

# Xe - M<sub>x</sub> mixtures for the NEXT EL TPC

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NEXT Collaboration

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**LIBPhys - Coimbra**

University of Coimbra

8th SYMPOSIUM ON LARGE TPCS FOR LOW-  
ENERGY RARE EVENT DETECTION

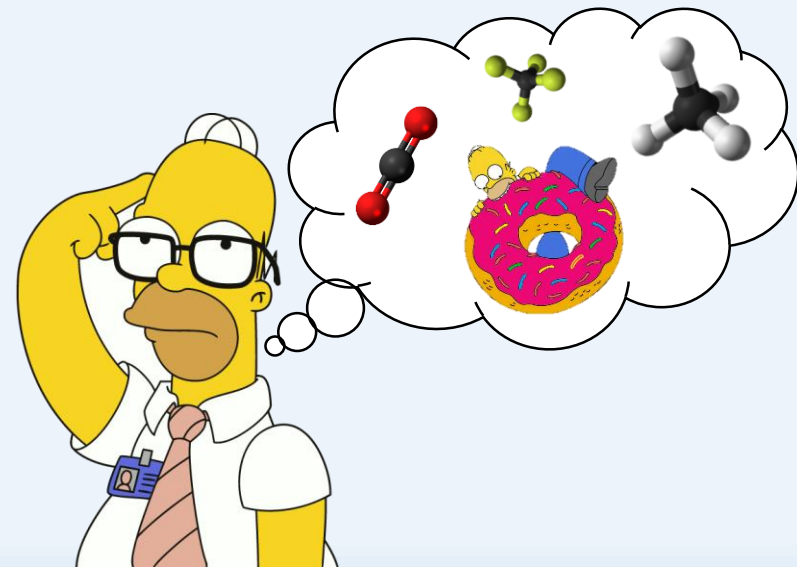
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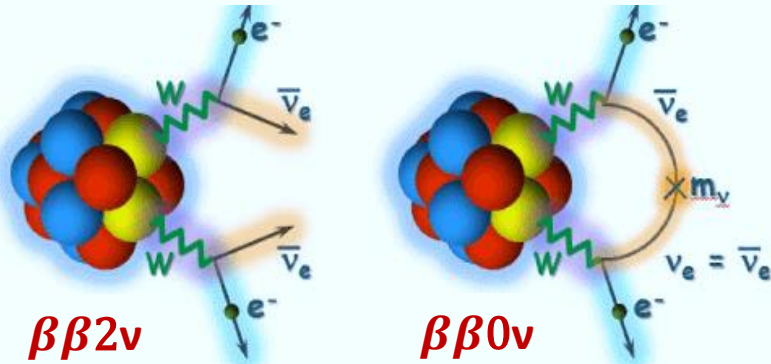
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# Introduction

1. Neutrinos absolute mass?
2. Majorana particles? ( $\nu = \bar{\nu}$ )

Answer: **neutrinoless double beta decay**

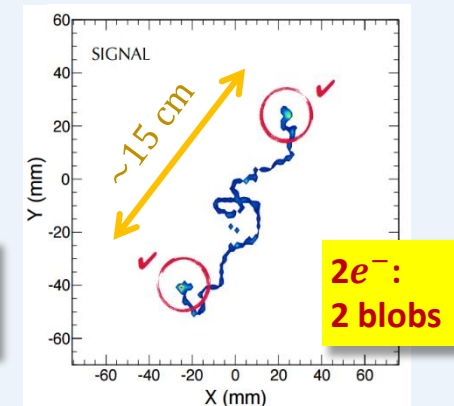
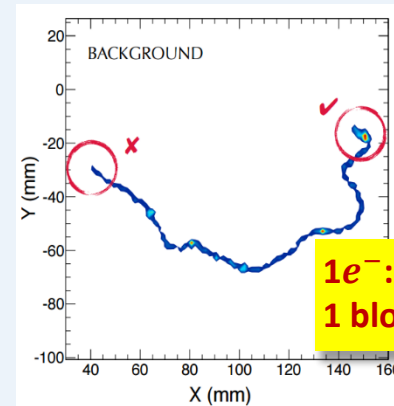
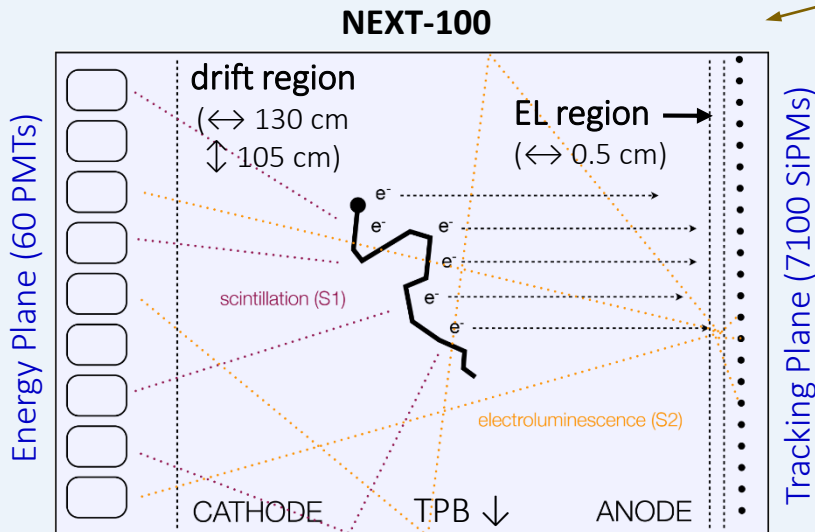


Neutrino Experiment with  
a Xenon Time Projection  
Chamber (TPC)

**NEXT-100 detector:** 100 kg of  $^{136}\text{Xe}$  gas at 15 bar  
High-pressure Xe (**HPXe**) electroluminescence (**EL**) TPC  
with separated readouts for **calorimetry** and **tracking**

**NEXT key features:**

- 1) **Excellent  $R_E$**   $\rightarrow$  0.5 – 0.7 % at  $Q_{\beta\beta}$  (2.457 MeV)
- 2) **Scalability**  $\rightarrow$  towards the ton scale
- 3) **Topological signature**  $\rightarrow$  background rejection



# NEXT – improving the spatial resolution

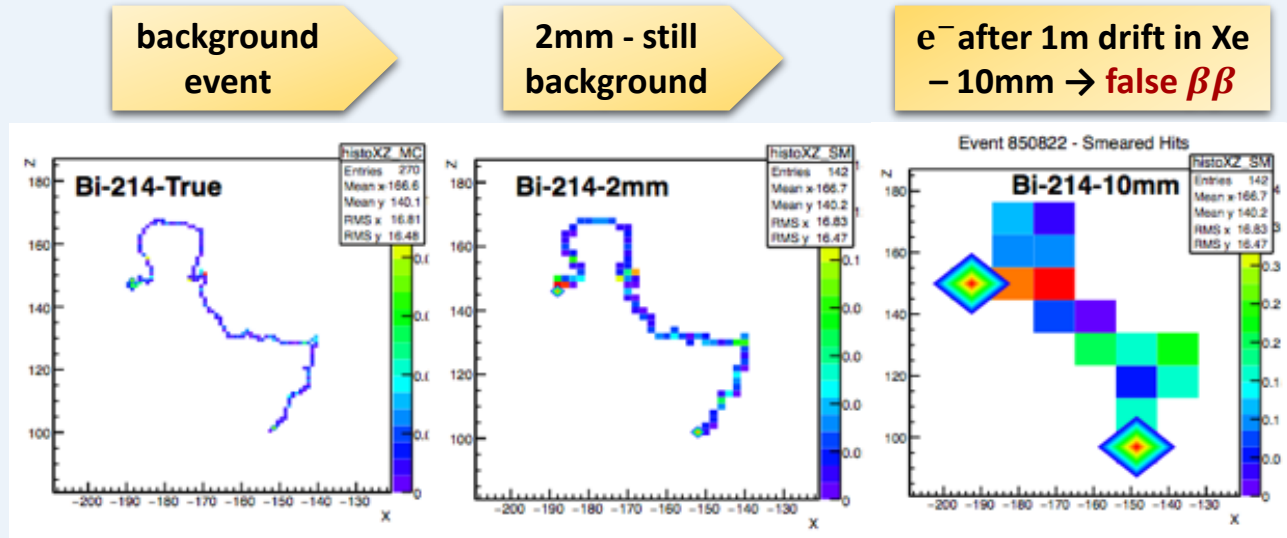
## ❖ Improve topological signature...

### 1. Longitudinal resolution:

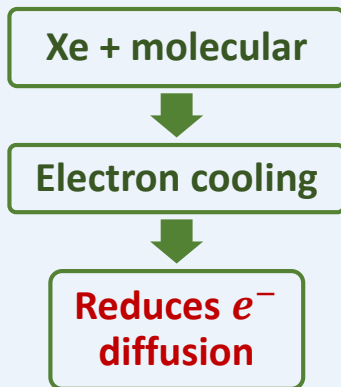
- $D_L(\text{Xe}) \sim 4.5 \text{ mm/m}$
- EL gap (5mm)  $\rightarrow$  1.5 mm

### 2. Transversal resolution:

- $D_T(\text{Xe}) \sim 10 \text{ mm/m}$
- SiPMs pitch + barycenter algorithm  $\rightarrow$  1 mm



## ❖ reducing electron diffusion:

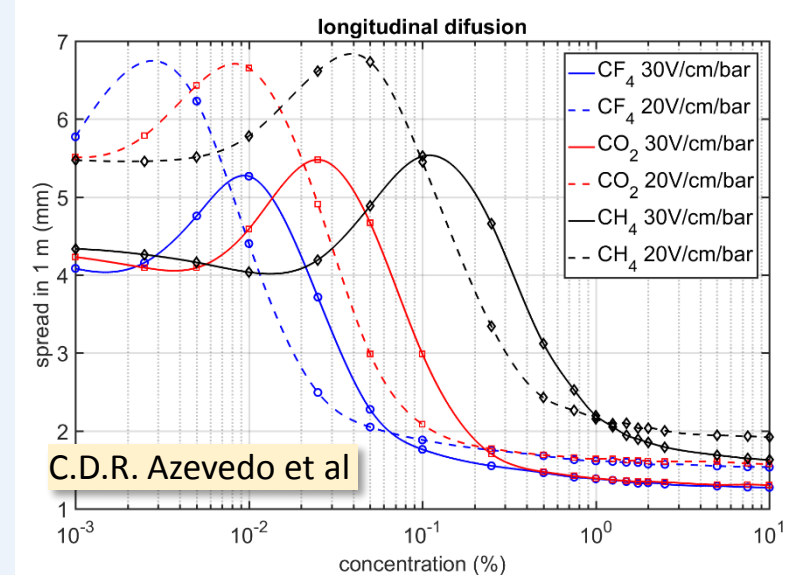
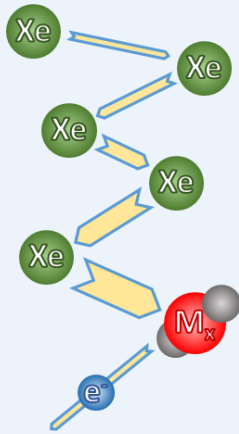
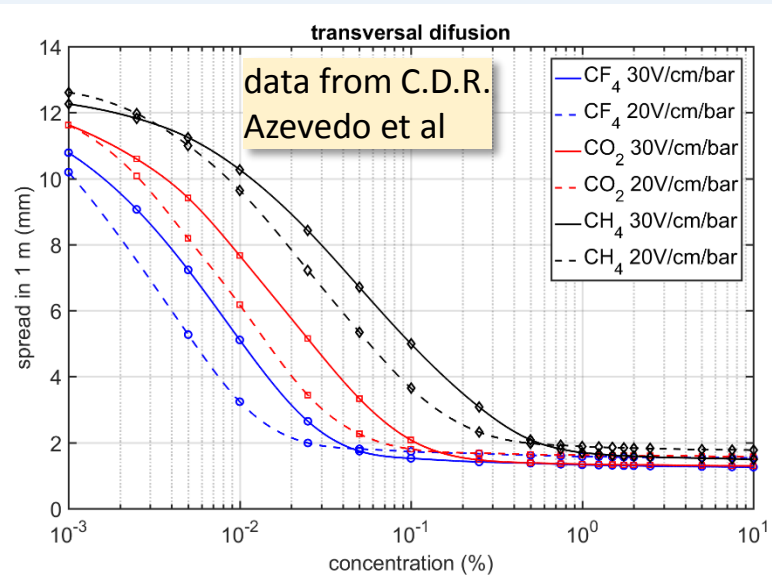


## It also degrades:

- S1 and S2 yield
- Energy resolution

# Additive & concentration

1) **Xe – M<sub>x</sub> reduces e<sup>-</sup> diffusion:** e<sup>-</sup> cooled by vibrational excitation modes of M<sub>x</sub>



2) **Xe – M<sub>x</sub> degrades S1, S2 and R<sub>E</sub>:**

- e<sup>-</sup> cooling → lower Y at same E (S2)
- quenching by M<sub>x</sub> (S1, S2)
- attachment/recombination: in drift or EL regions (S2)
- lower transparency to VUV (S1, S2)



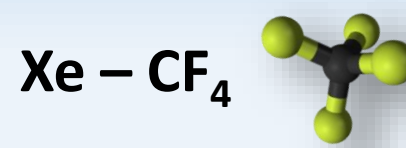
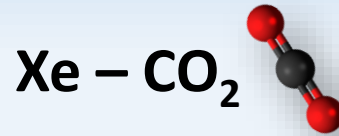
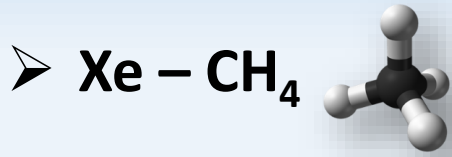
3) **Xe – M<sub>x</sub> technical issues:**

- stable & compatible (with detector and purification system)
- of easy handling and cleaning





# Experimental setup



➤ Driftless Gas Scintillation Proportional Counter (GSPC) with  $EL_{\text{gap}} = 25\text{mm}$

▪ Electroluminescence and  $R_E$  (@ ~1.1 bar)

➤ Gas Residual Analyzer (RGA)

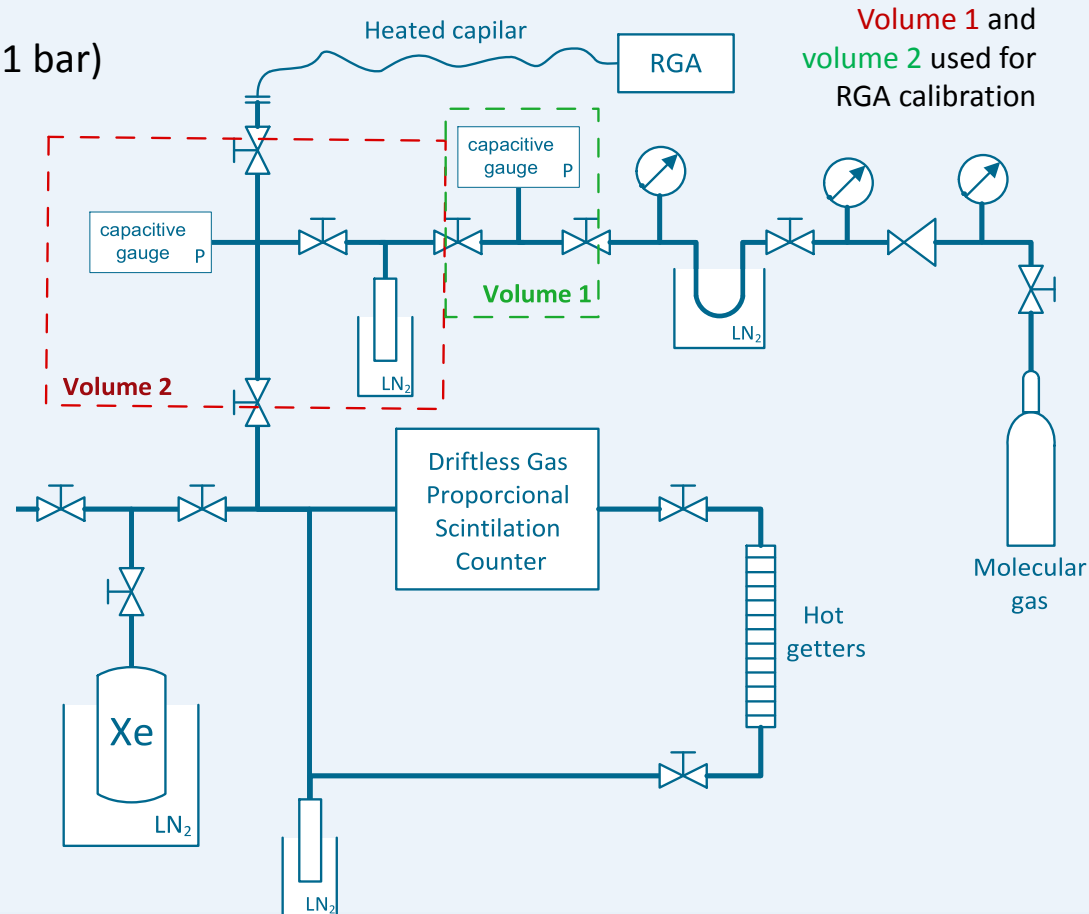
▪ real-time mixture concentration

➤ Gas purified by SAES hot getters

▪ Pure Xe at 250° C

▪ Xe – CH<sub>4</sub> and CF<sub>4</sub> at 120° C

▪ Xe – CO<sub>2</sub> at 80° C



# Energy resolution ( $R_E = FWHM/centroid$ )

$$R_E = 2.35 \sqrt{\frac{F}{\bar{N}_e} + \frac{Q}{\bar{N}_e} + \frac{1}{k \cdot \bar{N}_e \cdot \bar{N}_{EL}} \left( 1 + \frac{\sigma_G^2}{G^2} \right)}, \bar{N}_e = \frac{E}{w_i}$$

$\sigma$  in primary charge production  
 $\bar{N}_e \rightarrow$  primary  $e^-$

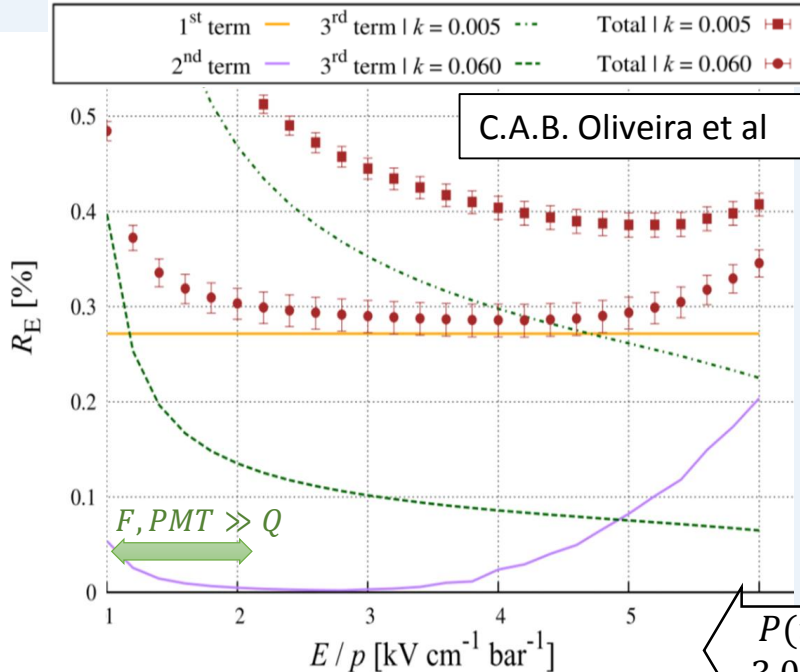
$\sigma$  in EL photon production

$\sigma$  in PMT signal  
 $k \rightarrow$  light collection efficiency  
 $\sigma_G \rightarrow$  fluctuations in PMT gain  
 $\bar{N}_{EL} \rightarrow$  EL emitted photons

$$R_E^2 \propto (N_{EL})^{-1}$$

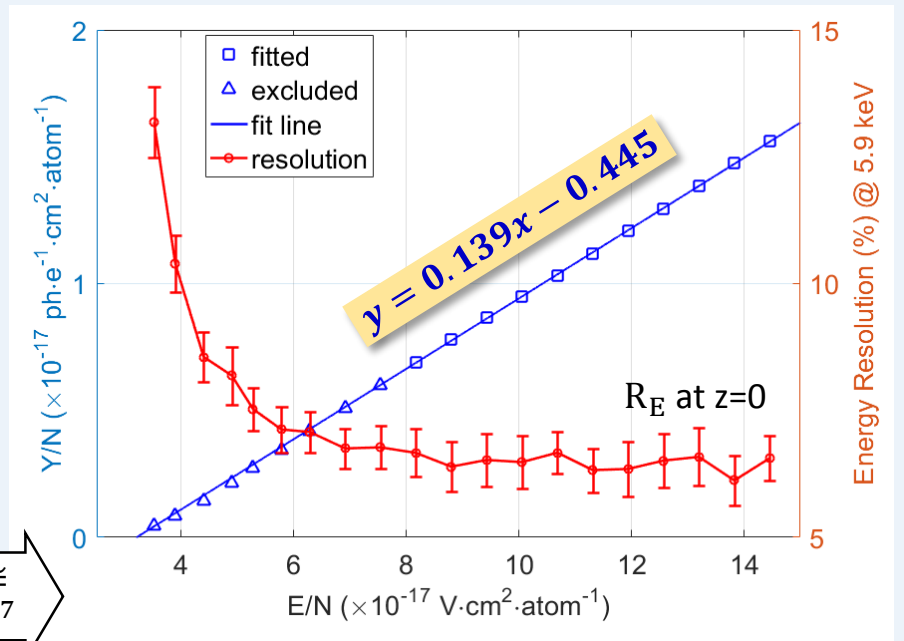
for E/N:  $F, PMT \gg Q$

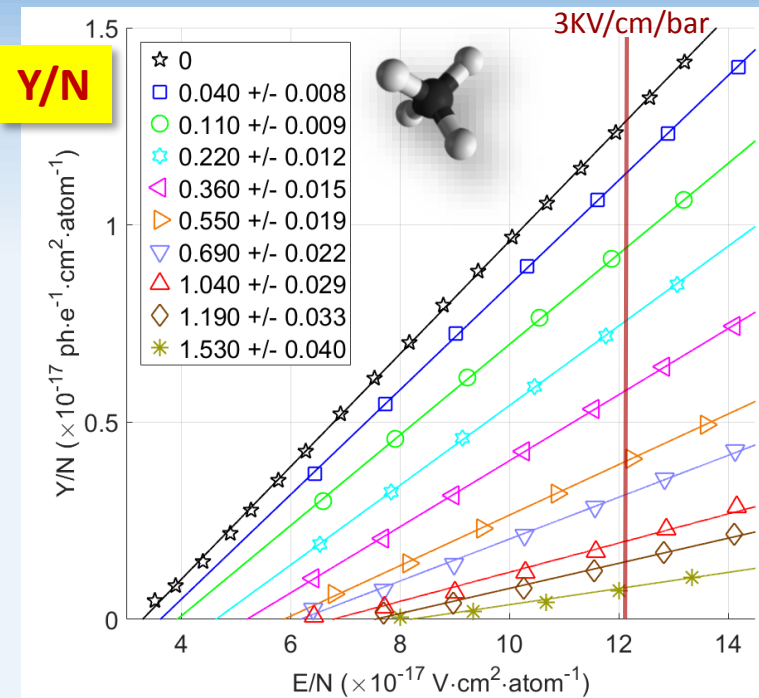
F and PMT contribution are determined using data from pure Xe



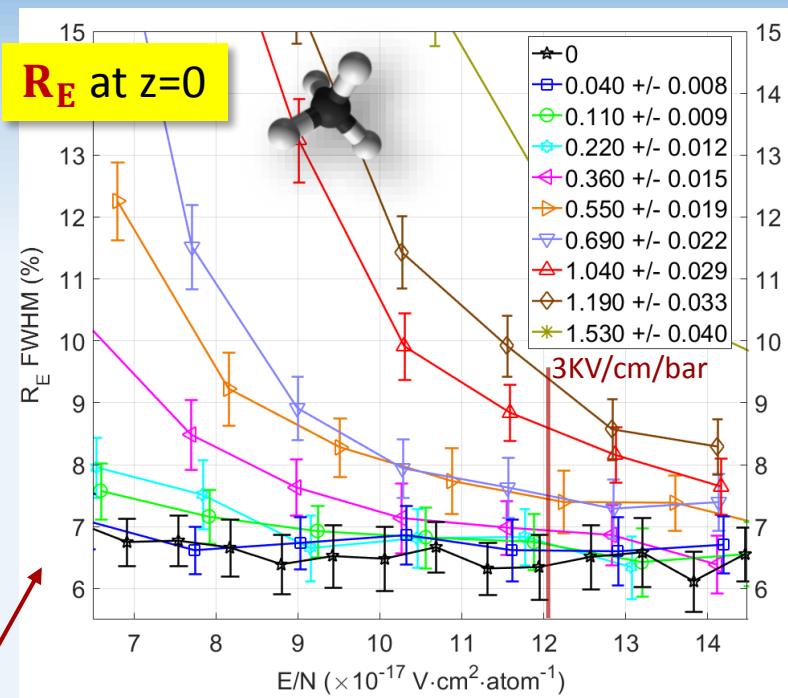
$$\frac{P(\text{torr})}{N} \cong 3.034 \times 10^{-17}$$

## EL Yield (Y) & $R_E$ in a driftless GSPC (pure Xe)

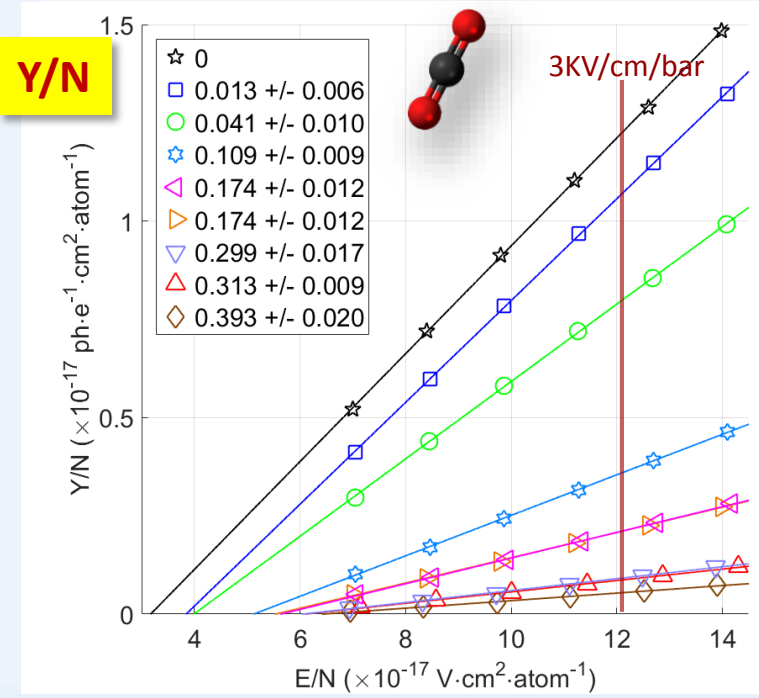




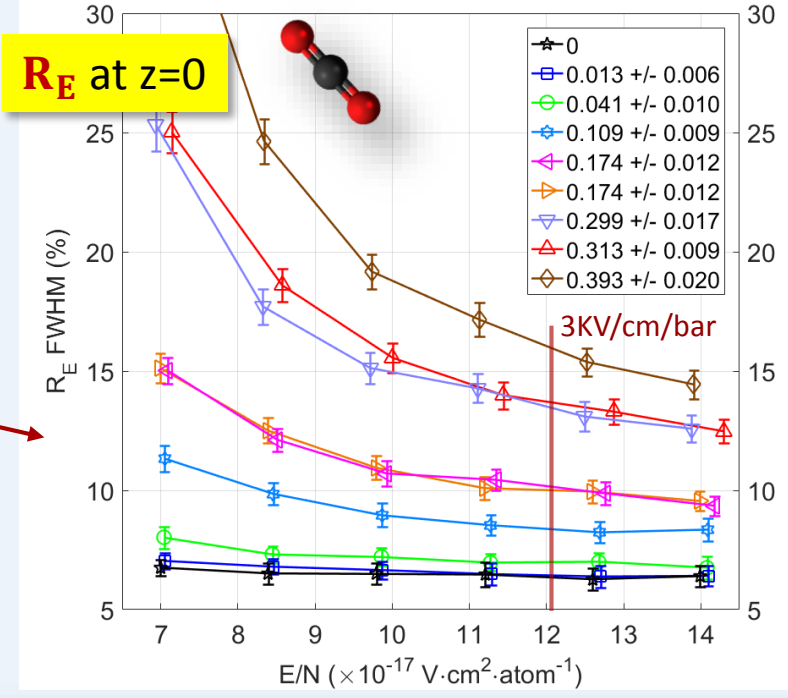
$R_E$  estimated for zero x-ray penetration →  
(driftless GSPC pulse-height distribution is left-tailed, exp + gauss)



EL threshold increases and slope decreases



Stronger E/N → better  $R_E$  favoured in CH4

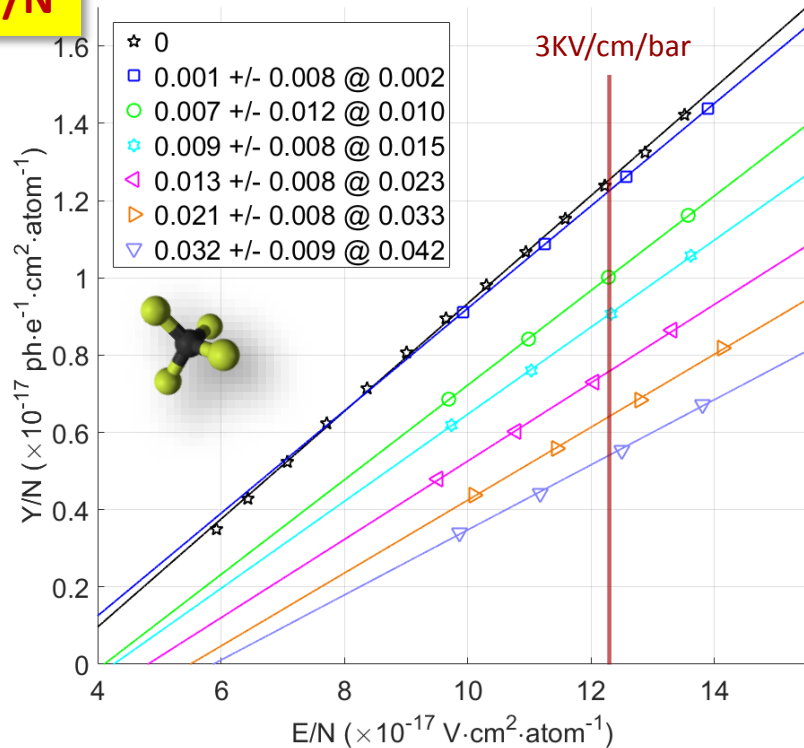


$P(\text{torr})/N \cong 3.034 \times 10^{-17}$



# The CF<sub>4</sub> case

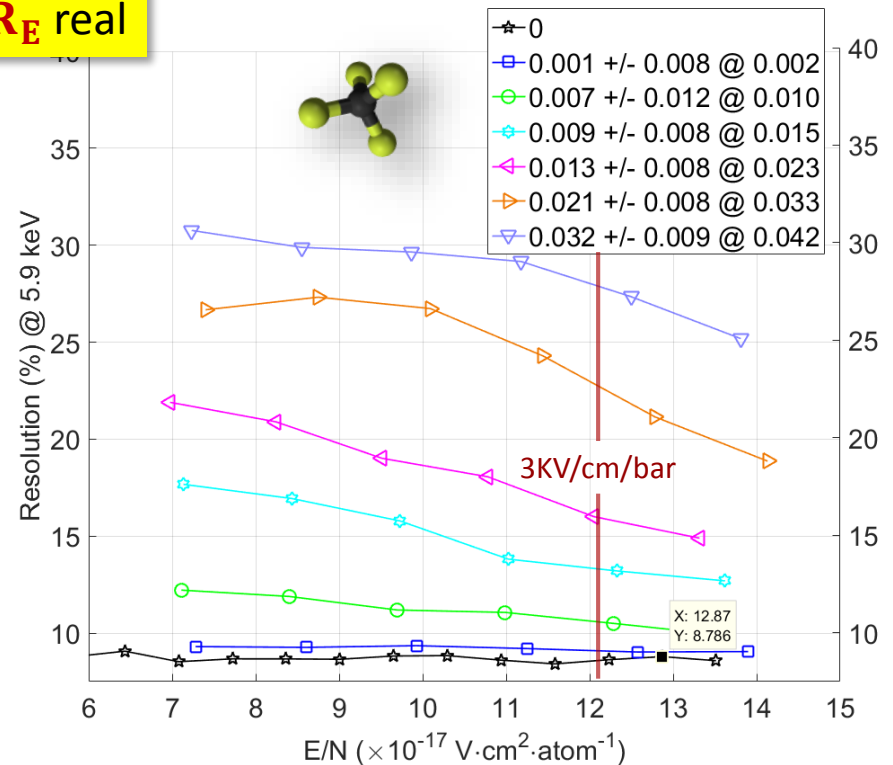
Y/N



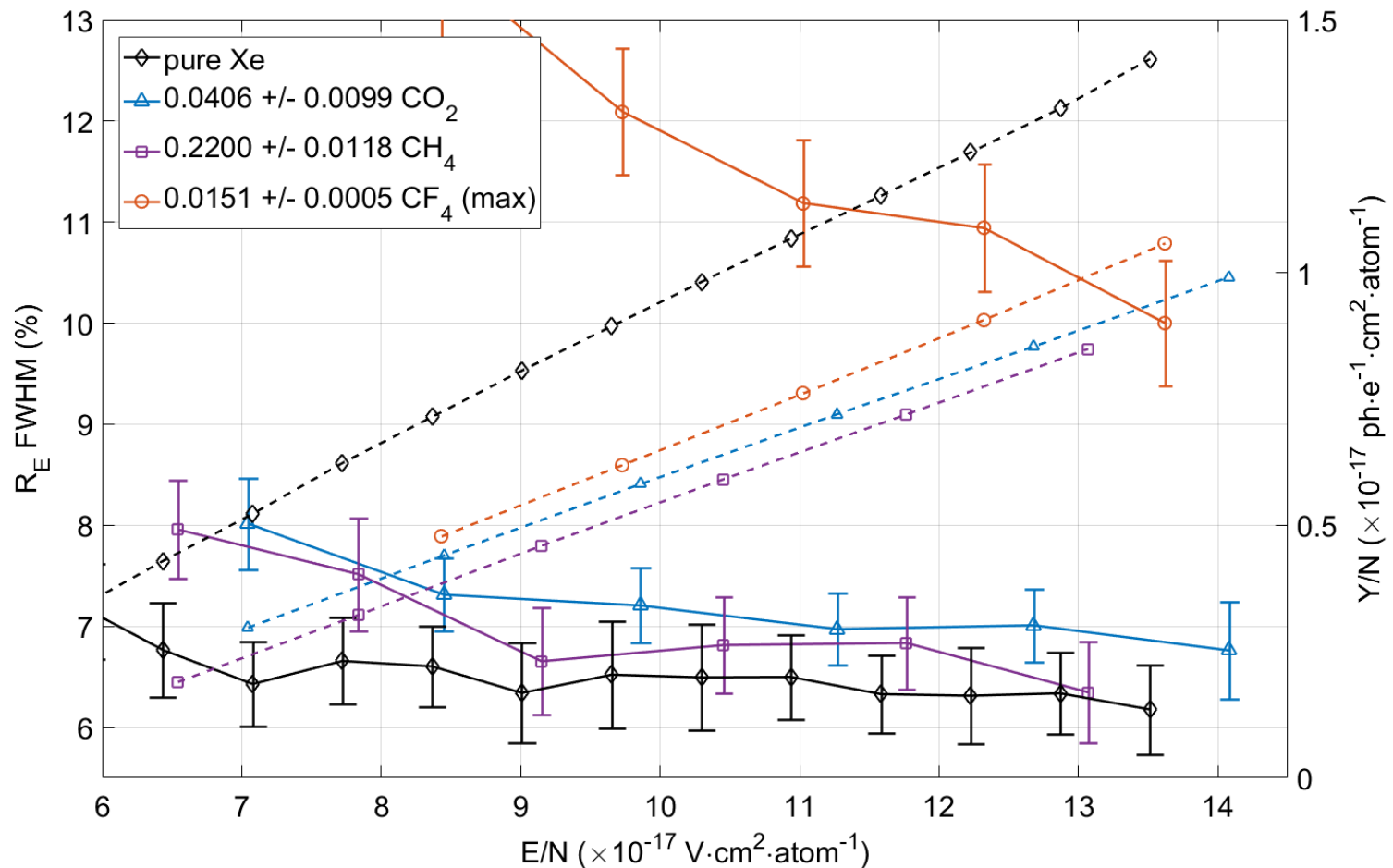
- EL Y well preserved if compared with  $R_E$
- Lower  $R_E$  dependence on E/N

- Here, the real  $R_E$  is showed (because the CF<sub>4</sub> high attachment resulted in some right-tailed spectrums)
- But, in next slides previous z=0 extrapolation adopted although ignoring right-tailed spectrums

$R_E$  real



# Comparison: $Y$ and $R_E$ for the same $D_{3D} = \sqrt[3]{D_L \times D_T \times D_T} \sim 2.75 \text{ mm/m}$

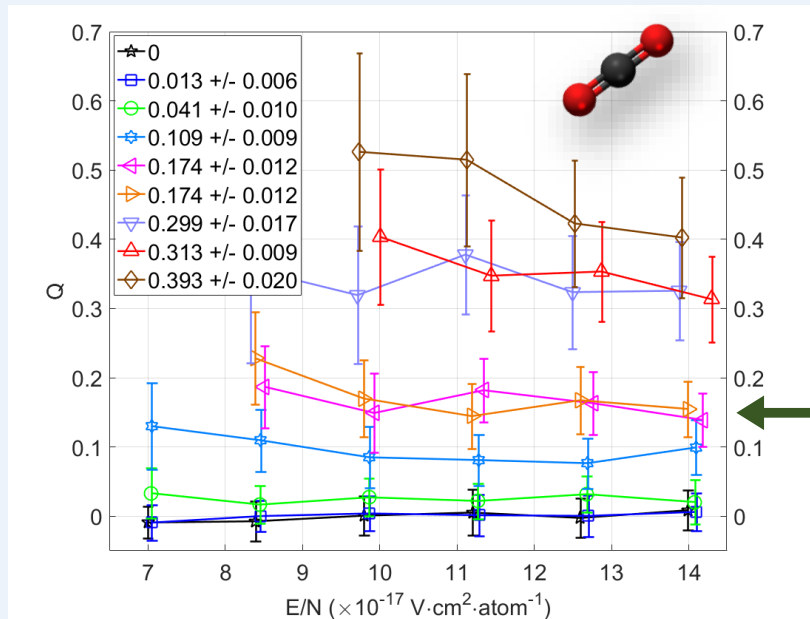
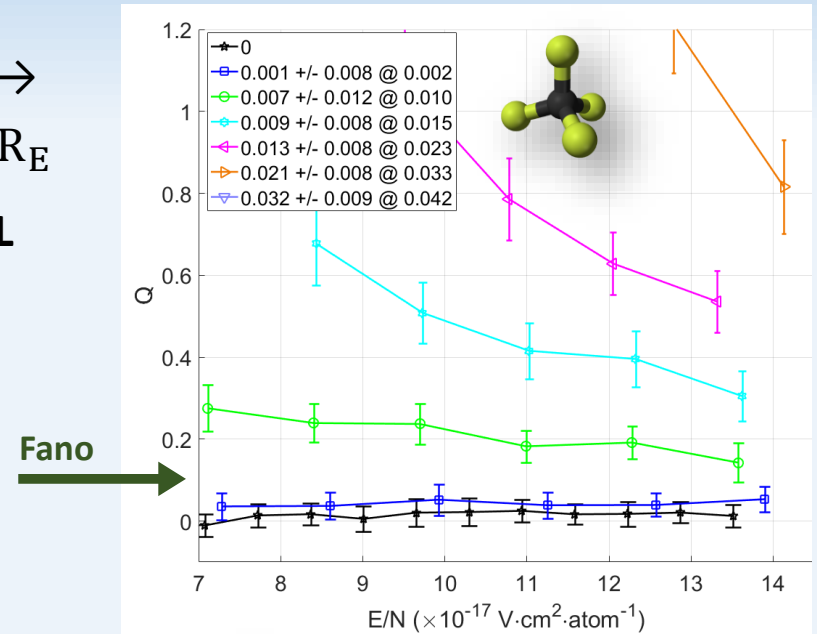


- **$\text{CO}_2$  have a good  $R_E$**  (but it degrades abruptly for higher concentrations)
- **$\text{CH}_4$  have the best  $R_E$ , even with the worst  $Y$**
- **$\text{CF}_4$  have the best  $Y$ , but a terrible  $R_E$**

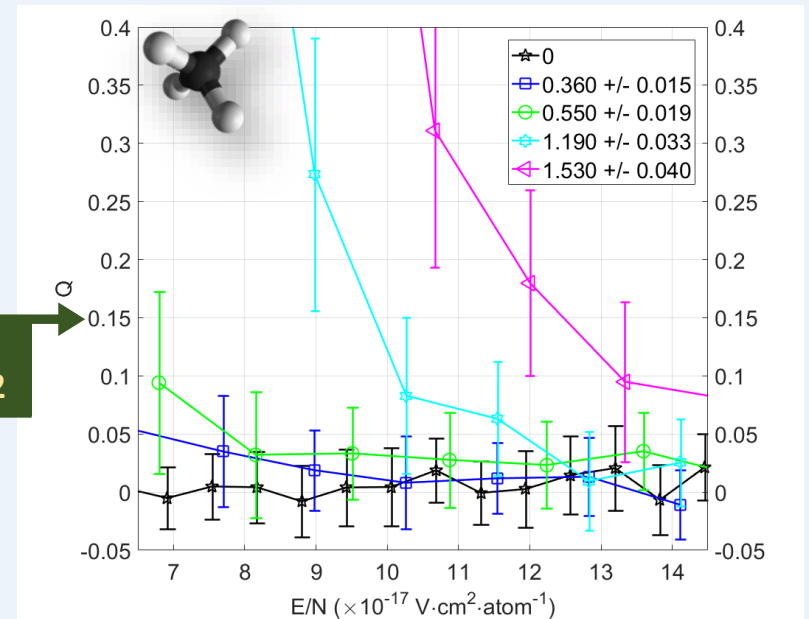
# Concerning Q

- Using  $F$ ,  $k$  and  $\sigma_G/G$  estimated with **pure Xe**  $\rightarrow$  PMT and Fano contributions are subtracted to  $R_E$
- The  $Q$  (relative fluctuations in the number of **EL photons**) is estimated
  - CH4:  $Q$  negligible ( $\ll F$ )
  - CO2:  $Q \sim \frac{1}{2}$  Fano (for conc. in ROI)
  - CF4:  $Q \gg$  Fano (high attachment)

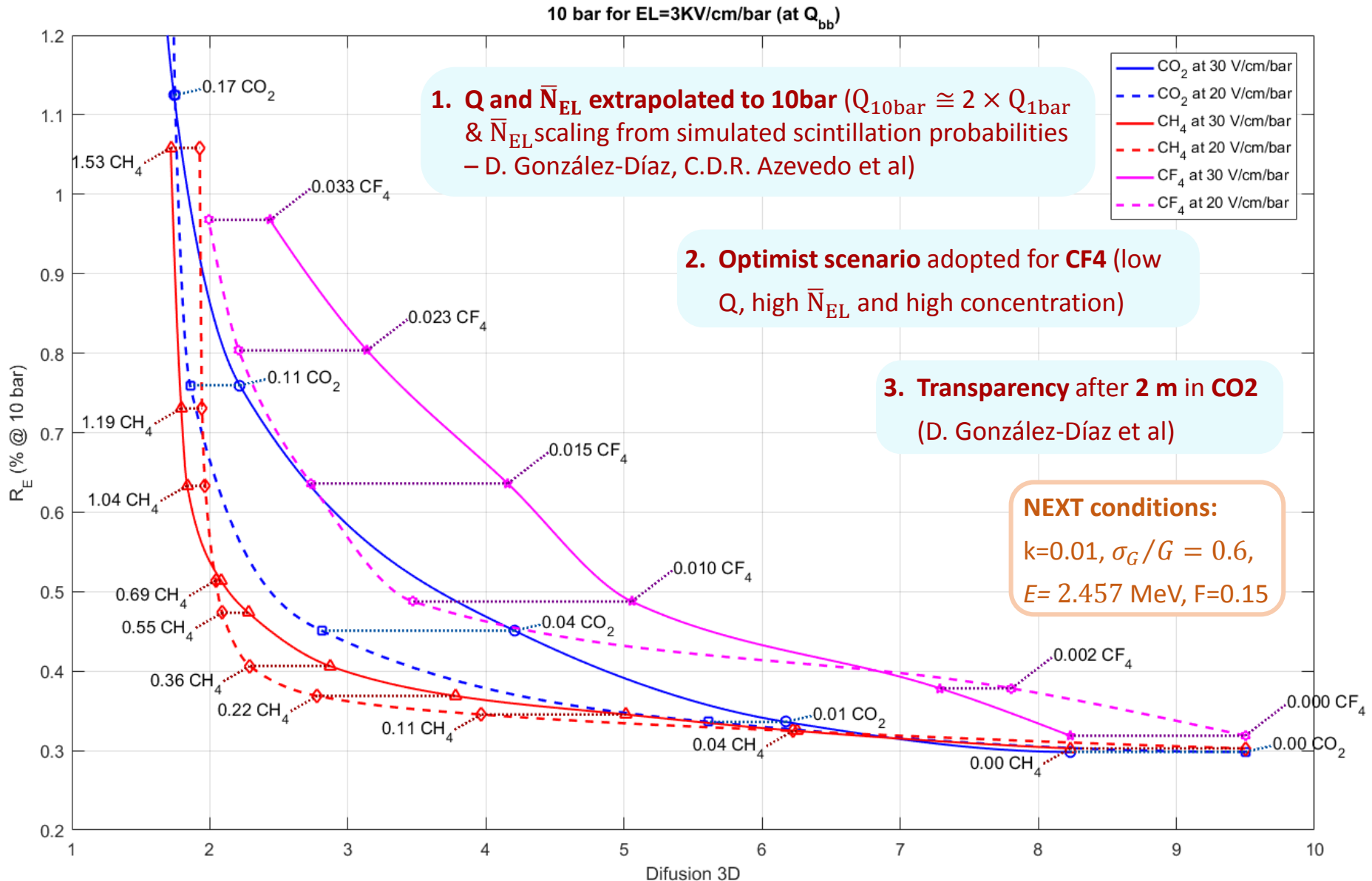
$\downarrow$  Same method as in CO2 and CH4, but **ignoring right-tailed pulse distributions**



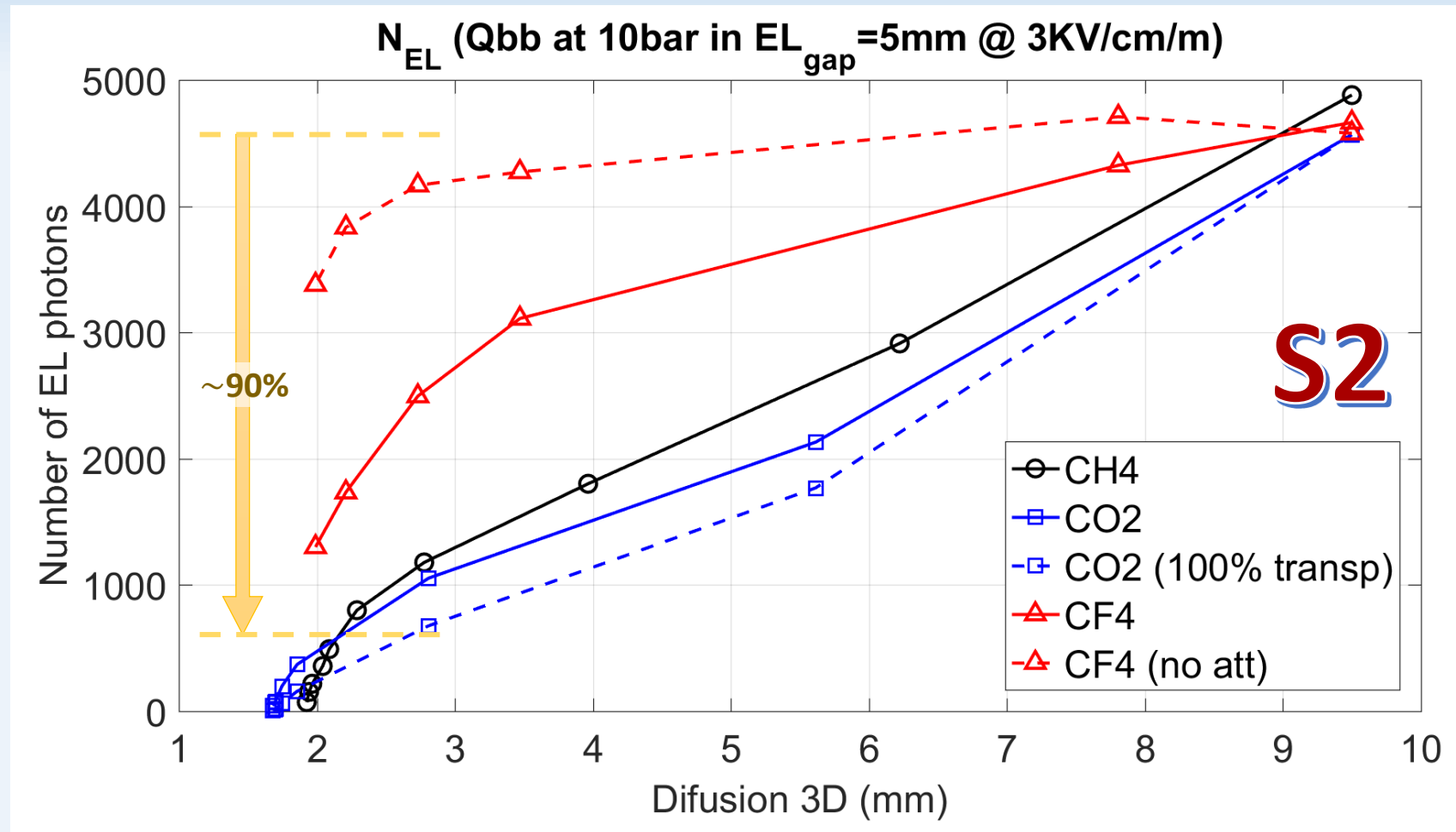
**Fano**  
 $0.15 \pm 0.02$



# The compromise $R_E$ vs $D_{3D}$ – $\text{CO}_2$ , $\text{CH}_4$ and $\text{CF}_4$



# $N_{EL}$ vs $D_{3D}$ – $CO_2$ , $CH_4$ and $CF_4$

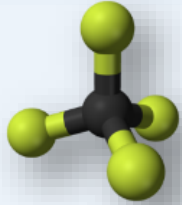


**S1**

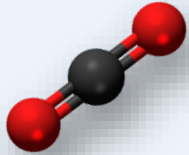
~80% light loss expected in  $CO_2$  and  $CH_4$  (almost 0% for  $CF_4$ ) from simulated scintillation probability (D. González-Díaz et al, same simulations are in agreement with experimental data for S2 at 1bar)



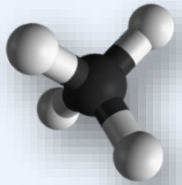
# Conclusion:



Low quenching, high transparency → **S1** and **S2** slightly affected  
High attachment →  $R_E$  extremely degraded (dominated by Q)  
Stable, but concentrations ( $\sim 100\text{ppm}$ ) too low to handle and measure



S1 and S2 affected by quenching and transparency  
Good  $R_E$  (attachment still low) in concentration ROI  
Absorbed by hot getters and transformed CO (CO2 specific cold getters)



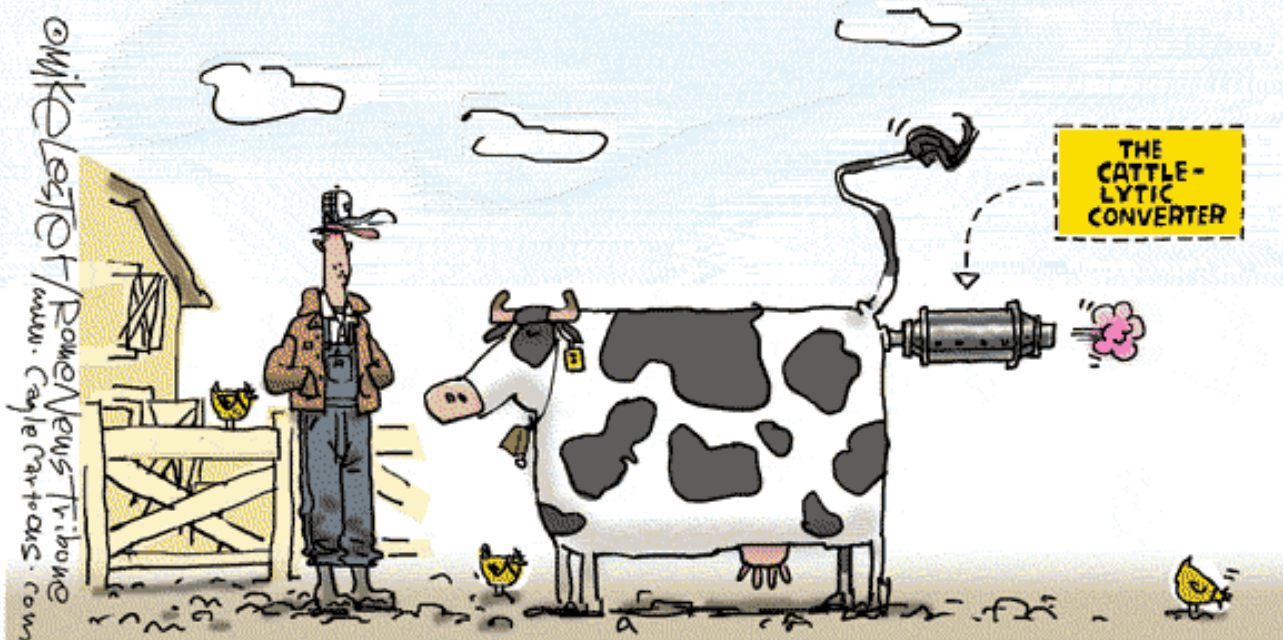
S1 and S2 affected by the high quenching  
Excelente  $R_E$  ( $Q \sim 0$ ), if E/N is increased (as EL threshold) S2 improved  
and  $R_E$  almost the same as in pure Xe  
Stable & high concentrations ( $\sim 4000\text{ppm}$ ), easy to handle and measure

**Xe – M<sub>x</sub> may improve spatial resolution in a EL optical TPC, keeping S1, S2 and R<sub>E</sub>**

# Thank you for your time

U-N REPORT IDENTIFIES "COW EMISSIONS" ARE MORE DAMAGING TO PLANET THAN CO<sub>2</sub> FROM CARS... SOLUTION?

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www.CayleCartoons.com



# References

1. Gómez Cadenas, J.J. et al. “Present Status and Future Perspectives of the NEXT Experiment.” *Advances in High Energy Physics* 2013 (2014).
2. C.D.R. Azevedo, L.M.P. Fernandes, E.D.C. Freitas et al., “An homeopathic cure to pure Xenon large diffusion,” *Journal of Instrumentation*, vol. 11, C02007–C02007, (2016). doi:10.1088/1748-0221/11/02/C02007.
3. C.A.B. Oliveira, M. Sorel, J. Martin-Albo et al., “Energy resolution studies for NEXT,” *Journal of Instrumentation*, vol. 6, P05007–P05007, (2011). doi:10.1088/1748-0221/6/05/P05007.
4. C.M.B. Monteiro, L.M.P. Fernandes, J.A.M. Lopes et al., “Secondary scintillation yield in pure xenon,” *Journal of Instrumentation*, vol. 2, P05001–P05001, (2007). doi:10.1088/1748-0221/2/05/P05001.
5. L.M.P. Fernandes, E.D.C. Freitas, M. Ball et al., “Primary and secondary scintillation measurements in a Xenon Gas Proportional Scintillation Counter,” *Journal of Instrumentation*, vol. 5, P09006–P09006, (2010). doi:10.1088/1748-0221/5/09/P09006.
6. J. Escada, T.H.V.T. Dias, F.P. Santos et al., “A Monte Carlo study of the fluctuations in Xe electroluminescence yield: pure Xe vs Xe doped with CH<sub>4</sub> or CF<sub>4</sub> and planar vs cylindrical geometries,” *Journal of Instrumentation*, vol. 6, P08006–P08006, (2011). doi:10.1088/1748-0221/6/08/P08006.
7. C.D.R. Azevedo, D. González-Díaz et al., “Microscopic simulation of Xenon-based gaseous optical TPCs in the presence of molecular additives,” (2016)

Backup

# Conclusion: mixture purification

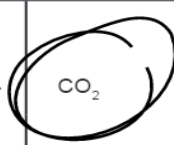
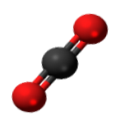
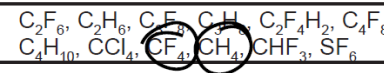


## ❖ Purifying the Xe - M<sub>x</sub> gas:

Specialized cold getters could be used to purify Xe + CO<sub>2</sub>/CH<sub>4</sub>/CF<sub>4</sub>  
 This getters absorbs the main contaminants: **CO**, H<sub>2</sub>O, O<sub>2</sub>, and H<sub>2</sub>...  
**However they don't absorb N<sub>2</sub>**

Radon?



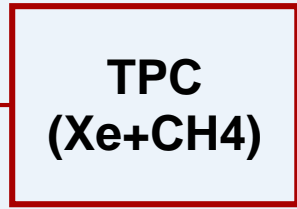
### Purification and Removal Capabilities

Media	Gases Purified	Impurities Removed	Outlet Performance	Regenerable	Dangerous Goods (DG) Classification
804	 	H <sub>2</sub> O, O <sub>2</sub> , CO, H <sub>2</sub> Volatile Acids, Refractories, Condensable Organics (>100amu), Volatile Base Non-Condensable Organics (>45 amu)	< 1 ppbV < 5 pptV < 100pptV	YES	DG - UN2881 Class 4.2
905	  	H <sub>2</sub> O, O <sub>2</sub> , CO, CO <sub>2</sub> , H <sub>2</sub> NMHCs*	< 1 ppbV	YES	DG - UN2881 Class 4.2



# Conclusion: remove $M_x$ from the Xe

CH<sub>4</sub>  
pumped  
out

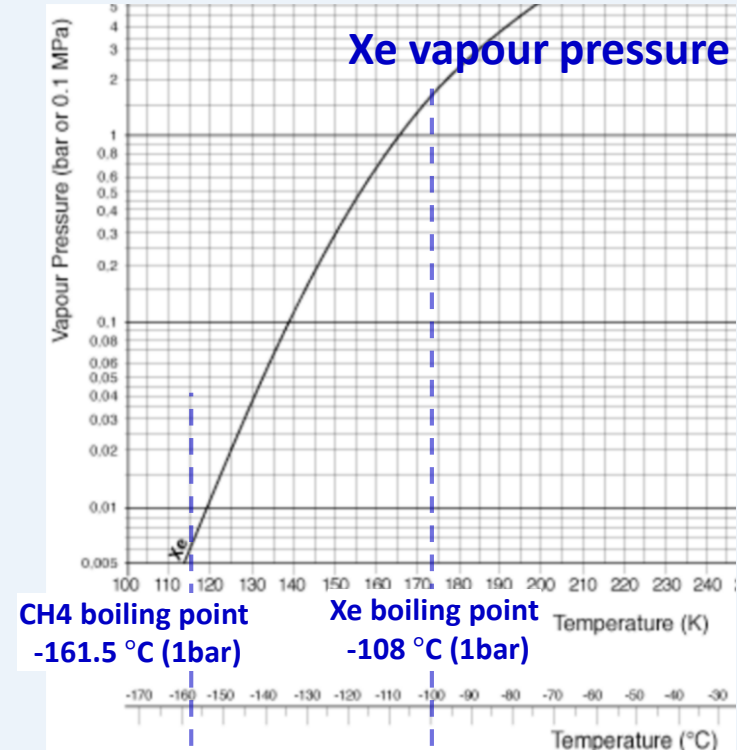
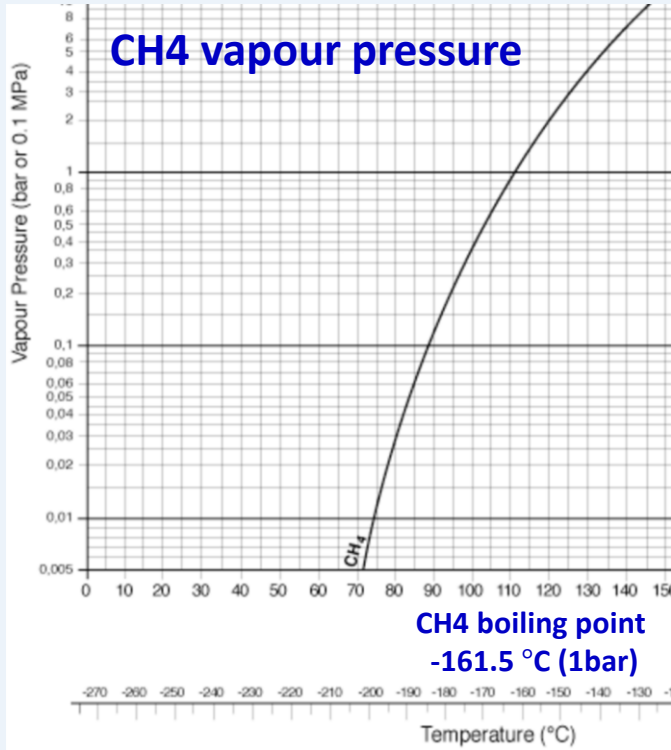


To remove  
remaining CH<sub>4</sub>  
(small  
concentration  
will not saturate  
getters)

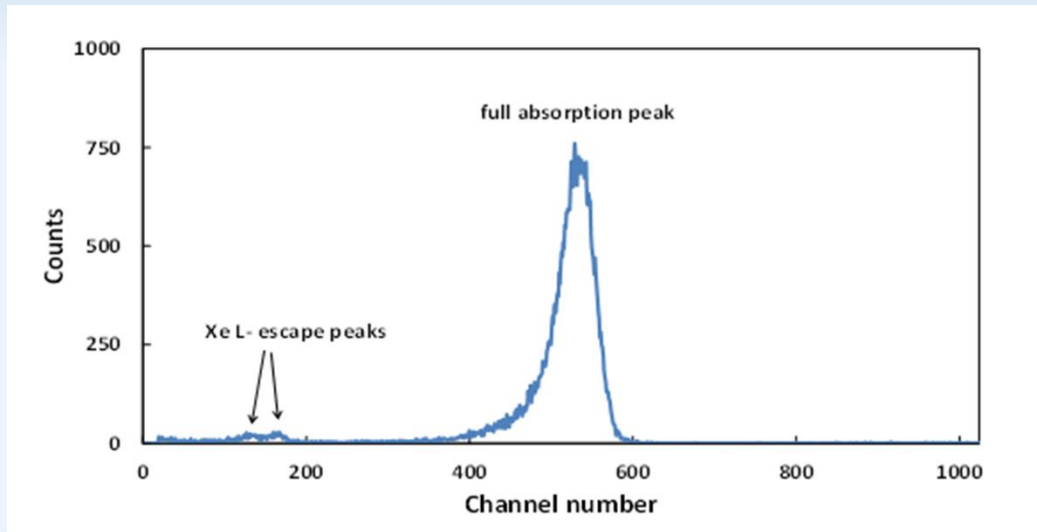
## Cooling baths

Temp.  
(°C)

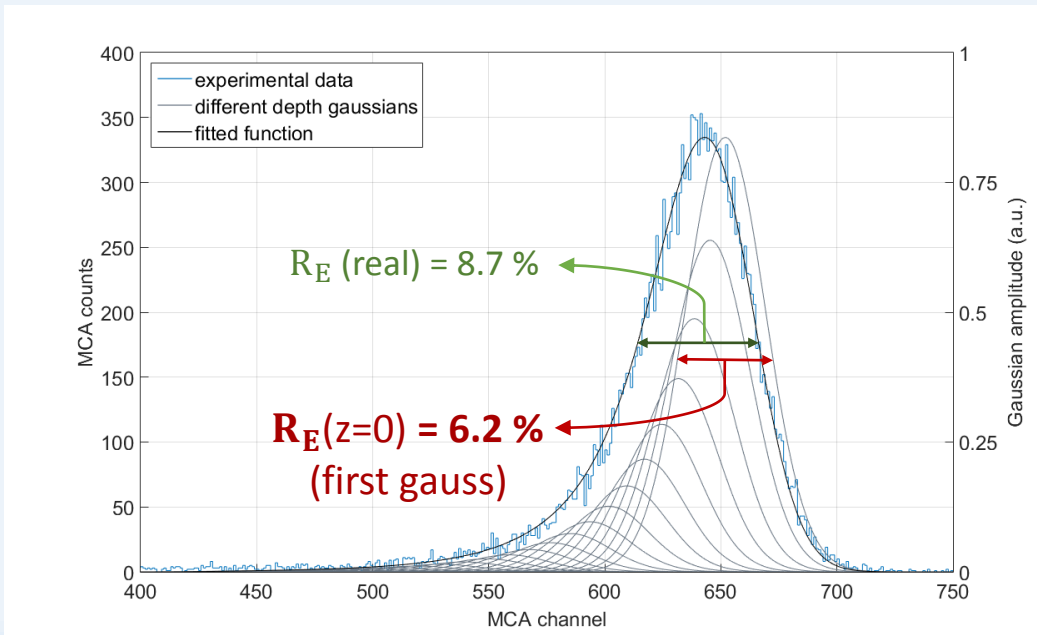
		Temp. (°C)
Liquid N <sub>2</sub>	Ethanol	-116
Liquid N <sub>2</sub>	Ethyl bromide	-119
Liquid N <sub>2</sub>	Acetaldehyde	-124
Liquid N <sub>2</sub>	Methylcyclohexane	-126
Liquid N <sub>2</sub>	n-Propanol	-127
Liquid N <sub>2</sub>	n-Pentane	-131
Liquid N <sub>2</sub>	1,5-Hexadiene	-141
Liquid N <sub>2</sub>	Isopentane	-160
Liquid N <sub>2</sub>	(none)	-196



# The pulse height distribution, of a driftless GPSC



← pulse height distribution of 5.9-keV ( $^{55}\text{Fe}$ ) x-rays absorbed in a **driftless** GPSC filled with pure Xe (at  $\sim 800$  torr)

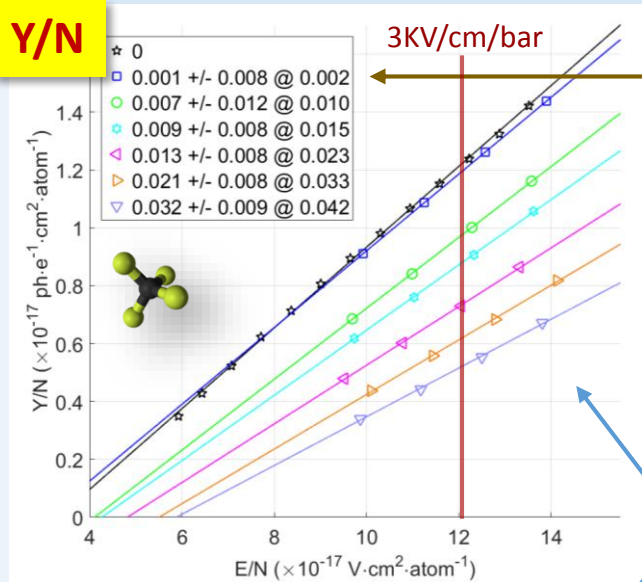


← Different depth ( $z$ ) absorbed x-rays  $\rightarrow$  **left-tailed** pulse-height distribution (gaussian & exponential absorption)

**$R_E$  is estimated for zero x-ray penetration** (FWHM/E of the first gauss)

# The CF<sub>4</sub> case

Y/N



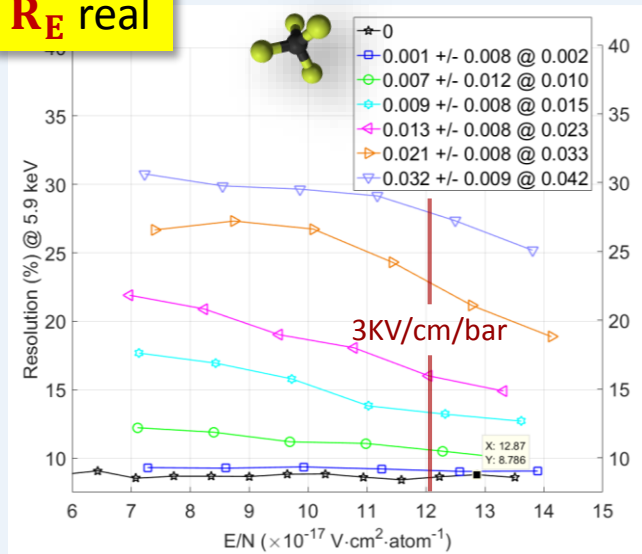
Huge **uncertainty** in low RGA's measurements:

**Initial/max values from P-V calculation are also shown**

**! There is not a systematic error – RGA's calibration was successfully tested after taking data !**

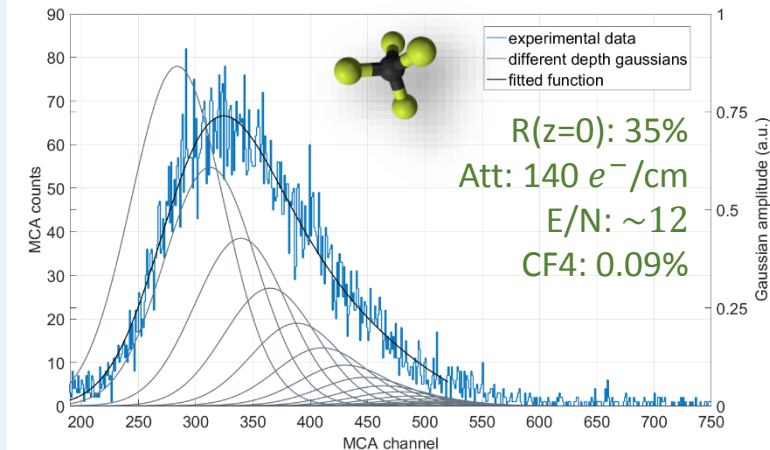
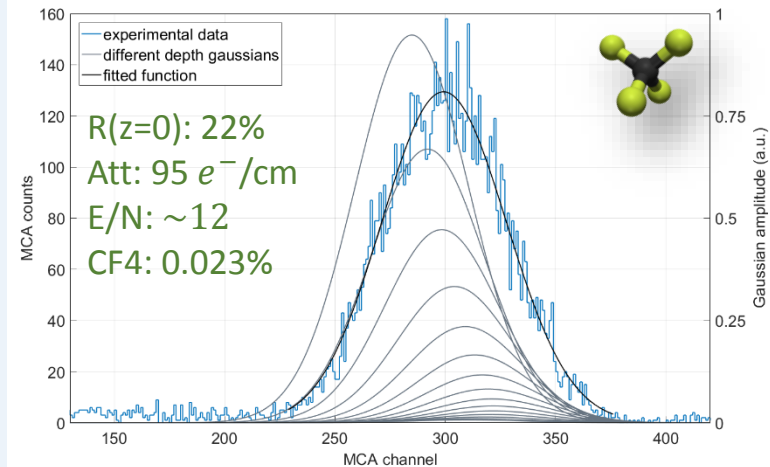
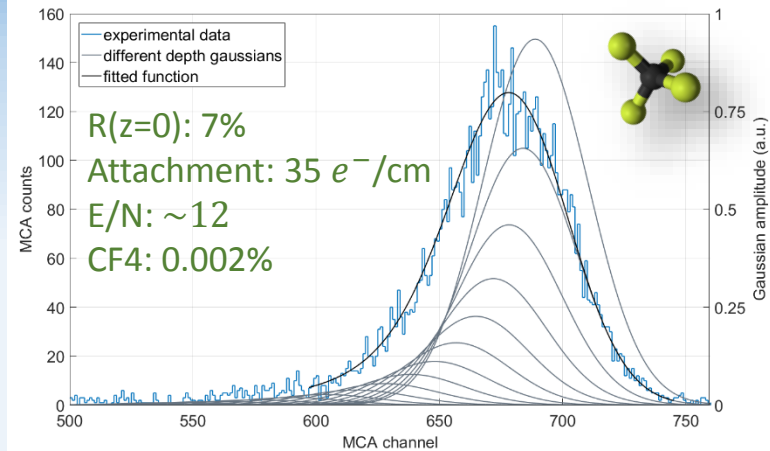
- EL Y well preserved if compared with  $R_E$
- Lower  $R_E$  dependence on E/N

$R_E$  real



With 1 more free fitting parameter (attachment),  $R_E$  (z=0) extrapolation could be not reliable:

- ← Here, the real driftless GSPC  $R_E$
- ↓ Next, previous z=0 extrapolation used but ignoring right-tailed spectrums



# What about NEXT - $Q_{\beta\beta}$ at 10 bar, $EL_{gap} = 5\text{mm}$

$$R_E = 2.35 \sqrt{\frac{F}{\bar{N}_e} + \frac{Q}{\bar{N}_e} + \frac{1}{\bar{N}_{ep}} + \frac{\sigma_G^2}{\bar{N}_{ep} G^2}}$$


$$\bar{N}_e = \frac{E_x}{w_{ion}} = \frac{2.457\text{MeV}}{22\text{ eV}},$$

$$F \sim 0.15 \mp 0.02$$

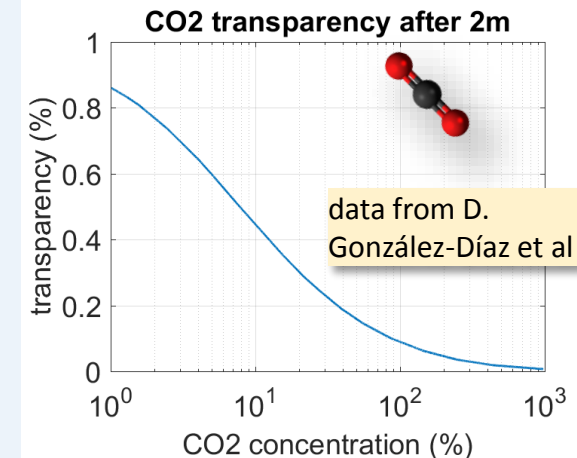
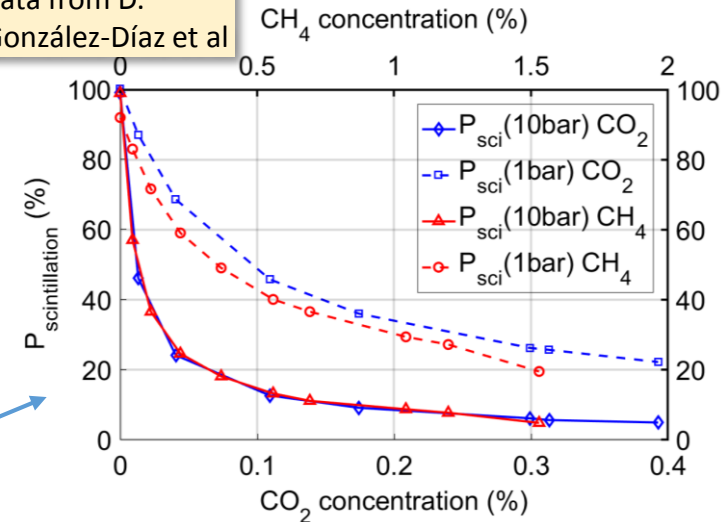
$$\bar{N}_{ep} = k \cdot \bar{N}_e \cdot \bar{N}_{EL}$$

## Expected features in NEXT-100:

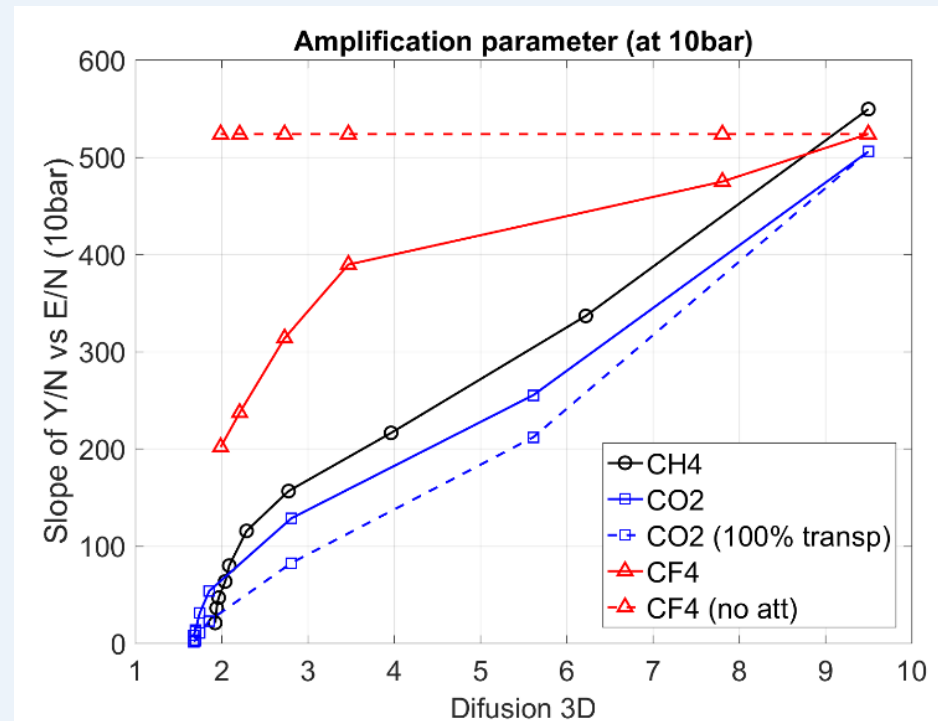
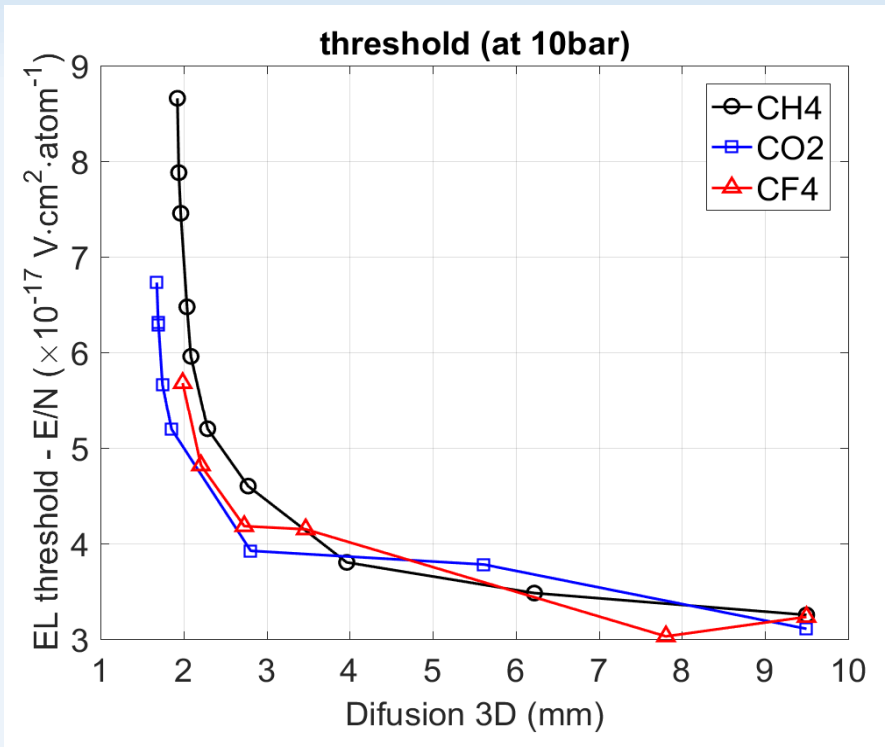
- EL photon collection efficiency ( $k$ ) = **0.01**
- Relative fluctuations in PMT's gain ( $\sigma_G/G$ ) = **0.6**

1.  **$Q(10\text{bar}) \cong 2 \times Q(1\text{bar})$**  since  $\frac{10\text{bar}}{1\text{bar}} \times \frac{5\text{mm gap}}{25\text{mm gap}}$ ,  
if dominated by attachment  $\rightarrow$  in **CH4**  $Q(1\text{bar}) = Q(10\text{bar})$
2.  **$\bar{N}_{EL}(10\text{ bar}) \cong \bar{N}_{EL}(1\text{ bar}) \times P_{scint}(10\text{bar})/P_{scint}(1\text{bar})$**   
from simulations (Diego-Azevedo), when reduction in  $Y$  is due to  $e^-$  cooling (threshold) and quenching, ie. in **CH4** and **CO2**
3. For **CF4** the more optimist scenario is adopted:  **$Q$  for max( $E/N$ ), max/initial concentrations** adopted,   
and  **$\bar{N}_{EL}(10\text{ bar}) \cong \bar{N}_{EL}(1\text{ bar}) - 20\%$**  lower at 10bar in ROI ( $2 \times$  att)
4. **Transparency to EL photons after 2 m in CO2**  $\rightarrow$   
100% in CH4 and CF4

data from D.  
González-Díaz et al



# The compromise $N_{EL}$ vs $D_{3D}$ – $CO_2$ , $CH_4$ and $CF_4$





# Preliminary results: CO<sub>2</sub> and CH<sub>4</sub>

$$P(\text{torr})/N \cong 3.034 \times 10^{-17}$$

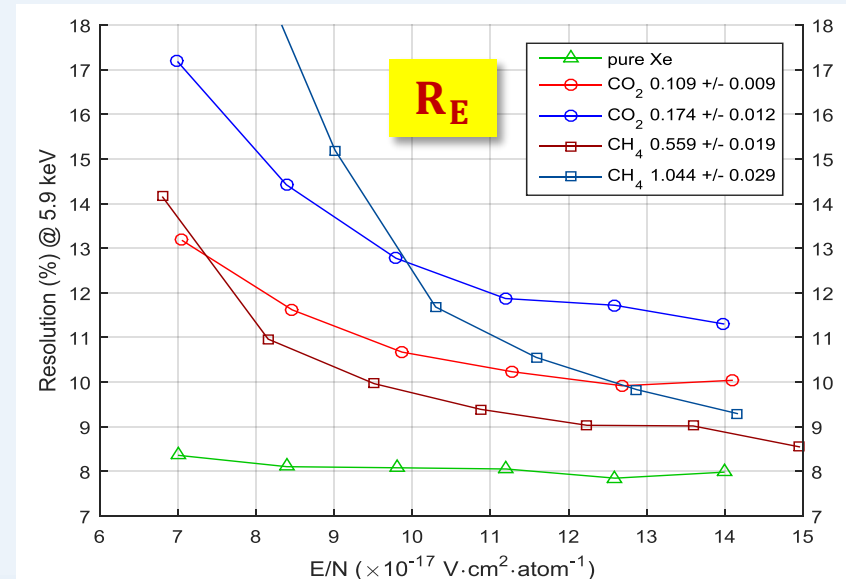
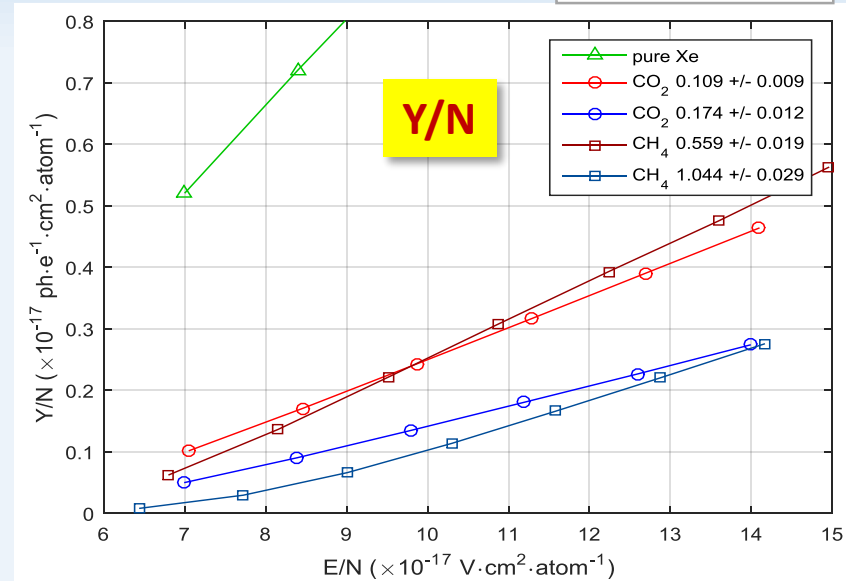
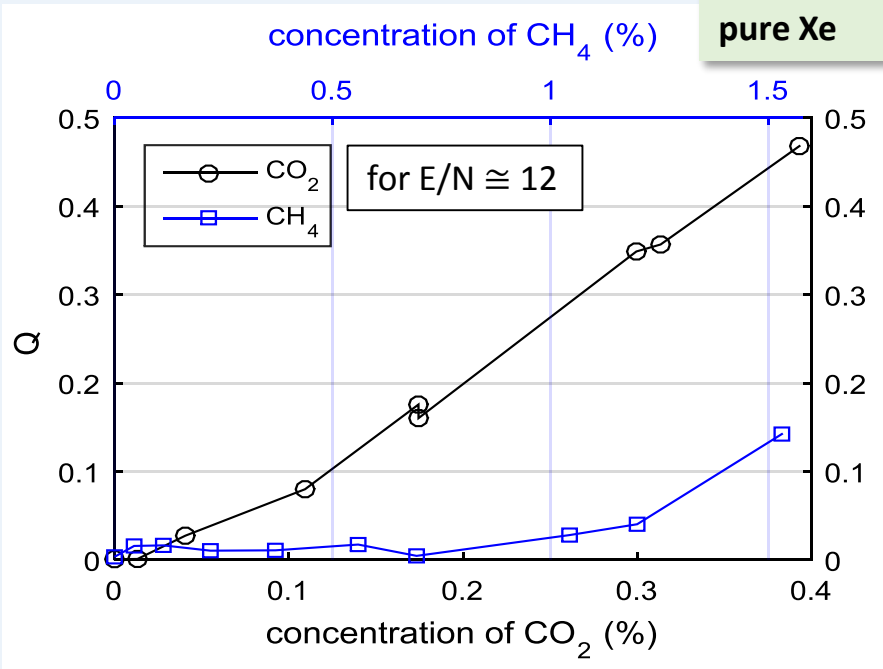
## ❖ Which mixture is best for NEXT?

$D_L @ D_T$  (mm/ $\sqrt{m}$ )      CO<sub>2</sub>      CH<sub>4</sub>

➔ ~ 3 (28%) @ 2.8 (77%)      ~0.11 %      ~0.55 %  
 ~2.2 (47%) @ ~2.6 (78%)      ~0.17 %      ~1.04 %

## ❖ Subtracting Fano and PMT contributions (preliminary)

using estimated **F** and **k** in pure Xe



# Neutrino mass and $\beta\beta 0\nu$ rate



$$(T_{1/2}^{0\nu})^{-1} = G^{0\nu} |M^{0\nu}|^2 m_{\beta\beta}^2$$

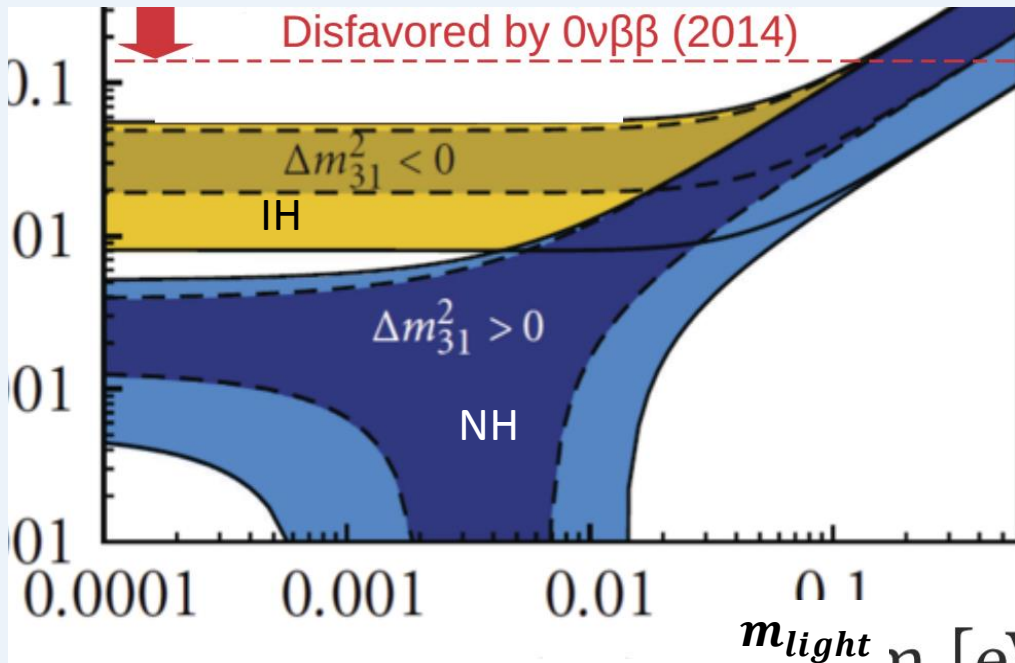
&

$$m_{\beta\beta} = \left| \sum_i U_{ei}^2 m_i \right|$$

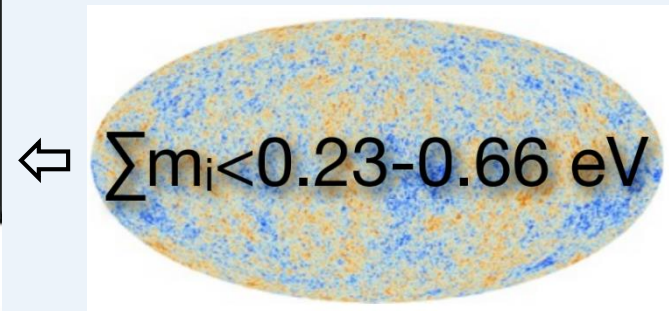
High source of uncertainty



Nuclear Matrix of Elements (NME)

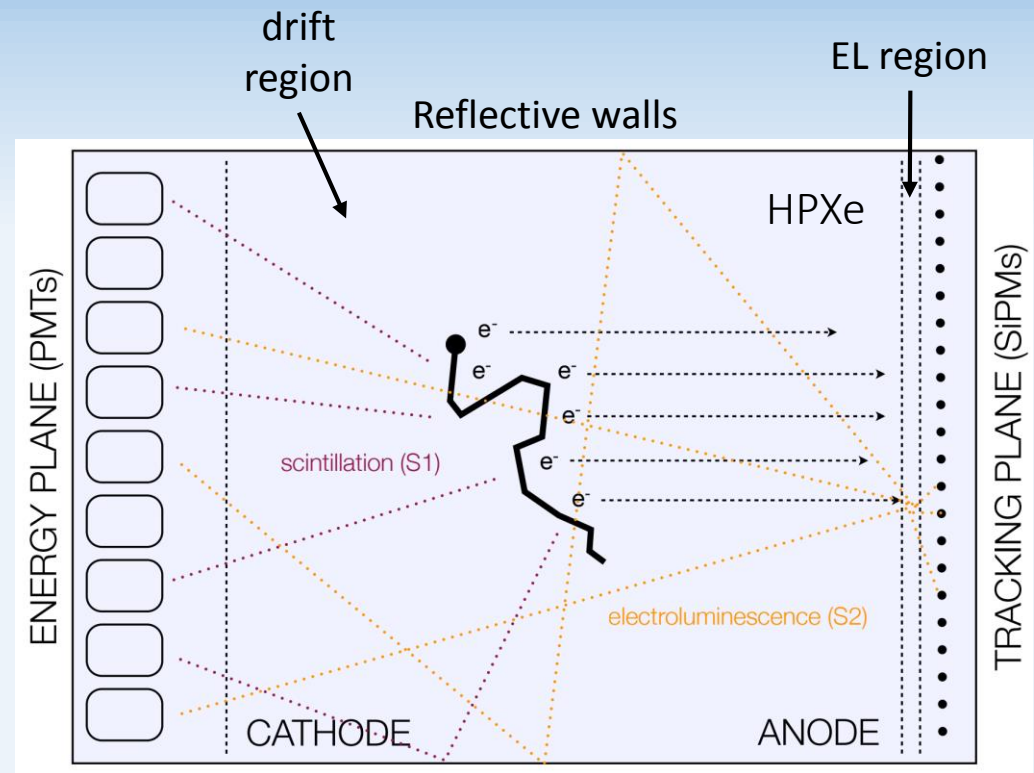


$\Downarrow$  experiments combined results :  $< 130-310$  meV (different systematic error)

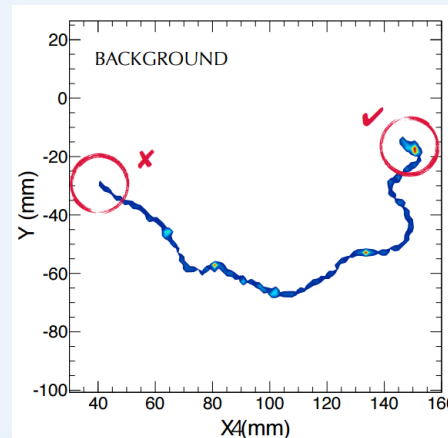


# NEXT – concept

1.  $^{136}\text{Xe}$  decays  $\rightarrow 2e^-$
2. Primary electrons ( $P_{e^-}$ ) + Primary scintillation (S1)
3. S1 at the energy plane  $\rightarrow t_0$
4.  $P_{e^-}$  drift towards EL region  
( $\sim 1 \text{ mm}/\mu\text{s}$  @  $\sim 0.5 \text{ KV}/\text{cm}/\text{bar}$ )
5.  $P_{e^-}$  accelerated in EL region  
 $\rightarrow$  electroluminescence (S2)  
( $\sim 4 \text{ KV}/\text{cm}/\text{bar}$ ) (S2  $\sim 2 \mu\text{s}$ )
6. S2 by tracking plane +  $t_0$   
 $\rightarrow$  3D event topology
7. S2 by energy plane  
 $\rightarrow$  precise energy of event

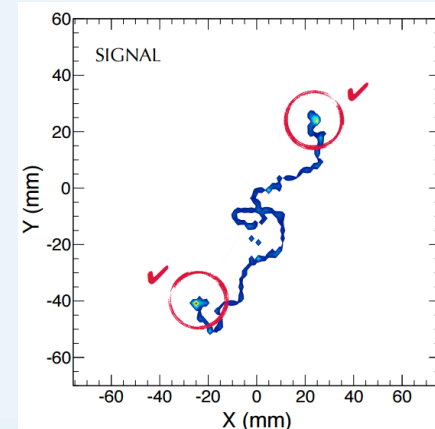


**↓ Topology signature (simulation) ↓**



Single gamma  
( $1e^-$ ):  
**← 1 blob**

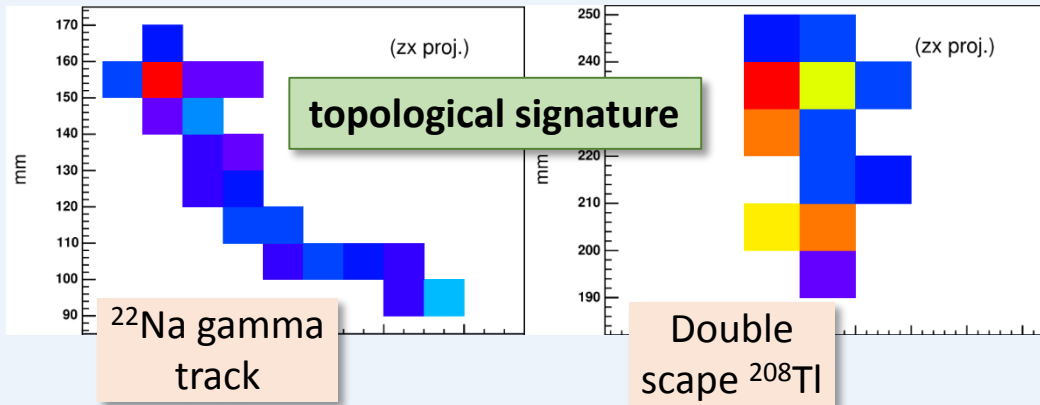
$\beta\beta$  decay  
( $2e^-$ ):  
**2 blobs →**



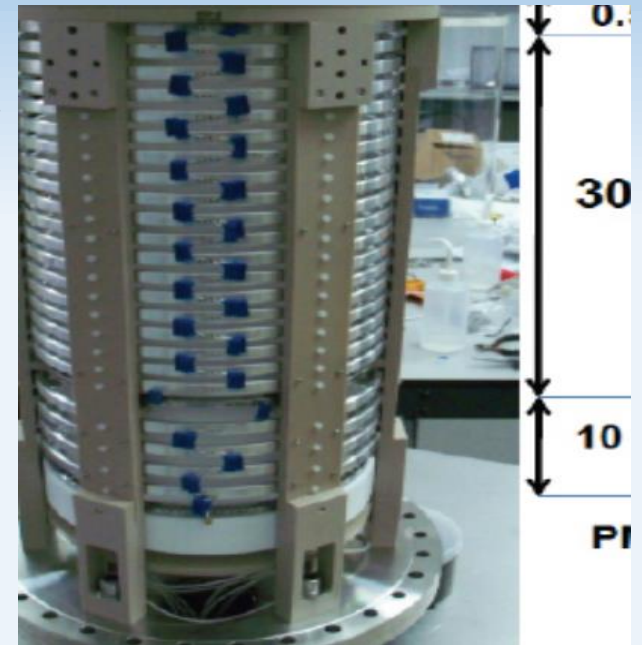
# NEXT – prototypes

NEXT-DEMO ~1.5 kg @ 10 bar

➤ Demonstrate NEXT technology

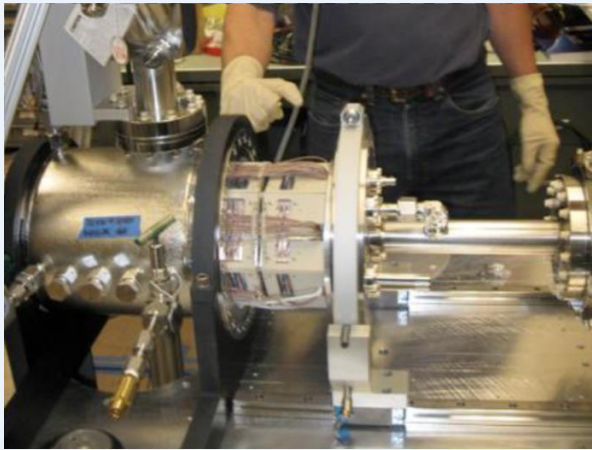


$R_E \sim 0.7\% \rightarrow$   
at  $Q_{\beta\beta}$



NEXT-DBDM ~1 kg @ 10 – 15 bar

➤ Study  $R_E$  in HPXe



←  $R_E \sim 0.5\%$   
at  $Q_{\beta\beta}$

NEXT phase I – NEW ~10 kg of  $^{136}\text{Xe}$

- NEXT-100 at scale 1:2 @ 20% of photosensors
- 1<sup>o</sup> radiopure underground detector

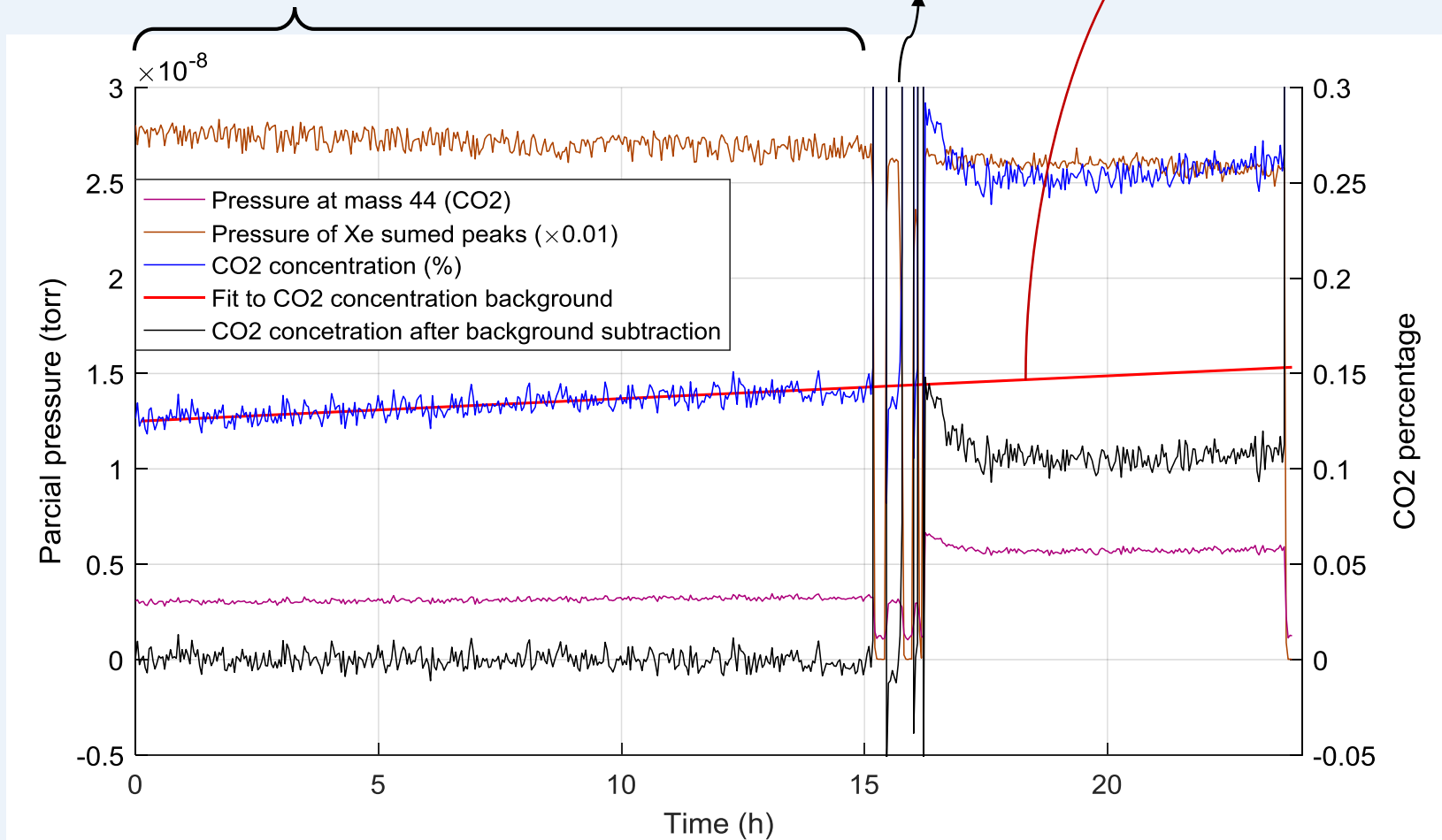


# RGA's Calibration

Background measurement –  
CO2 reading after V2 is filled  
with pure Xe

CO2 added here,  
then CO2 + Xe  
are liquefied

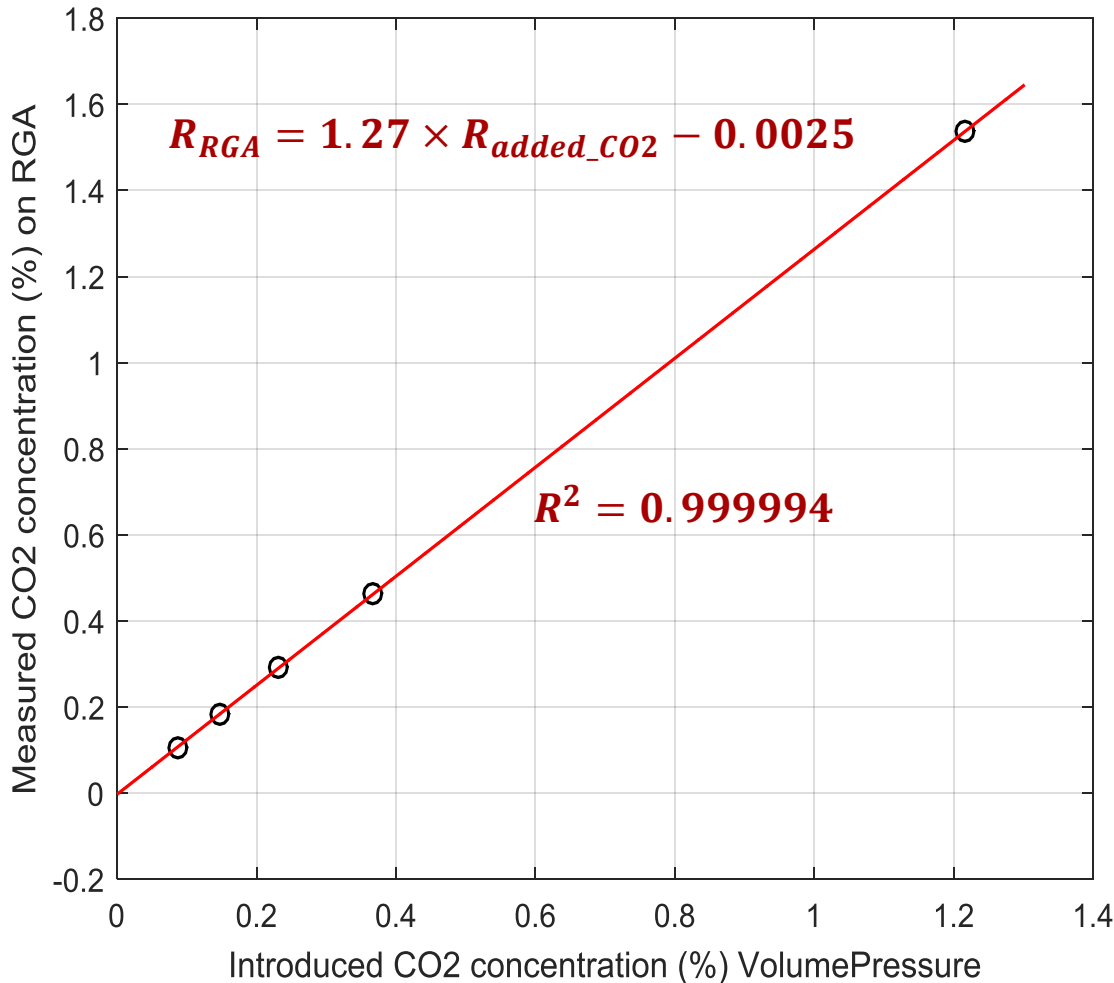
For CO2 background  
estimation after  
mixing



↑ RGA's example spectrum of a calibration point (0.088 %)

# RGA's Calibration

## ➤ Calibration line:



← As expected RGA's response is **linear**, at least within ROI

- Several methods were used to extrapolate the background of CO2 after mixing, this one showed the best  $R^2$
- This background estimation method will be also used in main mixtures

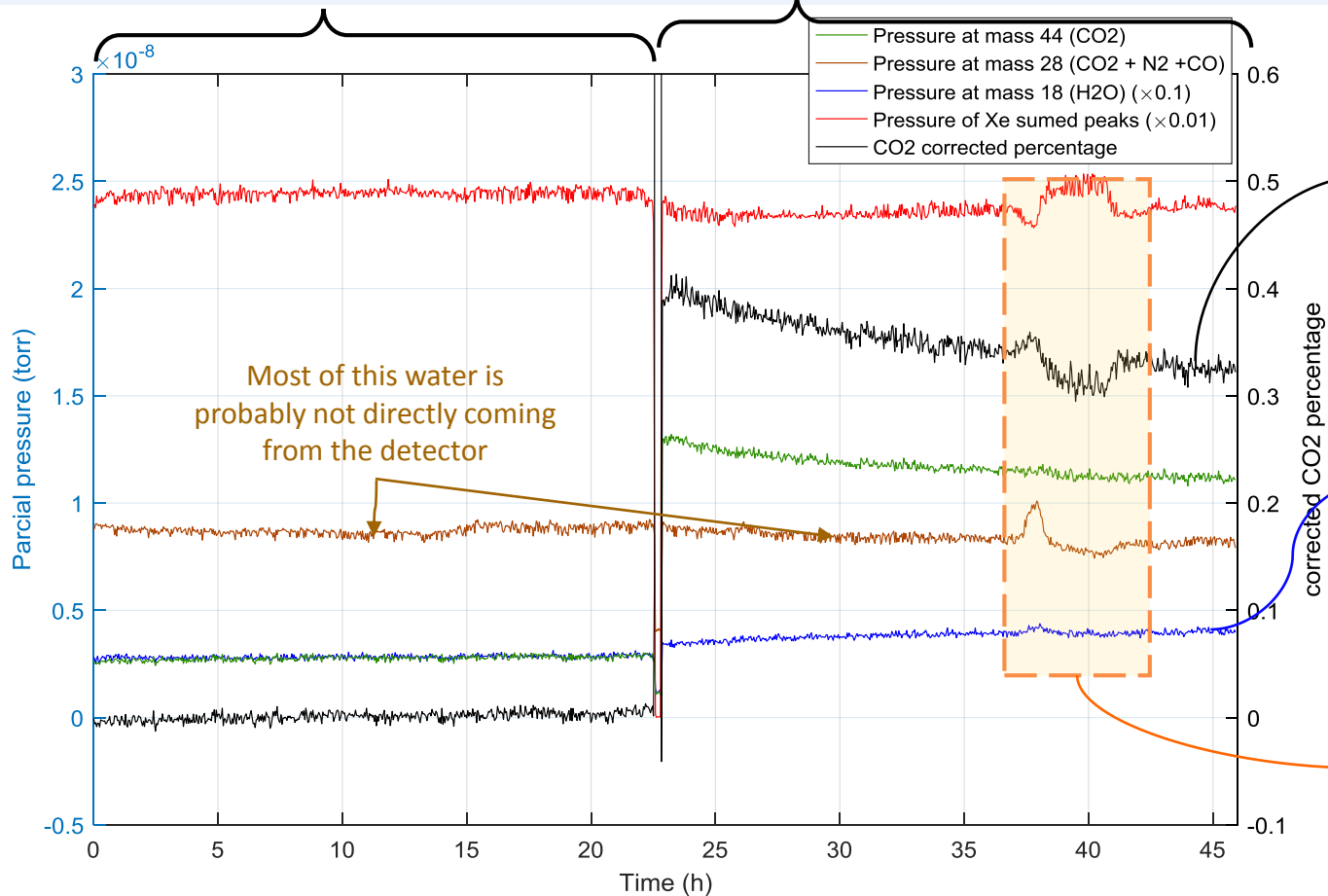


# Results – RGA's example spectrum → $CO_2/(Xe + CO_2) = 0.44\%$

1) Pure Xe with getters at 250° C is recorded for background quantification at the beginning of each mixture →  $CO_2/(Xe + CO_2) \approx 0.1\%$  changing at each mixture

2) Getters are set to 80° C one hour before CO<sub>2</sub> is introduced → for a more efficient mixing, Xe + CO<sub>2</sub> are liquefied after adding the CO<sub>2</sub>.

➤ 0.44 % introduced (estimated from volume-pressure calculation) – 0,33 % @ after 21h (estimated from RGA data)



**CO<sub>2</sub> percentage in relation to Xe + CO<sub>2</sub>** → corrected using RGA's calibration line

- EL measure was done in the last hour (44h – 45h)

**Partial pressure at mass 28 rises in time after adding CO<sub>2</sub>** → 28 is the main peak of N<sub>2</sub> and CO, and a secondary peak of CO<sub>2</sub> (~5 % → obtained in calibration)

**A typical non-explained perturbation** → usually, these perturbations are stronger in H<sub>2</sub>O and Xe, and often periodic (T=24h)



# Results – CO production

➤ **Pressure at mass 28 rises after adding CO2** → **Mass 28 is a combination of:**

If the growth at 28 was just coming from CO2, it would not be continually rising  
**Is this due to CO production?**

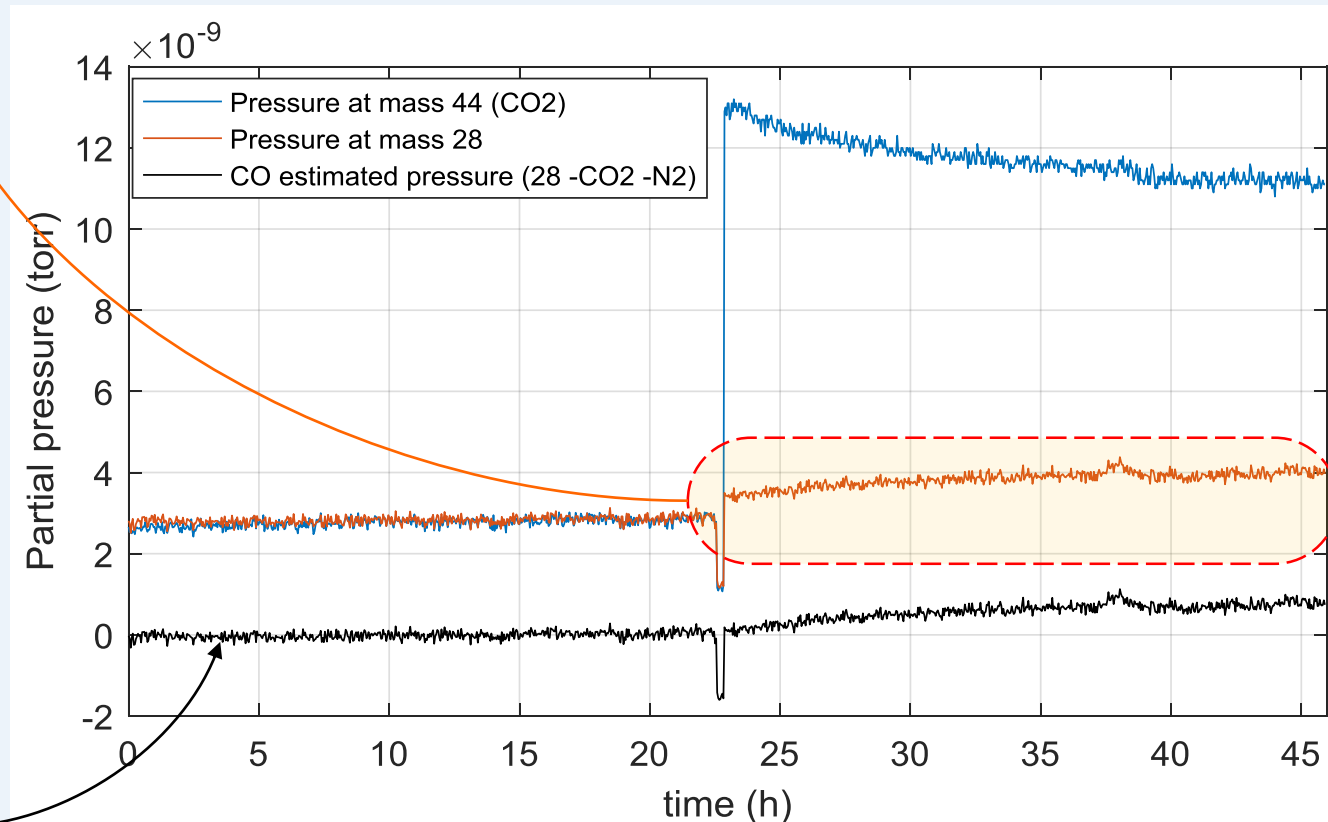
- Nitrogen (major fragmentation peak)
- CO (major fragmentation peak)
- CO2 (secondary fragmentation peak)

## Assuming:

- N2 keeps constant after adding CO2
- Experimental cracking pattern of CO2 obtained during calibration
- CO is zero before CO2

## We can:

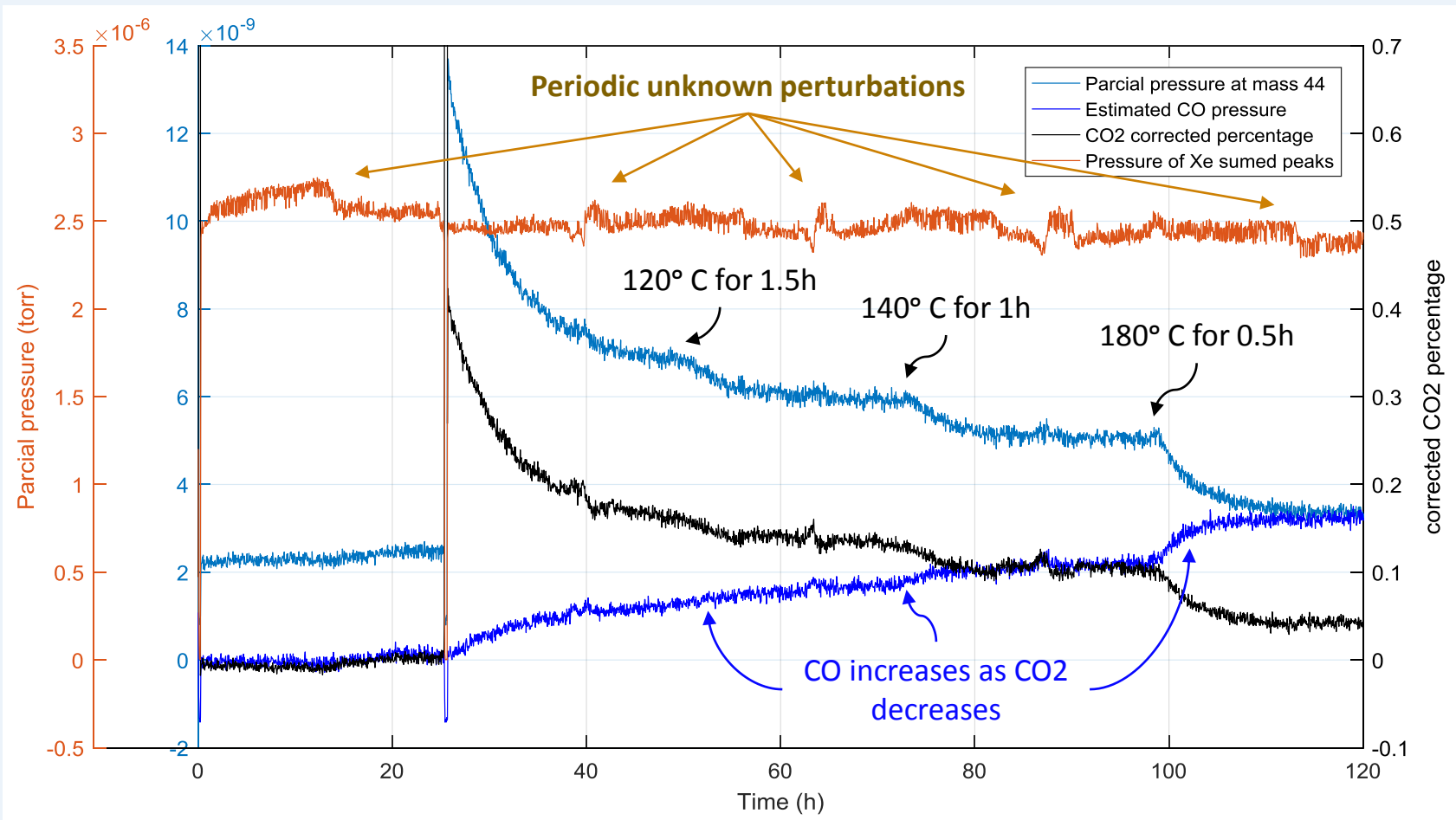
**Estimate CO pressure at mass 28 by subtracting CO2 and N2 contributions**



# Results – Getters' temperature & CO

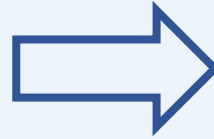
- **Two different mixtures became stable at 0.18 %** → in the last one we **raised up** the temperature of getters in order to absorb CO<sub>2</sub> → **however CO have raised even more as the getters' temperature was increased.**

Temperatures were raised up just for some time, then they are cooled down to 80° C again

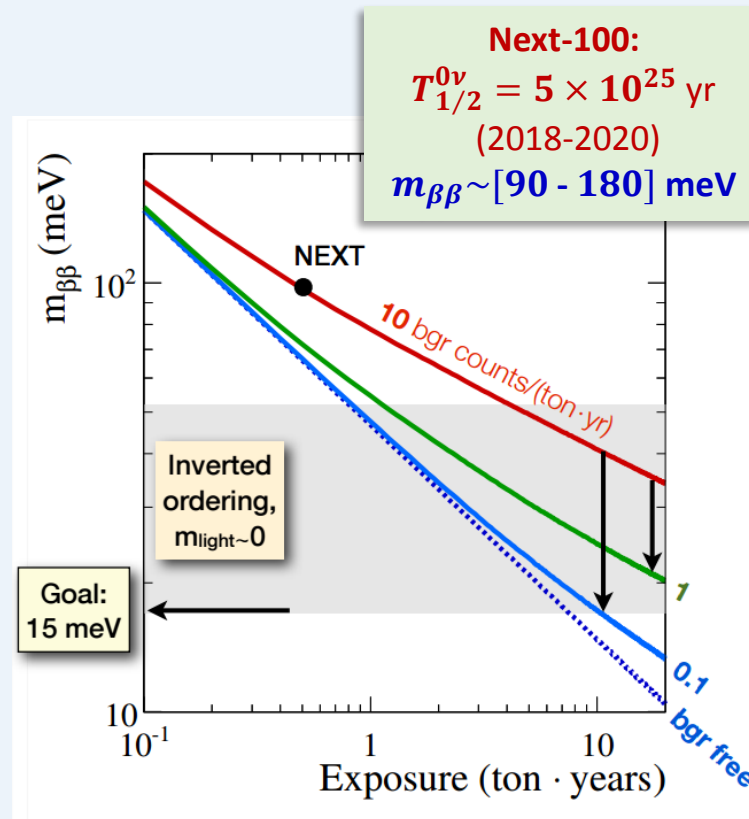


# NEXT – towards the inverted hierarchy

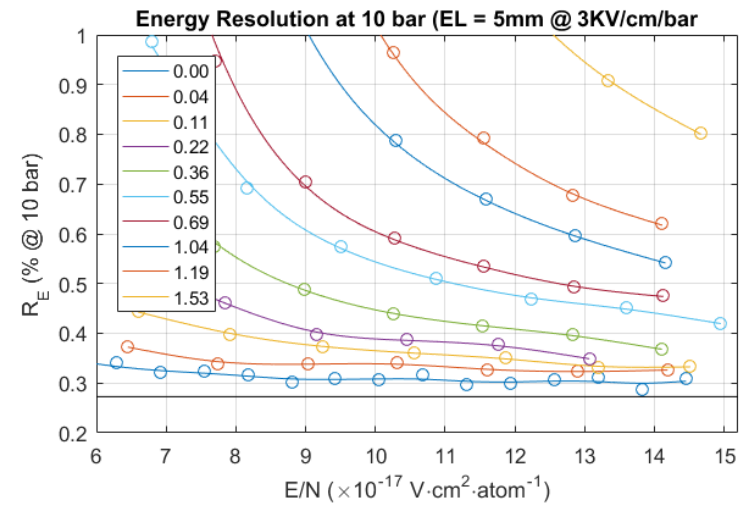
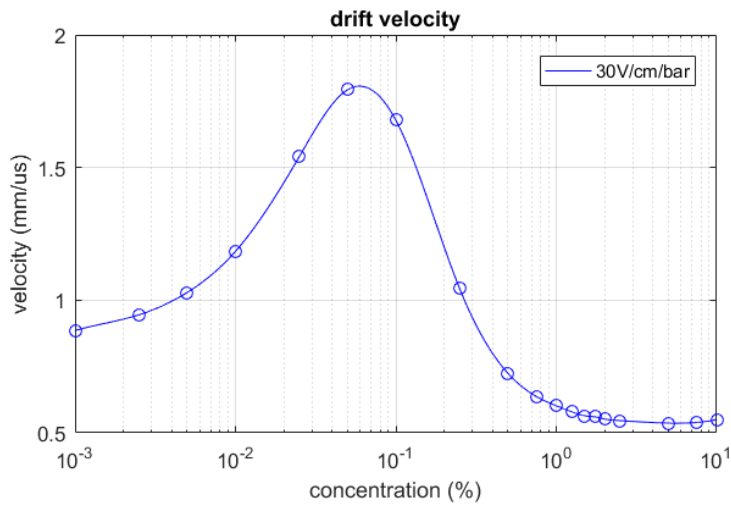
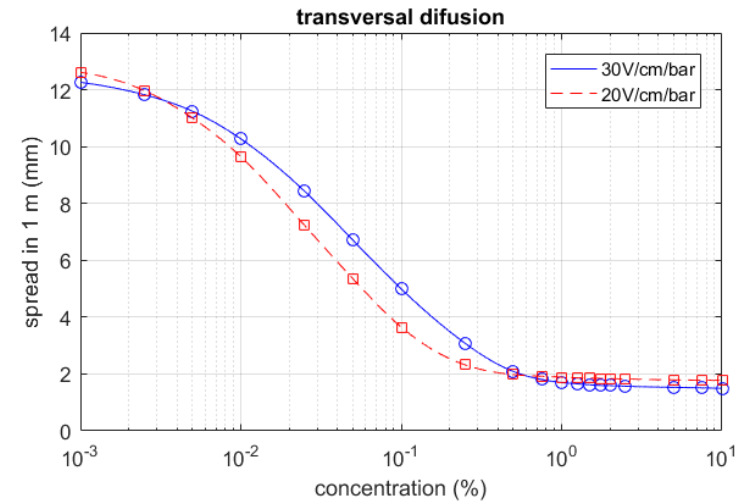
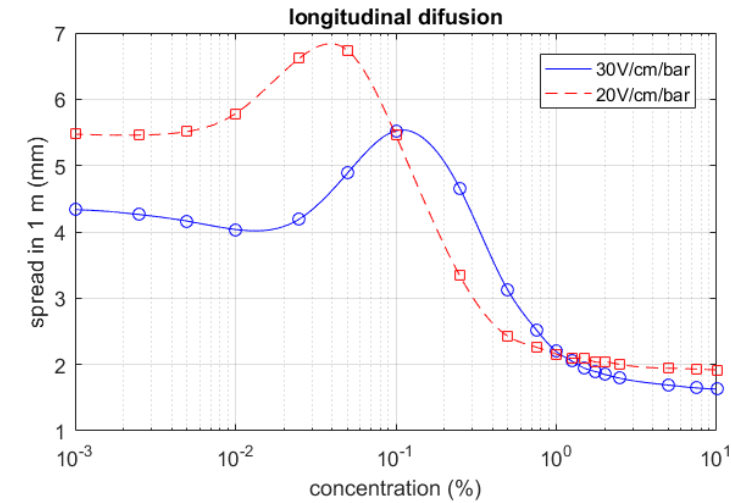
$\beta\beta 0\nu$  **unlikely** with current experiments



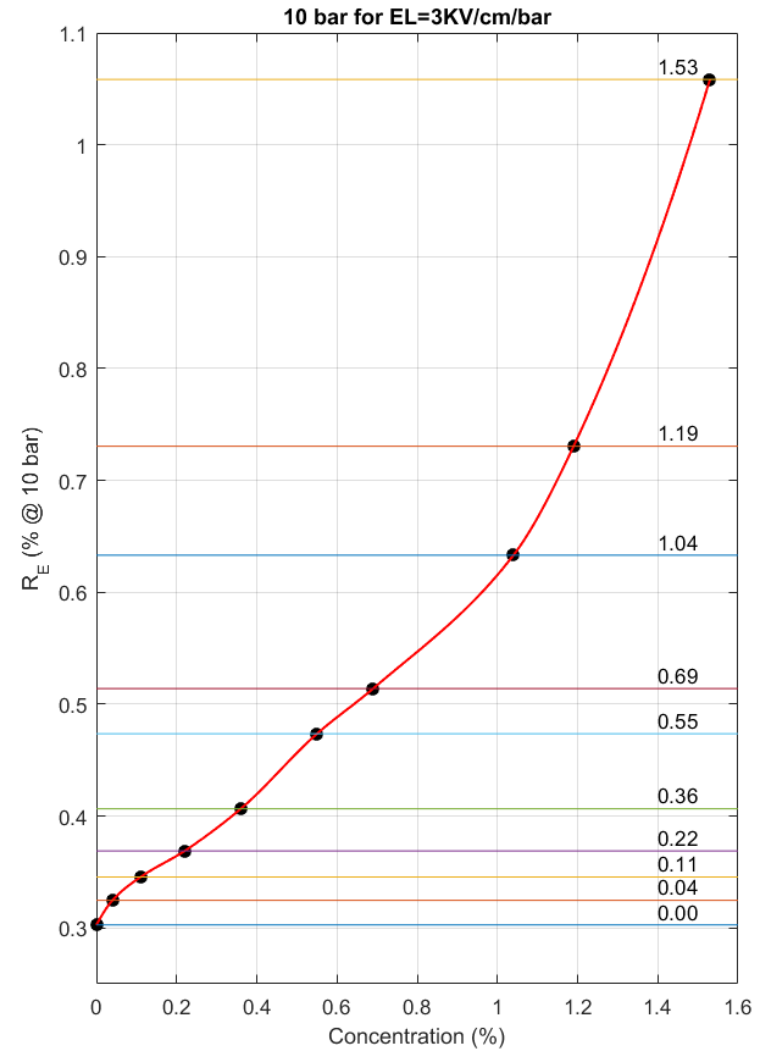
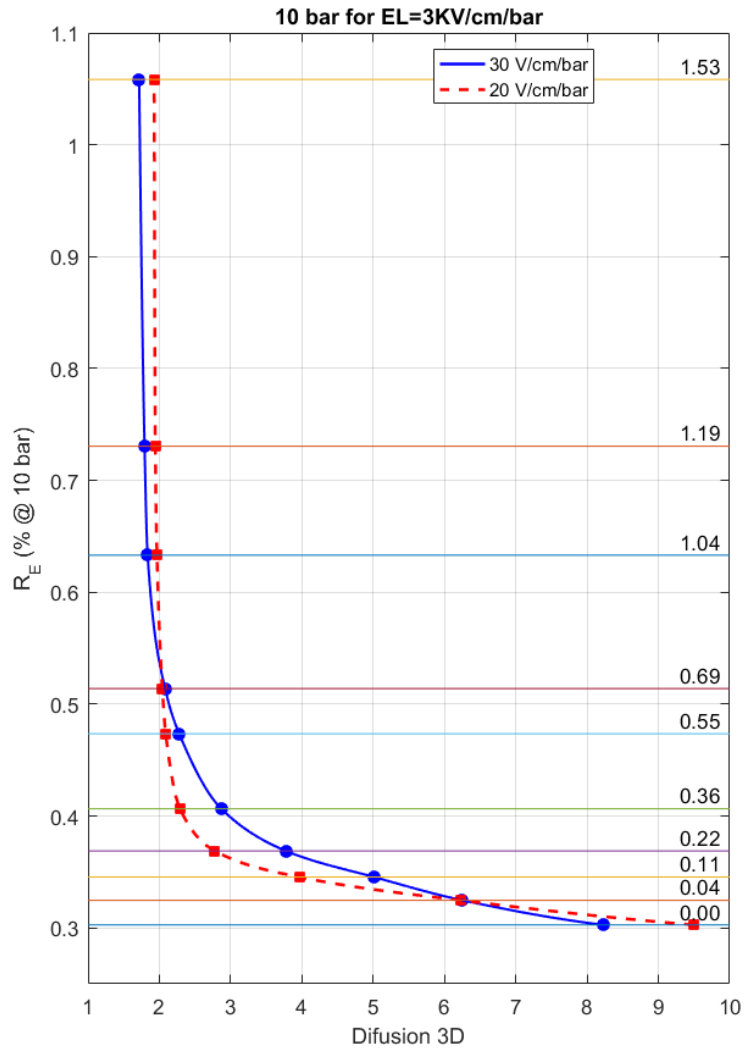
**Ton scale + background reduction/rejection**



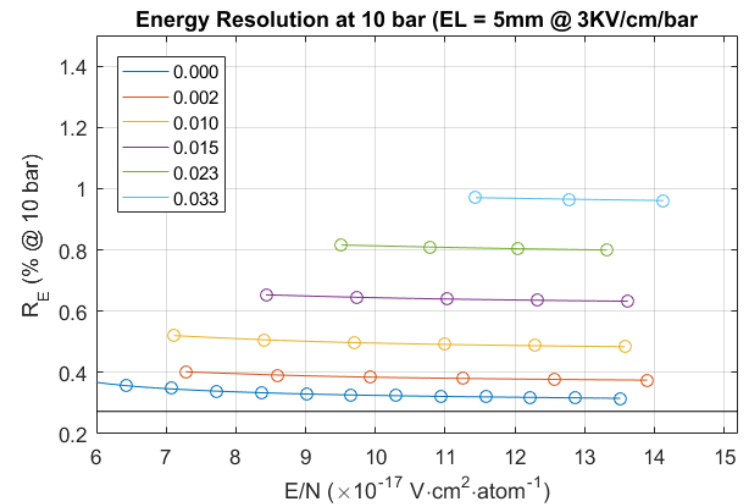
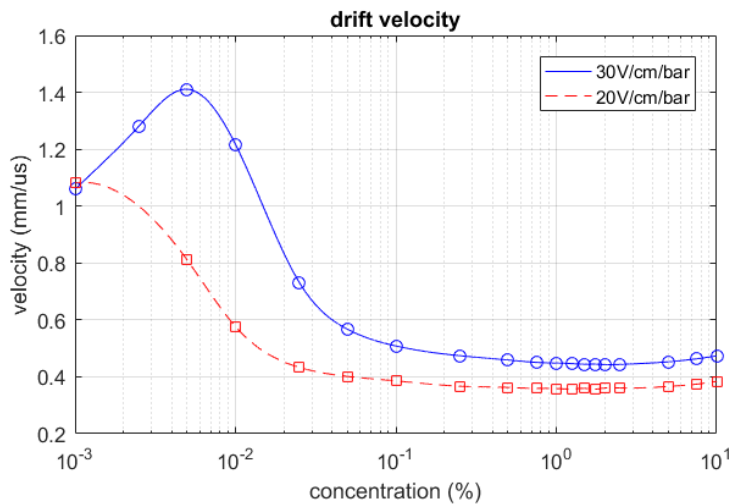
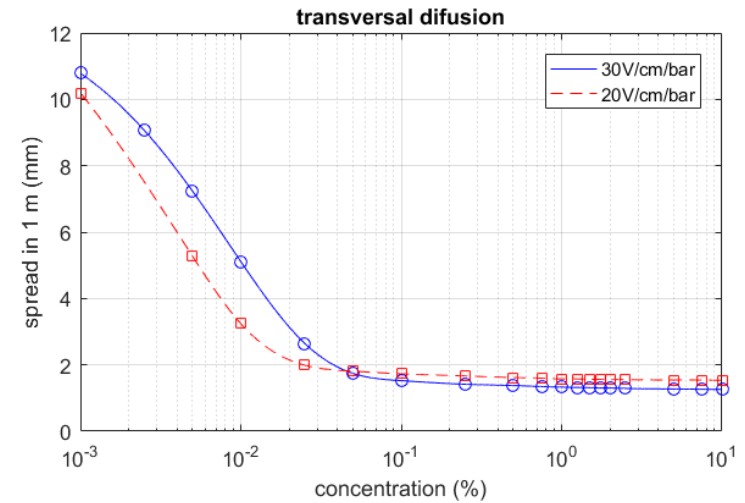
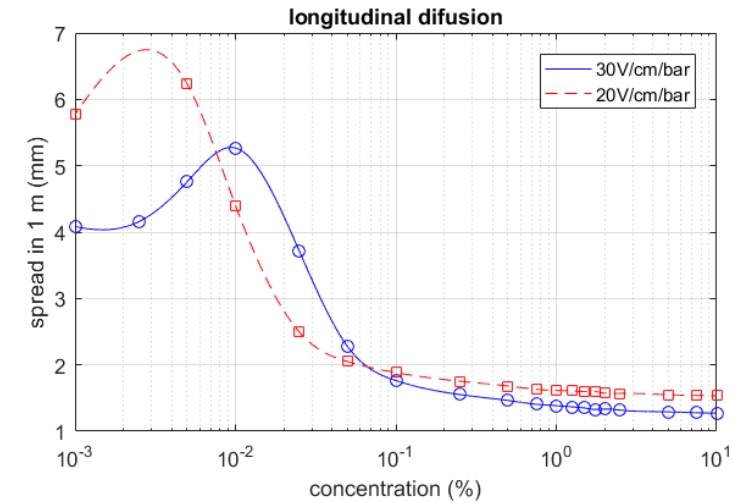
# R (3KV), Dt, Dl and v in CH<sub>4</sub>



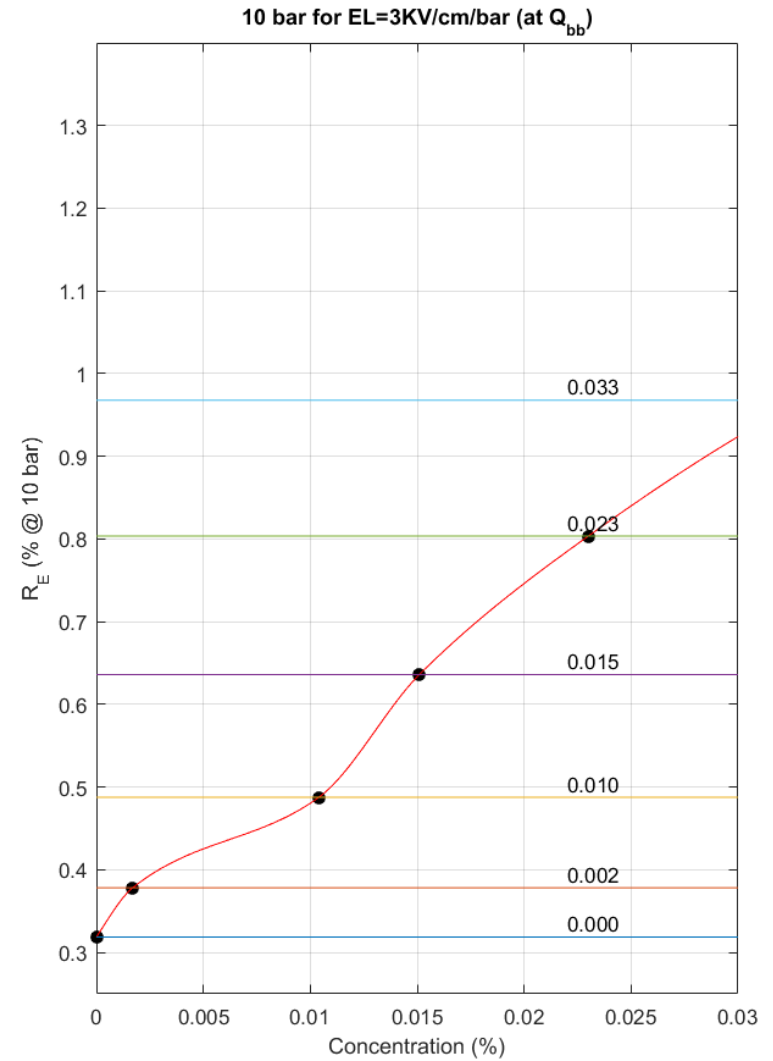
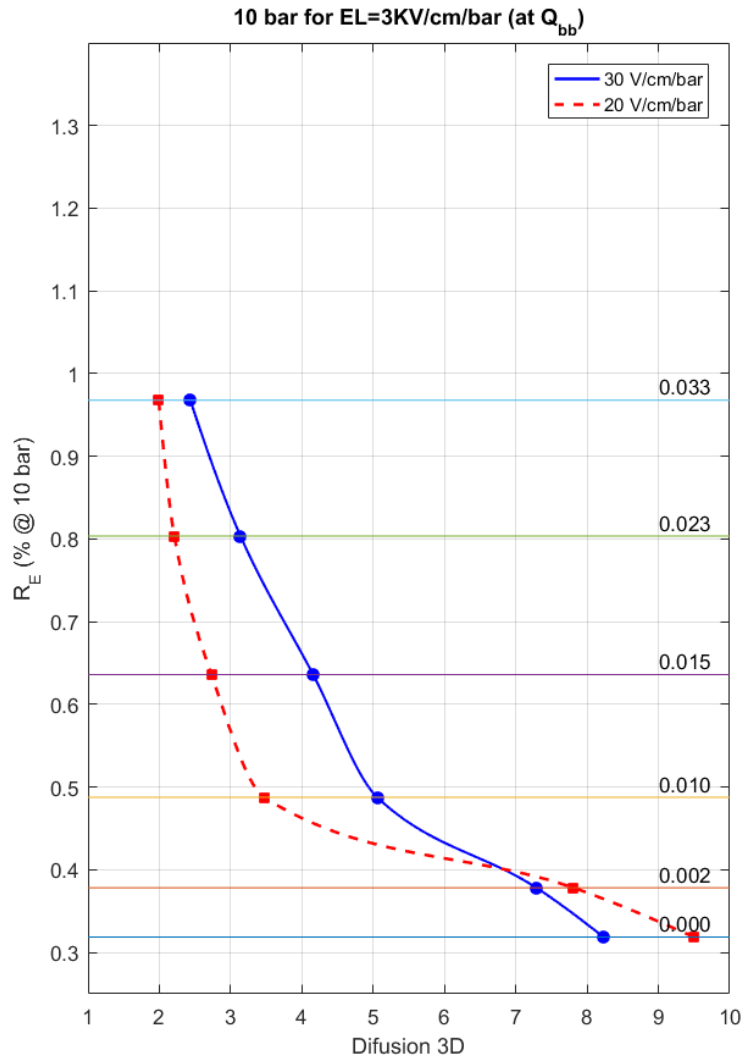
# R (3KV) vs D3d and concentration in CH<sub>4</sub>



# R (3KV), Dt, Dl and v in CF<sub>4</sub>

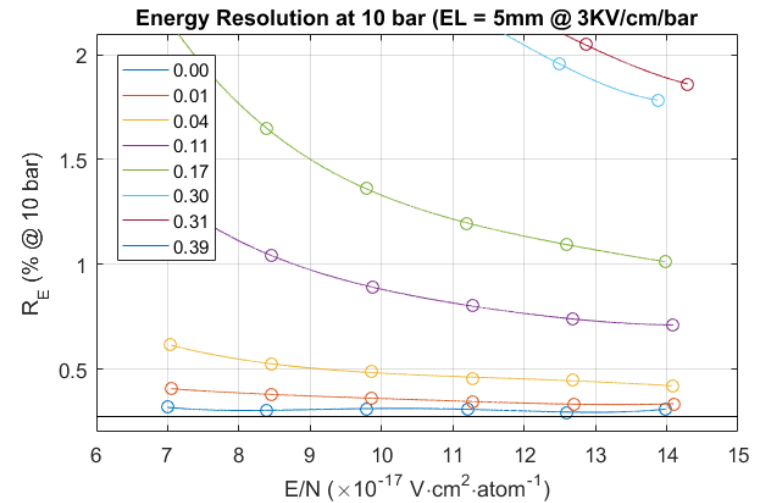
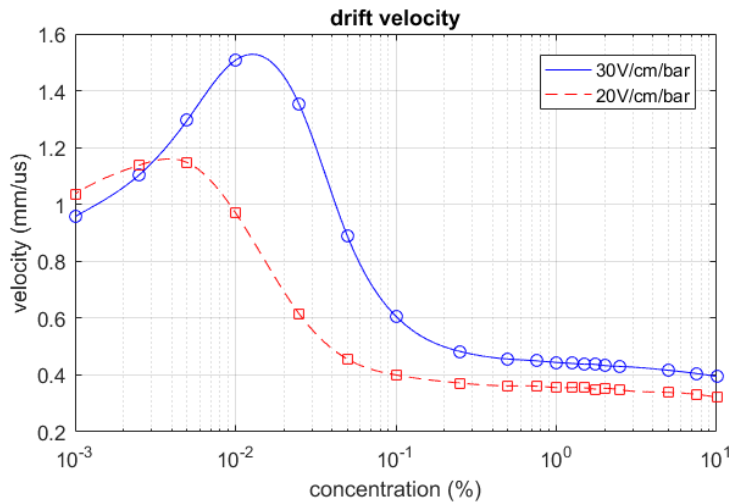
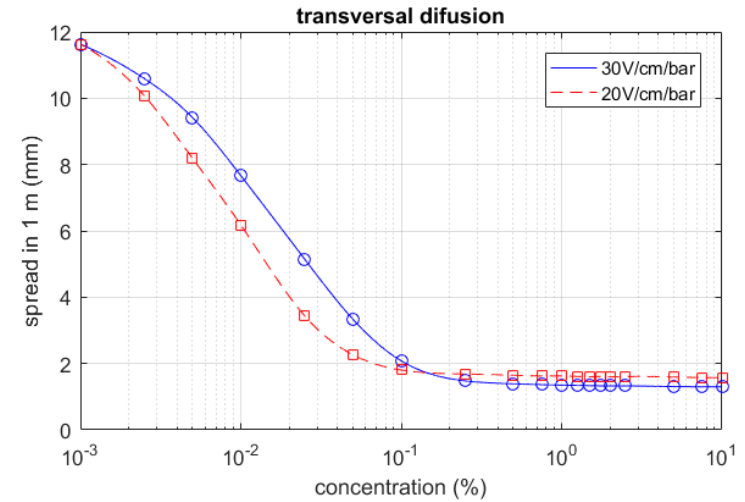
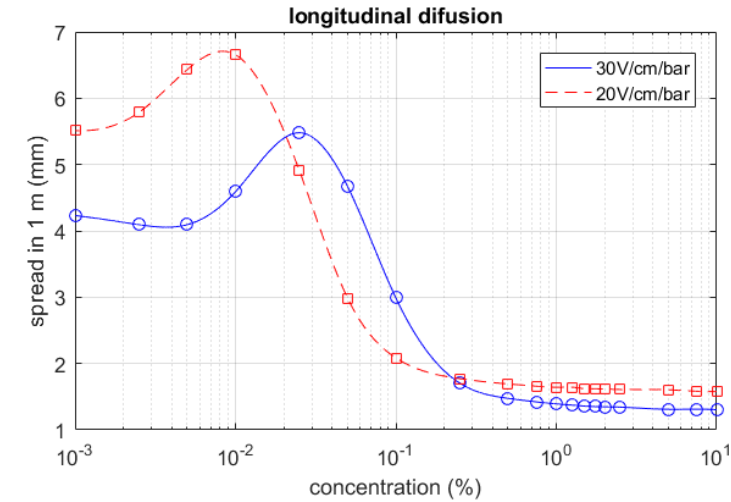


# R (3KV), Dt, Dl and v in CH<sub>4</sub>

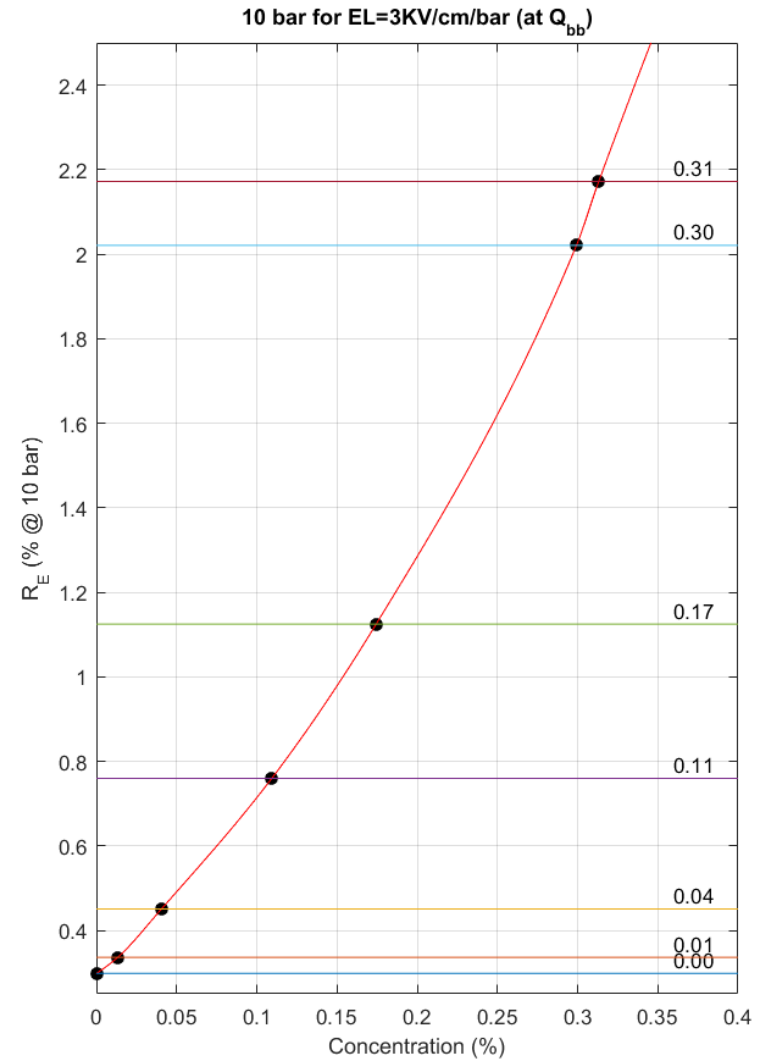
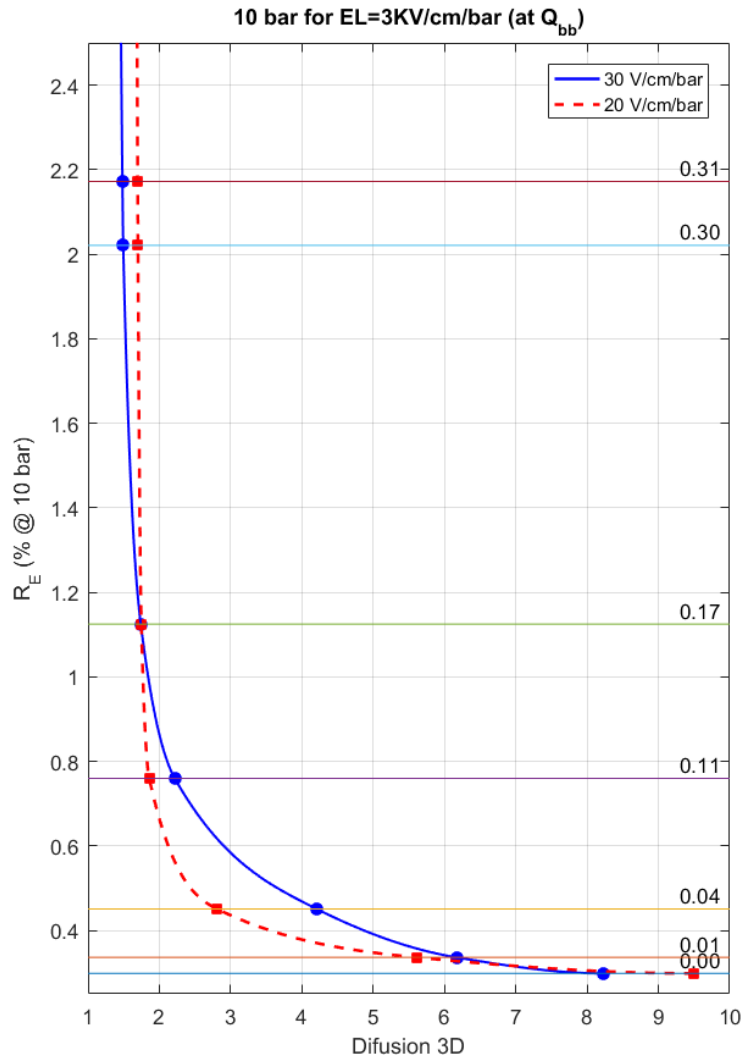




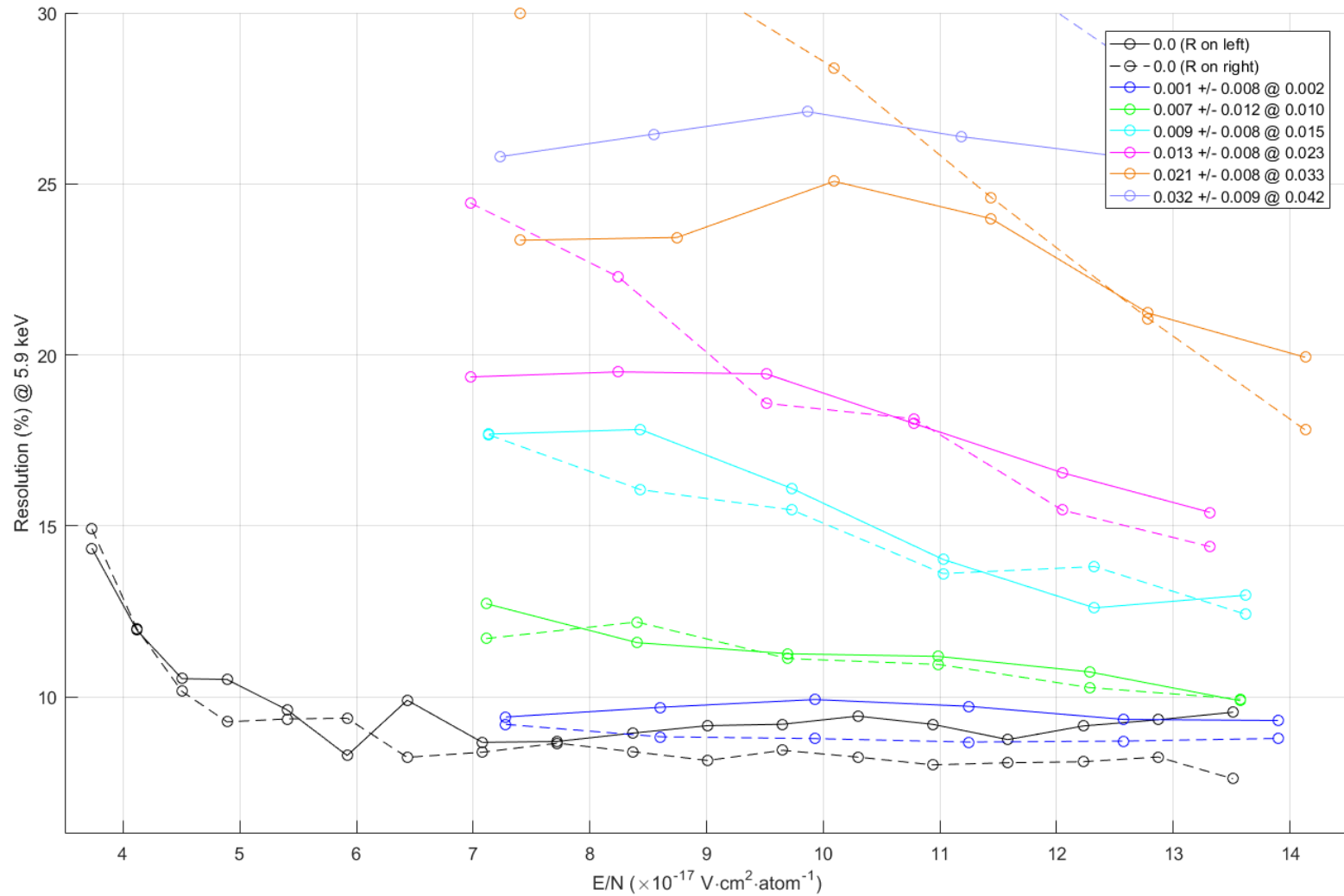
# R (3KV), Dt, Dl and v in CO<sub>2</sub>



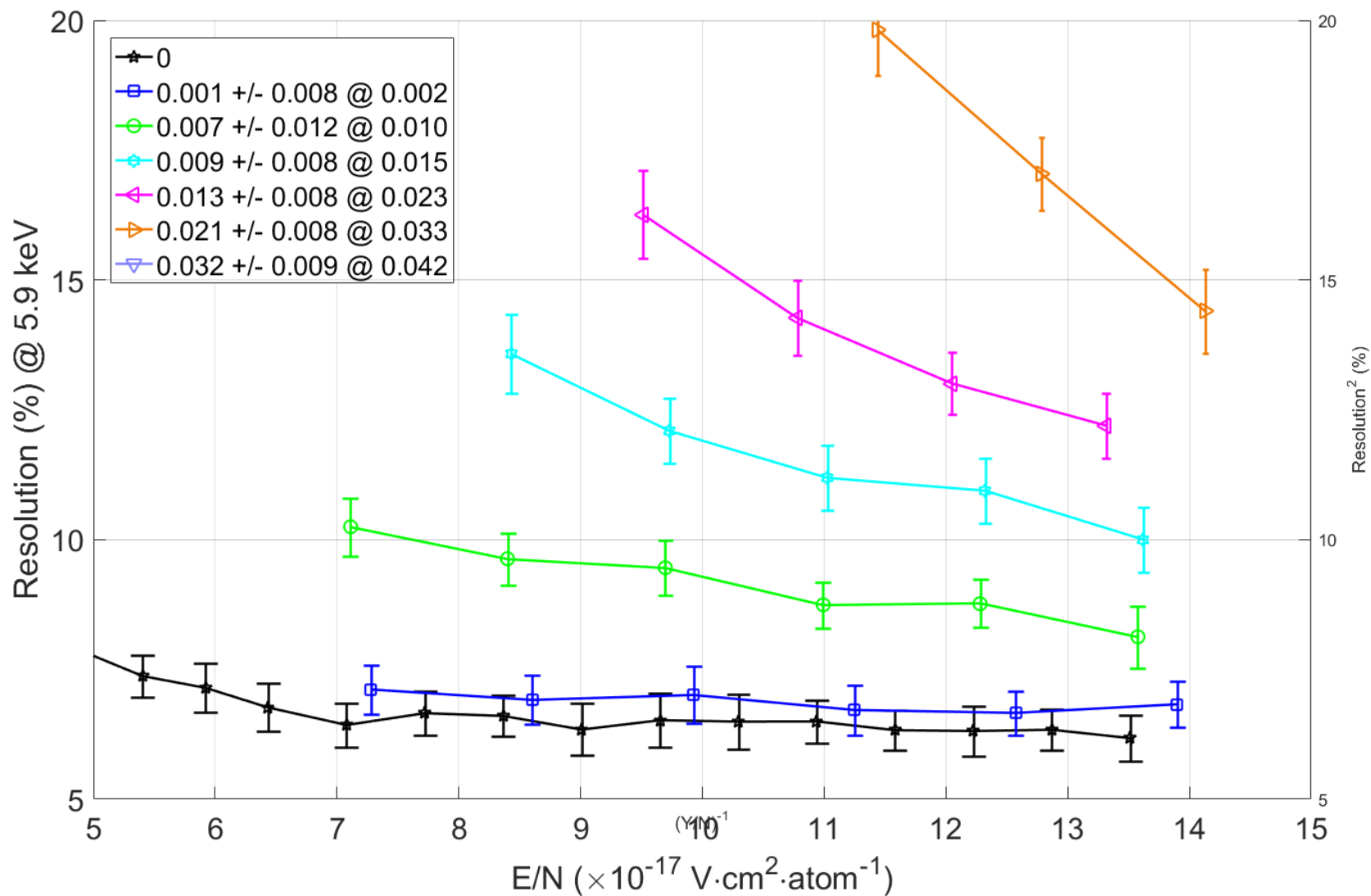
# R (3KV), Dt, Dl and v in CO<sub>2</sub>



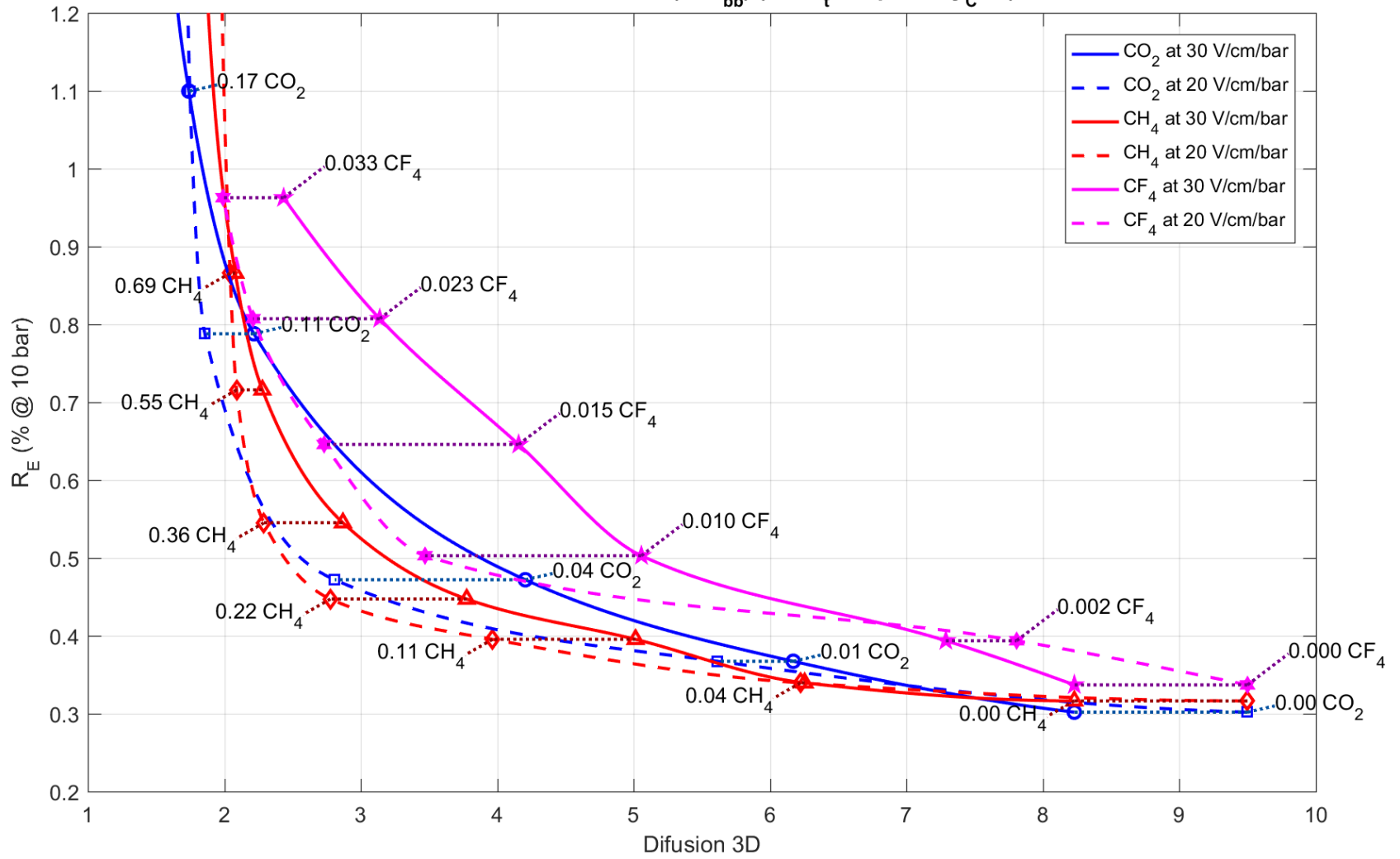
# CF<sub>4</sub> right-left real R



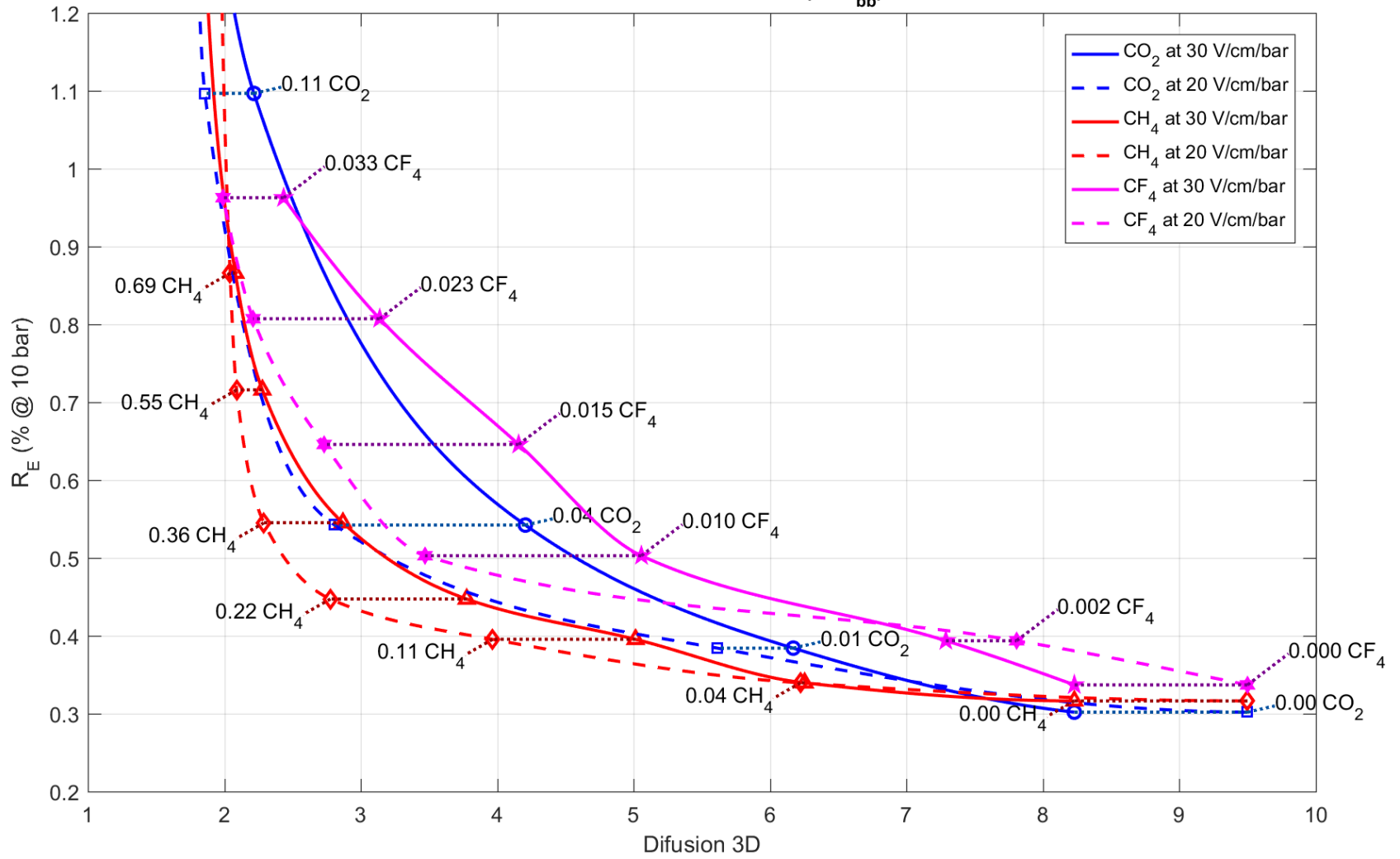
# R(z=0) without attachment - CF<sub>4</sub>



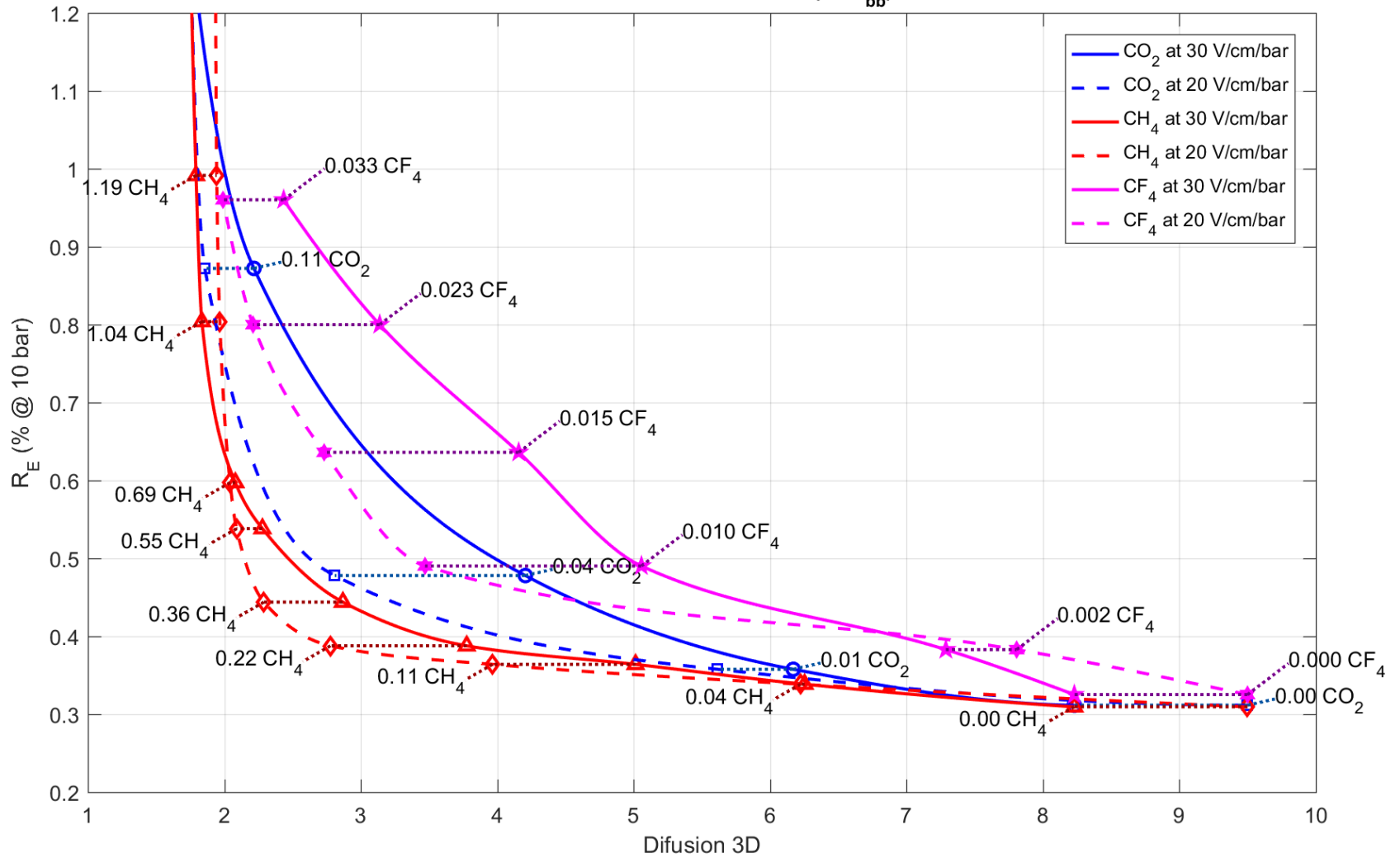
10 bar for EL=2KV/cm/bar (at  $Q_{bb}$ ) (100%<sub>t</sub> transparency<sub>c</sub> O2)



10 bar for EL=2KV/cm/bar (at  $Q_{bb}$ )

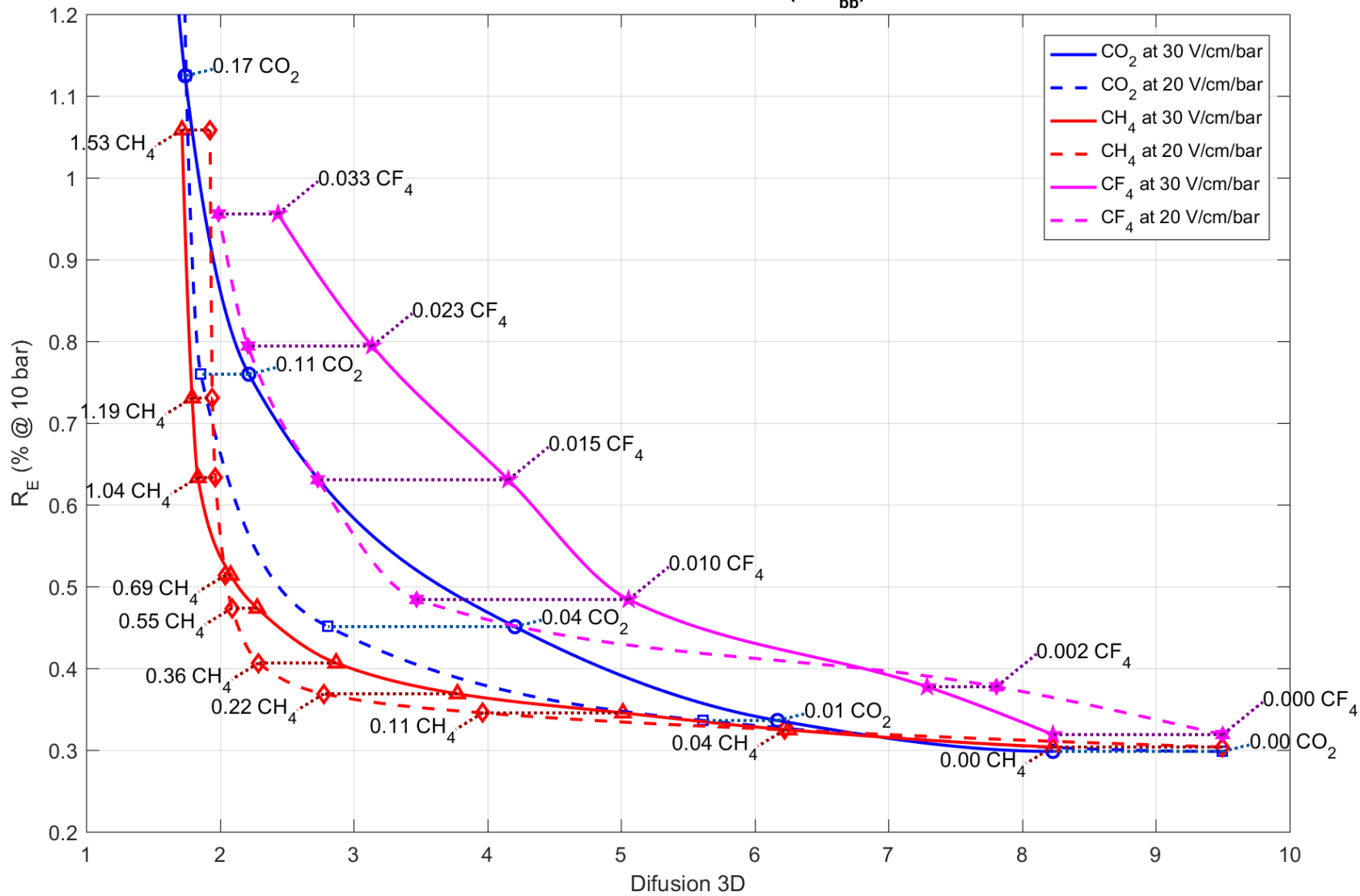


10 bar for EL=2.5KV/cm/bar (at  $Q_{bb}$ )

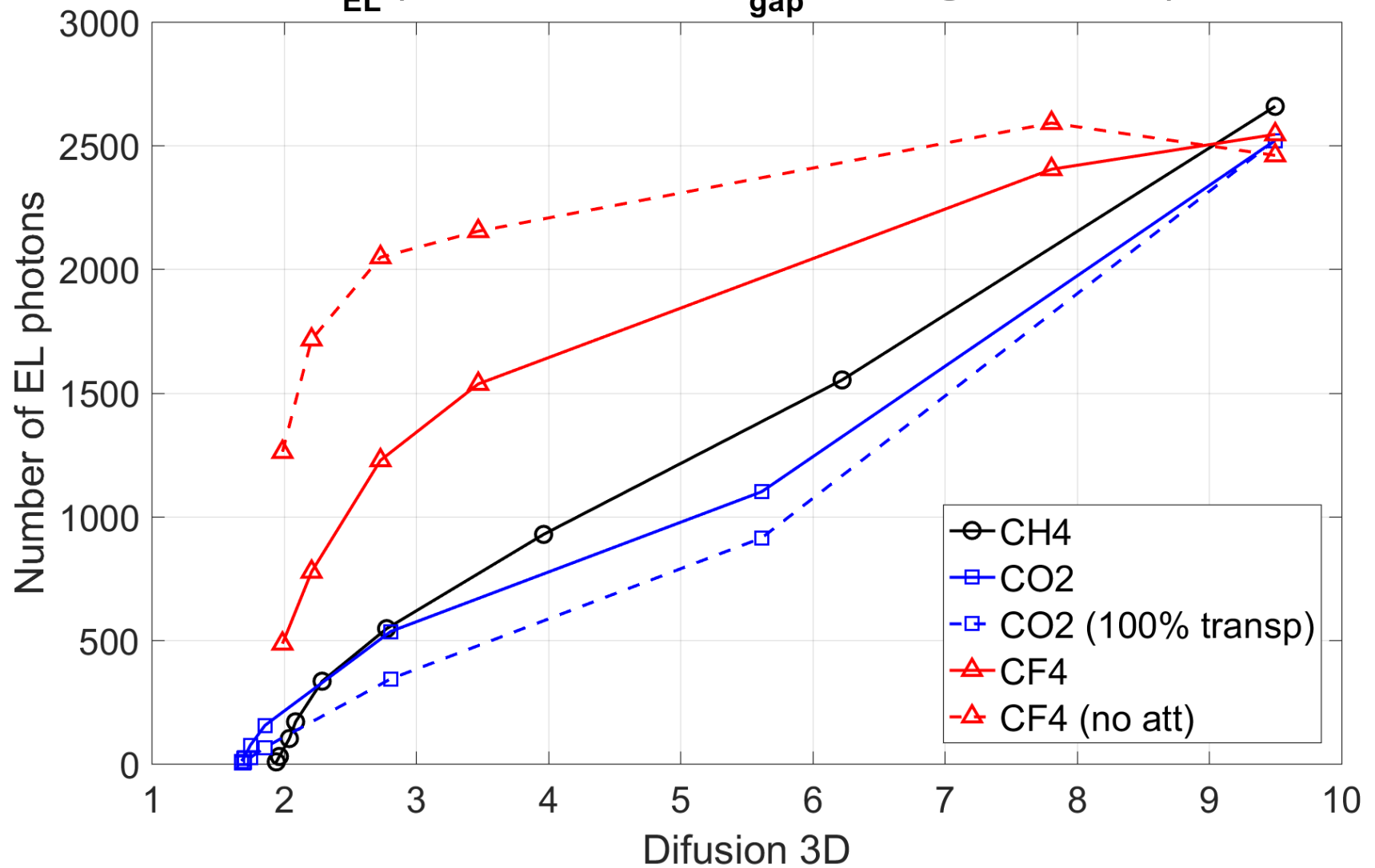




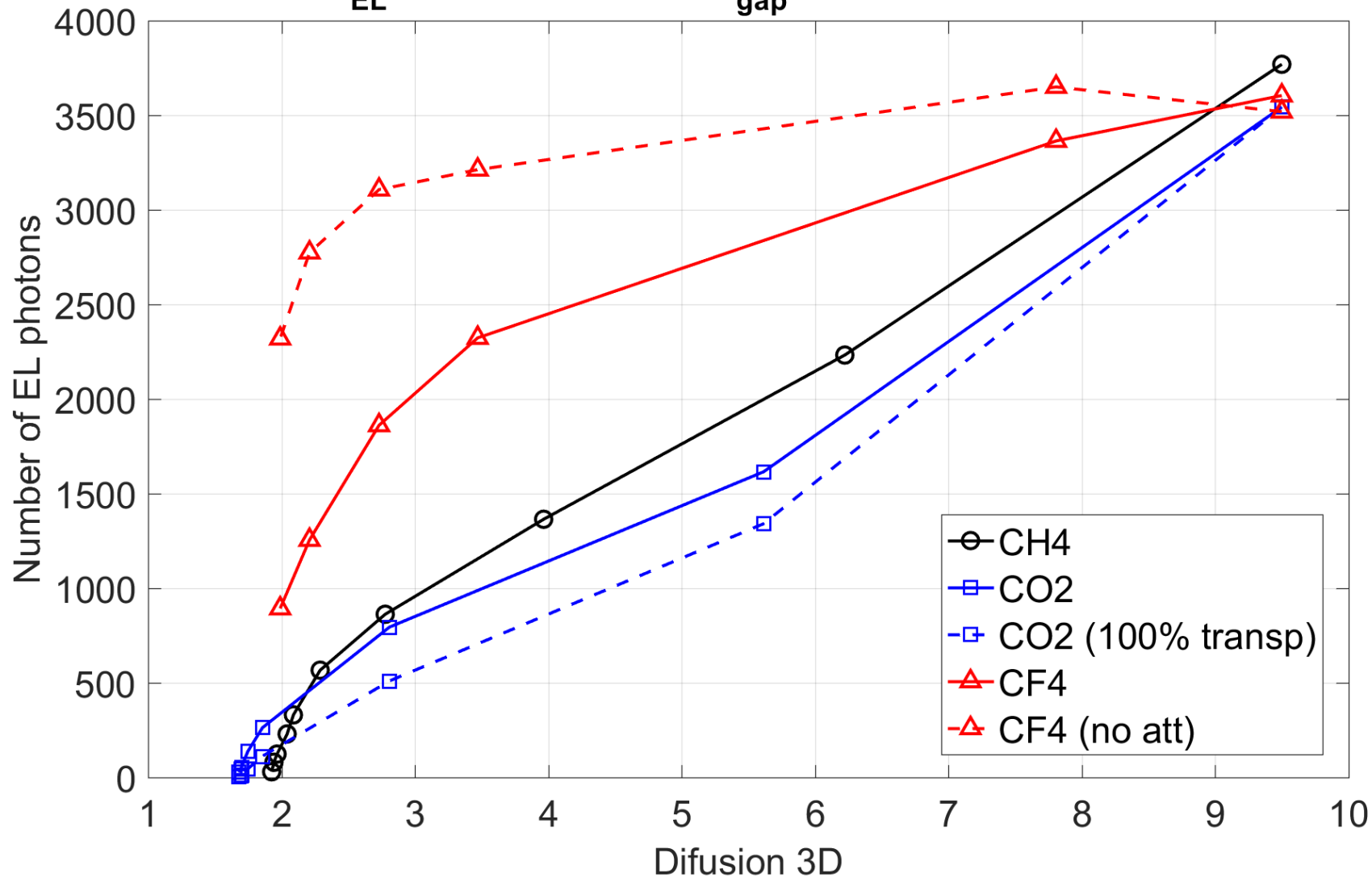
10 bar for EL=3KV/cm/bar (at  $Q_{bb}$ )



$N_{EL}$  (Qbb at 10bar in  $EL_{gap}=5\text{mm}$  @ 2KV/cm/m)



$N_{EL}$  (Qbb at 10bar in  $EL_{gap}=5mm$  @ 2.5KV/cm/m)



$N_{EL}$  (Qbb at 10bar in  $EL_{gap}=5mm @ 3KV/cm/m$ )

