

Neutrino-Emitting Seyfert candidates in the VHE gamma-ray sky

CTAO Seyfert TaskForce Meeting, October 22, 2025

Sweta Menon

INAF, University of Rome "Tor Vergata"

sweta.menon@inaf.it

For A. Lamastra, S. Mangano, F. G. Saturni, G. Peron and E. Peretti

Collaborations: MAGIC

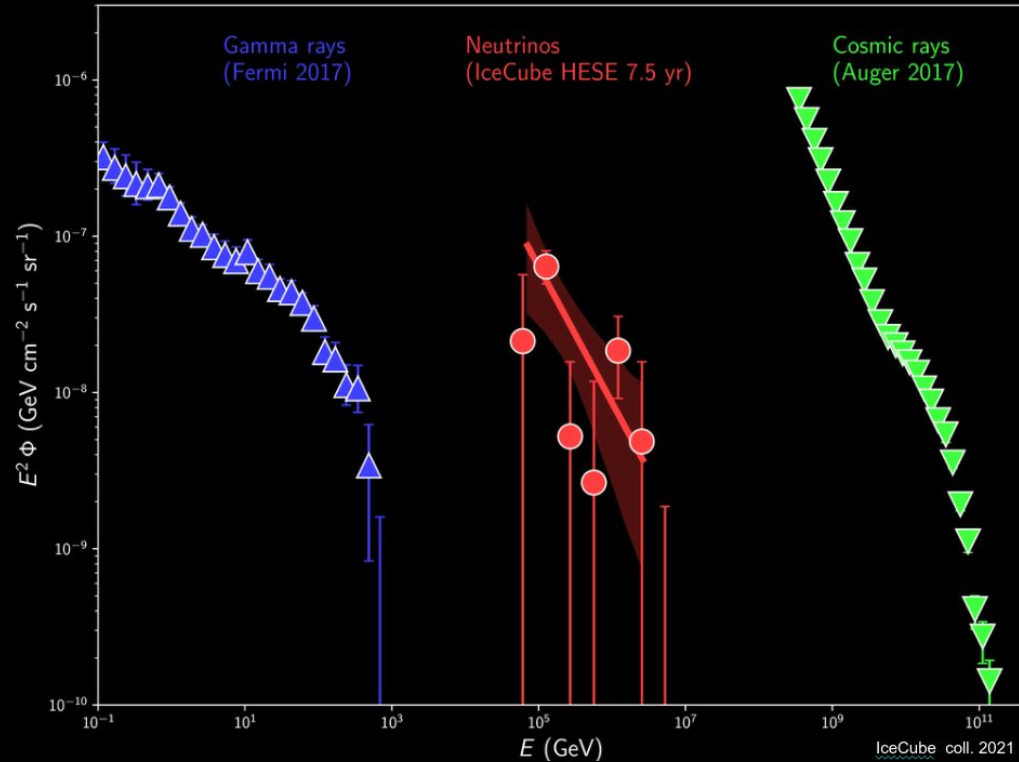
First hint of gamma obscured accelerators?

Comparable energy budgets of diffuse
Gamma, neutrino and cosmic rays (IceCube coll. 2021)
⇒ similar unresolved sources > 100 TeV-
PeV range?

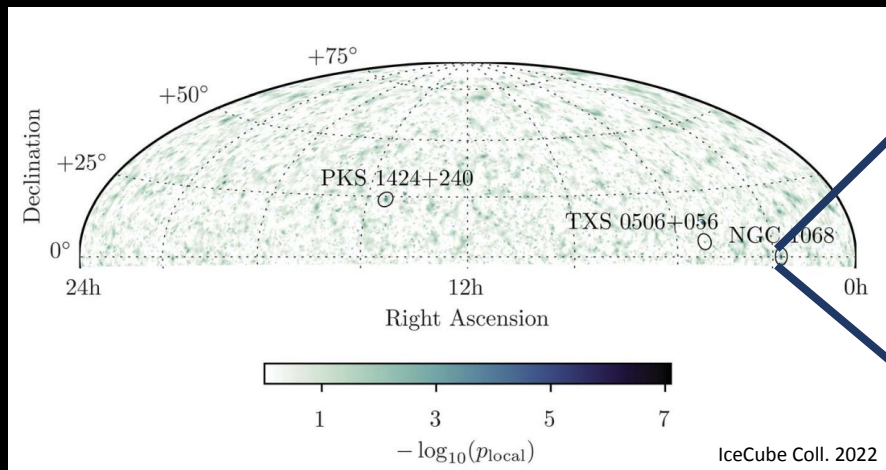
Hadronic interactions produce gamma rays
and neutrinos at the comparable levels
 $E_\nu \approx E_\gamma / 2$

Gamma rays co-produced with neutrinos <
100 TeV overpredicts Fermi-LAT isotropic
gamma ray background (Murase+ 23, Murase et al. 2013; Aartsen
et al. 2015, 2020b; Fang et al. 2022)

⇒ Gamma obscured accelerators produce
neutrino flux < 100 TeV?



Evidence of neutrino emission from NGC 1068



NGC 1068 global significance 4.2σ (IceCube coll. 2022)

TXS 0506+056 global significance 3.0σ

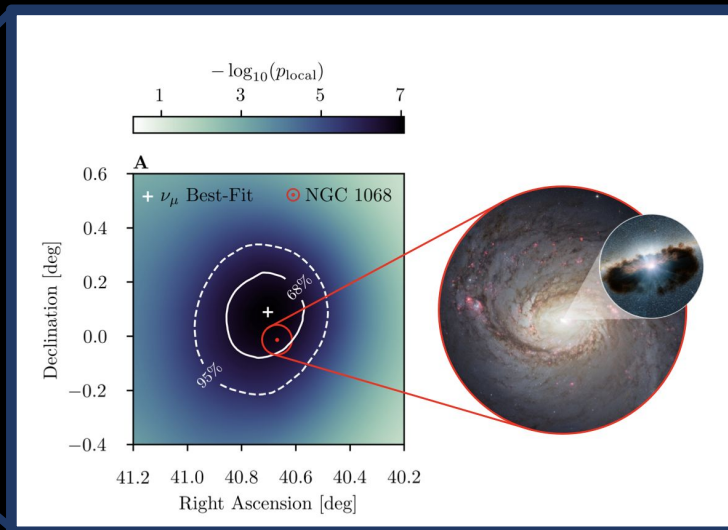
The Galactic plane global significance 4.5σ

At the NGC 1068 location:

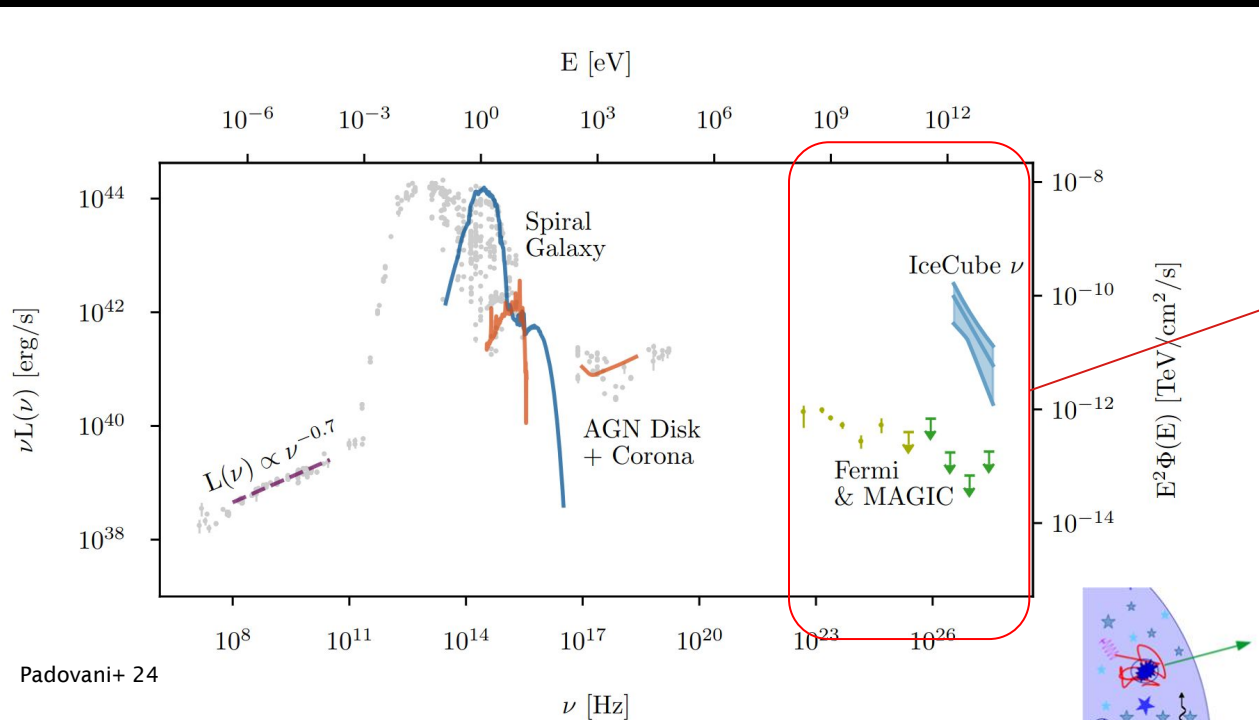
- Astrophysical neutrino events = $79 \pm^{22}_{20}$

- Energy: (1.5 - 15.0) TeV

- Flux: $\phi_\nu = 5 \times 10^{-11} (E/\text{TeV})^{-3.2} \text{ TeV}^{-1} \text{ cm}^{-2} \text{ s}^{-1} \Rightarrow$ All-flavour isotropic neutrino
 luminosity $L_\nu = 1.3 \times 10^{42} \text{ erg s}^{-1}$



Multimessenger Spectral Energy Distribution of NGC 1068

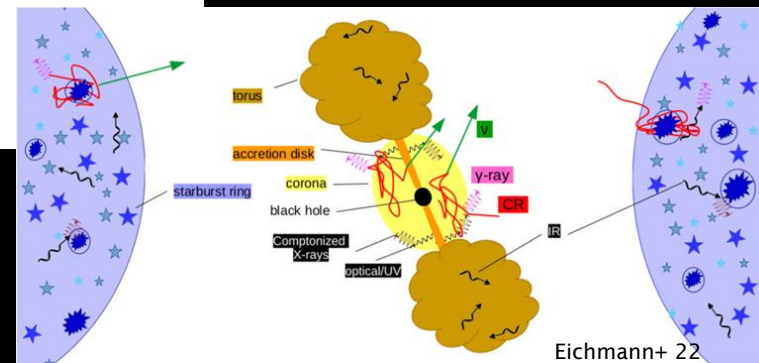


Padovani+ 24

Orders of magnitude
difference in VHE γ -rays
and ν

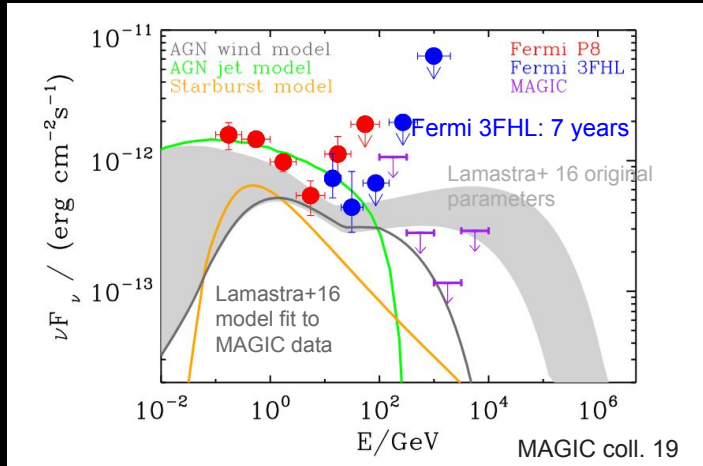
$\Rightarrow$

Neutrinos produced
at a site opaque to
VHE gamma rays



Eichmann+ 22

Gamma-ray investigations of NGC 1068



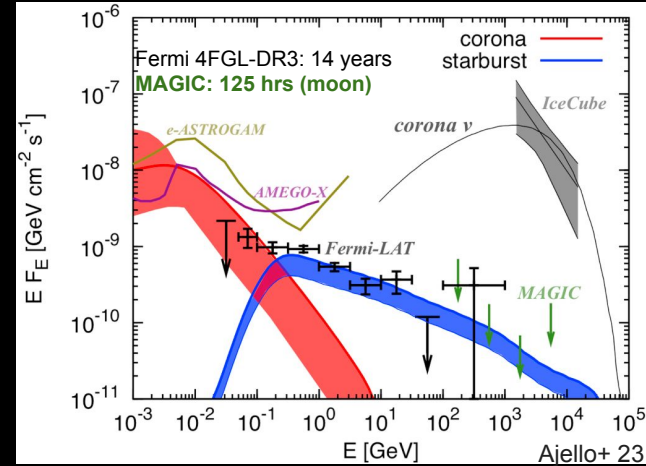
Most constraining ULs in VHE γ -rays: MAGIC+ 2019

MAGIC: 125 hrs(moon) from Jan 2016 to Jan 2019;

Fermi 4FGL-DR3: 14 yrs from 2008 - 2022

Constrained models of gamma ray production like the wind models

Need for improvement in ~10 GeV - TeV energy range to constrain models $\Rightarrow$ Perfect job for the newest generation of telescopes: CTAO LST



Neutrinos from Coronal regions(Eichmann+22,Ajello+23),
Failed wind(Inoue+23)

Gamma-rays primarily attributed to
starburst activity

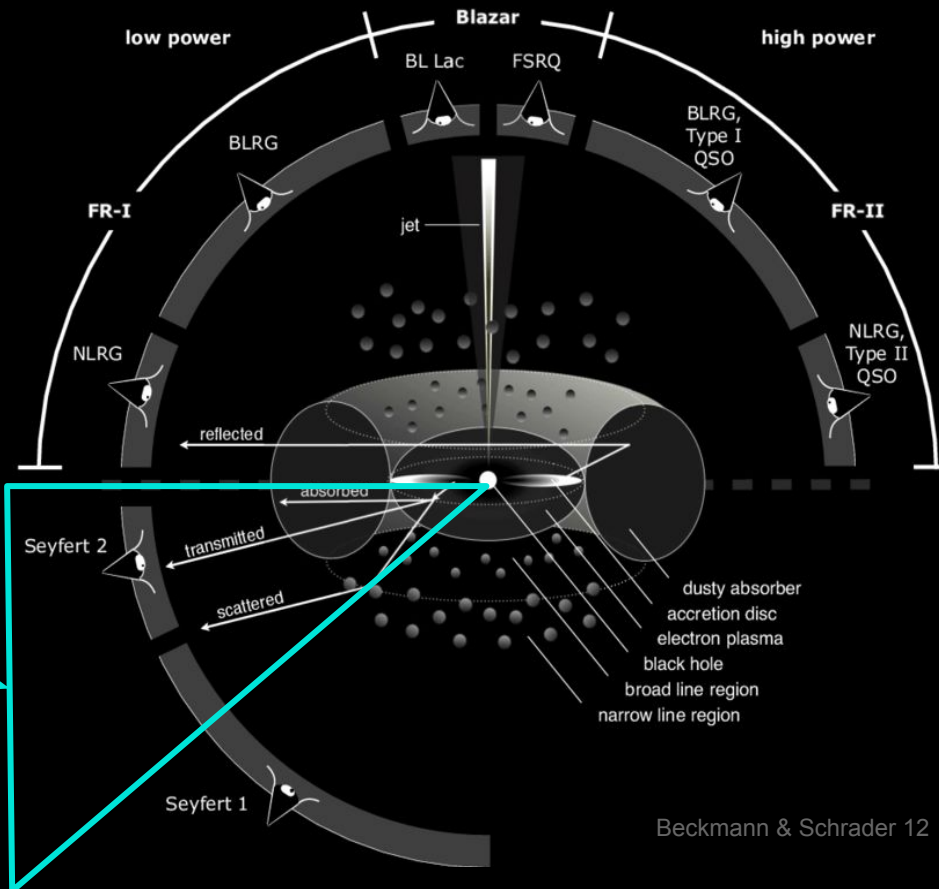
Current Multimessenger Synergies with neutrinos

Possible IceCube neutrino sources :

TXS 0506+05

PKS 1424+240

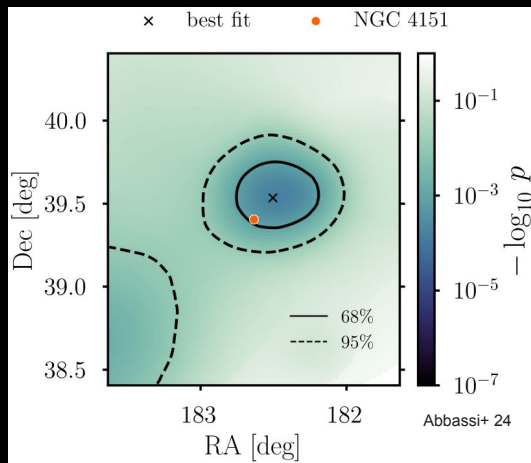
Possible IceCube neutrino sources :
NGC 1068 (4.2σ)
NGC 4151 (3σ)
CGCG 420-015 (3σ)
NGC 3079 (3σ)



Beckmann & Schrader 12

Prototype Seyfert 2 NGC 1068 indicative of an emerging class of neutrino emitters or peculiar? 6

Seyferts as possible neutrino emitting sources



NGC 4151

Abbasi+24:

Source probability: $\sim 3.2 \sigma$

Neutrinos: 30

Energy: (7 - 300) TeV

Flux $\phi_\nu = 1 \times 10^{-11} (E_\nu/\text{TeV})^{-2.7}$

$\text{TeV}^{-1} \text{cm}^{-2} \text{s}^{-1}$

CGCG 420-015

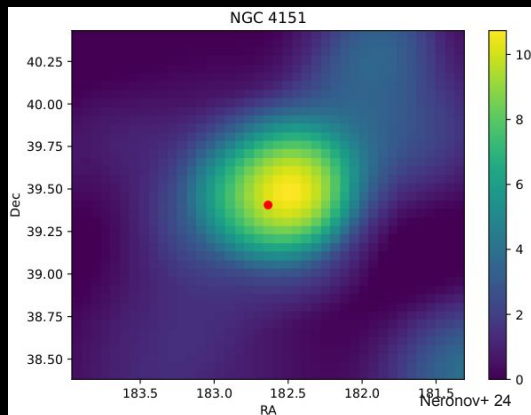
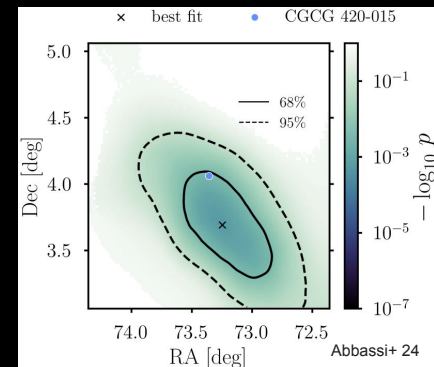
Abbasi+24:

Source probability: $\sim 2.7 \sigma$

Neutrinos: 35

Energy: (8 - 200) TeV

Flux $\phi_\nu = 1.2 \times 10^{-11} (E_\nu/\text{TeV})^{-2.8} \text{TeV}^{-1} \text{cm}^{-2} \text{s}^{-1}$



NGC 4151

Neronov +24:

Source probability: $\sim 2.9 \sigma$

Neutrinos:

Energy: (0.3 - 100.0) TeV

Flux $\phi_\nu = 1 \times 10^{-11} (E_\nu/\text{TeV})^{-3.0}$

$\text{TeV}^{-1} \text{cm}^{-2} \text{s}^{-1}$

NGC 3079

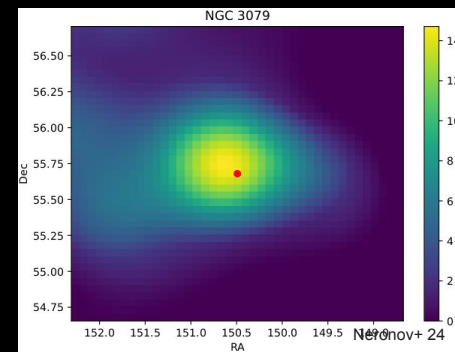
Neronov +24:

Source probability: $\sim 2.9 \sigma$

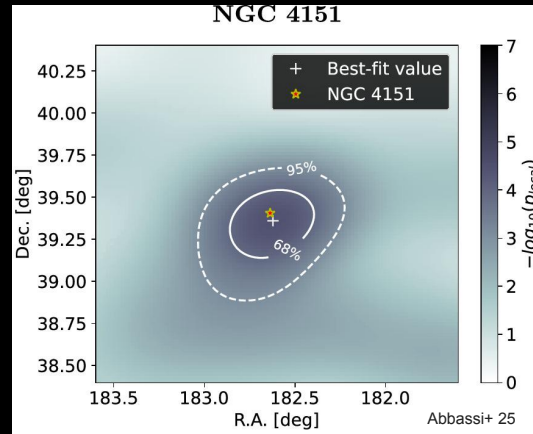
neutrinos:

Energy: (0.3 - 100.0) TeV

Flux $\phi_\nu = 0.8 \times 10^{-11} (E_\nu/\text{TeV})^{-3.0} \text{TeV}^{-1} \text{cm}^{-2} \text{s}^{-1}$



NGC 4151: Second most probable neutrino emitting Seyfert



NGC 4151

Abbasi+ 25:

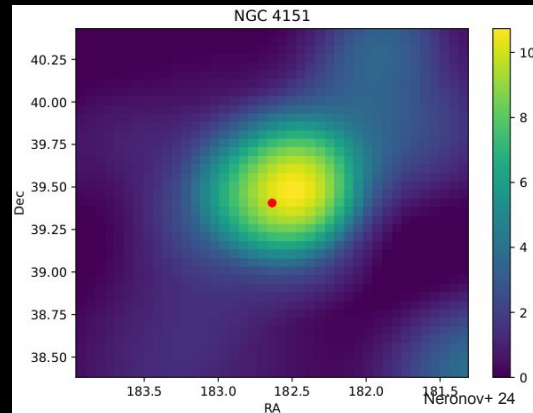
Source probability: $\sim 2.9 \sigma$

Neutrinos: 50

Energy: (4.3 – 65.2) TeV

Flux $\phi_\nu = 1.51 \times 10^{-11} (E_\nu/\text{TeV})^{-2.83}$
 $\text{TeV}^{-1} \text{cm}^{-2} \text{s}^{-1}$

See also Abbasi+ 24



NGC 4151

Neronov+ 24:

Source probability: $\sim 2.9 \sigma$

Neutrinos:

Energy: (0.3 - 100.0) TeV

Flux $\phi_\nu = 1 \times 10^{-11} (E_\nu/\text{TeV})^{-3.0}$
 $\text{TeV}^{-1} \text{cm}^{-2} \text{s}^{-1}$

Neutrino hotspot
correlation from two
independent
searches:

A second possible
source!!!



MAGIC observations of NGC 4151

RA DEC:12 10 32.6 +39 24 21

Seyfert 1 / 1.5 @ 15.8 Mpc

Hours of observation by MAGIC: 29 h

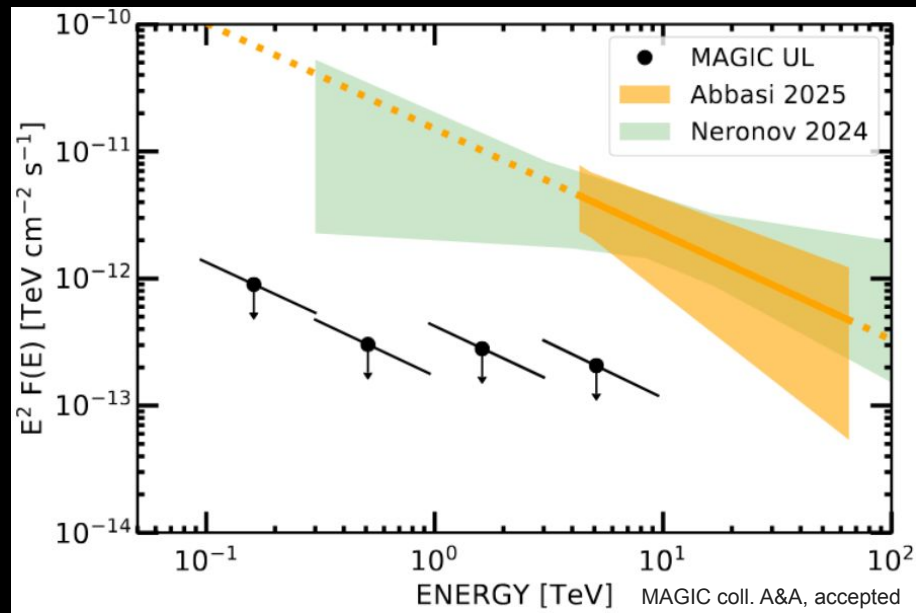
Conditions: Dark (25.6 h) + weak moon(3.4 h)

Assumed spectral model:

Power law with spectral index 2.83

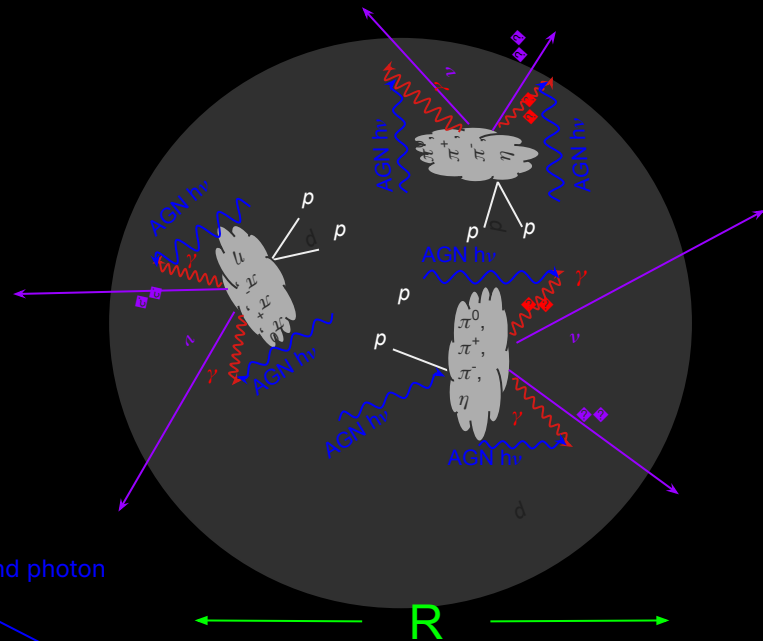
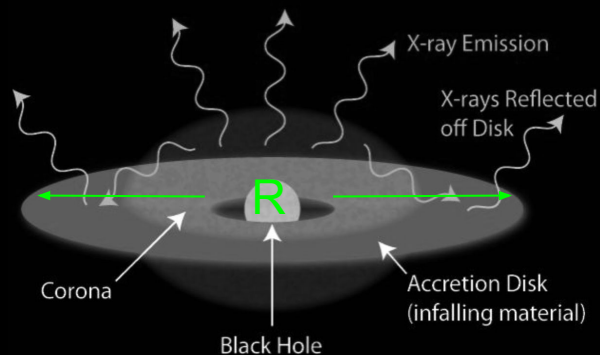
Non detection indicative of gamma-ray absorption

⇒ Another obscured accelerator?



Exploiting the gamma - neutrino connection

credit: D. Wilkins



Optical depth

$$\tau_{\gamma\gamma}(E_\gamma) = R \int_{\epsilon_{\min}}^{\infty} d\epsilon n_{\text{ph}}(\epsilon) \sigma_{\gamma\gamma}(E_\gamma, \epsilon)$$

$\tau_{\gamma\gamma}(E_\gamma)$ gamma ray energy
 R emission region radius
 $\epsilon_{\min} = m_e^2 c^4 / E_\gamma$ Aharonian+ 2009
 $\sigma_{\gamma\gamma}(E_\gamma, \epsilon)$ Pair production cross section
 AGN background photon density at ϵ

Exploiting the gamma - neutrino connection

gamma ray energy

emission region radius

AGN background photon density at ϵ

$$\tau_{\gamma\gamma}(E_\gamma) = R \int_{\epsilon_{\min}}^{\infty} d\epsilon n_{\text{ph}}(\epsilon) \sigma_{\gamma\gamma}(E_\gamma, \epsilon)$$

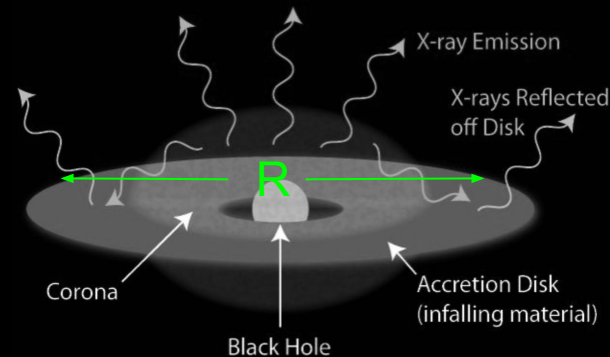
Pair production cross section

For a homogeneous region of emission:

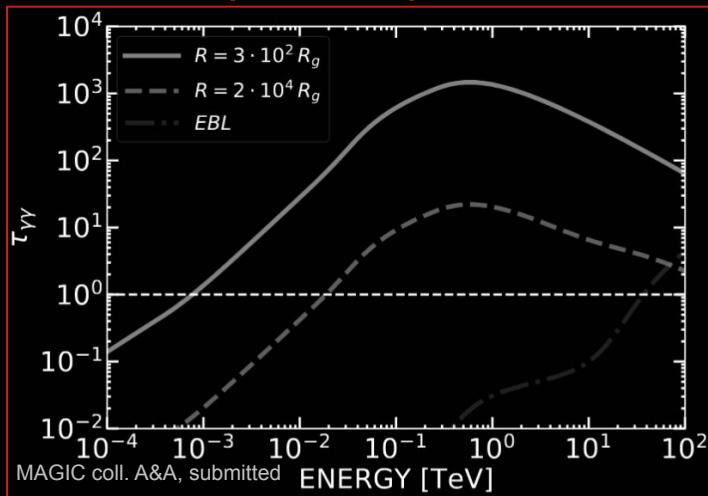
$$n_{\text{ph}}(\epsilon) \propto R^{-2}$$

$$\Rightarrow \tau_{\gamma\gamma} \propto 1/R$$

credit: D. Wilkins



Optical depth



Intrinsic Multipion gamma emission

(Murase+ 16)

$$E_\nu \approx E_\gamma / 2$$

pp interactions (K=2)
p γ interactions (K=1)

$$E_\gamma^2 Q_\gamma(E_\gamma) \approx \frac{4}{3K} E_\nu^2 Q_\nu(E_\nu)$$

production rate of γ -rays

production rate of all-flavor ν



Constraints on emission region of NGC 4151

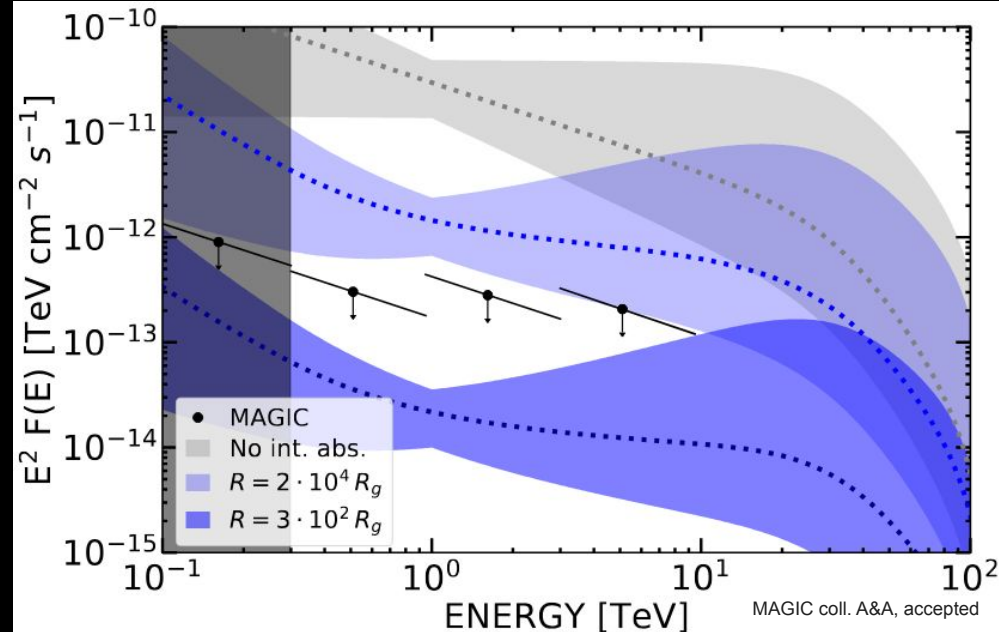
$$\tau_{\gamma\gamma} \propto 1/R$$
$$\Rightarrow R < 10^4 R_g$$

$\Rightarrow$ Site close to the central engine

Sites of acceleration for this class based on NGC 1068

$\rightarrow$ AGN disk-corona? Dense radiation field that absorb gamma rays (Ajello+ 23, Eichmann+ 22, Murase+ 23, Fiorillo +24, Fiorillo +25)

$\rightarrow$ Failed inner winds? (Inoue 2022)



The dotted lines are derived using flux normalization and spectral index 2.83 values from Abbasi+ 25, and the error band is calculated from their respective uncertainties

Summary

Second probable neutrino source, NGC 4151, probed with MAGIC after NGC 1068

Non-detection after observation with MAGIC for 29 h $\Rightarrow$ First ULs! $\Rightarrow$ Indication of another gamma-ray obscured candidate neutrino source!

Using simple opacity arguments, NGC 4151 emission region constrained to $10^4 R_g \Rightarrow$ Regions close to central engine such as disk-corona, failed winds, ...

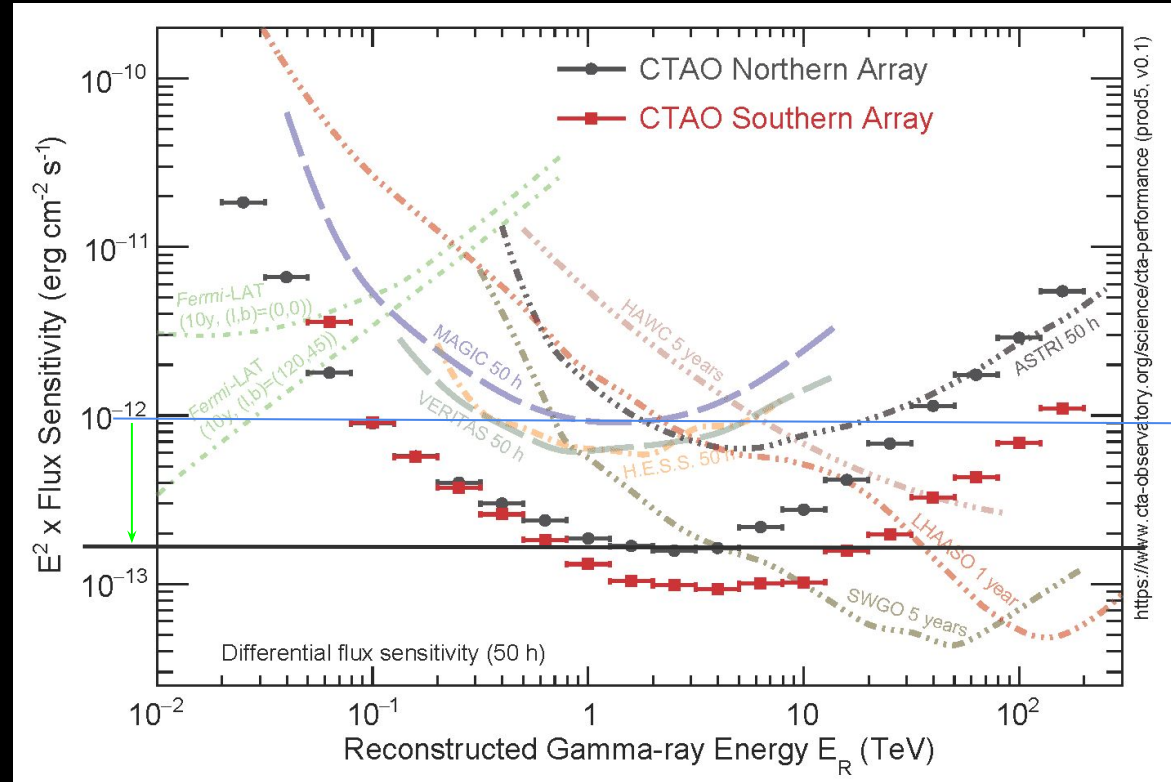
Confirmation of NGC 4151 as a source by current and new generation of neutrino telescopes needed!

Two types of seyferts with similar characteristic in terms of gamma ray opacity $\Rightarrow$ Hidden neutrino source class possibly dominating the diffuse neutrino background?

This work has been accepted to A&A!

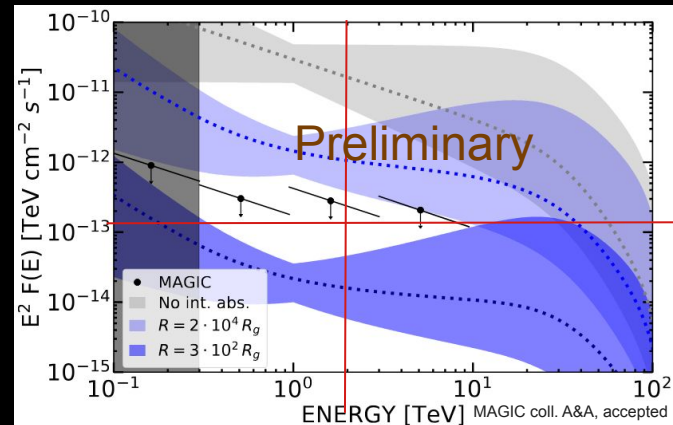
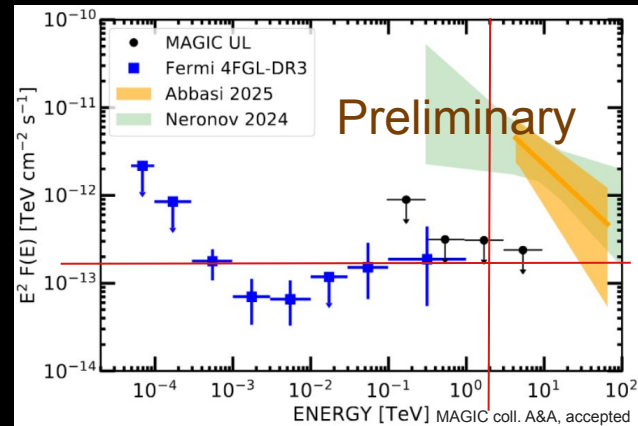
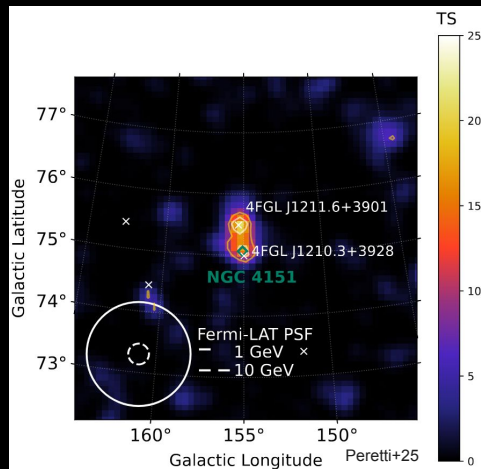
Improved Sensitivity with CTAO

Order of magnitude
improvement compared to
MAGIC!

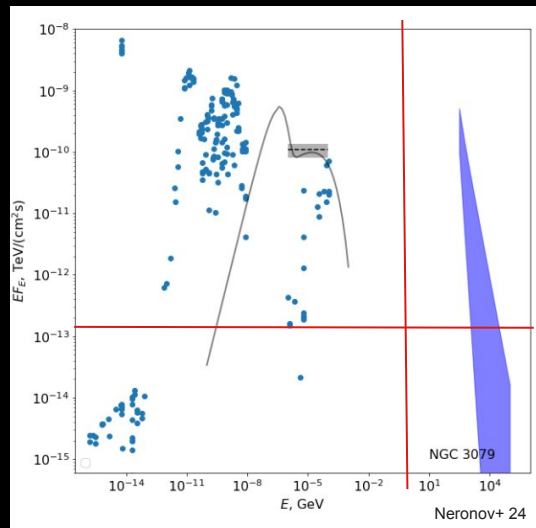
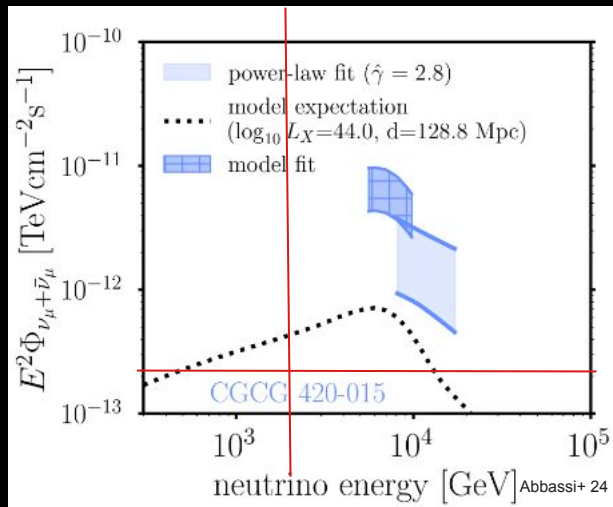


Prospects with CTAO : Deeper Studies with NGC 4151

- Extend the Fermi spectrum
- Alleviate source confusion: Two blazars @ $z \sim 0.6$
- Further constraints on the size



Prospects with CTAO : Prospects of study of other Seyferts

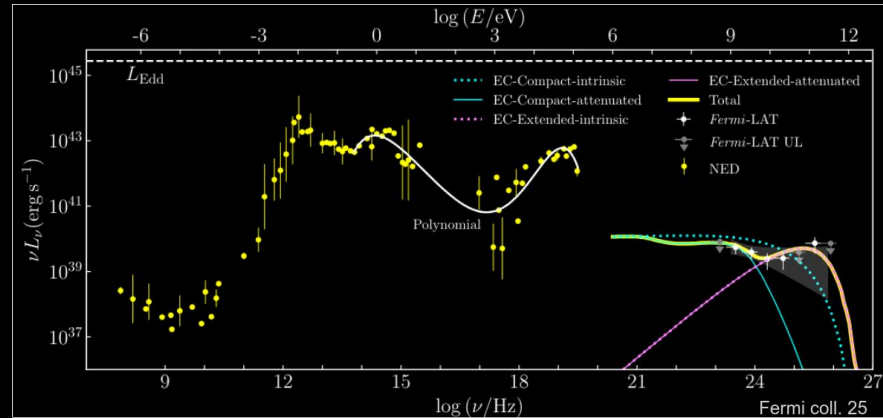


- Simulation of Neutrino emitting Seyfert candidates: NGC 3079, CGCG 420-015 etc.
- Simulation of Southern targets relevant for KM3Net.

Prospects with CTAO: Fermi Spectrum of Seyferts

Results from Fermi Stacking of Seyferts $\Rightarrow$ Detection of signal!

NEEDS INVESTIGATION in VHE gamma rays for extend the spectral coverage and potentially detect a high-energy cutoff, which provide information about the maximum energy of the accelerated particles

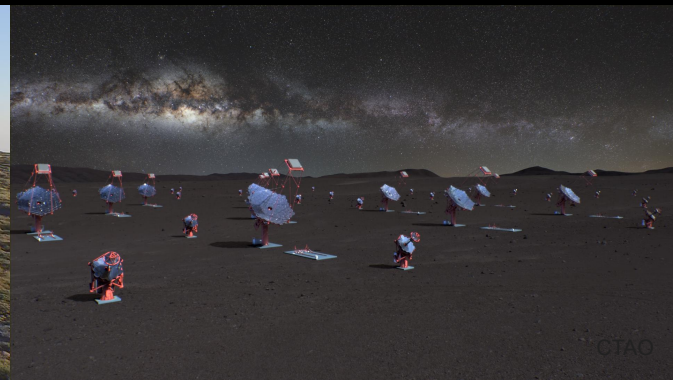


Cherenkov Telescope Array Observatory



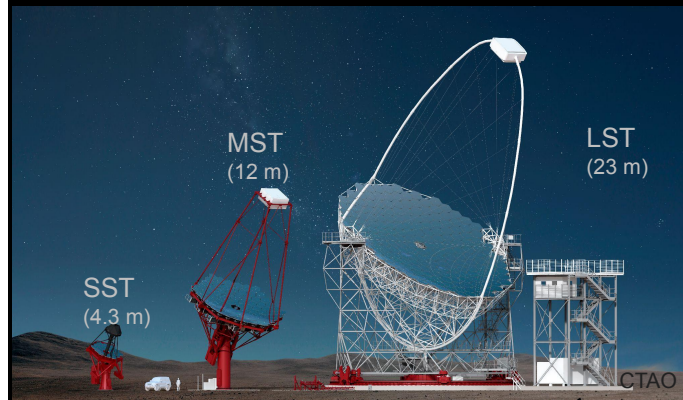
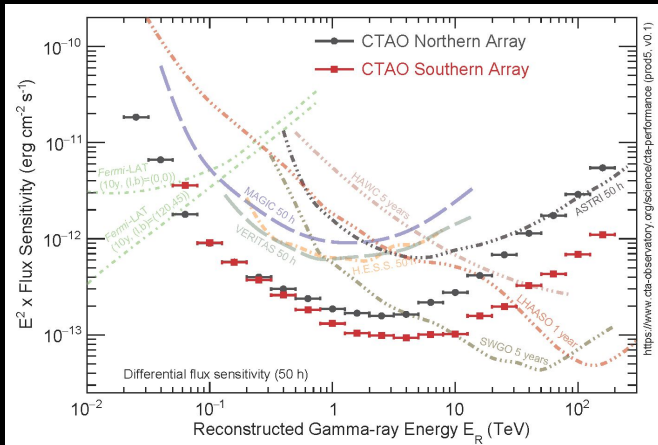
CTAO North: La Palma, Spain

4 Large Sized Telescope
9 Medium Sized Telescope



CTAO South: Paranal, Chile

14 Medium Sized Telescope
37 Small Sized Telescope



- + Full sky coverage
- + Sensitive to wider energy range of gamma rays
- + Gain in sensitivity by an order of magnitude

BACK UP: NGC 4151

RA DEC:12 10 32.6 +39 24 21

Seyfert 1 @ 15.8 Mpc

Fermi source: 4FGL J1210.3+3928(6 sig)

Offset 4.747 (NGC 4151)

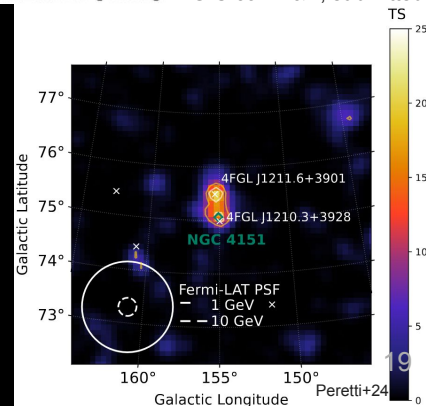
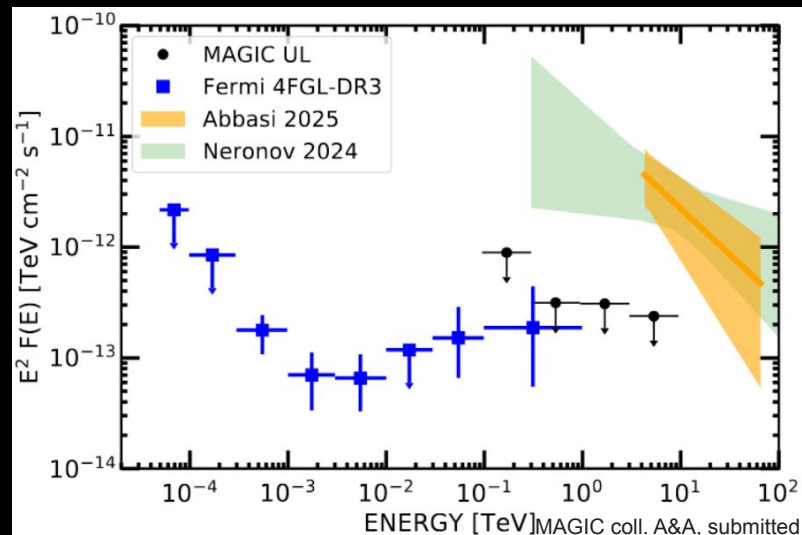
Hours of observation by MAGIC: 29 h

Conditions: Dark (25.6 h) + weak moon(3.4 h)

Assumed spectral model: Power law with spectral index 2.0

Non-detection indicative of gamma-ray absorption

⇒ Another obscured accelerator?

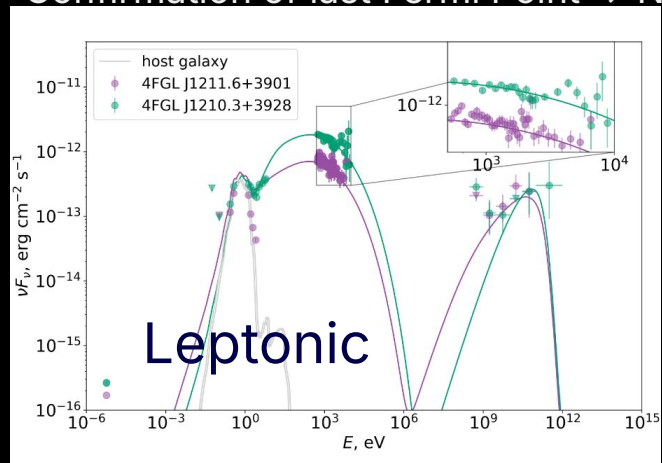


Back up: Blazars in FoV and source confusion

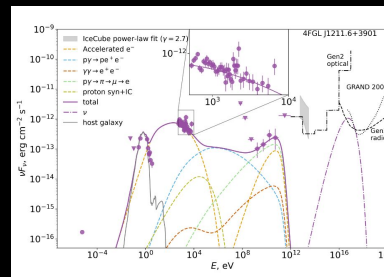
4FGL J1210.3+3928($\sim 0.08^\circ$) 4FGL J1211.6+3901($\sim 0.4^\circ$) in NGC 4151 FoV

Sharp cutoffs at 1 TeV $\rightarrow$ Only UL above TeV for Blazar(EBL motivated cut off @ $z \sim 0.6$) 4FGL J1210.3+3928

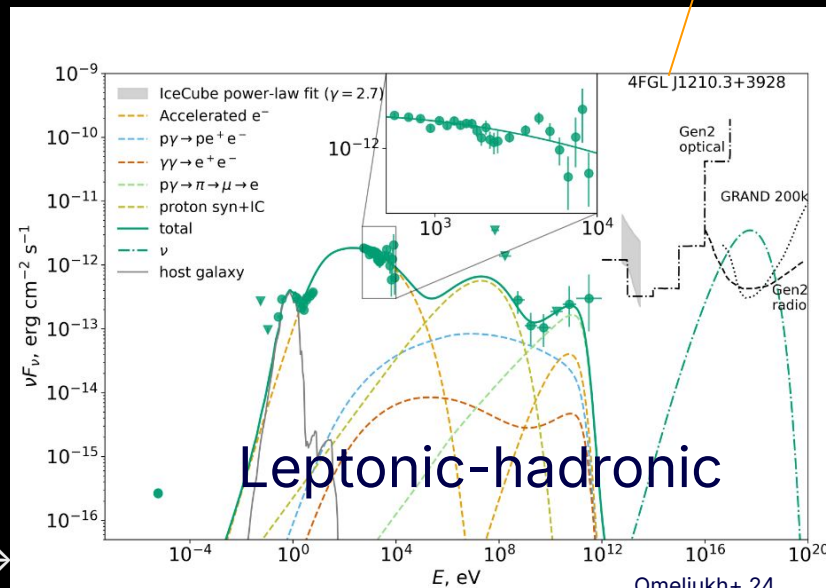
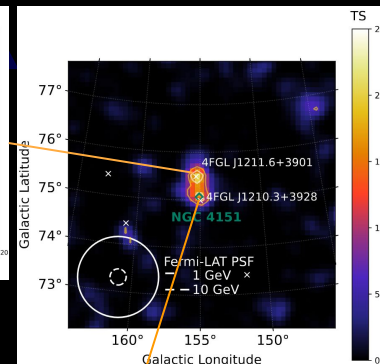
Confirmation of last Fermi Point $\rightarrow$ NGC 4151



Our tailored 14-year Fermi data analysis put the last Fermi spectral point in question(Peretti +24) $\rightarrow$ observations with low threshold MAGIC+LST



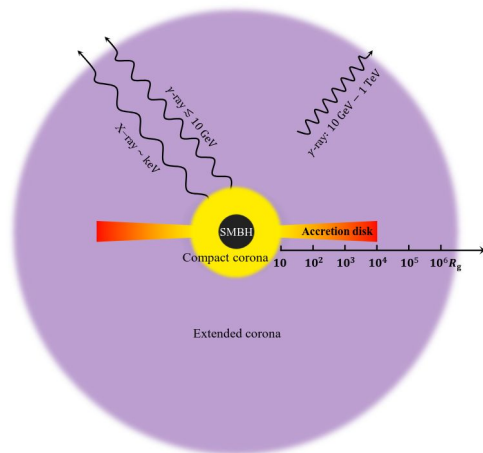
4FGL J1211.6+3901 Can also be spatially resolved by MAGIC/LST



Seyferts as possible neutrino emitting source

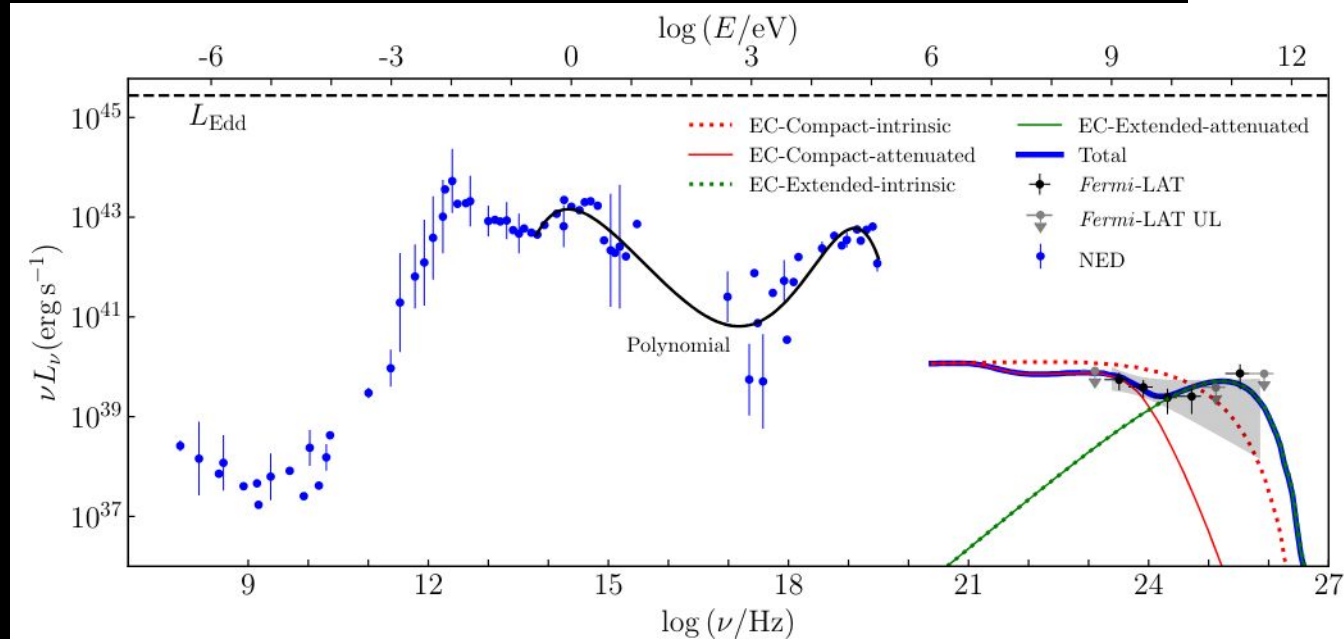
VHE telescopes probe the energy range of IceCube $\Rightarrow$

ULs from other potential candidates $\Rightarrow$ New class of obscured accelerator



ORATION

Fermi coll. 25



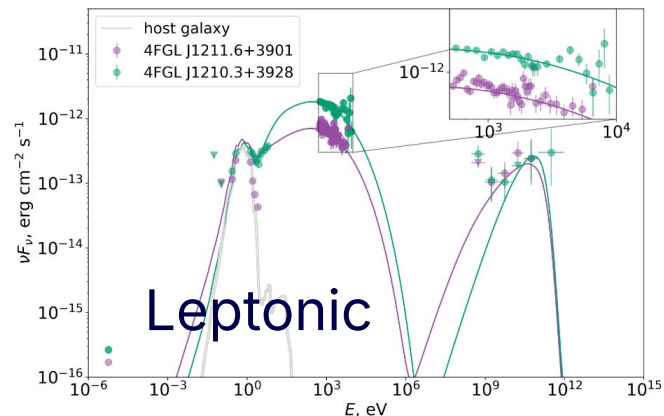
Fermi coll. 25

Blazars in FoV and source confusion

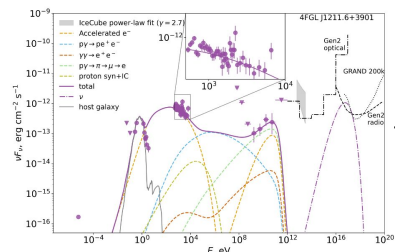
4FGL J1210.3+3928($\sim 0.08^\circ$) 4FGL J1211.6+3901($\sim 0.4^\circ$) in NGC 4151 FoV

Sharp cutoffs at 1 TeV $\rightarrow$ Only UL above TeV for Blazar(EBL motivated cut off @ $z \sim 0.6$) 4FGL J1210.3+3928

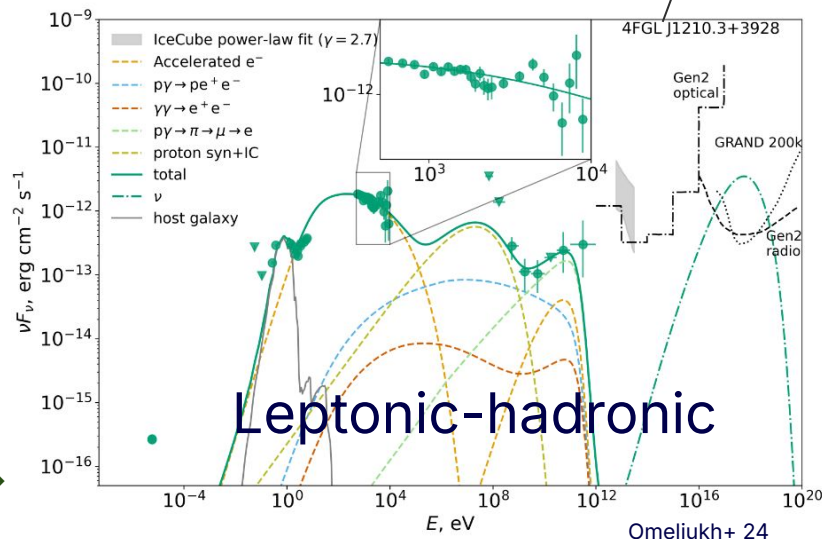
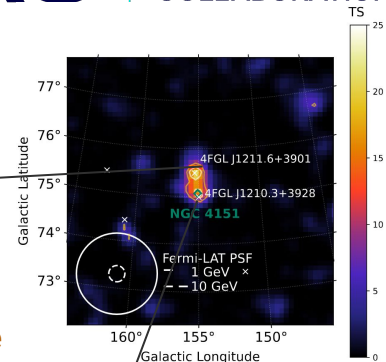
Confirmation of last Fermi Point $\rightarrow$ NGC 4151

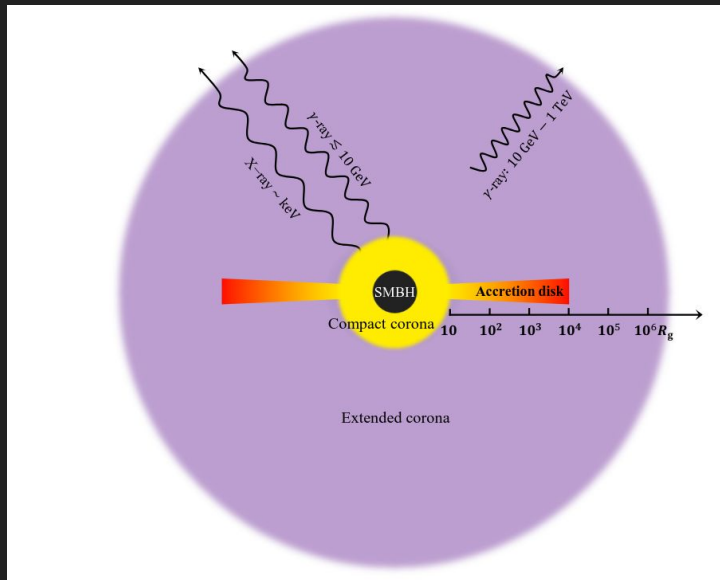


Our tailored 14-year Fermi data analysis put the last Fermi spectral point in question(Peretti +24) $\rightarrow$ observations with low threshold MAGIC+LST

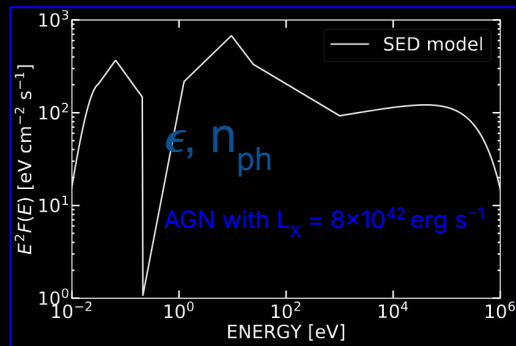


4FGL J1211.6+3901 Can also be spatially resolved by MAGIC/LST





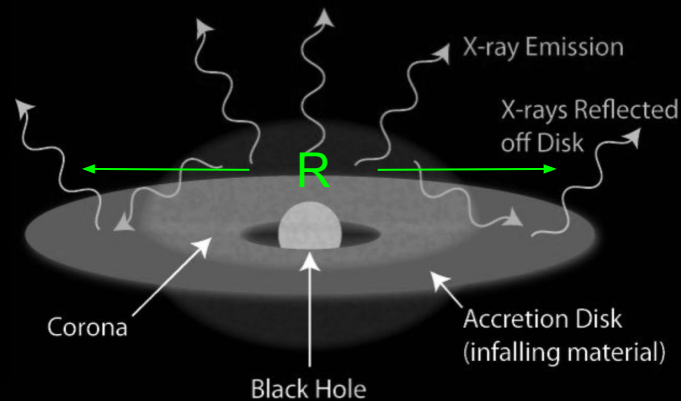
Exploiting the gamma - neutrino connection



Pair production cross section

$$\sigma_{\gamma\gamma}(E_\gamma, \epsilon) = \frac{3\sigma_T}{2s^2} \left[\left(s + \frac{1}{2} \ln(s) - \frac{1}{6} + \frac{1}{2s} \right) \ln(\sqrt{s} + \sqrt{s-1}) - \left(s + \frac{4}{9} - \frac{1}{9s} \right) \left(\sqrt{1 - \frac{1}{s}} \right) \right], s = \epsilon E_\gamma / (m_e^2 c^4)$$

credit: D. Wilkins



gamma ray energy

emission region radius

AGN background photon density at ϵ

opacity

$$\tau_{\gamma\gamma}(E_\gamma) = R \int_{\epsilon_{\min}}^{\infty} d\epsilon n_{ph}(\epsilon) \sigma_{\gamma\gamma}(E_\gamma, \epsilon)$$

$\epsilon_{\min} = m_e^2 c^4 / E_\gamma$

Aharonian+ 2009)