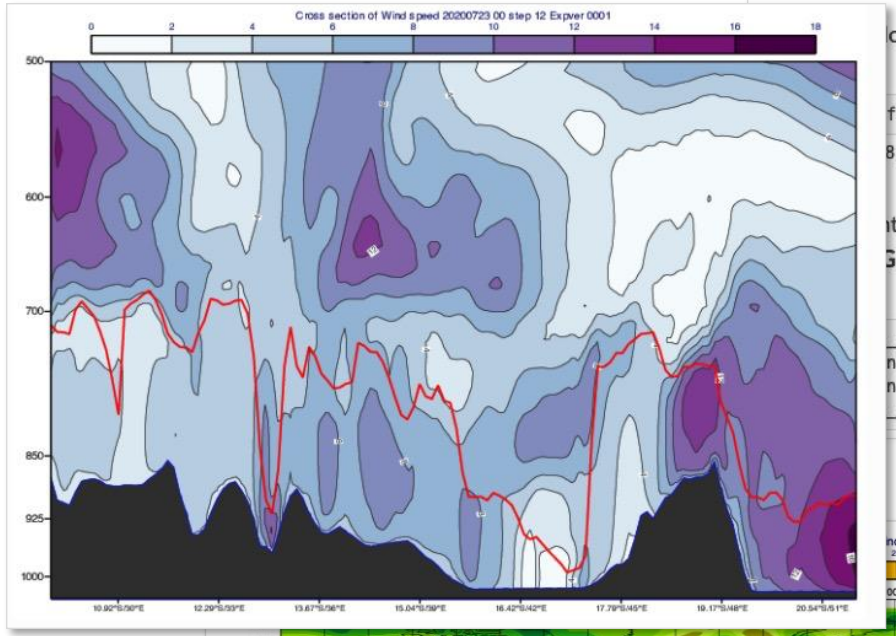
NWP : An Introduction to Metview for Data Analysis in Python

November 11, 2025

Iain Russell
Sándor Kertész

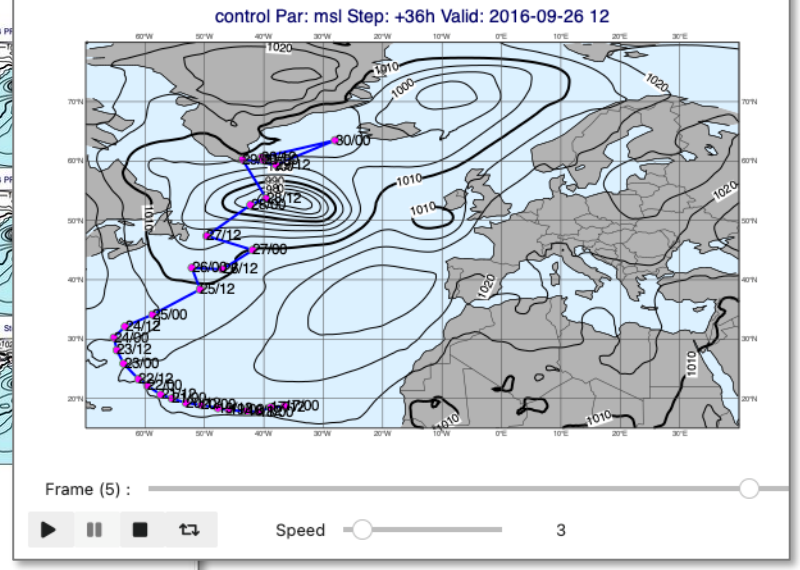
Development Section, ECMWF



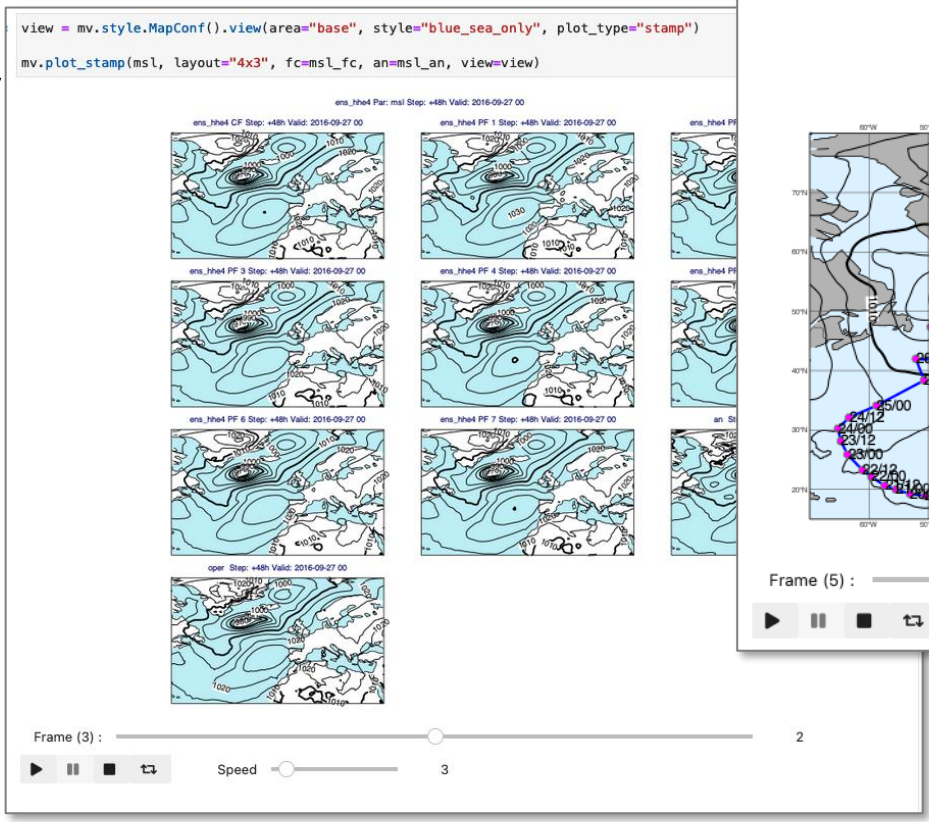
Outline

- What is Metview
- User interface
- Python interface
- How to obtain / install
- Practical exercise using Jupyter notebooks

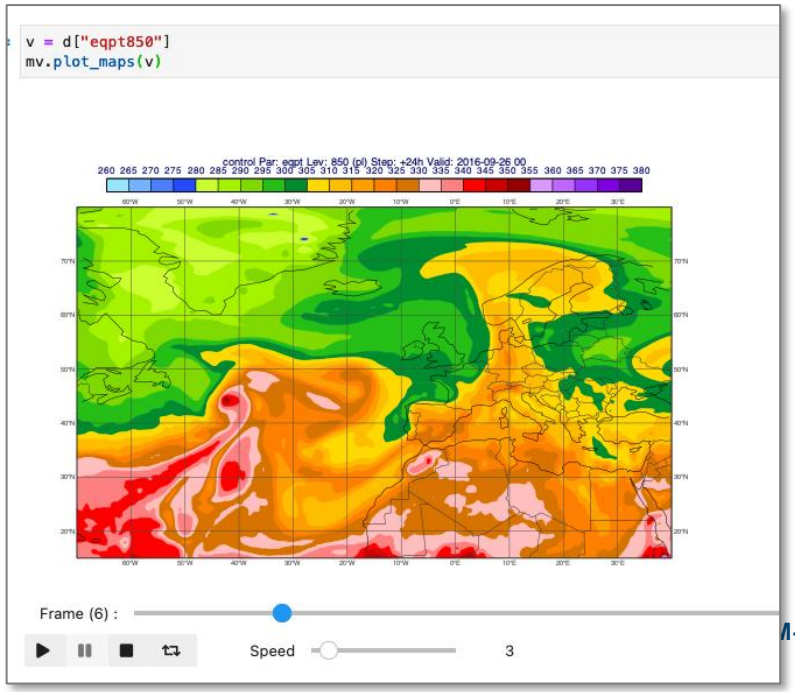
```
import metview as mv

mv.setoutput("jupyter", output_width=600)

ds = mv.load_dataset("oifs_2021")
run = mv.date("2016-09-25 00:00")
step = [0, 12, 24, 36, 48]
d = ds["control"].select(date=run.date(), time=run.time(), step=step)
msl = d["msl"]

tr = ds["track"].select("final_track_op_an_KARL")

vd = tr.style().update(
    {"graph_line_colour": "blue",
     "graph_symbol_colour": "purple",
     "graph_symbol_height": 0.6})

mv.plot_maps(msl, tr, vd, title_font_size=0.6)
```




```
view = mv.style.MapConf().view(area="base", style="blue_sea_only", plot_type="stamp")

mv.plot_stamp(msl, layout="4x3", fc=msl_fc, an=msl_an, view=view)
```

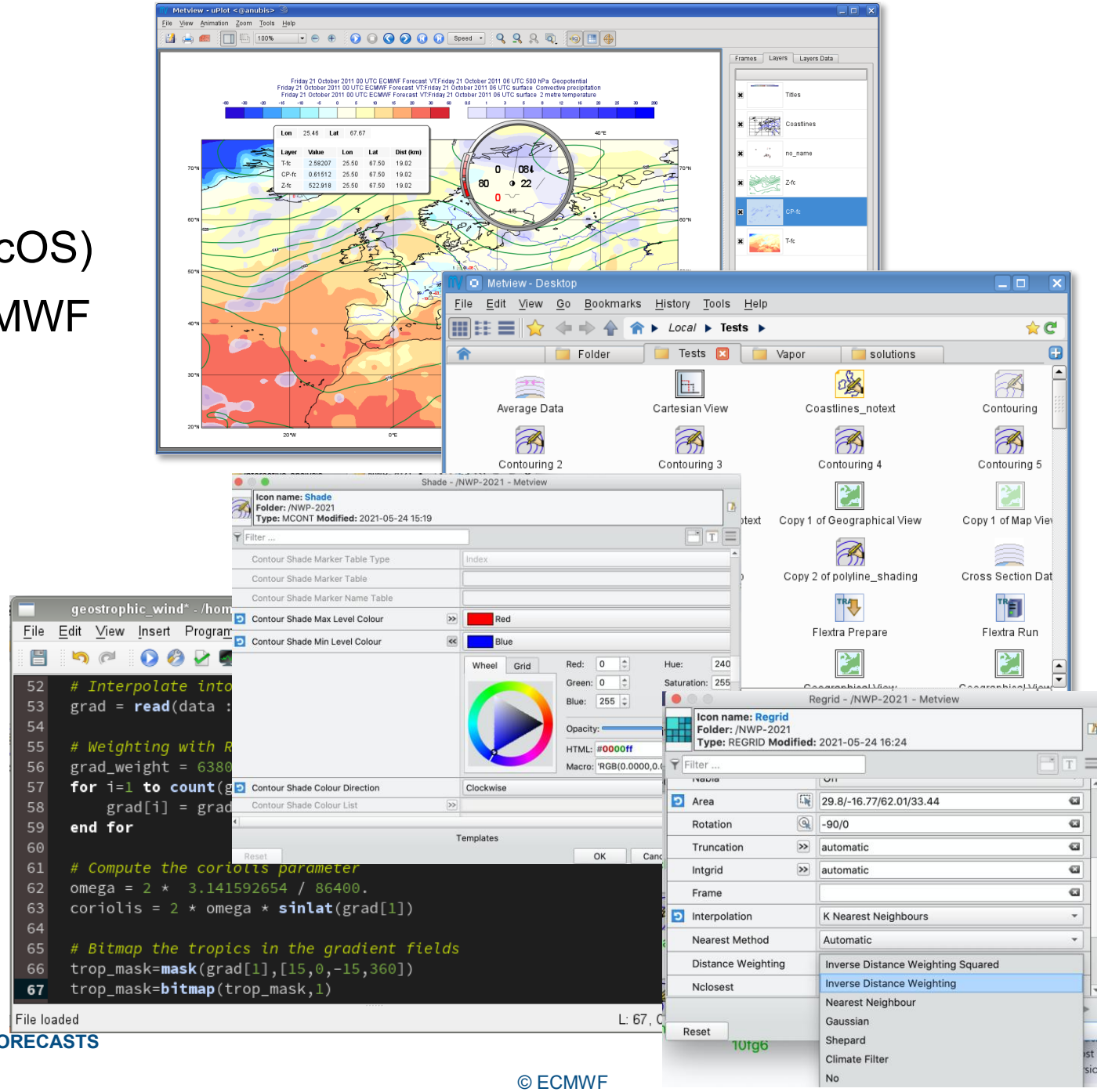



```
v = d["eqpt850"]
mv.plot_maps(v)
```



What is Metview?

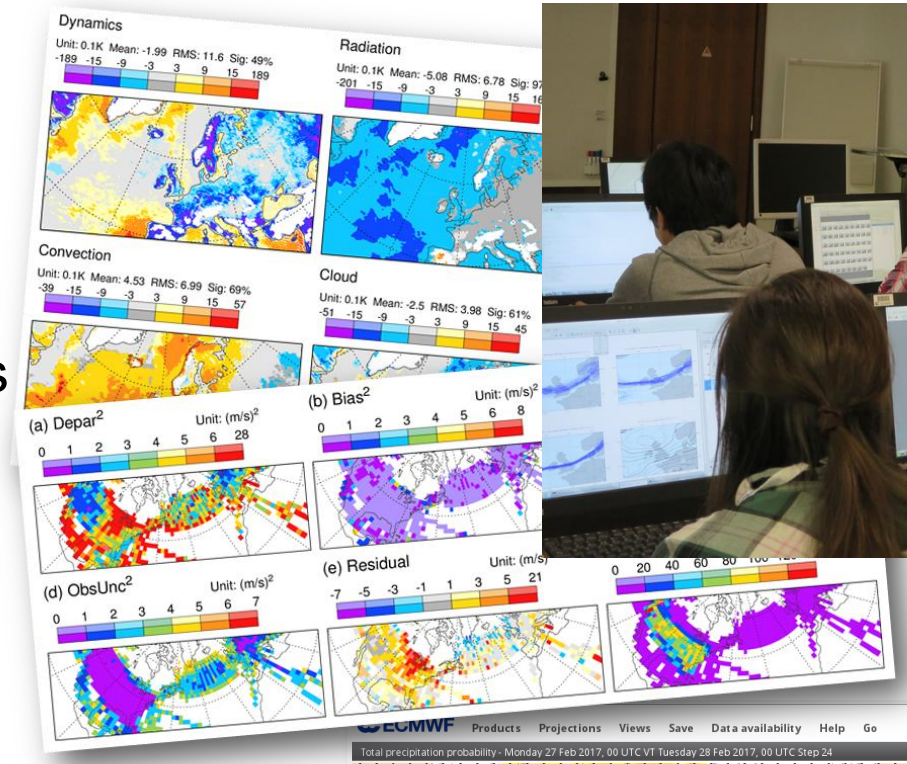
- Workstation software, runs on UNIX, from laptops to supercomputers (including macOS)
- Developed at ECMWF, built on other ECMWF libraries
- Open source, Apache 2.0 license
- Data access
- Data processing
- Data visualisation
- Icon based user interface
- Powerful scripting languages - Macro and **Python**

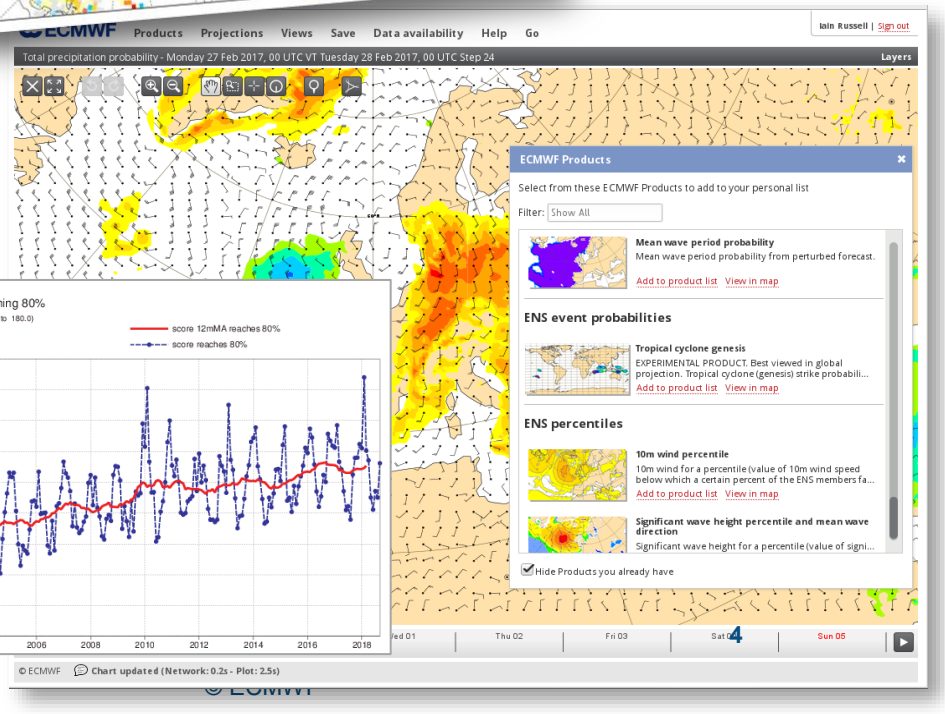


Over 30 years of Metview so far

- Serving users of ECMWF data since 1993

- Used daily by many analysts and researchers
  - inside and outside ECMWF
  - also by commercial users of our data

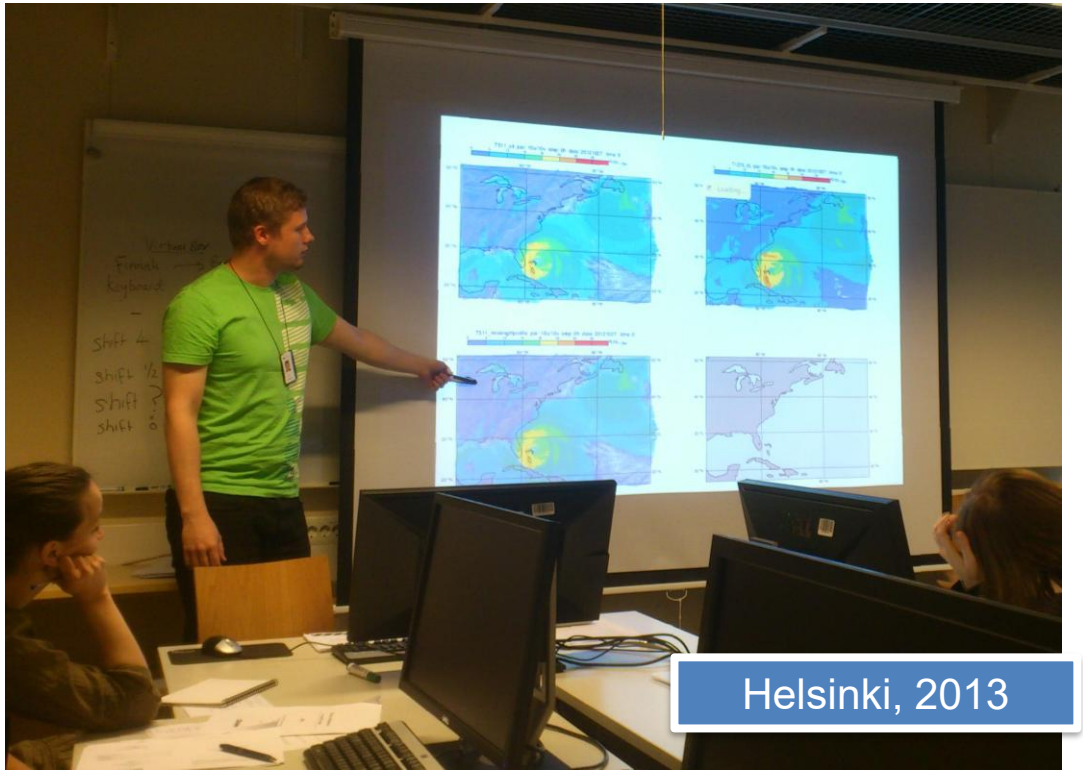




- Some large developments, e.g. the Diagnostics Toolbox, OpenIFS workshops, Quaver (verification package) are based on top of Metview
- ecCharts is based on Metview's architecture and takes it onto the web

Metview and OpenIFS

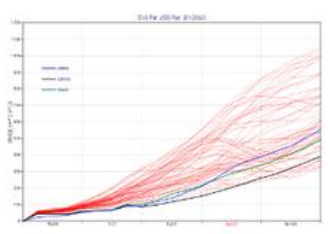
- In previous OpenIFS user workshops case studies were based on custom Metview Macro libraries; now we use Metview Python



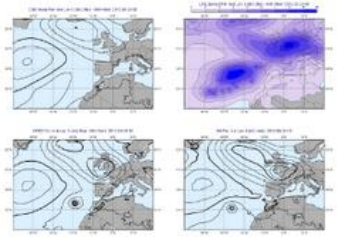
Helsinki, 2013

Toulouse, 2016

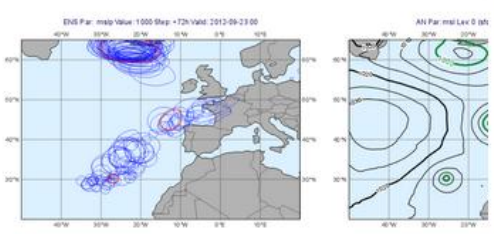
Ensembles



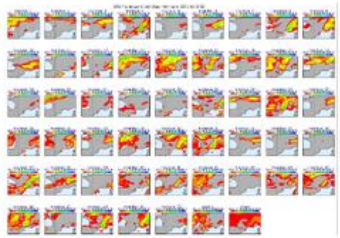
RMSE curves Z500 for ensemble



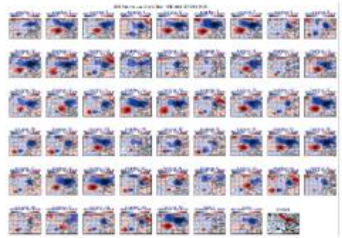
MSLP ensemble mean and spread compared to analysis



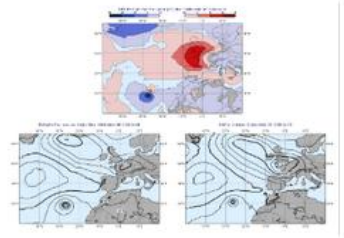
MSLP ensemble spaghetti plot



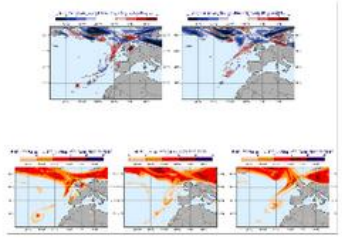
Ensemble stamp map total precipitation over France



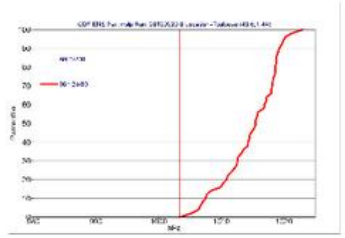
Ensemble difference stamp map of z500



Comparing MSLP of perturbed ensemble membe

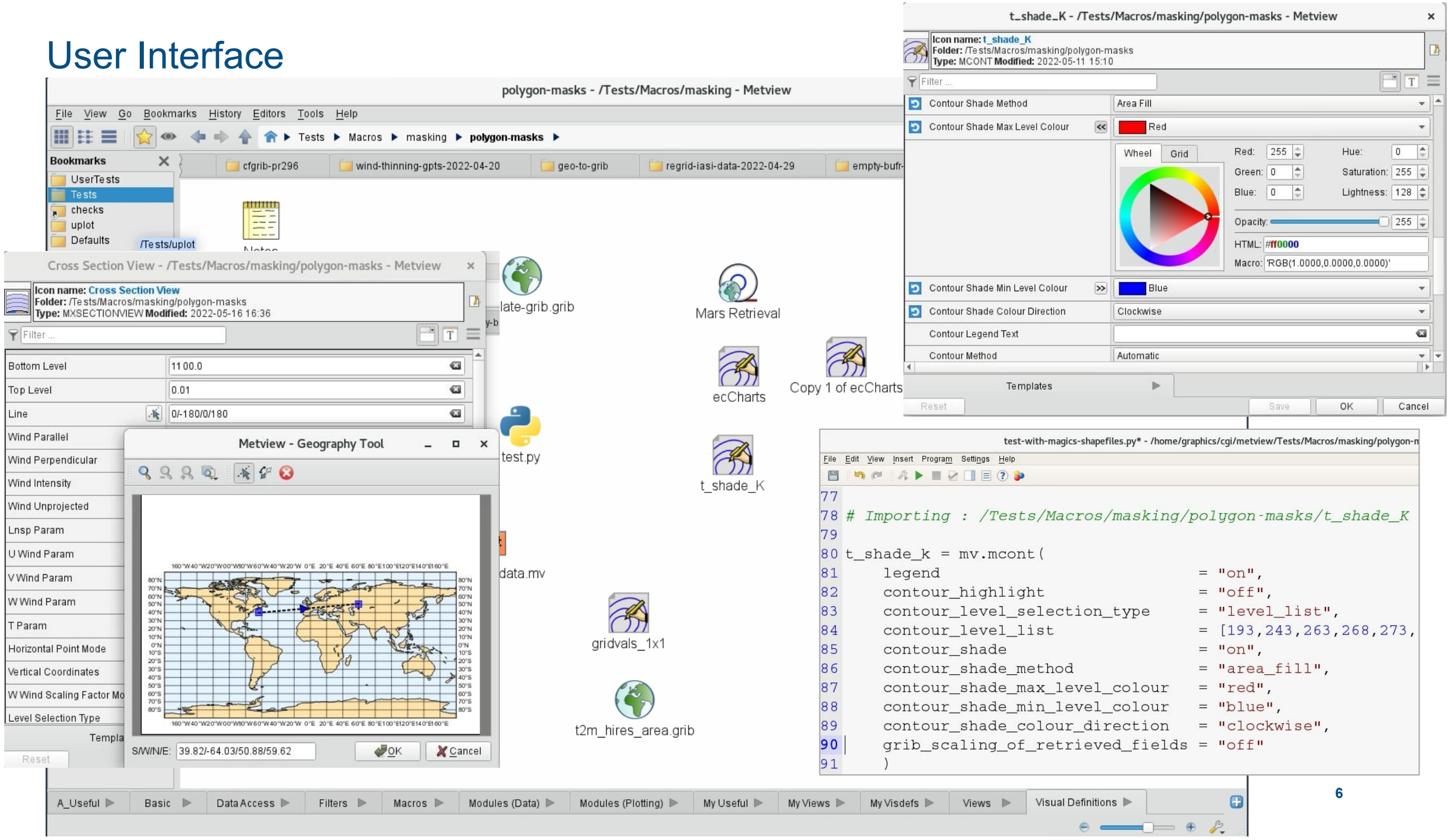


Difference maps of two ensemble members to analysis



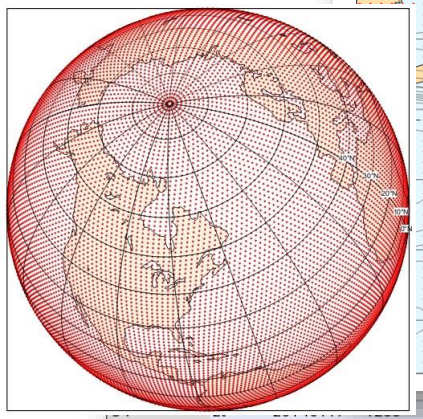
Cumulative distribution function MSLP for ensemble forecast at Toulouse, France

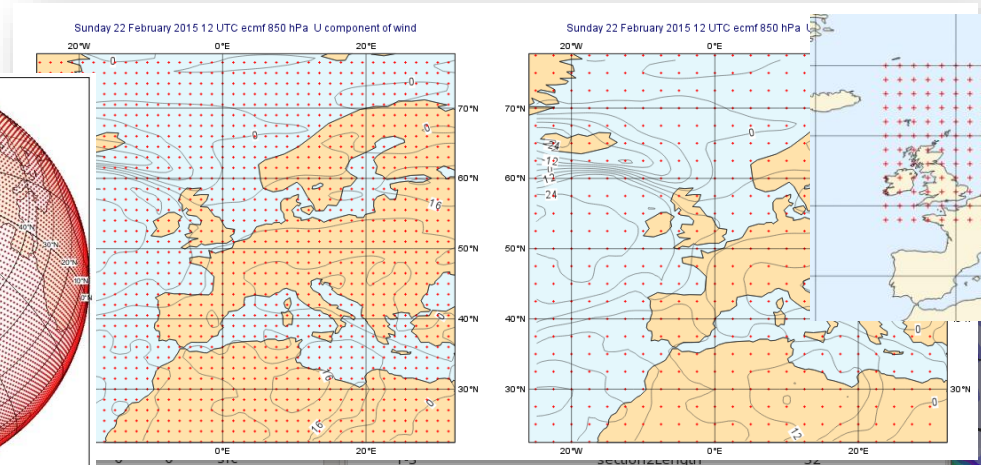
User Interface

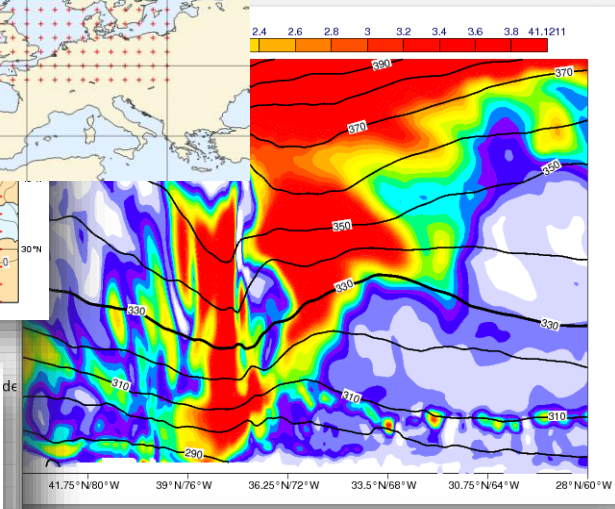


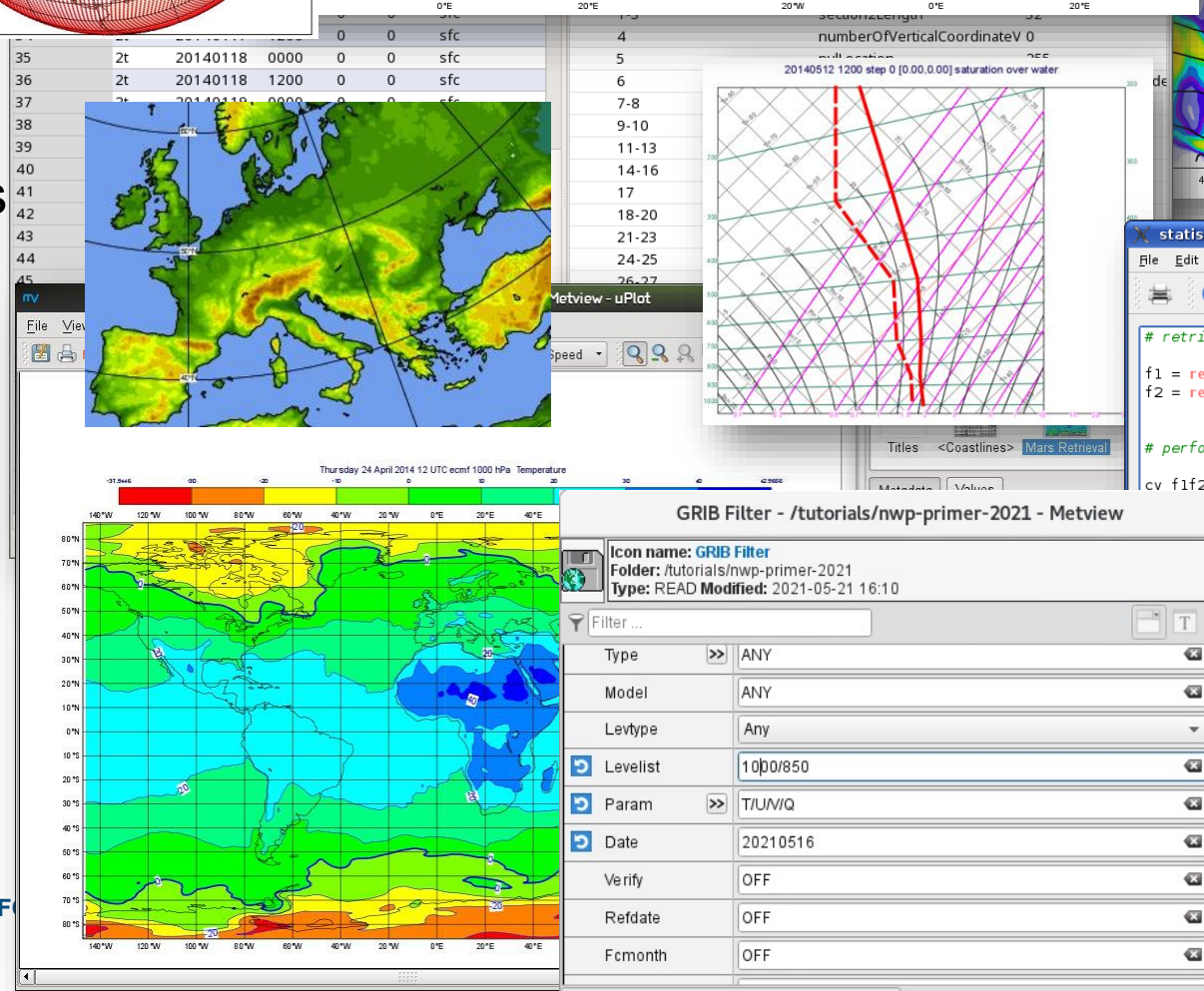
Metview + GRIB

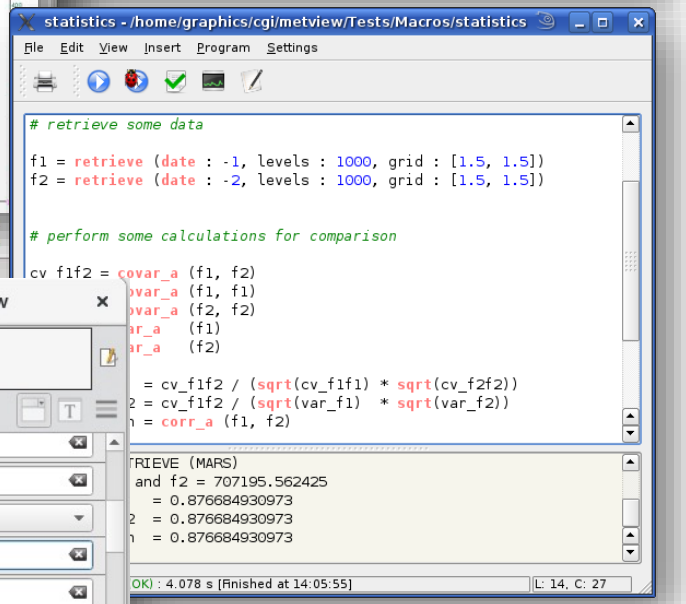
- Plot
- Examine
- Filter
- Spectral transform
- Regridding, cropping
- Missing values, masks
- Maths, Boolean
- Specialised:
  - Cross section
  - Thermodynamics
  - Gradient
  - Vertical integration
  - Model to pressure lev
  - Etc





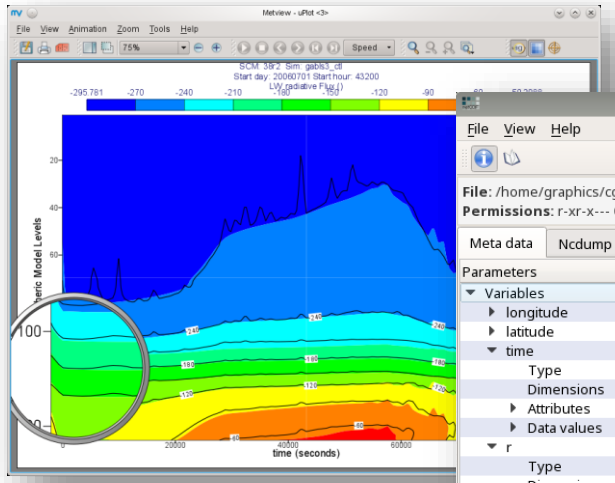


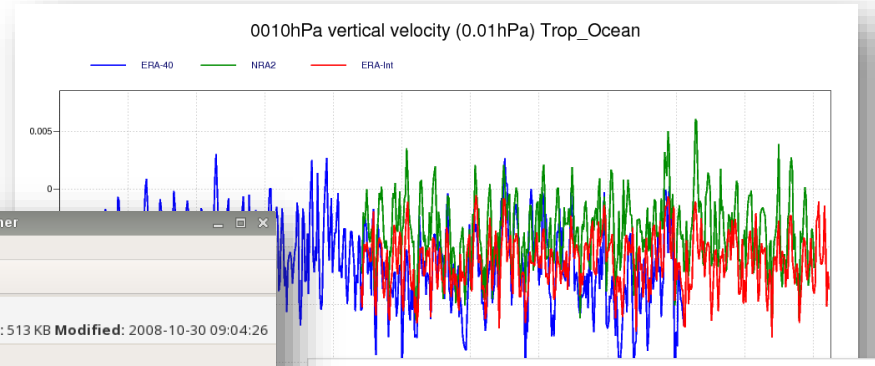


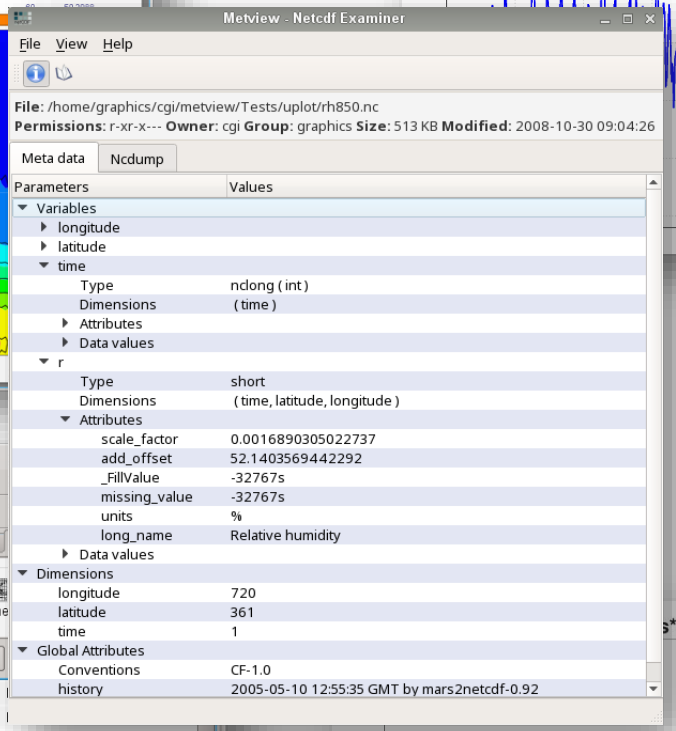


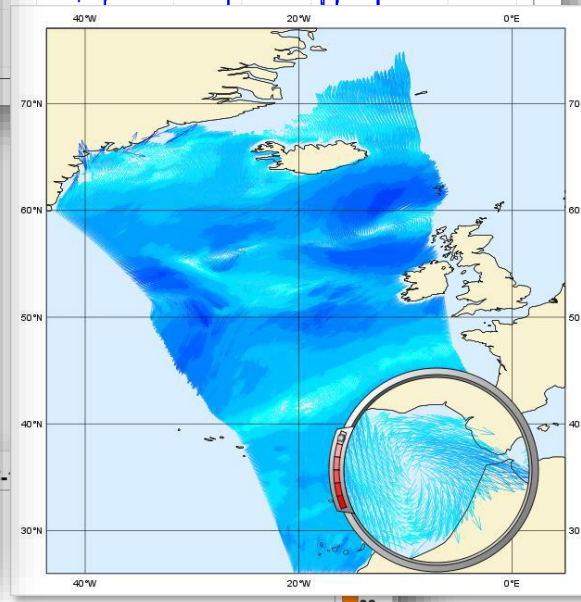
Metview + NetCDF

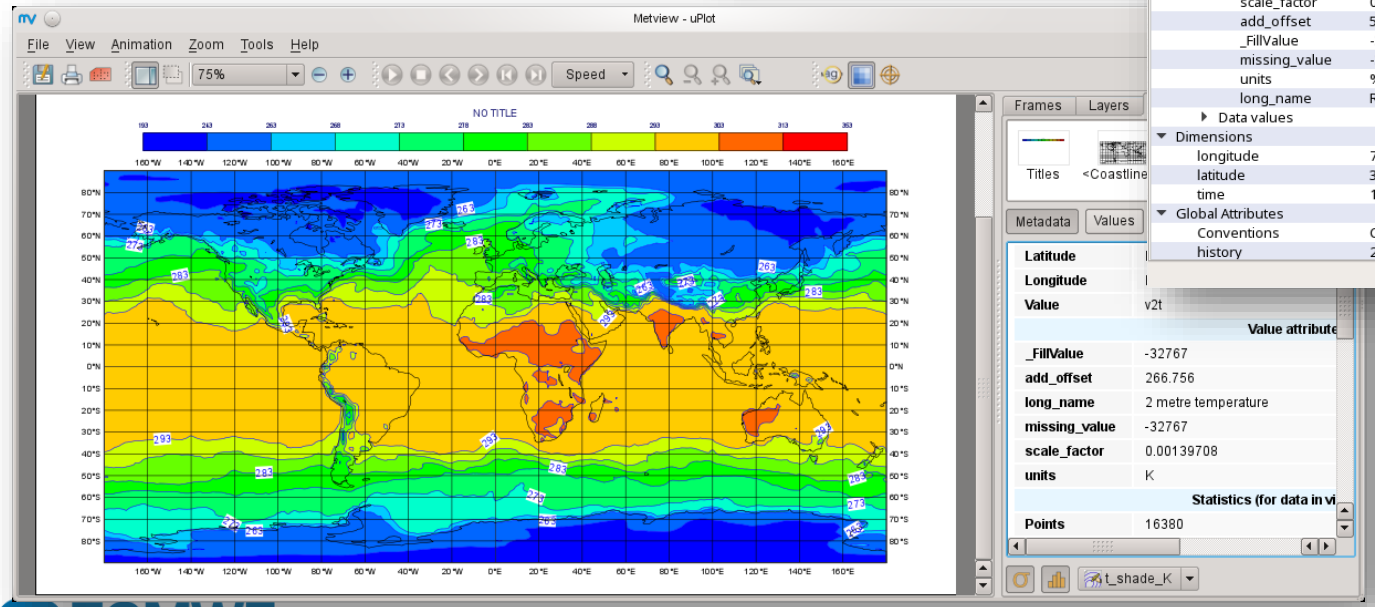
- Plot
- Examine
- Maths, Boolean

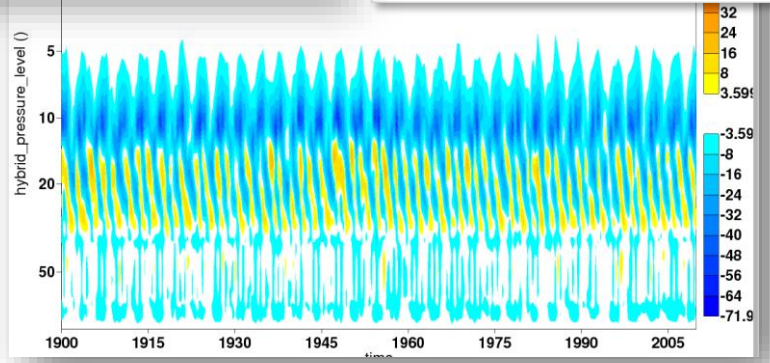






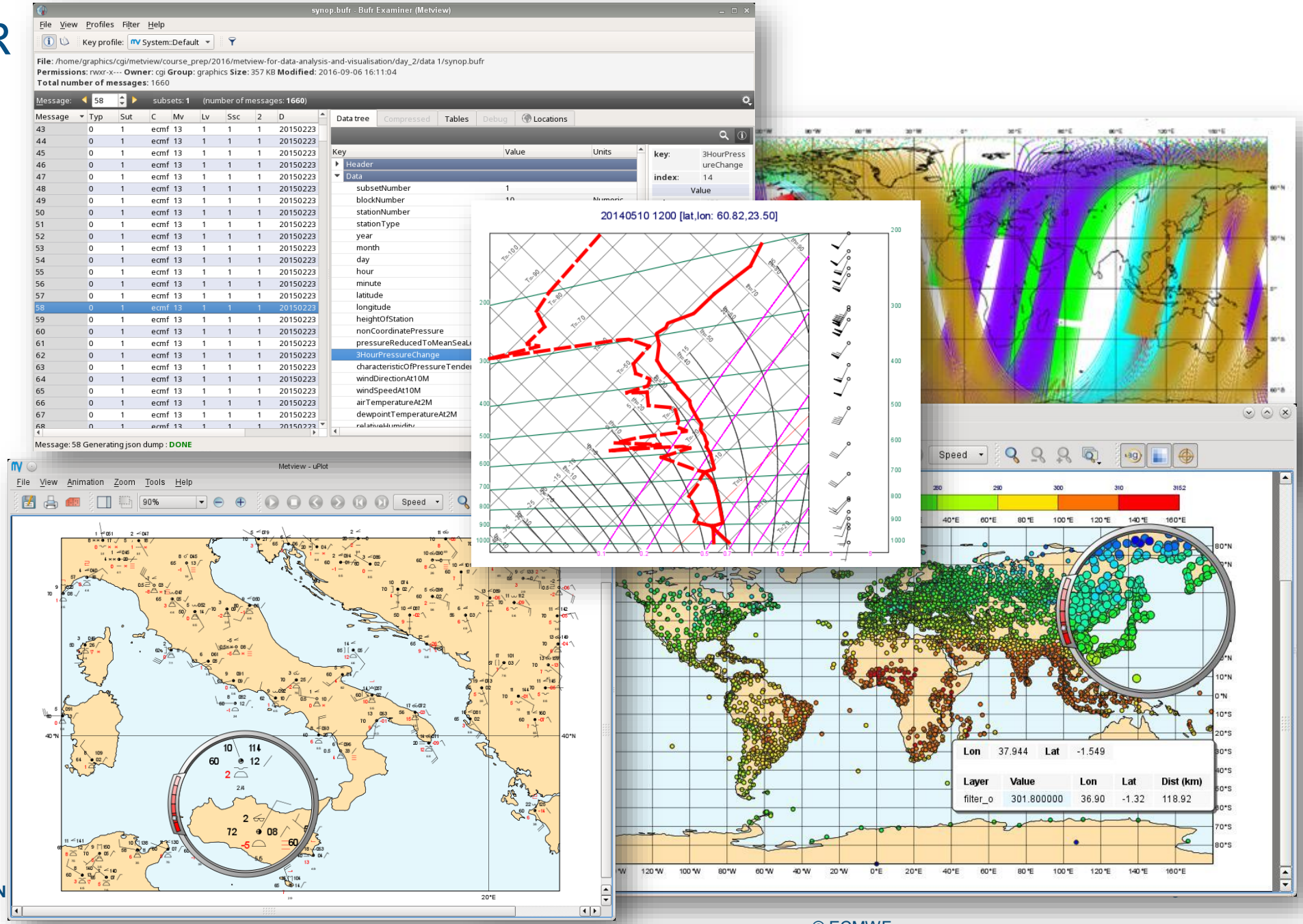






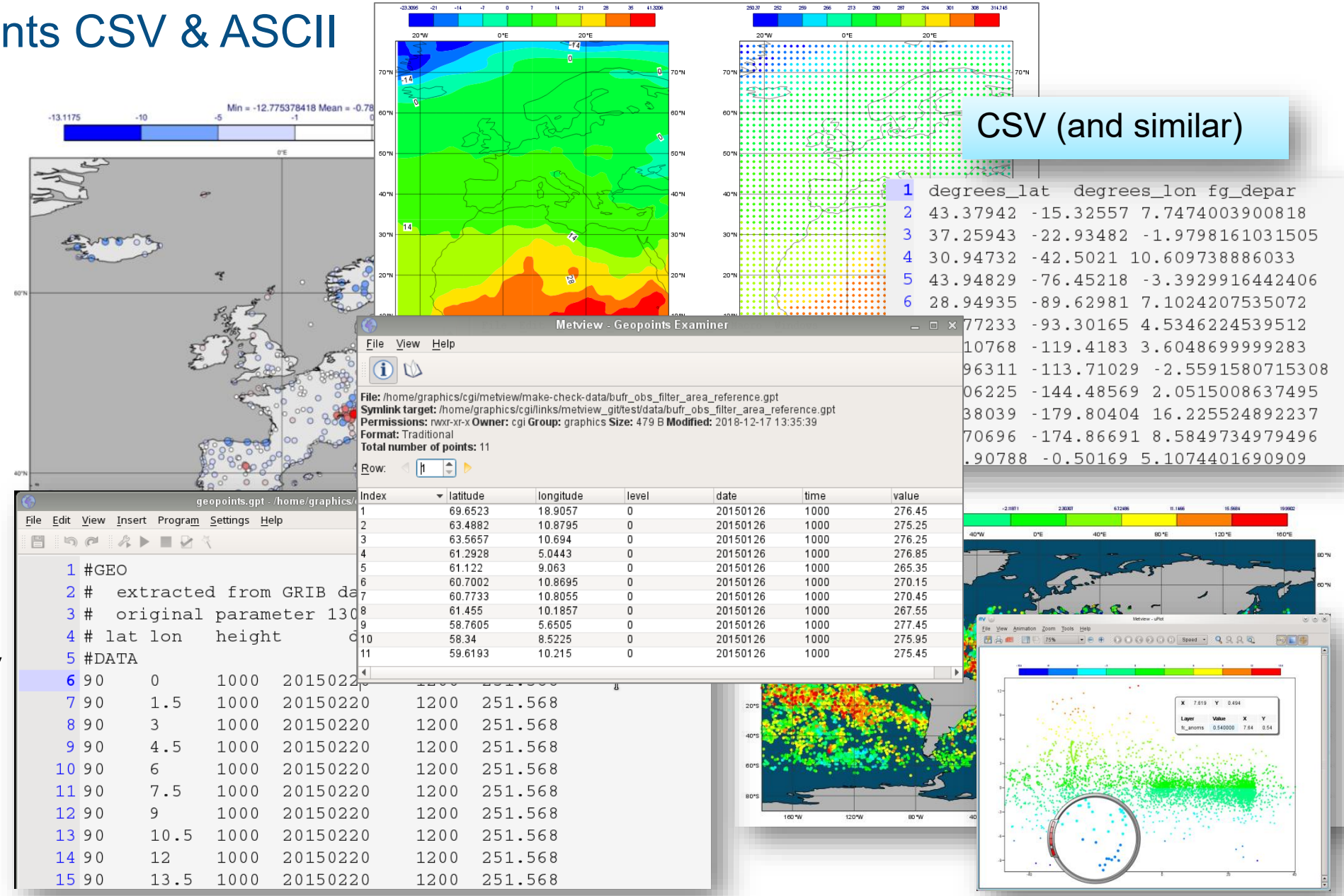
Metview + BUFR

- Plot
- Examine
- Filter
- Extract values
- Convert to Geopoints
- Thermodynamics

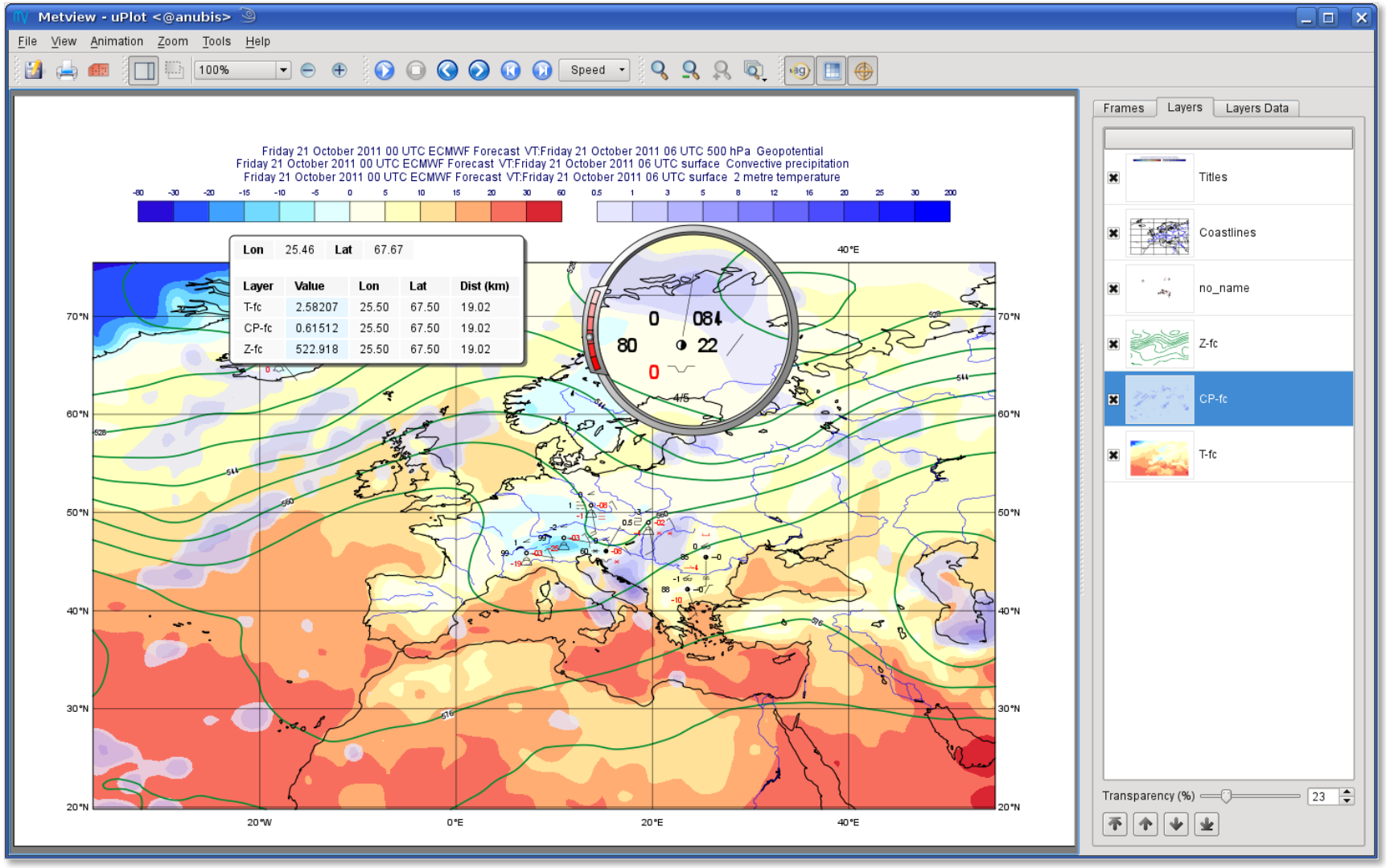


Metview + Geopoints CSV & ASCII

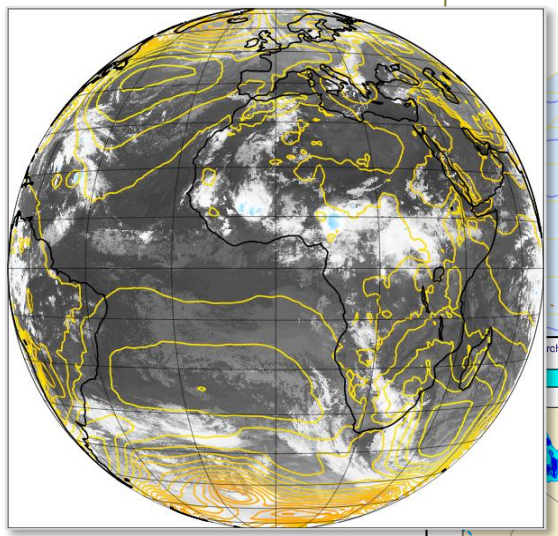
- Geopoints – geo-located values
- Plot
- Examine
- Filter
- Maths, Boolean
- Geo functions
- Convert between GRIB, BUFR and Geopoints
- Can also read CSV

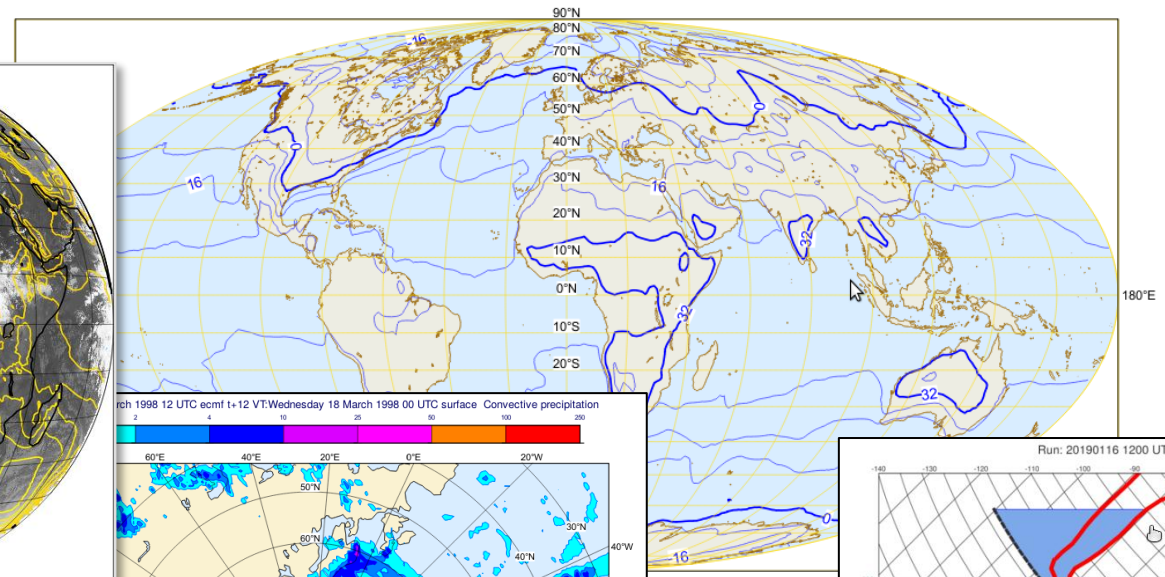


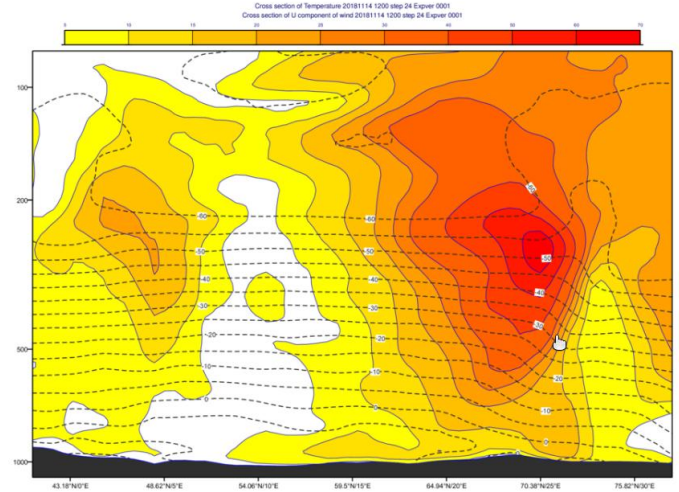
Visualisation - Overlay

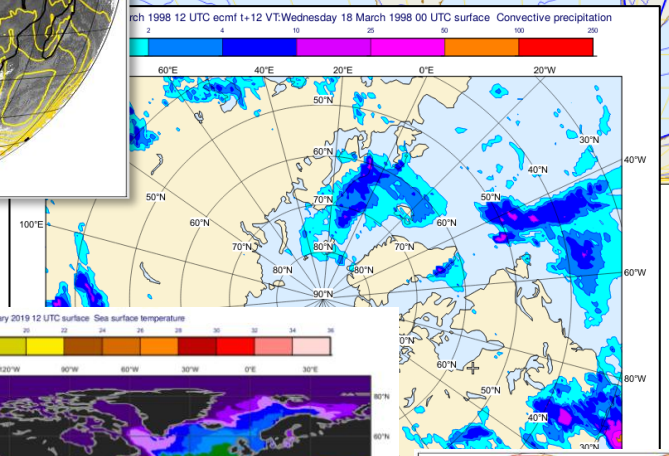


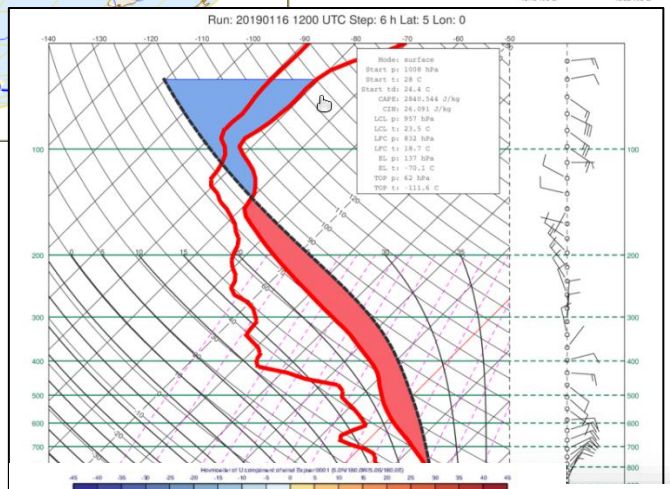
Views

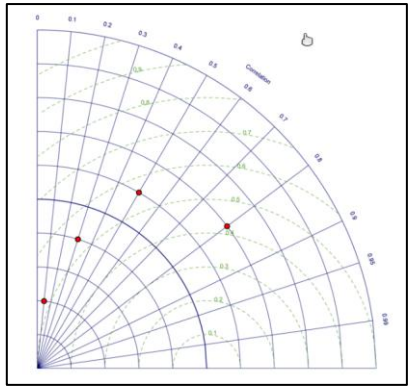


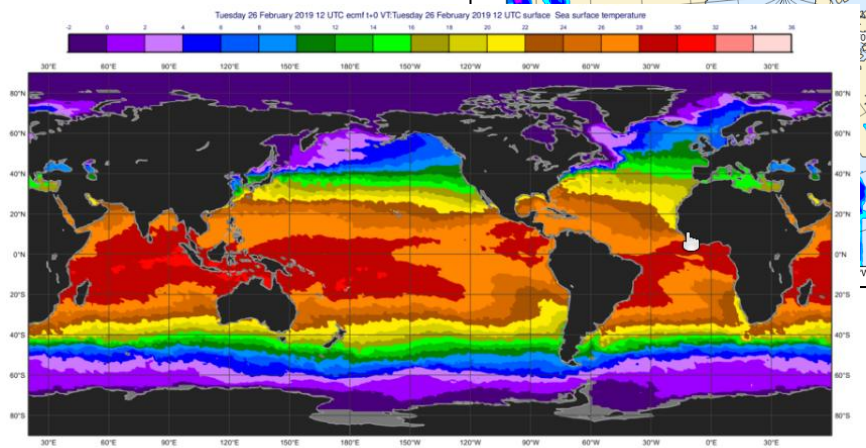

Tuesday 05 March 2019 12 UTC ecmf t+0 VT:Tuesday 05 March 2019 12 UTC 1000 hPa Temperature
90°N
80°N
70°N
60°N
50°N
40°N
30°N
20°N
10°N
0°N
10°S
20°S
180°E

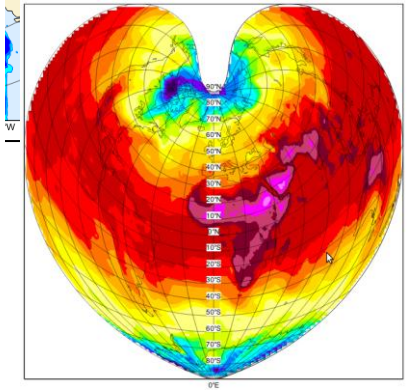


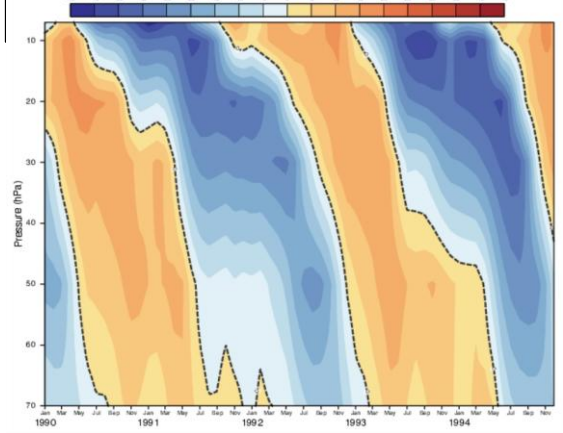

rch 1998 12 UTC ecmf t+12 VT:Wednesday 18 March 1998 00 UTC surface Convective precipitation
60°E
40°E
20°E
0°E
20°W
40°W
60°W
80°W
100°E

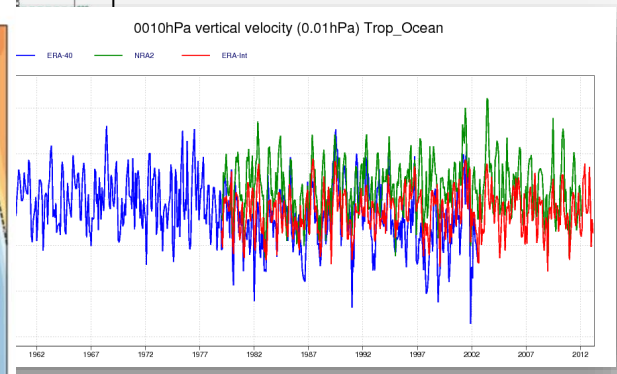

Run: 20190116 1200 UTC Step: 6 h Lat: 5 Lon: 0




Tuesday 26 February 2019 12 UTC ecmf t+0 VT:Tuesday 26 February 2019 12 UTC surface Sea surface temperature

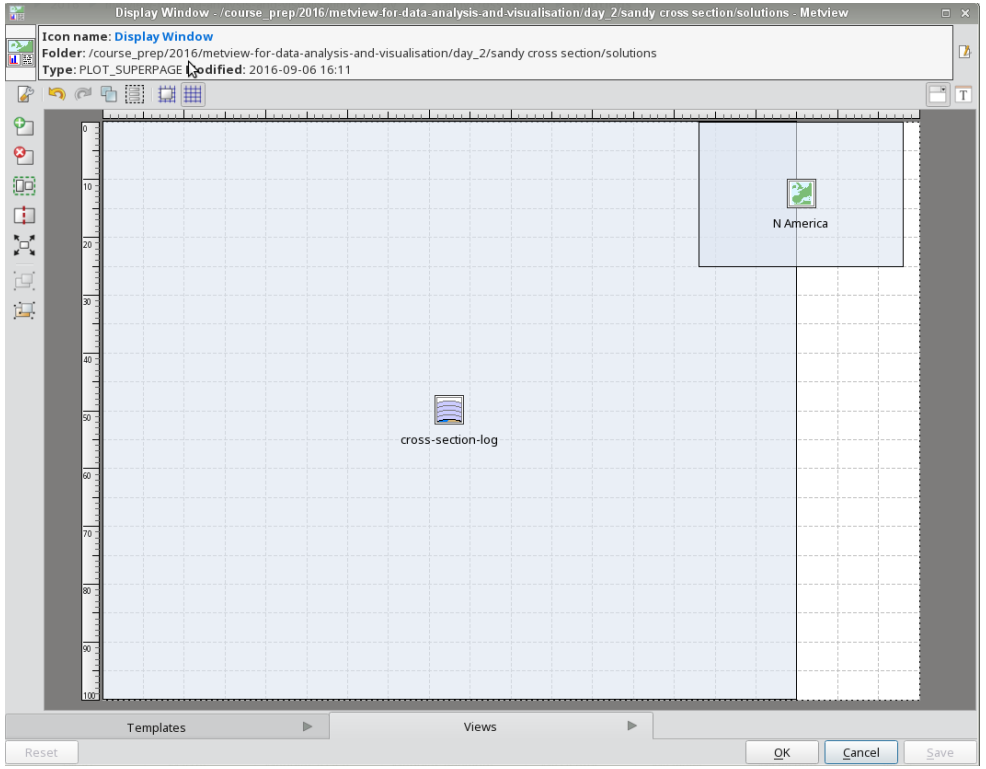


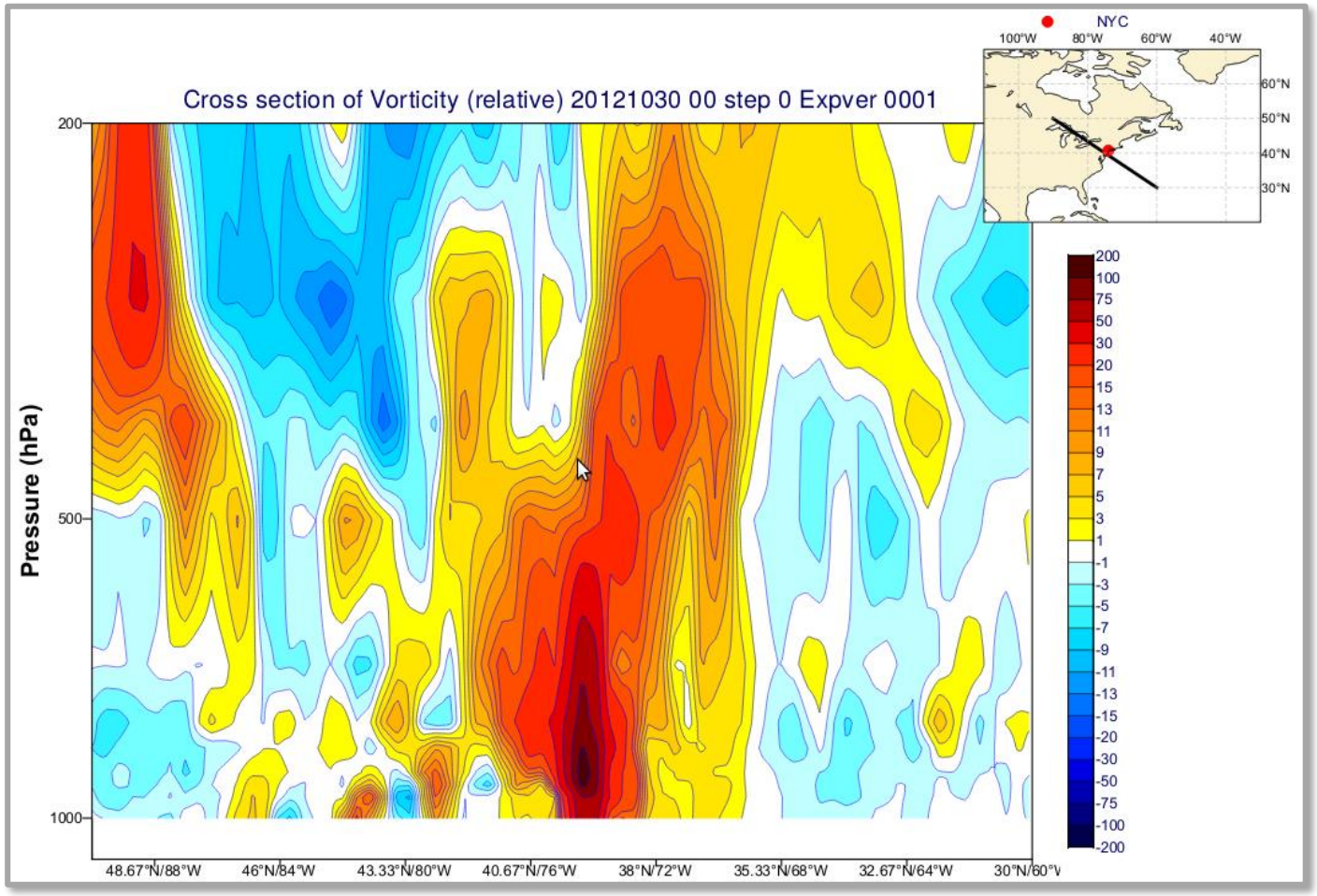

Pressure (hPa)
1990
1991
1992
1993
1994


0010hPa vertical velocity (0.01hPa) Trop_Ocean
ERA-40
NRA2
ERA-Int
1962
1967
1972
1977
1982
1987
1992
1997
2002
2007
2012

Visualisation - Layout

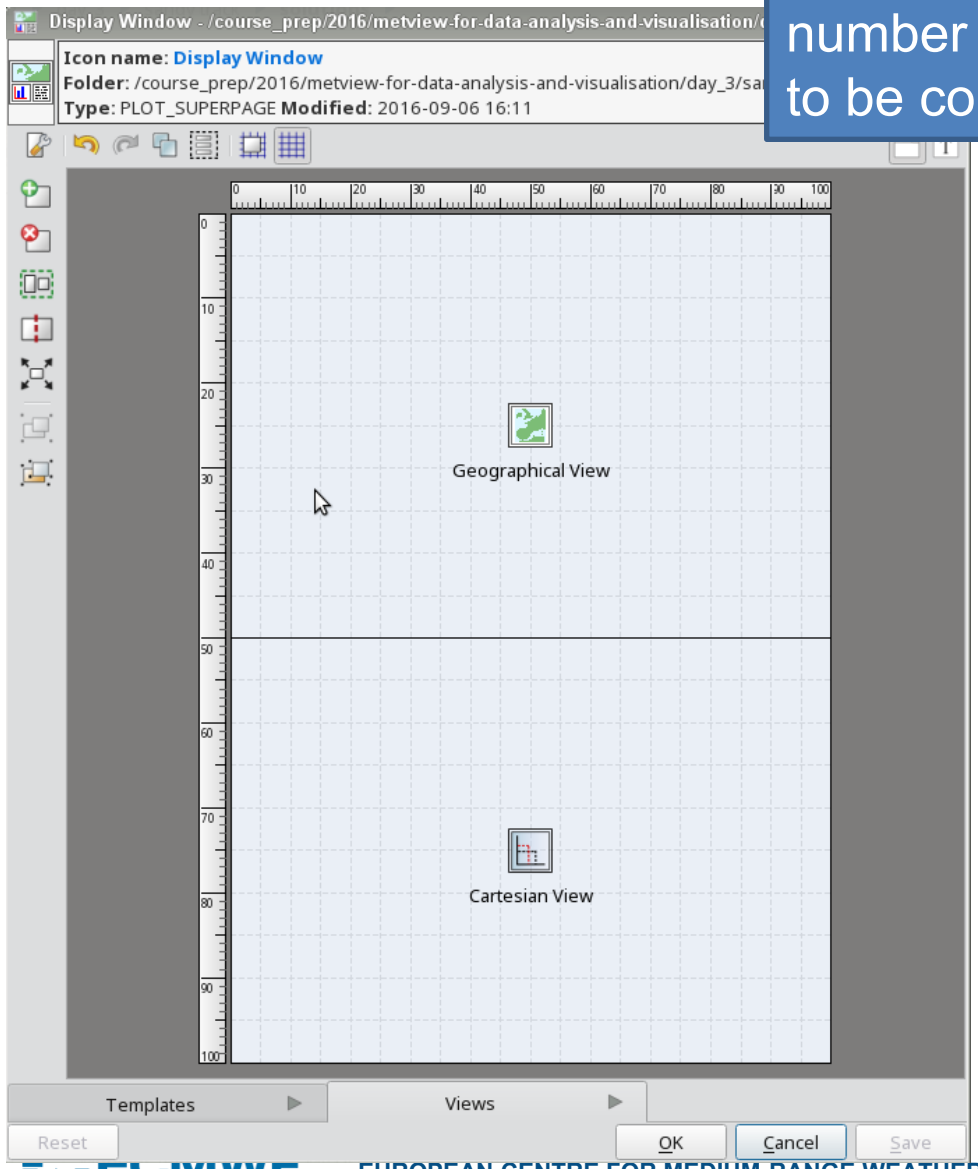
Layout editor allows any number of different views to be combined

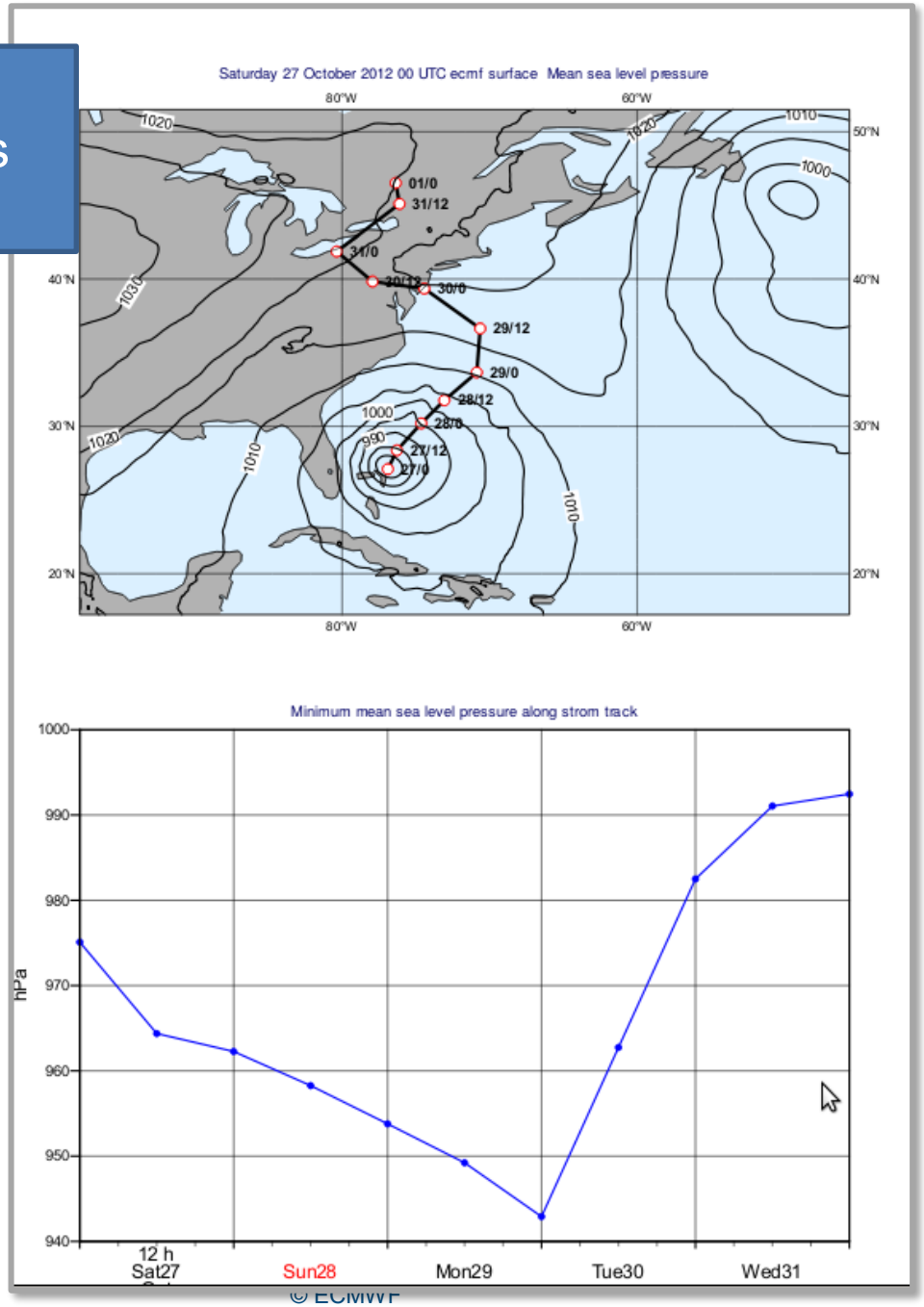




Visualisation - Layout

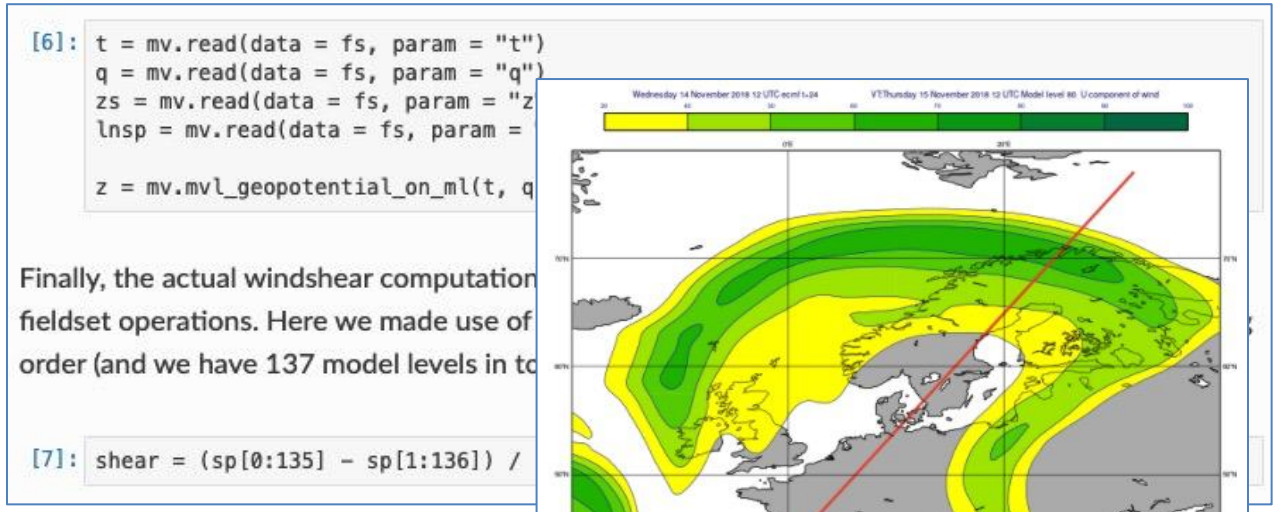
Layout editor allows any number of different views to be combined

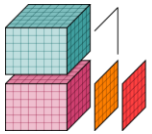




Metview's Python interface

- Gives access to Metview's data retrieval, processing and visualisation capabilities in Python
- GRIB data is loaded as a *Fieldset*
- Can also return data as numpy, pandas and xarray
- Works with the user interface or standalone (UI can even generate Python code for you)
- New features include an interactive plotting widget and data overview functions
- We will use some new helper functions designed to give one-line access to useful plot layouts and styles ; also *datasets* – combination of data and pre-prepared styling

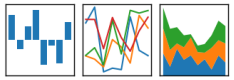


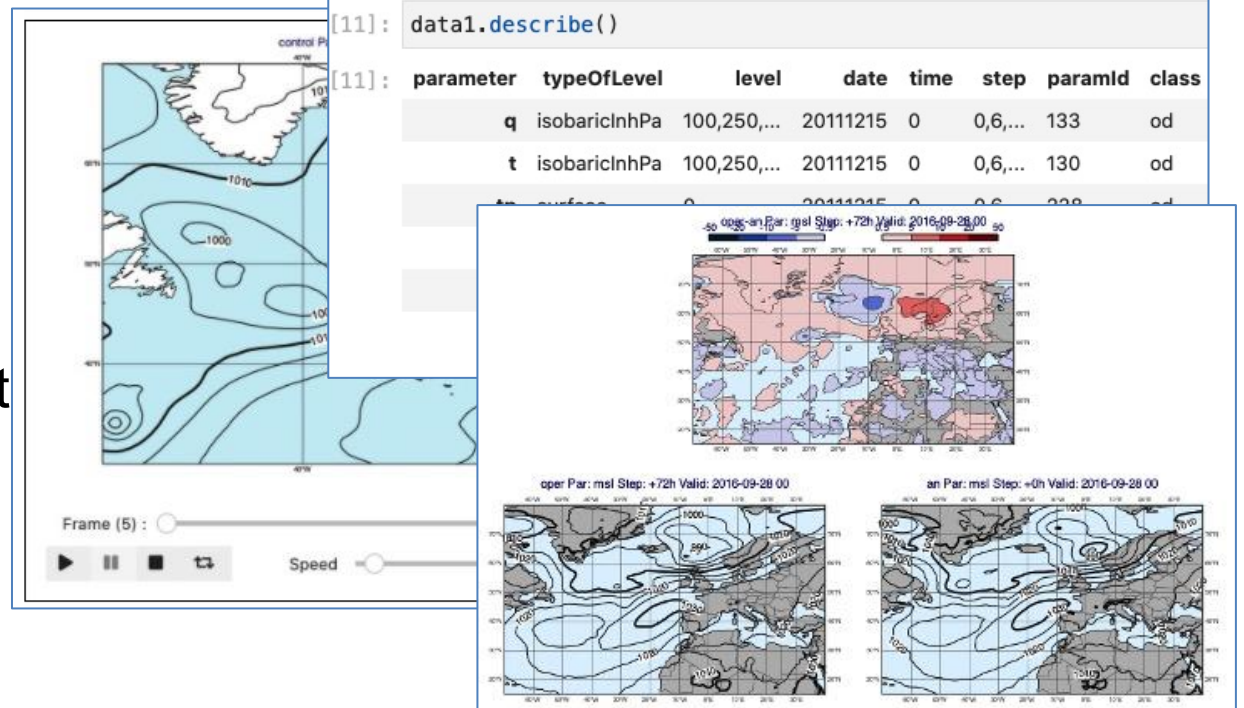


xarray

pandas

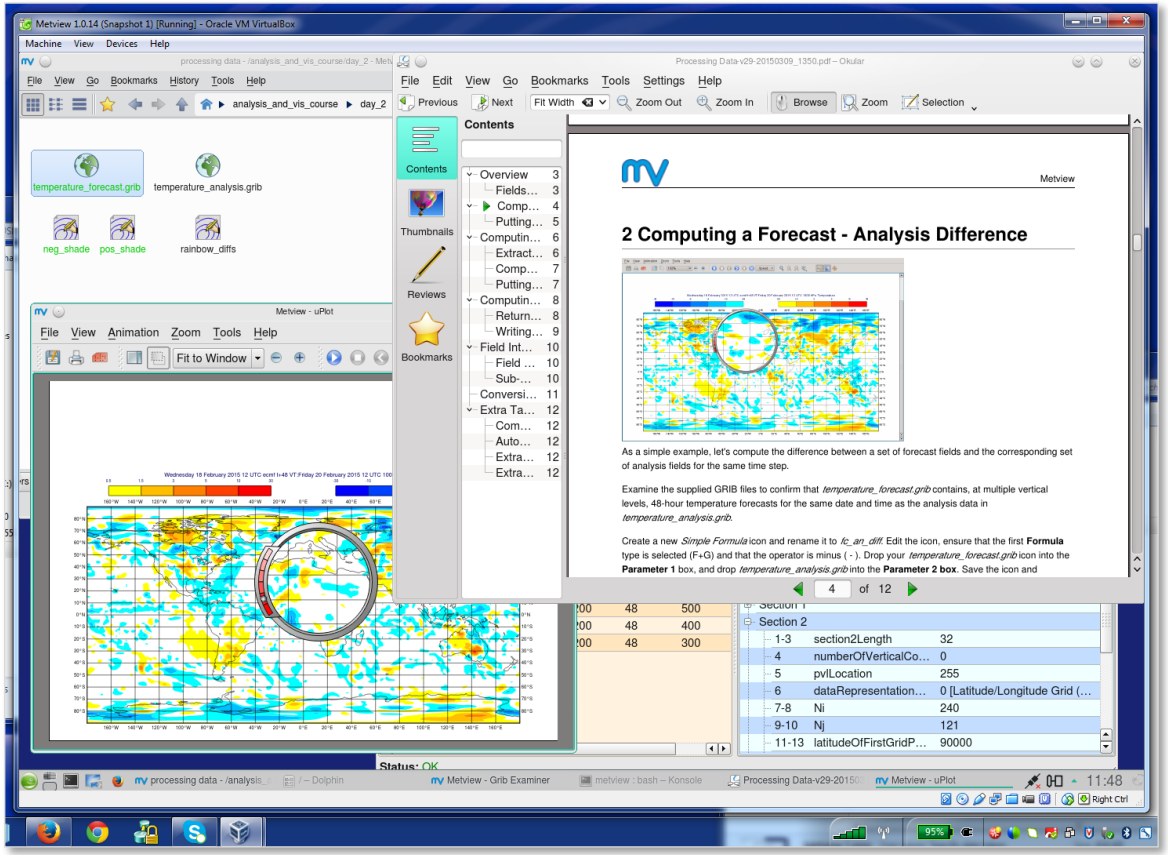
$y_{it} = \beta' x_{it} + \mu_i + \epsilon_{it}$





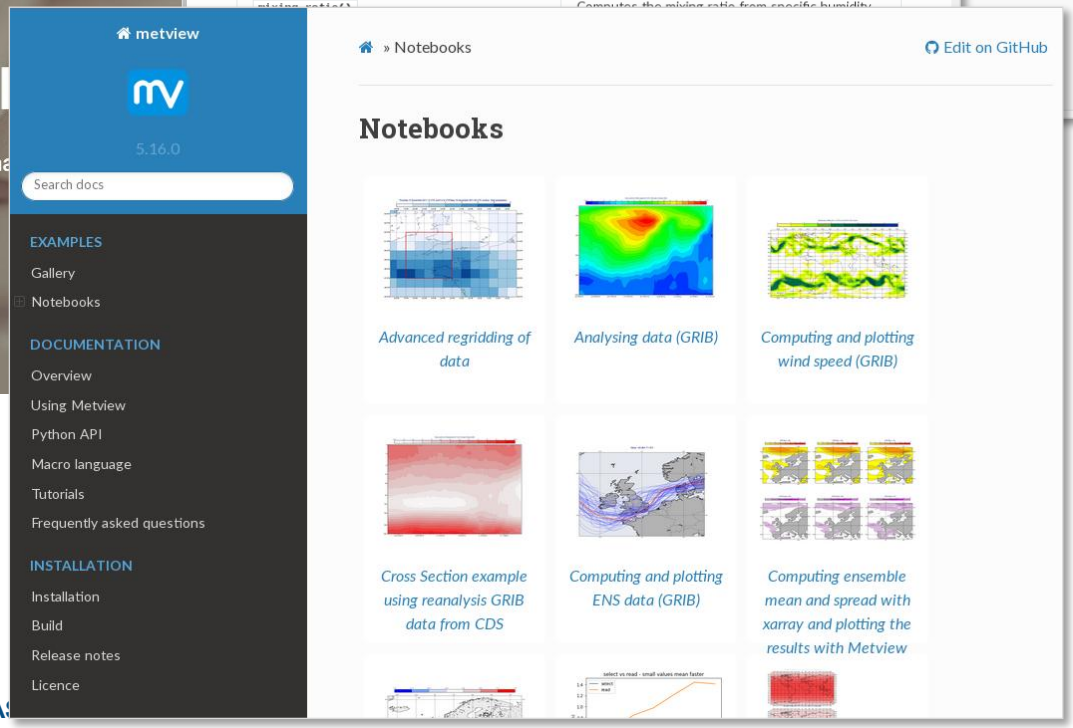
Metview availability

- Available for Linux and macOS
- Inside ECMWF
  - `module load ecmwf-toolbox ; metview`
- Conda
  - `conda install metview -c conda-forge`
  - `conda install metview-batch -c conda-forge`
  - `conda install metview-python -c conda-forge`
- Homebrew
  - `brew install metview`
- Build from source
- The Metview Python interface can be installed separately if not in conda:
  - `pip install metview`



For more information…

- Ask for help:
  - https://www.ecmwf.int/en/support
- Visit our web pages:
  - https://metview.readthedocs.io/en/latest/index.html



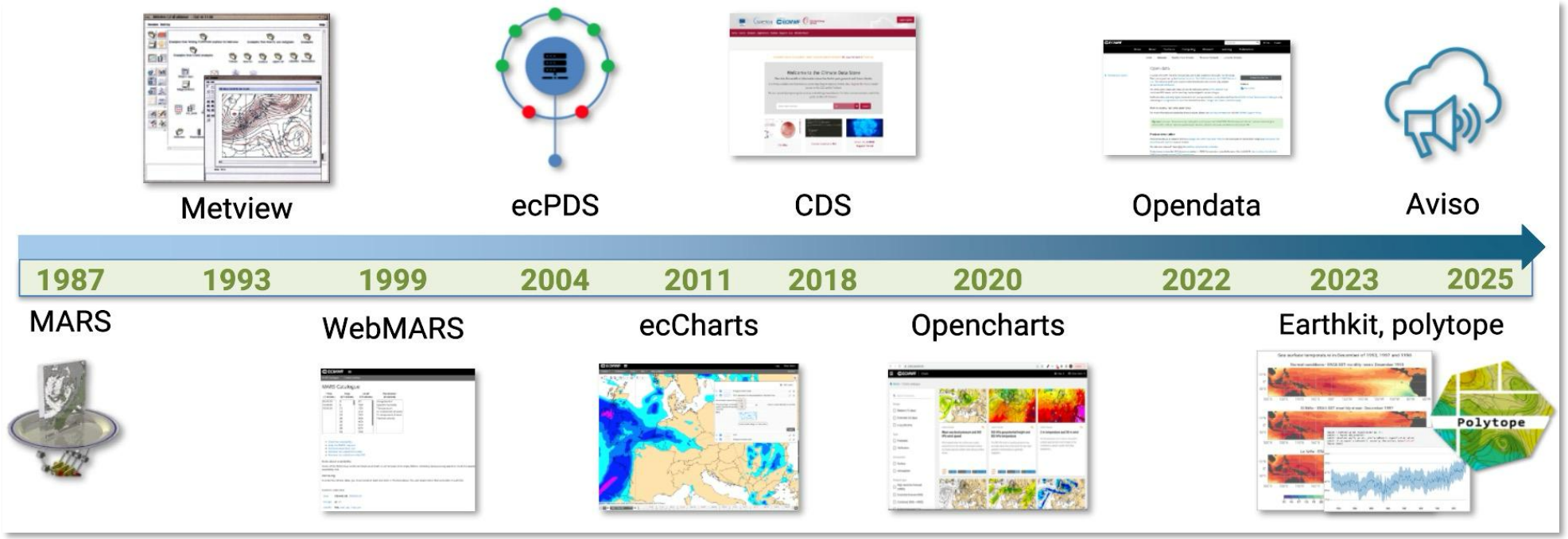
Questions?

Practical session

Inside Jupyterlab browser:
home/Metview_hands_on/Metview_Introduction.ipynb

Preview of what's coming

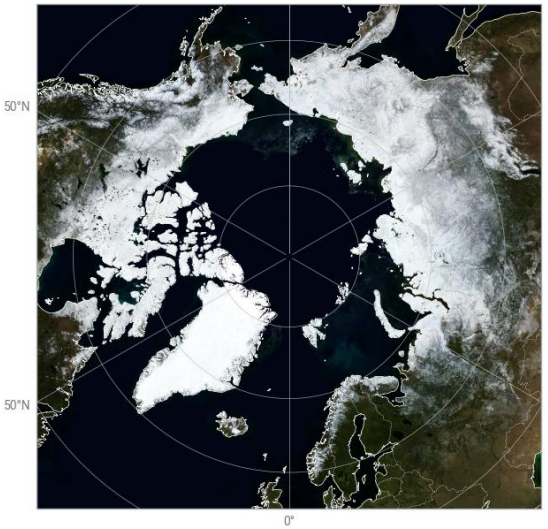
- Metview was one of the first pieces of software developed at ECMWF to support its NWP models
- More recent developments have focused on Open Development, greater componentisation, better use of 3rd-party libraries, performance on modern hardware (e.g. GPUs, avoid disk access when possible)



Preview of what's coming - Earthkit

- Earthkit
  - New set of high-level scalable, interoperable, focused Python components
  - Suitable for use by our operational services and directly by researchers / analysts
  - Designed with Machine Learning / GPU / In-memory computations as first-class citizens
  - Designed with diskless data access in mind
  - Reduce boilerplate code
  - *Components are in different stages of maturity, but some are already well-tested and in operational use at ECMWF*

- Open Development
  - Highly collaborative both inside and outside ECMWF
  - All code is on GitHub, fully embracing Open Development

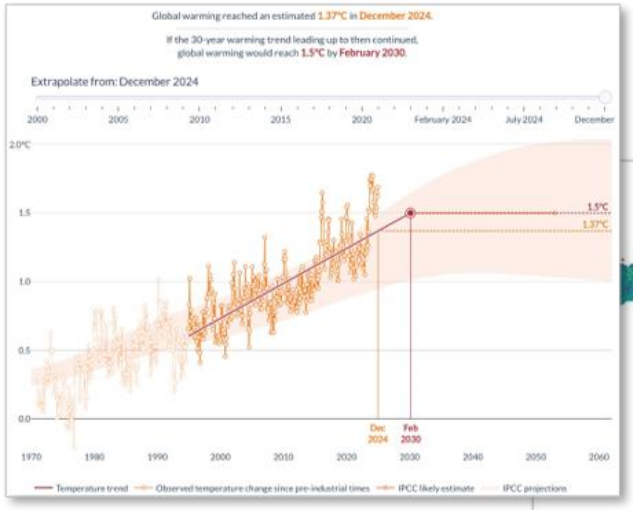


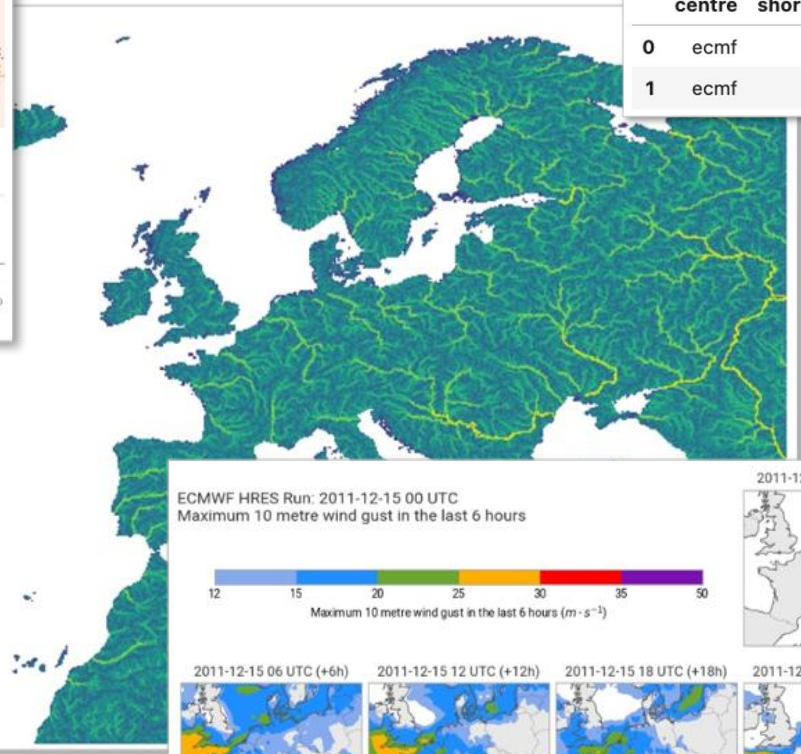
Earthkit and its Python components

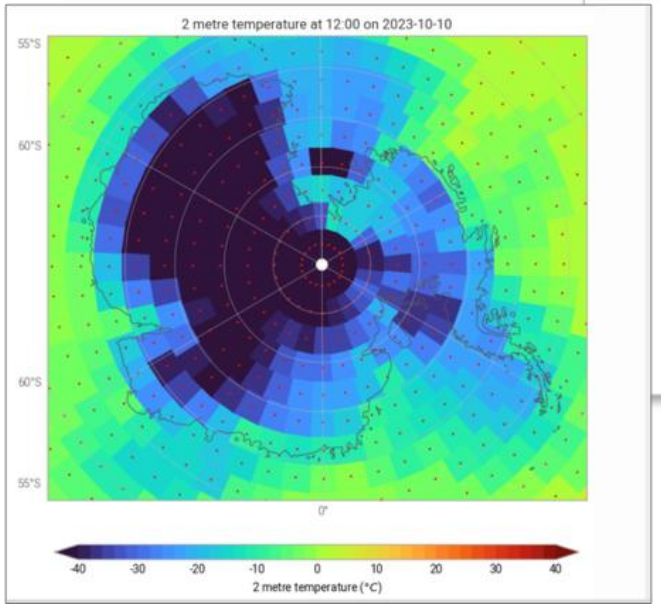
Earthkit examples

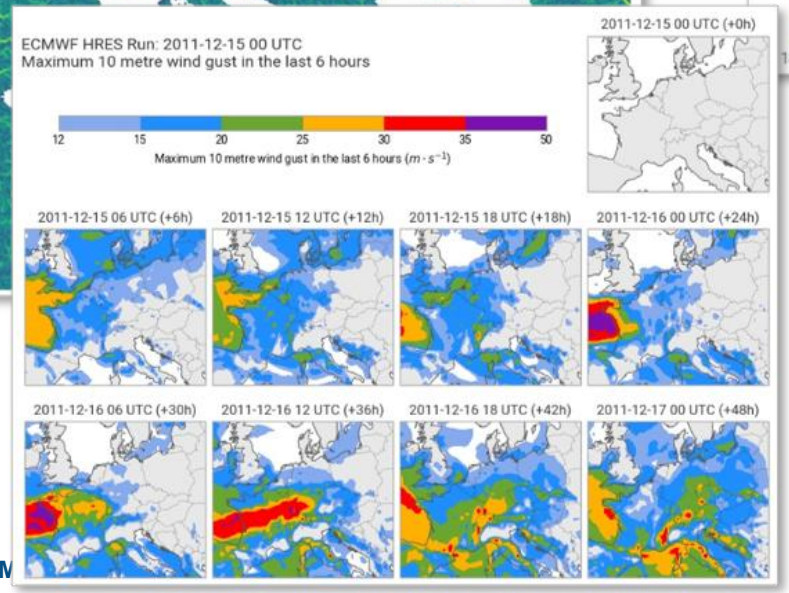
```
import earthkit.data

req = {"endpoint": "object-store.os-api.cci1.ecmwf.int",
       "bucket": "earthkit-test-data-public",
       "objects": "step6.grib",
   }

ds = earthkit.data.from_source("s3", req, stream=True, read_all=True, anon=True)

ds.ls()
```

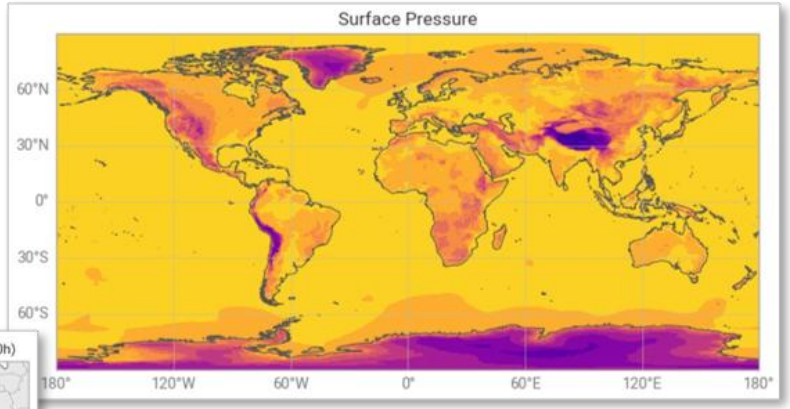
	centre	shortName	typeOfLevel	level	dataDate	dataTime	stepRange	dataType	number	gridType
0	ecmf	2t	surface	0	20250106	1200	6	fc	0	regular_ll
1	ecmf	10fg6	surface	0	20250106	1200	0-6	fc	0	regular_ll

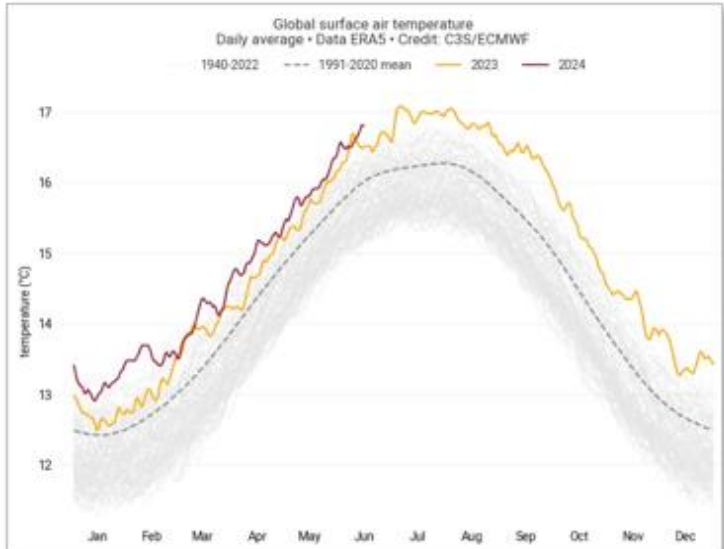












ECMWF EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR MEDIUM