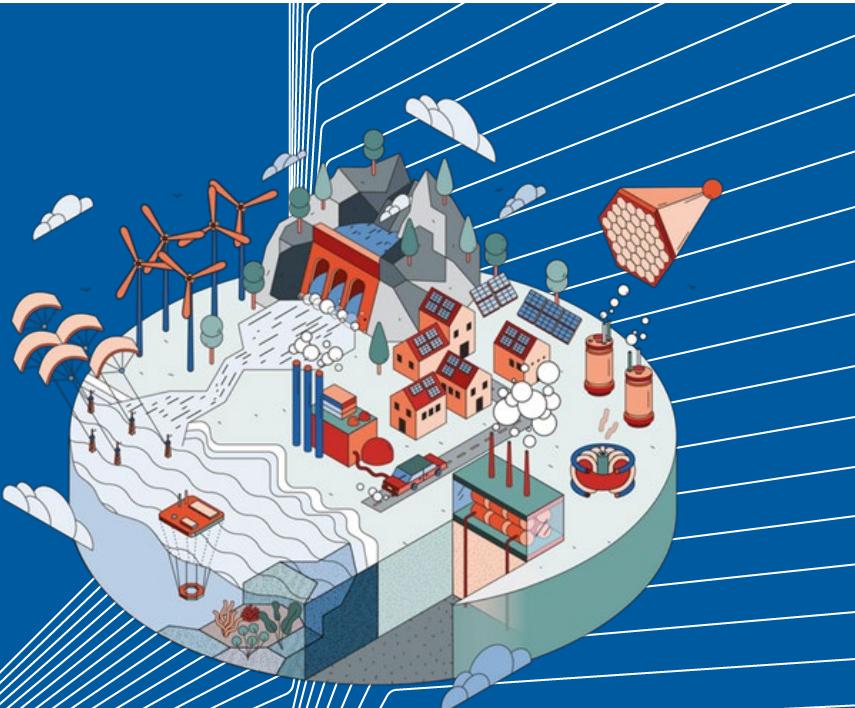


## Sun, Coal, Nuclear Fusion: Scientific challenges of the future energy supply

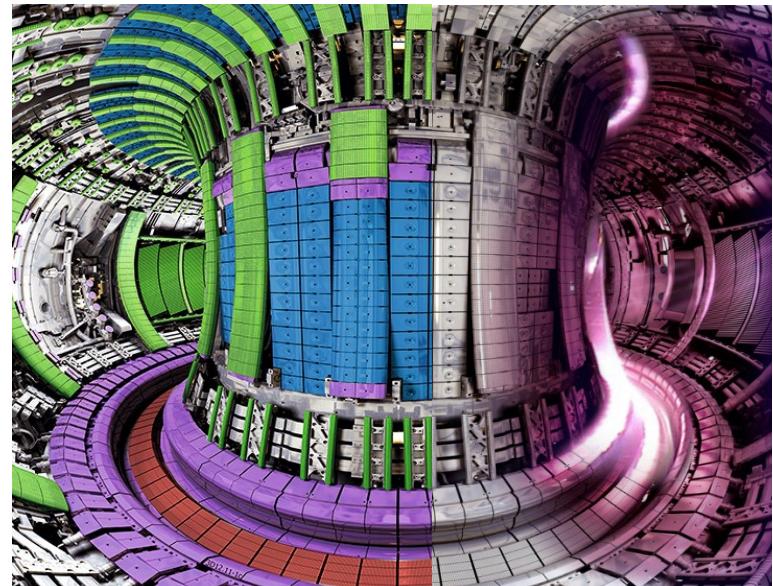
Sebastijan Brezinsek  
Institut für Energie und Klimaforschung - Plasmaphysik  
Forschungszentrum Jülich  
Heinrich-Heine-Universität Düsseldorf



# Outline

- Nuclear Fusion
  - Introduction
  - Magnetically Confined Fusion (MCF)
  - Scaling laws and their validity
- JET and ITER
  - Joined European Torus (JET)
  - Plasma-wall interaction
  - Power and particle exhaust challenge
  - International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER)
- DEMO and other concepts
  - Challenges
  - SPARC, ARC and tokamaks
  - Wendelstein7-X and HELIAS reactor

JET tokamak with ITER-like Wall



■ Bulk Be PFCs

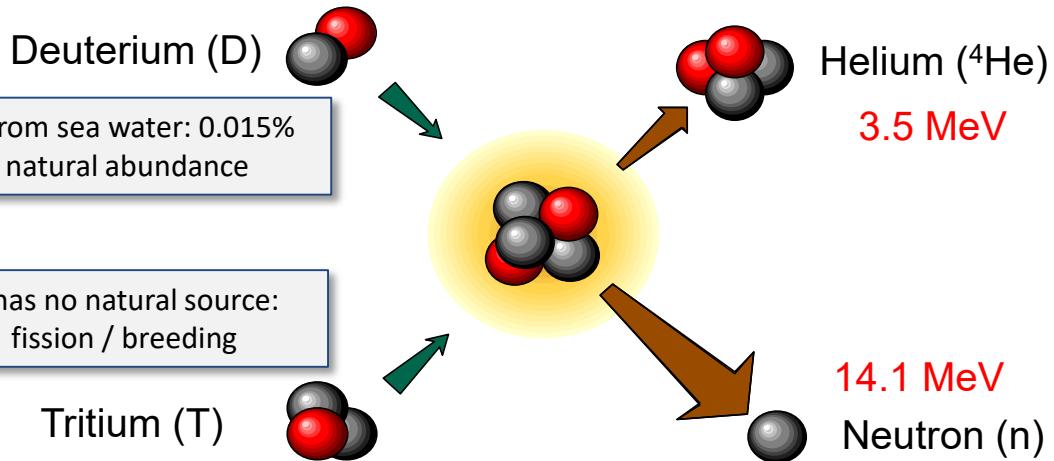
■ Bulk W

■ Be- coated inconel PFCs

■ W- coated CFC PFCs

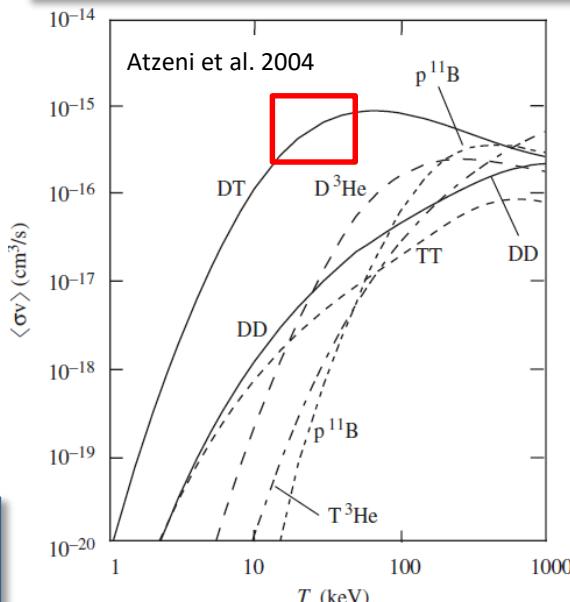
# Nuclear Fusion Basics

- Thermonuclear fusion with largest reaction rate: DT fusion reaction



- Measure for fusion power in a 50:50 DT reaction is the triple product:  
ion density ( $n_i$ )  $\times$  ion temperature ( $T_i$ )  $\times$  confinement time ( $\tau_E$ )
- Ignition in magnetically confined fusion plasmas achievable if:  
 $n_i [10^{20} \text{ m}^{-3}] \times T_i [\text{10 keV}] \times t_E [\text{5s}] \geq 5 \times 10^{21} \text{ keV s m}^{-3}$  (Lawson criterion)
- He used to heat plasma core (20% of required power) before removed

Maxwell-averaged reaction activity vs ion temperatures for fusion reactions



p-p reaction in sun  
at  $10^{-40} \text{ cm}^3\text{s}^{-1}$  !

# Particles in Magnetised Plasmas

Lorentz force acts on charged particles in a magnetic field:

$$\vec{F}_L = q \cdot [\vec{v} \times \vec{B}]$$

Lorentz force

Ions and electrons gyrate around magnetic field lines:

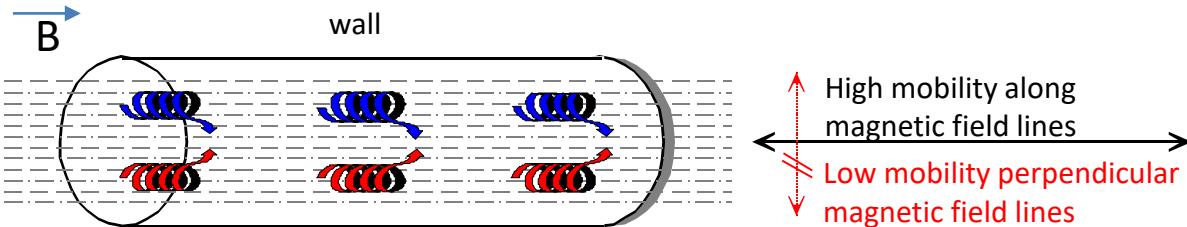
$$|\vec{r}_L| = \frac{|\vec{v}_\perp|}{|\vec{\omega}_L|} = \frac{mv_\perp}{qB}$$

Larmor radius

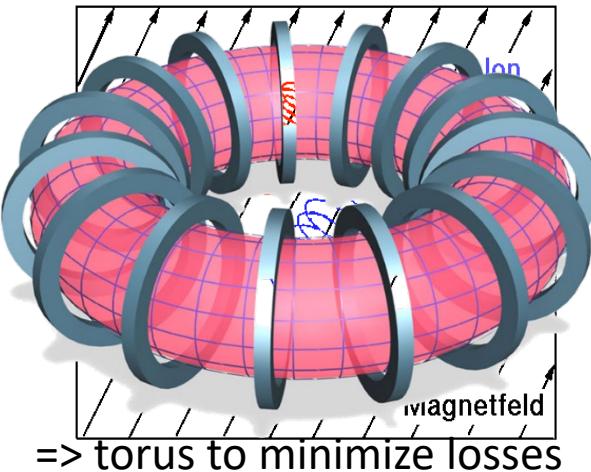
Many gyrations before a collision occurs in magnetized plasmas:

$$\beta = \frac{\omega_L}{v_{collision}} \gg 1$$

Hall parameter



Low plasma-wall interactions (PWI) if high magnetization present, full ionization, and no-cross field transport (ideal case).



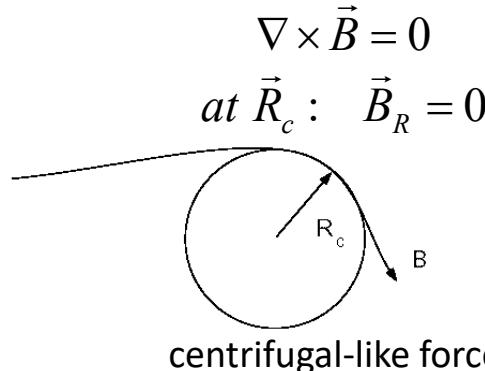
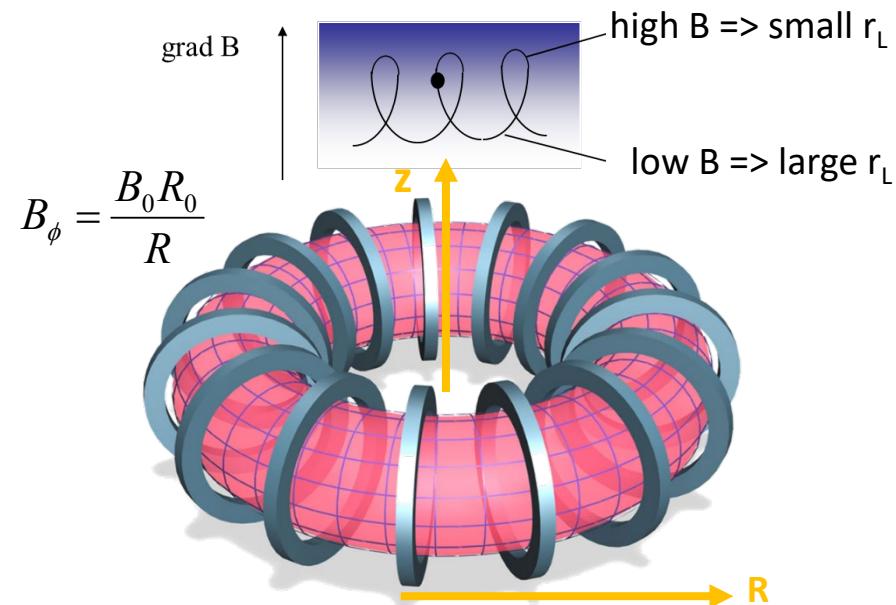
# Simple Toroidal Arrangement

Particle drifts due to forces in (inhomogeneous) B-field:

$$\vec{v}_D = \frac{\vec{F} \times \vec{B}}{qB^2}$$

In torus geometry two inherent drifts appear:  
 $\nabla B$  drift and curvature drift [so-called "torus drift"]

$$\vec{v}_D = \frac{m}{qB^3} \left( v_{\parallel}^2 + \frac{1}{2} v_{\perp}^2 \right) \vec{B} \times \nabla B$$



# Is the simple toroidal arrangement enough for MCF?

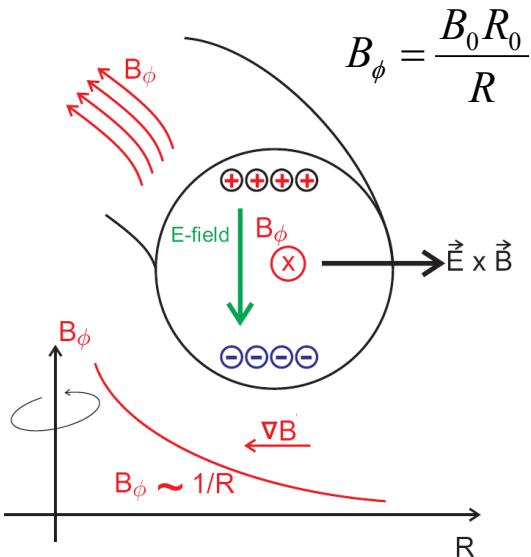
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$$\vec{v}_D = \frac{m}{qB^3} \left( v_{\parallel}^2 + \frac{1}{2} v_{\perp}^2 \right) \vec{B} \times \nabla B \quad \text{Torus drift}$$

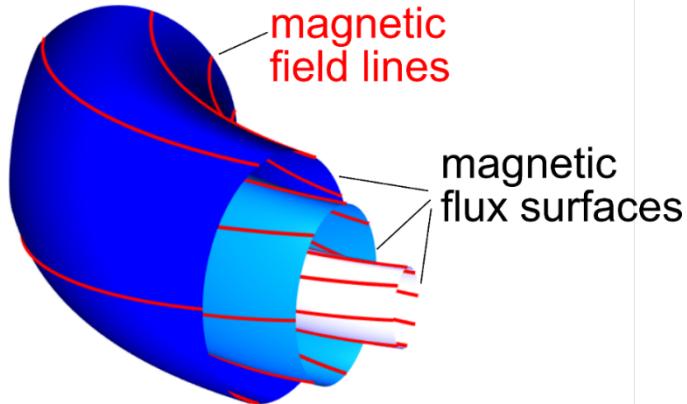


$$\vec{v}_D = \frac{\vec{E} \times \vec{B}}{B^2} \quad \text{ExB drift}$$

- Pure toroidal magnetic field induces charge separation due to "torus drift"
- Charge separation induces vertical electrical field E
- E and magnetic field B induces  $E \times B$  drift and particle movement outward
- **Second magnetic field component required** (poloidal direction) => induces screw-like trajectory (helical field lines) and stability

Two options: stellarator or tokamak

# Toroidal Magnetic Confined Solutions: Tokamak



- inductively driven toroidal plasma current essential
- no confining magnetic field without plasma
  - ⇒ disruptive plasma density limit
  - ⇒ steady-state operation challenging

- concepts rely on toroidal magnetic field geometry with nested magnetic flux surfaces

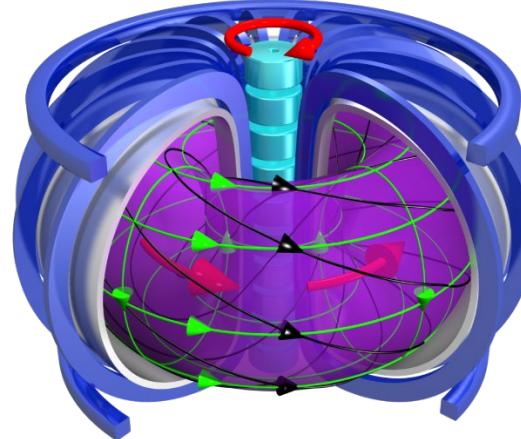
- plasma pressure counteracted by magnetic field force

$$\nabla p = j \times B$$

$j$  current density

$B$  magnetic field

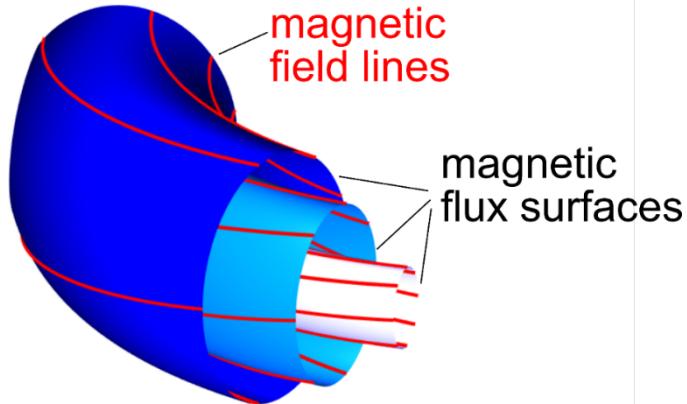
- stability by helical structure requires



$$j \times B = \nabla p$$

$$B \cdot \nabla p = 0$$

# Toroidal Magnetic Confined Solutions: Stellarator



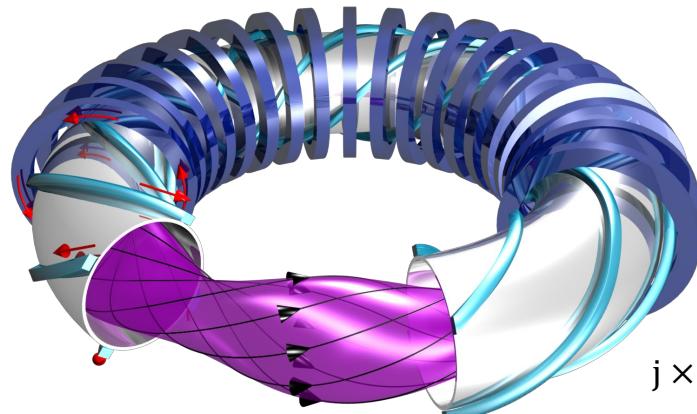
- confining magnetic field entirely generated
- by external magnetic field coils
- variety of different magnetic field geometries possible
- ⇒ confining vacuum magnetic field
- ⇒ intrinsic steady-state capability

- concepts rely on toroidal magnetic field geometry with nested magnetic flux surfaces
- plasma pressure counteracted by magnetic field force

$$\nabla p = j \times B$$

$j$  current density  
 $B$  magnetic field

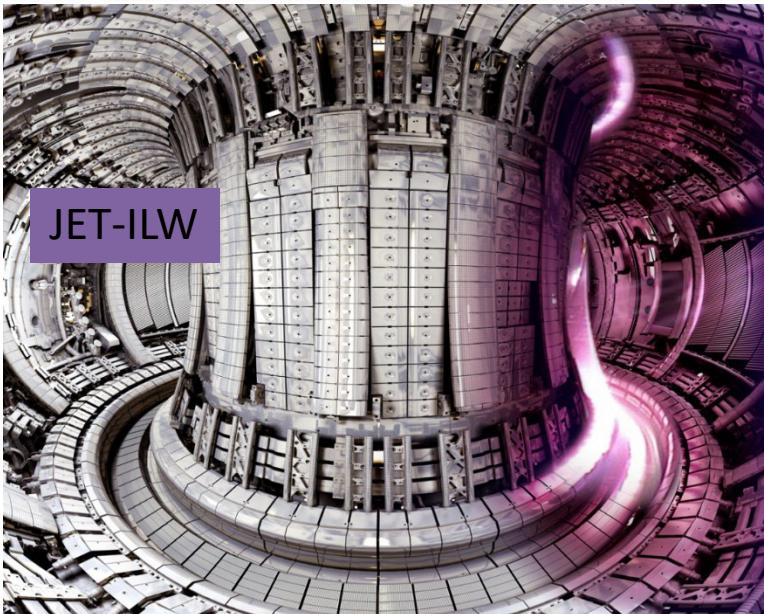
- stability by helical structure requires



$$j \times B = \nabla p$$
$$B \cdot \nabla p = 0$$

# Magnetically Confined Plasmas: Devices

- inductively driven toroidal plasma current
- plasma required to provide magnetic confinement



- poloidal divertor arrangement
- toroidally symmetric divertor (2D)

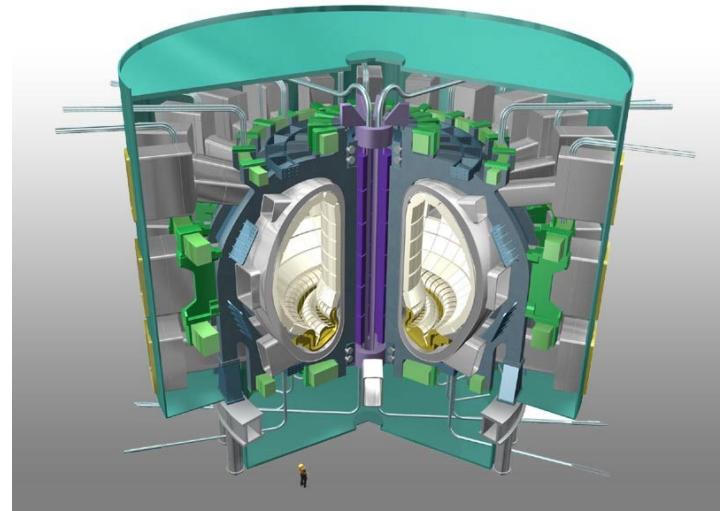
- magnetic confinement solely by magnetic coils
- no toroidal plasma current required



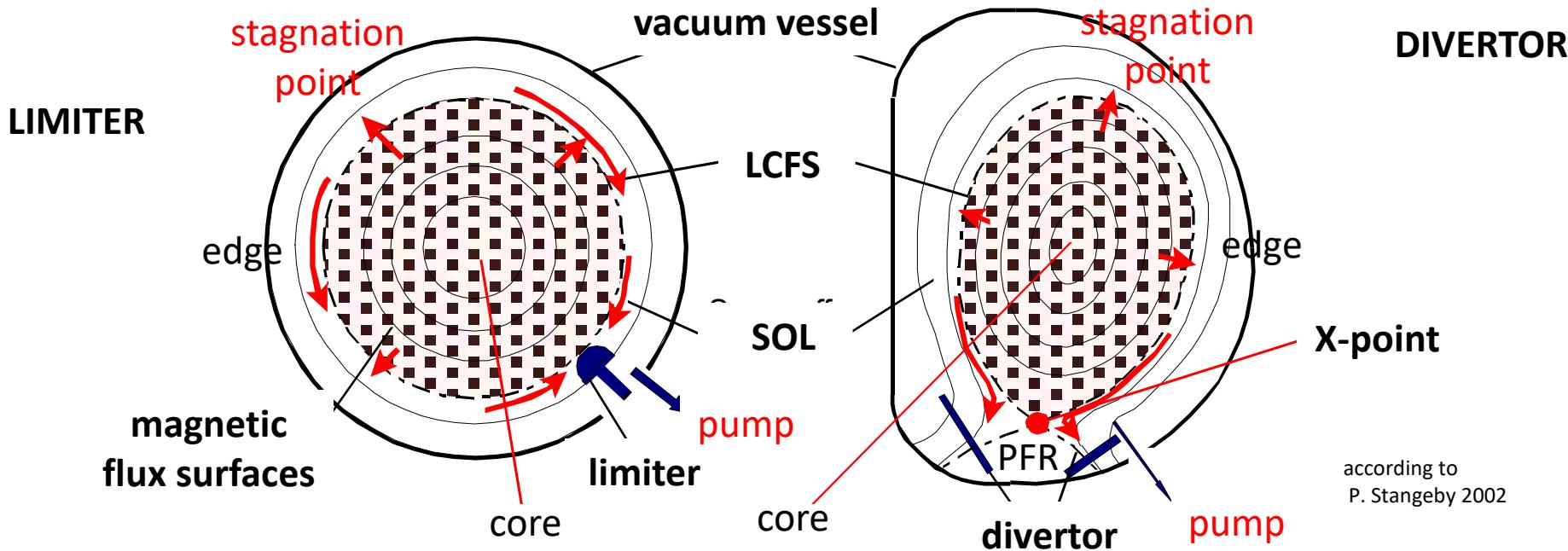
- complex divertor geometries (3D)
- helical divertor, island divertor etc.

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# Limiter vs. Divertor Tokamak Configuration

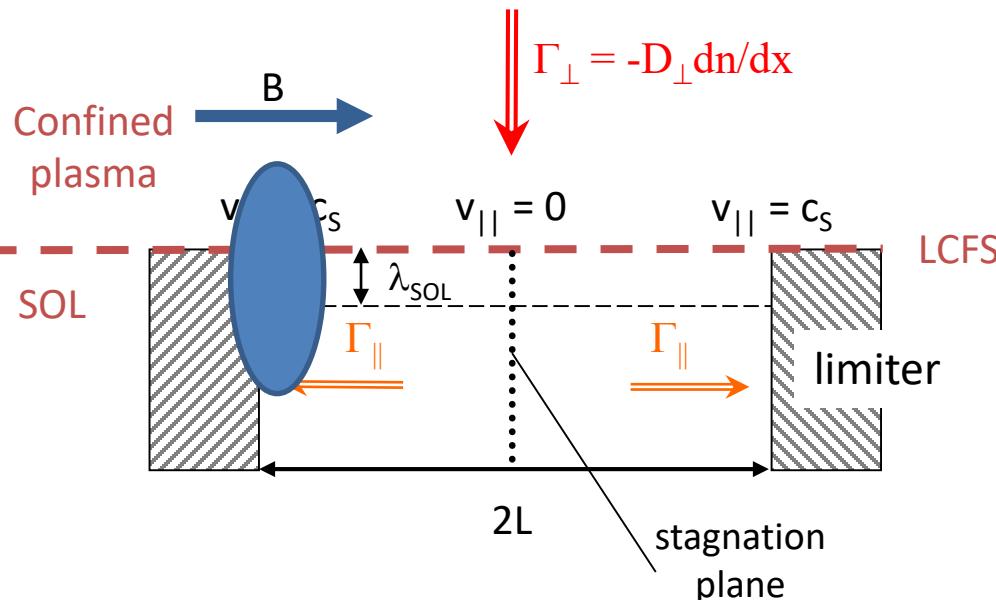


Cold plasma in MCF:  
SOL and divertor region

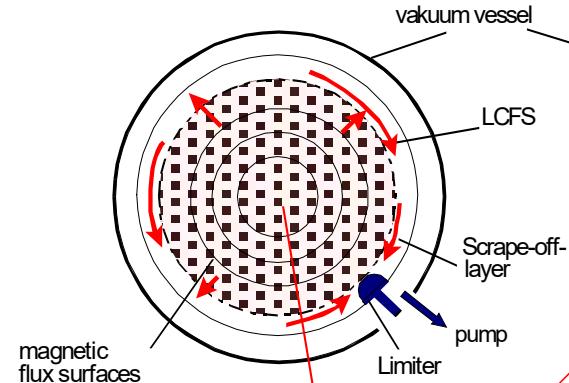
- Wide parameter space at low temperature (close to laboratory plasmas)
  - Electron temperature : ~50eV down to <1eV
  - Electron density: ~ $10^{17} \text{ m}^{-3}$  up to ~ $10^{21} \text{ m}^{-3}$
  - Operational regime: ionizing plasma recombining

# Simple Model for the Edge Plasma

Unfold limiter arrangement



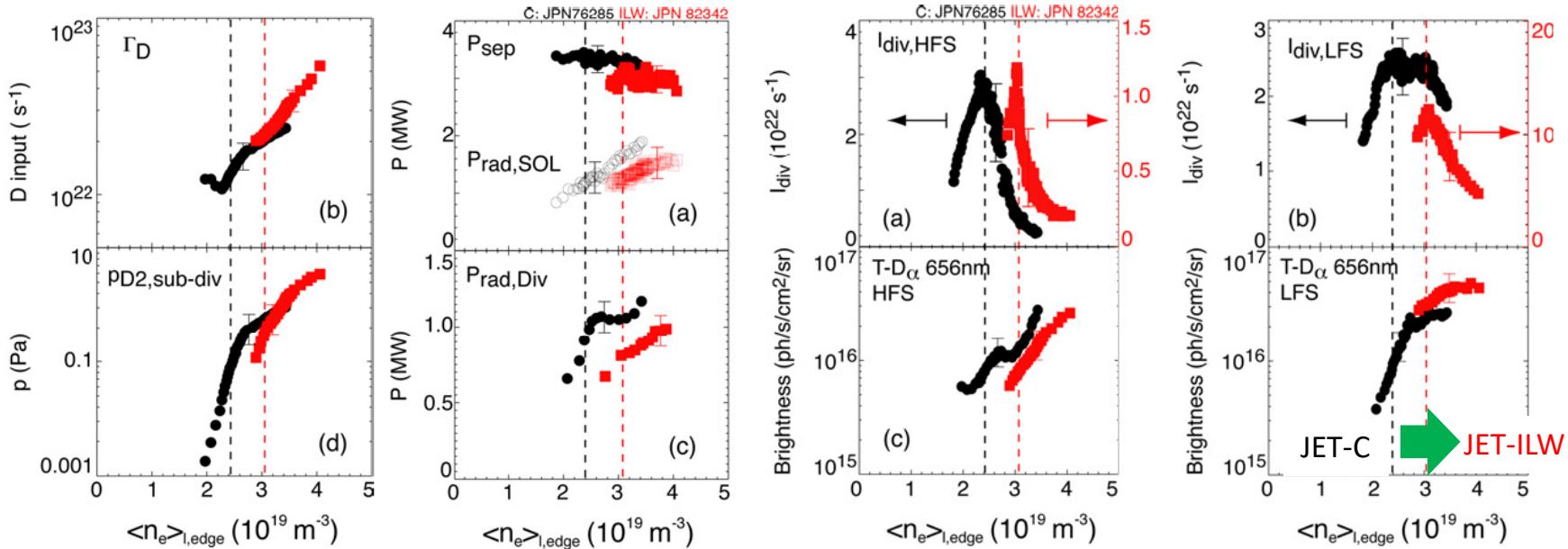
Formation of a neutral cushion in front of the target plate  
loss of momentum of impinging plasma ions along  $B$ :  
Recycling, + Radiation + Friction + Recombination ...



- Particle flux to edge due to cross field transport  
 $G_{\perp} = G_{||}$
- Wall is plasma particle sink
- Plasma-wall interaction processes occur e.g.
  - Recycling of fuel species
  - Erosion of fuel materials
- Identical for divertor target plates
- Detachment: neutral cloud before target plate which prevents ions to hit wall

# Complete Detachment in Divertor due D<sub>2</sub> Fuelling

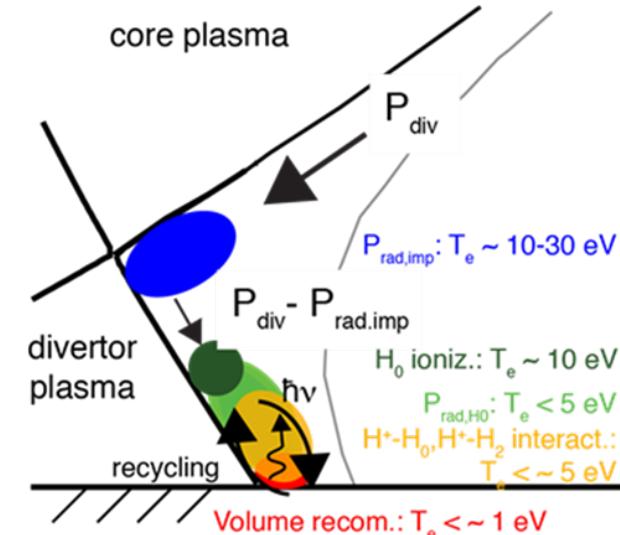
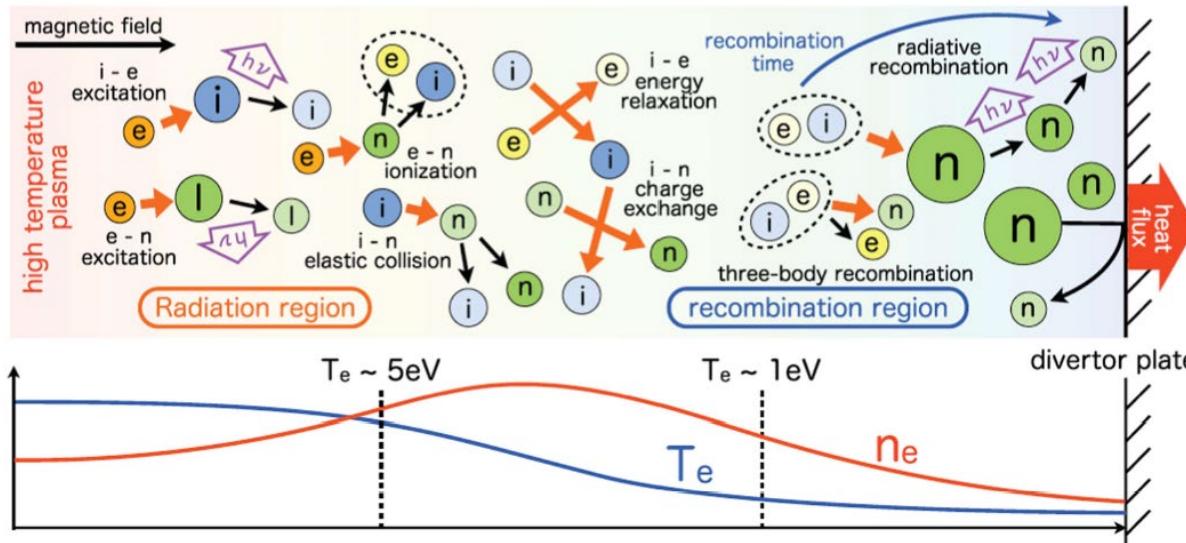
- During a fueling ramp in the divertor one passes all steps from recycling via “ion flux roll over” to detachment



- JET-ILW stable access to highly radiative discharges as required for ITER ( $f_{rad} \sim 70\%$ )

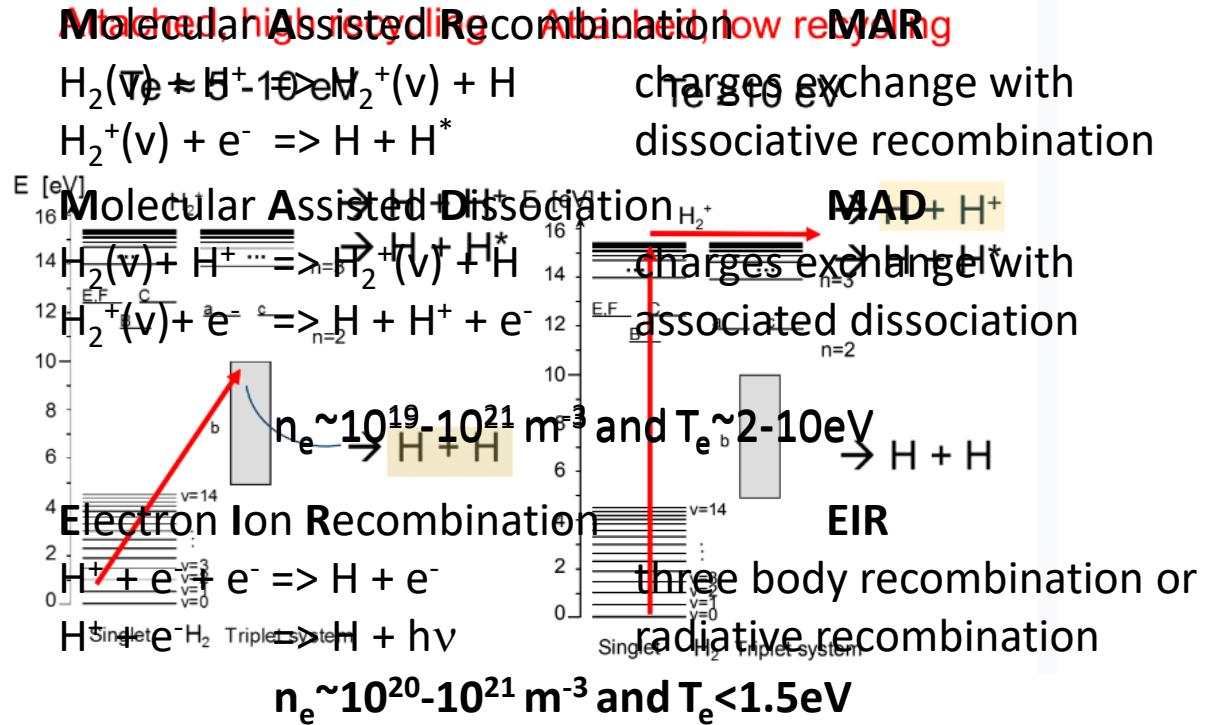
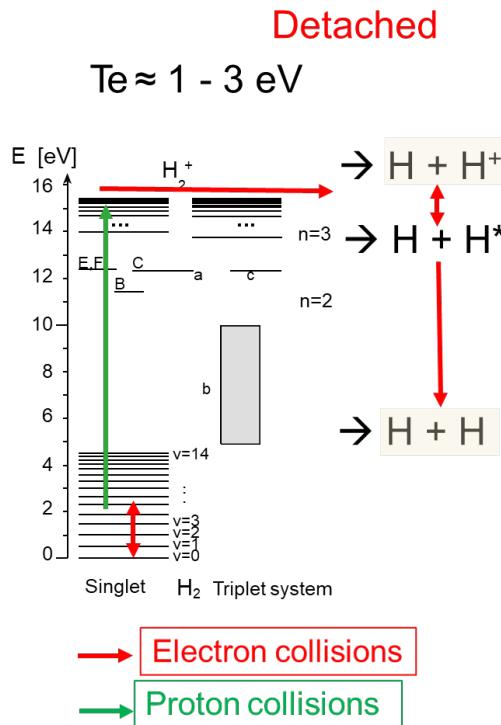
# Detachment Process

- Multiple step process including roll-over of ion flux at the target plate and recombination as strongest signature for detachment



- Strength of detachment described by comparison with upstream plasma conditions
- High recycling / partial detachment / pronounced detachment / complete detachment
- Detachment can be induced at higher power by additional impurity radiation (e.g. Ne and N<sub>2</sub>)

# Comparison of Relevant Processes in Detachment



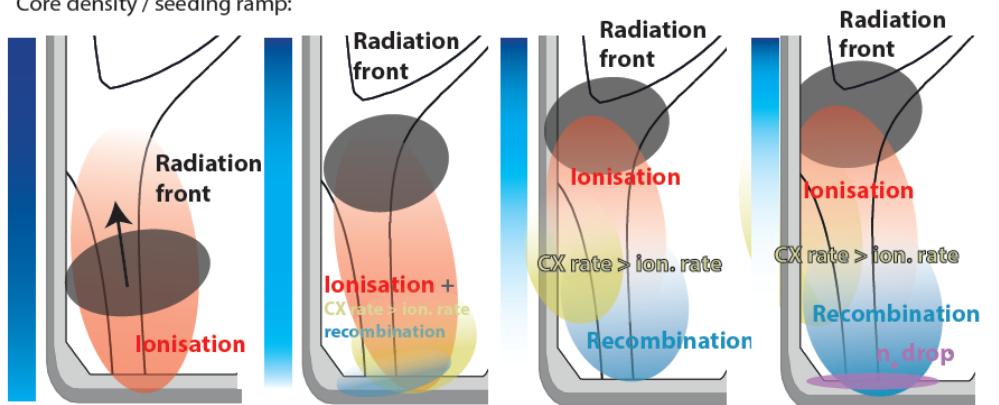
See U. Fantz, D. Wunderlich, D. Reiter, R. Janev, K. Sawada etc.

- Competition between different processes sensitive to the plasma conditions => Neutral particle codes like EIRENE

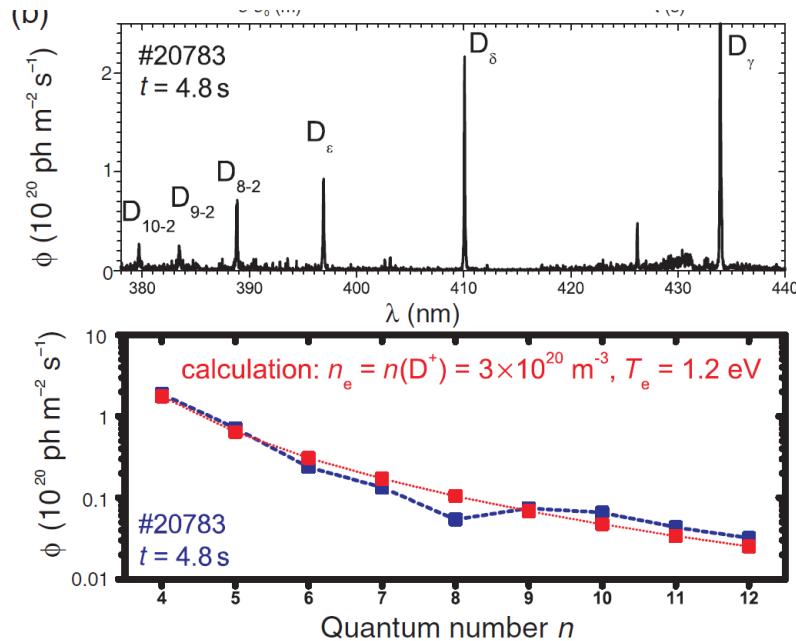
# Ionisation and Recombination

Usage of Balmer lines or NII lines  
(seeding) to locate ionization front

Core density / seeding ramp:

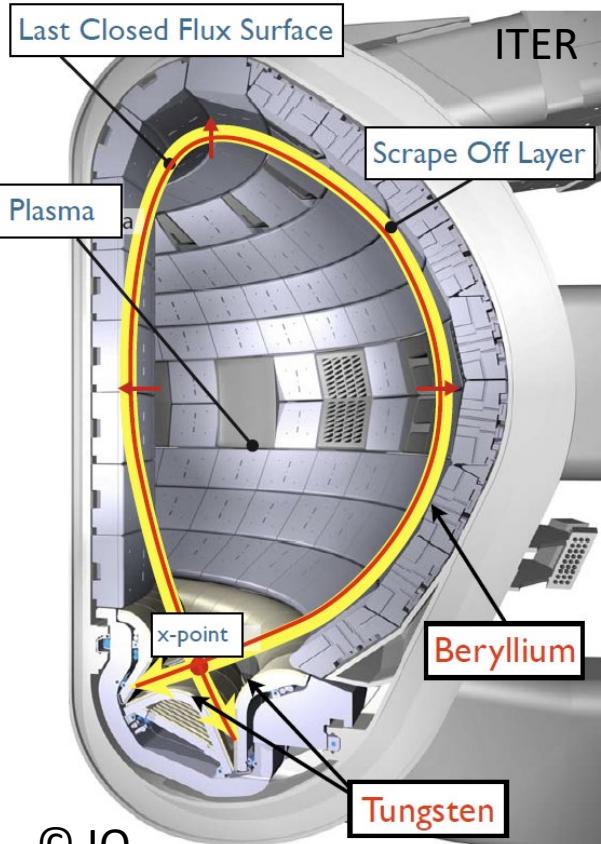


K. Verhaegh (TCV)



Plasma conditions determined by e.g.  
line ratios and appropriate CRMs (e.g. YACORA)

# Next step device ITER



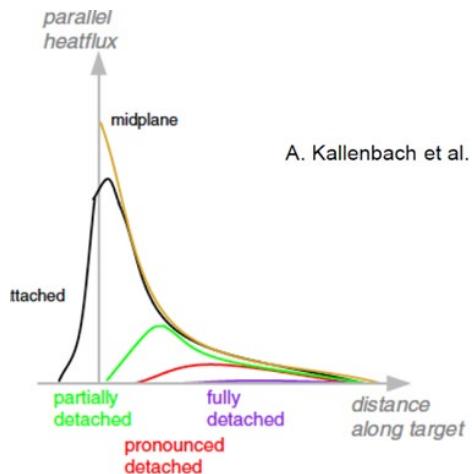
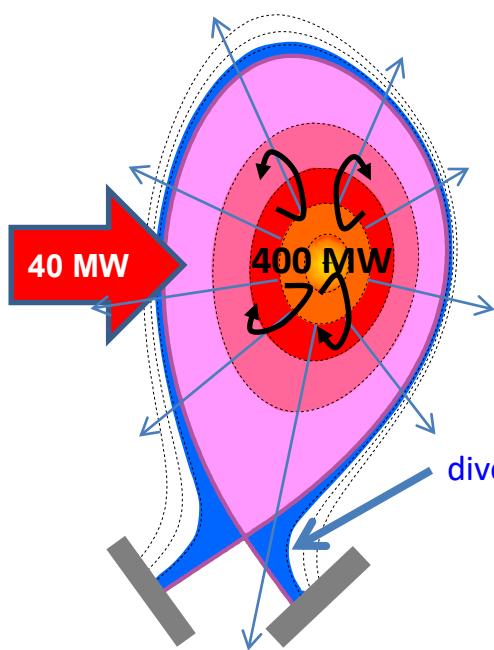
- To demonstrate (i) scientific and (ii) technical /plasma-surface interaction feasibility of fusion
- To achieve extended burn in inductively-driven DT plasma operation with  $Q=10$  (400s)
- To demonstrate readiness of essential fusion technologies (incl. plasma-facing components)

- Neutrons transferred to the tritium breeding blanket module
  - He-ash (residual helium) removal from the plasma on a fast time scale
  - Particles ( $D^+$ ,  $T^-$ ) loss and stream to the Scrape Off Layer
- Major Radius: 6.2 m  
Minor Radius: 2.0 m  
Plasma volume: 840 m<sup>3</sup>  
Surface area: 260m<sup>2</sup> W and 620m<sup>2</sup> Be  
Plasma current: 15 MA  
Magnetic field: 5.3 T (12 T)  
Energy content: 350 MJ  
Auxiliary heating: 70-100 MW  
Height: ~25 m and Diameter: ~26 m

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into the SOL  
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# The Power and Particle Exhaust Issue for ITER

ITER with Q=10



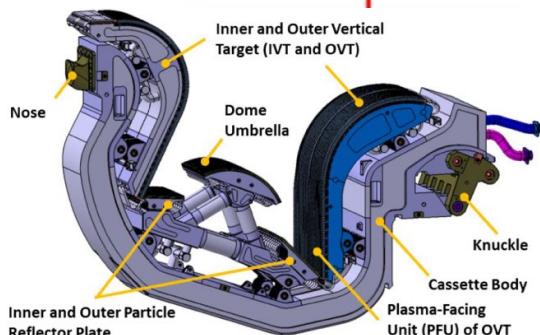
400 MW fusion power in steady-state

320 MW leave as neutrons  
converted to heat in the blanket

80 MW heat plasma ( $\alpha$  particles)  
40 MW additional heating for control

120 MW have to be transmitted to cooling system towards plasma-facing components:

20 MW core radiation and 100 MW to divertor

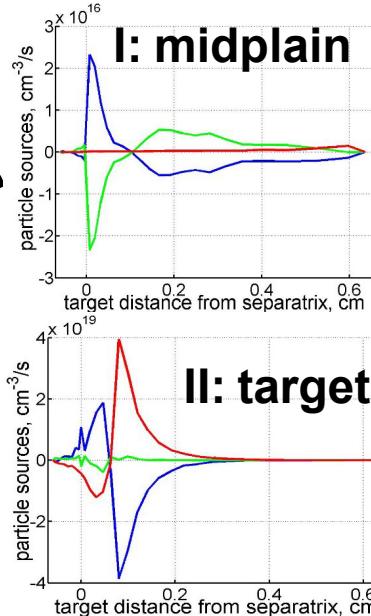
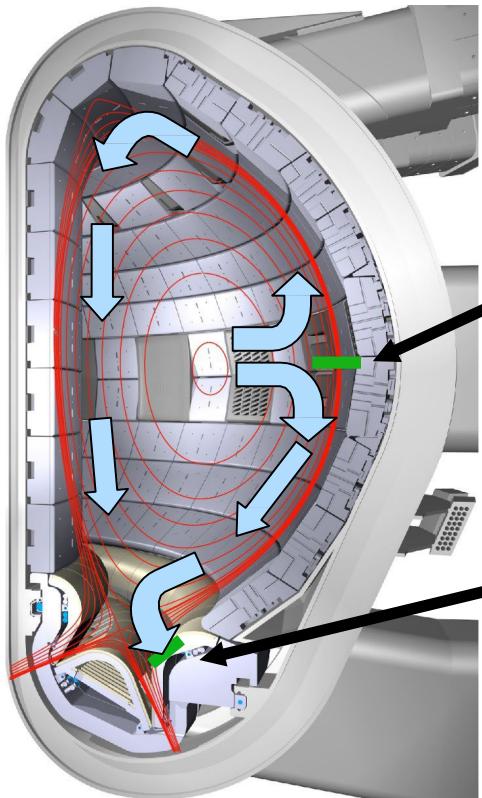


100 MW to divertor over  $2.5 \text{ m}^2$  area  
=>  $40 \text{ MWm}^{-2}$  => semi-detachment required

Relative importance of plasma flow forces  
over chemistry and PWI: I edge region → II divertor

$$\vec{\nabla}_{\parallel}(n_i \vec{V}_i) + \frac{\partial}{\partial x} D_{\perp} \frac{\partial n_i}{\partial x} = S_{n_i}$$

$\text{div}(nv_{\parallel}) + \text{div}(nv_{\perp}) = \text{ionization/recombination/charge exchange}$

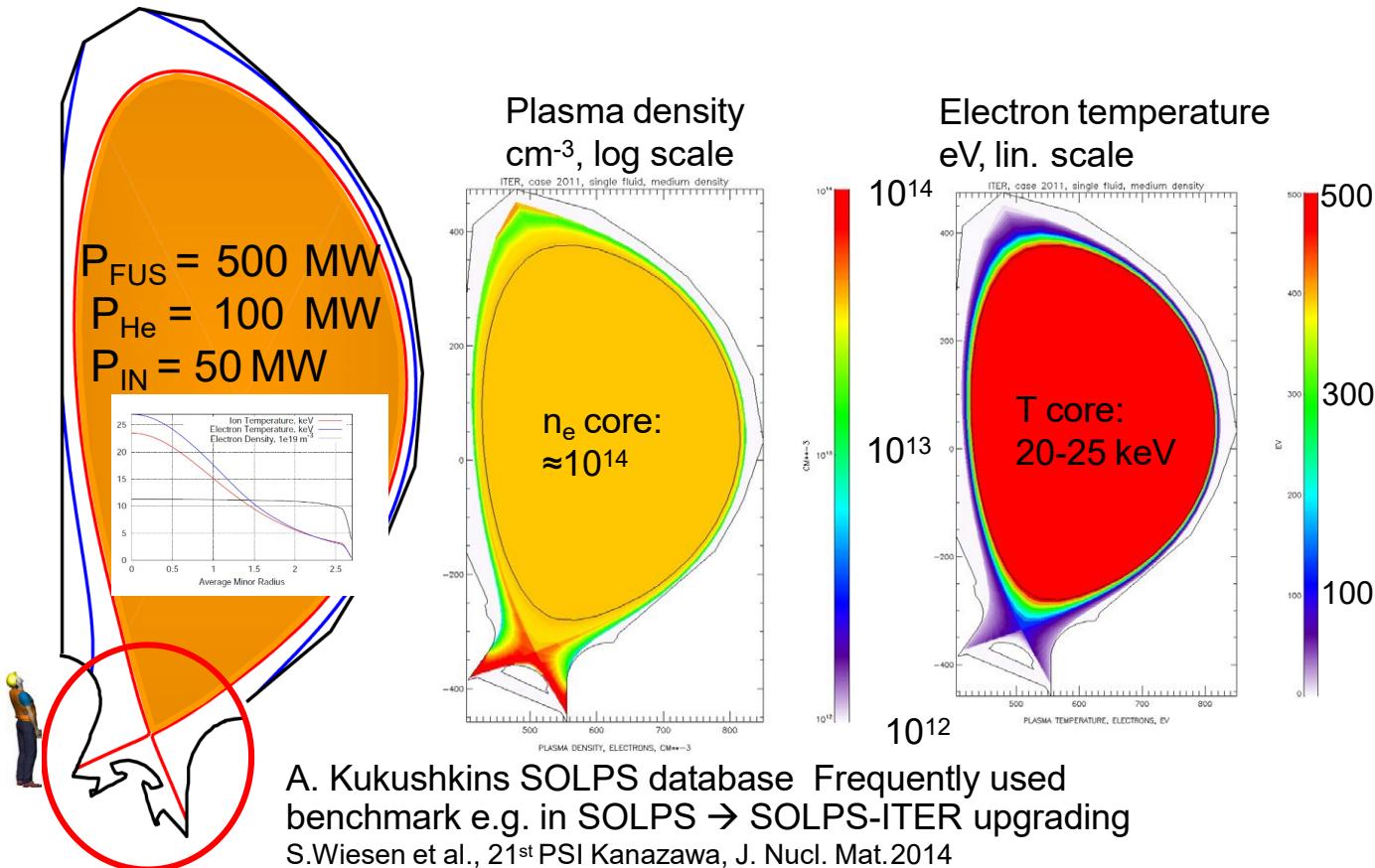


parallel vs.  
(turbulent)  
cross field  
flow

parallel vs.  
chemistry  
and PWI  
driven flow

important process:  
friction:  $p + H_2$ , recomb.,  
charge exchange } detachment

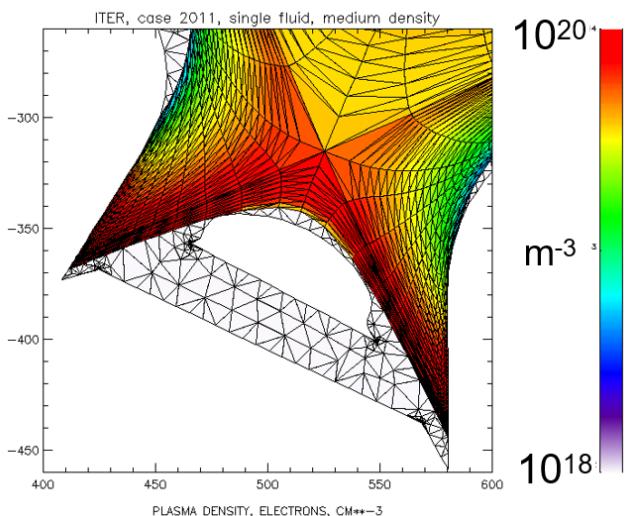
# ITER plasma simulation: SOLPS-ITER



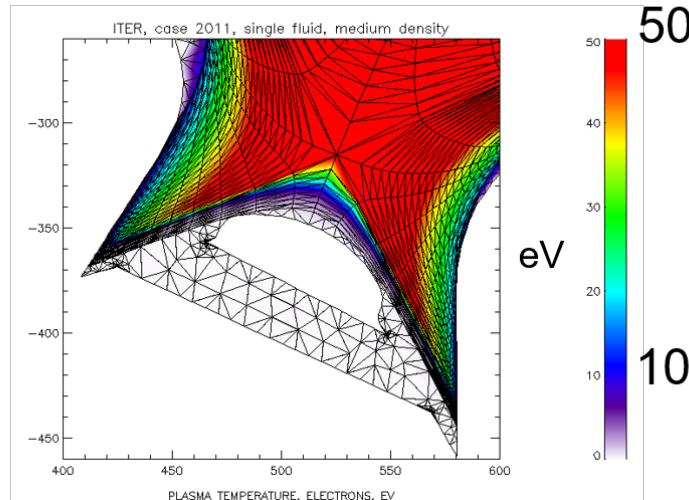
# ITER Divertor Plasma Solution: DETACHMENT

- Plasma solution with SOLPS-EIRENE with C exists / Update: SOLPS-ITER for Ne,N<sub>2</sub> and D plasmas
- Self sustained dense, cold plasma layer ( $\approx 1 - 3$  eV) formed in front of divertor components
- Plasma flux drops, despite increased density. Momentum loss predicted.
- ELM burn through not considered / Atomic and molecular data for T, DT not included

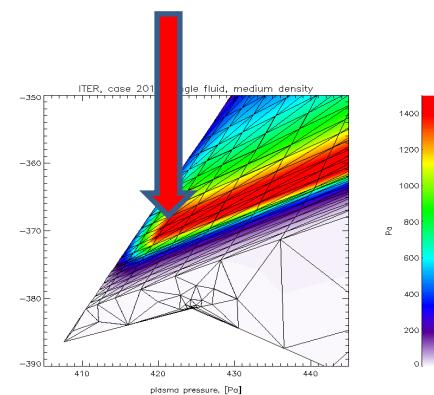
Divertor plasma density  
 $m^{-3}$ , log scale,  $10^{18}$ - $10^{20}$



Divertor electron temperature  
eV, lin. scale, 0 – 50 eV

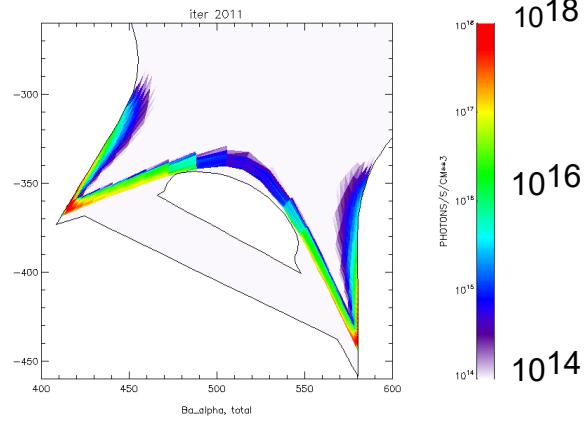
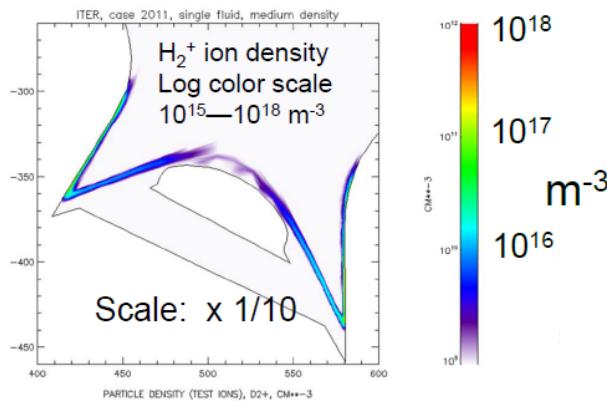
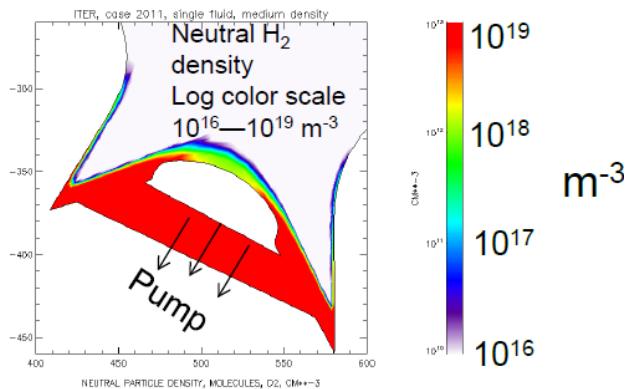
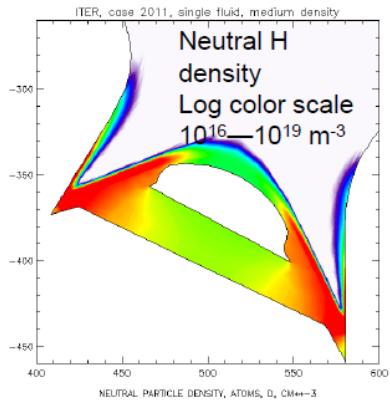


Pressure drop

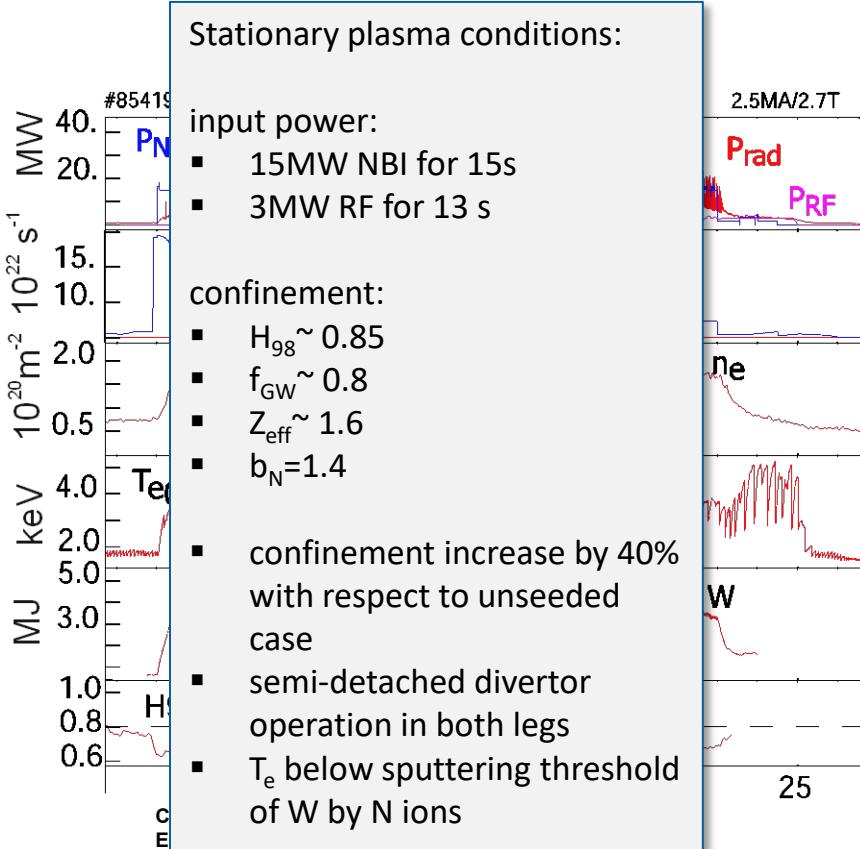
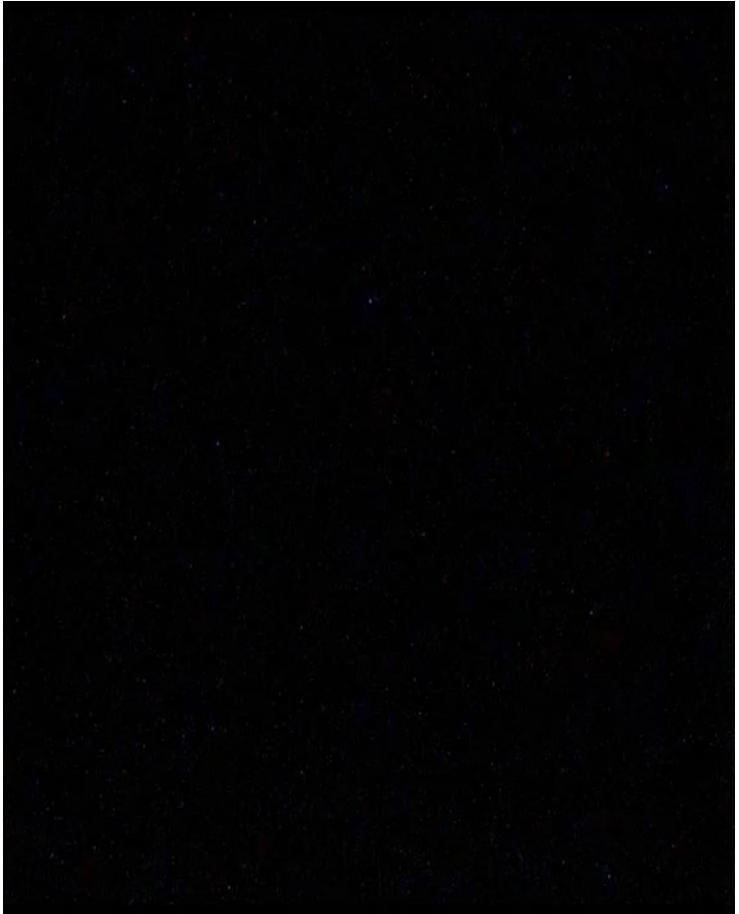


D. Reiter et al. PSI2018

# ITER: Self-sustained Neutral Gas Cushion H and H<sub>2</sub>

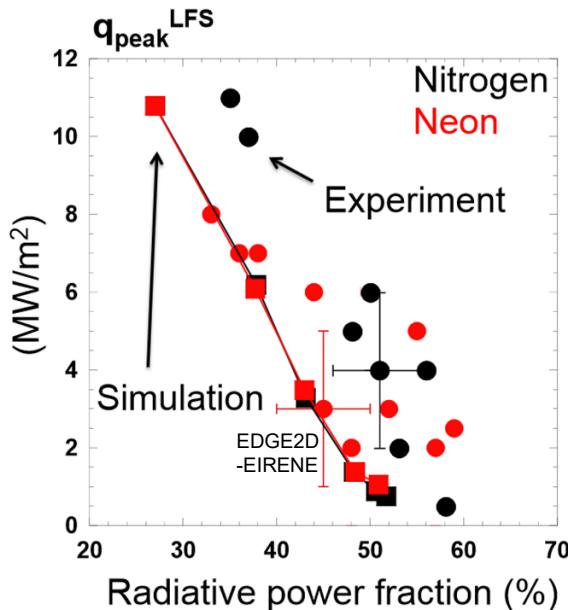


# Integrated Scenario with N<sub>2</sub> Seeding

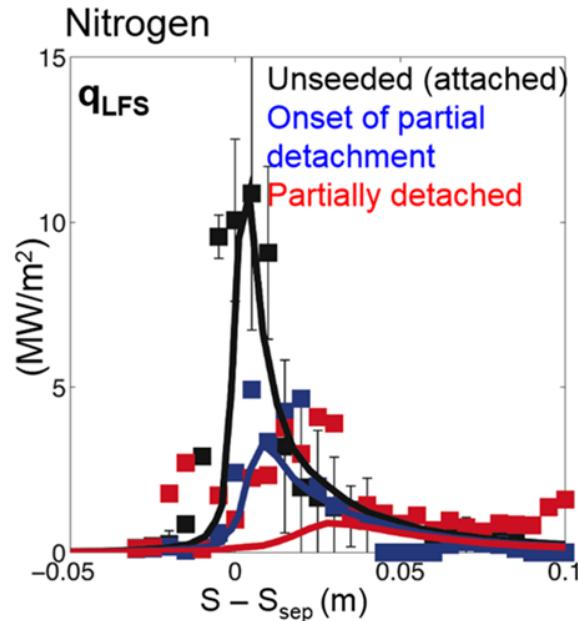


# Divertor Detachment with N<sub>2</sub> Seeding in H-mode

- Full detachment at outer target plate: sequence of power detachment (nitrogen radiation), momentum detachment (D ion-neutral friction) and particle detachment (D volume recombination) reproduced
- Compatibility with power loads and W source for long-pulse operation like in ITER
- Nitrogen radiates predominantly in divertor whereas neon in the edge layer of JET

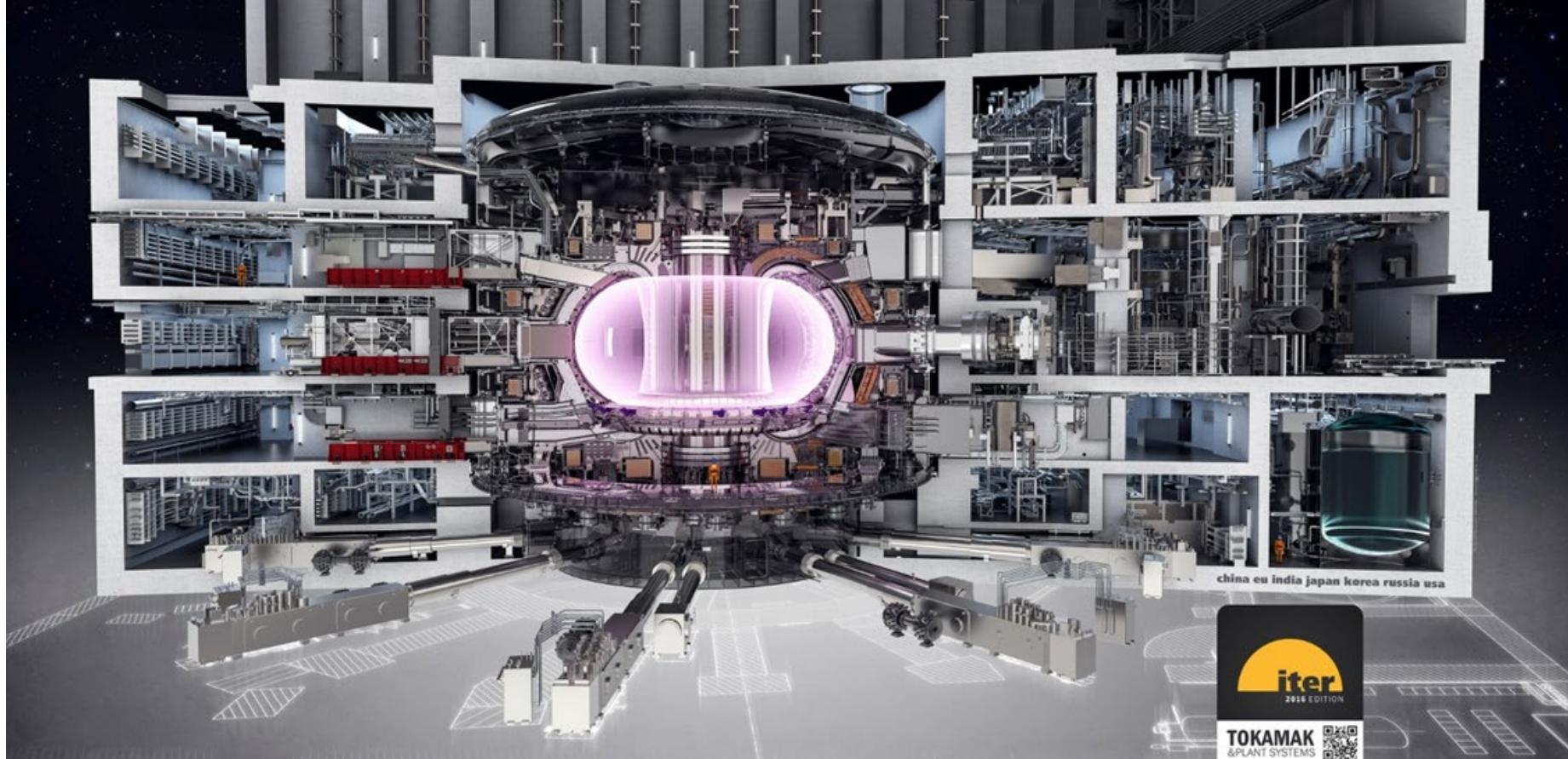


C. Giroud et al.  
NF 2014



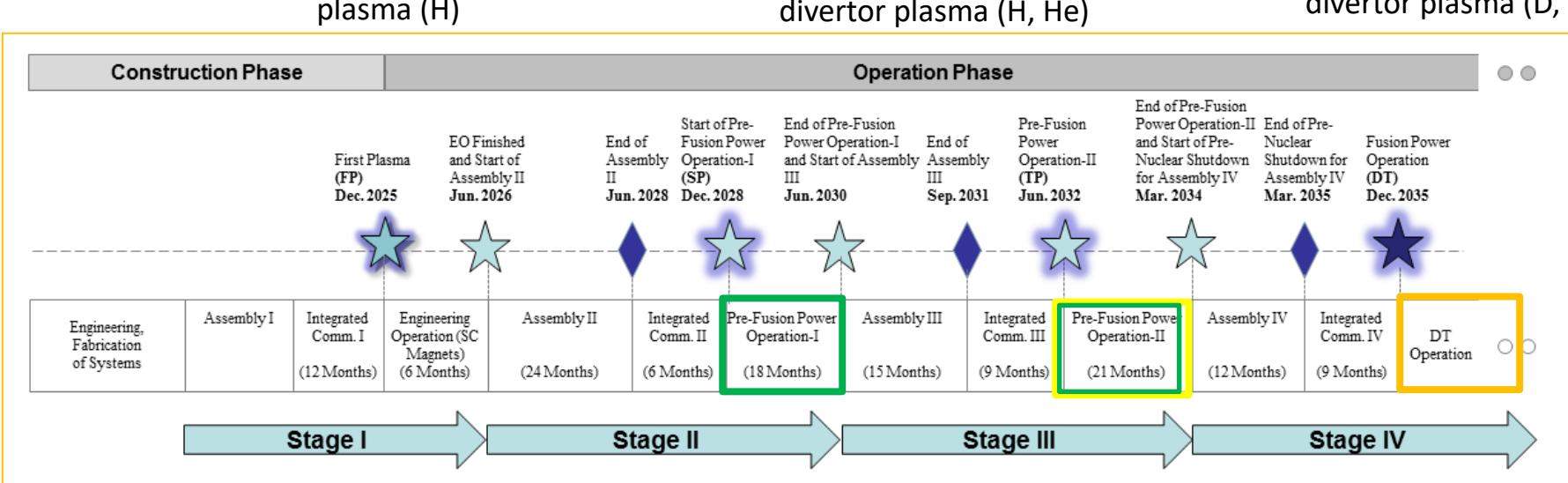
A. Jarvinen et al.  
JNM 2015

# ITER Tokamak Building and Infrastructure



# ITER Timeline

Step-wise construction of the tokamak and accompanied exploration program



ITER research plan (2018)  
<https://www.iter.org/technical-reports>

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# EU Roadmap for Nuclear Fusion

Present goal in Roadmap:

- “*DEMO represents the last step driven by the research community*”
- “*After DEMO, industry will lead fusion power plant production with limited involvement of the research community*”

Two additional goals compared to ITER

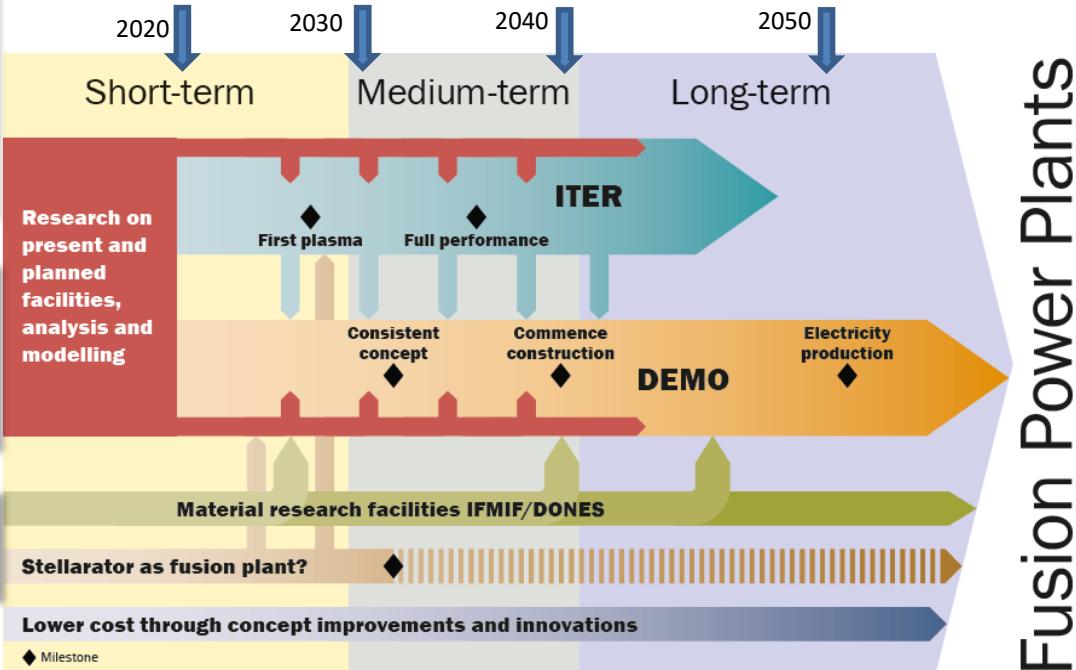
- Electricity production
- Tritium self-sufficiency

Not fully addressed in DEMO:

- Neutron-tolerant materials → IFMIF-DONES

Issue:

- Best plasma power and exhaust scenario?

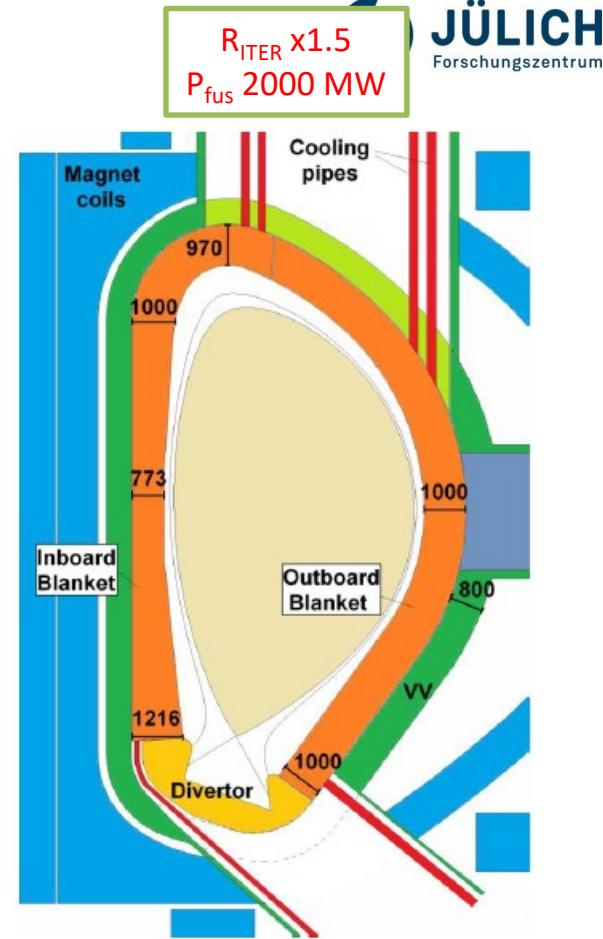
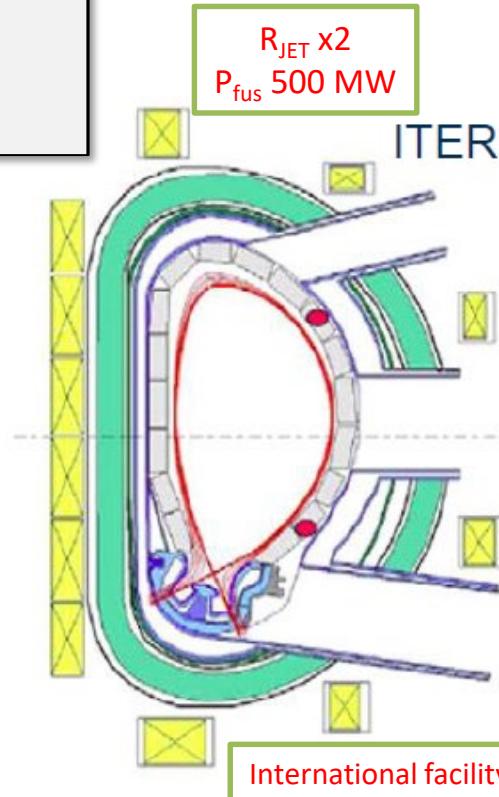
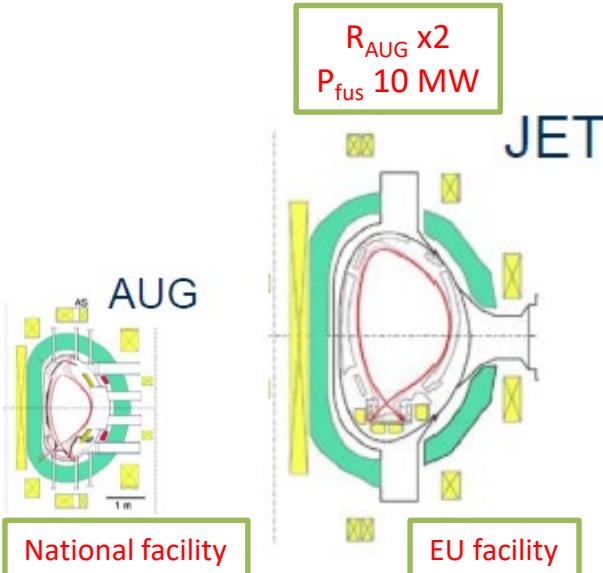


# Conservative Step-Ladder-Approach

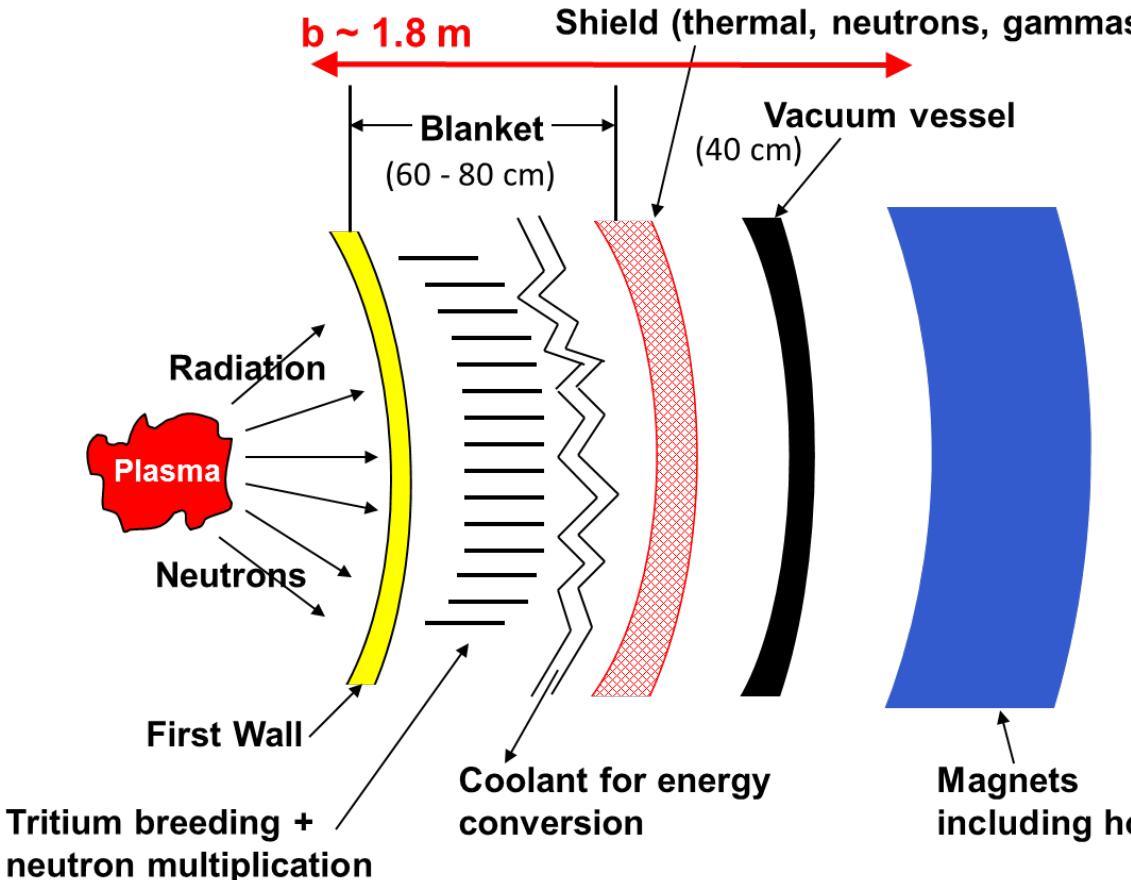
Same solution: LSN, H-mode, shape, magnets

Critical issues:

- Plasma scenario: disruptions
- Technology: phase transitions
- Funding: capital cost (>ITER)



# “Real“ Wall Dimension with Blanket



$$B_0 = B_{\max} \left( 1 - \frac{a + b}{R_0} \right)$$

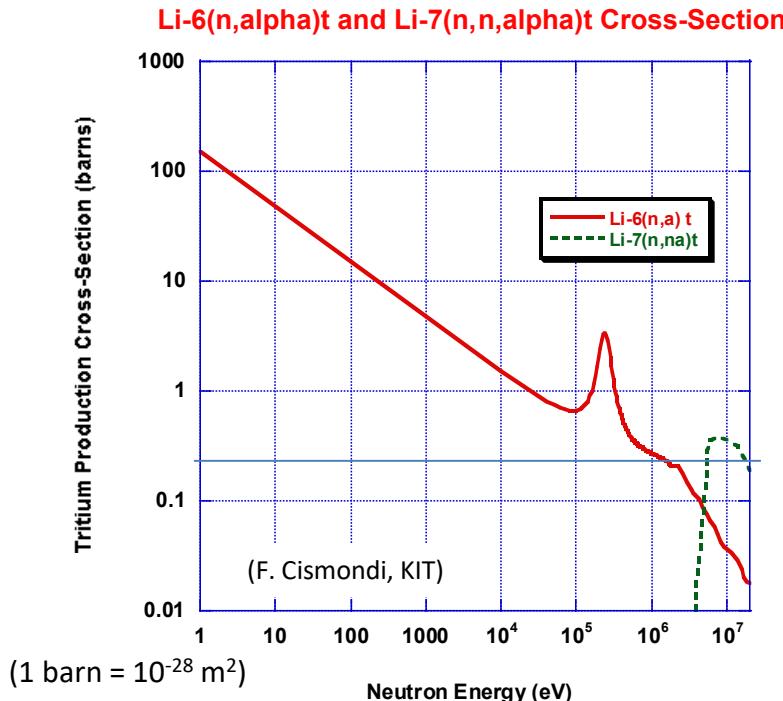
Fusion power plant estimates

- Distance between plasma edge and TF coil casing: **b ~ 1.8 m**
- This value doesn't scale with machine size
- Provides envelope for min. machine size for a reactor

F. Cismondi et al.

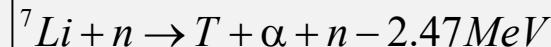
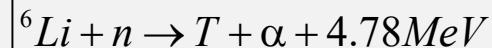
# Tritium Breeding?

- Tritium ( $t_{1/2} = 12.32$  y) currently from fission reactors (external source)
- Tritium to be produced in-situ (internal source = „breeding“)
- Tritium retention in first wall must be minimised as tritium breeding ratio is low



Natural Lithium consists of 7.42%  ${}^6\text{Li}$  and 92.58%  ${}^7\text{Li}$ .

Possible breeding reactions:



In steady state operation, a fusion reactor should reach a tritium breeding ratio (TBR)  $\sim 1.2 > 1$ .

Need of neutron multiplicator: Be

# Reactor Design Optimisation (system codes)

Design optimization for a reactor are worldwide ongoing

EUROfusion favours pulsed ITER-like design (up-scaled)

## Safety / Environment

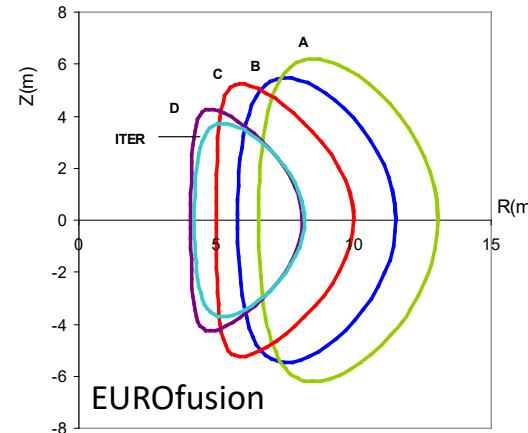
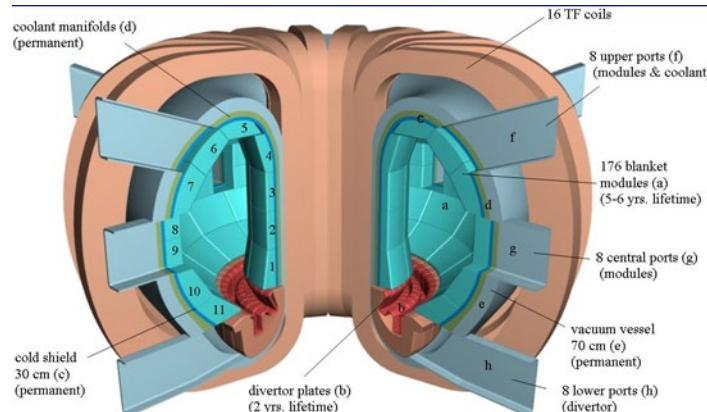
- no need for emergency **evacuation**, no **active systems** for safe shut-down, no **structure melting** following disruption ( $\text{CO}_2$  free energy source)
- **minimum waste** transport, minimum waste to repository (max. 100 years);

## Operation

- **steady state**,  $\sim 1\text{-}2 \text{ GWe}$ , base load;  $Q>30$ !
- **availability**  $75 \div 80 \%$ , with only few unplanned shut-downs/year;

## Economics

- **public acceptance** could be even more important than economics
- **economic comparison** among equally acceptable energy sources
- construction time  $\leq 5$  years



- A – simple scaling
- B – higher field
- C – advanced physics and materials
- D – very advanced physics and materials

# Other solutions and ideas speed-up quickly

## Adaption to actual knowledge and society needs

- New physics knowledge => better confinement
- New technical capabilities => higher magnetic field
- Size reduction => reduce impact of disruptions
- Pulses operation => adaption to grid needs
- In line with ITER
  - JT-60SA (Japan)
  - **CFETR** (China)
- Compact tokamaks
  - **SPARC** (USA)
  - **STEP** (UK)
  - DTT (Italy)
  - COMPASS-U (Czech Republic)
- Other initiatives (private)
  - Tokamak Energy (UK)
  - Renaissance fusion (France)
  - Commonwealth Fusion Systems (MIT, USA)

All require information from ITER:

- Alpha particle heating
- Scaling laws / scenarios
- PFC solutions
- T breeding tests



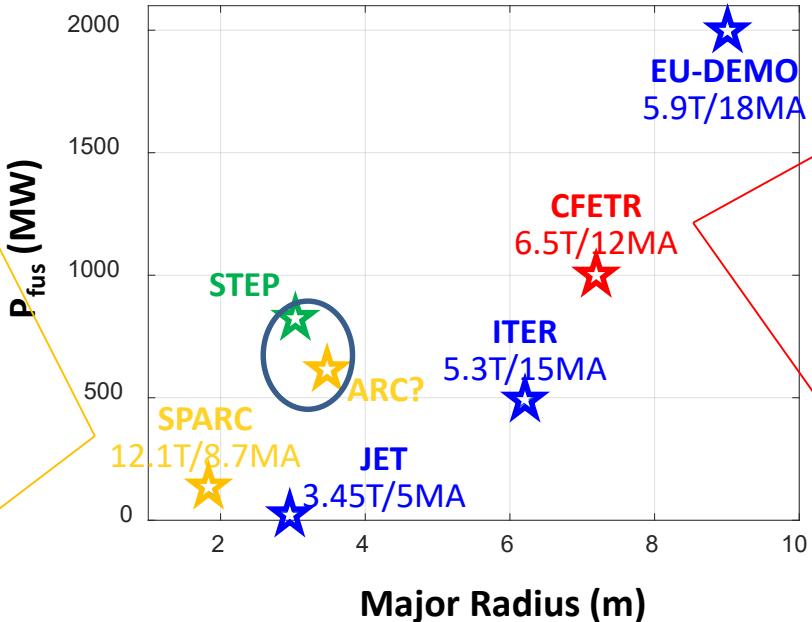
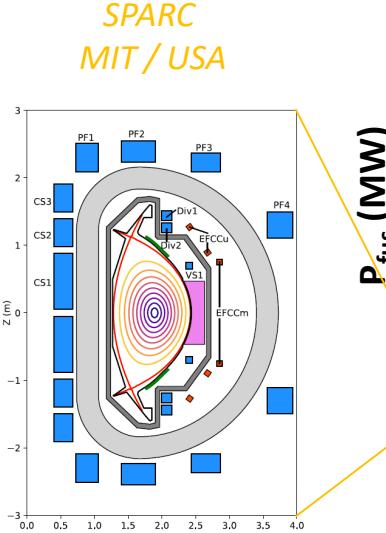
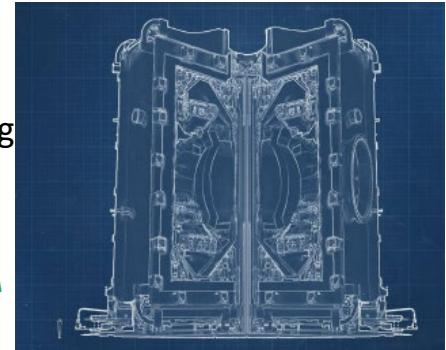
EU-DEMO at ITER side to share infrastrucutre?

# Landscape of reactor studies

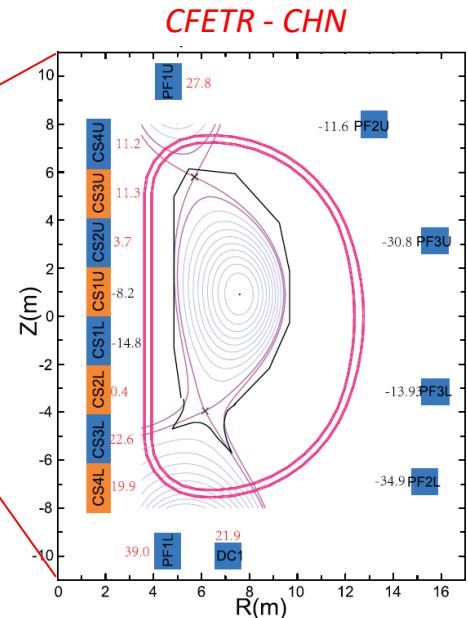
- Similar approach but at an intermediate fusion power: CFETR
- Compact approach at a higher magnetic field: **SPARC => ARC**
- Compact approach with spherical tokamak configuration: **STEP**  
=> ALL DOUBLE NULL and SMALLER in SIZE

UKAEA +  
private funding

**STEP**  
**UK / UKAEA**



SPARC: MIT + private funding



# SPARC Missions and Fast Step Forward

- Make a plasma with (robustly) break-even fusion energy gain,  $Q > 2$

This would be a sufficient demonstration to put fusion firmly into national energy plans and to attract investments for the next step

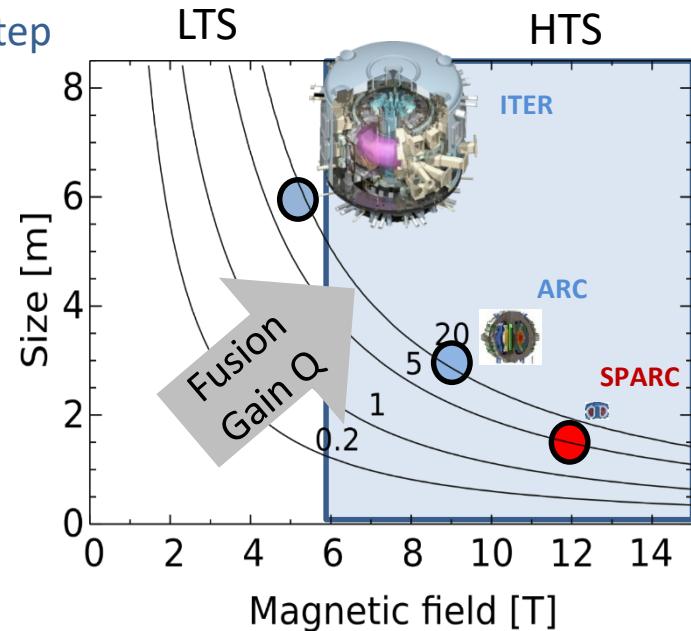
- Demonstrate fusion-relevant HTS magnets at scale

Integrated with high-performance tokamak operation

- Provide the physics basis for high-field pathway

Demonstrate high-field, burning fusion plasma scenarios

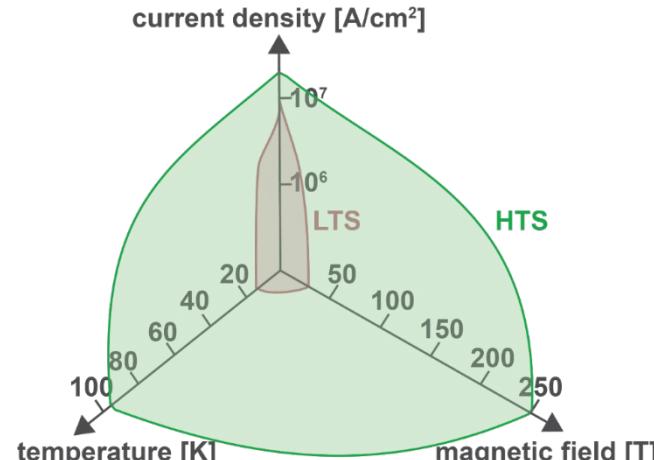
- Present limit with LTS ( $\text{Nb}_3\text{Sn}$ ) at 12T or so with 6T on torus axis
- Technology jump required ...



SPARC D. Whyte et al.

# New Superconducting Materials: Ideal For Large-Volume, High-Field Fusion Magnets

- Much wider operating space in field, current density and temperature
- Higher current densities
  - Strong structure
- Operation at higher temperatures
  - New cryogenic options
  - Better stability
  - Higher heat capacity
- No post-winding reduction process required



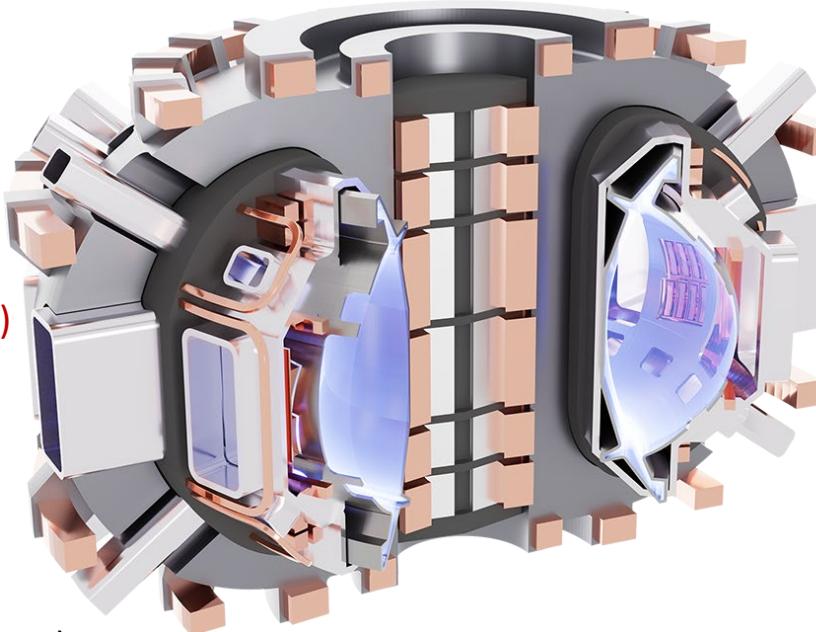
- Key: new High Temperature Superconducting magnets
  - SPARC => Q=2 test at size of AUG, DIII-D, KSTAR
  - ARC => Q=30+ at size of JET

SPARV D. Whyte et al.

# SPARC V2: Starting Point for Detailed Engineering Design

## SPARC technical requirements:

- Burn D-T fuel
- Fusion Gain:  $Q > 2$
- $P_{\text{fusion}} > 50\text{MW}$  (up to 140MW)
- Pulsed with 10s flattop burn
- Plasma current:  $I_p=8.7 \text{ MA}$



## Desired schedule:

- R&D: 3yrs (mainly HTS magnets)
- Const.: 4 yrs / Ops.: 5 yrs / Decom.: 4 yrs

Desired construction cost: <\$500M

$B_0$	12.1	T
$I_p$	8.7	MA
$R_0$	1.85	m
$a$	0.57	m
$\epsilon$	0.31	
$\kappa$ (area)	1.75	
$P_{\text{fus}}$	50-140	MW
$P_{\text{ext}}$	25	MW



# Optimised Stellarator: W7-X (towards HELIAS)

non-planar NbTi coils: 50

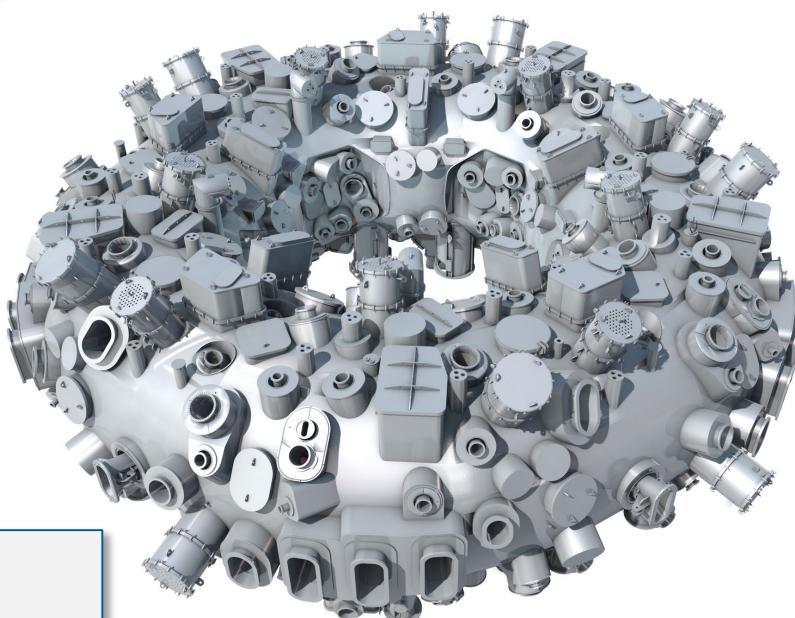
plasma volume: 30 m<sup>3</sup>

planar NbTi coils: 20

ports: 254  
shapes: 120

plasma vessel: 80 m<sup>3</sup>  
in-vessel components: 265 m<sup>2</sup>

NbTi bus bars: 113  
14 HTSC current leads: 14  
central support ring elements: 10

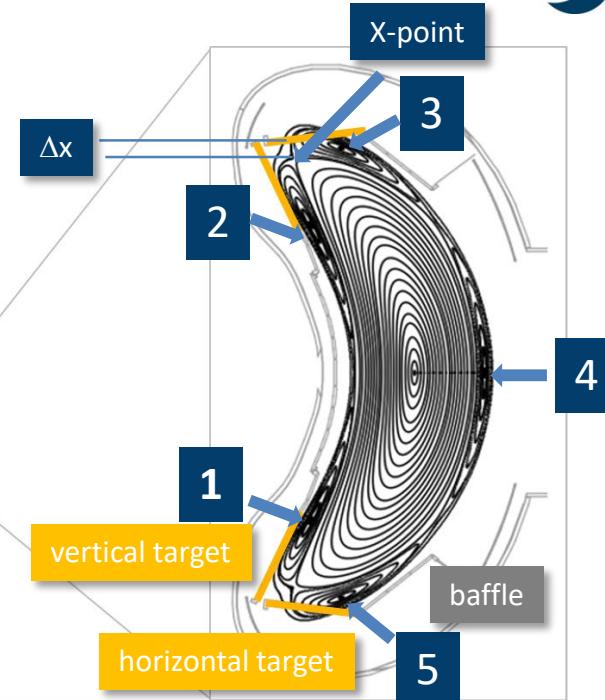
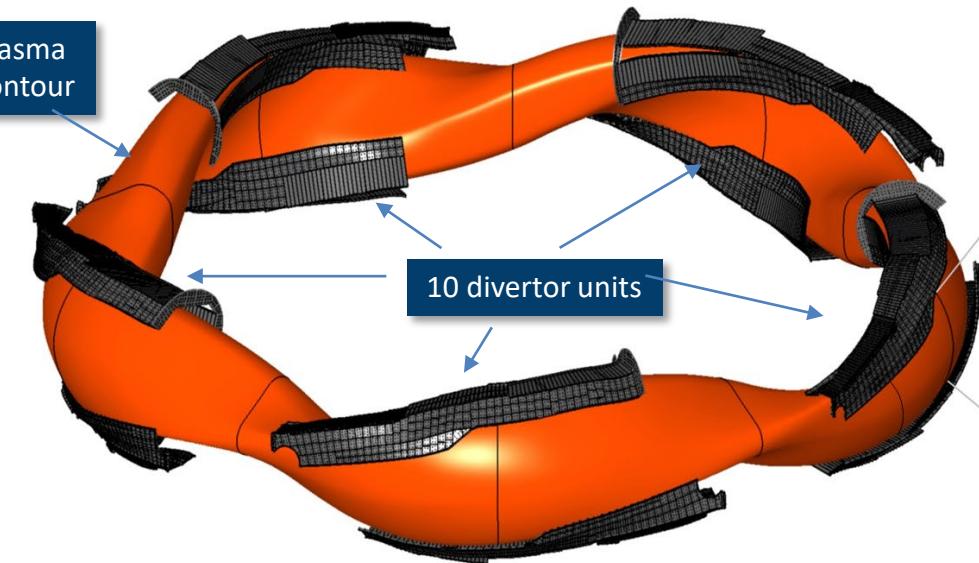


machine height: 4.5 m  
machine diameter: 16 m  
device mass: 735 t  
cold mass at 3.4 K: 435 t

[O. Grulke et al. EPS2019]

cryostat vessel insulation: 420 m<sup>3</sup>

# Island divertor concept in W7-X

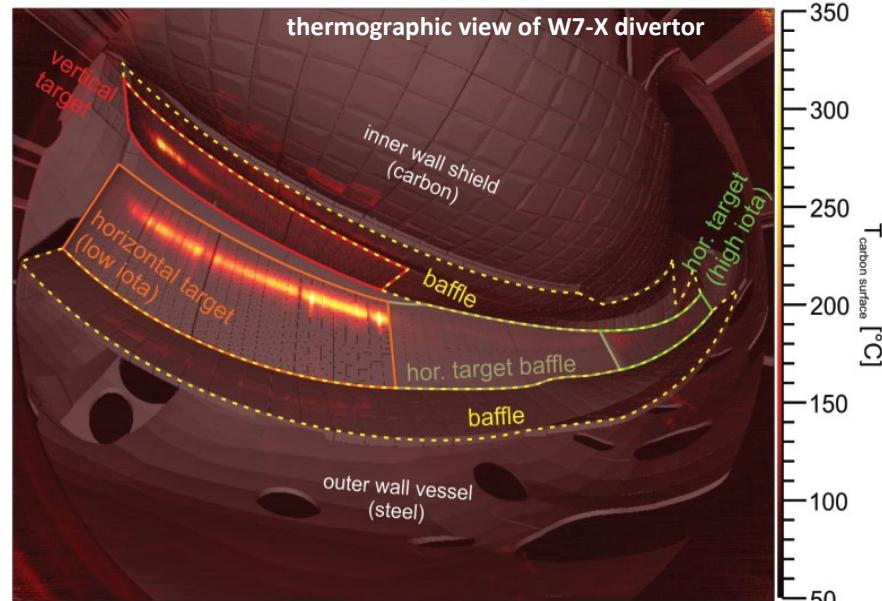
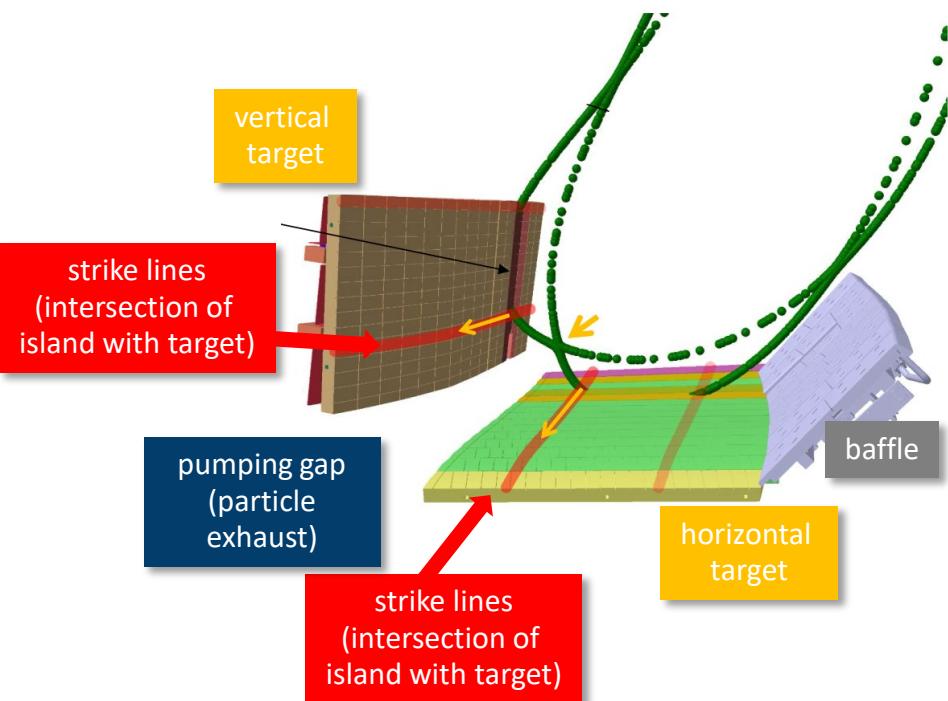


divertor target plates follow the magnetic island geometry in toroidal and poloidal direction

standard divertor solution with 5 magnetic islands

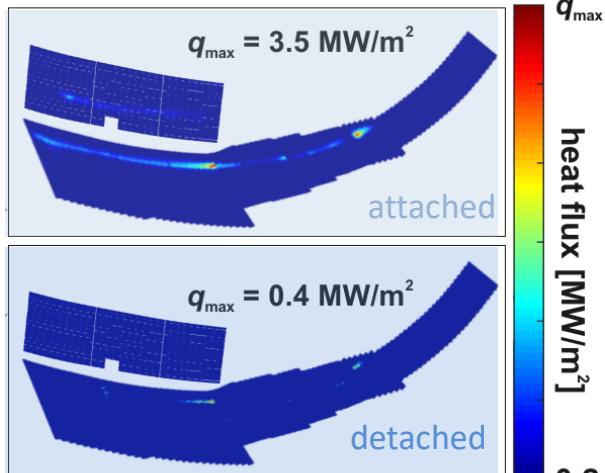
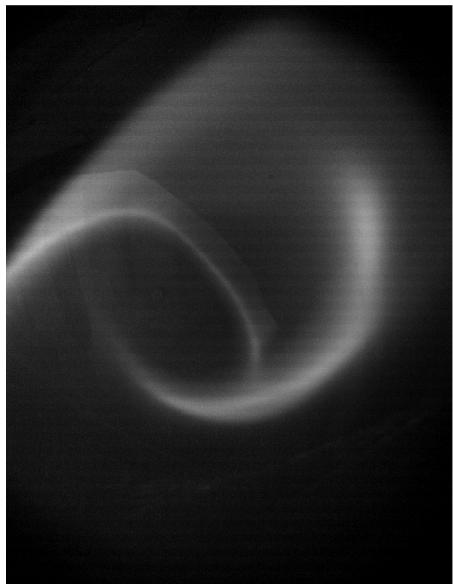
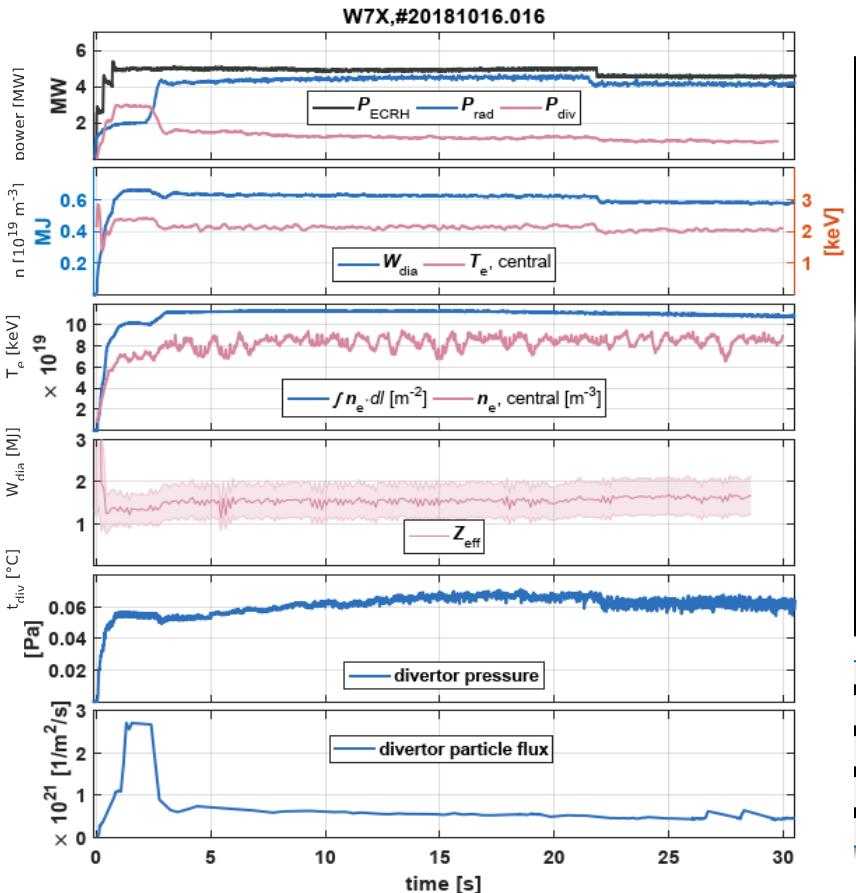
# Island divertor concept in W7-X

- In standard magnetic configuration two strike lines interact with the target plates
- Visible in heat-flux pattern (power exhaust), impinging particle-flux pattern (particle exhaust) and erosion pattern of target plates (impurity production) => main areas of plasma-surface interaction



[P. Drewelow et al. PSI 2018]

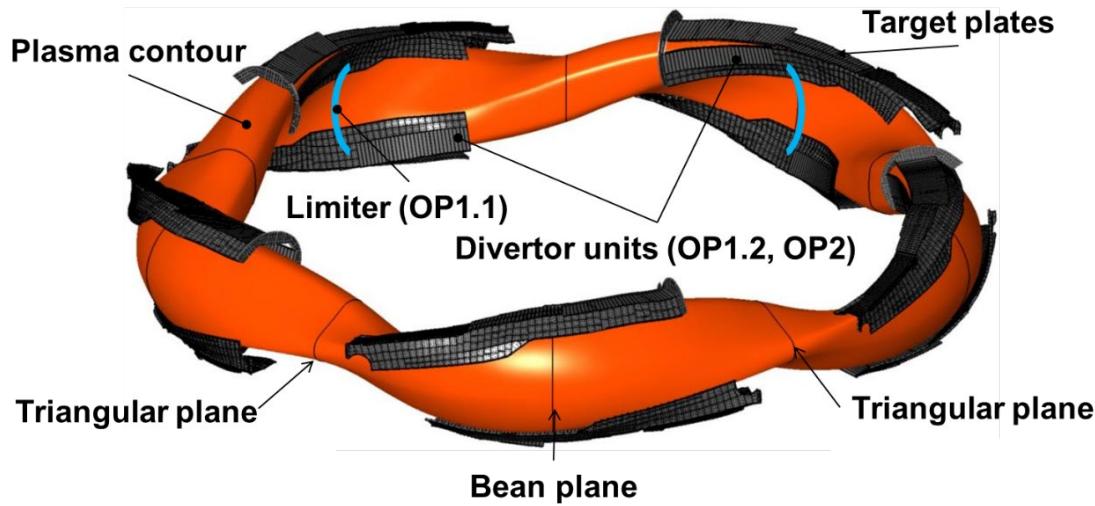
# Stable detachment --- next step actively cooled PFCs



[O. Schmitz et al., R. König et al. EPS 2019]

- Divertor detachment induced by C+H radiation and H recycling
- Almost no convective heat loads at the target plates
- Symmetric in all five modules with the ten divertor units
- Steady-state operation for 26 s inertially cooled PFCs!

## PSI in W7-X with graphite PFCs presented

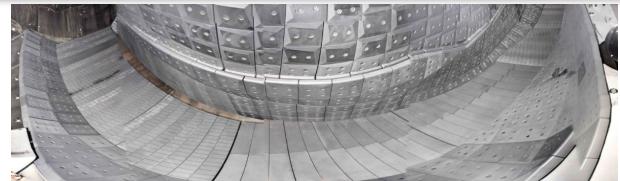


- 2017 / 2018
- C divertor
- 7.5 MW
- 200 MJ
- 100 s
- H/He

- 2021/2022
- CFC divertor
- >10 MW
- 18 GJ
- 1800 s
- H, He, D

- 202X with  $X > 7$
- W divertor
- “optimised” design
- Metallic first wall
- More input power
- H, He, D

Uncooled graphite divertor (TDU)

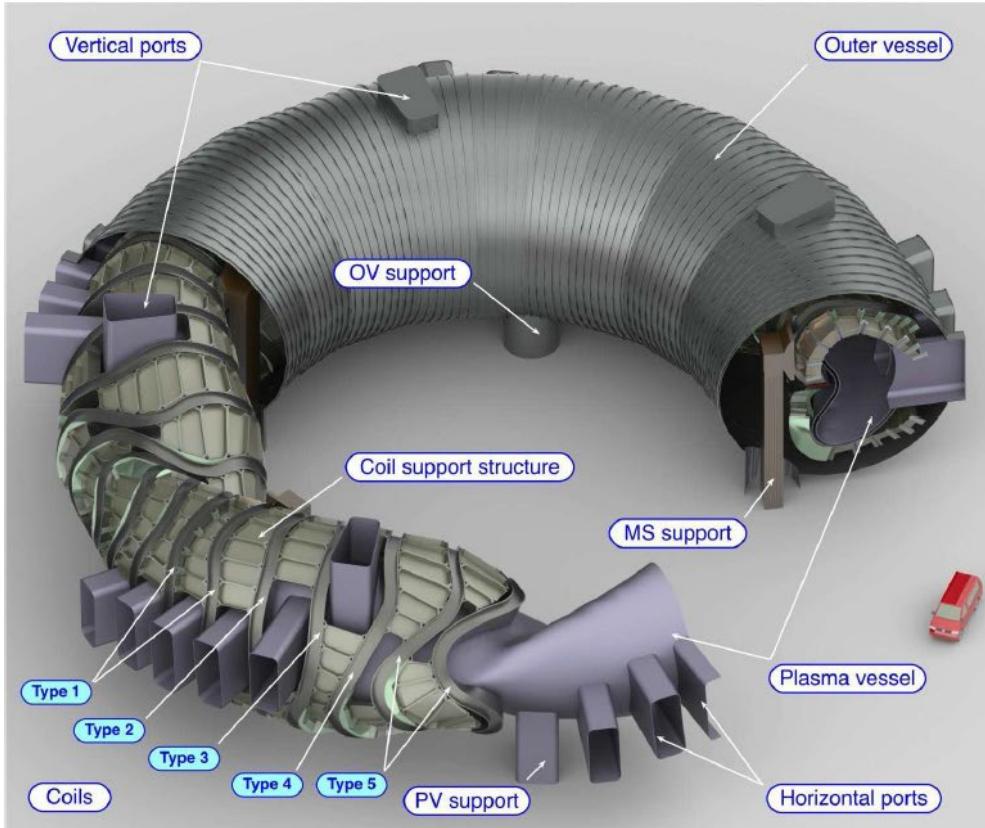


Actively cooled CFC divertor



Actively cooled divertor with W PFCs

# Stellarator Reactor: Helias 5 b



Symmetry	5 Periods
Coil number	50
Major radius	22 m
Overall diameter	60 m
$B_{avg.}$ on axis	5.9 T
$B$ on coil	12.5 T
Coil current	13.65 MA
Magnetic energy	160 GJ (44.4 MWh)

F. Schauer et al., Fusion  
Engineering and Design 88  
(2013) 1619

Toroidal coil dimensions like in ITER!

# Summary and Conclusion

- Nuclear Fusion with DT reaction works and releases energy
- Present day machines are close to  $Q=1$  (in and out) with metallic plasma-facing materials and relevant scenarios
- Power and particle exhaust with seeding and detachment
- Tritium retention and erosion issues solved for those facilities

- ITER is currently built and simulations/scenarios prepared
- PFPO (H, He) until 2034 / FPO (DT) operation from 2035 on
- ITER is the ONLY facility to demonstrate the full capability of all technologies (incl. breeding) and plasma-facing materials
- EU DEMO developed in parallel and design “ready” by 2030
- Step-ladder approach with size scaling => electricity by ~2055

- Parallel development (including private companies) utilizing the flexibility with HT superconducting magnets
- Permits smaller devices with high  $Q$ , less net-power and high flexibility => “fast” track with reactor prototypes by ~2040+



Nuclear fusion can complement renewables by second half of century! It can replace gas, coal, oil or fission in the energy portfolio on world scale!

# Back-up

