

# Tangent-linear modeling of underwater acoustics

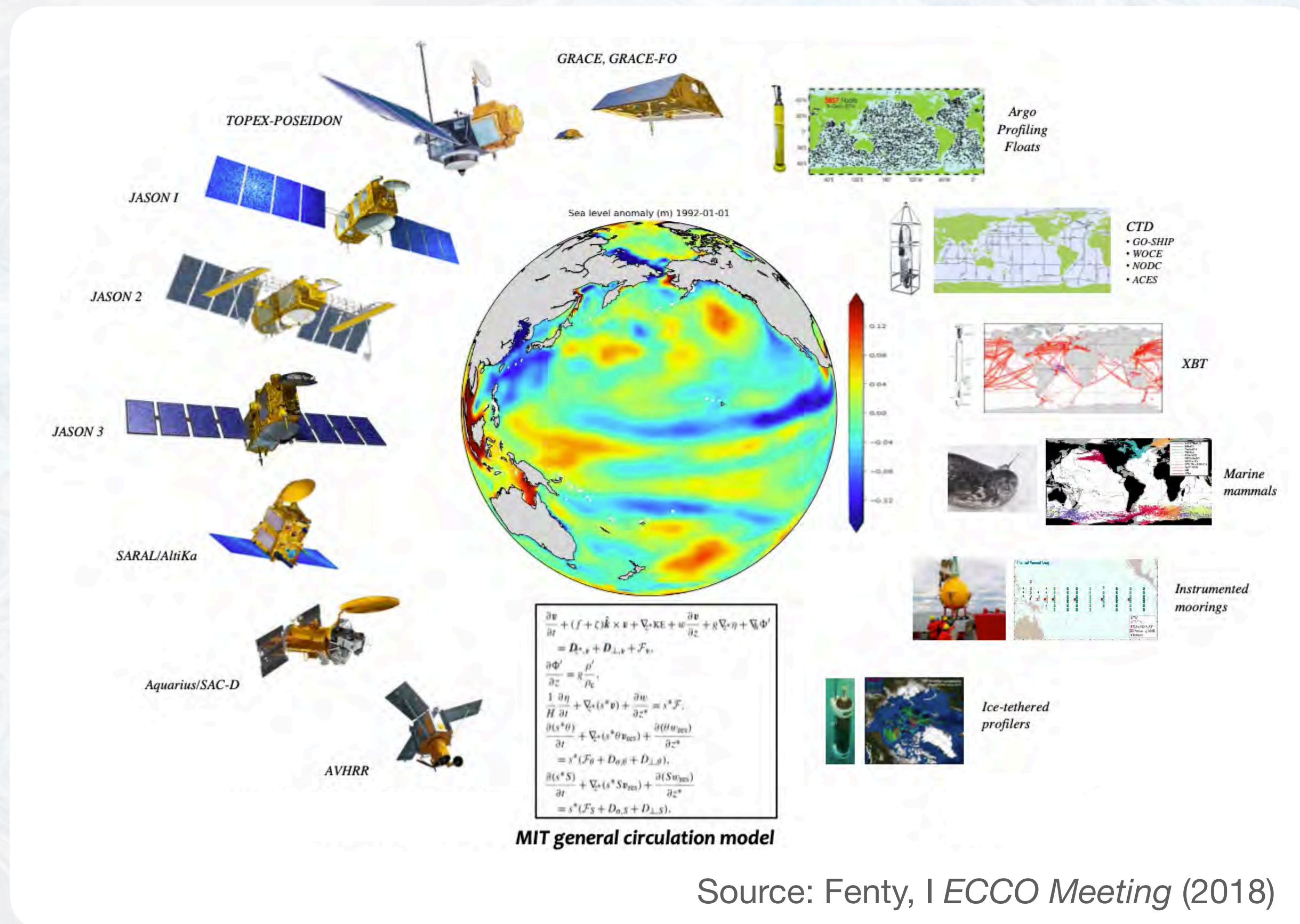
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**ECCO Annual Meeting**

**28 May 2026**  
**Austin, TX**

# Ocean state estimation

Dynamically consistent ocean fields corrected with global observations

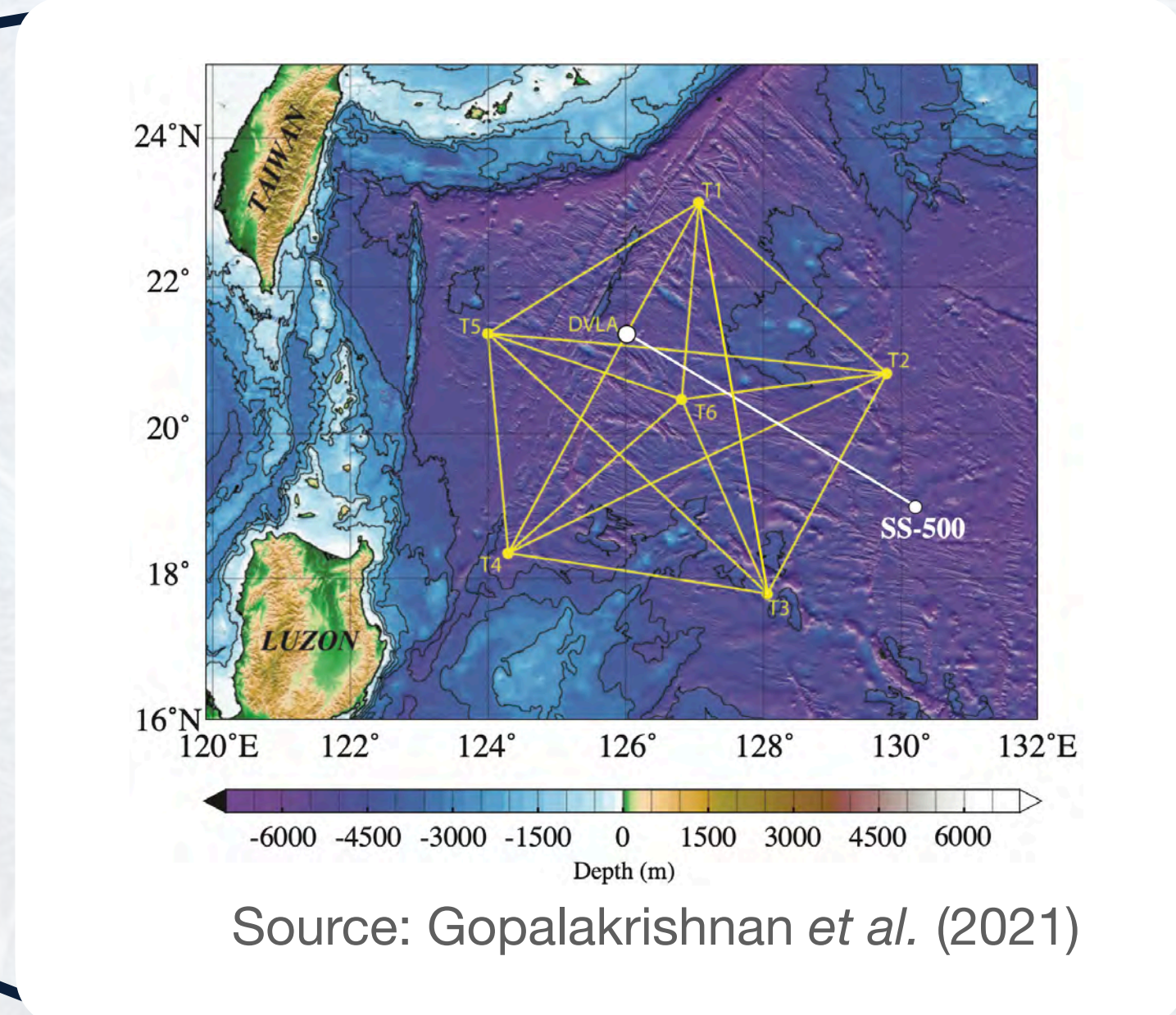
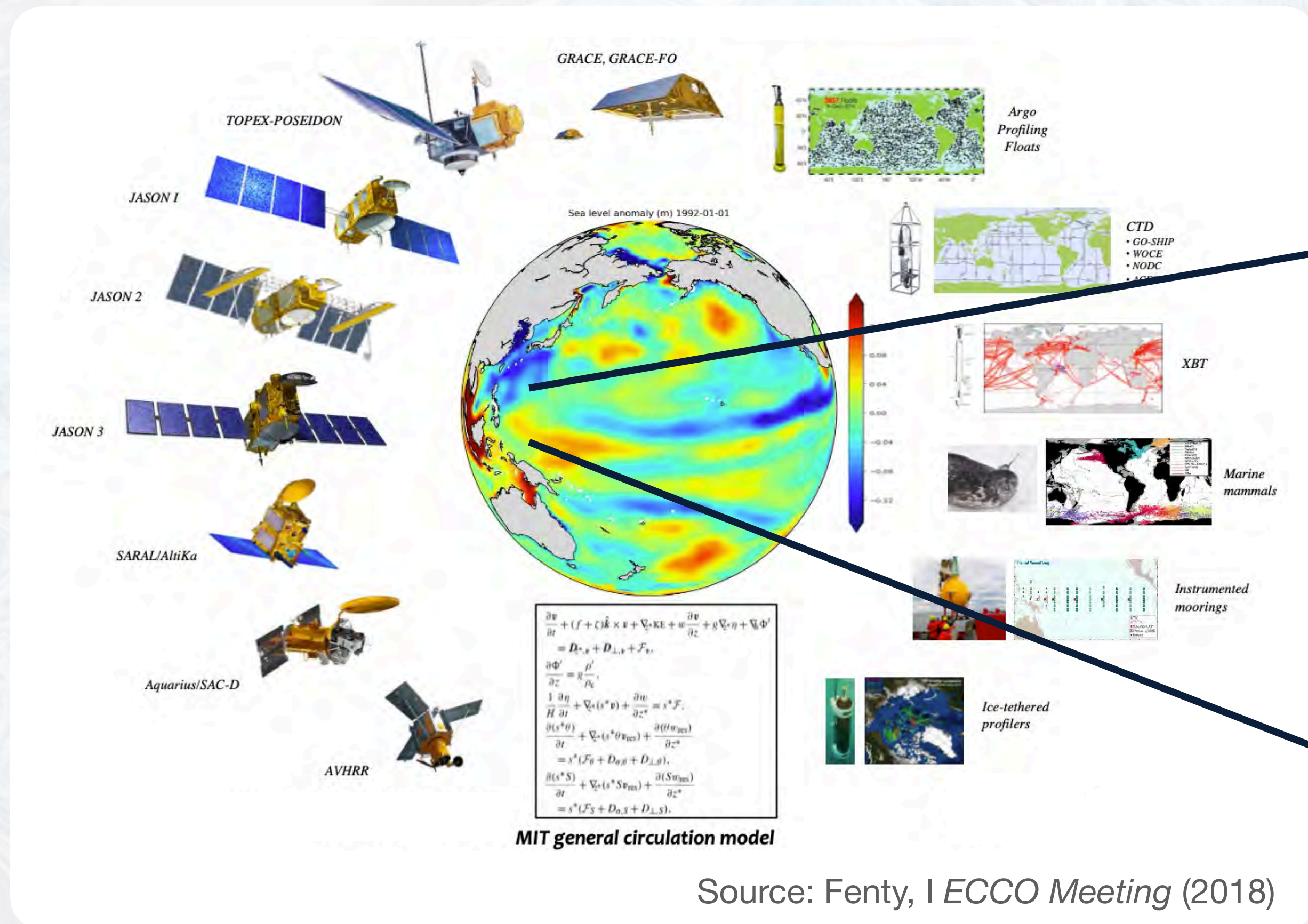


- **Data assimilation** of global ocean circulation synthesizes multiple decades via adjoint modeling
- Observing systems sparsely capture ocean >2 000 meters deep

# Ocean state estimation

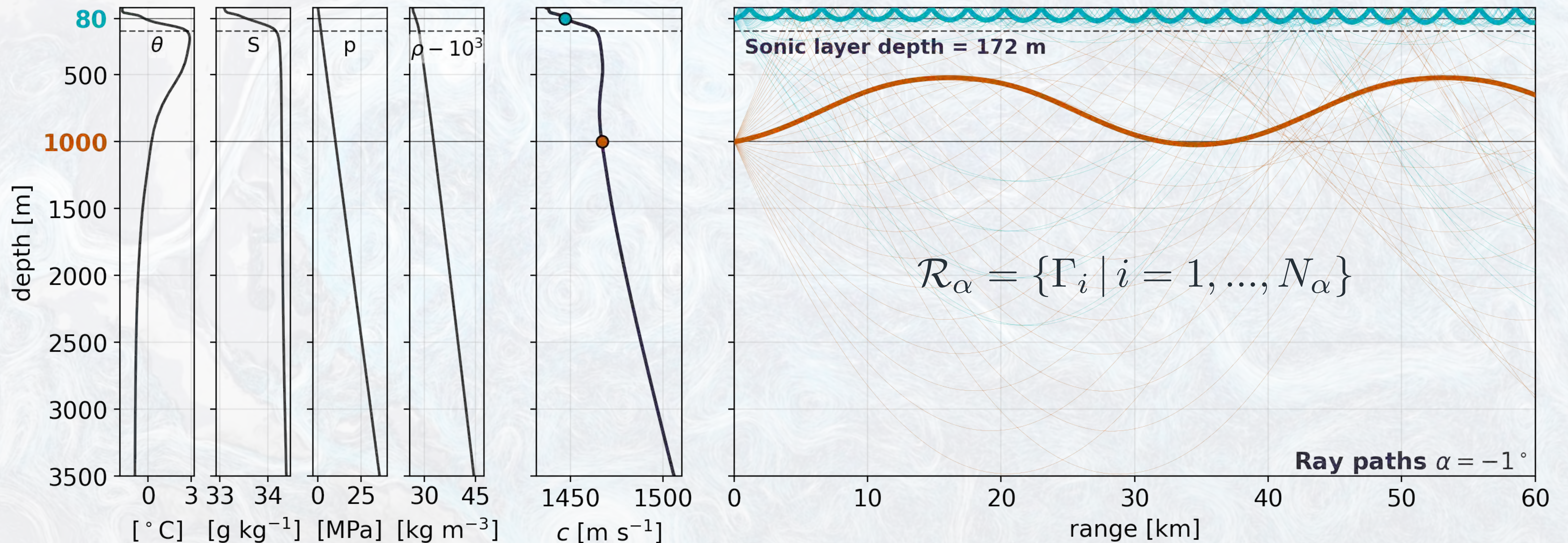
Global observing system coverage is too sparse

Include **underwater sound propagation** to the list of assimilated observing systems



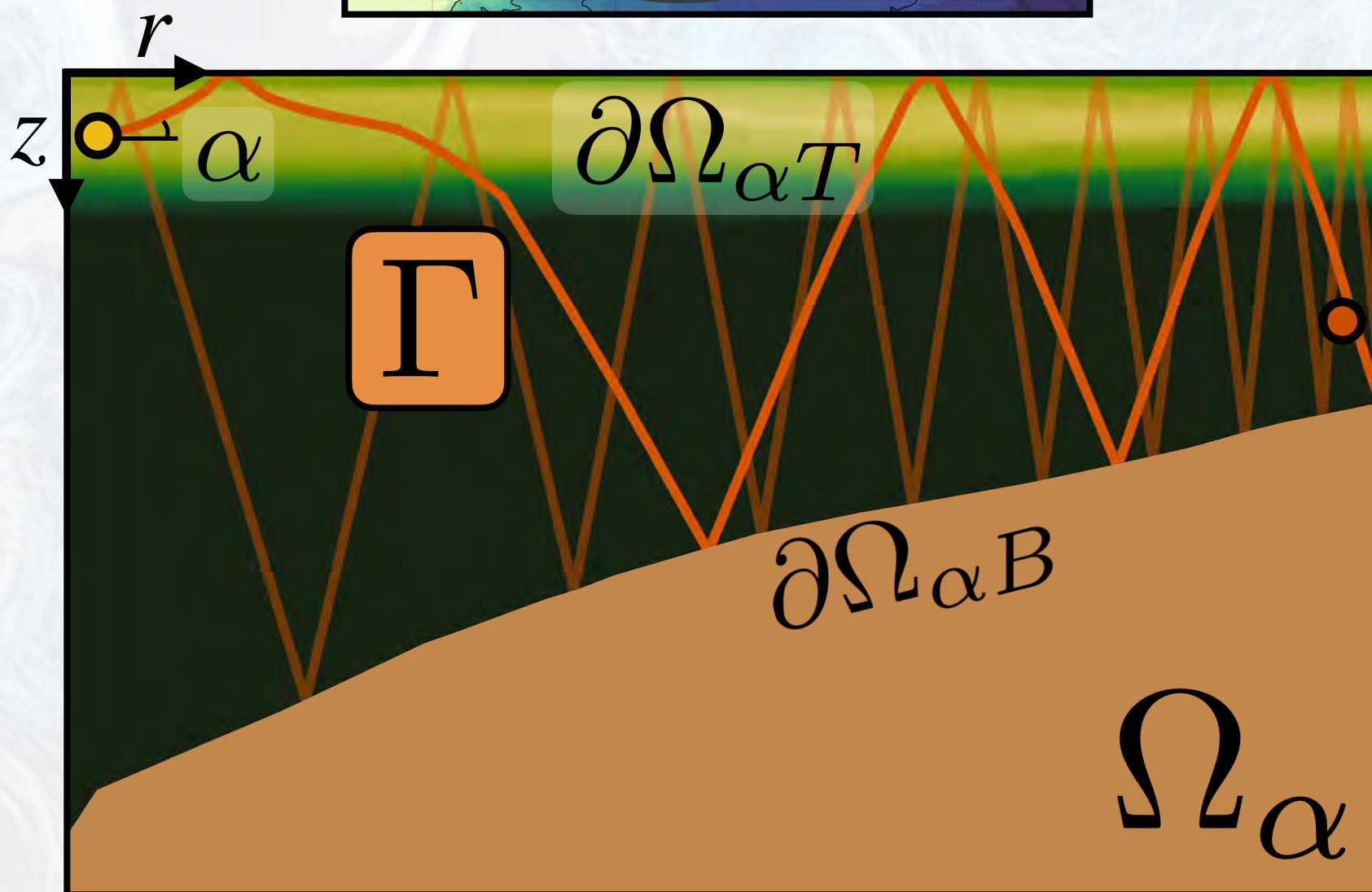
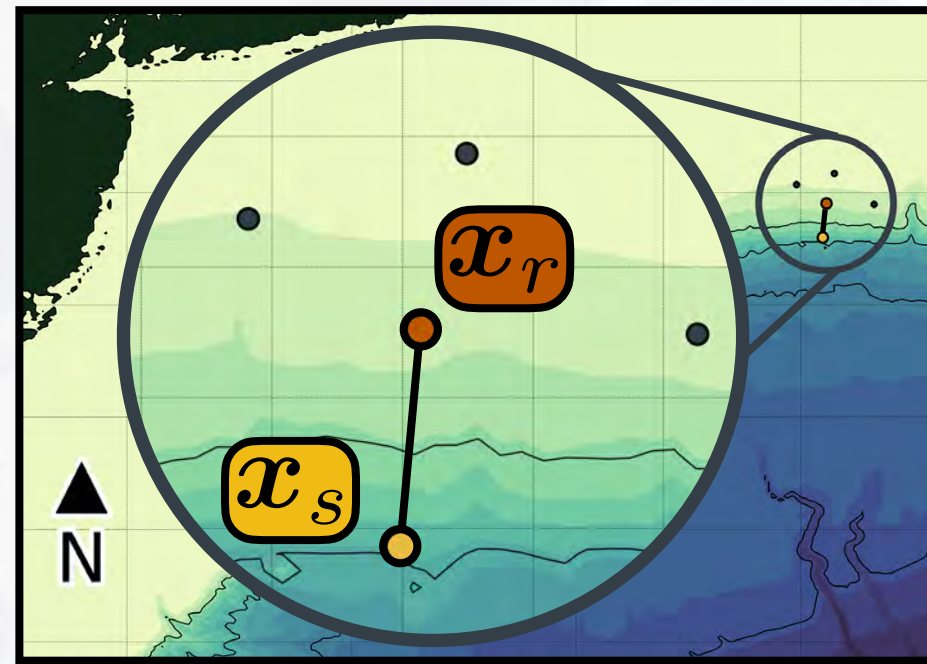
# Sound propagation in oceans

## Two-dimensional ray tracing underwater for two source depths



# Underwater acoustic model

For a single ray path launched in range dependent media



With the acoustic state  $\mathbf{a}(\gamma) = [\mathbf{r}, \tau, \mathbf{q}, \beta]^T$ ,  
let  $f' = df/d\gamma$

$$\mathbf{r}'' = -\nabla c/c$$

$$\tau' = 1/c$$

$$\mathbf{q}' = c\beta$$

$$\beta' = -(\nabla^2 c/c^2)\mathbf{q}$$

$$A = |\mathcal{R}|A \quad \partial\Omega_{\alpha B}$$

$$\mathbf{r}' = \mathcal{T}_B \quad \partial\Omega_{\alpha B}$$

$$\mathbf{r}' = \mathcal{T}_T \quad \partial\Omega_{\alpha T}$$

$$\nabla \mathbf{r} \cdot \mathbf{n} = 0 \quad \partial\Omega_{\alpha R}$$

$$\mathbf{a} = \mathbf{a}_0 \quad \partial\Omega_{\alpha S}$$

$$\mathbf{r}' = \mathcal{T}_0 \quad \partial\Omega_{\alpha S}$$

# Eigenray identification

## Geometric beam spreading with hat-shaped decay

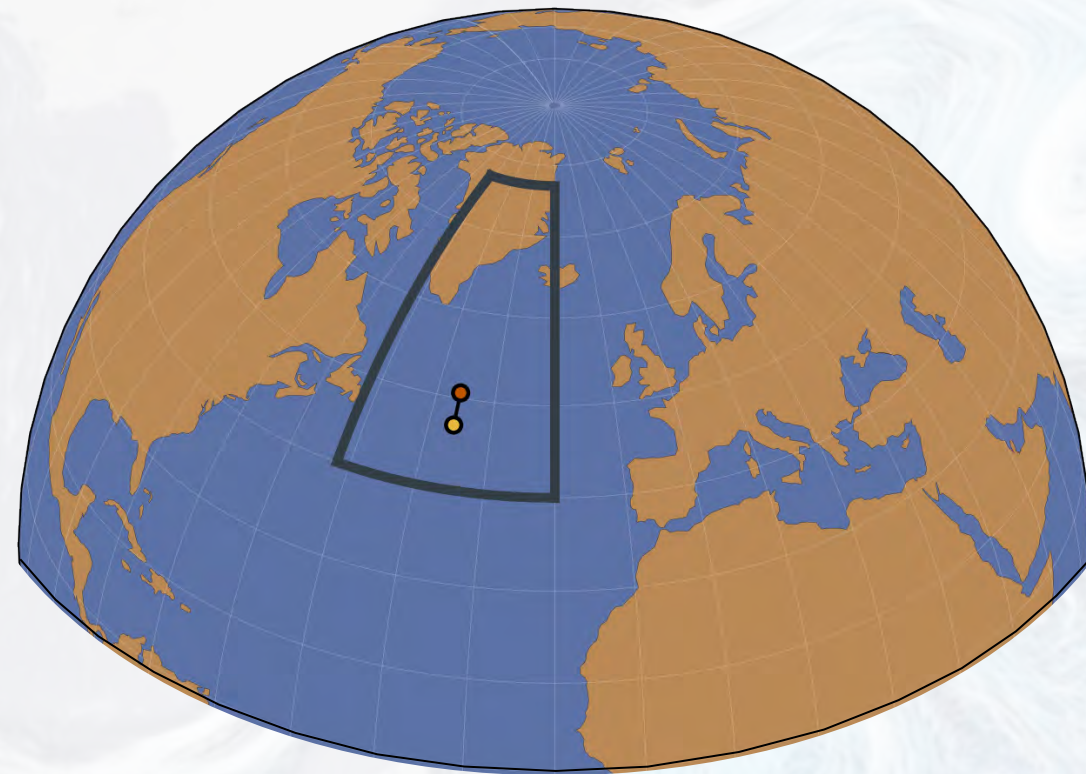
- A subset family of rays are found at a given receiver position  $\mathbf{r}_r$  by smearing functions over the beam halfwidth  $W(\gamma) = |q(\gamma)\delta\alpha|$ ,

$$\nu(\gamma) = \begin{cases} \frac{W(\gamma) - |\mathbf{n}(\gamma) \cdot \mathbf{r}_r|}{W(\gamma)} & \text{for } |\mathbf{n} \cdot \mathbf{r}_r| \leq W, \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

- Tapered pressure amplitude is found for each eigenray arrival,  $A_{\text{arr}} = A\nu$

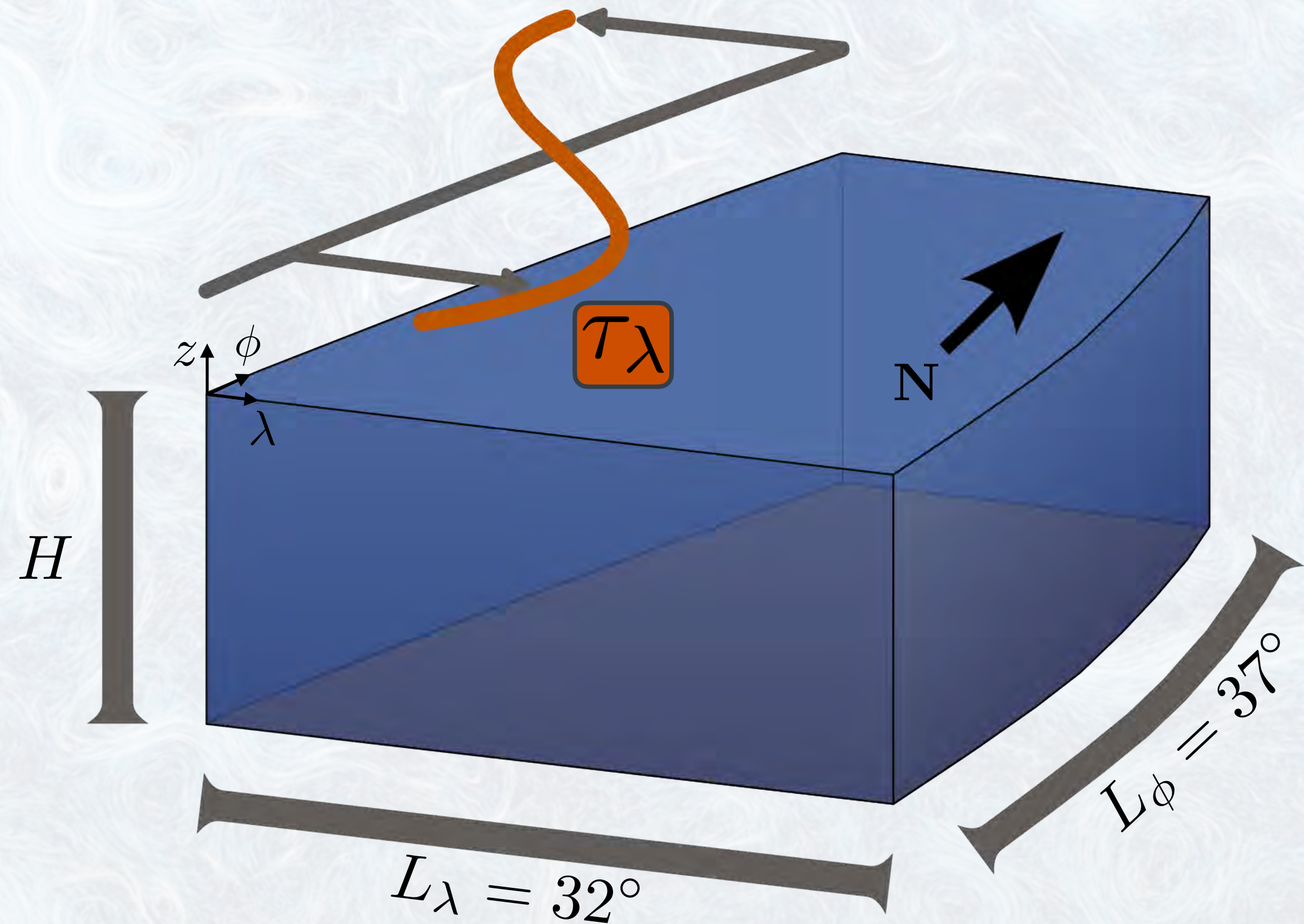
# Subpolar gyre basin

Idealized single gyre with 100 discrete depth levels



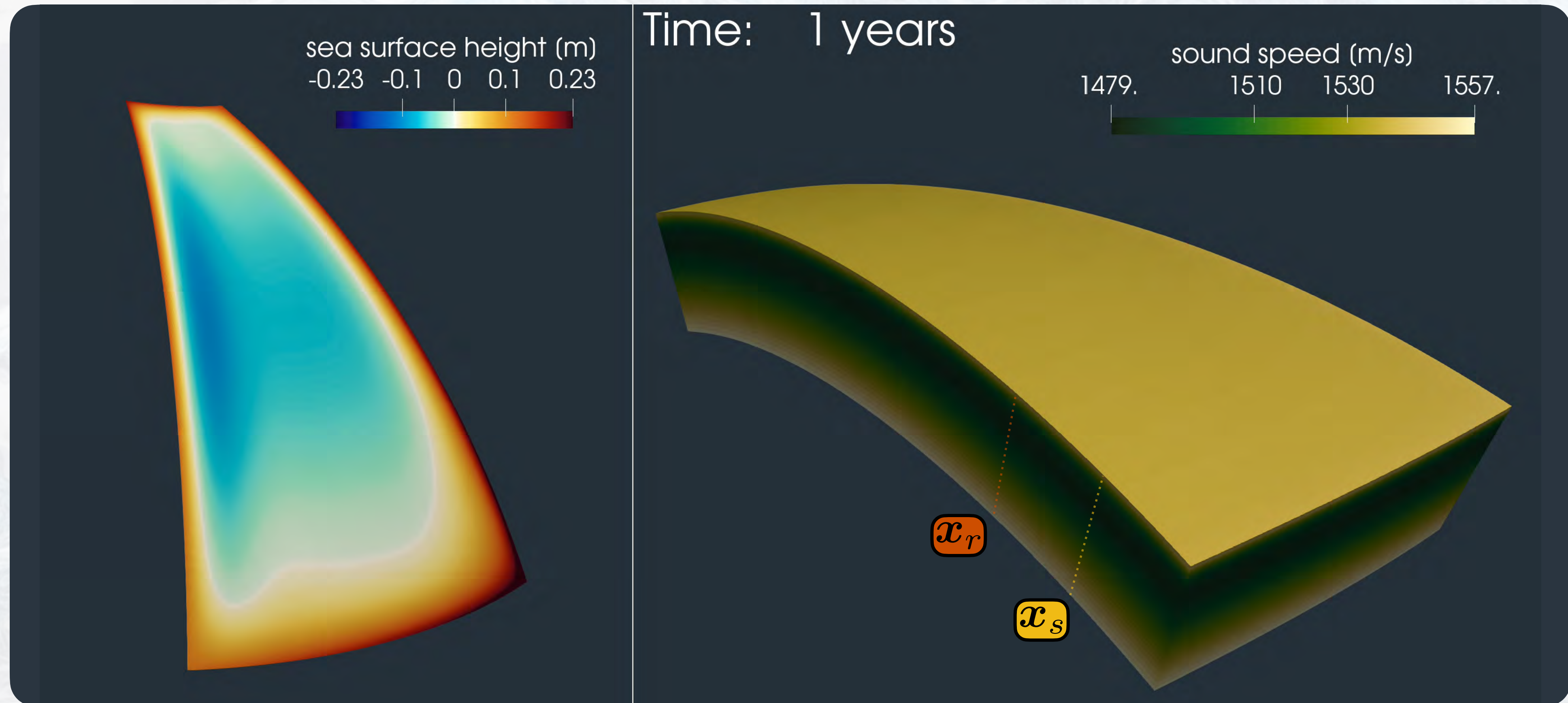
$$H = 6000 \text{ m}$$

$$\Delta\lambda = \Delta\phi = \frac{1}{12}^\circ$$



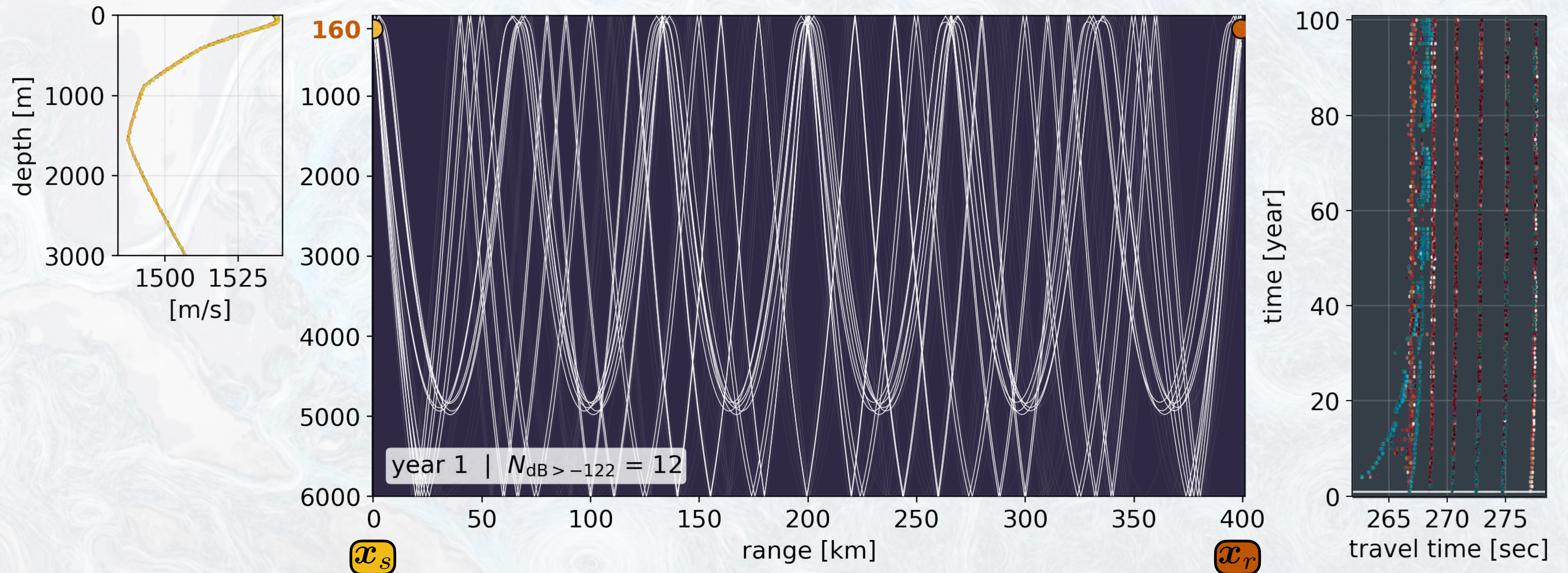
# Ocean spinup evolves sound speed field

Yearly snapshots for one century, meridional acoustic geometry



# Subpolar gyre acoustic structure

Threshold eigenrays oscillate over multi-decadal cycles



# Computing derivatives with AD

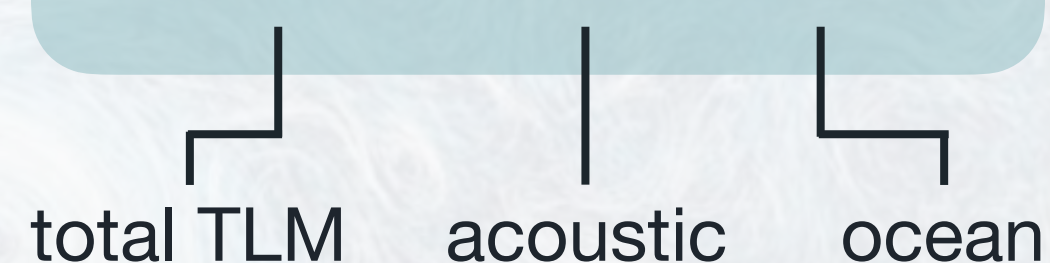
## Solving discrete forward responses to perturbations

- Forward algorithmic differentiation (**AD**) solves both the forward model and increments of,  $J$ , the quantity of interest with respect to,  $m$ , control parameters

$$\delta J = \nabla_m J \cdot \delta m$$

- Sensitivities are responses scaled along the directional derivative defined by a tangent linear model (**TLM**). Check performance of acoustic equations,

$$M = B \circ O$$



# Computing derivatives with AD

## Assessing performance according to ocean temperature perturbations

$$m = \theta_0(x)$$

$$\Delta\theta_0(x) = \epsilon P$$

$$\epsilon = 1$$

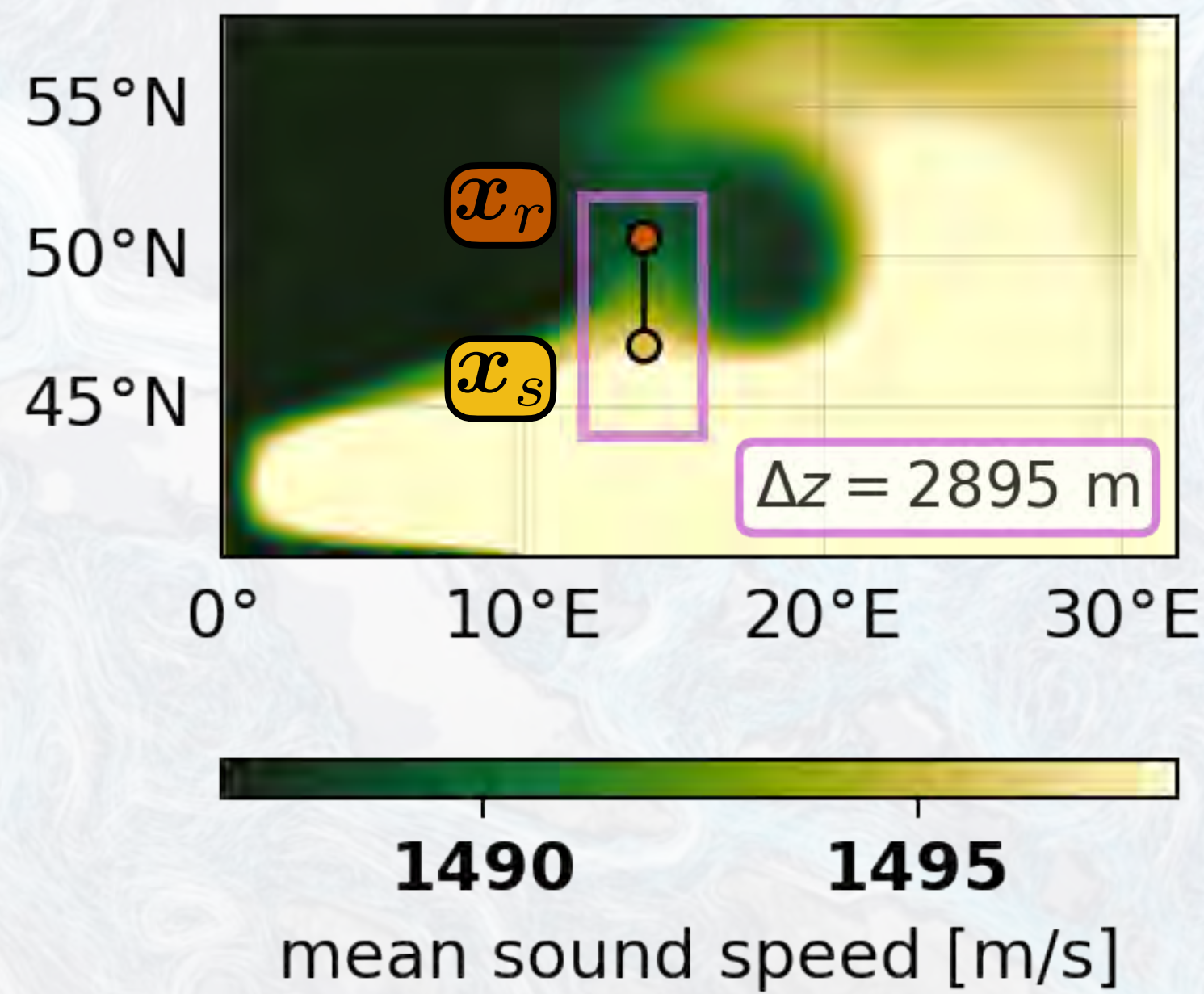
- ◎ The initial temperature field directly impacts the acoustic state
- ◎ Perturbations,  $P$ , are prescribed on
  - ▶ A single basis direction
  - ▶ Three-dimensional structures
- ◎ Unitary scaling defines directional derivatives

# BoxSea subdomain in subpolar gyre

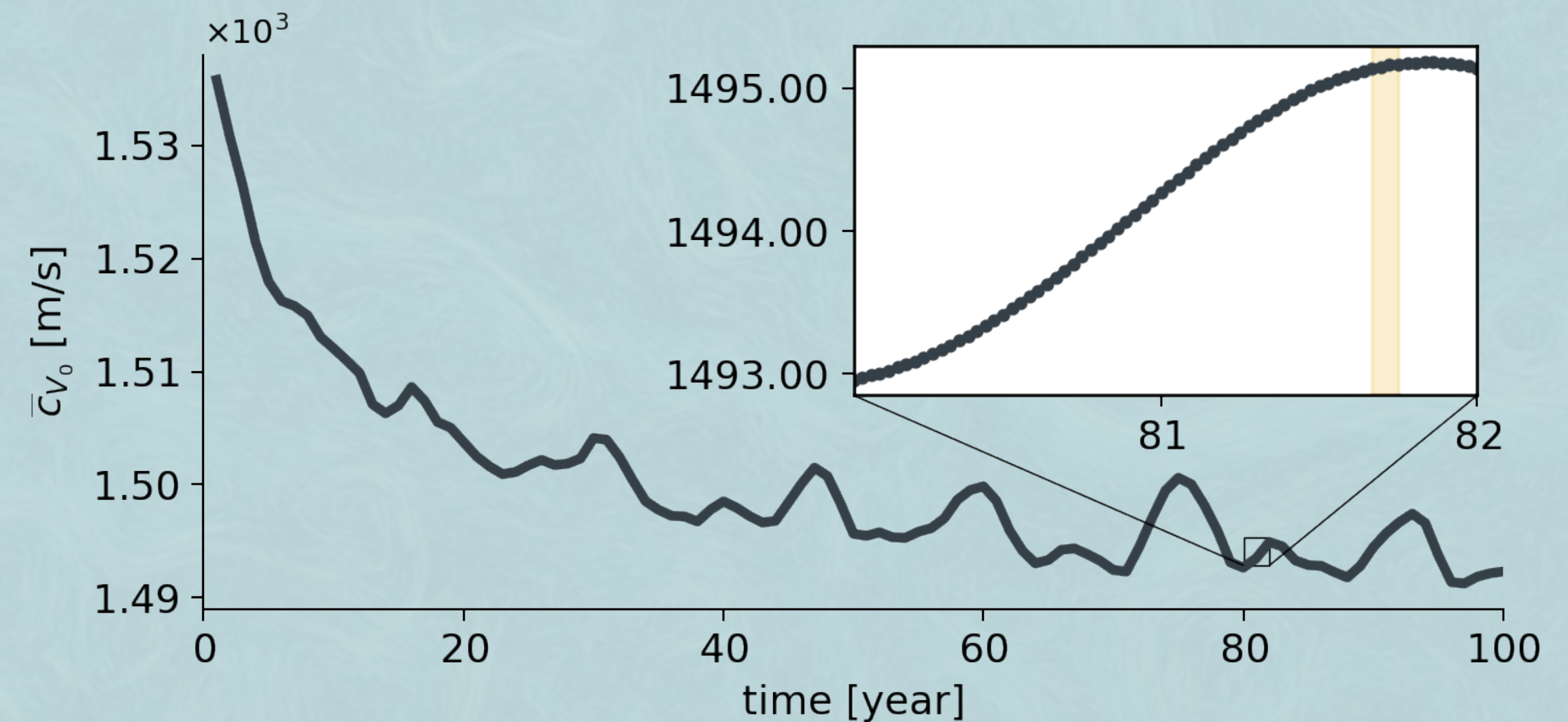


QoI of one month mean sound speed

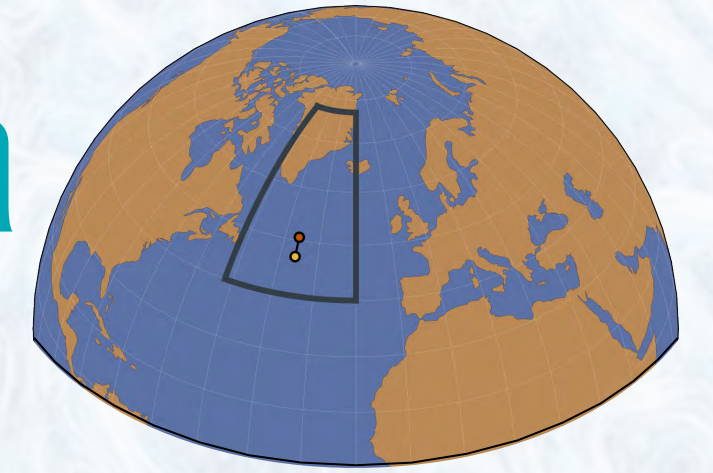
$$|\Omega_{\text{box}}| \sim \mathcal{O}(10^5)$$



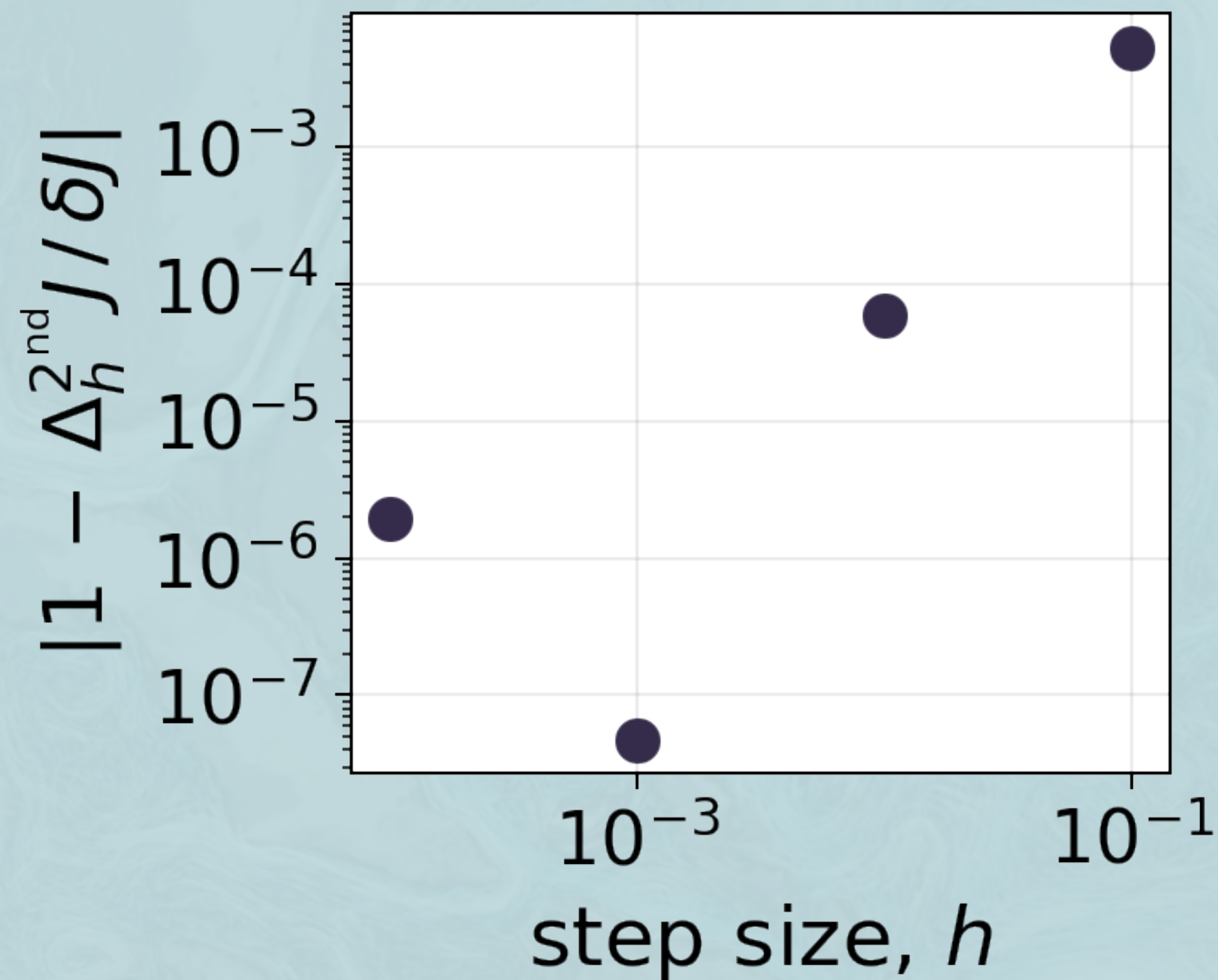
$$\bar{c} = \frac{1}{|\Omega_{\text{box}}|} \int_{\Omega_{\text{box}}} c(\mathbf{x}, t) dV$$



# TLM increment in direction of BoxSea



Positive directional derivative for temperature changes



The initial temperature field creates a positive response to the mean sound speed field increment

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Reference QoI:  $J = 8955.2245 \text{ m s}^{-1}$

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Case	$\delta J \text{ [m s}^{-1}\text{]}$
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TLM	14.8646
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FD, $h = 10^{-1}$	14.7845
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FD, $h = 10^{-2}$	14.8637
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FD, $h = 10^{-3}$	14.8646
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FD, $h = 10^{-4}$	14.8646
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# Data assimilation updates for acoustics

## ECCO's strong constrained 4DVar deterministic inversion

$$J(s, \mathbf{m}) := \frac{1}{2} \sum_{t=t_1}^{t_f} \|\mathbf{F}\mathbf{m}(t) - \mathbf{y}_{\text{obs}}(t)\|_{\mathbf{R}(t)}^2$$

- Discrete model-data misfit applies the parameter to observable (**pto**) map,  $\mathbf{F}$ , to model control parameters

- Variation to the control parameters define directional derivatives

- With  $\mathbf{R} = \mathbf{I}$ , a new pto map introduces comparison to observed **travel times**

$$\delta_{\mathbf{m}} J = \sum_{t=t_1}^{t_f} \delta \mathbf{m}(t)^T \mathbf{F}(t)^T \mathbf{R}(t)^{-1} [\mathbf{F}(t)\mathbf{m}(t) - \mathbf{y}_{\text{obs}}(t)]$$

$$J = \frac{1}{2} \sum_{t=t_1}^{t_f} \|\mathbf{E}\boldsymbol{\tau}(t) - \tau_{\text{obs}}(t)\|^2$$

# Extend misfit for acoustics

pto map extracts eigenray travel times

$$m = \theta_0(x)$$

$$s(t_1) = M(\theta_0), \quad s(t_{i+1}) = M(s(t_i))$$

$$F(t) = \underbrace{E}_{\text{observable map}} \circ \underbrace{B}_{\text{eigenrays}} \circ \underbrace{M(t)}_{\text{ocean-acoustics}}$$

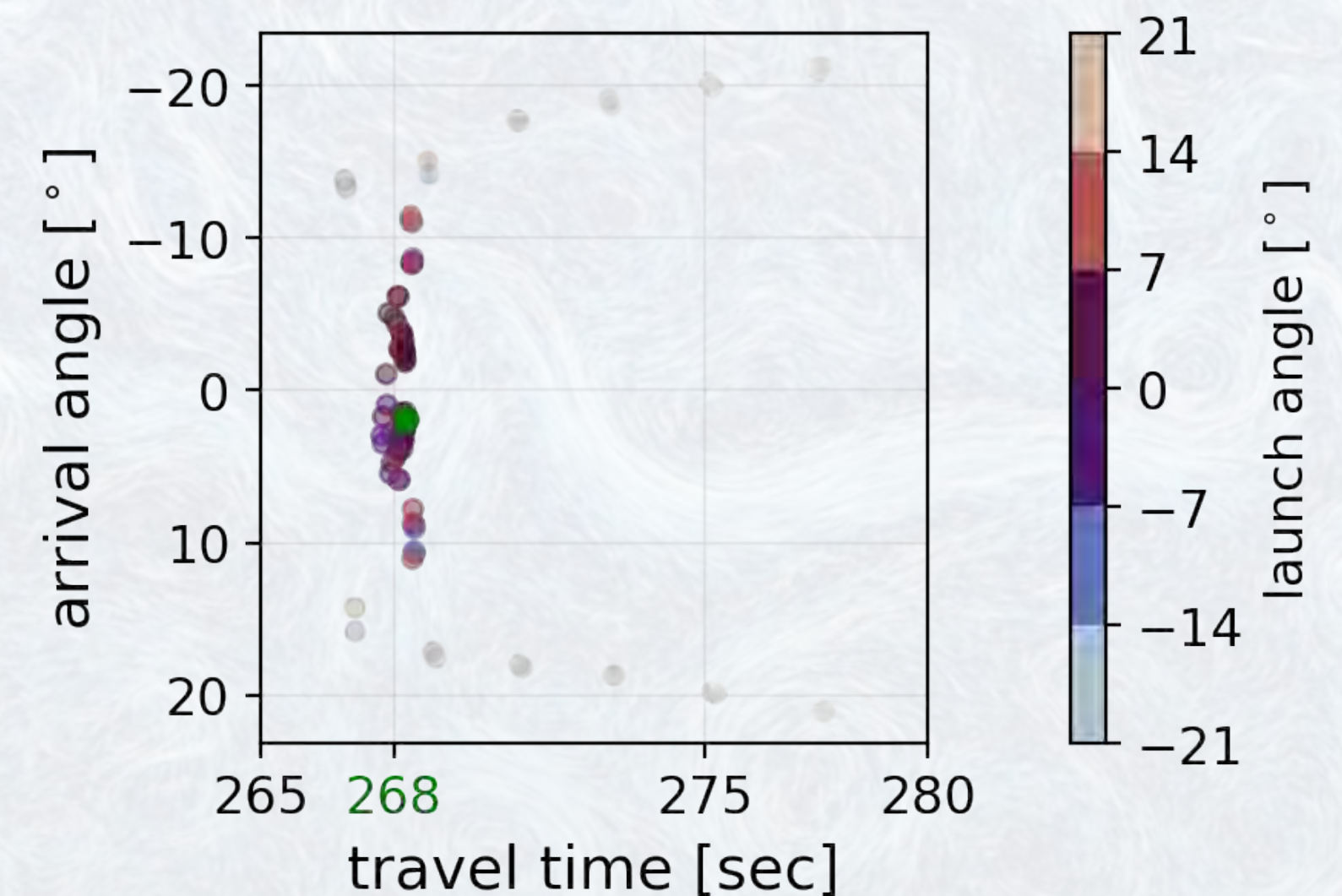
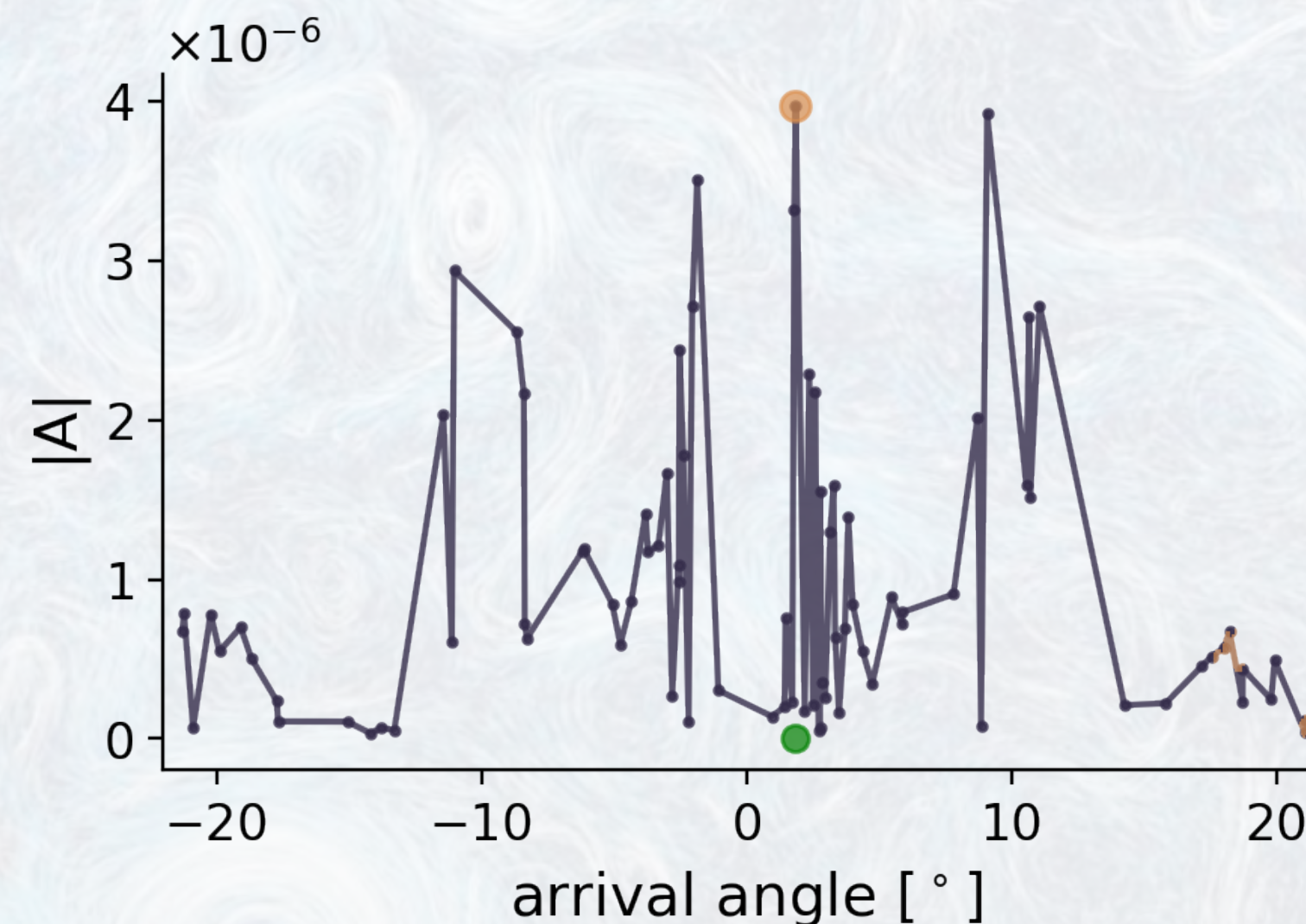
- ◎ Recall, the control parameter is potential temperature at initial time
- ◎ Ocean-acoustic state variables are evaluated with the coupled model  $s = [s, a]^T$
- ◎ The acoustic pto finds the set subfamily of eigenrays and maps them to data space

# Acoustic observable map design

## Treating observations as travel times from loudest arrivals

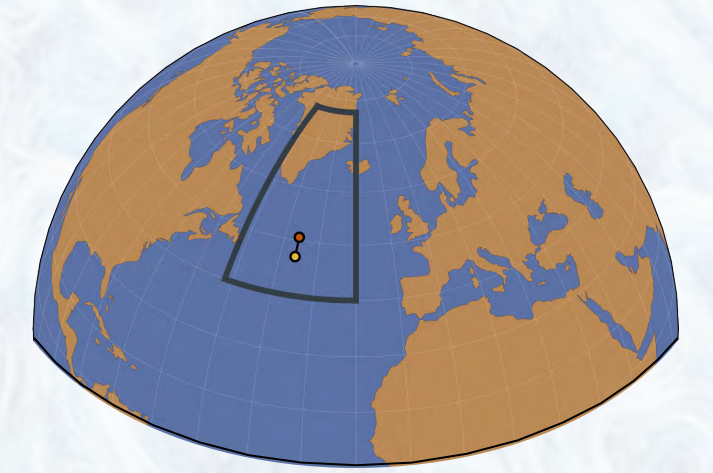
For a single source-receiver pair,  $N_e$  predicted eigenrays are found for each sound transmission. The strongest eigenray is defined as the ray with the largest acoustic pressure magnitude at the receiver range

$$E\tau(t) = \tau_{\arg \max(|A|)}(t)$$



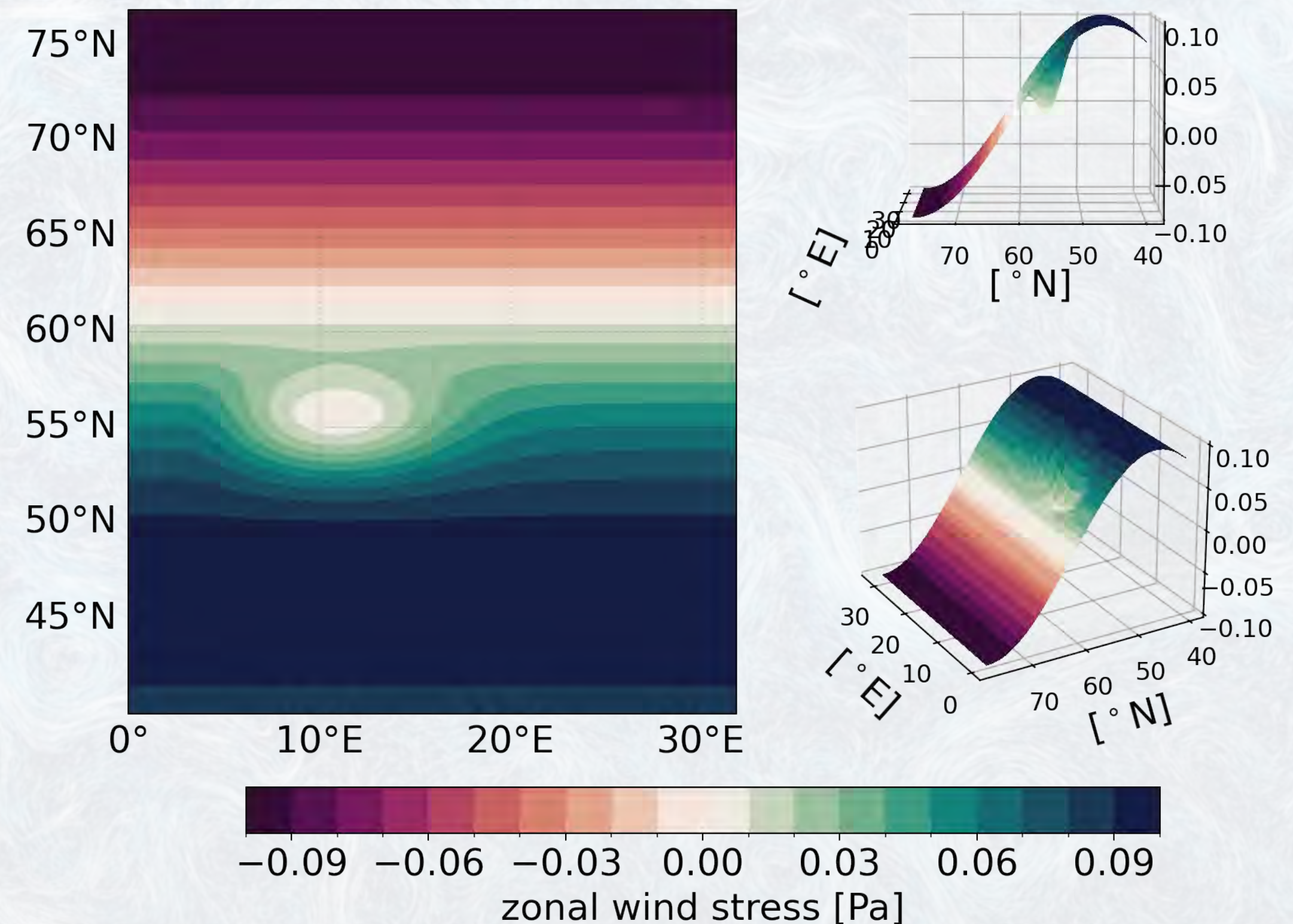
# Synthetic forward model

## Weibull distributed Beaufort state 1 winds



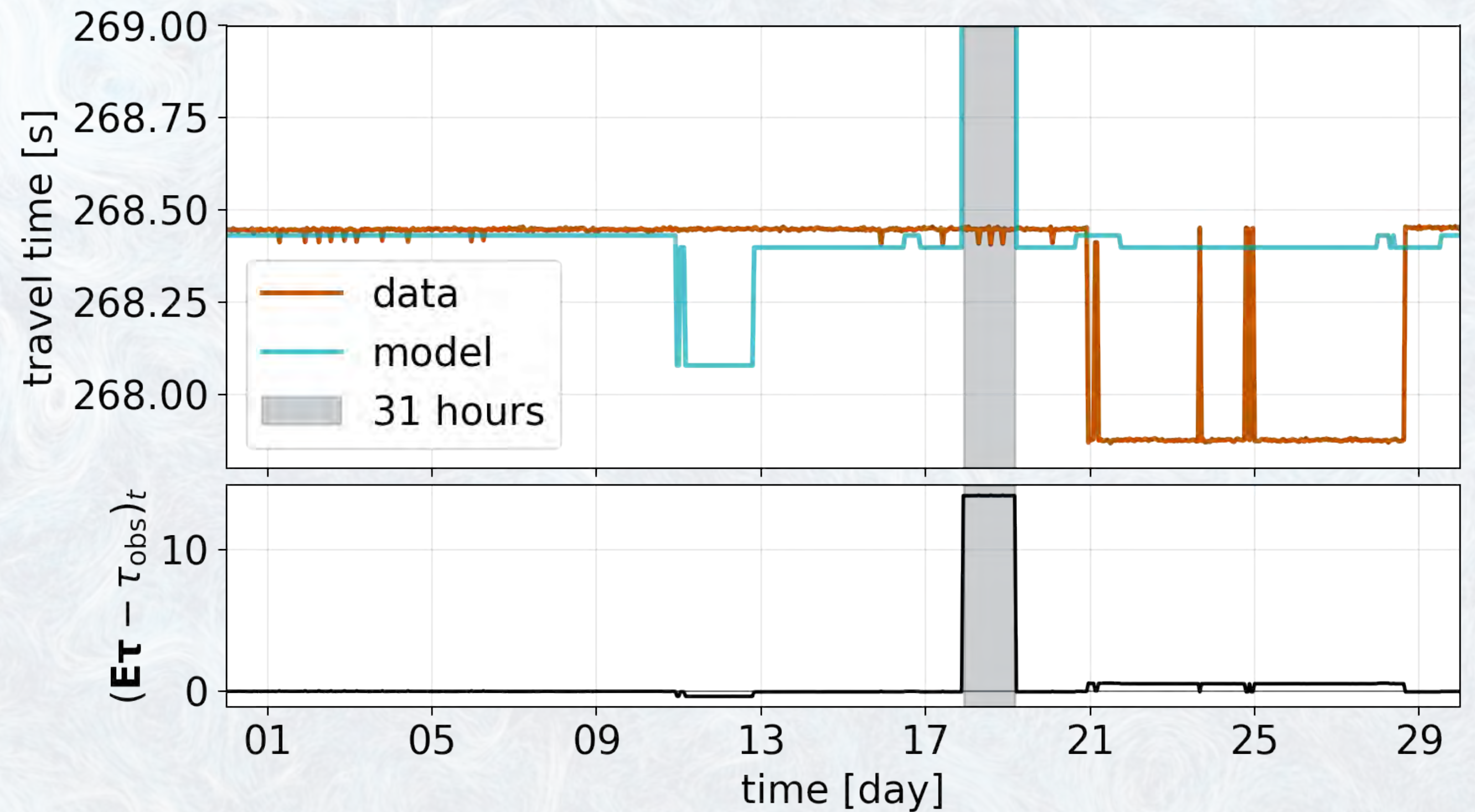
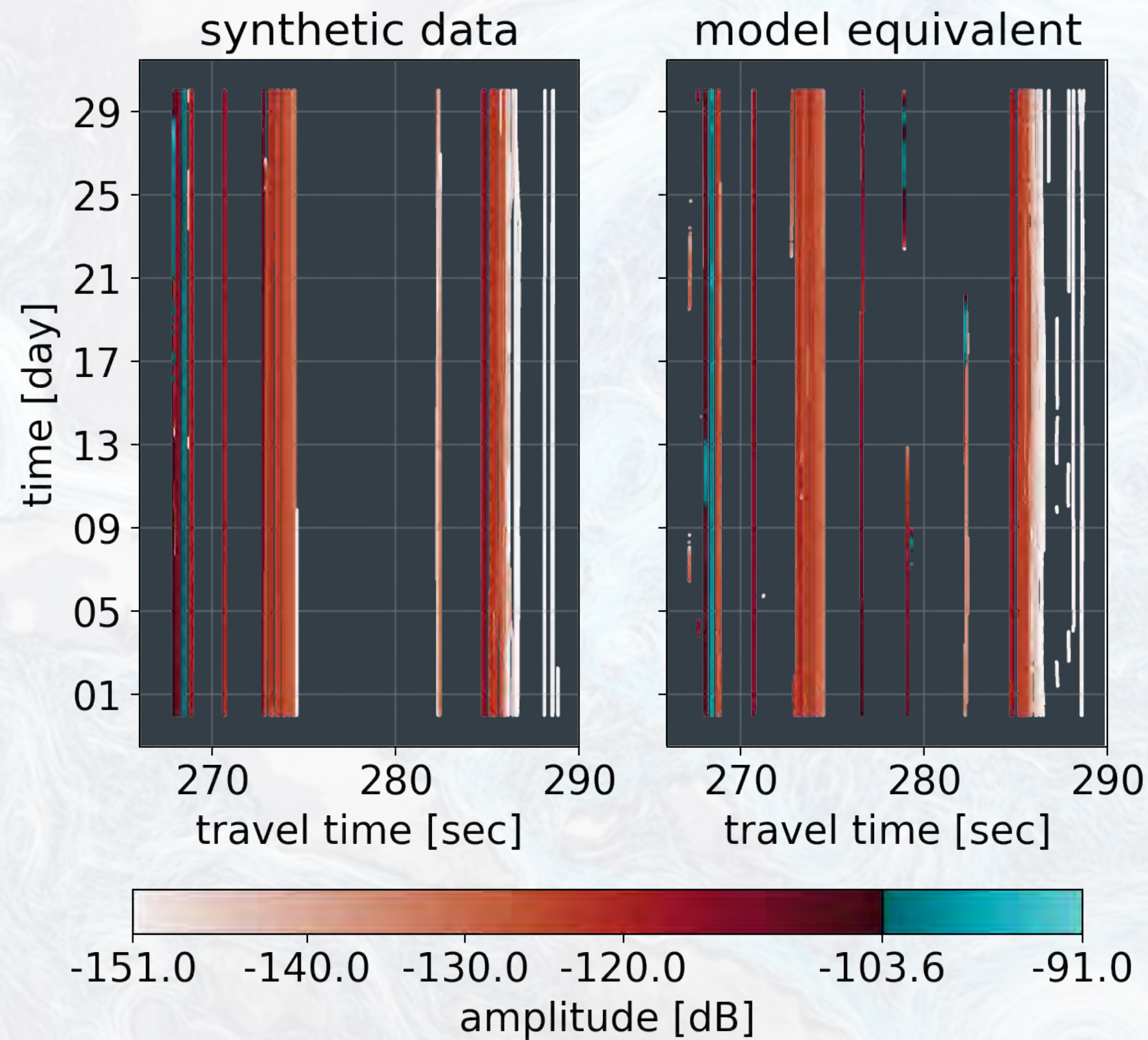
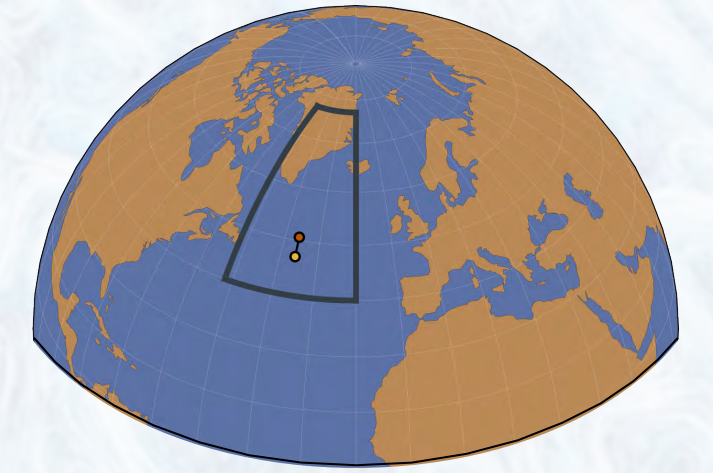
- Wind stress forcing modifies ocean state over two years after 80 years of spin up
- Observed travel times are hourly transmissions over 30 days

$$\tau_{\text{obs}} \sim \tau + \mathcal{N}(0, \sigma_{\tau}^2)$$



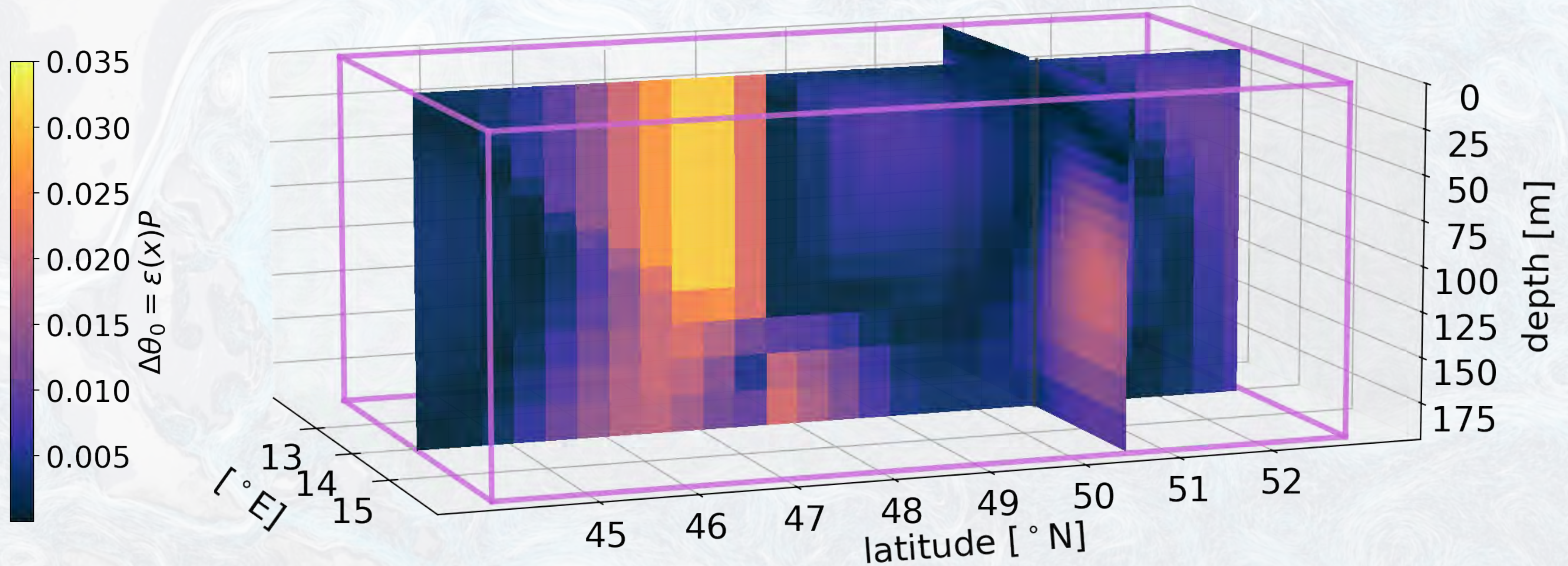
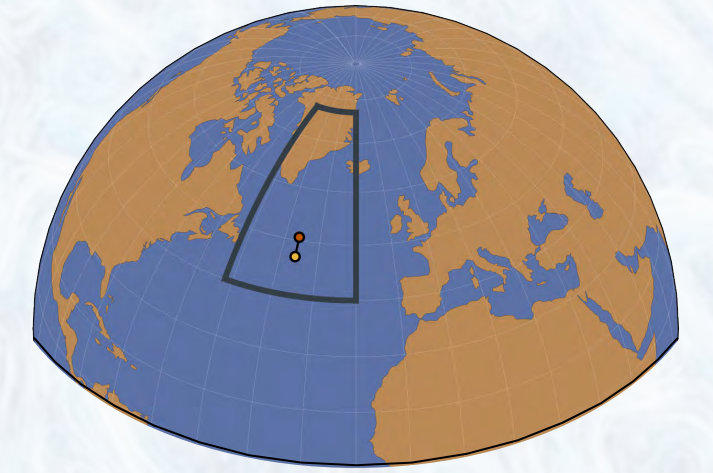
# Model-data misfit of travel times

pto allows for unique ray paths between model and data



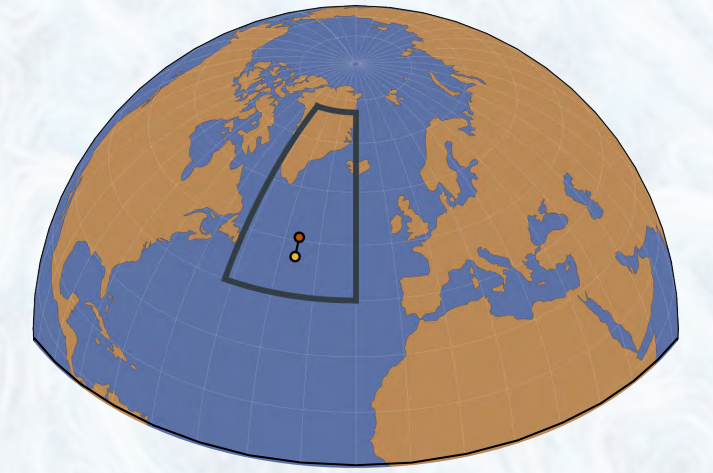
# Temperature anomaly perturbation

Apply nonuniform scaling to acoustic cost TLM



# Acoustic cost function TLM

Directional derivative is recovered from uniform scaling



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Reference state (forward model):  $J = 5970.2823$

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Perturbation scale:  $\epsilon$     Directional derivative:  $\delta J/\epsilon$     Cost increment:  $\delta J$

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Nonuniform ( $\Delta\theta_0$ )	—	-6.9033
$10^0$	-351.3624	-351.3624
$10^{-1}$	-351.3440	-35.1344
$10^{-2}$	-351.3226	-3.5132
$10^{-3}$	-351.3896	-0.3514
$10^{-4}$	-351.3285	-0.0351

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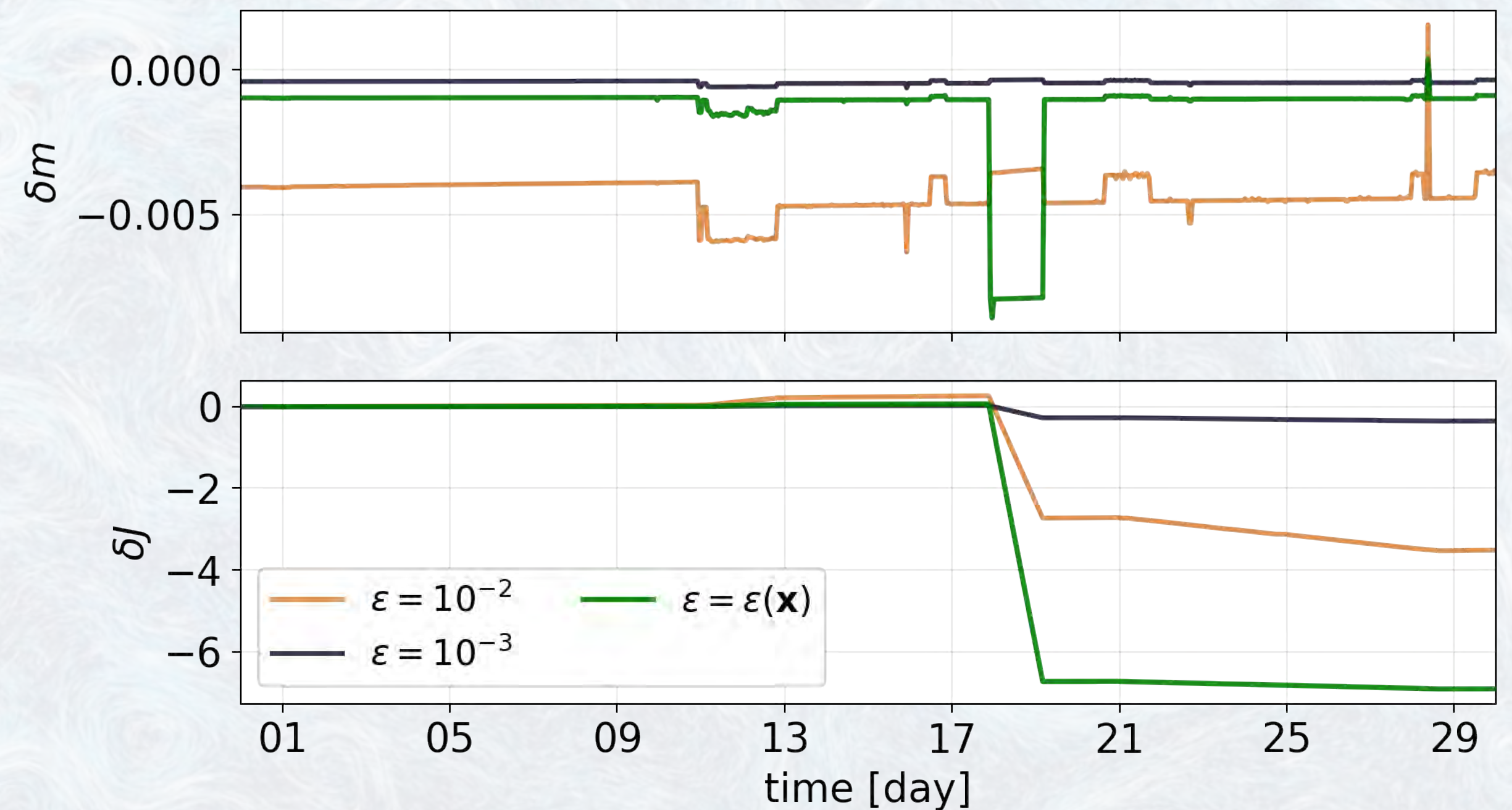
# Acoustic cost and travel time increments

Distinct travel time response to spatial structure in temperature



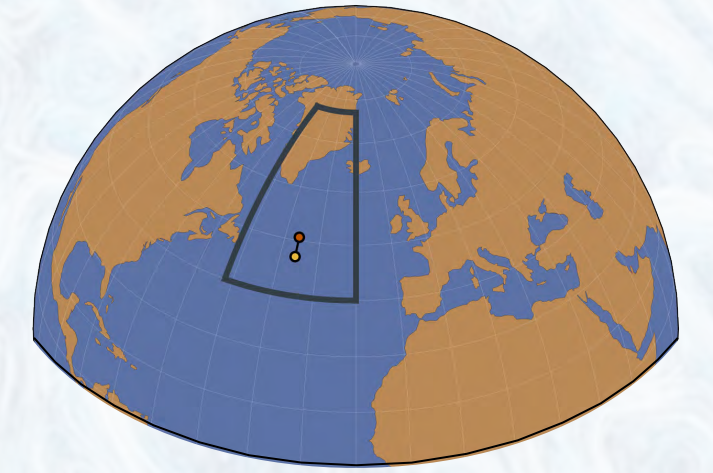
$$\delta J(t) = \delta m(t)^T \mathbf{E}^T (\mathbf{E}\boldsymbol{\tau}(t) - \boldsymbol{\tau}_{\text{obs}}(t))$$

$$\delta J = \sum_{t=t_1}^{t_i} \delta J(t)$$

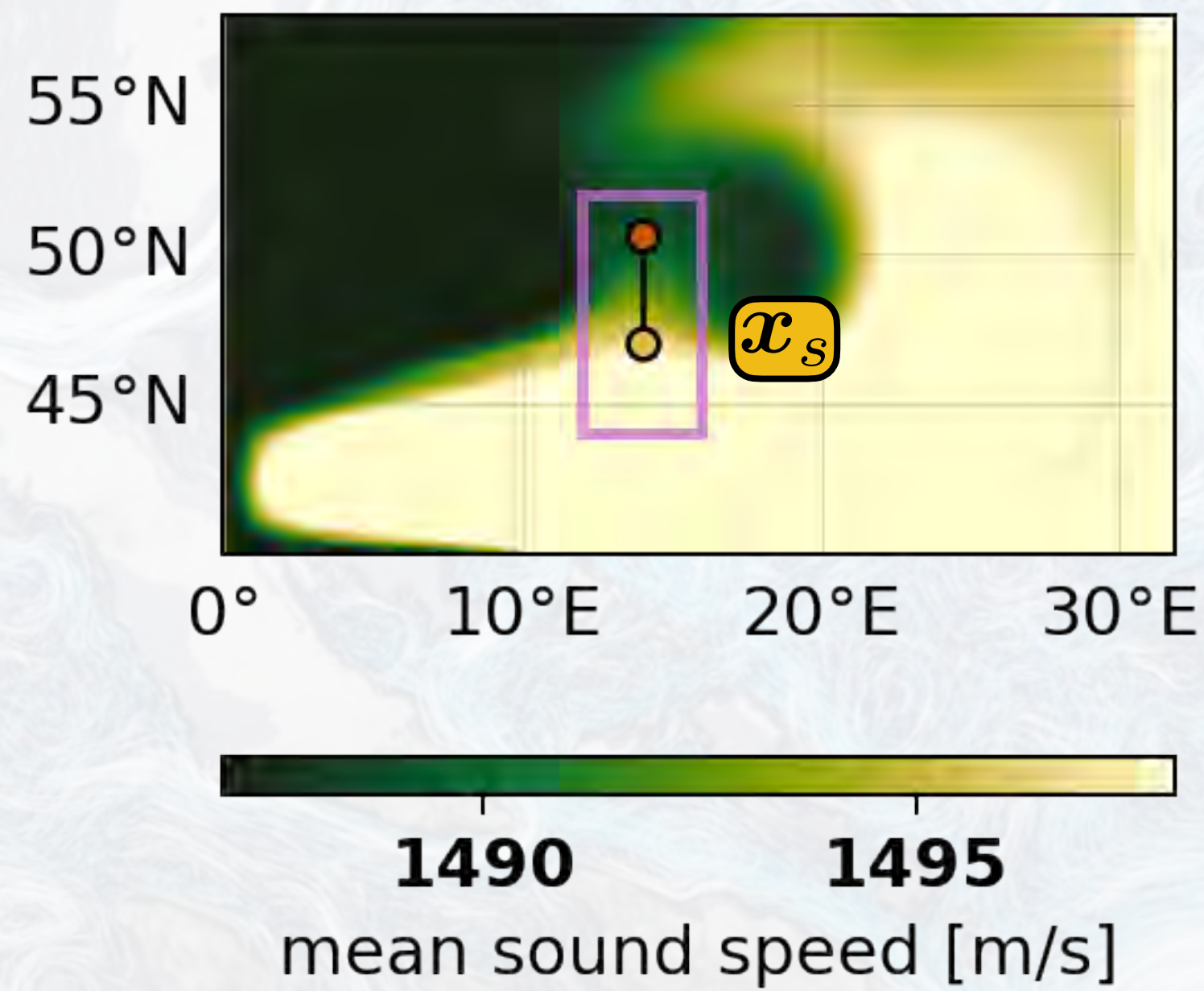


# The acoustic cost increment

## Pointwise assembly at a single vertical profile



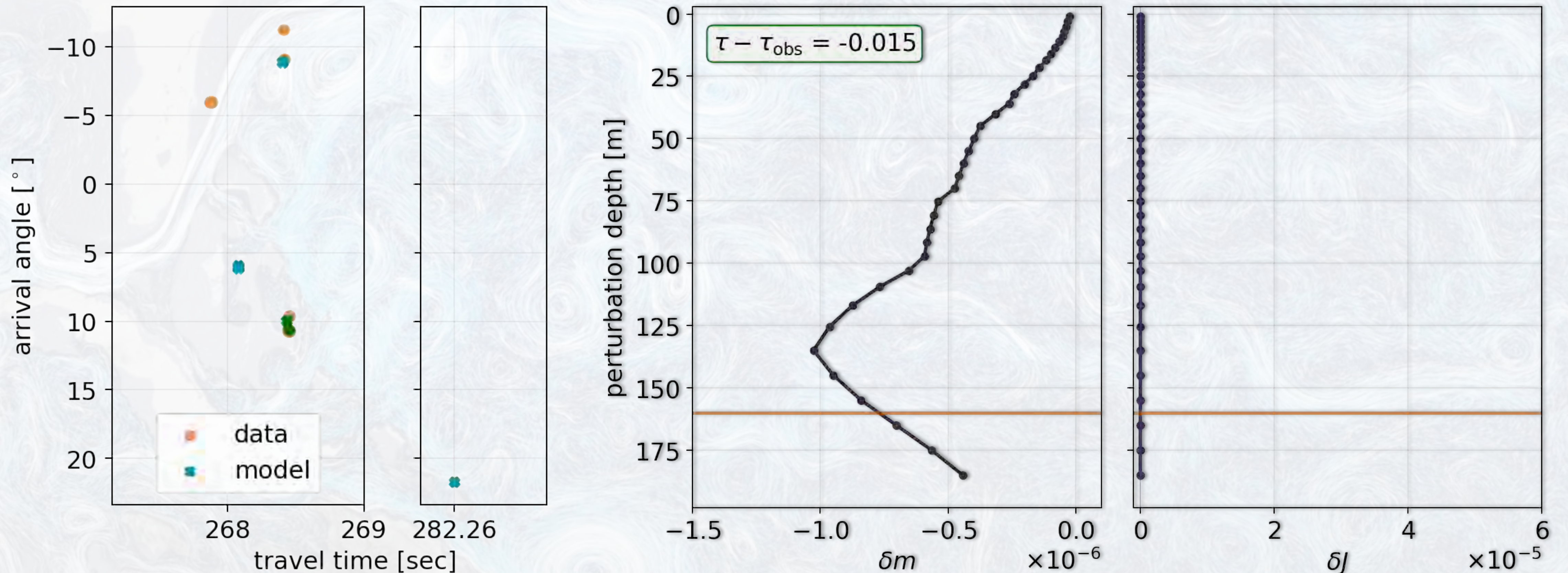
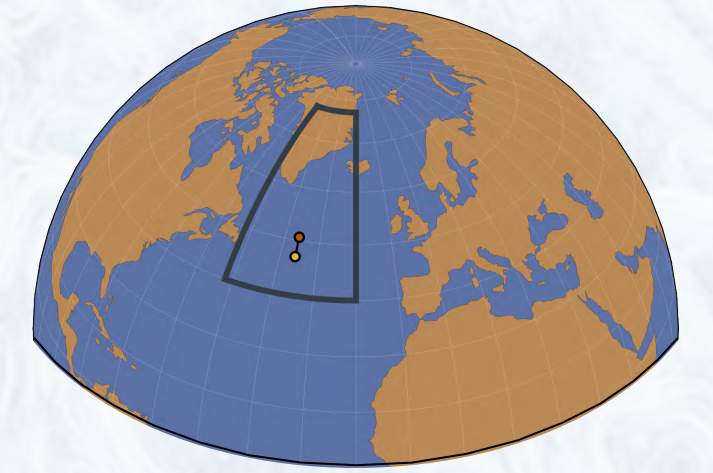
- Perturbing initial potential temperature at each depth contained in BoxSea at the sound source position



$$\Delta\theta_0(z; \mathbf{x}_s) = P(z), \quad \|P\| = 1$$

# The acoustic cost increment

Large misfit residuals accelerate descent towards observations



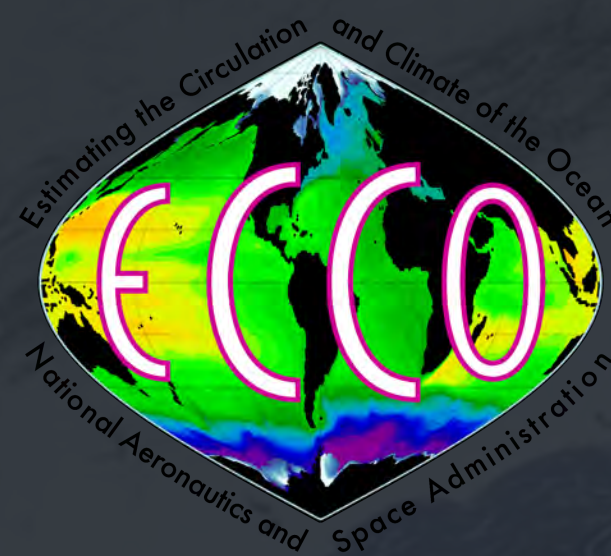
# Summary

<https://github.com/IvanaEscobar/belli>

## Highlights from the CSEM Ph.D. dissertation

- Coupled ocean-acoustic models
  - ▶ Added **belli**, an underwater acoustics package, to MITgcm
  - ▶ Opened MITgcm for hybrid compilation
- Differentiable underwater acoustics
  - ▶ Verified entire **belli** model with intermediate Qols
  - ▶ Simplified AD NetCDF I/O routines for MPI runs
- Cost function of acoustic travel times
  - ▶ Discovered forward sensitivities due to changes in ocean temperature
  - ▶ Extended objective map to include acoustic observations

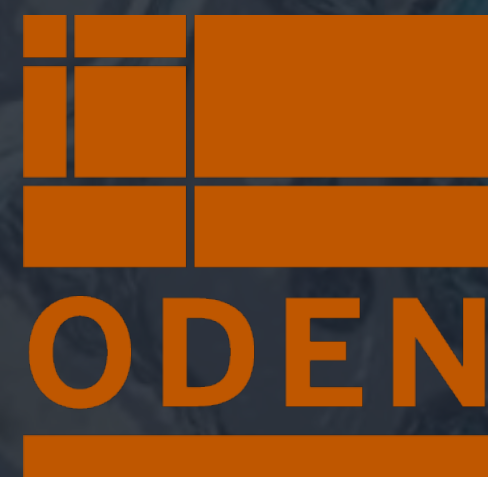
**Efficient coupled framework that robustly differentiates through ocean-acoustic assimilation using underwater acoustic data**



# Thank you!

## Questions?

<https://github.com/IvanaEscobar/belli>



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