

# Operation of an ultralight weightshift aircraft for environmental research: Properties, advantages and lessons learned



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# Operation of an ultralight weightshift aircraft for environmental research: Properties, advantages and lessons learned



**WHY A TRIKE?**



# PROBLEM TO BE ADRESSED

RADIATION TRANSFER  
MODULATION OF OPTICAL  
PROPERTIES BY CLOUDS AND  
AEROSOLS



**MEASUREMENT OF  
RADIATION QUANTITIES ( $\lambda$ )  
TEMP / rH, OZONE  
OPTICAL PROPERTIES  
PRESS / GPS / ALT**



© 1958, 1965 United Feature Syndicate, Inc.

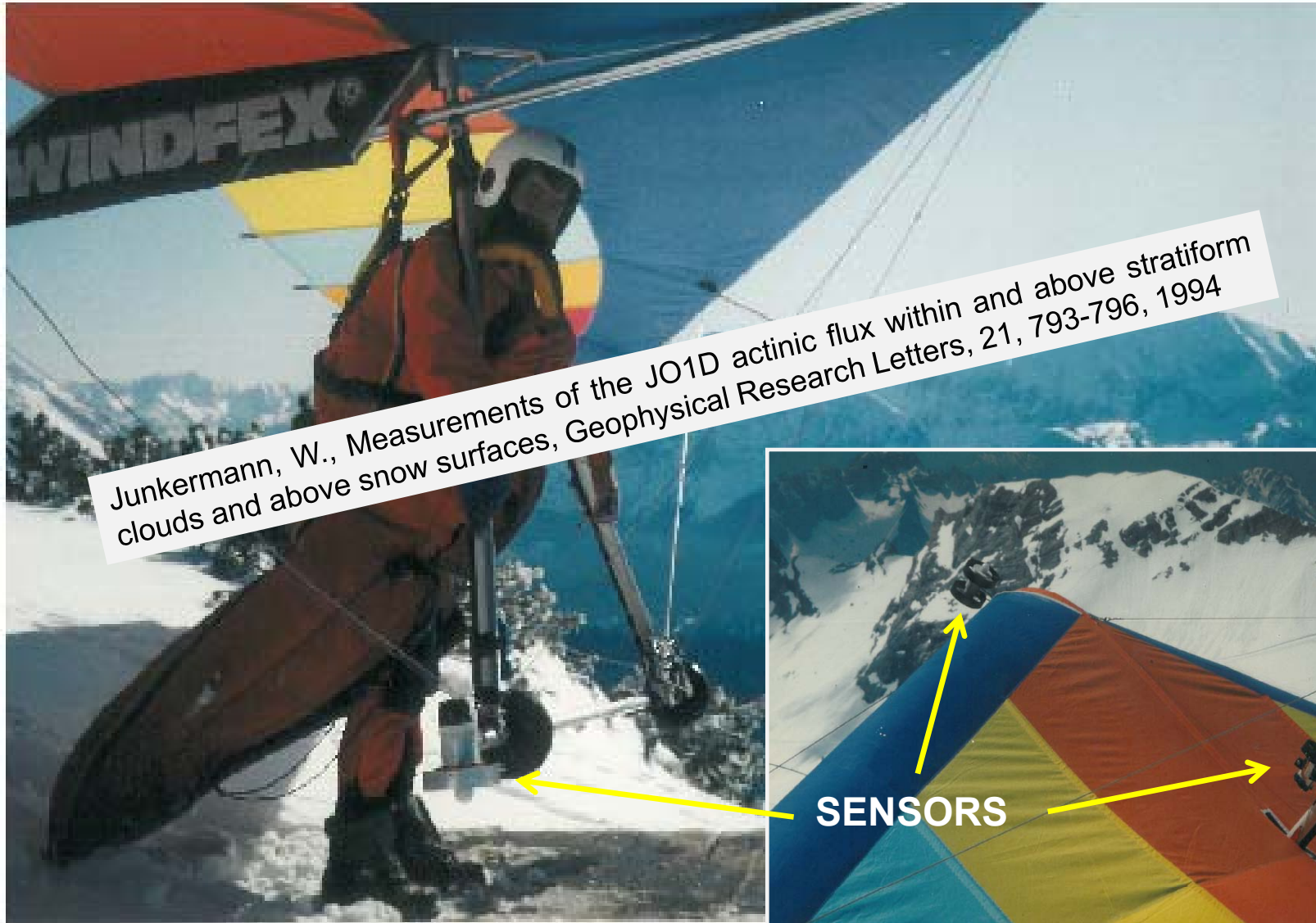
**KEEP IT SIMPLE**



# THE FIRST APPROACH



# THE FIRST APPROACH



# THE SECOND APPROACH



## ADDING AN ENGINE

# THE SOLUTION

## DOUBLE SEATER UL, ~ 50 kg SCIENTIFIC PAYLOAD





# THE SOLUTION (1998)

**ROTAX 582**  
**CEILING FL 120**  
**CRUISE 50 kt**  
**END 4h**



**FSSP /  
GROUND  
POWER**



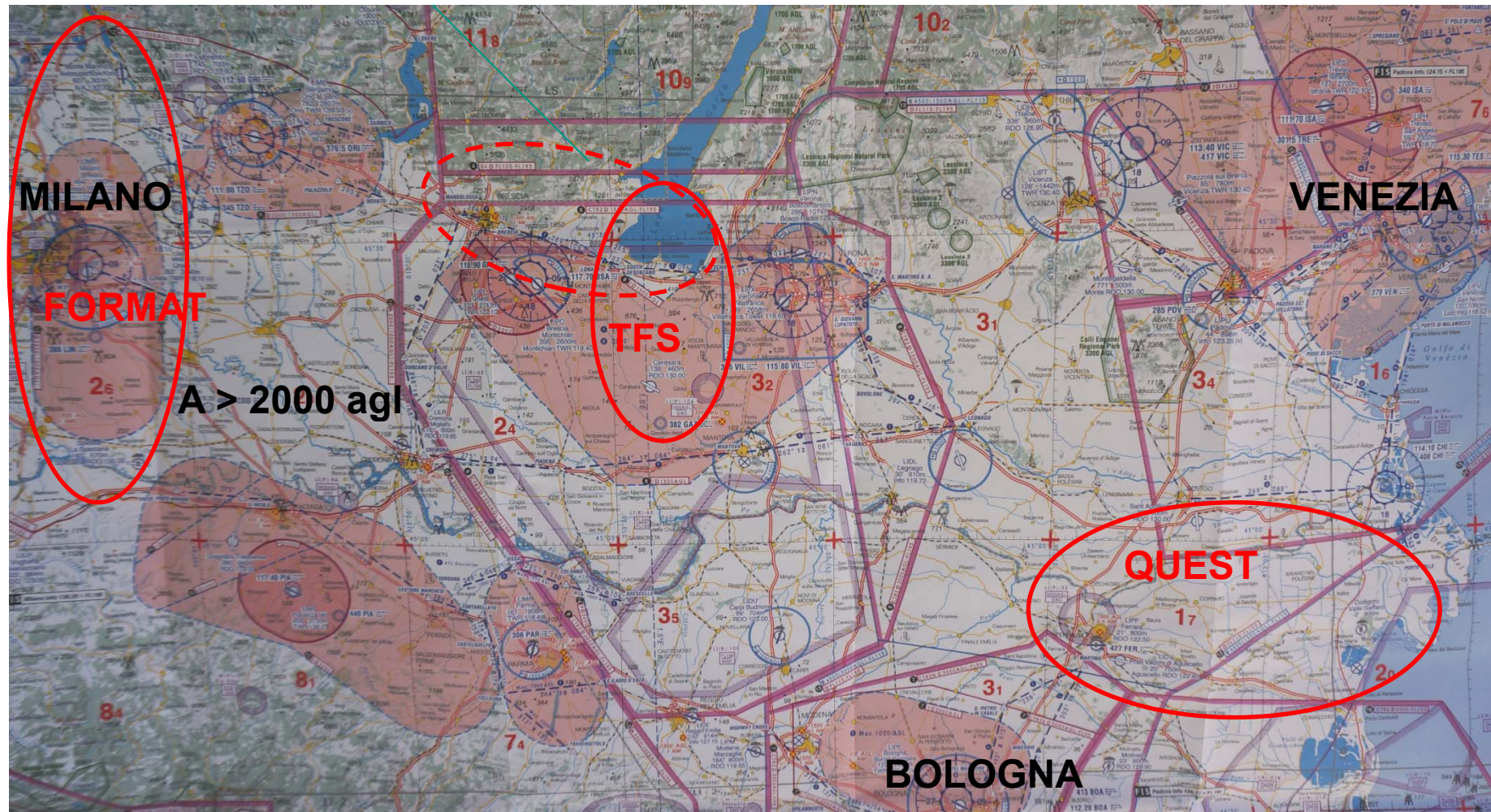
**OZONE SCATT. COEFF T/DP  
AEROSOL, UPW RADIATION**





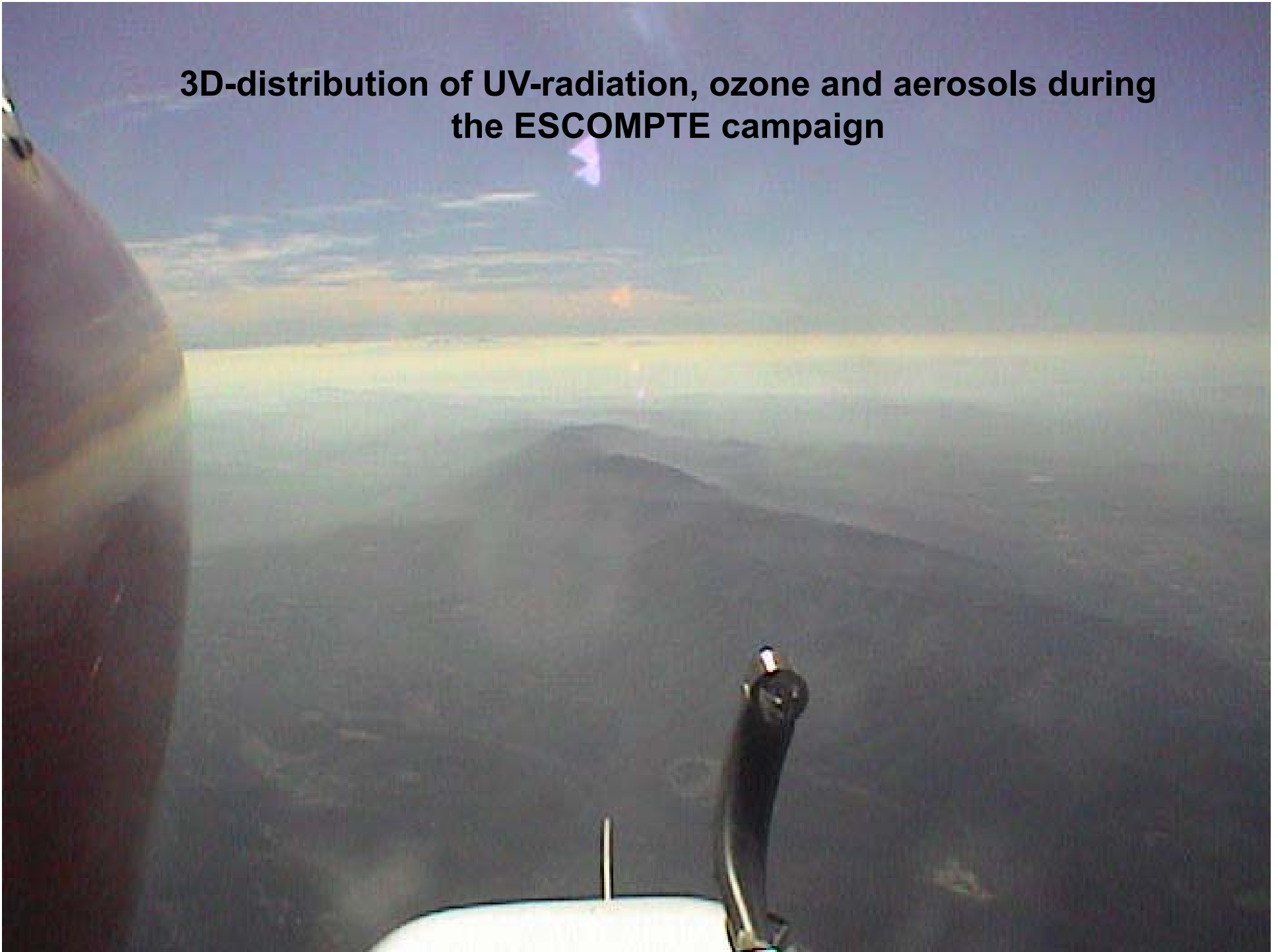
## VERTICAL PROFILES OVER THE PO-VALLEY



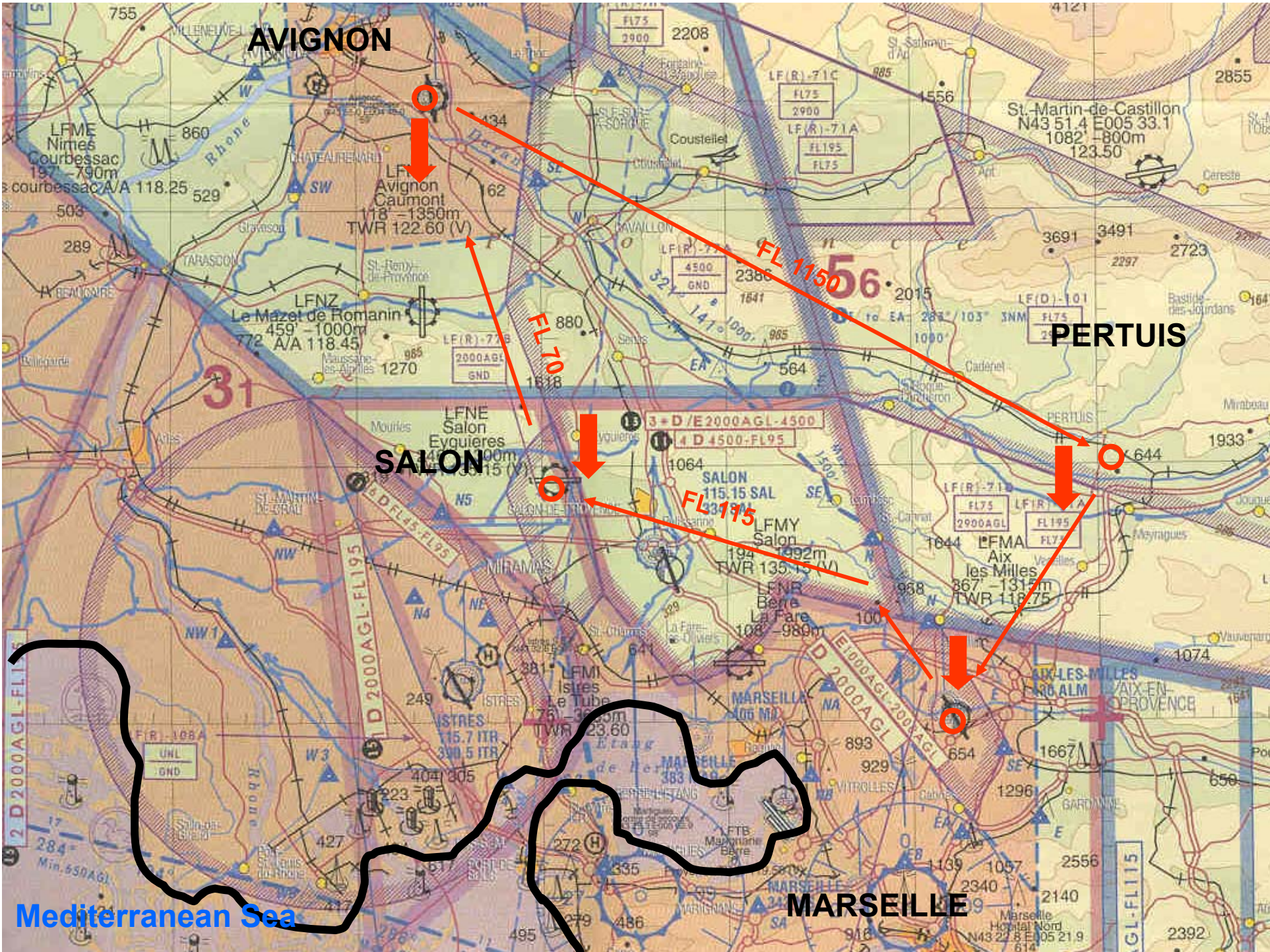




**3D-distribution of UV-radiation, ozone and aerosols during  
the ESCOMPTE campaign**

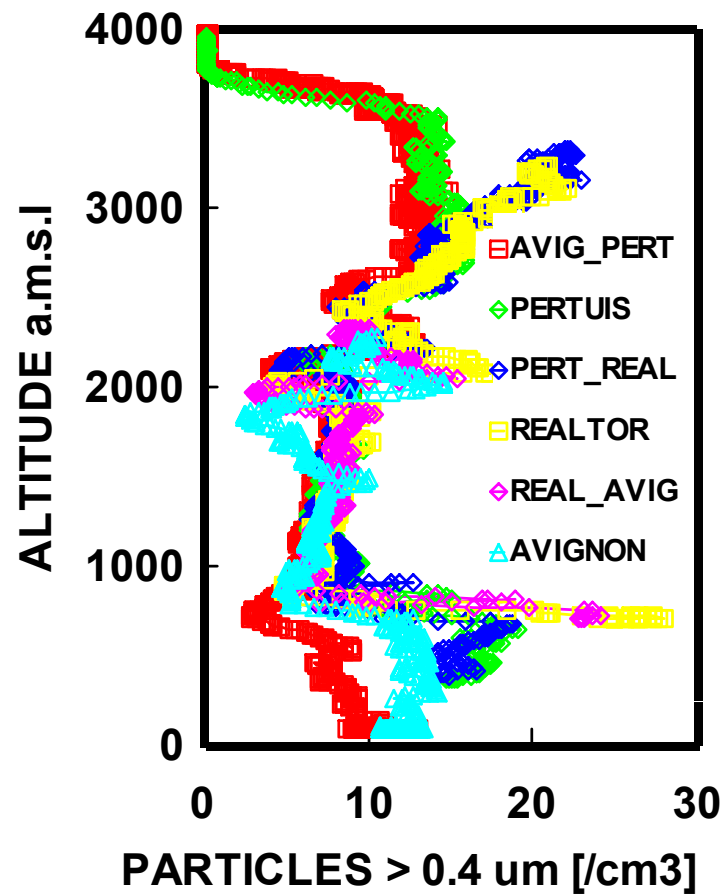




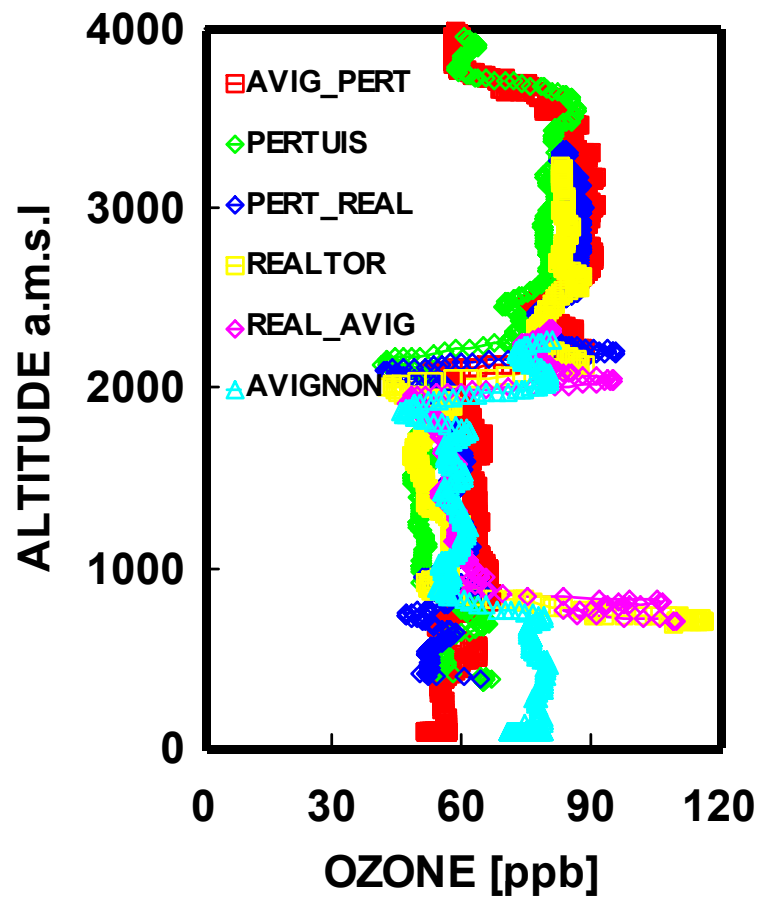




June 24, 2001  
8:14 - 11:08 UTC



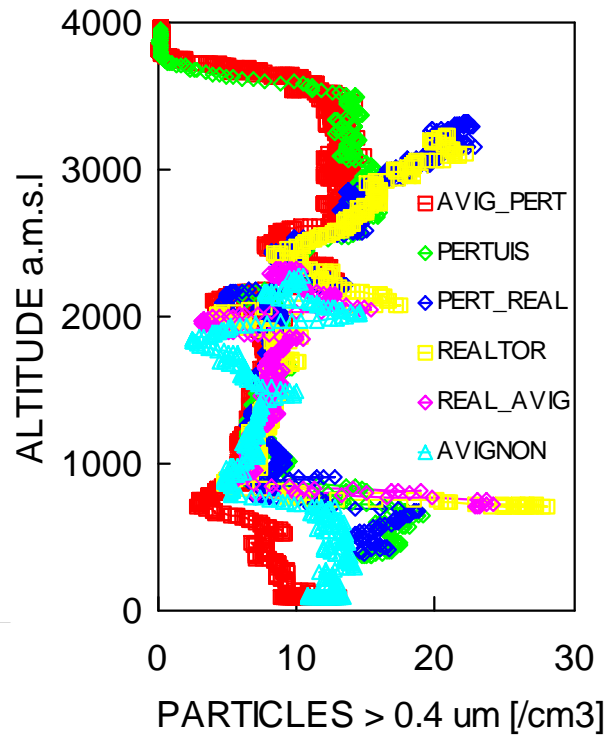
June 24, 2001  
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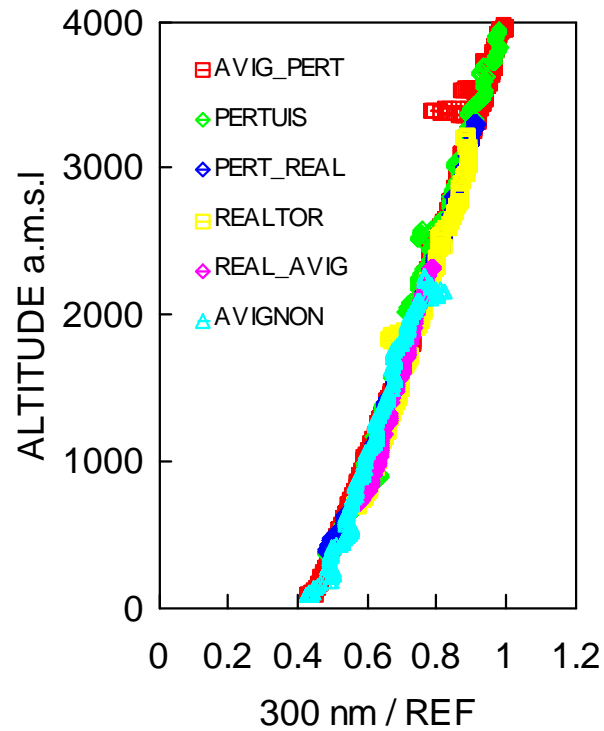


# Southern France, Provence, hazy, AOT 340 nm 0.48, 500 nm 0.42

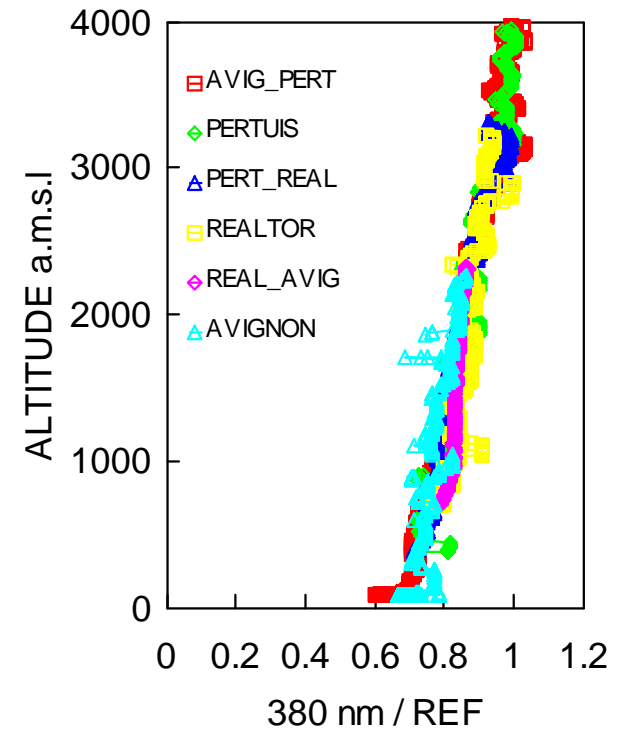
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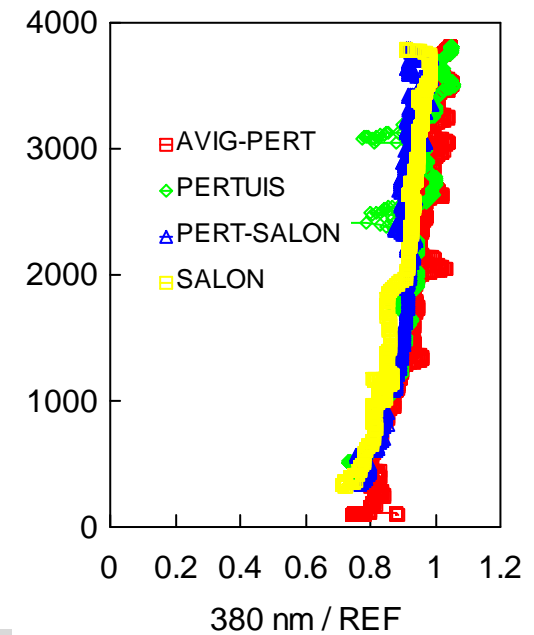
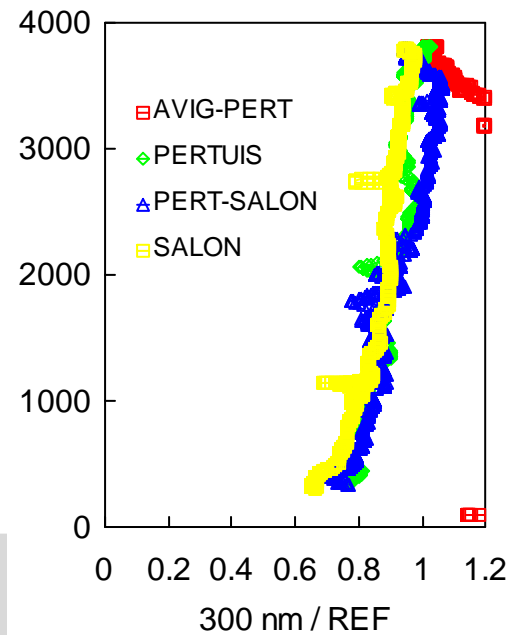
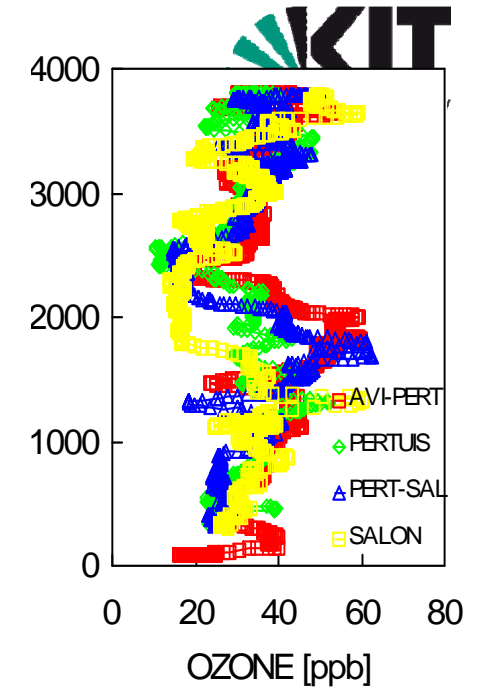
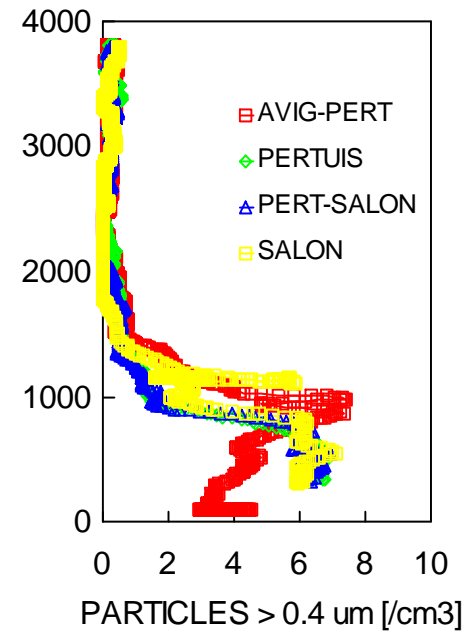


June 24, 2001  
8:14 - 11:08 UTC



June 24, 2001  
8:14 - 11:08 UTC



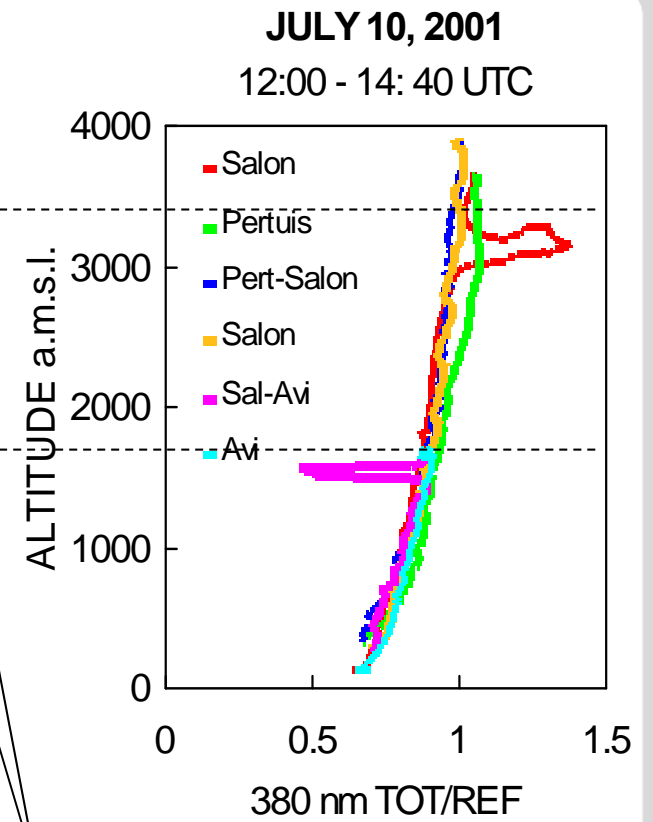
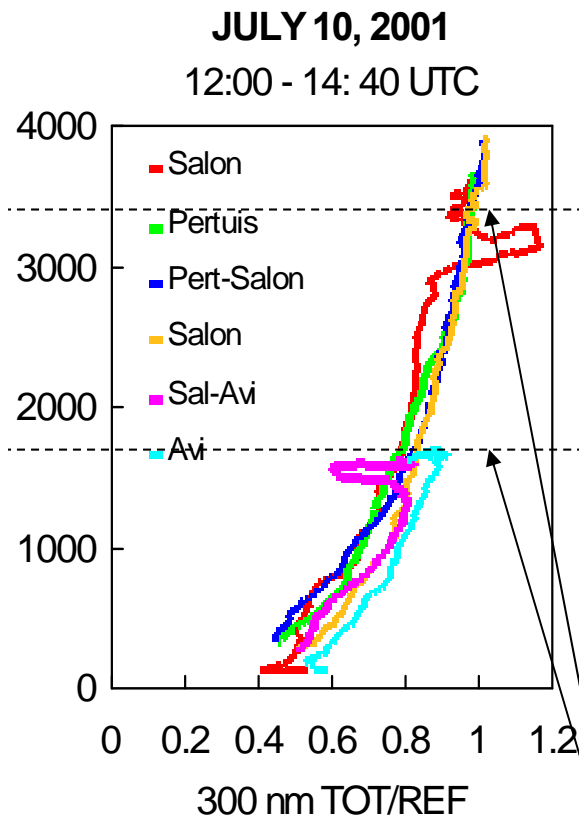
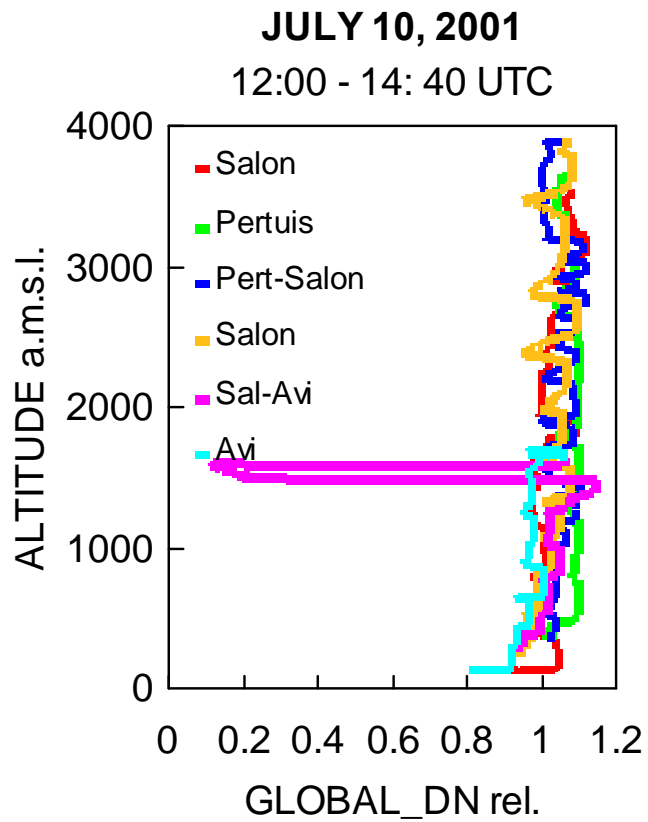


12.7. 6:30 - 10:00 UTC

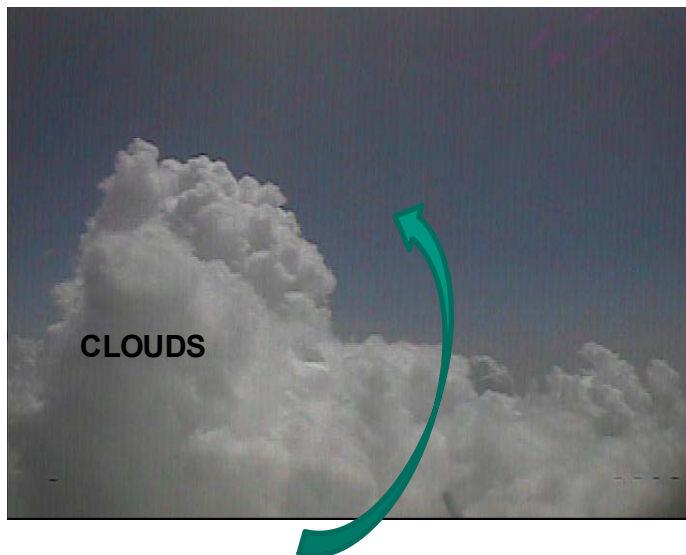
ESCOMPTE, France, 2001

AVIGNON-PERTUIS-SALON

AOT 340 nm BDL, 500 nm, 0.092



Cloud area



AOT 340 nm 0.52, 500 nm 0.44



# Aerosols over the Mediterranean



**DESERT DUST**  
**Climate impact:**  
**affecting**  
**shortwave**  
**and longwave?**  
**radiation**

# NO FERRY FLIGHT OVER OPEN WATER

## Take a ferry



# VERTICAL PROFILES ABOVE THE SEA UP TO 4000 m



LAMPEDUSA  
ISLAND (50 m)

10 km \* 3 km



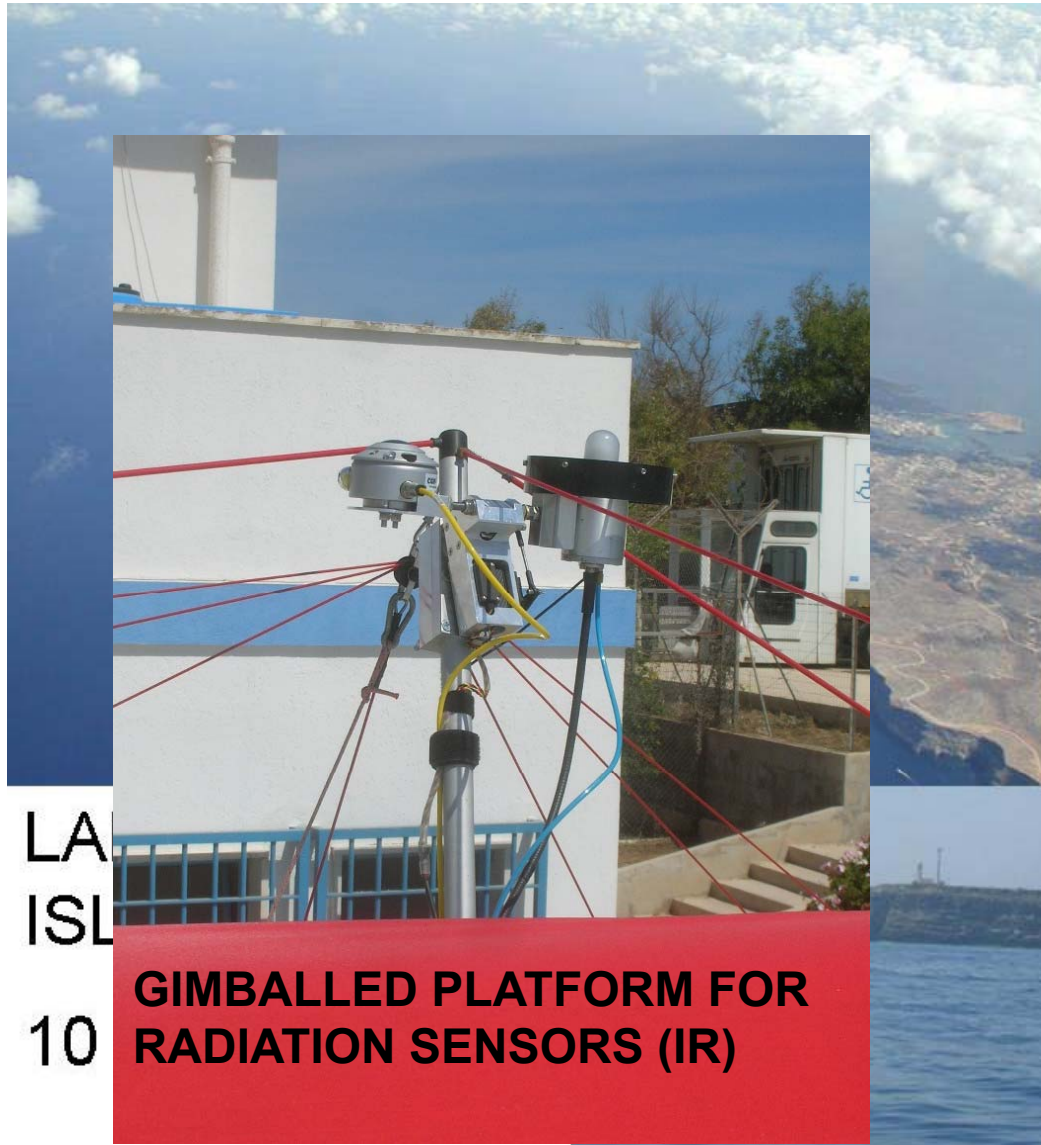
**1999 SW**  
**2004 SW**  
**2008 LW**

Special permit from Palermo ULM & CA (NOTAM)



# VERTICAL PROFILES ABOVE THE SEA UP TO 4000 m

**1999 SW**  
**2004 SW**  
**2008 LW**



LA  
ISL  
10

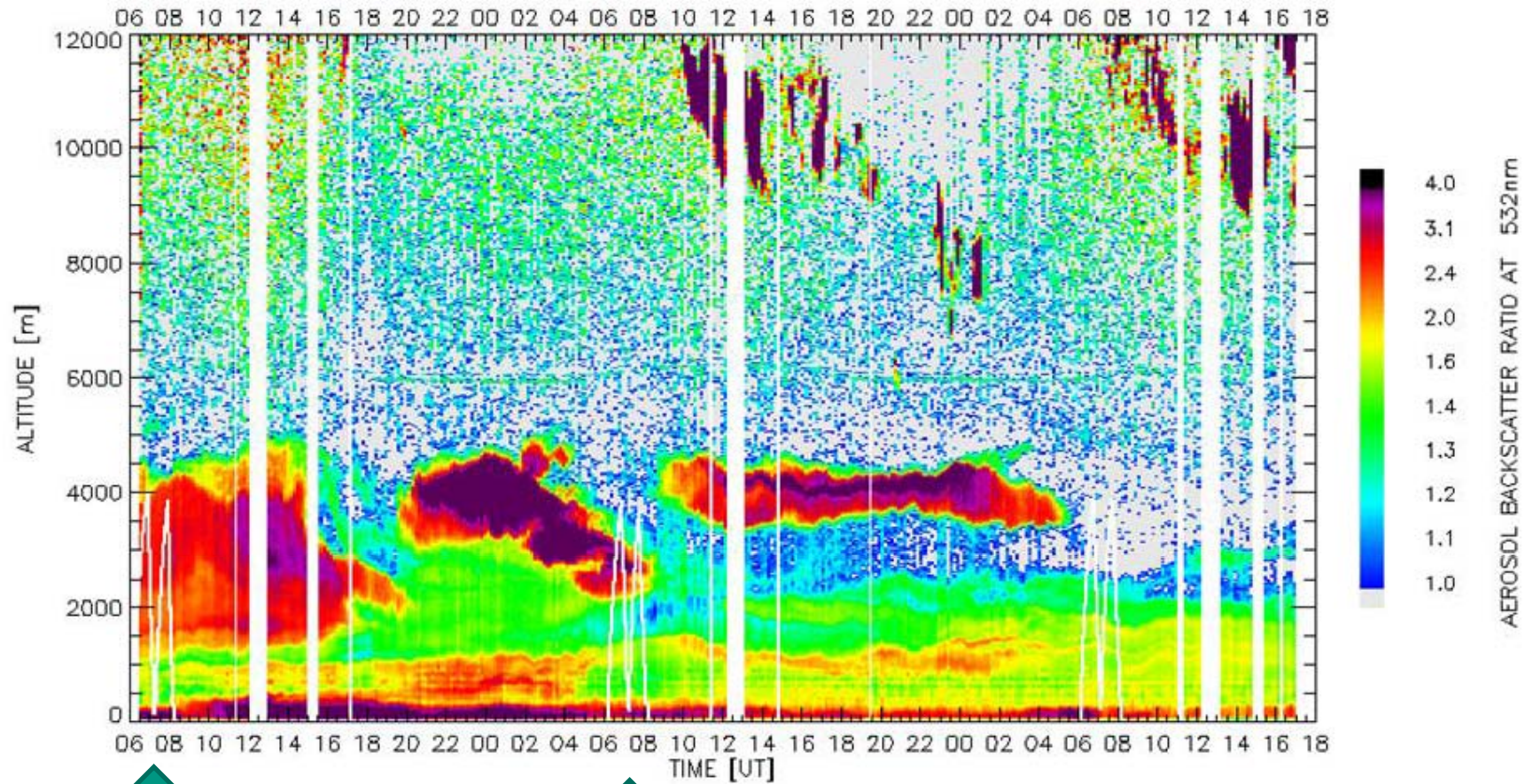
**GIMBALLED PLATFORM FOR  
RADIATION SENSORS (IR)**

LAMPEDUSA (35.5°N, 12.6°E)

TALE 03-05-2008

04-05-2008

05-05-2008





# **RADIATION/CLOUD/AEROSOL**

**ACTINIC UV RADIATION, O<sub>3</sub> AND AEROSOL ~HOMOGENEOUS OVER THE AREA**



**AEROSOL VERTICAL DISTRIBUTION CONTROLS RADIATION PROFILE,  
ATTENUATION (4000 - 0 m) UP TO 60 %  
MAJOR PARAMETERS: PBL HEIGHT, AOD.**

**CLOUD ALBEDO ~IN AGREEMENT WITH CURRENT MODELS**

**HAZE AROUND (BETWEEN) BROKEN CLOUDS**

**AEROSOL EFFECTS MASK 3D CLOUD FEATURES, REDUCTION  
BELOW CLOUD 30 - 50 %**

**But**



**How do aerosols modify clouds?**

**Can we investigate aerosol-cloud interactions with the microlight (or it's instrument package)?**



**But**



**How do aerosols modify clouds?**

**Can we investigate aerosol-cloud interactions with the microlight (or it's instrument package)?**

**WHY SUCH A SMALL AIRCRAFT**

# How do aerosols modify clouds?



**NUMBER CONC. OF CLOUD CONDENSATION NUCLEI**

**SIZE AND CONC. OF CLOUD DROPLETS**

**>> CLOUD ALBEDO, LIFETIME, RAINDROP PRODUCTION**

**BLACK CARBON ABSORPTION**

**GIANT CCN TRIGGERING ICE NUCLEATION**



# How do aerosols modify clouds?

NUMBER CONCENTRATION OF CLOUD CONDENSATION  
NUCLEI CONTROLS NUMBER AND SIZE OF CLOUD  
DROPLETS

**BELOW CLOUD BASE**

>> CLOUD ALBEDO, LIFETIME, RAINDROP PRODUCTION

BLACK CARBON ABSORPTION

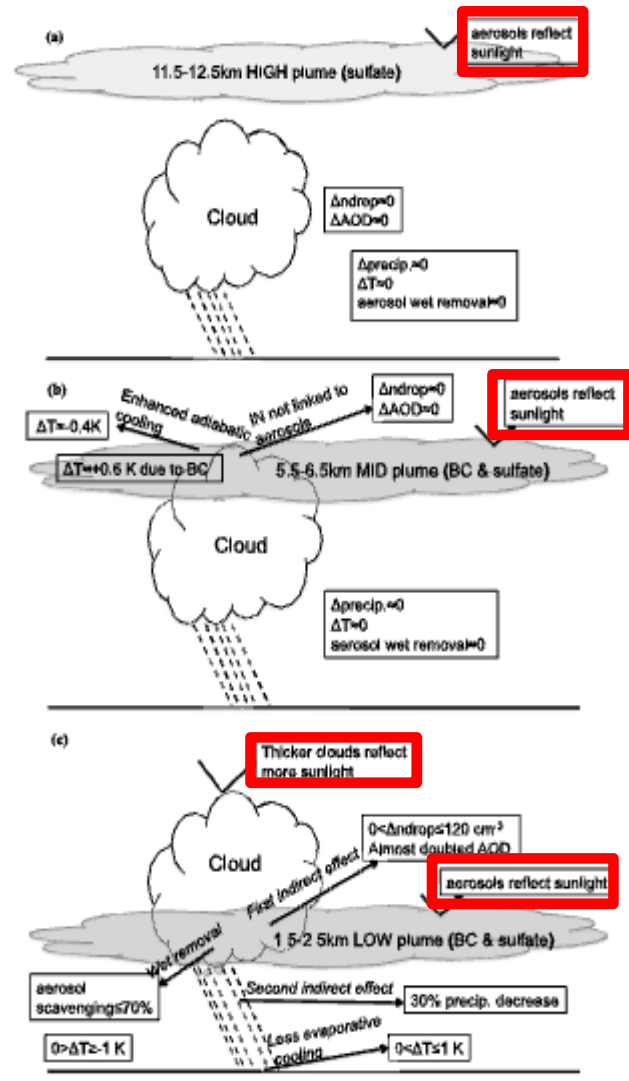
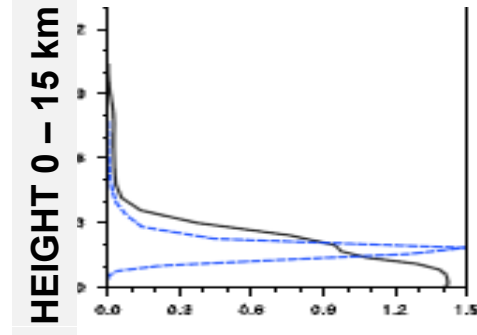
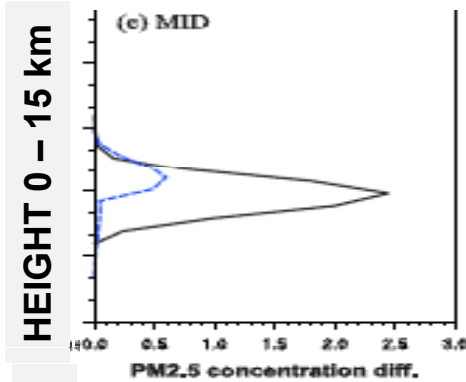
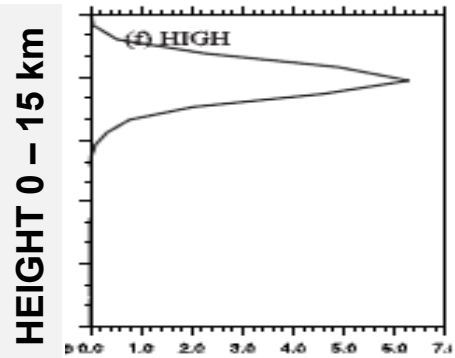
**PBL EMISSIONS  
BELOW CLOUD BASE**

GIANT CCN TRIGGERING ICE NUCLEATION

**BELOW AND ABOVE CLOUD**

# AEROSOLS AND CLOUDS, Zhao et al, 2012

## ALTITUDE DEPENDENCE



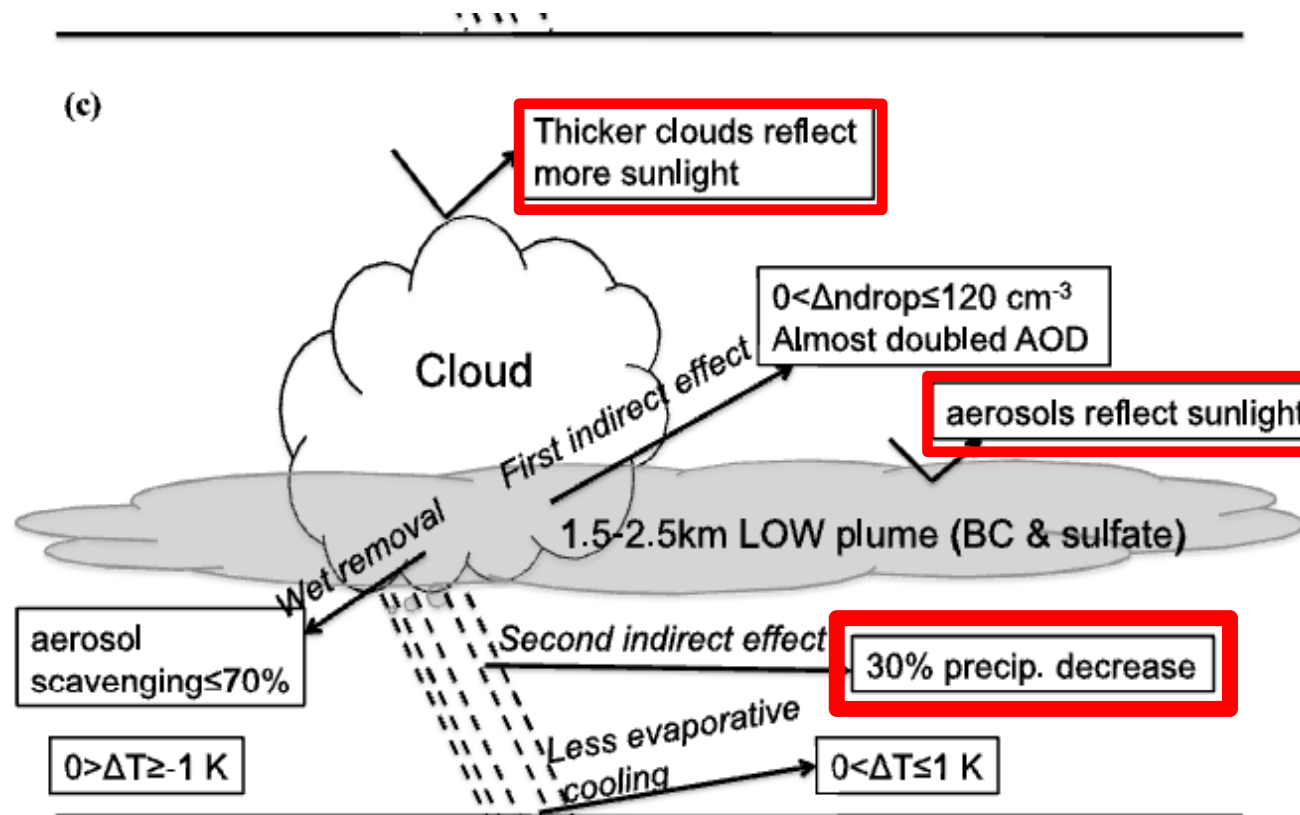
RADIATIVE EFFECTS

RADIATIVE EFFECTS

CLOUD MICROPHYSICS EFFECTS



# Aerosols and Clouds, Zhao et al, 2012

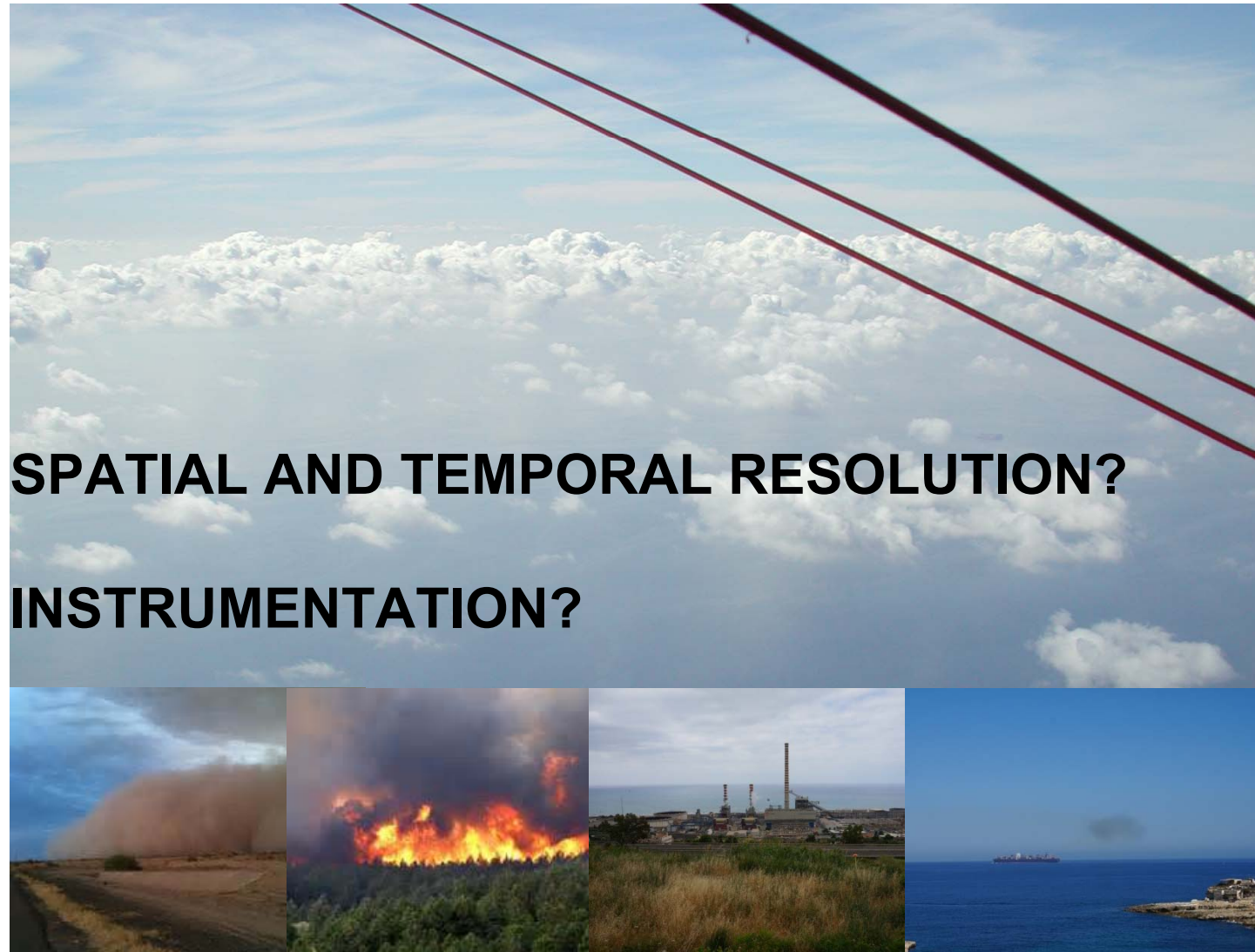


Climate impact:

Affecting Clouds and rainfall (-30 % regional scale)







Ozone  
CO<sub>2</sub>/H<sub>2</sub>O 20 Hz

UV-Photometer  
IRGA

Act. Rad. 300 nm JO11  
Act. Rad. 380 nm JNO2  
Global radiation  
Albedo 400, 550, 650, 990 nm (NDVI)  
Infrared

**RADIATION**

2 Filterradiometers  
2 Filterradiometers  
2 LICOR Pyranometers  
2 four channel irradiance sensors  
2 CGR4 Pyrgeometers

**2014**

Temperature  
Humidity  
Pressure  
Position  
Wind (horizontal) 10 Hz  
Surface / Sky Temperature

**METEOROLOGY**

Pt 100 /fast Thermocouple  
Chilled mirror

GPS  
GPS/Compass/INS  
IR sensors



**AEROSOL**

CN / number  
Aerosol / size distr.  
Submicron aerosol size distribution (SMPS) 4.5-350 nm  
Scatt. coeff. / visibility  
Absorption coefficient (BC)  
Cloud Condensation Nuclei (CCN)  
**CLOUD DROPLET SPECTRA**

CPC4 (> 4.5 nm)  
OPC, 300 nm – 20 um  
HSS-AVMIII, 870 nm  
7 wavelength Aethalometer  
Roberts CCN Spectrometer  
**FSSP-100**

**μ-METEOROLOGY**

Turbulence, 3D windvector  
Attitude / Heading

5 hole noseboom probe  
Oxford Tech. INS

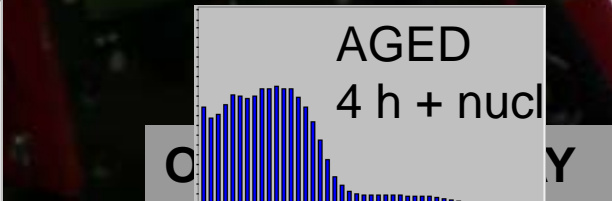
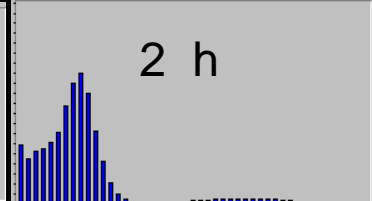
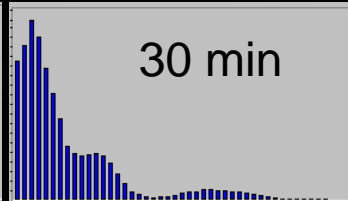
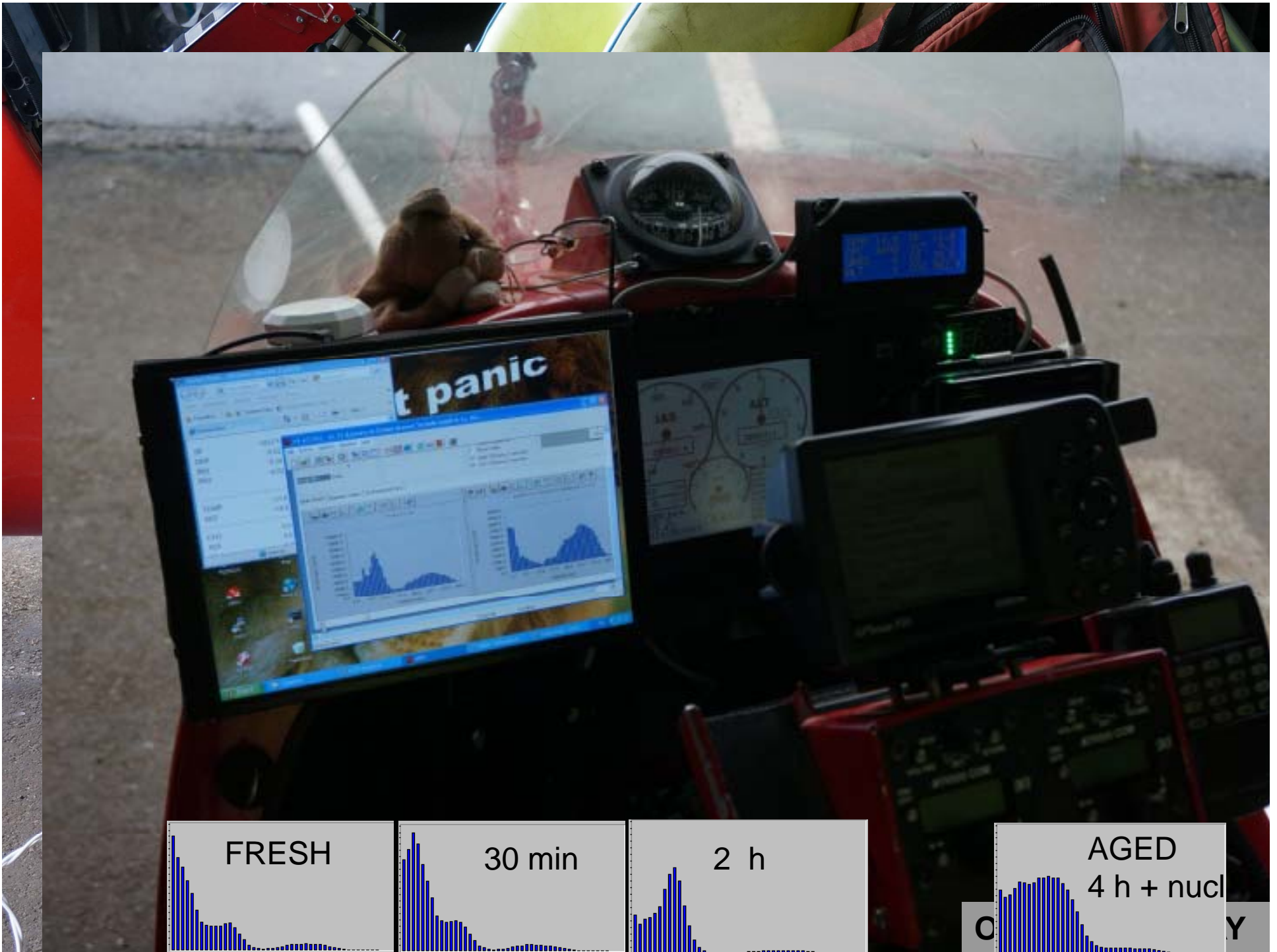


# AEROSOL-SIZE DISTRIBUTION

4.5 nm – 20  $\mu\text{m}$ , 2 min / > 300nm 6 s / # 1 s









# THE WORK PLACE

AIRCRAFT

GPS

RADIO

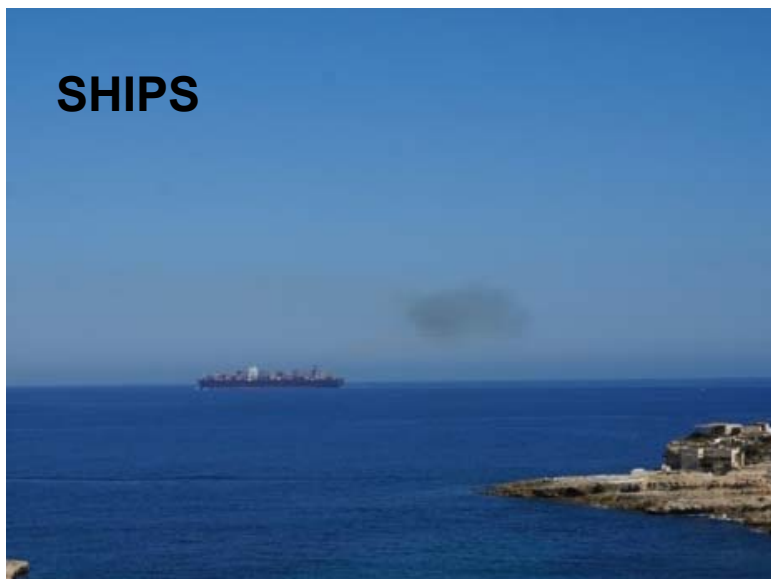
S-MODE  
TRANSPONDER



**FLYING LOW AND SLOW**

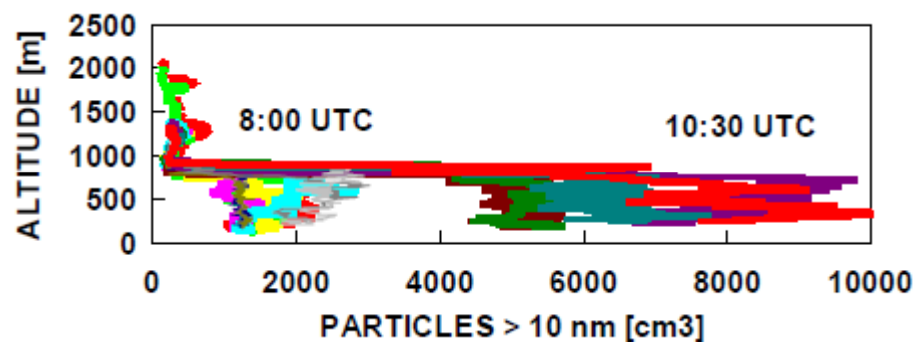
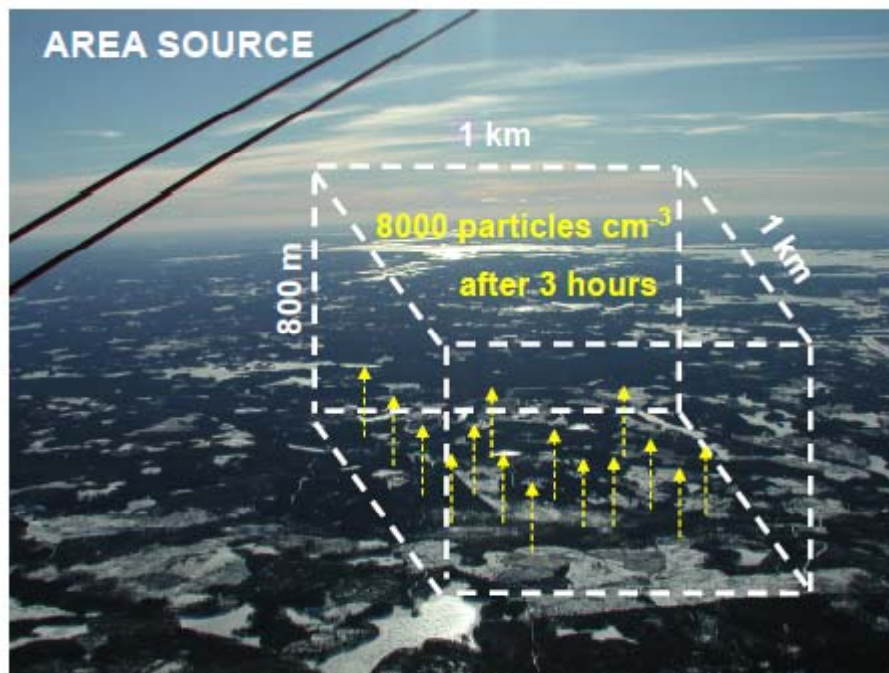


# SOURCES FOR CLOUD RELEVANT PARTICLES



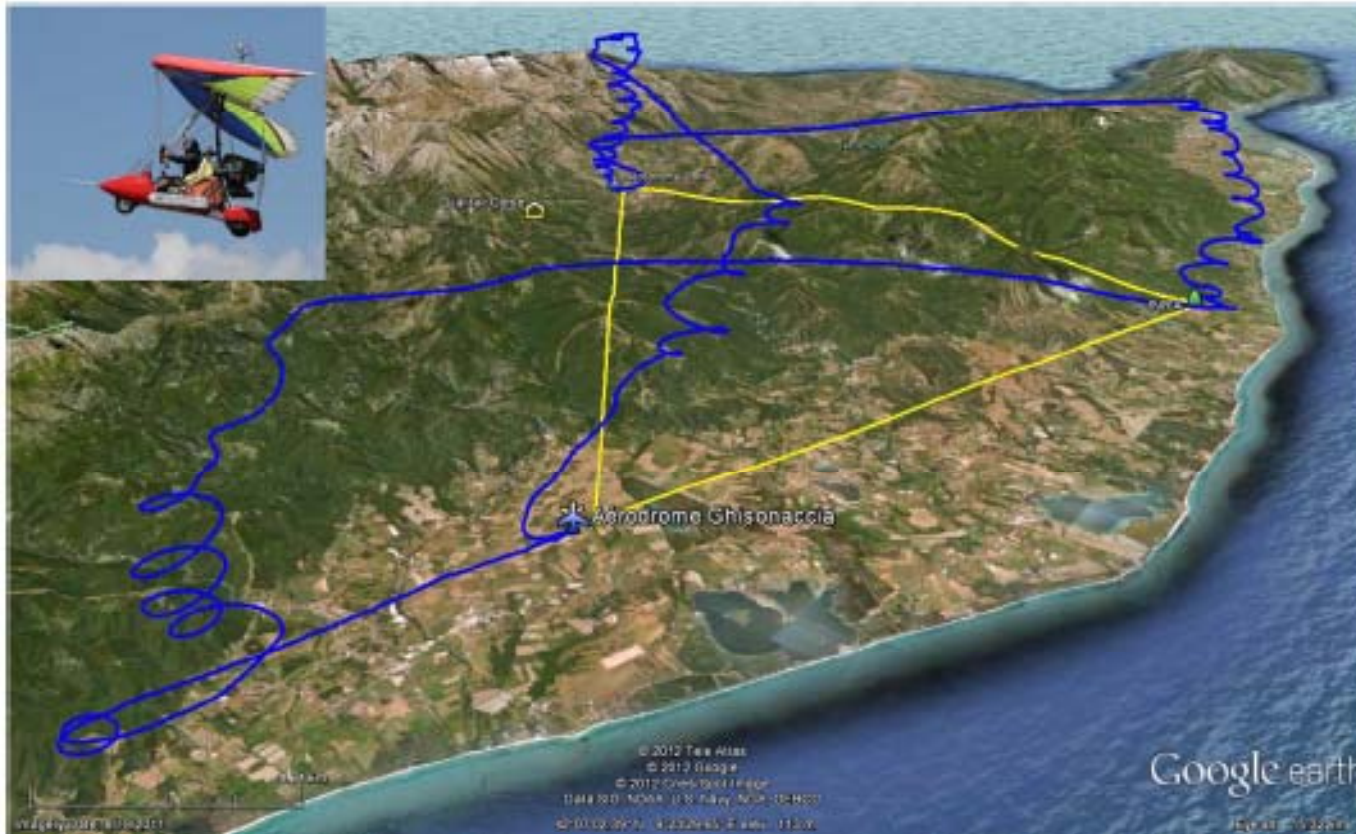
INVISIBLE  
PARTICLES  
UFP / **CCN**  
WITHIN THE PBL

# SOURCES FOR CLOUD RELEVANT PARTICLES



**FINLAND MARCH 2003**  
**Winter operation ~10 °C**

# Typical VESSAER Flight



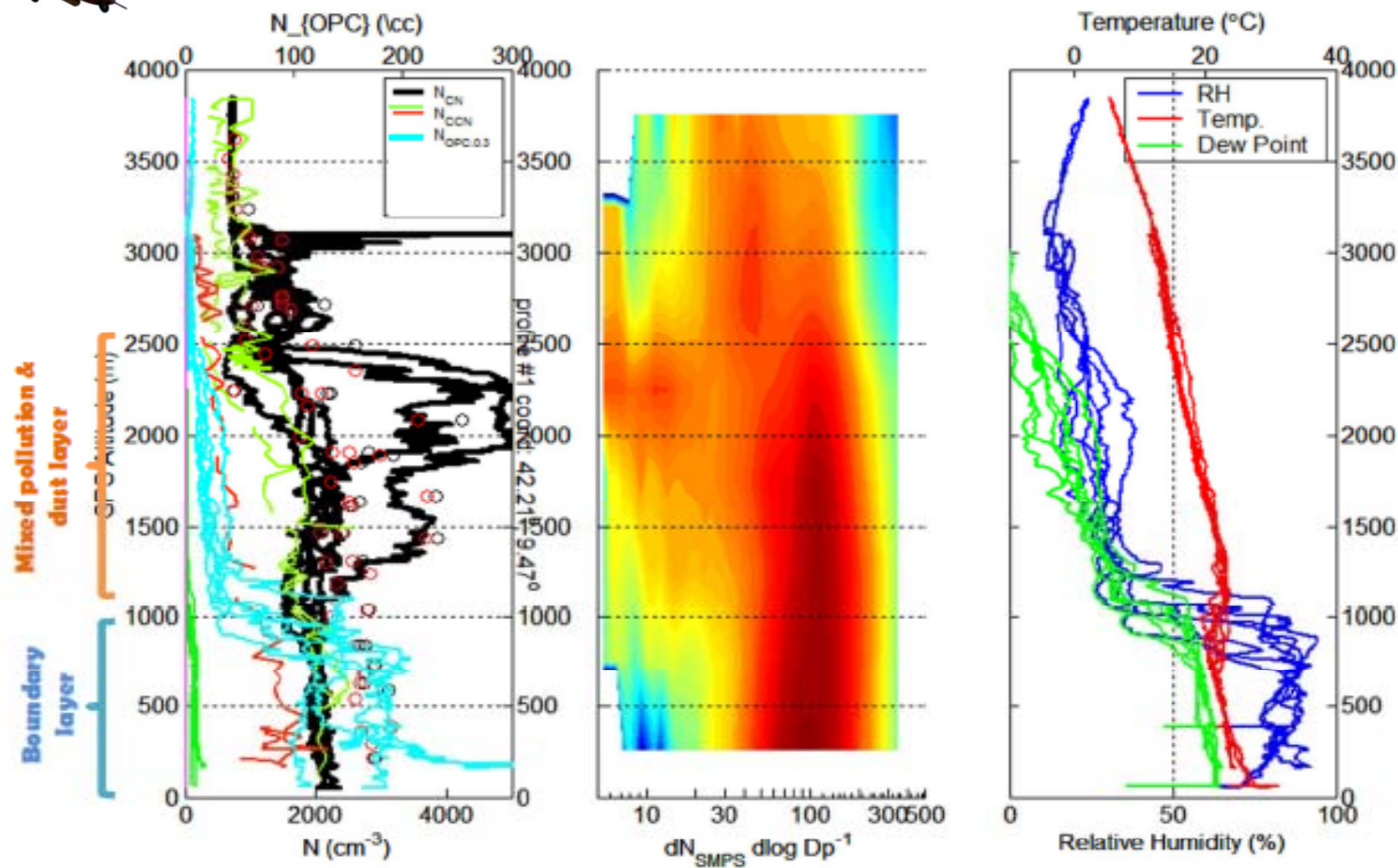
Vertical profiles over Corte, San Giuliano (INRA), and  
Ghisonaccia / Solenzara



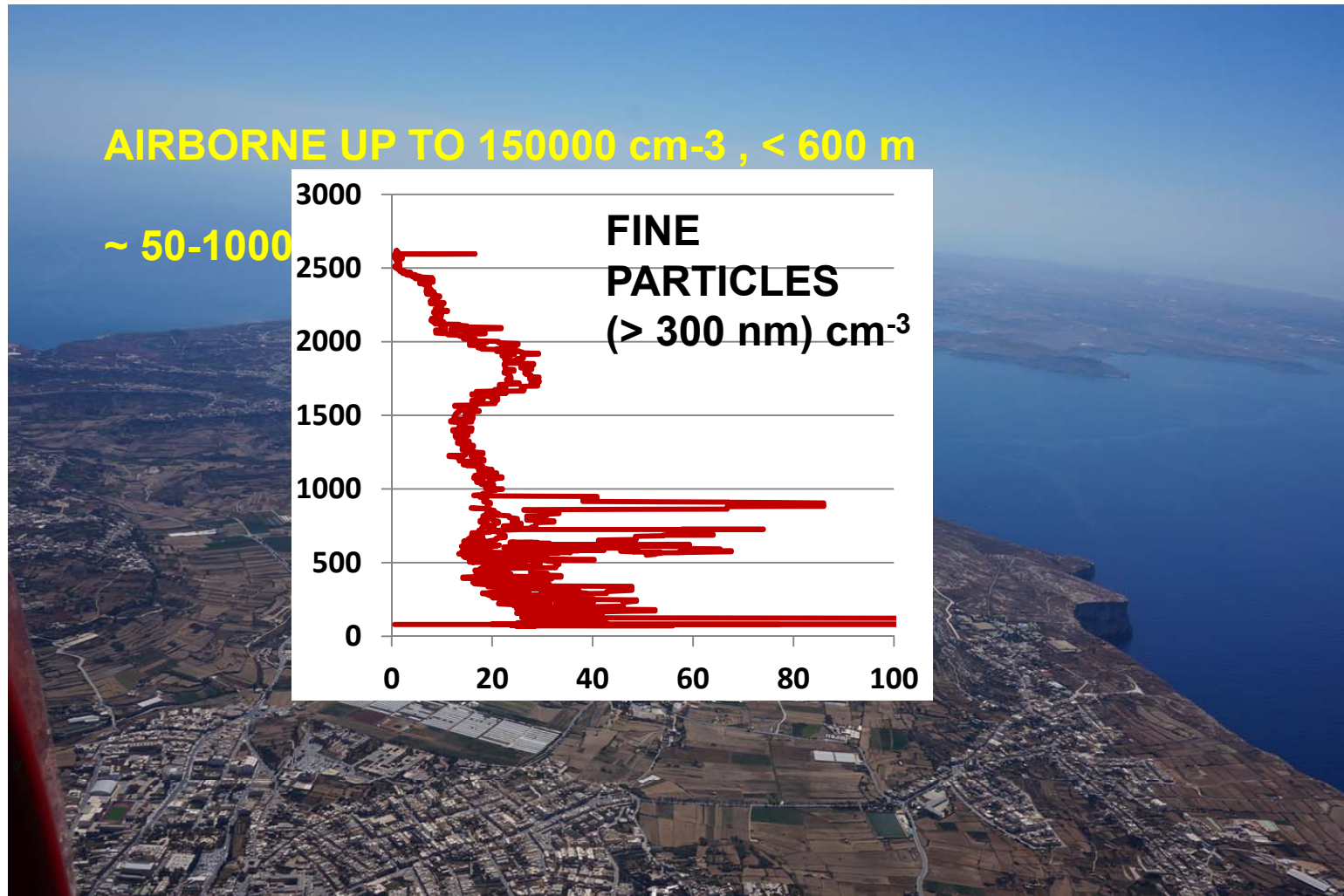
# Aerosols over Corsica



## Vertical profiles (8 July)

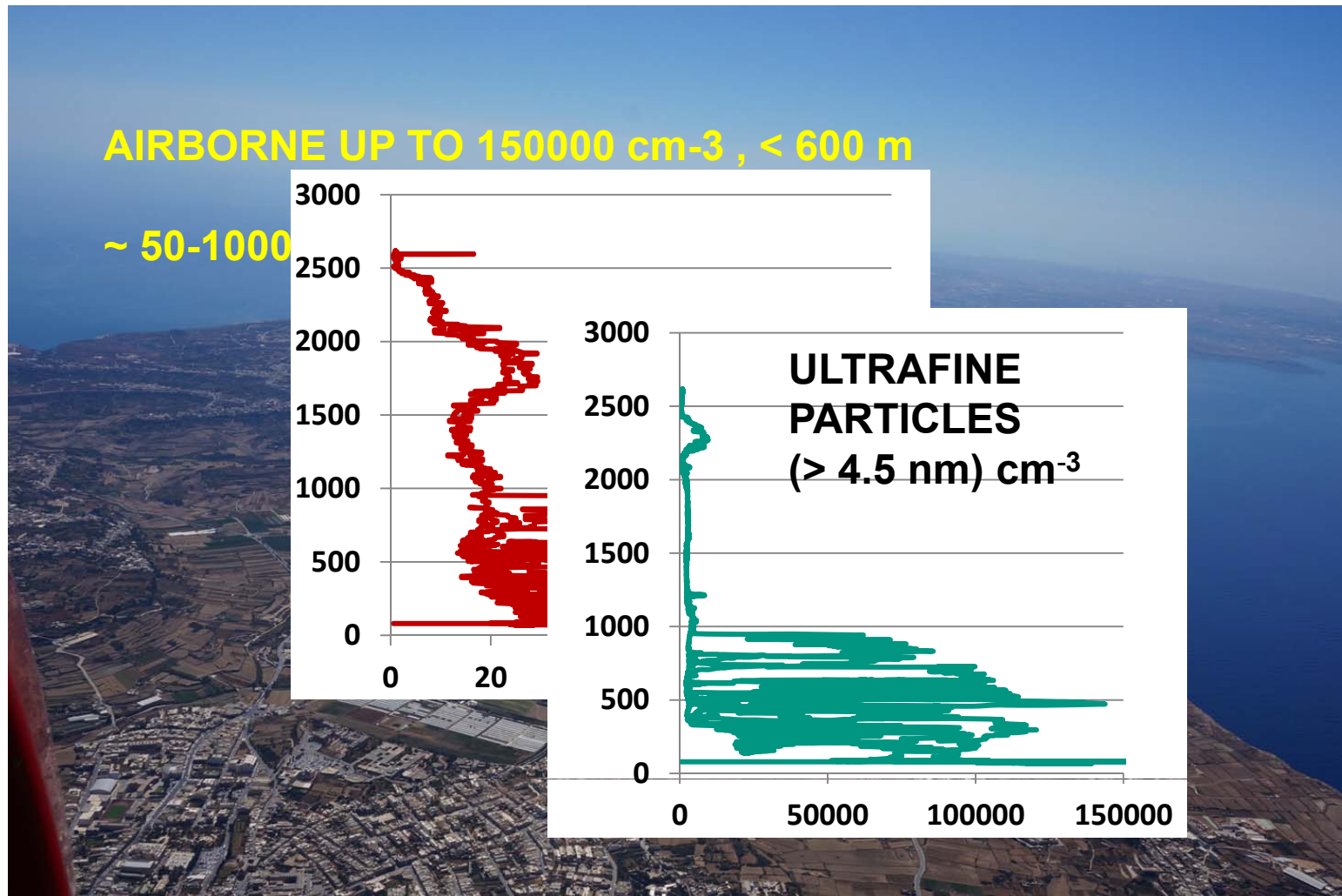


# Aerosols over the Malta / Gozo



**MALTA, 2013, CHARMEX**

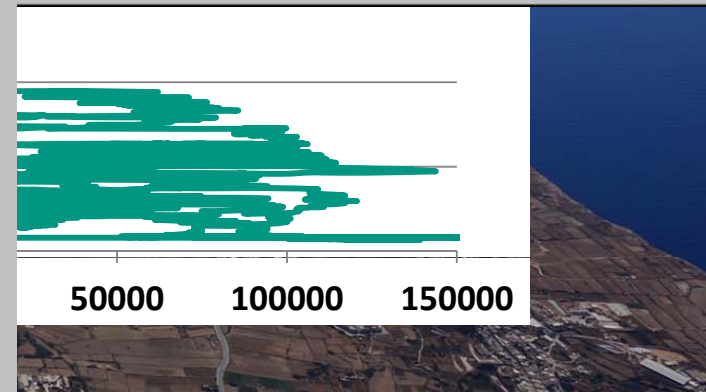
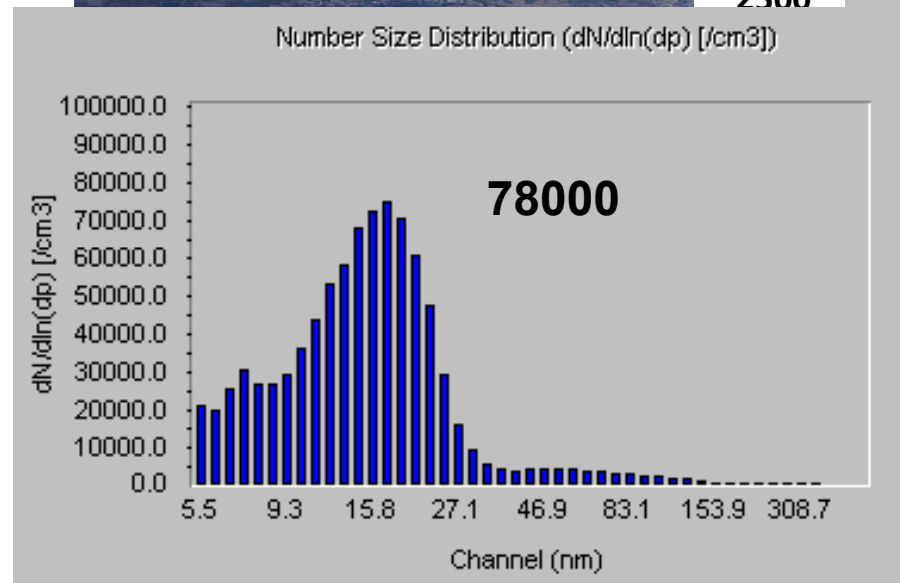
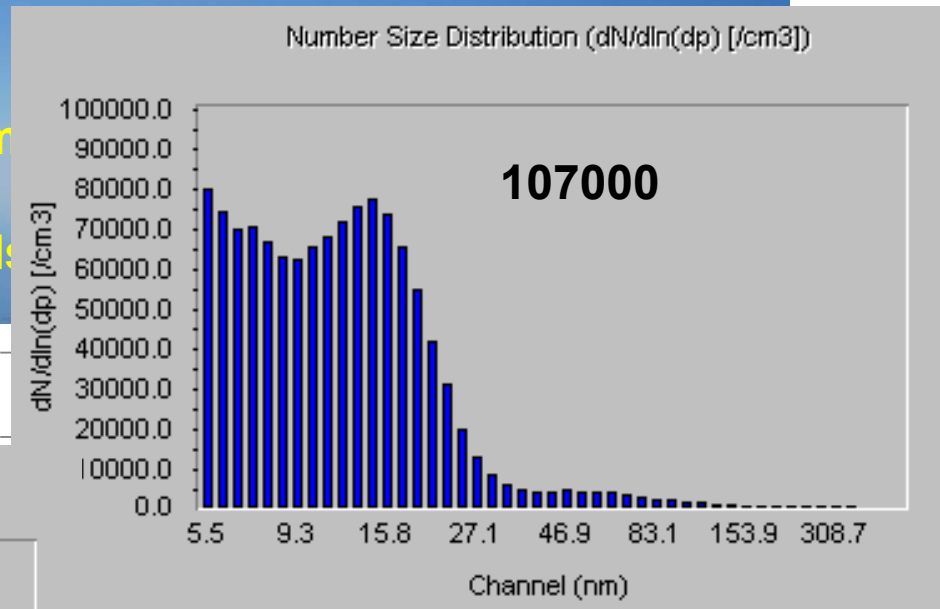
# Aerosols over the Malta / Gozo



**MALTA, 2013, CHARMEX**

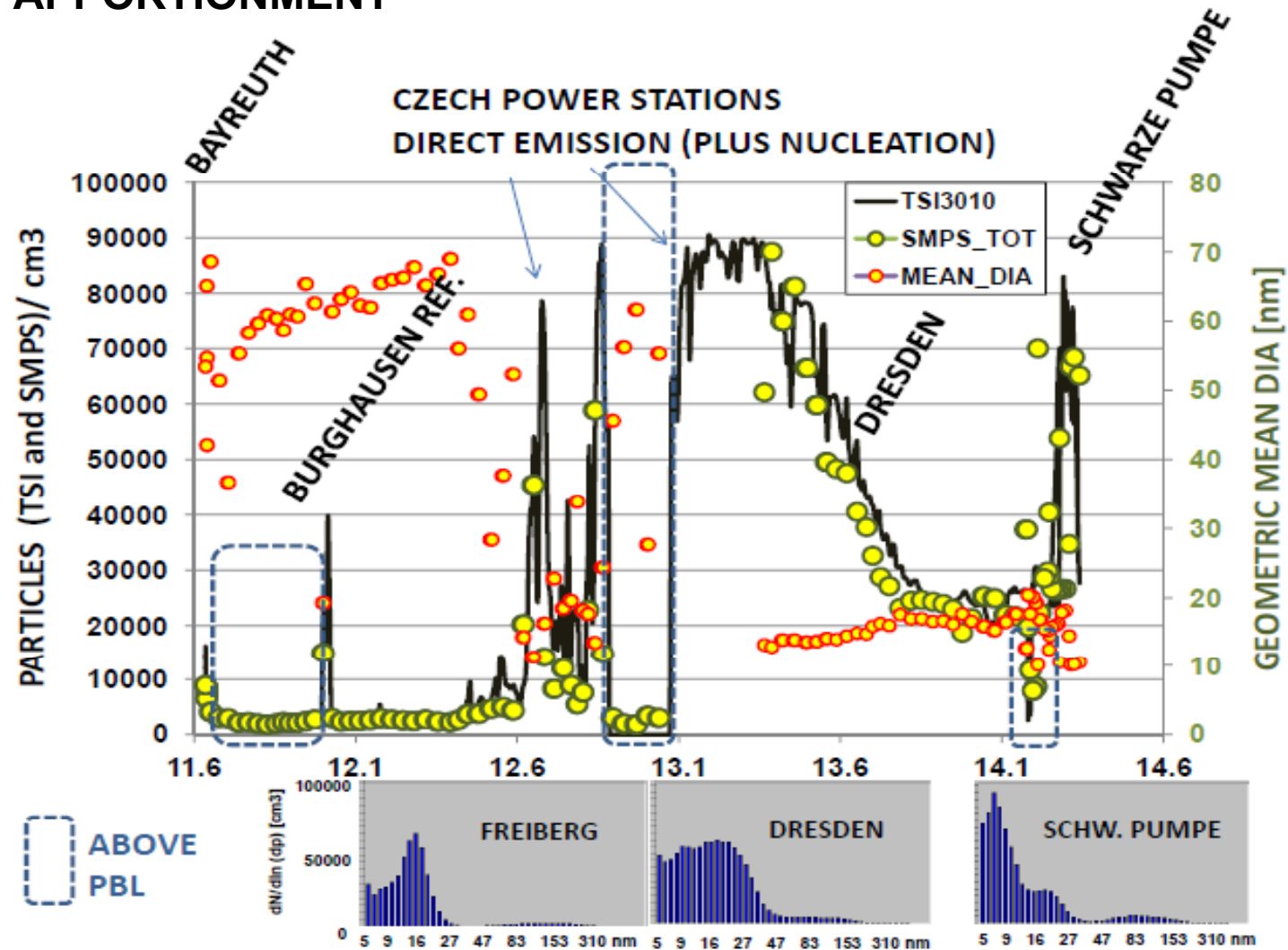


# Aerosols over the Malta / Gozo



**MALTA, 2013, CHARMEX**

# SOURCE APPORTIONMENT



# SOURCE APPORTIONMENT



PBL < 600 m agl





# SOURCE APPORTIONMENT?

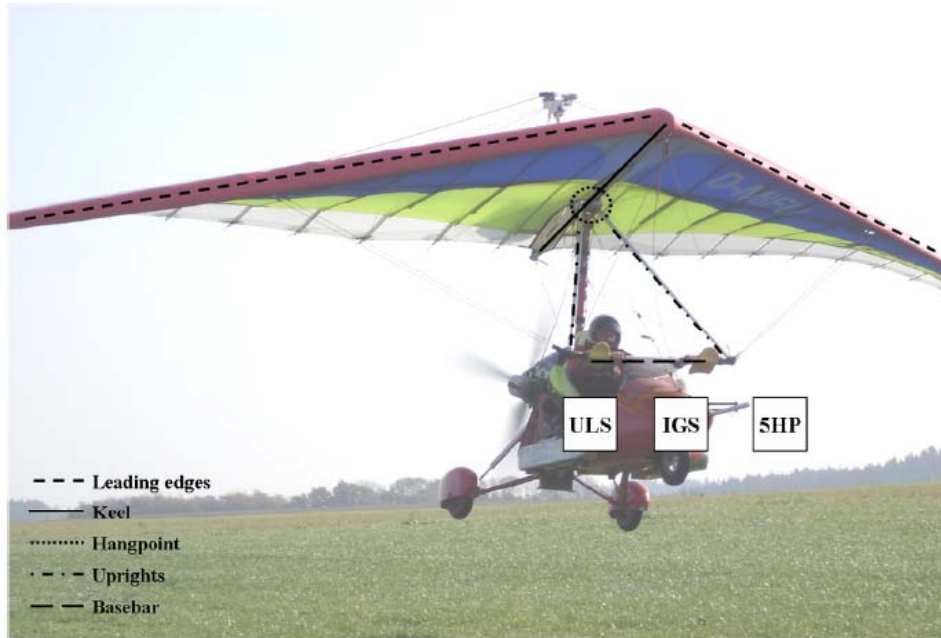


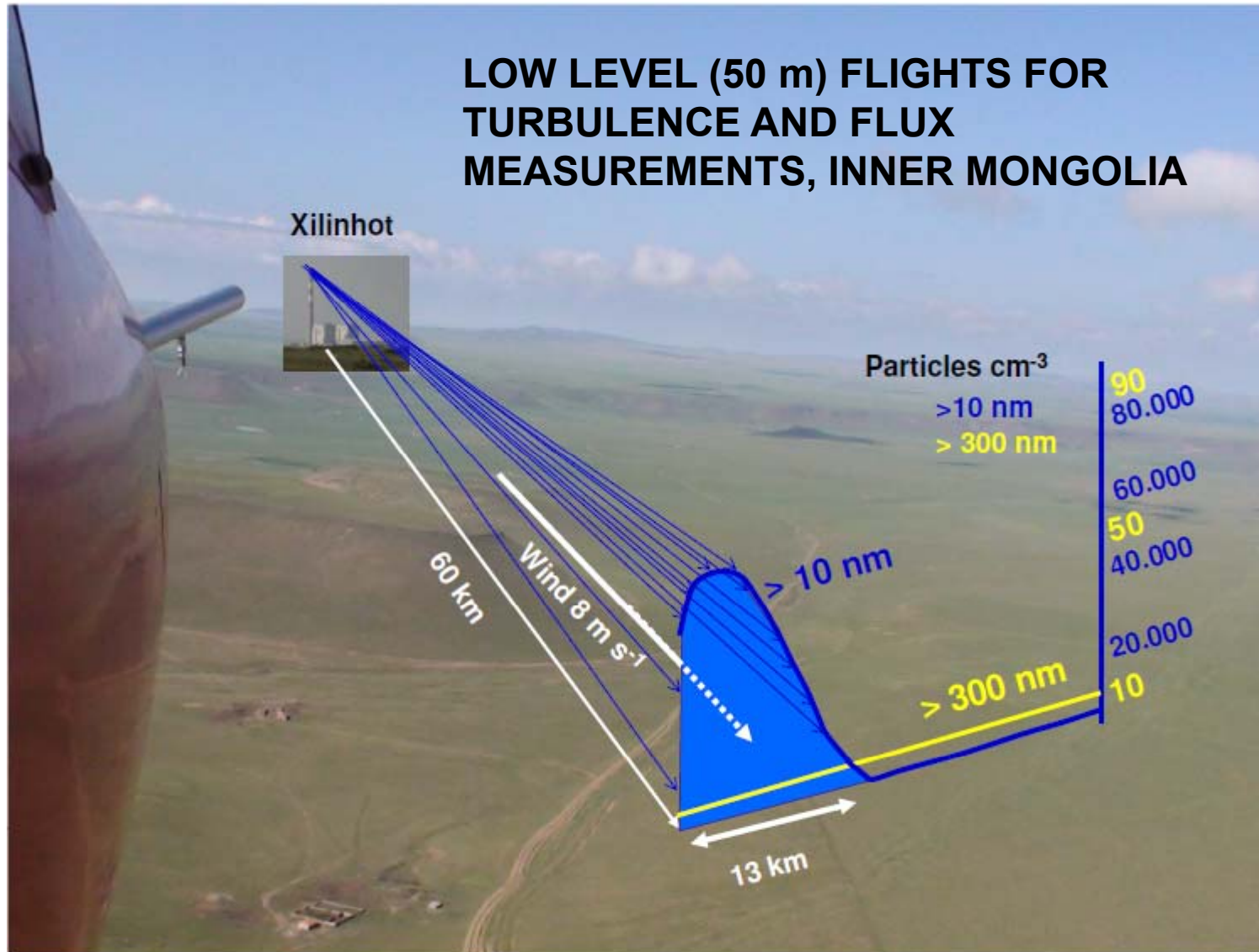
Fig. 1. Weight-shift microlight research aircraft D-MIFU, aircraft structural features are highlighted by dash-dotted lines. Sensor locations of wind-measuring five hole probe (SHP), inertial measurement and global positioning system (IGS, inside aircraft nose) and universal laser altitude sensor (ULS, below pilot seat) are indicated. Figure modified after Metzger et al. (2011, Appendix B).



## TURBULENCE MEASUREMENT FOR WSMA AND APP. IN CHINA

# SOURCE APPORTIONMENT

## LOW LEVEL (50 m) FLIGHTS FOR TURBULENCE AND FLUX MEASUREMENTS, INNER MONGOLIA

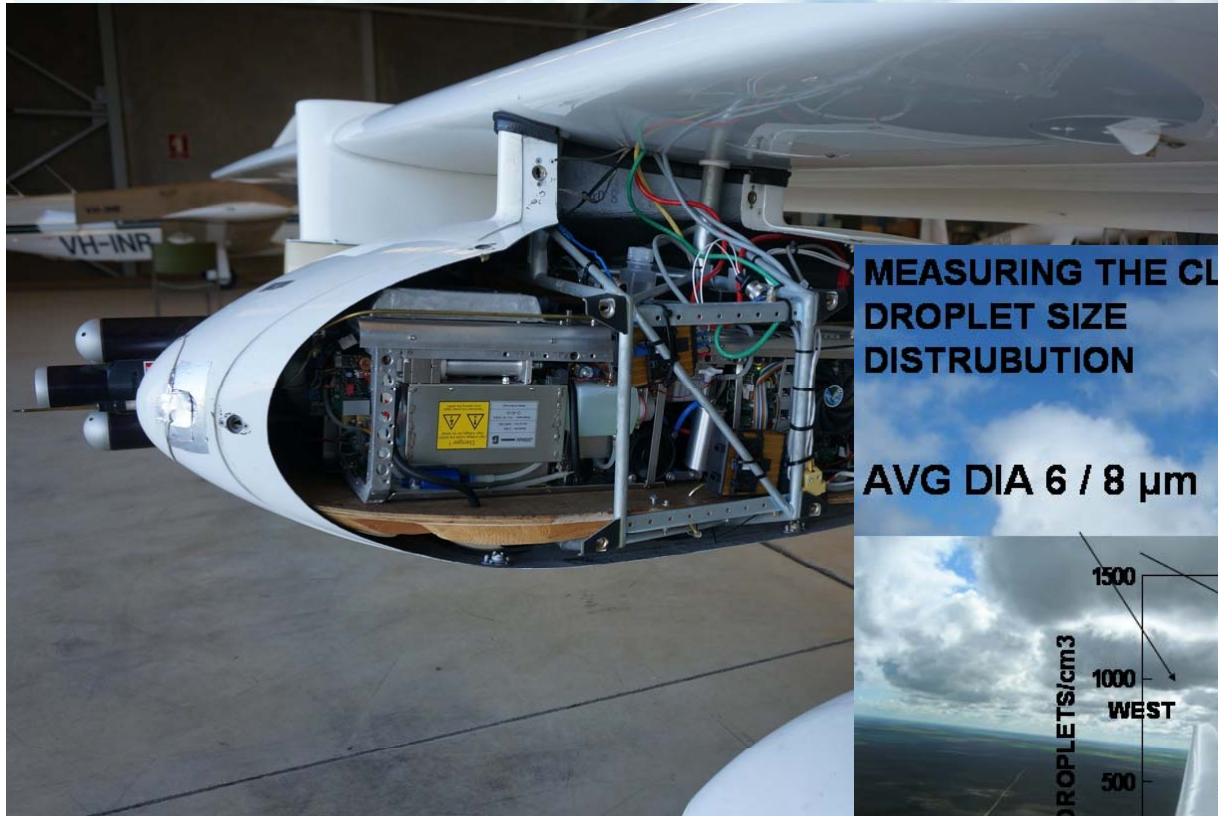


# LIMITS



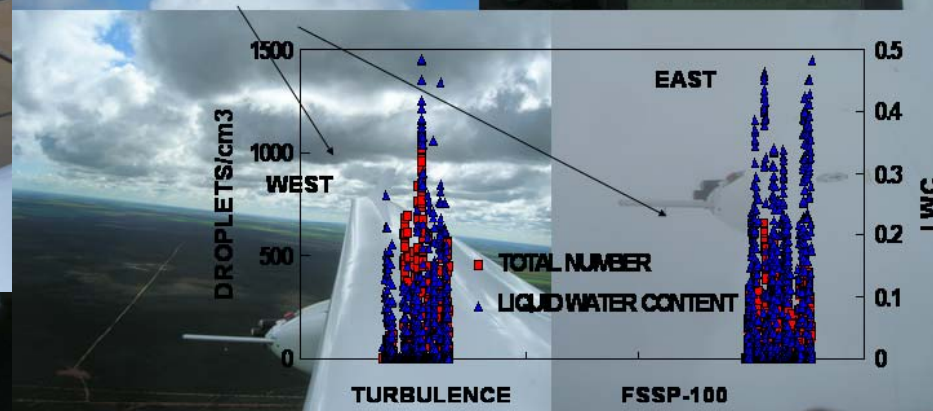


# LIMITS



MEASURING THE CLOUD DROPLET SIZE DISTRIBUTION

AVG DIA 6 / 8  $\mu\text{m}$



# LIMITS

## WINDS /GUSTS

Max ground  
wind speed  
15 kt



# LIMITS

## OROGRAPHIC TURBULENCE





# LIMITS

OPEN WATER



# LIMITS

## PERMITS

Switzerland  
Spain  
Italy....



# ADVANTAGES

SIMPLE REGULATIONS,  
CERTIFICATION ETC.

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY



REPRESENTATIVE OF THE  
MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT

CERTIFICATE OF AIRWORTHINESS  
FOR  
AIR SPORT EQUIPMENT

TYPE OF AIR SPORT EQUIPMENT

MICROLIGHT D-MIFU





# ADVANTAGES

**Pusher Configuration**

**Simple inlet systems**

**Versatile modular  
instrument system  
also for other platforms**



# ADVANTAGES

## SIMPLE WORLDWIDE TRANSPORT



## AIR FREIGHT MEXICO (PUEBLA)



## CHINA INNER MONGOLIA



## ROAD



# ADVANTAGES

## STOL, LOW REQUIREMENTS ON LANDING STRIP





# ADVANTAGES

## STOL, LOW REQUIREMENTS ON LANDING STRIP



# COST

# DIS-ADVANTAGES

**Sensitive to  
orographic  
turbulence**



**Sensitive to  
weather (hangar required)**



**Low gliding angle  
In case of emergency**

**Legislative limits  
(Switzerland/Italy/Spain)**

**Availability of pilots**



# SUMMARY

**VERSATILE  
PLATFORM  
WITH HIGHLY  
MODULAR  
INSTRUMENT  
SYSTEM**



**Requires small  
size instruments  
compatible with  
UAV**

**Low speed  
allows to use  
,slow‘  
instruments**





# SUMMARY

**VERSATILE  
PLATFORM  
WITH HIGHLY  
MODULAR  
INSTRUMENT  
SYSTEM**



**Major App.  
PBL research  
Regional scale**

**Instrument pods  
useful also for  
other platforms**



# SUMMARY

**WSMA  
COMPLEMENTARY  
TO OTHER SMALL  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
RESEARCH  
AIRCRAFT (SERA)**



**COVERING A  
SPECIAL NICHE AT  
LOW COST**

**HOWEVER, FOR  
CERTAIN  
PROBLEMS  
OTHER SERA's  
WOULD BE MORE  
SUITABLE**





***THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION***





