



# Stretching structures from finite-size Lyapunov exponents: Their impact across all biological scales

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E. García-Ladona, V. Rossi, V. Garçon, J. Sudre, S. Wiggins,  
A.M. Mancho, E. Tew Kai, F. Marsac, H. Weimerskirch, ...

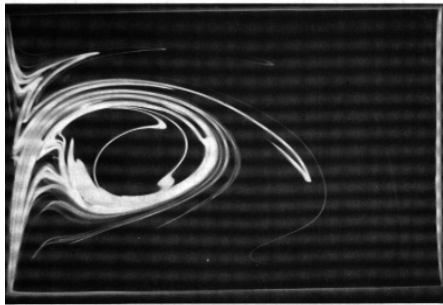




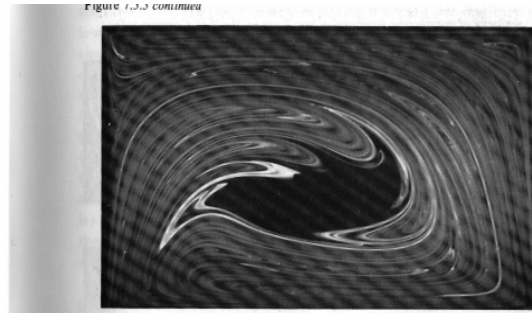
## OUTLINE

- The dynamical systems approach to fluid transport: hyperbolic points, manifolds, ...
- Finite-size Lyapunov exponents
  - Abiotic tracers
  - Phytoplankton
  - Frigatebirds

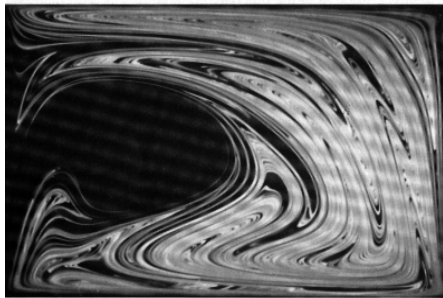
# The dynamical systems approach to fluid transport



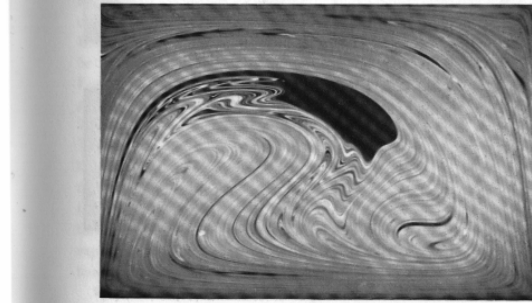
(a)



(c)



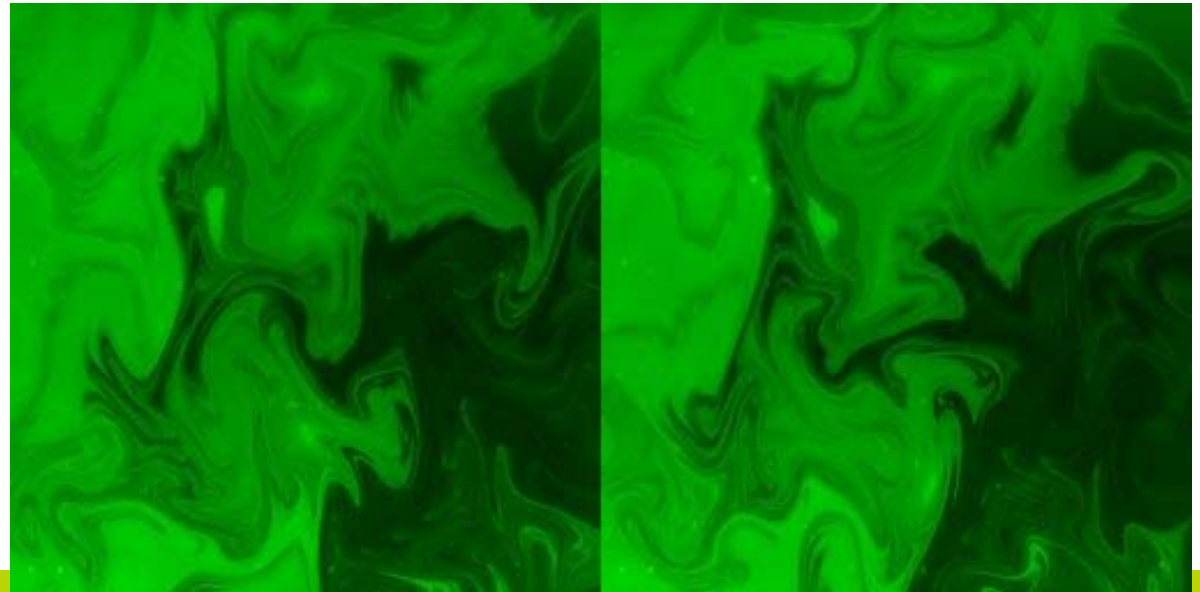
(b)



(d)

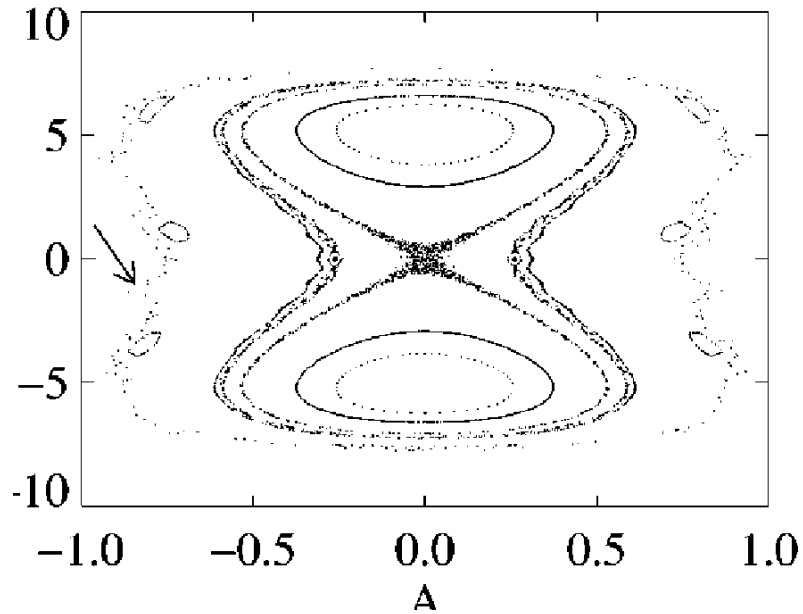
J.M. Ottino, *The kinematics of mixing: stretching, chaos, and transport* (Cambridge, 1989)

D. Rothstein, E. Henry,  
J. P. Gollub, *Nature* 401,  
770 (1999)

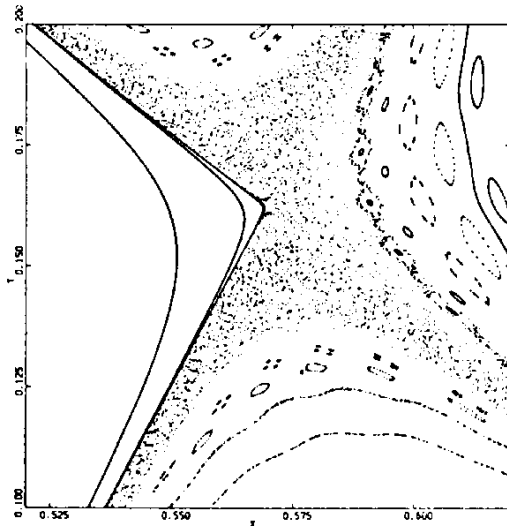


$$\frac{d\mathbf{x}(t)}{dt} = \mathbf{v}(\mathbf{x}(t), t)$$

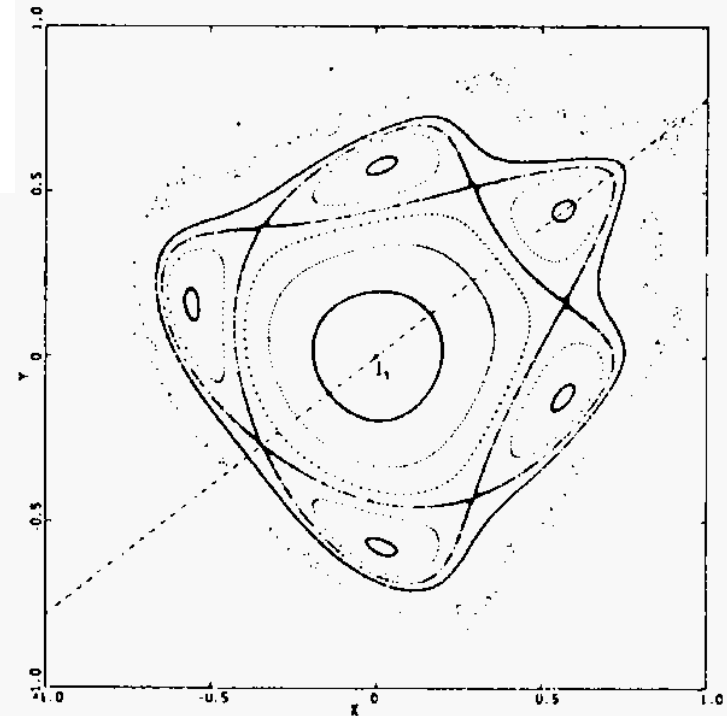
Two-dimensional  
time-periodic dynamical systems



Poincaré sections  
or estroboscopic  
maps



Chaotic seas,  
KAM tori, ...

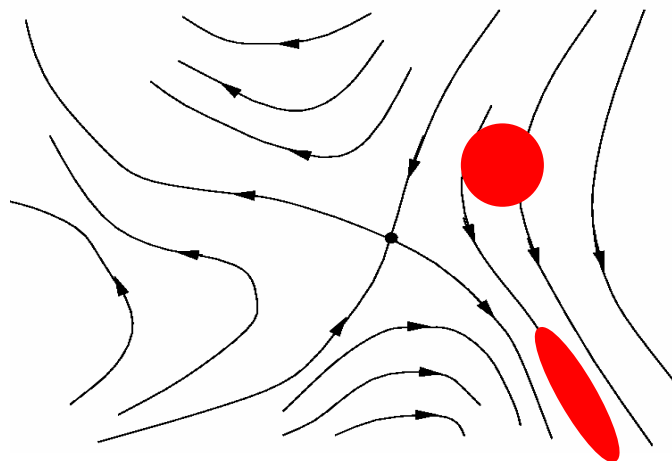
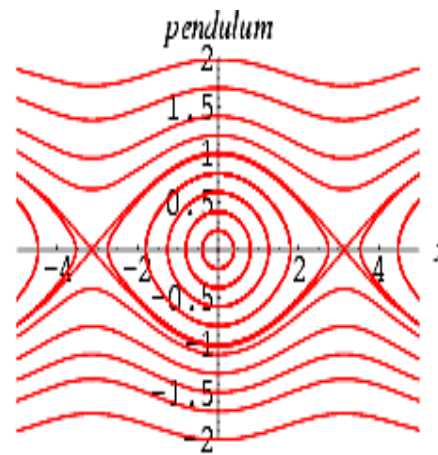
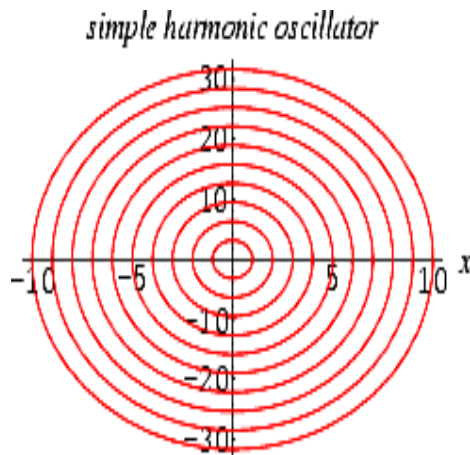


## THE DYNAMICAL SYSTEMS APPROACH TO LAGRANGIAN FLUID TRANSPORT

Trajectories of two-dimensional **steady** or **periodic** flows are

organized by the **fixed points**, or **periodic orbits** of the dynamical system

$$\frac{d\mathbf{x}(t)}{dt} = \mathbf{v}(\mathbf{x}(t))$$

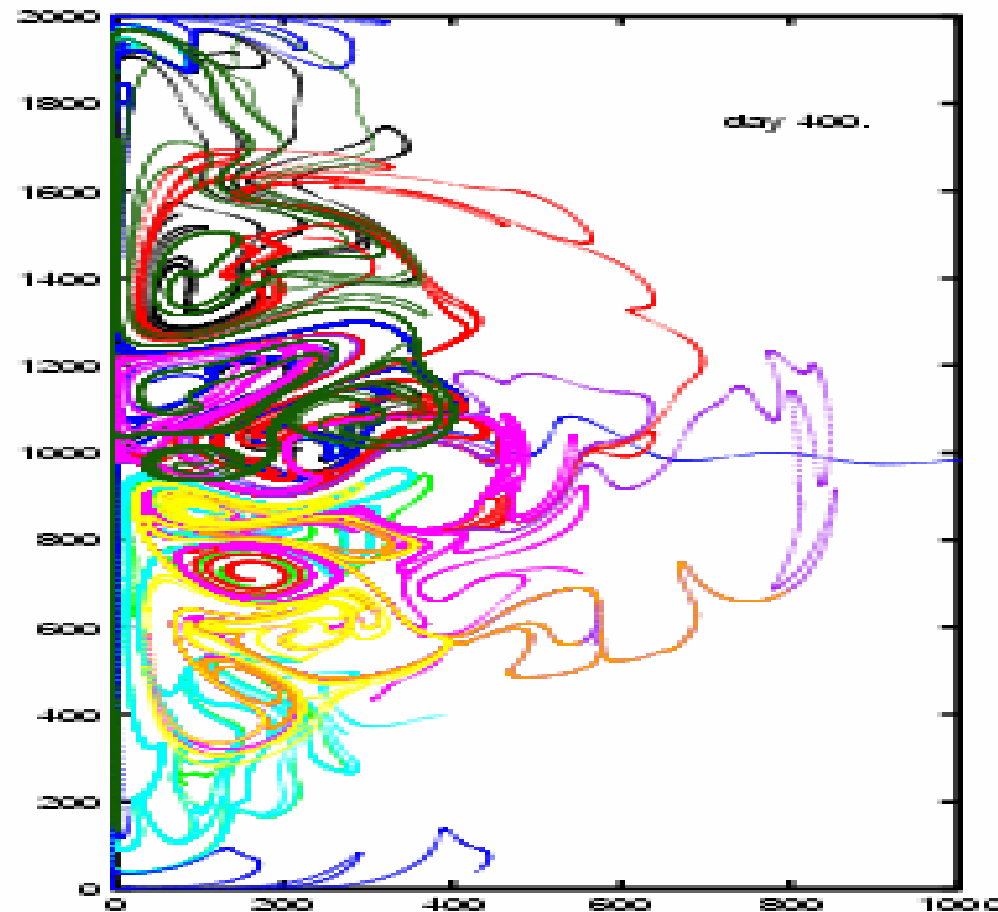


If **hyperbolic**:  
Stable and

unstable manifolds → separatrices

**Tracers tend to approach unstable manifolds**

**But  
unsteady flows ...**



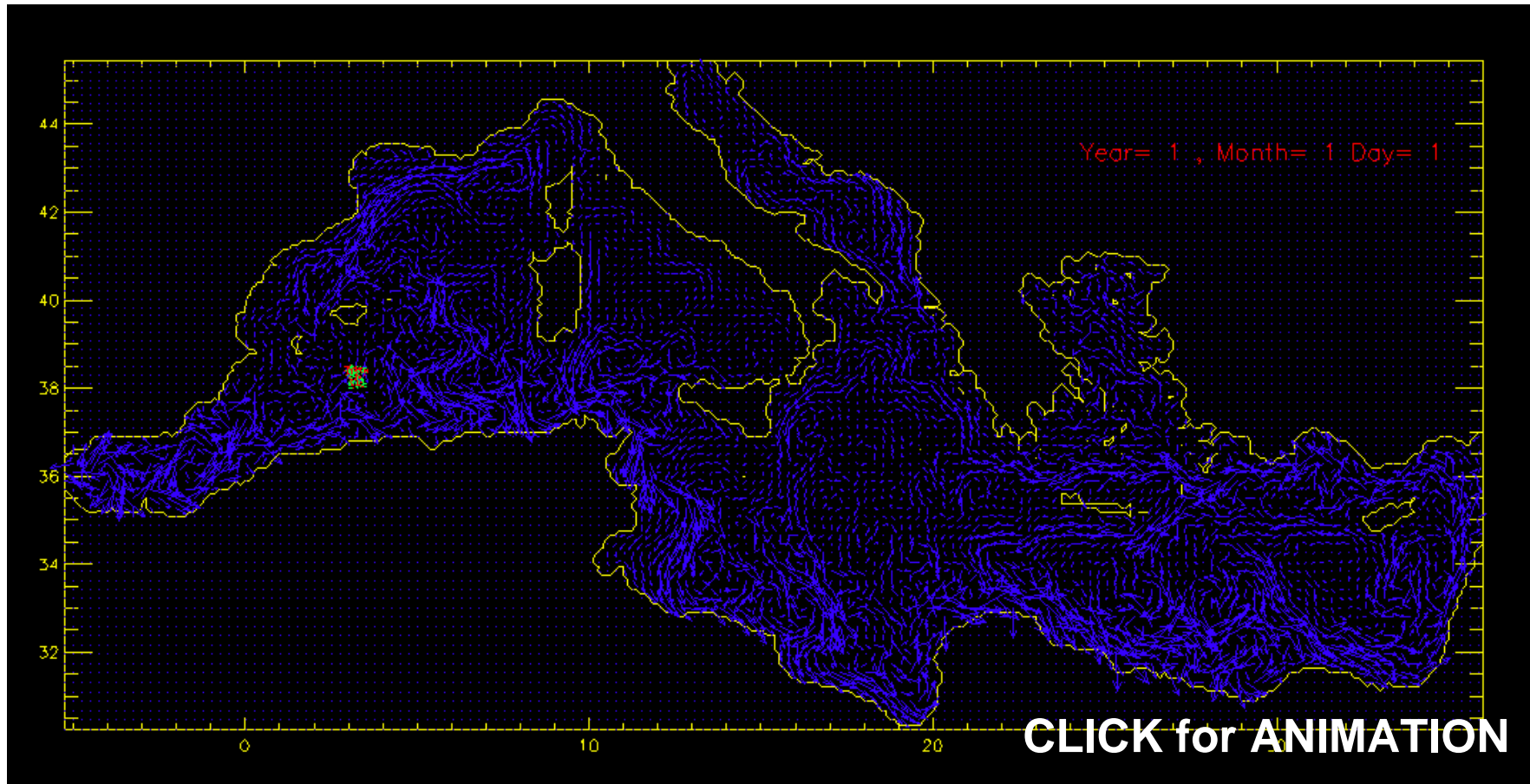
From Mancho, Small and Wiggins, 2005

Is there any particular subset of hyperbolic points and manifolds organizing the dynamics (the equivalent to the fixed points in autonomous systems) ?  
How to select them among this mess ?

## Identifying the relevant trajectories and manifolds in time-aperiodic dynamical systems

- Attracting or repelling material lines (Haller, Poje, ...)
- Distinguished hyperbolic points (Wiggins, Ide, Mancho, ...)
- Stretching-field methods: Finite-time Lyapunov exponents, Finite-size Lyapunov exponents, ... (Vulpiani, Cencini, Legras, Artale, Haller, Lekien, ...)
- Leaking (Tél, Schneider...)
- ...



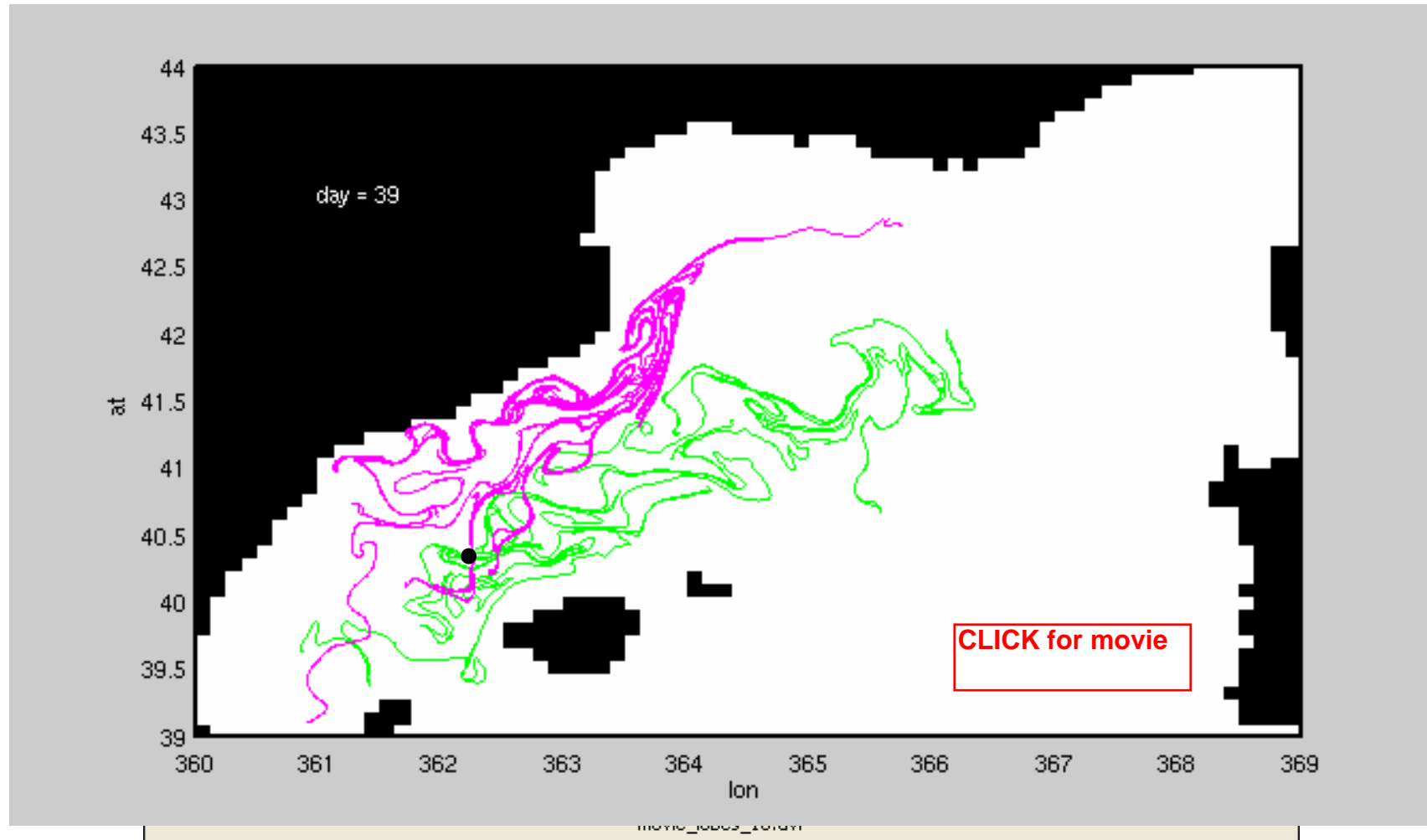


**DieCAST** model for the full Mediterranean  
Primitive equations,  
48 vertical levels,  $1/8^\circ$  horizontal resolution,  
climatological forcings ...  $\rightarrow$  5 years of daily velocity fields

Stable manifold

● Hyperbolic trajectory

Unstable manifold



Mancho, Hernández-García, Small, Wiggins, Fernández, J. Phys. Ocean. 38, 1222 (2008)

## Distinguished Hyperbolic Trajectories (DHTs)

(Mancho, Small, Wiggins, Ide, 2003; Mancho, Small, Wiggins, 2004, Physics Reports, 2006)

This methodology distinguishes hyperbolic points which are  
 ‘more fixed than their neighborhood’

The analogous to **fixed points** in **time-independent flows** or to  
**periodic orbits** in **periodic flows**.

$dx/dt=v(x) \rightarrow$  Tentative trajectory  $x_0(t)$

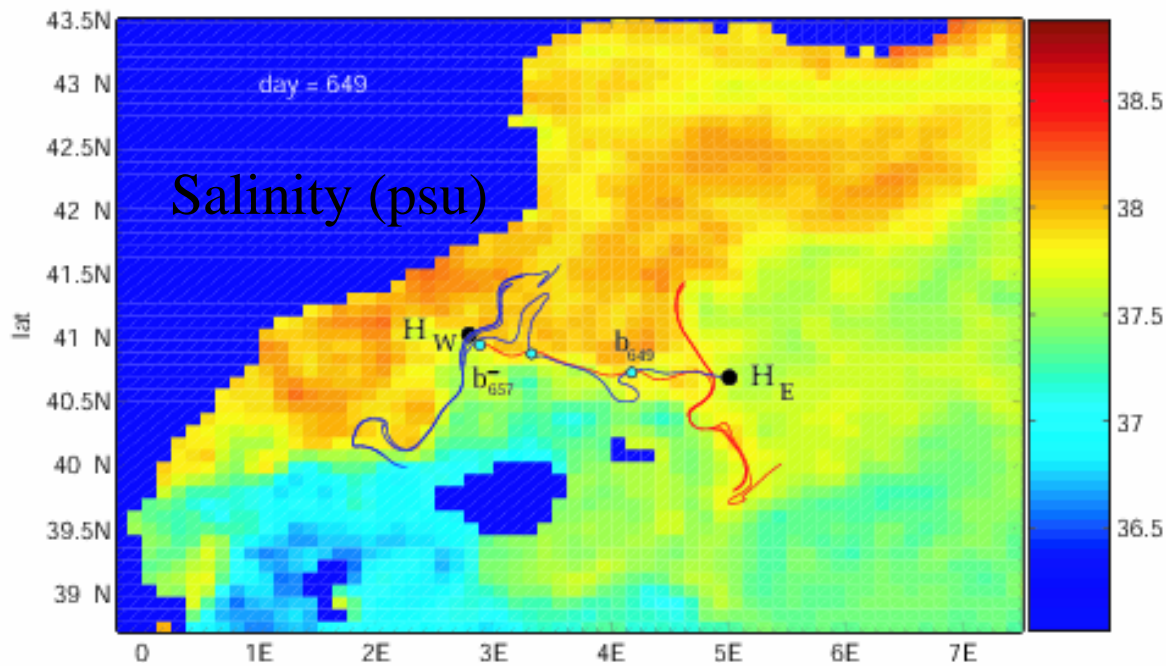
Expand around it:  $x(t)= x_0(t)+\delta(t) \rightarrow d\delta/dt = Dv(x_0(t)) \delta + NL(\delta,t)$

General solution:  $\delta(t) = \text{sum of } \delta_h(t) \text{ exponentials} + \text{Integral}(\exp \dots NL(\delta,t)) \delta_p(t)$

Choosing  $x_0(t)$  in this way guarantees a distinguished solution  $x(t)= x_0(t)+\delta(t)$  which is not wandering around exponentially fast, and neighbouring trajectories approach or escape from it exponentially

**The stable and unstable manifolds of DHTs organize the flow**

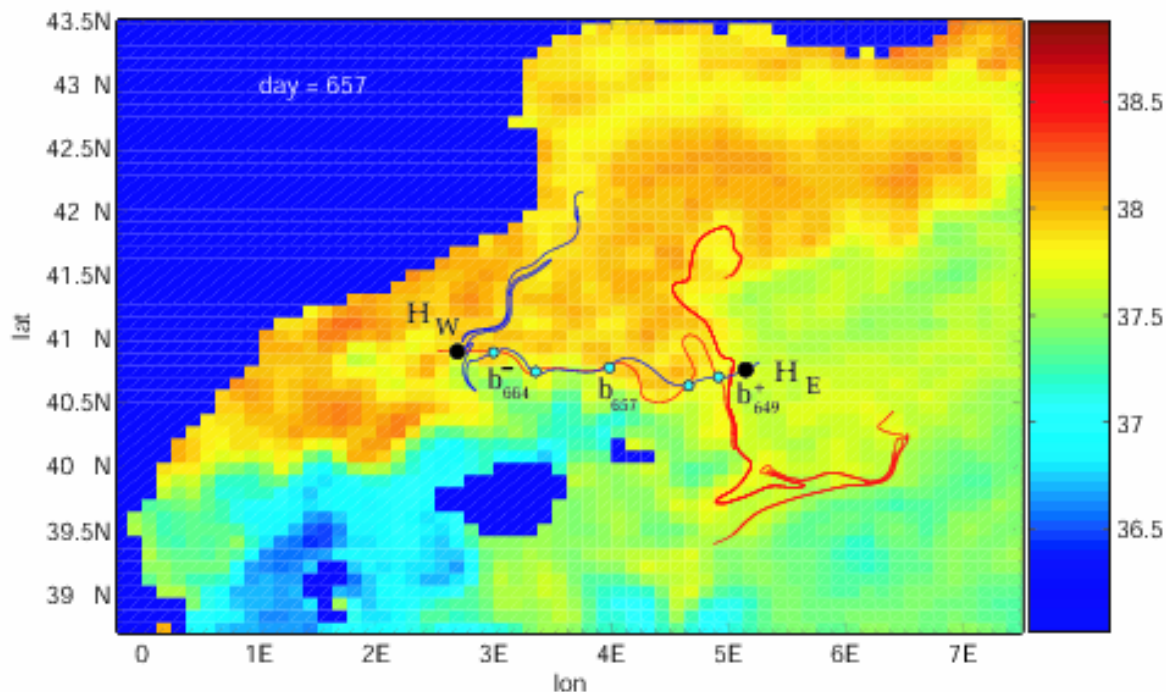
## Manifolds in the Mediterranean



Unstable manifold of  $H_W$

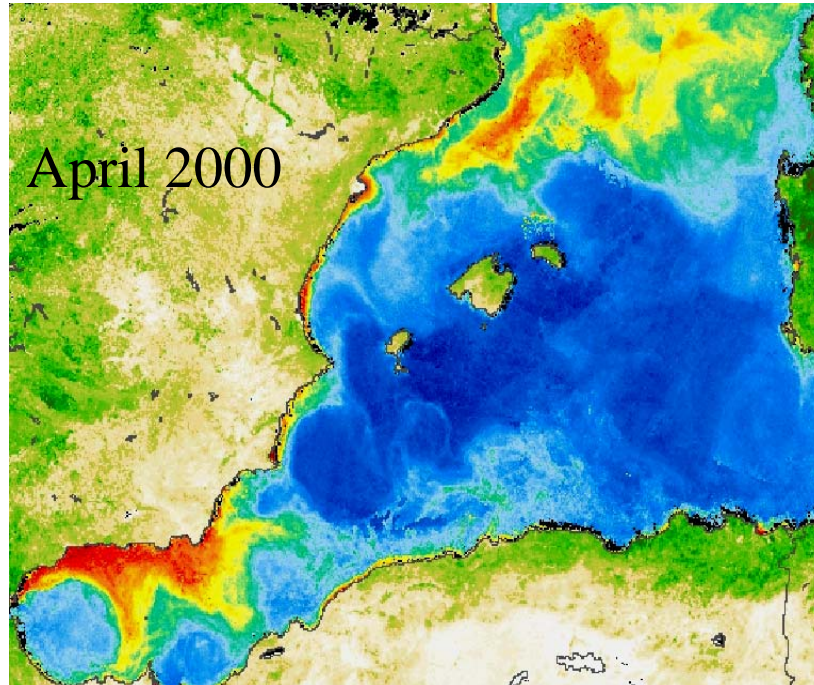


Stable manifold of  $H_E$



Two DHT with manifolds pointing against each other, and intersecting in between:

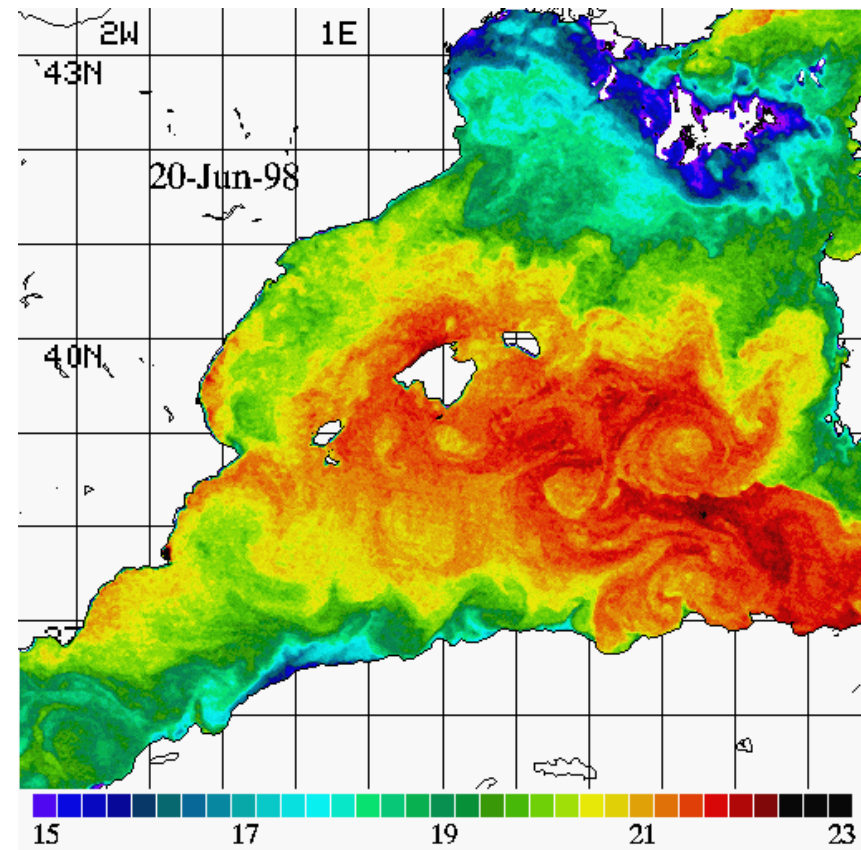
**The turnstile mechanism**  
for transport across a  
Lagrangian line

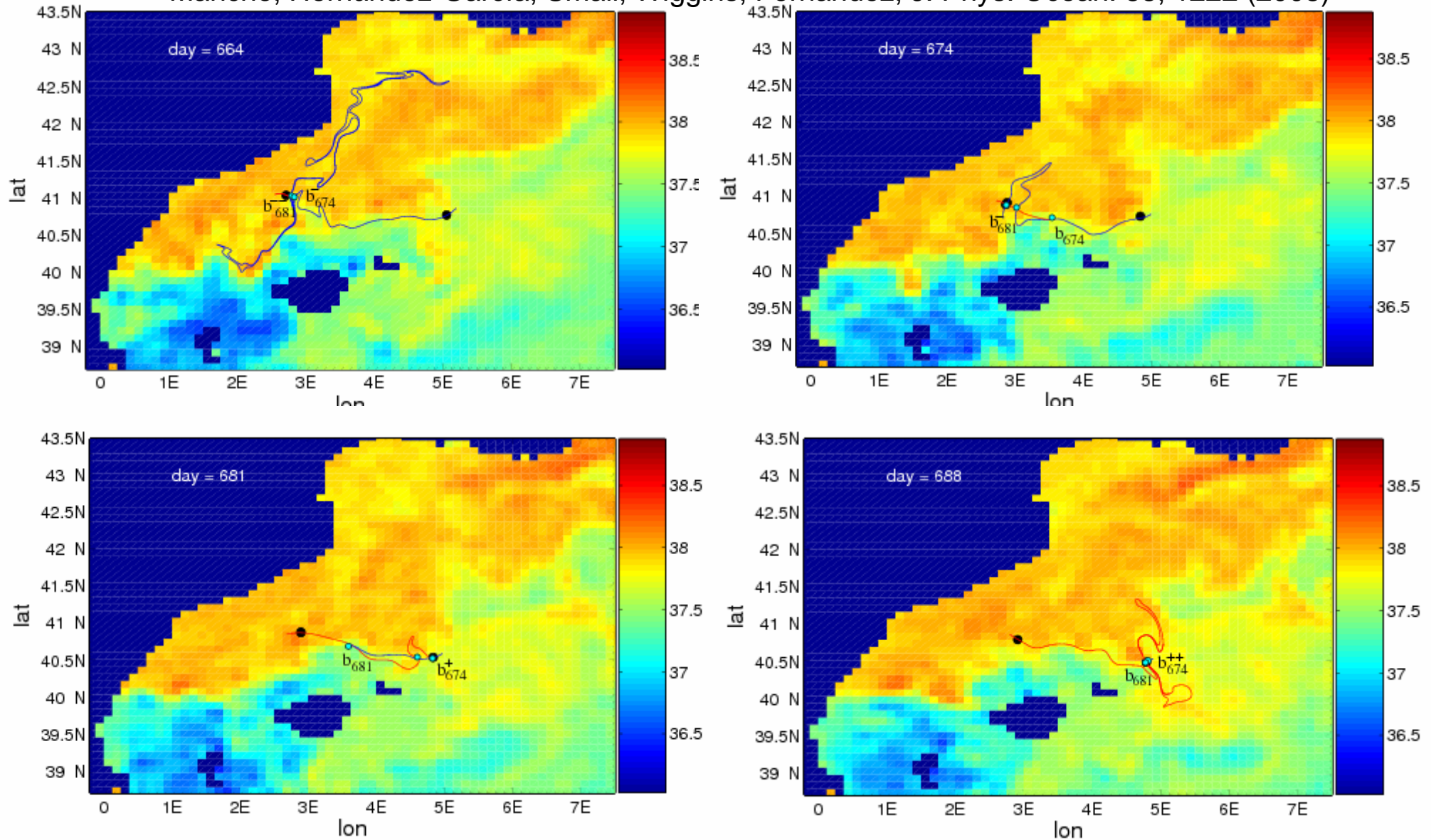


Chlorophyll

SST

## The North-Balearic Front



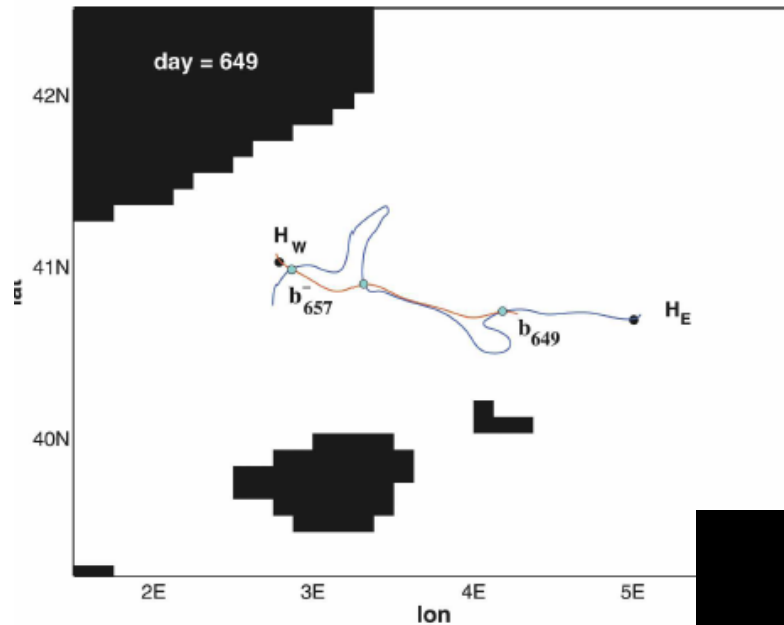


## LOBE DYNAMICS, ROUTES OF TRANSPORT

The area of the lobes can be calculated:

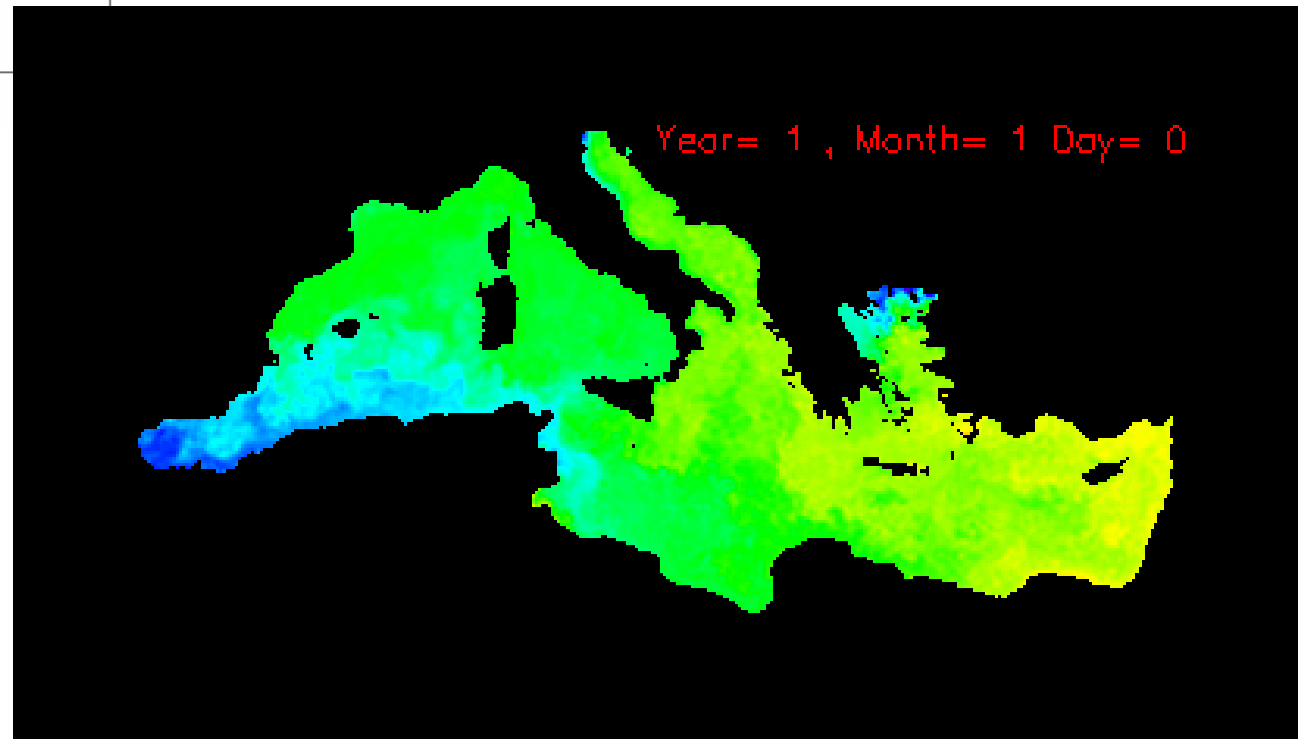
transport  $\approx 0.02-0.04$  Sv  $\ll 0.5$  Sv (current)

**BARRIER or FRONT**



This gives information manifold by manifold

Can we have a more global view ?

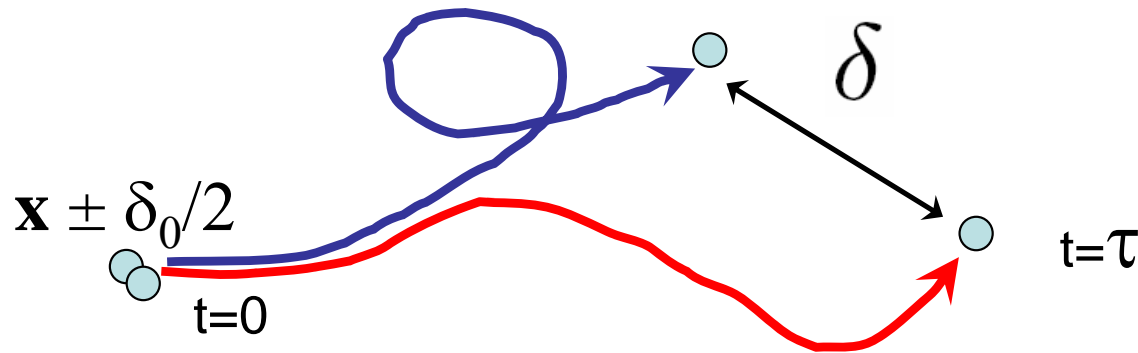


$$\lambda(t) = \lim_{\|\delta(0)\| \rightarrow 0} \frac{1}{t} \ln \frac{\|\delta(t)\|}{\|\delta(0)\|}$$

Finite-time Lyapunov exponent

$$\lambda = \lim_{t \rightarrow \infty} \lambda(t)$$

Lyapunov exponent



$$\lambda(\delta_0, \delta_f) \equiv \frac{1}{\tau} \log \frac{\delta_f}{\delta_0}$$

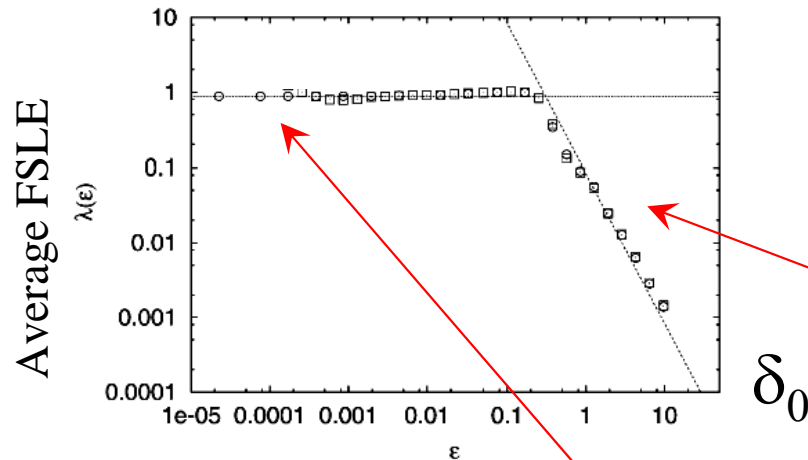
**Finite-size Lyapunov exponent**  
**FSLE**

All the quantities are also functions of the initial position and time:

$$\lambda(\mathbf{x}, t, \delta_0, \delta_f)$$



A chaotic map

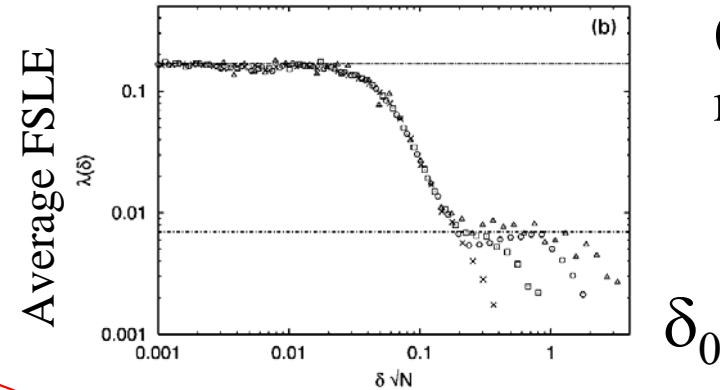


Exponential growth of separations (chaotic regime)

When  $\delta_0 \rightarrow 0$ ,  
 FSLE  $\rightarrow$  Lyapunov  
 and when  $t \rightarrow \infty$ ,  
 FTLE  $\rightarrow$  Lyapunov

**The FSLE was originally introduced to quantify dispersion from non-infinitesimal initial separations**

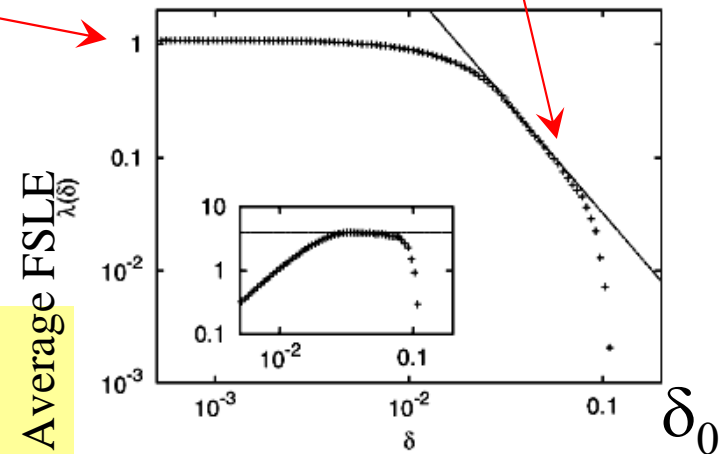
System with several time scales



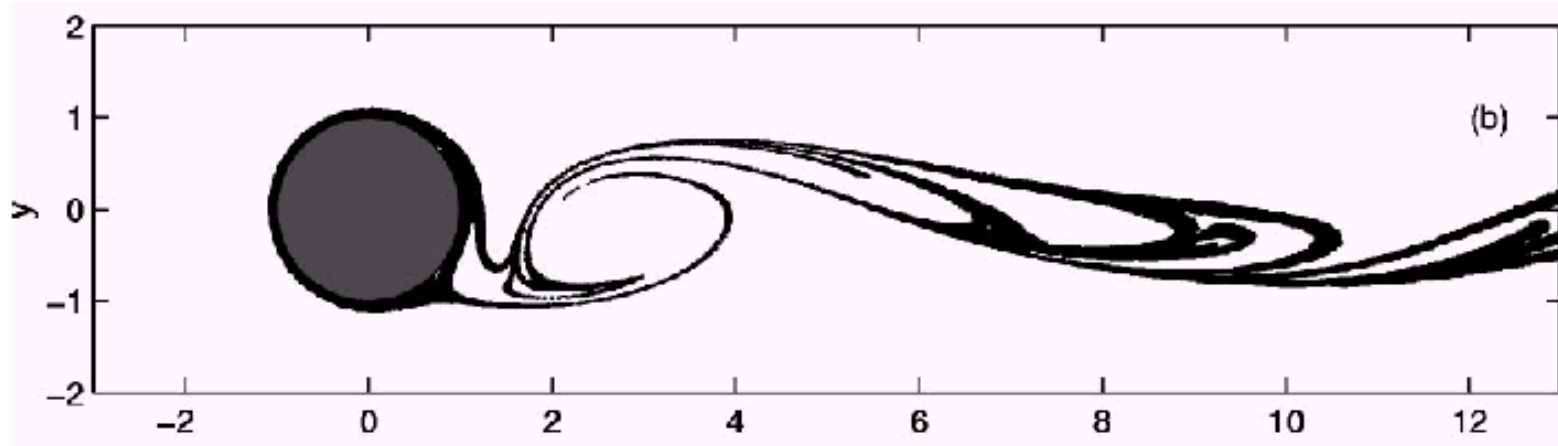
(coupled maps)

Subexponential growth (diffusion regime)

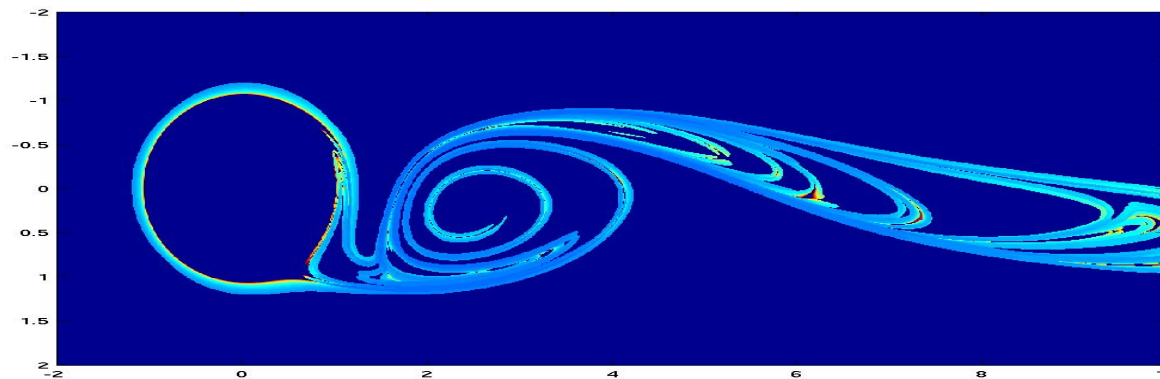
*G. Boffetta et al. / Physics Reports 356 (2002) 367–474*



2D turbulence

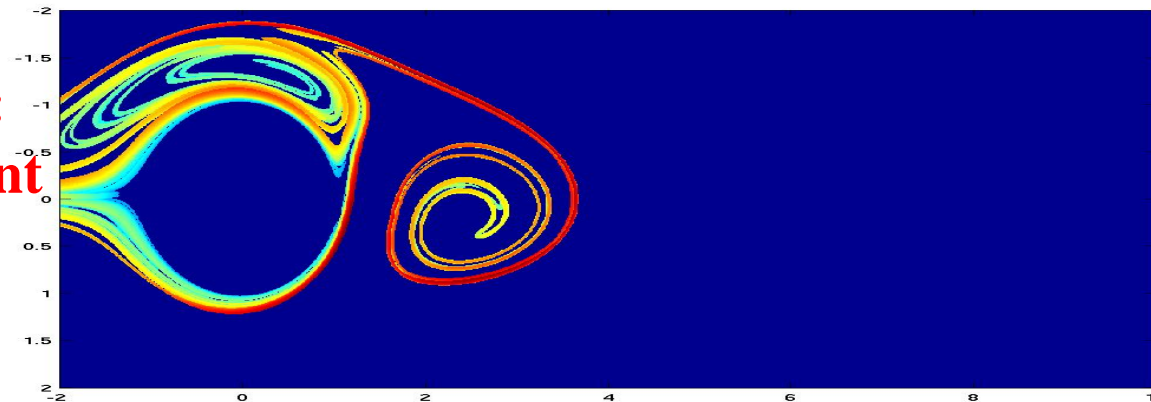


The spatial dependence of the FSLE allows the detection of stable and unstable manifolds of hyperbolic objects



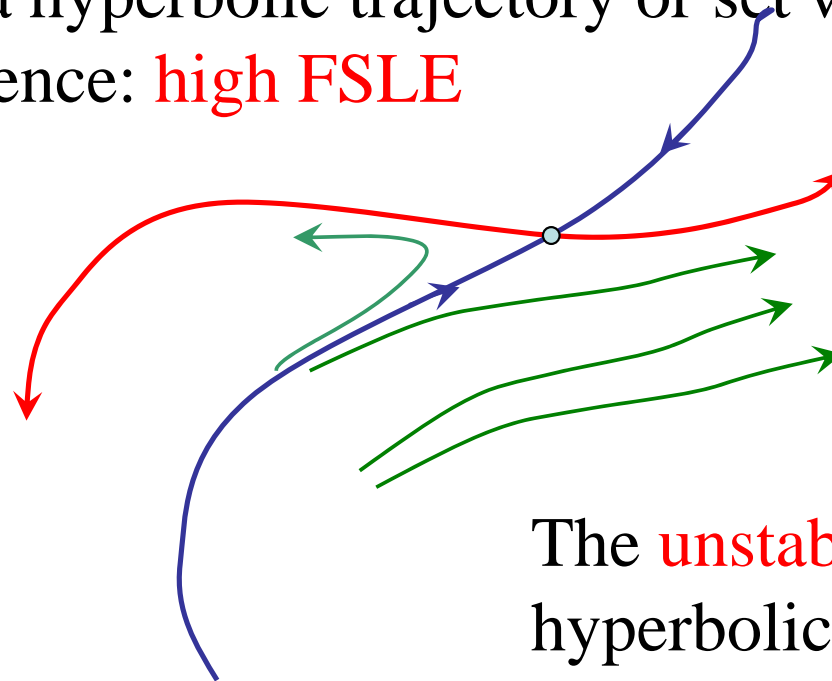
FSLE values from **time-backwards** trajectories

**MAXIMA of FSLE: Lagrangian Coherent Structures (LCSs)**



FSLE values from **time-forward** trajectories

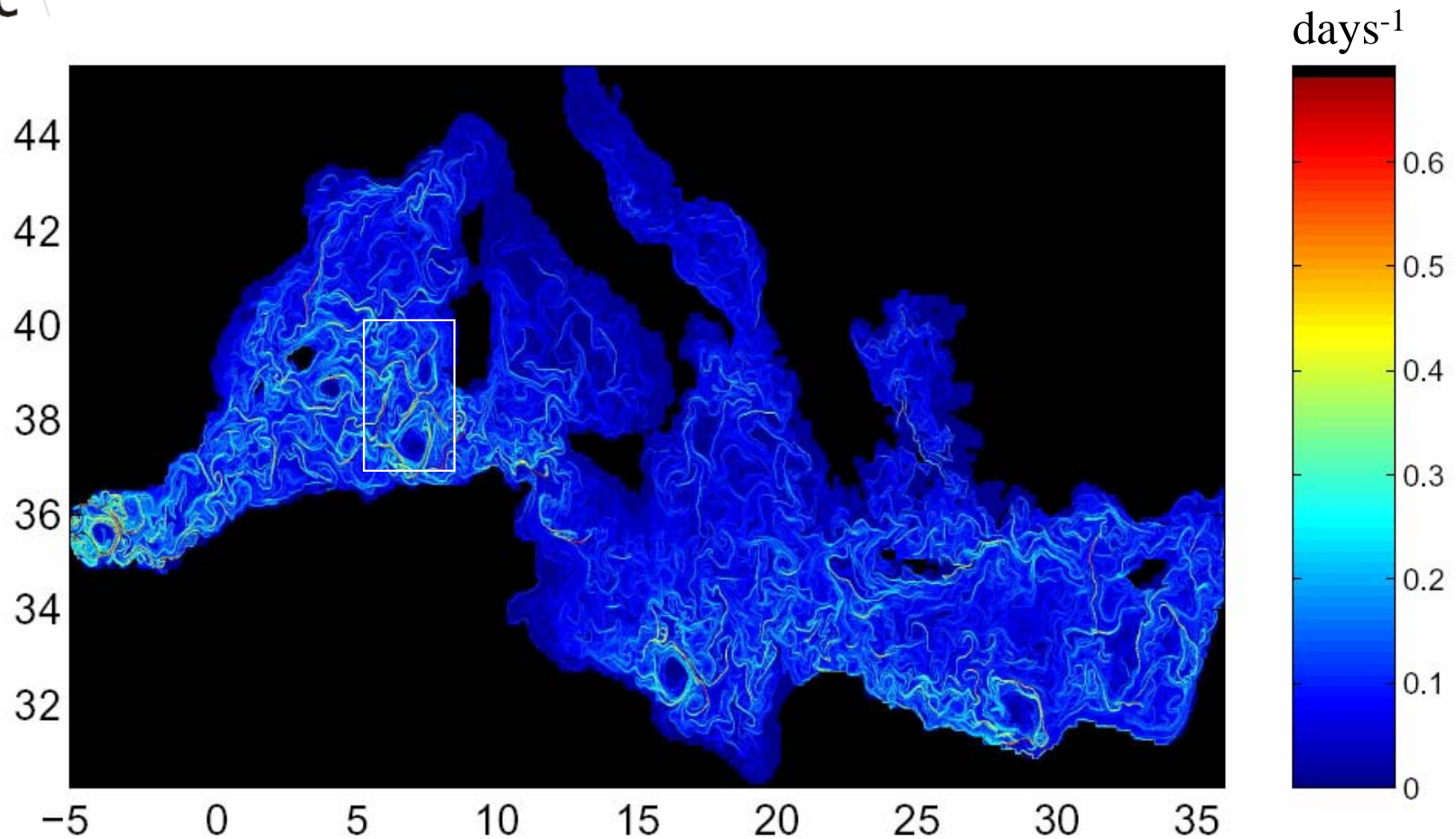
The idea is that initial conditions close to the **stable manifold** of a hyperbolic trajectory or set will show strong divergence: **high FSLE**



The **unstable manifold** of hyperbolic sets would be marked by **high FSLE in the time backwards** direction

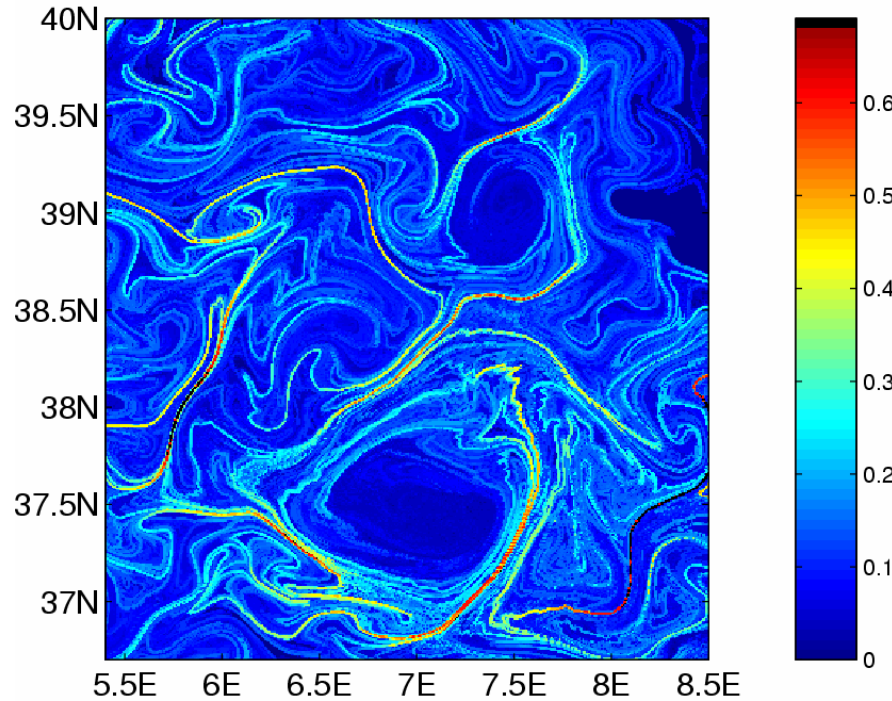
Other types of Lyapunov exponents would display similar information, but FSLE is less affected by saturation

**REMARK:** these are heuristic consideration. Theorems needed (some available for FTLE)



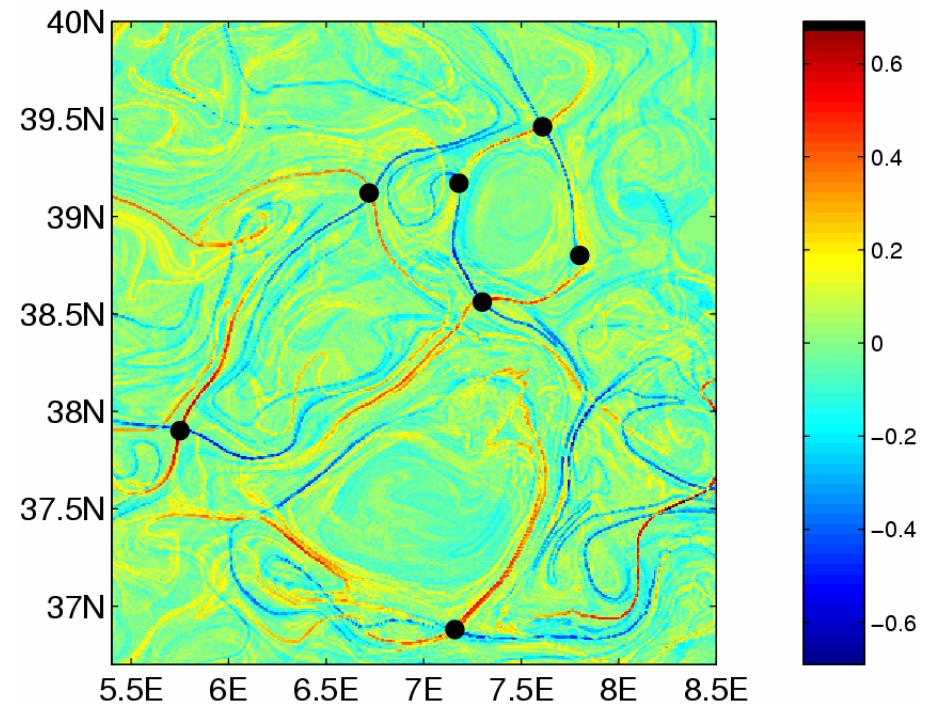
$\delta_0 = 0.02^\circ \rightarrow \delta_f = 1^\circ$  (mesoscale transport)  
 $\delta_0 \approx 2 \text{ km} \rightarrow \delta_f \approx 110 \text{ km}$  twodimensional

d'Ovidio, Fernández, Hernández-García, López, Geophys. Res. Lett. 31, L17203 (2004)

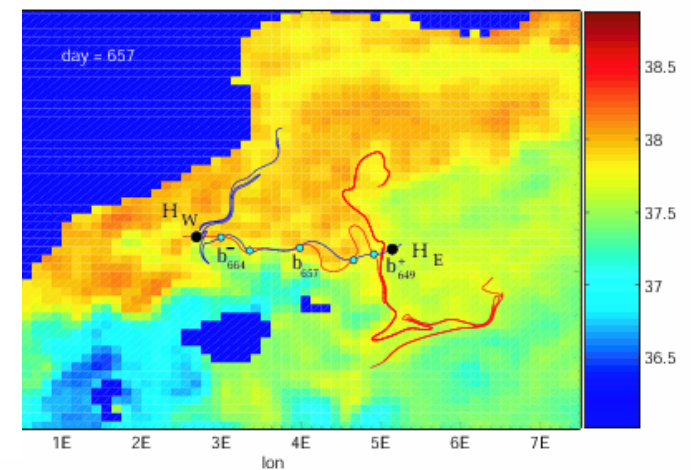
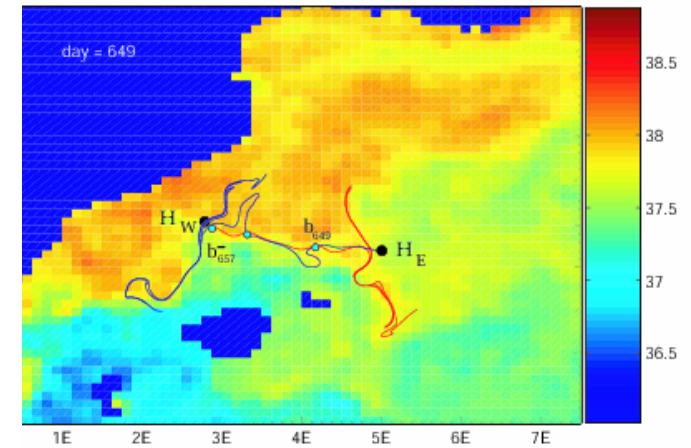
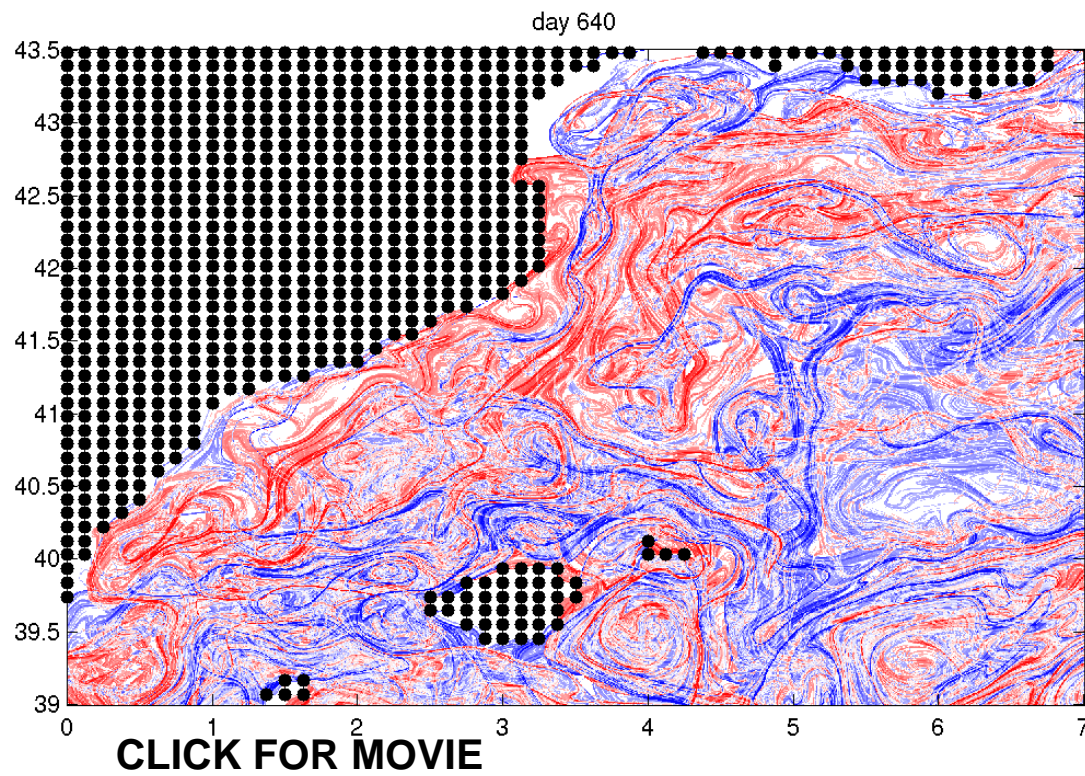


FSLE from time-backwards  
Integrations.  
Are they really unstable  
manifolds of hyperbolic  
trajectories?

FSLE from **forward**  
and **backwards**  
integrations



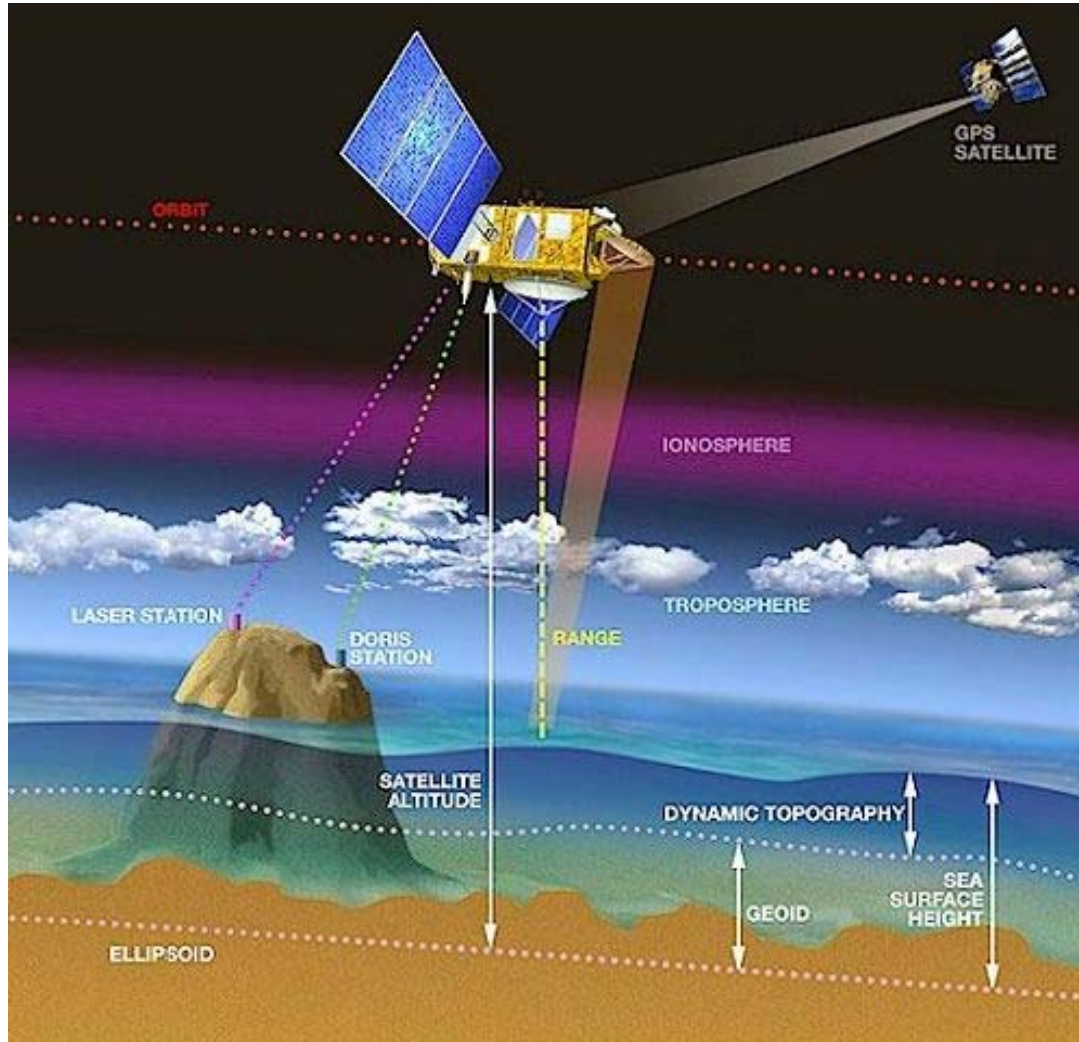
Click figures for movies



High backwards Lyapunov values (unstable manifolds)

High forward Lyapunov values (stable manifolds)

## SATELLITE ALTIMETRY FROM TOPEX/POSEIDON, ERS-2, JASON, ENVISAT, ...



Dynamic Topography (DT) =  
Sea Surface Height (SSH) – Geoid (G)

SSH  $\approx$  3 cm

G  $\approx$  meters ...

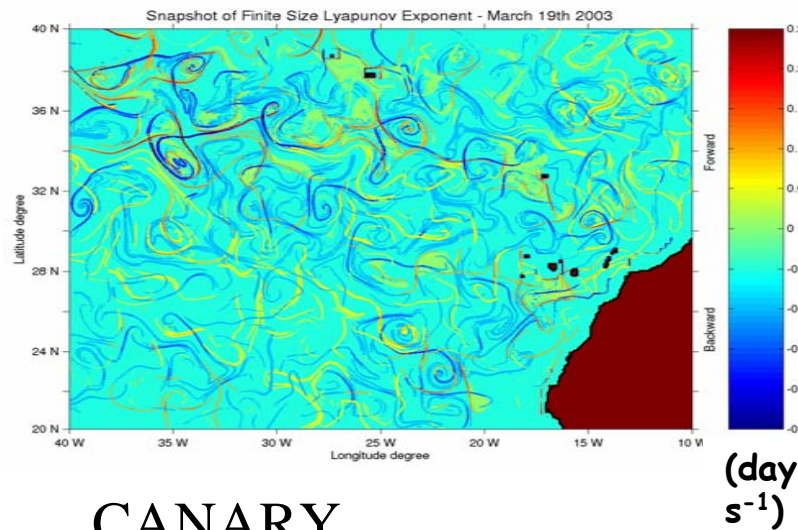
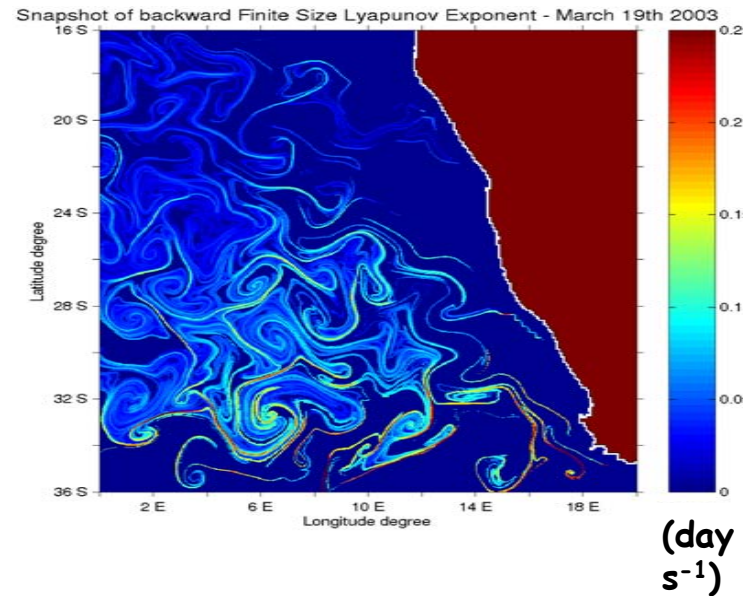
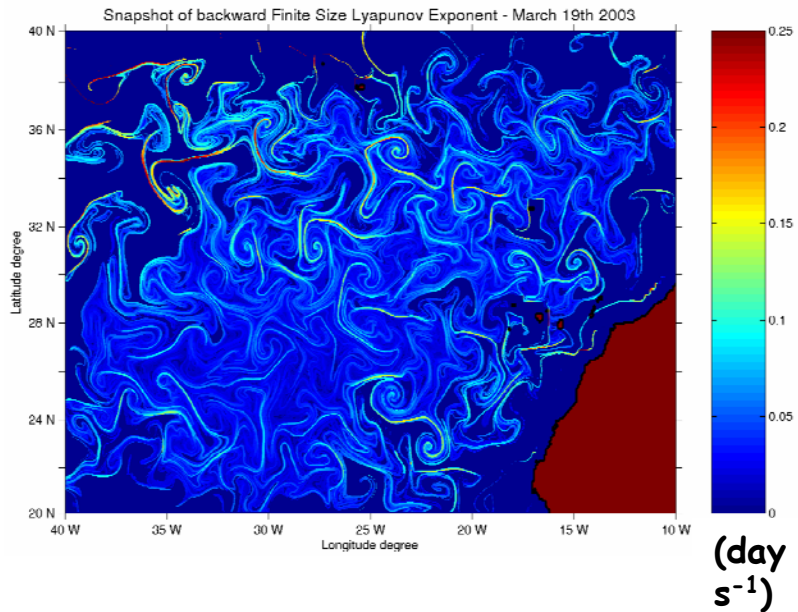
Sea Level Anomalies (SLA) =  
SSH -  $\langle$ SSH $\rangle_t$  = DT -  $\langle$ DT $\rangle_t$

Dynamic topography determines, via the Coriolis force, the velocity field (at large scales, geostrophic approximation)

# FROM ALTIMETRY DATA

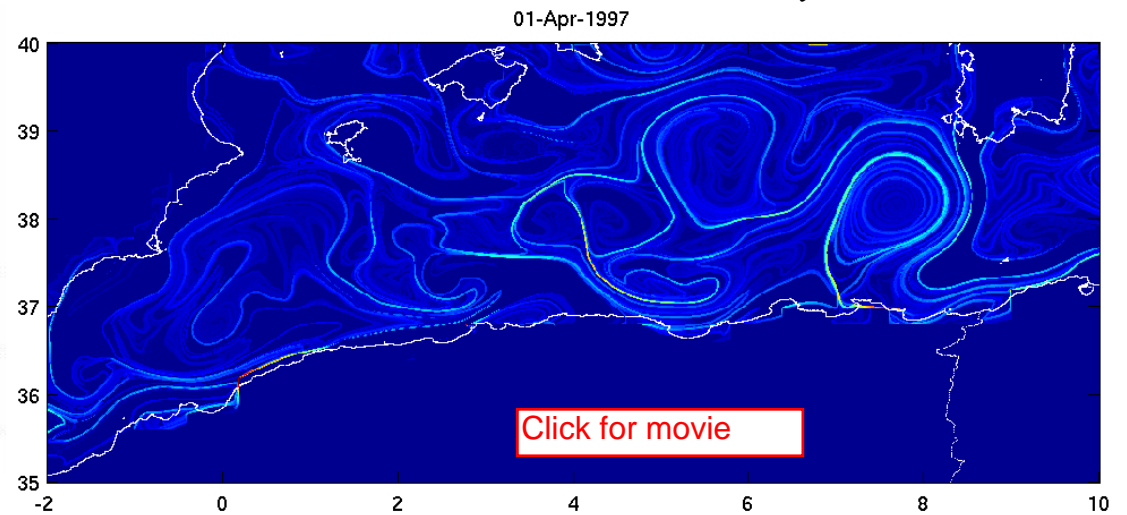
# BENGUELA

March 19  
2003  
snapshots



# CANARY

Note the presence of **SUB-MESOSCALE** detail

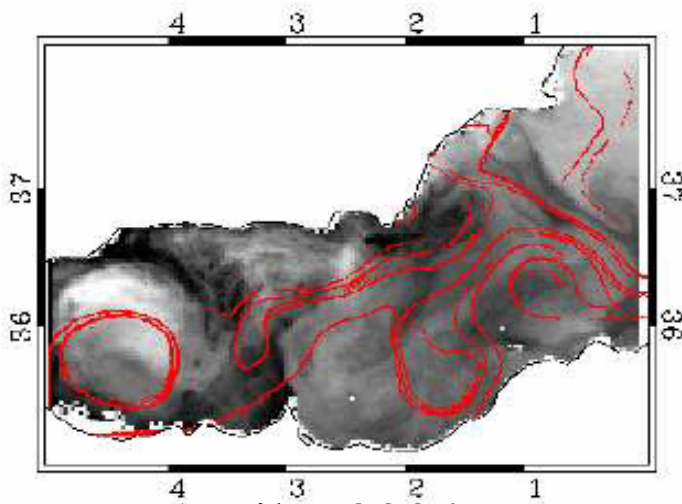
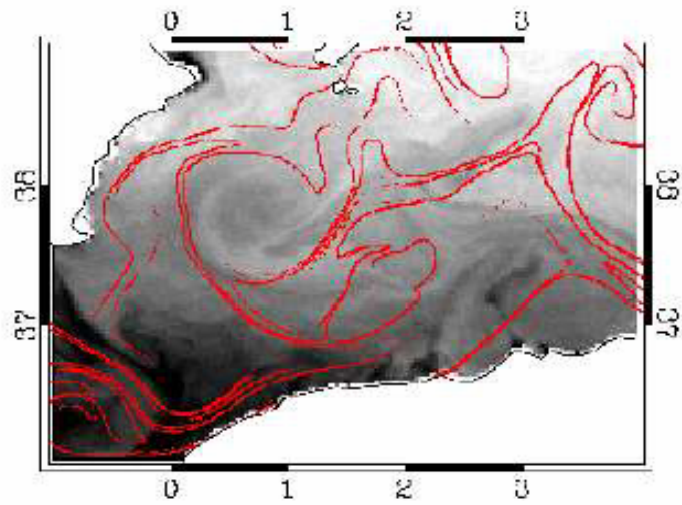


d'Ovidio et al. Deep-Sea Res. I 56, 15 (2009)  
V. Rossi et al. Nonlin. Proc. Geophys. 16, 557 (2009)

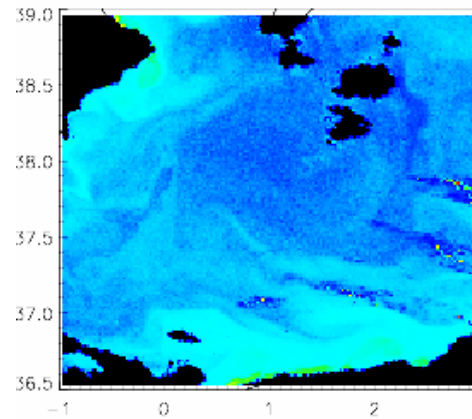


## Sea Surface Temperature vs lines of FSLE > 0.1 day<sup>-1</sup> (LCSs)

July 9 2003



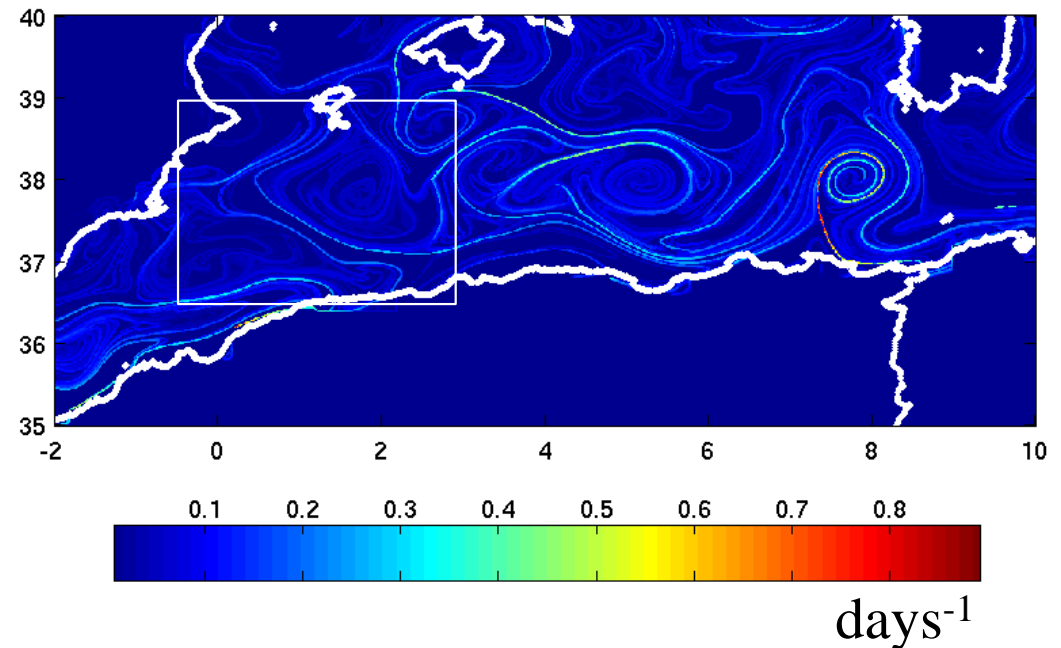
April 6 2004



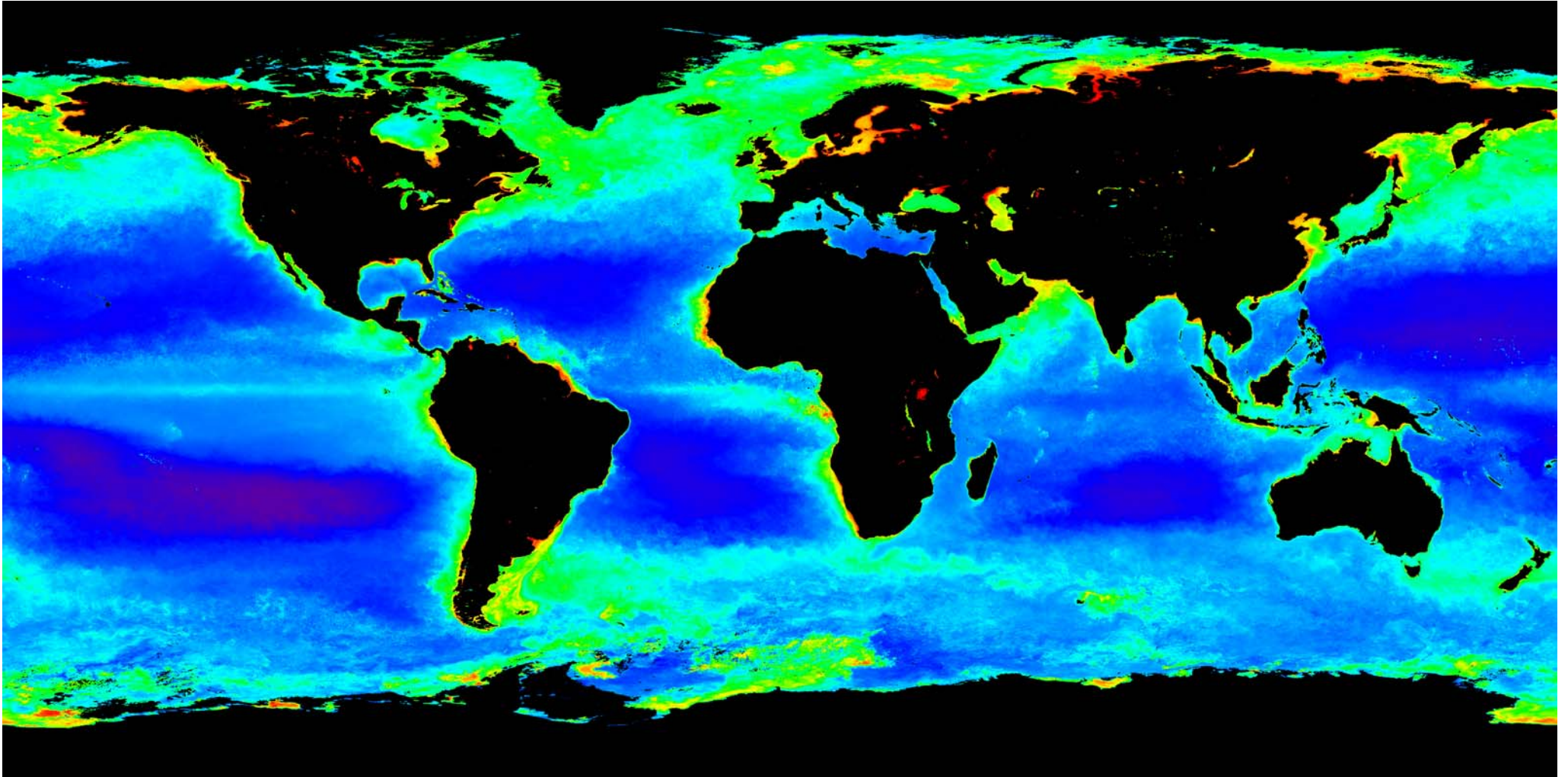
d'Ovidio et al.  
Deep-Sea Res. I (2009)

Chlorophyll

18 May 1998



## Chlorophyll-a ( $\approx$ phytoplankton) from space

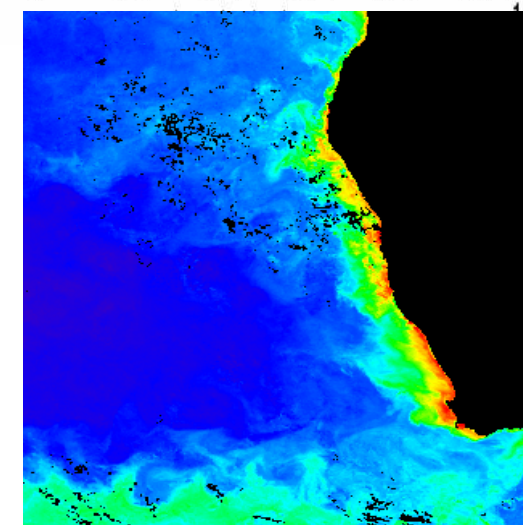
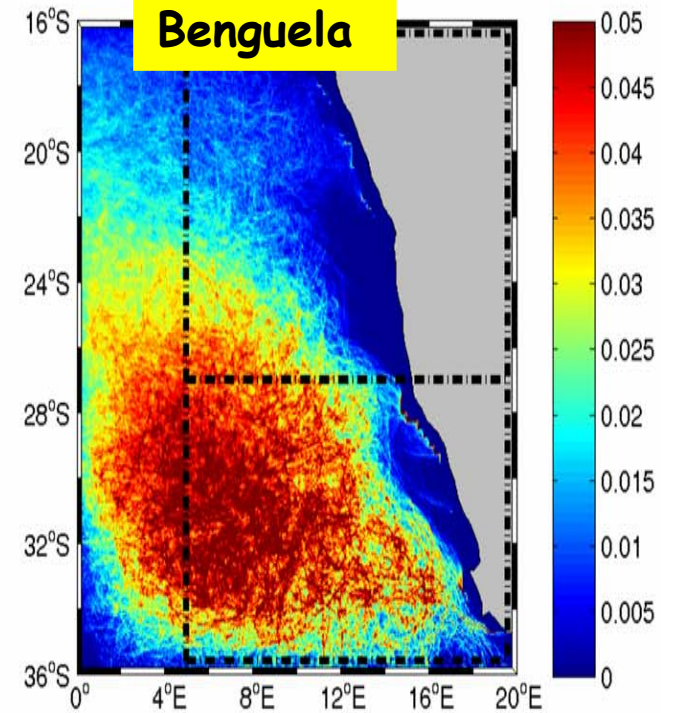
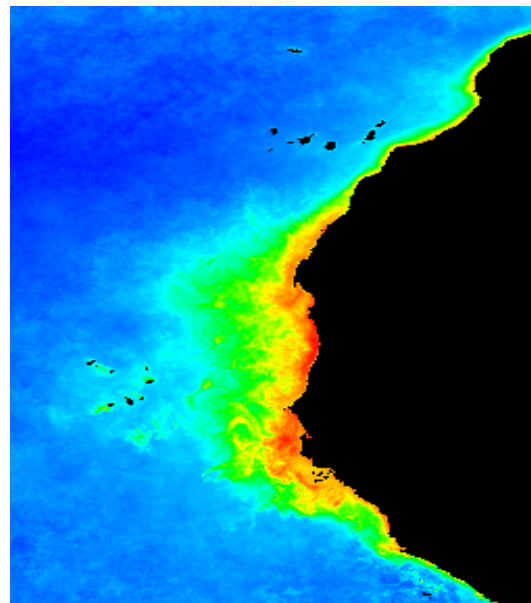
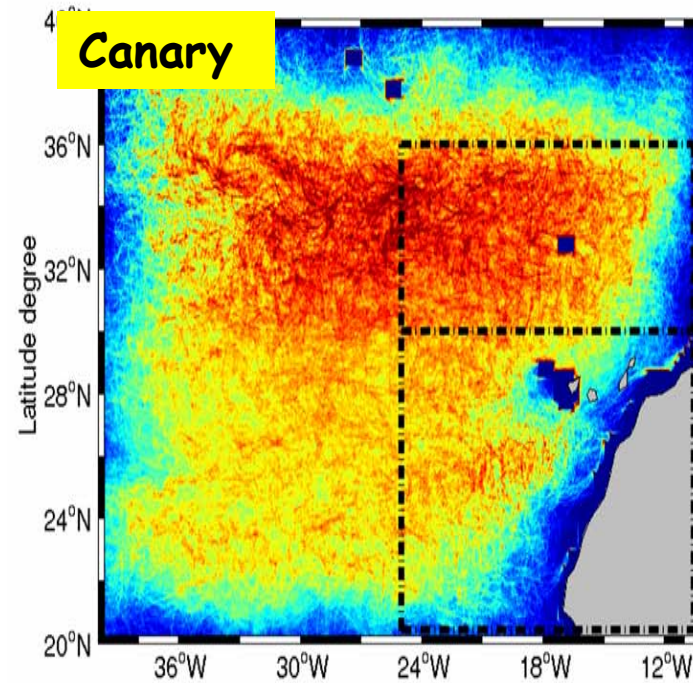


**MODIS Image**

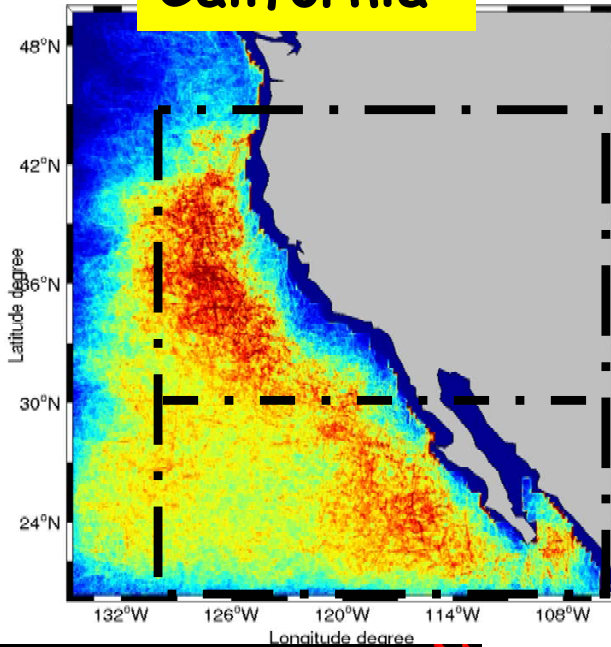
# Phytoplankton and FSLE in the world major upwelling areas

Backward FSLE ( $\lambda^-$ ):  
 Temporal average  
 (a measure of **horizontal MIXING**)  
 from June 2000 till  
 June 2005

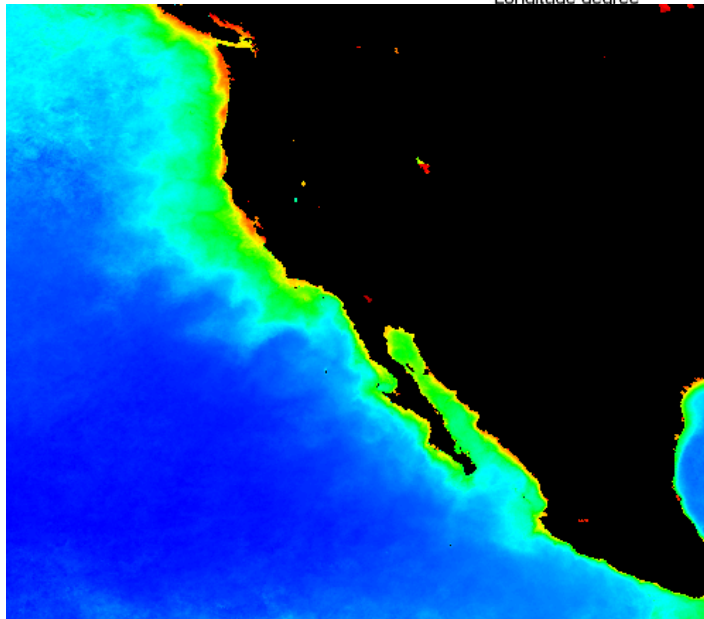
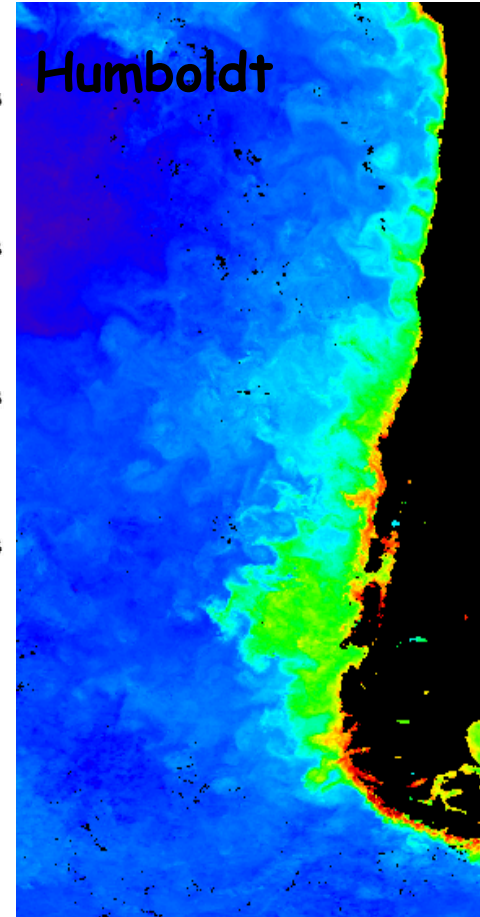
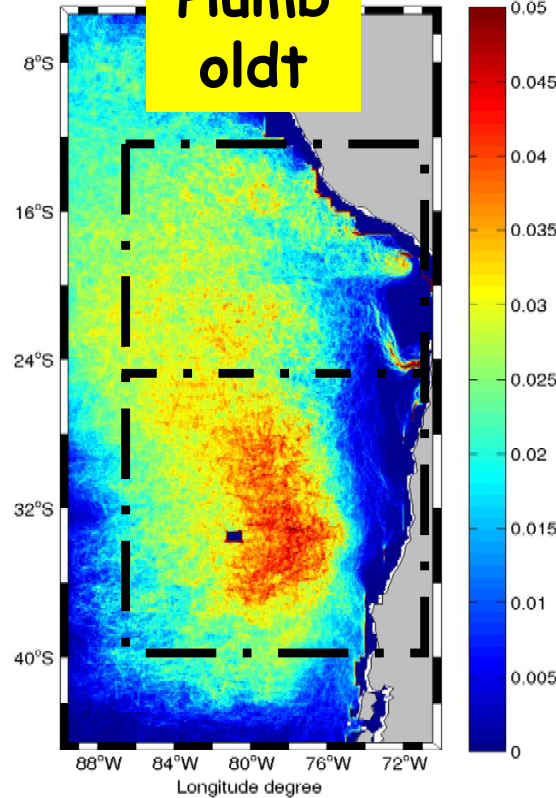
Rossi et al.,  
 Geophys. Res. Lett. 2008  
 Nonlin. Proc. Geophys. 2009



California



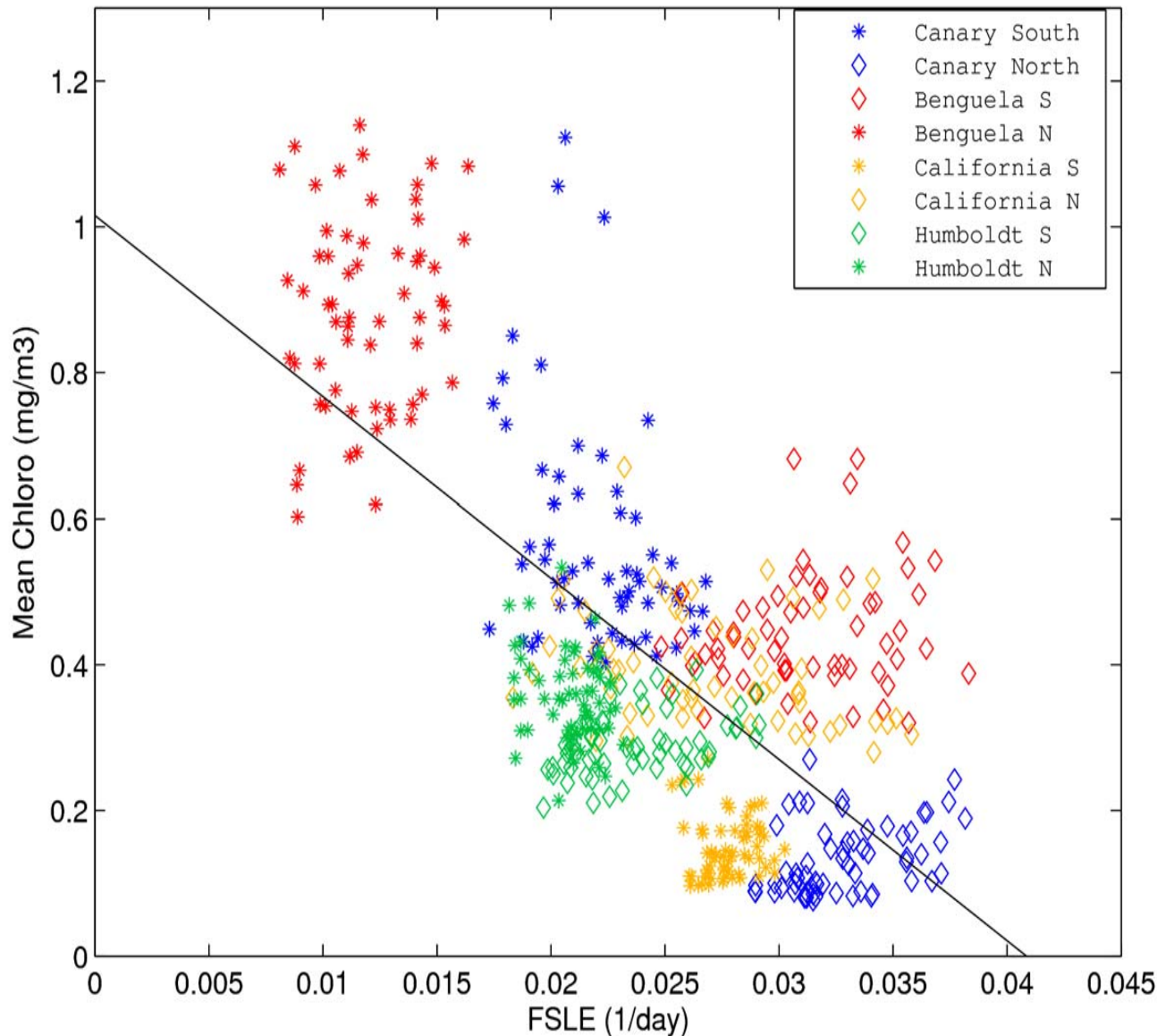
Humboldt



Backward FSLE ( $\lambda^-$ ):  
 Temporal average  
 (a measure of **horizontal MIXING**)  
 from June 2000 till June 2005

Rossi et al.,  
 Geophys. Res. Lett. 2008  
 Nonlin. Proc. Geophys. 2009

Mean backward FSLE versus mean Chlorophyll per subsystem

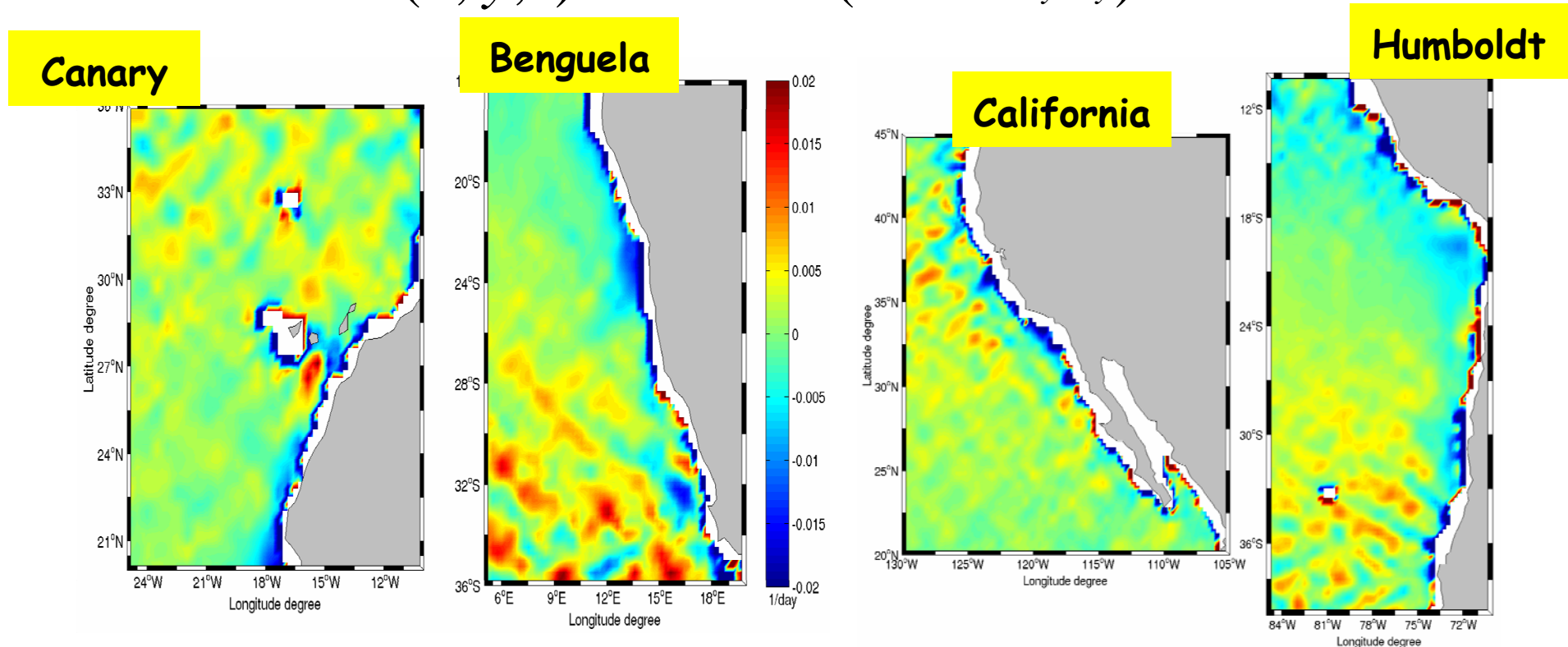


- Negative correlation
- Clustering
- Less turbulent systems are characterized by:  
**LOW FSLE / HIGH CHLOROPHYLL.**
- Most turbulent systems:  
**HIGH FSLE / LOW CHLOROPHYLL.**

Opposite to behavior seen in less enriched systems

Temporal averages of vertical velocities from incompressibility condition

$$\Delta(x, y, t) \equiv \partial_z V_z = -(\partial_x V_x + \partial_y V_y)$$

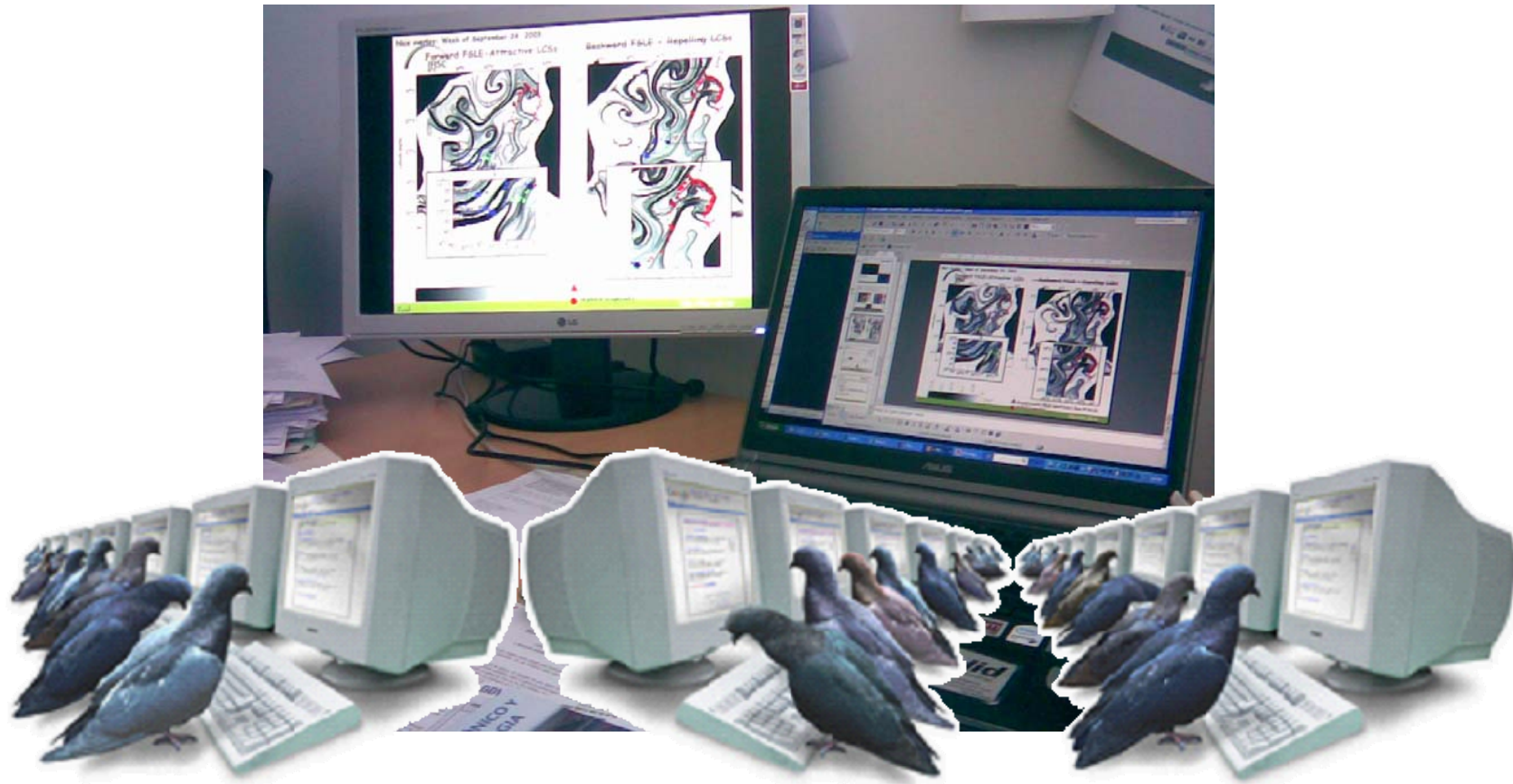


- Dominance of (small) upwelling vertical velocities in the less turbulent subsystem.
- Thus, probably the influence of horizontal stirring on plankton is only indirect: need to understand the 3d flow structure: high FSLE associated to low Eckman transport.

Rossi et al., *Geophys. Res. Lett.* 2008, *Nonlin. Proc. Geophys.* 2009

- Lagrangian Coherent Structures give the skeleton of horizontal transport
- This certainly influences abiotic quantities: temperature, nutrients, ...
- This certainly influences plankton distribution
- From there, impact is expected in plankton consumers, their predators, ... cascades up along the food chain ...

# Do birds know about FSLE calculations?



Tew Kai, Rossi, Sudre, Weimerskirch, Lopez, Hernandez-Garcia, Marsac, Garçon,  
PNAS 106, 8245 (2009)



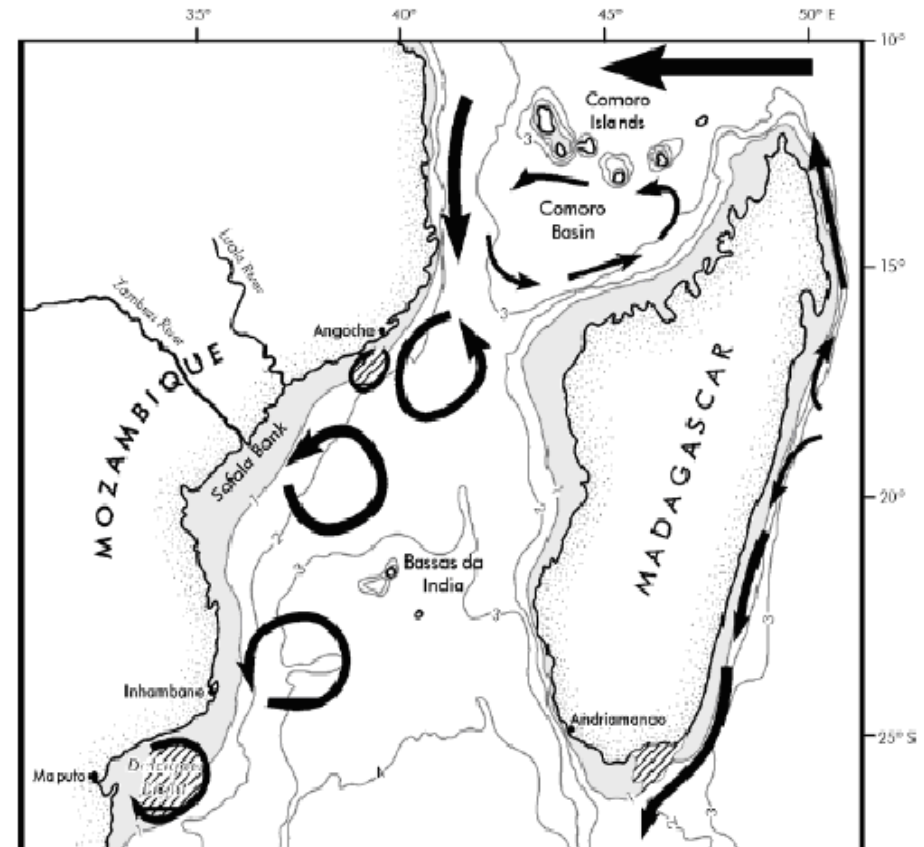
## FRIGATEBIRDS in the MOZAMBIQUE CHANNEL



Particular topography (channel/islands) linked with strong mesoscale activity:

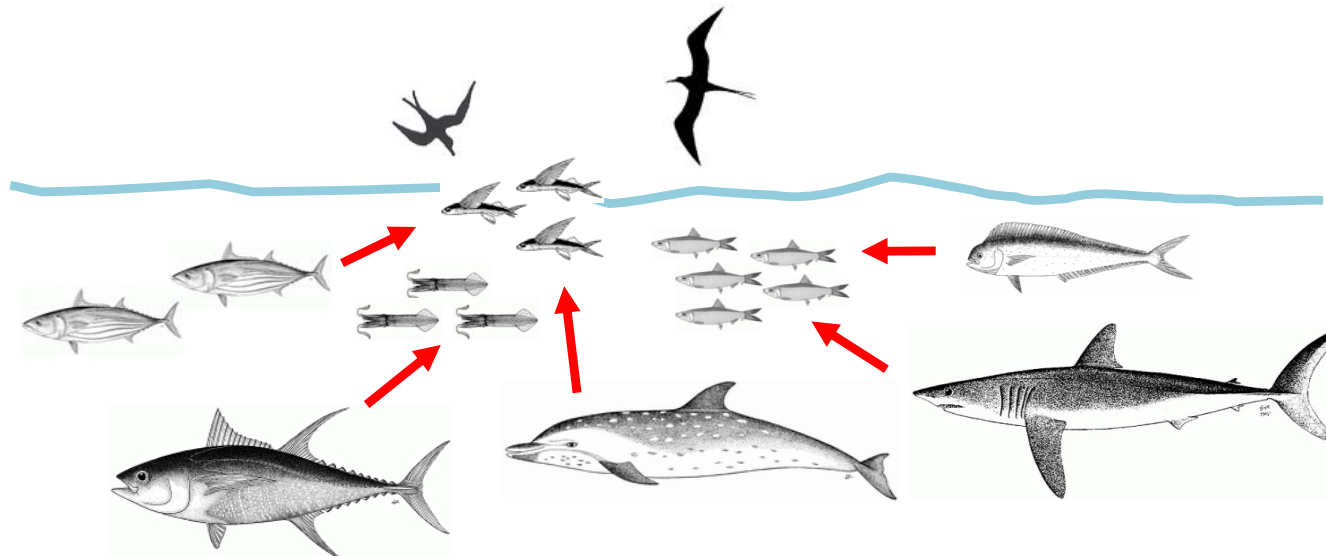
- Large anticyclonic cell at the north
- Local upwellings
- Anticyclonic and cyclonic mesoscale eddies moving southward permanently.

(De Ruijter et al., 2004)



**Great frigatebird (*fregata minor*):**

- Large seabirds (light weight < 5 kg and large wings > 2m). Use thermals to soar before gliding over long distances and time (days/nights over weeks).
- Traveling at high altitudes to locate patches of prey and come close to surface to feed (reduced flight speed indicates foraging).
- Feeding occurs only during daytime (peaks in the morning and evening).
- Unable to dive or rest on the water surface (permeable plumage) → in association with subsurface predators (tuna, ...): **fisheries indicators**





Satellite transmitter and altimeter  
(total weight : 1 to 3% mass of adults,  
max 45g)

8 birds (from Europa Island community) fitted with satellite transmitter and altimeter.

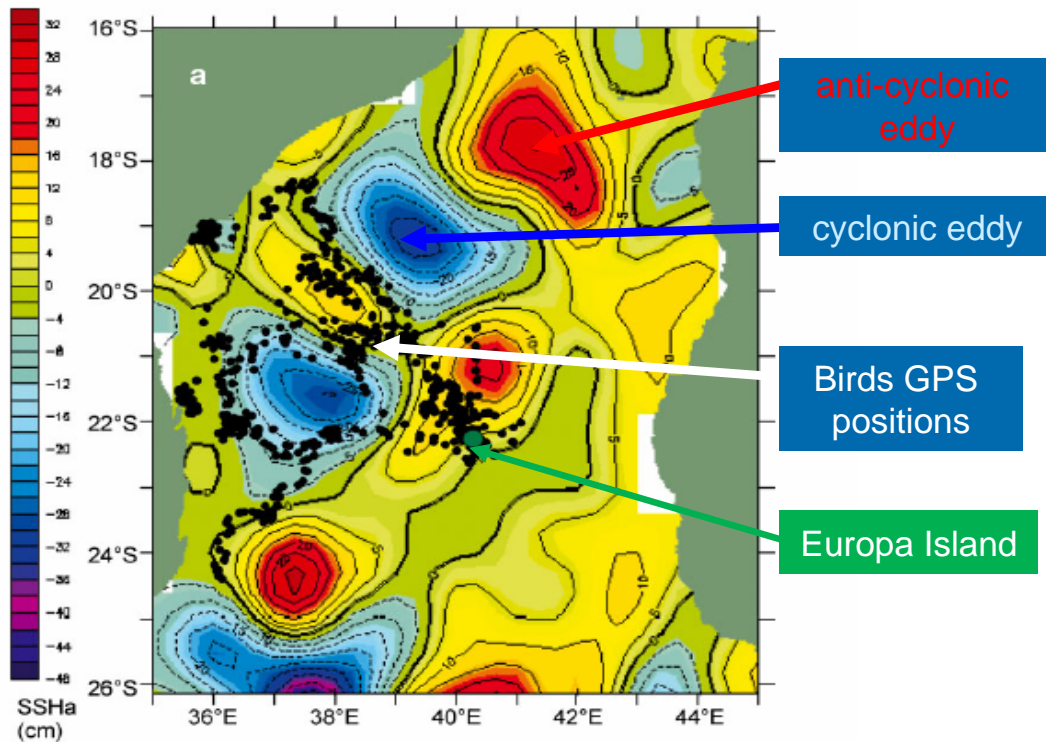
Followed for their foraging trips from August 18 to September 30, 2003.

1600 Argos from 50 trips positions, distributed into 17 long trips (> 614 km) and 33 short trips.

(Weimerskirch et al., 2004)

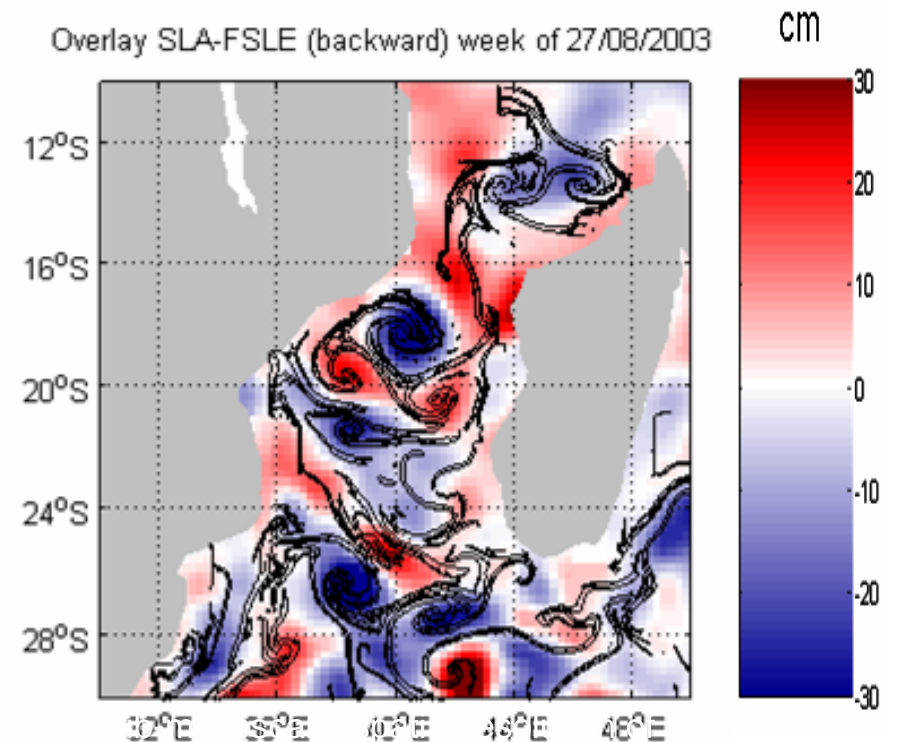


### SSH (cm): Eulerian view



Weimerskirch et al, 2004

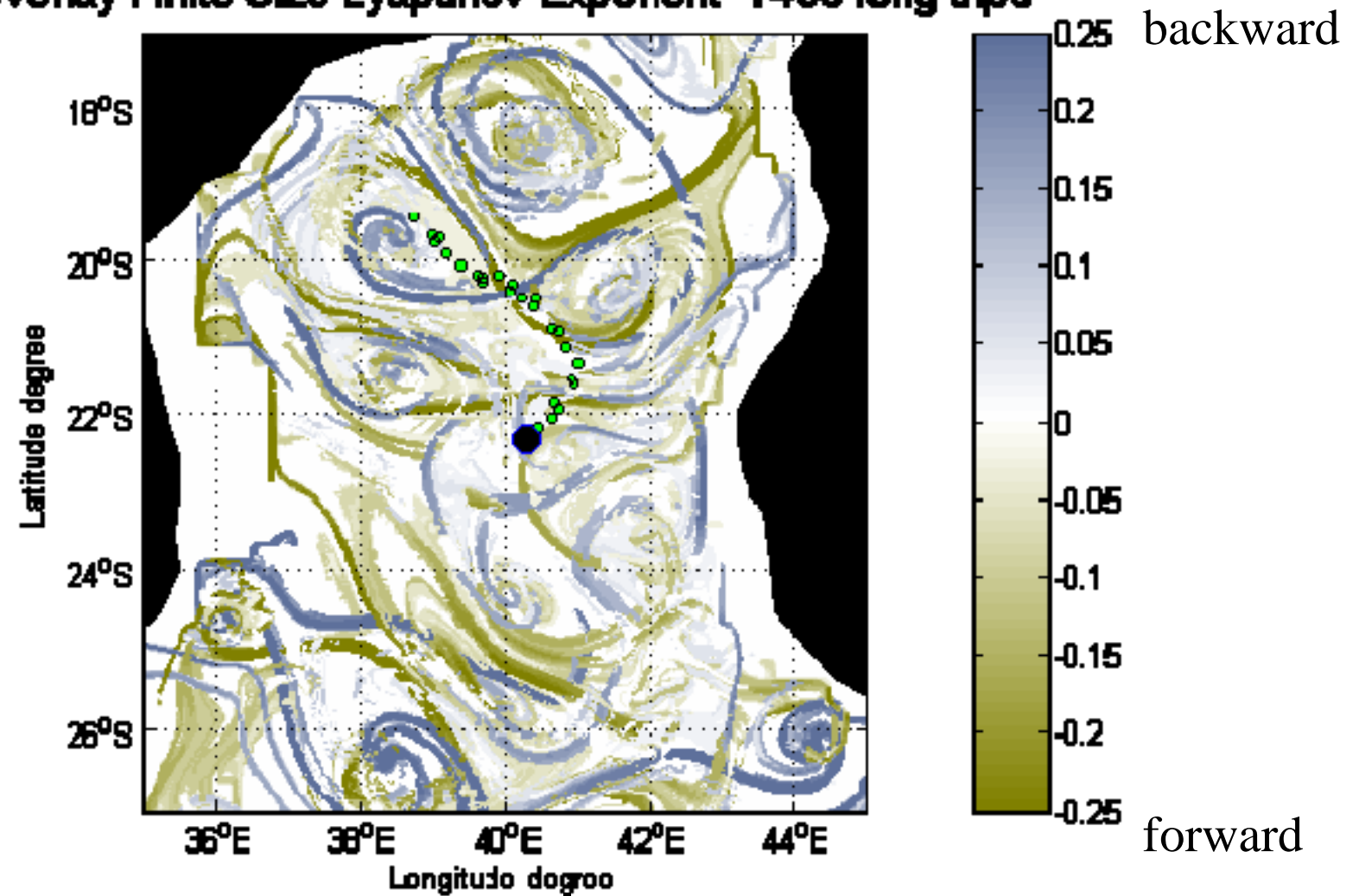
### Lagrangian FSLEs versus SSH



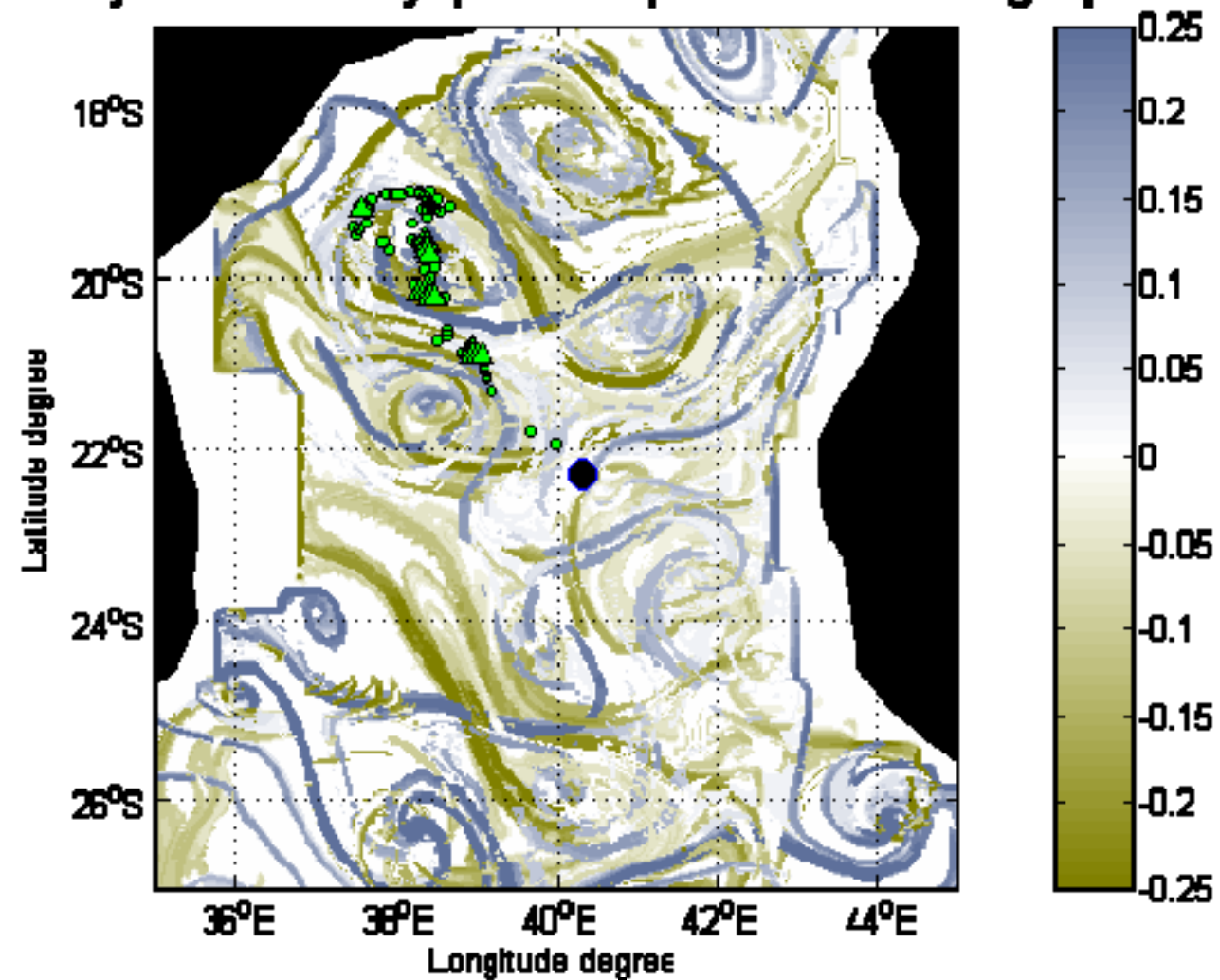
The Lagrangian FSLE gives access to submesoscale structures

**Lagrangian Coherent Structures:  $|FSLE| > 0.1 \text{ day}^{-1}$**

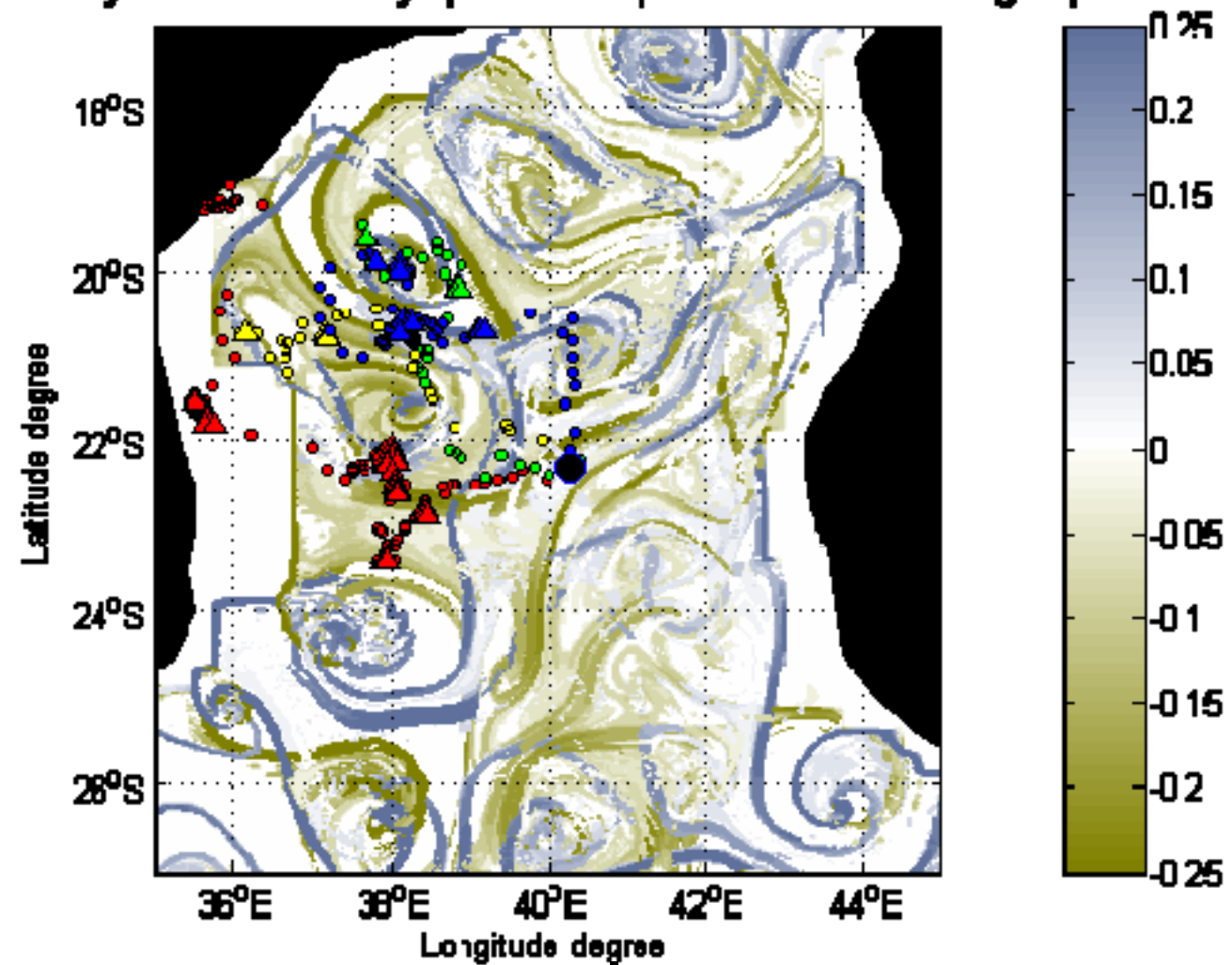
### Overlay Finite Size Lyapunov Exponent -1496 long trips



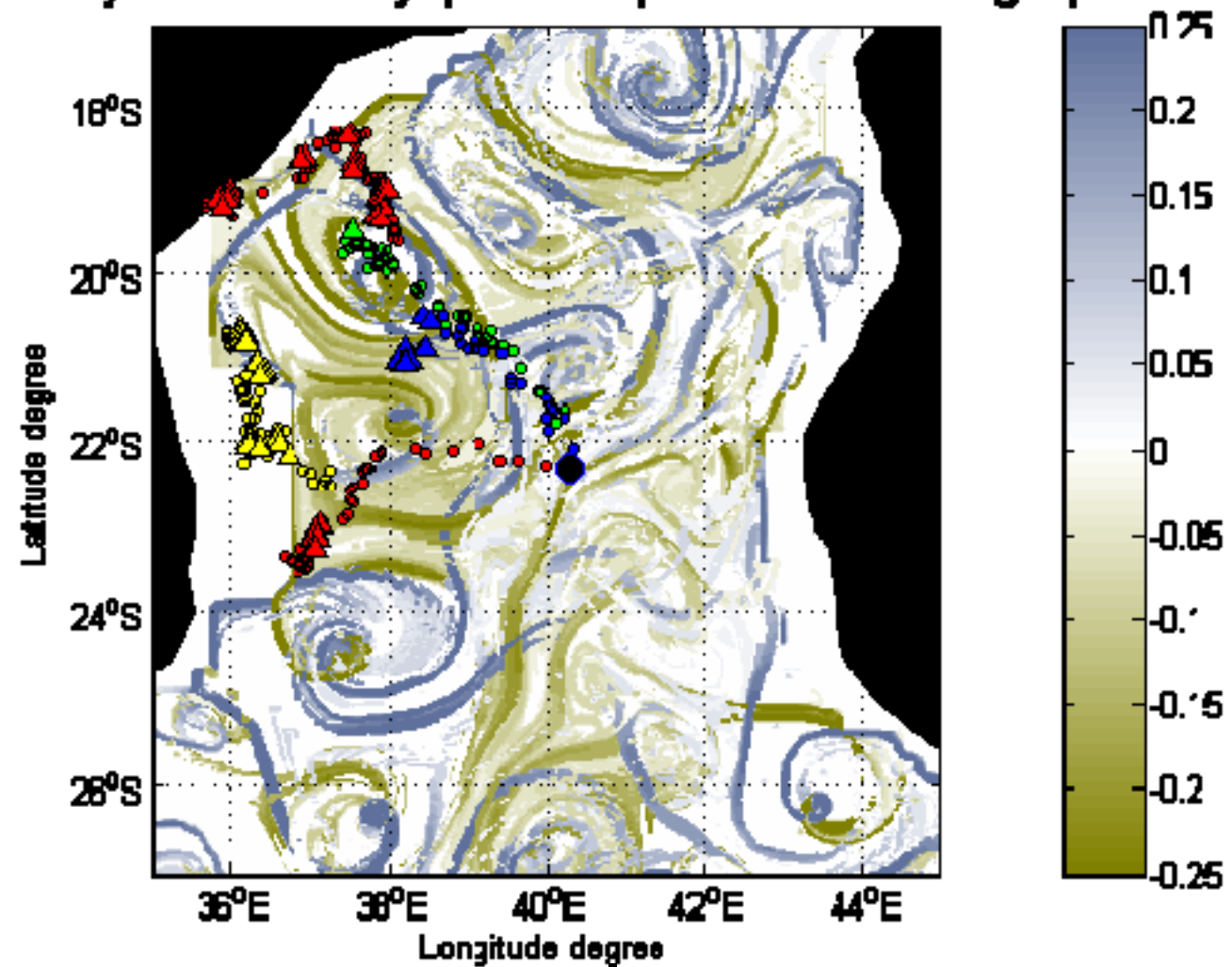
### Overlay Finite Size Lyapunov Exponent -1500 long trips



### Overlay Finite Size Lyapunov Exponent -1508 long trips

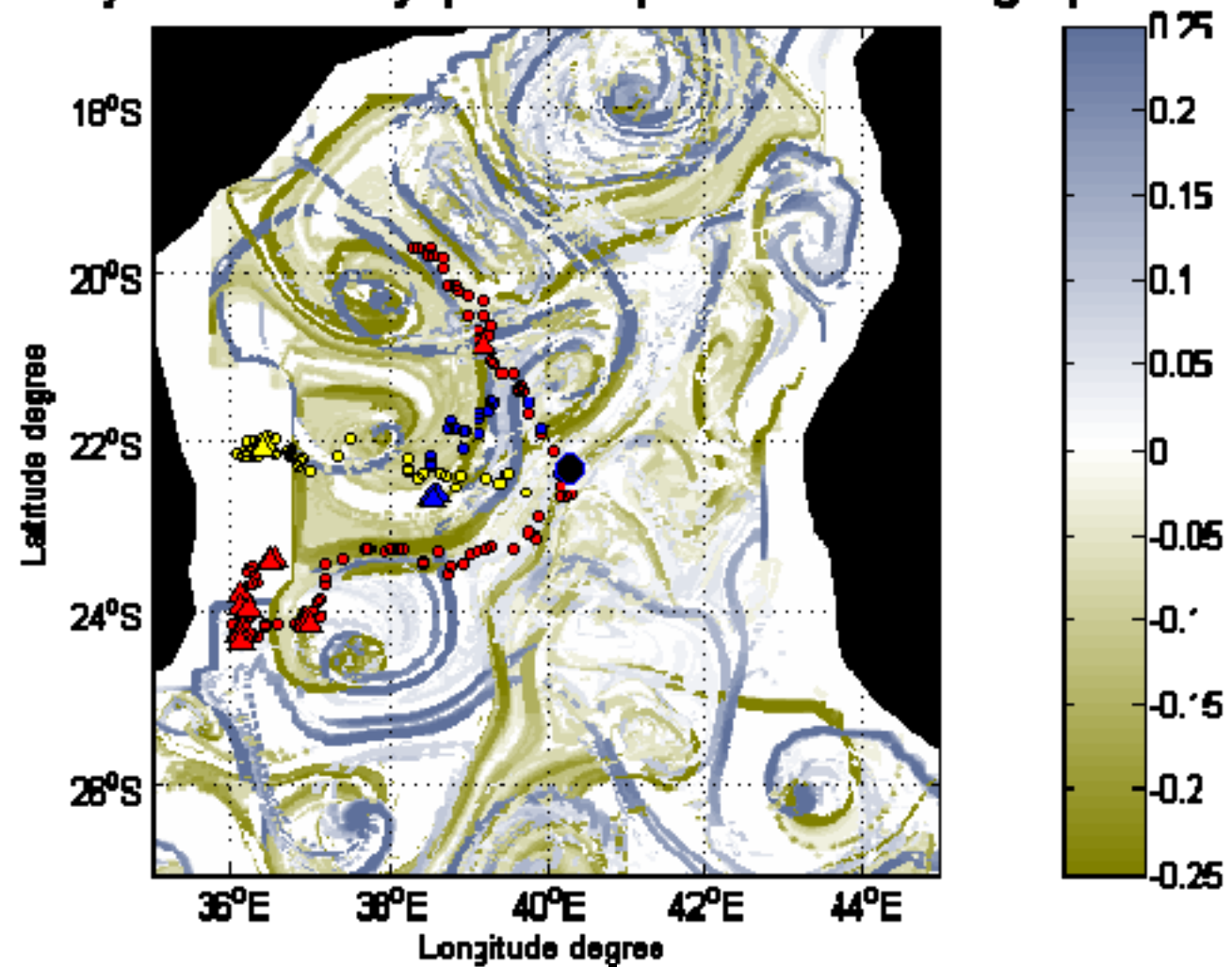


### Overlay Finite Size Lyapunov Exponent -1512 long trips

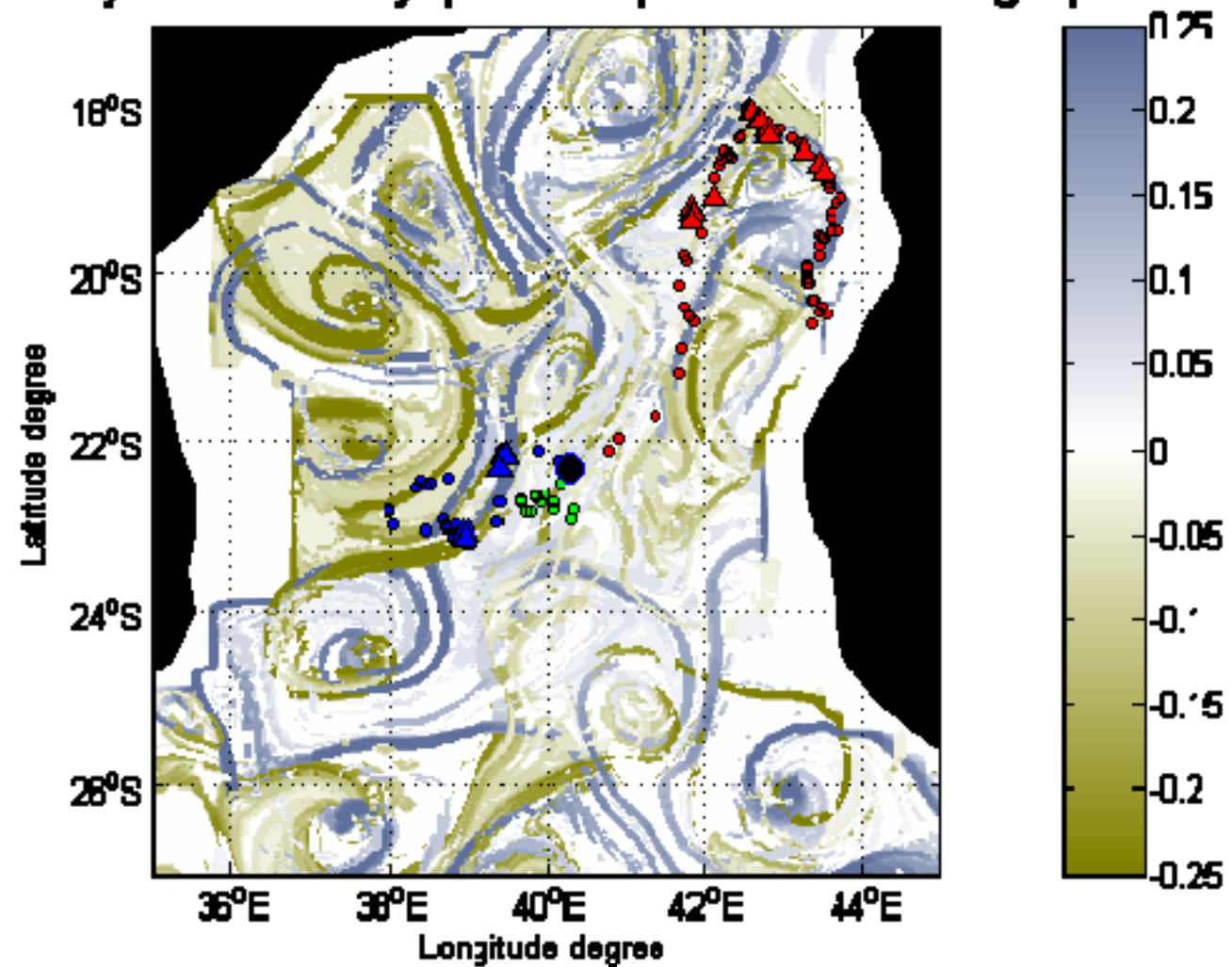




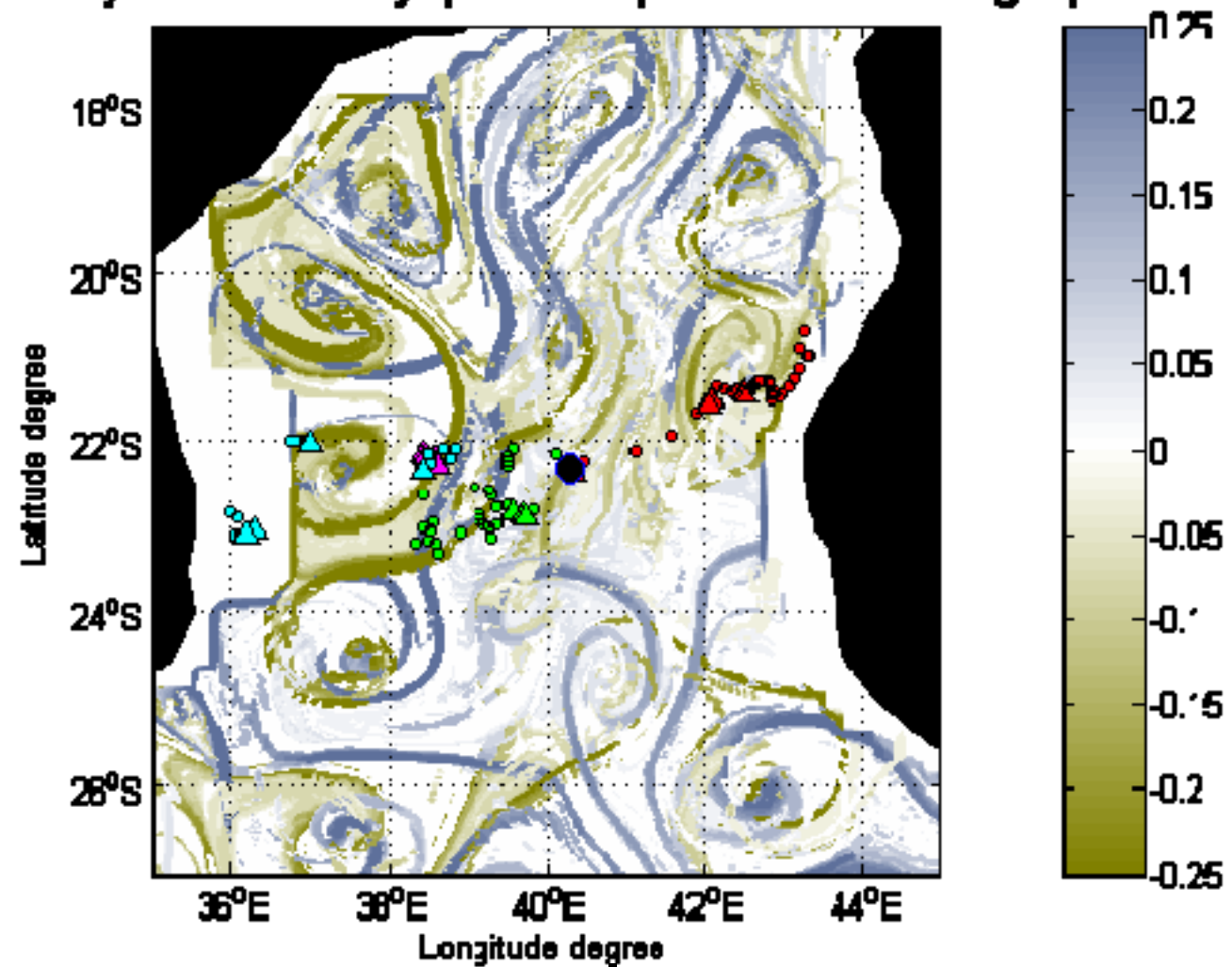
### Overlay Finite Size Lyapunov Exponent -1516 long trips



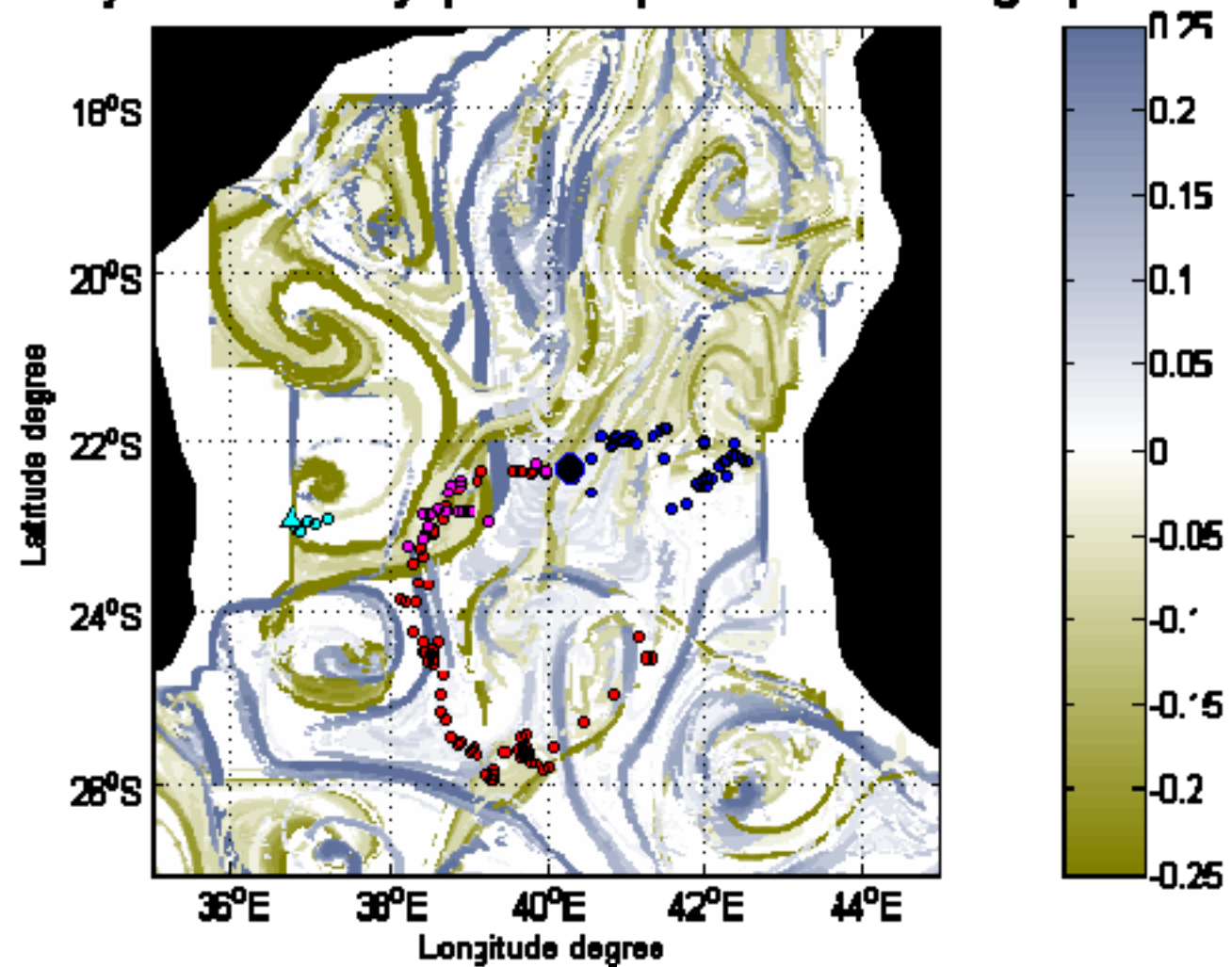
### Overlay Finite Size Lyapunov Exponent -1520 long trips



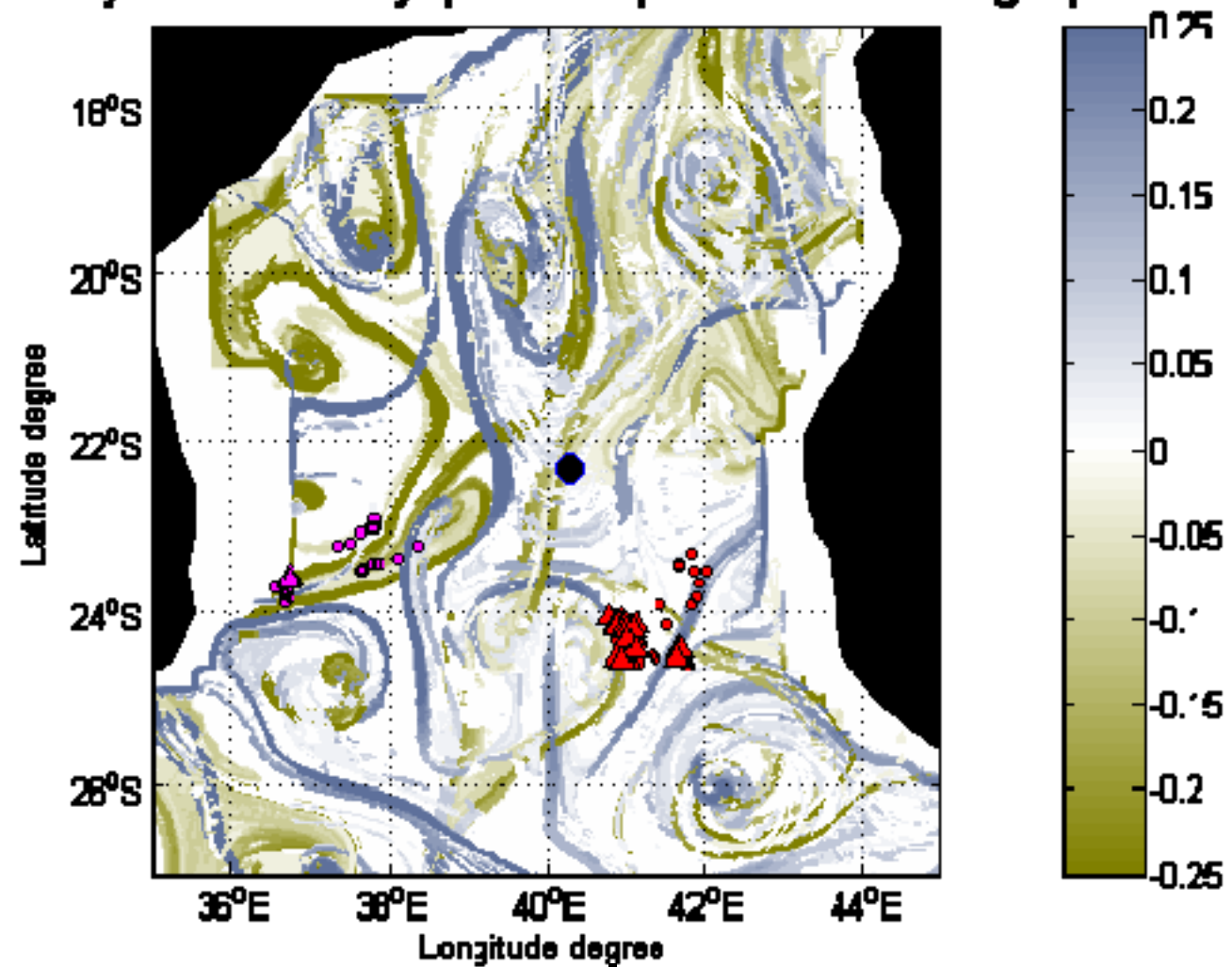
### Overlay Finite Size Lyapunov Exponent -1524 long trips



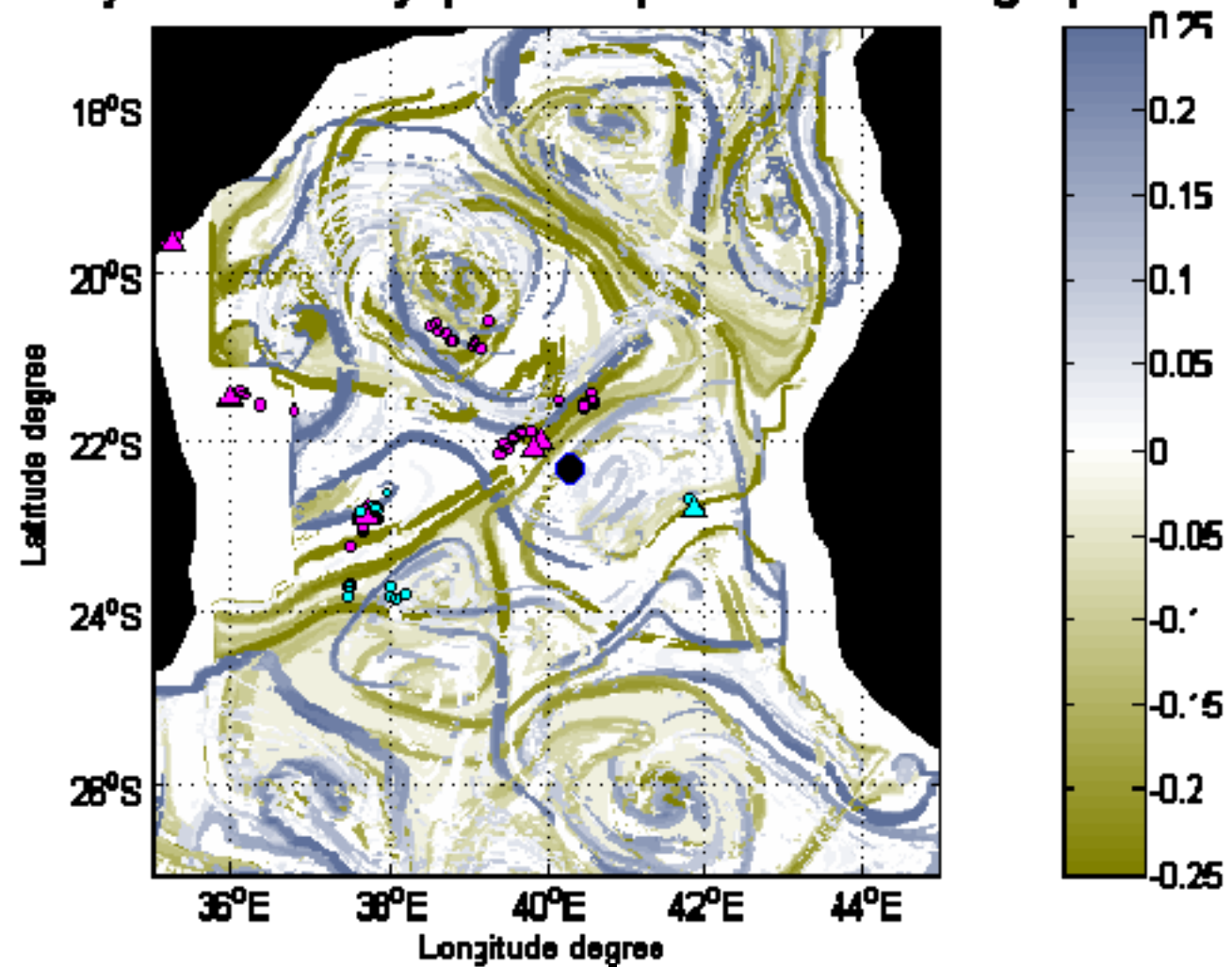
### Overlay Finite Size Lyapunov Exponent -1528 long trips



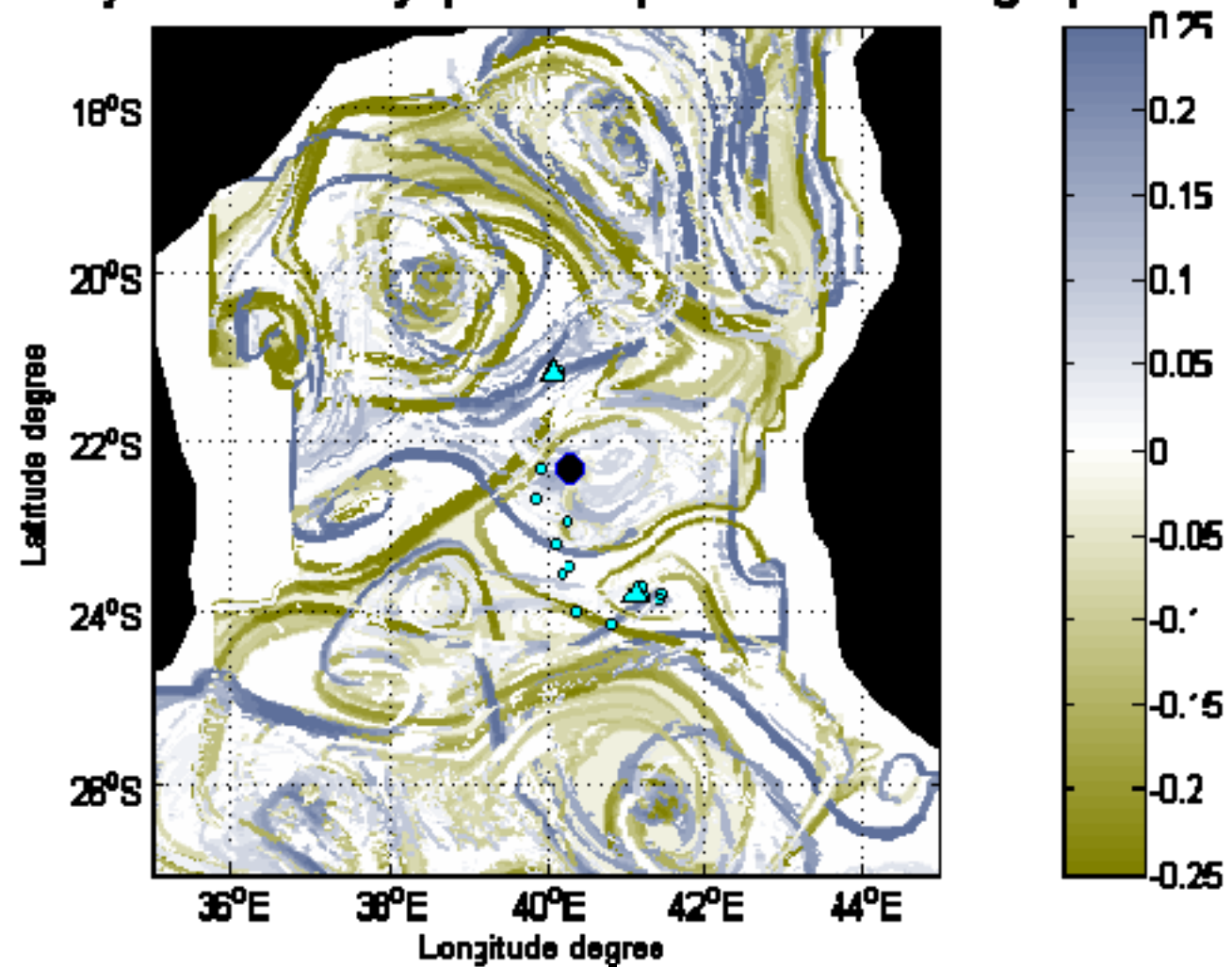
### Overlay Finite Size Lyapunov Exponent -1532 long trips



### Overlay Finite Size Lyapunov Exponent -1548 long trips



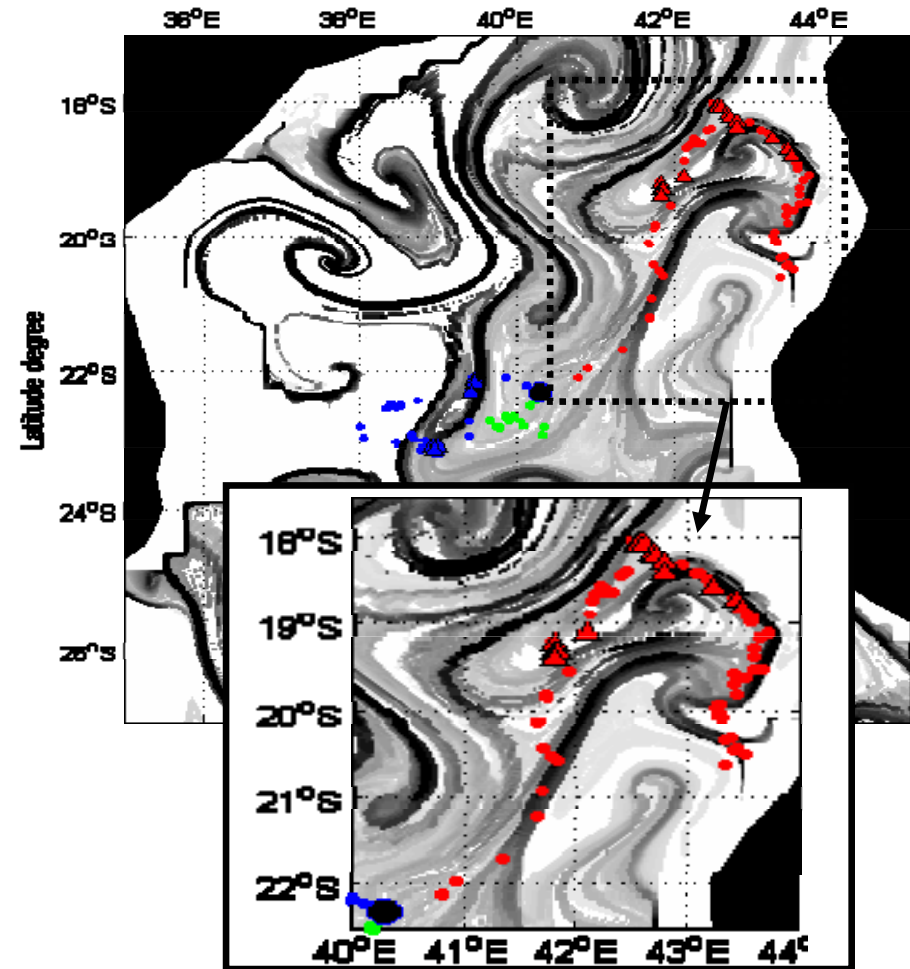
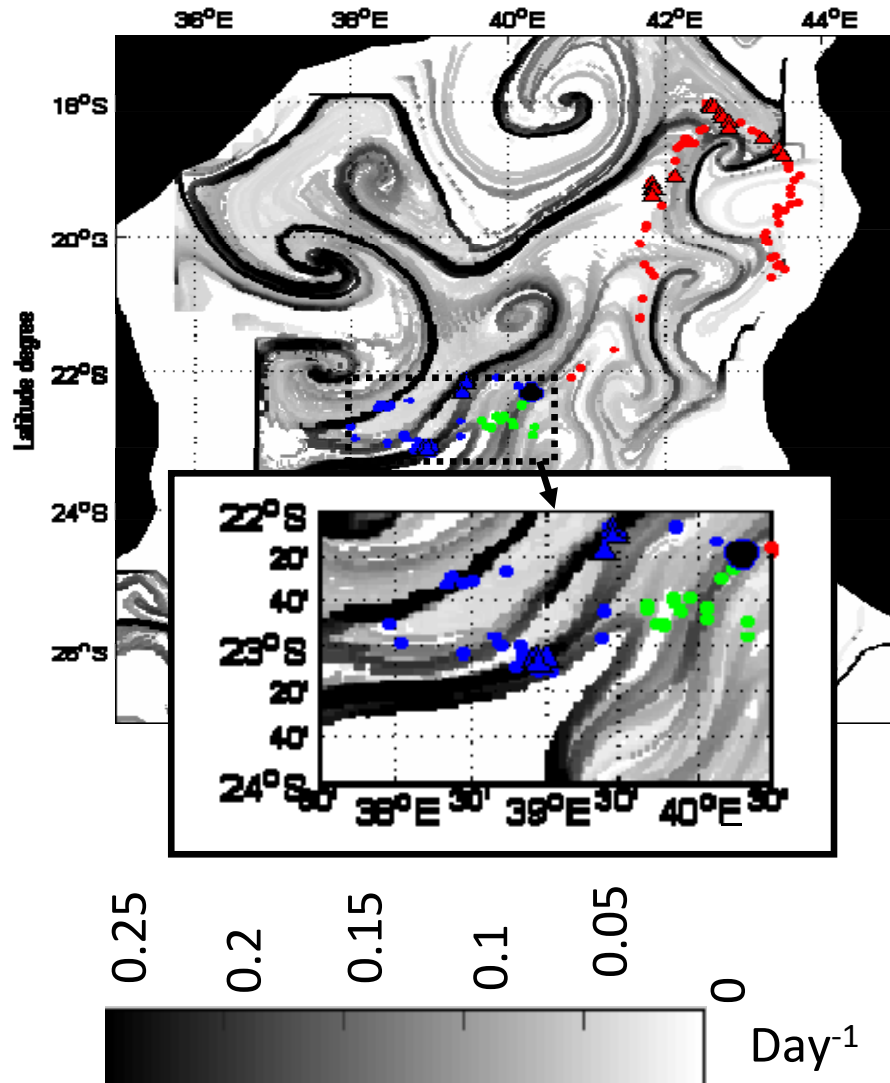
### Overlay Finite Size Lyapunov Exponent -1552 long trips



Week of September 24, 2003

Backward FSLE=Attractive LCSs

Forward FSLE = Repelling LCSs

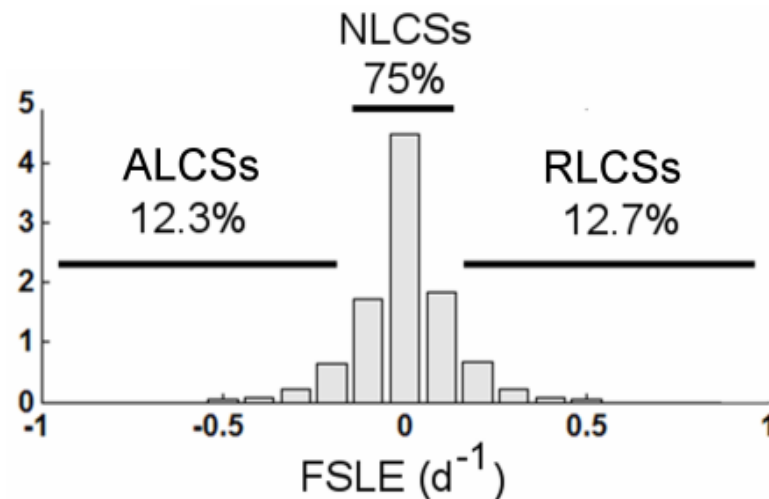


- ▲ foraging patch (flight speed lower than 10 km/h)
- seabird trajectory

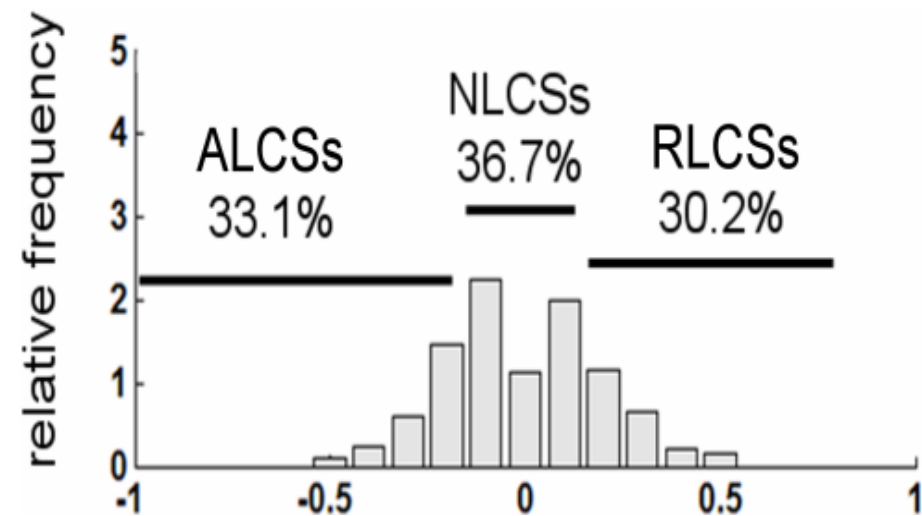


## Histograms of FSLE values

On the whole area



On the birds positions



ALCS: attracting LCS, i.e. FSLE (backwards)  $< -0.1 \text{ day}^{-1}$

RLCS: repelling LCS, i.e. FSLE (forwards)  $> 0.1 \text{ day}^{-1}$

NLCS: not LCS (small FSLE)

Despite LCS occupy only 25% of space, 63% of bird's positions are on them

Table 1. Absolute frequency of seabird positions on LCSs and on no Lagrangian structures for long and short trips per week and result of the G-test for goodness of fit

Week	All trips		Long trips		Short trips	
	LCSs:  FSLE  > 0.1 day <sup>-1</sup>	FSLE  < 0.1 day <sup>-1</sup>	LCSs:  FSLE  > 0.1 day <sup>-1</sup>	FSLE  < 0.1 day <sup>-1</sup>	LCSs:  FSLE  > 0.1 day <sup>-1</sup>	FSLE  < 0.1 day <sup>-1</sup>
1	38	9	19	7	19	2
2	78	40	55	12	23	28
4	208	85	147	54	61	31
5	167	109	137	84	30	25
6	120	77	89	51	31	26
7	79	55	72	32	7	23
8	53	34	53	34	—	—
9	61	59	61	59	—	—
10	55	31	45	24	10	7
14	35	12	35	12	—	—
15	10	5	10	5	—	—
%	63.7	36.3	65.9	34.1	56.0	44.0
G-test (log-likelihood ratio)						
<i>n</i>	1420		1097		323	
<i>k</i>	11		11		7	
df	10		10		6	
G	28.119		30.613		32.057	
P	0.00173		0.001		0.000	

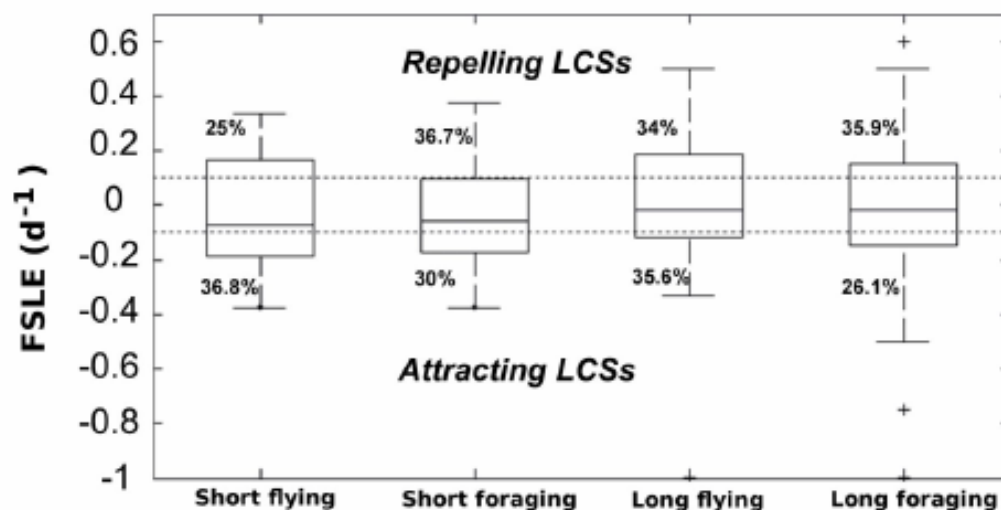
## STATISTICAL TESTS

One-tailed tests. Null hypothesis  $H_0$ : Seabird positions share equally LCSs ( $|FSLE| > 0.1 \text{ day}^{-1}$  and on no LCSs.  $\alpha = 5\%$ ).

Table S2. Result of G-test statistics for comparison between frequency of bird positions on repelling or attracting LCS during flying and foraging and short and long trips

Variable	Flying	Foraging
Long trips		
Repelling LCS ( $FSLE > 0.1 \text{ day}^{-1}$ )	318	50
Attracting LCS ( $FSLE < -0.1 \text{ day}^{-1}$ )	333	37
<i>n</i>	738	
G	2.29	
P	0.13021	
Short trips		
Repelling LCS ( $FSLE > 0.1 \text{ day}^{-1}$ )	76	9
Attracting LCS ( $FSLE < -0.1 \text{ day}^{-1}$ )	112	10
<i>n</i>	207	
G	0.34	
P	0.55993	

Two-tailed tests. Null hypothesis  $H_0$ : seabirds share out equally on repelling and attracting structures when they fly or forage.  $\alpha = 5\%$ .



## Results of statistical tests:

- Frigate birds fly on top of LCCs both for travelling as for foraging
- No significant difference between day and night positions
- No significant difference between come and return trip

**Frigatebirds ‘follow’ LCSs not only to find there prey, but as **biological corridors** which bring them to foraging places**

Aggregation of prey on LCSs? or aggregation of subsurface predators?

Olfactory clues (DMS produced by zooplankton) ? thermal air currents?

**Puzzling issue:** no significant difference between attracting and repelling LCSs

- Tangencies between manifolds?
- Interleaving between them?
- 3d dynamics associated both to ALCS and RLCS?
- Do they simply avoid low FSLE regions?

Tew Kai et al. PNAS (2009)

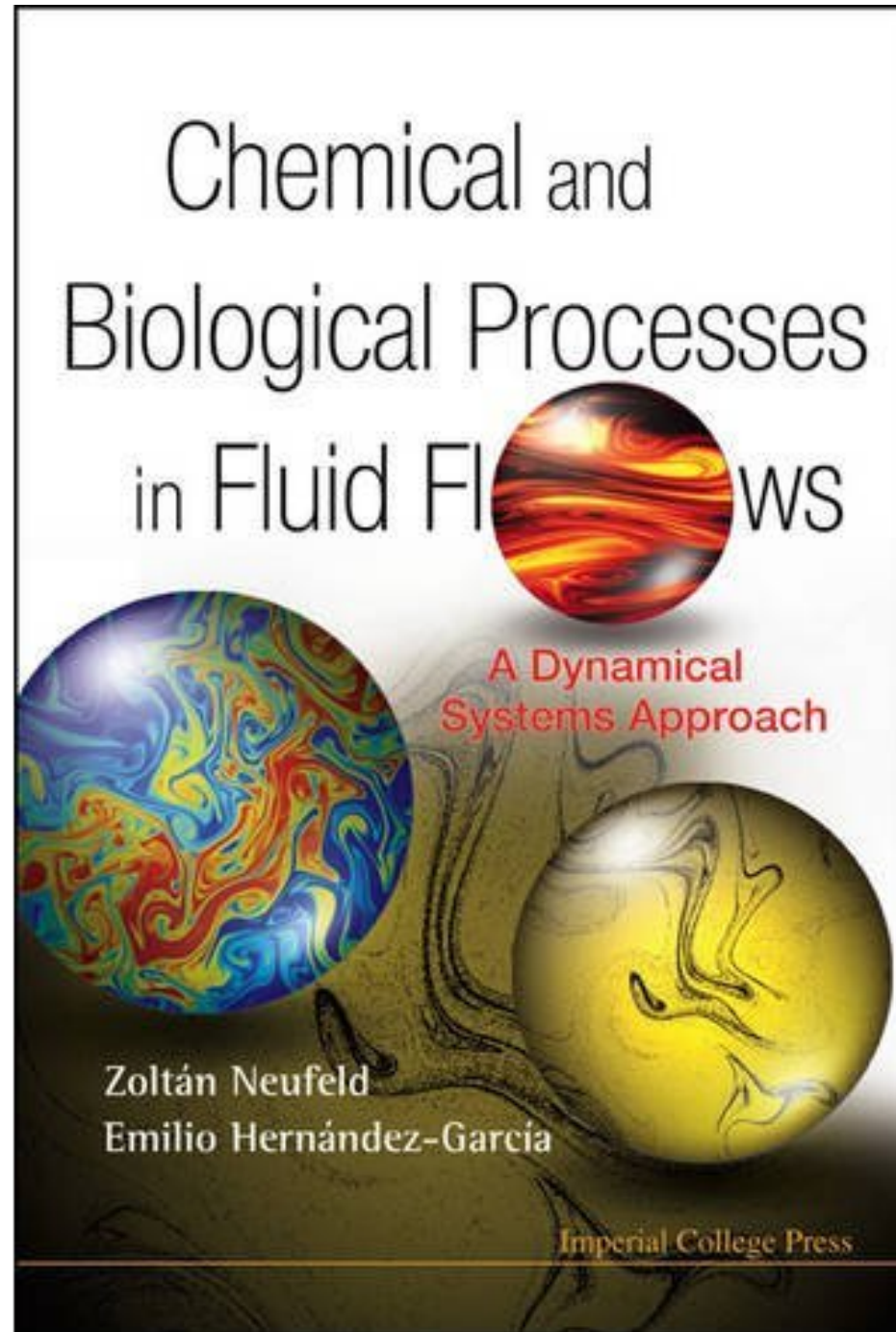
## DISTINGUISHED HYPERBOLIC POINTS AND THEIR MANIFOLDS

- Rigorously identifies hyperbolic structures in the flow
- Identifies observed structures such as 'barriers to transport' known to oceanographers
- Allows the calculation of lobe areas and transport, and traces the origin of water masses
- On the negative side: hyperbolic points should be found one by one: no global view. The numerics is rather delicate.

## FINITE-SIZE LYAPUNOV EXPONENT FIELDS

- Able to reveal **globally** the dynamical structures in the flow: main hyperbolic trajectories, their manifolds, ...
- Simple enough to be applied in a practical way to real and complex ocean velocity fields.
- On the negative side: relationship with material lines is not rigorous, and lobe areas not easy to compute.
- **Reveals impact of fluid flow on biological dynamics at all scales: from plankton to top predators**
- Relationship with 3d dynamics desirable

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