Searching for quasi-Dirac oscillations in the high-energy astrophysical neutrino flux

Kiara Carloni, Harvard University

KC, Martinez-Soler, Argüelles, Babu, Dev, PRD 109, L051702 (2024)

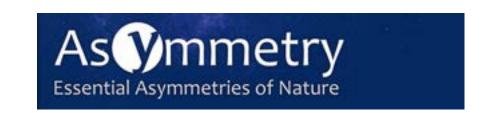
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MacDonald, KC, Argüelles, Alves-Batista, Martinez-Soler (to appear)









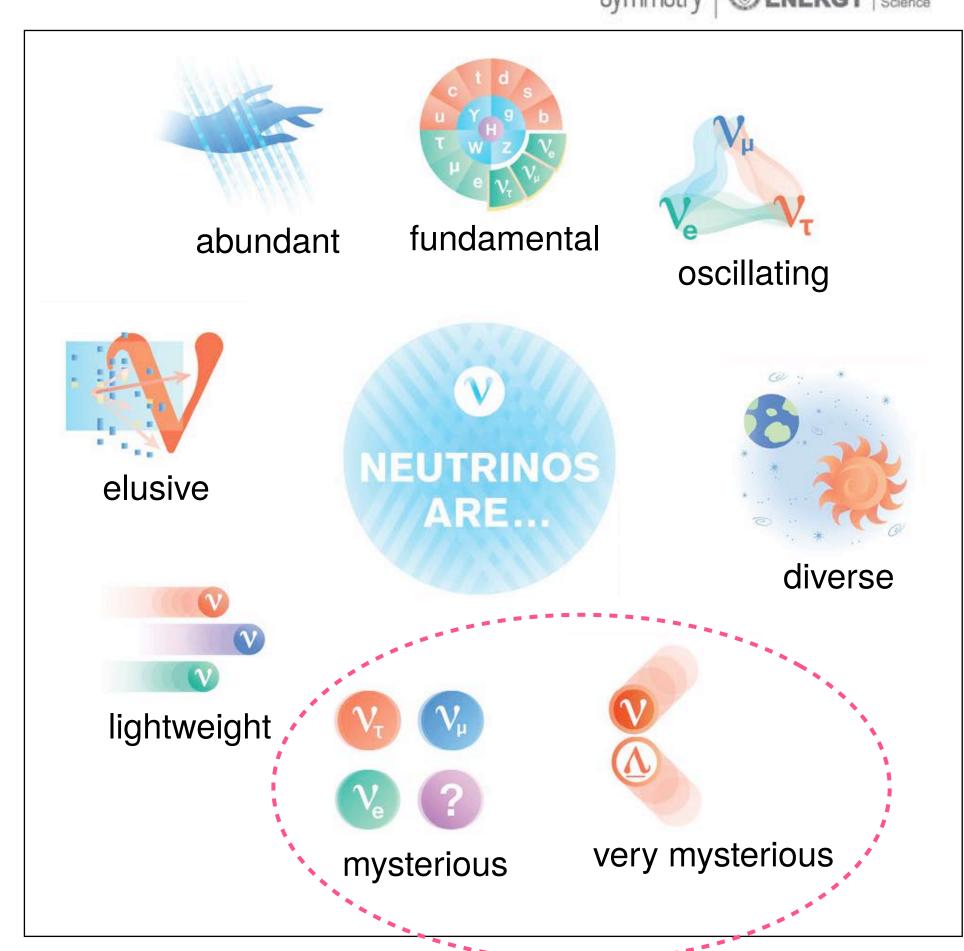
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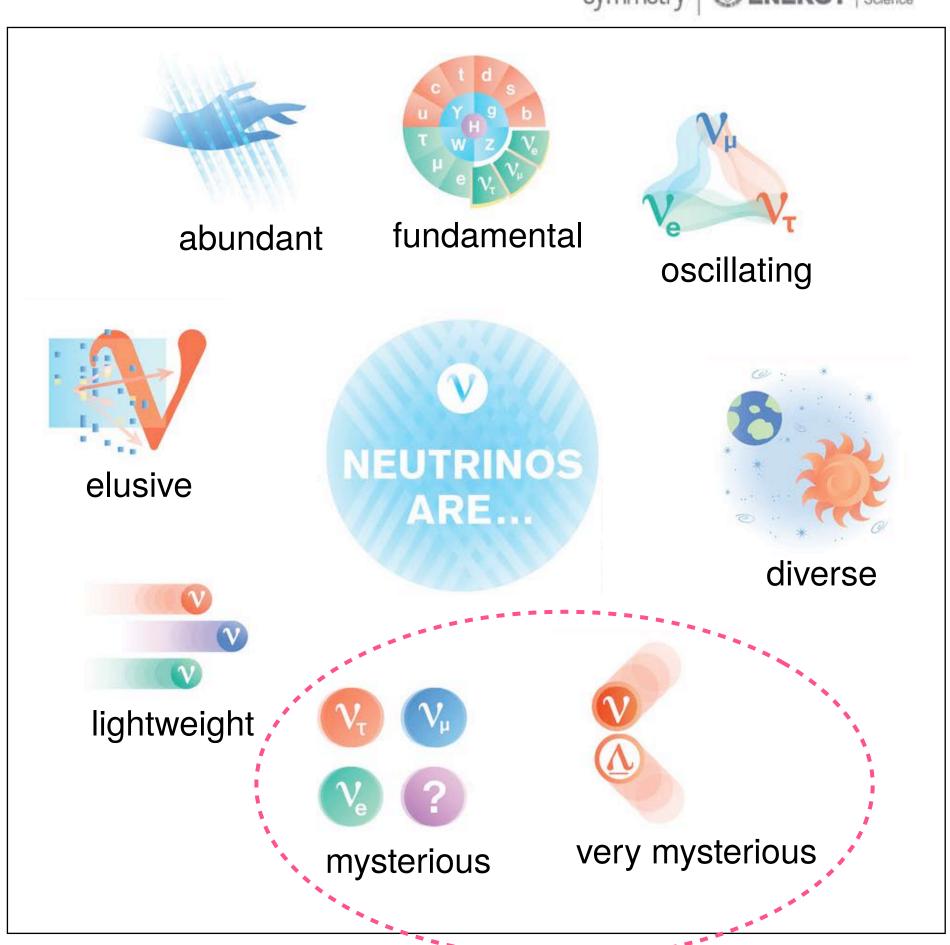




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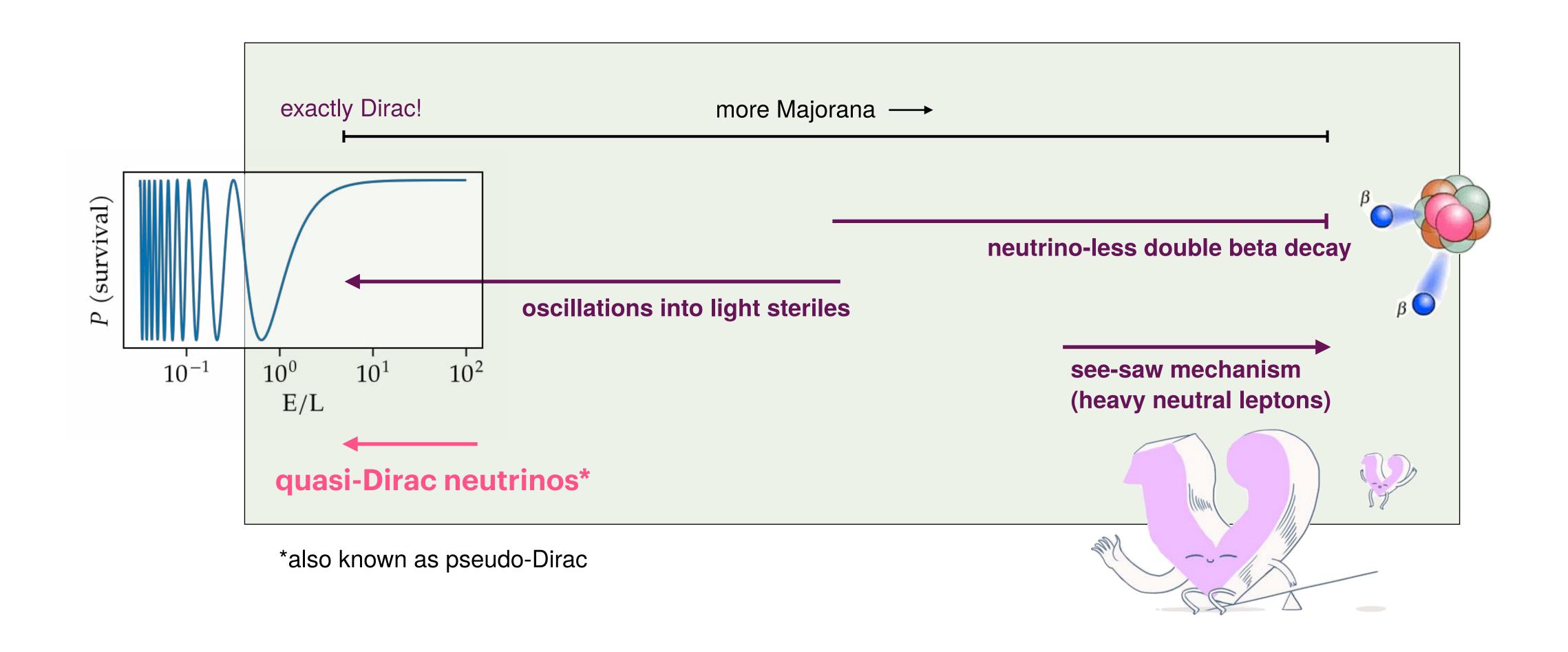
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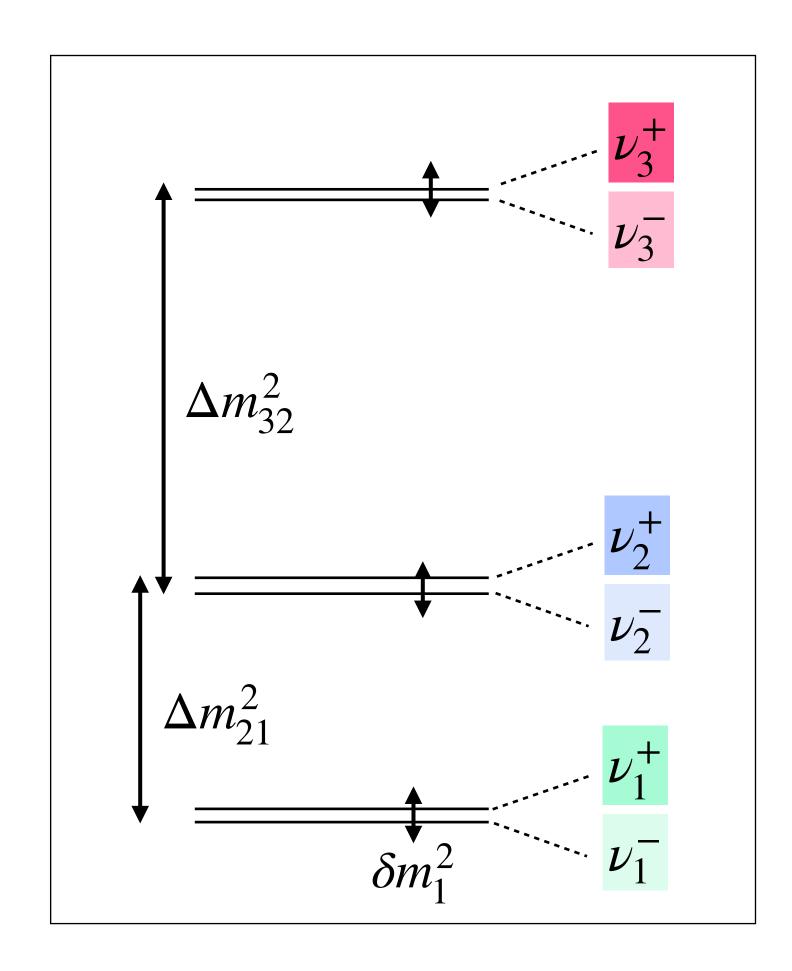


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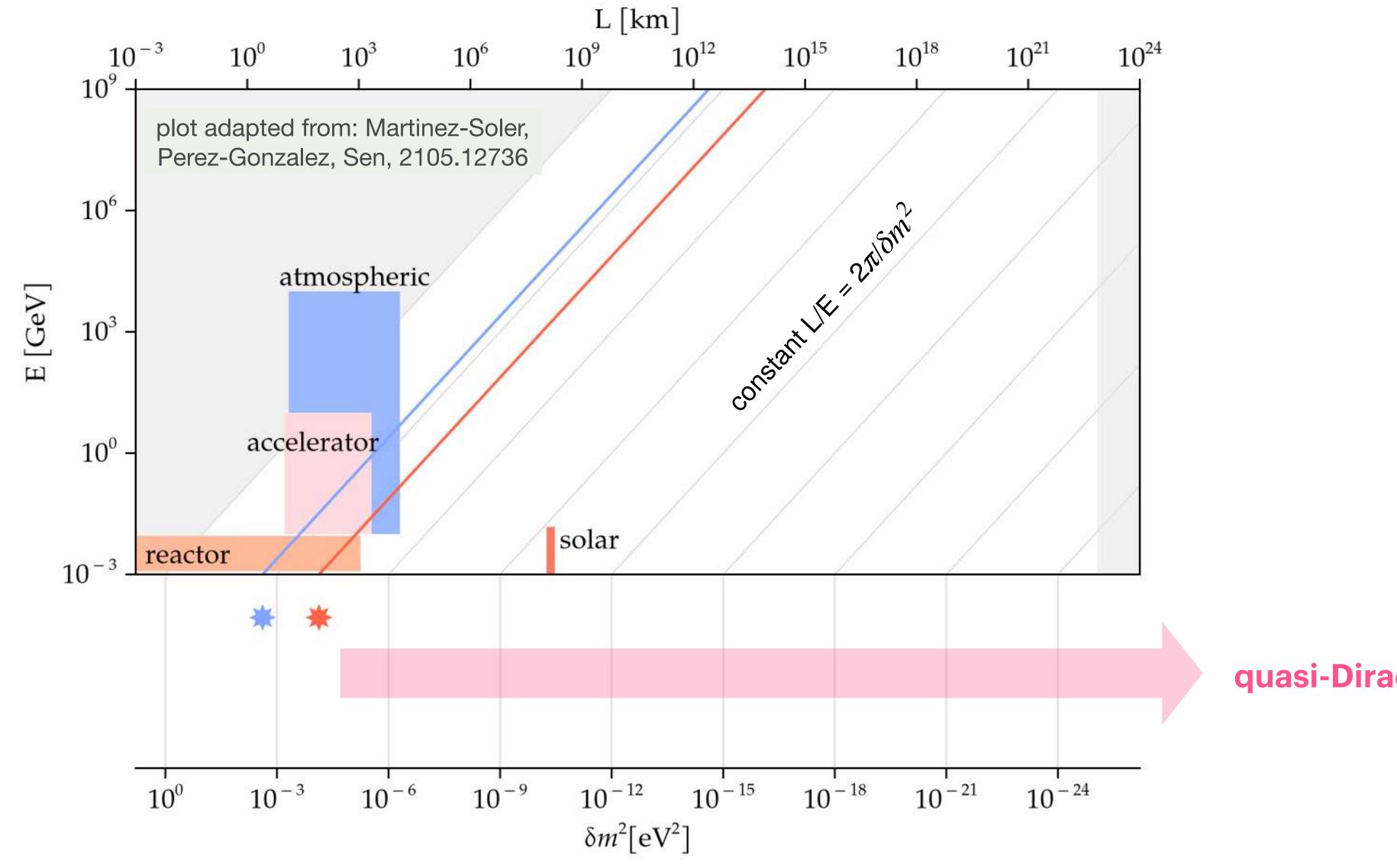
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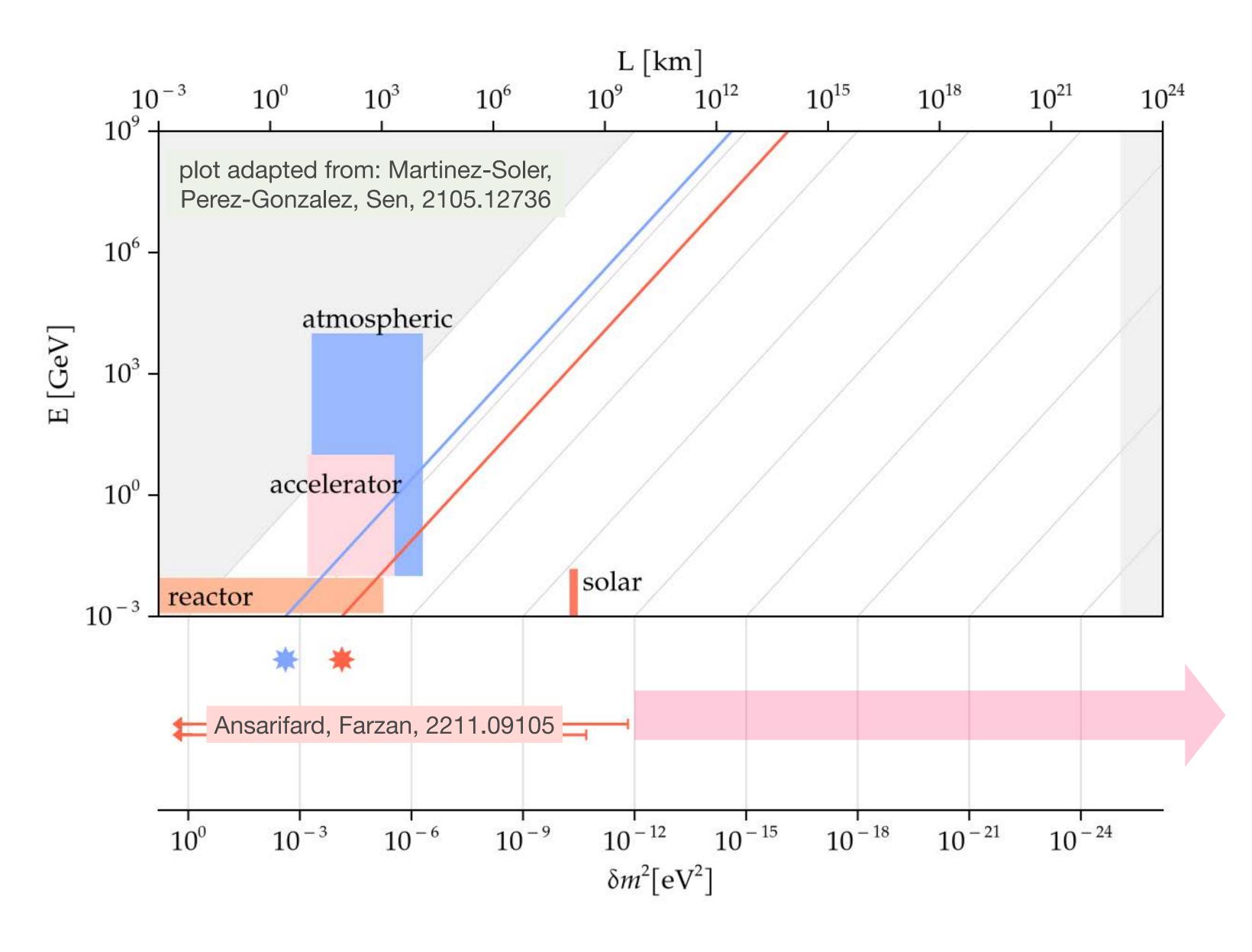
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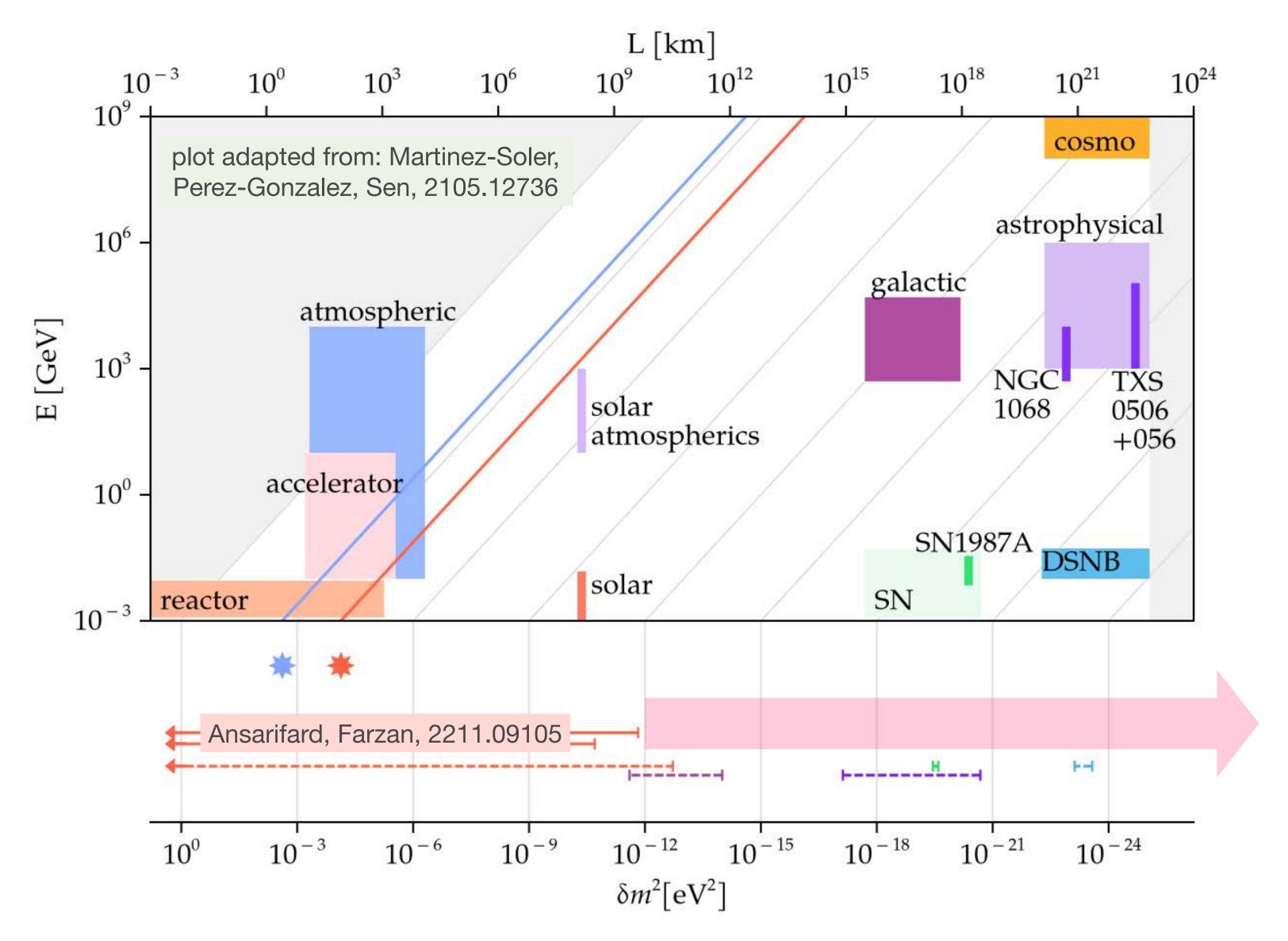


Solar:

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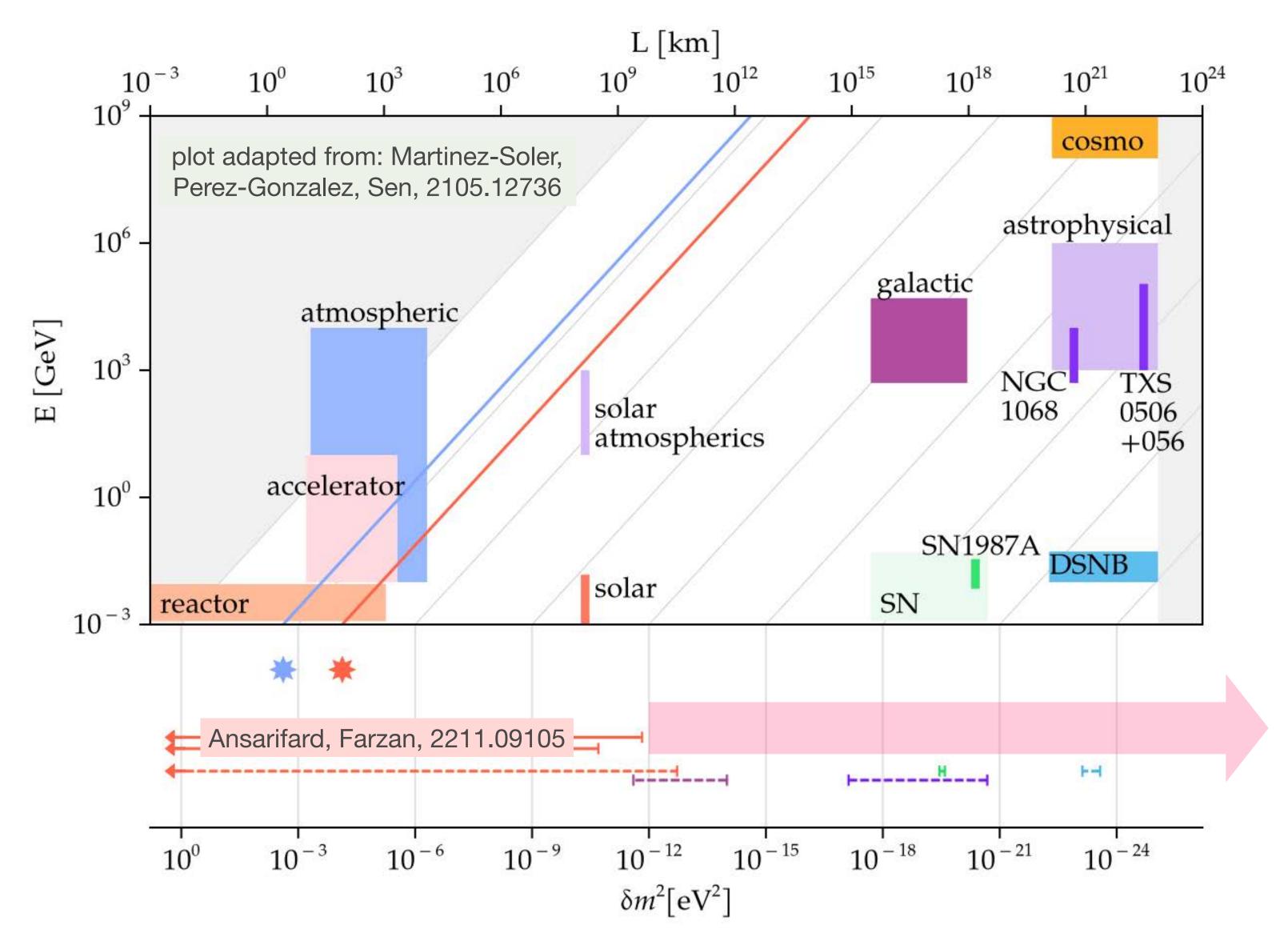
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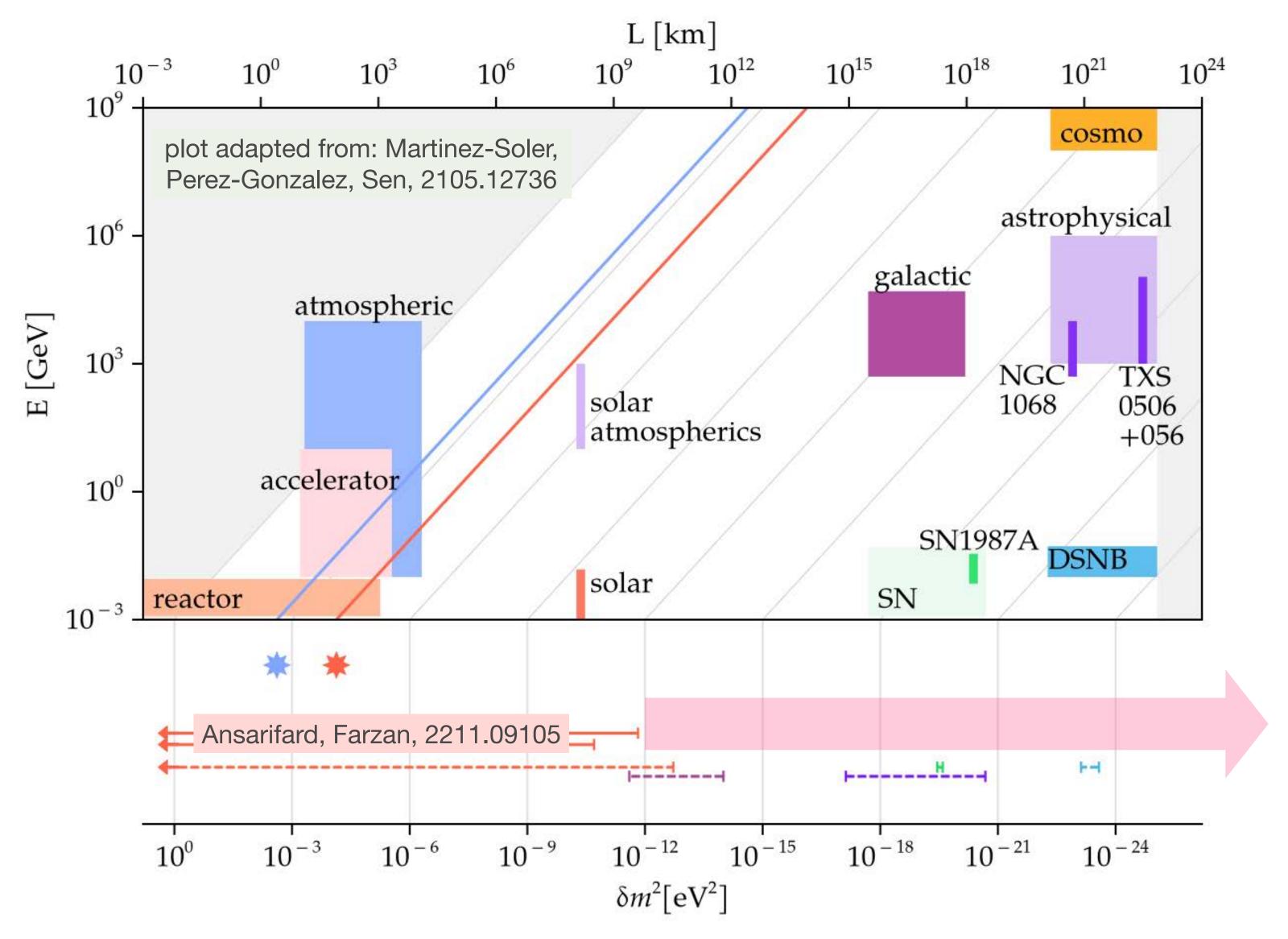
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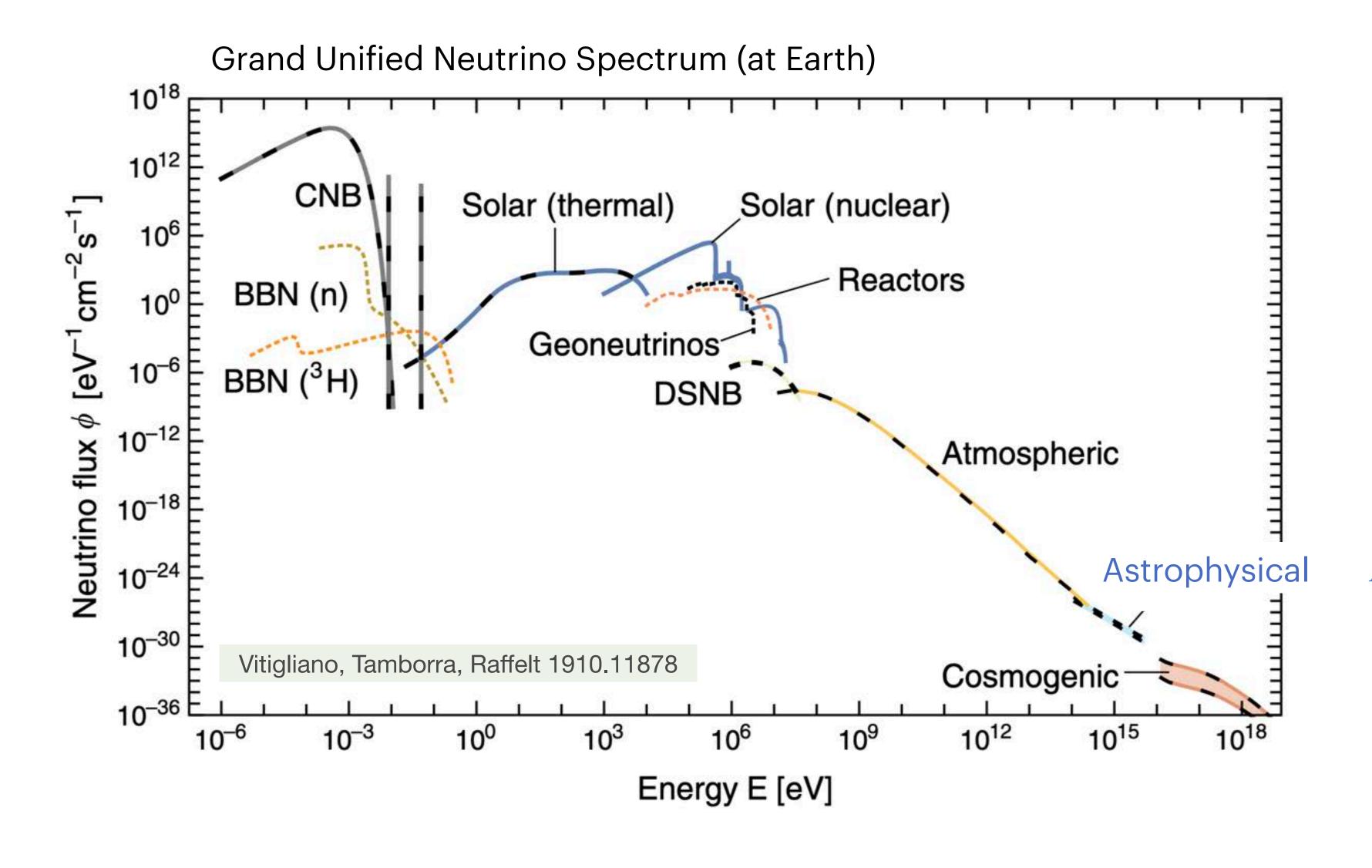
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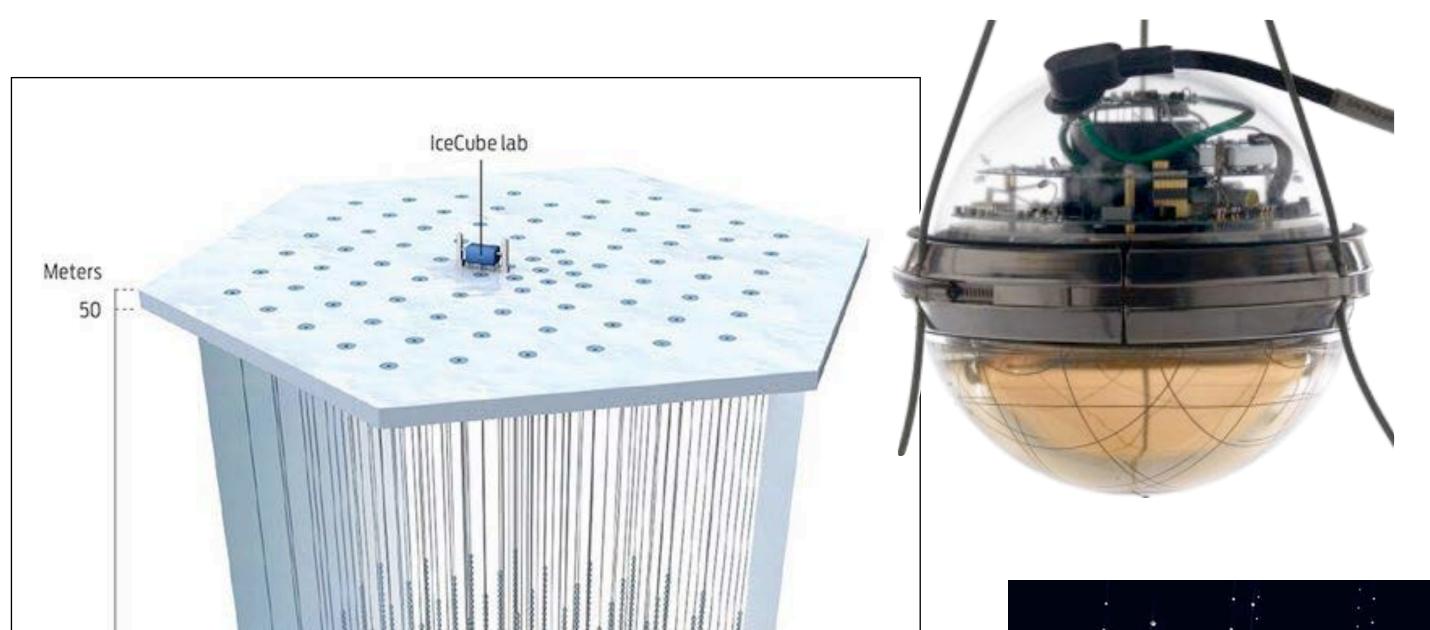
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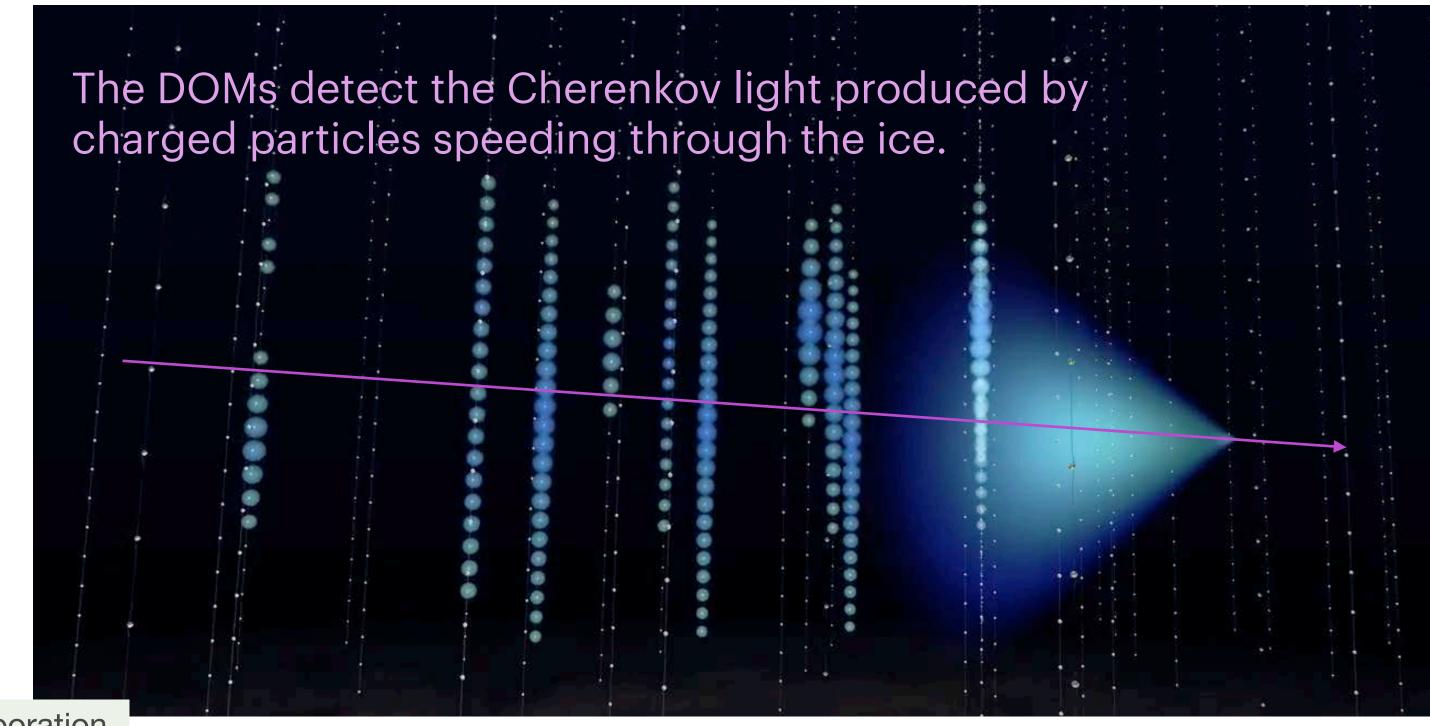
12

In order to see ~TeV astrophysical neutrinos, we need a gigaton of instrumented target = cubic-km of material

 $E^2 \phi \simeq 10^{-8} \text{GeV/cm}^2/\text{s/sr}$



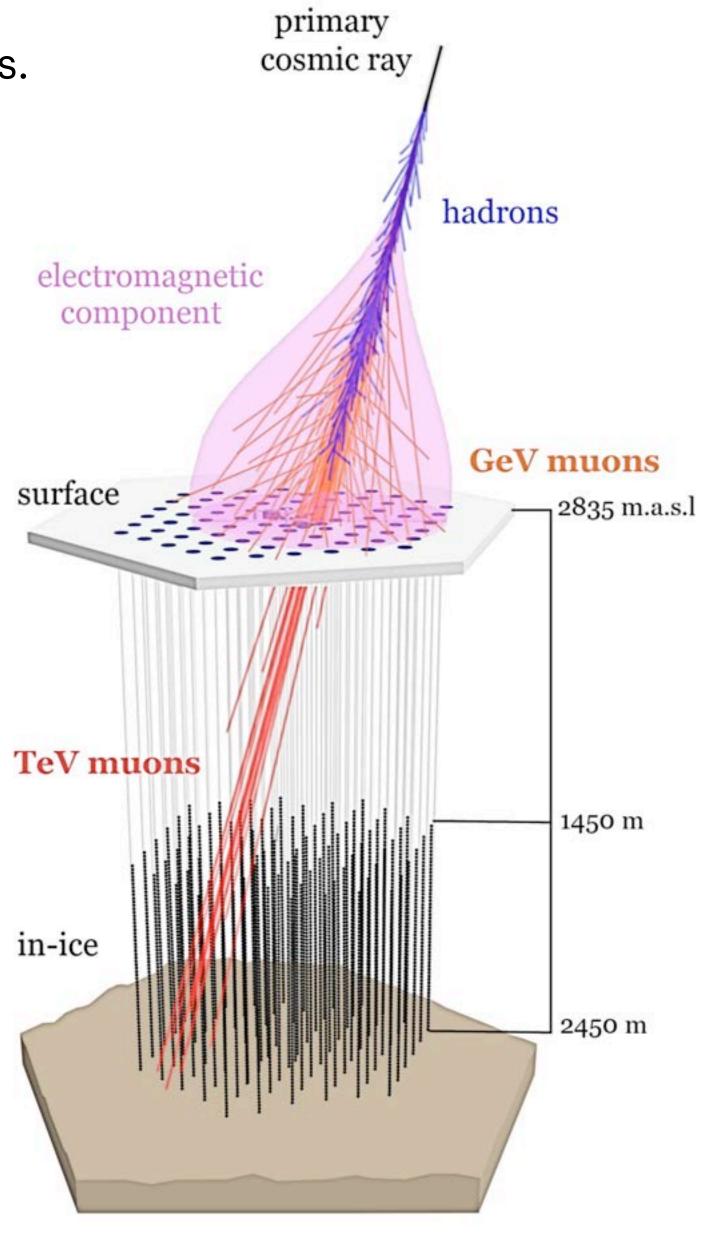
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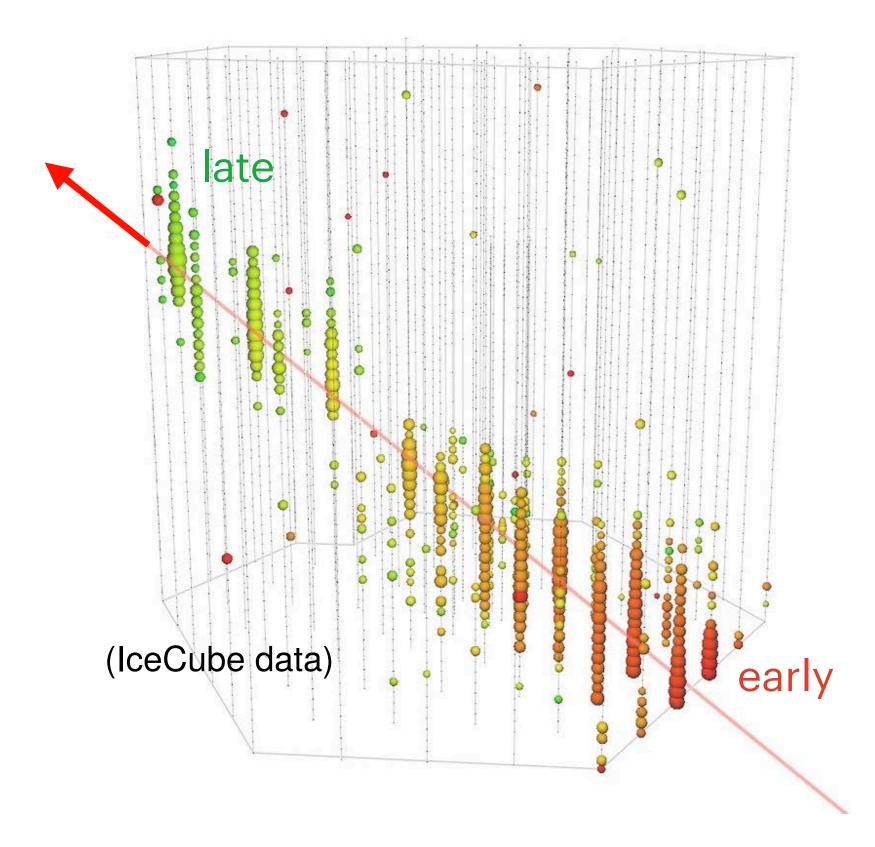
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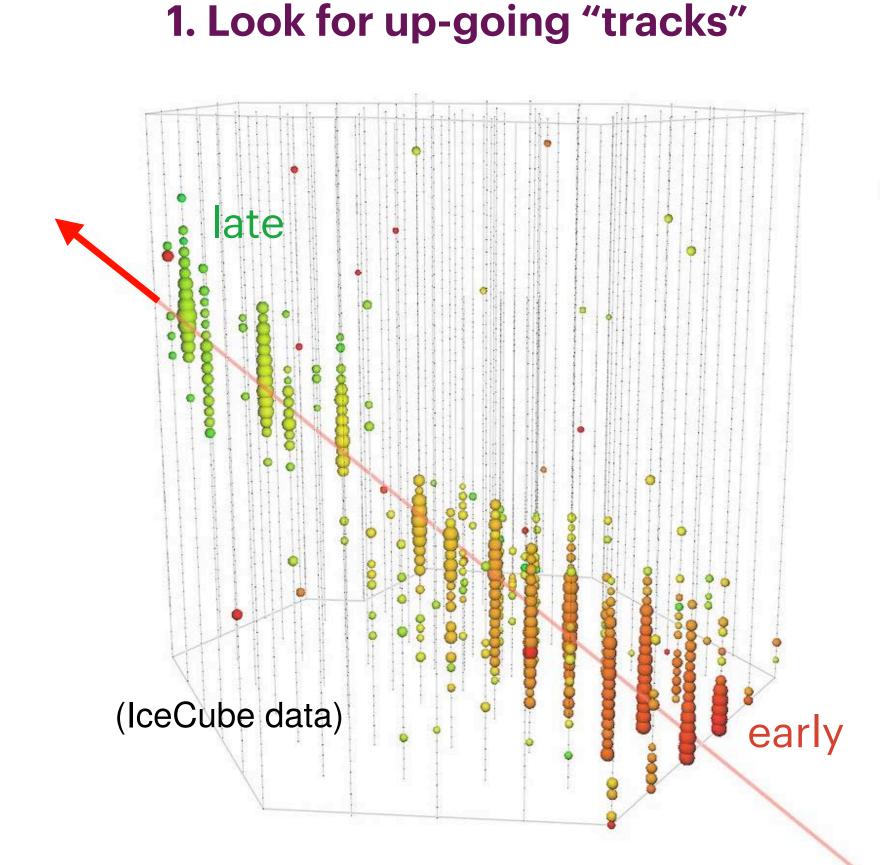
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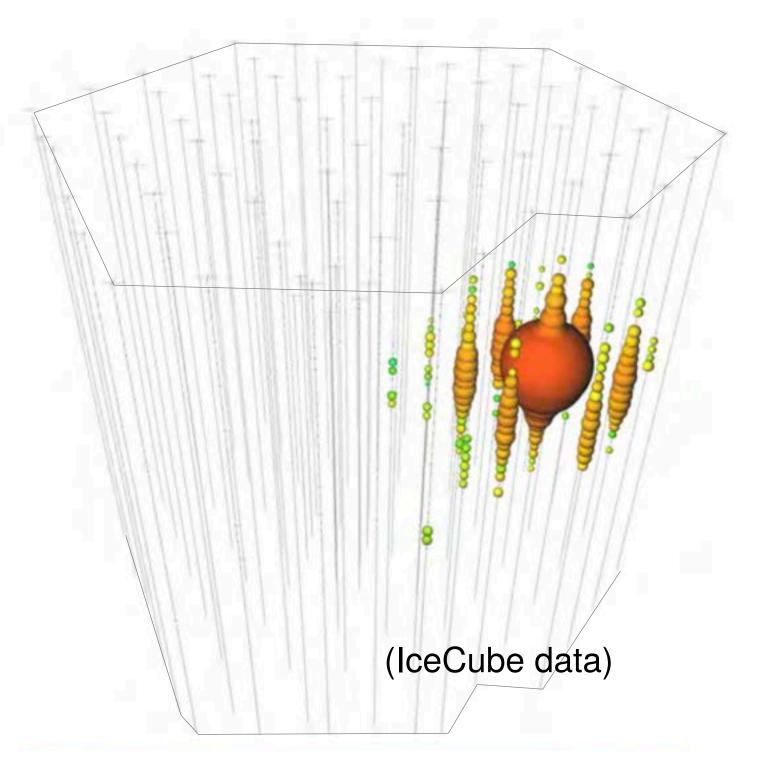
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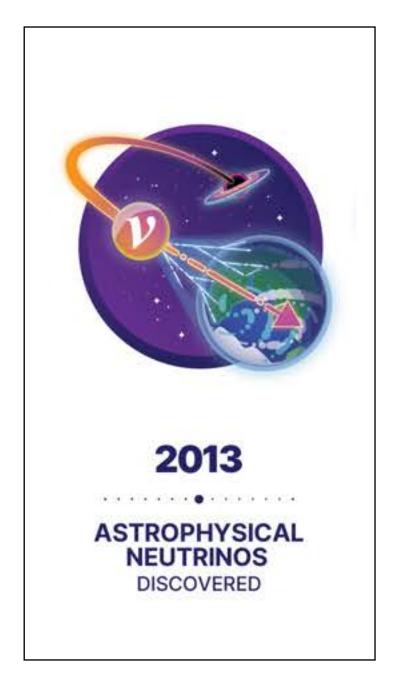
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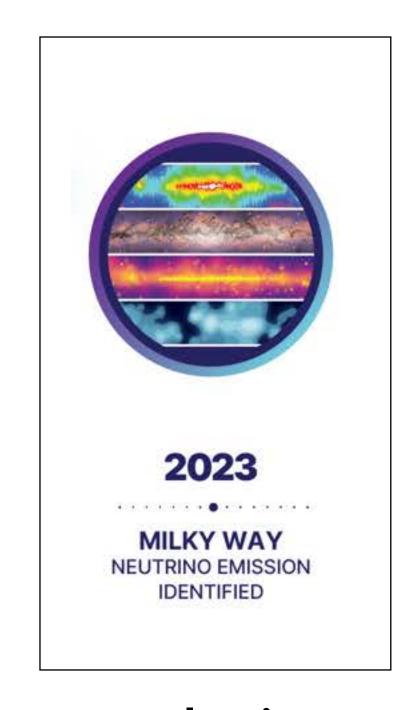
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diffuse

point sources

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galactic

Images courtesy of the IceCube Collaboration

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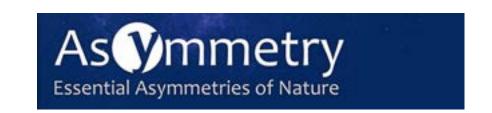
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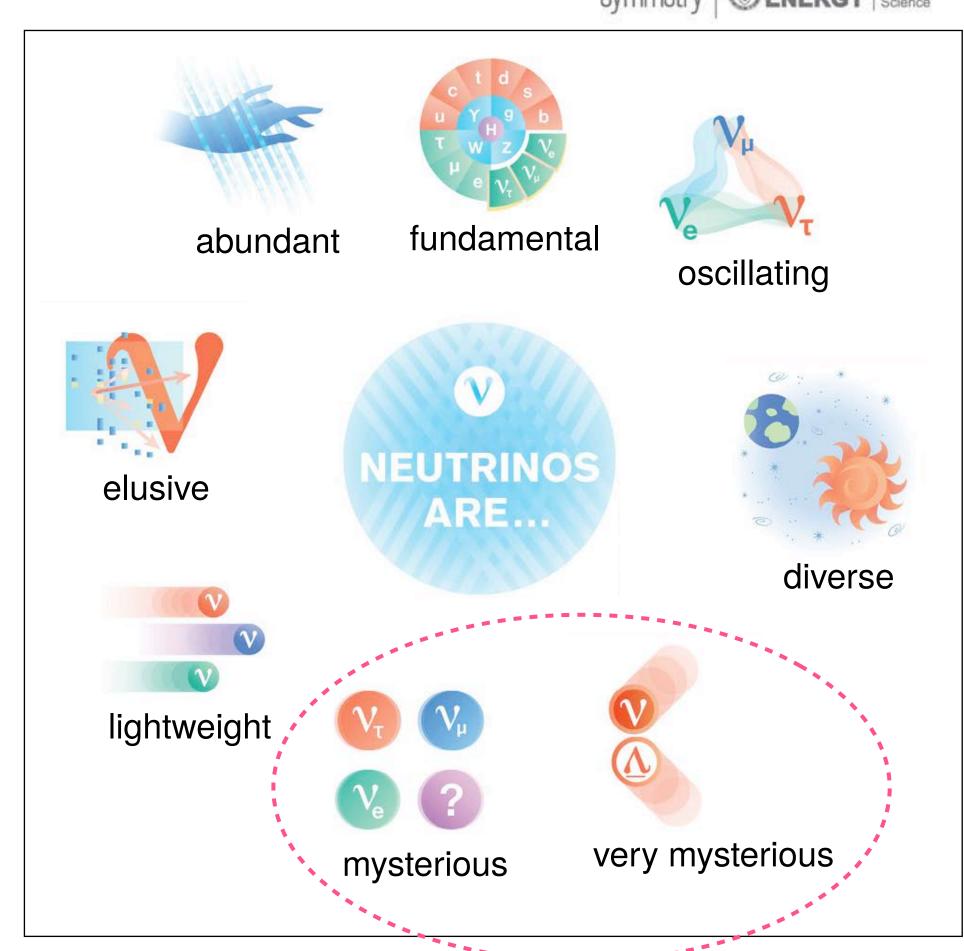
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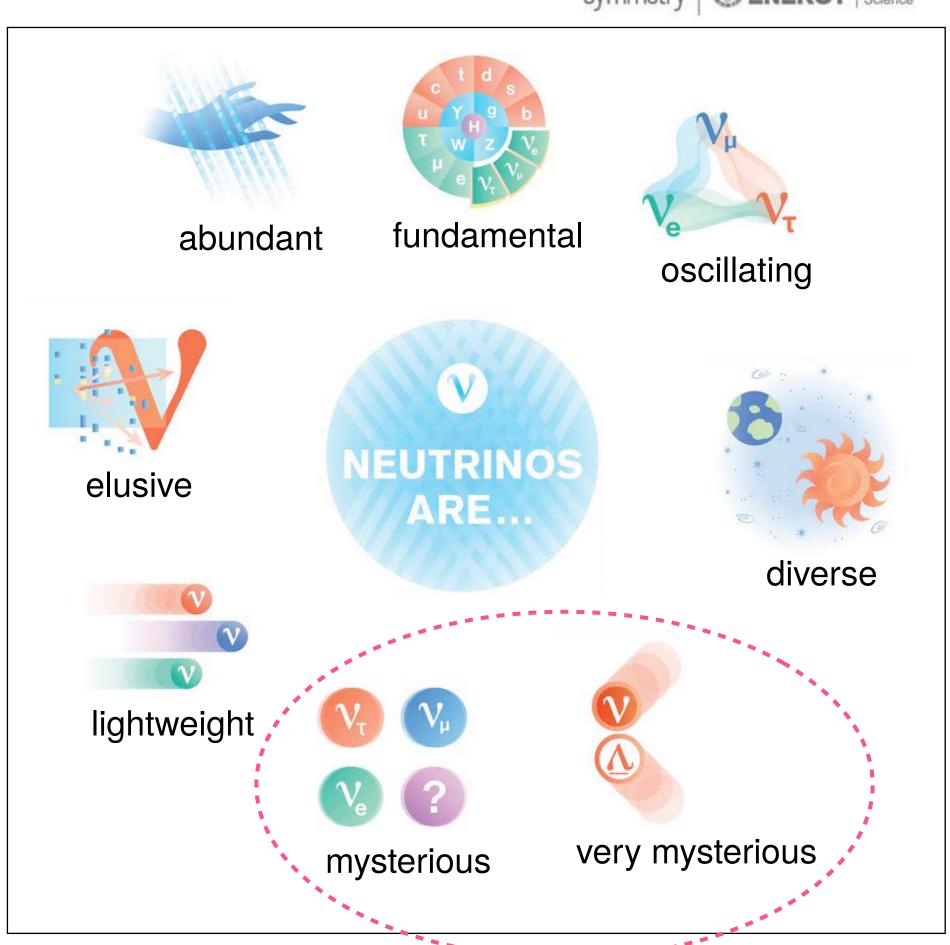




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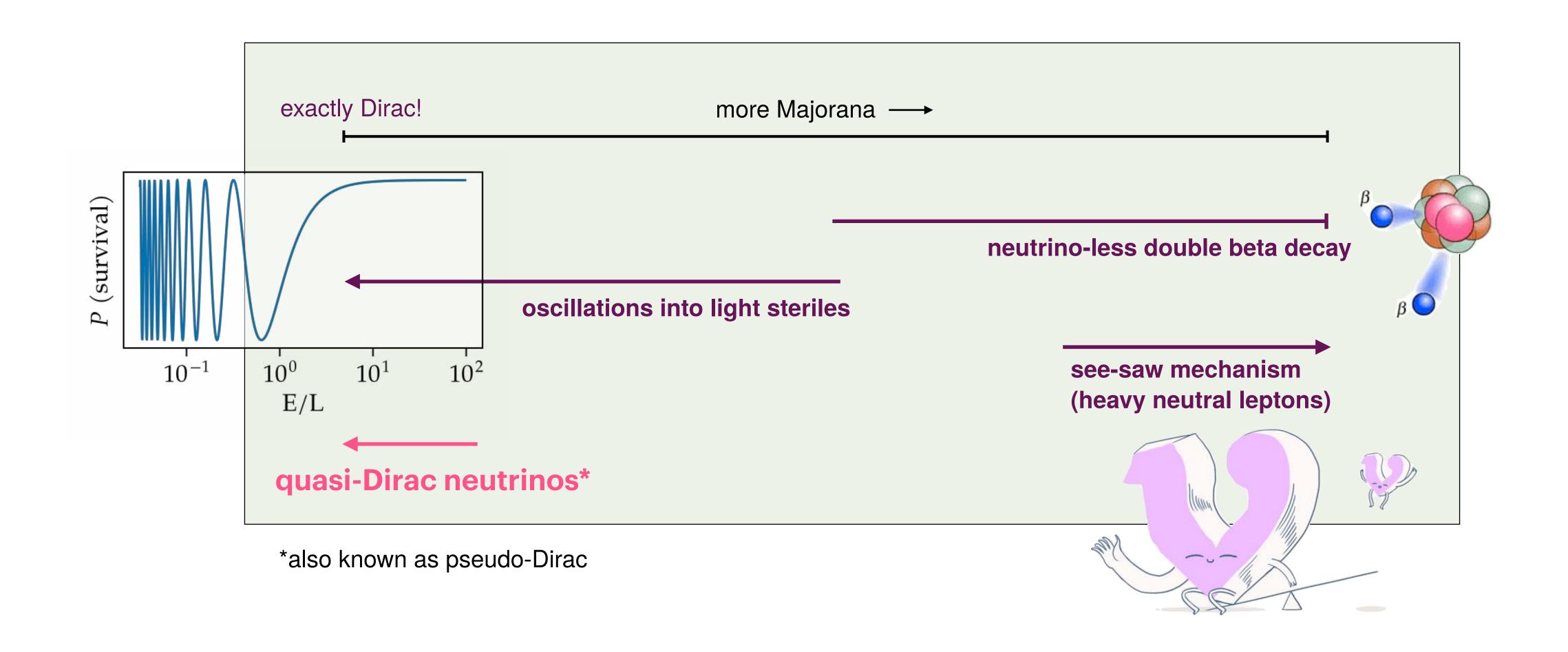
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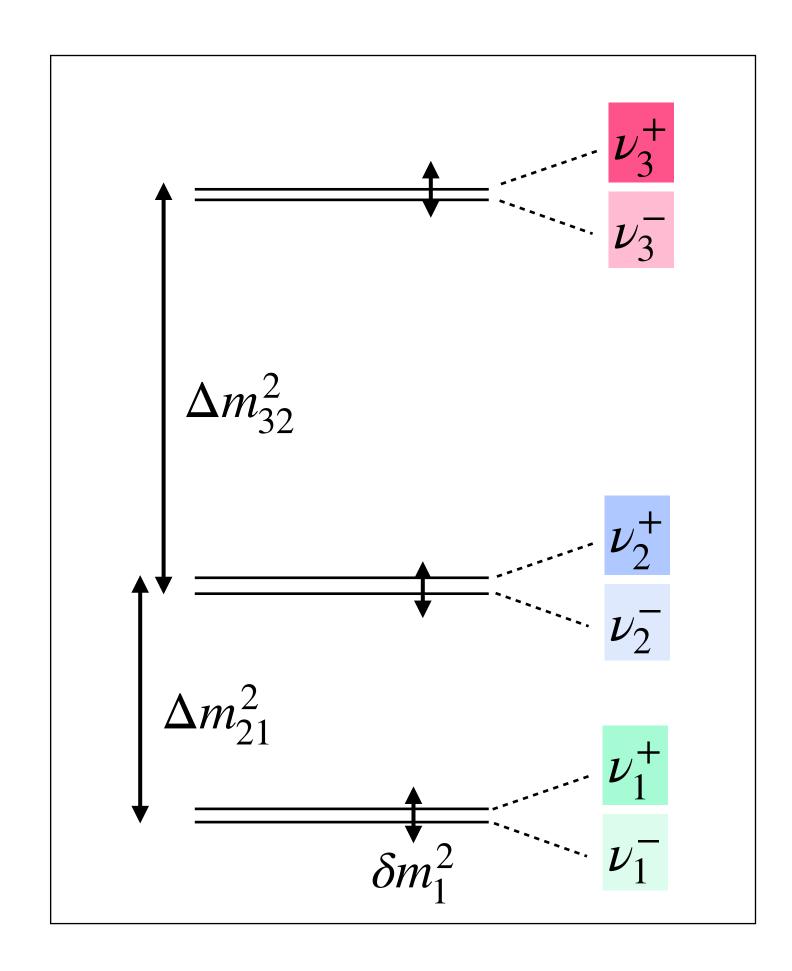


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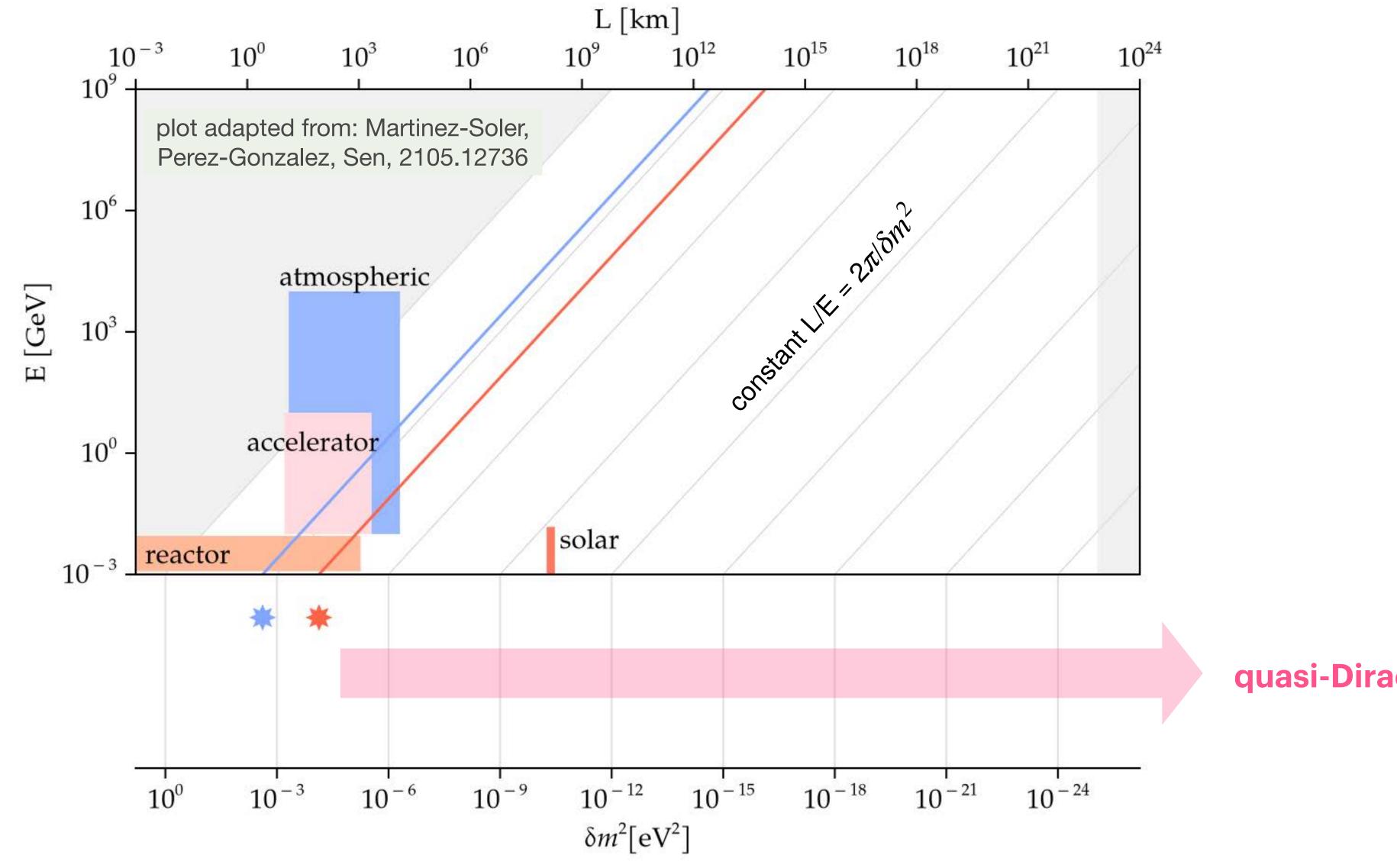
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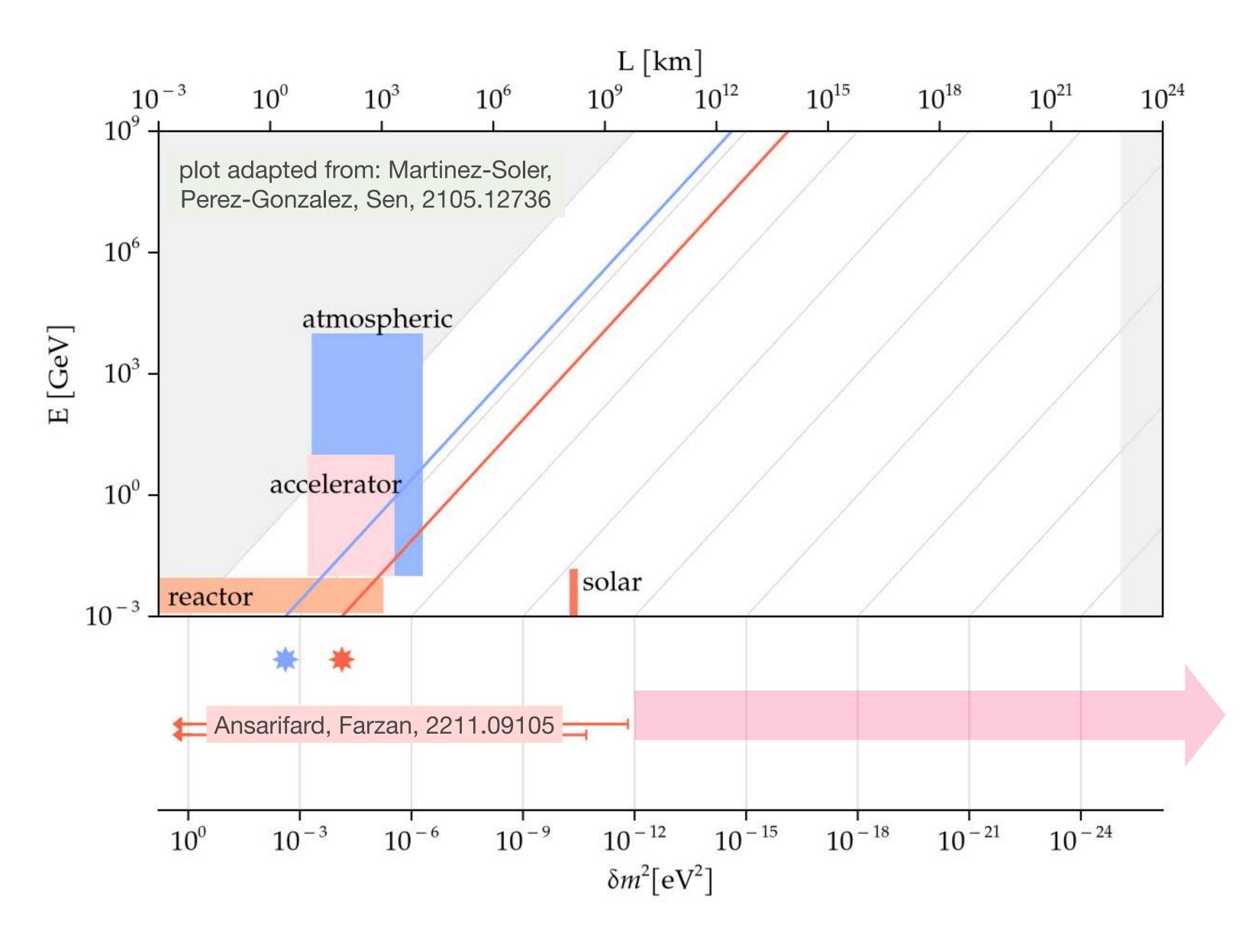
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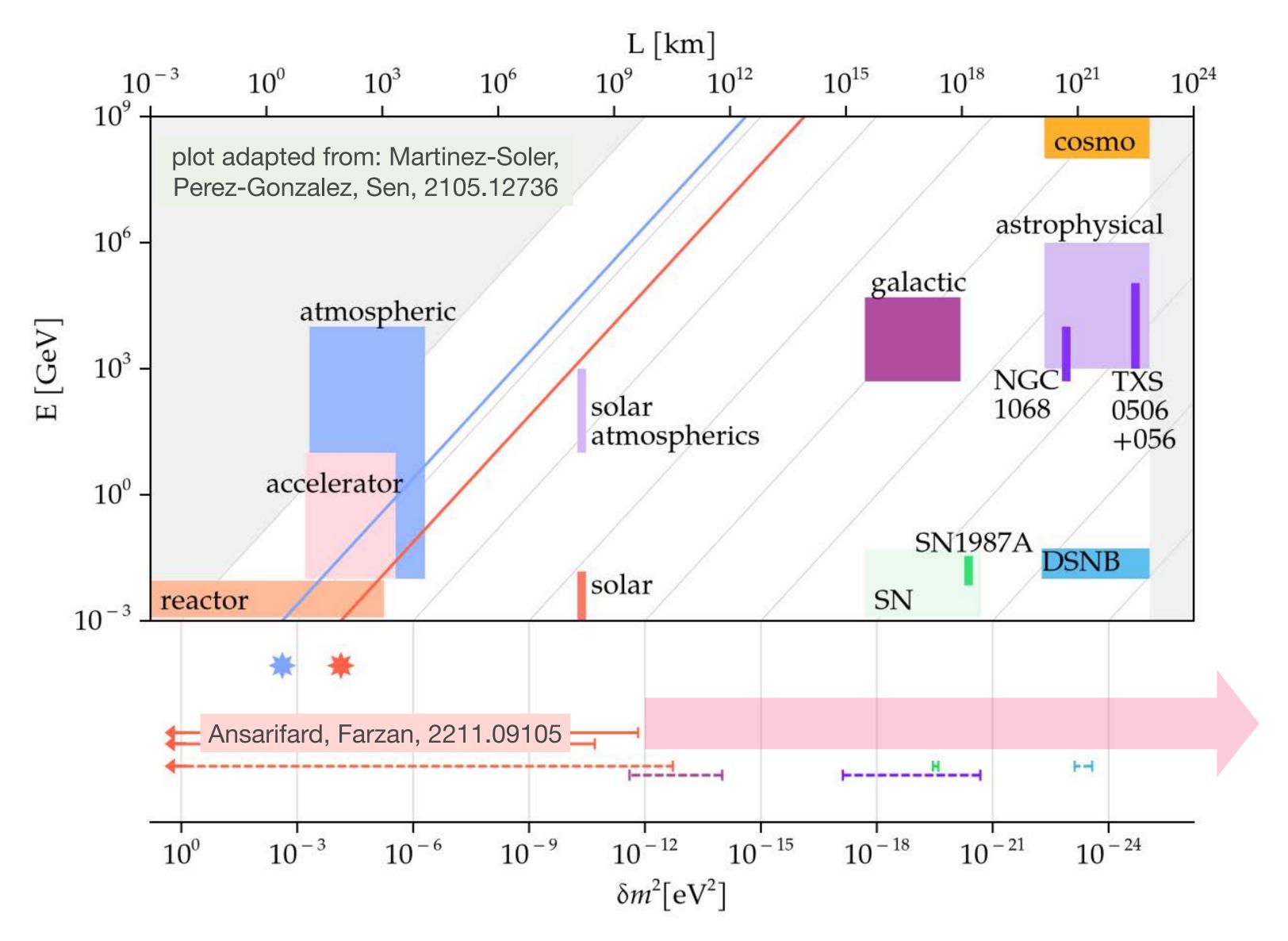


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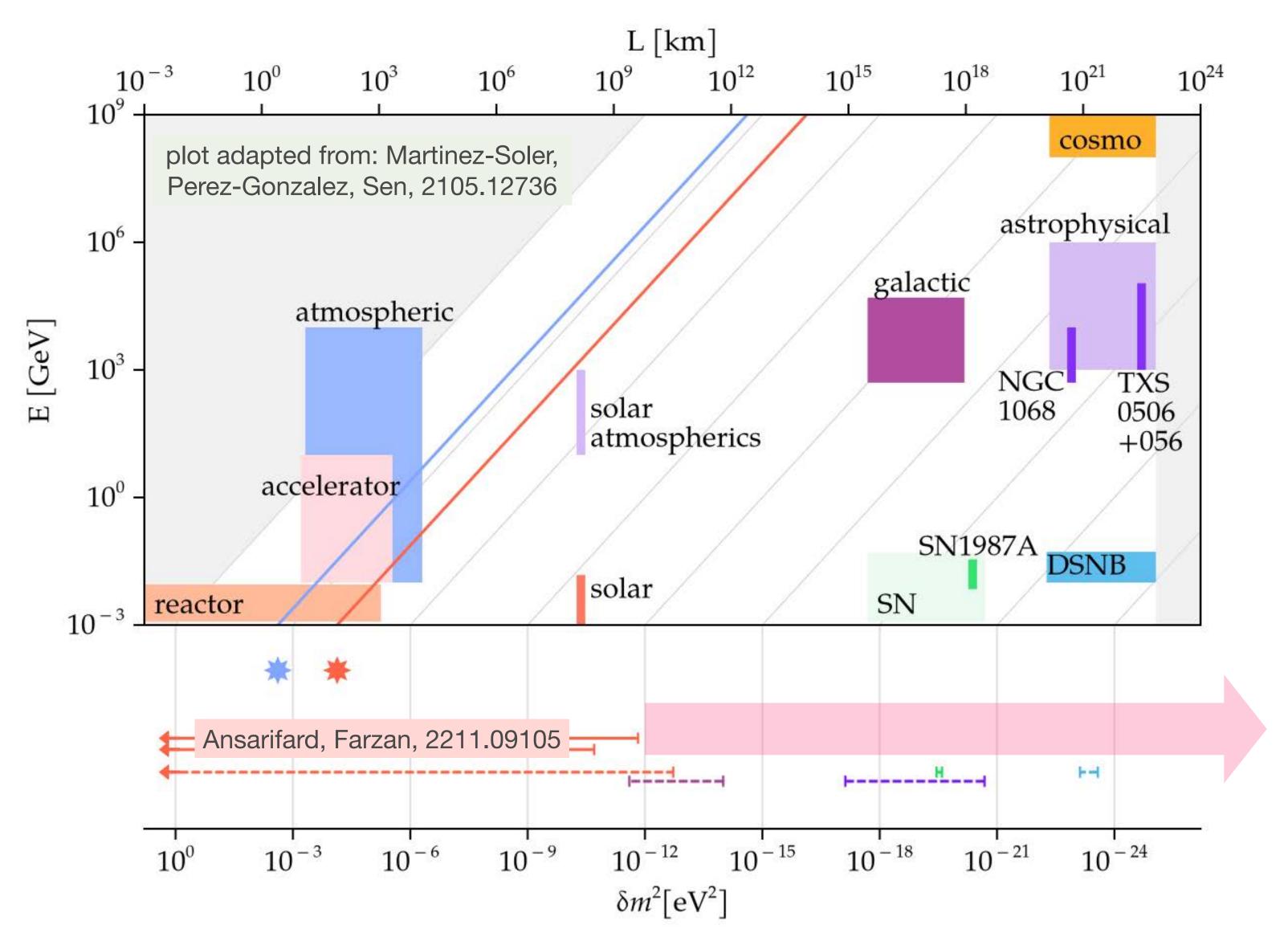
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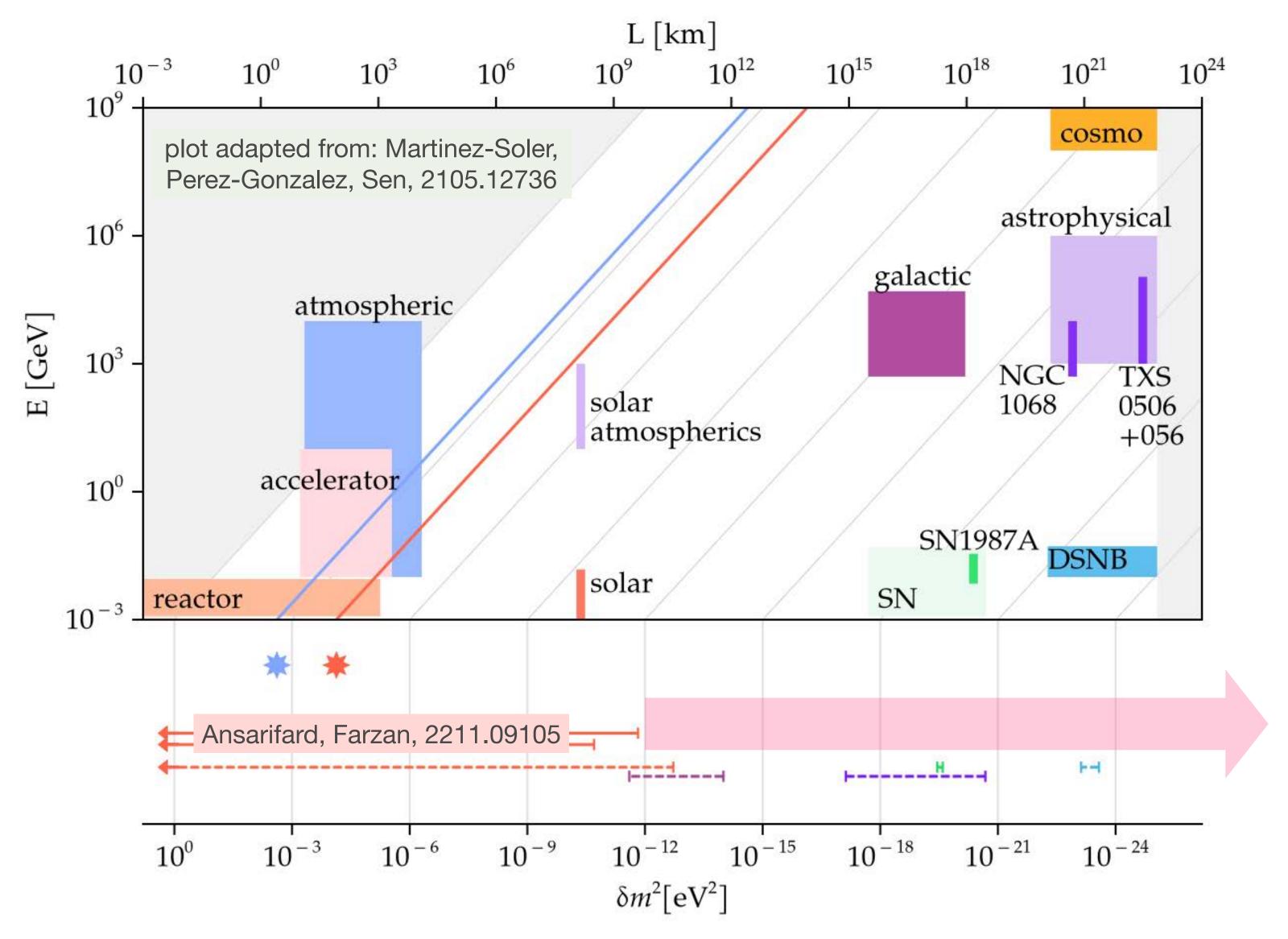
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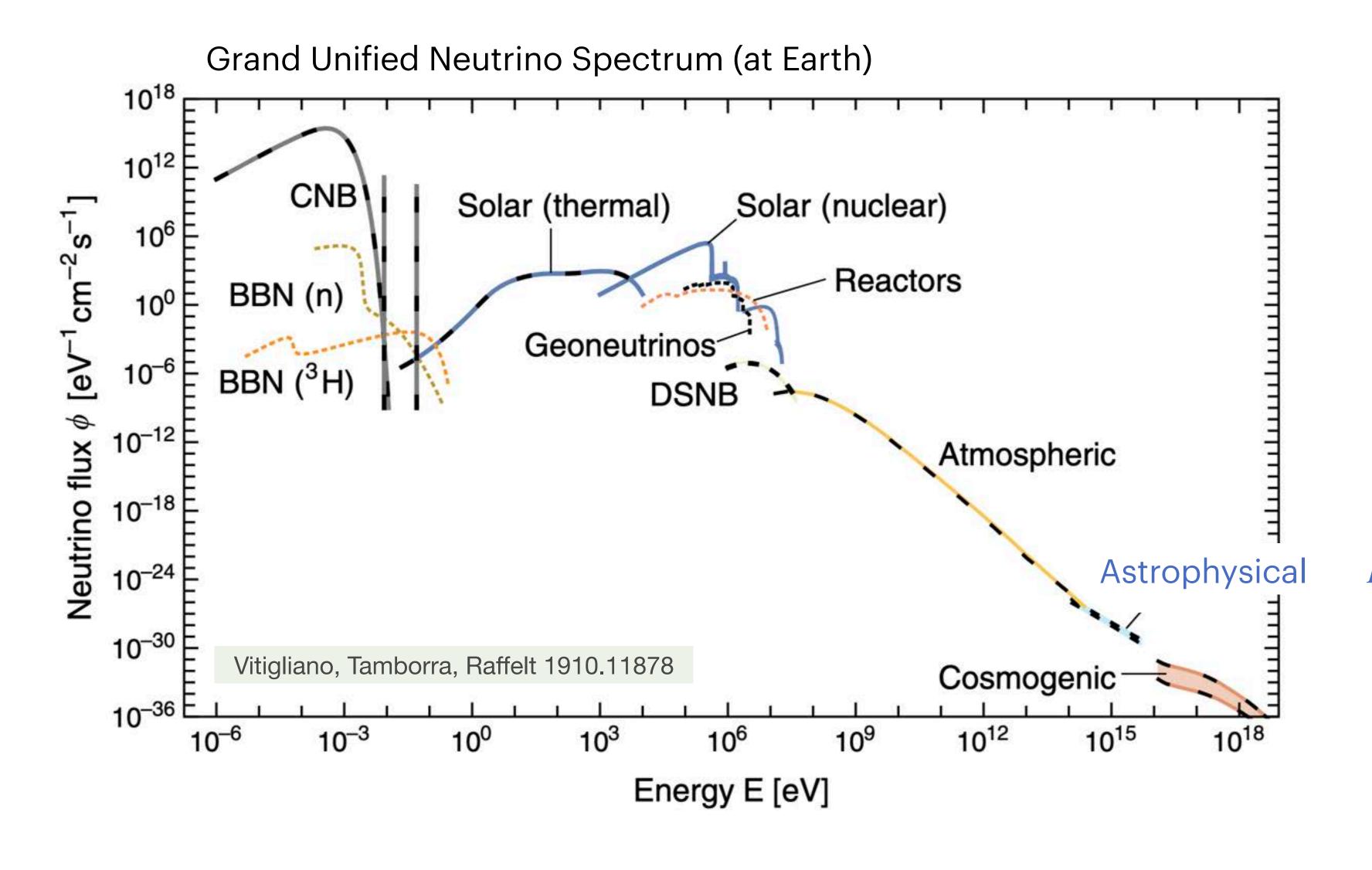
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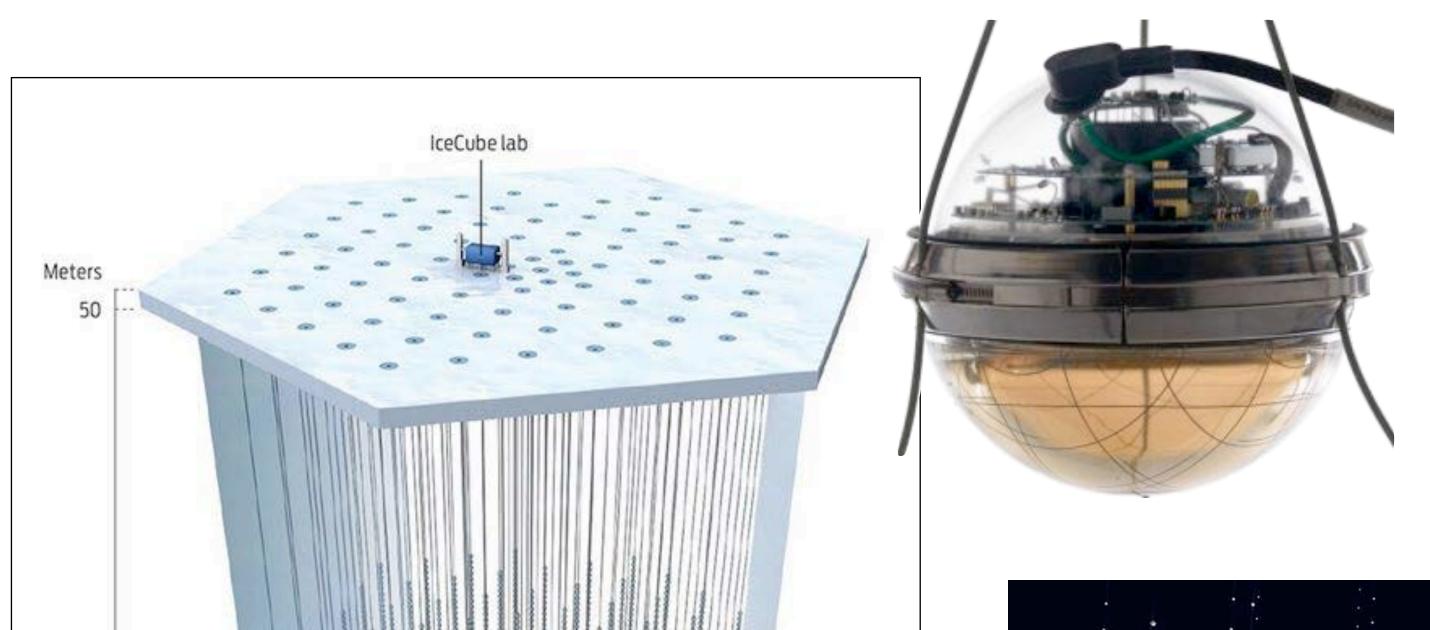
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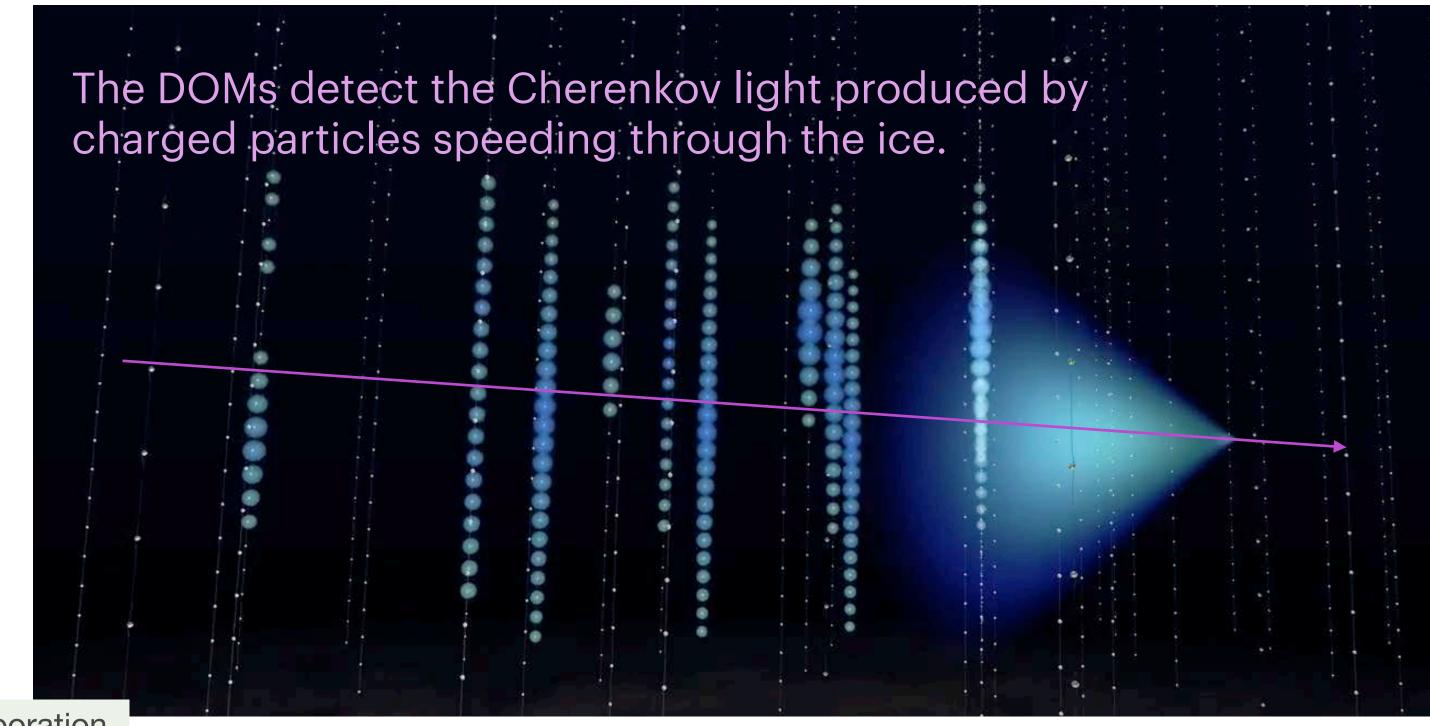
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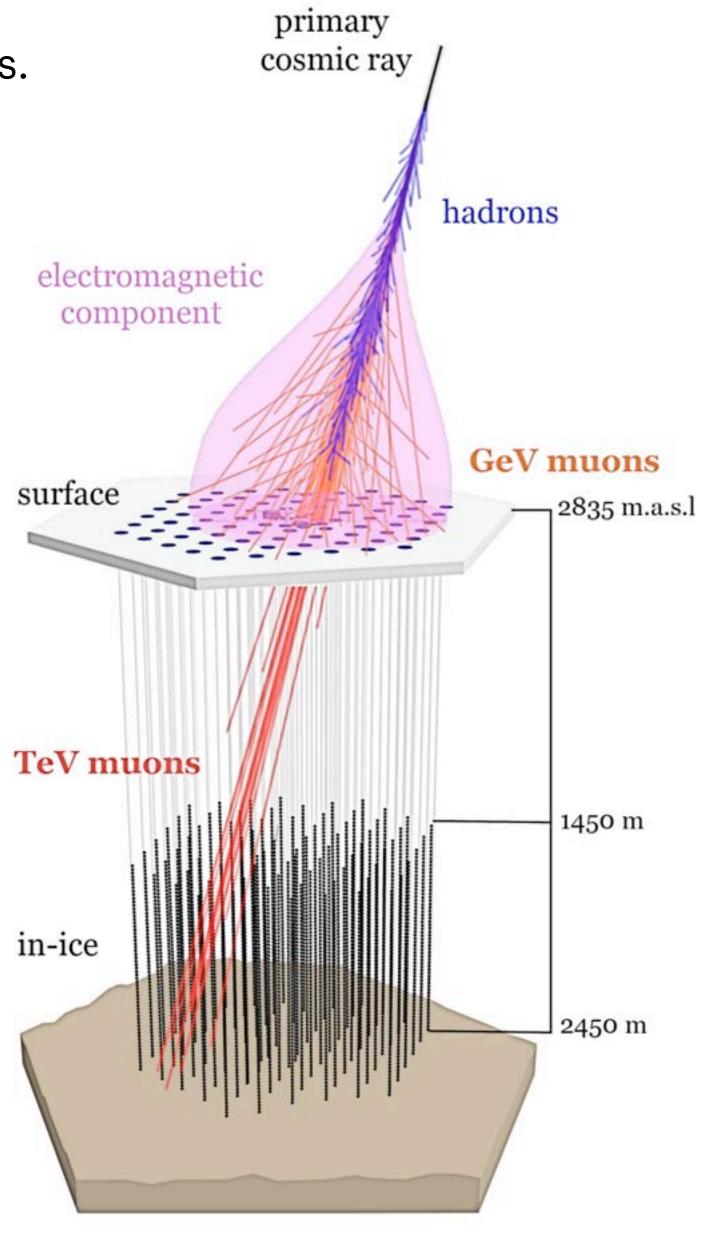
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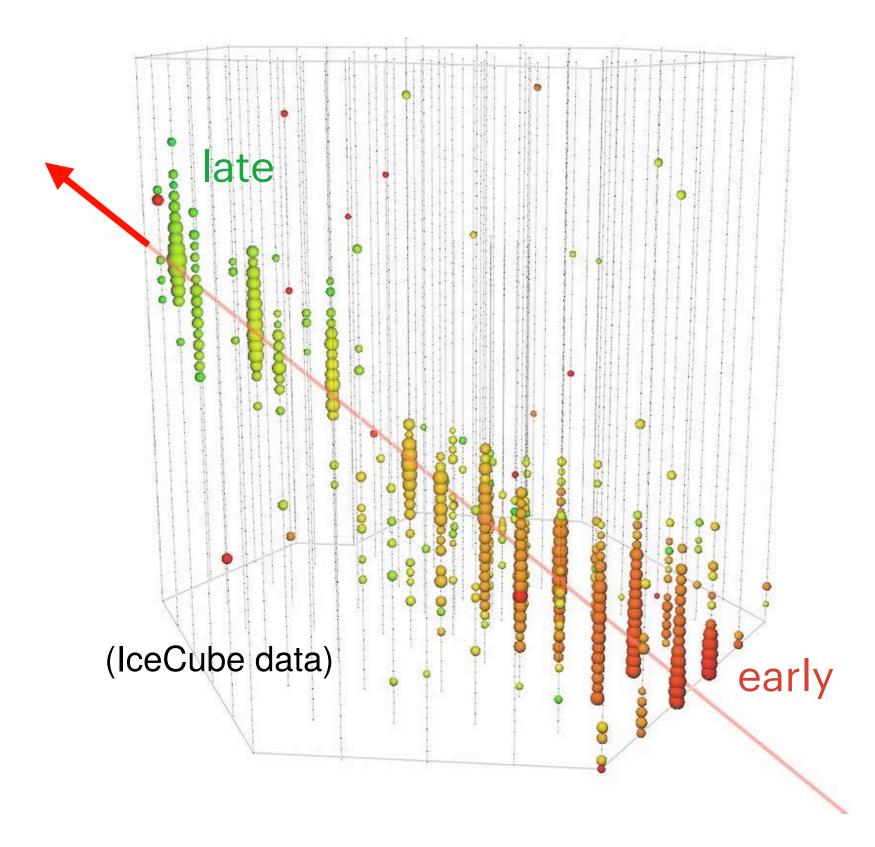
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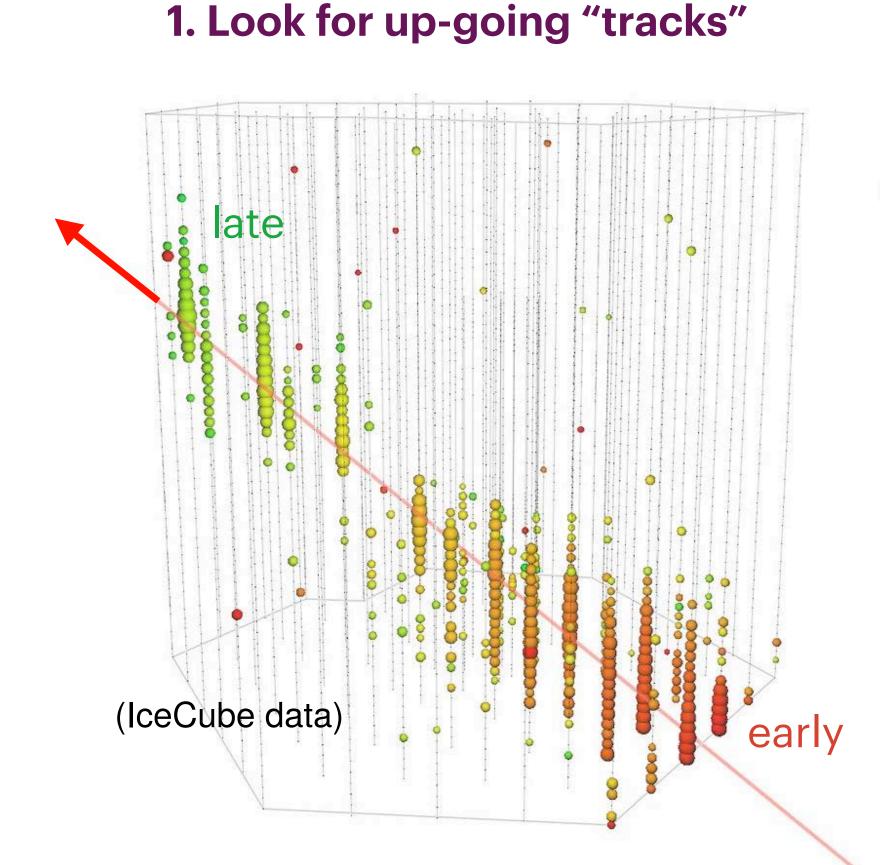
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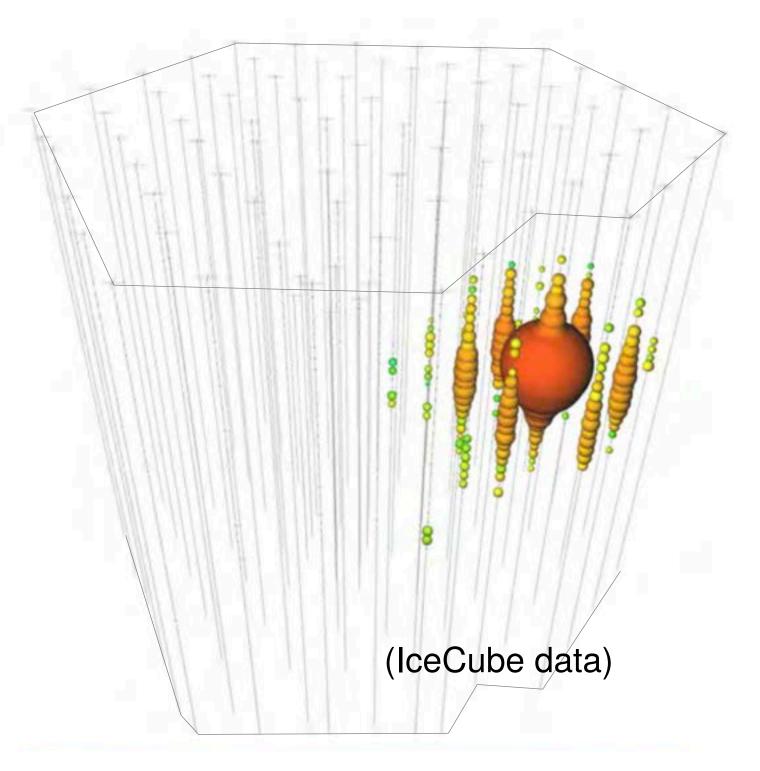
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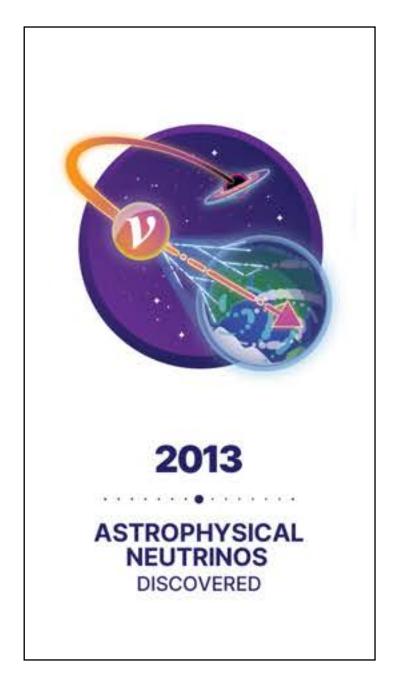
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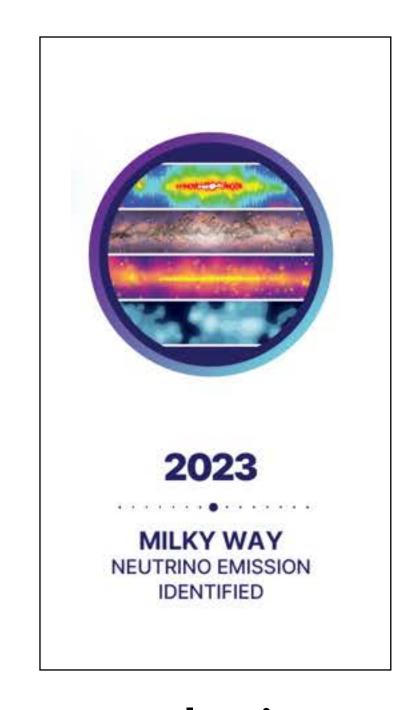
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diffuse

point sources

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How well can we constrain QD models with a population of neutrino "point sources"?



2018

BLAZAR TXS 0506+056 NEUTRINO EMISSION IDENTIFIED

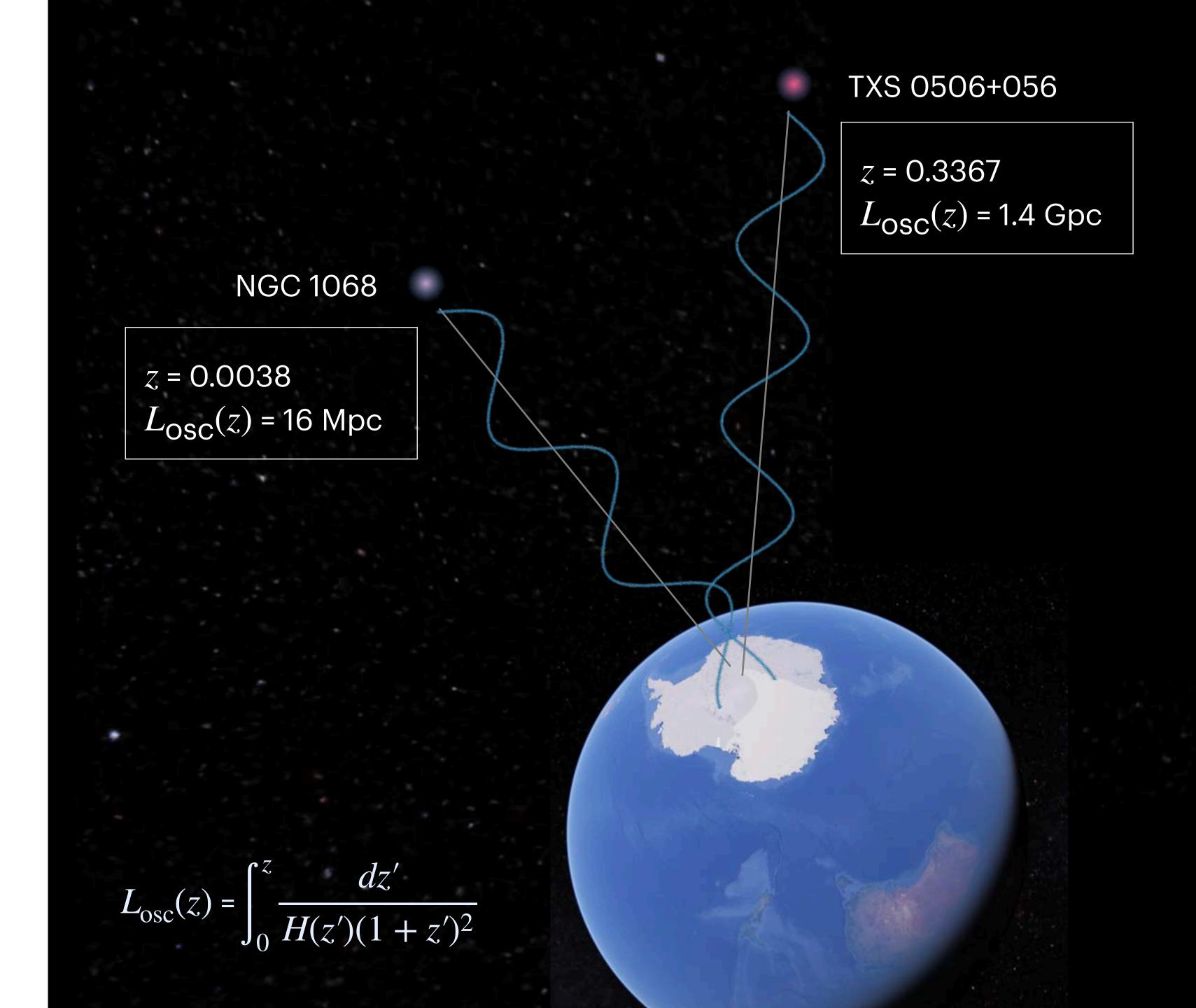


2022

ACTIVE GALAXY
NGC 1068
NEUTRINO EMISSION
IDENTIFIED

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$$P_{\rm surv}(E) = \cos^2(\delta m^2 L/4E)$$



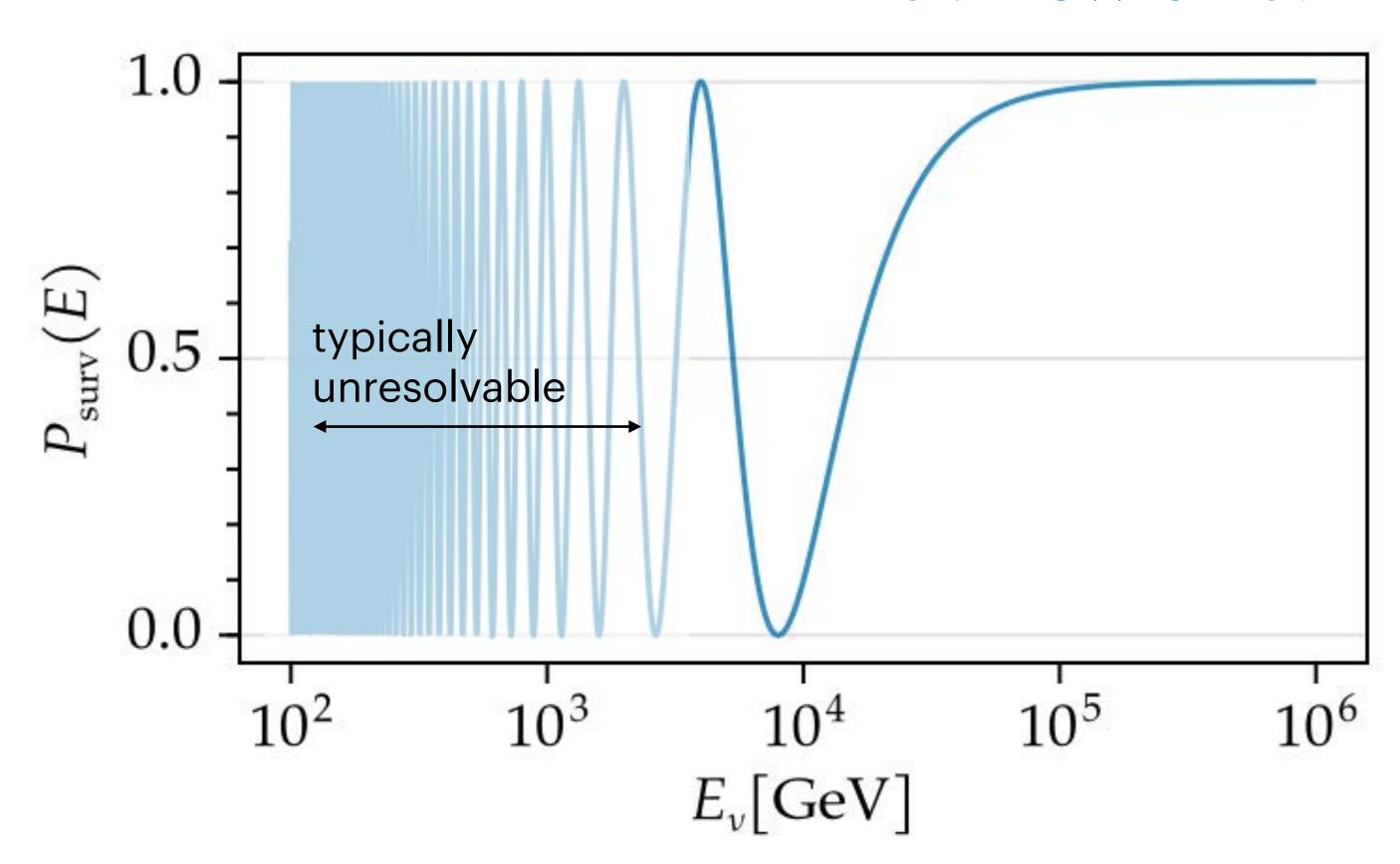
$$L = 16 \,\text{Mpc},$$

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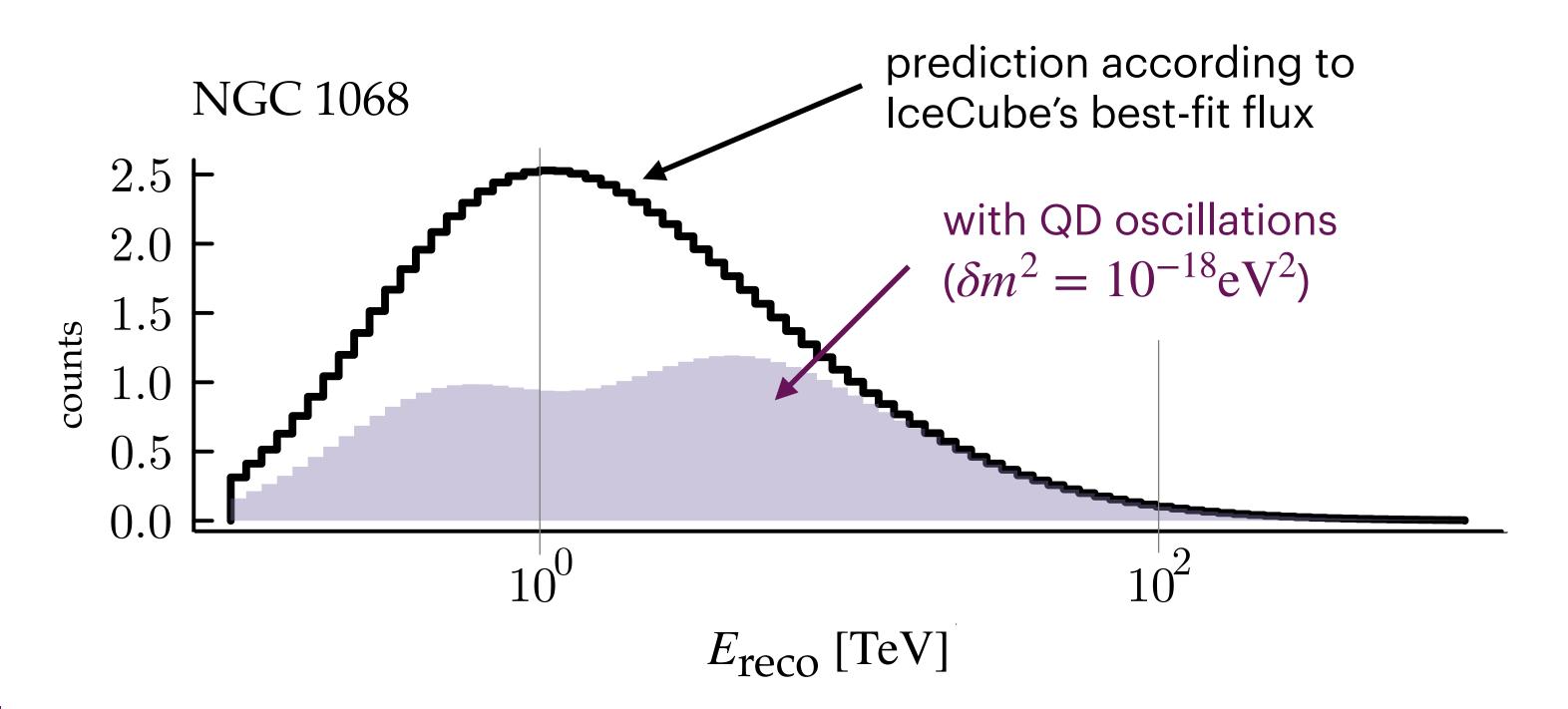
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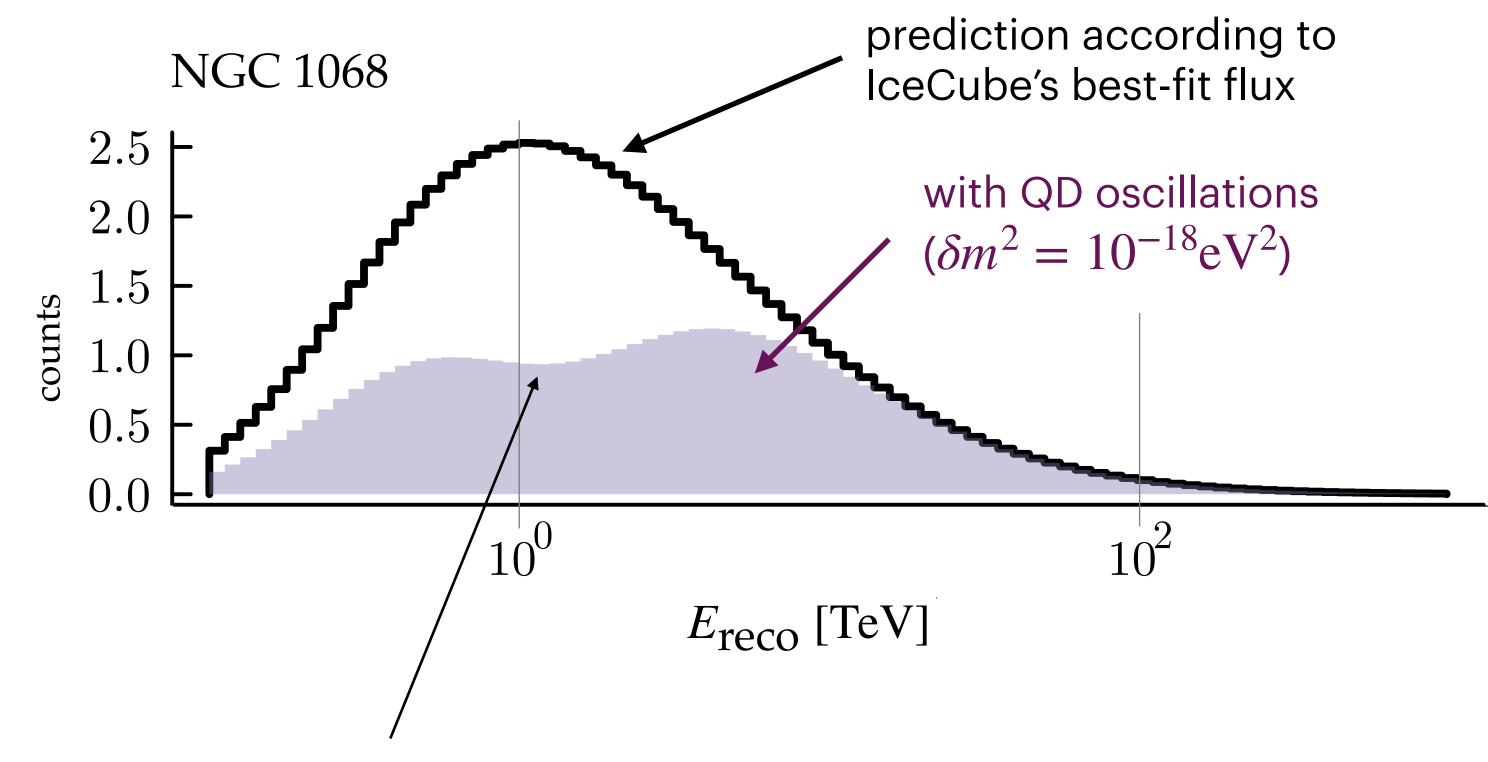
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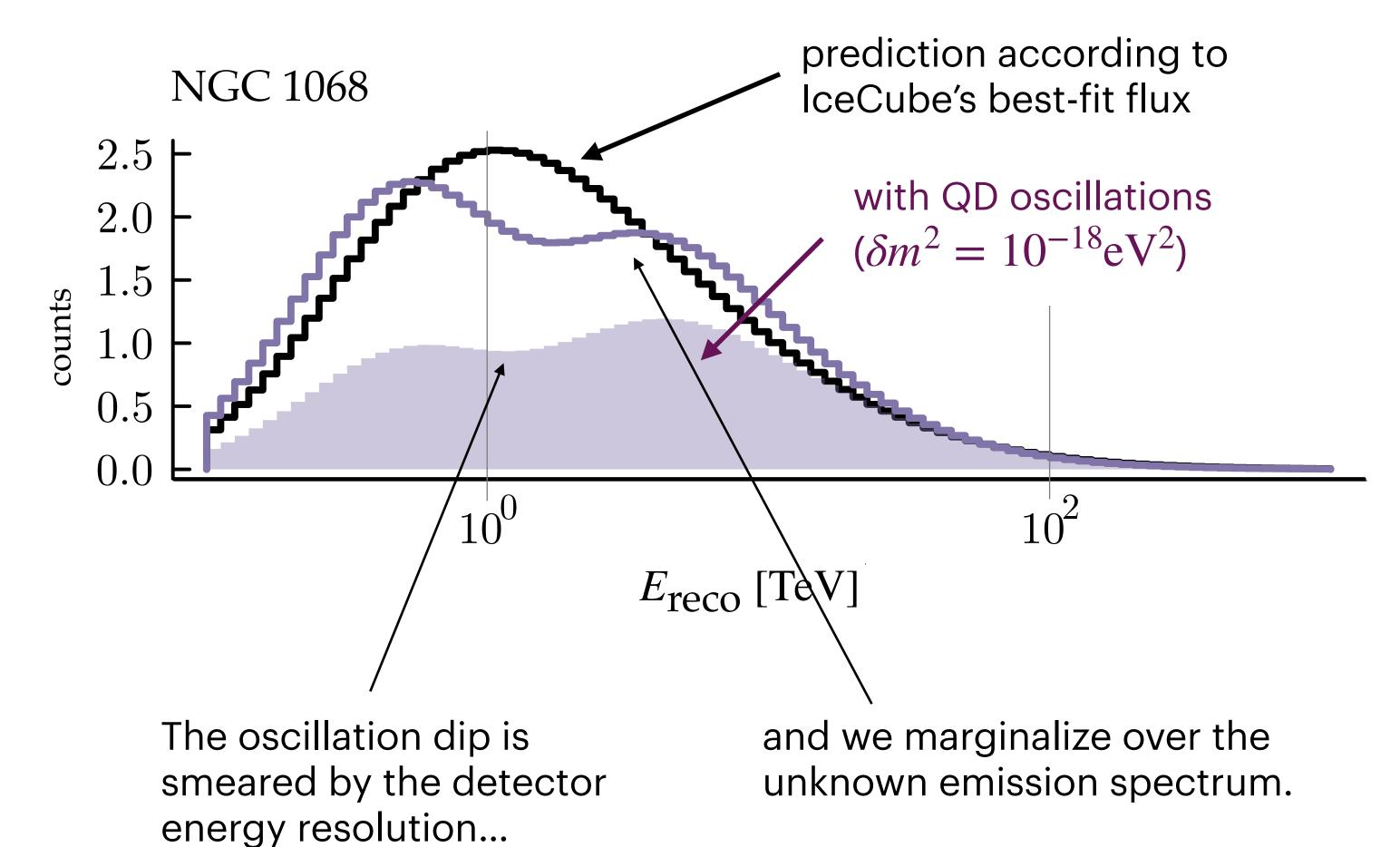


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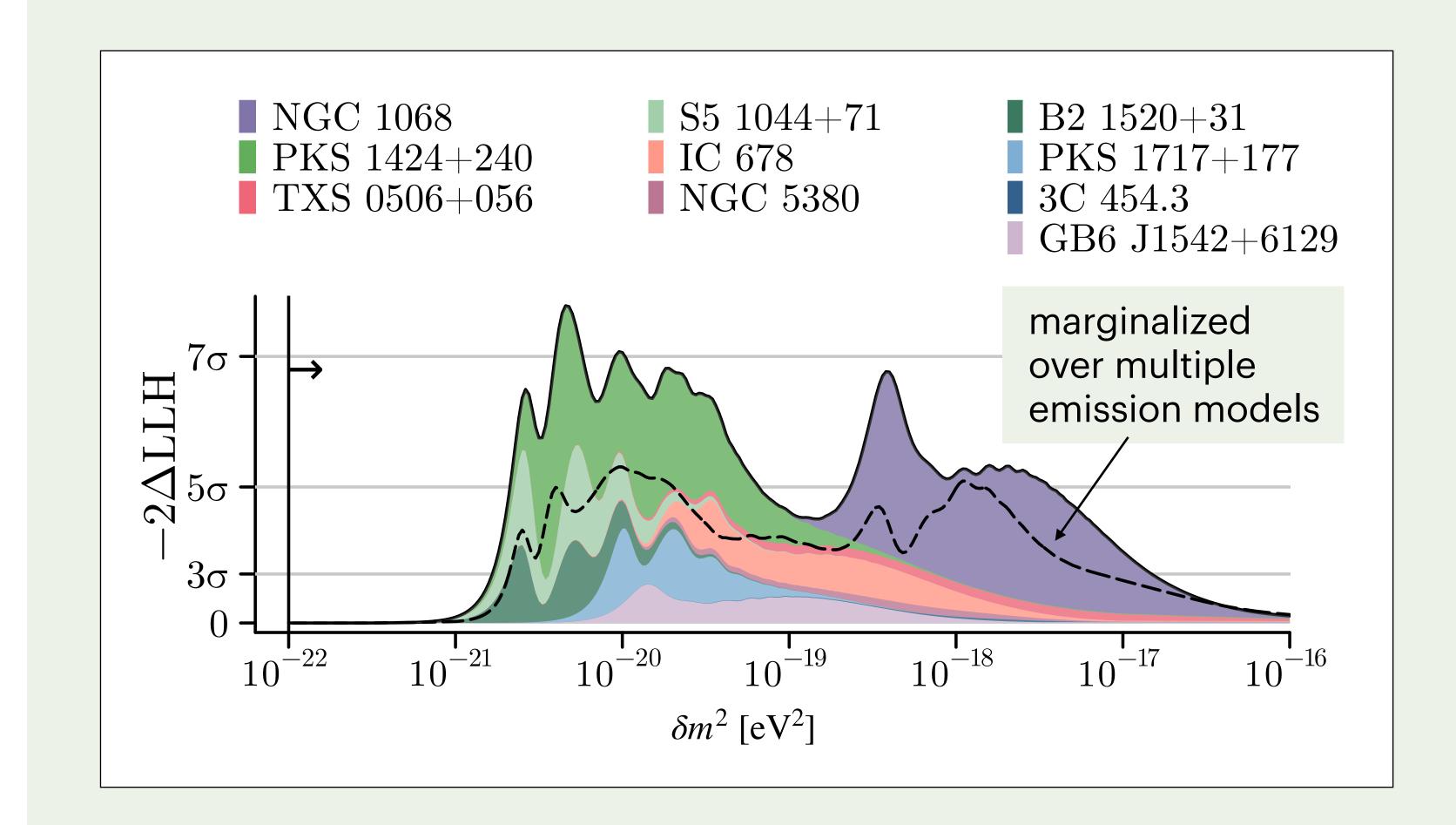
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Since each point source is independent, their contributions stack!

We project the sensitivity of IceCube-Gen2:



26

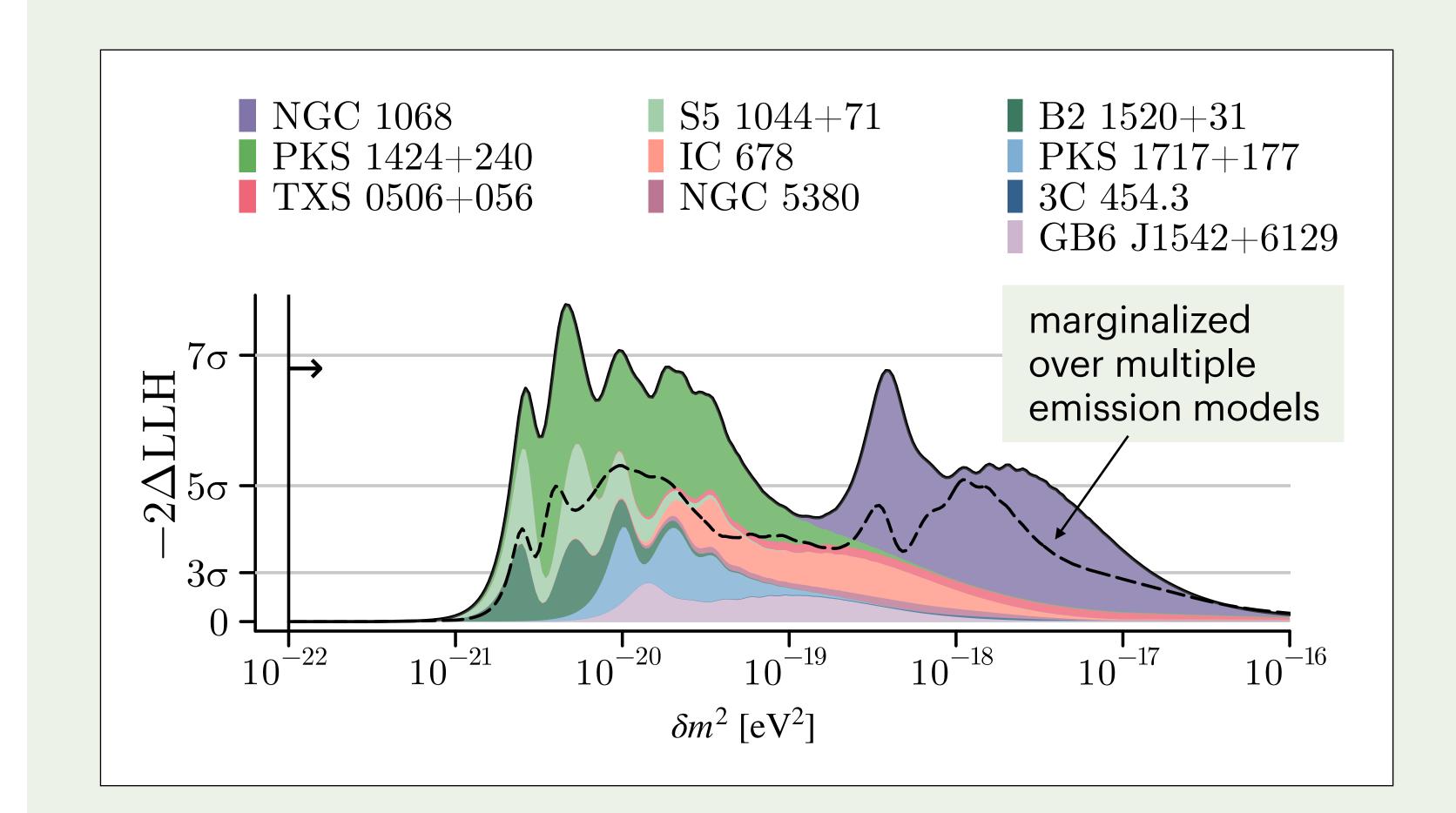
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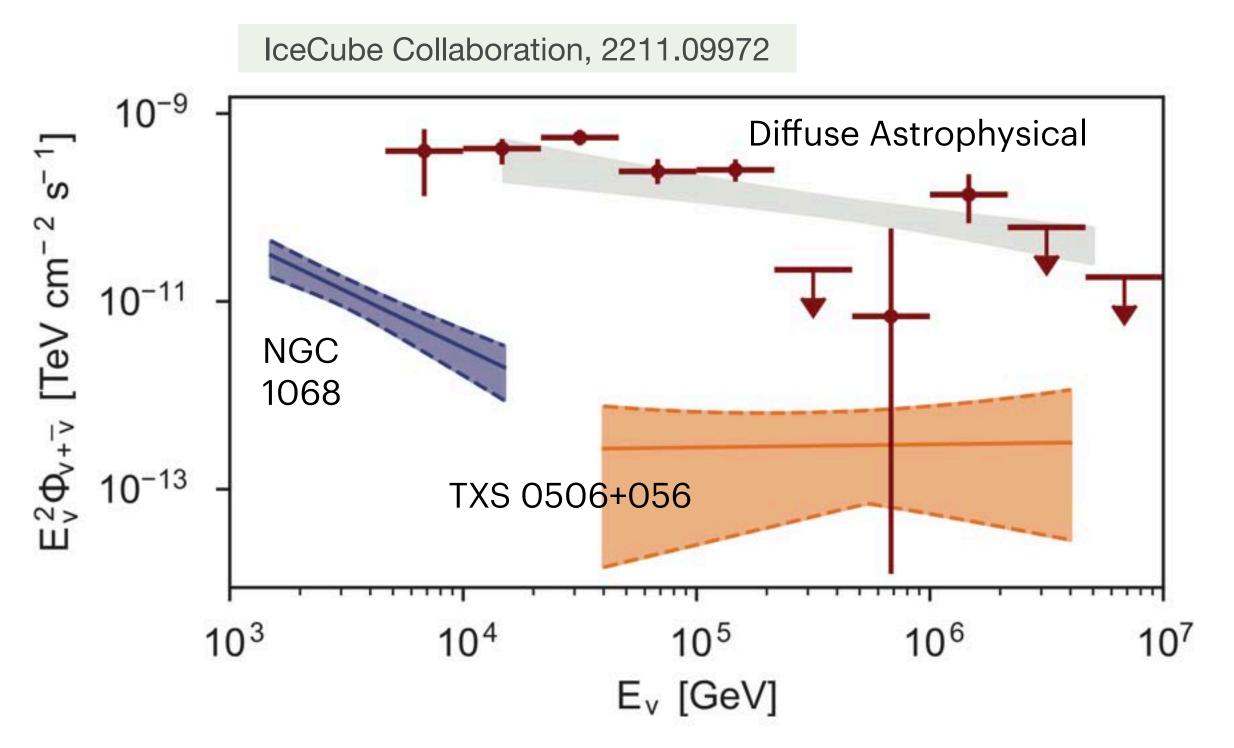
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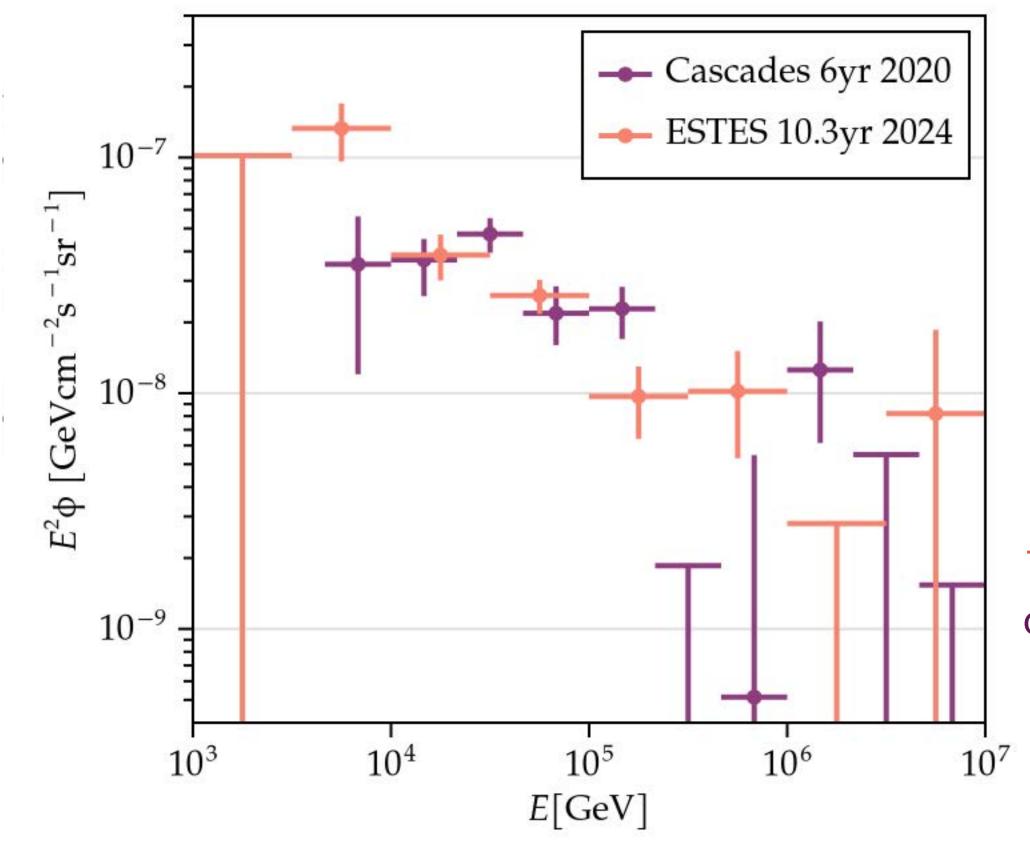
We project the sensitivity of IceCube-Gen2:

Our current sensitivity is limited by:

- poor energy resolution
- need to marginalize over unknown emission spectra
- few sources / limited statistics





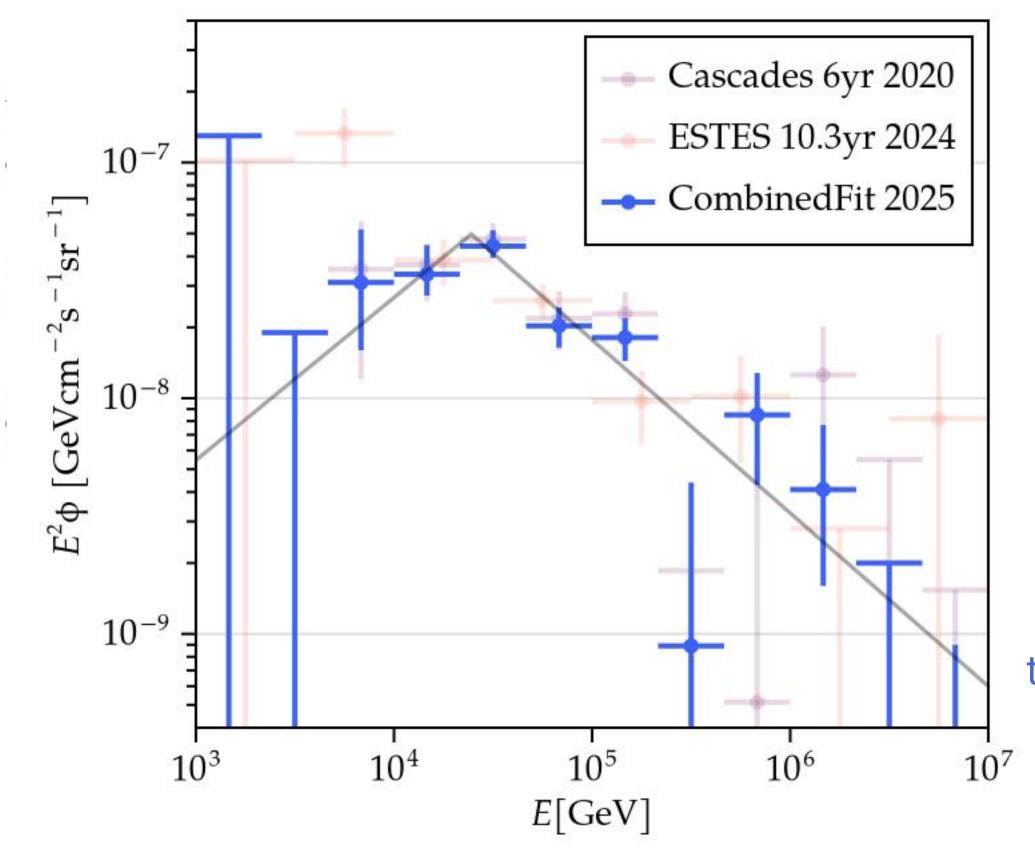


...and has been measured in multiple flavor combinations.

tracks = ν_{μ} dominated cascades = all-flavor

adapted from:

- 1. IceCube Collaboration, 2001.09520
- 2. IceCube Collaboration, 2402.18026



...and has been measured in multiple flavor combinations.

The most recent IceCube analyses found a > 4σ preference for a break around 30TeV!

tracks + cascades

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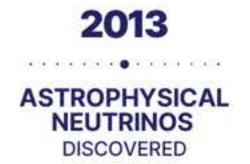
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Can we use IceCube's diffuse flux measurements to constrain QD parameter space?

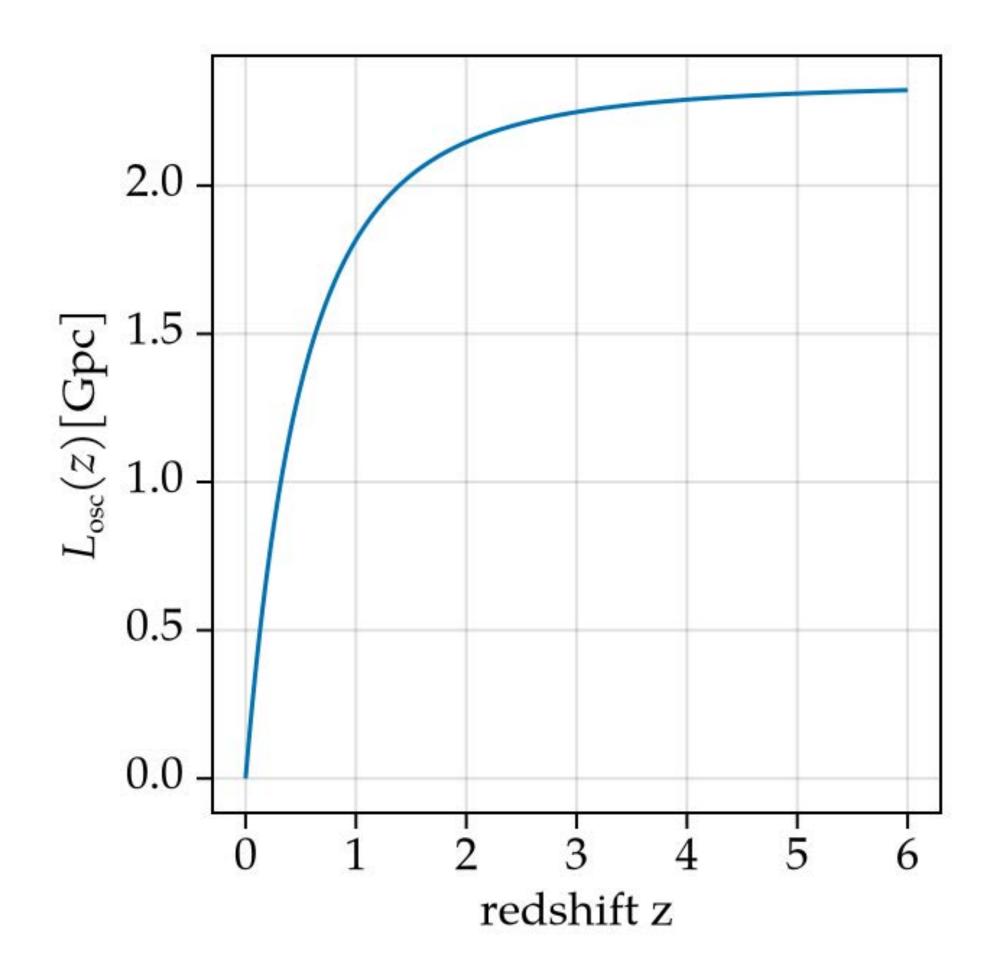
=> How is the total source population distributed across the universe?





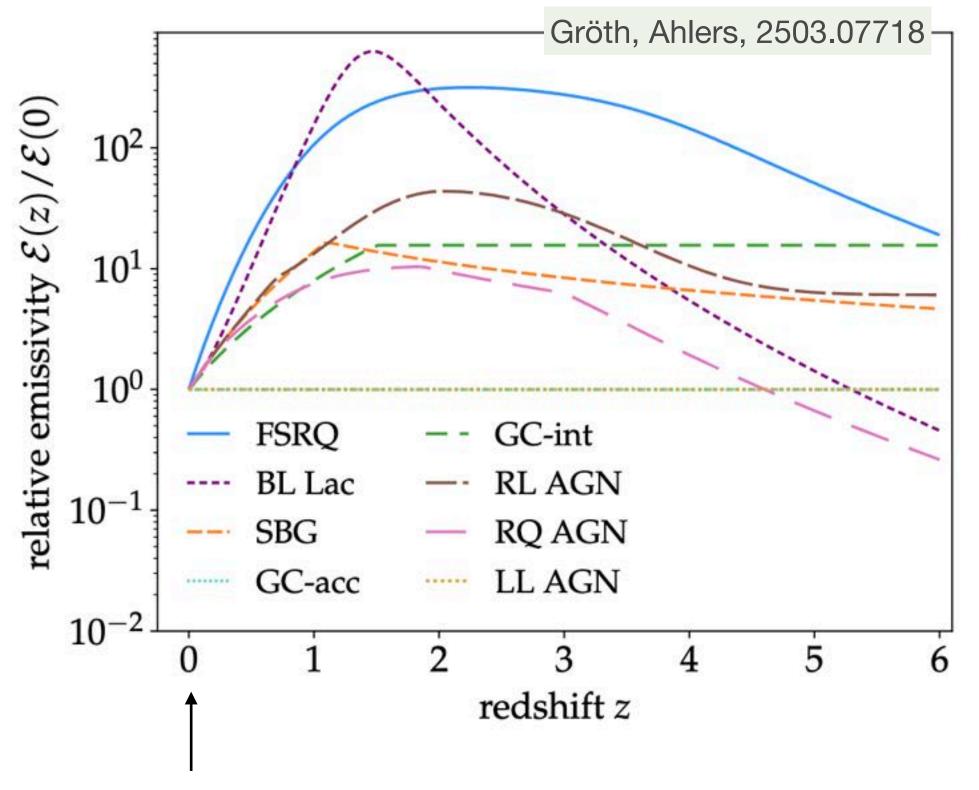
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Scale as $(1+z)^m$ at small z, for m=0,3,5

- Consider multiple physical evolution functions $\rho(z)$
- Assume all sources have the same emission spectrum $\phi_0(E_z)$, which can be a single power law, power law with a cutoff, or a broken power law

Our total diffuse flux, including QD oscillations, is given by:

$$\Phi_{\beta}(E) = \int dz \sum_{\alpha} P_{\alpha\beta}^{QD}(E, L_{\text{eff}}(z)) \times f_{\alpha} \times \phi_{0}(E(1+z)) \times \frac{\rho(z)}{H(z)}$$

 $P_{\alpha\beta}^{QD}$ = oscillation probability

 f_{α} = initial flavor fraction

 ϕ_0 = emission spectrum

 $\rho(z)$ = redshift evolution of source population

$$L_{\rm osc}(z) = \int_0^z \frac{dz'}{H(z')(1+z')^2}$$

- Consider multiple physical evolution functions $\rho(z)$
- Assume all sources have the same emission spectrum $\phi_0(E_z)$, which can be a single power law, power law with a cutoff, or a broken power law
- Perform a likelihood fit to the IceCube flux measurements
- Marginalize over all emission spectrum parameters

Our total diffuse flux, including QD oscillations, is given by:

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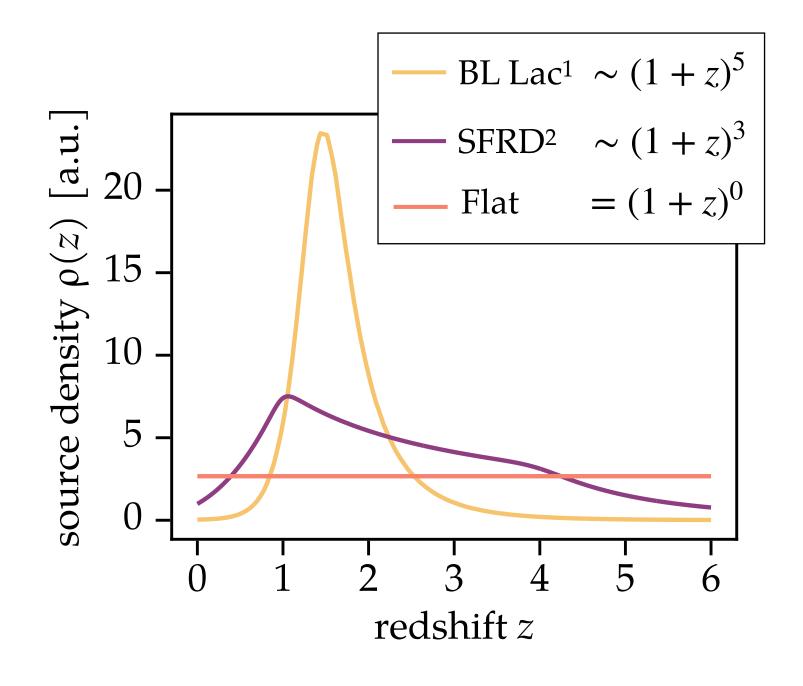
 f_{α} = initial flavor fraction

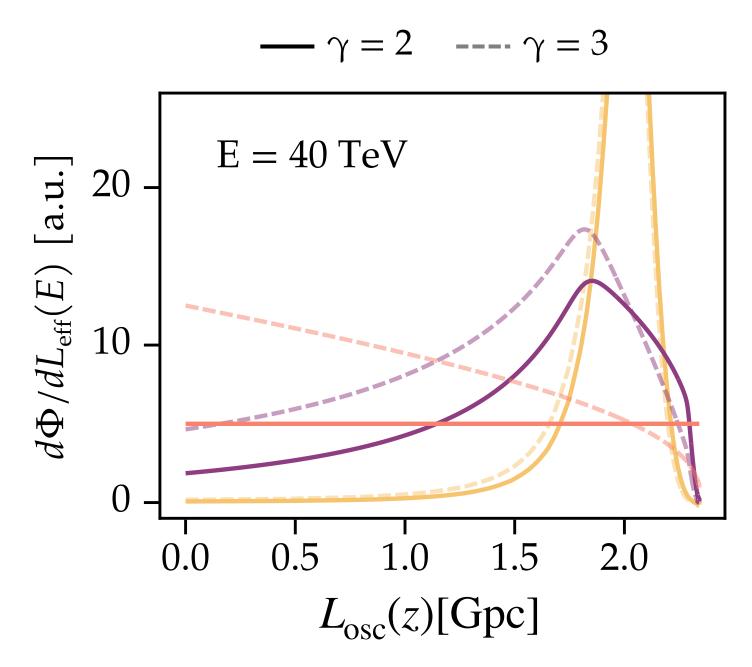
 ϕ_0 = emission spectrum

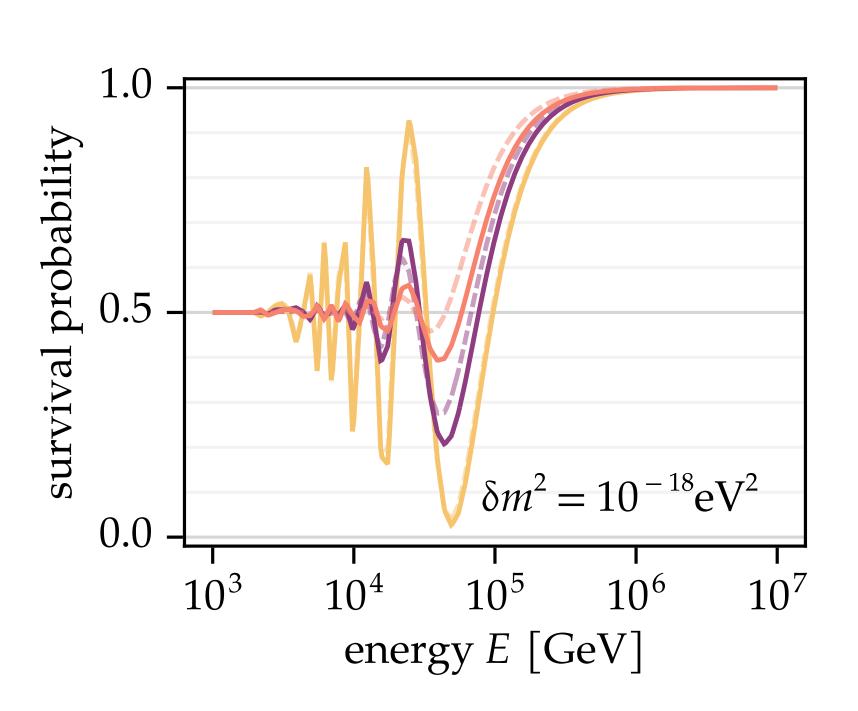
 $\rho(z)$ = redshift evolution of source population

$$L_{\rm osc}(z) = \int_0^z \frac{dz'}{H(z')(1+z')^2}$$

After integrating over all sources, we find that the QD disappearance dip remains resolvable!



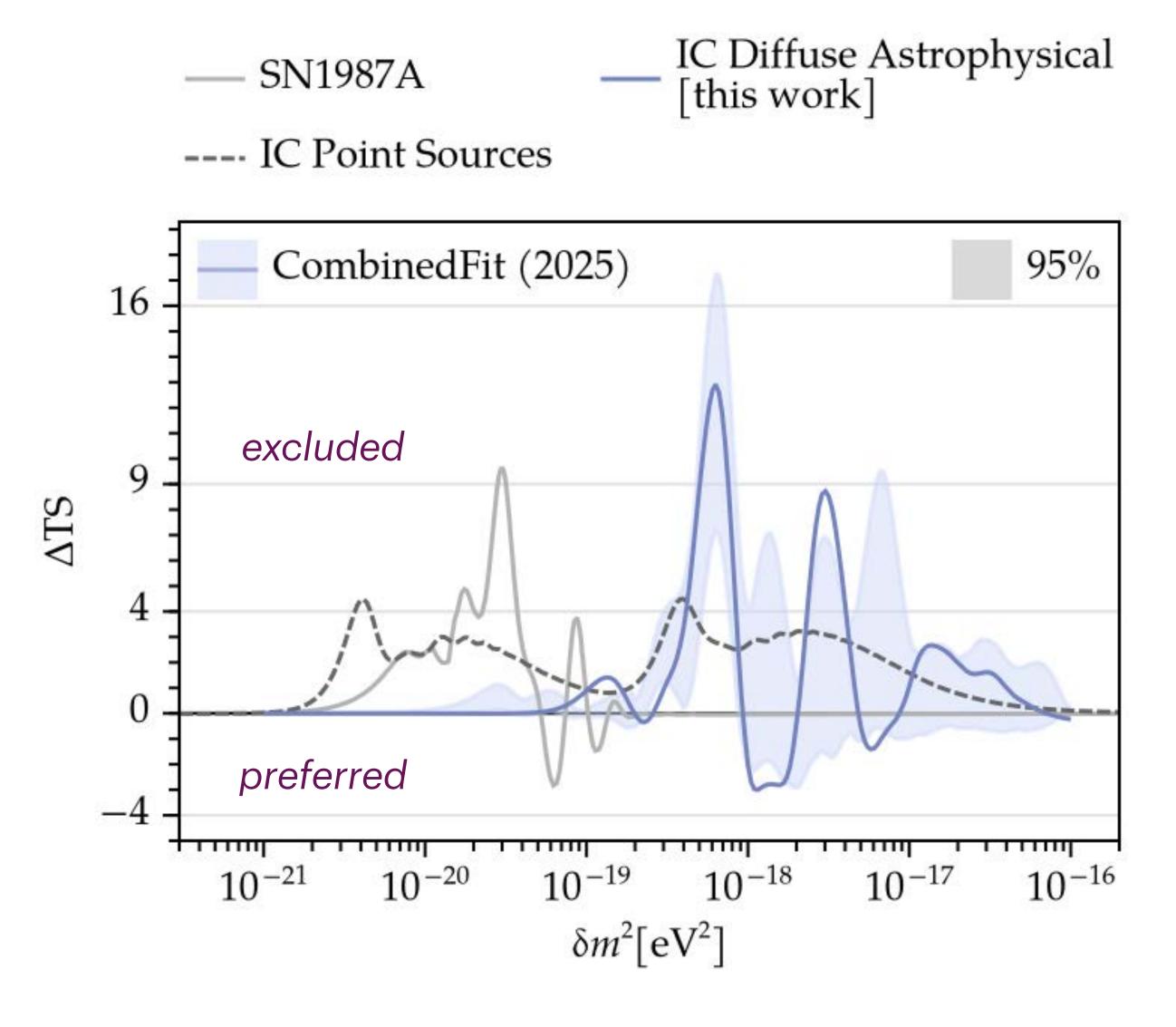




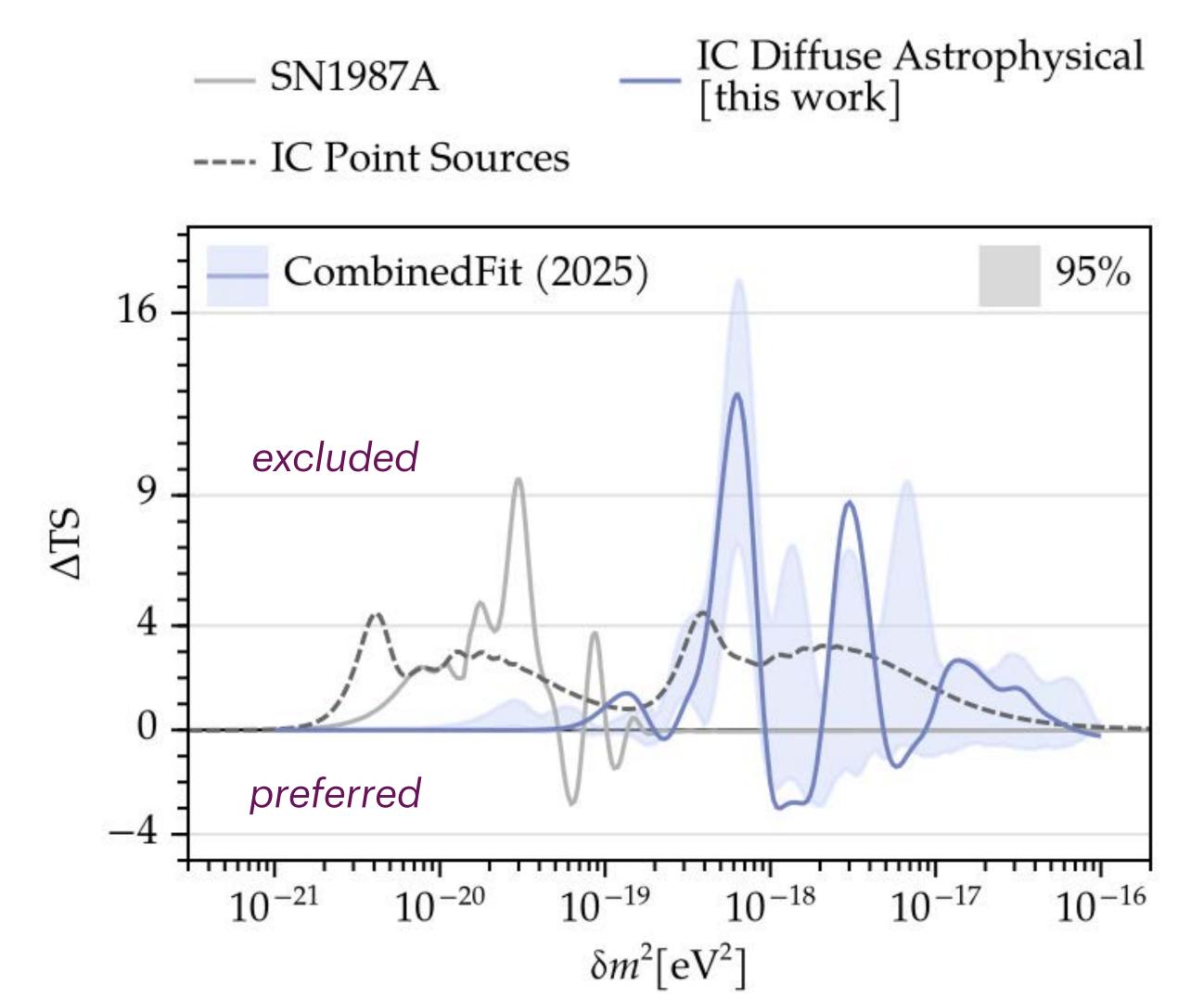
- 1. Gröth, Ahlers, 2503.07718
- 2. Elías-Chávez, Martínez, 2503.07718

We consider two scenarios for our results:

- 1. All generations have equal hyperfine splittings, $\delta m_k^2 = \delta m^2 \forall k$.
- 2. There are two distinct splittings, producing flavor-dependent as well as energy-dependent disappearance effects.



For our main result, we use a source evolution following the SFRD and emission given by a broken power law.

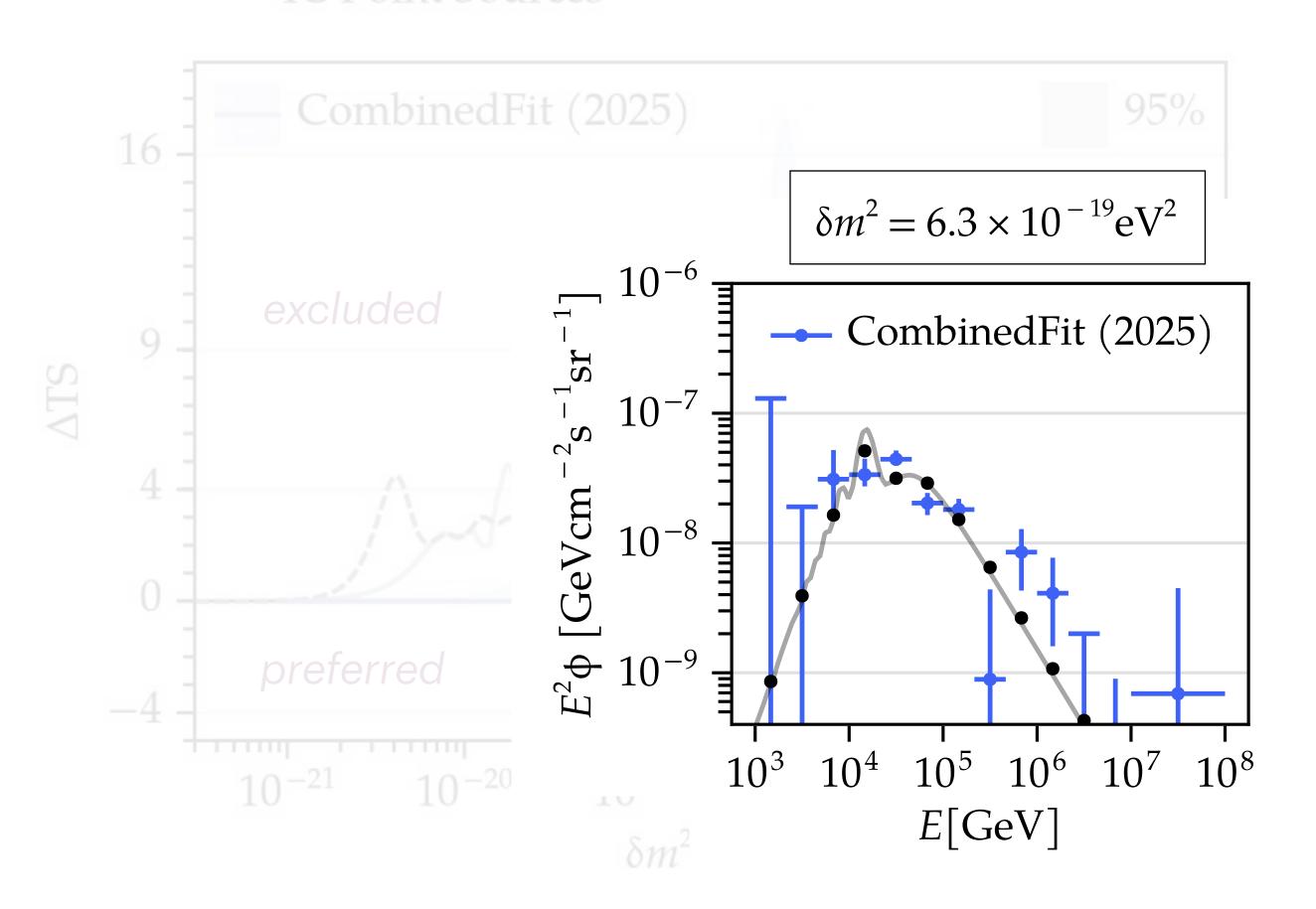


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We find no preference for a QD hypothesis.

We constrain $\delta m^2 \in [5-7.5] \times 10^{-19} \text{ eV}^2$ at 3σ , driven by incompatibility at the break around 30TeV.



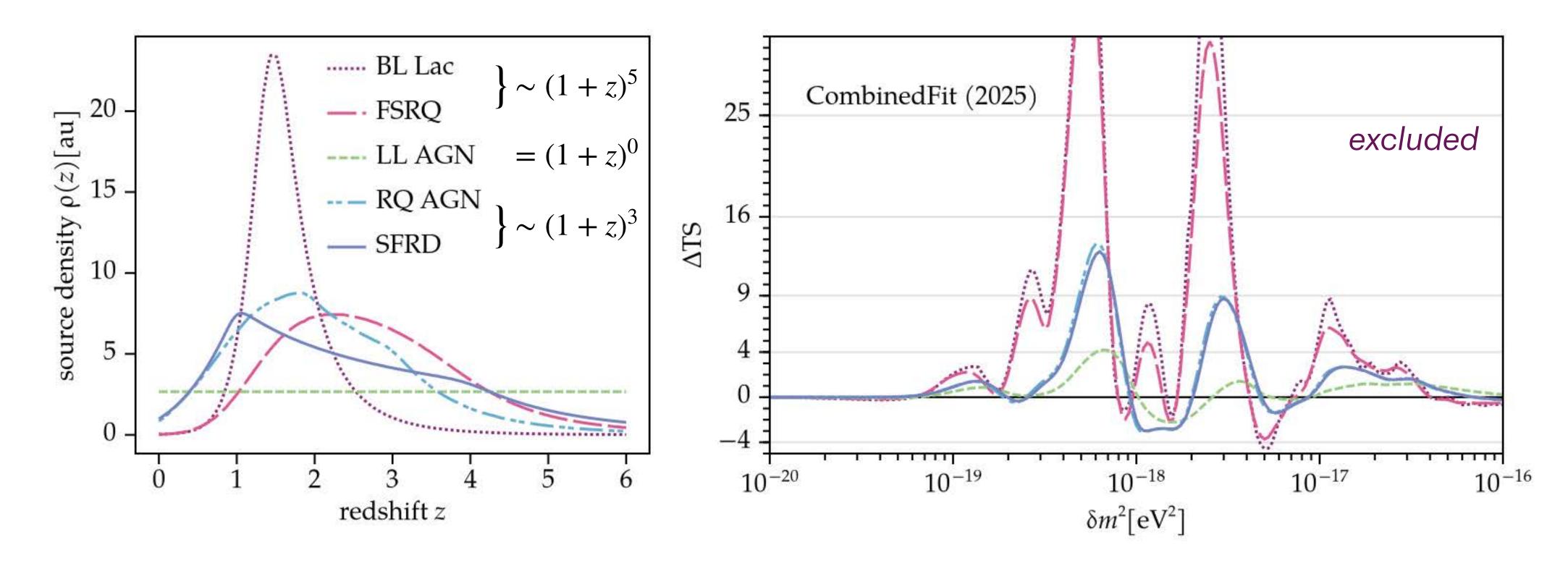


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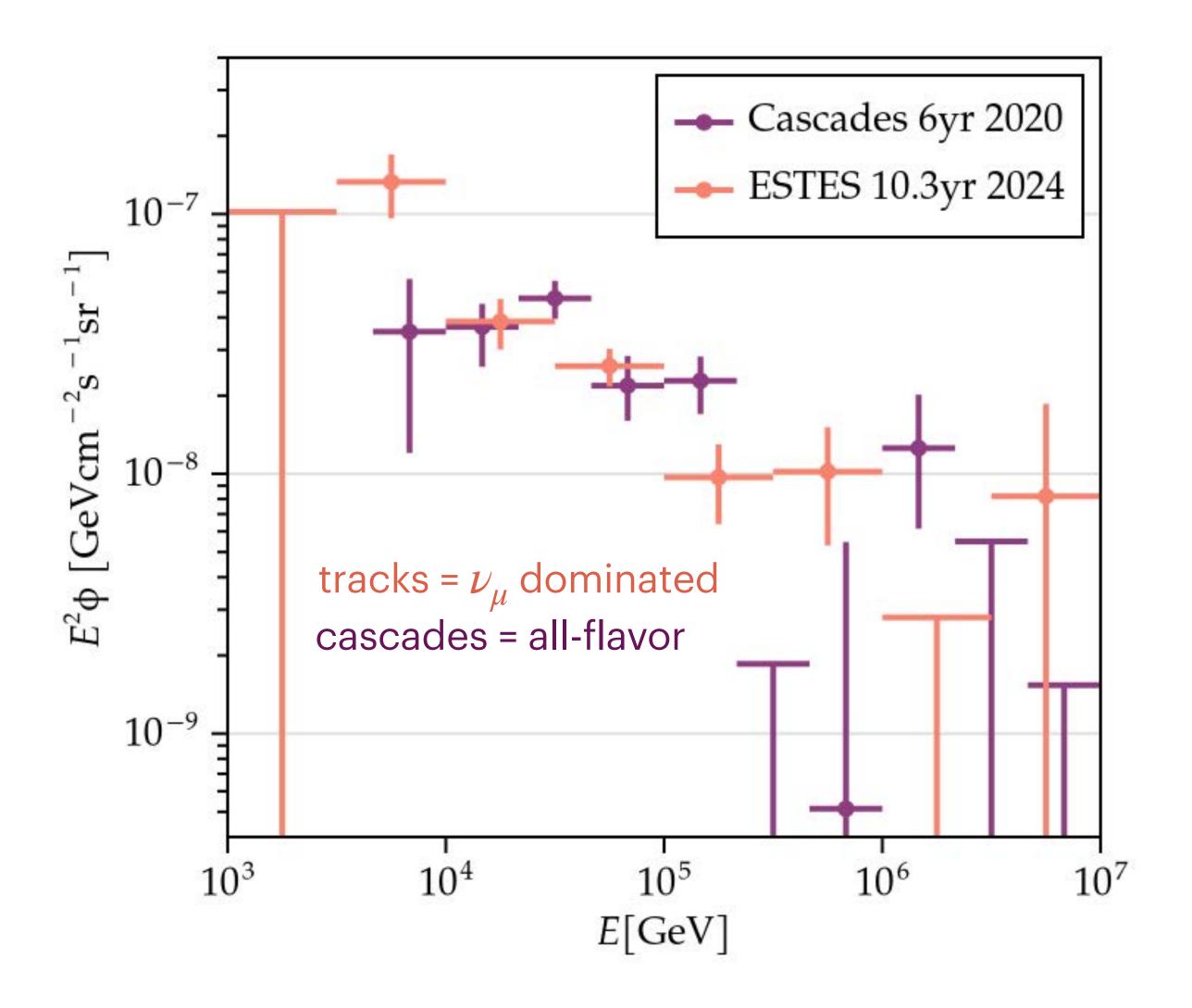
The significance of our constraints depend strongly on the scaling of the source evolution $\rho(z)$:



Redshift evolution models taken from: Gröth, Ahlers, 2503.07718; Elías-Chávez, Martínez, 2503.07718

Results (2): Assuming two distinct squared-mass differences => flavor-dependent effects

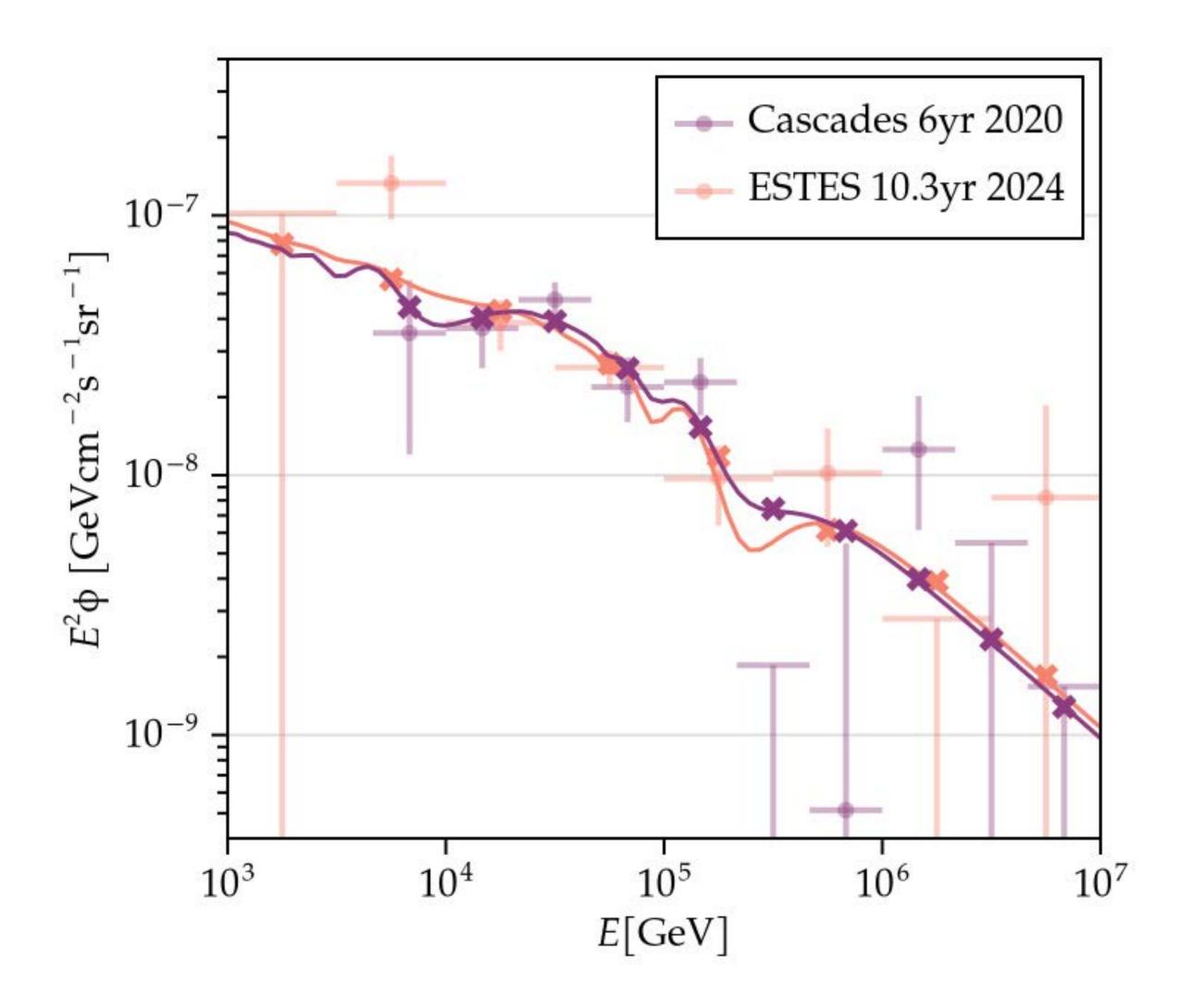
QD oscillations caused by δm_1^2 disproportionately affect cascades, while those caused by δm_3^2 disproportionately affect tracks.



Results (2): Assuming two distinct squared-mass differences => flavor-dependent effects

QD oscillations caused by δm_1^2 disproportionately affect cascades, while those caused by δm_3^2 disproportionately affect tracks.

However, we find this additional flexibility does not significantly improve the joint fit (1.4σ)



Conclusions:

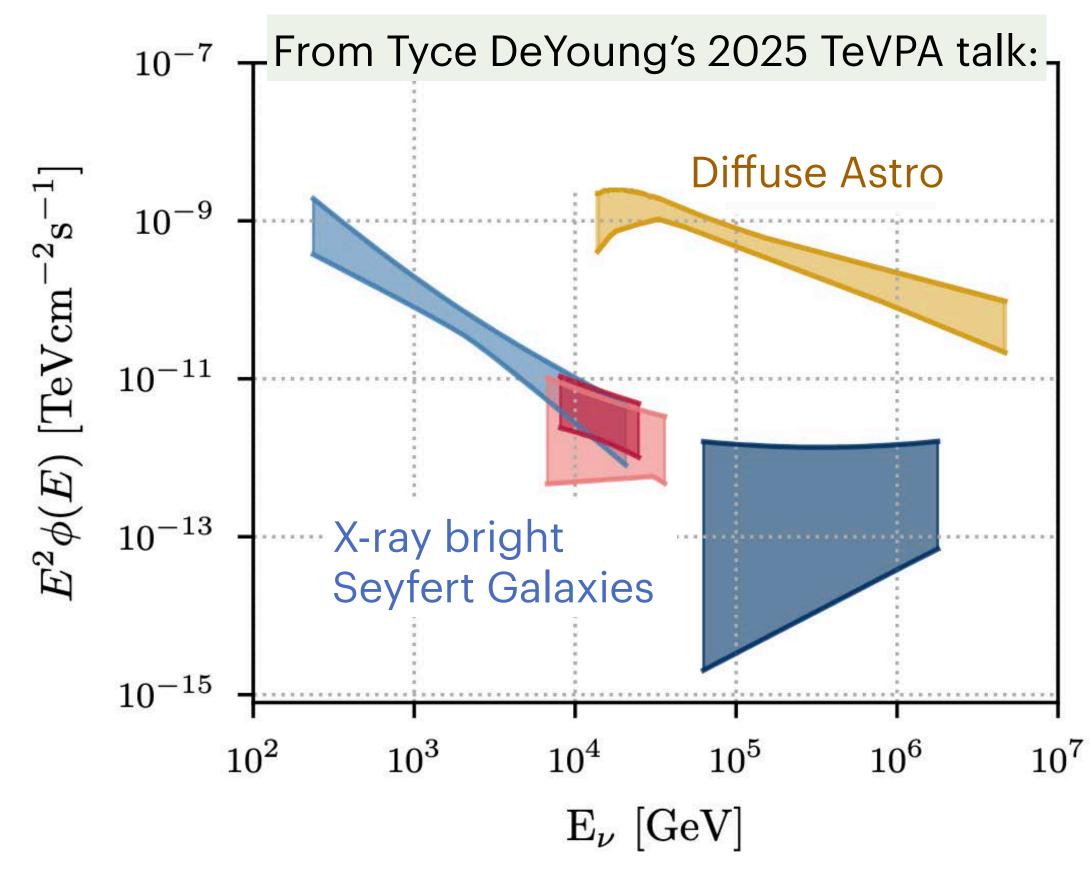
- The effects of extremely long baseline quasi-Dirac oscillations are resolvable in the total astrophysical ν flux
- We set constraints on $\delta m^2 \in [5,7.5] \times 10^{-18} \; \mathrm{eV}^2$

Conclusions:

- The effects of extremely long baseline quasi-Dirac oscillations are resolvable in the total astrophysical ν flux
- We set constraints on $\delta m^2 \in [5,7.5] \times 10^{-18} \; \mathrm{eV}^2$

Prospects:

- IceCube's diffuse flux measurements are continuously improving
 - better control of systematics at low energies
- Our understanding of what astrophysical objects produce neutrinos is improving!
 - => better characterize source population distribution and emission spectra



Outline for the rest of this talk:

- 1. What are quasi-Dirac neutrinos?
- 2. How has IceCube detected astrophysical neutrinos?
- 3. Searches using extragalactic sources
- 4. Searches using galactic sources
- 5. Bonus

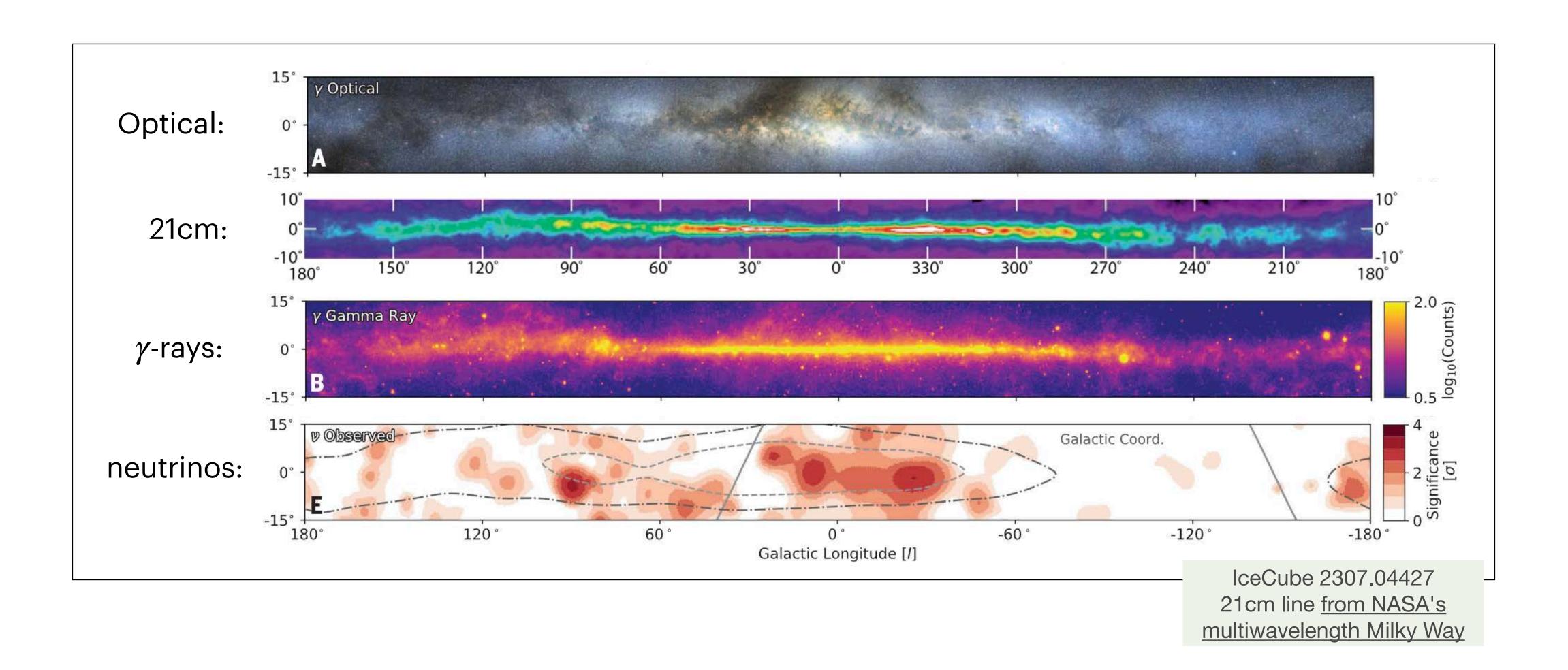


IceCube has reported the observation of our Milky Way in neutrinos at 4.5σ 5.7 σ !

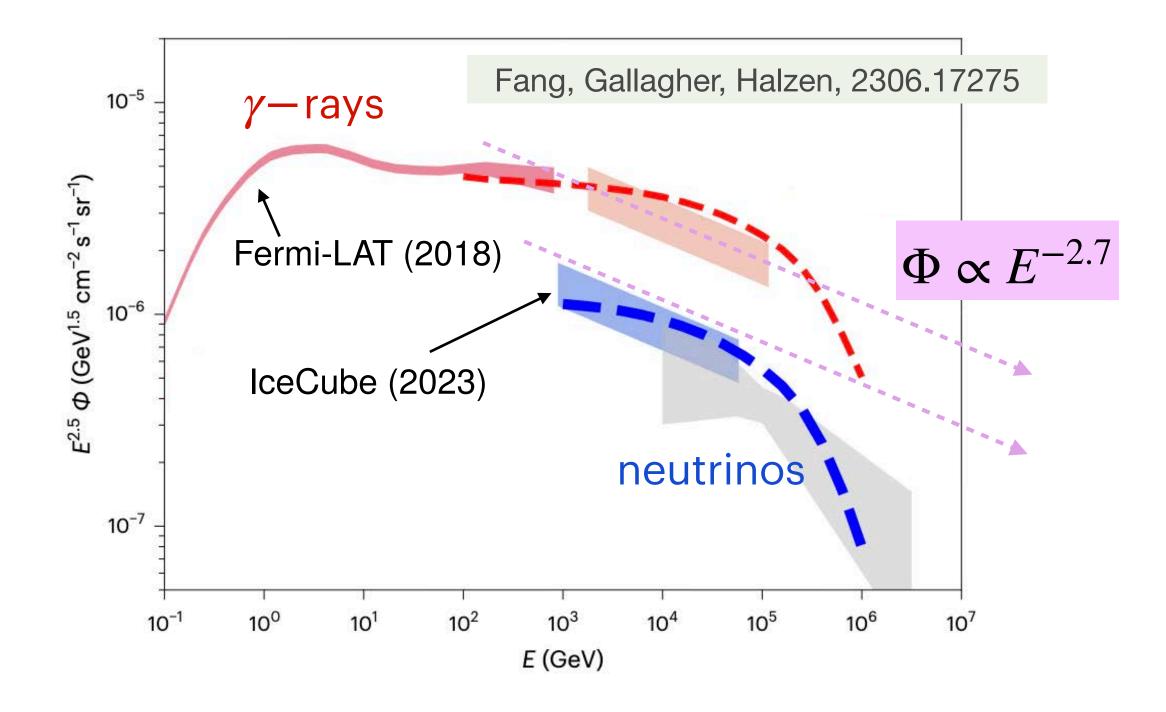
How well can we constrain QD models with galactic neutrinos?



1. We've observed the Milky Way in many messengers:

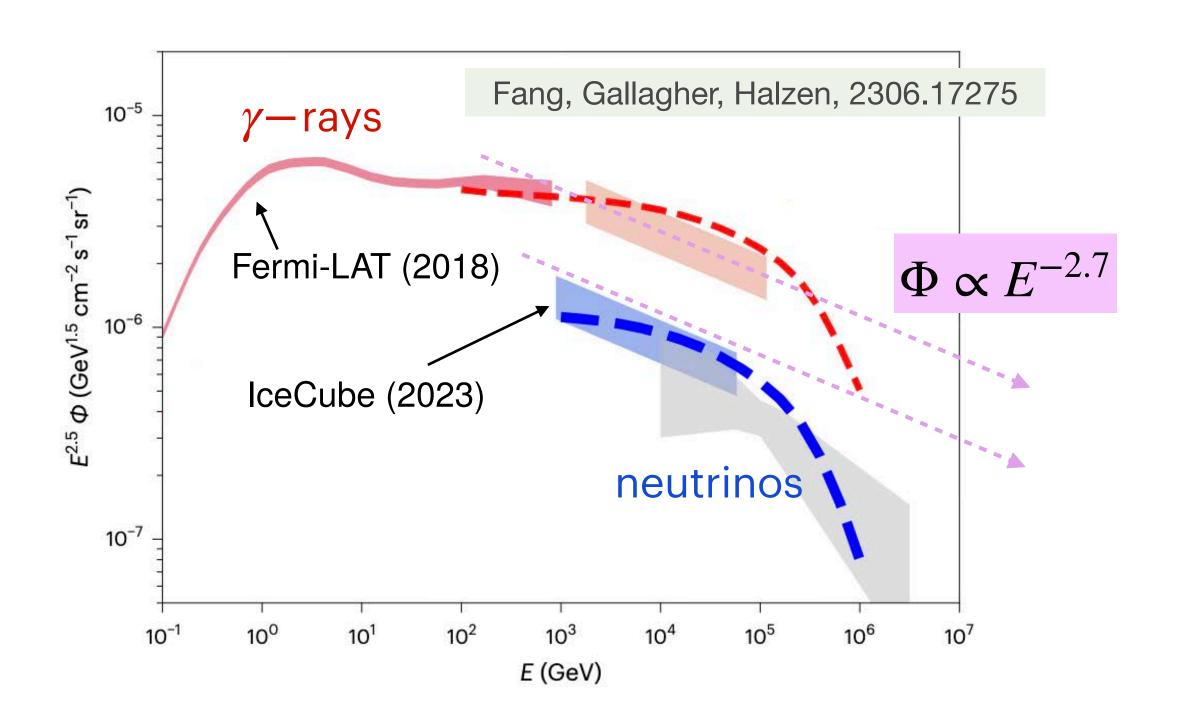


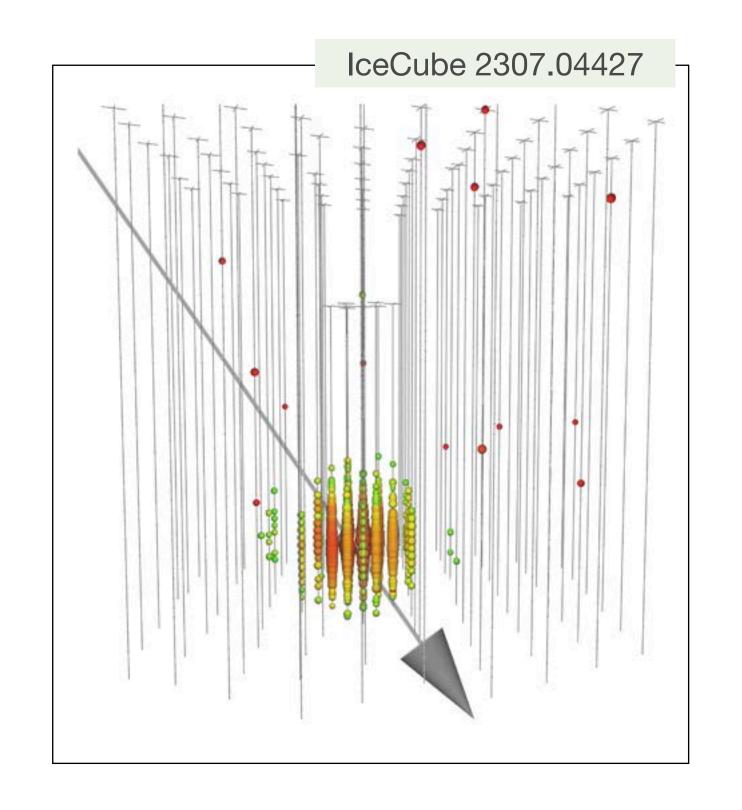
1. We've observed the Milky Way in many messengers: we thus have strong priors on the neutrino production spectrum.



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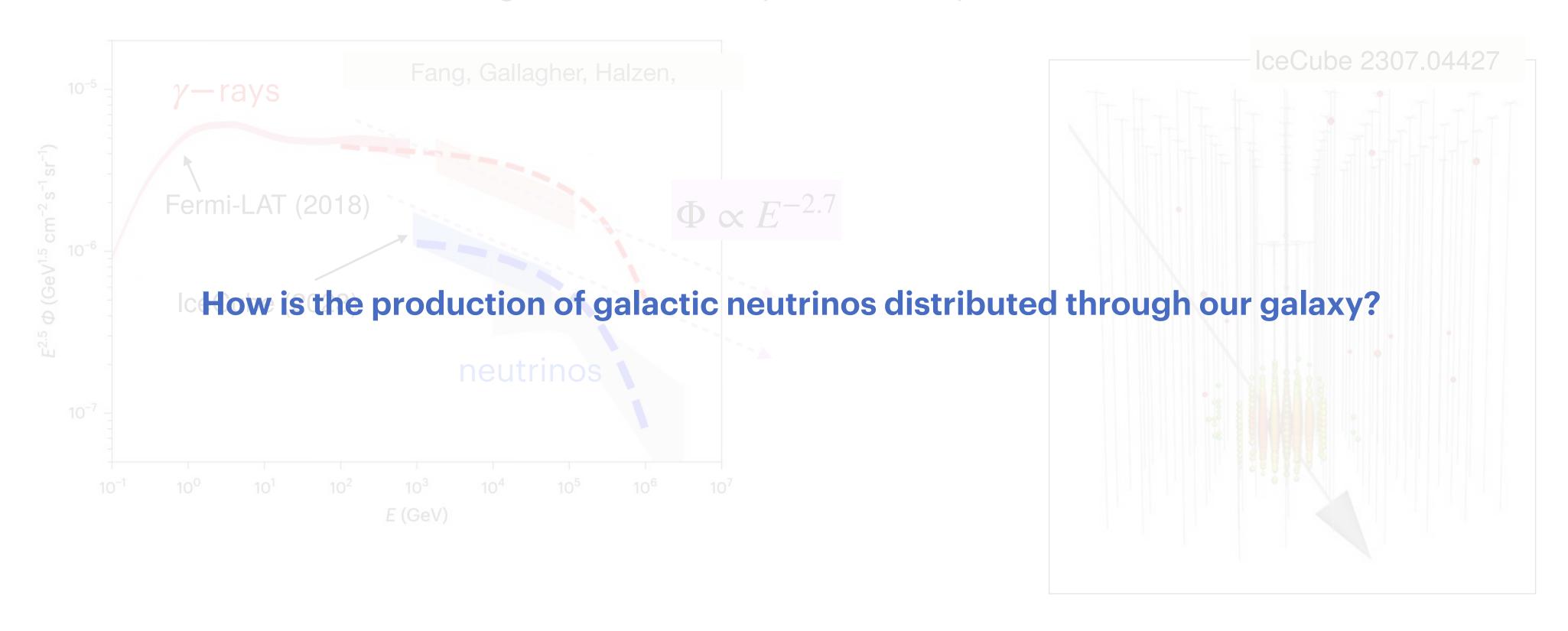
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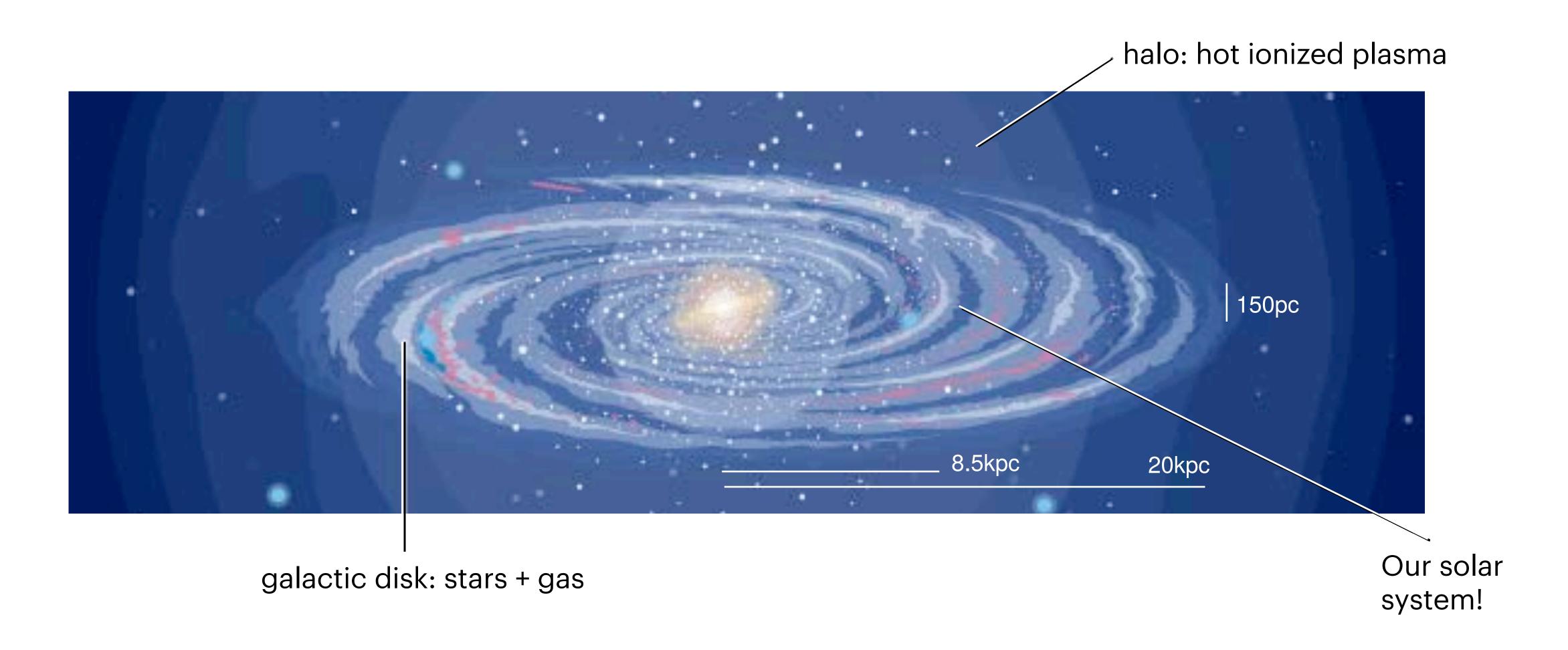
2. IceCube detected the Milky Way in cascades, which have much better energy resolution!

1. Because we've observed the Milky Way in many messengers... we have a much better understanding of the neutrino production spectrum.

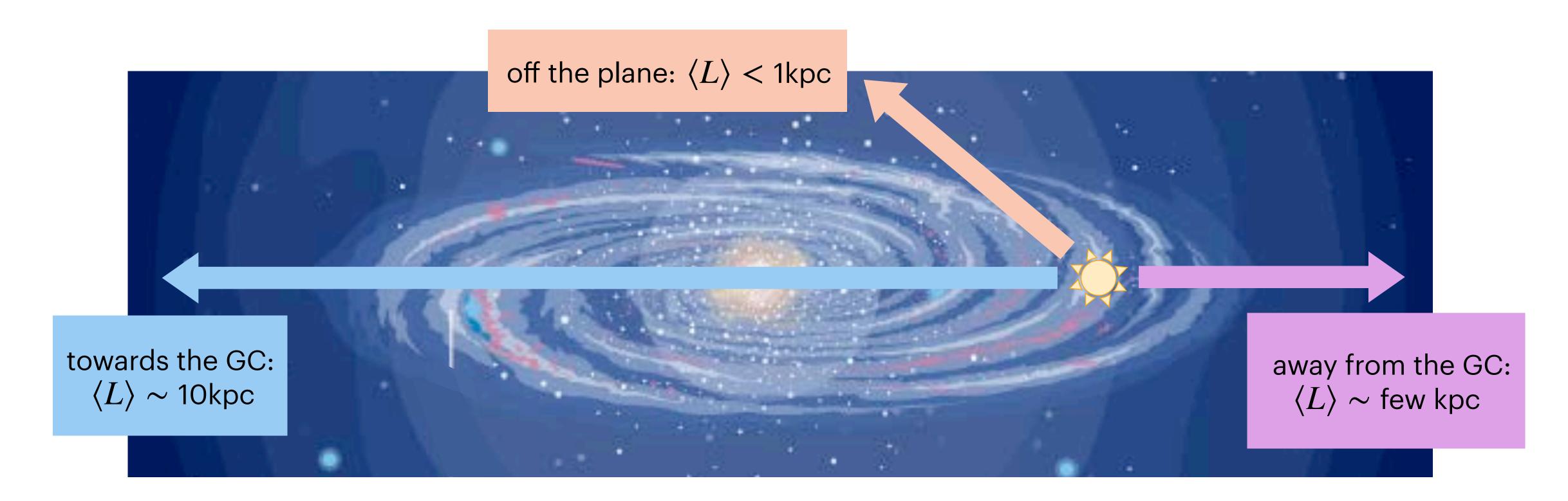


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Galactic neutrinos are primarily produced in cosmic ray - gas collisions within the galactic disk:



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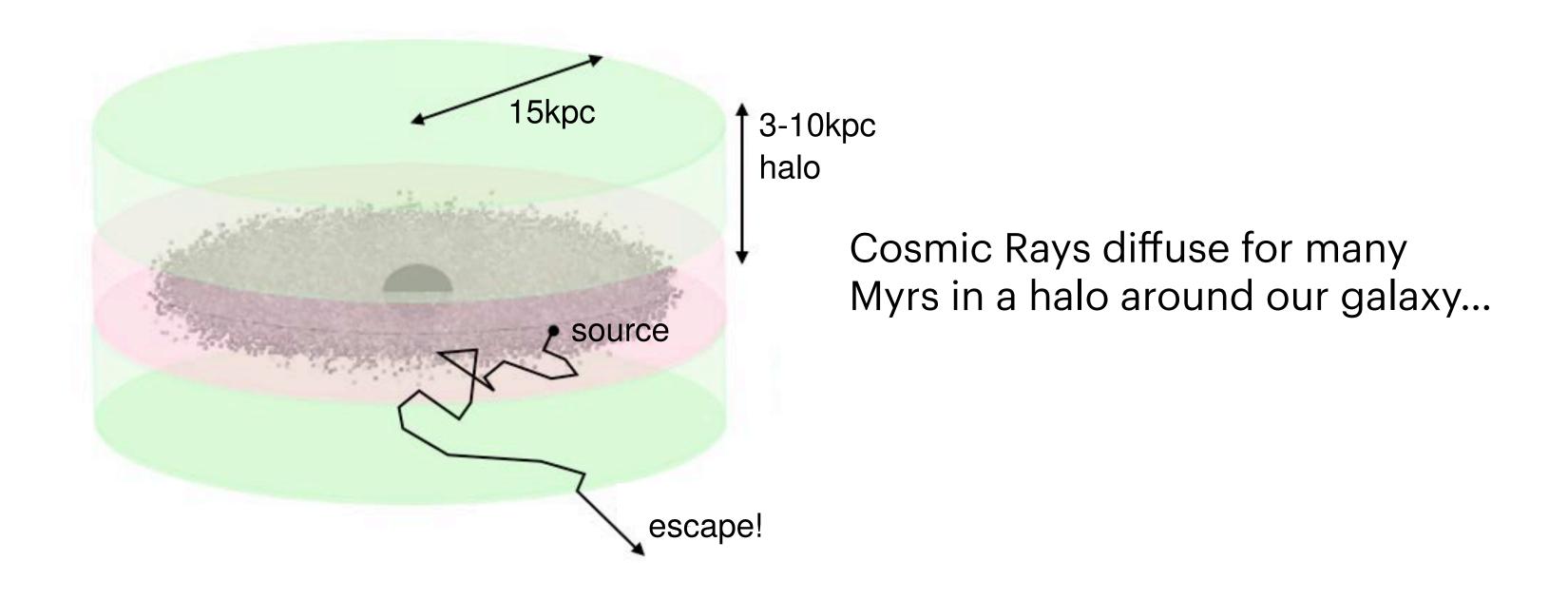
The geometry of the disk implies that the neutrino travel distance L depends strongly on which direction it's coming from.

We created a suite of models for the neutrino spatial distribution (TANDEM) based on the products of CR and gas maps:

neutrino ≃ cosmic rays × gas

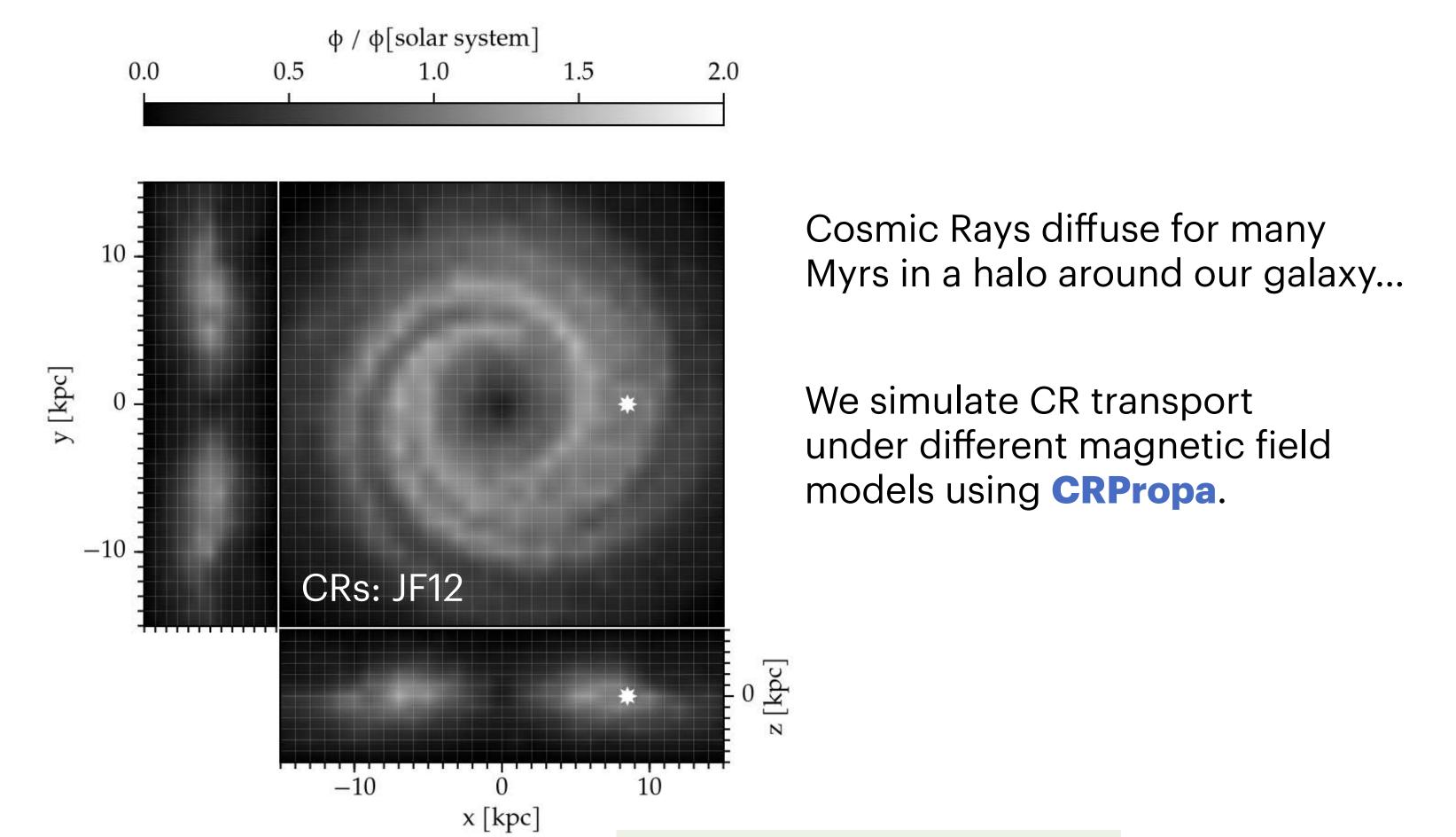
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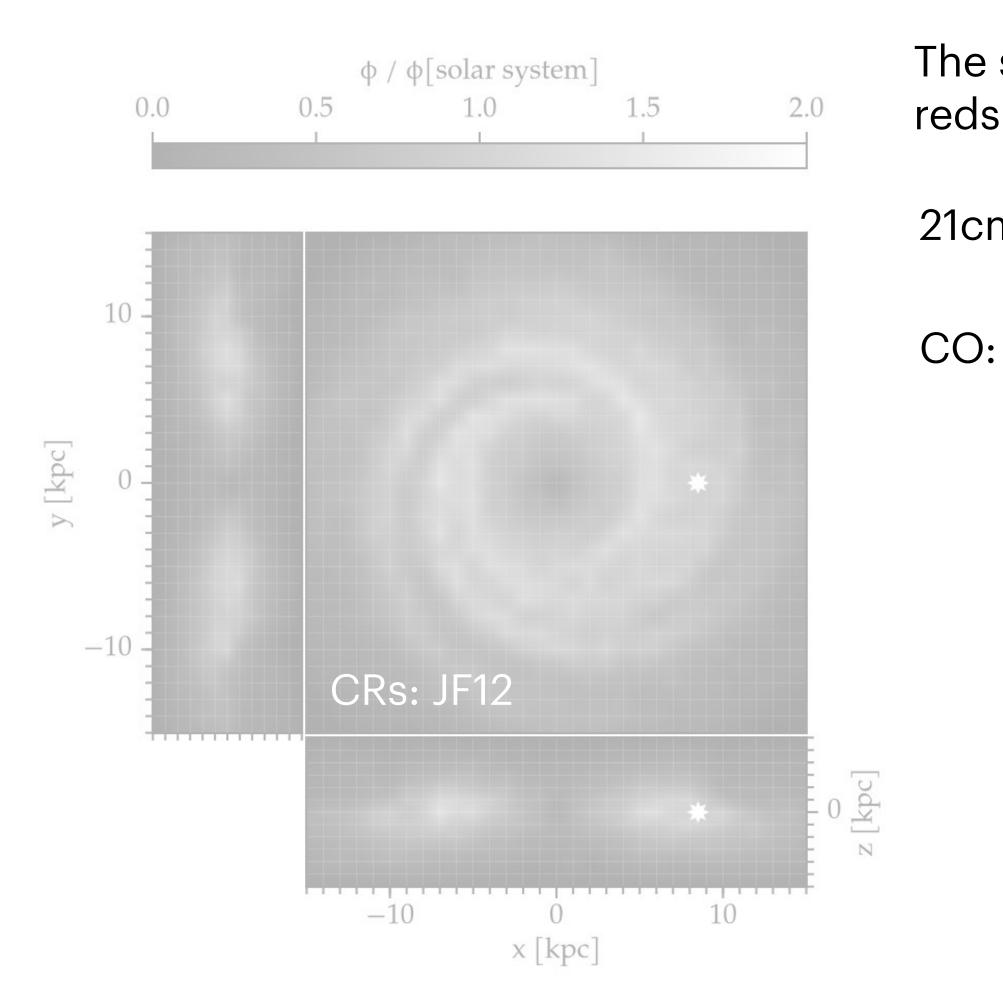


CRPropa3.2: Batista et. al. 2208.00107

Magnetic field from: Jansson, Farrar, 1210.7820

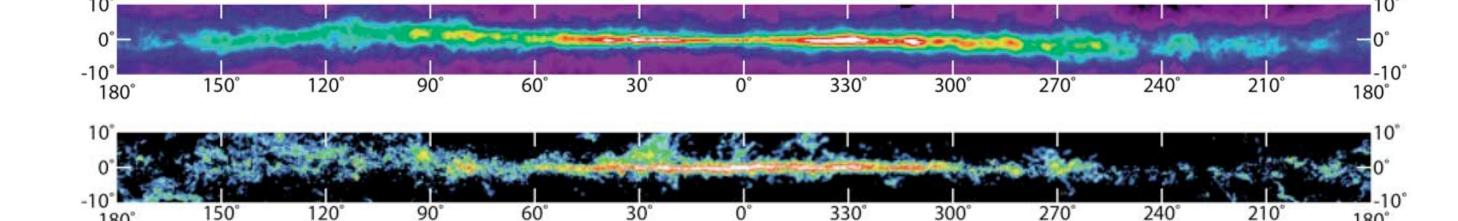
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The spatial distribution of H_I and H_2 gas can be reconstructed from redshifted emission lines by assuming a galactic rotation curve.

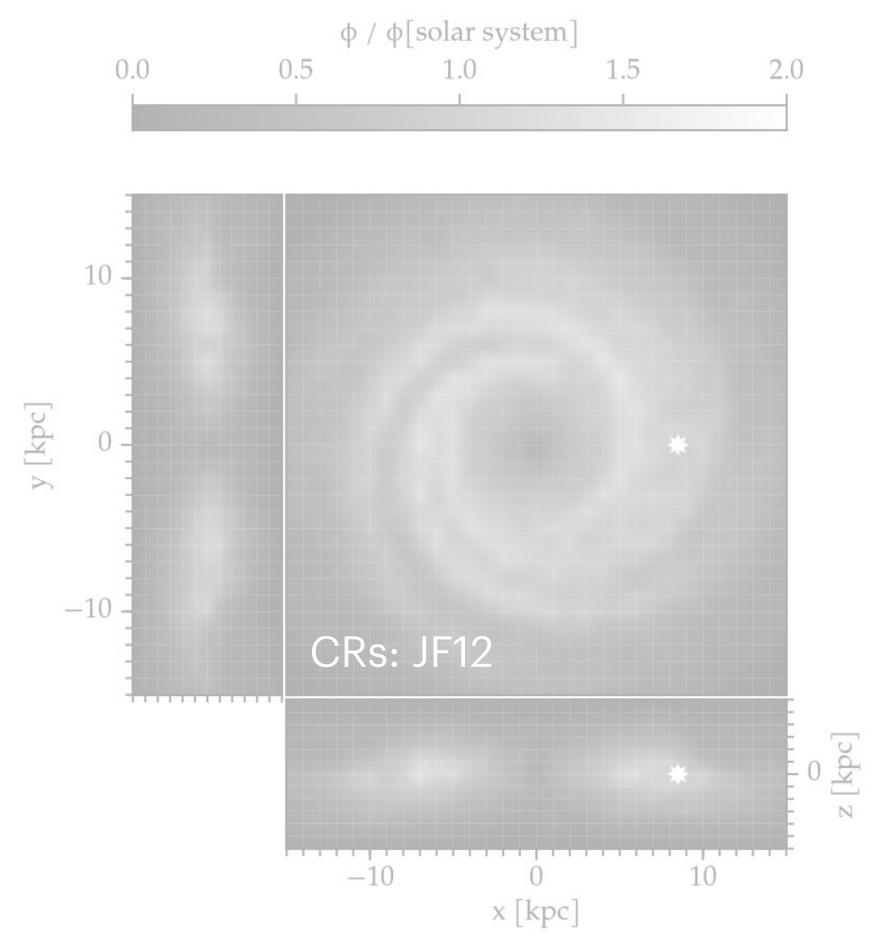
21cm:



57 Kiara Carloni

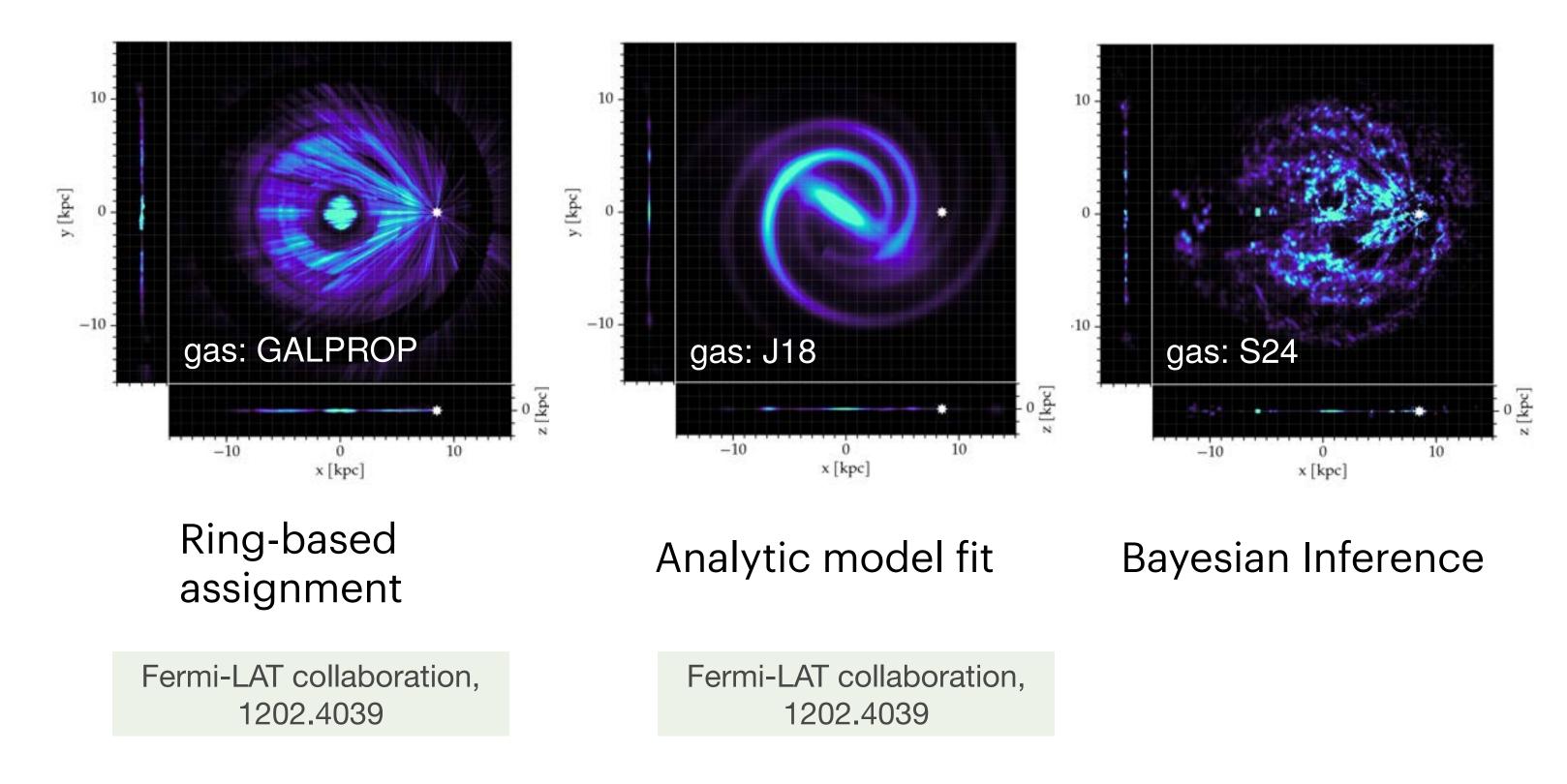
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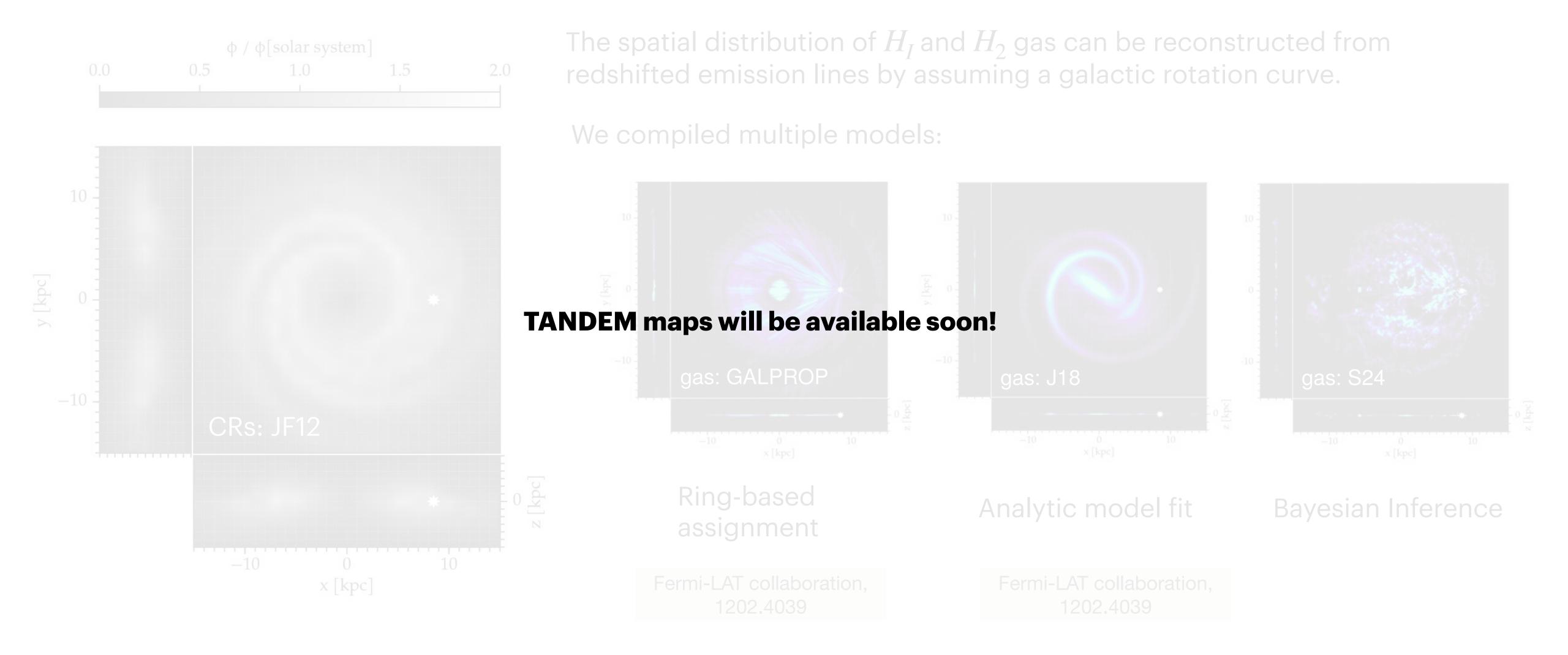
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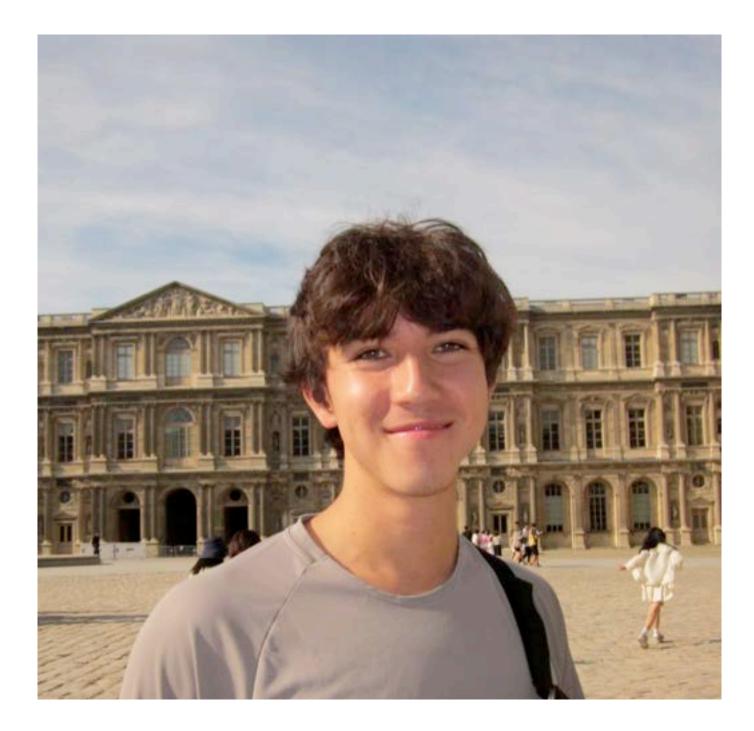
In our study, we

- create a suite of models for the neutrino spatial distribution ("TANDEM")
- model the distribution of galactic events at IceCube (cascades) and KM3Net (tracks)
- model atmospheric neutrino backgrounds at each experiment
- perform a binned likelihood ratio test, marginalizing over the galactic flux normalization.

use each experiment's

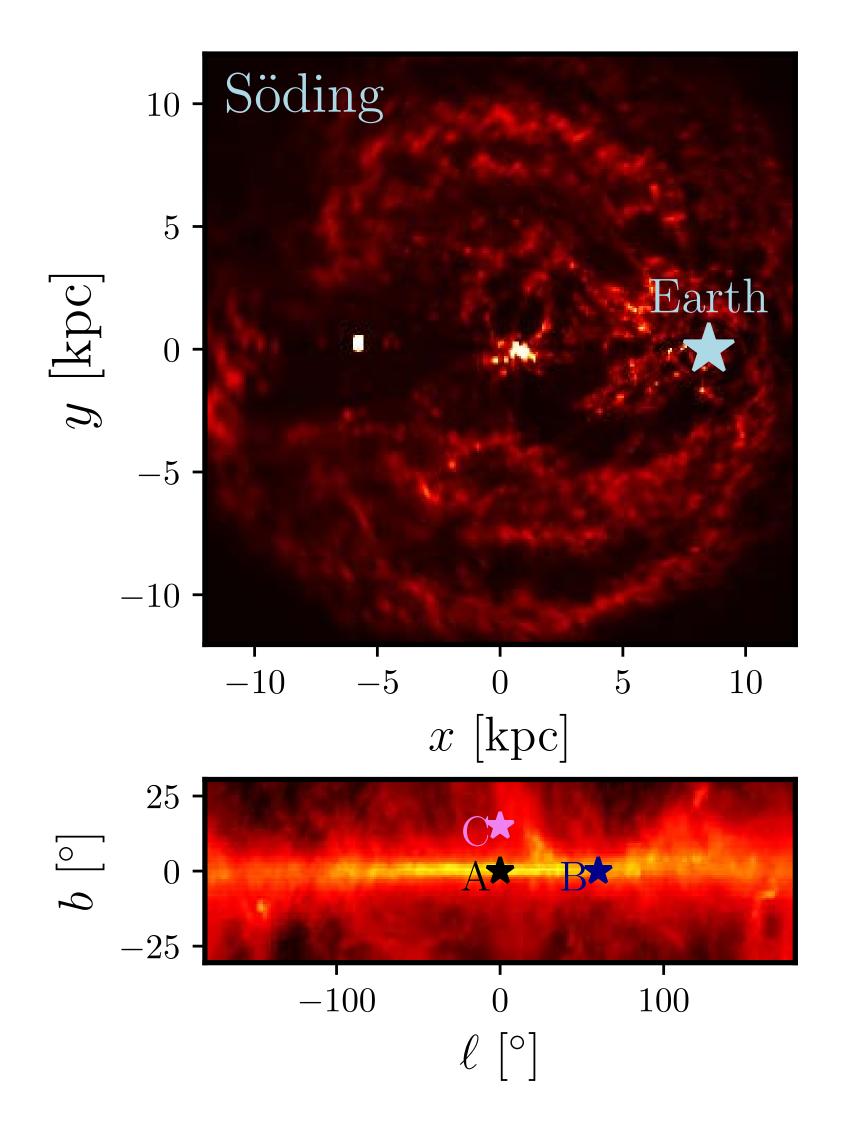
- effective area
- PSF
- energy resolution
- using H3a_SYBYLL23C
- included the self-veto via NuVeto

spectral index assumed fixed at $\gamma = 2.7$

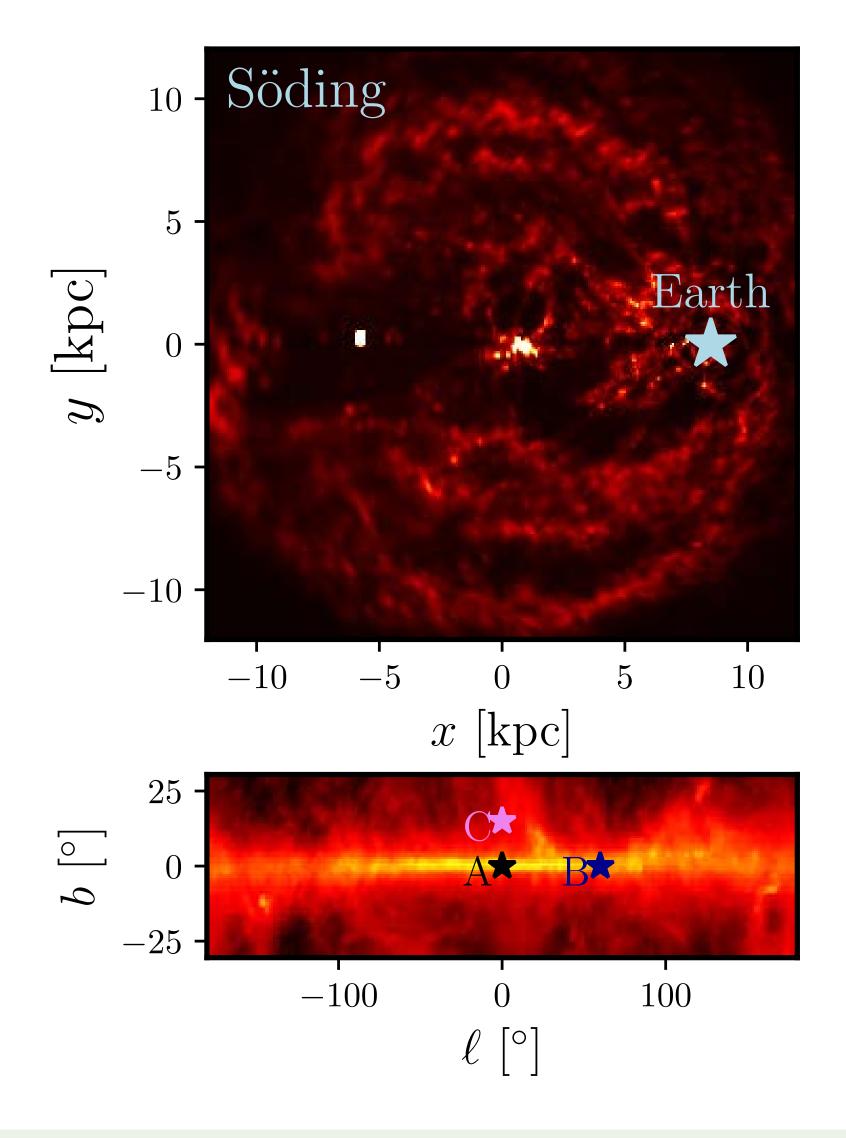


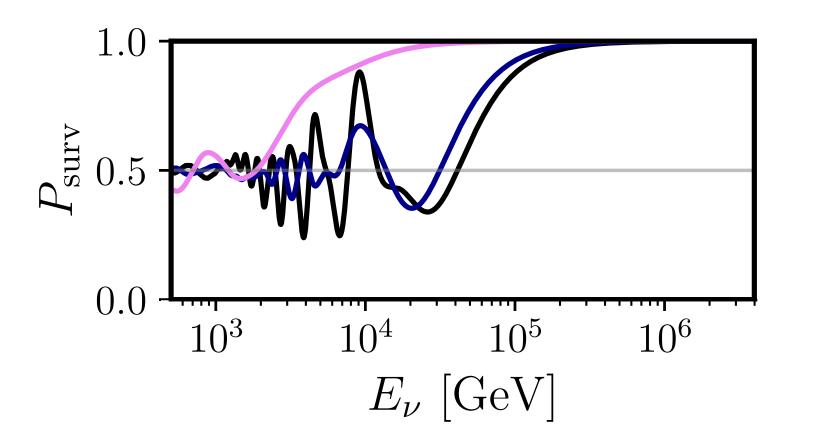
Miller Macdonald, Harvard College undergraduate

This is an example neutrino spatial distribution:



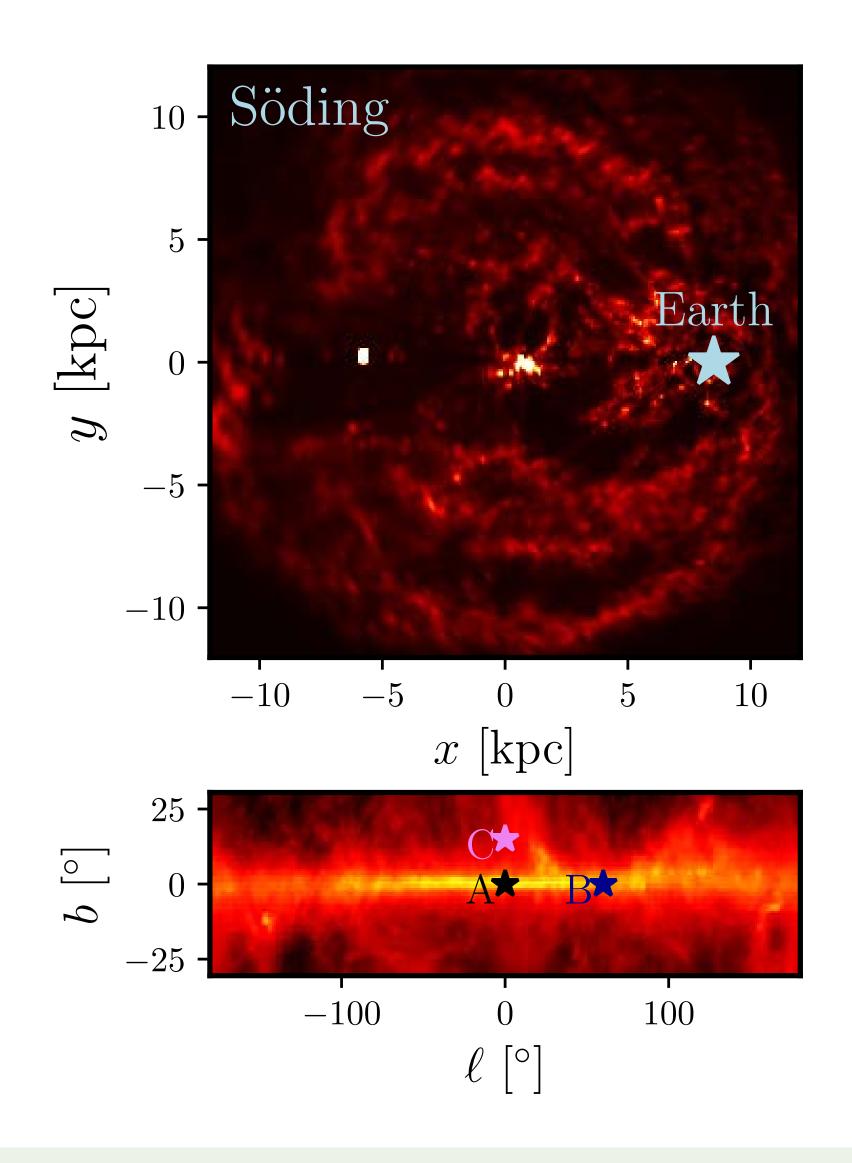
As expected, the survival probability is strongly dependent on the neutrino's direction.

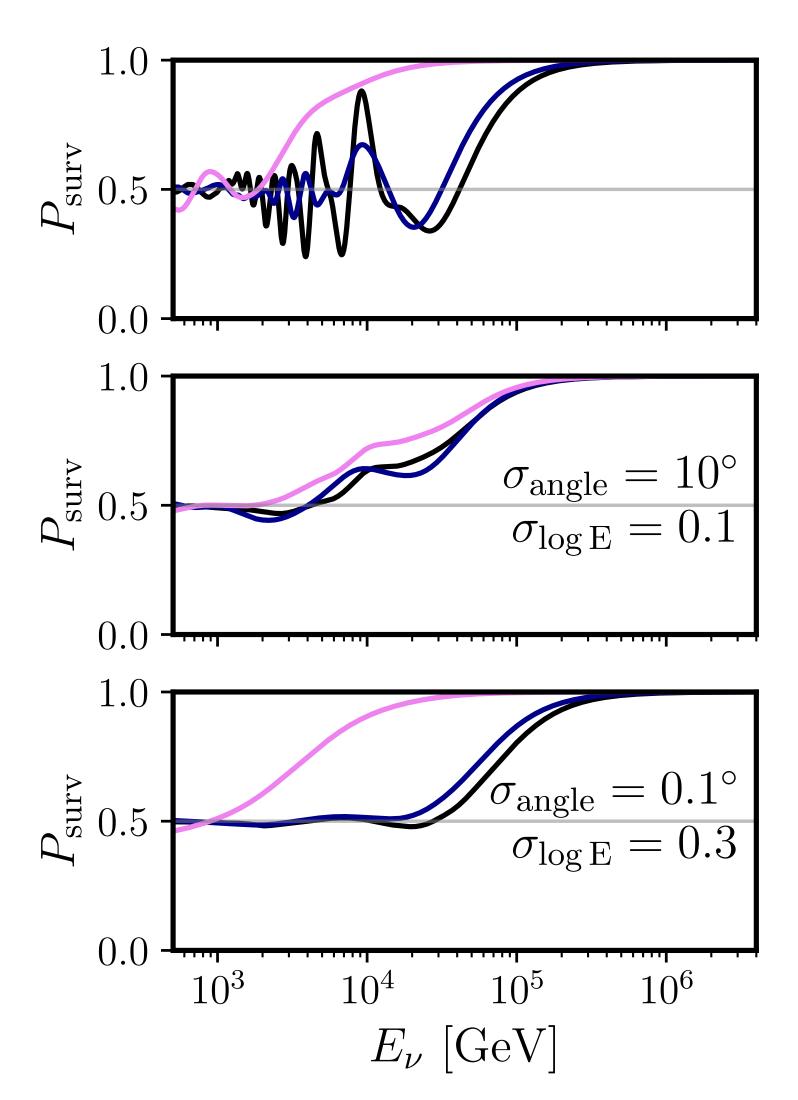




Perfect resolution

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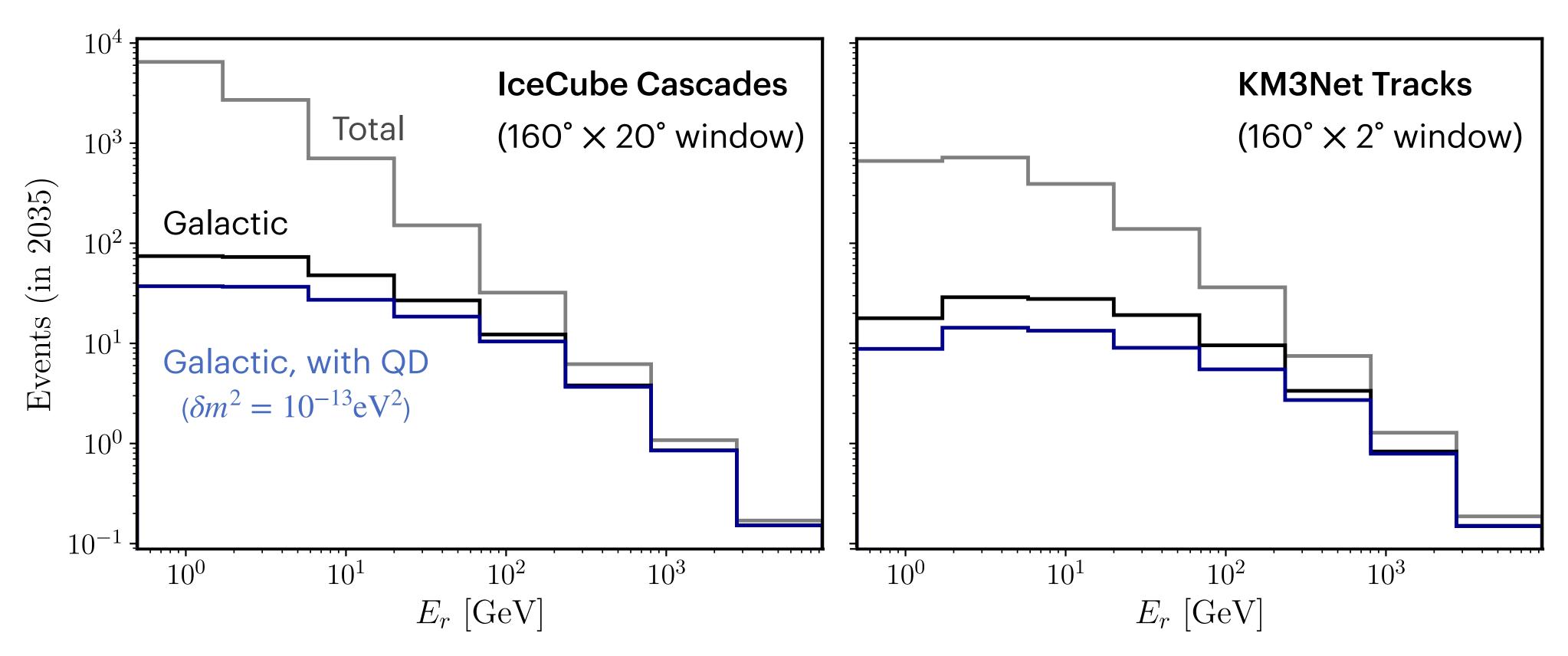


Perfect resolution

Cascade-like

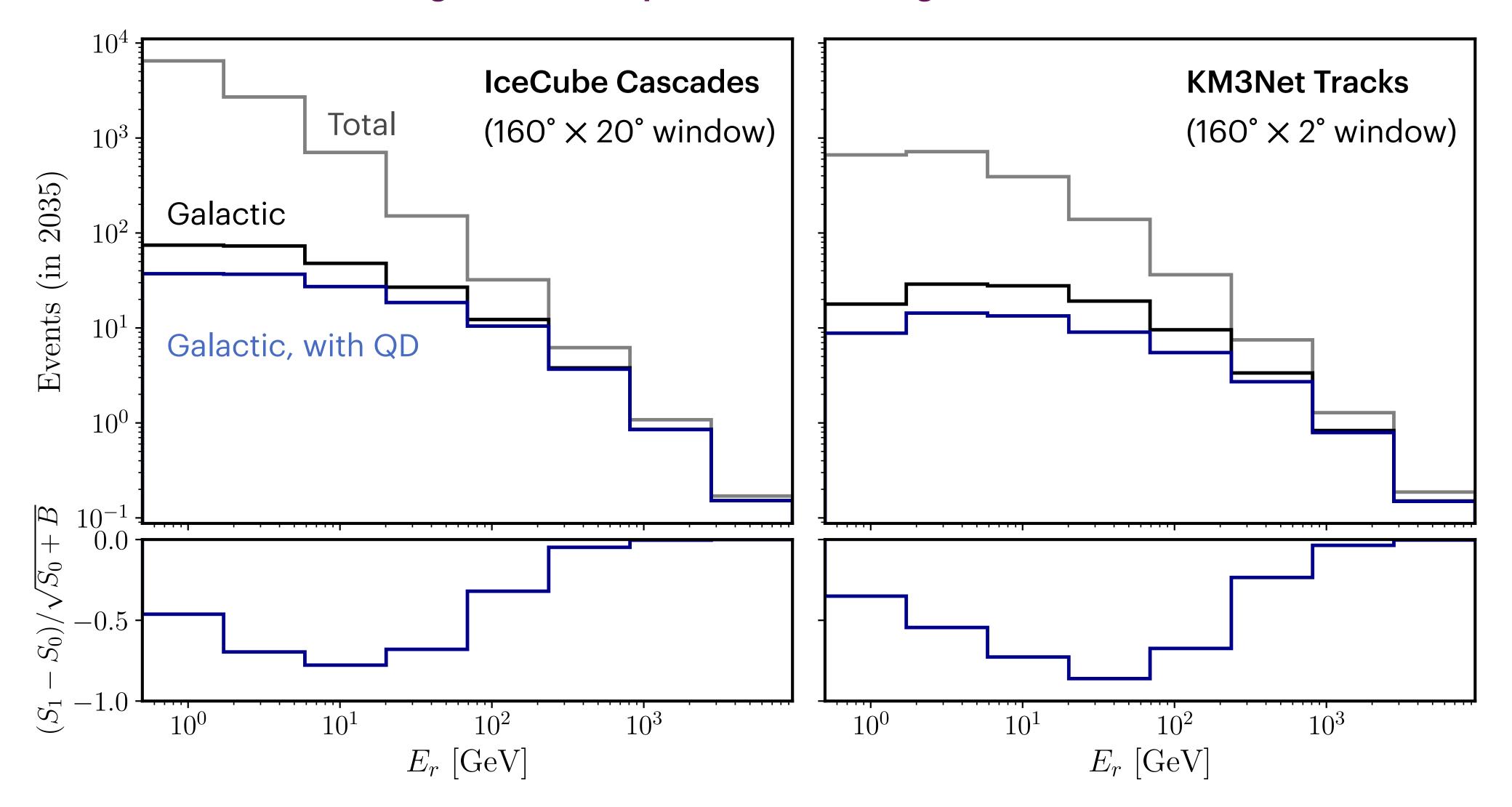
Track-like

We find that the galactic QD disappearance effect is smeared out, making it difficult to pick out over background fluctuations.



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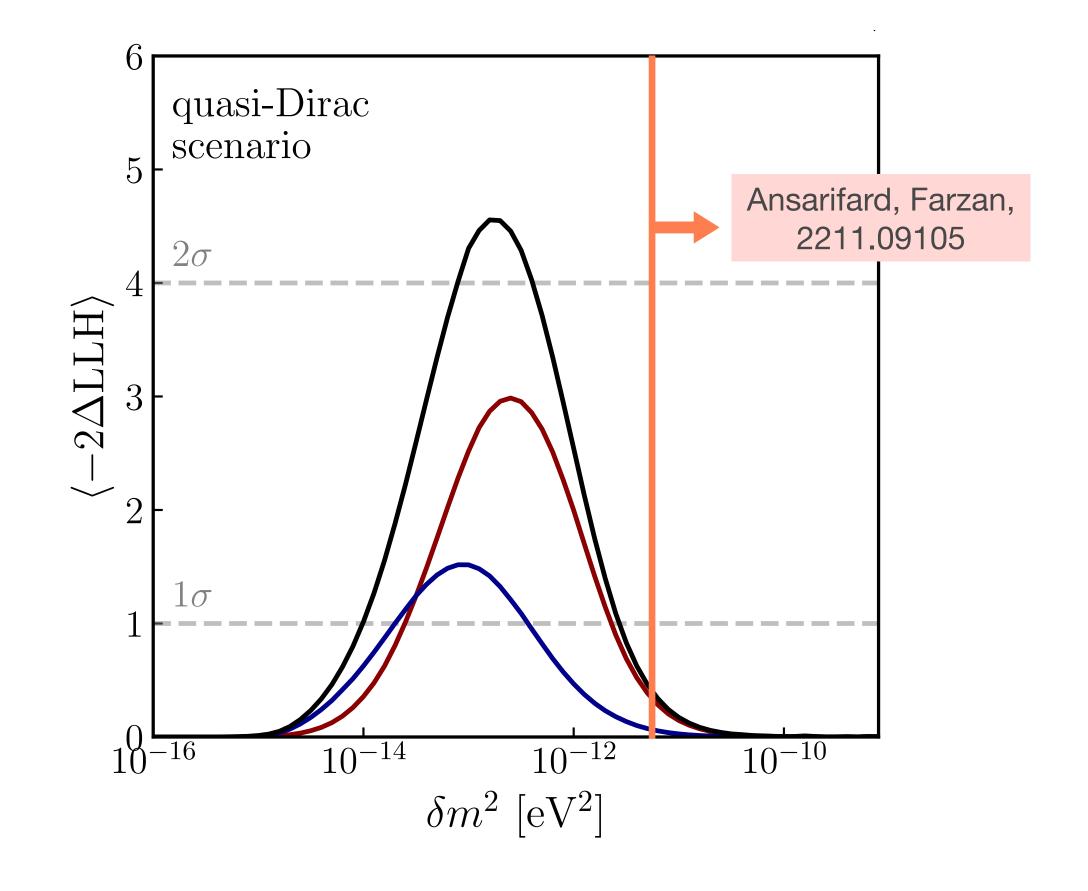
Results: Projected 2035 sensitivity of IceCube + KM3Net

The combination of the two experiments will be sensitive to $\delta m^2 \in [0.76, 4] \times 10^{-13} \text{eV}^2$ at the 2σ level.

Prospects:

This comparatively poor sensitivity could be improved if we can:

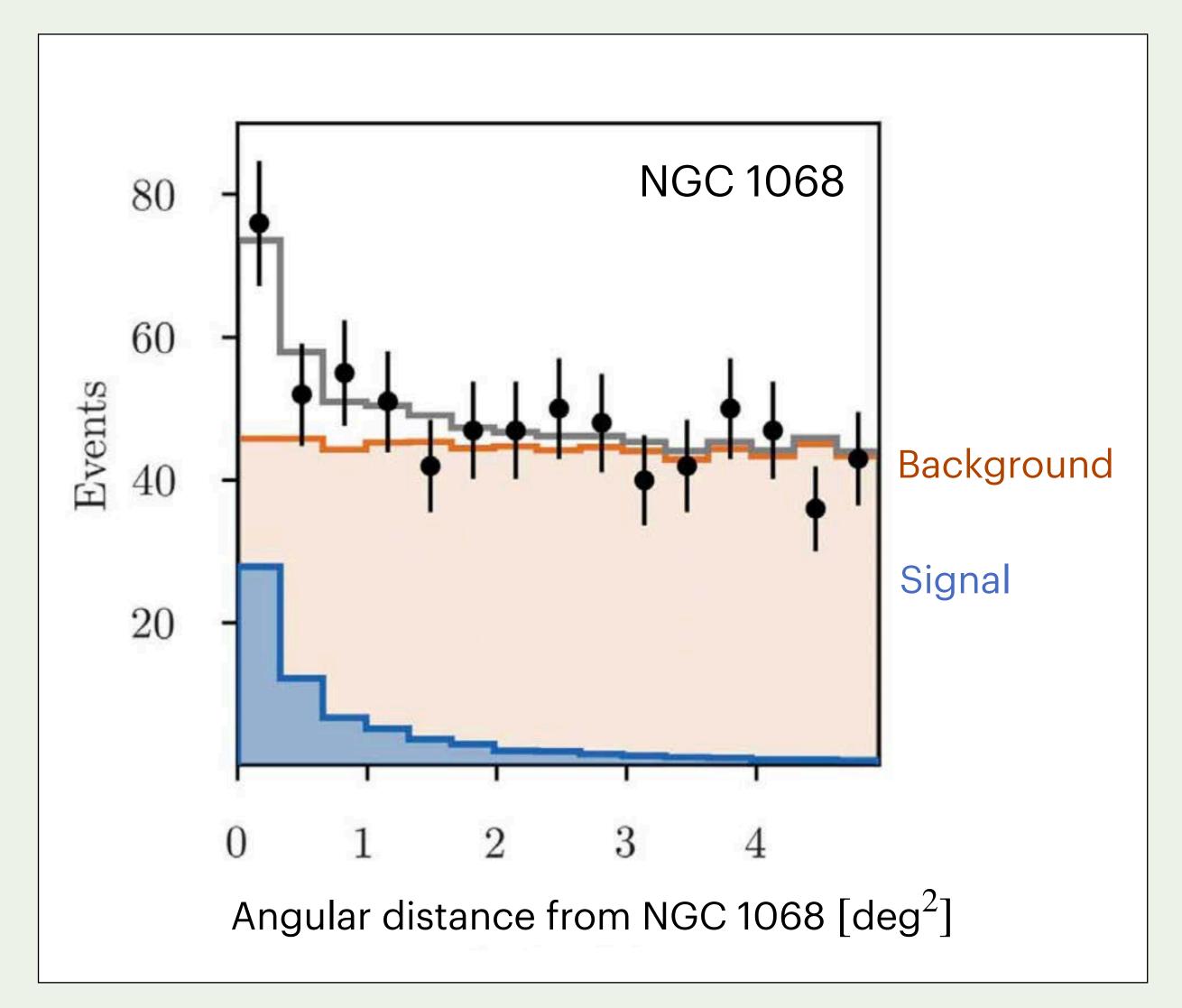
- constrain the normalization of the galactic flux to within 50%
- use a data selection with both good energy and angular resolution



- —— IceCube (cascades) 23 years
- KM3Net (tracks) 10 years
- Combined

Outline for the rest of this talk:

- 1. What are quasi-Dirac neutrinos?
- 2. How has IceCube detected astrophysical neutrinos?
- 3. Searches using extragalactic sources
- 4. Searches using galactic sources
- 5. Bonus: Muon Tagging in the IceCube Upgrade!

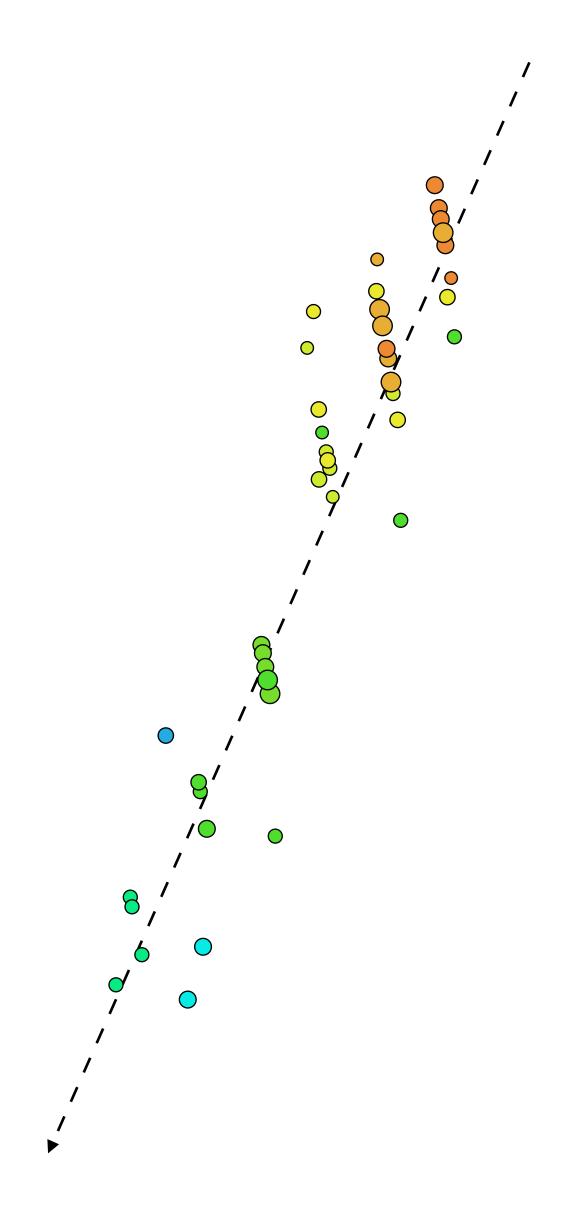


IceCube Collaboration, 2211.09972

NGC 1068's optical size is 0.1°.

The actual width of the signal distribution is set by the experimental angular resolution.

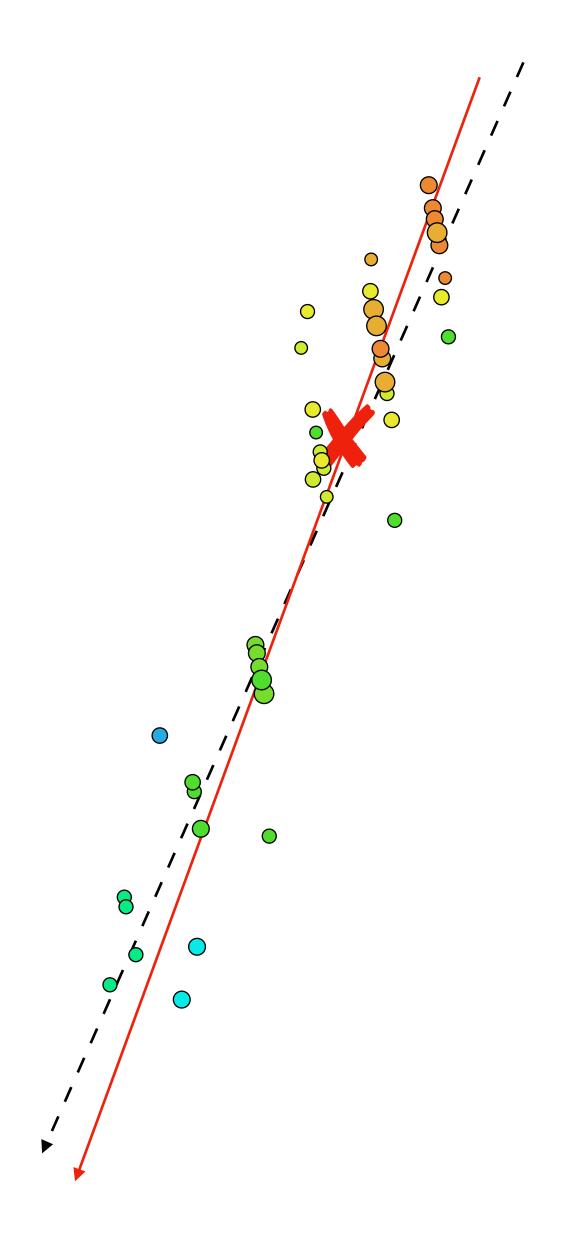
Better angular resolution => more sources!



For tracks, directional reconstruction means fitting a line to the pattern of light deposition.

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This is a five-dimensional problem: two angles + three coordinates.

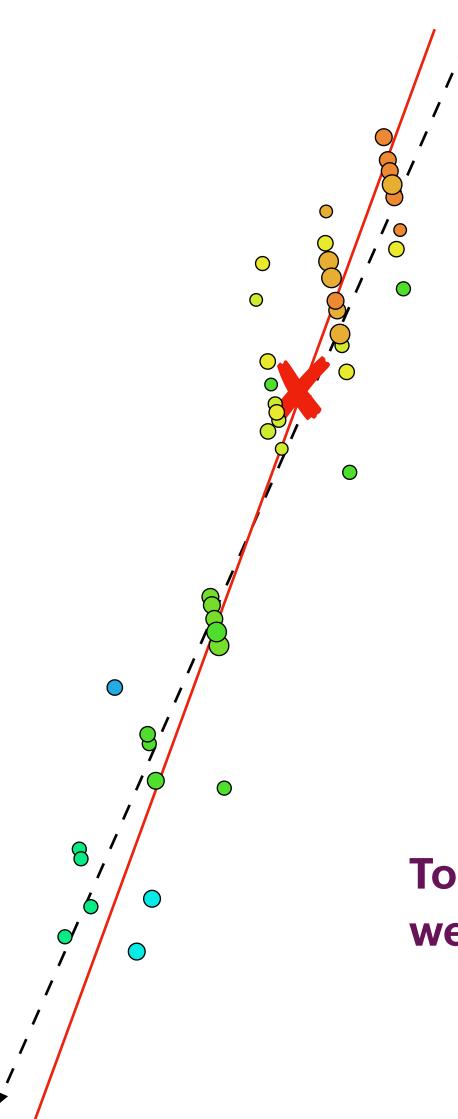


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If we could tag a muon that passed through a particular "pivot point," then we'd only need to fit two angles.

This is a significantly easier problem!



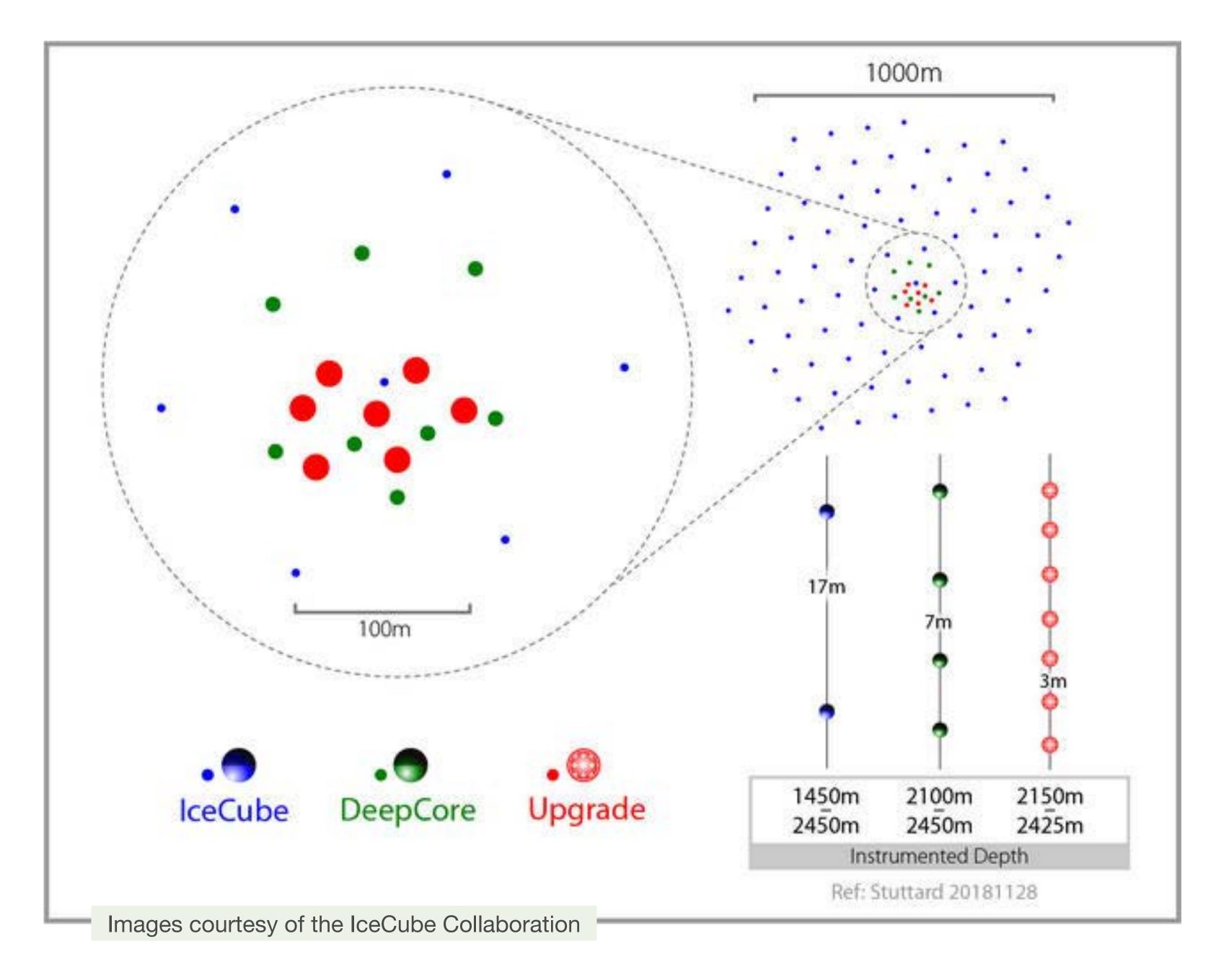
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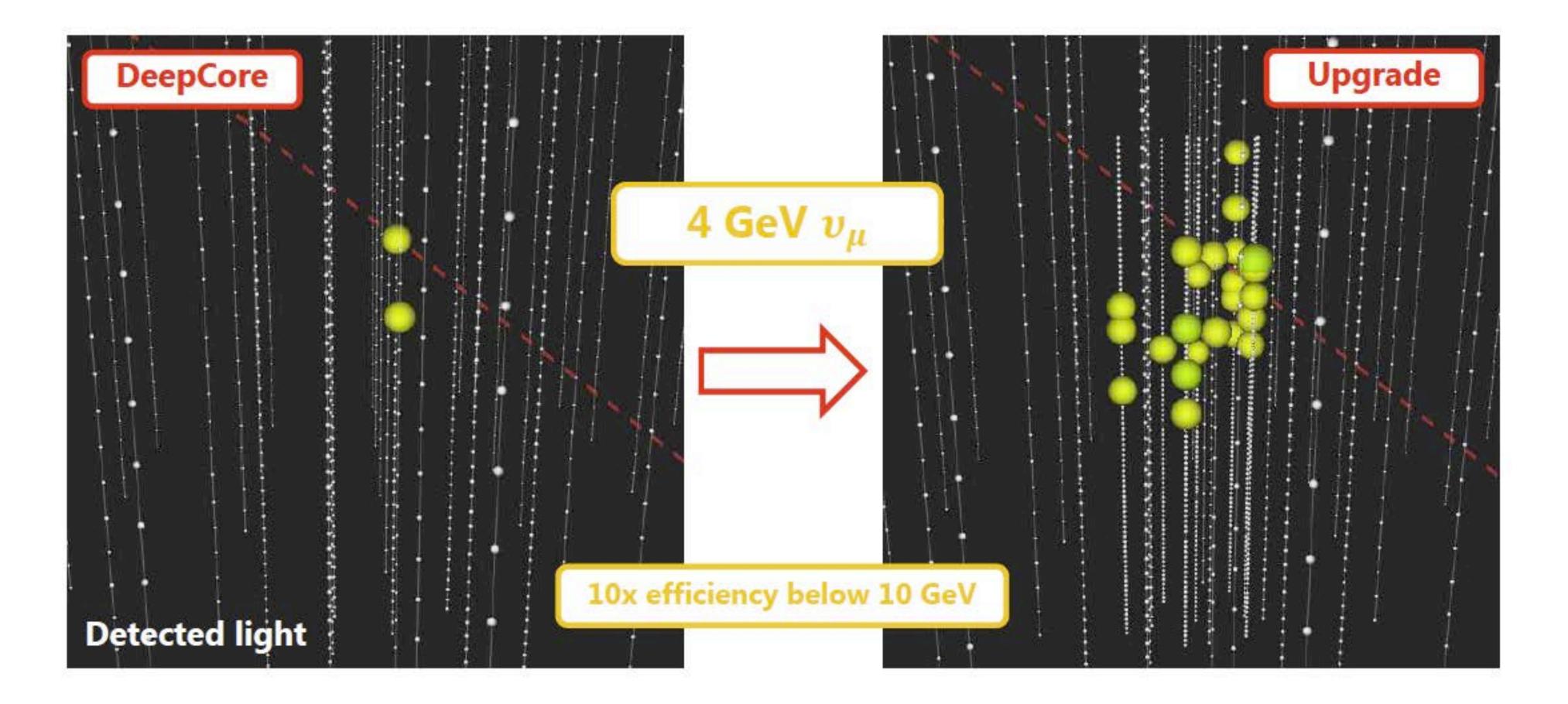
To produce a dataset of well-reconstructed "standard arrows," we put "muon taggers" into some of the DOMs going in to the IceCube upgrade!



The IceCube Upgrade will:

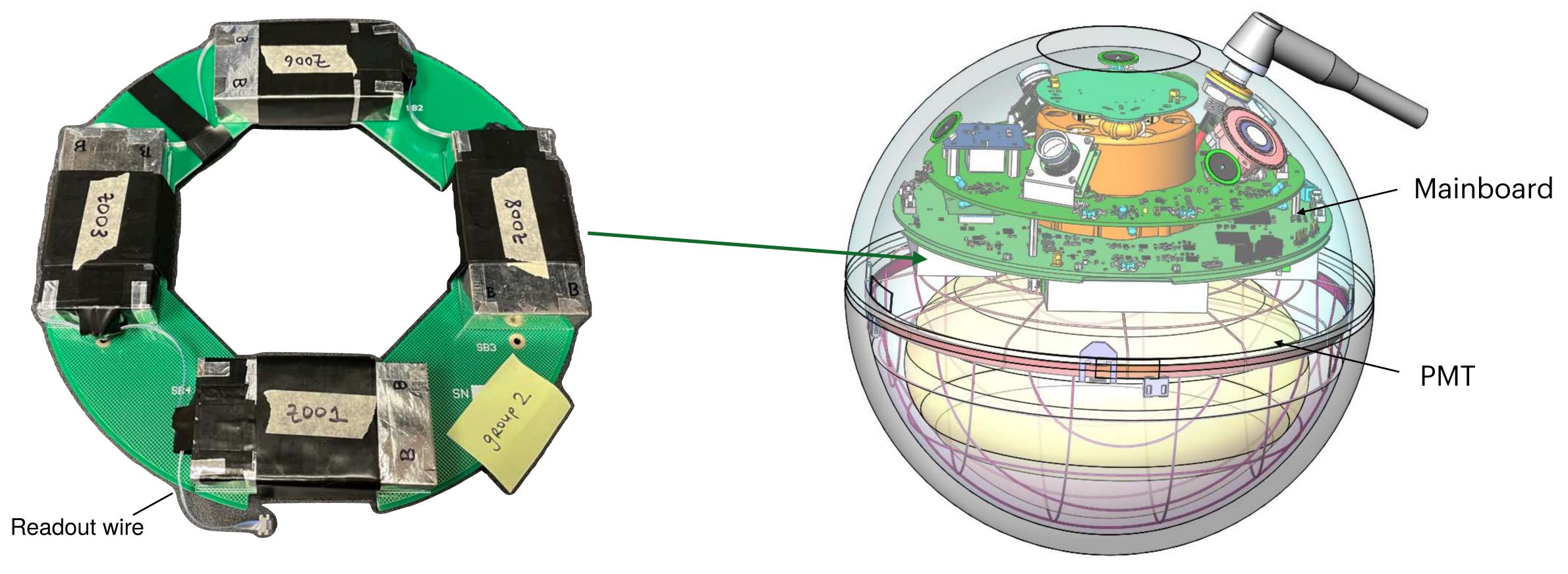
- significantly enhance worldleading low-energy oscillation physics
- significantly improve our detector characterization

The IceCube Upgrade will significantly enhance the sensitivity to few GeV-scale neutrinos:



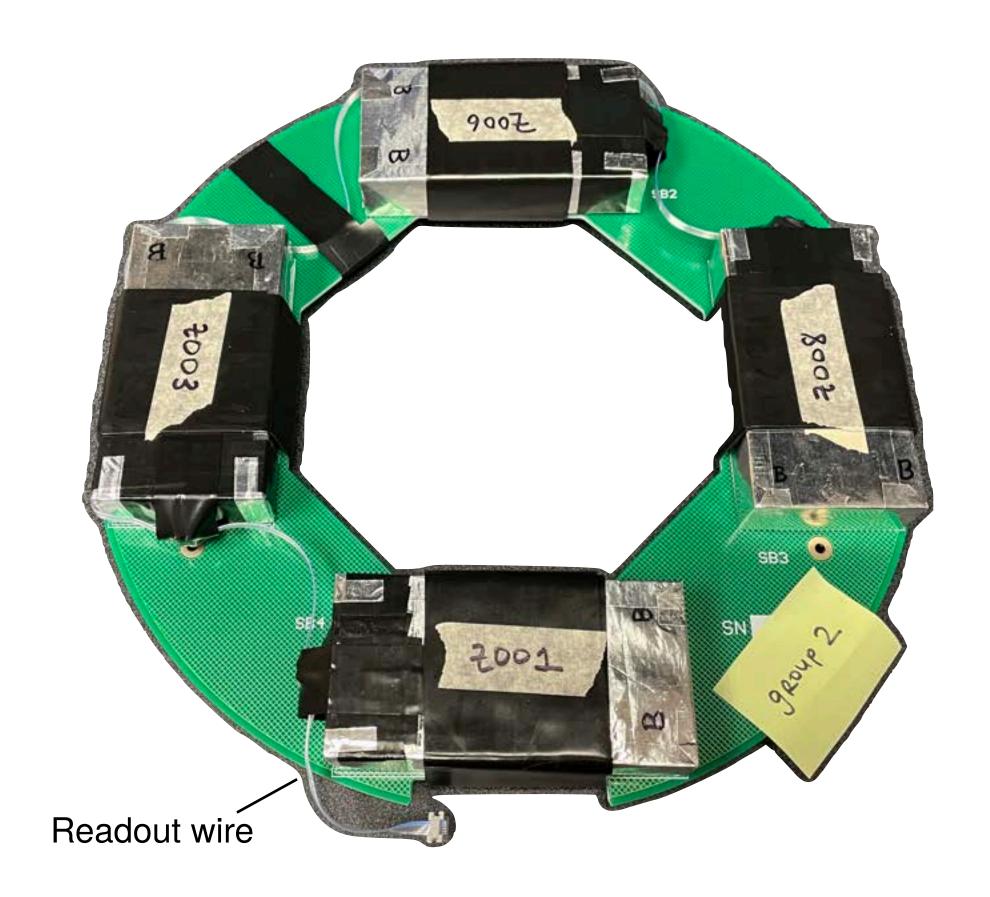
Images courtesy of the IceCube Collaboration

We deployed muon taggers (MTAs) in 21 "Precision" DOMs, which will go into the ice this winter.



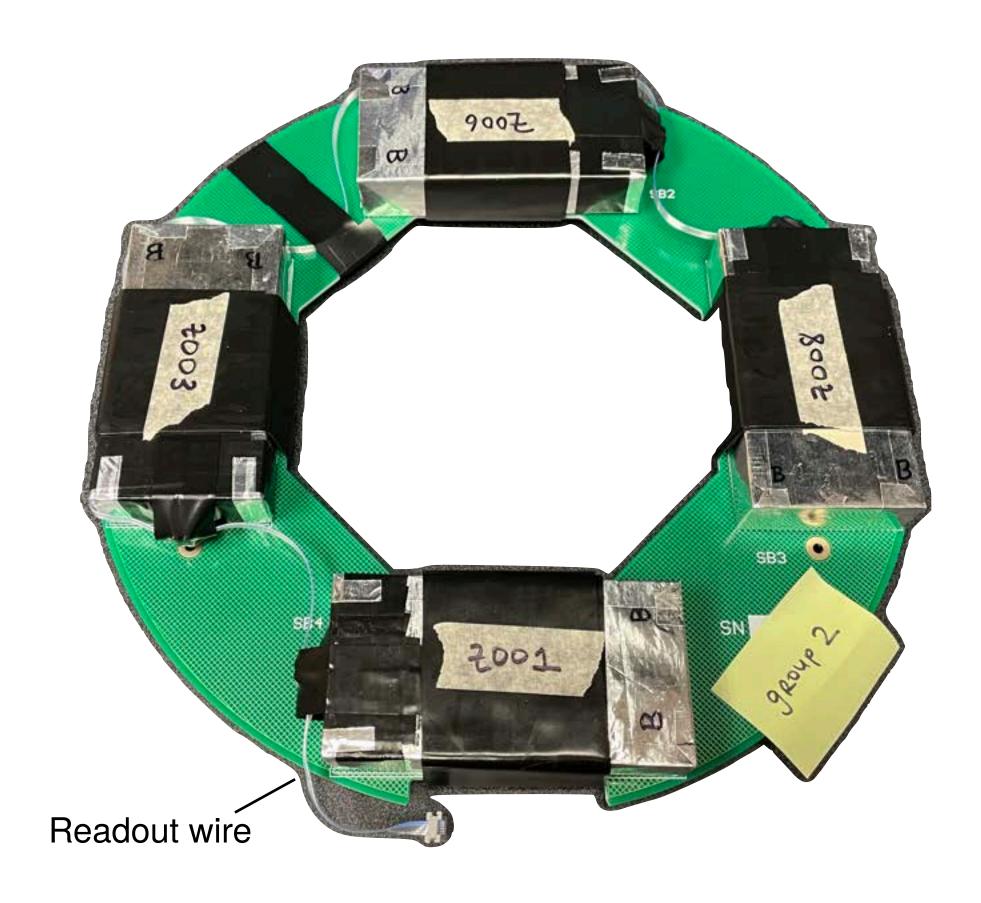
Muon Tagger Array

The MTA is composed of 4 blocks of 2cm thick plastic scintillator, wired in parallel to a SiPM:



Muon Tagger Array

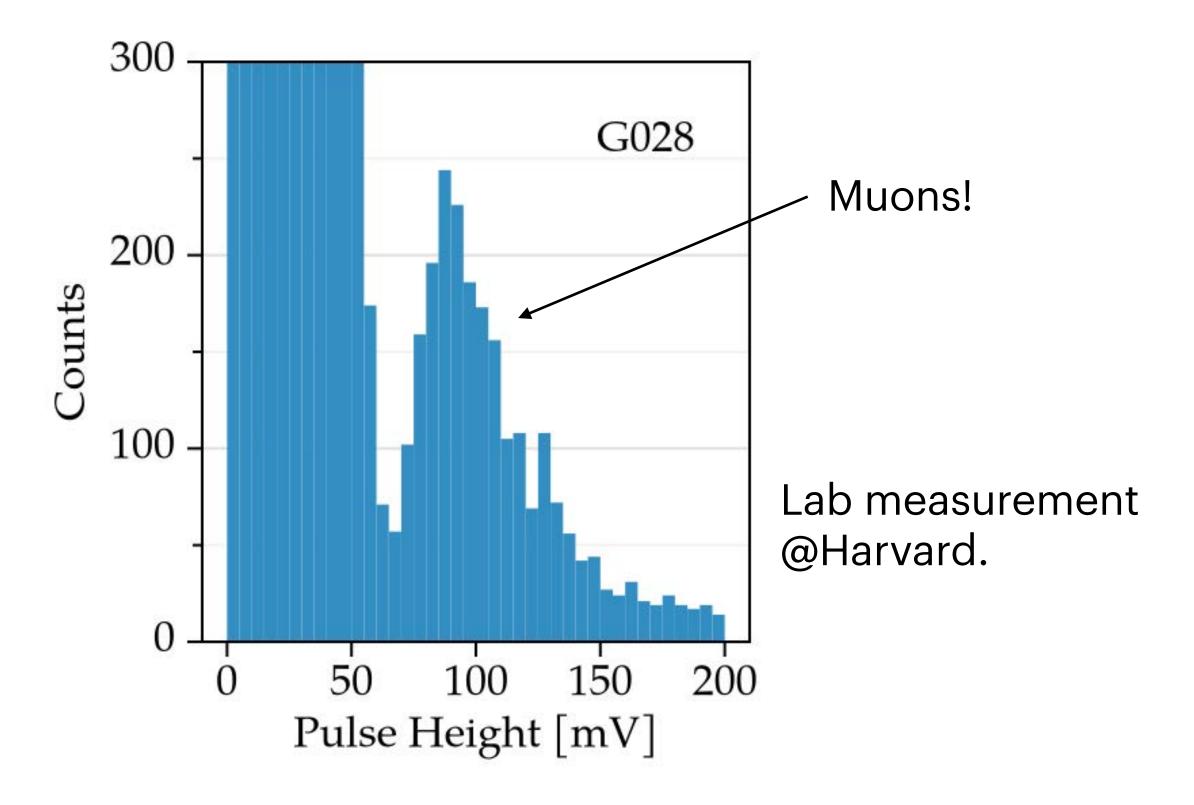
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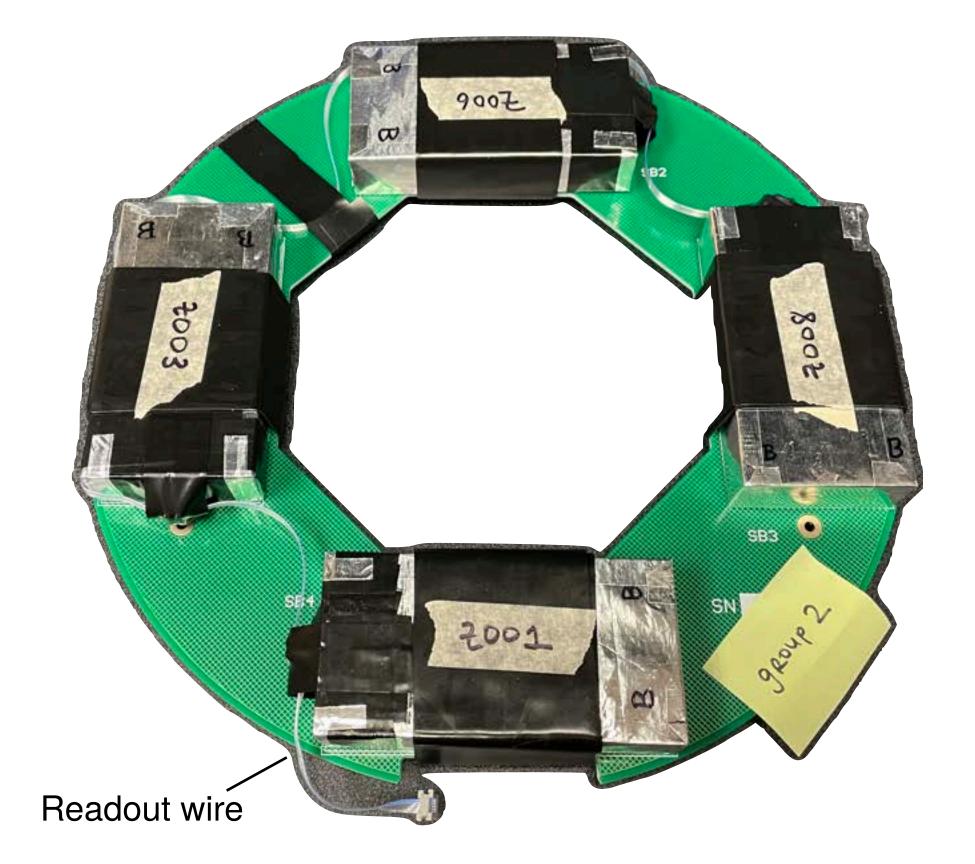


Muon Tagger Array

A minimum ionizing muon deposits about 4MeV as it passes through the scintillator block.

This results in a clean muon signature:





We expect to detect about 22k muons / year with the 21 MTAs!

With this dataset of standard arrows, we can:

- test data-driven machine learning methods
- improve reconstruction of low-energy muons
- perform calibration studies

Muon Tagger Array

In the long term, the MTA will improve angular resolution => help discover more sources!

Conclusions:

- Whether neutrinos are Majorana or Dirac is one of the biggest outstanding problems in neutrino physics.
- If lepton number is nearly conserved, neutrinos may be quasi-Dirac!
- We can constrain QD models by looking for disappearance signatures in the spectra of astrophysical neutrinos.
- Currently, the most promising search strategy is to use the total diffuse flux.
- Understanding the SM emission physics will improve our ability to constrain BSM oscillation physics.
- Muon taggers can help improve the angular reconstruction of next-generation neutrino telescopes, and thus help discover more sources.

Thank you!

Back-up material:

Sample(s)	Redshift dist. $\rho(z)$	$3\sigma \ { m region(s)} \ [{ m eV^2}]$
CombinedFit	SFRD [55]	$(5.0 - 7.5) \times 10^{-19}$
${\tt Cascades} + {\tt ESTES}$	SFRD [55]	$(5.9 - 7.9) \times 10^{-19}$
CombinedFit	BL Lac [56]	$(2.4-3.0), (3.5-7.2), (18-35) \times 10^{-19}$
CombinedFit	FSRQ [56]	$(3.5-7.2), (19-35) \times 10^{-19}$
CombinedFit	LL AGN [56]	
CombinedFit	RQ AGN [56]	$(4.9 - 7.5) \times 10^{-19}$

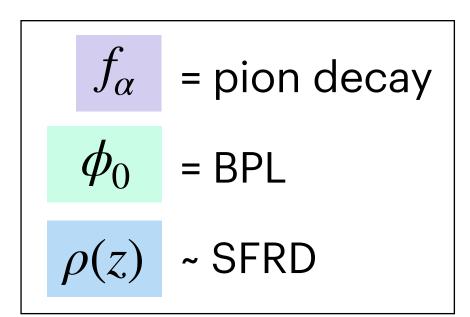
TABLE I. Limits on the squared-mass difference. These results assume the source emission spectrum is a broken power-law (BPL).

Sample(s)	Flux Model ϕ	$\delta m^2 [{ m eV}^2]$	TS	dof	p-value
CombinedFit					
	SPL	null	35.67	11	0.02%
	SPL	7.2×10^{-20}	18.93	10	4.11%
	SPE	null	22.82	10	1.14%
	SPE	6.9×10^{-20}	13.91	9	12.57%
	BPL	null	9.17	9	42.20%
	BPL	1.2×10^{-18}	6.17	8	62.84%
${\tt Cascades} + {\tt EST}$	ES				
	SPL	null	28.10	16	3.07%
	SPL	1.9×10^{-19}	25.10	15	4.87%
	SPE	null	26.67	15	3.16%
	SPE	6.3×10^{-18}	22.64	14	6.63%
	BPL	null	25.06	14	3.39%
	BPL	6.0×10^{-18}	22.18	13	5.26%

TABLE II. Best fit parameters, for each combination of IceCube results used, assuming a single mass-squared difference δm^2 . These results use the SFRD [55] for the source redshift distribution $\rho(z)$.

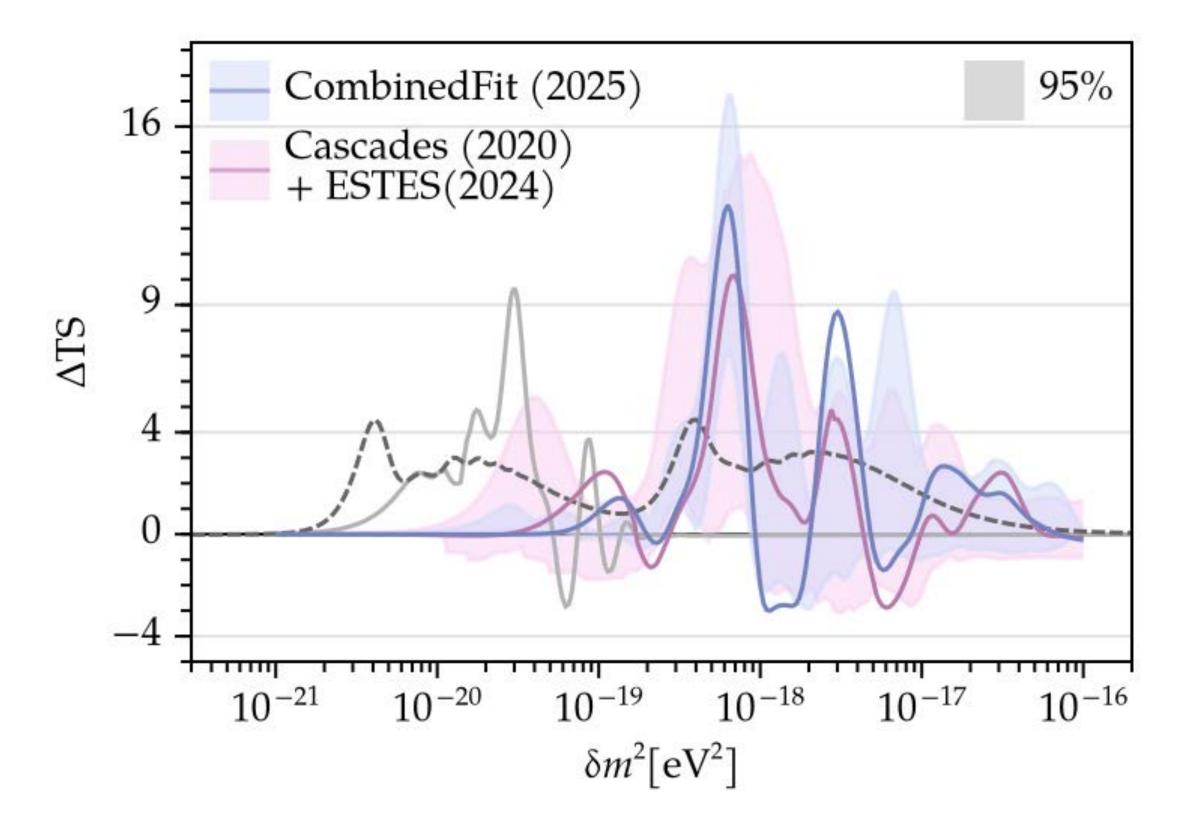
Flavor Ratio		Flux Model	$\phi \delta m_1^2 [{ m eV}^2]$	$\delta m_2^2 [{ m eV}^2]$	$\delta m_3^2 [{ m eV}^2]$	TS	dof	p-value
Pion decay	(1,2,0)	BPL	null	null	null	25.06	14	3.39%
Muon-damped	(0,1,0)	BPL	null	null	null	32.52	14	0.34%
Neutron dom.	(1,0,0)	BPL	null	null	null	33.35	14	0.26%
Pion decay	(1,2,0)	BPL	2.0×10^{-19}	5.6×10^{-18}	$=\delta m_2^2$	20.00	12	6.71%
Muon-damped	(0,1,0)	BPL	2.5×10^{-20}	$=\delta m_1^2$	5.6×10^{-18}	27.12	12	0.74%
Neutron dom.		BPL	6.3×10^{-18}	1.0×10^{-21}	$=\delta m_2^2$	25.63	12	1.21%

TABLE III. Best fit parameters for fits assuming two distinct mass-squared differences. These results are based on the combined Cascades and ESTES flux points, and use the SFRD [55] for the source redshift distribution $\rho(z)$.

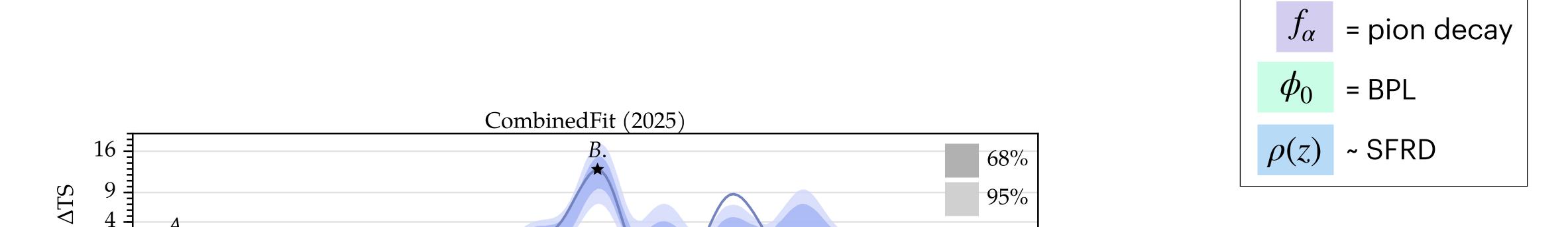






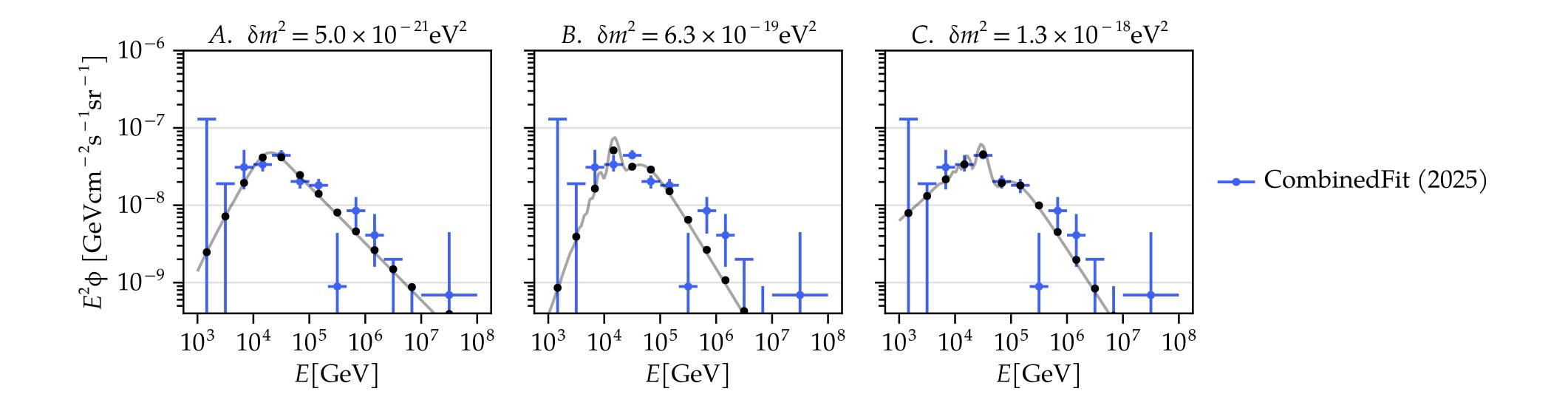


Constraints based on the *CombinedFit* measurements are consistent with those using *Cascades* and *ESTES*.



 10^{-17}

 10^{-16}

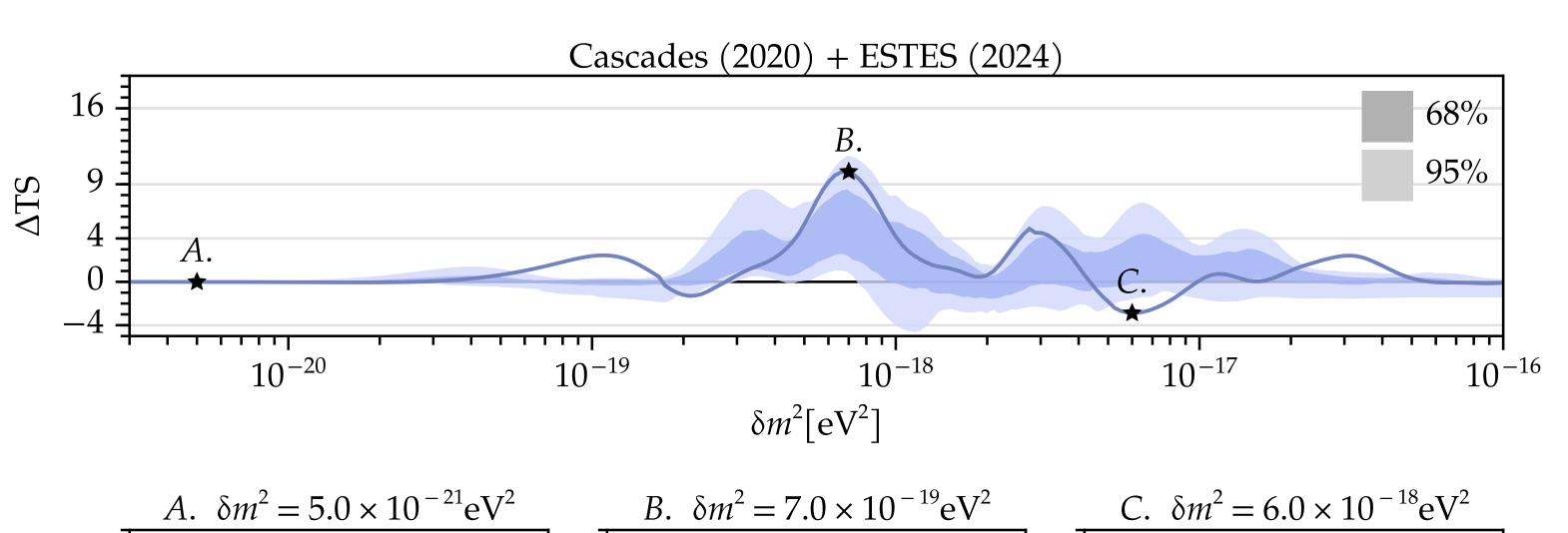


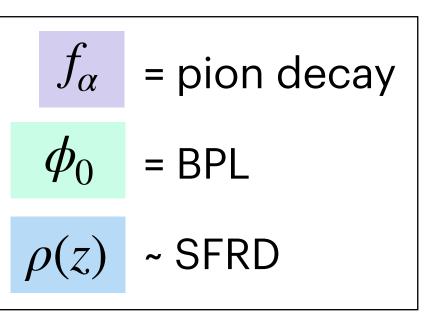
 10^{-18}

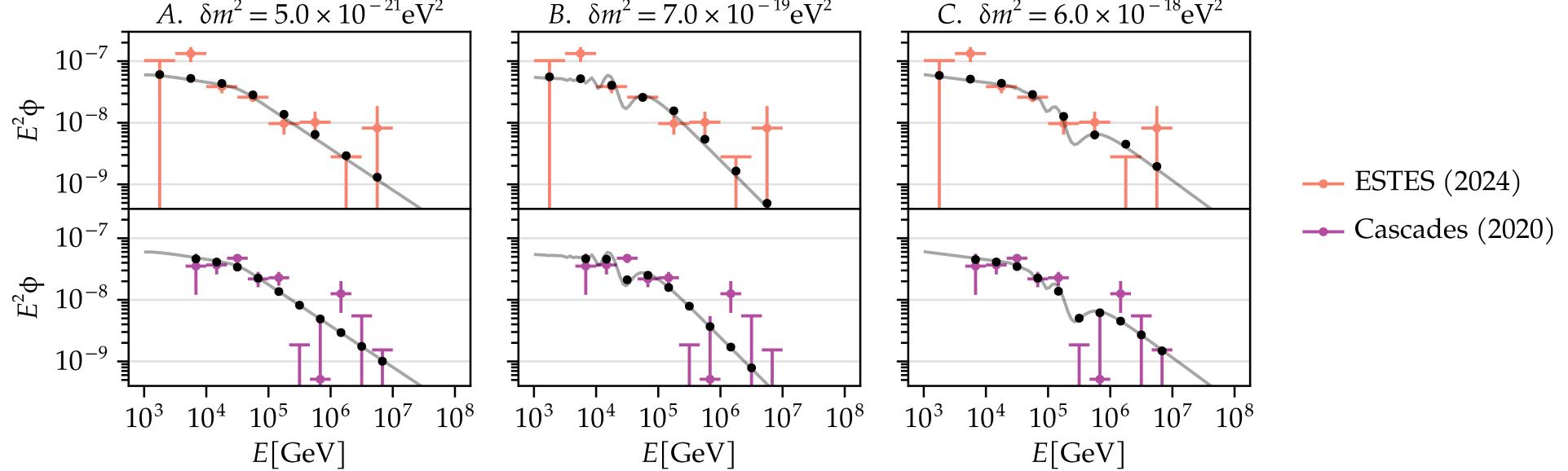
 $\delta m^2 [\text{eV}^2]$

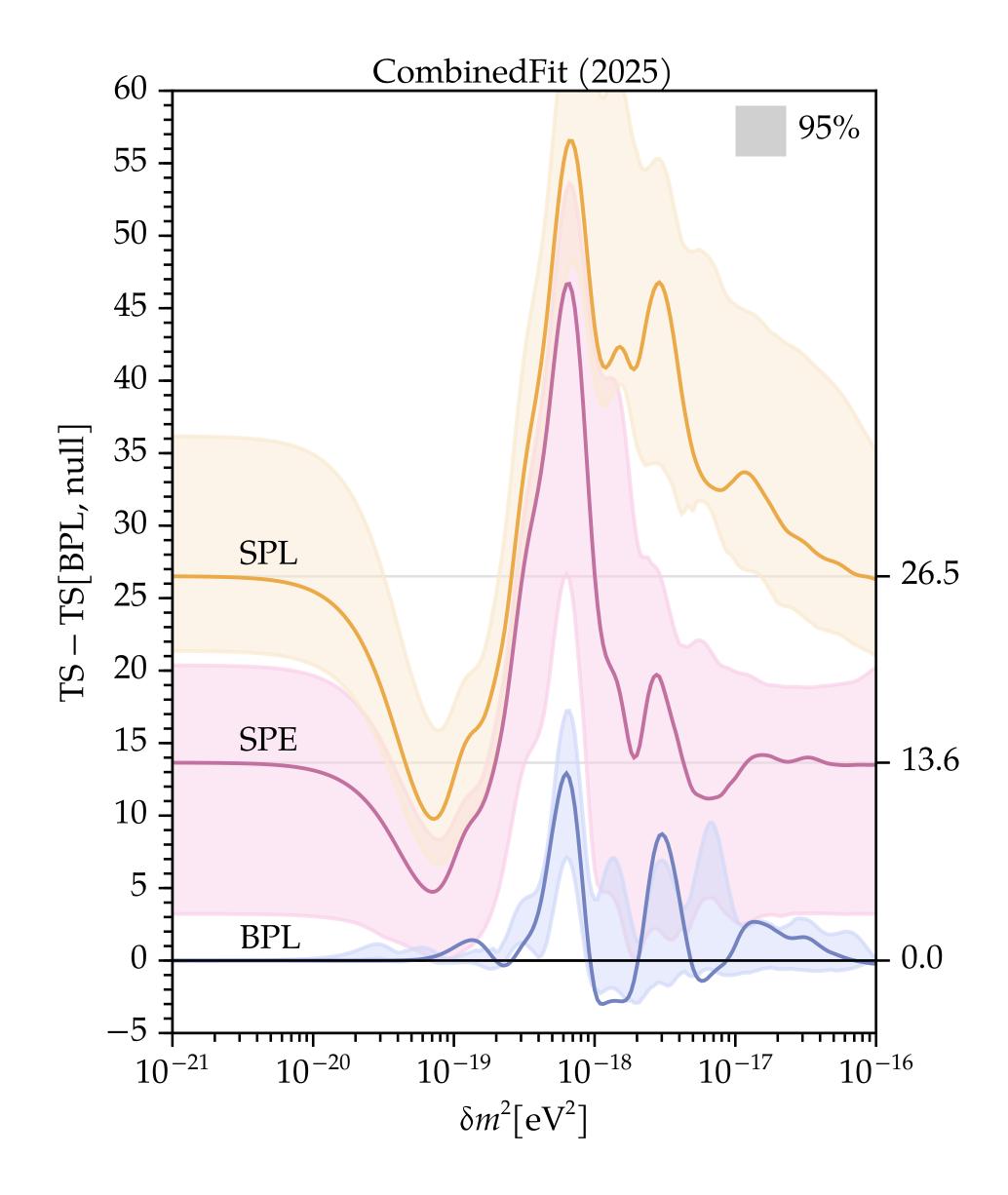
 10^{-19}

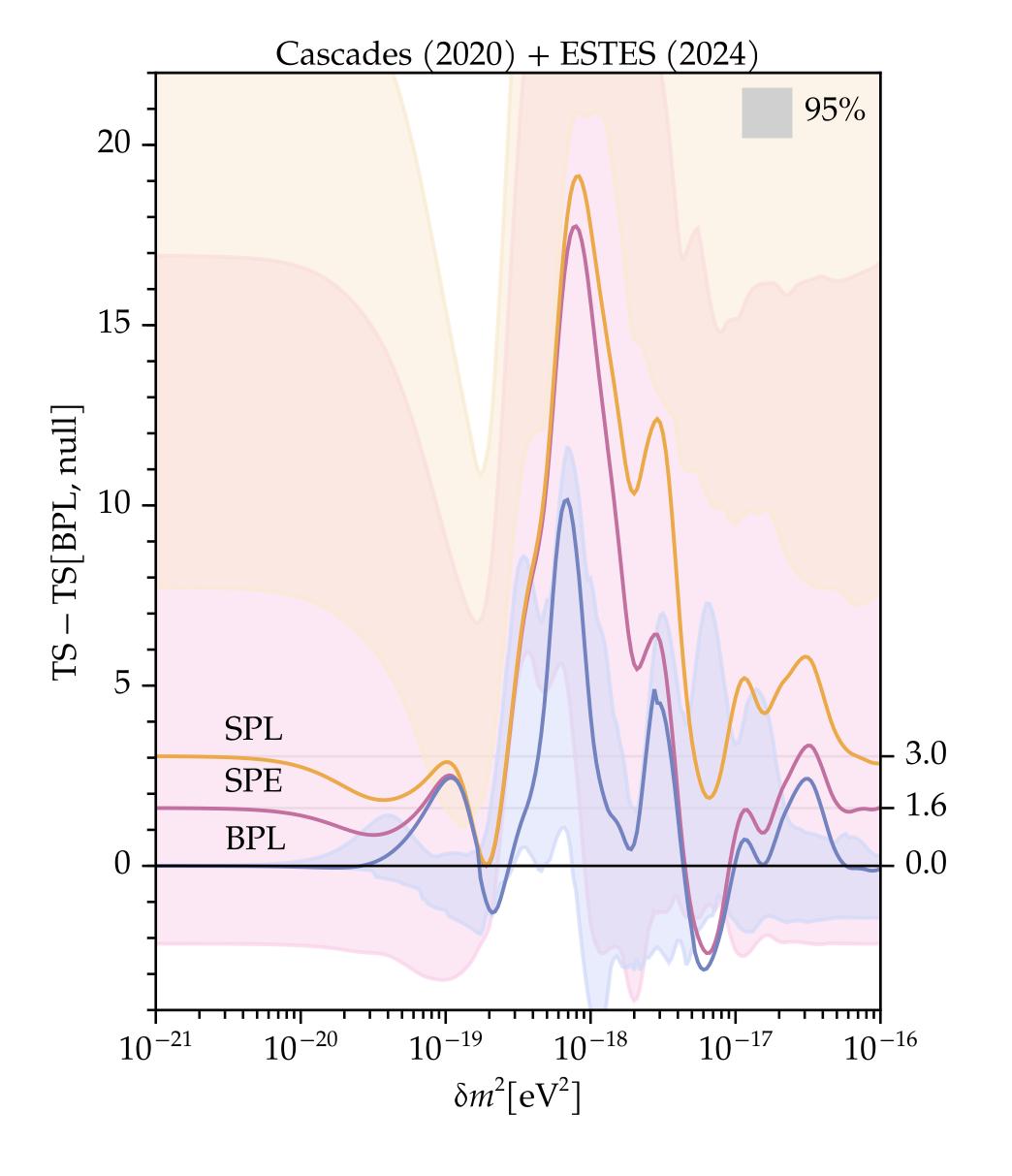
 10^{-20}











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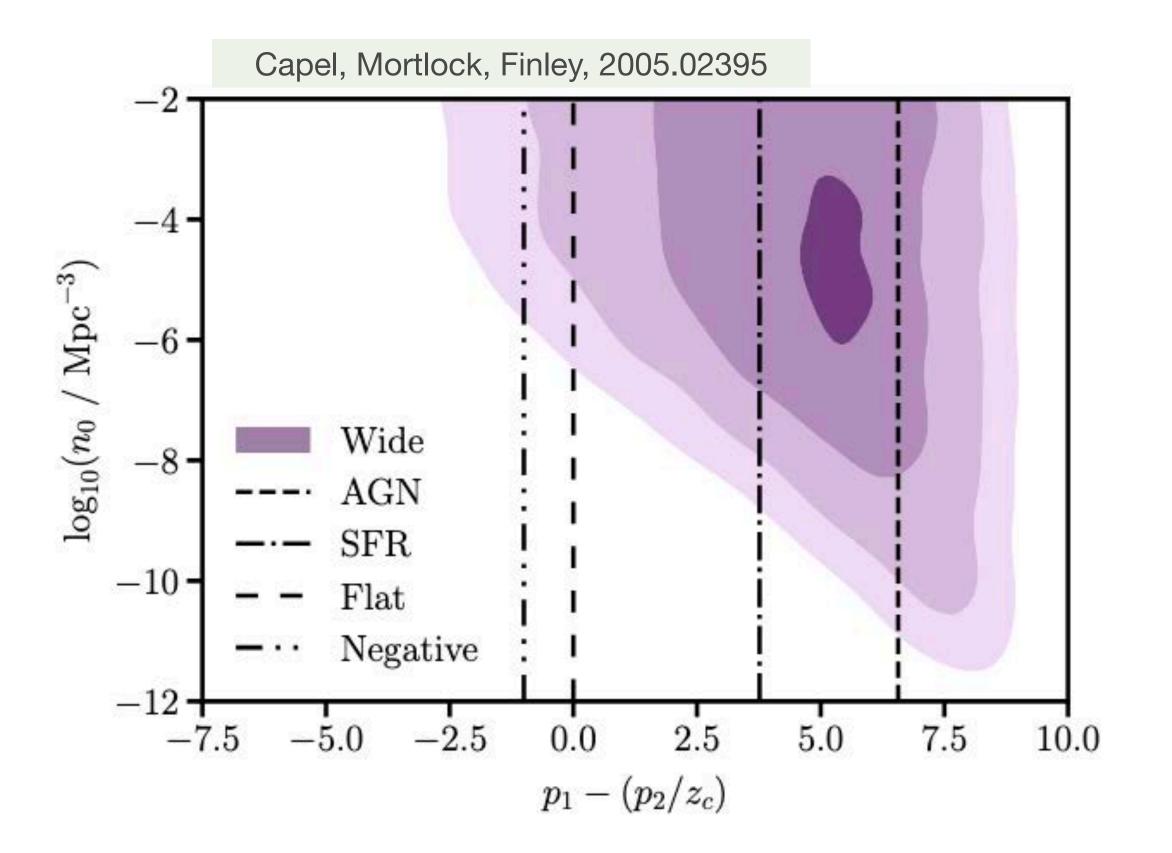
Fit	Sample	Flux Model					
		SPL	γ	ϕ_0			
IceCube	Cascades		$2.53^{+0.07}_{-0.07}$	$1.66^{+0.25}_{-0.27}$			
This work	Cascades		2.41	1.95			
IceCube	ESTES		$2.58^{+0.1}_{-0.09}$	$1.68^{+0.19}_{-0.22}$			
This work	ESTES		2.57	1.60			
IceCube	CombinedFit		$2.52^{+0.036}_{-0.038}$	$1.8^{+0.13}_{-0.16}$			
This work	CombinedFit		2.35	1.83			
		SPE	γ	ϕ_0	$\log_{10} E_{\mathrm{cut}}$		
IceCube	Cascades		$2.45^{+0.09}_{-0.11}$	$1.83^{+0.37}_{-0.31}$	$6.4^{+0.9}_{-0.4}$		
This work	Cascades		2.30	2.41	6.29		
IceCube	CombinedFit		$2.386^{+0.081}_{-0.09}$	$2.2^{+0.3}_{-0.25}$	$6.15^{+0.37}_{-0.24}$		
This work	CombinedFit		2.19		5.99		
		BPL	ϕ_0	$\log_{10} E_{\mathrm{break}}$	γ_1	γ_2	
IceCube	Cascades		$1.71^{+0.65}_{-0.29}$	$4.6^{+0.5}_{-0.2}$	$2.11^{+0.29}_{-0.67}$	$2.75^{+0.29}_{-0.14}$	
This work	Cascades		2.15	4.42	1.52	2.67	
IceCube	ESTES		$1.70^{+0.19}_{-0.22}$	4.36	$2.79_{-0.5}^{+0.3}$	$2.52^{+0.1}_{-0.09}$	
This work	ESTES		1.51	4.67	2.46	2.72	
IceCube	CombinedFit		$1.77^{+0.19}_{-0.18}$	$4.39^{+0.1}_{-0.1}$	$1.31^{+0.51}_{-1.3}$	$2.735^{+0.067}_{-0.075}$	
This work	CombinedFit		1.75	4.36	1.25	2.74	

SUPPL. TABLE IV. Compatibility with IceCube results Best-fit parameters obtain in our analysis compared with IceCube published values and their uncertainties.

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The non-observation of point sources requires sources to be very dim and dense if you assume flat evolution

— see Capel et. al. (2017).



How do neutrinos acquire mass?

We could write down a Yukawa coupling to a right-handed neutrino...

$$\mathcal{L}_{\nu-\text{mass}} = -m_D \overline{\nu}_R \nu_L + m_R \nu_R^T C^{\dagger} \nu_R + \text{H.c.}$$

$$= N_L^T C^{\dagger} \begin{bmatrix} 0 & m_D \\ m_D & m_R \end{bmatrix} N_L$$

In the QD limit, $m_D \gg m_R$, the 1-dimensional eigensystem is:

$$\begin{bmatrix} \nu_L \\ \nu_R^C \end{bmatrix} = R_\theta \begin{bmatrix} \nu^+ \\ \nu^- \end{bmatrix} \qquad m_\pm = m_D (1 \pm m_R/m_D) \quad \text{tiny mass-squared difference} \\ \tan 2\theta = 2m_D/m_R \gg 1 \qquad \text{maximal mixing}$$

The 3D system is approximately equal to three copies of the 1D system; the mixing between mass generations (PMNS) are unchanged!

QD-nos undergo very long baseline oscillations between the sterile and active states:

$$P_{\alpha \to \beta} = \left| \hat{V} \exp(i\hat{M}^2/2Et) \hat{V}^{\dagger} \right|_{\beta \alpha}^{2}$$

$$= \sum_{i} |U_{\alpha j}|^{2} |U_{\beta j}|^{2} \cos^{2} \left(\delta m_{j}^{2} L/4E \right) + \sum_{i>i} \operatorname{Re} \left[\exp[i\Delta m_{ij}^{2} L/2E] \times \dots \right]$$

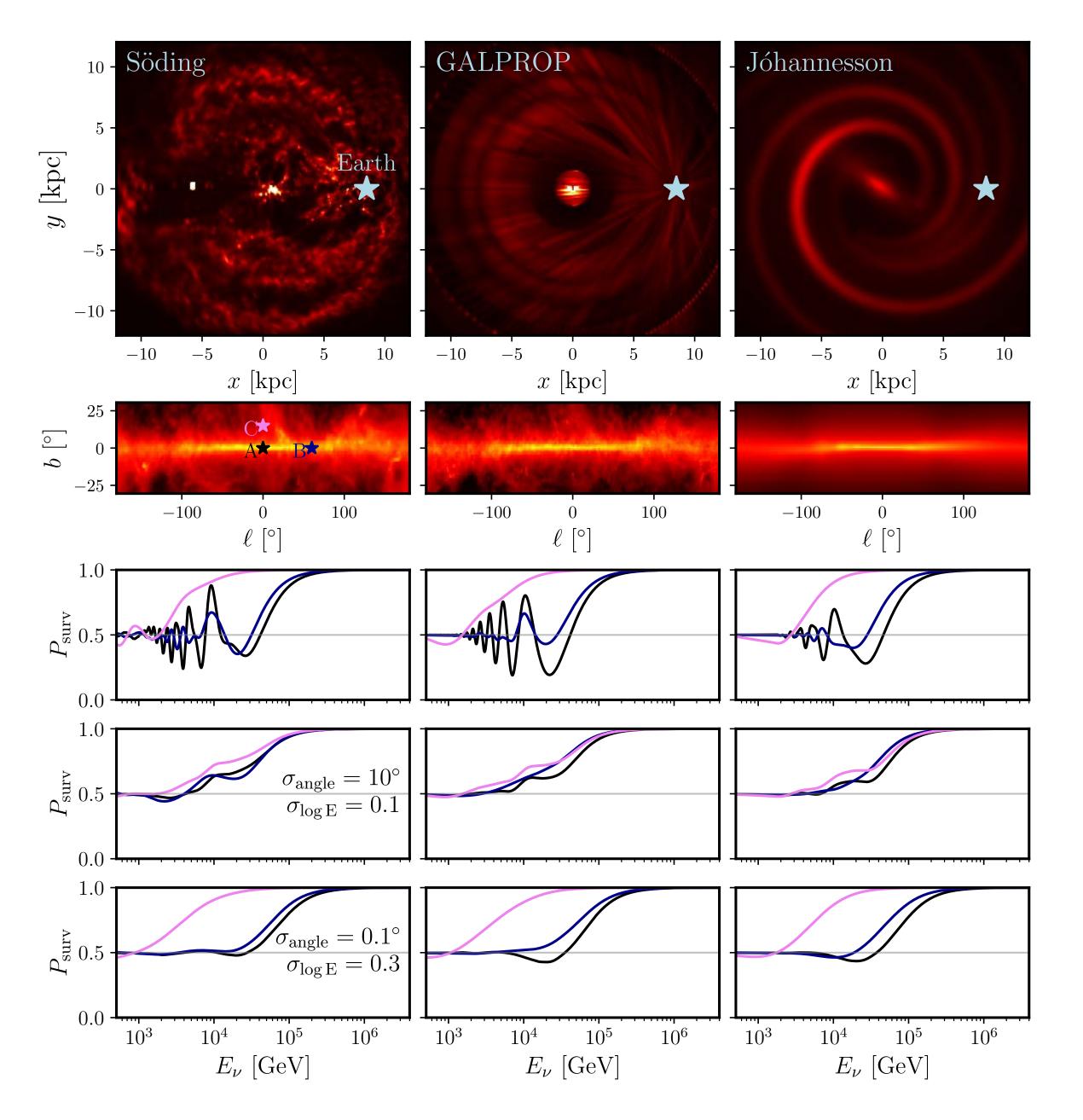
Quasi-Dirac oscillations are not washed out by extragalactic baselines. This is because the coherence length is

$$\begin{split} L_{\rm coh} &= \frac{4\sqrt{2}E^2}{|\delta m_k^2|} \sigma_x \\ &\approx 18 \; {\rm Gpc} \left(\frac{E}{10 \; {\rm TeV}}\right)^2 \left(\frac{10^{-19} \; {\rm eV}^2}{\delta m_k^2}\right) \left(\frac{\sigma_x}{10^{-19} \; {\rm m}}\right). \end{split}$$

Therefore, for benchmark values of 10 TeV and $\delta m_k^2 = 10^{-19} {\rm eV}^2$, the coherence length is comparable to the radius of the observable universe, even for wavepacket sizes $\sigma_x \sim 10^{-19} {\rm m}$, orders of magnitude smaller than the smallest wave packets typically considered.

Differences in oscillation pattern become negligible after accounting for energy resolution:

KM3NeT Events, Perfect Energy Resolution KM3NeT Events, Smeared in Energy $(\ell, b) = (0^{\circ}, 0^{\circ})$ $\delta m^2 = 10^{-13} \text{ eV}^2$ $(\ell, b) = (0^{\circ}, 0^{\circ})$ $\delta m^2 = 10^{-13} \text{ eV}^2$ 10^{-2} Events Null Null 10^{-3} Quasi-Dirac (Jóhannesson) Quasi-Dirac (Jóhannesson) Quasi-Dirac (Mertsch) Quasi-Dirac (Mertsch) 10^{0} 10^{1} 10^{2} 10^{0} 10^{2} 10^{3} 10^{1} 10^{3} E_t [TeV] E_r [TeV]

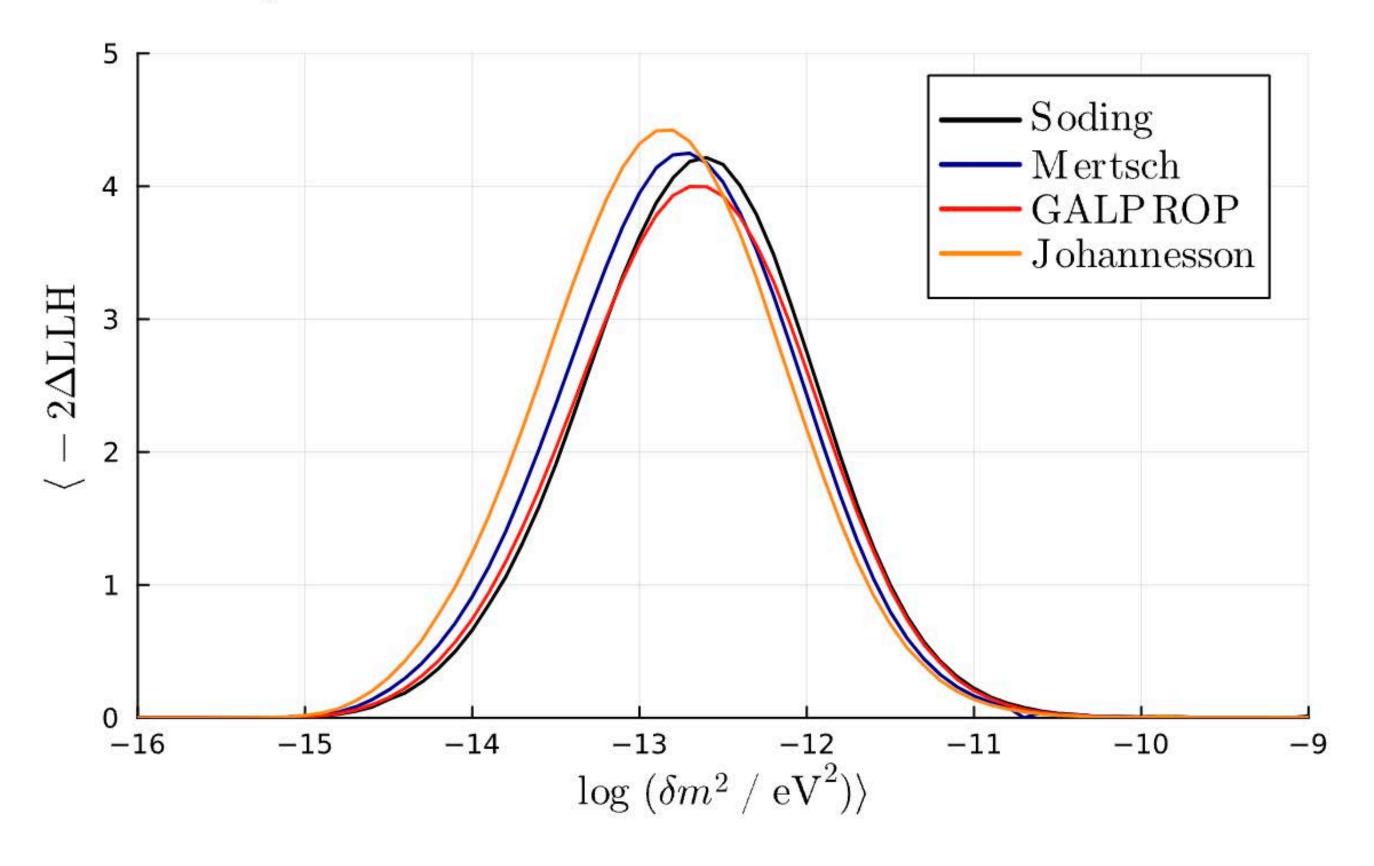


Perfect Resolution

Cascade-like Resolution

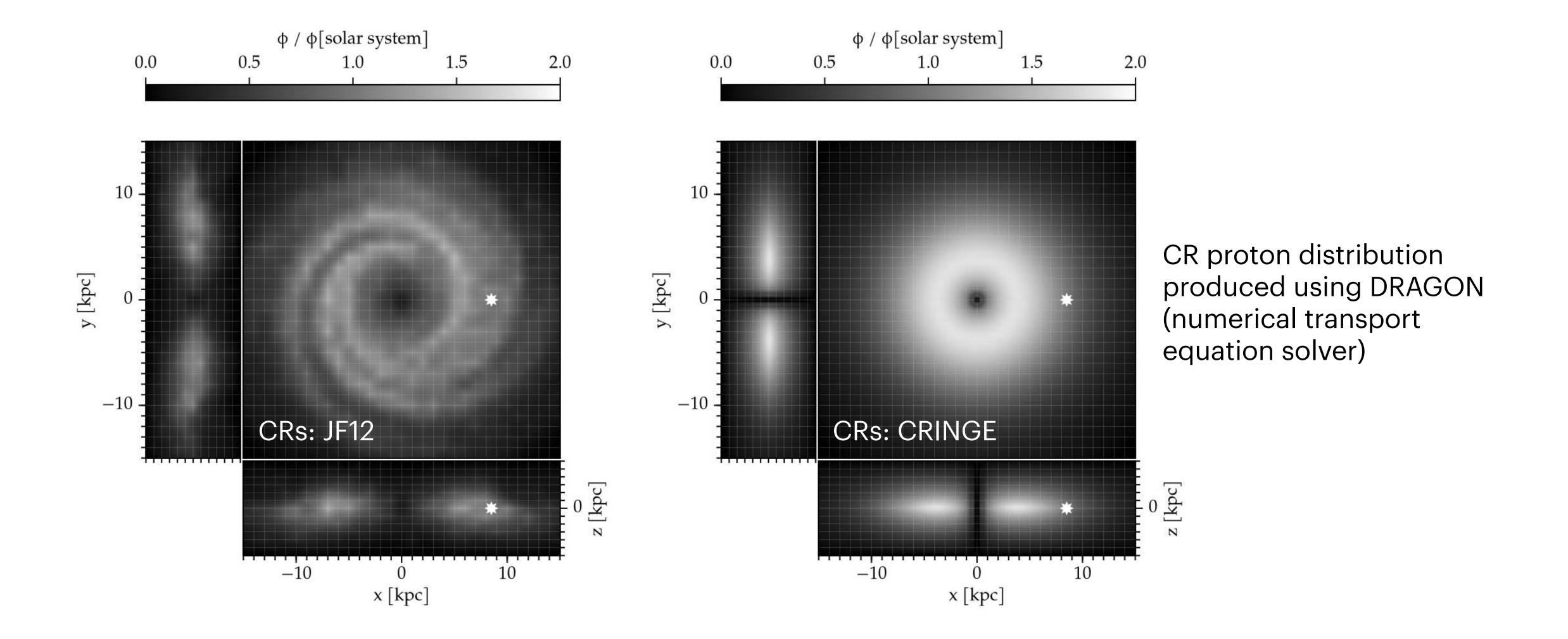
Track-like Resolution

QDino IceCube + KM3NeT 2035 sensitivities

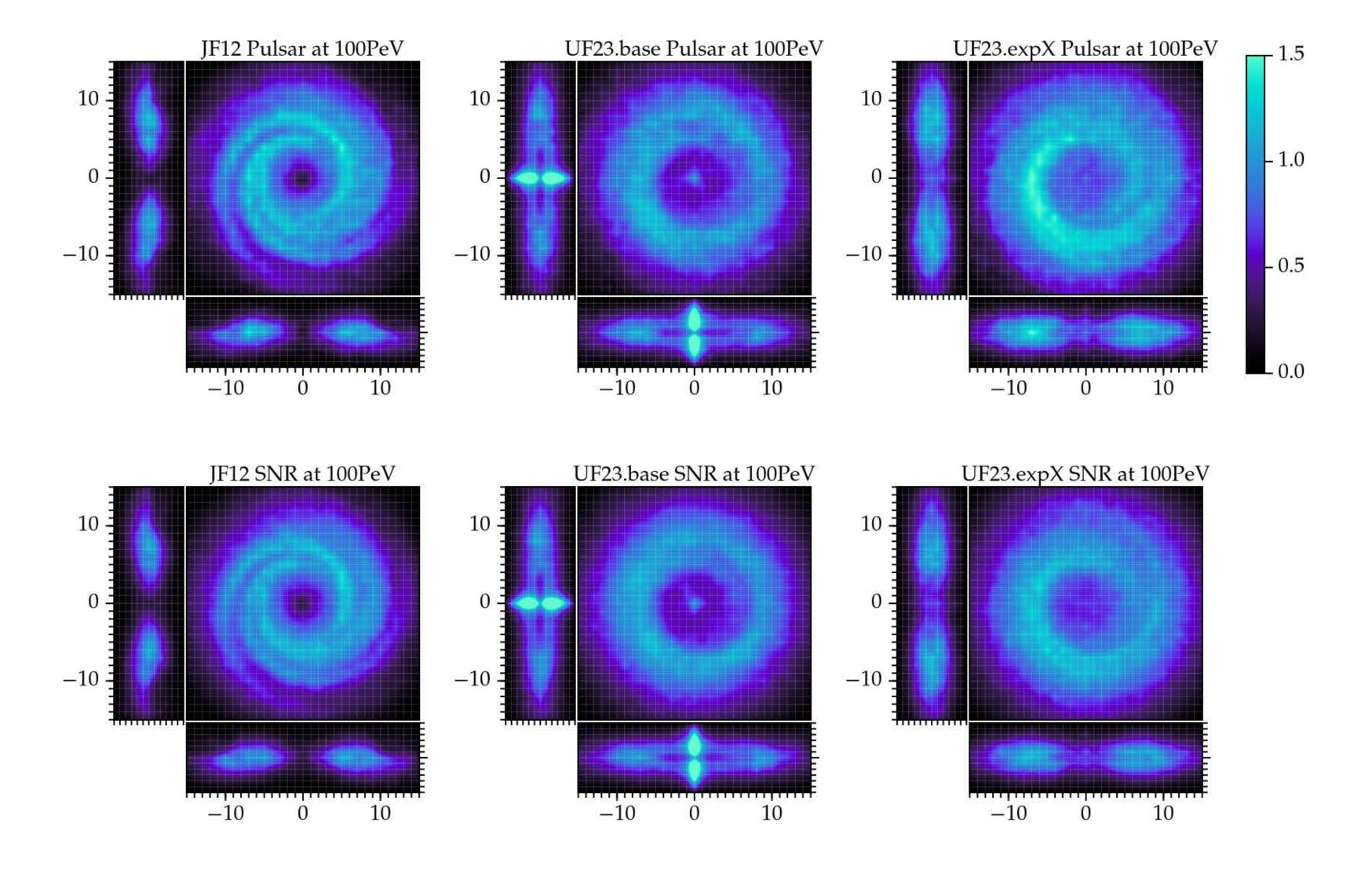


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Changing gas models => slight difference in baselines

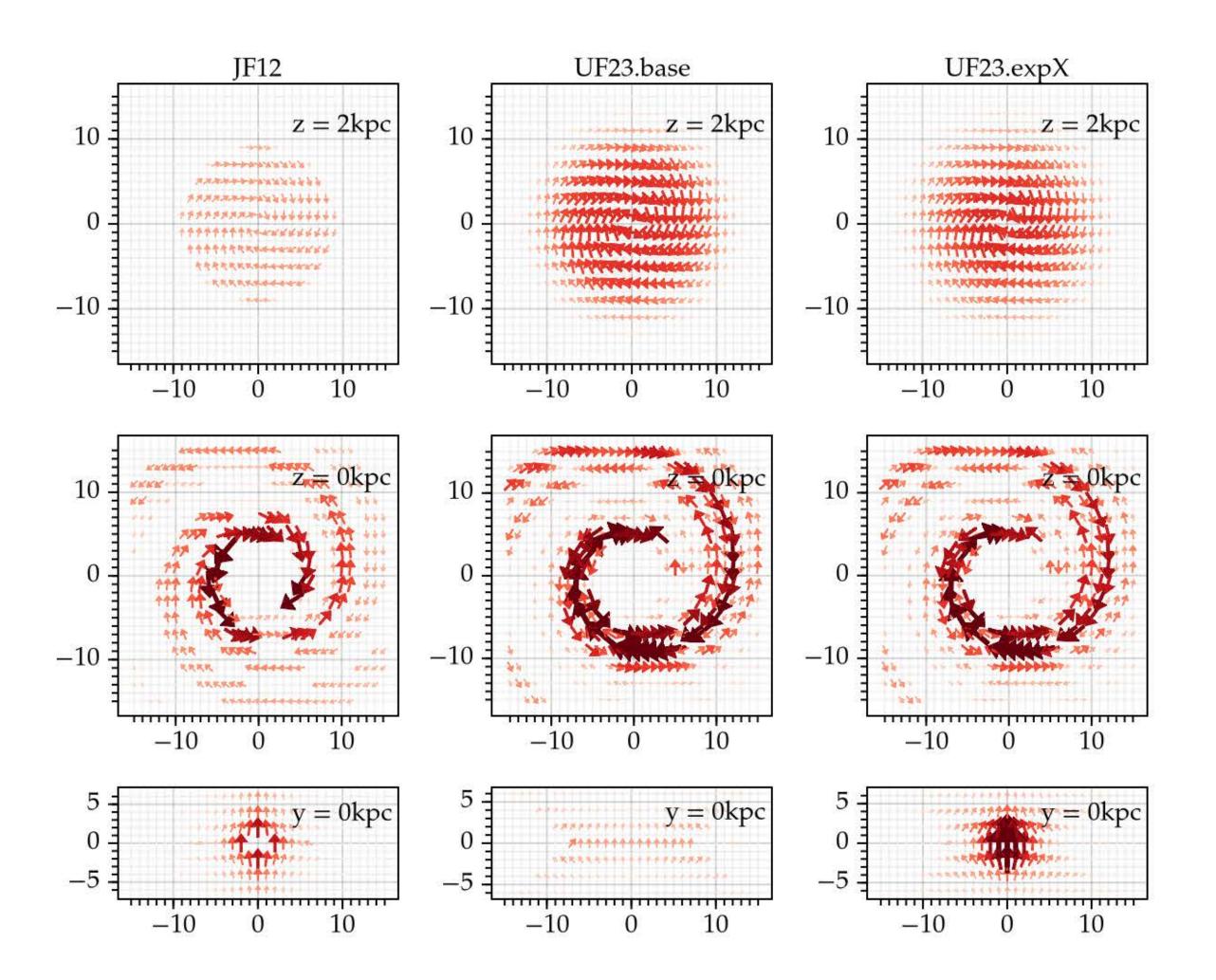


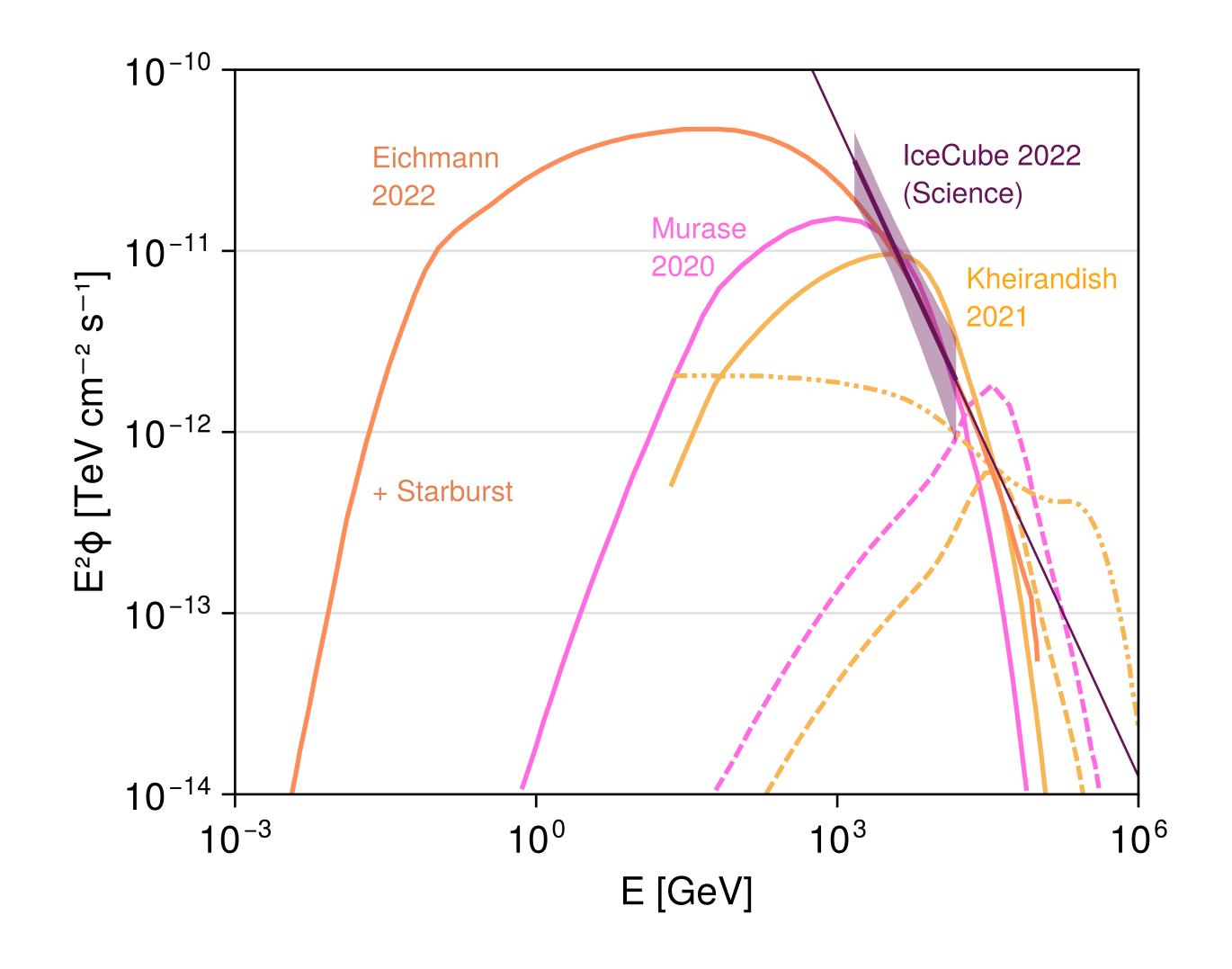
Different B-field models
=> qualitative differences
in CR distributions



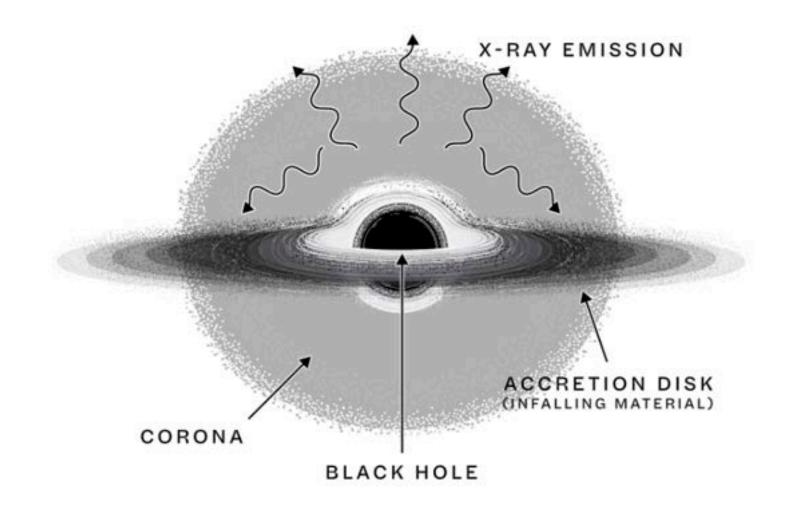
Cosmic rays primarily escape vertically out of the disk into the halo;

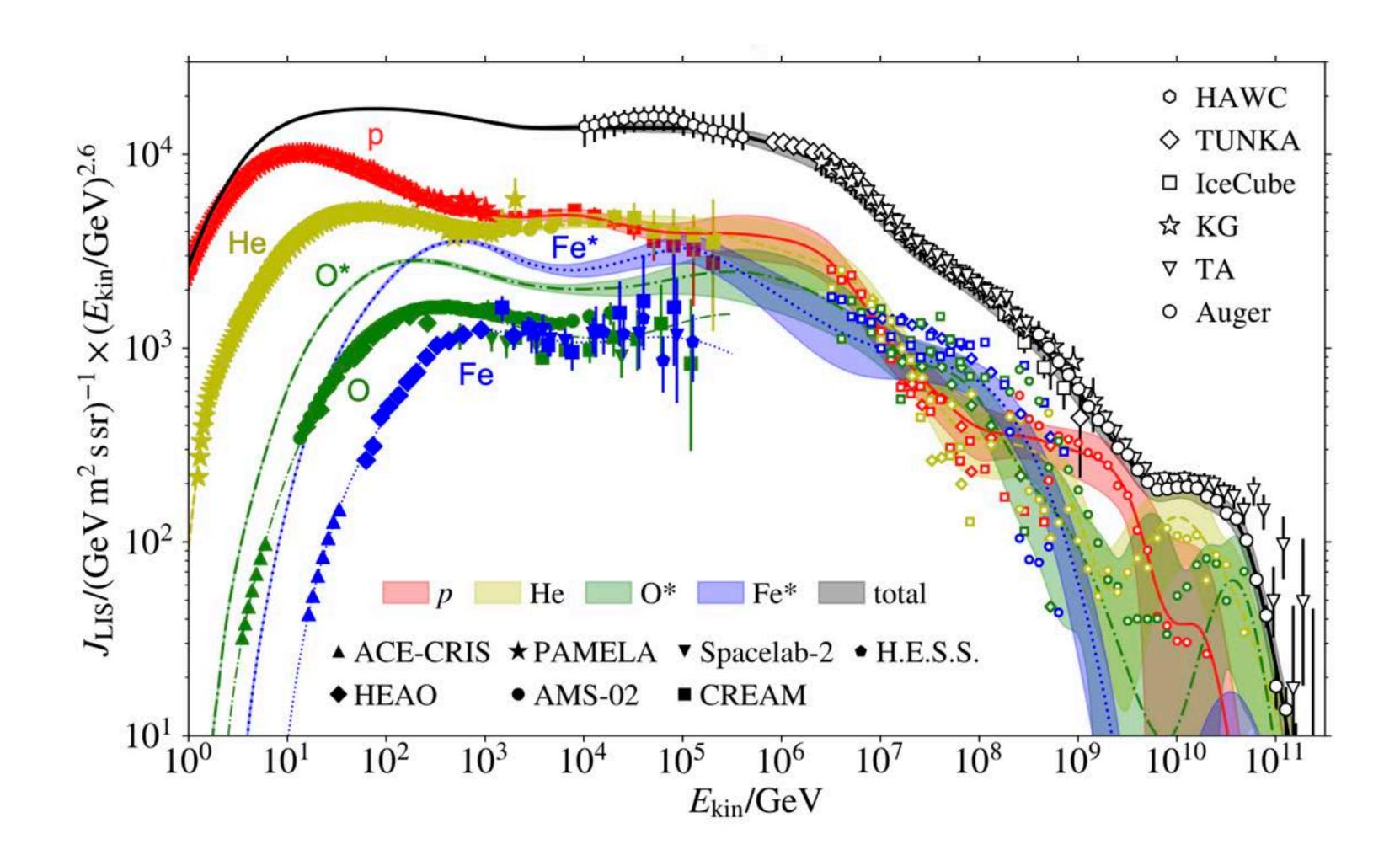
the strength of the B_z component seems to strongly affect the efficiency of vertical diffusion





Disk - Corona model: predicts X-ray and neutrino emission from Seyferts

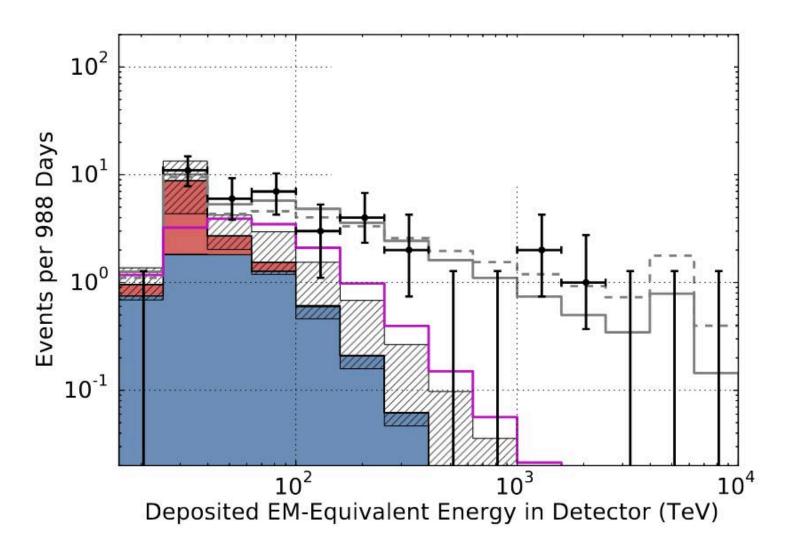




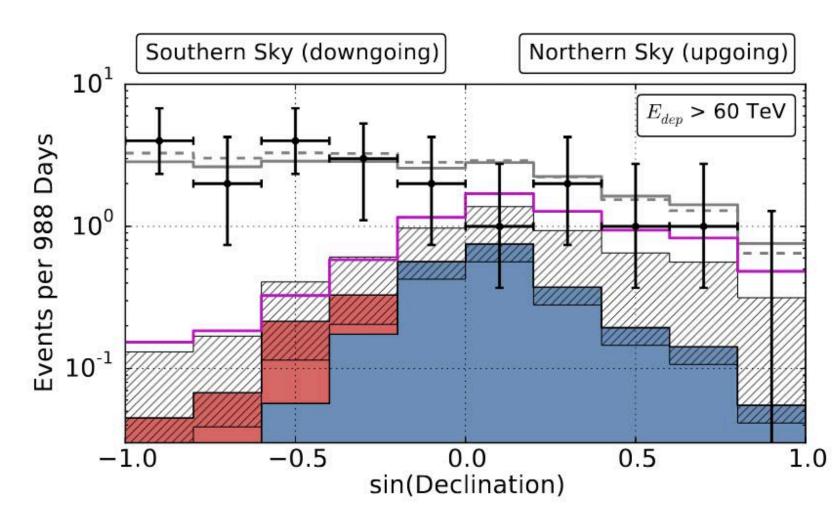
Dembinski at UHECR 2018, based on: Data-driven model of the cosmic-ray flux and composition from 10 GeV to 10^11 GeV, 2017

In 2014, IceCube discovered the "diffuse" astrophysical flux of neutrinos

which emerges over atmospheric backgrounds at high energies > 100TeV



downgoing atmospheric neutrinos are reduced a bit more by the self-veto effect



Background Atmospheric Muon Flux
 Bkg. Atmospheric Neutrinos (π/K)
 Background Uncertainties
 Atmospheric Neutrinos (90% CL Charm Limit)
 Bkg.+Signal Best-Fit Astrophysical (best-fit slope E^{-2.3})
 Bkg.+Signal Best-Fit Astrophysical (fixed slope E⁻²)
 Data