

Wave-flow coupling of SWAN with an unstructured model

Mike Herzfeld and Cagil Kirezci
June 2025



Wave coupling is not new.....

- Waves can influence ocean circulation due to:
 - Radiation stress, Stokes vortex and Coriolis (Hasselmann, 1971, Leibovich, 1980)
 - Enhanced bottom friction (Madsen, 1994)
 - Enhanced vertical mixing (Monismith, 2008)
 - Nearshore processes
- Coupling with flow is achieved by averaging waves over long time-scales \Leftrightarrow Wave Effect on Currents (WEC)
- Well summarized by:
 - Uchiyama et. al., (2010)
 - Kumar et., al., (2012)

Third generation spectral wave models in use

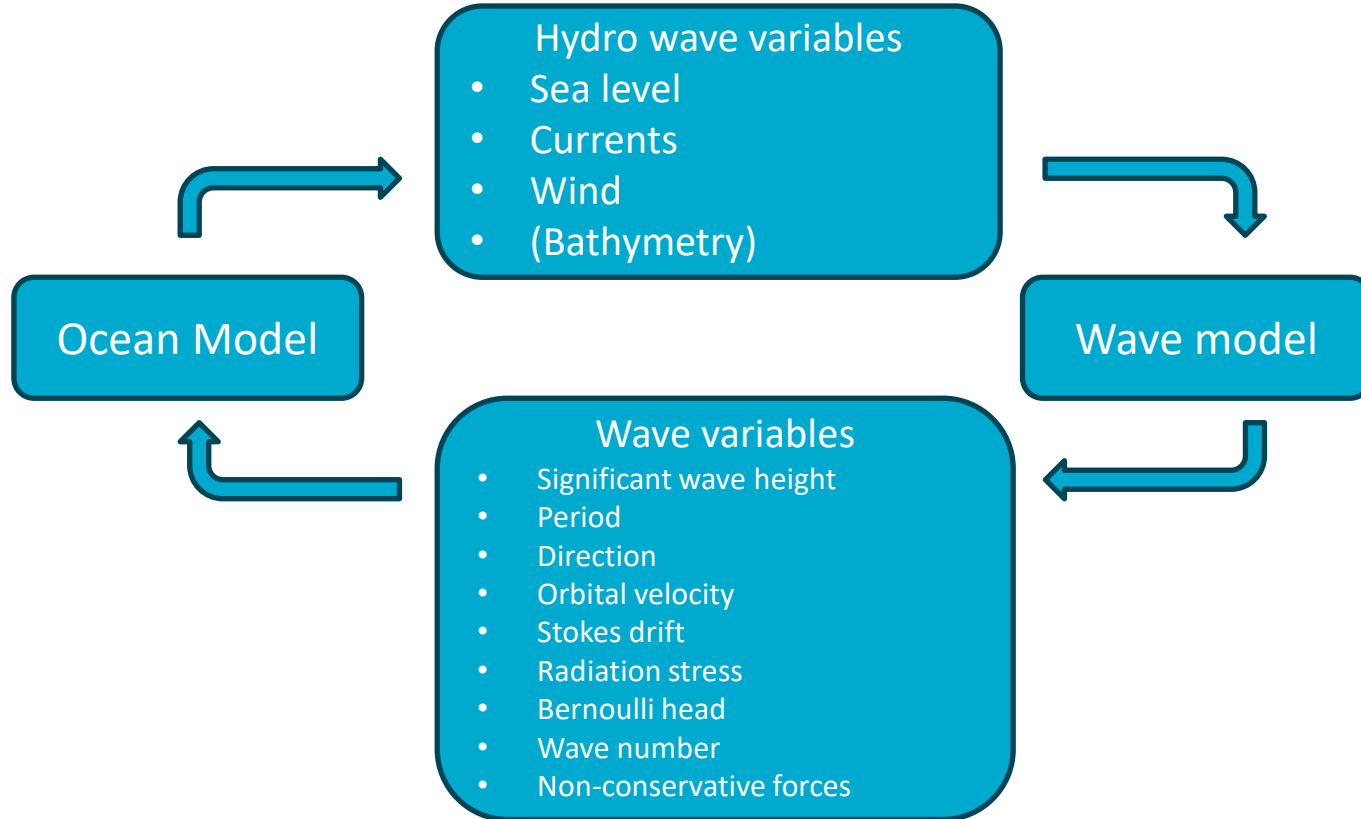
- Deliver wave quantities;
 - Wave amplitude (significant wave height), period, direction, wavenumber
 - Wave orbital velocity
 - Stokes drift
 - Radiation stress
 - Bernoulli head*
 - Non-conservative forces (breaking, white-capping)
- Common wave models;
 - SWAN (Simulating Waves Nearshore, Booij, 1999)
 - WWIII (Wave Watch III, Tolman, 1997)
 - WAM (Wave Ocean Model, WAMDIG, 1998)
 - WWM-II (Wind Wave Model, Roland, 2009)

* Bernoulli head is an adjustment to the pressure in accommodating incompressibility

Previously coupled to ocean models

- Structured
 - ROMS-SWAN (COAWST model, Uchiyama, Kumar)
 - COHERENS-SWAN (Liang et. al., 2007)
 - POM-WWIII (Moon, 2005)
 - POM-WAM (Xie et. al., 2001)
- Unstructured
 - ADCIRC-SWAN (Dietrich et. al., 2012)
 - SELFE-WWM (Roland et. al., 2012)
 - Schism-WWM (Schloen et. al., 2017)

Wave coupling



WEC Equations (see Uchiyama, Kumar)

Momentum

$$\frac{\partial \mathbf{u}}{\partial t} + (\mathbf{u} \cdot \nabla_{\perp}) \mathbf{u} + w \frac{\partial \mathbf{u}}{\partial z} + f \hat{\mathbf{z}} \times \mathbf{u} + \nabla_{\perp} \phi - \mathbf{F} = -\nabla_{\perp} \mathcal{K} + \mathbf{J} + \mathbf{F}^w$$

Dynamic pressure

Bernoulli Head

Non-wave, non-conservative force

RHS = WEC terms

Stokes vortex / Coriolis

$$\mathbf{J} = -\hat{\mathbf{z}} \times \mathbf{u}^{St} ((\hat{\mathbf{z}} \cdot \nabla_{\perp} \times \mathbf{u}) + f) - w^{St} \frac{\partial \mathbf{u}}{\partial z}$$

Non-conservative WEC

$$\mathbf{F}^w = \mathbf{B}^{bf} - \mathbf{B}^{sf} + \mathbf{B}^{wcap} + \mathbf{B}^b + \mathbf{B}^r$$

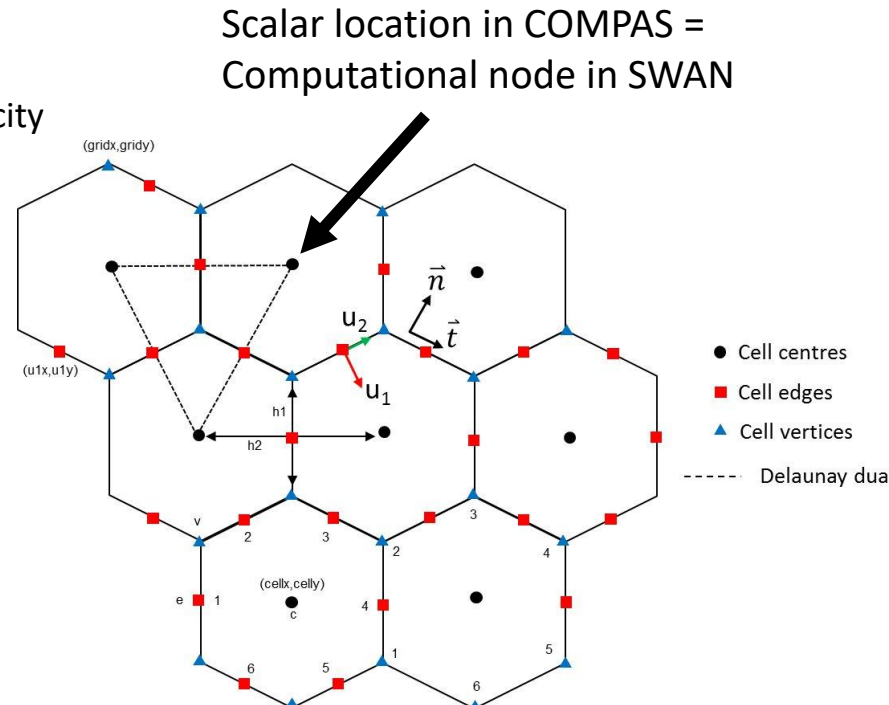
Bottom Surface White- Wave Wave
dissipation streaming capping breaking roller

Plus

- Continuity equation
- Tracer equation
- Depth averaged eqⁿ
- Boundary conditions

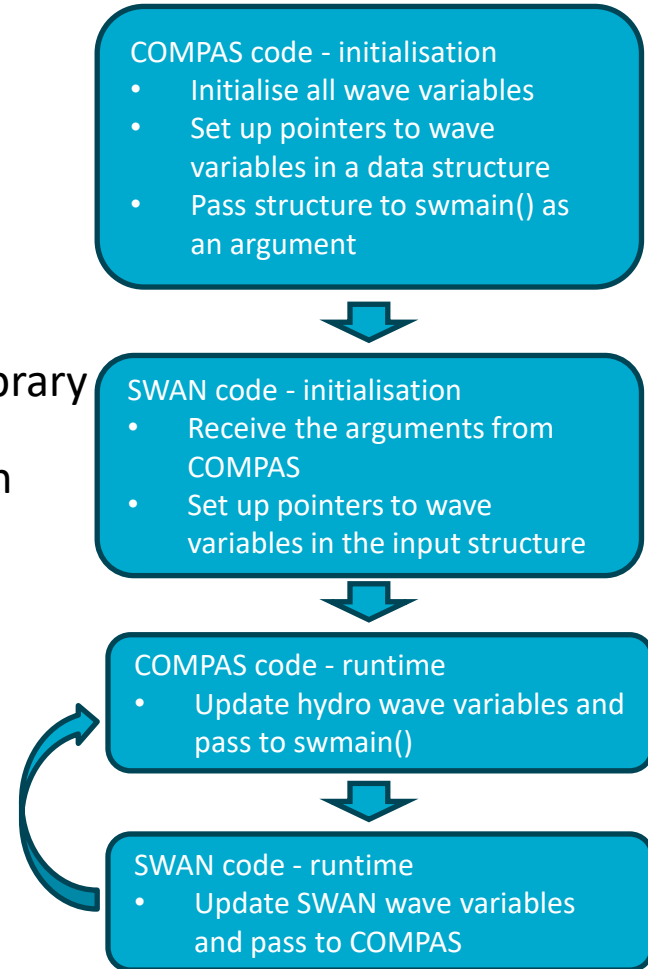
Unstructured model – COMPAS

- Ocean model is COMPAS (Coastal Ocean Marine Prediction Across Scales)
- Unstructured model using TRiSK numerics (e.g., as used in MPAS)
- Operates on a C-grid with a Voronoi tessellation
 - Hexagons represent the perfect Voronoi tessellation
 - Cell centres for tracers
 - Normal velocity at edges, reconstructed tangential velocity
 - No spurious modes on the C-grid
- Dual is a Delaunay triangulation
- Wave Model SWAN
 - Implicit
 - Can operate on unstructured meshes (triangulation)
 - Computational nodes are triangle vertices
- No remapping / interpolation required



Code Coupling

- SWAN is written in Fortran F95
- COMPAS is written in C
- Coupling achieved via C Interoperability Protocols (<https://gcc.gnu.org/onlinedocs/gfortran/Interoperability-with-C.html>)
- COMPAS allocates and manages wave coupling variables
- Main SWAN (swmain) routine is isolated as a stand-alone library function
- Wave coupling variables are passed to swmain() as function arguments
- Interoperability Protocols pass all this data within one data structure
- SWAN accesses the wave variable memory via pointers
- No direct data transfer results in very efficient coupling



Stokes Coriolis / vortex

- ROMS uses the flux form (Uchiyama, Kumar) : $\frac{\partial \mathbf{u}}{\partial t} + (\mathbf{u} \cdot \nabla_{\perp}) \mathbf{u} = \mathbf{J}$
 - Uchiyama adds Stokes drift added to Eulerian velocity ($\mathbf{u}^{\ell} = \mathbf{u} + \mathbf{u}^{St}$) to give:

$$\frac{\partial \mathbf{u}}{\partial t} + \nabla_{\perp} \cdot (\mathbf{u}^{\ell} \mathbf{u}) = \mathbf{u}^{St} \nabla_{\perp} \cdot \mathbf{u}$$

- Kumar seems to evaluate Stokes vortex explicitly on the RHS
- COMPAS uses vector invariant form of momentum advection

Vector invariant momentum $\frac{\partial \mathbf{u}}{\partial t} + \underbrace{((\hat{\mathbf{z}} \cdot \nabla_{\perp} \times \mathbf{u}) + f)}_{\text{Relative vorticity}} \times \underbrace{(\hat{\mathbf{z}} \times \mathbf{u})}_{\text{Tangential velocity}} + \nabla_{\perp} K$

↑ Planetary vorticity
 ↑ Kinetic energy

Stokes vortex / Coriolis $\mathbf{J} = ((\hat{\mathbf{z}} \cdot \nabla_{\perp} \times \mathbf{u}) + f) \times (\hat{\mathbf{z}} \times \mathbf{u}^{St}) - w^{St} \frac{\partial \mathbf{u}}{\partial z}$

Momentum + Stokes vortex / Coriolis $\frac{\partial \mathbf{u}}{\partial t} + ((\hat{\mathbf{z}} \cdot \nabla_{\perp} \times \mathbf{u}) + f) \times (\hat{\mathbf{z}} \times (\mathbf{u} + \mathbf{u}^{St})) + \nabla_{\perp} K = 0$

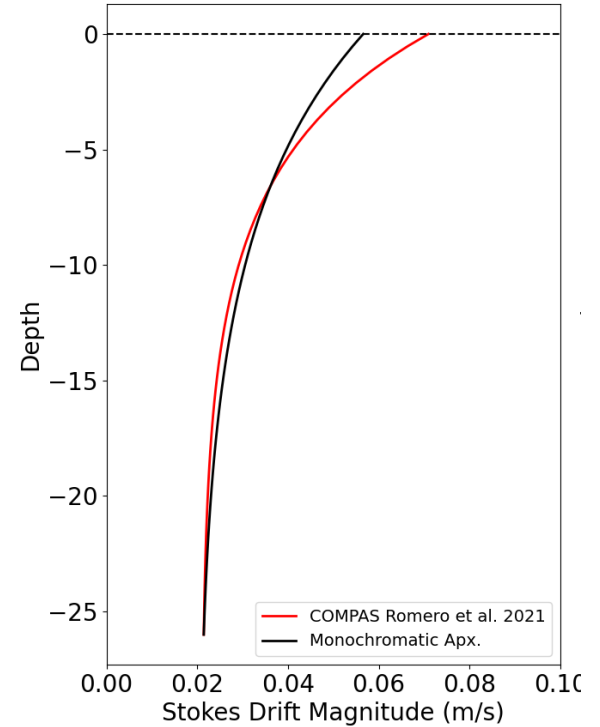


Stokes drift

- COAWST computes Stokes drift hydro-side using mean and peak wave variables
- COMPAS-SWAN compute 3D Stokes drift SWAN-side using the full spectrum
 - Composite Iterative Approach based on Romero et. al., (2021) following Breivik et. al., (2014)

Romero, L., Hypolite, D., & McWilliams, J. C. (2021). Representing wave effects on currents. *Ocean Modelling*, 167, 101873.

Breivik, O, Janssen, A.E., Bidlot, J. (2014) Approximate Stokes Drift Profiles in Deep Water. *JPO*, 44, 2433-2445.

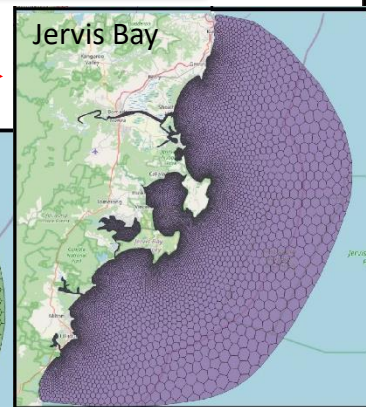
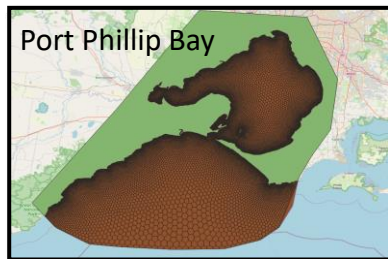
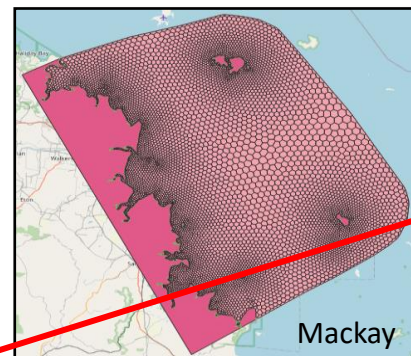


Coupled wave model features

- COMPAS-SWAN is an efficient and modular solution to hydrodynamic-wave coupling
- Also includes;
 - Enhanced bottom friction
 - Enhanced vertical mixing (including Harcourt (2015) scheme)
- No SWAN-specific configuration is required when running
 - Mesh generation
 - Bathymetry
 - Forcing and open boundary data
- Input; leverage efficient high order (unstructured) interpolation (e.g., Sibson)
- Output; cf-compliant UGRID netCDF
- Examples

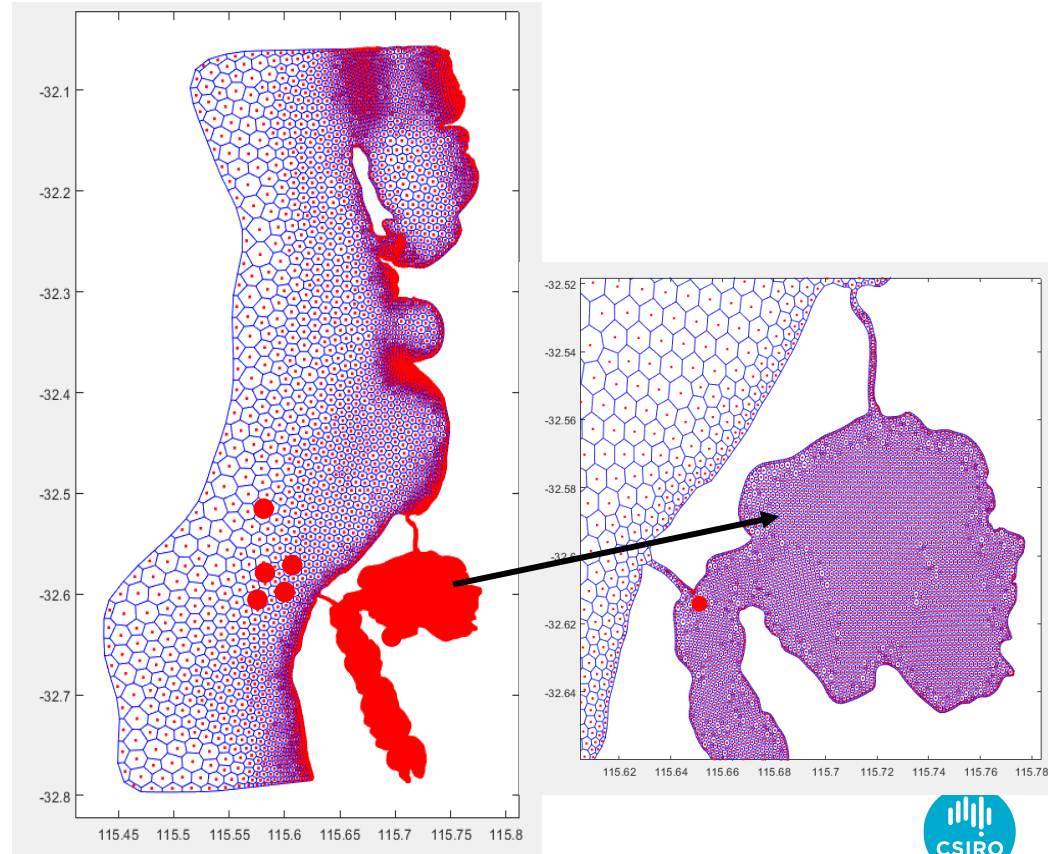
} Required anyway for COMPAS

Study domains (thanks to Cagil)



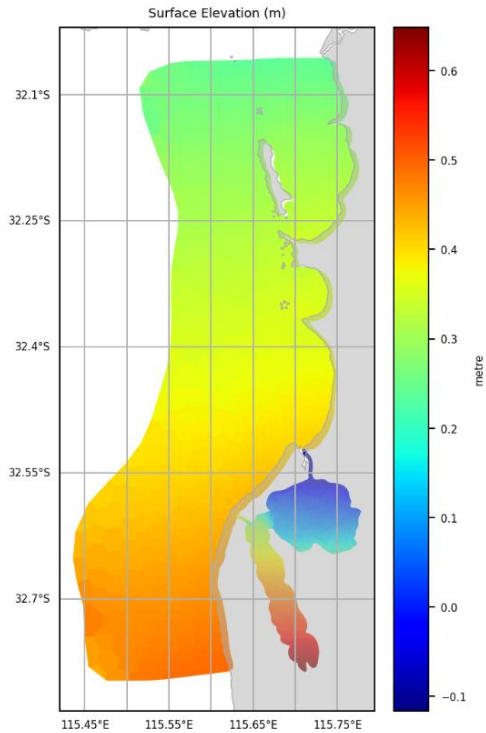
Mandurah test – June 2019

- 100 m coastal resolution
- 3 km offshore resolution
- TPXO tide forced
- Atmospherics:
ACCESS winds (BoM, 12 km)
- Ocean OBCs:
BRAN2020 (MOM5, 0.1 degree)
- Waves:
Regional SWAN hindcast (500m)
downscaled from Auswave G3
Operational Wave Model (WW3)

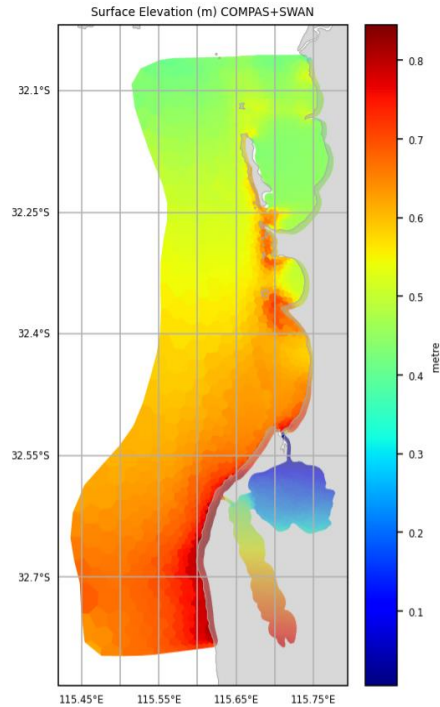


Sea surface elevation

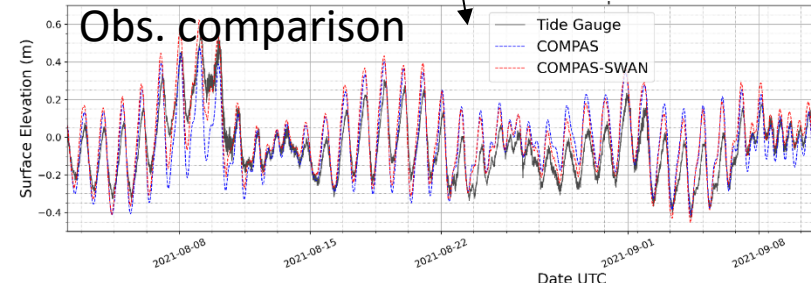
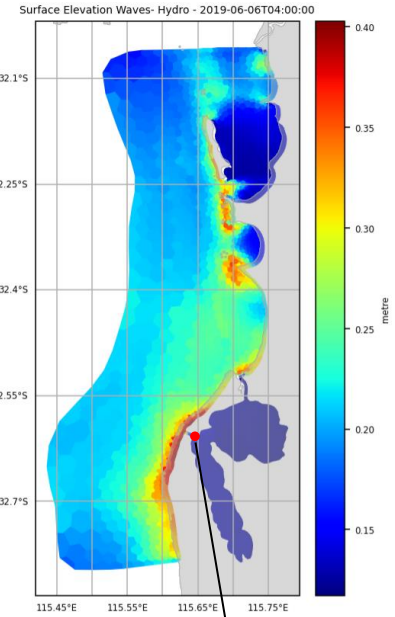
Hydro only



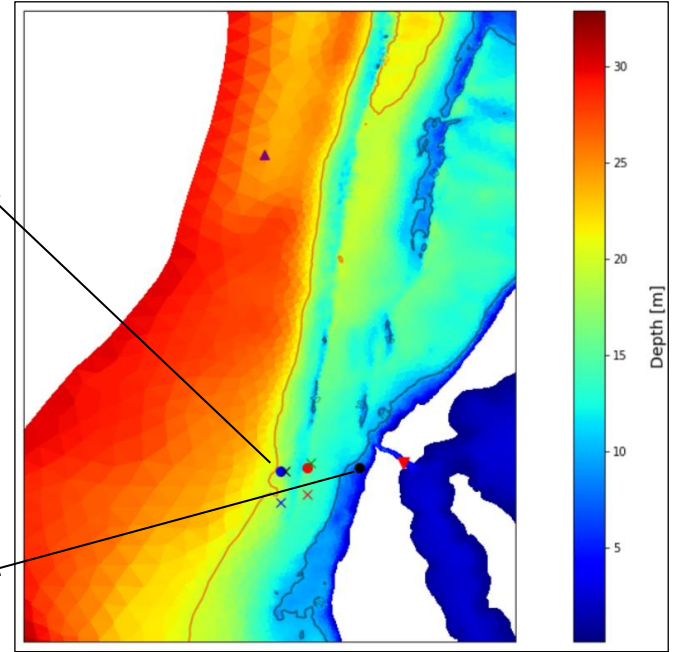
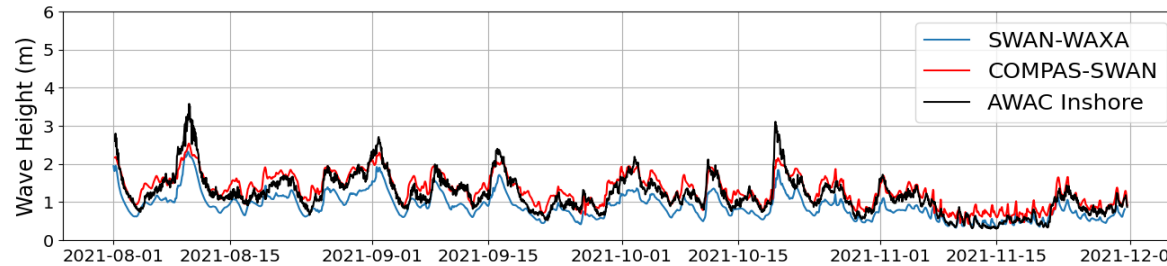
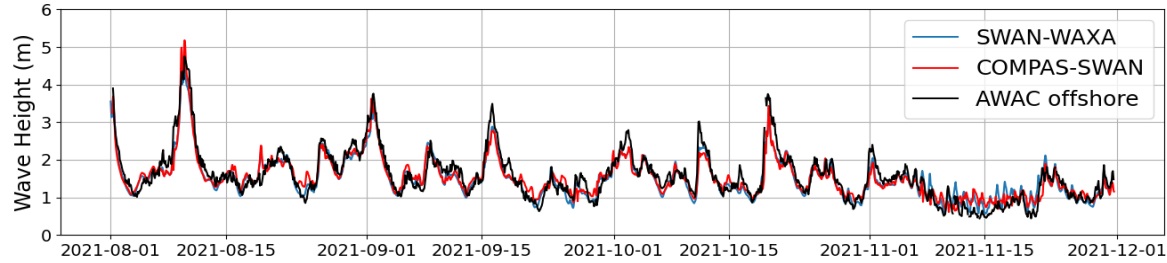
Hydro + Waves



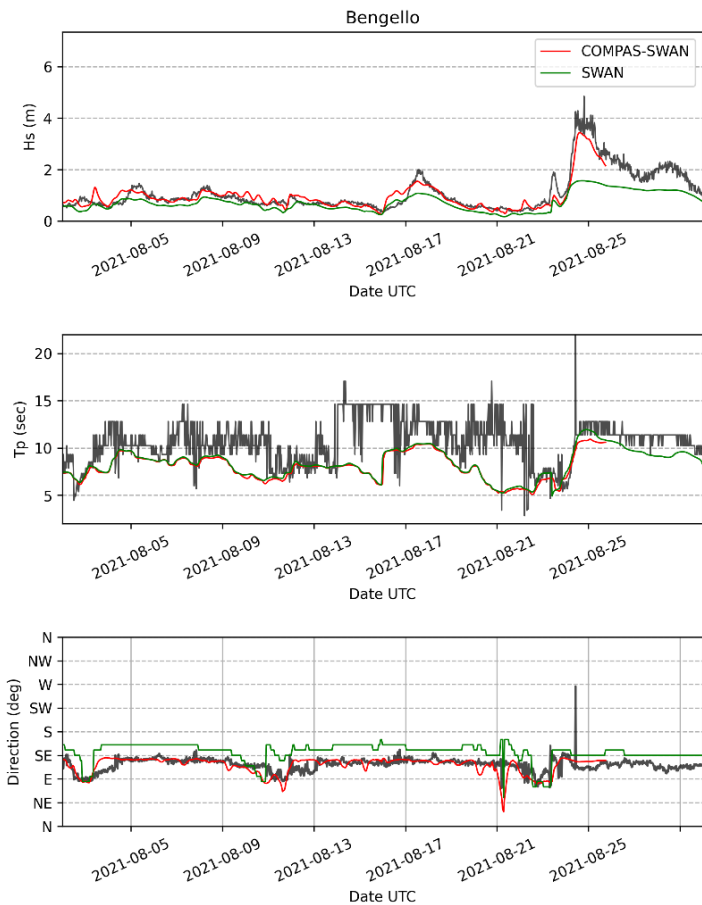
Difference (Waves – Hydro)



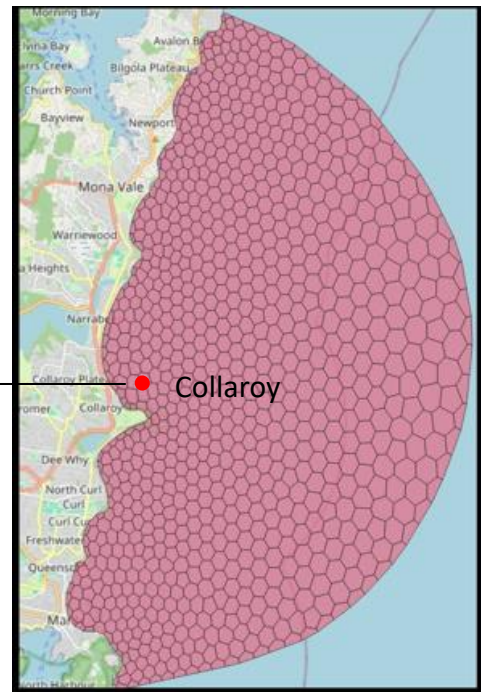
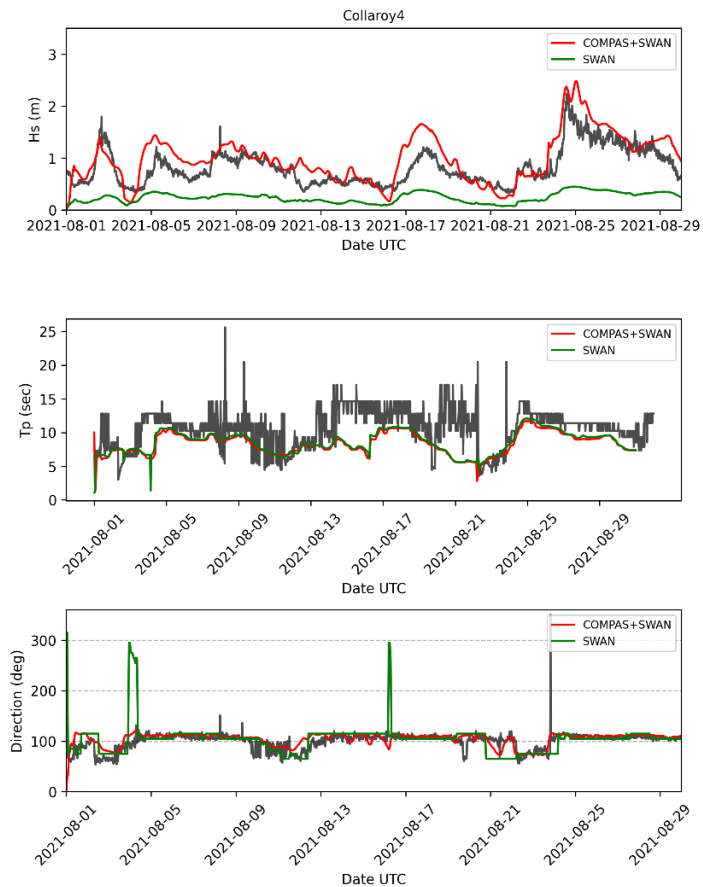
Wave height



Batemans Bay – August 21



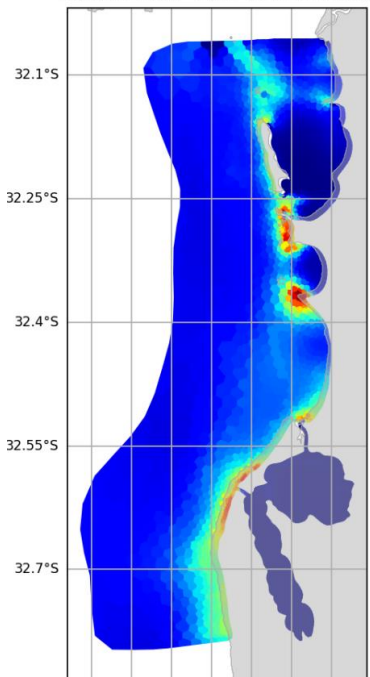
Narrabeen – August 21



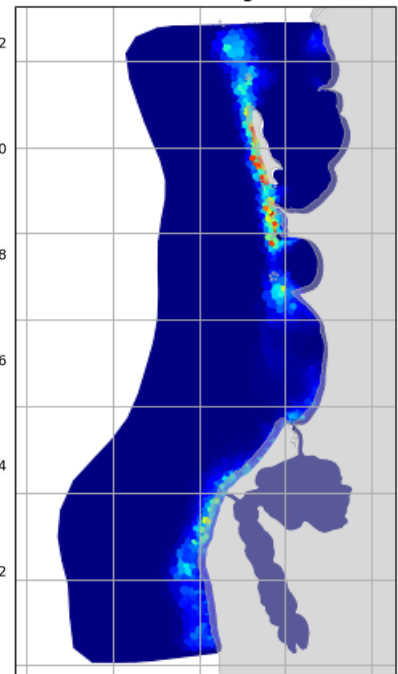
Non-conservative WEC Terms

Bernoulli Head - 2019-06-06T04:00:00

m^2s^{-2}

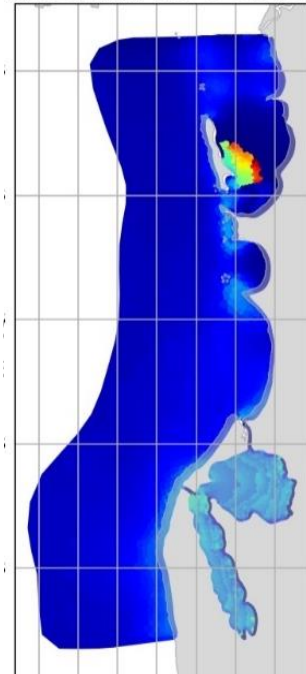


F_{breaking}



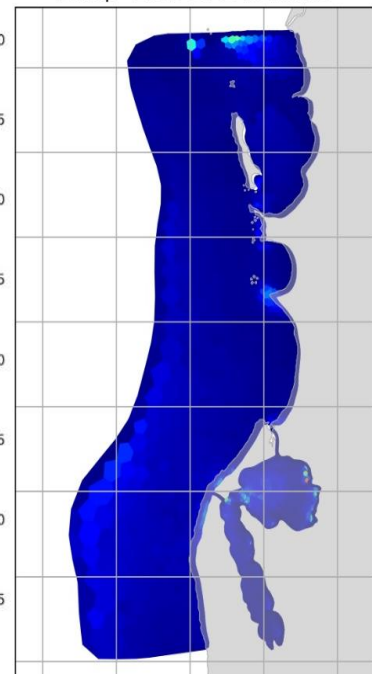
Surface Streaming - 2019-06-06T04:00:00

Nm^{-2}



F_{wcap} - 2019-06-06T04:00:00

Nm^{-2}



Summary

- An efficient and tightly coupled hydrodynamic-wave model was achieved using COMPAS-SWAN, leveraging
 - Co-location of hydrodynamic and wave scalar placement of variables
 - Data transfer using pointers
 - Streamlining Stokes Coriolis-vortex using hydrodynamic vector invariant momentum advection
 - Wave model access to hydrodynamic IO
- Model results appear promising

Thank you

