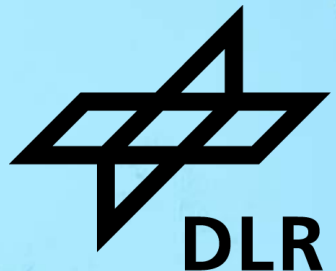


# PREPARING THE CFD SOFTWARE CODA FOR EXTREME SCALE

**Michael Wagner**, German Aerospace Center (DLR), Institute of Software Methods for Product Virtualization

HiPEAC 2025, Tackling software exascale challenges: the Centres of Excellence in High Performance Computing perspective, Jan 22<sup>nd</sup> 2025



# Background and Motivation

Numerical Simulation – Key Enabler for Future Aircraft Design



## Future aircraft

- Goals: drastic reduction CO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub> and noise emissions
- Step changes in aircraft technology and new designs

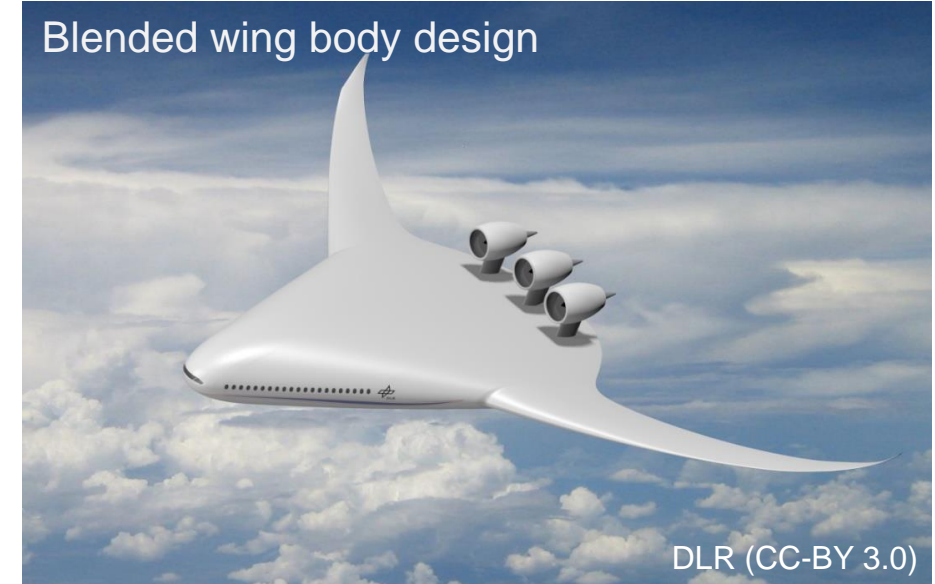
## High-fidelity CFD methods indispensable

- Flight characteristics dominated by non-linear effects
- Reliable insight to new aircraft technologies
- High-fidelity CFD simulation of aircraft aerodynamics

## Efficient linear system solving important

- CFD requires solving of large linear equation systems
- Linear systems solving makes up majority of time

**Further improvement of simulation capabilities, computational efficiency and scalability necessary.**



# CODA Software Environment



## CODA CFD Software

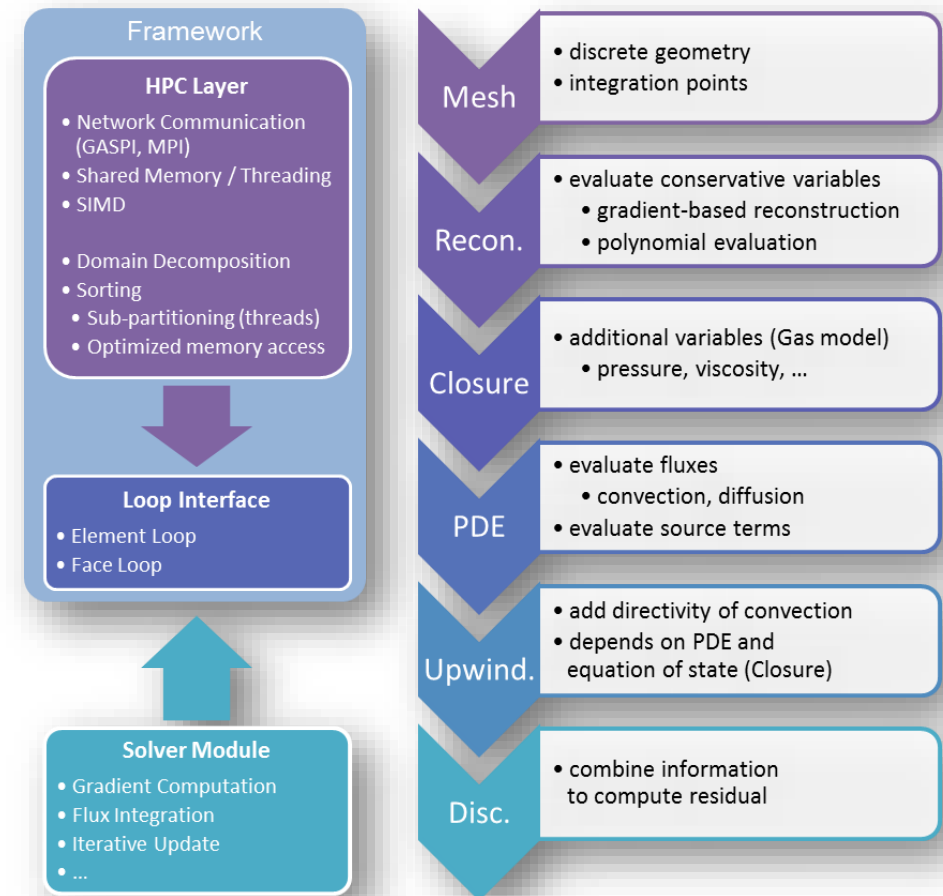
- Collaboration of ONERA, DLR and Airbus\*
- 2nd order Finite Volume method and higher-order DG for unstructured grids and compressible flows
- Hybrid parallelization (MPI/GASPI + OpenMP/threads) with overlap of communication & computation
- Seamless integration into multi-disciplinary simulations

## FlowSimulator

- Provides plug-ins for all steps of a full aircraft simulation
- FSMesh class for unified data exchange among plug-ins

## Splass: Sparse Linear Systems Solver

- Linear systems solving for implicit methods
- Full HPC support: MPI/GASPI, Threads, SIMD, GPUs



\*CODA is the computational fluid dynamics (CFD) software being developed as part of a collaboration between the French Aerospace Lab ONERA, the German Aerospace Center (DLR), Airbus, and their European research partners. CODA is jointly owned by ONERA, DLR and Airbus.

# EXCELLERAT (P2 2023 – 2026)

The European Centre of Excellence for Engineering Applications (P1 2019 – 2022)



## Preparing European engineering for exascale computing

- 15 partners
- 7 use cases: Alya, AVBP, CODA, m-AIA, Neko, Flew, OpenFoam
- Aerospace & Energy; CFD & Combustion

## Cooperation with European engineering and HPC community

- Expertise from other leading-edge engineering codes with similar challenges and problems
- Access to the largest HPC systems in Europe
- Early access and experiences with new hardware and trends



# EXCELLERAT Project Targets

## Evaluate and demonstrate CODA's and FlowSim's readiness for exascale computing

- Continuous evaluation (and analysis) of CODA/FlowSimulator scalability improvements
- Large scale demonstrator: large mesh + large system
- Evaluation of new systems and emerging technologies

## Use case: external aircraft aerodynamics

- Airflow for steady forward flight at subsonic speed
- Reynolds-averaged Navier-Stokes equations (RANS) with Spalart-Allmaras turbulence model (SA-neg)



# EXCELLERAT Use Case and Inputs

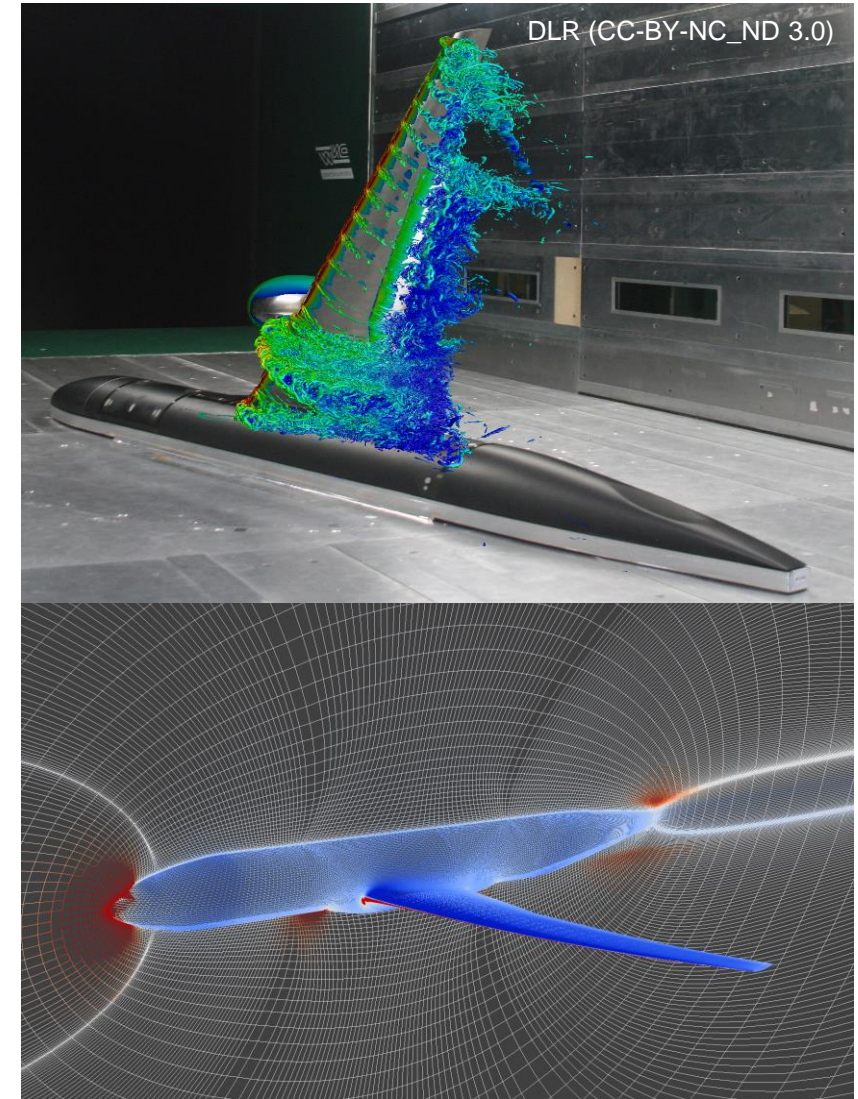
## Strong and weak scaling use case

- NASA Common Research Model CRM (wing-body configuration)
- Mesh set with 3, 10, **24**, 81 and 192 million elements
- Practical size to see large scaling effects at smaller scales\*
- Public, widely used and well-studied (also experimentally)

## Capability demonstrator

- Demonstrate capabilities for big meshes on big systems
- Mesh with about 1 – 5 billion elements
- Upcoming European (pre-)exascale systems

\* within the range of available resources at DLR, i.e. up to 32/64k cores



# Preparing for Extreme Scale (Exascale)

## Three main challenges

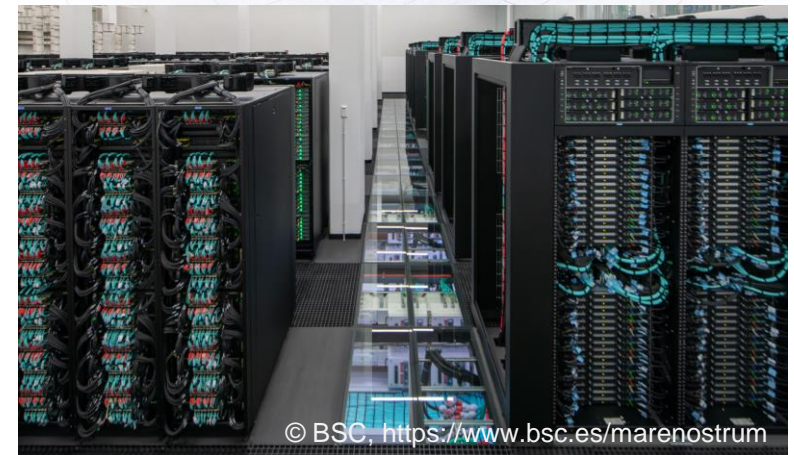
- Efficiency
  - Scale as efficiently as possible on current systems
    - Estimate performance for large systems
- Scalability
  - Support large meshes in FlowSimulator framework
  - Support large core counts in the entire workflow
    - Overcome any hard scalability limits
- Heterogeneity
  - Readiness for a variety of different systems (CPU, GPU, ...)
    - Support offloading to Nvidia and AMD GPUs



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# The CARA and CARO HPC Systems at DLR



## CARA (AMD Naples architecture):

- 2168 nodes with 128 GB DDR4 (2666 MHz)
- 2x AMD Epyc 7601 (32 cores; 2,2 GHz) per node
- 145.920 cores delivering 1.7 TFLOP/s
- Infiniband HDR network

## CARO (AMD Rome architecture)

- 1354 nodes with 256 GB DDR4 (3200 MHz) RAM
- 2x AMD Epyc 7702 (64 cores; 2,0 GHz) per node
- 174592 cores delivering 3.5 TFLOP/s
- Infiniband HDR network



# The CARA and CARO HPC Systems – Comparison



## Number of cores:

- CARO (AMD Epyc 7702) has 2x cores (128 vs. 64 per node)

## Cache:

- CARO has 4x last-level cache (256 MiB vs 64 MiB), i.e. twice as much per core.
- 16 vs. 8 NUMA domains
- 3 NUMA distances (on die, on socket, 2<sup>nd</sup> socket)
- 4 cores per die share L3

## Memory access:

- 8 memory channels and memory controllers
- Memory controllers: 3200MHz (CARO) vs. 2666MHz (CARA)
- CARO has 1.2x memory bandwidth (191 GiB/s vs. 159 GiB/s) for twice the number of cores.

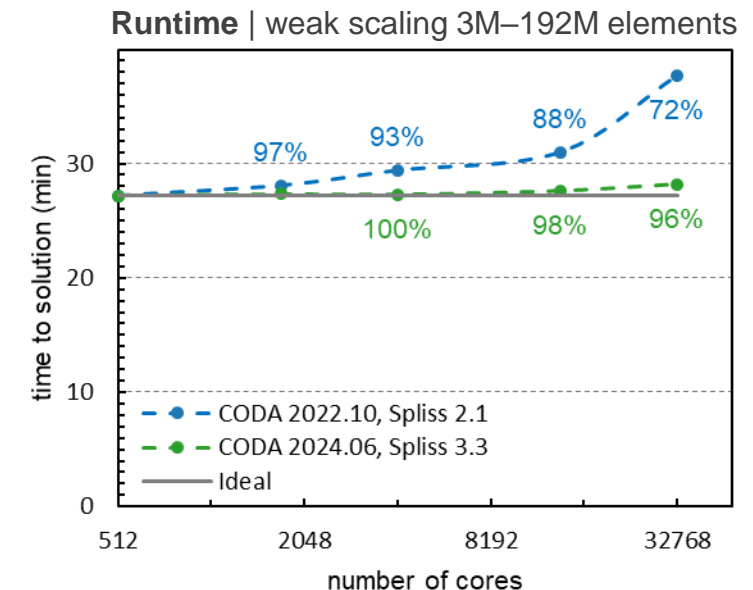
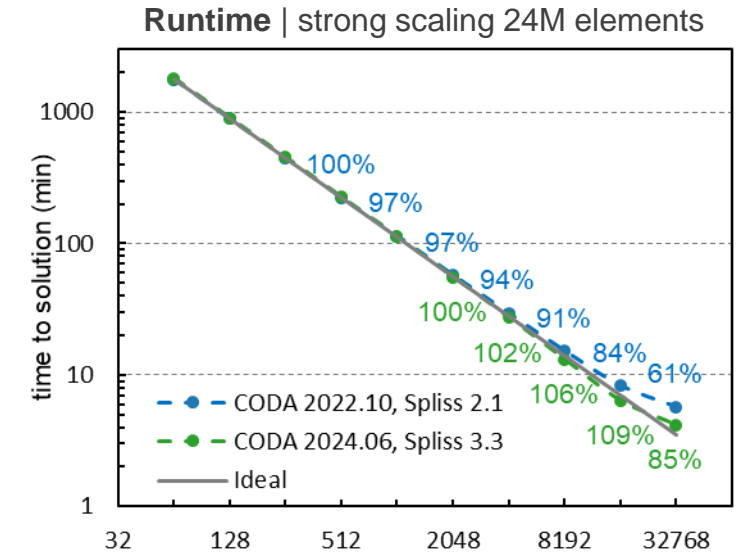


# Efficiency: Scalability on Current Systems (CARA)



## Scalability assessment on DLR's production system CARA

- Strong scaling (CRM, fixed problem size, 24M elements):
  - Scaling from 1 – 512 nodes (largest available partition)
  - Reduce runtime from 1.2 days to 4.2 minutes
  - Small mesh: just 730 elements/core @ 32,768 cores**
  - Scaling 64 – **32,768 cores: 85% strong scaling efficiency**
  - Small super-linear speedup
- Weak scaling (CRM, fixed workload per core, 3M – 192M elements):
  - Scaling 512 – 32,768 cores: 96% weak scaling efficiency



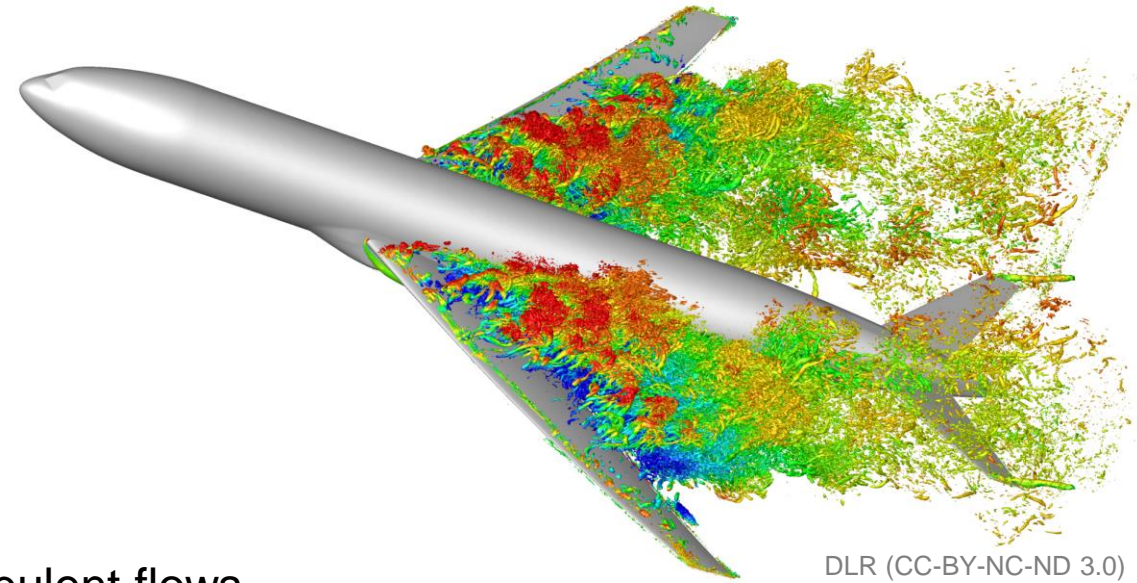
# Efficiency: Extrapolation

## Extrapolation (same architecture but more cores)

- ~55% efficiency at 5M cores (~0.1 Exa-FLOP)
- Requires a 13B elements mesh
- Not required for industrial RANS simulations (only marginally better resolution)

## Applications for extreme scale

- Scale-resolving simulations (hybrid RANS+LES) for turbulent flows  
→ require much finer meshes
- Unsteady RANS simulations (URANS)
- Parameter exploration: run thousands of simulations in parallel to optimize for different input parameters

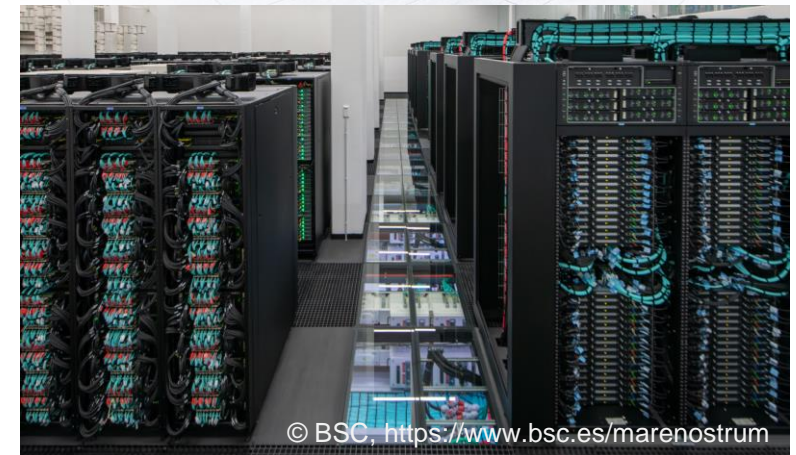


DLR (CC-BY-NC-ND 3.0)

# Preparing for Extreme Scale (Exascale)

## Three main challenges

- Efficiency
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# Scalability of the Entire Workflow (FlowSimulator)

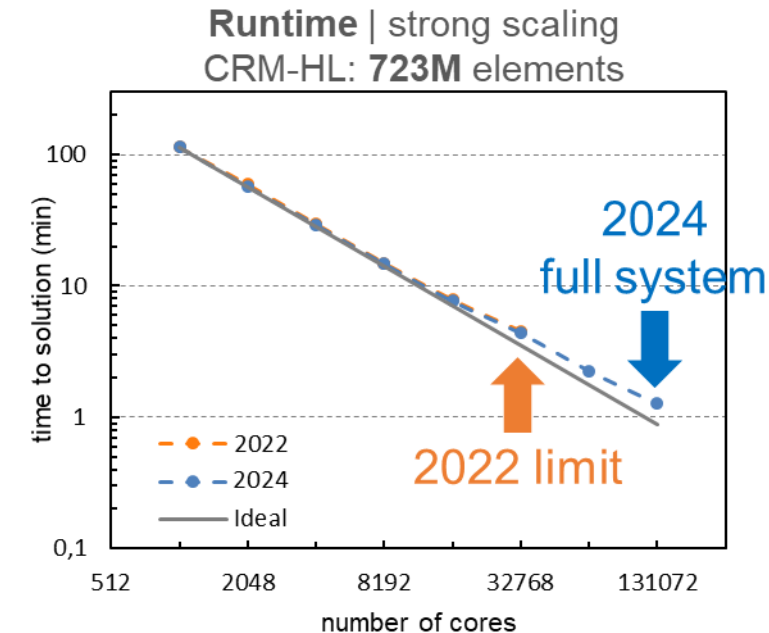


## Scalability assessment on DLR's production system CARO

- The entire workflow needs to ...
  - support large meshes (>1B elements)
  - support large core counts (>1M cores)

## Achievements (so far)

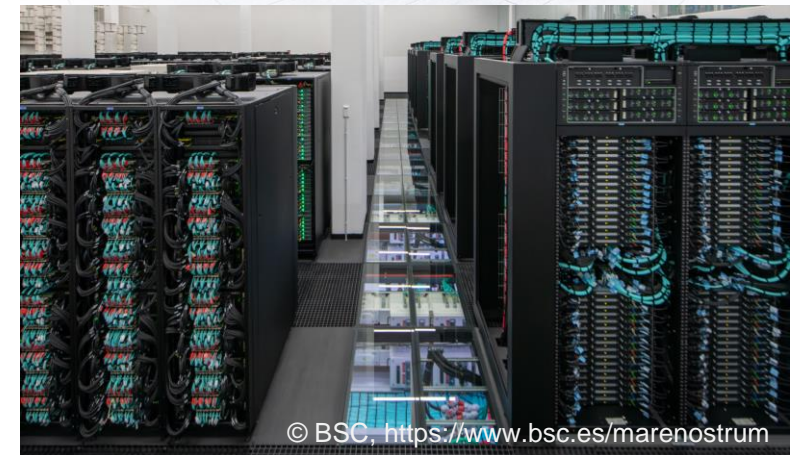
- Several improvements in FlowSimulator to scale to full system
- Improved hierarchical graph partitioning
- Support for meshes >1 billion elements tested
- Efficient scaling to 131,072 cores (full system CARO@DLR)



# Preparing for Extreme Scale (Exascale)

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# Heterogeneity: Support for Nvidia GPUs via Spliss



## System – Jewels Booster

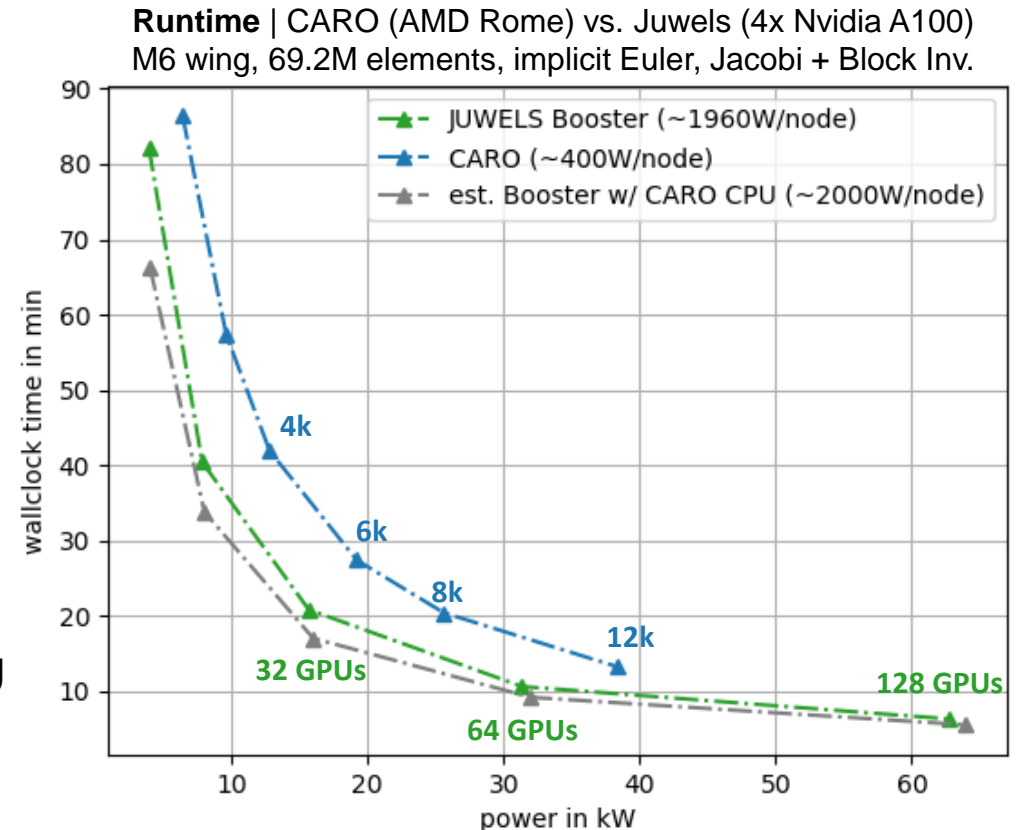
- AMD Epyc 7401 (2x 24 cores) per node
- 4x Nvidia Tesla A100 per node

## System – CARO

- Nodes with 128 cores (AMD Rome, 2x CARA)
- 8 memory channels @3.2GHz (1.2x CARA)

## Observations

- Node-wise comparison (“unfair”): 8-9x speedup
- Energy-wise comparison (“fair”): 1.6-1.9 speedup
- Performance limited by non-linear part on slow CPU
- Hypothetical Jewels Booster node with CARO CPU: 1.8-2.3 speedup (energy-wise)

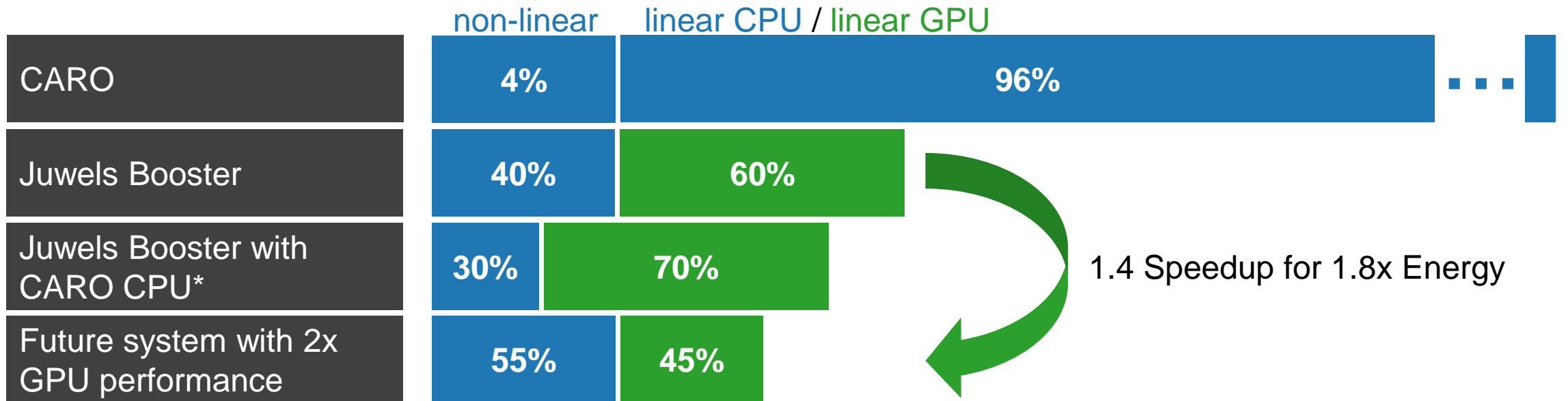


J. Mohnke and M. Wagner: A Look at Performance and Scalability of the GPU Accelerated Sparse Linear System Solver Spliss. In: Euro-Par 2023: Parallel Processing. DOI 10.1007/978-3-031-39698-4\_43



# Heterogeneity: Linear vs. Non-linear Part

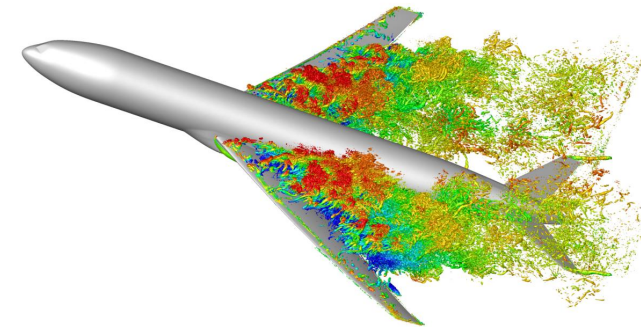
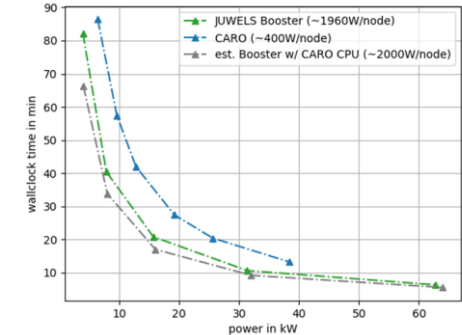
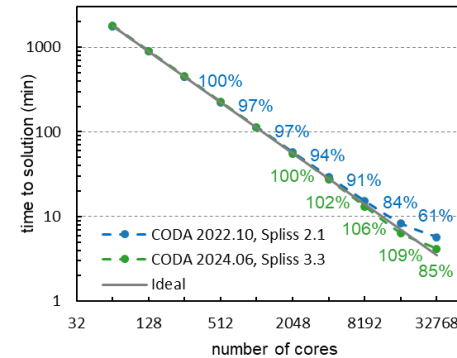
- For implicit methods, linear equation systems are solved via Spliss on GPUs
- Thus, only the linear part benefits from GPUs via Spliss
- For future system with more or more powerful GPUs the non-linear part may become bottleneck
- Port relevant parts of CODA to GPUs



\* i.e. CARA GPU partition

# Summary

- Is CODA ready for extreme scale?
- Efficiency
  - Efficient scaling on current systems (96% full system)
- Scalability
  - Tested with meshes >1B elements
  - Tested on full DLR system (131.072 cores)
- Heterogeneity
  - Support for Nvidia GPUs, AMD (ongoing)



## Acknowledgments

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