

Analyzing structural variations along strike in a deep-water thrust belt

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- Fault heave changes along strike in a deep-water thrust belt, offshore Malaysia.
- Multiple heave maxima on the main thrusts suggest merger of fault segments.
- Fault linkage sites exhibiting local heave minima concur with distributed strain on small imbricate thrusts and tight folds.
- Fault linkage and displacement kinematics are affected by adjacent structures across strike.
- A fold-thrust structure may be better characterized as a part of kinematically linked 3D system.

1 **Abstract**

2

3 We characterize a deep-water fold-thrust arrays imaged by a high-resolution 3D
4 seismic dataset in the offshore NW Borneo, Malaysia, to understand the kinematics
5 behind spatial arrangement of structural variations throughout the fold-thrust system.
6 The seismic volume used covers two sub-parallel fold trains associated with a series
7 of fore-thrusts and back-thrusts. We measured fault heave, shortening value, fold
8 geometries (forelimb dip, interlimb angle and crest depth) along strike in individual fold
9 trains. Heave plot on strike projection allows to identify individual thrust segments
10 showing semi-elliptical to triangular to bimodal patterns, and linkages of these
11 segments. The linkage sites are marked by local minima in cumulative heave. These
12 local heave minima are compensated by additional structures, such as small imbricate
13 thrusts and tight folds indicated by large forelimb dip and small interlimb angle.
14 Complementary profiles of the shortening amount for the two fold trains result in
15 smoother gradient of total shortening across the structures. We interpret this reflects
16 kinematic interaction between two fold-thrust trains. This type of along-strike variation
17 analysis provides comprehensive understanding of a fold-thrust system and may
18 provide an interpretative strategy for inferring the presence of complex multiple faults
19 in less well-imaged parts of seismic volumes.

20 1. Introduction

21

22 Fold-thrust belts have long been investigated in various settings, from orogenic
23 belts to gravitational failure on passive margins, especially for the hydrocarbon
24 exploration. In these endeavors, many interpretational strategies have been adopted
25 in the application of structural geology. Since at least the 1980s geoscientists have
26 developed diverse kinematic models (see Groshong et al., 2012; Brandes and Tanner,
27 2013 for recent reviews) and non-kinematic techniques (e.g. Williams and Chapman,
28 1983; Groshong and Epard, 1994) to illustrate thrust-related folding. These
29 approaches deal with the cross-sectional geometry essentially, whereas contractional
30 structures vary the kinematics and structural geometry along strike (Figure 1). Detailed
31 descriptions of such along-strike structural variations remain few on thrust systems.
32 This has led to our poor understanding of the deformation style and evolution of fold-
33 thrust structures in three dimensions. Aims of this contribution are 1) to provide
34 descriptions of deep-water fold-thrust arrays imaged by a high-resolution 3D seismic
35 dataset, and 2) to assess the kinematics underlying spatial arrangement of structural
36 variations in the fold-thrust system.

37 Dahlstrom (1969) demonstrated that quantitative analysis of along-strike structural
38 variations helps explain the kinematics of a fold-thrust array in the Alberta Front Range.
39 Based on displacement changes along strike, he postulated that a thrust fault died out
40 laterally and the displacement lost on the thrust was transferred to another so that net
41 shortening is largely conserved along strike (Figure 2). Dahlstrom's work has
42 developed into various attempts to characterize structural architectures transferring
43 displacement among thrust faults (O'Keefe and Stearns, 1982; Sanderson and Spratt,
44 1992; Farmor, 1999), to investigate the evolution of fold-thrust systems through the

45 propagation and linkage along strike (King and Yielding, 1984; Ellis and Dunlap, 1988;
46 Nicol et al., 2002; Davis et al., 2005; Mazzoli et al., 2005), and to build geologically
47 reasonable cross-sections throughout fold-thrust arrays (Watkins et al., 2017), with
48 uses of variations in the shortening amount or displacement plotted on strike
49 projections. But most studies depended on sparsely distributed data points. Few
50 studies presented detailed characteristics of along-strike variations (Nicol et al., 2002;
51 Davis et al., 2005). A small number of analogue experiments (Gardner and Spang,
52 1973; Liu and Dixon, 1991) and seismic-based studies (Higgins et al., 2009; Bergen
53 and Shaw, 2010) have shown along-strike changes in shortening and displacement
54 quantitatively and detailedly. The displacement distribution along strike and the
55 kinematic linkage between thrust faults and folds are not fully resolved yet. It is mainly
56 due to scarcity of geometrical constraints on thrust systems. Field studies suffer from
57 the erosion removing thrust hangingwalls and the burial of footwalls beneath thrust
58 sheets. Analogue experiments are no exception to the latter issue. Even where
59 seismic data are available, complex seismic velocities compounded by deformation
60 structure and repeated stratigraphy result in unclear seismic reflection images.

61 This contrasts with intensive studies on normal faults, where fault displacement
62 patterns have been analyzed along strike and dip minutely in fields and with seismic
63 datasets. Analyses of detailed displacement patterns along strike have brought
64 significant insights into the development of fault linkage (Peacock and Sanderson,
65 1991; Childs et al., 1995; Dawers and Anders, 1995; Soliva and Benedicto, 2004; Giba
66 et al., 2012), displacement-length scaling (Walsh and Watterson, 1991; Cowie and
67 Scholz, 1992; Dawers et al., 1993; Schlische et al., 1996; Kim and Sanderson, 2005),
68 and the fault growth history (Anders and Schlische, 1994; Cartwright et al., 1995;
69 Jackson et al., 2002; Meyer et al., 2002; Walsh et al., 2003). Analogue experiments

70 have examined these works with far more detail (Mansfield and Cartwright, 2001;
71 Bellahsen et al., 2003; Schlagenhauf et al., 2008; Wyrick et al., 2011). Advanced
72 knowledges for normal faults may help comprehend thrust fault systems further. But
73 we need more investigations to know how much both systems are comparable.

74 We describe imbricate thrusts developed through deep-water sandstone-shale
75 sequences in the offshore area of NW Borneo, Malaysia, using a high-resolution 3D
76 seismic dataset acquired by the multi-azimuth technology. The best quality of this 3D
77 seismic data provides good, three-dimensional constraints for structural geometry of
78 thrust faults and related folds. We present along-strike variations in the fault
79 displacement, fault dip, fold geometry and shortening amount at intervals of 250 m to
80 1 km. Above all, the displacement variation is quantified using measurement of fault
81 heave so that the measurement is readily made while avoiding influence of erroneous
82 depth conversion. Using these quantified along-strike variations, we show that a single
83 fold-thrust structure is a result of not only segment linkage along strike, but also
84 interaction of folding and faulting, and interference with adjacent structures across
85 strike. We provide a model accounting for spatial arrangement of structural complexity
86 controlled by segment linkage.

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89 **2. Geological setting**

90

91 The NW Borneo continental margin has been extensively explored for
92 hydrocarbons since the 1950's (Scherer, 1980) (Figure 3a). Thanks to many industrial
93 wells and seismic reflection surveys, the geology in this region has become clear, as
94 summarized by various authors (e.g. Petronas, 1999; Hutchison, 2005; Cullen, 2010).

95 The NW Borneo continental margin is marked by regressive Middle Miocene to recent
96 sandstone-shale successions, exceeding 11 km of thickness in some places (Lu and
97 Shipp, 2011) (Figure 3b, c). These Neogene sediments have been shed from the
98 Borneo interior hinterland that experienced considerable uplift and erosion from the
99 Early Miocene onward (Morley and Back, 2008; Hall, 2013). The Neogene coastal to
100 shallow-marine sequences unconformably overlie the Upper Cretaceous to Early
101 Miocene deep-water accretionary prism called Rajang-Crocker Group in the inboard
102 area (Morley et al., 2003; Sapin et al., 2011). The Neogene hemi-pelagic strata onlap
103 the pre-Early Miocene Dangerous Ground terrane in the NW Borneo Trough (Hinz et
104 al., 1989; Hutchison, 2010) (Figure 3b, c).

105 The target in this study is a fold-thrust belt developed through the Neogene deep-
106 water successions in the slope area (Figure 3a). It is 350 km long and 70 km wide,
107 trending NE-SW adjacent to the NW Borneo Trough. This compressional province
108 consists of five to seven trains of fault-propagation folds associated with NW-verging
109 thrusts (Hinz et al., 1989; Hesse et al., 2010) (Figure 3b, c). The thrust sheets are
110 assumed to be detached on over-pressured Early Miocene shale (Ingram et al., 2004).
111 The master detachment is estimated to lie at a depth of c. 4 km below seabed near
112 the toe thrust front and c. 10 km at the up-slope shelf break (Morley, 2007; Morley et
113 al., 2014). Folding and thrusting were initiated in the Late Miocene and have
114 propagated NW-ward over time (Franke et al., 2008; Sapin et al., 2013). The process
115 appears to continue today, as indicated by the seafloor deformation and GPS motion
116 records (Simons et al., 2007). Note that the fold structures and their underlying thrusts
117 were not active in a strict sequence. Although the age of growth strata indicates a
118 general forward migration of deformation, structures were active in parallel. It is a
119 feature to which we shall return at the end of this paper.

120 There are two end-member hypotheses as to the mechanism of the Neogene-to-
121 recent compression: crustal shortening driven by collisional plate tectonics (Hinz et al.,
122 1989) and the gravitational failure analogous to that in the Niger Delta (Tan and Lamy,
123 1990; Hazebroek and Tan, 1993). Many workers argued that both mechanisms have
124 contributed, to varying degrees in terms of which is dominant (e.g. Ingram et al., 2004;
125 Franke et al., 2008; Morley et al., 2008, 2011; Hesse et al., 2009; Sapin et al., 2013).
126 But, these debates do not affect our structural interpretation essentially.

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128

129 **3. Database**

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131 The database for this study consists of data from four boreholes tied into a 3D
132 seismic survey of c. 830 km² full-fold area (Figure 4). The seismic survey was acquired
133 in 2012 using deep-towed dual-sensor broadband system of PGS GeoStreamer® and
134 multi-azimuth technology. Data recording in structurally complex areas were repeated
135 along three sail-line orientations at 60° to each other (Figure 4a). The multi-azimuth
136 datasets were processed using Kirchhoff pre-stack depth migration and were then
137 stacked through multi-survey regularization and binning. In the processed data,
138 spacing in both inlines and crosslines is 12.5 m, sampling rate is 2 ms, and the data
139 record length is 7 s. The vertical resolution of the data varies from c. 10 m near the
140 sediment surface to c. 30 m at the top of deformed successions considered here,
141 dropping to perhaps as much as 90 m at the base of these intervals. The seismic full-
142 fold volume is covered by seismic velocities that were finalized through five iterations
143 of velocity picking on 50 m × 50 m × 50 m (x, y and z) grid with applications of isotropic
144 and anisotropic tomography.

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147 **4. Seismic interpretation**

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149 The seismic data clearly display multi-layered reflectors of turbiditic sandstone-
150 shale alternations deformed into fold-thrust structures (Figure 5). These sequences
151 interbed with seismically chaotic packages that denote cyclic occurrences of mass
152 transport deposits, or MTDs (Algar et al., 2011) (Figure 5). A well shows that reflective
153 packages on seismic images correspond to sand-dominant sequences and poorly
154 reflective intervals including MTDs are shale-dominant (Figure 6). Based on structural
155 patterns of these excellent illuminations, we identified three tectonic sequences
156 (Figure 5b):

157

158 1) Pre-kinematic strata that show a constant stratigraphic thickness and are
159 deformed by folds and thrusts. This unit is characterized by laterally continuous
160 reflectors and extensive MTDs throughout the survey area. Deeper sections in
161 thrust footwalls appear to thicken perhaps due to the drag along thrust faults.

162 2) Syn-kinematic strata that exhibit significant short-range changes in thickness.
163 They thin toward anticline crests and show local onlaps within the strata and
164 onto the pre-kinematic strata. Thrust faults cut the deeper section of the strata.
165 Tilting angle of fold limbs decreases upward so that anticline shapes broaden
166 at shallower depth. MTDs are not extensive as those in the pre-kinematic strata,
167 they are distributed only on forelimbs. Extensional normal faults develop
168 though the strata on anticline crests with minor offsets.

169 3) Post-kinematic strata that drape underlying deformed strata with rather
170 constant thickness. These strata are offset by a series of minor normal faults
171 on anticline crests, like the syn-kinematic strata.

172

173 Thrust faults are mappable from offsets in the section below the lower syn-kinematic
174 strata. However, the deeper section, including detachment layers and ramps, are not
175 imaged clearly.

176 We mapped eight regional stratigraphic markers defined at wells, seabed and
177 horizon h8 to h2, over the seismic volume (Figure 5b, 6). These horizons interpreted
178 are dated between Late Miocene to Quaternary based on biostratigraphic analysis
179 (Figure 6). We also mapped horizon h1, a continuous reflector having a positive
180 acoustic impedance at the base of the multi-layered pre-kinematic successions. This
181 horizon is not penetrated by the wells within the seismic volume. The interval between
182 the seabed and horizon h7 is the post-kinematic, horizons h7 to h4 define the syn-
183 kinematic, and below horizon h4 is the pre-kinematic strata (Figure 5b). Thrust faults
184 were interpreted along dip sections at interval of 312.5 to 1250 m and checked for
185 spatial continuities and structural relationships to other faults and horizons on arbitrary
186 time slices. We depth-converted horizons and thrust faults interpreted using seismic
187 velocities calibrated with borehole data.

188 The mapped seismic horizons are involved in three separate, sub-parallel trains of
189 non-cylindrical conical fold with strike trending NS to NE-SW (Figure 7). We name
190 these fold trains A, B and C from west to east for convenience. They are mostly fault-
191 propagation folds that are associated with underlying thrusts. Syn-kinematic horizon
192 h7 produces relatively gentle fold shapes with the fold train B opening southward
193 (Figure 7a), whereas pre-kinematic horizon h4 exhibits clear fold shapes cut by a

194 series of thrusts (Figure 7b). Individual fold trains exhibit along-strike change in
195 geometry that may be linked to the underlying thrust geometry.

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198 **5. Methods**

199

200 We describe the fold trains A and B that are well covered by the seismic data, with
201 focus on structural variations along strike on top pre-kinematic strata, horizon h4, using
202 the elevation map and a series of seismic profiles. The fold train C is not analyzed in
203 this study due to its limited extent within the seismic data coverage. We then compare
204 these observations with along-strike changes in measurements of structural
205 geometries and kinematics - fault heave, shortening value, fault dip, forelimb dip,
206 interlimb angle and fold crestal depth (Figure 8). All these measurements were made
207 in depth domain after performing depth conversion.

208 We use the fault heave as a proxy for fault displacement (h in Figure 8). This is to
209 demonstrate a practicality of the heave for analyzing displacement distribution along
210 traces of thrust faults in the seismic-based study. Unlike normal faults frequently
211 analyzed using throw, thrust faults are better described using heave as they incline at
212 low angles and their horizontal displacement components are significant. Use of the
213 heave is also advantageous in seismic studies; heave measurements are less
214 susceptible to the seismic depth conversion. We measured fault heaves at horizon h4,
215 on dip sections spaced every 250 m. We note that these heave measurements are
216 sensitive to, not only fault displacements, but also fault dip angles. Relationship
217 between fault heaves, dip-separations and fault dips in our study area shows that ratio
218 of heave to dip-separation falls, down to near 50 % at minimum, as the fault dip

219 increases (Figure 9). This suggests that we need to analyze heave measurements
220 carefully when fault dip angles are large, as heaves become apparently diminished
221 even with constant or increased fault displacements. We deal with this by examining
222 along-strike changes in the fault dip together when we evaluate heave profiles.
223 However, majority of our heave measurements (90 % of the measurements) are
224 associated with thrusts dipping 40° or less (Figure 9). On these thrusts, heaves equal
225 more than 77 % of dip-separations that roughly correspond to fault displacements on
226 the dip sections. Most thrusts do not change their dips considerably throughout the
227 study area. Thus, we argue that overall tendencies of our heave measurements along
228 strike mostly represent those of lateral displacement patterns.

229 We calculated the shortening amount for the horizon h4, using the line-length
230 balance (Dahlstrom, 1969) (Figure 8), on dip sections spaced at 1 km intervals along
231 strike. We pinned these sections away from fold-thrust structures at hinge point of
232 synclines in thrust footwalls or place where the seismic marker becomes horizontal.
233 Shortening values are obtained by subtracting section width (*A* in Figure 8) from
234 cumulative bed length of folded and faulted horizon h4 (*B* in Figure 8) between the pin
235 lines. Note that shortening calculated by this informs total shortening accommodated
236 by faulting and folding, and excludes a component of layer-parallel shortening (such
237 as lateral compaction). The calculated shortening could contain uncertainty arising
238 from vertical compaction and choice of depth conversion. We estimate errors in the
239 shortening are +/- 8 % at maximum, based on multiple parameter tests for the
240 decompaction and depth conversion. This uncertainty is acceptable for our primary
241 purpose that is analysis of along-strike variation rather than of absolute measurement
242 values.

243 Finally, we measured the forelimb dip, interlimb angle and depth of anticline crests
244 at horizon h4 (Figure 8). The forelimb dip and interlimb angle were determined on dip
245 sections spaced at every 1 km, the fold crest depth was measured at every 250 m
246 along fold lengths. We use these measurements to quantify variations in fold tightness
247 and amplitude along strike. Again, up to 15 % errors caused by depth conversion could
248 be included in the measurements of forelimb dip and interlimb angle, and 3 % errors
249 are estimated in the crestal line depth. But overall tendencies of along-strike variations
250 in these measurements should not be affected critically by this uncertainty, as an
251 impact of the depth conversion choice is rather uniform over the study area.

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253

254 **6. Results**

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256 *6.1. Observation of along-strike variations*

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258 *6.1.1. Structural pattern in map view*

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260 On horizon h4, the fold train A extends c. 35 km along strike within the seismic
261 area and runs northeast beyond the seismic data coverage (Figure 7Figure 6b). The
262 fold train B is c. 48 km long, has a crest line forming a gentle arc bowed towards the
263 northwest on the map view (Figure 7b). They are widely spaced, at 7-8 km, in the
264 northern section, whereas the fold trains become closer, 3-5 km distance, in the central
265 section.

266 Within the mapped segment, the fold train A shows a main culmination plunging
267 southward. This fold train is associated with five fore-thrusts dipping E to SE (FA1,

268 FA4, FA5, FA6 and FA8) and three oppositely dipping back-thrusts (FA2b, FA3b and
269 FA7b). Some pop-up structures (Butler, 1982) carried by these conjugate thrusts lie
270 along the fold length (e.g. between thrusts FA1 and FA2b). The longest fore-thrust
271 FA4 exhibits a sigmoidal fault trace in the map view whereas the other thrusts display
272 straight or gently bowed traces (Figure 7b). This 'master thrust' (FA4) overlaps the
273 other fore-thrusts (FA5, FA6) in the northern section where it lies within an array of
274 imbricate thrusts (Shaw et al., 1999) (Figure 7b). Thrust FA1 is the only fore-thrust
275 structure that is geometrically isolated from the aligned fore-thrust array on horizon h4.
276 The thrust FA1 forms a relay pattern with the thrust FA4, exhibiting so-called soft
277 linkage (in the sense of Walsh and Watterson, 1991). Above the relay structure there
278 is a deflection in the fold crest line (Figure 7b).

279 The fold train B has two elevation culminations in the central and the northern
280 sections and plunges away to both northeast and south (Figure 7b). The structure
281 contains four fore-thrusts (FB1, FB2, FB3 and FB7) and three back-thrusts (FB4b,
282 FB5b and FB6b). A pop-up structure occurs between conjugate thrusts FB3, FB4b
283 and FB7. The fore-thrust FB1, the largest fault in the study area, has a semi-sigmoidal
284 curvature in map view (Figure 7b), like the master thrust FA4 in the fold train A. The
285 thrust FB1 overlaps all the fore-thrusts along the fold train B to form part of an imbricate
286 thrust array (Figure 7b). Thrusts FB1 and FB7 form a weakly overlapping relay pattern
287 near the northern end of the fold train (Figure 7b). Unlike the fold train A displaying
288 kinks in the fold crest line, the fold train B exhibits a smoother anticline crest line.

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291 6.1.2. *Cross-sectional geometries*

292

293 The seismic sections across the fold trains illustrate the change in fold and thrust
294 geometry along strike (Figure 10). The fold train A shows a low-amplitude kink fold
295 associated with a single fore-thrust FA1 near the southern end (Figure 10b). To the
296 north, the fold changes to tight geometry, more fore- and back-thrusts cut the syn- and
297 pre-kinematic sequences below horizon h5 (Figure 10c). The thrust FA1 terminates
298 and is replaced by the master thrust FA4, the fold becomes asymmetric and verges
299 westward (Figure 10d). The fore-thrust FA1 and back-thrust FA2b and FA3b are not
300 clearly inked to the master thrust FA4 on the seismic image (Figure 10d). The north
301 side of the soft linkage zone between thrusts FA1 and FA4, where the master thrust
302 FA4 forms the embayment trace direction to west, thrust FA4 shows significant
303 displacement associated with a gentle overlying fold geometry (Figure 7b and Figure
304 10e). Further to the north, the fold is tightened and more imbricate sheets are
305 developed around the structural culmination along with the back-thrust FA7b (Figure
306 7b and Figure 10f-h). Structurally upper imbricate sheets appear to be younger than
307 underlying sheets, creating a similar structure to 'break-backward imbricate structure'
308 (Shaw et al., 1999), as upper sheets deform stratigraphically younger horizons in the
309 syn-kinematic sequences (e.g. Figure 10g). Back-thrusts show minor displacements
310 compared to fore-thrusts across the fold train A.

311 The fold train B evolves from near its southern end from an asymmetric, low-
312 amplitude fold verging westward on a single fore-thrust fault FB1 with significant fault
313 displacement (Figure 10a). To the north, more thrusts cut section below horizon h5
314 while the fold shape becomes tight (Figure 10b-e). The thrust FB2 appears to form an
315 isolated segment away from the master thrust FB1 at its southern end (Figure 10b).
316 These structural patterns mimic those of the fold train A described above, and the
317 geometrical changes along strike are accompanied by a decrease in fault

318 displacement and fault spacing. Analogous to the thrust sequence in the fold train A,
319 upper imbricate thrusts seem to be younger than those below, based on fold
320 deformation in syn-kinematic strata (e.g. Figure 10b, e). In the central section, where
321 one of the fold culminations is located, the fold train B exhibits a symmetric fold shape
322 (Figure 10f). On the north side of this culmination, the fault trace of thrust FB1 bows
323 out to the northwest, the thrust FB1 increases its displacement and accompanies
324 back-thrust FB4b. In accordance with these changes in fault geometry and
325 displacement, the fold evolves to a gentle shape verging east-southeast (Figure 10g).
326 In the northernmost section, where another culmination of the fold train occurs, thrust
327 FB1 reduces offset while accompanying closely spaced thrust faults above (Figure
328 10h). The anticline here shows a tight geometry. Fault displacements accommodated
329 by back-thrusts are minor in comparison with those of fore-thrusts as described for the
330 fold train A.

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332

333 6.2. *Heave profiles*

334

335 Individual thrust faults associated with the fold trains A and B show irregular shapes
336 of heave profiles on a strike projection (Figure 11b, 12b), analogous to displacement-
337 distance graph for normal faults. Each heave-distance profile, varying from quasi-
338 elliptical to triangular to bimodal in shape, exhibits single or two heave maxima and
339 diminishes to seismically undetectable heaves at the fault trace ends. Note that
340 complete heave profiles of some thrusts (FA5, FA6, FA7b, FA8, FB6b and FB7) are
341 uncertain, as they extend beyond the seismic area. Thrust FB2 shows large fault
342 heave at the northern end of the trace (Figure 12b). This is because the thrust gets

343 close to the upper imbricate thrust FB3, and fault heave on the thrust FB2 becomes
344 seismically unresolvable. Due to this 'fault merger' interpreted below the seismic
345 resolution, the thrust FB3 shows sharply increased fault heave (Figure 12b).

346 The most characteristic patterns of the heave profiles are bimodal shapes
347 associated with the master fore-thrusts, FA4 and FB1 (Figure 11b, 12b). Such uniquely
348 shaped heave profiles do not result from changes in fault dip (Figure 11c, 12c);
349 although the thrust FB1 slightly increases fault dips (29-35°) at its central section
350 where fault heave is diminished, the heave pattern keeps its bimodal shape even if the
351 fault dip effect (heave reduction at c. 20 %) is removed. These bimodal heave patterns
352 can be explained by the merger of at least two fault segments initiated separately and
353 propagated laterally to coalesce (Ellis and Dunlap, 1988; Liu and Dixon, 1991). Heave
354 maxima of the master thrusts, e.g. at 23 km and 35 km along strike for FA4 (Figure
355 11b), indicate places where thrust segments were initiated. These locations
356 correspond to the points in which gentle folds occur and fault traces form westward
357 bow-shapes (Figure 11a, 12a), probably because the faulting played more important
358 role as to the accommodation of shortening than folding there. Local heave minima in
359 the centers of these fault traces, at 28-30 km for FA4 and 22-27 km for FB1 along
360 strike (Figure 11b, 12b), are thought to be the sites of former fault linkage (Ellis and
361 Dunlap, 1988). These previous linkage sites coincide with heave peak(s) of imbricate
362 thrust(s) overlying the master thrusts, such as FA5, FB3 and perhaps FB2 (Figure 11b,
363 12b). Given that imbricate thrusts are relatively younger than master thrusts as we
364 described above, these imbricate thrusts appear to be initiated selectively in the fault
365 linkage sites to compensate for the heave deficits on the master thrusts. Nevertheless,
366 these former linkage sites are still marked by decreases in summed heave for each
367 fold train (Figure 11b, 12b).

368 Soft linkage sites between thrusts, at 19 km in fold train A and at 40 km in fold train
369 B along strike, are characterized by weakly overlapped heave profiles (Figure 11b,
370 12b). They present distinctive deficits in summed heave for individual fold trains. Near
371 these soft linkage sites, the master thrusts FA4 and FB1 show high heave gradients
372 of 0.18-0.52 (equivalent to displacement gradients of 0.22-0.56). This contrasts with
373 much of other fore-thrusts and back-thrusts presenting lower heave gradients of 0.04-
374 0.16 (displacement gradients of 0.05-0.17) at fault trace ends. These characters are
375 comparable with displacement patterns of normal fault arrays forming soft linkages
376 (e.g. Peacock and Sanderson, 1991). The high heave gradients of the master thrusts
377 suggest that restricted fault-tip propagation (Nicol et al., 1996) of the master thrusts
378 under the interaction with adjacent fault segments (Willemsse et al., 1996; Gupta and
379 Scholz, 2000; Nicol et al., 2016).

380 As if to reflect such restricted fault growth, heave patterns change abruptly across
381 the soft linkage areas. For example, in the south of the soft linkage site in the fold train
382 A, the thrust FA1 and back-thrusts FA2b and FA3b show small heaves and semi-
383 elliptically shaped heave patterns (Figure 11b). Contrary to this, in the north, thrust
384 faults present increased heaves and irregularly shaped profiles (FA4-FA8) (Figure
385 11b). Given that irregularities in heave profile and high-heave values are produced by
386 segment linkage (Cartwright et al., 1995), the northern regime is thought to be in a
387 more advanced stage of fault growth than the southern area. Small heaves in the south
388 are partly attributed to the thrust FA1 dipping steeply at angles of 40-58° (Figure 11c).
389 However, even after the consideration of the impact of such large fault dips (heave
390 reduction by 50 % at most), thrusts FA1, FA2b and FA3b are no match for the thrusts
391 having significant heaves in the north.

392 As fault heave on the master thrust FA4 decreases to near zero at its northern end,
393 structurally lowest fore-thrust FA6 increases fault heave, at 28-42 km along strike
394 (Figure 11b). This is similar to displacement patterns of displacement transfer between
395 relaying thrusts described in outcrops (Dahlstrom, 1969; Sanderson and Spratt, 1992;
396 Davis et al., 2005; Mazzoli et al., 2005).

397

398 6.3. *Fold strain*

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400 As we described above, anticlines carried by thrusts change from gentle to tight
401 folds along their fold lengths. Fluctuations of forelimb dip and interlimb angle of these
402 hangingwall anticlines represent such fold geometry changes along strike
403 systematically (Figure 11d, 12d). The forelimb dip presents particularly rich variation,
404 presumably due to fore-thrust faults that are predominant in the study area.

405 Along-strike variations of forelimb dip and interlimb angle are here used as fold
406 tightness indexes or proxies for fold strain. They appear to complement summed
407 heave profiles of individual fold trains in part (Figure 11b, 12b). Significant fold strain
408 (tightened fold) represented by decreased interlimb angles ($53-70^\circ$) and increased
409 forelimb dips ($57-64^\circ$) occurs at soft linkage sites where summed heave is diminished
410 (Figure 11d, 12d). In the similar way, increased fold strain indicated by large forelimb
411 dips ($> 45^\circ$) along with moderately reduced interlimb angles ($70-115^\circ$) is distributed on
412 central hard linkages of the master thrusts, where summed heave decreases to form
413 local minima. Some ends of fault traces also present relatively tight fold shapes shown
414 by decreased interlimb angles and increased fault dips, e.g. the southern end of thrust
415 FB1 at 4-8 km and northern end of thrust FB3 at 34 km along strike (Figure 12b). They
416 might resemble a thrust dying out into a fold, which have been described in natural

417 structures since the early twentieth century (Elliott, 1976). When summation of heave
418 displays local maxima (e.g. at 23 km and 12 km along strike in the fold trains A and B,
419 respectively), low fold strain (gentle fold geometry) occurs in thrust hangingwalls with
420 large interlimb angles (106-135°) and gentle forelimb dips (18-31°) (Figure 11d, 12d).
421 This shows that fault initiation points accumulate fault slip rather than fold strain.

422 The mirror-image relations between the summed heave and the fold strain indicate
423 displacement transfer between folding and faulting (Elliott, 1976; Liu and Dixon, 1991;
424 Higgins et al., 2009). There are exceptions, however. Local maxima in summation of
425 heave are paired with high fold strain presented by high interlimb angles at c. 30-40
426 km along strike in both fold trains (Figure 11b, d, 12b, d). In the area, seismic sections
427 display highly strained structures that are associated with increased number of thrusts
428 and tightened folds (Figure 10g, h). Such significant strain may exceed an upper limit
429 where the folding can complement the faulting. Both faulting and folding may have to
430 accommodate shortening as much as they can.

431 The soft linkage site in the fold train A marks the greatest fold strain presented by
432 interlimb angles of 53-63° and forelimb dip of 57-60° in the study area (Figure 11d).
433 Given that summed heave decreases to near zero at the place, these measurements
434 may be nearly equal to a maximum strain attained by the folding mechanism at the
435 horizon h4 without faulting, as far as we can ascertain.

436 The elevations of fold crests show rather smooth profiles along strike (Figure 11e,
437 12e). They display similarities to variations in the forelimb dip and interlimb angle.
438 Increased fold strain indicated by the elevation peaks occurs when the summed heave
439 decreases, e.g. at soft linkage site between FB1 and FB7 and central section of master
440 thrust FB1. Low fold strain is expressed by saddles at places where the summation of
441 heave presents peaks, e.g. c. 24 km on the fold train A and 13 km and 35 km on the

442 fold train B along strike. But again, northern regime of the study area, at 30-40 km
443 along strike, provides an exception; a crestal culmination occurs with greater summed
444 heave in the fold train A (Figure 11e). This could result from significant strain that
445 needs to be accommodated by both folding and faulting. Note that the crest of the fold
446 train B has been eroded locally, inhibiting complete analysis of its crestal elevation.

447

448

449 6.4. *Shortening in individual fold trains*

450

451 Shortening is accommodated by three mechanisms theoretically: folding, faulting
452 and layer-parallel shortening (Liu and Dixon, 1991). The shortening calculated in this
453 study, by line-length balancing, only consists of the components associated with the
454 folding and the faulting. Thus, if there is displacement transfer between these two
455 mechanisms along strike as we inferred above, the shortening may reflect a result of
456 such kinematic interaction.

457 In the fold train A, the shortening shows approximately linear increase to north
458 (Figure 11b). This smooth trend of the shortening profile is obvious compared to
459 fluctuated variations in summed heave, forelimb dip and interlimb angle along strike,
460 especially in southern section. This indeed appears to be the product of displacement
461 transfer between folding and faulting (Liu and Dixon, 1991; Higgins et al., 2009). Soft
462 linkage site between thrusts FA1 and FA4 provides a good example. A peak of fold
463 strain illustrated by the smallest interlimb angle and the greatest forelimb dip (Figure
464 11d) compensates cumulative heave decreased to near zero so that shortening
465 presents smooth trend without abrupt gap (Figure 11b). In northern section, there are
466 some deficits in shortening (at 27-31 and 36-38 km along strike) (Figure 11b). In this

467 area, increased fold strain indicated by reduced interlimb angle and increased forelimb
468 dip occur, implying that the folding work at full stretch to accommodate shortening.
469 The area is also characterized by large shortening values (> 2 km). Such significant
470 shortening may be over capacity for the fold train A to take the shortening up smoothly
471 along strike only using the folding and the faulting mechanisms.

472 The fold train B shows an irregular shape of shortening profile. Compared to highly
473 fluctuated profile of summed heave along strike, variation in the shortening is slightly
474 moderated (e.g. soft linkage at 40 km along strike), presumably due to fold strain
475 compensating along-strike change in fault displacement. But, the irregular shape of
476 the shortening profile indicates that such complementary relation between the folding
477 and the faulting did not fully work within the fold train B to accommodate shortening
478 along strike smoothly. Again, a reason for this could be significant shortening
479 exceeded a capacity limit of the complementary system between the folding and
480 faulting. Or there may be another mechanism accommodating the shortening.

481 Difference between the shortening value and summation of heave informs a rough
482 estimate of shortening taken up by the folding. Figure 13 shows that the shortening
483 related to the folding varies along strike in concordance with variations in forelimb dip
484 and interlimb angle (see Figure 11d, 12d for comparison). This fold-related shortening
485 takes up 8-87 % of the shortening amount throughout both fold trains (Figure 13). The
486 ratio of the fold-related shortening to the shortening amount is high at the soft linkage
487 areas (52-87 %), it becomes moderate at the central hard linkages of master thrusts
488 (20-42 %) and lower at the fault initiation points of master thrust segments (8-22 %).
489 The value of fold-related shortening reaches peaks of c. 1.2 km at soft linkage sites
490 and at places where imbricate thrust sheets occur (Figure 13), and does not exceed
491 this level. Compared to summation of fault heave reaching 3.7 km (at 29 km along

492 strike in the fold train B), the maximum value of fold-related shortening seems
493 relatively small. The places presented by maxima in the fold-related shortening are
494 characterized by ultimately tightened folds on seismic sections (e.g. Figure 10g, h).
495 The value of 1.2 km may therefore equal to an upper limit of shortening amount that
496 folding can accommodate at horizon h4 in the study area. Note that the shortening
497 amount taken up by the folding also depends on a structural depth of a layer;
498 structurally upper layers can accommodate more shortening value geometrically.

499

500

501 *6.5. Total heave and shortening across fold array*

502

503 We have seen that individual fold trains present geometric and kinematic variations
504 along strike due to displacement transfer between folds and thrust faults. But,
505 displacement could be transferred from a fold-thrust train to another over few to tens
506 kilometers (Dahlstrom, 1969; Sanderson and Spratt, 1992; Watkins et al., 2017). We
507 now consider fault heave and shortening across both fold trains A and B to see if they
508 demonstrate kinematic coherence.

509 Figure 14a shows that total heave across both fold trains is near zero at the
510 southern end and increases to the peak of 6.7 km at c. 35 km along strike while
511 fluctuating, and then declines to the northeast. Although the total heave profile shows
512 some distinctive local peaks (at c. 19, 27 km along strike) and diminishes (at 10, 25
513 km along strike), the profile appears to become closer to a triangular shape generally.
514 It is obvious compared to irregular shapes of summed heave profiles for individual fold
515 trains (Figure 14a). The near linear gradient in total heave appear to be a result of the
516 complementary relation in summed heave between the fold trains. Diminished fault

517 heaves of individual fold trains are paired with large heaves in another, or vice versa
518 (e.g. 20-27 km along strike; Figure 14a). Kinematically linked fault arrays that
519 propagate laterally produce linear displacement gradients (Cowie and Shipton, 1998;
520 Davis et al., 2005). The fold trains A and B may demonstrate such propagating system
521 by working together.

522 Total shortening across the fold trains presents much linear gradient (Figure 14b).
523 It increases from zero at southern end to the peak of 7.4 km at 35 km along strike and
524 then decreases toward the northeast. Smoother gradient in the total shortening is
525 presumably attributed to the folding that accommodates shortening to complement the
526 fluctuation in total heave. The fold train B displays irregular plateau shape in
527 shortening profile at c. 10-40 km along strike (Figure 14b). This area corresponds to
528 the section where the fold train A accommodates shortening. This may suggest that
529 the fold train A took over the neighboring fold train B to accommodate shortening.

530

531

532 **7. Discussion**

533

534 *7.1. A model for the kinematic linkage of thrusts*

535

536 The deep-water fold-thrust belt in offshore NW Borneo described above exhibits a
537 range of structural styles that vary along strike. Along their axes, anticlines vary from
538 gentle open structures to tight folds. These major anticlines lie in the hangingwalls to
539 thrusts. These in turn can vary along strike from single major splays to arrays of
540 smaller imbricate thrusts and local back-thrusts. Fault heave profiles, displaying
541 variations in displacement that we infer, reflect the growth and amalgamation of thrust

542 segments. Fold strains indicated by forelimb dip and interlimb angle react on the
543 displacement patterns to buffer variation in shortening. Thus, neighboring and
544 adjacent folds appear to be kinematically linked. We now build a model of the evolution
545 of a simplified imbricate thrust system (Figure 15).

546 We have shown that two anticlinal fold trains, A and B, in the 3D seismic survey
547 are defined by the large master thrusts, FA4 and FB1, respectively. These master
548 thrusts are commonly characterized by sigmoidal fault traces in the map view and
549 bimodal heave profiles on the strike projection. Sigmoidal thrust traces are observable
550 in analogue experiments as a result of merger of curved thrust segments (e.g.
551 Schreurs et al., 2016). Displacement pattern along fault traces in outcrops (e.g. Ellis
552 and Dunlap, 1988; Peacock and Sanderson, 1991) and in an analogue experiment
553 (Liu and Dixon, 1991) also suggest that coalescence of fault segments produces
554 diminished displacement at linkage zones. These studies suggest that our master
555 thrusts are the products of merger of at least two thrust segments, which initiated
556 individually, growing together as they accumulated slip (Figure 15a). The two heave
557 maxima correspond to the points of the nucleation of the individual segments. The
558 central heave minima are the location of final linkage between the former discrete
559 segments (Figure 15b). The occurrence of tight fold geometries at the points of heave
560 minima may have their origin in strain localized in the soft linkages (Walsh and
561 Watterson, 1991), or the transfer zones (in sense of O'Keefe and Stearns, 1982; Davis
562 et al., 2005) (Figure 15b). These tight folds complement the heave deficits on the
563 master thrusts, to their limit of shortening amount that the folding mechanism can
564 accommodate. Small, younger imbricate thrusts are selectively initiated in the strained
565 linkage zones to compensate the heave deficits of the master thrusts and to
566 accommodate further shortening that the folding cannot accommodate any more

567 (Figure 15c). The final thrust geometry created in this way is smoother in three
568 dimensions than the more sculpted forms that would result from a single linkage as
569 the relay ramp was breached (Figure 15d). Lateral propagation of newer, straighter
570 imbricate thrusts above the master thrust appears to create a geometry well-suited to
571 accommodate further shortening. The propagation of such additional structures can
572 be relatively rapid, as suggested by low heave gradients of the imbricate thrusts in the
573 study area.

574 The master thrust we described here is not necessarily the earliest thrust fault
575 developed in a structure; the master thrust FA4 appears to accommodate decreased
576 fault displacement on the structurally lower and older thrust FA6. We assume any
577 thrust faults can follow the steps modelled above if conditions are complete (e.g.
578 alignment of faults), irrespective of thrust sequence. Our model may occur at multiple
579 sites along a single fold train.

580 The deflection along the axis of fold train A is associated with the soft linkage area
581 between thrusts FA1 and FA4 (Figure 15d). We assume this site of soft linkage
582 hampered along-strike propagation of thrust array consisting of FA4, FA5 and FA6, as
583 indicated by high heave gradient of the master thrust. The soft linkage area presents
584 decrease in summed heave and a greater fold strain indicated by small interlimb angle
585 and large forelimb dip. Similar relationships between fold strain and fault linkage sites
586 have been previously inferred (Davis et al., 2005; Higgins et al., 2009). Linear gradient
587 of shortening across the site of soft linkage suggests that the folding plays an important
588 role to maintain the kinematic coherence across the soft linkage area instead of
589 faulting. Given that fold strain is almost at the upper limit for accommodating
590 shortening (c. 1.2 km), the soft linkage zone may be verging on a breach by faults to
591 evolve to a hard linkage zone.

592 Relative importance of the folding in accommodating the shortening amount varies
593 along strike, depending on the activity of thrust fault(s) and the bulk shortening. At a
594 place where fault propagation is impeded, e.g. by the soft linkage site described above,
595 the folding becomes principal mechanism to accommodate the shortening to
596 compensate the decrease in fault displacement. In an area where the faulting takes
597 up the shortening dominantly, such as fault nucleation points, the folding is less
598 important. Under the significant amount of bulk shortening (e.g. > 2 km in our case),
599 the folding may exert all its capacity to accommodate shortening together with the
600 faulting. Eventually, the proportion of the shortening taken up by the folding to the bulk
601 shortening can change in a wide range from near 0 to 100 %.

602 Our discussions to this point have focused on kinematic linkage of thrust segments
603 associated with a single train of hangingwall anticline. However, our cumulative heave
604 plots and total shortening for the two main fold trains show complementary
605 displacement patterns and shortening profiles. Thus, these two fold-thrust systems
606 appear to work together. Such behavior should be expected. Maximum distance at
607 which fold-thrust structures can work together remains unknown. But, it can be more
608 than 8 km based on the observable distance between the two fold trains. The regional
609 cross-section (Figure 3b, c) used here to set the scene for our three-dimensional study
610 shows that arrays of fold-thrust structures operated in parallel. They can relay between
611 each other along axis, as predicted by Dahlstrom (1969). Therefore, the occurrence
612 of linkage involving strain localization and imbricate thrusts is dynamically affected by
613 adjacent structures across strike. It is misleading to treat individual fold-thrust
614 structures in isolation.

615

616

617 7.2. *Comparisons to fold-thrust models*

618

619 Kinematic models, such as fault-bend fold (Suppe, 1983; Medwedeff and Suppe,
620 1997; Suppe et al., 2004), fault-propagation fold (Mitra, 1990; Suppe and Medwedeff,
621 1990; Mitra and Mount, 1998) and detachment fold (Epard and Groshong, 1995;
622 Poblet and McClay, 1996; Mitra, 2002), illustrate the evolution of the thrust-related
623 folding identified in outcrops and on seismic images while following the balancing
624 theory. They have brought insights into the development process of fold-thrust
625 structures and advances in the prediction of subsurface geometry. Particularly in thrust
626 settings where seismic images are often degraded, advantages to use the kinematic
627 models in testing structural interpretation have been well argued (Hardage et al., 1999;
628 Shaw et al., 2005; Kostenko et al., 2008; Cardozo and Brandenburg, 2014; Malz et al.,
629 2015).

630 The kinematic models are simplified and idealized templates of natural structures.
631 They represent large-scale deformation style of the structures, but often fail to account
632 for detailed features of structures (Butler and McCaffrey, 2004; Morley, 2009; Hardy,
633 2011; Torvela and Bond, 2011; Brandes and Tanner, 2013). This is particularly evident
634 in cases where displacement is small. For example, both fault-bend fold and fault-
635 propagation fold envisage a thrust fault propagated up-dip from a detachment fault.
636 However, at early stage of the fault development, thrust faults can nucleate away from
637 the detachment fault and propagate both up- and down-dip (Williams and Chapman,
638 1983; Kattenhorn, 1994; McConnell et al., 1997; de Vera et al., 2010; Ferrill et al.,
639 2016; Ghisetti et al., 2016). In our study area, some of the imbricate thrusts and back-
640 thrusts marked by small fault heaves appear to show similar characters (e.g. FB2 in
641 Figure 10b, FA1 and FA3b in Figure 10d). Shaw et al. (1999) showed that fault-bend

642 fold models can describe a variety of imbricate structures. The kinematic models could
643 forecast such structures reasonably only if fault displacement is large enough to
644 develop a linkage between the fore-thrust segment and the detachment fault.

645 Besides, the kinematic models treat cross-sectional geometry basically.
646 Characterization of a fold-thrust structure in three dimensions by them remains
647 challenging, although there are few attempts to expand the algorithms into three
648 dimensions (Cristallini et al., 2004; Cardozo, 2008). The kinematic models may be
649 applied onto serial cross-sections arranged at certain intervals along strike so that 3-
650 D structural geometry of a structure is apparently illustrated (Wilkerson et al., 1991;
651 Rodriguez-Roa and Wiltschko, 2010). This is in fact desirable approach, because the
652 lateral compatibility of model parameters used is ensured (Watkins et al., 2017). In
653 many cases, however, project time restrictions allow to work only on selected cross-
654 sections spaced sparsely, 3-D characterization of the structures using kinematic
655 models are roughly attainable.

656 Profiles of geometrical measurements along strike can be made quickly. In this
657 study, we spent less than a day for measuring fault heave, fold limb angles, fold crest
658 depth and shortening. The measurement of fault heave can be especially speedy as
659 it does not require seismic depth conversion. The profiles of these measurements
660 inform very detailed characters of the kinematics underlying the spatial variation in
661 structural style across the structures. Eventually this approach can establish a pseudo
662 three-dimensional view of the kinematic evolution of structures. Although our model,
663 of the relationships between thrust segment linkages and structural complexity, needs
664 to be proven by other studies, if confirmed, they could help forecast structural
665 complexity on low quality seismic dataset.

666 Use of kinematic models in combination with analysis of along-strike variation in
667 geometrical measurements may be the best mix. Better understanding obtained
668 through analysis of the geometrical measurement profiles is expected to sharpen an
669 area of interest for analysis with kinematic models, it also provides a guide for model
670 parameters. Thus, a work with the kinematic models could be optimized. The
671 kinematic models in turn can verify the structural geometry of seismic interpretation,
672 and justify the kinematics inferred by the profile analysis. Such conjunction of two
673 methodologies can lead to comprehensive understanding of the 3-D structural
674 geometry and underlying kinematics.

675

676

677 **8. Conclusions**

678

679 Changes in structural style along two anticlinal trains in a deep-water fold-thrust
680 belt, offshore NW Borneo, were described here using a high-resolution 3D seismic
681 dataset. Use of along-strike profiles of fault heave, shortening and fold geometry
682 measurements are effective for illustrating the kinematic interactions between folds
683 and thrusts, which underlie arrangement of structural variations in the fold-thrust
684 system.

685 Based on our analysis of these profiles allied to structural interpretation, we can
686 conclude the following:

687

- 688 1. The large master thrusts that define the fold-thrust structures are produced by
689 the amalgamation of two or more thrust faults. The former fault linkages are
690 marked by local heave minima.

- 691 2. The small imbricate thrusts above the master thrust, and increased fold
692 tightness, are spatially associated with sites of former linkage of the master
693 thrust. These additional structures in part compensate for the deficit in heave
694 on the master fault.
- 695 3. Folding can accommodate shortening to its limit that mainly depends on
696 structural depth level of a stratigraphic layer. The folding mechanism
697 compensates variation in fault displacement.
- 698 4. Adjacent structures in a thrust array can interact both along and across strike.
699 It may be misleading to consider each structure in isolation but rather as a
700 part of a three dimensional, kinematically linked system. It remains unclear
701 over what length-scales these interactions can occur.

702

703 In many thrust systems, subsurface imaging is of a substantially lower quality than
704 for the Borneo data we have used here. Consequently, forecasting subsurface
705 structure has commonly been driven by idealized fold-thrust models (e.g. Shaw et al.,
706 2005). This study casts doubt on this approach, as idealized models cannot fully
707 account for structural features marked with small displacement, such as imbricate
708 thrusts and back-thrusts. The fold-thrust models also have a limit to address along-
709 strike structural variations because they essentially work on the cross-section parallel
710 to the transport direction of rock deformation.

711 Our analysis of geometrical measurements plotted on the strike projection can be
712 readily performed. Particularly heave profile analysis is quickly performed, as fault
713 heave is essentially a measure of horizontal offset and does not require depth
714 conversion. Analysis of along-strike measurement profiles is useful for investigating
715 the kinematic coherence along and across structures. Our study shows that the zones

716 of greater structural complexity, as marked by greater arrays of imbricate thrusts,
717 coincide with sites of kinematic linkage between the main thrust segments. These in
718 turn coincide with axial deflections of the thrust hangingwall anticlines. These
719 relationships, if confirmed by other studies, could provide useful guides for forecasting
720 structural complexity even when seismic quality is low. Analysis of along-strike
721 variations prior to use of a kinematic model may be beneficial, as along-strike profiles
722 could provide a guide for areas of interest and model parameters.

723

724

725 **Acknowledgements**

726

727 This study is based on part of PhD research funded by INPEX CORPORATION at
728 University of Aberdeen. We acknowledge Petronas for the release of beautiful images
729 of 3D seismic data along with borehole information. We thank Schlumberger for the
730 academic use of Petrel software. We are truly thankful to Nancye Dawers, Haakon
731 Fossen, Roy Gabrielsen and Steve Laubach for their invaluable and constructive
732 comments that considerably improved the manuscript.

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1002

1003 **Figure captions**

1004

1005 Figure 1. Examples of along-strike variation on fold-thrust structures. (a) A thrust fault
1006 dying out into a fold (modified from Elliott, 1976). (b) Change in vergence direction
1007 along strike on a fold-thrust structure in Deep-water Niger Delta (after Higgins et al.,
1008 2007)

1009

1010 Figure 2. Displacement transfer model by Dahlstrom (1969) in the Alberta Front Range
1011 of the Canadian Cordillera. (a) Simplified serial cross-sections of a thrust array
1012 (modified from Dahlstrom, 1969). i, ii and iii are thrust faults. (b) Fault displacement
1013 plotted against along-strike distance. As displacements on individual thrusts decrease
1014 laterally, displacements on another thrusts increase, subsequently total displacement
1015 is largely unchanged.

1016

1017 Figure 3. Location map and regional 2D seismic profile of offshore Northwest Borneo.
1018 (a) Regional tectonic map of the offshore area of Northwest Borneo. Inset shows map
1019 location in Southeast Asia. Fault map is modified from Cullen (2010) and is
1020 superimposed on the Shuttle Radar Topography Mission Digital Elevation Model.
1021 Dashed line shows bathymetric contours at the interval of 500 m. Filled gray rectangle
1022 is location of 3D seismic data used in this study. (b) Regional 2D seismic profile of
1023 "Line A" and (c) a structural interpretation of the seismic profile. Profiles are displayed
1024 at no vertical exaggeration with an assumption of the average seismic velocity of 2.7
1025 km/s. Principal unconformities are labelled on the horizons; SCSU = South China Sea
1026 Unconformity (Early Miocene), M/P = Miocene-Pliocene boundary (~5.3 Ma), L/UP =

1027 Lower/Upper Pliocene boundary (~3.6 Ma) and P/Q = Pliocene/Quaternary boundary
1028 (~1.8 Ma).

1029

1030 Figure 4. Perspective view of 3D seismic survey with (a) syn-kinematic horizon h7,
1031 and (b) top pre-kinematic horizon h4. Two-way arrows show sail-line orientations of
1032 multi-azimuth survey. Translucent planes with dashed border lines are location of a
1033 dip section shown in Figure 5. Four wells (Well 1 to 4) were tied into seismic survey
1034 with sonic logs and check shot surveys. Only seismic volume within full-fold area is
1035 displayed. Elevation of horizons is displayed in two-way time with contour interval of
1036 100 ms. The survey location is in Figure 3.

1037

1038 Figure 5. A dip profile of 3D seismic survey. (a) Uninterpreted and (b) interpreted
1039 seismic profile. Multi-layered reflectors of turbiditic sequences interbed with
1040 seismically chaotic mass transport deposits. Pre-, Syn- and Post-kinematic strata are
1041 identified based on structural patterns. White rectangle shows area of Figure 6.
1042 Location of the profile is shown in Figure 4. Profiles are displayed at no vertical
1043 exaggeration with an assumption of the average seismic velocity of 2.7 km/s.

1044

1045 Figure 6. Correlation between gamma-ray log response and seismic character at Well
1046 3 location. Low gamma-ray, sandy sequences correspond with reflective packages
1047 while high gamma-ray, shaly intervals match with less reflective characters on seismic
1048 image. Formation ages presented alongside the profile are based on biostratigraphic
1049 analysis. See Figure 4, 5 for profile location. The profile has no vertical exaggeration
1050 with an assumption of the average seismic velocity of 2.7 km/s.

1051

1052 Figure 7. Elevation maps of key seismic horizons. (a) Syn-kinematic horizon h7. (b)
1053 Top Pre-kinematic horizon h4. Red lines with triangles show trace of fore-thrusts and
1054 orange lines with triangles are of back-thrusts in the hangingwalls. Major thrusts are
1055 labelled. White diagonal crosshatch indicates area of erosions on fold crest. Lines a
1056 to h are locations of seismic profiles in Figure 10. Contour interval is 100 m.

1057

1058 Figure 8. Diagram of structural geometry measured for quantifying along-strike
1059 variations on fold-thrust structures. h: fault heave, α : forelimb dip, β : interlimb angle,
1060 γ : fault dip, A: width of section, B: bed length. A subtracted from B leaves approximate
1061 estimate of the shortening amount.

1062

1063 Figure 9. Relationship between fault heave, dip-separation and fault dip angle.
1064 Measurements only for thrusts with significant displacements are plotted (FA1, FA4,
1065 FA5, FA6, FA7b, FA8, FB1, FB2, FB3, FB4b, FB7). As fault dip increases, difference
1066 between fault heave and dip-separation increases.

1067

1068 Figure 10. Selected seismic sections perpendicular to fold trains. Locations of sections
1069 are shown in Figure 7. Profiles are displayed at approximately no vertical exaggeration
1070 with an assumption of the average seismic velocity of 2.7 km/s. Major thrust faults are
1071 labelled. High-resolution images are provided in the Supplemental Materials.

1072

1073 Figure 11. Along-strike variations of the fold train A on strike projection. (a) Depth map
1074 of horizon h4 with thrust fault traces. Contour interval is at 100 m. (b) Fault heave and
1075 shortening value, (c) Fault dip angle for selected thrusts, (d) forelimb dip and interlimb
1076 angle, and (e) Depth to fold crest of horizon h4.

1077

1078 Figure 12. Along-strike variations of the fold train B on strike projection. (a) Depth map
1079 of horizon h4 with thrust fault traces. Contour interval is at 100 m. (b) Fault heave and
1080 shortening value, (c) Fault dip angle for selected thrusts, (d) forelimb dip and interlimb
1081 angle, and (e) Depth to fold crest of horizon h4.

1082

1083 Figure 13. Fold-related shortening along strike for (a) Fold train A and (b) Fold train B.
1084 Difference between shortening (solid gray line) and summed heave (dotted gray line)
1085 provides rough estimate of shortening accommodated by folding (dash-dotted black
1086 line). Maximum values of fold-related shortening, c. 1 km, appears to be an upper limit
1087 where folding can accommodate shortening at horizon h4.

1088

1089 Figure 14. (a) Total fault heave and (a) Total shortening across fold trains A and B.
1090 Summed fault heave and shortening for individual fold trains are displayed for
1091 comparison. Total fault heave and total shortening present generally linear gradients,
1092 implying kinematic coherence between the fold trains.

1093

1094 Figure 15. A model for the evolution of fold-thrust structures. (a) Early stage of fold-
1095 thrust belt development. At this stage, individual structure segments are geometrically
1096 isolated. Increased strain is distributed between closely neighboring structures. (b)
1097 Hard linkage of aligned segments is established as structures laterally propagate.
1098 Increased fold strain is distributed in linkage site due to decreased fault displacement.
1099 (c) Imbricate thrusts occur on former linkage site to compensate for diminished fault
1100 displacement. Soft linkage site is developed as non-aligned structures approach. (d)
1101 Imbricate thrusts dominantly accommodate shortening on linked segments.

- 1102 Accumulated fold strain on soft linkage site between non-aligned structures forms
- 1103 deflection in fold hinge. See text for further explanation.

1104 **Supplemental Material captions**

1105

1106 Supplemental Material 1a. High-resolution image of seismic section a-a' without
1107 author's interpretation (equivalent to left panel of Figure 10a).

1108

1109 Supplemental Material 1b. High-resolution image of seismic section a-a' with author's
1110 interpretation (equivalent to right panel of Figure 10a).

1111

1112 Supplemental Material 2a. High-resolution image of seismic section b-b' without
1113 author's interpretation (equivalent to left panel of Figure 10b).

1114

1115 Supplemental Material 2b. High-resolution image of seismic section b-b' with author's
1116 interpretation (equivalent to right panel of Figure 10b).

1117

1118 Supplemental Material 3a. High-resolution image of seismic section c-c' without
1119 author's interpretation (equivalent to left panel of Figure 10c).

1120

1121 Supplemental Material 3b. High-resolution image of seismic section c-c' with author's
1122 interpretation (equivalent to right panel of Figure 10c).

1123

1124 Supplemental Material 4a. High-resolution image of seismic section d-d' without
1125 author's interpretation (equivalent to left panel of Figure 10d).

1126

1127 Supplemental Material 4b. High-resolution image of seismic section d-d' with author's
1128 interpretation (equivalent to right panel of Figure 10d).

1129

1130 Supplemental Material 5a. High-resolution image of seismic section e-e' without
1131 author's interpretation (equivalent to left panel of Figure 10e).

1132

1133 Supplemental Material 5b. High-resolution image of seismic section e-e' with author's
1134 interpretation (equivalent to right panel of Figure 10e).

1135

1136 Supplemental Material 6a. High-resolution image of seismic section f-f' without
1137 author's interpretation (equivalent to left panel of Figure 10f).

1138

1139 Supplemental Material 6b. High-resolution image of seismic section f-f' with author's
1140 interpretation (equivalent to right panel of Figure 10f).

1141

1142 Supplemental Material 7a. High-resolution image of seismic section g-g' without
1143 author's interpretation (equivalent to left panel of Figure 10g).

1144

1145 Supplemental Material 7b. High-resolution image of seismic section g-g' with author's
1146 interpretation (equivalent to right panel of Figure 10g).

1147

1148 Supplemental Material 8a. High-resolution image of seismic section h-h' without
1149 author's interpretation (equivalent to left panel of Figure 10h).

1150

1151 Supplemental Material 8b. High-resolution image of seismic section h-h' with author's
1152 interpretation (equivalent to right panel of Figure 10h).

1153

Figure 1
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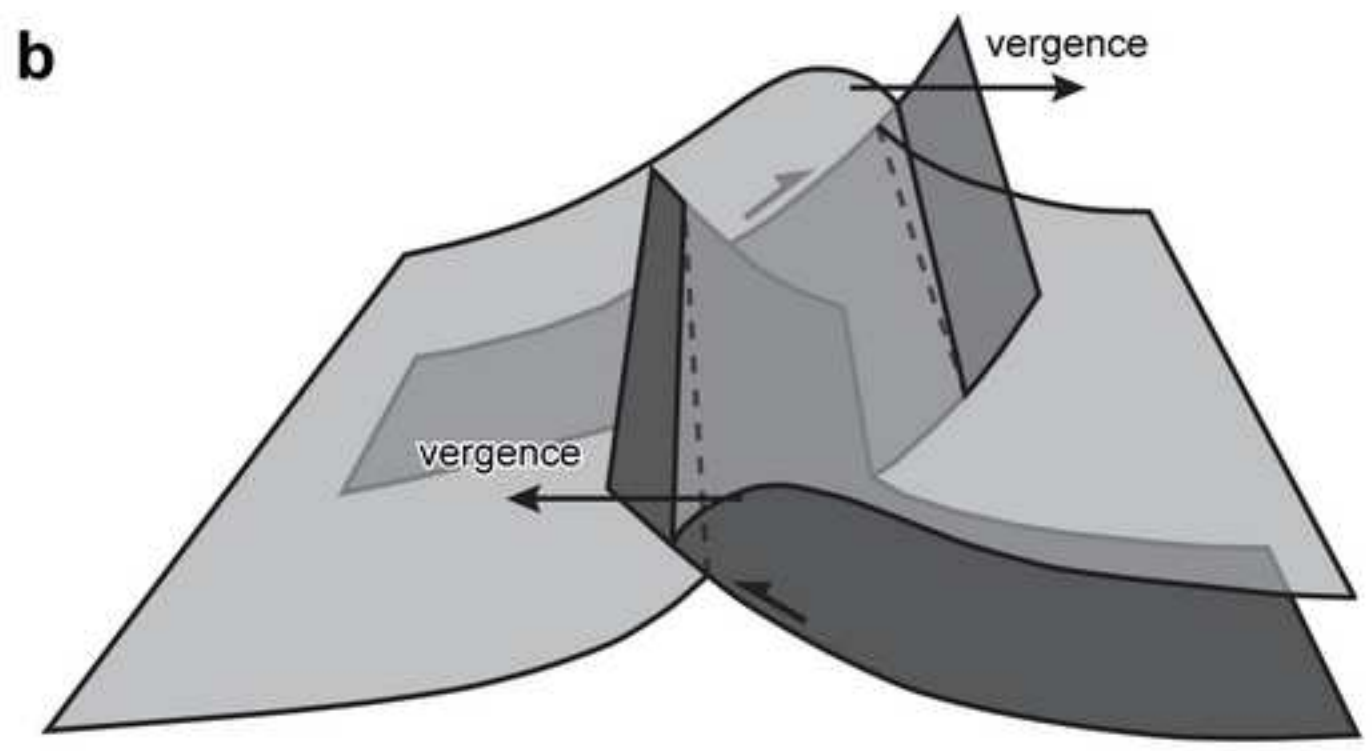
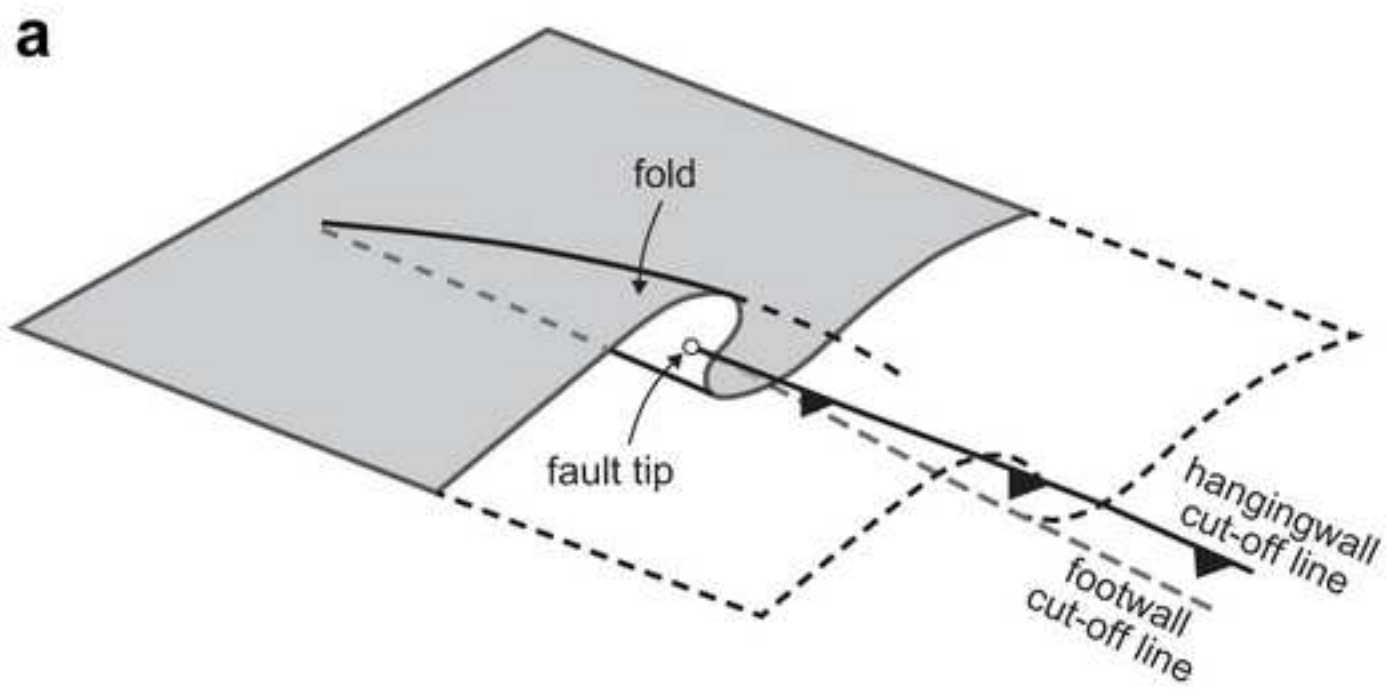


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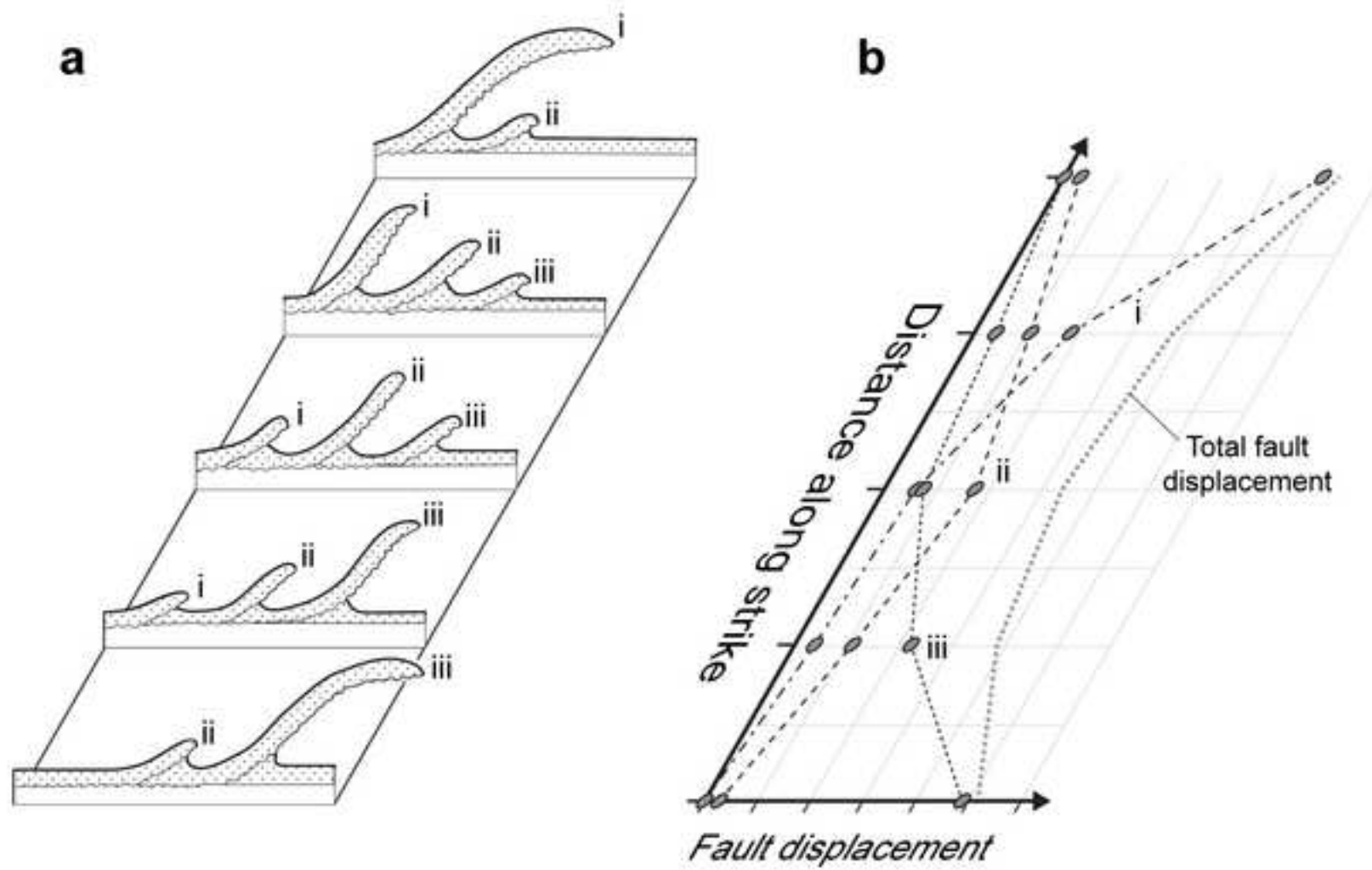


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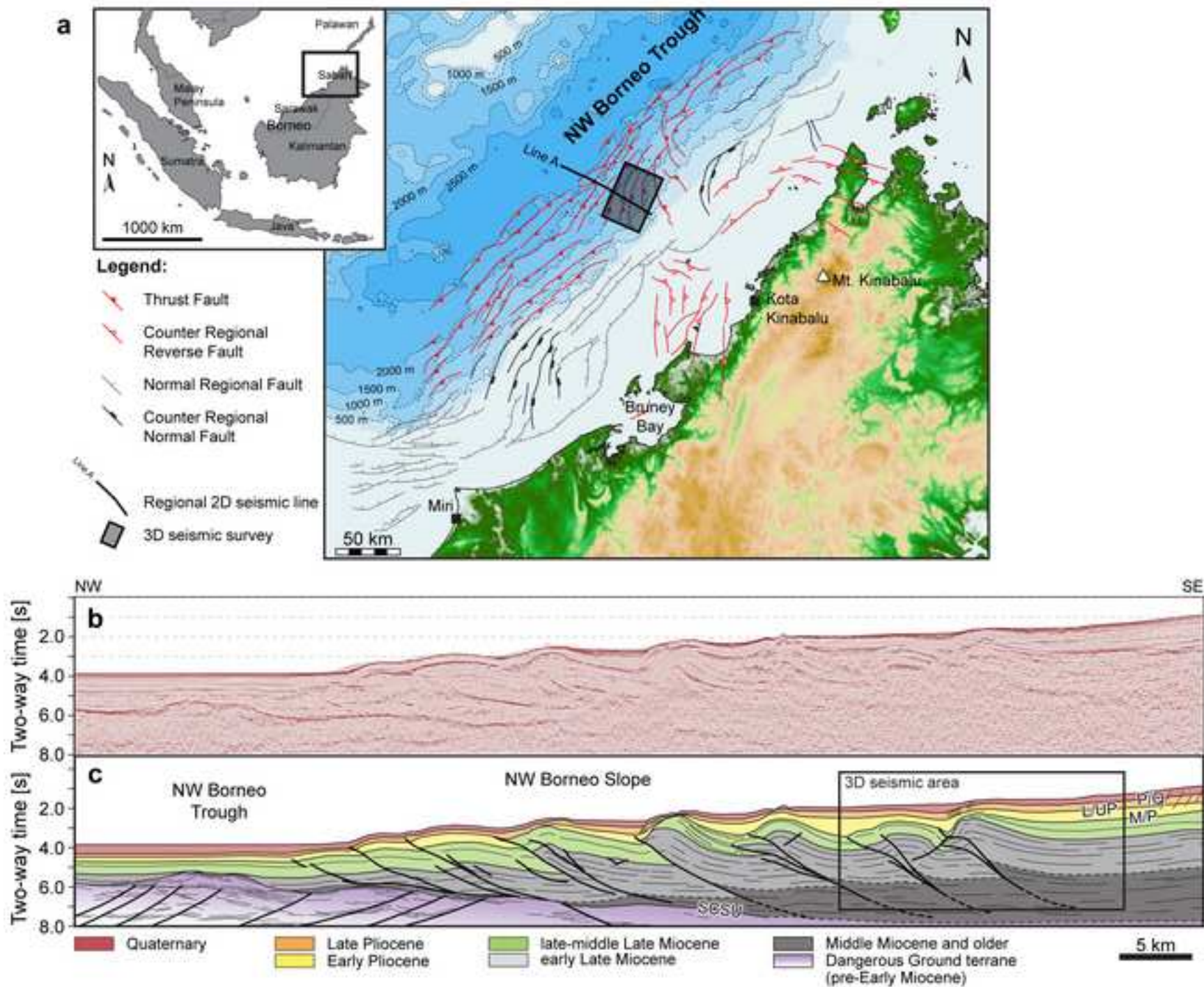


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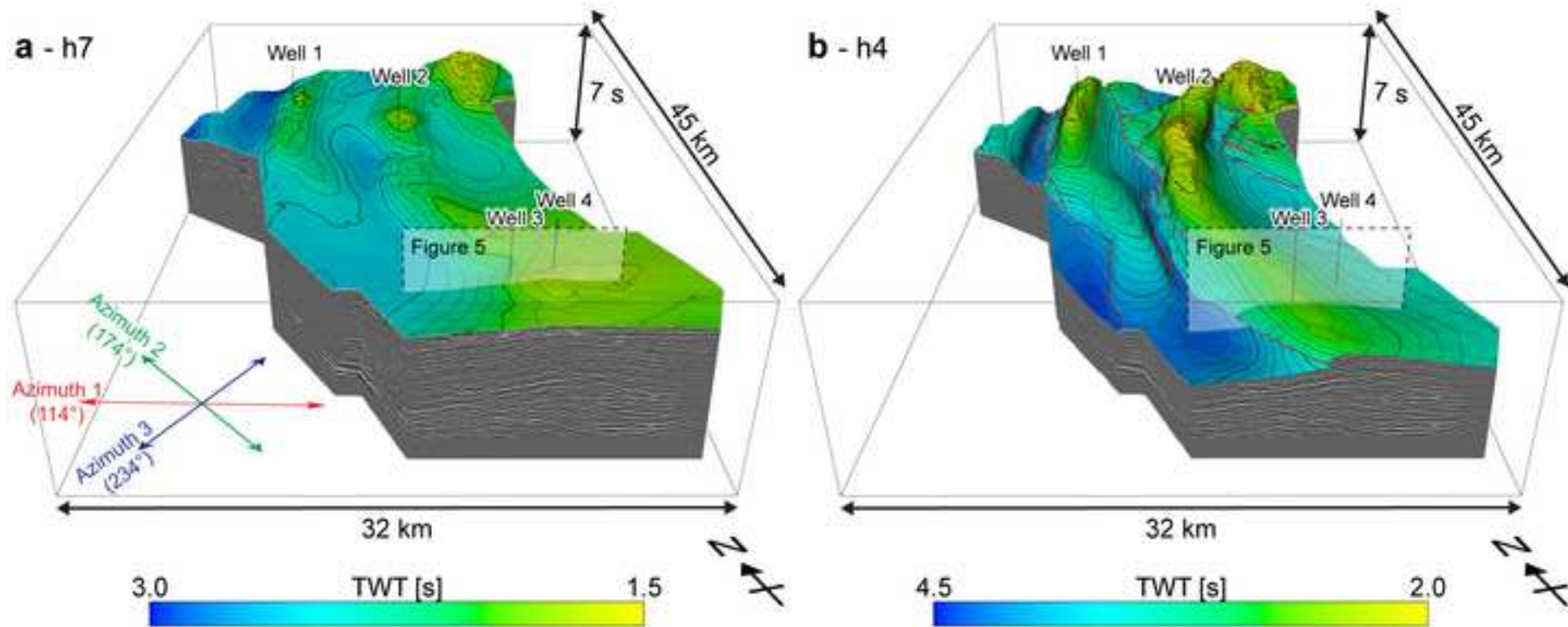


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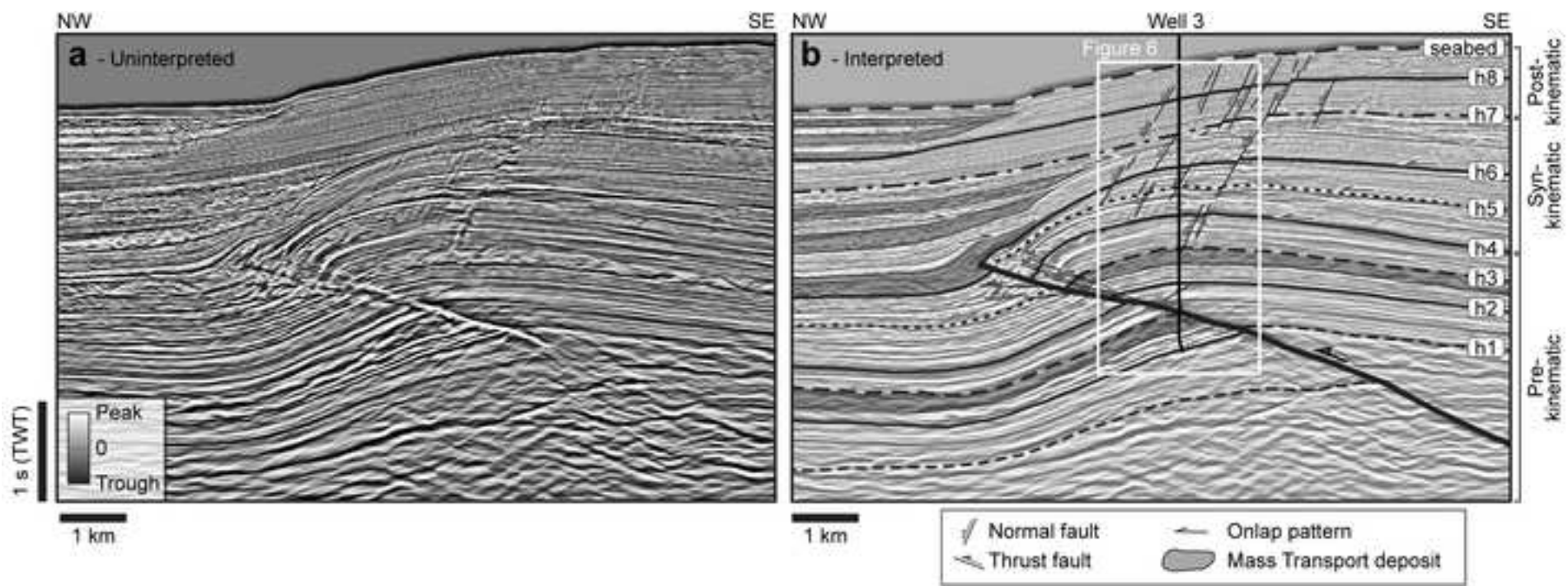


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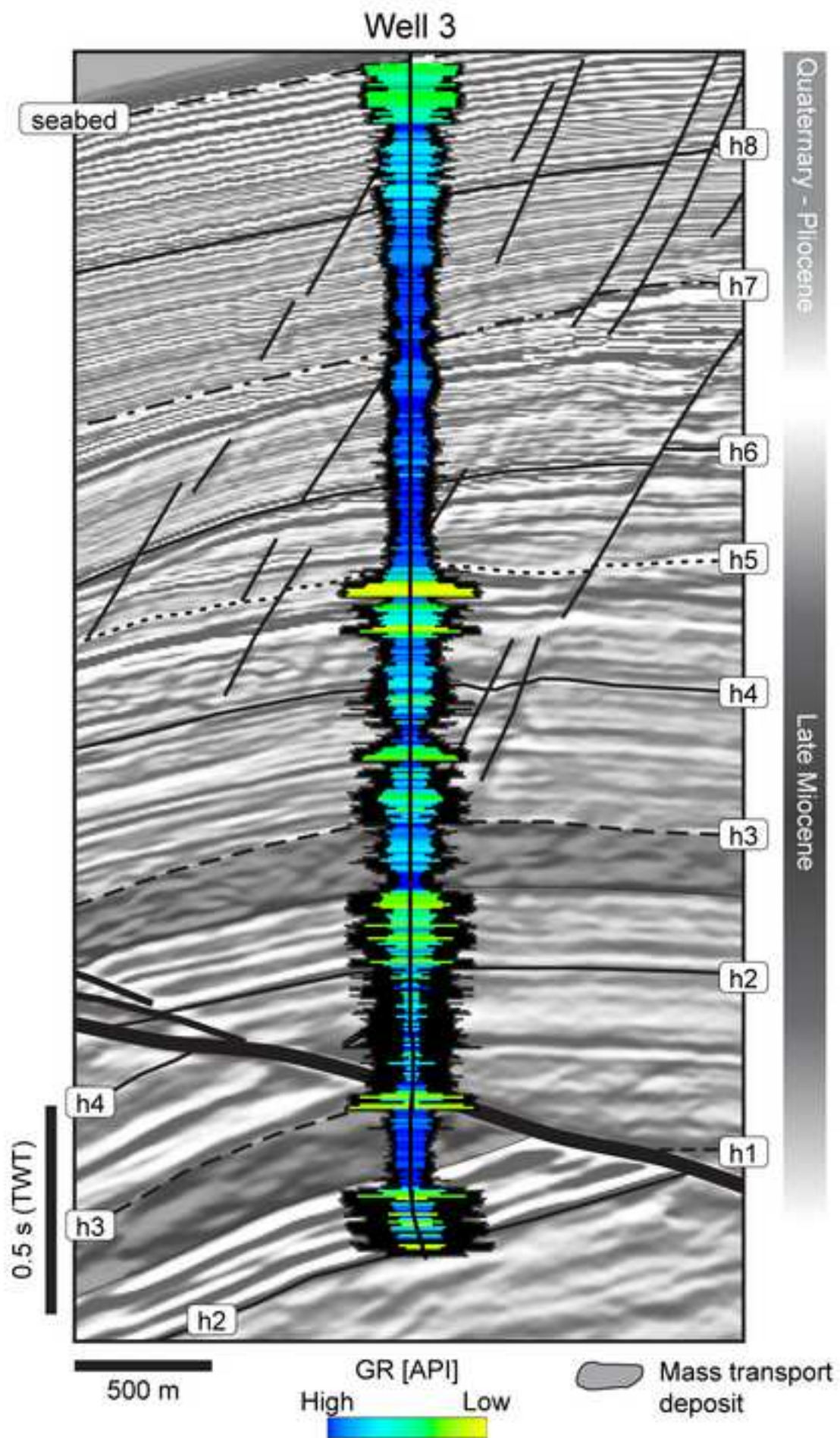


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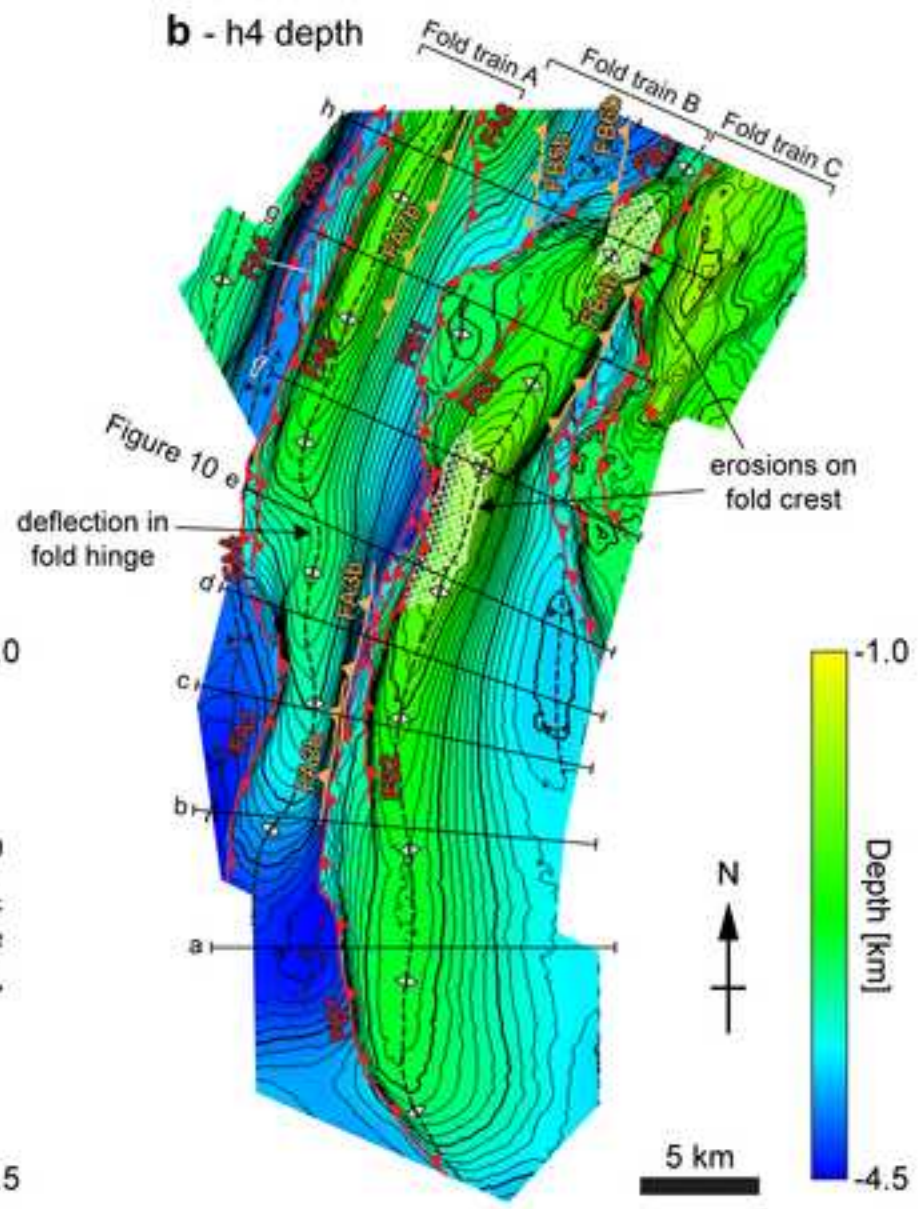
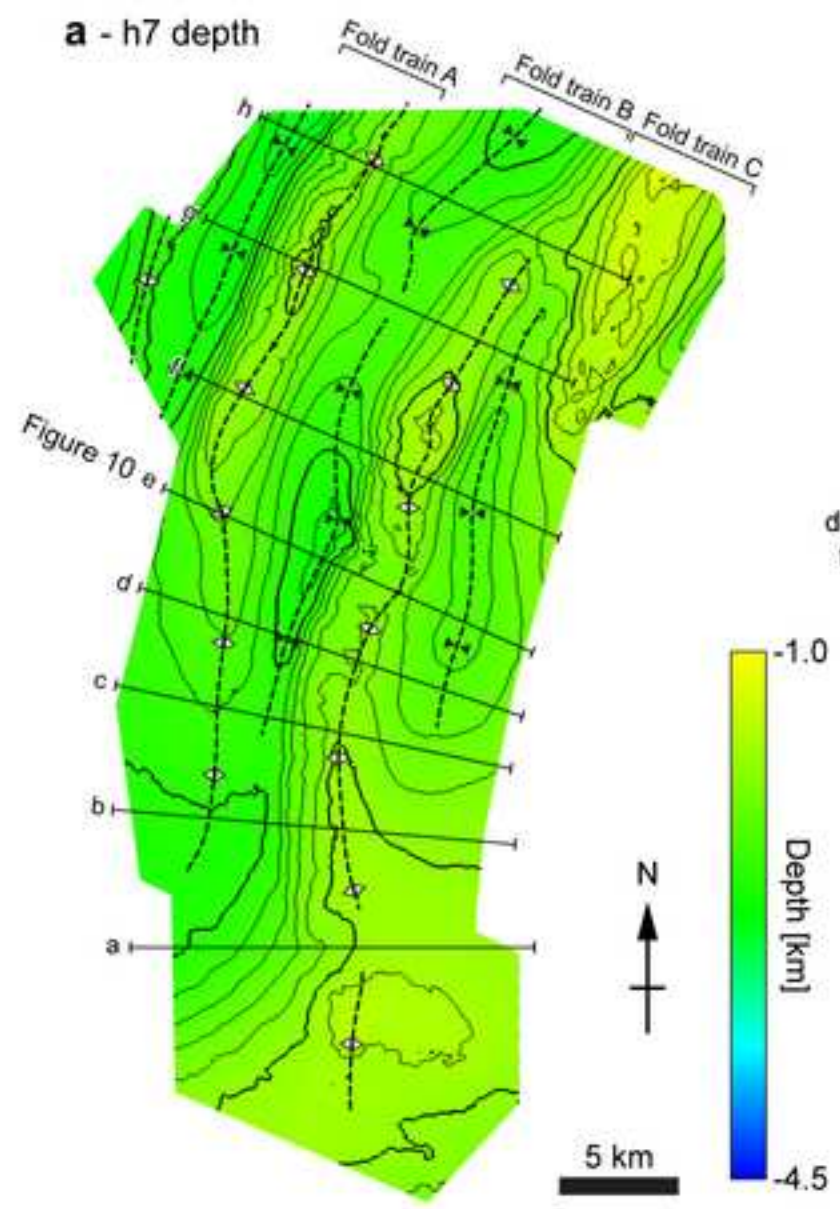


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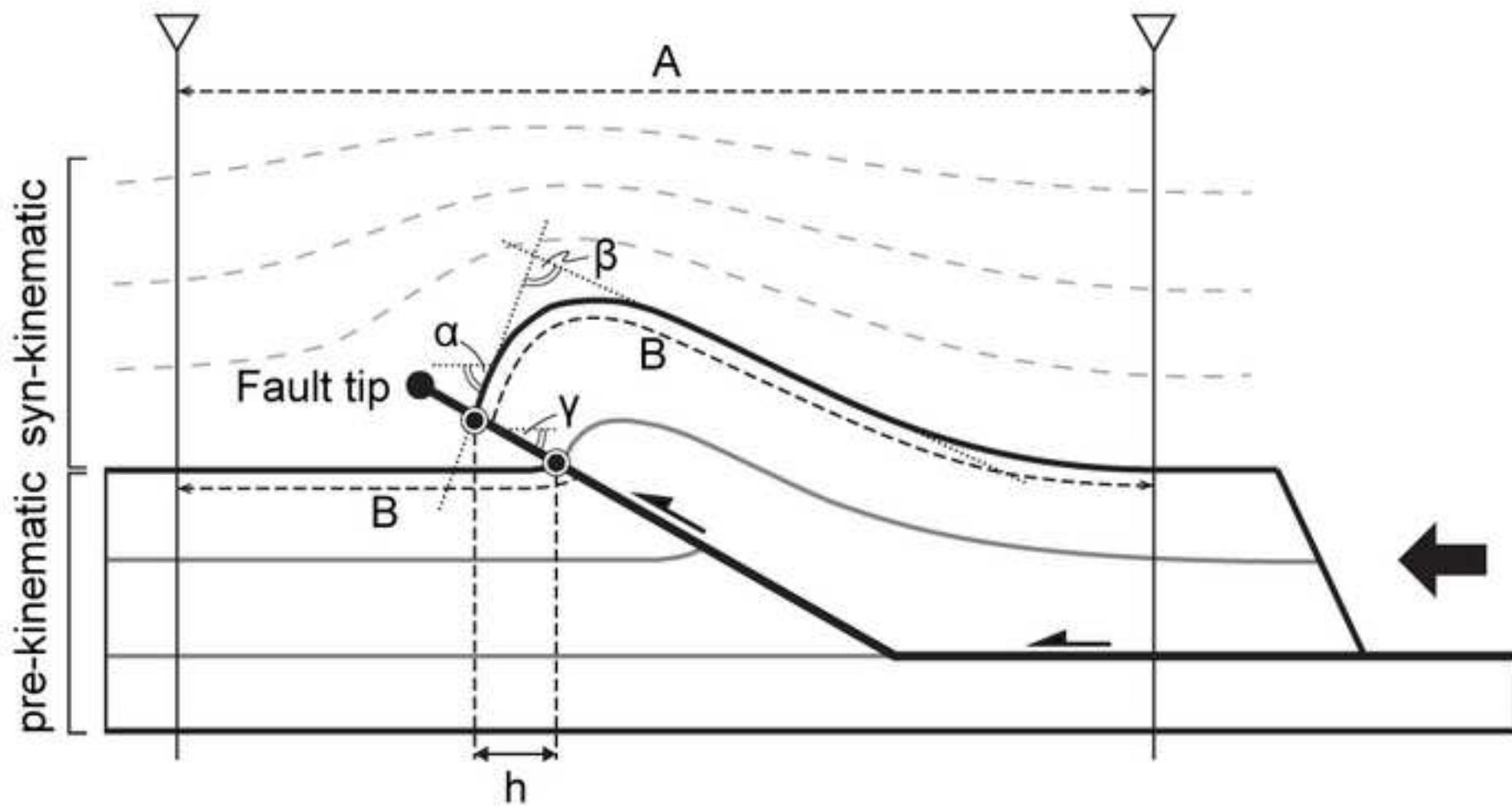


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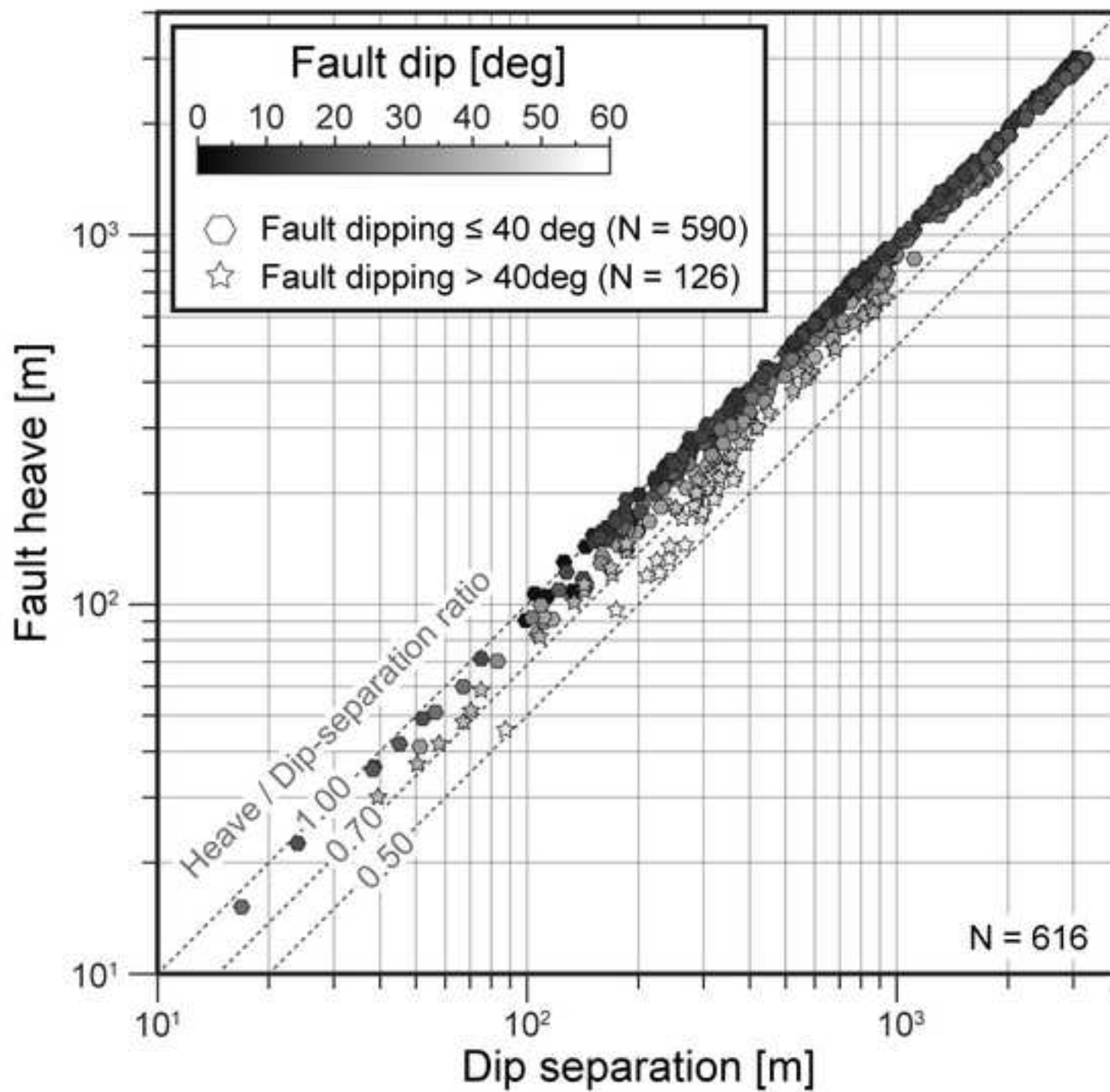


Figure 10-1
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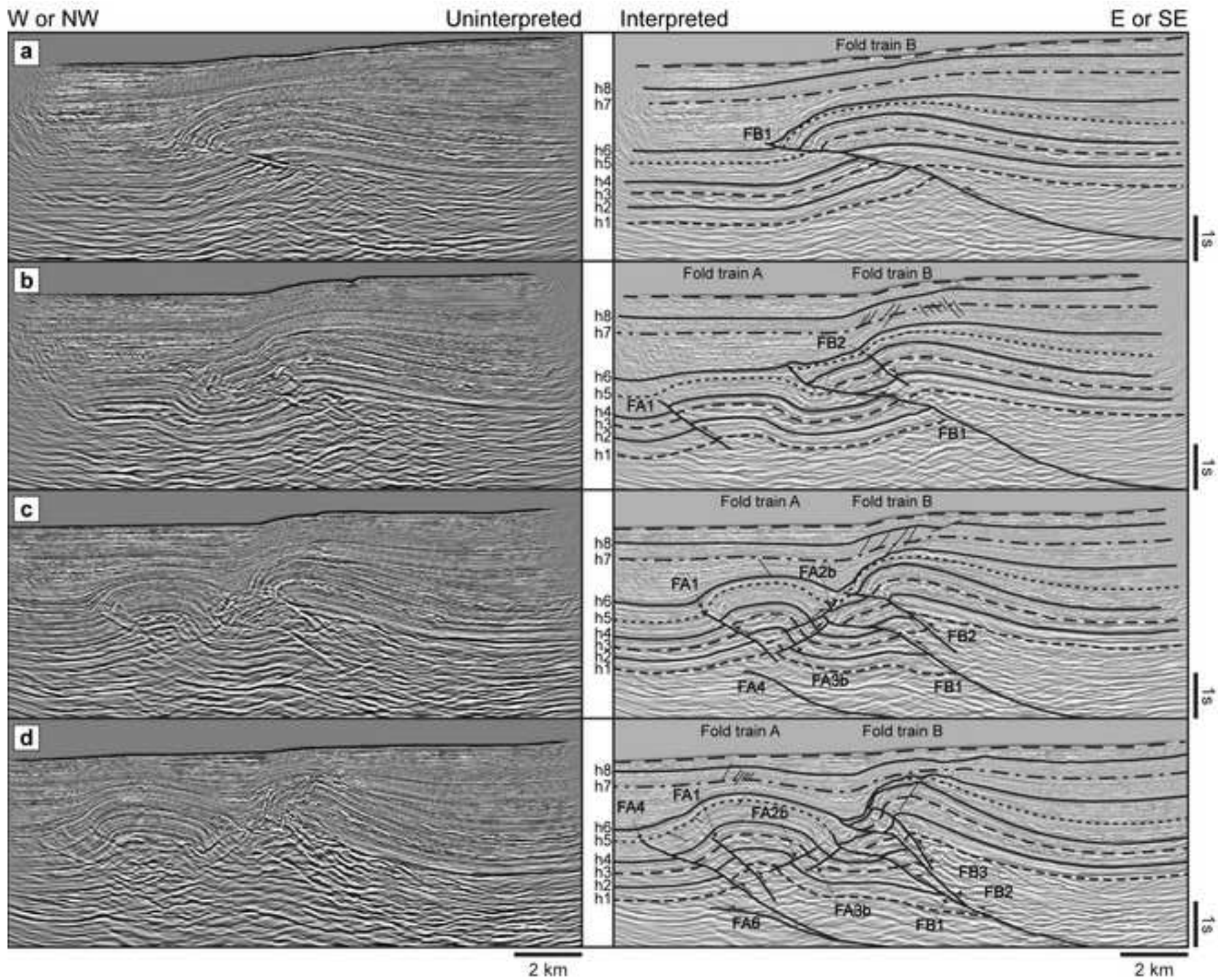


Figure 10-2
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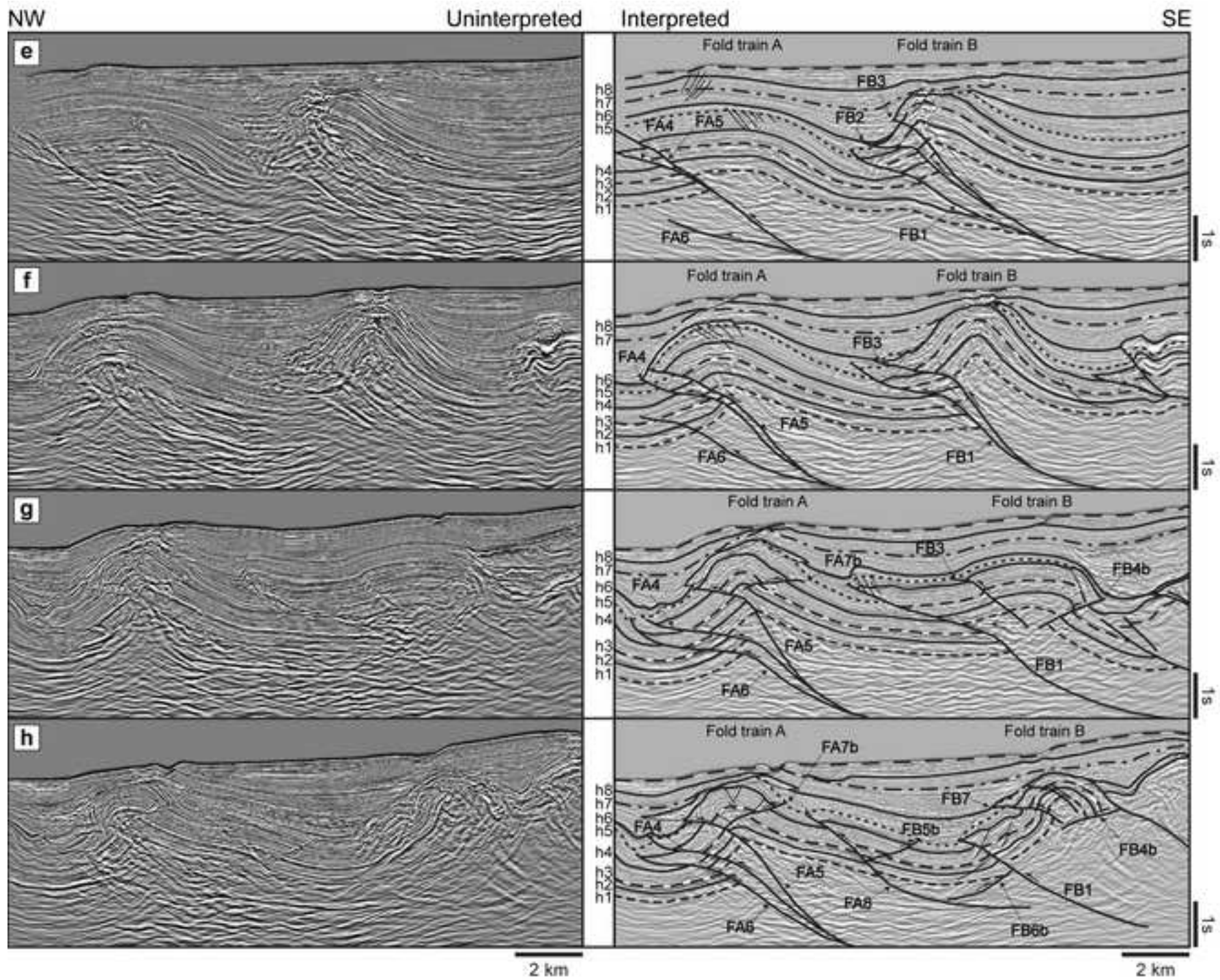


Figure 11
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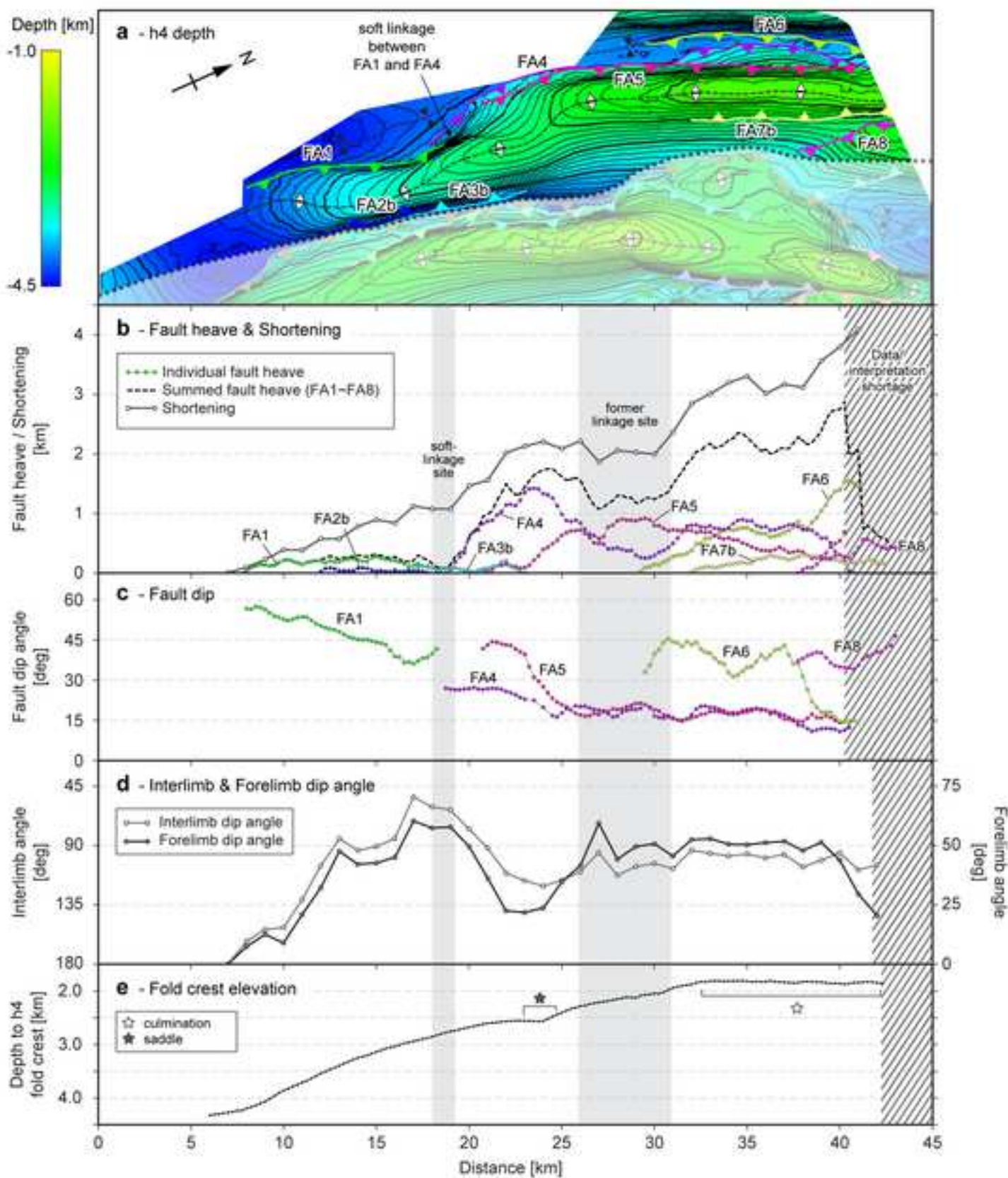


Figure 12
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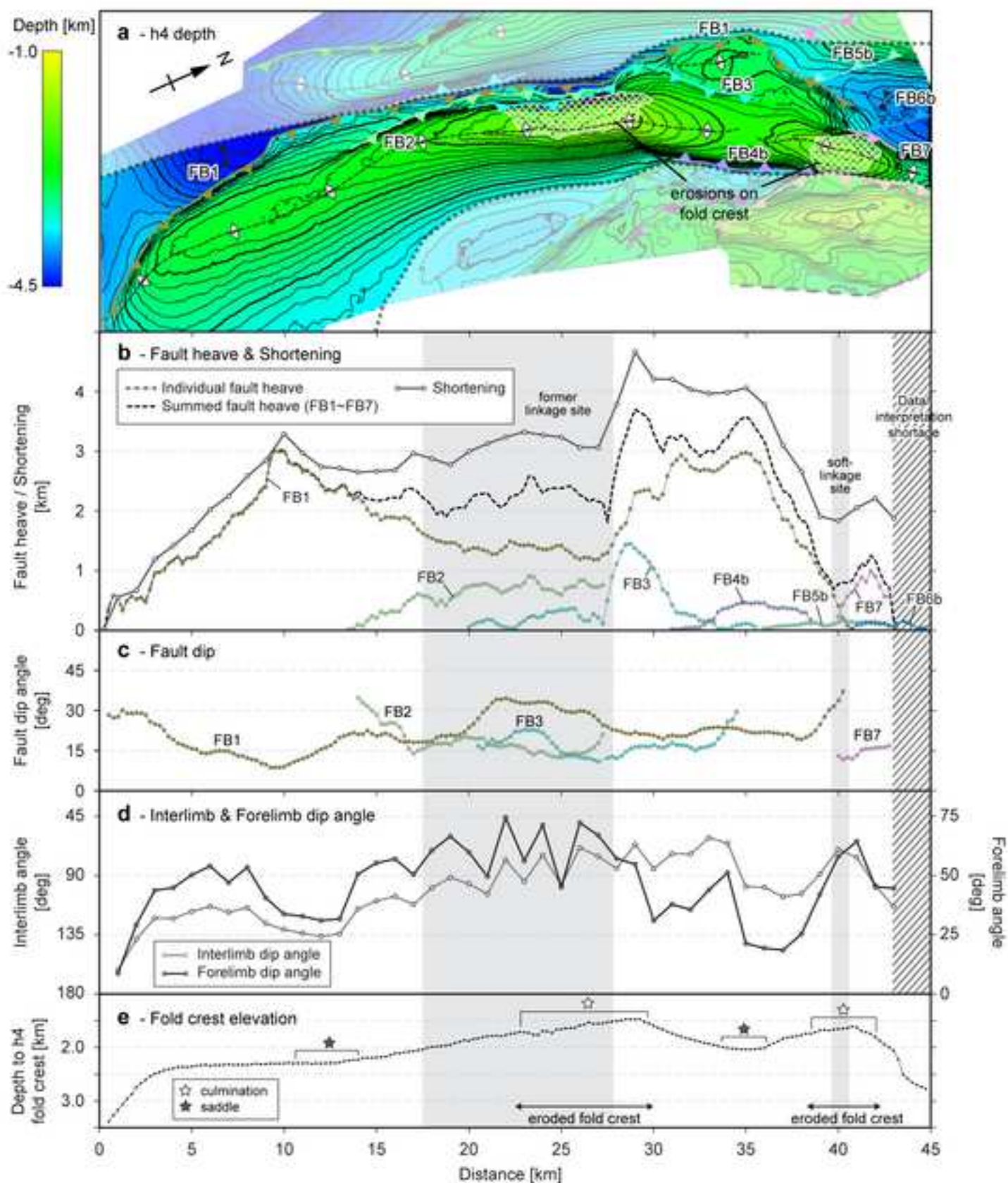


Figure 13

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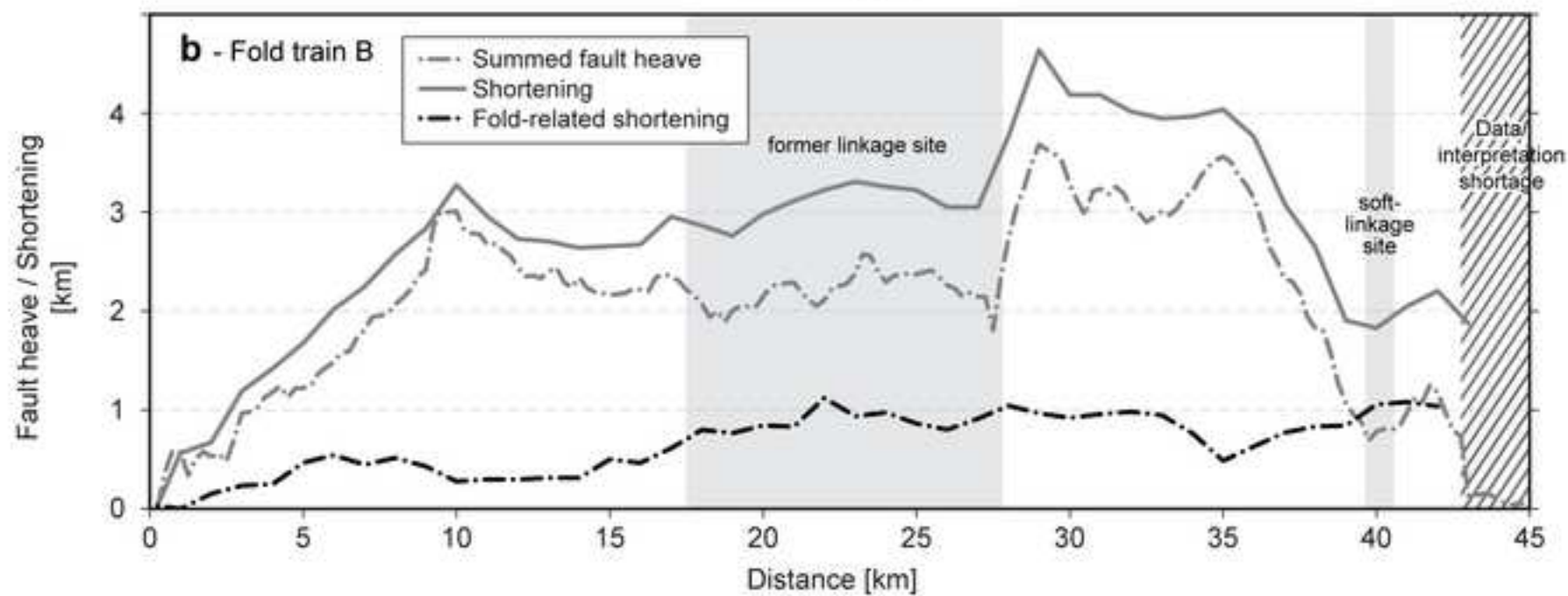
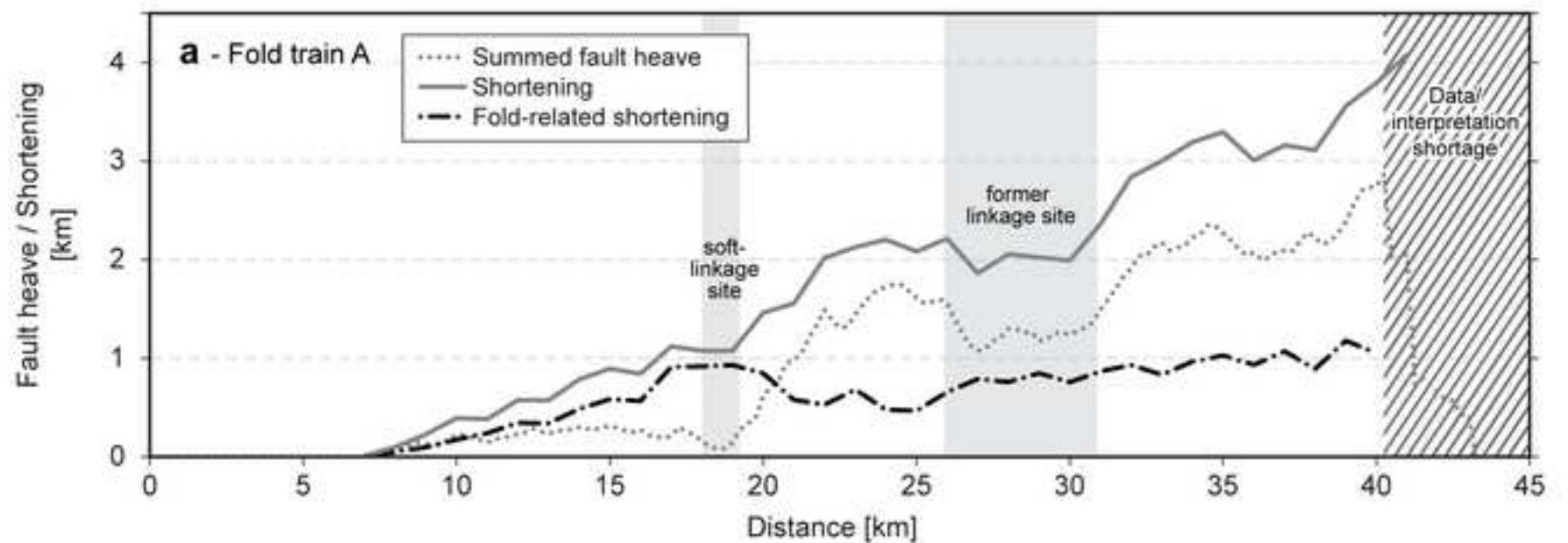


Figure 14

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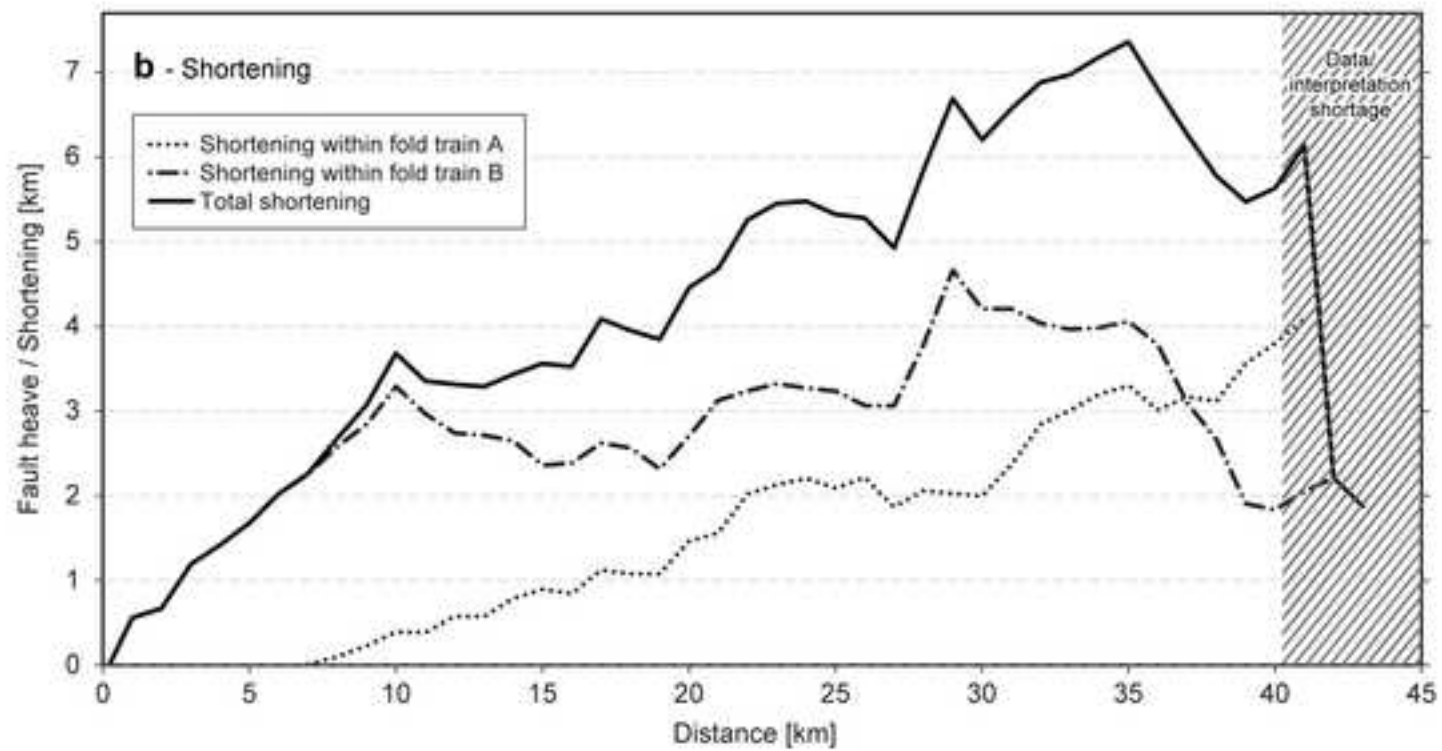
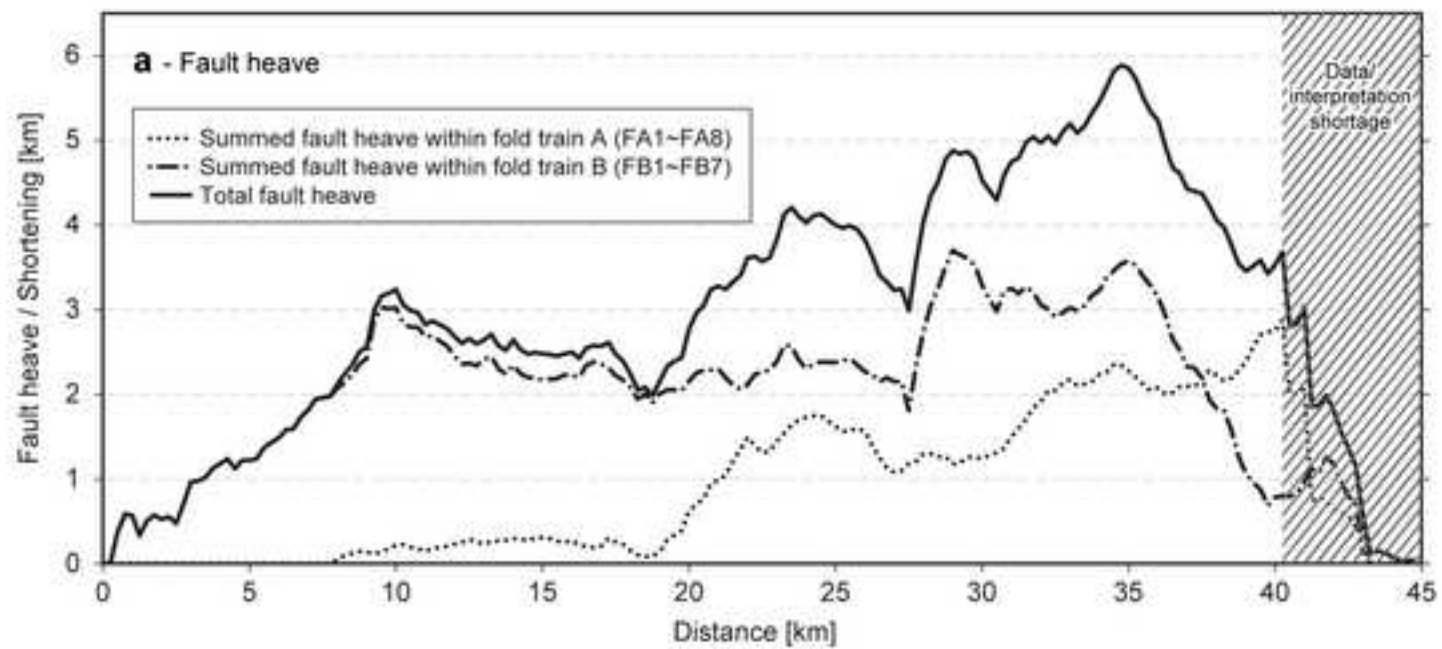


Figure 15
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