



LiS

LABORATOIRE
D'INFORMATIQUE
& SYSTÈMES

UMR 7020 

Towards an unbiased detection of Galactic filaments using innovative Deep Learning methods

BERTHELOT Loris



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Introduction



Context

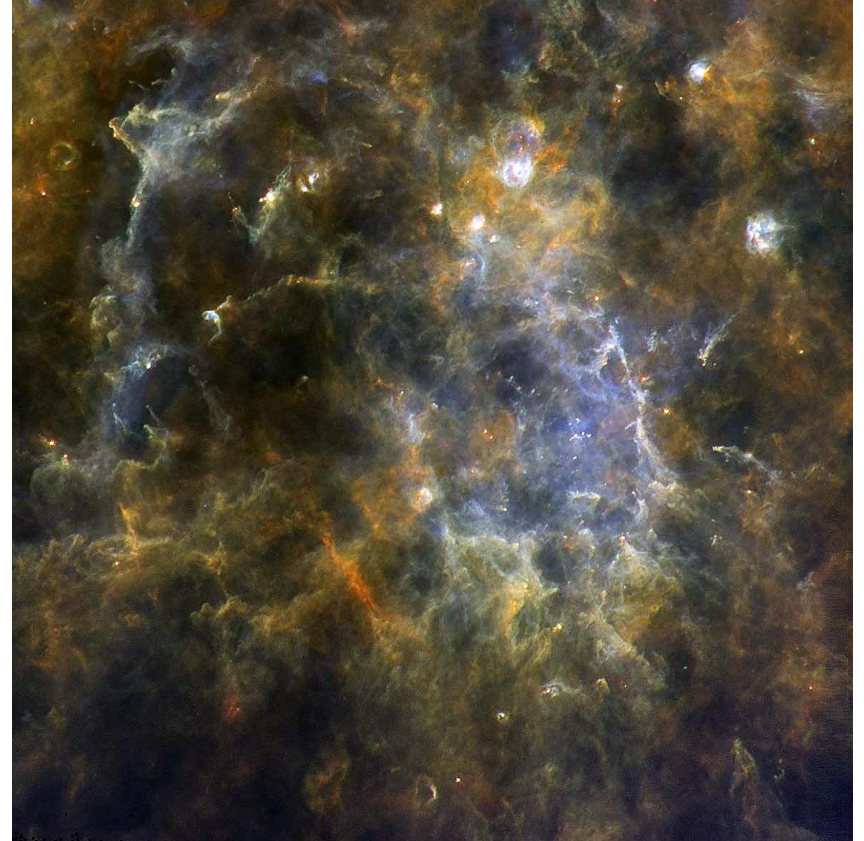
- Filaments are made of gas and dust
- Filaments host stars formation
- Need to detect filaments in an *unbiased* way to understand star formation



Eagle nebula (M16) with Herschel (70 160 250 μ m), Xu+2019

What are filaments?

- Structuration of the interstellar matter
- Over-density compared to the surrounding medium
- Mechanisms affecting filaments:
 - Gravity
 - Magnetic field
 - Turbulence
 - Supernova feedback

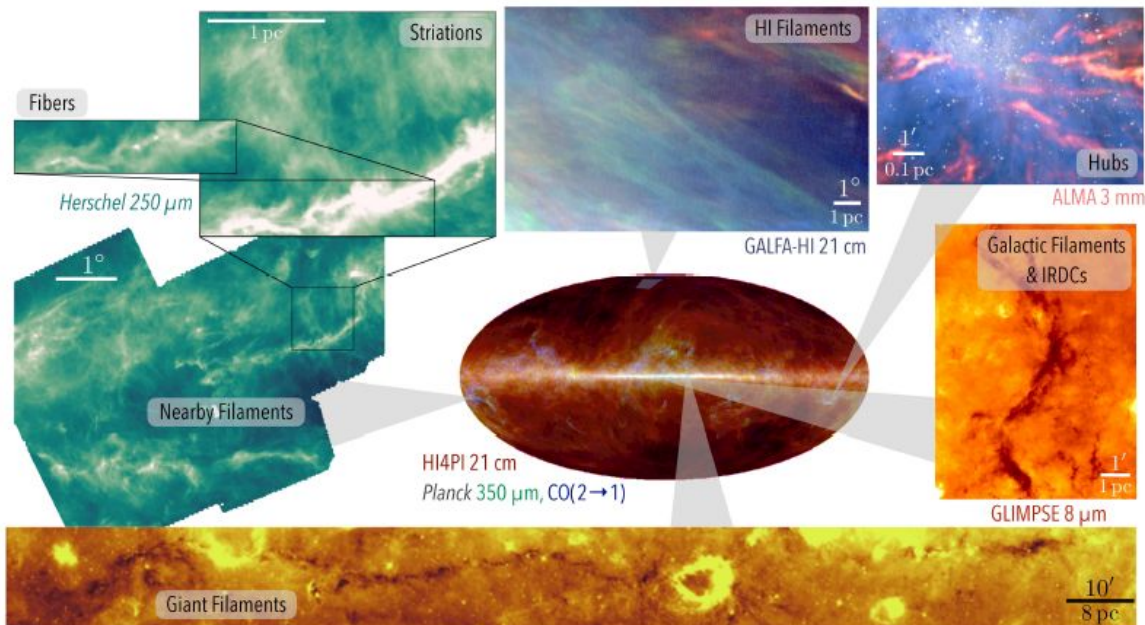


Herschel-Hi-GAL image of the Chamaeleon Galactic Star forming region
Credit: ESA/Herschel/PACS, SPIRE/Hi-GAL Project.

Filaments: A large diversity and a complex life cycle

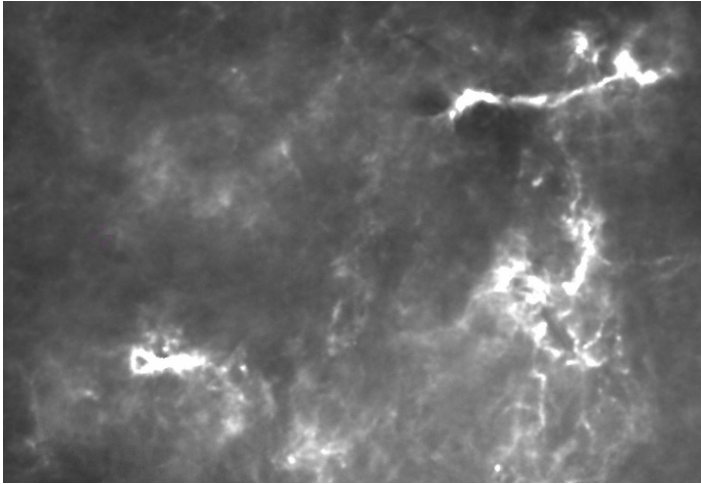
Filament properties:

- Shape
- Over-density level
- Orientation
- Length
- Width



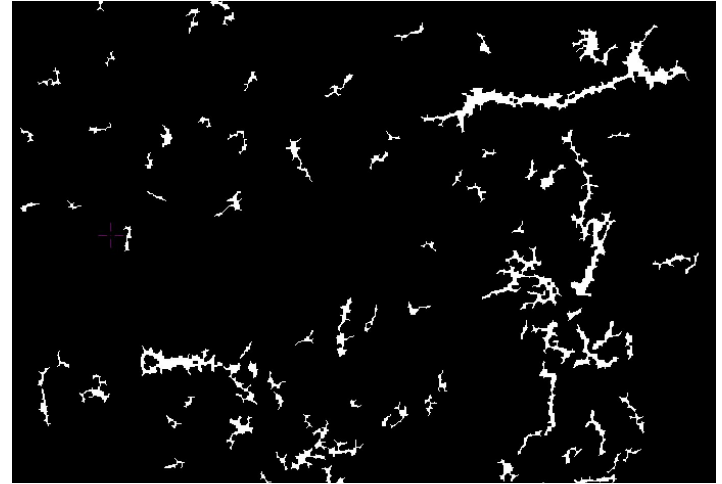
Hacar+2023, Protostars and Planets VII, 153

Objective: Detect filaments in an unbiased way



H₂ column density: Hi-GAL dataset, Molinari+ 2010

→
Filament
detection



Hessian-based method, Schisano+2020

Existing methods

- Derivative-based approaches (e.g. DisPerSe, CRISPy)
- Pattern matching approaches (e.g. RHT, Filfinder, FiLDReaMS)
- Multi-scale approaches (e.g. getfilaments, getsf, wavelet-based methods)



User hyper-parameters dependency

Hyperparameters issue

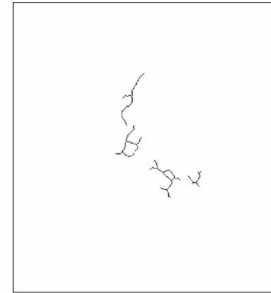
- Subjective results
- Incomplete extractions
- Over prediction algorithms
- Time consuming



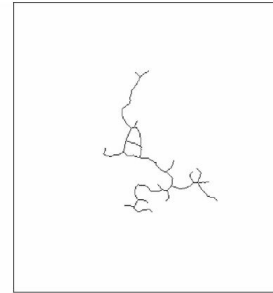
Machine learning



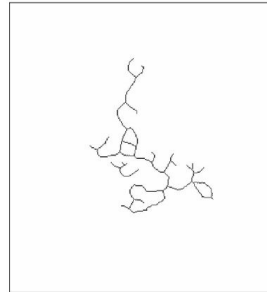
(i) Original input image.



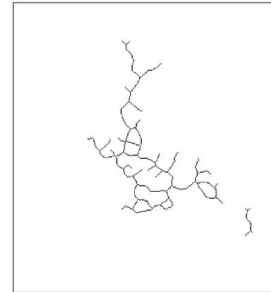
(ii) GT=90%, FT=90%,
MSSIM=0.6581.



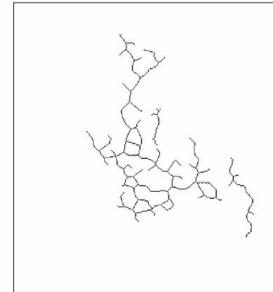
(iii) GT=80%, FT=80%,
MSSIM=0.6586.



(iv) GT=70%, FT=70%,
MSSIM=0.6589.



(v) GT=60%, FT=60%,
MSSIM=0.6587.



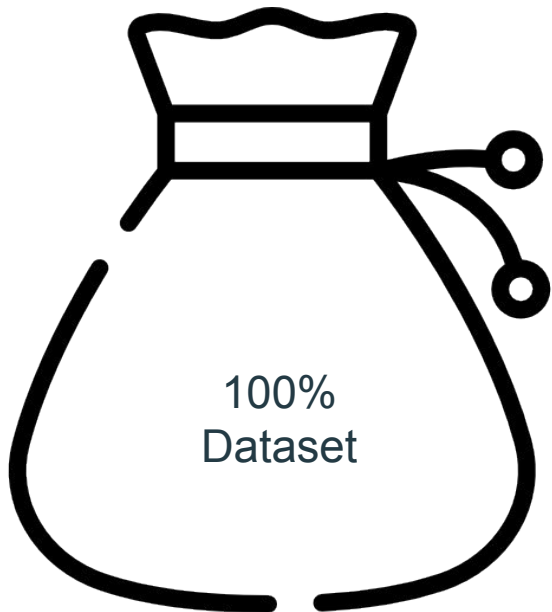
(vi) GT=50%, FT=50%,
MSSIM=0.6579.



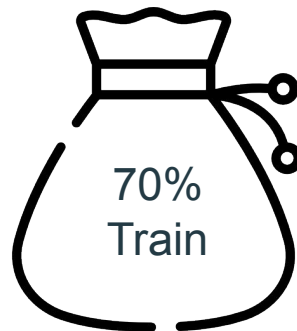
Machine learning concepts



Train/Validation/Test setting



→
Random split



- Train our neural network



- Training control
- Choose best hyper-parameters



- Compute performances

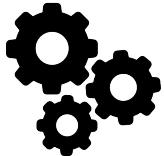
Hyper-parameter selection



Hyper-parameter selection

Hyper-parameter
selection

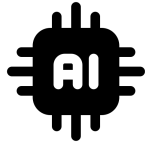
Retrain and
performance



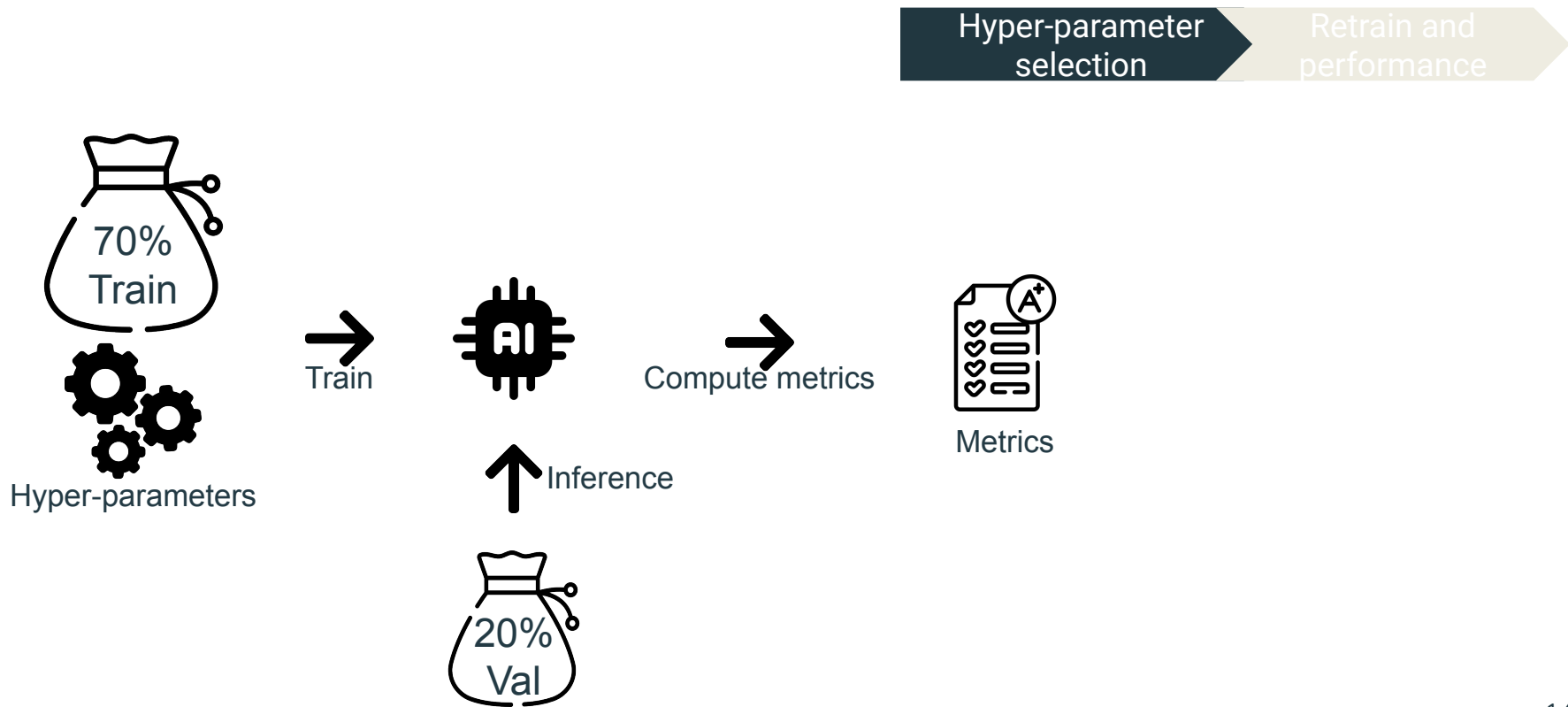
Hyper-parameters



Train

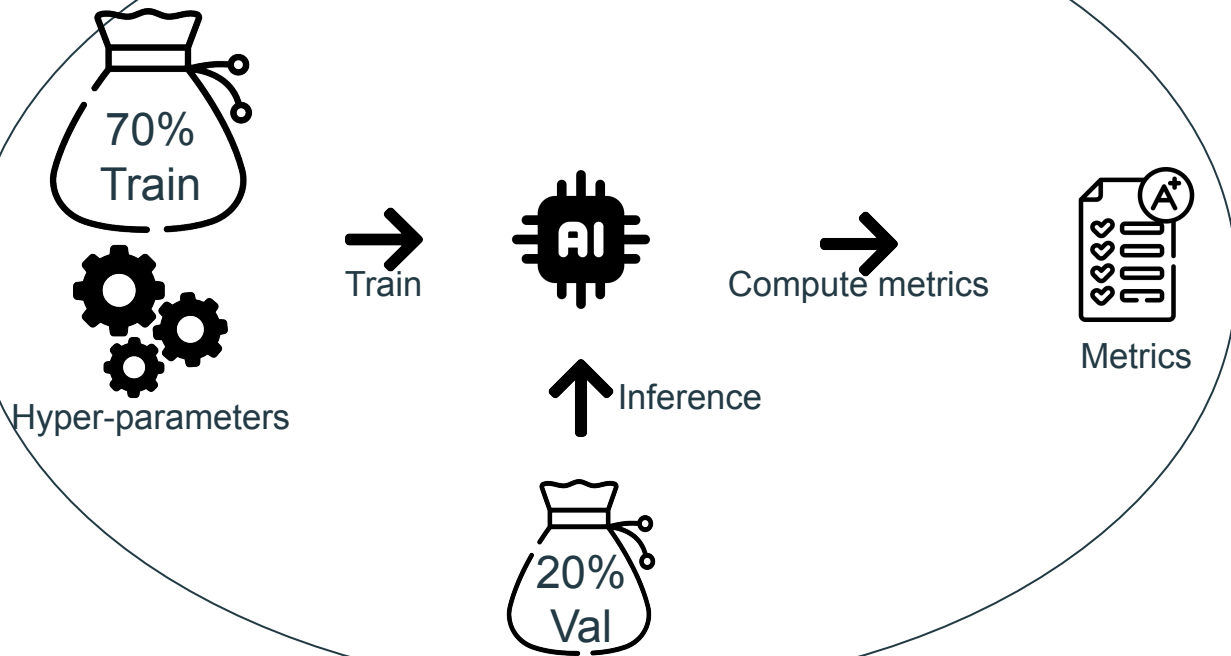


Hyper-parameter selection

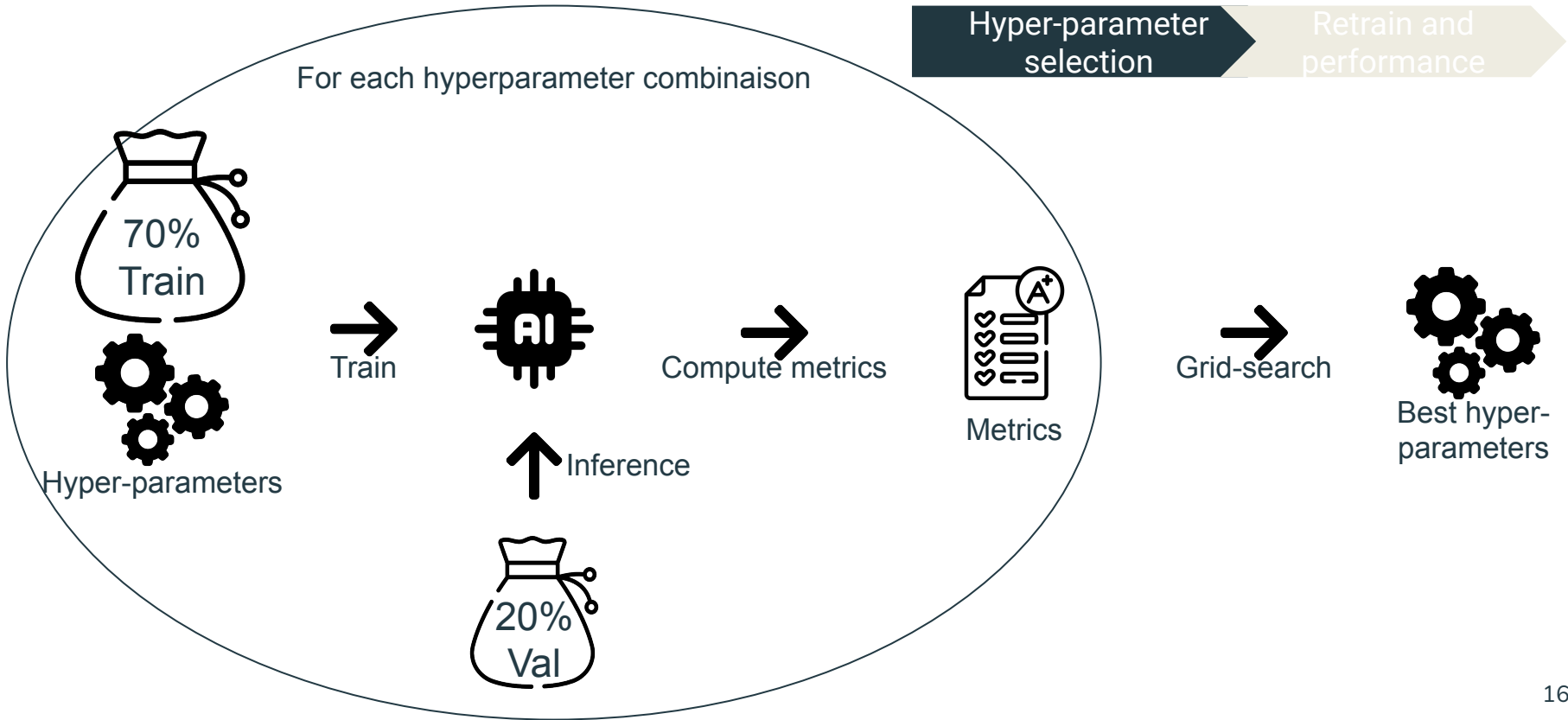


Hyper-parameter selection

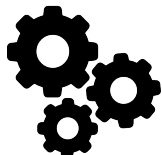
For each hyperparameter combination



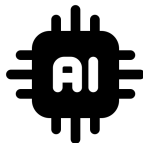
Hyper-parameter selection



Retraining and performances computation



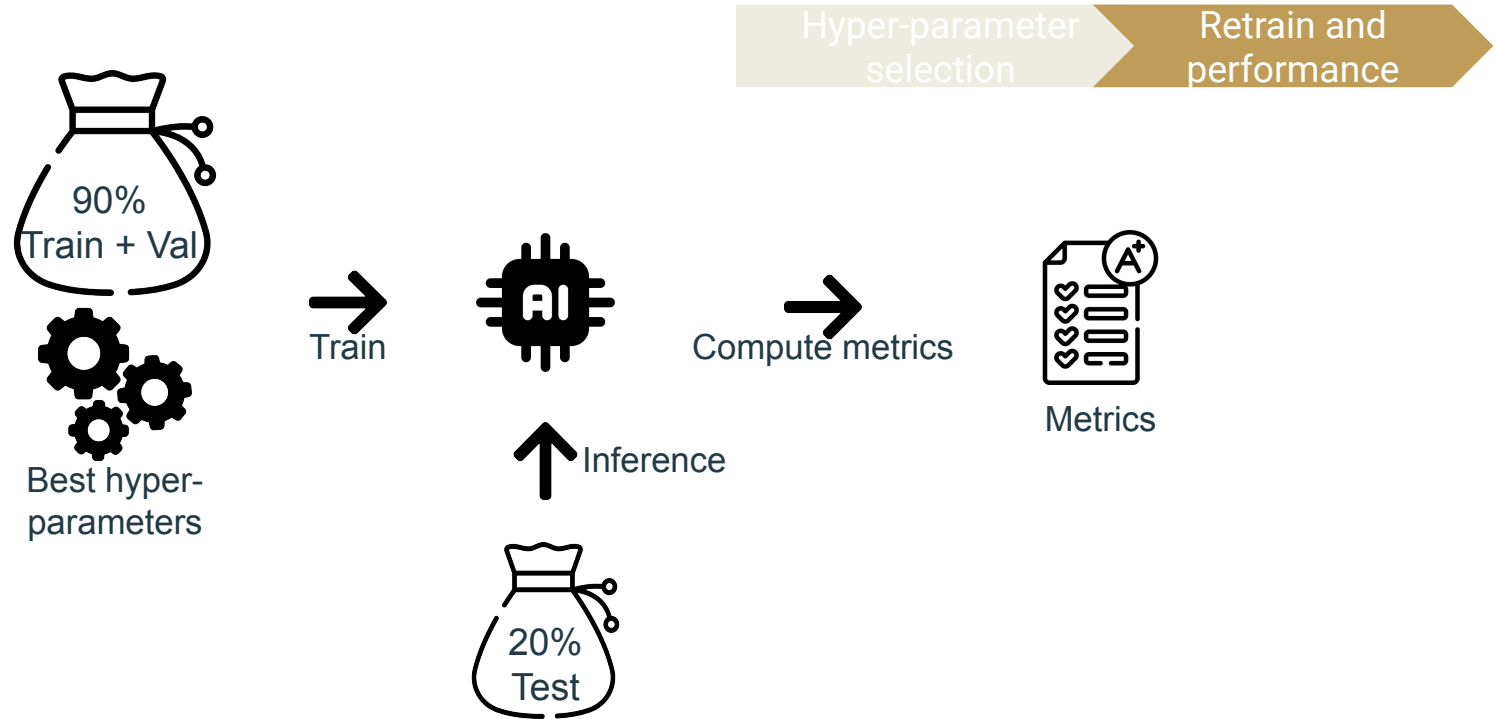
Best hyper-parameters



Hyper-parameter
selection

Retrain and
performance

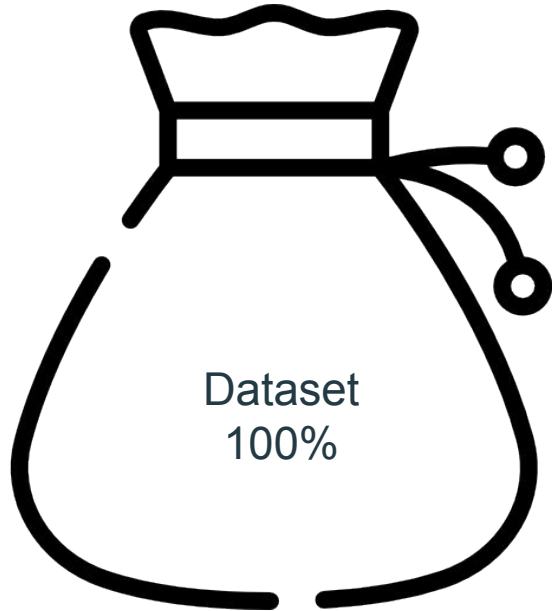
Retraining and performances computation



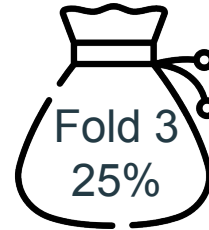
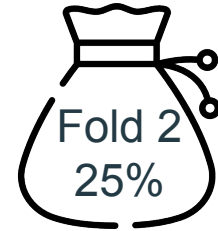
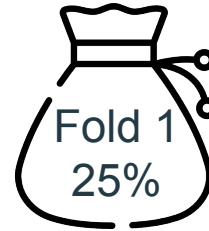
Model comparison

- One architecture → One performance measure
- No possible comparison between models
- We need several runs of the same experiment:
 - Statistics can be done on series of measures
 - This is called the **cross-validation**
 - We need to split our data into *folds*
 - This split is called the **k-fold**

K-fold split

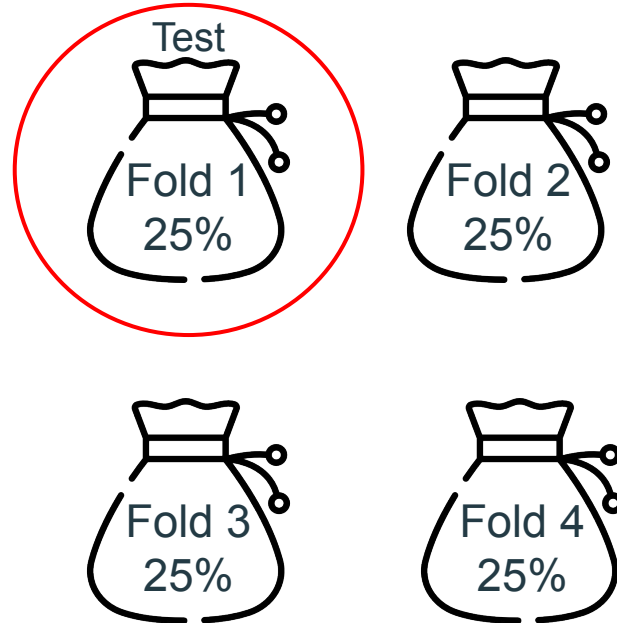


→
K-fold split



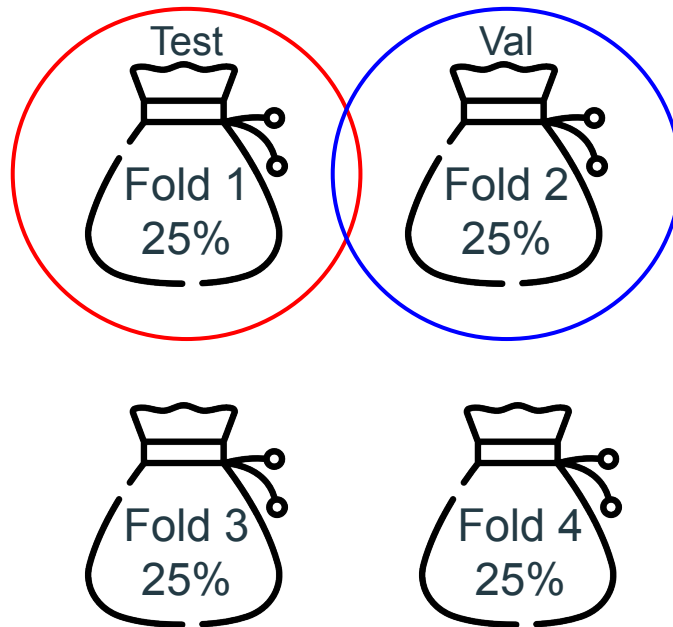
K-fold attribution

- For i from 1 to k
 - Fold i → test set
 - Fold $i+1$ → validation set
 - Remaining folds → train set



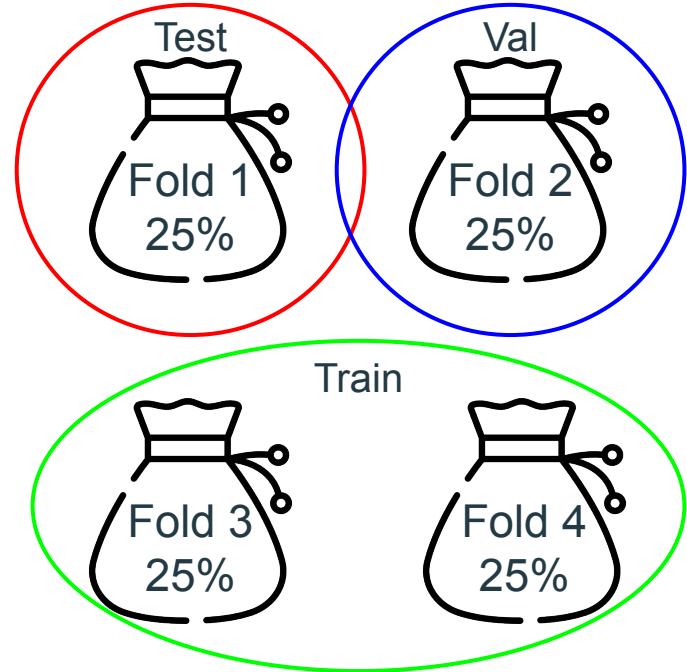
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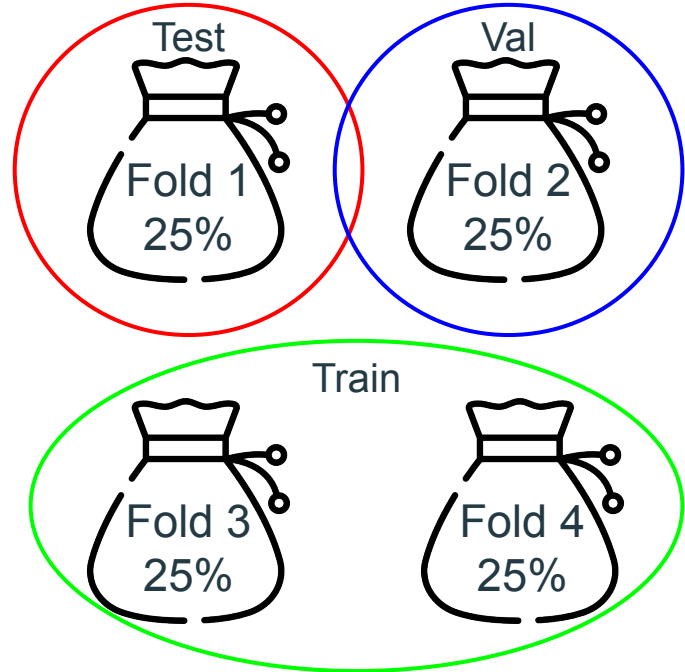


Cross-validation

- Perform the usual training procedure with the corresponding sets
- We train k models for k performances
- Every sample is seen exactly once in test

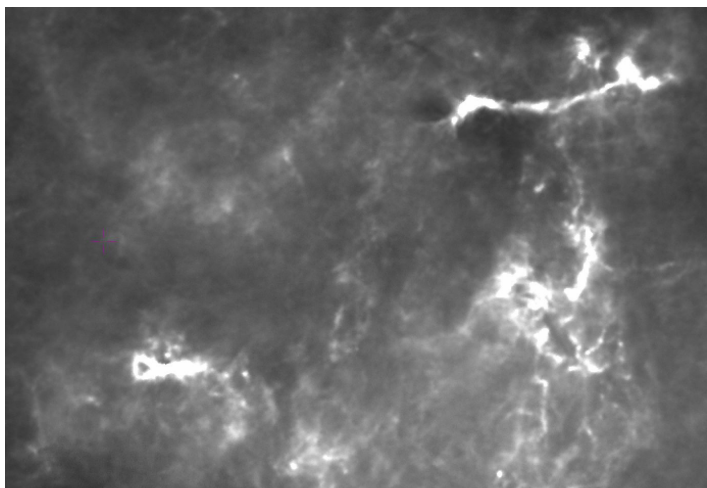


Computation time multiplied by k



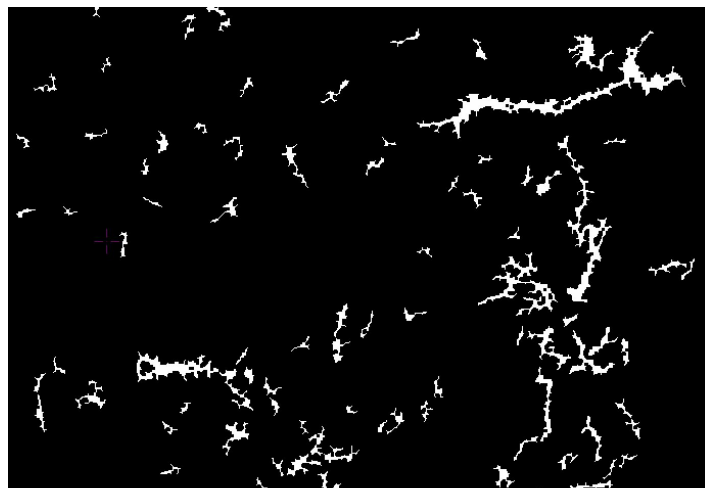
Semantic segmentation task

- Classification task
- Pixel level
- Two classes: Filament - Background



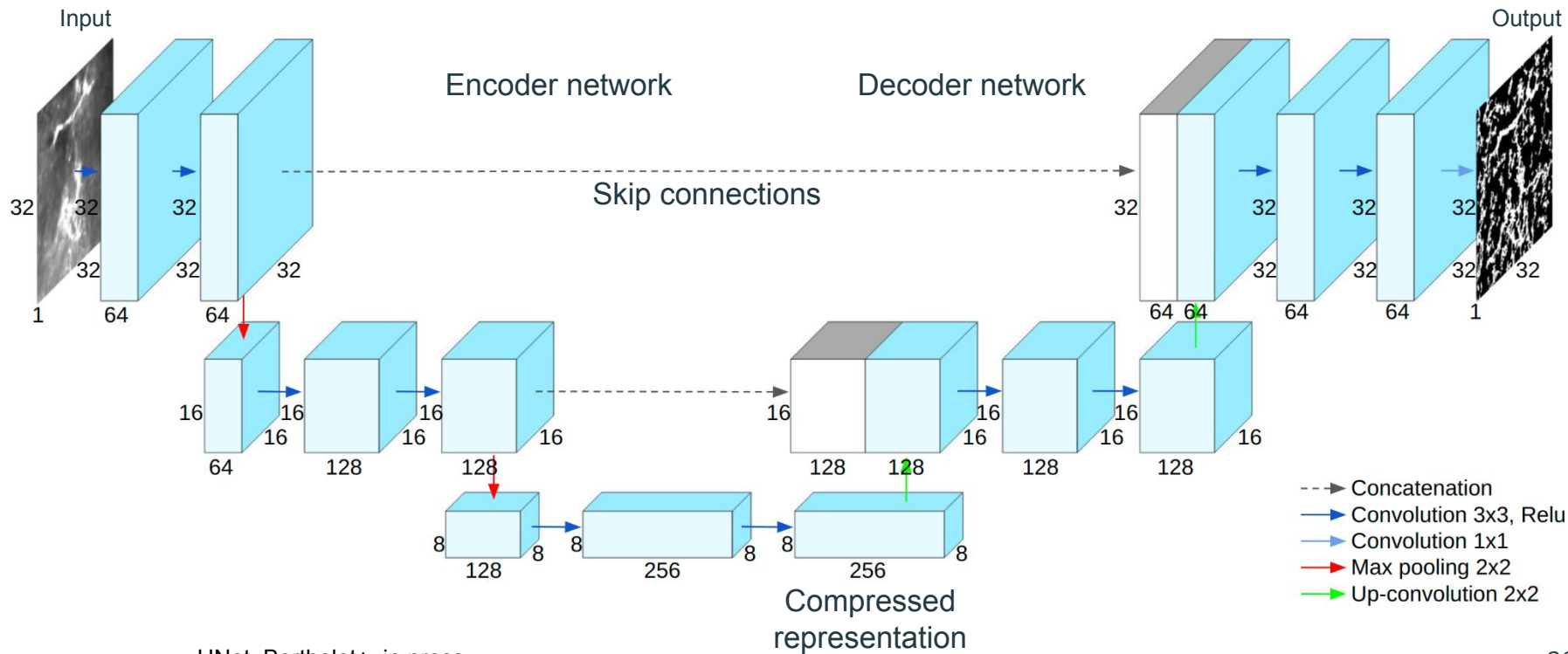
H₂ column density: Hi-GAL dataset, Molinari+ 2010

→
Semantic
segmentation

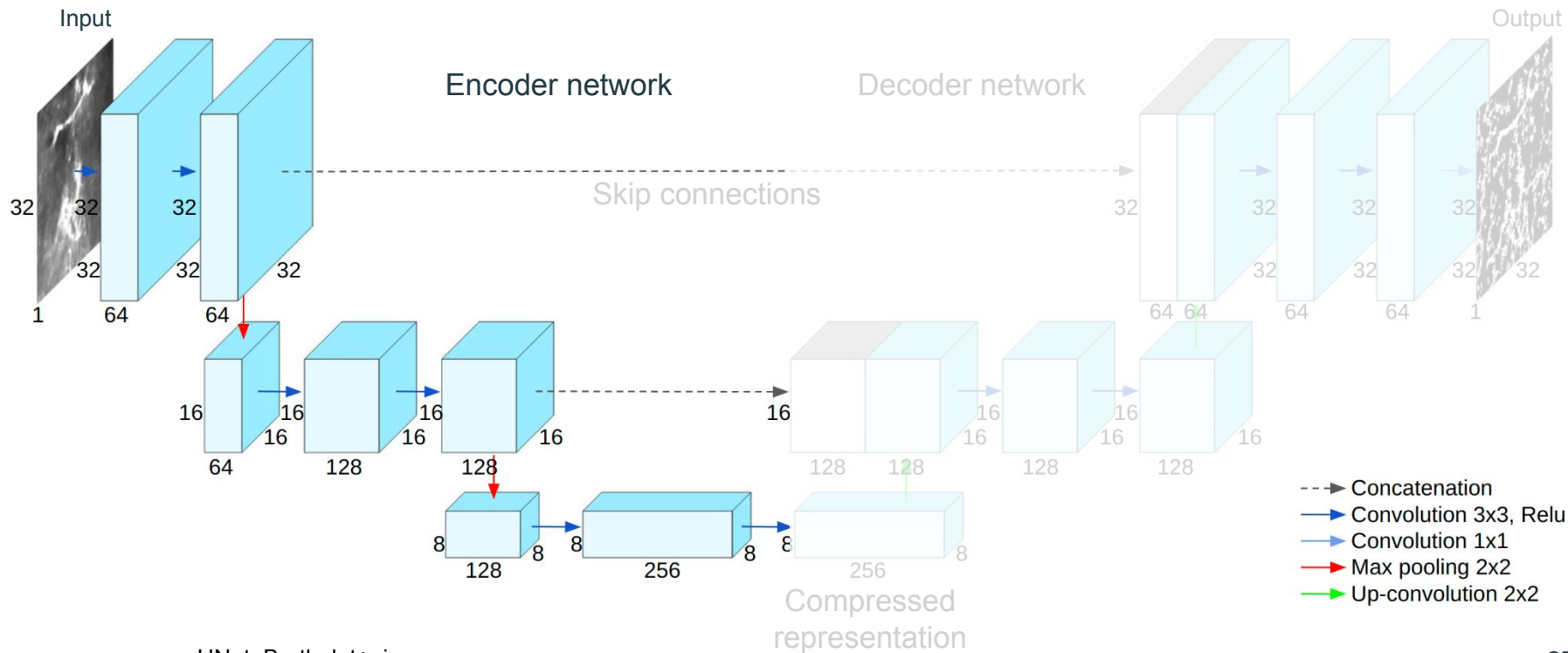


Schisano+2020

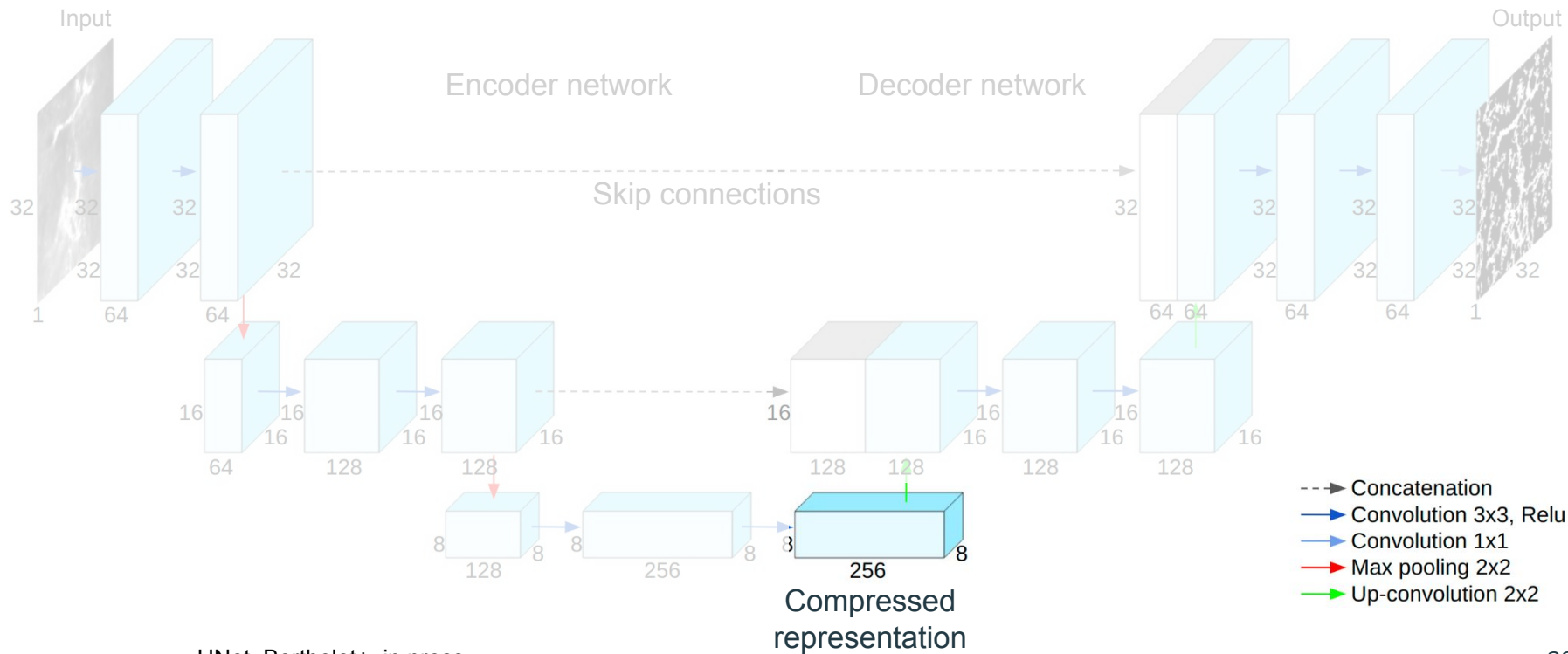
UNet models: Auto-encoder



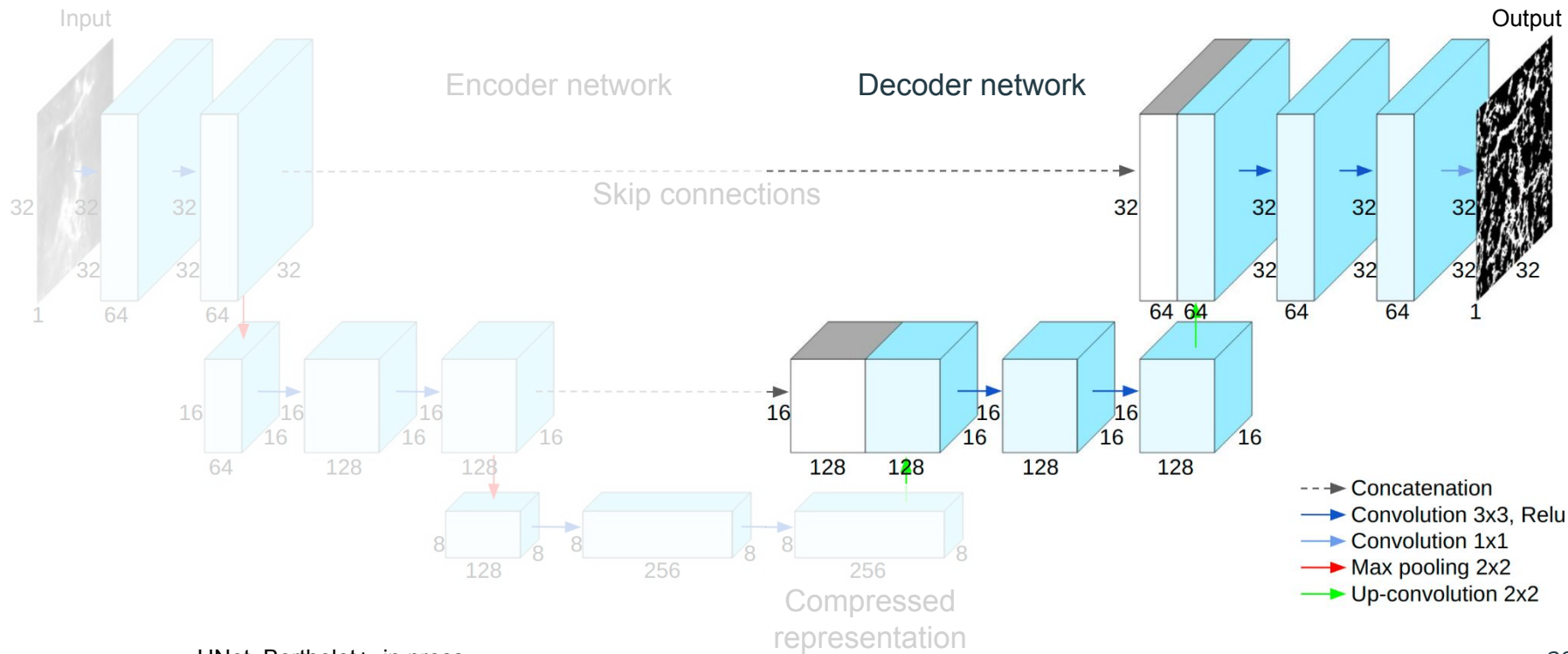
UNet models: Auto-encoder



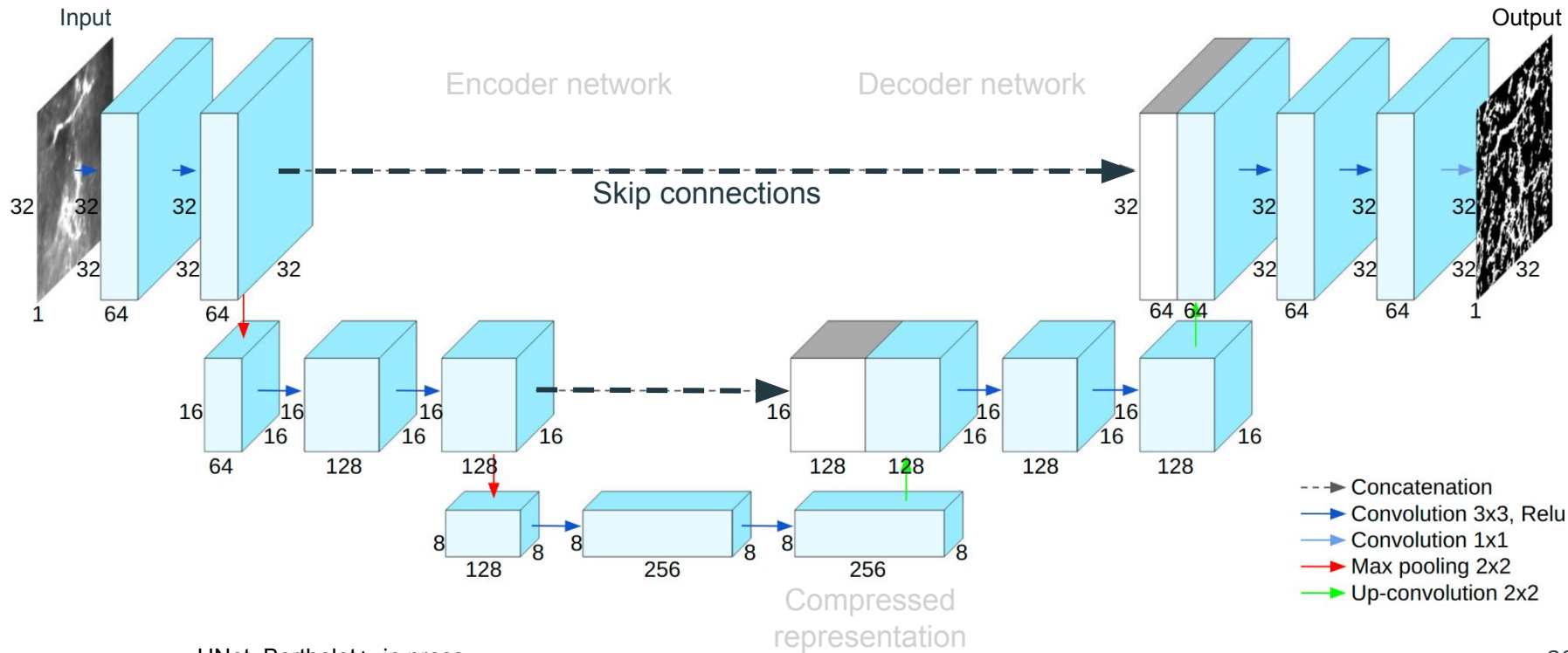
UNet models: Auto-encoder



UNet models: Auto-encoder



UNet models: Auto-encoder





Dataset: Hi-GAL



Hi-GAL: Description

- Herschel: far-IR space telescope (2009-2014)
- Survey of the Galactic plane in five photometric bands with the PACS and SPIRE instruments (Molinari+2010)
- Column density map $N(\text{H}_2)$ of the whole Gp derived (Elia+2013, Schisano+2020)

- Image of size: 1500 x 110000 pixels
- Pixel value: 4×10^{20} - 4×10^{23} H_2 molecules cm^{-2}
- **32069 filaments** extracted in the Gp (Schisano+2020) → **Labels**



Inference and learning on one single image



Hi-GAL: One single image

- We can not perform a direct k-fold split



Split our image into smaller ones (32x32 pixels patches)

Hi-GAL: the Herschel infrared Galactic Plane Survey

The inner Milky Way

Hi-GAL is the Herschel Open-Time Key-Project that observes the Galactic Plane in 9 continuum bands between 70 and 850 μ m using the PACS and SPIRE imaging photometers, to deliver a thermal map of the Milky Way. The area shown is only a portion of the entire Hi-GAL survey area (200 square degrees).

Hi-GAL will obtain the census, temperature, luminosity, mass and Spectral Energy Distribution of star-forming regions and cold ISM structures in all the environments of the Galactic Ecosystem, at unprecedented resolutions, and at all scales from massive objects in protoclusters to the full spiral arm. The dataset should enable decisive steps toward the formulation of a global predictive model of the ISM/star formation cyclic transformation process which is the engine responsible for most of the energy budget in normal star-forming galaxies. Hi-GAL will also deliver a dataset of extraordinary legacy value for decades to come, with a strong potential of systematic and serendipitous science in a wide range of astronomical fields.

Herschel PACS/SPIRE composite mosaic of the inner Milky Way, covering $\pm 2^\circ$ in longitude and $\pm 1^\circ$ in latitude. The color coding of the images (blue for PACS 70 μ m, green for PACS 160 μ m and red for SPIRE 350 μ m bands) essentially reflects the temperature of the dust. Warm dust (70 μ m) will appear blue, while colder dust (350 μ m) will appear red.

Hi-GAL: from [Barnett et al. 2010](#), [Molinari et al. 2010](#), [Molinari et al. 2011](#), [Molinari et al. 2012](#), [Molinari et al. 2013](#), [Molinari et al. 2014](#), [Molinari et al. 2015](#), [Molinari et al. 2016](#), [Molinari et al. 2017](#), [Molinari et al. 2018](#), [Molinari et al. 2019](#), [Molinari et al. 2020](#), [Molinari et al. 2021](#), [Molinari et al. 2022](#), [Molinari et al. 2023](#), [Molinari et al. 2024](#), [Molinari et al. 2025](#), [Molinari et al. 2026](#), [Molinari et al. 2027](#), [Molinari et al. 2028](#), [Molinari et al. 2029](#), [Molinari et al. 2030](#).

Hi-GAL data processing is made possible thanks to funding from ASI-Agenzia Spaziale Italiana. Herschel is an ESA space observatory with major participation from NASA.

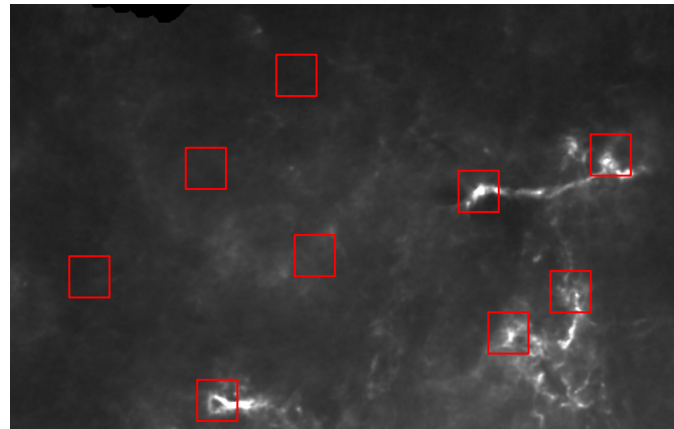
The PACS and SPIRE spectIF instruments have been developed by Consortium IMPE (Imaging and Photometry) and ASI (Agenzia Spaziale Italiana).

Herschel Hi-GAL survey of the inner Galactic plane (Molinari+2010)

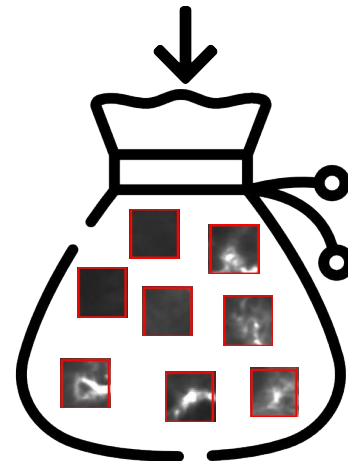
Patch-based learning

- One patch = one sample
 - It allows us to do k-fold split
 - Every patch appears exactly once in test

- We can reconstruct the Gp map from the k-fold



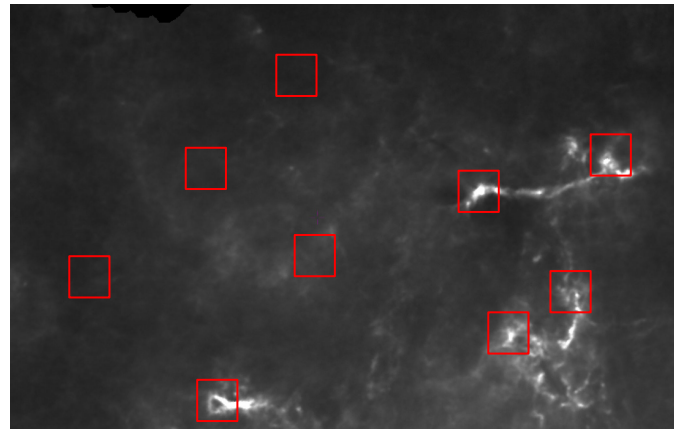
H₂ column density: Hi-GAL dataset, Molinari+ 2010



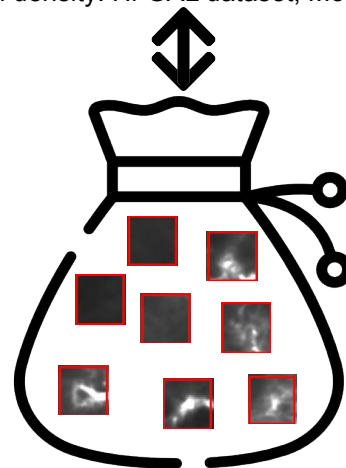
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H₂ column density: Hi-GAL dataset, Molinari+ 2010



Random k-fold strategy

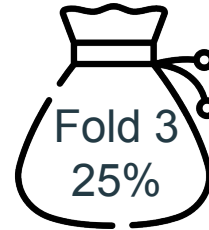
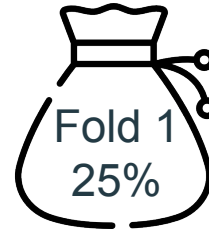


Randomly assign each sample to a fold

- Imbalanced positions might imply imbalanced folds:
 - Position imbalance
 - Filament properties
 - Class balance



Pseudo random k-fold

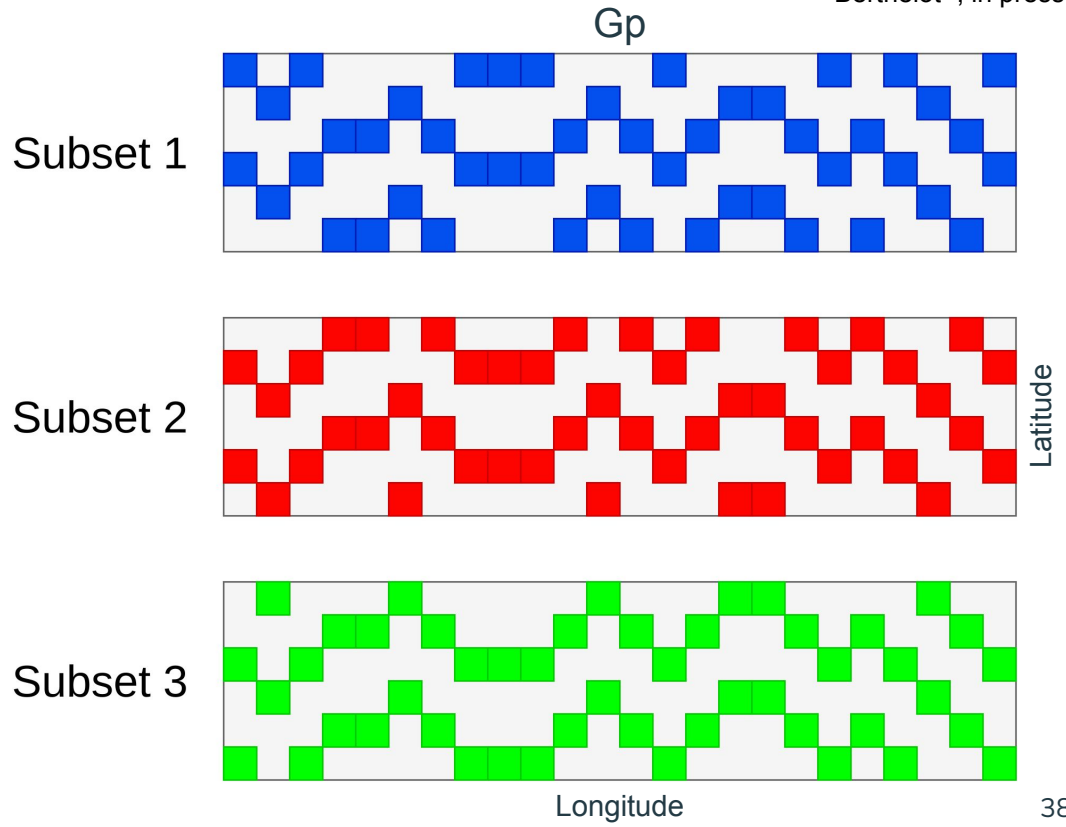


Pseudo random k-fold strategy

Pseudo random k-fold,
Berthelot+, in press

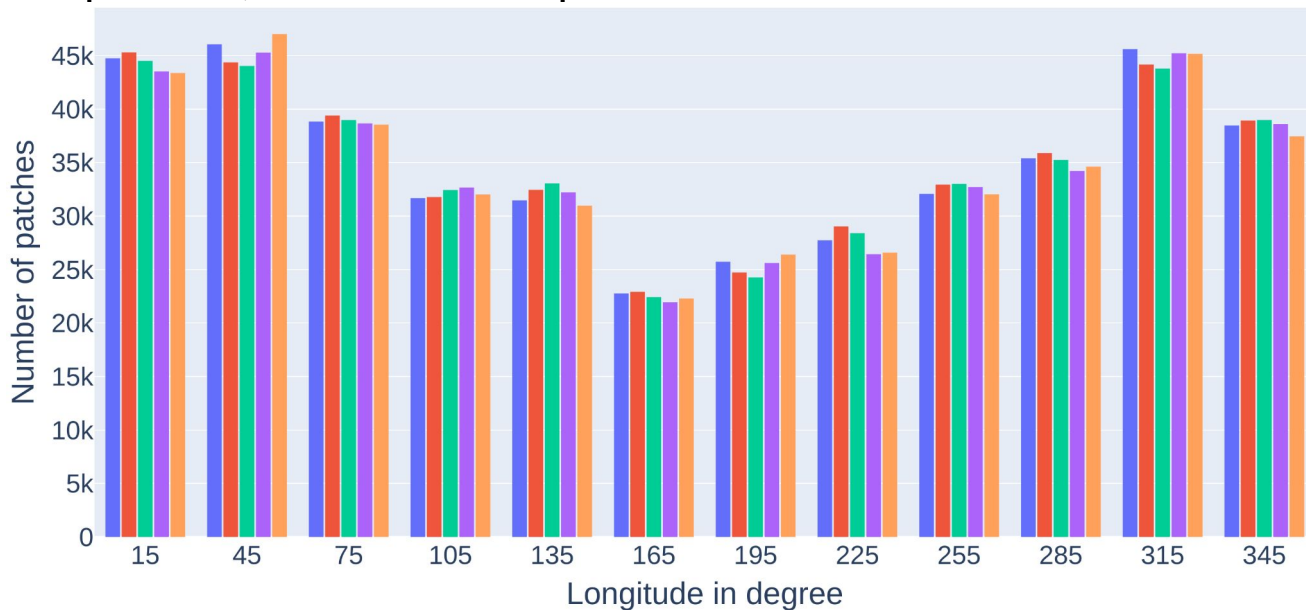
For a given longitude

- Assign the first patch to the i th fold (i random)
- Assign the second patch to the $i+1$ th fold
- Assign the third patch to the $i+2$ th fold



Position distribution with pseudo random k-folds

For each position, the number of patch should be the same in each fold



One colour → One fold

Position distribution,
Berthelot+, in press



Normalization



Challenges of normalization

- Normalization is mandatory in ML
 - Data consistency
 - Mitigate outlier's impact



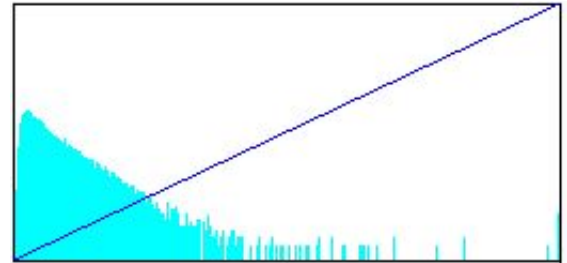
$N(\text{H}_2)$ large range



Global normalisation will prevent low density filament detection

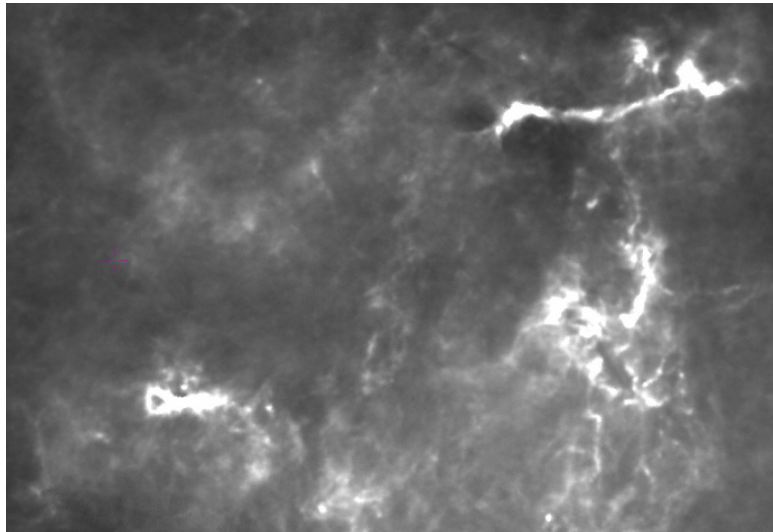


Local min-max normalisation (patch-based)



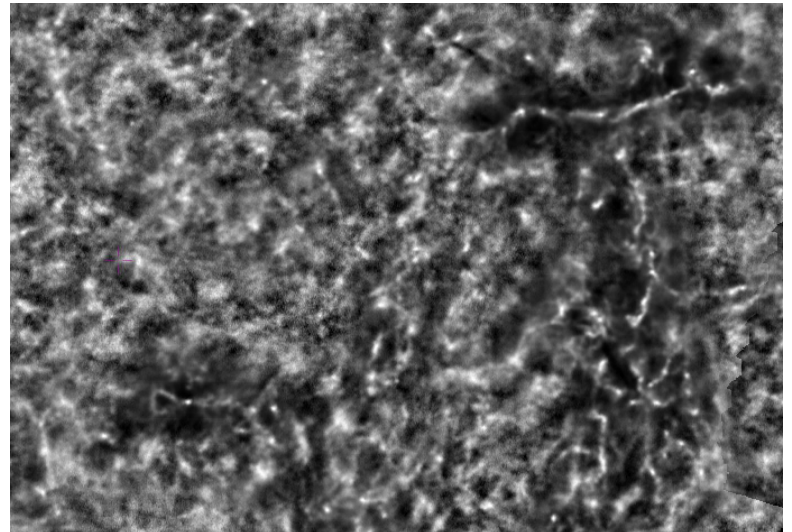
$4 \times 10^{20} - 4 \times 10^{23} \text{ H}_2 \text{ molecules cm}^{-2}$

Local min-max map: *revealing the structure*



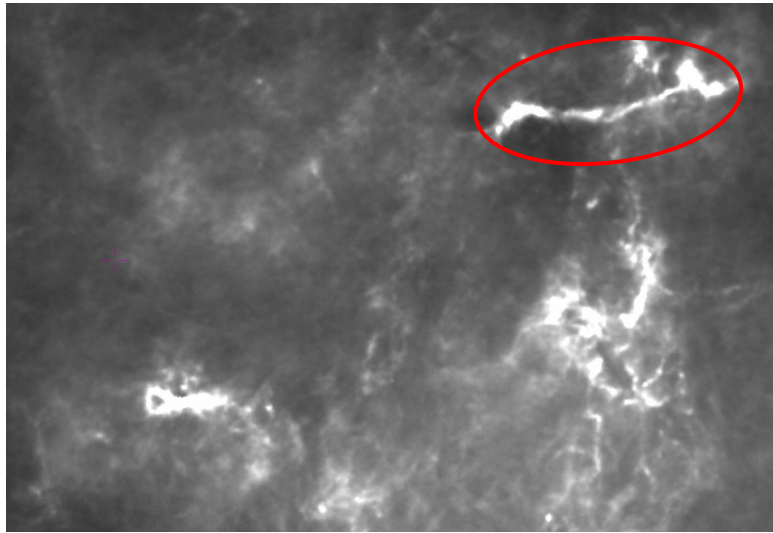
H₂ column density: Hi-GAL dataset, Molinari+ 2010

→
Local
normalisation



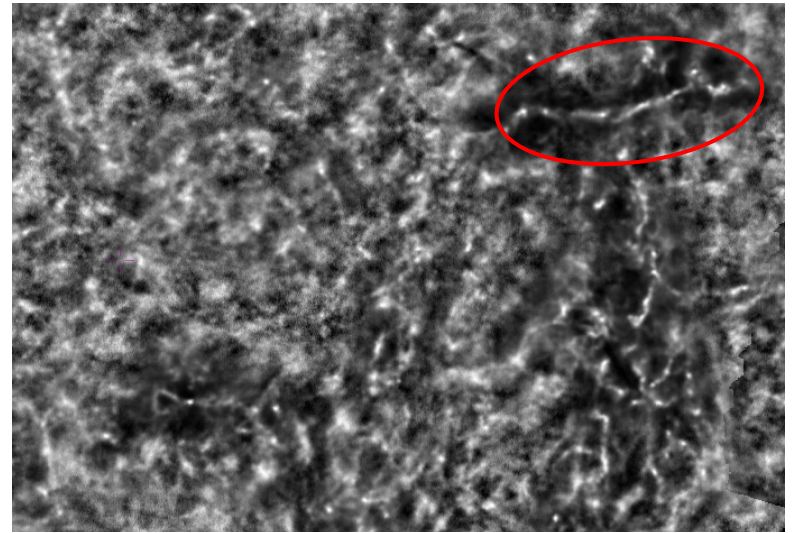
Local min-max normalization, Berthelot+ in press

Local min-max map: *revealing the structure*



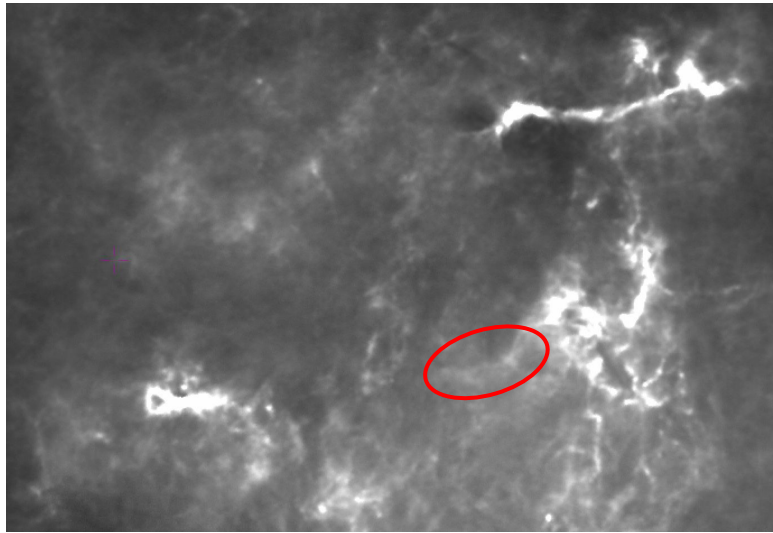
H₂ column density: Hi-GAL dataset, Molinari+ 2010

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Local
normalisation



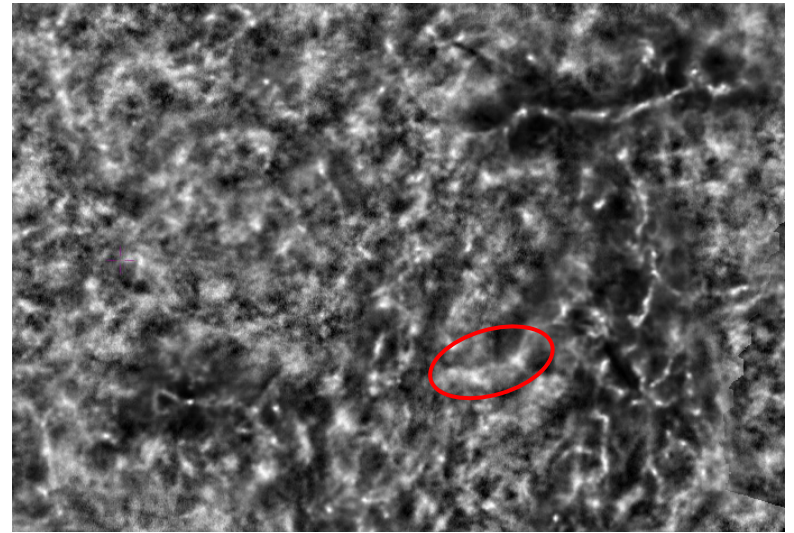
Local min-max normalization, Berthelot+ in press

Local min-max map: *revealing the structure*



H₂ column density: Hi-GAL dataset, Molinari+ 2010

→
Local
normalisation



Local min-max normalization, Berthelot+ in press



Semi-supervised learning

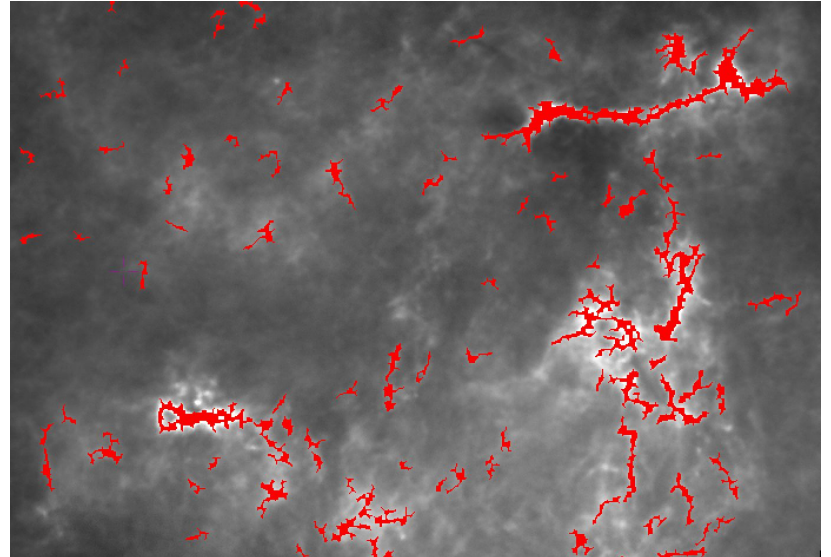


Using the usual supervised learning paradigm

Reproduce the current results:

- Reduce the computation time
- Fusion of the processing steps
- ⚠ Extraction of only known filaments

➔ We want to detect new filaments



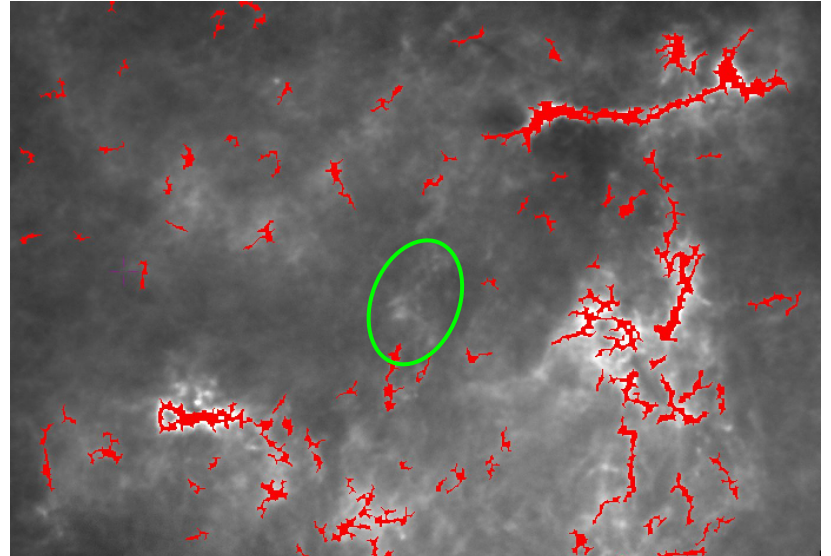
H₂ column density: Hi-GAL dataset, Uncomplete annotation

Using the usual supervised learning paradigm

Reproduce the current results:

- Reduce the computation time
- Fusion of the processing steps
- ⚠ Extraction of only known filaments

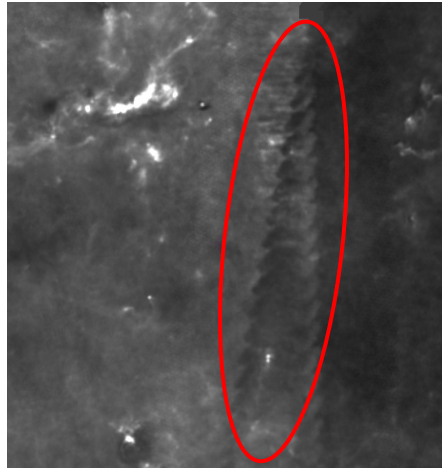
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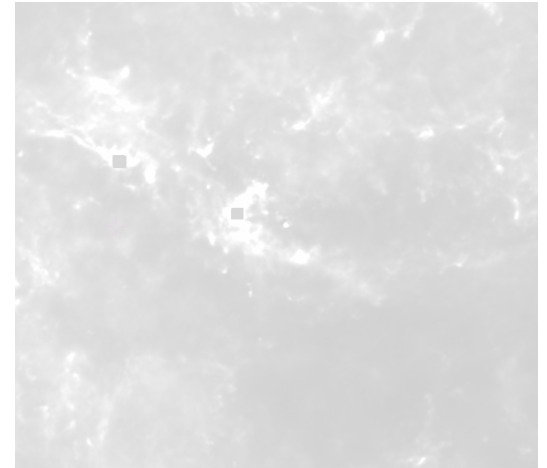
H₂ column density: Hi-GAL dataset, Uncomplete annotation

Using noisy inputs

- Artefacts
- Missing input



H₂ column density: Hi-GAL dataset,
artefacts

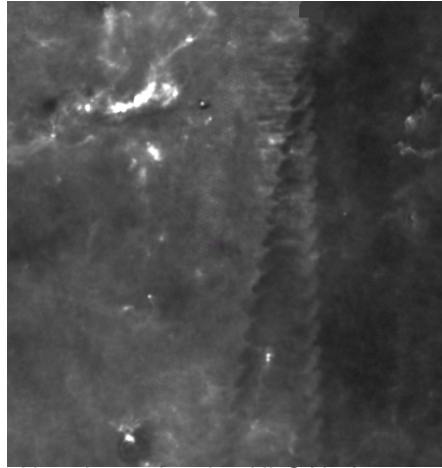


H₂ column density: Hi-GAL dataset,
missing values

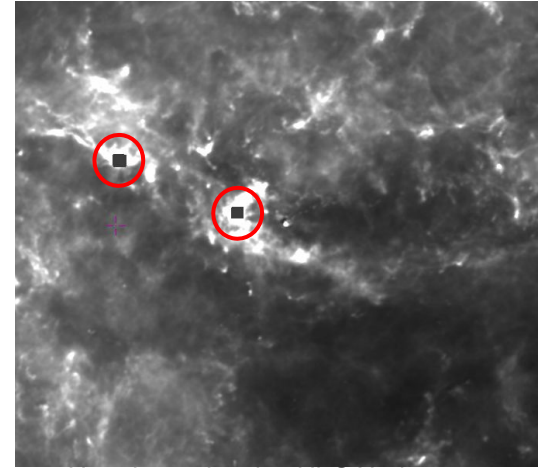
➔ We want to avoid learning and metric computation on noisy pixels

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H₂ column density: Hi-GAL dataset,
artefacts

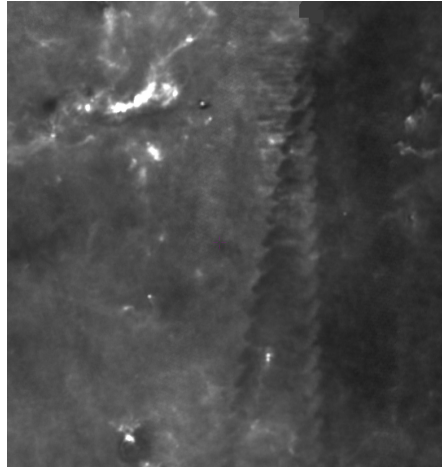


H₂ column density: Hi-GAL dataset,
missing values

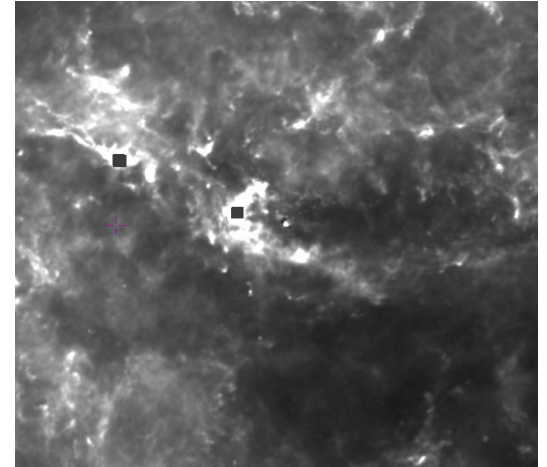
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Using noisy inputs

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H₂ column density: Hi-GAL dataset,
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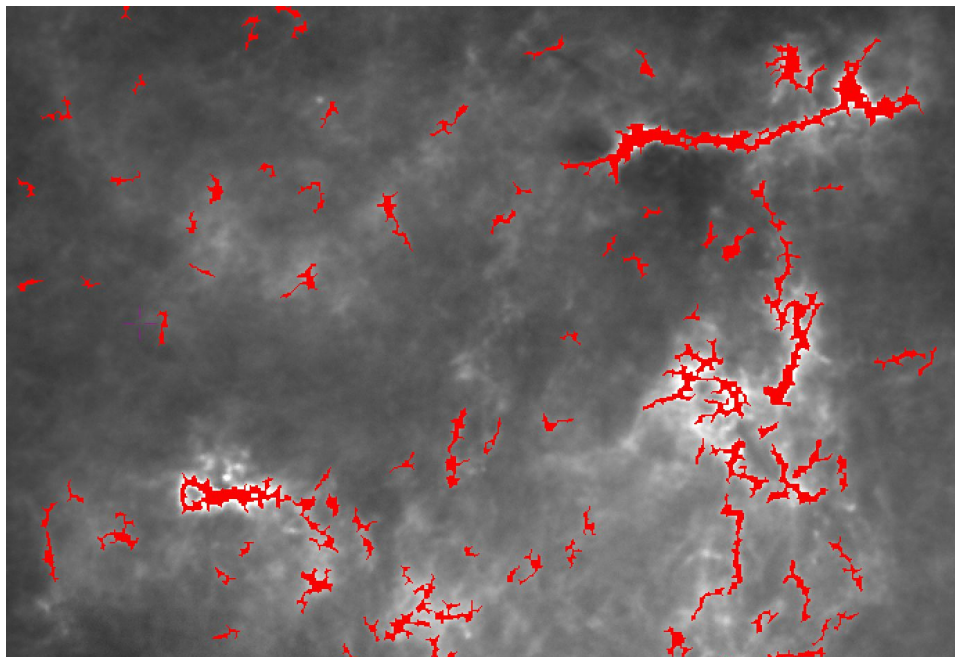
H₂ column density: Hi-GAL dataset,
missing values

➔ We want to avoid learning and metric computation on noisy pixels

A simple semi-supervised learning strategy

- Filament candidate from Schisano+2020
- Background pixels are pixels with a lower column density than a handcrafted local threshold
- Rest is unknown

! Training and metric computation is done only on *known* pixels

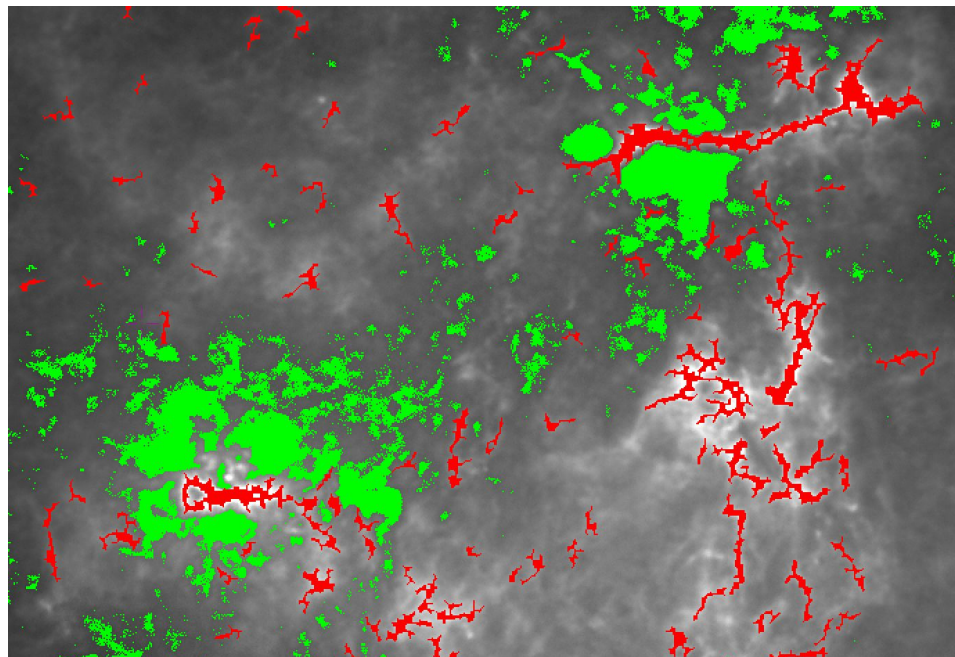


H₂ column density: Hi-GAL dataset, Pixel labels, background pixels are in green and filament pixels are in red. Rest is unknown.

A simple semi-supervised learning strategy

- Filament candidate from Schisano+2020
- Background pixels are pixels with a lower column density than a handcrafted local threshold
- Rest is unknown


! Training and metric computation is done only on *known* pixels

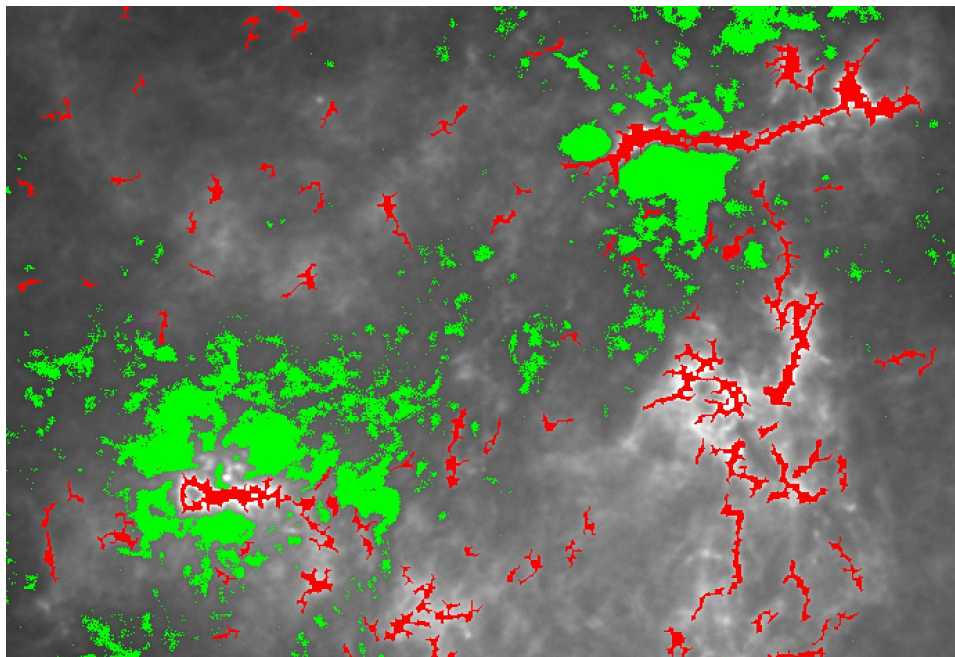


H₂ column density: Hi-GAL dataset, Pixel labels, background pixels are in green and filament pixels are in red. Rest is unknown.


A simple semi-supervised learning strategy

- Filament candidate from Schisano+2020
- Background pixels are pixels with a lower column density than a handcrafted local threshold
- Rest is unknown


 Training and metric computation is done only on *known* pixels (red & green)



H₂ column density: Hi-GAL dataset, Pixel labels, background pixels are in green and filament pixels are in red. Rest is unknown.



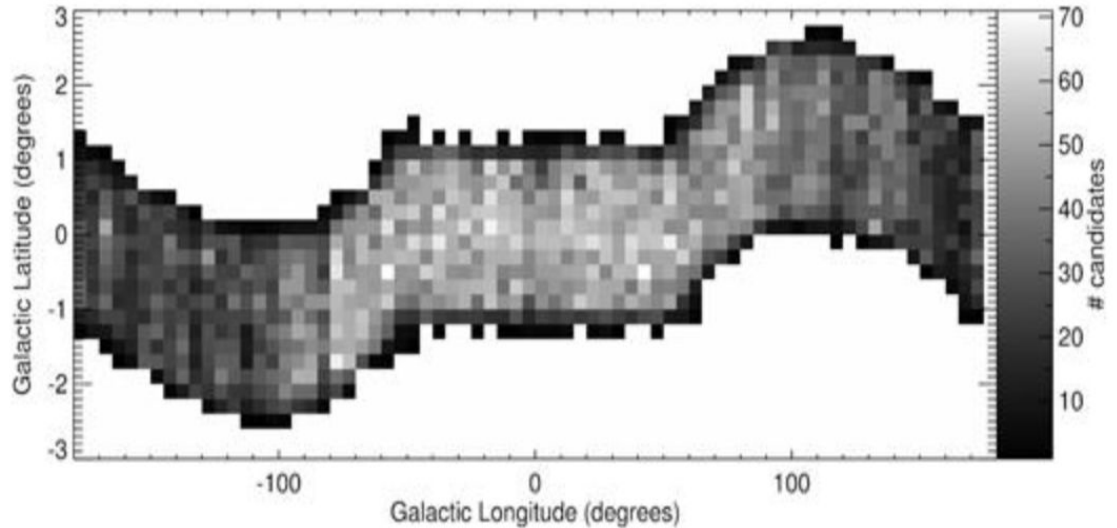
PE-UNets: Adding physics
information to improve
performance



Filament-position relation

- Filament properties:
 - Shape
 - Contrast ratio
 - Orientation
 - Column density
 - Length
 - Width
- Number of filaments

➔ Position might be an important information for filament detection



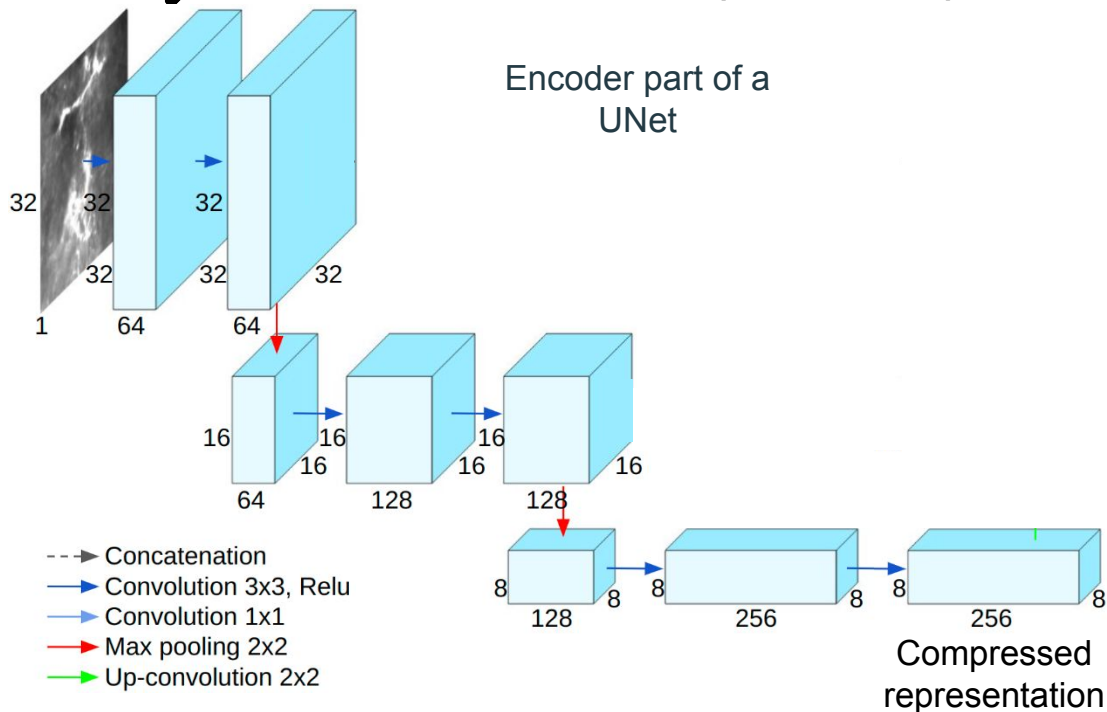
Filament distribution along the Galactic plane, Schisano+2020

Is the position information present in the column density?

→ Can we train a model to predict the position of a patch given as input?

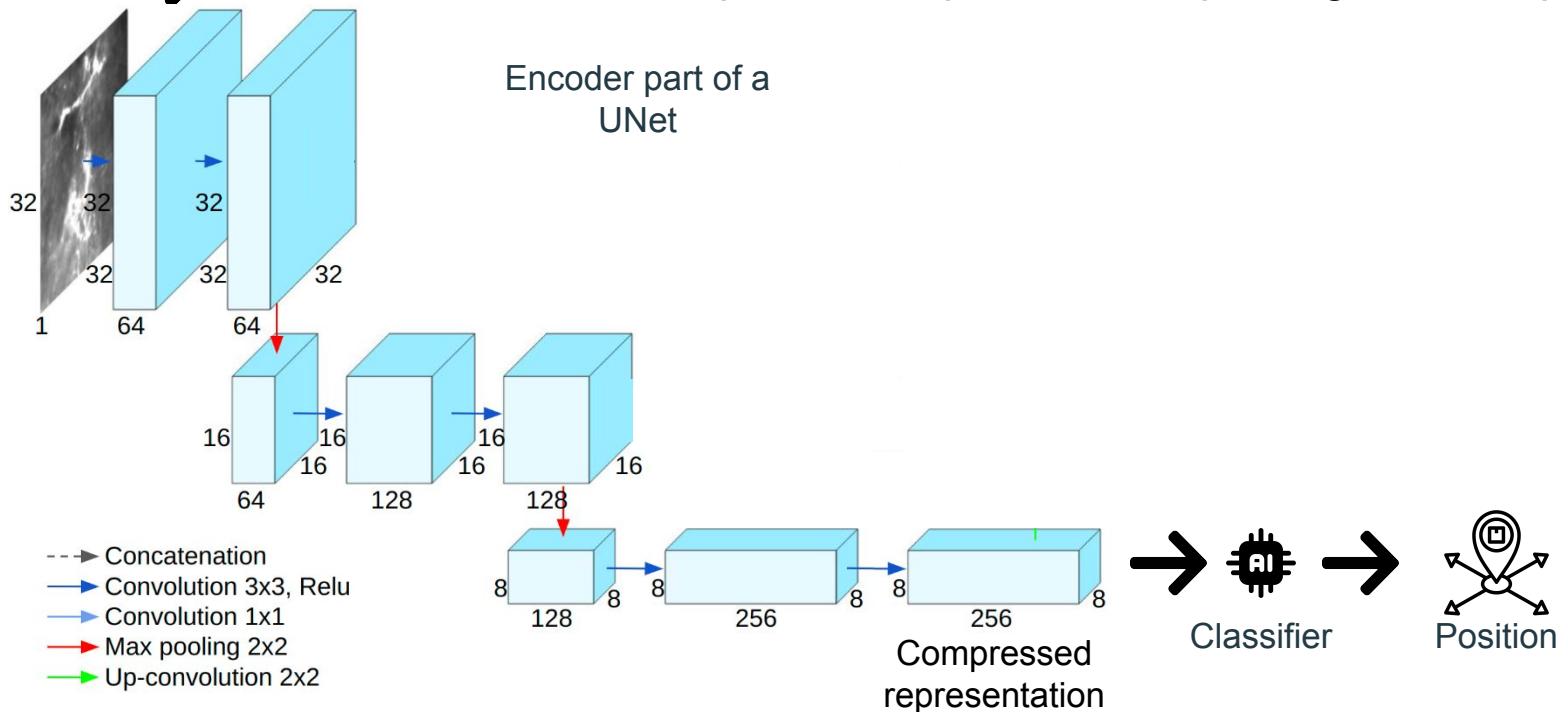
Is the position information present in the column density?

➔ Can we train a model to predict the position of a patch given as input?



Is the position information present in the column density?

➔ Can we train a model to predict the position of a patch given as input?



Can we train a model to predict the position of a patch given as input?

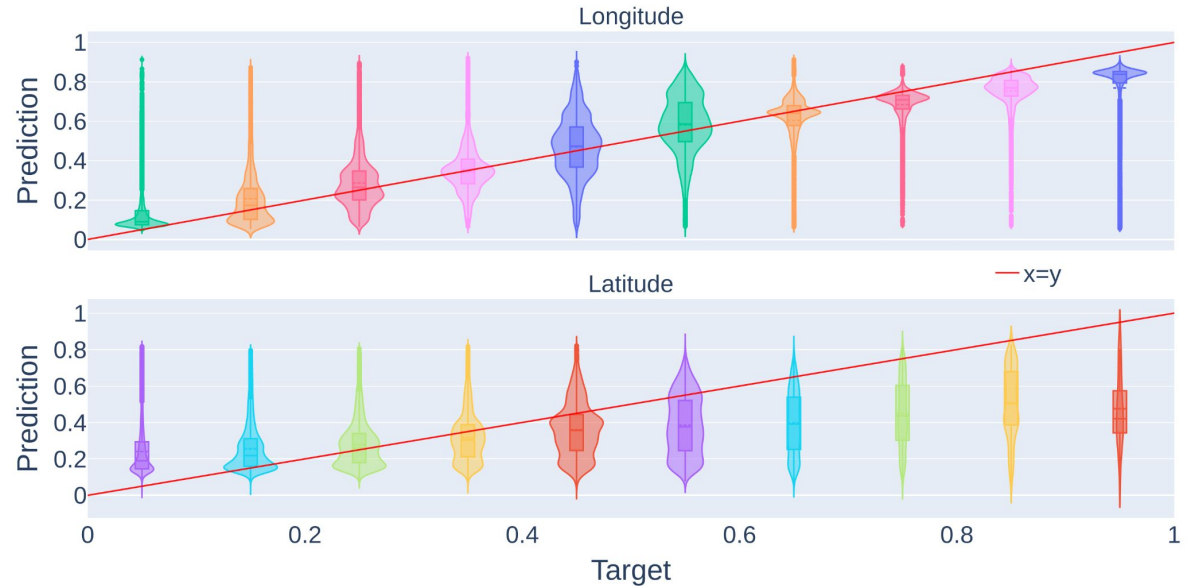
Classifier:

- Linear(4096, 2048)
- Relu()
- Dropout(0.5)
- Linear(2048, 1024)
- Relu()
- Dropout(0.5)
- Linear(1024, 2)

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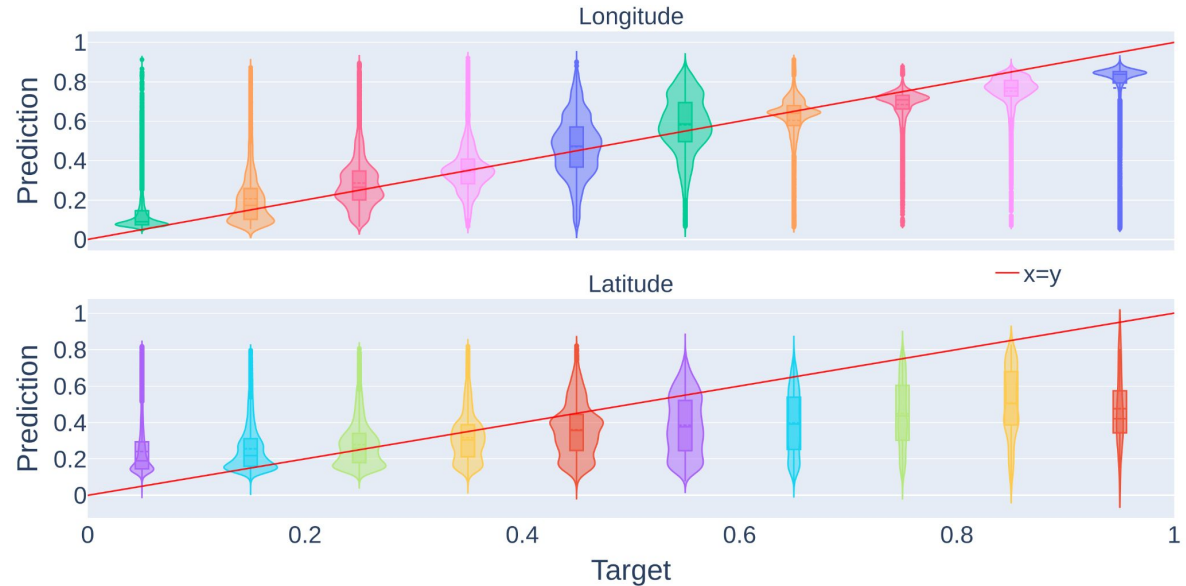
Predicted position against true position, Berthelot+, in press

Can we train a model to predict the position of a patch given as input?

Classifier:

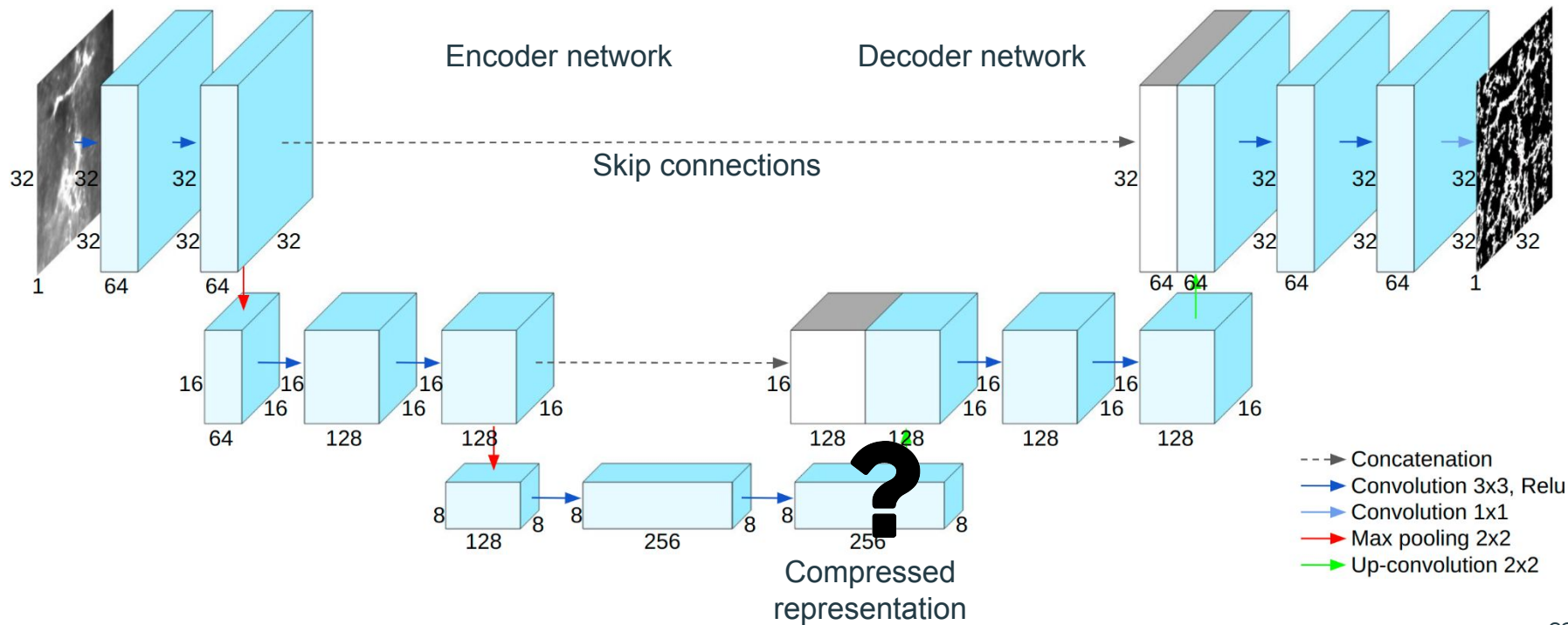
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- Relu()
- Dropout(0.5)
- Linear(2048, 1024)
- Relu()
- Dropout(0.5)
- Linear(1024, 2)

➔ To some extent, it is possible to predict the position from the density



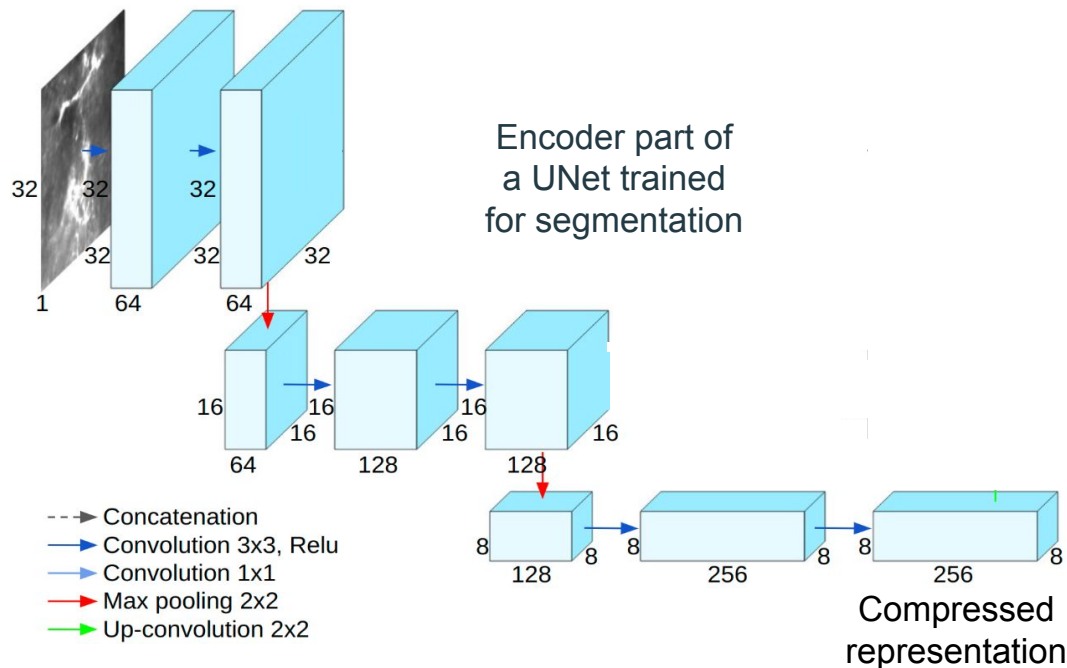
Predicted position against true position, Berthelot+, in press

Is the position present in the compressed representation?



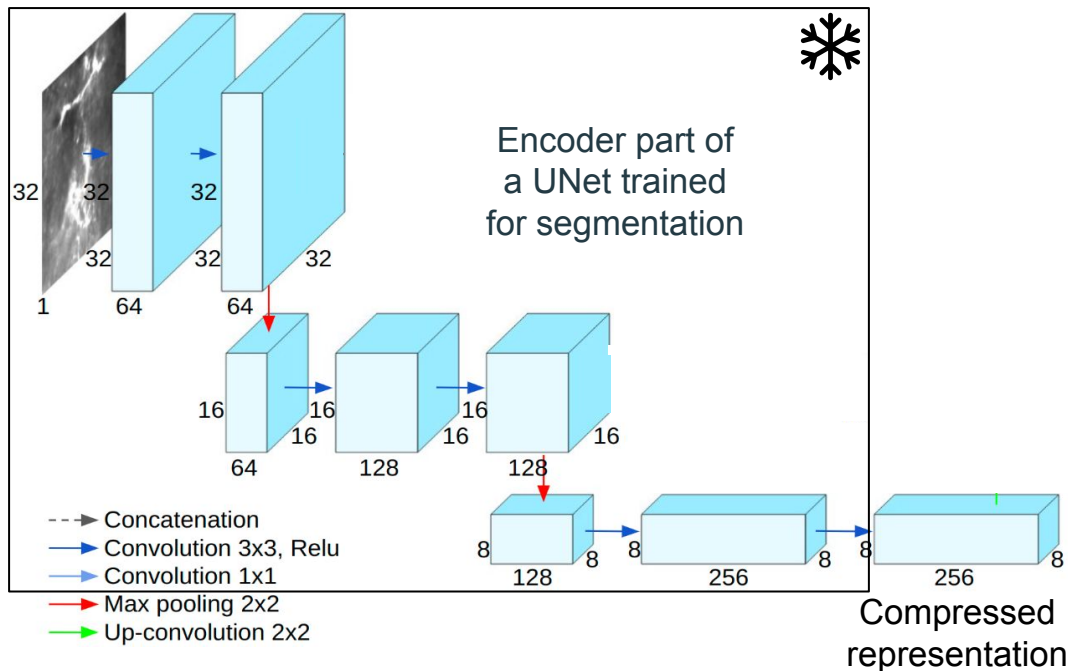
Is the position present in the compressed representation?

➔ Can we train a classifier to predict the position of a patch given a compressed representation of a patch?



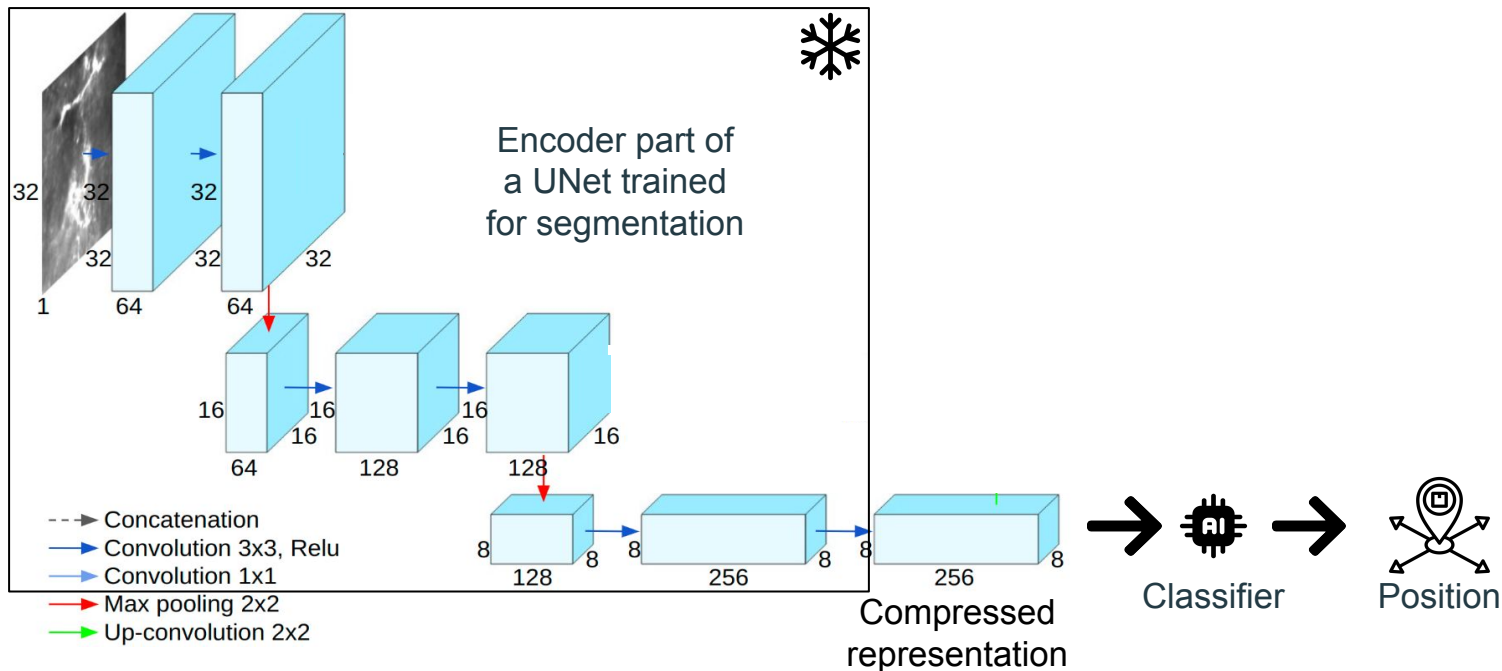
Is the position present in the compressed representation?

➔ Can we train a classifier to predict the position of a patch given a compressed representation of a patch?



Is the position present in the compressed representation?

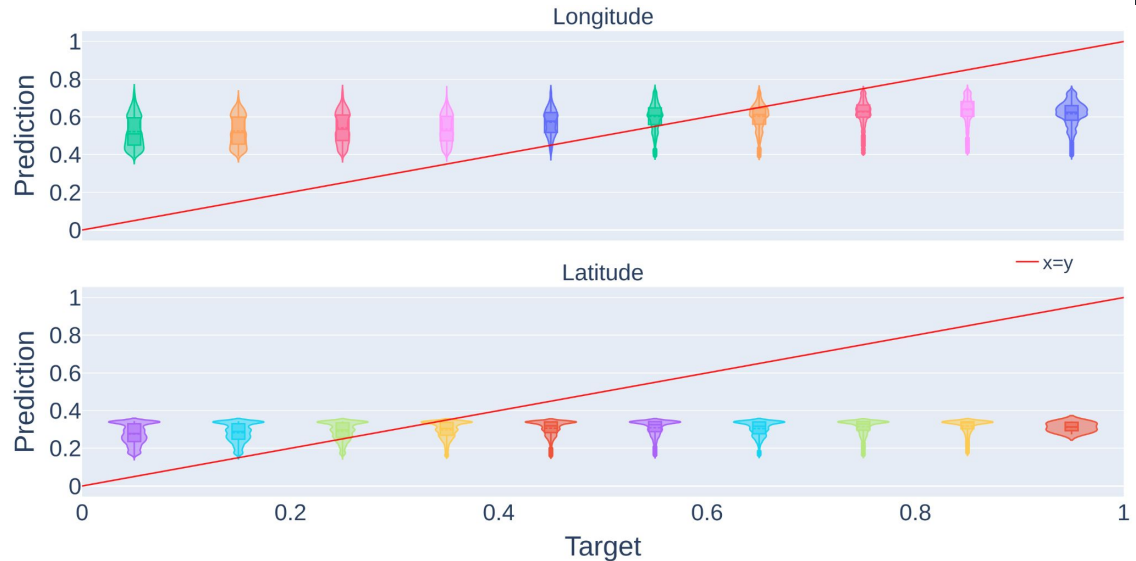
→ Can we train a classifier to predict the position of a patch given a compressed representation of a patch?



Can we train a classifier to predict the position of a patch given a compressed representation of a patch?

Classifier:

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- Relu()
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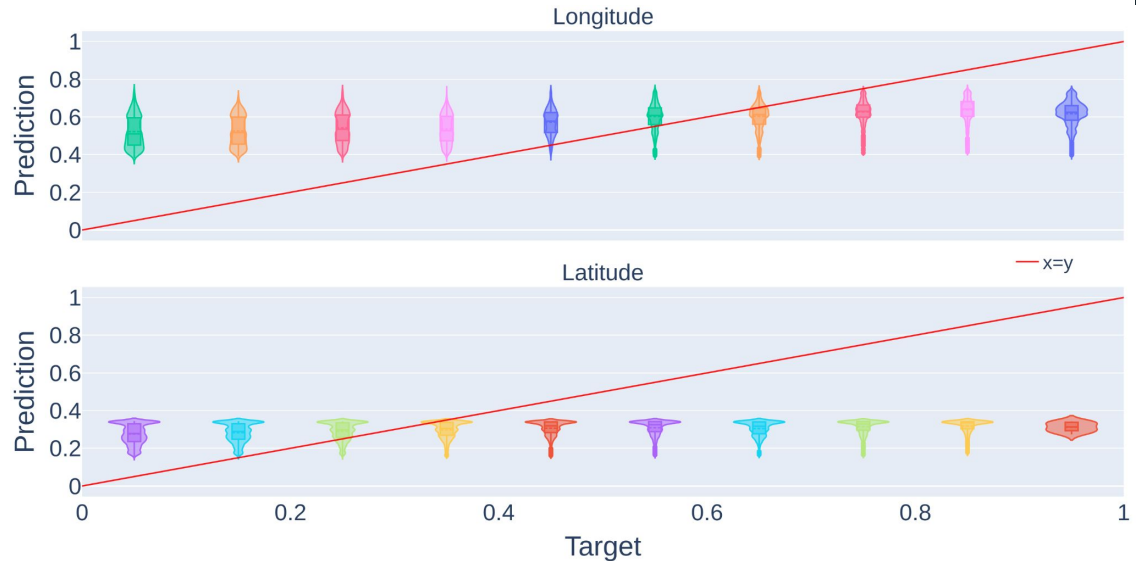
Predicted position against true position, Berthelot+, in press

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- Linear(1024, 2)

➔ UNet trained for segmentation do not use the position information contained in the patches



Predicted position against true position, Berthelot+, in press

How to improve UNet performances?



UNet models don't use position information for segmentation

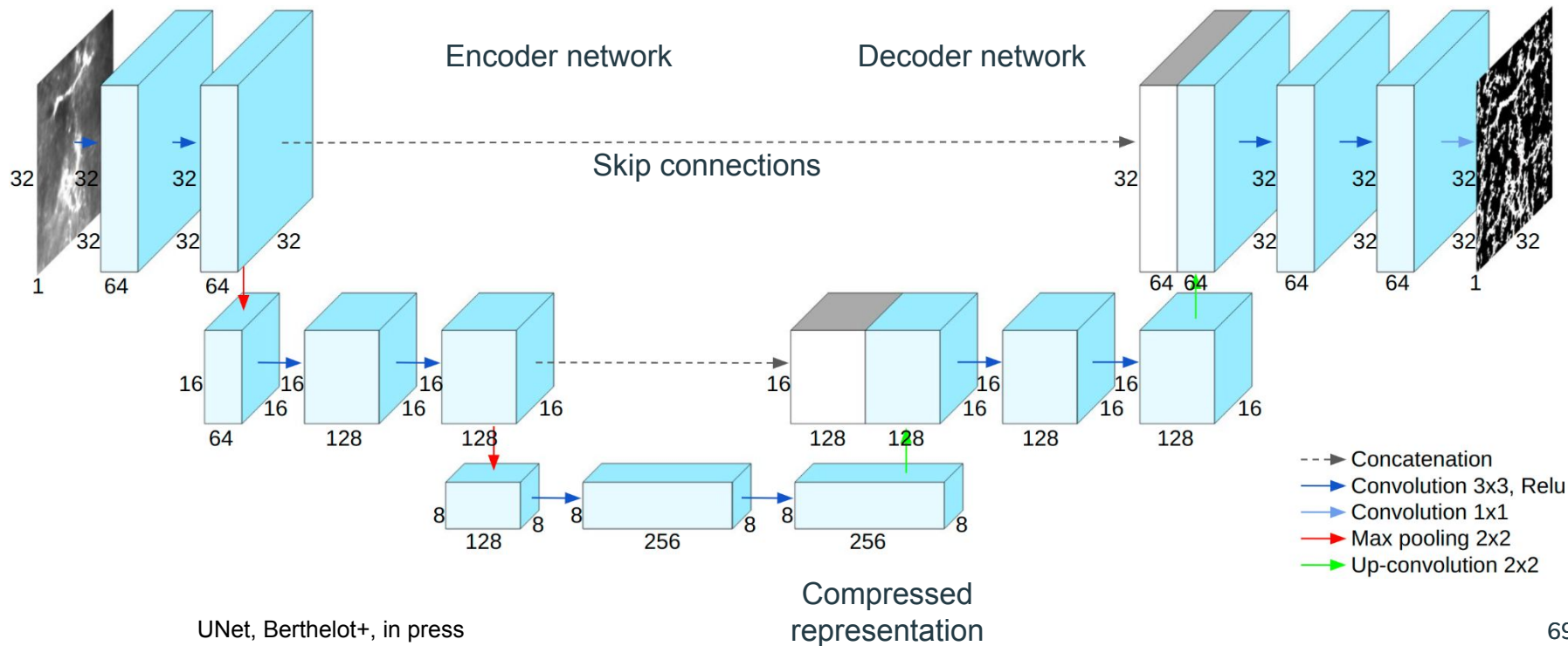


Position of filament in the Gp might be important (physical conditions)

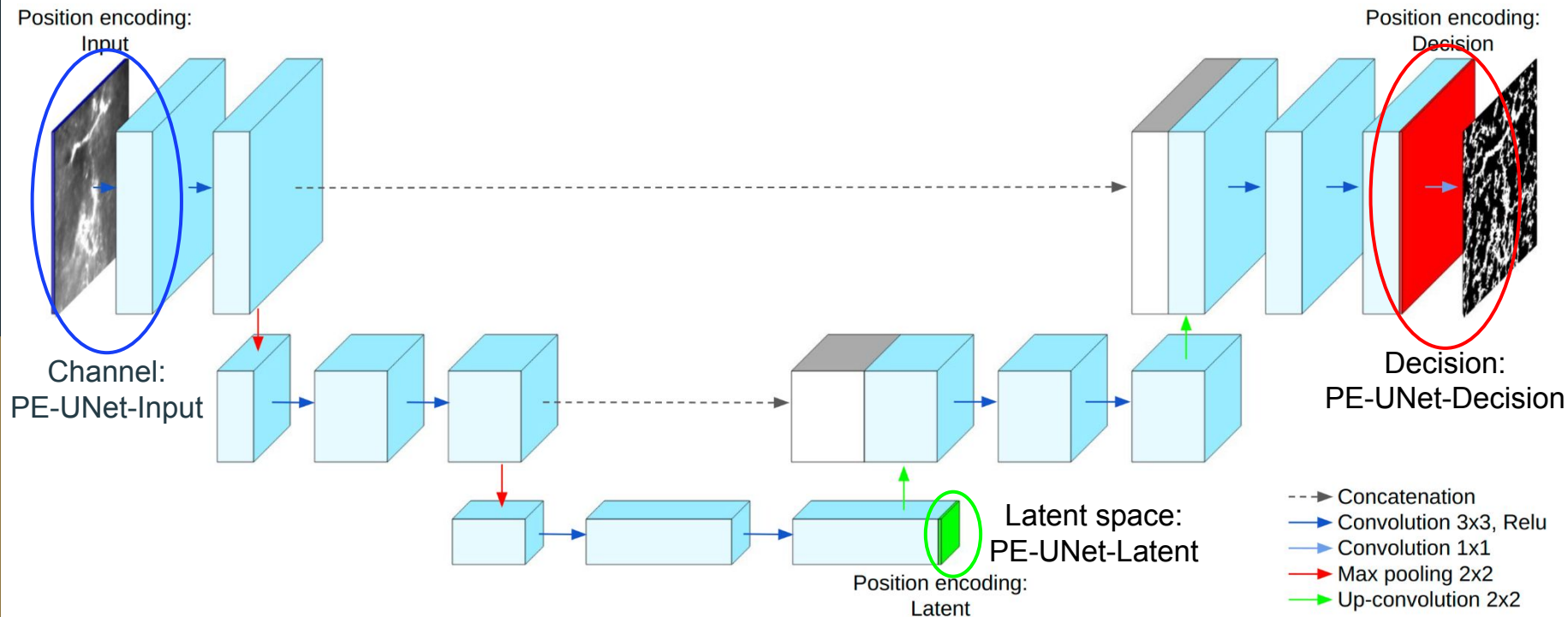


Let's give position as input to the UNet models

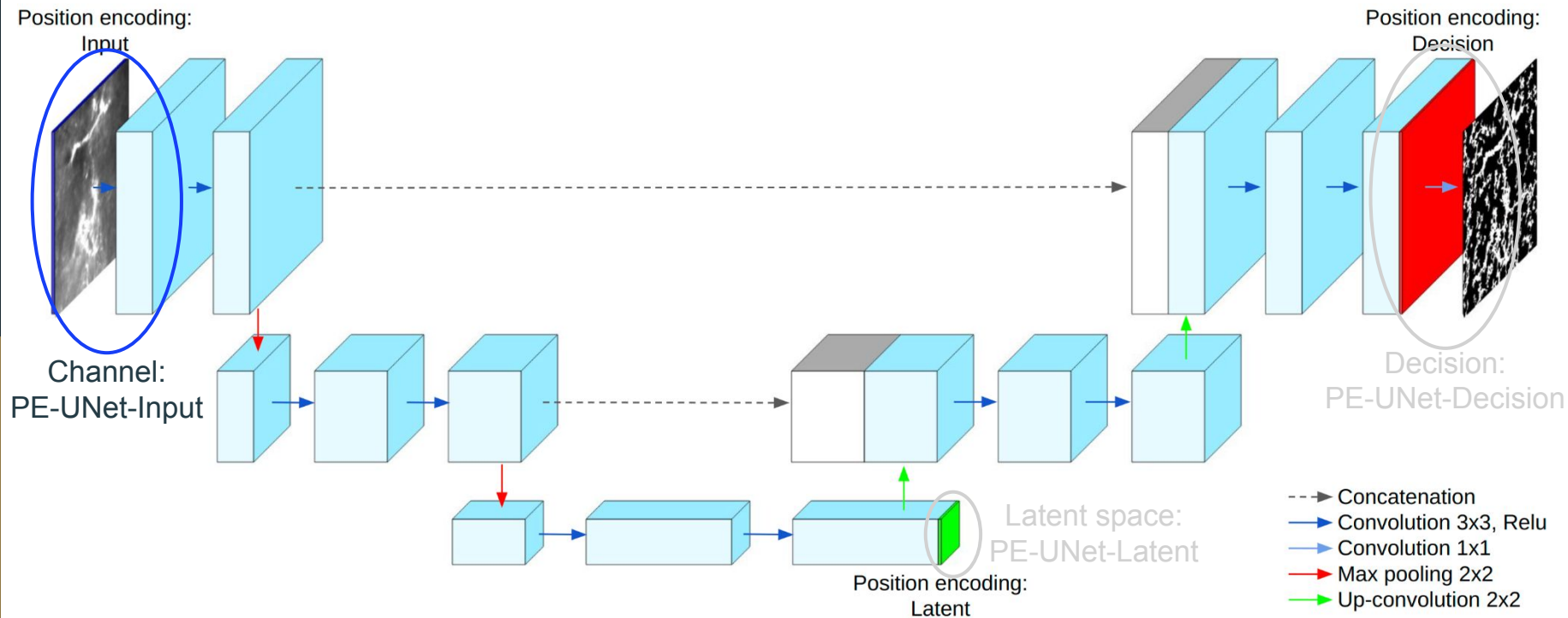
UNet



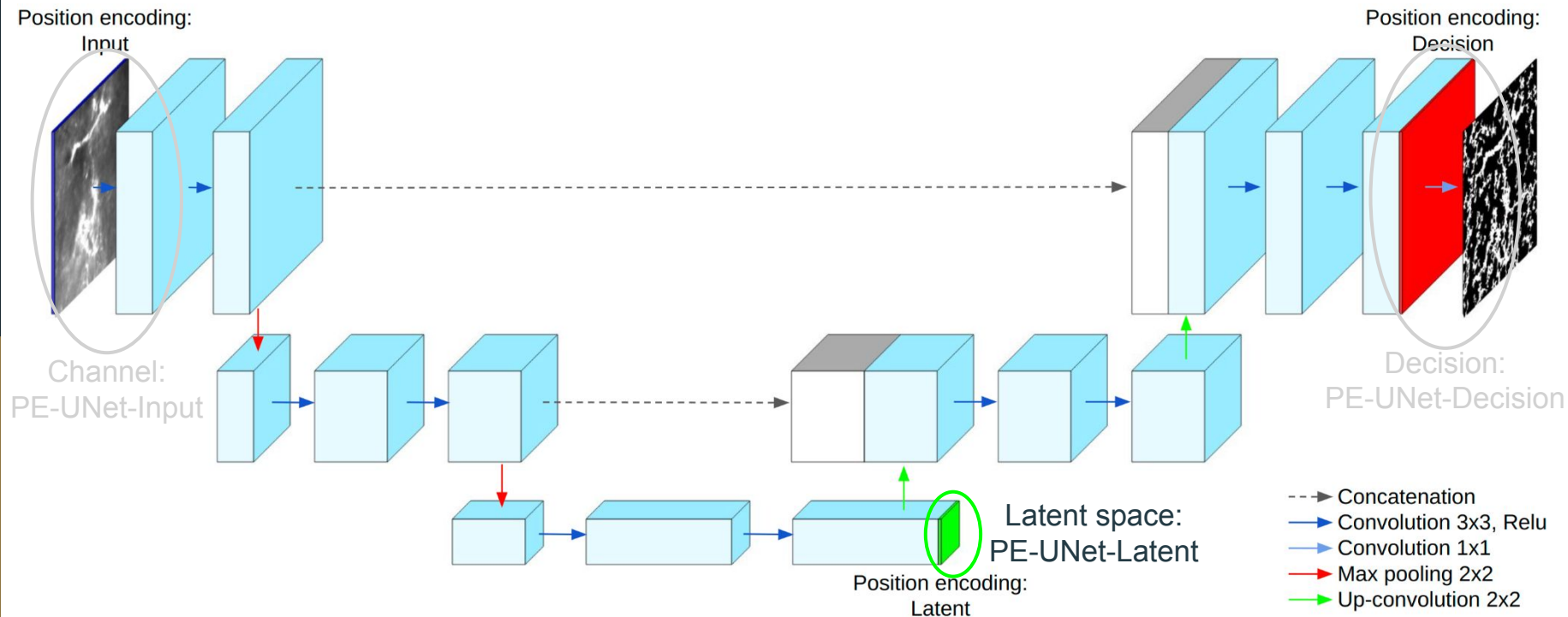
PE-UNets



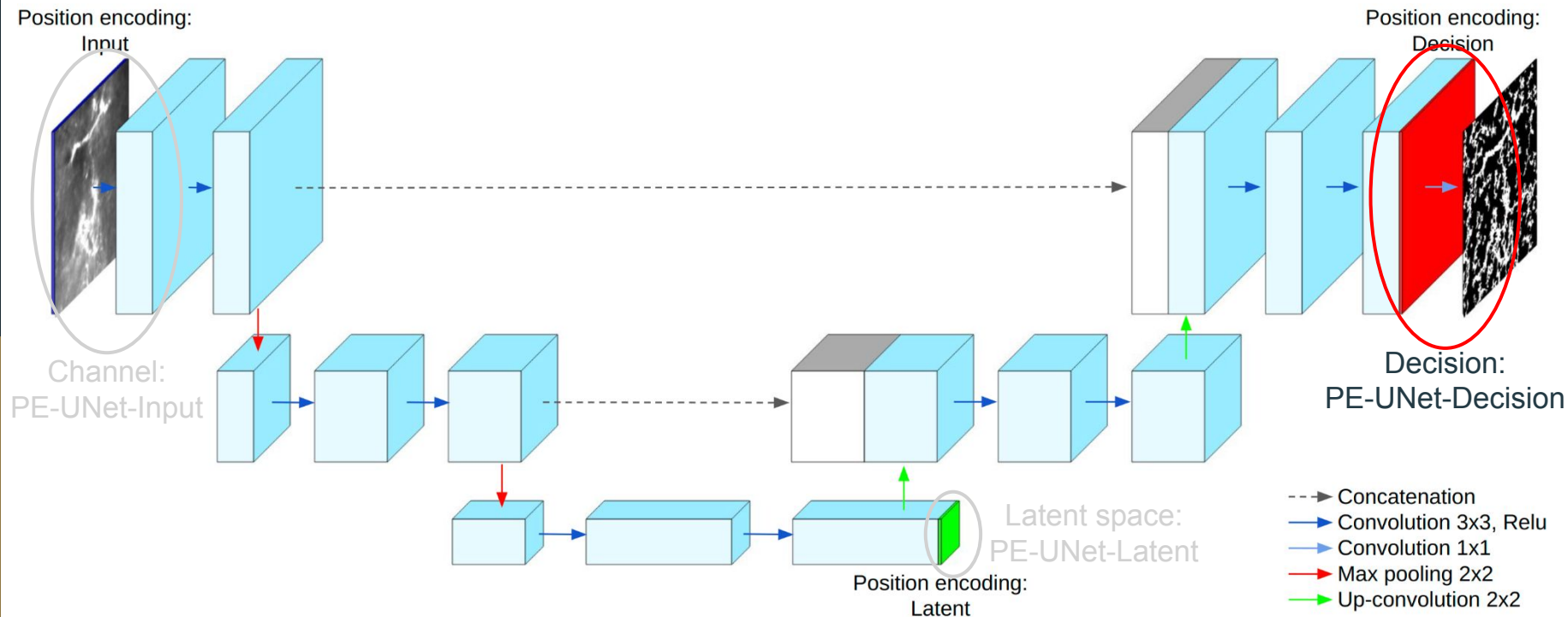
PE-UNet-Input



PE-UNet-Latent



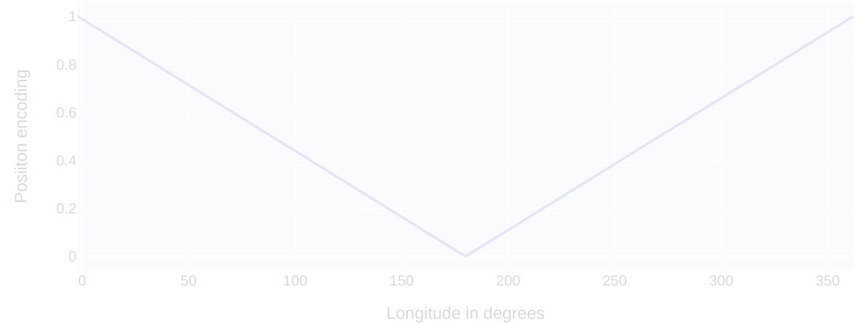
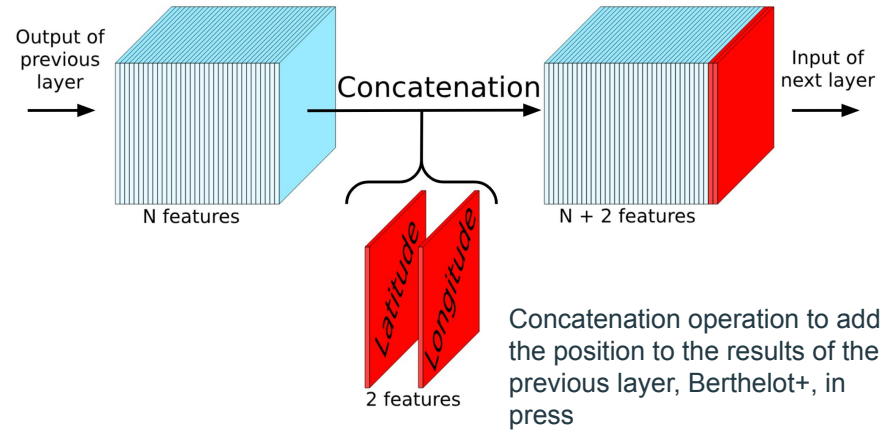
PE-UNet-Decision



How to add the position information?

- Add the position information:
 - Fill one feature with latitude
 - Fill one feature with longitude
 - Concatenate them to the result of the previous layer

- Encode the position:
 - Data consistency
 - Handle outlier

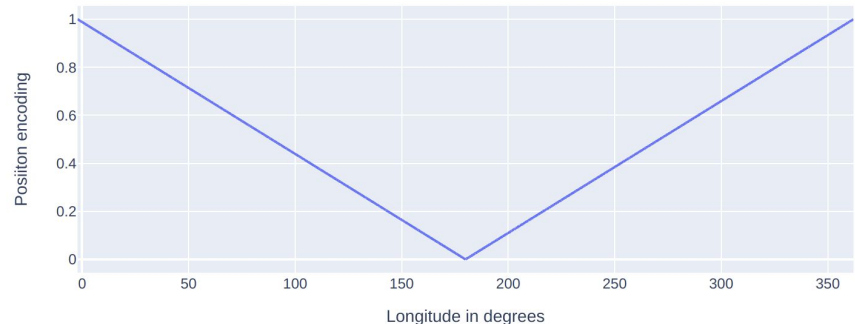
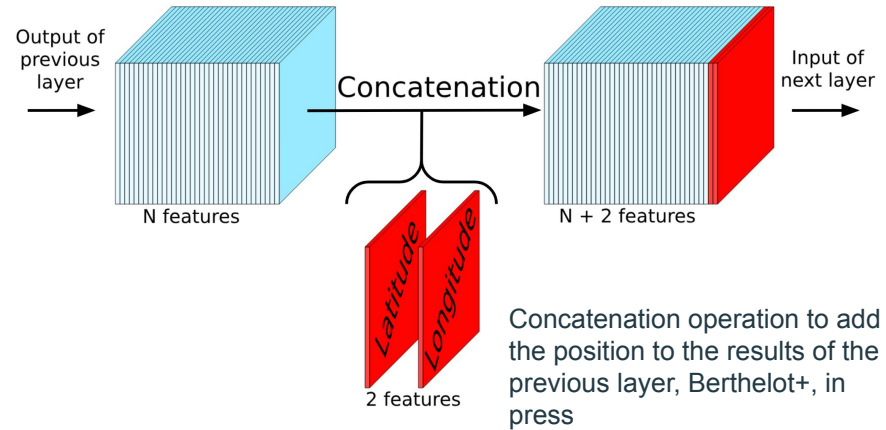


Position encoding of the Galactic longitude

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Position encoding of the Galactic longitude

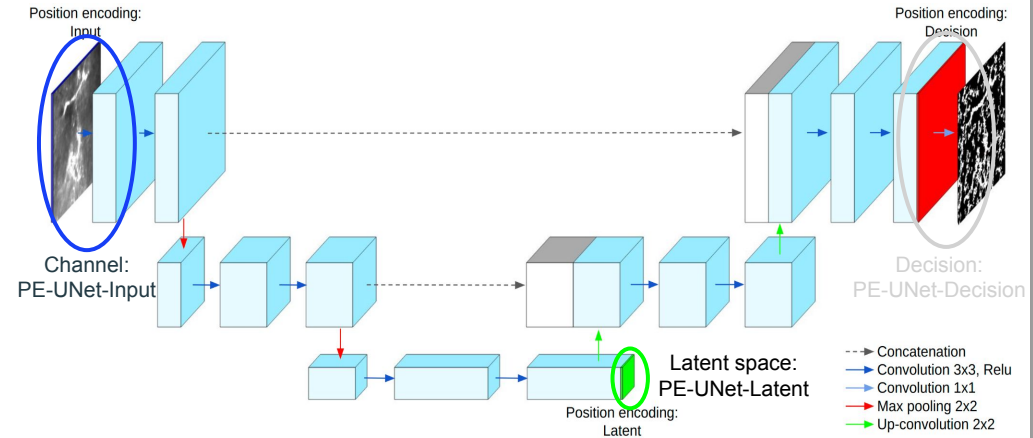
Putting some interpretability on PE-UNets

- Input/Latent:

Aim to extract long range relation between segmentation and position.

- Decision:

The PE-UNet-D perform segmentation regardless of the position then take it into consideration, acting like an adaptive threshold.



PE-UNets, Berthelot+, in press

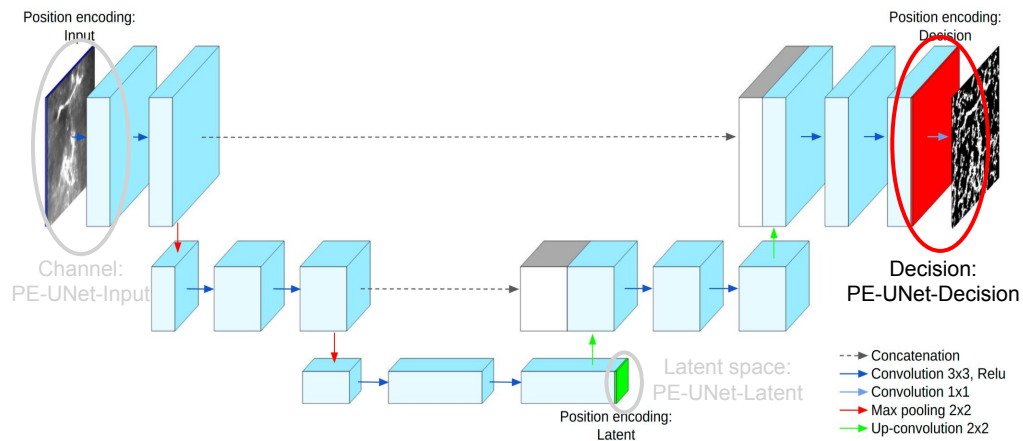
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PE-UNets, Berthelot+, in press



Improving PE-UNet performance with data augmentation



How to improve PE-UNet performance

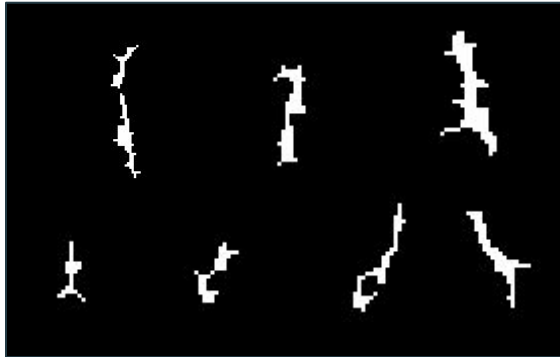
- Data augmentation improves model performance:
 - Flip
 - Rotation
 - Blur
 - Noise
 - Crop



Data augmentation should not change the label/reduce information

- Because of the filament-position relation, data augmentation could change the label

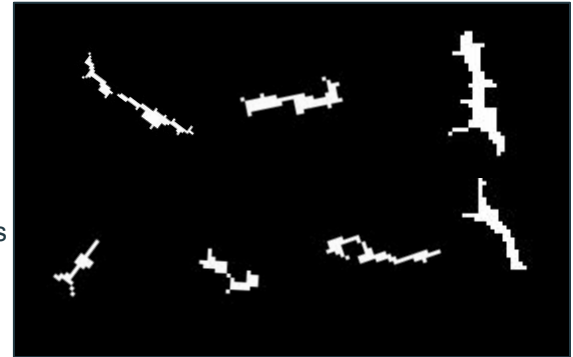
How to improve PE-UNet performance



Region 1



Data augmentation: flips and rotations



Region 1



Region 2



Data augmentation: flips and rotations



Region 2

Improving PE-UNet with Data augmentation

- Cross validation with 5 folds.
- Fixed learning rate, batch size, optimiser, etc.
- One cross-validation with no data augmentation strategy.
- One cross-validation with data augmentation (flips and rotations).
- Data augmentation virtually increases the dataset size by 16.
- Metrics used: DSC (IoU), mAP and AUC ROC

Can we improve PE-UNet performance with data augmentation?

→ PE-UNet-L performs better with DA



Maybe two effects play against each other:

- DA improving performance
- Physics non-reality decreasing performance
- We perform the same experiment with a UNet:
 - Performance gain is the same

→ DA is needed to increase performance

Model	DA	DSC	mAP	AUC ROC
UNet	no	0.9270	0.9551	0.9782
PE-UNet-L	no	0.9338	0.9627	0.9819
UNet	yes	0.9680	0.9949	0.9960
PE-UNet-L	yes	0.9746	0.9970	0.9976

Average metric value across the 5 folds, Berthelot+, in press

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Average metric value across the 5 folds, Berthelot+, in press

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Average metric value across the 5 folds, Berthelot+, in press



Cross validation and model comparison



Experiment settings

- 5 folds
- Hyper-parameter: Learning rate
- Data augmentation: Flips and rotations (x16)
- Optimizer: Adam
- Models used:
 - UNet
 - UNet++
 - SwinUNet
 - PE-UNet(s)
- Metrics used: DSC (IoU), mAP, AUC ROC

PE-UNet improves state of the art

PE-UNet-Latent gets
best average score
for the 3 metrics

Model	DSC	mAP	AUC ROC
UNet	0.9680	0.9949	0.9960
UNet++	0.9690	0.9953	0.9960
SwinUNet	0.9637	0.9939	0.9950
PE-UNet-I	0.9649	0.9950	0.9960
PE-UNet-D	0.9685	0.9952	0.9962
PE-UNet-L	0.9746	0.9970	0.9976

Average metric value across the 5 folds, Berthelot+, in
press

PE-UNet's improvements are significant

- We perform statistical test between models
- A p-value lower than 0.05 (values in bold) indicates a confidence of 95% that the difference is significant
- The PE-UNet-L is significantly better than every other model except for the PE-UNet-I

Method	PE-UNet-L
UNet	0.0175
UNet++	0.0061
SwinUNet	0.0031
PE-UNet-D	0.0006
PE-UNet-I	0.1676

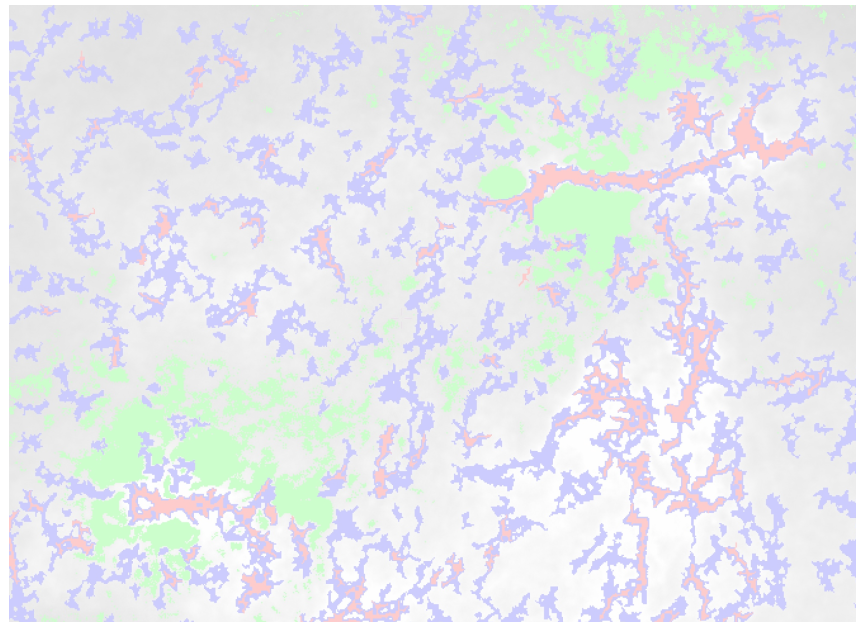
P-value of statistical test between models, Berthelot+, in press

How do metrics relate to maps?

Model	DSC
PE-UNet-L	0.9746

Average DSC for PE-UNet-L,
Berthelot+, in press

- About 97% labeled pixels are correctly classified by our model (PE-UNet-L)
- For the unknown pixels, an empirical study has been done showing that our model performs well



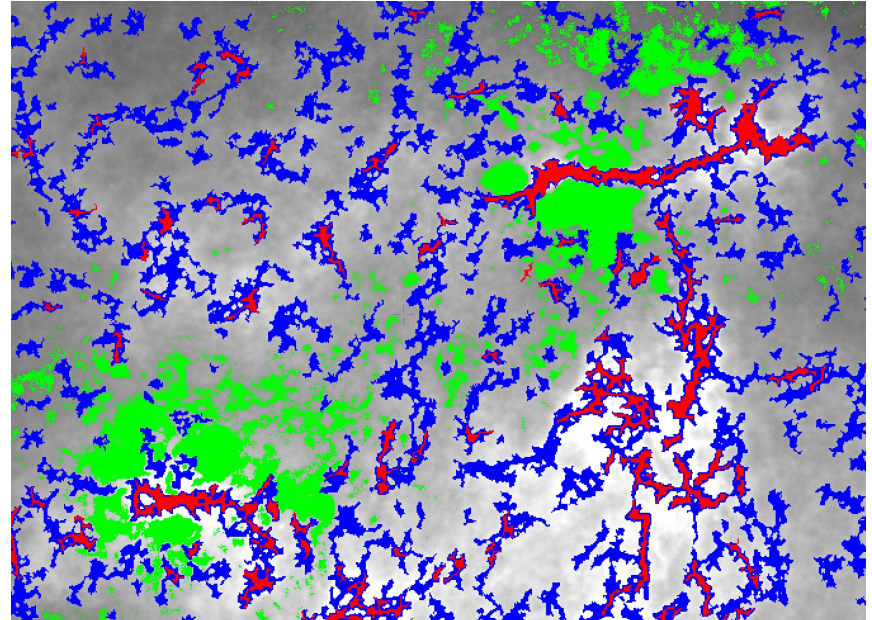
Background pixels are in green, filament labels in red and
filament segmentation by our PE-UNet-L in blue
Berthelot+, in press

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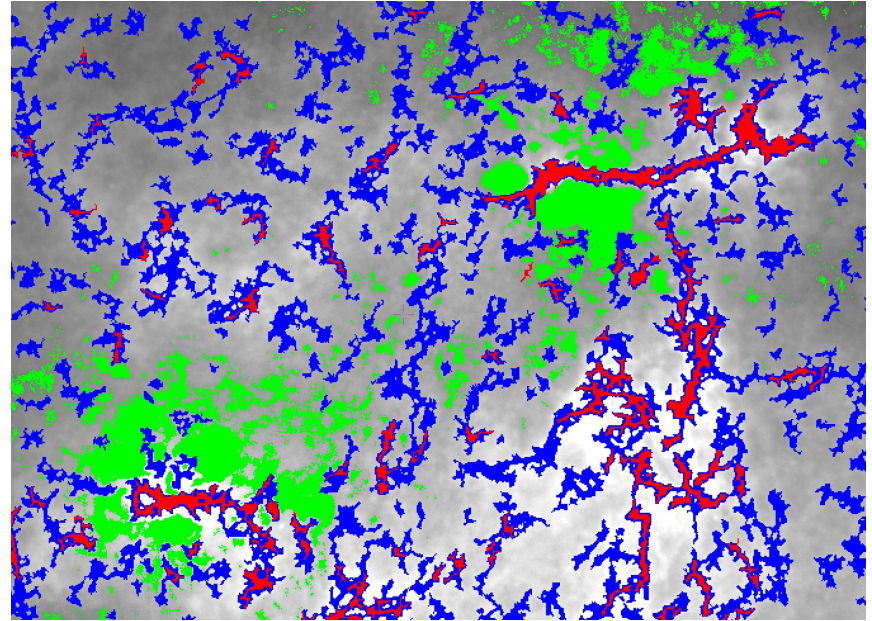
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Berthelot+, in press

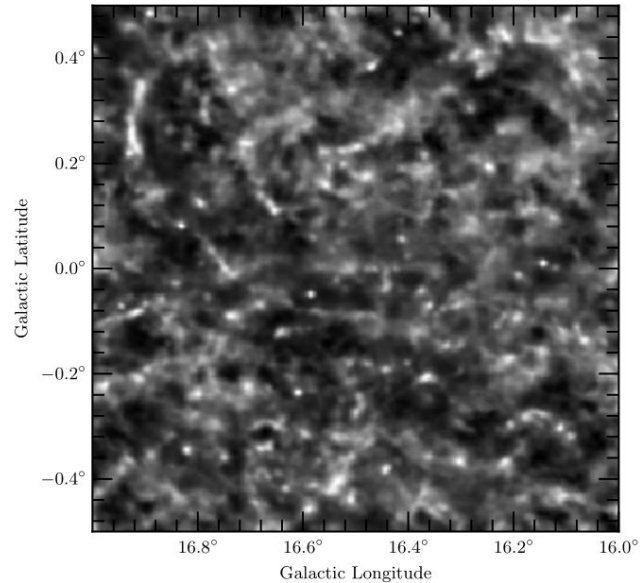
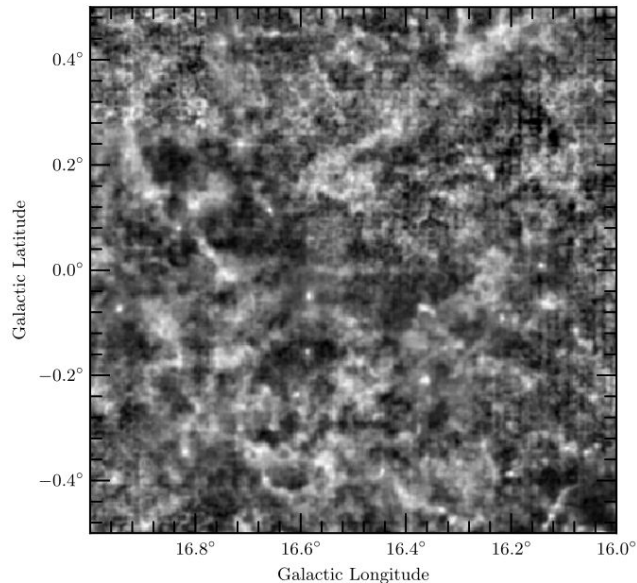


Applying our model to
COHRS data
 ^{12}CO (3-2) survey



Segmentation of COHRS (^{12}CO survey of the Gp)

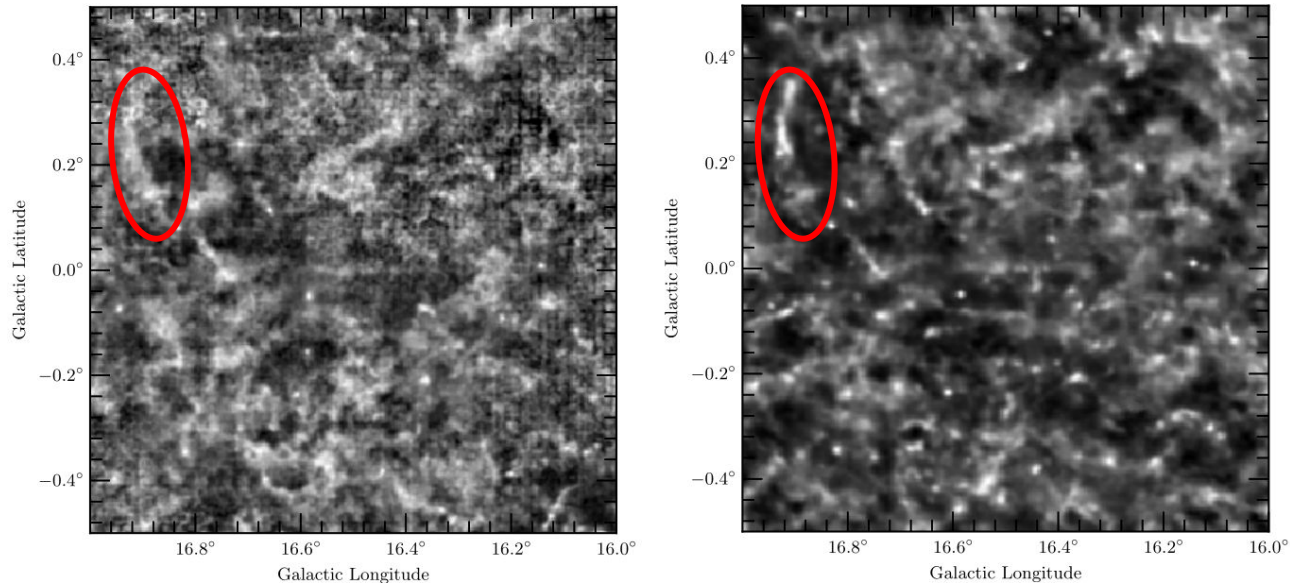
- COHRS: ^{12}CO (3-2) survey
- Hi-GAL and COHRS don't trace the same physical conditions



COHRS normed image on the left, Hi-GAL normed image on the right, Berthelot+ in press

Segmentation of COHRS (^{12}CO survey of the Gp)

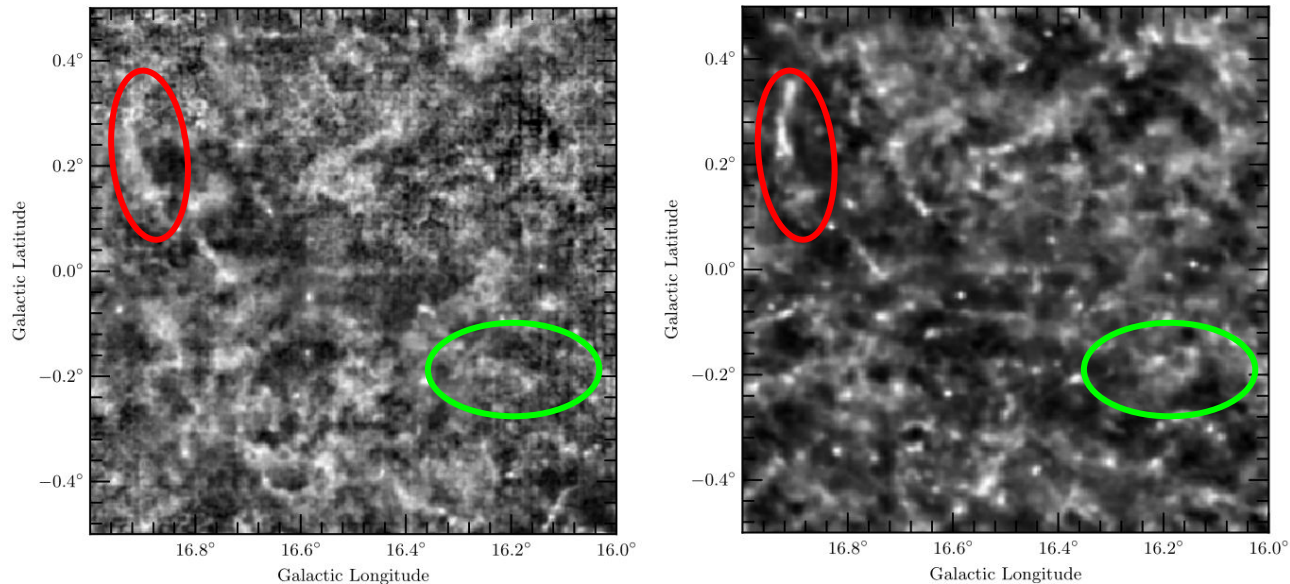
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COHRS normed image on the left, Hi-GAL normed image on the right, Berthelot+ in press

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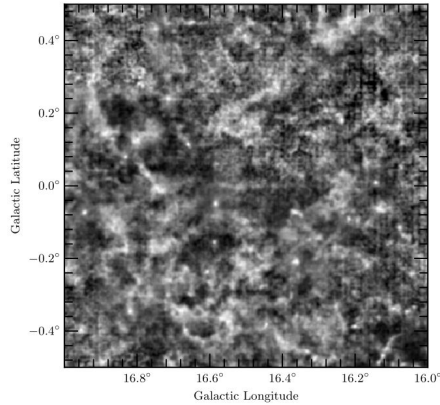
- COHRS: ^{12}CO (3-2) survey
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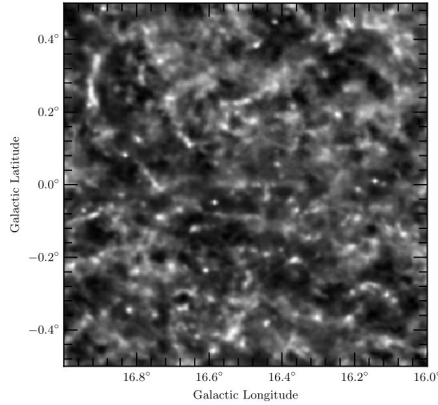
COHRS normed image on the left, Hi-GAL normed image on the right, Berthelot+ in press

Segmentation of COHRS (CO survey of the Gp)

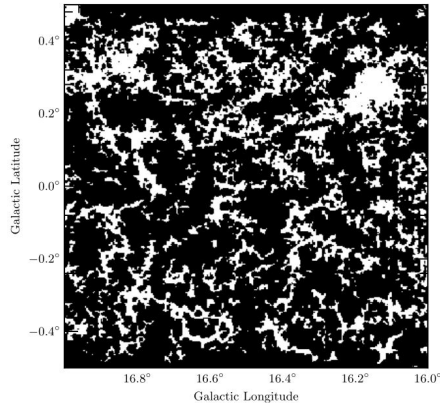
$^{12}\text{CO}(3-2)$ COHRS
normed image



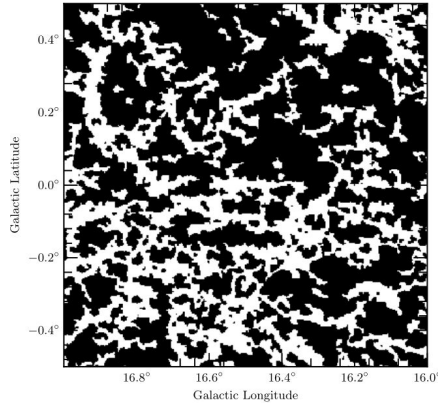
Hi-GAL normed
image



$^{12}\text{CO}(3-2)$ COHRS
Segmentation

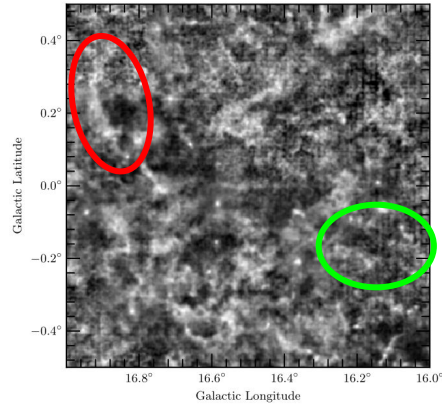


Hi-GAL
segmentation

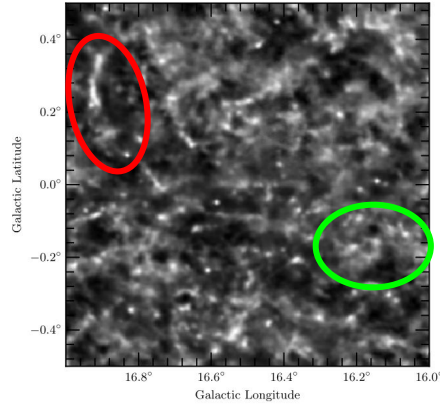


Segmentation of COHRS (CO survey of the Gp)

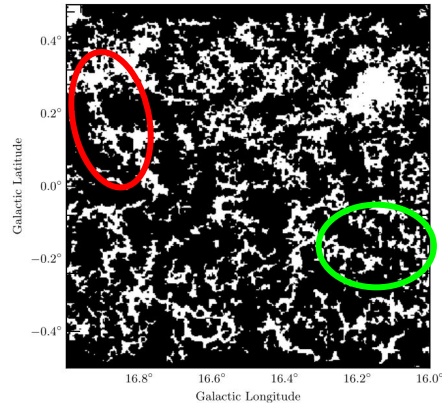
$^{12}\text{CO}(3-2)$ COHRS
normed image



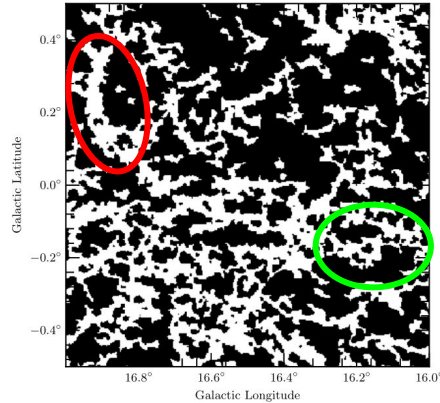
Hi-GAL normed
image



$^{12}\text{CO}(3-2)$ COHRS
Segmentation

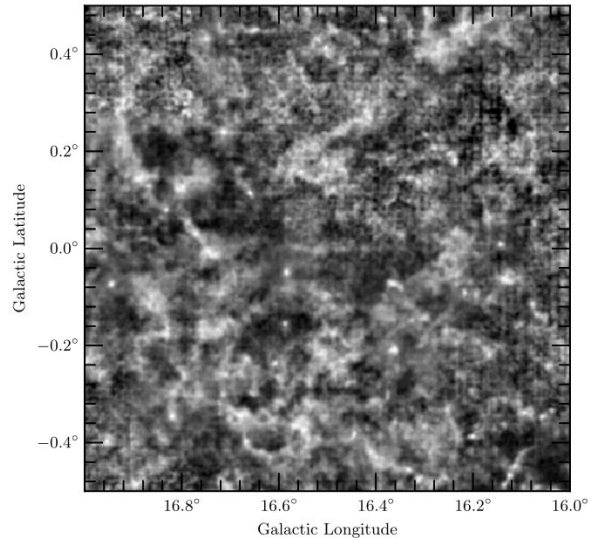


Hi-GAL
segmentation



Segmentation of COHRS (CO survey of the Gp)

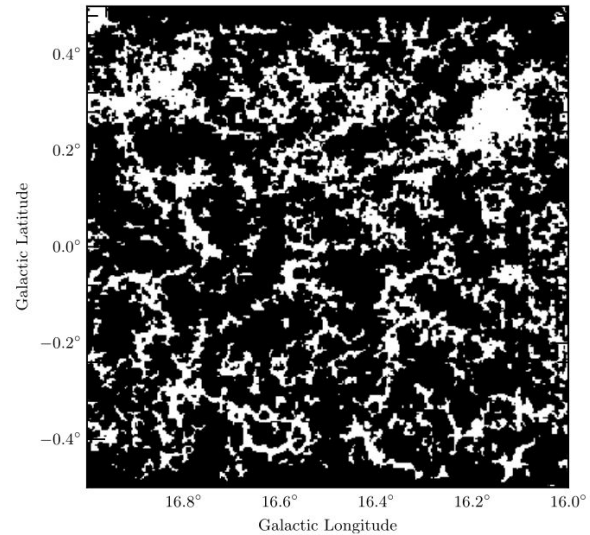
- Our model is able to detect filaments in COHRS
- No reference exists on COHRS for filament extraction
- COHRS presents very noisy images



COHRS normed image



PE-UNet-L trained
on Hi-GAL



COHRS segmentation



Conclusions



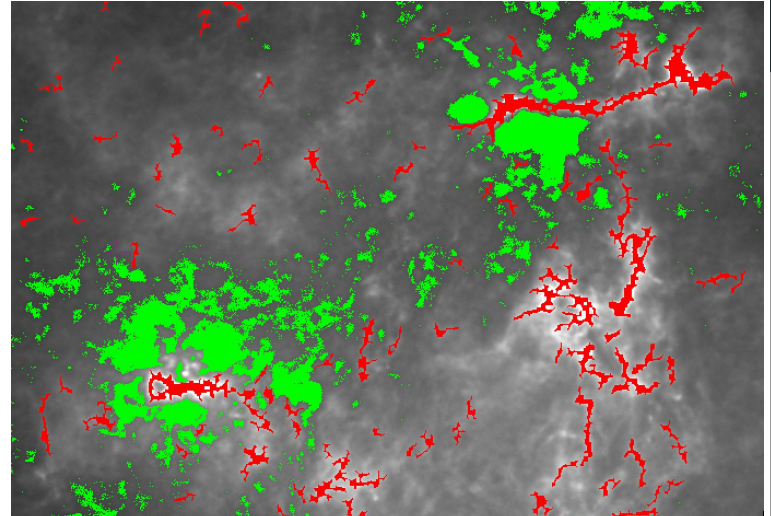
Conclusions

- Cross-validation scheme on Hi-GAL dataset
 - Patch learning strategy
 - Normalisation
 - Semi-supervised learning
- PE-UNet improves significantly the state of the art
- Application of our models to other datasets
 - COHRS

Perspectives

⚠ From a machine learning standpoint, performance validation is the biggest challenge

- ➔ Work towards ways to validate filament candidates
- Using 3D data from observations
 - Using numerical simulations



H₂ column density: Hi-GAL dataset, Pixel labels, background pixels are in green and filament pixels are in red. Rest is unknown.



Thanks for your attention

