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# High resolution reflection seismic profiling over the Tjellefonna fault in the Møre-Trøndelag Fault Complex, Norway

E. Lundberg<sup>1</sup>, C. Juhlin<sup>1</sup>, and A. Nasuti<sup>2,3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Earth Sciences, Uppsala University, Villavägen 16, 752 36 Uppsala, Sweden

<sup>2</sup>Department of Petroleum Engineering and Applied Geophysics, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, 7491 Trondheim, Norway

<sup>3</sup>NGU, Geological Survey of Norway, 7491 Trondheim, Norway

Received: 19 December 2011 – Accepted: 24 January 2012 – Published: 3 February 2012

Correspondence to: E. Lundberg (emil.lundberg@geo.uu.se)

Published by Copernicus Publications on behalf of the European Geosciences Union.

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## Abstract

The Møre-Trøndelag Fault Complex (MTFC) is one of the most prominent fault zones of Norway, both onshore and offshore. In spite of its importance, very little is known of the deeper structure of the individual fault segments comprising the fault complex. Most seismic lines have been recorded offshore or focused on deeper structures. This paper presents results from two reflection seismic profiles, located on each side of the Tingvollfjord, acquired over the Tjellefonna fault in the south-eastern part of the MTFC. Possible kilometer scale vertical offsets reflecting, large scale north-west dipping normal faulting separating the high topography to the south-east from lower topography to the north-west have been proposed for the Tjellefonna fault. In this study, however, the Tjellefonna fault is interpreted to dip approximately  $50\text{--}60^\circ$  towards the south-east to depths of at least 1.4 km. Travel-time modeling of reflections associated with the fault was used to establish the geometry of the fault structure at depth and detailed analysis of first P-wave arrivals in shot-gathers together with resistivity profiles were used to define the near surface geometry of the fault zone. A continuation of the structure on the north-eastern side of the Tingvollfjord is suggested by correlation of an in strike direction P-S converted reflection (generated by a fracture zone) seen on the reflection data from that side of the Tingvollfjord. The reflection seismic data correlate well with resistivity profiles and recently published near surface geophysical data. A highly reflective package forming a gentle antiform structure was also identified on both seismic profiles. The structure may be an important boundary within the gneissic basement rocks of the Western Gneiss Region. The Fold Hinge Line is parallel with the Tjellefonna fault trace while the topographic lineament diverges, following secondary fracture zones towards north-east.

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## 1 Introduction

The Møre-Trøndelag Fault Complex (MTFC), striking ENE-WSW, separates the northern North Sea basin system from the Møre and Vøring Basins (Brekke, 2000) and can be traced from the Møre County along the northern margin of the Western Gneiss Region (WGR) towards the Børgefjell Basement Window, where it dies out in a horsetail splay (Roberts, 1998). It consists of several marked major fault segments, e.g. the Hitra-Snåsa Fault (HSF) and the Verran Fault (VF) (Fig. 1). As one of the most prominent fault zones of Norway, both onshore and offshore, the MTFC has been studied frequently. Seismic lines have been recorded mainly offshore, e.g. Sommaruga and Bøe (2002) interpreted several seismic profiles from four inshore/nearshore areas, investigating the geometry and stratigraphy of mainly Jurassic sediments. Seismic profiles on land have focused on the deep crustal structure, e.g. Mykkeltveit (1980) and Hurich (1996). Based on apatite fission track data, Redfield et al. (2005a) indicated possible kilometer scale vertical offsets across the Baeverdalen lineament (here Baeverdalen fault, BF, in Fig. 1) and/or the Tjellefonna fault TF. These vertical offset were assumed to be reflecting north-west dipping normal faulting in the last 100 Ma just southeast of the MTFC, separating the high topography to the south-east from lower topography to north-west. The MTFC has been important in controlling the landscape development both onshore and offshore as established by many authors, e.g. Grunnaleite and Gabrielsen (1995) and Osmundsen et al. (2006), and may still be seismically active today (Olesen et al., 2004), influencing the regional stress pattern of Norway (Pascal and Gabrielsen, 2001). Connecting the deeper structure of MTFC segments with geological observations on the surface is therefore important for understanding seismicity and landslides as well as the geological/tectonic history of the region.

Although of major significance, the MTFC had not been geophysically investigated on land until recently, aside from an onshore reflection seismic Profile acquired on the Fosen Peninsula (Fig. 1) in the northeast (Hurich and Roberts, 1997). In 2008, an effort was initiated to better understand the nature of one of the onshore segments of the

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modeling of these reflections. Modeling, however, clearly shows that S1 is not a P-P reflection from a reflector with a similar geometry to the R1–R5 reflectors. Therefore, other options had to be tested. Figure 9 shows calculated travel-times for two different scenarios. In Fig. 9 travel-times from a P-P reflection from a 80° south-east dipping reflector are compared with travel-times from a P-S converted reflection from a reflector with the same geometry as the R1 reflection. The P-S converted reflection travel-times most closely fit the real data. Angle dependent reflection coefficients were also calculated in order to understand why the P-S reflection is most apparent in the observed offset range and, perhaps also, to provide a clue as to the origin of the reflection. P-P and P-S reflections from two fault zones (FZ), with different Vp/Vs ratios, and from a mafic rock are compared in Fig. 10. The calculations are based on the same geometry as used for reflection R1 with rock parameters defined in Table 4. The 2-D sketch (Fig. 11) of the P-P and P-S ray tracing (although the 3-D geometry was used in the calculations) illustrates the different ray paths used. The angle of reflection is larger than the incidence angle for the P-S converted ray path, since the S wave velocity is lower than the P wave velocity. The seismic velocities are typical values from laboratory measurements on rock samples collected along Profile 2 (unpublished data, Nasuti, 2009). The slowest velocity (perpendicular to foliation) was used and the host rock is assumed to be an intact gneiss. Densities are averages from rock samples collected by Biedermann (2010). The magnitude of the reflection coefficient is used for easier comparison of both positive and negative coefficients. In the interval where the P-S converted reflection is visible (receivers 215–255) a P-S reflection from a fault zone with a high Vp/Vs ratio (1.8) has amplitudes almost as high as a P-P reflection from a mafic rock. It is reasonable to assume that S1 is the P-S converted reflection from the same reflector as R1 and that these reflections originate from a fault zone boundary.

In between reflections R1 and R2 (Fig. 4b) two zones display a sharp delay in first arrival times, indicating lower velocity in these areas (Fig. 12). We name these zones Low Velocity Zone A and B (LVA and LVB). The delay in LVB is 0.025 s over a distance

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of 160 m and the delay in LVA is 0.040 s over a distance of 390 m. These zones are clearly visible on many shot gathers, and their respective positions correlate well between shot-gathers from the north-western side of the zones. However, when comparing the position of these zones on shots from the opposite (south-east) side, a slight shift of the positions towards south-east occur. The locations from shot-gather 302 (Fig. 12) was used to outline these zones on the stacked sections. In addition to significant delays in the first arrivals across these zones, the ground roll also disappears when approaching these zones. This effect is clearly seen in shot 302 where ground roll disappears around receiver 265 (Fig. 12) and in shot 160 (Fig. 8b) where ground roll disappears around receiver 210, corresponding approximately to the south-eastern boundary of LVA. No sources were activated in LVA due to soft ground conditions.

### 5.3 Resistivity profiles

The resistivity profiles are here interpreted for the purpose of correlating the observed reflections and the shallow subsurface. Two not previously published resistivity profiles (Profile 4 and Profile 5 in Fig. 13), show some possible fault locations marked. In the inverted profiles, relatively low-resistive zones may indicate fractured and/or water saturated bedrock, while more resistive ones are diagnostic for fresh bedrock. Particularly low resistivity (i.e. lower than 1000 $\Omega$ m) characterizes clay-filled fractures and, consequently, also fault gouge (e.g. Ganerød et al., 2008). Profile 4 shows a sharp lithological contrast. The northern part of the Profile may represent a fractured bedrock that is located in the topographic low (see Figs. 2 and 14). This fracture zone is at least 300 m wide. Profile 5 has three low resistivity zones marked (P1-P3). Profile 7 (Nasuti et al., 2011) have been reinterpreted based on the correlation with the reflection seismic profiles. The northernmost zones here marked P6 have been extended with an south-easterly dip. P6 show a straight line correlation with Reflections R1,S1 and S2 in the seismic sections (see Fig. 14). P3 on Profile 5 possibly correlate with P4 on Profile 7 (see Figs. 13 and 14).

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## 6 Discussion

The main topographic low (Tjellefonna fault) crosses Profile 2 between CMP 1500 and 1600, see Figs. 2 and 14. The most likely reflections that may be associated with the Tjellefonna Fault are, therefore, reflections R1/S1 and R2. Our modeling indicates that R1 is a P-P reflection and S1 a P-S reflection off a fault zone, assuming reasonable input was used in the modeling and the reflection coefficient calculations. Fracturing and chemical alteration of rock results in lower  $V_p$  and  $V_s$  and in an increase in the  $V_p/V_s$  ratio (e.g. Moos and Zoback, 1983). The  $V_p/V_s$  ratio seems to be the most important factor for explaining the strong P-S reflection and the missing (below noise level) P-P reflection in the traces close to where the reflector intersects the surface. At the offsets of interest, fracture zone (C) with a  $V_p/V_s$  ratio of 1.8 clearly shows a much larger P-S reflection coefficient than fracture zone (B) with a  $V_p/V_s$  ratio of 1.6 (Fig. 10). Note that the host gneissic rock is assumed to have a  $V_p/V_s$  ratio of 1.6. The reflection coefficient of a P-S reflection from the mafic rock is almost at the level of the P-S reflection from fracture zone (B), but the modeled strong P-P reflection for the mafic rock is not observed in the data (Fig. 8b). Therefore, we interpret the reflector generating reflections R1/S1 to be a fracture zone with a high  $V_p/V_s$  ratio (fluid filled). The reflection point for the reflected energy of S1 at receiver 210 at about 0.7 s TWT can be calculated. It is located at a depth of approximately 425 m (see Fig. 11) and indicates the minimum penetration depth of the fracture zone. A possible deeper penetration of the fault zone to approximately 1.4 km is suggested when tracing the P-P reflection in the stacked section.

Reflection S2 on Profile 1 has a very similar character as to S1 on Profile 2 and is located in the strike direction of S1 (Fig. 2). The same reflector geometry as for R1/S1 gives a reasonable fit for a P-S converted reflection, but a corresponding P-P reflection is not seen in the stacked section. If the reflector is steeper on this Profile it may explain why it is not imaged on the stacked section. A less steep P-P reflection is, however, seen in shot 110 (Fig. 5), but this reflection can also not be correlated with the stacked section. It is reasonable to assume that the Tjellefonna fault continues in

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and/or density contrast). Therefore, we interpret this antiform structure as a boundary to a different unit. This unit reflects a significant property change within the gneissic basement rock. One such boundary that could cause a large impedance contrast is the detachment zone separating the lower eclogitic crust from the middle and upper crust exposed in Western Norway (Andersen and Jamtveit, 1990). The Fold Hinge Line of this unit appears to have a strike subparallel to the strike of the Tjellefonna fault and a plunge towards the southwest of about 4° (Fig. 14). Unfortunately, it is difficult to determine if the fault structures cut the fold structure or not. Reflection R1/S1 seems to terminate approximately where a continuation of the south-eastern flank of the antiform in Profile 2 is expected. However, there is no obvious reason to why such a fold flank should not be imaged properly in the seismic section (Fig. 4a). The north-west dipping reflectivity marked by arrow in shot 95 (Fig. 6b), and seen in the stacked section between CMP 1750 and 1800 at about 0.5 s TWT (Fig. 4a), seems to be the only indication of a continuation of the reflective package towards south-east. Also on Profile 1, the fold structure is not imaged south-west of the suggested fault zone (Figs. 3 and 14). The depth extent to where reflections R1–R5 can be traced on the stacked section is mainly controlled by the length of the seismic acquisition line and a deeper extension cannot be imaged without extending the seismic Profile further south-east. The parallelism of the Fold Hinge Line and the fault trace of the Tjellefonna fault (Fig. 14) suggest that the folding and faulting may have been concordant. The low topography lineament is however not coinciding with the Tjellefonna fault in the north-eastern side of the Tingvollfjord (Figs. 2 and 14). Apparently the eroding forces forming the low topography seems to have followed secondary fracture zones north-east of the Tingvollfjord, perhaps due to the Tjellefonna fault being less pervasive towards north-east.

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## 7 Conclusions

The Tjellefonna Fault was imaged using two reflection seismic profiles located on each side of the Tingvollfjord. The fault extends to a depth of at least 400 m and most likely to at least 1.4 km on the southern side of the fjord where it was imaged clearly. The fault dips 50–60° towards southeast at depth.

A continuation of the fault on the north-eastern side is suggested by correlation of an in-strike P-S converted reflection (generated by a fracture zone) seen on the reflection data on the north-eastern side of the Tingvollfjord on Profile 1. The fault zone is however not seen on the stacked section, perhaps due to the fault zone being steeper in the north-eastern part.

The fault seems to diverge into at least two zones of intensely fractured bedrock near the surface on the southern side of the Tingvollfjord (Profile 2). The seismic data correlates well with resistivity and other near surface geophysical data presented by Nasuti et al. (2011) and in this paper. Also the strike of the fault is in agreement with previous large scale interpretation of potential field data by Nasuti et al. (2012). However, the main topographic lineament is only in agreement on the south-western side of the Tingvollfjord. Towards the north-east the low topography seems to follow secondary fracture systems.

An antiform can be seen on both seismic sections (Profiles 1 and 2). A strong amplitude increase of this structure is found at a depth of about 0.5 km on the north-eastern Profile and at about 1 km on the south-western profile, indicating that the Fold Hinge Line plunges about 4° towards the south-west. The Fold Hinge Line of the antiform is parallel to the suggested Tjellefonna fault. The amplitude increase suggests a significant physical property change within the gneissic basement rock. If the antiform structure is penetrated or truncated by the fault or not is, however, not clear.

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**Table 2.** Processing steps.

Step	Parameters
1	Decoding raw shot-gathers using shift and stack procedure
2	Geometry check / correction
3	Trace edit
4	Pick first break
5	Refraction statics: floating datum 200 m replacement velocity 5100 m s <sup>-1</sup>
6	Remove 50 Hz noise
7	Spectral equalization: 15 25 140 180
8	AGC 100 ms window
9	Deconvolution
10	Band-pass filter 15 25 140 180
11	Remove first arrival energy
12	AGC 100 ms window
13	Residual statics
14	Normal Move Out correction 50% stretch mute
15	Stack
16	Floating datum statics
17	Band-pass filter 25 35 95 120
18	FX-decon
19	Band-pass filter 25 35 95 120
20	FD-migration: constant velocity 5.5 km s <sup>-1</sup>
21	Band-pass filter 25 35 95 120

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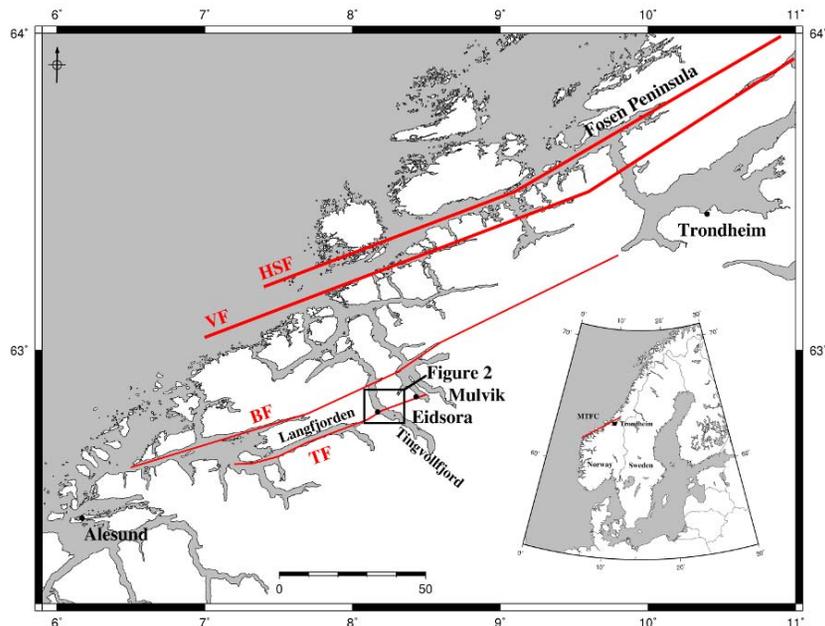
[Title Page](#)[Abstract](#)[Introduction](#)[Conclusions](#)[References](#)[Tables](#)[Figures](#)[Back](#)[Close](#)[Full Screen / Esc](#)[Printer-friendly Version](#)[Interactive Discussion](#)**Table 3.** Modeling results.

Reflector	Strike	Dip
R1	55	55 SE
R2	70	50 SE
R3	60	55 SE
R4	60	53 SE
R5	60	65 SE



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**Fig. 1.** Location of major faults comprising the Møre-Trøndelag Fault Complex (MTFC); Hitra-Snåsa Fault–HSF; Verran Fault–VF; Baeverdalen fault–BF; Tjellefonna fault–TF. Framed area marks location of Fig. 2. Inset map over Scandinavia with Trondheim and the MTFC marked.

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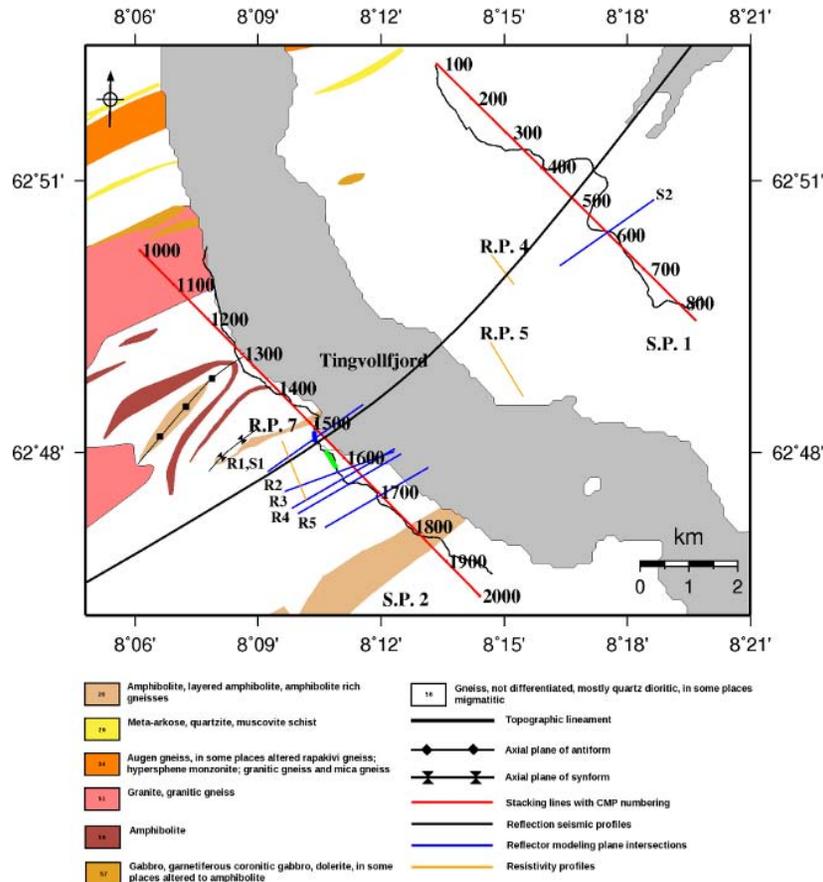
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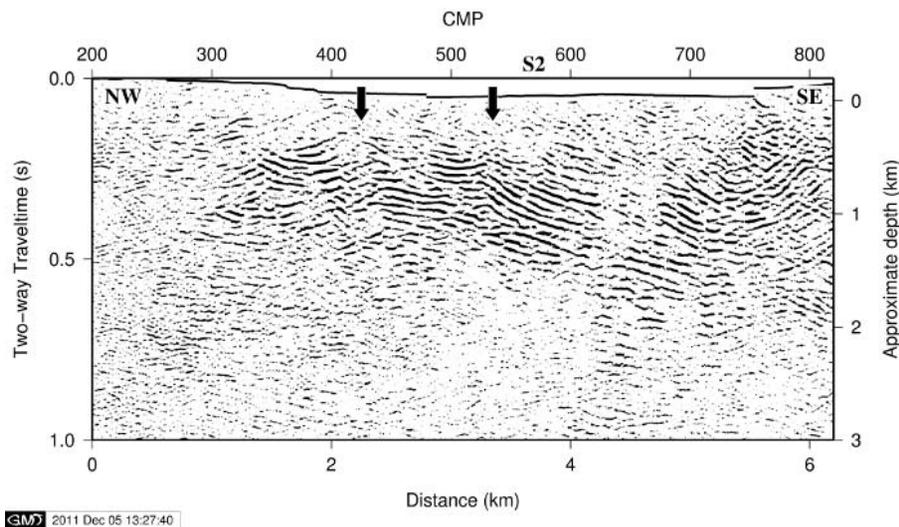
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**Fig. 2.** Simplified geological map after Tveten et al., 1998. S.P–Seismic Profile; R.P–Resistivity Profile; Green zone–LVA; Blue zone–LVB see text for explanation.

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**Fig. 3.** Final migrated stack of Profile 1 with marked position of reflection S2 (see also Fig. 8a). Arrows mark sections affected by sharp bends in the recording line (compare with Fig. 2). Elevation marked on top. Length to depth ratio approximately 1:1.

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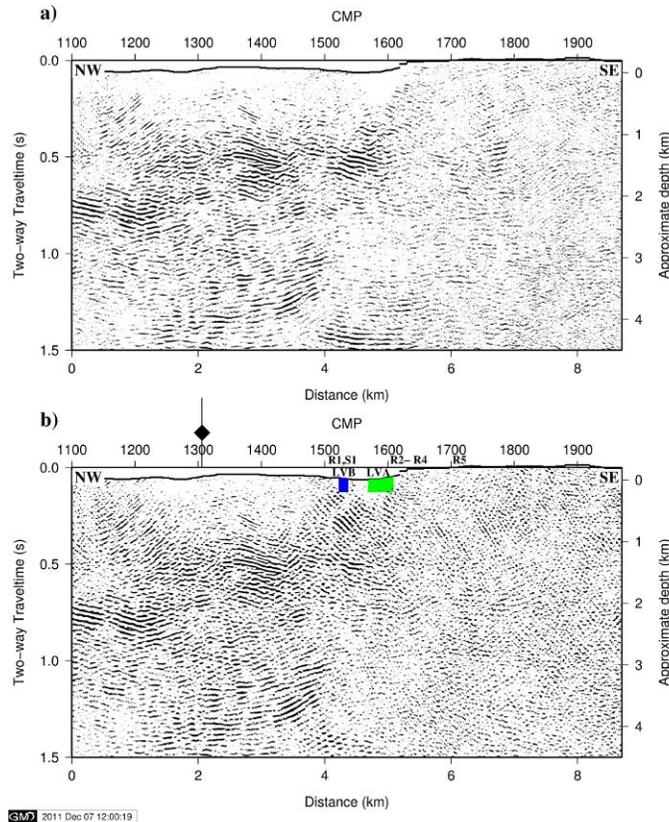
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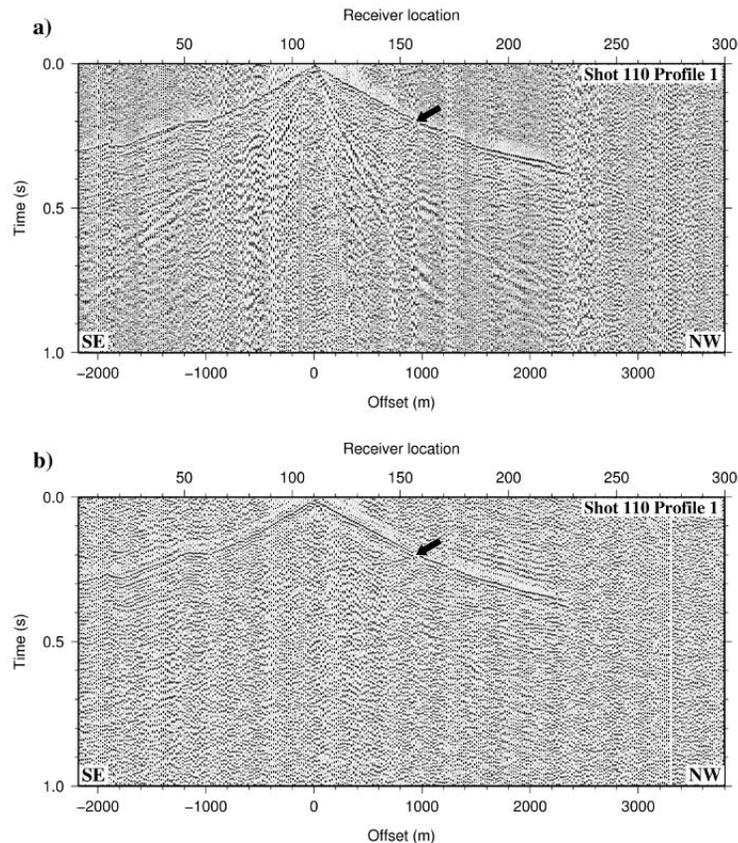


**Fig. 4.** (a) Final migrated stack of Profile 2. (b) Final migrated stack of Profile 2 merged with migrated stack using high stacking velocities on right hand side. Green zone–LVA; Blue zone–LVB see text for explanation. Reflections S1 and R1–R5 marked. Location of axial plane of antiform from geology map (Fig. 2) also marked. Elevation on top. Length to depth ratio approximately 1:1.

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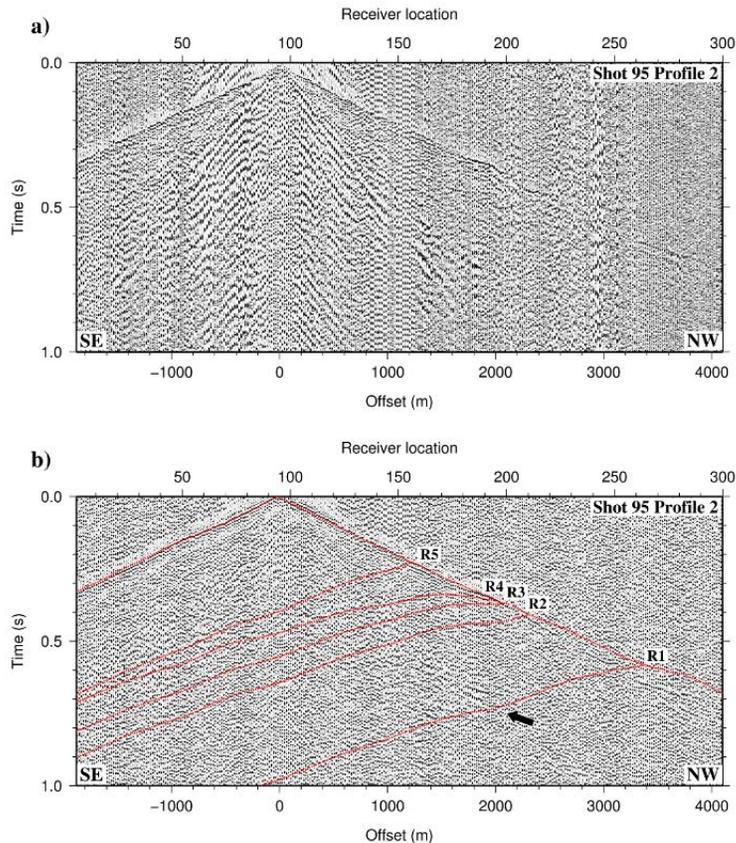


**Fig. 5.** Raw shot-gather (agc 100 ms window and high pass filter (10 20) was used) from Profile 1 (a) and the same shot-gather processed until step 10 + step 12 and 17 (b). Black arrow marks reflection more clearly seen in the processed shot-gather.

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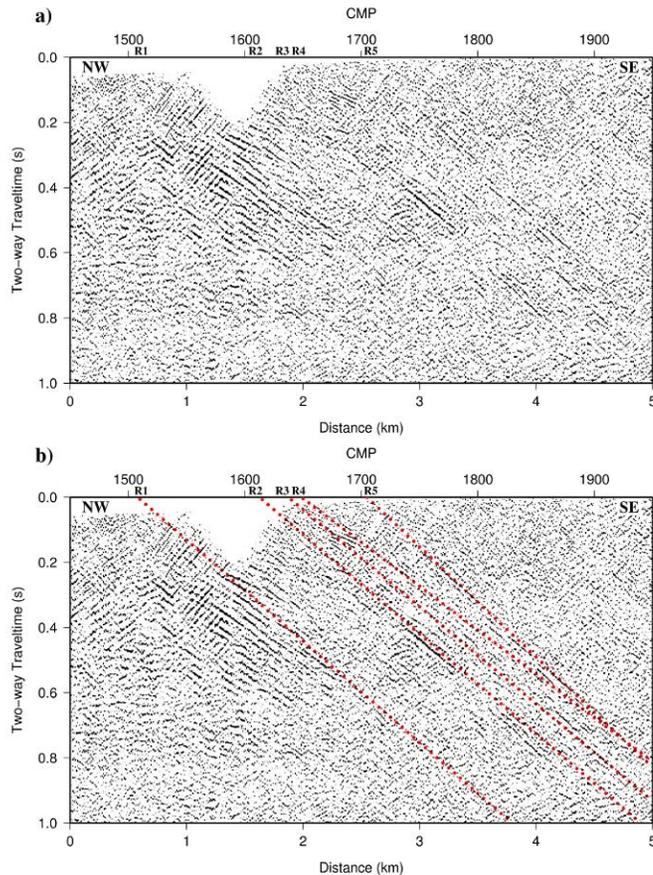


**Fig. 6.** Raw shot-gather (agc 100 ms window and high pass filter (10 20) was used) from Profile 2 (a) and the same shot-gather processed until step 10 + step 12 and 17 (b) with calculated travel-times for reflections R1–R5 plotted. The north-west dipping reflection marked with black arrow correspond to the reflections seen between CMP 1750 and 1800 at about 0.5 s TWT in the stacked section (Fig. 4a).

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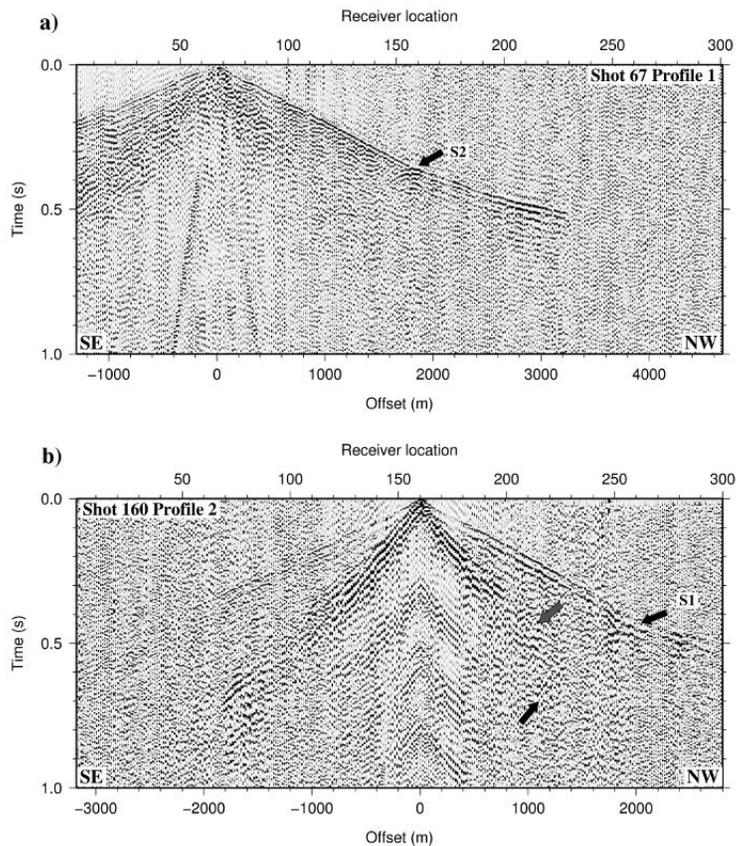


**Fig. 7.** Parts of unmigrated stack of Profile 2 using high stacking velocities. **(a)** Without and **(b)** with calculated travel-times for reflections R1–R5 plotted.

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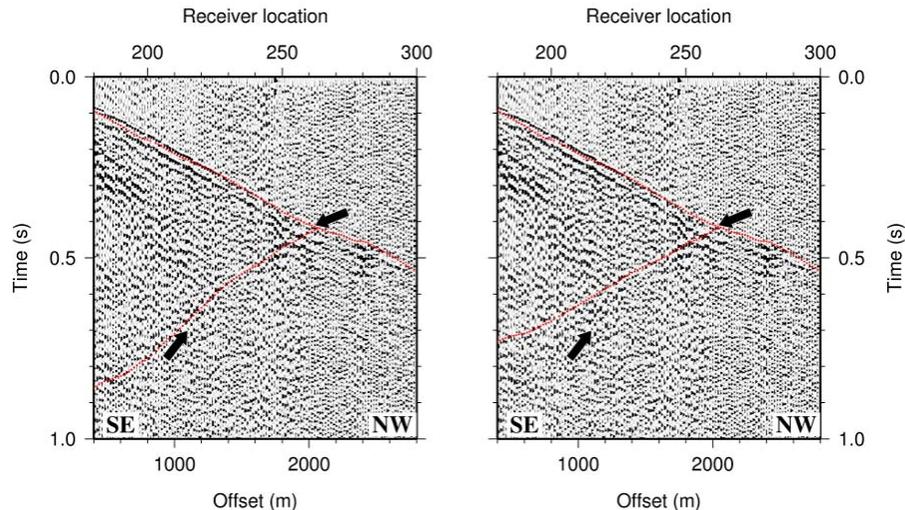
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**Fig. 8.** P-S converted reflections (S2 and S1) in raw shot-gathers on both Profile 1 (a) and Profile 2 (b). Dark gray arrow indicates where surface waves disappear.

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**Fig. 9.** Comparison of travel-time modeling of reflection S1. P-S reflection from a boundary with strike  $55^\circ$  and dip  $55^\circ$  (same geometry as for reflection R1) – left and P-P reflection from a steeply dipping boundary strike  $55^\circ$  and dip  $80^\circ$  – right.

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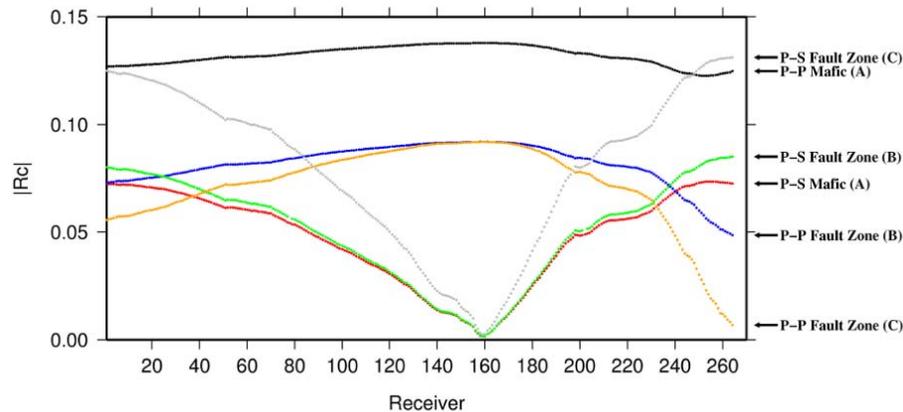
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**Fig. 10.** Comparison of magnitude of reflection coefficient ( $|R_c|$ ) for different reflecting boundaries. Geometry of boundary as for reflection R1 (strike  $55^\circ$  and dip  $55^\circ$ ) and properties of rocks as defined in Table 4.

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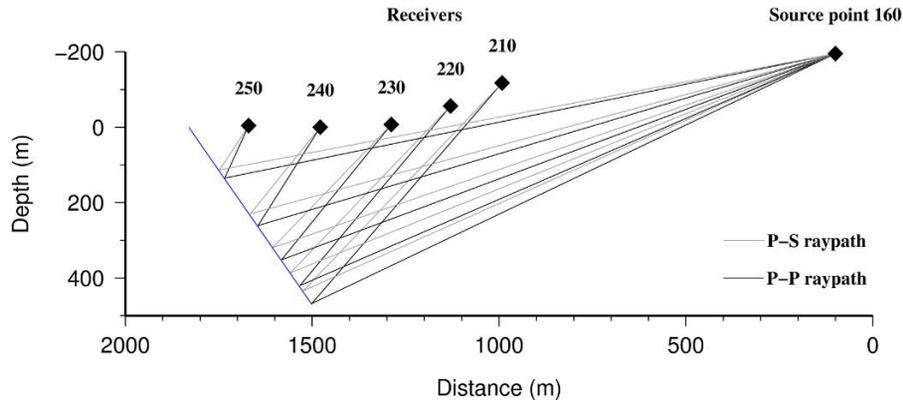
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**Fig. 11.** 2-D sketch of the selected ray paths for a model with a plane dipping  $55^\circ$ . The angle of reflection is larger than the incidence angle for the P-S converted ray path, since the S wave velocity is lower than the P wave velocity. The reflection point for receiver 210 is located at approximately 425 m depth for a P-S converted reflection.

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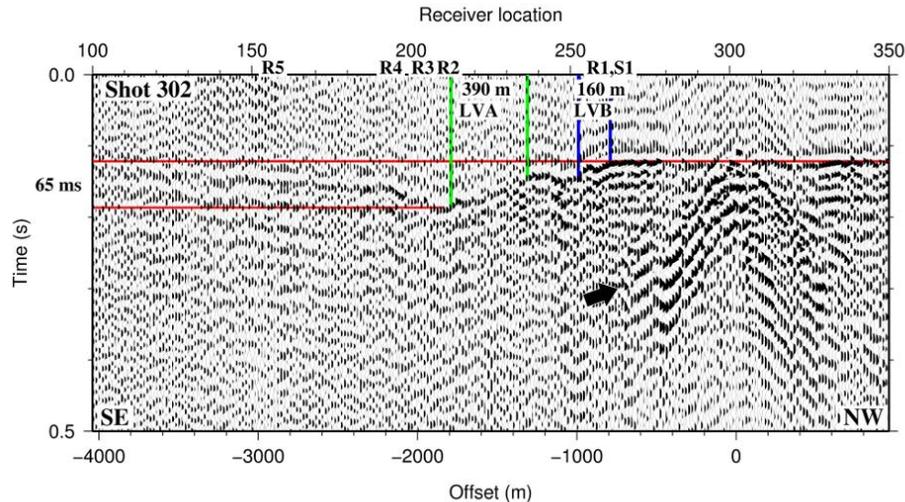
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**Fig. 12.** Shot-gather 302 from Profile 2 plotted using a reduction velocity of  $5000 \text{ ms}^{-1}$  and without refraction statics correction. Two zones display a sharp delay in the first arrivals marked as LVA and LVB. Total accumulated delay is 65 ms across the two zones. South-east dipping reflections S1, R1–R5 are marked. Black arrow indicates where surface waves disappear.

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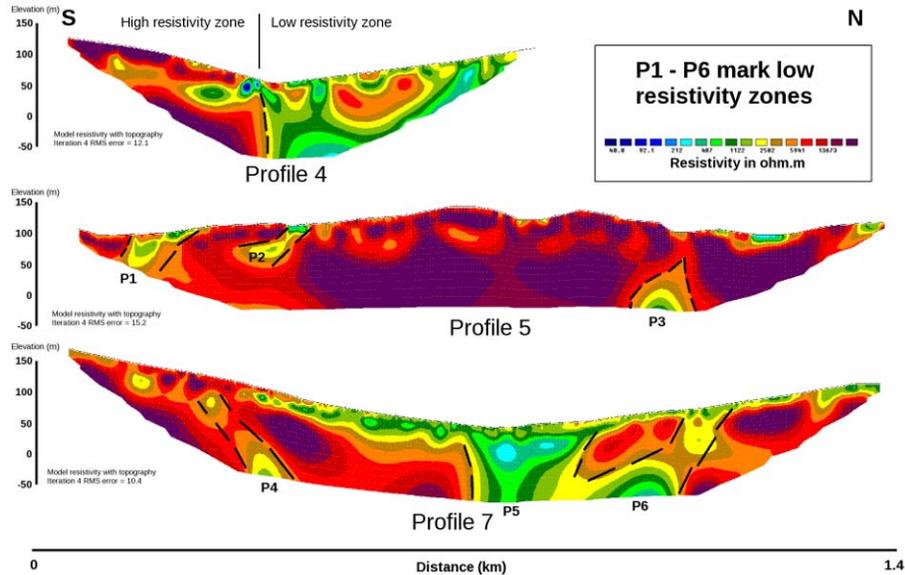
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**Fig. 13.** Resistivity profiles: Top – Profile 4; Center – Profile 5; Bottom – Profile 7, reinterpreted from Nasuti et al. (2011). For low resistivity zones marked P1–P6 see text for discussion. Length to depth ratio approximately 1:1.

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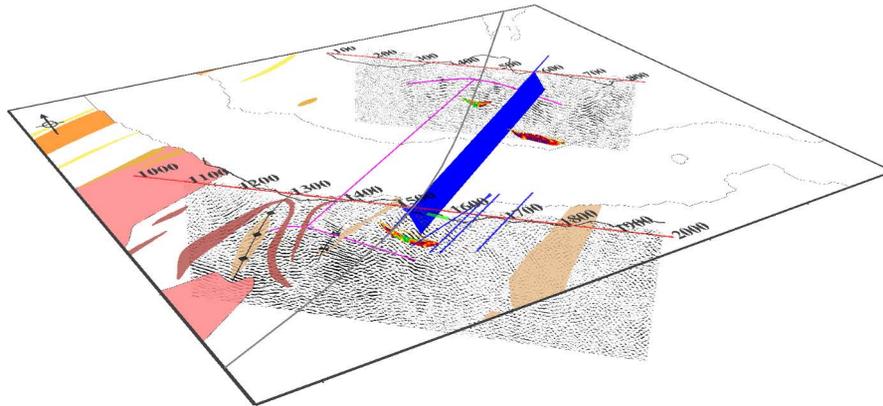
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**Fig. 14.** Seismic Profiles 1 and 2 and Resistivity Profiles 4, 5 and 7 plotted with geology in 3-D perspective view. Grey solid line indicates topographic lineament and blue solid lines mark Reflections S2, S1/R1–R5. See Fig. 2 for locations. The blue plane indicates the modeled fault plane with strike  $55^\circ$  and dipping  $55^\circ$  towards south east. The plane extends to 400 m depth in the figure. Antiform structures are enhanced with purple lines and also the Fold Hinge Line is marked in purple.

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