

# Atmosphere Modeling I: Introduction & Dynamics

the CAM (Community Atmosphere Model) FV (Finite Volume) dynamical core

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Figure courtesy of J. Daniel (ORNL)

## 1 Atmosphere intro

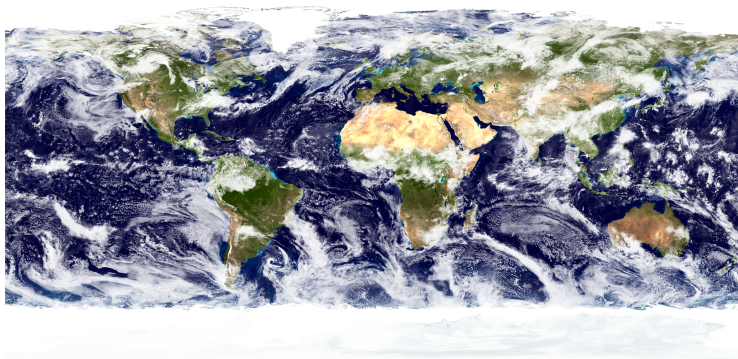
- Multi-scale nature of atmosphere dynamics
- Resolved and un-resolved scales
- 'Define' dynamical core and parameterizations

## 2 CAM-FV dynamical core (current 'work horse' dynamical core)

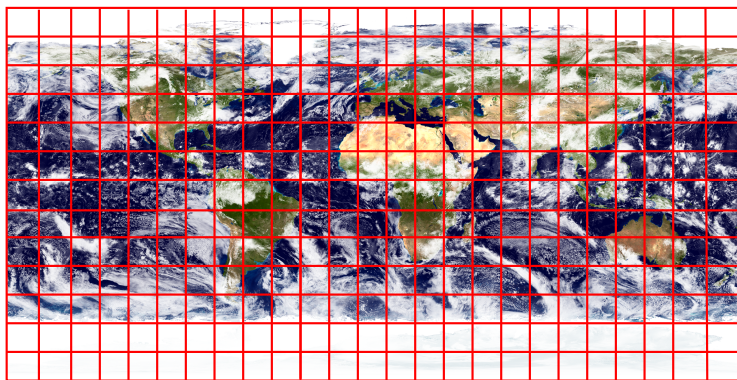
- Horizontal and vertical grid
- Equations of motion
- The Lin and Rood (1996) advection scheme
- Finite-volume discretization of the equations of motion
- The 'CD' grid approach
- Vertical remapping
- Tracers

## 3 Other dynamical core options in CAM

- CAM-EUL, CAM-SLD, (CAM-MPAS)
- CAM-SE: Next default dynamical core in CAM for medium to ultra-high horizontal resolution applications



Source: NASA Earth Observatory



- Red lines: regular latitude-longitude grid
- Grid-cell size defines the smallest scale that can be resolved
- Many important processes taking place sub-grid-scale that must be parameterized
- Loosely speaking, the parameterizations compute grid-cell average tendencies due to sub-grid-scale processes in terms of the (resolved scale) atmospheric state
- In modeling jargon parameterizations are also referred to as *physics* (what is unphysical about resolved scale dynamics?)



# Multi-scale nature of atmosphere dynamics (from Thuburn 2011)

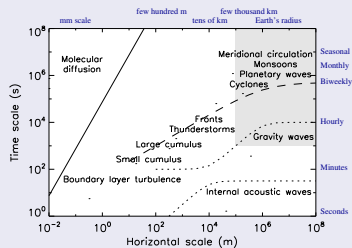


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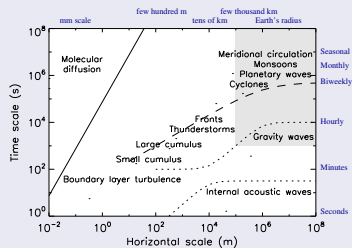


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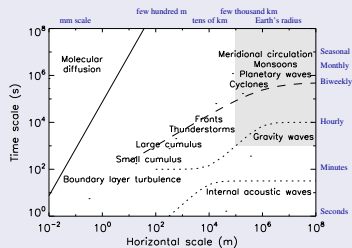


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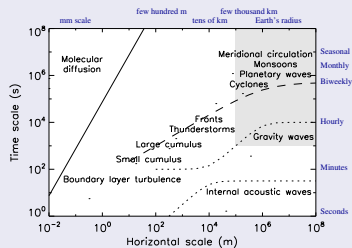


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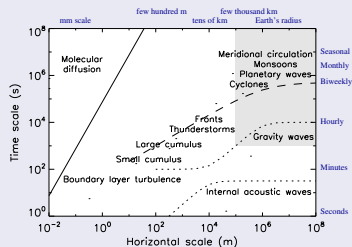


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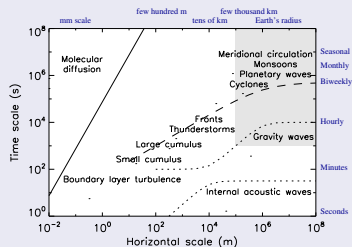


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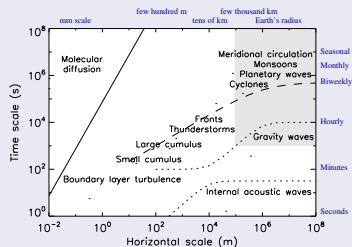
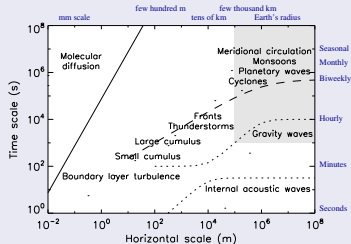


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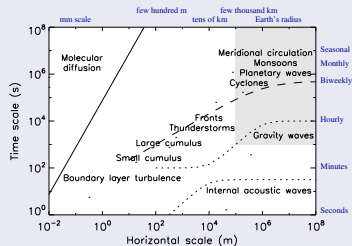


- All of the phenomena along the dashed line are important for weather and climate, and so need to be represented in numerical models.
- **Important phenomena occur at all scales - there is no significant spectral gap!** Moreover, there are strong interactions between the phenomena at different scales, and these interactions need to be represented.
- The lack of any spectral gap makes the modeling of weather/climate very **challenging**
- The emphasis in this lecture is how we model resolved dynamics; however, it should be borne in mind that equally important is how we represent unresolved processes, and the interactions between resolved and unresolved processes.

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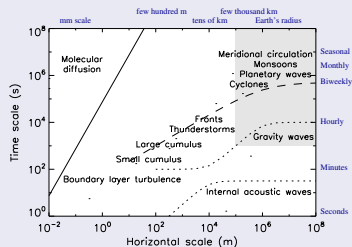
# Multi-scale nature of atmosphere dynamics (from Thuburn 2011)



- Two dotted curves correspond to dispersion relations for internal inertio-gravity waves and internal acoustic waves (relatively fast processes)
- these lines lie significantly below the energetically dominant processes on the dashed line
  - $\Rightarrow$  they are energetically weak compared to the dominant processes along the dashed curve
  - $\Rightarrow$  we do relatively little damage if we distort their propagation (will return to this later)
  - the fact that these waves are fast puts strong constraints on  $\Delta t$  that can be used in numerical models with explicit time-stepping schemes.

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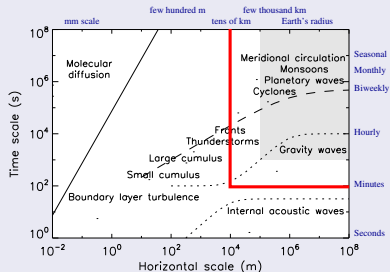


## Horizontal resolution:

- the shaded region shows the resolved space/time scales in typical current day climate models (approximately  $1^0 - 2^0$  resolution)
- highest resolutions at which CAM has been run is on the order of  $10 - 25$  km
- as the resolution is increased some 'large-scale' parameterizations may no longer be necessary (e.g., large scale convection) and we might need to redesign some parameterizations that were developed for horizontal resolutions of hundreds of km's

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## Parameterization suite

- Moist processes: deep convection, shallow convection, large-scale condensation
- Radiation and Clouds: cloud microphysics, precipitation processes, radiation
- Turbulent mixing: planetary boundary layer parameterization, vertical diffusion, gravity wave drag



## 'Resolved' dynamics

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### Strategies for coupling:

- **process-split**: dynamical core & parameterization suite are based on the same state and their tendencies are added to produce the updated state (used in CAM-EUL)
- **time-split**: dynamic core & parameterization suite are calculated sequentially, each based on the state produced by the other (used in CAM-FV; **the order matters!**).
- different coupling approaches discussed in the context CCM3 in Williamson (2002)
- simulations are very dependent on coupling time-step (e.g. Williamson and Olson, 2003)



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# Spherical (horizontal) discretization grid

CAM-FV uses regular latitude-longitude grid:

- horizontal position:  $(\lambda, \theta)$ , where  $\lambda$  longitude and  $\theta$  latitude.
- horizontal resolution specified in configure as:

-res  $\Delta\lambda \times \Delta\theta$

where, e.g.,  $\Delta\lambda \times \Delta\theta = 1.9 \times 2.5$  corresponding to `nlon=144`, `nlat=96`.

Changing resolution requires a 're-compile' .



- CAM-FV uses a Lagrangian ('floating') vertical coordinate  $\xi$  so that

$$\frac{d\xi}{dt} = 0,$$

i.e. vertical surfaces are material surfaces (no flow across them).

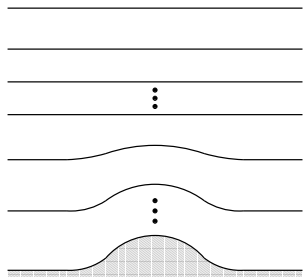


Figure shows 'usual' hybrid  $\sigma - p$  vertical coordinate  $\eta(p_s, p)$  (where  $p_s$  is surface pressure):

- $\eta(p_s, p)$  is a monotonic function of  $p$ .
- $\eta(p_s, p_s) = 1$
- $\eta(p_s, 0) = 0$
- $\eta(p_s, p_{top}) = \eta_{top}$ .

Boundary conditions are:

- $\frac{d\eta(p_s, p_s)}{dt} = 0$
- $\frac{d\eta(p_s, p_{top})}{dt} = \omega(p_{top}) = 0$

( $\omega$  is vertical velocity in pressure coordinates)

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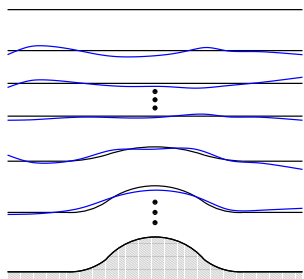


Figure:

- set  $\xi = \eta$  at time  $t_{start}$  (black lines).
- for  $t > t_{start}$  the vertical levels deform as they move with the flow (blue lines).
- to avoid excessive deformation of the vertical levels (non-uniform vertical resolution) the prognostic variables defined in the Lagrangian layers  $\xi$  are periodically remapped (= conservative interpolation) back to the Eulerian reference coordinates  $\eta$  (more on this later).



- Vertical resolution specified in `configure` as:

```
-nlev klev
```

where *klev* is the number of vertical levels, e.g.,  $klev = 26$  or  $klev = 30$ . Changing vertical resolution requires a 're-compile'.

The vertical extent is from the surface to

- approximately 40 km's / 2hPa for CAM
- approximately 100 km's /  $10^{-6}$  hPa for WACCM (Whole Atmosphere Community Climate Model)
- approximately 500 km's /  $10^{-9}$  hPa for WACCM-x

The following approximations are made to the compressible Euler equations:

- **spherical geoid:** geopotential  $\Phi$  is only a function of radial distance from the center of the Earth  $r$ :  $\Phi = \Phi(r)$  (for planet Earth the true gravitational acceleration is much stronger than the centrifugal force).  
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- **quasi-hydrostatic approximation** (also simply referred to as *hydrostatic approximation*): Involves ignoring the acceleration term in the vertical component of the momentum equations so that it reads:

$$\rho g = -\frac{\partial p}{\partial z}, \quad (1)$$

where  $g$  gravity,  $\rho$  density and  $p$  pressure. Good approximation down to horizontal scales greater than approximately  $10km$ .

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- **shallow atmosphere:** a collection of approximations. Coriolis terms involving the horizontal components of  $\Omega$  are neglected ( $\Omega$  is angular velocity), factors  $1/r$  are replaced with  $1/a$  where  $a$  is the mean radius of the Earth and certain other metric terms are neglected so that the system retains conservation laws for energy and angular momentum.

# Adiabatic frictionless equations of motion using Lagrangian vertical coordinates

Assuming a Lagrangian vertical coordinate the hydrostatic equations of motion integrated over a layer can be written as

$$\begin{aligned} \text{mass air:} & \quad \frac{\partial(\delta p)}{\partial t} = -\nabla_h \cdot (\vec{v}_h \delta p), \\ \text{mass tracers:} & \quad \frac{\partial(\delta p q)}{\partial t} = -\nabla_h \cdot (\vec{v}_h q \delta p), \\ \text{horizontal momentum:} & \quad \frac{\partial \vec{v}_h}{\partial t} = -(\zeta + f) \vec{k} \times \vec{v}_h - \nabla_h \kappa - \nabla_p \Phi, \\ \text{thermodynamic:} & \quad \frac{\partial(\delta p \Theta)}{\partial t} = -\nabla_h \cdot (\vec{v}_h \delta p \Theta) \end{aligned}$$

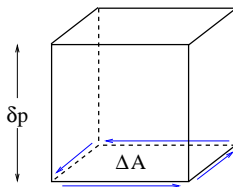
where  $\delta p$  is the layer thickness,  $\vec{v}_h$  is horizontal wind,  $q$  tracer mixing ratio,  $\zeta$  vorticity,  $f$  Coriolis,  $\kappa$  kinetic energy,  $\Theta$  potential temperature. The momentum equations are written in vector invariant form.

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The equations of motion are discretized using an Eulerian finite-volume approach.



Integrate the flux-form continuity equation horizontally over a control volume:

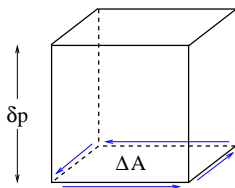
$$\frac{\partial}{\partial t} \iint_A \delta p \, dA = - \iint_A \nabla_h (\vec{v}_h \delta p) \, dA, \quad (2)$$

where  $A$  is the horizontal extent of the control volume. Using Gauss's divergence theorem for the right-hand side of (2) we get:

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial t} \iint_A \delta p \, dA = - \oint_{\partial A} \delta p \vec{v} \cdot \vec{n} \, dA, \quad (3)$$

where  $\partial A$  is the boundary of  $A$  and  $\vec{n}$  is outward pointing normal unit vector of  $\partial A$ .

# Finite-volume discretization of continuity equation



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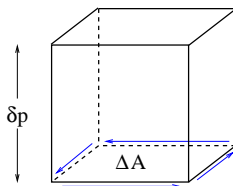
$$\frac{\partial}{\partial t} \iint_A \delta p \, dA = - \oint_{\partial A} \delta p \vec{v} \cdot \vec{n} \, dA, \quad (3)$$

Right-hand side of (3) represents the instantaneous flux of mass through the vertical faces of the control volume.

Next: integrate over one time-step  $\Delta t_{dyn}$  and discretize left-hand side.



## Finite-volume discretization of continuity equation



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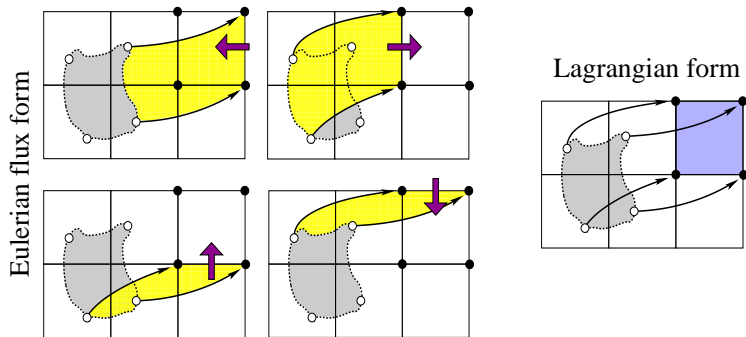
$$\frac{\partial}{\partial t} \iint_A \delta p \, dA = - \iint_A \nabla_h (\vec{v}_h \delta p) \, dA, \quad (2)$$

$$\Delta A \overline{\delta p}^{n+1} - \Delta A \overline{\delta p}^n = -\Delta t_{dyn} \int_{t=n\Delta t}^{t=(n+1)\Delta t} \left[ \oint_{\partial A} \delta p \vec{v} \cdot \vec{n} \, dA \right] dt, \quad (3)$$

where  $n$  is time-level index and  $\overline{(\cdot)}$  is cell-averaged value.

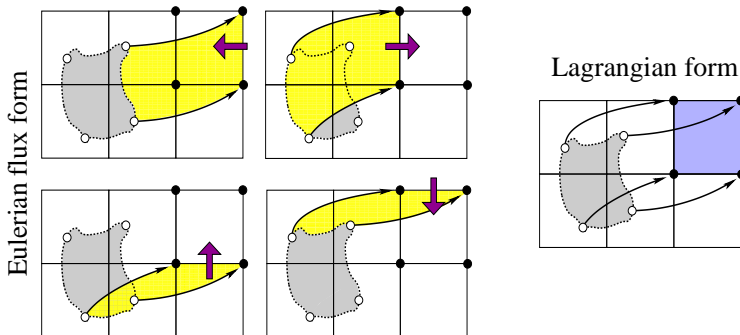
The right-hand side represents the mass transported through all of the four vertical control volume faces into the cell during one time-step. Graphical illustration on next slide!

# Finite-volume discretization of continuity equation: Tracking mass



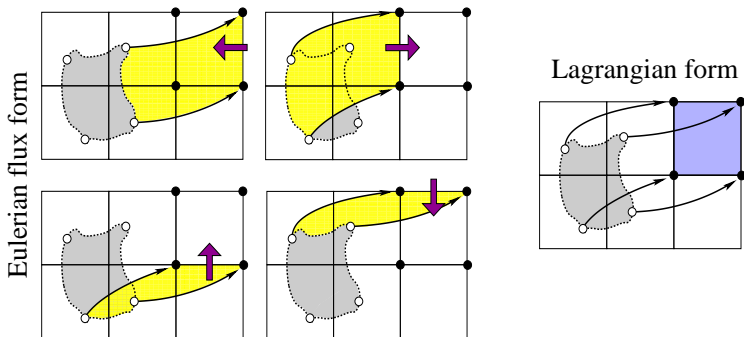
The yellow areas are 'swept' through the control volume faces during one time-step. The grey area is the corresponding Lagrangian area (area moving with the flow with no flow through its boundaries that ends up at the Eulerian control volume after one time-step). Black arrows show parcel trajectories.

Note **equivalence** between Eulerian flux-form and Lagrangian form!



Until now everything has been exact. How do we approximate the fluxes numerically?

- In CAM-FV the Lin and Rood (1996) scheme is used which is a dimensionally split scheme (that is, rather than 'explicitly' estimating the boundaries of the yellow areas and integrate over them, fluxes are estimated by successive applications of one-dimensional operators in each coordinate direction).



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- (before showing equations for Lin and Rood (1996) scheme) What is the effective Lagrangian area associated with the Lin and Rood (1996) scheme?

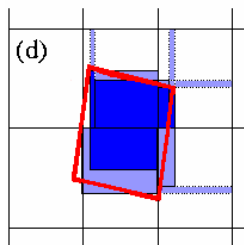


Figure: Red lines define boundary of exact Lagrangian cell for a special case with deformational, rotational and divergent wind field. Blue colors is Lagrangian cell associated with the Lin and Rood (1996) scheme. Dark blue shading weights integrated mass with 1 and light blue shading weights integrated mass with 1/2. See Machenhauer et al. (2009) for details.

Until now everything has been exact. How do we approximate the fluxes numerically?

- (before showing equations for Lin and Rood (1996) scheme) What is the effective Lagrangian area associated with the Lin and Rood (1996) scheme?

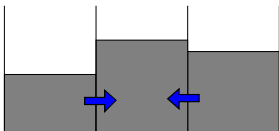
$$\overline{\delta p}^{n+1} = \overline{\delta p}^n + F^\lambda \left[ \frac{1}{2} \left( \overline{\delta p}^n + f^\theta(\overline{\delta p}^n) \right) \right] + F^\theta \left[ \frac{1}{2} \left( \overline{\delta p}^n + f^\lambda(\overline{\delta p}^n) \right) \right],$$

where

$F^{\lambda,\theta}$  = flux divergence in  $\lambda$  or  $\theta$  coordinate direction

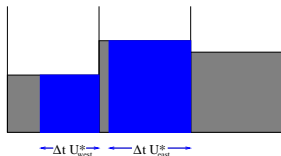
$f^{\lambda,\theta}$  = advective update in  $\lambda$  or  $\theta$  coordinate direction

$$\overline{\delta p}^{n+1} = \overline{\delta p}^n + F^\lambda \left[ \frac{1}{2} \left( \overline{\delta p}^n + f^\theta(\overline{\delta p}^n) \right) \right] + F^\theta \left[ \frac{1}{2} \left( \overline{\delta p}^n + f^\lambda(\overline{\delta p}^n) \right) \right],$$



- Figure: Graphical illustration of flux-divergence operator  $F^\lambda$ . Shaded areas show cell average values for the cell we wish to make a forecast for and the two adjacent cells.

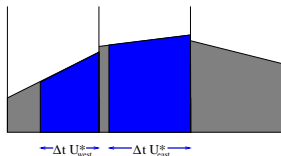
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- $u_{East/West}^*$  are the time-averaged winds on each face (more on how these are obtained later).
- $F^\lambda$  is proportional to the difference between mass 'swept' through East and West cell face.
- $f^\lambda = F^\lambda + \overline{\overline{\delta p}} \Delta t_{dyn} D$ , where  $D$  is divergence.
- On Figure we assume constant sub-grid-cell reconstructions for the fluxes.



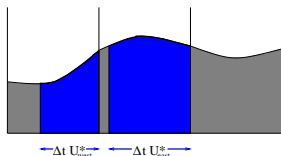
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Higher-order approximation to the fluxes:

- Piecewise linear sub-grid-scale reconstruction (van Leer, 1977): Fit a linear function using neighboring grid-cell average values with mass-conservation as a constraint (i.e. area under linear function = cell average).

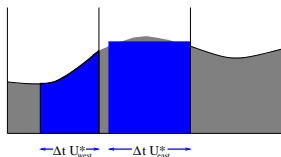
$$\overline{\delta p}^{n+1} = \overline{\delta p}^n + F^\lambda \left[ \frac{1}{2} \left( \overline{\delta p}^n + f^\theta(\overline{\delta p}^n) \right) \right] + F^\theta \left[ \frac{1}{2} \left( \overline{\delta p}^n + f^\lambda(\overline{\delta p}^n) \right) \right],$$



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- Piecewise parabolic sub-grid-scale reconstruction (Colella and Woodward, 1984): Fit parabola using neighboring grid-cell average values with mass-conservation as a constraint. Note: Reconstruction is  $C^0$  across cell edges.

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- Piecewise parabolic sub-grid-scale reconstruction (Colella and Woodward, 1984): fit parabola using neighboring grid-cell average values with mass-conservation as a constraint. Note: reconstruction is continuous at cell edges.
- Reconstruction function may 'overshoot' or 'undershoot' which may lead to unphysical and/or oscillatory solutions. Use limiters to render reconstruction function shape-preserving.

$$\overline{\delta p}^{n+1} = \overline{\delta p}^n + F^\lambda \left[ \frac{1}{2} \left( \overline{\delta p}^n + f^\theta(\overline{\delta p}^n) \right) \right] + F^\theta \left[ \frac{1}{2} \left( \overline{\delta p}^n + f^\lambda(\overline{\delta p}^n) \right) \right],$$

Advantages:

- Inherently mass conservative (note: conservation does not necessarily imply accuracy!).
- Formulated in terms of one-dimensional operators.
- Preserves a constant for a non-divergent flow field (if the finite-difference approximation to divergence is zero).
- Preserves linear correlations between trace species (if shape-preservation filters are not applied)
- Has shape-preserving options.

**IOR**: Scheme used for  $F^\lambda$ , **JOR**: scheme used for  $F^\theta$

Options for sub-grid-scale reconstruction (IOR, JOR = -2,1,2,3,4,5,6):

- ② Piecewise linear (non shape-preserving), (van Leer, 1977).
- ④ Piecewise constant (Godunov, 1959).
- ② Piecewise linear with shape-preservation constraint (van Leer, 1977).
- ③ Piecewise parabolic with shape-preservation constraint (Colella and Woodward, 1984).
- ④ Piecewise parabolic with shape-preservation constraint (Lin and Rood, 1996).
- ⑤ Piecewise parabolic with positive definite constraint (Lin and Rood, 1996).
- ⑥ Piecewise parabolic with quasi 'shape-preservation' constraint (Lin and Rood, 1996).

Defaults: **IOR=JOR=4**

- In top layers operators are reduced to first order:

if ( $k \leq k_{lev}/8$ ) IORD=JORD=1

E.g., for  $k_{lev}=30$  the operators are altered in the top 3 layers.

- The advective  $f^{\lambda,\theta}$  (*inner*) operators are 'hard-coded' to 1st order. For a linear analysis of the consequences of using *inner* and *outer* operators of different orders see Lauritzen (2007).

Hydrostatic equations of motion integrated over a Lagrangian layer

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{\partial(\delta p)}{\partial t} &= -\nabla_h \cdot (\vec{v}_h \delta p), \\ \frac{\partial(\delta p q)}{\partial t} &= -\nabla_h \cdot (\vec{v}_h \delta p), \\ \frac{\partial \vec{v}_h}{\partial t} &= -(\zeta + f) \vec{k} \times \vec{v}_h - \nabla_h \kappa - \nabla_p \Phi, \\ \frac{\partial(\delta p \Theta)}{\partial t} &= -\nabla_h \cdot (\vec{v}_h \delta p \Theta)\end{aligned}$$

The equations of motion are discretized using an Eulerian finite-volume approach.

Hydrostatic equations of motion integrated over a Lagrangian layer

$$\begin{aligned}\overline{\delta p}^{n+1} &= \overline{\delta p}^n + F^\lambda \left[ \frac{1}{2} \left( \overline{\delta p}^n + f^\theta(\overline{\delta p}^n) \right) \right] + F^\theta \left[ \frac{1}{2} \left( \overline{\delta p}^n + f^\lambda(\overline{\delta p}^n) \right) \right], \\ \frac{\partial(\delta p q)}{\partial t} &= -\nabla_h \cdot (\vec{v}_h \delta p), \\ \frac{\partial \vec{v}_h}{\partial t} &= -(\zeta + f) \vec{k} \times \vec{v}_h - \nabla_h \kappa - \nabla_p \Phi, \\ \frac{\partial(\delta p \Theta)}{\partial t} &= -\nabla_h \cdot (\vec{v}_h \delta p \Theta)\end{aligned}$$



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- $\vec{\Gamma}^1$  is operator using combinations of  $F^{\lambda,\theta}$  and  $f^{\lambda,\theta}$  as components to approximate the time-volume-average of the vertical component of absolute vorticity. Similarly for  $\vec{\Gamma}^2$  but for kinetic energy.  $\nabla_h$  is simply approximated by finite differences. For details see Lin (2004).
- $\hat{P}$  is a finite-volume discretization of the pressure gradient force (see Lin 1997 for details).

Hydrostatic equations of motion integrated over a Lagrangian layer

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- No explicit diffusion operators in equations (so far!).
- Implicit diffusion through shape-preservation constraints in  $F$  and  $f$  operators.
- CAM-FV has 'control' over vorticity at the grid scale through implicit diffusion in the operators  $F$  and  $f$  but it does not have explicit control over divergence near the grid scale.

# Adiabatic frictionless equations of motion

Hydrostatic equations of motion integrated over a Lagrangian layer

$$\begin{aligned}\overline{\delta p}^{n+1} &= \overline{\delta p}^n + F^\lambda \left[ \frac{1}{2} \left( \overline{\delta p}^n + f^\theta(\overline{\delta p}^n) \right) \right] + F^\theta \left[ \frac{1}{2} \left( \overline{\delta p}^n + f^\lambda(\overline{\delta p}^n) \right) \right], \\ \overline{\delta p q}^{n+1} &= \text{super-cycled (discussed later),} \\ \vec{v}_h^{n+1} &= \vec{v}_h^n - \vec{\Gamma}^1 \left[ (\zeta + f) \vec{k} \times \vec{v}_h \right] - \nabla_h \left( \vec{\Gamma}^2 \kappa \right) - \Delta t_{dyn} \hat{P} + \Delta t_{dyn} \nabla_h \left( \nu \nabla_h^\ell D \right), \ell = 0, 2 \\ \overline{\Theta \delta p}^{n+1} &= \overline{\Theta \delta p}^n + F^\lambda \left[ \frac{1}{2} \left( \overline{\Theta \delta p}^n + f^\theta(\overline{\Theta \delta p}^n) \right) \right] + F^\theta \left[ \frac{1}{2} \left( \overline{\Theta \delta p}^n + f^\lambda(\overline{\Theta \delta p}^n) \right) \right],\end{aligned}$$

- No explicit diffusion operators in equations.
- Implicit diffusion through shape-preservation constraints in  $F$  and  $f$  operators.
- The above discretization leads to 'control' over vorticity at the grid scale through implicit diffusion but no explicit control over divergence.
- **Add divergence damping (2<sup>nd</sup>-order or 4<sup>th</sup>-order) term to momentum equations.**  
Optionally a 'Laplacian-like' damping of wind components is used in upper 3 levels to slow down excessive polar night jet that appears at high horizontal resolutions.

namelist variable: `div24de12flag`

More details: Lauritzen et al. (2011); for a stability analysis of divergence damping in CAM see Whitehead et al. (2011)

# Total kinetic energy spectra

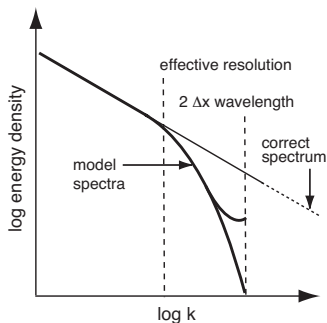
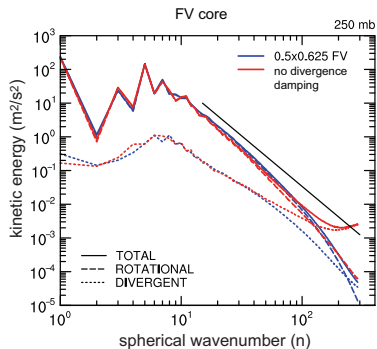


Figure: (left) Solid black line shows  $k^{-3}$  slope (courtesy of D.L. Williamson). (right) Schematic of 'effective resolution' (Figure from Skamarock (2011)).

- (left) Without divergence damping there is a spurious accumulation of total kinetic energy associated with divergent modes near the grid scale.
- (right) Note: total kinetic energy spectra can also be used to assess 'effective resolution' (see, e.g., discussion in Skamarock, 2011)

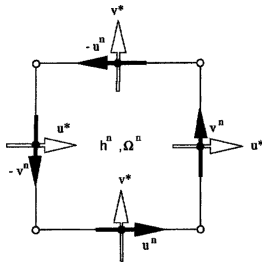


Figure from Lin and Rood (1997).

Definition of Arakawa C and D horizontal staggering (Arakawa and Lamb, 1977):

- C: velocity components at the center of cell faces and orthogonal to cell faces and mass variables at the cell center. Natural choice for mass-flux computations when using Lin and Rood (1996) scheme.
- D: velocity components parallel to cell faces and mass variables at the cell center. Natural choice for computing the circulation of vorticity ( $\frac{\partial v}{\partial x} - \frac{\partial u}{\partial y}$ ).

# Time-stepping: the 'CD'- grid approach

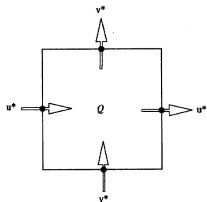


Figure from Lin and Rood (1997).

- For the flux- and advection operators ( $F$  and  $f$ , respectively) in the Lin and Rood (1996) scheme the time-centered advective winds ( $u^*$ ,  $v^*$ ) for the cell faces are needed:
- An option: extrapolate winds (as in semi-Lagrangian models)  $\Rightarrow$  can result in noise near steep topography (Lin and Rood, 1997).

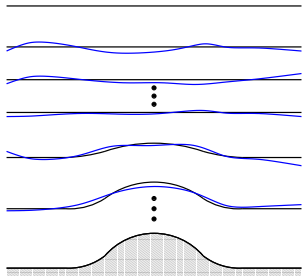
- Instead, the equations of motion are integrated forward in time for  $\frac{1}{2}\Delta t_{dyn}$  using a  $C$  grid horizontal staggering.
- These  $C$ -grid winds ( $u^*$ ,  $v^*$ ) are then used for the 'full' time-step update (everything else from the  $C$ -grid forecast is 'thrown away').
- The 'full' time-step update is performed on a  $D$ -grid.
- For a linear stability analysis of the 'CD'-grid approach see Skamarock (2008).



# Vertical remapping

- CAM-FV uses a Lagrangian ('floating') vertical coordinate  $\xi$ .
- $\xi$  is retained *ksplit* dynamics time-steps  $\Delta t_{dyn}$ .
- Hereafter the prognostic variables are remapped to the Eulerian vertical grid  $\eta$  (the vertical remapping is performed using a mass and energy conserving method, see Lin 2004).
- *ksplit* is set in `namelist`:

```
-nsplit ksplit
```



- The 'physics time-step is set in the `namelist`:

```
-dtime  $\Delta t$ ,
```

where  $\Delta t$  s is given in seconds.

- At every physics time-step  $\Delta t$  the variables are remapped in the vertical as described above.
- So the dynamics time-step  $\Delta t_{dyn}$  is controlled with *ksplit* and  $\Delta t$  in the `namelist`:

$$\Delta t = ksplit \times \Delta t_{dyn}.$$

(in CAM5 there is also an option to vertical remap more often)

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- $\xi$  is retained *ksplit* dynamics time-steps  $\Delta t_{dyn}$ .
- Hereafter the prognostic variables are remapped to the Eulerian vertical grid  $\eta$  (the vertical remapping is performed using a mass and energy conserving method, see Lin 2004).
- *ksplit* is set in `namelist`:

```
-nsplit ksplit
```



- Default setting for the  $1.9 \times 2.5$  resolution is *ksplit* = 4 and  $\Delta t = 1800s$  (so  $\Delta t_{dyn} = 450s$ ).
- *ksplit* is usually chosen based on stability.
- (meridians are converging towards the poles) To stabilize the model (and reduce noise) FFT filters are applied along latitudes North/South of approximately  $36^\circ N/S$ .

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  - thermodynamic variables and other prognostic variables feed back on the velocity field

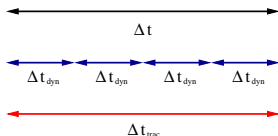
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  - Hence the continuity equation for air can not be solved in isolation and one must obey the maximum allowable time-step restrictions imposed by the fastest waves in the system.
- The passive tracer transport equation can be solved in isolation given prescribed winds and air densities, and is therefore not susceptible to the time-step restrictions imposed by the fastest waves in the system.
- For efficiency: Use longer time-step for tracers than for air.



$\Delta t_{\text{trac}}$  is time-step of the tracers. Specified in terms of `nspltrac` (default for  $1.9 \times 2.5$  resolution is `nspltrac=1`).

Leads to a major 'speed-up' of dynamics.



## Free-stream preserving 'super-cycling' of tracers with respect to air $\rho$

Simply solving the tracer continuity equation for  $\overline{q\delta\rho}^{n+1}$  using  $\Delta t_{trac}$  will lead to inconsistencies. Why?

Continuity equation for air  $\delta\rho$

$$\frac{\partial\delta\rho}{\partial t} + \nabla \cdot (\delta\rho \vec{v}_h) = 0, \quad (4)$$

and a tracer with mixing ratio  $q$

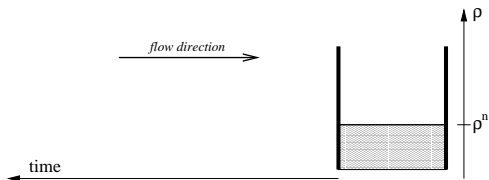
$$\frac{\partial(\delta\rho q)}{\partial t} + \nabla \cdot (\delta\rho q \vec{v}_h) = 0, \quad (5)$$

For  $q = 1$  equation (5) reduces to (4). If this is satisfied in the numerical discretizations, the scheme is 'free-stream' preserving.

Solving (5) with  $q = 1$  using  $\Delta t_{trac}$  will NOT produce the same solution as solving (4) `nsp1trac` times using  $\Delta t_{dyn}$ !

# Graphical illustration of 'free stream' preserving transport of tracers

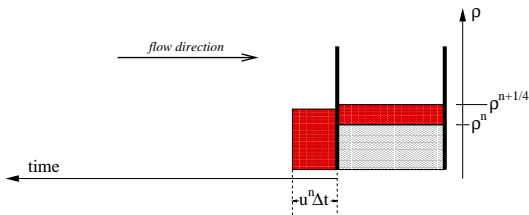
Assume no flux through East cell wall.



- Solve continuity equation for air  $\rho = \delta p$  together with momentum and thermodynamics equations.

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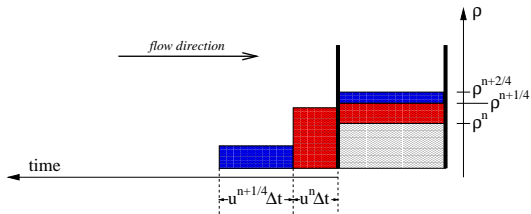
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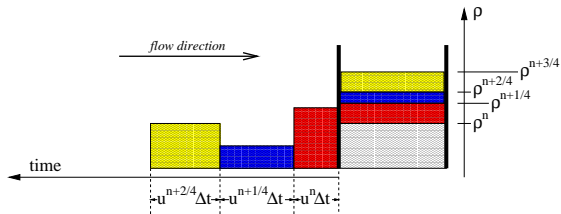
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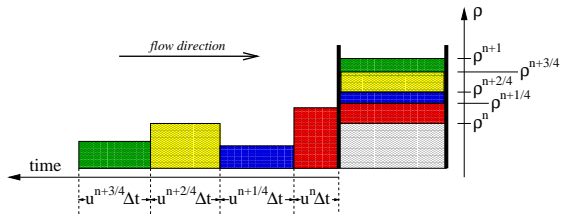
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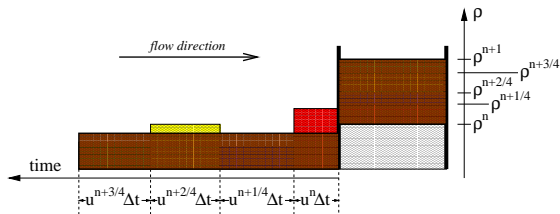
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# Graphical illustration of 'free stream' preserving transport of tracers

Assume no flux through East cell wall.



- Solve continuity equation for air  $\rho = \delta p$  together with momentum and thermodynamics equations.
- Repeat *ksplit* times
- Brown area = average flow of mass through cell face.
- Compute time-averaged value of  $q$  across brown area using Lin and Rood (1996) scheme:  $\overline{\langle q \rangle}$ .
- Forecast for tracer is:  $\overline{\langle q \rangle} \times \sum_{i=1}^{ksplit} \delta p^{n+i/ksplit}$
- Yields 'free stream' preserving solution!

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- This is very important: Number of trace species in climate models are increasing and accounts for most of the computational 'work' in the dynamical core.



- CAM-FV has a very efficient and quite consistent treatment of the tracers.
- This is very important: Number of trace species in climate models are increasing and accounts for most of the computational 'work' in the dynamical core.
- Rasch et al. (2006) did a comprehensive study of the characteristics of atmospheric transport using three dynamical cores in CAM (CAM-FV, CAM-EUL, CAM-SL; acronyms defined later):

The results from this study favor use of the CAM-FV core for tracer transport. Unlike the others, CAM-FV

- is inherently conservative
- less diffusive (e.g. maintains strong gradients better)
- maintains the nonlinear relationships among variables required by thermodynamic and mass conservation constraints more accurately.

- CAM-FV has a very efficient and quite consistent treatment of the tracers.
- This is very important: Number of trace species in climate models are increasing and accounts for most of the computational 'work' in the dynamical core.
- Rasch et al. (2006) did a comprehensive study of the characteristics of atmospheric transport using three dynamical cores in CAM (CAM-FV, CAM-EUL, CAM-SL; acronyms defined later):

The results from this study favor use of the CAM-FV core for tracer transport. Unlike the others, CAM-FV

- is inherently conservative
- less diffusive (e.g. maintains strong gradients better)
- maintains the nonlinear relationships among variables required by thermodynamic and mass conservation constraints more accurately.

However, with respect to 'meteorology' CAM-FV needs higher horizontal resolution to produce results equivalent to those produced using the spectral transform dynamical core in CAM (CAM-EUL). See Williamson (2008) for details.

- **ADIABATIC**: No physics. See example of application in Jablonowski and Williamson (2006) and Lauritzen et al. (2010).
- **IDEAL\_PHYS**: Held-Suarez test case (Held and Suarez, 1994):
  - Simple Newtonian relaxation of the temperature field to a zonally symmetric state
  - Rayleigh damping of low-level winds representing boundary-layer friction
- **AQUA\_PLANET**: Ocean only planet with zonally symmetric SST-forcing using 'full' physics package (Neale and Hoskins, 2000). See example of application in Williamson (2008).

## CAM3 ('old') dynamical core options:

- CAM-EUL and CAM-SLD (Collins et al., 2004):
  - Based on the spectral transform method and semi-implicit time-stepping
  - EUL/SLD = Eulerian/semi-Lagrangian discretization in grid-point space.
  - Tracer transport with non-conservative semi-Lagrangian scheme ('fixers' restore formal mass-conservation)

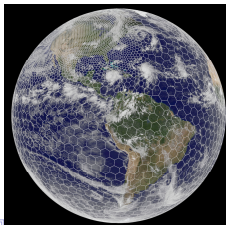
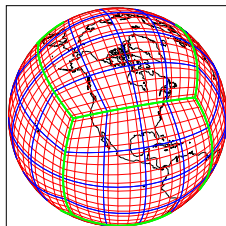
## New dynamical core options:

### ● CAM-SE (Evans et al., 2012): Spectral Elements

- A dynamical core in HOMME (High-Order Method Modeling Environment, Thomas and Loft 2005).
- For each element: Mass-conservative to machine precision and total energy conservative to the truncation error of the time integration scheme
- Discretized on cubed-sphere (uniform resolution or conforming mesh-refinement) and highly scalable
- Default dynamical core in the next release of CAM5 (planned November 2012)

### ● CAM-MPAS (Skamarock et al., 2012): Finite-volume unstructured

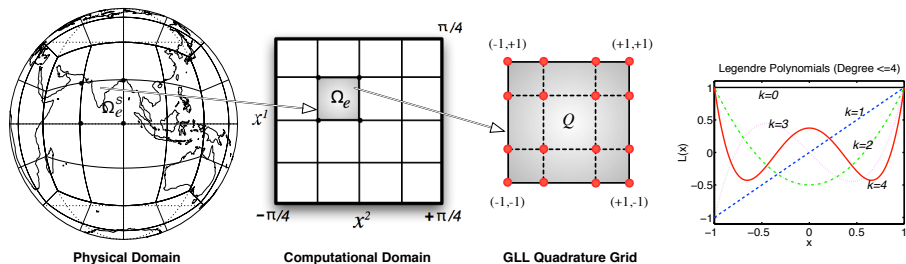
- MPAS = Model for Prediction Across Scales
- Variable resolution centroidal Voronoi tessellation of the sphere
- Fully compressible non-hydrostatic discretization similar to Advanced Research WRF (ARW) model (Skamarock and Klemp, 2008)
- Currently being integrated into CAM



Figures courtesy of R.D. Nair (upper) and W.C. Skamarock (lower).

# CAM-SE (spectral element dynamical core); (Dennis et al., 2012)

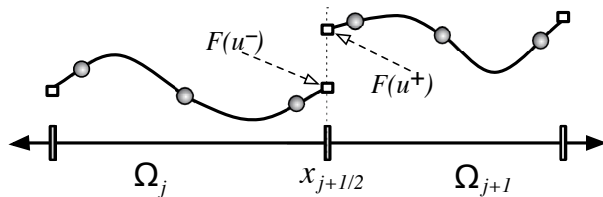
CAM-SE uses a continuous Galerkin finite element method (Taylor et al., 1997) referred to as **Spectral Elements (SE)**:



Figures from Nair et al. (2011)

- **Physical domain**: Tile the sphere with quadrilaterals using the gnomonic cubed-sphere projection
- **Computational domain**: Mapped local Cartesian domain
- Each element operates with a **Gauss-Lobatto-Legendre (GLL) quadrature grid**  
Gaussian quadrature using the GLL grid will integrate a polynomial of degree  $2N - 1$  exactly, where  $N$  is degree of polynomial
- **Elementwise** the solution is projected onto a tensor product of 1D Legendre basis functions by multiplying the equations of motion by test functions; *weak Galerkin formation*  
→ all derivatives inside each element can be computed analytically!

CAM-SE uses a continuous Galerkin finite element method (Taylor et al., 1997) referred to as **Spectral Elements (SE)**:



Figures from Nair et al. (2011)

How do solutions in each element 'communicate' with each other?

- The solution is projected onto the space of globally continuous ( $C^0$ ) piecewise polynomials
- $\rightarrow$  point values are forced to be  $C^0$  continuous along element boundaries by averaging.
- Note: this is the only operation in which information 'propagates' between elements
- MPI data-communication: only information on the boundary of elements!

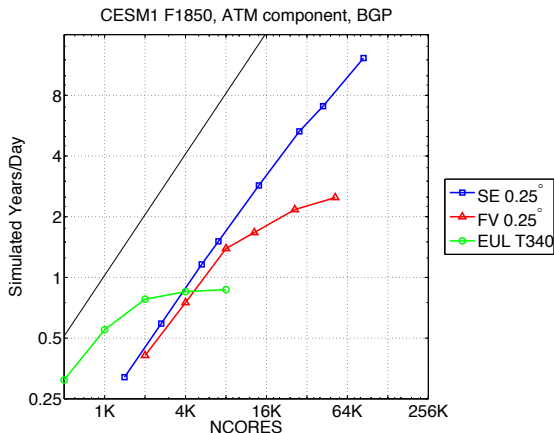
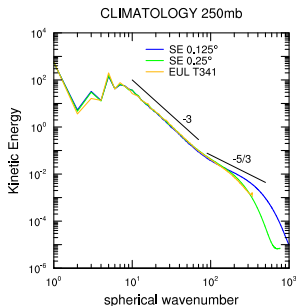


Figure from Dennis et al. (2012)

CAM-SE has superior scalability properties compared to other dynamical core options in CAM  
 → given a sufficiently large machine we can run climate simulations at unprecedented resolutions



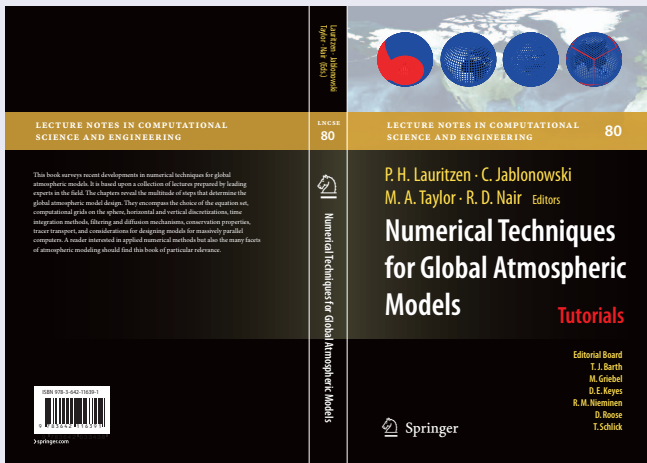
Solid lines: total kinetic energy of  $\vec{v}$  at 250hPa,  $E(k)$ . Dotted lines:  $E(k)$  including only divergent component of  $\vec{v}$ . Figure from Evans et al. (2012)

- $1/8^\circ$  resolution: clear transition from  $k^{-3}$  to  $k^{-5/3}$  (Nastrom and Gage, 1985)!
- Widely accepted that dynamics of  $k^{-3}$  regime correspond to downscale cascade of enstrophy; there is no consensus concerning the  $k^{-5/3}$  regime (Lilly et al., 1998; Lindborg, 2006).
- $\rightarrow$  The characterization of  $k^{-5/3}$  regime represents one of the major unanswered questions in mesoscale atmospheric dynamics!

Some of the first **global** models to simulate  $k^{-5/3}$ 's transition: Takahashi et al. (2006); Hamilton et al. (2008)



# Interested in numerical methods for global models?



- Book based on the lectures given at the 2008 NCAR ASP (Advance Study Program) Summer Colloquium.
- 16 Chapters; authors include J.Thuburn, J.Tribbia, D.Durran, T.Ringler, W.Skamarock, R.Rood, J.Dennis, Editors, ... Foreword by D. Randall
- More details at: <http://www.cgd.ucar.edu/cms/pel/colloquium.html> and <http://www.cgd.ucar.edu/cms/pel/lncse.html>

# Questions?



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# Excessive polar night jet when increasing horizontal resolution

## Zonal wind speed difference plots

CAM4 (DJF zonal average over years 2-11)

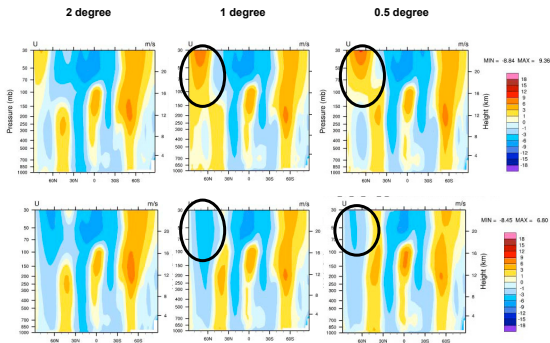


Figure:

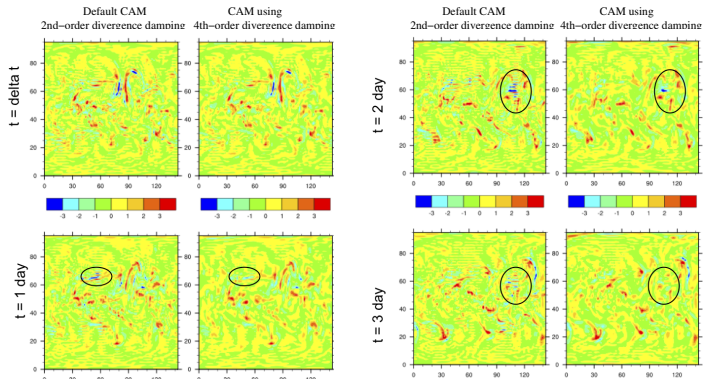
- 1<sup>st</sup> row: difference between zonal wind speed and observations (NCEP) during Northern winter using default CAM.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> row: same as 1<sup>st</sup> row but for default CAM + ' $\nabla^2$ -like' damping of velocity components near model top

'Laplacian-like' damping of wind components near model top alleviates this problem (optional in CAM5; controlled with namelist variable div24de12f1ag)

More details: Lauritzen et al. (2011)

# Noise in divergence field aligned with grid

Instantaneous divergence around 200 hPa in units of  $1e10^{-5}/s$



Divergence associated with “physical” features seem preserved while grid-scale noise is alleviated

- The noise can be reduced by increasing the divergence damping coefficient (at the cost of excessive damping in terms of total kinetic energy spectra analysis) or using 4<sup>th</sup>-order divergence damping (option added to CAM5; namelist variable `div24de12f1ag`)
- 4<sup>th</sup>-order divergence damping significantly reduces noise when running CAM in ‘weather forecast-mode’ using DART (DART = Data Assimilation Research Testbed). More details: Lauritzen et al. (2011)