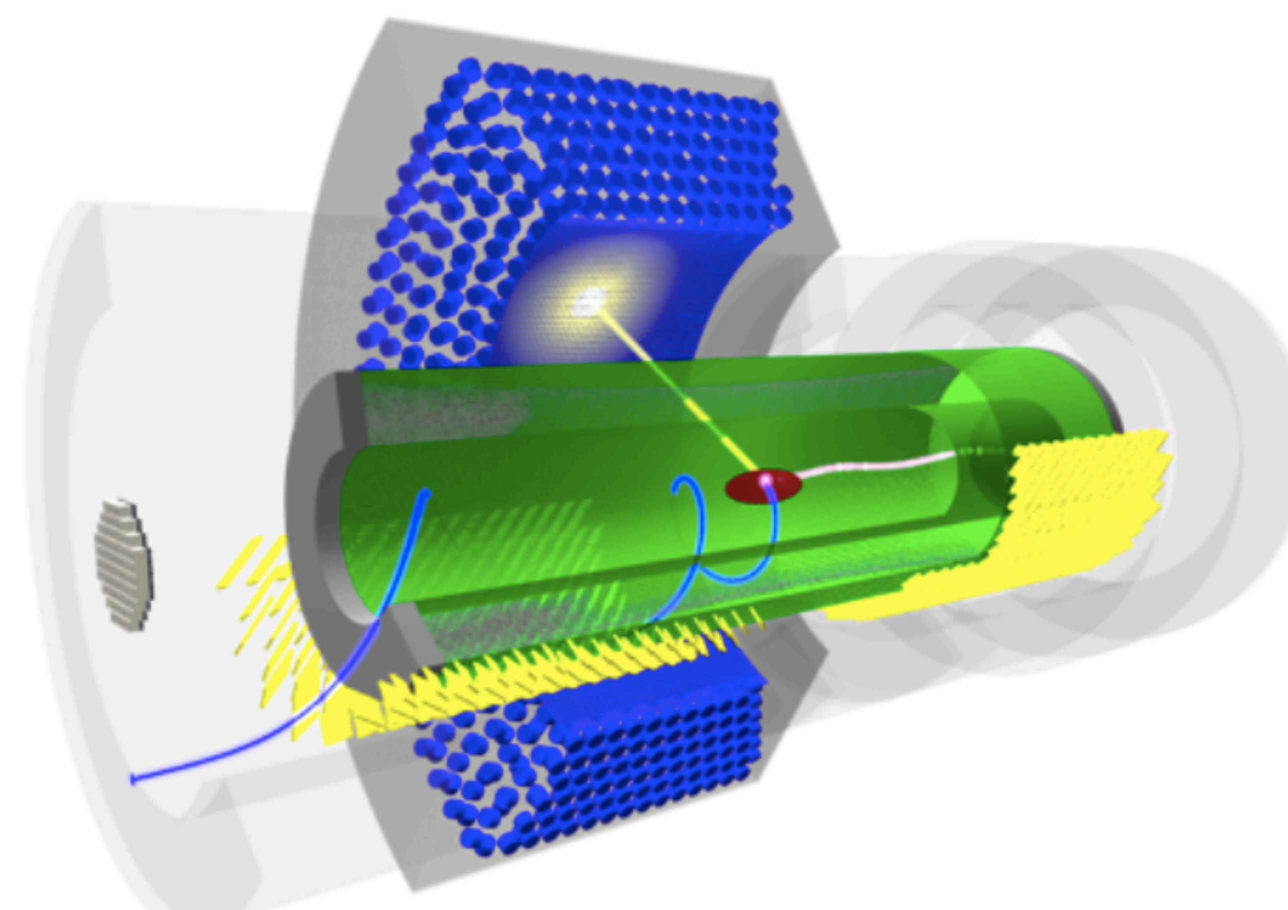
Results on the X17 search with the MEG-II apparatus

Hicham Benmansour, INFN Pisa
on behalf of the MEG-II collaboration



Lepton Interactions with Nucleons and Nuclei 2025
Marciana Marina, June 26th, 2025

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Outline

1) Physics motivation: the Atomki anomalies

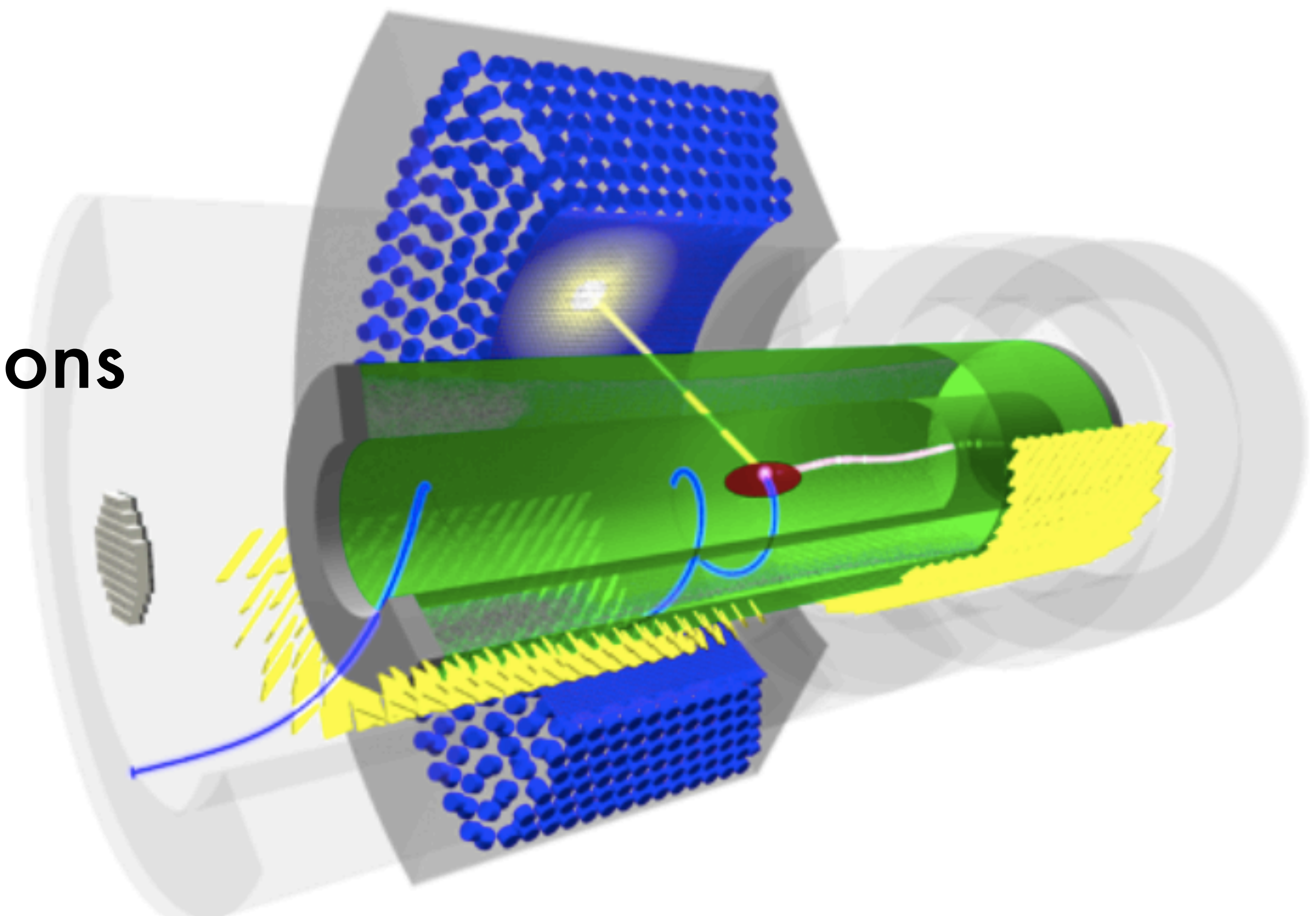
2) The MEG-II apparatus

3) Backgrounds and signal simulations

4) Pair reconstruction

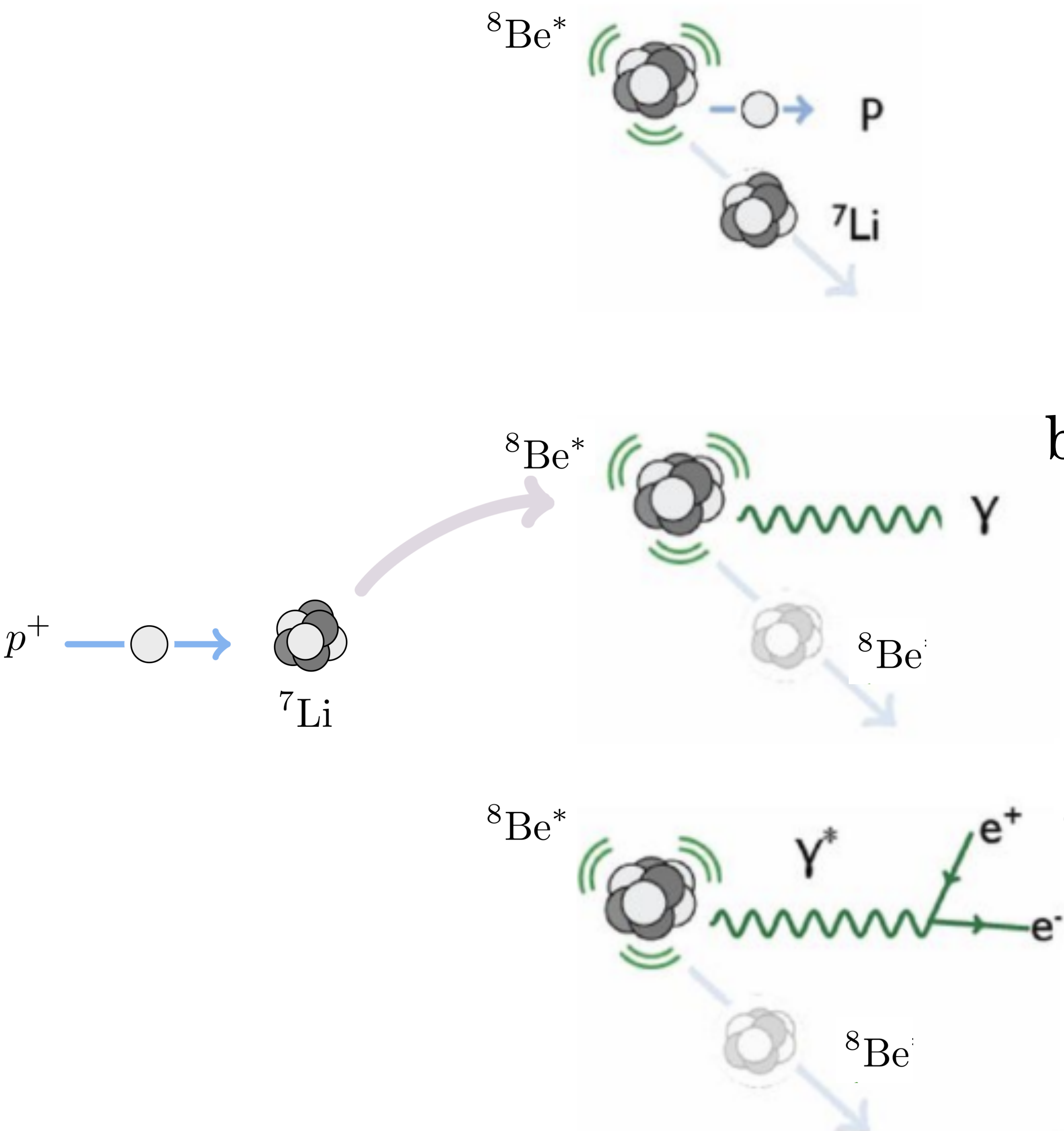
5) Trigger and DAQ strategies

6) Physics dataset and X17 results



1) The Atomki anomalies

Beryllium decays



a) Hadronic dissociation
BR ~ 100%

b) Electromagnetic transition
γ-emission
BR ~ 1e-5

c) Electromagnetic transition
Direct $e^{+}e^{-}$ emission
BR ~ 1e-8

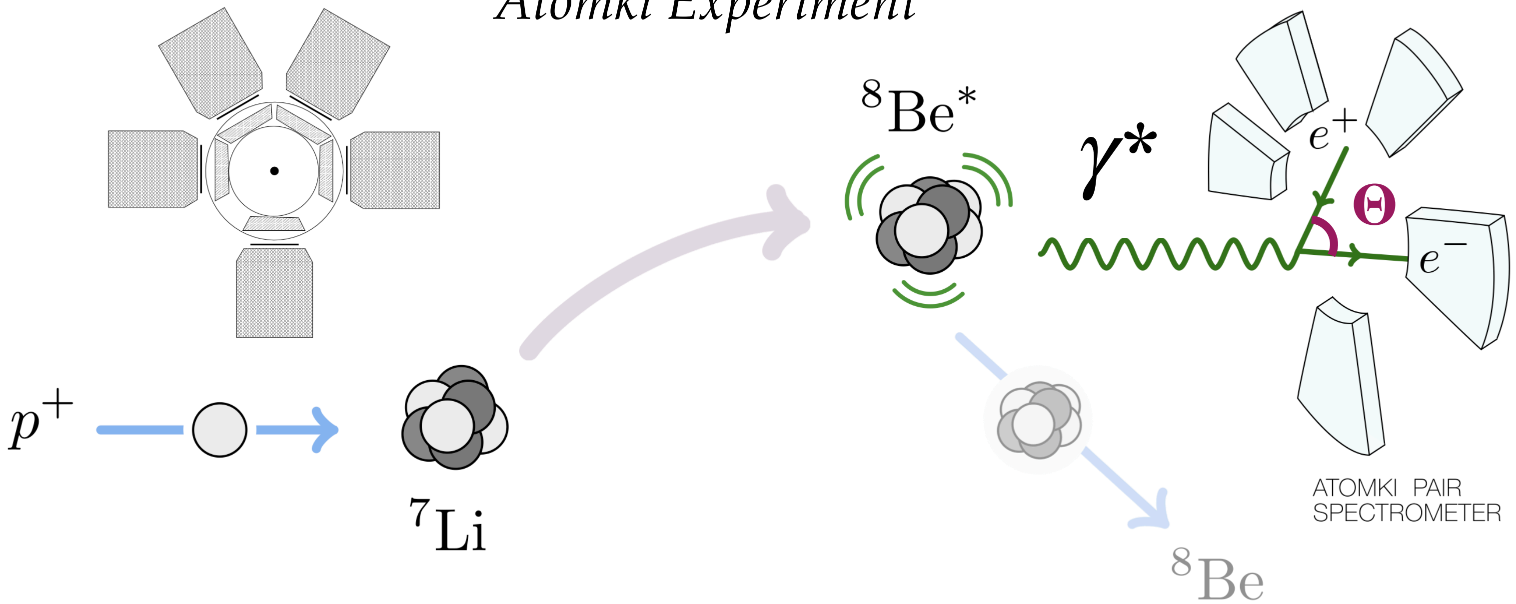
–> IPC = Internal Pair Conversion

$^{7}\mathrm{Li}(p, e^{+}e^{-})^{8}\mathrm{Be}$

The Beryllium Anomaly

IPC = Internal Pair Conversion
→ **direct e+/e- pair creation**

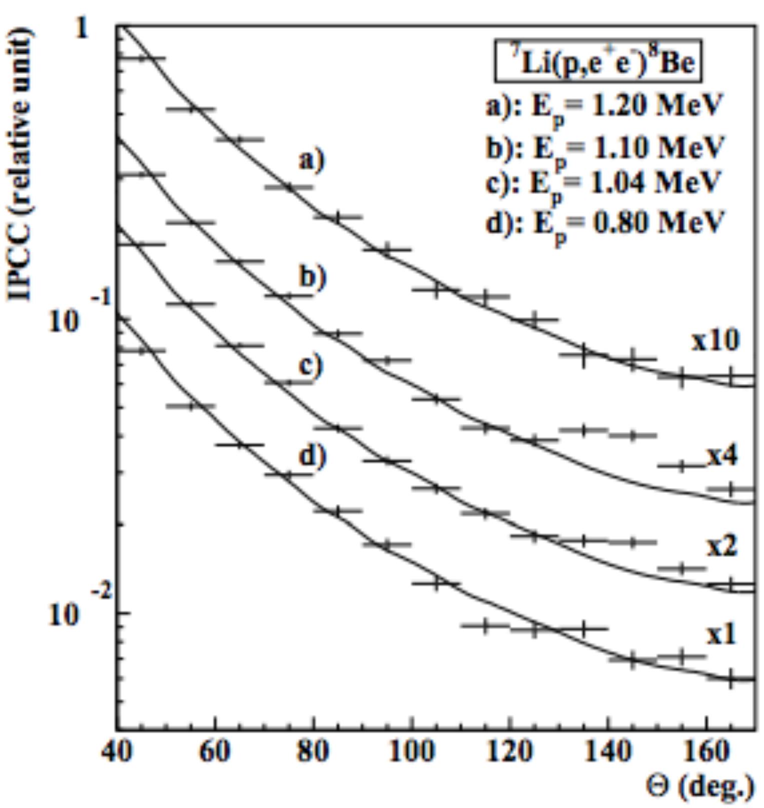
Atomki Experiment



^{7}Li$(p, e^+e^-)^8$Be studied at
Ep = 800, 1040, 1100, 1200 keV

→ e+/e- energy sum and
angular opening Θ

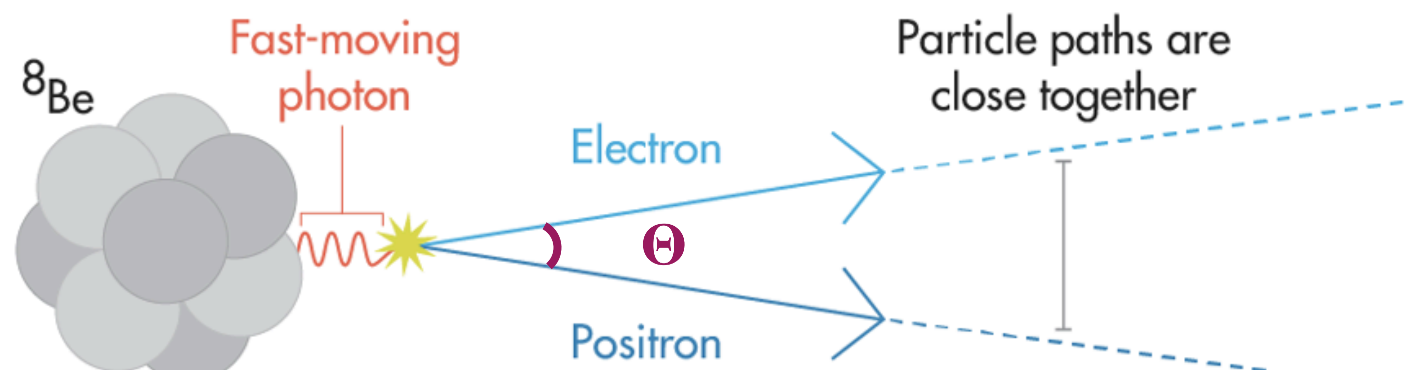
2016 Atomki results



Phys. Rev. Lett. 116, 042501

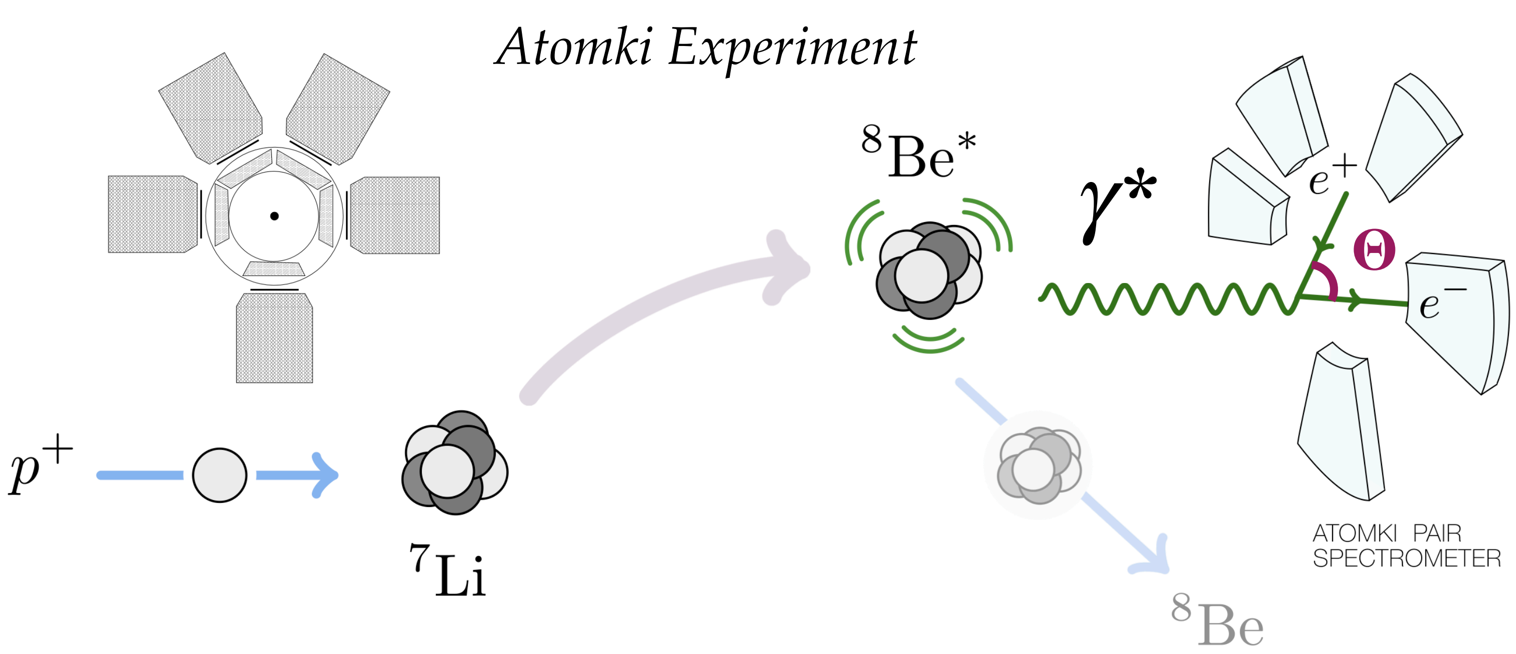
IPC mostly small angles
Monotonous decrease expected

EXPECTED ^{8}Be TRANSITION



IPC = Internal Pair Conversion
→ direct e+/e- pair creation

①



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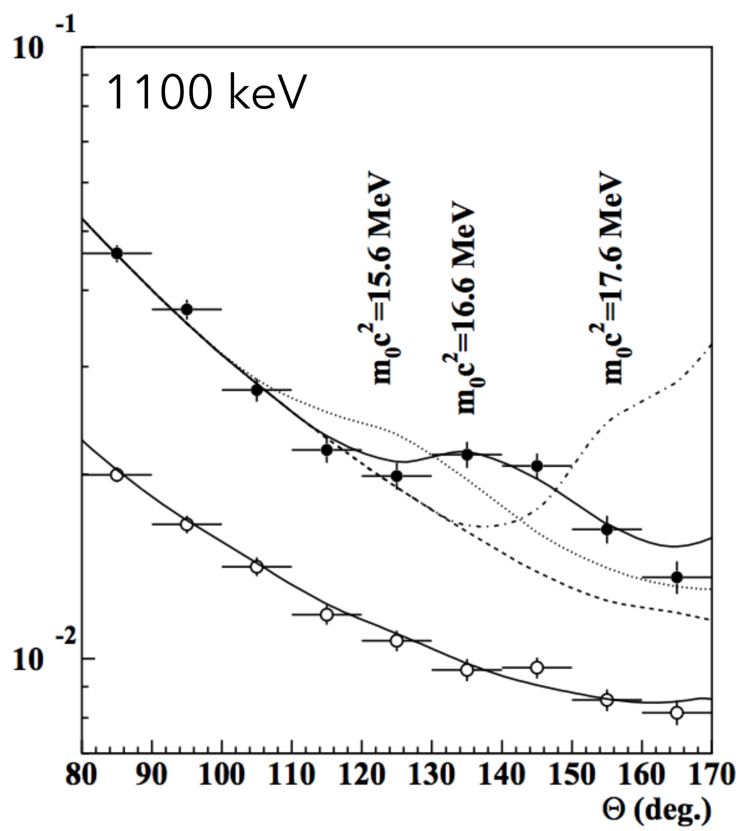
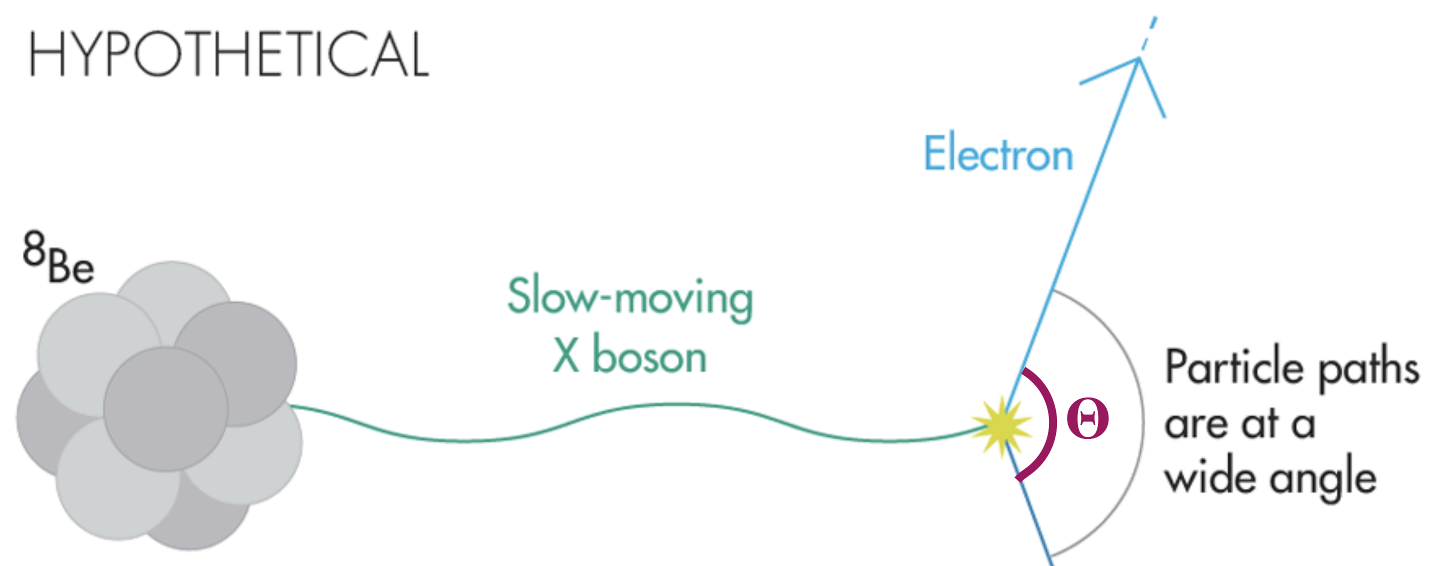


Phys. Rev. Lett. 116, 042501



→ Bump consistent with massive particle decay

→ $m_X = 16.70\,\mathrm{MeV/c^2}$

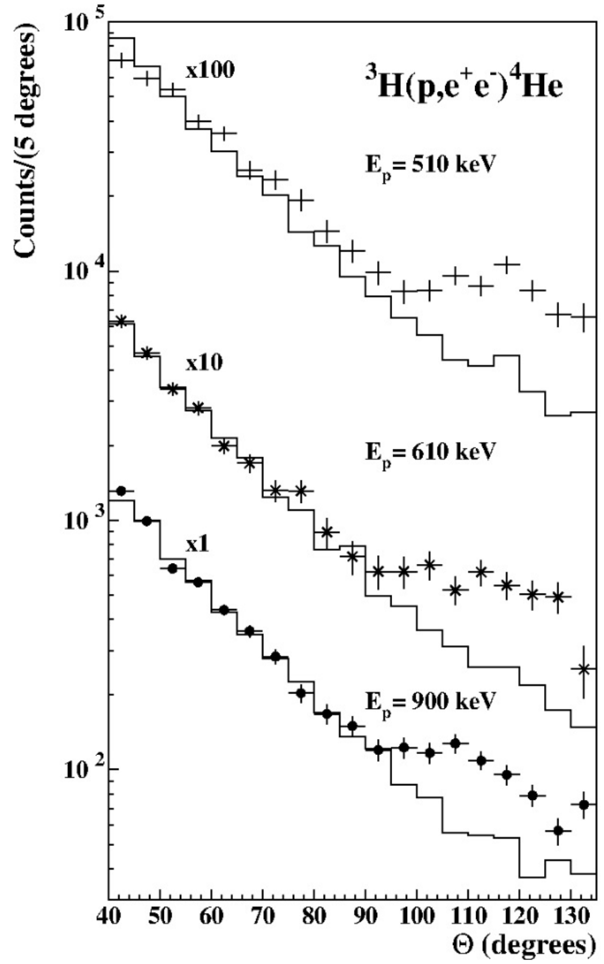
→ Fifth force? Phys. Rev. D 95, 035017

Consistent anomalies?

Phys. Rev. C 104, 044003

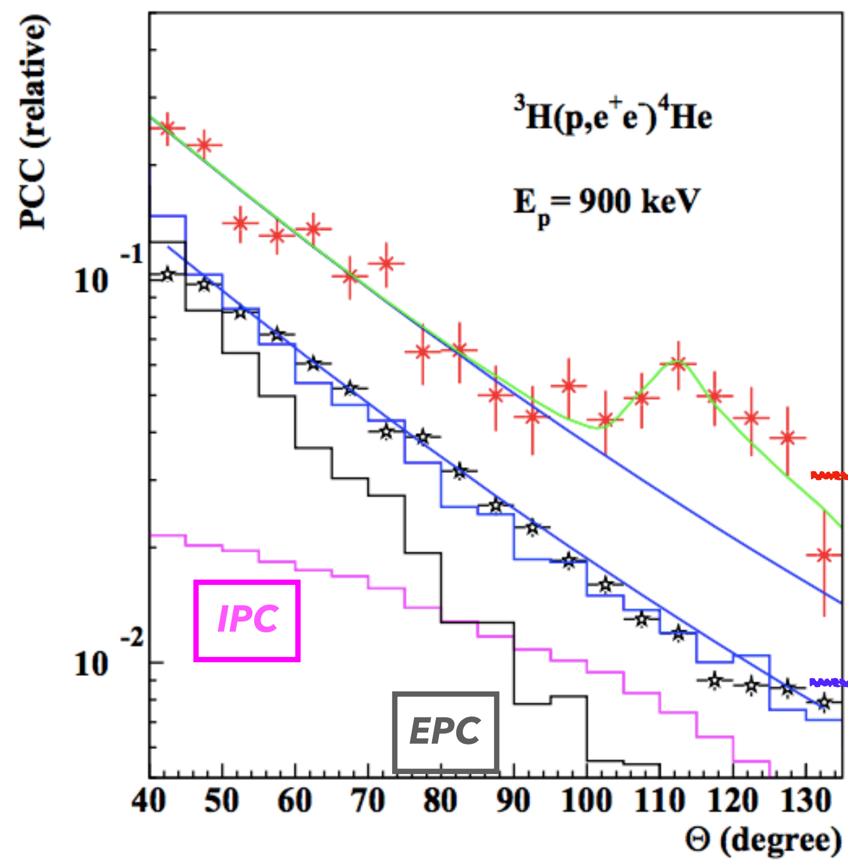
arXiv:1910.10459

Signal region



Study repeated with Tritium target

$$^{3}\mathrm{H}(p,e^{+}e^{-})^{4}\mathrm{He}$$



E_{sum} = E_{e+} + E_{e-}

IPC = Internal Pair Conversion → direct e+/e- pair creation

EPC = External Pair Conversion → γ-conversion in matter

E_{sum} signal region

E_{sum} background region

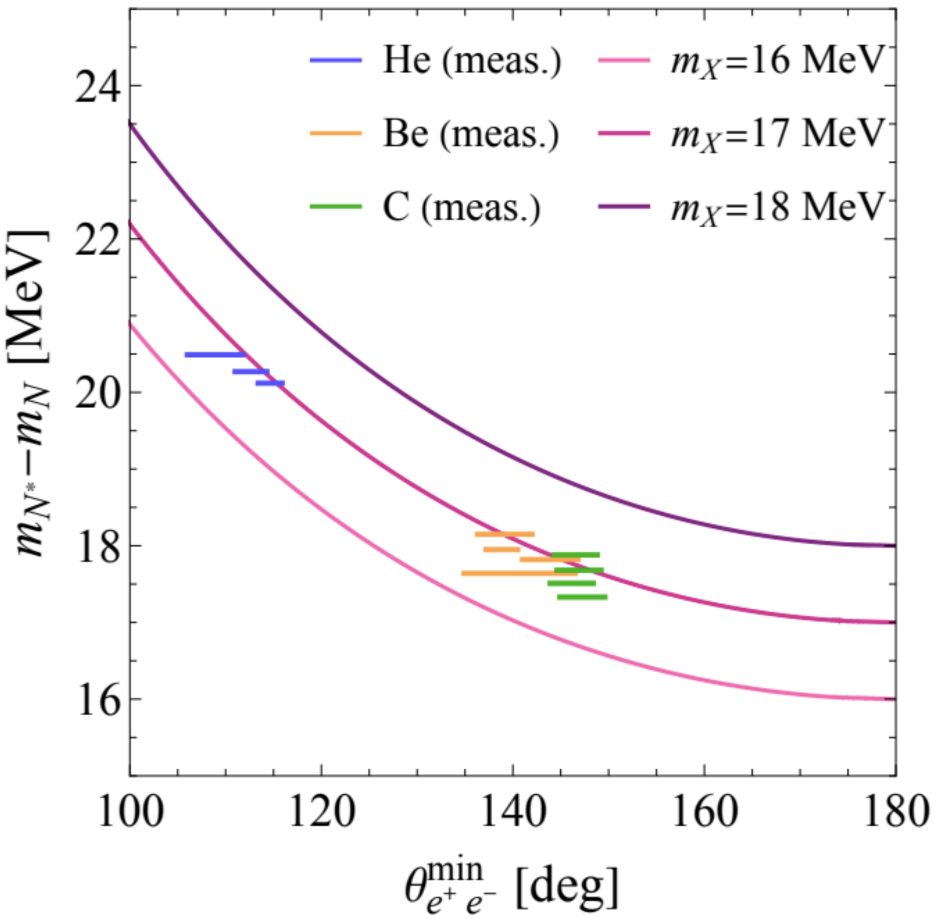
- Excess in IPC background at 115° angular opening: >6σ
- Possible explanation: a 16.84 MeV neutral boson (X17?)
- Recent excess in ^{11}B(p,γ)^{12}C as well Phys. Rev. C 106, L061601
- Other indirect searches (NA64, NA48/2): no evidence for X17 but strong constraints

Phys. Rev. D, 101:071101 Phys. Lett. B 746, 178

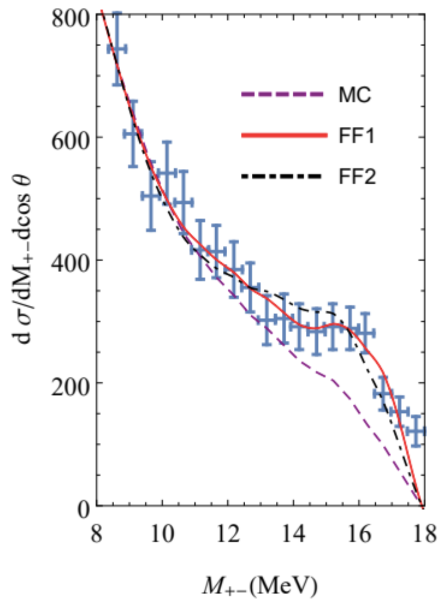
New boson or standard physics?

New boson? or Standard Model physics?

Phys. Rev. D 108, 015009



- Reported results are kinematically consistent



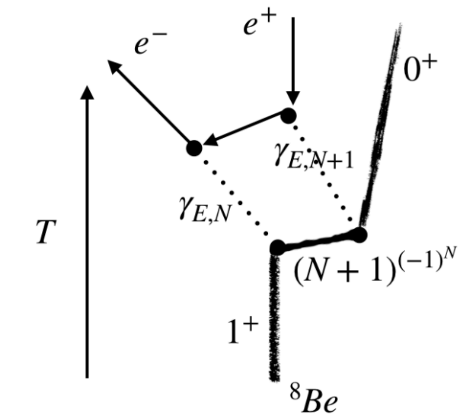
- Zhang & Miller 2017

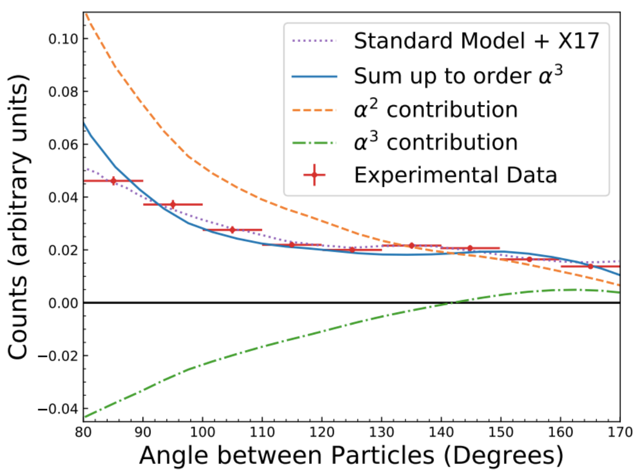
Phys. Lett. B 773, 159

Multipole interferences?
Form factor?

- Koch 2021 Modified Bethe-Heitler

Nucl. Phy. A 1008, 122143





- Aleksejevs 2021 arXiv:2102.01127

IPC second-order processes included

- Hayes 2021 Phys. Rev. C 105, 055502

Underlines importance of E1/M1 multipole contribution ratio

MEG-II objectives

- Hint for the production of a neutral, 17 MeV boson, potential mediator of a fifth force: X17

- Can the measurement be reproduced with an independent setup?

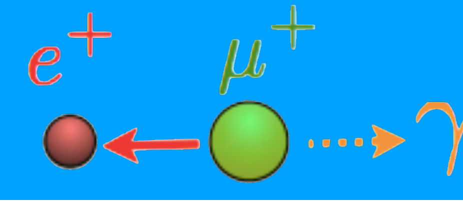
- Need for experimental confirmation: MEG-II has all elements to carry out the measurement
  - → Improved resolution
  - → Reconstruction in full solid angle
  - → Reproduction of excess?

- Engineering run in 2022
- First DAQ period in February 2023

2) The MEG-II apparatus

The MEG-II experiment

The MEG-II experiment

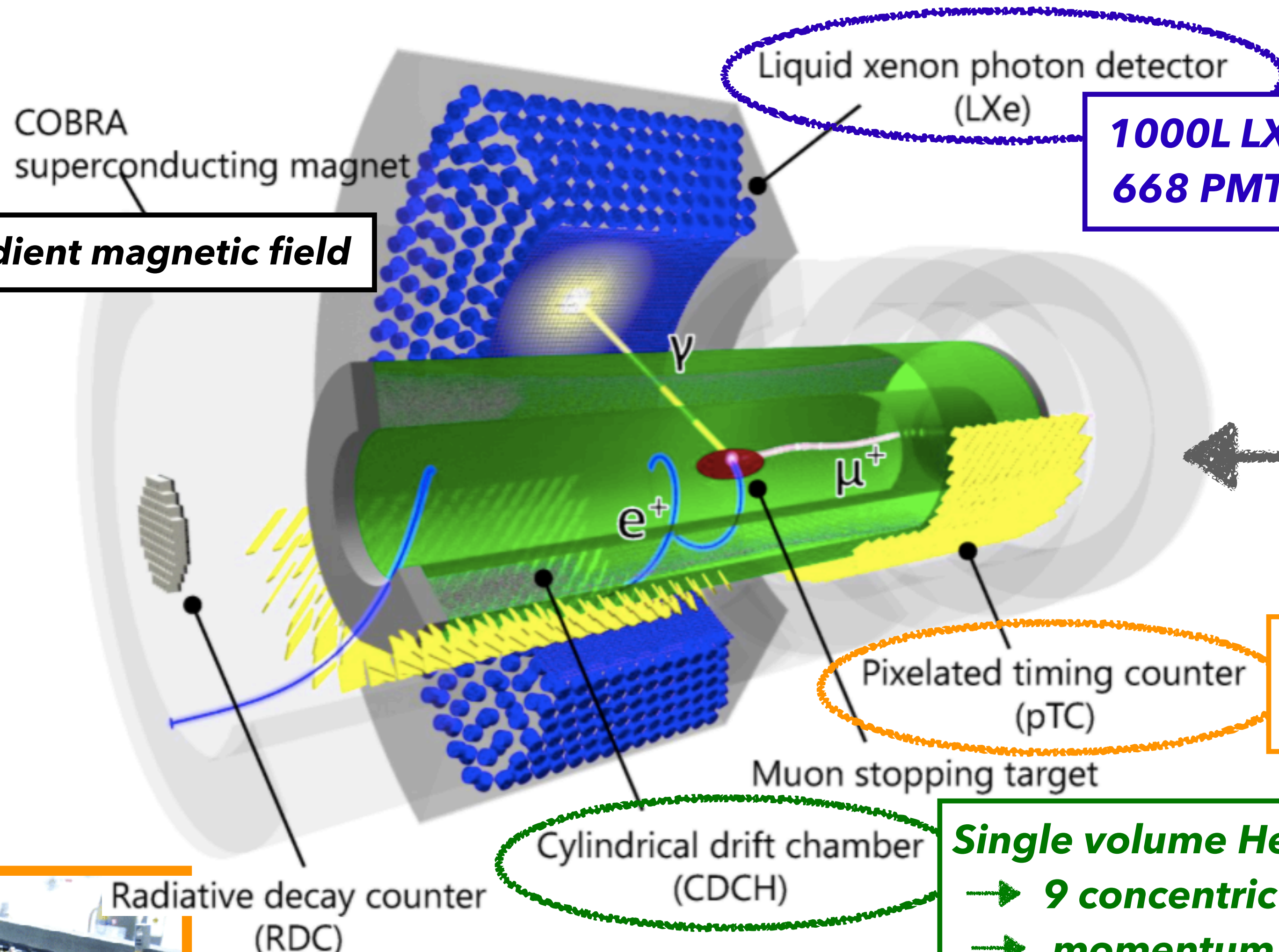


- MEG-II experiment searches for charged lepton flavour violating decay: $\mu^+ \to e^+\gamma$
- At Paul Scherrer Institute, PSI, Switzerland Eur. Phys. J. C, 76(8):434
- 1 order of magnitude sensitivity improvement wrt MEG: $BR(\mu \longrightarrow e\gamma) \to 6 \times 10^{-14}$

Eur. Phys. J. C 78, 380

MEG-II results from an intense upgrade program

Gradient magnetic field



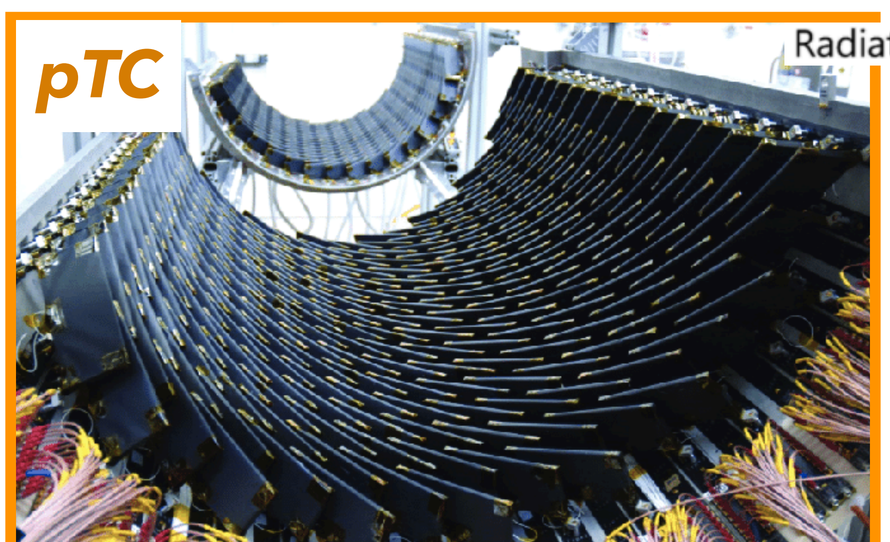
1000L LXe tank readout by 668 PMTs and 4092 SiPMs

Muon beam direction for MEG-II search

35 ps resolution
→ 512 plastic tiles

Single volume He:iC_4H_{10}
→ 9 concentric layers of 192 drift cells each
→ momentum resolution up to 90 keV

pTC



CDCH

2) The MEG-II apparatus

Adapting for the X17 search

- We need to measure the direction and momentum of both electron and positron
- MEG-II highly performing spectrometer can be used for the X17 search:

→ MEG-II CW accelerator as proton beam
→ X17-dedicated target in place of the muon target
→ gamma auxiliary detectors
→ reduced magnetic field
→ optimized TDAQ

The MEG-II experiment

$e^+ \leftarrow \mu^+ \dashrightarrow \gamma$

- MEG-II experiment searches for charged lepton flavour violating decay: $\mu^+ \to e^+\gamma$
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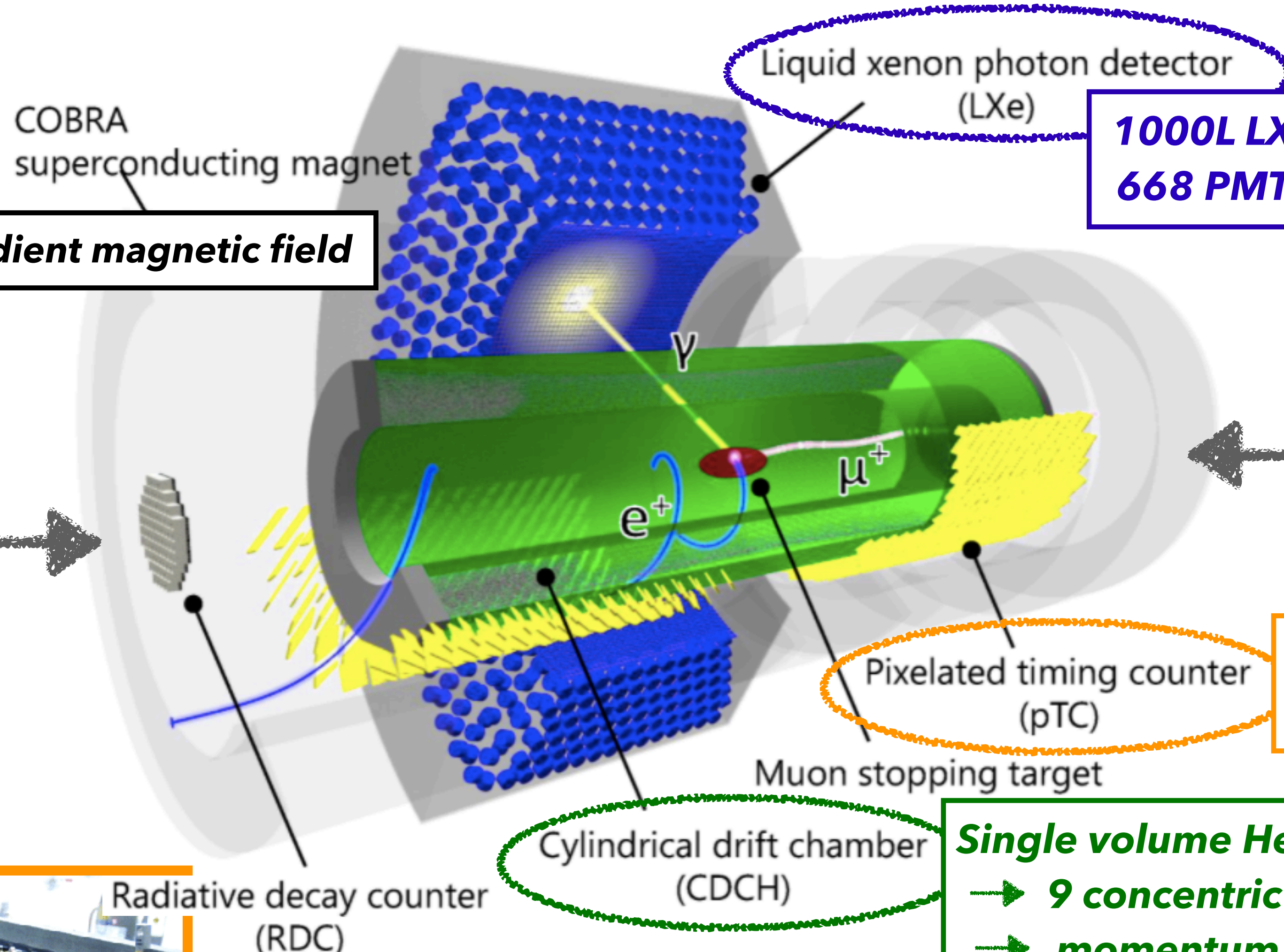

Proton beam direction for X17 search

~~Muon beam direction for MEG-II search~~

35 ps resolution
→ 512 plastic tiles

Single volume He:iC$_4$H$_{10}$
→ 9 concentric layers of 192 drift cells each
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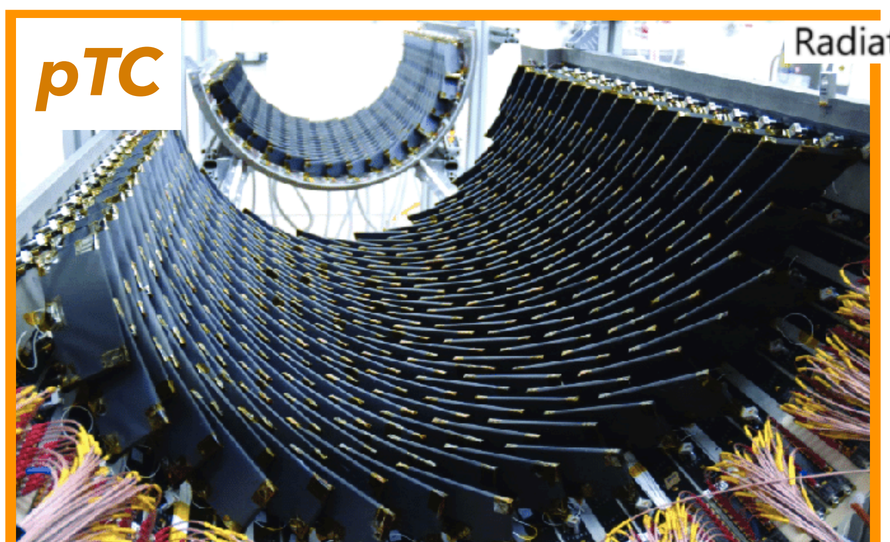
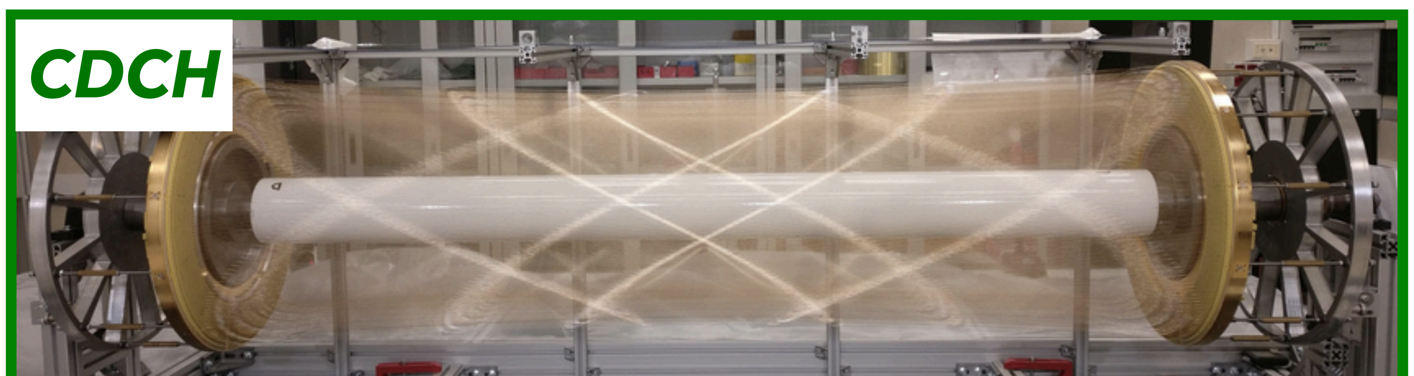
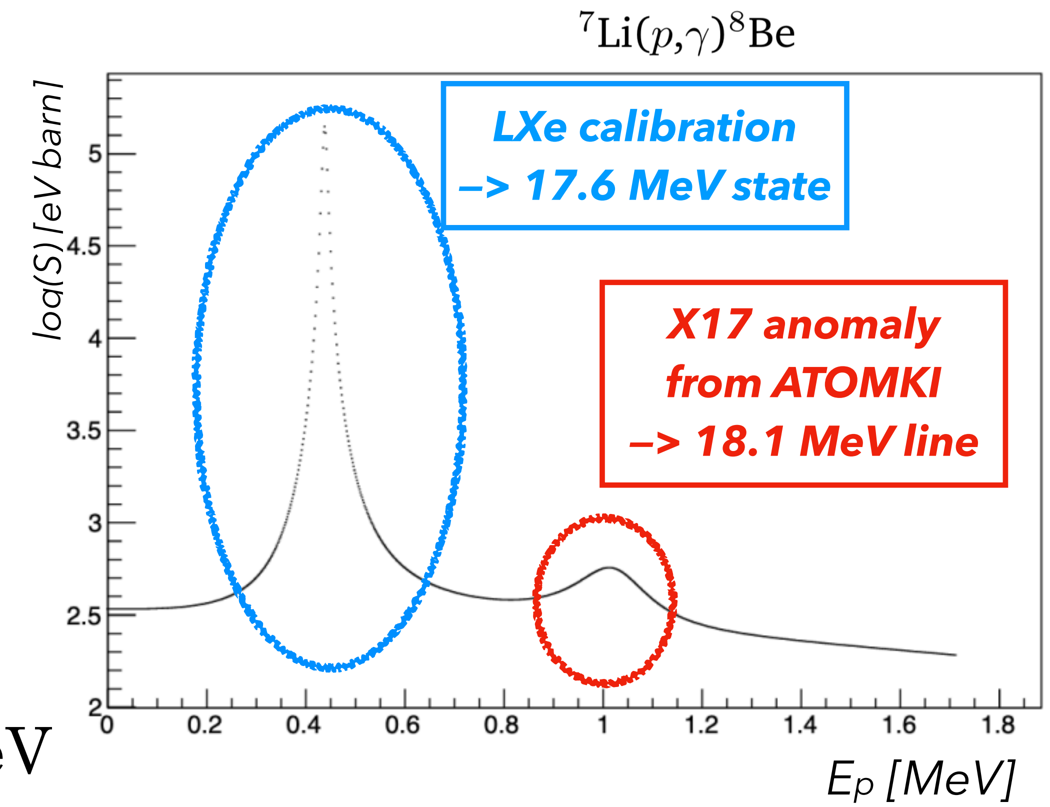




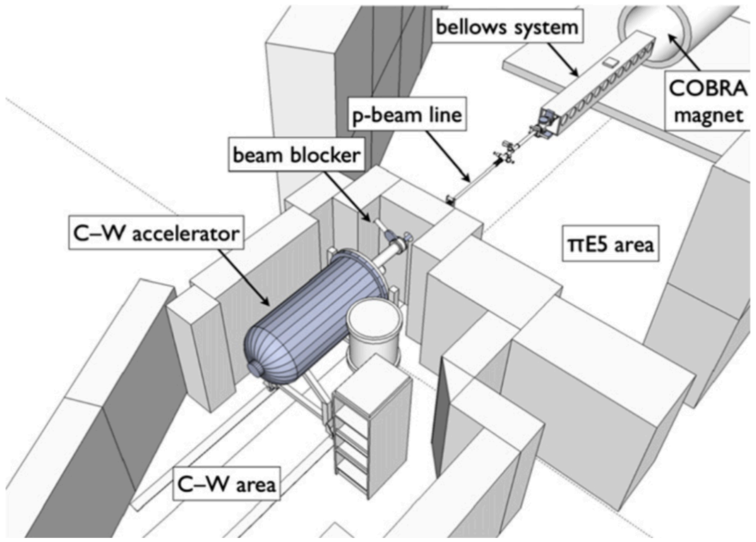
The Cockcroft-Walton accelerator

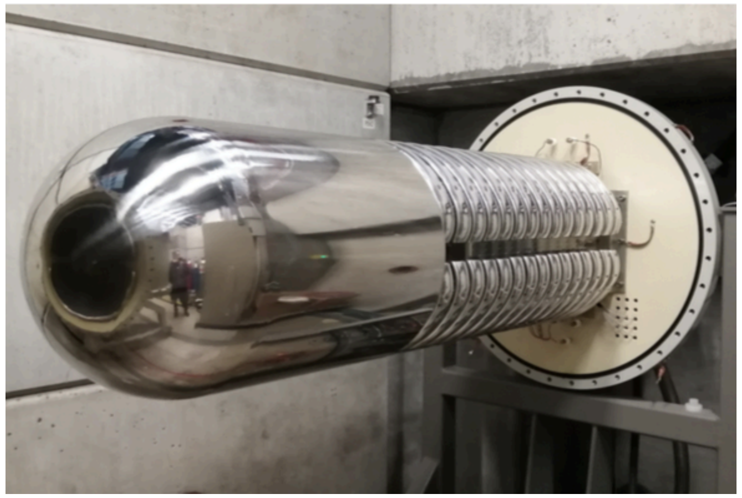
- <u>LXe calibration</u>
  - MEG-II Cockcroft-Walton accelerator: used for calibration of LXe calorimeter
  - Proton beam impinging on Li target (0.44 MeV resonance): 17.64 MeV γ line



- <u>X17 search</u>

Max proton current and energy: 100 μA and 1.1 MeV
  - ideal for X17 search, 1.03 MeV resonance





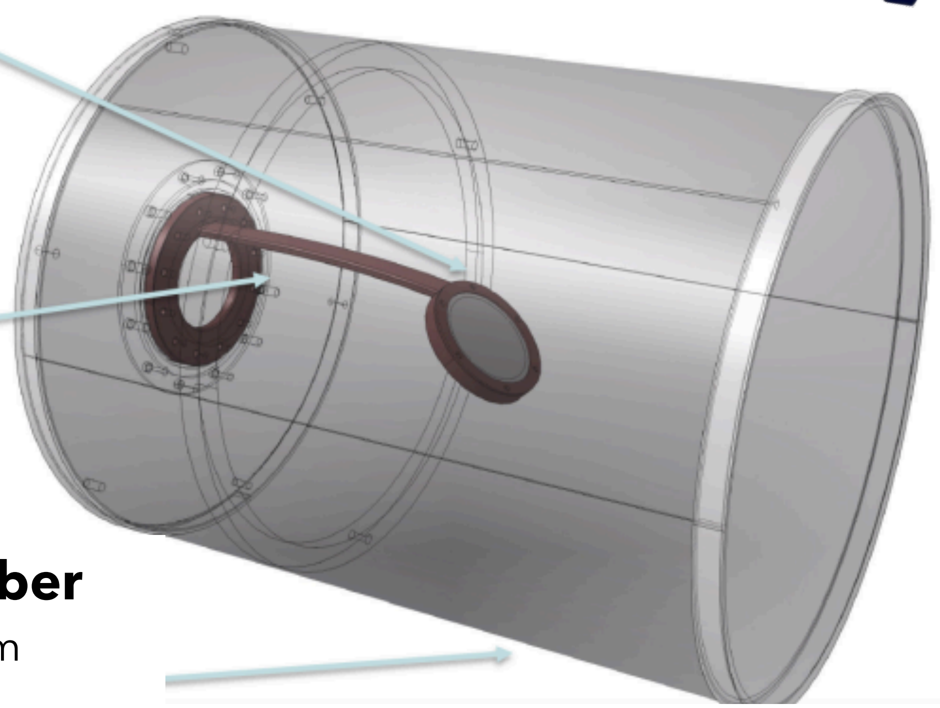
The new target region

- 400 μm-thick carbon fiber vacuum chamber to minimize multiple scattering

- Main target for physics run
  → 2 μm LiPON(*) on 25 μm copper substrate (by PSI)
- For gamma detectors calibration
  → 5 μm LiF on 10 μm copper substrate (by INFN Legnaro)

B field x0.15 wrt MEG (0.2T at center)

- Target-supporting and heat-dissipating copper structure attached to CW nose

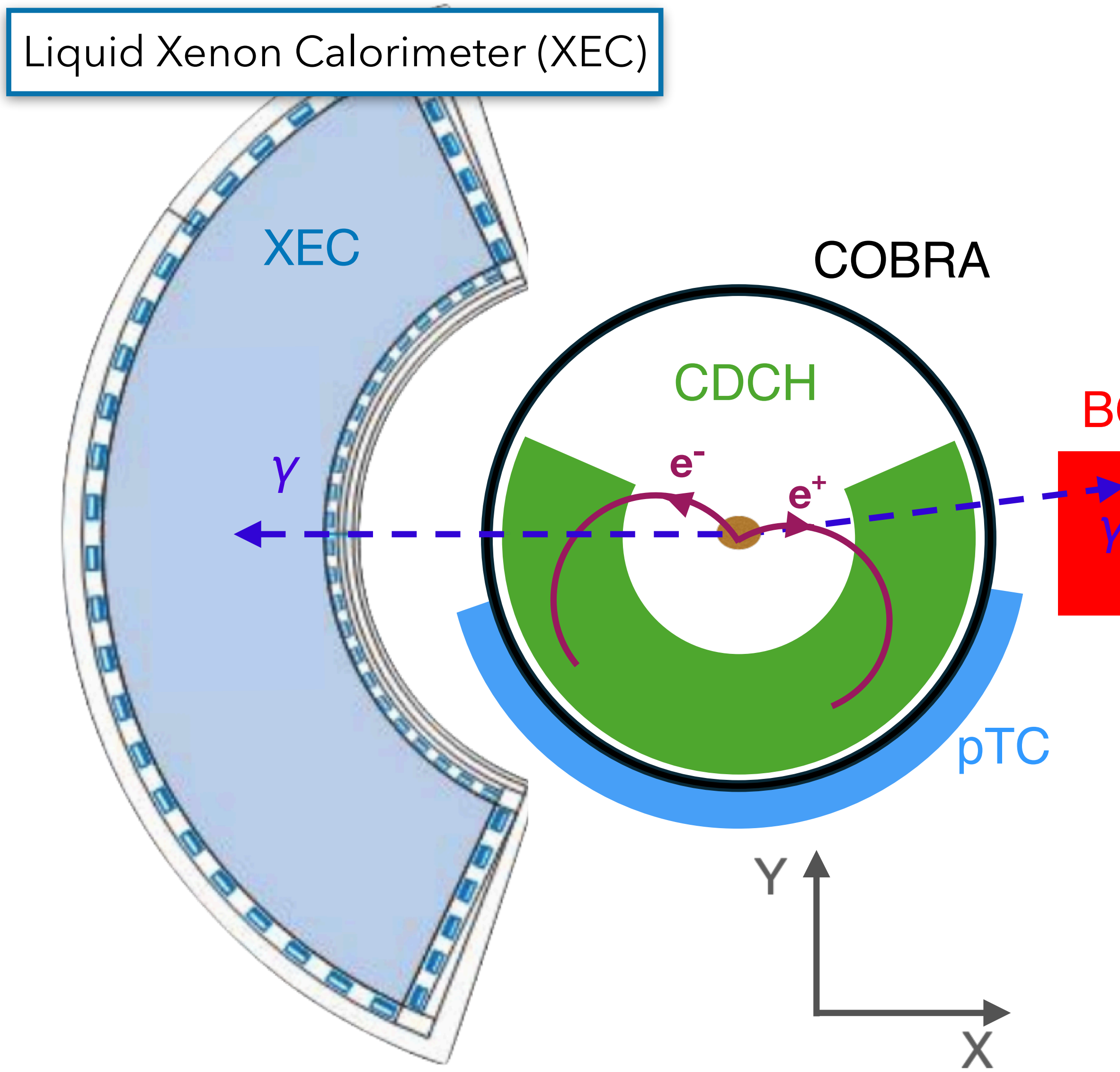


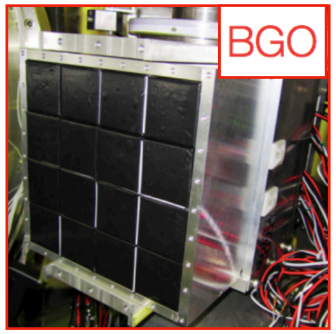
(*) Lithium phosphorus oxynitride ($Li_{3\text{-}x}PO_{4\text{-}Y}N_{x+Y}$)

Detectors

- Two gamma detectors for monitoring and bkg understanding

LXe calorimeter **BGO crystal matrix (4x4)**

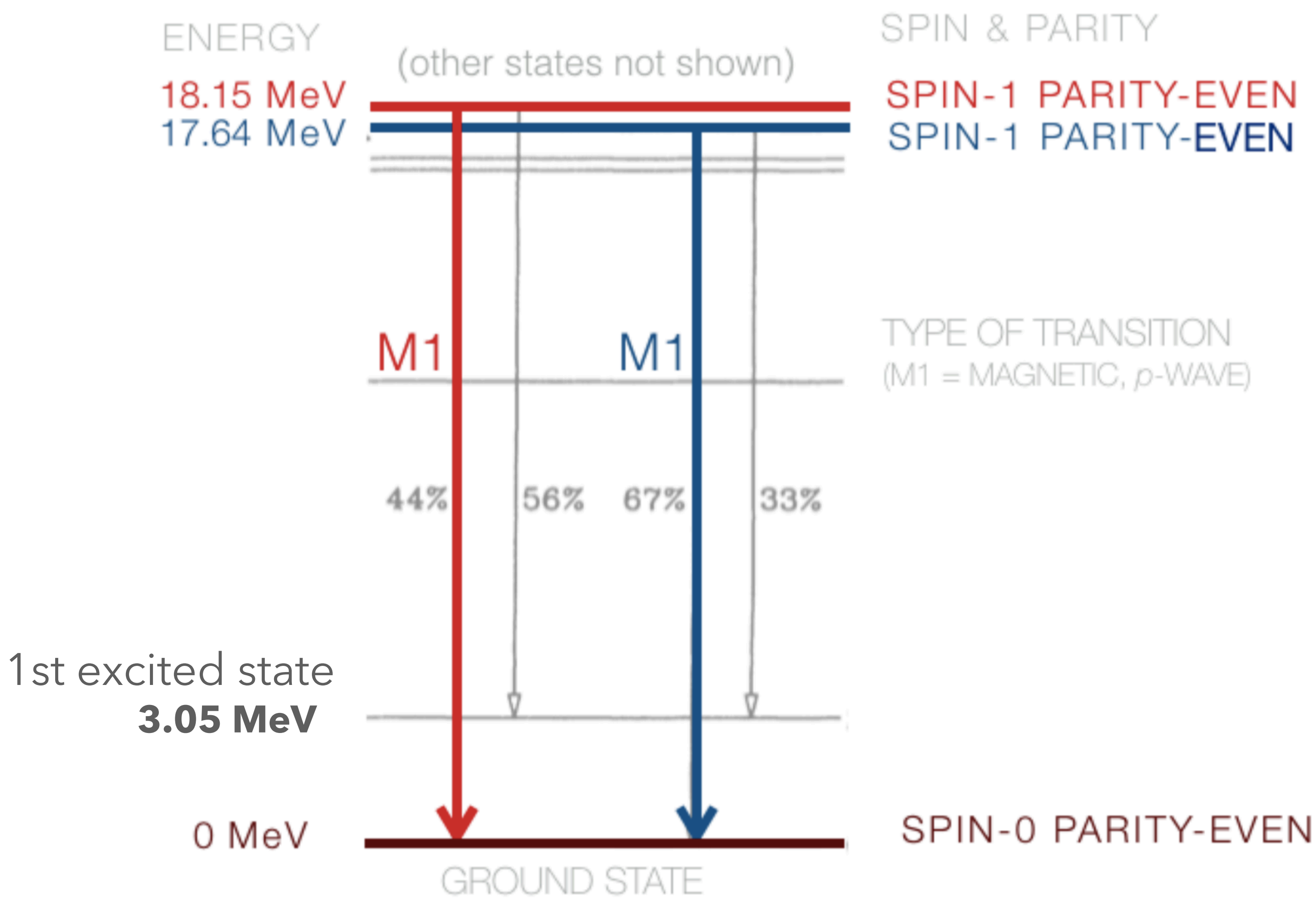


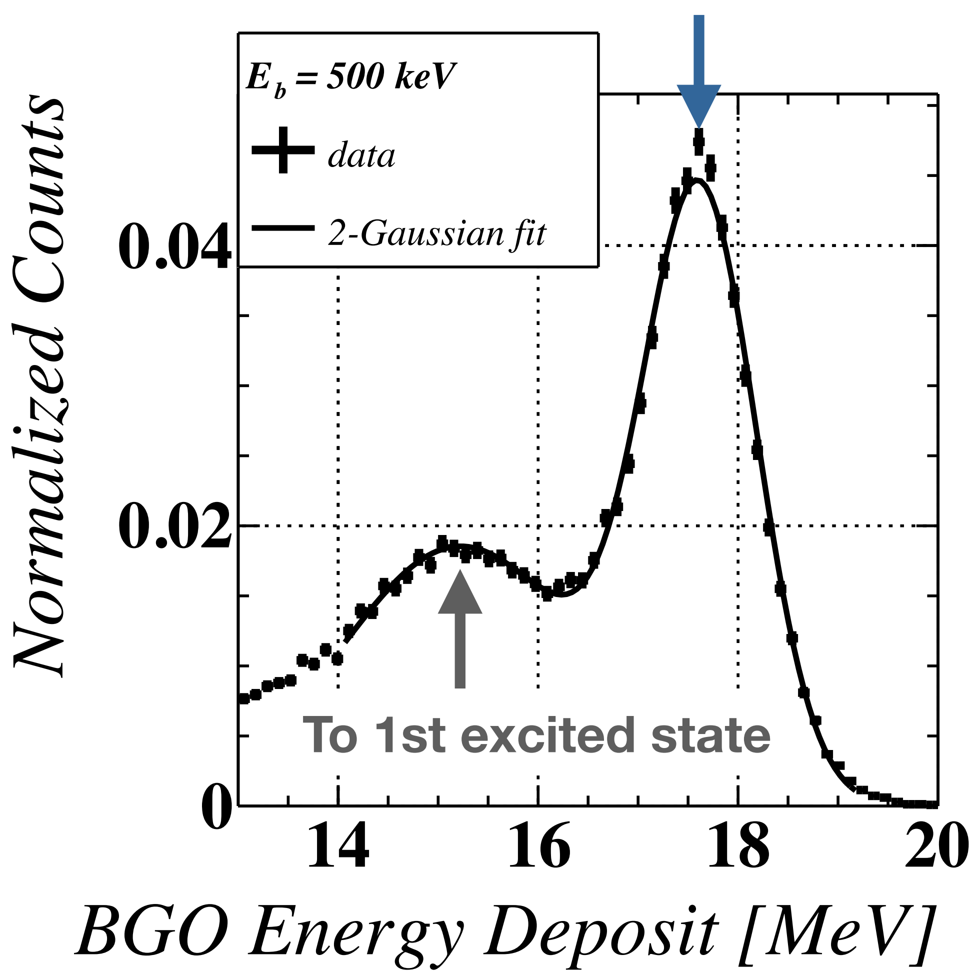


Transitions and photon spectrum

- Transitions both to ground state and first excited state

@500 keV, 17.6 MeV state only is excited

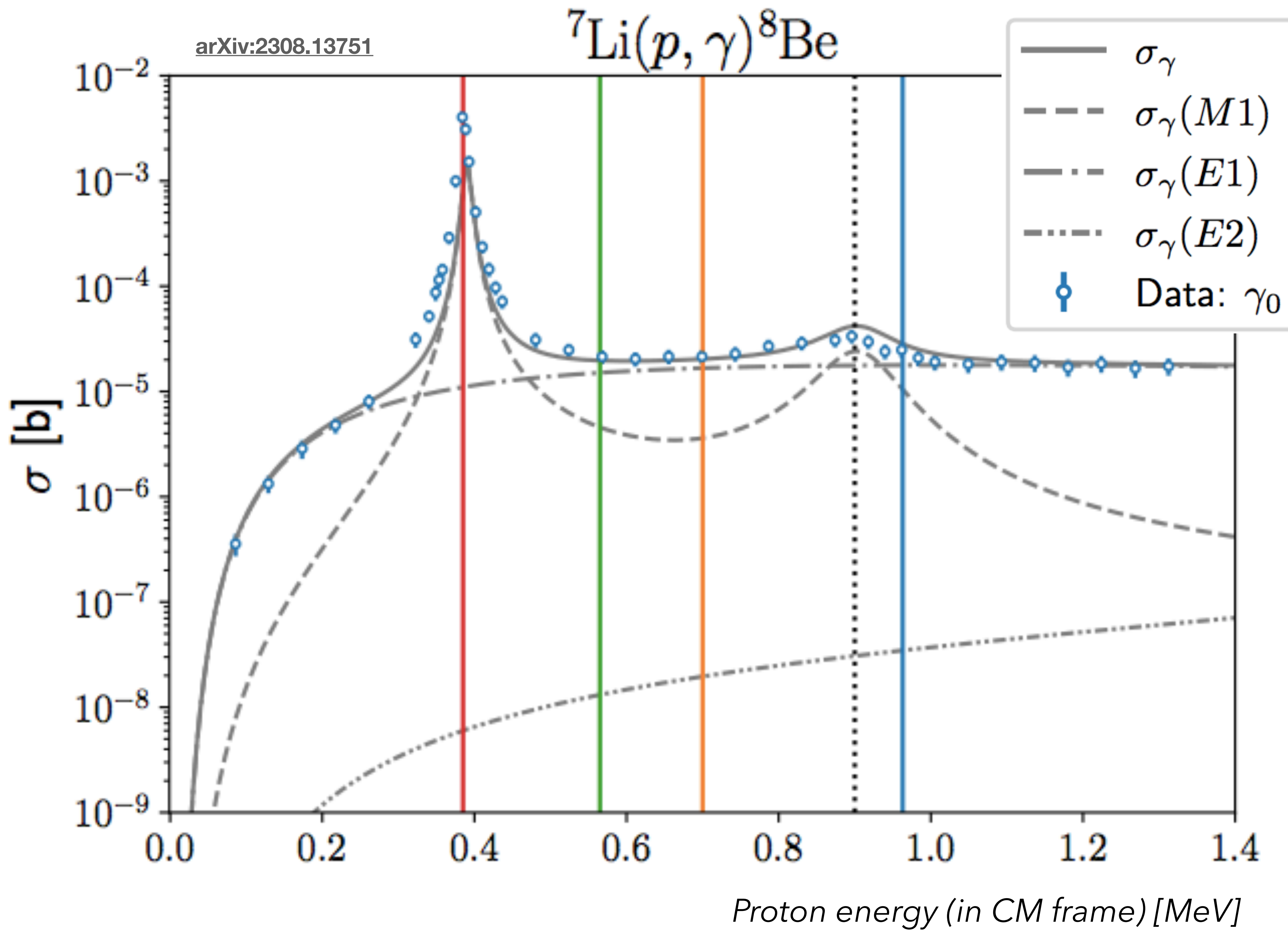




3) Physics backgrounds and signal simulations

Multipole contributions

- <u>Cross-section multipole contributions</u> is largely <u>dependent on proton energy</u>



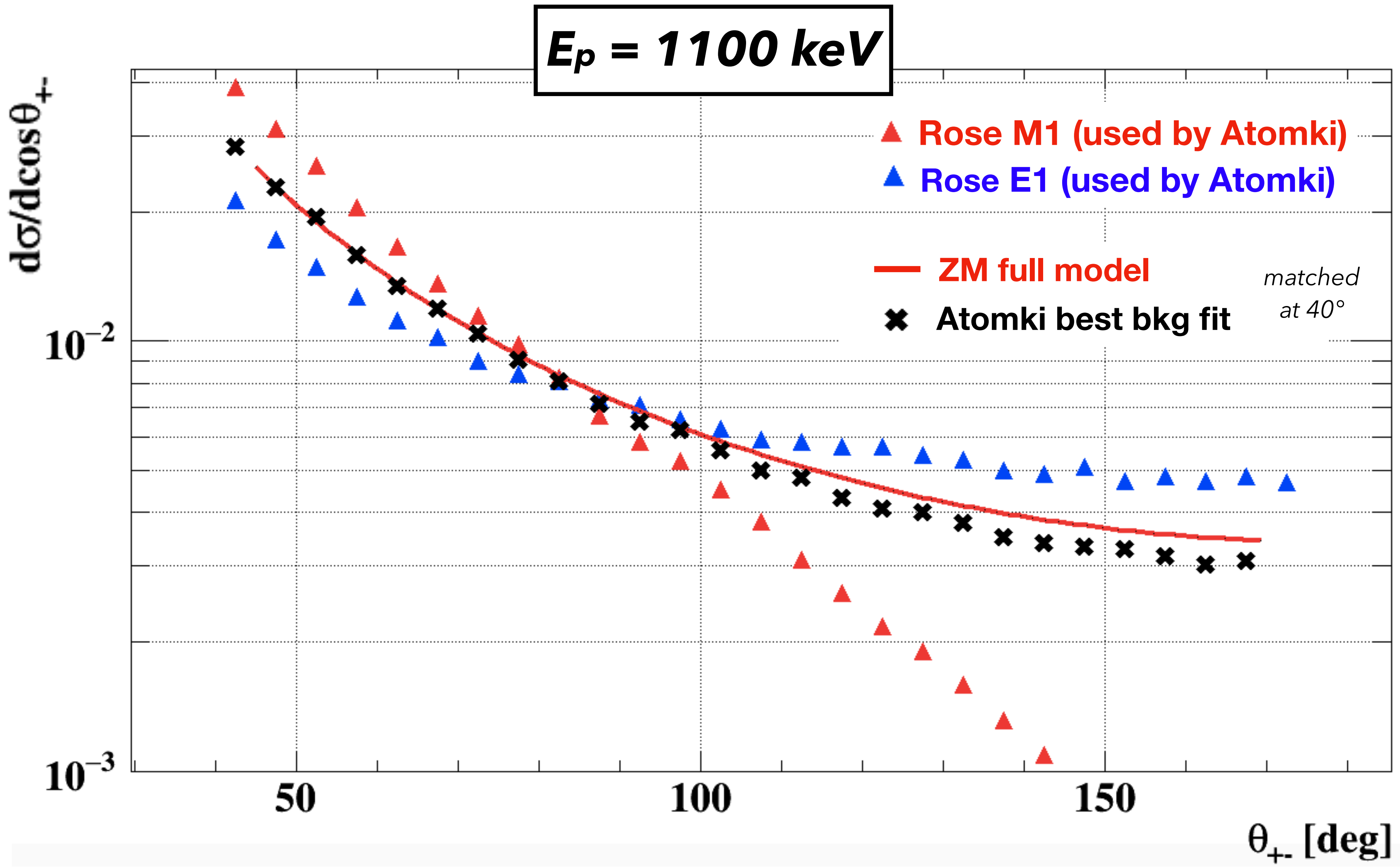
Internal Pair Conversion

IPC = Internal Pair Conversion
→ direct e+/e- pair creation

- Need for an accurate background model, IPC is dominant background in signal region
- First IPC model developed by Rose in 1949 Phys. Rev. 76, 678

→ Anisotropy and multipole interferences not included

→ Zhang and Miller in 2017 did it, ZM model
Phys. Lett. B 773, 159

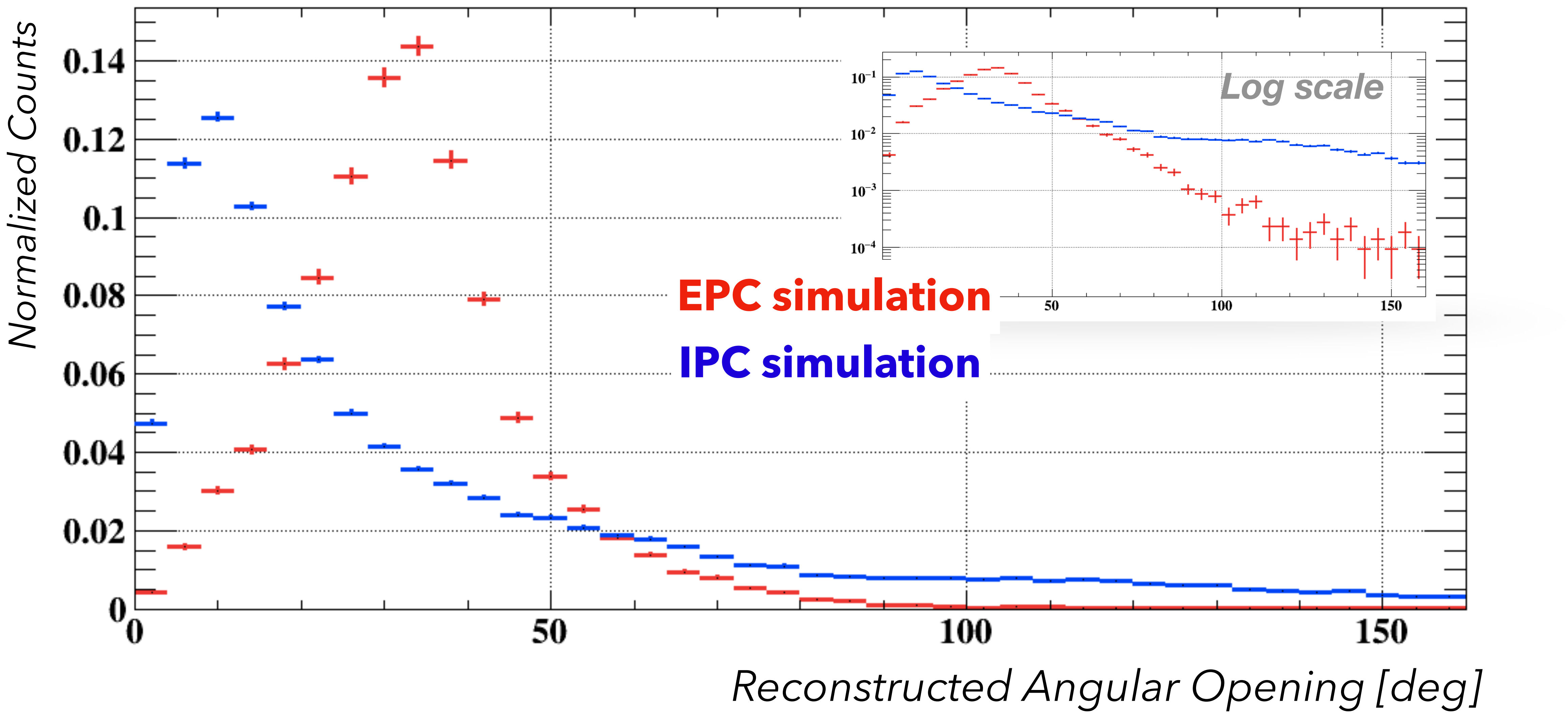


→ IPC background shape is changed

→ Cannot explain anomaly but can impact significance

External Pair Conversion and other bkgs

- We simulated External Pair Conversion —> gamma conversion in matter
- EPC rate was estimated to be comparable to IPC
  - ➜ But angular opening is largely concentrated below 70°, far from the signal region

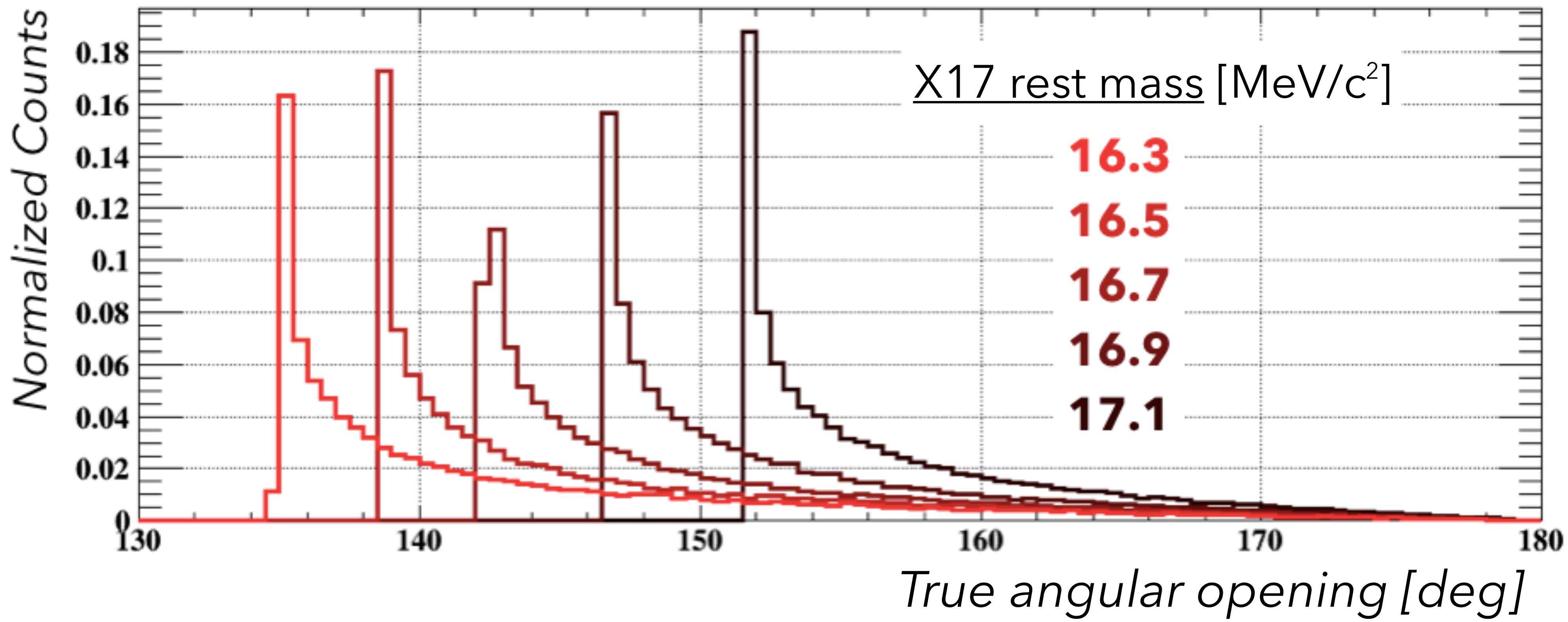


➜ Almost 2 orders of magnitude below IPC in signal region

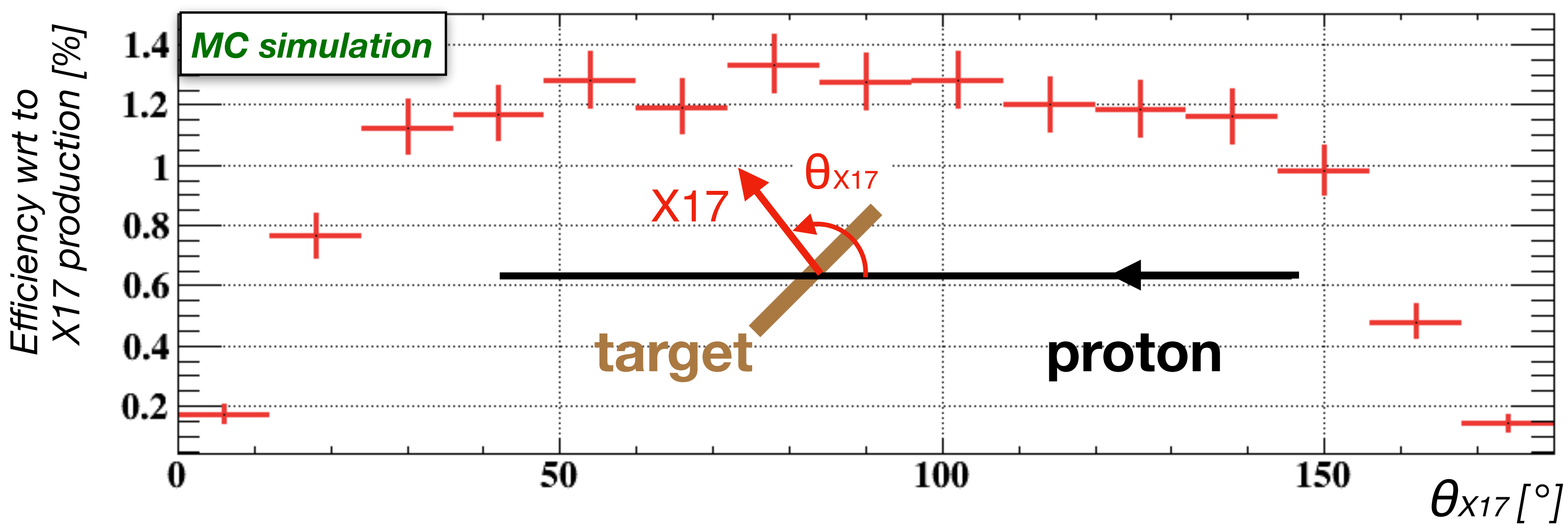
➜ All photon conversion events included in full simulation

Signal simulation

- We want to carry X17 search in both 0.44 and 1.02 MeV resonances
- X17 is assumed isotropically produced



- Atomki has carried out the search <u>only in plane orthogonal to beam</u>

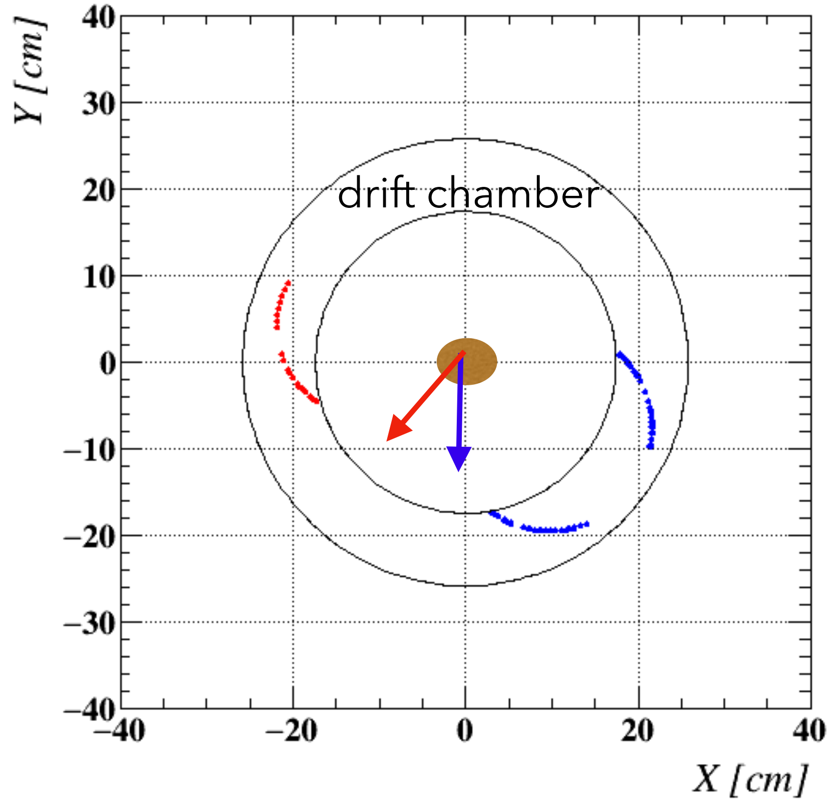


- X17 reconstructed <u>not only</u> in orthogonal plane
- 1% efficiency in planes <u>between 40° and 140°</u>

4) Pair reconstruction

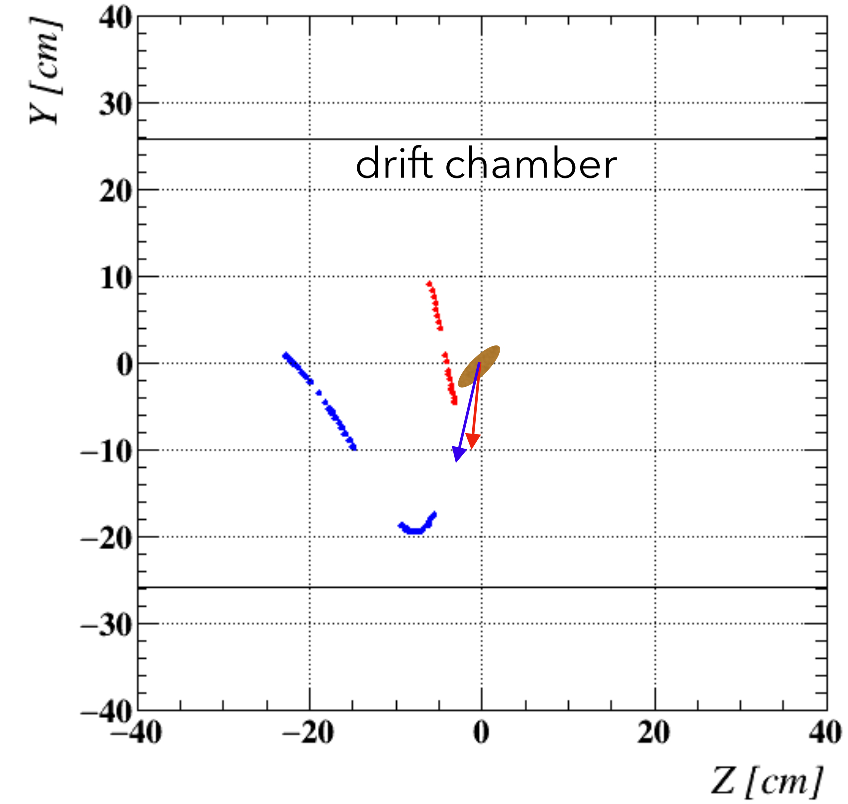
Event display

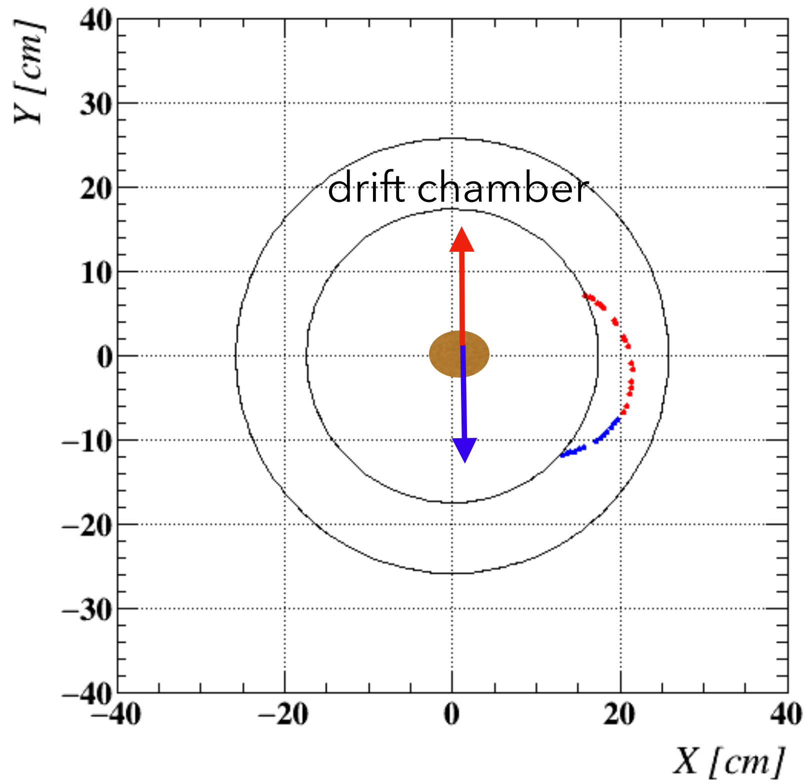
- <u>MEG-II only reconstructs e+. Procedure was adapted for e- as well.</u>



GOOD PAIR

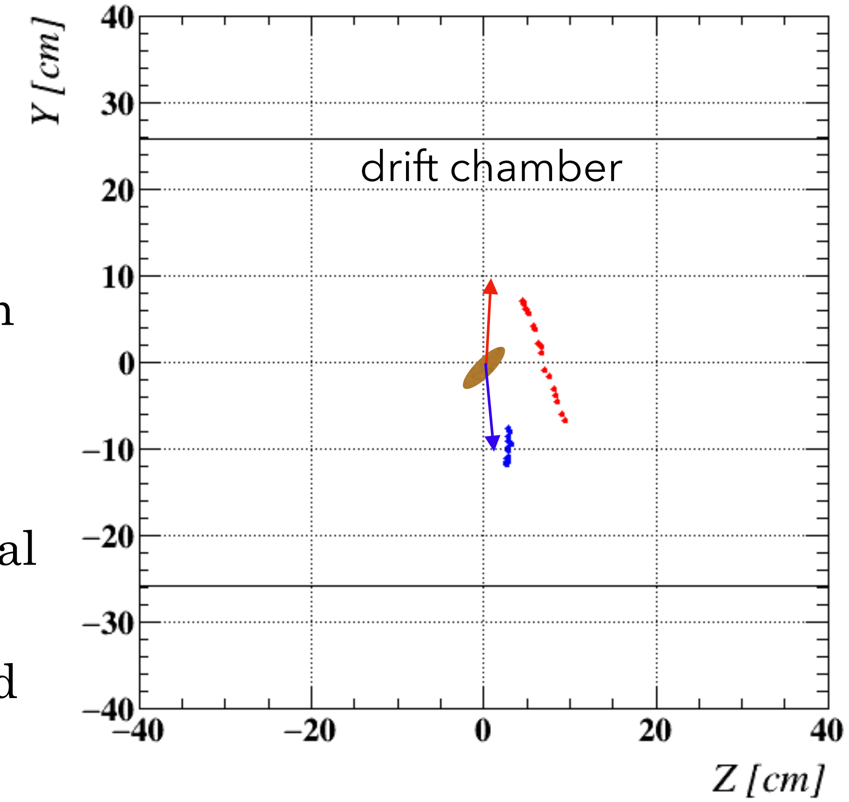
- $\vec{p}$+ at target
- $\vec{p}$- at target
- e+ hit
- e- hit
- target





FAKE PAIR

- <u>Two pieces</u> of the same track reconstructed with <u>opposite sign</u>
- Back-to-back reconstructed
- <u>Dangerous</u>, close to signal region
- Need to characterize and reject these

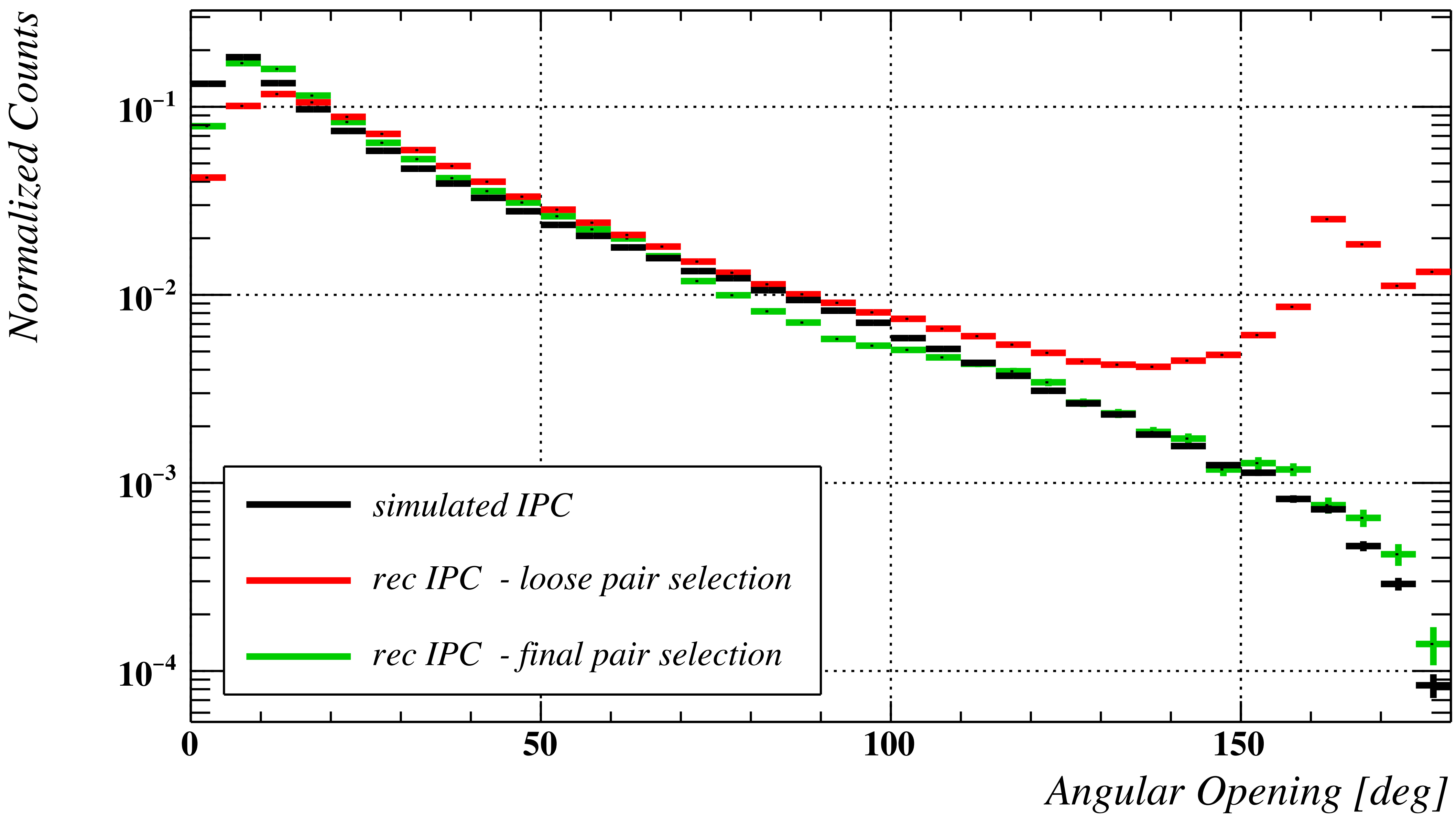


Track selection

Fake tracks → short → if longer, little dense → consecutive hits distance large → orthogonal to the beam and close to z=0

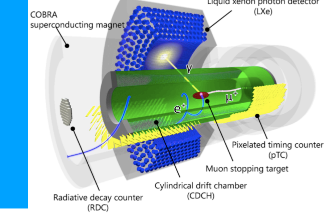
Advanced track selection was developed

- With full selection, IPC simulated monotonous shape is recovered
- Remaining fakes in signal region estimated to be negligible



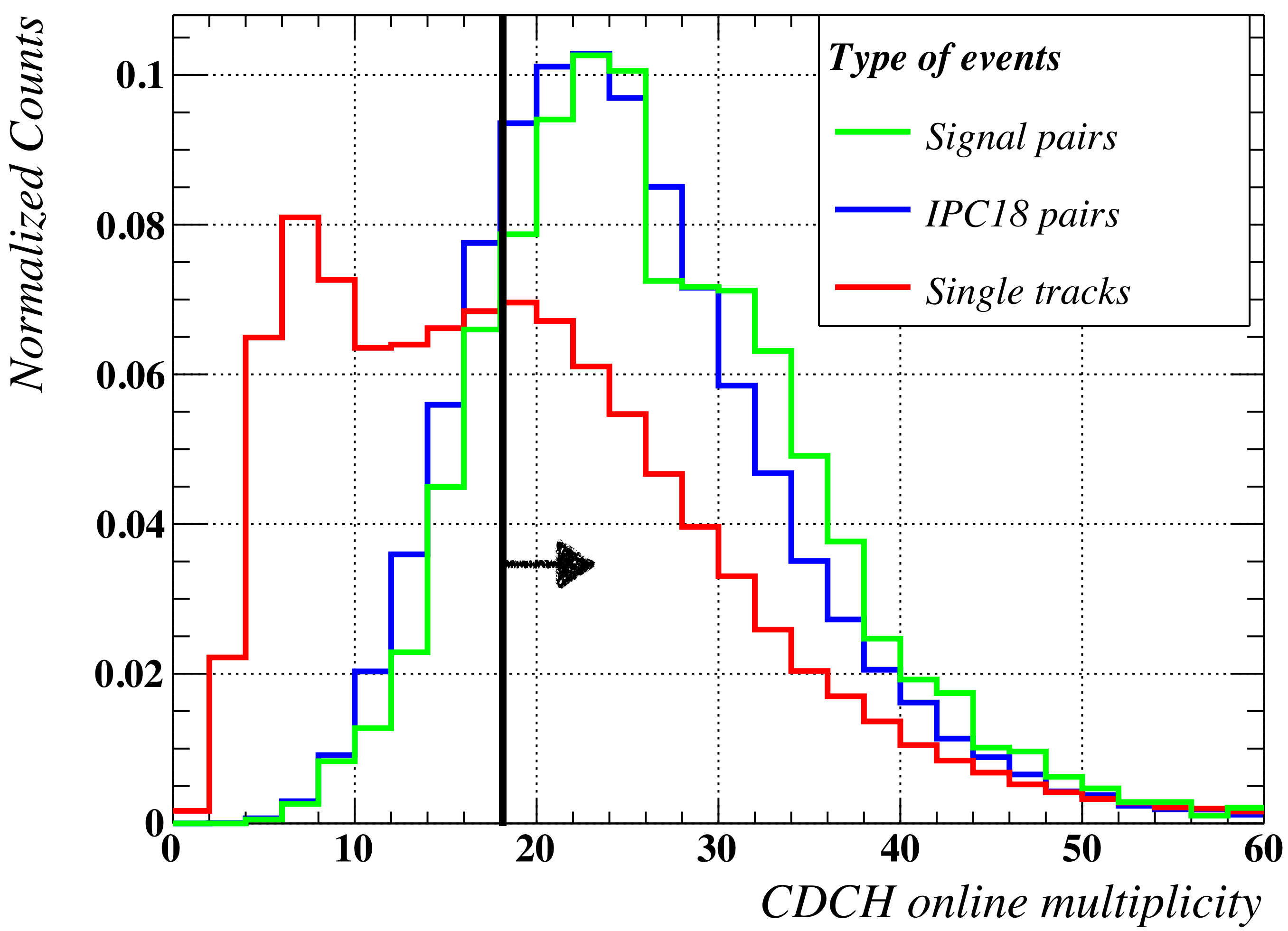
5) Trigger and DAQ strategies

Trigger strategy: CDCH hit multiplicity

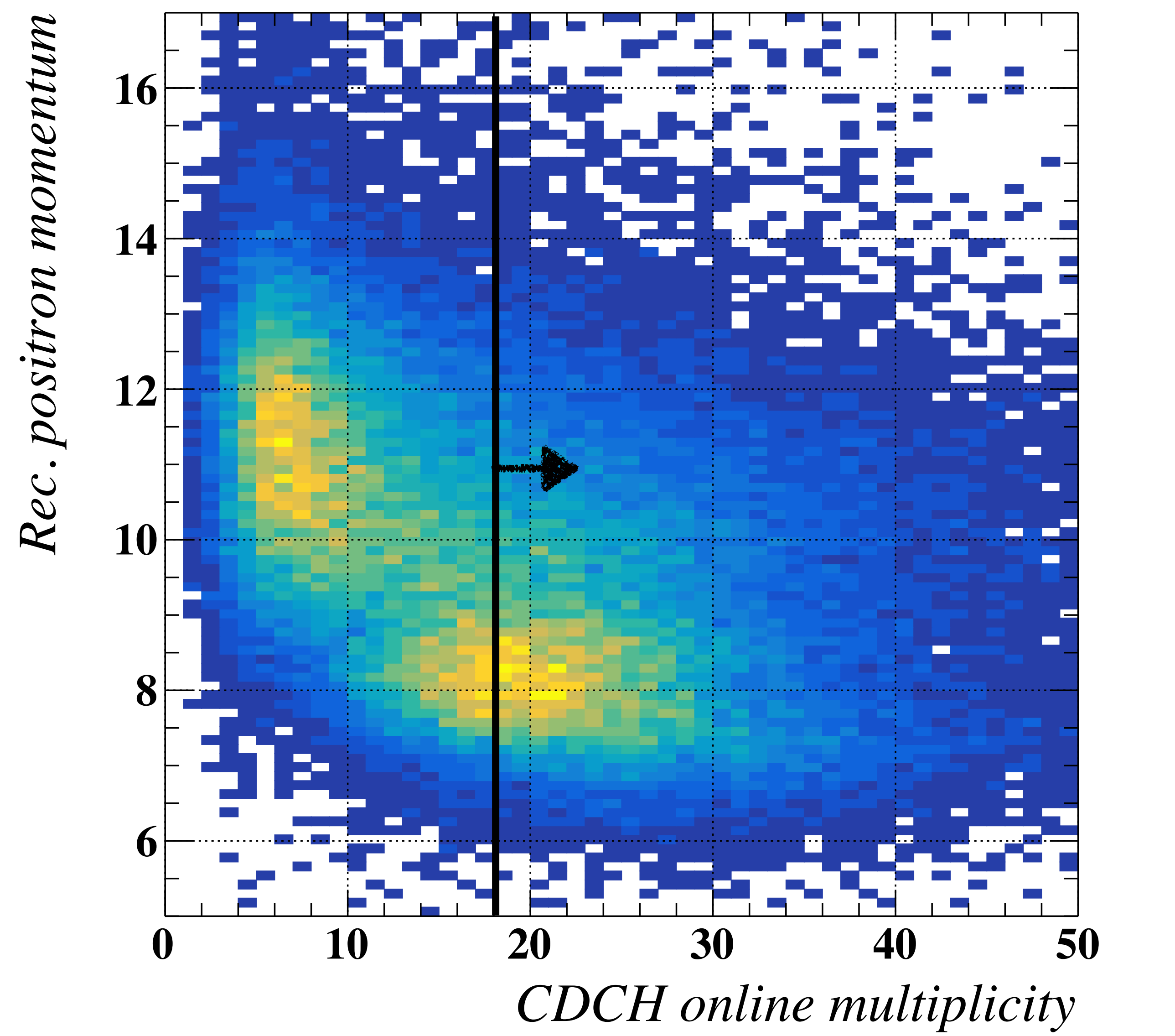


- CDCH hit multiplicity is higher for:
  - pair of tracks
  - symmetric pairs
  - tracks produced at target center

<u>CDCH online multiplicity to reconstruct</u>
single tracks/IPC pairs/signal pairs



<u>Reco momentum vs CDCH online multiplicity</u>



Trigger set as <u>18 hits > 60 mV</u>

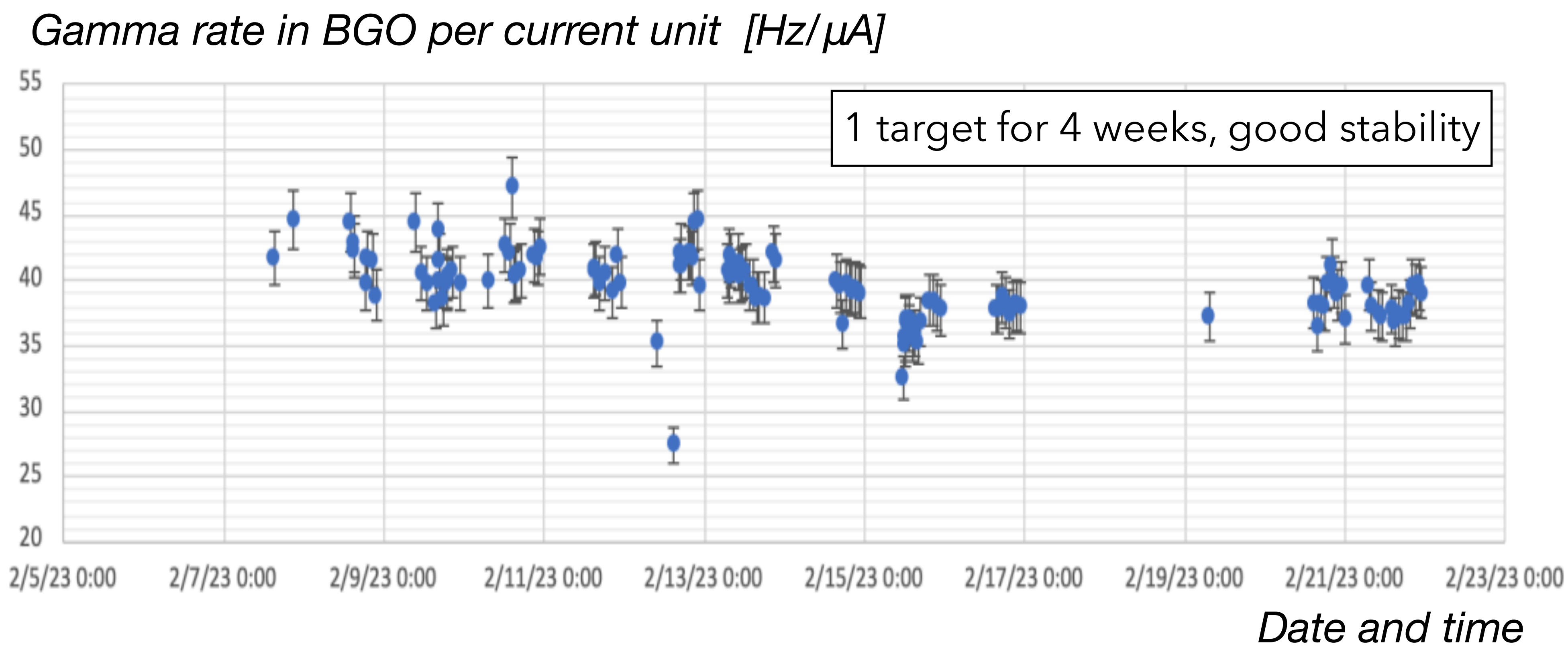
- Background rate divided by 5 (wrt. 10 hits)
- 10% signal lost
- Proton current can be largely increased

6) Physics dataset and X17 results

2023 run

- In February 2023, first run at E_{beam} = 1080 keV @I_{beam} = 10 μA
- X17 runs: sample of 25k runs of 3k events each

→ 75M triggered events → 300k pairs to be reconstructed

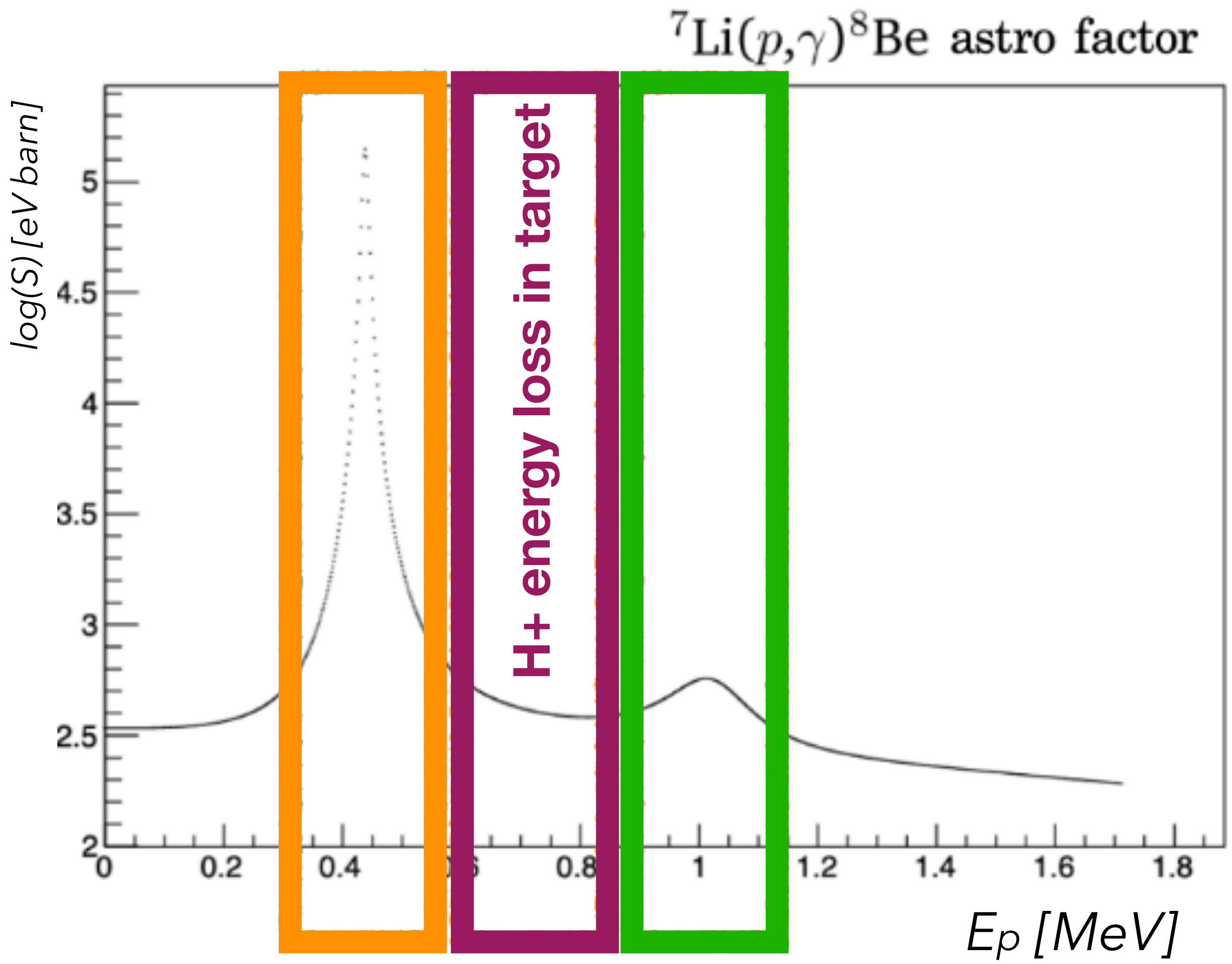


On full E_{sum} and Angular Opening range:

→ 60% EPC (15+18) → 40% IPC (15+18)

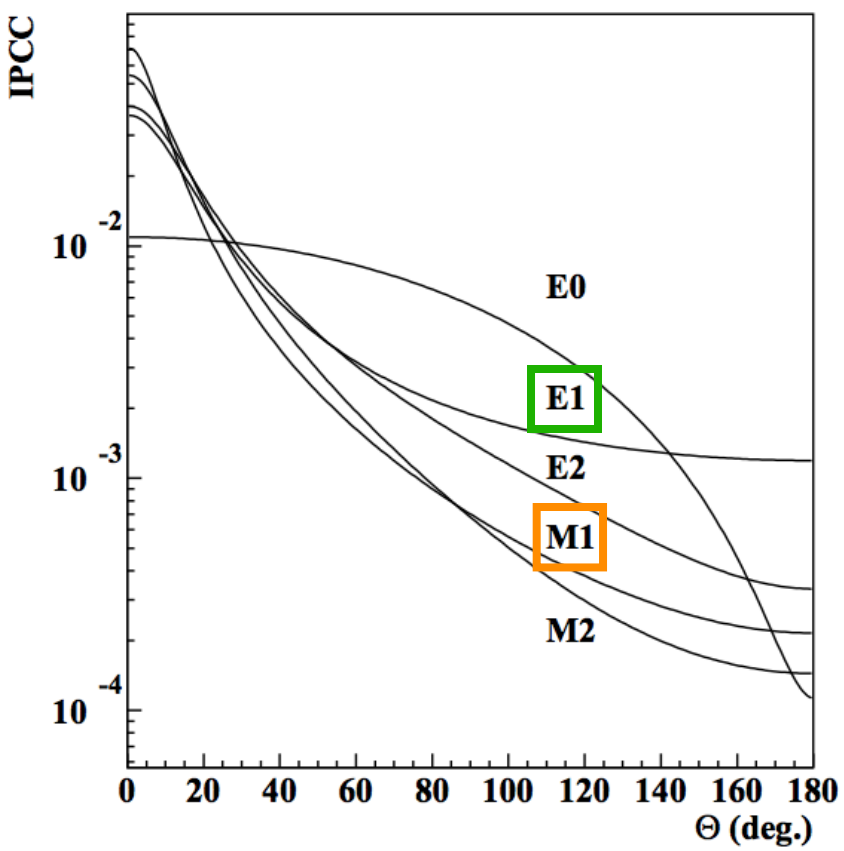
Unfortunately, we have had contamination from H_2+ within proton beam

3 proton energy regions



H2+ **H+**

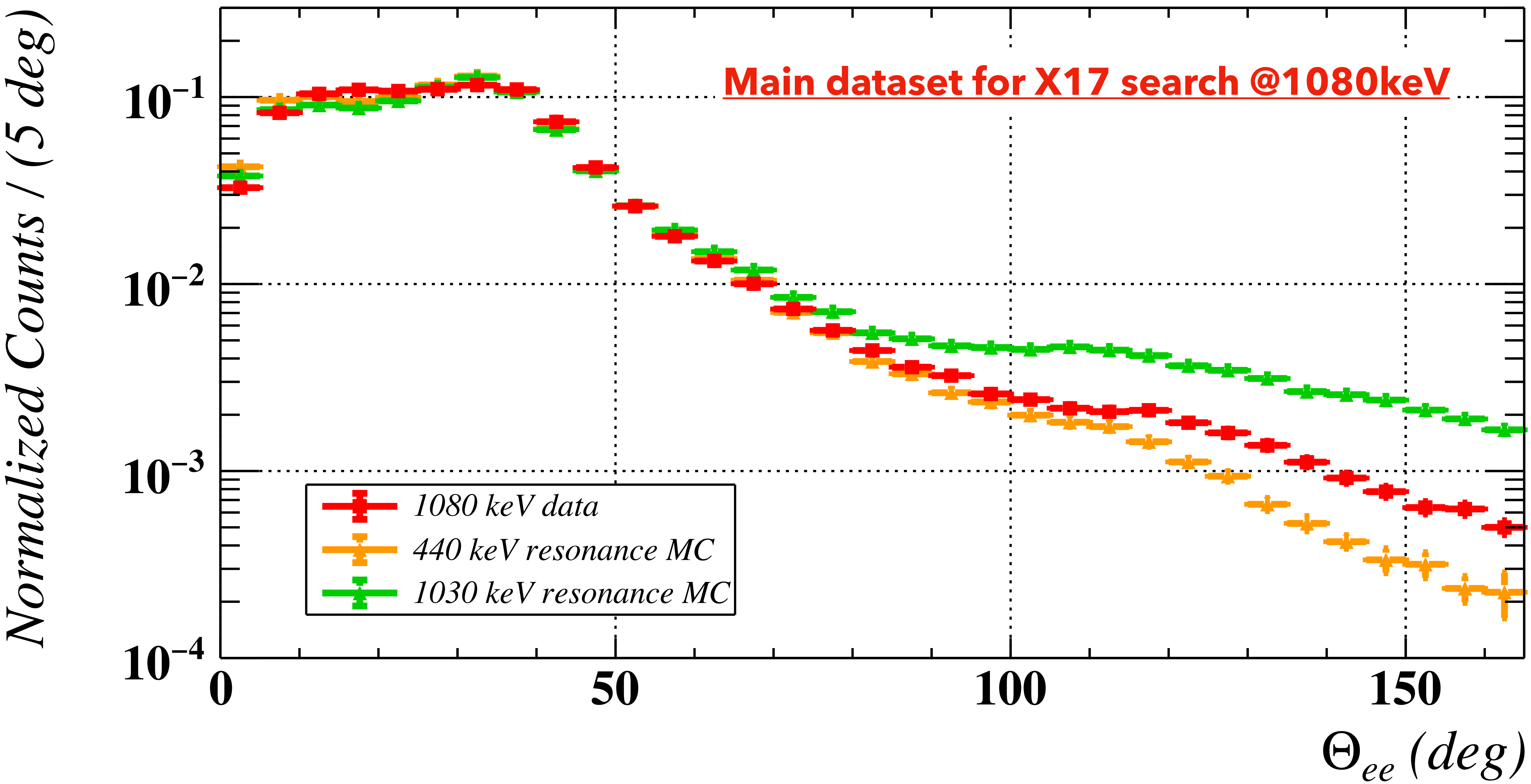
M1-dominated **M1~E1**



steeper IPC shape
flatter IPC shape

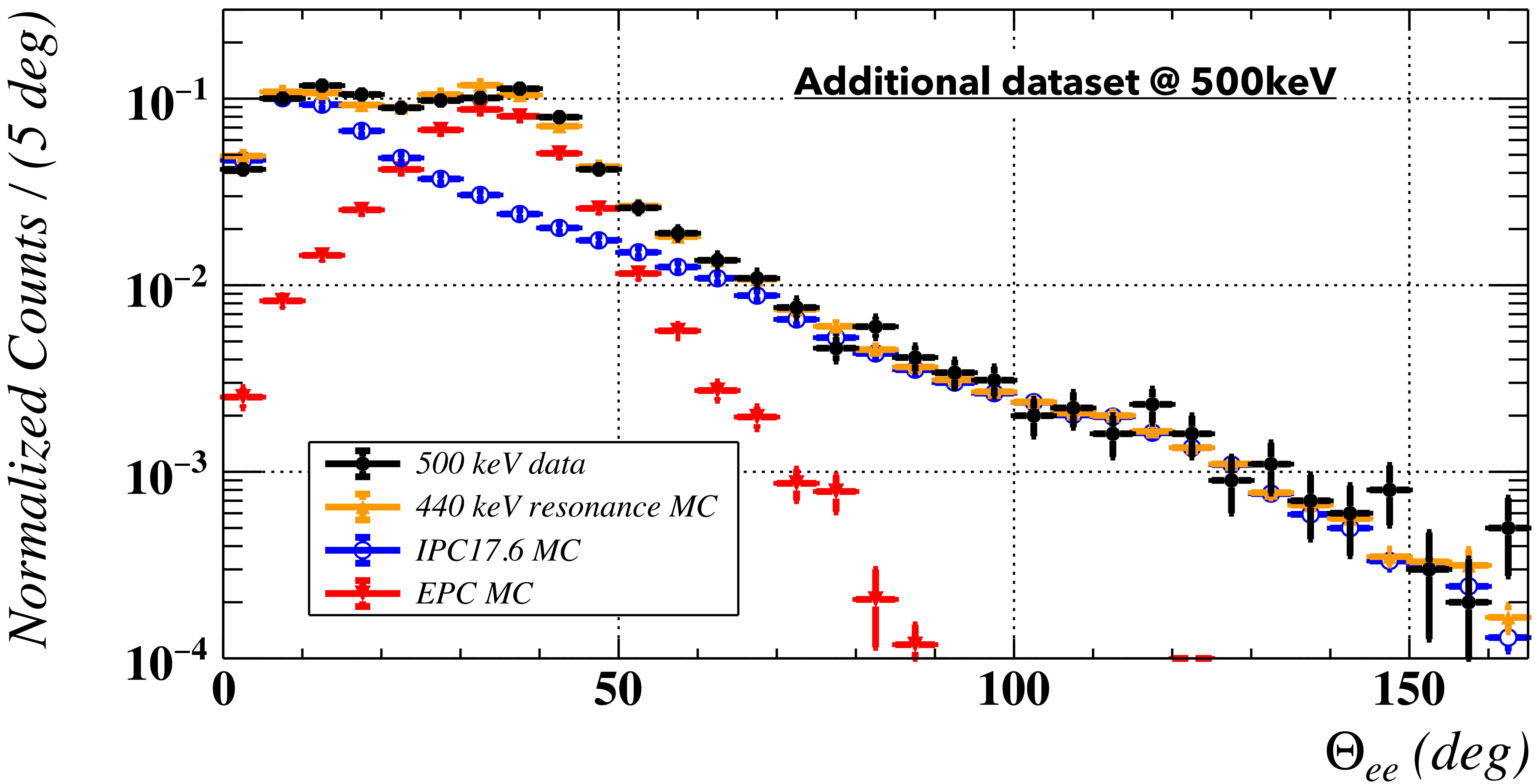
→ Resonances can be distinguished via the steepness of the IPC Angular Opening

Angular Opening spectrum @1080 keV ⑥



- 18.1 MeV presence at 1080 keV leads to E1-enriched flatter shape at large angles
- 17.6 MeV line / 18.1 MeV line —> 80% / 20% of our main dataset
- We can search for anomaly in both transitions

Angular Opening spectrum @500 keV ⑥



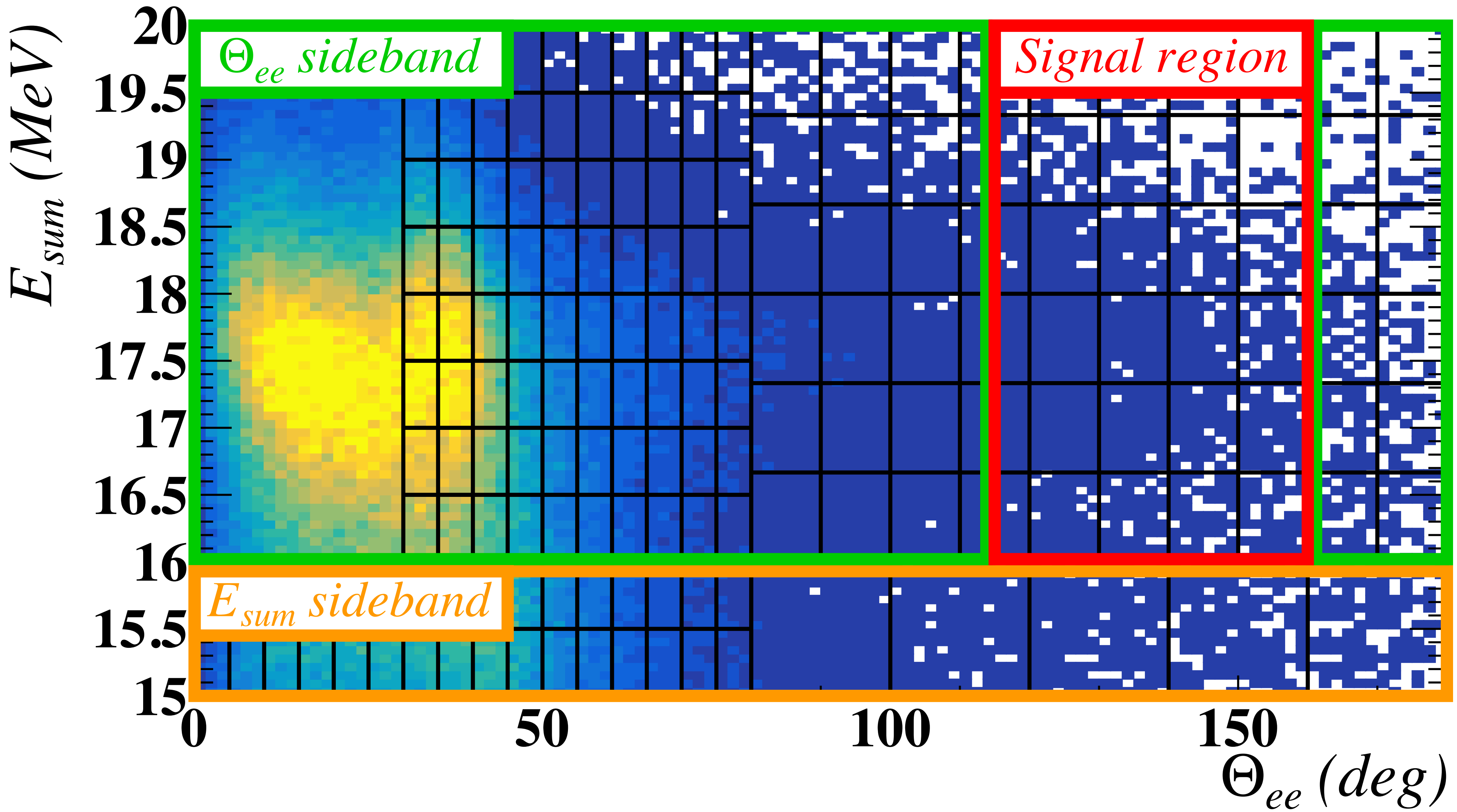
- Small dataset @500keV (only 17.6 MeV line)
- Data well modelled by Zhang-Miller IPC model!

- <u>2D likelihood maximization</u>: Esum vs Angular Opening
- <u>Blinded signal region</u> defined as:

Signal Region

- 16 MeV < E_{sum} < 20 MeV
- 115° < Angle < 160°

- Before unblinding, understanding of background done in two sidebands



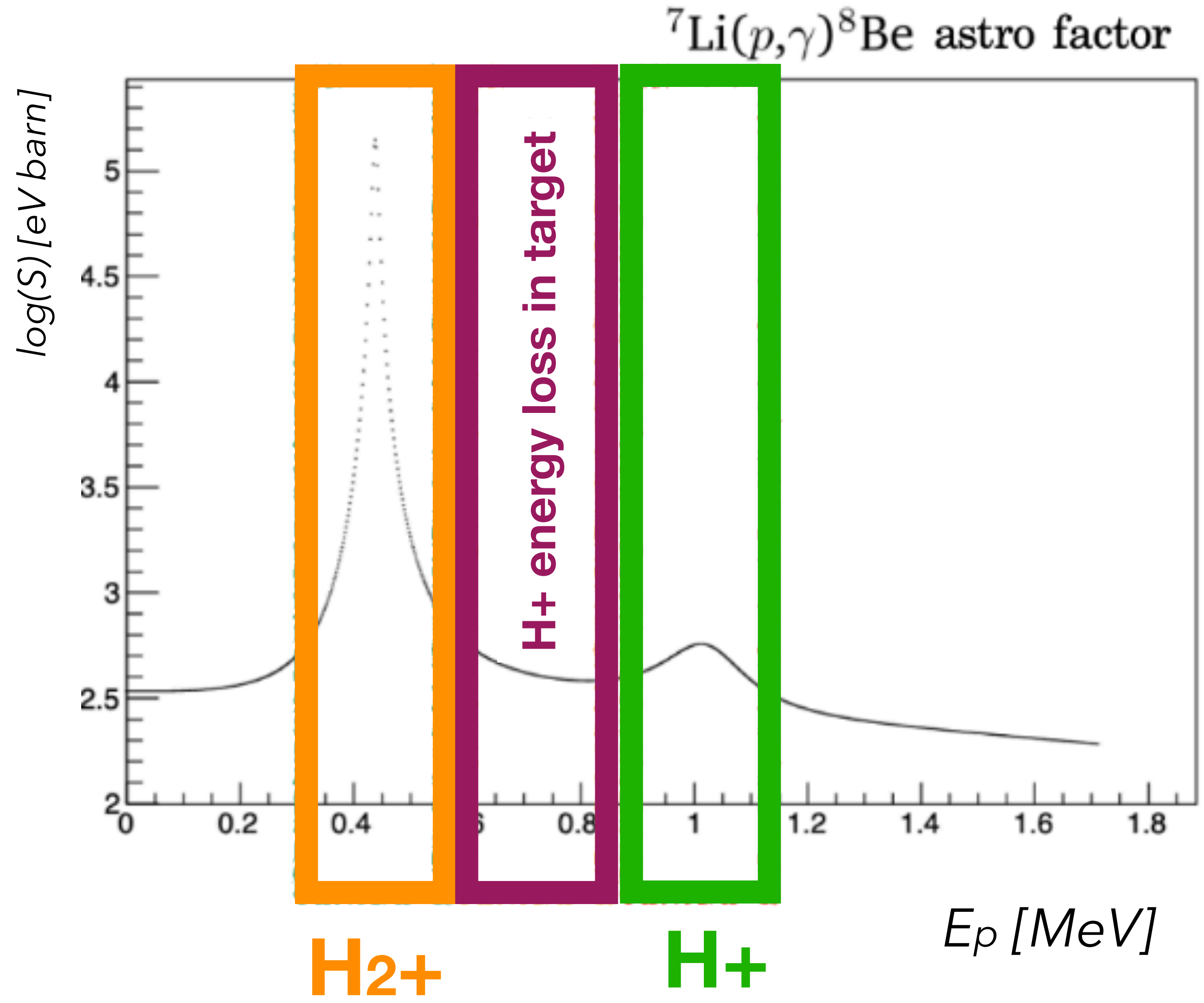
Maximum likelihood fit

- Binned max. likelihood fit using template histograms as PDF from a detailed MC simulation → validated in the sidebands

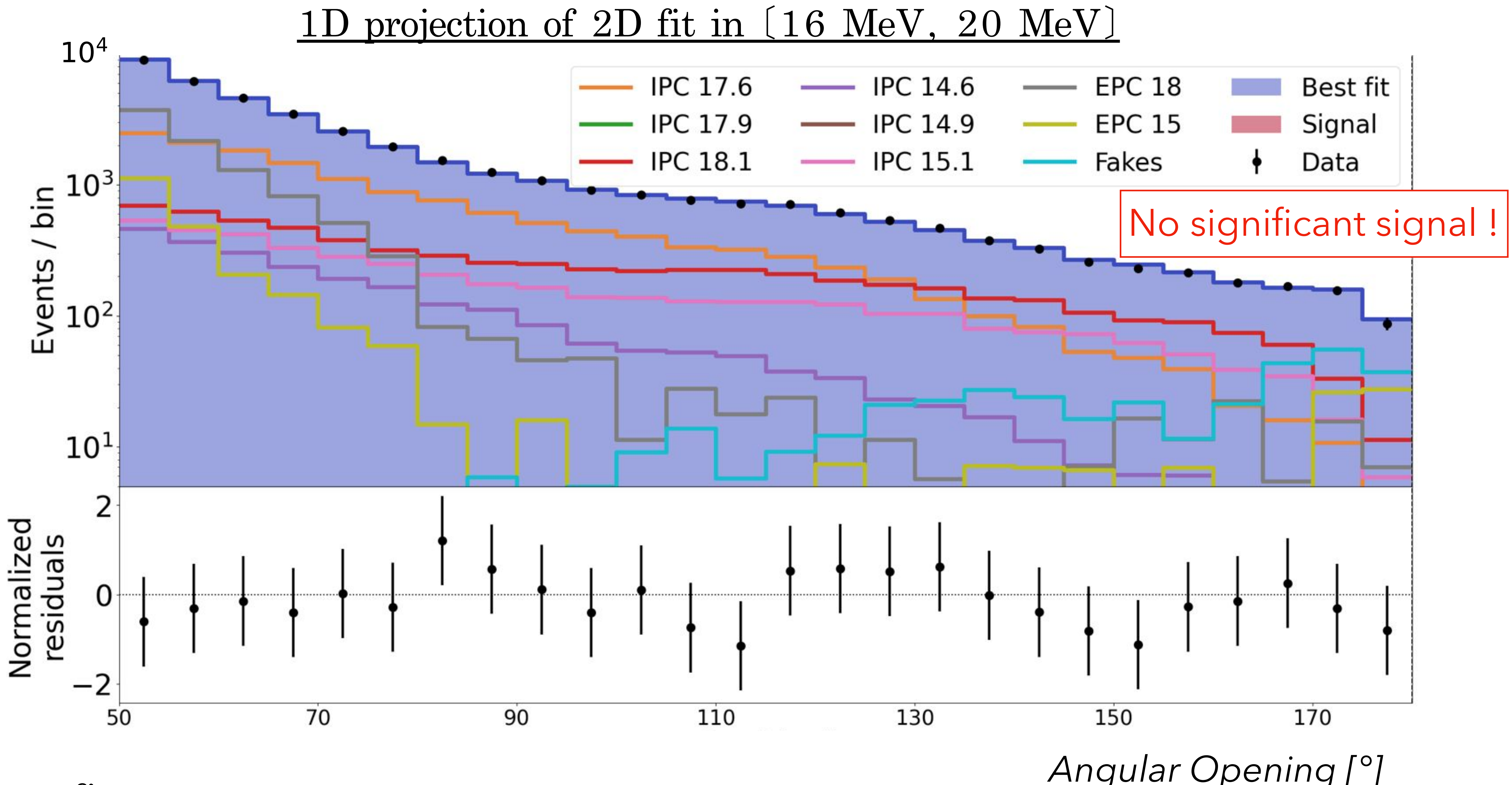
- Likelihood parametrized wrt. photon emission BR

$$R_Q = \frac{\mathscr{B}(^8\mathrm{Be}^*(Q) \to {}^8\mathrm{Be} + \mathrm{X17})}{\mathscr{B}(^8\mathrm{Be}^*(Q) \to {}^8\mathrm{Be} + \gamma)}$$

Two signal templates
→ One per resonance, Q =17.6 and Q=18.1 MeV
Six IPC templates
→ Three Ep bins,
→ Two transitions (g.s and 1st excited s.) for each bin
Two EPC templates
→ Neglected Ep dependence,
→ Transition to g.s. and 1st e.s.
One fake pairs template



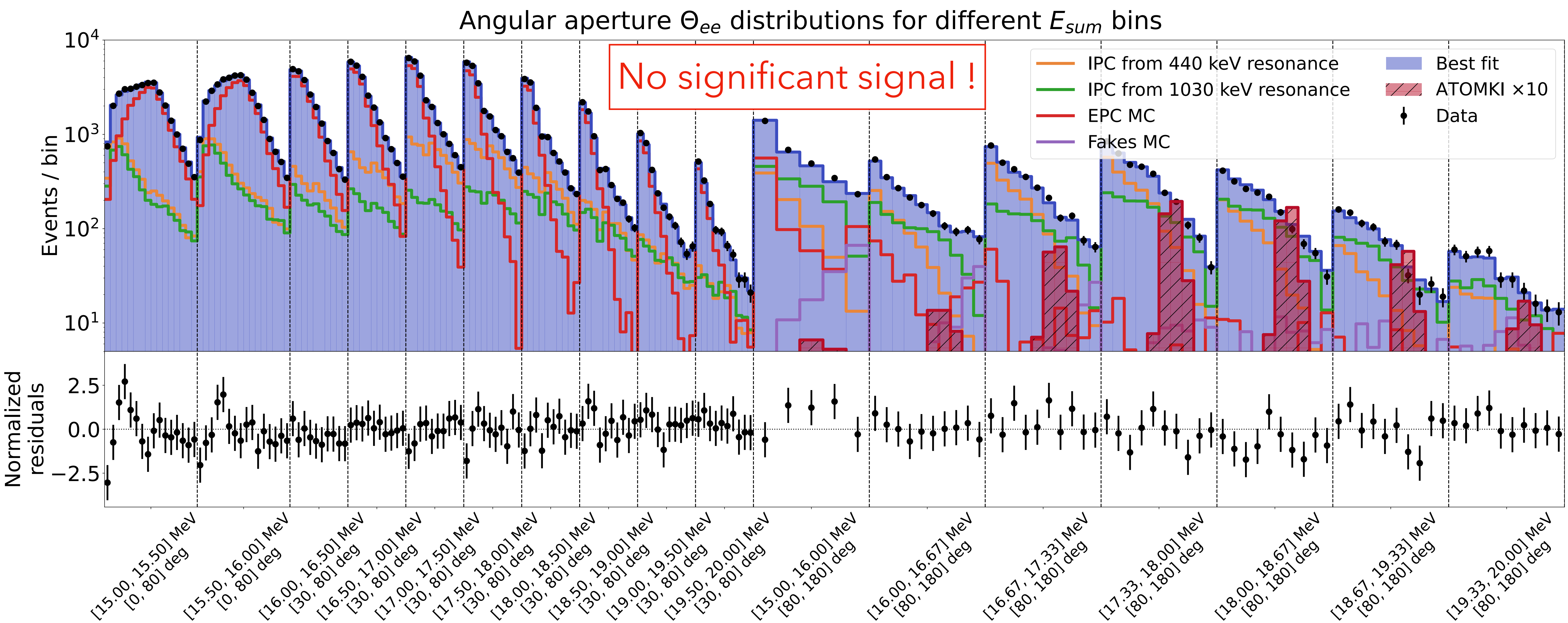
→ Beeston-Barlow likelihood to account for MC limited statistics
Eur. Phys. J. C 82(11), 1043



Best fit

- Goodness-of-fit: p-value = 10%
- 10 signal events at Q = 18.1 MeV, O(100) were expected based on Atomki
- 0 signal event at Q = 17.6 MeV, O(300) were expected based on Atomki/Feng et al
- Compatibility test carried out, results in next slides

Phys. Rev. Lett. 117, 071803



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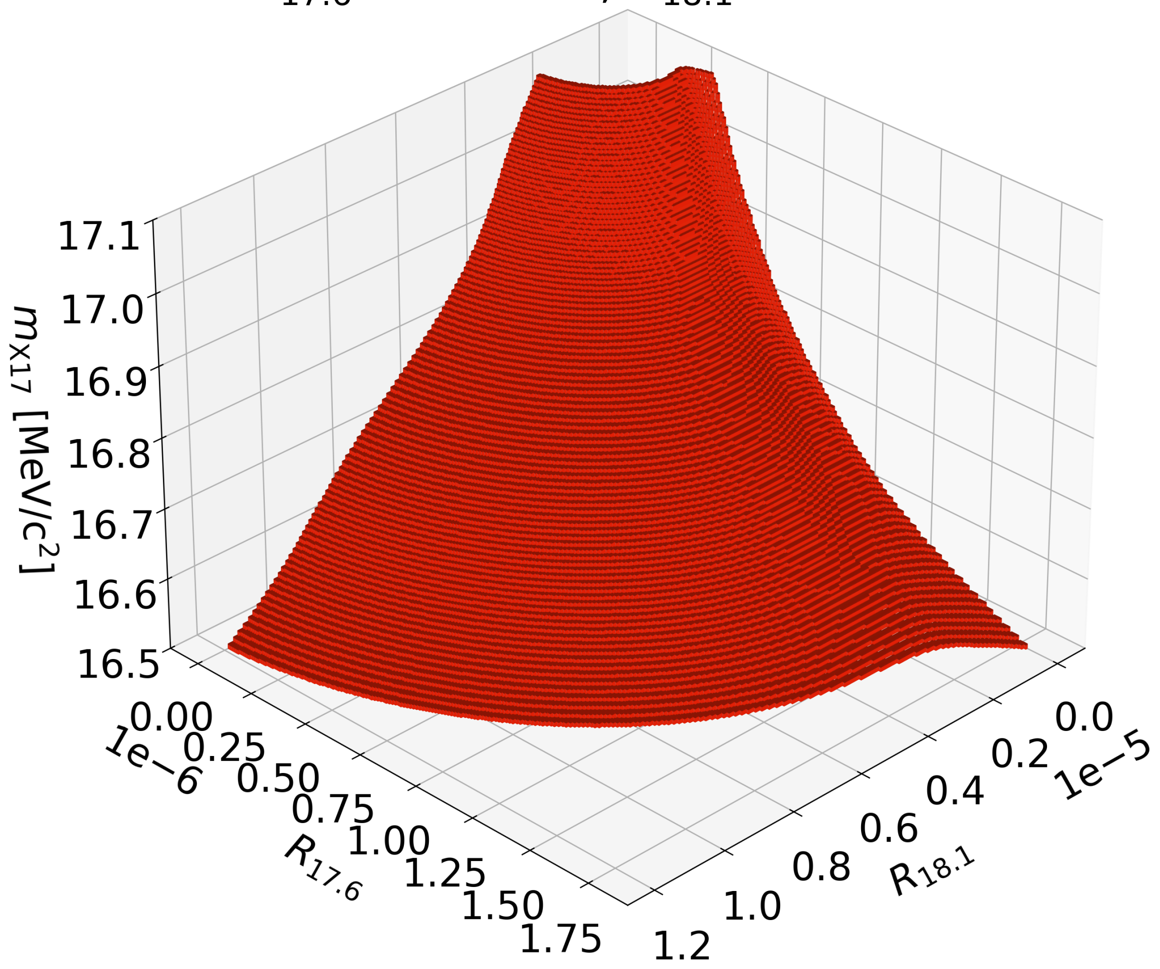
- 0 signal event at Q = 17.6 MeV, O(300) were expected based on Atomki/Feng et al
- Compatibility test carried out, results in next slides

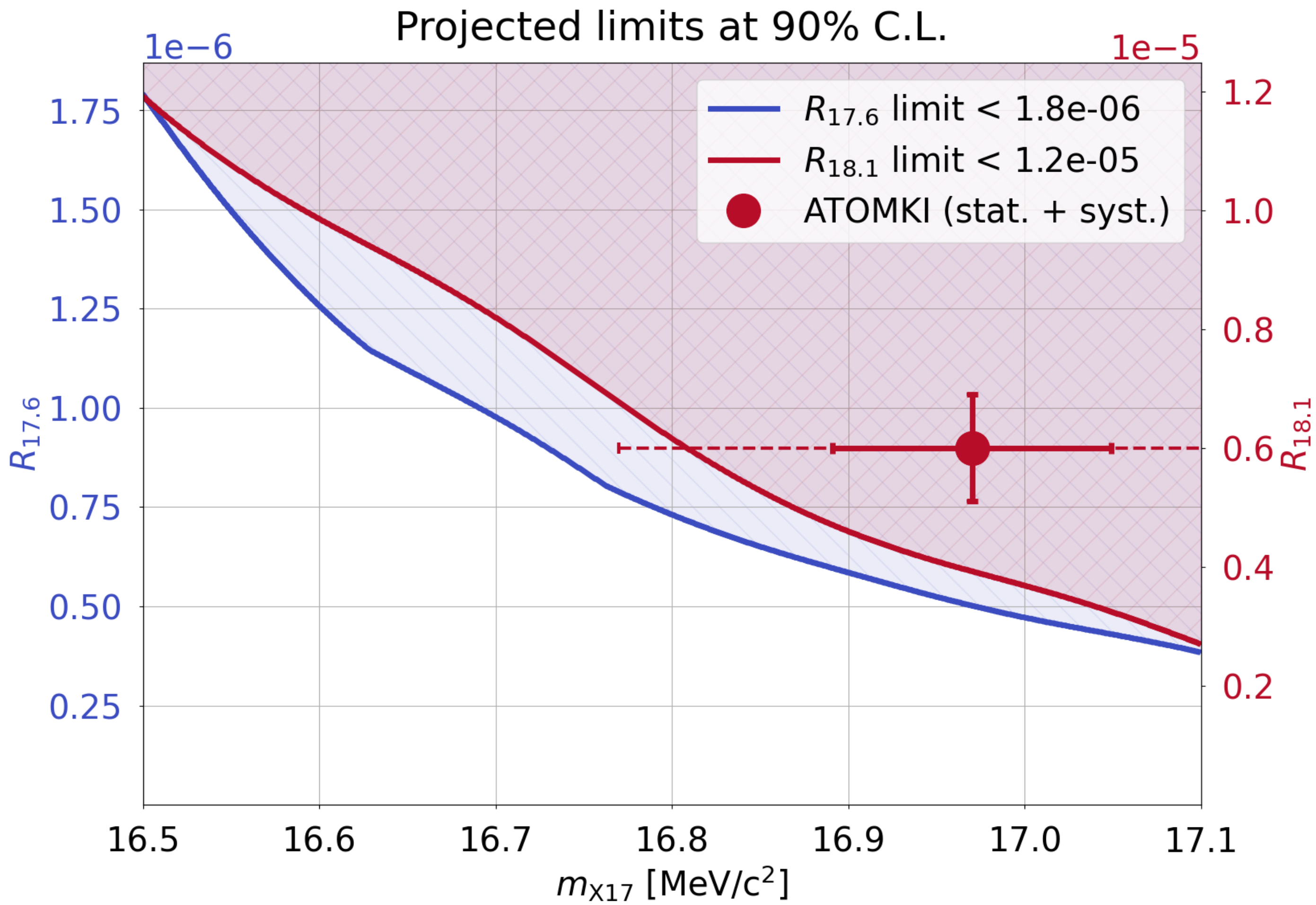
Phys. Rev. Lett. 117, 071803

90% Confidence Limits

- Systematic effects (energy scale, mass dependence, relative acceptance) included as nuisance parameters

$$R_Q = \frac{\mathscr{B}(^8\mathrm{Be}^*(Q) \to {}^8\mathrm{Be} + \mathrm{X17})}{\mathscr{B}(^8\mathrm{Be}^*(Q) \to {}^8\mathrm{Be} + \gamma)}$$





$$R_{17.6} < 1.8 \times 10^{-6}$$

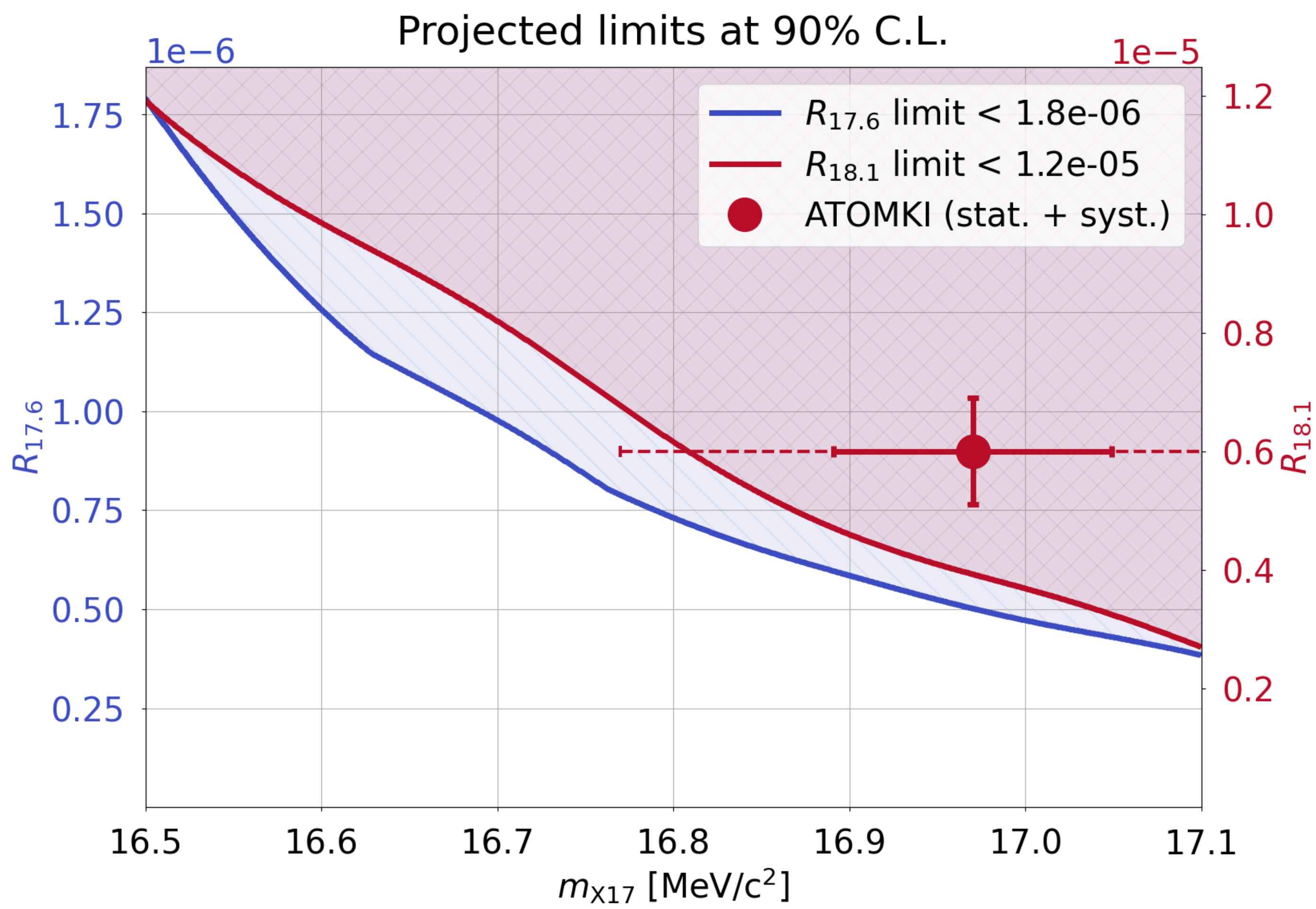
$$R_{18.1} < 1.2 \times 10^{-5}$$

Two hypotheses were tested

Assumes:

pondered average over 3 nuclei's result

- **m =16.97(22) MeV/c^2**
- **$R_{18.1}$ = 6(1)e-6**
- **$R_{17.6}$ = 0.46 $R_{18.1}$**



Atomki hypothesis: X17 only from 18.1 MeV decay

incompatible at 94% (1.5σ)

Feng et al. hypothesis: X17 from both 18.1 MeV and 17.6 MeV decay

incompatible at 98% (2.1σ)

Conclusion and outlook

- Anomalous excess observed in the angular correlation of $^{7}\mathrm{Li}(p,e^{+}e^{-})^{8}\mathrm{Be}$ by the Atomki group

- The MEG-II collaboration has designed, tested and built all the elements to perform the X17 search in an independent manner
  → better understanding of the X17 anomaly

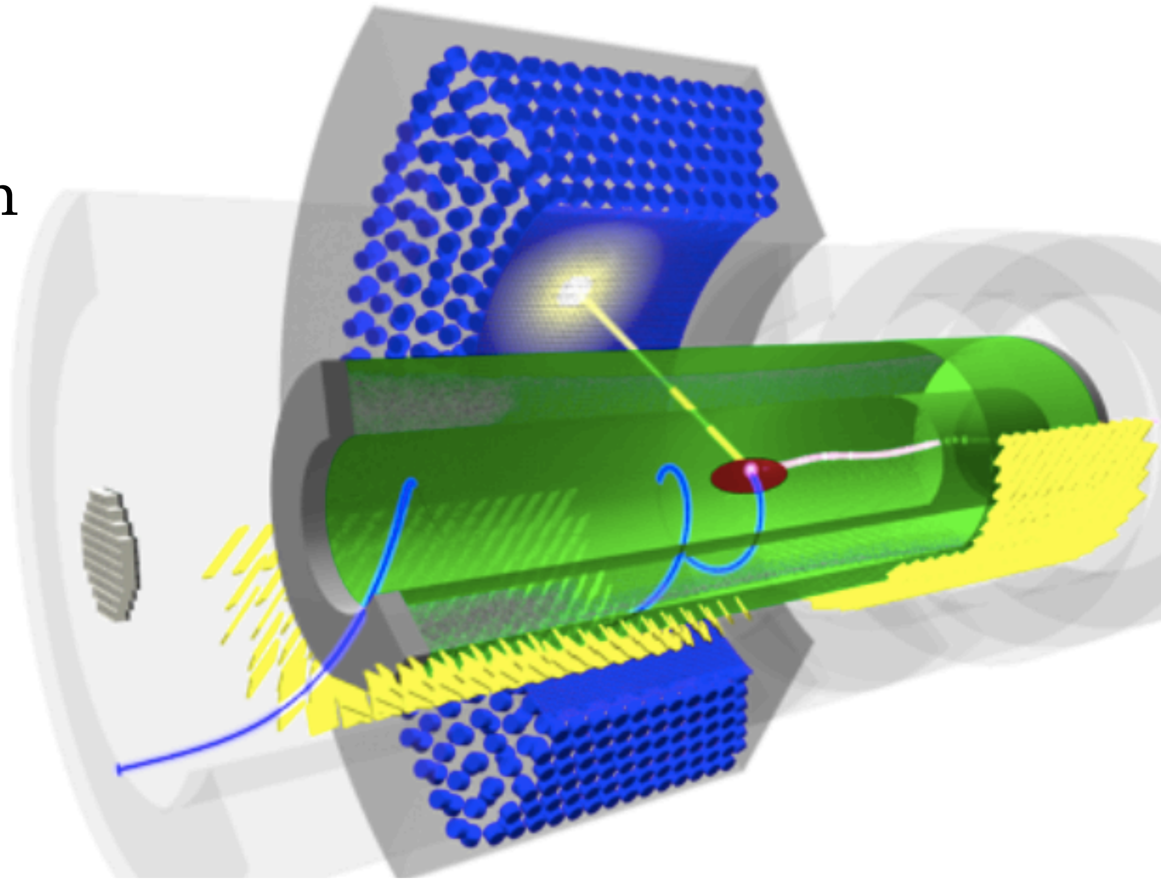
- Physics run in February 2023

→ backgrounds, signal and detectors simulation

→ 2023 data was reprocessed, good background understanding

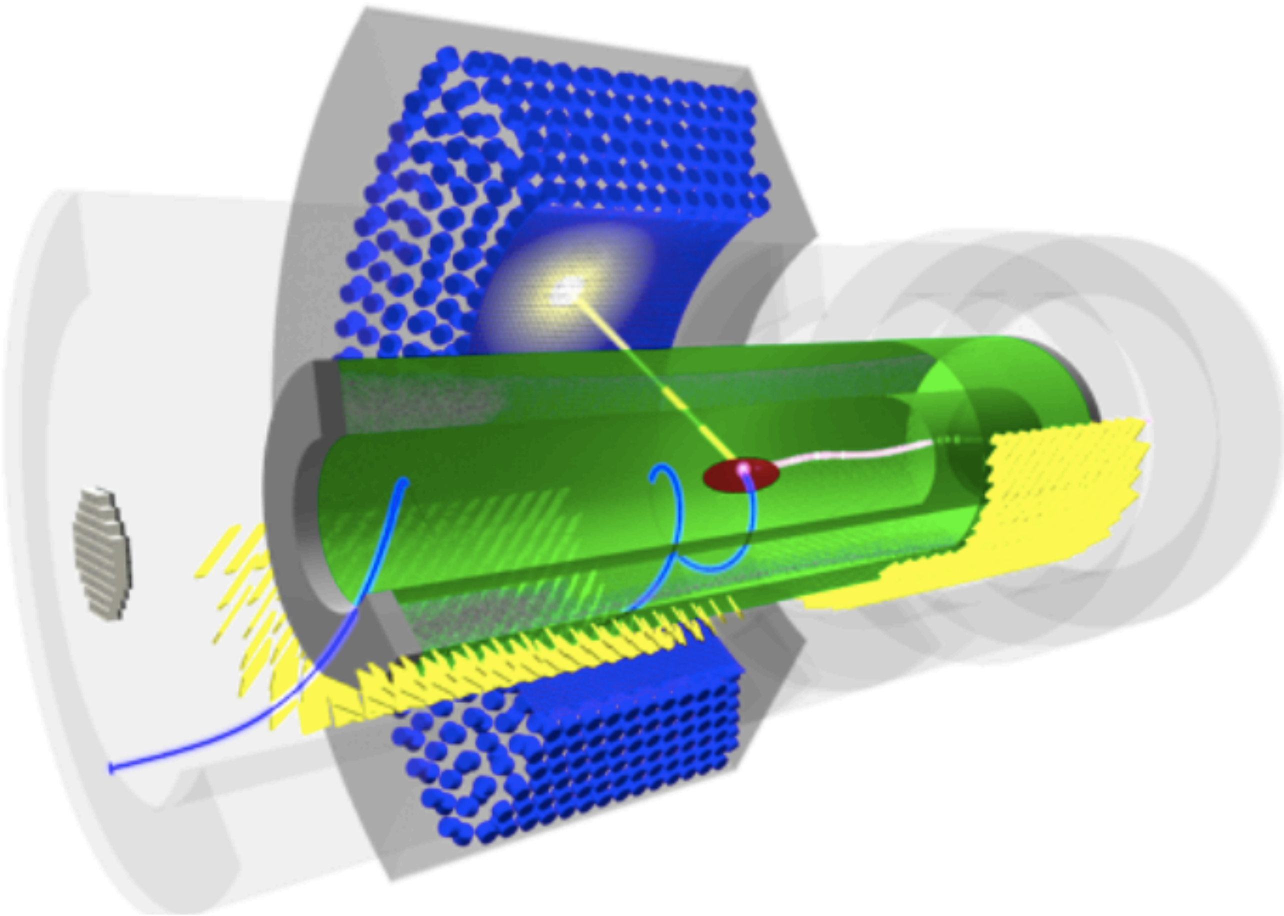
→ No significant signal was found in our data

→ ATOMKI observation was tested and excluded at 94%



- New DAQ period @1030 keV with pure proton beam is foreseen
  → improved sensitivity

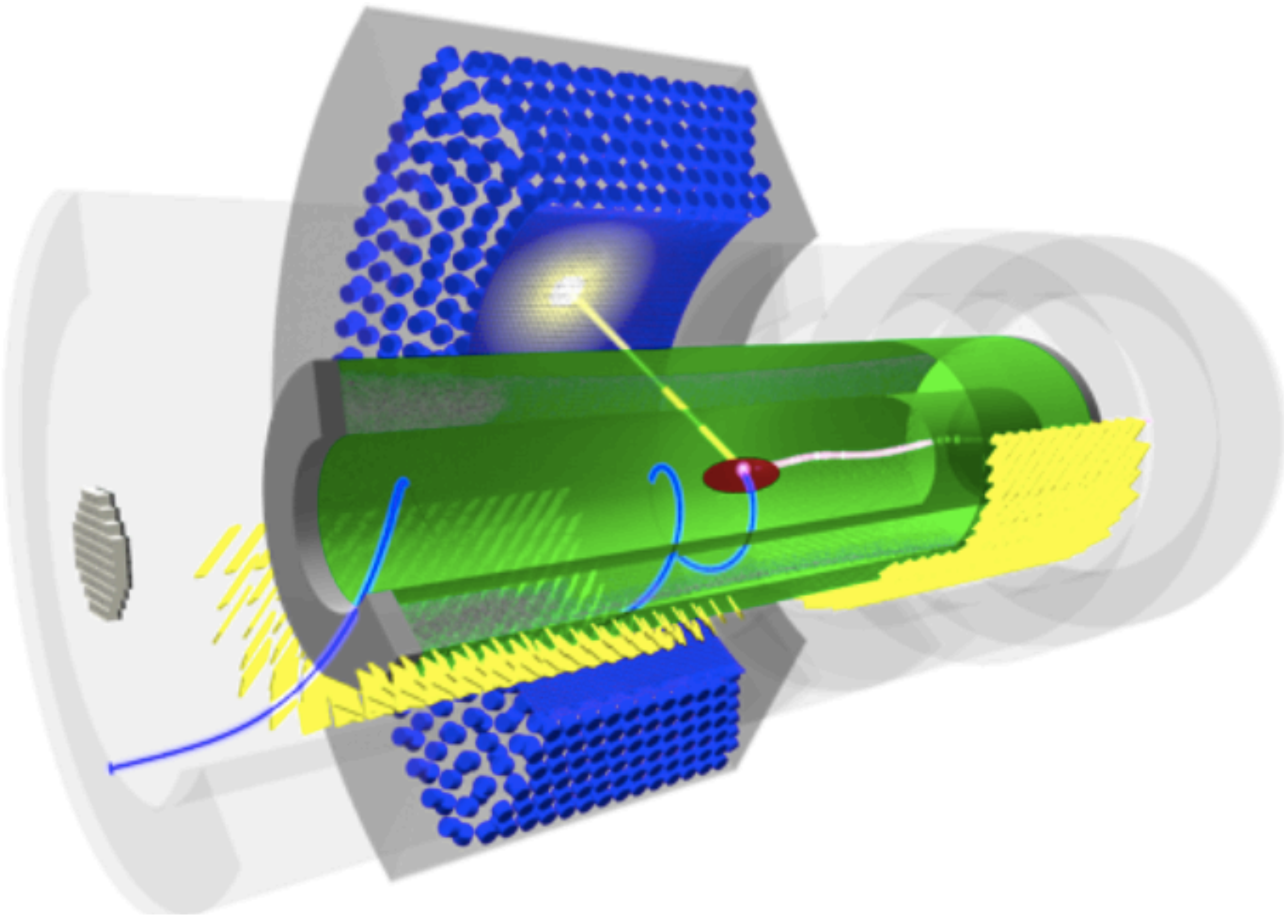
Thank you for your attention!



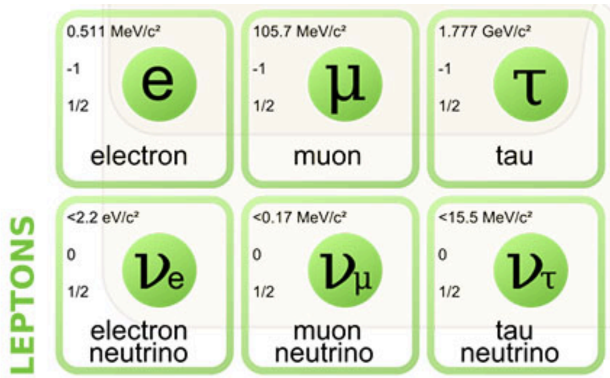
Hicham Benmansour, INFN Pisa
on behalf of the MEG-II collaboration

hicham.benmansour@pi.infn.it

Backup slides

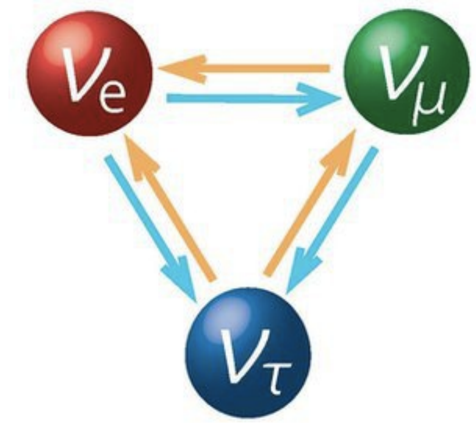


Charged Lepton Flavour Violation



- Lepton flavour violation observed experimentally with neutral leptons

  → Neutrino oscillations (Kamiokande, SNOLAB)



- No Charged Lepton Flavour Violation (CLFV) observed so far

- Neutrinoless muon decay is a CLFV golden channel → $\mu^+ \to e^+\gamma$

SM with massive neutrinos

$$\mathcal{B}(\mu^+ \to e^+\gamma) \approx 10^{-54}$$

BSM physics

$$\mathcal{B}(\mu^+ \to e^+\gamma) \gg 10^{-54}$$

accessible experimentally today

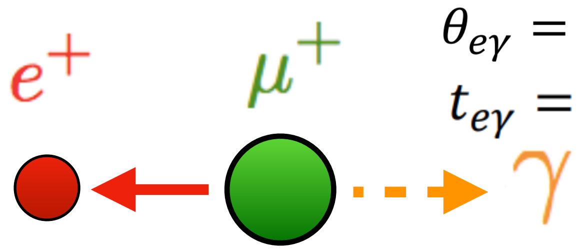
- Observation of CLFV at current sensitivities = unambiguous evidence for New Physics

Signal

Back-to-back decay at rest

$\theta_{e\gamma} = 180°$

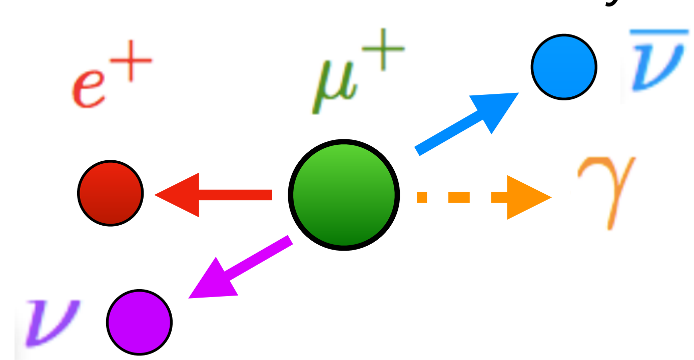
$t_{e\gamma} = 0$ s



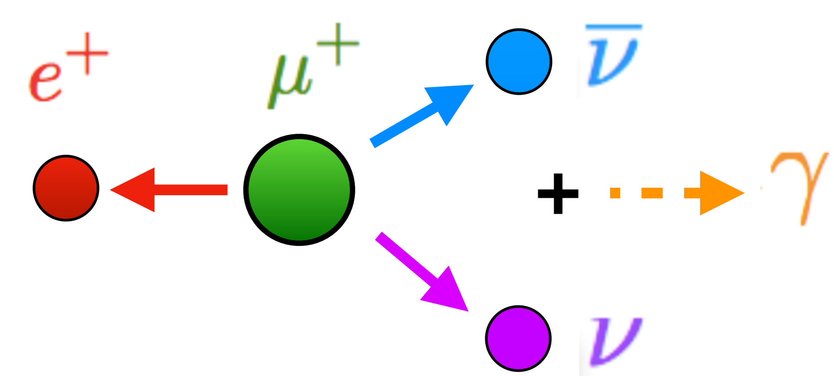
$E_\gamma = E_e = 52.8$ MeV

Backgrounds

Radiative Muon Decay



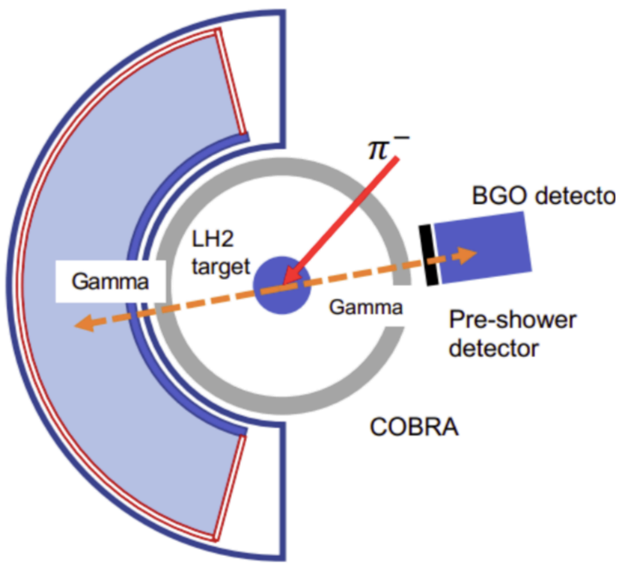
Accidental

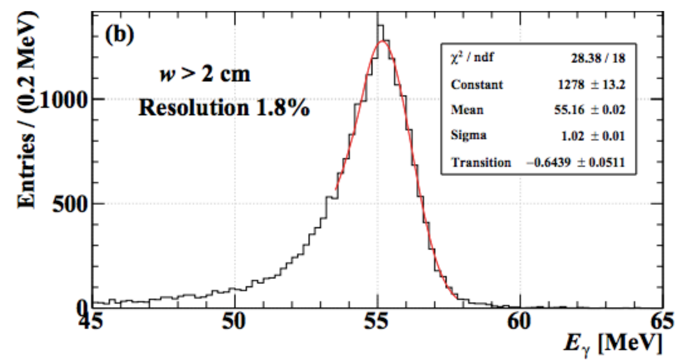


Detectors calibrations

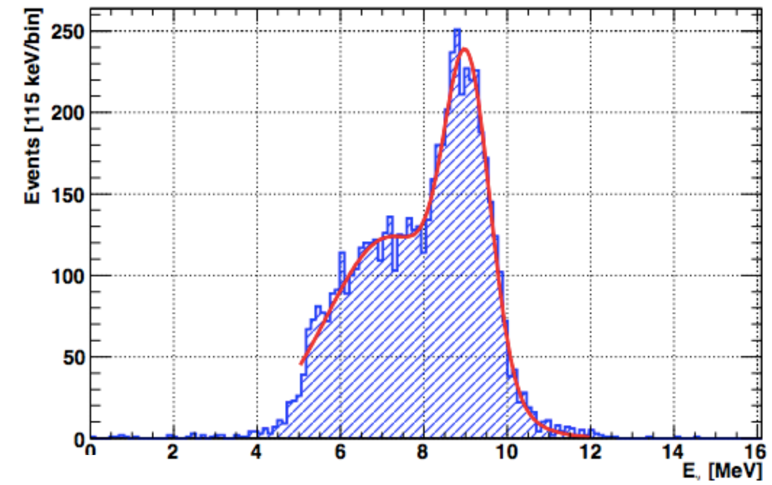
- Search relies on an extensive and regular calibration routine

55 MeV γ | $\pi^- p \rightarrow \pi^0 n,\ \pi^0 \rightarrow \gamma\gamma$ | **LXe**

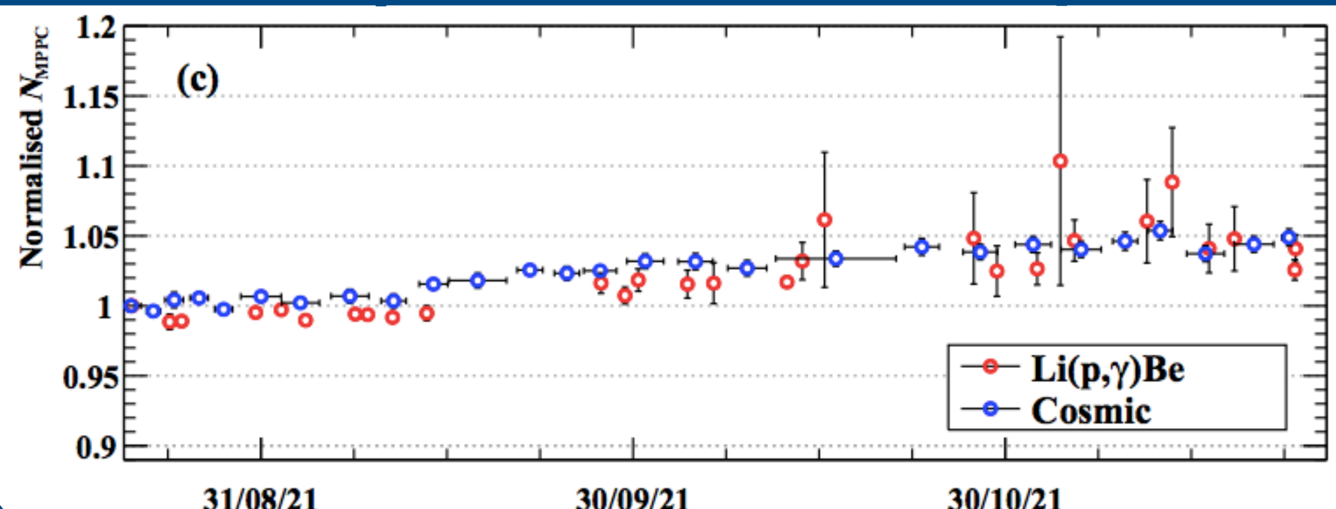




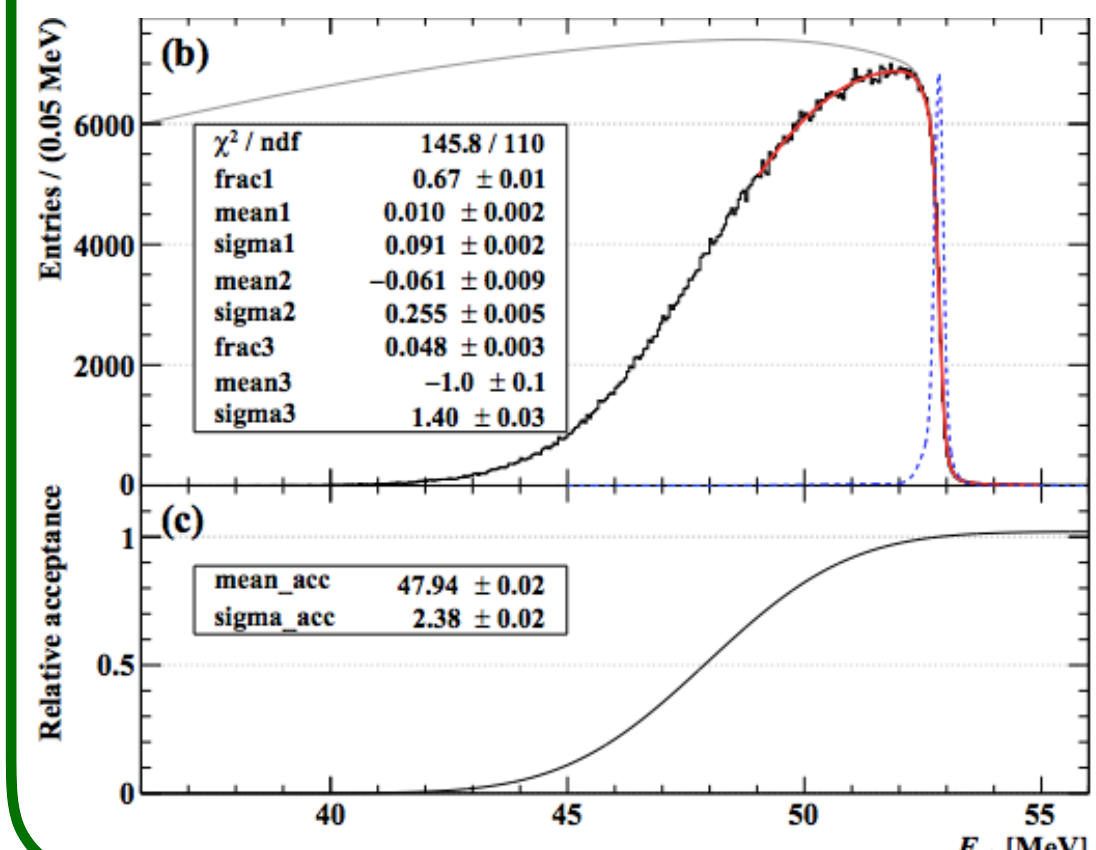
9 MeV γ | $^{58}\mathrm{Ni}(n,\gamma)^{59}\mathrm{Ni}$ | **LXe**



17.6 MeV γ | $^{7}\mathrm{Li}(p,\gamma)^{8}\mathrm{Be}$ | **LXe**



52.8 MeV e^+ | $\mu^+ \rightarrow e^+ \nu_e \bar{\nu}_\mu$ | **CDCH**



2022 engineering run

- With all elements mentioned above, engineering run in February 2022

- Objectives:
  - → define optimal experimental setup and final TDAQ configuration
  - → understand backgrounds
  - → optimize target region
  - → develop reconstruction algorithm

- Take-aways from 2022 run

→ converting gammas from 6 MeV Fluorine line overcrowd the trigger when the LiF target is used —> only good for calibration of ancillary detectors, LiPON has to be used for X17 search

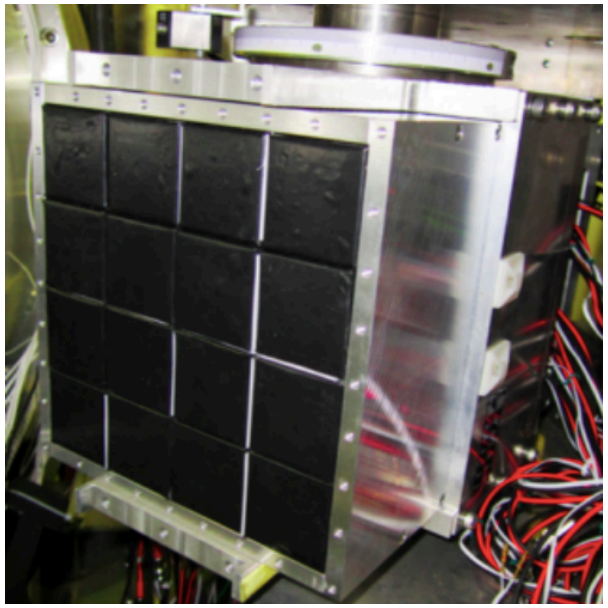
→ CDCH multiplicity condition (18 hits on each detector end) strongly suppresses trigger contamination and improves reconstruction

→ target region can stand high proton currents(up to 10uA) without overheating —> heat-dissipation material can be reduced (less EPC background)

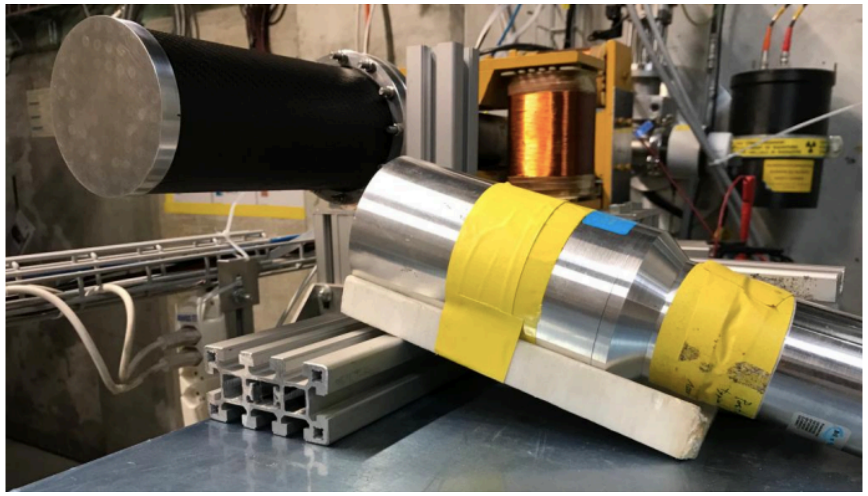
- Two additional gamma detectors

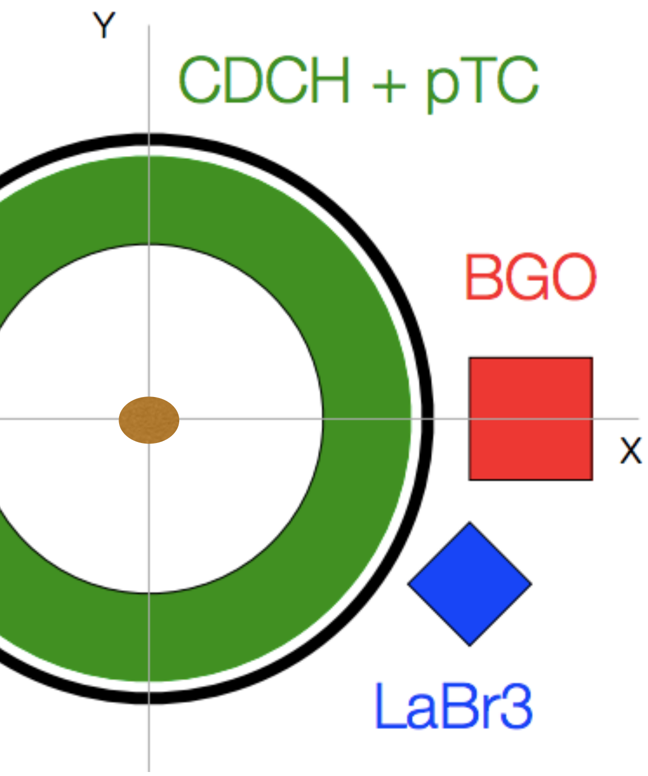
→ Stability monitoring → Signal normalisation → Daily monitoring

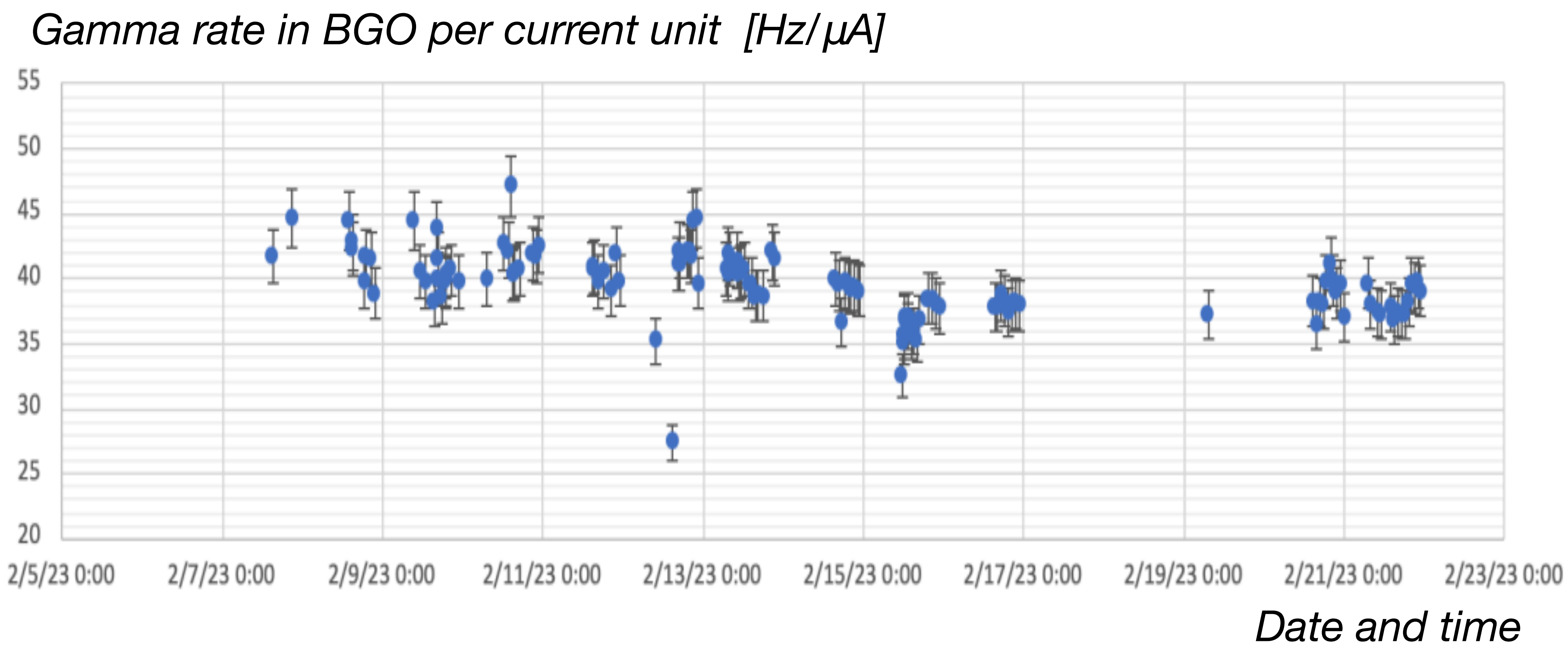
Bismuth Germanate (BGO) crystal matrix (4x4)



Lanthanum Bromide (LaBr3) crystal



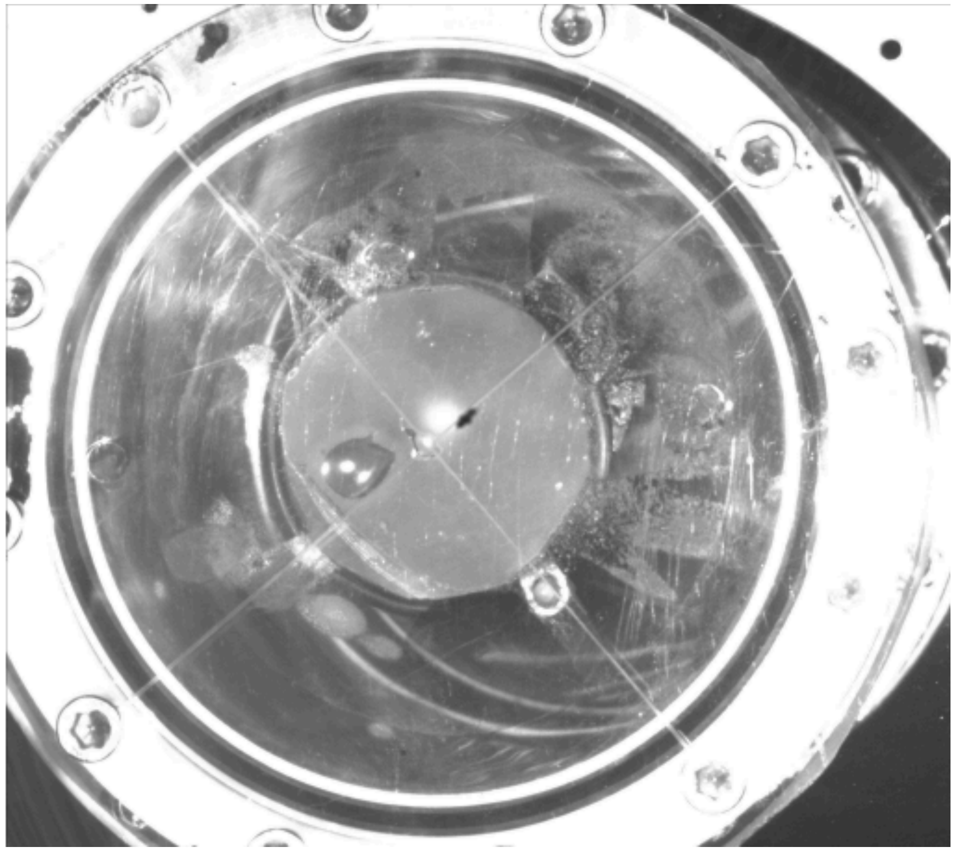




Reduced magnetic field and beam tuning

- $\mu \longrightarrow e\gamma$ search relies on 52.8 MeV positron search with default magnetic field (1.27T at COBRA center)
- for X17: energies ~6 times lower → scaling of the field by a factor 0.15
- CW tuned using a quartz target: proton-induced fluorescence in the quartz, visible emission
- Tuning made varying 3 dipolar fields along the beamline to center the beam
  → beam spot centered and covering the Li area

megCam - COBRA OFF



CCD camera - COBRA ON

Cockroft-Walton beam

- <u>Beam composition investigation and tuning</u>

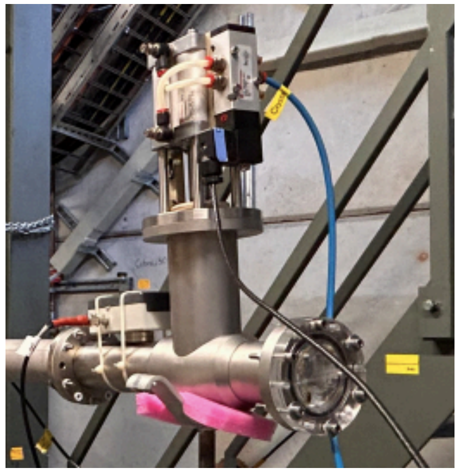
→ CW beam tuned using a quartz target: proton-induced fluorescence in the quartz, visible emission

→ Tuning made varying 4 dipolar fields along the beamline

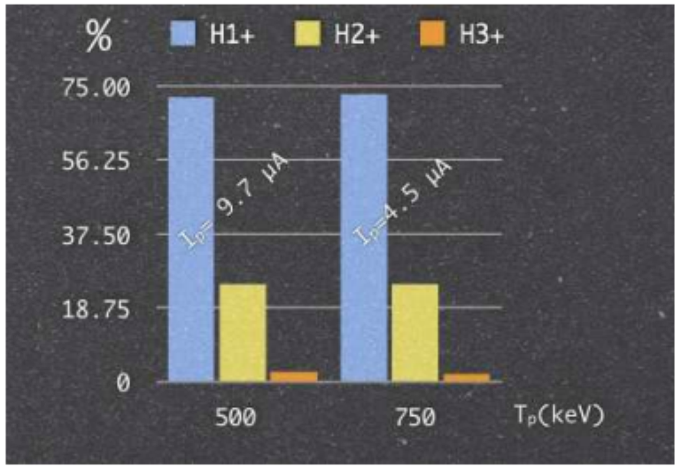
→ H_2+ contamination in the beam

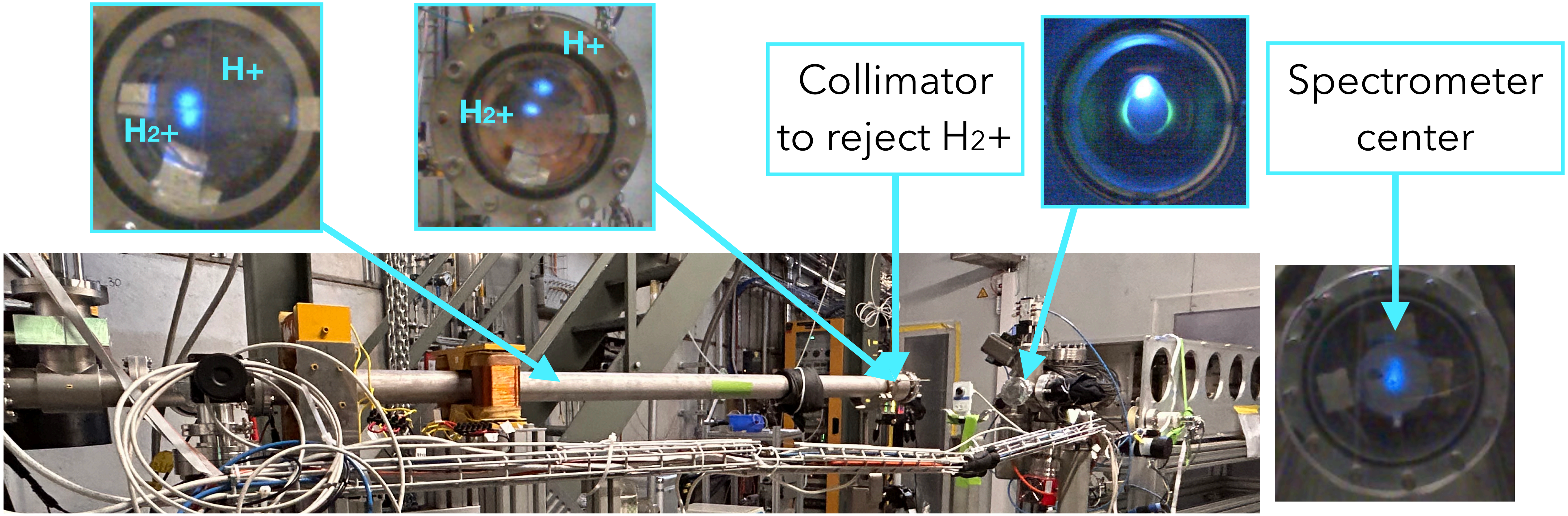
Measurement of the beam ion composition with Faraday Cup

Faraday cup

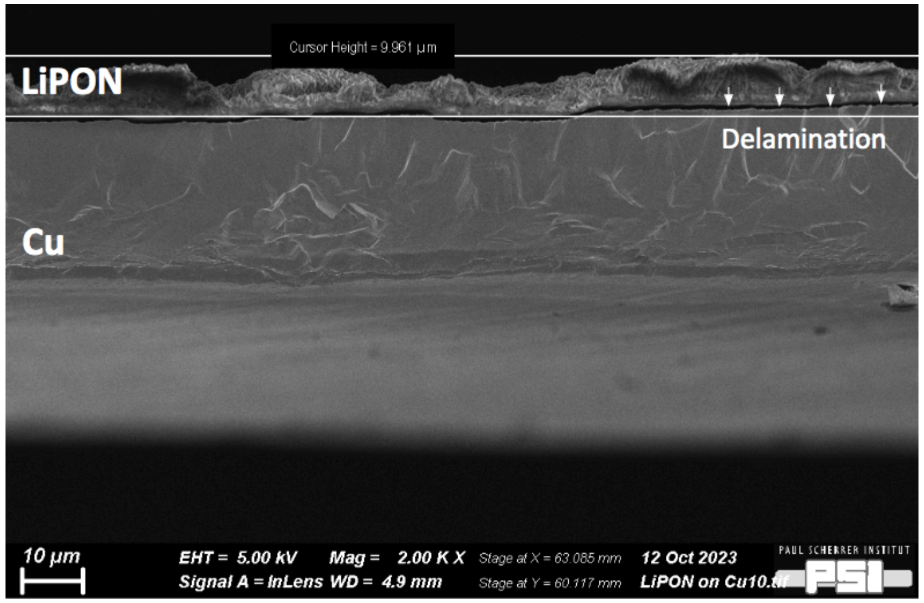


Ion composition



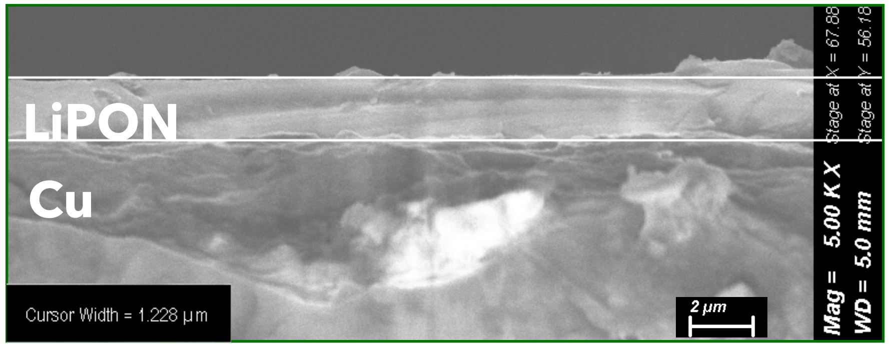


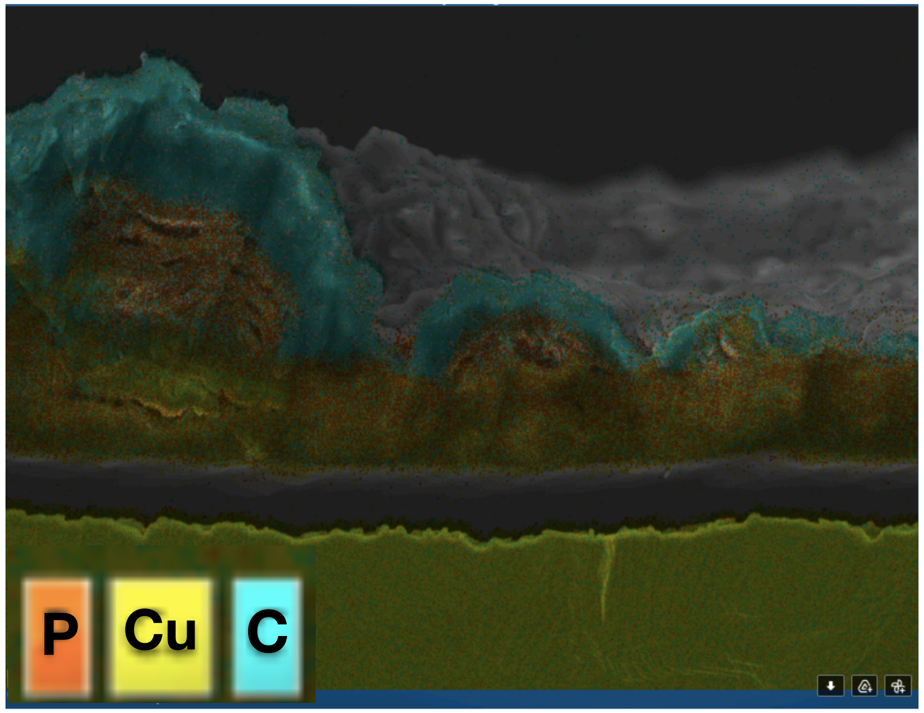
- Why LiPON?
  → Stable, no F-related bkg, thin films through sputtering, developed for batteries
- Difficulties for production: thickness control and non-uniformity, oxidation layer



→ Delamination, pores, large thickness variations

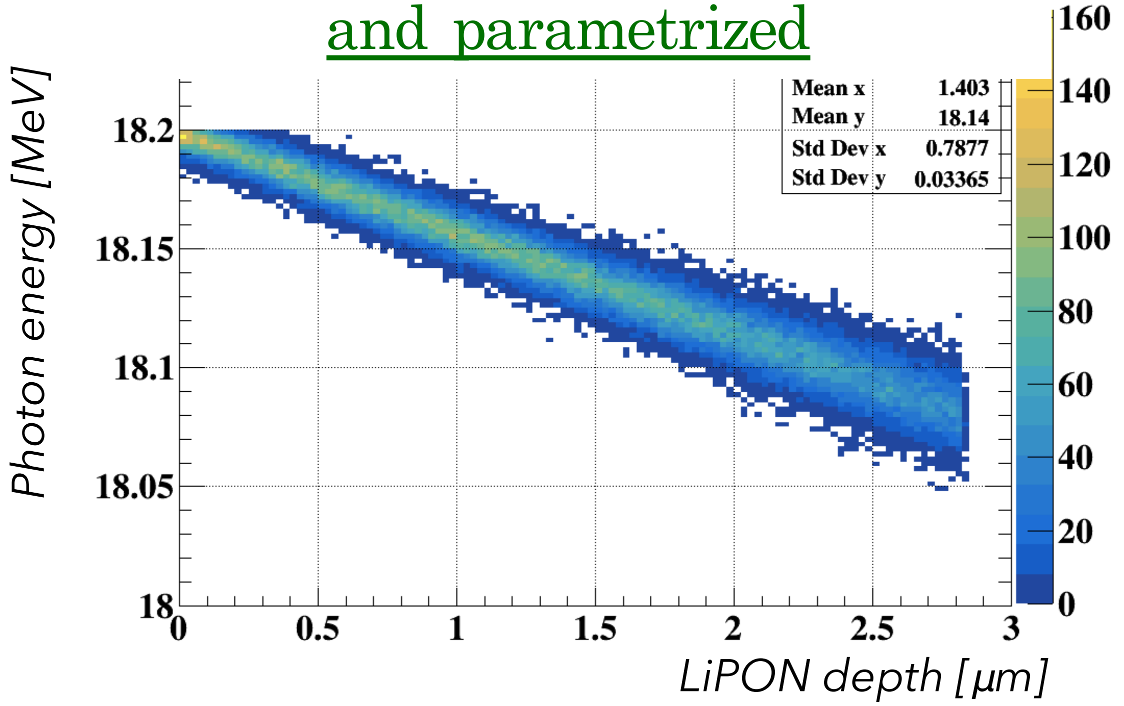
Recently, uniform thin 2-µm films were achieved at PSI



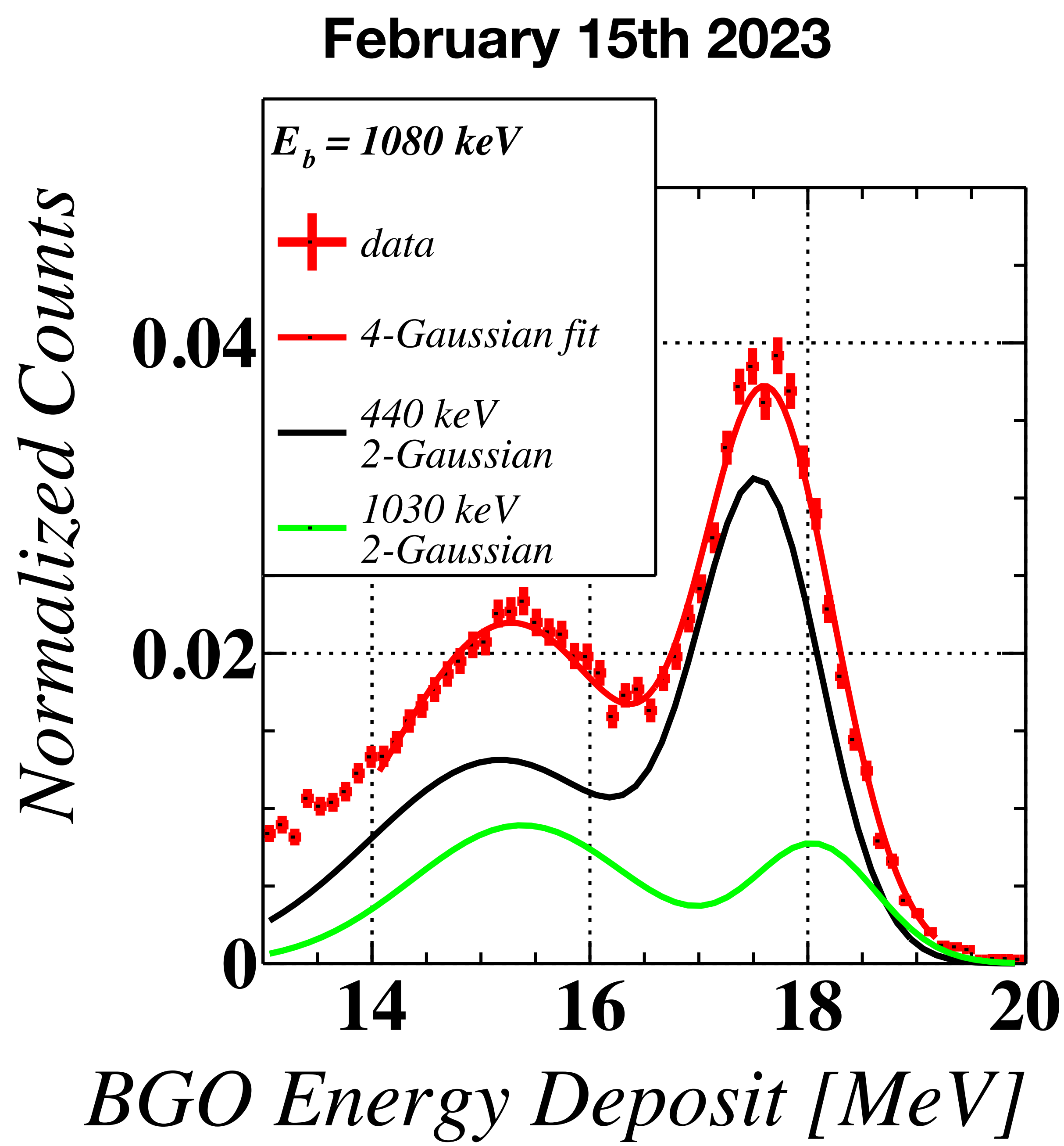


→ $LiCO_3$ on the surface

Proton energy loss simulated and parametrized



18.1 MeV line proportion in X17 2023 dataset

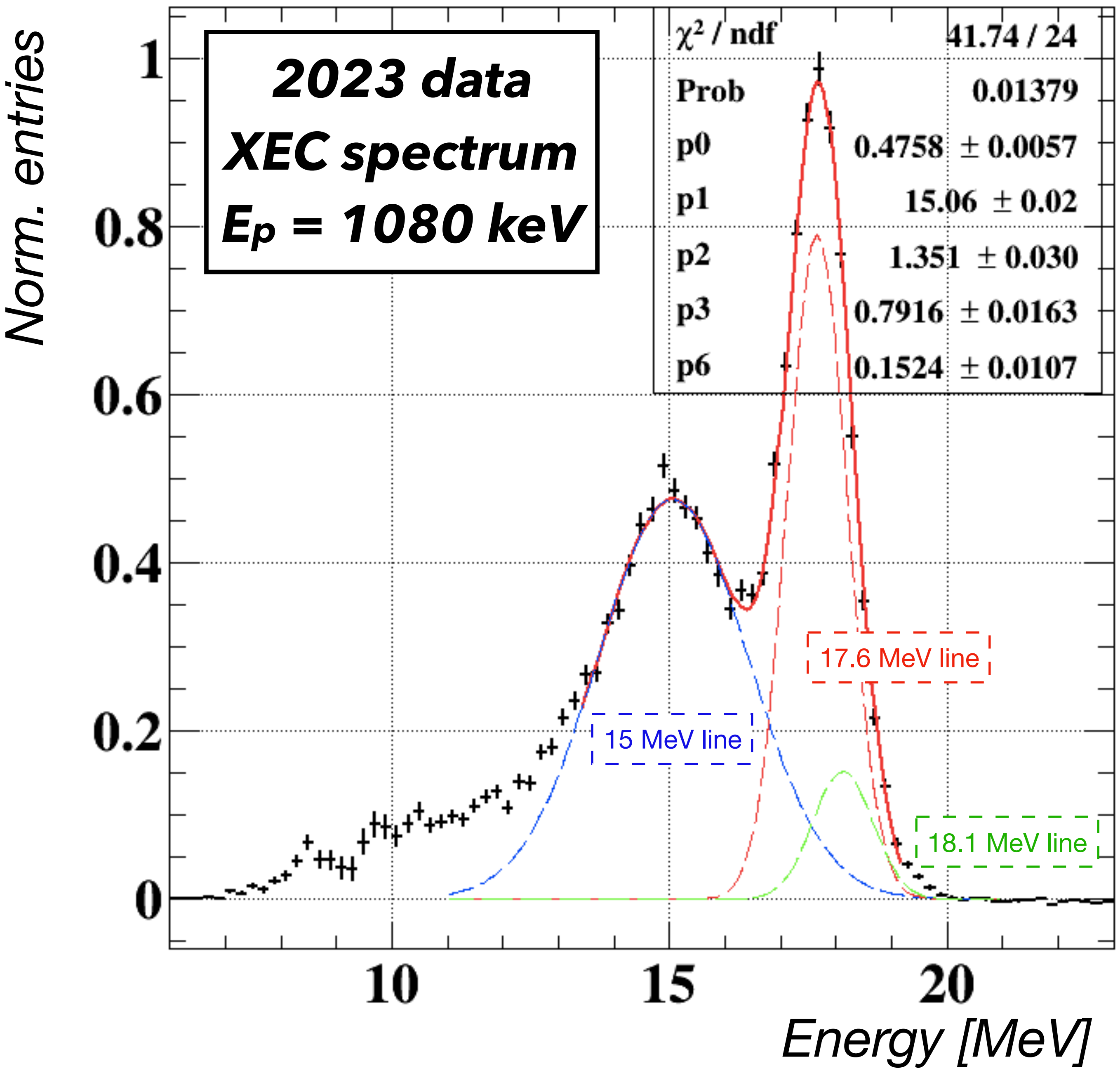


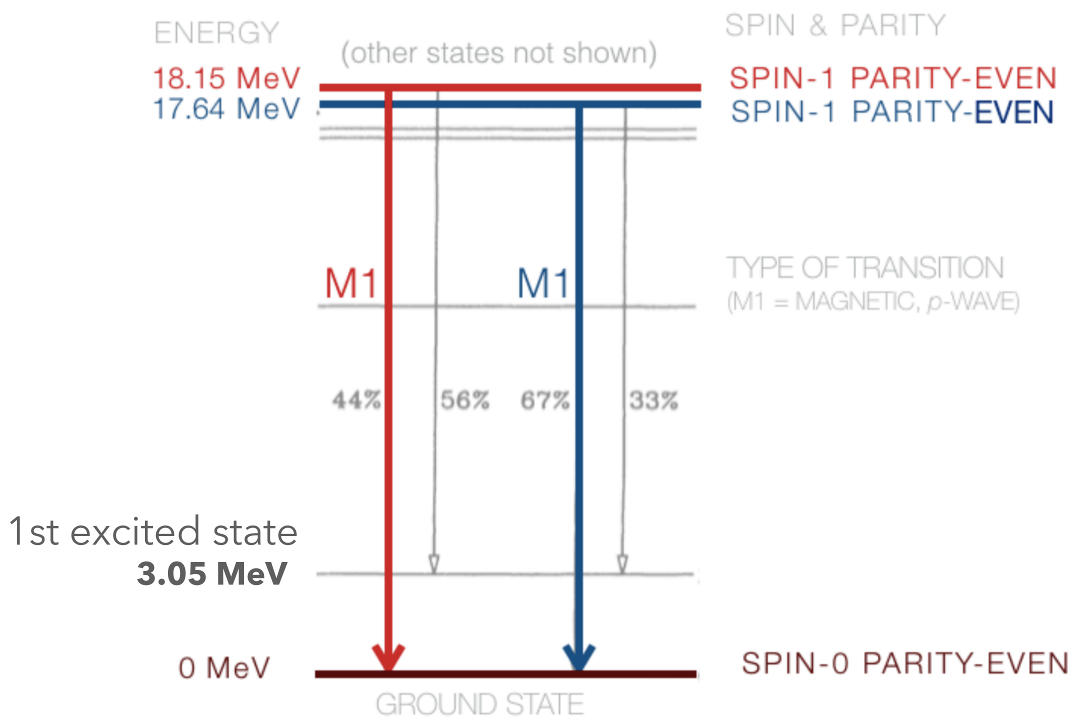
→ Proportion = 20%

But variations throughout the DAQ month

Excited transitions

- Gamma spectrum using LXe calorimeter to understand excited transitions





Fraction of 18.1 MeV line (wrt *17.6+18.1*) can be extracted:

$f_{18.1}$ ~ 20 %

Internal Pair Conversion

IPC = Internal Pair Conversion
→ direct e+/e- pair creation

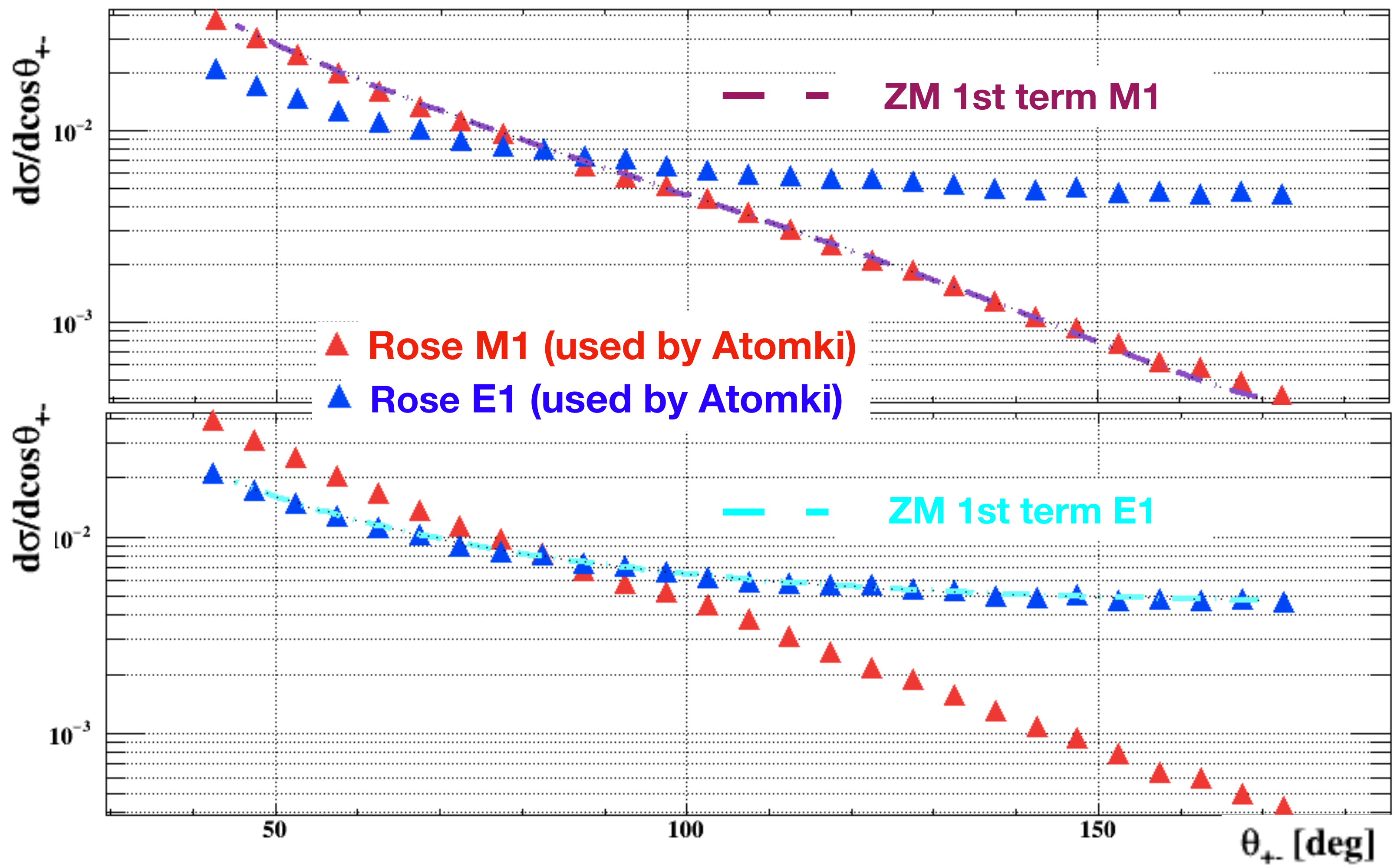
- Need for an accurate background model, IPC is dominant background in signal region
- First IPC model developed by Rose in 1949 Phys. Rev. 76, 678

→ Anisotropy and multipole interferences not included

→ Zhang and Miller in 2017 did it, ZM model
Phys. Lett. B 773, 159

$$d\sigma/d\cos\theta_{+-}dE_{+}d\cos\theta\, d\phi \propto T_{0,0} + T_{0,2}\cos 2\phi + T_{1,0}P_1 + T_{2,0}P_2 + T_{2,2}P_2\cos 2\phi + T_{3,1}\sin\theta\cos\phi + T_{4,1}\sin 2\theta\cos\phi\ , \quad (4.1)$$

Rose-equivalent ($T_{0,0}$)



→ We implemented Zhang-Miller model

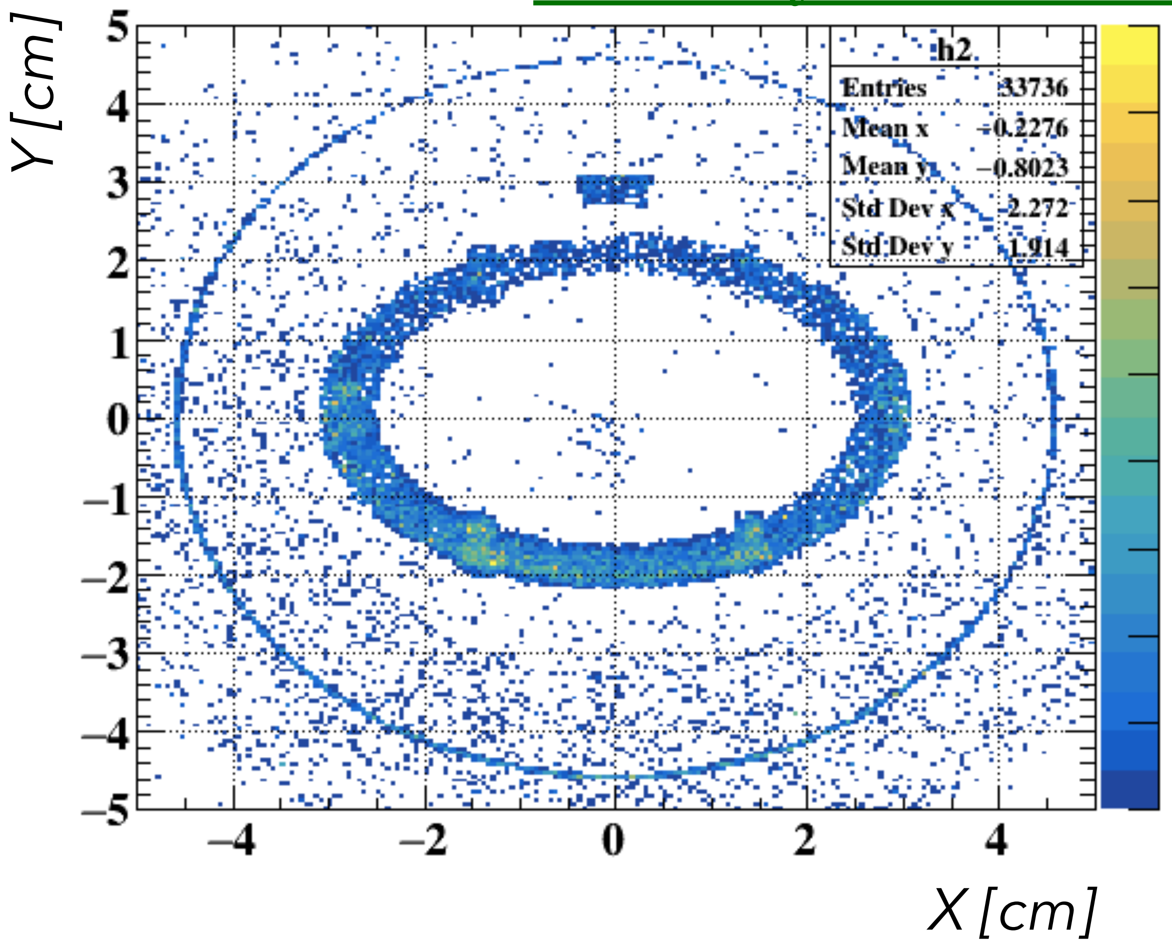
→ Rose/simplified ZM models agree for both E1 and M1 multipoles

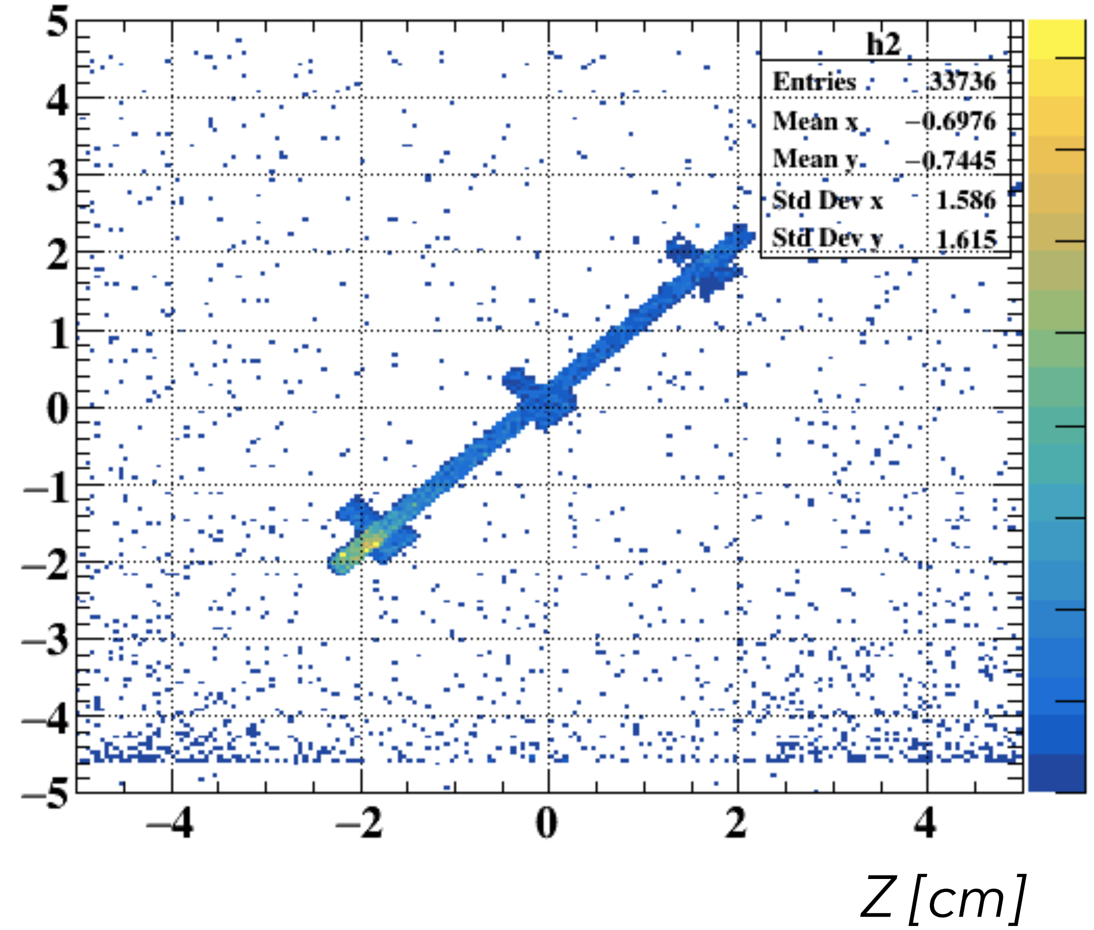
External Pair Conversion and other bkgs

- Other backgrounds can impact the search
  - → Need to be carefully studied and estimate probabilities
  - → Complete setup with target, surrounding region, all detectors and all material was simulated
  - → Large photon (18 and 15 MeV lines) simulation at beamspot position

EPC = External Pair Conversion
→ γ-conversion to e+/e- pair in matter

Secondary electron and positron conversion points



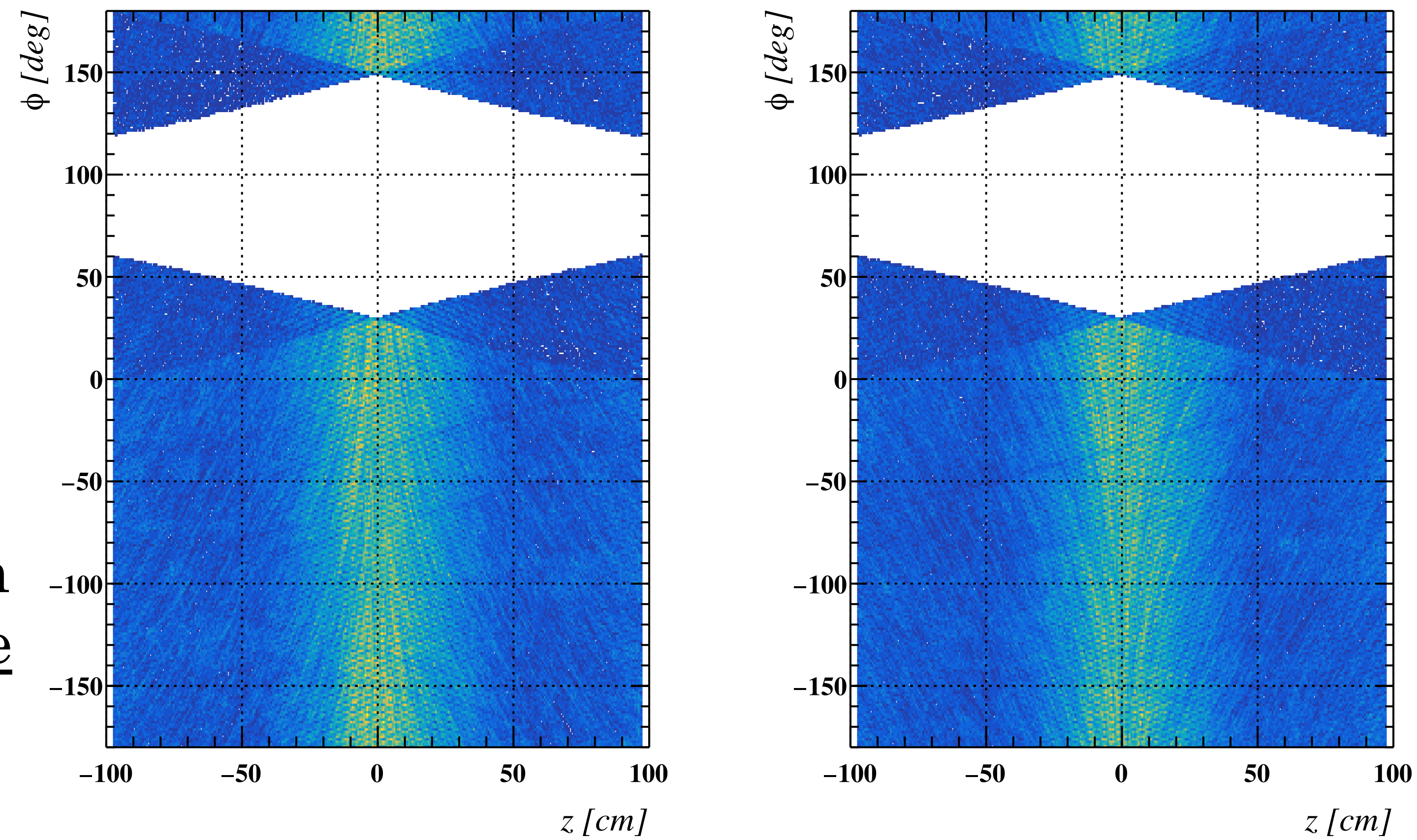


→ Dominating background is EPC and Compton in heat-dissipating Cu ring

→ With magnetic field and cylindrical design, reduced low-energy background

Electron reconstruction

- <u>MEG-II only reconstructs e+. Procedure was adapted for e- as well.</u>

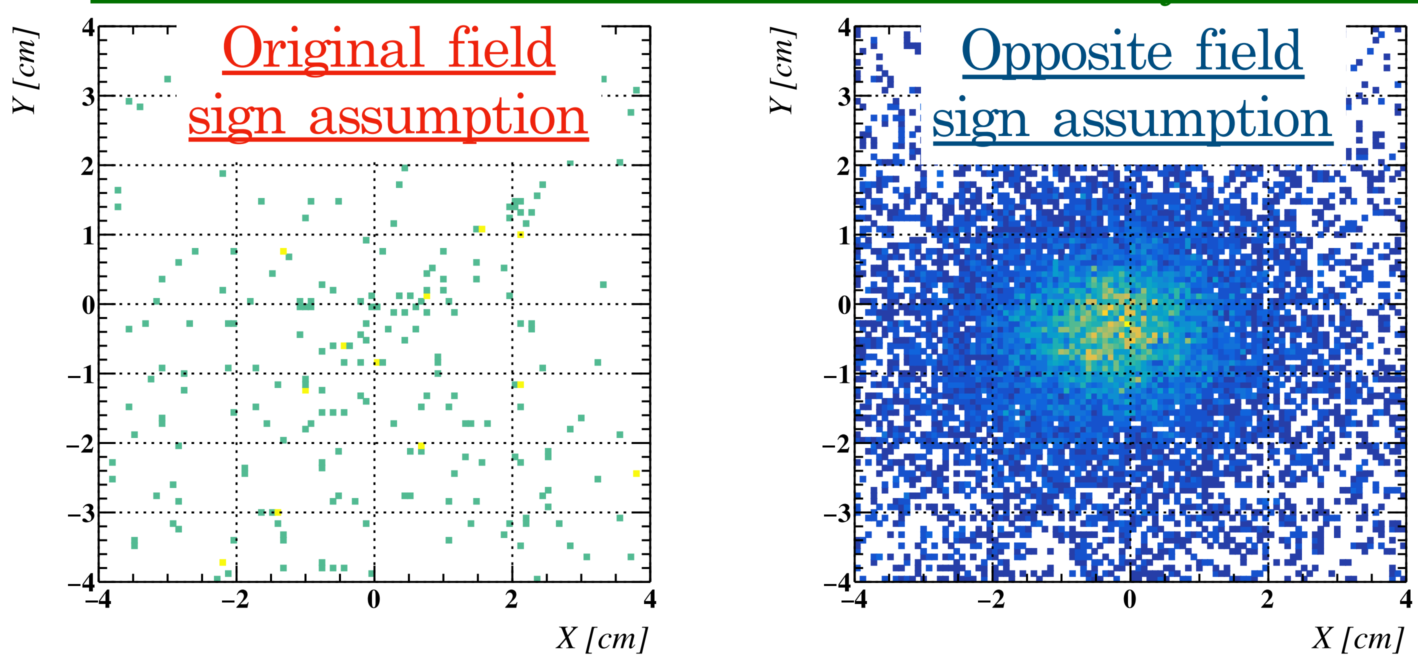


➜ Simulated e+/e- tracks in CDCH

➜ Both tracks can be distinguished through dp_T/dp_z sign in COBRA gradient field

➜ Electron tracks reconstructed with MEG-II's track finder <u>inverting the COBRA field sign assumption</u>

Reconstructed vertices from electron-only simulation



➜ 99% of tracks have correct sign

➜ 1% of tracks is <u>misreconstructed</u>

Electron reconstruction

- MEG-II only reconstructs e+. Procedure was adapted for e- as well.

Simulated e+/e- tracks in CDCH

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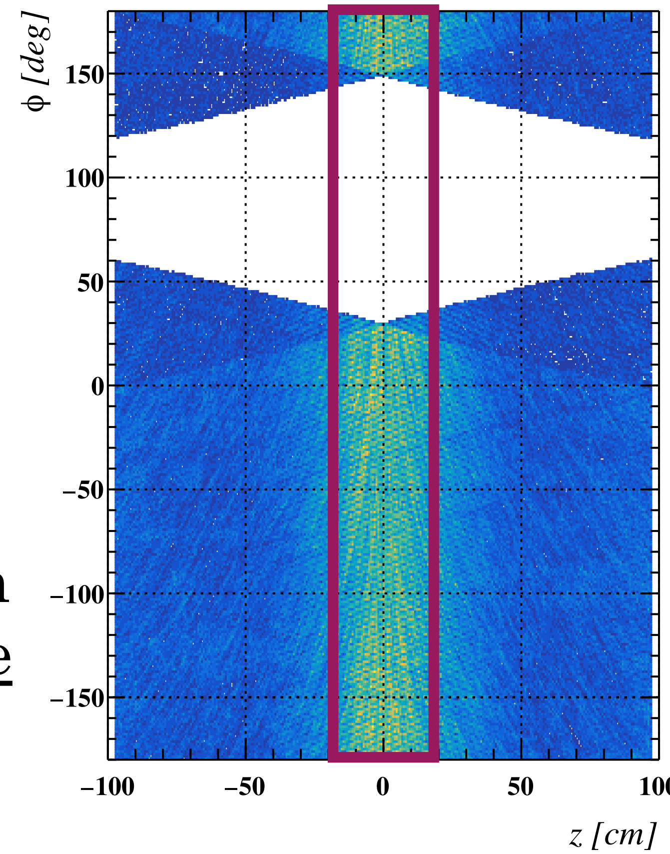
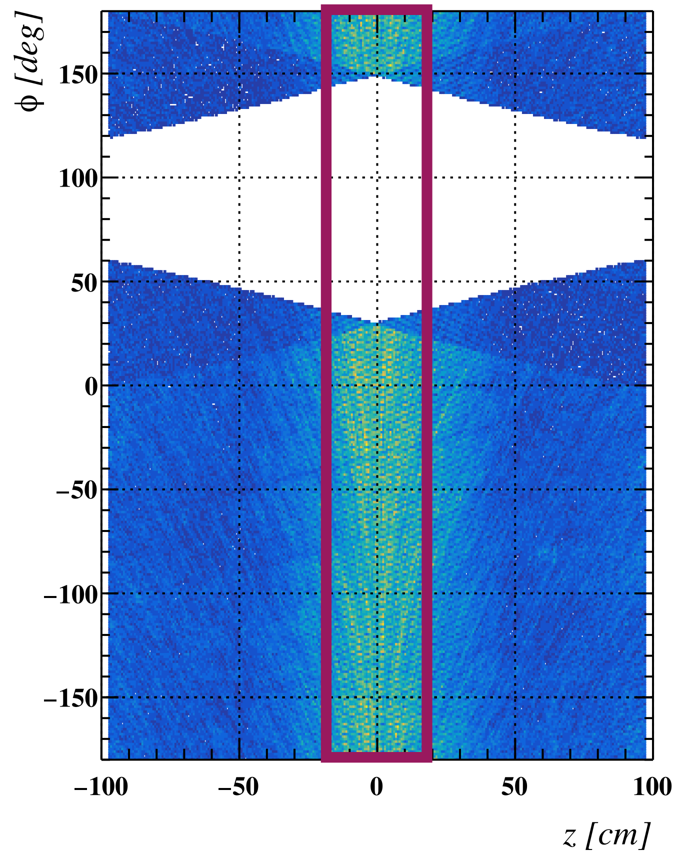
Electron tracks reconstructed with MEG-II's track finder inverting the COBRA field sign assumption

Positrons

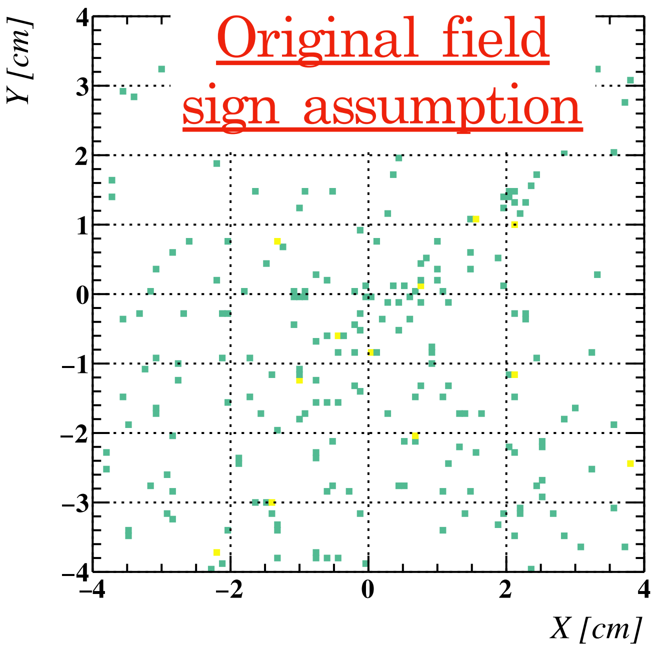


Electrons

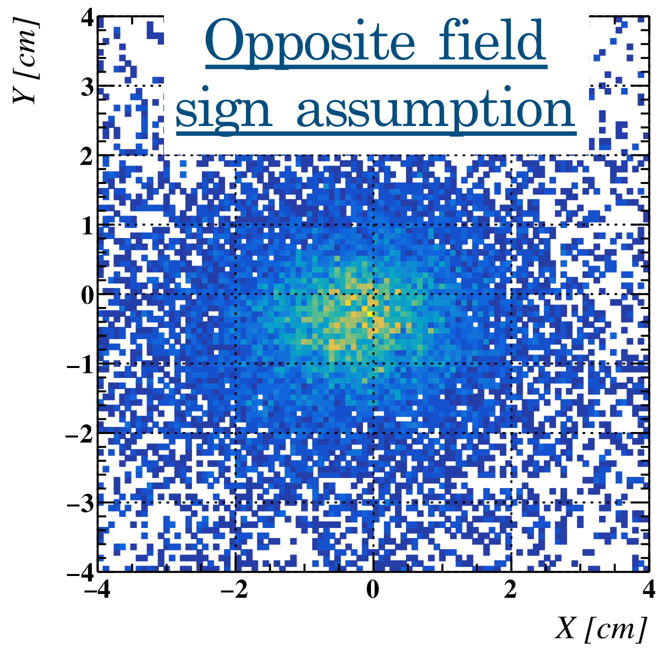


Reconstructed vertices from electron-only simulation

Original field sign assumption



Opposite field sign assumption



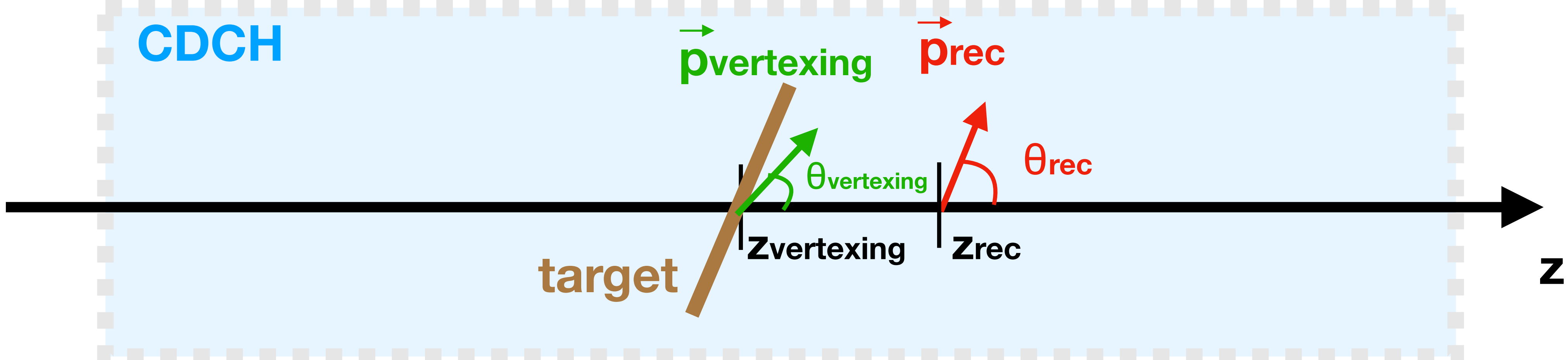
99% of tracks have correct sign

1% of tracks is misreconstructed

Tracks emitted orthogonal to the beam are sign-ambiguous

Vertexing

due to O(20cm) of air between target and CDCH and large multiple scattering
→ tracks are reconstructed O(cm) away from the true vertex



<u>Objective</u>: find e+ and e- common vertex
<u>How</u>: use e+ and e- state extrapolated at beam axis point of closest approach POCA + beam spot information
<u>Why</u>: improve resolutions

<u>Procedure</u>

- all tracks are <u>fitted separately</u> to the z axis POCA
- selection of <u>best e+ and e- track</u>
- search for a possible <u>common vertex</u> within a beam spot constraint
- <u>vertexing tool</u>

→ RAVE (Reconstruction (of vertices) in Abstract Versatile Environments)
→ compatible with GENFIT

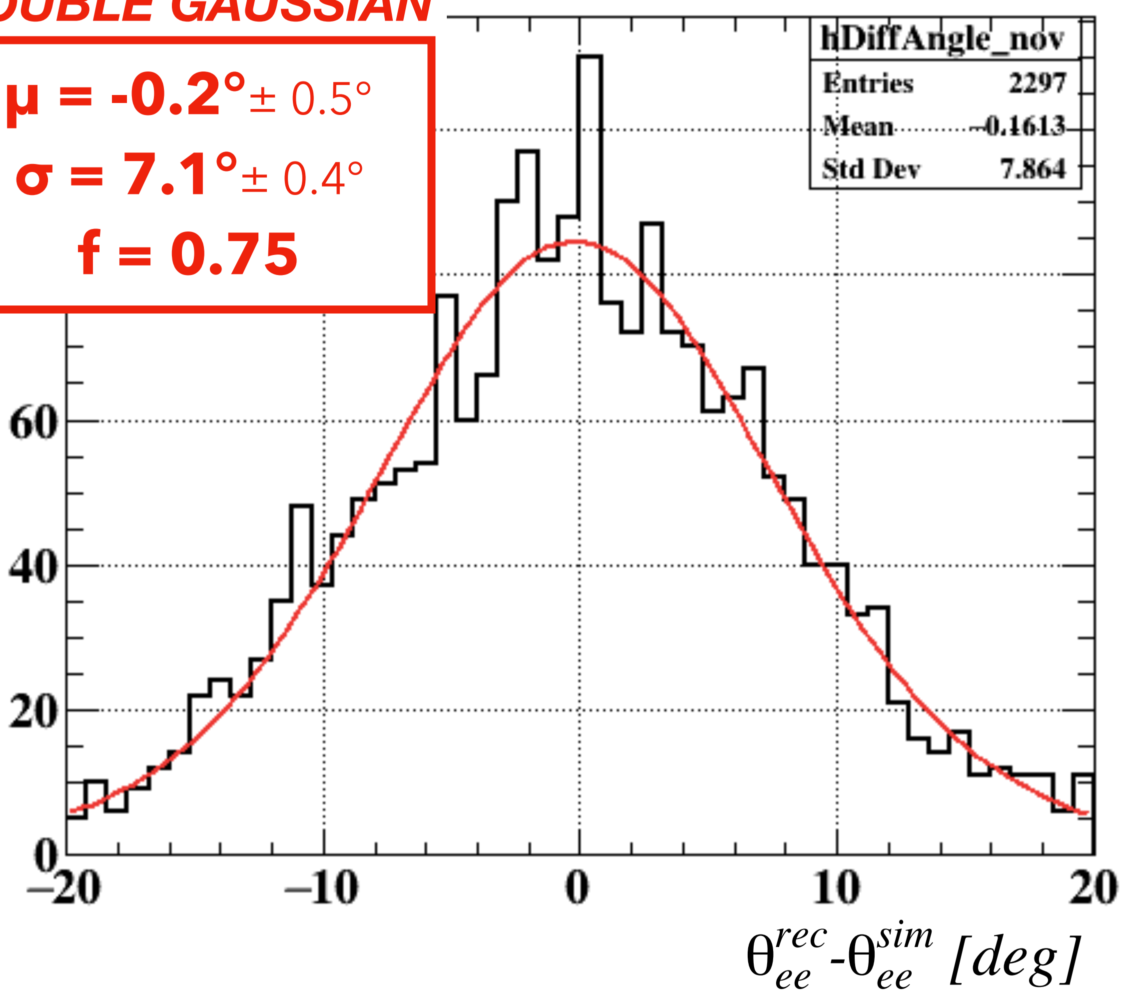
Angular Opening resolutions

X17 MC simulation

No vertexing

DOUBLE GAUSSIAN

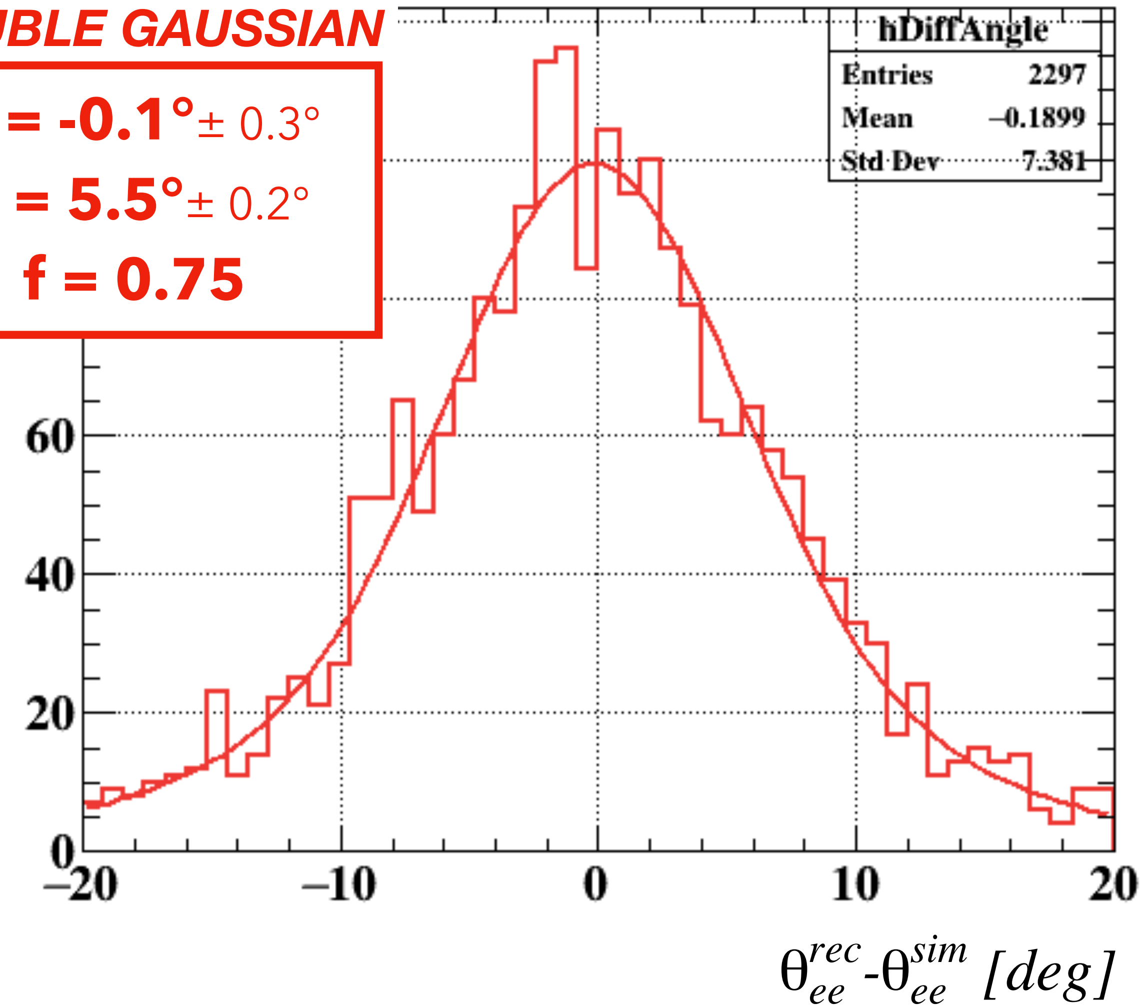
μ = -0.2° ± 0.5°
σ = 7.1° ± 0.4°
f = 0.75



With vertexing

DOUBLE GAUSSIAN

μ = -0.1° ± 0.3°
σ = 5.5° ± 0.2°
f = 0.75

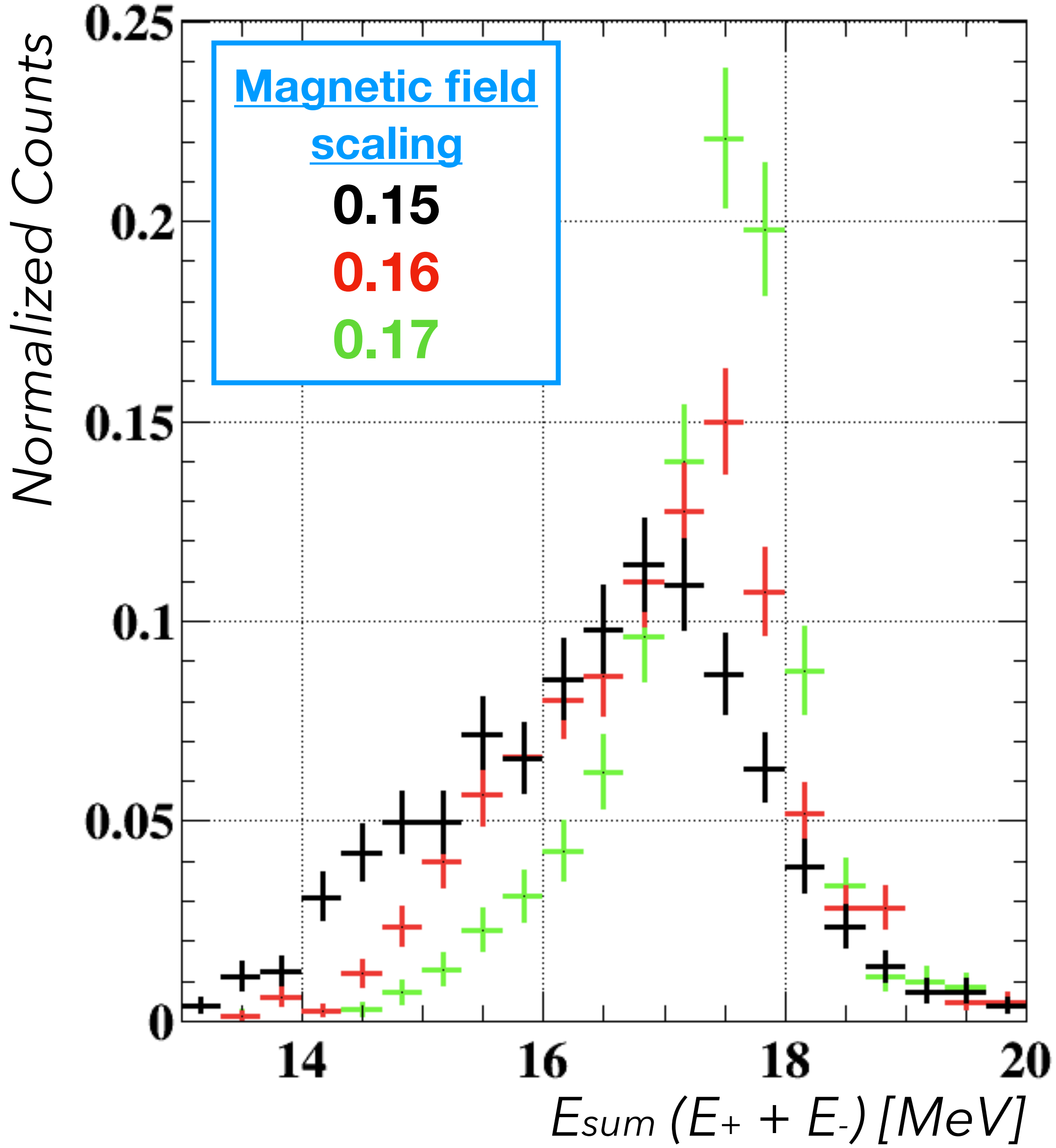


→ <u>25% improvement</u> on X17 signal angular opening resolution

Reduced magnetic field

- $\mu^+ \to e^+\gamma$ search relies on 52.8 MeV positron search with default magnetic field (1.27T at COBRA center)
- for X17: energies ~6 times lower → scaling of the field by a factor 0.15 wrt. default
- Signal and backgrounds simulation with different field strengths to estimate the best signal efficiency and resolution

Field scaling	Comments
0.17	good resolution but poor efficiency (low mom outside acceptance)
0.16	good resolution + good efficiency
0.15	good resolution + good efficiency + lower E_{sum} tail for study in sidebands



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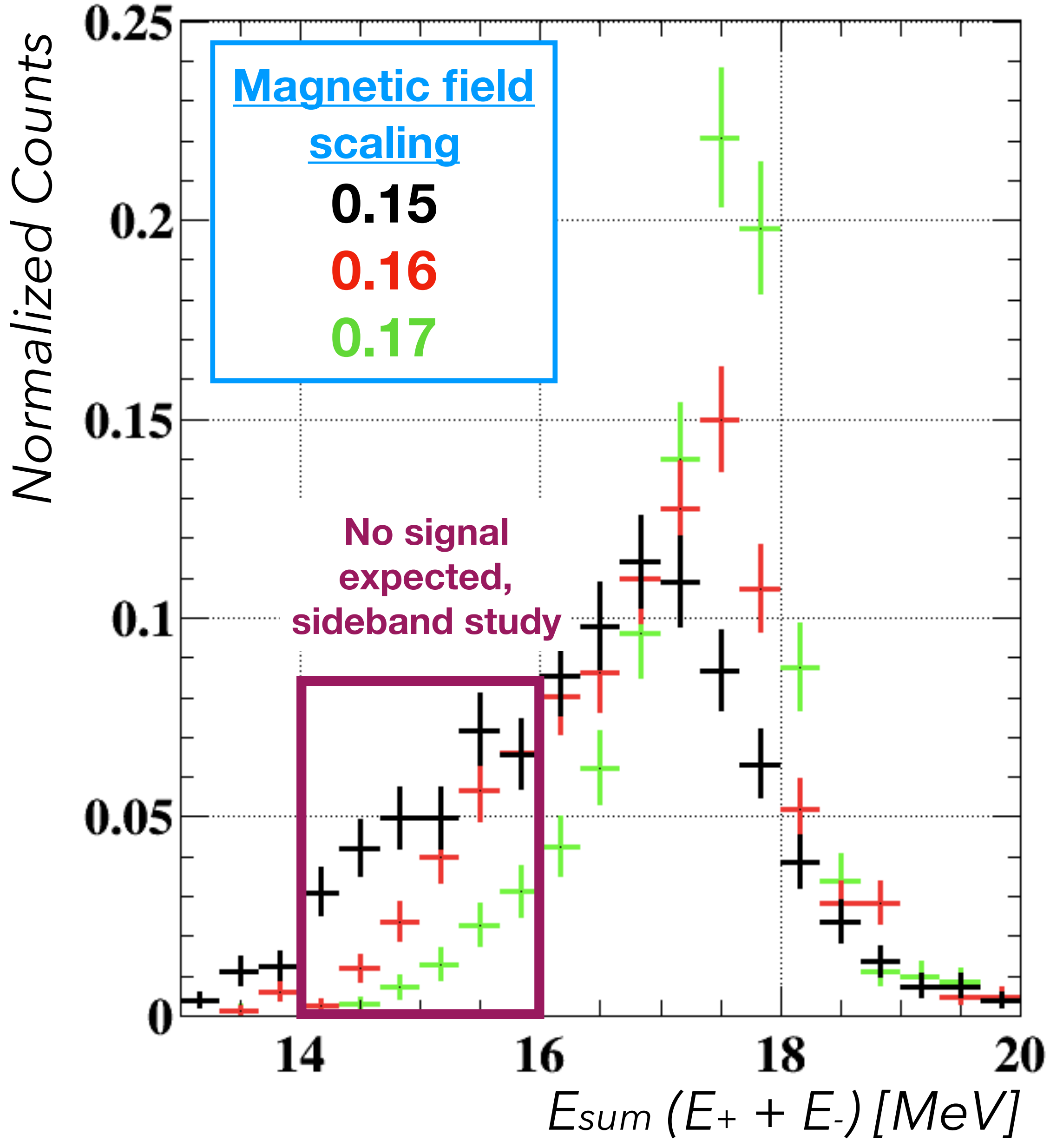
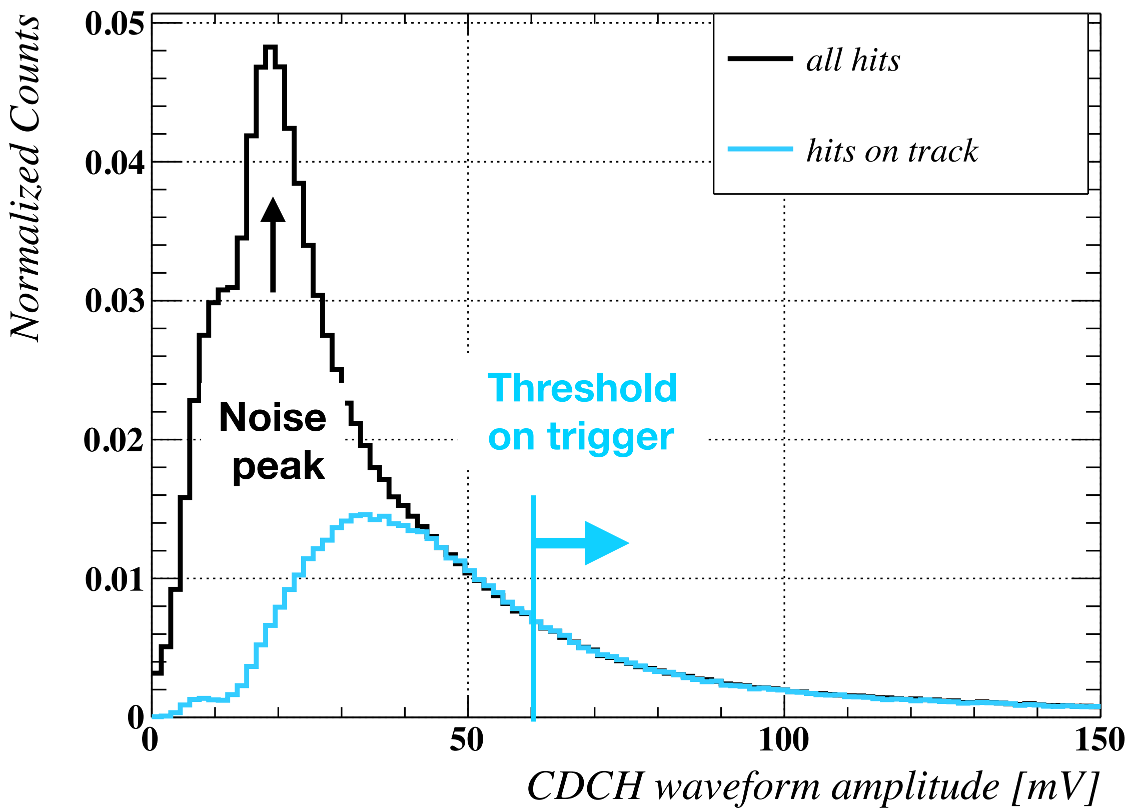


- S/B (X17 to IPC ratio) in signal region is fixed by physics

- To maximize significance
  - → Reduce non-signal-like contamination in trigger ← EPC / Single tracks / Asymmetric pairs
  - → Select signal-like pairs ← Pair of tracks / Opening angle > 120° / ~Symmetric momenta
  - → Increase proton current up to trigger capabilities

HOW TO TRIGGER ON SIGNAL-LIKE?

- In practice, difficult because of no online access to CDCH hit coordinates
- No CDCH trigger for MEG: one to be developed for X17 search

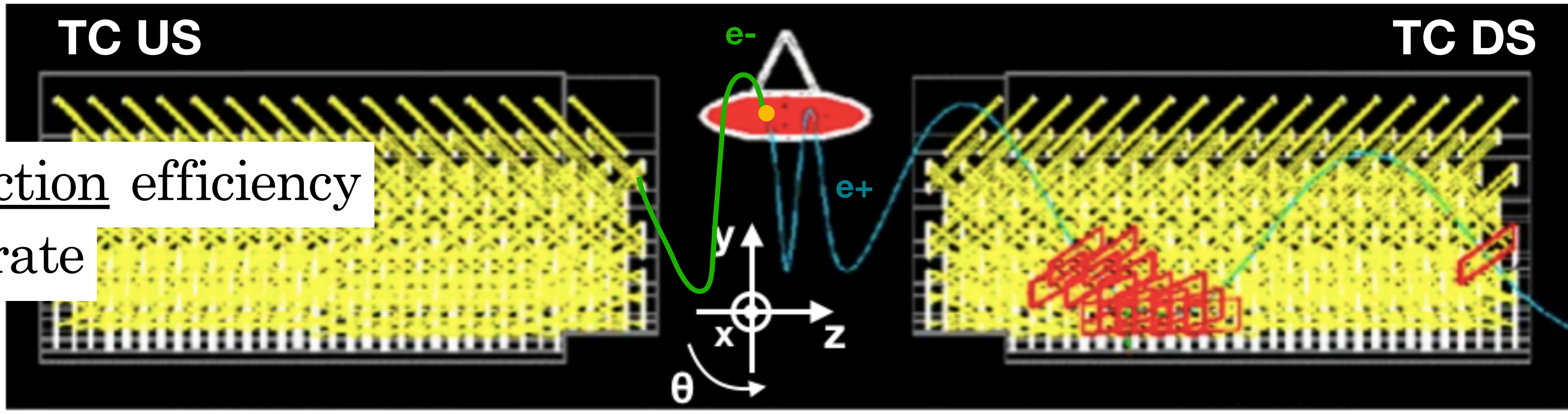


- Alternative: let's use online CDCH waveform amplitude
  - → High online threshold to trigger on good hits mostly
  - → How to exploit them?

Trigger strategy: TC hit multiplicity

Why requesting at least 1 TC hit?

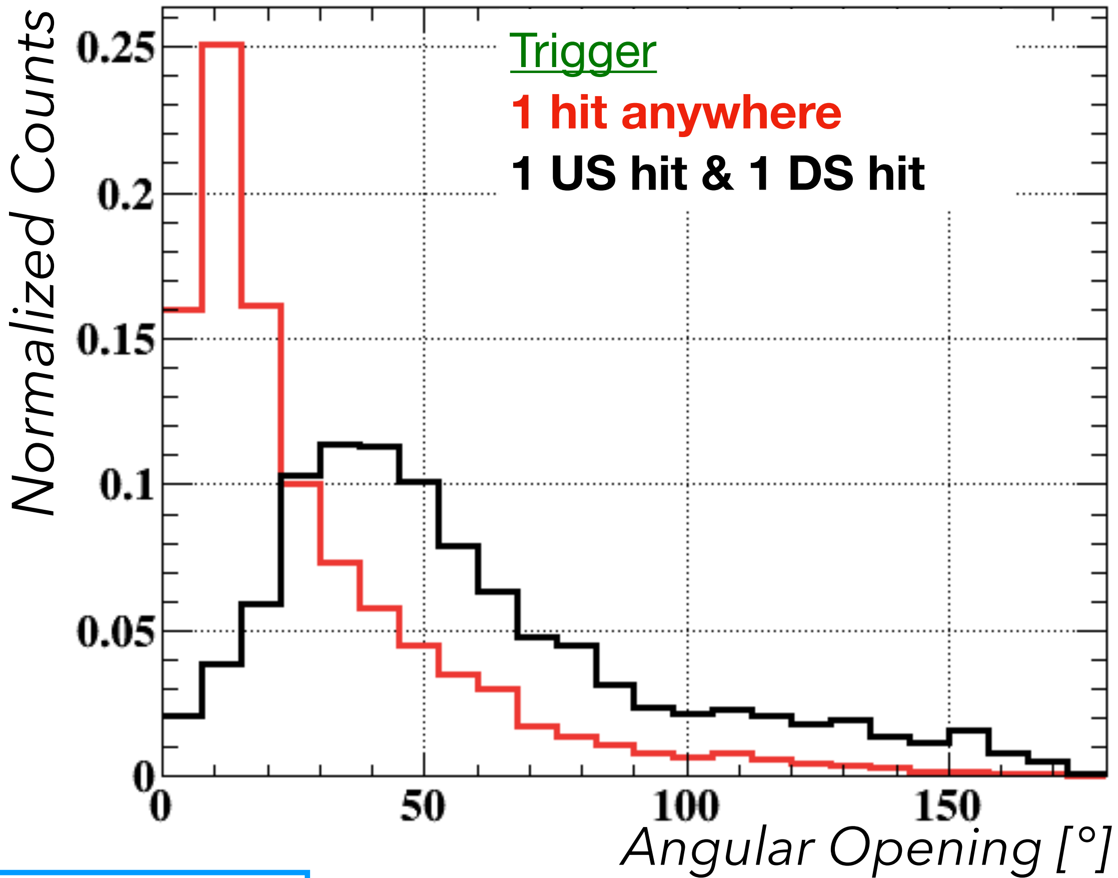
- largely improves track reconstruction efficiency
- less pileup, allows higher beam rate



One trigger option:

- 1 TC hit US & 1 TC hit DS
- Selects large angular opening pair
- IPC rate divided by a factor 60 (wrt to 1 TC hit)
- Total trigger rate < 1 Hz (at I_{proton} = 10μA)
- X17 rate divided by a factor 3 (wrt to 1 TC hit)
- Low angle statistics is mitigated
- Proton current limitations prevented us from making it advantageous

Reconstructed IPC angular opening

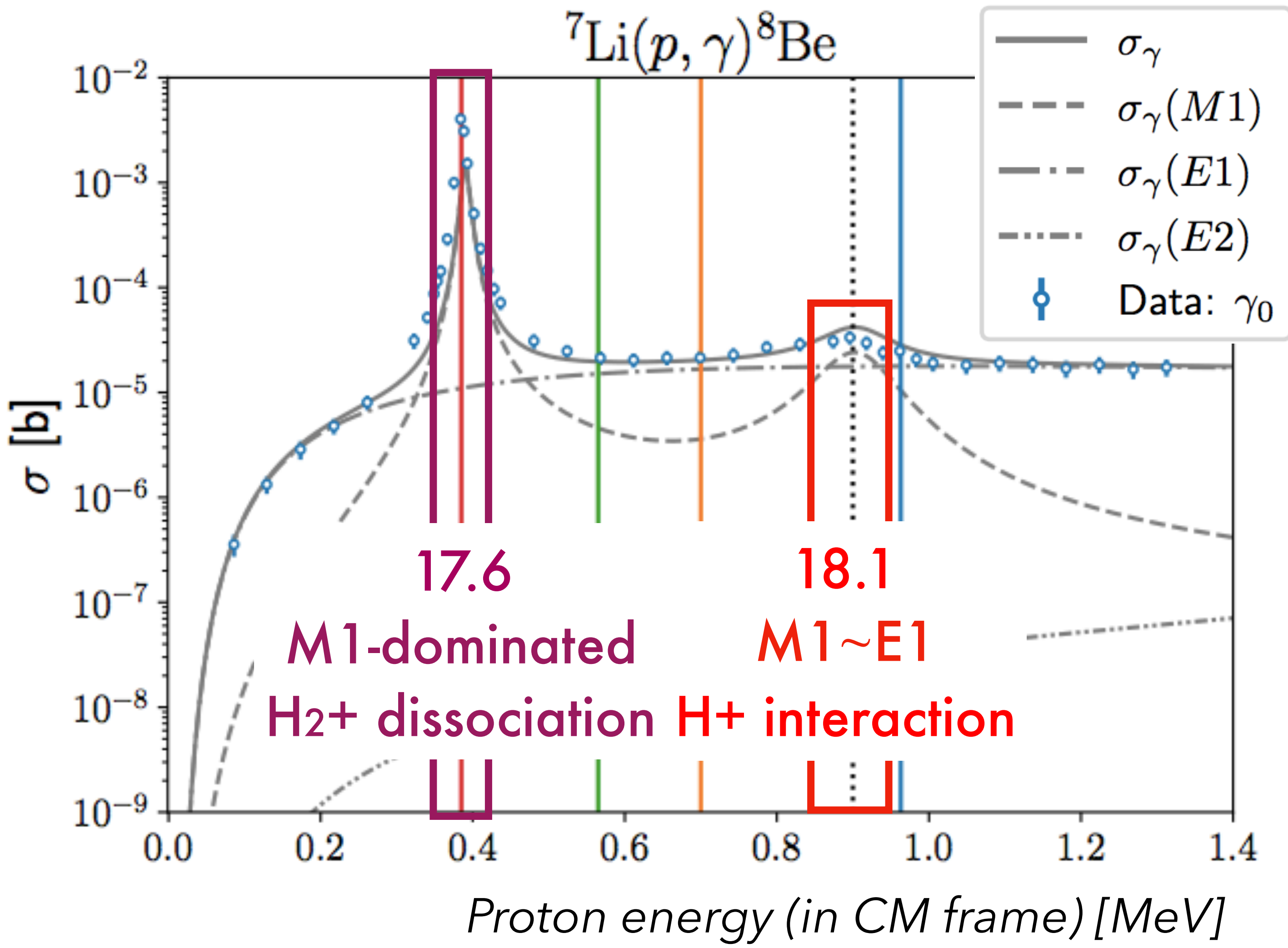


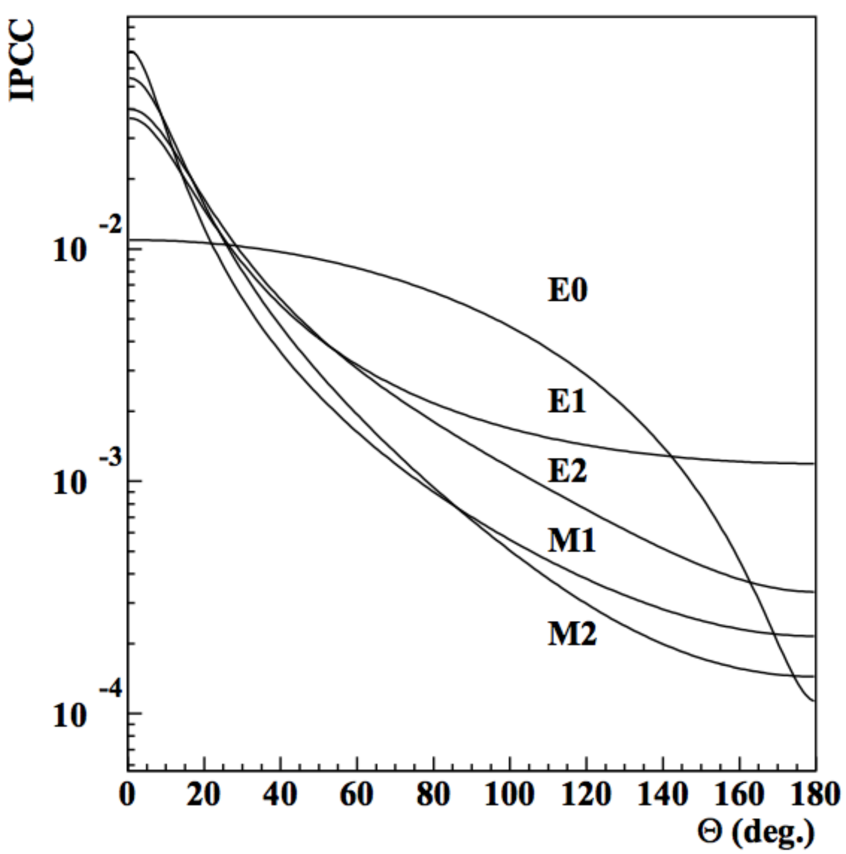
To be considered in the future but for now **1 TC hit required**

MC production

- To account for H_2+ contamination:

  <u>Two IPC templates</u> based on interacting proton energy

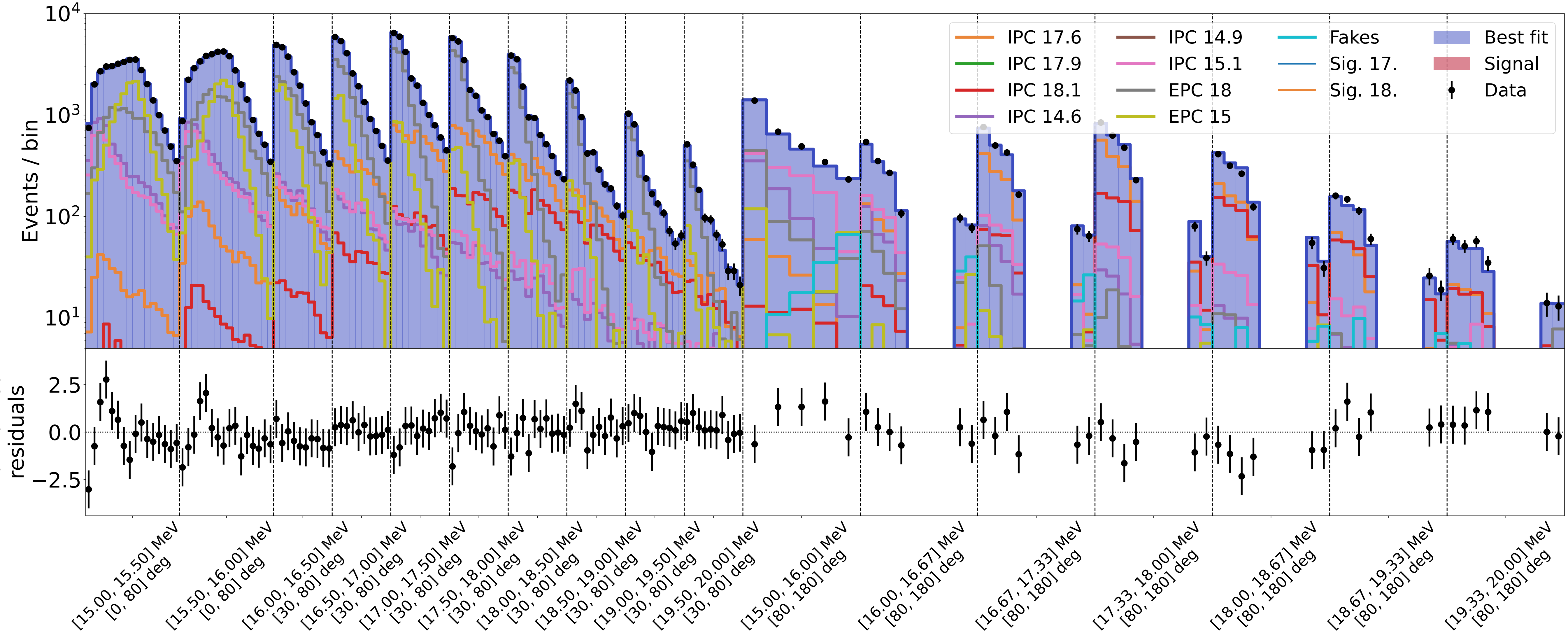




→ simultaneous search for X17 in both <u>440 keV</u> and <u>1030 keV</u> resonances based on different IPC shapes

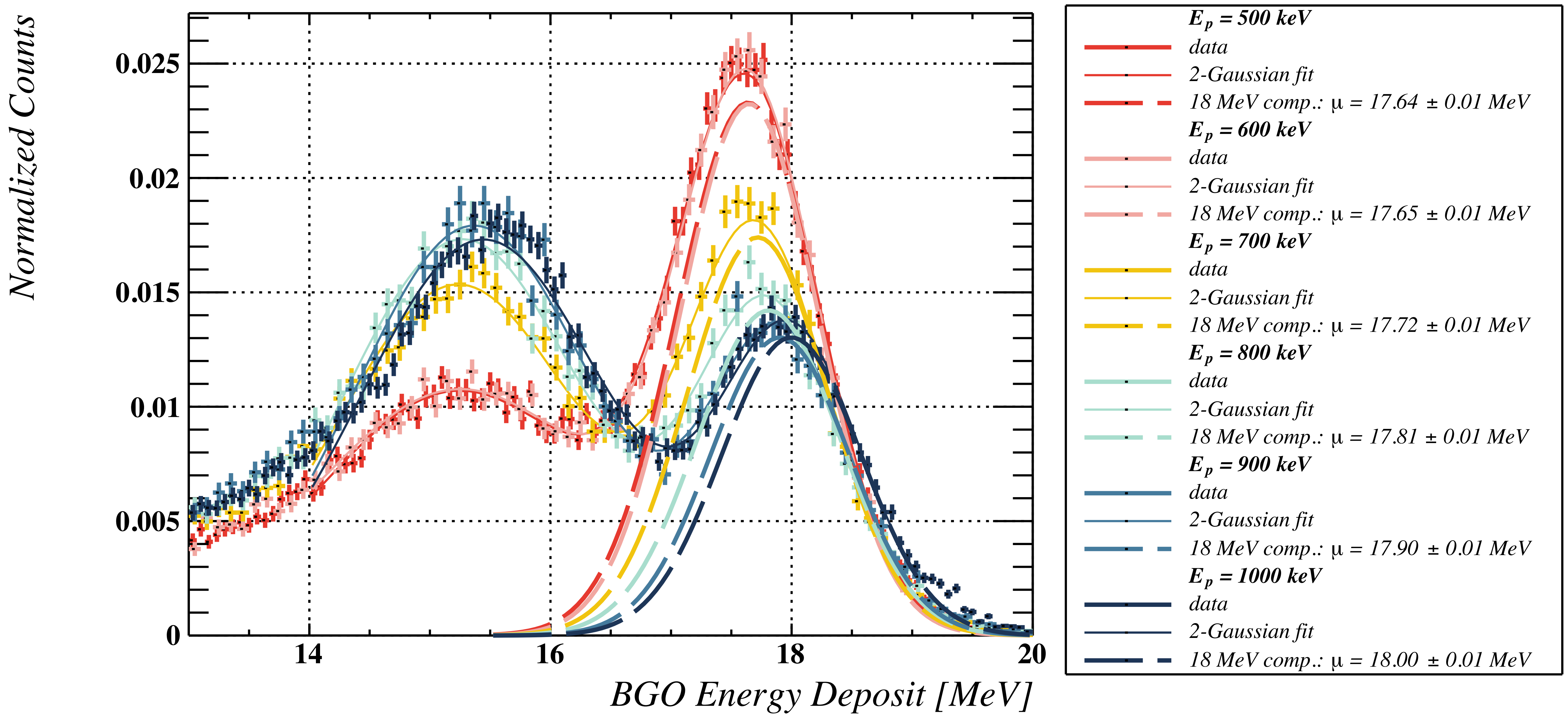
Sideband fit

- 2D fit in slices of Esum:



Ep scan: LiPON spectra on BGO

- **A few hours of data were taken as well:** spectra are shown here

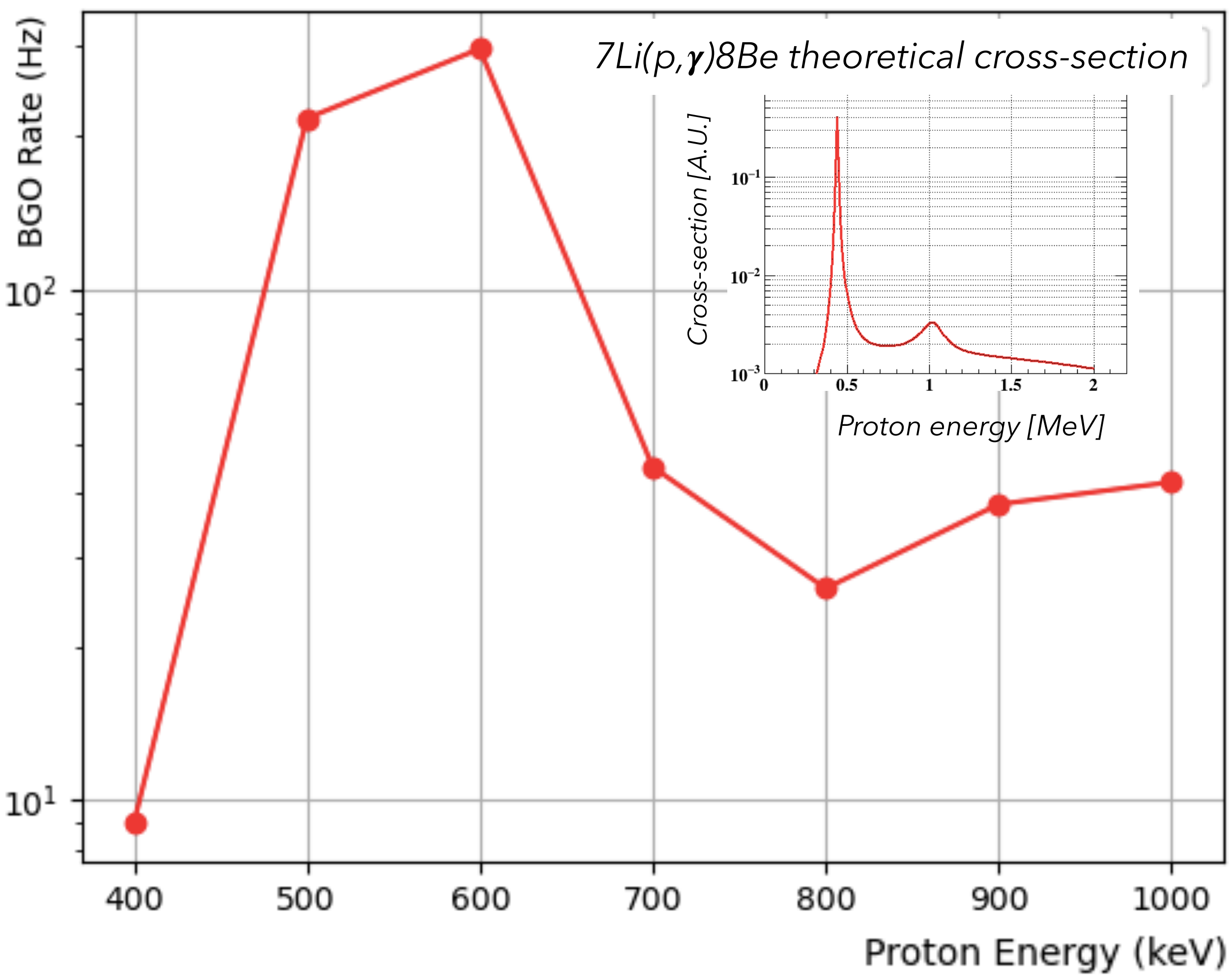


- As expected, **clear shift of a few hundred keV. To be confirmed with final fit.** BGO PMTs gain drift considered small.
- As expected, **increased proportion of « 15 MeV line »**

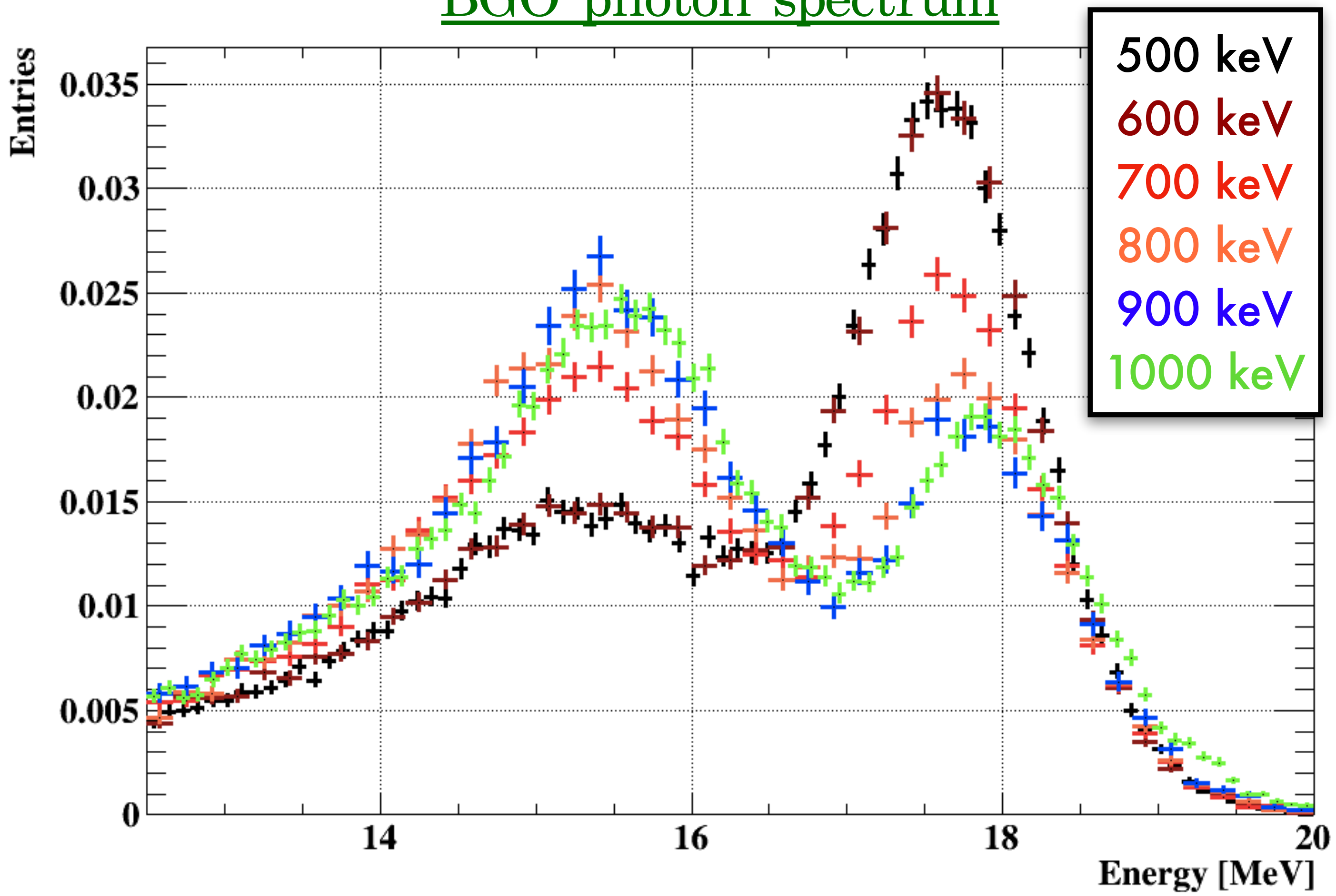
What's next?

- H2+ contamination was mitigated
- New thin 1.9 μm LiPON target installed
- Anisotropy measurements changing BGO position
- E_p scan with BGO @7 different proton energies

BGO trigger rate vs Proton energy



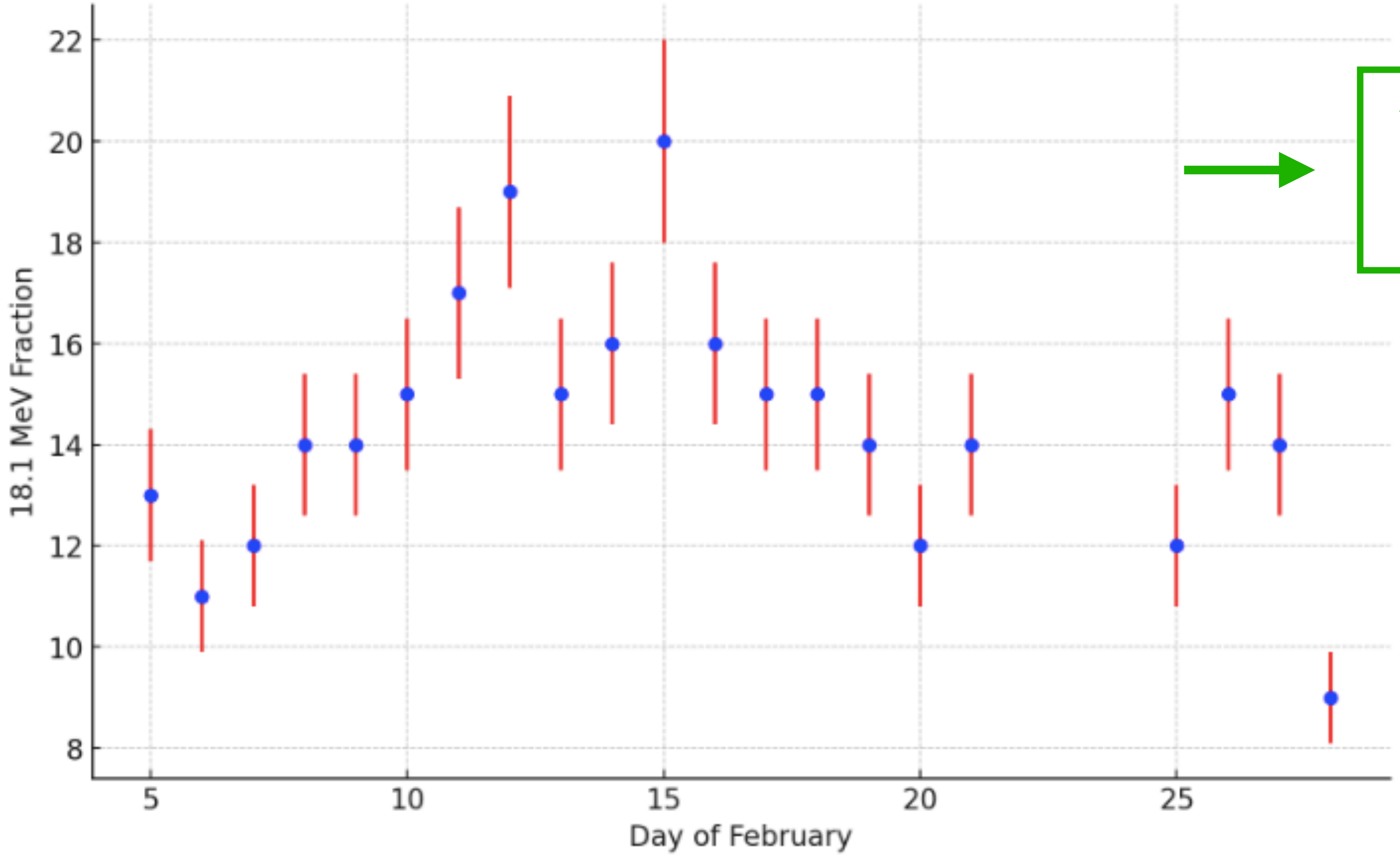
BGO photon spectrum



- Measurement fully in line with expected H+ cross-section
- 18.1 MeV line was observed: ready for next DAQ!

18.1 MeV line proportion in X17 2023 dataset

Strong variations throughout the DAQ month.



15% on average but large error

Probable explanation:

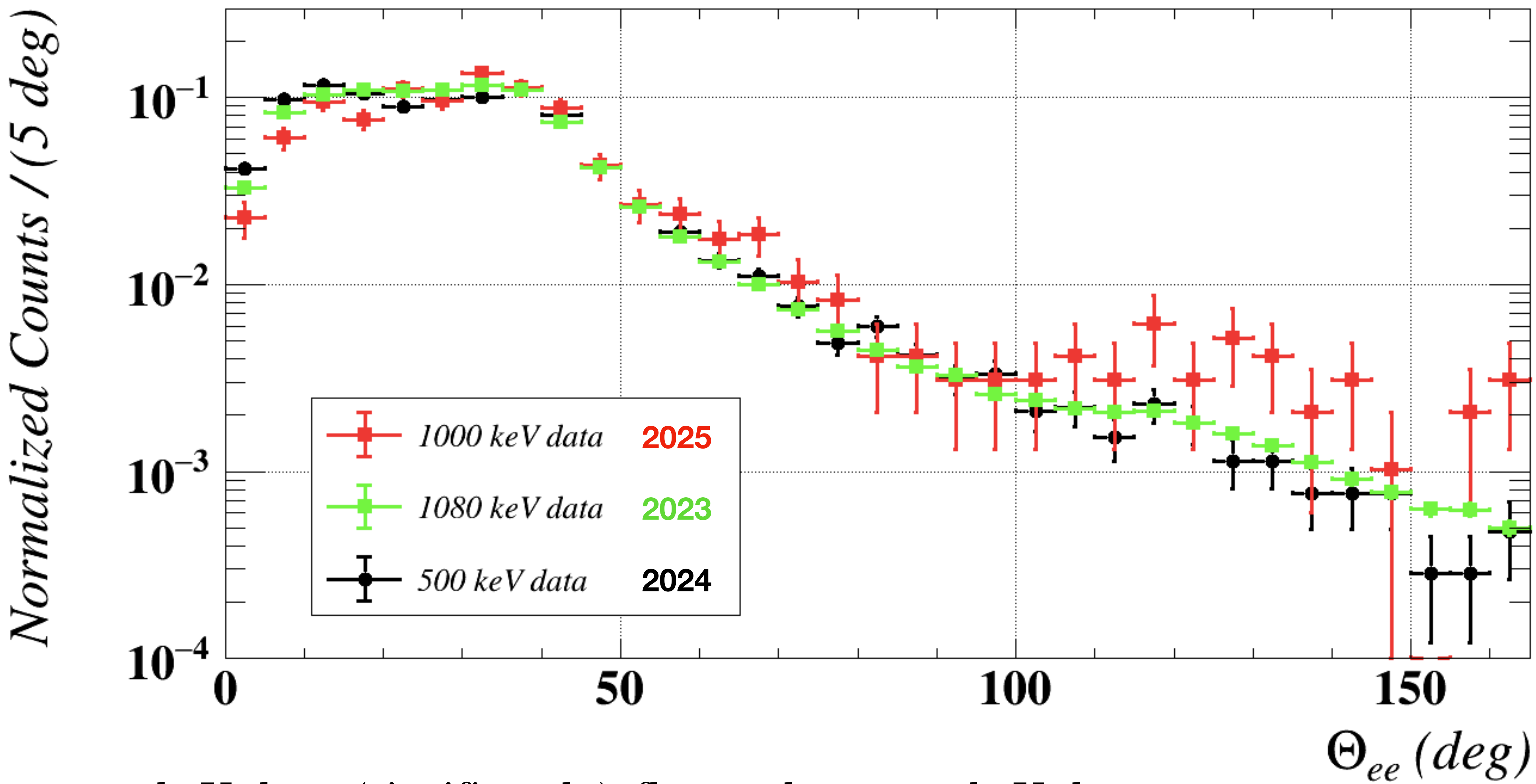
1) instability of the beam dipole currents → instability of the H+ and H2+ beamspot positions on target

+

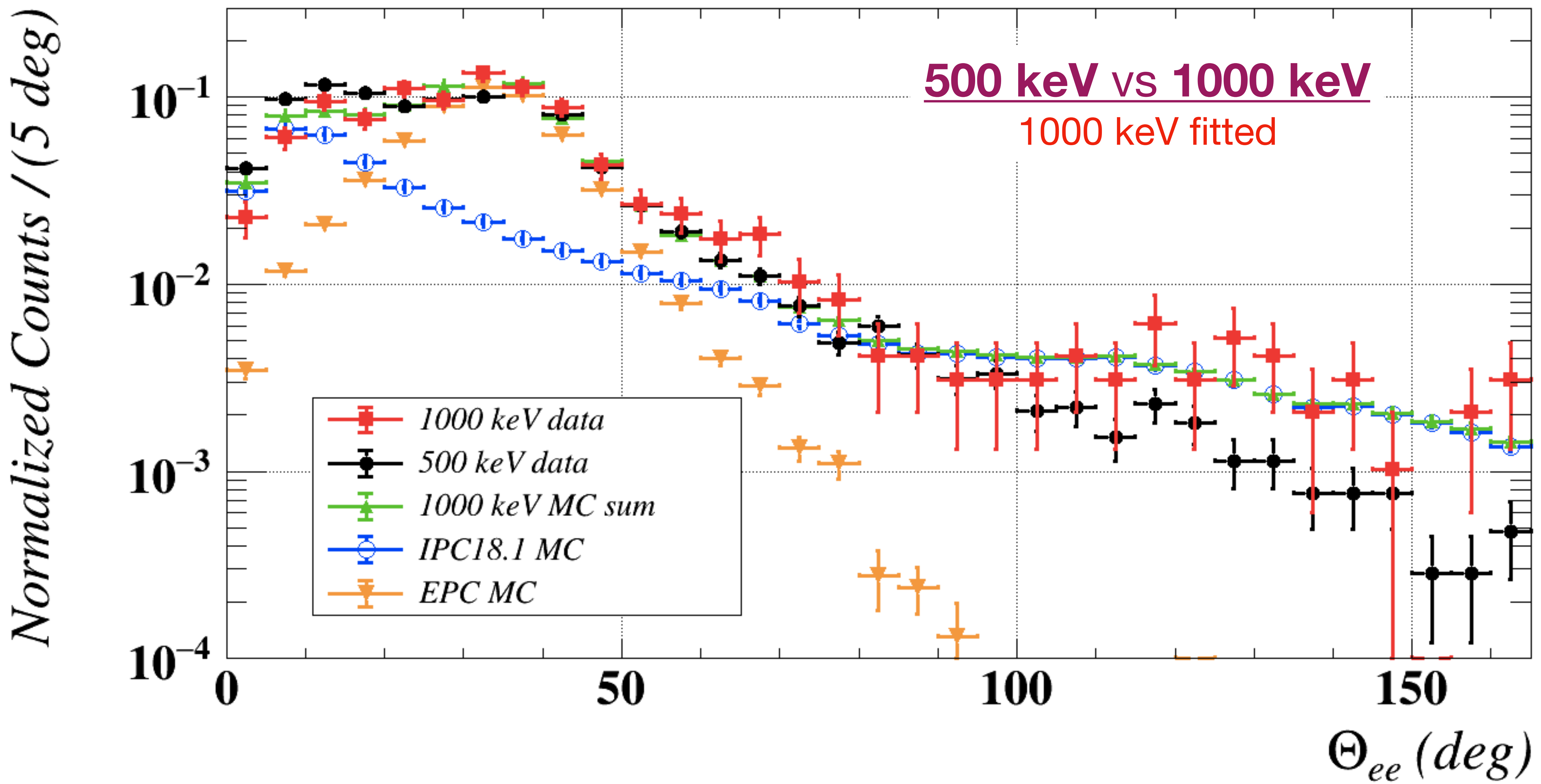
2) non-uniformity of LiPON deposit on target

→ **strong variations of 18.1 MeV proportion**

Angular Opening distribution



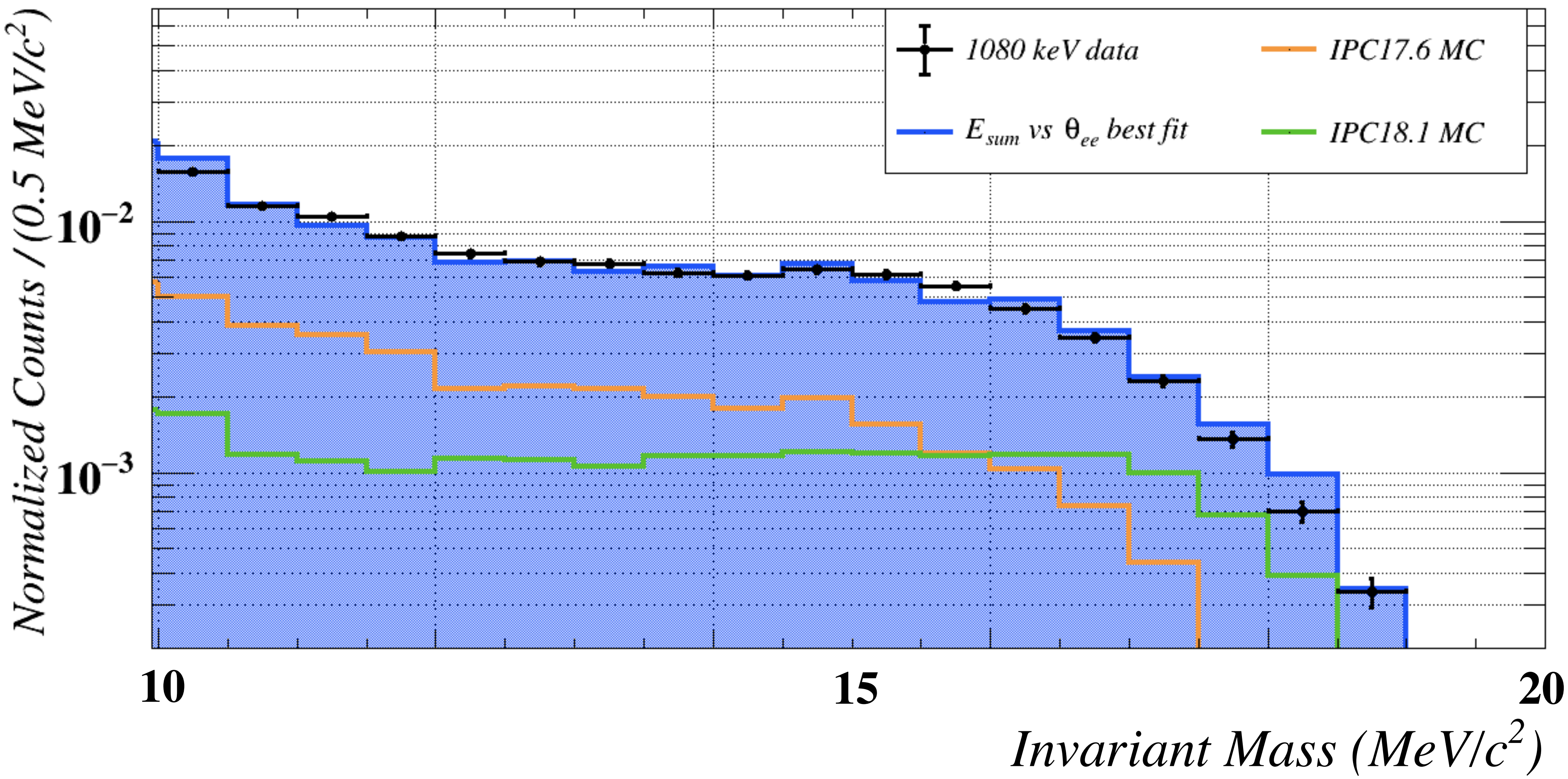
- 1000 keV data (significantly) flatter than 500 keV data: expected from higher E1 non-resonant component!
- 1080 keV data (preprint) shows intermediate slope: Further confirms our analysis method! Data is a mix of 440 keV and 1030 keV resonances



- Small dataset @1000keV (only 18.1 MeV line)
- Data well modelled by Zhang-Miller IPC model!

Current best fit

- 1D Invariant Mass projection of the 2D fit



BGO constraint on the ML fit

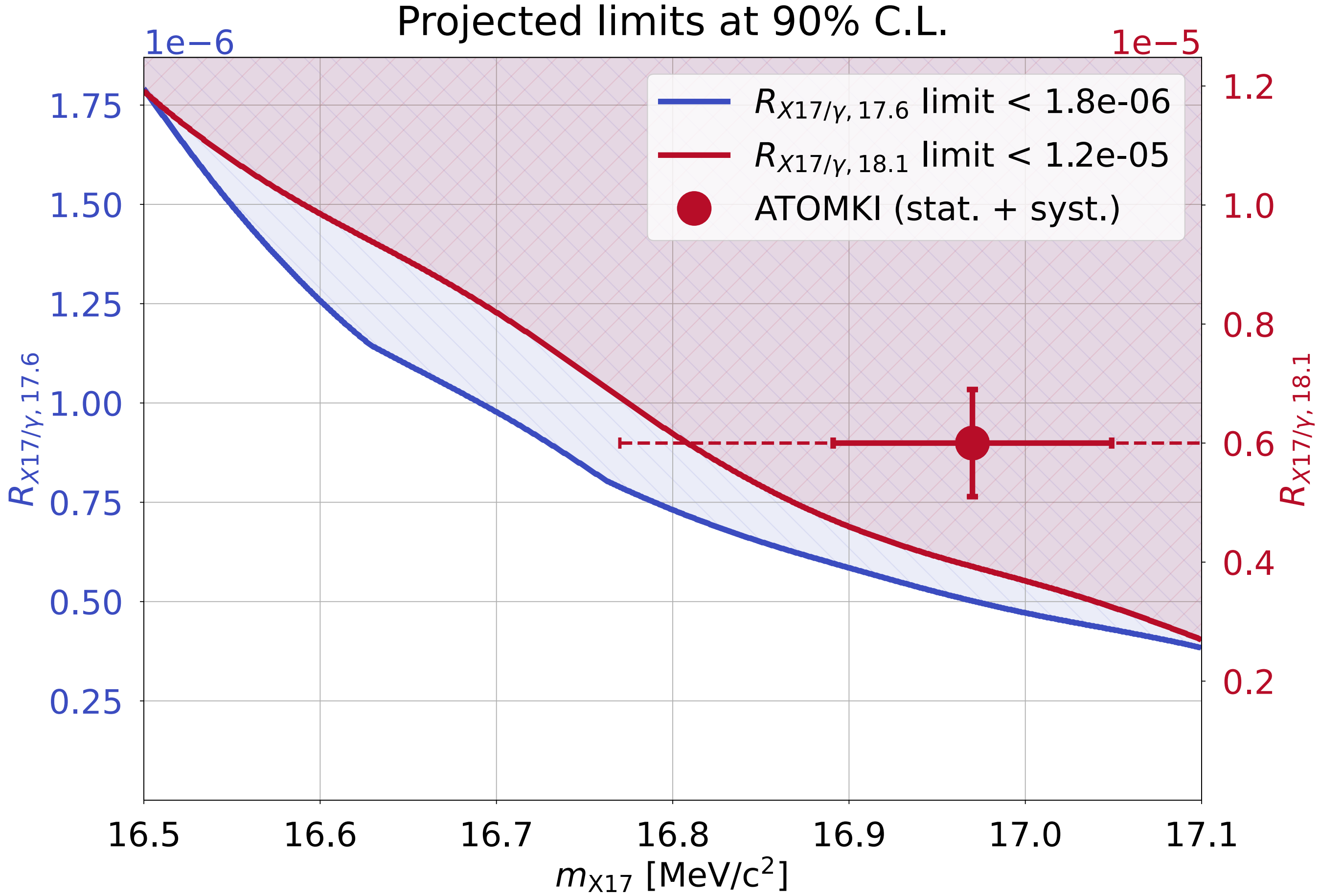
The 18 /(18+15) integral ratio are extracted from the BGO and constrain the ML fit

$\frac{18}{18+15}$	From BGO	From Zahnow 1995
E_p = 440 keV	51(2)%	69(5)%
E_p = 1030 keV	32(2)%	31(7)%

- **Reason for discrepancy at 440 keV is unclear**
- **XEC at 500 keV is consistent with BGO**
- **No good reason to favour Zahnow's results**
- **Fit re-done with Zahnow's values as a cross-check**

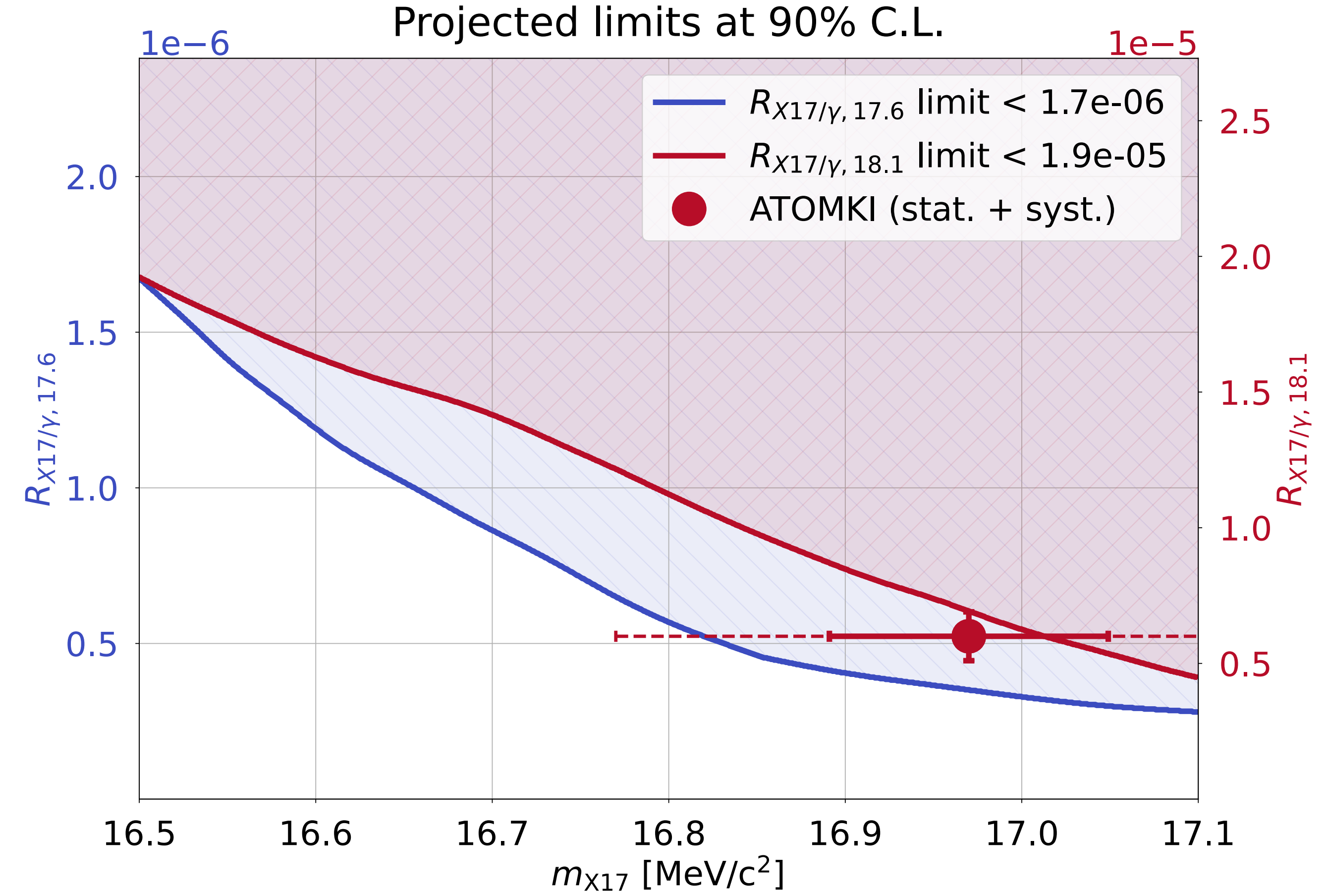
BGO constraint on the ML fit

Based on BGO constraint
Paper version



94% incompatibility with Atomki

Based on Zahnow constraint



83% incompatibility with Atomki

<u>**Limits from 18.1 MeV slightly worse but results are consistent with published fit**</u>