



# THE LIPMAN–ZARISKI CONJECTURE IN GENUS ONE HIGHER

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## Abstract

We prove the Lipman–Zariski conjecture for complex surface singularities with  $p_g - g - b \leq 2$ . Here  $p_g$  is the geometric genus,  $g$  is the sum of the genera of exceptional curves and  $b$  is the first Betti number of the dual graph. This improves on a previous result of the second author. As an application, we show that a compact complex surface with a locally free tangent sheaf is smooth as soon as it admits two generically linearly independent twisted vector fields and its canonical sheaf has at most two global sections.

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## 1. Introduction

The Lipman–Zariski conjecture asserts that a complex algebraic variety (or complex space)  $X$  with a locally free tangent sheaf  $\mathcal{T}_X$  is necessarily smooth. Here  $\mathcal{T}_X = \mathcal{H}om_{\mathcal{O}_X}(\Omega_X^1, \mathcal{O}_X)$  is the dual of the sheaf of Kähler differentials. By the combined work of Lipman [[Lip65](#), Theorem 3], Becker [[Bec78](#), Section 8, page 519] and Flenner [[Fle88](#), Corollary], it is known that *it suffices to prove the conjecture for normal surface singularities*.

In a previous paper [[Gra19](#)], the second author dealt with surface singularities that are ‘not too far’ from being rational. To make this precise, recall that for a normal surface singularity  $(X, 0)$ , the following invariants are defined in terms of

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(but not dependent on the choice of) a log resolution  $f : Y \rightarrow X$  with exceptional divisor  $E = E_1 + \cdots + E_r$  and dual graph  $\Delta = \Delta(E)$ :

$$p_g := \dim_{\mathbb{C}} (R^1 f_* \mathcal{O}_Y)_0, \text{ the (geometric) genus,}$$

$$g := \sum_{i=1}^r h^1(E_i, \mathcal{O}_{E_i}),$$

$$b := b_1(\Delta), \quad \text{the first Betti number of } \Delta.$$

In this notation, the main result of [Gra19] (albeit formulated in a different way) is the confirmation of the Lipman–Zariski conjecture in the case  $p_g - g - b \leq 1$ . The purpose of this note is to push that result one step further, to  $p_g - g - b \leq 2$ . This also explains the title, which on its own is rather cryptic.

**THEOREM 1** (Lipman–Zariski conjecture in genus one higher). *Let  $(X, 0)$  be a normal complex surface singularity, with invariants  $p_g, g$  and  $b$  as above. Assume that  $p_g - g - b \leq 2$ . Then the Lipman–Zariski conjecture holds for  $(X, 0)$ . That is, if  $\mathcal{T}_X$  is free, then  $(X, 0)$  is smooth.*

**Global Corollaries.** In [Gra19], the second author used his (local) main result to study compact complex surfaces whose tangent sheaf satisfies some *global* triviality properties. Naturally, our stronger Theorem 1 also has new applications in this global setting. First of all, the proof of [Gra19, Corollary 1.4] can be simplified to some extent. For the reader’s convenience, we repeat the statement here.

**COROLLARY 1** (Surfaces with generically nef tangent sheaf). *Let  $X$  be a complex-projective surface such that  $\mathcal{T}_X$  is locally free and generically nef. Then  $X$  is smooth.*

Recall that generic nefness of a vector bundle  $\mathcal{E}$  on a normal-projective surface  $X$  means the following: there exists an ample line bundle  $H$  on  $X$  such that if  $C \subset X$  is a general element of the linear system  $|mH|$ , for  $m \gg 0$ , then the restriction  $\mathcal{E}|_C$  is nef.

A second application concerns compact complex surfaces  $X$  that are not necessarily Kähler. By a *twisted vector field* on  $X$ , we mean a global section of  $\mathcal{T}_X \otimes \mathcal{L}$ , where  $\mathcal{L}$  is a line bundle with vanishing real first Chern class  $c_1(\mathcal{L}) \in H^2(X, \mathbb{R})$ .

**COROLLARY 2** (Surfaces with two twisted vector fields). *Let  $X$  be a compact complex surface such that  $\mathcal{T}_X$  is locally free. Suppose that  $X$  admits two twisted*

vector fields  $v_i \in H^0(X, \mathcal{T}_X \otimes \mathcal{L}_i)$ ,  $i = 1, 2$ , which are linearly independent at some point. Assume furthermore that  $\dim_{\mathbb{C}} H^0(X, \omega_X) \leq 2$ . Then  $X$  is smooth.

This result generalizes [Gra19, Corollary 1.2], where  $X$  was assumed to be almost homogeneous. Note that this is nothing but the special case where both  $\mathcal{L}_i \cong \mathcal{O}_X$ .

REMARK 1. The wedge product  $v_1 \wedge v_2$  is a nonzero global section of  $\omega_X^\vee \otimes \mathcal{L}_1 \otimes \mathcal{L}_2$ , multiplication by which gives an injection  $H^0(X, \omega_X) \hookrightarrow H^0(X, \mathcal{L}_1 \otimes \mathcal{L}_2)$ . Thus the assumption on the dimension of  $H^0(X, \omega_X)$  is automatically satisfied, for example, if  $X$  is Kähler or if  $\mathcal{L}_1 \otimes \mathcal{L}_2 \cong \mathcal{O}_X$ .

However, on a non-Kähler surface, having vanishing first Chern class is a rather weak condition on a line bundle. Indeed, a line bundle with  $c_1 = 0$  can have Kodaira dimension one (and hence arbitrarily many global sections). The easiest example is probably given by a Hopf surface of algebraic dimension one. A more interesting example would be a primary Kodaira surface, or more generally any elliptic fibre bundle  $S \rightarrow C$  that is not topologically trivial. In this case,  $H^2(S, \mathbb{R})$  can be arbitrarily large (depending on  $C$ ), but  $\varphi^*: H^2(C, \mathbb{R}) \rightarrow H^2(S, \mathbb{R})$  always is the zero map [BHPV04, Proposition V.5.3].

REMARK 2. The proof of Corollary 2 shows the following: Assume that for some integer  $C$ , we knew the Lipman–Zariski conjecture for surface singularities satisfying  $p_g - g - b \leq C$ . Then the additional assumption in Corollary 2 can be weakened to “ $\dim_{\mathbb{C}} H^0(X, \omega_X) \leq C$ ”.

## 2. Notation and basic facts

The sheaf of Kähler differentials of a reduced complex space  $X$  is denoted by  $\Omega_X^1$ . The tangent sheaf, its dual, is denoted by  $\mathcal{T}_X := \mathcal{H}om(\Omega_X^1, \mathcal{O}_X)$ . If  $Z \subset X$  is a closed subset, then  $\mathcal{T}_X(-\log Z) \subset \mathcal{T}_X$  denotes the subsheaf of vector fields tangent to  $Z$  at every point of  $Z$ . The canonical sheaf of  $X$  is denoted by  $\omega_X$ . If  $X$  is normal, the sheaf of reflexive differential 1-forms is defined to be the double dual of  $\Omega_X^1$ , or the dual of  $\mathcal{T}_X$ . We denote it by  $\Omega_X^{[1]} := (\Omega_X^1)^\vee$ . It is isomorphic to  $i_*(\Omega_{X^\circ}^1)$ , where  $i: X^\circ \hookrightarrow X$  is the inclusion of the smooth locus. If  $X$  is compact and  $\mathcal{F}$  is a coherent sheaf on  $X$ , we write  $h^i(X, \mathcal{F}) := \dim_{\mathbb{C}} H^i(X, \mathcal{F})$ .

DEFINITION 1 (Resolutions). A resolution of singularities of a reduced complex space  $X$  is a proper bimeromorphic morphism  $f: Y \rightarrow X$ , where  $Y$  is smooth. We say that the resolution is projective if  $f$  is a projective morphism. A log resolution is a resolution whose exceptional locus  $E = \text{Exc}(f)$  is a simple normal crossings

divisor, that is, a normal crossings divisor with smooth components. A resolution is said to be *strong* if it is an isomorphism over the smooth locus of  $X$ .

**FACT 1 (Functorial resolutions).** *Let  $X$  be a normal complex space. Then there exists a strong log resolution  $f: Y \rightarrow X$  projective over compact subsets, called the functorial resolution, such that  $f_*\mathcal{T}_Y(-\log E)$  is reflexive. This means that for any vector field  $\xi \in \Gamma(U, \mathcal{T}_X)$ ,  $U \subset X$  open, there is a unique vector field*

$$\tilde{\xi} \in \Gamma(f^{-1}(U), \mathcal{T}_Y(-\log E))$$

which agrees with  $\xi$  wherever  $f$  is an isomorphism.

Fact 1 is proven in [Kol07, Theorems 3.36 and 3.45], but concerning the reflexivity of  $f_*\mathcal{T}_Y(-\log E)$  see also [GK14, Theorem 4.2]. If  $X$  is a surface, the functorial resolution is the same as the minimal good resolution.

**DEFINITION 2 (Geometric genus).** Let  $(X, 0)$  be a normal surface singularity, and let  $f: Y \rightarrow X$  be an arbitrary resolution. The (geometric) genus  $p_g(X, 0)$  is defined to be the dimension of the stalk  $(R^1 f_* \mathcal{O}_Y)_0$ . Alternatively, choosing the representative  $X$  of the germ  $(X, 0)$  to be Stein, we may set  $p_g(X, 0) := \dim_{\mathbb{C}} H^1(Y, \mathcal{O}_Y)$ . This definition is independent of the choice of  $f$ .

The following statement can be found in [Sei67, Theorem 5], in slightly greater generality and with an algebraic proof. Another reference is [BW74, proof of Proposition 1.2]. We include our own proof, which is more geometric in spirit.

**PROPOSITION 1 (Derivations in the presence of an isolated singularity).** *Let  $(X, 0)$  be a normal isolated singularity which is not smooth. Then every  $\mathbb{C}$ -linear derivation  $\delta: \mathcal{O}_{X,0} \rightarrow \mathcal{O}_{X,0}$  factors through the maximal ideal  $\mathfrak{m}_0 \subset \mathcal{O}_{X,0}$ . In other words,  $\delta(\mathcal{O}_{X,0}) \subset \mathfrak{m}_0$ .*

In geometric terms, this says that ‘every vector field vanishes at the singular point’ or more generally, ‘every vector field is tangent to the singular locus’.

*Proof of Proposition 1.* We use the correspondence between derivations, vector fields and local  $\mathbb{C}$ -actions as described in [Akh95, Sections 1.4, 1.5]. Let  $\delta$  be a derivation of  $\mathcal{O}_{X,0}$ . We have an induced local  $\mathbb{C}$ -action  $\Phi: \mathbb{C} \times X \rightarrow X$ . By the definition of local group action,  $\Phi(t, -)$  is an automorphism of the germ  $(X, 0)$  for every (sufficiently small)  $t \in \mathbb{C}$ . Since  $0 \in X$  is the unique singular point of  $X$ , it follows that  $\Phi(t, 0) = 0$  for every  $t \in \mathbb{C}$ . In other words, the singular point is fixed by the action  $\Phi$ . Now, we can recover  $\delta$  from  $\Phi$  by the formula

$$\delta(f)(x) = \left. \frac{d}{dt} \right|_{t=0} f(\Phi(t, x)) \tag{2.2}$$

for every  $f \in \mathcal{O}_{X,0}$ . Plugging the statement about the singular point being fixed into (2.2), we arrive at  $\delta(f)(0) = 0$  for every function germ  $f$ . Hence  $\delta(\mathcal{O}_{X,0}) \subset \mathfrak{m}_0$ , as desired.  $\square$

Finally, we rely crucially on the following Hodge-theoretic result by van Straten and Steenbrink.

**FACT 2 [vSS85, Corollary 1.4].** *Let  $(X, 0)$  be a normal surface singularity and  $f: Y \rightarrow X$  a log resolution with reduced exceptional divisor  $E \subset Y$ . Then the map*

$$\Omega_X^{[1]} / f_*\Omega_Y^1 \xrightarrow{d} \omega_X / f_*\omega_Y(E)$$

*induced by exterior derivative is injective.*

### 3. Proof of Theorem 1

Let  $\{v_1, v_2\}$  be a local basis of  $\mathcal{T}_X$  and let  $\{\alpha_1, \alpha_2\}$  be the dual basis of  $\Omega_X^{[1]}$ , defined by  $\alpha_i(v_j) = \delta_{ij}$ . Furthermore, let  $f: Y \rightarrow X$  be the functorial resolution of  $X$  and  $E \subset Y$  its exceptional locus. We isolate the following observation from the proof of [Gra19, Theorem 1.1], to which we also refer for more details.

**OBSERVATION 1.** If the basis  $\{\alpha_1, \alpha_2\}$  can be chosen in such a way that say  $d\alpha_2 \in f_*\omega_Y(E)$ , that is,  $f^*(d\alpha_2)$  has at most simple poles along  $E$ , then  $(X, 0)$  is smooth.

*Sketch of proof.* By Fact 2, we see that  $\alpha_2 \in f_*\Omega_Y^1$ , that is,  $f^*\alpha_2$  extends to a holomorphic 1-form  $\tilde{\alpha}_2$  on  $Y$ . On the other hand,  $v_2$  extends to a holomorphic vector field  $\tilde{v}_2$  on  $Y$  tangent to  $E$ , by Fact 1. As  $\tilde{\alpha}_2(\tilde{v}_2)$  is identically one,  $\tilde{v}_2$  cannot have any zeros. It follows that  $E$ , if nonempty, consists of a single smooth elliptic curve. Hence  $(X, 0)$  is log canonical and we may apply [GK14, Corollary 1.3]. (We could also appeal to the argument in [vSS85, (1.6)], or in fact even do this case completely by hand.)  $\square$

**CLAIM 1.** We have  $\dim \omega_X / f_*\omega_Y(E) = p_g - g - b$ .

*Proof.* Consider the short exact sequence

$$0 \longrightarrow \underbrace{f_*\omega_Y(E) / f_*\omega_Y}_{=:\mathcal{X}} \longrightarrow \omega_X / f_*\omega_Y \longrightarrow \omega_X / f_*\omega_Y(E) \longrightarrow 0.$$

The middle term has dimension exactly  $p_g$  by [KM98, Proposition 4.45(6)]. Hence it suffices to show that  $\dim \mathcal{K} = g + b$ . To this end, consider the residue sequence

$$0 \longrightarrow \omega_Y \longrightarrow \omega_Y(E) \longrightarrow \omega_E \longrightarrow 0.$$

Since  $R^1 f_* \omega_Y = 0$  by Grauert–Riemenschneider vanishing [Kol07, Theorem 2.20.1], and since  $E$  is Cohen–Macaulay, we get  $\dim \mathcal{K} = h^0(E, \omega_E) = h^1(E, \mathcal{O}_E)$ . A standard computation on the normalization of  $E$  yields

$$h^1(E, \mathcal{O}_E) = g + |E_{\text{sg}}| - r + 1.$$

In terms of the dual graph  $\Delta = \Delta(E)$ , clearly  $r$  is the number of vertices and  $|E_{\text{sg}}|$  is the number of edges. But it is a general fact that the first Betti number of a (connected, undirected) graph  $G$  with  $r$  vertices and  $n$  edges is  $n - r + 1$ . (Proof: Let  $T \subset G$  be a maximal subtree. Then  $T$  has exactly  $r - 1$  edges. The map  $G \rightarrow G/T$  is a homotopy equivalence, and  $G/T$  is a wedge sum of  $n - (r - 1)$  circles.) So  $h^1(E, \mathcal{O}_E) = g + b$ , as desired.  $\square$

CLAIM 2. The 2-form  $\sigma := \alpha_1 \wedge \alpha_2$  is a generator of  $\omega_X$ . In particular,  $X$  is Gorenstein.

*Proof.* Define a map  $\mathcal{O}_X \rightarrow \omega_X$  by sending  $1 \mapsto \sigma$ . This is an isomorphism on the smooth locus  $X \setminus \{0\}$ . Then it is an isomorphism everywhere, as  $X$  is normal and the sheaves  $\mathcal{O}_X$  and  $\omega_X$  are reflexive.  $\square$

By Claim 2, every element in  $\omega_X / f_* \omega_Y(E)$  can be written as (the class of)  $\rho \cdot \sigma$  for some holomorphic function germ  $\rho \in \mathcal{O}_{X,0}$ . If  $\mathfrak{m} := \mathfrak{m}_0 \subset \mathcal{O}_{X,0}$  is the maximal ideal, consider the linear subspace

$$\mathfrak{m} \omega_X / f_* \omega_Y(E) = \{\rho \cdot \sigma \mid \rho(0) = 0\} \subset \omega_X / f_* \omega_Y(E).$$

Unless  $\omega_X / f_* \omega_Y(E) = 0$ , this subspace has codimension one. In any case, it has dimension  $\leq 1$  by Claim 1 and the assumption  $p_g - g - b \leq 2$ . (This is the only place where that assumption is used.) Thus if the images of  $d\alpha_1$  and  $d\alpha_2$  are both contained in  $\mathfrak{m} \omega_X / f_* \omega_Y(E)$ , they are linearly dependent, say  $d\alpha_1 + \lambda \cdot d\alpha_2 = 0$  for some  $\lambda \in \mathbb{C}$ . Considering the basis  $\{\alpha_1 + \lambda \alpha_2, \alpha_2\}$  of  $\Omega_X^{[1]}$ , we can apply Observation 1 to conclude that  $(X, 0)$  is smooth. After possibly interchanging  $\alpha_1$  and  $\alpha_2$ , we may hence without loss of generality make the following

ADDITIONAL ASSUMPTION 1. We have  $d\alpha_1 \notin \mathfrak{m} \omega_X$ .

Writing  $d\alpha_j = \rho_j \cdot \sigma$  for suitable  $\rho_j \in \mathcal{O}_{X,0}$ , we thus have that  $\rho_1 \notin \mathfrak{m}$  is a unit. So replacing  $\alpha_2$  by  $\rho_1\alpha_2$  does not destroy the property of  $\{\alpha_1, \alpha_2\}$  being a basis of  $\Omega_X^{[1]}$ . After this replacement,  $d\alpha_1 = \sigma$ . Furthermore, note that

$$d\left(\underbrace{\alpha_2 - \rho_2(0)\alpha_1}_{=:\alpha'_2}\right) = \left(\underbrace{\rho_2 - \rho_2(0)}_{\in \mathfrak{m}}\right) \cdot \sigma,$$

and that we may replace  $\alpha_2$  by  $\alpha'_2$ , again without destroying the basis property. Summing up, this leads to the following simplification of our setting.

**ADDITIONAL ASSUMPTION 2.** We have that  $d\alpha_1 = \sigma$  and  $d\alpha_2 \in \mathfrak{m}\omega_X$ . In other words,  $\rho_1 \equiv 1$  and  $\rho_2 \in \mathfrak{m}$ .

We will also assume from now on that  $(X, 0)$  is not smooth, as otherwise there is nothing to prove. Consider the 1-form  $\rho_2\alpha_1$ . A short calculation shows that  $d(\rho_2\alpha_1) = (\rho_2 - v_2(\rho_2)) \cdot \sigma$ , which by Proposition 1 and Assumption 2 defines an element in the at most one-dimensional vector space  $\mathfrak{m}\omega_X/f_*\omega_Y(E)$ . If that element is nonzero, then there is a constant  $\lambda \in \mathbb{C}$  with

$$d(\alpha_2 + \lambda\rho_2\alpha_1) = d\alpha_2 + \lambda d(\rho_2\alpha_1) = 0 \in \mathfrak{m}\omega_X/f_*\omega_Y(E) \subset \omega_X/f_*\omega_Y(E).$$

Because  $\{\alpha_1, \alpha_2 + \lambda\rho_2\alpha_1\}$  is a basis of  $\Omega_X^{[1]}$ , we can again apply Observation 1 and then we are done. Hence we may without loss of generality impose the following

**ADDITIONAL ASSUMPTION 3.** We have  $d(\rho_2\alpha_1) \in f_*\omega_Y(E)$ .

For any function/differential form/vector field on  $X$ , we denote its lift to  $Y$  as a holomorphic or meromorphic object by a tilde. Thus we have, for example,  $d\tilde{\alpha}_1 = \tilde{\sigma} = \tilde{\alpha}_1 \wedge \tilde{\alpha}_2$  and  $d\tilde{\alpha}_2 = \tilde{\rho}_2 \cdot \tilde{\sigma}$ . Furthermore we let  $\mathfrak{E}$  be the set of irreducible components of  $E$  and we put

$$\begin{aligned} \mathfrak{E}^{\leq 1} &:= \{P \in \mathfrak{E} \mid \tilde{v}_2 \text{ vanishes to order at most 1 along } P\}, \\ \mathfrak{E}^{\geq 2} &:= \{P \in \mathfrak{E} \mid \tilde{v}_2 \text{ vanishes to order at least 2 along } P\}. \end{aligned}$$

The order of vanishing, of course, refers to the largest integer  $k$  such that locally near a general point of  $P$ , we can write  $\tilde{v}_2 = w^k v'$ , where  $w$  is a local defining equation for  $P$  and  $v'$  is a holomorphic vector field.

Let  $P \in \mathfrak{E}^{\geq 2}$  be arbitrary, pick a point  $p \in P$  not contained in any other component of  $E$ , and choose local holomorphic coordinates  $z, w$  around  $p$  such that locally  $P = \{w = 0\}$ . We can then write  $\tilde{v}_2 = w^2 v'$  for some holomorphic vector field  $v'$  defined near  $p$ . The 1-form  $\alpha_2 - \rho_2\alpha_1$  satisfies

$$d(\alpha_2 - \rho_2\alpha_1) = [\rho_2 - (\rho_2 - v_2(\rho_2))] \cdot \sigma = v_2(\rho_2) \cdot \sigma,$$

and the order of vanishing of  $f^*(v_2(\rho_2)) = \tilde{v}_2(\tilde{\rho}_2) = w^2 v'(\tilde{\rho}_2)$  along  $P$  is strictly larger than the vanishing order of  $\tilde{\rho}_2$  along  $P$ . Hence after replacing  $\alpha_2$  by  $\alpha_2 - \rho_2 \alpha_1$  finitely often, the 2-form  $d\tilde{\alpha}_2 = \tilde{\rho}_2 \cdot \tilde{\sigma}$  will be holomorphic at a general point of  $P$ . This argument applies simultaneously to all  $P \in \mathfrak{E}^{\geq 2}$  and we arrive at the

**ADDITIONAL ASSUMPTION 4.** The 2-form  $d\tilde{\alpha}_2$  does not have a pole along any exceptional curve  $P \in \mathfrak{E}^{\geq 2}$ .

The next claim analogously deals with  $\mathfrak{E}^{\leq 1}$ . We stress that its proof relies only on Assumption 3, but not on Assumption 4.

**CLAIM 3.** Along any curve  $P \in \mathfrak{E}^{\leq 1}$ , the form  $d\tilde{\alpha}_2$  has at worst a simple pole.

*Proof of Claim 3.* Pick a component  $P \in \mathfrak{E}^{\leq 1}$  and let  $p \in P$  and  $z, w$  be as before. There are holomorphic functions  $a$  and  $b$  near  $p$  such that locally  $\tilde{v}_2 = a \frac{\partial}{\partial z} + b \frac{\partial}{\partial w}$ . Using Taylor expansion, we may write

$$\begin{aligned} a(z, w) &= a_0(z) + a_1(z)w + \dots \quad \text{and} \\ b(z, w) &= b_0(z) + b_1(z)w + \dots, \end{aligned}$$

where the dots stand for terms of order at least 2 in  $w$  and  $a_j, b_j$  are appropriate local holomorphic functions in one variable. Since  $\tilde{v}_2$  is logarithmic with respect to  $P = \{w = 0\}$ , we in fact have  $b_0 \equiv 0$ . As  $P \in \mathfrak{E}^{\leq 1}$ , not all of  $a_0, a_1, b_1$  can be identically zero.

- If  $a_0 \neq 0$ , there is a point  $q \in P$  near  $p$  with  $a_0(q) \neq 0$ .
- If  $a_0 \equiv 0$ , we may locally write  $\tilde{v}_2 = w \cdot v'$  with  $v'$  holomorphic. Since  $a_1 \neq 0$  or  $b_1 \neq 0$ , there is a point  $q \in P$  near  $p$  with  $v'(q) \neq 0$ .

In both cases, locally near  $q$  we have  $\tilde{v}_2 = h \cdot v'$  for a holomorphic function  $h$  and a holomorphic vector field  $v'$  with  $v'(q) \neq 0$ . What is more, the function  $h$  (which is either identically one, or equal to  $w$ ) vanishes of order at most one along  $P$ . Since  $v'(q) \neq 0$ , there exist local holomorphic coordinates  $x, y$  near  $q$  such that locally  $v' = \frac{\partial}{\partial x}$  and thus  $\tilde{v}_2 = h \cdot \frac{\partial}{\partial x}$ .

There are local meromorphic functions  $g_{ij}$  such that with respect to the local coordinates  $x, y$  we have  $\tilde{\alpha}_1 = g_{11} dx + g_{12} dy$  and  $\tilde{\alpha}_2 = g_{21} dx + g_{22} dy$ . Because  $\tilde{\alpha}_i(\tilde{v}_2) = \delta_{i,2}$ , we have in fact  $\tilde{\alpha}_1 = g_{12} dy$  and  $\tilde{\alpha}_2 = h^{-1} dx + g_{22} dy$ . Thus by Assumption 2

$$d\tilde{\alpha}_1 = \tilde{\sigma} = \tilde{\alpha}_1 \wedge \tilde{\alpha}_2 = -\frac{g_{12}}{h} dx \wedge dy$$



and

$$d\tilde{\alpha}_2 = \tilde{\rho}_2 \cdot \tilde{\sigma} = -\frac{\tilde{\rho}_2 g_{12}}{h} dx \wedge dy.$$

According to Assumption 3 and Fact 2,  $f^*(\rho_2\alpha_1) = \tilde{\rho}_2\tilde{\alpha}_1 = \tilde{\rho}_2 g_{12} dy$  extends to a holomorphic 1-form on  $Y$ . In particular,  $\tilde{\rho}_2 g_{12} dy$  has no pole along  $P$  and therefore  $\tilde{\rho}_2 g_{12}$  is holomorphic. This implies that  $d\tilde{\alpha}_2 = -h^{-1} \tilde{\rho}_2 g_{12} dx \wedge dy$  has at most a pole of order one along  $P$ , as desired.  $\square$

Taken together, Assumption 4 and Claim 3 show that  $d\tilde{\alpha}_2$  has at worst first-order poles along any exceptional curve  $P \in \mathfrak{E} = \mathfrak{E}^{\leq 1} \cup \mathfrak{E}^{\geq 2}$ . In other words, we have  $d\alpha_2 \in f_*\omega_Y(E)$ . Applying once again Observation 1, we get that  $(X, 0)$  is smooth.  $\square$

#### 4. Proof of Corollary 1

By [Lip65, Theorem 3],  $X$  is normal. Let  $f: S \rightarrow X$  be the minimal resolution (that is,  $K_S$  is  $f$ -nef). We may assume that  $X$  is not smooth. Under this additional assumption, one shows as in the proof of [Gra19, Claim 4.2] that

$$h^0(X, R^1 f_* \mathcal{O}_S) = \sum_{x \in X_{\text{sg}}} p_g(X, x) \leq 2.$$

Hence every singular point of  $X$  satisfies  $p_g - g - b \leq p_g \leq 2$ . We conclude by Theorem 1 that  $X$  is smooth.  $\square$

#### 5. Proof of Corollary 2

The following proposition, probably well known to experts, will greatly simplify the proof.

PROPOSITION 2 (Surfaces carrying a divisor homologous to zero). *Let  $S$  be a smooth compact complex surface containing a nonzero effective divisor  $D$  with*

$$c_1(D) := c_1(\mathcal{O}_S(D)) = 0 \in H^2(S, \mathbb{R}).$$

Then either

(2.1) the Kodaira dimension  $\kappa(S) \leq 0$ ; or

(2.2) we have  $\kappa(S) = 1$  and  $\chi(\mathcal{O}_S) = 0$ .

*Proof.* Let  $\pi: S \rightarrow S_0$  be a minimal model, and set  $D_0 := \pi_* D$ . Then  $c_1(D_0) = 0$  by Lemma 1 below. Furthermore  $D_0 \neq 0$ , as otherwise  $D$  would be  $\pi$ -exceptional and hence  $D^2 < 0$  by negative definiteness of the intersection form [BHPV04, Theorem III.2.1], contradicting the fact that  $D^2 = c_1(D)^2 = 0$ . Also  $\chi(\mathcal{O}_S)$  remains unchanged when passing to  $S_0$ . We may thus assume that  $S$  is minimal.

If  $\kappa(S) = 2$ , then  $c_1^2(S) > 0$  and  $S$  is projective [BHPV04, Theorem IV.6.2]. Thus the divisor  $D$  cannot exist. If  $\kappa(S) = 1$ , then the pluricanonical map  $\varphi: S \rightarrow C$  is a relatively minimal elliptic fibration. In this case

$$\begin{aligned} \chi(\mathcal{O}_S) &= \deg_C(R^1\varphi_*\mathcal{O}_S)^\vee && \text{[BHPV04, Proposition V.12.2]} \\ &= \deg_C(\varphi_*\omega_{S/C}) && \text{[BHPV04, Theorem III.12.3]} \\ &\geq 0. && \text{[BHPV04, Theorem III.18.2].} \end{aligned}$$

On the other hand, we have  $\chi(\mathcal{O}_S) \leq 0$  by [CDP98, Corollary 1.2]. We conclude that  $\chi(\mathcal{O}_S) = 0$ .  $\square$

LEMMA 1. *Let  $S$  be a smooth compact complex surface and  $\pi: S \rightarrow S'$  the blowing-down of a  $(-1)$ -curve. If  $\mathcal{L} \in \text{Pic}(S)$  is a line bundle with  $c_1(\mathcal{L}) = 0$ , then so is  $\mathcal{L}' := (\pi_*\mathcal{L})^{\vee\vee}$ , where  $(-)^{\vee\vee}$  denotes the reflexive hull (or double dual) of a coherent sheaf.*

*Proof.* Being a reflexive rank-1 sheaf on a smooth surface,  $\mathcal{L}'$  is locally free. Thanks to negative definiteness again [BHPV04, Theorem III.2.1], we have  $\mathcal{L} = \pi^*\mathcal{L}'$  and hence  $\pi^*(c_1(\mathcal{L}')) = c_1(\mathcal{L}) = 0$ . As  $\pi^*: H^2(S', \mathbb{R}) \rightarrow H^2(S, \mathbb{R})$  is injective [BHPV04, Theorem I.9.1(iv)], it follows that  $c_1(\mathcal{L}') = 0$ .  $\square$

LEMMA 2. *Let  $\mathcal{L}$  be a line bundle on the smooth-projective curve  $C$  of genus  $g$ .*

(2.3) *If  $\deg \mathcal{L} = 0$ , then  $h^0(C, \mathcal{L}) = h^0(C, \mathcal{L}^\vee)$ .*

(2.4) *If  $\deg \mathcal{L} = 2g - 2$  but  $\mathcal{L}$  is not isomorphic to  $\omega_C$ , then  $h^0(C, \mathcal{L}) = g - 1$ .*

*Proof.* This is well known and hence left to the reader as an exercise.  $\square$

We now turn to the proof of Corollary 2. As in the previous corollary, we may assume that  $X$  is normal, but not smooth. Let  $f: S \rightarrow X$  be the functorial resolution and  $\pi: S \rightarrow S_0$  a run of the  $K_S$ -MMP.

$$\begin{array}{ccc} S & \xrightarrow{\pi} & S_0 \\ f \downarrow & & \\ X & & \end{array}$$

By Fact 1, the twisted vector fields  $v_i$  on  $X$  lift to twisted vector fields  $\tilde{v}_i$  on  $S$ . These in turn can be pushed forward to twisted vector fields  $v_i^0$  on  $S_0$ , by Lemma 1. Furthermore, the Leray spectral sequence associated to  $f_*\mathcal{O}_S$  yields a five-term exact sequence

$$\begin{aligned} 0 &\longrightarrow H^1(X, \mathcal{O}_X) \longrightarrow H^1(S, \mathcal{O}_S) \longrightarrow H^0(X, R^1 f_* \mathcal{O}_S) \\ &\longrightarrow H^2(X, \mathcal{O}_X) \longrightarrow H^2(S, \mathcal{O}_S) \longrightarrow 0, \end{aligned}$$

where the last map is Serre dual to  $H^0(S, \omega_S) \hookrightarrow H^0(X, \omega_X)$ , and hence surjective. We obtain an upper bound

$$h^0(X, R^1 f_* \mathcal{O}_S) \leq h^1(S, \mathcal{O}_S) + h^0(X, \omega_X) - h^0(S, \omega_S). \tag{5.3}$$

CLAIM 4. Assume that  $S$  has the property that every nonzero effective divisor  $D \subset S$  satisfies  $c_1(D) \neq 0$ . (This applies in particular if  $S$  is Kähler.) Then  $h^0(X, \omega_X) \leq 1$  and  $\kappa(S) = -\infty$ .

*Proof.* If  $\kappa(X, K_X) = -\infty$ , then in particular  $h^0(X, \omega_X) = 0$  and also  $\kappa(S) = -\infty$ , since in any case  $\kappa(S) \leq \kappa(X, K_X)$ . We may thus assume that  $\kappa(X, K_X) \geq 0$ , that is,  $|mK_X| \neq \emptyset$  for some  $m \geq 1$ . Pick  $D_m \in |mK_X|$ , for a suitable  $m$ . The wedge product of twisted vector fields  $v_1 \wedge v_2$  is a nonzero global section of  $\omega_X^\vee \otimes \mathcal{L}_1 \otimes \mathcal{L}_2$ . Its zero divisor is thus an element  $D_{-1} \in |-K_X + L_1 + L_2|$ . Then  $D_m + mD_{-1} \in |m(L_1 + L_2)|$  is an effective divisor with first Chern class zero. It follows that  $D_m + mD_{-1} = 0$  (pull back along  $f$  and use the assumption on  $S$ ). Hence  $D_m = 0$ , that is,  $K_X$  is torsion and  $h^0(X, \omega_X) \leq 1$ . If  $f': S' \rightarrow X$  is the minimal resolution, we have

$$K_{S'} = f^* K_X - E \sim_{\mathbb{Q}} -E$$

with  $E \geq 0$  an effective  $f'$ -exceptional divisor. If  $E = 0$ , then  $X$  has canonical singularities; hence it is smooth [GK14, Corollary 1.3]. So  $E \geq 0$  and  $\kappa(S) = \kappa(S') = \kappa(S', -E) = -\infty$ . □

CLAIM 5. If  $\varphi: S_0 \rightarrow C$  is a ruled surface, then the genus  $g(C) \leq 1$ .

*Proof.* The vector fields  $v_i^0$ , being generically linearly independent, cannot both be tangent to the fibres of  $\varphi$ . Hence  $H^0(S_0, \varphi^* \mathcal{T}_C \otimes \mathcal{L}_i) \neq 0$  for, say,  $i = 1$ . This is the same as  $H^0(C, \mathcal{T}_C \otimes \varphi_* \mathcal{L}_1)$  by the projection formula, so  $\varphi_* \mathcal{L}_1 \neq 0$ . Since  $c_1(\mathcal{L}_1) = 0$ ,  $\mathcal{L}_1$  must be trivial on the fibres of  $\varphi$ . Thus  $\varphi_* \mathcal{L}_1$  is a line bundle and  $\mathcal{L}_1 = \varphi^*(\varphi_* \mathcal{L}_1)$ . We conclude from this that  $\deg_C \varphi_* \mathcal{L}_1 = 0$ . Summing up, the line bundle  $\mathcal{T}_C \otimes \varphi_* \mathcal{L}_1$  has a nonzero global section (the image of  $v_1$ ) and its

Table 1. Possibilities for  $S_0$  and corresponding dimensions of cohomology groups.

$S_0$	$h^1(S, \mathcal{O}_S)$	$h^0(X, \omega_X)$	$h^0(S, \omega_S)$
$\mathbb{P}^2$ or ruled	$\leq 1$ (Claim 5)	$\leq 1$ (Claim 4)	0
Class VII <sub>0</sub>	1 [BHPV04, Theorem IV.2.7]	$\leq 2$	0
Primary Kodaira	2	$\leq 2$	1
Secondary Kodaira	1	$\leq 2$	0
Minimal properly elliptic, non-Kähler, and $\chi(\mathcal{O}_S) = 0$	$g + h^0(L)$	$\leq 2$	$\geq h^0(K_C + L)$

degree is  $2 - 2g(C) + \deg_C \varphi_* \mathcal{L}_1 = 2 - 2g(C) \geq 0$ . This immediately implies the claim. □

CLAIM 6. If  $\kappa(S) = 1$  and  $\varphi: S_0 \rightarrow C$  is the pluricanonical map, let  $L$  be a divisor on  $C$  corresponding to the line bundle  $\varphi_* \omega_{S_0/C}$ . Assume that  $\deg L = 0$ . Then

- $h^1(S, \mathcal{O}_S) = g + h^0(C, L)$ , where  $g$  is the genus of  $C$ , and
- $h^0(S, \omega_S) \geq h^0(C, K_C + L)$ .

*Proof.* The Leray spectral sequence for  $\varphi$  and  $\mathcal{O}_{S_0}$  gives

$$h^1(S_0, \mathcal{O}_{S_0}) = h^1(C, \mathcal{O}_C) + h^0(C, R^1 \varphi_* \mathcal{O}_{S_0}) = g + h^0(C, L)$$

by (2.3). On the other hand, if  $m_1 F_1, \dots, m_k F_k, m_i \geq 2$ , are the multiple fibres of  $\varphi$ , then Kodaira’s canonical bundle formula [BHPV04, Theorem V.12.1] reads

$$K_{S_0} = \varphi^*(K_C + L) + \sum_{i=1}^k (m_i - 1) F_i \geq \varphi^*(K_C + L).$$

Taking global sections yields the second claim. □

Now by Claim 4, either  $\kappa(S) = -\infty$ , or  $\kappa(S) \in \{0, 1\}$  and  $S$  contains a divisor with vanishing first Chern class. By Proposition 2 and the Kodaira–Enriques classification [BHPV04, Table 10 on page 244], we are left with the possibilities for  $S_0$  listed in Table 1 on this page.

In each case, the estimate (5.3) yields  $h^0(X, R^1 f_* \mathcal{O}_S) \leq h^0(X, \omega_X) + 1$ . In the last case, this is seen as follows, using (2.4):

$$g + h^0(C, L) - h^0(C, K_C + L) = \begin{cases} g + 1 - g, & L \text{ trivial,} \\ g - (g - 1), & L \text{ nontrivial,} \end{cases} = 1.$$

Hence if  $h^0(X, \omega_X) \leq 1$ , then we can conclude by Theorem 1 that  $X$  is smooth, just as in the proof of Corollary 1. We will thus from now on assume that  $h^0(X, \omega_X) = 2$ . In view of the above table, this means that the first line ( $S_0 = \mathbb{P}^2$  or ruled) can be excluded. Also, the algebraic dimension  $a(S_0) = 1$ , as the ratio of two linearly independent sections of  $\omega_X$  provides a nonconstant meromorphic function on  $X$  and then also on  $S_0$ .

CLAIM 7. Any irreducible curve contained in  $S_0$  is smooth elliptic.

*Proof.* Assume first that  $S_0$  is a primary Kodaira surface, that is, in particular a locally trivial fibration with fibre  $F$  an elliptic curve. If  $C \subset S_0$  were a curve not contained in a fibre, then  $(C + nF)^2 > 0$  for  $n \gg 0$  and so  $S_0$  would be projective [BHPV04, Theorem IV.6.2], which it is not. Hence Claim 7 is true in this case. A secondary Kodaira surface admits an étale covering by a primary Kodaira surface, so any of its curves must be smooth and then also elliptic by the Hurwitz formula.

We next treat the case where  $S_0$  is of class VII<sub>0</sub>. By [Kod66, Theorem 35],  $S_0$  is a Hopf surface. As any Hopf surface has an étale covering by a primary Hopf surface [Kod66, Theorem 30], we may assume by the same argument as above that  $S_0$  is itself primary. Then  $S_0$  is the quotient of  $W := \mathbb{C}^2 \setminus \{0\}$  by the infinite cyclic group  $G$  generated by the automorphism  $(z_1, z_2) \mapsto (\alpha_1 z_1, \alpha_2 z_2)$ , where  $0 < |\alpha_1| \leq |\alpha_2| < 1$  and  $\alpha_1^k = \alpha_2^\ell$  for certain positive integers  $k, \ell$  [Kod66, Theorem 31]. We may assume that  $k$  and  $\ell$  are minimal with this property. The nonconstant meromorphic function  $z_1^k/z_2^\ell$  then defines a map  $\varphi: S_0 \rightarrow \mathbb{P}^1$  with connected fibres. We claim that all fibres of  $\varphi$  are smooth elliptic curves. To this end, let  $\tilde{\varphi}: W \rightarrow \mathbb{P}^1$  be the pullback of  $\varphi$  to the universal covering. By calculating the differential of  $\tilde{\varphi}$ , we see that this map has rank one at all points  $(z_1, z_2) \in W$  with  $z_1 z_2 \neq 0$ . So all the fibres  $F_\lambda := \varphi^{-1}(\lambda)$  with  $\lambda \neq 0, \infty$  are smooth. As the second Betti number  $b_2(S_0) = 0$ , all intersection numbers on  $S_0$  are zero. In particular,  $\text{deg } K_{F_\lambda} = (K_{S_0} + F_\lambda) \cdot F_\lambda = 0$  by adjunction and so  $F_\lambda$  is an elliptic curve.

It remains to consider  $F_0$  and  $F_\infty$ . The fibre  $F_0$  is the quotient of  $\tilde{\varphi}^{-1}(0) = \{z_1 = 0\} \cong \mathbb{C}^*$  by the group  $G$ , which acts on  $\tilde{\varphi}^{-1}(0)$  via multiplication by  $\alpha_2$ . Via the exponential map,  $F_0$  is thus seen to be isomorphic to  $\mathbb{C}$  modulo a lattice, that is, an elliptic curve. The argument for  $F_\infty$  is the same. So all fibres of  $\varphi$  are

smooth elliptic. As in the case of Kodaira surfaces, every curve on  $S_0$  is contained in a fibre of  $\varphi$  and hence the claim is proven in this case, too.

Finally, if  $S_0$  is minimally elliptic and  $\varphi: S_0 \rightarrow C$  is the pluricanonical map, then we have seen that  $\deg_C(\varphi_*\omega_{S_0/C}) = 0$ . By [BHPV04, Theorem III.18.2] this implies that the only singular fibres of  $\varphi$  are multiples of smooth elliptic curves. In particular, set-theoretically all fibres are smooth elliptic. Again, there are no other curves except the fibres and so the proof is finished.  $\square$

As observed above, we have  $h^0(X, R^1 f_* \mathcal{O}_S) \leq 3$ . If  $X$  has only singularities of genus at most two, we conclude by Theorem 1. Otherwise, there is a genus 3 singularity  $x \in X$ , and it is the unique singular point of  $X$ . If  $\text{Exc}(f)$  contains a nonrational curve, then  $x \in X$  has  $g \geq 1$ ; hence  $p_g - g - b \leq 2$ , and we are done by Theorem 1 again. If, on the other hand,  $\text{Exc}(f)$  consists solely of rational curves, then in particular every  $f$ -exceptional curve gets contracted to a point by  $\pi$  thanks to Claim 7. In other words,  $\text{Exc}(f) \subset \text{Exc}(\pi)$ . By the Theorem on Formal Functions,  $R^1 f_* \mathcal{O}_S$  can be computed as

$$\varprojlim_Z H^1(Z, \mathcal{O}_Z),$$

where the inverse limit runs over all cycles  $Z$  with  $\text{supp } Z \subset \text{Exc}(f)$ . By smoothness of  $S_0$ , we have  $R^1 \pi_* \mathcal{O}_S = 0$  and thus, by the Theorem on Formal Functions again,  $H^1(Z, \mathcal{O}_Z) = 0$  for all  $Z$  with  $\text{supp } Z \subset \text{Exc}(\pi)$ . Since  $\text{Exc}(f) \subset \text{Exc}(\pi)$ , we conclude that  $x \in X$  is a rational singularity and so  $X$  is smooth by Theorem 1.  $\square$

REMARK. We would like to discuss which parts of the above argument can be generalized, in particular with respect to Table 1. In the first case,  $S_0 = \mathbb{P}^2$  or a ruled surface, the condition  $h^0(X, \omega_X) \leq 2$  is automatic by Claim 4, but the existence of two twisted vector fields on  $X$  is necessary in Claim 5 to exclude ruled surfaces over curves of general type. If there is only one vector field, all one can say is that such a ruled surface would be decomposable.

The vector fields  $v_{1,2}$  are also used in Claim 4 to rule out the situation that  $S_0$  is Kähler and of nonnegative Kodaira dimension. Without this assumption, several new cases need to be dealt with:

- If  $S_0$  is a complex 2-torus, then  $h^1(S, \mathcal{O}_S) - h^0(S, \omega_S) = 1$  and so we can still prove smoothness of  $X$  if  $h^0(X, \omega_X) \leq 2$ . Note that Claim 7 does not hold any longer, but this is not a problem because it is still true that  $S_0$  contains no rational curves.
- If  $S_0$  is bi-elliptic, then again  $h^1(S, \mathcal{O}_S) - h^0(S, \omega_S) = 1$  and there are no rational curves on  $S_0$ . The conclusion is thus the same as in the torus case.

- If  $S_0$  is a K3 surface, we have  $h^1(S, \mathcal{O}_S) - h^0(S, \omega_S) = -1$ . Thus the assumption  $h^0(X, \omega_X) \leq 3$  is sufficient. The case  $h^0(X, \omega_X) = 4$ , however, appears difficult due to the failure of Claim 7:  $S_0$  could certainly contain a lot of rational curves.
- If  $S_0$  is an Enriques surface, then  $h^1(S, \mathcal{O}_S) - h^0(S, \omega_S) = 0$ . Similarly to the K3 case,  $h^0(X, \omega_X) \leq 2$  is fine, but  $h^0(X, \omega_X) = 3$  is not.
- If  $\kappa(S_0) = 1$ , we use notation as in Claim 6. If  $\deg L = 0$ , we have already seen that  $h^1(S, \mathcal{O}_S) - h^0(S, \omega_S) \leq 1$ . If  $h^0(X, \omega_X) \leq 1$  or if  $g > 0$ , the above arguments apply. The remaining case  $h^0(X, \omega_X) = 2$  and  $g = 0$  needs to be addressed either by showing  $h^0(S, \omega_S) = 1$  or by excluding any rational curves on  $S_0$ .  
If  $\deg L > 0$ , then clearly  $h^1(S, \mathcal{O}_S) = g + h^0(L^\vee) = g$  and  $h^0(S, \omega_S) \geq h^0(K_C + L) \geq g$ ; hence the difference is  $\leq 0$ . The conclusion is as in the Enriques case because the singular fibres of  $\varphi$  can very well have rational components.
- If  $S_0$  is of general type, it appears difficult (if not impossible) to give a general upper bound on  $h^1(S, \mathcal{O}_S) - h^0(S, \omega_S)$  and hence we do not believe that statements in the style of Theorem 1 are useful for handling this situation.

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