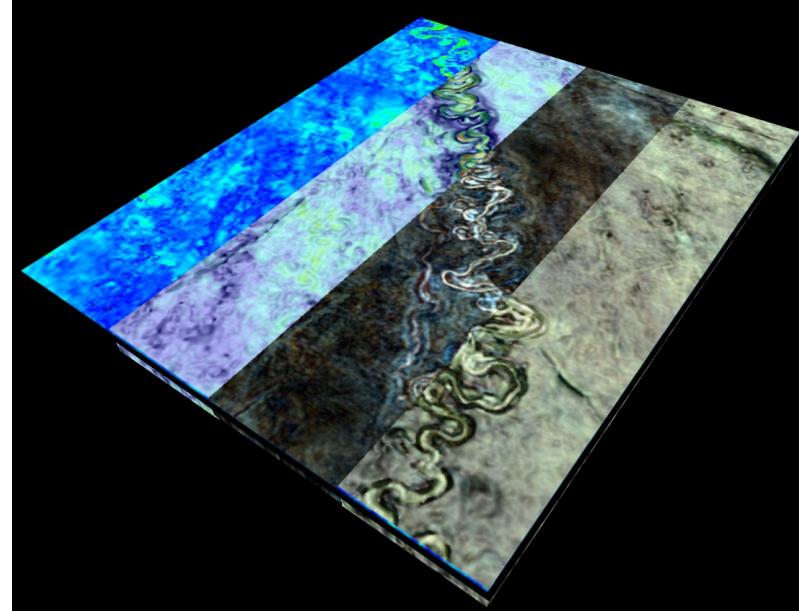


# Seismic imaging

## Lecture 6



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# Module outline

## **Day 2 morning- Visualising and interpreting seismic data**

Lecture 4: The SEGY data convention and where to find data

Lecture 5: How to interpret seismic data

Lecture 6: Seismic attribute analysis and machine learning (future outlook)

## **Day 2 afternoon- Exercises**

Exercise 3: Reading SEGY data and visualizing 3D data

Exercise 4: Calculating seismic attributes

# Lecture outline

**Objective of lecture 6:**

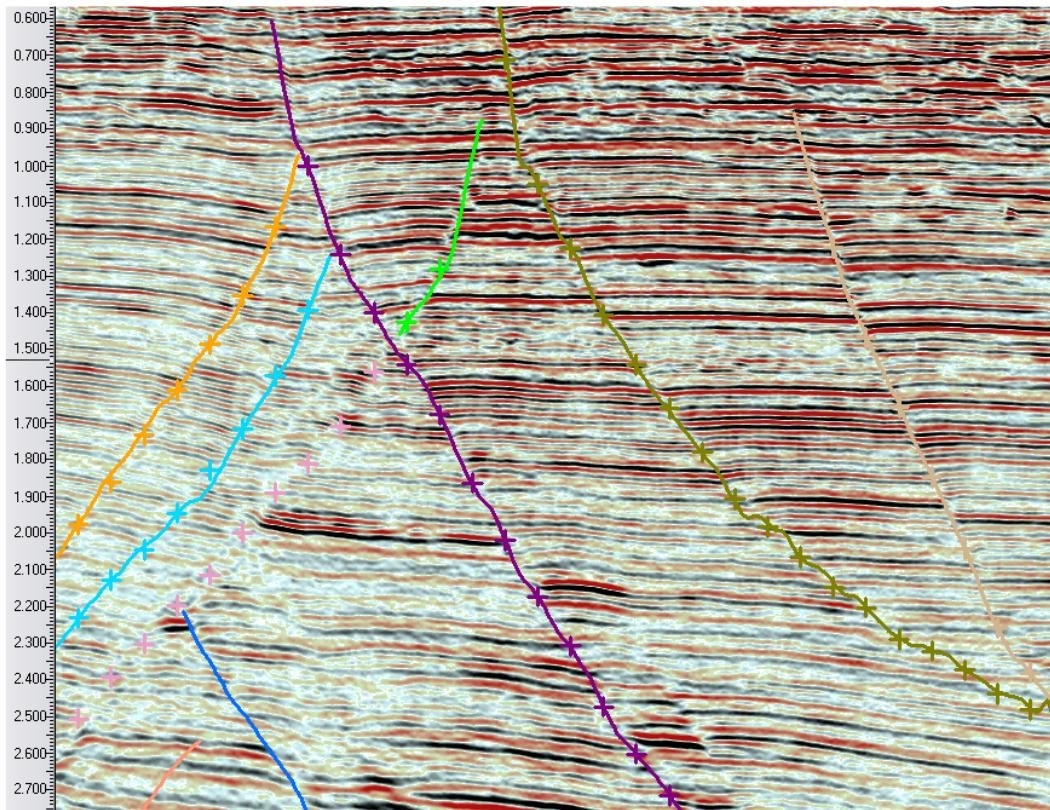
**Post-stack seismic attributes and the future of seismic interpretation**

- 1) Grid-based post-stack seismic attributes
- 2) Volume-based post-stack seismic attributes
- 3) Potential for automation

**This lecture directly links to Exercise 4:  
Seismic attributes**

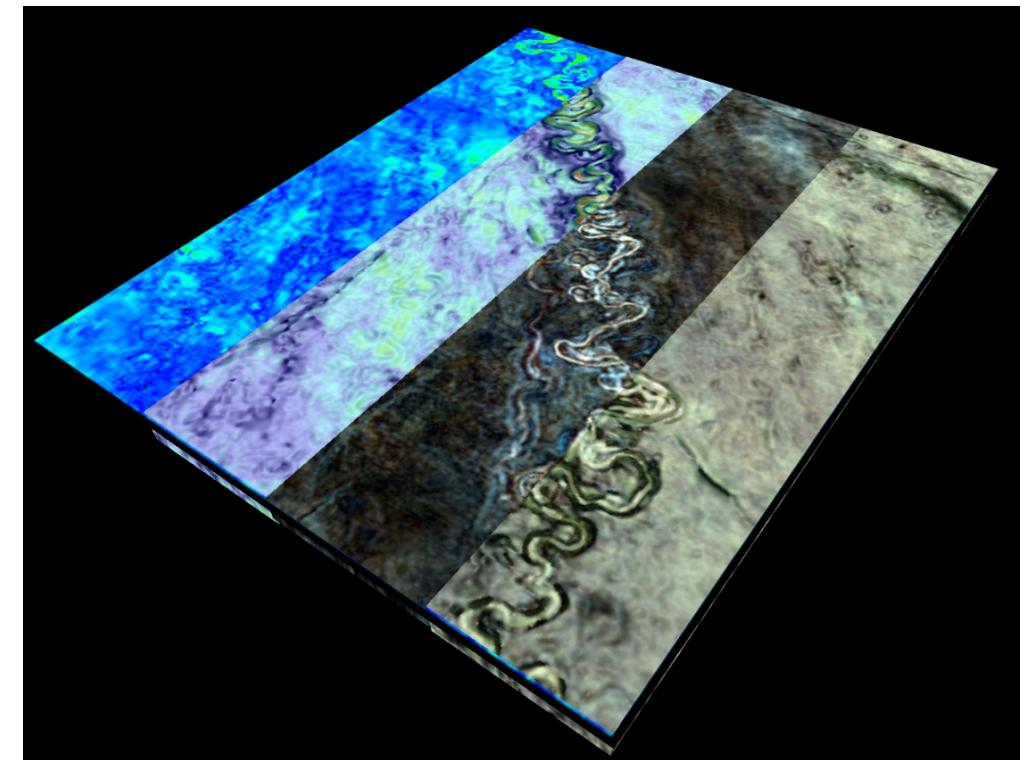
# Conventional vs ‘cognitive’ interpretation

Conventional interpretation



Mapping to reveal geological features

Cognitive interpretation

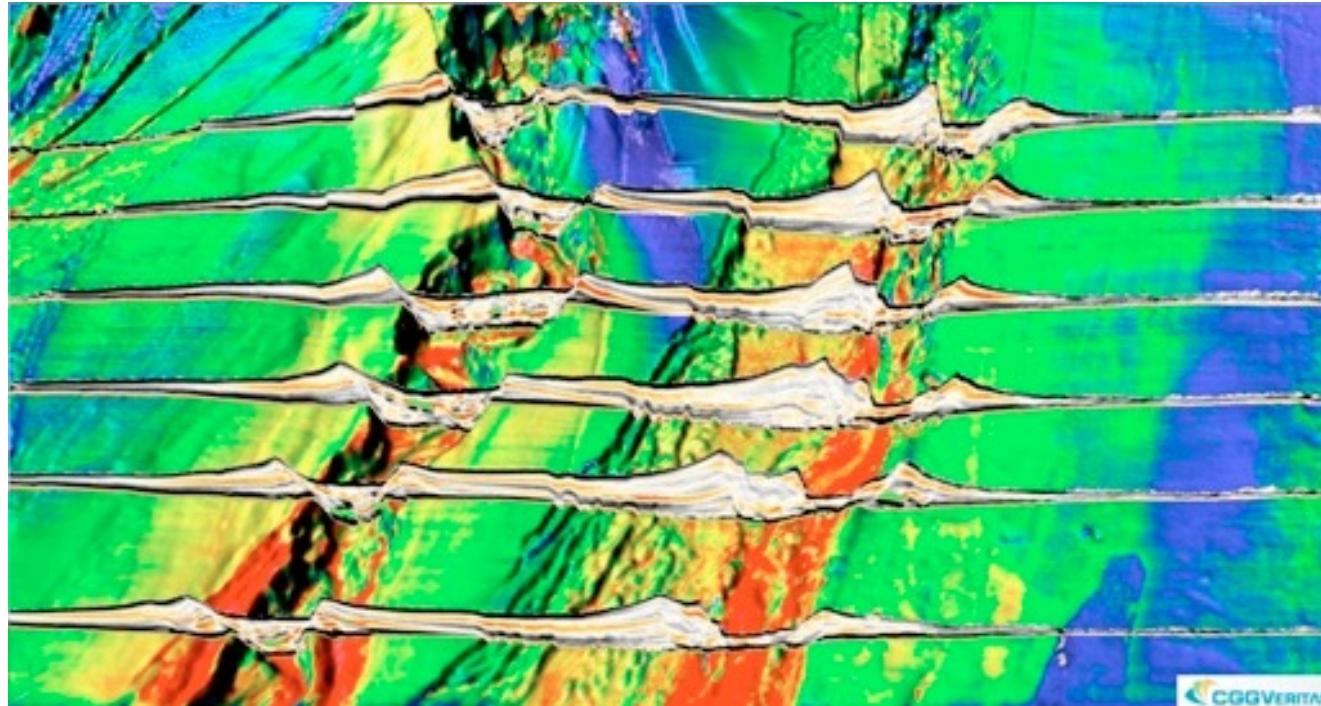


Computing seismic attributes to reveal geological features before mapping

# Definitions

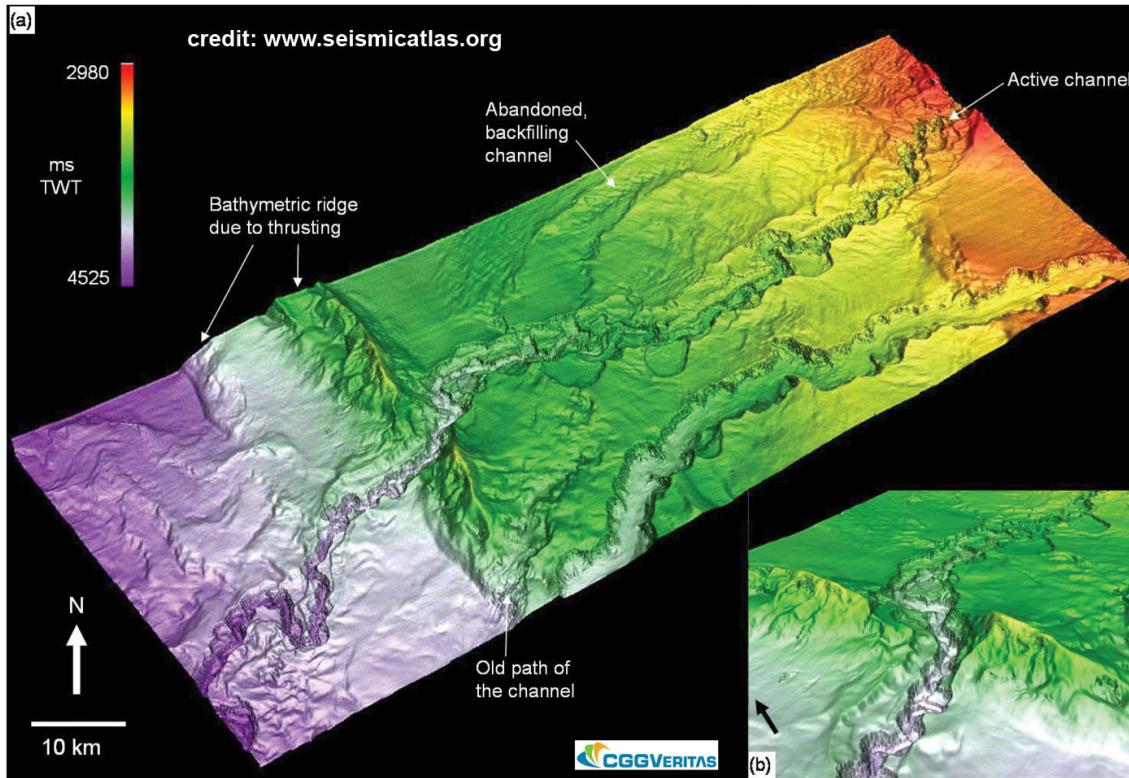
- What is an attribute?
  - “*...A quality ascribed to any person or thing*” (*Oxford Dictionary*)
- What is a seismic attribute?
  - “*...a quantitative derivative of a basic seismic measurement that may be extracted along a seismic trace, extracted along a horizon, or summed over a time window*” (see *Brown 2003; Hart & Chen, 2004*)
- What types of seismic attributes are available?
  - Grid-based attribute analysis
  - Volume-based attribute analysis

# Grid-based seismic attributes



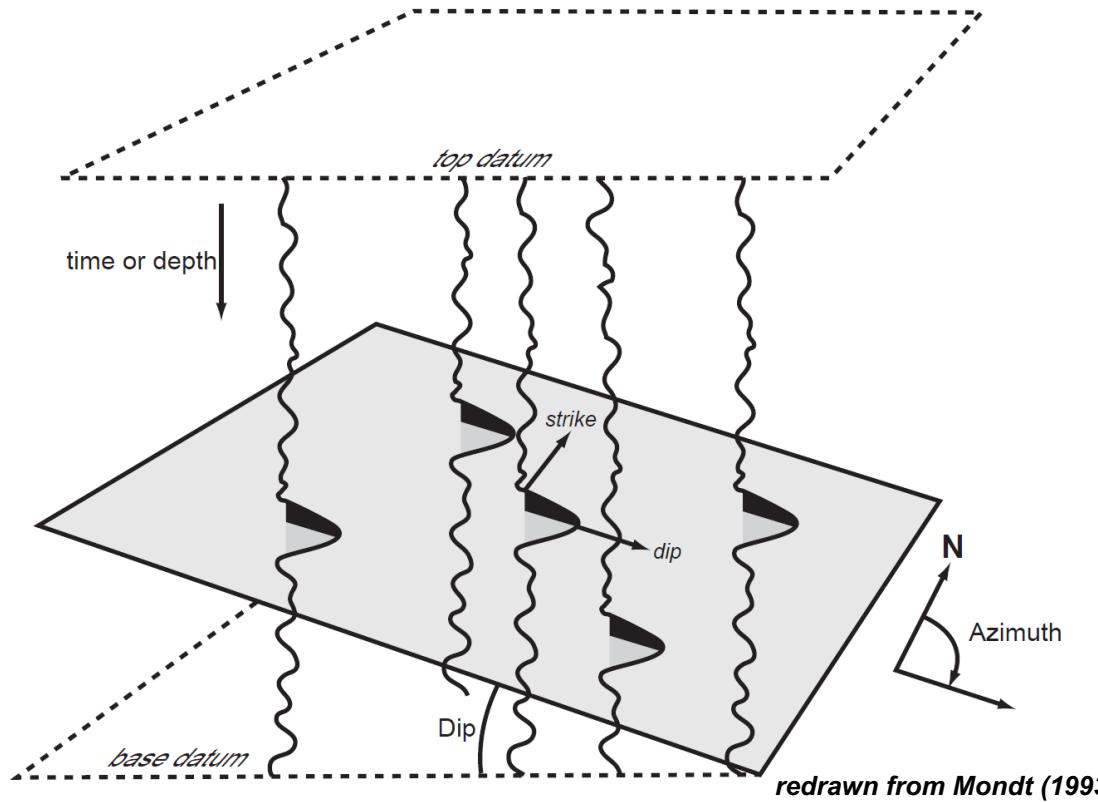
# Time/depth-structure maps

- Time/depth to a particular interpreted reflection (ie geological boundary)
- we can illuminate (hill shade) these diagrams to highlight features



- Grid-based seismic attributes can be used to examine the morphology of these surfaces in more detail
- Like working with a satellite-derived Digital Elevation Model (but underground!)

# Dip and azimuth attributes



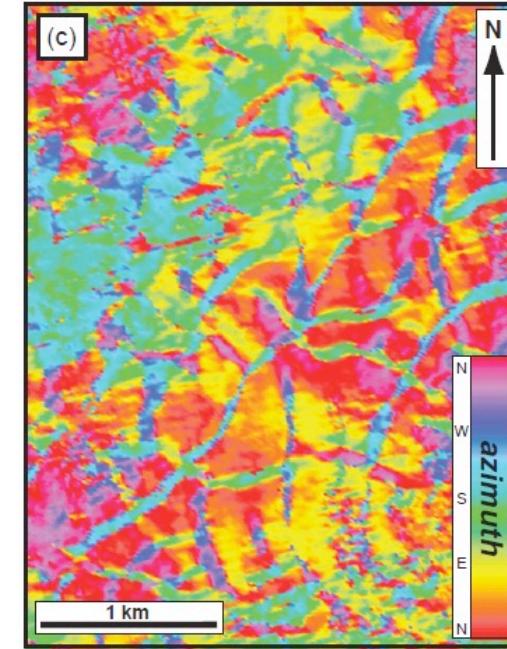
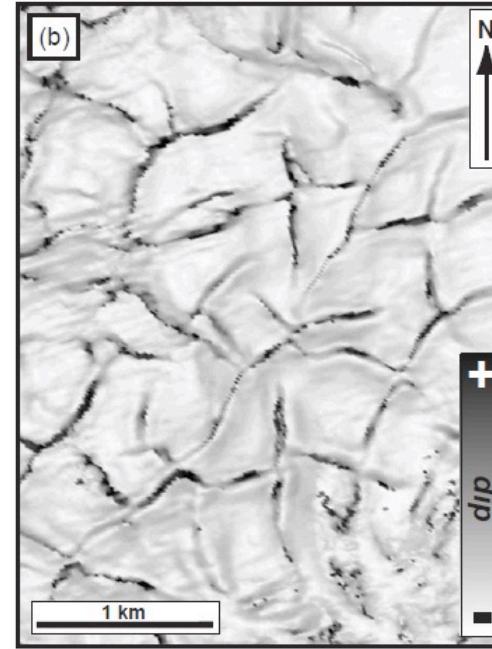
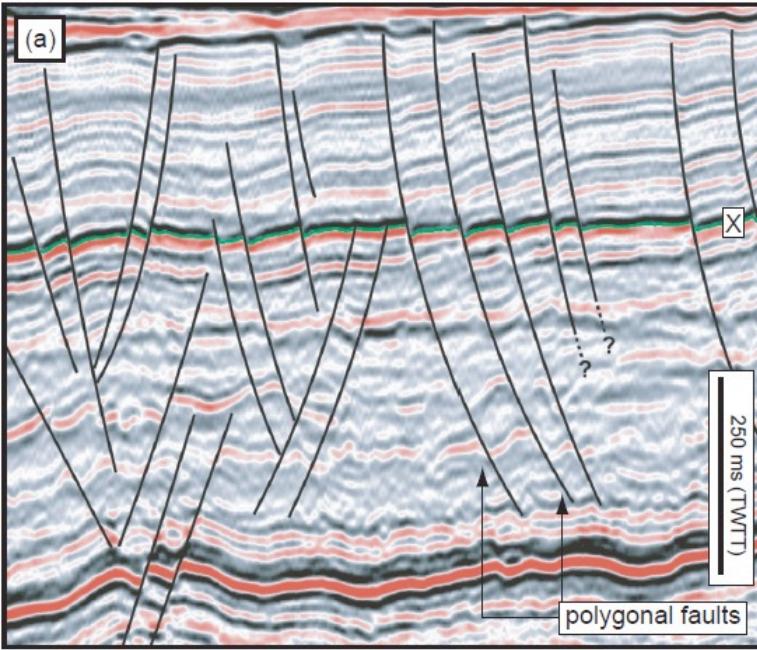
- **Dip** - calculates the dip at each point on an horizon. The resultant map (termed a 'dip map') displays variations in the **magnitude of dip**. The map contains no information on dip direction or magnitude of offset across a structure (e.g. total displacement or displacement direction in the case of a fault). Typically used to delineate structural features (i.e. faults and folds)
- **Azimuth** - calculates the azimuth at each point in degrees ( $^{\circ}$ ) away from north and displays variations in the **direction of dip**. The map contains no information regarding the dip magnitude of a structure (e.g. total amount of displacement on a fault). Typically used to delineate large-scale structural trends within sedimentary basins.

Direction of max dip

# Dip and azimuth attributes

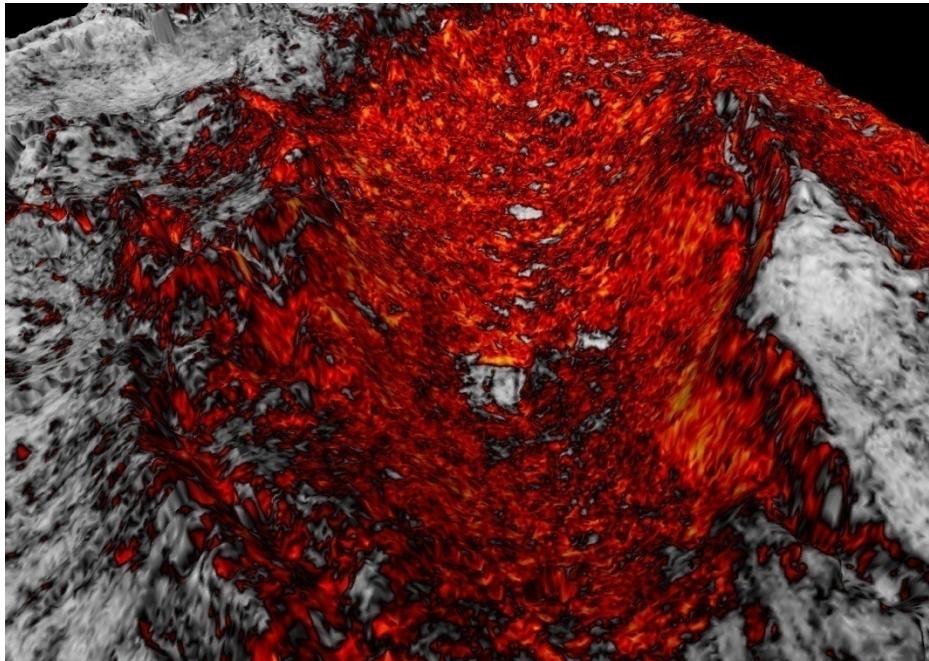
detecting faults using  
dips. Dips will have  
high gradient / dip

Images are  
not of the  
same faults



- **A** - Seismic section from the North Sea Basin illustrating the presence of small faults. Note the mapped reflection event marked X (in green)
- **B** - Dip map of reflection event X illustrates the polygonal pattern of the fault array
- **C** - Azimuth map of reflection event X illustrating the polygonal pattern of the fault array in addition to the variable dip direction of individual faults

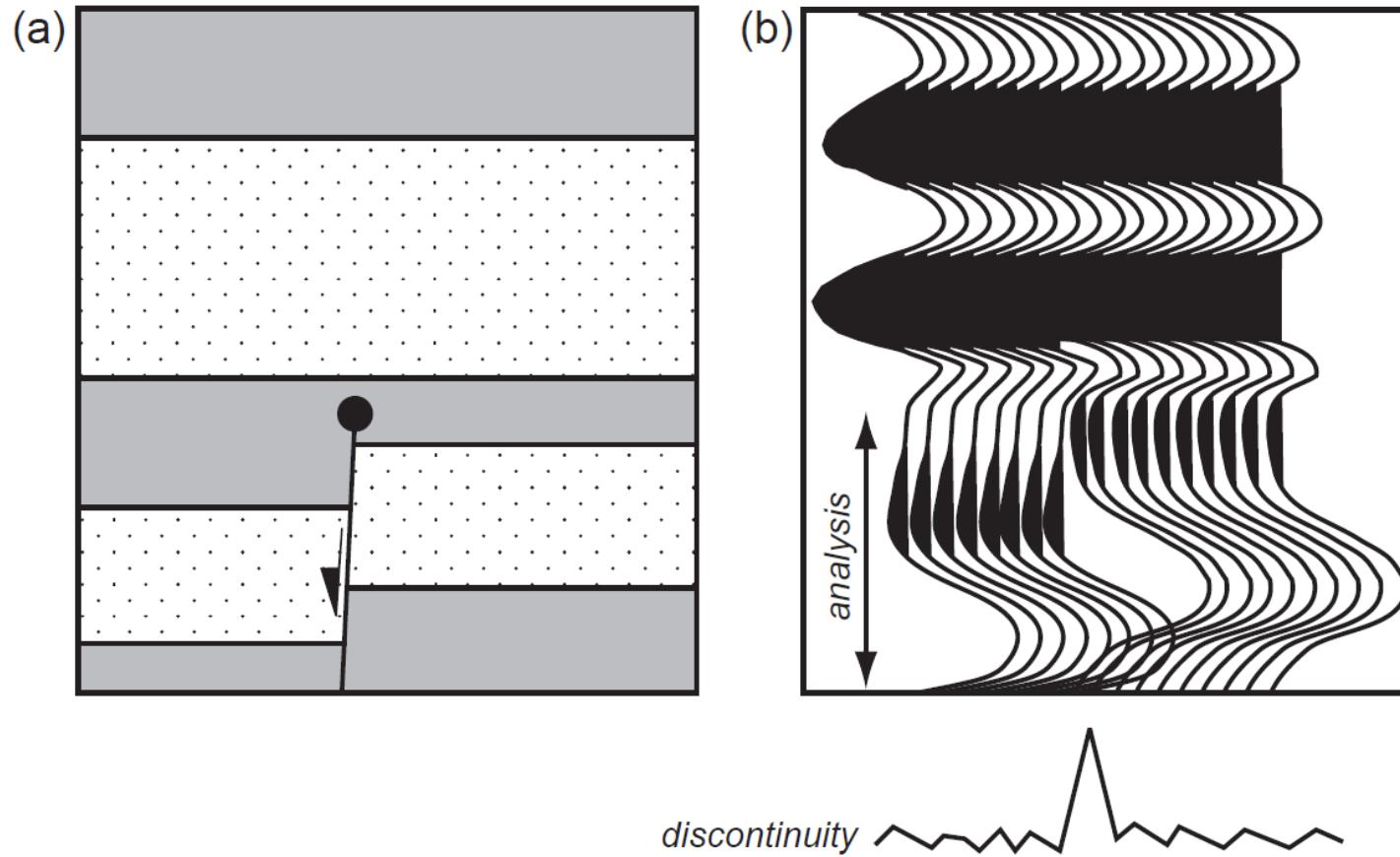
# Volume-based attribute analysis



# Volume-based seismic attributes

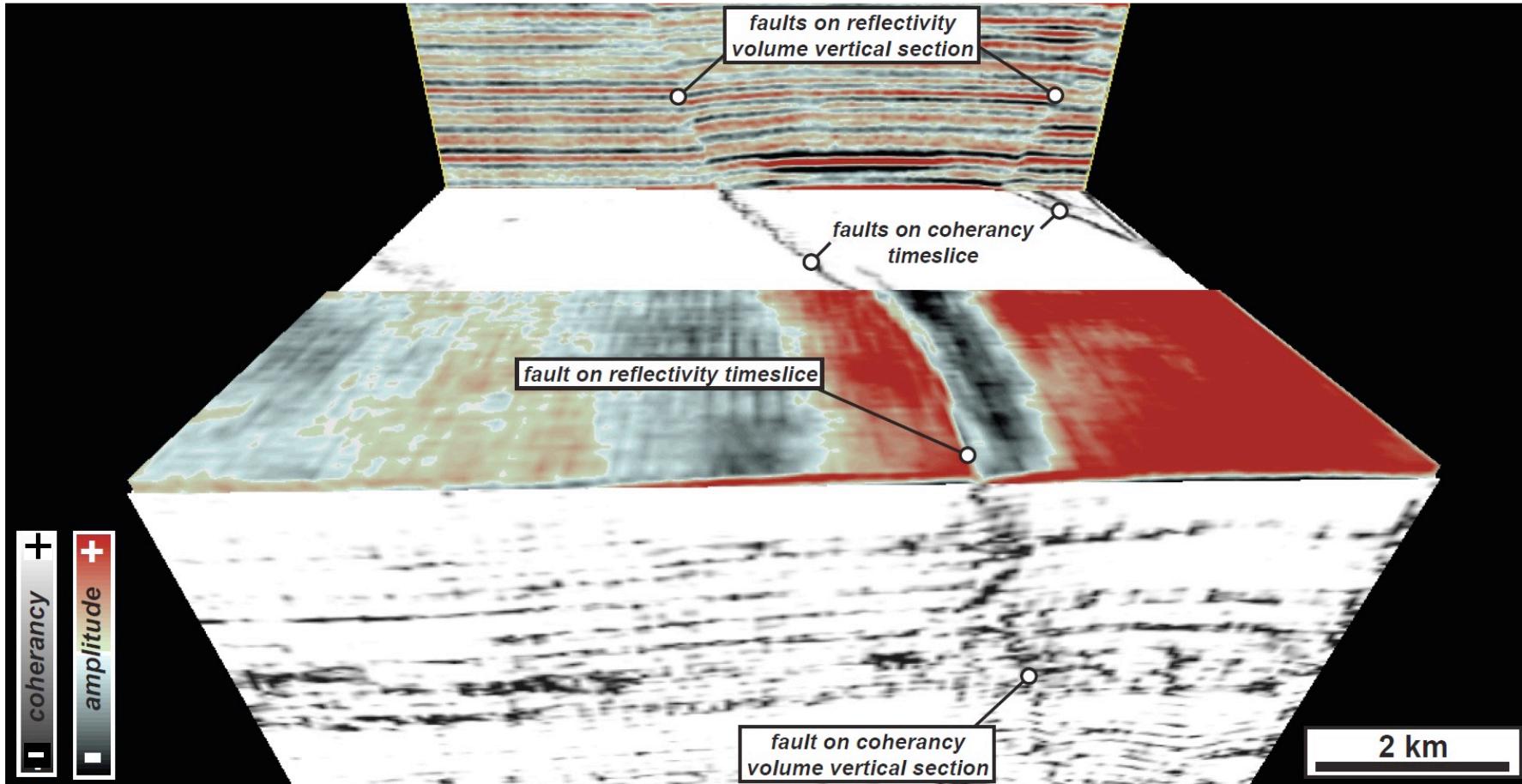
- Volume-based attributes are derived directly from the seismic reflectivity volume
- Volume-based attributes can be affected by noise in the initial input volume; caution should be exercised when interpreting geological features...
- A key part of the seismic interpreter's toolkit, they are applicable in a wide variety of structural and stratigraphic settings and across a range of scales
- Two types of volume-based attributes are defined; (i) geometric; and (ii) amplitude
- Hundreds of volume-based seismic attributes exist... you may be able to design your own (basically, any calculation you do on the seismic data reveals a seismic attribute, which may or may not be useful for resolving environmental/geological features)

# Geometric attributes- Coherency/discontinuity/semblance



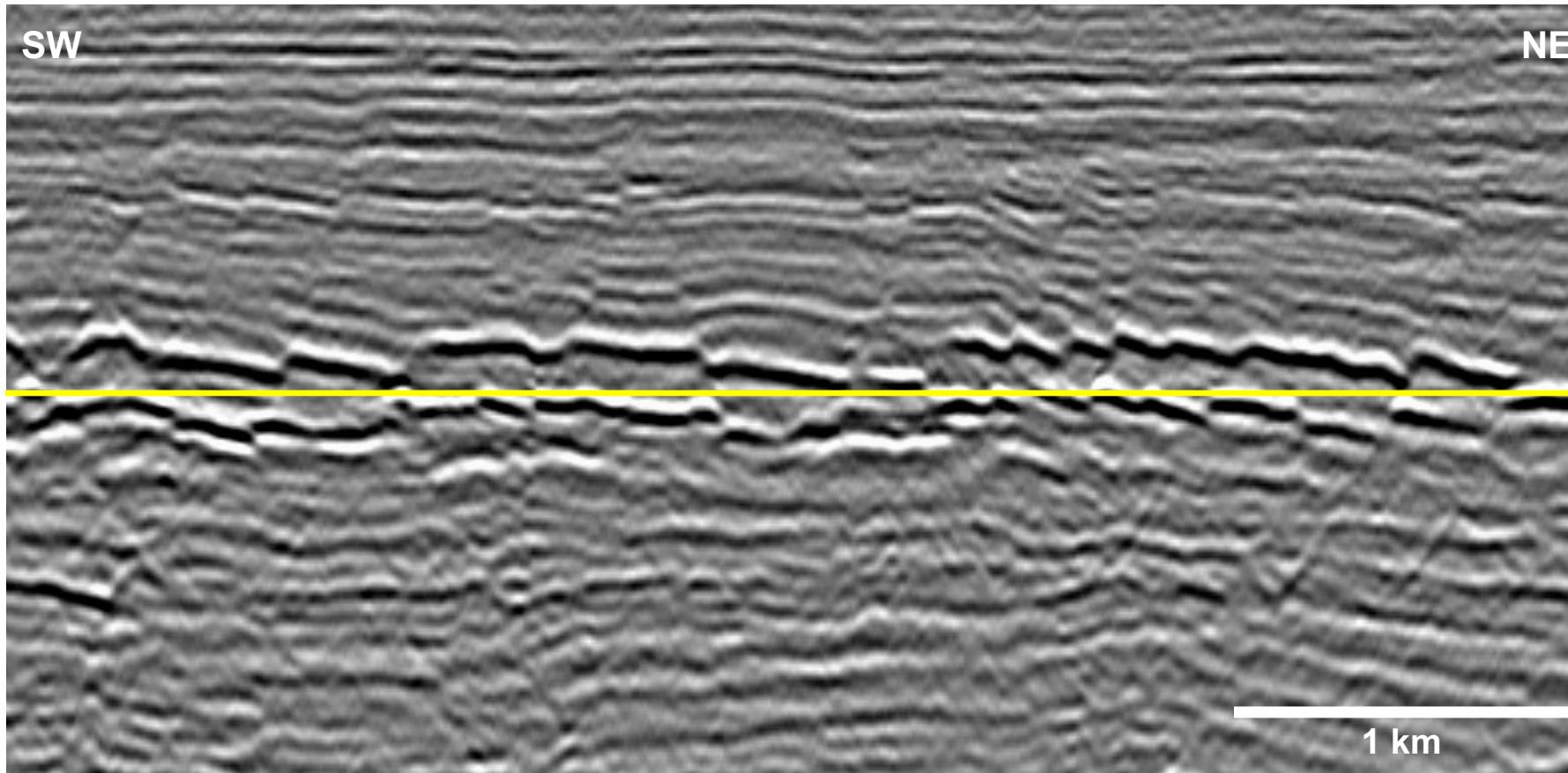
- Coherency, discontinuity, variance and semblance-type volumes is one of the most commonly-used volume-based geometric attributes used by seismic interpreters
- (a) illustrates a simple geological cross-section characterised by a normal-faulted sand (stippled)-shale (grey) sequence; (b) is a schematic sketch of how the coherence attribute 'sees' these lithological variations and the fault
- Note the discontinuity 'spike' (or decrease in coherence) at the location of the normal fault due to an abrupt change in the spatial seismic character of reflection events

# Coherency/discontinuity/semblance



- Combination of vertical and timeslice displays from a standard reflectivity volume and a coherence cube illustrating the application of coherency to imaging normal faults
- Note the clear expression of the normal faults on the vertical reflectivity slice and the coherency timeslice. The left-hand fault is more poorly-imaged on the reflectivity timeslice and the vertical coherency slice. Better imaging on timeslices rather than vertical slices is typical for coherency-type volumes

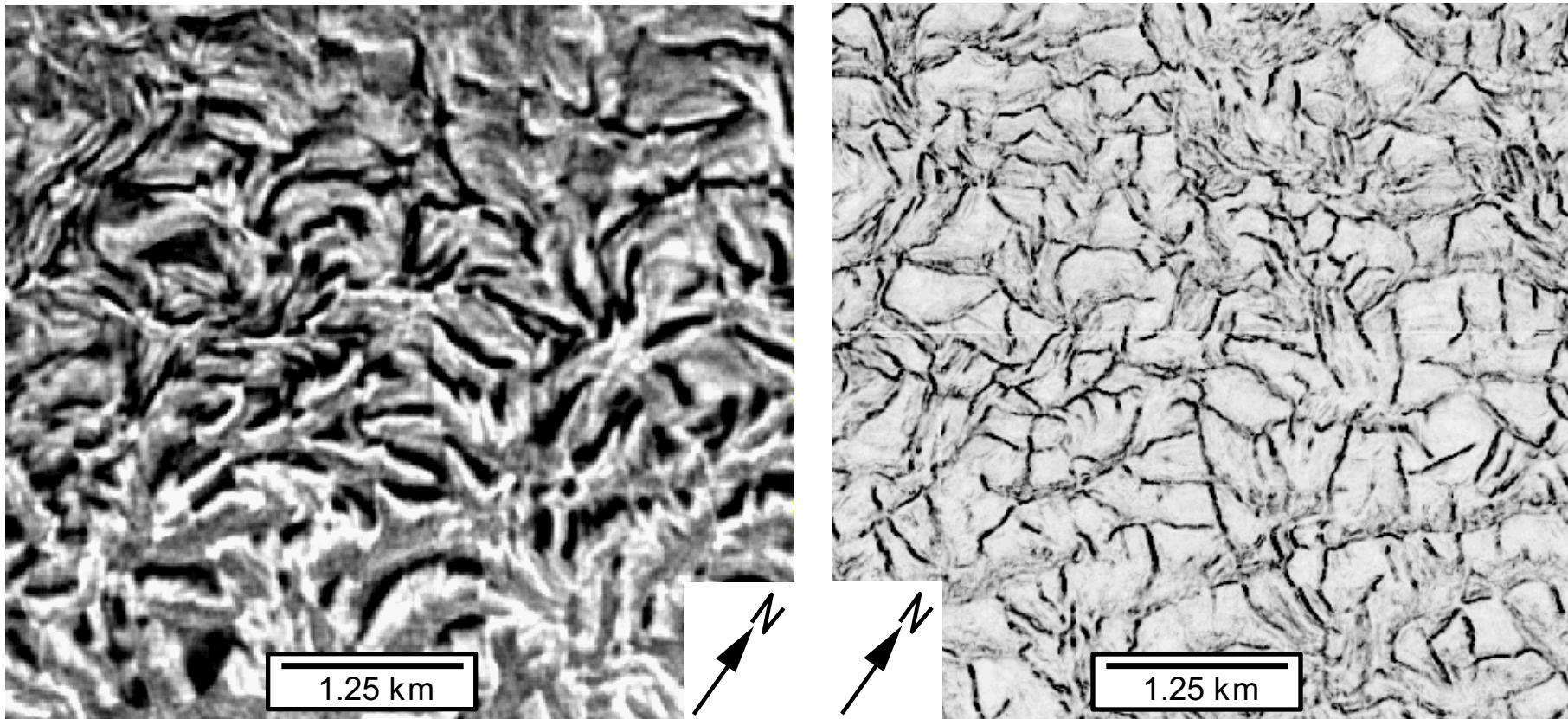
# Coherency/discontinuity/semblance



*Image courtesy of Lidia Lonergan*

- Seismic section from the northern North Sea
- Note the development of a series of low-displacement faults
- A timeslice (yellow line) is extracted from both the reflectivity volume and corresponding coherency volume (see next slide)

# Coherency/discontinuity/semblance



*Images courtesy of Lidia Lonergan*

- **Above-left** – Timeslice through reflectivity volume. Faults are poorly-imaged due to structural ‘interference’ with shallowly-dipping reflection events (see previous slide)
- **Above-right** – Timeslice at the same structural level through a coherency volume. The faults are very clearly-imaged

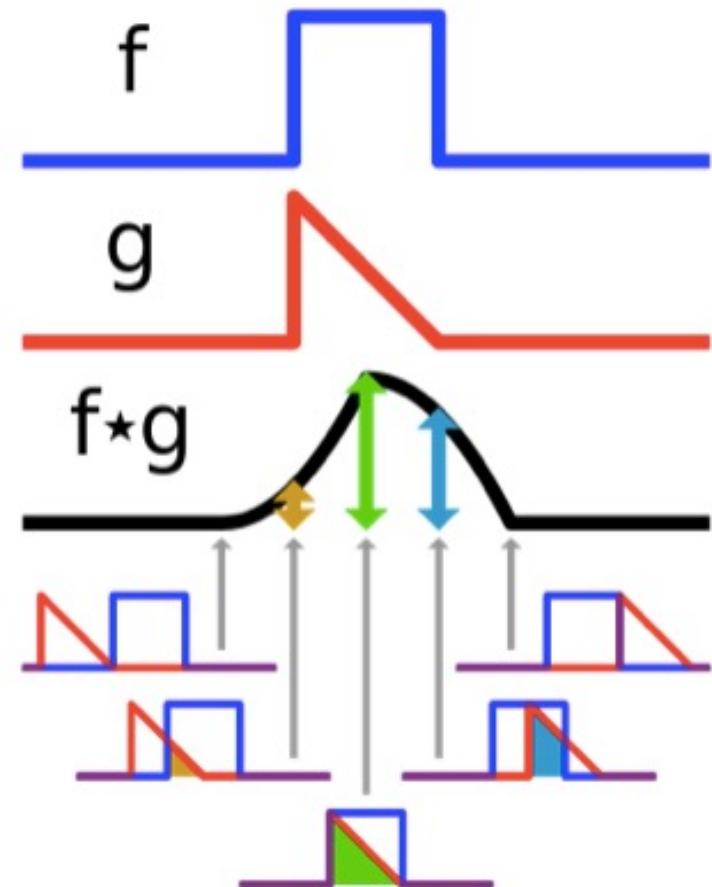
# • Discontinuity algorithms

Take a look at the following [tutorial](#) on Github from Joe Kington. There is a nice introduction to the use of discontinuity attributes and calculating them yourself

- We are focusing here on attributes that compare the local similarity/variance of traces. In image processing these would be considered like a type of “3D edge filter”
- The attributes are referred to as ‘semblance’, ‘coherence’, ‘similarity’, ‘discontinuity’, ‘chaos’ and many other terms. We are using the term “discontinuity” for this whole family of terms
- Most discontinuity attribute algorithms are trade-secrets within seismic interpretation packages- and the vast majority of interpreters just use them as a “black-box”
- The earliest discontinuity algorithm uses the **maximum cross correlation value of traces**. The entirety of each trace is correlated within a moving-window subset of two neighboring traces.

You will explore discontinuity attributes in Ex 4

## Cross-correlation



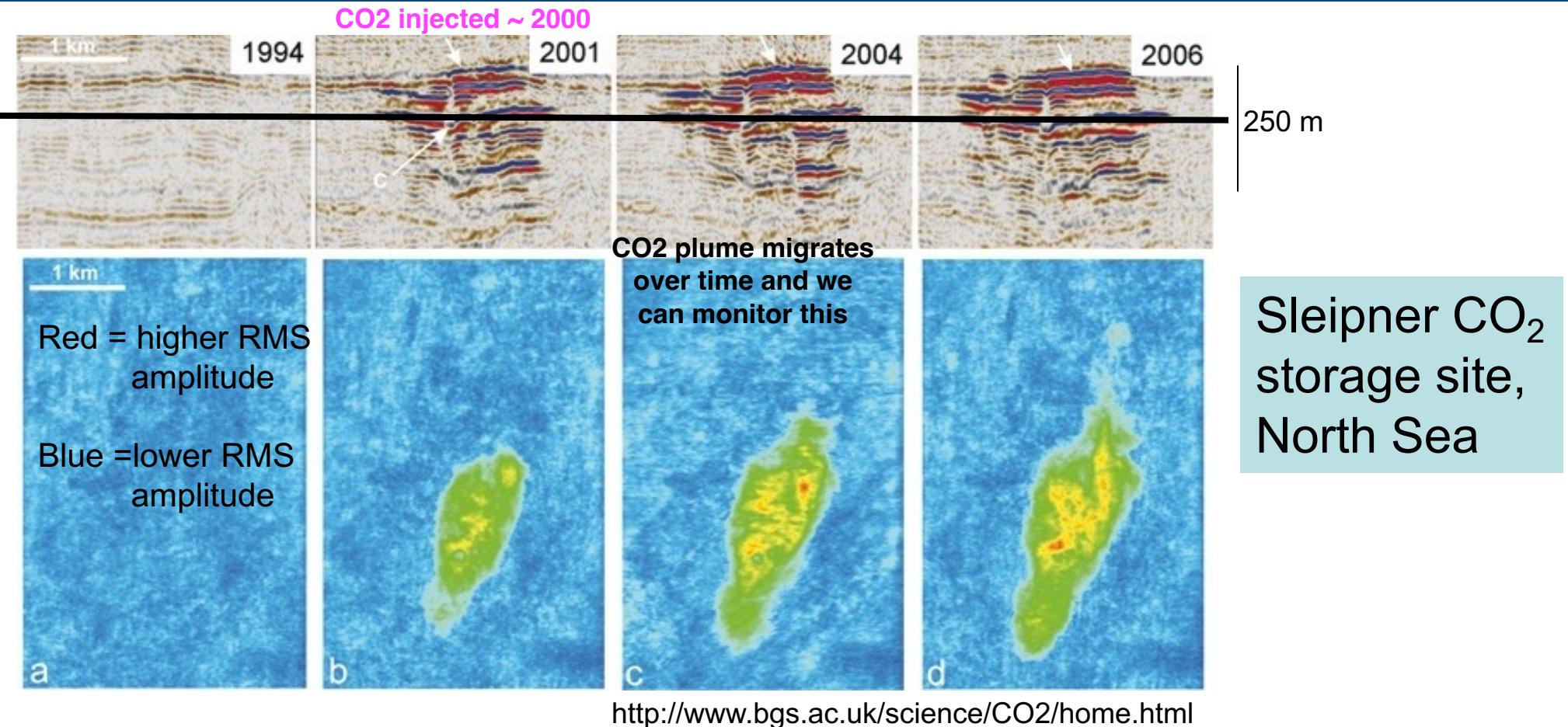
[http://www.ceri.memphis.edu/people/gdaub/datanotes/\\_build/html/sac5.htm](http://www.ceri.memphis.edu/people/gdaub/datanotes/_build/html/sac5.htm)

# **Amplitude-based attributes derived from grids and volumes**

- Amplitude algorithm extraction methods aim to delineate map-view distributions of amplitude anomalies (ie areas where the wiggles of the seismic trace have abnormally high or low amplitude)
- There are an almost indefinable number of amplitude extraction algorithms.... (maximum positive or negative amplitude, reflection intensity, total energy, average amplitude etc etc...)
- We can extract amplitude along or in a window around a mapped horizon or along a time/depth slice or within a time/depth volume

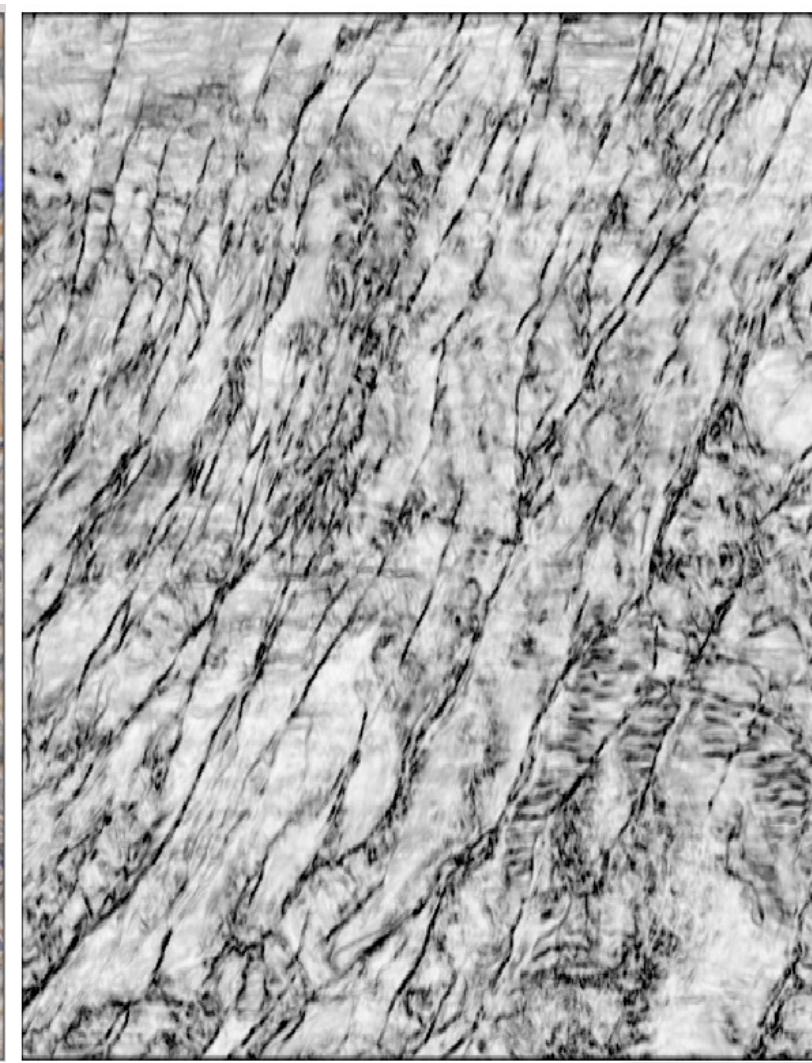
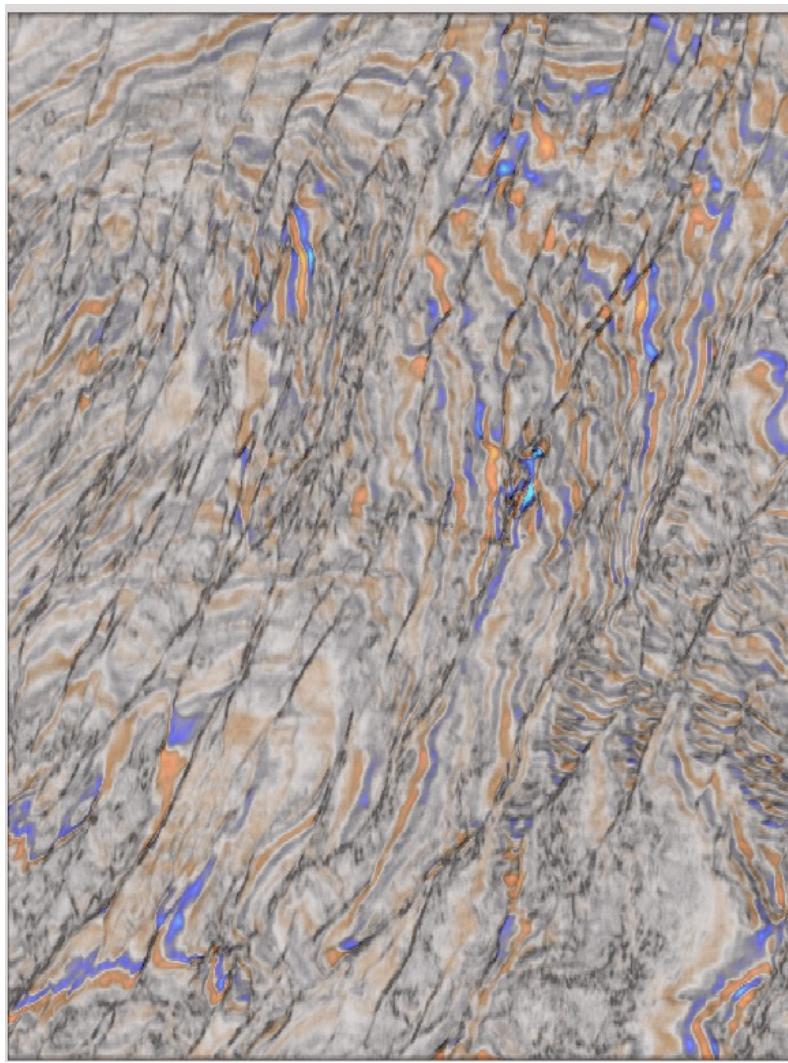
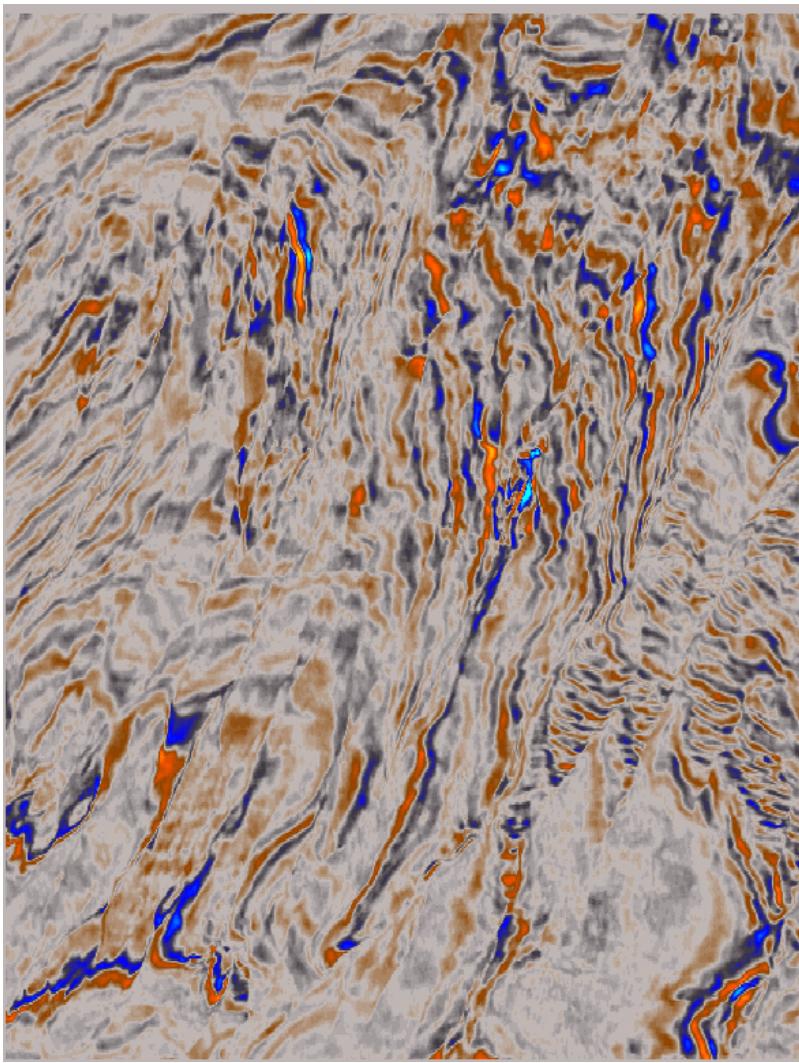
# 4D seismic and RMS amplitude

RMS amplitude  
(calculated over  
a window 125 m  
above the horizon  
and 125 m below)



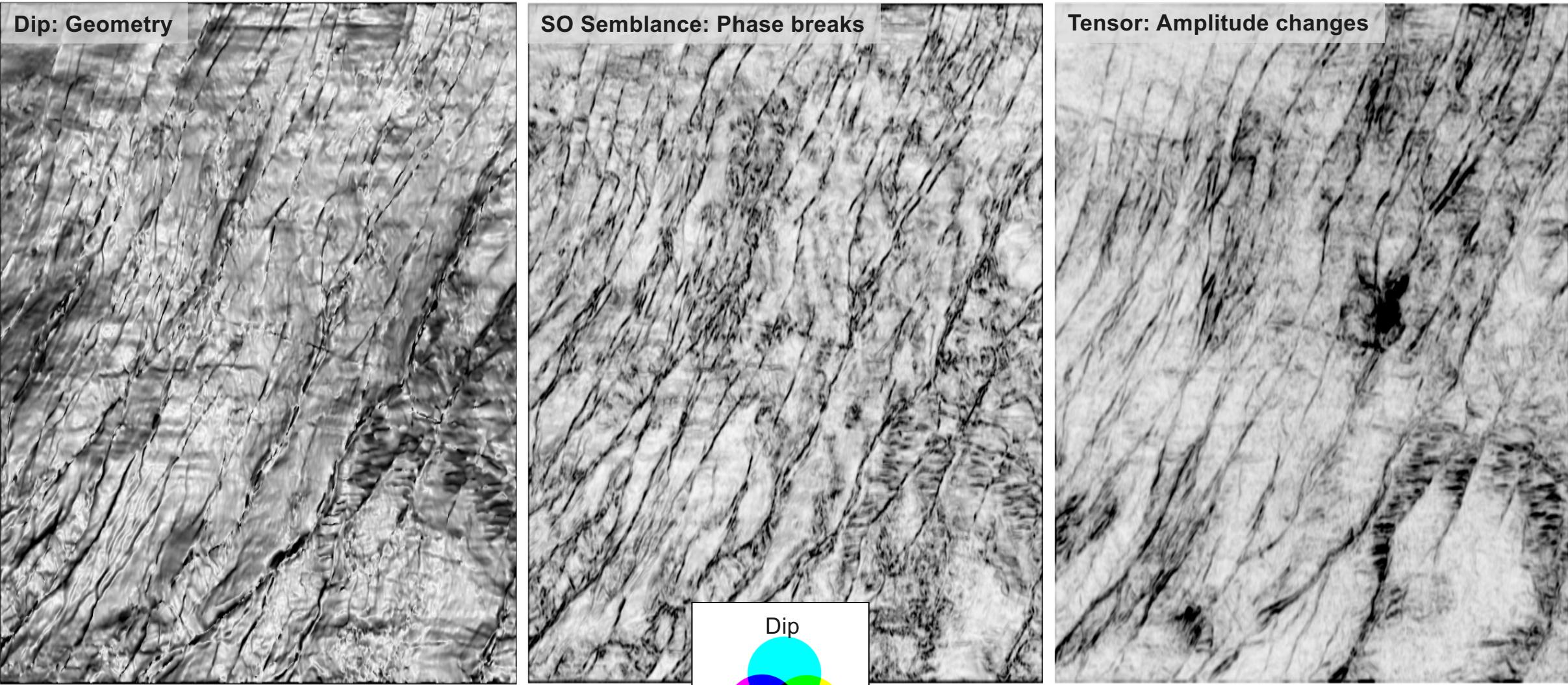
- 3D seismic data acquired at different times over the same area (time-lapse)
- Require exactly the same source, receiver and survey configuration
- Used to assess monitor CO<sub>2</sub> storage
- <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/science/CO2/home.html>

# Multi-attribute analysis- superposition



Reveals the relationship between two images.

# Several shades of grey



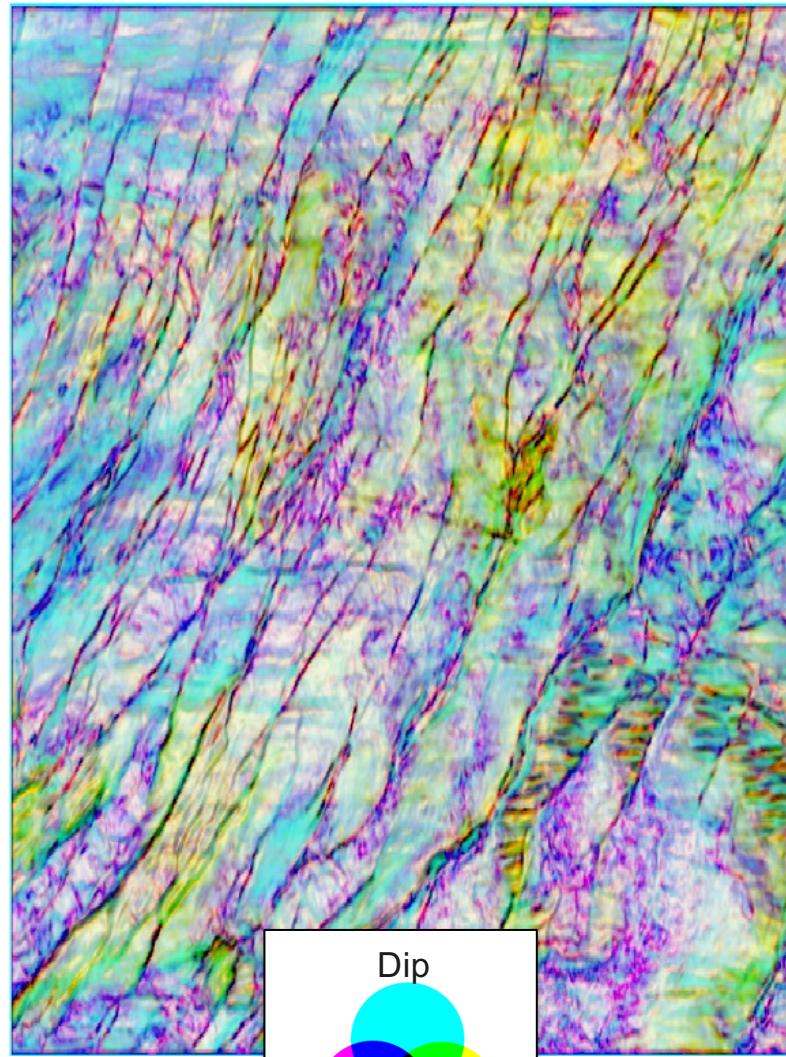
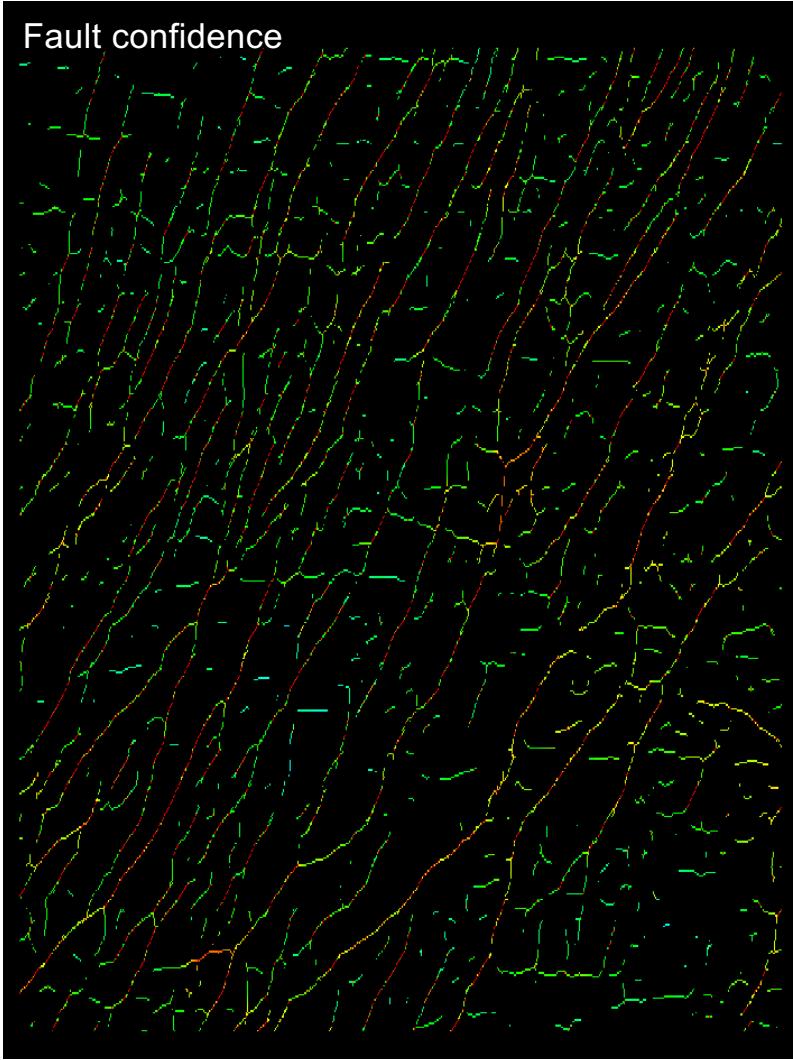
feature imaged by all 3 attributes will  
show as black in colour blending

Faults h

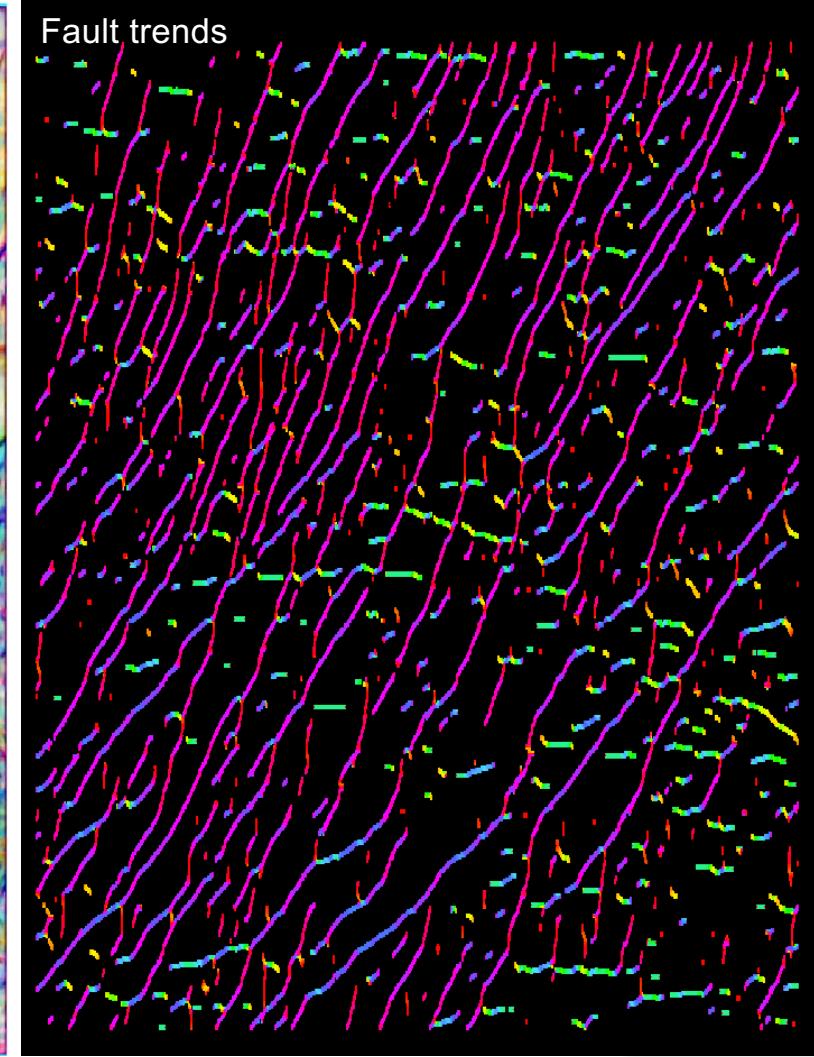
ressions.

# Colour blending

Fault confidence



Fault trends



# A question for you...

Go to [www.menti.com](http://www.menti.com) and use the code 5445 8699

**In your view, how might data science and ML contribute to seismic interpretation?**



# Key points

- Understand the importance of post-stack seismic attributes (both grid-based and volume-based)
- After Ex 4 appreciate how some basic post-stack attributes can be calculated using real data
- Begin to think about the potential role of data science and machine learning in revolutionizing the field of seismic data interpretation

# Introduction to Exercise 3 and 4

- In Exercise 3 and 4 you will load two/three different SEGY volumes, visualize them and have a look at the geological features and compute some simple post-stack attributes to reveal geological features even further
- In the EDSML group project you can expect to load a new SEGY file and conduct similar analysis, so make sure you are happy with all steps of Ex 3 and 4

# Data volume 1- Exercise 3/4

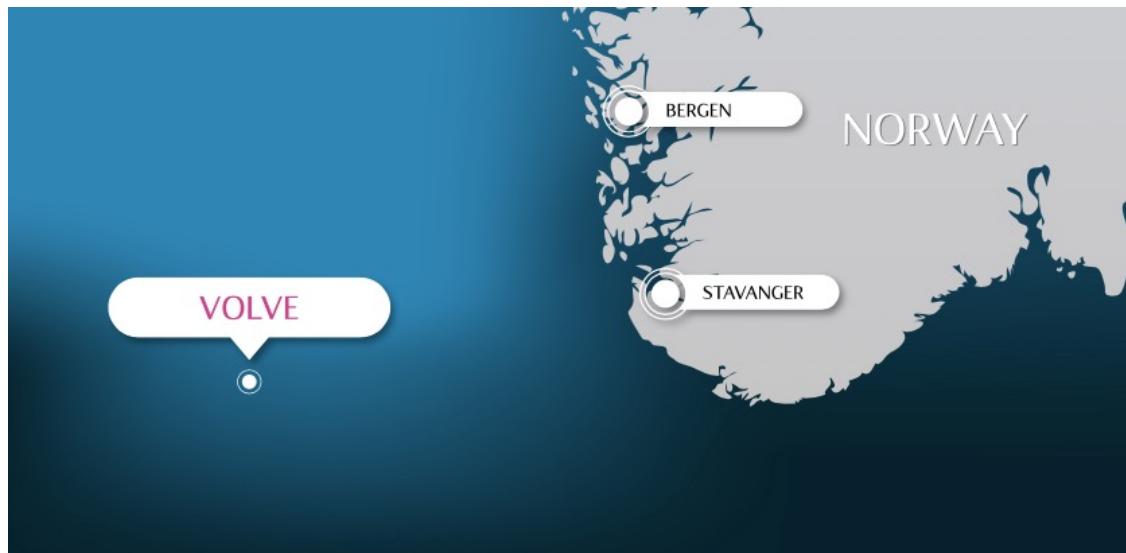
- TNW 3D Ultra-high resolution seismic (UHRS) (TNW\_small2.segy)
- **Sparker** source **depth** dataset collected to develop a ground model for an offshore wind development at Ten noorden van de Waddeneilanden, north coast Netherlands
- Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) have released the data and geophysical reports
- SAND Geophysics now developing a ground model from the data
- We will look at just a subset of the data containing modern channels and evidence of past glaciations



[TNW 3D UHRS geophysical report](#)

# Data volume 2 – Exercise 3 Bonus

- Volve dataset (ST0202.segy)
- Airgun array source **time** dataset 200 km west of Stavanger, Norway
- Equinor have released the full-dataset ([40,000 files](#)) for the 2016 decommissioned Volve oil field. Dataset includes seismic, wells, interpreted horizons and faults etc and is a great dataset for data scientists to explore
- Old oil fields like this are now being re-considered as sites of CO<sub>2</sub> storage- see for example the CO2 storage [atlas](#) from the Barents Sea



This dataset is not a perfect rectangle... therefore when you load it you need to add some padding to make it a complete rectangle. It is useful to know how to do this when you download your own data sets

# Data volume 3 – Exercise 4

- Thebe 3D seismic  
(Thebe\_rift\_faults.segy)
- Airgun array source time dataset
- Gas field located in Exmouth Plateau of NW Shelf Australia. Data open source from Geoscience Australia
- Spectacular crustal-scale imaging of fault systems makes this an important dataset for research into faults and earthquakes hazards eg. [Pan, Bell et al. 2021](#)
- The dataset shows older Jurassic rifts and younger 'polygonal' faults. We are going to look at the Jurassic faults

