

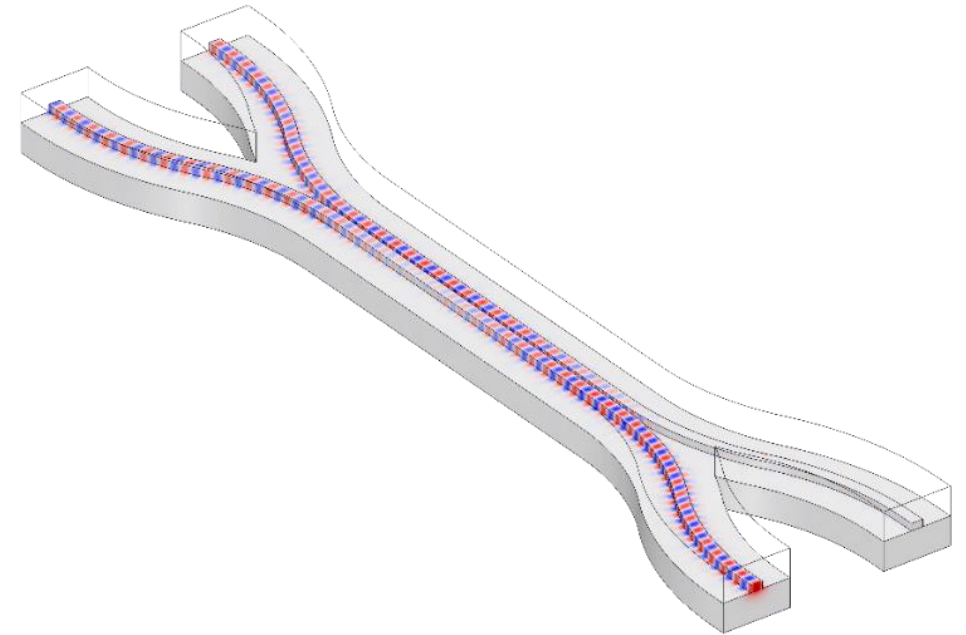


P&S COMSOL® Design Tool

Lecture 1: Introduction to Optical Simulations

Taichiro Fukui, Maximilian Bosch

Welcome to the P&S: COMSOL Design Tool – Design of Optical Components



Outline for Today

- **General organization**
 - Presence check
 - Learning objectives
- **Why do we need simulations?**
 - Electromagnetics in our daily life
 - EM Simulation
 - What will you be able to do...
 - Examples
- **Tutorial**
 - Introduction to the Software

Learning Objectives

- In this course, we aim to teach you the process of optical component design
- You will learn to:
 - ... **develop** a component idea into a specific design problem
 - ... **create** the correct simulation environment (model the photonic device)
 - ... **analyze** simulation results and **interpret** different physical effects involved
 - ... **evaluate** the design according to initial specifications and recommend improved solution
 - ... **summarize** the results and report them

Semester Outline

- Simulation concept
 - EM review
 - 2D EM simulation
- Intro to COMSOL tools
 - Wave optics
 - Mode solver
 - Boundary mode solver
- Project
 - Presentation
 - Report

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- Project
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 - Report

6 weeks

6 weeks

Final presentation: Monday, 15.12.2025

Report : Monday, 22.12.2025

If there is a conflict, please let us know early

Projects

- Design a passive optical structure for given specifications
 - In pairs or individually
 - A list of possible projects will be given / implement own idea

Projects

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 1. Build model
 2. Set physics and boundary conditions
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 4. Evaluate preliminary results
 5. Optimize
 6. Analyze and report

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 6. Analyze and report
- Evaluation
 1. **Presentation** (12 minutes talk and 3 minutes questions, **15.12.2025**)
 2. **Written report** (<10 pages with pictures and references, **22.12.2025**)

Practical Information – Administrative

- Time: Mondays from **13:15h** to **~16:00 h**
- Location: **CHN D29**
- Our availability: office hours ETZ K-floor

(Send email to schedule a meeting)

Taichiro	(ETZ K 77)	→ fukui@ief.ee.ethz.ch
Maximilian	(ETZ K 77)	→ bosch@ief.ee.ethz.ch

Practical Information – Online Material

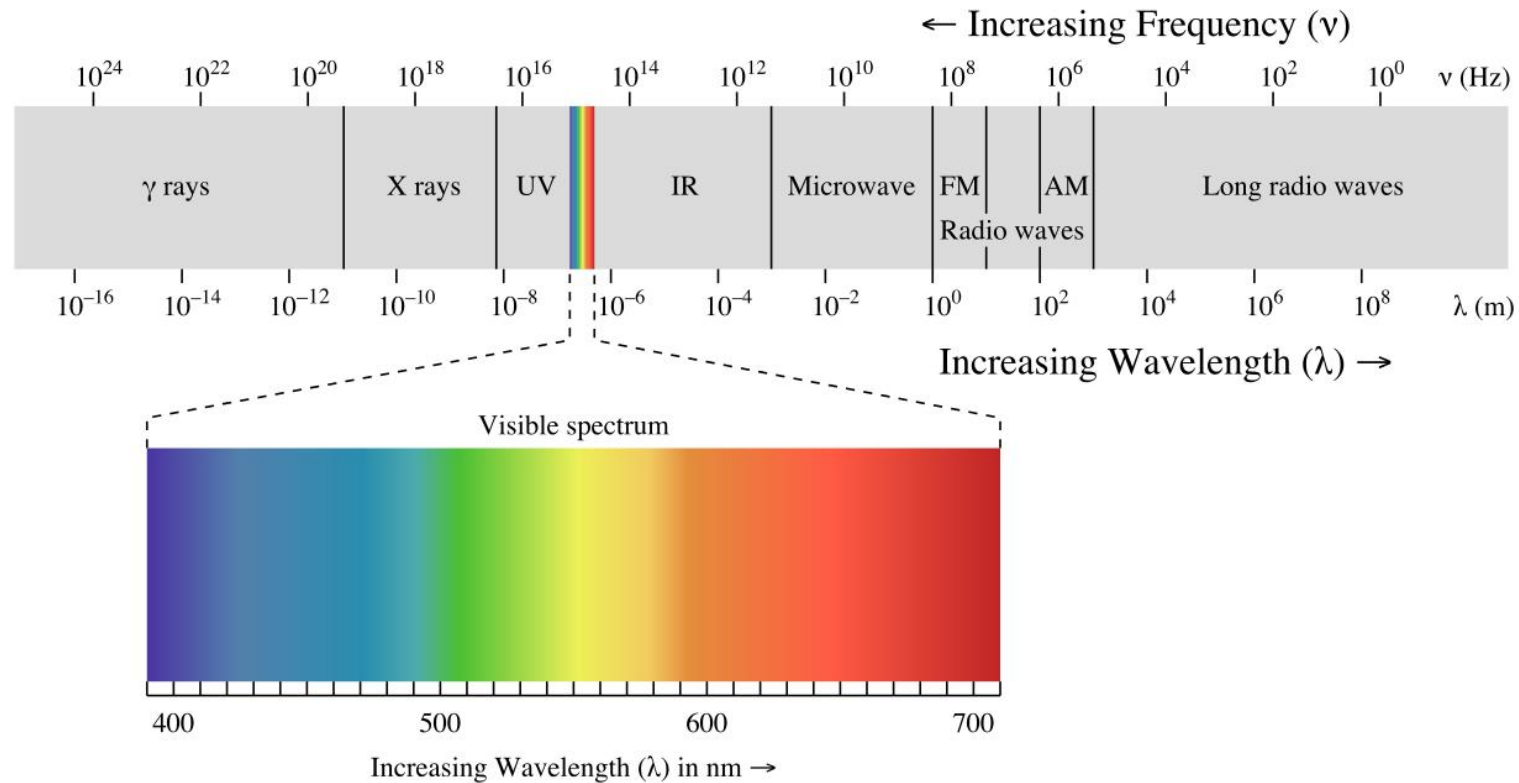
- Online material
 - https://blogs.ethz.ch/ps_comsol/
 - Presentations
 - Exercises
 - Literature
- Literature
 - B. Salah and M. Teich, *Fundamental of Photonics*, 2nd ed., 2007.
 - K. Okamoto, *Fundamentals of optical waveguides*, 2nd ed., Elsevier, 2006.

About us

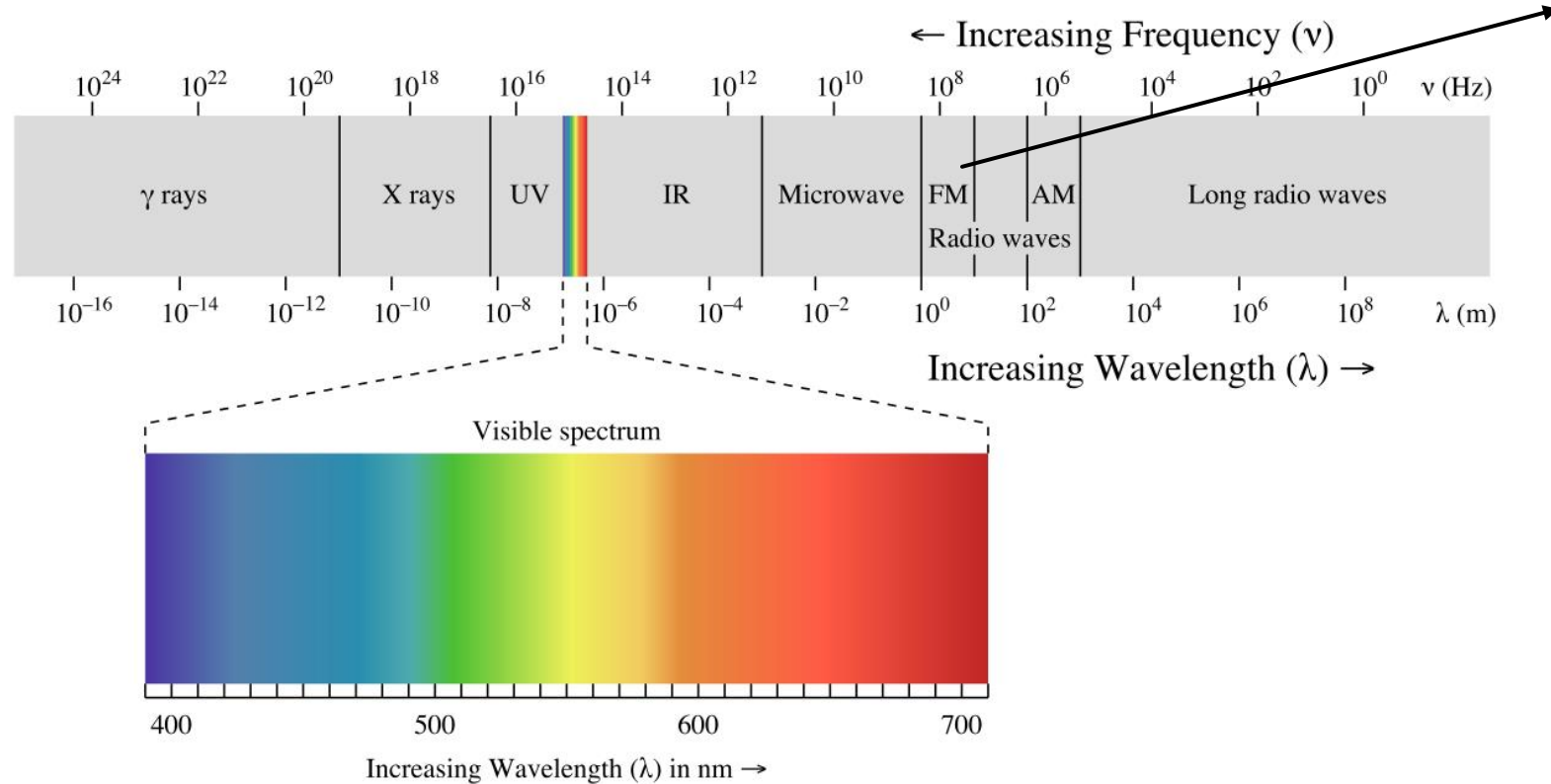
- Taichiro Fukui
 - Integrated photonic devices and systems
 - Integrated photonic phased array
 - THz free space communication
- Maximilian Bosch
 - Integrated photonic devices and systems
 - Passive and THz radar
 - Optical antenna simulation

Questions?

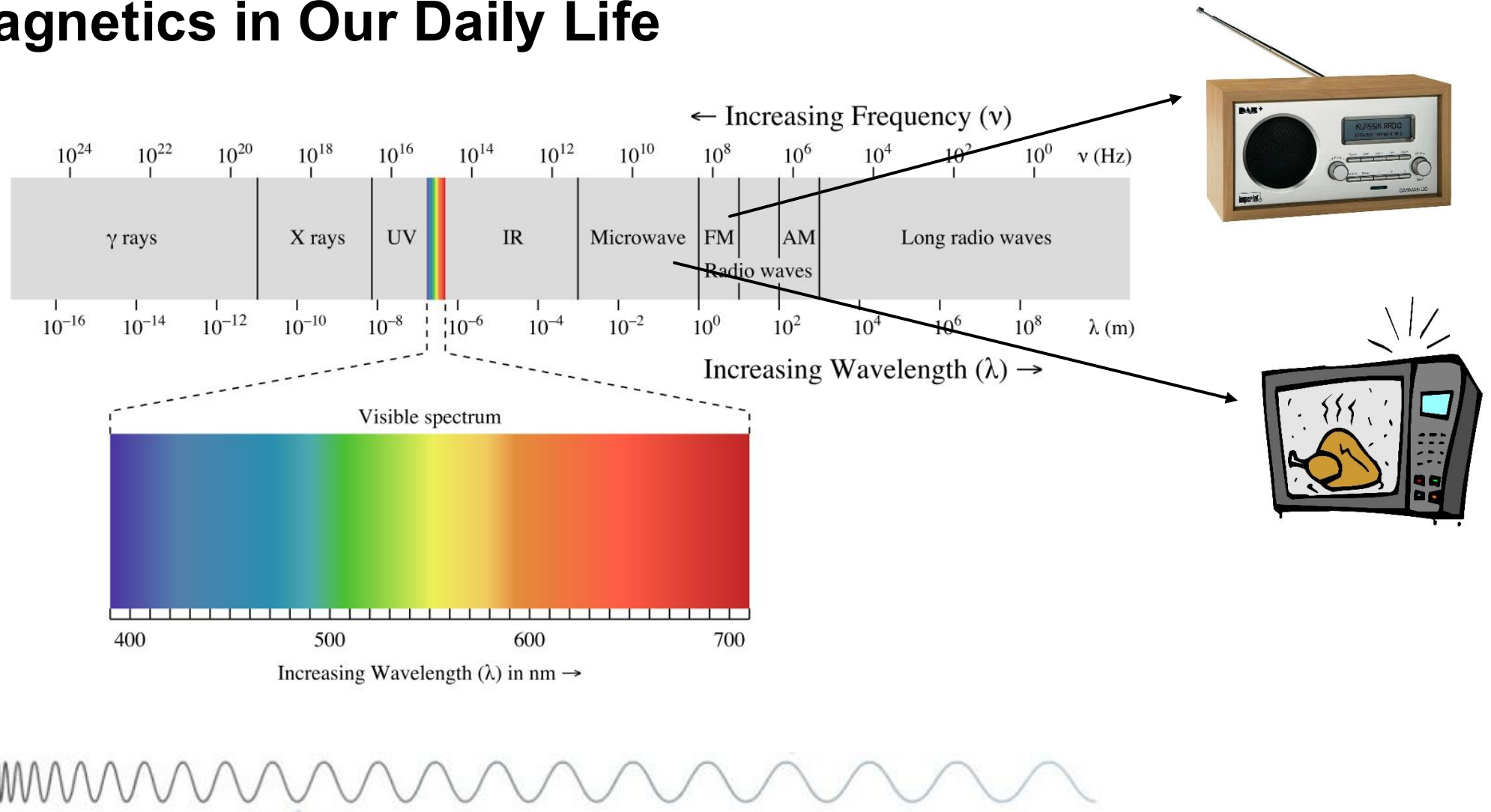
Electromagnetics in Our Daily Life



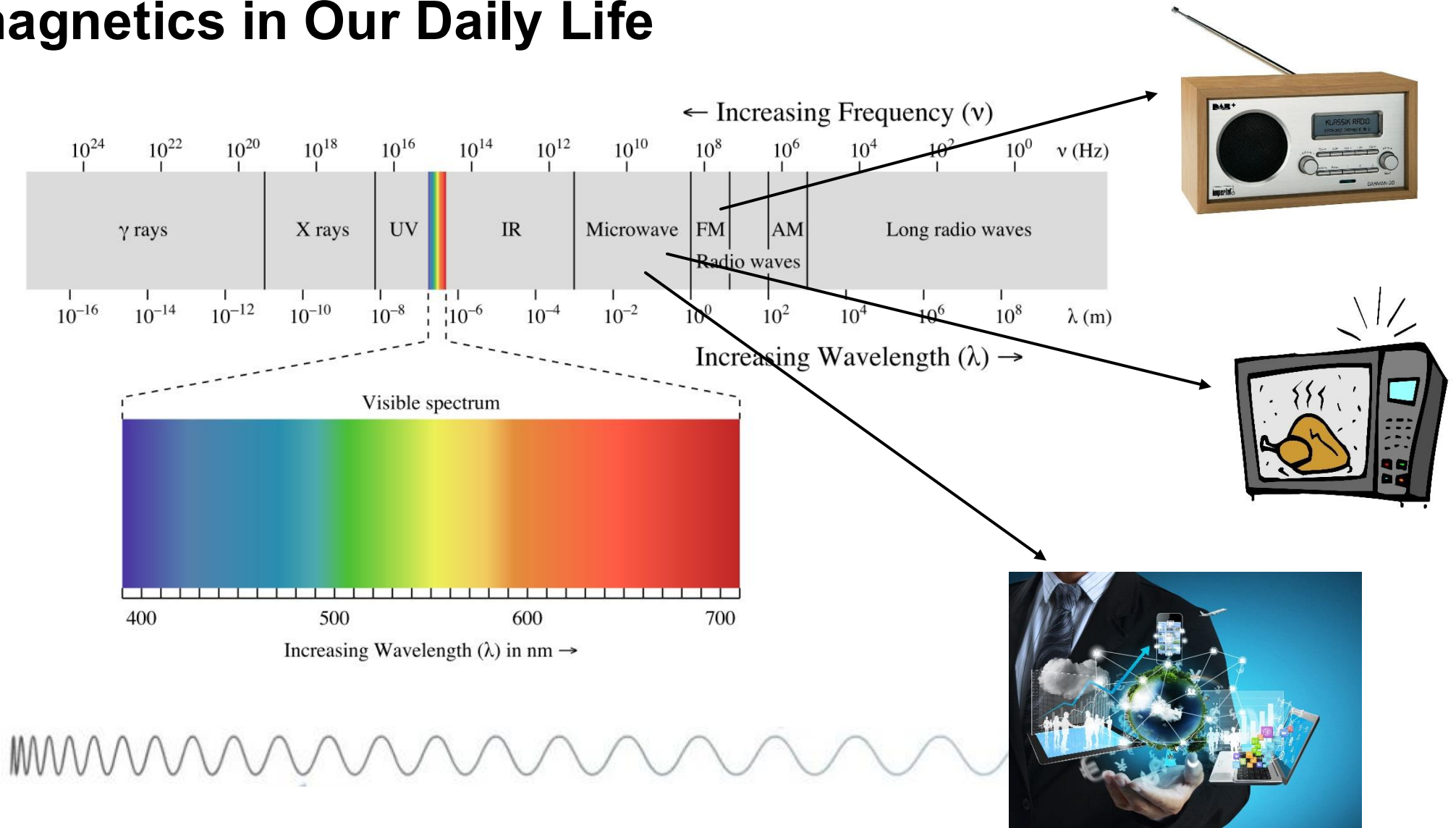
Electromagnetics in Our Daily Life



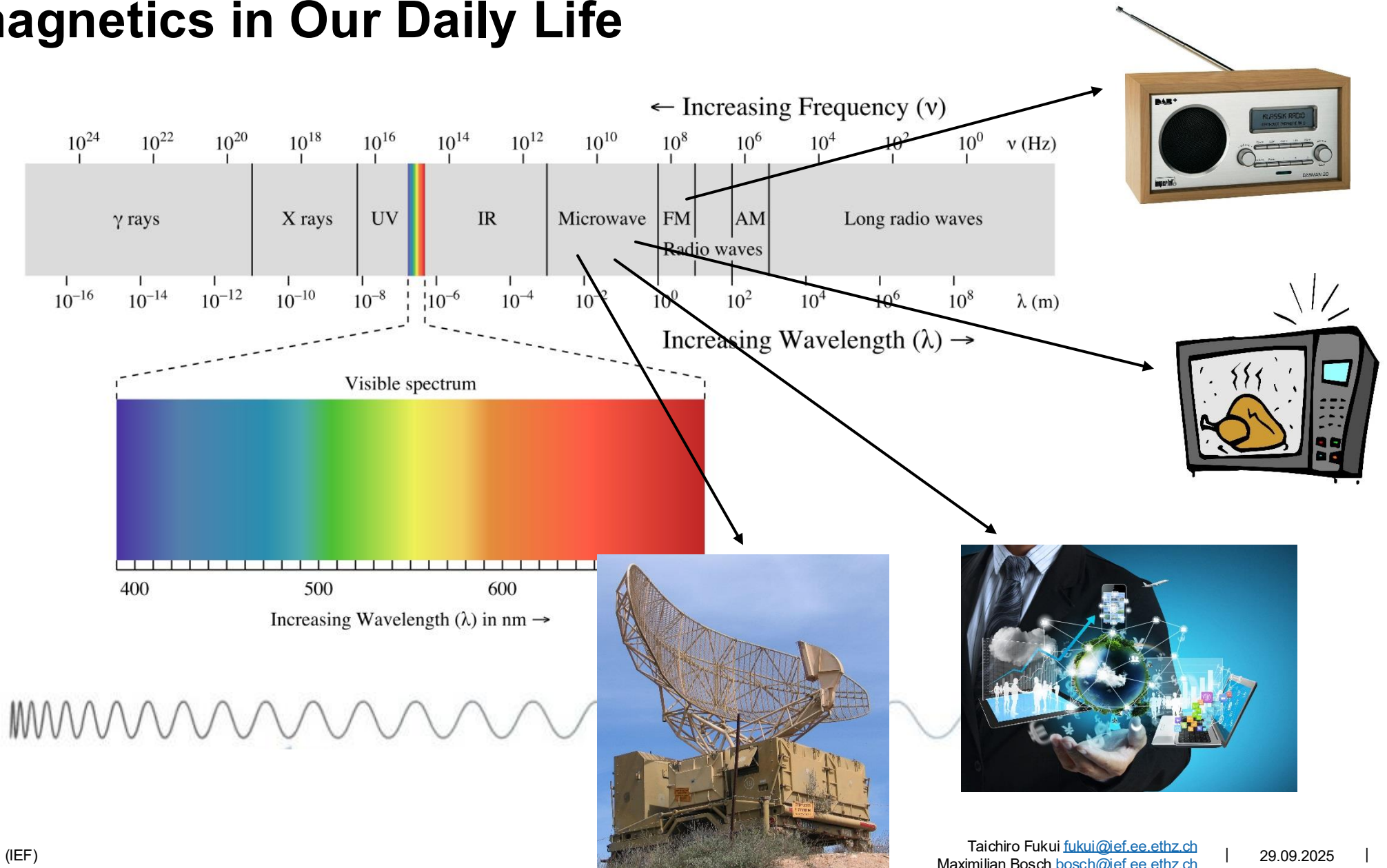
Electromagnetics in Our Daily Life



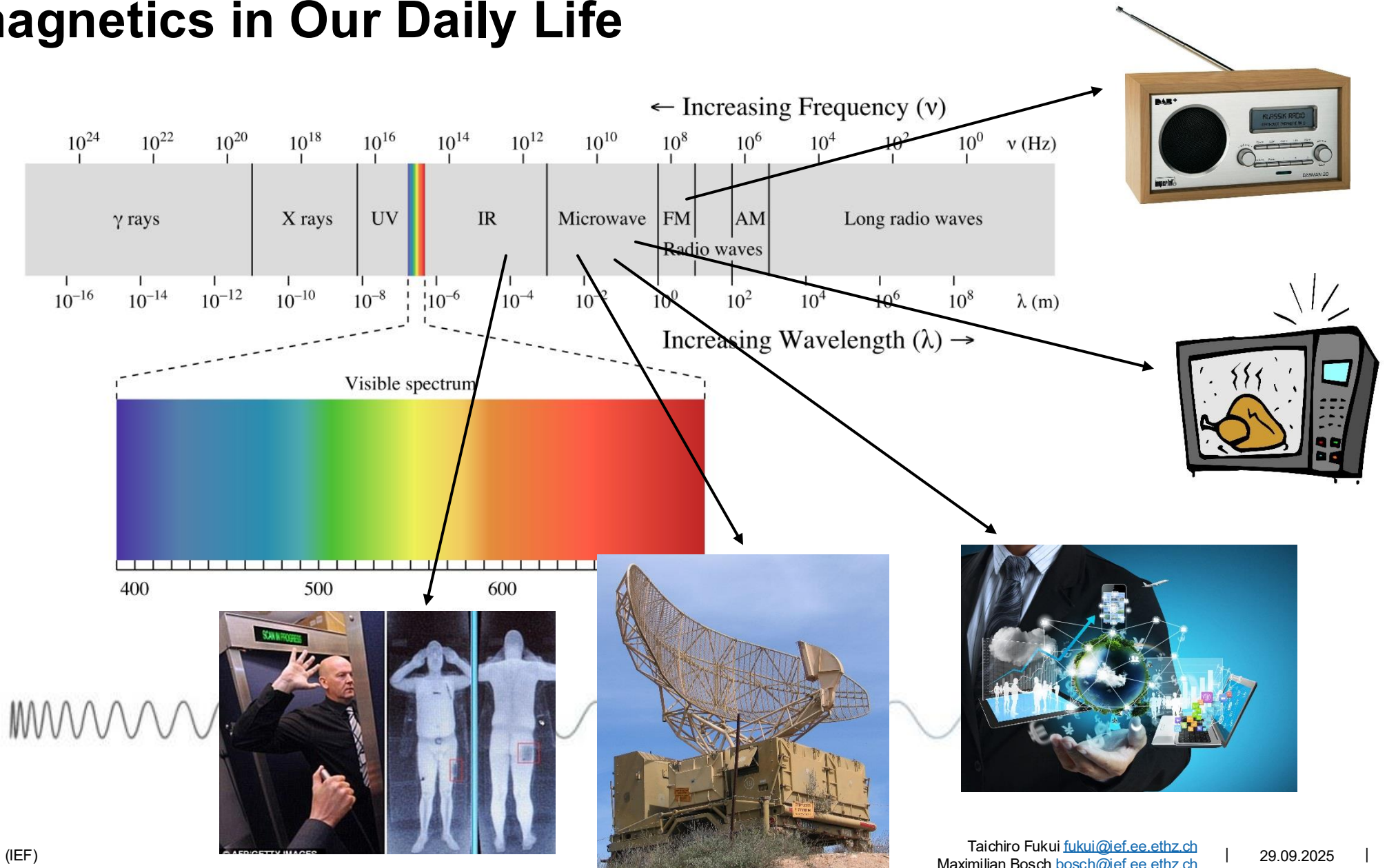
Electromagnetics in Our Daily Life



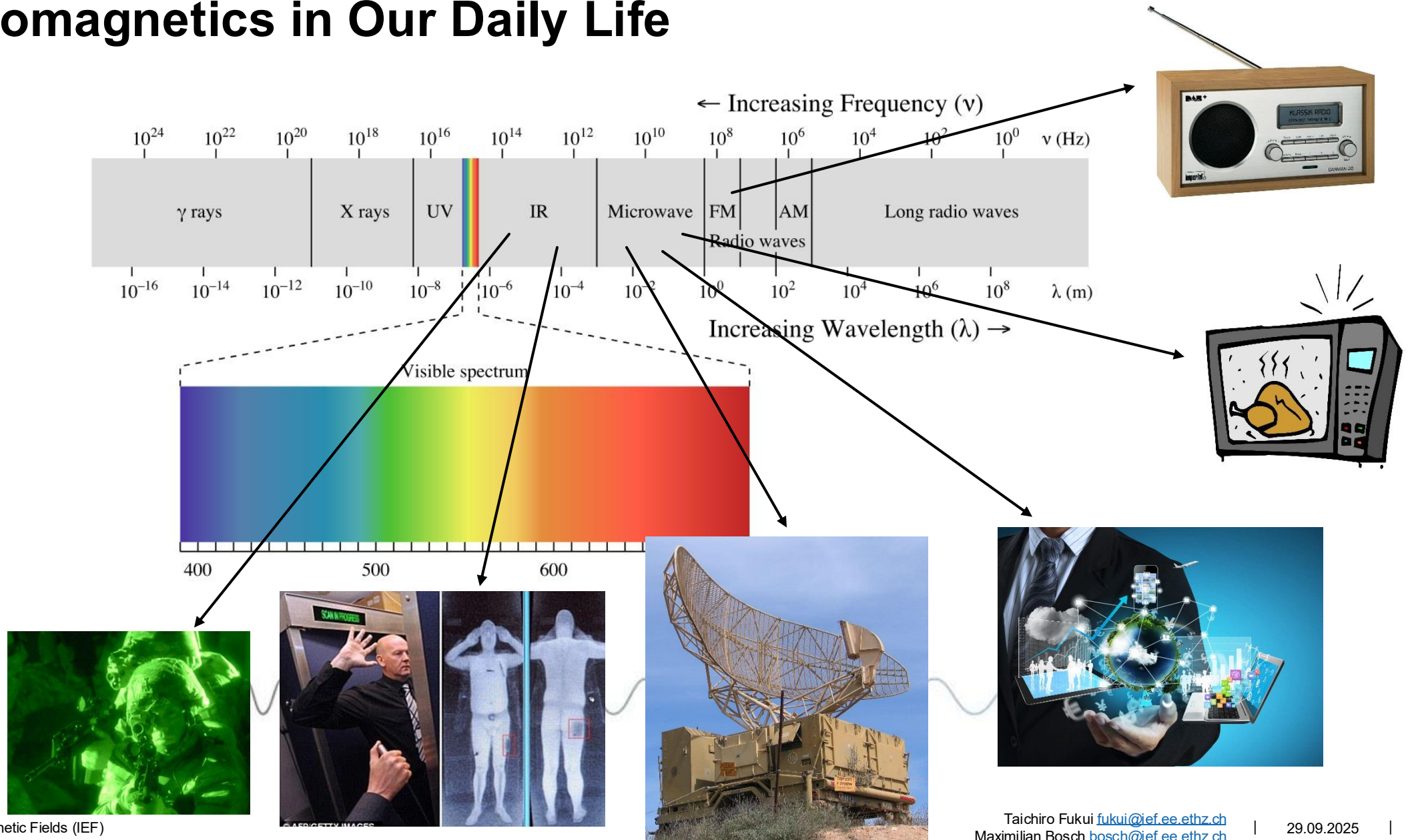
Electromagnetics in Our Daily Life



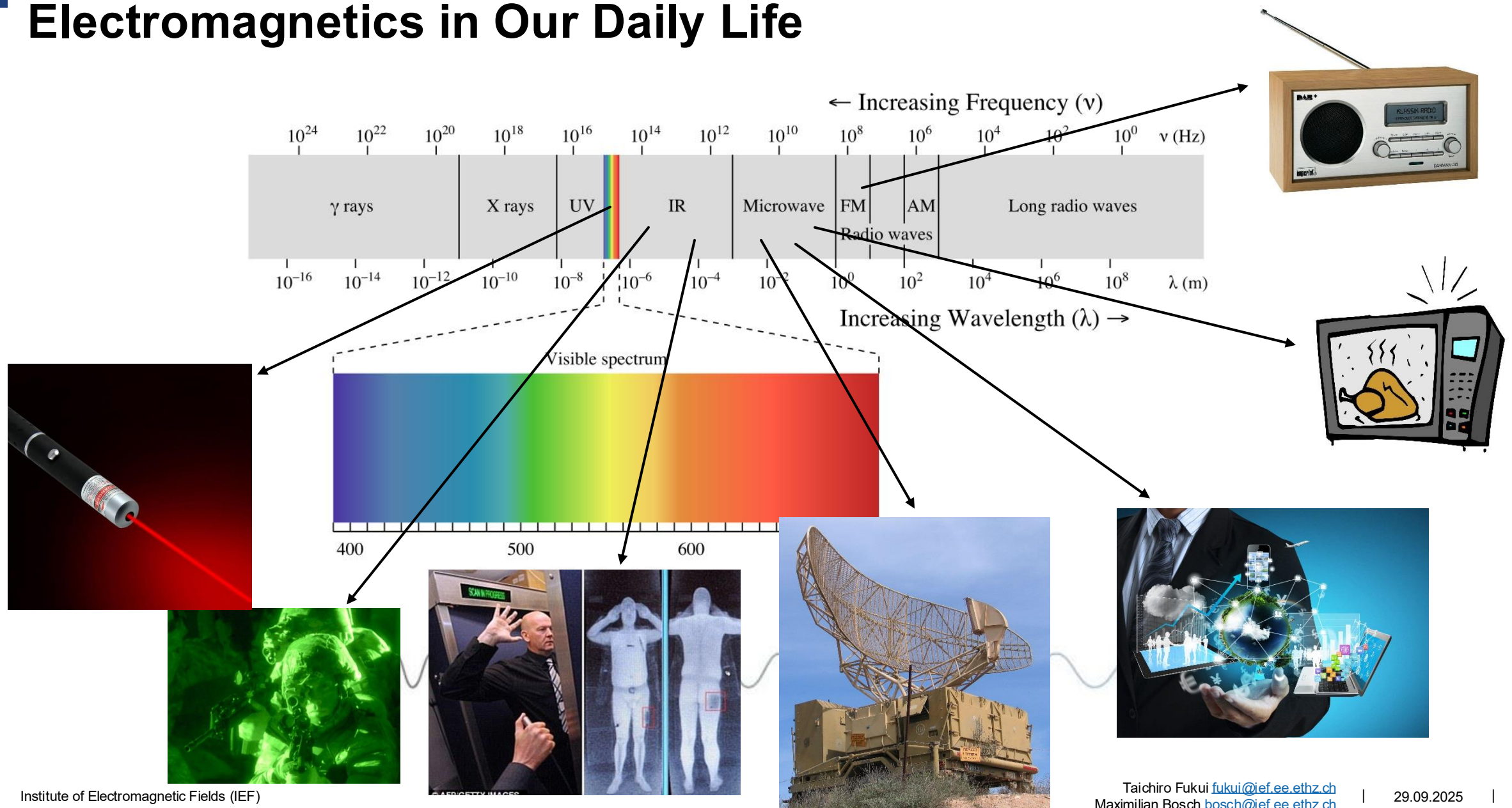
Electromagnetics in Our Daily Life



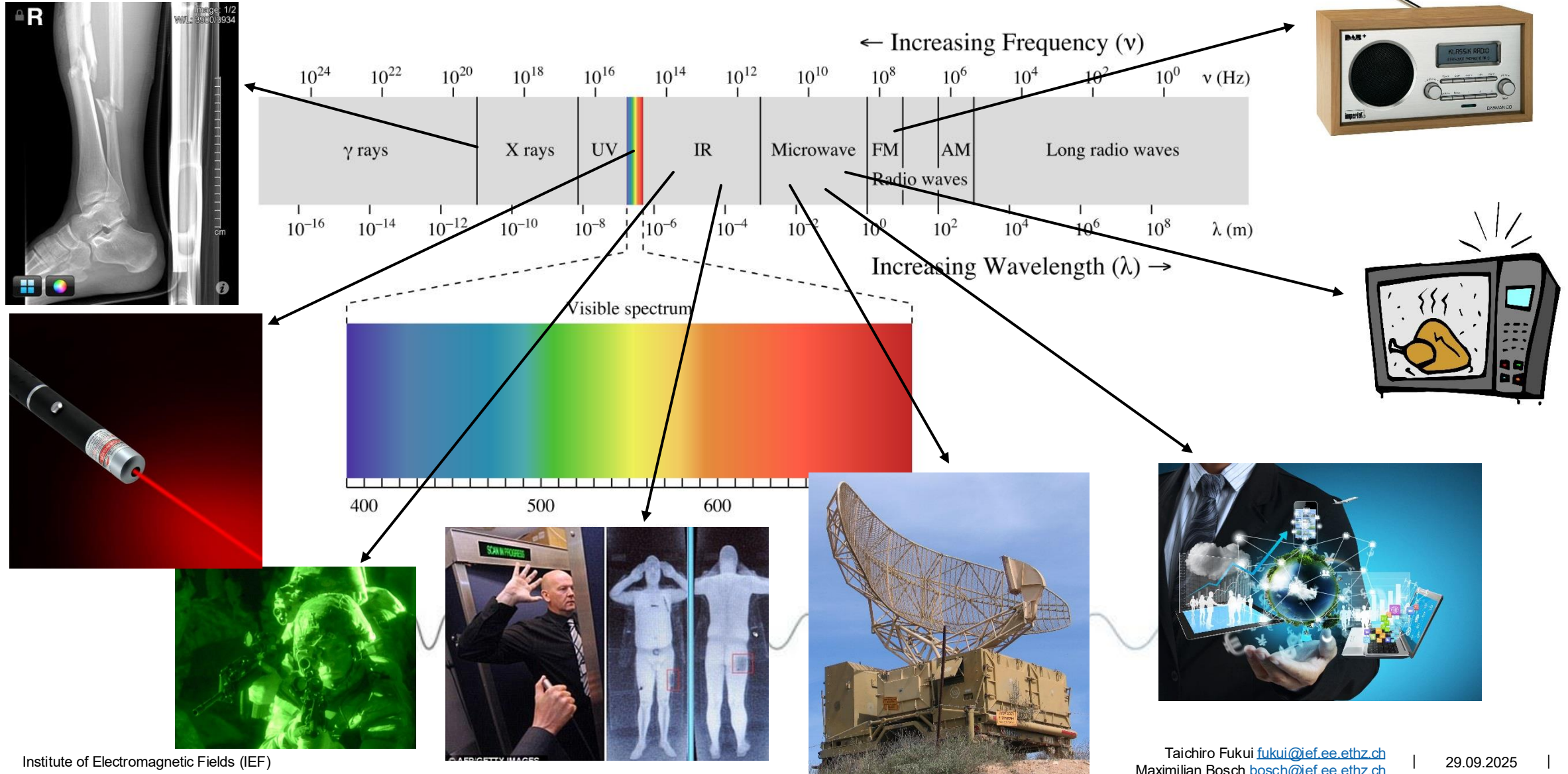
Electromagnetics in Our Daily Life



Electromagnetics in Our Daily Life

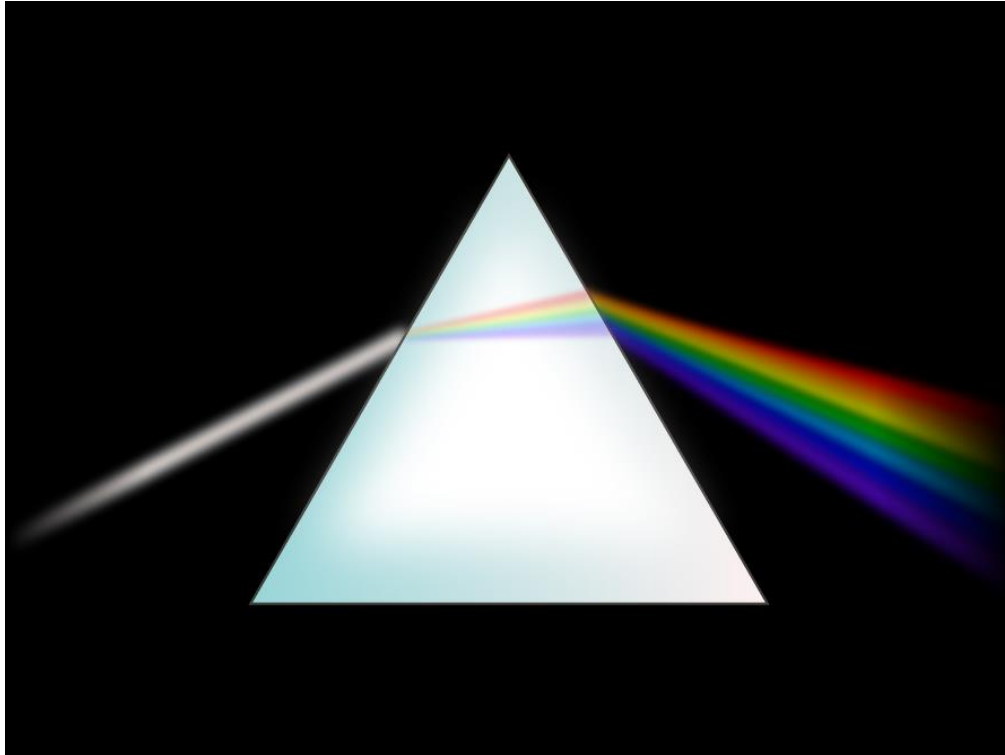


Electromagnetics in Our Daily Life



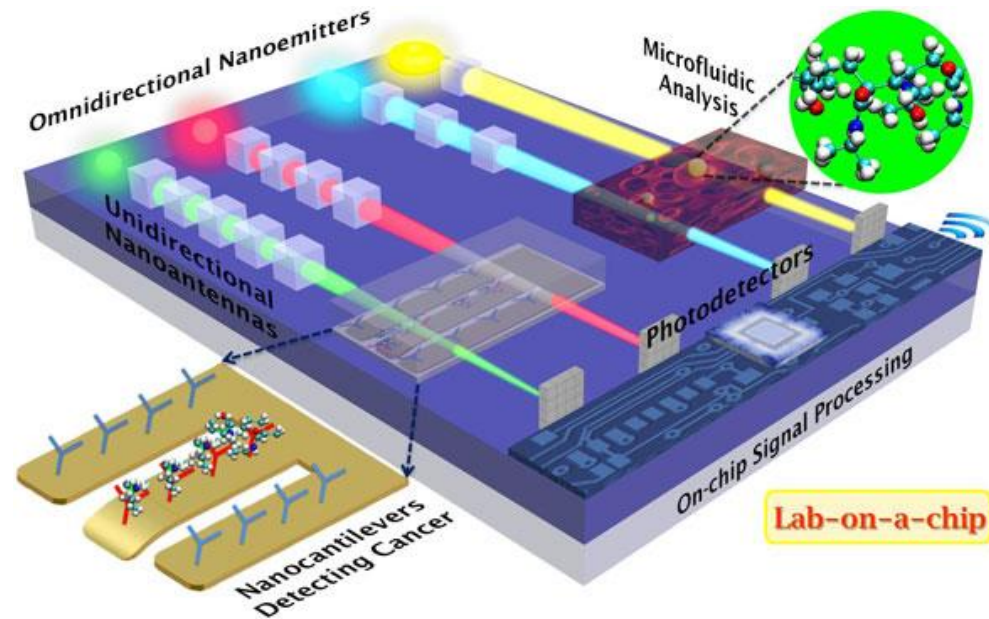
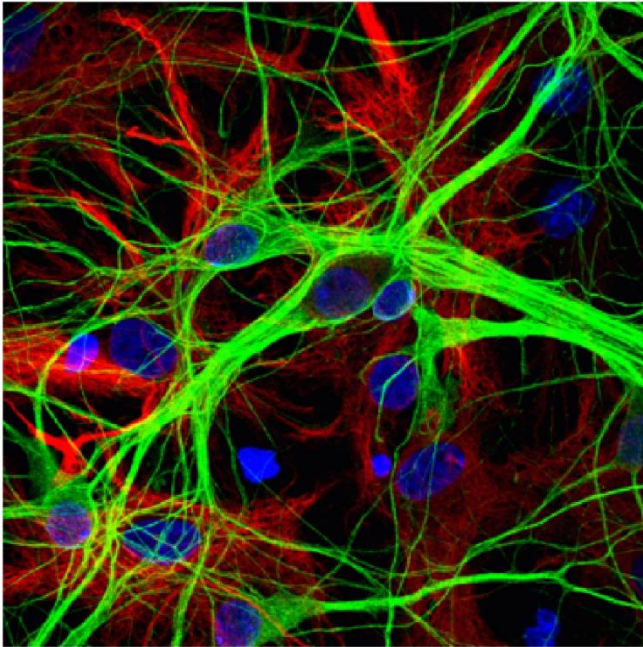
Photonics

- Photonics – studying the properties of light



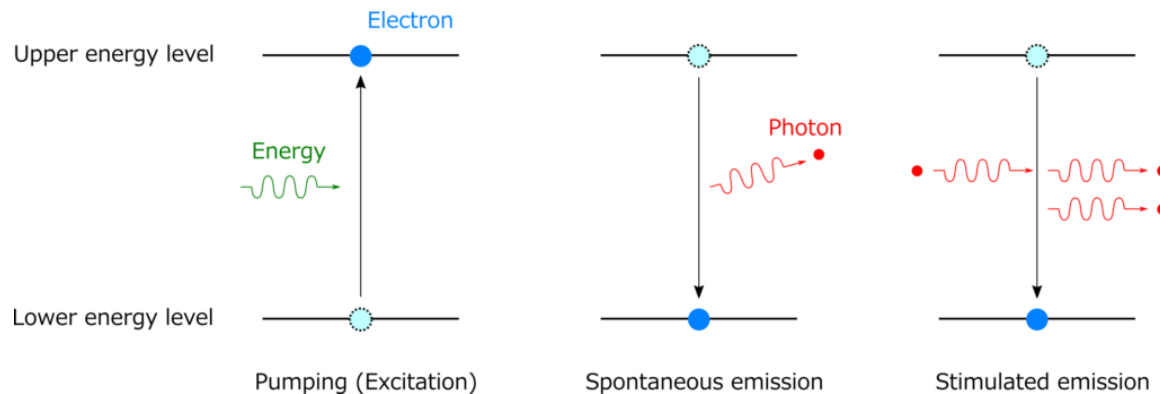
Photonics Today

- Photonics – studying the properties of light
- Where do we use it today?
 - **Biology – Lab-on-Chip**



Photonics Today

- Photonics – studying the properties of light
- Where do we use it today?
 - *Biology – Lab-on-Chip*
 - **Quantum effects**

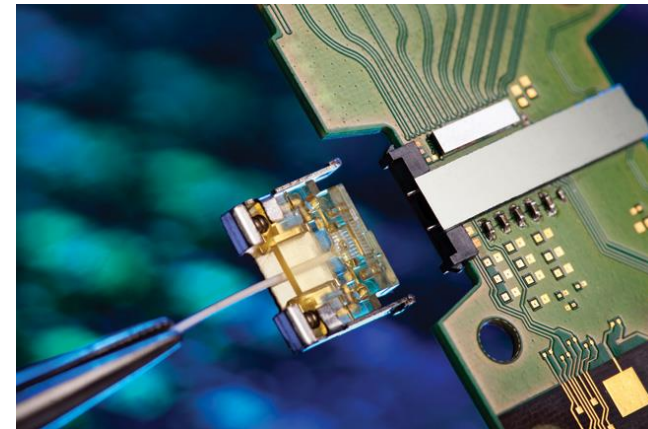
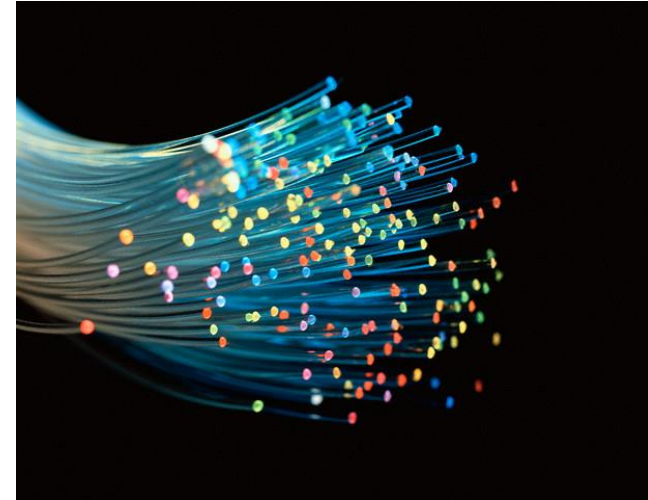


Laser Pointer



Photonics Today

- Photonics – studying the properties of light
- Where do we use it today?
 - *Biology – Lab-on-Chip*
 - *Quantum effects*
 - **Telecommunications**
 - *Fiber replaces traditional copper wires*
 - **5G**



Source: Intel

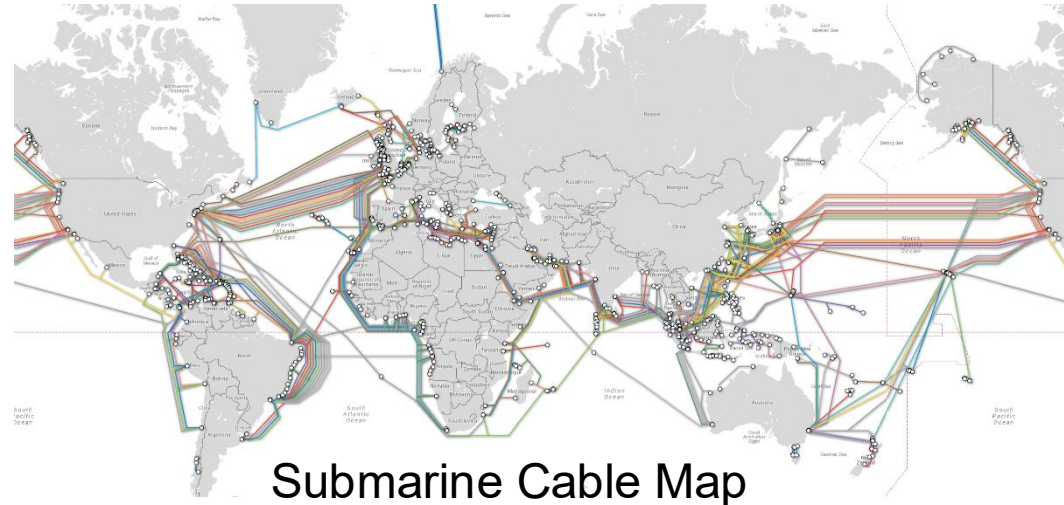
Communication: From Radio to Fiber

- Radio waves
 - Copper wires (TV/Phone)
 - Broadcasting



Communication: From Radio to Fiber

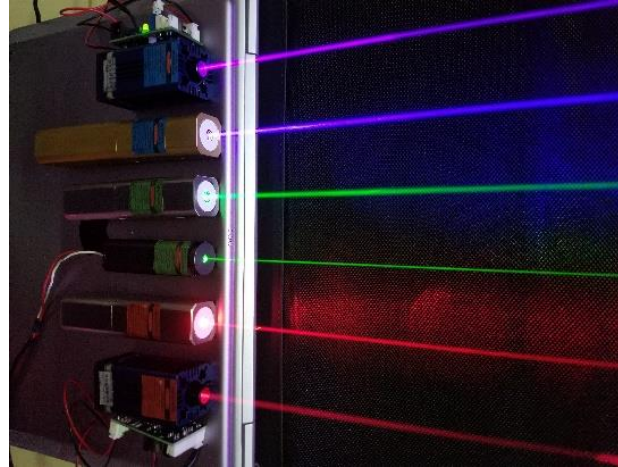
- Radio waves
 - Copper wires (TV/Phone)
 - Broadcasting
- Fiber optics (NIR)
 - Advantages
 - Large bandwidth
 - Low losses
 - Fiber deployment
 - Long distances: Submarine Cables
 - Short distances: Server



Submarine Cable Map

Photonics for Communications: Basic Principles

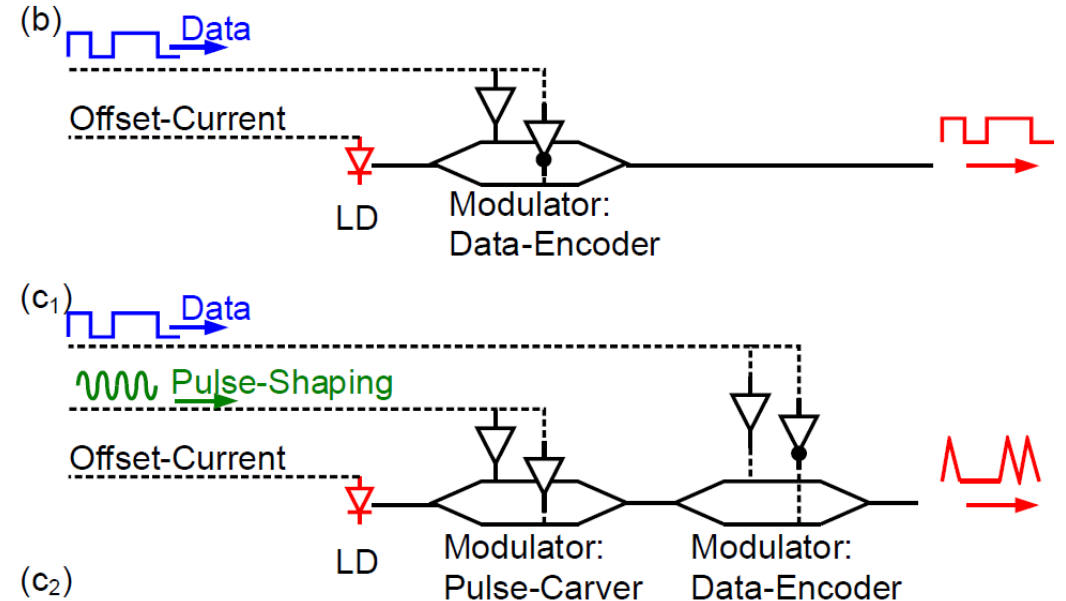
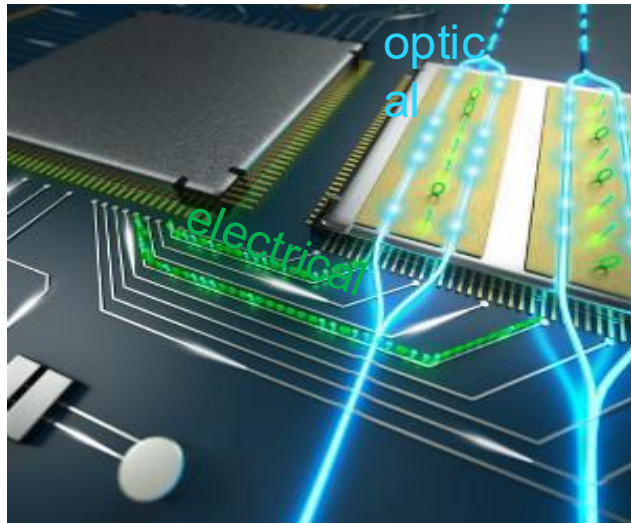
1: Light generation



Photonics for Communications: Basic Principles

1: Light generation

2: Light modulation for data encoding

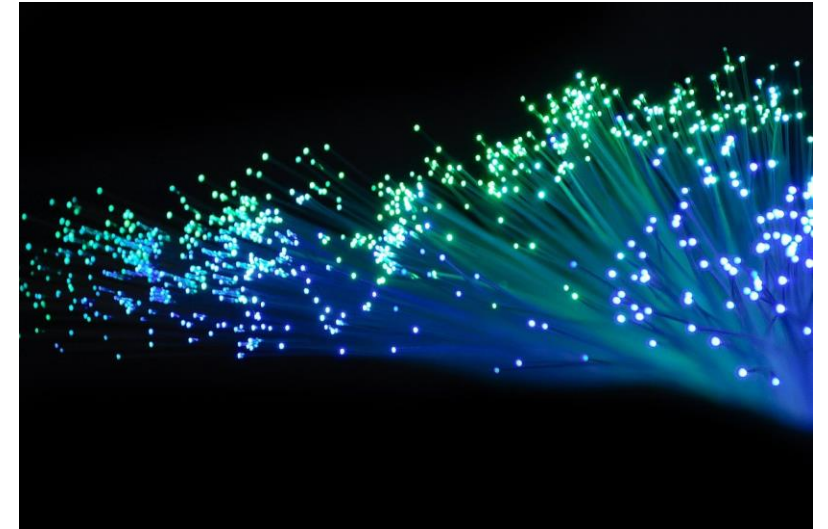
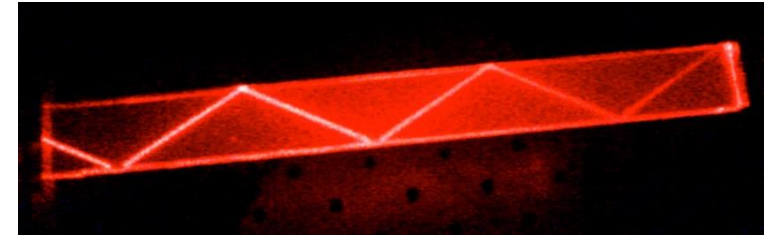


*Modulator: From **electrical data** to **optical data***

Photonics for Communications: Basic Principles

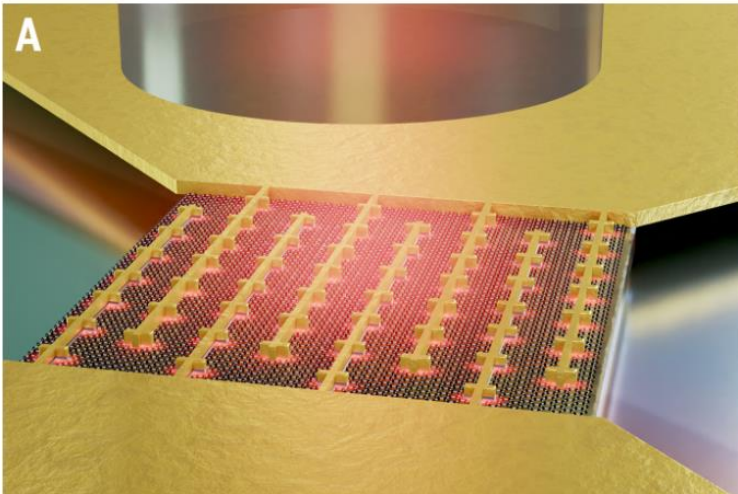
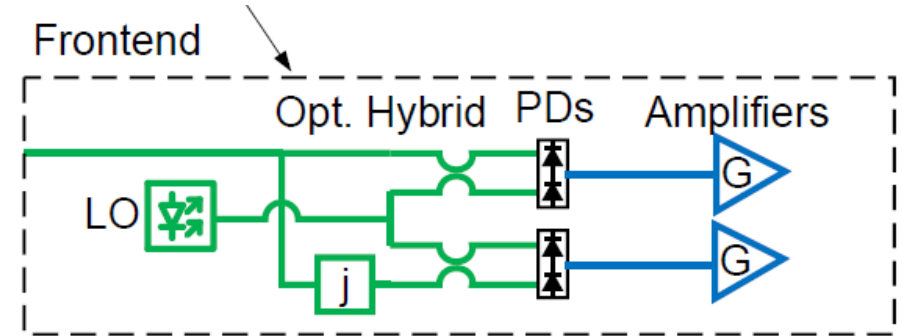
- 1: Light generation
- 2: Light modulation for data encoding
- 3: Light guiding, waveguides and optical fibers

Fiber guides light



Photonics for Communications: Basic Principles

- 1: Light generation
- 2: Light modulation for data encoding
- 3: Light guiding, waveguides and optical fibers
- 4: Light detection and data demapping

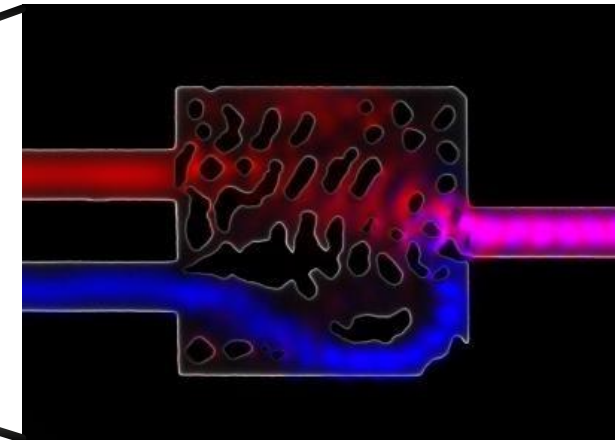
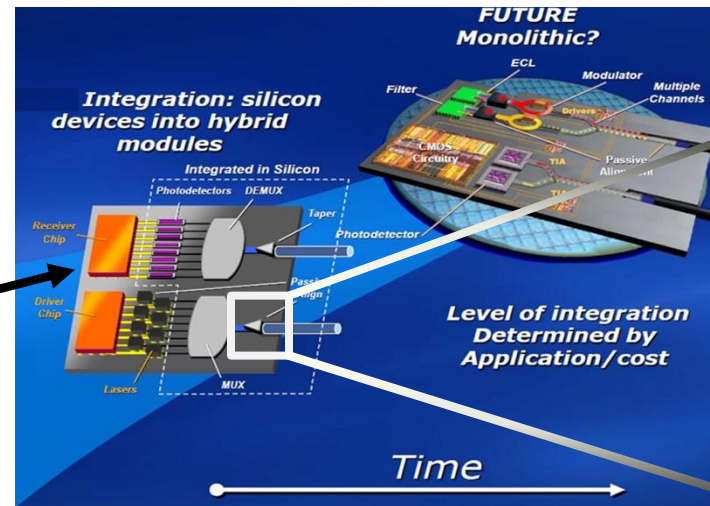
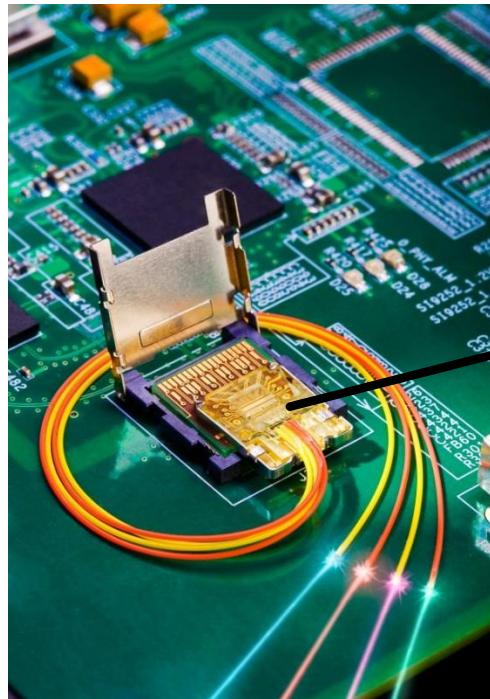


*Detector: From **optical data** to **electrical data***

Why do we need simulations?

Why Simulate?

- Implementation of devices
 - Devices **need a design!**
 - Fabrication & characterization (test)
 - Improvement of the design
- } Time & money



Why Simulate?

- Implementation of devices
 - Devices **need a design!**
 - Fabrication & characterization (test)
 - Improvement of the design
- } Time & money
- We perform simulations to...
 - Shorten the developing time
 - Fast
 - Cost effective
 - Test physical models
 - Confirm experimental data
 - Investigate ideas



Work flow

1. Idea
2. Design & Simulate
3. Optimize
4. Fabricate
5. Characterize



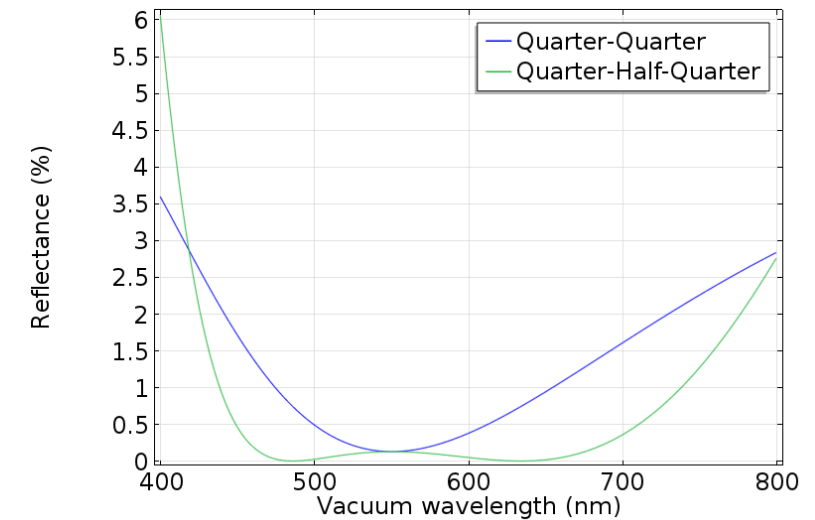
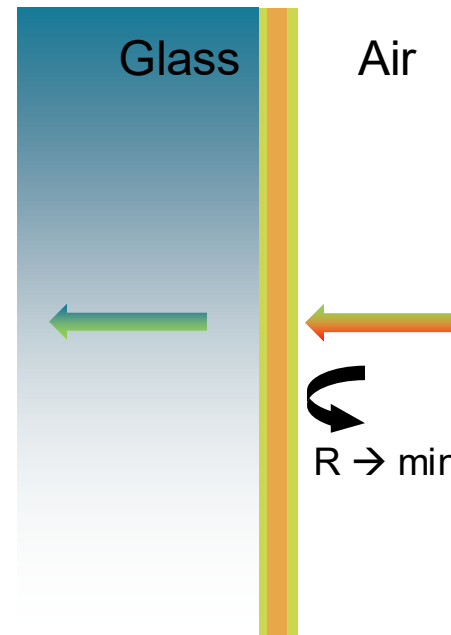
What you will be able to simulate...

- Anti – reflection coating



Without anti-reflection

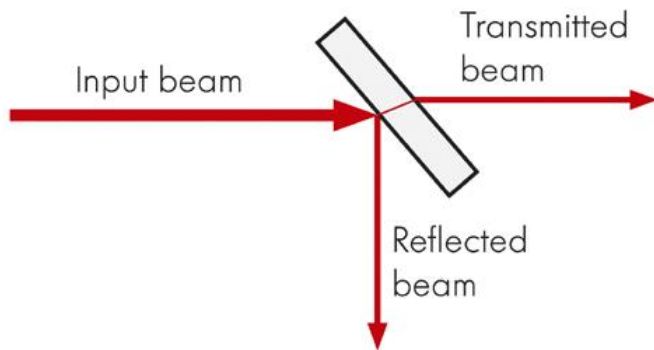
With anti-reflection



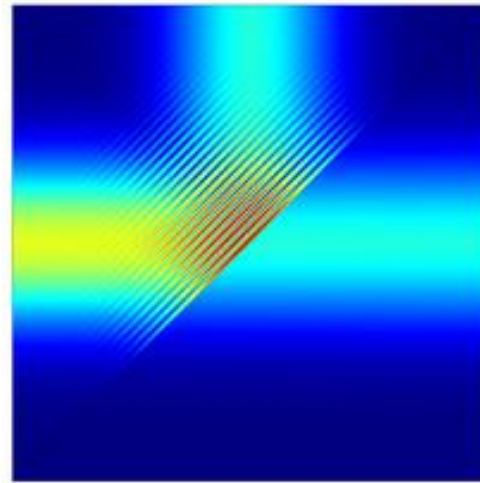
What you will be able to simulate...

- Beam Splitter

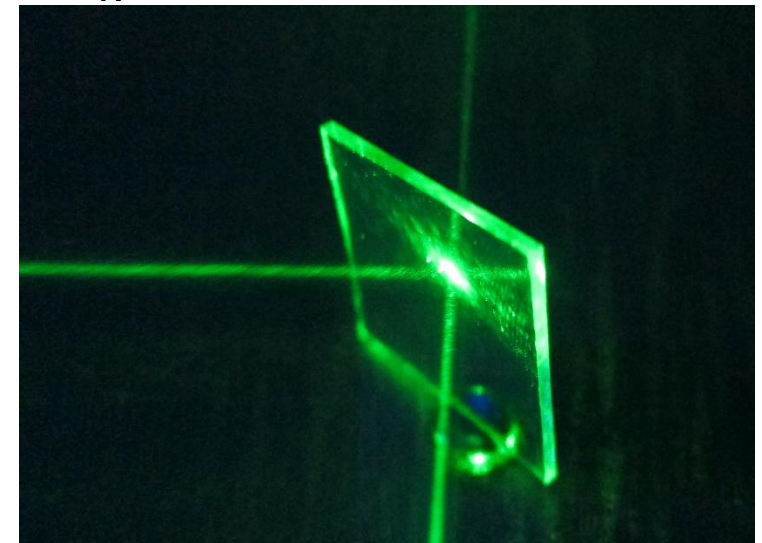
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2. & 3.



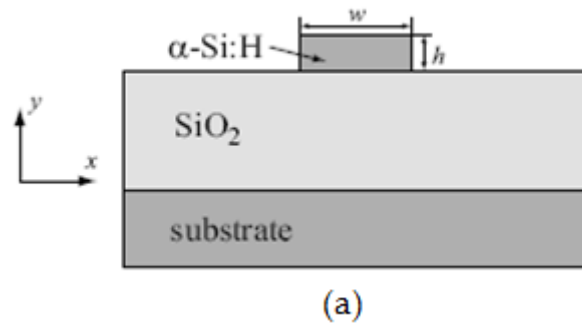
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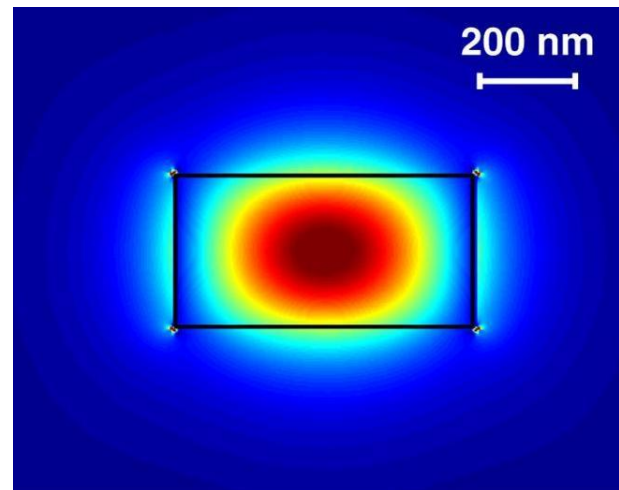
What you will be able to simulate...

- Silicon waveguide

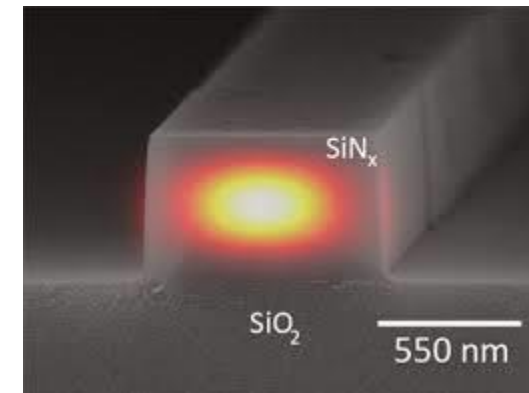
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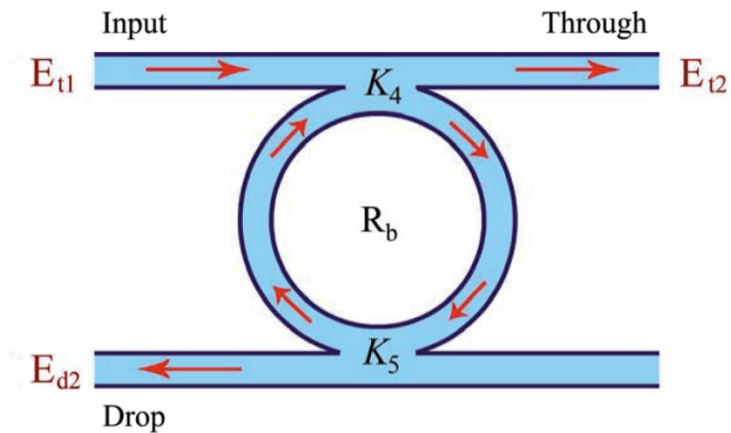
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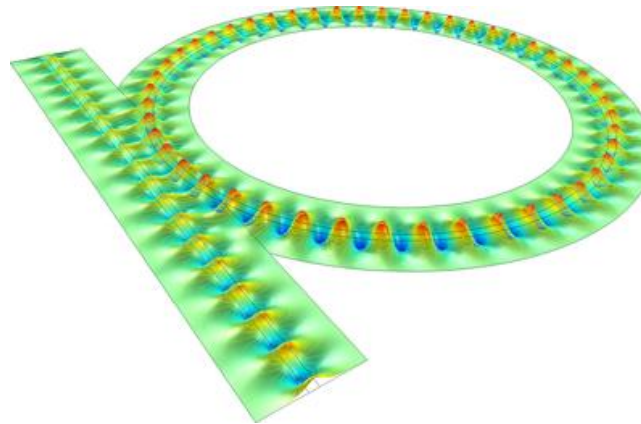
What you will be able to simulate...

- Optical add-drop filters

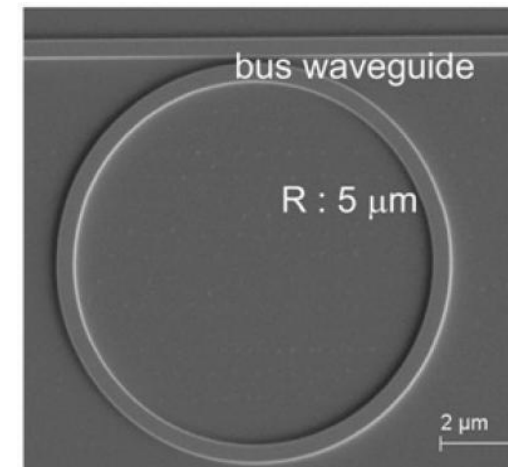
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2. & 3.



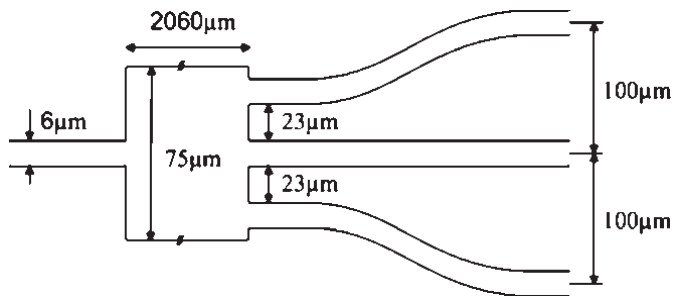
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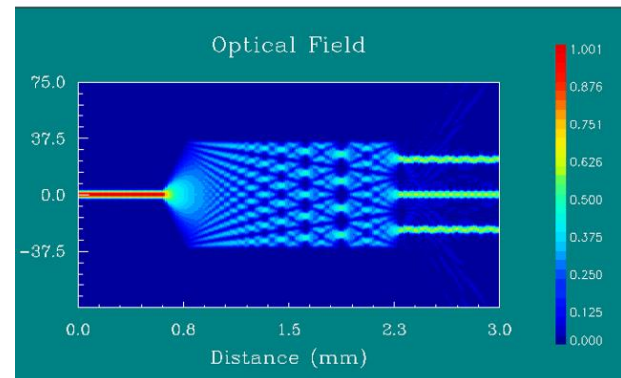
What you will be able to simulate...

- Multi-mode interferometer

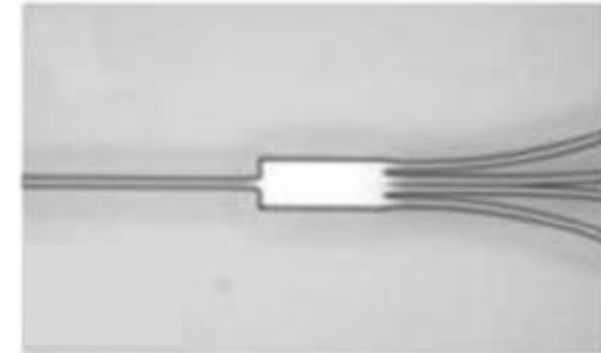
1.



2. & 3.



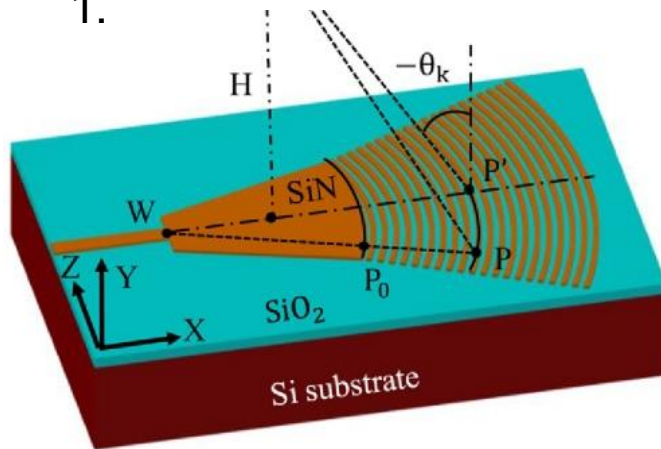
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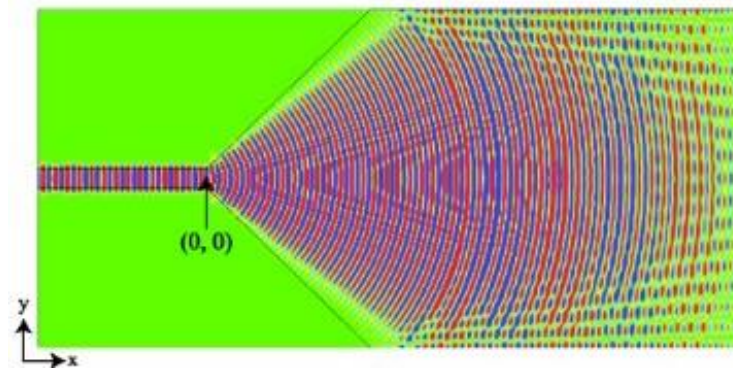
What you will be able to simulate...

- Grating coupler

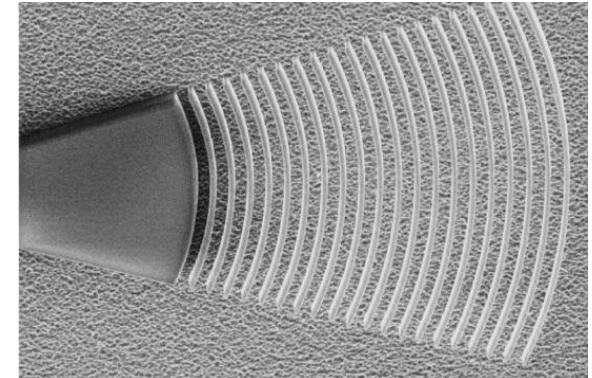
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2. & 3.



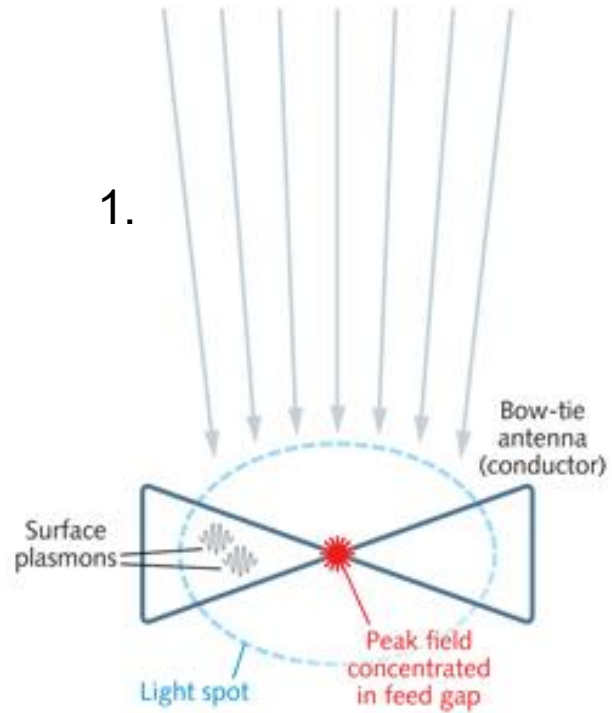
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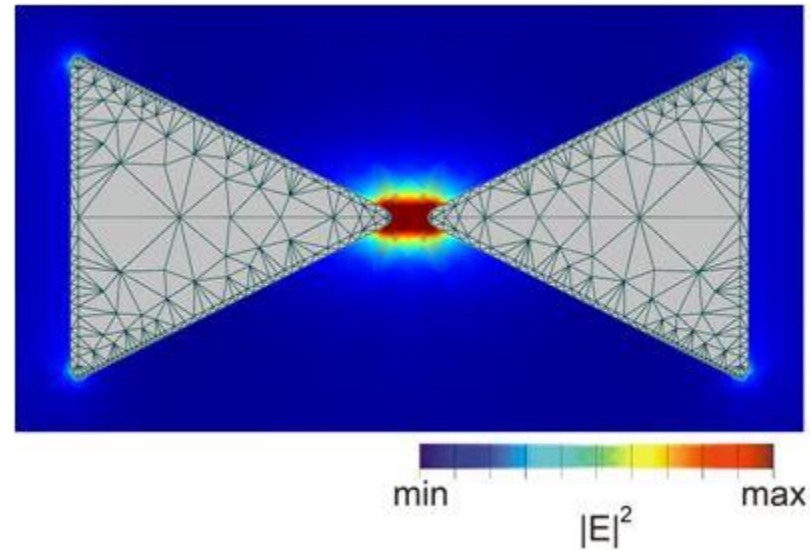
What you will be able to simulate...

- Optical Antennas

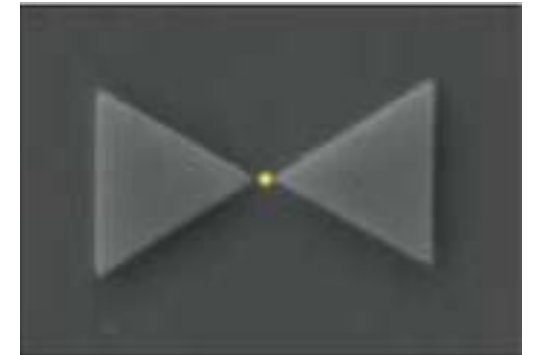
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2. & 3.



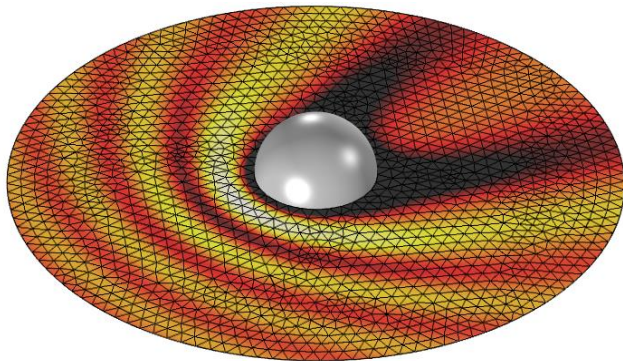
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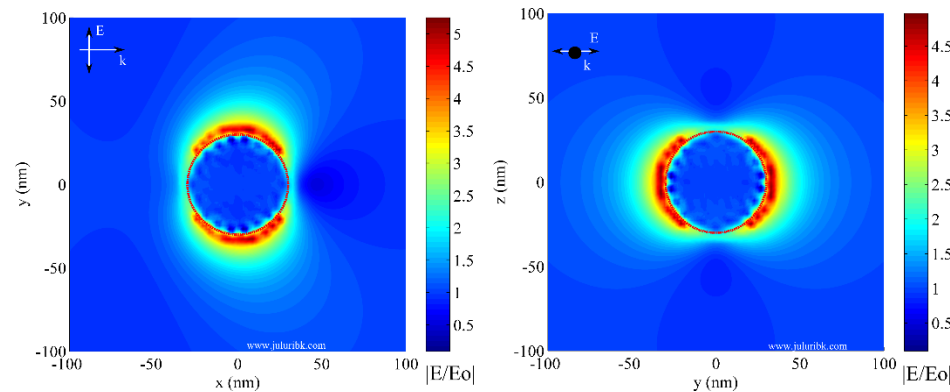
What you will be able to simulate...

- Scattering from metallic nanoparticle

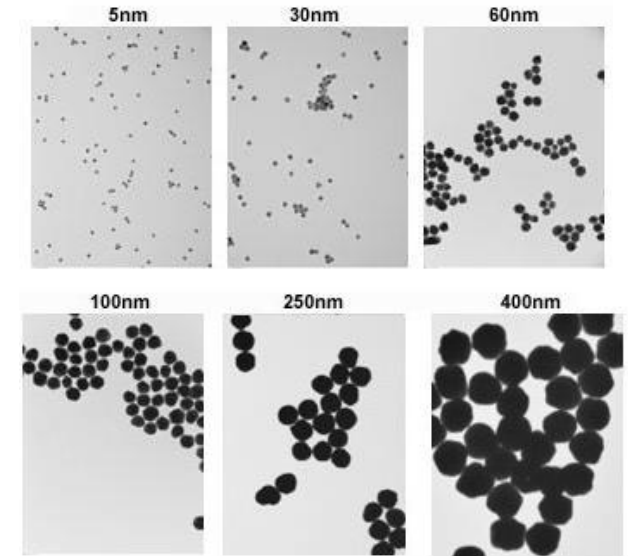
1.



2. & 3.



4.



Questions?

Tutorial

COMSOL Installation

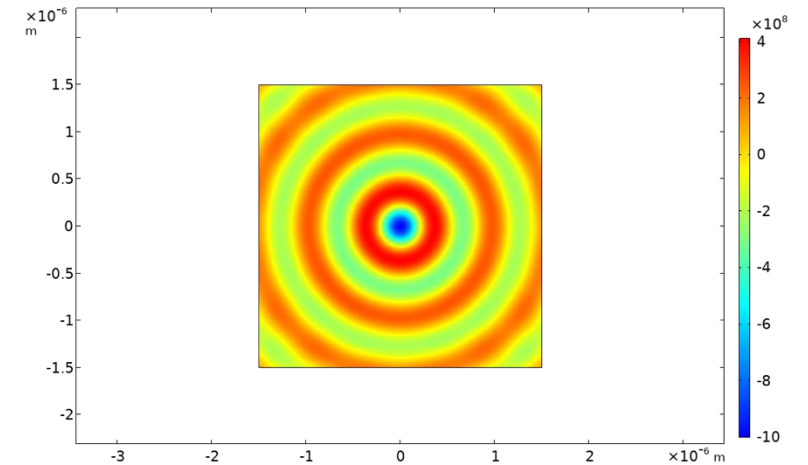
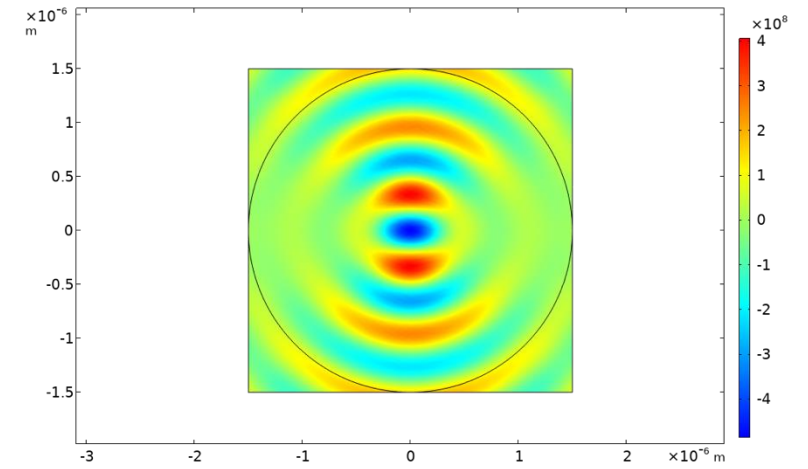
- Installation guide and license file sent by email last week.
- **Licenses are shared within whole ETH. Please avoid using COMSOL during the following time slots to not block other lectures:**
 - 08:00–12:00 Mondays
 - 14:00–18:00 Wednesdays
 - 08:00–12:00 Thursdays

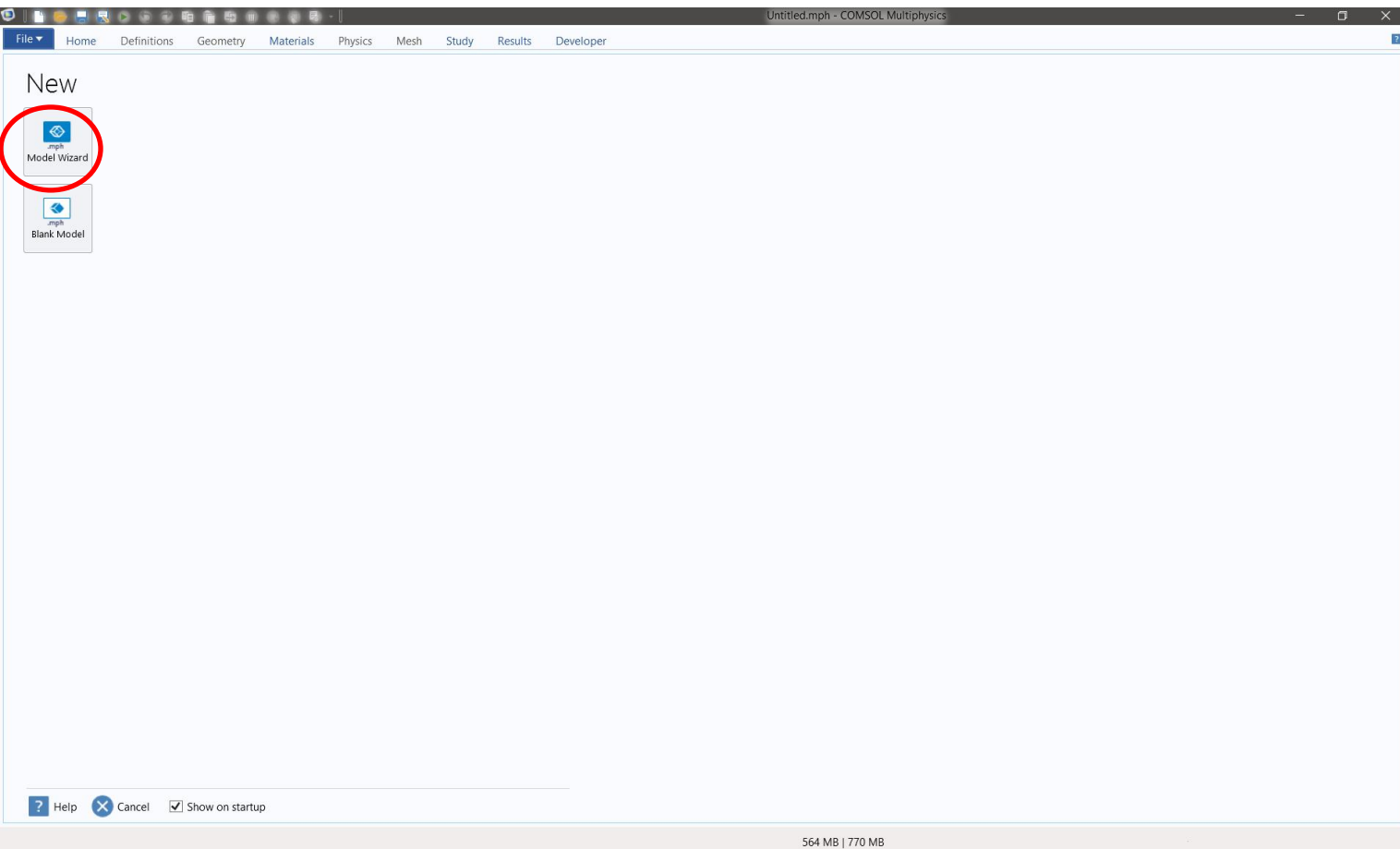
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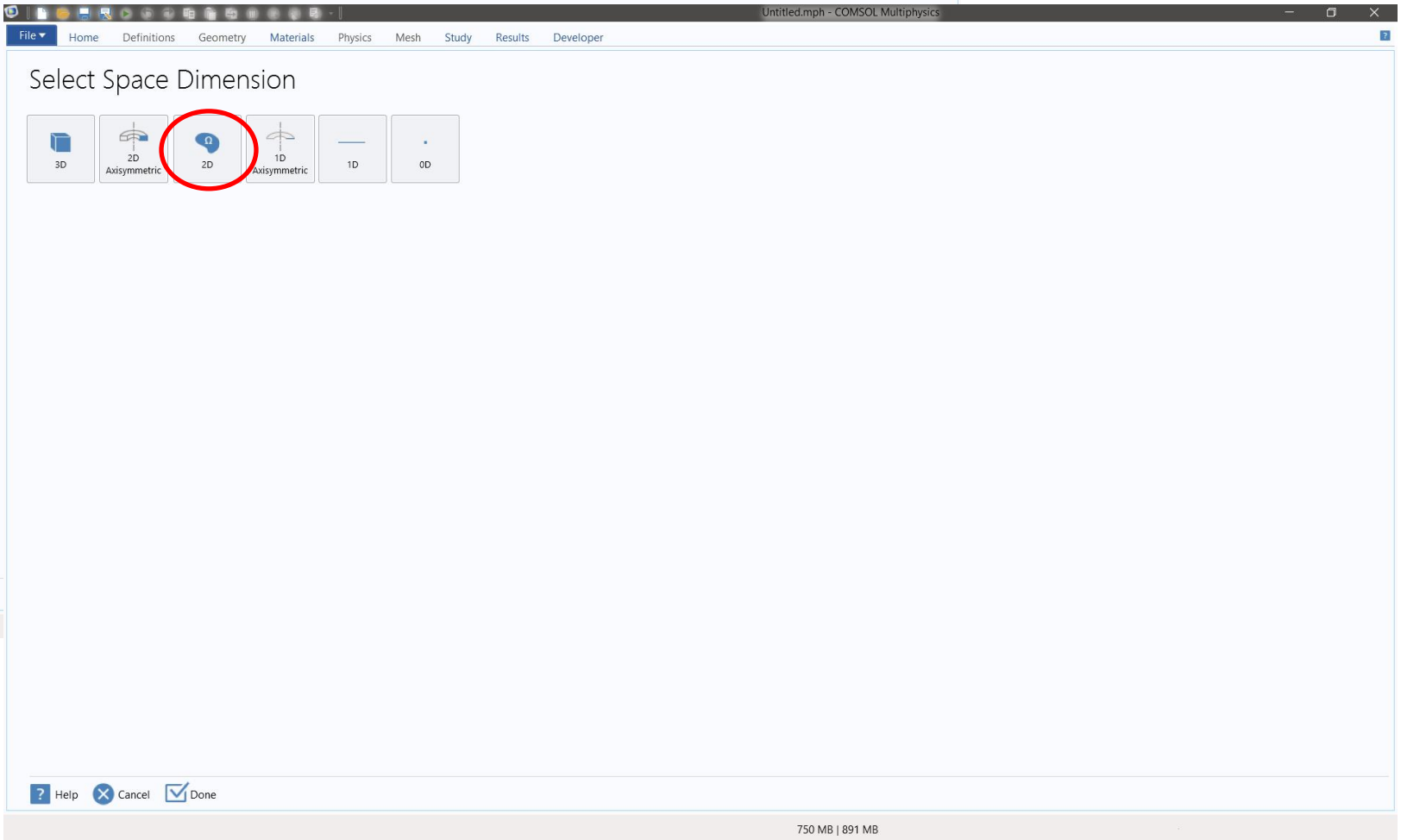
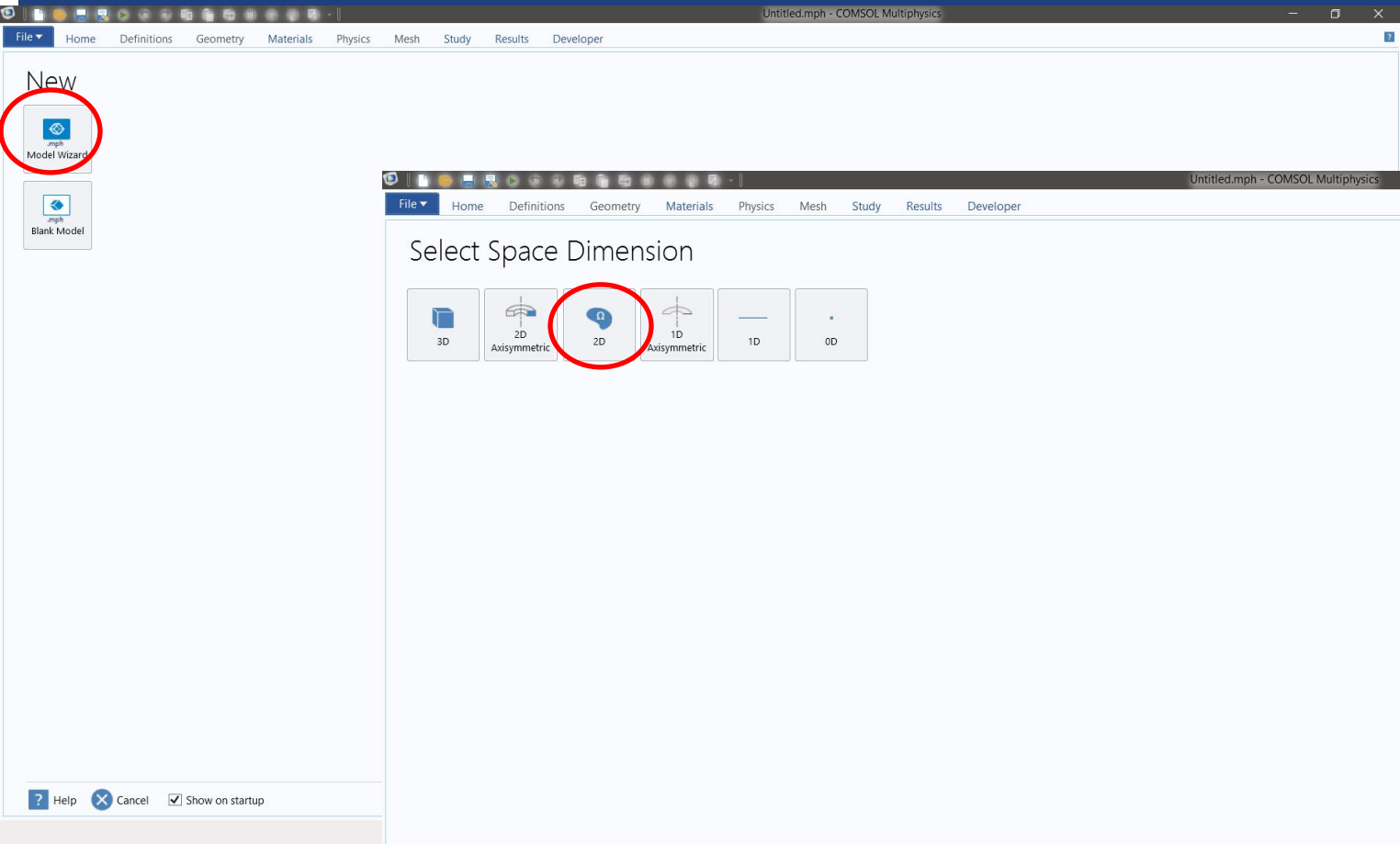
Please **DON'T** share the guide and license file outside this class.

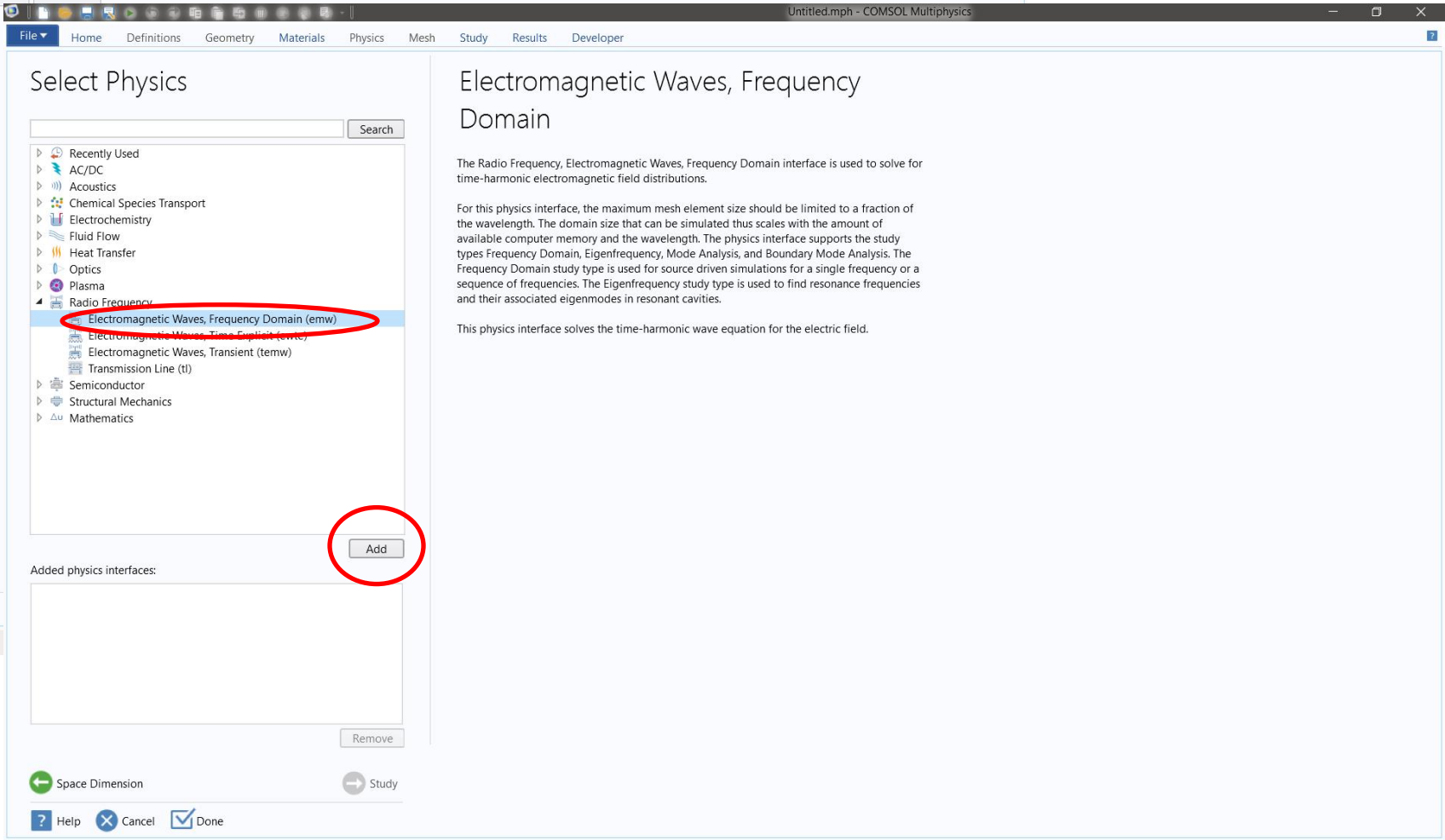
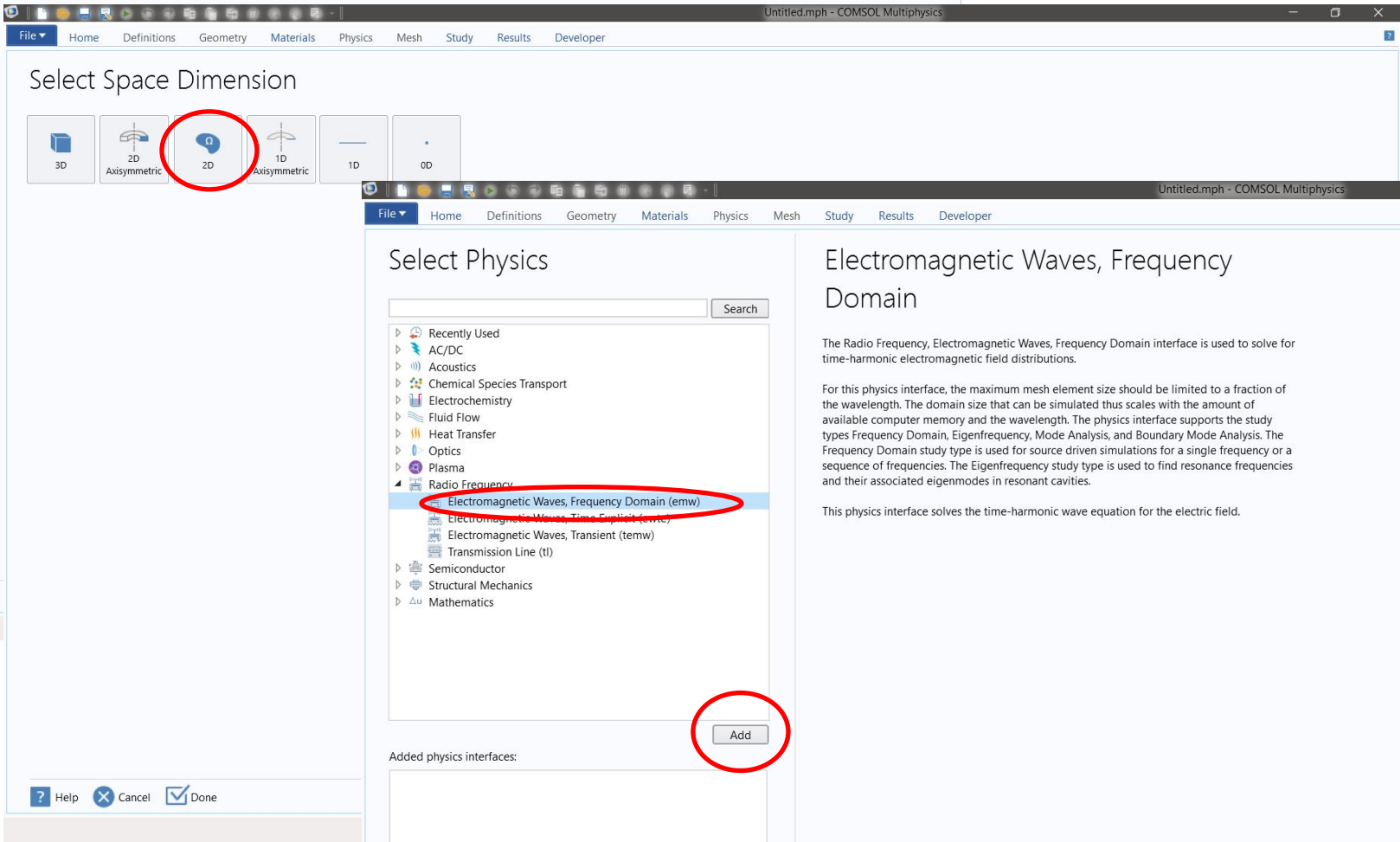
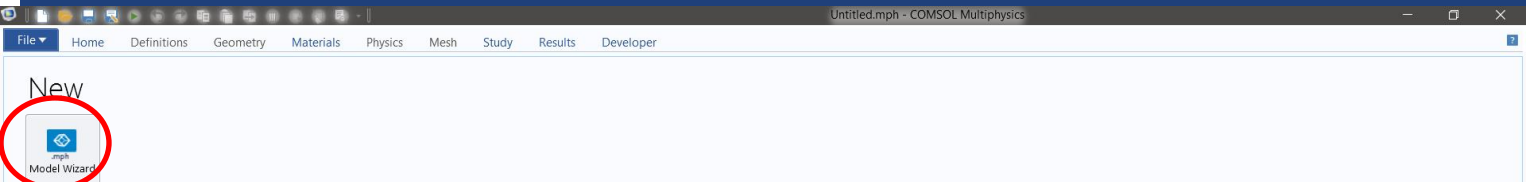
Tutorial 1 – Single Point Source

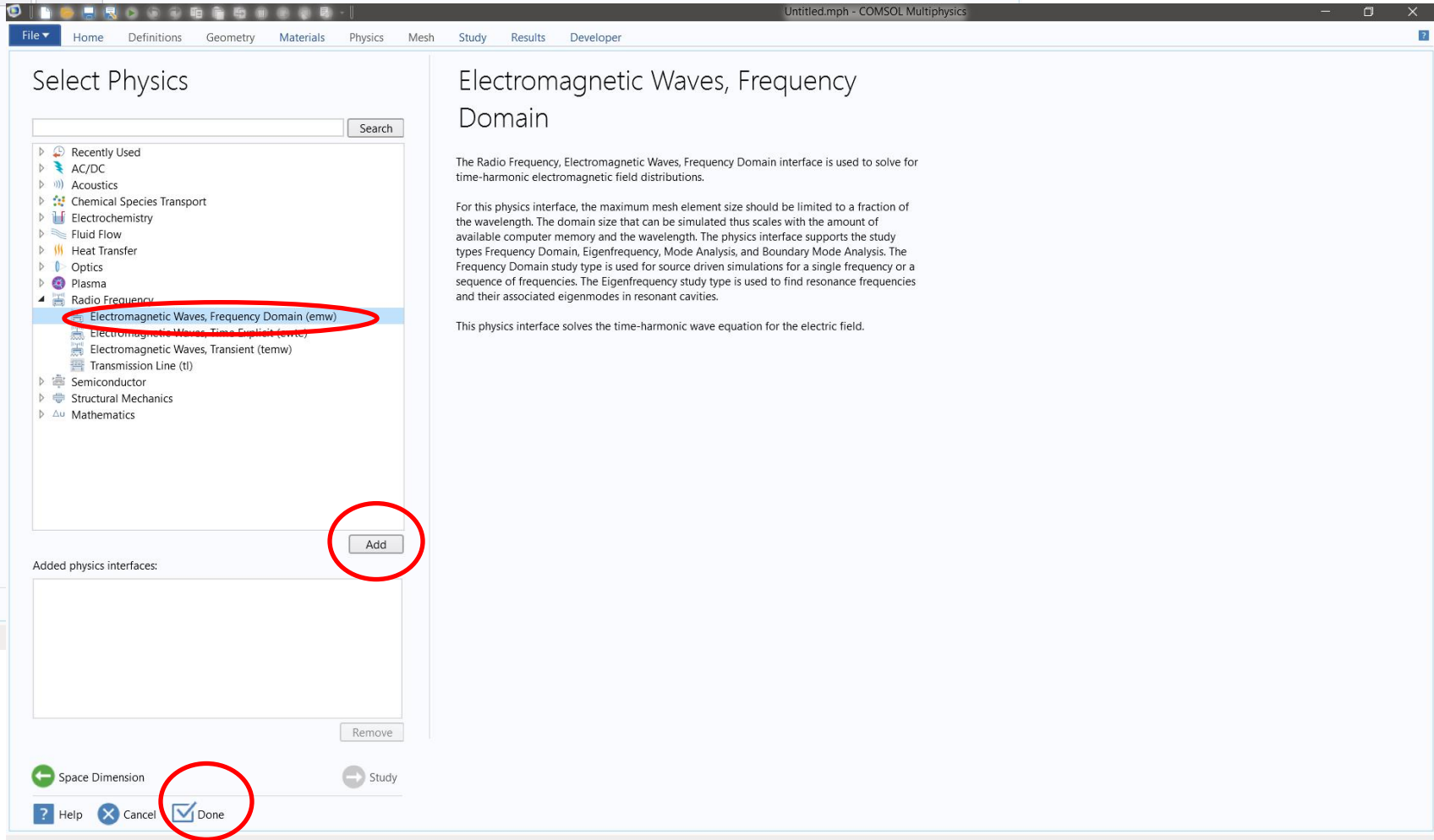
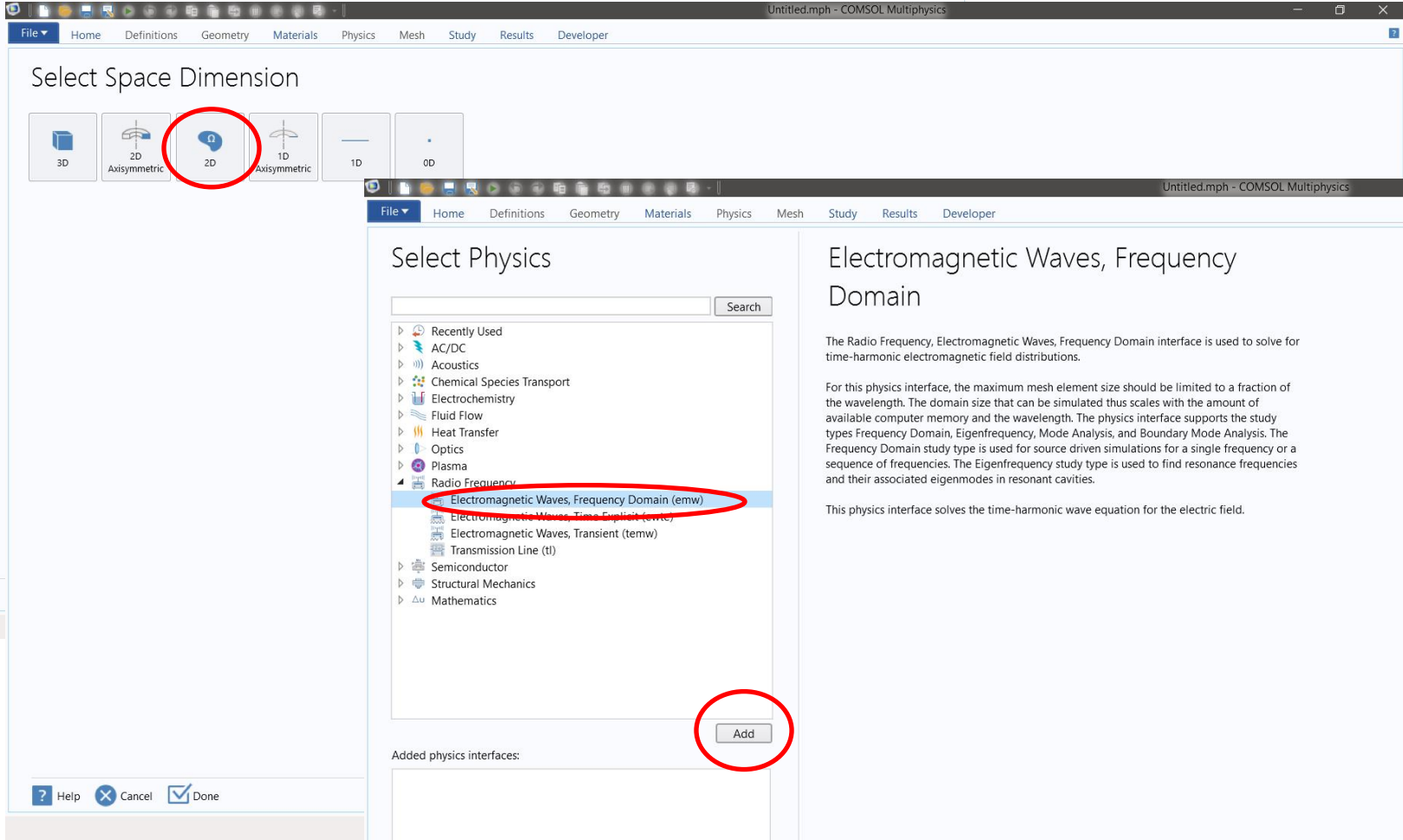
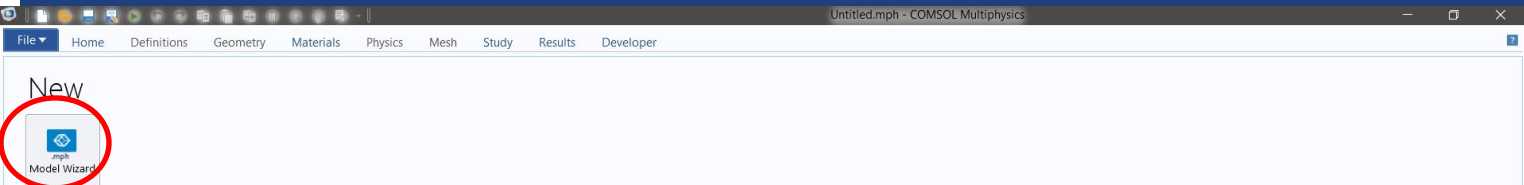
- Radiation of a single point source in infinitely large space
 - Electric dipole
 - Line current
- Plot functions
 - Electric field and different components
 - Radiation pattern

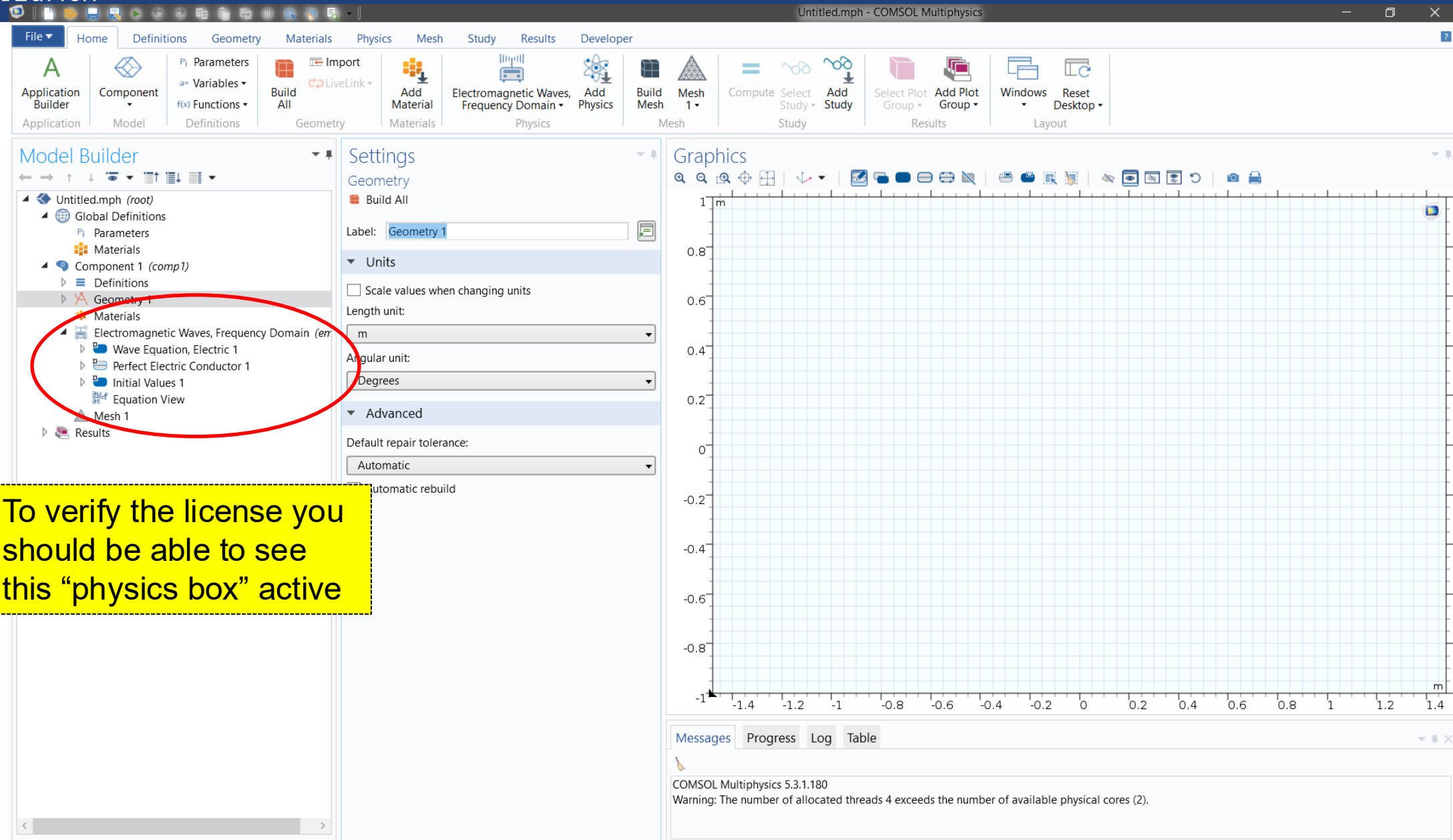












File Home Definitions Geometry Materials Physics Mesh Study Results Developer

Application Builder Component Parameters Variables Functions Build All Import LiveLink Add Material Electromagnetic Waves, Frequency Domain Add Physics Build Mesh Mesh 1 Compute Select Study Add Study Select Plot Group Add Plot Group Windows Reset Desktop Layout

Model Builder

- Untitled.mph (root)
 - Global Definitions
 - Parameters
 - Materials
 - Component 1 (comp1)
 - Definitions
 - Geometry 1
 - Materials
 - Electromagnetic Waves, Frequency Domain (em)
 - Wave Equation, Electric 1
 - Perfect Electric Conductor 1
 - Initial Values 1
 - Equation View
 - Mesh 1
 - Results

Settings

Geometry

Build All

Label: Geometry 1

Units

☐ Scale values when changing units

Length unit: m

Angular unit: Degrees

Advanced

Default repair tolerance: Automatic

Automatic rebuild

Graphics

Messages Progress Log Table

COMSOL Multiphysics 5.3.1.180

Warning: The number of allocated threads 4 exceeds the number of available physical cores (2).

To verify the license you should be able to see this “physics box” active

PointSource.mph - COMSOL Multiphysics

File Home Definitions Geometry Sketch Materials Physics Mesh Study Results Developer

Application Builder Model Manager Component 1 Add Component Parameters Variables Functions Import Build All Part Libraries Add Material Electromagnetic Waves, Frequency Domain Add Physics Add Mathematics Build Mesh Mesh 1 Compute Study 1 Add Study Electric Field (emw) Add Plot Group Add Predefined Plot Windows Reset Desktop Layout

Model Builder

Type filter text

- PointSource.mph (root)
 - Global Definitions**
 - Parameters 1
 - Default Model Inputs
 - Materials
 - Component 1 (comp 1)
 - Definitions
 - Geometry 1
 - Simulation Space (sq 1)
 - Point Source (pt 1)
 - Circle 1 (c 1)
 - Form Union (fun)
 - Materials
 - Electromagnetic Waves, Frequency Domain (emw)
 - Mesh 1
 - Study 1
 - Results
 - Datasets
 - Derived Values
 - Tables
 - Electric Field (emw)
 - Polar Plot Group 2
 - Export
 - Reports

Settings

Parameters

Label: Parameters 1

Name	Expression	Value	Description
wl	600[nm]	6E-7 m	
f0	c_const/wl	4.9965E14 1/s	
n	1	1	
L	3[um]	3E-6 m	

Graphics

16 $\times 10^{-7}$ m

-16 $\times 10^{-6}$ m

-3.5 -3 -2.5 -2 -1.5 -1 -0.5 0 0.5 1 1.5 2 2.5 3 3.5

Messages Progress Log Table

COMSOL Multiphysics 6.2.0.278
[Feb 25, 2025, 10:56 AM] Opened file: D:\Xinzh\PointSource.mph

1.08 GB | 1.08 GB

Add parameters in
Global scope

The screenshot displays the COMSOL Multiphysics 6.2.0.278 interface. The top menu bar includes File, Home, Definitions, Geometry, Sketch, Materials, Physics, Mesh, Study, Results, and Developer. The toolbar contains icons for Application Builder, Model Manager, Component 1, Add Component, Parameters, Functions, Build All, LiveLink, Add Material, Electromagnetic Waves, Add Physics, Add Mathematics, Build Mesh, Mesh 1, Compute, Study 1, Add Study, Electric Field (emw), Add Plot Group, Add Predefined Plot, Windows, and Reset Desktop.

The **Model Builder** window on the left shows the project hierarchy for **PointSource.mph (root)**. Under **Component 1 (comp 1)**, the **Geometry 1** folder is expanded, and the **Domain (sq 1)** object is highlighted with a red circle. Other objects in the hierarchy include **Point Source (pt 1)** and **Form Union (fin)**.

The **Settings** window in the center shows the configuration for the selected **Domain** object. The **Object Type** is set to **Solid**. The **Size** section shows **Side length: L** in meters. The **Position** section shows the base as **Center** with coordinates **x: 0** and **y: 0** in meters. The **Rotation Angle** is set to **0** degrees.

The **Graphics** window on the right displays a 2D plot of the domain. The x-axis ranges from -3.5 to 3.5 with a scale of $\times 10^{-6}$ m. The y-axis ranges from -16 to 16 with a scale of $\times 10^{-7}$ m. A gray square representing the domain is centered at the origin.

A yellow text box with a dashed border is overlaid on the Graphics window, containing the text: **Draw the geometries to simulate in Component->Geometry**.

The bottom status bar shows the system tray with icons for Windows, search, and various applications. The taskbar displays the time as 11:00 on 25.02.2025.

PointSource.mph - COMSOL Multiphysics

File Home Definitions Geometry Sketch Materials Physics Mesh Study Results Developer

Application Builder Model Manager Component 1 Add Component Parameters f Functions Pi Parameter Case Build All Import LiveLink Part Libraries Add Material Electromagnetic Waves, Frequency Domain Add Physics Add Mathematics Build Mesh Mesh 1 Compute Study 1 Add Study Electric Field (emw) Add Plot Group Add Predefined Plot Windows Reset Desktop

Model Builder

Type filter text

- PointSource.mph (root)
 - Global Definitions
 - Parameters 1
 - Default Model Inputs
 - Materials
 - Component 1 (comp 1)
 - Definitions
 - Geometry 1
 - Domain (sq 1)
 - Point Source (pt 1)
 - Form Union (fin)
 - Materials
 - Material 1 (mat 1)
 - Electromagnetic Waves, Frequency Domain (emw)
 - Mesh 1
 - Study 1
 - Results
 - Datasets
 - Derived Values
 - Tables
 - Electric Field (emw)
 - Polar Plot Group 2
 - Export
 - Reports

Settings

Material

Label: Material 1

Name: mat1

Geometric Entity Selection

Geometric entity level: Domain

Selection: Manual

1

Override

Material Properties

Material Contents

Property	Variable	Value	Unit	Property group
☒ Refractive index, real part	n_iso...	n	1	Refractive index
☒ Refractive index, imaginary part	ki_iso...	0	1	Refractive index

Graphics

16 x 10⁻⁷ m

14

12

10

8

6

4

2

0

-2

-4

-6

-8

-10

-12

-14

-16

-3.5 -3 -2.5 -2 -1.5 -1 -0.5 0 0.5 1 1.5 2 2.5 3 3.5 x 10⁻⁶ m

Messages Progress Log Table

COMSOL Multiphysics 6.2.0.278

[25, 2025, 10:56 AM] Opened file: D:\Xinzh\PointSource.mph

[25, 2025, 11:00 AM] Formed union of 1 solid object and 1 point object.

[Feb 25, 2025, 11:00 AM] Finalized geometry has 1 domain, 4 boundaries, and 5 vertices.

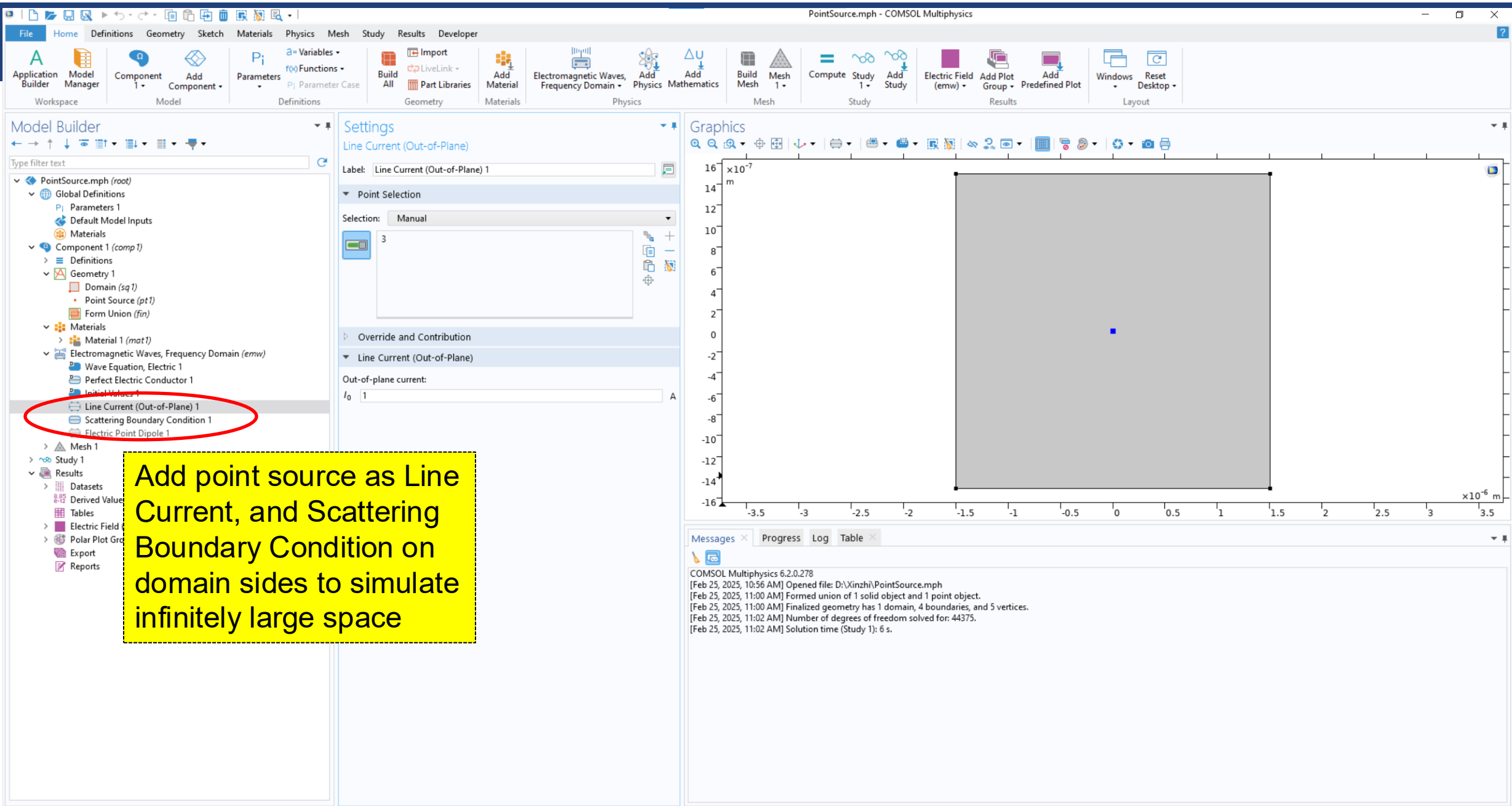
1.21 GB | 1.2 GB

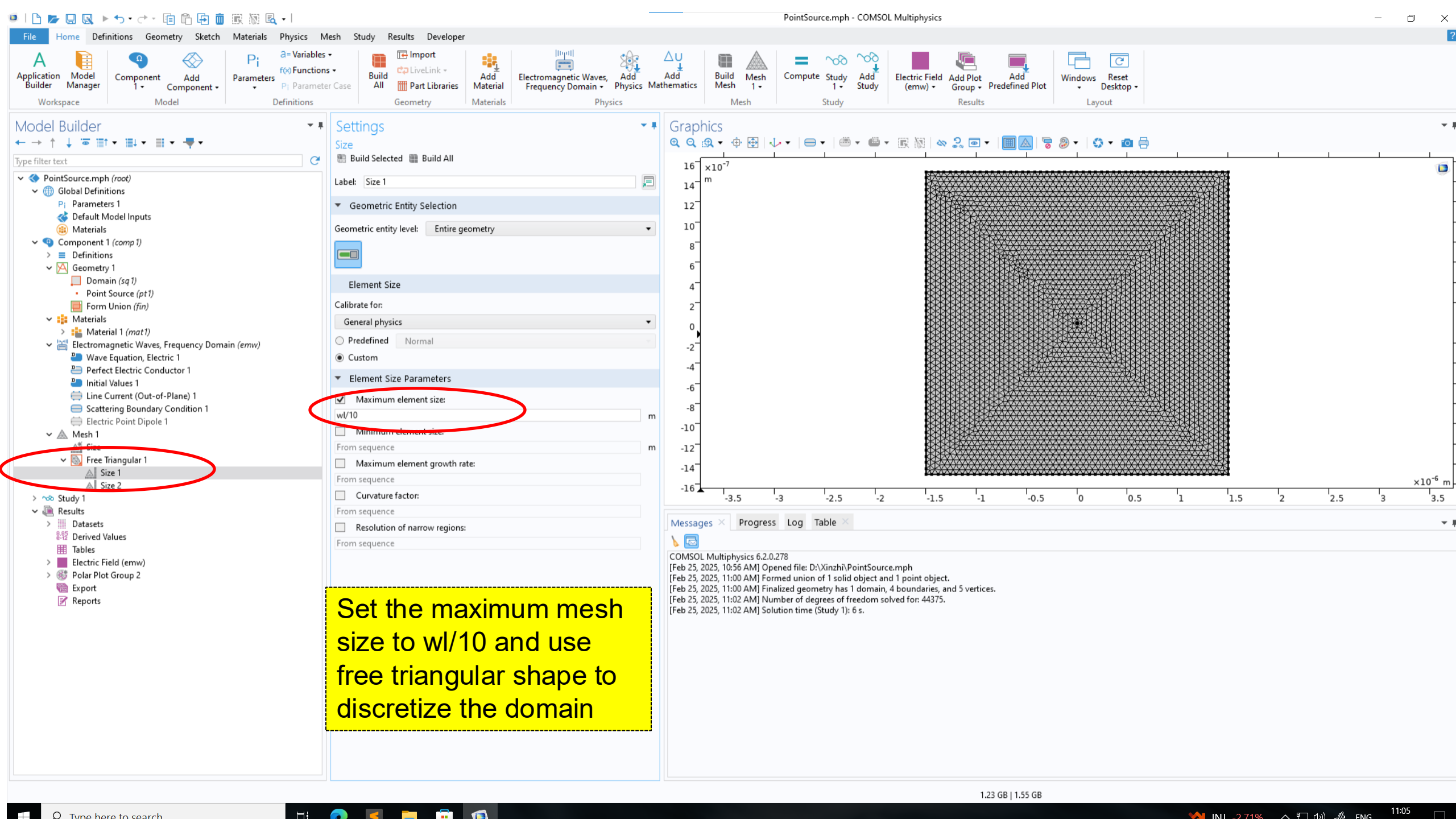
Type here to search

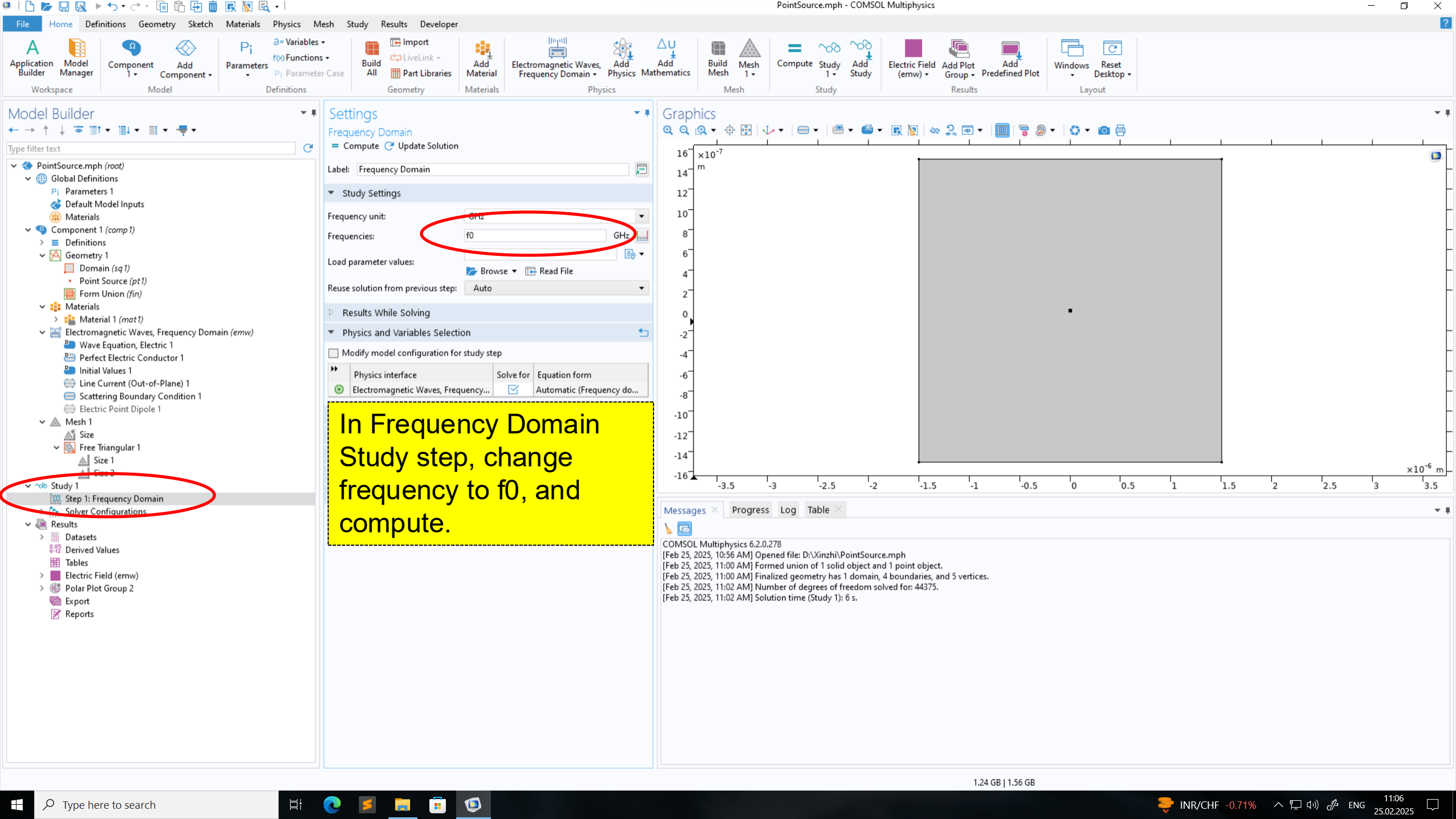
LLY +1.28%

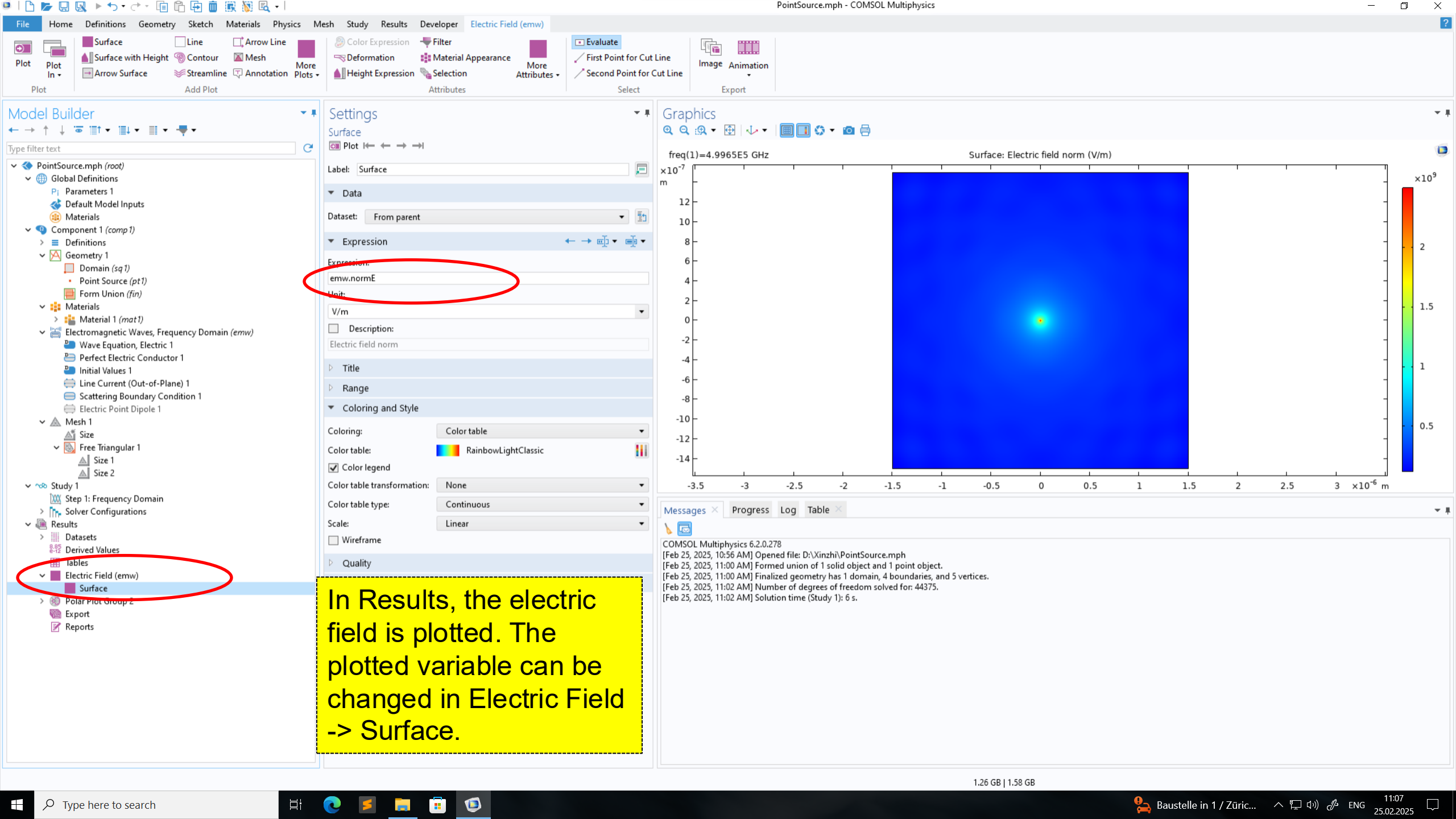
ENG 11:01 25.02.2025

59



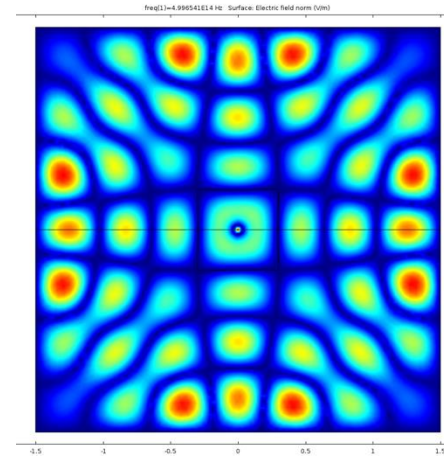




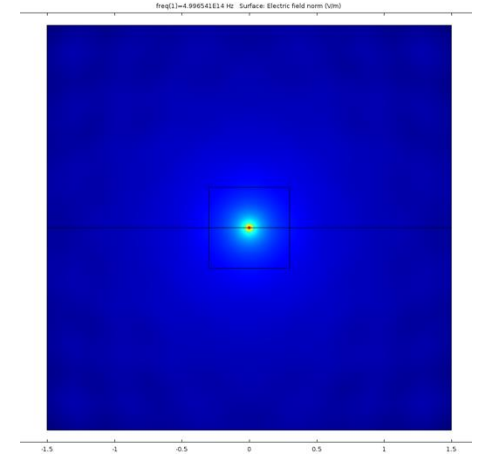


COMSOL: Boundary Condition

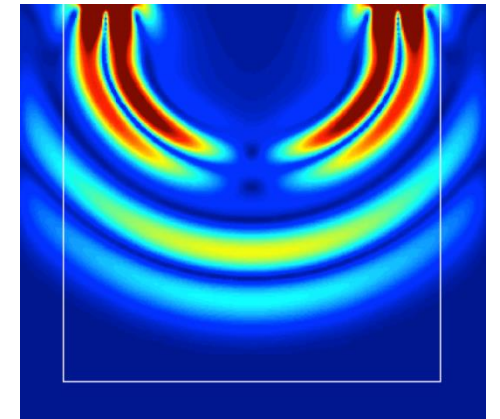
- Purpose of boundary conditions → define simulation domain
- Types of boundary conditions in COMSOL
 - Perfect Electric Conductor (PEC)
 - Perfect Magnetic Conductor (PMC)
 - Scattering Boundary Condition
 - Periodic Boundary Condition (PBC)
 - Perfectly Matched Layer (PML)



PEC Boundaries



Scattering Boundaries



PML Boundaries