

Embedding the 125 GeV Higgs boson measured at the LHC in an effective MSSM: possible implications for neutralino dark matter

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(Dated: April 18, 2013)

We analyze the phenomenological consequences of assuming that the 125 GeV boson measured at the LHC coincides with one of the two CP-even Higgs bosons of an effective Minimal Supersymmetric extension of the Standard Model at the electroweak scale. We consider the two ensuing scenarios and discuss critically the role of the various experimental data (mainly obtained at colliders and at B-factories) which provide actual or potential constraints to supersymmetric properties. Within these scenarios, properties of neutralinos as dark matter particles are analyzed from the point of view of their cosmological abundance and rates for direct and indirect detections.

I. INTRODUCTION

It is remarkable that the neutral boson with a mass of 125–126 GeV, measured at the LHC in the diphoton, ZZ , WW and $\tau\tau$ channels (hereafter denoted by H_{125}) [1], can be interpreted as the Higgs particle of the Standard Model (SM). However, due to the well known problems of quadratic divergences related to the Higgs mass, a pressing question is whether this newly discovered Higgs-like particle can be interpreted within a supersymmetric extension of the SM, where the problem of divergences would be solved by boson-fermion loop cancellations. Should this be the case, a very rich and intriguing phenomenology would open up [2–16].

Here we investigate this possibility in detail, also in connection with possible implications for supersymmetric candidates of dark matter (DM) in the Universe. We employ a simple supersymmetric model, which we already used in previous analyses [8, 17–19], consisting in an effective Minimal Supersymmetric extension of the Standard Model (MSSM) at the electroweak (EW) scale, where the usual hypothesis of gaugino-mass unification at the scale of Grand Unification (GUT) of a supergravity (SUGRA) model, is removed; this effective MSSM is very manageable, since expressible in terms of a limited number of independent parameters.

The Higgs sector of this MSSM has two Higgs doublets, which generate, by spontaneous symmetry breaking, two vev 's: v_1 and v_2 . These provide masses to the down-type quarks and the up-type quarks, respectively. As usual, an angle β is introduced and defined as $\tan\beta = v_2/v_1$. This Higgs sector contains three neutral bosons: two CP-even, h, H , and a CP-odd one A . The two CP-even Higgs bosons are defined, in terms of the neutral components of

the original Higgs doublets, as: $H = \cos\alpha H_1^0 + \sin\alpha H_2^0$, $h = -\sin\alpha H_1^0 + \cos\alpha H_2^0$. In the diagonalization of their mass matrix, the mass hierarchy $m_h < m_H$ is imposed, and the angle α is taken in the range $[-\pi/2, \pi/2]$.

The lower bound on m_h can be established using the LEP data on the search for Higgs particles [20]. Contrary to the usual assumption (employed in most of the literature until very recently) of assuming for this lower limit the *Standard Model* bound $m_h > 114$ GeV, in our previous works (and in the present one) we take the actual LEP constraint on the Higgs-production cross sections, that can be translated into a bound on the quantity $\sin^2(\alpha - \beta)$ as a function of m_h (this quantity represents the ratio of the cross section for the Higgs-strahlung process $e^+e^- \rightarrow Zh$ to the corresponding SM cross section; a complementary bound arises from the process $e^+e^- \rightarrow ZA$, and it is also taken into account). In Refs. [8, 17–19] we showed that the LEP limit actually allows the mass m_A to reach values as low as 90 GeV in some regions of the supersymmetric parameter space in MSSM, where the phenomenology of neutralino DM is particularly interesting.

The ATLAS and CMS data exclude that the boson A can be identified with the new particle H_{125} , but we are left with the two options: either $H \equiv H_{125}$ (hereafter denoted as scenario I) or $h \equiv H_{125}$ (scenario II).

As pointed out in Ref. [8], scenario I arises naturally in the supersymmetric scheme considered in Refs. [17–19], when m_h is taken as light as possible (compatibly with the mentioned LEP bound). In fact, in this regime one has $m_h \sim m_A \simeq (90 - 100)$ GeV, and $m_H \simeq (115 - 130)$ GeV [8]. This scenario has also been discussed in Refs. [4, 9, 12, 13, 15]. As remarked in Ref. [12, 21], the light h boson of this scenario could be the origin of the small excess of Higgs-like events observed at LEP [22].

The second option is represented by scenario II: this scenario occurs, when the Higgs-like boson observed at LHC is identified with the lighter CP-even boson h within the MSSM [2–7, 9–11, 13–16]. In this case, $m_h \simeq (125 - 126)$ GeV and A, H can also decouple substantially from h , but with $m_A \simeq m_H$.

In this paper we analyse separately scenarios I and II, critically discussing the role of the various experimental data (mainly obtained at colliders and at B-factories) which provide actual or potential constraints to supersymmetric properties. For each scenario the properties of neutralinos as DM particles are then analyzed from the point of view of their cosmological abundance and rates for direct and indirect detections.

The scheme of the presentation is the following. In Sect. II the features of the employed MSSM are described, in Sect. III a full list of conceivable constraints on the model is introduced. Results are given in Sects. IV, V, VI and conclusions in Sect. VII.

II. EFFECTIVE MSSM

The supersymmetric model we consider here is an effective MSSM scheme at the electroweak scale, with the following independent parameters: $M_1, M_2, M_3, \mu, \tan\beta, m_A, m_{\tilde{q}_{12}}, m_{\tilde{t}}, m_{\tilde{l}_{12,L}}, m_{\tilde{l}_{12,R}}, m_{\tilde{\tau}_L}, m_{\tilde{\tau}_R}$ and A . We stress that the parameters are defined at the EW scale. Notations are as follows: M_1, M_2 and M_3 are the U(1), SU(2) and SU(3) gaugino masses (these parameters are taken here to be positive), μ is the Higgs mixing mass parameter, $\tan\beta$ the ratio of the two Higgs v.e.v.'s, m_A the mass of the CP-odd neutral Higgs boson, $m_{\tilde{q}_{12}}$ is a squark soft-mass common to the squarks of the first two families, $m_{\tilde{t}}$ is the squark soft-mass for the third family, $m_{\tilde{l}_{12,L}}$ and $m_{\tilde{l}_{12,R}}$ are the slepton soft-masses common to the L,R components of the sleptons of the first two families, $m_{\tilde{\tau}_L}$ and $m_{\tilde{\tau}_R}$ are the slepton soft-masses of the L,R components of the slepton of the third family, A is a common dimensionless trilinear parameter for the third family, $A_{\tilde{t}} = A_{\tilde{t}} \equiv Am_{\tilde{t}}$ and $A_{\tilde{\tau}} \equiv A(m_{\tilde{\tau}_L} + m_{\tilde{\tau}_R})/2$ (the trilinear parameters for the other families being set equal to zero). In our model, no gaugino mass unification at a Grand Unified scale is assumed, and therefore M_1 can be sizeably lighter than M_2 . Notice that the present version of this framework represents an extension of the model discussed in our previous papers [17–19], where a common squark and the slepton soft mass was employed for the 3 families.

The linear superposition of bino \tilde{B} , wino $\tilde{W}^{(3)}$ and of the two Higgsino states $\tilde{H}_1^o, \tilde{H}_2^o$ which defines the neutralino state of lowest mass m_χ is written here as:

$$\chi \equiv a_1 \tilde{B} + a_2 \tilde{W}^{(3)} + a_3 \tilde{H}_1^o + a_4 \tilde{H}_2^o. \quad (1)$$

We assume R-parity conservation to guarantee that the lightest supersymmetric particle is stable (we consider only models where this is the neutralino).

Within our model we calculate all the quantities necessary to impose the constraints discussed in Sect. III, and the cross sections relevant for direct and indirect detection of DM neutralinos: the neutralino-nucleon cross section $\sigma_{\text{scalar}}^{(\text{nucleon})}$ and the thermally averaged product of the neutralino pair annihilation cross section times the relative velocity $\langle \sigma_{\text{ann}} v \rangle$.

The neutralino-nucleon scattering takes contributions from (h, A, H) Higgs boson exchange in the t-channel and from the squark exchange in the s-channel; the A -exchange contribution is suppressed by kinematic effects. This cross section is evaluated here according to the formulae given in Ref. [23]. For the crucial coupling parameter g_d entering the Higgs boson exchange amplitude, we take its *reference* value $g_{d,\text{ref}} = 290$ MeV employed in our previous papers [18, 19]. We recall that this quantity is affected by large uncertainties [24] with $(g_{d,\text{max}}/g_{d,\text{ref}})^2 = 3.0$ and $(g_{d,\text{min}}/g_{d,\text{ref}})^2 = 0.12$ [18, 19].

We also calculate $\langle \sigma_{\text{ann}} v \rangle_{\text{int}}$ which is the integral of $\langle \sigma_{\text{ann}} v \rangle$ from the present temperature up to the freeze-out temperature T_f , since this quantity enters the neutralino relic abundance (and, for dominant s-wave annihilation, implies $\langle \sigma_{\text{ann}} v \rangle_{\text{int}} \equiv x_f \langle \sigma_{\text{ann}} v \rangle$):

$$\Omega_\chi h^2 = \frac{x_f}{g_\star(x_f)^{1/2}} \frac{9.9 \cdot 10^{-28} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}}{\langle \sigma_{\text{ann}} v \rangle_{\text{int}}}, \quad (2)$$

where x_f is defined as $x_f \equiv m_\chi/T_f$ and $g_\star(x_f)$ denotes the relativistic degrees of freedom of the thermodynamic bath at x_f .

The values of $\Omega_\chi h^2$, as obtained from Eq. (2), are employed to exclude neutralino configurations which would provide values exceeding the upper bound for cold dark matter (CDM), $(\Omega_{\text{CDM}} h^2)_{\text{max}}$, and to rescale the local neutralino density ρ_χ , when $\Omega_\chi h^2$ turns out to be below the lower bound for CDM, $(\Omega_{\text{CDM}} h^2)_{\text{min}}$. In the latter case, we rescale ρ_χ by the factor $\xi = \rho_\chi/\rho_0$, where ρ_0 is the total local DM density; ξ is conveniently taken as $\xi = \min\{1, \Omega_\chi h^2/(\Omega_{\text{CDM}} h^2)_{\text{min}}\}$ [25].

In the present analysis, $(\Omega_{\text{CDM}} h^2)_{\text{min}}$ and $(\Omega_{\text{CDM}} h^2)_{\text{max}}$ are assigned the values: $(\Omega_{\text{CDM}} h^2)_{\text{min}} = 0.11$, $(\Omega_{\text{CDM}} h^2)_{\text{max}} = 0.13$ to conform to the new measurements by the Planck Collaboration [26].

Since the rates of DM direct detection and those of processes due to pair annihilation (with the exclusion of processes taking place in macroscopic bodies) are proportional to ρ_χ and ρ_χ^2 , respectively, in the following we will consider the quantities $\xi \sigma_{\text{scalar}}^{(\text{nucleon})}$ and $\xi^2 \langle \sigma_{\text{ann}} v \rangle$.

We calculate Higgs-boson masses and production cross sections using FeynHiggs [27].

III. CONSTRAINTS

We give here a listing of requirements and constraints derived from a rich set of experimental data. In Sects. III A – III B are indicated the requirements which are essential to qualify the model we are considering. Sect. III C reports other constraints which can potentially bound the physical region of the supersymmetric parameter space, but whose implications for our model are more involved and thus possibly less compelling; we will also explicitly consider the possibility of relaxing some of them. This aspect will be discussed later on.

A. Constraints from the CERN e^+e^- collider LEP2

These constraints take into account all data on supersymmetric and Higgs boson searches [28] done at LEP2 (some of which are improved by those obtained at the Tevatron and LHC, as discussed in the next subsection) as well as the upper bound on the invisible width for the decay of the Z -boson into non Standard Model particles: $\Gamma(Z \rightarrow \chi\chi) < 3 \text{ MeV}$ [29, 30].

B. Constraints from the Tevatron and the LHC

Bounds on searches for supersymmetry from Tevatron and LHC are implemented as schematically outlined below. The observation of a Higgs-like particle seen at the LHC imposes specific requirements on the signal strengths factors for the production and decay of this boson, which have been applied as discussed below.

Signal strength factors for Higgs production/decay. In the spirit of the present analysis, in the scanning of the supersymmetric parameter space we select configurations which satisfy the following requirements, as established by the most recent results at LHC [31]:

$$0.61 < R_{\gamma\gamma} < 1.57 \quad (3)$$

$$0.75 < R_{ZZ} < 1.47 \quad (4)$$

$$0.44 < R_{WW} < 1.24 \quad (5)$$

$$0.21 < R_{\tau\tau} < 1.90, \quad (6)$$

where the ratio $R_{\gamma\gamma}$ is defined as:

$$R_{\gamma\gamma} = \frac{\sigma(p+p \rightarrow H_{125})BR(H_{125} \rightarrow \gamma + \gamma)}{\sigma_{SM}(p+p \rightarrow H_{125})BR_{SM}(H_{125} \rightarrow \gamma + \gamma)}, \quad (7)$$

and similarly for the other final states. Notice that the ranges of Eqs. (3–6) are 2σ intervals.

Bounds from search for Higgs decaying to tau pairs. An upper bound in the plane $m_A - \tan\beta$ is obtained, in our model, in an indirect way from the data reported by the CMS Collaboration in Ref. [32]. A consistency check of our procedure has been performed, by using the upper bound on the production cross section reported in Ref. [33] to obtain the corresponding upper bound in the plane $m_A - \tan\beta$.

Bounds on squark masses of the first two families and on the sbottom mass. These bounds are taken from the CMS official analysis of Ref. [34].

Bounds on the stop mass. These bounds are taken from the official ATLAS analyses of Ref. [35] for heavy stops and of Ref. [36] for light stops.

Decay $B_s \rightarrow \mu^+ + \mu^-$. We implement the constraint recently derived by the LHCb Collaboration in Ref. [37]:

$$1.1 \times 10^{-9} < BR(B_s \rightarrow \mu^+ + \mu^-) < 6.4 \times 10^{-9} \quad (8)$$

This is a 95 % C.L. limit.

Search for the decay $t \rightarrow b + H^+$.

Whenever relevant, we have adopted the ATLAS $2-\sigma$ upper bound on the branching ratio $B(t \rightarrow b + H^+)$ as reported in Ref. [38].

C. Constraints from B factories and from $(g-2)_\mu$ measurements

Flavor physics experiments are providing stringent bounds on many physical processes that can be sizably affected by supersymmetric virtual corrections. Here we list the most relevant ones for our analysis in the specific model we are assuming.

Measurement of the branching ratio of $b \rightarrow s + \gamma$. The rate for the branching ratio of the process $b \rightarrow s + \gamma$ is taken here as $2.89 \times 10^{-4} < BR(b \rightarrow s\gamma) < 4.21 \times 10^{-4}$. This interval is larger by 25% with respect to the experimental determination [39] in order to take into account theoretical uncertainties in the supersymmetric contributions [40] to the branching ratio of the process. For the Standard Model calculation, we employ the NNLO results from Ref. [41].

Search for the decay $B \rightarrow \tau + \nu$. We use here the range $0.38 \times 10^{-4} < BR(B \rightarrow \tau + \nu) < 1.42 \times 10^{-4}$ (world average at 95 % C.L.) [42].

Search for the decay $B \rightarrow D + \tau + \nu$. A new range for the quantity $R(D) \equiv BR(B \rightarrow D\tau\nu)/BR(B \rightarrow D\tau\nu)$ has been established by the BABAR Collaboration [43]: $30.0 \times 10^{-2} < R(D) < 58.8 \times 10^{-2}$ (2σ interval).

Muon anomalous magnetic moment $(g-2)_\mu$. We take the conservative 2σ range $3.1 \times 10^{-10} \leq \Delta a_\mu \leq$

Scenario I	
$\tan\beta$	(4, 6)
μ	(1800, 2000) GeV
M_1	(40, 80) GeV
M_2	(180, 800) GeV
M_3	~ 2000 GeV
$m_{\tilde{q}_{12}}$	(1400, 1600) GeV
$m_{\tilde{t}}$	(1400, 1600) GeV
$m_{\tilde{t}_{1,L}}, m_{\tilde{t}_{1,R}}$	~ 500 GeV
$m_{\tilde{\tau}_L}, m_{\tilde{\tau}_R}$	(120, 200) GeV
m_A	(100, 120) GeV
$ A $	(2.5, 2.8)

TABLE I: Values and intervals for the MSSM parameters outlined by the LHC bounds for Scenario I.

47.9×10^{-10} for the deviation $\Delta a_\mu \equiv a_\mu^{\text{exp}} - a_\mu^{\text{the}}$ of the experimental world average of $a_\mu \equiv (g_\mu - 2)/2$ [44] from the theoretical evaluation[45] (in the latter we estimate the leading hadronic vacuum polarization contribution in the Standard Model by combining the two determinations estimated from e^+e^- and τ -decay data). We evaluate the supersymmetric contributions to the muon anomalous magnetic moment within the MSSM by using the formulae in Ref. [46].

IV. SELECTION OF SUPERSYMMETRIC CONFIGURATIONS AND NEUTRALINO RELIC ABUNDANCE

Here we provide the results of our analysis for scenarios I and II, regarding the selection of supersymmetric configurations and the neutralino relic abundance. The mass interval for the LHC Higgs-like particle is taken here as $123 \text{ GeV} \leq m_{H_{125}} \leq 129 \text{ GeV}$.

A. Scenario I: $H \equiv H_{125}$

This scenario is defined by identifying the heavier CP-even Higgs neutral boson H of the MSSM with the LHC Higgs-like particle, *i.e.* $H \equiv H_{125}$. This implies that the mass interval for H_{125} obtained at the LHC has to be attained by H ($123 \text{ GeV} \leq m_H \leq 129 \text{ GeV}$), and this entails $m_h \sim m_A \simeq (90 - 100) \text{ GeV}$, as already noticed above. The LHC constraints on the production rates in the various channels detailed in Eqs. (3–6) select the sector of supersymmetric parameter space reported

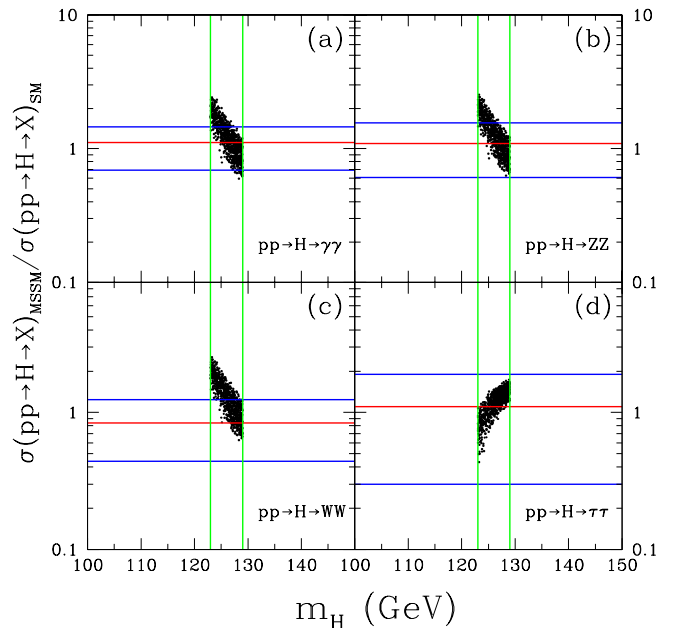


FIG. 1: Scenario I – Signal strength factors as defined in Eq. (7) for the production and decay of the heavy Higgs H when $123 \text{ GeV} \leq m_H \leq 129 \text{ GeV}$. (a): $R_{\gamma\gamma}$; (b): R_{ZZ} ; (c): R_{WW} ; (d): $R_{\tau\tau}$. The horizontal lines denote the allowed intervals obtained at the LHC, and given in Eq.(3,4,5,6).

in Table I. ¹

The most peculiar feature of this region is represented by the high values of the parameter μ , a property which agrees with the findings of Refs. [4, 13, 15] and appears to be related to the constraint imposed by Eq. (3) on $R_{\gamma\gamma}$, as remarked in Ref. [13]. We also notice that the sector of parameter space defined in Table I has some similarities with the scenario denoted by *low- M_H* in Ref. [15], though it differs in one important feature: in our case the slepton masses (most notably the mass parameters for $\tilde{\tau}_L$ and $\tilde{\tau}_R$) are significantly lower. These are the prerequisites for having configurations where the neutralino relic abundance does not exceed the cosmological bound.

The properties of the solutions we have found are displayed in Figs. 1 – 4. In Fig. 1 we show the signal strength factors for Higgs production and decay at the LHC; we notice how a sizable subset of our population of supersymmetric configurations fits quite well all LHC data on these factors. This population satisfies also the

¹ For the lower bound on the slepton masses we use here the LEP values $m_{\tilde{l}} \gtrsim 80\text{--}100 \text{ GeV}$ (depending on flavour) [30]. These lower bounds actually depend on the condition that $m_{\tilde{l}} - m_{\chi_1} > \mathcal{O}(3\text{--}15) \text{ GeV}$. If these conditions are not met, the slepton lower bound can decrease to about 40 GeV, with relevant implications for the neutralino phenomenology, as discussed in Ref. [47].

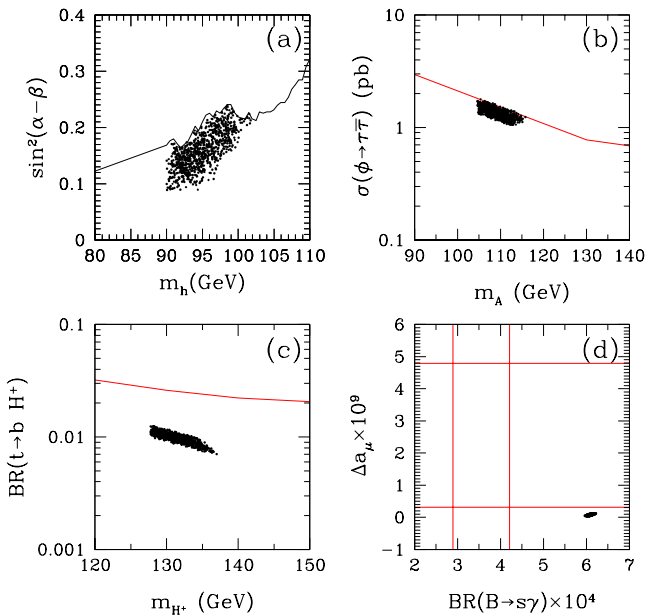


FIG. 2: Scenario I – Some of the experimental constraints discussed in Section III are compared to the corresponding theoretical expectations for the supersymmetric configurations reported in Table I and Fig. 1. Panels (a)–(c) correspond to collider constraints: (a) LEP bound on the higgs production cross-section, reported in terms of the coupling factor $\sin^2(\alpha - \beta)$ [28]; (b) CMS bound on Higgs production and subsequent decay into $\tau\bar{\tau}$ [32] (the production cross section refers to $\phi = A$ unless $m_A \simeq m_h$ or $m_A \simeq m_H$, in which case $\phi = A, h$ or $\phi = A, H$, respectively); (c) ATLAS upper bound on the branching ratio $\text{BR}(t \rightarrow bH^+)$ [38]. Panel (d) shows the extent of deviations from the two constraints on $\text{BR}(b \rightarrow s + \gamma)$ and $(g - 2)_\mu$.

other relevant constraints from colliders as depicted in panels (a)–(c) of Fig. 2. Panel (d) of Fig. 2, instead, shows that predictions for $\text{BR}(b \rightarrow s + \gamma)$ and $(g - 2)_\mu$ in scenario I deviate from the experimental bounds discussed in Sect. III C. A minimal deviation occurs for $(g - 2)_\mu$, whereas a deviation of about 4σ occurs for $\text{BR}(b \rightarrow s + \gamma)$. Therefore scenario I, which is perfectly viable as far as accelerators data are concerned, is in tension with the experimental bounds when also flavor physics determinations are included (this will not be the case for scenario II, as discussed below). Contrary to accelerator physics constraints, these are indirect bounds and rely to some degree of cancellation of various terms [19], which may not be fully under theoretical control. We therefore discuss the implications of scenario I for dark matter, nevertheless reminding that this scenario exhibit a significant level of tension with indirect bounds on supersymmetry.

In the present scenario the neutralino mass sits in the range: $m_\chi \simeq (40 - 85)$ GeV. As shown in Fig. 3,

Scenario II	
$\tan \beta$	(4, 20)
$ \mu $	(100, 400) GeV
M_1	(40, 170) GeV
M_2	(100, 1000) GeV
M_3	~ 2000 GeV
$m_{\tilde{q}_{12}}$	(700, 2000) GeV
$m_{\tilde{t}}$	(700, 1200) GeV
$m_{\tilde{t}_{12,L}}, m_{\tilde{t}_{12,R}}, m_{\tilde{\tau}_L}, m_{\tilde{\tau}_R}$	(80, 1000) GeV
m_A	(200, 1000) GeV
$ A $	(1.5, 2.5)

TABLE II: Values and intervals for the MSSM parameters outlined by the LHC bounds for Scenario II.

most of our configurations have a sizable neutralino relic abundance. Fig. 4 illustrates the contributions of different annihilation channels to the integrated cross section $\langle \sigma_{\text{ann}} v \rangle_{\text{int}}$; we notice that, as anticipated, light sleptons are instrumental in keeping the annihilation cross section large enough to comply with the experimental upper bound on $\Omega_\chi h^2$, since diagrams with exchange of a slepton dominate $\langle \sigma_{\text{ann}} v \rangle_{\text{int}}$ over the whole range of the available neutralino masses, with the exception of a small mass range around $m_\chi \simeq m_A/2$, where resonant annihilation through A exchange can become important. On the other hand, Z -boson exchange remains sub-dominant even close to the pole in the corresponding annihilation cross section, $m_\chi \simeq M_Z/2$, since the Z boson couples to the neutralino only through its Higgsino components, while in this scenario the neutralino is a Bino of extremely high purity, due to the very large values required for the μ parameter, as specified in Table I. Finally, for the same set of supersymmetric configurations we show in Fig. 5 the ratios $[\langle \sigma_{\text{ann}} v \rangle_i / \langle \sigma_{\text{ann}} v \rangle_{\text{tot}}]_{T=0}$ between the neutralino annihilation cross sections times velocity to the final states $i = \tau\tau, b\bar{b}$ and the total annihilation cross section times velocity, both calculated at zero temperature. The latter quantities are relevant for the evaluation of indirect signals, as discussed in Section VI. As shown in the plot, annihilation to $\tau\bar{\tau}$ (driven by the exchange of light staus) is dominant, with a sub-dominant contribution from the $b\bar{b}$ annihilation channel (which, as in the case of $\langle \sigma_{\text{ann}} v \rangle_{\text{int}}$, can become sizeable through resonant annihilation through A exchange).

B. Scenario II: $h \equiv H_{125}$

This scenario is defined by the alternative choice, that identifies the lighter CP-even Higgs neutral boson h

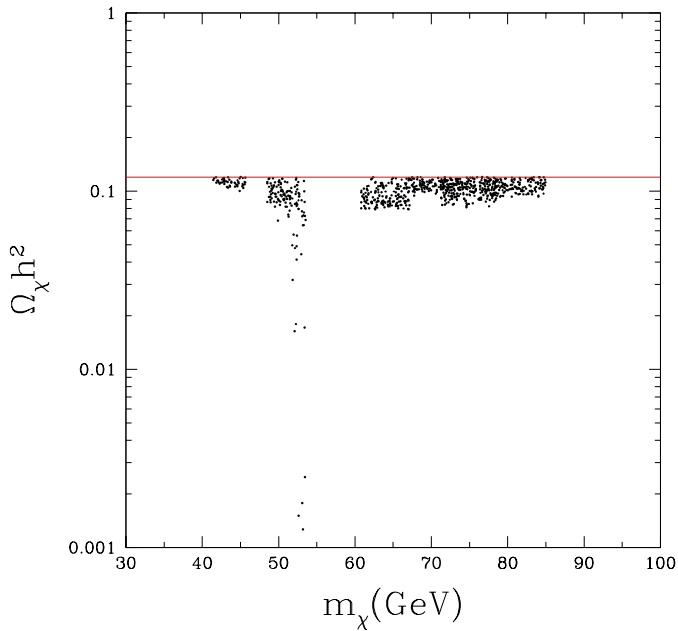


FIG. 3: Scenario I – Neutralino relic abundance as a function of the neutralino mass for the supersymmetric configurations reported in Table I and Fig.1. The horizontal line represents the upper bound $(\Omega_{CDM}h^2)_{\max} = 0.13$ from the Planck Collaboration [26] on the cold dark matter content in the Universe.

of the MSSM with the LHC Higgs-like particle, *i.e.* $h \equiv H_{125}$. This therefore implies: $123 \text{ GeV} \leq m_h \leq 129 \text{ GeV}$. The scan of the MSSM parameter space that produces a population of configurations satisfying all requirements and constraints mentioned in Sect. III identifies the sector outlined in Table II. The features of this population are displayed in Figs. 6 – 10.

Fig. 6 shows how the requirements for the signal strength factors are verified for our configurations. The constraint derived from LHC searches for Higgs decaying to a tau pair implies for the mass of the CP-odd Higgs A the lower bound: $m_A \gtrsim 300 \text{ GeV}$, as indicated by panel (a) of Fig. 7. Fig. 7(b) shows that, at variance with the previous case, in scenario II the constraints $\text{BR}(b \rightarrow s + \gamma)$ and $(g - 2)_\mu$ are satisfied. It is worth noting that also the bound on the branching ratio for the invisible decay $h \rightarrow \chi + \chi$ [48], not explicitly discussed before, is respected.

The plot of Fig. 8, displaying the neutralino relic abundance versus the neutralino mass, shows that m_χ has the lower limit $m_\chi \gtrsim 30 \text{ GeV}$ and that there exists a break in the range $70 \text{ GeV} \lesssim m_\chi \lesssim 85 \text{ GeV}$, this interval being disallowed by the requirement that $\Omega_\chi h^2 \leq (\Omega_{CDM}h^2)_{\max}$. In turn, this property is due to the strong enhancement in the pair annihilation amplitude when m_χ runs over the values $\frac{1}{2}m_h, \frac{1}{2}m_Z$.

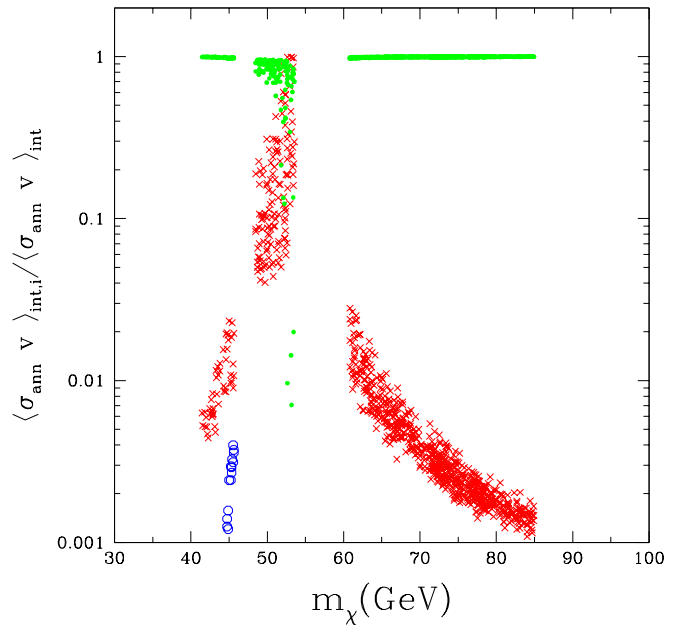


FIG. 4: Scenario I – Fractional contributions of different annihilation channels to the integrated neutralino cross section times velocity $\langle \sigma_{\text{ann}} v \rangle_{\text{int}}$ for the supersymmetric configurations reported in Table I and Fig.1. (Green) dots: $\chi\chi \rightarrow f\bar{f}$ through slepton exchange; (red) crosses: $\chi\chi \rightarrow f\bar{f}$ through Higgs exchange; (blue) open circles: $\chi\chi \rightarrow f\bar{f}$ through Z -boson exchange.

Fig. 9 displays the various contributions to $\langle \sigma_{\text{ann}} v \rangle_{\text{int}}$ and shows that dominances in the annihilation amplitude are as follows: a) dominance of annihilation to fermions through Z -exchange in the range $30 \text{ GeV} \lesssim m_\chi \lesssim 60 \text{ GeV}$; b) dominance of annihilation to fermions through light scalar Higgs-exchange for $m_\chi \simeq m_h/2$; c) dominance of annihilation to W^+W^- for $m_\chi > m_W$. To conclude the discussion, Fig.10 shows the ratios $[\langle \sigma_{\text{ann}} v \rangle_i / \langle \sigma_{\text{ann}} v \rangle_{\text{tot}}]_{T=0}$ between the neutralino annihilation cross section times velocity to the final states $i = \tau\tau, b\bar{b}, W^+W^-, ZZ, Zh$ and the total annihilation cross section times velocity, both calculated at zero temperature: as shown in the plot, $\tau\tau$ dominates when $m_\chi \lesssim 65 \text{ GeV}$, W^+W^- prevails when $m_W < m_\chi < m_Z + m_h$, and Zh dominates at larger masses.

V. DIRECT DETECTION.

We turn now to the evaluation of the relevant quantity for DM direct detection, $\xi\sigma_{\text{scalar}}^{(\text{nucleon})}$. The values for this quantity are shown in the scatter plot of Fig. 11 together with the regions pertaining to the signals measured by the experiments of DM direct detection of Refs. [51, 52] (other experimental results showing an excess of events

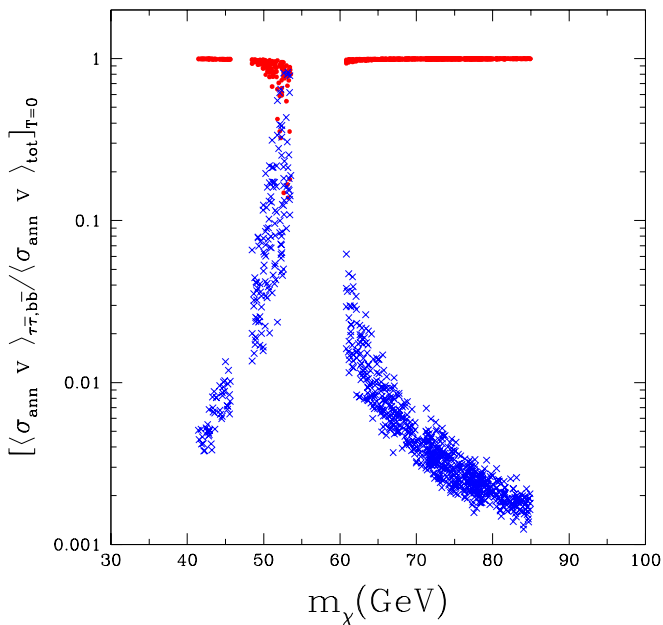


FIG. 5: Scenario I – Ratios $[\langle\sigma_{\text{ann}}v\rangle_i/\langle\sigma_{\text{ann}}v\rangle_{\text{tot}}]_{T=0}$ between the neutralino annihilation cross sections times velocity to the final states $i = \tau\tau, b\bar{b}$ and the total annihilation cross section times velocity, both calculated at zero temperature, for the supersymmetric configurations reported in Table I and Fig. 1. (Red) dots: $\tau\bar{\tau}$ final state; (blue) crosses: $b\bar{b}$ final state.

compatible with a positive signal are reported in Refs. [53, 54]). In particular, in Fig. 11 (red) crosses represent configurations found in the set of Scenario I, while (blue) dots correspond to configurations found in Scenario II. The experimental domains shown here were obtained by using for the velocity distribution function of the galactic dark matter those pertaining to a standard isothermal sphere with $\rho_0 = 0.30 \text{ GeV cm}^{-3}$, $v_0 = 220 \text{ km sec}^{-1}$, with $v_{\text{esc}} = 650 \text{ km sec}^{-1}$ for the DAMA/LIBRA experiment and $v_{\text{esc}} = 544 \text{ km sec}^{-1}$ for CRESST and for specific sets of experimental parameters (quenching factors and others), as discussed in Refs. [51, 52]. Including uncertainties of various origin, the experimental regions would expand as indicated for instance in Fig. 7 of Ref. [49].

One notices that the set of configurations found in the scenario I generate very low rates for direct detection of relic neutralinos. Thus in this scheme neutralinos does not appear be responsible for the signals measured by the experiments of DM direct detection of Refs. [51–54].

It is worth stressing that these conclusions rest heavily on the results recently obtained from colliders; in particular, very constraining are the conditions expressed in Eqs. (3,4,5,6) and the bounds implied by the search for Higgs decay into tau pairs, that constrain the parameter μ to be very large and $\tan\beta$ small. Should these con-

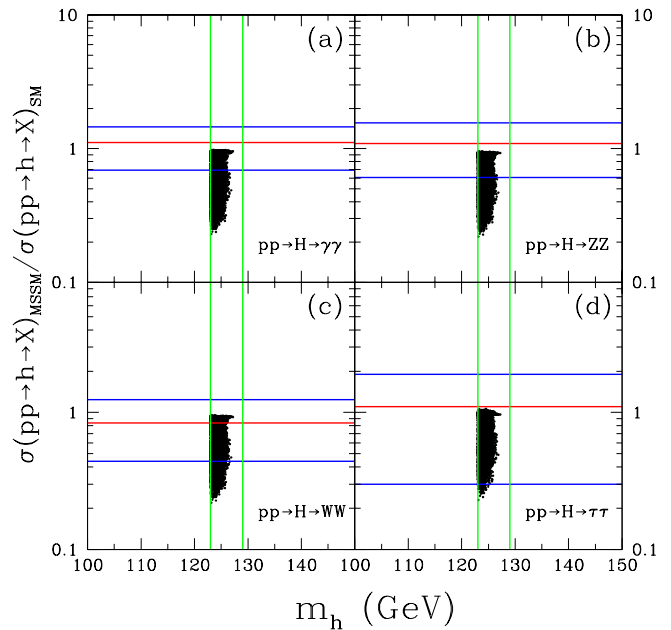


FIG. 6: Scenario II - The same as in Fig. 1, except that here $123 \text{ GeV} \leq m_h \leq 129 \text{ GeV}$.

straints significantly relax in the future, as a consequence of further experimental data and analyses from colliders, the theoretical values of $\xi\sigma_{\text{scalar}}^{(\text{nucleon})}$ would compare to the data of DM direct detection much more favorably, as for instance depicted in Fig. 5 of Ref. [8].

In the case of scenario II, in view of the experimental uncertainties mentioned above and of the theoretical uncertainties related to the parameter g_d (see Sect. II), the gap between the experimental regions and the scatter plot shown in Fig. 11 could somewhat narrow down. Most of the theoretical values shown in Fig. 11 are in tension with the experimental bounds given by other DM experiments (see for instance Ref. [55, 56]).

VI. INDIRECT DETECTION.

In order to study the capability of indirect signals to probe neutralino dark matter in scenario I and scenario II, we discuss the exotic component in cosmic rays represented by antiprotons, and the contribution to the so-called isotropic gamma-ray background (IGRB) due to the production of gamma-rays at high latitudes from annihilation in our Galaxy.

Antiprotons are potentially able to provide quite strong bounds on dark matter annihilation in our Galaxy. We therefore calculate the antiproton production in both scenarios and compare them with the PAMELA measurements of the absolute antiproton flux [57]. Similar bounds can be obtained with the BESS-Polar II deter-

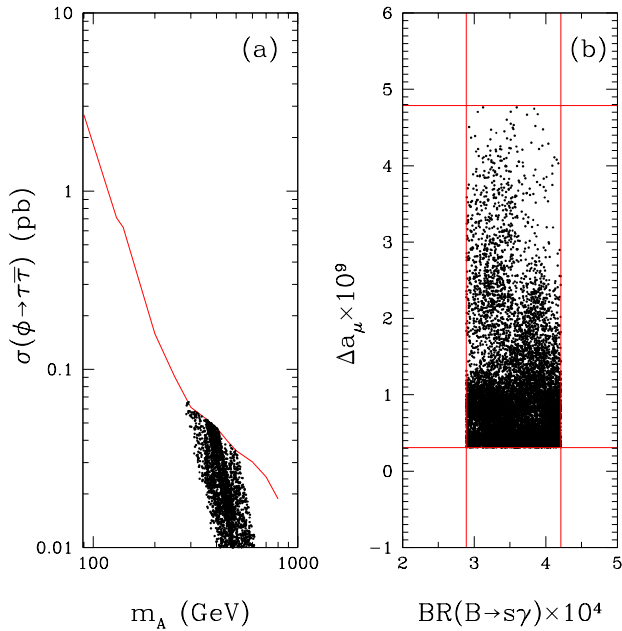


FIG. 7: Scenario II - Two of the experimental constraints discussed in Section III are compared to the corresponding theoretical expectations for the supersymmetric configurations reported in Table II and in Fig. 6. (a) CMS bound on Higgs production and subsequent decay into $\tau\bar{\tau}$ [32] (the production cross section refers to $\phi = A$ unless $m_A \simeq m_h$ or $m_A \simeq m_H$, in which case $\phi = A, h$ or $\phi = A, H$, respectively); (b) the two constraints on $\text{BR}(b \rightarrow s + \gamma)$ and $(g - 2)_\mu$, which in this scenario are simultaneously satisfied.

mination [58]. Fig. 12 shows the antiproton fluxes in the first PAMELA energy bin ($T_{\bar{p}} = 0.28$ GeV) for the configurations of scenario I (red crosses) and scenario II (blue circles). The left panel refers to a galactic propagation model with the MED values of propagation parameters [59]; the right panel refers to the MAX set of parameters [59]. The MAX set refers to the configuration in the space of propagation parameters which provides the largest antiproton fluxes (mostly due to a large volume of the cosmic-rays confinement region), while being allowed by B/C measurements [59].

The upper long-dashed line denotes the 95% C.L. bound by using the PAMELA data [57] and adding in quadrature a 40% theoretical error on the theoretical determination of the antiproton background. This generous allowance is taken under consideration because of uncertainties in the nuclear cross sections relevant for the secondary production [59]. The modification of the bound when a smaller estimate of the theoretical uncertainty (20%) is adopted [59] is shown by the short-dashed line. We notice that antiprotons are far from bounding the configurations of both scenario I and II. This is due to the fact that the dominant channel of annihilation in a

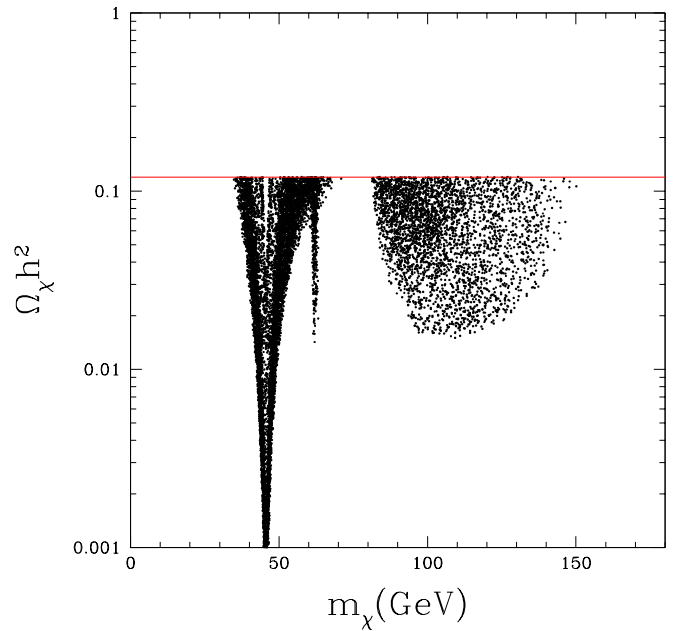


FIG. 8: Scenario II - The same as in Fig.3 for the supersymmetric configurations reported in Table II and in Fig. 6 (Scenario II in the text).

large portion of the parameter space of both scenarios is a leptonic one (namely, $\tau\bar{\tau}$) which is unable to produce a relevant amount of antiprotons. Only those configurations of scenario I where the $b\bar{b}$ final state dominates (very few configurations with a neutralino mass close to 55 GeV, as seen in Fig. 5) and the configurations of scenario II where the gauge-bosons final state (for neutralino masses above 80 GeV, as seen in Fig. 10) dominates are able to produce an antiproton flux that reaches its maximal values. Dominant hadronic ($b\bar{b}$) final states for neutralino masses below 70 GeV are accompanied by small values of the neutralino relic abundance: this has a strong impact in reducing the antiproton flux, due to the squared appearance of the rescaling factor ξ in indirect signals (since they depend on ρ_χ^2).

Current antiprotons bounds therefore do not constrain our supersymmetric configuration, neither for the MIN nor for the MAX set of propagation parameters. Prospects for future searches are shown in Fig. 12 by the dotted line, which refers to an expected reach of AMS [60]. We estimated AMS capabilities by taking into consideration the following facts: AMS data on antiprotons will likely reach a level of a few percent uncertainty; AMS will determine the fluxes of cosmic rays species to an unprecedented level, and this will help in reducing also the theoretical modeling of galactic cosmic rays propagation. Determination of the boron-to-carbon (B/C) ratio will be especially relevant. By considering a total (theoretical + experimental) uncertainty on the antiproton fluxes

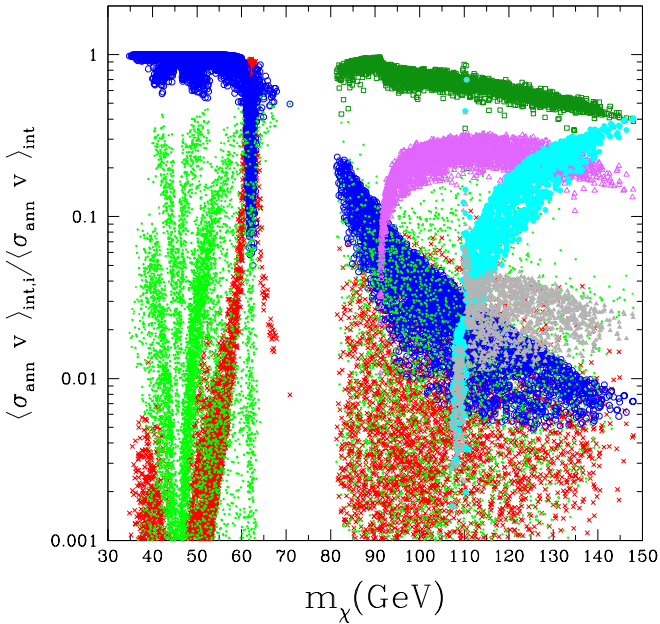


FIG. 9: Scenario II - The same as in Fig. 4, for the supersymmetric configurations reported in Table II and in Fig. 6. (Green) dots: $\chi\chi \rightarrow f\bar{f}$ through slepton exchange; (red) crosses: $\chi\chi \rightarrow f\bar{f}$ through Higgs exchange; (blue) open circles: $\chi\chi \rightarrow f\bar{f}$ through Z -boson exchange; (dark green) open squares: $\chi\chi \rightarrow WW$; (purple) open triangles: $\chi\chi \rightarrow ZZ$; (cyan) filled circles: $\chi\chi \rightarrow Zh$; (grey) filled triangles: $\chi\chi \rightarrow hh$.

after AMS, we can estimate a bound (in case of non observation of deviation from the expected background) at the level of the dotted lines in Fig. 12: this would allow to probe a fraction of the parameter space, both for scenario I and scenario II, in the case of relatively large values of the propagation parameters (right panel of Fig. 12). This capability is further illustrated in Fig. 13, where two representative antiproton fluxes (one for scenario I and one for scenario II) are reported. The two fluxes refer to the best-choice occurring in our parameter space, but are nevertheless representative of those configurations with fluxes in excess of the AMS reaching capabilities shown in the right panel of Fig. 12. Dark matter fluxes like those shown in Fig. 13 will easily represent a detectable signal in AMS, considering that they produce visible excesses over the background (denoted by the solid line, while the dashed lines bracket a $\pm 10\%$ uncertainty) in most of the energy spectrum. We also stress that AMS will have a very large statistics and therefore and excess like those shown in Fig. 13 will be detected as a deviation in a large number of experimental bins, thus making the evidence of a signal potentially quite clear. The major limitation remains the ability to reduce the theoretical uncertainties on the background to a suitable

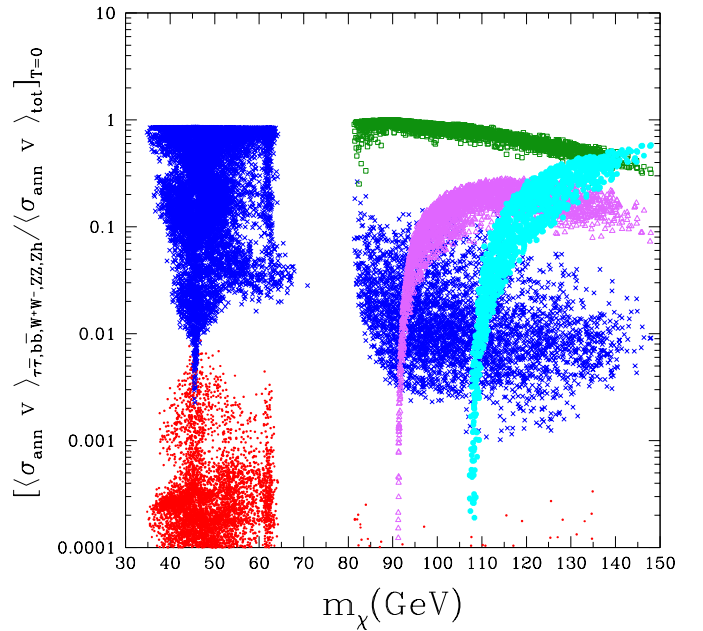


FIG. 10: Scenario II - The same as in Fig. 5, for the supersymmetric configurations reported in Table II and in Fig. 6. (Red) dots: $\tau\bar{\tau}$ final state; (blue) crosses: $b\bar{b}$ final state; (dark green) open squares: W^+W^- final state; (purple) open triangles: ZZ final state; (cyan) filled circles: Zh final state.

level, as discussed above.

Concerning the indirect signal in terms of gamma-rays, Fig. 14 shows the flux of gamma rays produced by galactic dark matter annihilation at high latitudes for both scenario I and scenario II. The contribution to the IGRB has been calculated for an Einasto profile of the dark matter density, but different profiles predict only slightly different fluxes [61], since we are looking here at high galactic latitudes.

The signal fluxes in both scenario I and scenario II are relatively small, when compared to the current upper bounds on the IGRB, obtained by considering the Fermi-LAT measurements [62] and the best-fit of various contributions to the IGRB [61]: misaligned AGN [63], star-forming galaxies [64], unresolved milli-second pulsars [65], BL Lacertae [66] and flat-spectrum radio quasars [67]. The upper bound at the 95% C.L. is shown in Fig. 14 by the horizontal dashed line. The figure shows the flux at two representative energies, corresponding to two different energy bins of the Fermi-LAT analysis [62]: the left panel refers to $E_\gamma = 1.2$ GeV, the right panel to $E_\gamma = 9.4$ GeV.

We notice that the contribution to the IGRB of astrophysical origin suffers of large uncertainties: in deriving the bounds shown in Fig. 14 we have adopted the central-value determinations of the different sources of background, as reported in Ref. [61]. If (just) some

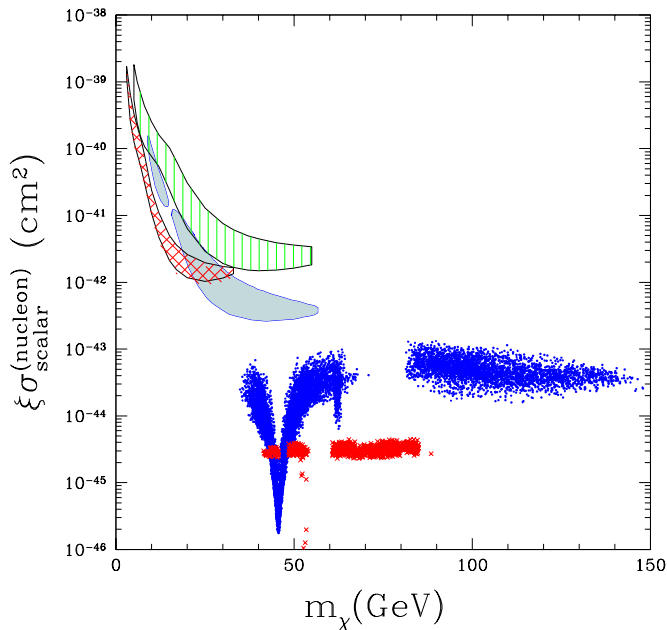


FIG. 11: Neutralino–nucleon coherent cross section times the rescaling factor $\xi \sigma_{\text{scalar}}^{(\text{nucleon})}$. (Red) crosses: supersymmetric configurations plotted in Fig.1 (Scenario I in the text); (blue) dots: supersymmetric configurations plotted in Fig.6 (Scenario II in the text). The hatched areas denote the DAMA/LIBRA annual modulation regions [51]: the (green) vertically-hatched region refers to the case where constant values of 0.3 and 0.09 are taken for the quenching factors of Na and I, respectively[49]; the (red) crossed-hatched is obtained by using the energy-dependent Na and I quenching factors as established by the procedure given in Ref. [50]. The gray regions are those compatible with the CRESST excess [52]. In all cases a possible channeling effect is not included. The halo distribution function used to extract the experimental regions is given in the text. For other distribution functions see [49]

of these background fluxes are allowed to fluctuate up (especially the recently determined gamma-ray flux originating from misaligned AGN [63]) the ensuing bounds can become quite constraining [61].

VII. CONCLUSIONS

The attempt of interpreting the neutral boson (H_{125}) measured at the LHC in the diphoton, ZZ , WW and $\tau\tau$ channels, and with a mass of 125–126 GeV, in terms of the effective Minimal Supersymmetric extension of the Standard Model defined in Sect. II, has led us to consider two possible scenarios: a scenario I, where the boson H_{125} is identified with the heavier CP–even neutral boson H and scenario II, where the boson H_{125} is identified with the lighter CP–even neutral boson h .

The supersymmetric parameter space has been analysed also in terms of a full set of constraints derived from collider experiments, B–factories, and measurements of the muon anomalous magnetic moment. The properties of the neutralino as a dark matter constituent has been analysed in both scenarios, considering its relic abundance and direct and indirect detection rates.

We have found that in scenario I no solution for supersymmetric configurations exists, unless two indirect constraints ($\text{BR}(b \rightarrow s + \gamma)$ and $(g - 2)_\mu$) are relaxed. If these two requirements are not implemented, solutions with a physical relic abundance are found in a region of the supersymmetric parameter space characterized by low values for the stau mass parameters $80 \text{ GeV} \leq m_{\tilde{t}_{1,2,L}}, m_{\tilde{t}_{1,2,R}}, m_{\tilde{\tau}_L}, m_{\tilde{\tau}_R} \leq 200 \text{ GeV}$, and high values for the μ parameter: $\mu \geq 1.8 \text{ TeV}$. In the region defined in Table I the neutralino mass turns out to sit in the range $m_\chi \simeq (40 - 85) \text{ GeV}$. The set of configurations found in the present scenario generate very low rates for direct detection of relic neutralinos (the quantity $\xi \sigma_{\text{scalar}}^{(\text{nucleon})}$ is at the level of $\xi \sigma_{\text{scalar}}^{(\text{nucleon})} \sim \text{a few } \times 10^{-45} \text{ cm}^2$). The same occurs for indirect detections signals: only antiproton searches, under some optimistic assumptions, may be able to test scenario I for neutralino masses close to 50 GeV. For this to be reachable, a somehow large cosmic-rays confinement region is required, accompanied by a reduction of the total theoretical + experimental uncertainty on the antiproton flux determination at the level of about 10%. AMS [60] is expected to beat this level of precision on the antiproton data, and its measurement of the fluxes of cosmic rays species, especially B/C, could help in reducing the uncertainties on the theoretical determination, allowing to approach the level required to study these supersymmetric populations.

In scenario II we have found a population of configurations which satisfy all requirements and constraints mentioned in Sect. III, including the indirect bounds coming from $\text{BR}(b \rightarrow s + \gamma)$ and $(g - 2)_\mu$. Here the lower limit for the neutralino mass is $m_\chi \gtrsim 30 \text{ GeV}$. The direct detection rates are shown to be typically rather low; though, they could approach the level of the signals measured by the experiments of DM direct detection [51–54] under special instances for the DM distribution, for experimental parameters and/or for significantly large size of the neutralino-nucleon coupling. As for the indirect signals a situation similar to scenario I occurs: under the same, somehow optimistic, assumptions discussed above an antiproton signal in AMS may be reachable for neutralino masses above 80 GeV.

A few comments are in order here, regarding the features of the population of relic neutralinos examined in the present paper: a) our results apply only to the standard situation of thermal decoupling in a standard FRW

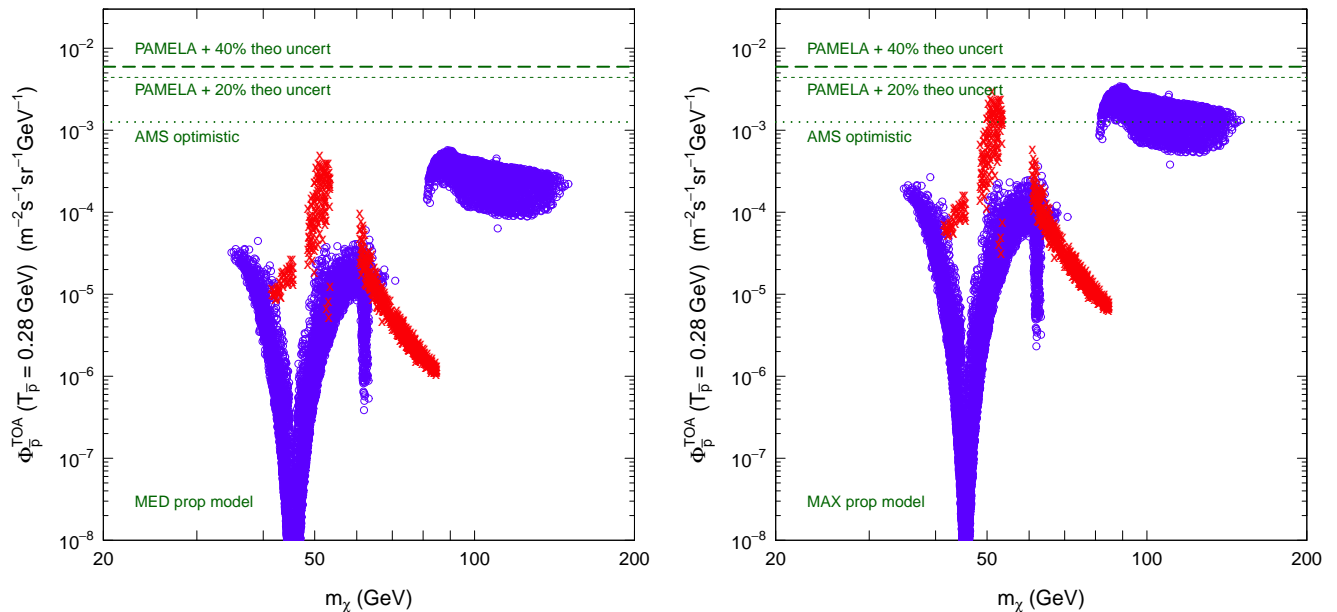


FIG. 12: Antiproton fluxes in the first PAMELA energy bin ($T_{\bar{p}} = 0.28$ GeV) for the configurations of scenario I (red crosses) and scenario II (blue circles). The upper long-dashed line denotes the 95% C.L. bound by using the PAMELA [57] data and adding in quadrature a 40% theoretical error on the theoretical determination of the antiproton background. The short-dashed line shows the same upper bound, with a 20% estimate of the theoretical uncertainty. The dotted line denotes the reaching capabilities of AMS [60], provided the total experimental and theoretical uncertainties are reduced to 10%. The left panel refers to a galactic propagation model with the MED values of propagation parameters [59]; the right panel refers to the MAX set of parameters [59].

cosmology; in more extended cosmological scenarios, especially those with an enhanced expansion rate of the Universe the features of these populations are expected to be different [68–70]; b) the relic neutralinos considered here could constitute only a part of a multicomponent DM (another component would be the one responsible for the signals observed until now in DM direct detection experiments); c) the derivations presented in the present paper rest heavily on the results obtained at colliders: many of the analyses pertaining these results are actually in progress, thus some of them could be susceptible of significant modifications, with the implication of possible substantial changes in the our present conclusions.

Acknowledgments

We thank F. Donato and M. Di Mauro for insightful discussions on the IGRB and on its potential in bounding

DM gamma-ray signals. A.B. and N.F. acknowledge the Research Grant funded by the Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare within the *Astroparticle Physics Project* (INFN grant code: FA51). S.S. acknowledges support by the National Research Foundation of Korea(NRF) grant funded by the Korea government(MEST) (No.2012-0008534). N.F. acknowledges support of the spanish MICINN Consolider Ingenio 2010 Programme under grant MULTI-DARK CSD2009- 00064.

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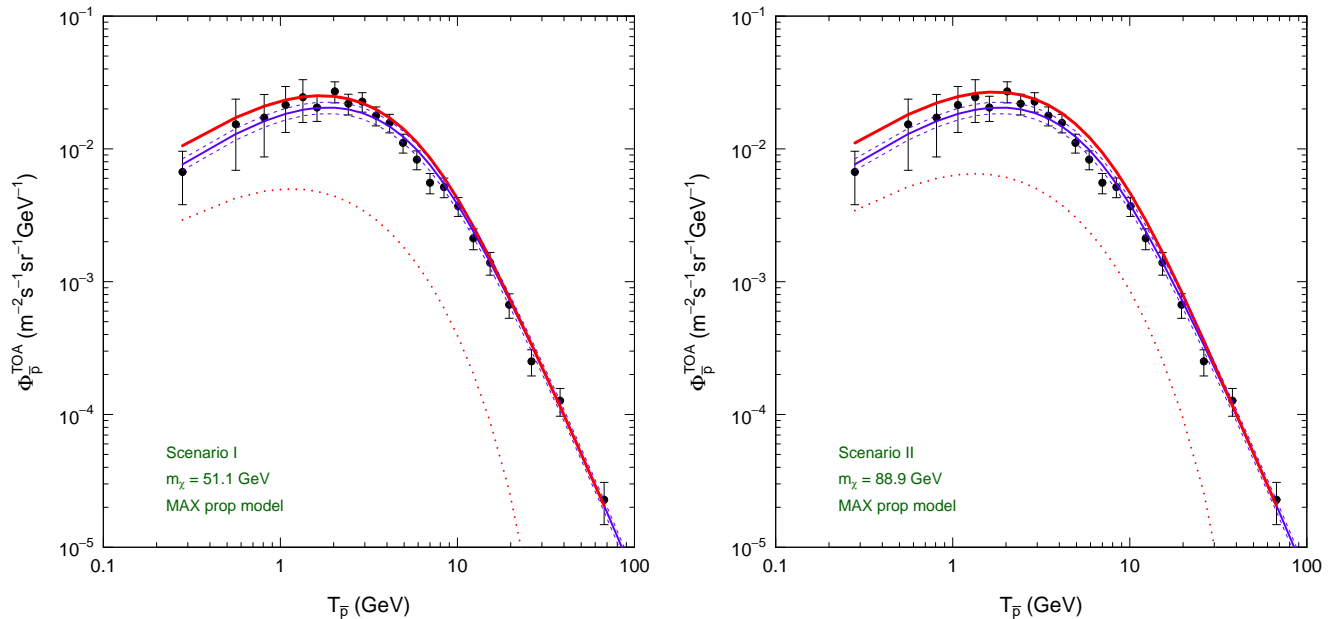


FIG. 13: Representative best antiproton fluxes for scenario I (left panel) and scenario II (right panel). Data refer to PAMELA measurement [57] of the cosmic rays antiproton flux. The lower (blue) solid line refers to the theoretical determination of the secondary antiproton flux [59]. The dashed (blue) lines show a 10% uncertainty on the secondary determination. The dotted (red) line shows the signal antiproton flux produced by dark matter annihilation: the best cases are considered, and they refer to $m_\chi = 51.1$ GeV for scenario I and to $m_\chi = 88.9$ GeV for scenario II. The upper (red) solid curve shows the sum of the secondary background and the signal. In both panels, the MAX set of propagation parameters are used [59].

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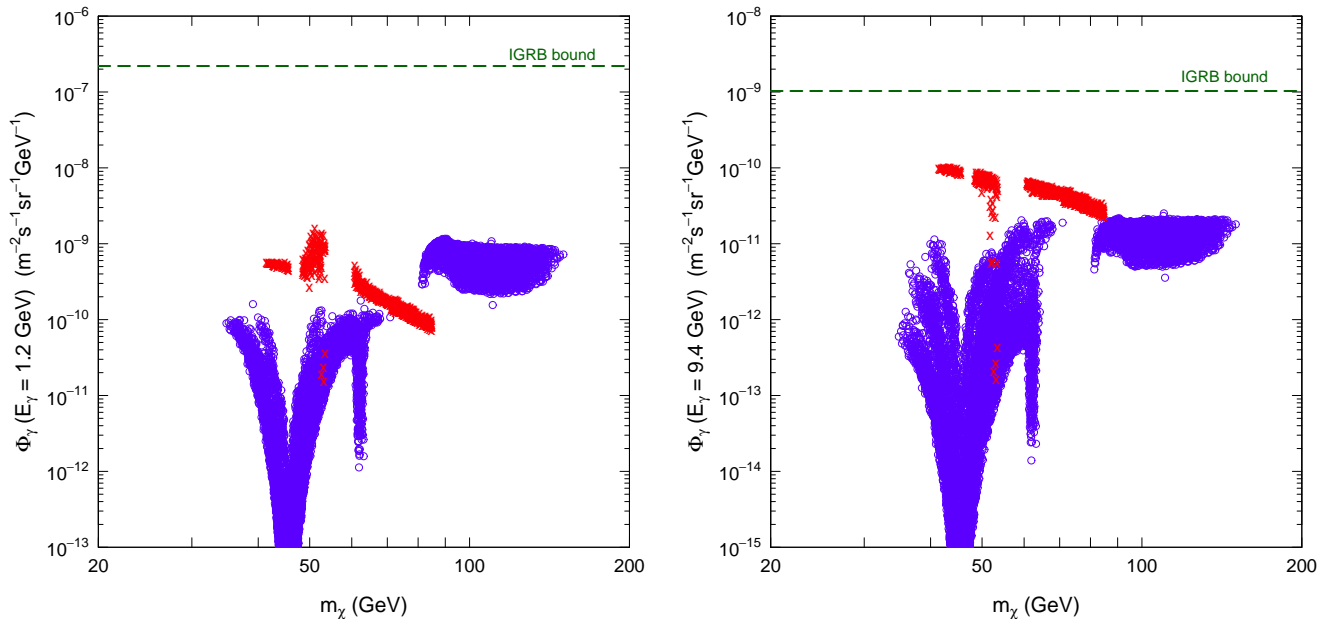


FIG. 14: Flux of gamma rays produced by galactic dark matter annihilation at high latitudes. The horizontal dashed line represents the upper bound on the isotropic gamma-rays background (IGRB) as determined by considering the Fermi-LAT [62] measurements and the best-fit of various contributions to the IGRB [61]: misaligned AGN [63], star-forming galaxies [64], unresolved milli-second pulsars [65], BL Lacertae [66] and flat-spectrum radio quasars [67]. The two panels show the fluxes in two different energy bins of the Fermi-LAT analysis [62]: the left panel refers to $E_\gamma = 1.2$ GeV, the right panel to $E_\gamma = 9.4$ GeV. (Red) crosses refer to configurations of scenario I; (blue) circles to scenario II.

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