

Interference-sensitive Coastal SAR Altimetry Retracker for Measuring Significant Wave Height

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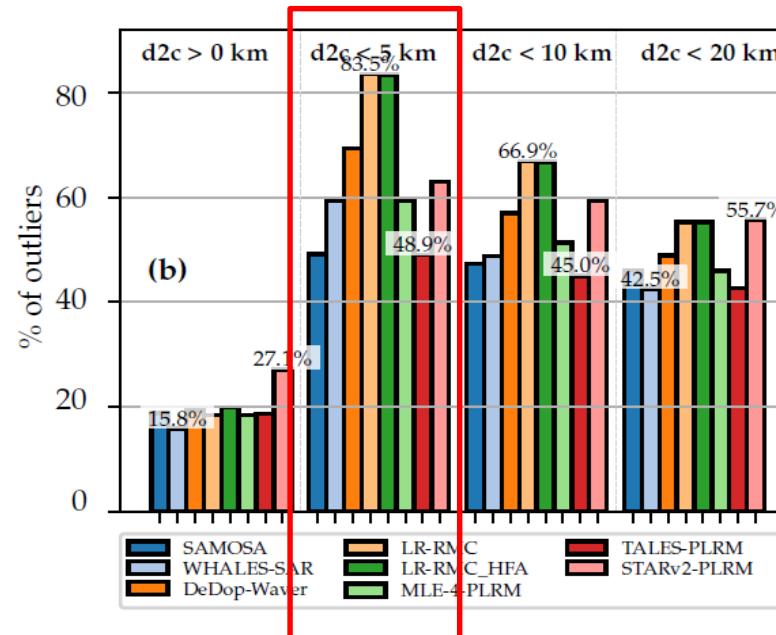
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Outline

1. Motivation
2. Novel Coastal SAR Altimetry Retracker: CORALv1
3. Validation
4. Conclusion

1. Motivation

- A lot of research about the open ocean performance of retracking with many evolutions coming for the Sentinel-6 PDAP processor (Virtual OSTST 2022 slides from Boy et al.)
- Altimeters' Round Robin assessment (Schlembach et al. 2020) within ESA SeaState CCI project
 - Performance was in general improved significantly by most of the retracker as compared to the Sentinel-3 baseline product
 - **BUT:** Number outliers is significantly increased in the coastal zone ($\text{dist2coast} < 20 \text{ km}$): **up to 83.5%**



- We see a high potential in **increasing** the **quantity** (and the quality) in the **coastal zone**

2. Novel Coastal SAR Altimetry Retracker: CORALv1

Objective

Estimation of SWH in the presence of strong spurious interference in the trailing edge that typically occurs in the coastal zone

→ Maximising the quantity without sacrificing quality of records in the coastal zone

CORALv1 - COastal Retracker for SAR ALtimetry version 1.0

- SAMOSA2-model based (SAMOSA DPM 2.5.2)
- Starts from L1B
- Based on SAMOSA+ (Dinardo et al. 2018)
- Features a three-step fitting process
- In open ocean: Falls back to standard SAMOSA-based retracker

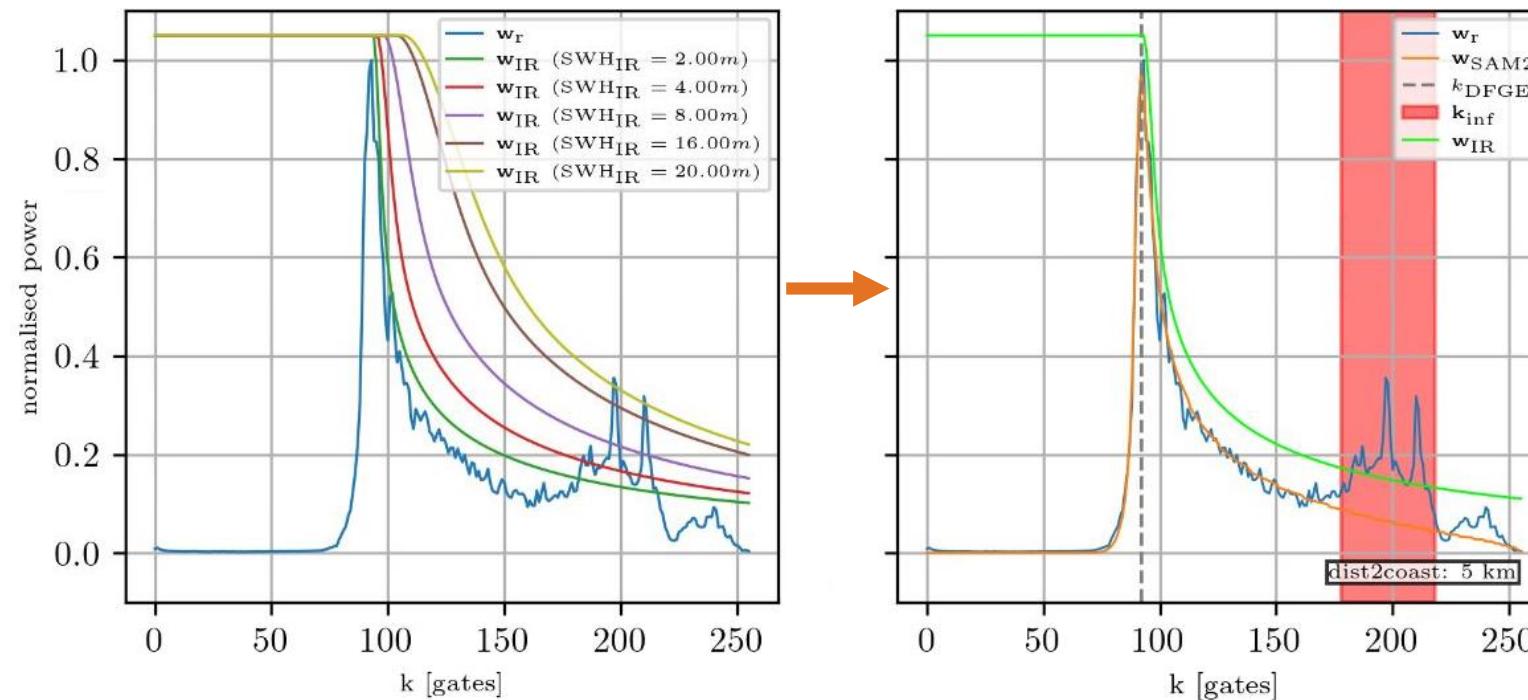
- Main novelty: Adaptive Interference Masking (AIM) scheme

2. CORALv1: AIM

Adaptive Interference Masking (AIM)

→ **senses and masks interference within the trailing edge**

Generation of a single-look SAMOSA model w_{SAM2} to produce the interference reference waveform $w_{IR}(SWH_{IR})$



detected interference gates
 $k_{inf} = \text{True}(w_r > w_{IR})$

→ AIM detects interference gates and excludes them from fitting procedure → **quality** of SWH estimate is improved.

2. CORALv1: AIM (cont'd)

Quality flag definition by SAMOSA+
misfit calculation

$$\text{misfit} = 100 * \sqrt{\frac{1}{N} \sum_i^N (w_{r,i} - w_{\text{SAM2},i})^2}$$

Quality flag: True: bad, False: good

$$q = \text{misfit} > 4$$

→ Drawback: strongly perturbed waveforms are flagged **bad** even if correctly retracked

2. CORALv1: AIM (cont'd)

CORALv1 improves the quality flag by using the **selective misfit**

→ exclusion of interference gates k_{inf} from the misfit calculation

$$\text{misfit}_{\text{selective}} = 100 * \sqrt{\frac{1}{N} \sum_i^N (w_{r,i} - w_{\text{SAM2},i})^2}$$

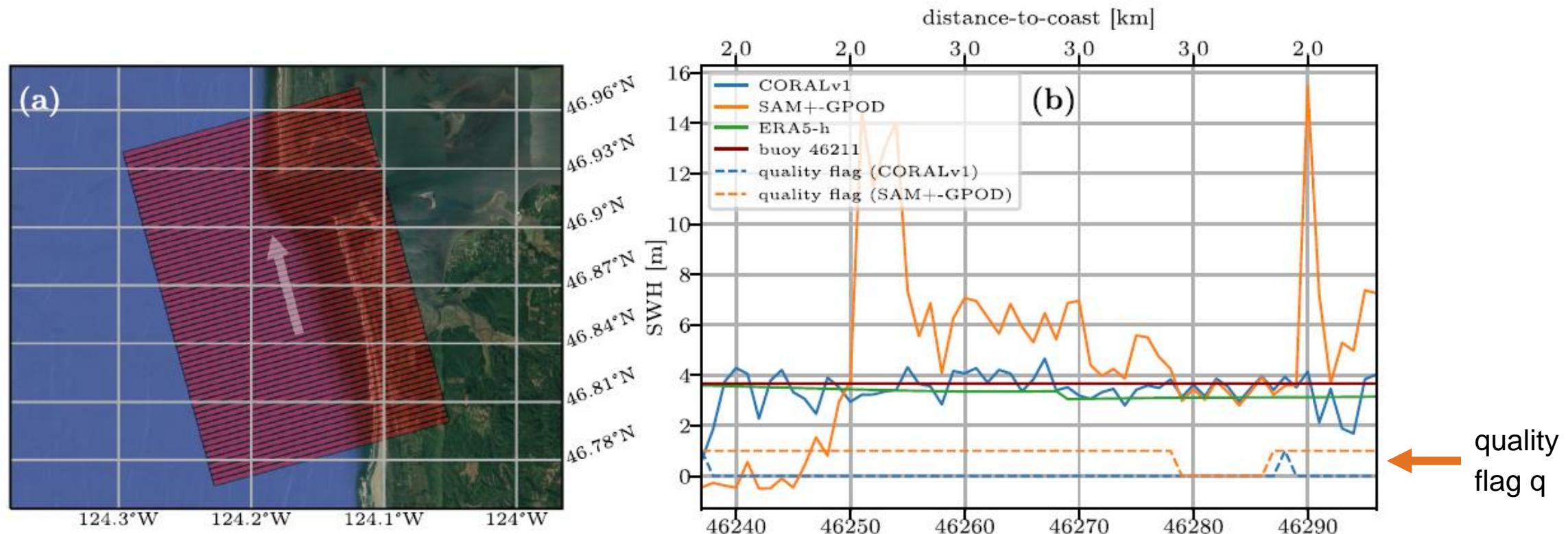
$$i \notin k_{\text{inf}} = \text{True}(w_r > w_{\text{IR}})$$

$$q_{\text{CORALv1}} = \text{misfit}_{\text{selective}} > 4$$

→ AIM better determines the goodness of the fit and recovers strongly interfered waveforms → **quantity** of records ↑

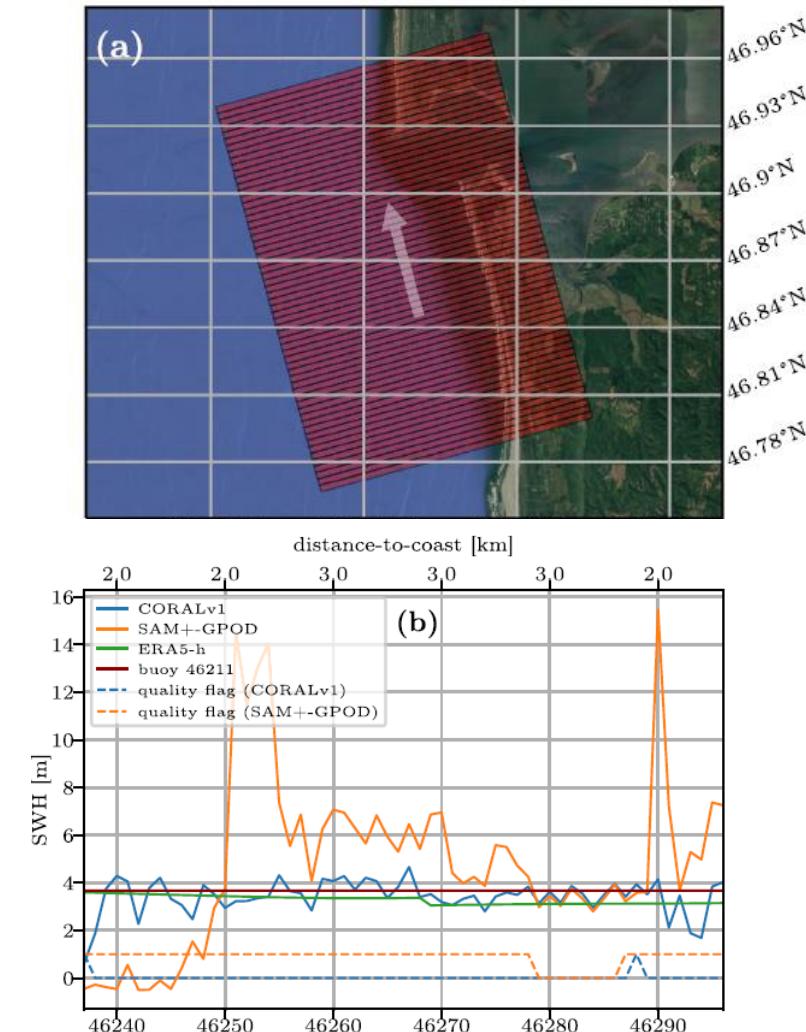
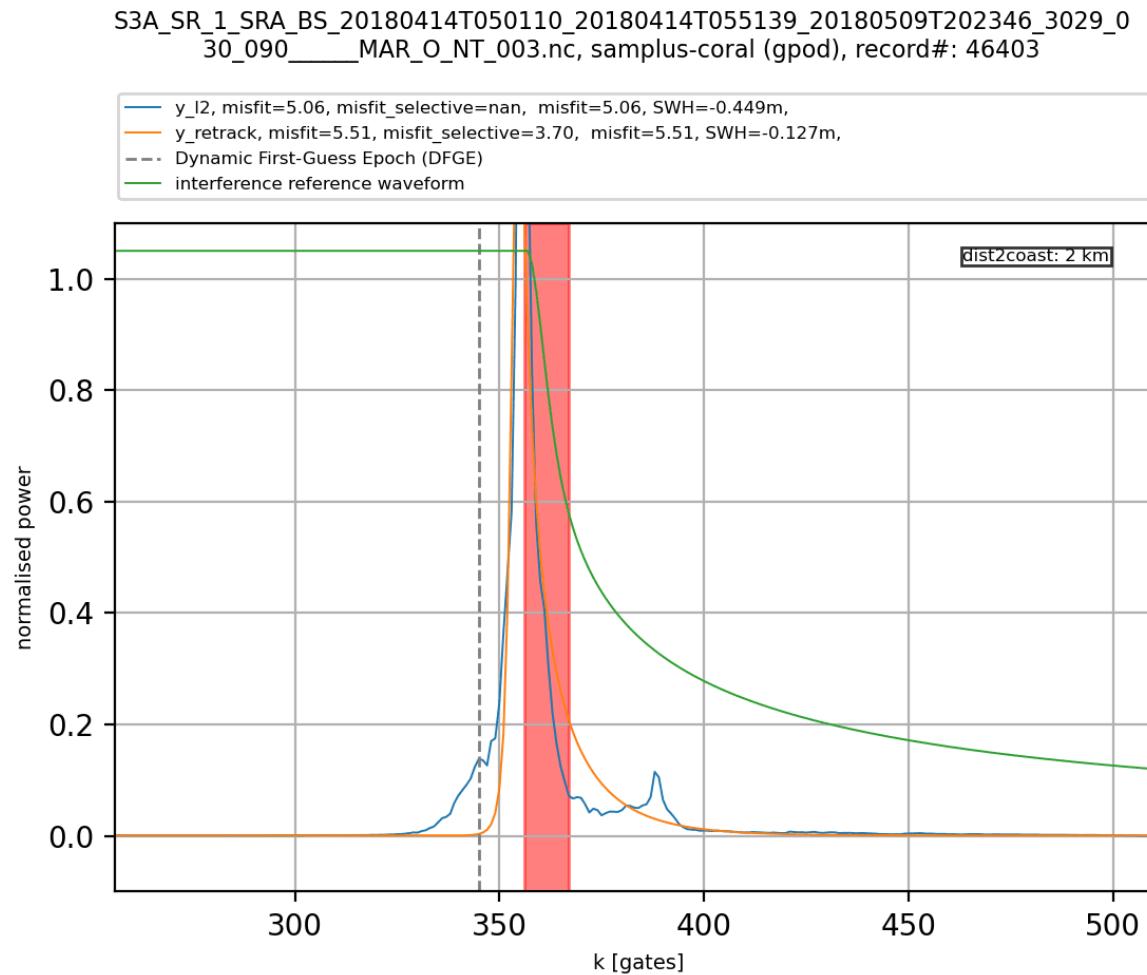
3. Validation: Coastal Case Study

Retracking waveforms with strong coastal interference by CORALv1 in comparison with SAMOSA+



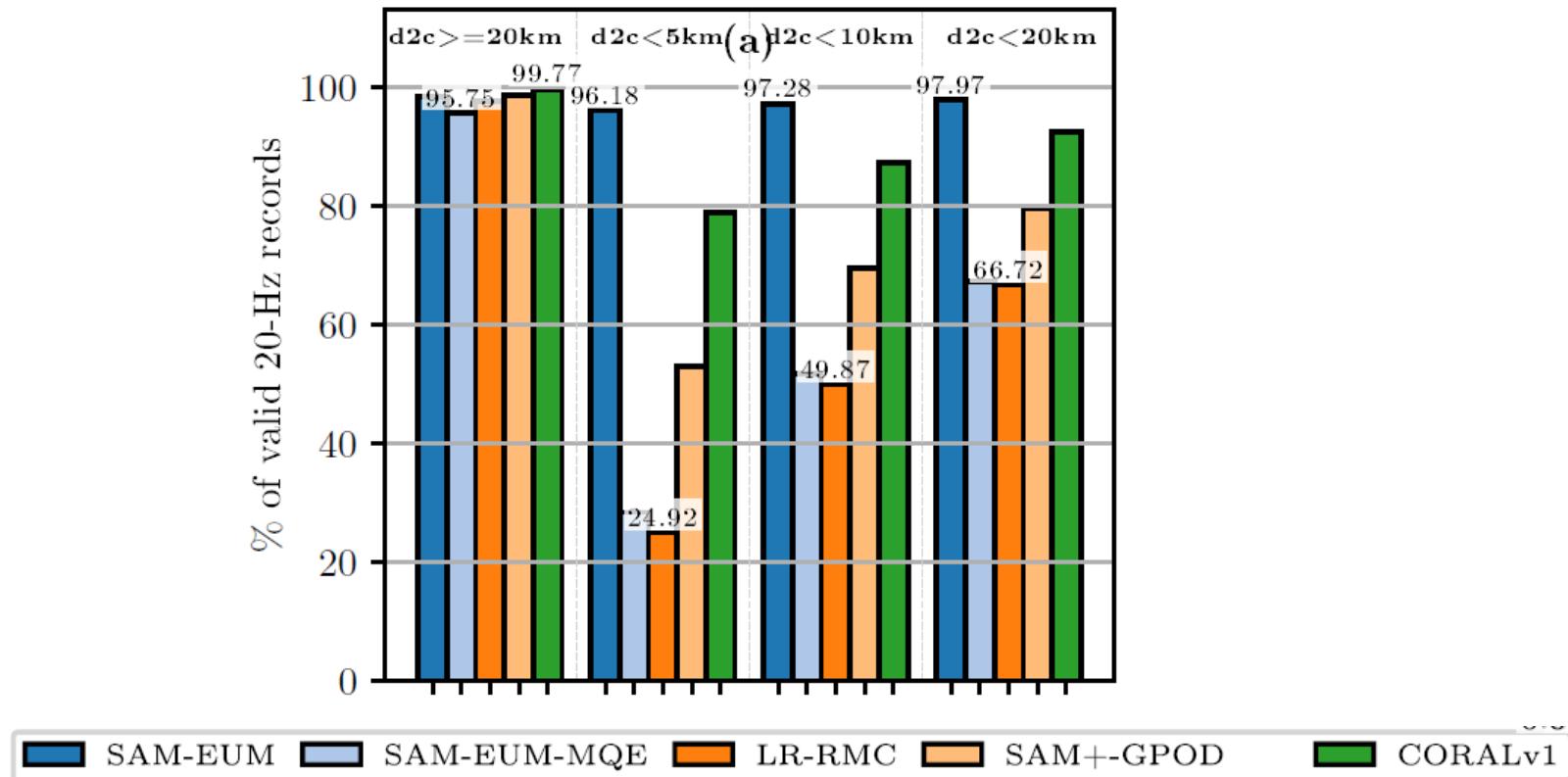
3. Validation: Coastal Case Study

Retracking waveforms with strong coastal interference by CORALv1 in comparison with SAMOSA+



3. Validation: Number of Valid Records

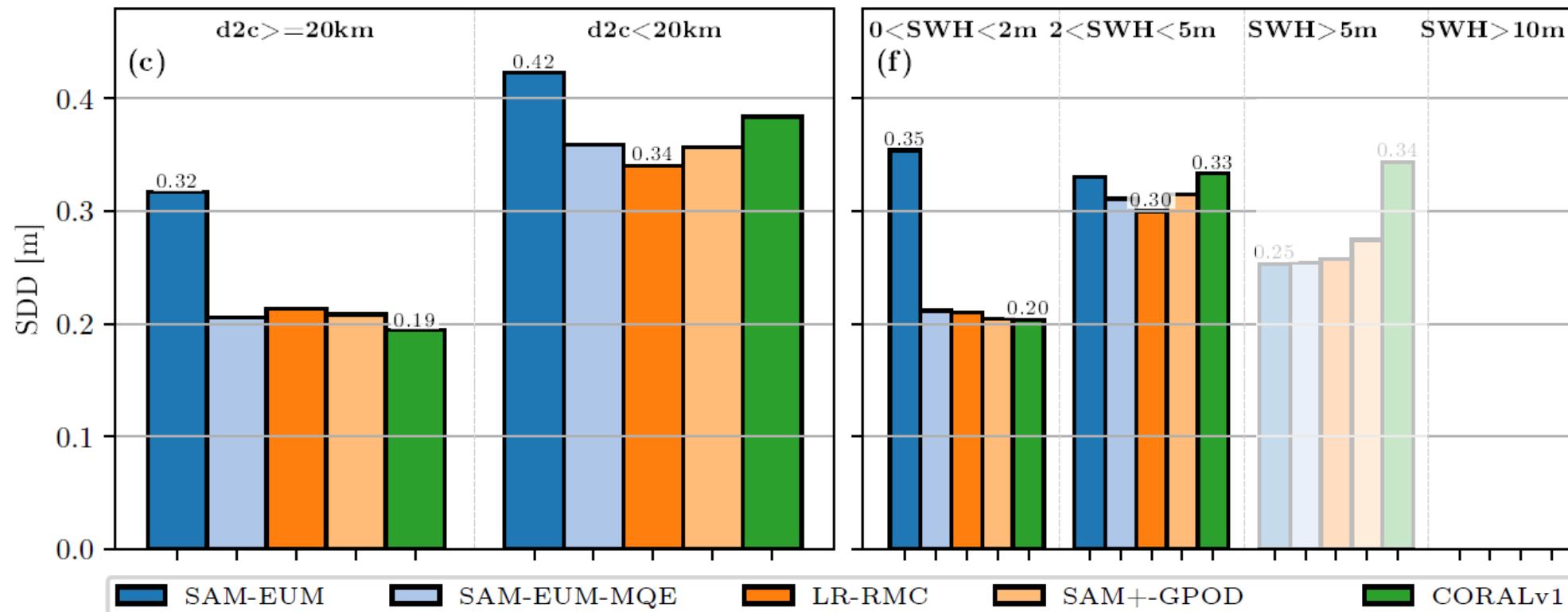
Valid record → quality flag = **good** (0)



→ CORALv1 shows an increased number of valid 20-Hz records of 25%, 17%, and 12% as compared to SAM+-GPOD.

3. Validation: Comparison with In-situ Data

Standard deviation of the differences (SDD)

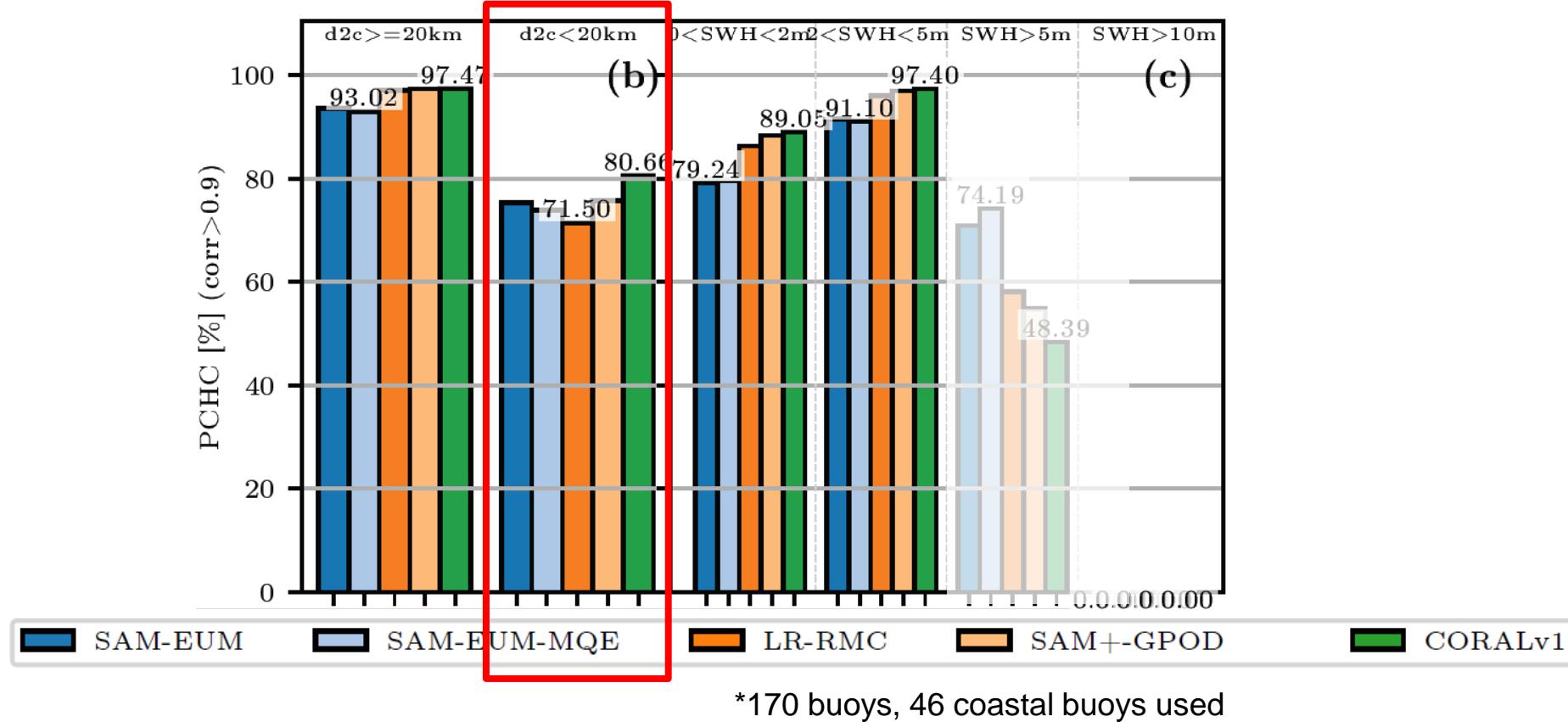


*170 buoys, 46 coastal buoys used

3. Validation: Comparison with In-situ Data

Percent of cycles for high correlation (PCHC): ratio between number of altimeter-buoy collocations with a high correlation (0.9) and number of all altimeter-buoy collocations

51 altimeter records collocated with 1 buoy records per cycle → correlation coefficient r → only take collocations with $r > 0.9$



4. Conclusion

- CORALv1 has implemented a novel **Adaptive Interference Masking (AIM)** scheme that senses and masks interference in the coastal zone
- CORALv1 significantly increases the number of valid 20-Hz records in the coastal zone by 25%, 17%, and 12% (5, 10, 20 km from the coast), without sacrificing quality

Published in Remote Sensing of Environment journal

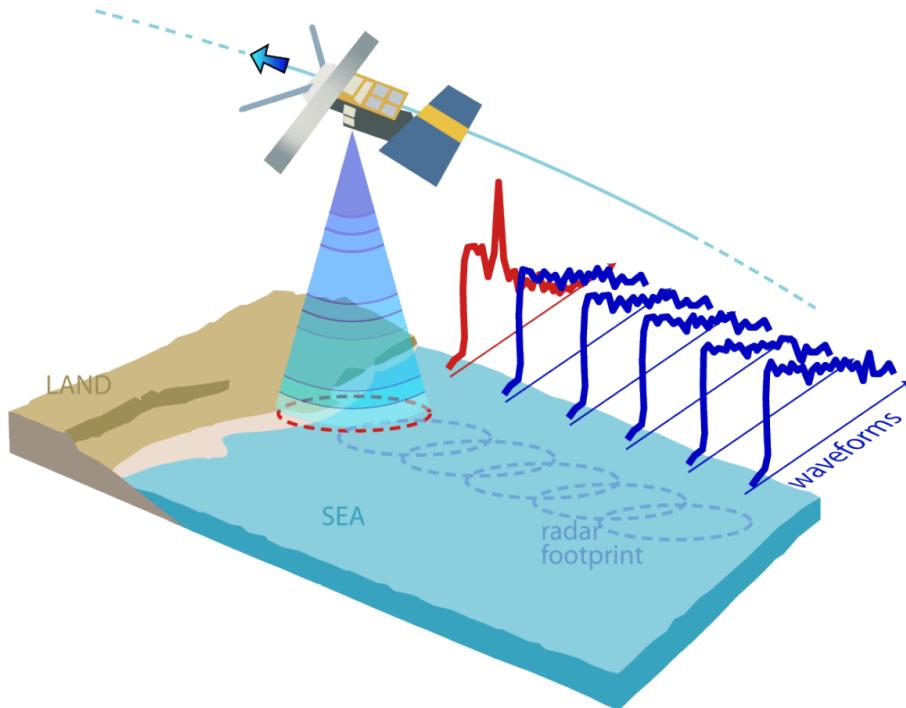
Schlembach et al. „Interference-Sensitive Coastal SAR Altimetry Retracking Strategy for Measuring Significant Wave Height“. *Remote Sensing of Environment*, 274, 112968. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rse.2022.112968>.

Thank you!

0. Satellite Altimetry

Principle

- An altimeter transmits and receives short radio-wave pulses, which are reflected from the ocean surface



round-trip time between altimeter's antenna and ocean surface → **range/distance**

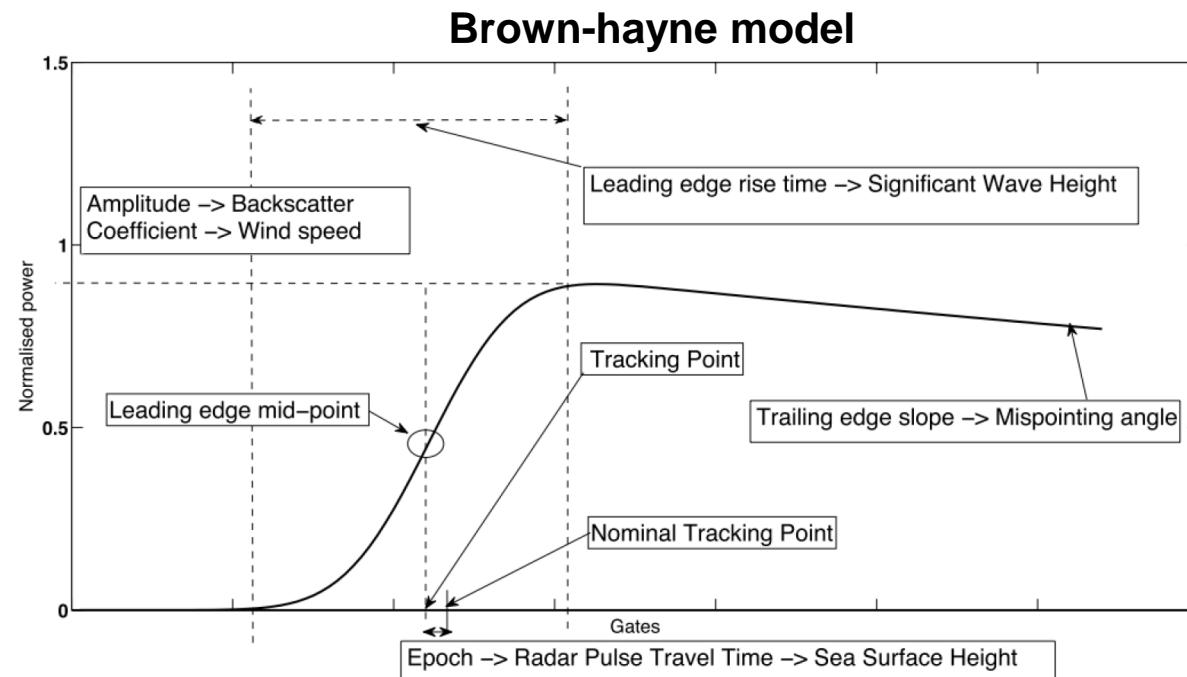
Power of reflected pulse → **wind speed**

Steepness of the leading edge → **significant wave height**

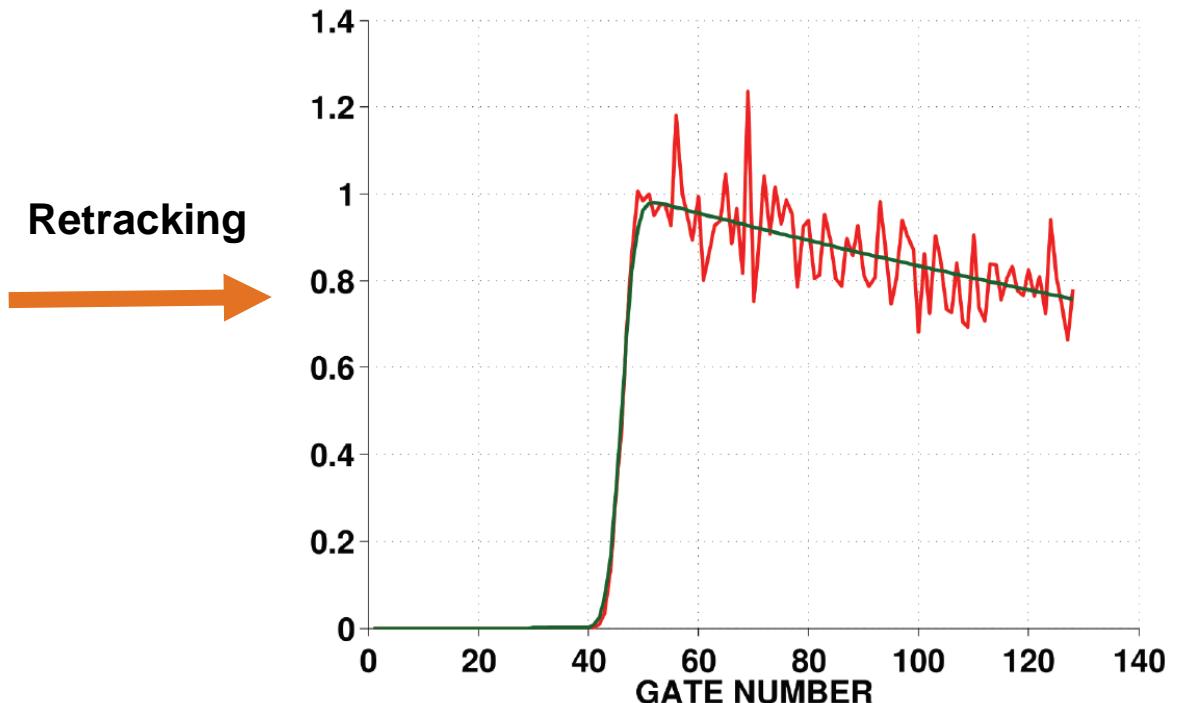
0. Satellite Altimetry

Retracking

- Process of fitting the received echo to an idealised model



Retracking



- Extraction of geophysical parameters:
- range, wind speed (σ_0), **significant wave height (SWH)**

(Estimated) Computational Complexity

L1B-to-L2 processing (=retracking)

12 h on 1 core @Intel(R) Xeon(R) W-2133 CPU @ 3.60GHz

2:15 h on 12 cores @Intel(R) Xeon(R) W-2133 CPU @ 3.60GHz

~35 min on 50 cores @Intel(R) Xeon(R) CPU E5-2699 v4 (x2) @ 2.20GHz

LRZ HPC cluster

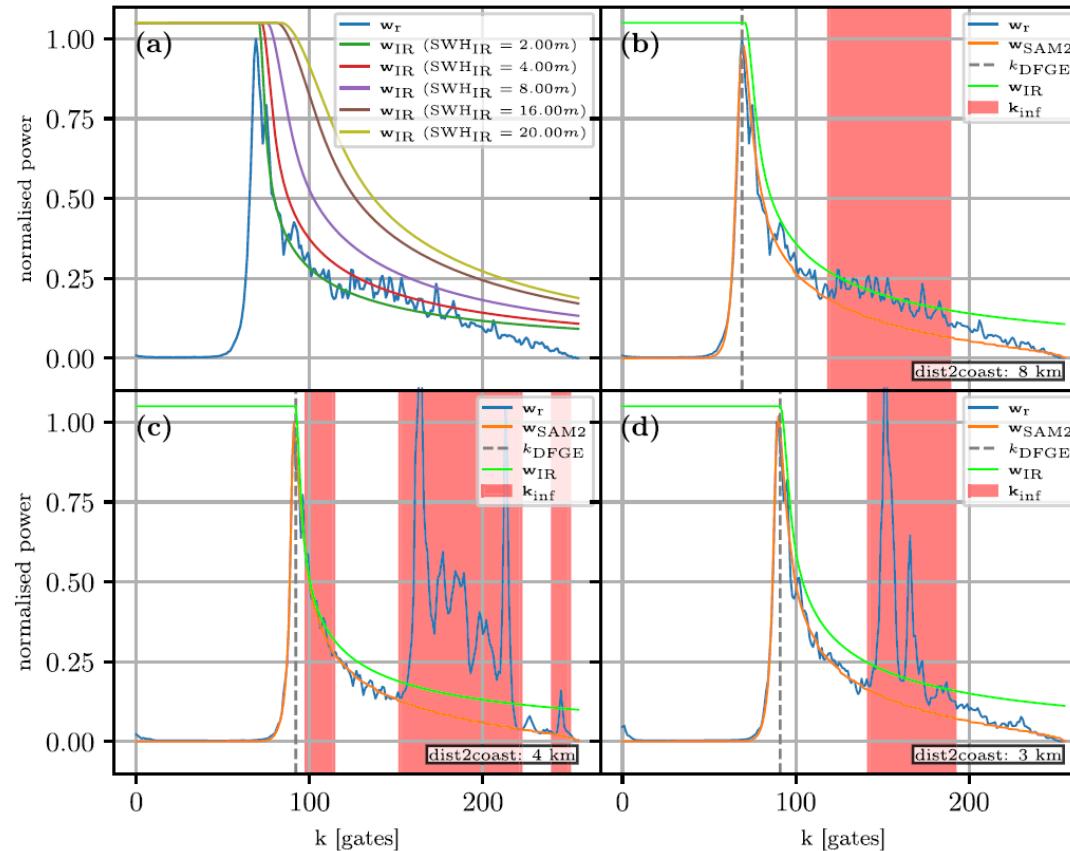
512 netCDF files

~1.5 days on 896 cores (16 cluster nodes) @Intel Xeon E5-2690 v3 ("Haswell") @ 2.60GHz

Adaptive Interference Masking (AIM)

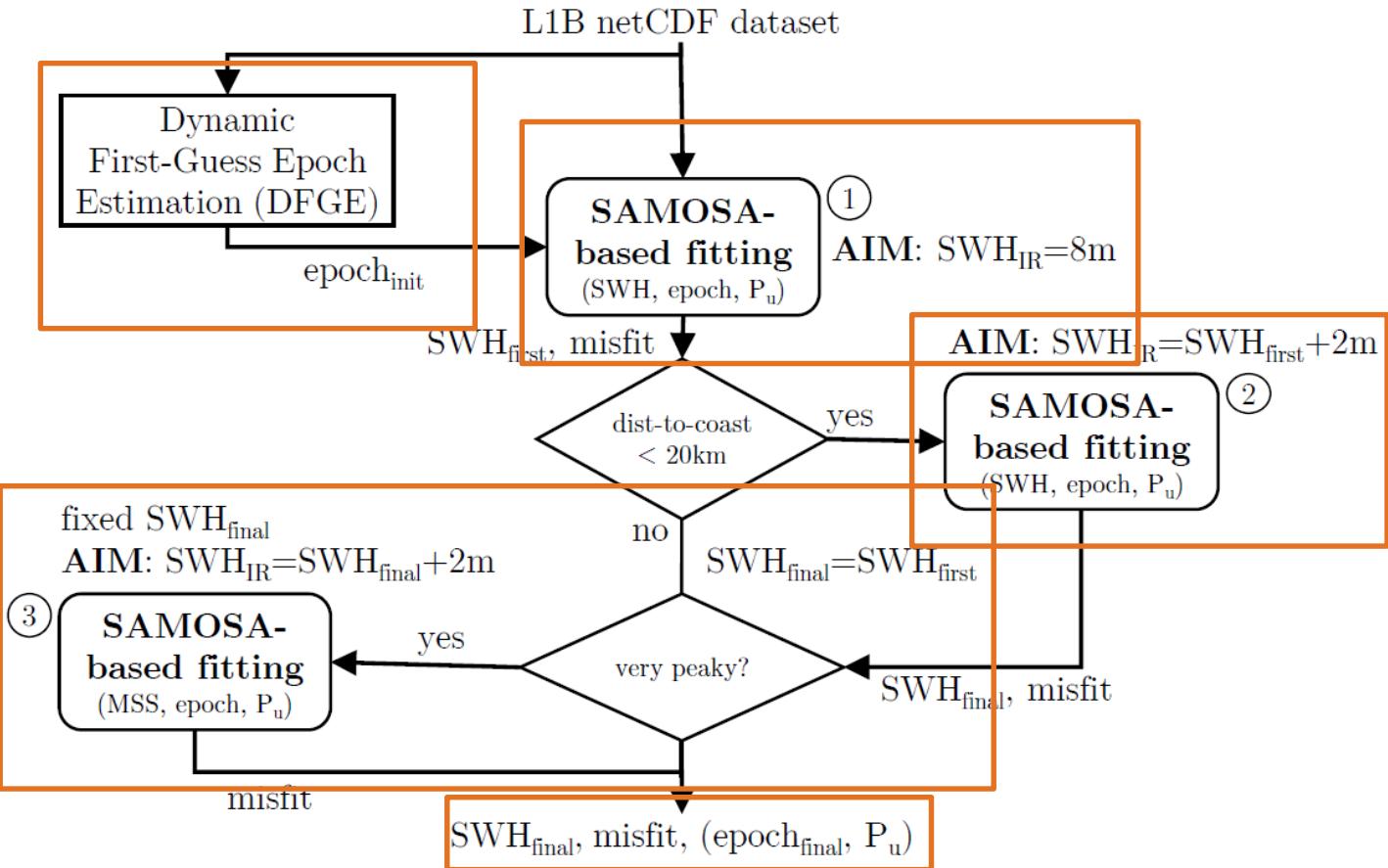
→ senses and masks interference within the trailing edge

Generation of a single-look SAMOSA model w_{SAM2} to produce the interference reference waveform $w_{IR}(SWH_{IR})$



CORALv1: Retracking Strategy

- CORALv1' retracking strategy



- run DFGE
- SAMOSA-based fitting (1) → $\text{SWH}_{\text{first}}$
- If dist-to-coast-<20: SAMOSA-based fitting (2) → $\text{SWH}_{\text{final}}$
- If peaky waveform: SAMOSA-based fitting (3)
- $\text{SWH}_{\text{final}}, \text{misfit}, (\text{epoch}_{\text{final}}, P_u)$

Validation

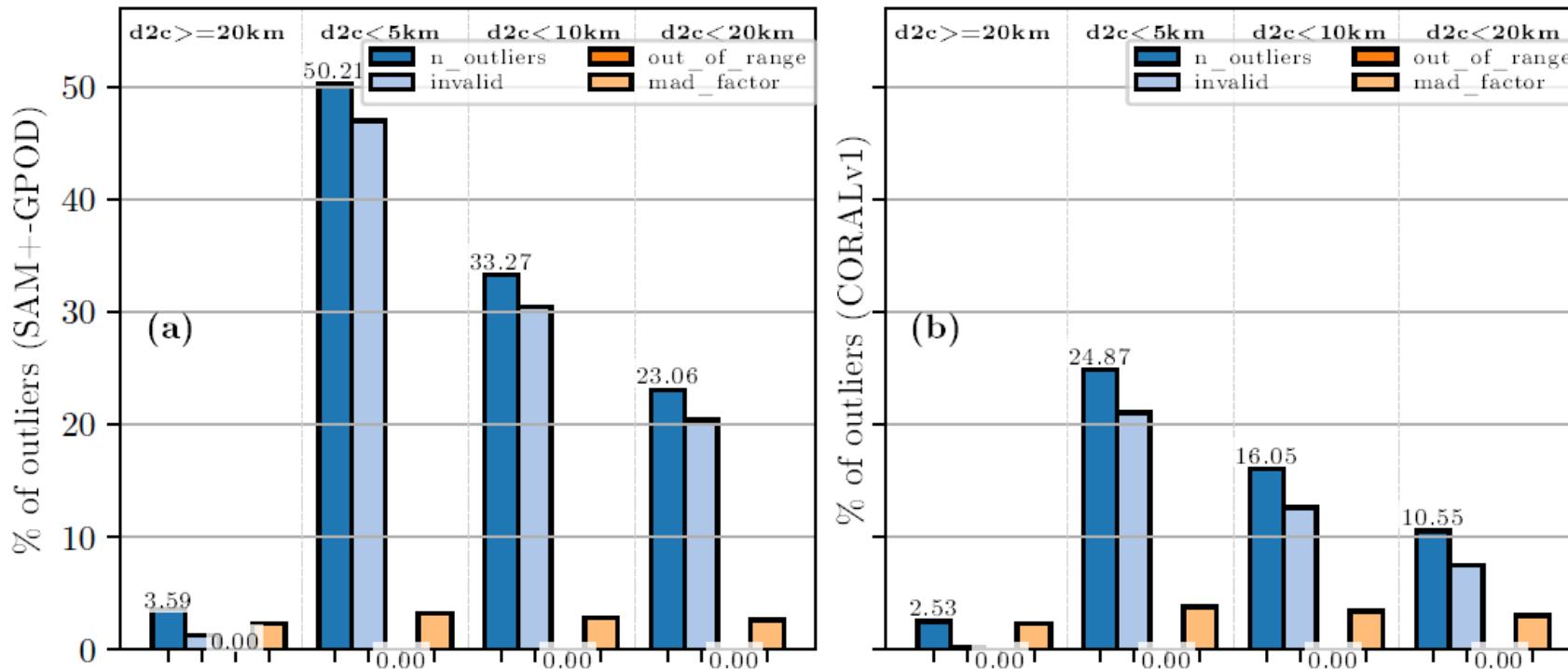
- Performed with retrackval framework from Altimeters' Round Robin assessment (Schlembach et al. 2020)
- Only minor changes to RR assessment
- Same L1B dataset as for RR:
 - 512 netCDF files, 30 pole-to-pole tracks, 17-18 cycles
 - 26th of March 2017 to the 30th of June 2018 (15 months)
 - From EUMETSAT CODA, baselines 002 and 003
- Validation data:
 - ERA5-based hindcast model (ERA5-h)
 - In-situ buoy data (170 buoys, 46 coastal buoys)
 - Reference L2 datasets:
 - SAM-EUM: original L2 with latest baseline 004 with original quality flag (defined by 3-sigma criterion)
 - SAM-EUM-MQE: original L2 with latest baseline 004 and redefined quality flag: $\text{misfit_eum} = \sqrt{100 * \sqrt{\text{mqe}}}$
 - LR-RMC, dataset taken from Altimeter Round Robin
 - SAM+-GPOD, RR files processed by GPOD
- Types of analyses: Outliers, **Number of Valid Records**, Intrinsic noise, wave spectral variability, comparison against ERA5-h wave model, in-situ buoy data

Validation

- Performed with framework from Altimeters' Round Robin (RR) assessment (Schlembach et al. 2020)
- Reference L2 datasets:
 - SAM-EUM: original L2 with latest baseline 004 with original quality flag (defined by 3-sigma criterion)
 - SAM-EUM-MQE: original L2 with latest baseline 004 and redefined quality flag: $\text{misfit_eum} = \sqrt{100 * \sqrt{\text{mqe}}}$
 - LR-RMC, dataset taken from Altimeter Round Robin
 - SAM+-GPOD, RR files processed by GPOD

Validation: Outliers

Distribution of the different types of outliers



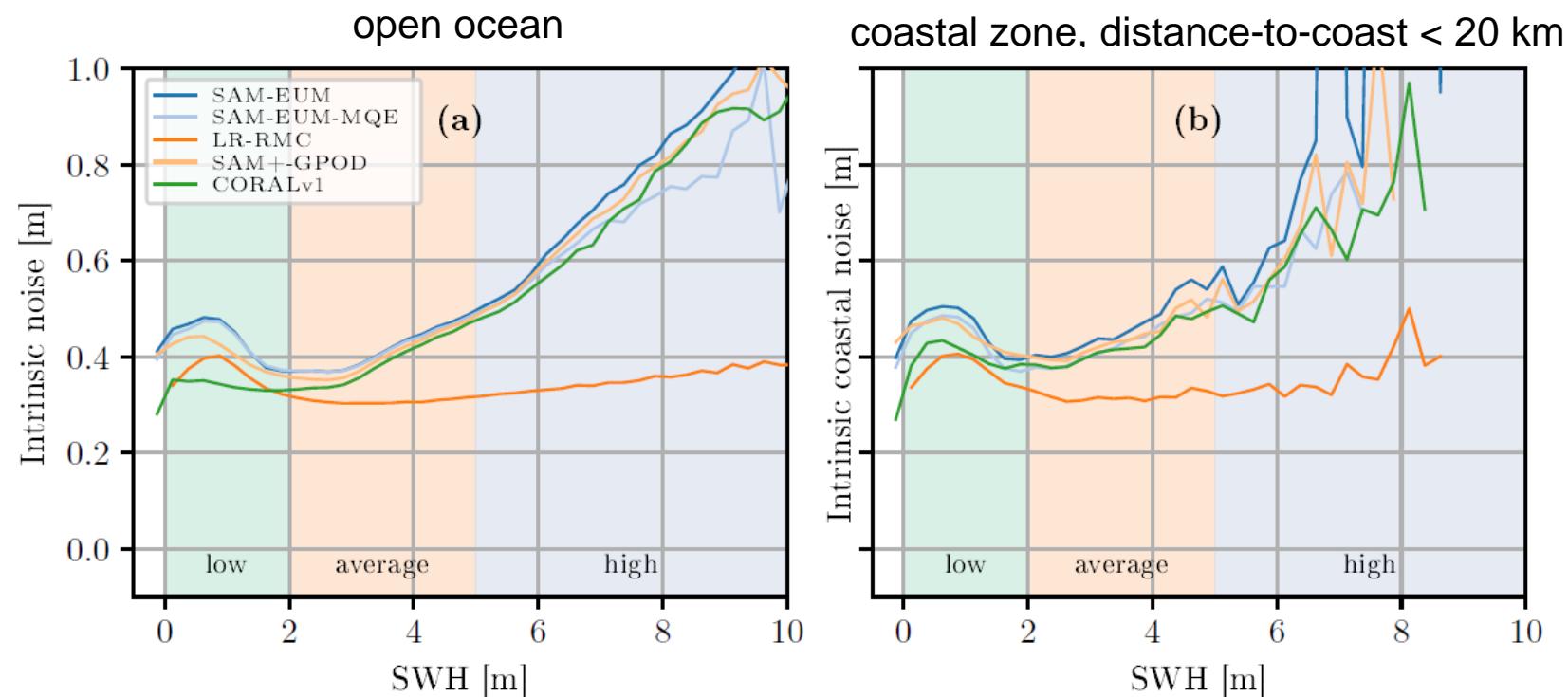
Invalid: missing data or quality flag set ,bad'
Out_of_range: [-0.5, 25]m
mad_factor:

$$|\text{SWH}_i| - \text{median}_{20} > \pm 3 \cdot 1.4826 \cdot \text{MAD}_{20}$$

Invalid outliers and thus the quality flag account for most of the outliers

Validation: Intrinsic Noise

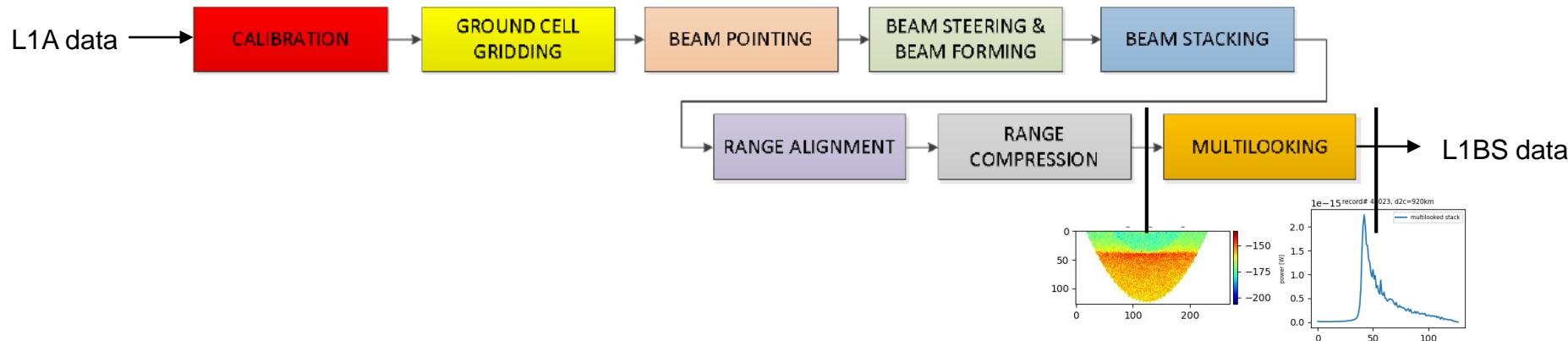
Defined as the standard deviation (STD) of 20-Hz data within a 1-Hz distance



→ No significant additional noise in coastal zone

SAR Altimetry Processing Levels

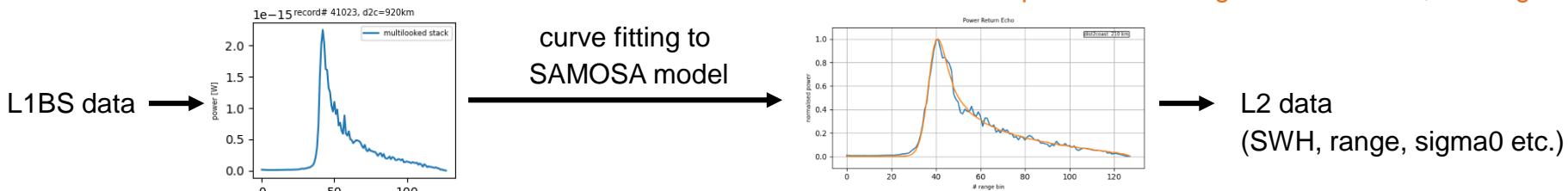
L1B processing (L1A -> L1B)



Different L1B products available

- EUMETSAT
- GPOD ('official s3' setting) $\rightarrow n_p=128$, no Hamming window
- GPOD ('coastal' setting) $\rightarrow n_p=512$, Hamming window
- DeDop framework \rightarrow generation works, but large bias \rightarrow buggy \rightarrow needs rework

L2 processing (L1B/S -> L2)



\rightarrow Implemented retrackers: - SAM, SAM+, SAM++

\rightarrow Plus additional (optional) features that are targeting coastal scenarios (distorted multi-peak waveforms):

`dynamic_fg_epoch, normalise_around_fg, leading_edge_detection, distortion_masking, new_qual_flag`

SAMOSA+ Algorithm

As in Dinardo2018, Dinardo2020

- Based on SAMOSA2 model (SAMOSA DPM 2.5.2)
- Dedicated L1B processing:
 - Oversampling (zero-padding) factor 2, double-extension of receiving window → 512-len waveform
 - Applied Hamming window to mitigate spurious signal originating from sidelobes
- Two extensions to L2 processing
 1. Dynamic first-guess epoch: pointwise product of 20 adjacent waveforms to get an averaged initial epoch for fitting
 2. Second retracking step: fix SWH from first step, retrack mean square slope, if one of the following conditions are met:

$$E \cdot PP < 0.68$$

$$E \cdot PP > 0.78$$

$$100 \cdot PP > 4$$

$$\frac{E}{\text{mistfit}} < 8$$

$$E = - \sum_i^N |w_{r,i}|^2 \log_2(|w_{r,i}|^2)$$

$$PP = \frac{\max(\mathbf{w_r})}{\sum_i^N w_{r,i}}$$

CORALv1: TRR Fitting Parameters

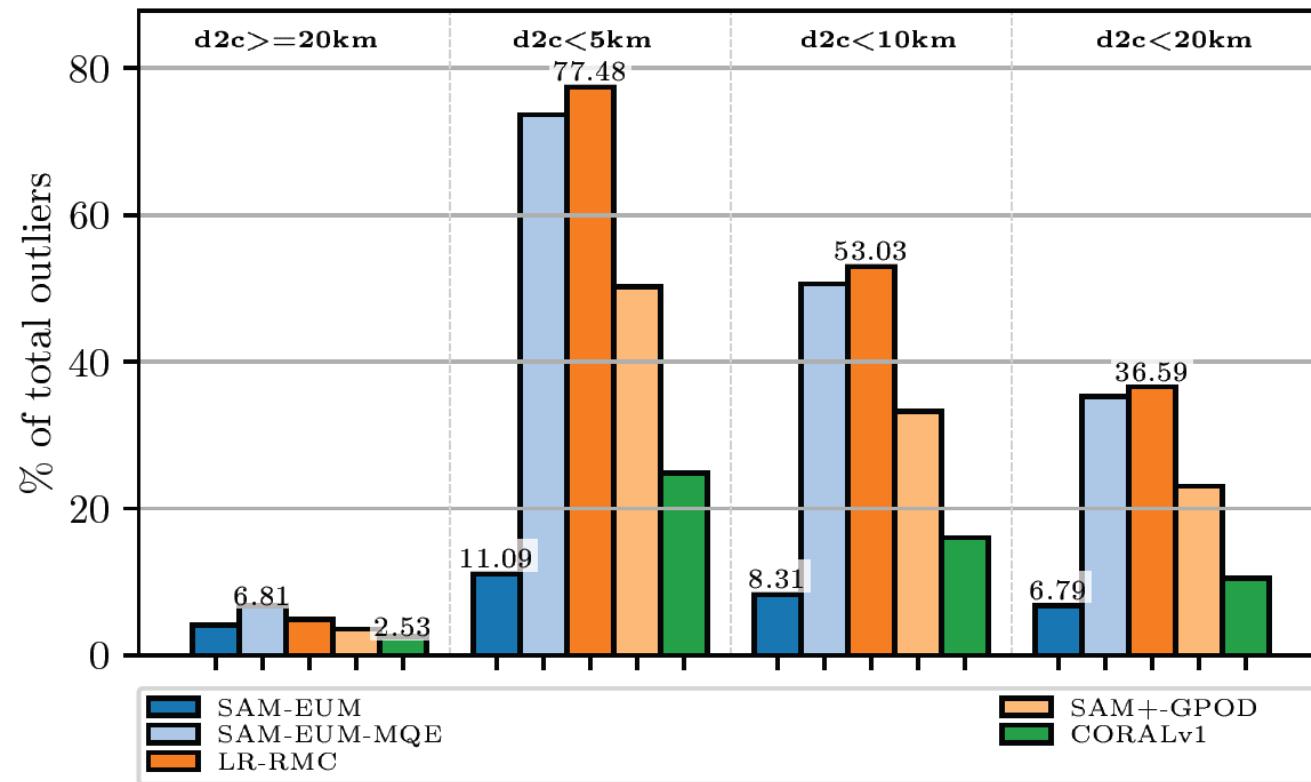
Chosen optimisation parameters for TRR algorithm

Optimisation parameter	Value
Init value: SWH	2.0 m
Boundary: SWH	[−0.5, 20.0] m
Init value: epoch	estimated FG epoch
Boundary: epoch	±10 k_{DFGE}
Init value: P_u	1.0
Boundary: P_u	[0.2, 1.5]
ftol/gtol/xtol	1e-5
Step size	1e-2

Table 2: Optimisation parameters used for TRR algorithm. ftol, gtol, and xtol are tolerances for terminating the fitting by the change of the cost function, the norm gradients, and the independent variables, respectively.

Validation: Outliers

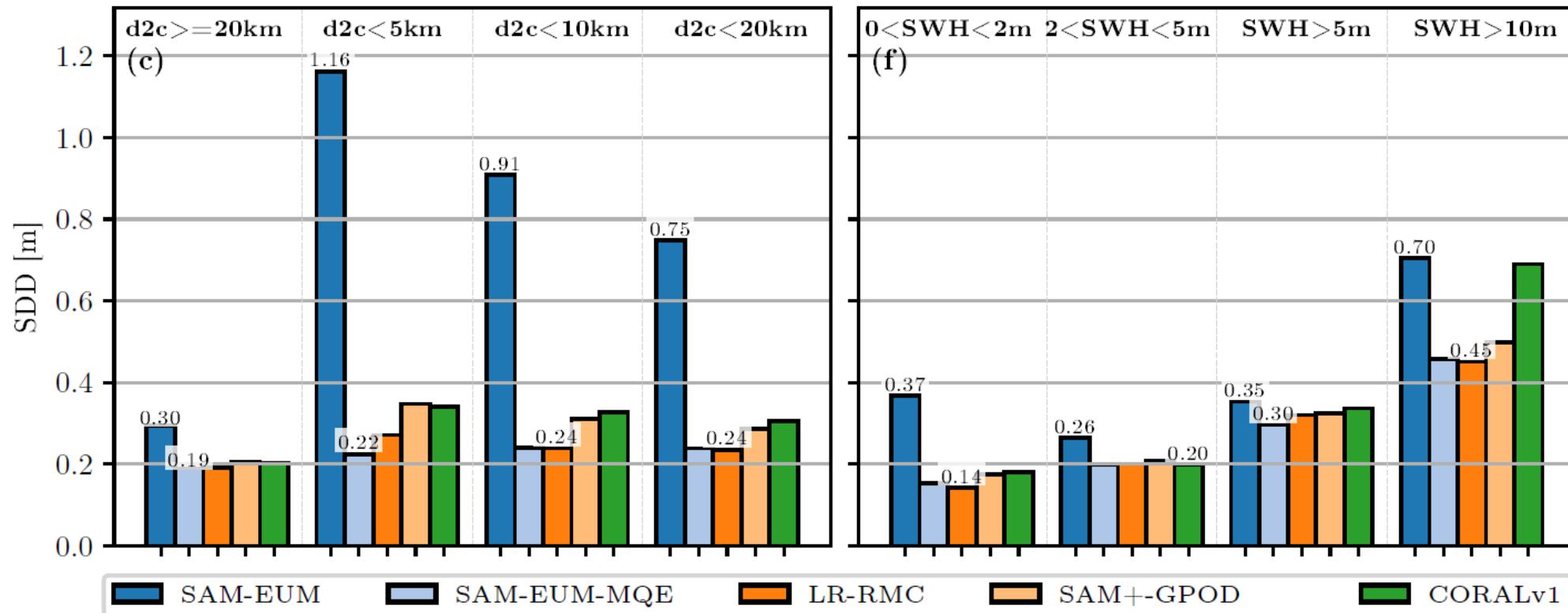
Total number of outliers



CORALv1 has significantly less outliers in the coastal zone.

Validation: Comparison with the ERA5-h Wave Model

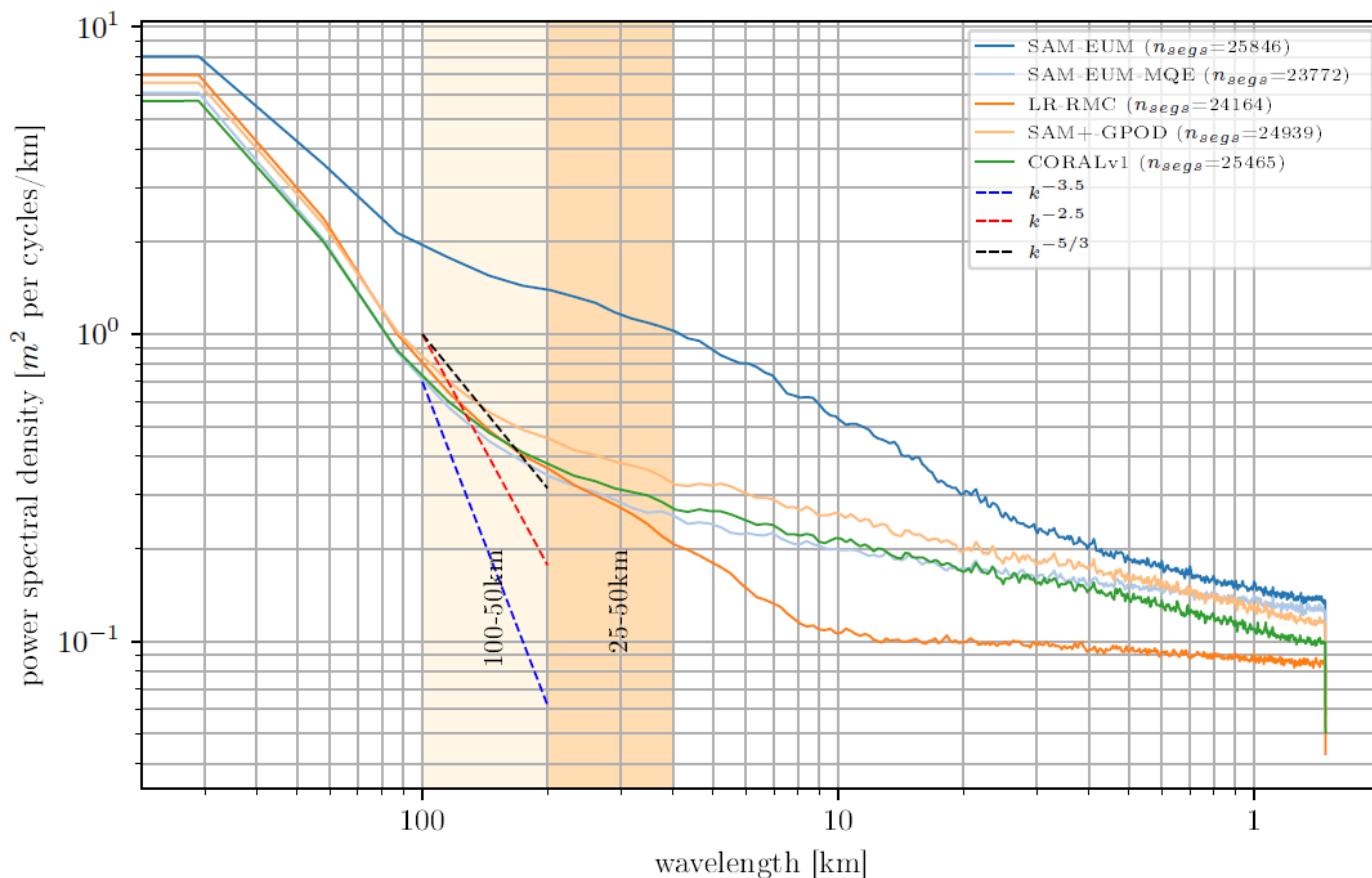
Standard deviation of the differences (SDD)



CORALv1 shows a comparable performance with regards to the ERA5-h wave model.

Validation: Power Spectral Density

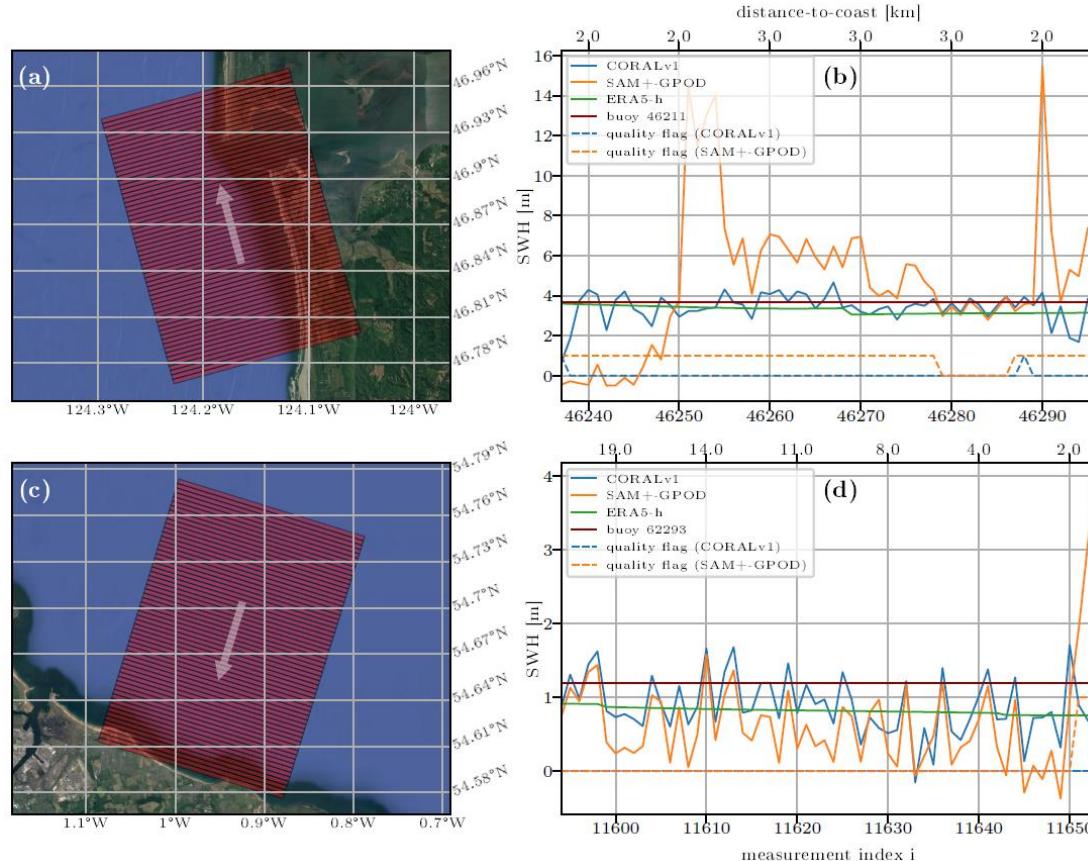
Welch spectra (averaged 1024-pt Fourier spectra, 50% overlap, Hann windowed) → open ocean segments (gaps interpolated)



$k^{-5/3}$
Boas et al. 2020
Dodet et al. 2020

Validation: Coastal Case Study

Two coastal case studies showing maps of effective footprints (14 km x 330 m)



CORALv1 shows a significant increase of valid, good quality SWH estimates when the effective footprint is land-intruded

