

# Introducing the BLUEMIRA fusion reactor design framework

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# Outline

- Introduction
- Selected BLUEMIRA modules
- Case studies
- Next steps

# Introduction

Dozens of organisations are presently designing fusion power reactors across the world.



Most of their concepts are MCF, many of which are tokamaks.

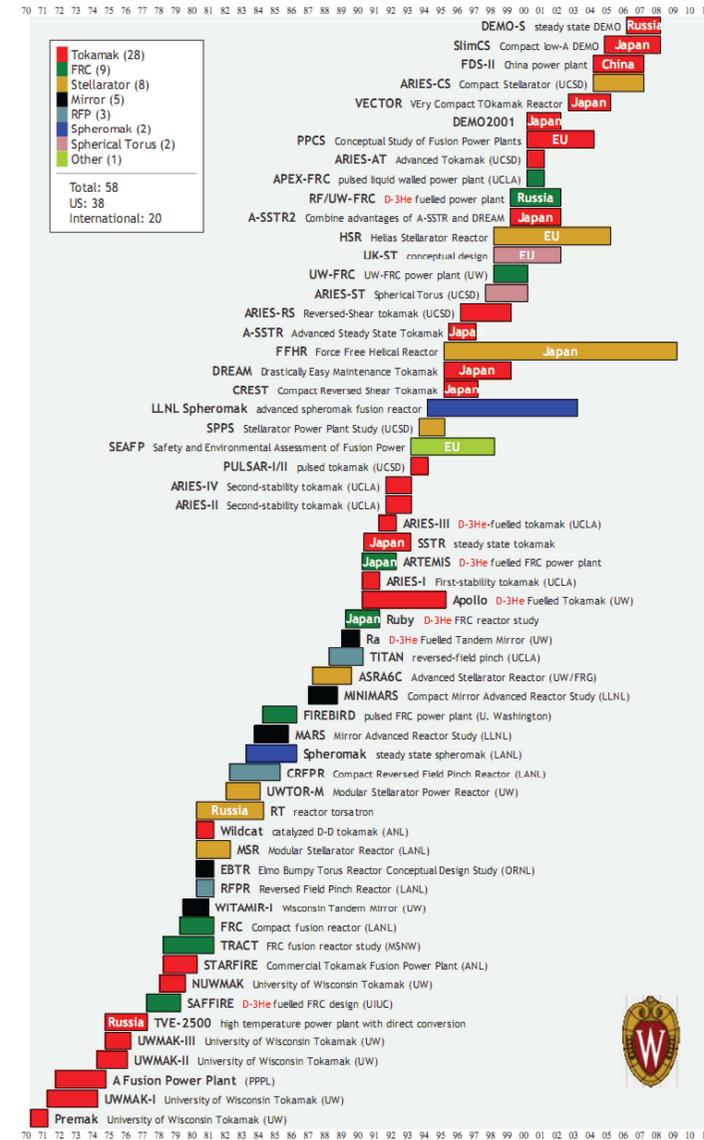
# Introduction

The fact that many people are designing fusion power reactors is not new... but the nature of fusion research is changing.

Many organisations successfully use systems codes to inform their initial design stages, rapidly iterating low-fidelity design points.

When moving to higher fidelity concept designs, however, progress tends to slow down.

- A broad set of multi-disciplinary skills are required
- Different tools are used sequentially, passing assumptions, load cases, etc.
- Reaching a concept design and changing that design can be a very slow exercise...



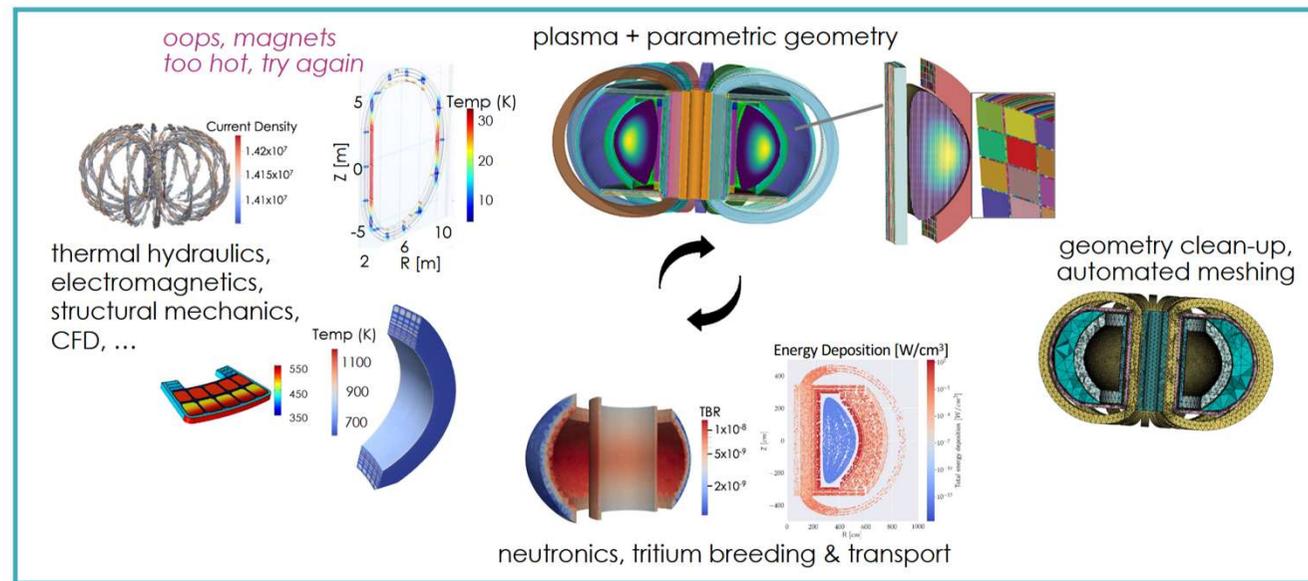
[1] El-Guebal, Fifty Years of Magnetic Fusion Research (1958–2008)

# Speeding up the design cycle

Several authors have noted the challenges that higher fidelity fusion reactor design cycles pose, and have proposed tools to address them:

- MIRA [2, 3]
- BLUEPRINT [4, 5]
- FUSE [6, 7]
- FREDA [8, 9]

Approach: Integrated multiphysics modeling with parametric engineering and uncertainty quantification to speed detailed, robust design



Even if predictions for an FPP regime are not yet validated, this approach enables progress in assessing feasibility of engineering requirements and tolerances.

[9]

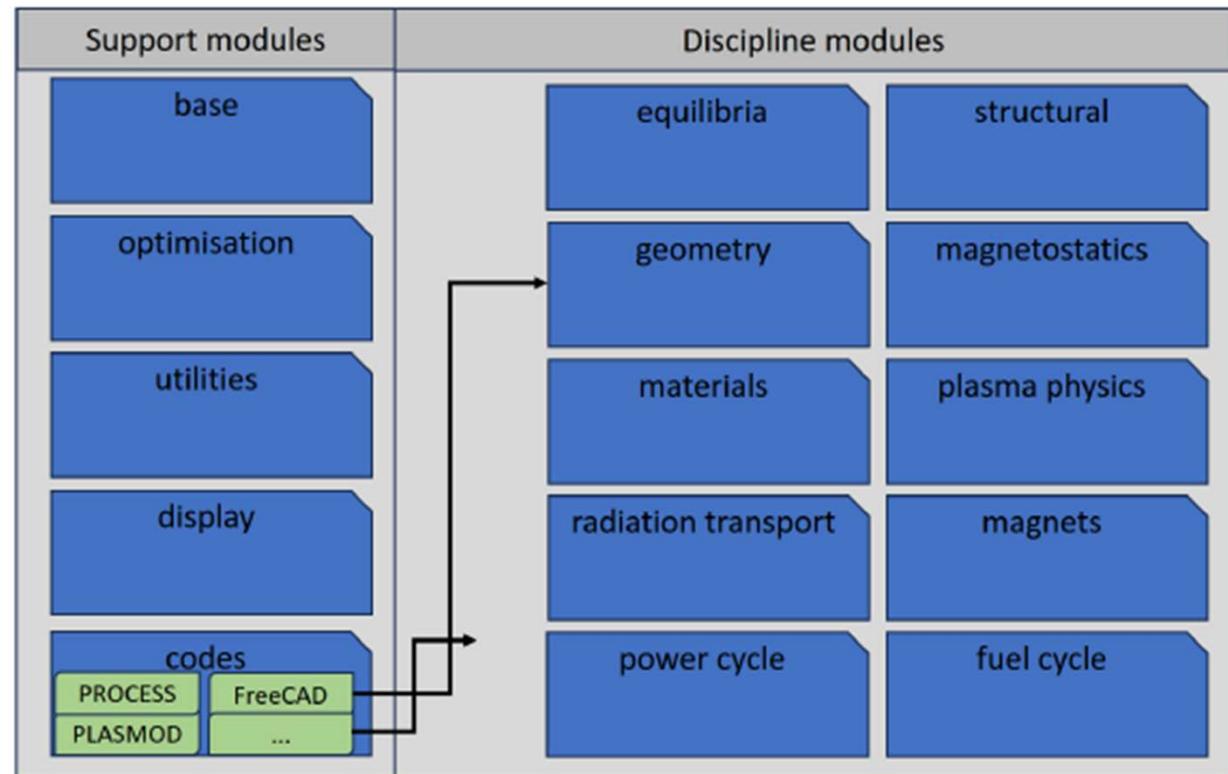
# Software, status, structure

## BLUEMIRA:

- Collaboration between UKAEA and KIT
- Version: 2.11.0
- License: LGPLv2.1+
- Language: Python 3.11 - 3.12
- Platform: Linux // WSL2 // (MacOS WIP)
- Modular

## Other associated software:

- [eqdsk](#) (v 0.8.0)
- [matproplib](#) (v 0.0.1)
- [tokamak-neutron-source](#) (v 0.1.4)
- [fast-ctd](#) (v 0.1.1)



# BLUEMIRA modules

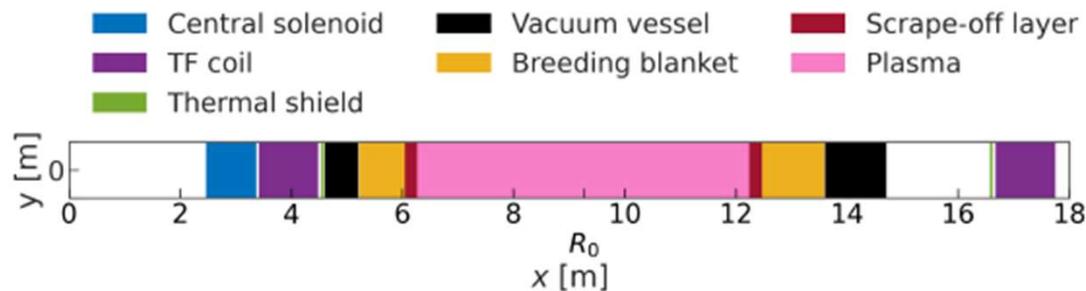
# 0/1-D radial build solver: PROCESS [10, 11]

BLUEMIRA has a generic interface to 0/1-D “systems codes”. We actively maintain an interface to PROCESS (latest release).

PROCESS is a simple but sophisticated systems code which we typically use as the starting point for a design workflow. It solves a “full reactor” constrained design optimisation problem and produces a 0/1-D design point.

L1	<a href="#">PROCESS Systems Code and its use in the STEP Concept Design Workflow</a>	Christopher Ashe	UKIFS
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The radial build, plasma profiles, and 0-D parameters are extracted and used in subsequent activities.



# Magnetostatics – (1/2)

BLUEMIRA has a range of 2-D and 3-D analytic and semi-analytic uniform current density source terms:

- Green's functions ( $\psi$ ,  $B_x$ ,  $B_z$ , ..)
- Poloidal ring of rectangular cross-section
- Biot-Savart filaments
- Trapezoid of rectangular cross-section
- Circular arc of rectangular cross-section

Fast and accurate calculations of magnetic fields without resorting to finite elements.

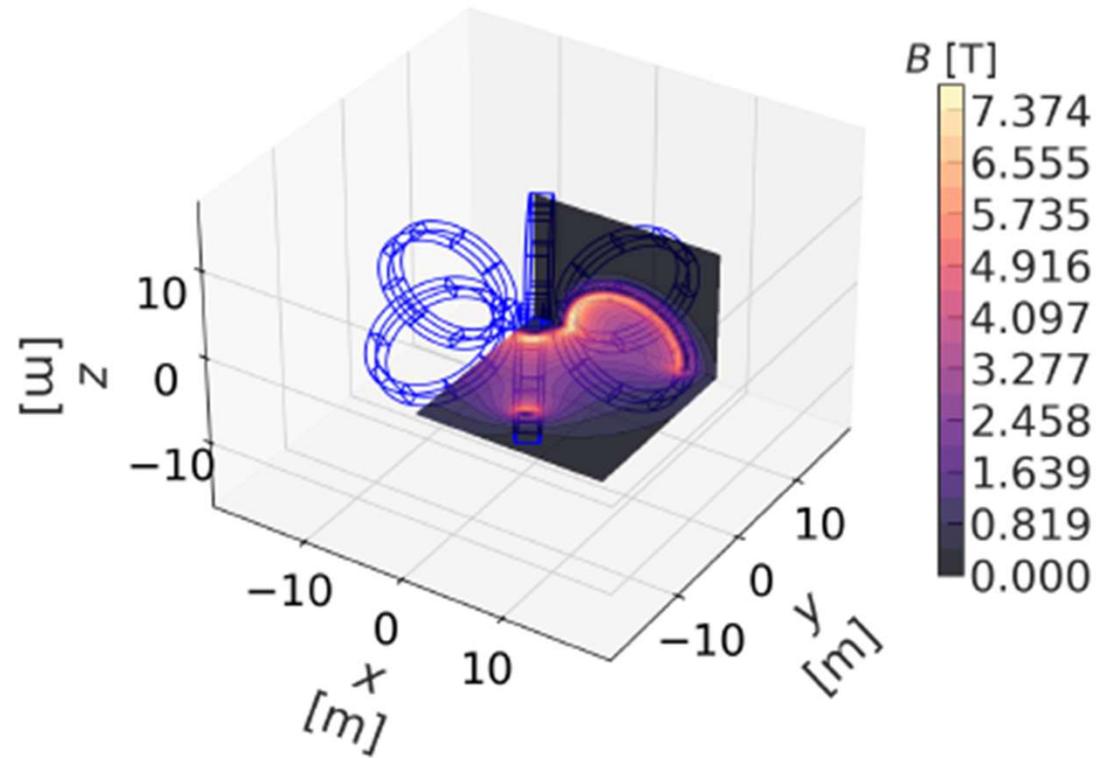
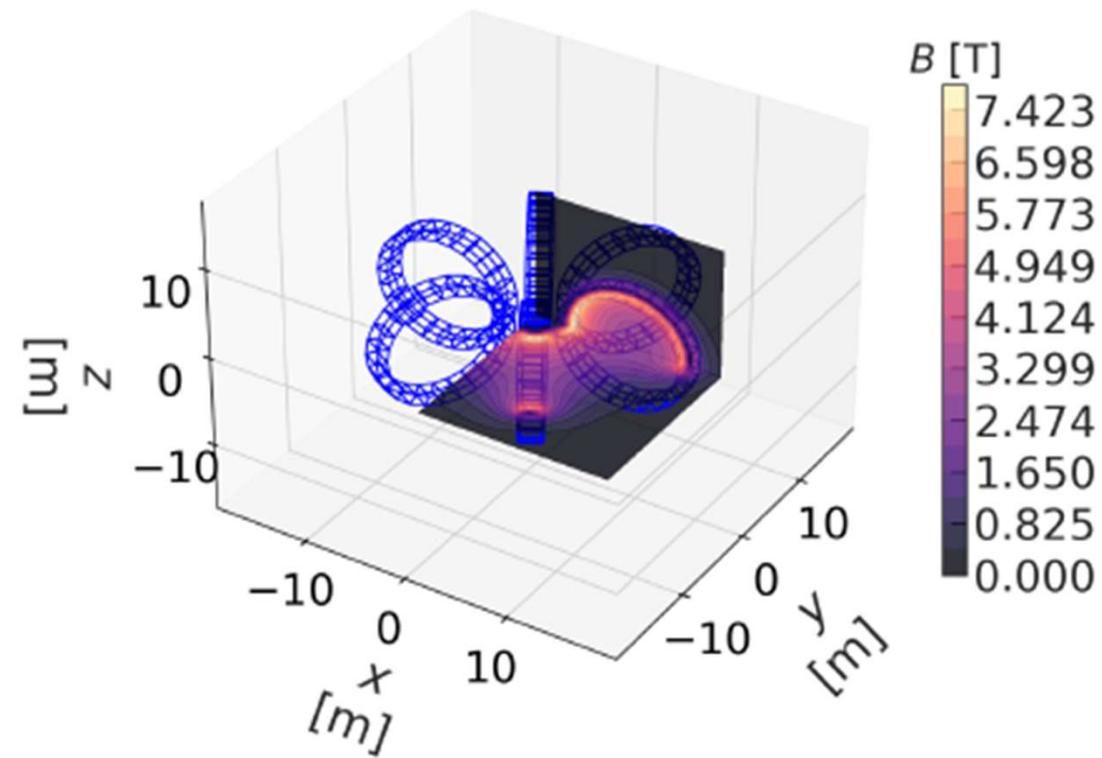
$$\mathbf{B}(\mathbf{r}) = \frac{\mu_0 I}{4\pi} \int_{\mathcal{L}} \frac{d\mathbf{l} \times (\mathbf{r} - \mathbf{r}')}{|\mathbf{r} - \mathbf{r}'|^3}$$

$$\mathbf{B}(\mathbf{r}) = \frac{\mu_0}{4\pi} \iiint_{\mathcal{V}} \frac{\mathbf{J}(\mathbf{r}') \times (\mathbf{r} - \mathbf{r}')}{|\mathbf{r} - \mathbf{r}'|^3} d\mathbf{r}'$$

where:

- $d\mathbf{l}$  = differential vector of a current-carrying path
- $\mathbf{r}$  = sink point  $\{x, y, z\}$  at which the field is to be calculated
- $\mathbf{r}'$  = source point  $\{x', y', z'\}$  containing the centre of the current source
- $\mathcal{L}$  = length domain where the current flows
- $d\mathbf{r}'$  = differential volume of a current-carrying element
- $\mathbf{J}$  = current density vector
- $\mathcal{V}$  = volume domain where  $\mathbf{J}$  is defined

# Magnetostatics – (2/2)



# Equilibria – (1/2) free boundary solver

Free boundary solver:

- Static, inverse
- Finite difference
- Arbitrary profiles (incl. formulations to match  $\{\beta_p, l_i, I_p\}$ )
- Benchmarked with CREATE [12], FreeGSNKE [13]

Equilibrium constraints:

- Flux
- Isoflux
- Radial, vertical field
- ...

$$\mathbf{GI} - \mathbf{b}_t + \mathbf{b}_p = \mathbf{0}$$

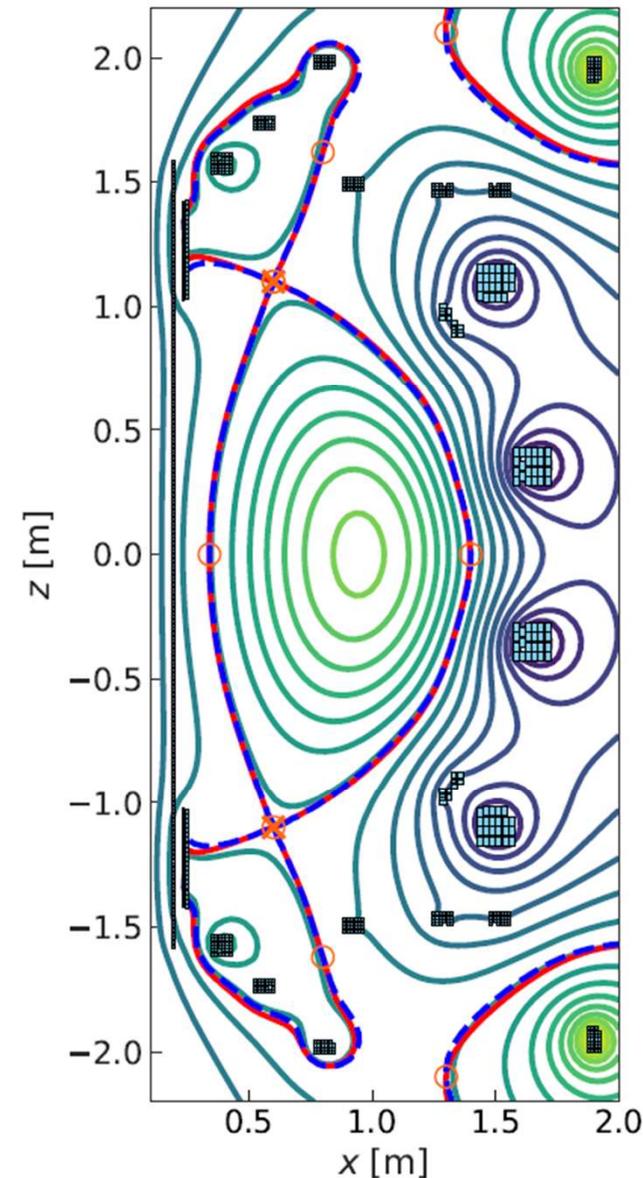
where:

$\mathbf{G} = n_t \times n_c$  matrix of unit current responses at the control points

$\mathbf{I} = n_c$  vector of coil currents

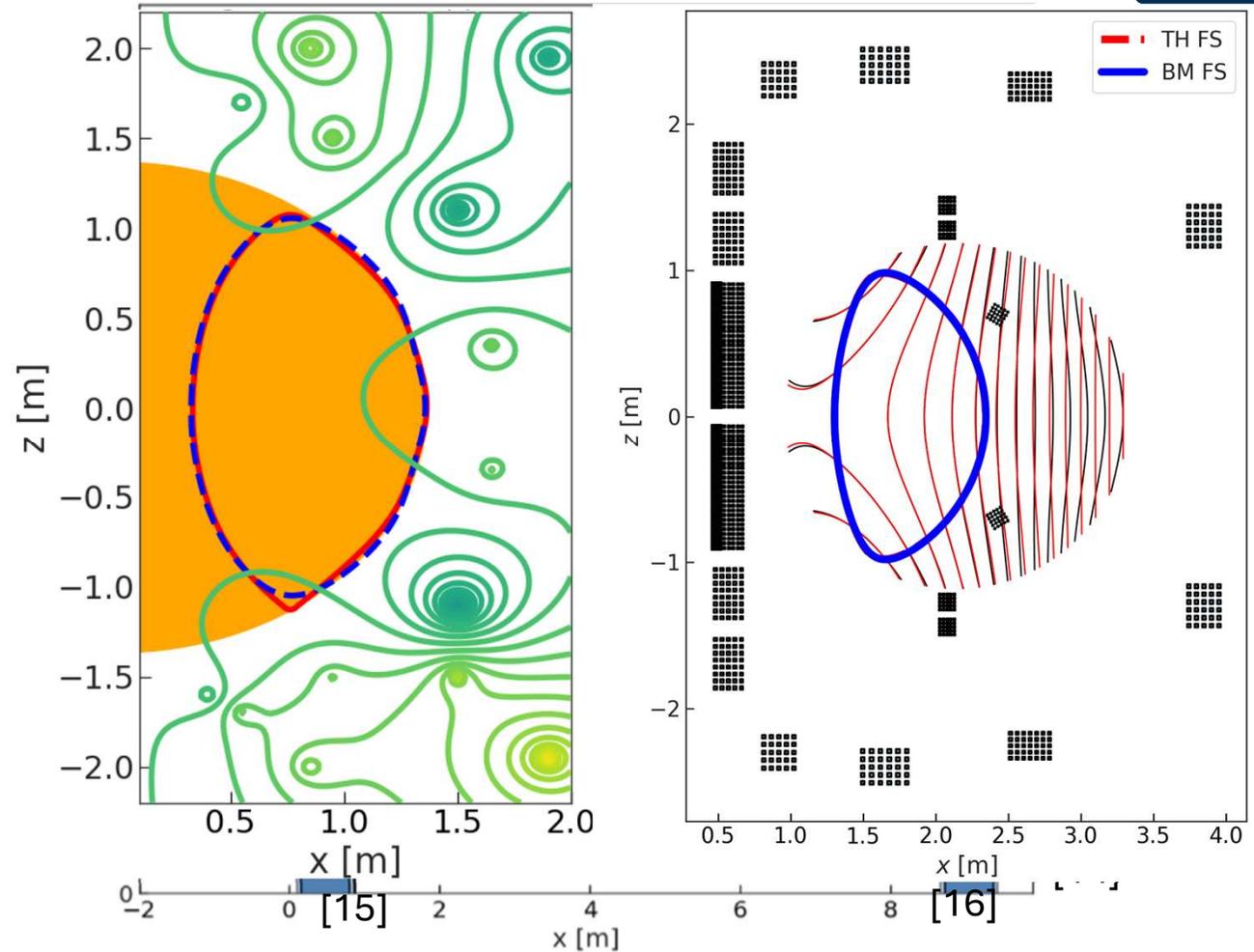
$\mathbf{b}_t = n_t$  vector of desired target values

$\mathbf{b}_p = n_t$  vector of passive current contributions (including the plasma)



# Equilibria – (2/2) additional features

- Solve a variety of constrained optimisation problems, e.g:
- Routines for constrained coil position and current optimisation
- Up-down symmetric coils and equilibrium solve
- Spherical [15] and toroidal harmonic [16] constraints
- RZIp [17] implementation, benchmarked with FIESTA [18]



## Geometry – (1/2)

Geometry in BLUEMIRA is provided in terms of native CAD “primitives” (boundary representations)

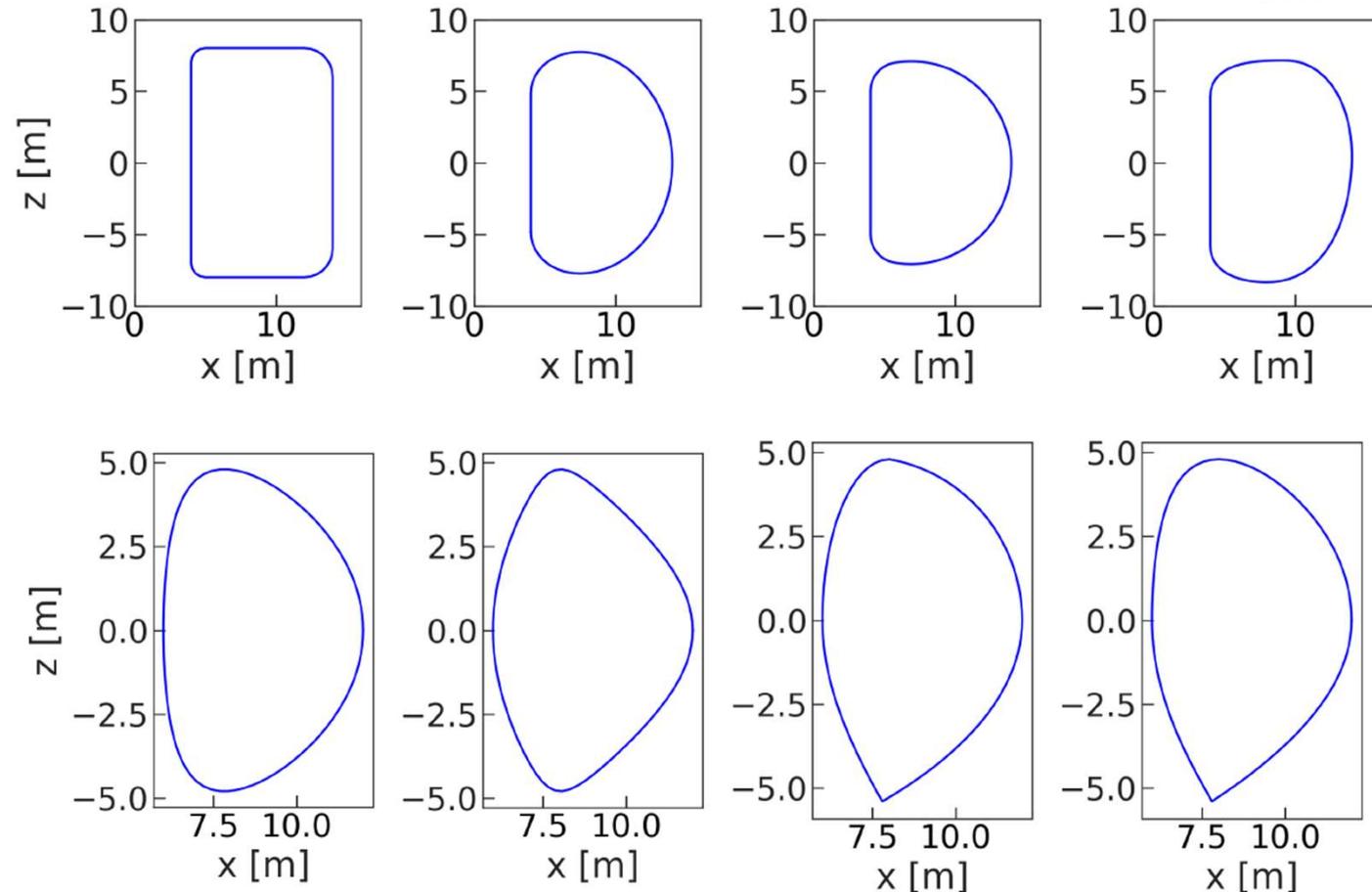
- OpenCASCADE is wrapped by FreeCAD, which is wrapped in BLUEMIRA. This is to protect users from API changes...
- Primitive geometry representation does away with some discretisation issues, and facilitates interfacing with meshing and finite element codes
- FreeCAD and Polyscope viewers



# Geometry – (2/2)

Geometry parameterisations are provided to enable optimisation of geometry

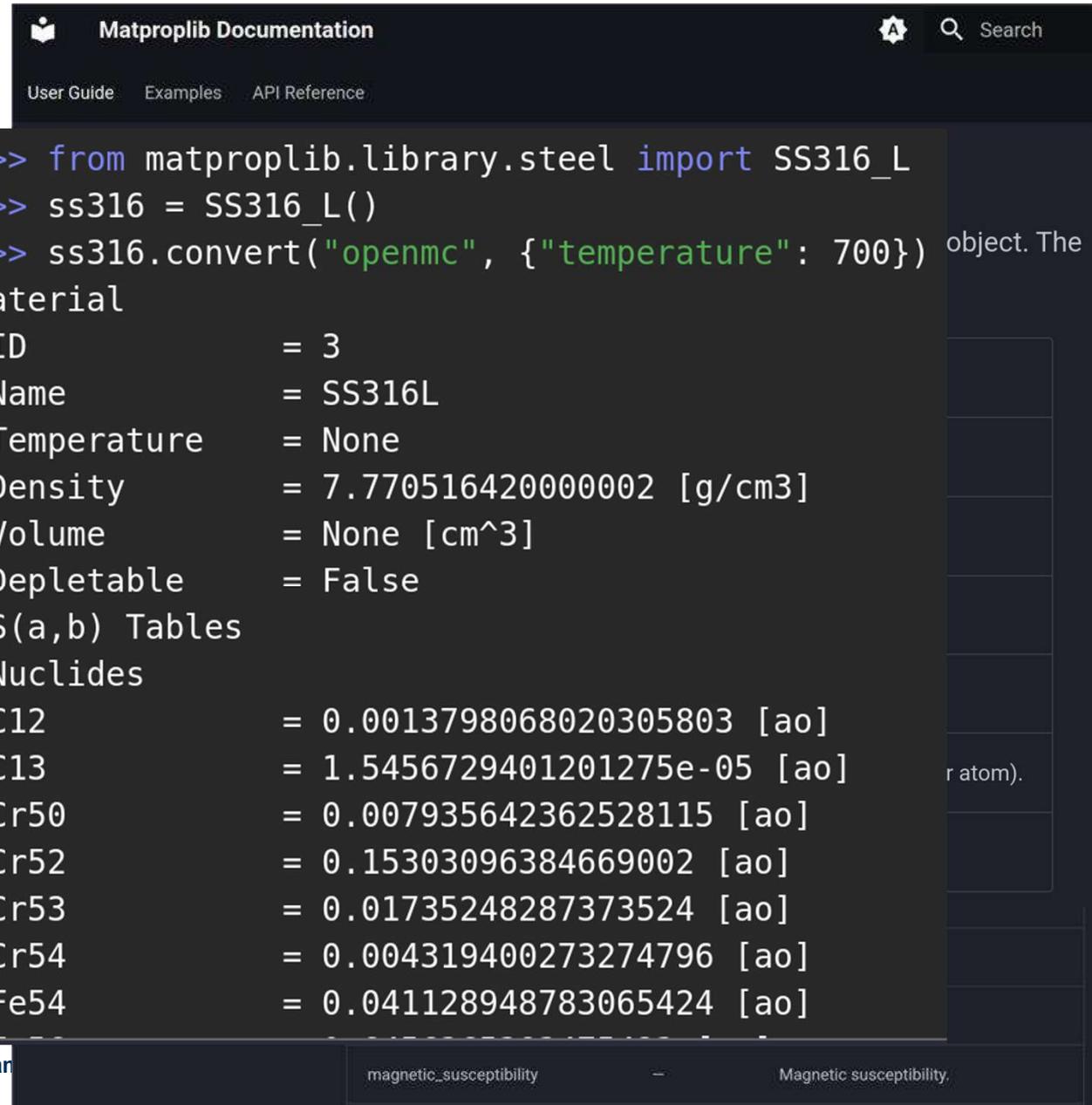
- Built-in geometrical constraints (e.g. tangency)
- Different parameterisations can be used in the same optimisation problems
- Enables different topologies to be explored



# Materials

A materials property library package, [matproplib](#), is used in BLUEMIRA.

- Create materials and mixtures of materials
- Define material composition
- Assign material properties that depend on operational conditions
- Interfaces to:
  - Neutronics codes ([OpenMC](#) [20], [MCNP](#), ...)
  - FE codes (work in progress)
- Set of publicly available materials
- Private materials (e.g. EUROfer97, CuCrZr, etc.) hosted separately



The screenshot shows the Matproplib Documentation website. The navigation bar includes 'User Guide', 'Examples', and 'API Reference'. A search icon is present in the top right. The main content area displays a Python code snippet in a dark-themed editor:

```
>>> from matproplib.library.steel import SS316_L
>>> ss316 = SS316_L()
>>> ss316.convert("openmc", {"temperature": 700})
```

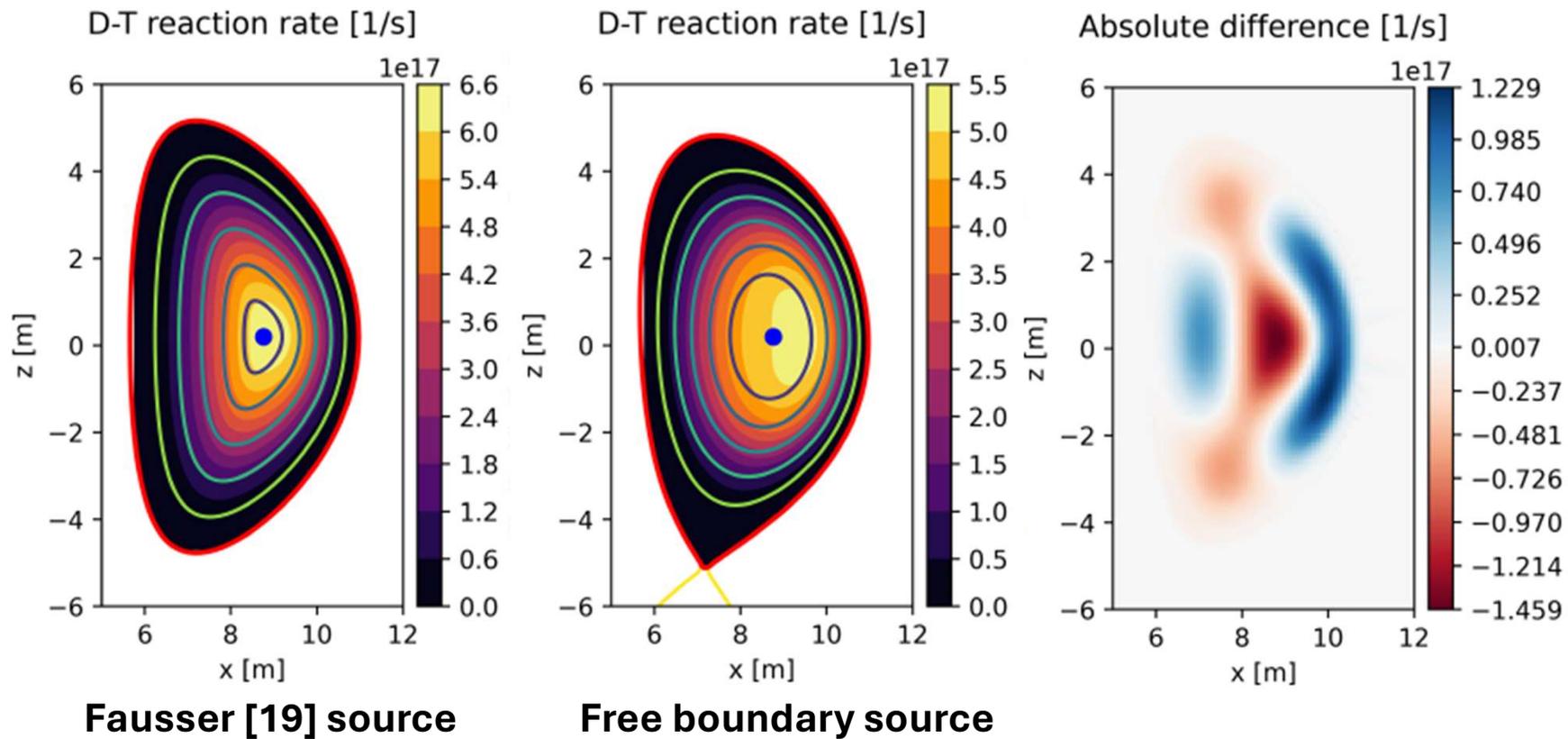
The output of the code is a dictionary-like representation of the material object:

```
Material
  ID          = 3
  Name        = SS316L
  Temperature = None
  Density     = 7.770516420000002 [g/cm3]
  Volume      = None [cm^3]
  Depletable  = False
  S(a,b) Tables
  Nuclides
  C12         = 0.0013798068020305803 [ao]
  C13         = 1.5456729401201275e-05 [ao]
  Cr50        = 0.007935642362528115 [ao]
  Cr52        = 0.15303096384669002 [ao]
  Cr53        = 0.01735248287373524 [ao]
  Cr54        = 0.004319400273274796 [ao]
  Fe54        = 0.041128948783065424 [ao]
```

Partial text from the right side of the image is visible: 'object. The' and 'r atom)'.

# Neutronics – (1/3) source term

tokamak-neutron-source can create a highly representative thermal fusion neutron source, which can take arbitrary plasma profiles and MHD equilibria as inputs.



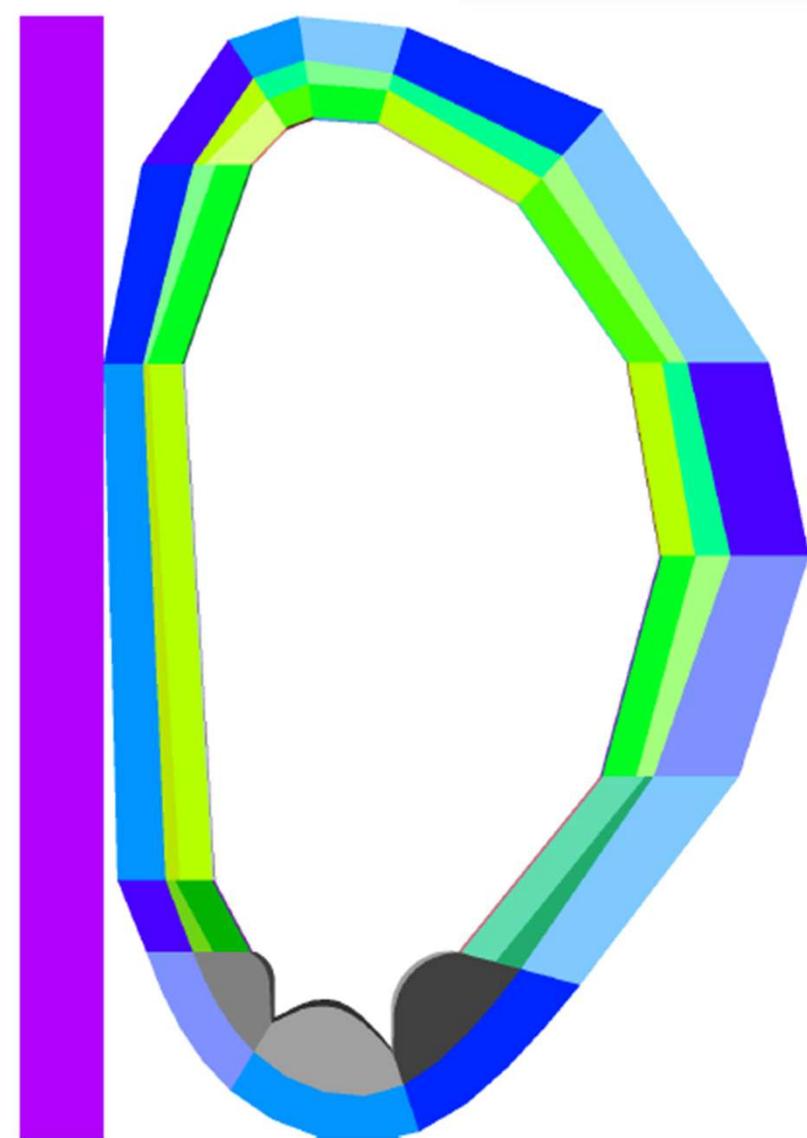
**Fausser [19] source**

**Free boundary source**

## Neutronics – (2/3) axisymmetric CSG

An axisymmetric CSG neutronics pipeline in OpenMC [20] for tokamaks:

- Simplified geometry (blankets, divertors, vacuum vessel)
- Blanket split into 3 different materials
- CSG cells, predominantly polygons (cones and planes)
- Runs relatively fast (100,000 neutrons x 3 batches in ~3 minutes)
- Improvements planned!



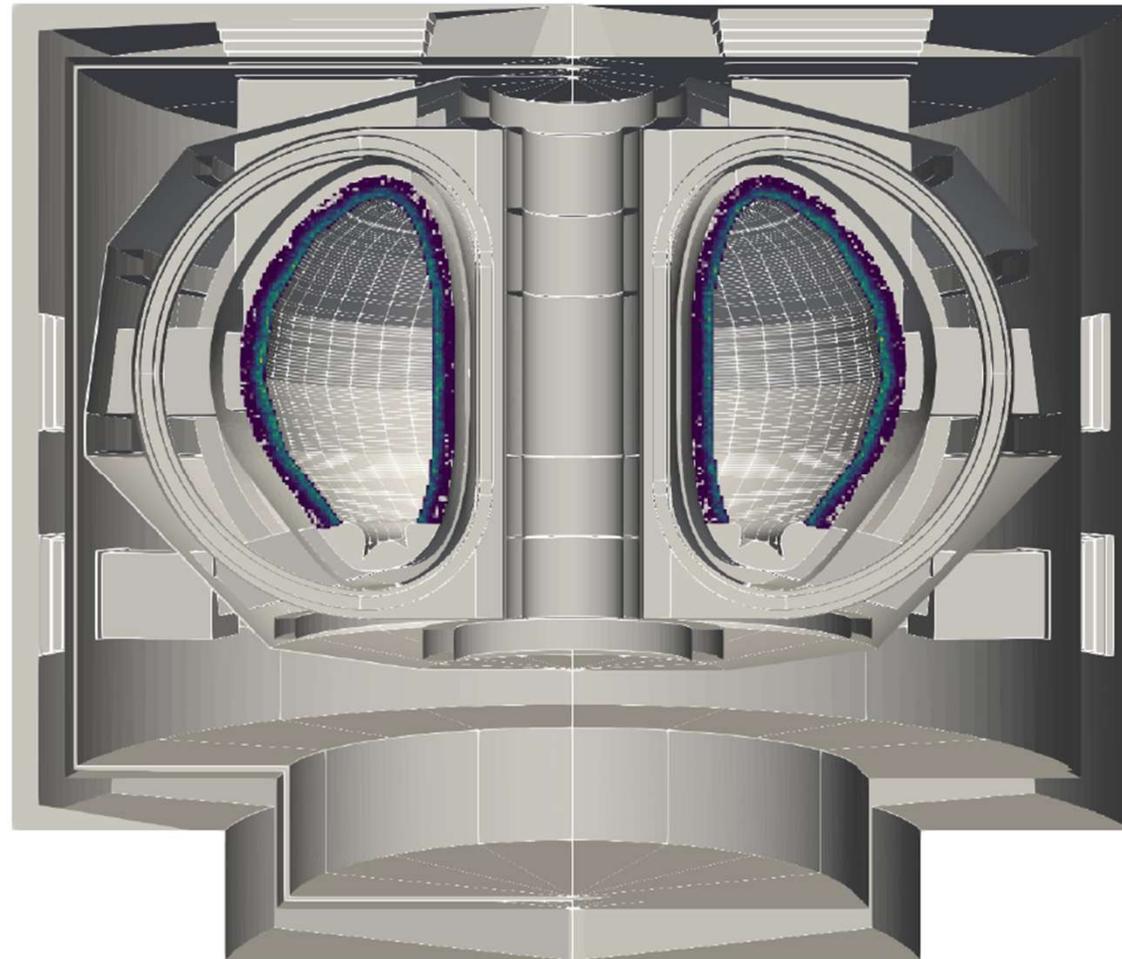
# Neutronics – (3/3) CAD

CAD pre-processing pipeline  
(fast-ctd):

- Overlap checking
- Imprinting
- Merging
- Meshing + MOAB [21] +  
DAGMC [22]

Pre-processing runs in ~ 11  
minutes for this geometry

OpenMC [20] runs 100,000  
neutrons x 3 batches in ~11  
minutes



# First wall heat loads – (1/2) charged particles [23]

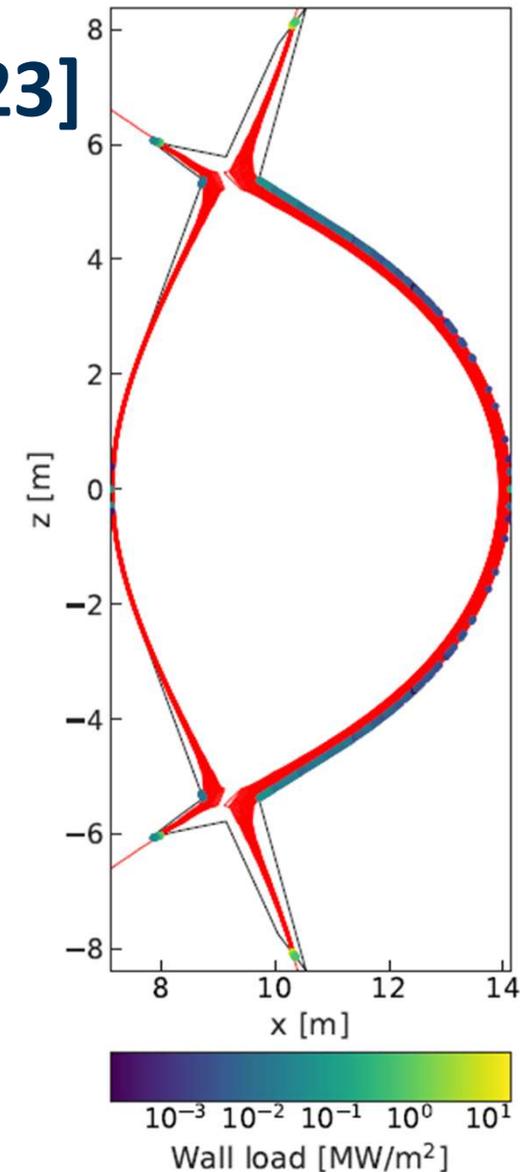
- Simple field-line tracing in axisymmetry
- Calculate incident heat flux based on posited SOL physics model parameters ( $\lambda_q, \dots$ )

At the mid-plane the parallel heat flux density is:

$$q_{\parallel,mp}(x_{mp}) = \frac{P_{SOL}}{2\pi f_x(x_{mp})} \left( \frac{f_{near}}{\lambda_{q,near}} e^{-\frac{x_{mp}}{\lambda_{q,near}}} + \frac{1 - f_{near}}{\lambda_{q,far}} e^{-\frac{x_{mp}}{\lambda_{q,far}}} \right)$$

where:

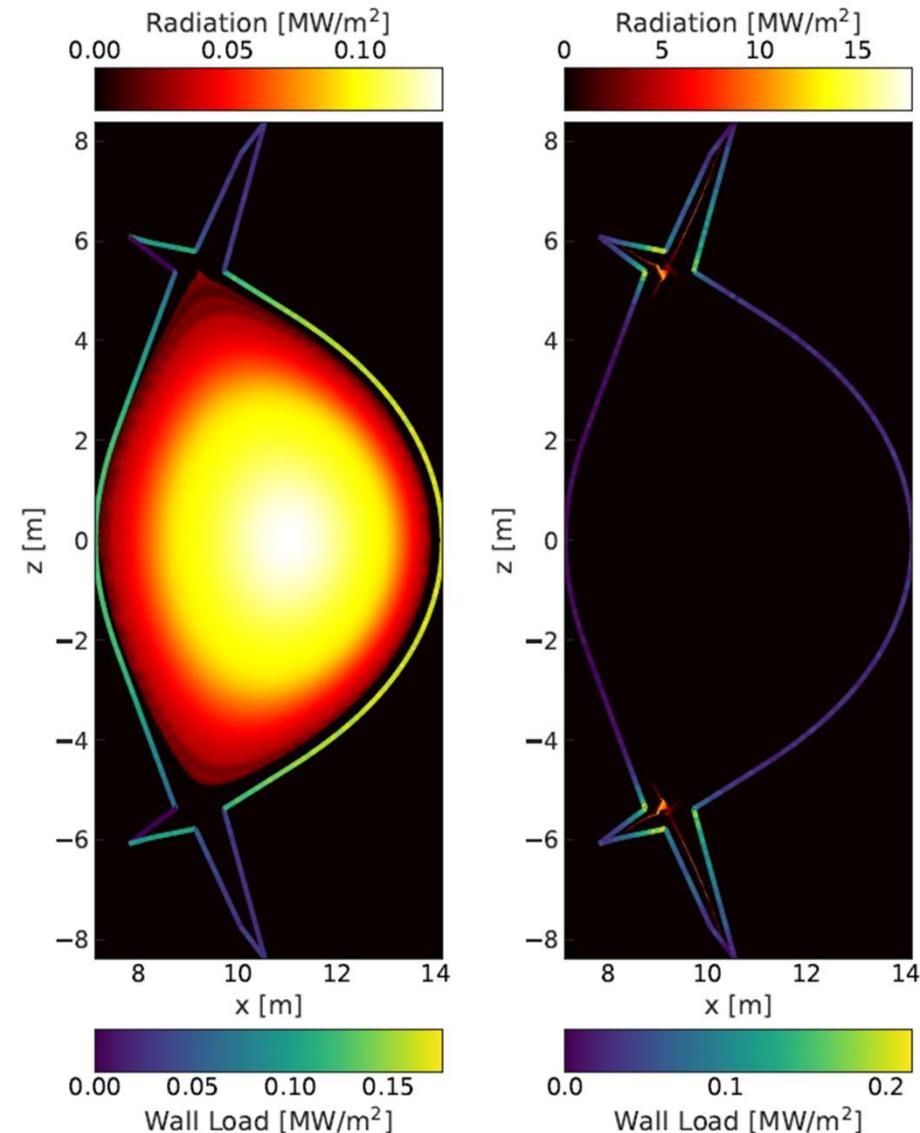
$x_{mp}$	= mid-plane radial coordinate of a flux tube
$P_{SOL}$	= total charged particle power crossing the separatrix into the scrape-off layer (SOL), (ignoring synchrotron losses)
$\lambda_{q,near}, \lambda_{q,far}$	= near and far SOL power decay length constants
$f_{near}$	= fraction of SOL power assumed to be deposited in the near SOL
$f_x(x_{mp})$	= local flux tube expansion factor



# First wall heat loads – (2/2) radiation [23]

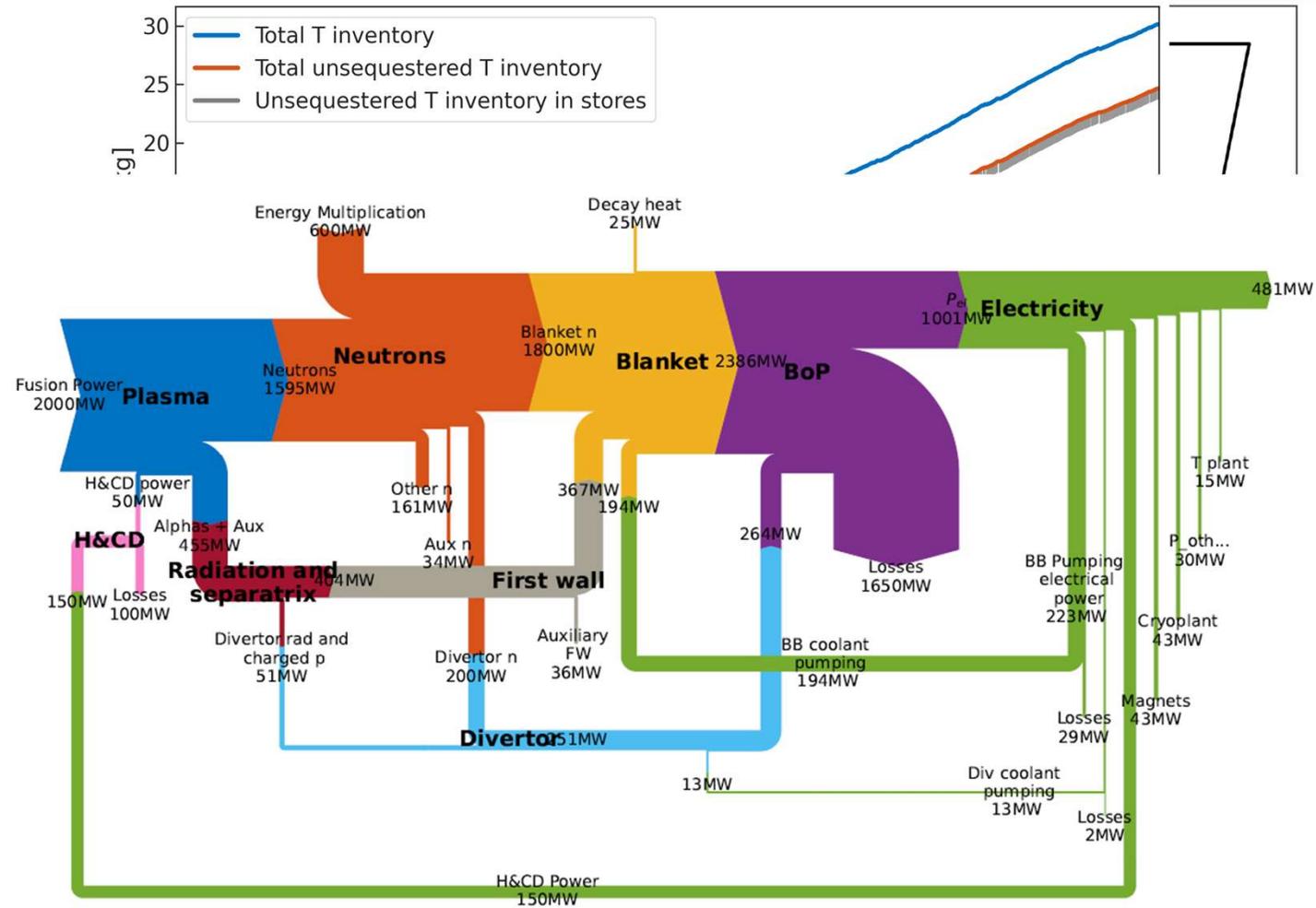
- Core and SOL radiation from plasma
- Calculate source term based on posited plasma profiles
- SOL temperature and density evolution modelled with two-point model
- Source term is used in CHERAB [24] with an axisymmetric FW

$$\frac{dP_{\text{rad}}}{dV} = \sum_k f_k n_e^2 L_k(T_i)$$



# And more...

- Interface to 1.5-D transport and fixed boundary solver PLASMOD [25]
- Fixed boundary equilibrium solver
- Winding pack design module
- Fuel cycle model
- Power cycle model



# Case studies

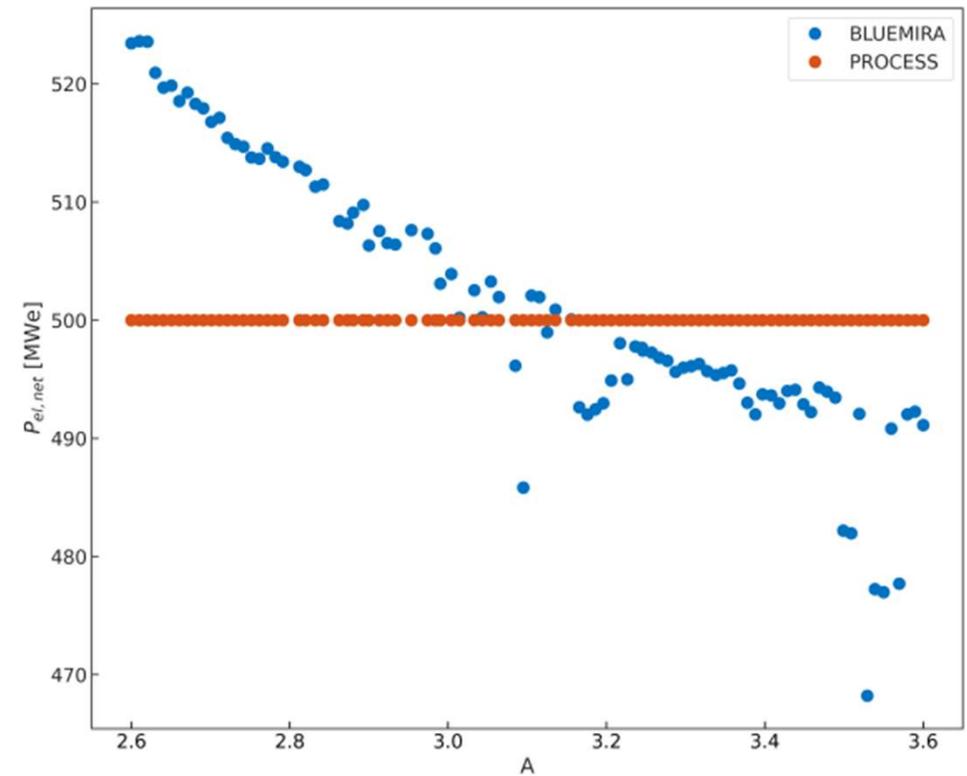
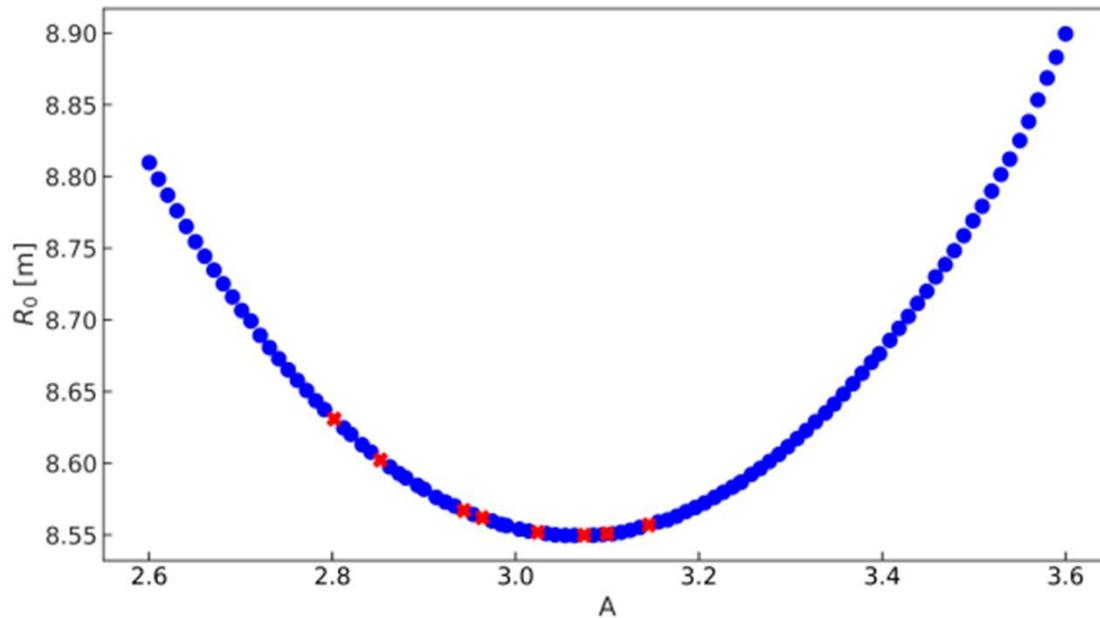
# Conventional $A$ tokamak parameterisation

For the purposes of demonstration, a full-reactor design parameterisation is used with the following workflow:

- PROCESS run
- Initial “reference” equilibrium design
- Initial FW shape design
- TF coil poloidal shape optimisation
- PF system optimisation
- FW shape optimisation and panelling
- CAD component design (blankets, divertor, vessel, etc.)
- Axisymmetric CSG neutronics analysis
- CAD component design (PF coils, ports, thermal shields, etc.)
- Steady-state power balance model

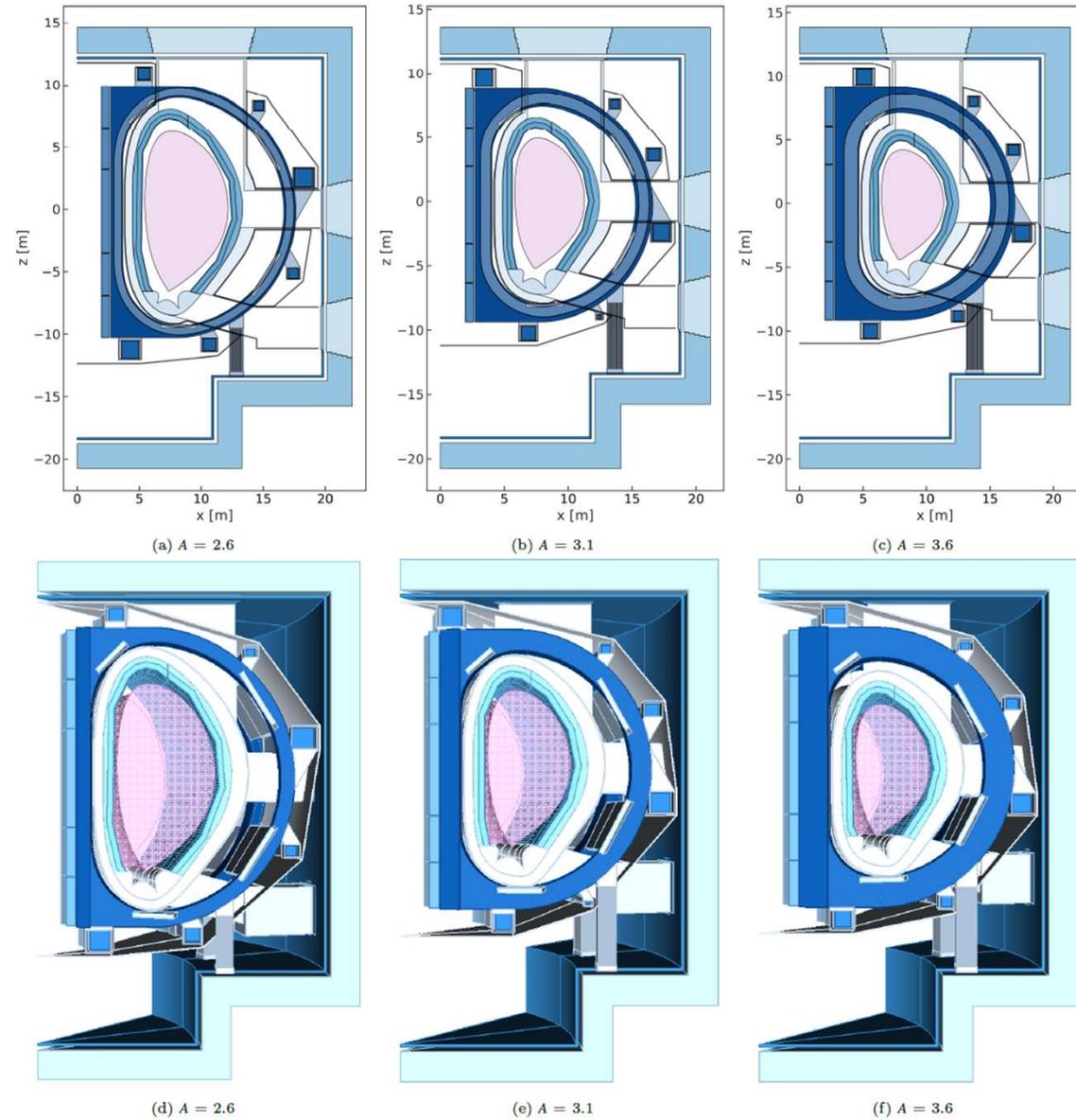
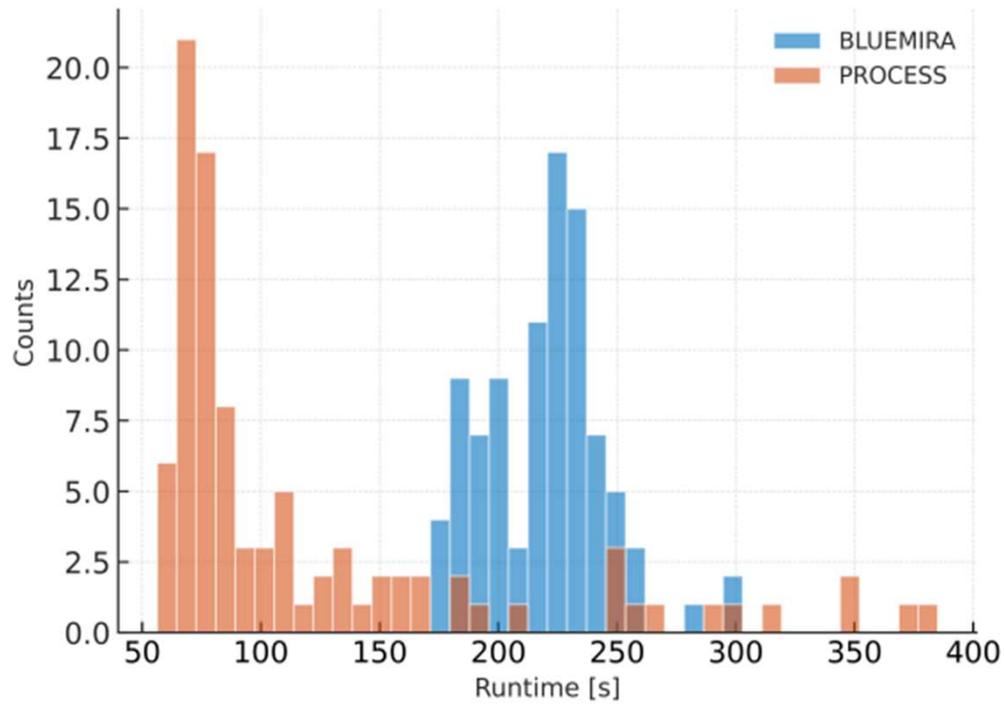
# A scan results (PROCESS and BLUEMIRA)

- 100 points in  $A \in [2.6 - 3.6]$
- 7-8% failure rate (geometry  $\rightarrow$  CSG)



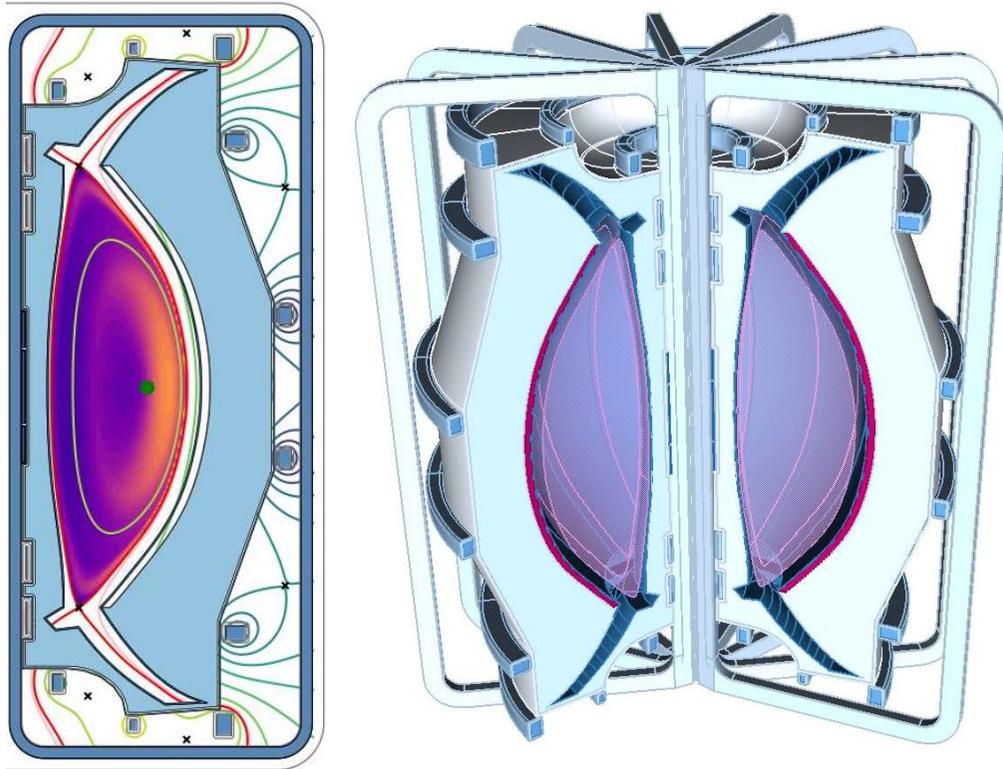
# A scan results

- Average total (PROCESS + BLUEMIRA) runtime of 6.2 minutes

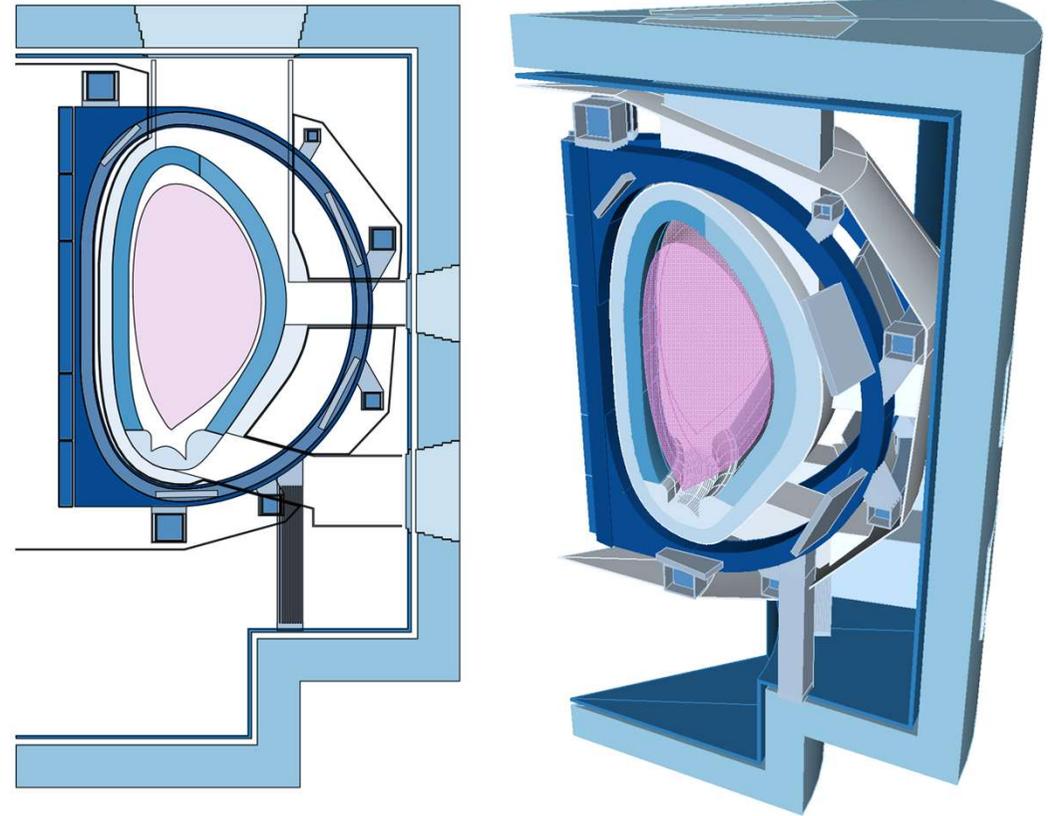


# Present use of BLUEMIRA

**UKIFS: STEP reactor design, courtesy of A. Pearce (UKIFS), see also [14, 15, 23]**

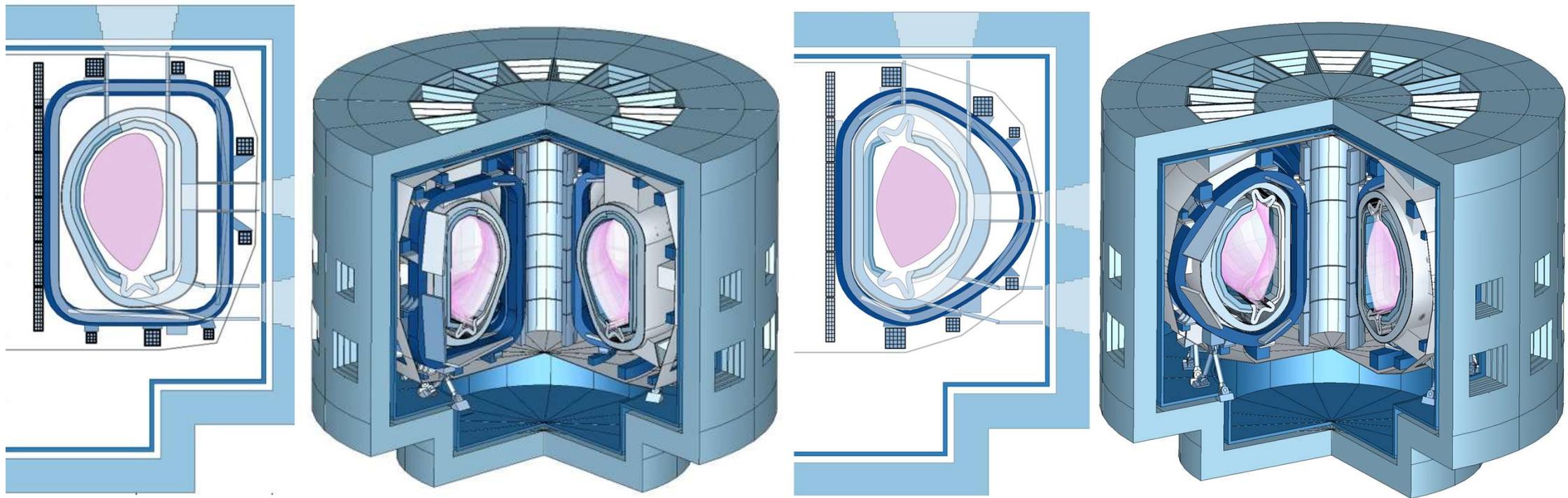


**EUROfusion: EU-DEMO LAR reactor design**



# Other reactor parameterisations...

Make your own: [bluemira-template-project](#)



## Next steps

- User experience and user interface improvements
- Explore alternative CAD engine options
- CSG + CAD neutronics pipeline improvements
- Couple to open-source 1.5-D transport + fixed boundary solver
- Full interface to 3-D finite element framework
- ...

# Summary

- BLUEMIRA is a modular, open-source tokamak fusion reactor design framework.
- A wide variety of modules covering typical tokamak design activities ranging from systems code runs and plasma equilibrium design to 3-D CAD generation and neutronics analyses are included.
- Custom reactor design parameterisations and workflows can be assembled by sequentially combining a series of design stages.
- We invite those interested in using and/or contributing to this framework to get in touch via the online repository:
  - <https://www.ukaea.org/service/bluemira>
  - <https://github.com/Fusion-Power-Plant-Framework/bluemira>
  - <https://bluemira.readthedocs.io/en/latest/>
  - <https://github.com/Fusion-Power-Plant-Framework/bluemira-template-project>



# Thank you

M. Coleman, J. E. Cook, F. Franza, I. A. Maione, S. McIntosh, A. I. Blair, S. Desai, O. Funk, G. Graham, J. Matthews, J. Morris, C. Mould, A. Nilima, H. Saunders, D. Short, D. Vaccaro, O. Wong

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# Back-up slides

# The BLUEMIRA project

In 2020, Fabrizio Franza and I agreed to combine BLUEPRINT and MIRA in a collaboration between UKAEA and KIT in EUROfusion's TSVV-14: Multi-fidelity systems codes.

Over the past five years ~ 2.4 ppy / yr:

- 2 full-time, 4 part-time, 6-10 occasional collaborators

Used on:

- EUROfusion's EU-DEMO
- UKIFS' STEP

BLUEMIRA paper submitted to Nuclear Fusion (excerpts shown here), with some modules already partially described in [10, 11] (and shown here).

# Use cases and requirements for a tokamak design framework

Based on observations of fusion reactor design efforts, we foresee the following use cases:

- (i) Generation of concept
- (ii) Modification of an existing concept
- (iii) Exploration of the design space for a concept
- (iv) Comparison of alternative concepts

For any design framework to be as useful as possible, to as many people as possible, the following aspects are important:

- (i) Ease of access (licence, installation, dependency, etc.)
- (ii) Ease of use (application programming, design, language, etc.)
- (iii) Ease of understanding (documentation, examples, training, etc.)
- (iv) Ease of interoperability (file I/O, data exchange, visualisation, etc.)
- (v) Robustness
- (vi) Verification and validation

For tokamak design in particular, we consider the following features as necessary components of a framework:

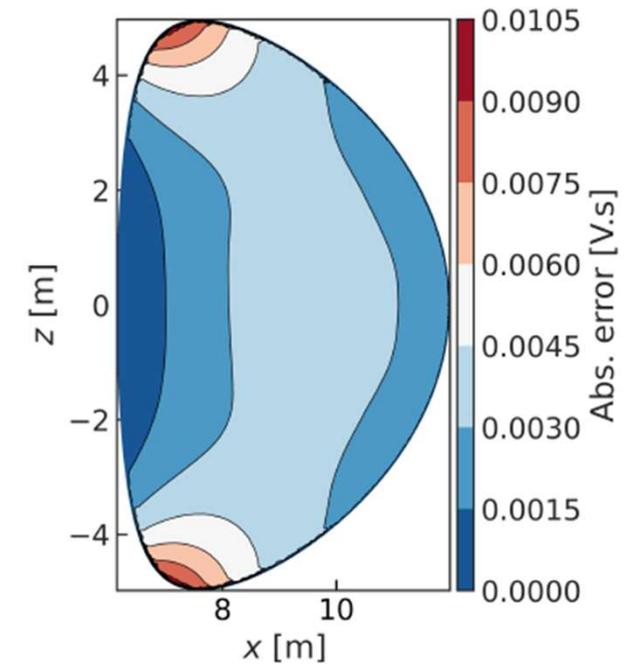
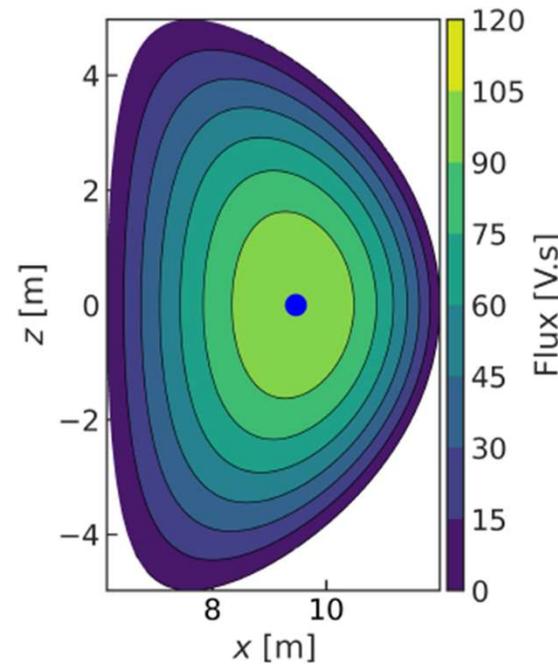
- (i) 0/1-D systems code solver
- (ii) 1.5-D plasma transport and equilibrium solver
- (iii) 2-D free boundary equilibrium solver(s)
- (iv) 3-D magnetostatics solver(s)
- (v) 2-D and 3-D geometry creation and manipulation
- (vi) 2-D and 3-D radiation transport solver(s)
- (vii) 2-D and 3-D finite element solver(s)
- (viii) Material properties
- (ix) Fuel cycle model
- (x) Power balance model
- (xi) Cost model

# Equilibria – fixed boundary

BLUEMIRA has fixed and free boundary MHD equilibrium solvers (ideal MHD, static).

Fixed boundary solver:

- Finite element
- Arbitrary (fixed) boundary and profiles
- Used for coupling to PLASMOD
- Verified with Solov'ev



# Comparison of source spatial distribution in a simple tokamak geometry

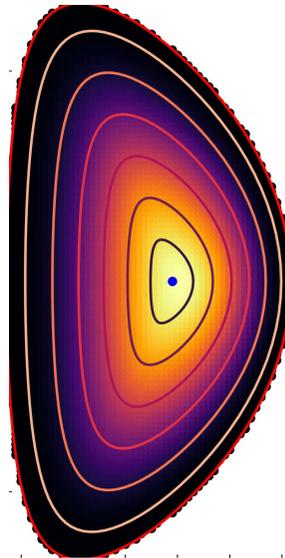
Experiment on a typical EU-DEMO like machine in BLUEMIRA (tns v0.1.2):

- OpenMC 0.15.2, 2 batches, same seed
- Simplified CSG geometry and materials
- Parabolic-pedestal profiles, same fusion power
- 0.1 x 0.1 m source discretisation

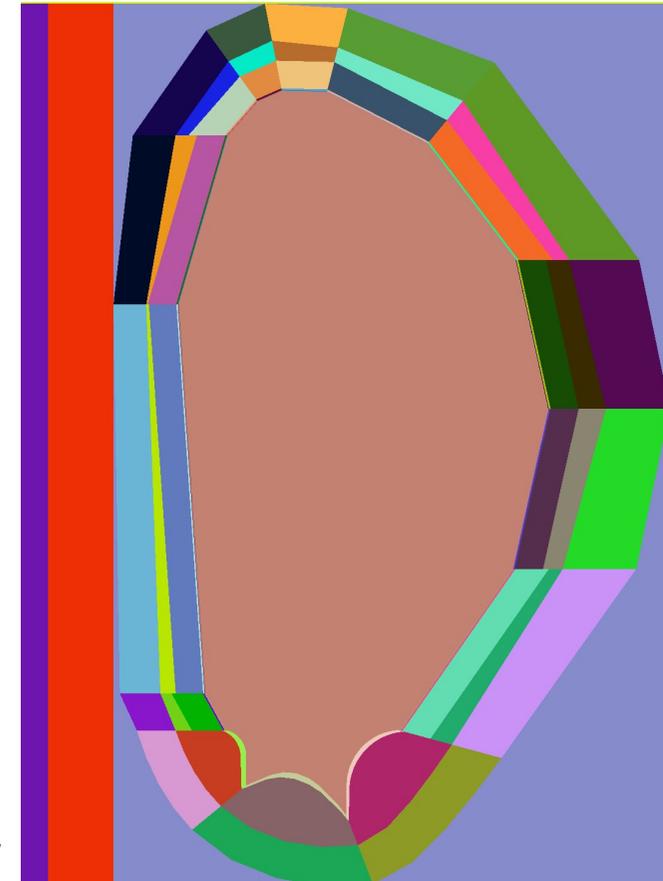
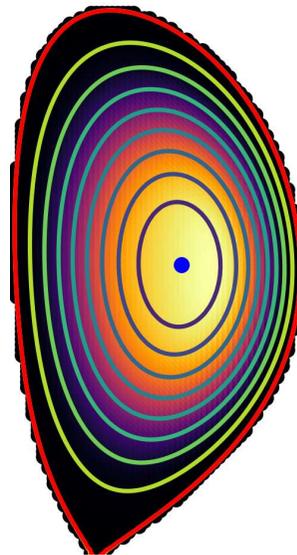
**Ring (mono-energetic)**



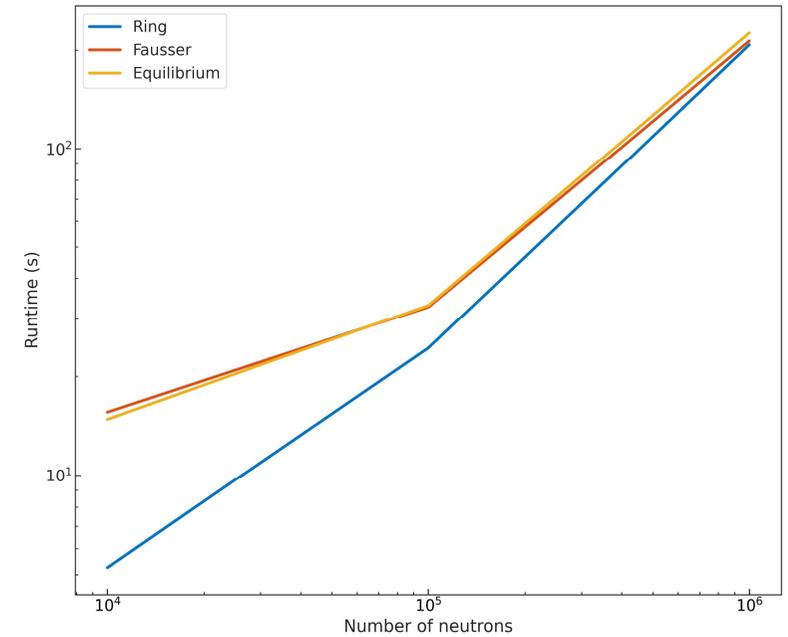
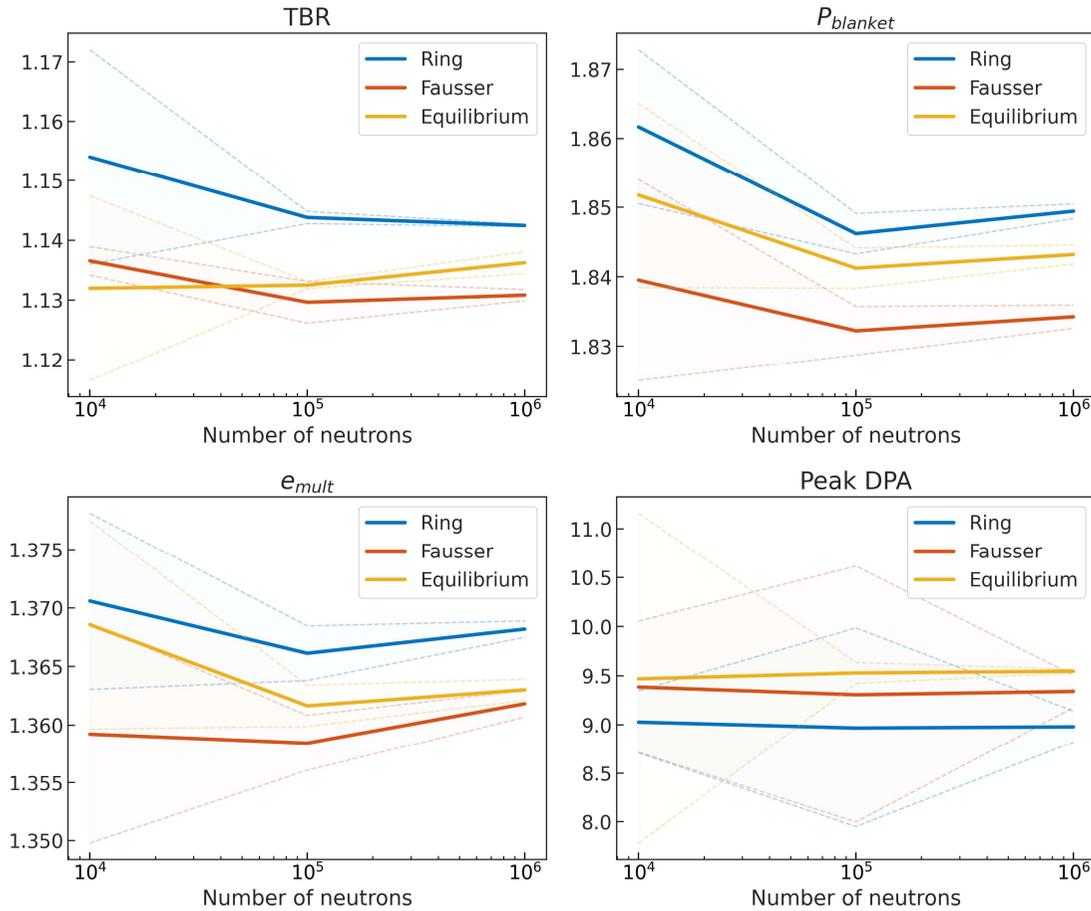
**Fausser**



**Equilibrium**



# Comparison of source spatial distribution in a simple tokamak geometry

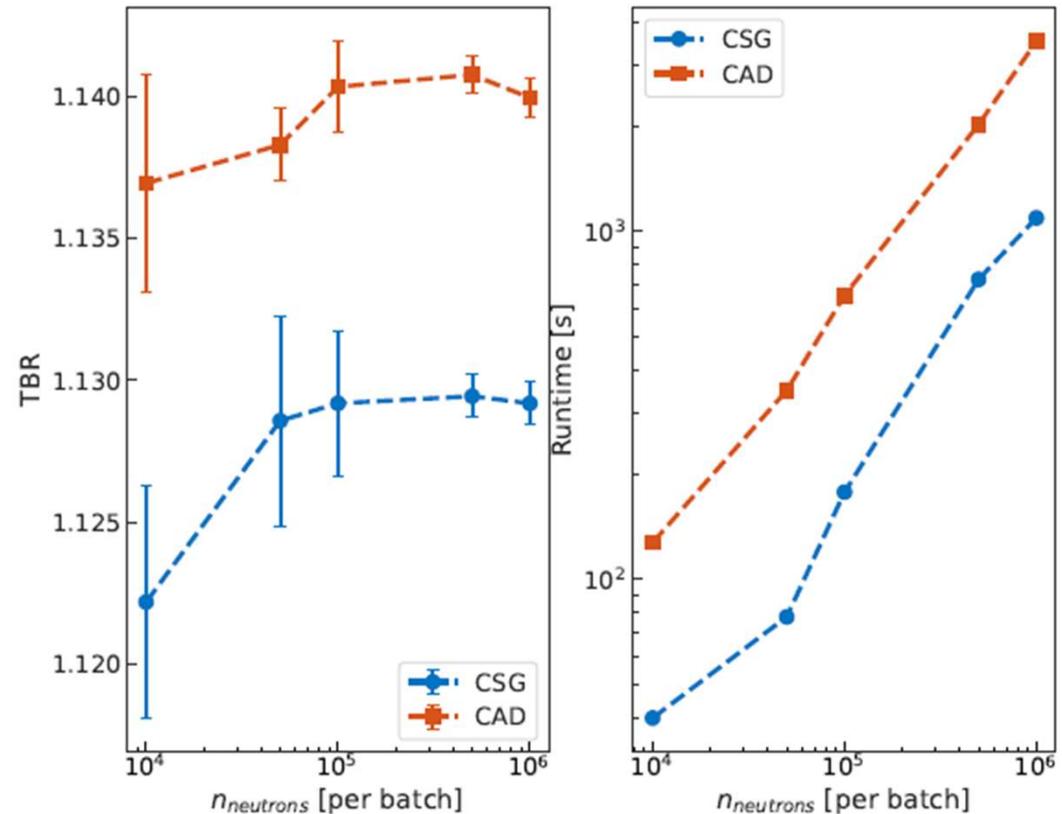


# Neutronics – (4/4) comparison

Here we compare the CSG and CAD neutronics pipelines on the same tokamak design point:

- Same (base) geometry
- Same materials
- Same neutron source

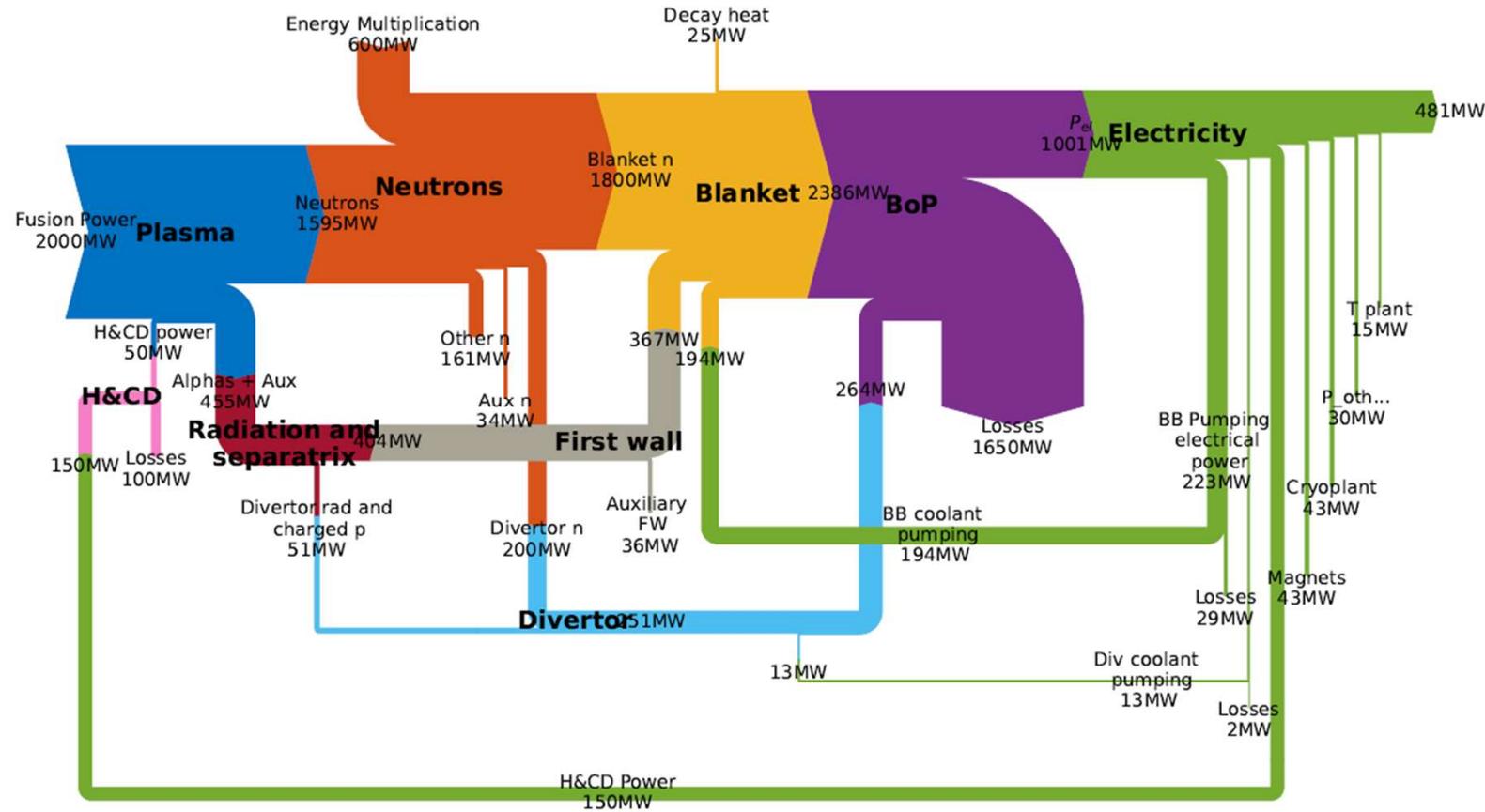
We would expect to see lower TBR in the CAD pipeline, because of gaps in the blanket, but we don't. This is due to how CAD is meshed and is a problem we will address in future work.



# Power cycle

## Steady-state power cycle model

- Same parasitic loads as PROCESS
- Slightly more detailed
- Power deposition in IVCs from neutronics models



# Conventional A tokamak parameterisation

## PROCESS problem

$$\mathbf{x}^* = \underset{\mathbf{x}}{\text{minimise}} : R_0$$

subject to :

$$\mathbf{x} \geq \mathbf{x}_{\min}$$

$$\mathbf{x} \leq \mathbf{x}_{\max}$$

$$P_{el,net} = P_{el,net,target}$$

$$\tau_{flattop} \geq \tau_{flattop,min}$$

$$P_{sep} B_T / q_{95} A R_0 \leq (P_{sep} B_T / q_{95} A R_0)_{max}$$

$$f_{LH,min} \leq f_{LH} \leq f_{LH,max}$$

$$\bar{n}_e \leq f_{GW} n_{GW}$$

$$n_{e,core} \geq n_{e,ped}$$

$$\beta \leq \beta_{max}$$

$$\sigma_{TF,case,peak} \leq \sigma_{TF,case,max}$$

$$\sigma_{TF,WP,peak} \leq \sigma_{TF,WP,max}$$

$$J_{TF} \leq J_{TF,max}$$

$$\Delta_{T,TF} \geq \Delta_{T,TF,min}$$

$$\sigma_{CS,peak} \leq \sigma_{CS,max}$$

$$\Delta_{T,CS} \geq \Delta_{T,CS,min}$$

$$\sigma_{VV,TF,CFD} \leq \sigma_{VV,max}$$

...

## TF coil shape problem

$$\alpha^* = \underset{\alpha}{\text{minimise}} : \int_0^1 \sqrt{\left(\frac{dx}{dt}\right)^2 + \left(\frac{dz}{dt}\right)^2} dt$$

subject to :

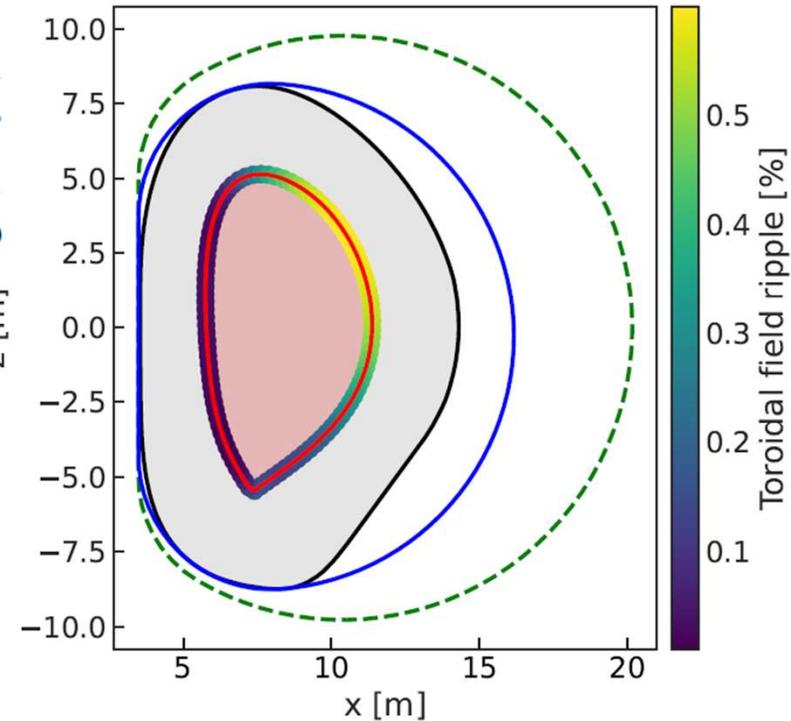
$$\{r_1, r_2, r_3\} \geq r_{TF,min} \mathbf{1}$$

$$\theta_1 + \theta_2 + \theta_3 \leq 180^\circ$$

$$\delta_\phi | \partial \Omega_p \leq \delta_{\phi,max} \mathbf{1}$$

$$d^\pm(\mathcal{S}_{CCL}(\alpha, n), \Omega_{Koz}) \leq 0$$

▭ Plasma      - - - Original CCL  
 Keep-out zone      — Optimal CCL



# Conventional $A$ tokamak parameterisation

## Upper port problem

$$\begin{aligned}
 \mathbf{x}^* &= \underset{\mathbf{x}}{\text{minimise}} : && x_{ob} - x_{ib} \\
 &\text{subject to :} && \\
 &&& x_{ob} - x_{cut_{BSS}} - \Delta_{RM} \leq x_{BB_{max}} - x_{cut_{BSS}} \\
 &&& x_{cut_{FW}} - x_{BB_{max}} \leq x_{ob} - x_{cut_{FW}} + \Delta_{RM} \\
 &&& x_{ib} + \frac{|x_{cut_{FW}} - x_{BB_{min}}|}{2} \leq x_{cut_{FW}} \\
 &&& \gamma_{min} \leq \gamma \leq \gamma_{max}
 \end{aligned} \tag{27}$$

## PF coil position and current problems

$$\begin{aligned}
 \mathbf{L}^* &= \underset{\mathbf{L}}{\text{minimise}} : && \|\mathbf{I}^*\|_2^2 \\
 &\text{subject to :} && \mathbf{L}_{min} \leq \mathbf{L} \leq \mathbf{L}_{max}
 \end{aligned} \tag{28}$$

where  $\mathbf{I}^*$  is the vector of optimal currents for a given set of positions,  $\mathbf{L}$ , which is the result of a current optimisation problem, discussed in the next section.

### 5.4.3. PF coil current optimisation problem

For the PF coil current optimisation, a similar optimisation problem to the one described by Albanese et al. in [107] for EU-DEMO is solved, as detailed in [53], see Eq. 29.

$$\begin{aligned}
 \mathbf{I}^* &= \underset{\mathbf{I}}{\text{minimise}} : && \|\mathbf{GI} - \mathbf{b}_t + \mathbf{b}_p\|_2^2 + \|\mathbf{GI}\|_2^2 \\
 &\text{subject to :} && \\
 &&& |\mathbf{I}| \leq \mathbf{I}_{max} \\
 &&& B_p|_{X_{point}} \leq 0 + \epsilon \\
 &&& \mathbf{B}_{p,coils} \leq \mathbf{B}_{p,max} \\
 &&& |\mathbf{F}_{z,coils}| \leq \mathbf{F}_{z,max}
 \end{aligned} \tag{29}$$