

EPOS LHC-R

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Hadronic Interaction Model workshop, Hong Kong, China

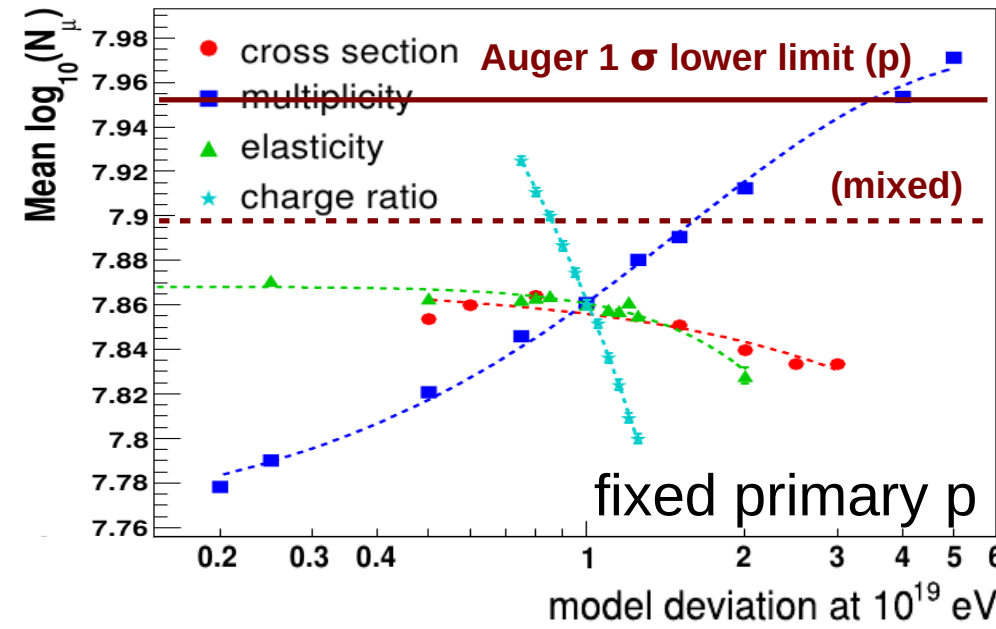
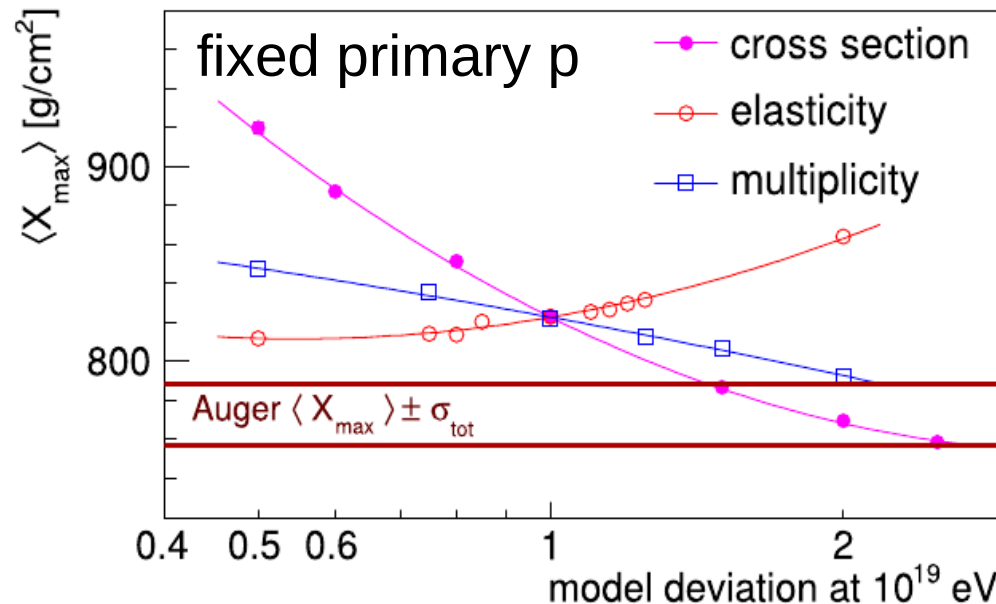
March the 20th 2025

Outline

- Introduction
- New LHC data → update for CR → EPOS LHC-R
 - ➔ A real global approach to do hadronic interactions
- Impact of collective effects and Hadronic Rescattering (HS)
 - ➔ Role of resonances
- Predictions for air showers (EAS)
 - ➔ X_{\max} and μ
- Remaining uncertainties and new measurements

Recent **LHC** data provide new constraints on models changing X_{\max} and the muon production if a **global approach** is used.
More data needed to validate models and reduce uncertainties !

Hadronic Interactions and Air Showers



- Air shower development dominated by few parameters
 - ➔ mass and energy of primary CR
 - ➔ cross-sections (p-Air and (π-K)-Air)
 - ➔ (in)elasticity
 - ➔ multiplicity
 - ➔ charge ratio and baryon production
- Change of primary = change of hadronic interaction parameters
 - ➔ cross-section, elasticity, mult. ...
- Model tuned to accelerator data

Theory AND data are important to constrain the hadronic model parameters.

From R. Ulrich (KIT)

Possible updates since last model release

- A number of new data since last release has been used to further improve the models :
 - ➔ Update of the p-p cross sections (ALFA)
 - ➔ Data at 13 TeV (CMS, ATLAS, LHCf)
 - ➔ More detailed p-Pb measurements (fluctuations) CMS
 - ➔ Particle yields as a function of multiplicity (ALICE, LHCb)
 - Very important to understand the mechanism behind particle production
 - ➔ NA61 data
- Update of EPOS LHC → EPOS LHC-R
 - ➔ New EPOS 4 available for heavy ion physics but not usable for air showers (yet, cf. Klaus)
 - ➔ Modify EPOS LHC to take into account new data and new knowledge accumulated with EPOS 4 (and some code)

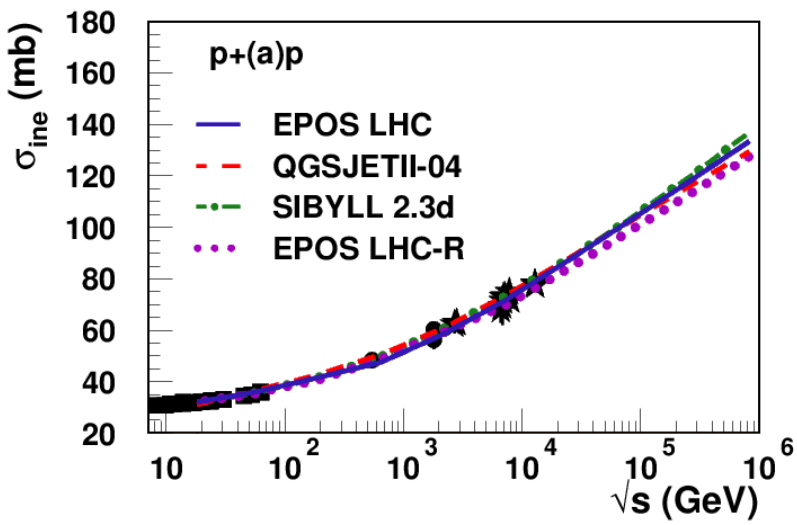
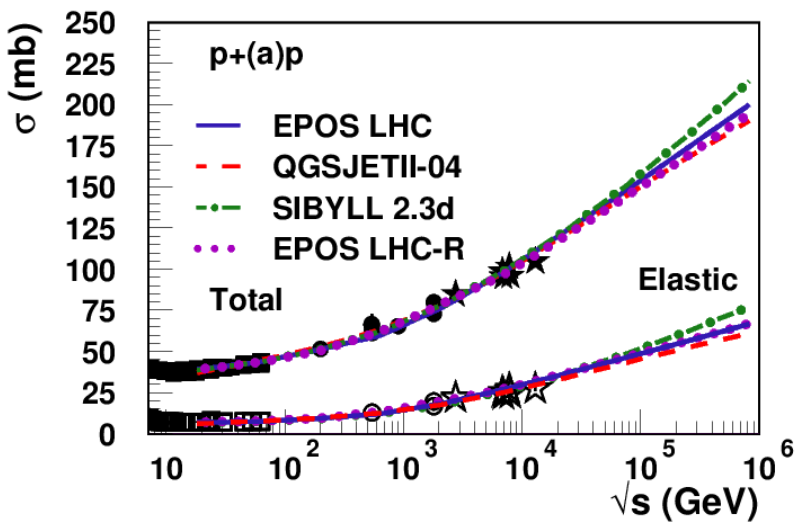
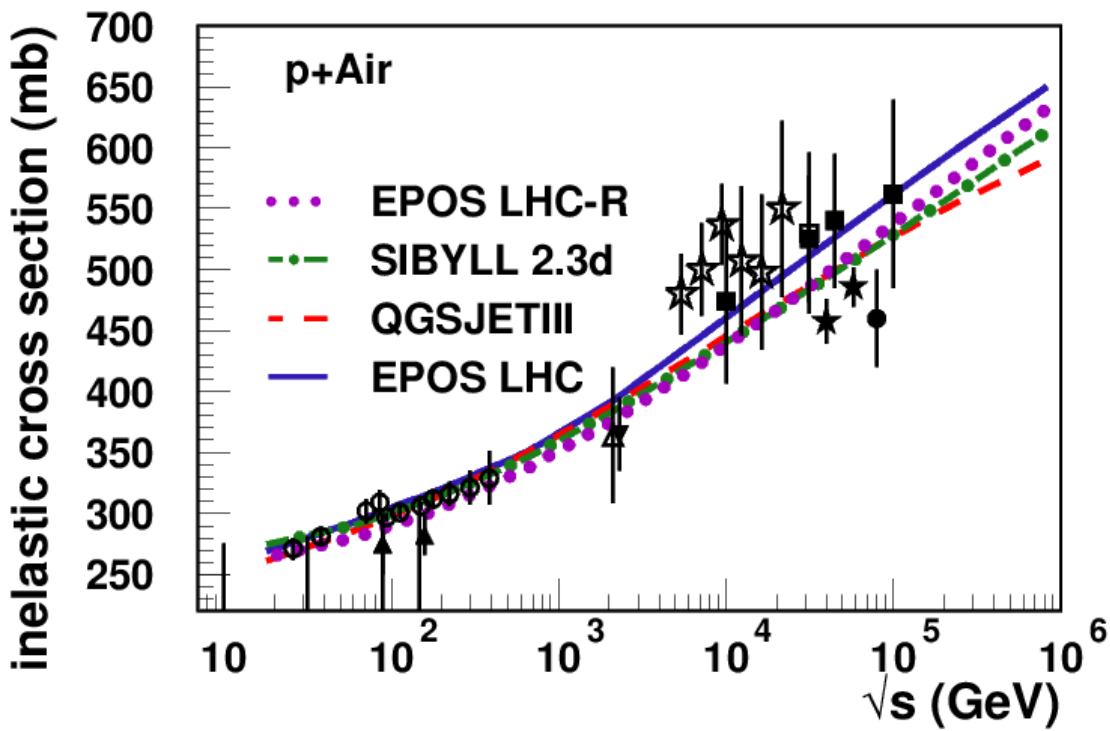
X_{\max}

N_{μ}

Inelastic Cross-Section Reduced

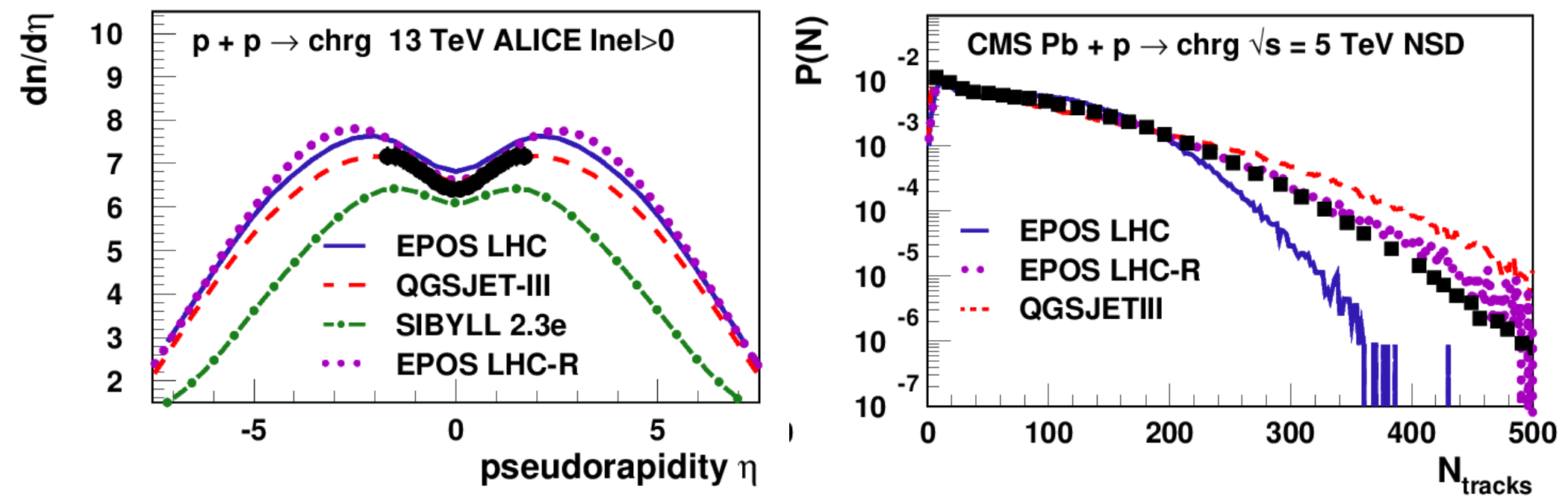
- **Probability for the particle to interact : directly related to X_{\max}**
- After TOTEM (CMS), new measurements by ALFA (ATLAS) with higher precision
 - ➔ p-p cross-section slightly too high in all models
 - ➔ Change by up to -5% at the highest energy

using **most recent CR based measurements**



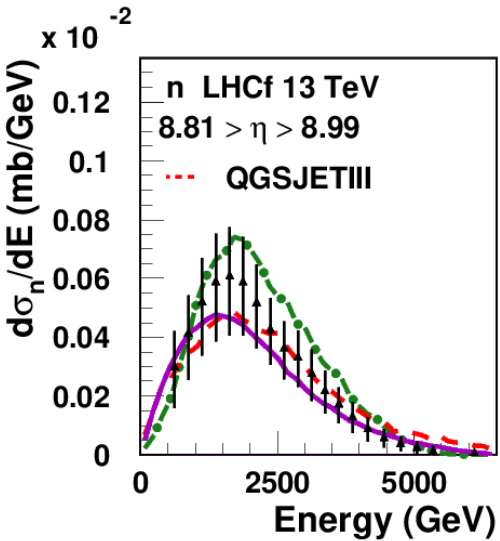
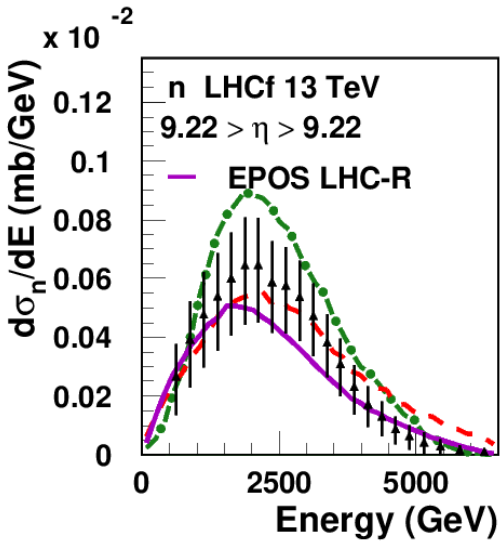
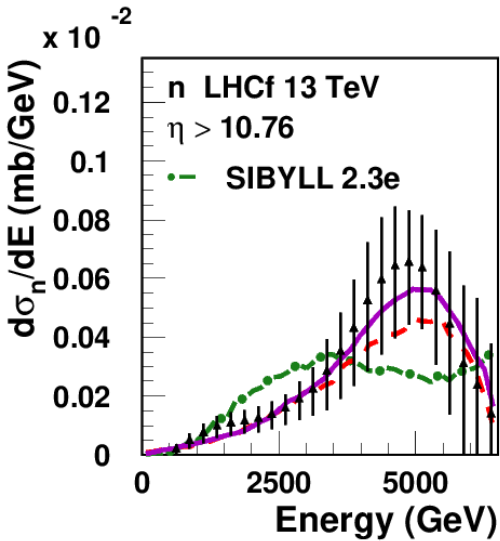
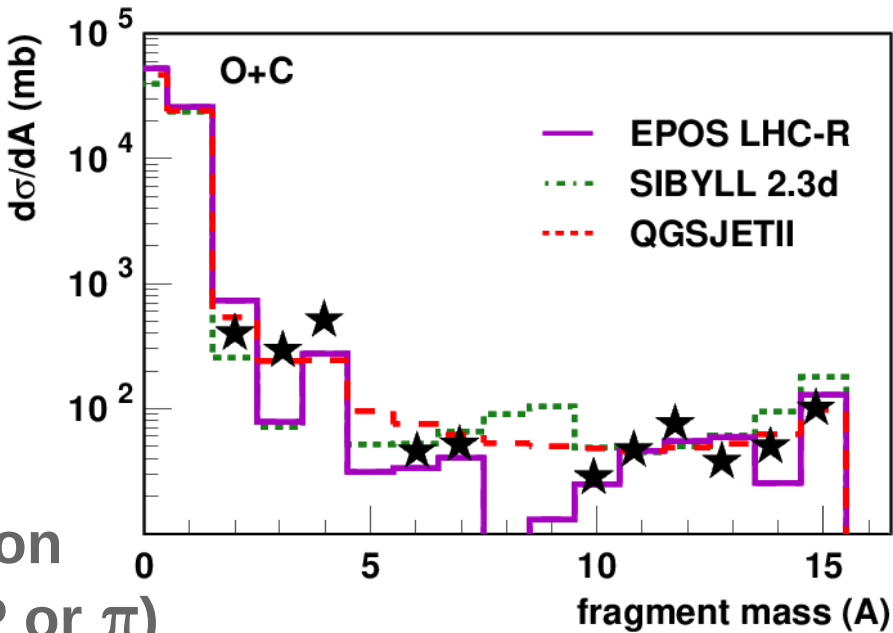
Pseudorapidity

- Angular distribution of newly produced particles
- New data at 13 TeV in p-p
 - ➔ Test extrapolation with different triggers
 - ➔ Sibyll has a clear difference with other models (and data) : **too narrow !**
- Detailed data at 5 TeV for p-Pb
 - ➔ Wrong multiplicity distributions in all models (before retune)



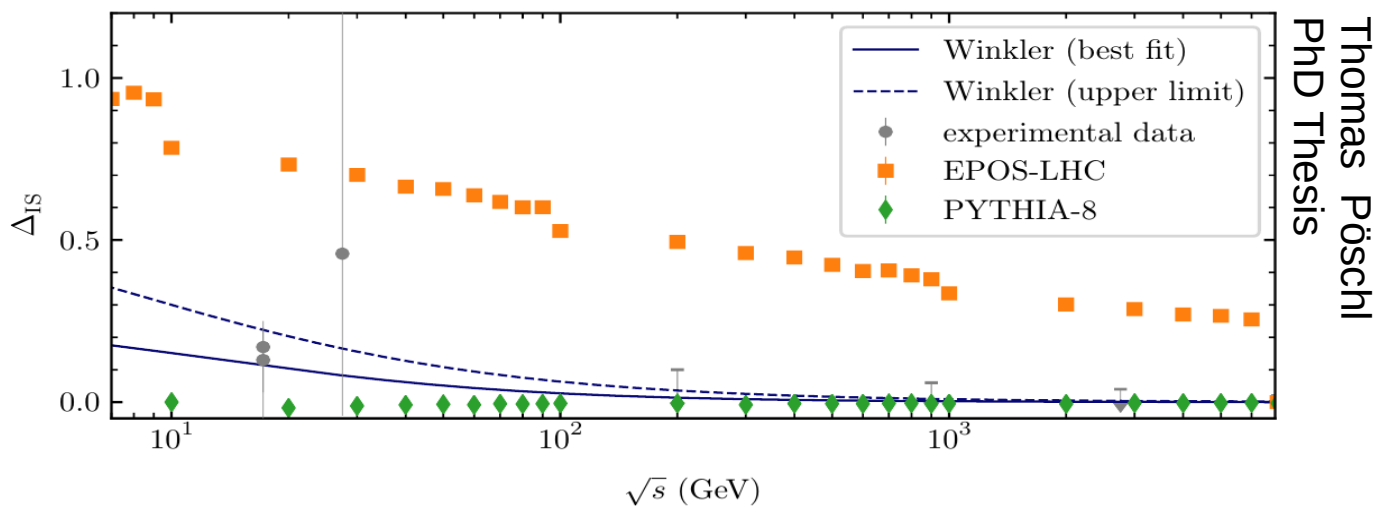
Improvements in EPOS LHC-R (1)

- Number of limitations identified in EPOS LHC
- Problem with nuclear fragments
 - ➔ Double counting for single nucleons
 - ➔ Missing multifragment production
 - Significant impact on X_{\max} fluctuations for nuclei
- Simplified high mass diffraction and pion exchange replaced by real emission (IP or π)



Improvements in EPOS LHC-R (2)

- **Number of limitations identified in EPOS LHC**
- **Charm production**
 - ➔ Soft (low energy and forward) and hard (high energy and mid-rapidity) prod.
- **Hard binary scaling**
 - ➔ Hard scale increase with number of MPI (inspired by EPOS 4 but simplified)
- **Large isospin breaking in EPOS LHC**
 - ➔ additional baryons and modified pion ratio



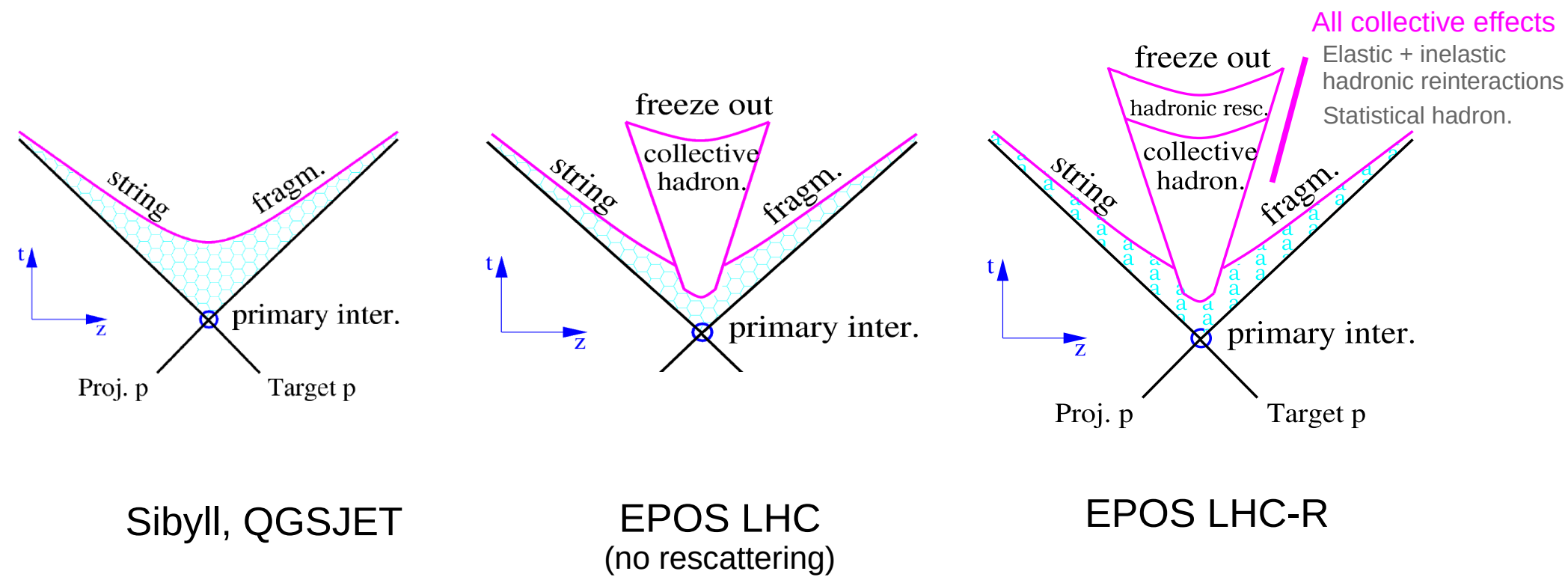
Thomas Pöschl
PhD Thesis

➔ **Exact isospin symmetry at production in EPOS LHC-R**

Impact of LHC data : need for a global approach

Global approach is the key !

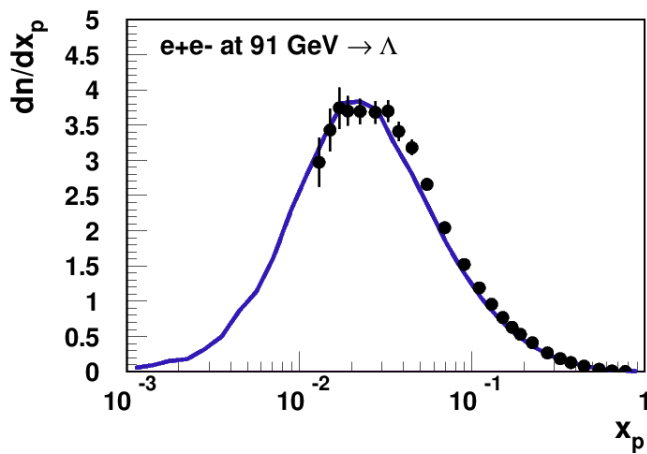
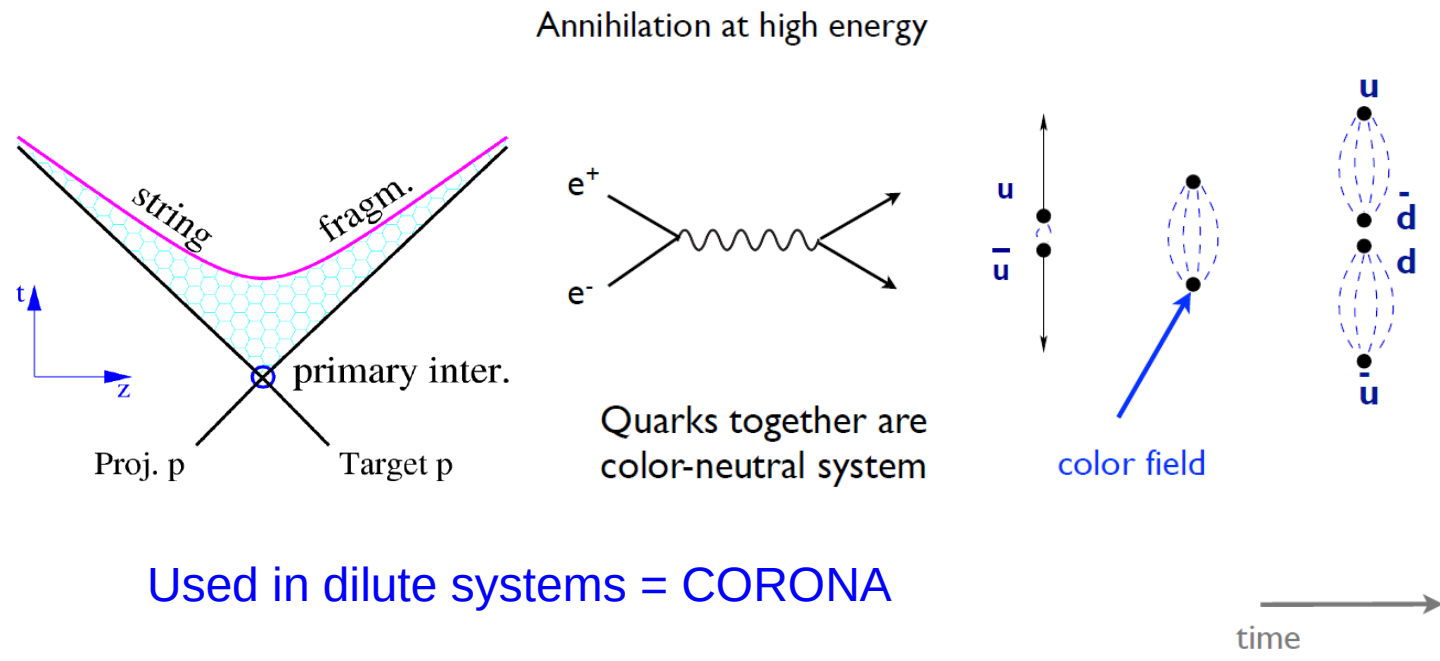
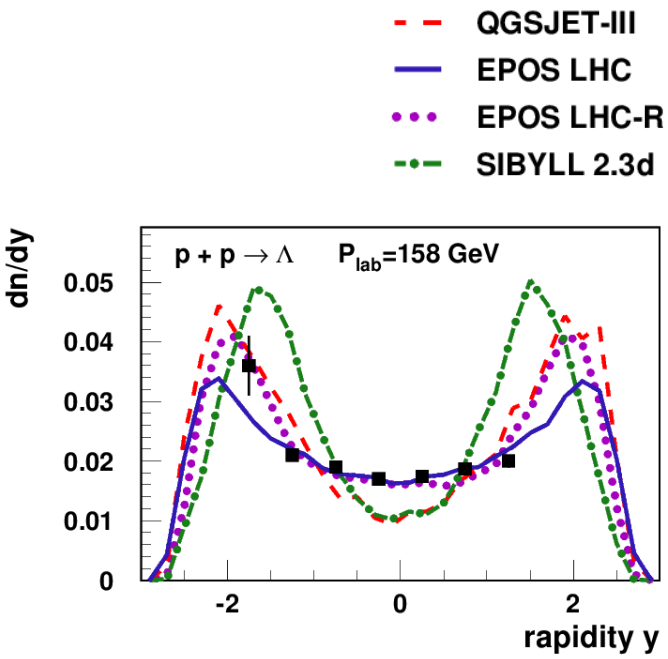
- ➔ Tuning models neglecting some physics process may lead to wrong parameters !
- ➔ Correct tune possible only if everything taken into account
- ➔ **Even without a direct impact on the shower development** (rare particle or not forward), **it will change model parameters and the extrapolation** (in energy or phase space)



String Fragmentation

Global approach is the key !

- ➔ Common hadronization in all the models
- ➔ Very important for forward particle production (EAS)
 - ➔ Used for beam remnant hadronization
- ➔ Parameters fixed on e⁺-e⁻ only in EPOS
 - Other CR models tuned on p-p data
 - ➔ “Contamination” by beam remnant

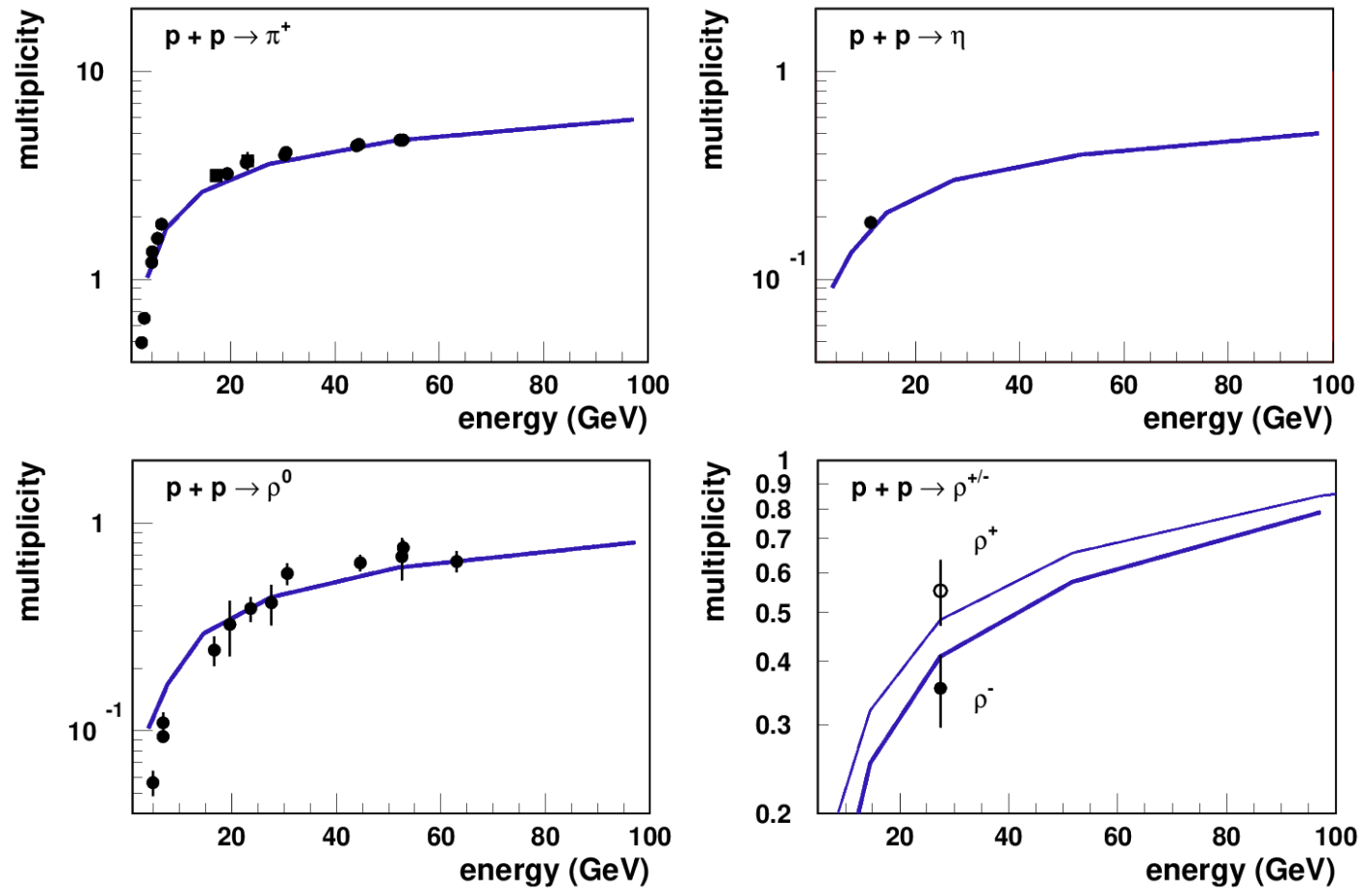


Used in dilute systems = CORONA

Generic CR tuning

CR models usually tuned on hadronic interactions (not LEP)

- ➔ Impose isospin symmetry ($u=d$) for pions, ρ s and nucleons **BEFORE** decay
- ➔ Produce only most common particles π , ρ and η and tuned to pp data

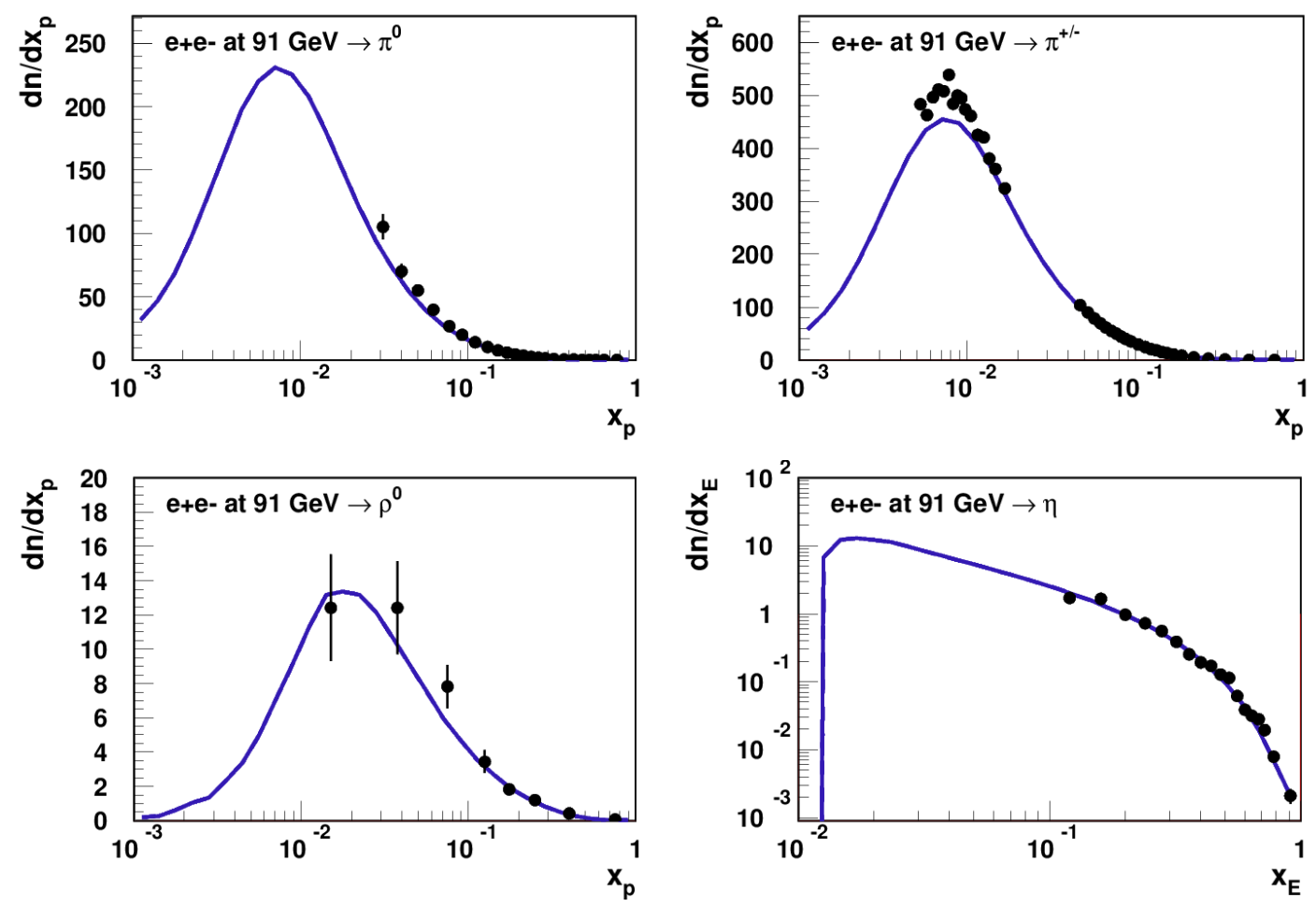


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- ➔ Impose isospin symmetry ($u=d$) for pions, ρ s and nucleons **BEFORE** decay
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➔ Reasonable description of LEP

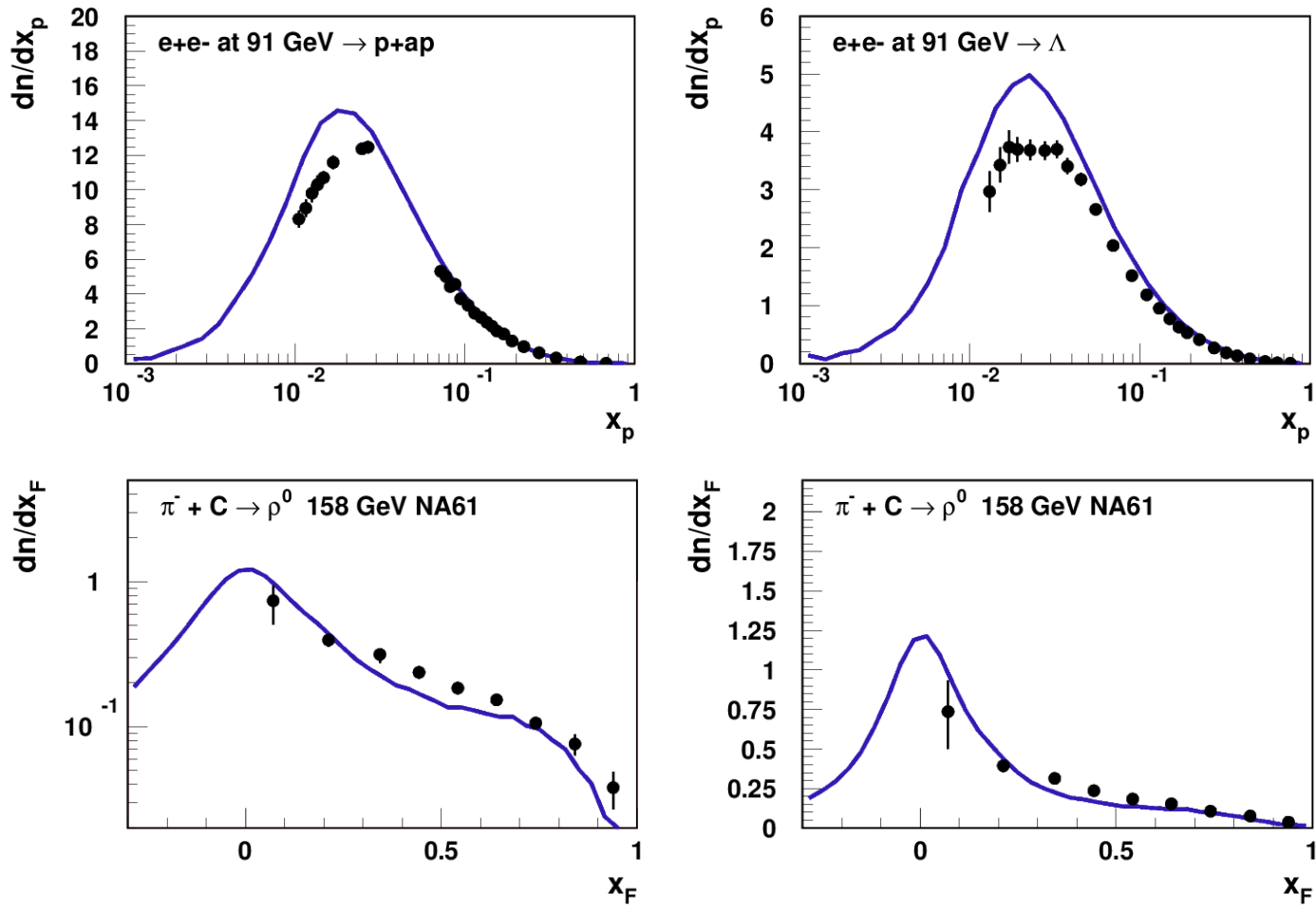


Generic CR tuning

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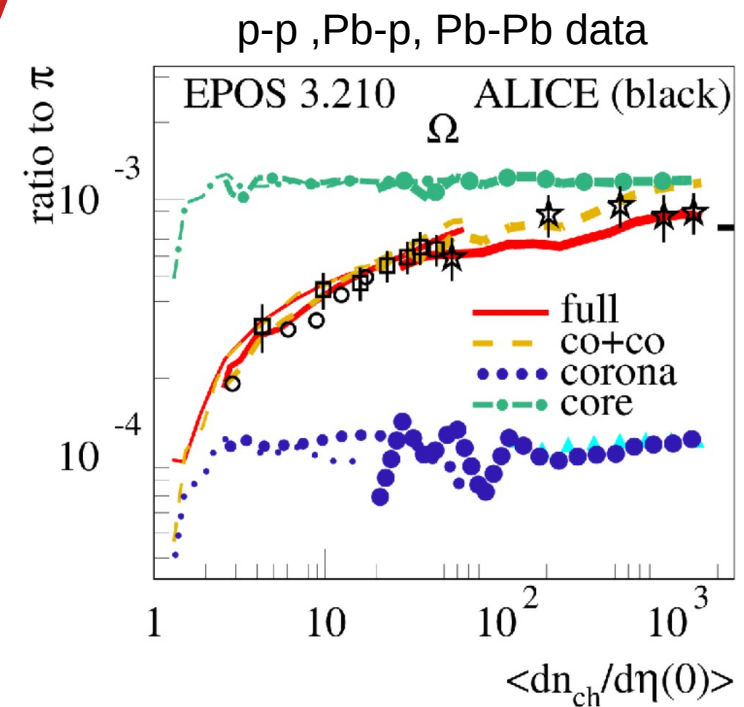
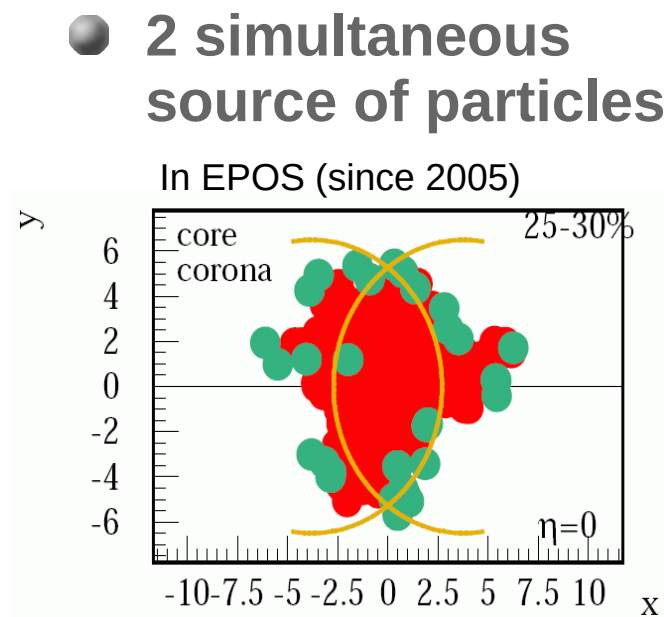
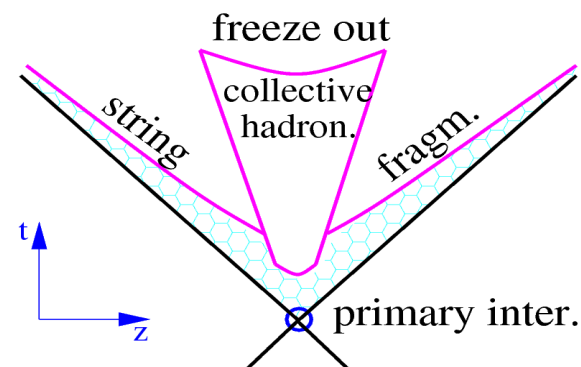
- ➔ Impose isospin symmetry ($u=d$) for pions, ρ s and nucleons **BEFORE** decay
- ➔ Produce only most common particles π , ρ and η and tuned to pp data

➔ LEP ~ OK but overestimate baryons and tension in h-A for ρ



Core-Corona

- Core hadronization = thermal hadronization of Quark Gluon Plasma
- Mixing of core and corona hadronization needed to achieve detailed description of p-p data (ref K.Werner)
 - ➔ Evolution of particle ratios from pp to PbPb
 - ➔ Particle correlations (ridge, Bose Einstein correlations)
 - ➔ Pt evolution, ...
- Both hadronizations are universal but the fraction of each change with particle density

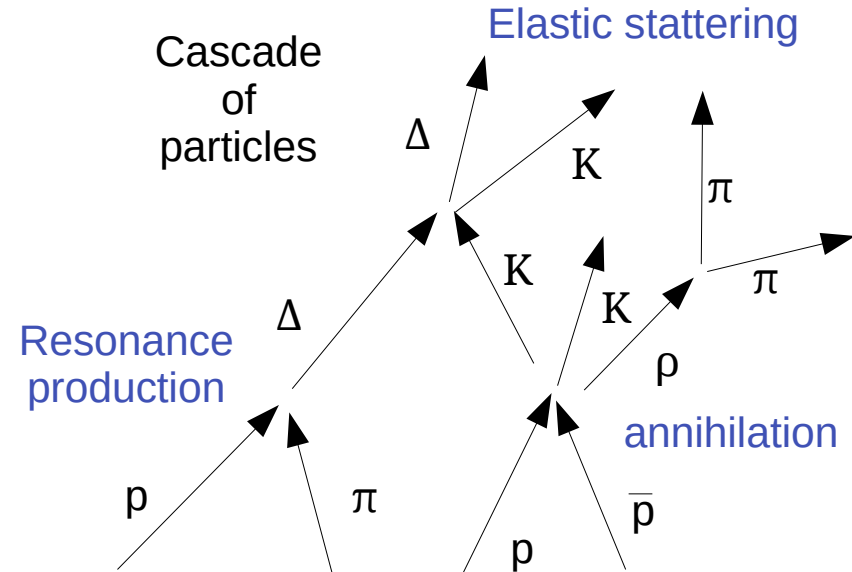
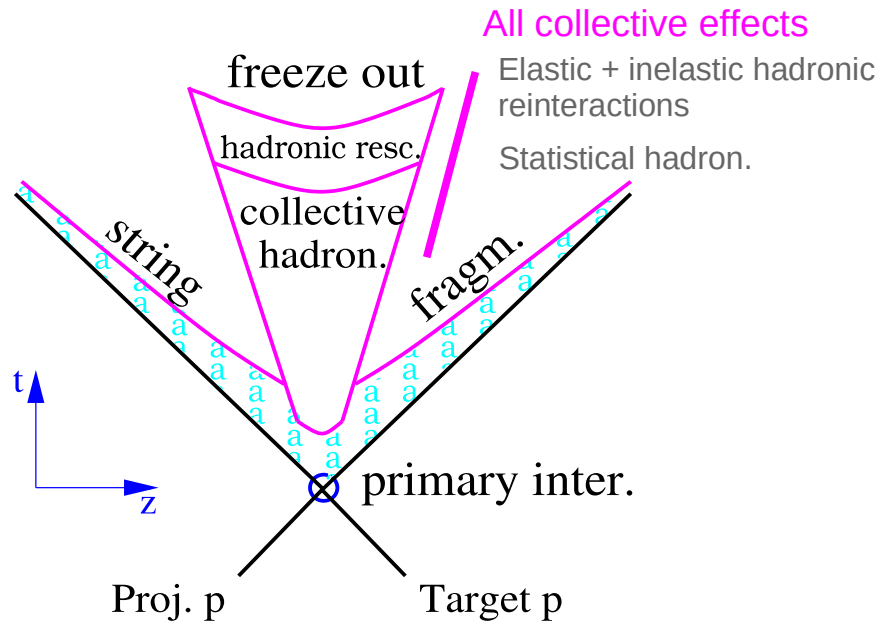


Hadronic Rescattering (HS)

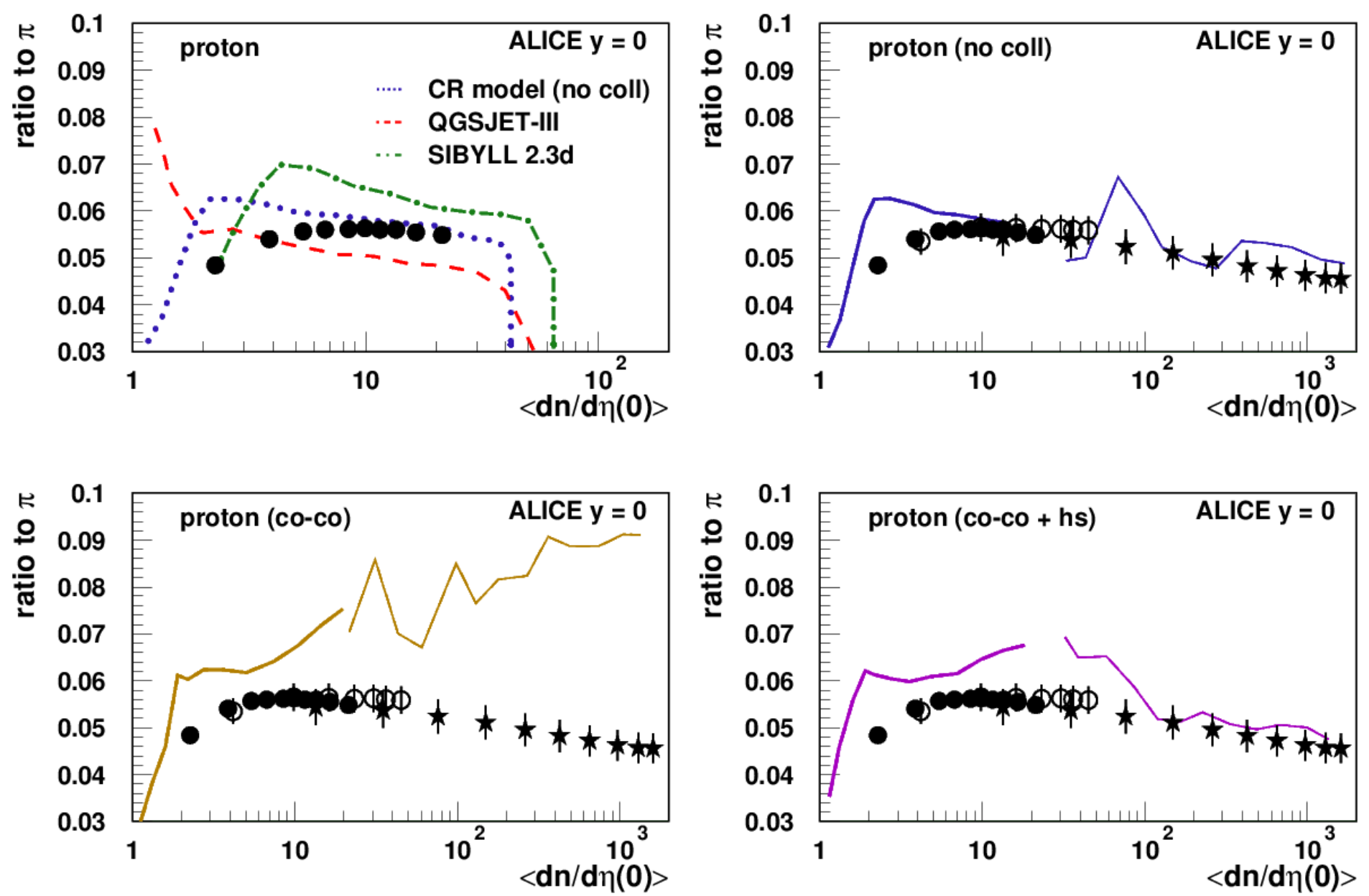
Missing effect in all CR models until now !

- ➡ Re-interaction of hadrons after parton hadronization (space-time evolution)
- ➡ “traditionally” used only for heavy ion collisions (until recently NOT in p-p)
- ➡ No direct impact on EAS development since forward particles escape
- ➡ But significant to large impact at midrapidity in heavy ion collisions !

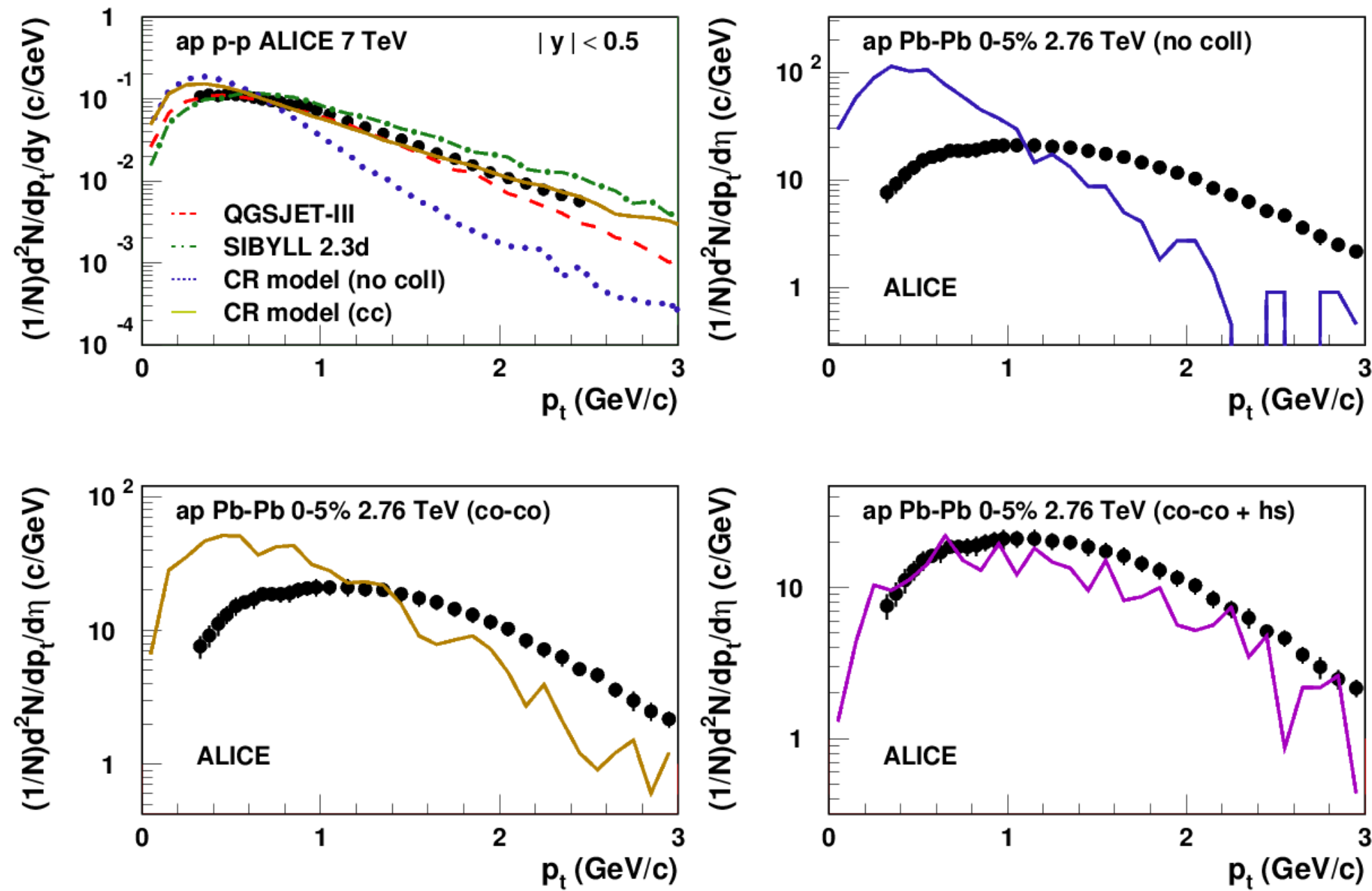
➡ Let's apply it to all system (from e⁺-e⁻ to PbPb) !



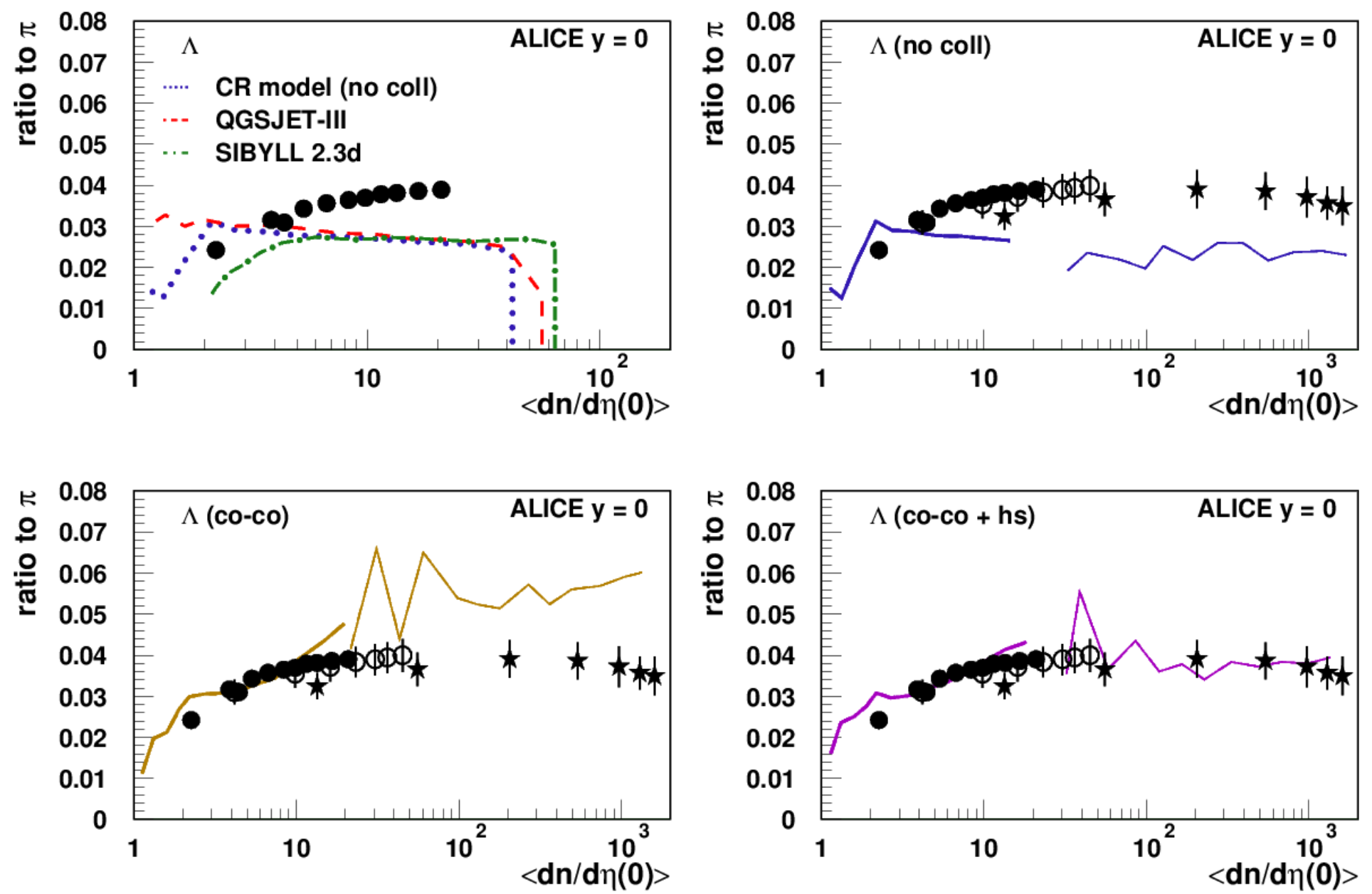
Example with protons in p-p and Pb-Pb @ LHC



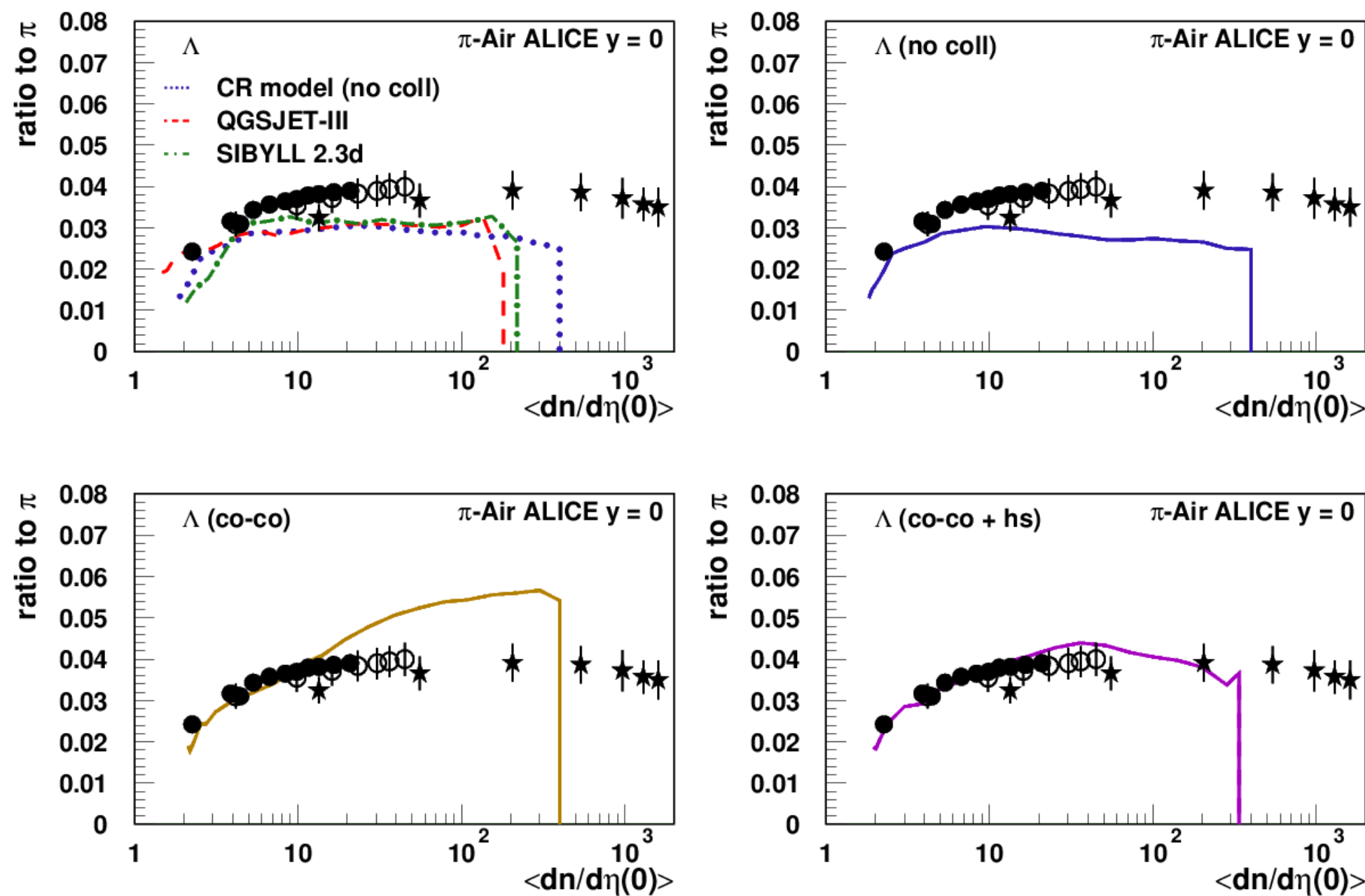
Example with protons in p-p and Pb-Pb @ LHC



Example with Lambda particle in p-p and Pb-Pb @ LHC



Example with Lambda particle in π -Air @ all energies

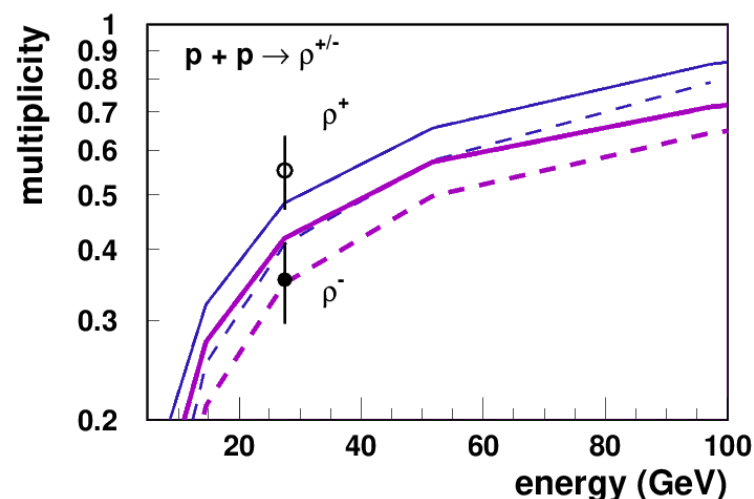
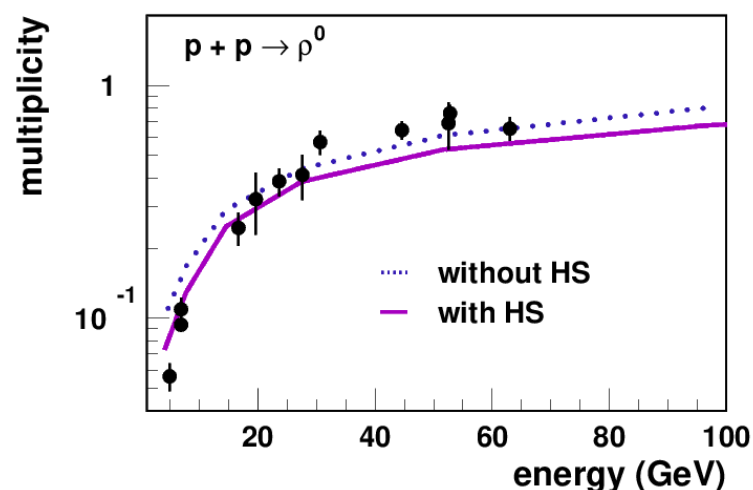
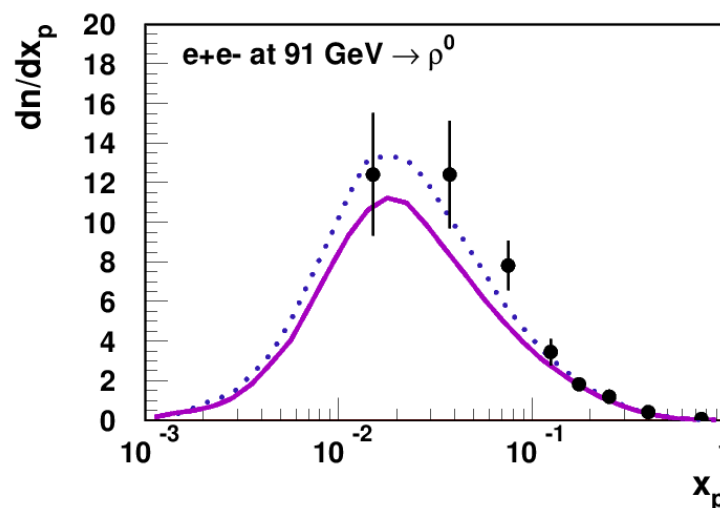
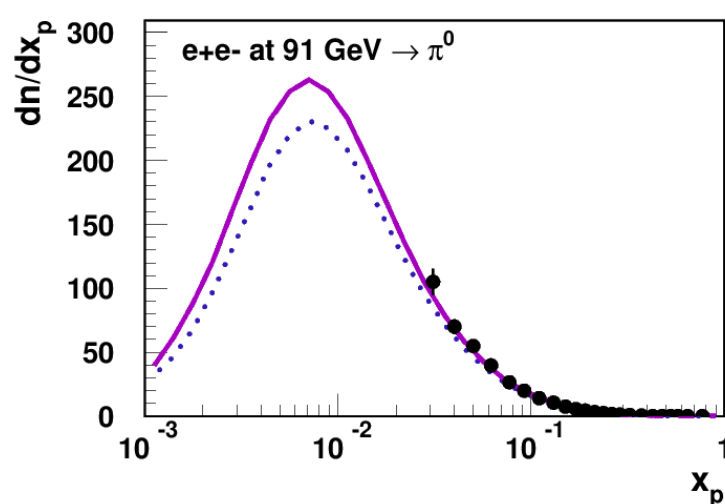


Impact of HS on light systems

If short hadronization time (~ 0.5 fm/c), particles close enough to interact

➔ Small but significant effect even in e^+e^- interactions

➔ Reduce ρ resonances and increase pions

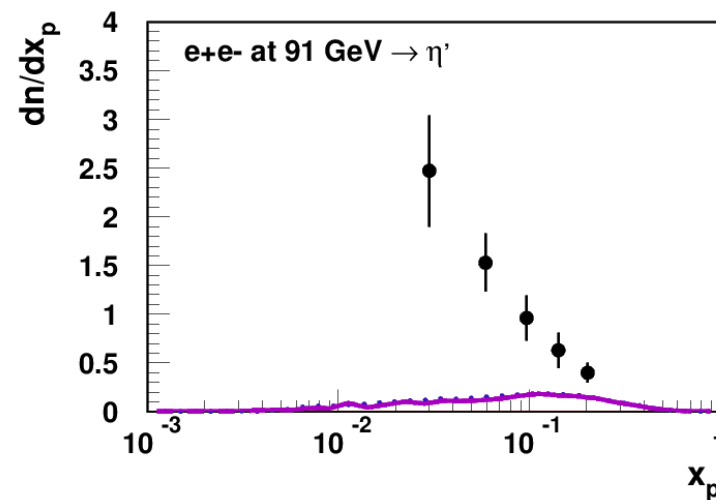
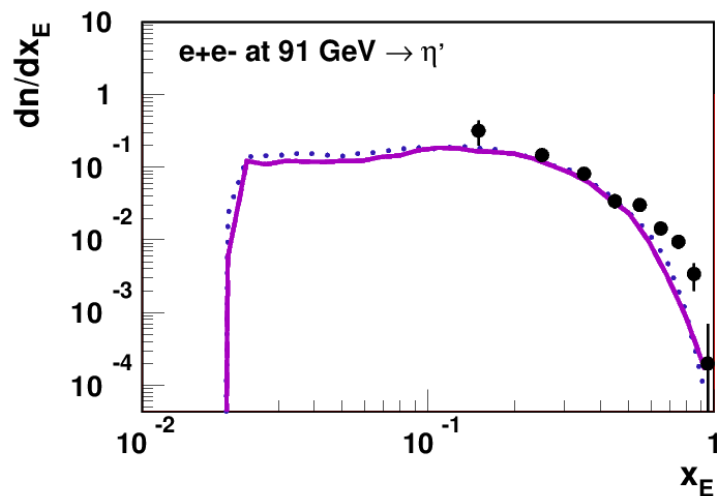
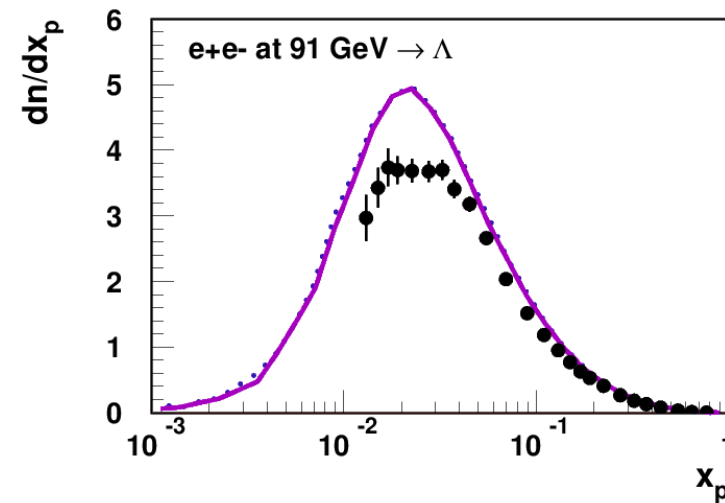
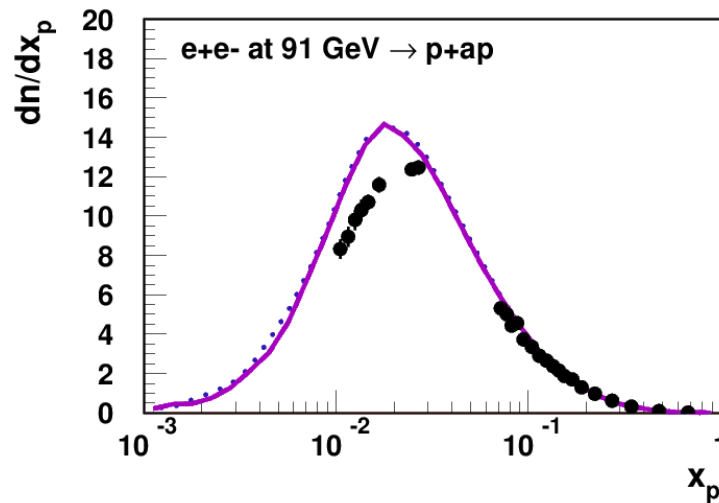


LEP data

If short hadronization time (~ 0.5 fm/c), particles close enough to interact

➔ Small but significant effect even in e+e- interactions

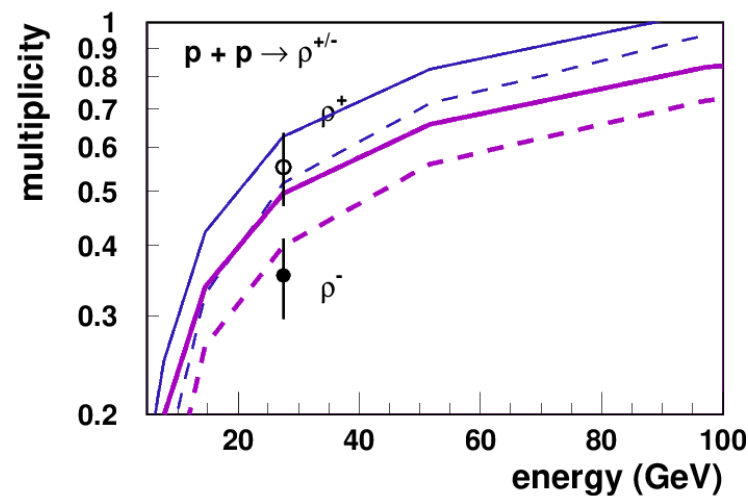
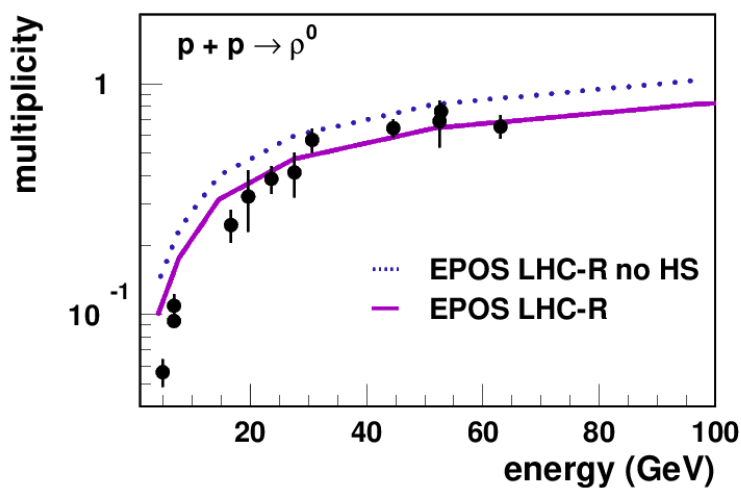
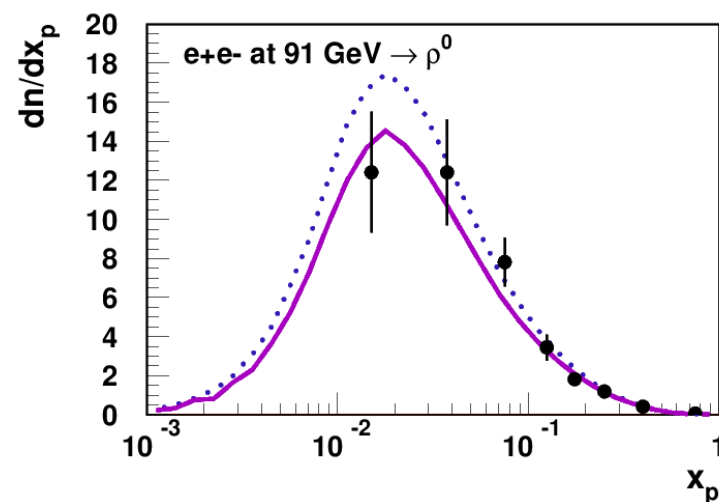
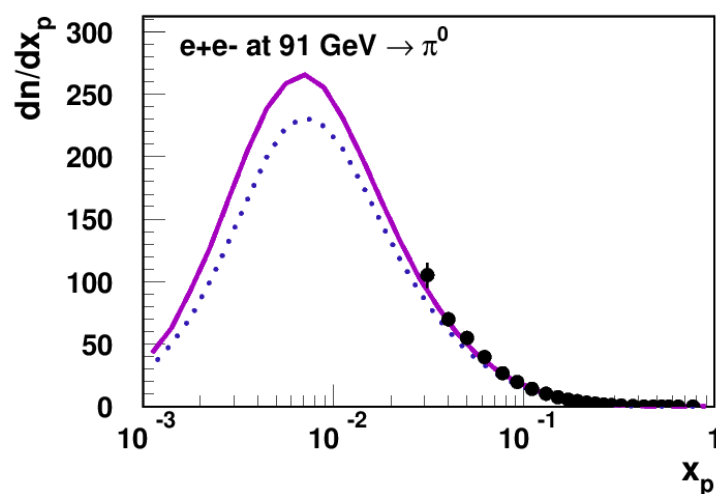
➔ More data could be considered if LEP data are used



Retune basic parameters with HS and LEP

EPOS LHC-R uses experimental constraints from LEP

➔ Increase contribution of ρ s to compensate the effect of HS

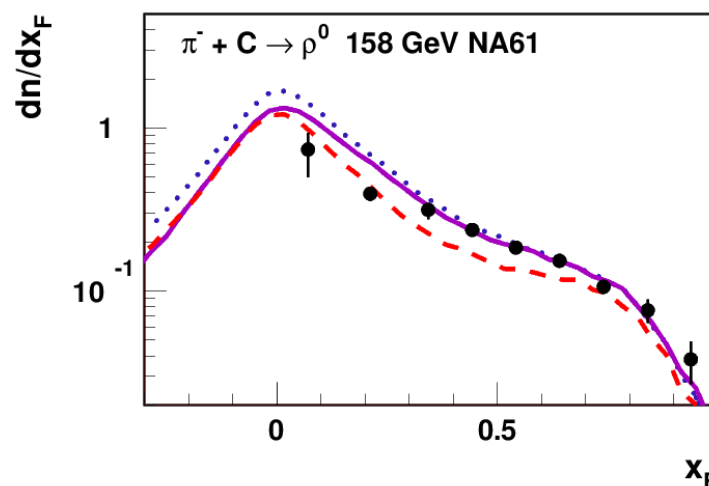
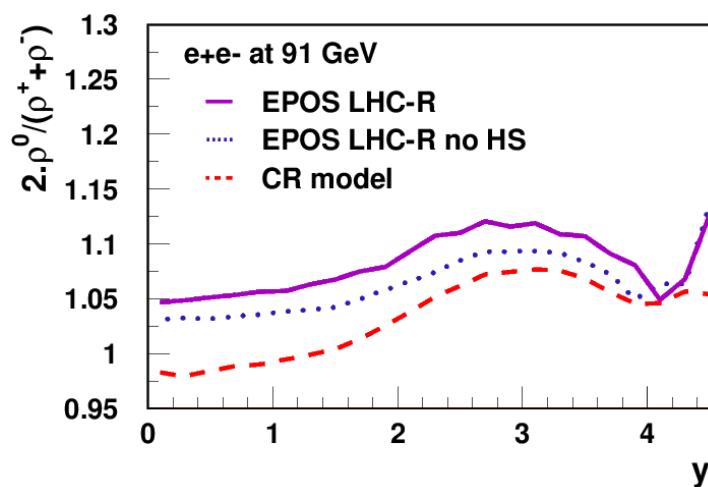
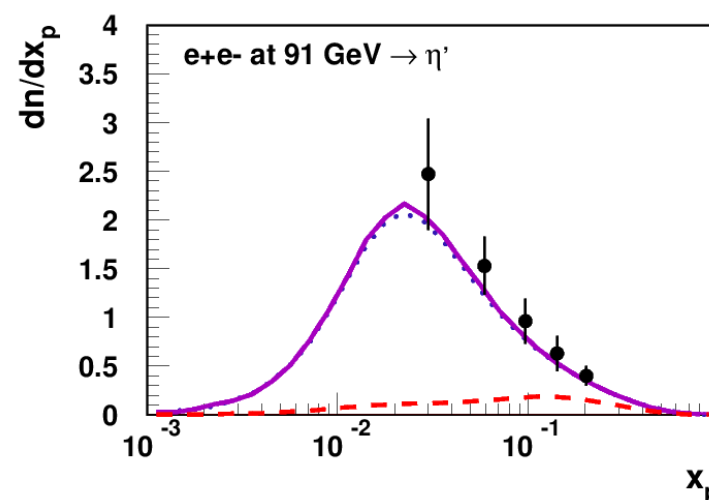
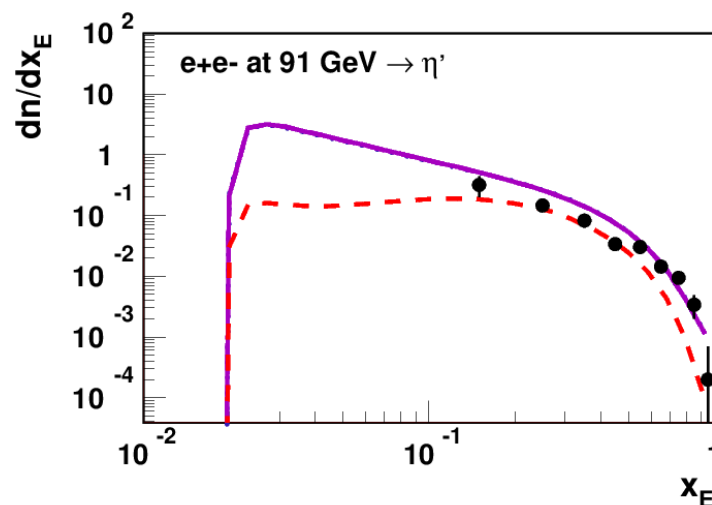


Retune basic parameters with HS and LEP

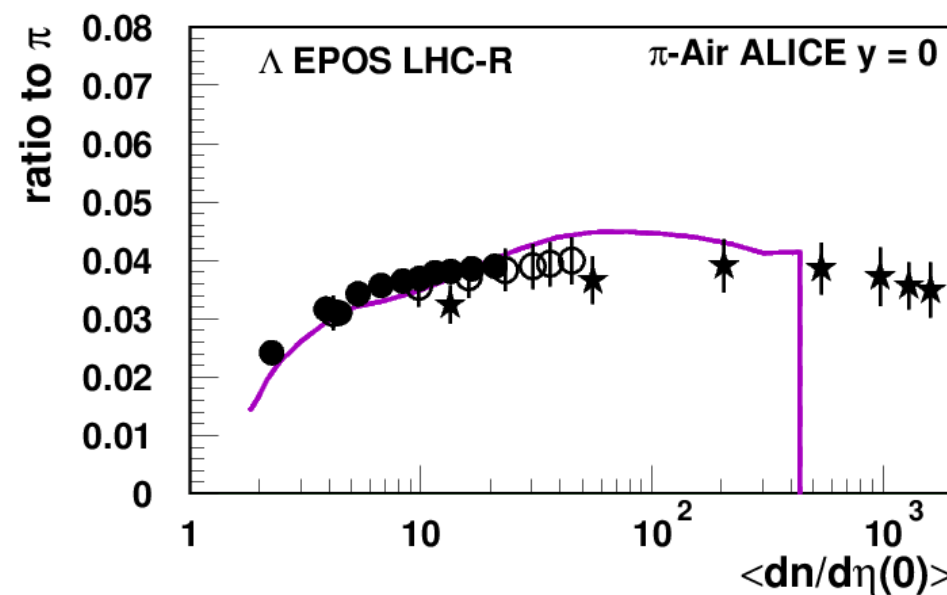
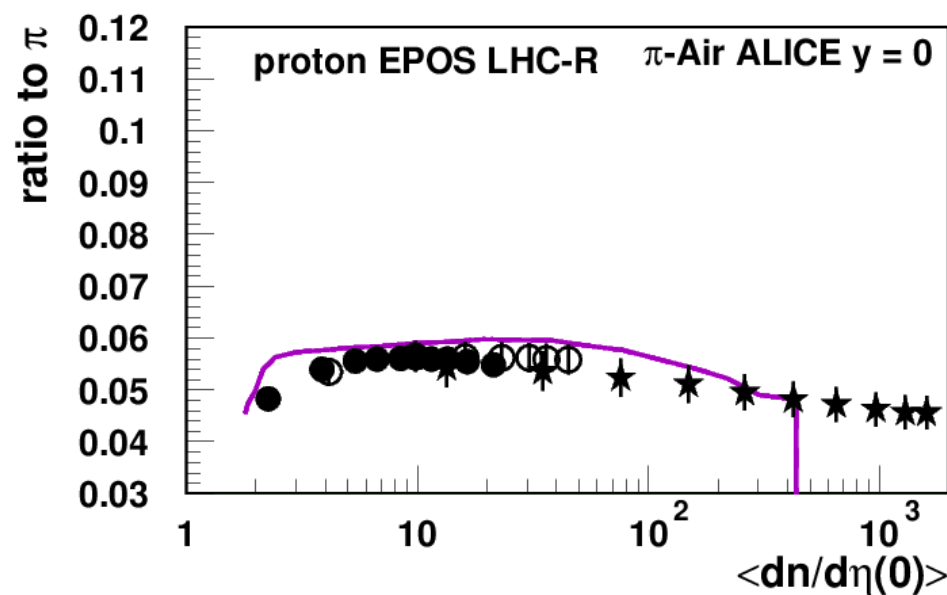
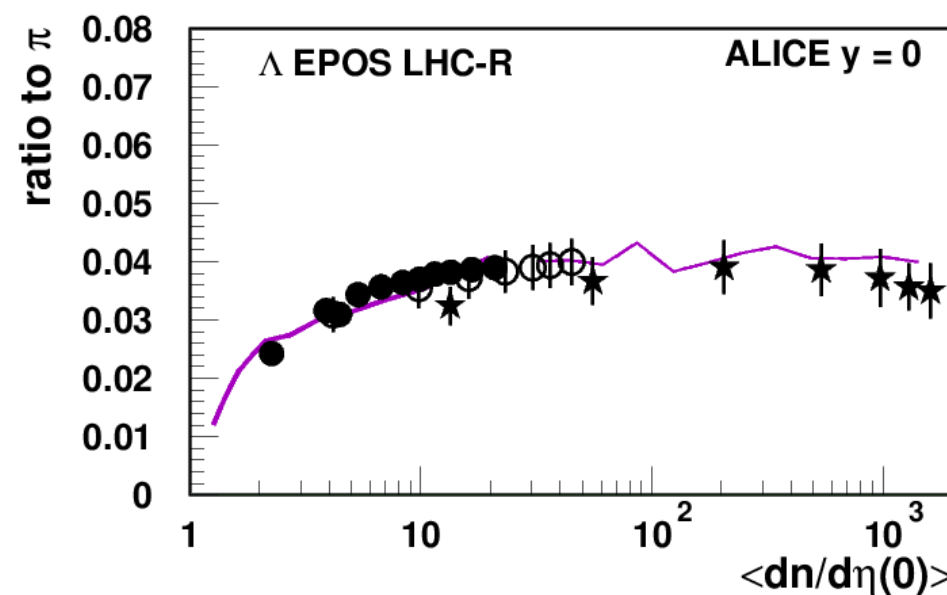
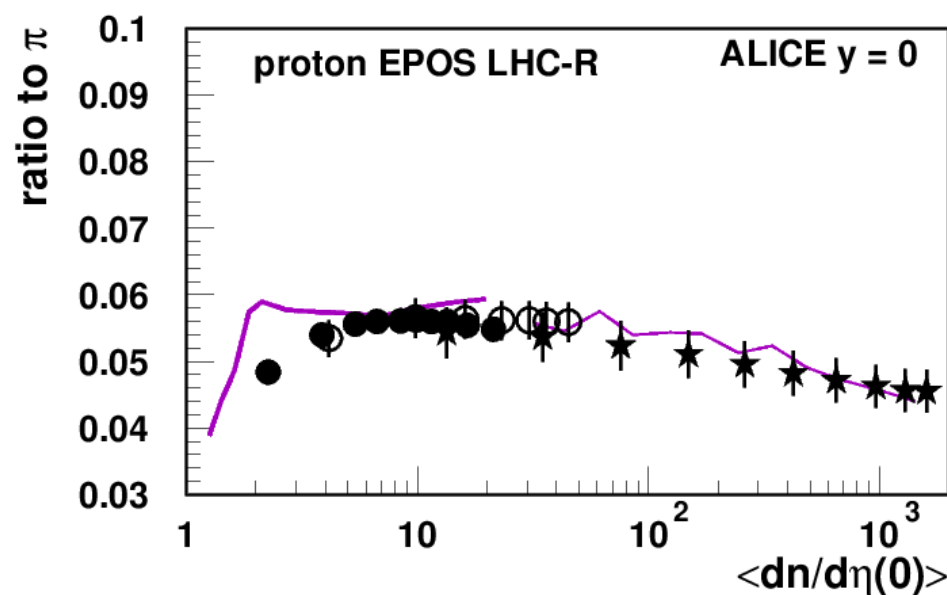
EPOS LHC-R uses experimental constraints from LEP

➔ Produce η' and f_0 in addition to η : change asymmetry for ρ (and π)

➔ Effect on muon production in air showers !



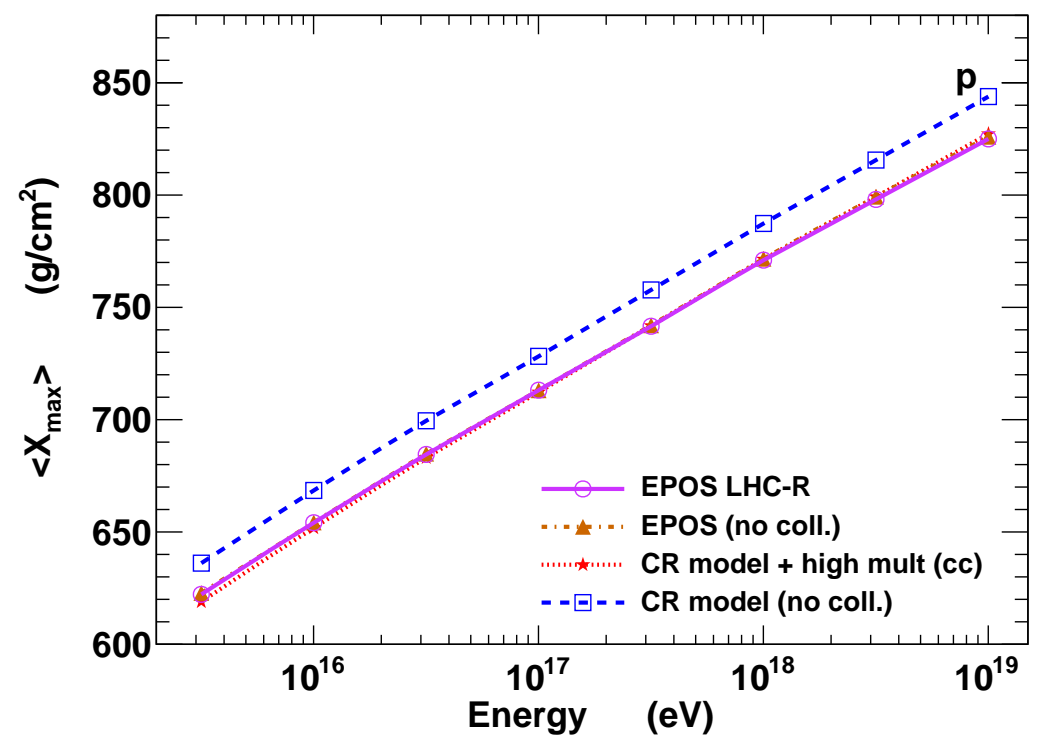
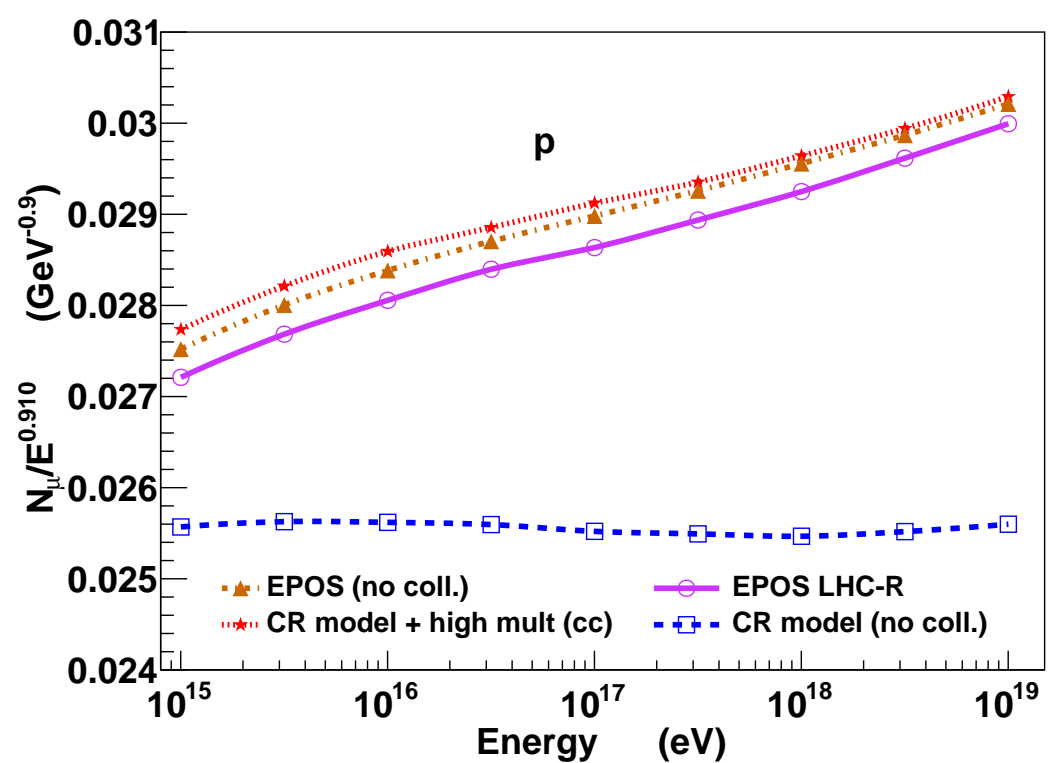
Check ALICE data



Impact on air showers

Changes with new tune taking into account collective effects (LHC)

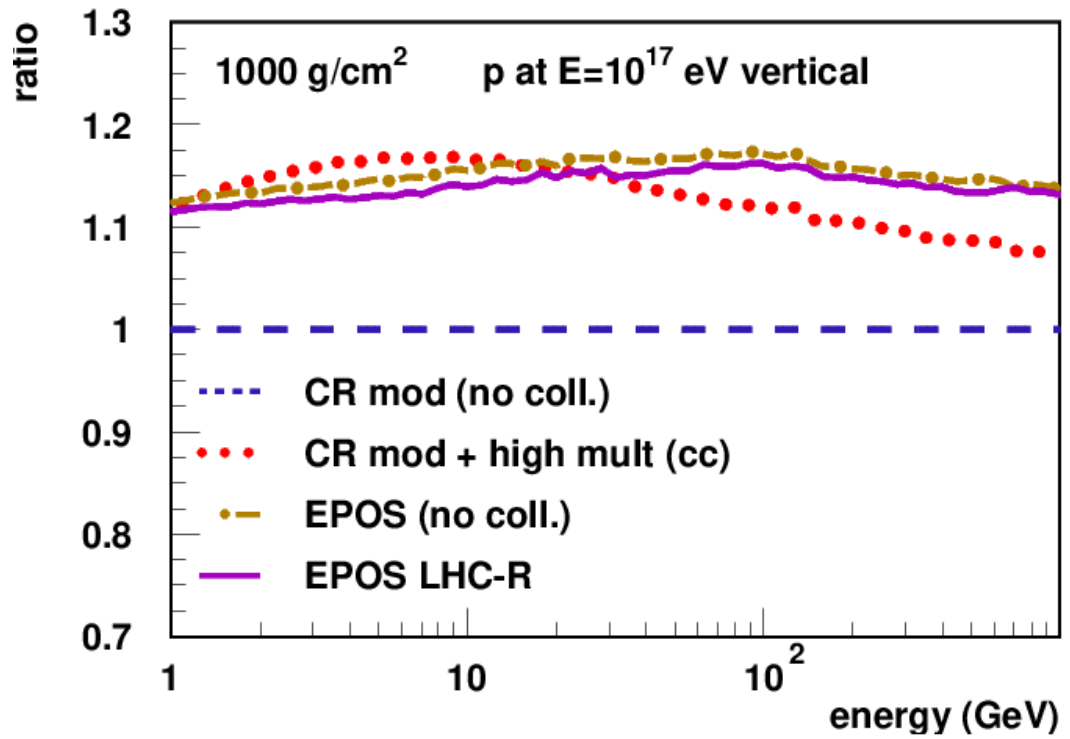
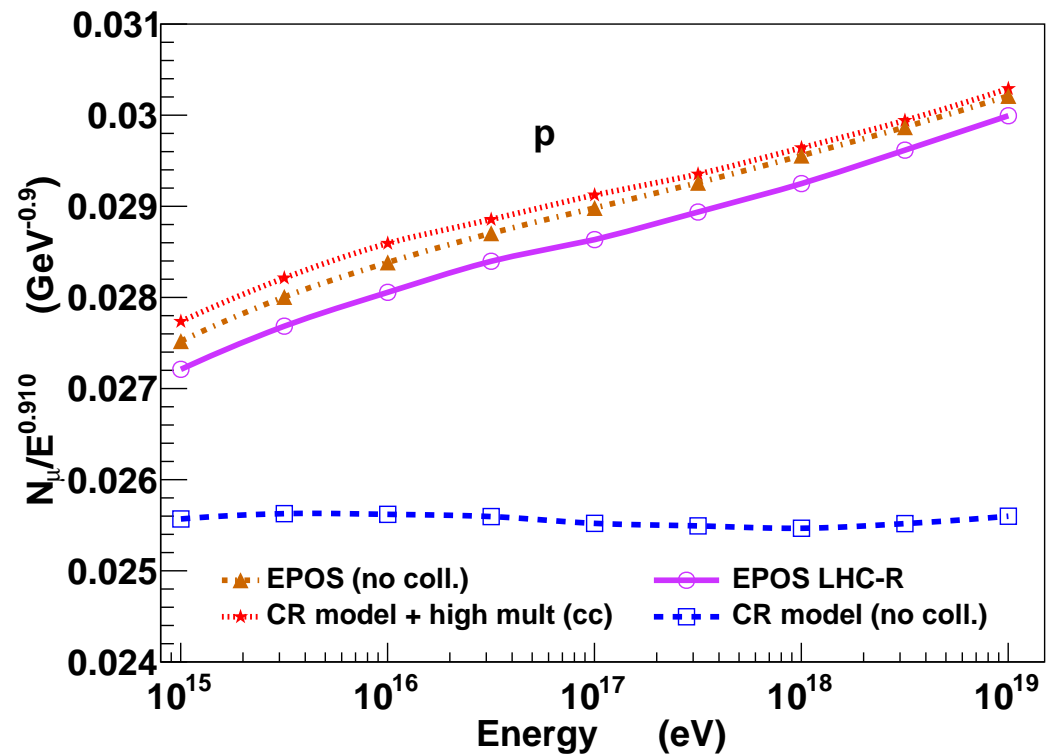
- ➔ Increase the number of muons by ... 10 to 20% (different slope) !
 - ➔ Large impact of the change to accommodate for core-corona (more hard)
 - ➔ But very little difference due to new tunes ????
- ➔ Change in X_{\max} due to the change in multiplicity and in elasticity (anti-correlated)



Impact on air showers

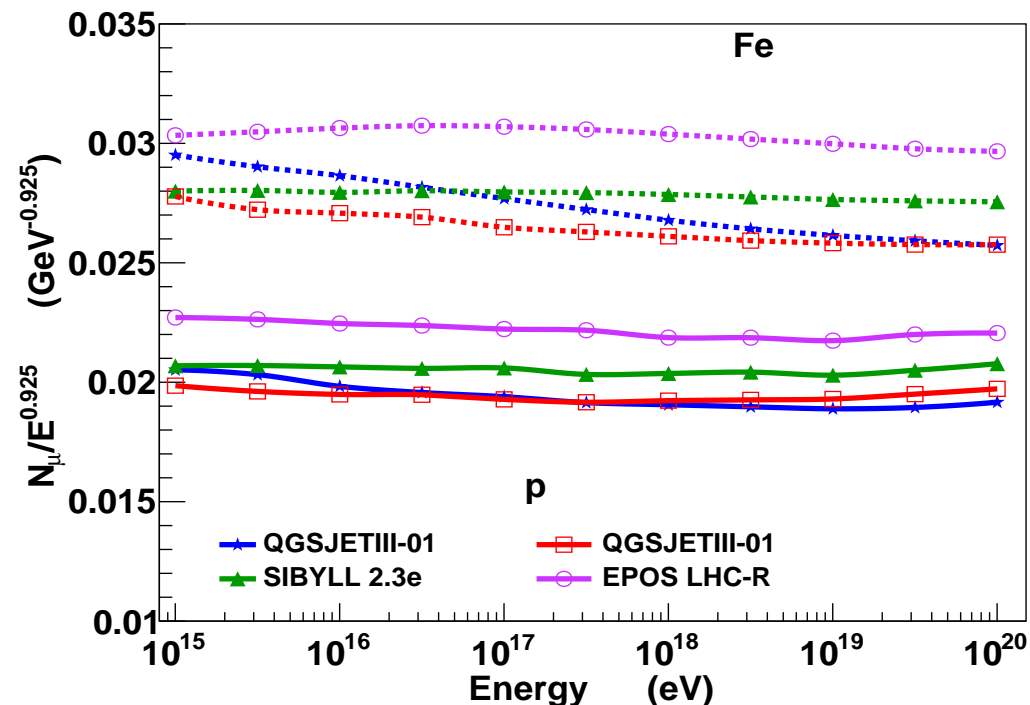
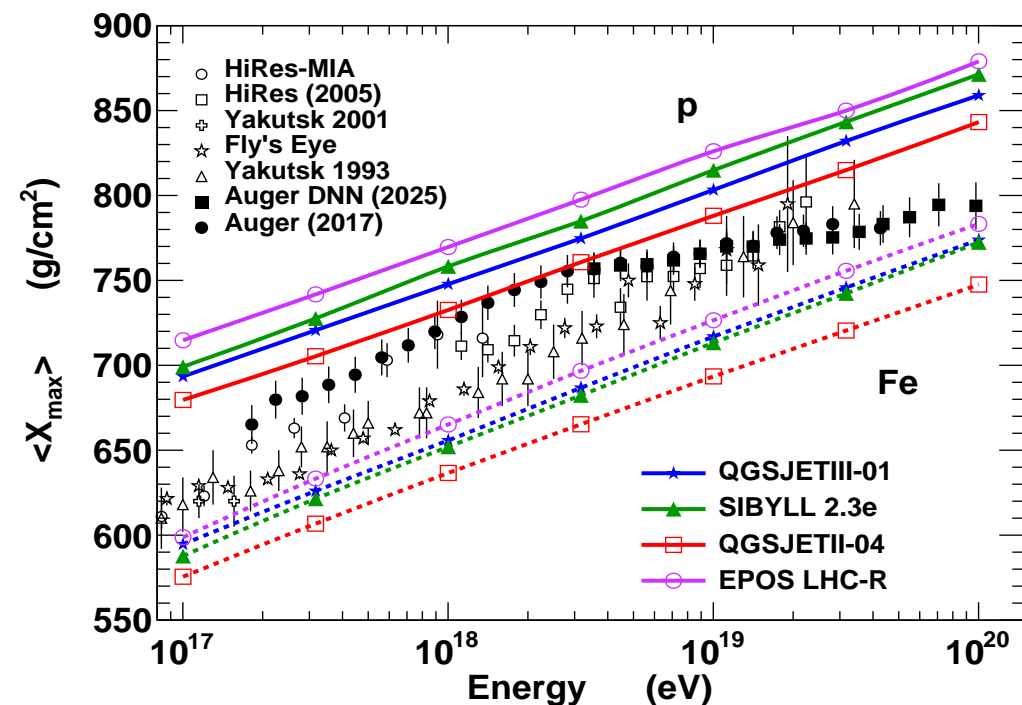
Changes with new tune taking into account collective effects (LHC)

- ➔ Increase the number of muons by ... 10 to 20% (different slope) !
 - Large impact of the change in multiplicity to accommodate for core-corona
 - But very little difference due to new tunes ????
- ➔ Change in muon energy spectrum !
 - Less baryon (low energy μ) but more ρ^0 (all μ)



Global changes

- ➔ Consequence of retuning, now EPOS shifted by +20 g/cm²
- ➔ QGSJETIII is shifted by +15 g/cm² = EPOS LHC
- ➔ Will give heavier composition when interpreting the data
- ➔ Consequence of retuning for muons, now EPOS shifted by +7%
- ➔ Change in QGSJETIII for muons mostly at low energy (LHAASO ?)

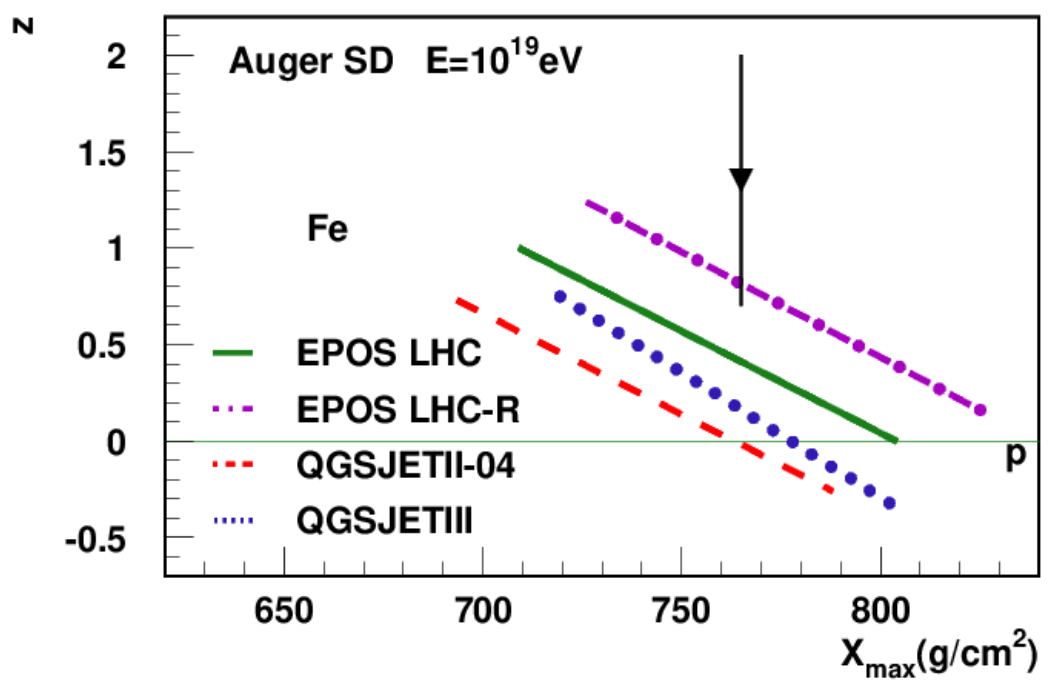
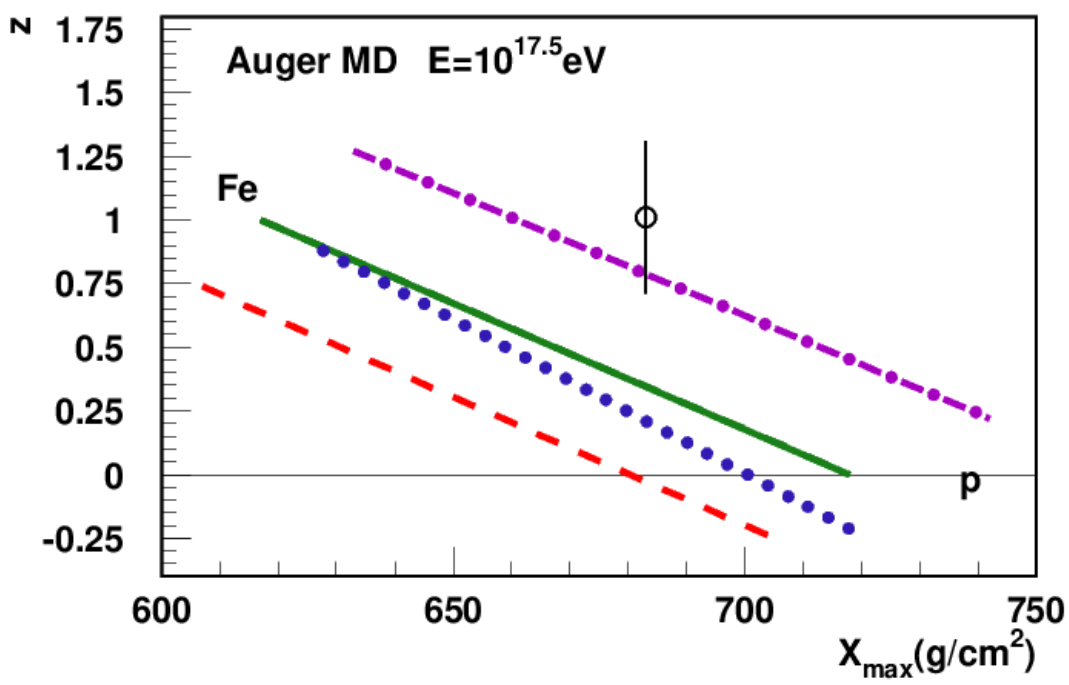


Muon Puzzle

EPOS LHC-R, first model producing a deeper X_{\max} and more muons and being compatible with all measured accelerator data :

- ➔ Deeper X_{\max} give larger $\langle \ln A \rangle$ reducing the gap with measured muon content
- ➔ Increase of muons further decrease the gap to reach Auger systematics
- ➔ No big change for QGSJETIII
 - Still no nuclear effect for hadronization !

$$z = \frac{\ln N_{\mu}^{\text{det}} - \ln N_{\mu,p}^{\text{det}}}{\ln N_{\mu,\text{Fe}}^{\text{det}} - \ln N_{\mu,p}^{\text{det}}}$$



Multiplicity

Collective effects are important to tune properly the models !

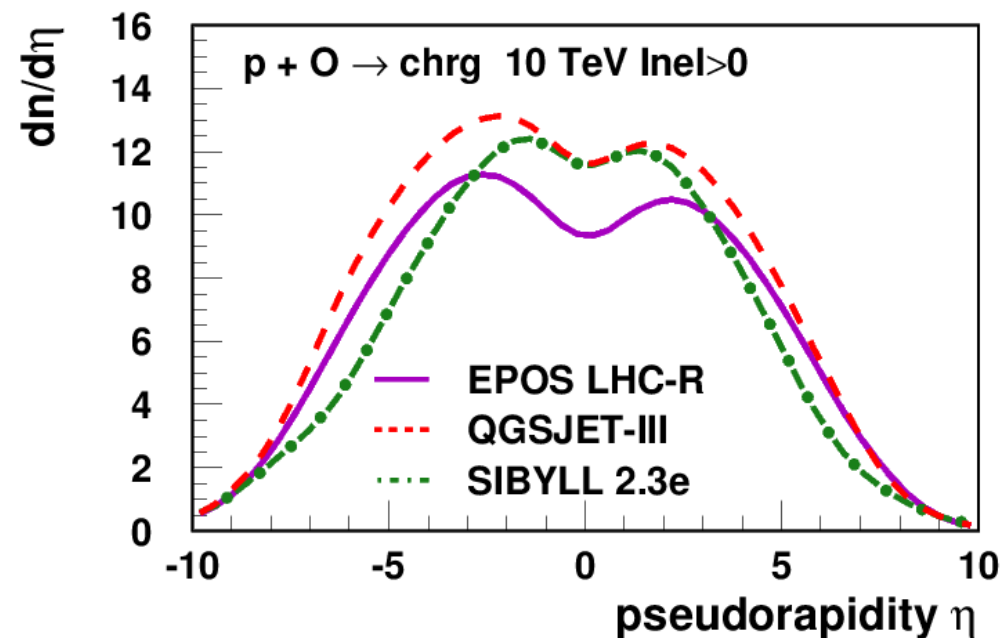
➔ Indirect impact on multiplicity and elasticity

■ Is it possible to predict multiplicity without collective effects ?

➔ pO data

■ Is elasticity anti-correlated with multiplicity ?

➔ Forward spectra vs mid-rapidity multiplicity (or # of mini-jets)

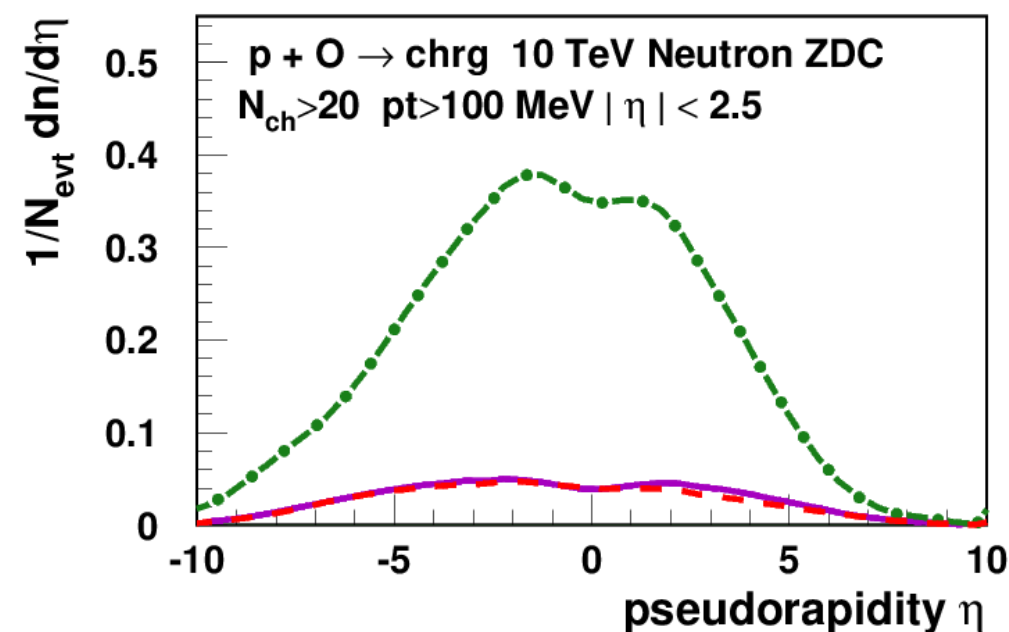
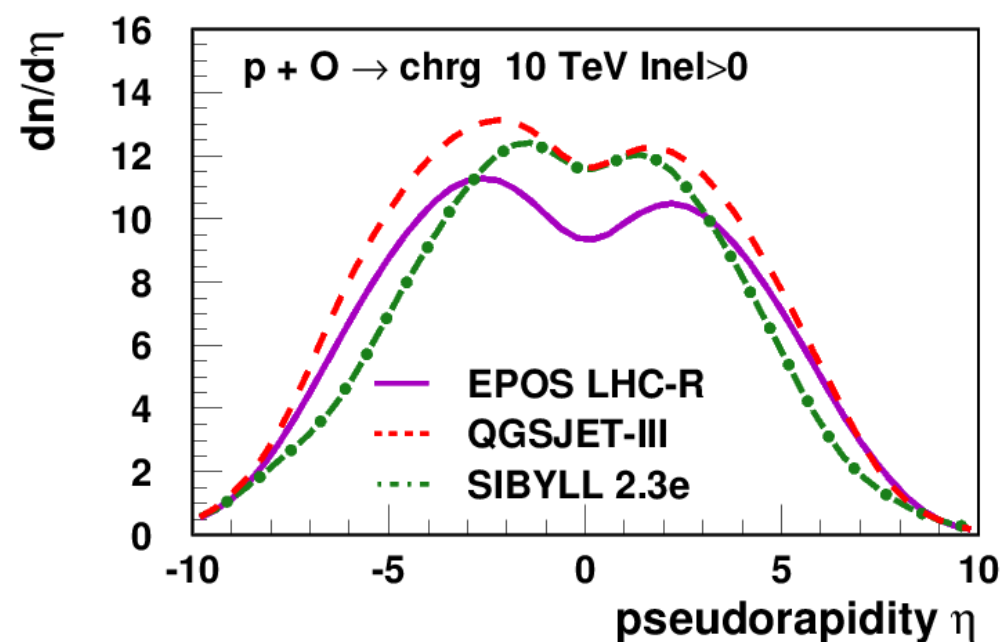


Multiplicity for pion projectile

Collective effects are important to tune properly the models !

➔ Still lack of constrain on pion-Air multiplicity

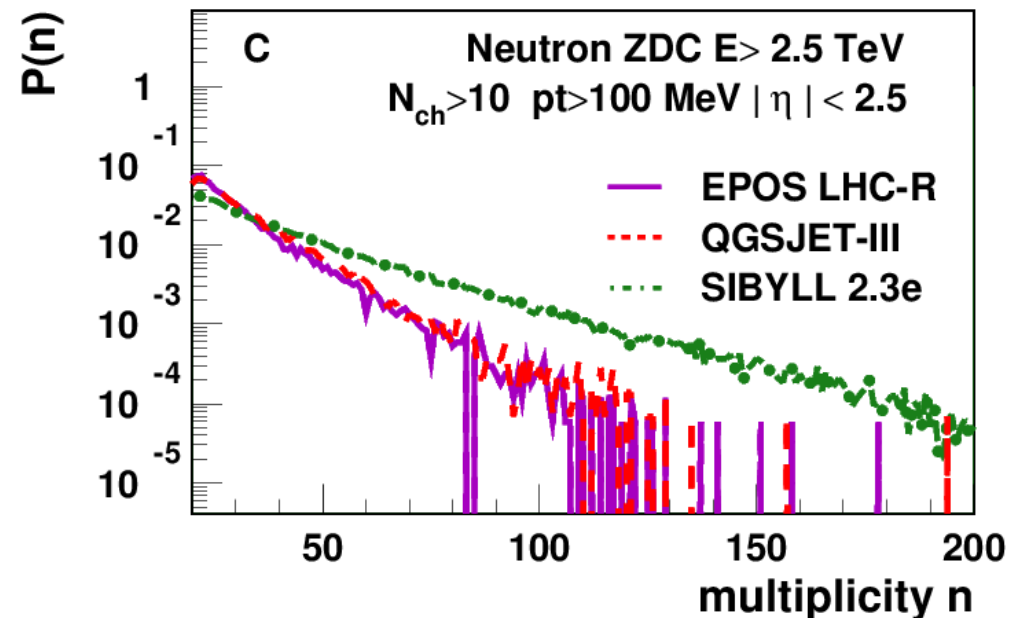
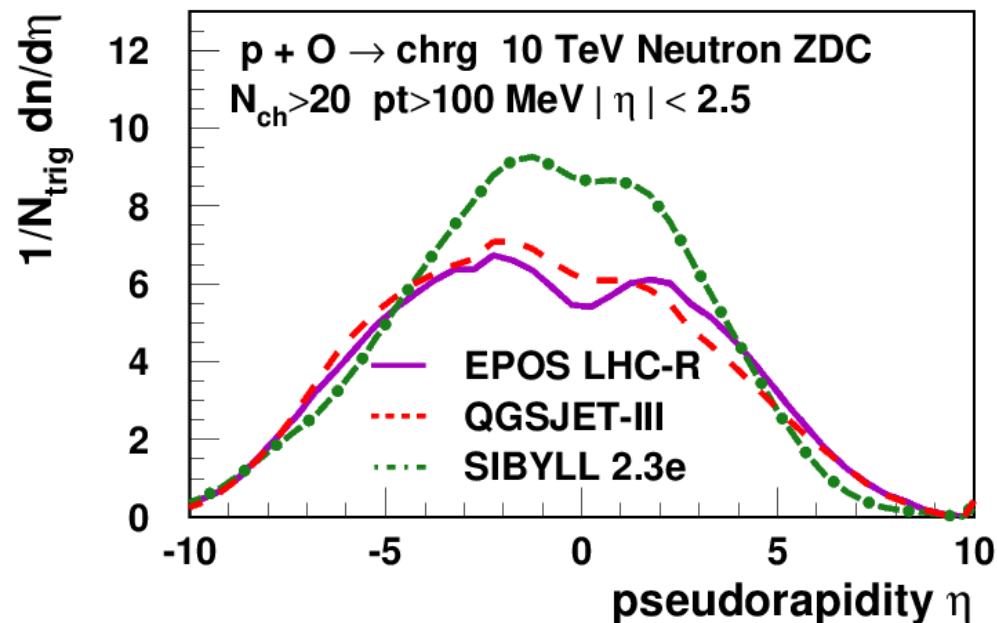
- up to $\pm 5\%$ uncertainty in N_{μ} and $\pm 5 \text{ g/cm}^2$ for X_{\max}
- Use pion exchange in p-O interactions to probe = neutron tag in ZDC (LHCf)



Multiplicity with neutron tag

Collective effects are important to tune properly the models !

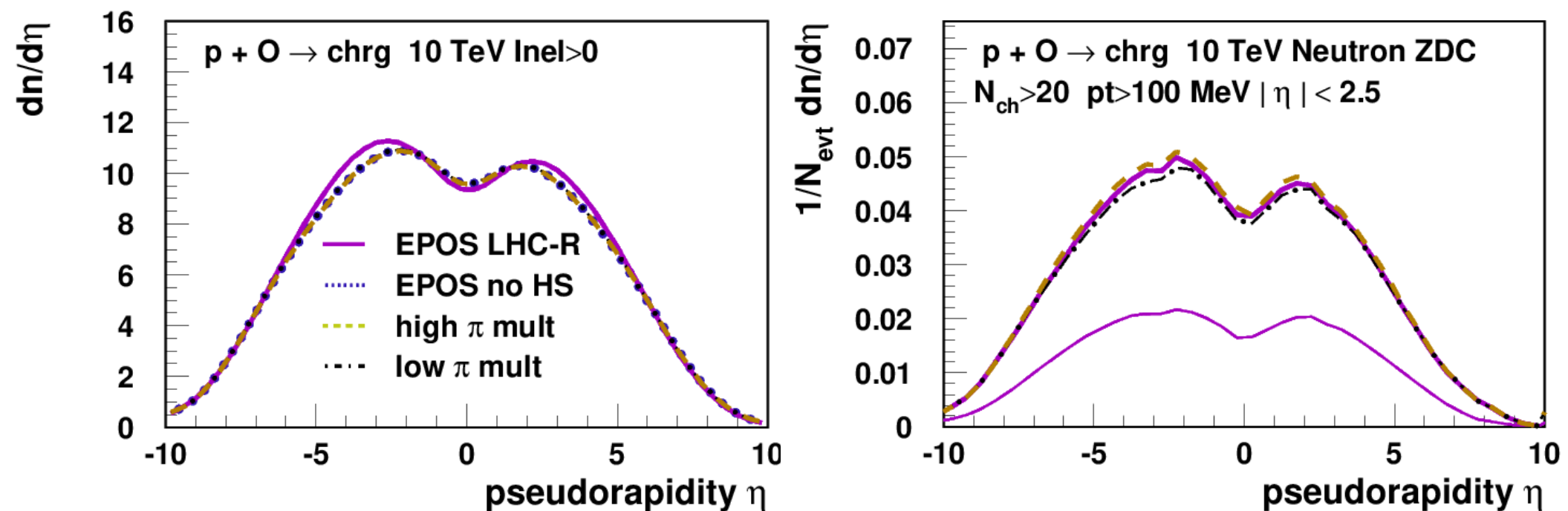
- ➔ Still lack of constrain on pion-Air multiplicity
 - up to $\pm 5\%$ uncertainty in N_{μ} and $\pm 5 \text{ g/cm}^2$ for X_{\max}
 - Use pion exchange in p-O interactions to probe = neutron tag in ZDC (LHCf)
- ➔ Trigger on forward neutron + high multiplicity at mid-rapidity to select pion exchange interaction (around 50% in EPOS)



Multiplicity with neutron tag

Collective effects are important to tune properly the models !

- ➔ Still lack of constrain on pion-Air multiplicity
 - Can we get the sensitivity to test the π -O / p-O in a given model ?
- ➔ Trigger on forward neutron + high multiplicity at mid-rapidity to select pion exchange interaction (around 50% in EPOS)



Multiplicity with neutron tag

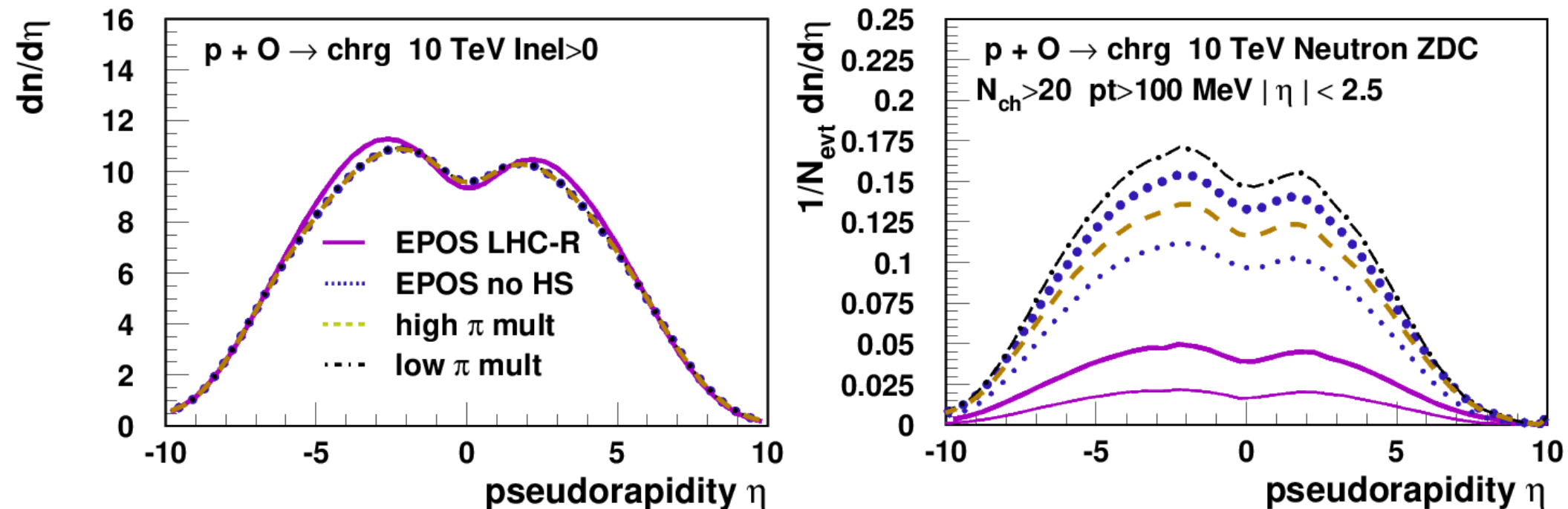
Collective effects are important to tune properly the models !

➔ Still lack of constrain on pion-Air multiplicity

■ Can we get the sensitivity to test the π -O / p-O in a given model ?

➔ Trigger on forward neutron + high multiplicity at mid-rapidity to select pion exchange interaction (around 50% in EPOS)

■ Dependence on hadronic rescattering in EPOS LHC-R ... to be confirmed ?



Future measurements at LHC

Hadronic rescattering and collective effects are important to tune properly the models !

→ Is this approach fully correct ?

- Need data to confirm the role/presence of hadronic rescattering even in low multiplicity system (mid-rapidity)
- Need forward data for model validation

➡ If model is validated, mid rapidity data are very constraining

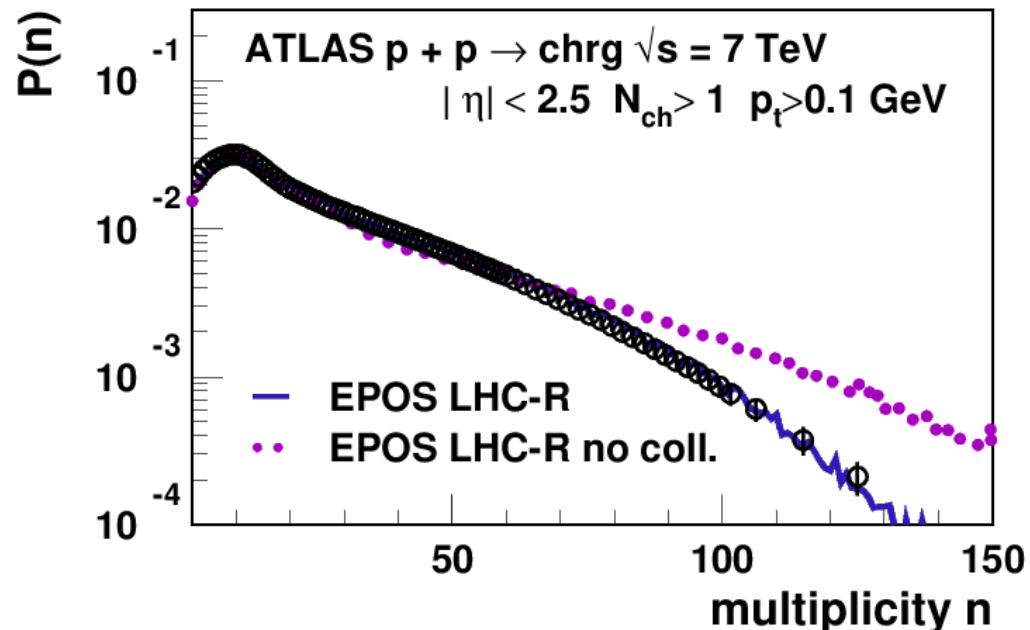
→ Test collective effects

- multiplicity/hard vs soft
- strangeness/baryon vs multiplicity
- Pt ratios
- How forward does it goes ?

➡ LHCb !

→ Measure resonances:

- can we confirm that $\rho^0/\rho^{+/-} > 1$



Outlook

- Updated results of cross-sections, multiplicity and diffraction/elasticity
 - ➔ Large impact on X_{max}
 - ➔ Larger $\langle \ln A \rangle$ (heavier primary mass → reduce “muon puzzle”)
- Details of hadronization matters
 - ➔ Important role of resonances
 - ➔ ρ^0 impacted by hadronic rescattering, important to take it into account as well as higher mass resonances like η' or $f_0(980)$
 - ➔ Evolution of strangeness with multiplicity
 - ➔ Different type of hadronization and impact on apparent multiplicity
 - ➔ **Combination of the 3 effects improve significantly the description of EAS !**
- Source of muon puzzle probably due to the fact that collective effects including hadron rescattering were always neglected
 - ➔ Change the correlation between mid-rapidity (data and tuning) and forward particle production (EAS)
- **Fusion of EPOS LHC-R and EPOS 4 → additional constraints from hydro.**

Recent **LHC** data provide new constraints on models, changing X_{max} and the muon production if a **global approach** is used.

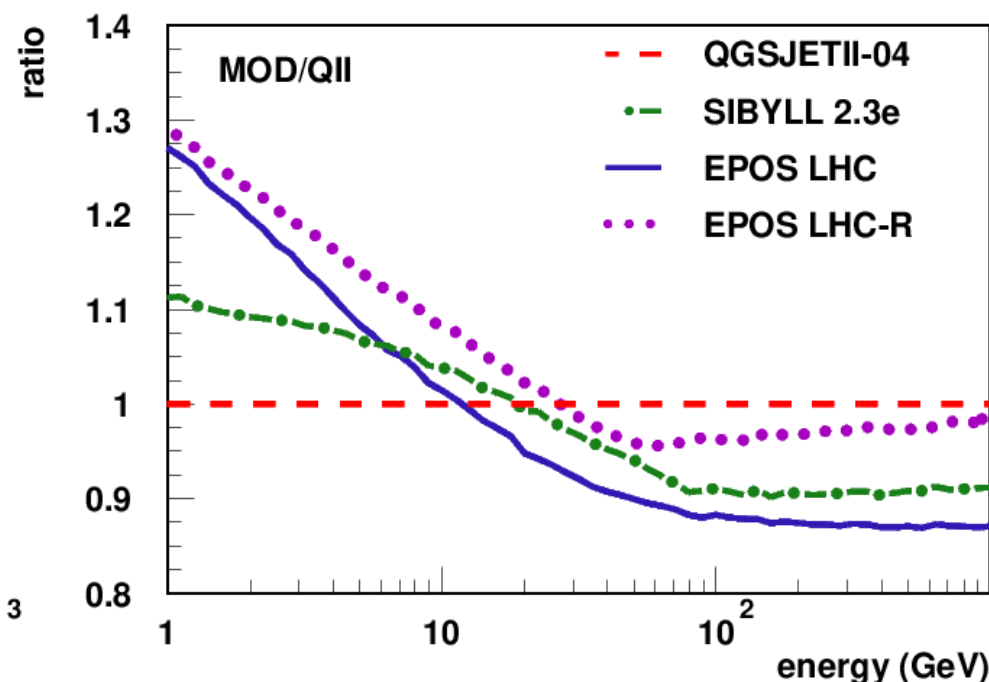
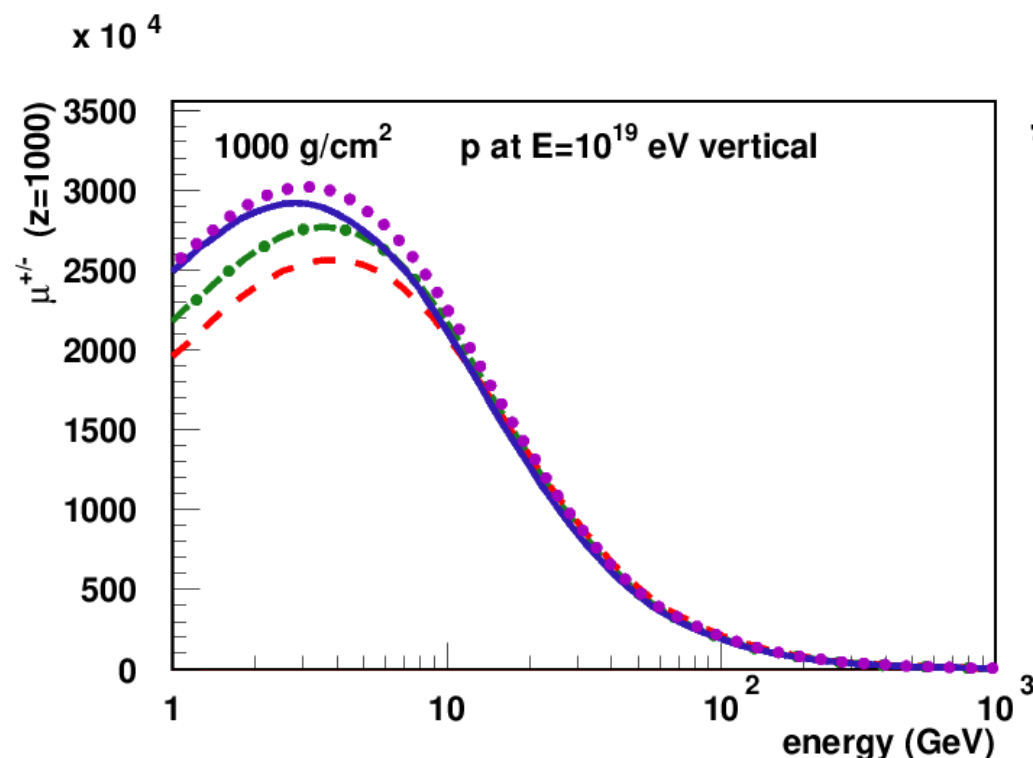
More data needed to validate models and reduce uncertainties!

Thank you !

$$E_{\mu}$$

First simulations with full collective effect implementation:

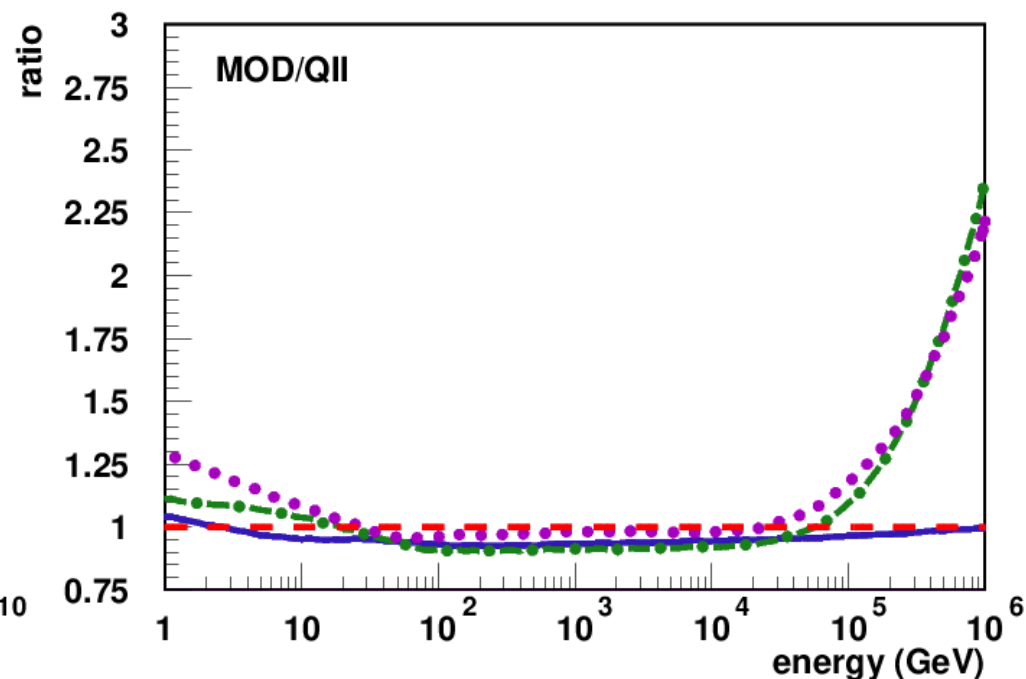
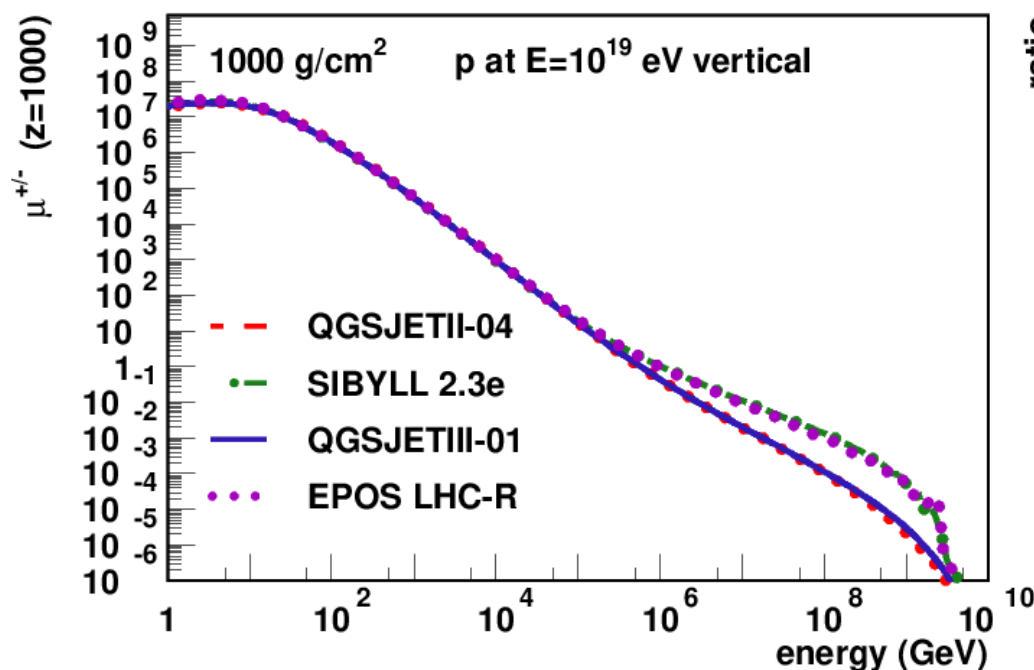
- ➔ Simulations without core-corona but ρ asymmetry already have more muons
 - ➔ Parallel shift changing all muon energies
- ➔ Pion-Air multiplicity impact muon energy between 10 and 100 GeV
- ➔ Better tune of kaons (indirect impact of core-corona)
 - ➔ Increase >100 GeV muons (Ice-Top/Ice-Cube)



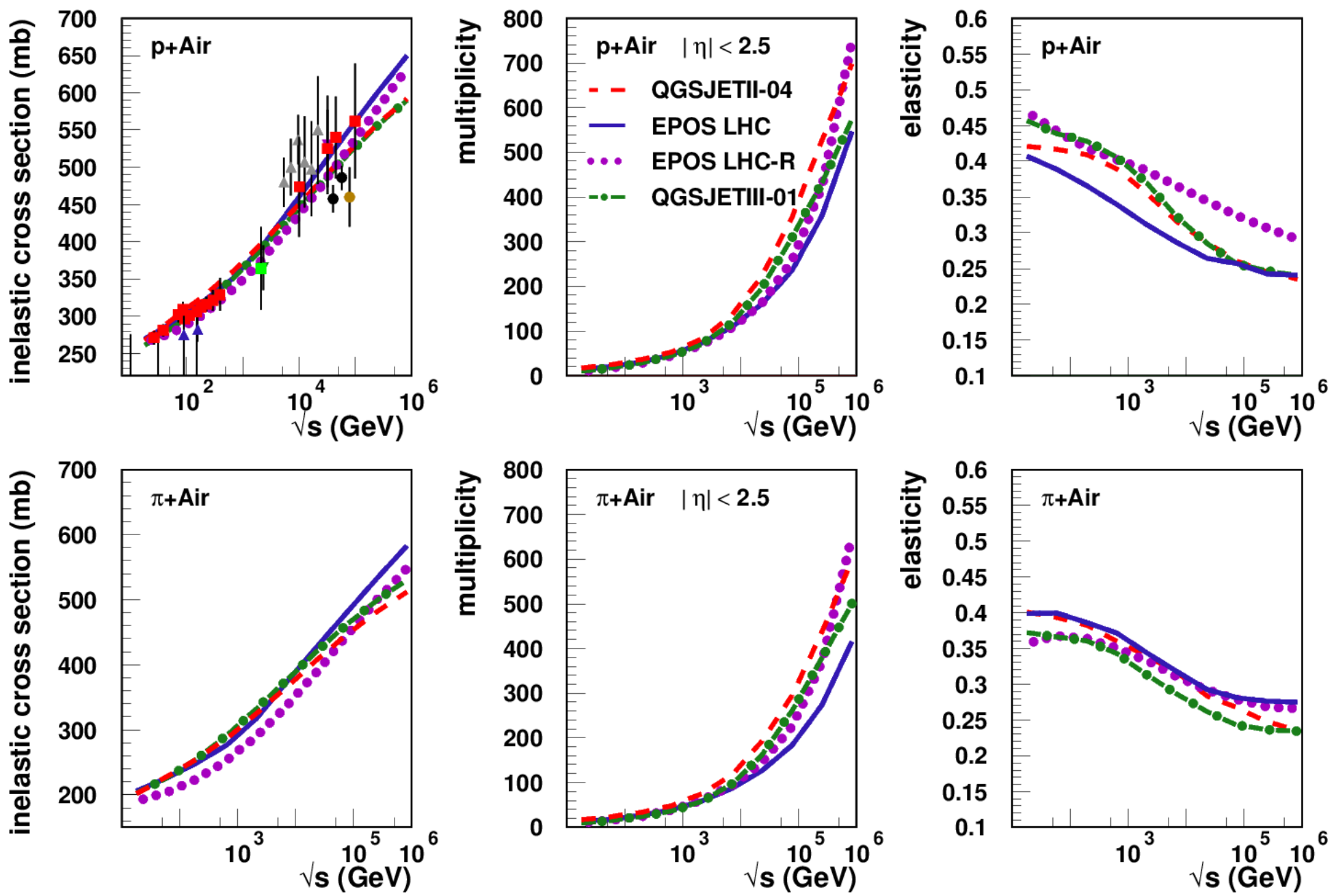
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- ➔ Better tune of kaons (indirect impact of core-corona)
- ➔ Very high energy muons from charm ! (background for neutrino analysis)

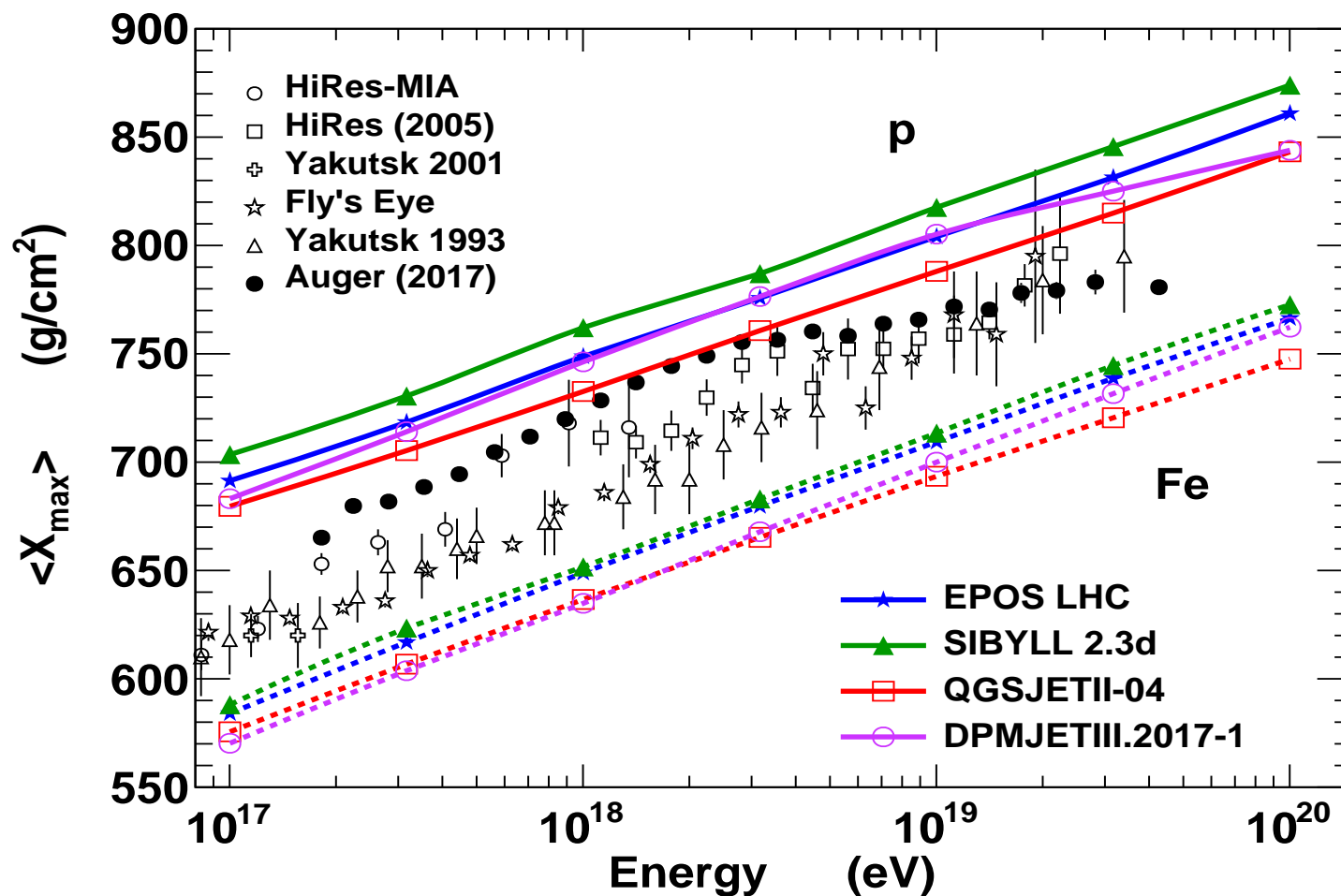


EPOS LHC-R interaction with Air



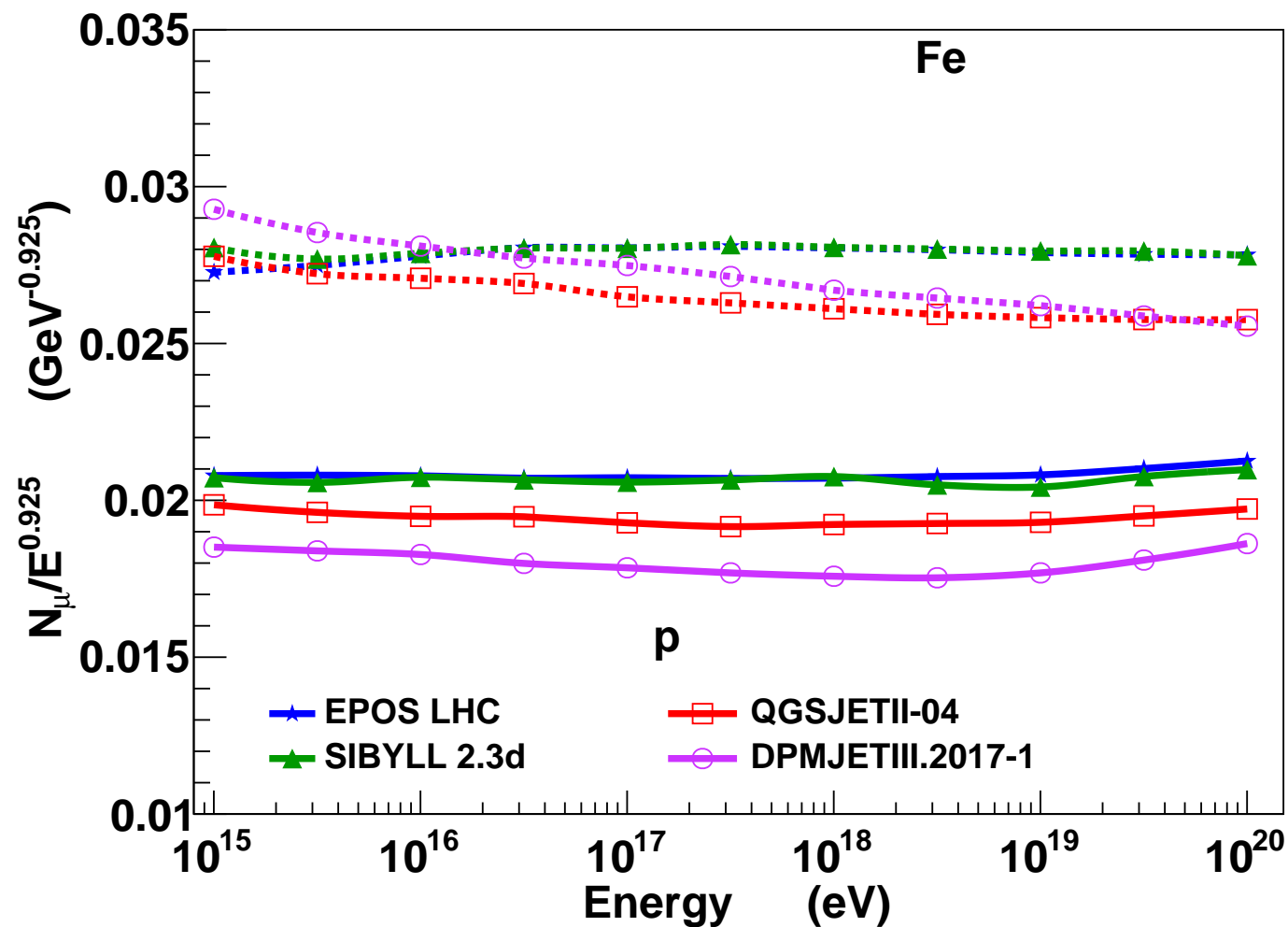
Old models

- ➔ Model range around EPOS LHC +/- 15 g/cm²
- ➔ Relatively light composition using QGSJETII-04



Old models

- ➔ 15% difference between models (10% not counting DPMJET)
- ➔ Not enough in comparison to data (“muon puzzle”)



Constraints from Correlated Change

- One needs to change energy dependence of muon production by $\sim +4\%$

- To reduce muon discrepancy β has to be change

→ X_{\max} alone (composition) will not change the energy evolution

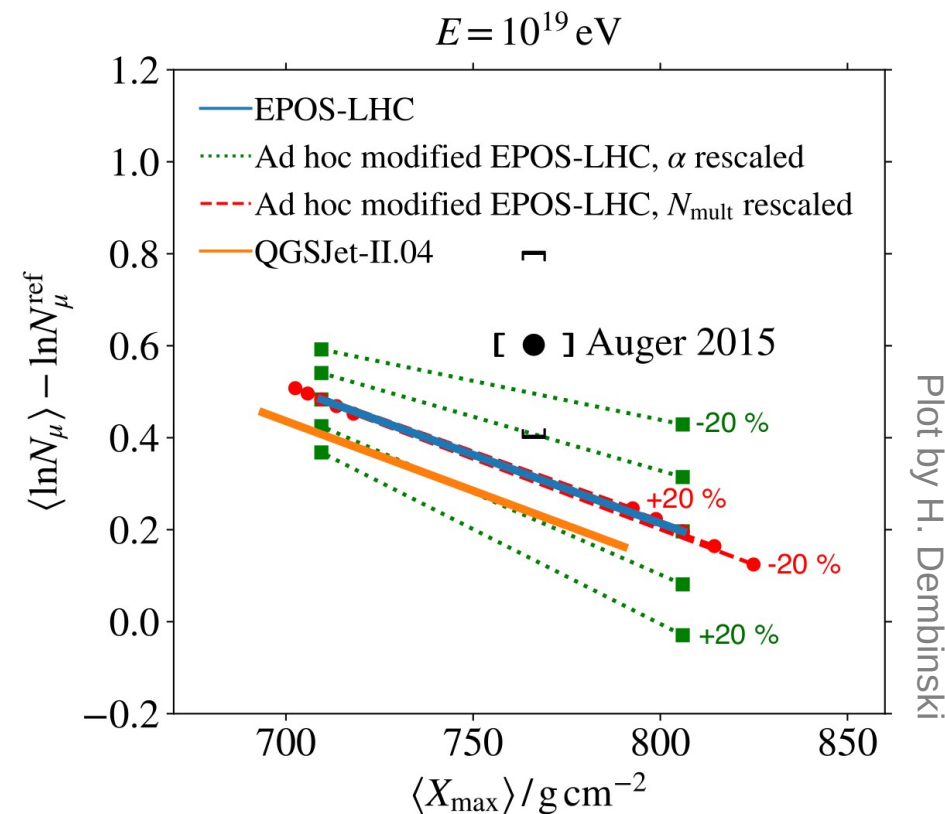
→ β changes the muon energy evolution but not X_{\max}

$$\beta = \frac{\ln(N_{\text{mult}} - N_{\pi^0})}{\ln(N_{\text{mult}})} = 1 + \frac{\ln(1 - \alpha)}{\ln(N_{\text{mult}})}$$

→ $+4\%$ for β → -30% for $\alpha = \frac{N_{\pi^0}}{N_{\text{mult}}}$

$$N_{\mu} = A^{1-\beta} \left(\frac{E}{E_0} \right)^{\beta}$$

$$X_{\max} \sim \lambda_e \ln \left(E_0 / (2 \cdot N_{\text{mult}} \cdot A) \right) + \lambda_{\text{ine}}$$



Possible Particle Physics Explanations

A 30% change in particle charge ratio ($\alpha = \frac{N_{\pi^0}}{N_{\text{mult}}}$) is huge !

➔ Possibility to increase N_{mult} limited by X_{\max}

➔ New Physics ?

- Chiral symmetry restoration (Farrar et al.) ?
- Strange fireball (Anchordoqui et al., Julien Manshanden) ?
- String Fusion (Alvarez-Muniz et al.) ?

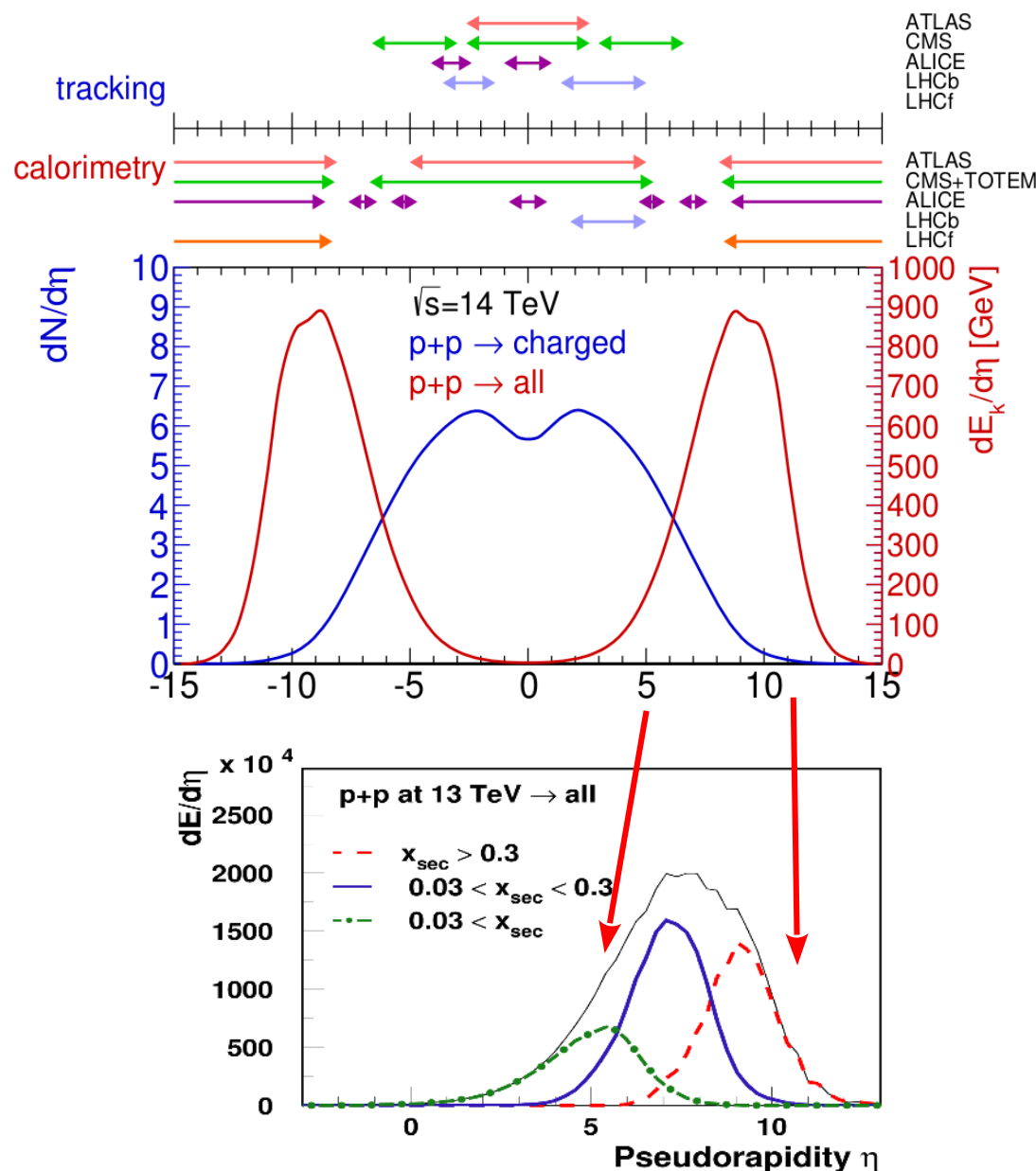
➡ Problem : no strong effect observed at LHC ($\sim 10^{17}$ eV)

➔ **Unexpected production of Quark Gluon Plasma (QGP) in light systems observed at the LHC** (at least modified hadronization)

- Reduced α is a sign of QGP formation (enhanced strangeness and baryon production reduces relative π^0 fraction. Baur et al., arXiv:1902.09265) !
- α depends on the hadronization scheme

➡ How is it done in hadronic interaction models ?

LHC acceptance and Phase Space



p-p data mainly from “central” detectors

- \rightarrow pseudorapidity $\eta = -\ln(\tan(\theta/2))$
- \rightarrow $\theta=0$ is midrapidity
- \rightarrow $\theta \gg 1$ is forward
- \rightarrow $\theta \ll 1$ is backward

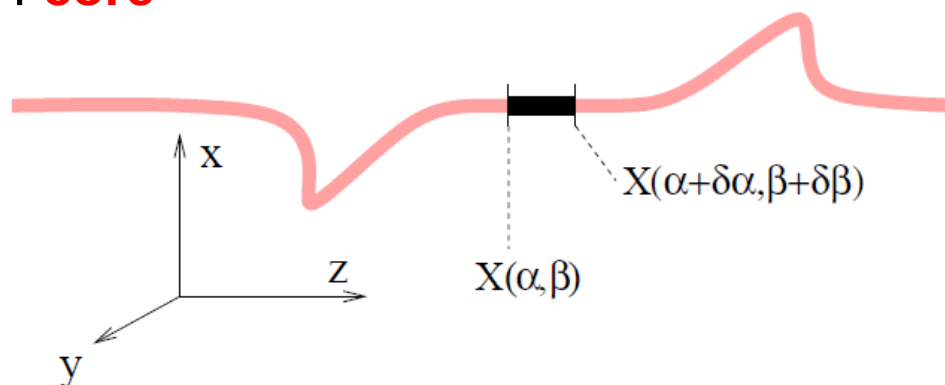
Different phase space for LHC and air showers

- \rightarrow most of the particles produced at **midrapidity**
- \blacksquare important for **models**
- \rightarrow most of the energy carried by **forward** (backward) particles
- \blacksquare important for **air showers**

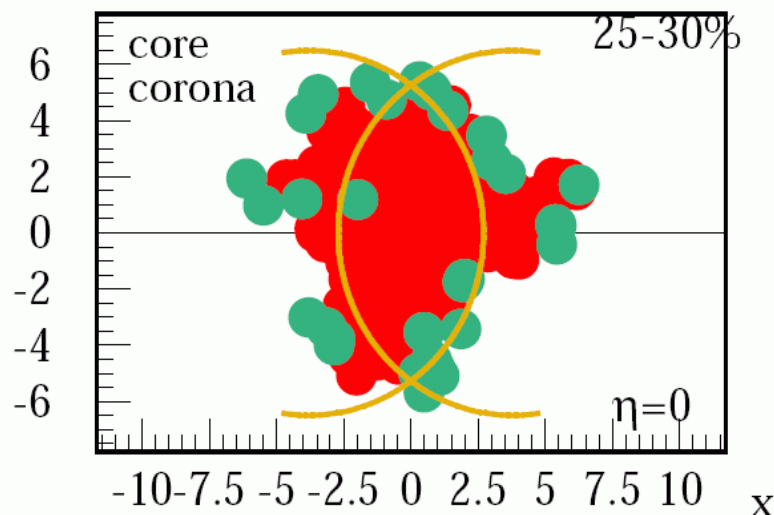
A 3rd way : the core-corona approach

Consider the local density to hadronize with strings OR with QGP:

- ➔ First use string fragmentation but modify the usual procedure, since the density of strings will be so high that they cannot possibly decay independently : **core**



In EPOS (since 2005)



- ➔ Each string cut into a sequence of string segments, corresponding to widths $\delta\alpha$ and $\delta\beta$ in the string parameter space
- ➔ If energy density from segments high enough
 - ◆ segments fused into core
 - ➔ flow from hydro-evolution
 - ➔ statistical hadronization
- ➔ If low density (**corona**)
 - ◆ segments remain hadrons