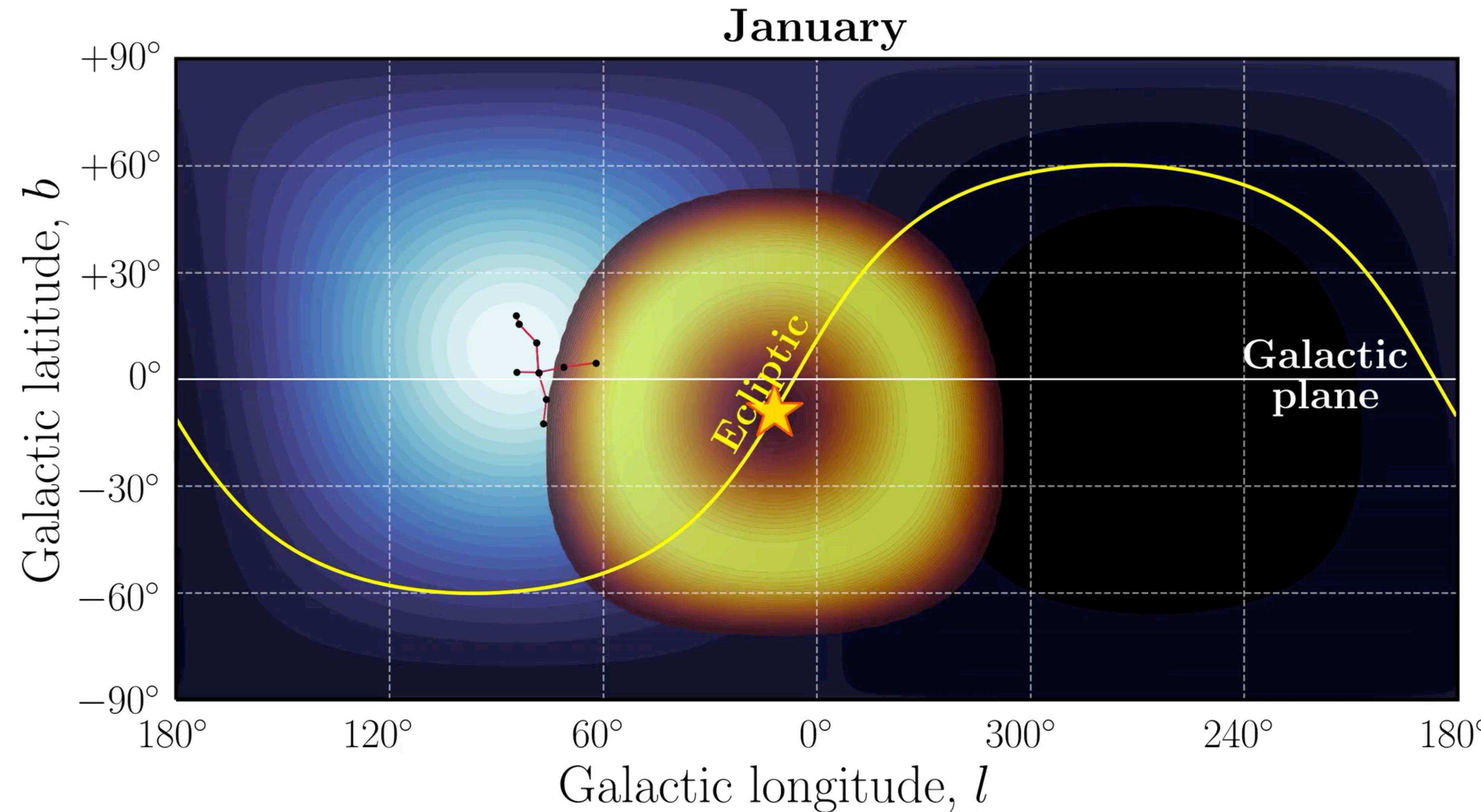


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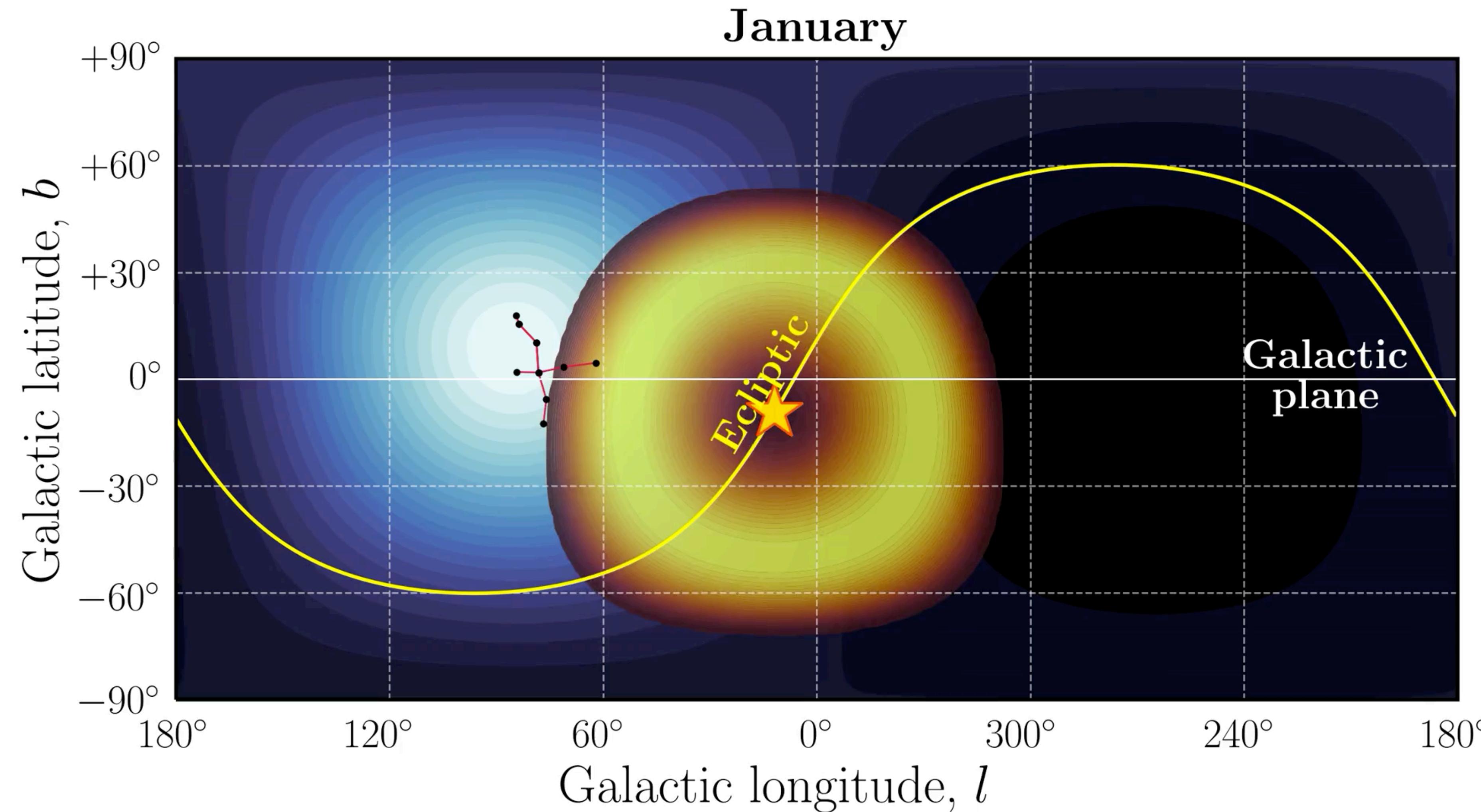


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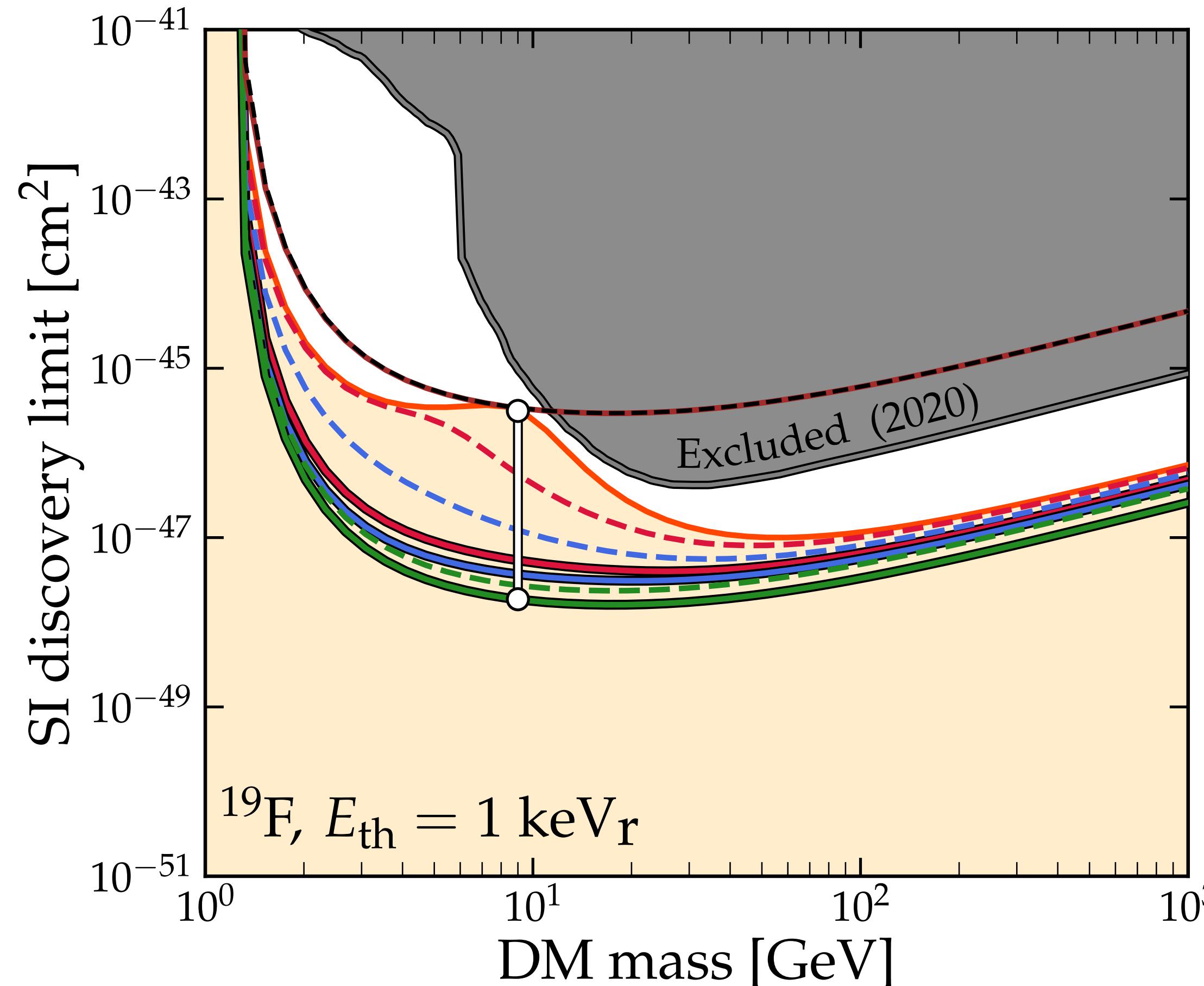
Nothing should mimic dark matter's directional signal, including solar neutrinos



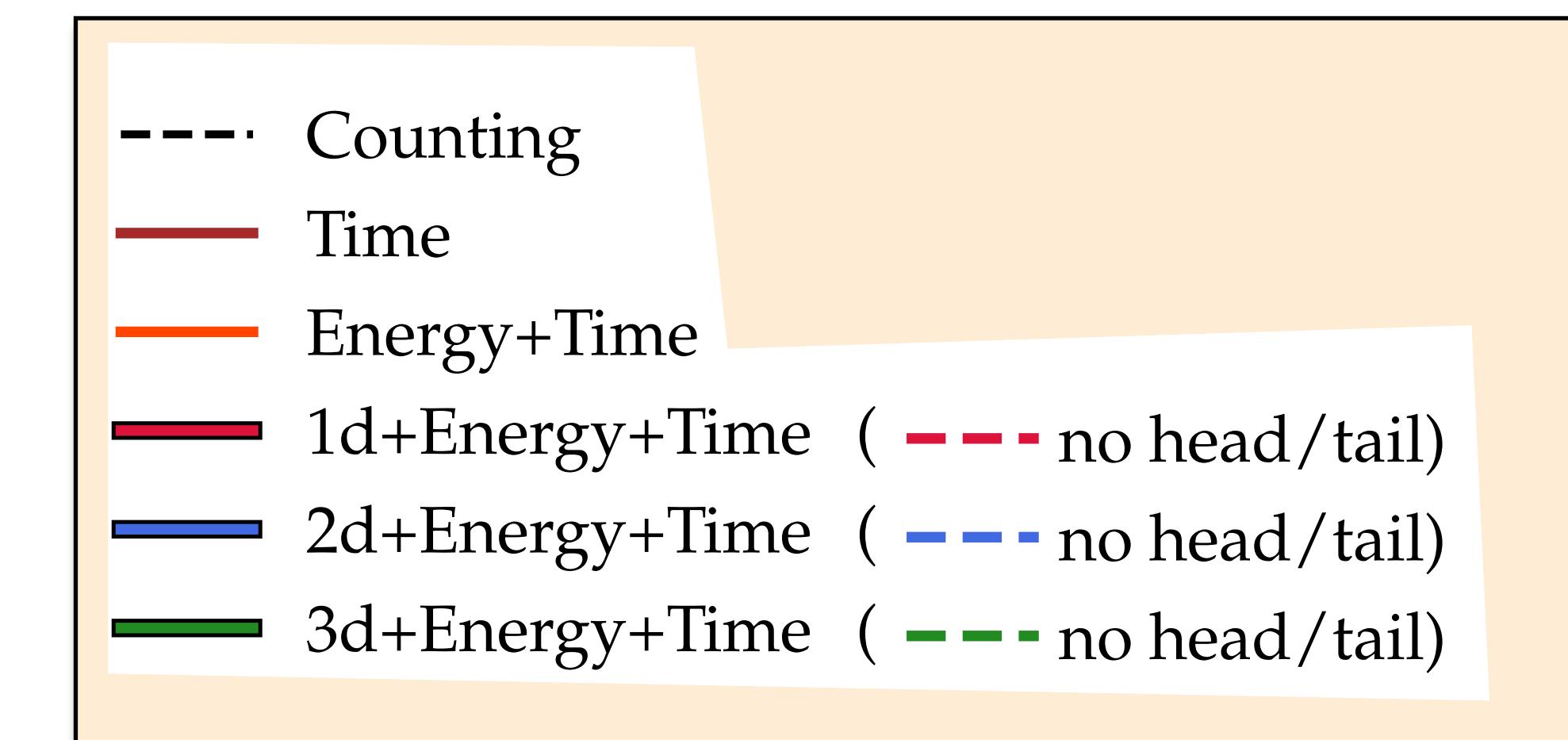
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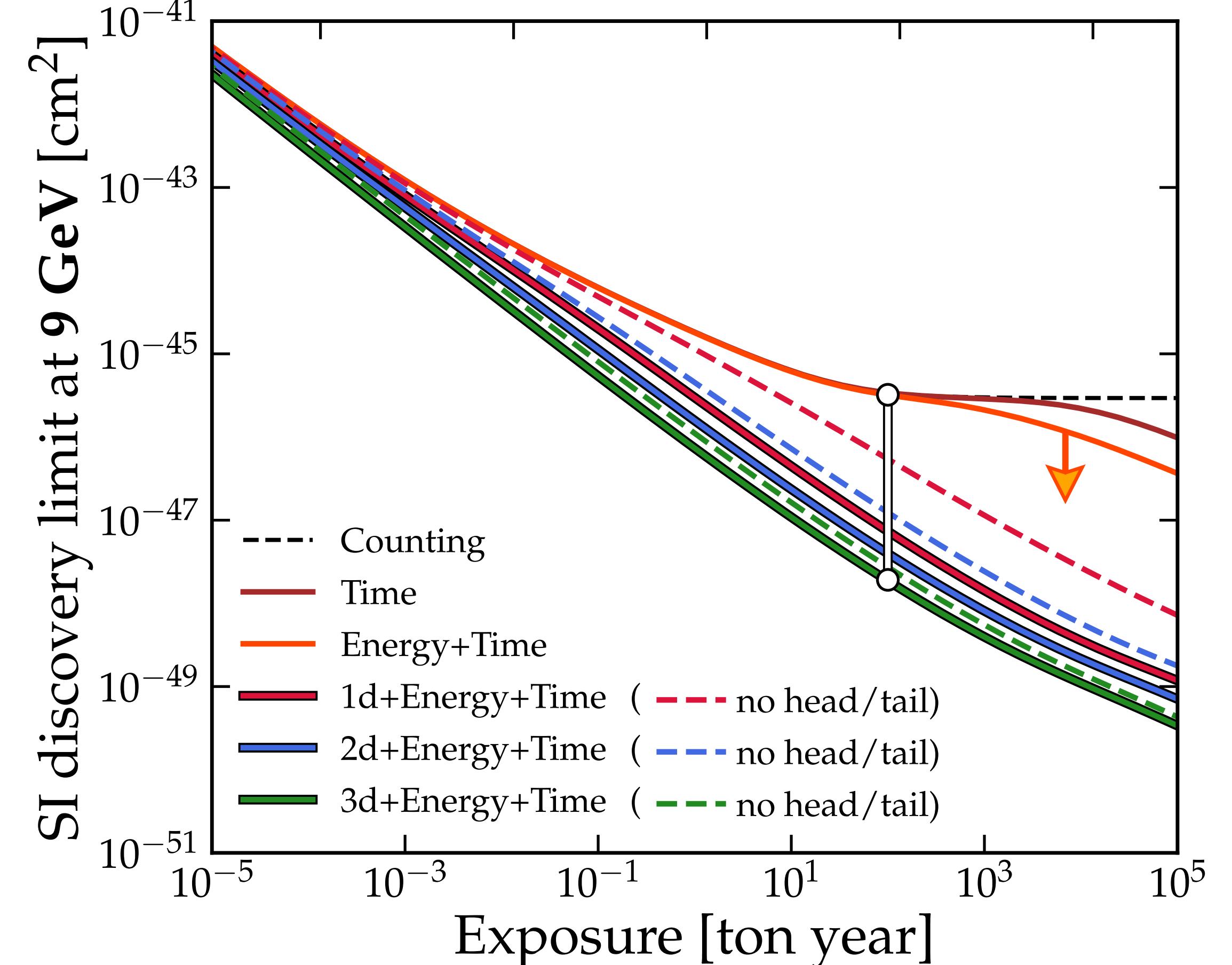
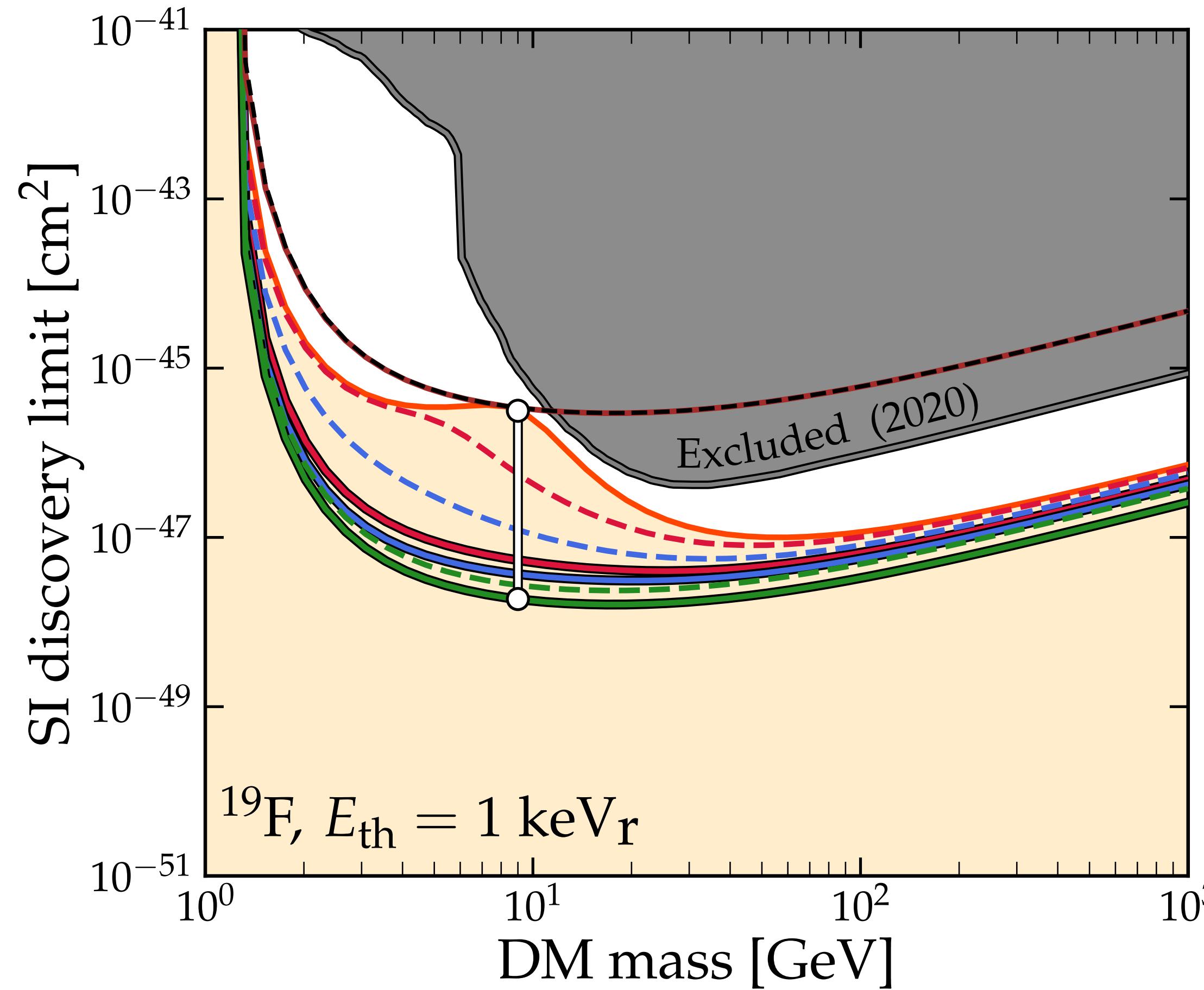
Subtracting the neutrino background



Same experiment, different levels of information used

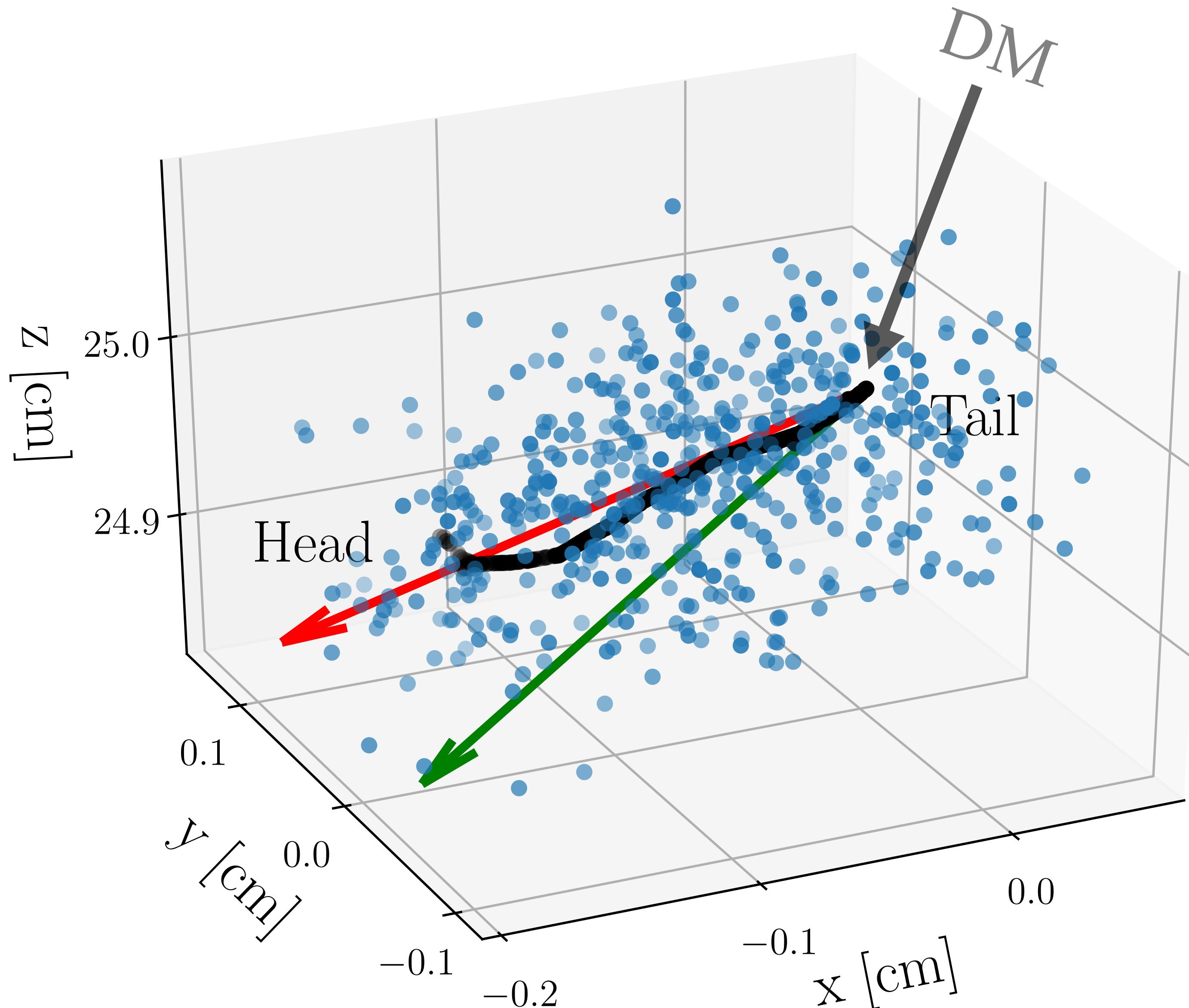


Subtracting the neutrino background



Directional experiments are largely unaffected by the neutrino fog

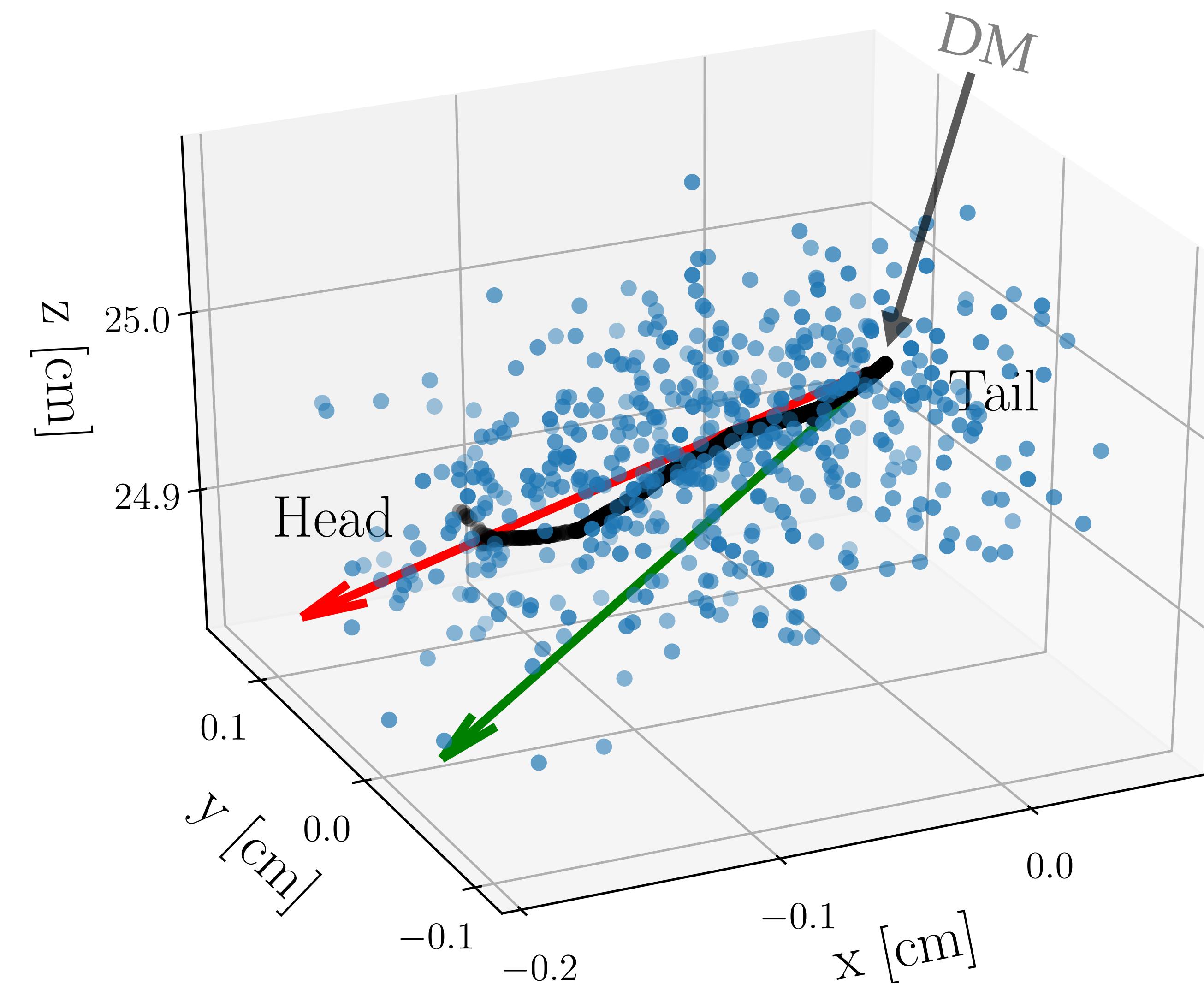
How to detect nuclear recoils at the keV-scale?



- Initial track
- After diffusion
- ↑ True recoil dir.
- ↑ Straggled recoil dir.

The ideal detector measures:

- **Initial** recoil direction (i.e. what the DM scattering predicts)
- The full 3-dimensions of the track
- The head/tail (i.e. sign of the track vector)
- The time of the event (to account for Earth rotation)



CYGNUS

- **Proto-collaboration:** >50 members from US, UK, Australia, Japan, Italy, Spain, China
- **Focus:** Ton-scale gas time projection chamber (TPC)
- **Primary goal:** DM discovery into the neutrino fog
- **Secondary goal:** Directional detection of solar neutrinos
- **Tertiary goals:** study DM velocity dist., non-WIMP models, supernovae + more?



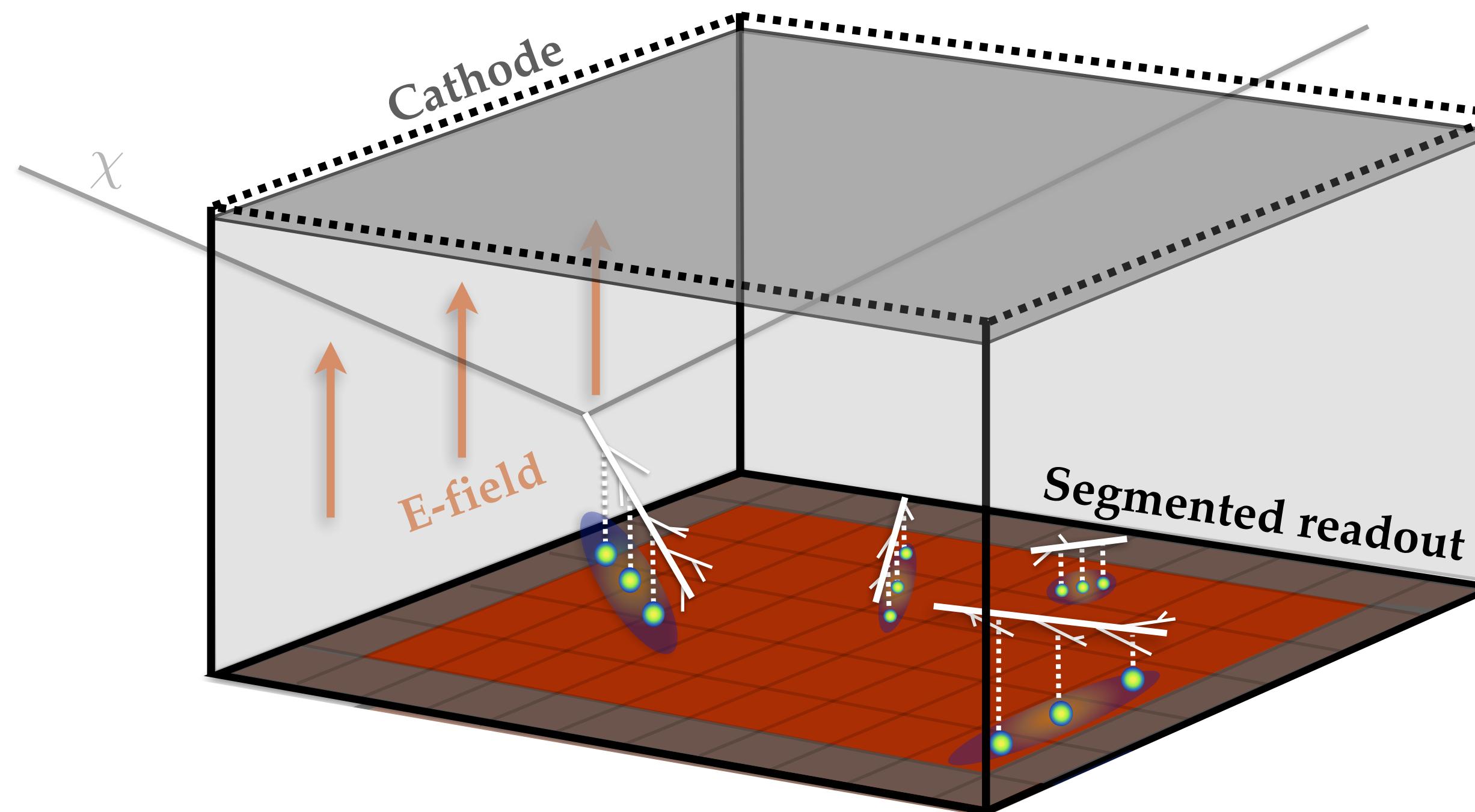
[2008.12587]

CYGNUS: Feasibility of a nuclear recoil observatory with directional sensitivity to dark matter and neutrinos

S. E. Vahsen,¹ C. A. J. O'Hare,² W. A. Lynch,³ N. J. C. Spooner,³ E. Baracchini,^{4, 5, 6} P. Barbeau,⁷ J. B. R. Battat,⁸ B. Crow,¹ C. Deaconu,⁹ C. Eldridge,³ A. C. Ezeribe,³ M. Ghrear,¹ D. Loomba,¹⁰ K. J. Mack,¹¹ K. Miuchi,¹² F. M. Mouton,³ N. S. Phan,¹³ K. Scholberg,⁷ and T. N. Thorpe^{1, 6}

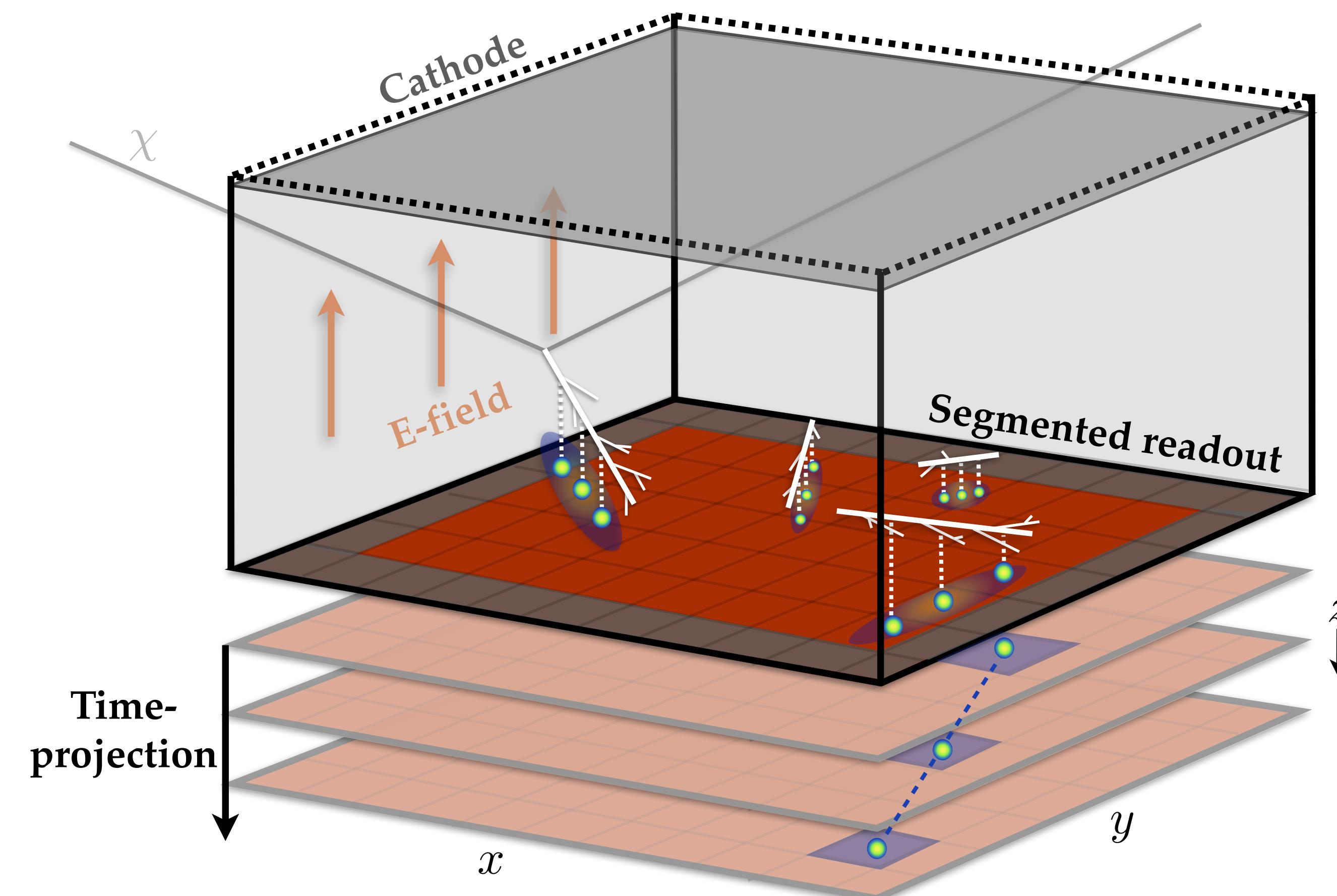
Focus of CYGNUS: gas time projection chamber

Current gas of interest: 1 atm. of He:SF₆ at 755:5, negative ion drift



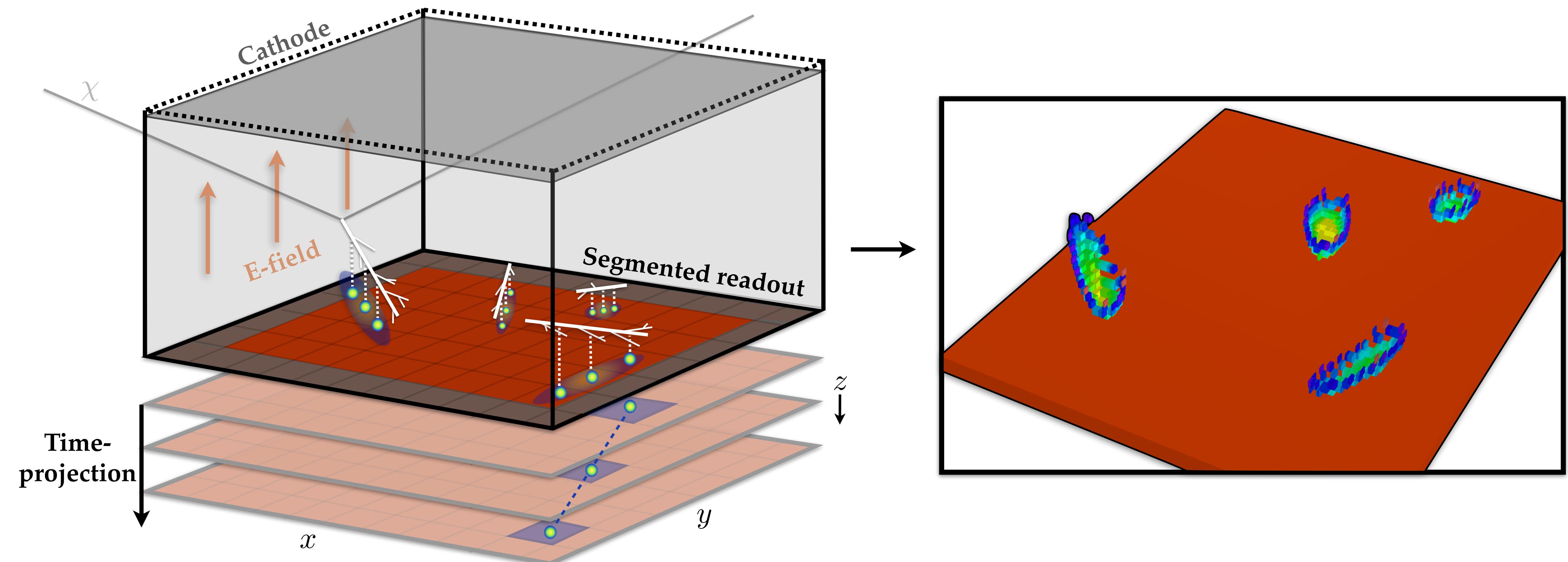
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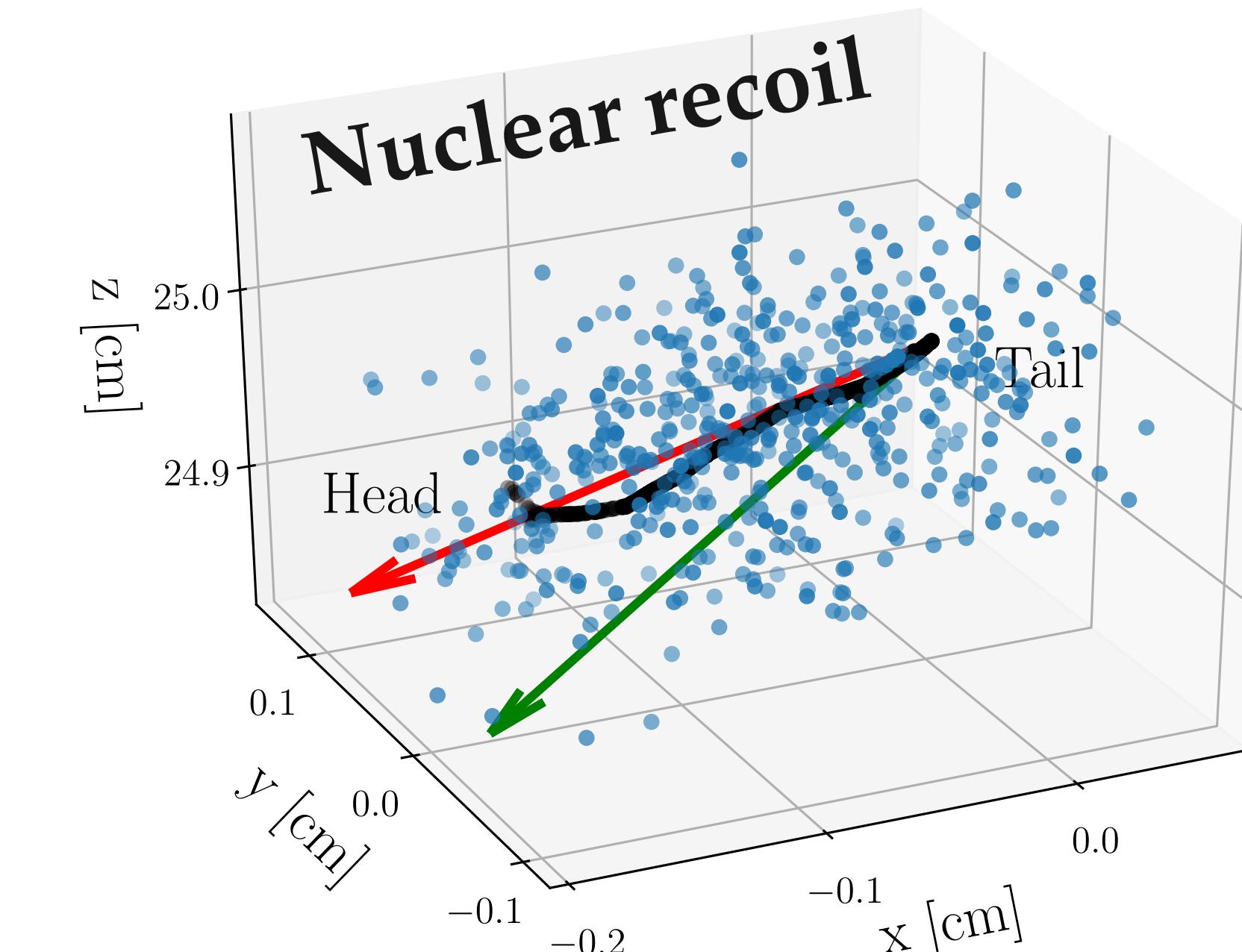
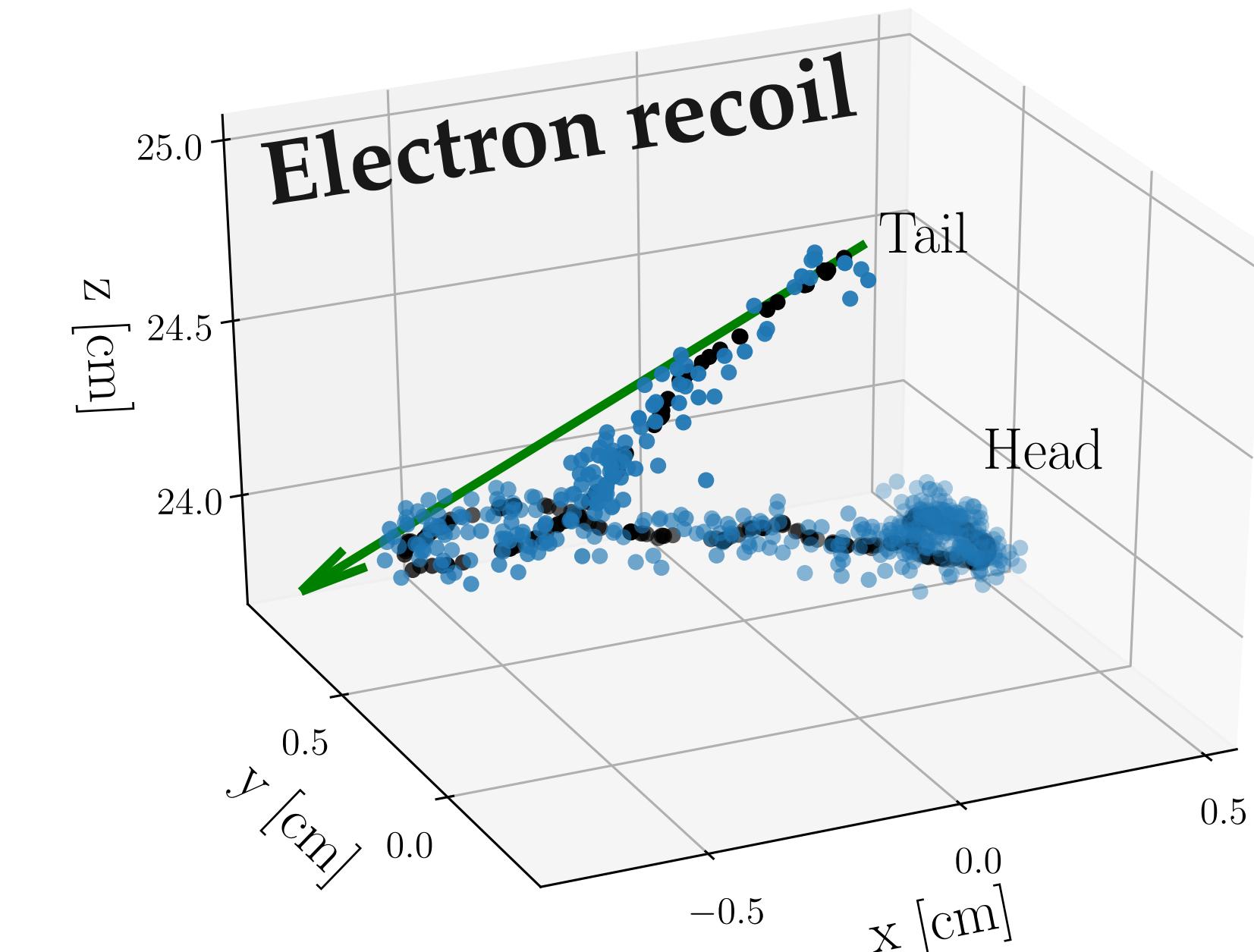


Angular performance

Everything gets worse at lower energies:

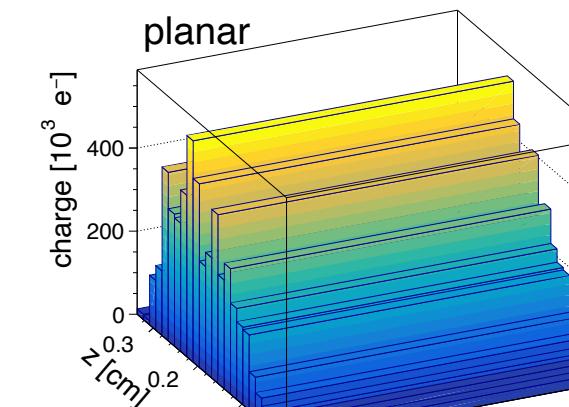
- Decreasing quenching factor, means recoils are harder to detect
- Tracks get shorter → harder to measure directions
- Contrast in dE/dx is lower, harder to measure head-tail
- All this makes it harder to distinguish ER/NRs, so worse background rejection

→ **Energy dependence of directional performance is very important, and needs to be the focus of all directional detection proposals**



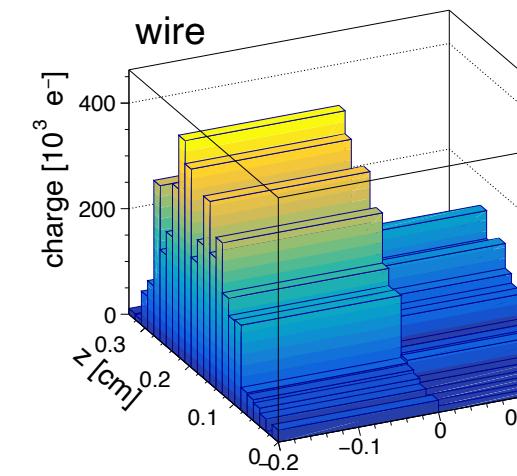
Readout technologies

Planar



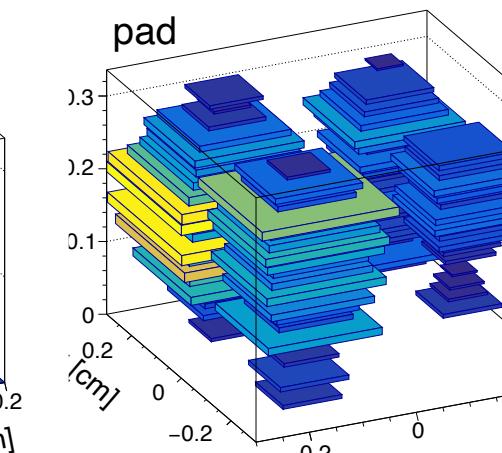
1D

Wire



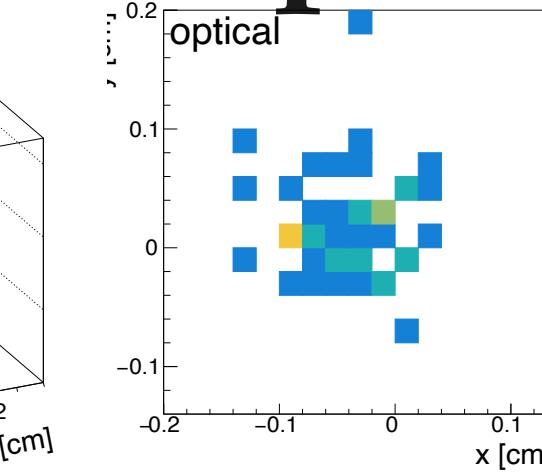
1D

Pad



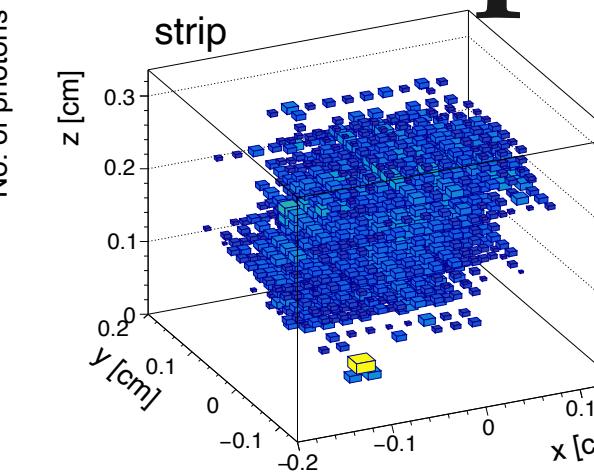
2D

Optical



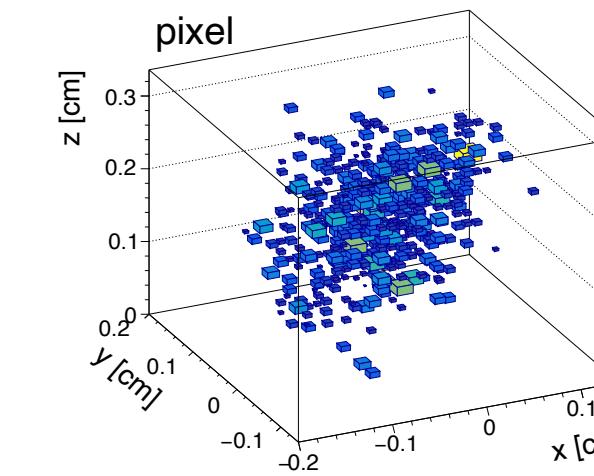
3D

Strip



3D

Pixel



3D



Simplest readouts

→ Worst directional sensitivity but
lower cost

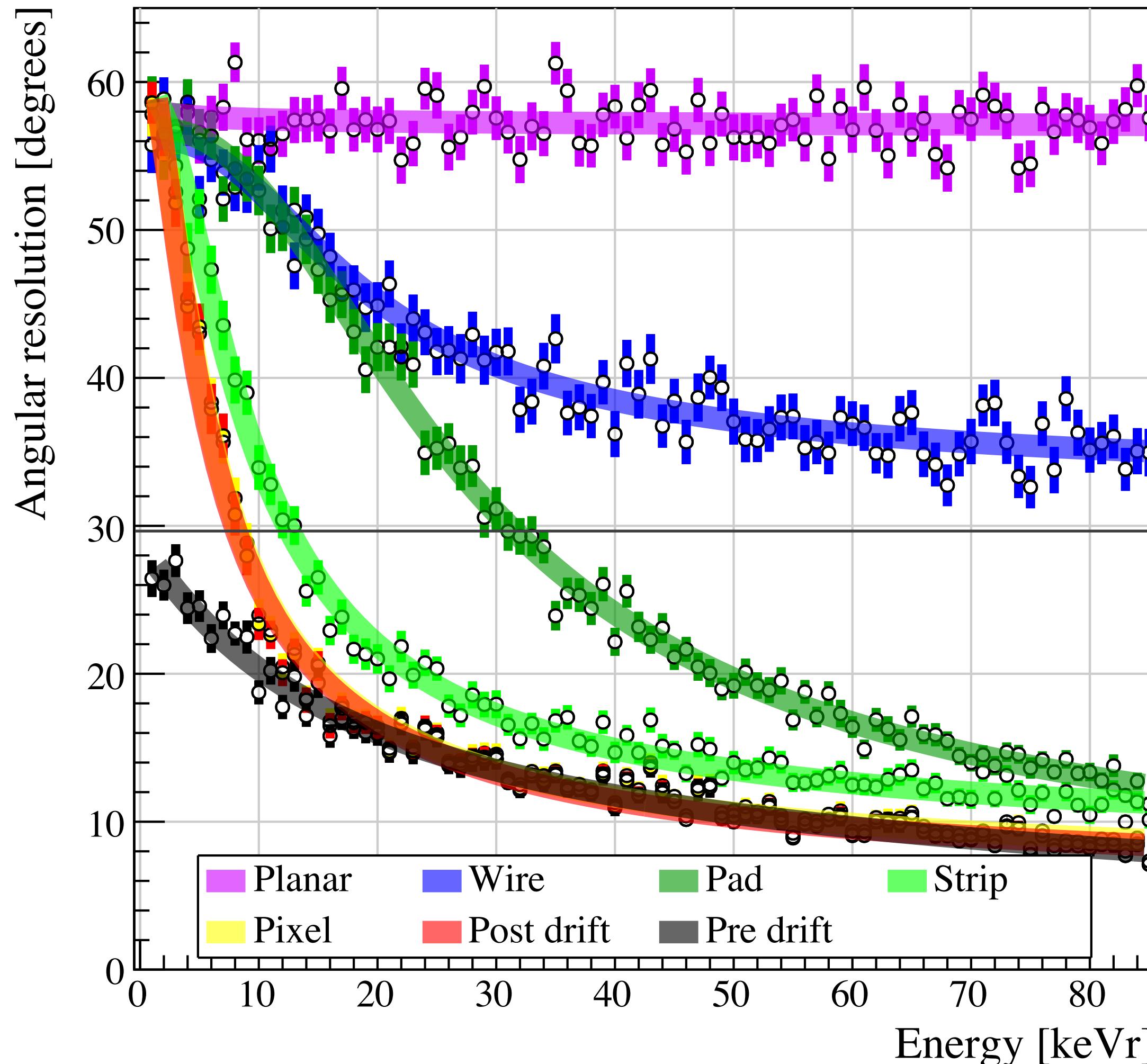
Most highly segmented readouts

→ Best directional sensitivity but
Highest cost

Need a balance between directional performance and *cost*

Angular resolution, comparing different readouts

Dispersion in measured (axial) angles relative to initial recoil direction



Worst performance.

1 rad. = No directional sensitivity

Rough requirement for neutrino/DM discrimination

Strip: Best cost / performance trade-off

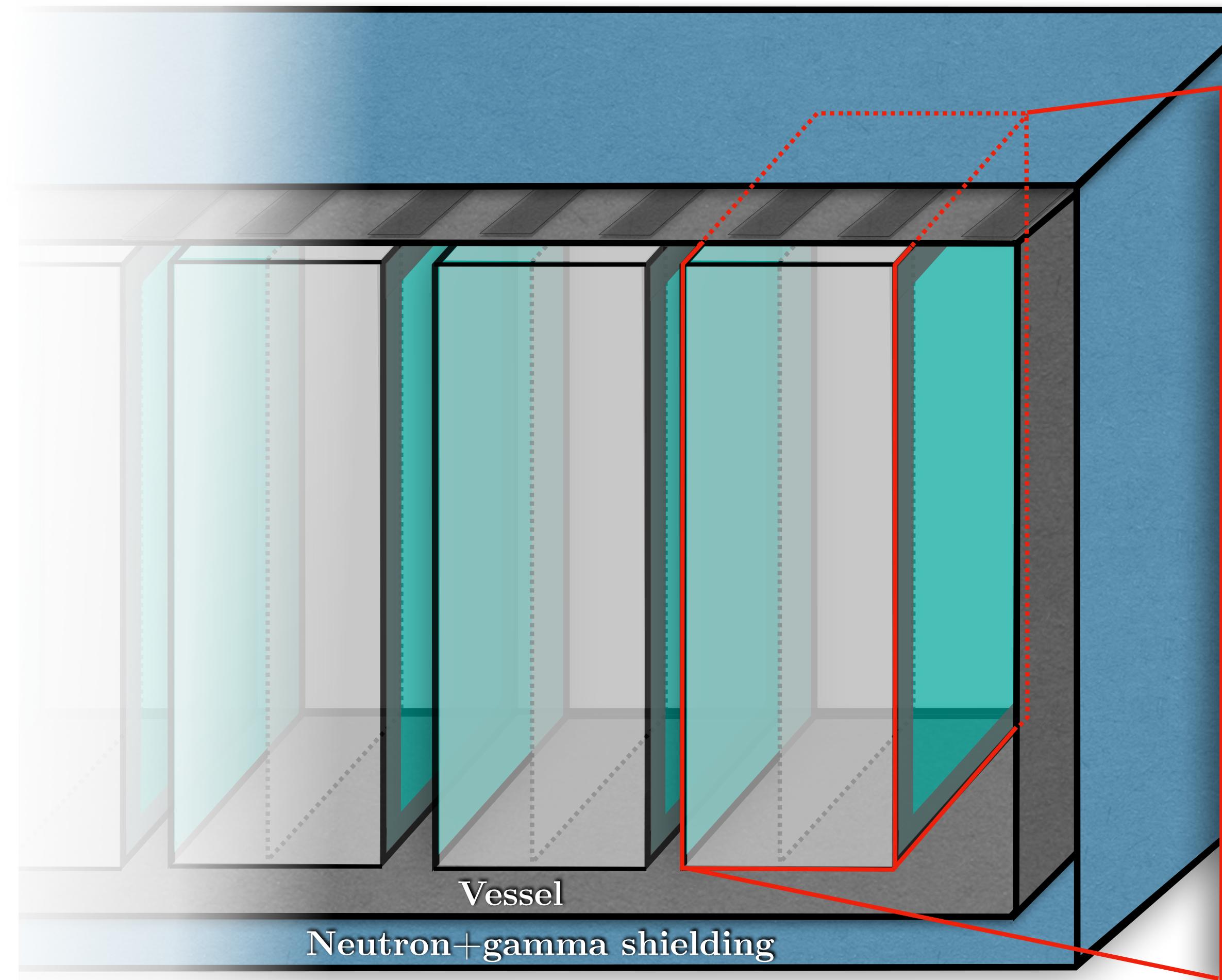
Optimal performance.

Main thing limiting readouts from optimal performance is diffusion

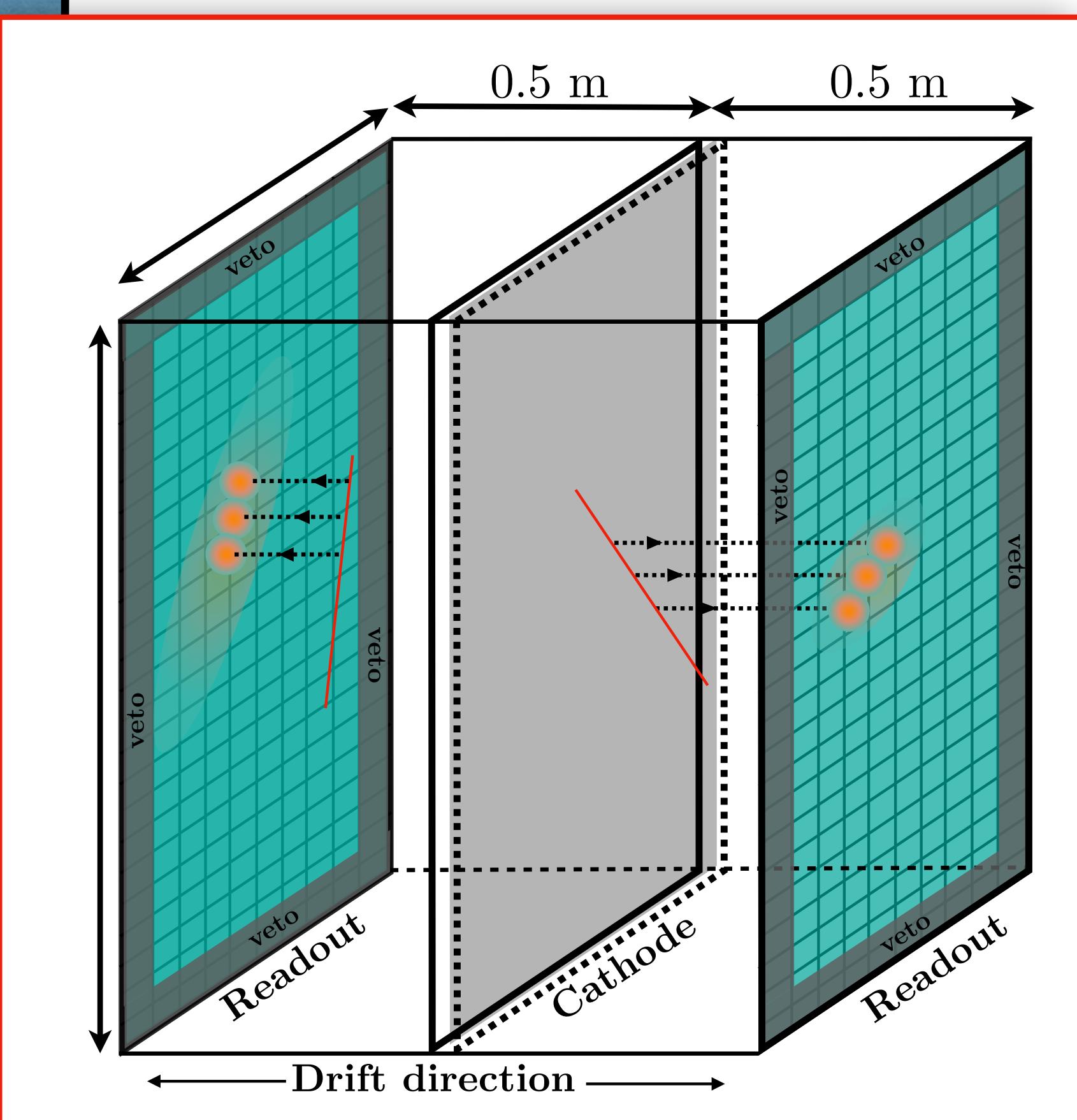
How to scale up?

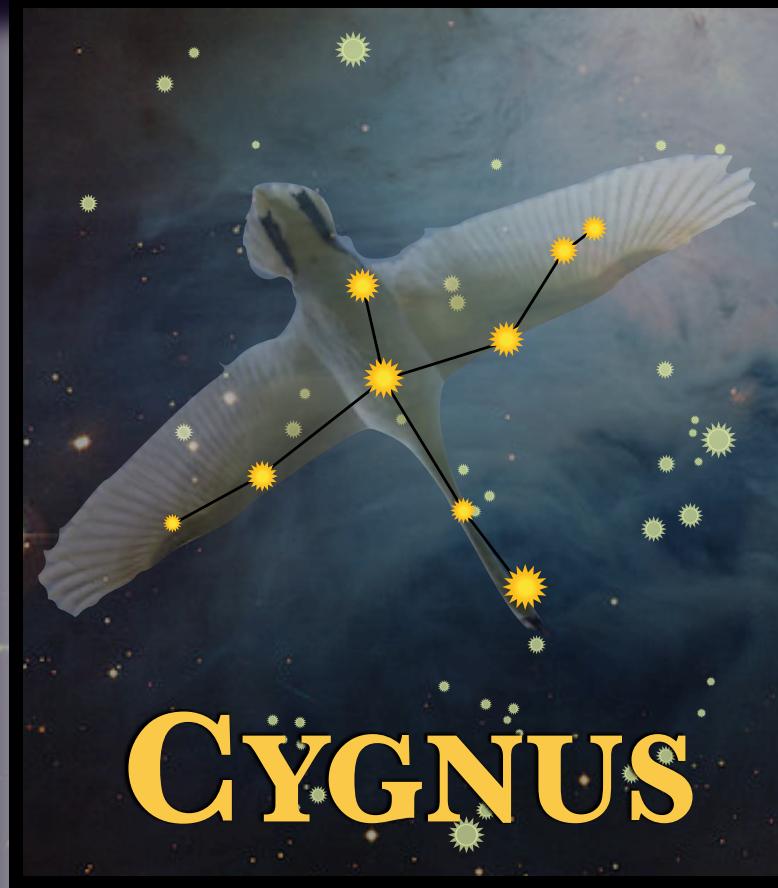
Modularity is both necessary, and advantageous

CYGNUS-Nm³



CYGNUS-10 m³ module





CYGNUS-HD10
Lead, South Dakota

CYGNUS-Andes
Chile/Argentina

CYGNUS-10
Boulby, UK

CYGNUS-KM
Kamioka, Japan

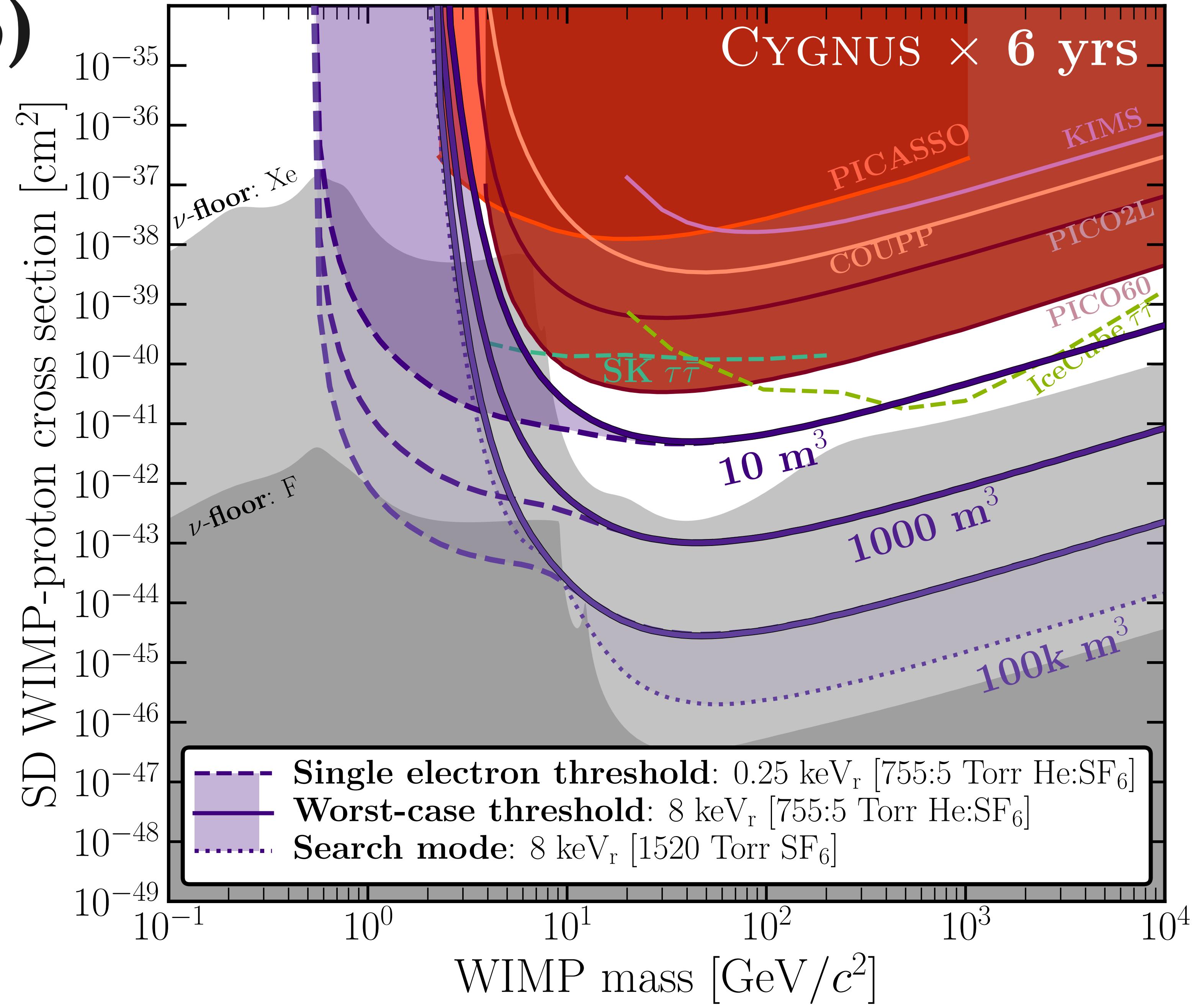
CYGNUS-OZ
Stawell, Aus.

CYGNUS-Andes
Chile/Argentina

Sensitivity (SD-p)

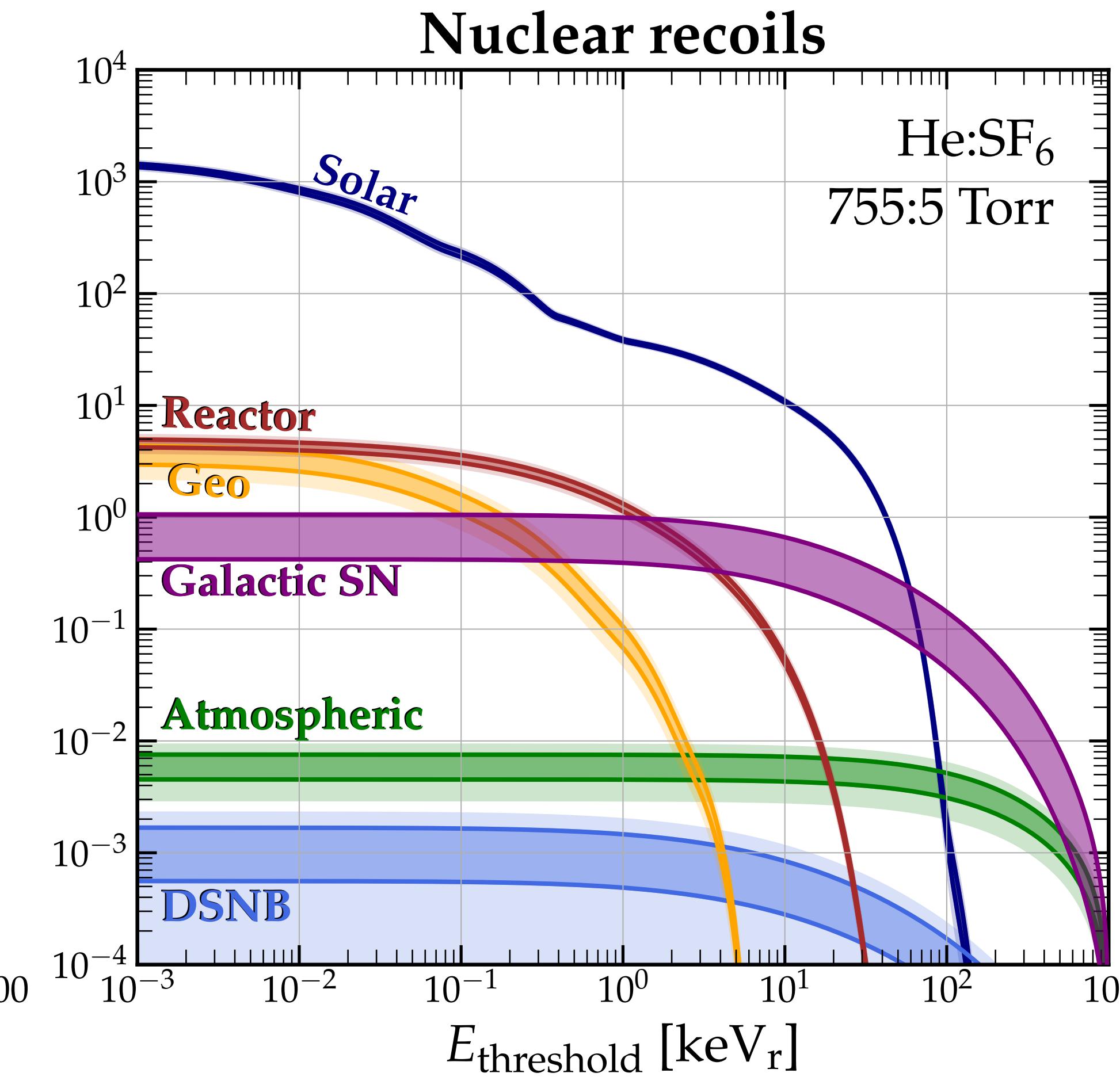
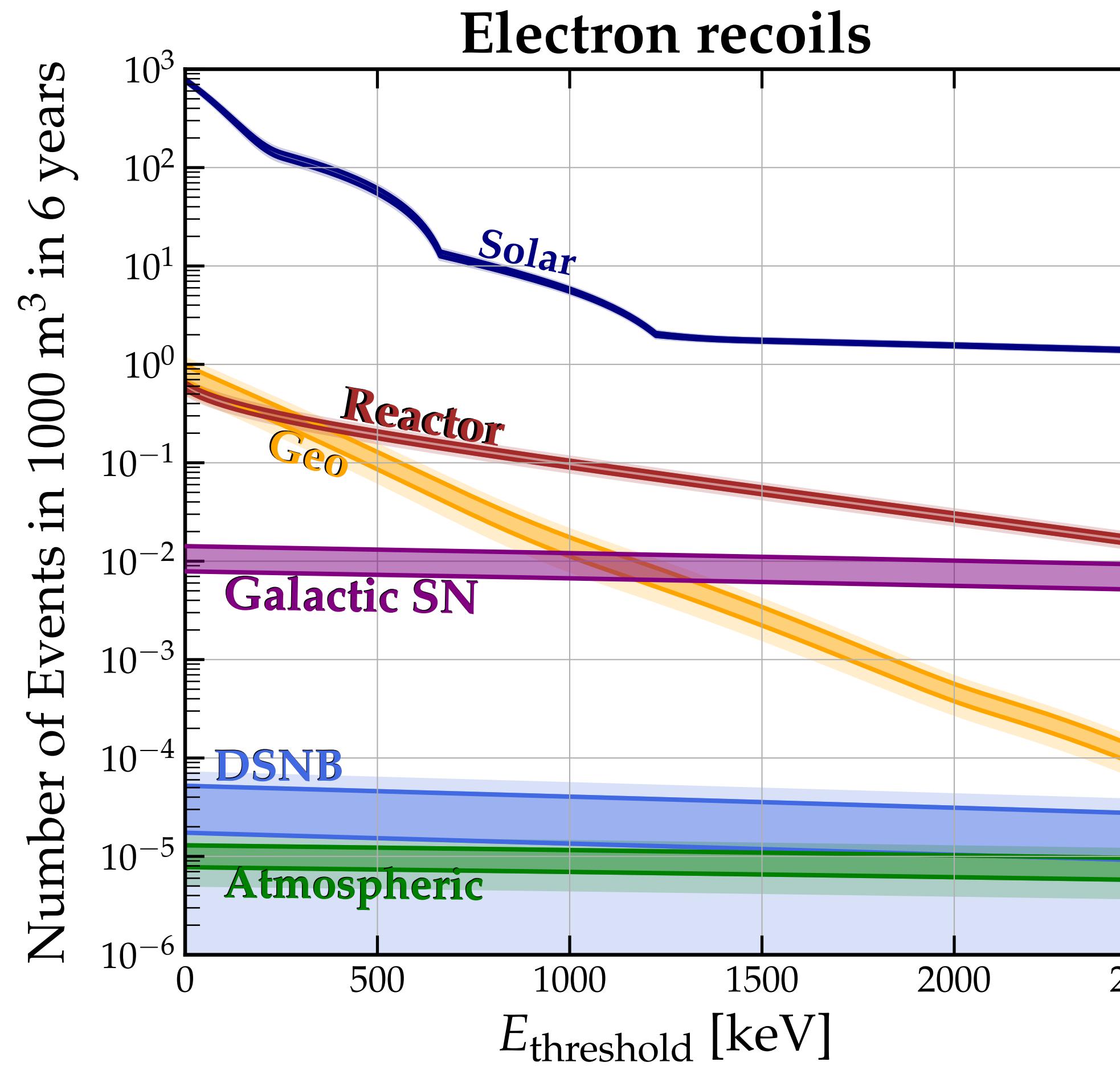
- Fluorine-based fill gases have high proton spin $\langle S_p \rangle$ → naturally good SD-proton limits
- He does not set limits on this cross section

Important note: these limits are true discovery limits, i.e. a signal can be confirmed as DM, so comparison of CYGNUS limits with other experiments undersells its potential



Directionality beyond dark matter

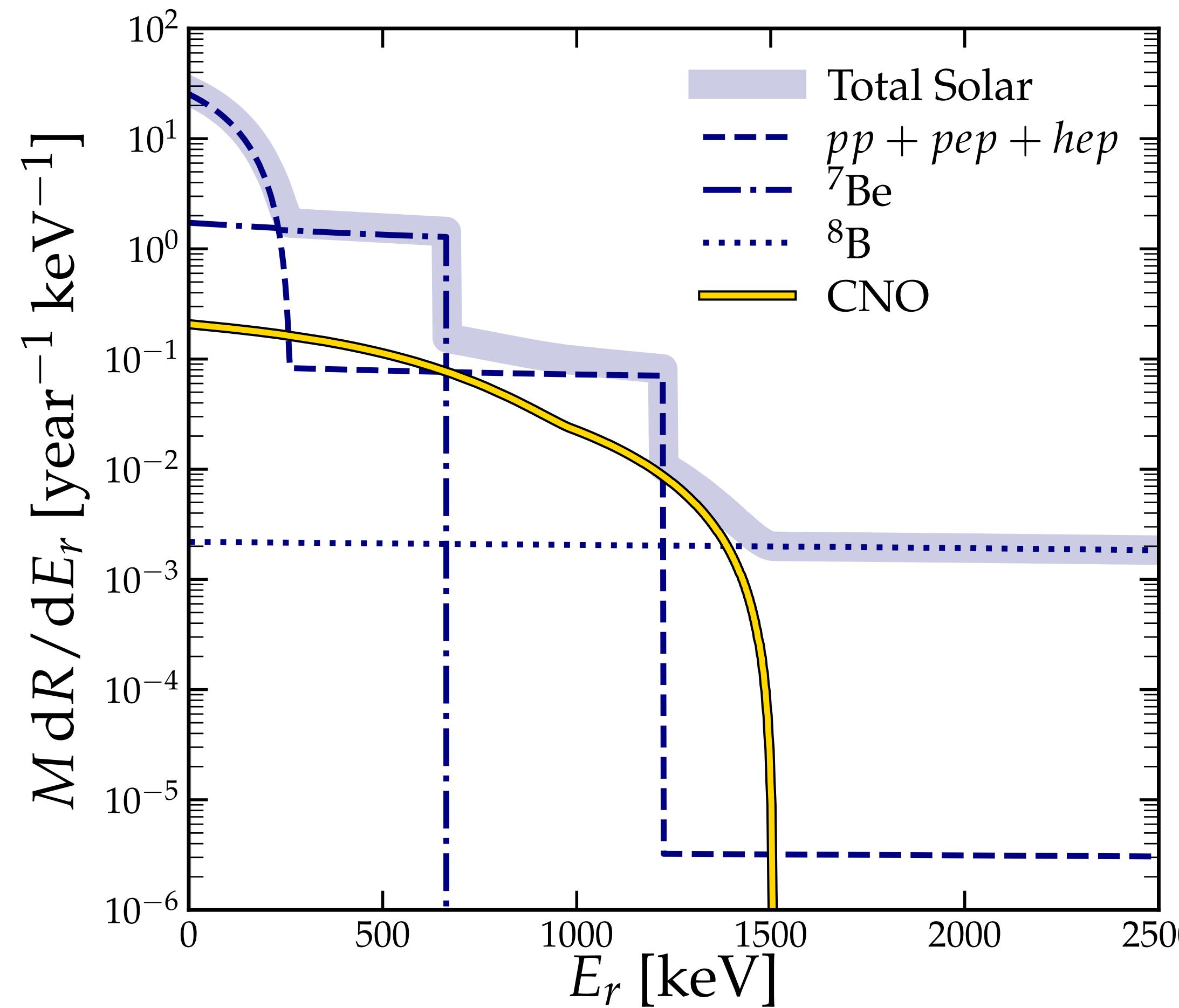
A directional detector has the potential for superior background rejection and NR/ER discrimination
→ this is true even if we're not interested about DM below the neutrino floor



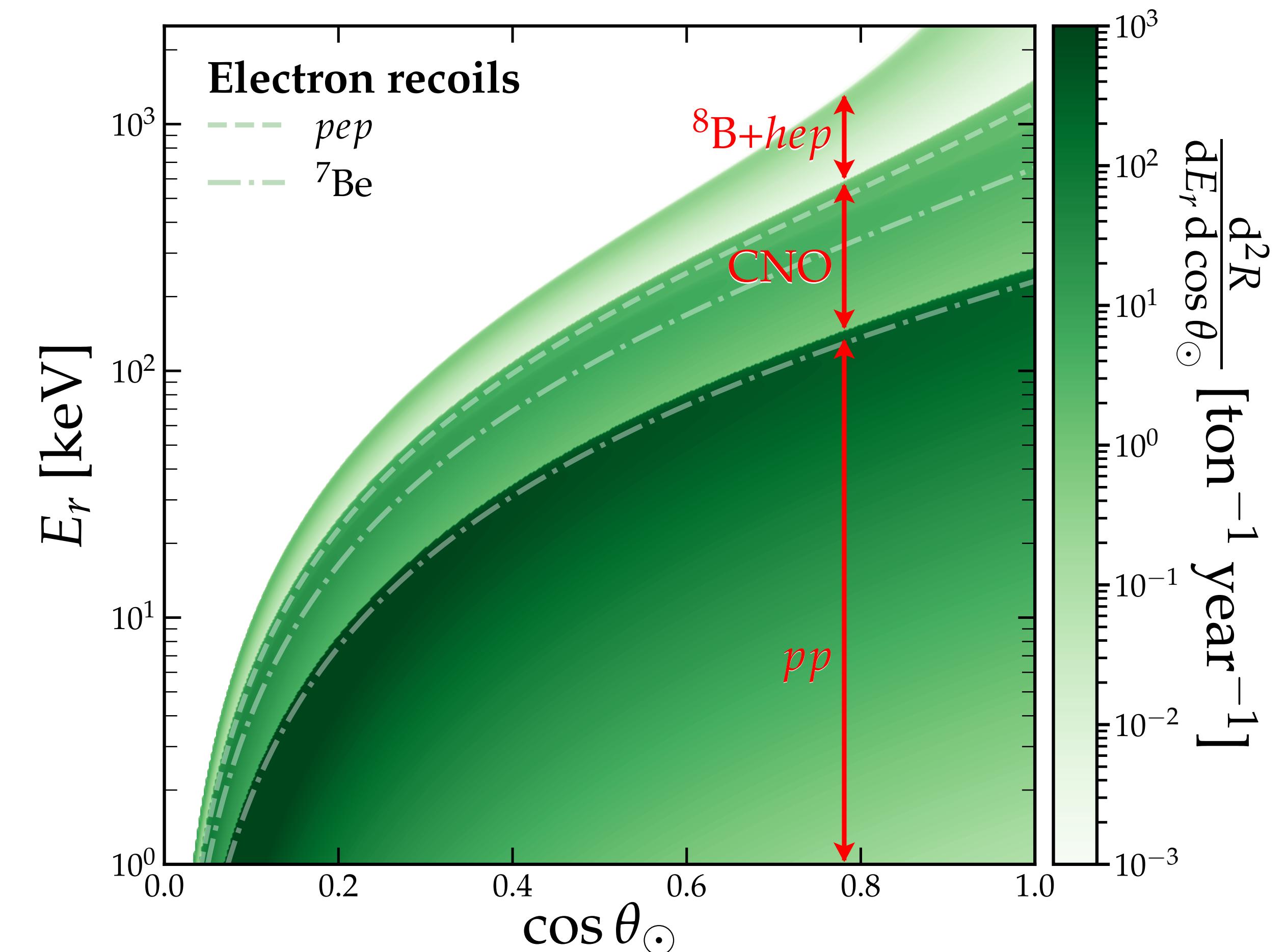
CYG ν S?

Given known direction to the Sun, directional information allows one to reconstruct the neutrino energy spectrum event-by-event (in principle, probably hard in practice)

Recoil energy spectrum (ERs)



Recoil energy-angle spectrum (ERs)



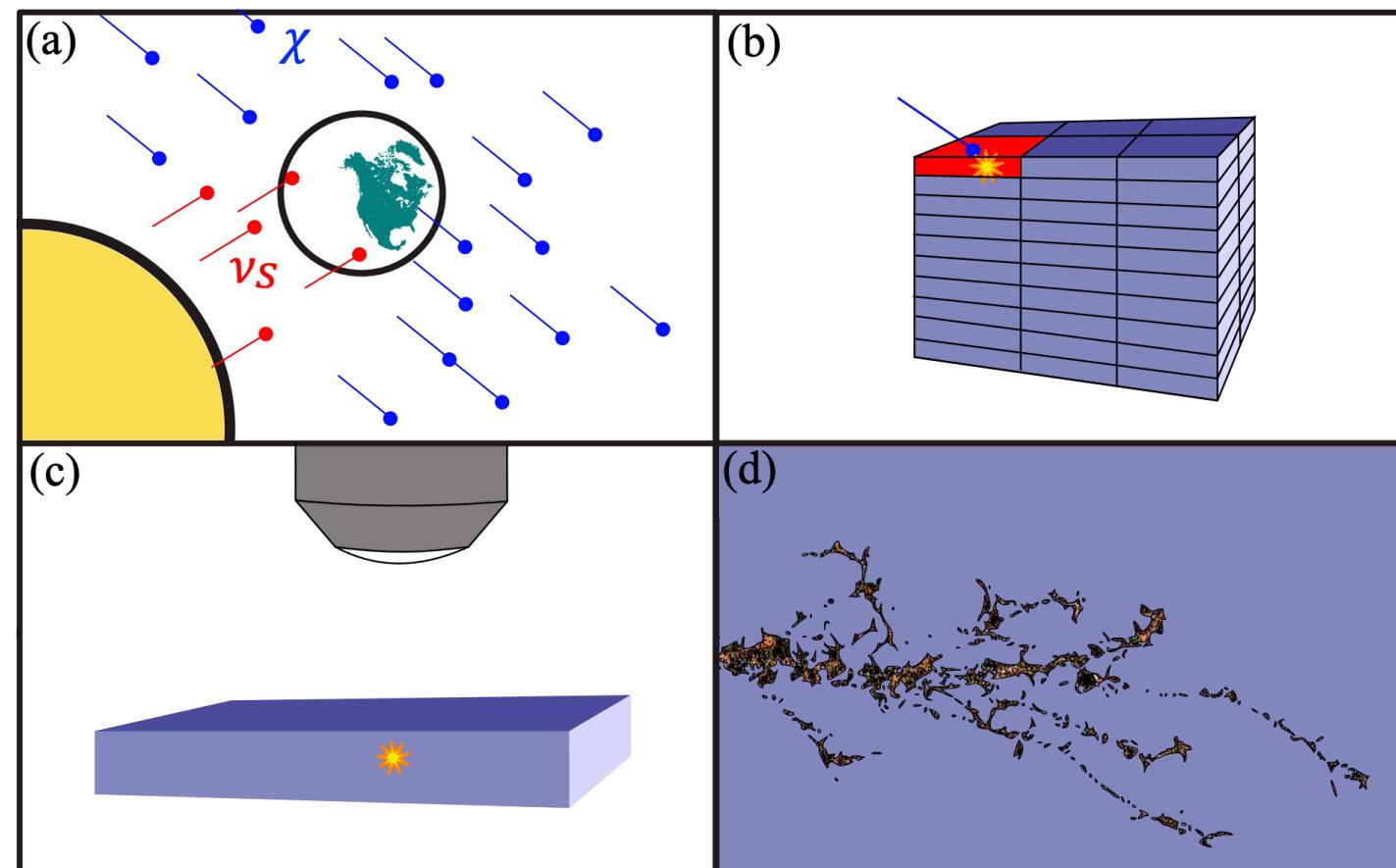
Beyond gas TPCs

What are the main limitations of the gas approach?

1. Target density
2. Diffusion

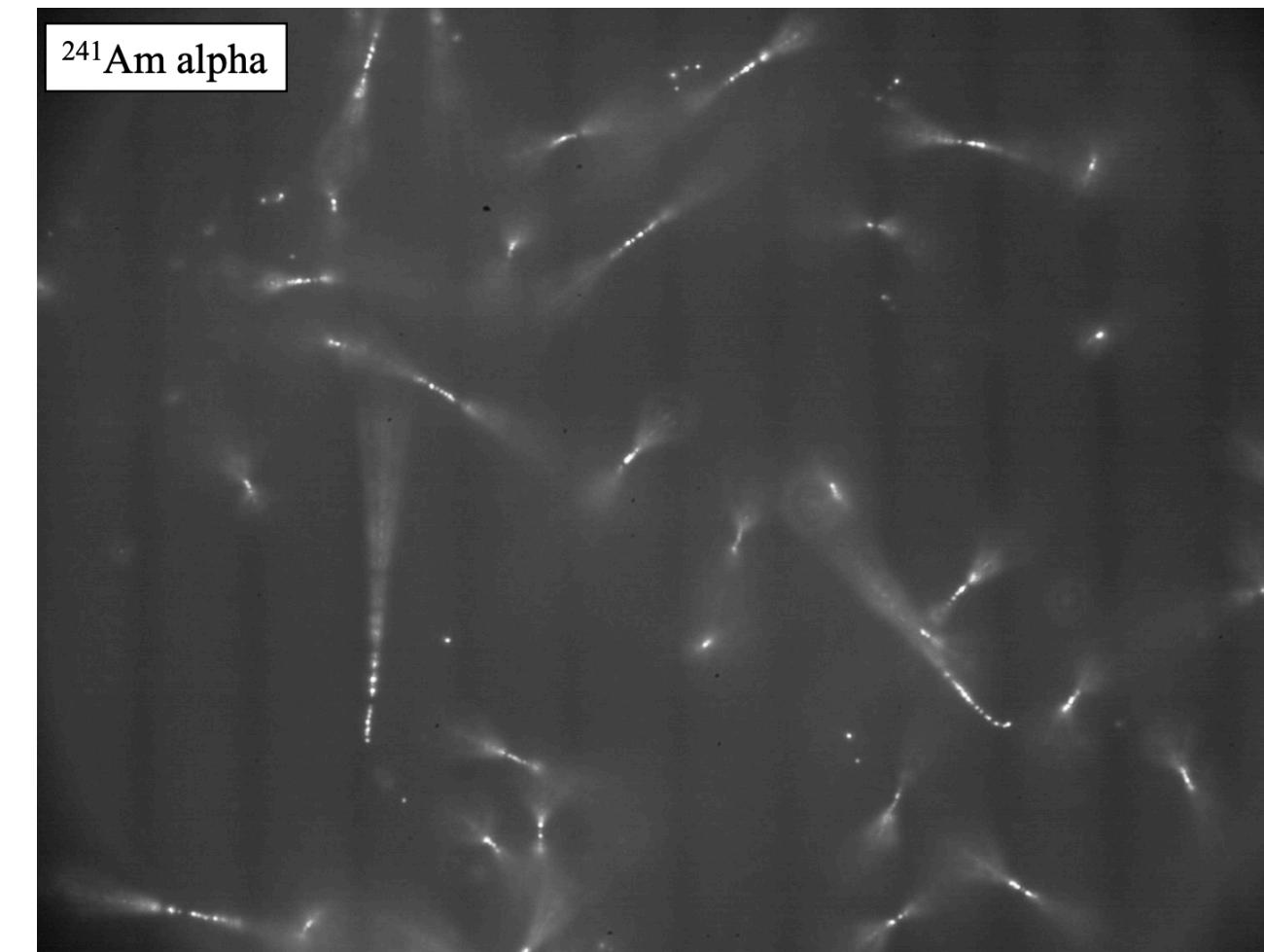
Directionality in solids

Nitrogen vacancy centres in diamond



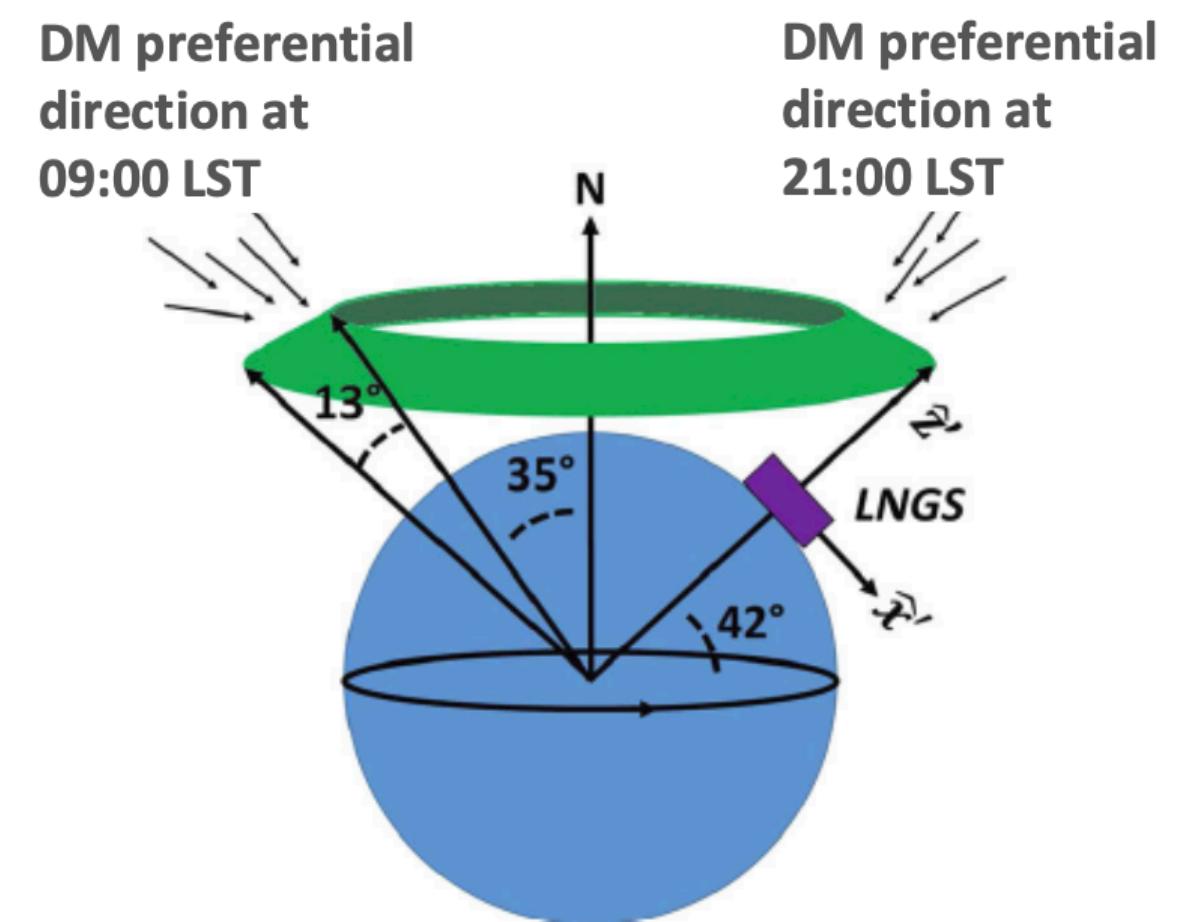
Marshall et al. [2009.01028]

Nuclear emulsions (NEWSdm)



T. Asada 1604.04199

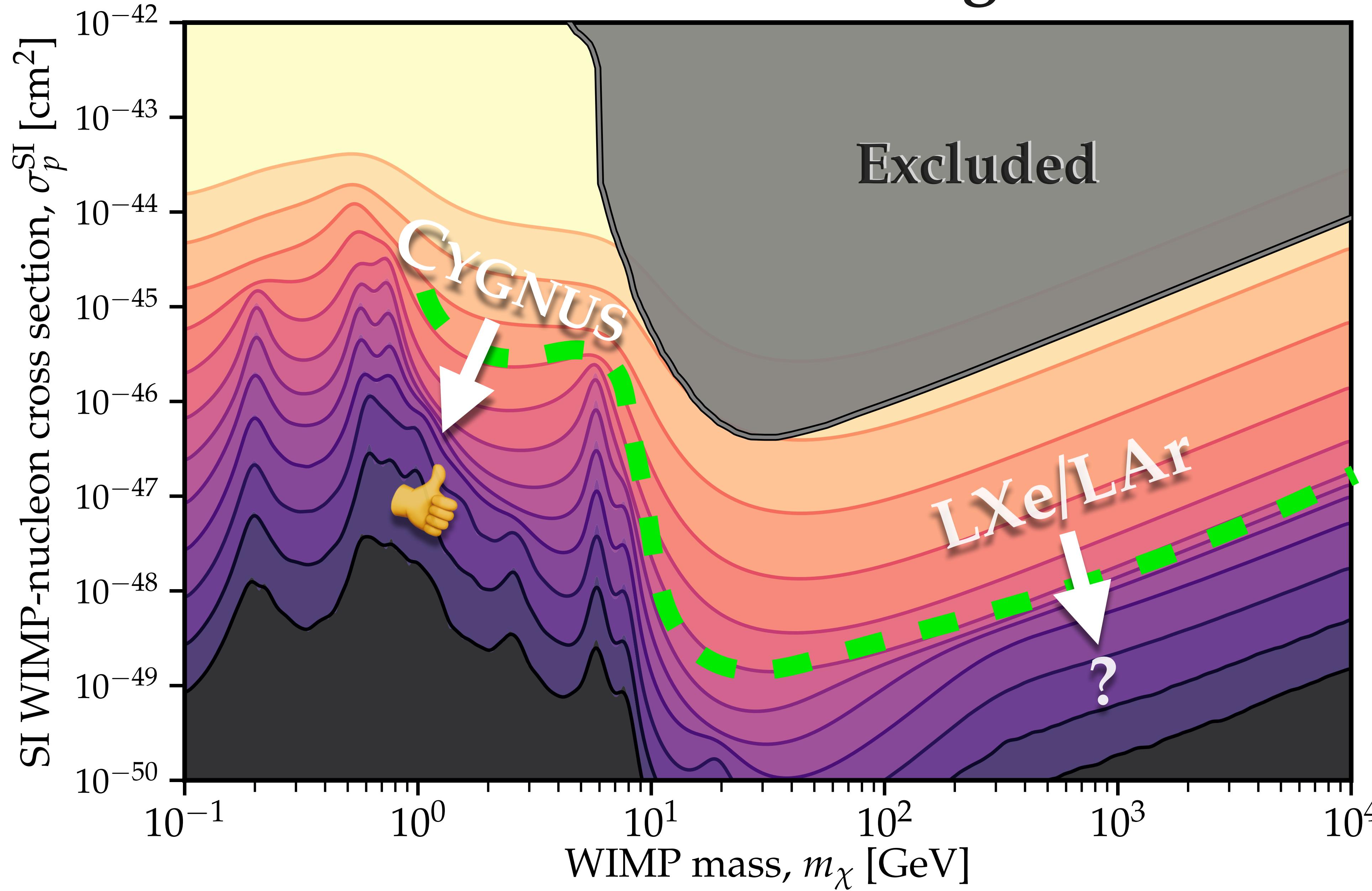
Anisotropic scintillators (ADAMO)



A. diMarco

Solid-state resolves both issues faced by gas (density / diffusion) but comes with additional challenges, e.g. scrambling of recoil directions or costly nano-scale imaging

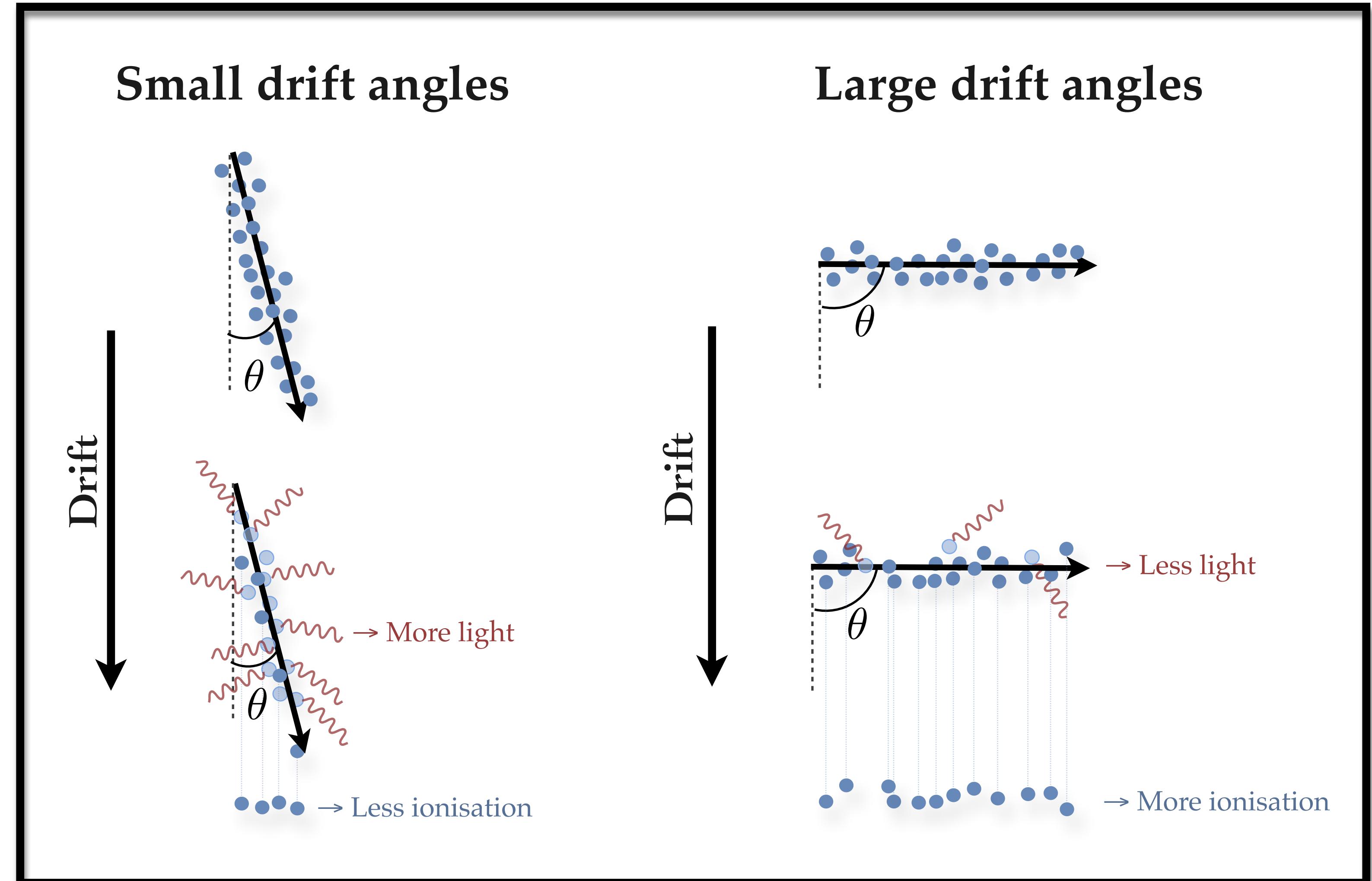
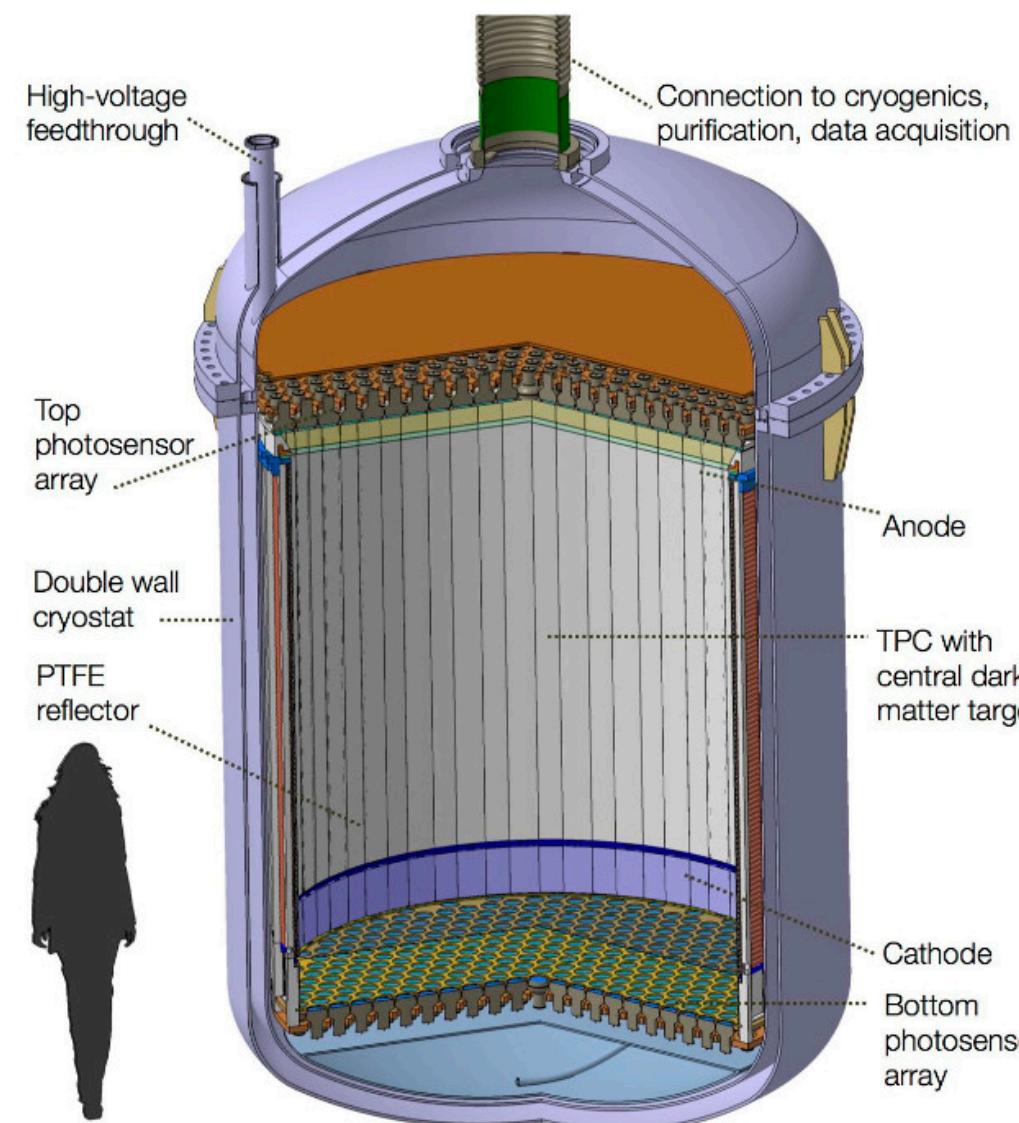
The neutrino fog



Directionality in liquids: columnar recombination

Nygren 2013 J. Phys.: Conf. Ser. 460 012006

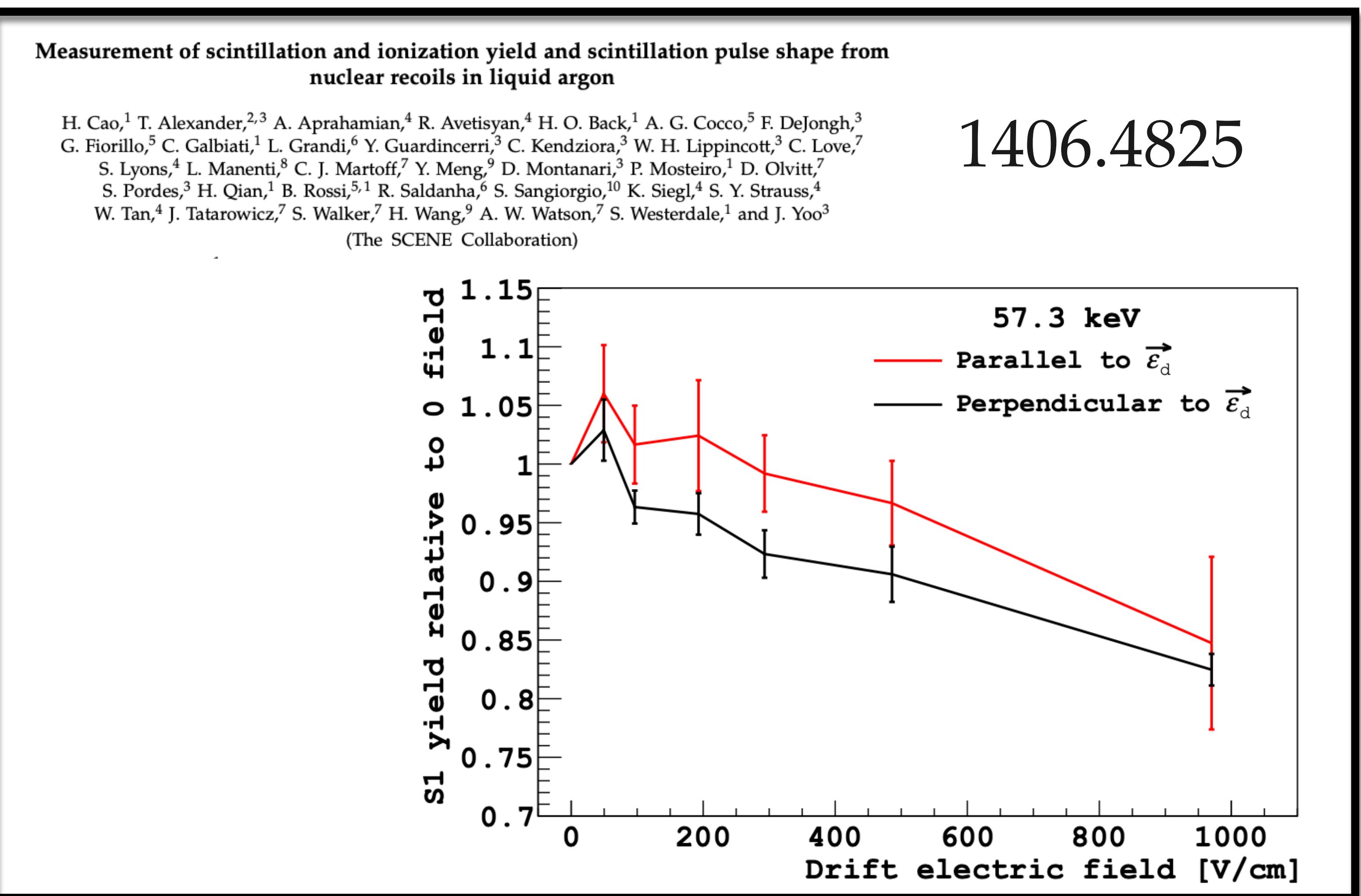
→ Possible directional effect where charge/light yield in LXe/LAr depends on angle of recoil w.r.t. electric field



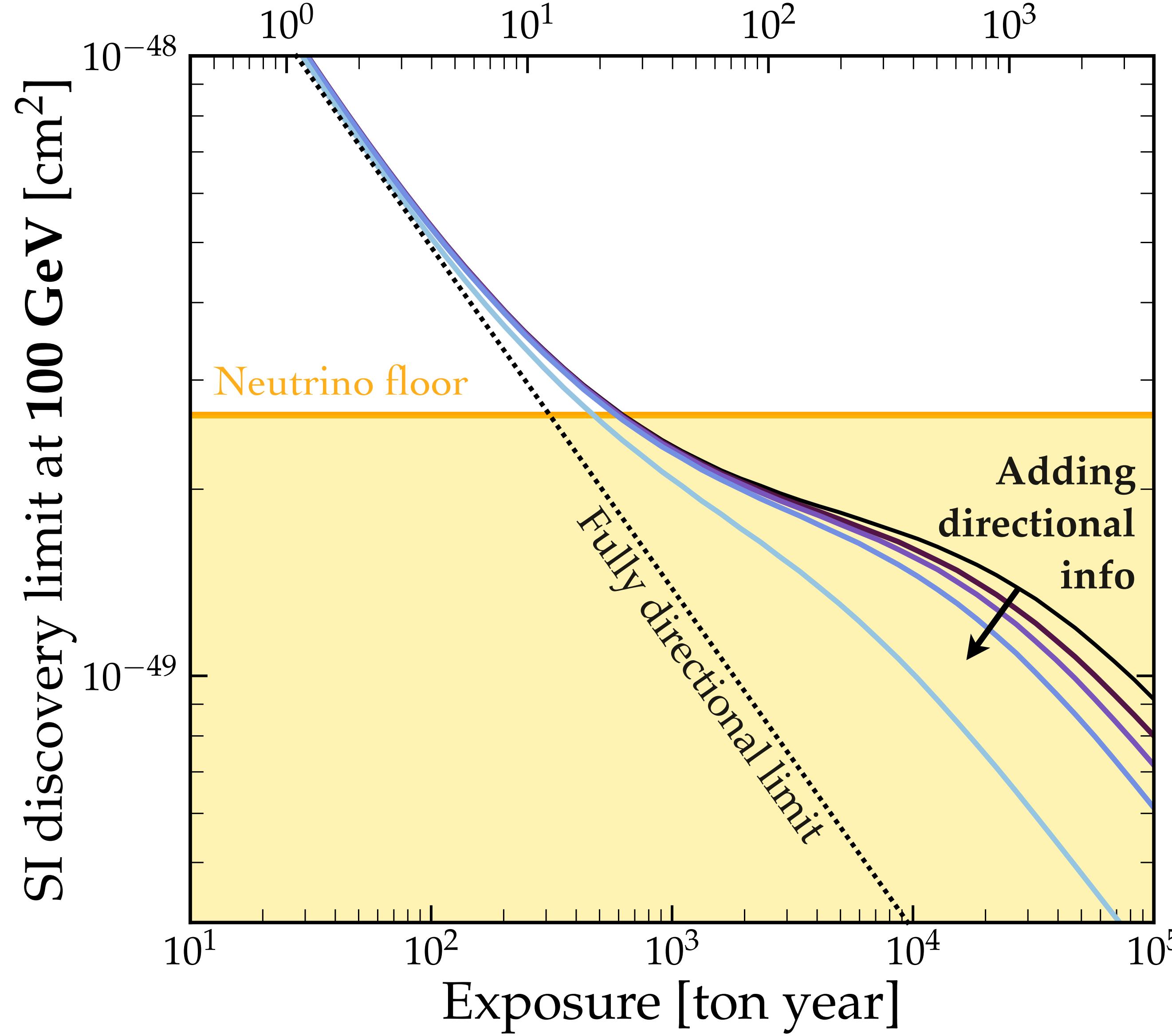
Directionality in liquids: columnar recombination

- Possible hint in LAr

- Almost certainly unobservable in LXe
(at interesting energies, though GXe is a possibility)



Number of atmospheric neutrino events



- No effect → — Nondirectional
- Realistic → — Stationary, $\mathcal{A} = 0.5$
- Optimistic → — Stationary, $\mathcal{A} = 1$
- Very optimistic → — Cygnus Tracking, $\mathcal{A} = 1$
- Impossible → — Head-Tail, $\mathcal{A} = 1$

Columnar recombination
doesn't help much, even in
wildly over-optimistic scenario
→ **directionality in liquids**
seems unfeasible for now

What about a radical re-thinking?

New Dark Matter Detectors using DNA or RNA for Nanometer Tracking

Andrzej Drukier,^{1,*} Katherine Freese,^{2,3,†} Alejandro Lopez,^{2,‡} David Spergel,^{4,§} Charles Cantor,^{5,¶} George Church,^{6,**} and Takeshi Sano^{7,††}

¹ *BioTraces Inc., 5660 Oak Tanager Ct., Burke, Va. 22015*

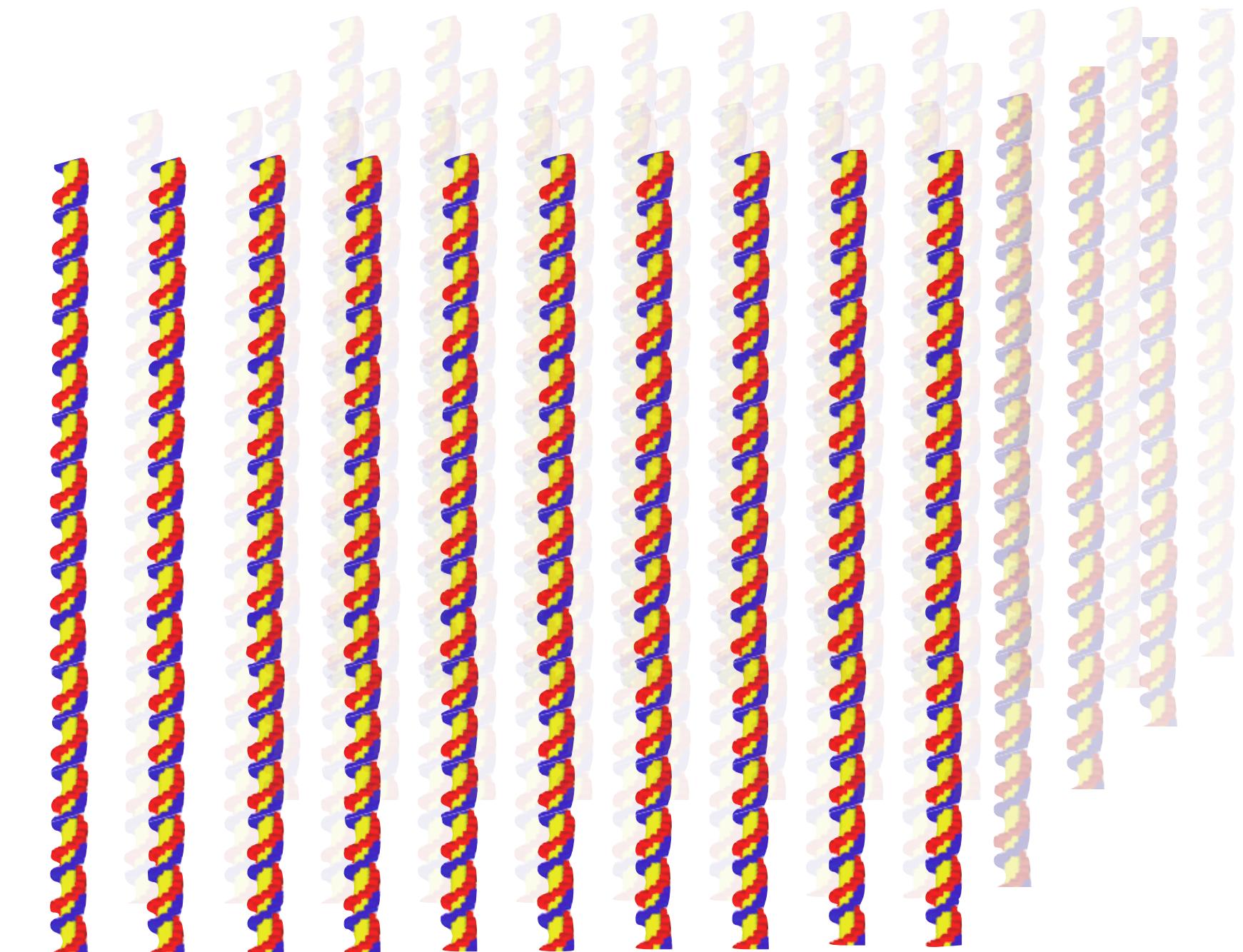
² *Michigan Center for Theoretical Physics, Department of Physics,
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 48109*

³ *Physics Department, Caltech, Pasadena, CA 91101*

1206.6809

DNA-based particle detector?

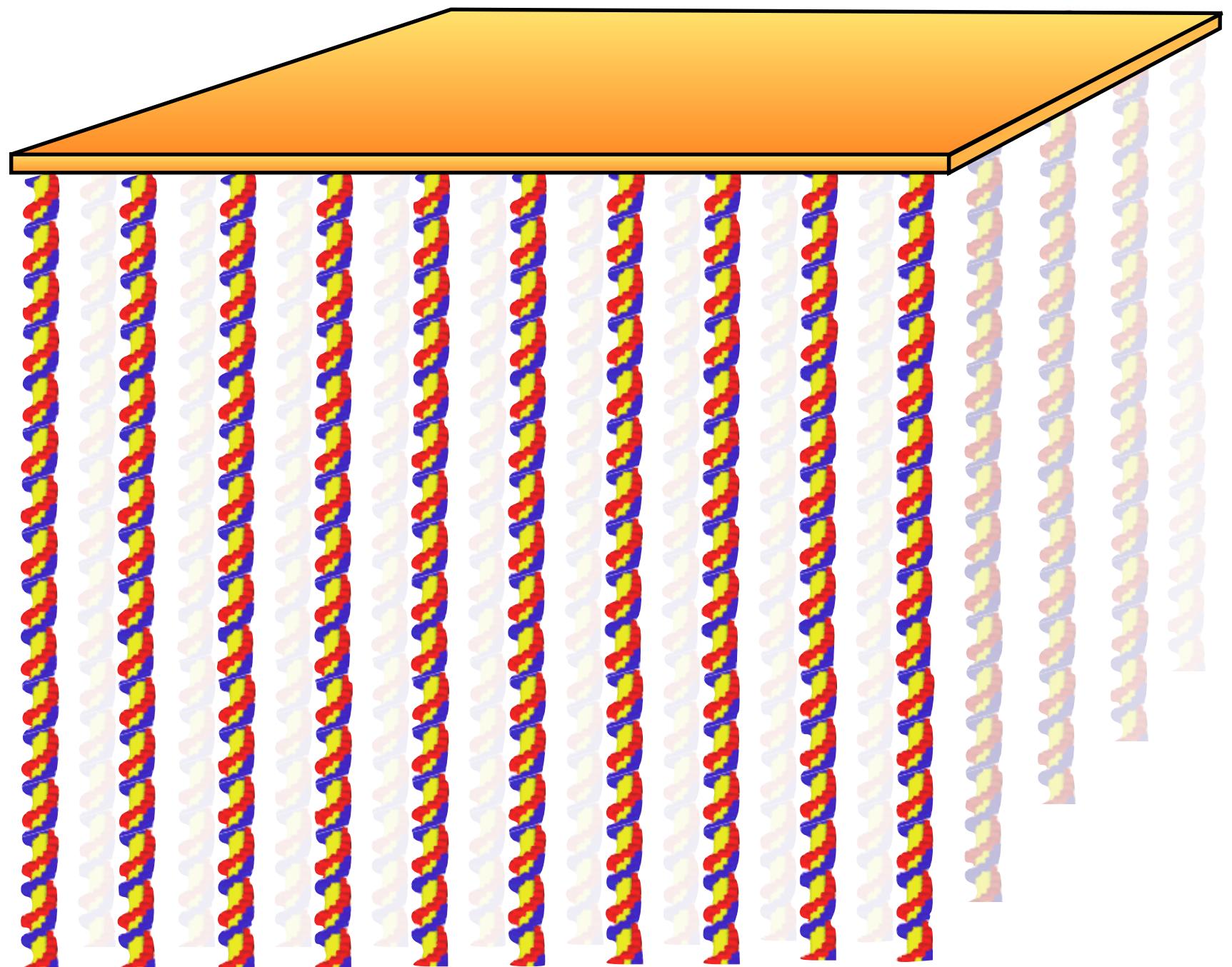
Step 1: acquire some double or single-stranded nucleic acids, each with a known sequences of bases



DNA-based particle detector?

Step 1: acquire some double or single-stranded nucleic acids, each with a known sequences of bases

Step 2: Attach them in a regular pattern to a thin substrate made of a high density material

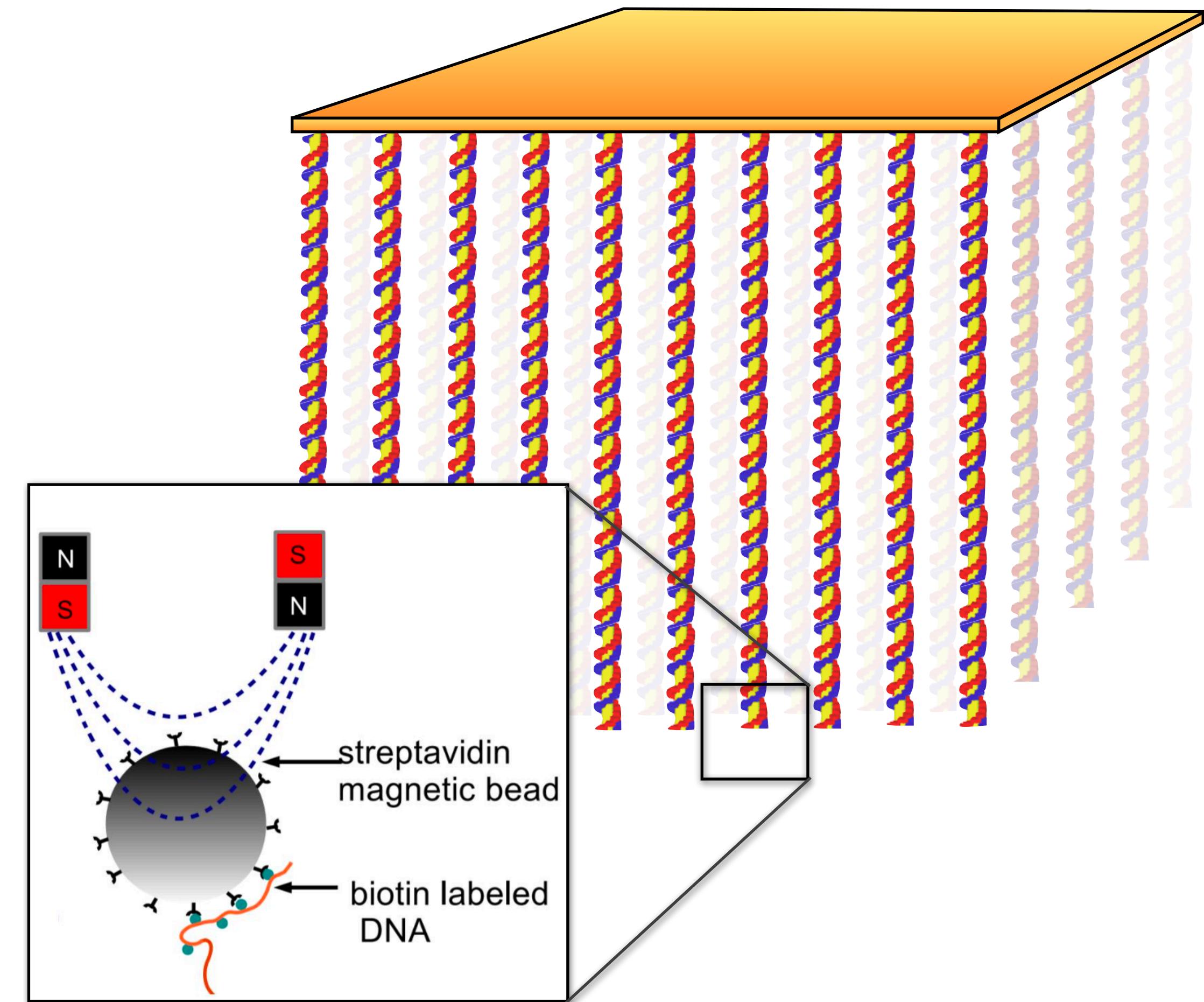


DNA-based particle detector?

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Step 3: Attach a paramagnetic bead to each strand



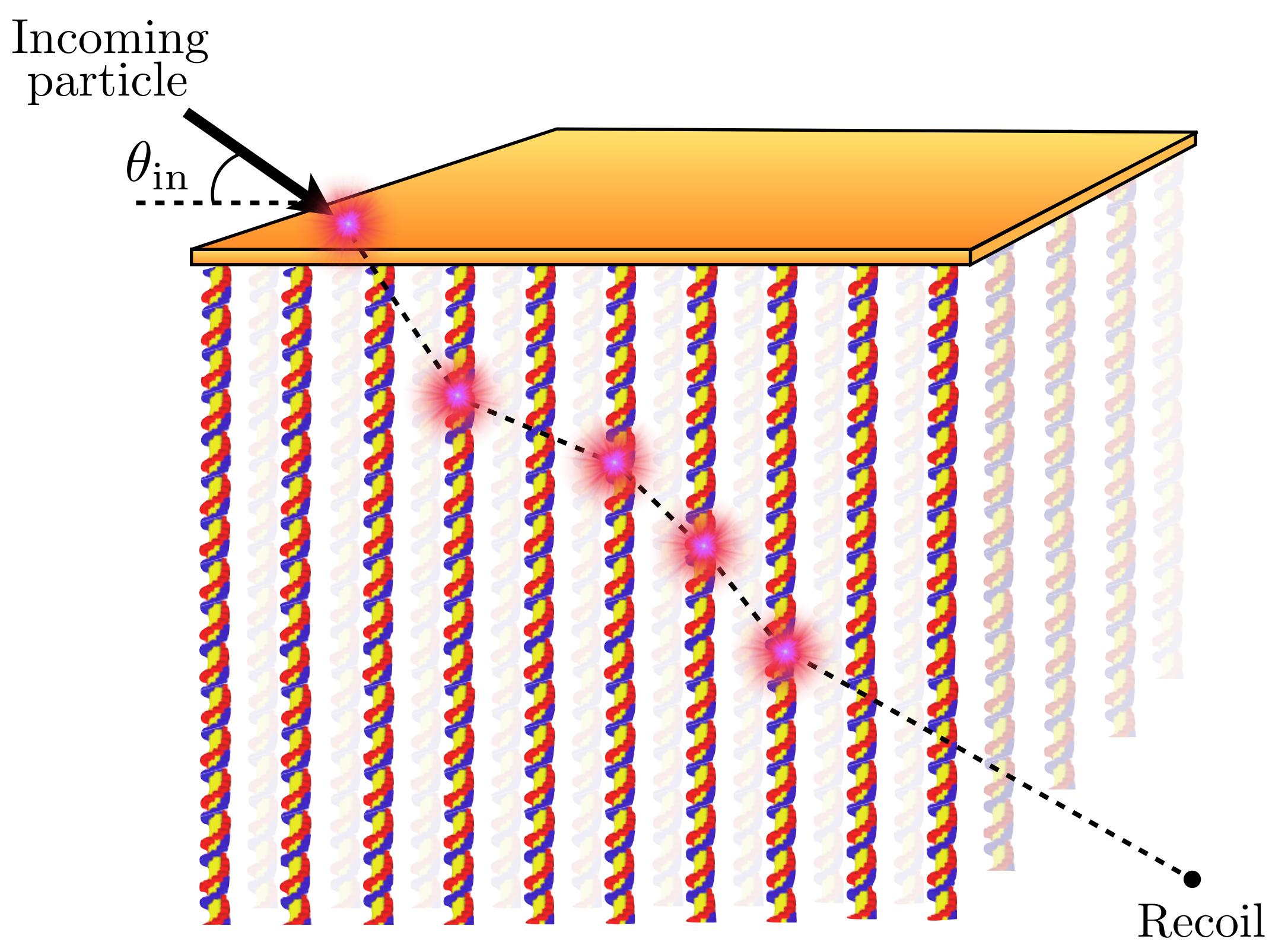
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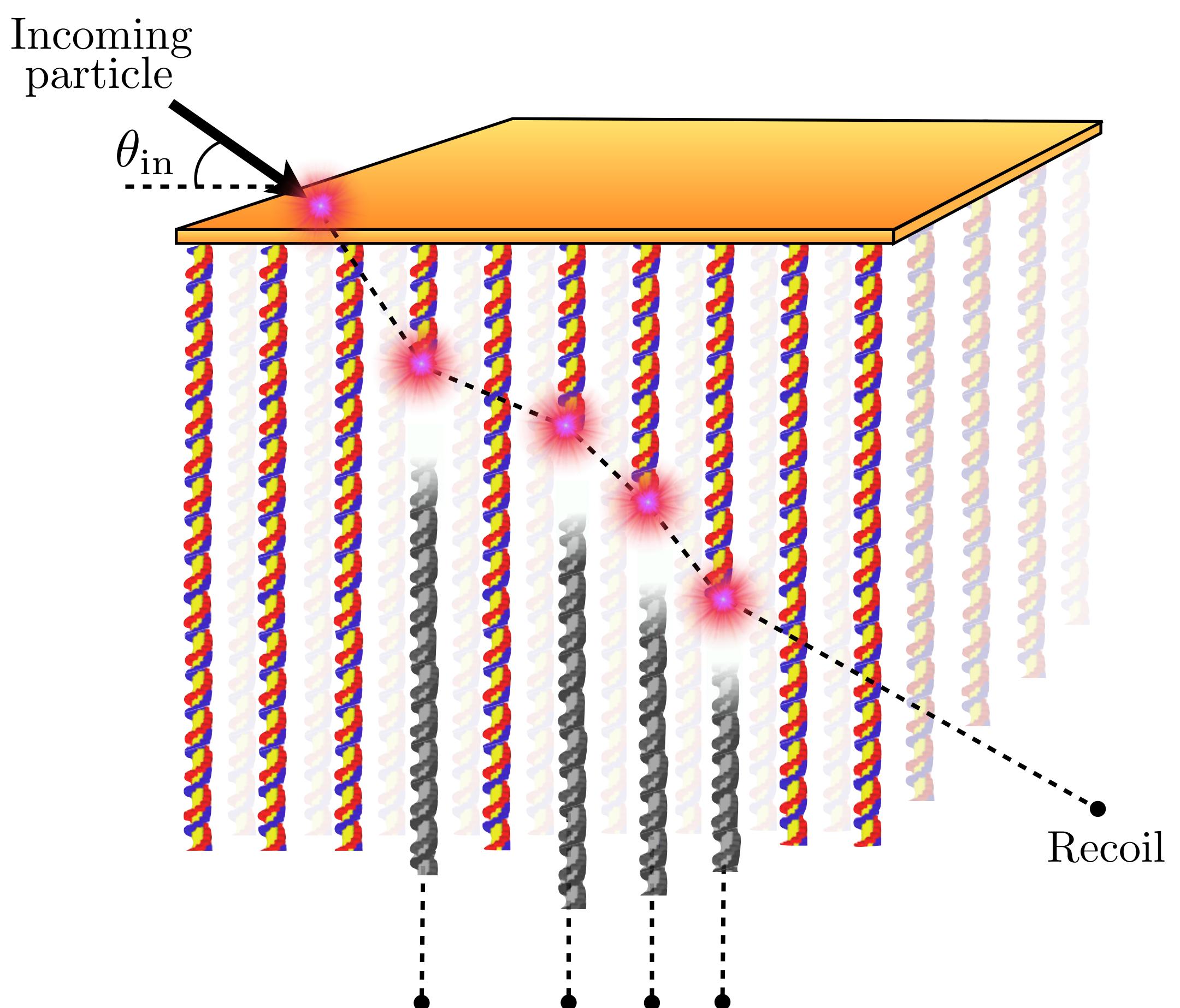
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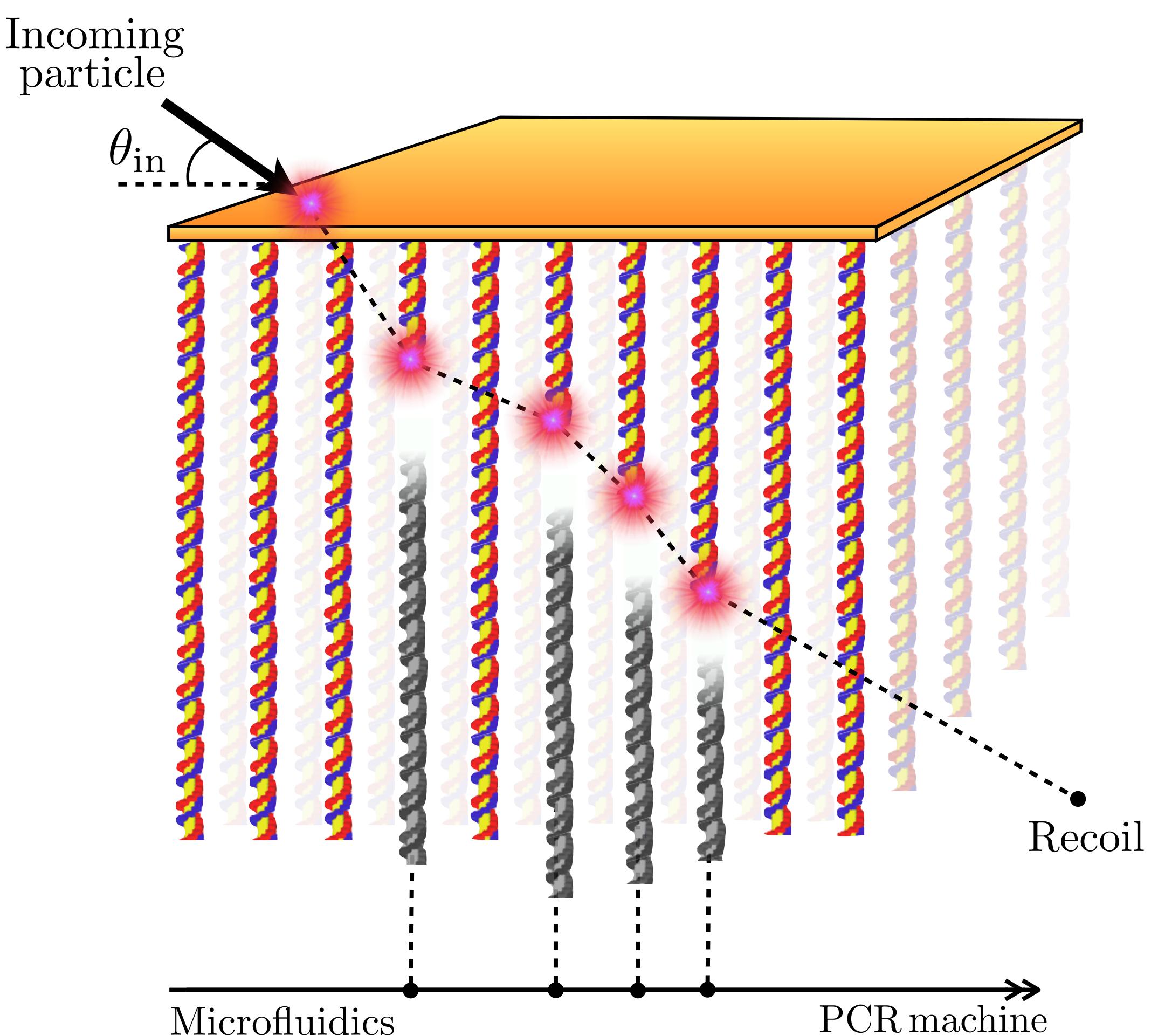
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Step 6: System of microfluidics transports the strand segments to a PCR machine which amplifies them and the original (x,y,z) positions are reconstructed

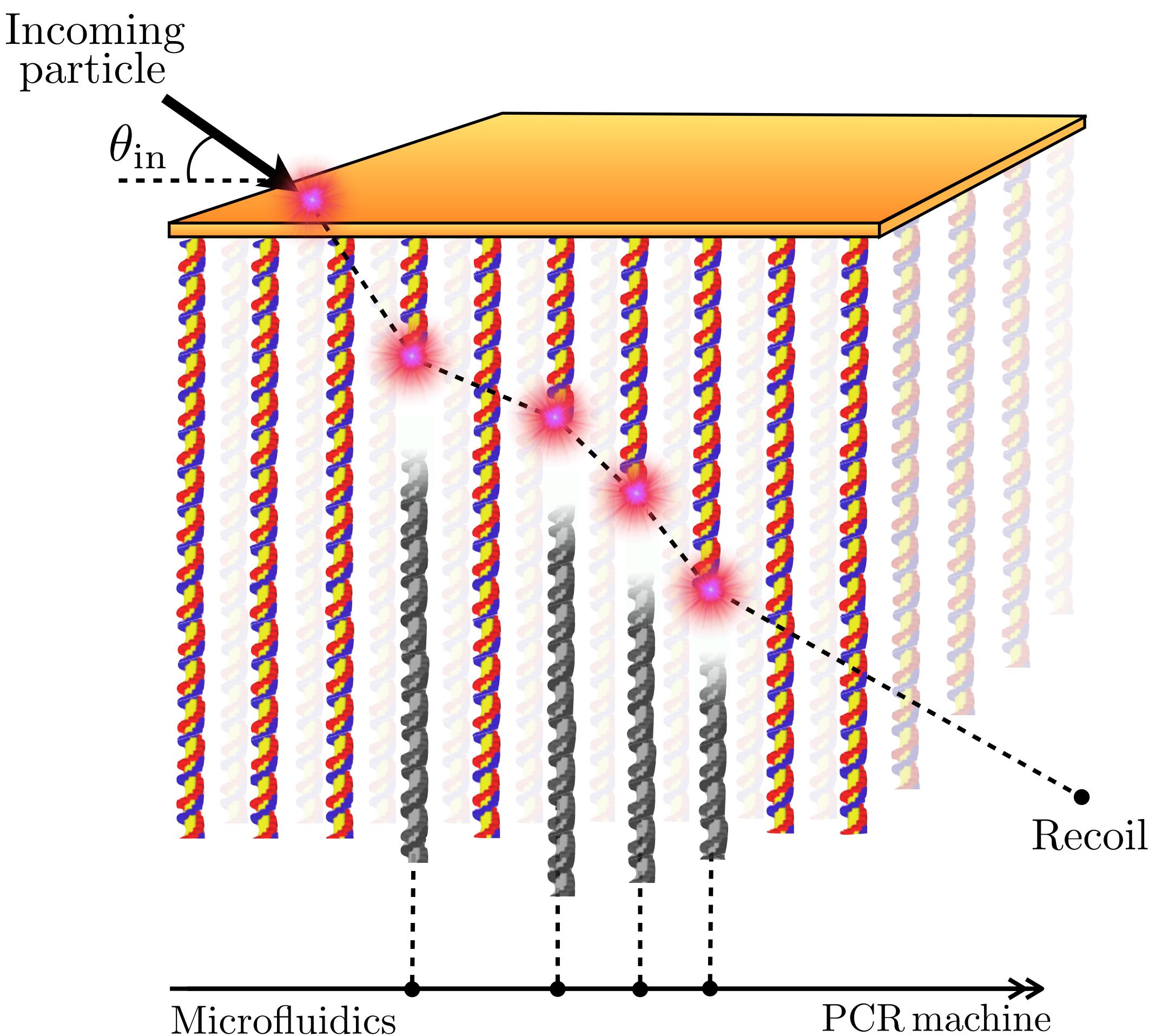


DNA-based particle detector?

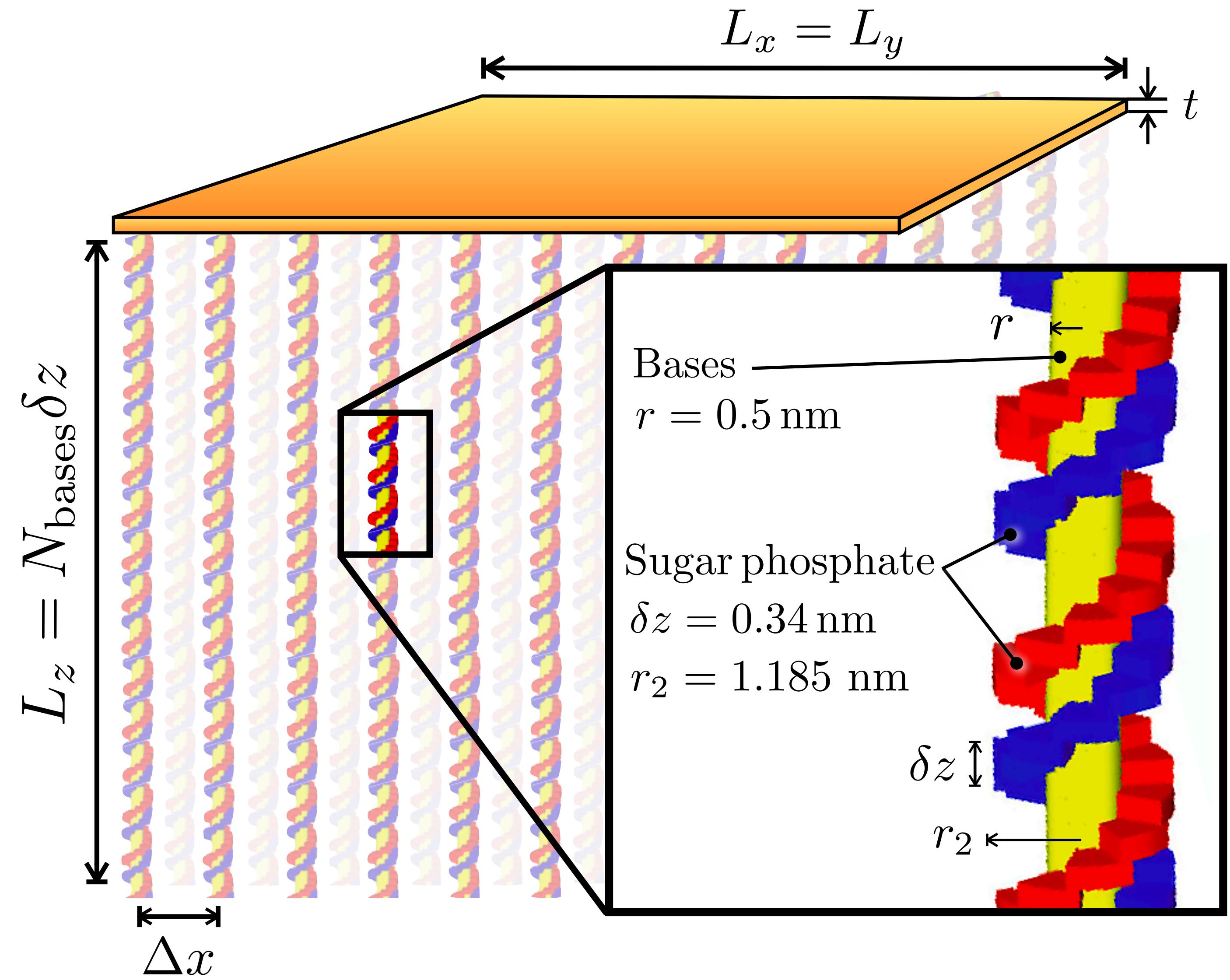
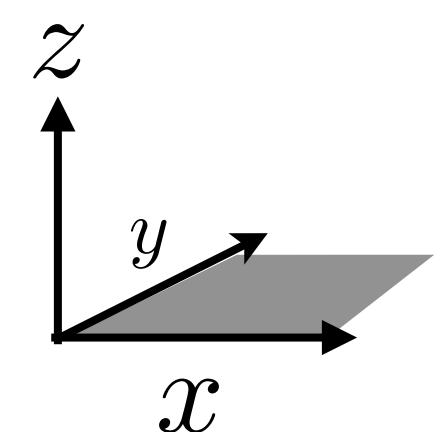
How crazy is it?

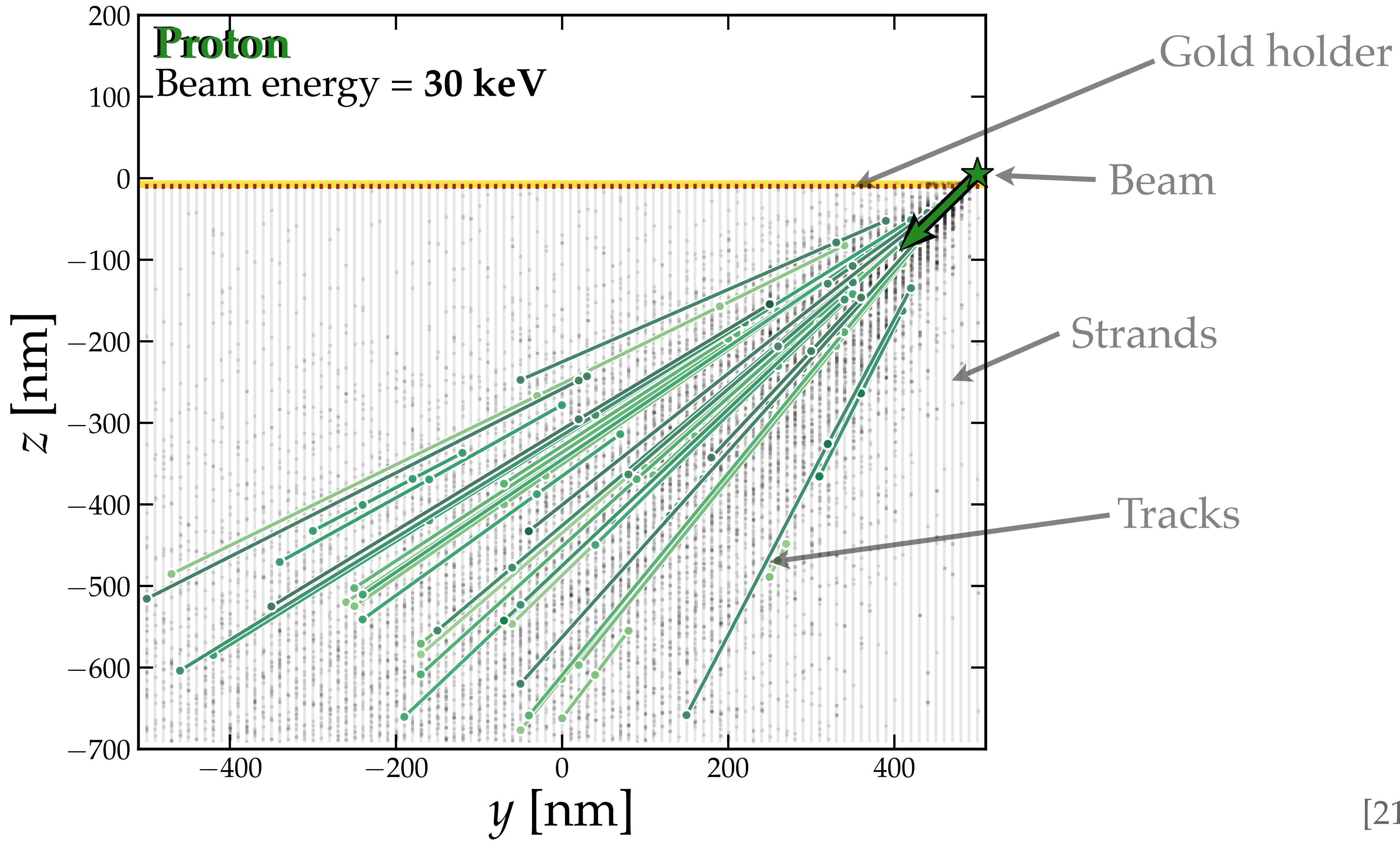
Putting aside the obvious experimental challenge, there is a clear advantage in the context of directional detection

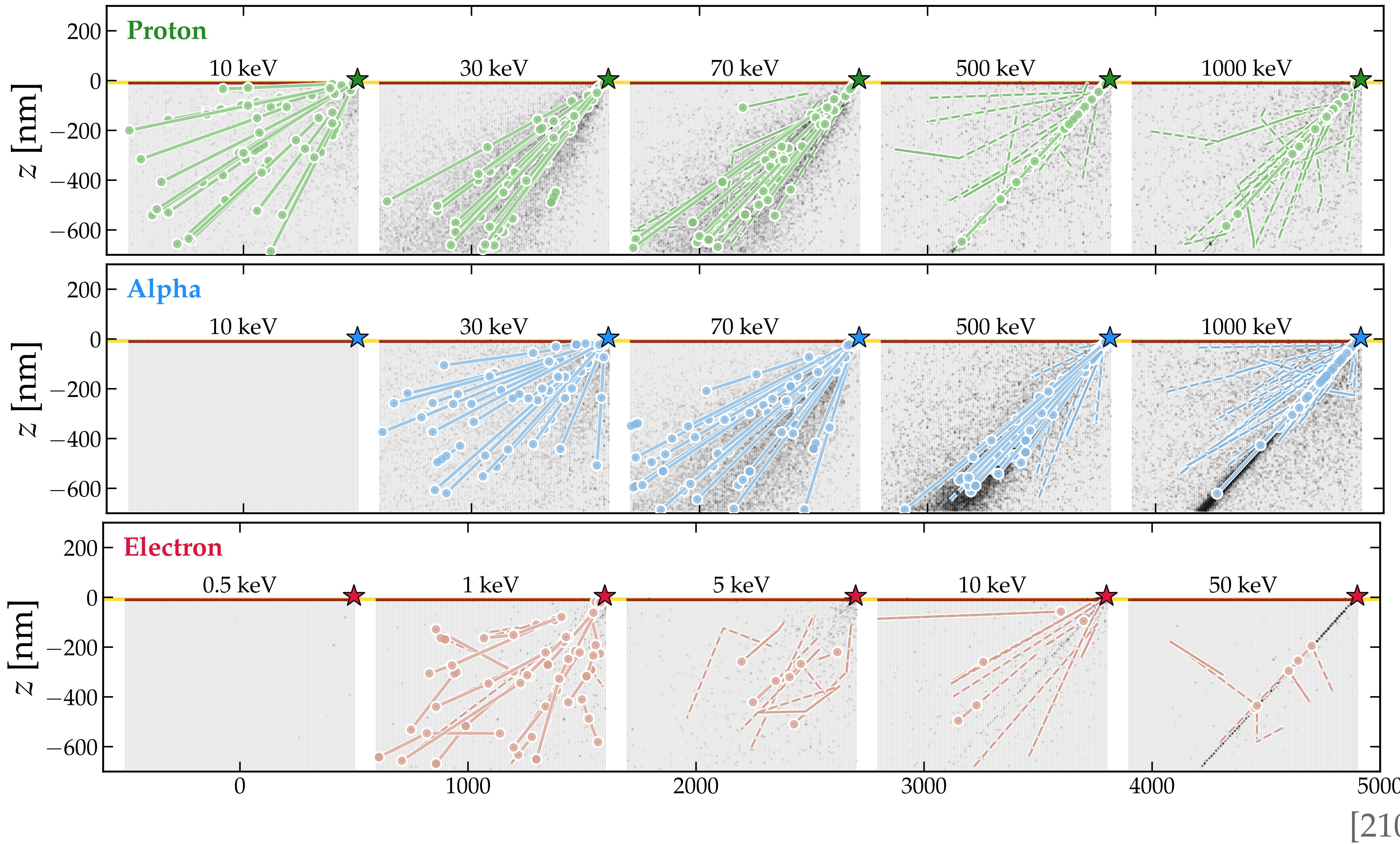
→ No diffusion and no nanoscale interrogation required



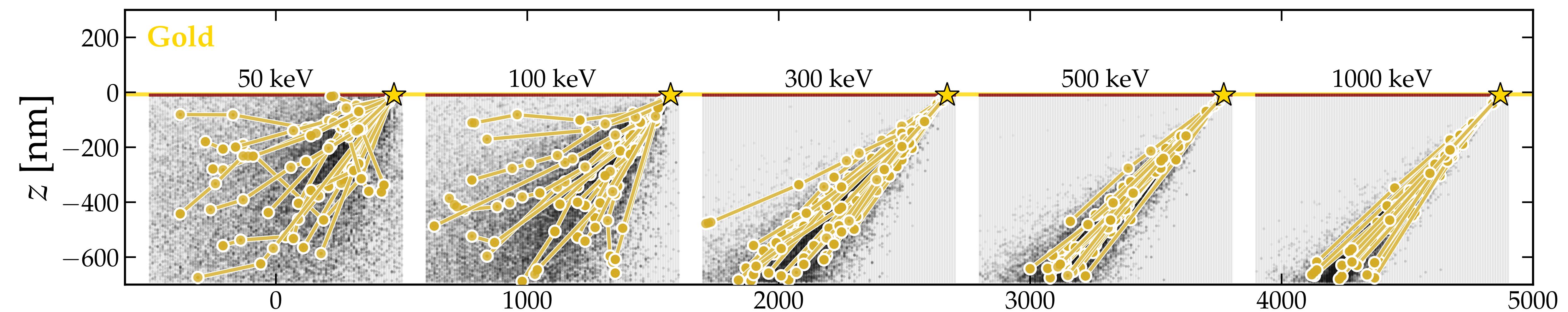
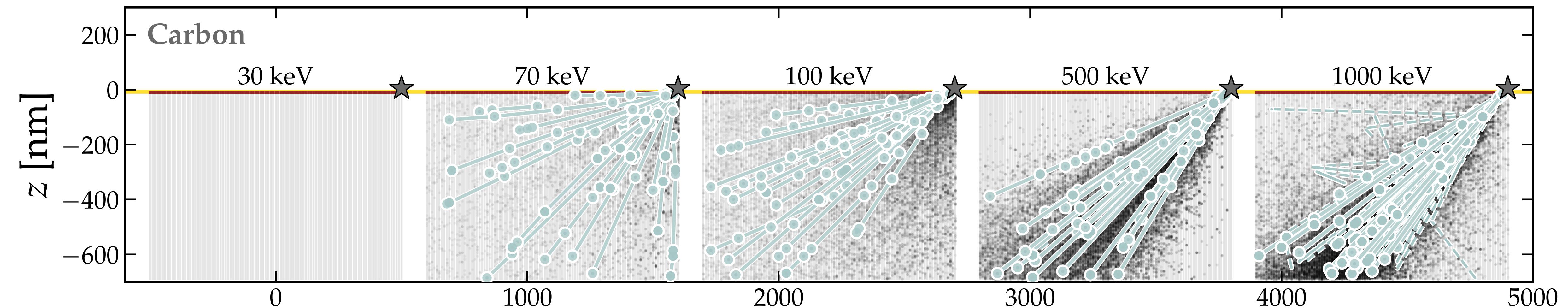
Idea: Lets make a crude model of the detector which roughly captures the geometry and material content and use Geant4 to simulate particle tracks



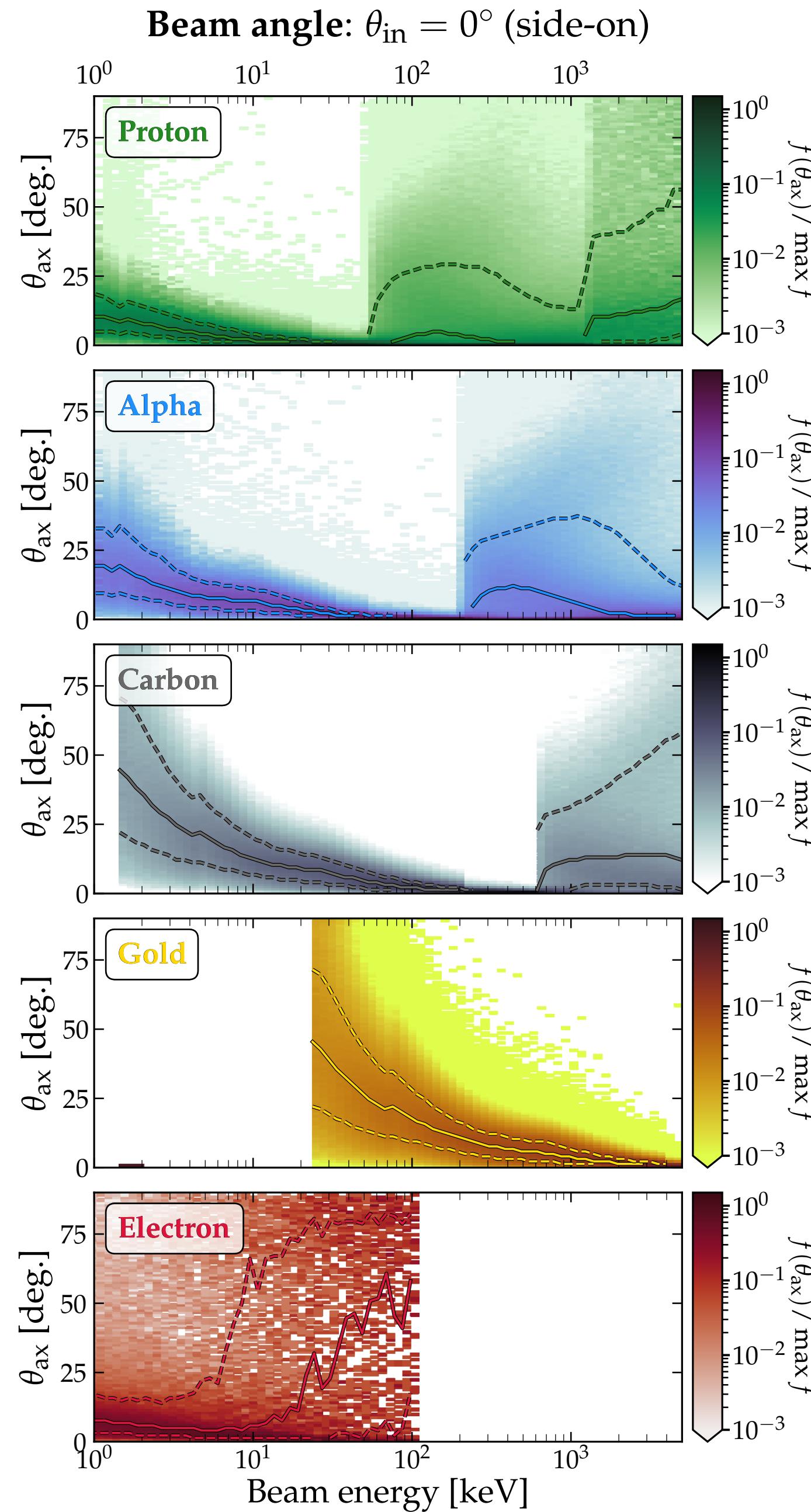




[2105.11949]



[2105.11949]



Main conclusions from the μm^3 unit simulation

- Track directions well-preserved. Around 25° angular res. for *initial* recoil direction
- Particle ID and energy reconstruction not really possible, need to look at tracks over many units and measure dE/dx
- Need to find a good purpose for the idea...

Experimental side

- **Detector construction →**
DNA-origamists can make practically anything

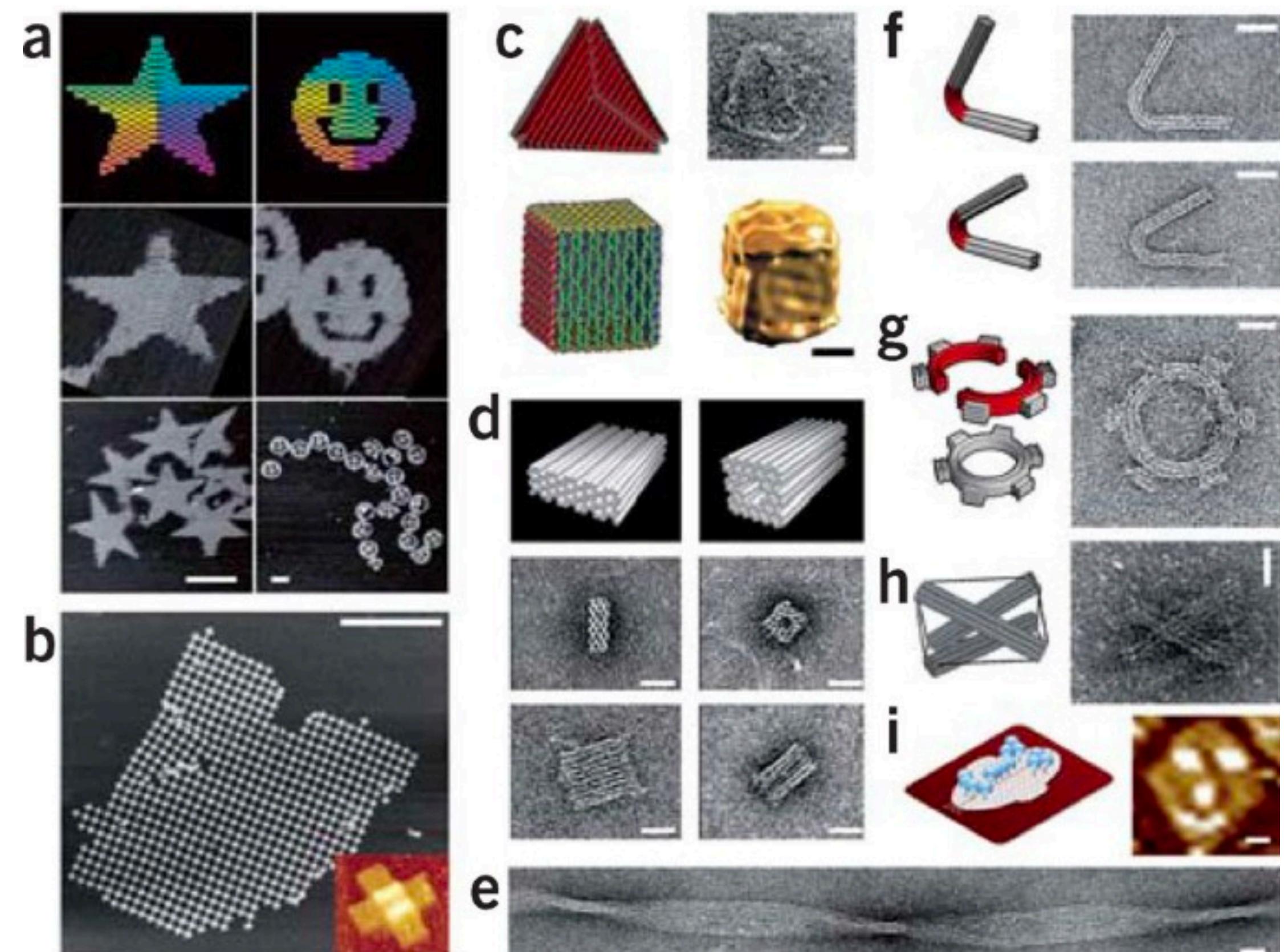
Primer | Published: 28 January 2021

DNA origami

Swarup Dey, Chunhai Fan✉, Kurt V. Gothelf✉, Jiang Li✉, Chenxiang Lin✉, Longfei Liu, Na Liu✉, Minke A. D. Nijenhuis, Barbara Saccà✉, Friedrich C. Simmel✉, Hao Yan✉ & Pengfei Zhan

Nature Reviews Methods Primers 1, Article number: 13 (2021) | Cite this article

11k Accesses | 7 Citations | 25 Altmetric | Metrics

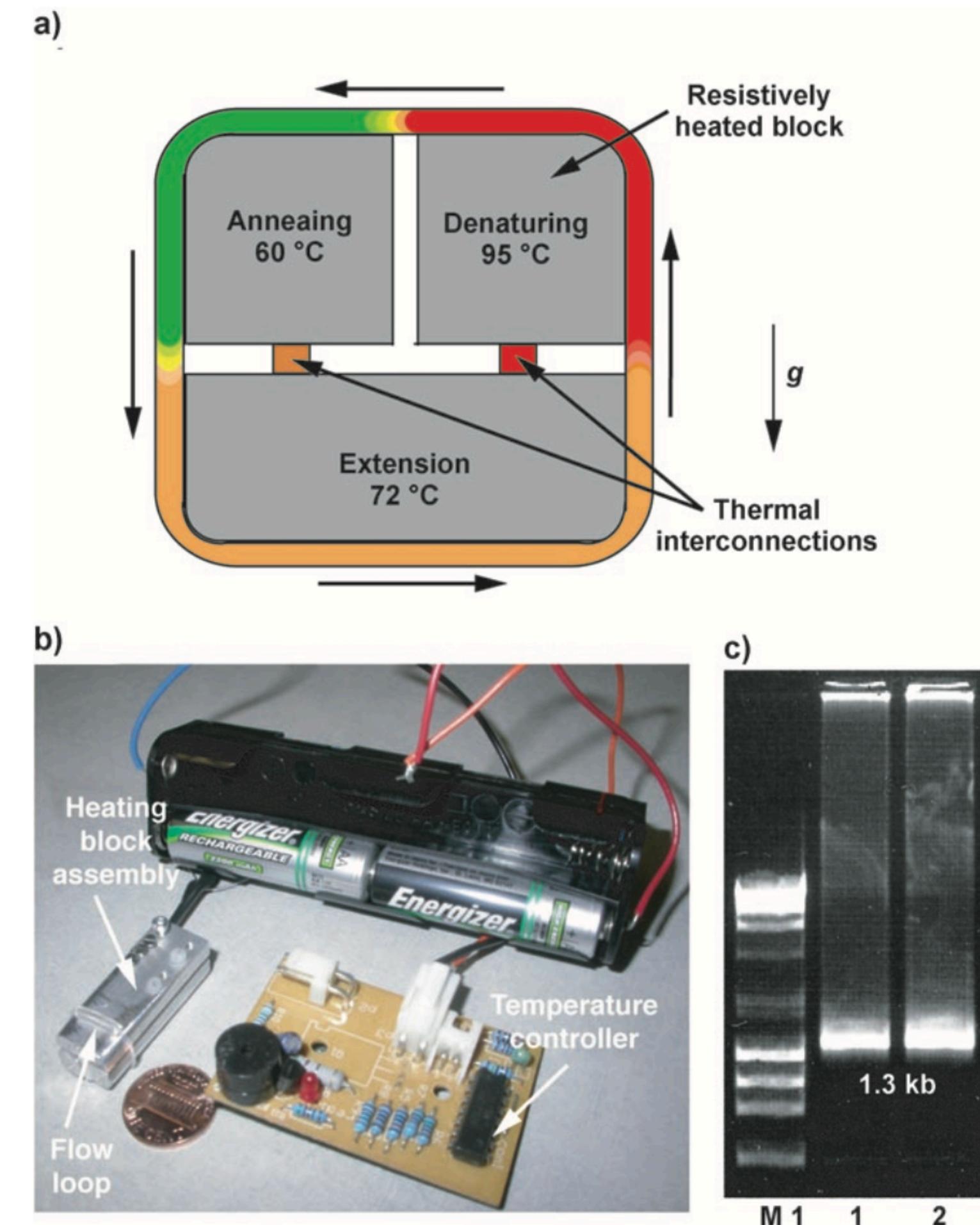


Experimental side

- Detector construction →
DNA-origamists can make practically anything
- PCR machines → cheap, commercially available, portable, and fast.

A Pocket-Sized Convective PCR Thermocycler**

*Nitin Agrawal, Yassin A. Hassan, and Victor M. Ugaz**



Experimental side

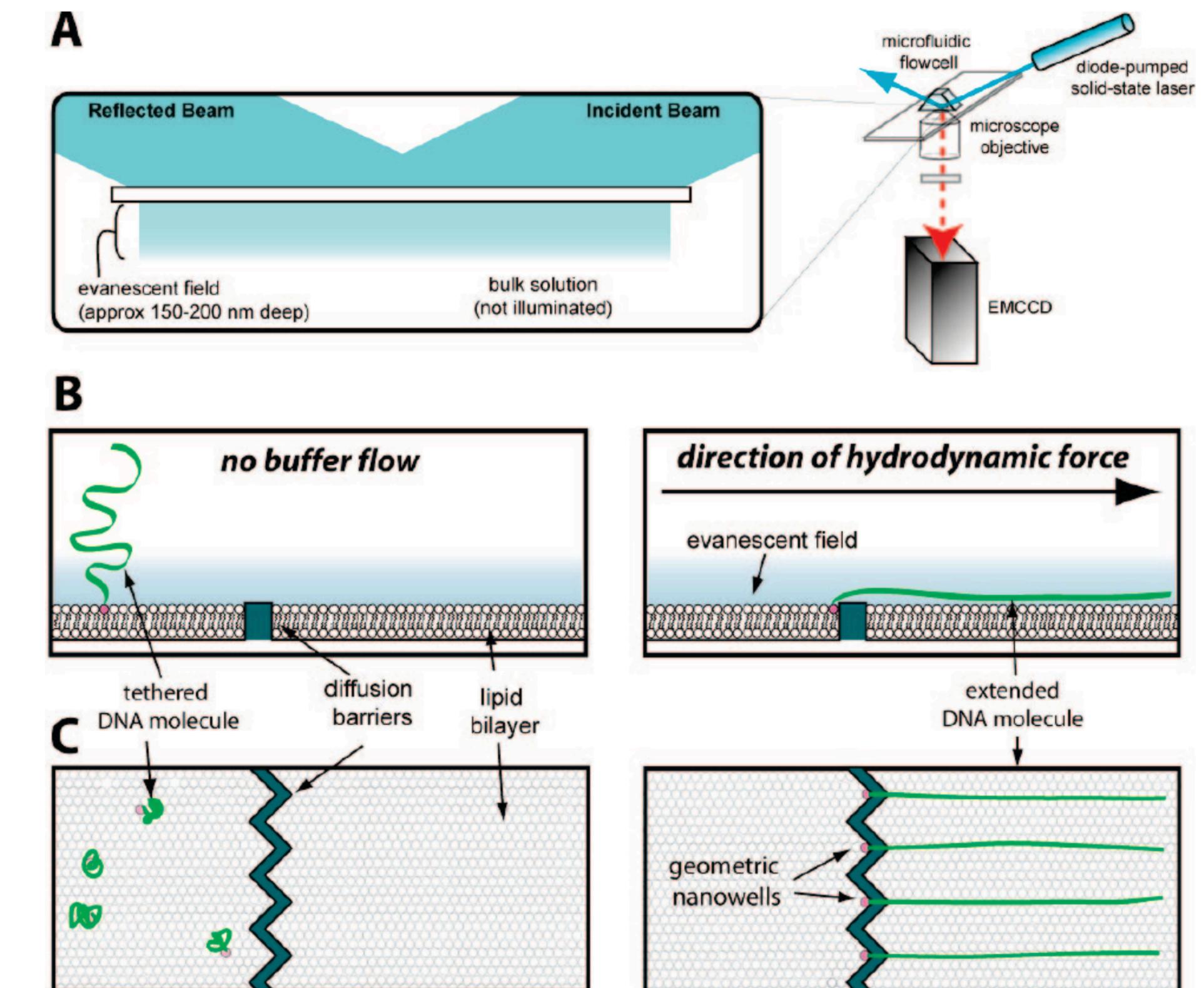
- **Detector construction** → DNA-origamists can make practically anything
- **PCR machines** → cheap, commercially available, portable, and fast.
- **DNA-substrate attachment** → standard protocols (looking at this in the lab right now!)

Parallel Arrays of Geometric Nanowells for Assembling Curtains of DNA with Controlled Lateral Dispersion

Mari-Liis Visnapuu,^{‡,§} Teresa Fazio,^{†,§} Shalom Wind,[†] and Eric C. Greene*,[‡]

Department of Applied Physics and Applied Mathematics, Center for Electron Transport in Molecular Nanostructures, NanoMedicine Center for Mechanical Biology, Columbia University 1020 Schapiro CEPSR, 530 West 120th Street, New York, New York 10027, and Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biophysics, Columbia University, 650 West 168th Street, Black Building Room 536, New York, New York 10032

Received June 6, 2008. Revised Manuscript Received August 18, 2008



Experimental side

- **Detector construction** → DNA-origamists can make practically anything
- **PCR machines** → cheap, commercially available, portable, and fast.
- **DNA-substrate attachment** → standard protocols (looking at this in the lab right now!)
- **Main challenge** → stability of detector and ensuring strands are collected, maybe a total rethink of design is in order (DNA-based harddrive?)

<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-020-15588-z>

DNA punch cards for storing data on native DNA sequences via enzymatic nicking

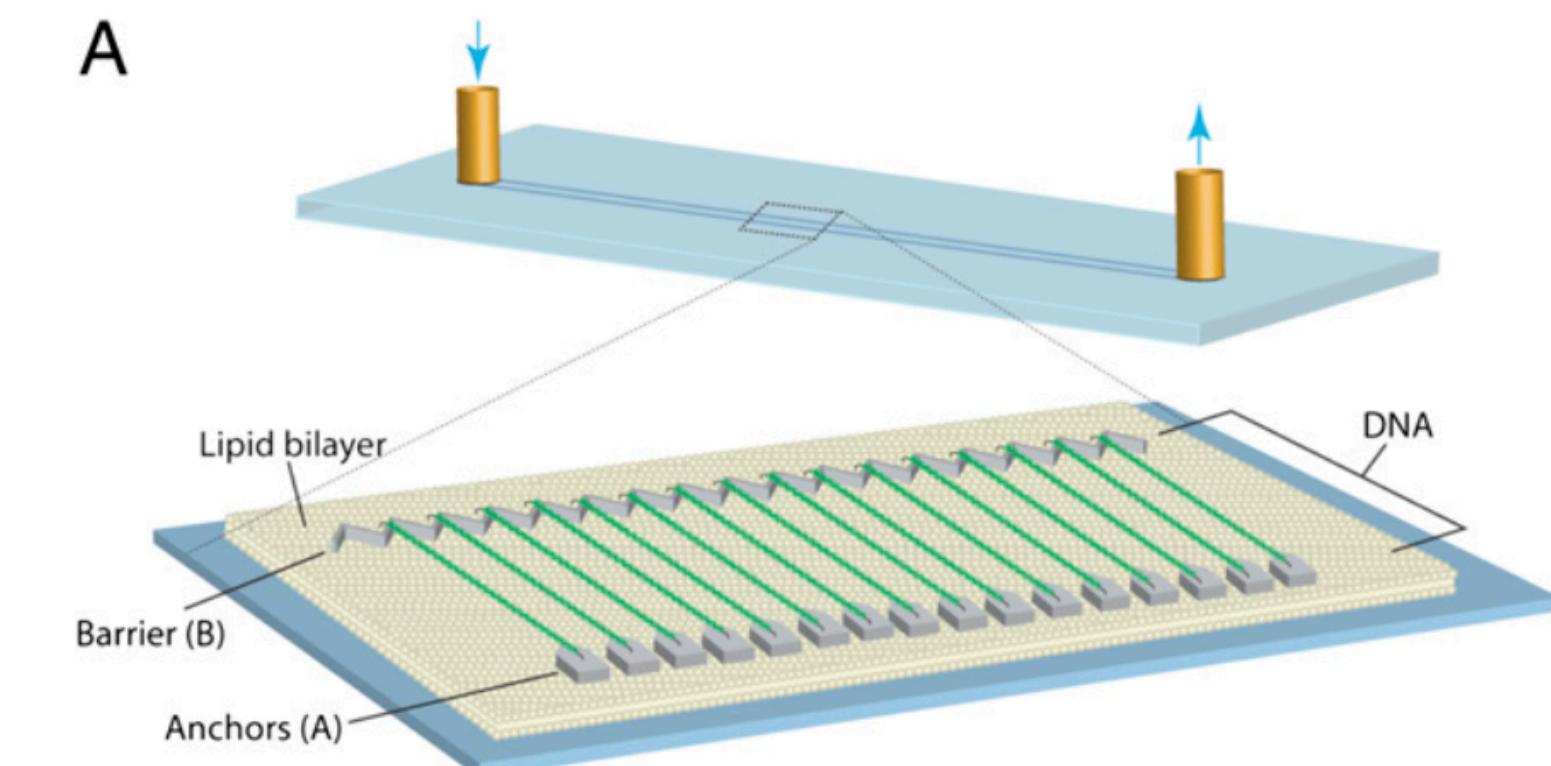
S. Kasra Tabatabaei¹, Boya Wang^{2,8}, Nagendra Bala Murali Athreya^{3,8}, Behnam Enghiad⁴, Alvaro Gonzalo Hernandez⁵, Christopher J. Fields⁶, Jean-Pierre Leburton³, David Soloveichik², Huimin Zhao^{1,4,7} & Olgica Milenkovic³

+

Single-molecule imaging of DNA curtains reveals mechanisms of KOPS sequence targeting by the DNA translocase FtsK

Ja Yil Lee^{a,1}, Ilya J. Finkelstein^{a,1}, Estelle Crozat^{b,2}, David J. Sherratt^b, and Eric C. Greene^{a,c,3}

^aDepartment of Biochemistry and Molecular Biophysics and ^bHoward Hughes Medical Institute, Columbia University, New York, NY 10032; and ^bDepartment of Biochemistry, University of Oxford, Oxford OX1 3QU, United Kingdom

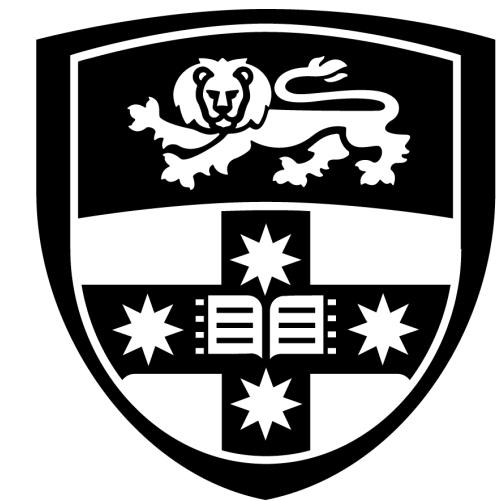
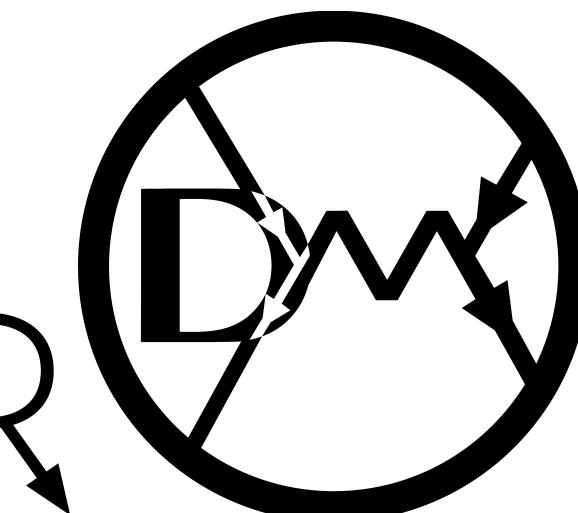


Status and future of directional recoil detection

- Directional TPC network “CYGNUS” is an exciting possibility that appears increasingly plausible. Primary physics goals are to set limits into the neutrino fog, and to study directional ν -e and ν -N scattering at low energies
- Many other experimental techniques under investigation. Some of them fill niches that are missed by gas experiments, although no proposal at the moment stands out in terms of performance and readiness like TPCs.
- DNA detector is a radical new idea with many interesting characteristics that build on extensive research in biotechnology, but is far away from being a real detector at the moment

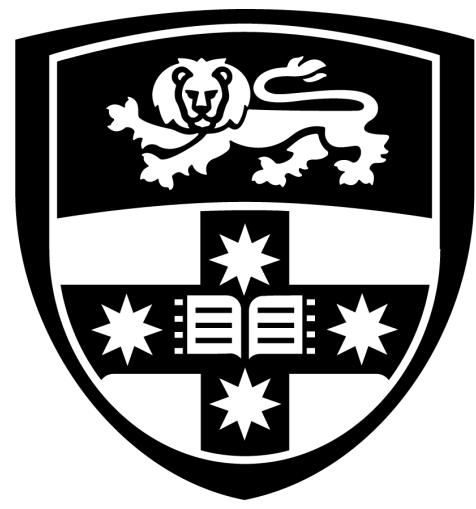
ARC CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR

DARK
MATTER



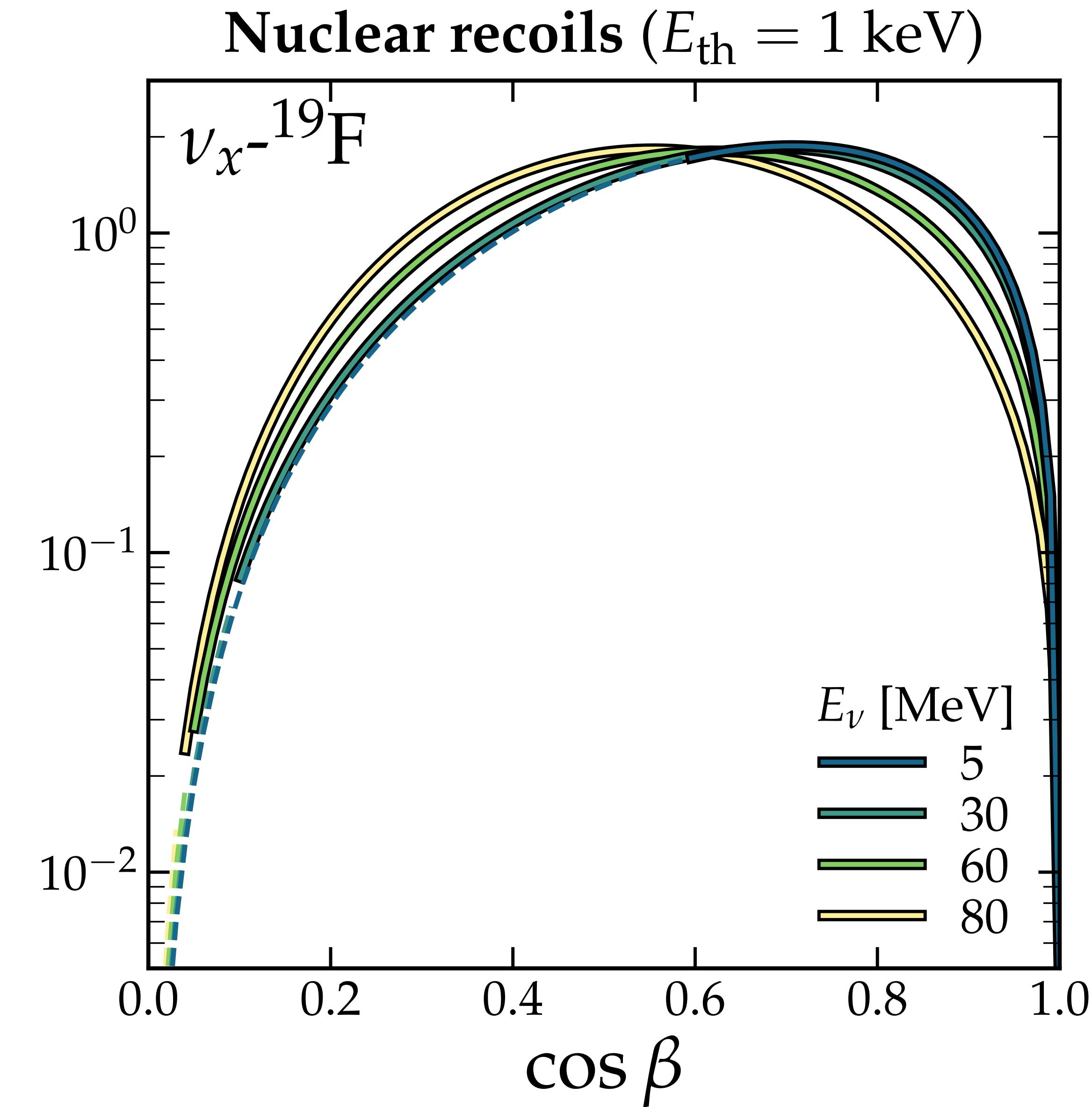
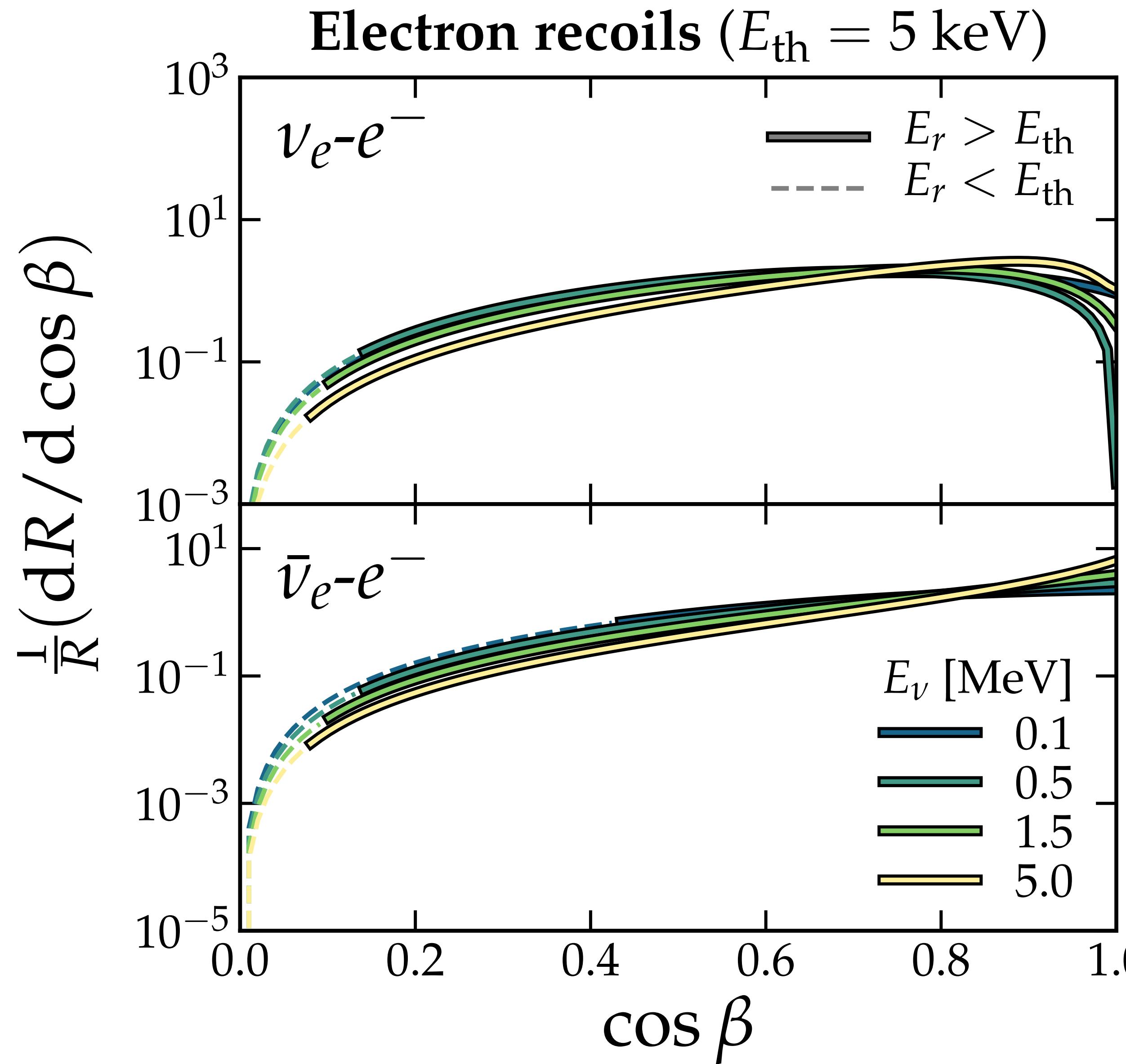
THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

Extra slides

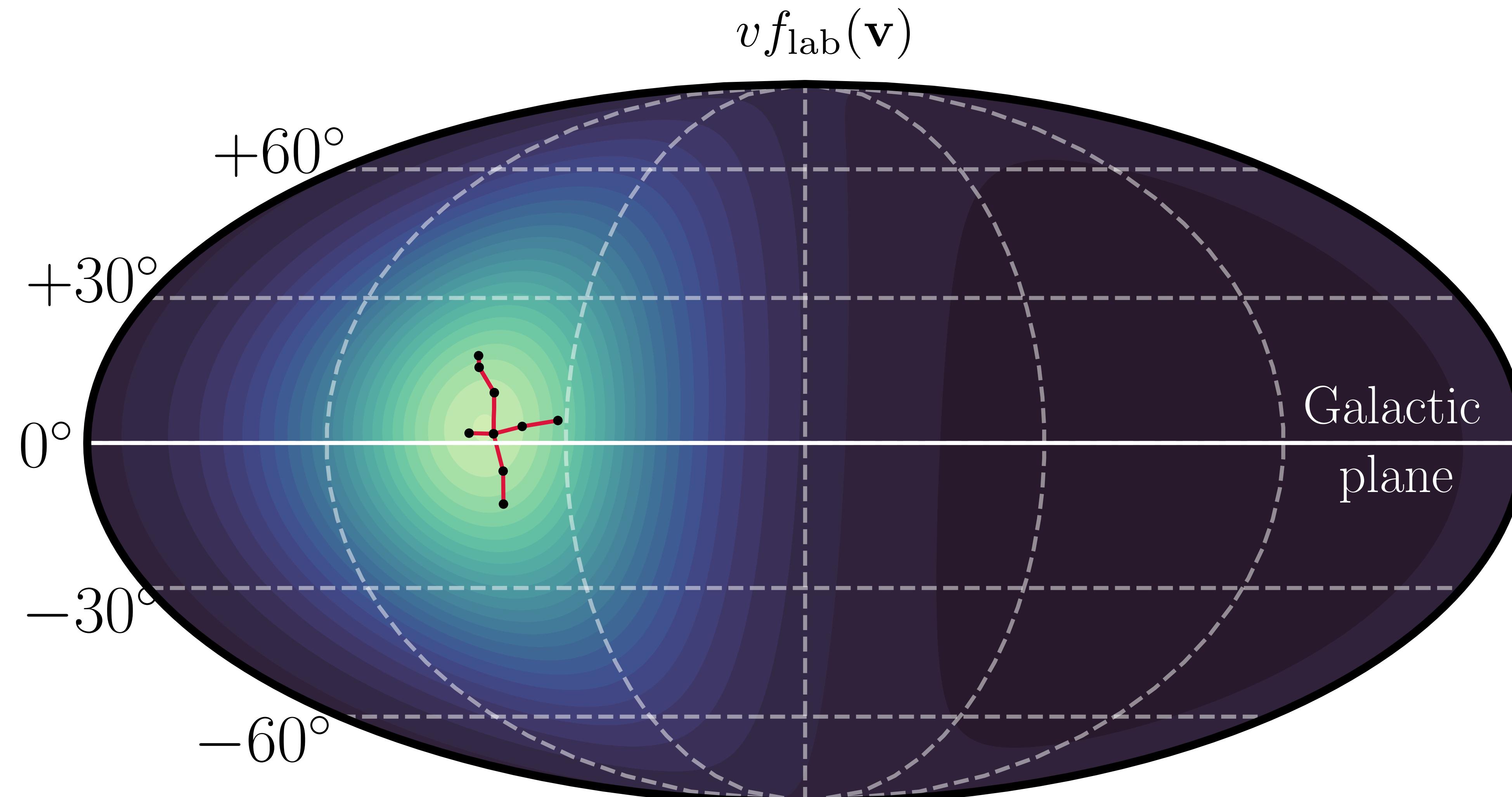


THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

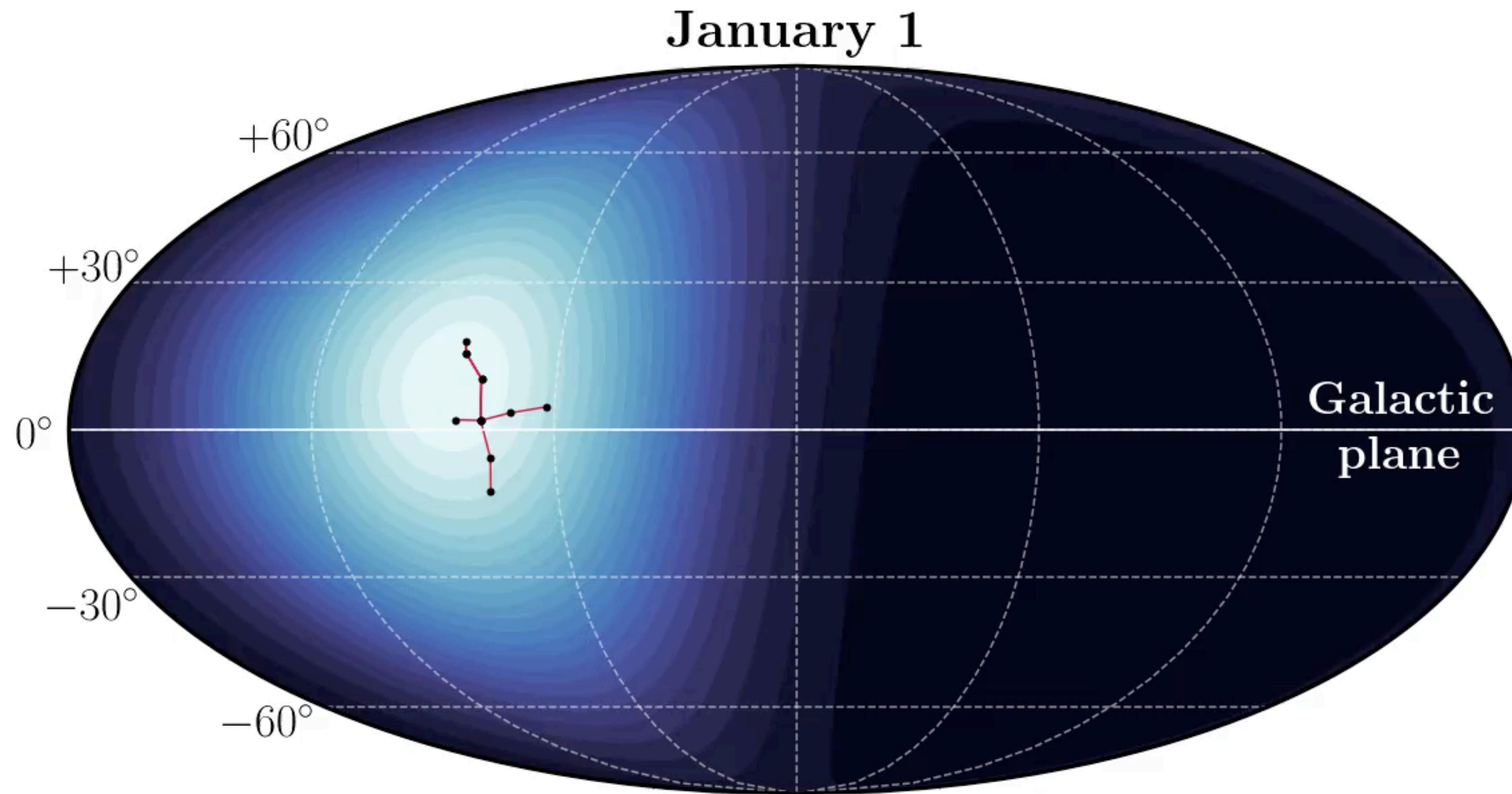
Neutrino scattering angles



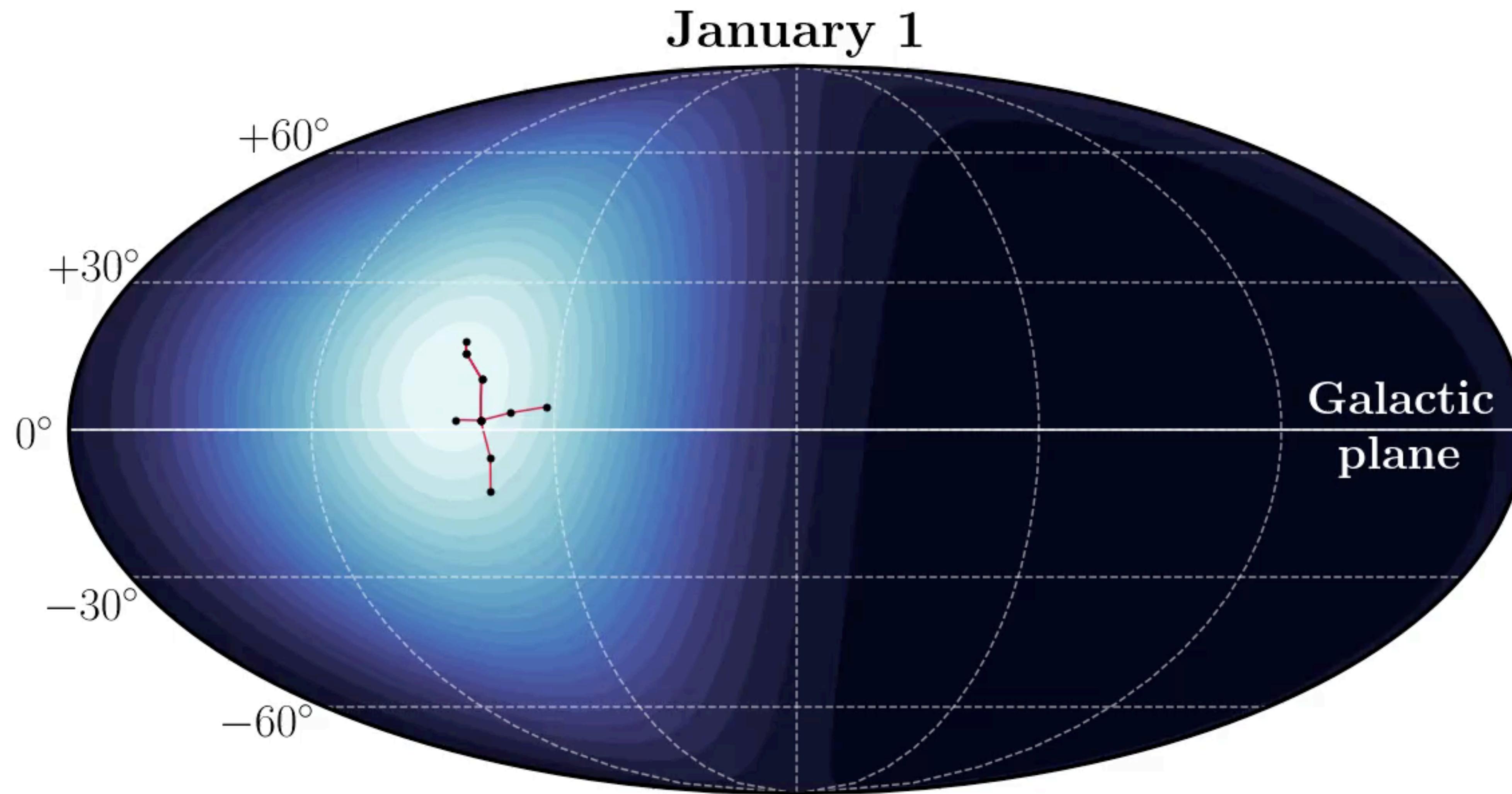
The dark matter flux is anisotropic \rightarrow O(10) anisotropy in event rate



The dark matter flux is anisotropic \rightarrow O(10) anisotropy in event rate



The dark matter flux is anisotropic \rightarrow O(10) anisotropy in event rate



Target gas mixture: 755:5 He+SF₆ at 1 atm.

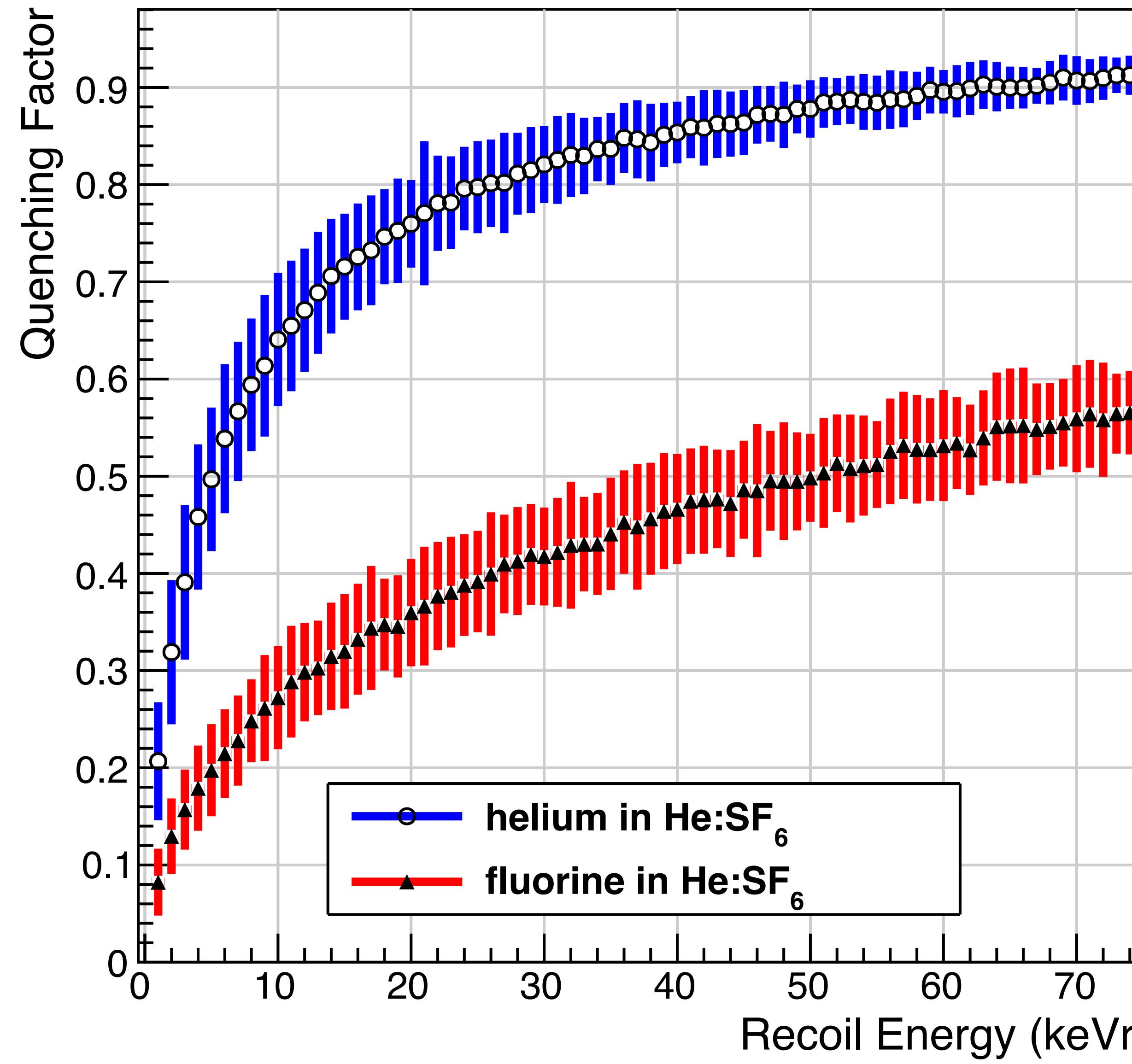
Why SF₆?

- Negative ion drift mixture:** drift ions rather than electrons, results in lower diffusion and better track preservation
- Minority charge carriers** which can be used to fiducialise the gas volume in the drift direction (z)
- ¹⁹F has very high $\langle S_p \rangle$** so sets powerful spin dependent WIMP limits (this is why PICO's SD-p limits are so good)

Why He?

- Light WIMPs** still give large recoil energies with He: improves the low mass sensitivity
- High quenching factor** in gas mixture (>70% above 10 keVr)
- Doesn't significantly impact Fluorine tracks**, can be used simultaneously

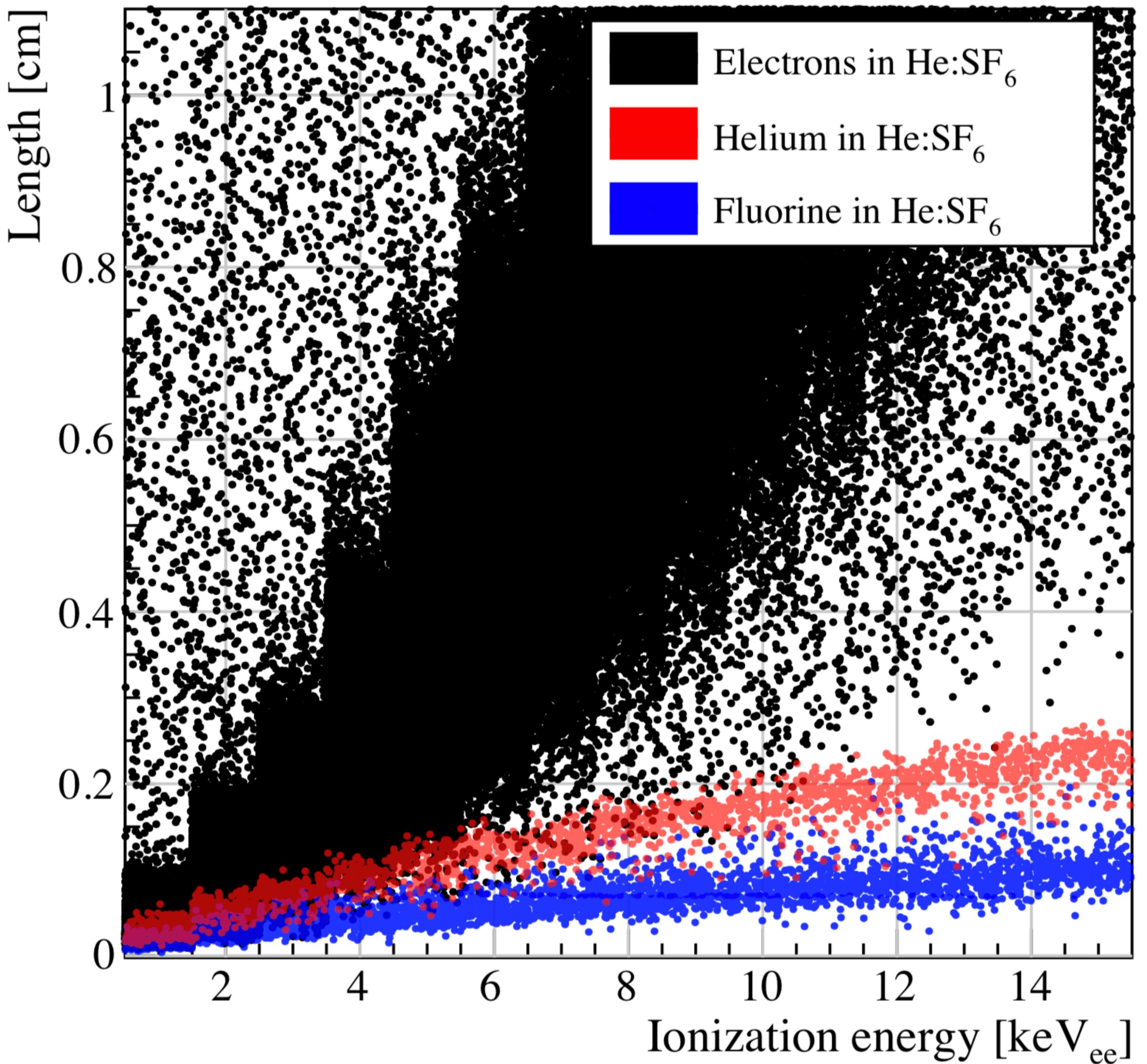
Quenching factors for recoils in 1 atm of He+SF₆



Electron discrimination

- Electrons have much longer tracks than nuclei so can discriminate based on this info.
- Track lengths for recoils in He+SF₆ at 1 atm:

Energy threshold will be based on how low this can be achieved, probably can do a lot better with more sophisticated track fit and comparison metric



Gas mixture	SF ₆	He:SF ₆	He:SF ₆
Pressure [Torr]	20	740:20	755:5
Density [kg/m ³]	0.16	0.32	0.20
W [eV/ion pair]	35.5	38.0	40.0
Trans. diffusion [$\mu\text{m}/\sqrt{\text{cm}}$]	116.2	78.6	78.6
Long. diffusion [$\mu\text{m}/\sqrt{\text{cm}}$]	116.2	78.6	78.6
Drift velocity [mm/μs]	0.140	0.140	0.140
Mean avalanche gain	9×10^3	9×10^3	9×10^3

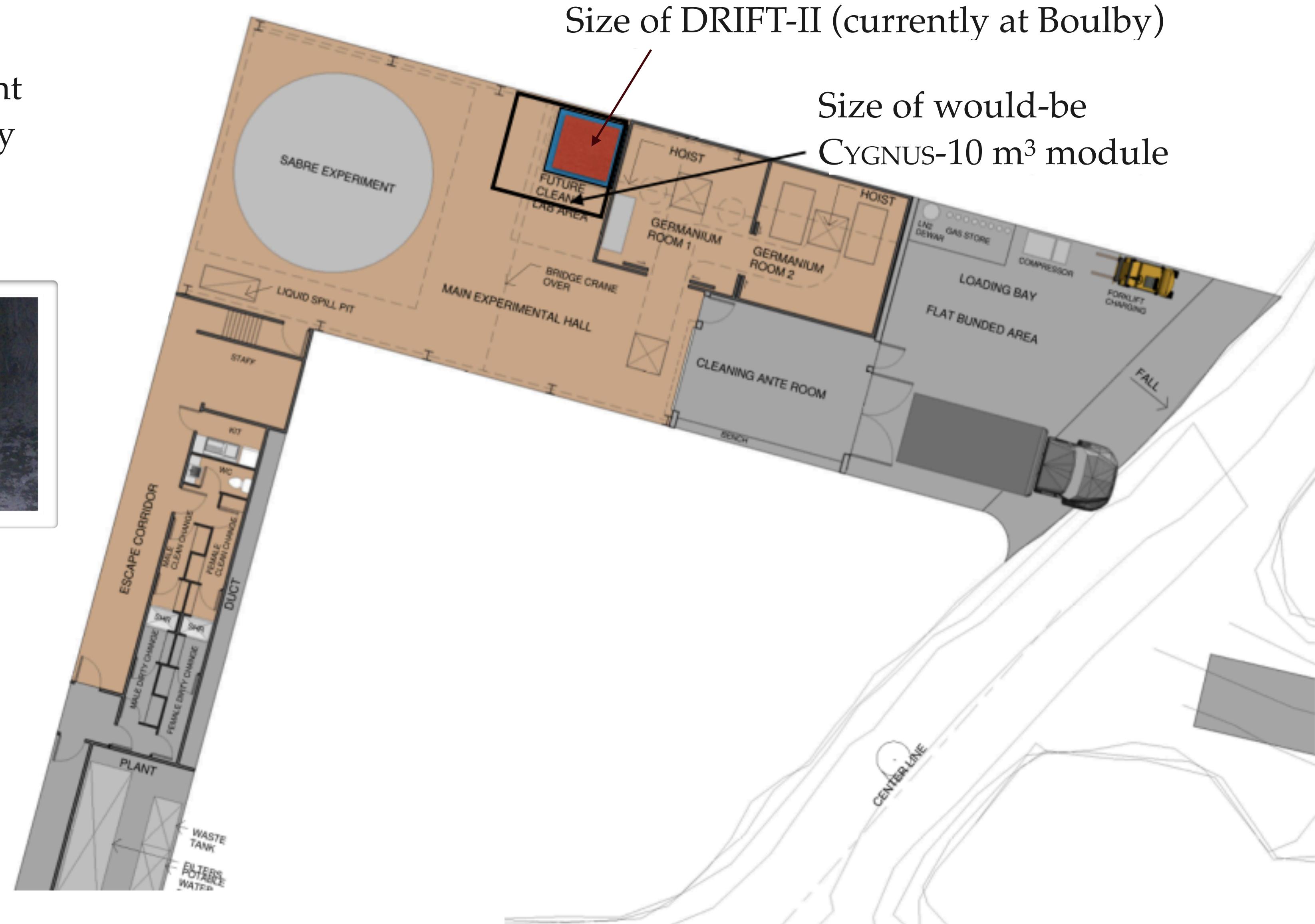
TABLE I. Various gas-dependent parameters assumed in the TPC detector simulation. The values are sourced as follows: the W factor for pure SF₆ is from a measurement with alpha particles [310], while the W factors for the He:SF₆ and He:CF₄ mixtures are calculated using Eq.(1) of Ref. [266]. The diffusion values and drift velocity in 20 Torr of pure SF₆ were measured in Ref. [299]. For the He:SF₆ mixtures, no measurements or reliable simulations exist, so we use the 40 Torr pure SF₆ diffusion from Ref. [299] and then assume the electric field can be adjusted to keep the drift velocity constant. The avalanche gain assumed for pure SF₆ has been achieved with THGEMs in Ref. [311] and triple thin GEMs in Ref. [312], and is also used for He:SF₆ mixtures.

Readout type	Dimensionality	Segmentation ($x \times y$)	Capacitance [pF]	σ_{noise} in 1 μs	Threshold/ σ_{noise}
planar	1d (z)	10 cm \times 10 cm	3000	18000 e^-	3.09
wire	2d (yz)	1 m wires, 2 mm pitch	0.25	800 e^-	4.11
pad	3d (xyz)	3 mm \times 3 mm	0.25	375 e^-	4.77
optical	2d (xyz)	200 μm \times 200 μm	n/a	2 photons	5.77
strip	3d (xyz)	1 m strips, 200 μm pitch	500	2800 e^-	4.61
pixel	3d (xyz)	200 μm \times 200 μm	0.012 - 0.200	42 e^-	5.77

TABLE II. List of readout-specific parameters that are used in the simulation of each technology we consider here. The capacitance, which determines the noise level, is listed as that for a single detector element. For the optical readout, a yield of 7.2×10^{-6} photons per avalanche electron is used to account for the combined effects of photon yield, geometric optical acceptance, optical transparency, and quantum efficiency.

Stawell Underground Physics Laboratory (SUPL)

- 1.6 km depth, still operational gold mine
- First underground site in Southern Hemisphere
- Will host one half of SABRE experiment
- Cygnus involvement as part of recently formed Centre of Excellence for Dark Matter Particle Physics

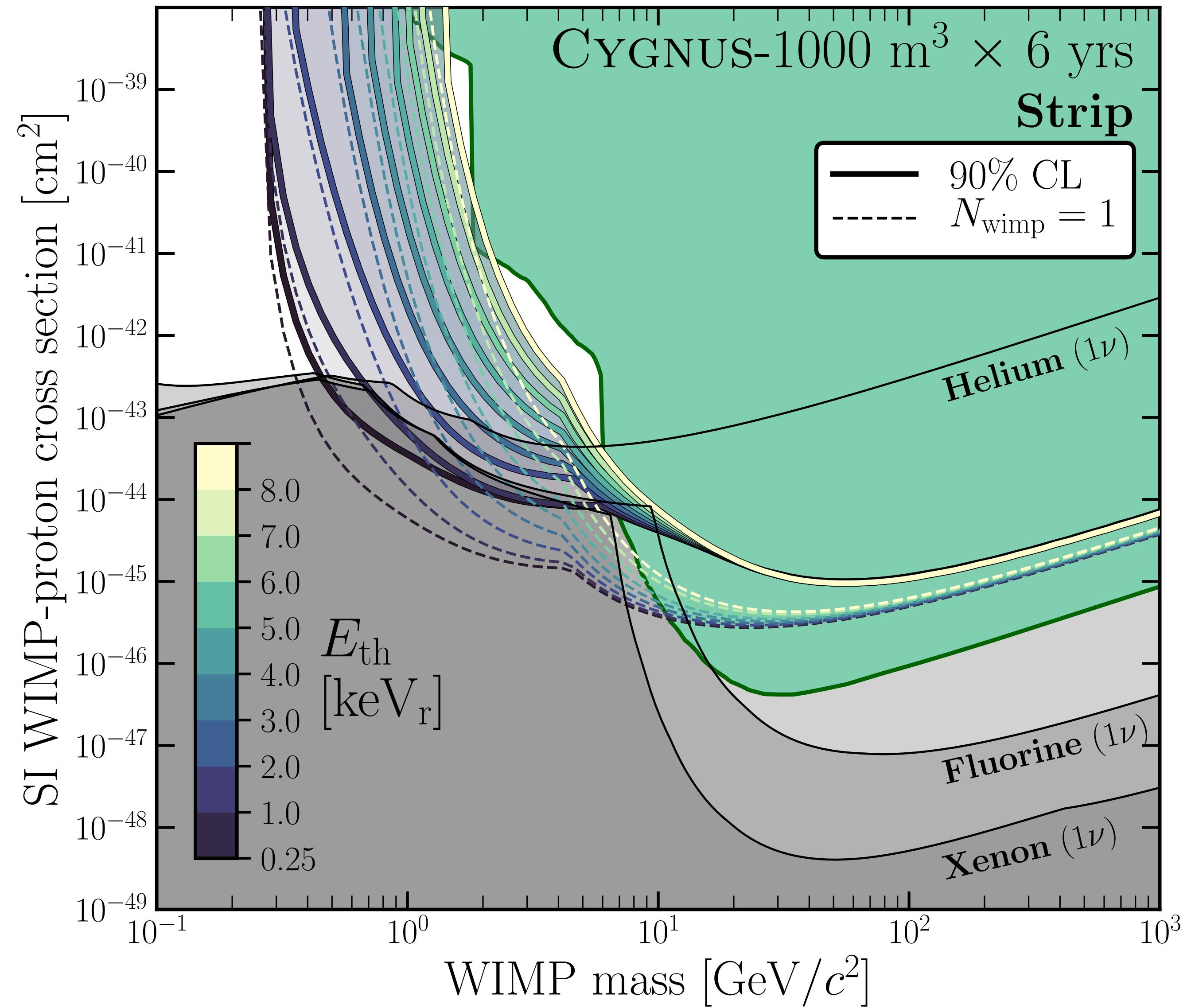


μ -PIC (strip) readout currently looks the best in terms of cost vs. directional sensitivity

A closer look at dependence on threshold:

Threshold:

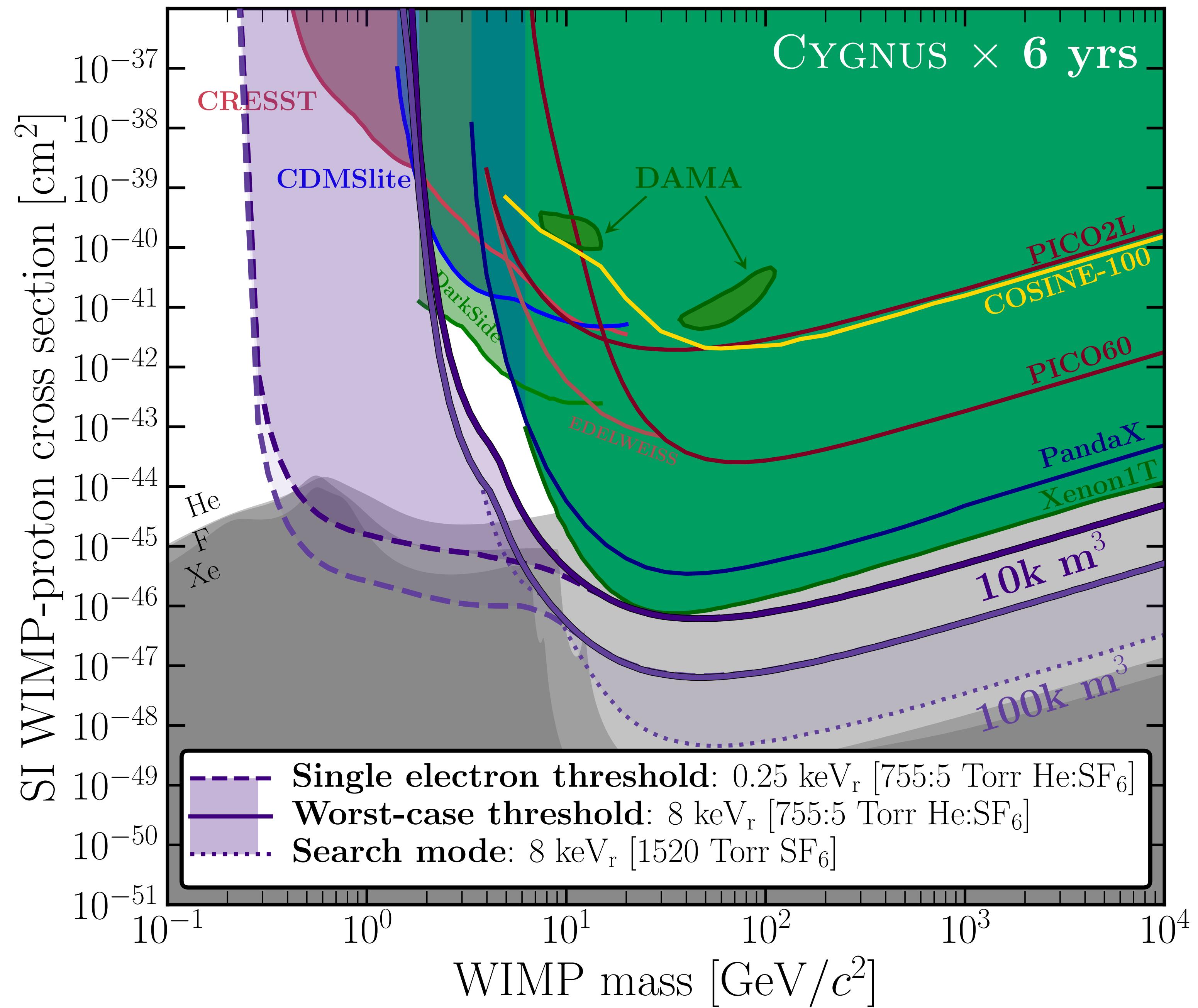
- 8 keV_r definitely feasible with simplest electron rejection strategy
- 3 keV_r is probably feasible with optimisation of gas, bespoke track fitting algorithms
- 0.25 keV_r is theoretical minimum (single electron)



Sensitivity (SI)

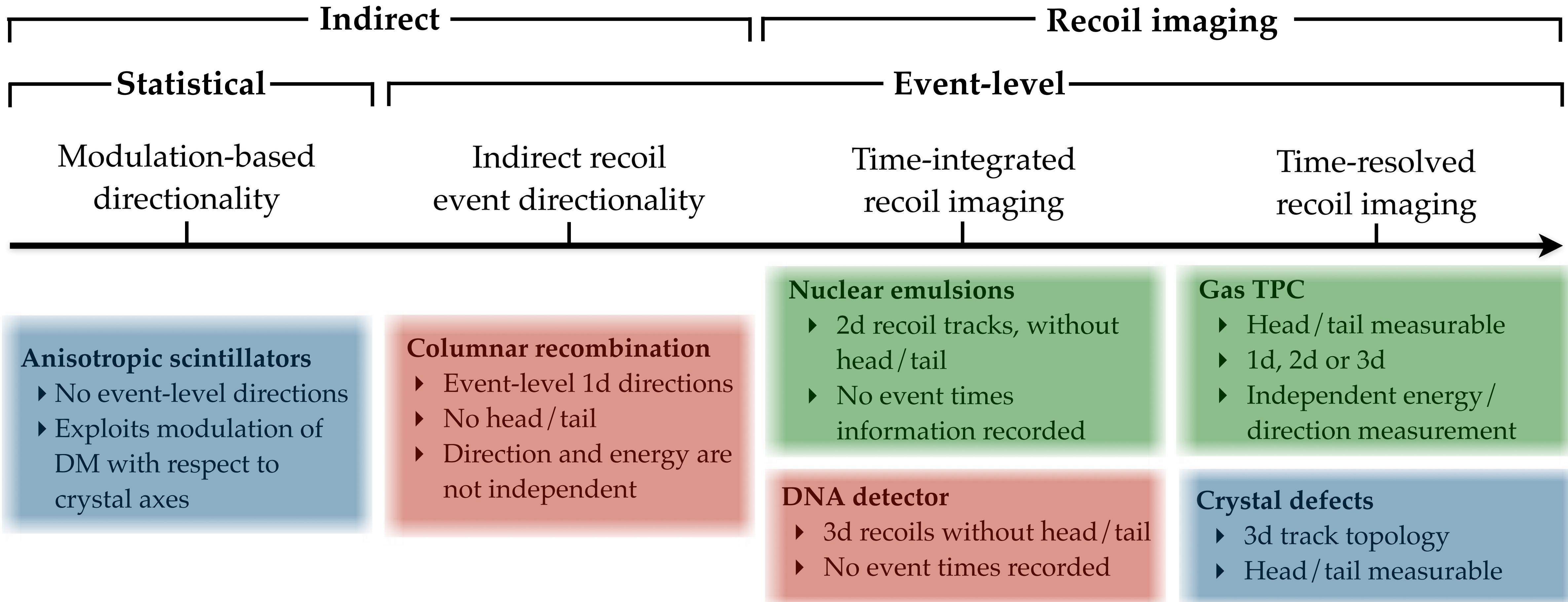
- Window worst/best case threshold
- Search mode: 1 atm. of SF₆ but no directionality (possible way to extend high mass sensitivity)

Important note: these limits are true discovery limits, i.e. a signal can be confirmed as DM, so comparison of Cygnus limits with other experiments undersells its potential



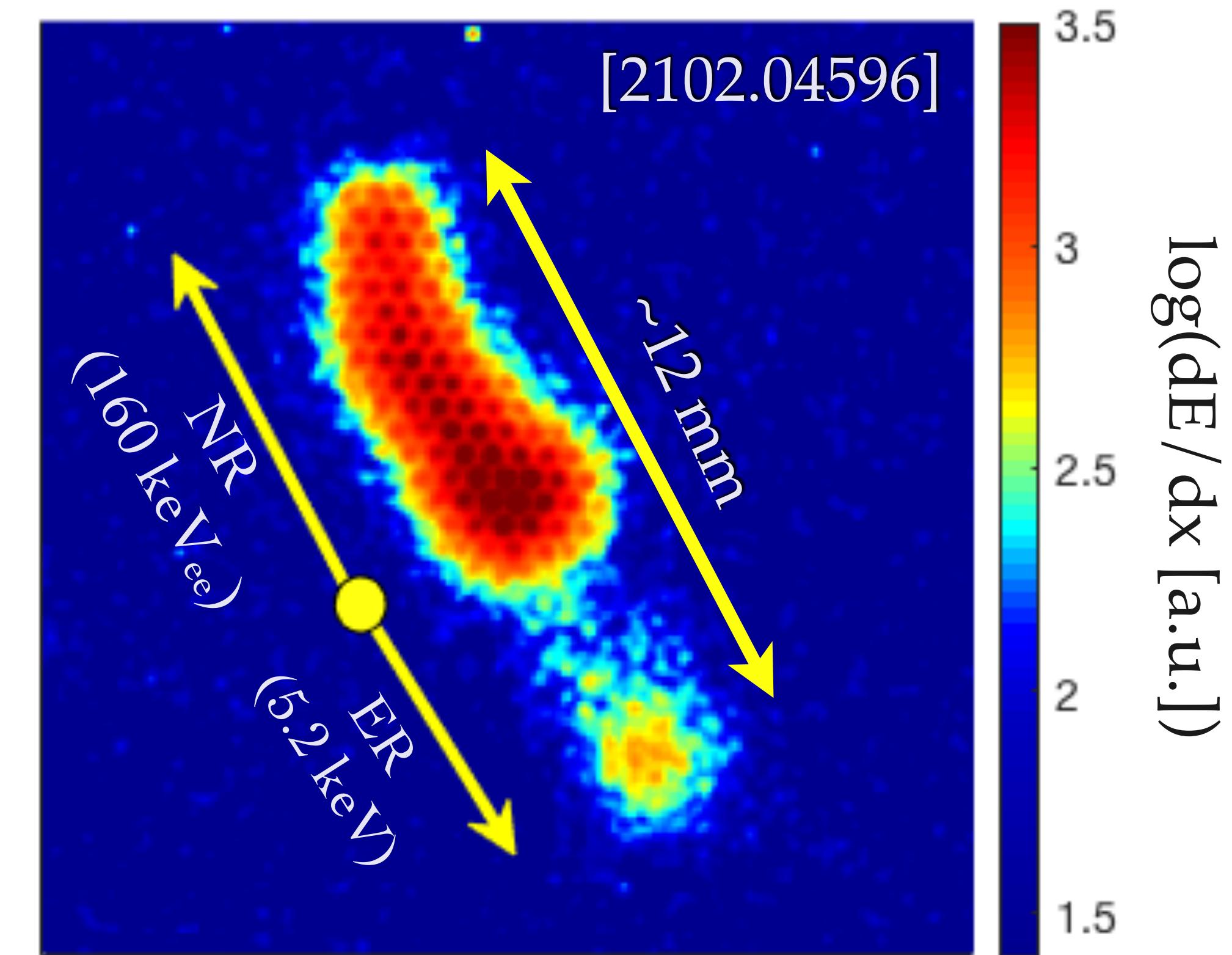
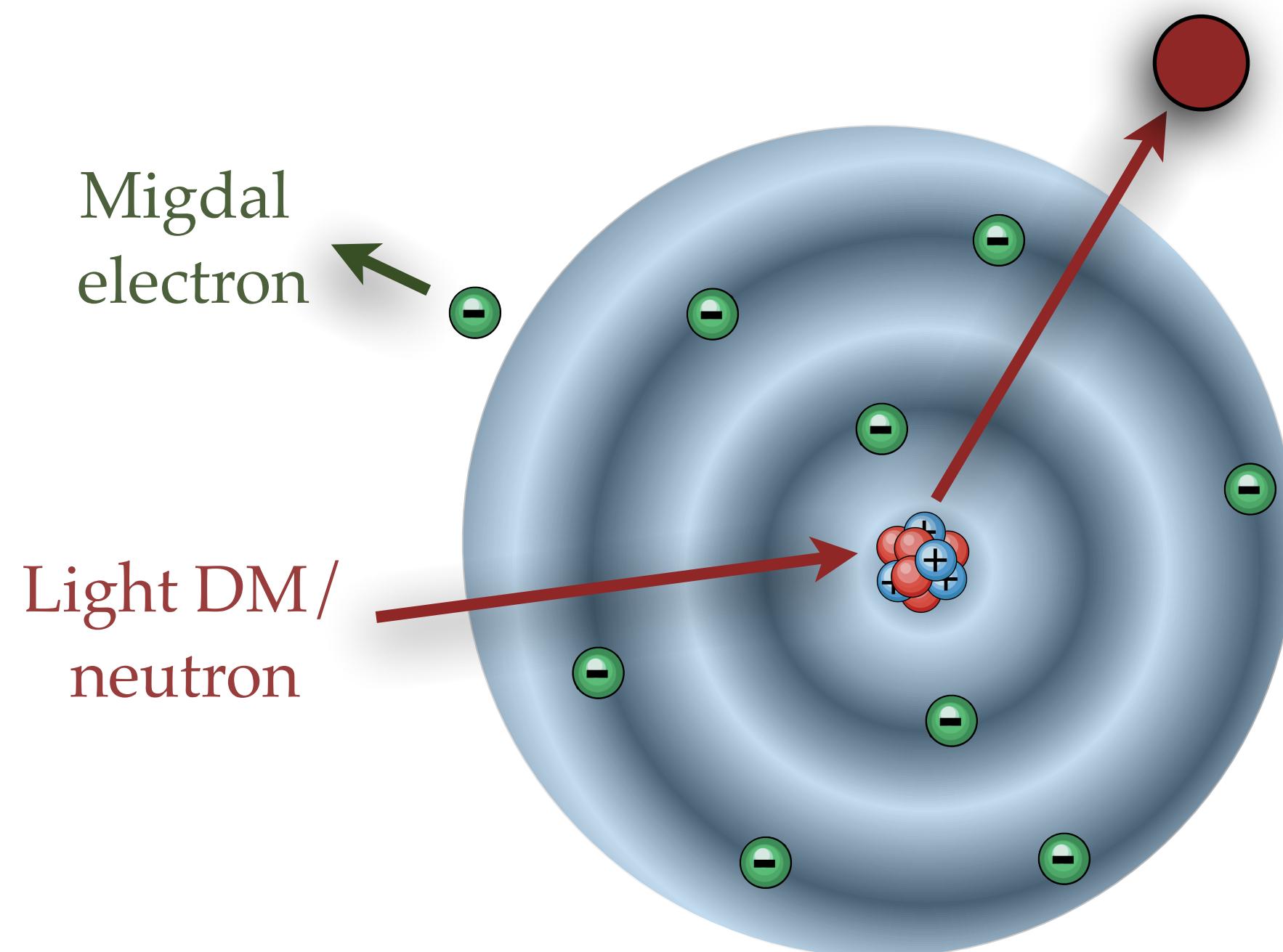
Detector classes by directional information

Demonstrated
 R&D
 Proposed



General physics: Measurement of the Migdal effect

→ Emission of \sim keV electron for very low energy NRs. Important for sub-GeV DM searches, but on shaky ground theoretically as it has never been measured

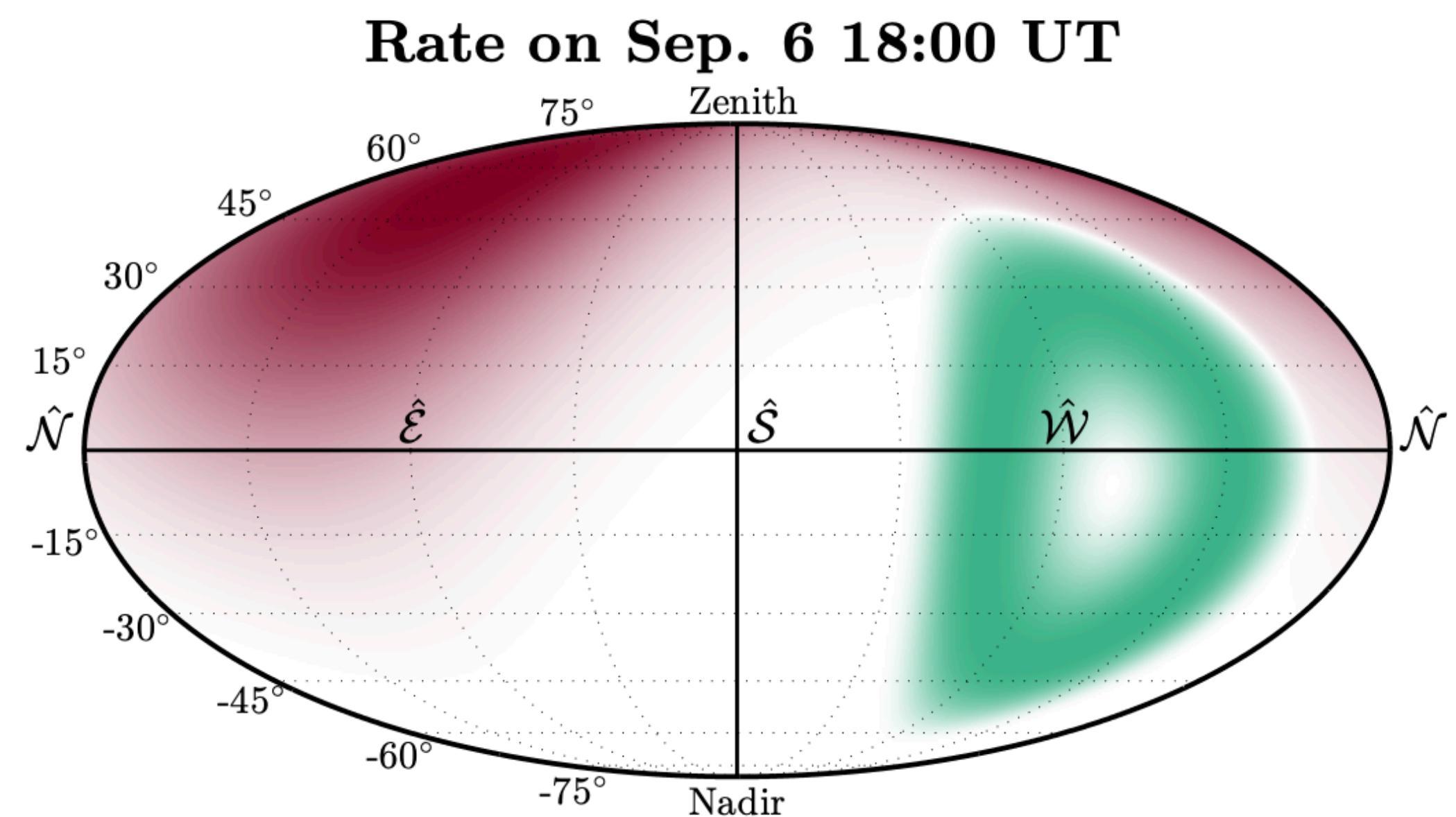
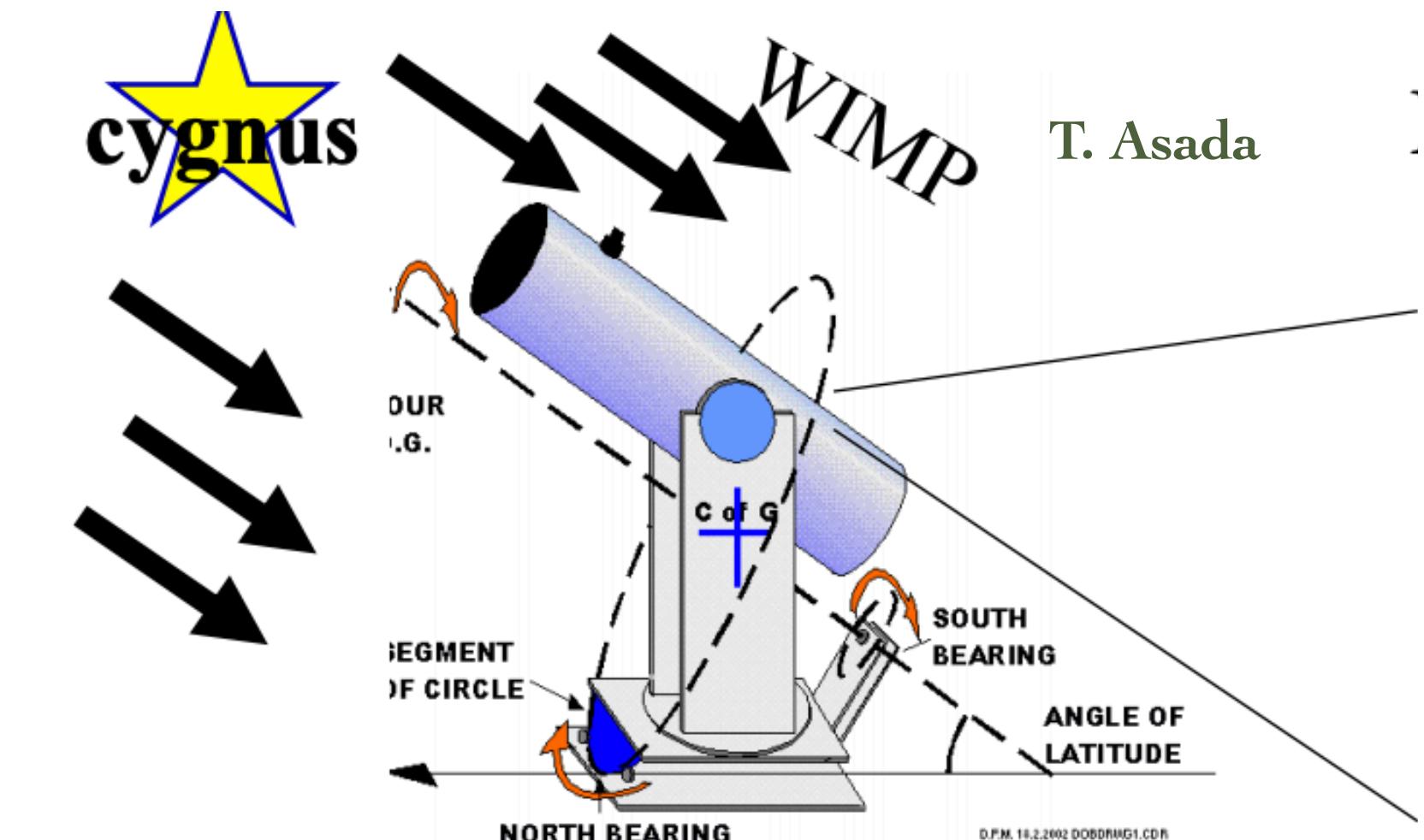


Could be confirmed directionally, using a small-scale TPC!

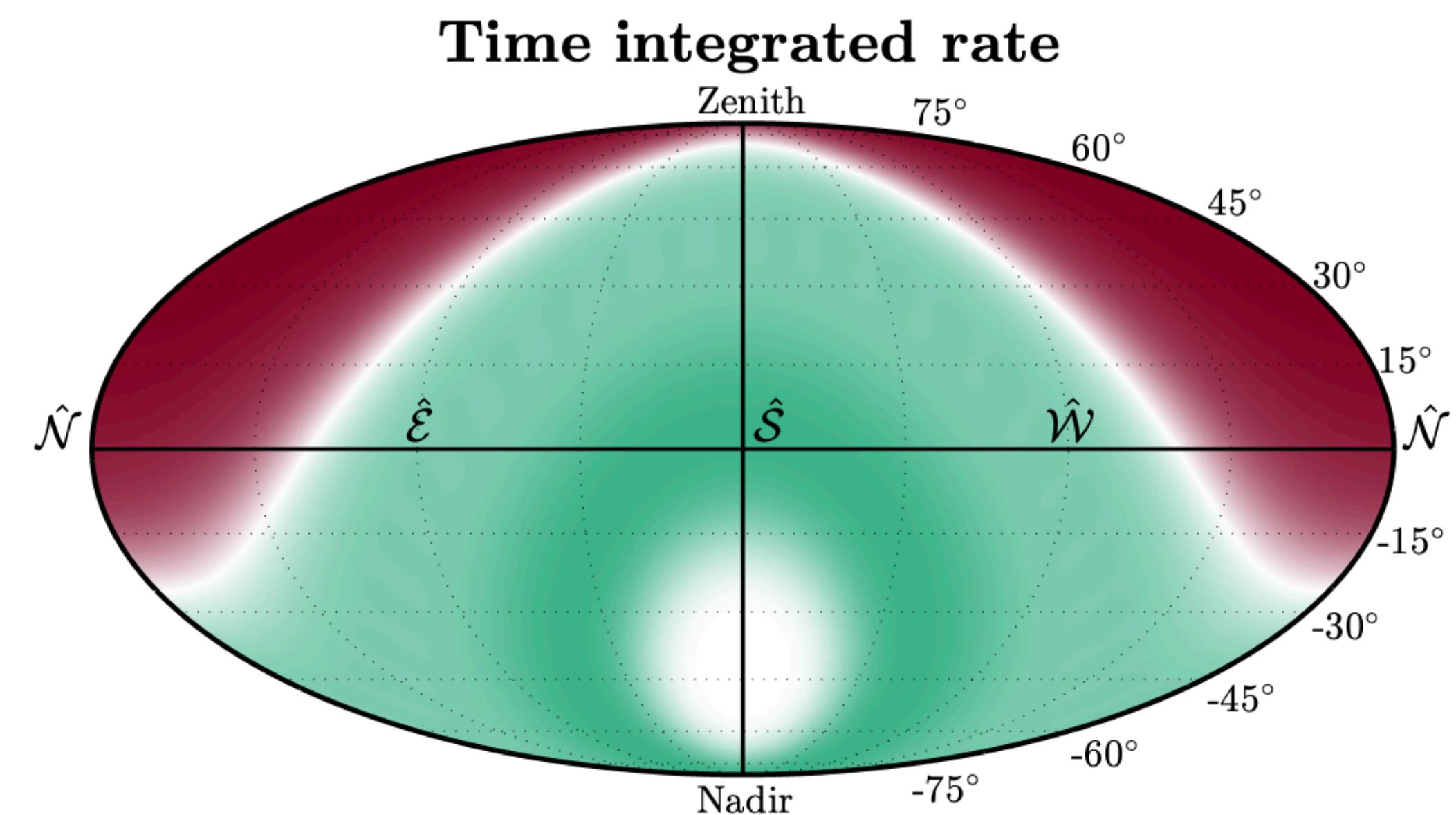
Time-integrated directional detection

Experiments like NEWSdm need to develop tracks after exposure

→ rotation of Earth will wash out anisotropy unless some Cygnus-tracking is implemented

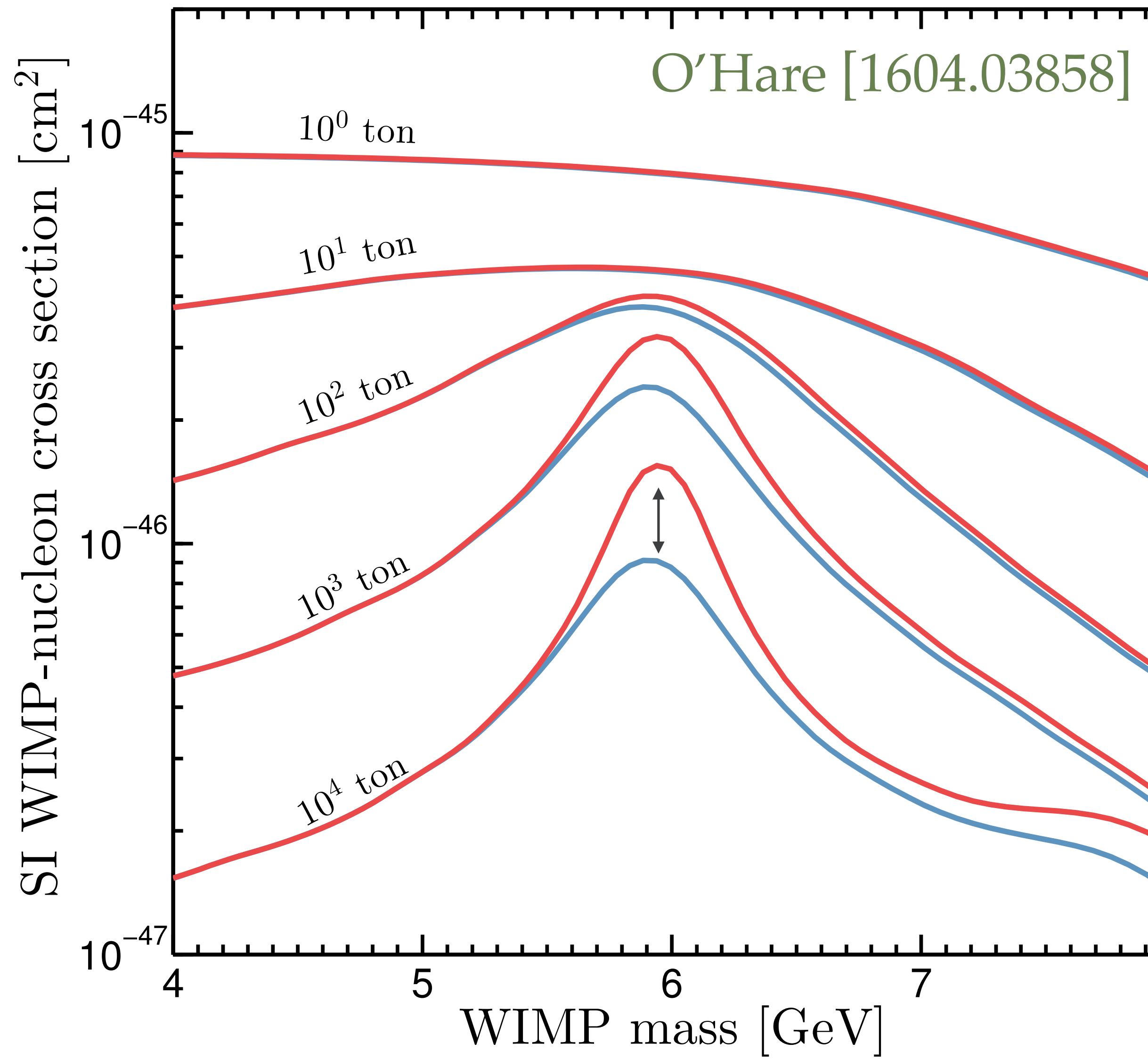


Neutrino events



DM events

Annual modulation: does it help?



Information used:

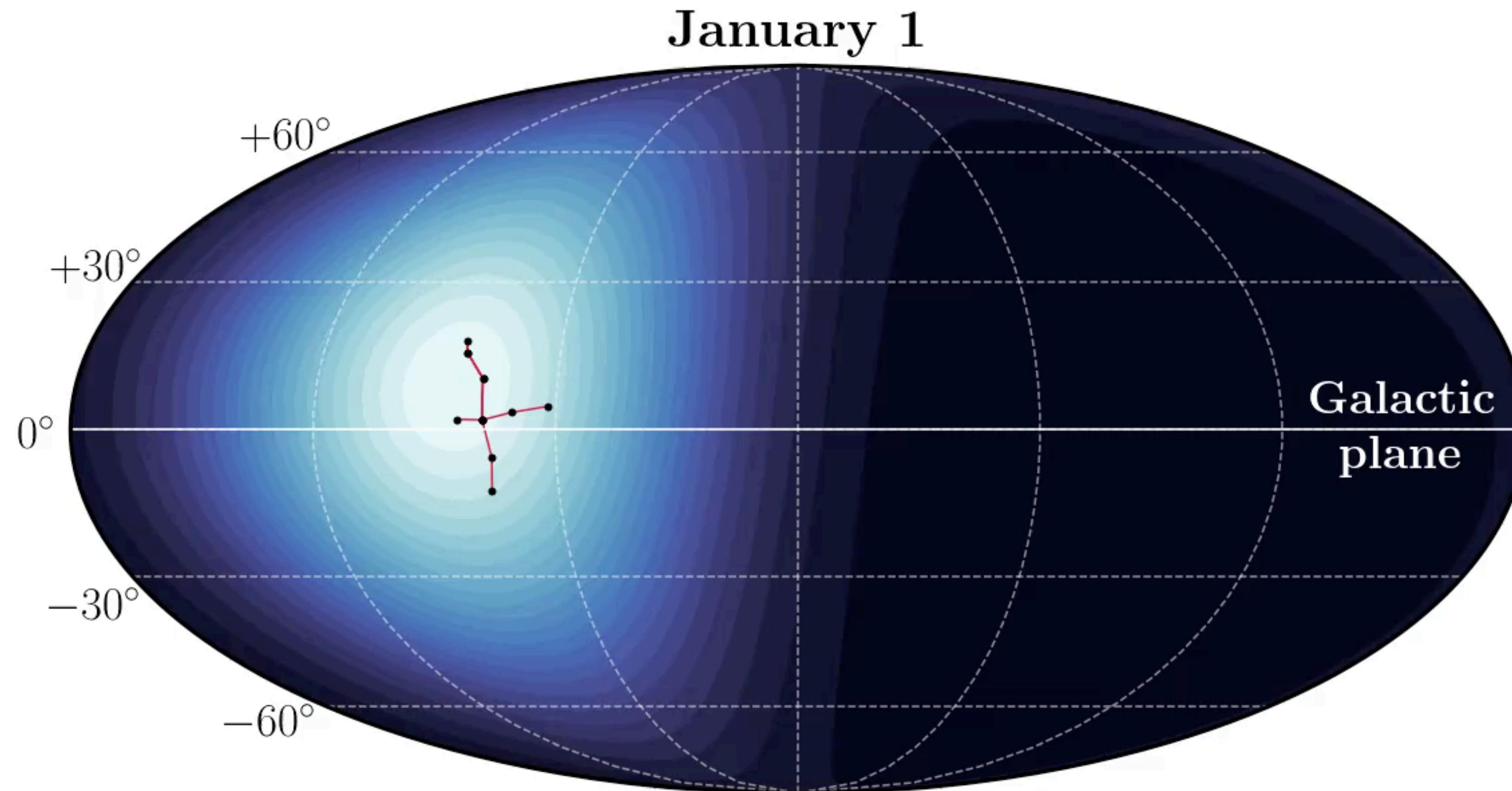
Energy only

Energy+Time

Increasing
exposure

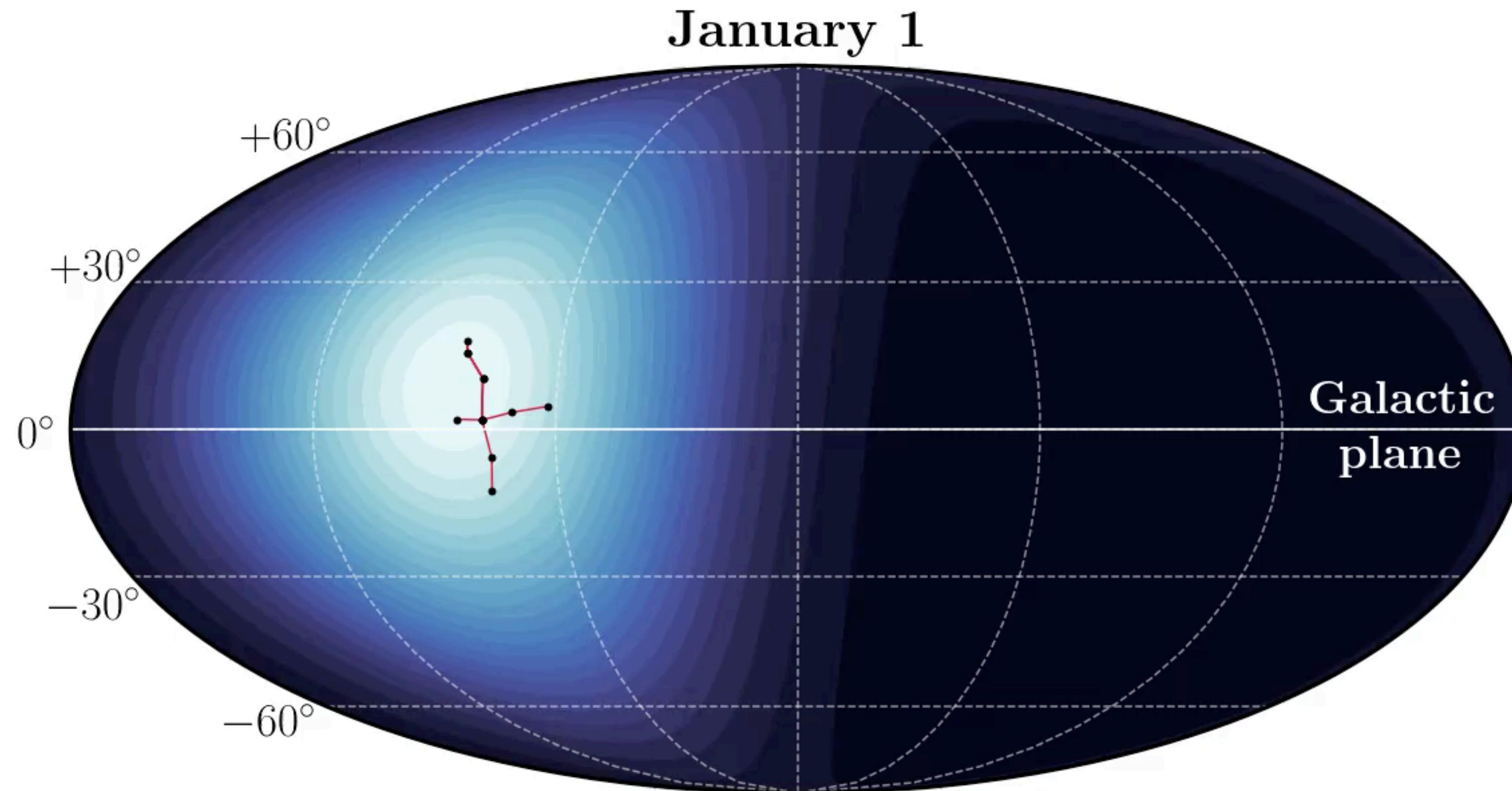
Based on standard assumptions, what should the signal look like?
→ a **Gaussian** peaking towards **Cygnus**

$$\left. \frac{dR(t)}{d \cos \theta} \right|_{E_r} \propto \frac{1}{(2\pi\sigma_v^2)^{1/2}} \exp \left(-\frac{(v_{\min} + v_{\text{lab}}(t) \cos \theta)^2}{2\sigma_v^2} \right)$$



Based on standard assumptions, what should the signal look like?
→ a **Gaussian** peaking towards **Cygnus**

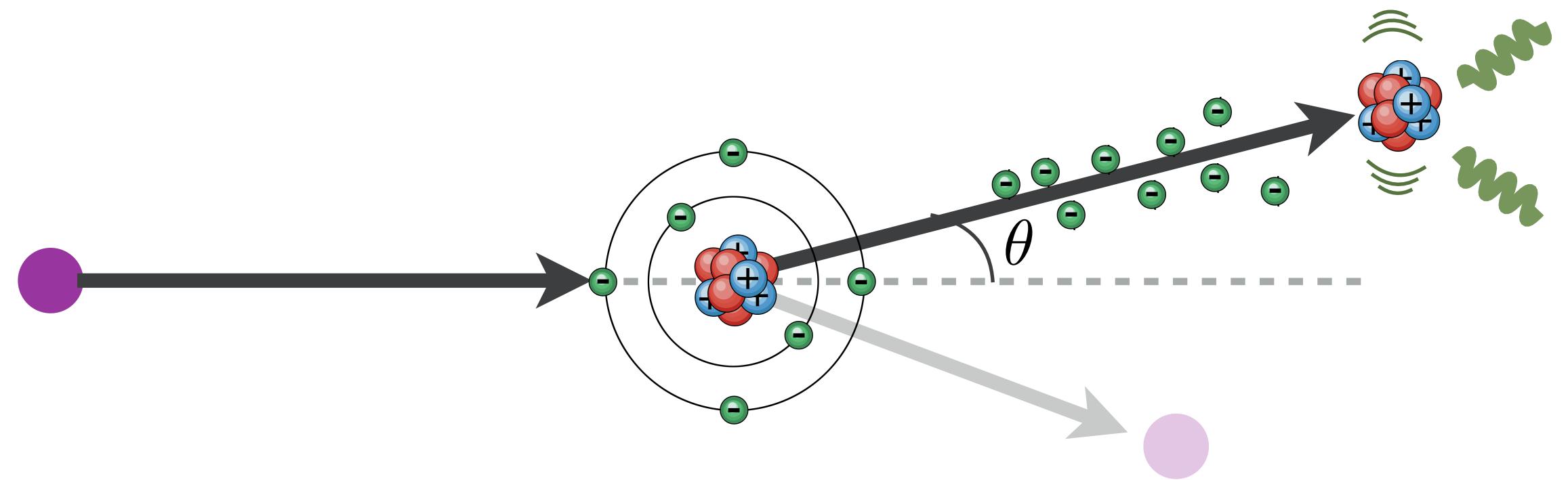
$$\left. \frac{dR(t)}{d \cos \theta} \right|_{E_r} \propto \frac{1}{(2\pi\sigma_v^2)^{1/2}} \exp \left(-\frac{(v_{\min} + v_{\text{lab}}(t) \cos \theta)^2}{2\sigma_v^2} \right)$$



Standard prediction based on a few assumptions

- The DM scatters elastically

$$\rightarrow E_r = \frac{2m_N m_\chi^2}{(m_N + m_\chi)^2} v^2 \cos^2 \theta$$



- The DM velocity distribution is a Gaussian (SHM)

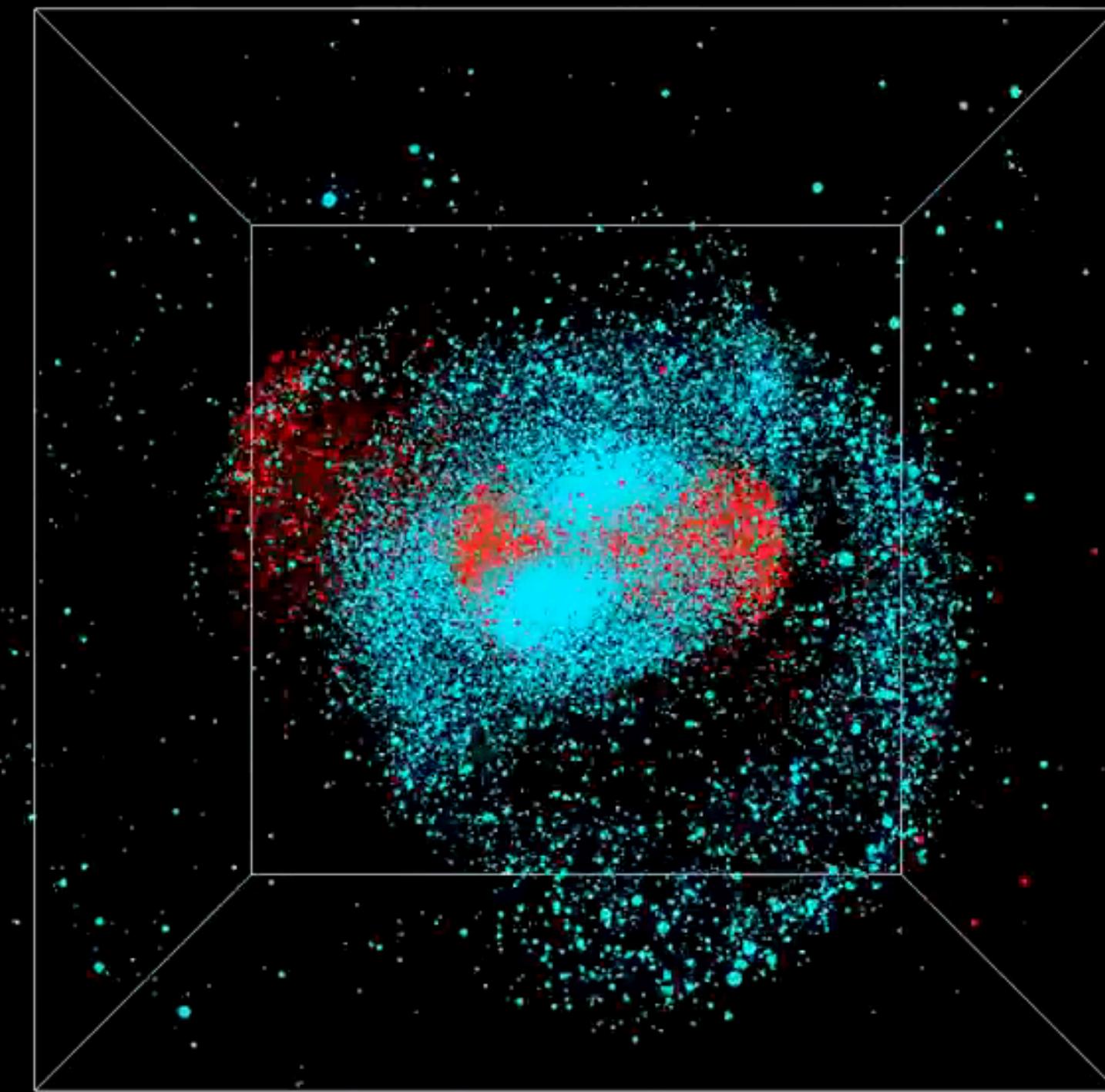
$$\rightarrow f(\mathbf{v}) \sim \exp \left(-\frac{(\mathbf{v} + \mathbf{v}_{\text{lab}})^2}{2\sigma_v^2} \right)$$

- DM-nucleus matrix element does not depend on velocity

$$\rightarrow \frac{dR}{d\Omega} \sim \int \delta(v \cos \theta - v_{\min}) f(\mathbf{v}) d^3 \mathbf{v}$$

Should the DM velocity distribution be a Gaussian? → Evidence of significant merger in the MW's history

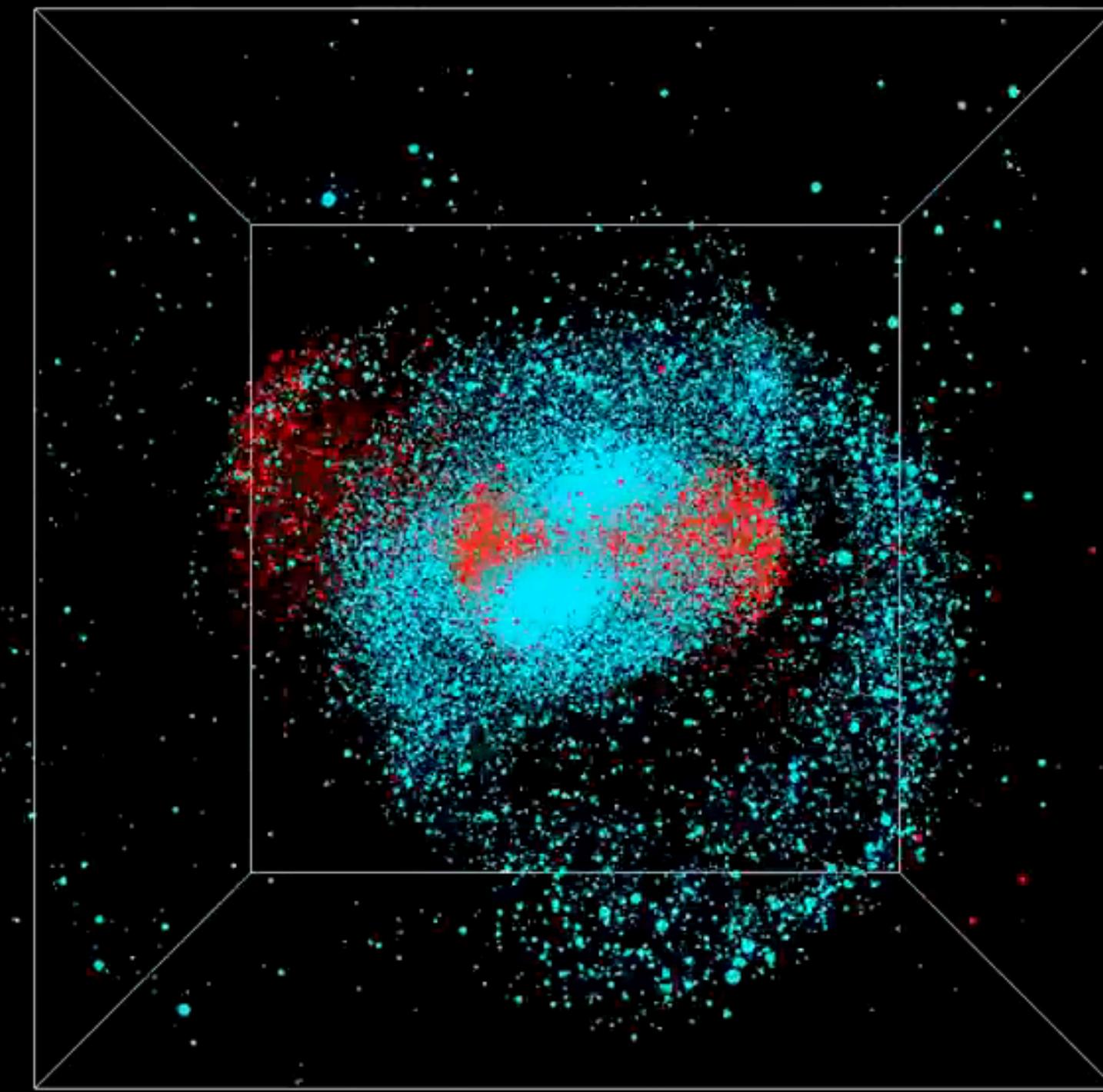
The Gaia Sausage



See e.g. Helmi et al. 1806.06038, O'Hare et al., 1810.11468, Necib et al. 1810.12301

Should the DM velocity distribution be a Gaussian? → Evidence of significant merger in the MW's history

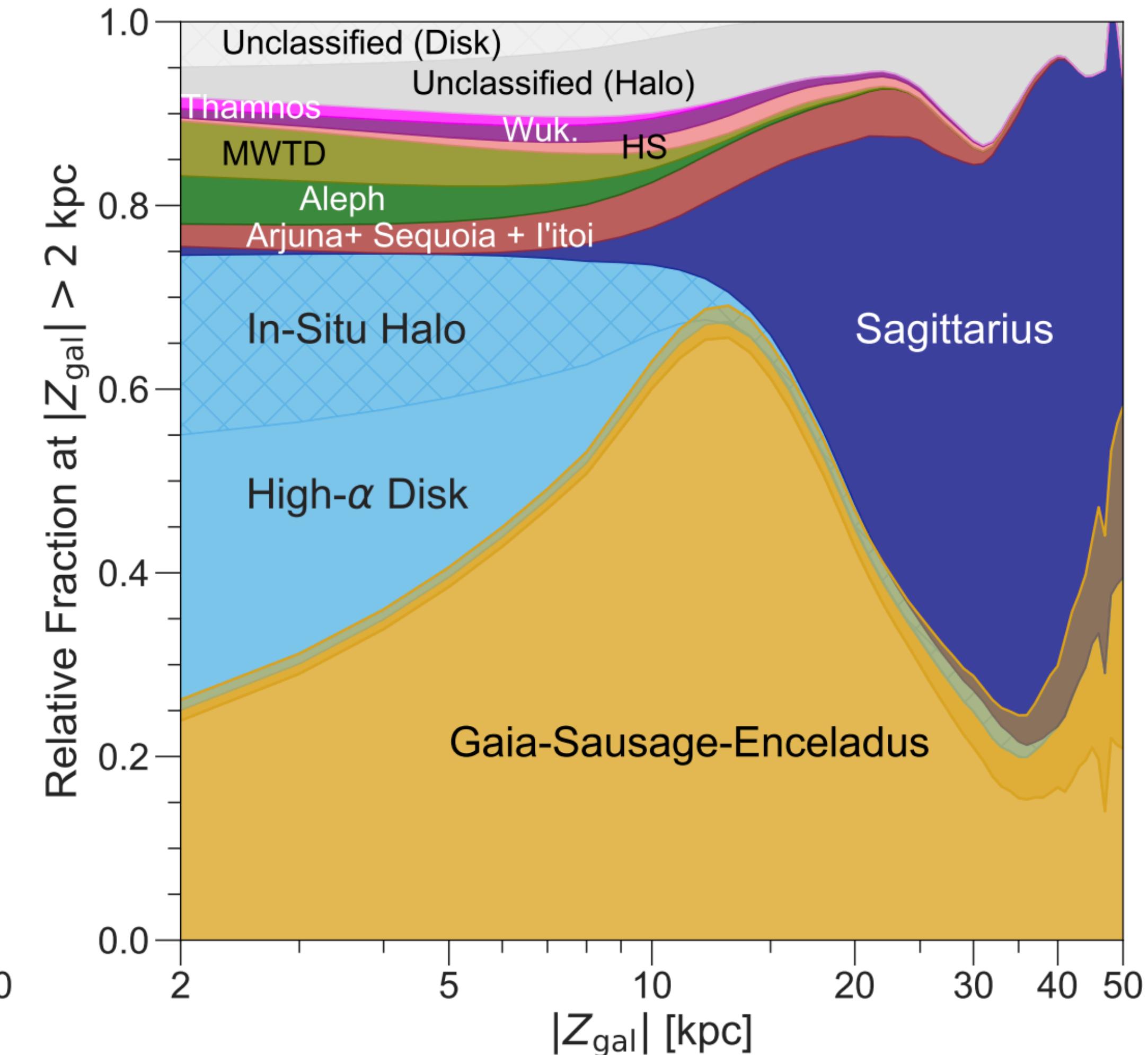
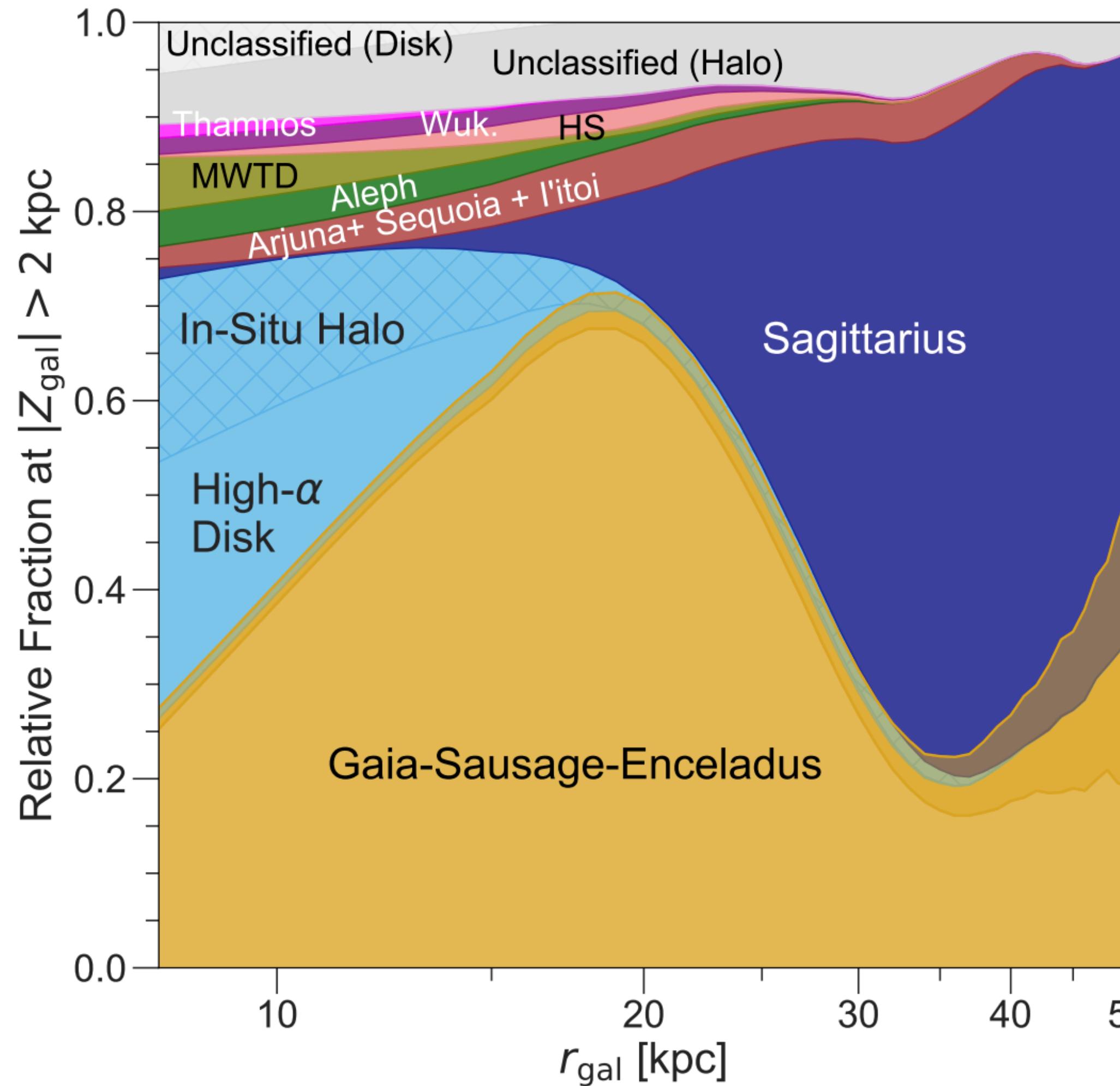
The Gaia Sausage



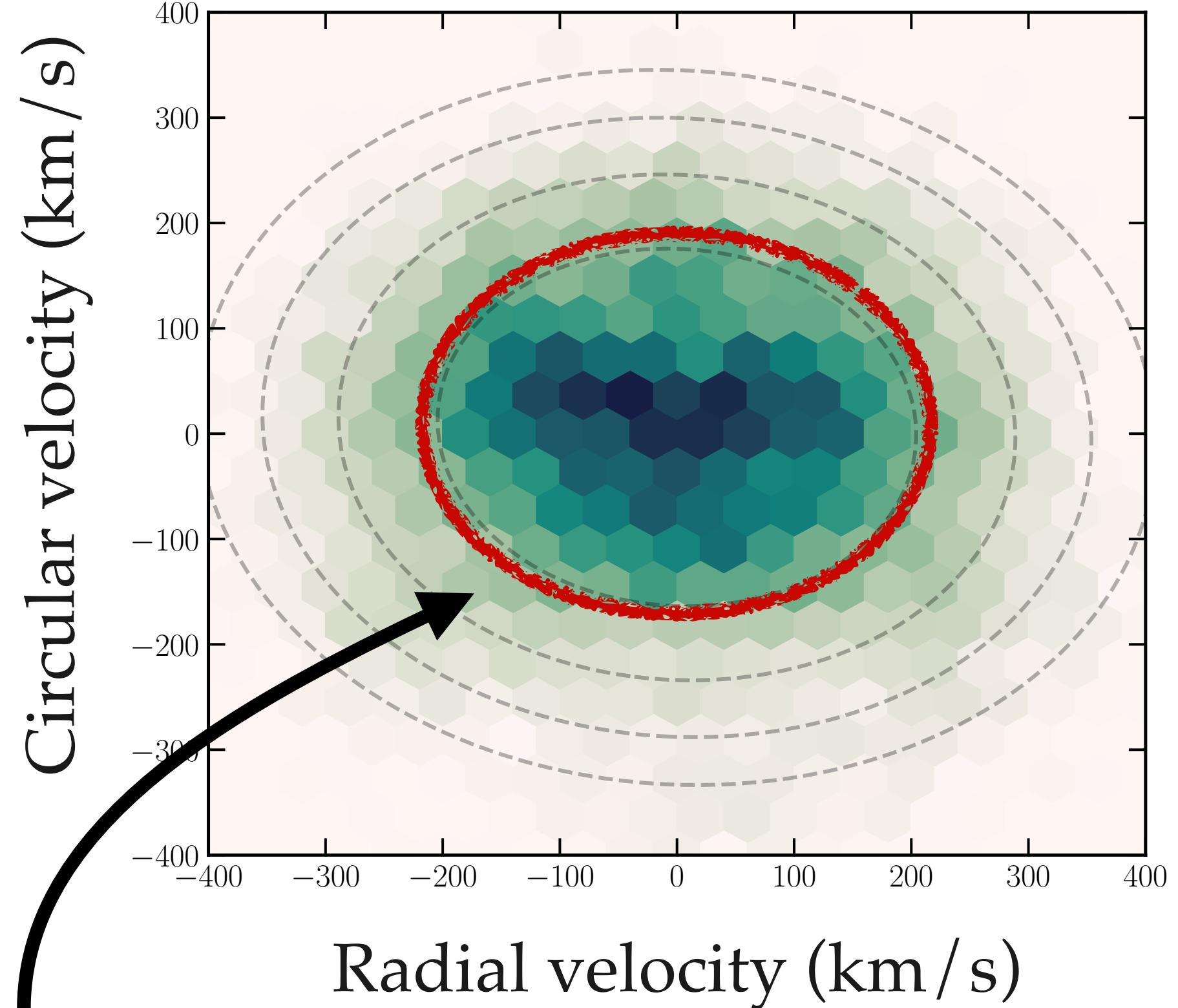
See e.g. Helmi et al. 1806.06038, O'Hare et al., 1810.11468, Necib et al. 1810.12301

Evidence from the H3 Survey that the Stellar Halo is Entirely Comprised of Substructure

ROHAN P. NAIDU,¹ CHARLIE CONROY,¹ ANA BONACA,¹ BENJAMIN D. JOHNSON,¹ YUAN-SEN TING (丁源森),^{2, 3, 4, 5, *}
NELSON CALDWELL,¹ DENNIS ZARITSKY,⁶ AND PHILLIP A. CARGILE¹



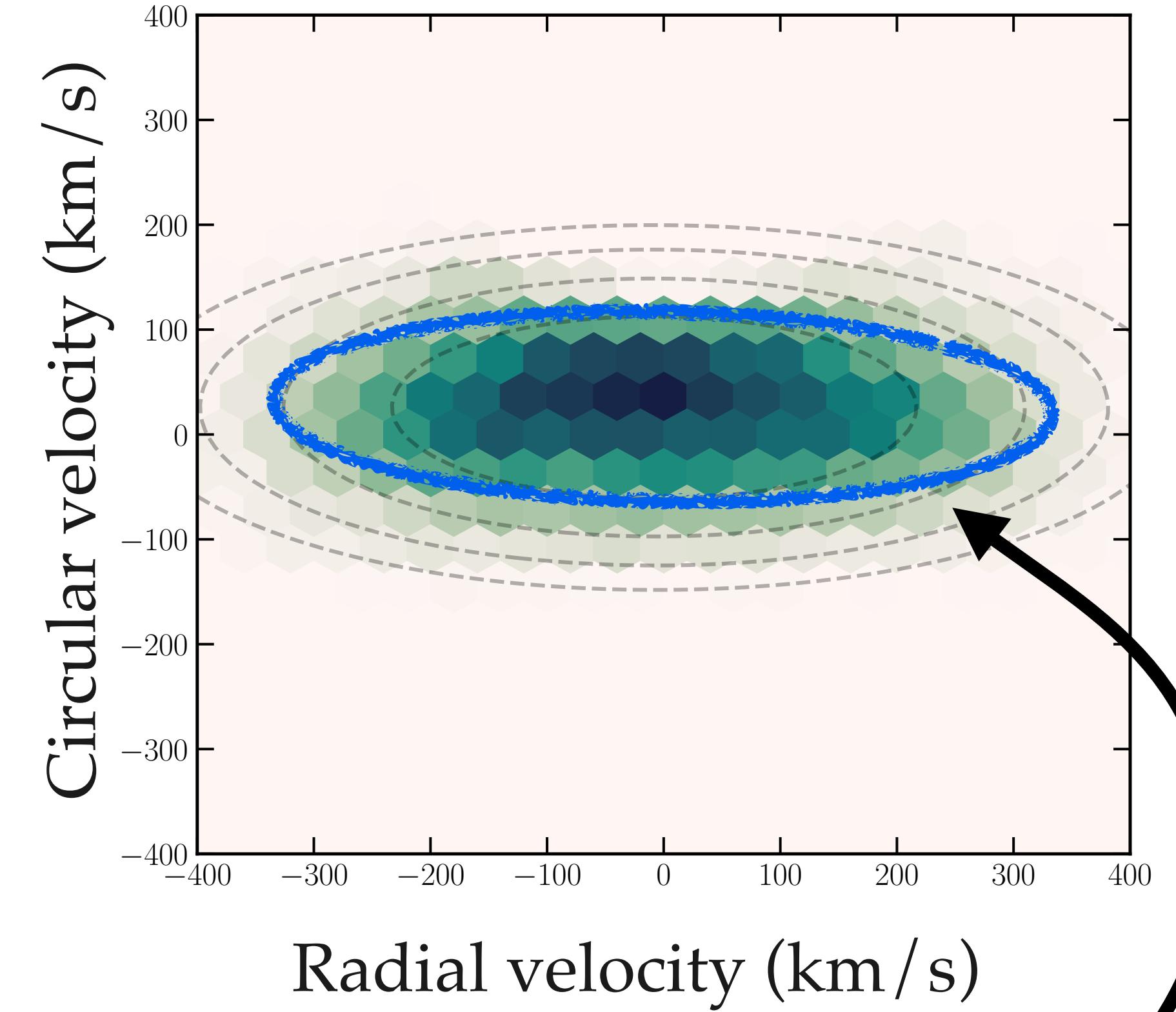
$[\text{Fe}/\text{H}] < -1.5$



“Metal-poor” halo

- Round velocity ellipsoid
- ~30% of main sequence halo sample
- More metal-poor on average

$[\text{Fe}/\text{H}] > -1.5$



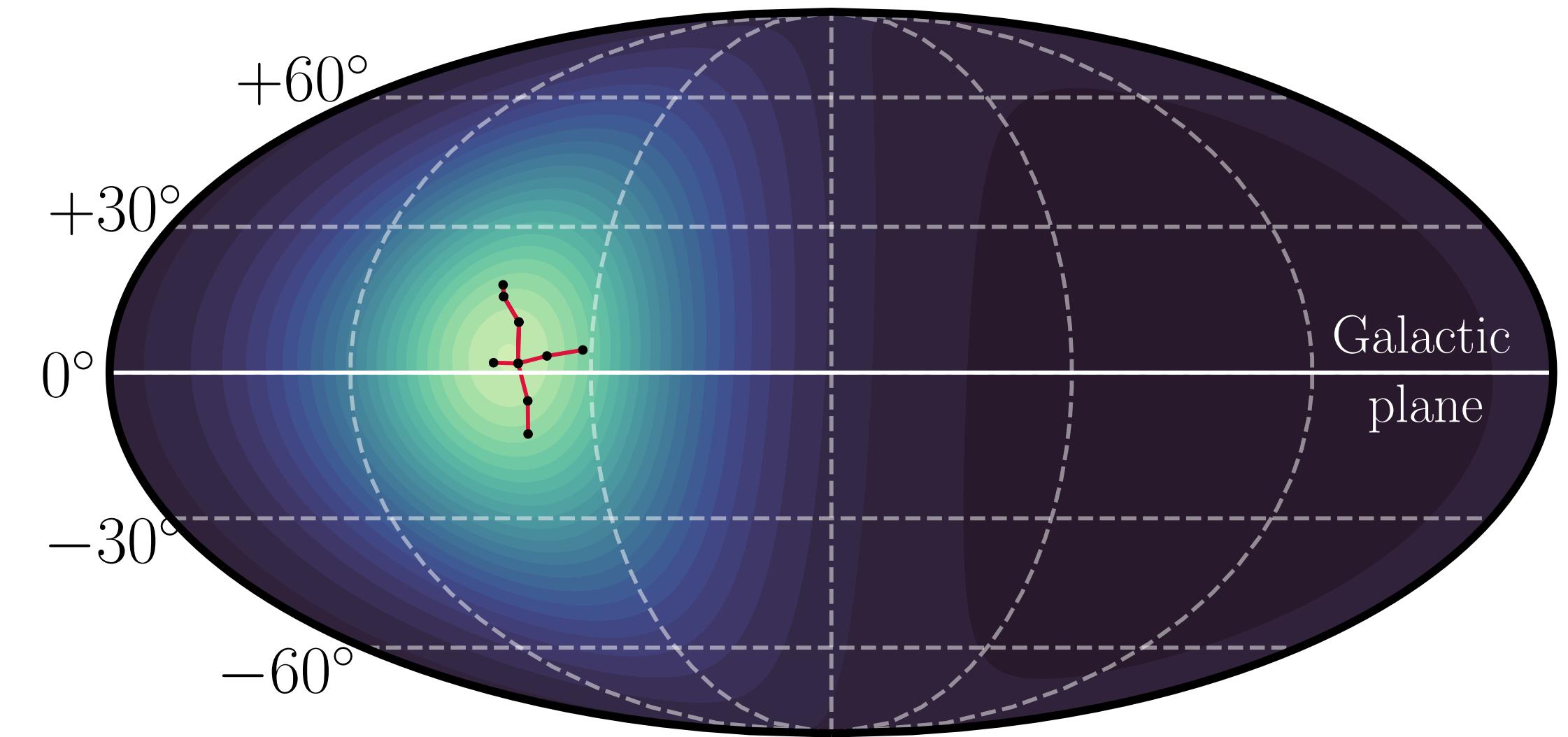
“Metal-rich” halo

- Highly eccentric radial orbits
- Dominant contribution ~50%
- Characteristic metallicity $[\text{Fe}/\text{H}] = -1.4$

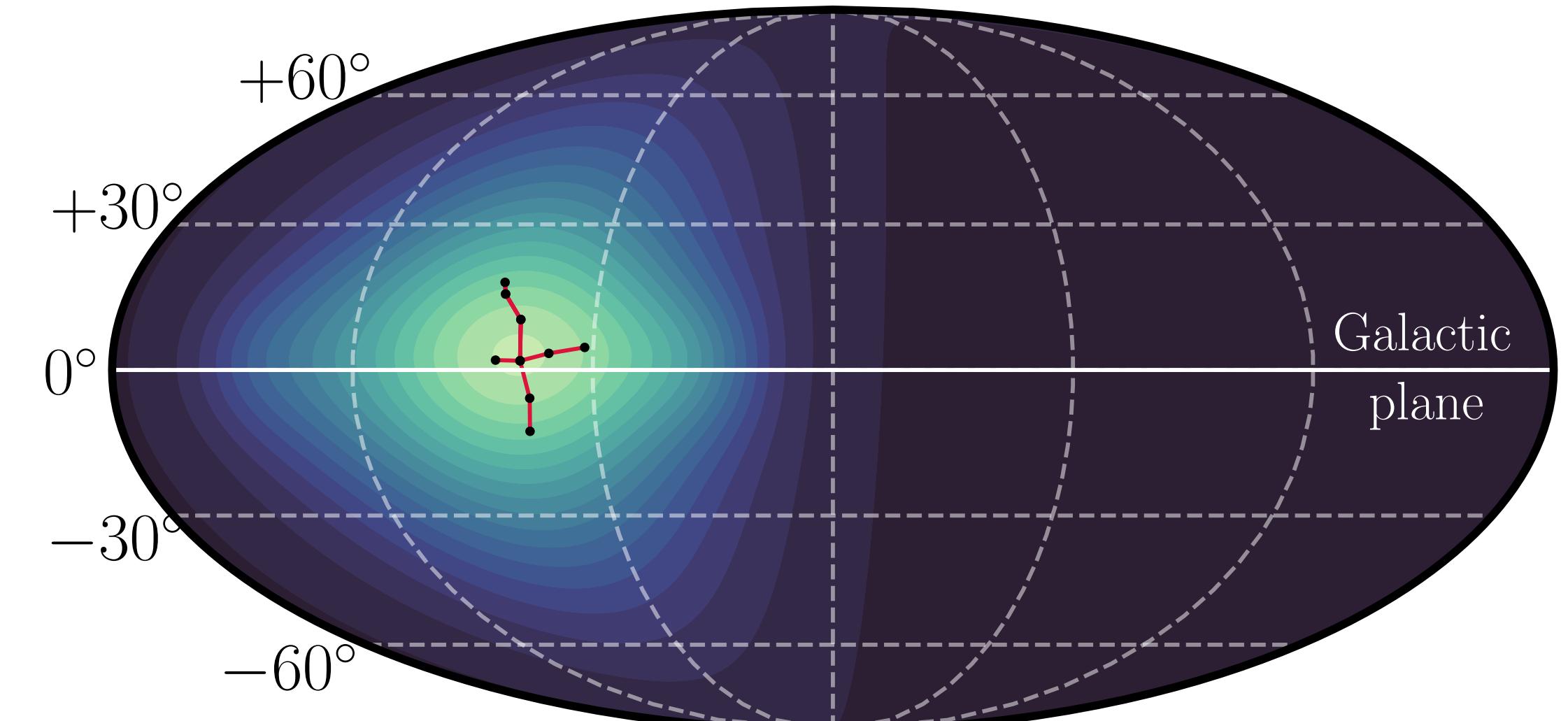
The Gaia Sausage

seen prominently in the Gaia data → Should also be present in DM distribution

DM Flux for SHM
(Gaussian distribution)



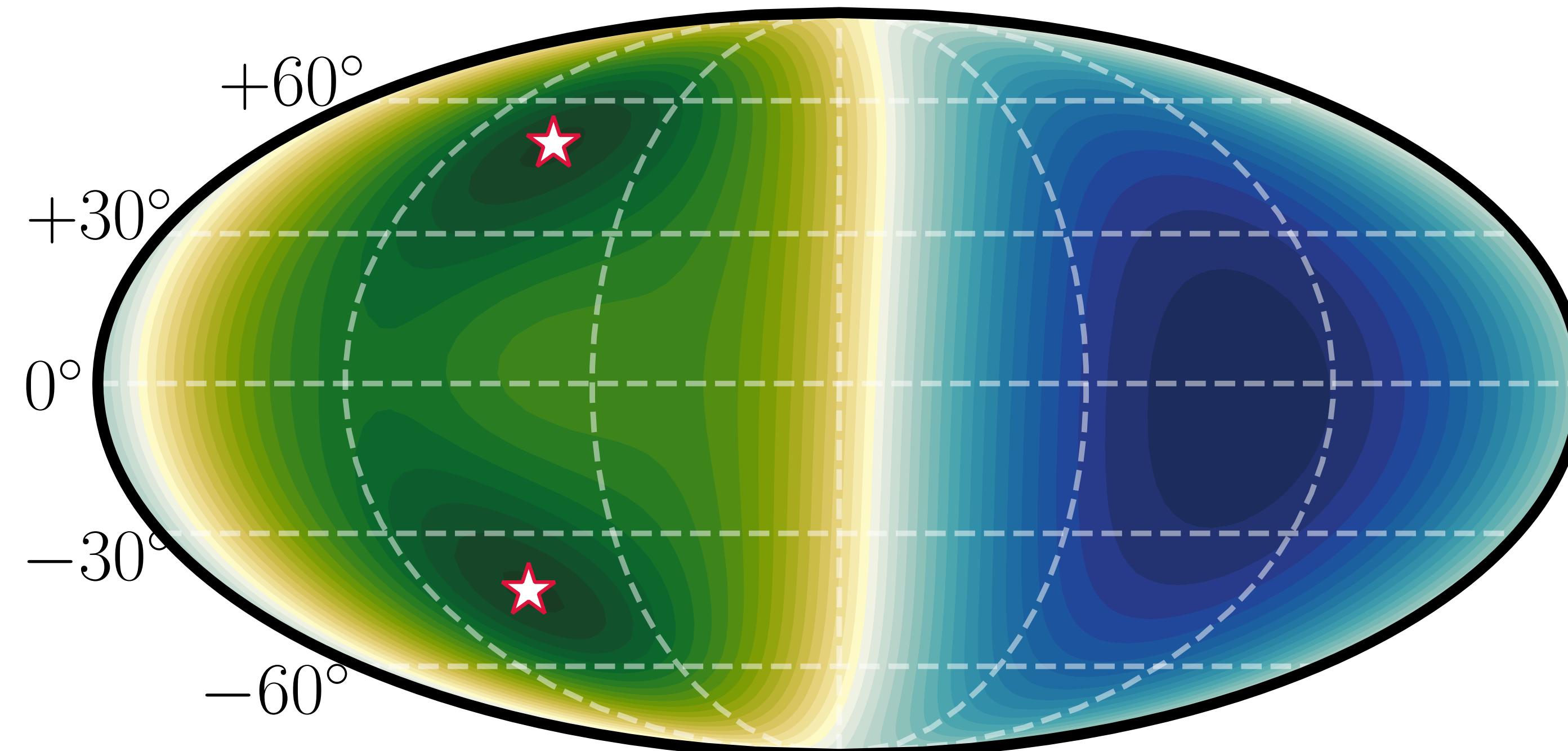
SHM + Gaia Sausage
(Isotropic and radially anisotropic components)



The Gaia Sausage gives rise to peaks off center from Cygnus

O'Hare+ [1909.04684]

5 – 10 keV



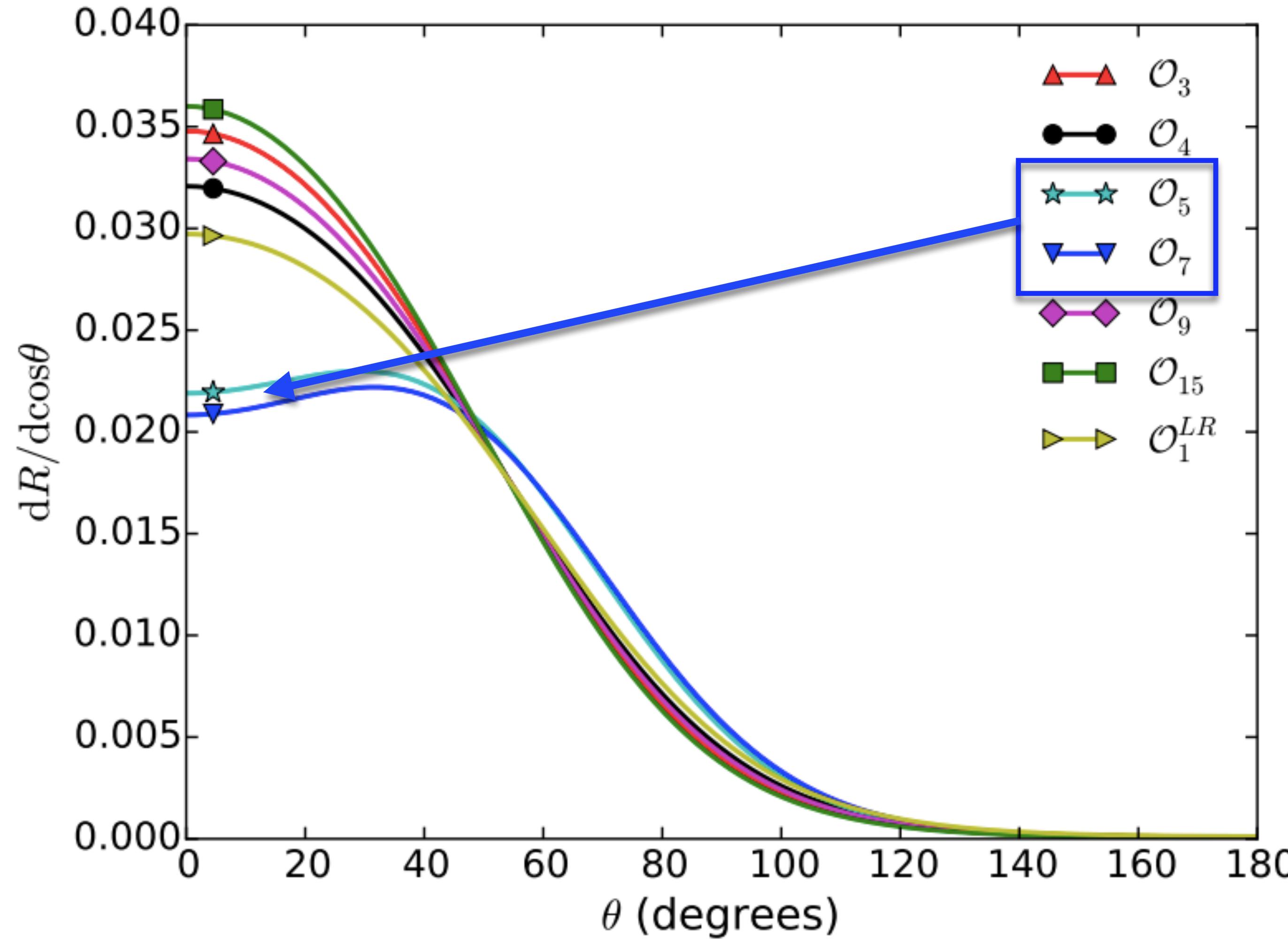
Distribution for 5-10 keVr Fluorine recoils with a 100 GeV WIMP
Halo model = SHM + Sausage

Non-relativistic EFT of DM-nucleus interaction

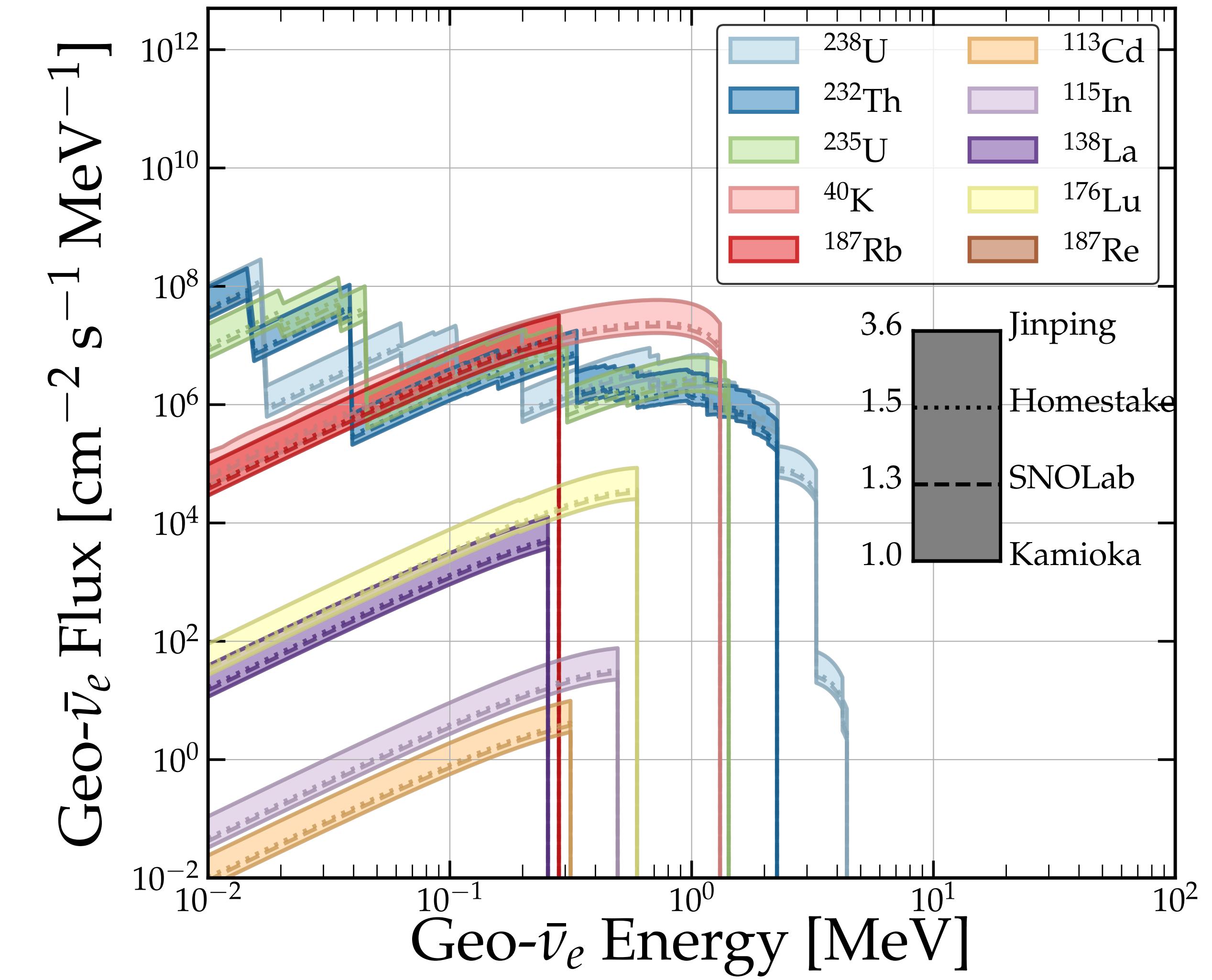
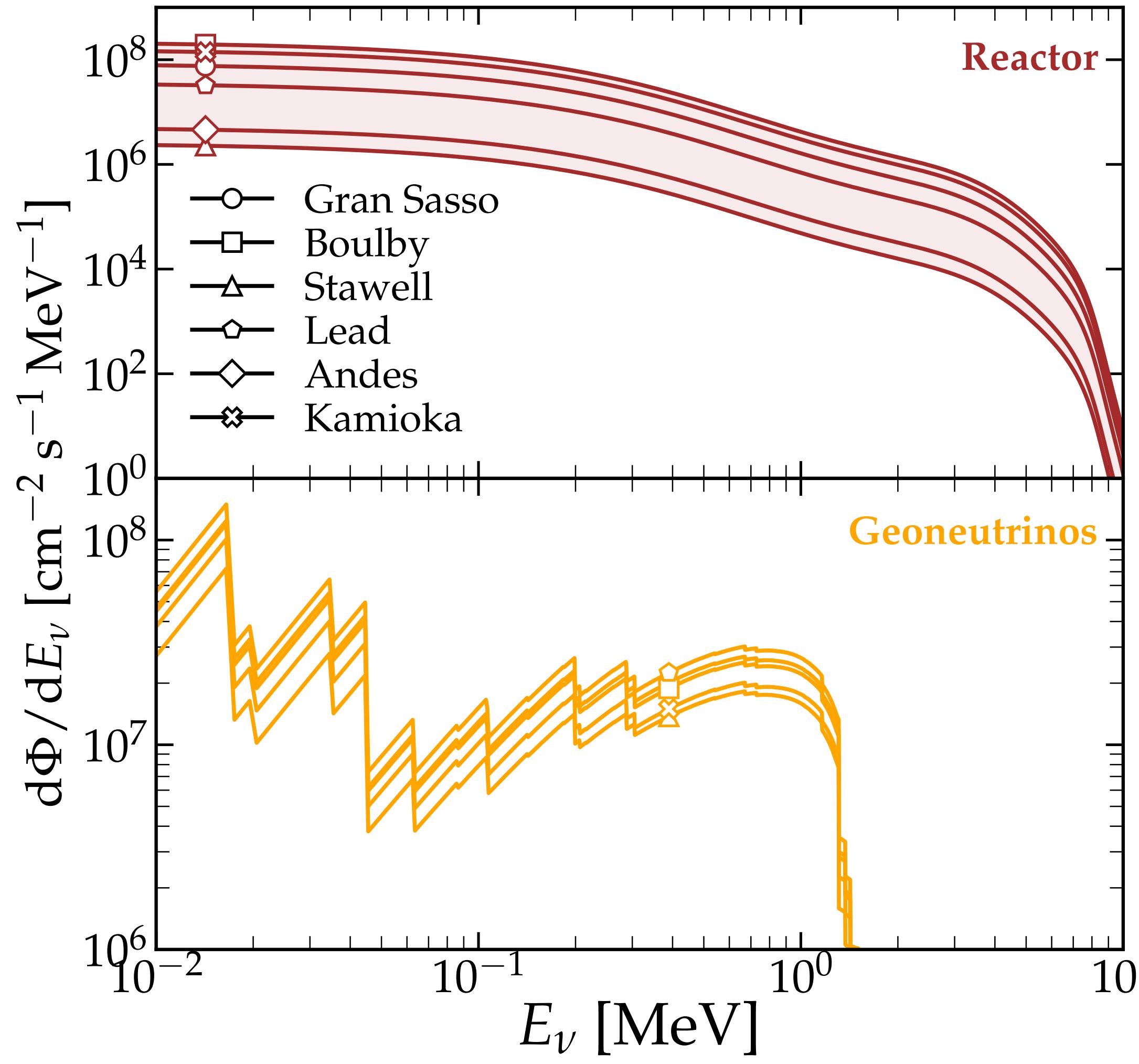
Allows for operators (e.g. $\mathcal{O}_5, \mathcal{O}_7$)
dependent on transverse velocity:

Kavanagh [1505.07406]

→ Non-Gaussian angular distributions



Geoneutrinos



Attachment of paramagnetic beads to the DNA strands

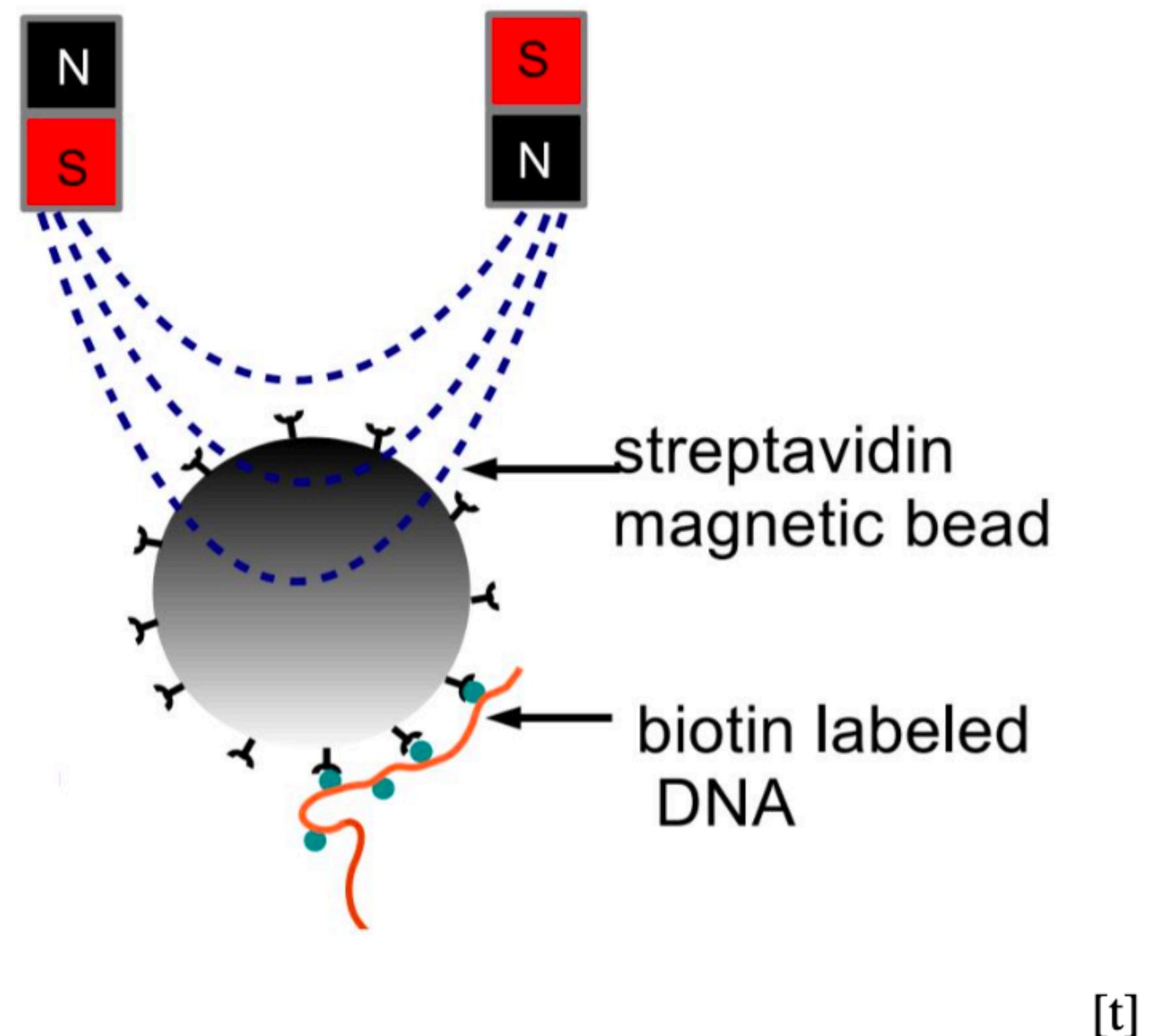


FIG. 3. Diagram from [16] illustrating the DNA to paramagnetic bead attachment and manipulation via an external magnetic field. The connection occurs due to the extreme affinity of Streptavidin (a type of protein) to biotin molecules (vitamin H). Streptavidin is known to form one of the strongest bonds known in nature with biotin.