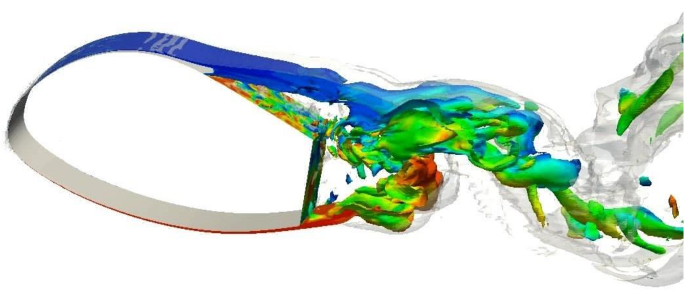
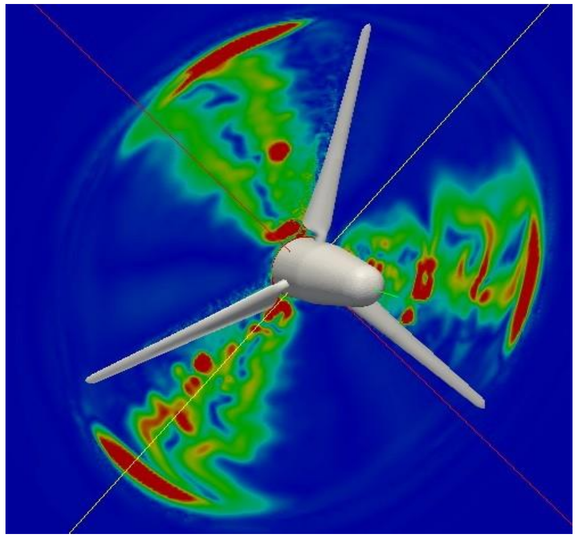
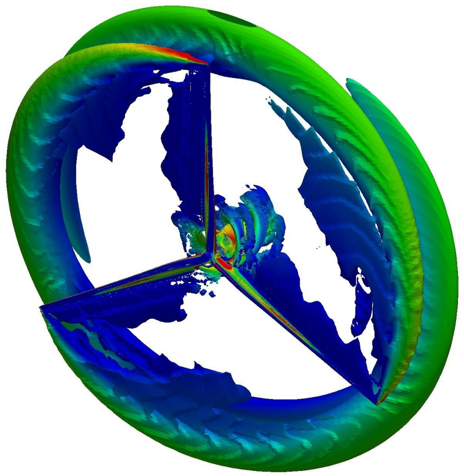
CFD Modeling of Wind Turbines in OpenFOAM







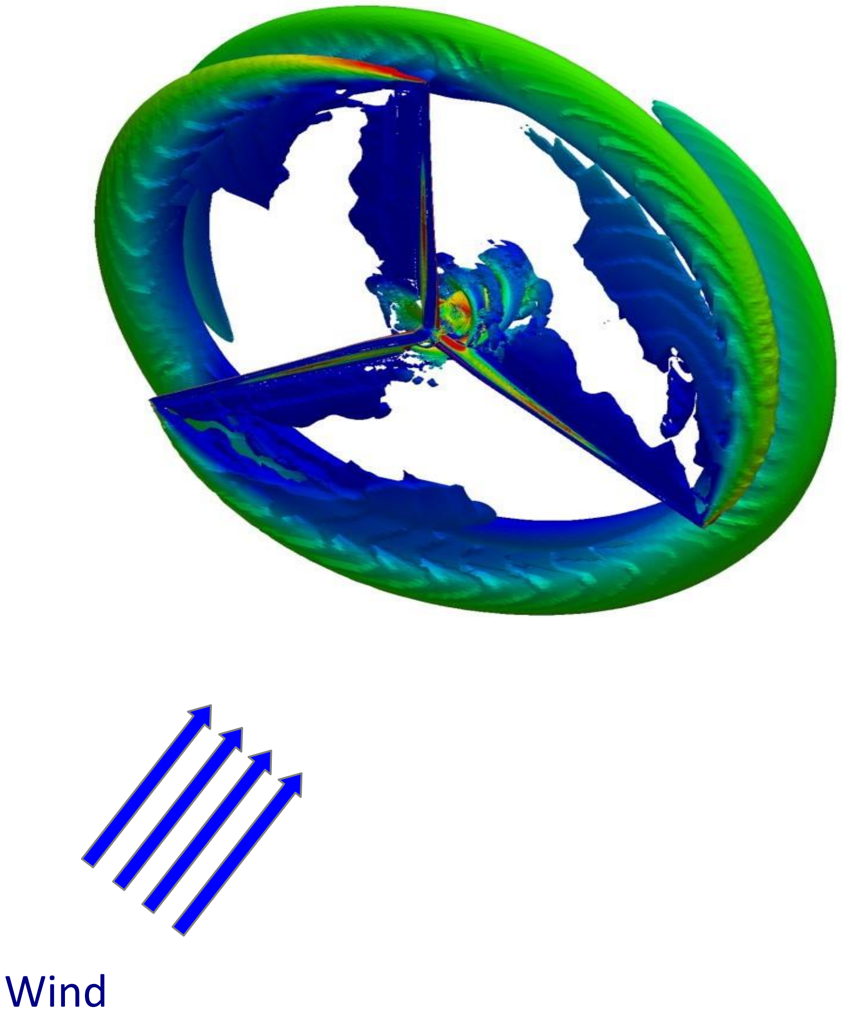
Dr. Sattar Aljabair

Outline

- Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD)
- A CFD library: Introduction to OpenFOAM
- CFD aerodynamic research
  - 2D → Airfoils
  - 3D → Rotor blades
- Summary

Computational Fluid Dynamics

- Navier-Stokes equations (NSE)
- Numerical modelling of NSE
  - Can be cheaper than Experiment
  - Can be fast
  - Gain detailed insight into entire flow field
  - Reproducible
  - A better understanding of flow phenomena leads to more control over them



What is OpenFOAM?

- Open Field Operation and Manipulation – software
- Huge Library of field calculation tools
- Mainly used for CFD calculations
- OpenSource – with different branches

What is OpenFOAM?

Open∇FOAM

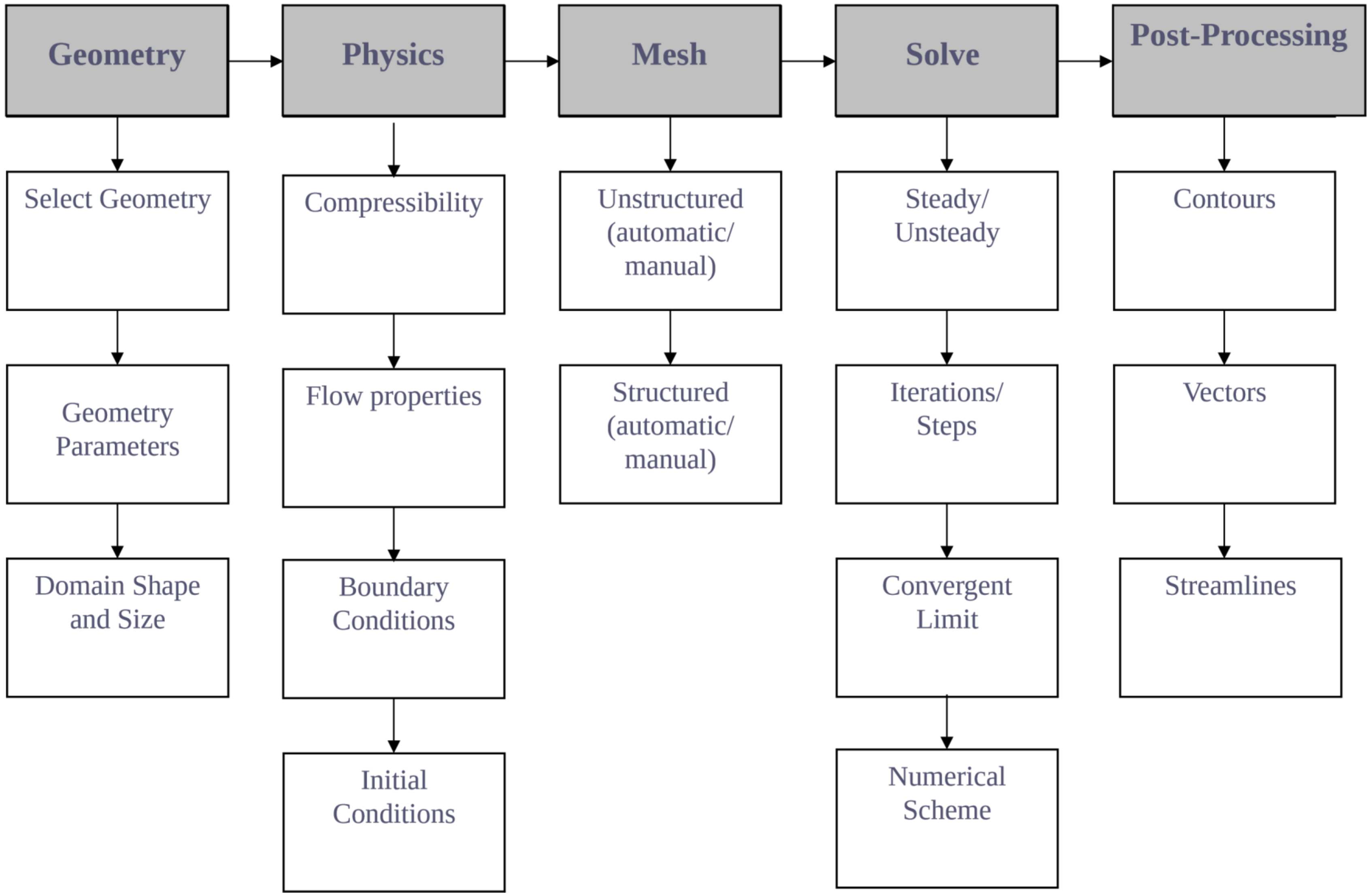
Advantages

- Open Code – you can change it
- Very powerful toolbox for own development
- Once you know it – you know what it does!
- There is now a large community using and improving it
- Free

Disadvantages

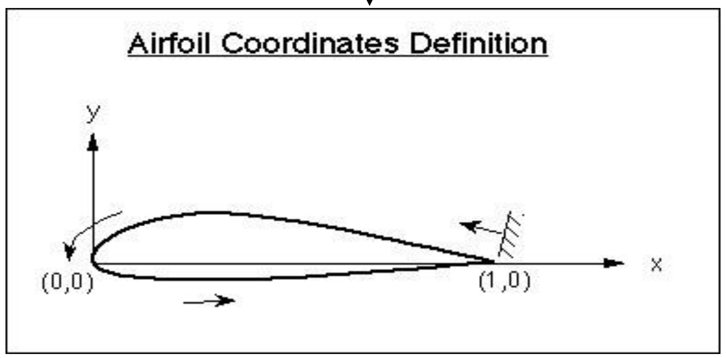
- Open Code – you can do what you want – is not always correct
- Steep learning curve
- Documentation is severe issue

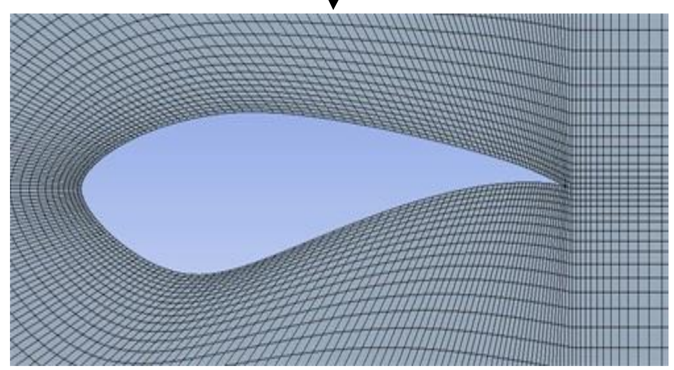
CFD Process

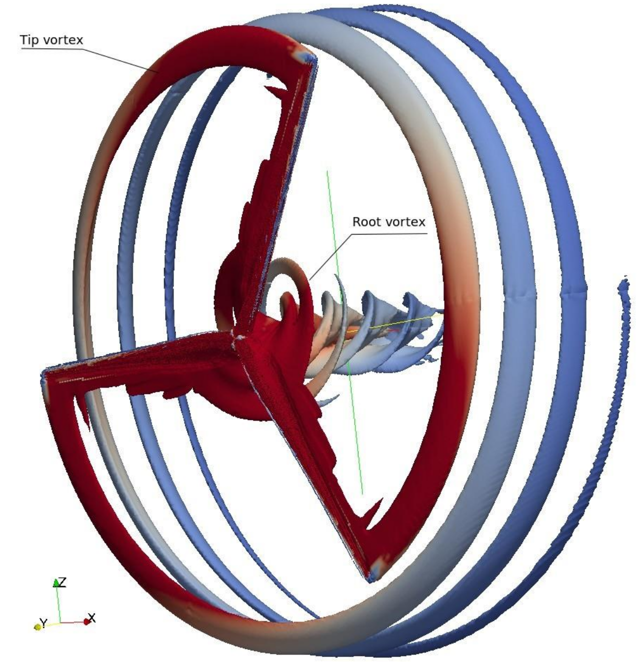

Geometry
Physics
Mesh
Solve
Post-Processing
Select Geometry
Geometry Parameters
Domain Shape and Size
Compressibility
Flow properties
Boundary Conditions
Initial Conditions
Unstructured (automatic/ manual)
Structured (automatic/ manual)
Steady/ Unsteady
Iterations/ Steps
Convergent Limit
Numerical Scheme
Contours
Vectors
Streamlines

CFD Process

Geometry → Physics → Mesh → Solve → Post-Processing







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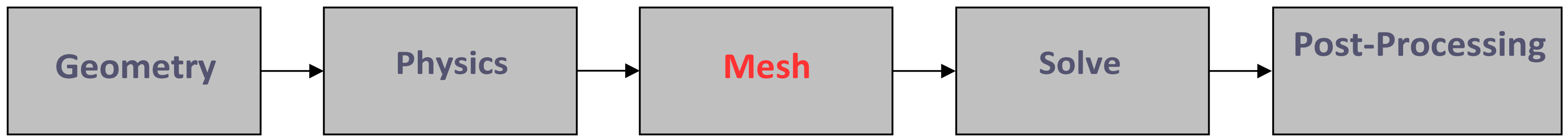
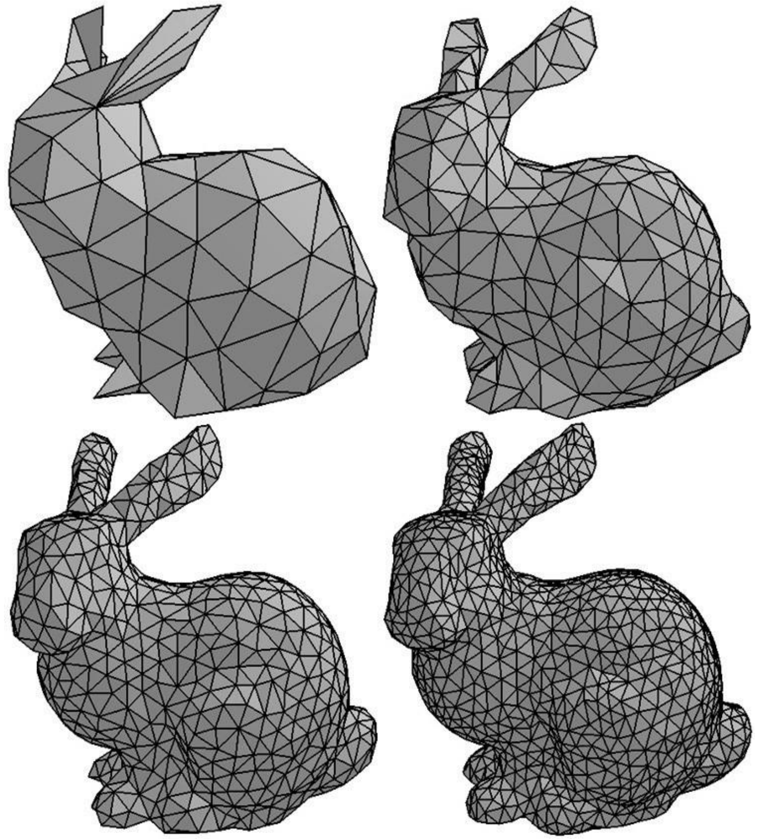
CFD Process



Meshing



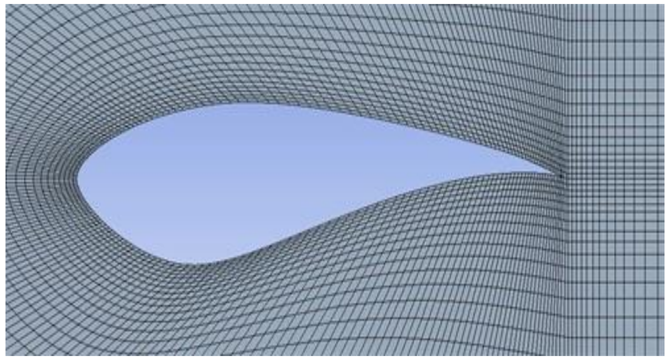
- CFD requires discretization
- Size & Quality impact:
  - Solution
  - Computation time
  - Convergence

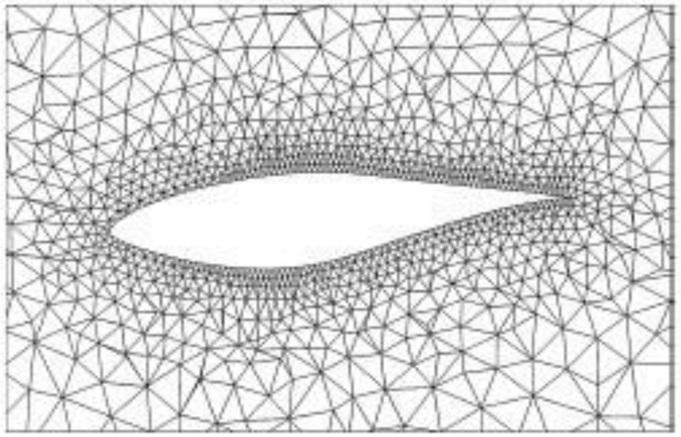
- Highly important, non trivial, most time consuming step in preprocessing

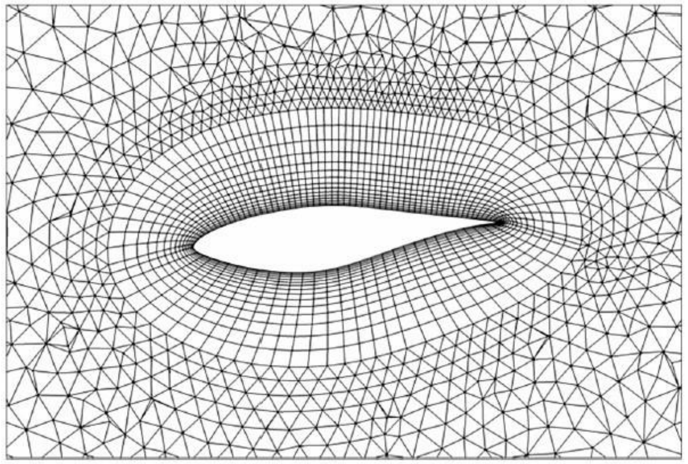
Ref: www.cmap.polytechnique.fr

Mesh classification

- Structured:
  - Identified by regular connectivity
  - Hexahedral in 3D
  - Can effect on efficiency and convergence
- Unstructured:
  - Identified by irregular connectivity
  - Tetrahedral in 3D
  - Faster to create
- Hybrid grids

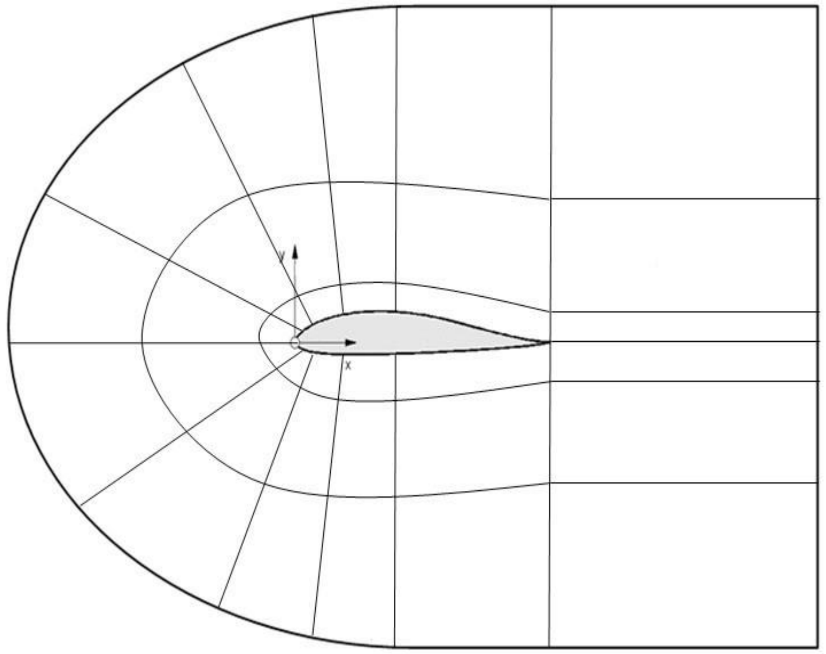


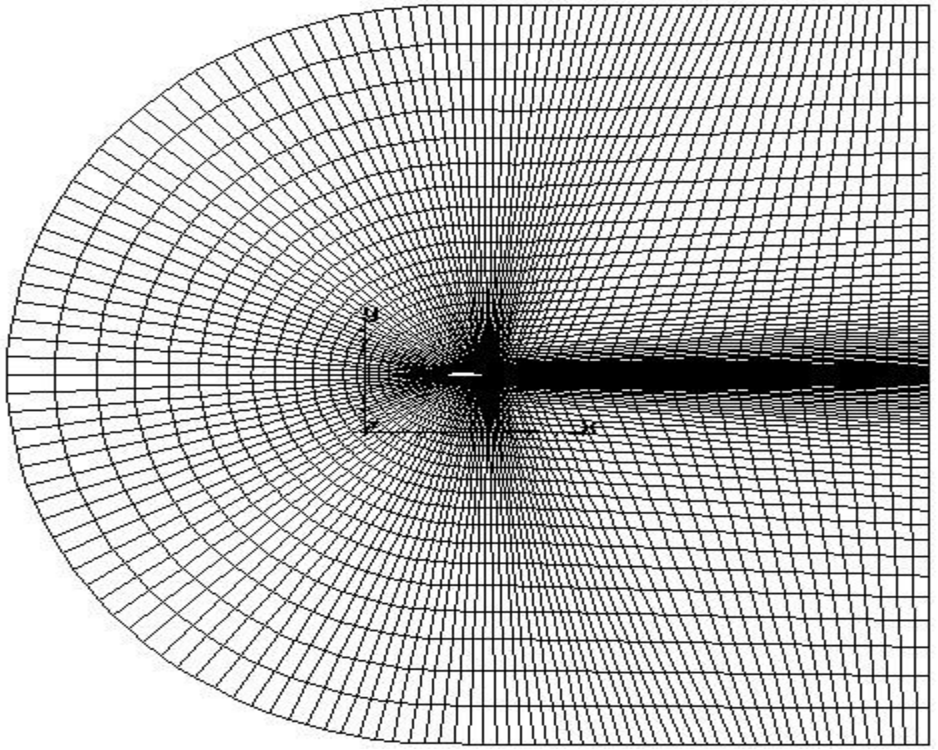




Meshing with OpenFOAM

- blockMesh
  - Structured mesh
  - Block decomposition of the computational domain
  - Simple geometries
  - Time consuming procedure

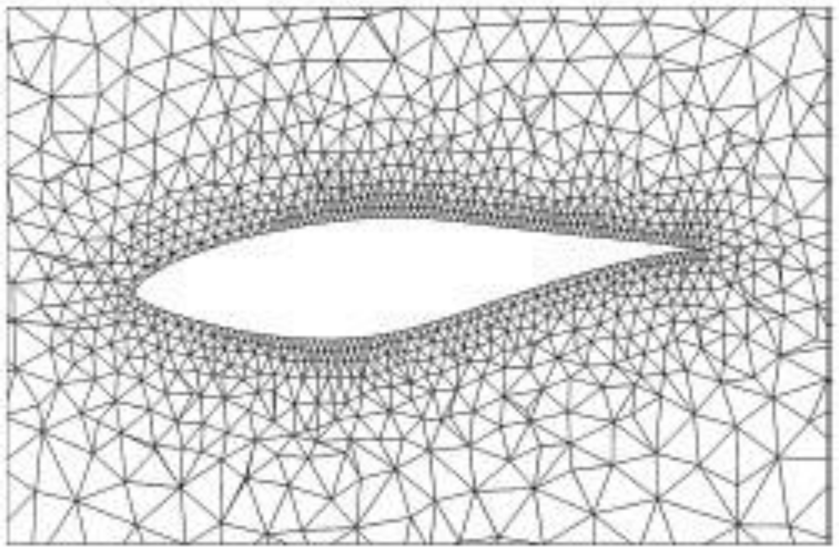




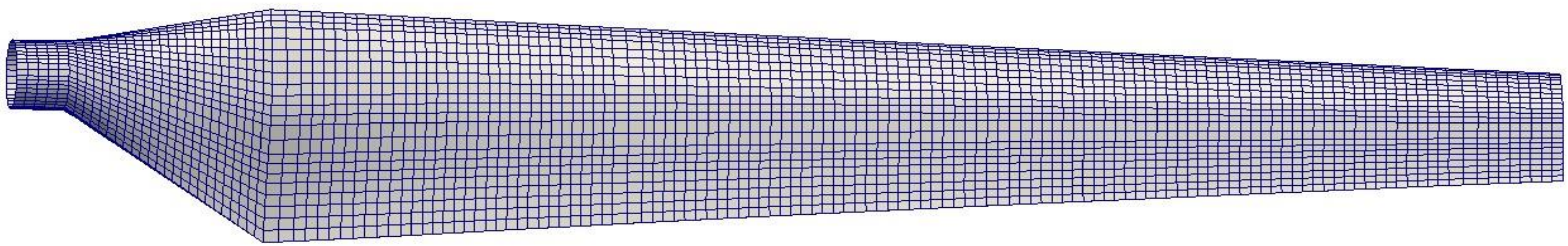
Meshing with OpenFOAM

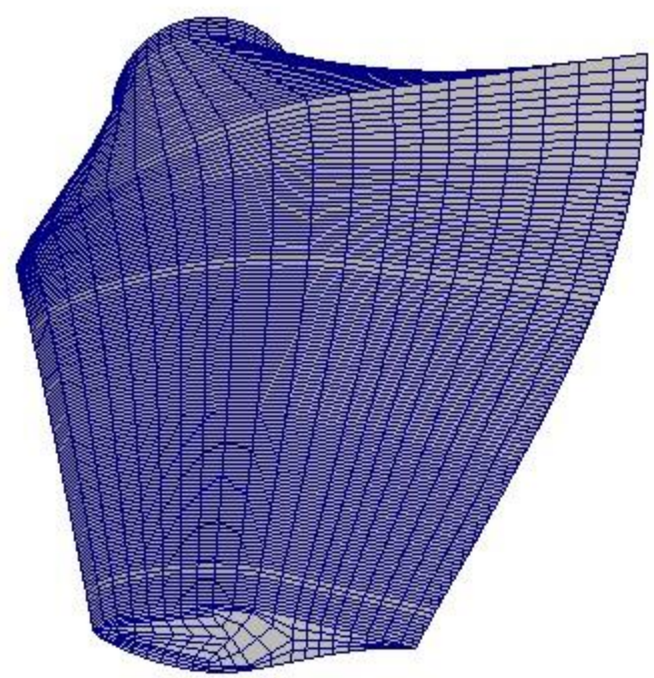
- snappyHexMesh
  - Unstructured mesh
  - Meshes directly to surfaces from CAD file
  - Can be a time consuming procedure
  - Problem with sharp edges:

    eg:Trailing edge of blades, can not represent the geometry well

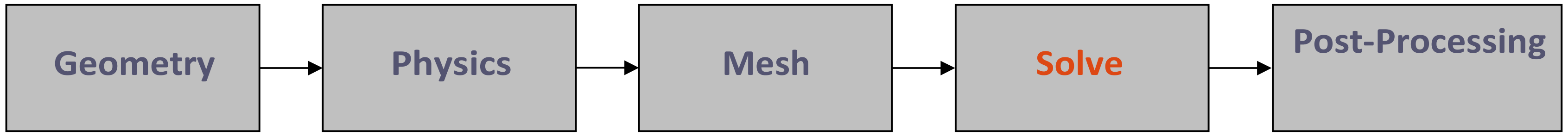


Mesh generation tool





CFD Process



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CFD Process

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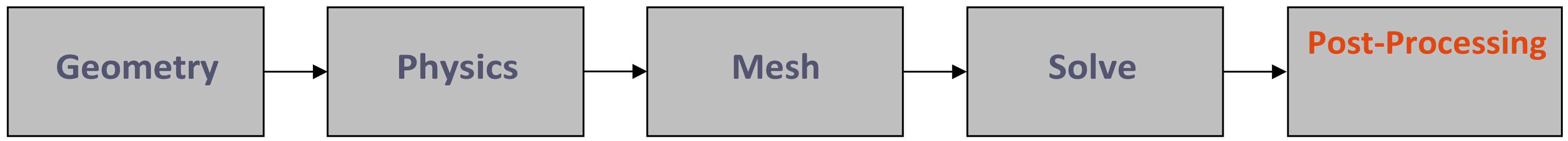
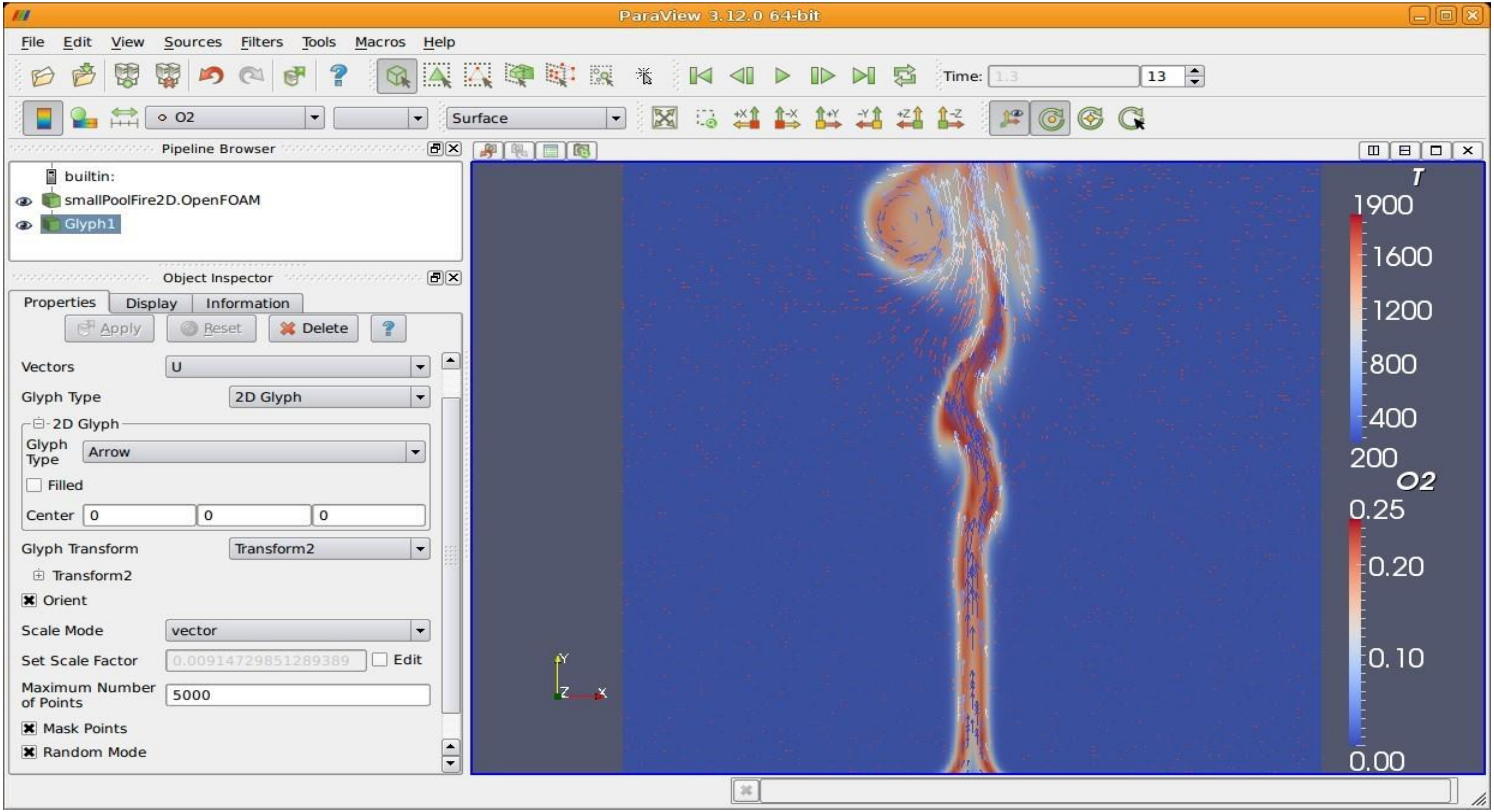
CFD Process



CFD Process


ParaView 3.12.0 64-bit
File Edit View Sources Filters Tools Macros Help
Time: 13
O2
Surface
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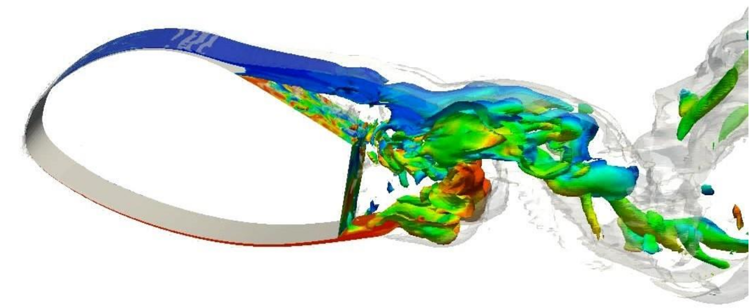
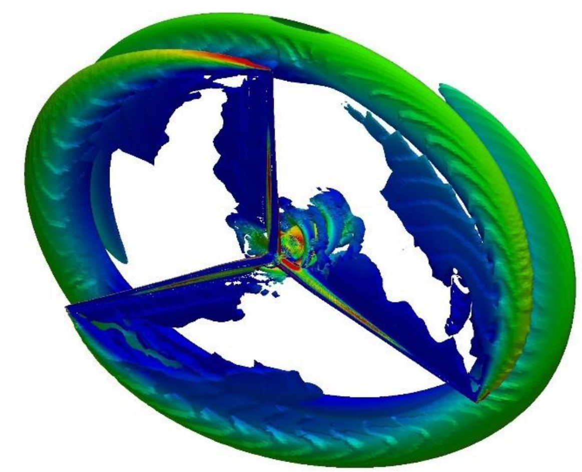
builtin:
smallPoolFire2D.OpenFOAM
Glyph1
Object Inspector
Properties Display Information
Apply Reset Delete
Vectors U
Glyph Type 2D Glyph
2D Glyph
Glyph Type Arrow
Filled
Center 0 0 0
Glyph Transform Transform2
Transform2
Orient
Scale Mode vector
Set Scale Factor 0.00914729851289389 Edit
Maximum Number of Points 5000
Mask Points
Random Mode
T
1900
1600
1200
800
400
200
O2
0.25
0.20
0.10
0.00
Y
Z
X

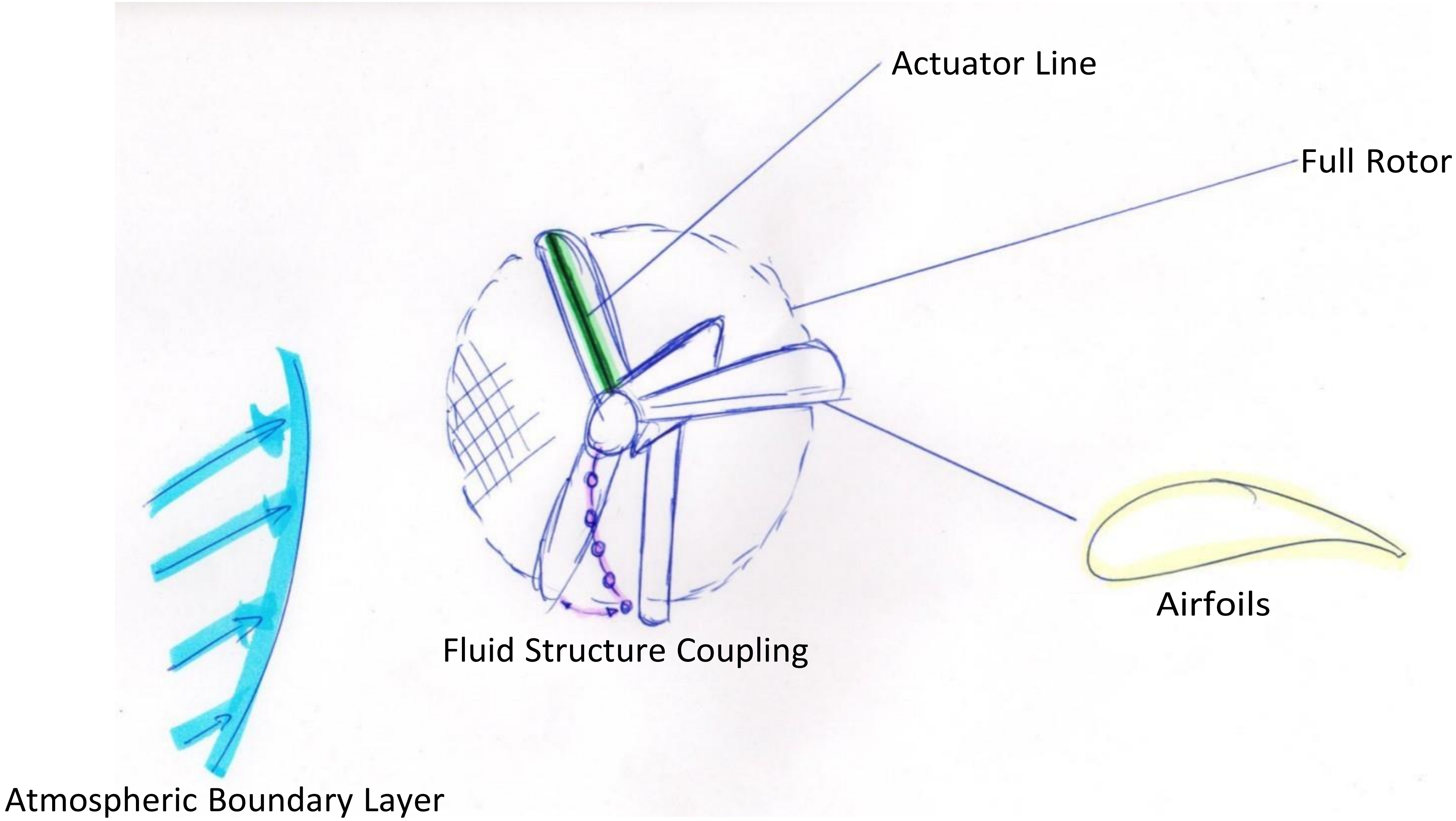
Why should we use CFD methods in wind energy?

- Load calculations based on 2D models with limited accuracy
- Especially in non-standard load cases models show problems (e.g. yawed inflow)
- In non-standard cases for atmospheric flows (complex terrain, water, ...)
- Detailed aerodynamics only with measurements or CFD



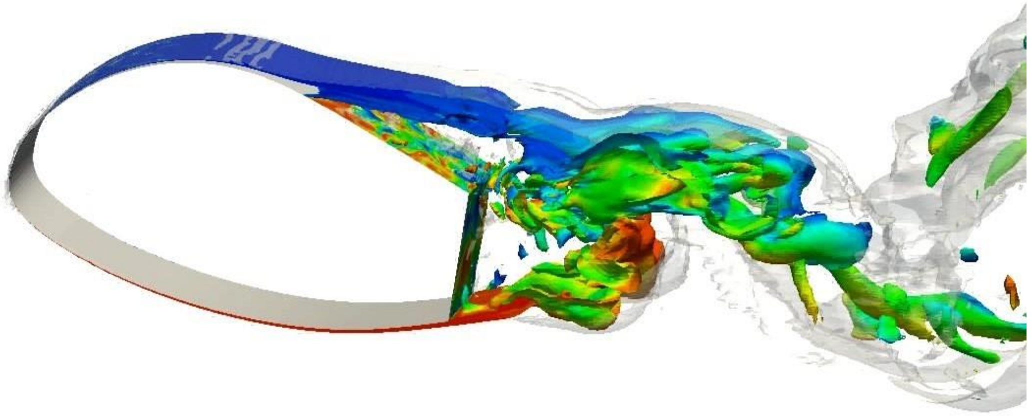


Why should we use CFD methods in wind energy?



CFD Simulations: Airfoil

- 2D Airfoil Characteristics needed for:
  - Airfoil Design
  - Blade Design
  - Load Calculations



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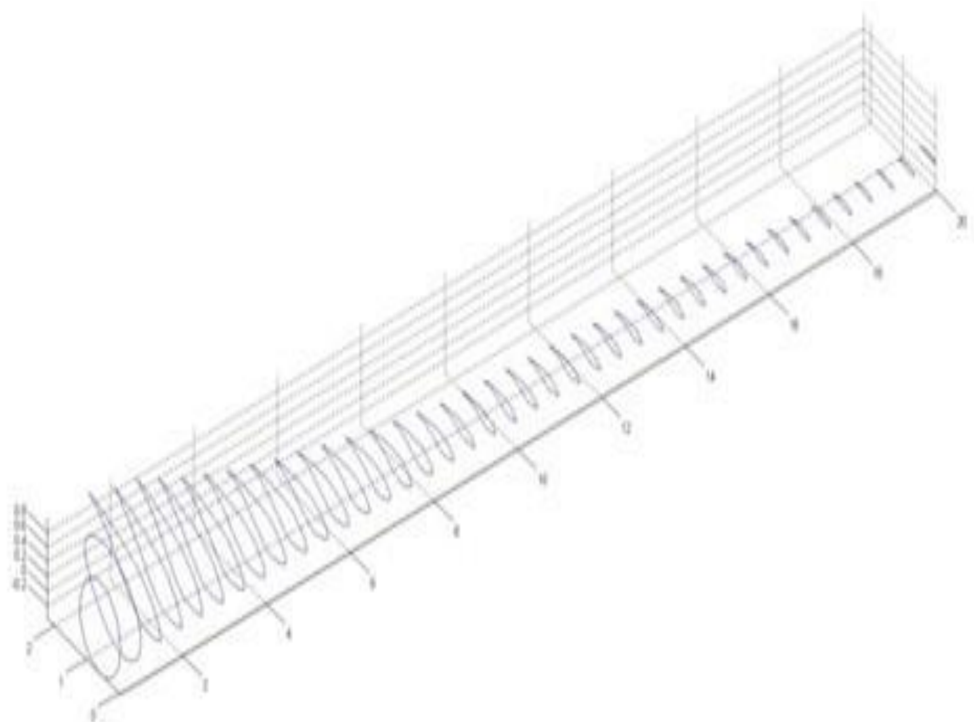
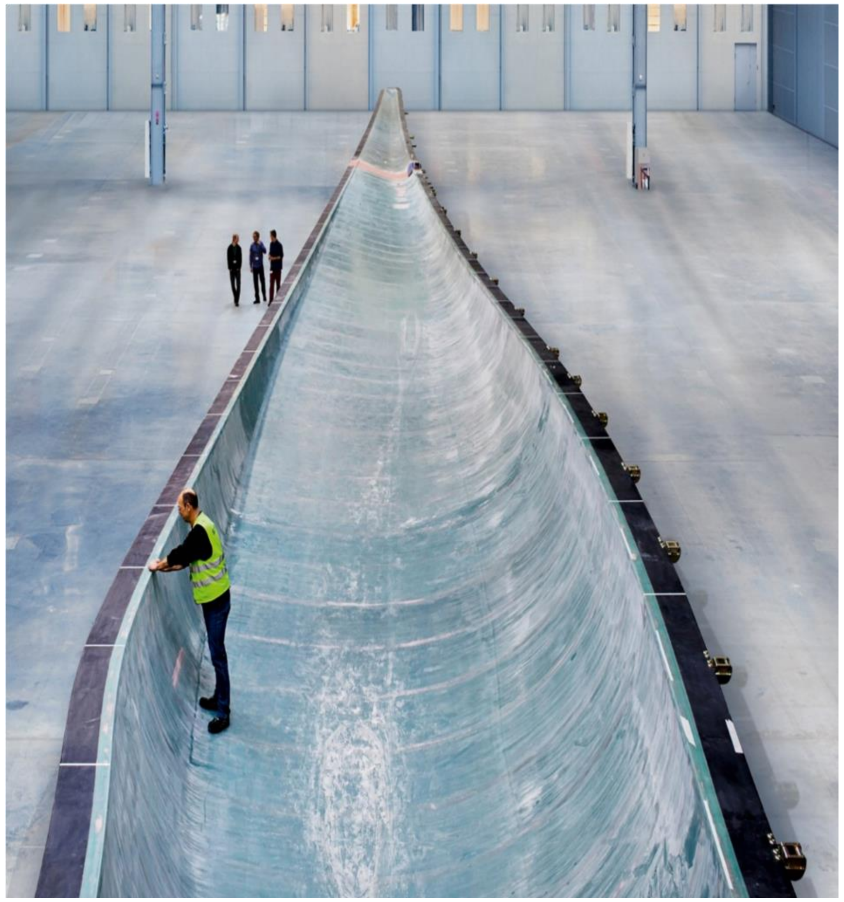
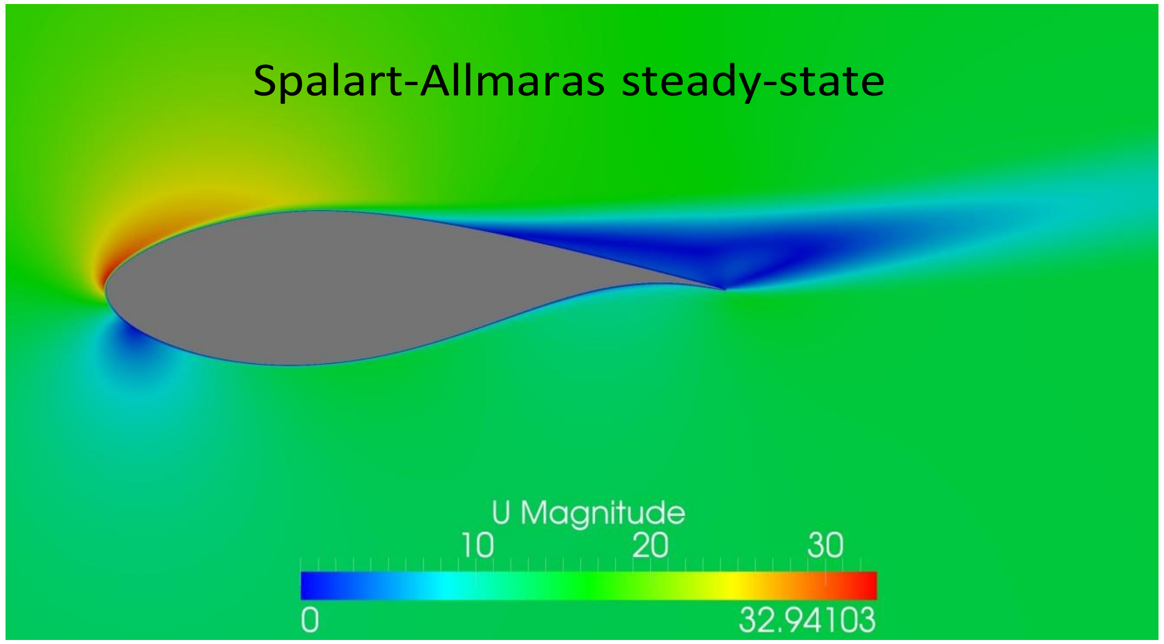


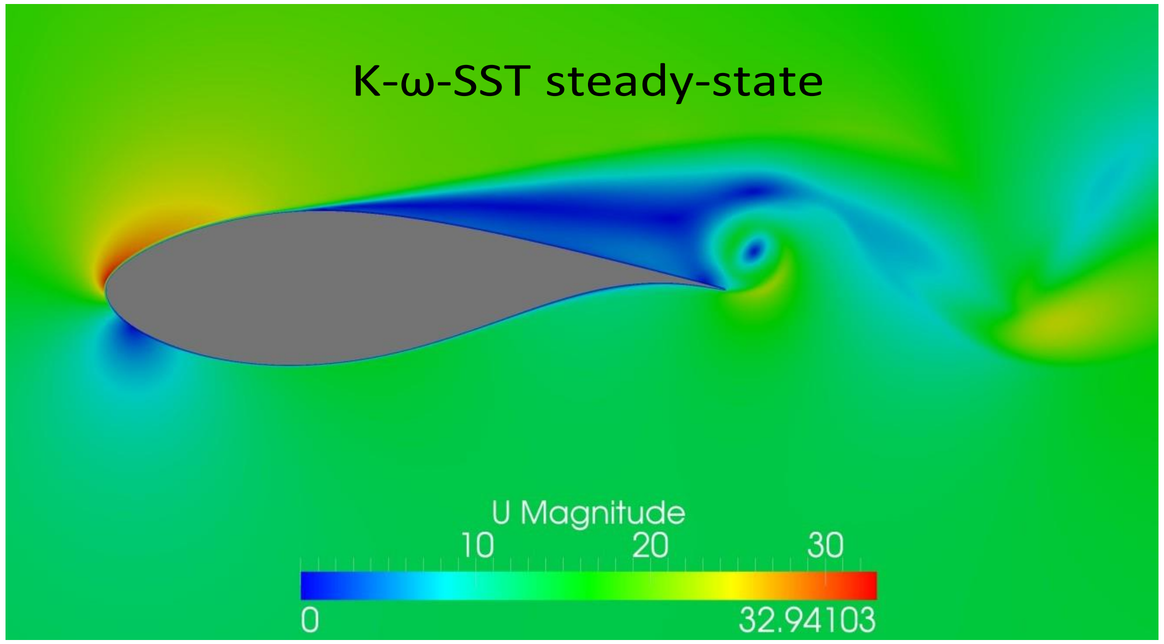


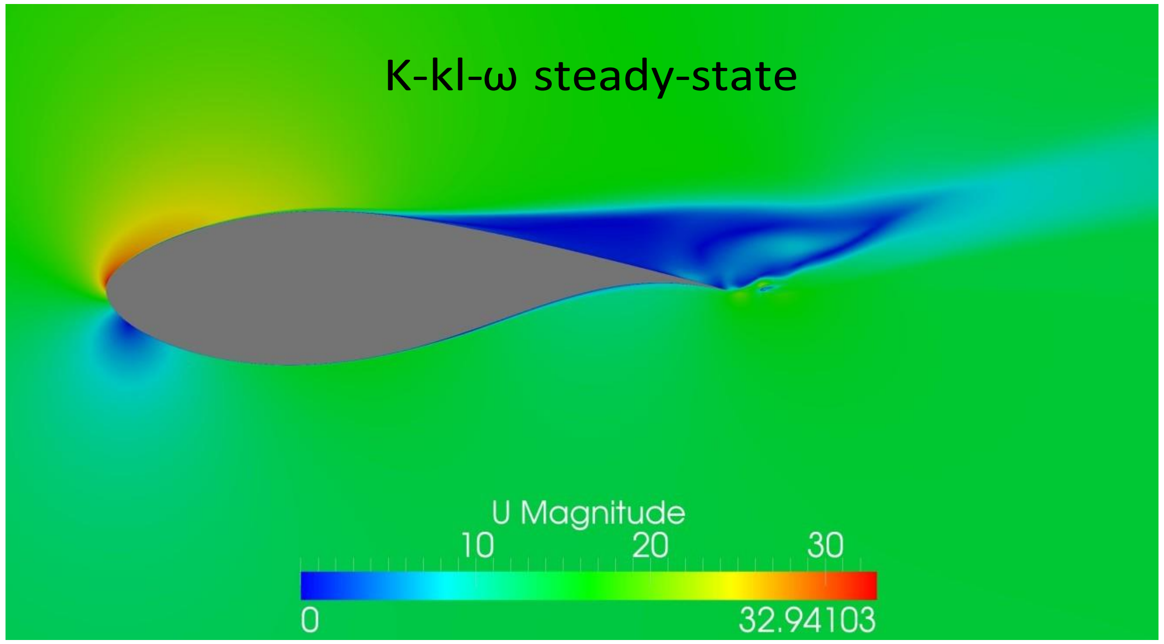
Ref: [www.siemens.com]

DU-91-W2-250

Velocity Distribution – Re = 1E6, α = 15.19°





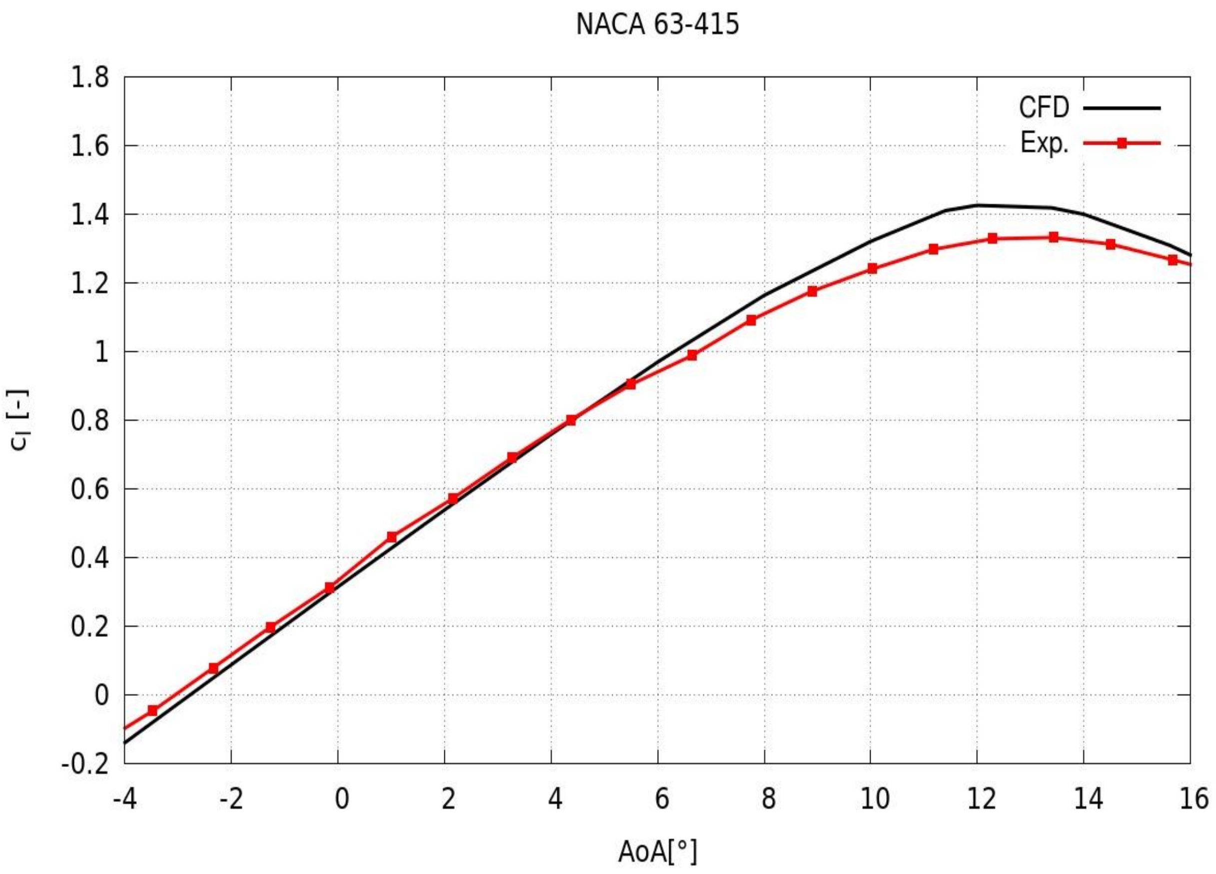


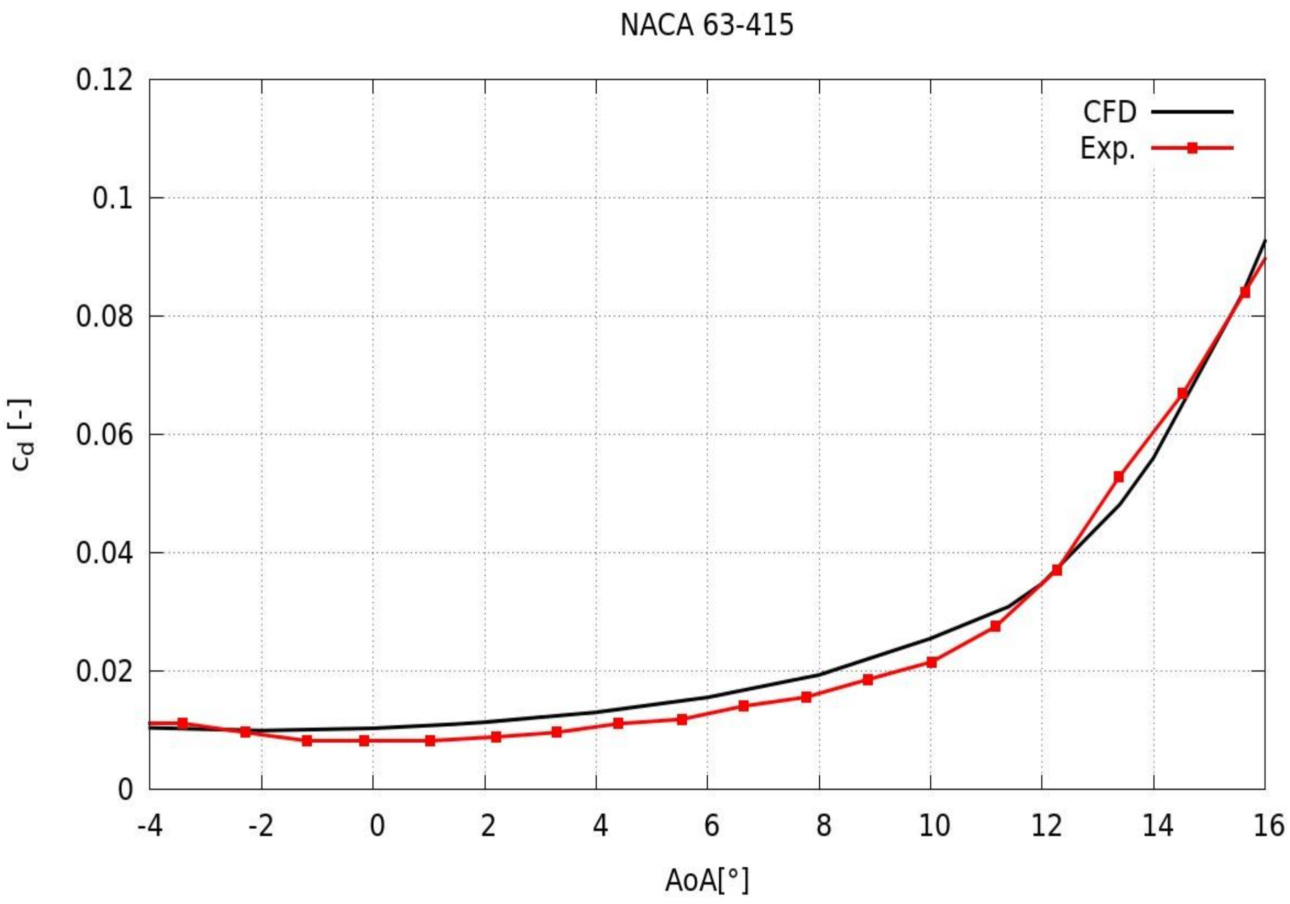
Know your model!

Airfoil Simulations

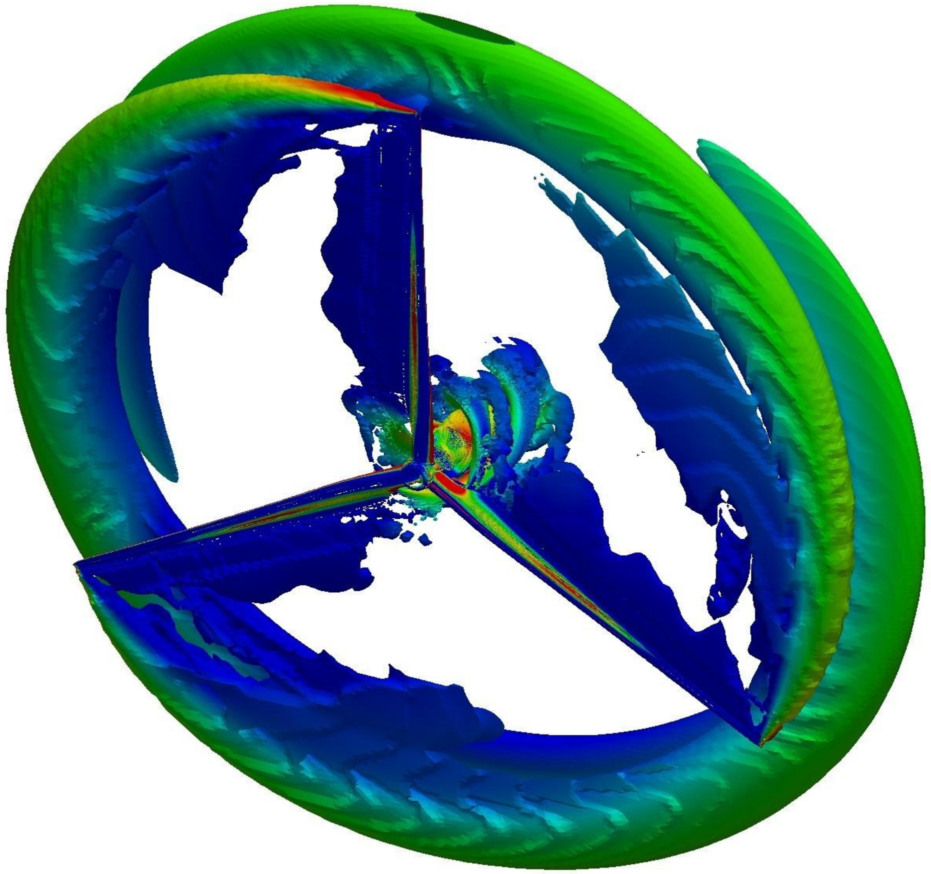
NACA-63-415

Lift and Drag Coefficient



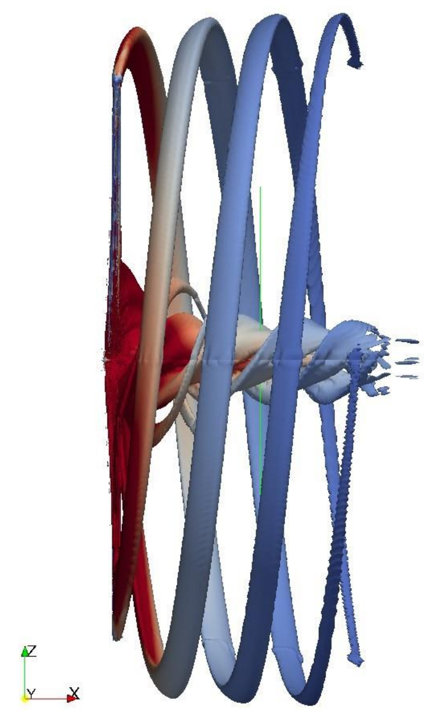


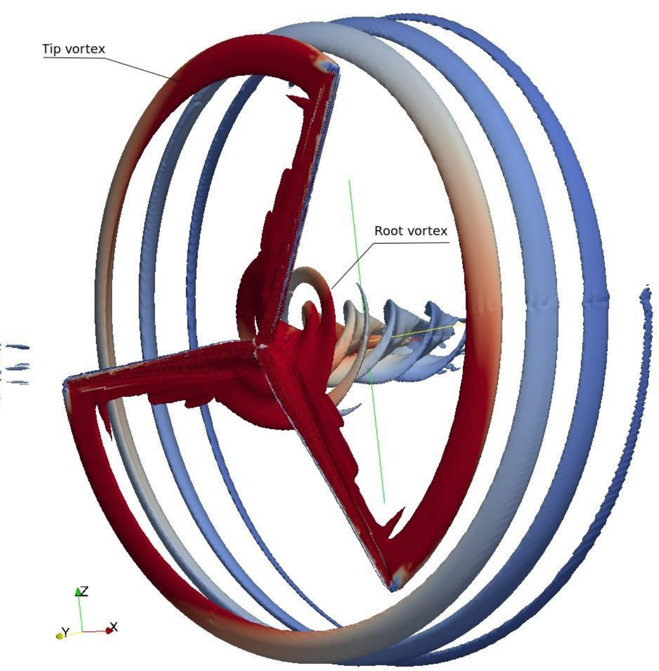
Wind Turbine Simulations



Motivation

- Get knowledge about full rotor aerodynamics
- Investigation of flow pattern
- Rotor & tower interaction
- Get knowledge about 3D effects
- Wake investigation

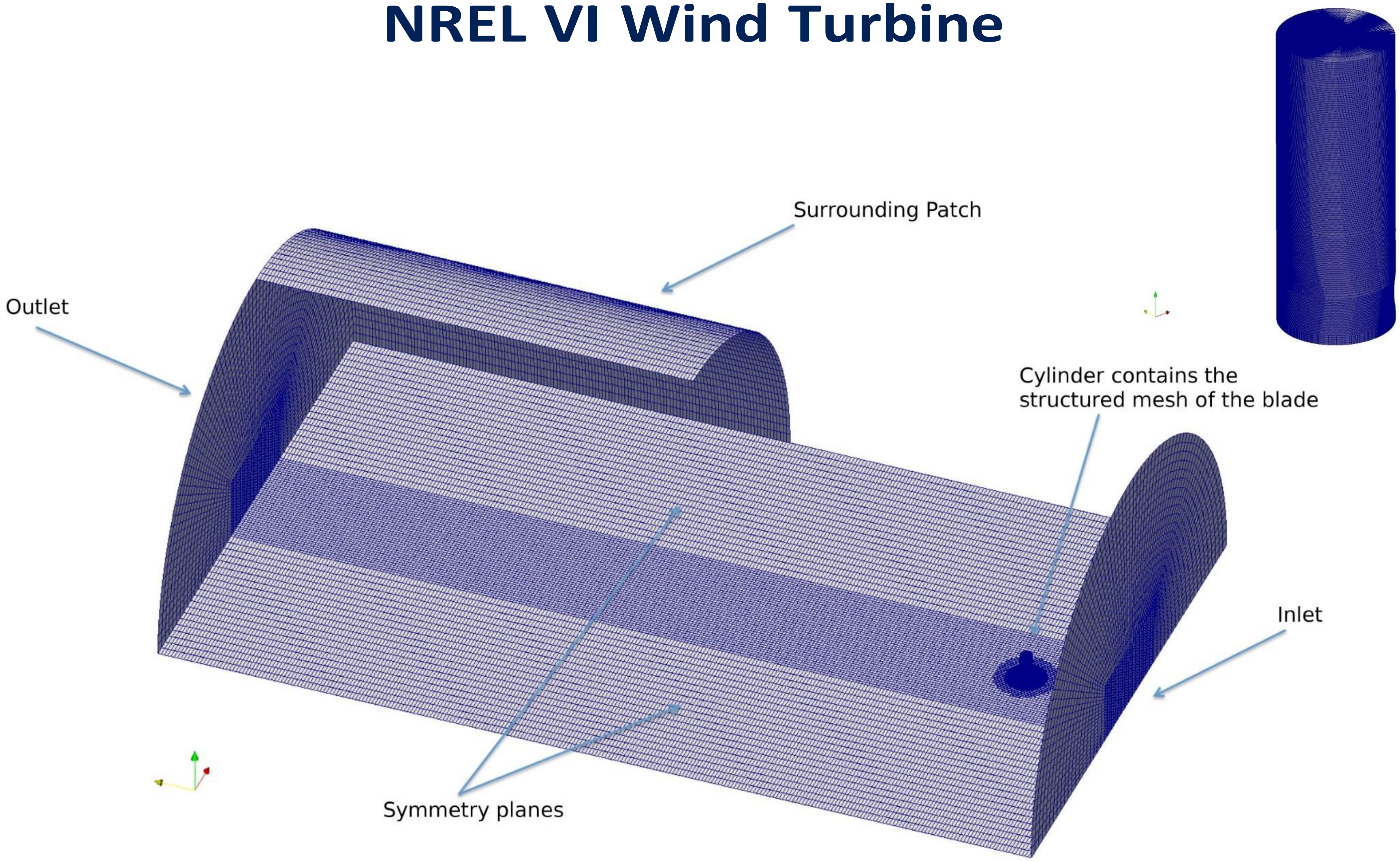




CFD Simulation: NREL VI Wind Turbine

- 10 m rotor diameter
- Measurements in NASA wind tunnel
- Pressure, load as experimental data available

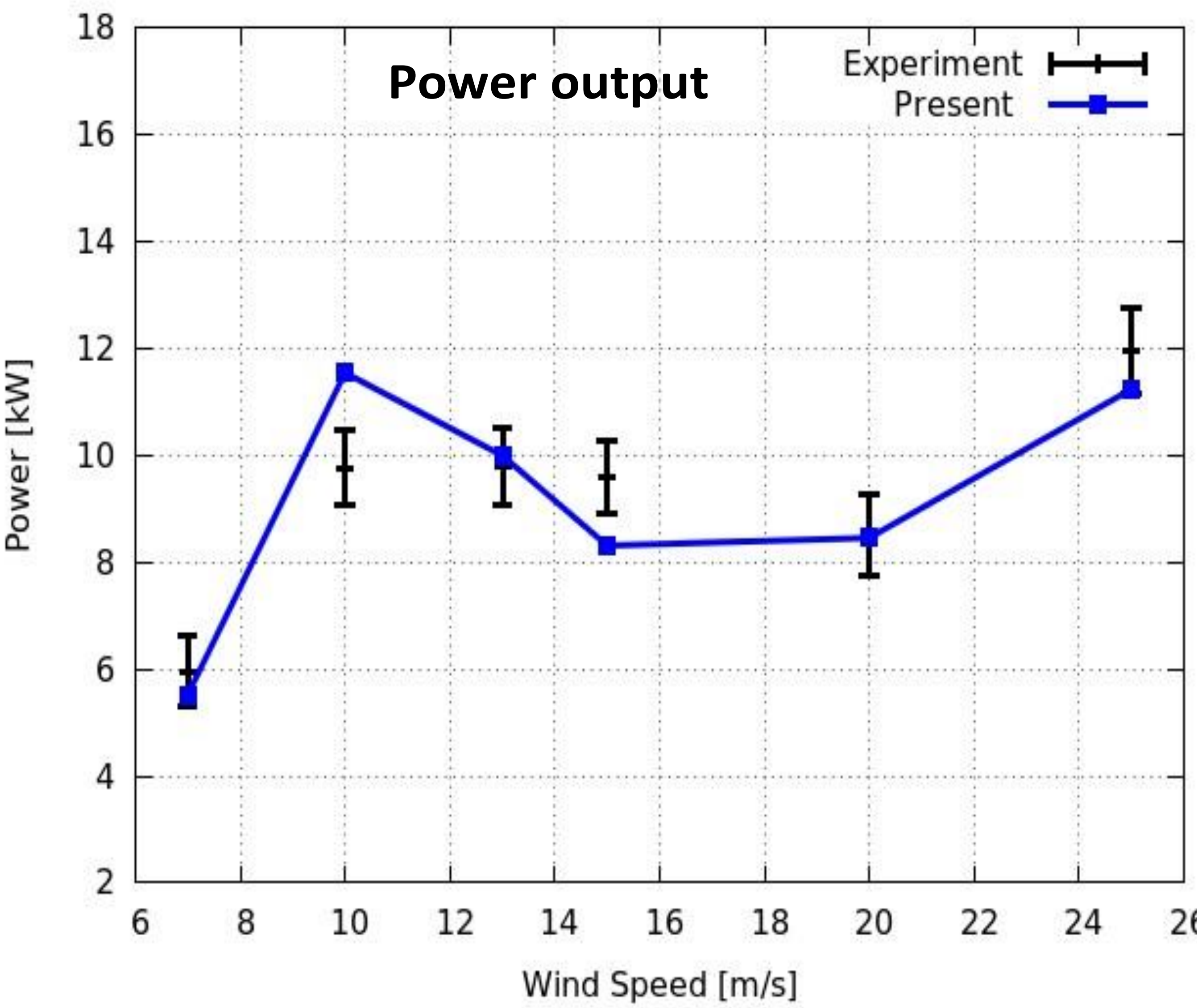
NREL VI Wind Turbine

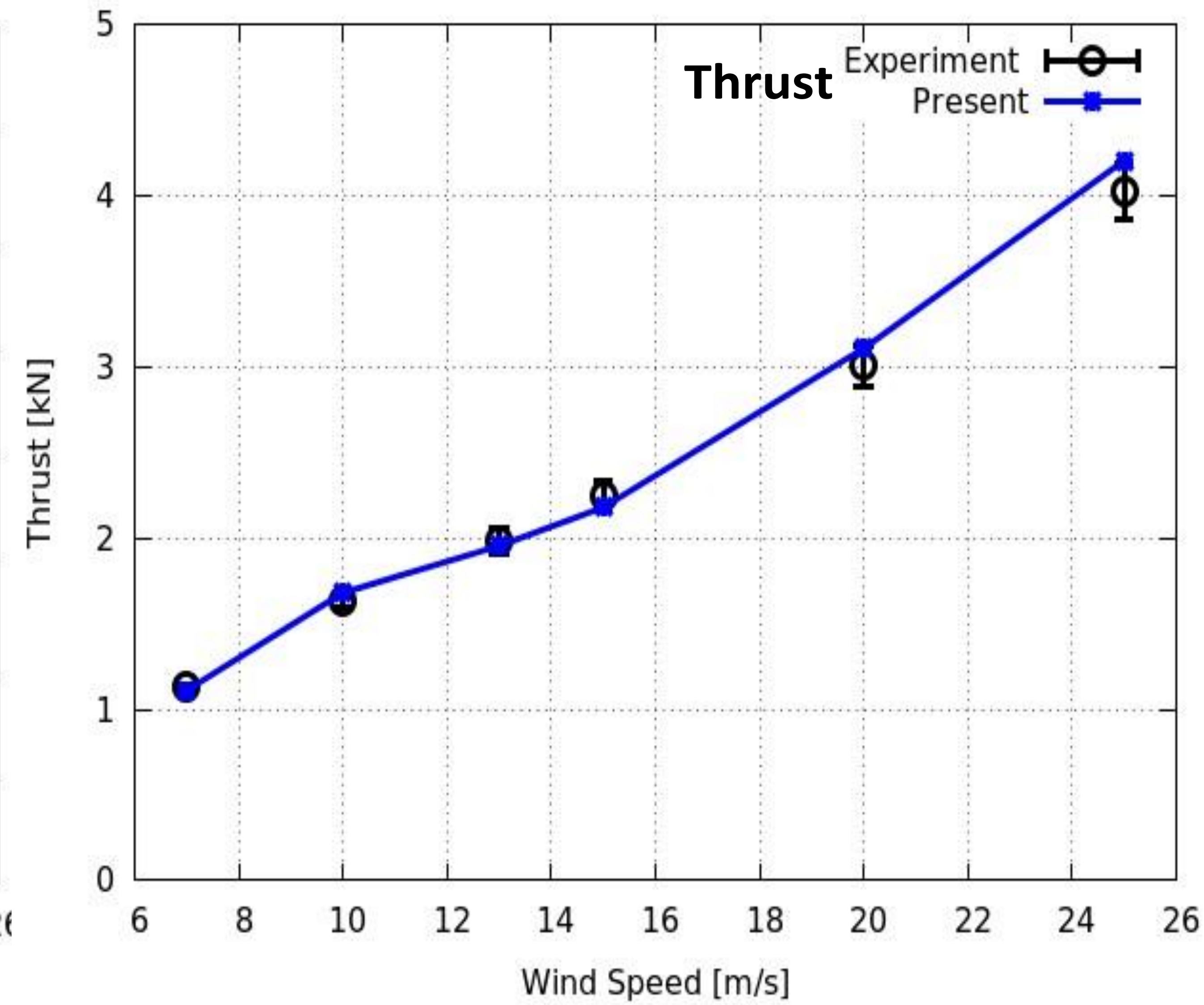


NREL VI Wind Turbine

- Simulation conducted on the FLOW * cluster, with 92 CPU cores
- Steady-State simulation
- Total grid size: 7 Million
- k-ω SST turbulence model
- Convergence achieved within 5 hours CPU time

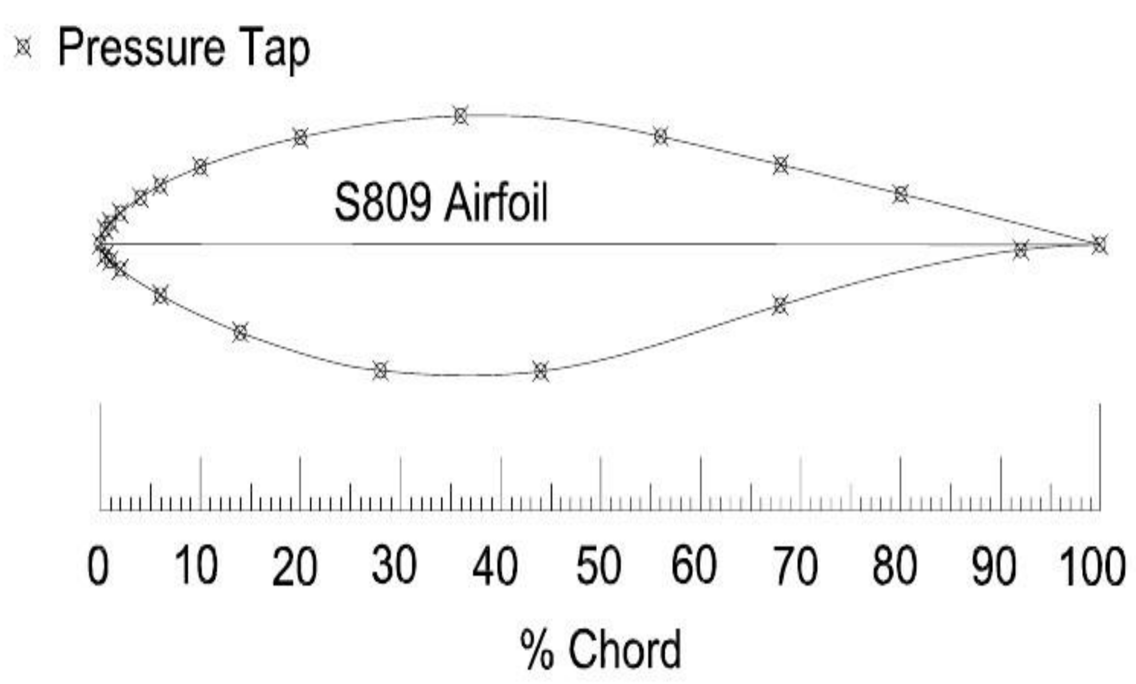
NREL VI Wind Turbine

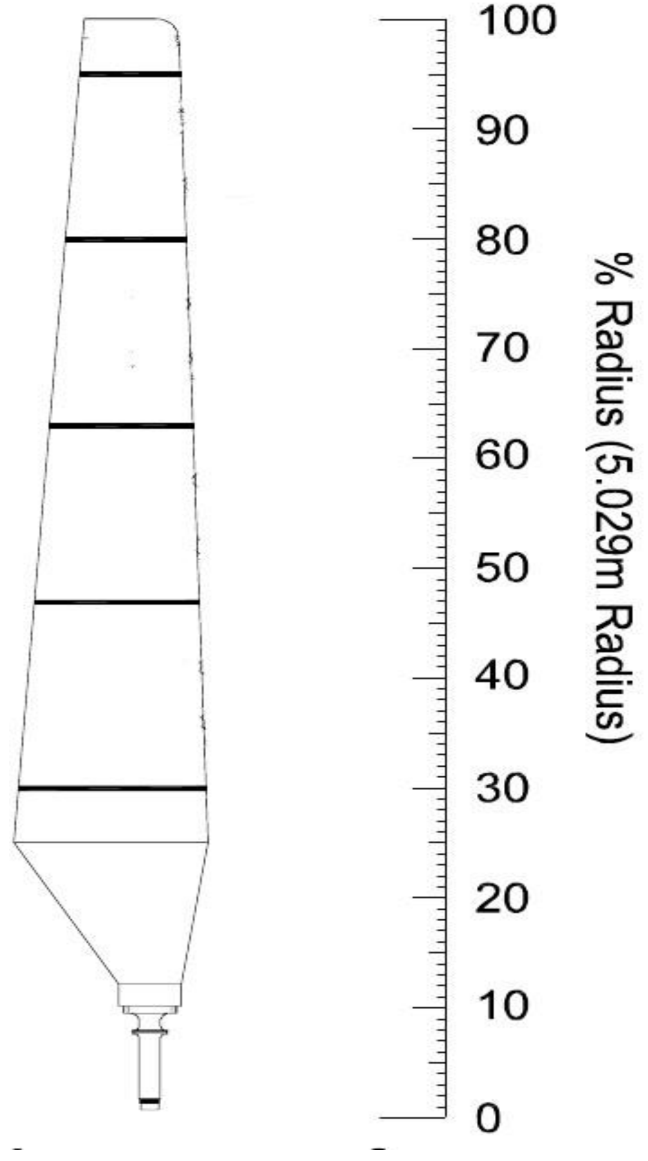




NREL VI Wind Turbine

Pressure distribution



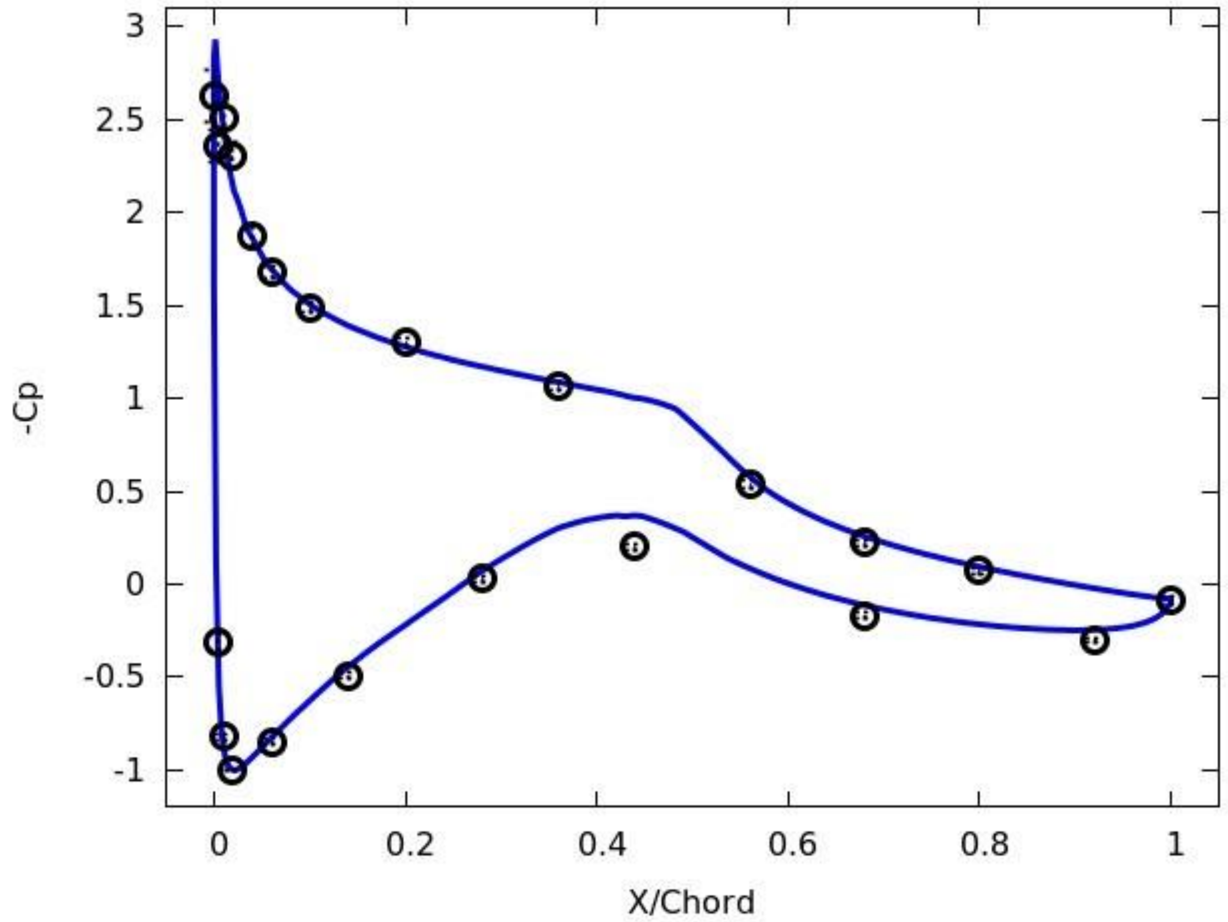


Ref: http://www.nrel.gov/wind/

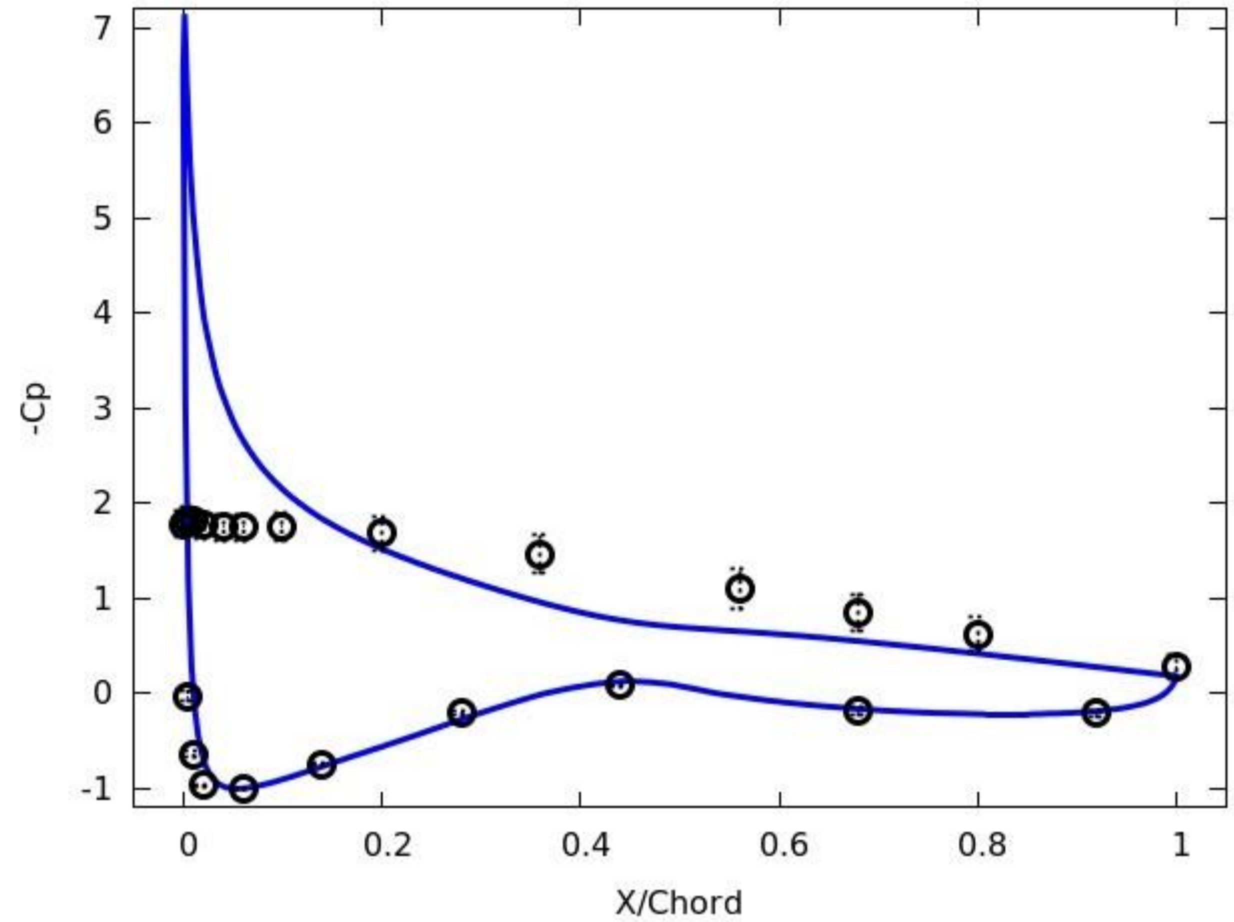
NREL VI Wind Turbine

Pressure distribution

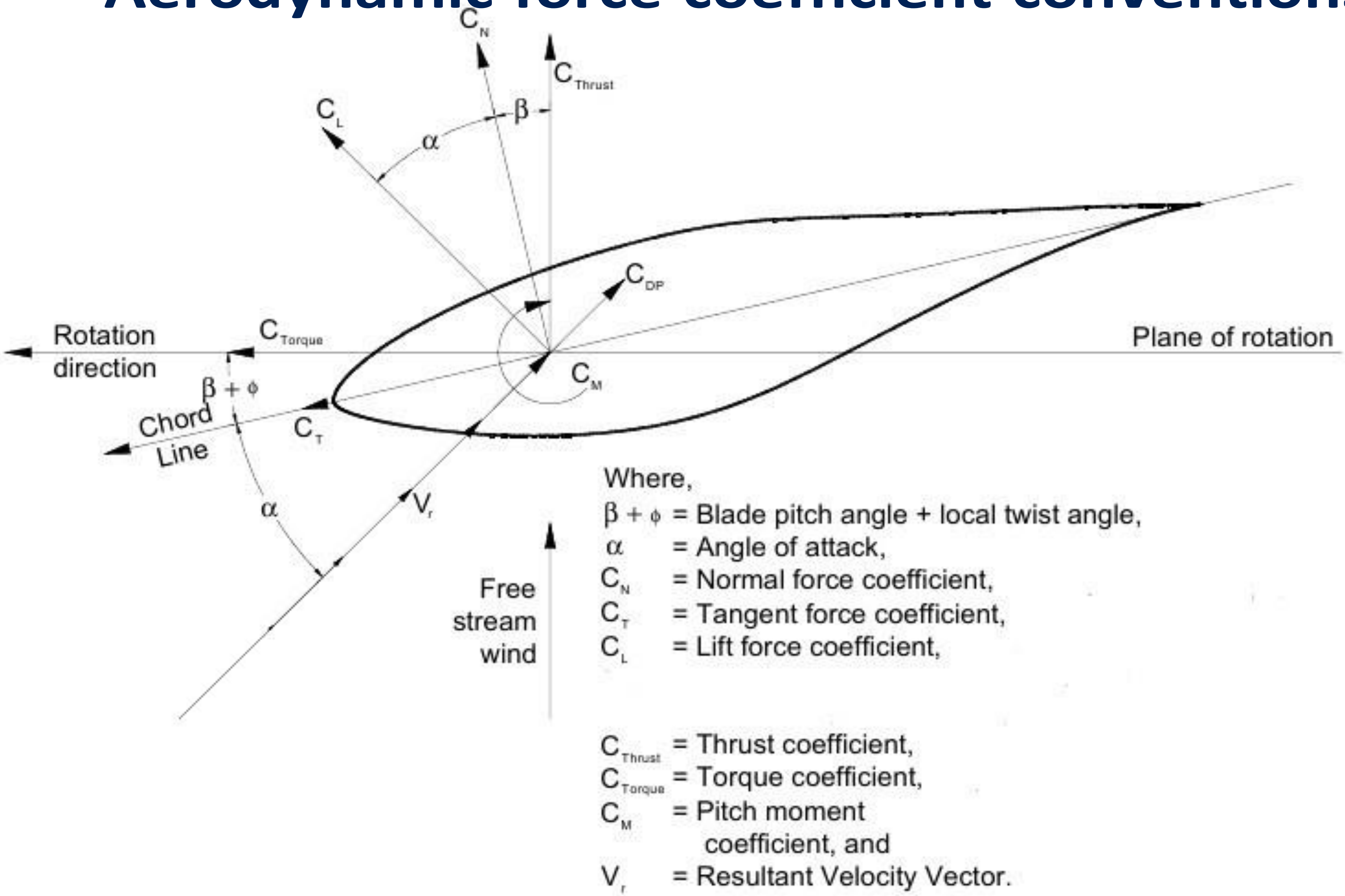
7 m/s



10 m/s



Aerodynamic force coefficient conventions



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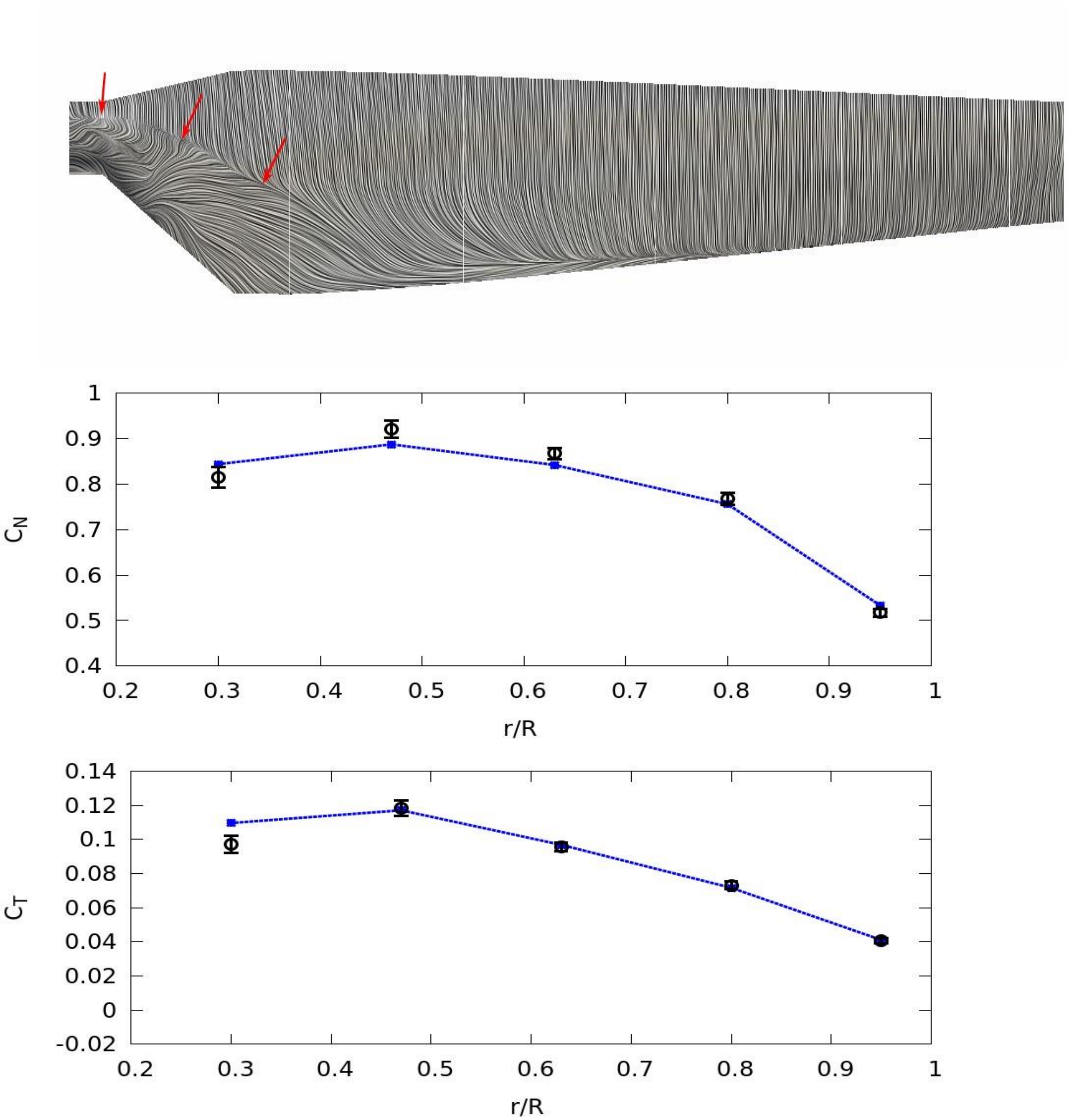
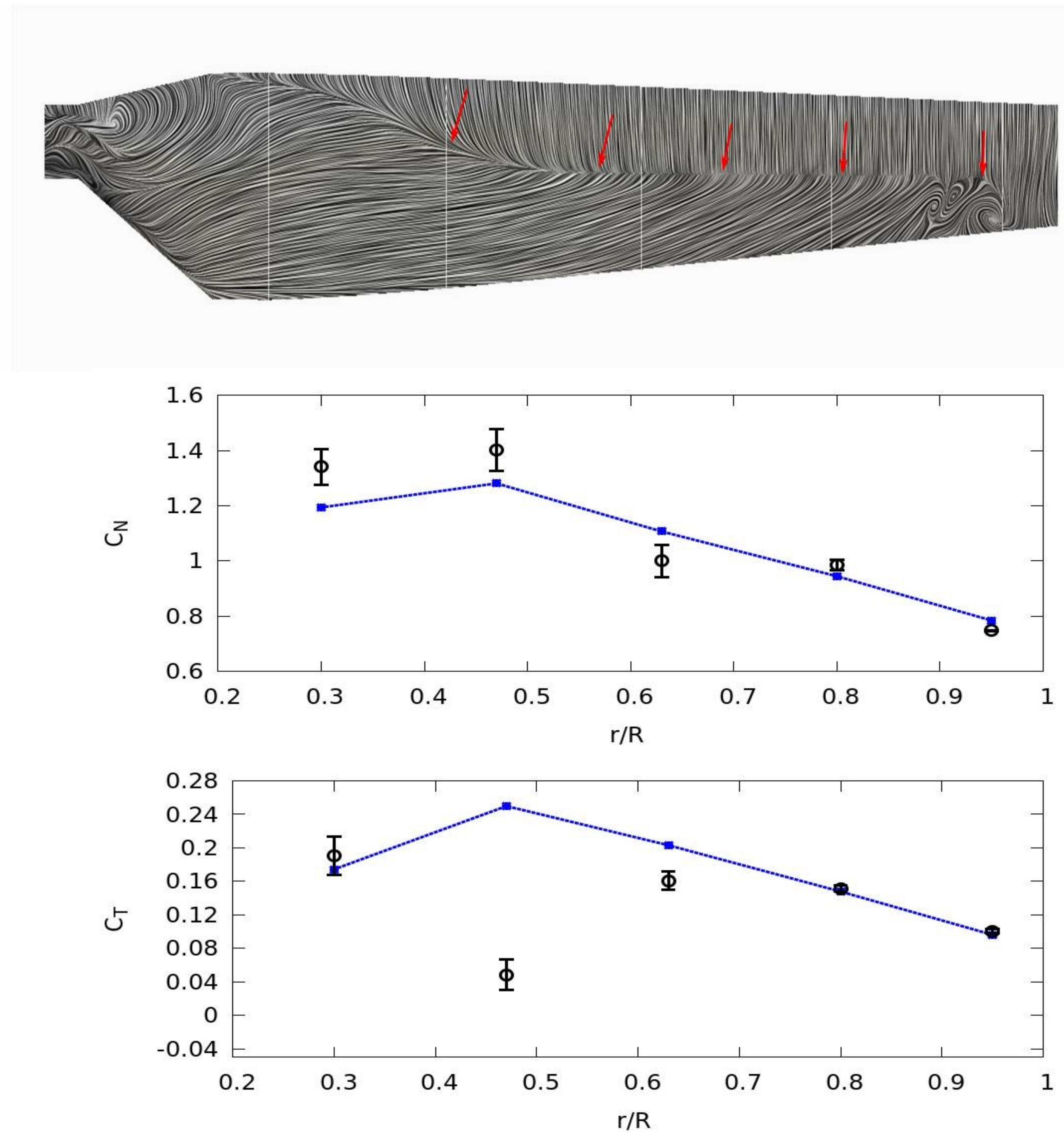


7 m/s

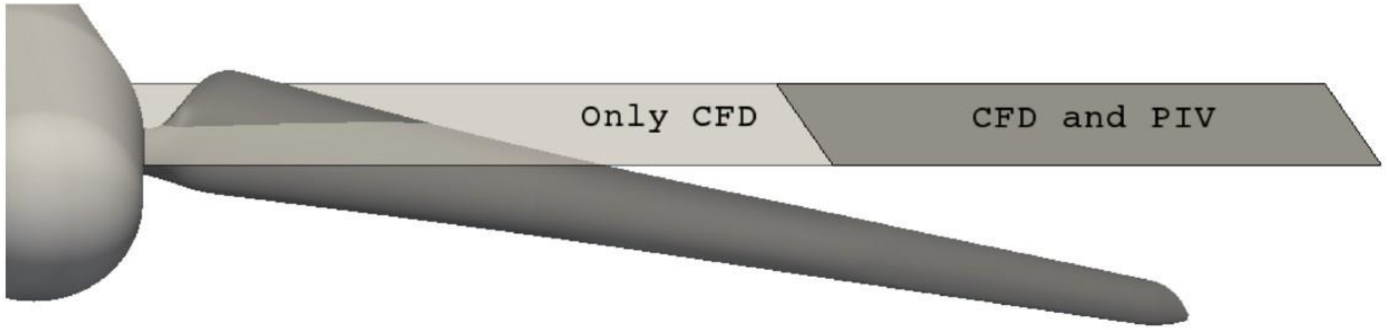


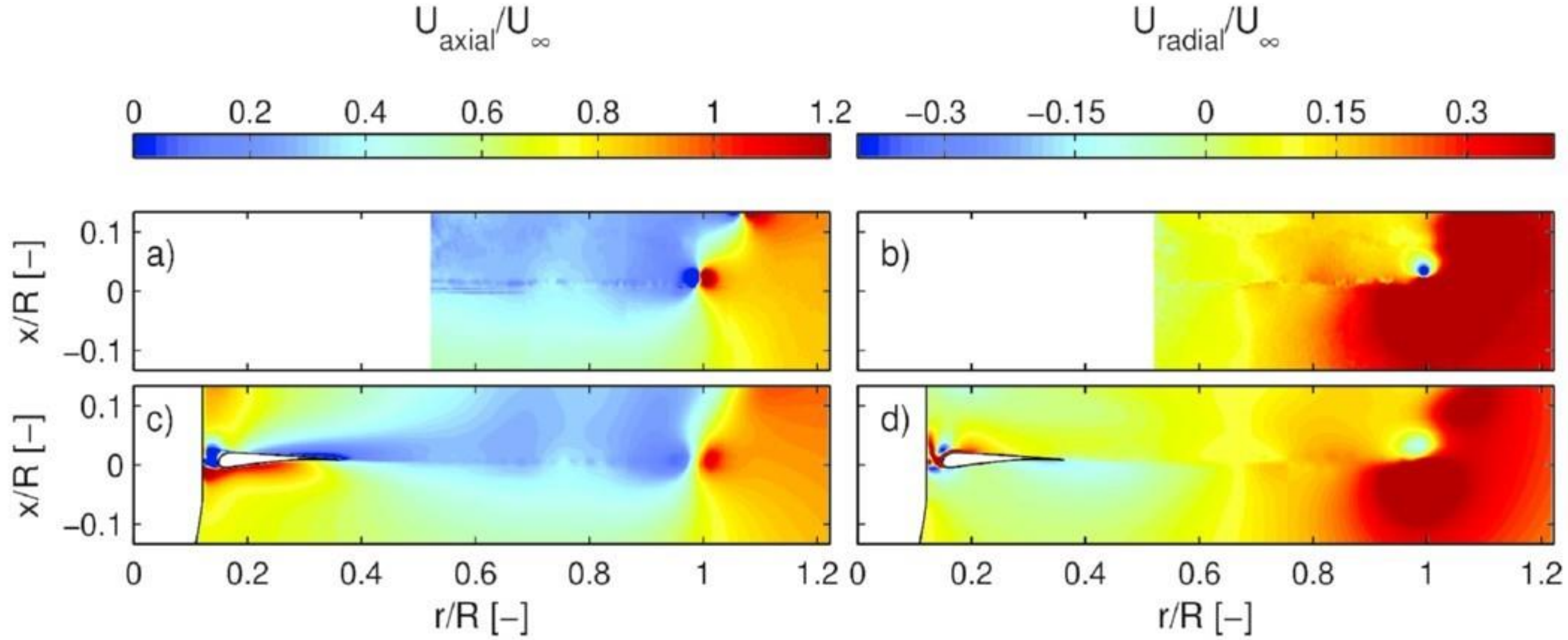
0 m/s

CFD Simulation: Mexico Wind Turbine

- 4.5 m rotor diameter
- Measurements in 9x9 m^2 open section wind tunnel
- Pressure, load and PIV experimental data available
- Considered cases: axial inflow with 10, 15, 19, 24 and 30 m/s

Mexico Wind Turbine

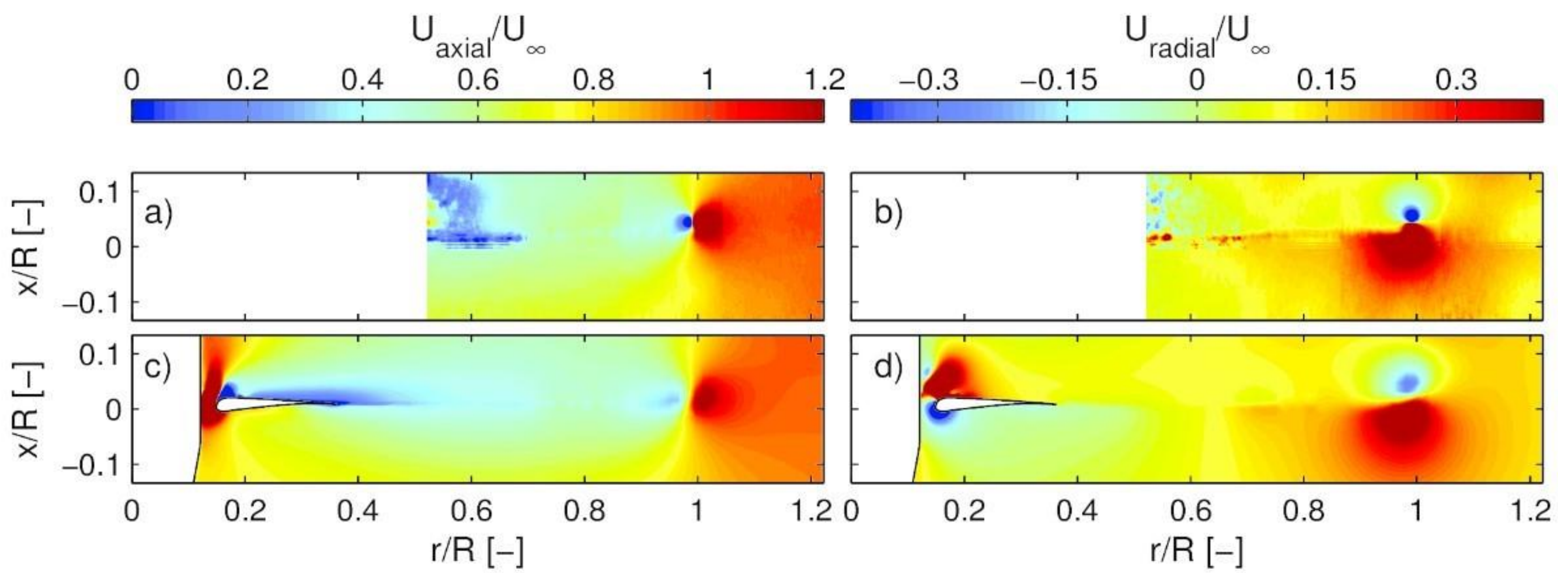




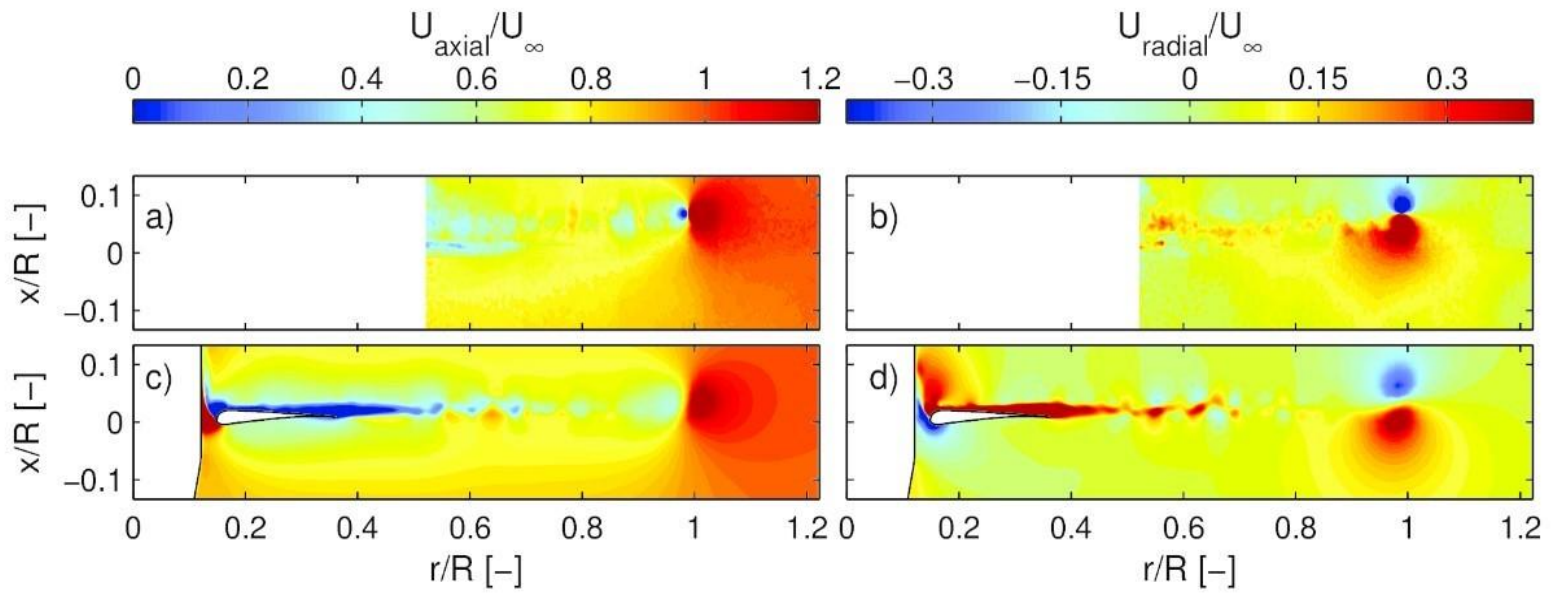
U=10 m/s
Linear range

Mexico Wind Turbine

U=15 m/s
Design conditions

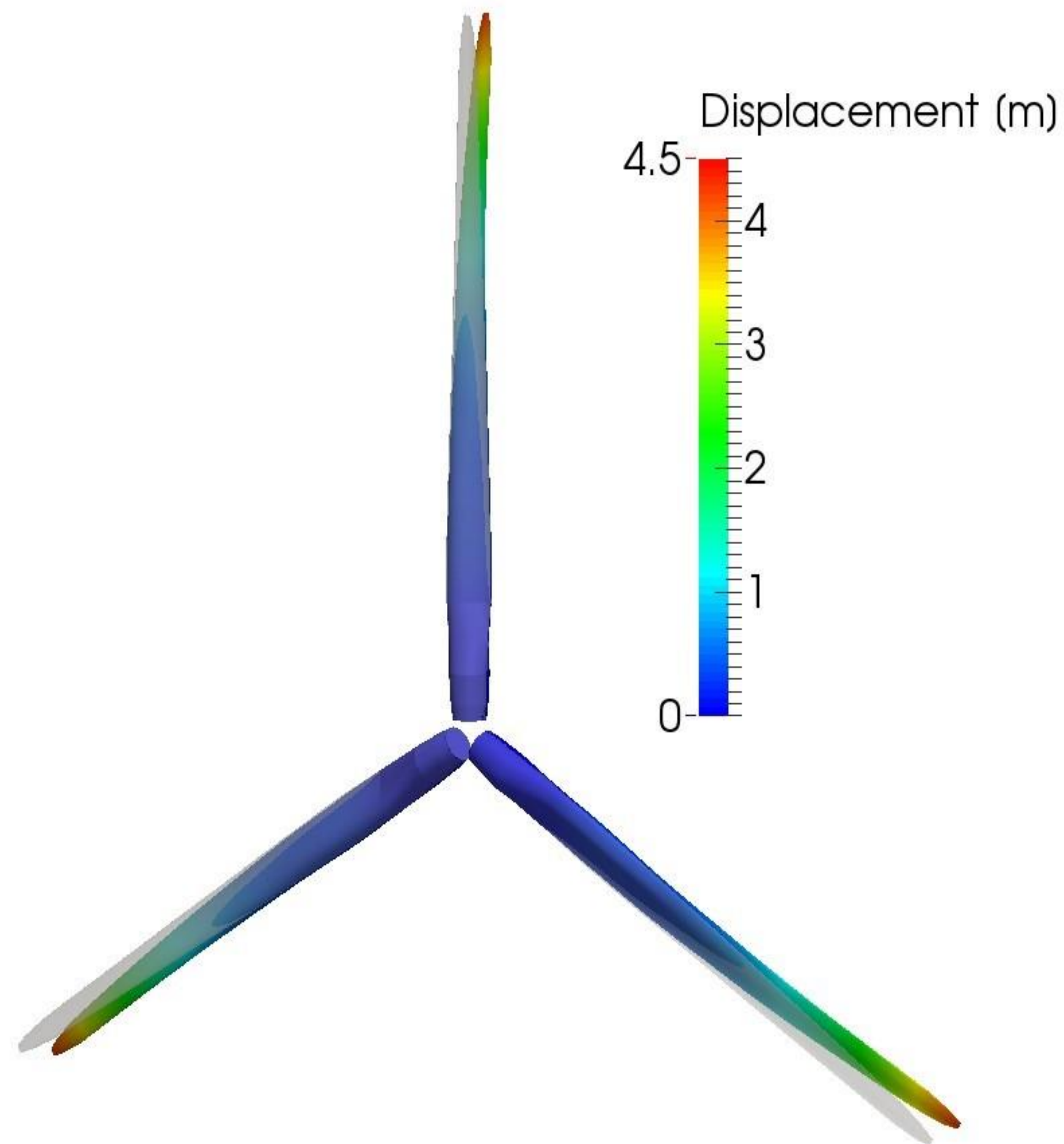


U=24 m/s
Stall conditions



Fluid-Structure Coupling

- Large, flexible rotor blades deform
- Conventional CFD assumes stiff blades
- CFD+FEA improves accuracy
- (FEA = Finite Element Analysis)



Summary

- OpenFOAM is a very useful tool for simulating wind energy applications (2D, 3D, steady state, transient)
- Open source concept
- Shows good results for wind energy applications •Join the community!

Discussion

Thank you for your attention