

# How Lonely (or not) is the Universe? aka "future IROUV flagship" aka Habitable Worlds Observatory

Shawn Domagal-Goldman

Program Scientist, Great Observatories Maturation Program

Julie Crooke

Program Executive, Great Observatories Maturation Program

Astrophysics Division, NASA Headquarters

# Sagan Exoplanet Summer Workshops

The Sagan Exoplanet Summer Workshops are held annually and provide opportunities for students, postdocs, and researchers to learn about the engineering and scientific application of exoplanet-related techniques used in NASA's Exoplanet Exploration Program.

**2023: Characterizing Exoplanet Atmospheres: The Next Twenty Years**

**2022: Exoplanet Science in the Gaia Era**

**2021: Circumstellar Disks and Young Planets**

**2020: Extreme Precision Radial Velocity**

**2019: Astrobiology for Astronomers**

**2018: Did I Really Just Find an Exoplanet?**

**2017: Microlensing in the Era of WFIRST**

**2016: Is There a Planet in My Data? Statistical Approaches to Finding and Characterizing Planets in Astronomical Data**

**2015: Exoplanetary System Demographics: Theory and Observations**

**2014: Imaging Planets and Disks**

2013: *workshop cancelled due to federal government sequestration*

**2012: Working with Exoplanet Light Curves**

**2011: Exploring Exoplanets with Microlensing**

**2010: Stars as Homes for Habitable Planetary Systems**

**2009: Exoplanetary Atmospheres**



# Tilt-a-Worlds: Effects of High Rates of Obliquity Change on the Habitability of Extrasolar Planets

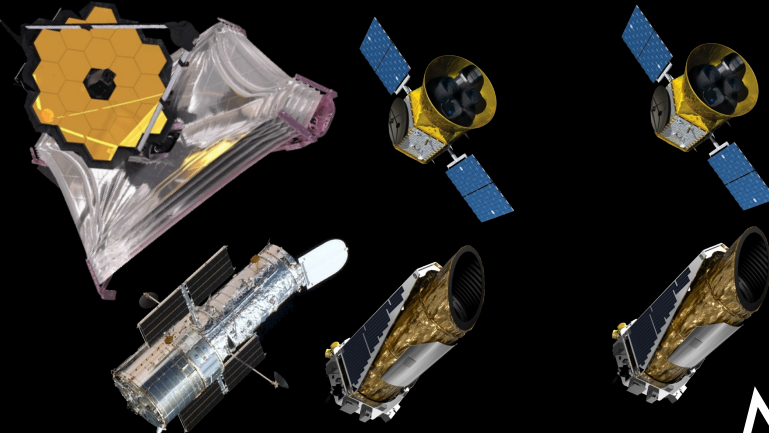
Show affiliations

[Domagal-Goldman, Shawn](#) ; [Barnes, R.](#) ; [Armstrong, J. C.](#) ; [Breiner, J.](#) ; [Meadows, V. S.](#)

We explore the impact of obliquity variations on planetary habitability in hypothetical systems with high mutual inclination. For the hypothetical systems, we restrict our exploration to systems consisting of a solar-mass star, an Earth-mass planet at 1 AU, and 1 or 2 giant planets. We verify that these systems are stable for  $10^8$  years with N-body simulations. We then calculate the obliquity variations induced by the orbital architecture on the Earth-mass planets. We find that in some cases the spin axes can rotate through 360 degrees in as little as 10,000 years (John is that right? Can you look through the systems and find the most extreme case of obliquity variation?)

Next, we run energy balance models (EBM) on the terrestrial planets to assess surface temperature and ice coverage on the planets' oceans. Finally, we explore differences in the outer edge of the habitable zone for planets with rapid obliquity variations. We run EBM simulations for a range of values for the semi-major axis, assuming that the obliquity variations of the nominal system (terrestrial planet at 1 AU) are typical for each orbital architecture. We find that planets undergoing extreme axial perturbations may be habitable at larger distances than those with static

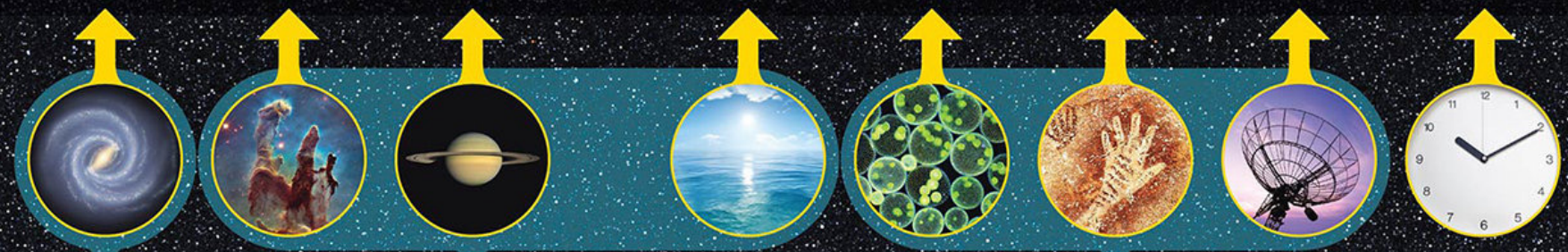




We are here.

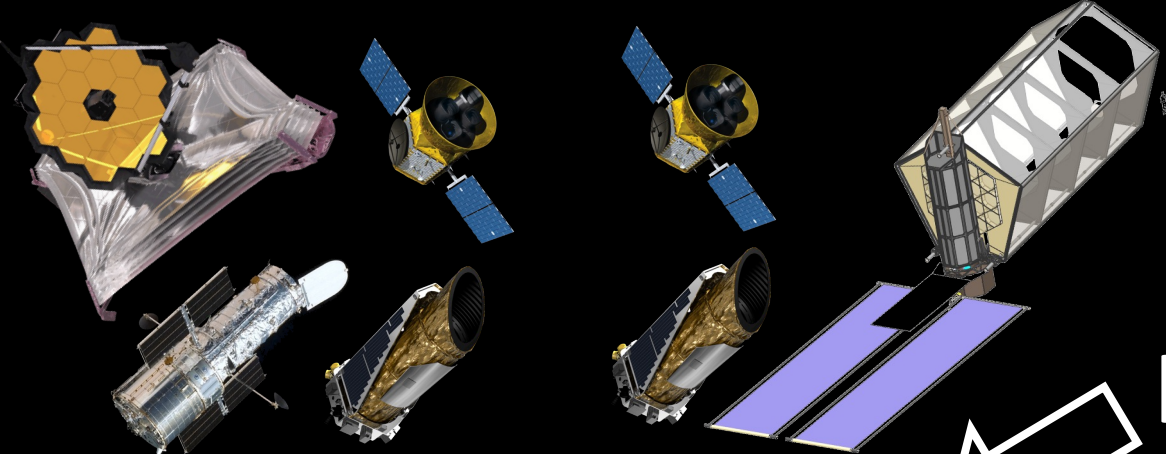
$$N = R_{\star} \times f_p \times n_e \times f_e \times f_i \times f_c \times L$$

The number of technologically advanced civilizations in the Milky Way galaxy    The rate of formation of stars in the galaxy    The fraction of those stars with planetary systems    The number of planets, per solar system, with an environment suitable for life    The fraction of suitable planets on which life actually appears    The fraction of life-bearing planets on which intelligent life emerges    The fraction of civilizations that develop a technology that releases detectable signs of their existence into space    The length of time such civilizations release detectable signals into space

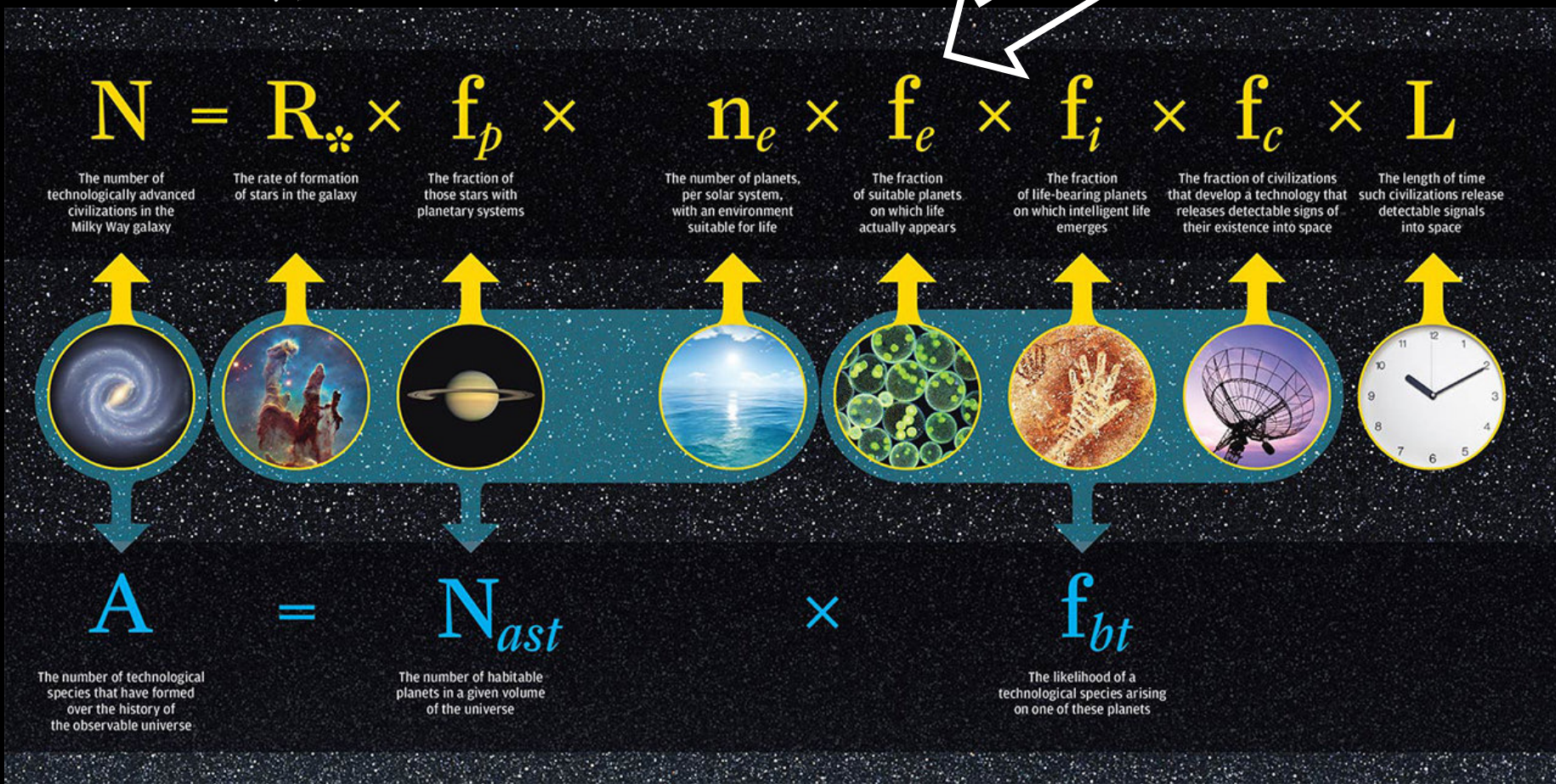


$$A = N_{ast} \times f_{bt}$$

The number of technological species that have formed over the history of the observable universe    The number of habitable planets in a given volume of the universe    The likelihood of a technological species arising on one of these planets

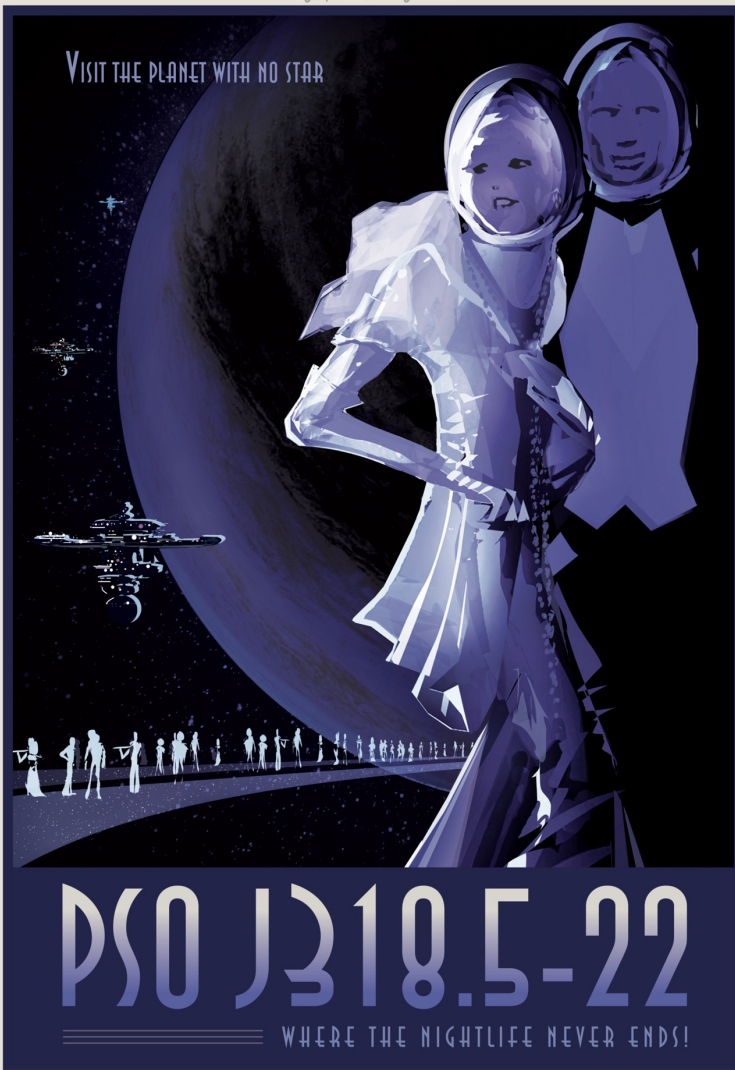


HWO takes us here.

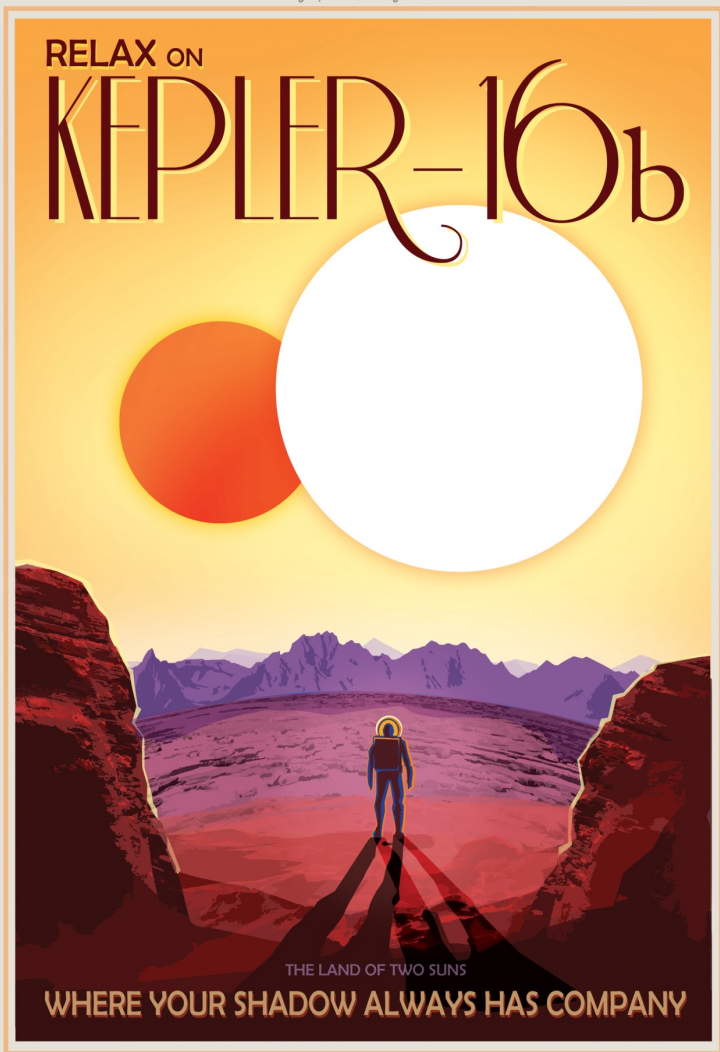




While there is much debate over which exoplanet discovery is considered the "first," one stands out from the rest. In 1995, scientists discovered 51 Pegasi b, forever changing the way we see the universe and our place in it. The exoplanet is about half the mass of Jupiter, with a seemingly impossible, star-hugging orbit of only 4.2 Earth days. Not only was it the first planet confirmed to orbit a sun-like star, it also ushered in a whole new class of planets called Hot Jupiters: hot, massive planets orbiting closer to their stars than Mercury. Today, powerful observatories like NASA's Kepler space telescope, will continue the hunt for distant planets.



Discovered in October 2013 using direct imaging, PSO J318.5-22 belongs to a special class of planets called rogue, or free-floating, planets. Wandering alone in the galaxy, they do not orbit a parent star. Not much is known about how these planets come to exist, but scientists theorize that they may be either failed stars or planets ejected from very young systems after an encounter with another planet. These rogue planets glow faintly from the heat of their formation. Once they cool down, they will be dancing in the dark. Confirmed and candidate exoplanets and all available data are listed in the NASA Exoplanet Archive.



Like Luke Skywalker's planet "Tatooine" in Star Wars, Kepler-16b orbits a pair of stars. Depicted here as a terrestrial planet, Kepler-16b might also be a gas giant like Saturn. Prospects for life on this unusual world aren't good, as it has a temperature similar to that of dry ice. But the discovery indicates that the movie's iconic double-sunset is anything but science fiction.



# Kepler-186f

WHERE THE GRASS IS ALWAYS REDDER ON THE OTHER SIDE

Kepler-186f is the first Earth-size planet discovered in the potentially 'habitable zone' around another star, where liquid water could exist on the planet's surface. Its star is much cooler and redder than our Sun. If plant life does exist on a planet like Kepler-186f, its photosynthesis could have been influenced by the star's red-wavelength photons, making for a color palette that's very different than the greens on Earth.

This discovery was made by Kepler, NASA's planet-hunting space telescope.

NASA's Exoplanet Exploration Program, Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Pasadena, CA  
exoplanets.nasa.gov



# PLANET HOP FROM TRAPPIST-1e

VOTED BEST "HAB ZONE" VACATION WITHIN 12 PARSECS OF EARTH

Some 40 light-years from Earth, a planet called TRAPPIST-1e offers a heart-stopping view: brilliant objects in a red sky, looming like larger and smaller versions of our own moon. But these are no moons. They are other Earth-sized planets in a spectacular planetary system outside our own. These seven rocky worlds huddle around their small, dim, red star, like a family around a campfire. Any of them could harbor liquid water, but the planet shown here, fourth from the TRAPPIST-1 star, is in the habitable zone, the area around the star where liquid water is most likely to be detected. This system was revealed by the TRAPPIST (TRAnsiting PAnets and Planetesimals Small Telescope (TRAPPIST)) and NASA's Spitzer Space Telescope. The planets also are excellent targets for NASA's James Webb Space Telescope. Take a planet-hopping vacation through the TRAPPIST-1 system.

NASA's Exoplanet Exploration Program, Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Pasadena, CA  
exoplanets.nasa.gov



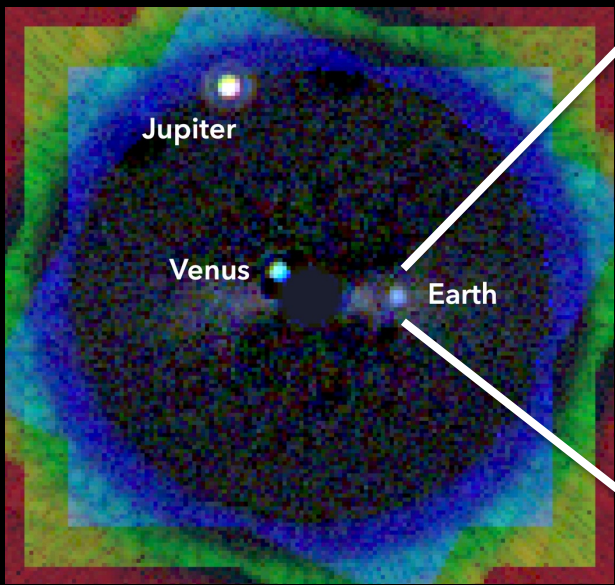
# 55 Cancri e lava life

Skies sparkle above a never-ending ocean of lava

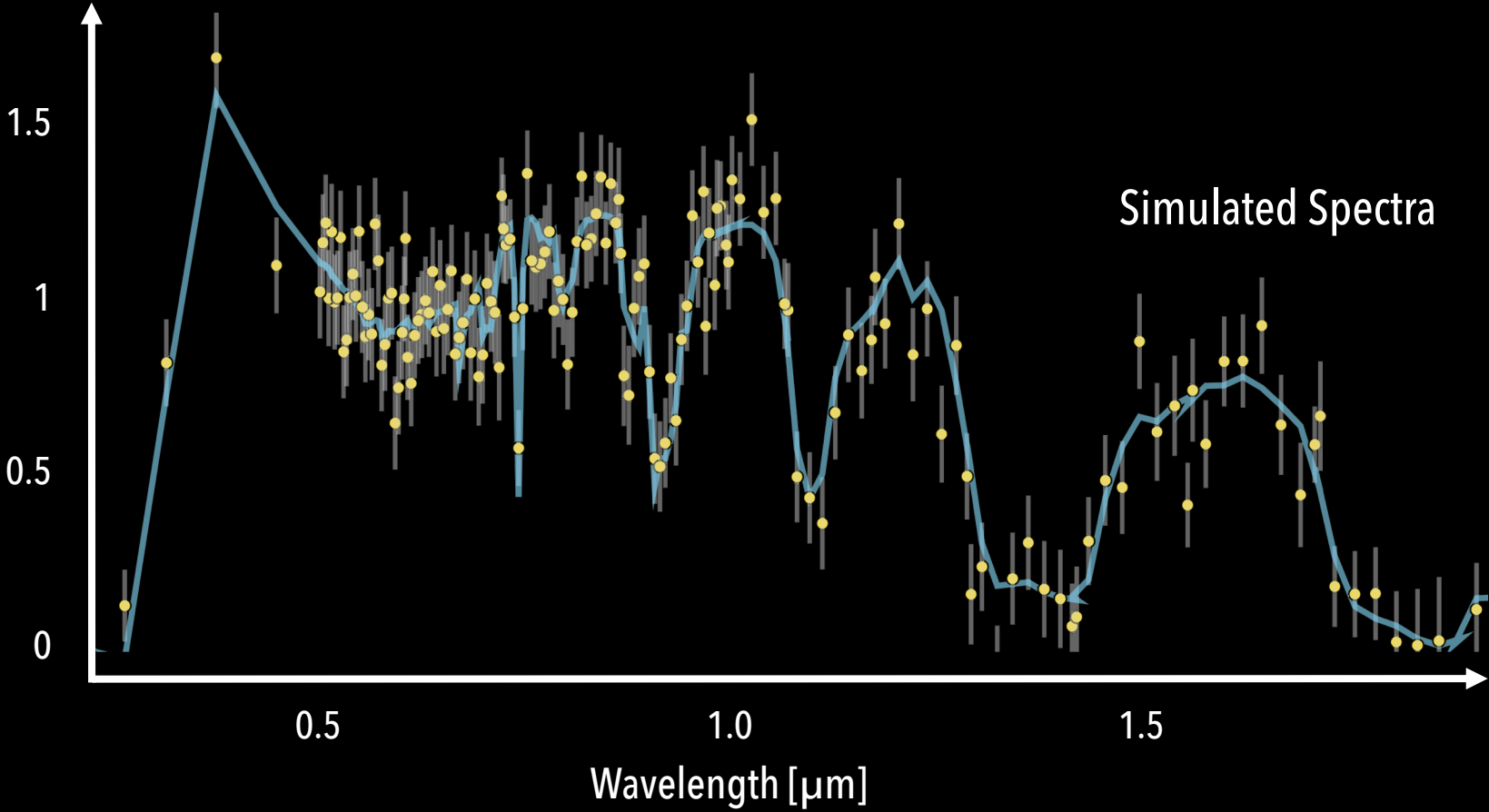
A global ocean of lava under sparkling, silicate skies reflecting the lava below: what better choice for an extreme vacation? Planet Janssen, or 55 Cancri e, orbits a star called Copernicus only 41 light years away. The molten surface is completely uninhabitable, but you'll ride safely above, taking in breathtaking views: the burning horizon, Janssen's sister planet Galileo hanging in a dark sky, and curtains of glowing particles as you glide across the terminator to Janssen's dark side. Book your travel now to the hottest vacation spot in the galaxy, 55 Cancri e.

NASA's Exoplanet Exploration Program, Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Pasadena, CA  
exoplanets.nasa.gov

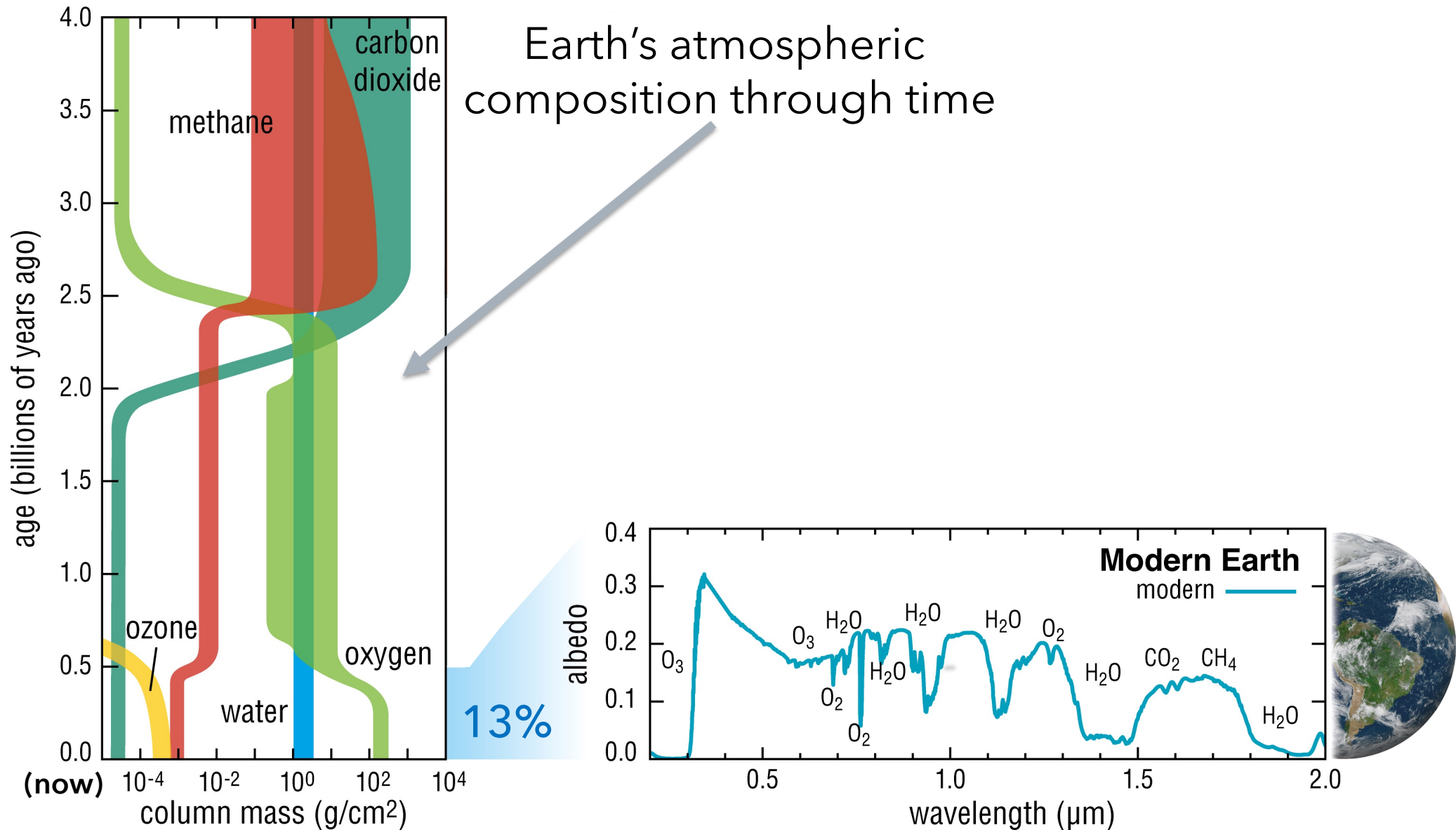




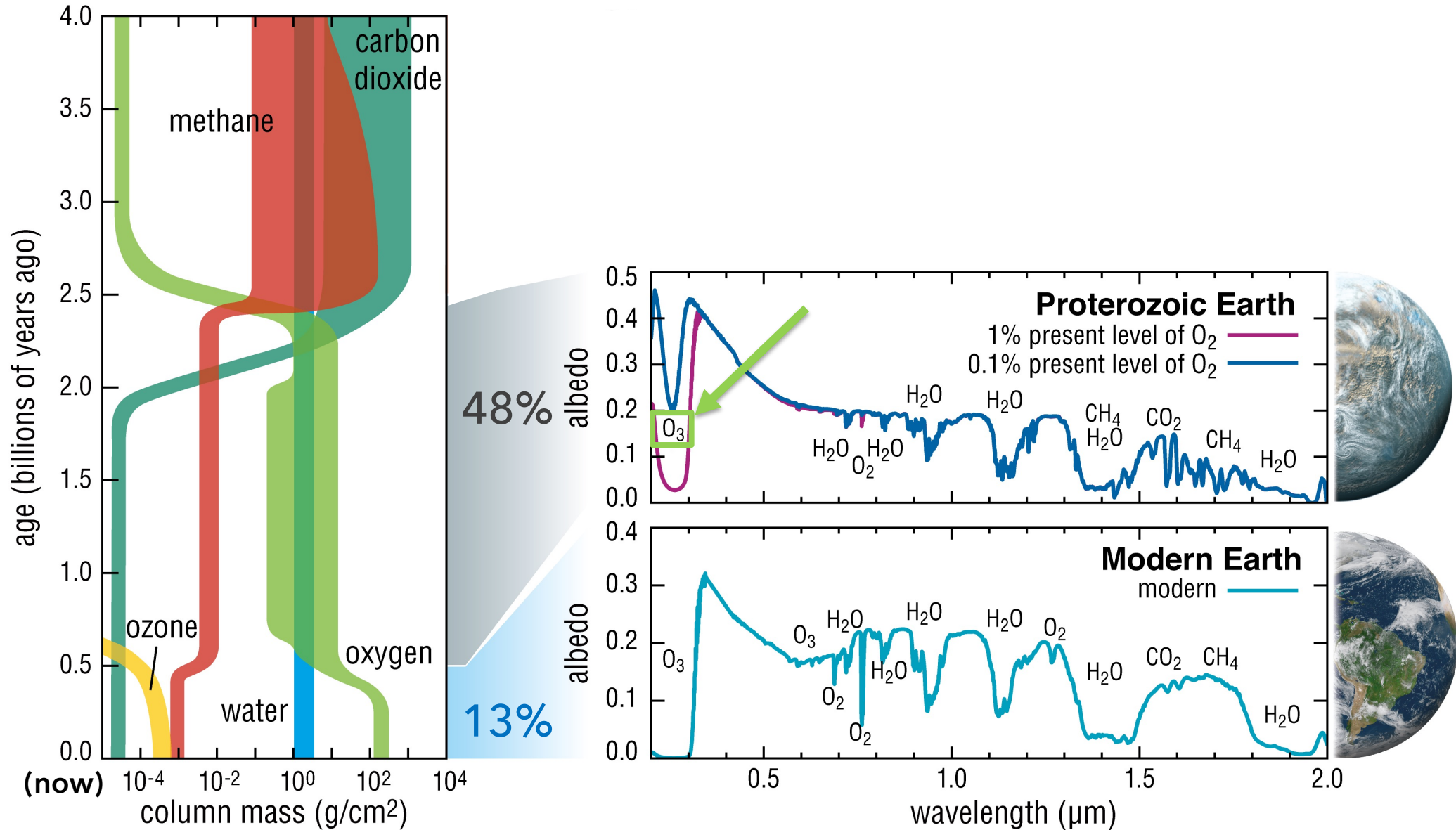
Planet-star flux ratio  $\times 10^{-10}$



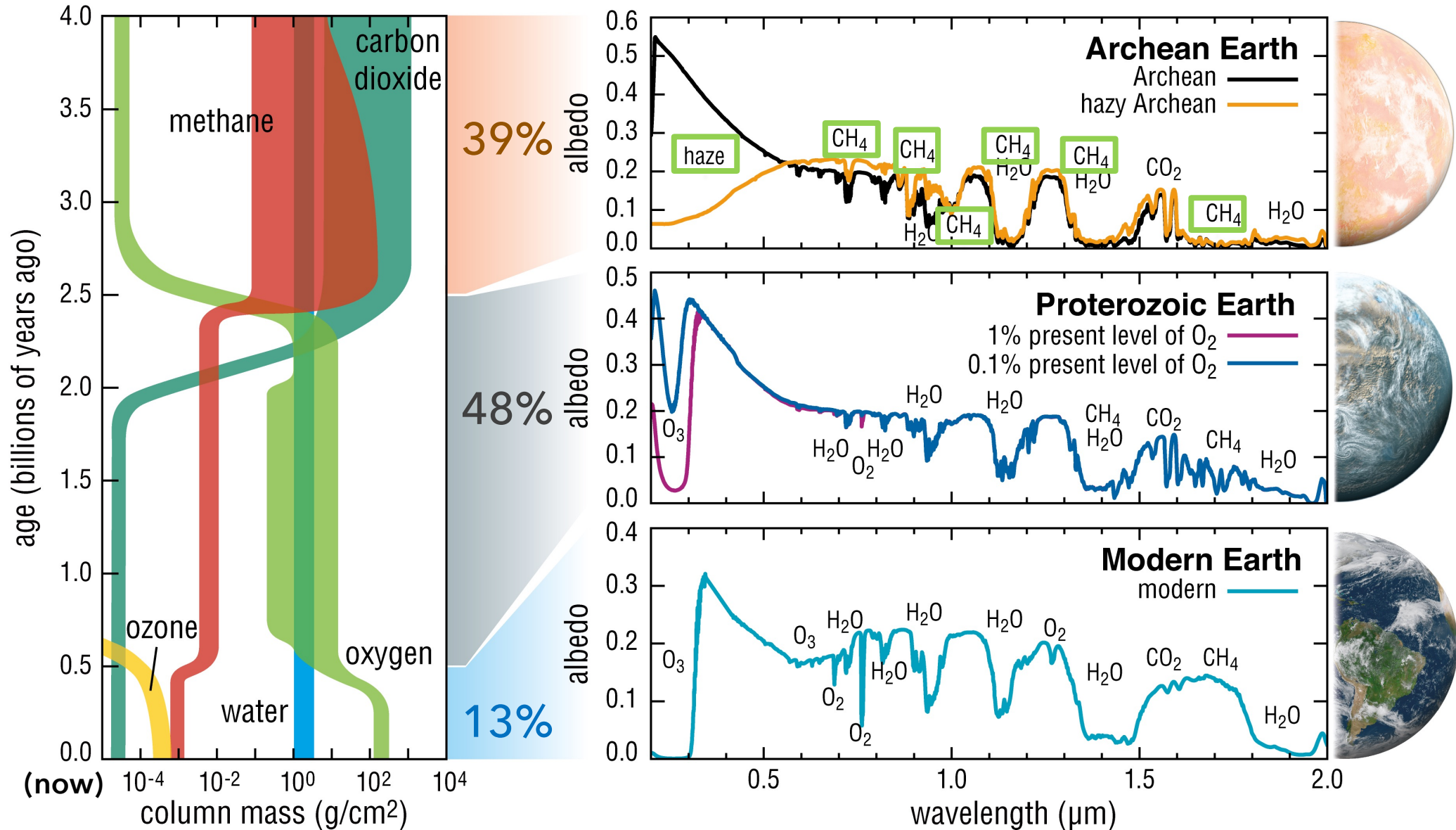
# EARTH IS MORE THAN ONE PLANET



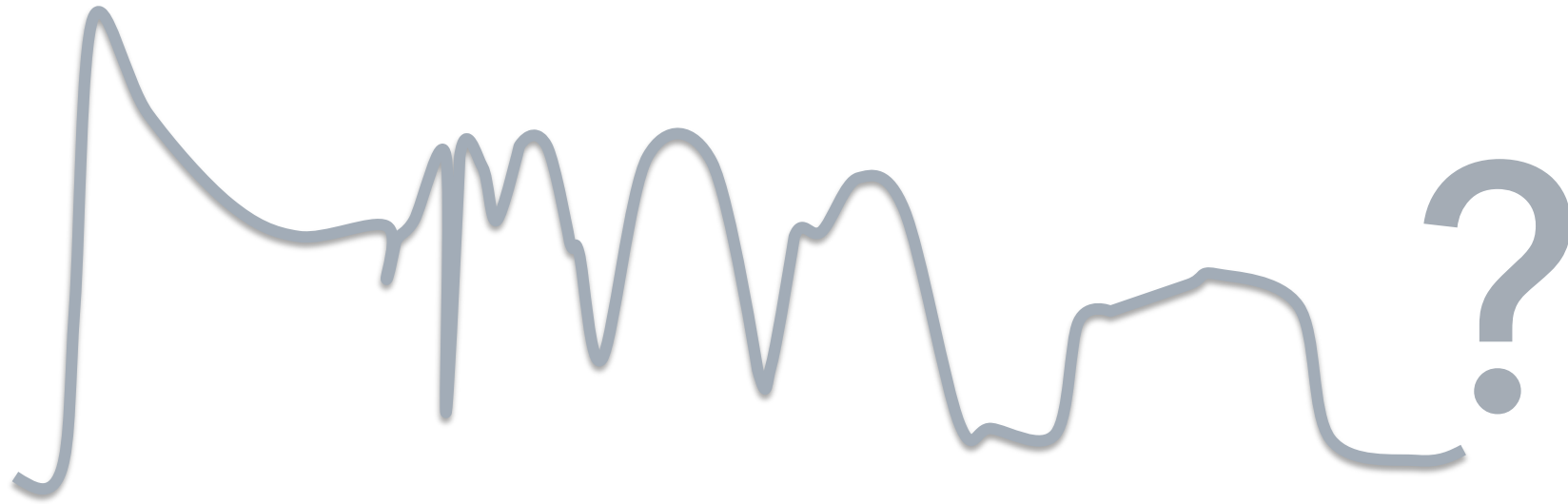
# EARTH IS MORE THAN ONE PLANET



# EARTH IS MORE THAN ONE PLANET



# BIOSIGNATURES NEED CONTEXT

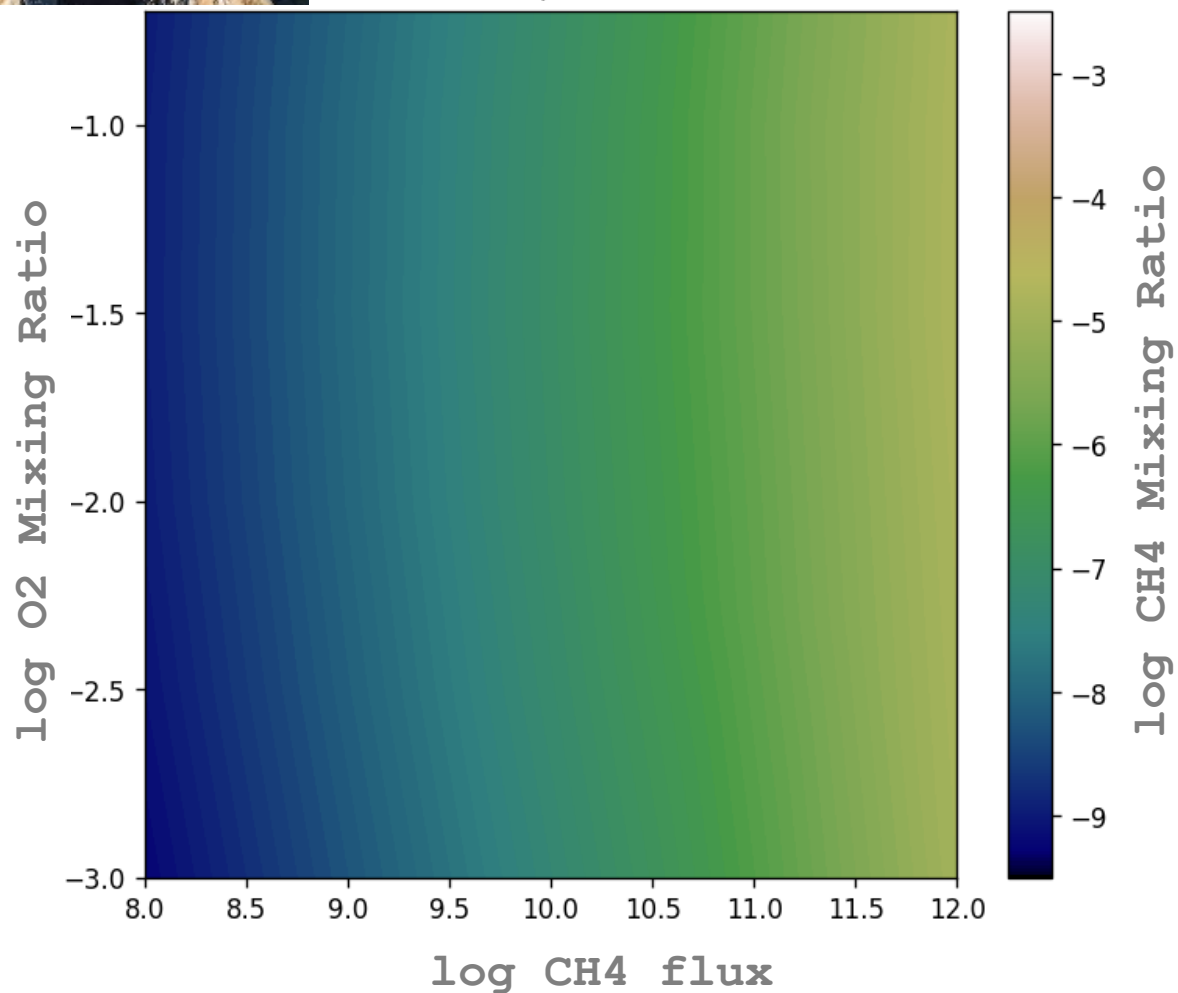


False positive?  
True biosignature?

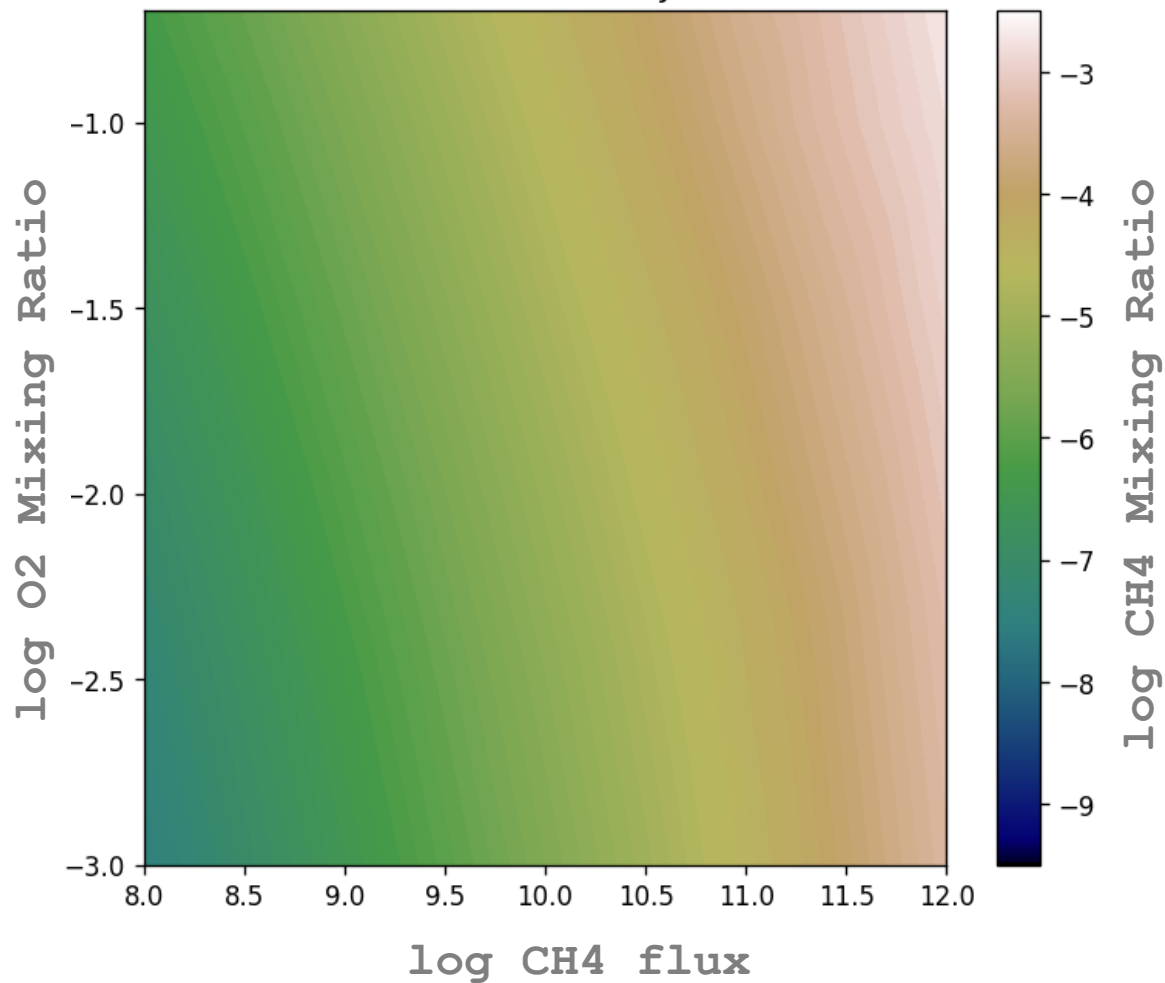


# BIOSIGNATURES DEPEND ON CONTEXT...

Modern Sun

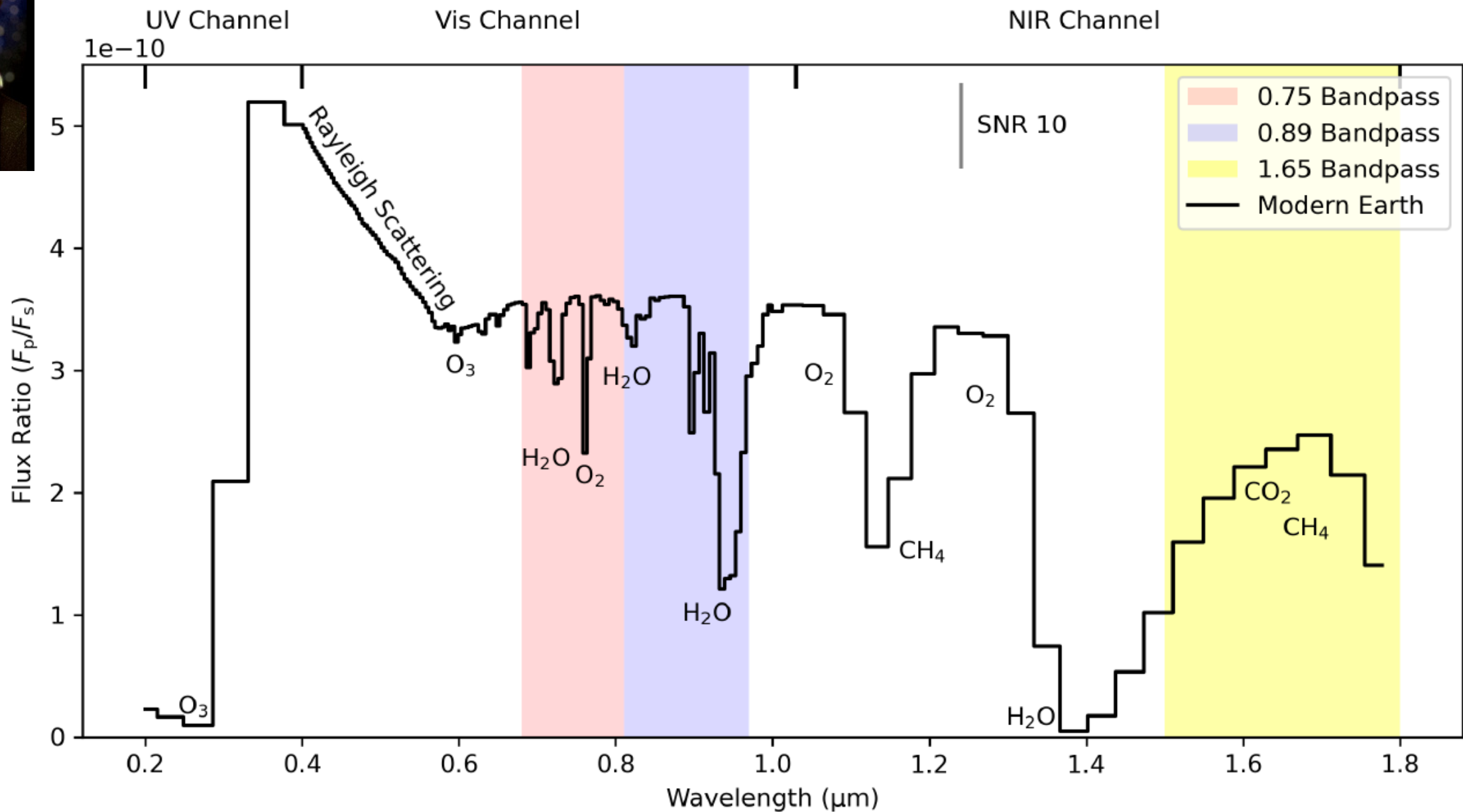


Proxima Centauri

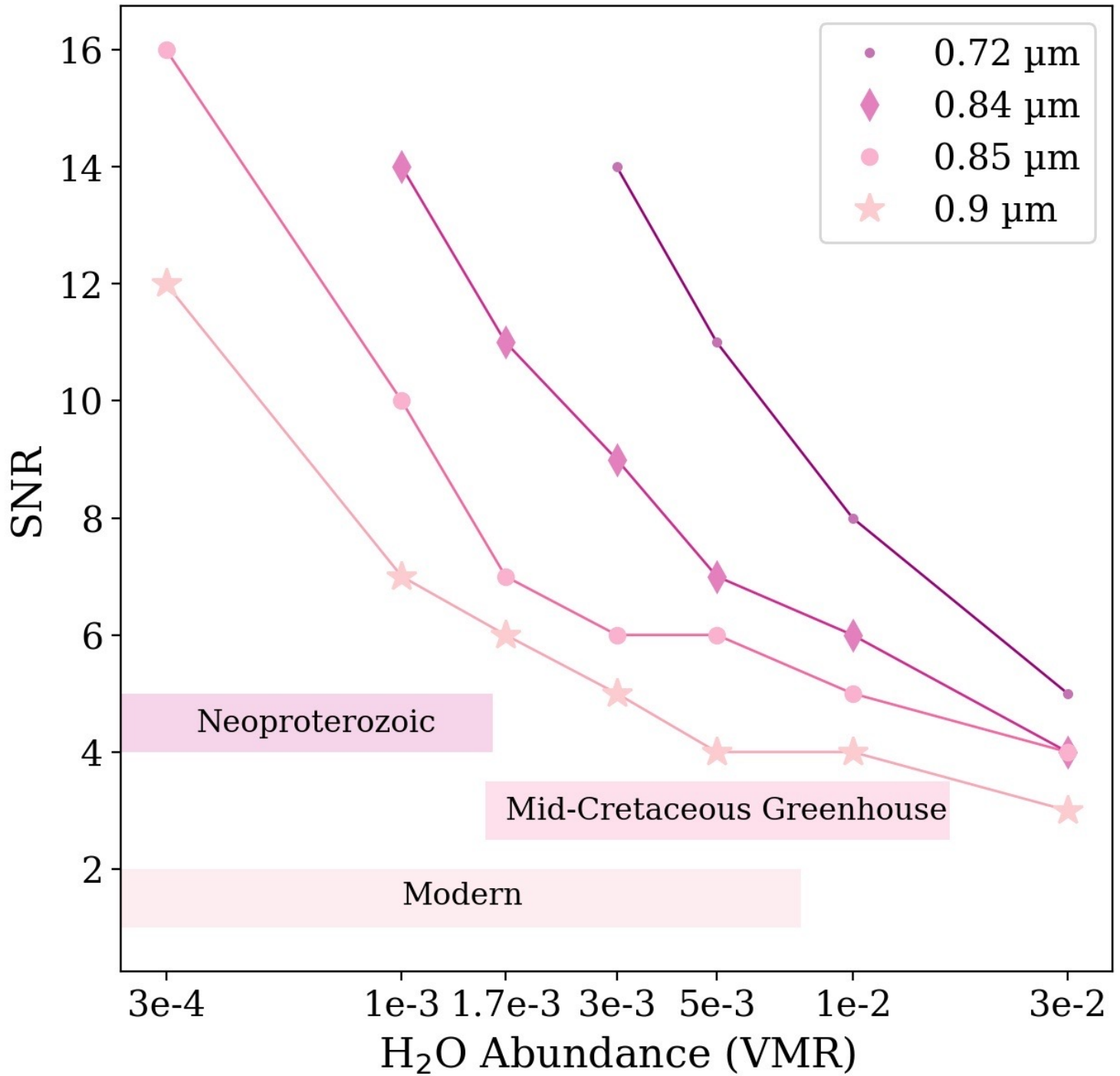




# ... AND HWO CAN OBTAIN THAT CONTEXT!



This Barbie is available for questions!

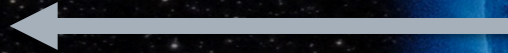




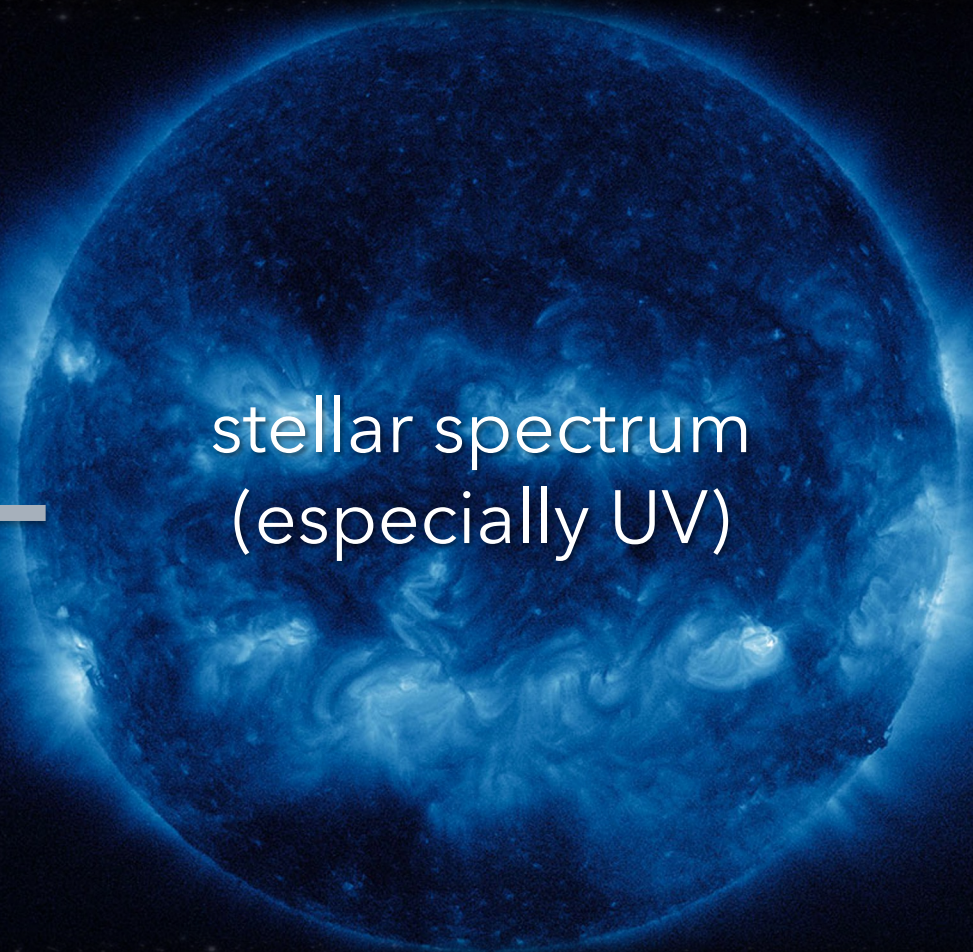
# HWO WILL NEED TO GIVE US THE NEEDED CONTEXT

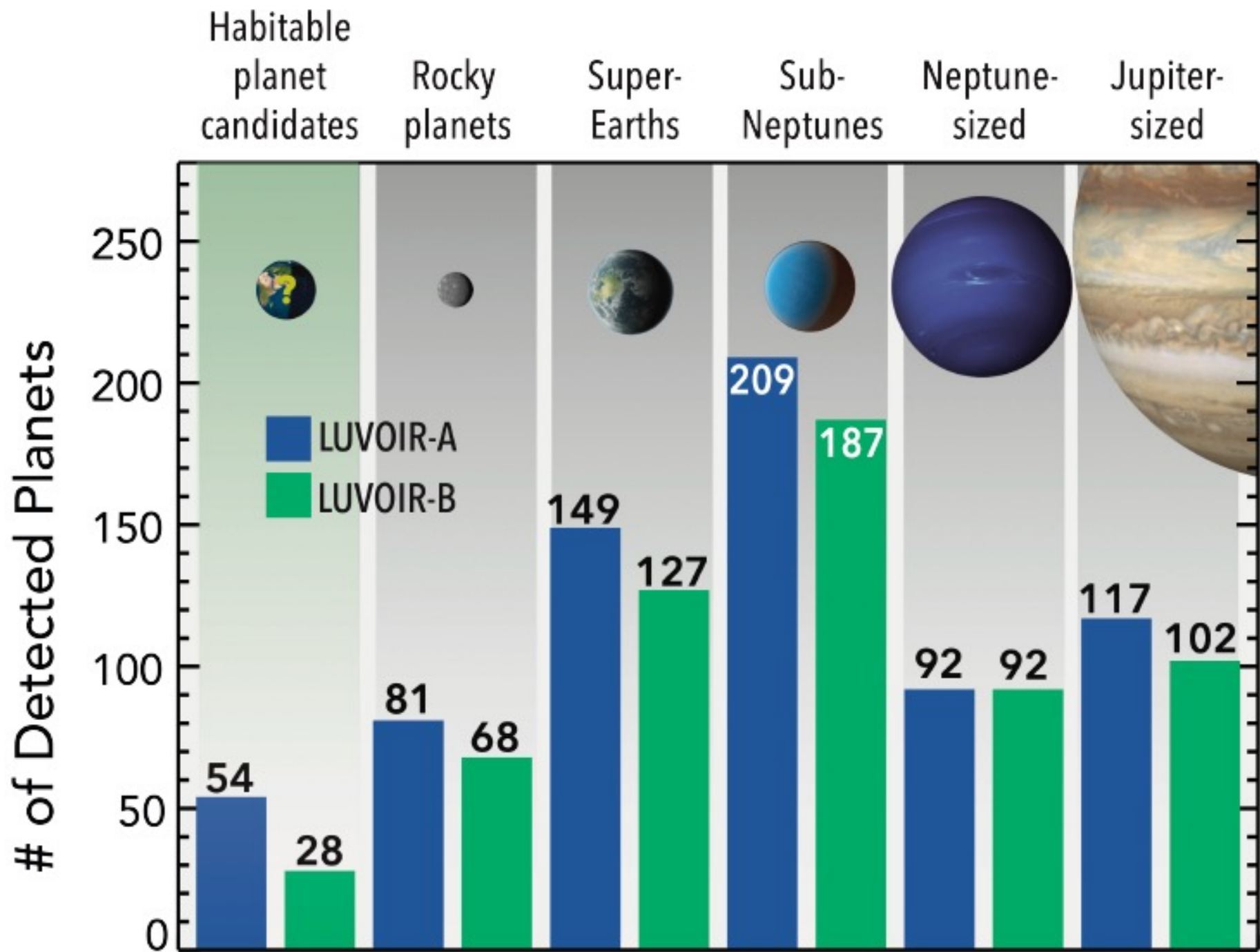
**UV instrument**  
100-1000 nm spectra

enabled by



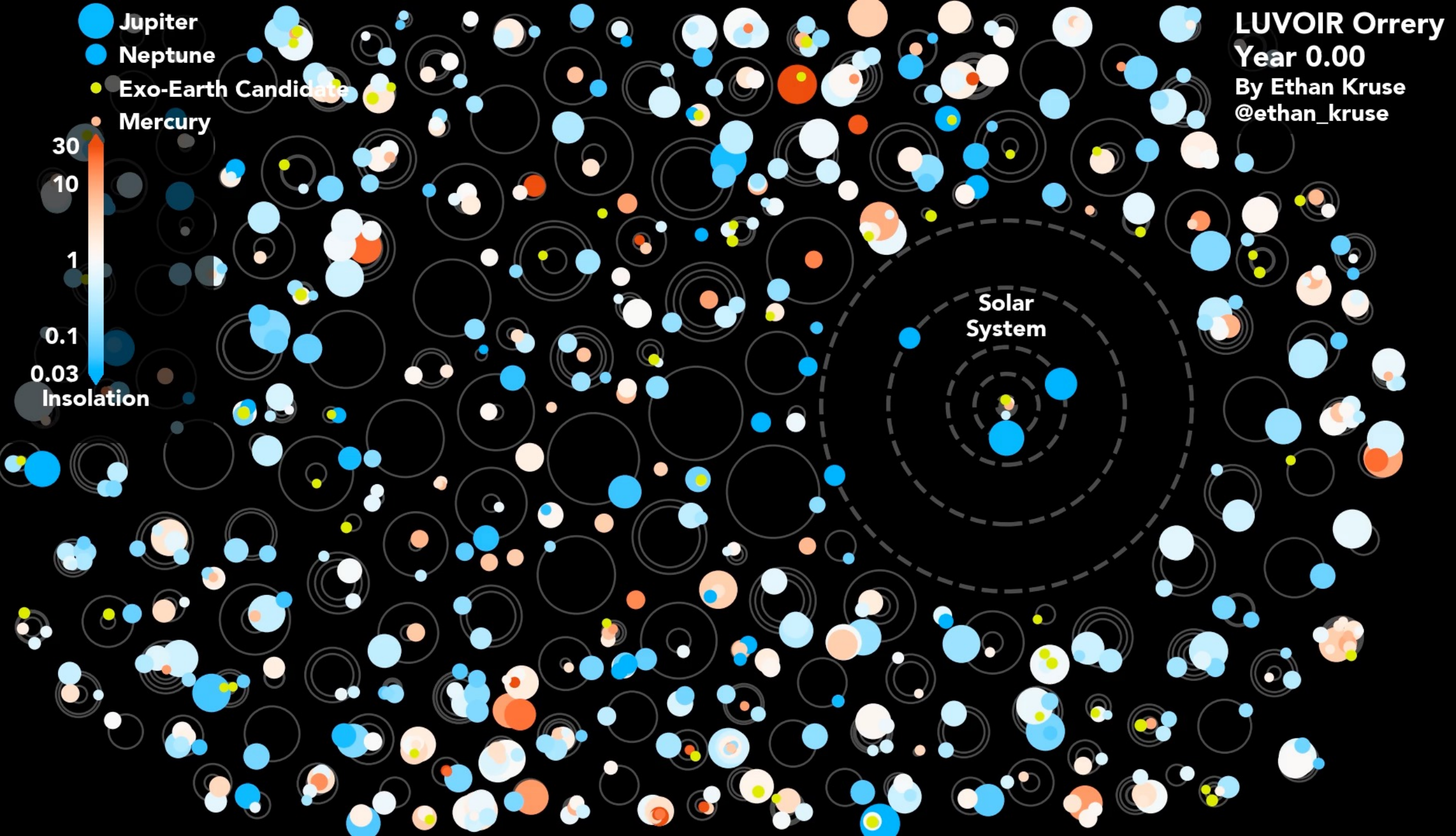
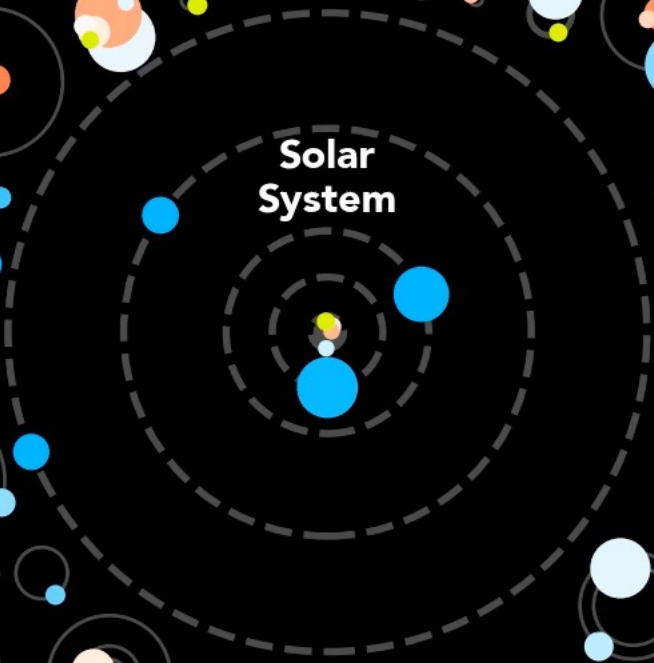
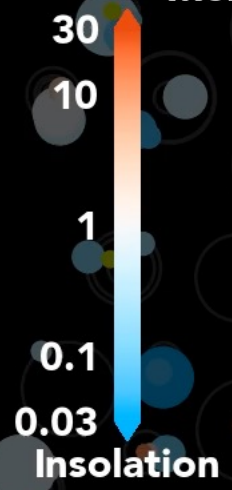
stellar spectrum  
(especially UV)





LUVOIR Orrery  
Year 0.00  
By Ethan Kruse  
@ethan\_kruse

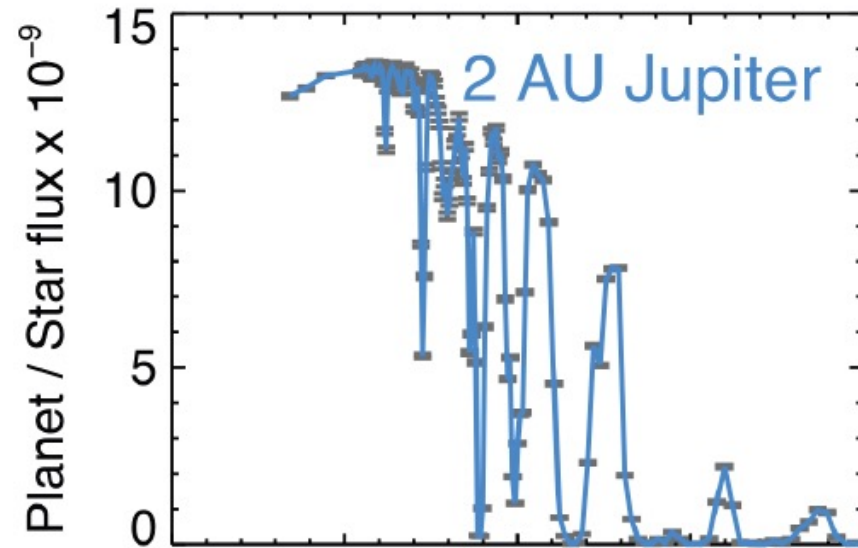
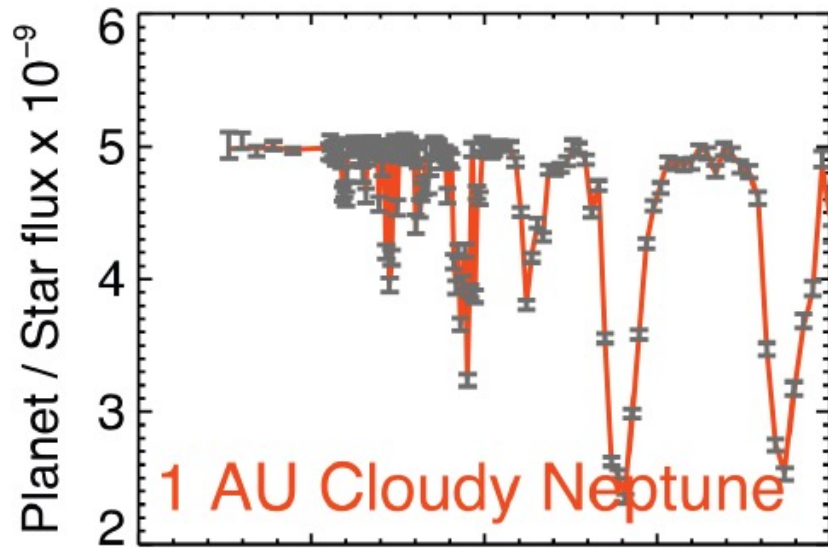
- Jupiter
- Neptune
- Exo-Earth Candidate
- Mercury



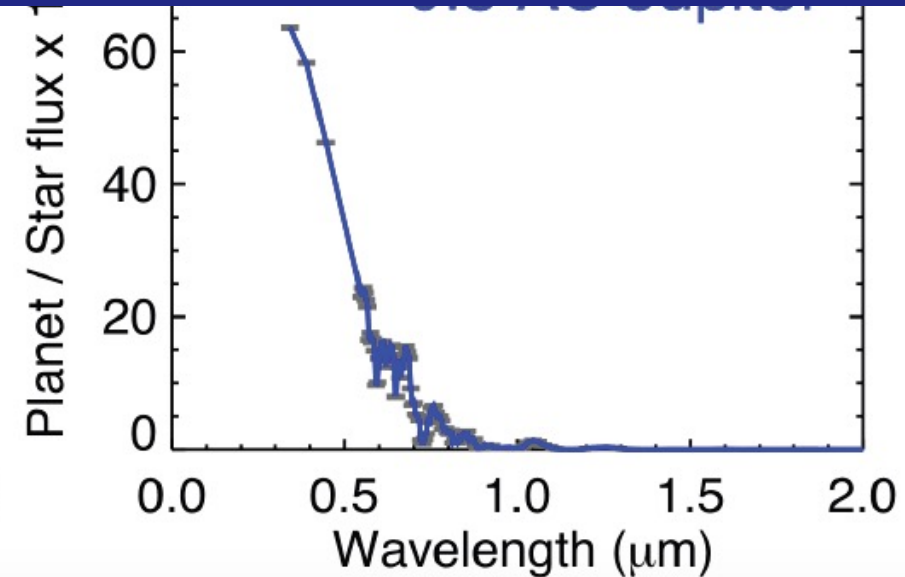
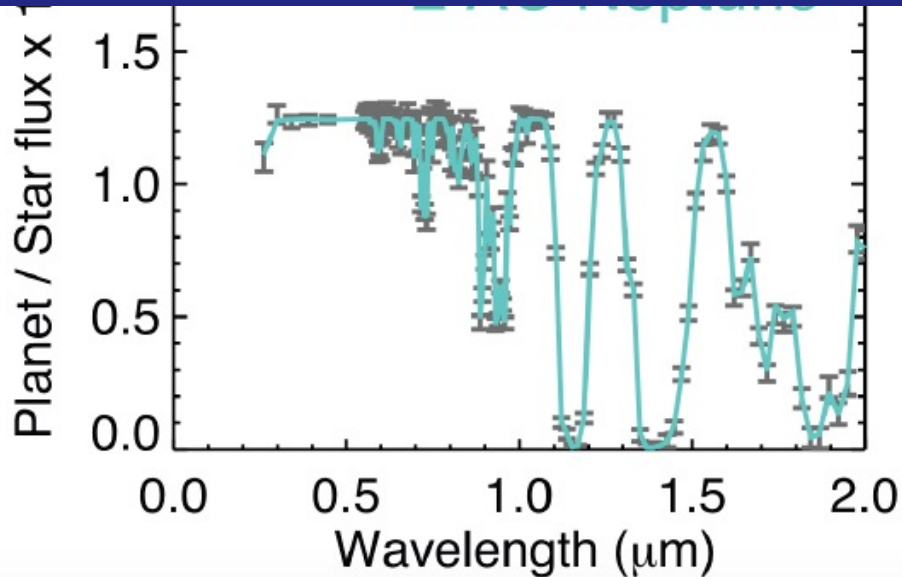
# HWO WILL NEED TO GIVE US THE NEEDED CONTEXT



HWO will explore planets holistically, in the context of the other planets in their system and of their host star.



HWO will continue the chemical characterization of transiting worlds, extending the wavelength range of JWST and other facilities.



# HABITABLE ENVIRONMENTS? SOLAR SYSTEM OCEAN MOONS

Europa in far-UV Lyman- $\alpha$  emission

HST



HWO



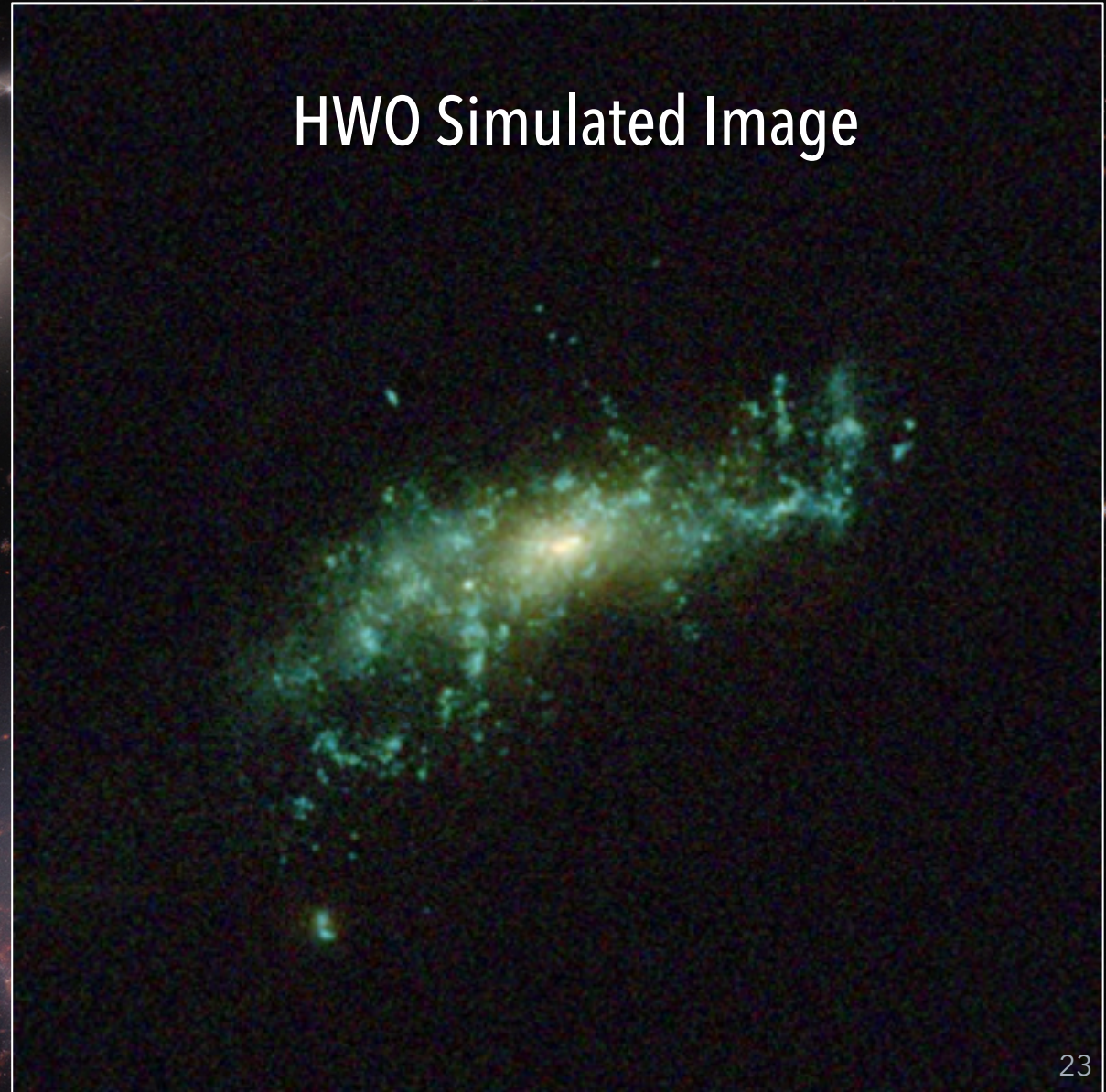
HWO can *monitor cryovolcanic activity* from the Solar System's ocean worlds at high resolution

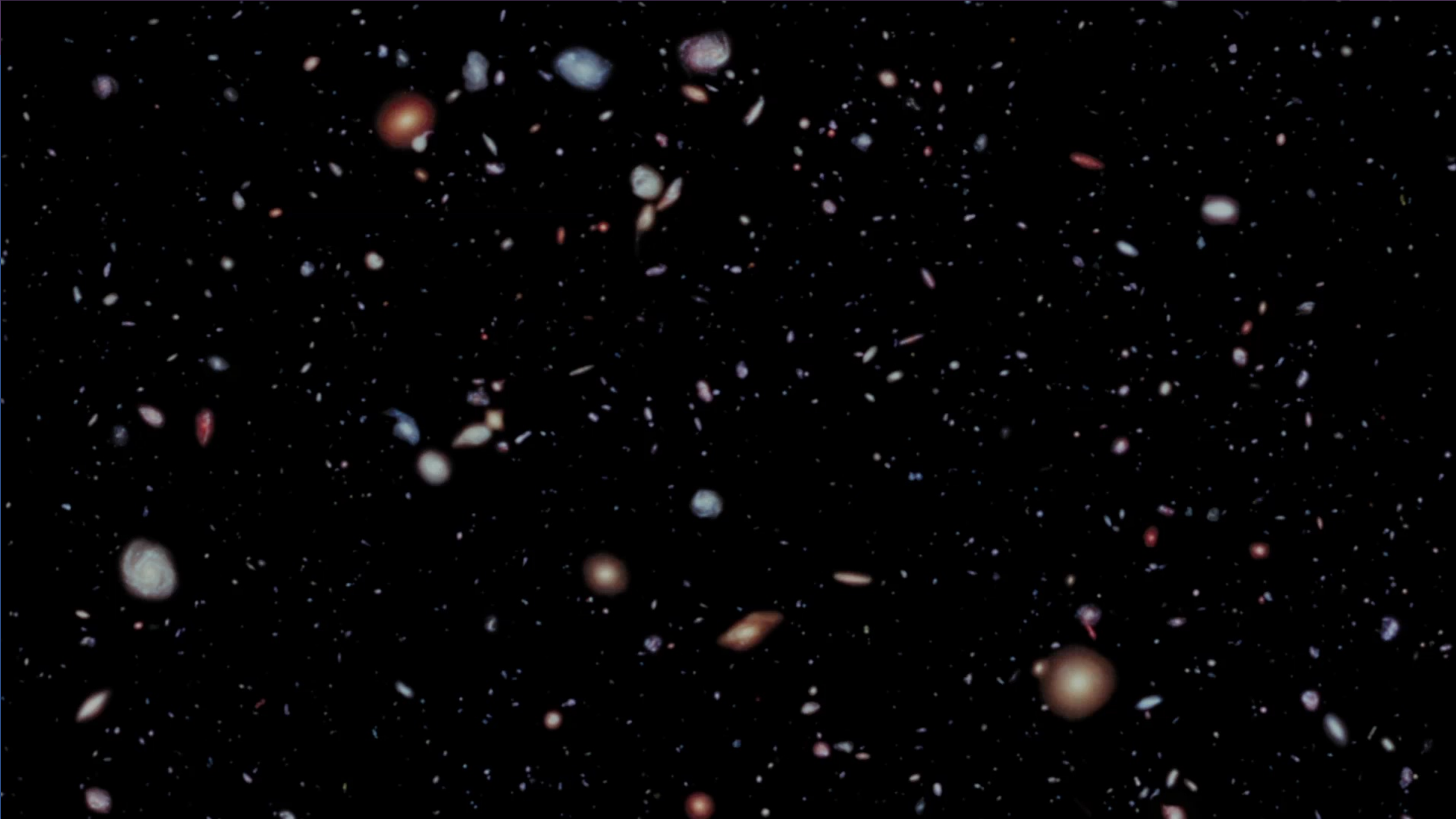
# PROBING THE PROPERTIES OF DARK MATTER WITH DWARF GALAXIES

Hubble



HWO Simulated Image







# Why GOMAP? Decades of research-based consensus on megaprojects

Independent  
research Papers

Mission Concept  
Reports

GAO Report on  
Major Projects

SMD Internal Study  
on Flagship Projects

National Academy  
Recommendations

**Challenges and Potential Solutions to Develop and Fund NASA Flagship Missions**

Robert E. Bitten  
The Aerospace Corporation  
2318 E. El Segundo Blvd.  
El Segundo, CA 90245  
310-334-1917  
robert.e.bitten@aero.org

Stephen A. Shinn  
NASA Goddard Space Flight Center  
8800 Greenbelt Road  
Greenbelt, Maryland 20771  
301-286-5894  
stephen.a.shinn@nasa.gov

Debra L. Edmunds  
The Aerospace Corporation  
2318 E. El Segundo Blvd.  
El Segundo, CA 90245  
310-418-7992  
debra.l.edmunds@aero.org

Abstract—Large, strategic “Flagship” missions have unique characteristics that lead to challenging developmental difficulties for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). Missions such as the Hubble Space Telescope (HST), James Webb Space Telescope (JWST), and the Mars Science Laboratory (MSL) had technical and programmatic challenges that led to significant schedule delays and subsequent cost growth. Although NASA has instituted policies that have reduced cost growth for more “typical” NASA science missions, NASA Flagship missions create a distinct challenge due to their requirement to provide unprecedented science or tackle hard exploration goals, typically while concurrently developing new technologies. The unique challenges presented by Flagship missions make it extremely difficult to fully predict cost and schedule given that the technical and programmatic advances needed to meet performance requirements are unprecedented. This paper addresses why Flagship missions are unique and proposes a new programmatic approach to develop and fund Flagship missions.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

- 1. DEFINITION OF FLAGSHIP MISSIONS ..... 1
- 2. BENEFITS OF FLAGSHIP MISSIONS ..... 2
- 3. DIFFICULTY IN ESTIMATING FLAGSHIPS ..... 2
- 4. FLAGSHIP COST GROWTH ..... 3
- 5. COULD COSTS HAVE BEEN ANTICIPATED? ..... 7
- 6. A POTENTIAL NEW APPROACH ..... 7
- 7. SUMMARY ..... 10
- ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ..... 10
- ACRONYMS ..... 10
- REFERENCES ..... 10
- BIOGRAPHY ..... 12

**1. DEFINITION OF FLAGSHIP MISSIONS**

According to Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary, a Flagship is: 1) the ship that carries the commander of a fleet or subdivision of a fleet and flies the commander’s flag, or 2) the finest, largest, or most important one of a group of things. [1] In many ways, National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Flagship missions incorporate both

978-1-5386-4654-2/19/\$31.00 ©2019 IEEE

Authorized licensed use limited to: Nasa Shared Services Center (MSFC). Downloaded on October 20,2025 at 20:18:08 UTC from IEEE Xplore. Restrictions apply.

L U V O I R  
FINAL REPORT



www.nasa.gov

**GAO**  
United States Government Accountability Office

Report to Congressional Committees June 2022

**NASA** Assessments of Major Projects

LUNAR EXPLORATION | ASTROPHYSICS | PLANETARY SCIENCE | AERONAUTICS




GAO-22-105212

**LMS**

*Large Mission Study Report*

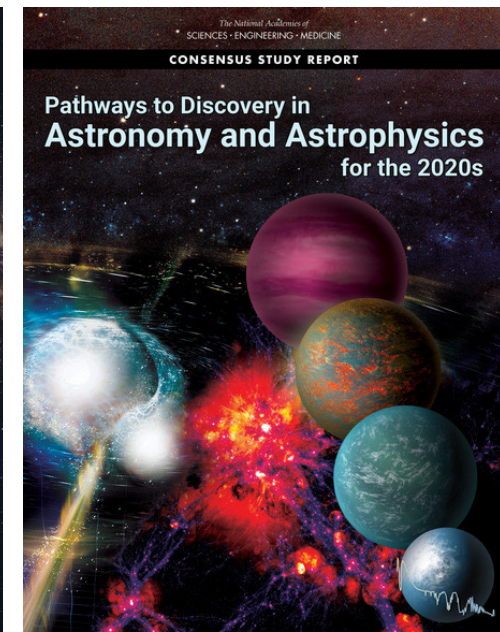
SPONSORED BY THE SCIENCE MISSION DIRECTORATE (SMD)



The National Academies of  
SCIENCES • ENGINEERING • MEDICINE

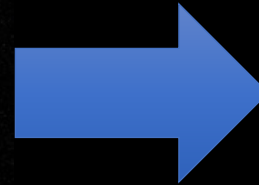
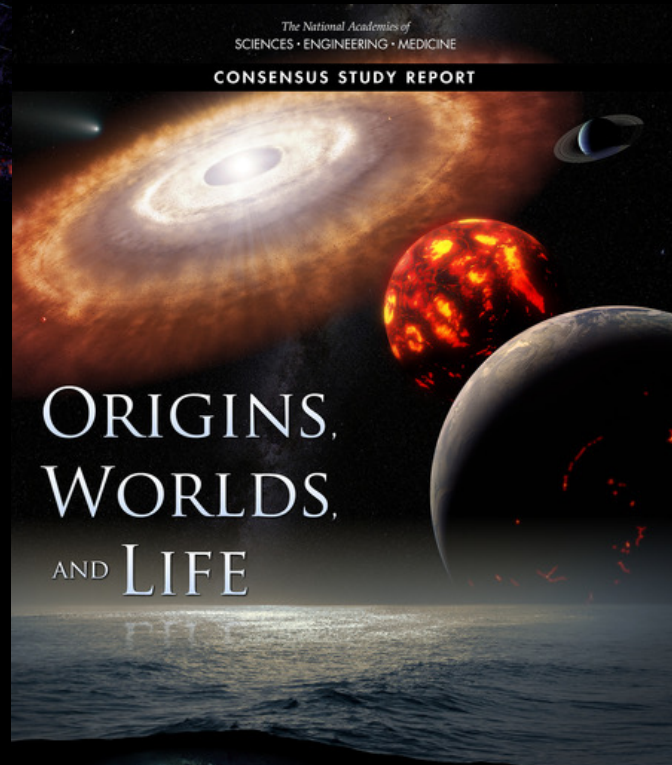
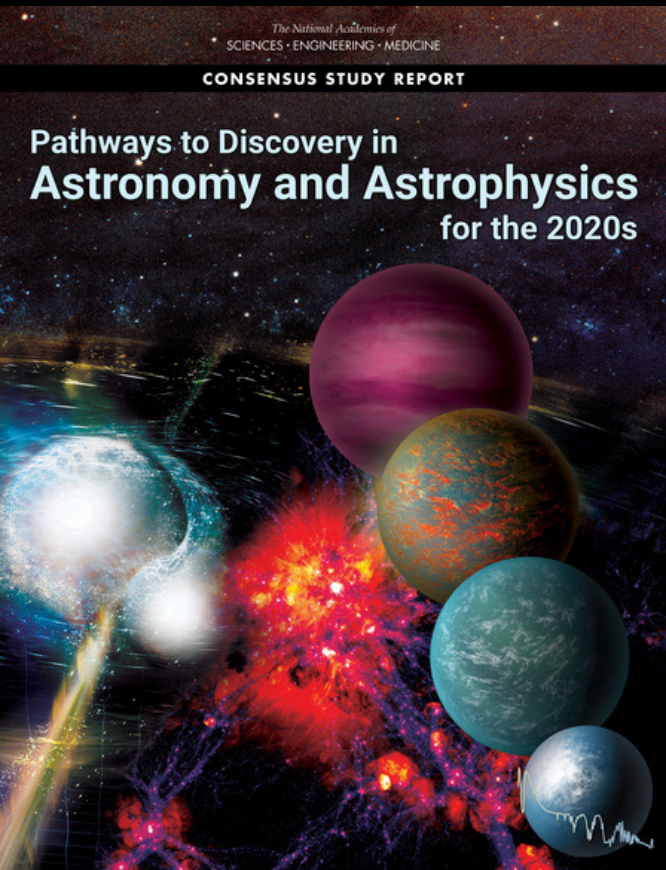
**CONSENSUS STUDY REPORT**

Pathways to Discovery in  
**Astronomy and Astrophysics**  
for the 2020s



A variety of documents from internal, external, and oversight groups all point to a consistent set of problems & solutions for large/flagship projects, across sectors

# Science, Technology, Architecture Review Team (START)



Which decadal science questions  
can HWO help address?

What observations do we need to  
answer those questions?

What capabilities will deliver those  
observations?

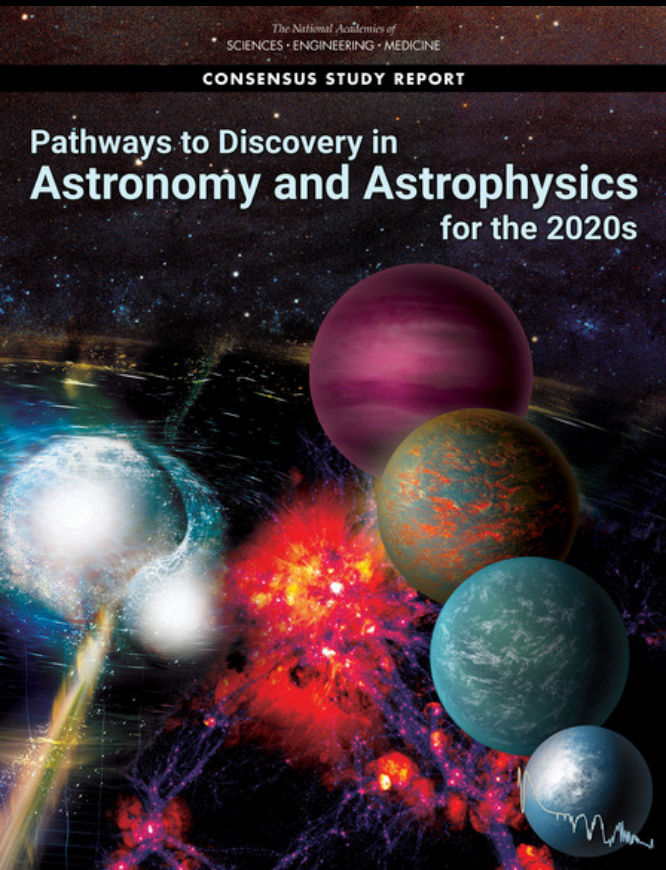
What performance can we expect?

Where do performance  
breakpoints exist?

What models do we need to  
predict performance?



# Technical Assessment Group (TAG)



What architecture trades remain?

How are those trades related/coupled to each other?

Which trades are the most important to study now?

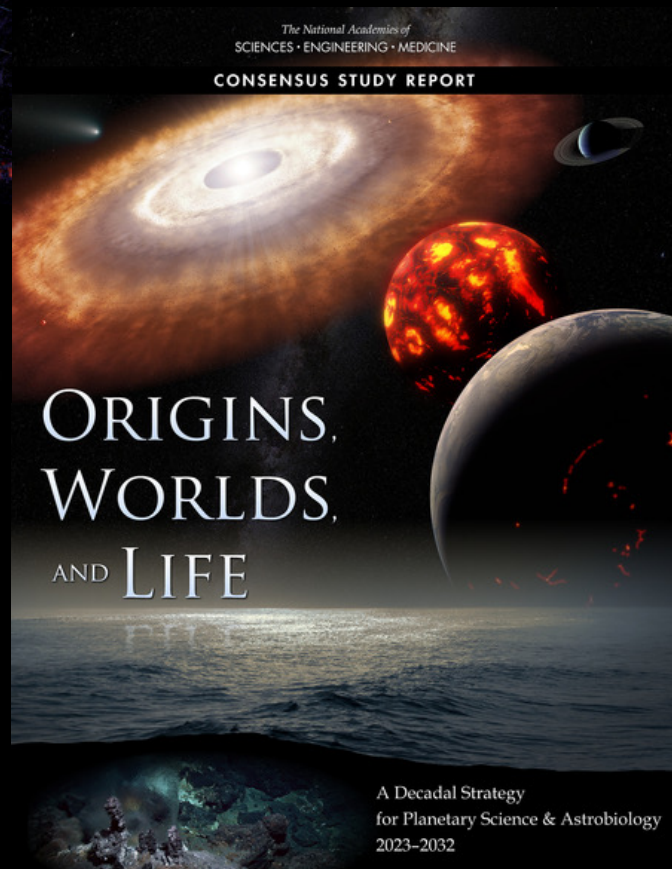
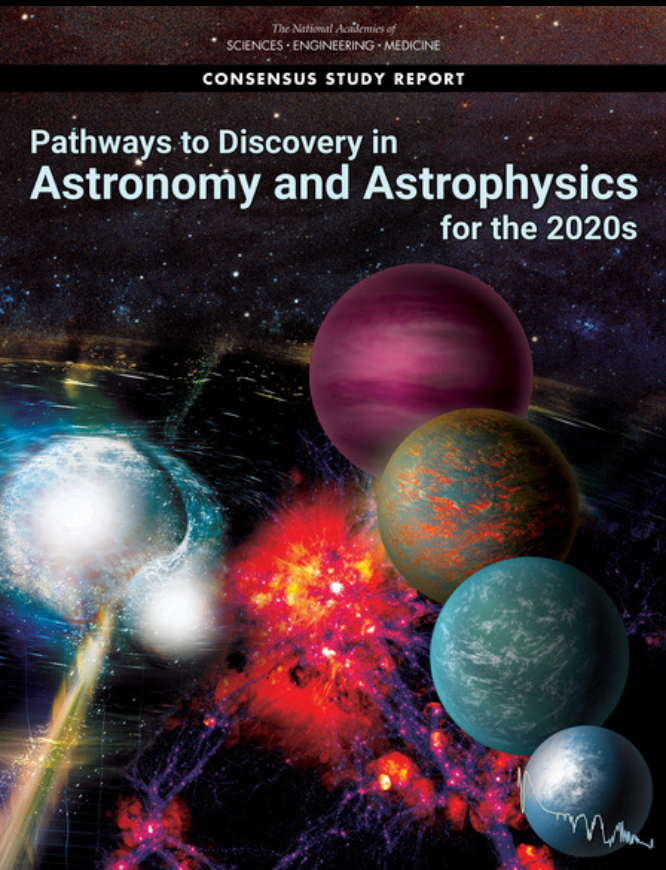
What are the technologies associated with those trades?

What cost/schedule risks exist for those trades?

How might those risks be mitigated?

How can external partners be involved?

# Community Participation



Multi-generational approach to a multi-generation mission

Training/development/mentorship programs throughout lifecycle

Diversification of the HWO community

“Badgeless” culture that places expertise over institution

Safe and just team culture

Team culture that adapts to a changing culture

Changing leadership over time

Compensation for people’s work<sup>28</sup>

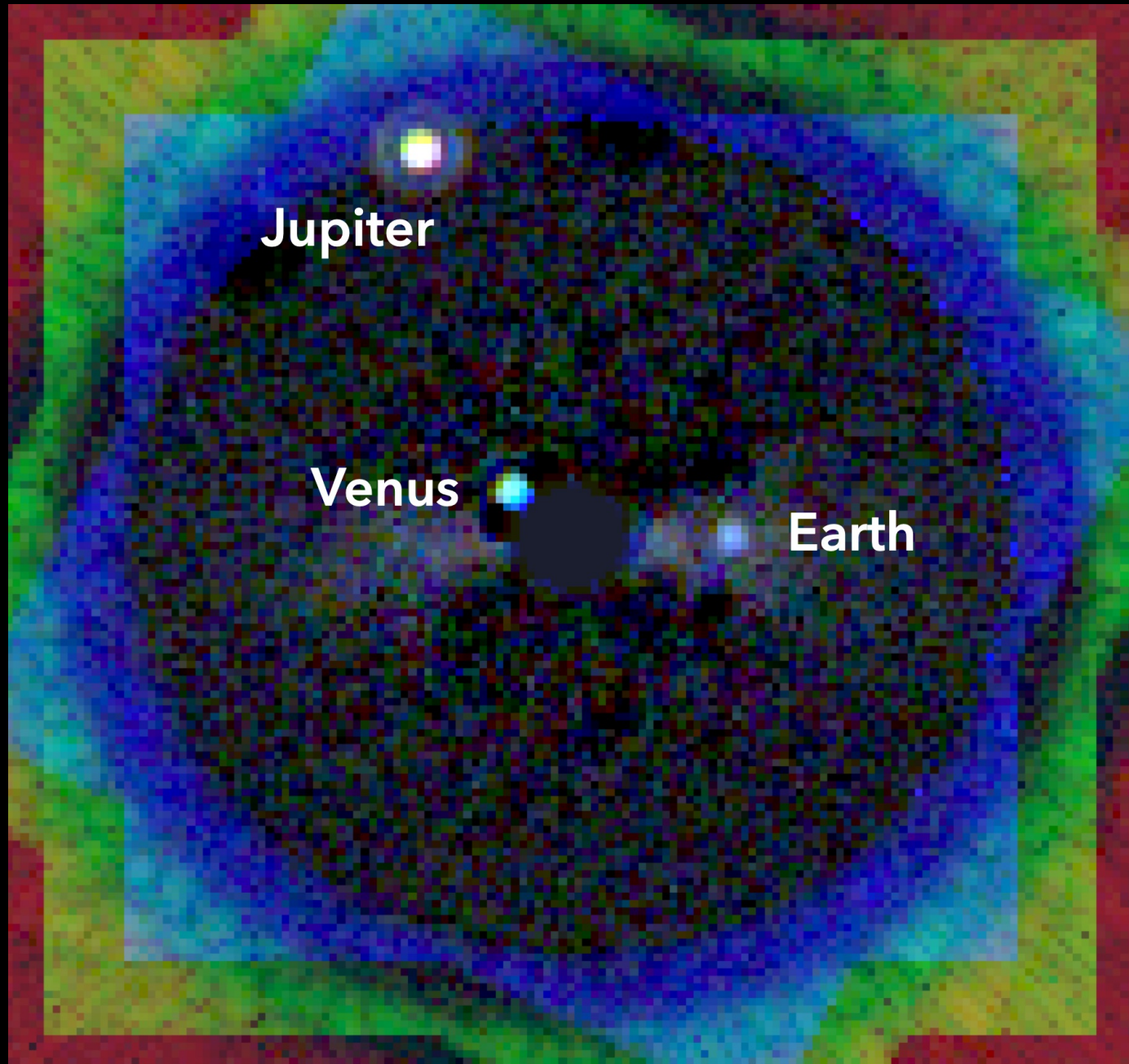
# HWO Early Career Initiatives

START/TAG members will be allowed to include their institution/research group members in technical work related to the START

We will create an HWO mentorship program, focused on early career members from institutions not represented on the START

Creation of an HWO Early Career Community/Council for discussions within the HWO early career community, and for feedback on HWO culture from that community

We will have a workshop (date/location very TBD) to discuss plans for HWO workforce development. Will include "primers" on HWO science/technology, networking/job fair to connect early career members to HWO-relevant institutions, and presentations and discussion on ideas for a welcoming, just, safe, and inclusive culture for HWO.





WAY



EssilorLuxottica



EssilorLuxottica







How do we get involved?

What is TAG?

How big is it?

How much of it is IUVOR or  
habex?

What is START?

Is the telescope  
actually a real thing?  
What still needs to  
happen to make it a  
real thing?

What's the timeline?



NASA Astrophysics Statement of Principles:  
[go.nasa.gov/3Kwn07s](https://go.nasa.gov/3Kwn07s)



NASA GOMAP website:  
[go.nasa.gov/4107ZzC](https://go.nasa.gov/4107ZzC)



[julie.a.crooke@nasa.gov](mailto:julie.a.crooke@nasa.gov)  
[shawn.goldman@nasa.gov](mailto:shawn.goldman@nasa.gov)

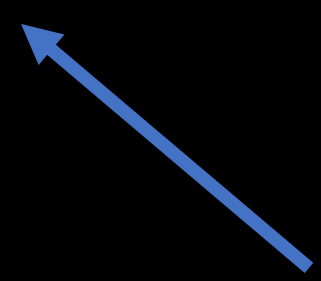
# The Habitable Worlds Observatory:

## *Big Picture Strategy*

- **Build to schedule:** Mission Level 1 Requirement - like planetary
- **Evolve technology from what we have done before:**
  - Build upon current NASA investments and TRL-9 technology
  - Segmented optical telescope system from JWST
  - Coronagraph from Roman's coronagraphic imager program
- **Next Generation Rockets:**
  - Larger telescope aperture sizes
  - Leverage opportunities for mass & volume trades
- **Planned Servicing:** Robotic servicing at L2
- **Robust Margins:** Large scientific, technical, and programmatic margins
- **Mature technologies first:** Reduce risk by fully maturing the technologies prior to development phase.









# DESIGN DRIVER – CONTRAST STABILITY FOR EXO-EARTHS

Corresponds to wavefront stability of “10 pm per 10 minutes”

How do we enable that level of ultra-stability?

Through **design**

Through **control**

Through **tolerance**



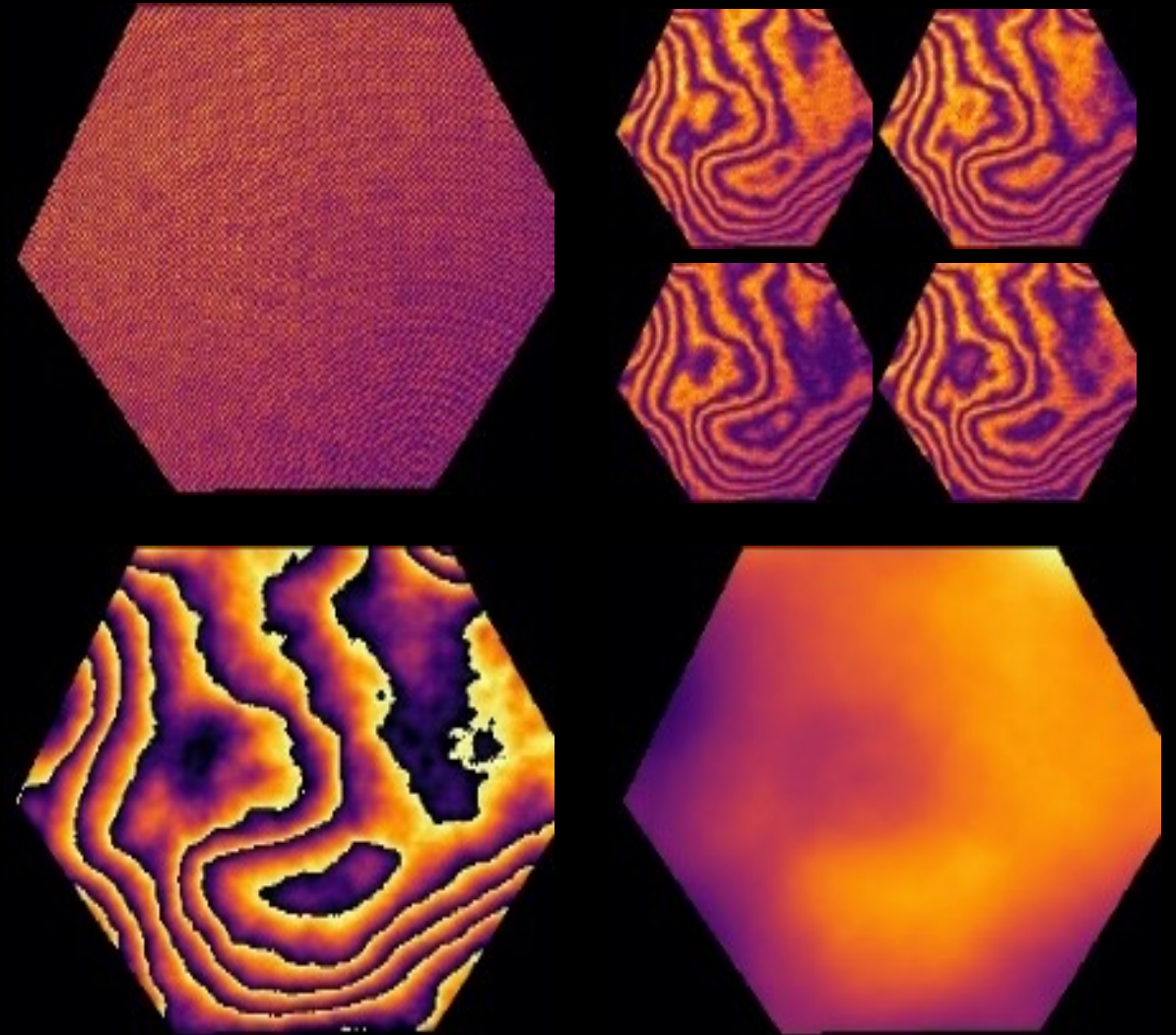
# ULTRA-STABILITY THROUGH DESIGN

Lightweight ULE mirror segment



Credit: L3/Harris

Picometer-scale dynamics  
measured with high-speed  
interferometry



Credit: NASA GSFC

# ULTRA-STABILITY THROUGH CONTROL

Sub-milli-Kelvin thermal control



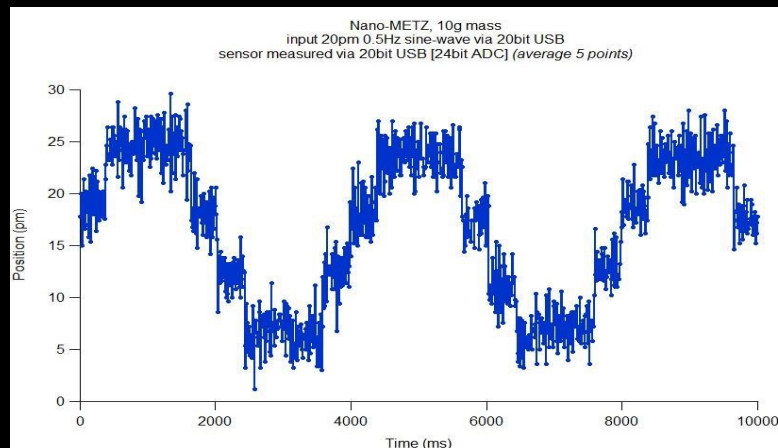
296.6504 K

296.6500 K

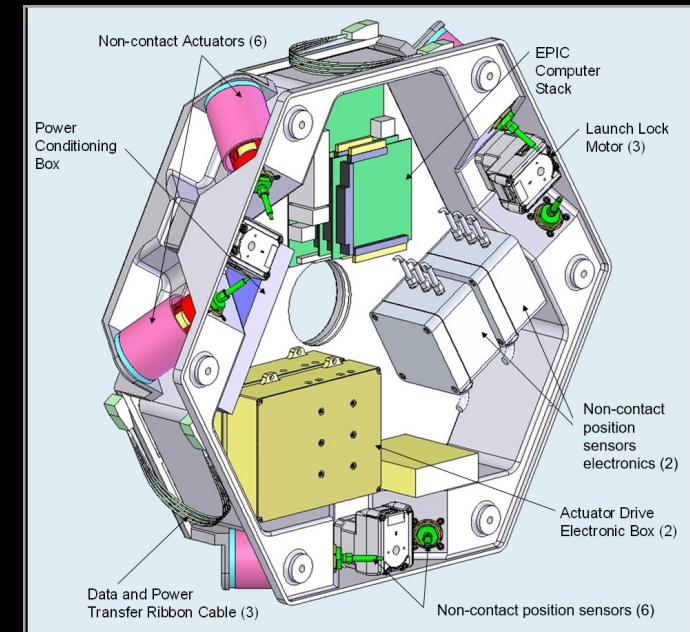
296.6408 K

Credit: SAO / NASA GSFC

Measurement of 5  
pm resolution  
piezo actuator at 1  
Hz



Credit: NASA GSFC



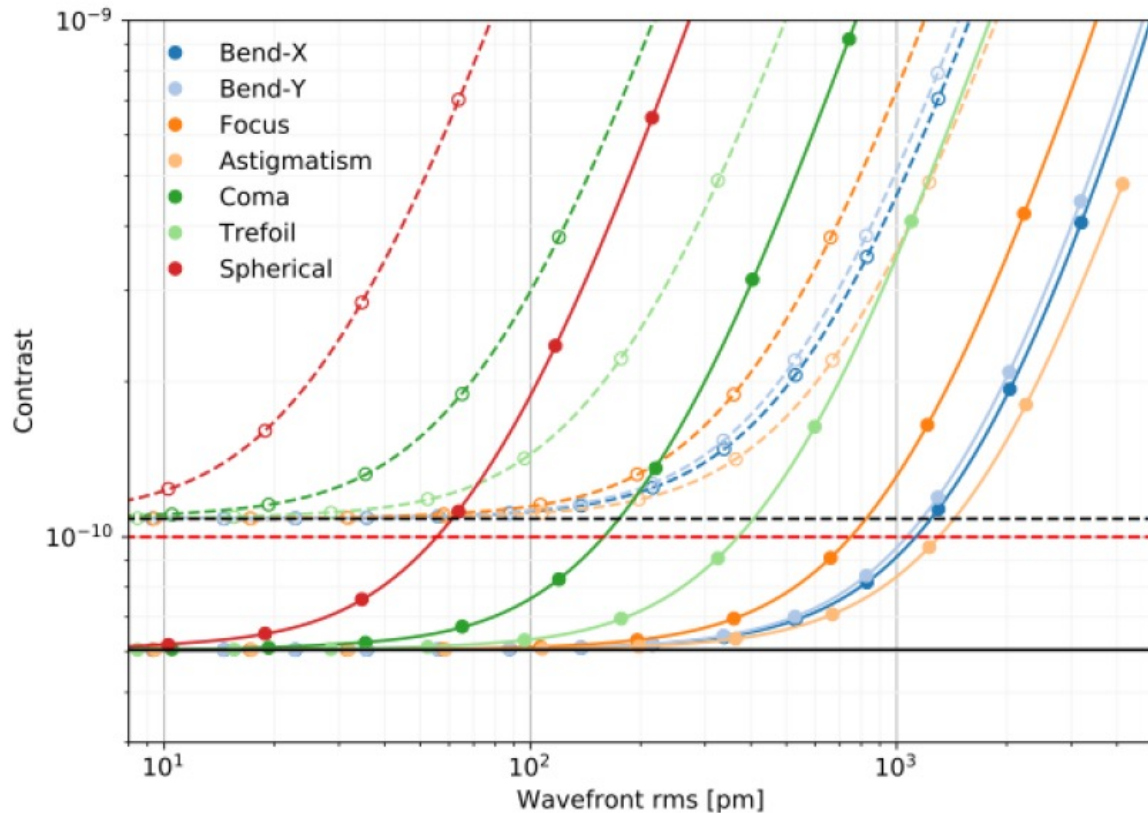
Credit: Lockheed Martin

Vibration-isolation and  
precision pointing  
system

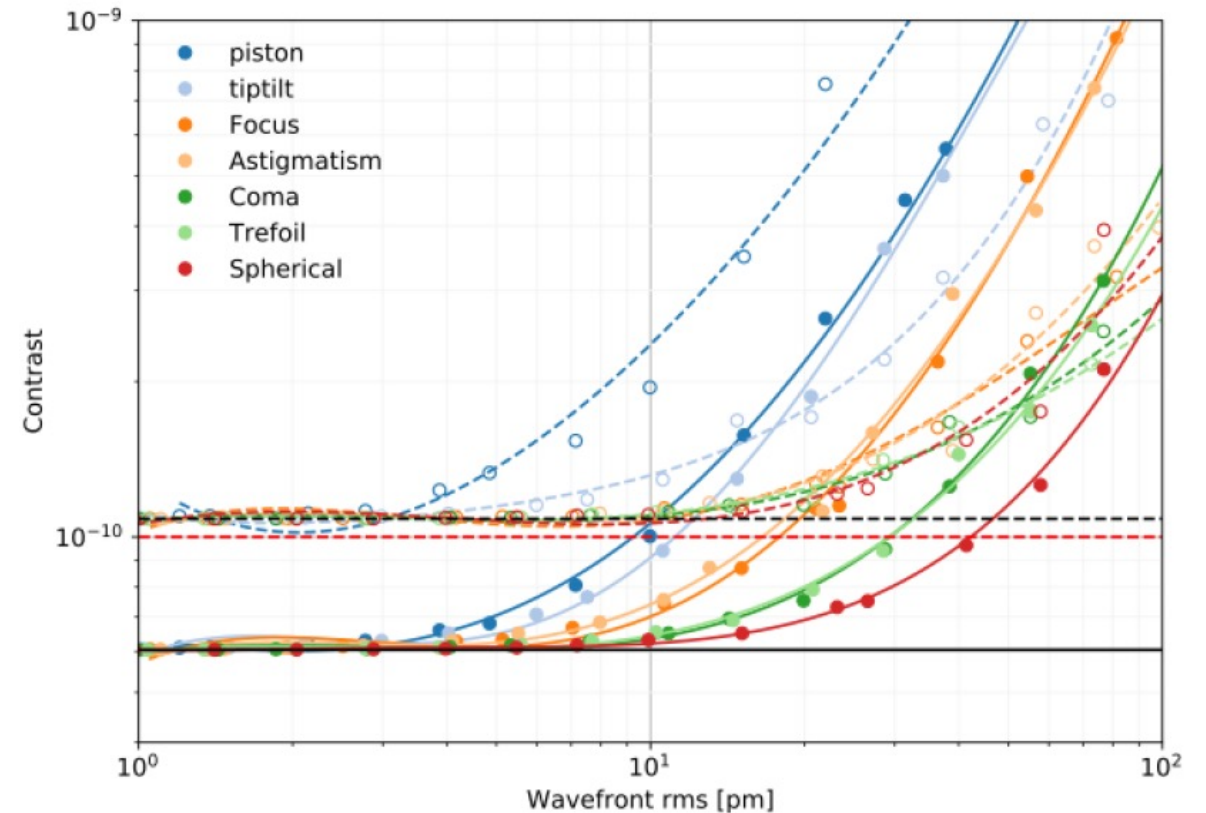
# ULTRA-STABILITY THROUGH TOLERANCE

## Contrast Sensitivity to Wavefront Errors

### LUVOIR-A APLC Global aberrations



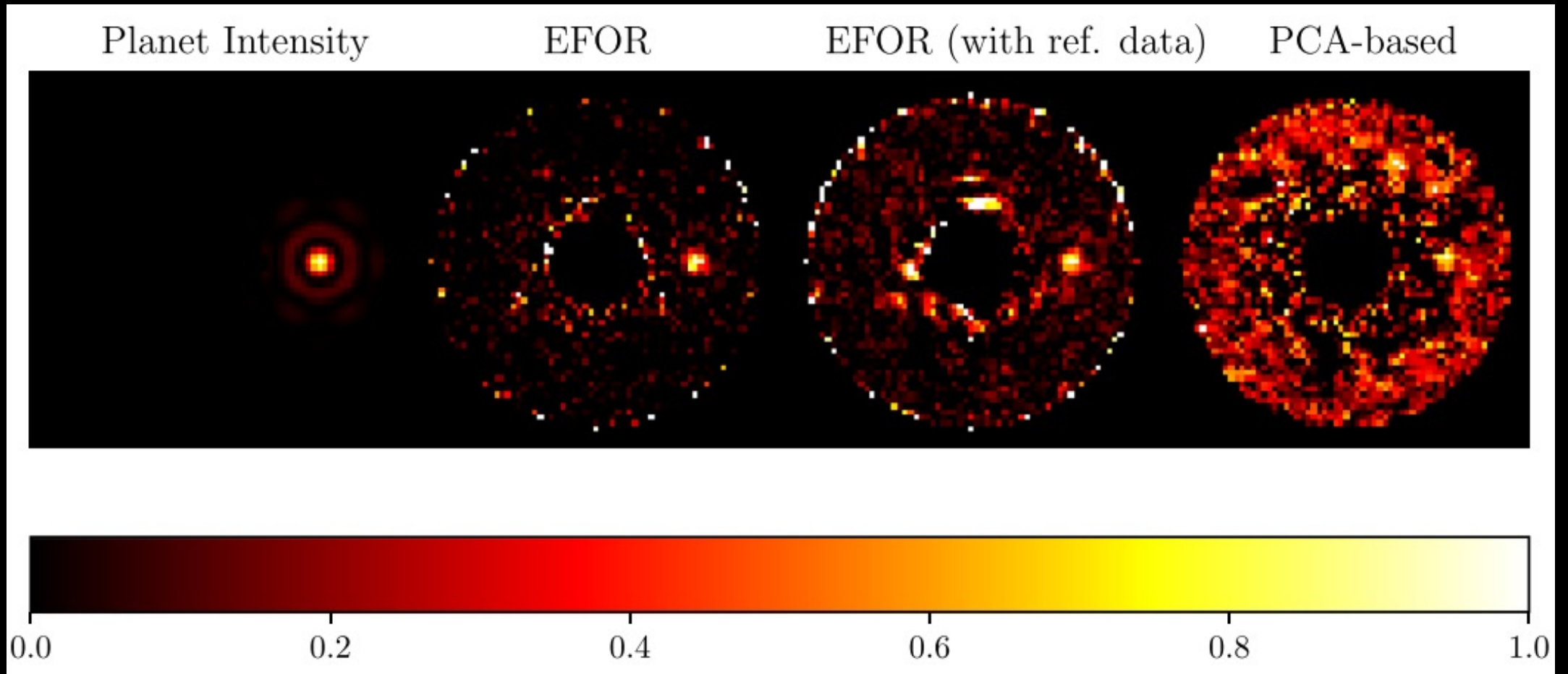
### LUVOIR-A APLC Segment Phasing errors



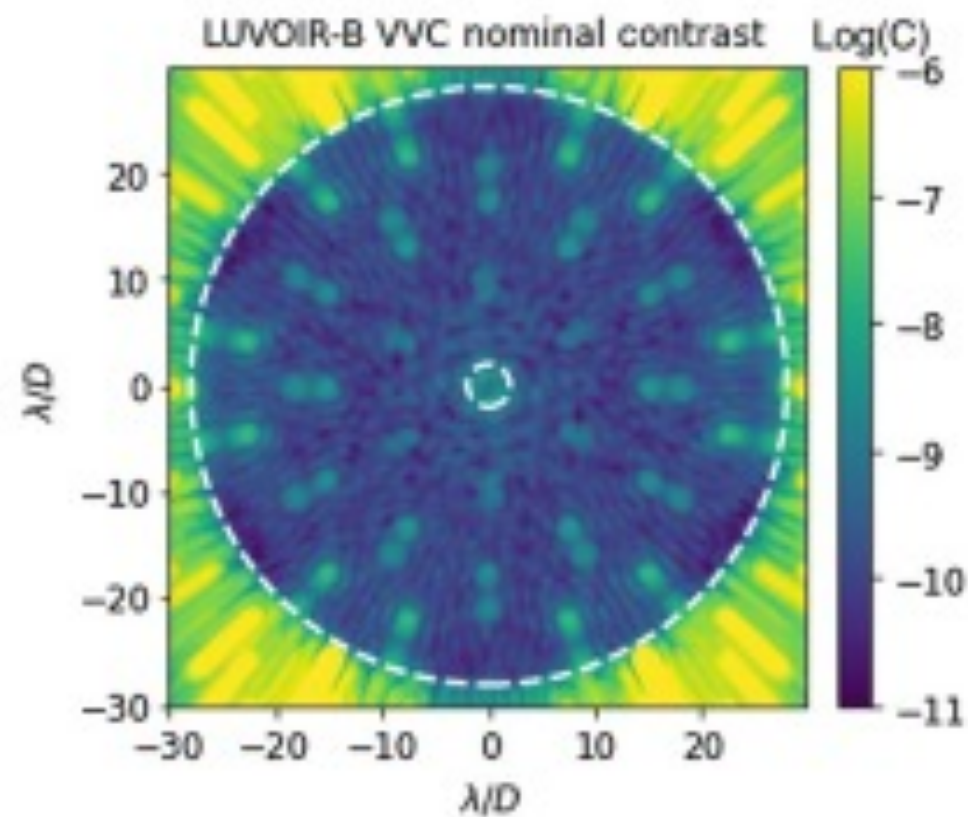
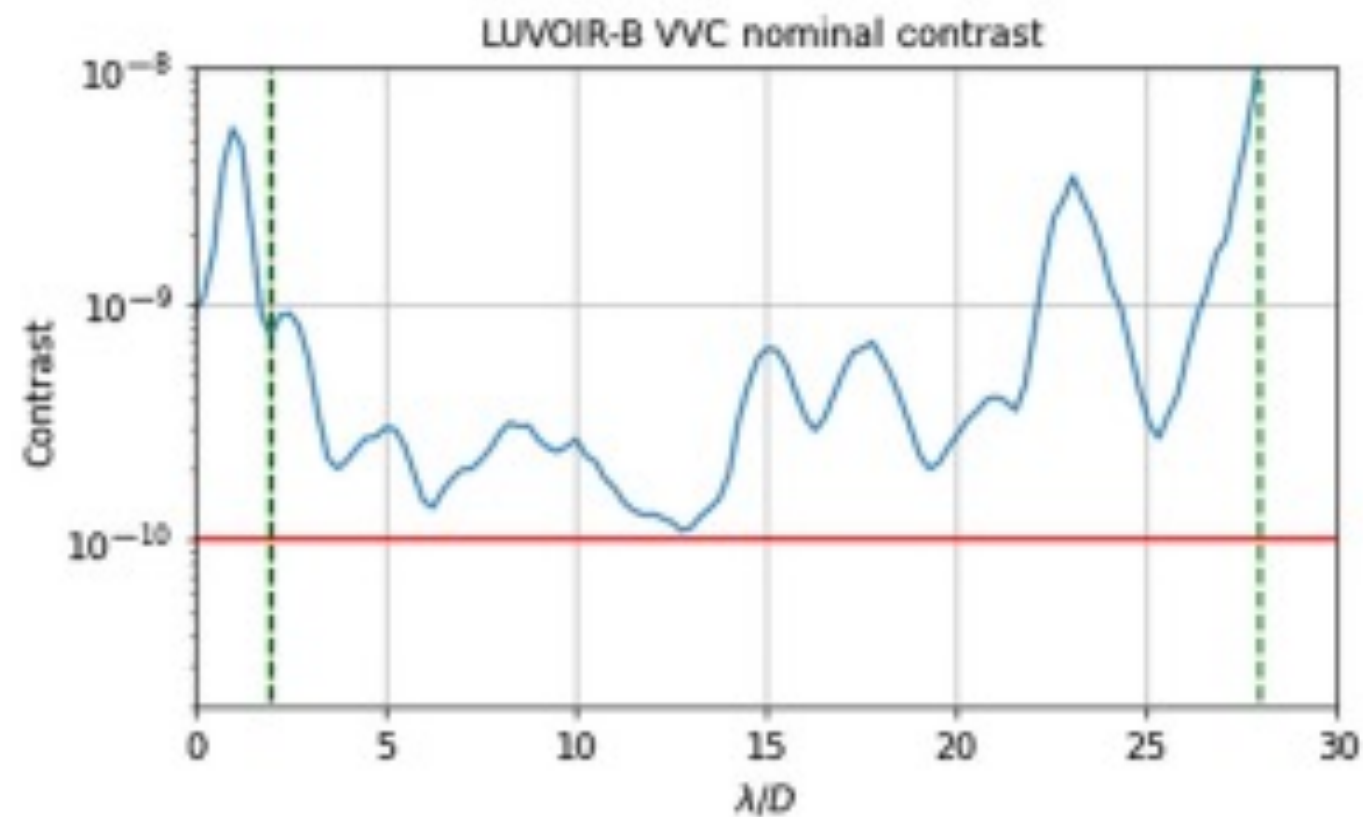
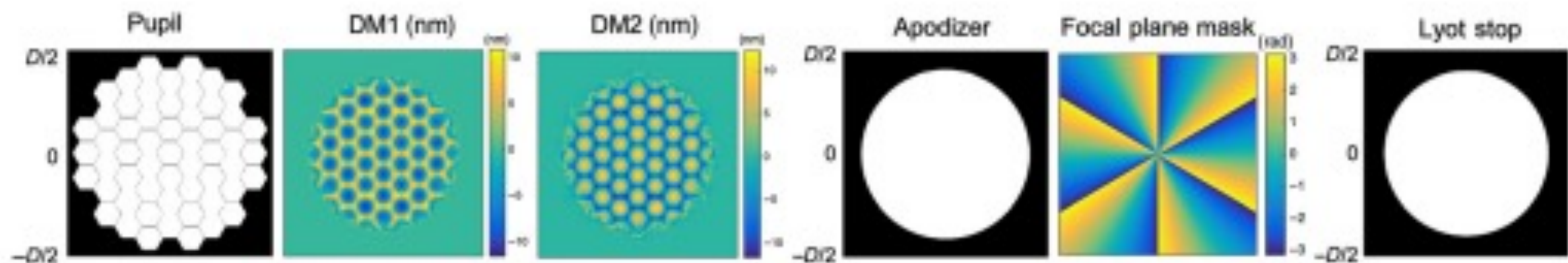
Credit: Juanola-Parramon / NASA GSFC

# ULTRA-STABILITY THROUGH TOLERANCE

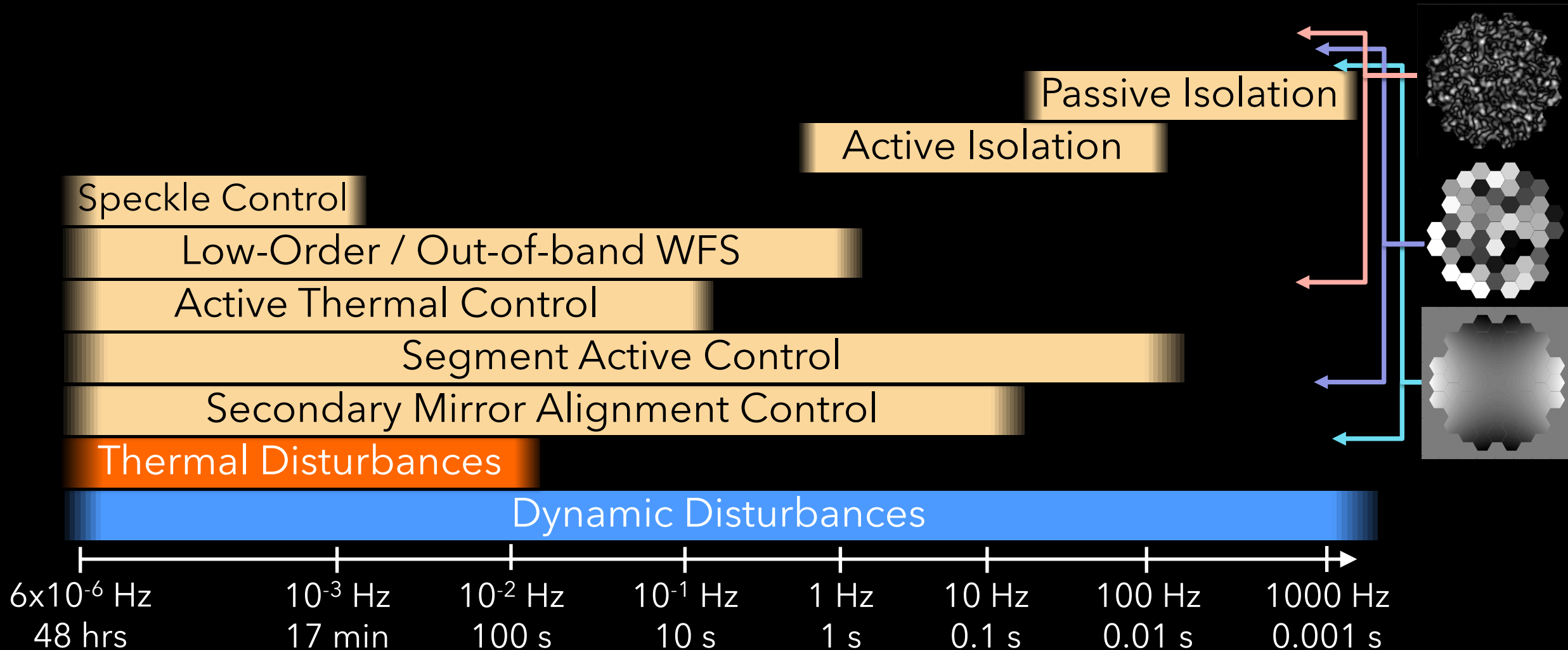
Post-processing Extraction of Exoplanet Image



Credit: Pogorelyuk / Princeton University

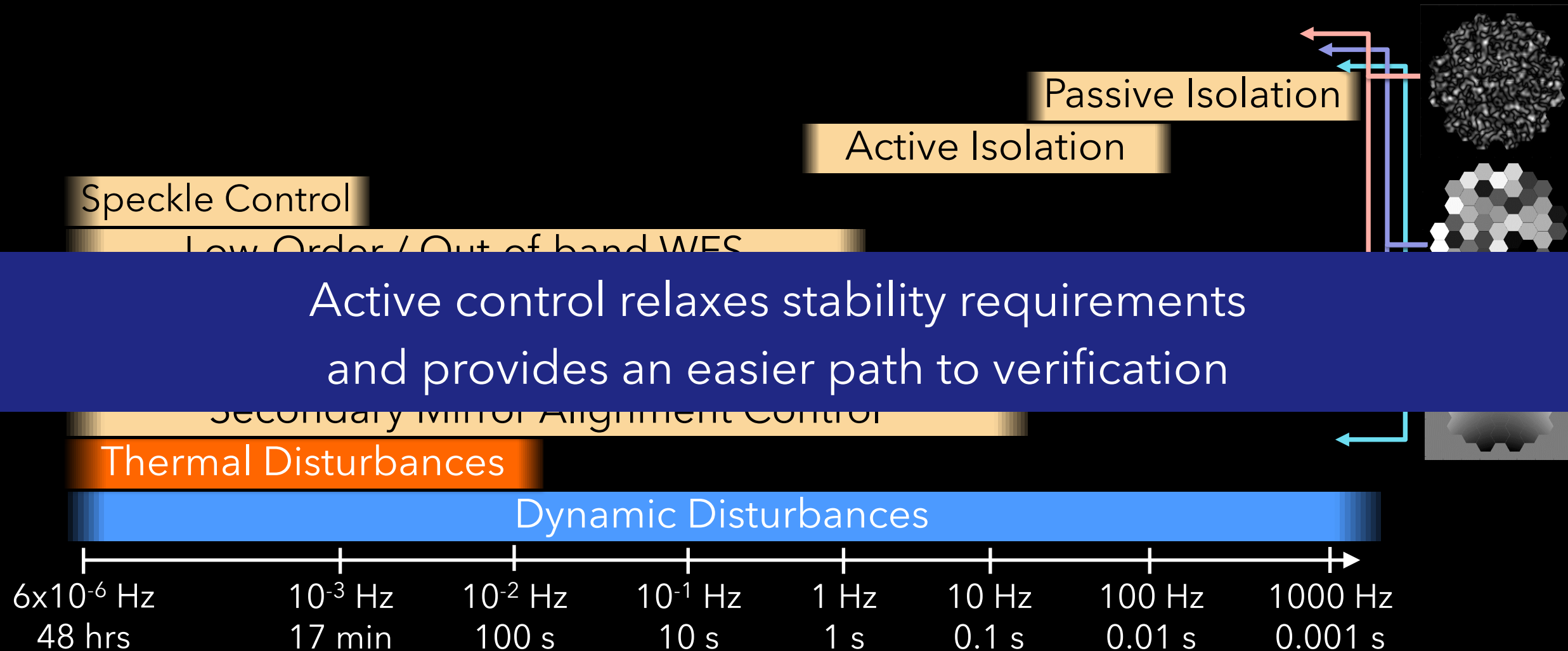


# ULTRA-STABILITY THROUGH CONTROL



See "Ultra-stable Telescope Research and Analysis (ULTRA) Program Phase 1 Report",  
Ball Aerospace, L3/Harris, Northrop Grumman, SGT, Space Telescope Science Institute

# ULTRA-STABILITY THROUGH CONTROL



See "Ultra-stable Telescope Research and Analysis (ULTRA) Program Phase 1 Report",  
Ball Aerospace, L3/Harris, Northrop Grumman, SGT, Space Telescope Science Institute