Observations **and Modeling** of Wave Current Interactions

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Collaborators:

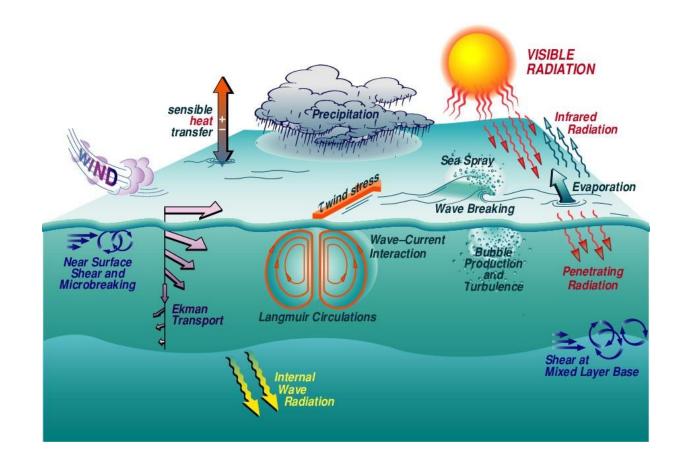
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Air-Sea Interaction

•70% of the earths surface is covered by water

Oceans play an important role regulating the weather and climate
Coupling between the ocean and the atmosphere is modulated by surface waves.

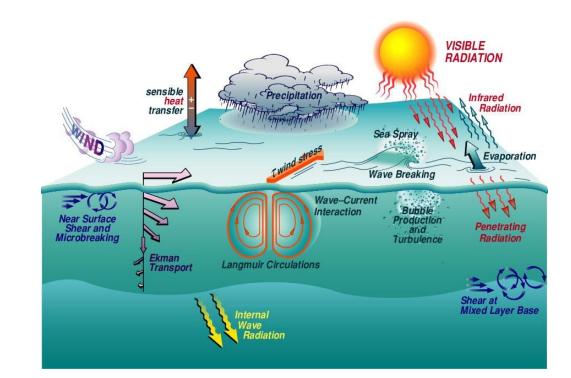
•Surface waves modulate the exchange of momentum, heat and gases across the air-sea interface.



Source CBLAST website: http://www.whoi.edu/science/AOPE/dept/cbl.jpg

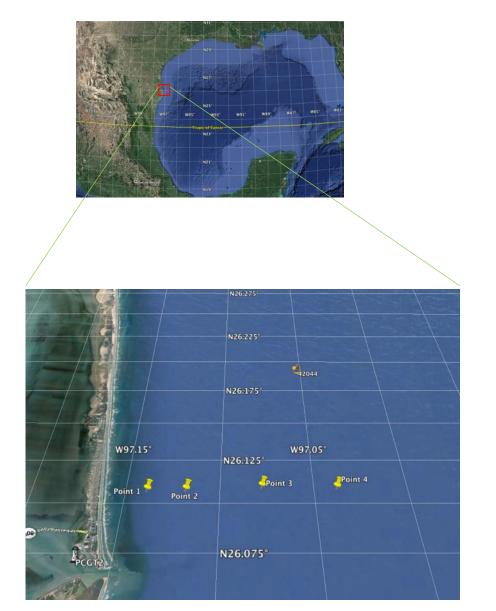
Oceanic Boundary Layer:

- 1) Wave breaking
 - Energy dissipation
 - Drives upper ocean currents
 - Turbulence/Mixing
 - Gas exchange
 - Aerosol production
- 2) Langmuir Circulation
 - Turbulence
 - Mixing



Field experiments

- Location: South Padre Island, TX
- Environmental Conditions
 - Mainly upwelling and downwelling winds
- Number of experiments
 - 2 experiments during spring and fall 2016
- Experiment characteristics
 - 5-7 days of field observations within a 14 day waiting period under different environmental conditions.
 - Each day 4 patches of dye and 4 clusters of drifters were released at 2, 4, 8 and 12 km from the shore (water depth between 10 and 20 m)
 - Measurements were collected for up 5 hours



stations

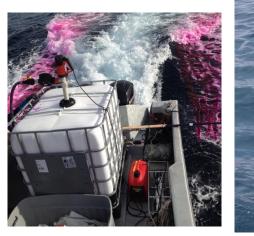
In-situ Measurements

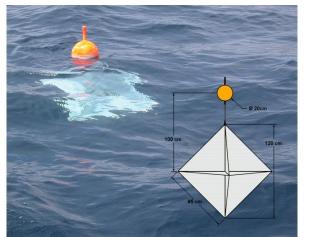
- Platform: small fishing boat (Salt Walker)
- Instrumentation/Supplies:
 - Hand deployed CTD/fluorometer system (Seabird SBE-19+)
 - 16 Microstar drifters drogued at 1 m
 - Tow body with dye fluorometer and GPS for real-time plume tracking (Turner Designs C-fins)
 - 270 gallon tank with a pump and a diffuser
 - 4 gallons of rhodamine dye/ day
 - 2 gallons of alcohol /day













Airborne measurements

Platform:

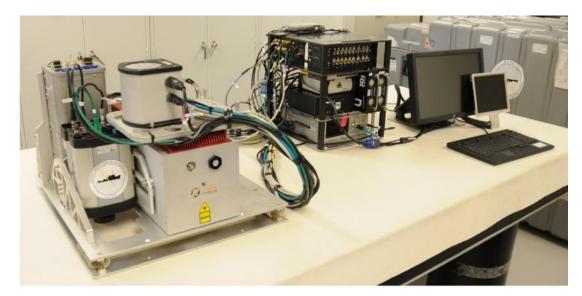
Aspen Helicopters Partenavia Observer

Instrumentation (SIO) :

- The Modular Aerial Sensing System (Melville et al., 2016)
- -Hyperspectral sensor track dye patches
- -Infrared camera detect flow structures
- -Scanning lidar surface waves
- -Inertial Motion Unit w/GPS

Flights

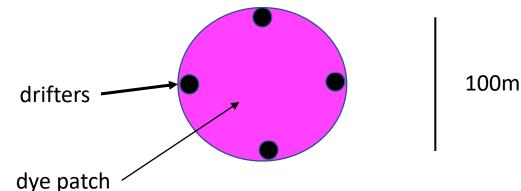
-Seven flights 5 hours long each per experiment out of Brownsville Airport, Texas



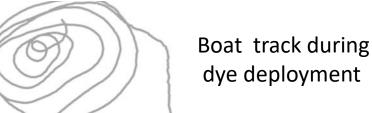


Dye and drifter deployments

- Four drifters in a square configuration 100 m apart allowing measurements of the current gradients and dispersion
- Circular dye patches with a diameter of 100 m



 Drifters are used to guide the boat as it fills in the circle with dye

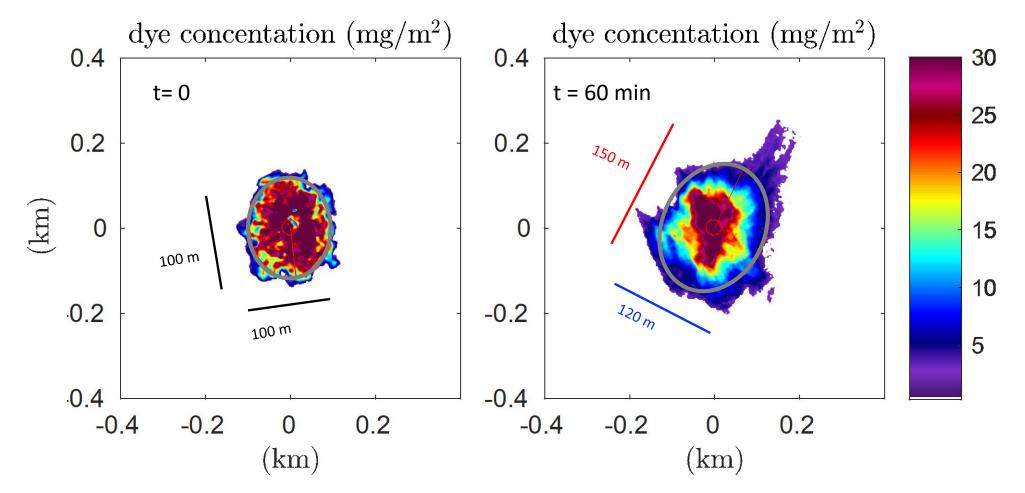




Dye patch

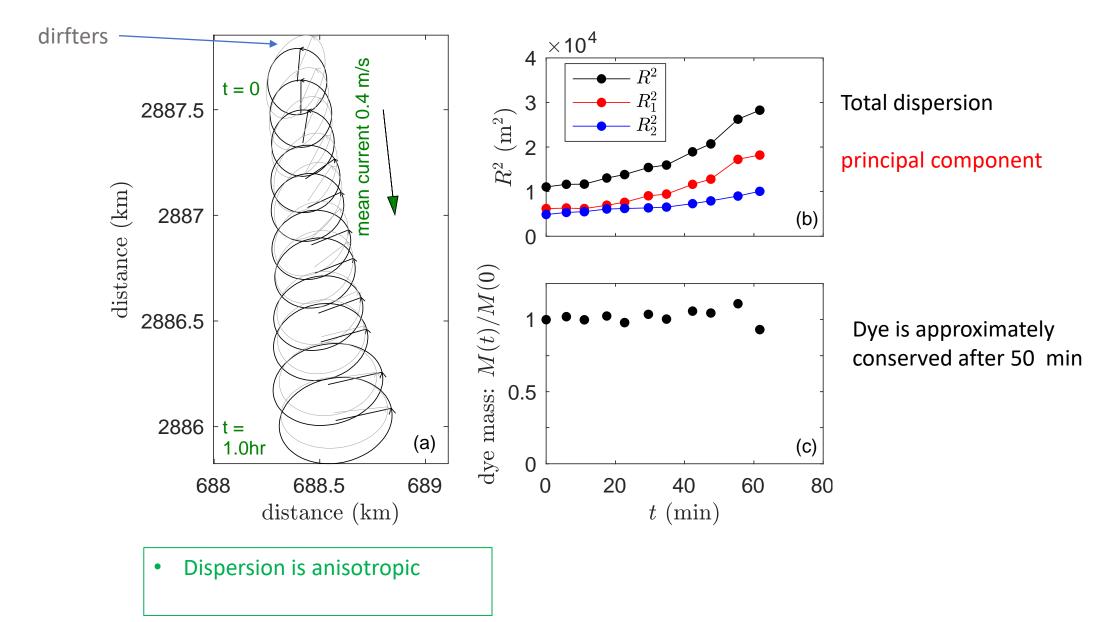


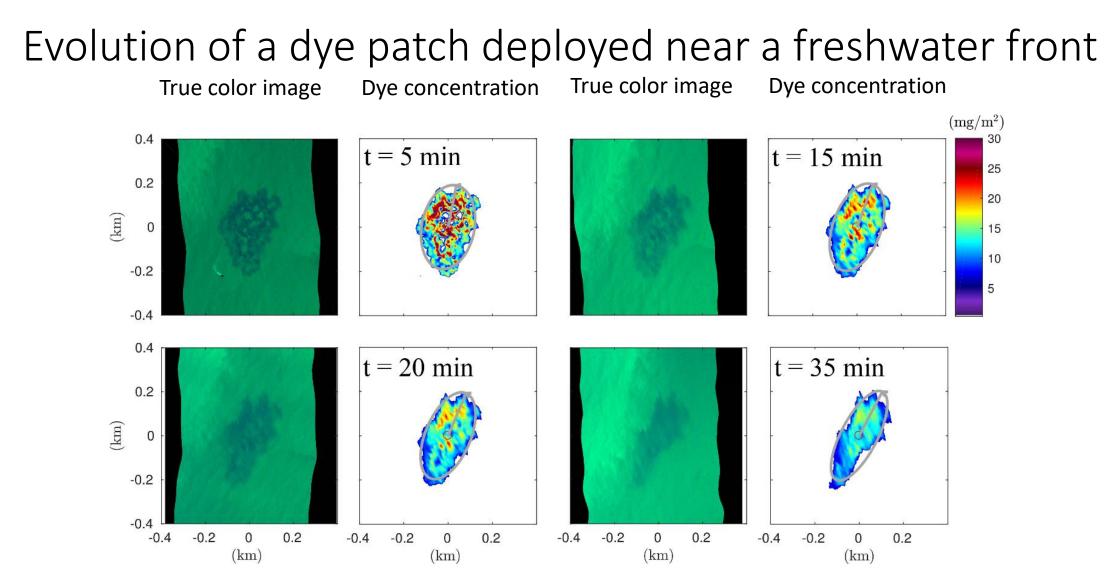
Evolution of a dye patch measured with hyperspectral sensor



- Dye patch expands significantly over an hour period
- Dye concentration distributions allow us to calculate the horizontal dispersion through the mean-square width and the orientation of the principal component
- Dispersion is represented with principal axis ellipses

Time evolution and dispersion of a dye patch measured remotely

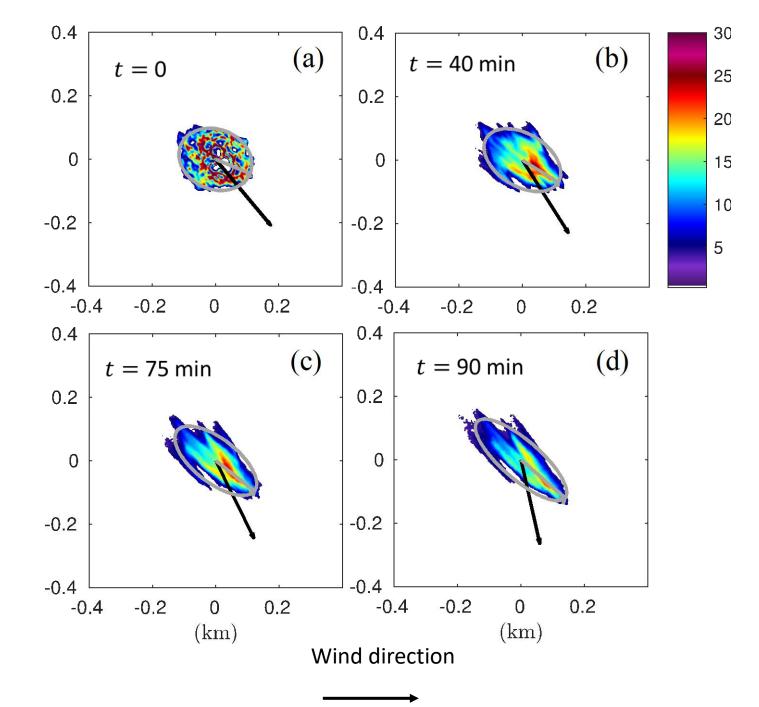




- -Dye patch stretches along-front and gets narrower cross-front
- -Dye concentration decreases rapidly
- -Consistent with submesoscale dynamics with surface convergence and strong downwelling (e.g., Capet et al. 2008
- -Remote sensing data allows us to identify different processes that play a dominant role on dispersion

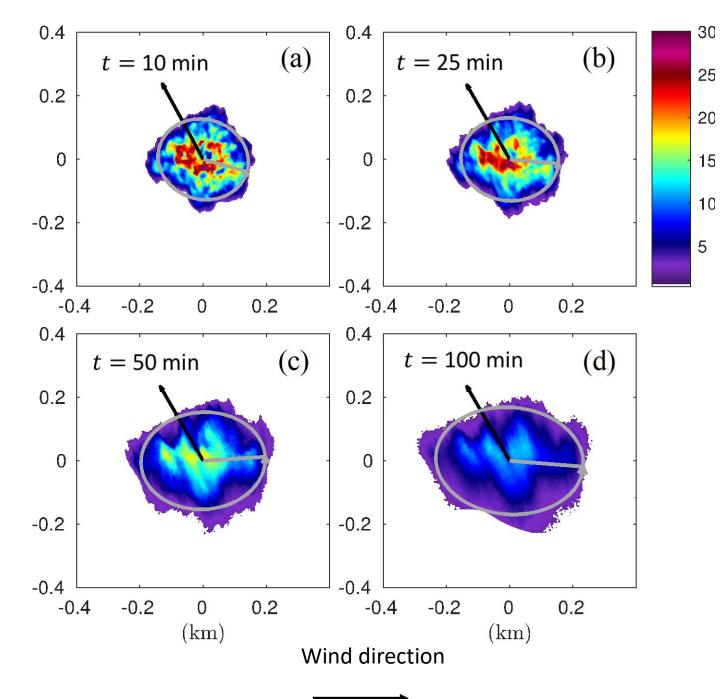
Langmuir like Coherent Streaks

- Dye organizes along streaks mostly aligned the wind (black arrow)
- Downwind "Y-junctions" are typical features of Langmuir cells (Obs. and models)
- Dye spreading is anisotropic approximately along the mean wind direction

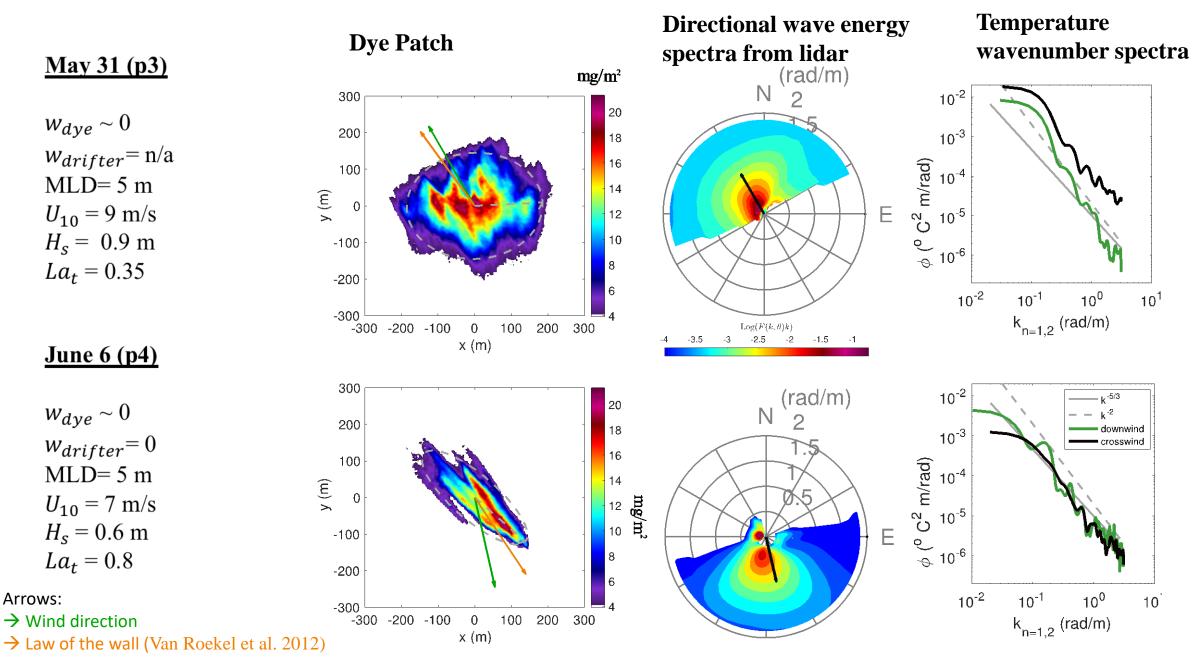


Langmuir like Coherent Streaks

- Dye organizes along streaks mostly aligned the wind (black arrow)
- Dye spreading is anisotropic, being largest approximately crosswind
- Width of the Streaks reaches ~ 100 m, or 5 times the water depth (c.f., Super Langmuir Cells - Gargett and Wells 2007)



Aligned vs misaligned Winds and Waves



Characterization of vertical transport

 $_{\odot}$ Vertical velocities from from clusters of drifters (\geq 3)

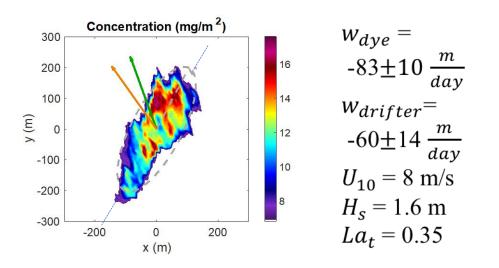
- Current gradients: $u_i = U + u_x x_{rel_i} + u_y y_{rel_i}$
- Vertical velocity from continuity: $w = \int_0^{z_d} \frac{du}{dx} + \frac{dv}{dy} dz$

 \circ Vertical velocities from conservation of dye mass (M)

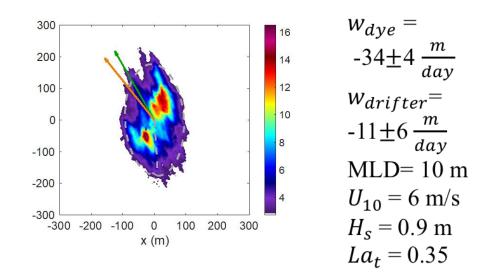
•
$$\frac{dM}{dt} = w \, \bar{C} dA \approx \frac{wM}{z_d} \quad \Rightarrow w \approx \frac{dM}{dt} \frac{z_d}{M}$$

• Surface convergence at submesoscale fronts give values of up to 10 f and vertical velocities up to 100 m/day (much larger than that for mesoscale fronts)

Downwelling at a Freshwater Front



Vertical transport by Langmuir Circulation



Wave Breaking

• wind speed of 15 m/s



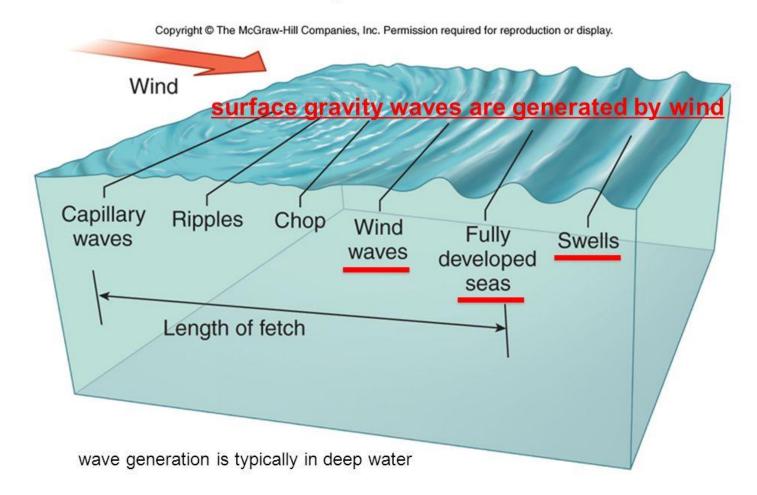
old patches of foam

actively breaking fronts -

+Photo taken from an aircraft in the Gulf of Tehuantepec, Feb. 2004

Generation of Surface Wind Waves

wave development and evolution



95% of the energy imparted by the wind is lost locally due to wave breaking, inducing mixing and driving currents 5% of the energy becomes swell

Wave Breaking

• wind speed of 15 m/s



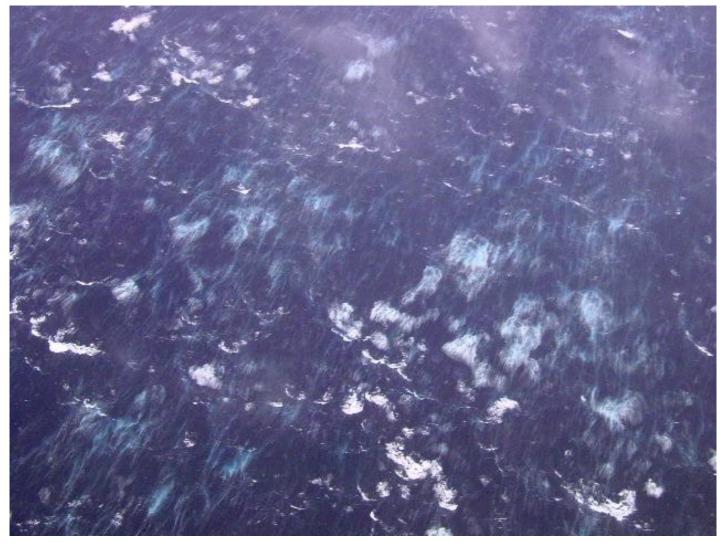
old patches of foam

actively breaking fronts -

+Photo taken from an aircraft in the Gulf of Tehuantepec, Feb. 2004

Whitecaps in Hurricane Conditions

Hurricane Isabel (2003) – wind speed 60 m/s



http://www.aoml.noaa.gov/hrd/Storm_pages/isabel2003/photo.html

Whitecap Coverage vs Wind Speed

• 2004 and before

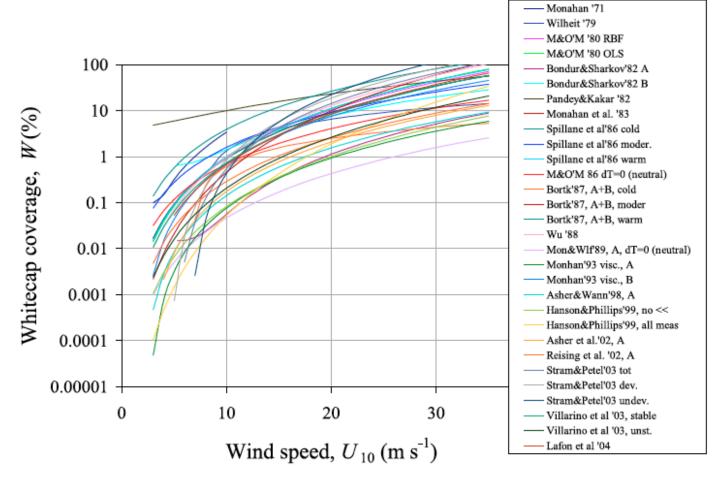
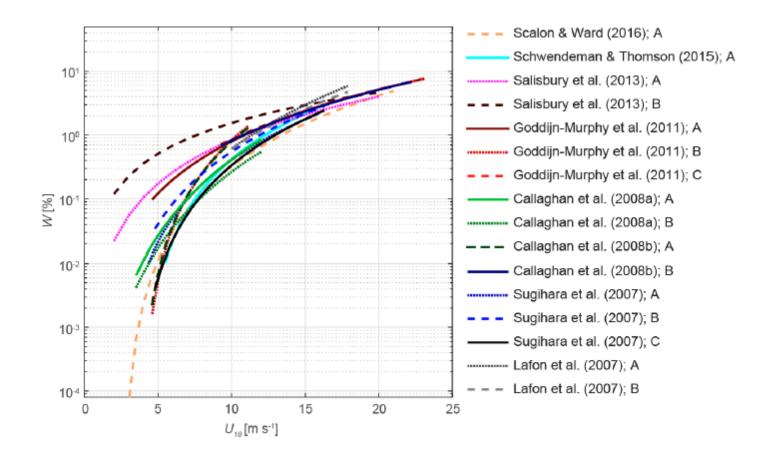


Figure 1. Various parameterizations for $W(U_{10})$ relation.

Modern Measurements: Whitecap Coverage vs Wind Speed

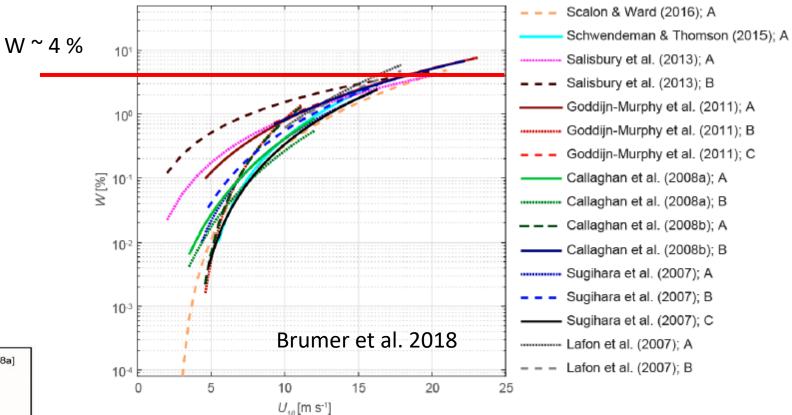
- Overall smaller variability
- Variability is large particularly at low winds
- Saturation or roll off at high winds

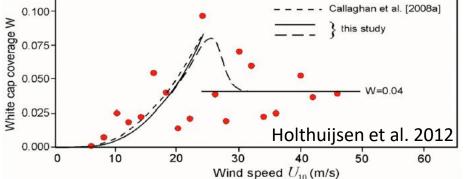


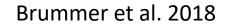
Brummer et al. 2018

Modern Measurements: Whitecap Coverage vs Wind Speed

- Variability is large particularly at low winds
- Saturation or (Roll off) at high winds







Enhanced Breaking due to Wave Current Interactions

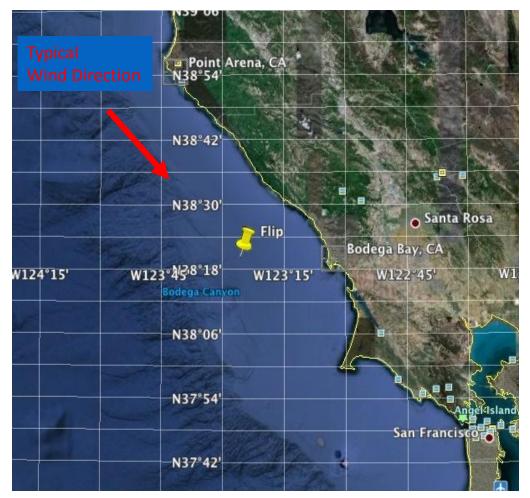


Bodega Bay, 2010 (HiRes)



Gulf of Tehuantepec, 2004 (Melville et al. 2005)

HiRes Air-Sea Interaction Experiment



- **Environmental Conditions**
- Wind speed : 10 15 m/s
- •Waves: up to 4 m wave height
- •Surface currents: up to 1 m/s

Platforms

- RV Flip
- •CIRPAS Twin Otter (TO) Aircraft
- Partenavia Aircraft

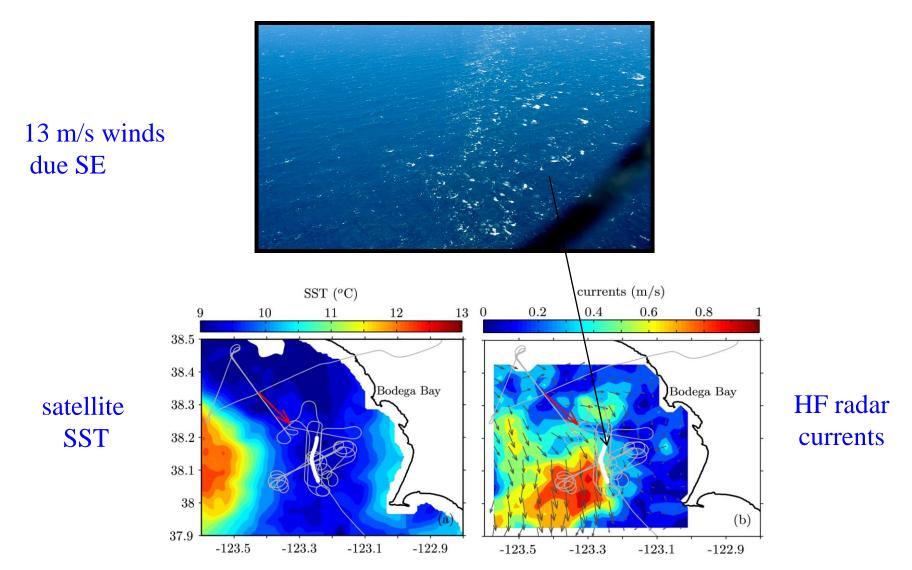
Instrumentation

- •Scanning LIDAR (NASA Airborne Topographic Mapper ATM) •Fixed LIDAR
- •Atmospheric turbulent fluxes (wind, temperature, humidity)
- •Nadir looking visible imagery
- •Nadir looking Infrared imagery
- •SST sensor and aerosols measurement package



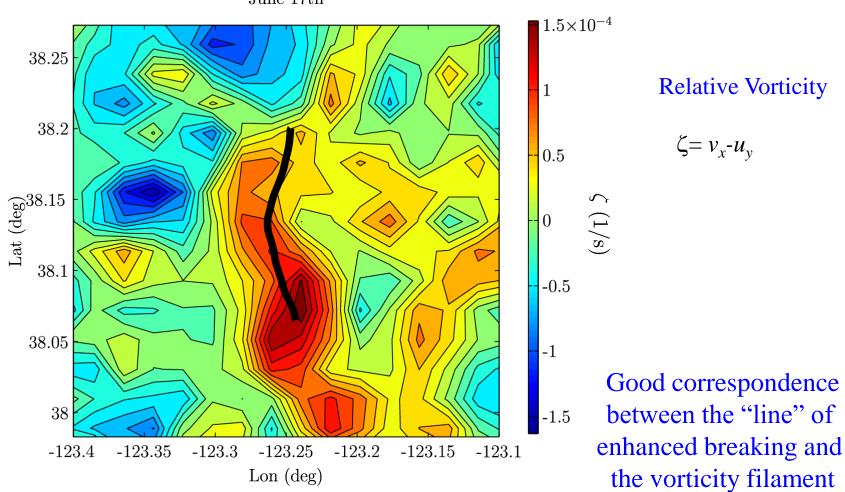
Line of Enhanced Breaking

June 17th , 2010



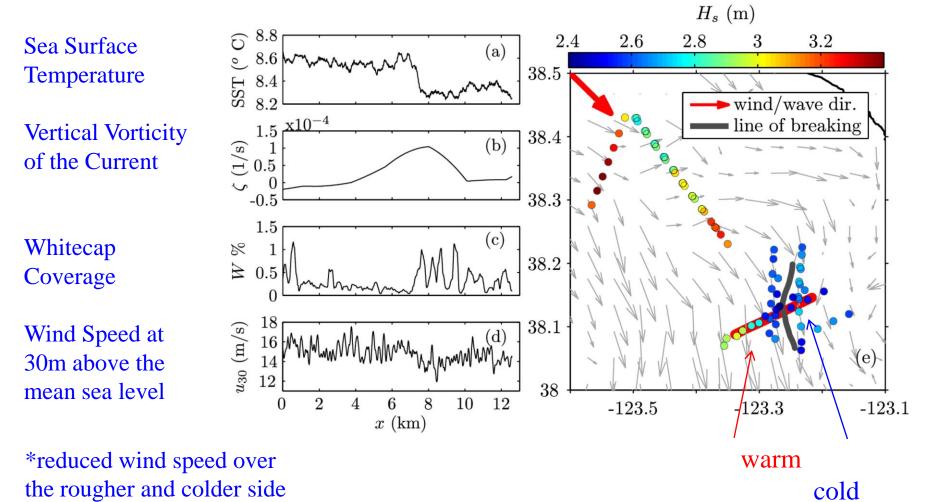
Current Induced Refraction

*Vertical Vorticity / C_g = Curvature of a ray (Kenyon, 1971;Dysthe, 2001)



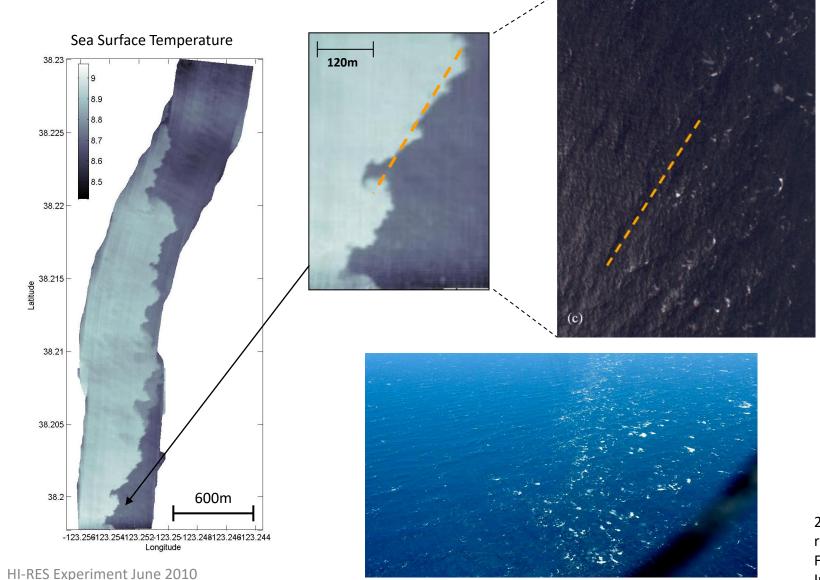
June 17th

Cross Front Data



the rougher and colder side (cf. Friehe et al. 1991)

Infrared and Visible Imagery

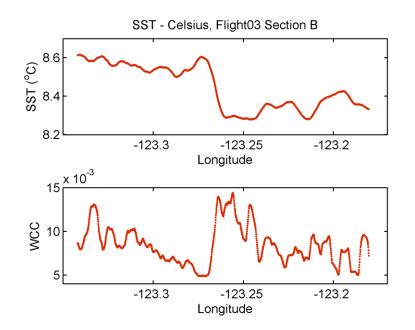


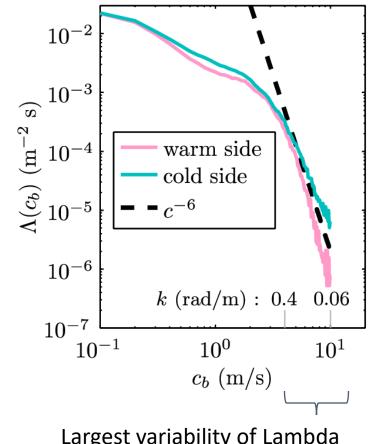
Visible video imagery

2x2m Spatial resolution From Twin Otter IR Imager

HI-RES Experiment June 2010

Breaking Statistics across the Front

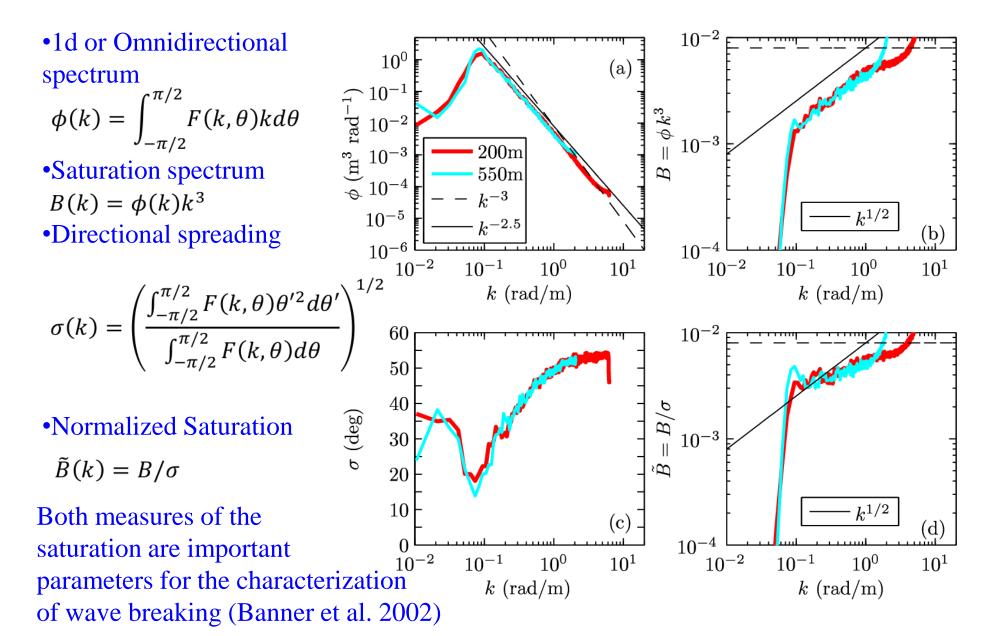




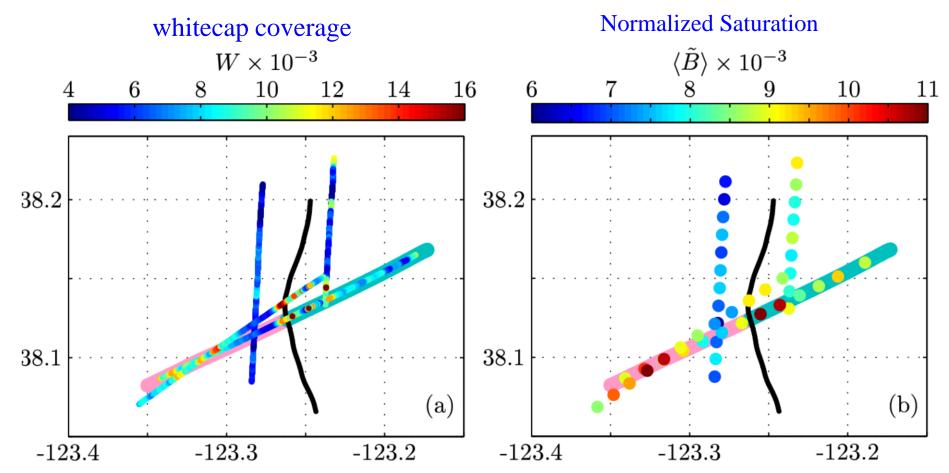
the wavenumber is calculated from the linear dispersion relationship and $c_b = \alpha c$, with $\alpha = 0.8$ (Rapp and Melville 1990)

Largest variability of Lambda c: 10 and 4 m/s

Moments of the Spectrum



Normalized Saturation vs Whitecap Coverage



There is good correspondence between both variables (r = 0.76)

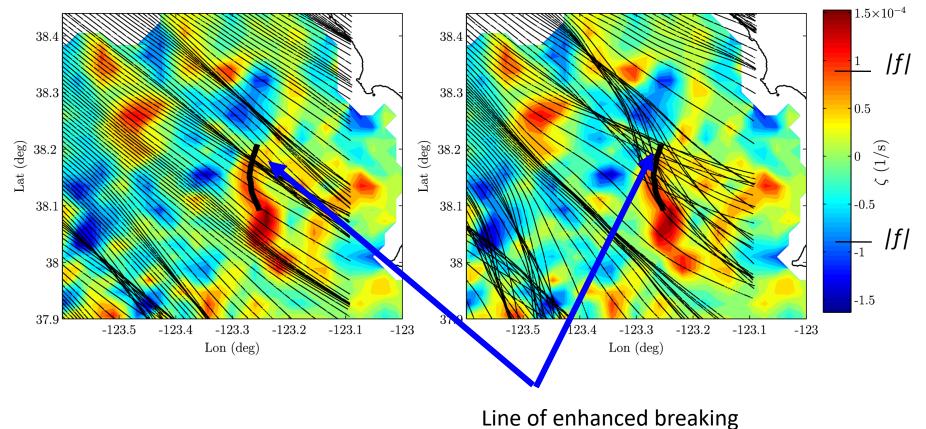
Ray Tracing * Following: Gerber 1993; Dysthe 2001

+

Vertical Vorticity: $\zeta = v_x - u_y$

- ζ / C_g = Curvature of a ray (Kenyon, 1971;Dysthe, 2001)

Dominant waves : wavelength =110 m Shorter waves: wavelength = 15m



Conclusions

- Novel airborne observations over areas with significant wave-current interactions
- Tight coupling between the surface winds, waves and currents at horizontal scales of 1 km.
- Wave height varied by about 25% due to wave-current interactions, whereas whitecap coverage varied substantially by an order of magnitude
- Whitecap coverage correlated with spectral moments, particularly with the normalized saturation

Numerical Modeling of Wave-Current interactions in the Presence of Submesoscale Ocean Features

Goal:

Better understand the interaction between surface waves and submesoscale currents, including feedbacks

Modeling Framework

- Spectral wave model WaveWatchIII (ww3) coupled offline to
 - Regional Ocean Modeling System (ROMS)
 - Weather Research and Forecasting Model (WRF)
- Nested grid from a 300 m grid down to 100 m
- Spectral grid
 - 24 azimuthal points (15° resolution)
 - 18 Frequencies with periods between 5 s and 27 s (most energetic)
- Both ROMS and WRF are forced with realistic forcing (without data assimilation, except at the boundaries of the largest domain)
- WW3 uses buoy observations for boundary conditions.

Wave Model included Current Effects on Waves (CEW)

- Wave Action Conservation Equation: $\frac{\partial N}{\partial t} + (\vec{c}_g + \vec{U}) \cdot \nabla N \nabla \Omega \cdot \frac{\partial N}{\partial \vec{k}} = S$ $N(\vec{k}) = \frac{F(\vec{k})}{G(\vec{k})}$: the wave action advection refraction $N(\vec{k}) = \frac{F(\vec{k})}{\sigma(k)}$: the wave action advection refraction $F(\vec{k})$: directional wavenumber spectrum $\sigma(\vec{k}) = \sqrt{g \, k \, \tanh kh}$: intrinsic frequency, $\Omega(\vec{k}) = \sigma(k) + \vec{U} \cdot \vec{k}$: Doppler-shifted frequency, \vec{U} : ocean surface current (i.e., upper most current vector from ROMS) **S**: source terms (wind forcing, wave-wave interactions, **dissipation**, ...)
- Directional frequency spectrum: $F(\omega, \theta) = \frac{\partial k}{\partial \omega} F(k, \theta) k$
- $\langle \eta^2 \rangle = \int \int F(\omega,\theta) d\theta d\omega = \int \int F(k,\theta) k d\theta dk$

Source Terms

S_{in}: wind input (Janssen 1989, 1991, Ardhuin et al. 2010)

- *S_{nl}*: nonlinear fluxes due to resonant wave-wave interactions (Webb-Resio-Tracy or DIA) DIA: direct interaction approximation Hasselmann et al. 1985
- S_{ds} : dissipation, primarily due to wave breaking (new parameterization based on Romero and Melville 2011, Romero et al. 2012)

Romero and Melville 2011: Statistics of wave steepness is consistent with weakly non-Gaussian statistics

Romero et al. 2010: Parameterization of strength of wave breaking as a function of the spectral saturation based on field observations and modeling

New model extends the analytical results of Romero and Melville 2011 at the spectral peak over the entire spectrum, assuming self similarity.

Model was tuned and validated against available observations

**Numerical Framework: WAVEWATCH III

Spectral Statistics of Breaking Fronts: $\Lambda(c)$

- Following Phillips 1985
 - L= $\int \Lambda(c) dc$:Length of breaking crests per unit surface area
 - Moments of
 - Breaking probability ~ $\int \Lambda(c)c \, dc$

 - Energy dissipation $\sim \int b(c)\Lambda(c)c^5 dc$

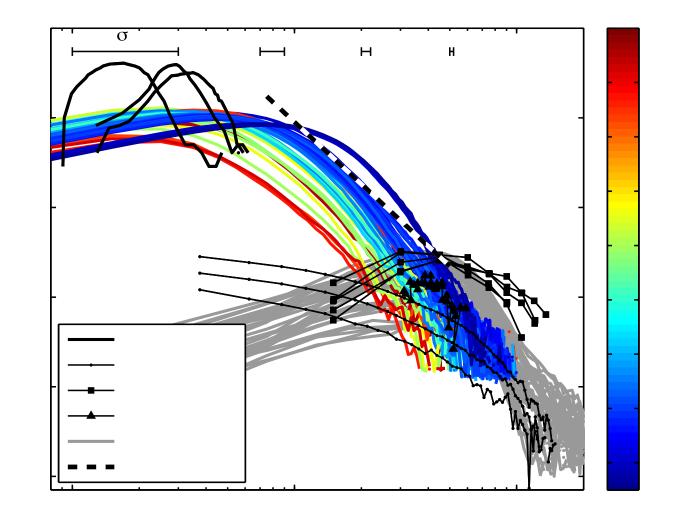
- Whitecap coverage $\sim \int \Lambda(c)c^2 dc$ Gas transfer velocity $\sim \int b(c)\Lambda(c)c^3 dc$
- Momentum flux $\sim \int b(c)\Lambda(c)c^4 dc$
- $\Lambda(c) \sim c^6$ within the equilibrium range above the spectral peak ($S_{in} \sim S_{nl} \sim S_{ds}$)
- Strength of wave breaking: $b(c, B) = A\left((B)^{\frac{1}{2}} (B_T)^{\frac{1}{2}}\right)^{\frac{1}{2}}$ (Romero et al 2012; Drazen et al. 2008)

•
$$\Lambda(k) \sim \exp(-\frac{1}{2} \left(\frac{BT}{B(k)}\right)^2), \qquad \Lambda(k,\theta)(-\frac{2g^2}{c^6}) = \Lambda(c,\theta), BT \text{ is a constant.}$$

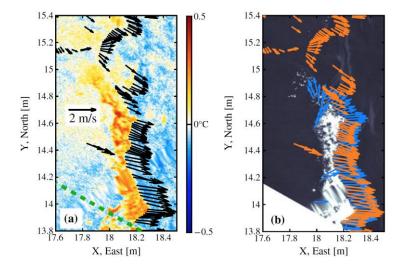
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Infrared Measurements of $\Lambda(c)$

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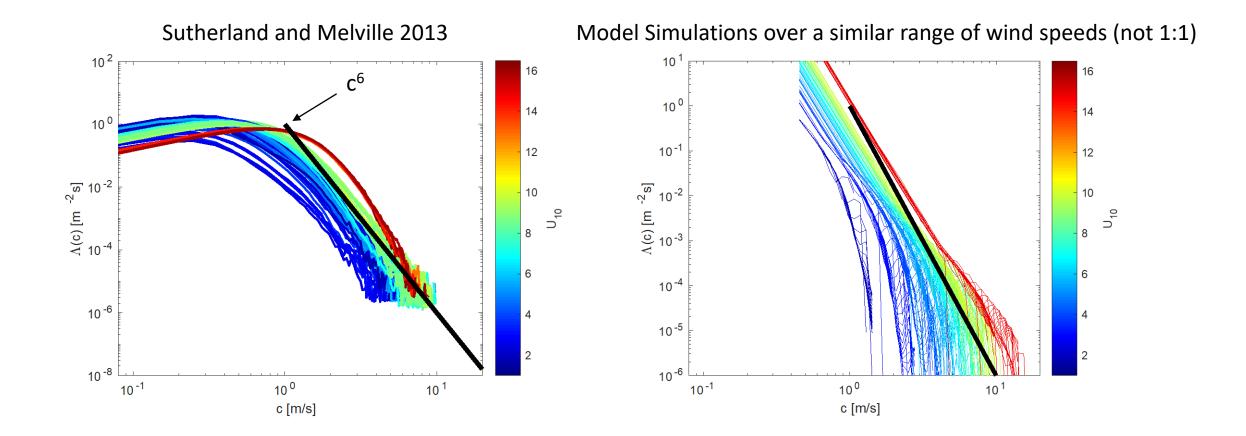


Sutherland and Melville 2013



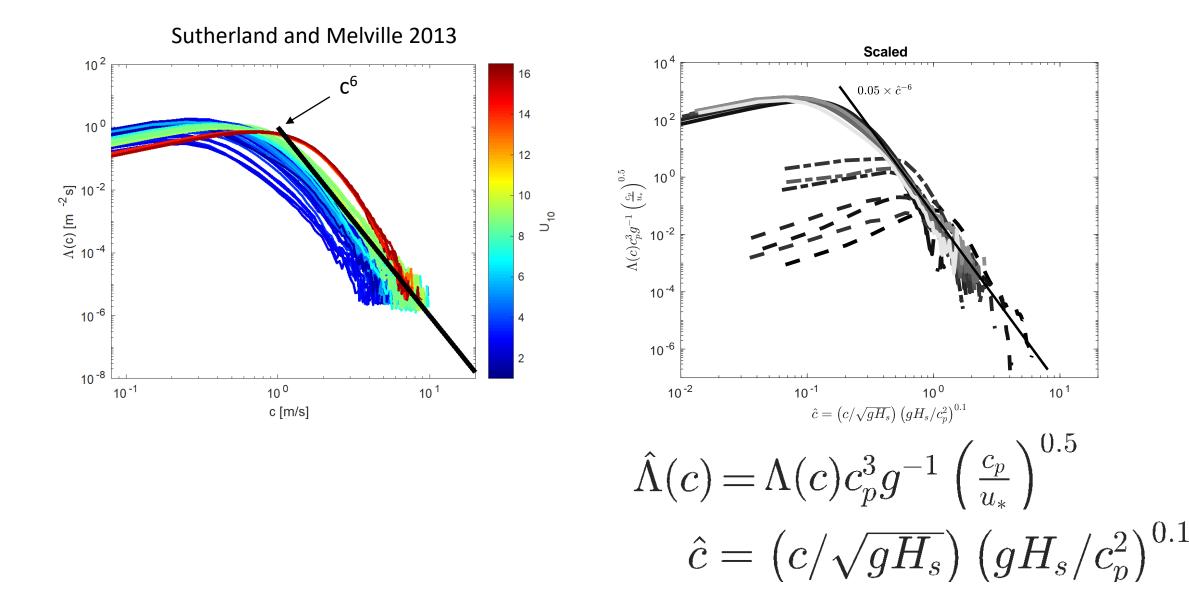
The new model parameterizes $\Lambda(c)$ as a function of the spectral saturation with a few tuning parameters

Distribution of Breaking Fronts: $\Lambda(c)$

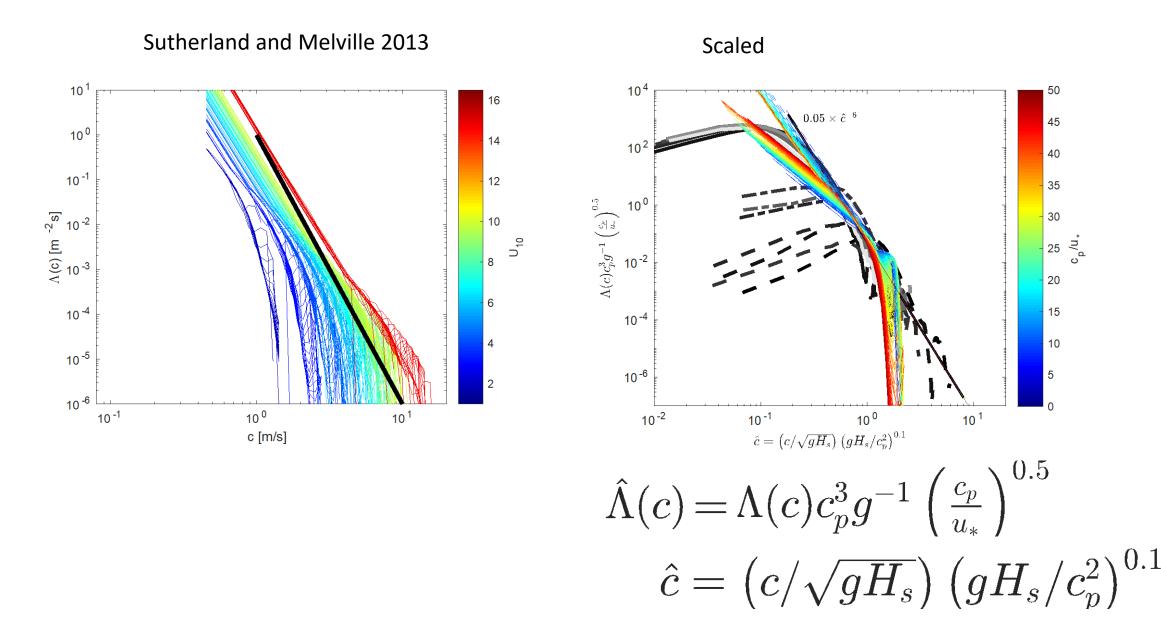


c⁶ is consistent with Phillips 1985

Distribution of Breaking Fronts: $\Lambda(c)$

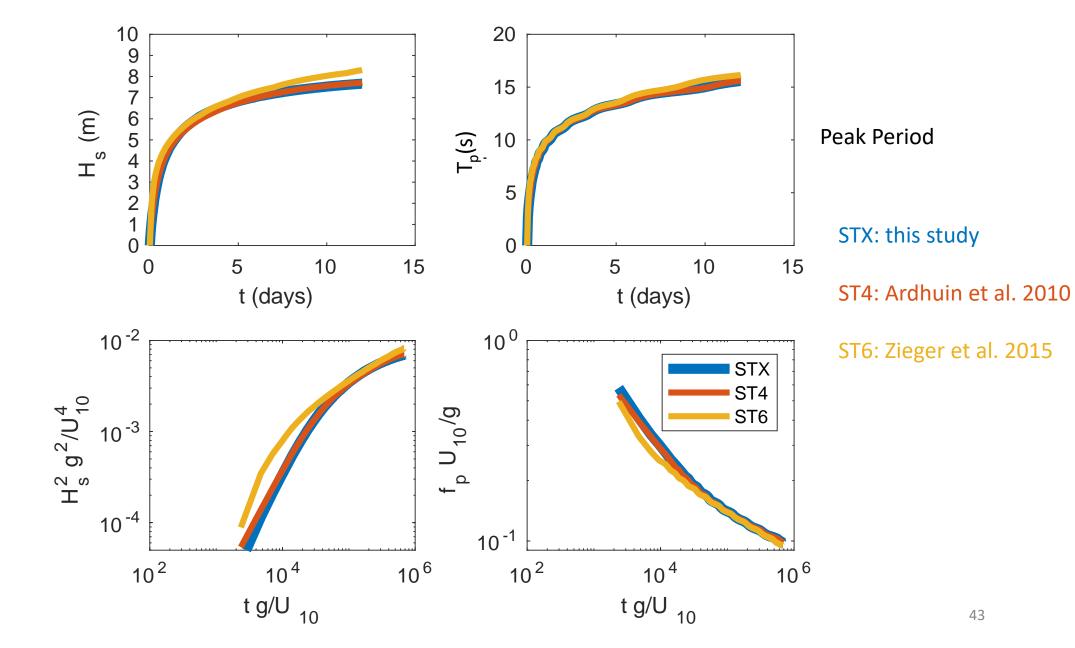


Distribution of Breaking Fronts: $\Lambda(c)$

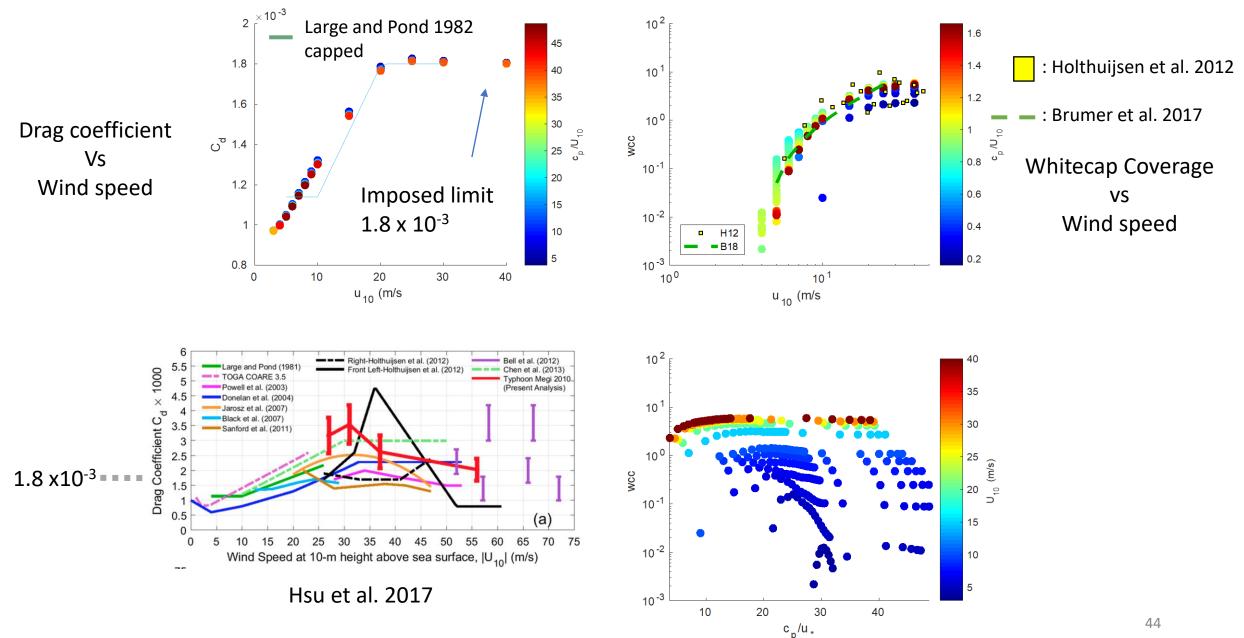


Model performance

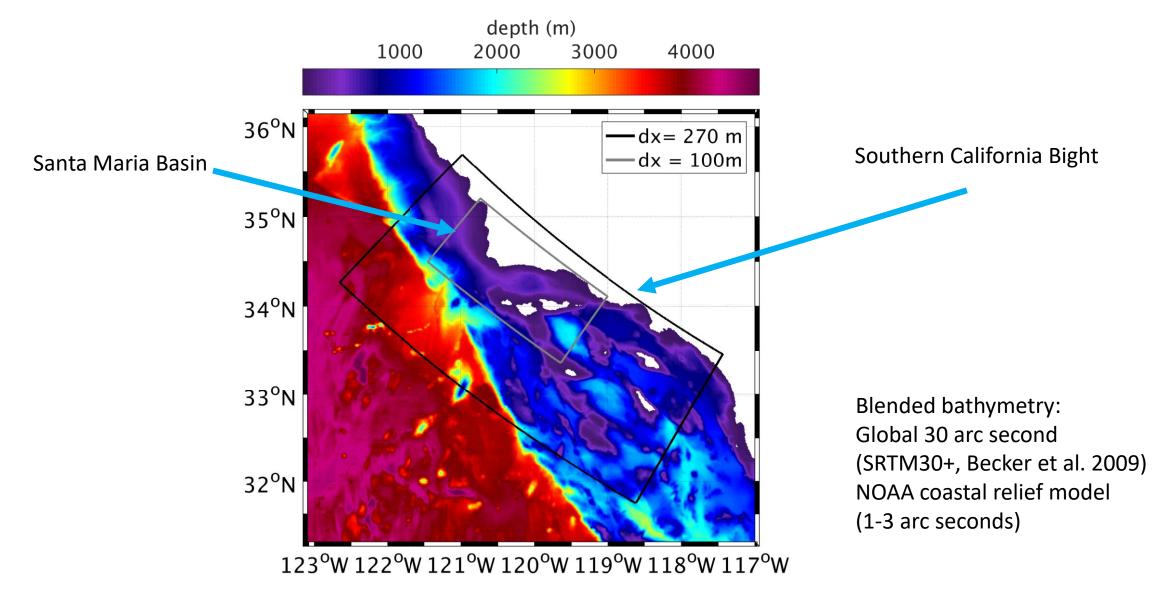




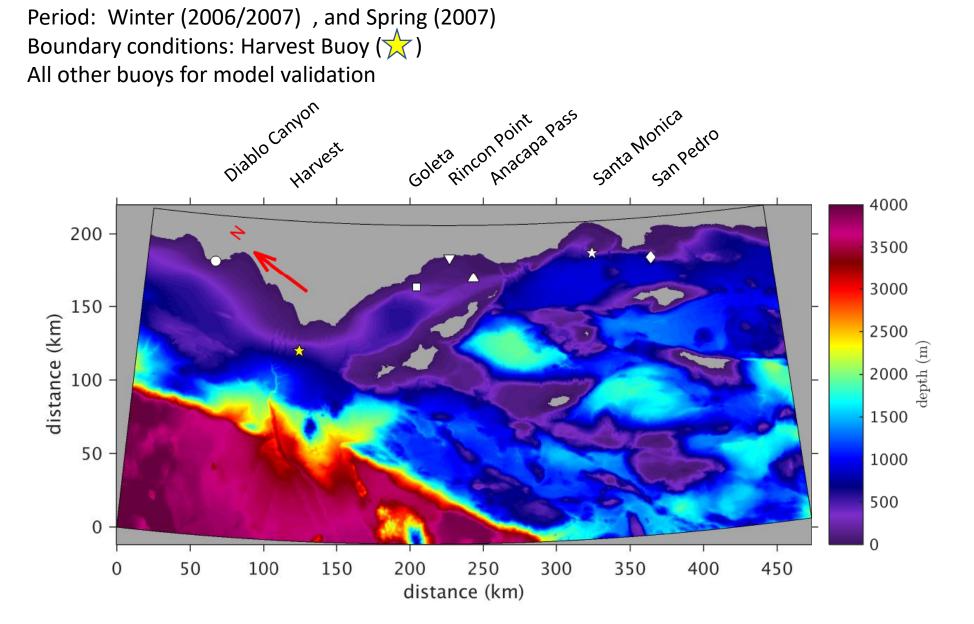
Drag coefficient and Whitecap coverage at high winds

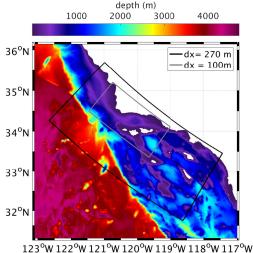


Nested Grids: 270 m and 100 m resolution



Wave Data from Coastal Data Information Program (CDIP)



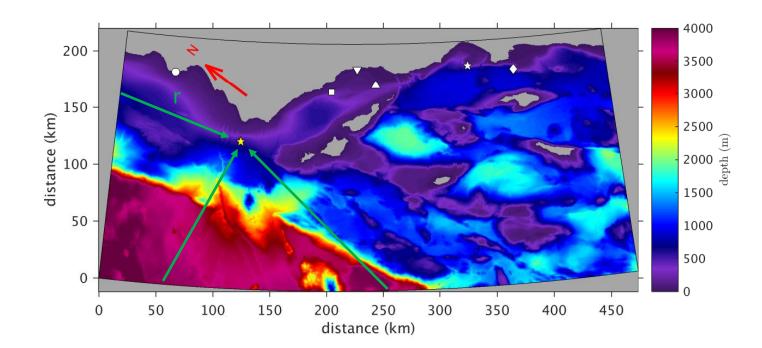


Boundary Conditions

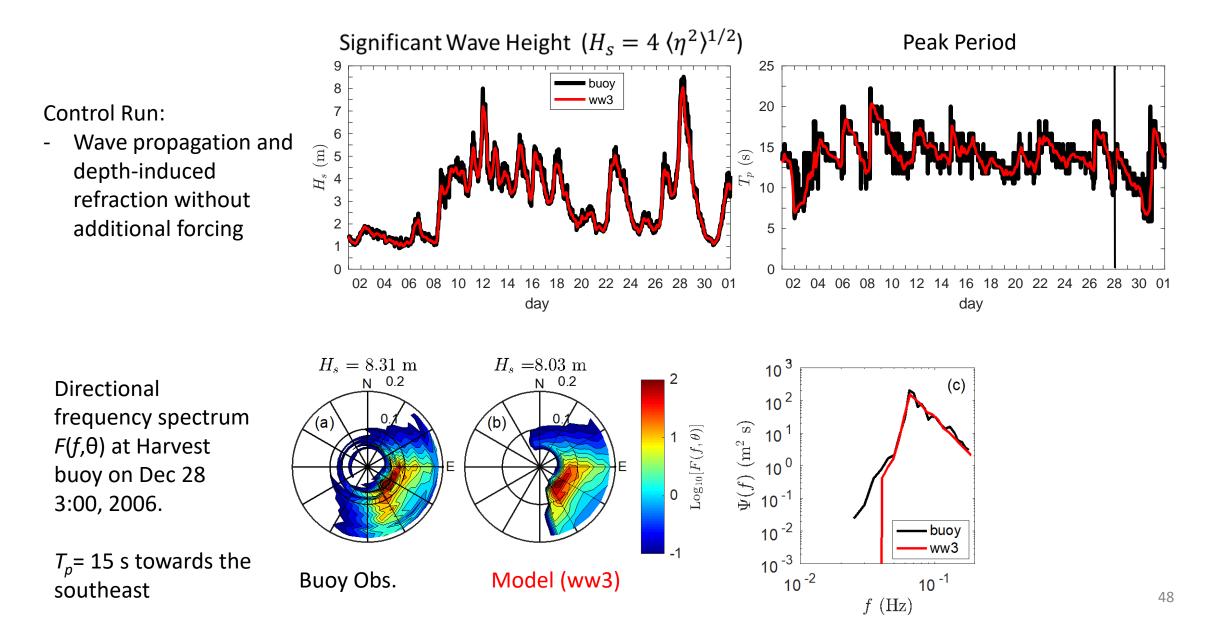
- Harvest buoy data are smoothed with at 2.5 hour filter
- Directional spectra are reconstructed from directional Fourier coefficients using Maximum Entropy Method (Lygre and Krogstad, 1986)
- Temporal lag (T_{lag}) accounting for the wave travel time between the boundary and buoy location using the linear dispersion relationship (cf., O'Reilly et al. 2016)

 $T_{lag} = r / C_g \sim \text{few hours}$

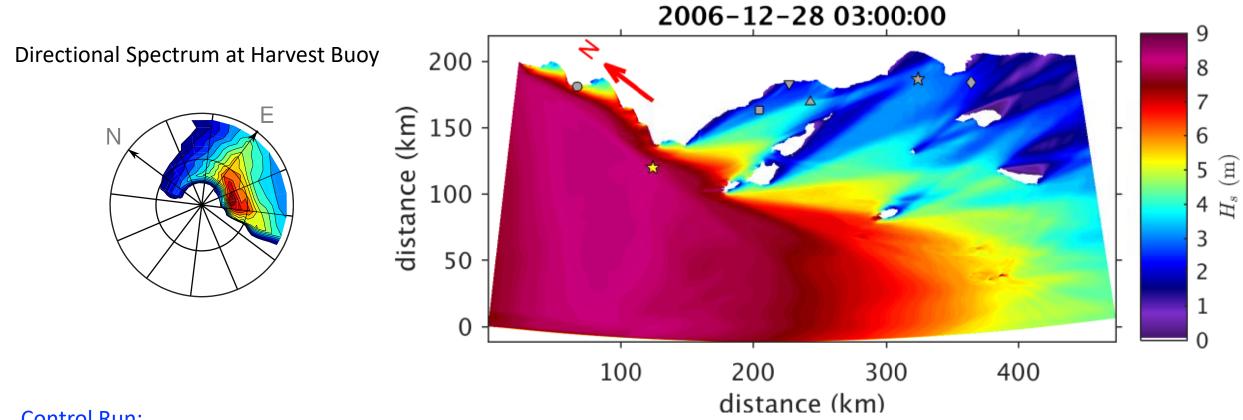
T_{lag} is accounted for all spectral components projected along the path between the boundary points and the Harvest buoy



Time Series at Harvest Buoy (Dec. 2006)



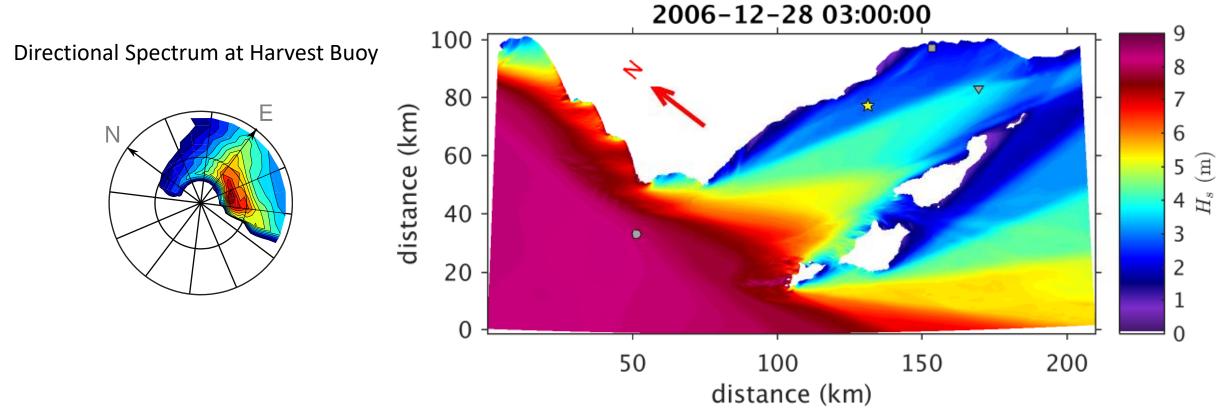
Snapshot of Significant Wave Height ($\Delta x = 270$ m)



Control Run:

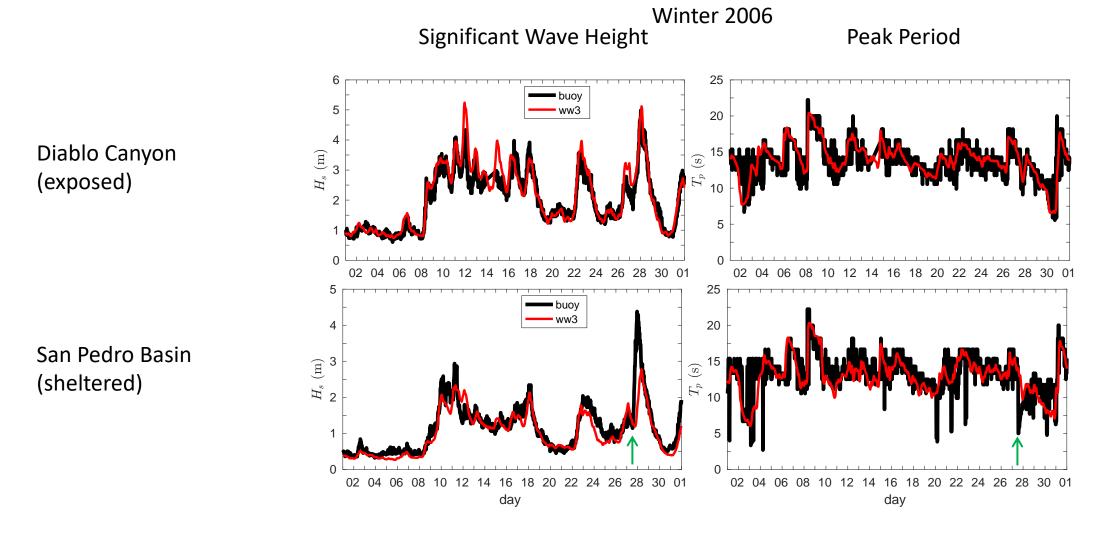
- Propagation and depth-induced refraction without additional forcing

Snapshot of Significant Wave Height ($\Delta x = 100 \text{ m}$)



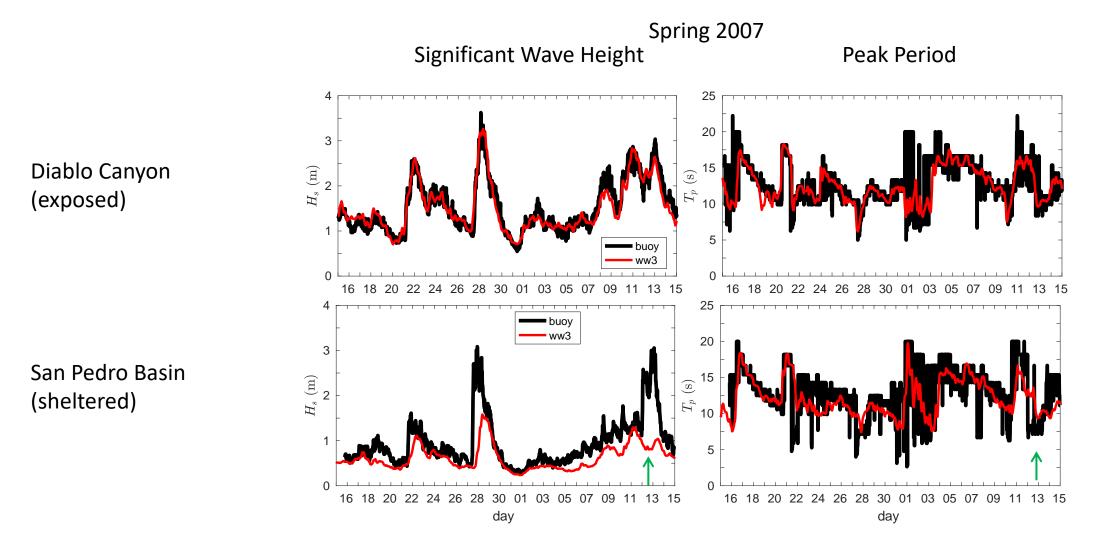
Model results at buoy locations give nearly identical solutions with two resolutions considered for water depths less than 10 m

Model Performance: Exposed vs. Sheltered Regions



- Larger model errors at sheltered regions
- When H_s differences are large, T_p observed is low, indicative mixed wind-sea and swell

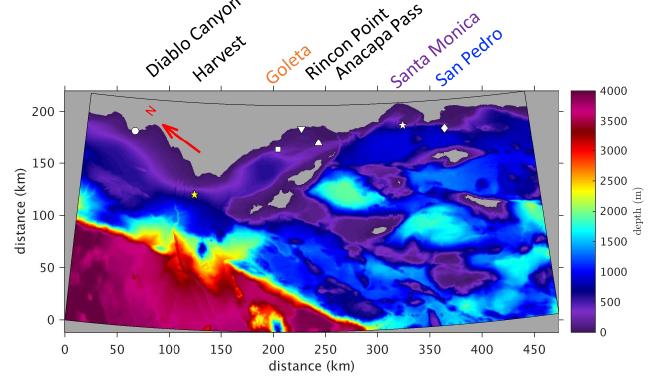
Model Performance: Exposed vs. Sheltered Regions



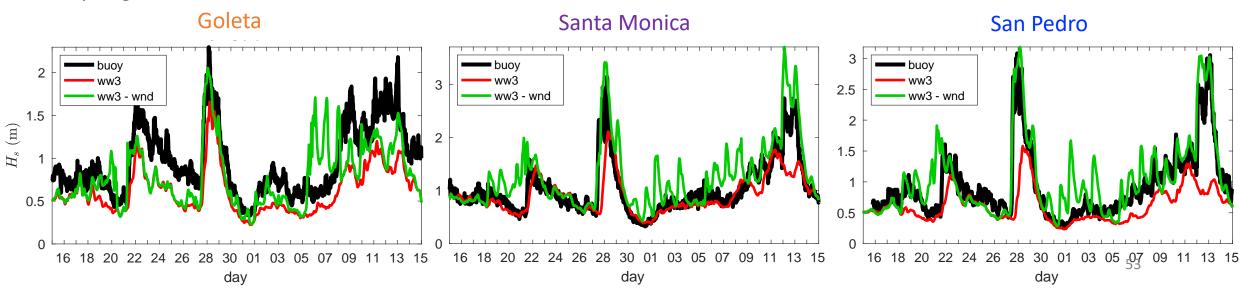
- Larger model errors at sheltered regions (5% vs 10% root-mean-square-errors and 0.96 vs 0.88 correlation)
- When H_s differences are large, T_p observed is low, indicative mixed wind-sea and swell

Wind Forcing

 Wind forcing can significantly improve model performance within sheltered areas during spring



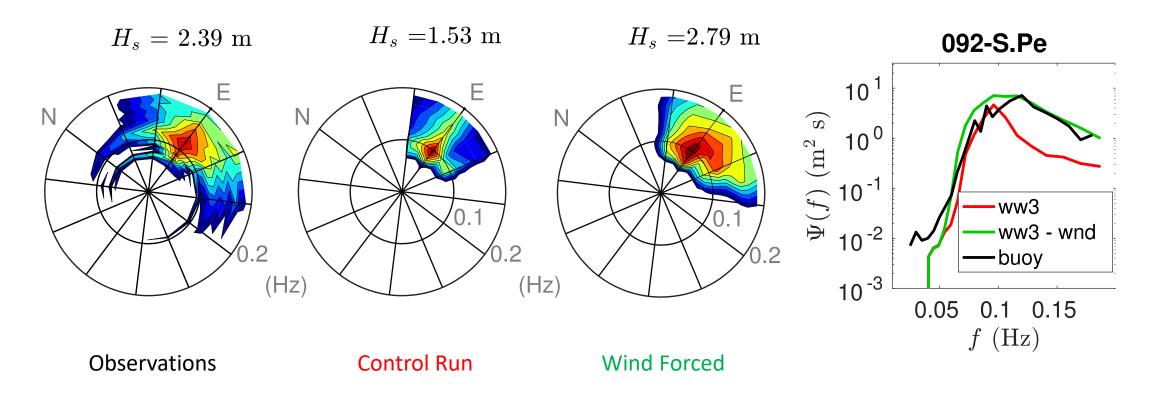
Spring 2007



Wind Forcing

• Directional and One-Dimensional Frequency Spectra at San Pedro

March 28, 8:00 UTC, 2007

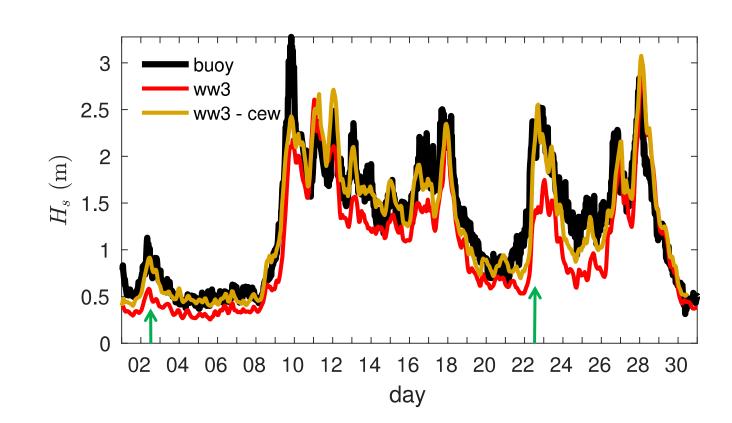


Spectrum forced by wind is in good agreement with observations

Current Effects on Waves (CEW)

• Significant wave height variability due CEW is around 20%, with larger values in the Santa Barbara Channel improving model performance during the 2006 winter

Goleta

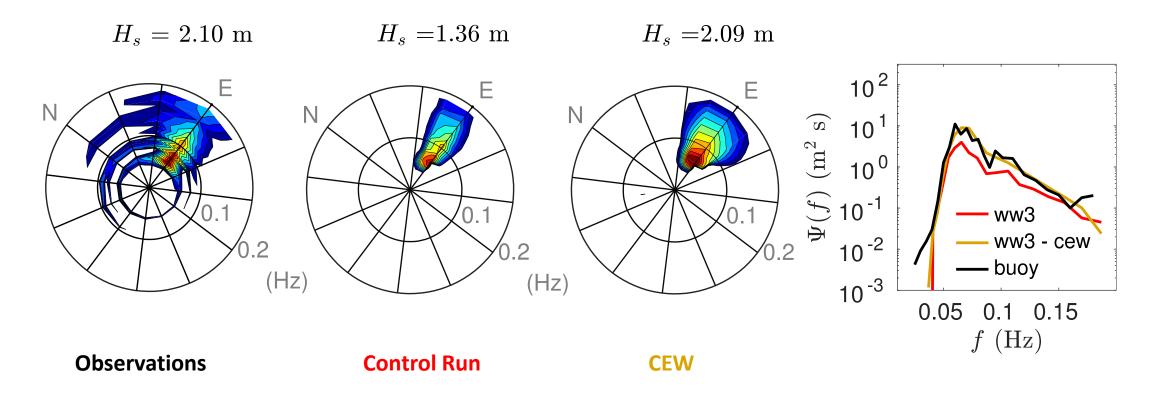


Winter 2006

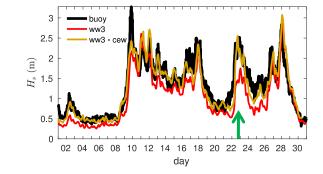
Current Effects on Waves (CEW)

• Directional and 1-D Frequency Spectra at Goleta Point

Dec 22, 12:00 UTC, 2006



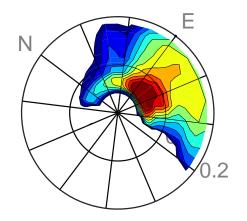
Spectrum forced by currents is wider and more energetic in better agreement with buoy data

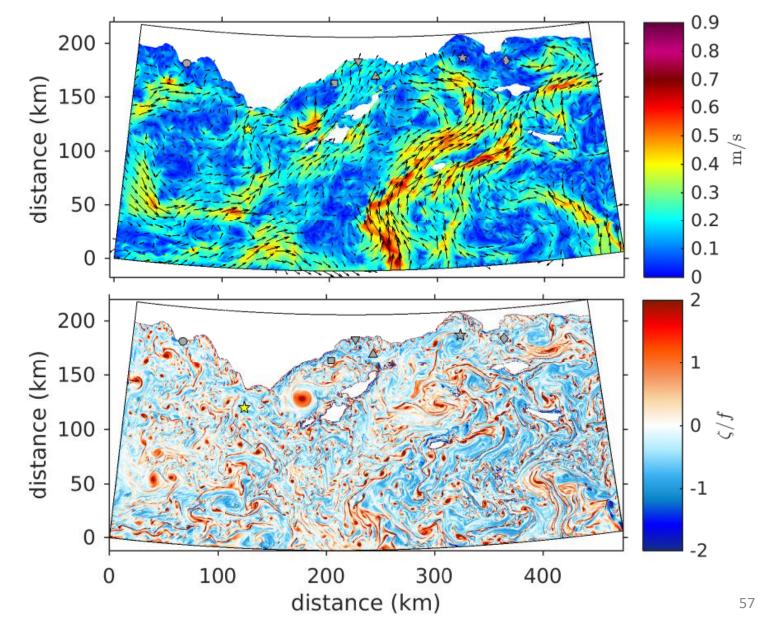


ROMS Surface Currents and Vorticity Field

Dec 22, 12:00 UTC, 2006

Directional Spectrum at Harvest (\bigstar)

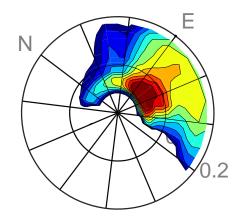


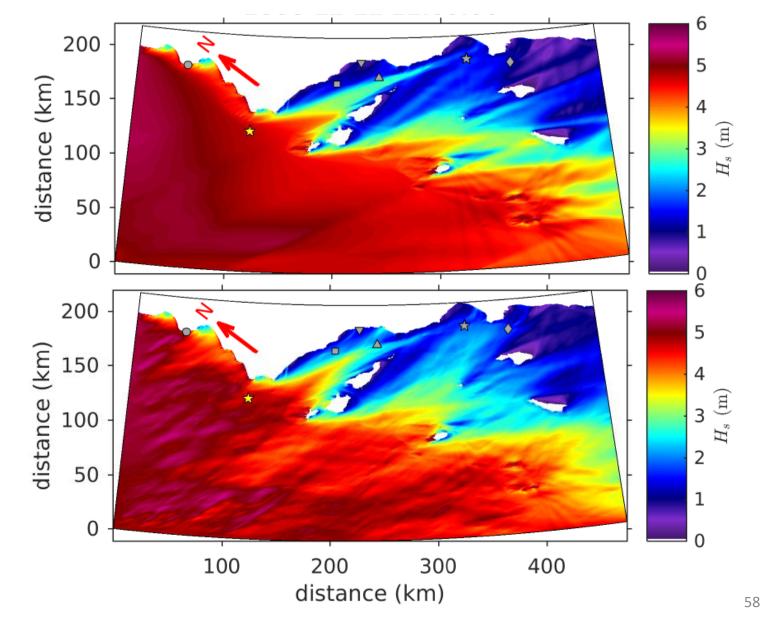


Significant Wave Height: Control Run vs WEC

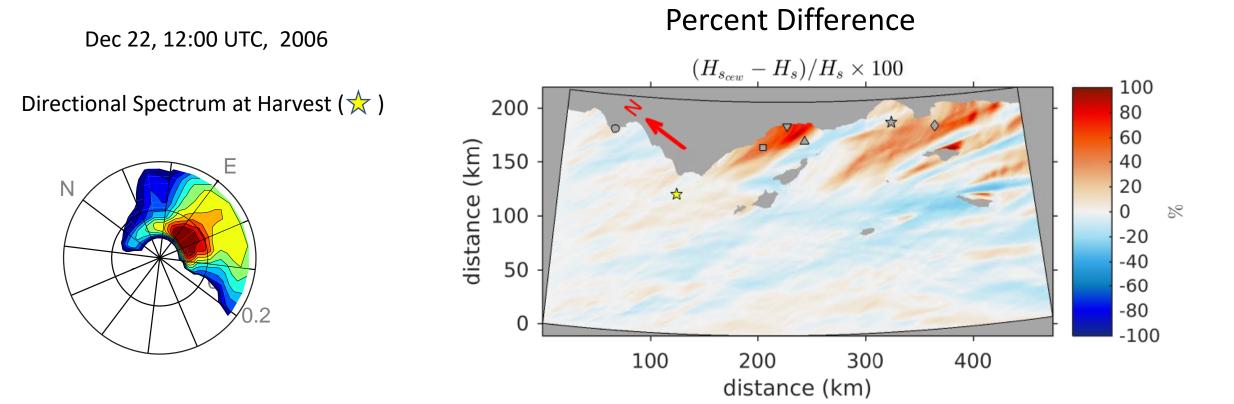
Dec 22, 12:00 UTC, 2006

Directional Spectrum at Harvest (\bigstar)





Significant Wave Height: Control Run vs WEC

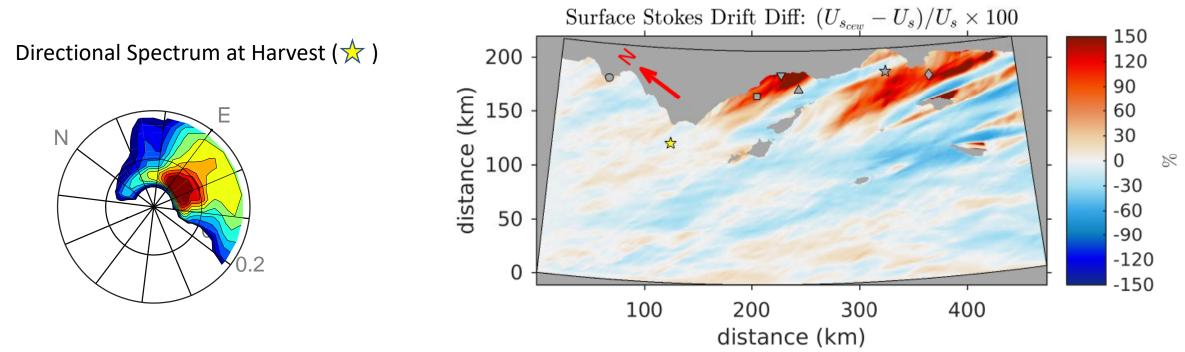


• Significant wave height variability due CEW is around 20%, with larger values in the sheltered areas

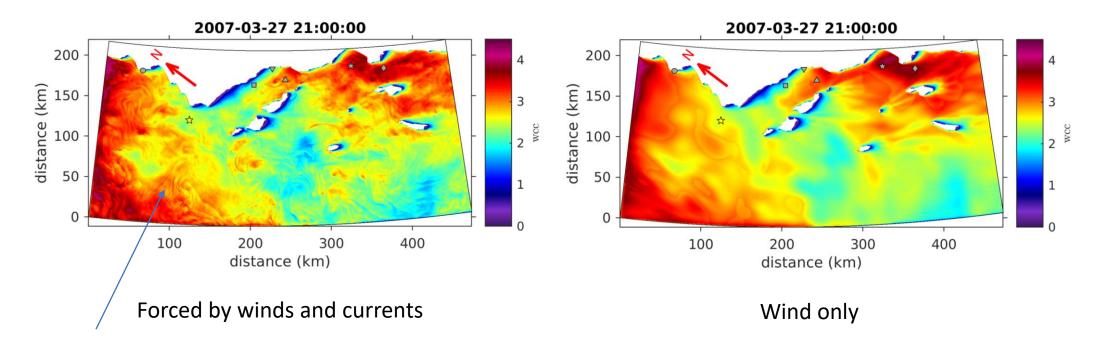
Surface Stokes Drift: Control Run vs WEC

Dec 22, 12:00 UTC, 2006

Percent Difference

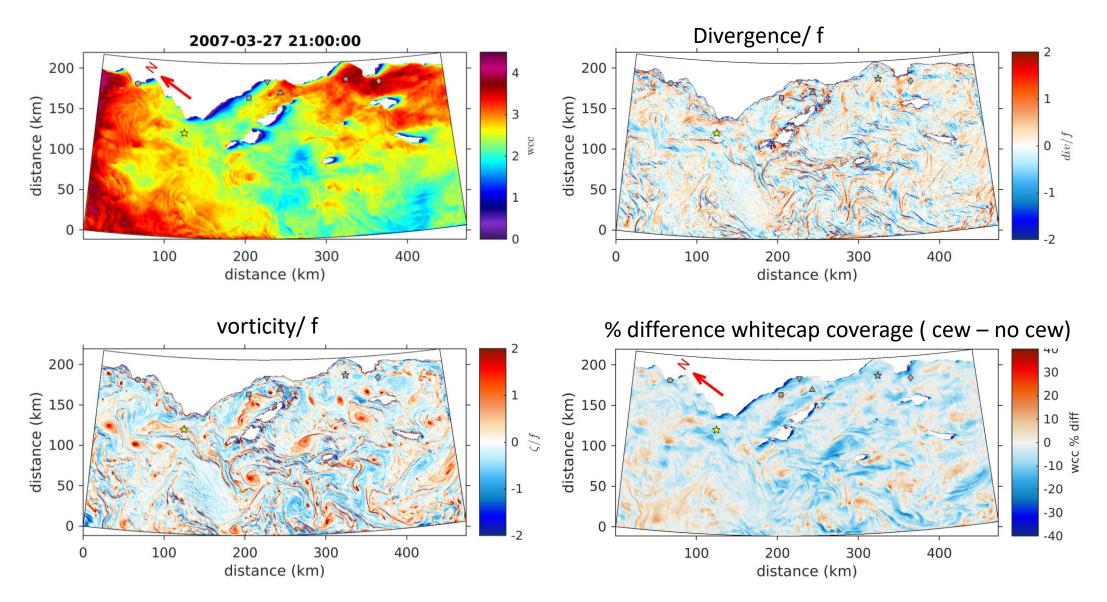


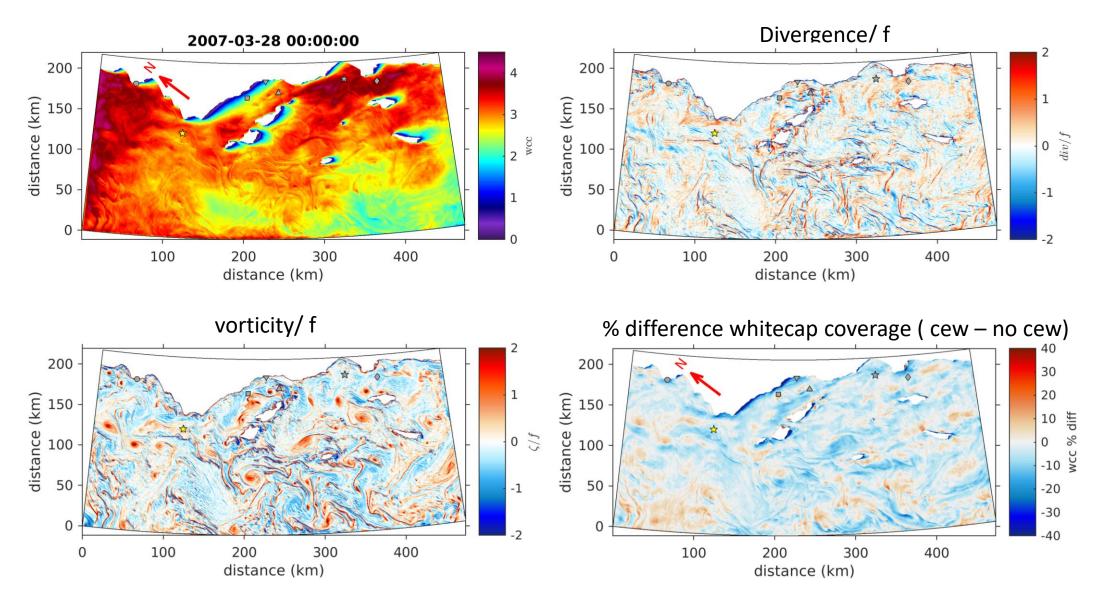
- Stokes drift spatial modulation is similar to that of Hs much with much larger percent changes with values around 30% over exposed areas and greater than 100% within the Bight
- Narrower spectrum over focal areas results in larger surface Stokes drift

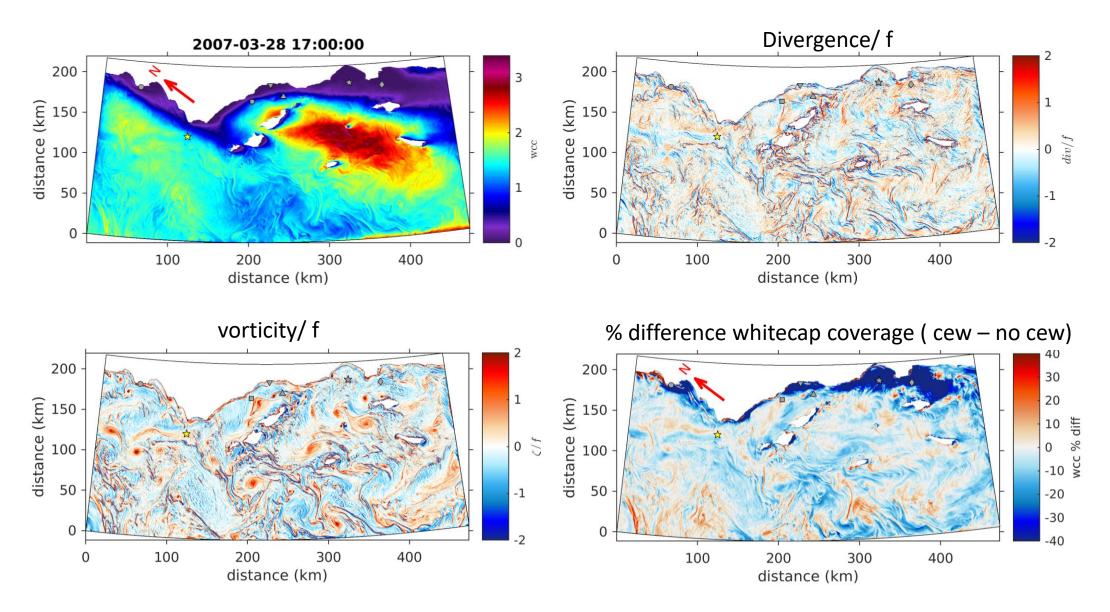


Enhanced breaking at fronts and filaments (c.f. Romero et al 2017)









Summary and Conclusions

- New wave breaking parameterization implemented in WaveWatch III
- Model performance is very good reproducing observations, including high winds (< 40 m/s)
- Whitecap coverage at high winds saturates not exceed 10%
- Gas transfer velocities from DNS and CO2 from field observations are also well reproduced
- CEW results in modulation of H_s by 20% over wave exposed areas, with larger variability within the Bight (up 100%)
- CEW significantly modulate the Surface Stokes drift by 40% over exposed areas and by more than 100% within the Bight.
- CEW results in modulation of wcc by up to 40% over wave exposed areas, with larger variability within the Bight (up 100%)
- Large eddies (i.e. Santa Barbara eddy) can significantly increase the energy flux towards coast of Santa Barbara

ROMS surface vorticity: with and without wave effects on currents (WEC)

Control

2007-03-19 15:34 1.3 ζ_z/f (WEC) 200 0.9 0.6 150 y [km] 0.3 Forced by waves 0.0 (vortex force) 100 -0.3 -0.6 -0.9 50 -1.3 ζ/f (no WEC) 1.26 200 0.940.63 150 y [km] 0.31 0.00 100 -0.31-0.63 -0.9550 -1.260 100 200 300 400 0

x [km]

Feedback –offline coupling

Ongoing and Future Work

- Wave model validation against Romero et al. 2017
- Two-way (online) coupling of ROMS and WW3 with OASIS3-MCT
 - Spectral peak coupling (i.e., H_s, T_p, and mean wave direction) following the framework by Uchiyama et al. 2010 (coupling of two-dimensional fields) – DONE
 - Fully coupled Stokes drift (required coupling of three-dimensional fields)
 - Coupling of non-conservative effects (wind stress from wave breaking)
- Two-way coupled ROMS-WW3 simulations in Southern California with validation against field observations (Langmuir DRI, Inner Shelf DRI)
 - Fully coupled vs spectral peak coupling (vortex forces)
 - Non-conservative effects (e.g., modification of the surface stress)
- Three-way coupled ROMS-WW3-WRF
 - coupled air-sea fluxes

Thank You



