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A geology-based 3D velocity model of the Amatrice Basin (Central Italy)

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# Engineering Geology

## 3D geological modeling, a new approach in seismic hazard assessment studies: insights from the Amatrice case study (central Italy).

--Manuscript Draft--

<b>Manuscript Number:</b>	
<b>Article Type:</b>	Research Paper
<b>Keywords:</b>	3D geological model; seismic hazard assessment; seismic risk prevention; Amatrice Basin; Laga Basin; central Apennines
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<b>Abstract:</b>	<p>The Amatrice area (central Italy) falls in a high seismic hazard region, which has been struck by several disastrous earthquakes. The recent 2016-2017 seismic sequence, with several earthquakes of magnitude Mw greater than 5, caused extensive damage and 299 victims, reaffirming the importance of activities devoted to the seismic risk prevention in an effective territorial planning.</p> <p>In this paper we present a detailed 3D geological model, with related geophysical parameters, of the uppermost hundreds of meters (maximum depth about 200 meters) of the Amatrice Basin subsoil. Geological maps, cross-sections, and morphological data (Digital Elevation Model) have been integrated with subsurface geological and geophysical data (e.g., core-well data and seismic noise measures) and models obtained by the interpretation of surface and well geophysical measurements, like S-wave (Vs) and P-wave (Vp) velocities. All data have been georeferenced and uploaded into a 3D geological modeling software, where faults, stratigraphic boundaries and geophysical attributes have been digitized, checked, hierarchized, and modeled. A posteriori calibration of the 3D reconstructed model has been operated by comparing the modeled seismic responses of some extracted volumes with those obtained by environmental noise measurements (i.e., Horizontal-to-Vertical Spectral Ratio analysis, HVSr). The final 3D model correctly reproduces the amplitude and frequency of arriving waves in the Amatrice area, thus allowing an evaluation of possible focusing and/or amplification effects due to the morpho-litho-stratigraphic setting of the near surface geological features (i.e., Quaternary cover deposit and pre-Quaternary rocky substratum). The proposed 3D modeling approach represents a promising general methodology for developing more realistic seismic hazard scenario, useful for allowing an effective territorial planning.</p>
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Rome, 30 March 2021

Hsein Juang, Vicki Moon, Janusz Wasowski  
Editors-in-Chief of Engineering Geology Journal: Elsevier

Dear Editors,

please, find attached a manuscript entitled "3D geological modeling, a new approach in seismic hazard assessment studies: insights from the Amatrice case study (central Italy).", by Michele Livani et alii, that we would like you to consider for publication as a Research Article in Engineering Geology Journal.

This manuscript has not been previously published and it is not under consideration for publication elsewhere.

With this manuscript, we present a new and detailed 3D geological model, based on the integration of surface and subsurface geological and geophysical data, of the Amatrice high seismic hazard area (central Italy).

The proposed approach introduces a new essential element in seismic hazard evaluation of seismically active areas. It considers what the seismic wave undergoes on its path from the seismogenic source to the surface, thus representing a link between seismic zoning and microzonation studies, predicting possible focusing and/or amplification effects due to the morpho-litho-stratigraphic setting of the near surface geological structures.

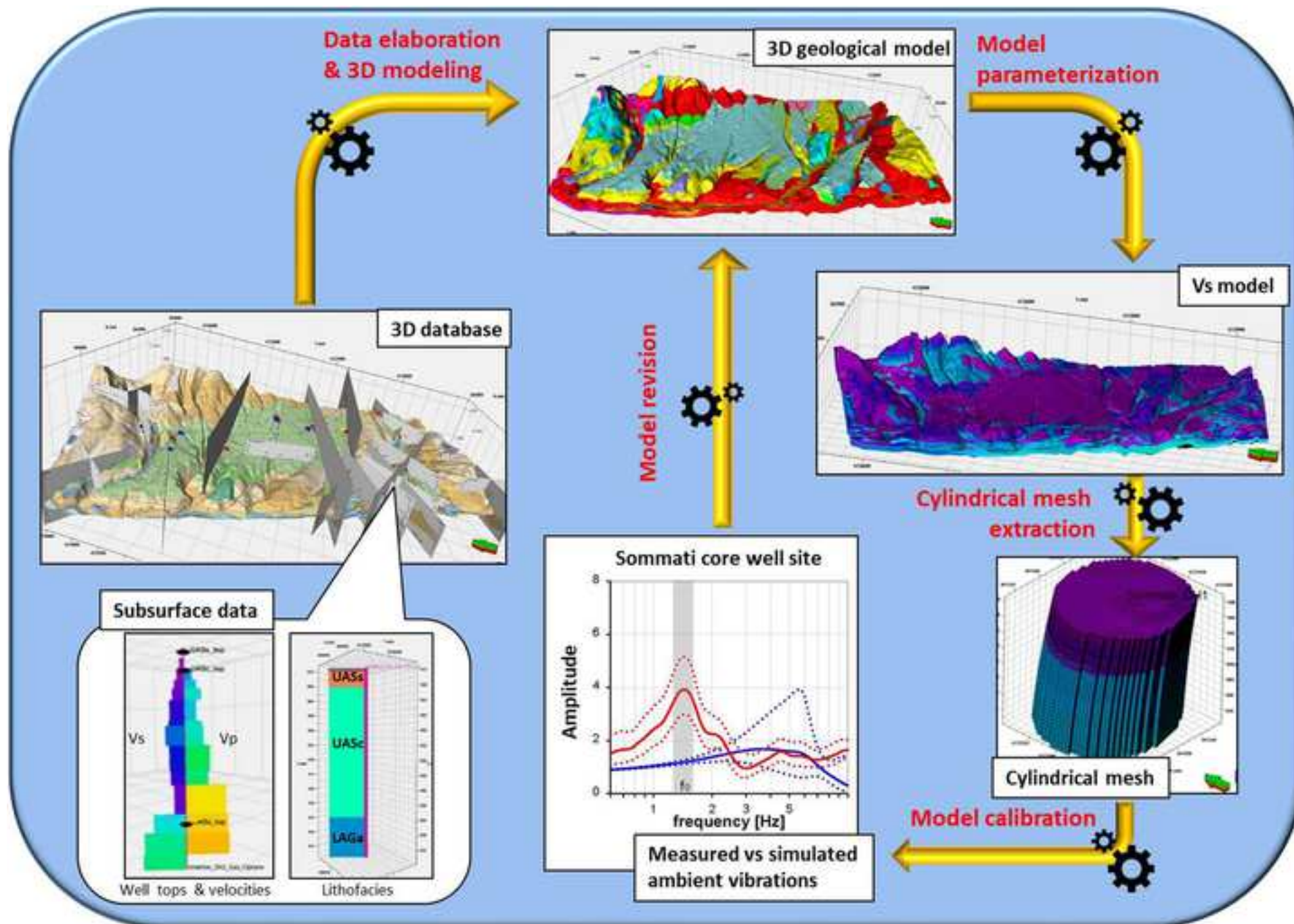
Looking forward to hearing from you

Sincerely,  
Davide Scrocca

Istituto di Geologia Ambientale e Geoingegneria (IGAG)  
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Rome, Italy  
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## **Highlights**

- A new detailed 3D geological model, with related geophysical parameters, of the uppermost hundreds of meters of the Amatrice area has been elaborated;
- the model has been calibrated by processing the ellipticity curves of the Rayleigh fundamental mode at four chosen sites;
- the model predicts correctly the amplitude and frequency of arriving waves;
- the model could help in predicting possible focusing and/or amplification effects due to the morpho-litho-stratigraphic setting of the near surface geological structures;
- the proposed modeling approach allows to define more realistic seismic hazard scenarios being also exploitable in other similar seismic areas.



**3D geological modeling, a new approach in seismic hazard assessment studies: insights from the Amatrice case study (central Italy).**

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21 *Abstract*

22 The Amatrice area (central Italy) falls in a high seismic hazard region, which has been struck by  
23 several disastrous earthquakes. The recent 2016-2017 seismic sequence, with several earthquakes of  
24 magnitude  $M_w$  greater than 5, caused extensive damage and 299 victims, reaffirming the  
25 importance of activities devoted to the seismic risk prevention in an effective territorial planning.  
26 In this paper we present a detailed 3D geological model, with related geophysical parameters, of the  
27 uppermost hundreds of meters (maximum depth about 200 meters) of the Amatrice Basin subsoil.  
28 Geological maps, cross-sections, and morphological data (Digital Elevation Model) have been  
29 integrated with subsurface geological and geophysical data (e.g., core-well data and seismic noise  
30 measures) and models obtained by the interpretation of surface and well geophysical measurements,  
31 like S-wave ( $V_s$ ) and P-wave ( $V_p$ ) velocities. All data have been georeferenced and uploaded into a  
32 3D geological modeling software, where faults, stratigraphic boundaries and geophysical attributes  
33 have been digitized, checked, hierarchized, and modeled. A posteriori calibration of the 3D  
34 reconstructed model has been operated by comparing the modeled seismic responses of some  
35 extracted volumes with those obtained by environmental noise measurements (i.e., Horizontal-to-  
36 Vertical Spectral Ratio analysis, HVSr). The final 3D model correctly reproduces the amplitude  
37 and frequency of arriving waves in the Amatrice area, thus allowing an evaluation of possible  
38 focusing and/or amplification effects due to the morpho-litho-stratigraphic setting of the near  
39 surface geological features (i.e., Quaternary cover deposit and pre-Quaternary rocky substratum).  
40 The proposed 3D modeling approach represents a promising general methodology for developing  
41 more realistic seismic hazard scenario, useful for allowing an effective territorial planning.

42 **Keywords:** 3D geological model, seismic hazard assessment, seismic risk prevention, Amatrice  
43 Basin, Laga Basin, central Apennines.

## 44 1 Introduction

45 In last decades, the advent of the three-dimensional (3D) geological modeling software gave to  
46 geologists a new tool to effectively represent the subsurface. A detailed 3D geological and  
47 mechanical model is an important tool for assessing the seismic hazard of an area. As an example,  
48 compared to classic two-dimensional (2D) models, 3D seismogenic source models can provide a  
49 more realistic prediction of the expected ground shaking as well as of its spatial distribution (e.g.,  
50 Boncio et al., 2004). Defining 3D geometries of rock bodies and the spatial distribution of their  
51 mechanical properties allow running physically based numerical simulations (e.g., Mazzieri et al.,  
52 2013; Smerzini and Pitilakis, 2018) and, consequently, investigating their role in influencing the  
53 upward propagation of seismic waves, highlighting the possible occurrence of focusing, reflection,  
54 refraction and/or amplification effects. In addition, a 3D geological model can be used for  
55 predicting amplitude and frequency of the arriving seismic waves (e.g., Magistrale et al., 1996; Süss  
56 et al., 2001),

57 In this framework, our study area (the Amatrice Basin, central Italy), provides a remarkably  
58 interesting case study for reconstructing a 3D geological model due to the large amount of  
59 available seismological, geological and geophysical data. The Amatrice Basin (Cacciuni et al.,  
60 1995; Vignaroli et al., 2019) is a NW-SE-trending intermountain depression in the axial part of the  
61 central Apennines (Fig. 1). For this area, at the state of art, a 3D fully parameterized model in terms  
62 of mechanical parameters is still missing.

63 The study area has been historically affected by moderate-to-large earthquakes that produced  
64 extensive damage and many victims (e.g., the 1639 and 2016-2017 seismic sequences; Tiberi  
65 Romano, 1639; Galli et al., 2016; Chiaraluce et al., 2017; Pizzi et al., 2017; Rovida et al., 2019; and  
66 references therein) (Fig. 1). Recently, it has been struck by a seismic sequence started on the 24<sup>th</sup>  
67 August 2016 (with the Amatrice earthquake of magnitude Mw 6.0) due to the activation of a  
68 complex system of extensional faults. Numerous earthquakes of magnitude Mw > 5 have been  
69 recorded in the period between 24<sup>th</sup> August 2016 and 18<sup>th</sup> January 2017 (e.g., Chiaraluce et al.,  
70 2017; Improta et al., 2019; Michele et al., 2020 and references therein).

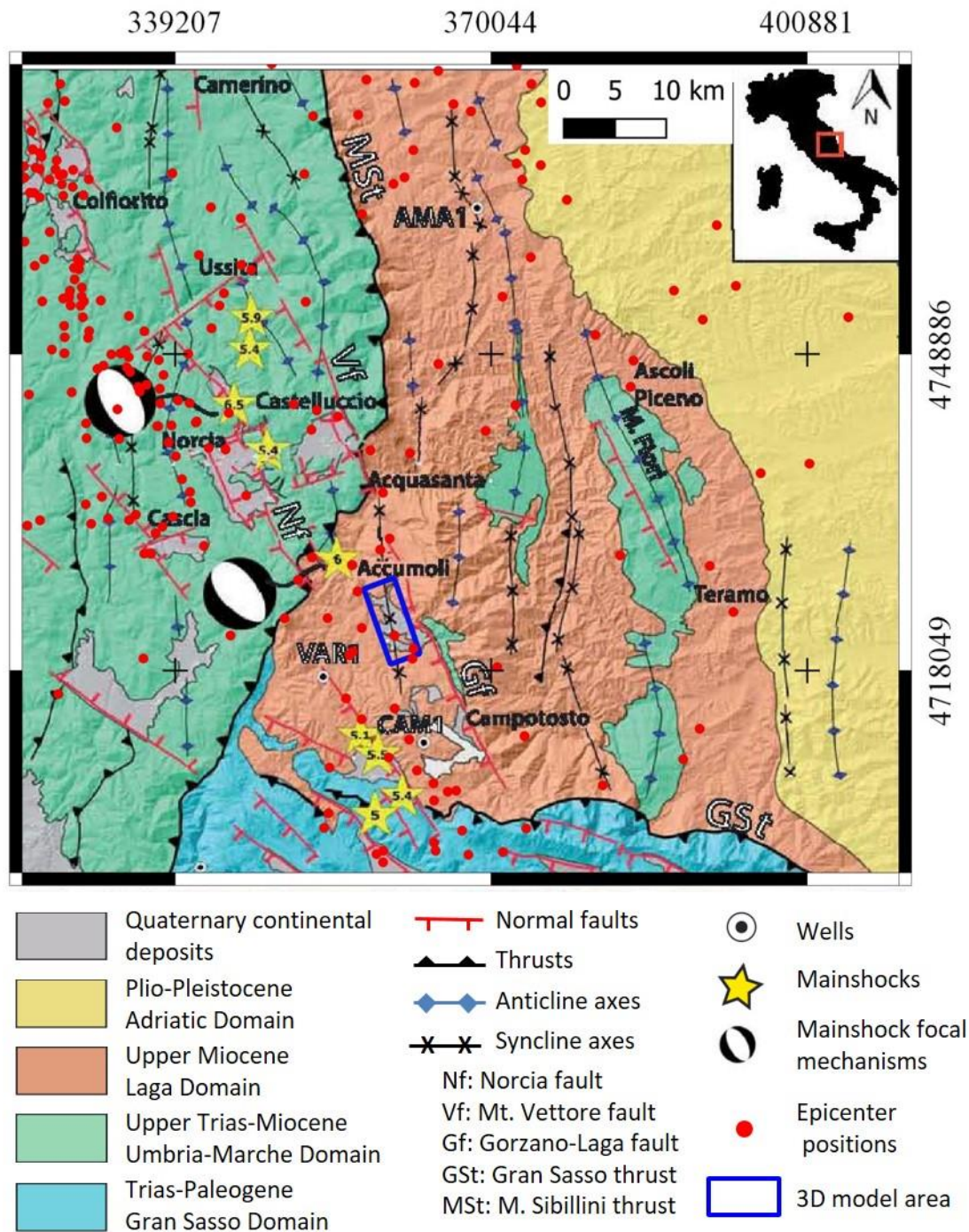
71 After the 2016-2017 events, the Amatrice area has been the subject of numerous research projects,  
72 including surface geological surveying and data collection (e.g.,  $V_s$  and  $V_p$  data) activities (e.g.,  
73 Vignaroli et al., 2019; 2020; Mancini et al., 2020) aimed at the seismic microzonation (EmerTer  
74 Project Working Group, 2018; Chiaretti & Nibbi, 2018). Seismic microzonation provided seismic  
75 hazard estimates at the municipality scale, based on shallow geological/geotechnical conditions and  
76 site-dependent constraints, for the design of new settlements and for interventions of retrofit and  
77 reconstruction (Hailemikael et al., 2020). Furthermore, a 2D and 3D numerical modeling of the site

78 effects for the main hamlet of the entire Amatrice municipality has been also attempted (Gaudiosi et  
79 al, 2021; Moscatelli et al., 2020; Razzano et al., 2020), while a new 3D geological modeling  
80 project, named RETRACE-3D, has been launched. The latter aimed at obtaining, by interpreting  
81 seismic lines and well data, a 3D seismotectonic and stratigraphic characterization of the Amatrice  
82 Basin (Di Bucci et al., 2021; RETRACE-3D Working Group, 2021).  
83 The aim of our study is to contribute to a more effective seismic hazard assessment of the Amatrice  
84 area by providing an accurate (resolution from 5m up to 1m in-depth and 5m in plan) 3D geological  
85 and mechanical model of a shallow portion (maximum depth about 200 meters) of subsoil, joining  
86 the previously available existing models. Our model integrates surface and subsurface (some  
87 hundred meters deep) geological data, as well as geophysical parameters, setting the ground for a  
88 proper evaluation of the local seismic response in tectonically active geologically complex areas.  
89 The methodology here proposed could bridge the gap between deep seismotectonic reconstructions  
90 typical of seismic zonation and characterizations of shallow portions of subsoil in seismic  
91 microzonation studies.

92

## 93 2 Geological setting

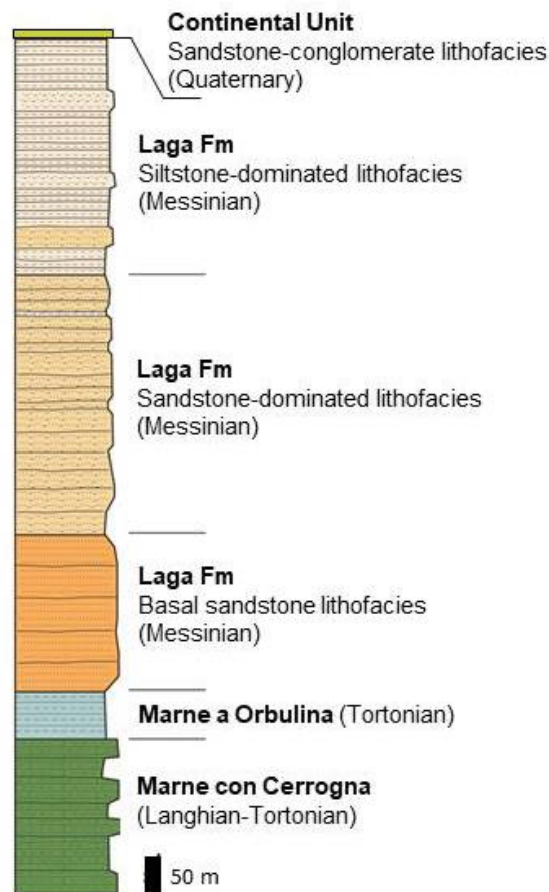
94 The study area is part of the central Apennines, an eastward-migrating fold-and-thrust belt,  
95 developed since the upper Oligocene above the westward subducting Adria plate (Malinverno &  
96 Ryan, 1986; Ricci Lucchi, 1986; Patacca et al., 1990; Boccaletti et al., 1990; Doglioni, 1991;  
97 Argnani & Ricci Lucchi, 2001; Cosentino et al., 2010). Along the belt axial zone, the foredeep Laga  
98 Basin is located, which is bounded by the Gran Sasso thrust to the south, the Sibillini thrust to the  
99 west, and the Montagna dei Fiori-Montagnone anticline to the east (Fig. 1).



**Figure 1:** Geological and seismicity map of the study area (modified after Porreca et al., 2018). Yellow stars represent the epicenter positions of the 2016 seismic event with  $M_w > 5$ . The focal mechanisms mainshocks ( $M_w$  6.0 and 6.5) and the positions of the Amatrice 1 (AMA1), Campotosto 1 (CAM1) and Varoni 1 (VAR1) wells are shown. The position of the Gran Sasso and Sibillini regional thrusts (GSt and MSt, respectively), and of the Vettore (Vf), Norcia (Nf), and Gorzano-Laga (Gf) extensional fault systems are also shown. The blue rectangle indicates the Amatrice area, which is detailed in figure 4.

Facies and physical stratigraphy, analysis of thermal history, seismic line interpretations and balanced cross sections allowed a detailed reconstruction of the stratigraphy and the time-space

111 evolution of the Laga Basin, thus representing a key area to understand the most recent evolution of  
 112 the central Apennines (Koopman, 1983; Centamore et al., 1991; 1992; Artoni, 2003, 2007;  
 113 Moscatelli, 2003; Moscatelli et al., 2004; Scisciani & Montefalcone, 2005; Casero & Bigi, 2006;  
 114 Bigi et al., 2006, 2009; Stanzione et al., 2006; Aldega et al., 2007; Milli et al., 2007, 2009;  
 115 Cosentino et al., 2010).  
 116 The Laga Basin is filled by more than 2000-m thick deep-sea turbidite succession, named Laga  
 117 Formation (Mutti & Ricci Lucchi, 1972; Mutti et al., 1978; Mutti & Sonnino, 1981; Milli et al.,  
 118 2007, 2009; Marini et al., 2015, 2016). It consists of an alternation of lithofacies that vary from  
 119 arenaceous and pelitic-arenaceous to marly (e.g., Milli et al., 2007; 2009; Mancini et al., 2020)  
 120 grouped into three main members: pre-evaporitic (upper Tortonian-lower Messinian), evaporitic  
 121 (middle Messinian), and post-evaporitic (upper Messinian) ones (Roveri et al., 2001).  
 122 A 1200-m thick pre-evaporitic Laga Formation has been identified by the stratigraphy of the  
 123 Campotosto 1 and Varoni 1 wells (locations in figure 1) and the interpretation of some seismic  
 124 reflection profiles (e.g., Bigi et al., 2011; Porreca et al., 2018). The Laga Formation lies above the  
 125 “*Marne con Cerroghna*” and “*Marne ad Orbulina*” Formations, a Langhian to lower Messinian  
 126 pelagic succession that is today exposed at the footwall of the Gorzano-Laga Fault (in the eastern  
 127 edge of the study area) (Fig. 1). The Laga Formation is topped by a succession of lower Pleistocene  
 128 to Holocene continental deposits consisting of sandstones and conglomerates of alluvial fans and  
 129 fluvial terraces, forming the Amatrice Basin (e.g., Centamore et al., 1991, 1992; Cacciuni et al.,  
 130 1995; Vignaroli et al., 2019; 2020; Mancini et al., 2020) (Fig. 2).



**Figure 2:** Synthetic stratigraphic column of the middle Miocene-to-recent sedimentary interval (modified after Mancini et al., 2020).

The Laga Basin originated since the Messinian time (Ricci Lucchi, 1986; Roveri et al., 2002, 2003; Manzi et al., 2005; Bigi et al., 2006; Milli et al., 2007, 2009; Bigi et al., 2009; Cosentino et al., 2010) and evolved with the activation of major out-of-sequence thrust systems in the late Messinian-early Pliocene time (e.g., Billi & Tiberti, 2009) when, due to the compressional tectonic activity, the Laga Formation filled the confined foreland basin. Since the Pliocene time, the post-orogenic phase leads to the activation of the main extensional faults (e.g., Malinverno & Ryan, 1986; Cavinato & De Celles, 1999) and the formation of fault-bounded intra-mountain basins that disarticulate the old orogenic framework (e.g., Cavinato, et al., 2002; Giaccio et al., 2012; Mancini et al., 2012; Pucci et al., 2015; Nocentini et al., 2017).

Today, this portion of central Apennines, where the study area is located, is a high-hazard region affected by post-orogenic extension occurring along Quaternary normal faults (e.g., Cavinato and De Celles, 1999; Galadini, 1999; Galadini & Galli, 2003, Mancini et al. 2019, Vignaroli et al., 2019; 2020; and reference therein) and causing widespread historical and instrumental seismicity (CSI, Castello et al., 2006; ISIDe working group, 2007; CPTI15 V2.0, Rovida et al., 2019; 2020) (Fig. 1).

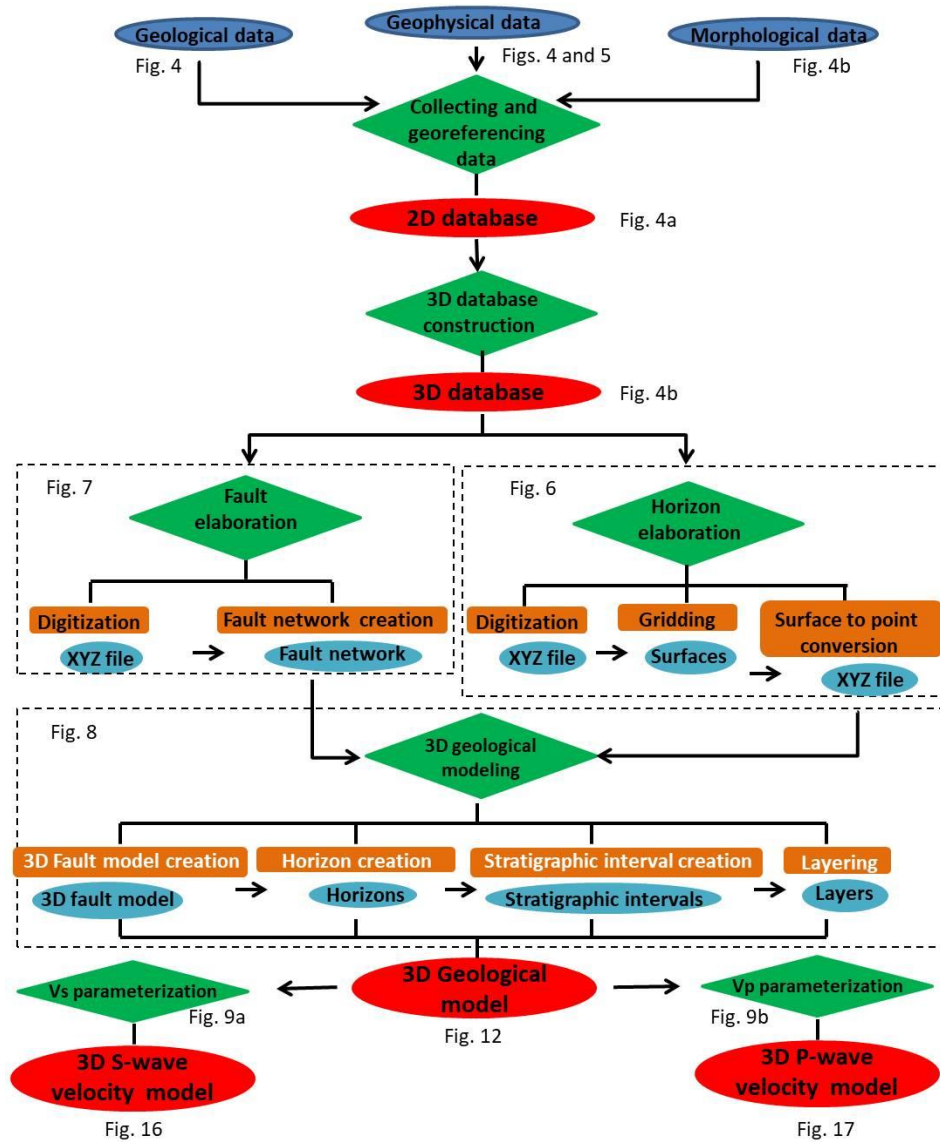
150 The 2016-2017 seismic sequence in the Amatrice area consisted of many earthquakes aligned along  
151 an NNW-SSE-trending, 60 km-long normal fault system (e.g., Scognamiglio et al., 2016;  
152 Chiaraluce et al., 2017; Improta et al., 2019; Michele et al., 2020; and references therein). The  
153 seismic sequence was characterized by three mainshocks: Mw 6.0 (on 24<sup>th</sup> August) located near the  
154 Amatrice town; Mw 5.9 (on 26<sup>th</sup> October) at the northernmost border of the sequence, near the  
155 Visso town; Mw 6.5 (on 30<sup>th</sup> October) that occurred right in the middle of the fault system already  
156 activated in August, near the Norcia town (Fig. 1). In the same area, another catastrophic and  
157 remarkably similar seismic event occurred in 1639, with an estimated Mw 6.2 mainshock (Tiberi  
158 Romano, 1639; Rovida et al., 2019; 2020). Galli et al. (2016) suggest that the 1639 seismic event  
159 could have been generated by the same seismogenic fault that ruptured in 2016. In the past, the  
160 Amatrice and surrounding areas have been struck by other moderate-to-large seismic sequences, as  
161 the 1703 L'Aquila (estimated Mw 6.7 mainshock; Rovida et al., 2019; 2020), the 1997 Colfiorito  
162 (Mw 6.0 mainshock; Deschamps et al., 2000; Ripepe et al., 2000), and the 2009 L'Aquila (Mw 6.3  
163 mainshock; Scognamiglio et al., 2010; Lucente et al., 2010; Chiaraluce et al., 2011; Herrmann et al.,  
164 2011; Valoroso et al., 2013; Lavecchia et al., 2017) sequences. Like the 2016-2017 sequence, the  
165 1997 Colfiorito and the 2009 L'Aquila sequences were characterized by the occurrence of multiple  
166 events that activated 5-15 km long, southwest-dipping normal fault segments (Chiaraluce et al.,  
167 2017).

168

### 169 **3 Data and methods**

170 This work is based on a multidisciplinary approach that integrates geological and geophysical  
171 datasets (Fig. 3).





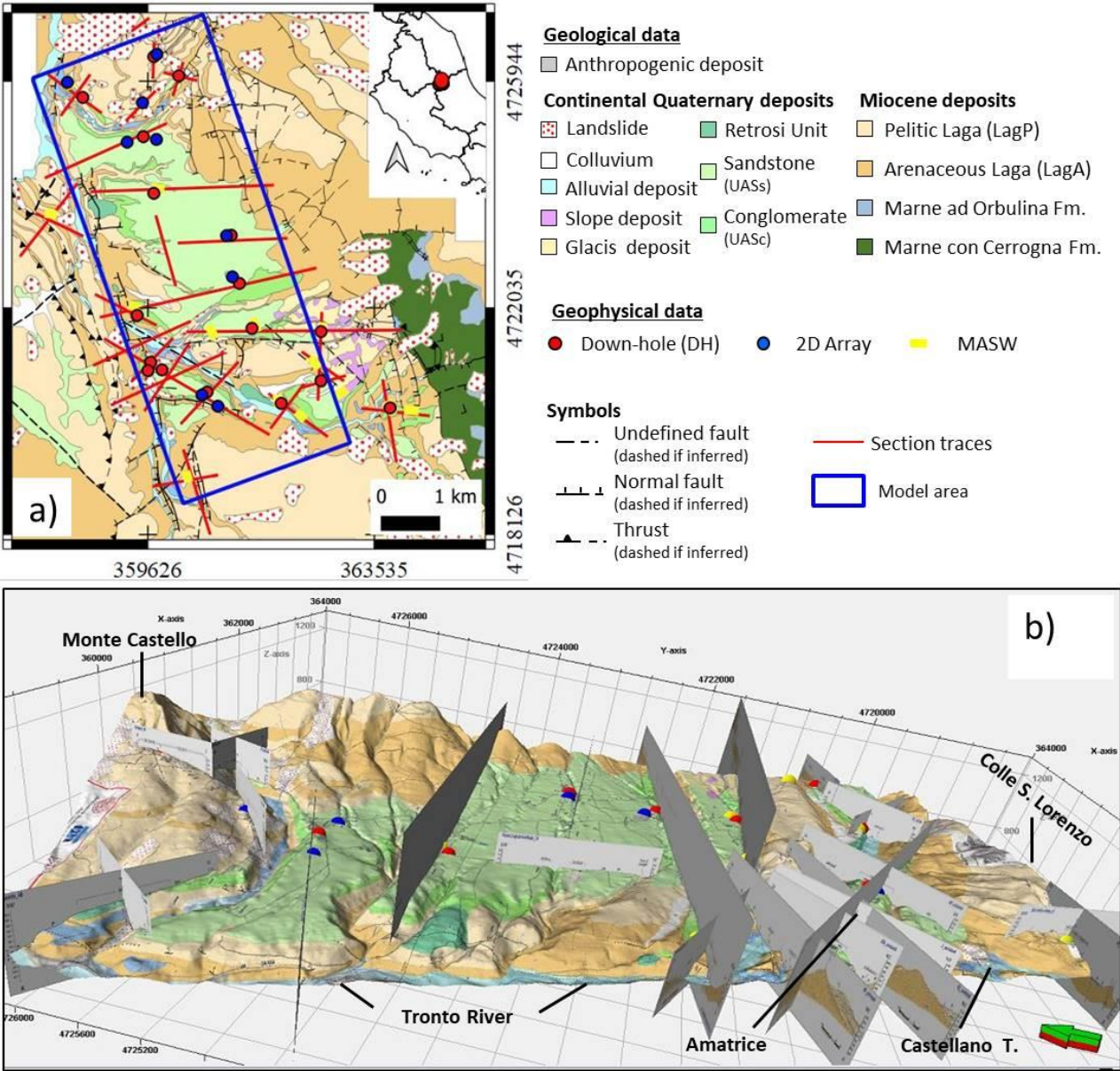
**Figure 3:** Workflow chart. Main processes (green diamonds) and their sub-processes (brown rectangles), primitive (blue ellipses) and derived (light blue ellipses) data, realized databases and models (red ellipses) are represented. The contextualization of some figures in this paper is indicated.

### 3.1 Data collection

Geological and geophysical data derive from fieldworks and surveys performed at 1:5.000 scale and from published works on the area struck by 2016-2017 seismic sequence (Chiaretti & Nibbi, 2018; EmerTer Project Working Group, 2018; Milana et al., 2019; Vignaroli et al., 2019; 2020; Mancini et al., 2020; Del Gaudio et al., 2021). This geological dataset provides information on (i) nature, thickness and distribution of the main lithotypes, and (ii) orientation, geometry and kinematics of the main tectonic structures (e.g., faults and their associated fracture network). Surface geological data have been integrated with data from 16 Down-Hole (DH) measurements, 8 associated Multichannel Analyses of Surface Waves (MASW), to some of which (i.e., Cascello, Collecetra, Prato MASW)  $V_p$  values deriving from some seismic refraction profiles acquired along the same

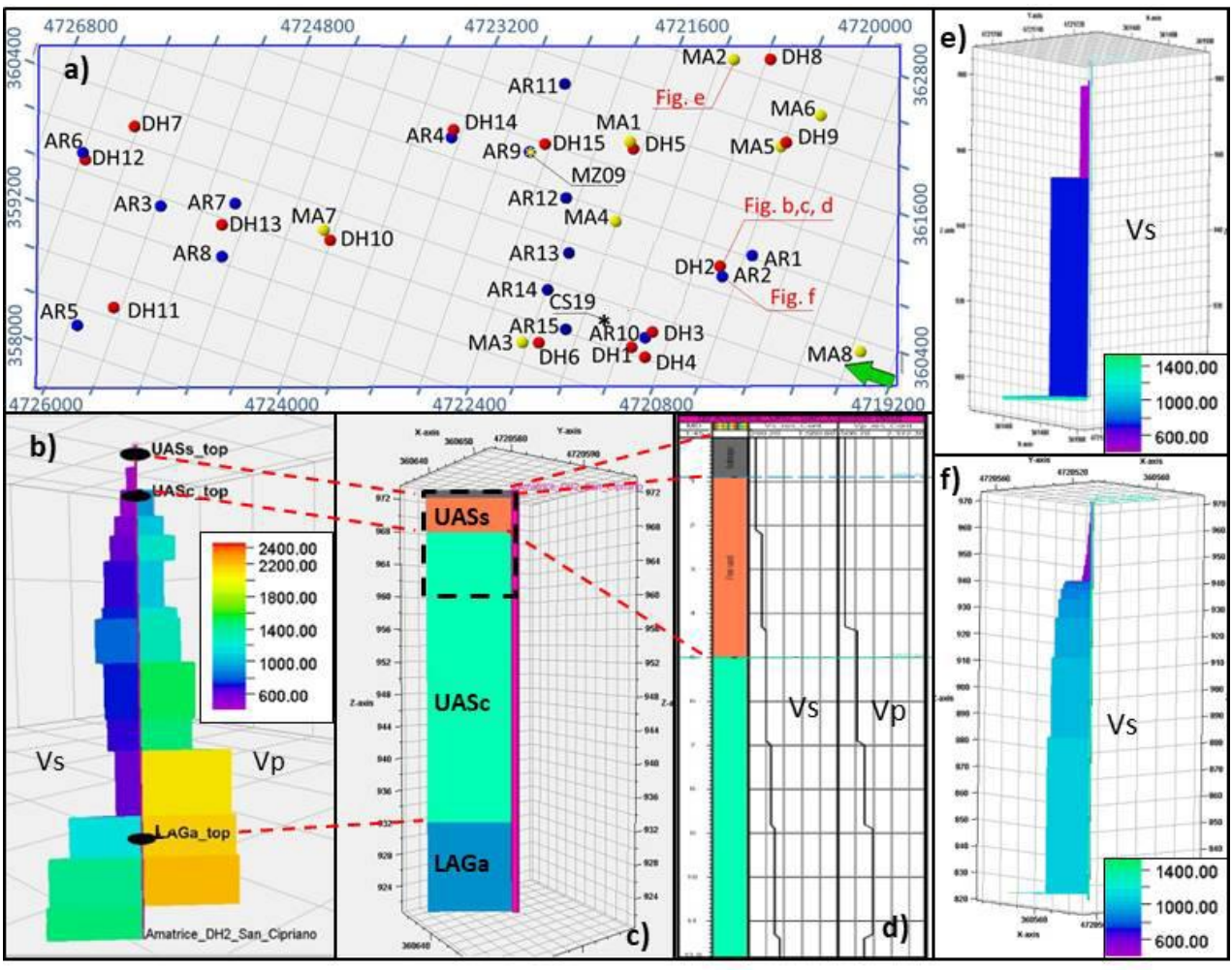


187 traces have been associated, and 15 Horizontal-to-Vertical Spectral Ratio analyses (HVSr or 2D  
188 array). DHs reach a maximum depth of about 50 meters, while MASWs and 2D arrays in some  
189 cases exceed 200 meters in depth (Table 1), allowing to constrain the deeper parts of the  
190 geophysical model.  
191 A 5 m-resolution digital elevation model (DEM), deriving from the 1:5.000-scale Regional  
192 Technical Map of the Rieti Province has been used as topographic base (Fig. 4).  
193



194 **Figure 4:** Used data. (a) 2D GIS image of geological (geological map and cross-sections by Vignaroli et al., 2019) and  
195 geophysical data (general geological framework in figure 1); (b) 3D view of geological and geophysical data in the model  
196 area (blue rectangle in figure 1). The geological map is projected on a 5-m resolution Digital Elevation Model. The  
197 overlapped points represent the DH (red points), 2D array (blue points), and MASW (yellow points) locations. See figure  
198 3 to contextualize figures in the workflow.  
199

201 DH data provided stratigraphic information, like lithofacies tops (classified according to Mancini et  
 202 al., 2020, for the Quaternary deposits, and Vignaroli et al., 2019, for the Messinian Laga Formation)  
 203 and velocity information (i.e.,  $V_s$  and  $V_p$  velocities) of the drilled deposits (Figs. 5b, 5c, 5d).  
 204 Finally, MASW (Fig. 5e) and 2D array (Fig. 5f) data have been used for constraining the wave  
 205 velocities for each lithofacies (Table 1).  
 206



207 **Figure 5:** Subsoil geological and geophysical data. (a) Location map of seismic stations (black and yellow asterisks) and  
 208 DH (red points), 2D array (blue points) and MASW (yellow points) measurement points; a code is associated with each  
 209 measurement point (see corresponding extended names in table 1); the green arrow points north. (b) Lithofacies tops  
 210 (black ellipses: UASs, Quaternary sandstones; UASc, Quaternary conglomerates; LAGa, arenaceous Laga) and velocity  
 211 data ( $V_p$  and  $V_s$ ) in the Amatrice-San Cipriano DH, also named Amatrice DH2; (c) lithofacies in the Amatrice-San Cipriano  
 212 DH (grey, anthropic; orange, fine sand; light blue, gravel and sand; blue, sandstone and siltstone); (d) well section  
 213 window of a portion of the Amatrice-San Cipriano DH; (e)  $V_s$  velocities of the Cascello MASW; (f)  $V_s$  velocities of the  
 214 Amatrice 2D array. Seismic velocity values shown in color scales are expressed in m/s. A detailed list of used  
 215 geophysical data is shown in table 1.  
 216  
 217  
 218

	NAME	CODE	Vs	Vp	LITHOFACIES	DEPTH (m)
DOWN-HOLE (DH)	Amatrice_DH1	DH1	×	×	✓	50
	Amatrice DH2-San Cipriano	DH2	✓	✓	✓	51
	Amatrice_DH3	DH3	✓	✓	✓	52
	Amatrice_DH4-San Francesco	DH4	✓	✓	✓	37
	Cascello_DH1	DH5	✓	✓	✓	50
	Cornillo_Vecchio_DH1	DH6	✓	✓	✓	20
	Cossito_DH1	DH7	✓	✓	✓	30
	Moletano_DH1	DH8	✓	✓	✓	31
	Retrosi_DH1	DH9	✓	✓	✓	50
	Rocchetta_DH1	DH10	✓	✓	✓	50
	Saletta_DH1	DH11	✓	✓	✓	30
	San_Capone_DH1	DH12	✓	✓	✓	30
	San_Lorenzo_Flaviano_Rio_DH1	DH13	✓	✓	✓	30
	Sant_Angelo_DH1	DH14	✓	✓	✓	40
	Sommati_DH1	DH15	✓	✓	✓	40
MASW	Cascello	MA1	✓	✓	×	100
	Collecetra	MA2	✓	✓	×	30
	Cornillo_Vecchio	MA3	✓	×	×	30
	Prato	MA4	✓	✓	×	90
	Retrosi1	MA5	✓	×	×	30
	Retrosi2	MA6	✓	×	×	40
	Rocchetta	MA7	✓	×	×	35
	S.Lorenzo_Pinaco	MA8	✓	×	×	30
2D ARRAY	AMA03	AR1	✓	×	×	30
	Amatrice	AR2	✓	×	×	150
	CAS08	AR3	✓	×	×	120
	S.Angelo	AR4	✓	✓	×	199
	SAL04	AR5	✓	×	×	37
	SCP01	AR6	✓	×	×	80
	SLO01	AR7	✓	×	×	197
	SLO02	AR8	✓	×	×	35
	Sommati	AR9	✓	✓	×	195
	Milana et al., 2019	AR10	✓	×	×	150
	Sommati transect (point S05)	AR11	✓	×	×	312
	Sommati transect (point S06)	AR12	✓	×	×	259
	Sommati transect (point S07)	AR13	✓	×	×	265
	Sommati transect (point S08)	AR14	✓	×	×	248
	Sommati transect (point S09)	AR15	✓	×	×	208

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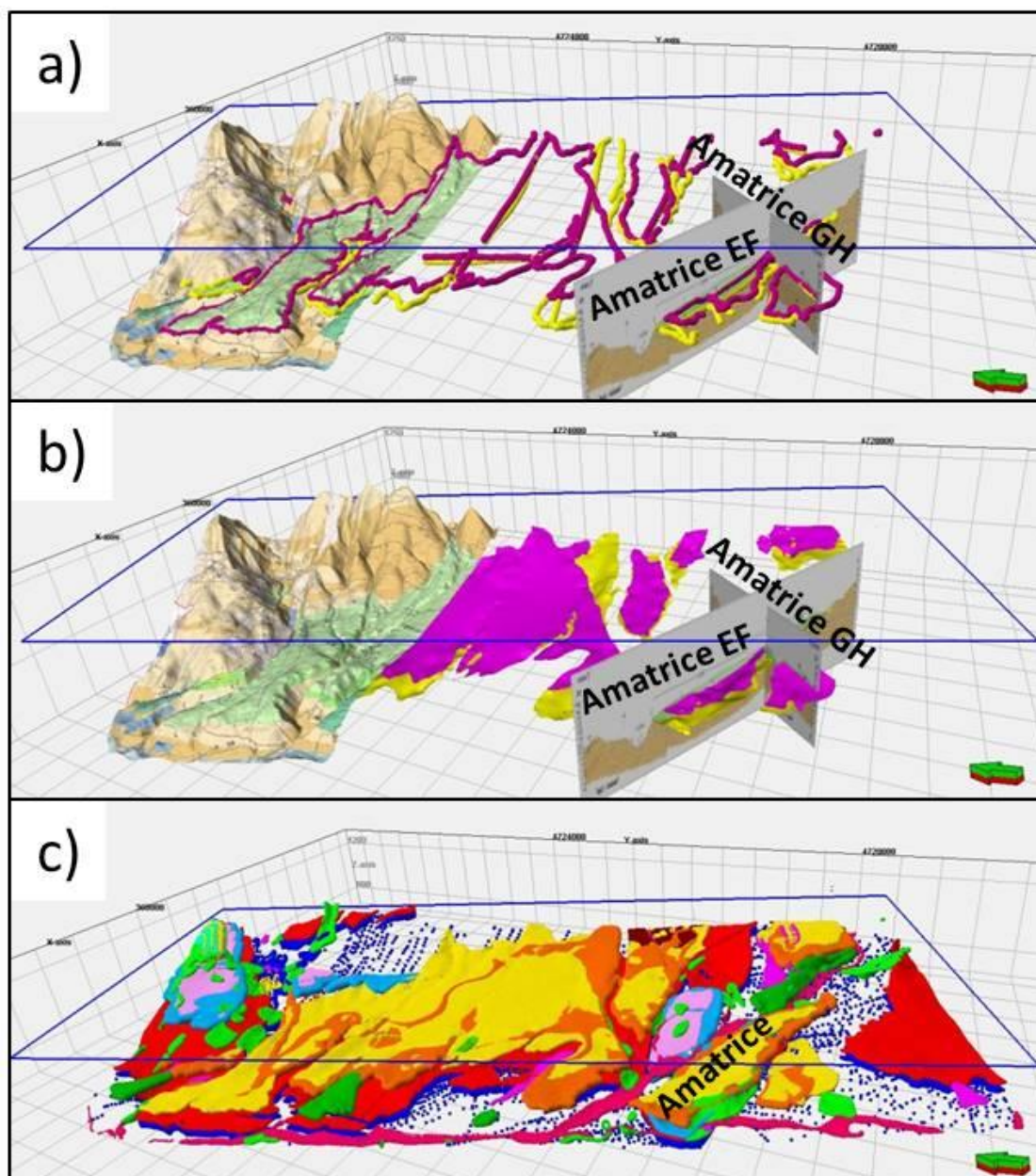
**Table 1:** List of used subsoil geological and geophysical data. The extended names and codes of measurement points are reported respectively in the “name” and “code” columns, while the availability of geological and geophysical data is indicated in “Vs”, “Vp”, and “lithofacies” columns (green checks, available data; red crosses, not available data). In the “depth” column the maximum investigation depths are expressed in meters from the ground surface. Locations of the measurement points in figure 5a.



226 3.2 Data preparation and 3D modeling

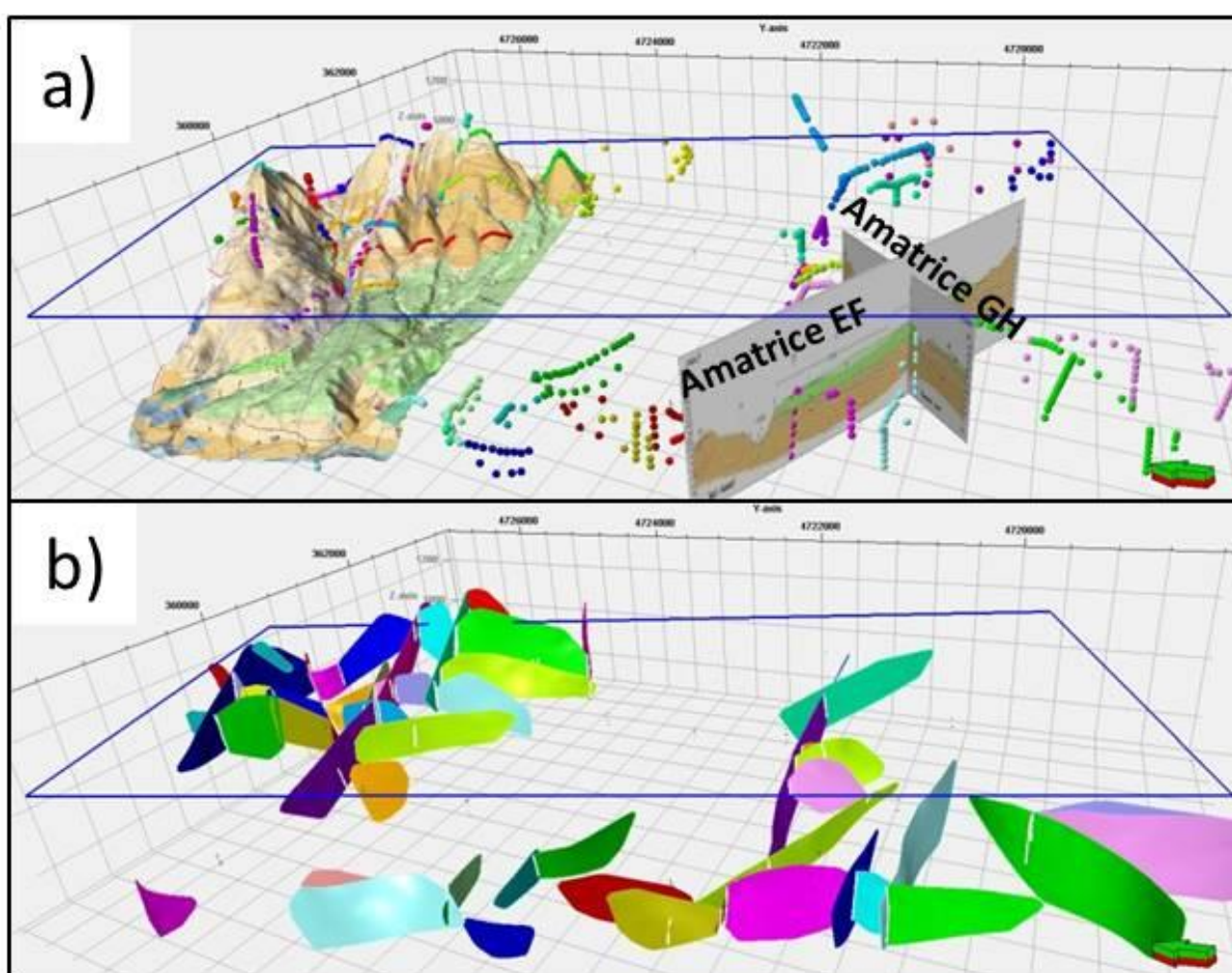
227 Geological and geophysical data have been firstly homogenized in terms geological coding (i.e.,  
228 stratigraphy and lithofacies), quality checked and geo-referenced to a common Spatial Reference by  
229 using a GIS software (Fig. 4a), and finally uploaded into a 3D geological and geophysical modeling  
230 software (Fig. 4b).

231 Firstly, all stratigraphic boundaries (lithofacies surfaces) have been digitized on the geological map  
232 and cross-sections (Fig. 6a). Then, the XYZ point file obtained for the digitized horizons, integrated  
233 with the lithostratigraphic tops intercepted in core-wells, have been gridded. Lithofacies surfaces  
234 have been so created (Fig. 6b), manually edited where required, and finally converted back into  
235 XYZ point files. In this way, we obtained denser XYZ point files (Fig. 6c) to better constrain the  
236 construction of horizons during the 3D modeling phase (see Figure 3).



238 **Figure 6:** Horizon elaboration workflow. 3D view of digitized horizons: (a) bases of Quaternary sandstones (UASs)  
 239 (purple points) and conglomerates (UASc) (yellow points) digitized on geological map and cross-sections; (b) gridded  
 240 surfaces of the UASs and UASc bases; (c) all digitized horizon (XYZ points). Figures a and b show the northern portion  
 241 of the geological map; two representative geological cross-sections (named Amatrice AB and Amatrice GH) are also  
 242 reported for illustrating the spatial correlation of the data. See figure 3 to contextualize figures in the workflow.

244 Faults have been digitized on the geological map and cross-sections (Fig. 7a). The resulting XYZ  
 245 point files have been finally used as input data to create the fault network (Figs. 3 and 7). It defines  
 246 faults in the geological model that represents the basis for the development of 3D meshes. The  
 247 generated faults, in fact, define breaks in the grid, along which the digitized stratigraphic horizons  
 248 should be offset.



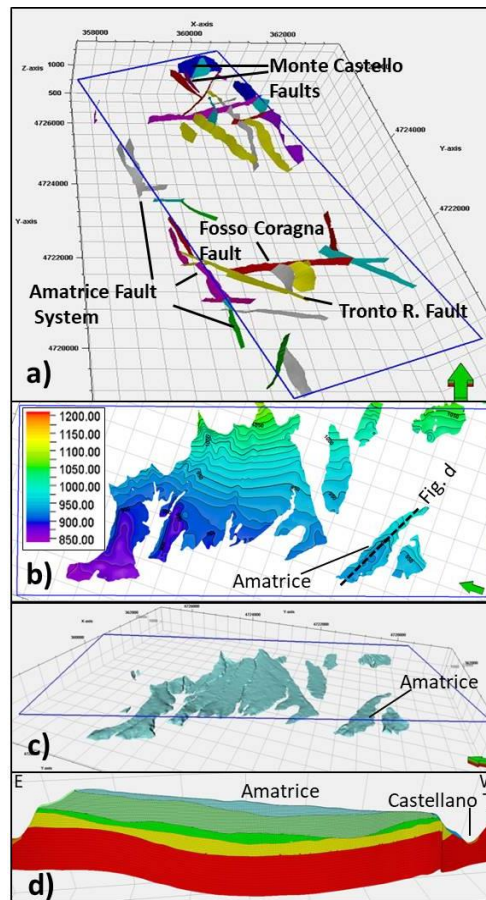
249 **Figure 7:** Fault elaboration workflow. (a) 3D view of faults digitized on geological map and cross-sections (XYZ points);  
 250 (b) 3D view of the processed fault network (solid colored surfaces). In figure the northern portion of the geological map  
 251 and two representative geological cross-sections (named Amatrice AB and Amatrice GH) are also reported for illustrating  
 252 the spatial correlation of the data. See figure 3 to contextualize figures in the workflow.

256 The resulting stratigraphic horizons and faults have been finally checked and, if necessary,  
 257 corrected to obtain the best fit between their geometry and their outcroppings. Eventually, they have

258 been hierarchized according to the stratigraphic position (for horizons) and cross-cutting  
 259 relationships (for faults).

260 The final 3D geological model has been generated with the following procedure. First, the created  
 261 fault network has been incorporated into a 3D mesh (Fig. 8a), whose average areal resolution has  
 262 been set to 5 meters. Then, the horizons (Fig. 8b) and the included stratigraphic intervals (Fig. 8c),  
 263 have been reconstructed. Finally, the resulting stratigraphic intervals have been divided into layers  
 264 (Fig. 8d).

265



266

267 **Figure 8:** 3D modeling workflow. (a) Fault network generation; (b) Horizon creation (in the figure is shown the contour  
 268 line map of the base of Quaternary sands); (c) stratigraphic interval creation (in the figure is shown the created  
 269 Quaternary sandstone zone); (d) layering. See figure 3 to contextualize figures in the workflow.

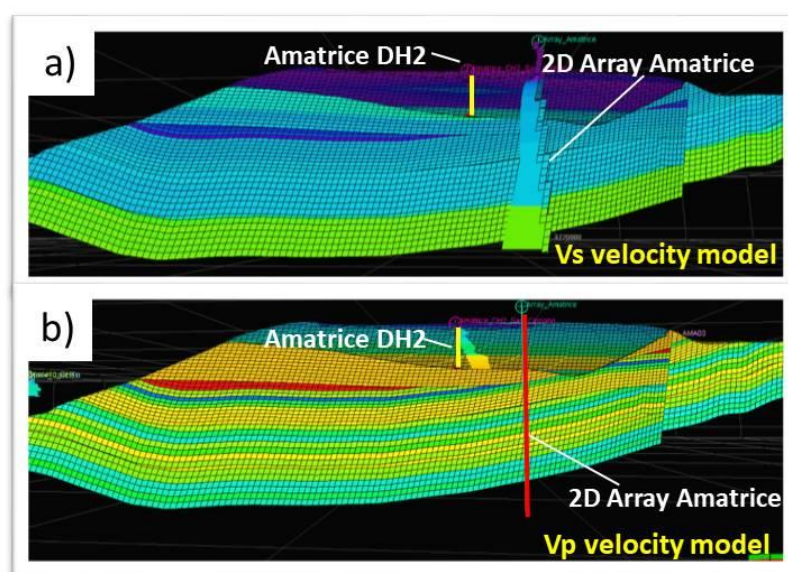
270

271

272 The 3D geological model has been finally parameterized with the  $V_s$  and  $V_p$  velocities derived by  
 273 the DH, MASW (with the associated seismic refraction profiles where available), and 2D array  
 274 measurements (Fig. 5; Tab. 1). First, we have parameterized the 3D model cells located along the  
 275 DH, MASW (or seismic refraction profiles for  $V_p$  data), and 2D array paths by running a “well log  
 276 upscaling” process, then, starting from the upscaled cells, the entire 3D model has been populated  
 277 with the  $V_s$  and  $V_p$  data following the geological model layering (Fig. 9). In this way, two



278 preliminary geology-based 3D velocity models have been constructed (Figs. 16 and 17). The  
 279 parameterization of the 3D geological model has been carried out by using a “moving average”  
 280 interpolation algorithm by Petrel software. The “moving average” algorithm calculates averaged  
 281 values for cells starting from the input data, to which a weight is associated as a function of the  
 282 distance from the measurement points. The algorithm is fast and does not generate smaller or bigger  
 283 values than the minimum and maximum velocity values of the upscaled cells. Furthermore, the  
 284 "moving average" algorithm, considers the effects of structural (e.g., fault network) and  
 285 sedimentary (e.g., lithology and anisotropy) conditions on the spatial distribution of geophysical  
 286 attributes (Shao et al., 2012; Grunis & Khasanov, 2017).



287  
 288 **Figure 9:** Model parameterization with Vs (a) and Vp (b) values. (a) A section of the Vs velocity model throw the  
 289 Amatrice plateau with the Amatrice DH2 down-hole (on the section) and the Amatrice 2D array (projected) Vs data; (b) a  
 290 section of the Vp velocity model throw the Amatrice plateau with the Amatrice DH2 down-hole (on the section) Vp data.  
 291 On the two models the 3D geological model layers and cells can be observed. See figure 3 to contextualize figures in the  
 292 workflow.

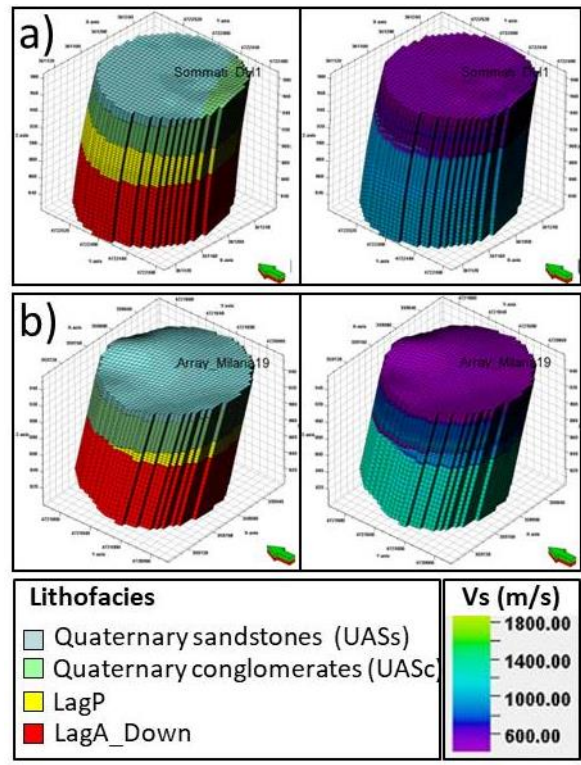
293  
 294 A preliminary calibration of the realized 3D model has been done by processing the ellipticity  
 295 curves (see Fäh et al., 2001) of the Rayleigh fundamental mode at two selected sites (hereafter  
 296 control points).

297 The procedure of calibration consists of three steps:

- 298 1. around each control point, cylindrical 3D meshes (with a radius of 75 m) are extracted (Fig.  
 299 10);
- 300 2. meshes are organized in seismo-stratigraphy profiles in order to define, for each layer, the  
 301 thickness in meters, the unit weight in  $\text{Kg/m}^3$ , the  $V_p$  and  $V_s$  velocity models in m/s;

3. ellipticity curves of the Rayleigh fundamental mode are computed through the open-source software Geopsy (<http://www.geopsy.org/>) and compared with the available HVSR curves (Fig. 11).

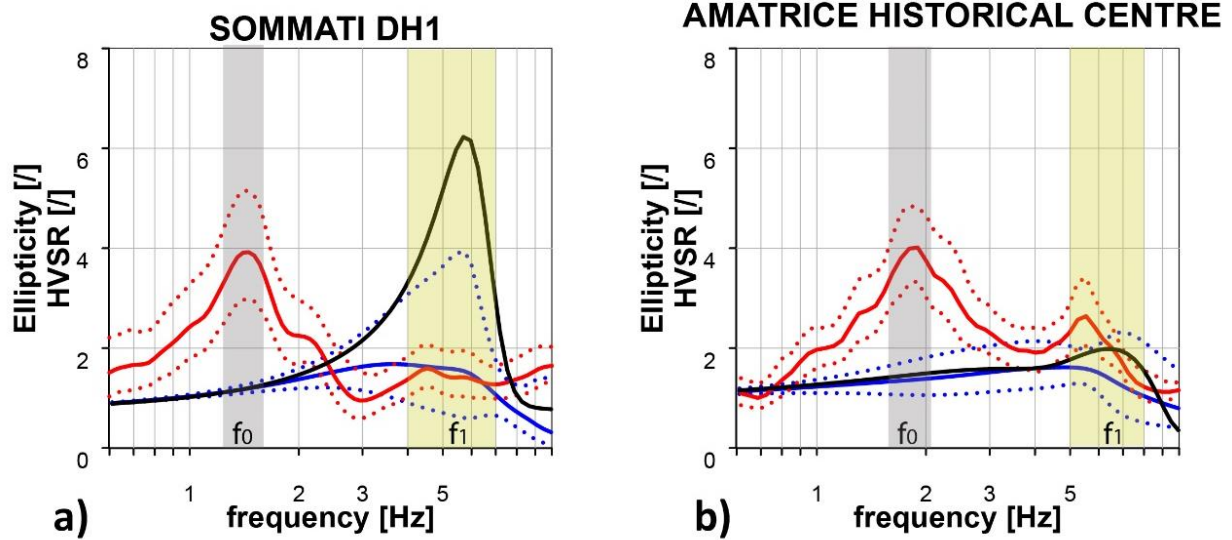
The selected control points are in the northeastern part of the Amatrice town (i.e., Amatrice historical center, in correspondence of the Milana et al., 2019 2D array), seriously damaged during the 2016-2017 seismic sequence, and in correspondence of the Sommati DH1 site (Fig. 10). This selection was made to focus the attention on some points where the evidence of 2D\3D effects has been demonstrated (Gaudiosi et al., 2021).



**Figure 10:** Extracted 3D geological (left) and  $V_s$  velocity (right) meshes. The cylindrical meshes (75 m radius) are centered on the Sommati DH1 (a) and Amatrice historical center (in correspondence of the Milana et al., 2019 2D array) (b). Green arrow points north. Site locations are reported in Figure 5a.

The HVSR curves have been automatically scanned to identify the frequencies  $f$  at which the maximum amplitudes occur. In this study, the frequency value  $f_0$  is assigned to the lowest fundamental peak of frequency determined for each HVSR curve in the range 1-10 Hz. The  $f_0$  frequency and its standard deviation (according to the SESAME criteria; SESAME, 2004) have been plotted in Fig. 11.





**Figure 11:** Comparison between ellipticity (blue and black lines) and experimental HVSR curves (red lines) at the chosen control points. The figure shows the comparison of the ellipticity curves at (a) Sommati DH1 and (b) Amatrice historical centre (in correspondence of the Milana et al., 2019 2D array) sites with the experimental HVSR curves recorded at the nearest seismic stations: MZ09 for Sommati DH1 site and CS19 for Amatrice historical centre site. Ellipticity curves are represented considering both the response for the entire cylindrical mesh (blue curves), and a singular vertical profile at its center (black curves). Standard deviations of ellipticity and experimental HVSR curves (dashed blue and red lines, respectively) have been also considered. The grey vertical bands represent the  $f_0$  frequency and its standard deviation computed over all the curves from time windows of 50 s length (according to the SESAME criteria; SESAME, 2004). The yellow vertical bands represent the highest amplified frequency band ( $f_1$ ). The related 3D geological and  $V_s$  velocity meshes are shown in figure 10. Locations of the chosen control points and seismic stations are shown in figure 5a.

## 4 Results

This work provides two georeferenced databases (i.e., a 2D GIS and a 3D databases), a high-resolution 3D geological model, and two preliminary geology-based 3D velocity models (i.e.  $V_s$  and  $V_p$  velocity models) of the Amatrice Basin.

### 4.1 Georeferenced databases

Both georeferenced databases (i.e., 2D and 3D) share a common Spatial Reference System (see the appendix section) and classify the data according to their data type (e.g., topography data, geological section, maps, geophysical data, wells, horizons, faults, etc.). The GIS database consists of a 2D georeferenced database that collects morphological (topography contour lines), geological (sections and fault traces, maps, etc.), geophysical (seismic line and MASW traces, HVSR and DH position, etc.), and seismological (epicentral locations of the seismicity of the area) data. The data are subdivided into images (e.g., maps) and vectorial data (i.e., shapefiles). The latter are, in turn, grouped into points, lines, and polygons.

348 The 3D database contains the previous data that are combined with the related depth information.  
349 3D data can be subdivided into two main groups: primitive data, which consist of the collected data  
350 (i.e., well positions, geological cross-sections and maps, velocity data, etc.), and derived data, which  
351 consist of the data produced during the various processing phases (i.e., digitized horizons and faults,  
352 lithostratigraphic and fault surfaces, etc.) for constructing the 3D geological model.

#### 353 4.2 *The 3D geological model*

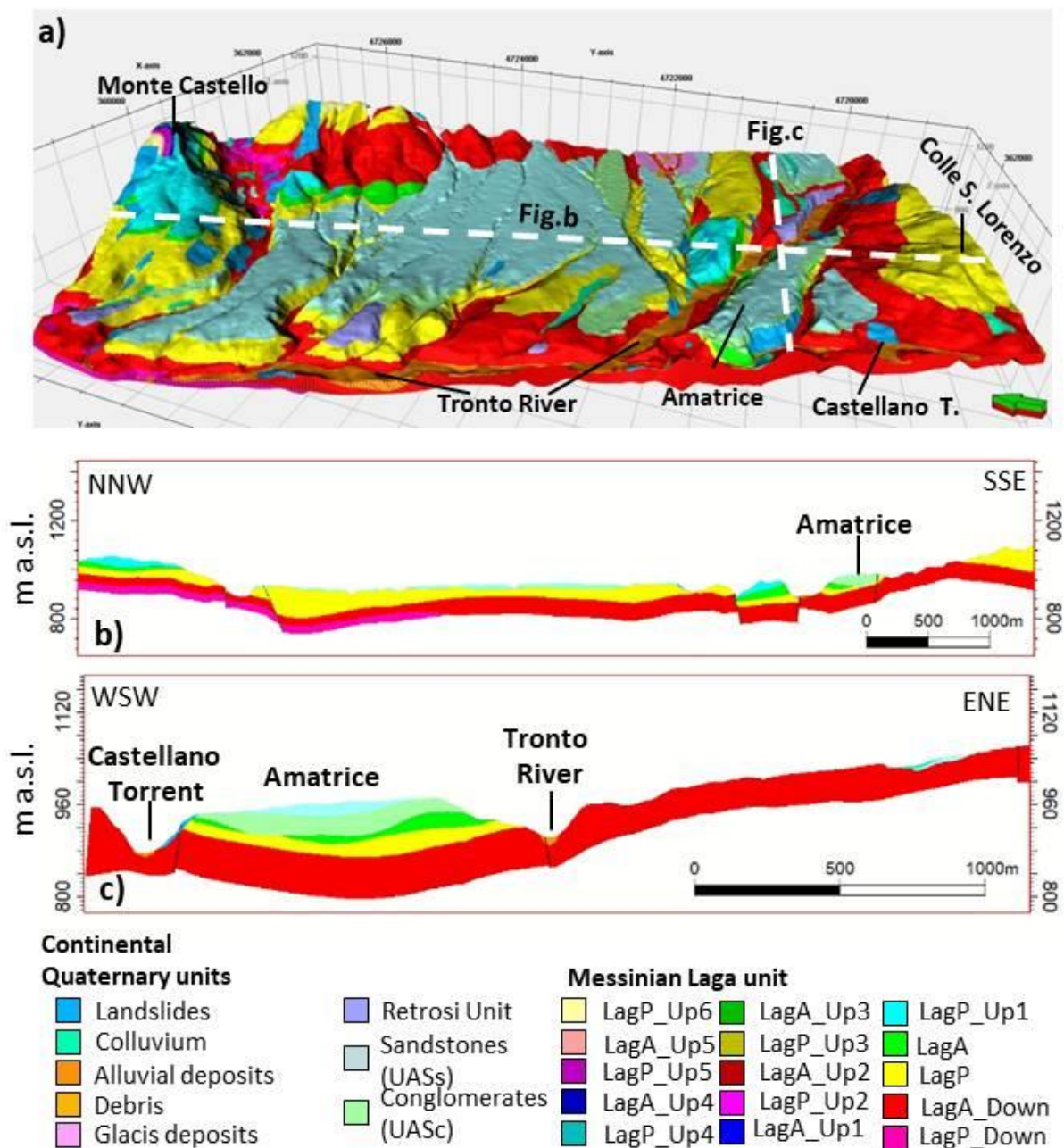
354 The performed 3D geological model covers an area of about 24.7 km<sup>2</sup> and extends about 200 meters  
355 deep from the topographic surface, with local variations. The area, elongated in NNE-SSW  
356 direction, is about 7.8 km long and 3.2 km wide, and extends from Monte Castello to Colle San  
357 Lorenzo hamlets, 1.5 km south-east of the Amatrice hamlet (Figs. 4 and 12a). Its western edge  
358 roughly follows the orientation of the Tronto River up to the Cornillo Vecchio village and then,  
359 southward, follows the Castellano Torrent.

360 The areal size of cells is 5 meter in the whole area, while the vertical thickness of cells varies from  
361 1 meter for the Quaternary interval, where more data are available and a higher resolution is  
362 required, to 3 or 5 meters for the Messinian turbiditic interval (Fig. 8d).

363 The DEM represents the top surface of the model. From top to bottom, two main stratigraphic  
364 successions can be distinguished: the Quaternary continental deposits and the underlying Messinian  
365 Laga Formation. The surfaces that delimit the Quaternary continental deposits are erosive, while the  
366 underlying ones are conformal (i.e., non-erosive stratigraphic surfaces). The latter represent the  
367 interfaces bounding the arenaceous and pelitic intercalations of the Laga Formation.

368 Quaternary deposits are discontinuously distributed, thus forming isolated patches in the model. On  
369 the other hand, the Laga Formation can be traced continuously through the whole studied area. The  
370 modeled faults consist of normal faults, which mainly affect the Laga Formation and are generally  
371 sutured by the Quaternary deposits, except for rare and limited exposures (Fig. 12).

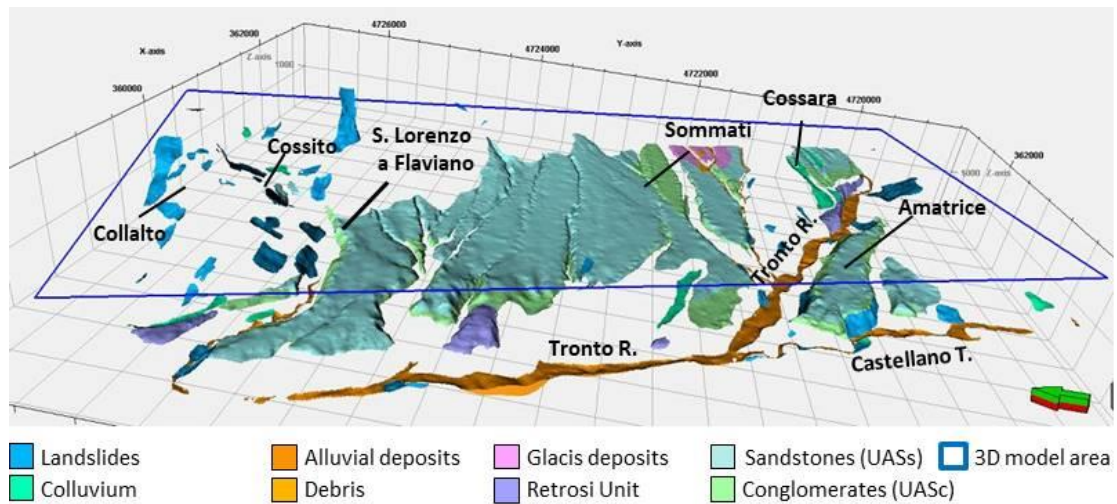
372



**Figure 12:** 3D geological model of the study area. (a) View of the 3D geological model; (b) NNW-SSE and (c) WSW-ESE cross-sections through the model (traces in a). Green arrow points north. See figure 3 to contextualize this figure in the workflow.

#### 4.2.1 Quaternary units

The following deposits were modeled for the Quaternary succession: landslide bodies; colluvium; debris; fluvial (e.g., Retrosi Unit) and recent alluvial deposits; Quaternary sandstones and conglomerates (Fig. 13).



**Figure 13:** Modeled Quaternary deposits. In this figure a 3D view of the modeled Quaternary deposits is shown. Blue rectangle delimits the modeled area. Green arrow points north.

The landslide bodies, alluvial deposits, sandstones, and conglomerates represent the most widespread Quaternary deposits in the area.

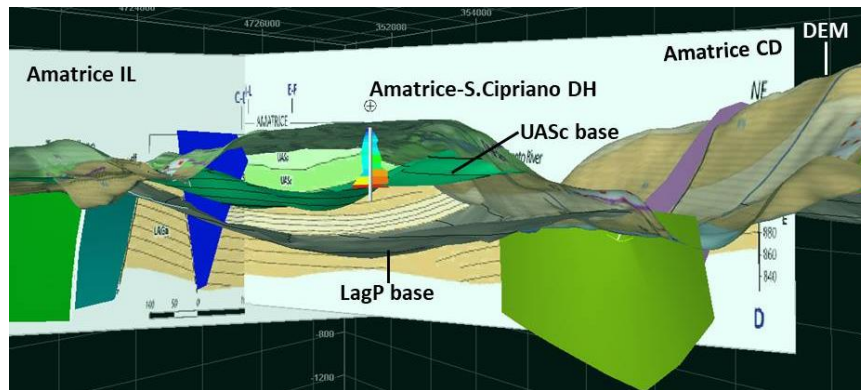
Landslides overlap both the Quaternary and Messinian successions. Their thickness, unraveled by the interpretation of the geological cross-sections, ranges from less than one meter to a few meters. Small to moderate size landslides ( $\sim 0.01$  to  $0.2 \text{ km}^2$ ) located at higher altitudes were mapped in the northern portion of the modeled area (surrounding areas of Casale, Collalto, and Cossito hamlets) and in the southern one (surrounding area of Amatrice hamlet). Two medium-sized landslides are located along the north-eastern ( $\sim 0.03 \text{ km}^2$ ) and south-western ( $\sim 0.06 \text{ km}^2$ ) slope of the northernmost portion of the Amatrice terrace. The landslide bodies in the middle area, between San Lorenzo a Flaviano and Sommati villages, are instead rare and small ( $\leq 0.01 \text{ km}^2$ ).

Alluvial deposits are mainly made up of river deposits that fill the Tronto River and the Castellano Torrent riverbeds. They are located along the western edge of the model and immediately northeast of Amatrice village. Their thickness, defined by the geological sections, is up to a few meters, changing both along and across the riverbed.

Quaternary sands cover a large part of the model area. The most extensive outcrop ( $\sim 5.6 \text{ km}^2$ ) is in the central area, where its base descends, as well as the slope, from northeast to southwest, towards the Tronto River (Fig. 8b). Other medium-sized ( $\sim 0.2$  to  $0.5 \text{ km}^2$ ) outcrops are present in the Amatrice, Prato-Voceto, and Cossara areas. A limited number of small outcrops ( $\leq 0.02 \text{ km}^2$ ) can also be observed in the model. This lithofacies overlaps in part the Quaternary conglomerates and in part the Messinian foredeep deposits. Its average thickness ranges from few meters to about 20-25 meters. In the Amatrice village area, the base of the lithofacies shows an upward concave shape and reaches its maximum thickness (approx. 20 meters) in the middle part of the terrace.



409 The Quaternary conglomeratic lithofacies interposes between Quaternary sands and Messinian  
 410 foredeep deposits. It is characterized by a variable thickness ranging from a few meters up to about  
 411 30-35 meters. Its base is an erosive surface characterized by culminations and depressions. In the  
 412 central area, this base shows a general dip from east to west, while in the Amatrice area it shows a  
 413 general upward concave shape (Fig.14). Quaternary conglomerates and sands are characterized by  
 414 mostly horizontal internal layering.



415  
 416 **Figure 14:** 3D view of the Amatrice subsoil. The figure shows the processed UASc and LagP bases. The upward  
 417 concave geometry of the stratigraphic horizons is evident. Two geological cross-sections (i.e., Amatrice CD and Amatrice  
 418 IL), the Amatrice-San Cipriano DH (also named Amatrice DH2) and the associated S-wave (left) and P-wave (right)  
 419 velocities, the DEM, and some processed faults (solid-colored vertical surfaces) are shown.

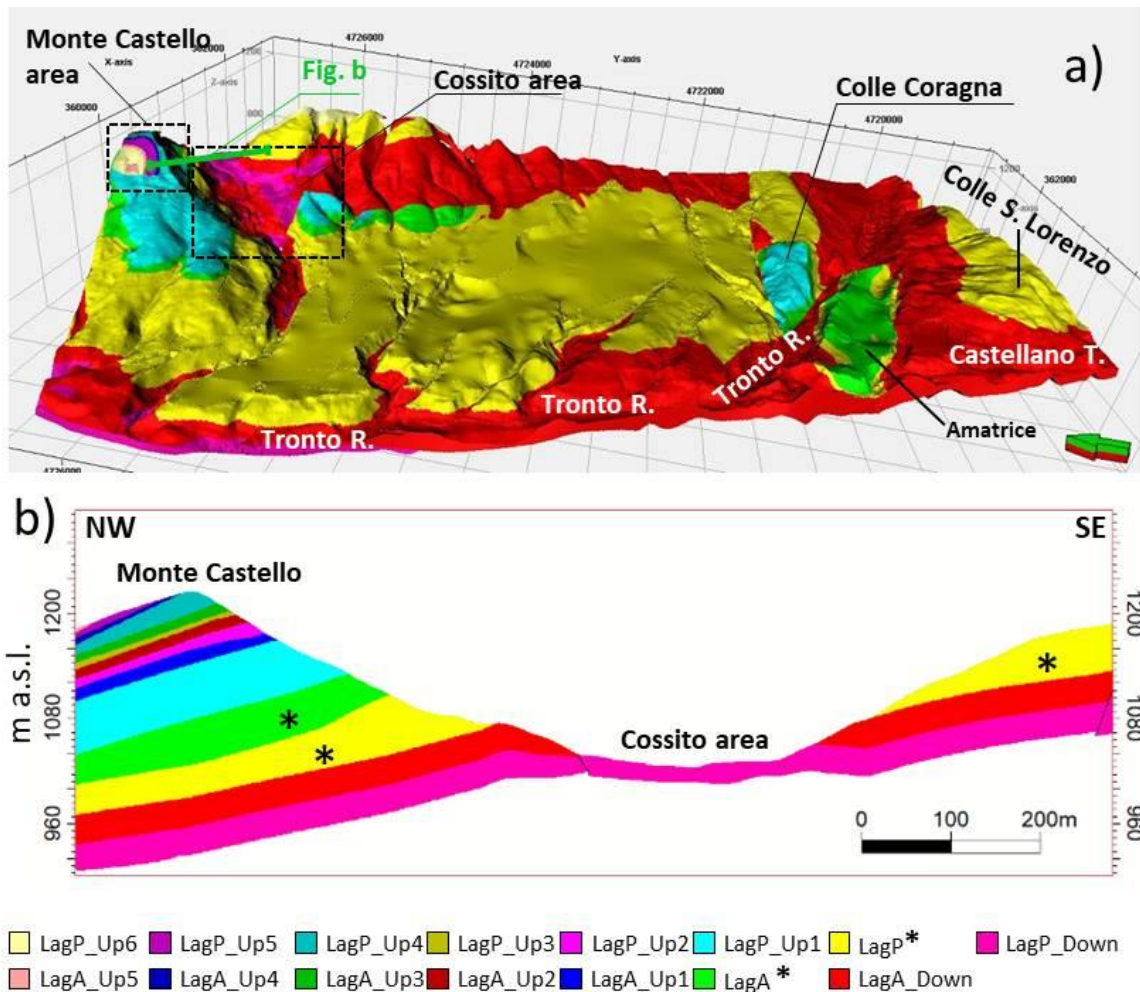
420

#### 421 4.2.2 Messinian foredeep deposits

422

423 The Messinian foredeep deposits of the Laga Formation are made up of an interlayering between  
 424 arenaceous and pelitic layers. Overall, we reconstructed eight pelitic lithofacies and seven  
 425 arenaceous ones. Some arenaceous and pelitic intercalations (i.e., LagA and LagP) have been  
 426 considered as reference horizons to hierarchize and denominate all the Laga intercalations. The  
 427 name associated to each lithofacies contains both lithological (i.e., "A" for arenaceous and "P" for  
 428 pelitic) and stratigraphical (i.e., "down" for layers below reference horizons and "up" for layers  
 429 above reference horizons; numbers, proceeding upwards with respect to the reference horizons,  
 430 indicate the stratigraphic position of the arenaceous and pelitic intercalations) information (Fig 15).

431



**Figure 15:** Modeled Laga deposits. (a) 3D view of the modeled Laga deposits. The overlying Quaternary deposits have been switched off. Monte Castello and Cossito areas are shown (black dashed rectangles). Green arrow points north. (b) Geological cross-section across the Monte Castello and Cossito areas (trace in a; green line). In Monte Castello area an upward reduction of the intercalation thickness can be observed. Black asterisks indicate the reference horizons.

The deepest Messinian horizon (i.e., LagA\_Down base) and the underlying lithofacies (i.e., LagP\_Down layer), identified below the reference horizons, have been modeled exclusively on the basis of the data collected in the Cossito surrounding area, the only area where they crop out (Fig. 15). The LagA layer (reference horizon) widely cropping out in the model area, while the overlying ones sporadically cropping out in some smaller areas (e.g., LagP layer, Amatrice and Monte Castello areas; LagP\_Up1 layer, Colle Coragna and Monte Castello areas). The stratigraphically higher Laga portion (i.e., from LagA\_Up1 to LagP\_Up6 layers), instead, crops out exclusively in Monte Castello area, where layers have been lowered by normal faults bounding the Monte Castello structure. This interval consists of a rapid alternation of thin arenaceous and pelitic intercalations (Fig. 15).

In some cases, the thickness of Messinian lithofacies varies due to the original shape of the sedimentary basin and/or erosional phenomena.

450 Laga intercalations are overlaid by younger Messinian layers by means of conformal surfaces or by  
451 Quaternary continental deposits by means of erosive surfaces.

452

#### 453 4.2.3 Faults

454

455 The Messinian foredeep deposits appear disarticulated by an extensional fault system located at the  
456 hanging wall of a major west-dipping normal fault (i.e., the Gorzano-Laga Fault), to which defines  
457 a subsidiary structure (Vignaroli et al., 2020) (Fig. 1). Most of normal faults have been mapped in  
458 the southwestern and northeastern portions of the 3D geological model, while the central part  
459 (between Rocchetta and Sommati villages) lacks the occurrence of such tectonic structures.  
460 However, we cannot exclude the presence of additional faults sealed by the Quaternary continental  
461 deposits.

462 Two main fault trends can be identified: an NNW–SSE and an E-W one (Fig. 8a). When observed,  
463 the E-W-striking system systematically cut and dislocates the NNW-SSE-striking one. Fault plains  
464 are generally characterized by high dip angles ( $>60^\circ$ ) and their length varies from a few hundred  
465 meters up to a few kilometers.

466 The NNW-SSE striking normal fault system is observed along the western boundary of the model.  
467 This fault system, named Amatrice Fault System, runs along the Tronto River in his northern  
468 portion, up to the Cornillo Vecchio village, and along the Castellano Torrent in his southern  
469 portion. This fault system is segmented into several portions by some small E-W normal faults (Fig.  
470 8a).

471 Along some faults a rotational movement of the fault blocks around the intermediate stress axis ( $\sigma_2$ )  
472 is observed (scissor faults). The rotation causes the block lifting on one side and its lowering on the  
473 other side. In the Monte Castello area, for example, Messinian deposits are lowered northwestwards  
474 and raised southeastwards by the activity of the faults bordering the Monte Castello structure, while,  
475 in the Colle Coragna area, the Messinian deposits are lowered westwards and raised eastwards by  
476 the activity of the Fosso Coragna and the Tronto River faults (Figure 8a). The rotation in both cases  
477 gives to the Messinian deposits the aspect of monoclines with different dip with respect to the  
478 surrounding deposits.

479

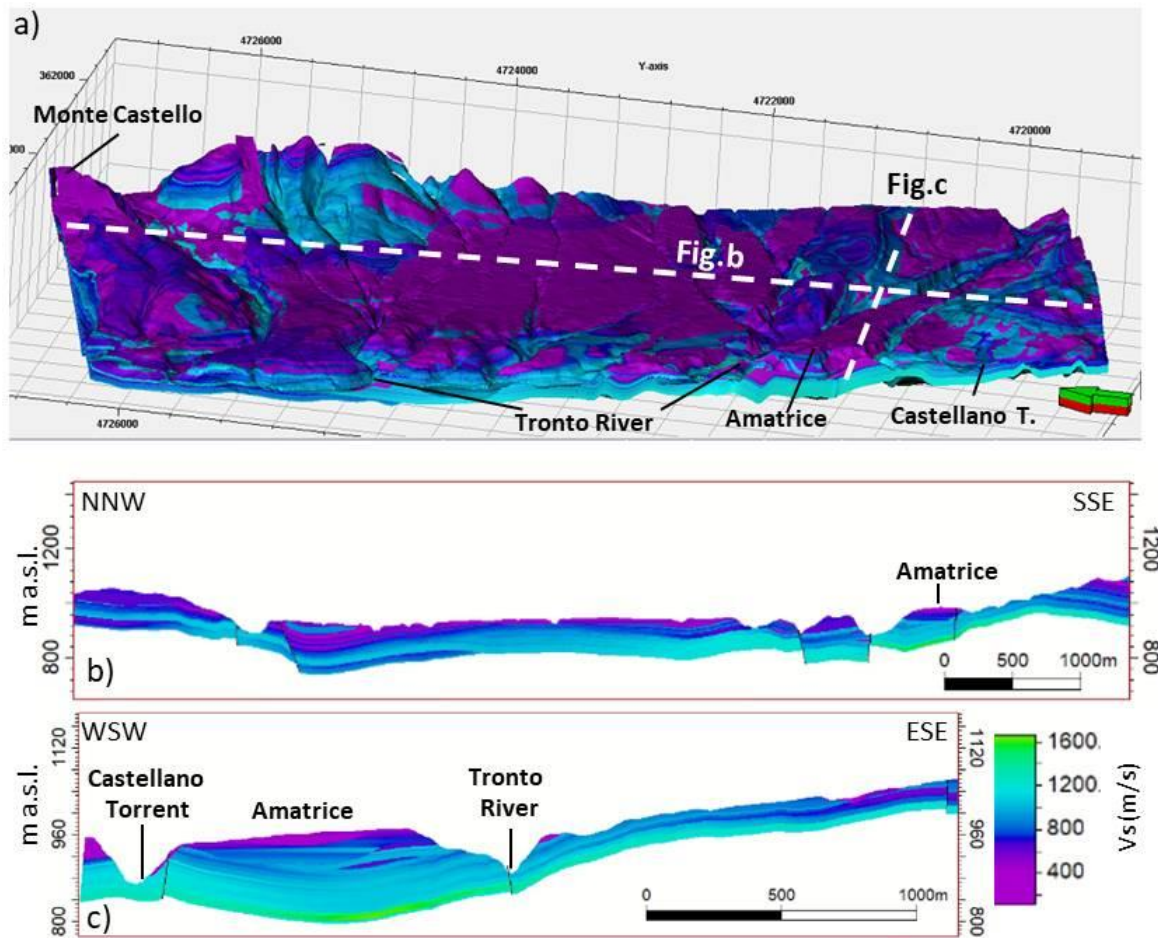
#### 480 4.3 3D velocity models

481 The reconstructed geology-based  $V_s$  and  $V_p$  velocity models represent a first attempt to  
482 parameterize the geological model, aimed at defining the 3D distribution of the geophysical  
483 parameters in the modeled geological volume. Starting from the parameterized cells along the DH,  
484 MASW (or seismic refraction profiles for  $V_p$  data), and 2D array measurement path (upscaled

485 cells), the  $V_s$  and  $V_p$  velocities populate the entire 3D model with a gradual value variation defined  
486 by the adopted “moving average” algorithm following the geological model layering (Figs. 16 and  
487 17).

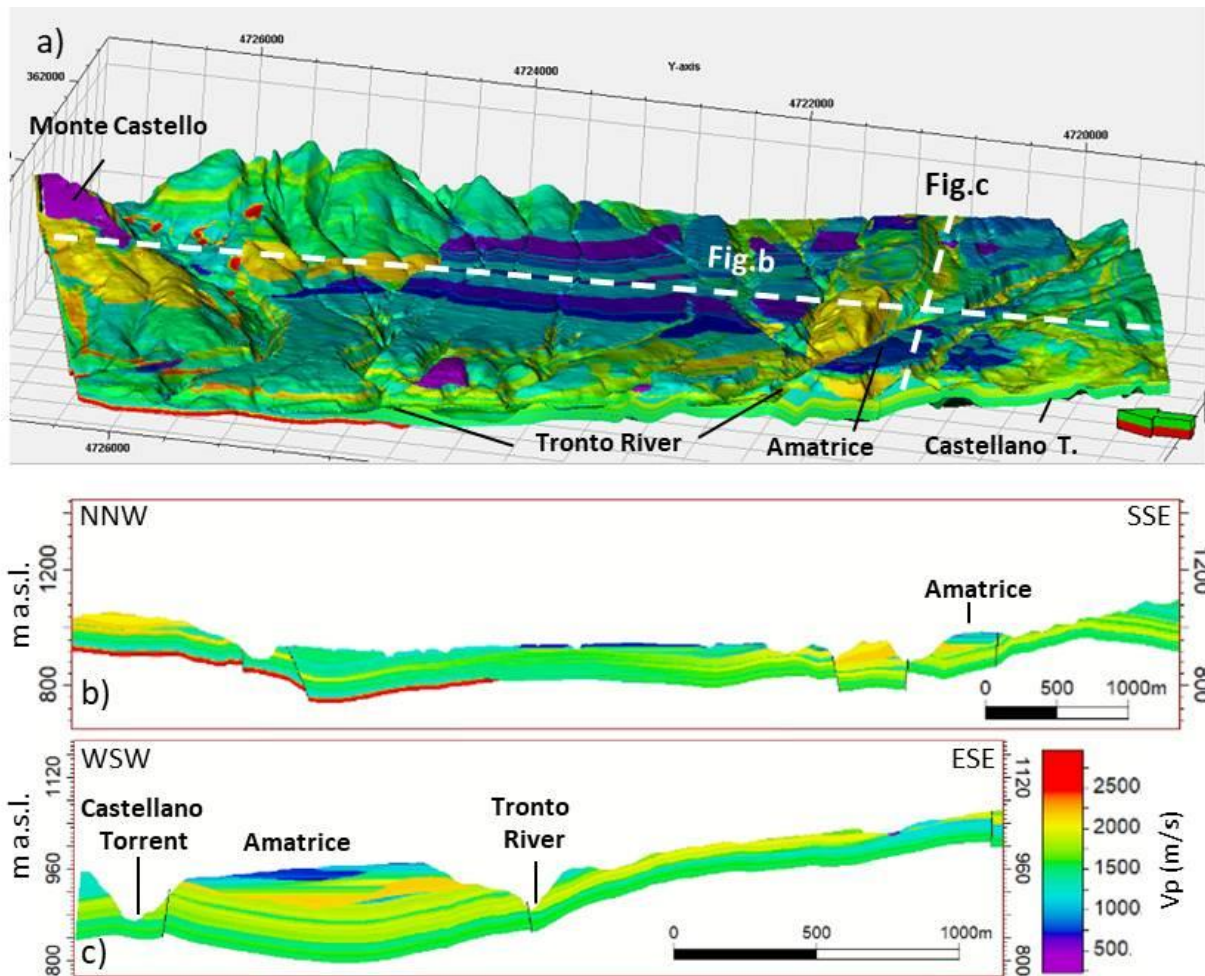
488 The  $V_s$  model (Fig. 16) is characterized by velocity values that are in a range between 100 m/s (at  
489 the top of the SLO01 2D array) and 1667 m/s (at the base of the Amatrice 2D array). They show a  
490 general downward increasing, with marked local velocity inversions within the modeled succession.  
491 The lowest  $V_s$  values (about 100 m/s) are observed in correspondence of the Quaternary continental  
492 deposits. In some cases, a sudden increase in  $V_s$  values (from 607 m/s to 1170 m/s at 37.7 m depth  
493 of the Amatrice DH2-San Cipriano Down-Hole, 2.3 meters above the Quaternary base) occurs near  
494 the transition between Quaternary deposits and Messinian foredeep deposits (Figs. 9a, 16b and 16c).  
495 The  $V_s$  values of the Messinian foredeep deposits vary from a few hundred meters per second up to  
496 a maximum of 1667 m/s near the model base, as also recorded at the bottom of the Amatrice 2D  
497 array. Within the Messinian succession there are some local velocity inversions, which are likely  
498 due to the lithological interlayering of the arenaceous-pelitic succession. Low velocity values are  
499 sometimes observed within the uppermost (few meters) layers of the Laga lithofacies (e.g., at the  
500 top of the San Capone DH1,  $V_s = 162$  m/s) and interpreted as the effect of weathering.





**Figure 16:** 3D Vs velocity model. (a) View of the 3D Vs velocity model; (b) NNW-SSE and (c) WSW-ESE cross-sections through the Vs velocity model (traces in a). Green arrow points north. See figure 3 to contextualize this figure in the workflow.

The  $V_p$  velocity model (Fig. 17) is mainly based on the DH recordings, plus some additional MASW (or seismic refraction profiles) and 2D array data (see table 1). For this reason, the lower part of the  $V_p$  model is less constrained compared to the  $V_s$  model.  $V_p$  values range between 225 m/s (at the top of the S. Angelo 2D array) and 2960 m/s (maximum  $V_p$  value recorded the Cossito DH1). In the continental Quaternary units, we can observe a generally downward increasing of  $V_p$  values that, in this interval, vary from about 225 m/s to 1800 m/s (e.g., near the Quaternary base in the Amatrice DH2-San Cipriano and Amatrice DH3 Down-Holes). The Messinian foredeep deposits, instead, are characterized by greater  $V_p$  values, that approximately range from 317 m/s to 2960 m/s, with several internal velocity inversions. In some areas, where the Laga unit crops out, we can observe low  $V_p$  values, like for example at the top of the San Capone DH1 Down-Hole ( $V_p$  = 317 m/s).



**Figure 17:** 3D Vp velocity model. (a) View of the 3D Vp velocity model; (b) NNW-SSE and (c) WSW-ESE cross-sections through the Vp velocity model (traces in figure a). Green arrow points north. See figure 3 to contextualize this figure in the workflow.

#### 4.4 Geophysical constraints

The model reliability has been estimated by comparing the experimental HVSR curves, available at the nearest seismic stations (i.e., MZ09 and CS19, localization in Fig. 5a), and the ellipticity curves calculated at the selected control points (i.e., Sommati DH1 and Amatrice historical centre, sites, Fig. 11).

The experimental HVSR curves, recorded at the nearest seismic stations, show two amplified frequency bands: a lowest frequency band ( $f_0$ ), located between 1 and 2 Hz, with an associated HVSR peak with a value of about 4.2 at the two different control points (grey vertical bands in Fig.11), and a highest frequency band ( $f_1$ , yellow vertical bands in Fig.11) ranging between 4.0 and 7.0 Hz, that in the case of Amatrice historical centre is characterized by a broadband behaviour and amplitude values of the HVSR smaller than 2.

The lowest amplified frequency band ( $f_0$ ) has never been reproduced by the model and the ellipticity curves obtained at Sommati DH1 are characterized by large standard deviations. On the

536 contrary, all the amplification peaks at frequency between 4 and 7 Hz are recognizable in the  
537 ellipticity curves. The averaged responses of the modeled ellipticity curves are only slightly  
538 underestimated at high frequency (i.e.,  $f_1$ ), attesting the goodness of the model parameterization of  
539 the surficial layers above 200 m. In fact, a bias affecting ellipticity amplitudes is expected and does  
540 not invalidate the results: the natural noise field contains Love, Rayleigh and body waves, while the  
541 calculated ellipticity is generated assuming that the noise field is composed only by Rayleigh  
542 waves.

543 Looking at investigating the influence of lateral variability on the seismic response, ellipticity  
544 curves obtained at the center of the two cylindrical meshes were also represented in Fig. 11.

545 In the two cases, at the centre of each model the ellipticity exceeds the average values  $\pm$  st. dev.

546 The case of Sommati site, where the ellipticity is significantly variable inside the modelled volume,  
547 leads us to conclude that the geological variability is significant, although the HVSR measurement  
548 is few meters away from the exact location of the Down-Hole.

549 In the historical centre, the variability is less evident, but ellipticity curve at the centre of the model  
550 shows a slightly shift of the  $f_1$  frequency respect to the average. The behaviour in this case confirms  
551 that pinch-out zones, existing in the areas around the control points, influence the HVSR and the  
552 ellipticity modelling, thus affecting also the actual seismic response at the sites.

## 553    **5   Discussions and conclusions**

554    The 2016-2017 seismic sequence, which violently struck central Italy, put in evidence that more  
555    effort should be addressed to the assessment of the seismic hazard in the inner complex basins such  
556    as the Amatrice Basin.

557    Structural and stratigraphic characterization of surface deposits allowed defining the local seismic  
558    response (Chiaretti & Nibbi, 2018; EmerTer Project Working Group, 2018; Vignaroli et al., 2019;  
559    Hailemikael et al., 2020; Mancini et al., 2020). Despite these studies have been the key for the  
560    seismic hazard assessment of the area, they mainly investigate the characteristics of the shallow  
561    subsoil layers, hampering a full three-dimensional parametrization of the geological volume  
562    affected by the seismic waves. It should be noted that a three-dimensional geological model better  
563    approximates geometries and latero-vertical heterogeneities (e.g., thickness, facies changing,  
564    structural discontinuities) that induce modifications of the propagating seismic waves, in terms of  
565    reflections, refractions, energy absorption, amplifications. For this reason, seismic hazard studies of  
566    an area require realistic geological and seismic-velocity models. These models can provide more  
567    accurate ground shaking predictions, as confirmed by the seismic hazard assessment studies carried  
568    out by Magistrale et al. (1996) and Süß et al. (2001) in the Los Angeles sedimentary basin. The  
569    authors proved that geology-based seismic-velocity models allow determining correctly the timing  
570    and the amplitude of the arriving waves in earthquake ground-motion simulations.

571    After the 2016-2017 seismic sequence, a heterogeneous distribution of the damage was observed in  
572    the Amatrice hamlet. The historical center, located at the northwest side of a terraced area, was  
573    destroyed, while the central and southeastern portion of the village was affected by a lower damage.  
574    Milana et al. (2019) highlighted a significant variability in the amplification function in terms of  
575    both spectral ratio amplitude and frequency response. In particular, the authors observed a  
576    vanishing of the amplification factors at the base of the Amatrice terrace and in central portion of  
577    the village, while a strong amplification was observed in both the northwestern and the southeastern  
578    edges. These variability in terms of effects highlights the possible contribution of the geological  
579    heterogeneity, associated with topographic consequences near the terrace border.

580    In terms of novelty, our work provides an accurate geology-based velocity model, which  
581    simultaneously considers geological and geophysical characteristics of the modeled volume. The  
582    ellipticity curves, elaborated by extracting two cylindrical (75 m radius)  $V_s$  velocity meshes from  
583    the whole  $V_s$  velocity model (Fig. 10), allows us identifying a high amplified frequency band ( $f_1$ ),  
584    between 4.0 and 7.0 Hz, where the calibration is satisfactory. In fact, this frequency band is also  
585    amplified in the experimental HVSR curves recorded at the nearest seismic stations (Fig. 11). This

586 demonstrates not only the reliability of the realized geology-based  $V_s$  velocity model at the  
587 calibrated sites, but also that the amplification of this frequency band origins within the last  
588 hundreds of meters, within the modeled volume.

589 By employing our model in earthquake ground-motion simulations it could also be possible  
590 predicting possible focusing and/or amplification effects, due to mechanical and geological features,  
591 such as the upward concave geometries reconstructed beneath the Amatrice village (Fig. 14). In this  
592 perspective, future research will be carried out.

593 In the experimental HVSR curves a lower amplified frequency band,  $f_0$ , is recognized, but it was  
594 never reproduced by means of our model (Fig. 11). The absence of the  $f_0$  peak in the ellipticity  
595 curves processed at the chosen sites could be due to: 1) the occurring of 2D/3D effect at low  
596 frequency, such as recognized by Gaudiosi et al. (2021) along the Amatrice terrace; 2) the presence  
597 of a deeper geological interface and/or mechanical impedance contrast, located below the modeled  
598 volume.

599 Considering the results of our study, we can conclude as follows:

- 600 • our geology-based model could help in predicting correctly the amplitude and frequency of  
601 arriving seismic waves by calibrating the model in additional scattered points of the  
602 Amatrice Basin;
- 603 • the proposed model could also help in predicting possible focusing and/or amplification  
604 effects by performing earthquake ground-motion simulations;
- 605 • a deepening of the model by using and interpreting data reaching greater depths, such as  
606 seismic reflection profiles, is necessary to investigate the origin of the lowest amplification  
607 frequency band ( $f_0$ );
- 608 • the proposed method represents a promising missing step between seismic zoning at large  
609 scales and microzonation studies, by integrating all the available geological and  
610 geophysical information;
- 611 • in complex geological contexts, such as the intermountain basins, the availability of  
612 geophysical information linking surface and deep data is essential to correctly evaluate the  
613 local seismic hazard;
- 614 • the proposed approach helps in defining more realistic seismic hazard scenarios and is  
615 exploitable in other comparable sectors of the central Apennine.

616

## 617 **Appendix**

618 In this work a WGS84-UTM33N Spatial reference (EPSG 32633) has been adopted. For data  
619 georeferencing we have used the QGis software (Version 2.18), while, for the realization of the 3D  
620 geological model and its parameterization we have used the Petrel software (Version 2016.2), mark  
621 of Schlumberger. Ellipticity curves have been modeled by using “gpell” code by geopsy software  
622 (<http://www.geopsy.org/index.html>).

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630

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**Declaration of interests**

☒ The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

☐The authors declare the following financial interests/personal relationships which may be considered as potential competing interests: