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Active Faulting in Source Region of 2016-2017 Central Italy Event Sequence

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ABSTRACT

The Central Italy earthquake sequence produced three mainshocks: **M**6.1 24 August, **M**5.9 26 October, and **M**6.5 30 October 2016. Additional **M**5-5.5 events struck this territory on 18 January 2017 in the Campotosto area. Fault plane solutions for the mainshocks exhibit normal faulting (characteristic of crustal extension occurring in the inner central Apennines). Significant evidence, including hypocenter locations, strike and dip angles of the moment tensors, inverted finite fault models (using GPS, InSAR, and ground motion data), and surface rupture patterns, all point to the earthquakes having been generated on the Mt. Vettore-Mt. Bove fault system (all three mainshocks) and on the Amatrice fault, in the northern sector of the Laga Mountains (portion of 24 August event). The earthquake sequence provides examples of both synthetic and antithetic ruptures on a single fault system (30 October event) and rupture between two faults (24 August event). We describe active faults in the region, their segmentation, and present understanding of the potential for linkages between segments (or faults) in the generation of large earthquakes.

Keywords: faults, segmentation, moment tensor solutions, finite fault models.

INTRODUCTION

The 2016-2017 Central Italy seismic sequence affected a large sector of the central Apennines of Italy. The events struck an area between the regions affected by the 1997 Umbria-Marche and 2009 L'Aquila seismic sequences.

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28 Seismological and geodetic data indicate that the earthquake events were associated with
29 activation of normal faults striking northwest-southeast (NW-SE) and dipping towards the
30 SW (e.g. Tinti et al., 2016; Chiaraluce et al., 2017). The rupture characteristics are
31 compatible with current understanding of the seismotectonics of this part of the central
32 Apennines (e.g. Galadini and Galli, 2000, 2003; Boncio et al., 2004a). Previous field
33 investigations of fault structures in the central Apennines have demonstrated Quaternary (or
34 late Quaternary) activity based on mapped fault displacements across continental sedimentary
35 sequences and associated landforms (e.g. Calamita et al., 2000; Galadini and Galli, 2000,
36 2003; Tondi, 2000; Boncio et al., 2004a; Galadini et al., 2012; Falcucci et al., 2016). Many of
37 the central Apennine Quaternary normal faults are considered as the surface manifestation of
38 seismogenic sources potentially responsible for $M_{6.5-7}$ earthquakes. This is based on fault
39 system lengths at the surface often in the order of 20-30 km, which are comprised of
40 segments that are up to approximately 10 km in length. These hypotheses have been verified
41 by the recent seismic sequences. We show here that the faults that produced this seismic
42 sequence occurred on known active normal faults of this type.

43 In this paper, we describe the fault structures on which the mainshock events in this
44 earthquake sequence occurred and the active faults surrounding the epicentral area. We
45 provide geometric and kinematic parameters for these fault systems. Such information can be
46 used for regional active tectonics and stress analyses, as well as for seismic hazard and risk
47 analyses. In this paper the terms *fault* or *fault system* refer to seismogenic structures
48 comprising one segment (*fault*) or multiple segments (*fault system*) that are part of the same
49 geologic feature, and which are capable of rupturing partially or fully together during a single
50 event. As used here, a *fault segment* is a continuous feature within a fault system.

51 We also present specific source information in the form of hypocenter locations, finite
52 fault models useful for distance calculations, and aftershock patterns. We do not describe the
53 surface rupture produced by the event sequence, which is described and analyzed in detail in
54 a companion paper (Gori et al. 2018, this issue).

55 **GEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK**

56 The Apennine belt represents the “spine” of the Italian Peninsula and results from the
57 complex interaction between the Africa and Europe plates, and the Adria microplate. The
58 formation of the central portion of the chain started in the Oligocene, when a compressive

59 front began to “squash” and displace Mesozoic and Cenozoic marine carbonate sequences
60 (e.g. Ciarapica and Passeri, 1998; Patacca et al., 2008; Cosentino et al., 2010). The front
61 superposed different tectonic units and advanced progressively towards the east and north-
62 east through thrust-and-fold systems that become progressively younger to the east.
63 Migration of the thrust front occurred as a result of successive deformation events, which are
64 expressed as different foredeep and thrust-top basins that are nestled in between the fronts
65 (e.g. Cipollari et al., 1999; Centamore and Rossi, 2009; Cosentino et al., 2010; 2017).

66 Since the Pliocene, when compression was deforming the present Adriatic domain, the
67 Tyrrhenian area (interpreted as a back-arc basin) and the inner sectors of the central
68 Apennines has experienced tectonic extension (Malinverno and Ryan, 1986; Cavinato et al.,
69 1994; Cavinato and De Celles, 1999; Cosentino et al., 2010). The extensional tectonics
70 nucleated a series of NW-SE trending, i.e. chain-parallel, normal fault systems, which
71 displaced the older compressive structures (Figure 1a). The compression-extension tectonic
72 pair migrated east-northeastwards (e.g. Galadini and Messina, 2004; Fubelli et al., 2009;
73 Carminati and Doglioni, 2012). The entire process occurred contemporaneously with chain
74 uplift (e.g. Galadini et al., 2003), which amounted to about 1000 m over the Quaternary (e.g.
75 D’Agostino et al., 2001).

76 Evidence of ongoing extension of the central Apennine chain is provided by:

- 77 1) Seismicity, with minor-to-major earthquakes on NW-SE trending extensional
78 ruptures, including the **M**6.1, 6 April 2009 L’Aquila earthquake (Chiarabba et al.,
79 2009; Valoroso et al., 2013) and the 2016-2017 seismic sequence (e.g. Tinti et al.,
80 2016, for the sequence between 24 August and 30 October 2016; Gruppo di Lavoro
81 INGV sul terremoto di Visso, 2016; <http://cnt.rm.ingv.it/event/8863681>, last accessed
82 10/12/2017; Cheloni et al., 2017);
- 83 2) Geodetic data, with GPS time series indicating 2-3 mm/yr extension in the NE-SW
84 direction (D’Agostino et al., 2011; Devoti et al., 2011; 2017);
- 85 3) Borehole breakout data, showing minimum horizontal stress oriented perpendicular to
86 the belt (Montone and Mariucci, 2016); and
- 87 4) Geological data, indicating activity of normal faults and fault systems during the
88 Quaternary (e.g. Galadini and Galli, 2000; Boncio et al., 2004a; Roberts and Michetti,
89 2004), as well as paleoseismological evidence of activity on central Apennine major

90 normal faults during historical times, nucleating **M**6.5-7 events. Notable among these
91 events are the 1703 seismic sequence, with two major shocks in the Norcia (14
92 January) (Galli et al., 2005) and the L'Aquila (2 February) (Moro et al., 2002) sectors
93 (Figure 1b) and the 1915 event in the Fucino basin (e.g. Ward and Valensise, 1989;
94 Michetti et al., 1996; Galadini and Galli, 1999).

95 The following sections describe regional faults in the epicentral region of the 2016-2017
96 seismic sequence, with an emphasis on those faults to which the 24 August, 26 and 30
97 October 2016 mainshock events are attributed.

98 **REGIONAL FAULTS OVERVIEW**

99 The Apennine chain in Central Italy has series of normal faults that accommodate
100 regional extension. Varying amounts of information are available for these faults from field
101 studies, trenching, and historical data. A critical issue for hazard characterization is what
102 combination of faults, fault segments, and fault systems can rupture in a single event. In the
103 Central Apennine region, some seismogenic structures consist of multiple discrete segments
104 that can rupture together, as was the case for example with the Mt. Vettore-Mt. Bove fault
105 system that was primarily responsible for the mainshocks that occurred in 2016. What is less
106 clear is when rupture can occur between fault systems, which was also a feature of the 24
107 August 2016 event (it is beyond the scope of this document to resolve such questions in a
108 general sense). Under a seismotectonic perspective, ruptures of a number of fault systems in
109 very short time spans (from few minutes to several days from one another), have occurred
110 over the past millennium in the central and southern Apennine during complex seismic
111 sequences. This is the case of the 1349, 1456, and 1703 earthquake sequences. This
112 demonstrates that kinematically independent and even not contiguous fault systems activated
113 in the past for various possible reasons (i.e. stress transfer, dynamic triggering, fluids
114 migration) and that a similar scenario can occur again in an undefined future.

115 As for the 24 August event, the rupture of the two faults did not released a seismic
116 moment associated to the rupture of a single large fault but to the single ruptures of the two
117 slip patches.

118 In this section, we briefly describe faults and fault systems in the broader region of the
119 2016-2017 earthquake sequence. This summary has two objectives:

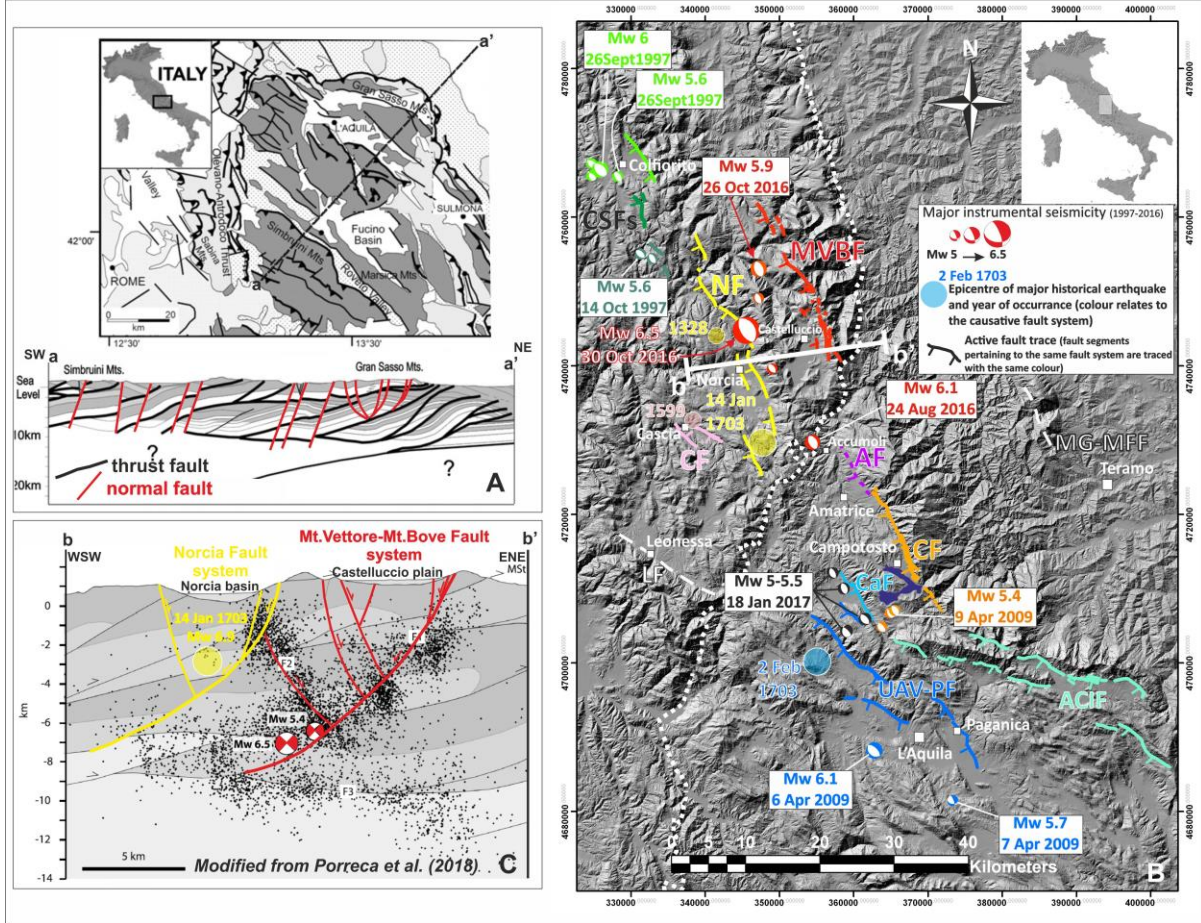
- 120 1. To synthesize fault attributes from prior work that are useful in source models, for
121 example as used in seismic hazard analyses;
- 122 2. To establish the context, from a faulting perspective, that allows the significance
123 of the 2016 earthquake sequence to be understood and appreciated.

124 We first examine major regional faults, and then focus more specifically on the faults that
125 produced the 2016 main events of the sequence (Mt. Vettore-Mt. Bove fault system and
126 Amatrice fault). As shown in Figure 1b, additional significant faults in the region include the
127 Colfiorito and Sellano basin faults, the Norcia fault system and the Upper Aterno valley-
128 Paganica fault system. Two further structures are also shown, namely the Leonessa fault and
129 the Monti Gemelli-Montagna dei Fiori fault, as normal faults that appear to be inactive (i.e.
130 they are not able to generate surface rupturing earthquakes, that is $M < 6 \pm 0.2$; Falcucci et al.,
131 2016). Table 1 presents selected characteristics and references for each of these regional
132 faults. More details about geological evidence of past activity of the faults reported in Figure
133 1b and historical seismicity associated with each fault are provided in GEER (2017).

134 Beginning from the north end of the region shown in Figure 1b, the Colfiorito and
135 Sellano basin faults were responsible for the seismic sequence that struck the Umbria-
136 Marchean region in September-October 1997 (e.g. Pantosti et al., 1999; Cello et al., 2000;
137 Calamita et al., 2000; Vittori et al., 2000; Chiaraluce et al., 2005; Barchi e Mirabella, 2009;
138 Ferrarini et al., 2015) with three mainshocks of $M_{5.6}$ -to-6. These faults are *en-echelon*
139 arranged with dextral step-over. Based on geological and historical data, we consider multi-
140 fault ruptures on these faults to be unlikely, that is, each fault ruptures separately with
141 earthquakes of up to $M_{6 \pm 0.2}$ (Messina et al., 2002), as occurred in 1997. Moreover, as shown
142 in Figure 1b, due to the large separation and geological evidence about different recent
143 kinematic behavior, simultaneous rupture with the neighboring Mt. Vettore-Mt. Bove fault
144 system or the Norcia fault system to the south is considered unlikely.

145 Five moderate-to-large magnitude seismic events occurred in the past millennium in the
146 Norcia basin area: in 1328, 1703, 1730, 1859, and 1979. Based on damage distributions
147 (Galadini et al., 1999), the pre-20th century events could be attributed to the activation of the
148 whole Norcia fault system, as in 1703, or to single segments of the structure. The fault
149 system consists of four major segments, as shown in Figure 1b. The $M_{6.9}$ 1703 event
150 produced damage across the entire Norcia sector, suggesting synchronous activation of the
151 whole seismogenic fault system. This is also supported by paleoseismological investigations,

152 which find evidence of surface ruptures with displacements consistent with the reported
 153 magnitude (Galli et al., 2005). Other historic events (such as the 1328, 1730, 1859, 1979
 154 seismic events) have likely ruptured single fault segments in earthquakes with $M \leq 6.5$
 155 (Galadini et al., 1999).



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 157 **Figure 1.** (a) Schematic geological setting of the central Apennines (upper panel) and cross-section
 158 showing the relationship between the compressive tectonic structures and the Pliocene-Quaternary
 159 normal faults (modified from Falcucci et al., 2015); (b) Map showing active faults and fault systems
 160 discussed in this section and locations of large seismic events in the region since 2009, as well as
 161 historical seismicity. Faults: Colfiorito and Sellano basin faults, CSFs; Mt. Vettore-Mt. Bove fault
 162 system, MVBF; Norcia fault system, NF; Cascia fault, CF; Amatrice fault, AF; Campotosto fault, CF;
 163 Capitignano fault, CaF; Upper Aterno Valley-Paganica fault system, UAV-PF; Leonessa fault, LF;
 164 Monti Gemelli-Montagna dei Fiori fault, MGMFF. The Olevano-Antrodoco-Sibillini inactive thrust
 165 system is defined by the white dotted line. The trace of the geological cross-section b-b' shown in (c)
 166 is marked by the white line. (c) Geological cross-section, modified from Porreca et al. (2018),
 167 showing the deep structural setting of the epicentral area of the 30 October 2016 mainshock, in
 168 relation with the aftershock sequence (black dots).

169 Located at the south end of Figure 1b is the upper Aterno valley, i.e. the L'Aquila region.
 170 The Upper Aterno Valley-Paganica fault system consists of four NW-SE normal fault
 171 segments. The Paganica segment of this fault system generated the 2009 earthquake ($M6.1$)

172 (e.g. Chiaraluce, 2012; Valoroso et al., 2013). The seismogenic behavior of the fault system
173 is complex. Current knowledge indicates that it can rupture both entirely, generating $M \sim 6.7$
174 earthquakes, as on 2 Feb. 1703, and partly, with single segments generating $M \sim 6$, as in 2009.

175 Two faults shown in Figure 1b are considered inactive, that is, they are unable to produce
176 surface rupturing earthquake ($M 6 \pm 0.2$, threshold magnitude of surface faulting earthquakes
177 for Apennine extensional faults; Falcucci et al., 2016): the Leonessa fault and the Monti
178 Gemelli-Montagna dei Fiori fault. As explained further in GEER (2017), the Leonessa fault
179 was possibly active during the late Pliocene-lower Early Pleistocene and its activity ended or
180 strongly reduced during the Middle Pleistocene-late Quaternary. There are no historical
181 earthquakes associated with this fault. The Montagna dei Fiori-Monti Gemelli fault is
182 associated with a NW-SE trending anticline related to an ancient thrust active between the
183 Late Messinian and the Lower Pliocene. Probably the normal fault was active during
184 Miocene pre-thrusting and thrusting phases (Scisciani et al., 2002; Storti et al., 2016; 2017).
185 Despite the presence of a sporadically exposed fault scarp, geological evidence suggests that
186 the Montagna dei Fiori-Monti Gemelli fault is inactive in the Quaternary. Strong historical
187 earthquakes cannot be associated to this fault. Minor events of low magnitude sometimes
188 occur in the area. However, the relationship of these events with the fault is unclear.

189 The following sub-sections describe active faults in the region that produced the 2016
190 mainshocks, namely the Mt. Vettore-Mt. Bove fault and the Amatrice fault. Each sub-section
191 describes geological data, mainly based on the criteria from Falcucci et al. (2016), and
192 reviews historical seismicity, which collectively provide the basis for inferences of current
193 activity. Data on past earthquakes and the damage distribution have been derived from
194 Rovida et al. (2016). Table 1 summarizes main seismogenic characteristics of these faults.

Table 1. Summary of the kinematic, geometric, and seismogenic characteristics of the faults located in the region. Rake angles for all considered faults (normal kinematics) are $\sim 90^\circ$.

Fault/Fault system	No. segments	Associated historical/recent earthquakes	Average dip ($^\circ$)	Surface length (km)	Upper and lower seismogenic depth (km)	Maximum expected magnitude (uncertainty) ¹	Previously modeled as seismogenic source ²	Slip rate (mm/yr)	Recurrence time (years)
Mt. Vettore-Mt. Bove fault system	3	Aug 2016 (M6.1) Oct 2016 (M5.9 and M6.5)	45	27	Upper: 0 Lower: 10	M6.7 (± 0.1)	BEA04: Y (1) AKI09: Y (1) DISS: D	0.36- 0.62 (min.)	ca. 4500 (max.)
Campotosto fault	1	-	45	20	Upper: 0 Lower: 10	M6.5 (± 0.1)	BEA04: Y (1) AKI09: Y (1) DISS: D	0.7-0.9	ca. 7500 (max.)
Amatrice fault	1	Oct 1639 (M6.2) Aug 2016 (M6.1)	45	8	Upper: 2 Lower: 10	M <6.0 (± 0.2)	BEA04: Y (1) AKI09: N DISS: D	-	400 (M6.0)
Colfiorito and Sellano basins faults	3	Apr 1279 (M6.2) Sep 1997 (M6.0) Oct 1997 (M5.6)	45	8	Upper: 2 Lower: 10	M <6.0 (± 0.2)	BEA04: Y (2) AKI09: Y (1) DISS: Y (3)	-	700 (M6.0)
Norcia fault system	4	Dec 1328 (M6.5) Jan 1703 (M6.9) May 1730(M6.0) Aug 1859 (M5.7) Sep 1979 (M5.8)	45	31	Upper: 0 Lower: 10	M6.9 (± 0.1)	BEA04: Y (2) AKI09: Y (1) DISS: C	0.25-1.15	1700-1900 (M6.9)
Upper Aterno Valley-Paganica fault system	4	Nov 1461 (M6.5) Feb 1703 (M6.7) Oct 1762 (M5.5) Apr 2009 (M6.3)	45	27	Upper: 0 Lower: 10	M6.7 (± 0.2)	BEA04: Y (3) AKI09: Y (2) DISS: C (2), Y (2)	0.47-0.86	500 (M6-6.2) 850-1700 (M6.7)
Leonessa fault	1	-	60	20	Upper: 2 Lower: 10	M <6.0(± 0.2)	BEA04: N AKI09: N DISS: C	-	-
Montagna dei Fiori-Monti Gemelli fault	1	-	60	15	Upper: 2 Lower: 10	M <6.0(± 0.2)	BEA04: N AKI09: N DISS: C	-	-

197 ¹Based on expert judgement.198 ²BEA04 = Boncio et al. (2004a); AKI09 = Akinci et al. (2009); DISS = DISS Working Group (2015); Y = Modeled as individual segment; D = Debated source;
199 C = Modeled as composite source; N = Not modeled; (#) = Number of segments (if modeled as individual segments).

200 **MT. VETTORE-MT. BOVE FAULT SYSTEM**

201 **Geological evidence of recent activity**

202 The Mt. Vettore-Mt. Bove normal fault system strikes NNW-SSE to NW-SE and dips
203 WSW to SW, and can be detected for a length of about 27 km (Figure 1b and c). It is
204 characterized by a prominent fault scarp exposed in the SW carbonate slopes of the Sibillini
205 Mts. (Figure 2). Based on available geomorphologic evidence, the fault was recognized as
206 active by several authors (e.g. Calamita and Pizzi, 1992; Cello et al., 1997; Galadini and
207 Galli, 2000; 2003; Boncio et al., 2004a) prior to the 2016 earthquake sequence.

208 Only one intermontane basin can be associated with this fault, i.e. the Castelluccio plain,
209 close to the southernmost end of the fault. The basin is bordered by some of the fault splays
210 located in the piedmont area of Mt. Vettore, one of which has been the object of
211 paleoseismological investigations, described below. However, the origin of the Castelluccio
212 plain cannot be entirely related to fault activity, since geomorphologic traces of karstic
213 processes that contributed to the plain evolution are widespread, such as swallow holes,
214 dolines, and local endorheic hydrographic nets. The geomorphic aspect of the Castelluccio
215 plain seems to resemble that of a *polje* (i.e. a large karstic depression) and was defined by
216 Principi (1911) as the source area of part of the groundwater in the Norcia basin (due to
217 groundwater flow along karstic pathways).

218 The most impressive fault scarp (fault line scarp at places) is represented by the “Cordone
219 del Vettore” (Figures 2a, 2b), located at about 2,000 m above sea level (asl) in the uppermost
220 portion of the slope (Calamita and Pizzi, 1992; Coltorti and Farabollini, 1995; Cello et al.,
221 1997; Pizzi et al., 2002; Pizzi and Galadini, 2009). Along the bedrock scarp, the exposed
222 fault plane displaces the carbonate rocks, which are overlain by a thin and discontinuous
223 cover of debris on the hanging wall. A less prominent bedrock fault scarp occurs at lower
224 elevation along the same slope of Mt. Vettore (white arrow in Figures 2a and 2b). This lower
225 fault plane places the carbonate bedrock into contact with carbonate bedrock and with slope
226 deposits of Late Pleistocene-Holocene age (Coltorti and Farabollini, 1995).

227 Further evidence of recent fault activity is provided by the displacement of a wide alluvial
228 fan filling the northern sector of the Castelluccio plain (Figure 3). The displacement is due to
229 the motion of a further fault strand, parallel to the aforementioned main splays on the slopes
230 (Galadini and Galli, 2003). The alluvial fan is comprised of several depositional units dated
231 between 23,000 and 3,200 BP. The motion of this fault splay, paleoseismologically

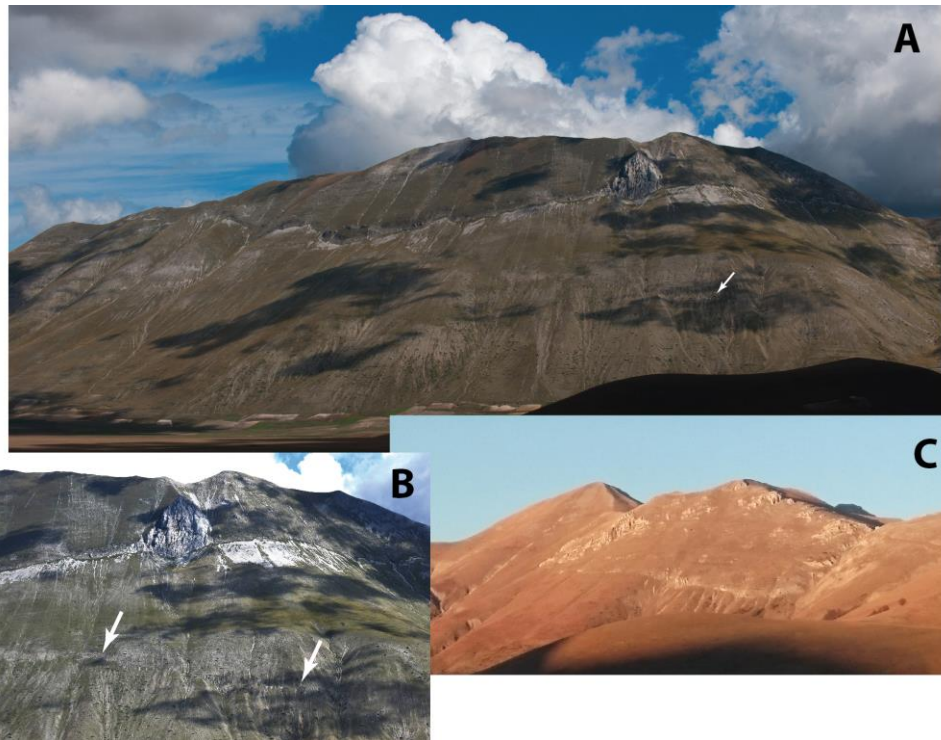
232 investigated in 1999 (Figures 3a and 3b), and the related scarp formation can be attributed to
233 a time span ranging between the Late Pleistocene-Holocene and 3,800-3,200 years BP,
234 resulting in a slip rate between 0.36 and 0.62 mm/yr. Surface faulting (vertical offset up to
235 about 20 cm) along the splay trenched in 1999 has been observed after the 30 Oct 2016 event
236 (Figure 3c) (Civico et al., 2018; Villani et al., 2018; Gori et al., this issue). Huang et al.
237 (2017) present an alternative interpretation of a deep-seated landslide with a head scarp at the
238 preexisting fault scarp along the Mt. Vettore slope, which if present, would significantly
239 influence the long-term fault slip rate estimated using geological observations and
240 paleoseismology (Galadini and Galli; 2003). However, Galadini and Galli (2003) trenched
241 within the flat Castelluccio plain, where no landsliding can occur. Hence, the slip rates
242 presented in Galadini and Galli (2003) are unlikely to have been affected by landslide
243 movements.

244 **Associated seismicity**

245 While the last fault activation is traced to the beginning of the first millennium B.C.
246 based on paleoseismic data (Galadini and Galli, 2003; Galli et al., 2008), no historical
247 earthquakes can be associated with this fault. It is for this reason that the fault was considered
248 “silent” prior to the 2016-2017 sequence by Galadini and Galli (2000), meaning that the
249 elapsed time since the last significant event is many centuries/some millennia (minimum
250 elapsed time 1,300-1,500 years) (Galadini and Galli, 2003).

251 **Seismogenic interpretation**

252 Despite the lack of recent activity, the aforementioned paleoseismic evidence of surface
253 rupture led Galadini and Galli (2000) to suggest that the Mt. Vettore-Mt. Bove fault system
254 represents the superficial expression of a seismogenic source potentially responsible for **M**6.5
255 earthquakes. Indeed, the geologic and geomorphologic characteristics of the Mt. Vettore-Mt.
256 Bove fault system are similar to those of other well-known active faults in the central
257 Apennines. For this reason, the 2016 earthquake sequence is not surprising in terms of the
258 seismogenic characteristics of this fault and in general of the Apennines. Smeraglia et al.
259 (2017) reach a similar conclusion, based on micro-structural analyses along the fault plane, at
260 the southernmost sector of the structure, which showed that the fault slipped seismically
261 during past earthquakes.



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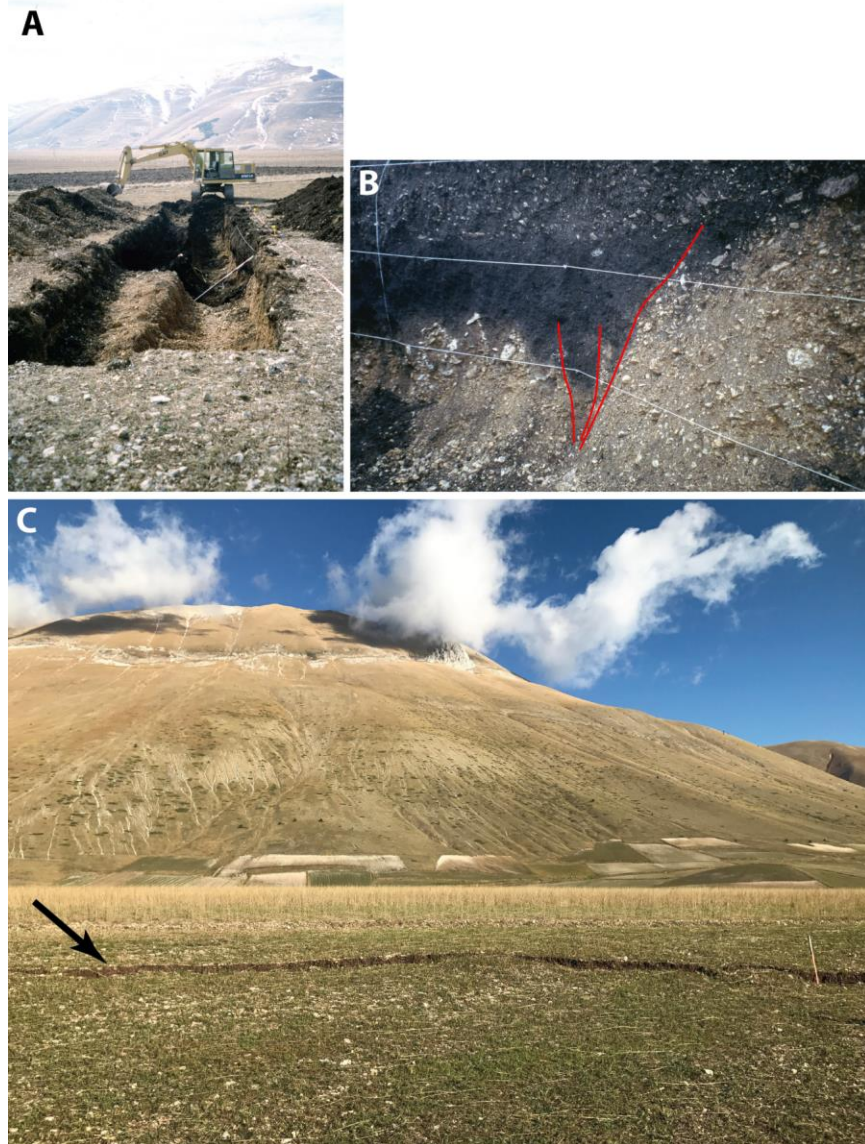
Figure 2. (a), (b) Mt. Vettore-Mt. Bove fault system: bedrock fault scarps along the SW slope; the uppermost scarp is known as "Cordone del Vettore"; the white arrows indicate the bedrock scarp located in the middle sector of the slope; (c) bedrock fault scarp along the western slope of Palazzo Borghese, between Mt. Porche and Mt. Argentella, NW of Mt. Vettore.

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Based on the fault geometry as expressed at the surface, the Mt. Vettore-Mt. Bove fault system was proposed as a NW-SE trending and SW dipping seismogenic source by Galadini and Galli (2000, 2003). More recent investigations proposed that the source has a 27-km-long superficial expression, consistent with an expected maximum magnitude of ~6.7 (Falcucci et al., 2016).

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A structural interpretation of the Mt. Vettore-Mt. Bove seismogenic source posits the system as negatively inverting the Sibillini thrust ramp (Bonini et al., 2016; Scognamiglio et al., 2018) or even an older structure (e.g. Di Domenica et al., 2014; Falcucci et al., 2018). An alternative interpretation of the faulting from the October 30 2016 mainshock suggests that a significant part of the coseismic slip (and seismic moment release) involved an inferred low angle structure transverse to the Mt. Vettore-Mt. Bove fault system that comprised the lateral ramp of the thrust (Scognamiglio et al., 2018). Similarly, Pizzi et al. (2017) proposed that the lateral ramp of the Sibillini thrust acted somehow to separate the rupture of the October 30 2016 mainshock from that of the August 24 2016 mainshock.



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282 **Figure 3.** Castelluccio plain: (a) view of one of the paleoseismological trenches excavated in 1999 by
283 Galadini and Galli (2003); (b) NW trench wall: the fault places Late Pleistocene-Holocene gravels in
284 contact with Holocene paleosol and colluvium; (c) 10-20 cm surface displacement caused by the 30
285 October 2016 earthquake (M6.5) along the fault splay trenched in 1999.

286 Despite the prior studies on this fault system, it was not considered as an individual
287 seismic source for this region by the DISS Working Group (2015). It was considered as a
288 “debated source” (ITDS002), which means a potential seismogenic source proposed in the
289 literature but not considered reliable enough to be included in the database. Other source
290 models for this portion of Italy include the Mt. Vettore-Mt. Bove fault system within a map
291 of seismogenic boxes (Boncio et al., 2004a) and as an individual source (Akinci et al., 2009)
292 (Table 1).

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295 **LAGA MTS. FAULTS: THE AMATRICE AND CAMPOTOSTO FAULTS**

296 **Geological evidence of recent activity**

297 As shown in Figure 1b, the western slope of the Laga Mts. is affected by two aligned
298 normal faults: the Amatrice fault to the north, and the Campotosto fault to the south, striking
299 NW-SE, dipping towards SW. These faults border two geomorphologic domains: the
300 Amatrice basin to the north and the Campotosto plateau to the south. Although apparently
301 located along the same fault system, the two areas have different geomorphologic
302 characteristics (Galadini and Messina, 2001; Boncio et al., 2004b). The Amatrice area is
303 similar to numerous other basins of the central Apennines, having experienced lacustrine and
304 alluvial deposition during the Quaternary (Cacciuni et al., 1995). In contrast, the Campotosto
305 plateau is a highland containing late Quaternary units made of lacustrine, alluvial and debris
306 deposits typical of piedmont areas (e.g. Galadini and Messina, 2001).

307 Different from most other central Apennine Quaternary faults, the two fault scarps are
308 carved onto a relatively weak bedrock known as Laga flysch, which consists of arenaceous
309 and clayey successions. In spite of this, the major fault scarp and scarps associated with
310 synthetic minor splays of the Campotosto fault are visible at the base and along the Laga Mts.
311 slope (Figure 4).

312 The two faults have been defined as tectonically active in the Quaternary (Galadini and
313 Messina, 2001). Quaternary activity in the Amatrice sector may be related to the formation of
314 the related intermontane basin from extension, likely with processes similar to those of the
315 other Apennine depressions, even if its origin may be pre-Quaternary (Falcucci et al., 2018).
316 The oldest sediments and related landforms are displaced and tilted (Cacciuni et al., 1995).
317 However, the top of the Early Pleistocene units is only displaced by 20-30 m (Galadini and
318 Messina, 2001), suggesting that tectonic activity may have significantly decreased during the
319 Quaternary, such that the fault has to be considered inactive during the late Quaternary or
320 affected by displacement events with very low vertical offset (Galadini and Messina, 2001).

321 Alluvial and lacustrine deposits not older than the Late Pleistocene are present along the
322 southern fault section (Campotosto plateau), in the piedmont area of Laga Mts. These
323 deposits overlie the Miocene flysch. This kind of deposition also occurred during the
324 Holocene (Galadini and Galli, 2003). Late Quaternary deposits in the Campotosto area are

325 significantly displaced by the Campotosto fault. A vertical displacement larger than 20 m
326 affects an alluvial terrace formed during the upper Late Pleistocene and displacement of
327 alluvial deposits of age 8,000 years BP has been observed (Galadini and Galli, 2003; Figure
328 4d). Along the Vomano valley, south of the Campotosto plateau, a succession of relict paleo-
329 landsurfaces was identified on the hanging wall of the fault. The absence of similar
330 landforms in the footwall was interpreted as the result of tectonic lowering of the hanging
331 wall and relative minor uplift of the footwall (Galadini and Messina, 2001). This type of
332 terracing up to an elevation close to the present valley bottom suggests the persistence of
333 recent (late Quaternary) tectonic processes (Galadini and Messina, 2001).

334 The relative lack of significant late Quaternary slip on the Amatrice fault contrasts with
335 evidence of surface activity during the Late Pleistocene and the Holocene on the Campotosto
336 fault. The different ages of fault activity indicate a sort of along-fault migration of fault
337 activity during the Quaternary, from north to south (Galadini and Messina, 2001).

338 **Associated seismicity**

339 An historic earthquake sequence began on 7 October 1639 ($M_{6.2}$; Castelli et al., 2016).
340 Only a single account describes the events, from a writer in Rome, far from the epicentral
341 area. That writer gathered oral reports from witnesses about the coseismic effects. Based on
342 this account, the highest damage has been estimated as intensity I 10 MCS at one location
343 and intensity I 9-10 MCS at 12 locations. Damage at Amatrice was listed with I 9 MCS. Most
344 of the coseismic effects occurred in the Amatrice basin; little information is available about
345 damage in surrounding areas.

346 Considering the significant impact the earthquake had in the Amatrice area and the
347 magnitude attributed to the 1639 mainshock, the 24 August 2016 earthquake has been
348 compared to the 1639 event. However, because the damage from the 1639 event was mostly
349 localized in Amatrice, and many historical buildings within the city did not suffer damage, it
350 may be that the magnitude of the 1639 event is overestimated. Compounding the problem is
351 the excessive emphasis given to the historical damage descriptions from only a single written
352 source and the likely accumulation of damage across events within an earthquake sequence
353 and the unknown damage from the mainshock (Castelli et al., 2002). We note that the 1639
354 event produced no strong damage in Norcia and surrounding areas, whereas the 24 August
355 2016 event caused significant damage north of the Amatrice basin.

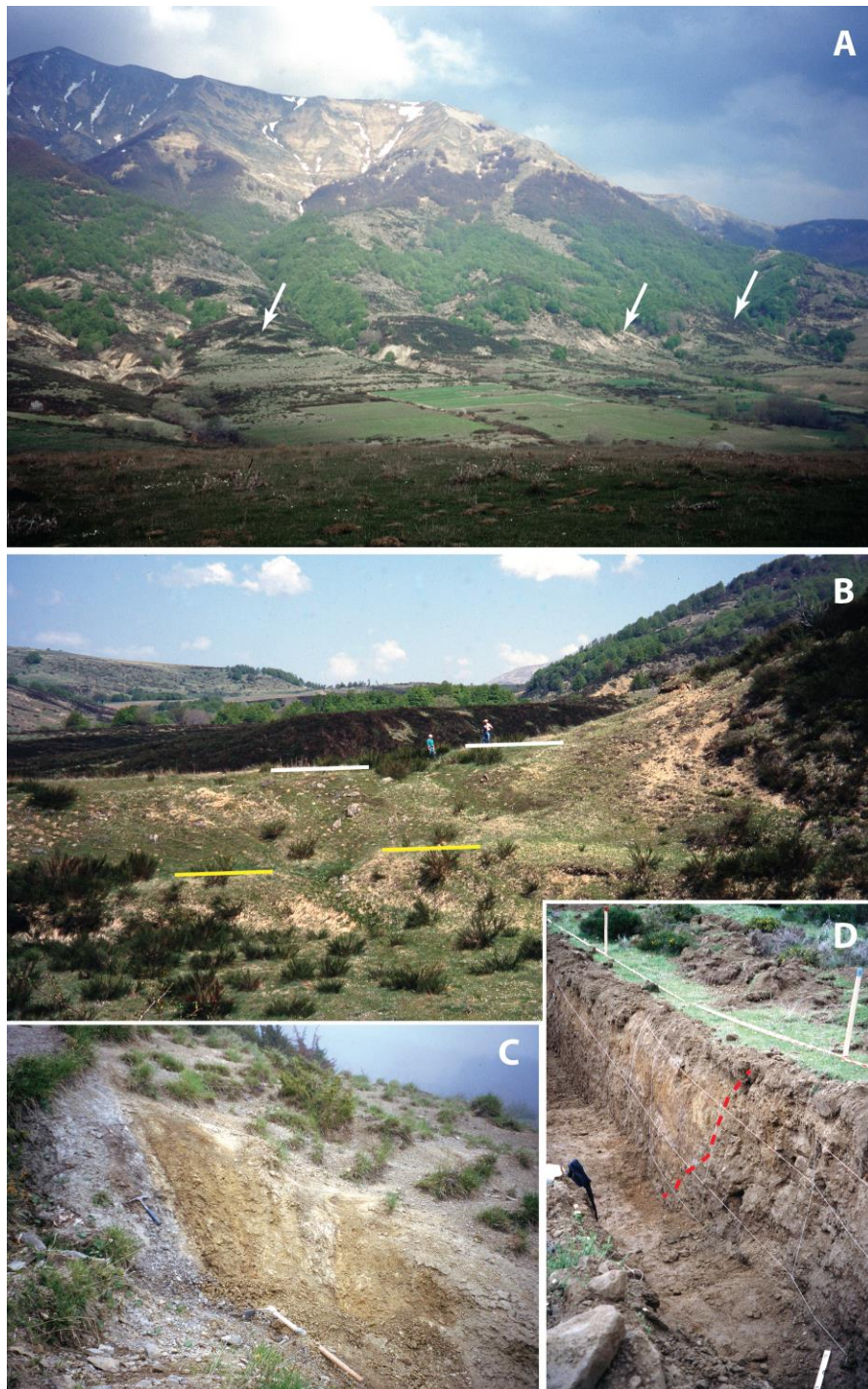
356 **Seismogenic interpretation**

357 Geological data suggest the presence of distinct normal faults along the Laga Mts. SW
358 slope, one in the Amatrice basin to the north and one in the Campotosto plateau and the
359 Vomano valley to the south. These faults, although apparently contiguous, appear to have
360 differing tectonic activity and seismotectonics. The only historical seismicity is related to the
361 1639 event that struck Amatrice, with little damage to the surrounding areas, which suggests
362 activation of the Amatrice fault. The magnitude attributed to the earthquake (6.2) results
363 presumably from cumulative damage from the seismic sequence and possibly from an
364 exaggeration in the description of the damage by the single written source, resulting in an
365 overestimation of the actual 1639 mainshock magnitude. Recent seismicity also supports
366 characterization of the faults as distinct seismogenic sources, since earthquakes related to the
367 2009 sequence and those that occurred on 18 January 2017 were mainly associated with the
368 Campotosto fault, while the 24 August 2016 events occurred on the Amatrice fault.

369 The Amatrice fault is considered active from the standpoint of producing earthquakes that
370 can generate strong shaking, but not large enough to produce surface faulting (e.g. Falcucci et
371 al., 2016 and references therein). Events occurring on this structure (presumably the 1639
372 earthquake), or on this fault in combination with the Mt. Vettore-Mt. Bove fault system to the
373 north (2016) do not appear to cause surface faulting along the Amatrice fault, as indicated by
374 the surveys following the recent event (Emergeo, 2016) and by the investigations on the
375 geomorphic features related to the long-term geological evolution of the Laga Mts. western
376 slope (Galadini and Messina, 2001). The maximum magnitude of events rupturing this fault
377 on its own, without neighboring faults as in 2016, is therefore $< 6 \pm 0.2$.

378 The rupture on both the Amatrice fault and the Mt. Vettore-Mt. Bove fault system in the
379 24 August 2016 event is an important observation being considered by different research
380 groups (e.g. Lavecchia et al., 2016; Tinti et al., 2016; Cheloni et al., 2017). Importantly, the
381 two slip patches are clearly separated from one another and the total seismic moment released
382 during the event is the sum of the seismic moments released by the two distinct ruptures and
383 not the seismic moment released by a single large fault comprising the two ruptures.

384 There is no record of historical events on the Campotosto fault, although geomorphologic
385 and paleoseismological evidence indicates Holocene activity (Figure 4). This suggests that
386 the structure should be considered active (attributes in Table 1), with a length that indicates it
387 can produce earthquakes up to about **M**6.5 (Falcucci et al., 2018).



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Figure 4. (a) Panoramic view of the Campotosto fault scarp; the arrows indicate places where fault scarp in the arenaceous bedrock have been detected; (b) Holocene terraces (white and yellow lines) displaced by the Campotosto fault; (c) fault plane placing the clayey-arenaceous Laga flysch in contact with colluvium probably deposited during the Late Pleistocene; (d) panoramic view of the trench excavated in 1998 across the Campotosto fault by Galadini and Galli (2003); the fault places the arenaceous bedrock of the Laga flysch in contact with colluvial units of Holocene age.

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Interpretations different from those presented here are provided by Boncio et al. (2004b) and Akinci et al. (2009). Boncio et al. (2004b) consider the Laga Mts. faults as the expression

397 of a single, unsegmented structure (Mt. Gorzano). Akinci et al. (2009) consider only the
398 Campotosto fault as a source capable of producing strong earthquakes; they justify this
399 hypothesis by neglecting the activity from the 1639 earthquakes with the argument that the
400 magnitudes are smaller than those reported in seismic catalogues, and hence the event
401 represents background seismicity. Bigi et al. (2012) propose another hypothesis in which the
402 surficial Campotosto fault is not directly connected with the seismogenic fault at depth, the
403 latter ending updip against a thrust plane inherited from the preceding compressive tectonic
404 phase. This hypothesis seems not to be in agreement with the 18 January 2017 events along
405 the Campotosto fault, whose ruptures cross-cut unhindered the supposed thrust plain
406 (Falcucci et al., 2018).

407 Although the DISS database (DISS Working Group, 2015) reported a fault in the Laga
408 Mts. area (within the debated seismogenic source ITDS073), single seismogenic sources
409 were not defined. However, this area is partly included in composite source ITCS028.

410 **MOMENT TENSOR AND AFTERSHOCK PATTERN**

411 In this and the following section, we present evidence for the mainshock events having
412 occurred on the Mt. Vettore-Mt. Bove fault system and the Amatrice fault. Additional
413 evidence of this is provided by the surface rupture data provided by Gori et al. (this issue)
414 and references therein.

415 Between 24 August and 30 October 2016, 17 events with $M > 4.2$ were recorded by the
416 Italian National Seismic Network (Rete Sismica Nazionale, RSN; www.gm.ingv.it/index.php/rete-sismica-nazionale/, last accessed 2 October, 2017) owned by
417 the Italian Institute of Geophysics and Vulcanology (Istituto Nazionale di Geofisica e
418 Vulcanologia, INGV). Table 2 shows parameters and locations of the six largest-magnitude
419 events from that sequence. Using event-type classification procedure by Wooddell and
420 Abrahamson (2014), we identified three mainshocks: (1) 24 August **M6.1**, (2) 26 October
421 **M5.9**, and (3) 30 October **M6.5** (bold entries in Table 2). Data for the 24 August **M6.1** and
422 26 October **M5.9** events are from Cheloni et al. (2017). Finite fault information for the 30
423 October **M6.5** events were evaluated in this study (Section *Finite Fault Models*). All other
424 data presented in Table 2 are from <http://cnt.rm.ingv.it> (last accessed 3 April, 2017).
425

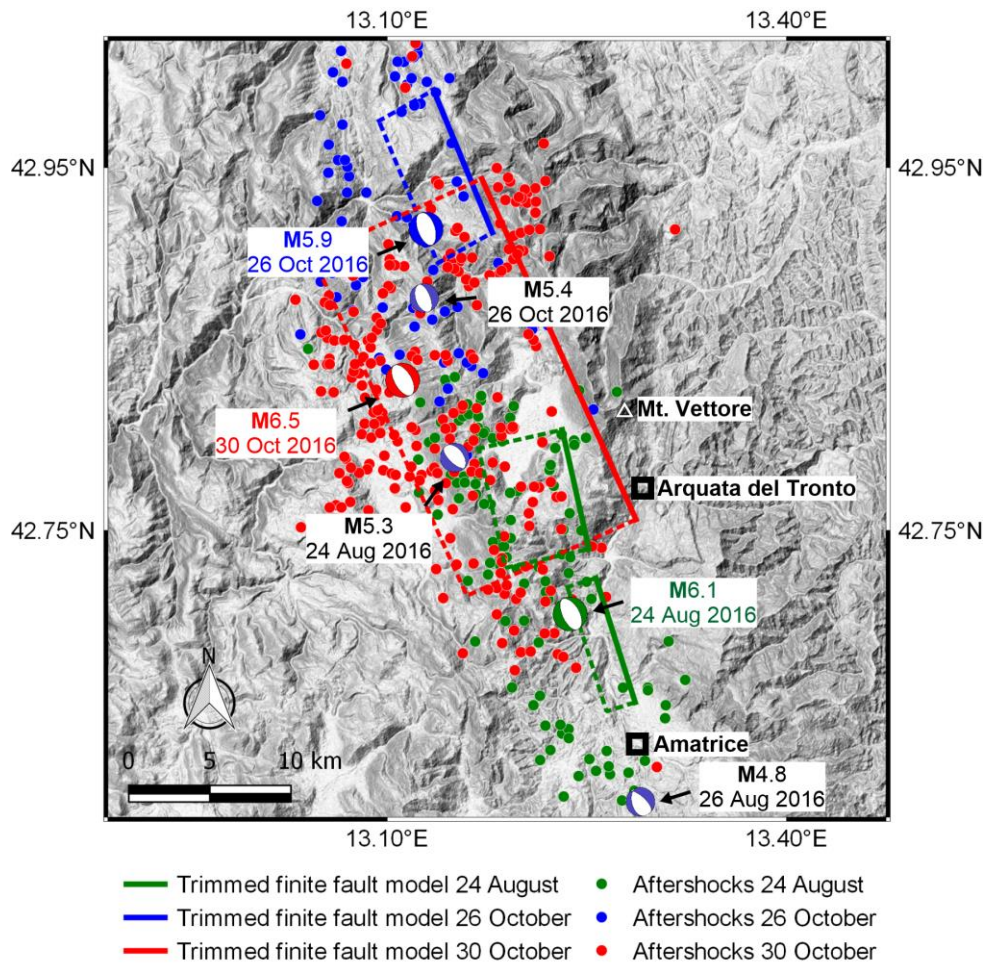
426 Figure 5 shows focal mechanisms for each mainshock event and $M > 5$ aftershocks. Each
427 mainshock involved normal slip on faults striking NW-SE and dipping to the SW. Specifics

428 for each event are given in Table 2. The focal mechanism of the 24 August 2016 event
 429 occurred in a gap between the mapped Mt. Vettore-Mt. Bove fault system to the north and the
 430 Amatrice fault to the south. It is possible that the focus of this event actually occurred at the
 431 northernmost tip of the Amatrice fault. The strike of the fault from the moment tensor is
 432 generally consistent with the orientation of both faults. The hypocenter locations, slip
 433 directions, and surface rupture suggest that the 26 and 30 October events occurred on
 434 segments of the Mt. Vettore-Mt. Bove fault system.

435 As shown in Figure 6, the number of aftershocks with $M > 3$ within 24 hour periods
 436 following each mainshock were 121 (24 August), 75 (26 October), and 258 (30 October).
 437 The aftershocks following the three considered mainshocks have clear spatial patterns. For
 438 the 24 August event, most aftershock epicenters are not within the surface projection of the
 439 finite fault model, with many south and west of the rupture. This pattern holds for the 26
 440 October event as well. The aftershocks pattern for the largest event (30 October) follows the
 441 expected pattern in which most epicenters occur within the surface projection of the rupture.

442 **Table 2.** Summary of the six main events that occurred in Central Italy between 24 August and 30
 443 October 2016

Date	Hour (UTC)	Latitude (N)	Longitude (E)	Depth (km)	M	Strike (deg)	Dip (deg)
08/24/2016	01:36:32	42.70	13.23	8	6.1	168	41
						Mt. Vettore-Mt. Bove fault system	
						163	52
						Amatrice fault	
08/24/2016	02:33:28	42.79	13.15	8	5.3	134	56
08/26/2016	04:28:25	42.60	13.29	9	4.8	165	36
10/26/2016	17:10:36	42.88	13.13	9	5.4	160	38
10/26/2016	19:18:05	42.92	13.13	8	5.9	158	43
10/30/2016	06:40:17	42.84	13.11	5	6.5	156	43



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Figure 5. Map showing locations of hypocenters for three mainshock events in central Italy between 24 August and 30 October 2016. Also shown are selected finite fault models for each event and aftershock patterns for the 24-hour periods post-rupture.

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FINITE FAULT MODELS

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Finite fault models of the seismic source are needed for ground motion analysis, which typically uses distance metrics such as closest distance to rupture plane (R_{rup}) or closest distance to surface projection (R_{JB}). This section briefly reviews the data used in the inversions of finite fault models and the models themselves, including trimming of the rupture dimensions applied in the present work.

454

CONSIDERED DATA

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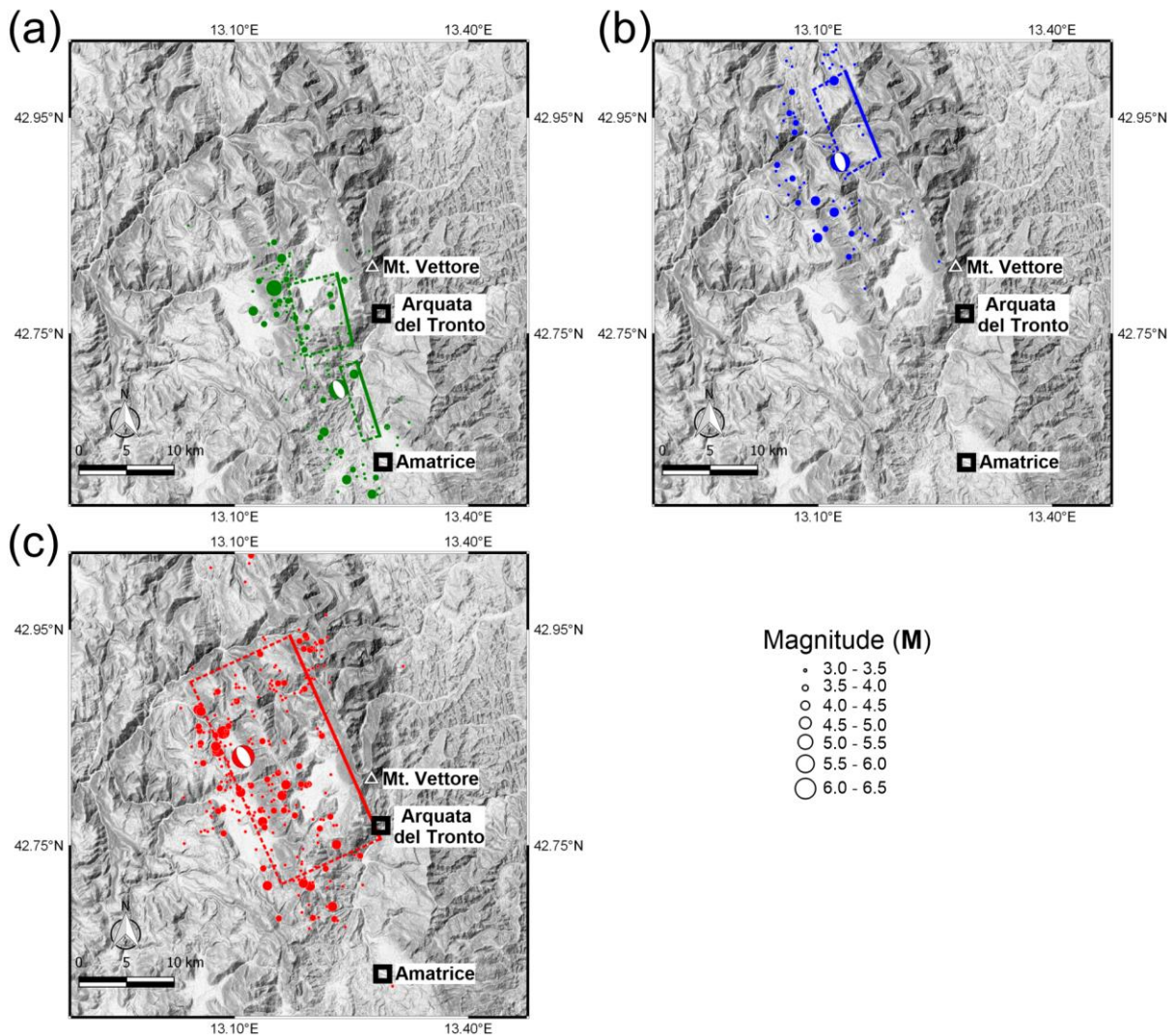
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In this section, we revisit the mechanisms of all three main shocks that occurred during the 2016-2017 Central Italy earthquake sequence (M6.1 24 August 2016, M5.9 26 October 2016, and M6.5 30 October 2016). We present a new source model that simultaneously fits the available measurements of the observed surface deformation. As in previous studies (Cheloni et al., 2017) for the 24 August M6.1 and 26 October M5.9 events, we use GPS data and

460 interferometric aperture radar (InSAR) measurements involving the ALOS-2 sensor. For the
461 30 October **M**6.5 event, we use the elastic dislocation modeling to determine the slip
462 distribution of the causative fault, integrating GPS and InSAR measurements with static
463 displacements derived from six strong motion stations. In this approach, static displacements
464 from ground motion records are used to complement GPS and InSAR measurements. While
465 both the GPS coseismic offsets and the ALOS-2 interferogram, relevant only to the 30
466 October earthquake have been already described in Cheloni et al. (2017), the static
467 displacements derived from the closets stations have never been previously used in the source
468 modeling and are presented here.



469
470 **Figure 6.** Spatial pattern of aftershocks that occurred in 24 hour periods following mainshocks on (a)
471 24 August, (b) 26 October, and (c) 30 October 2016. The finite fault model for each mainshock is
472 added to the Figures (next section).

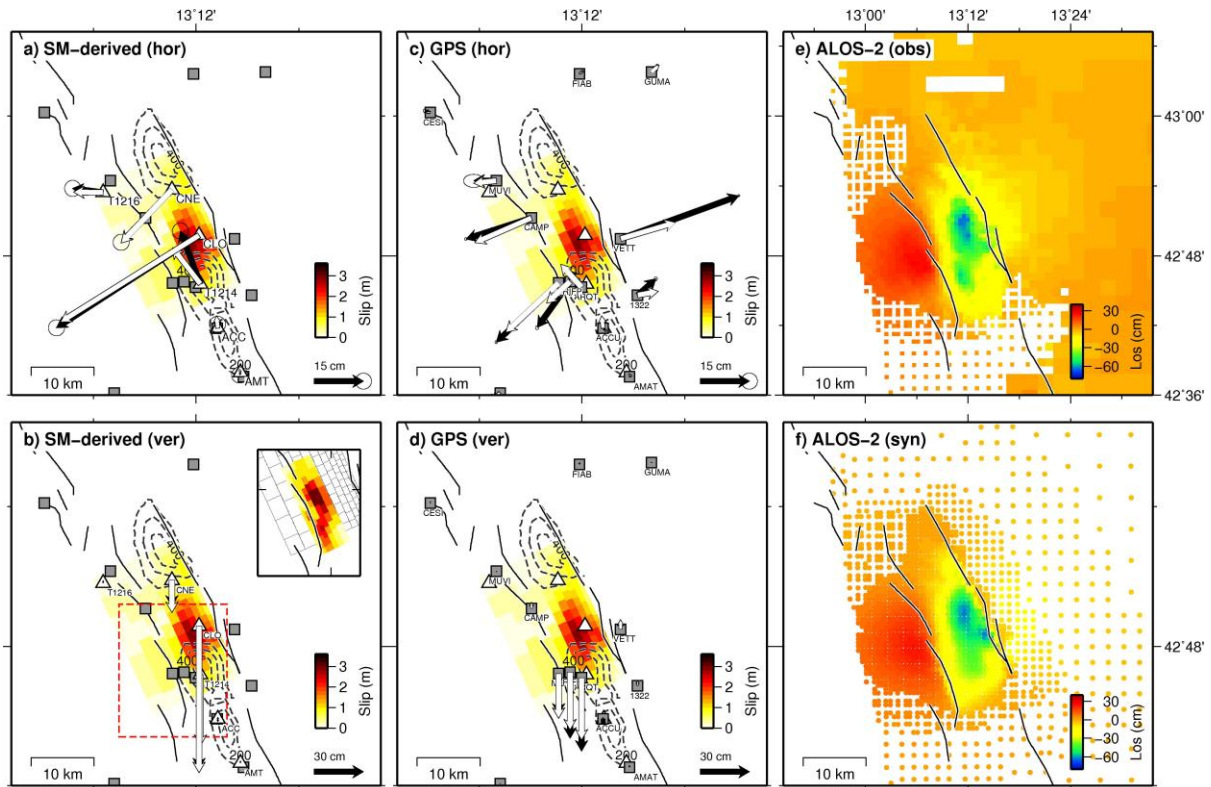
473 Near-fault strong motion data has been analyzed using special procedures (i.e. Gregor et
474 al., 2002) for the following stations: (1) Amatrice (AMT), (2) Accumoli (ACC), (3)
475 Castelluccio di Norcia (CLO), (4) Castelsantangelo sul Nera (CNE), (5) Forca Canapine
476 (T1214), and (6) Castelvechchio (T1216). Those procedures preserve fling-step displacements
477 (i.e. earthquake-related static ground displacements, resulting from fault rupture).

478 The largest static coseismic offsets identified from strong motion data (up to 50-80 cm)
479 were observed in the Castelluccio plain, coinciding with the area of the maximum observed
480 deformation as depicted by InSAR interferograms spanning the 30 October earthquake
481 (Cheloni et al., 2017). As shown in Figure 7, data from the CLO station indicates horizontal
482 offsets of about 52 cm towards the SW and about 87 cm of vertical subsidence. The CNE
483 station indicates horizontal movement of about 22 cm towards the SW and subsidence of
484 about 15 cm. Other strong motion stations (T1216, ACC, AMT, and T1214) are almost co-
485 located with GPS stations and show horizontal and vertical coseismic displacements in
486 agreement with the estimated GPS offsets (Figure 7). The CLO and CNE strong motion
487 stations, do not have co-located GPS sensors. As a result, these stations provide additional
488 displacement data useful for constraining the fault slip distribution for the **M**6.5 30 October
489 event.

490 **SELECTED MODELS**

491 Cheloni et al. (2017) presents finite fault models for the 24 August and 26 and 30 October
492 earthquakes. The trimmed versions of these models are shown in Figure 8. Details on the
493 trimming procedure are given by GEER (2016). For the 30 October event, we performed new
494 modeling using rectangular dislocations in a homogeneous elastic half-space (Okada, 1985)
495 to infer the slip distribution responsible for the surface displacements, as described in Cheloni
496 et al. (2014, 2016). In the modeling, we used a fault plane geometry ($156^{\circ}/43^{\circ}$, strike/dip) for
497 the 30 October **M**6.5 Norcia earthquake that is taken from Cheloni et al. (2017) with a small
498 translation and rotation to make it consistent with the new data set, and invert for the best-
499 fitting displacements of the dislocations, solving for rake and slip magnitude on each fault
500 patch. In addition, to better constrain the slip pattern in the inversion we also considered the
501 hypothesis, based on geodetic data, that a certain amount of slip during the 30 October
502 earthquake occurred on an antithetic fault (Figure 1c). To help fit the data better, we consider
503 a scenario with further slip on a an antithetic normal fault in addition to the majority of the
504 coseismic slip estimated on the Mt. Vettore-Mt. Bove fault related to the main shock. In

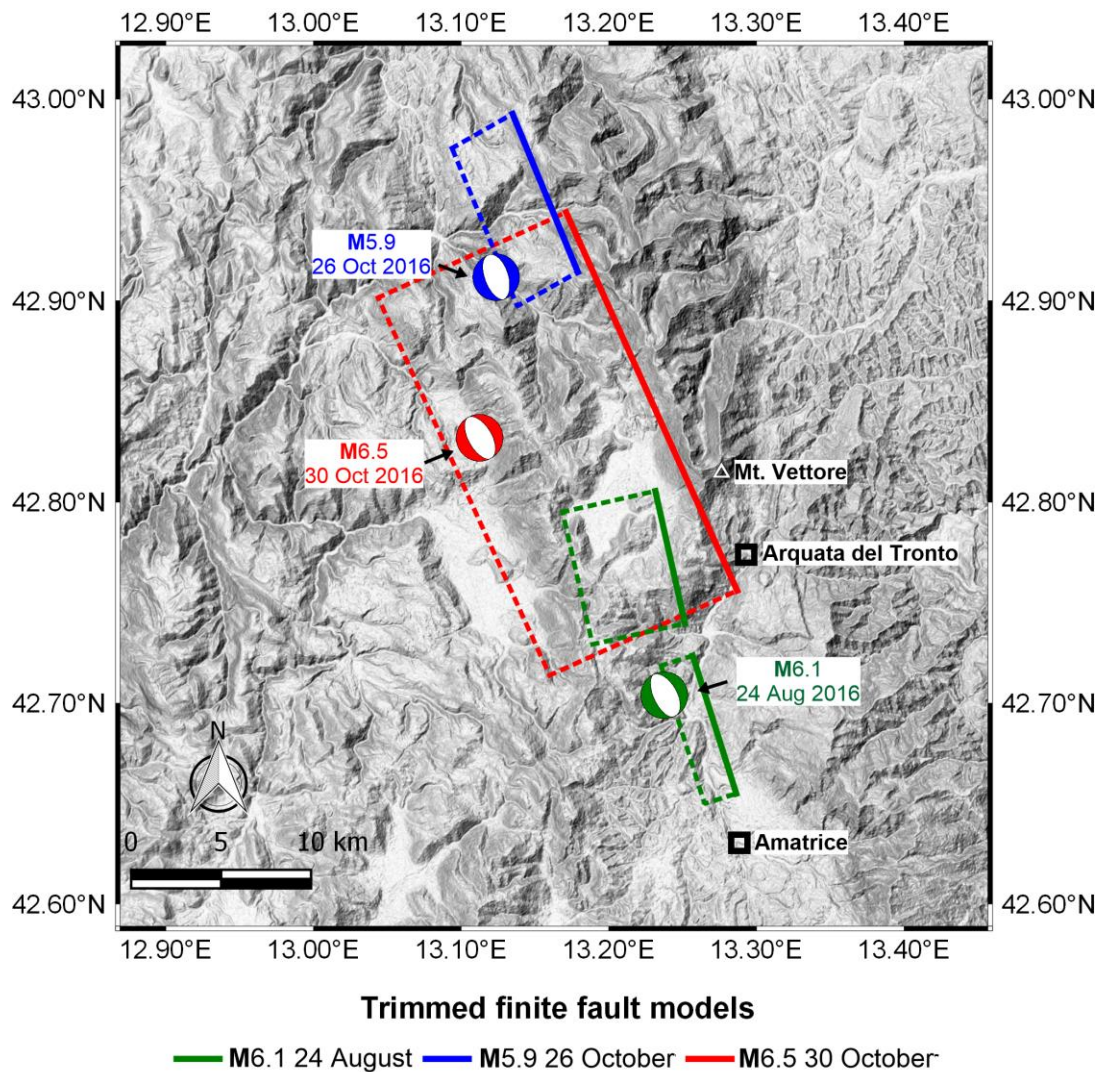
505 particular, we used the position and geometry of the antithetic fault ($335^{\circ}/50^{\circ}$, strike/dip)
 506 proposed by Cheloni et al. (2017) and well illuminated by aftershocks recorded three months
 507 following the earthquake (Chiaraluce et al. 2017).



508

509 **Figure 7.** (a) Strong motion (SM)-derived (black) and predicted (white) horizontal and (b) vertical
 510 displacements, (c) observed (black) and predicted (white) GPS horizontal and (d) vertical
 511 displacements, (e) observed and (f) modeled displacement fields from the unwrapped ALOS-2
 512 interferograms, relative to the **M**6.5 30 October event. The slip distributions are shown in panels a-d:
 513 the dashed lines are the contours of the 24 August and 26 October earthquakes from Cheloni et al.
 514 (2017), while the colors indicate an updated coseismic slip distribution of the 30 October event. The
 515 inset in panel (b) represent the modelled antithetic fault.

516 Our best-fit model can explain each data set reasonably well (RMS 2.6, 5.0 and 2.0 cm
 517 for GPS, InSAR and SM, respectively). The results show that the slip is concentrated in one
 518 main asperity within a depth of 0-7 km and the rupture touches the free surface in
 519 correspondence to the observed surface breaks (Gori et al., this issue) for a total length of >
 520 15 km, in agreement with the results of Cheloni et al. (2017). It is worth noting that where
 521 field mapping studies (Civico et al., 2018; Villani et al., 2018; Gori et al., this issue)
 522 documented the maximum surface breaks (up to > 1.5 m), the estimated shallow coseismic
 523 slip also reaches the maximum values. Finally, our model indicates a seismic moment of 9.04
 524 $\times 10^{18}$ Nm, equivalent to a **M**6.6 earthquake released by the Mt.Vettore-Mt. Bove fault
 525 system. The antithetic fault released a slip equivalent to an earthquake of magnitude 6.0.



527

528 **Figure 8.** Surface projections of the trimmed finite fault models for the M6.1 24 August, M5.9 26
 529 October, and M6.5 30 October events.

530

CONCLUSIONS

531 In this paper, we describe the Quaternary/active faulting setting for the region that
 532 produced the 2016-2017 Central Italy earthquake sequence, with an emphasis on the faults to
 533 which the mainshocks are attributed. We also present source attributes of the mainshocks
 534 (focal mechanisms and finite fault models) that support the conclusion that the causative fault
 535 for these events was principally the Mt. Vettore-Mt. Bove fault system with the Amatrice
 536 fault to the south being involved in the 24 August 2016 event.

537 In our analysis of regional fault systems and the present earthquake sequence, we address
 538 issues of fault segmentation based on Quaternary geological evidence, and the degree to
 539 which single earthquake events can rupture one or more seismogenic faults or multiple

540 adjacent segments of a single fault system. We review current understanding of this subject
541 for regional faults based on fault geometry, paleoseismic studies, neotectonic analyses
542 (concerning the evidence of fault activity through the Quaternary), and historical earthquake
543 observations. Most of the faults in the region are considered unlikely to rupture with
544 neighboring faults as multi-fault ruptures, due to kinematic differences expressed by different
545 long term (Quaternary) activity, relatively large gaps between faults and different strike and
546 dip angles, any of which suggest kinematically independent structures. Of course, the
547 potential for rupture on one seismogenic source to dynamically trigger ruptures on nearby
548 faults is present to varying degrees.

549 The Mt. Vettore-Mt. Bove fault system and the Amatrice fault are relatively proximate
550 and share similar strike and dip angles. They are considered different fault systems because
551 of the presence of the Ancona-Anzio lithospheric fault, representing a kinematic separation
552 between them. Falcucci et al. (2018) show that the presence of this lithospheric structure
553 allowed slip transfer between the two structures during the 24 August 2016 event. The
554 observations from the initial mainshock in the sequence (24 August 2016) was that rupture
555 involved both fault systems, which is relatively unusual for the region. The subsequent 30
556 October event produced rupture on multiple segments of the Mt. Vettore-Mt. Bove fault
557 system. Hence, these events provide valuable data that give rise to more complex questions
558 on how earthquake ruptures can cross between separate segments and faults in an extensional
559 environment. A more nuanced discussion of this issue is provided by Lyakhovsky et al.
560 (2016). We provide tabular information on the principal fault systems in the region, including
561 earthquake size, recurrence and segment geometries. We anticipate that this collection of
562 information will be useful in future source modeling studies. Moreover, we provide source
563 attributes for the mainshock events in the 2016-2017 earthquake sequence, which will be
564 useful for ground motion studies, including those presented in Zimmaro et al. (this 2018, in
565 this issue).

566

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578

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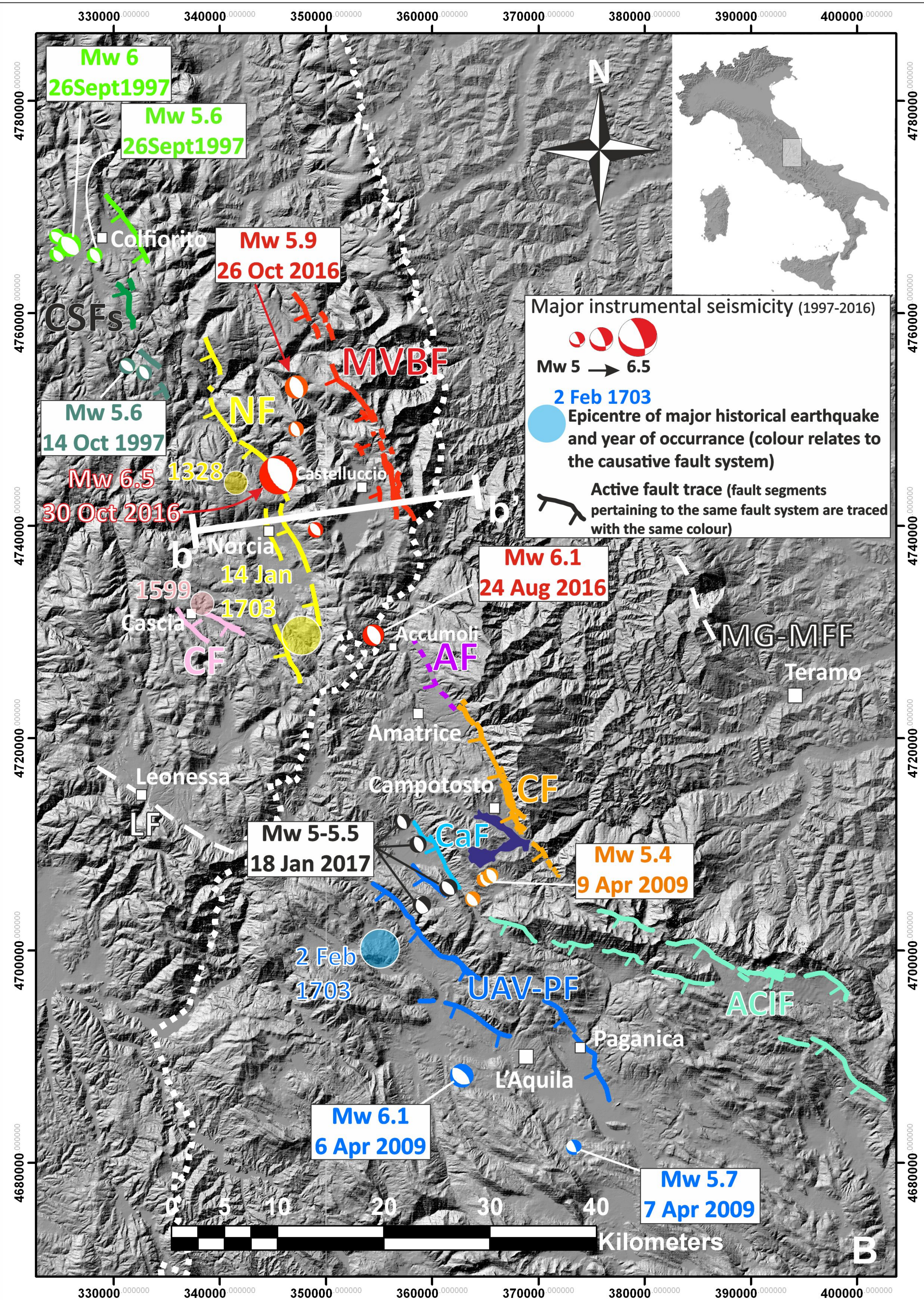
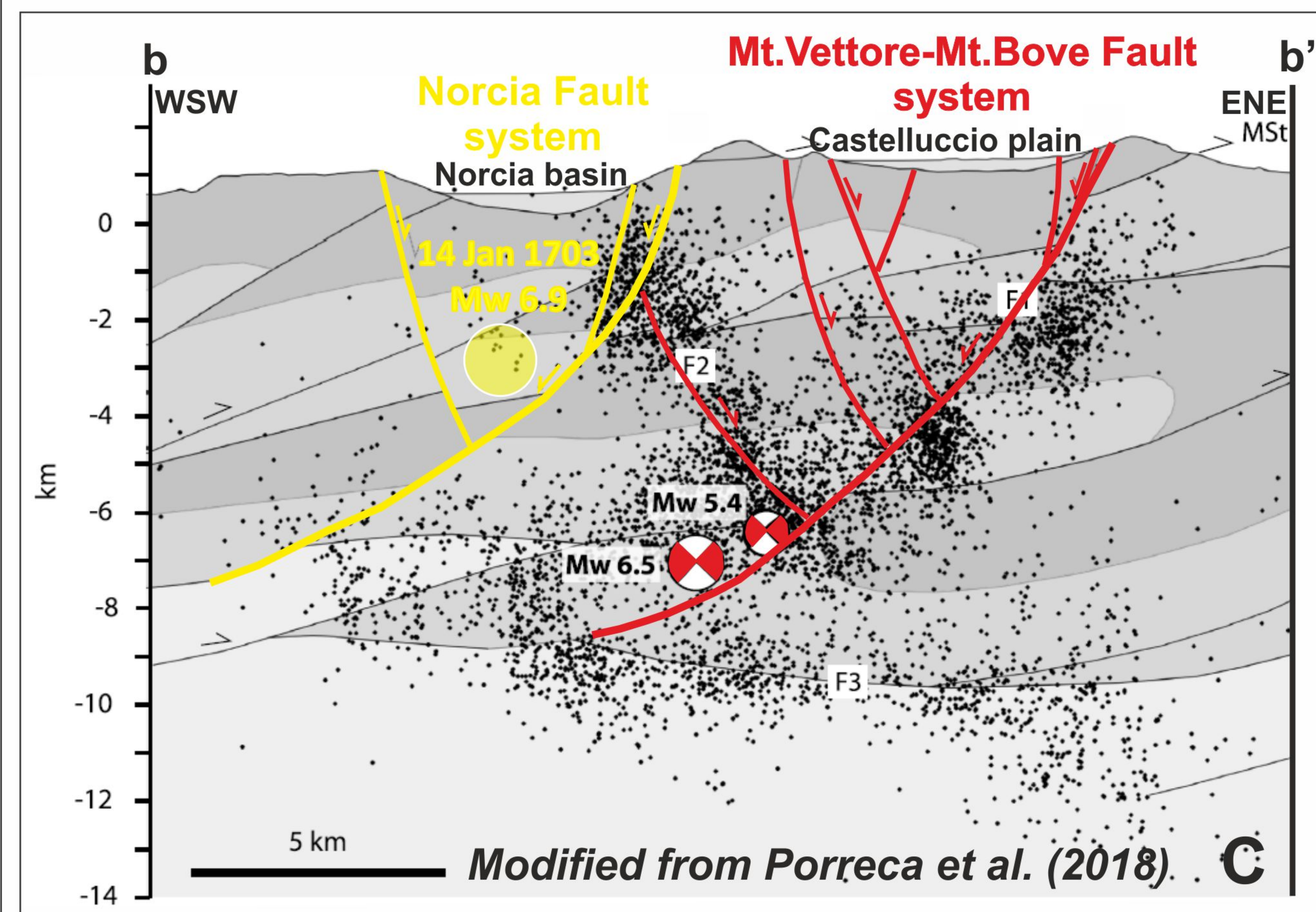
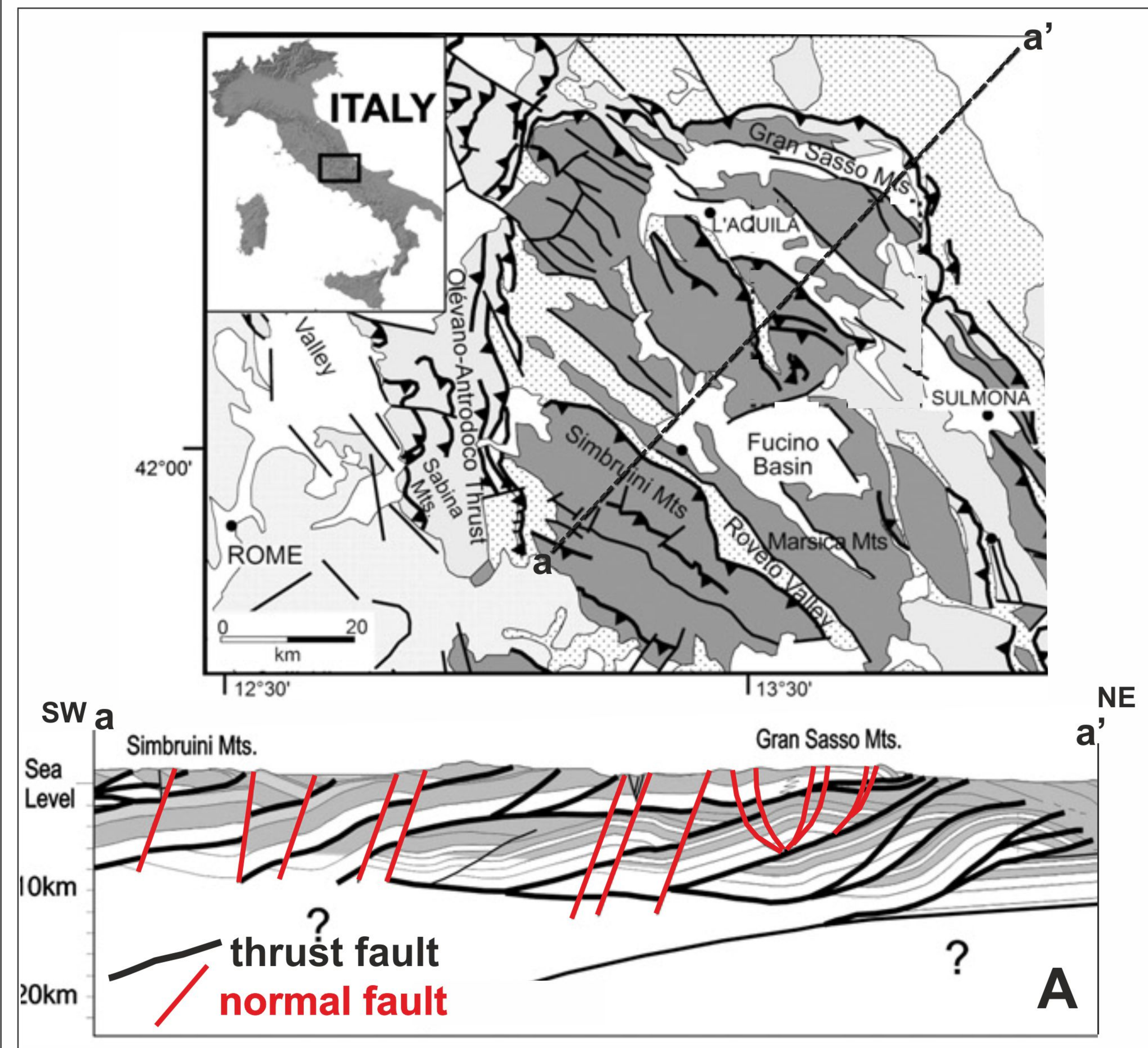
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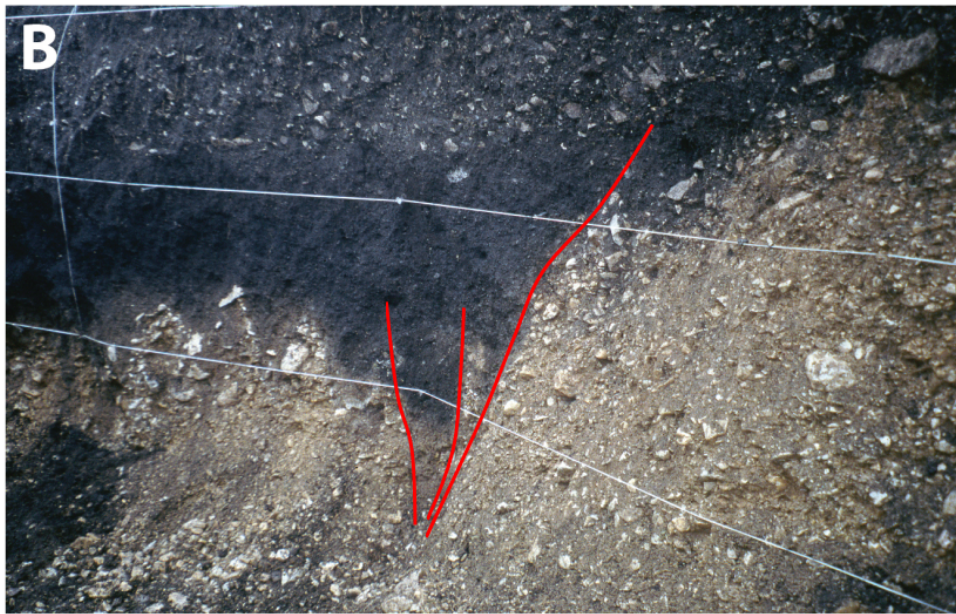
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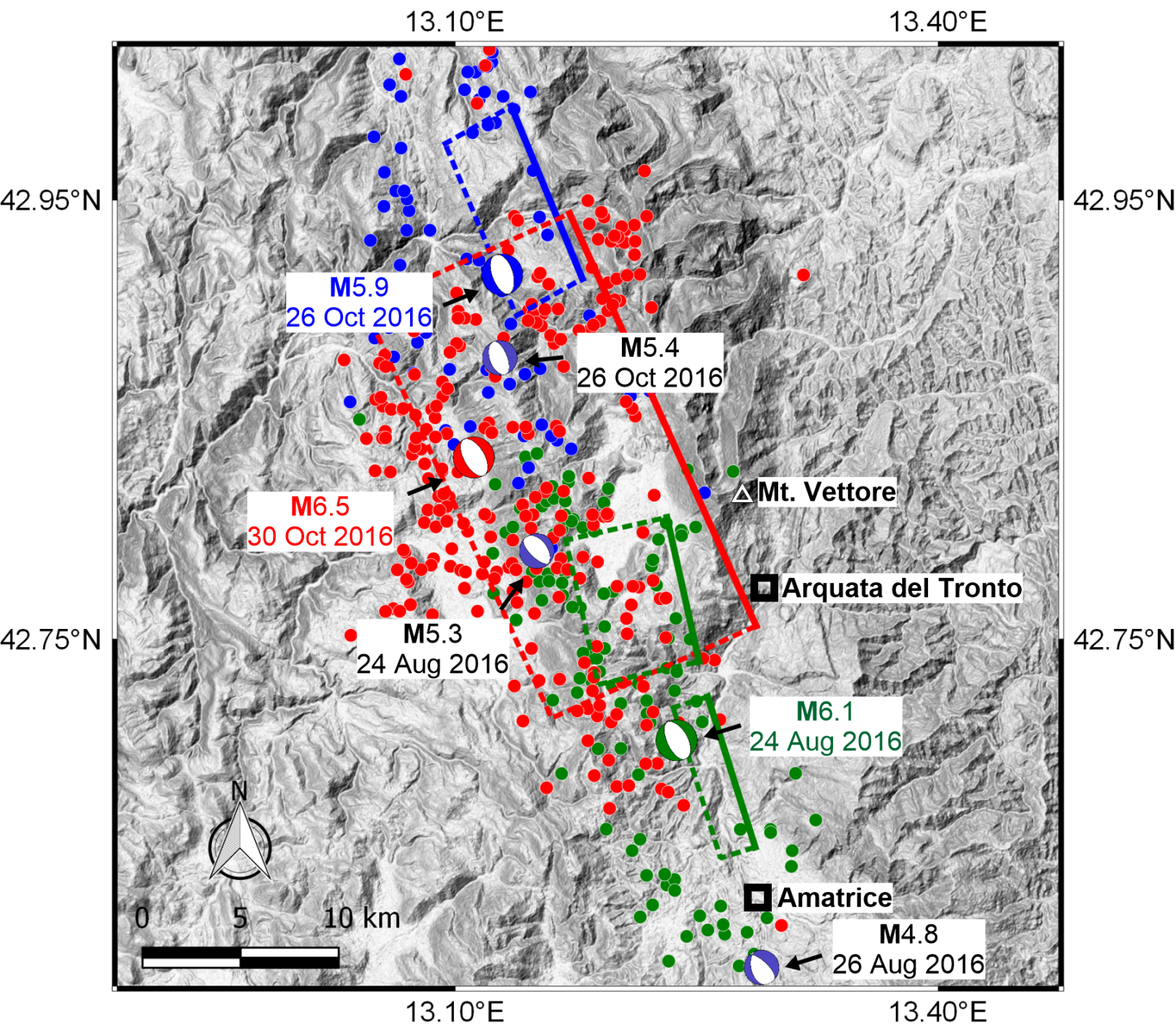
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A**B****C**

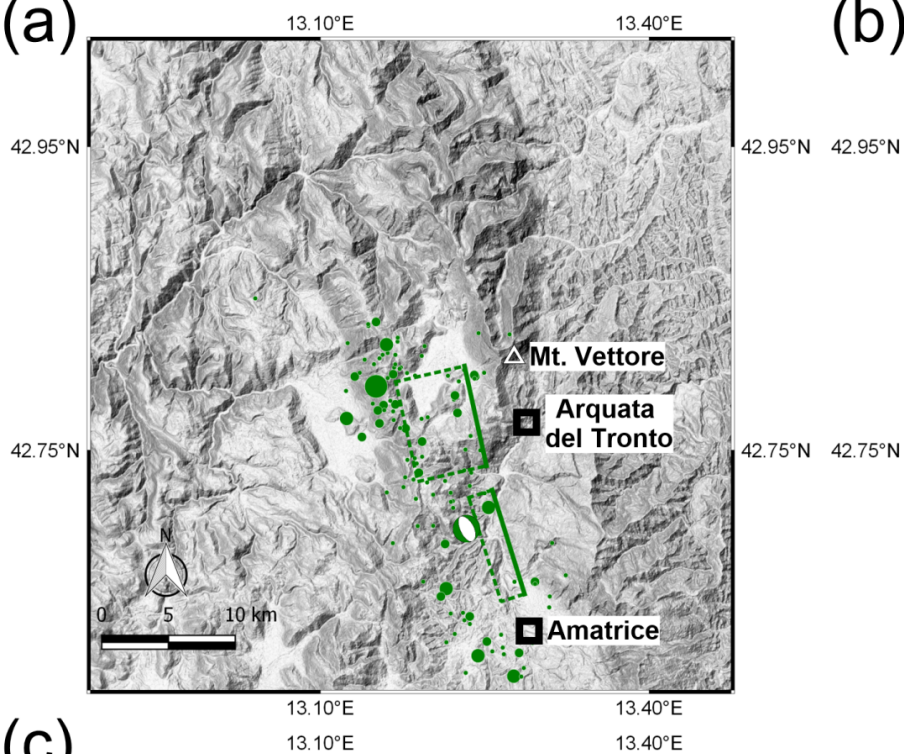
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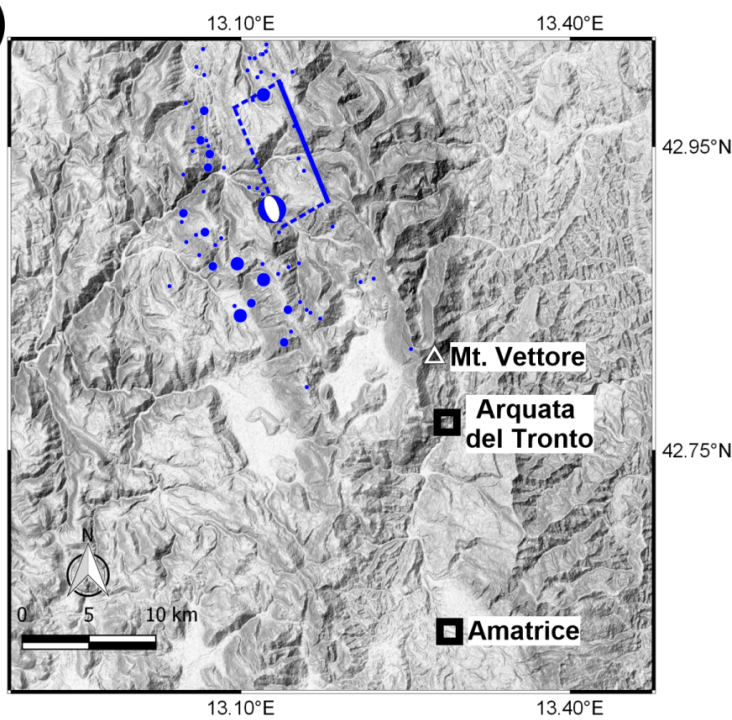


- | | |
|---|--|
| — Trimmed finite fault model 24 August | ● Aftershocks 24 August |
| — Trimmed finite fault model 26 October | ● Aftershocks 26 October |
| — Trimmed finite fault model 30 October | ● Aftershocks 30 October |

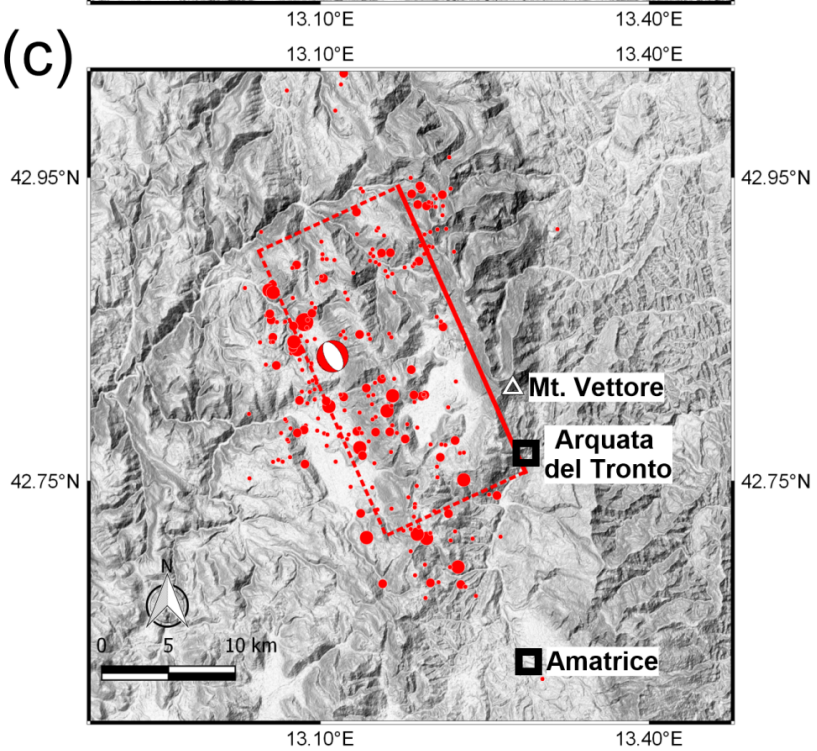
(a)



(b)

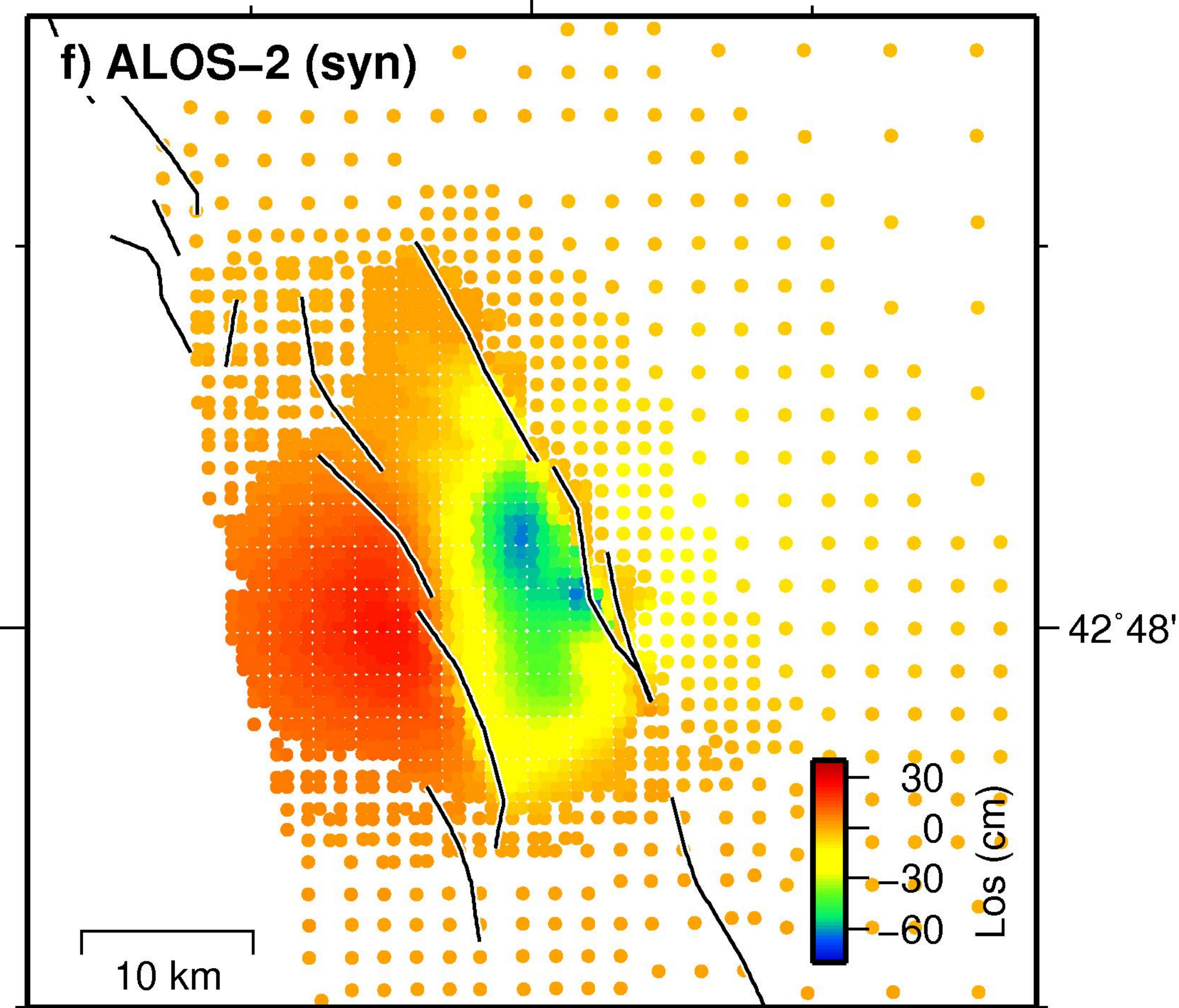
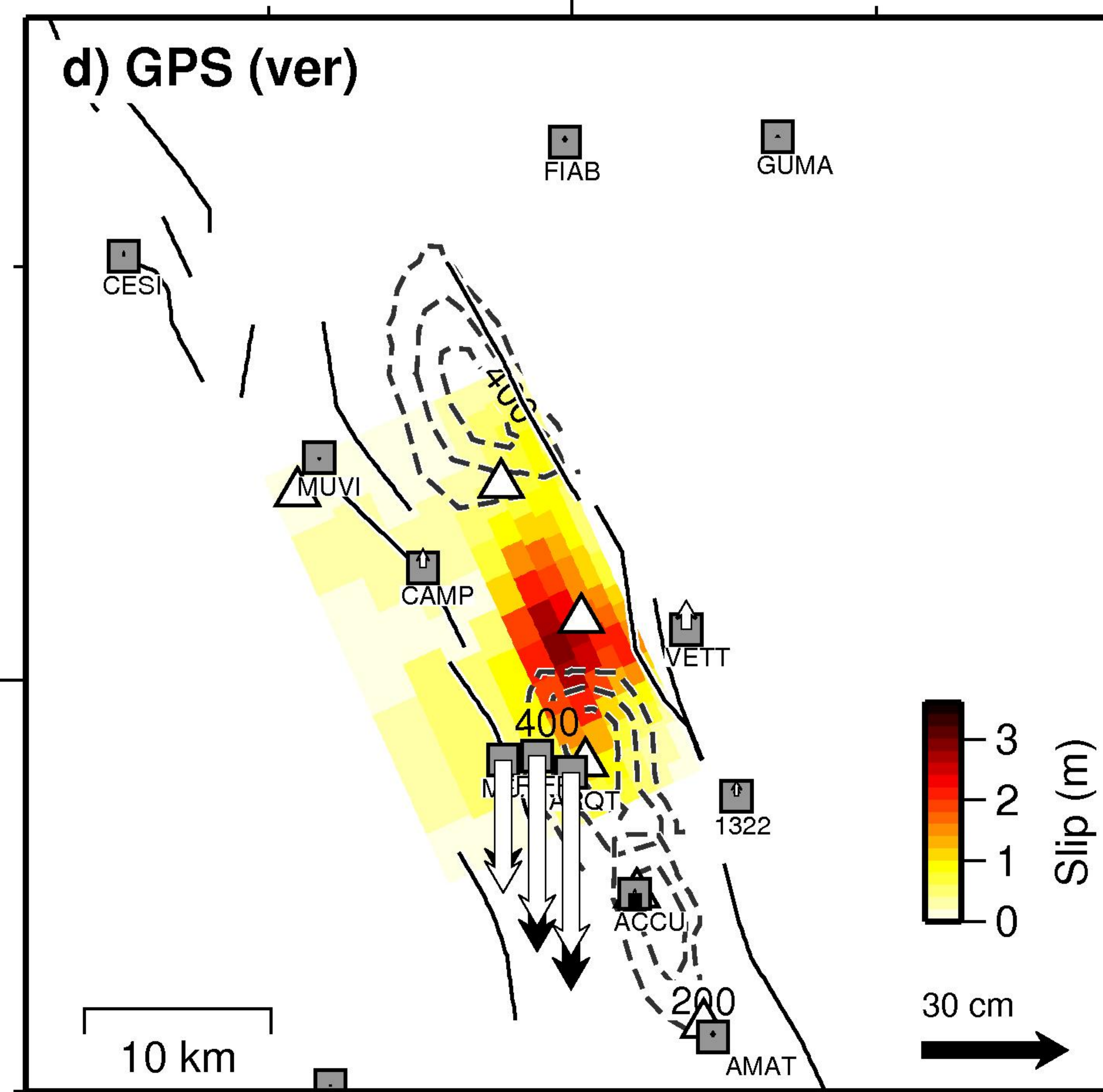
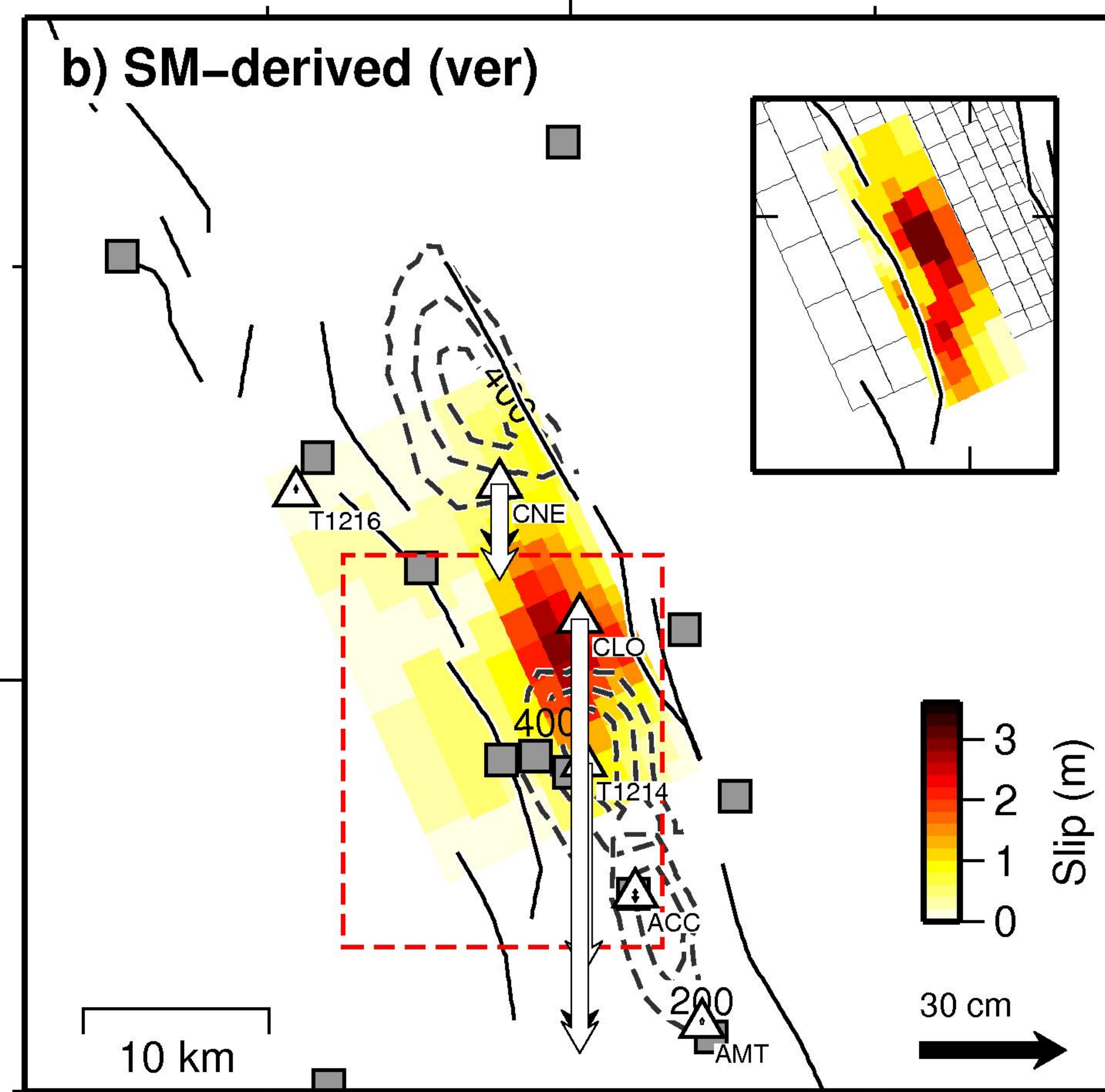
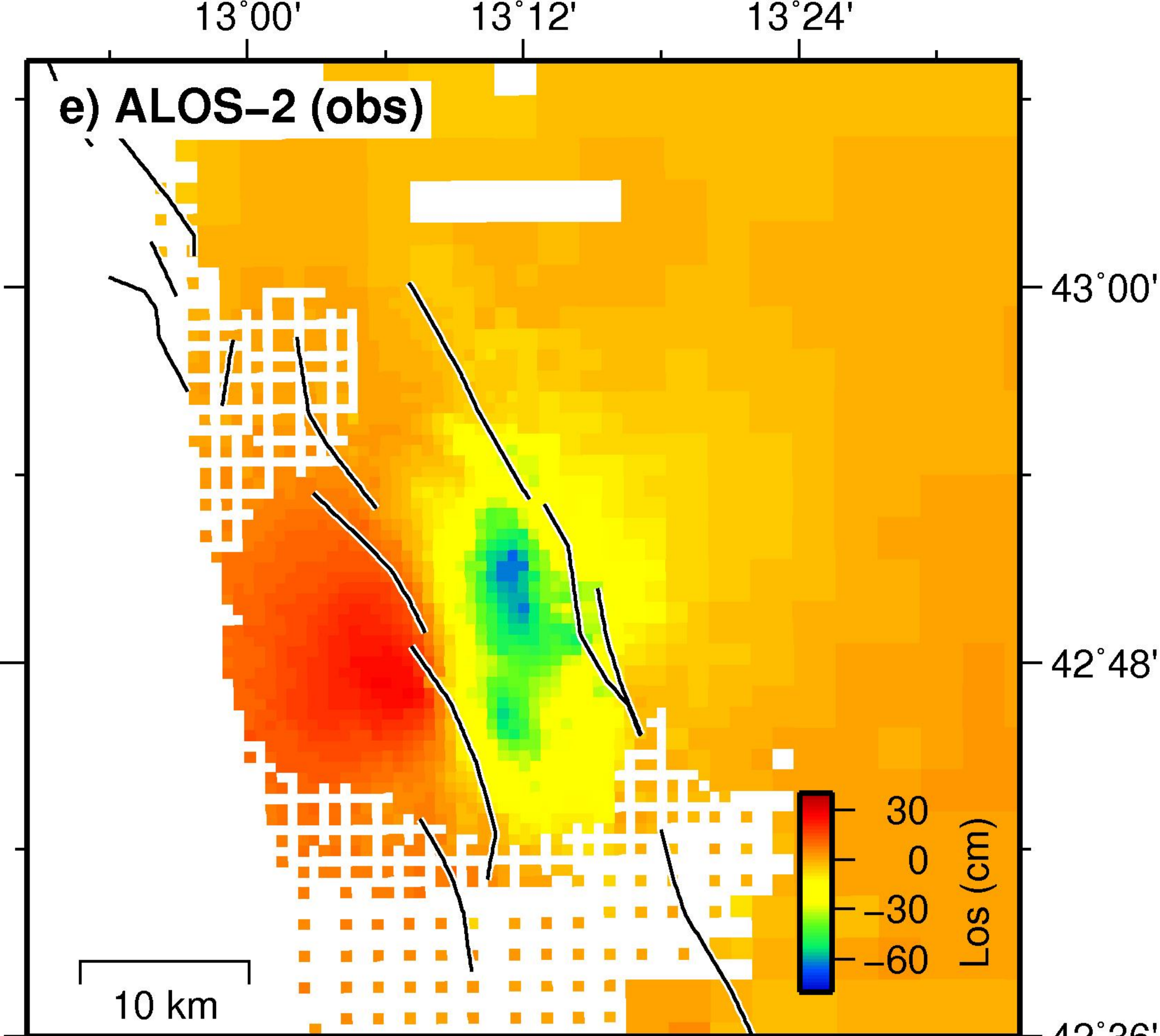
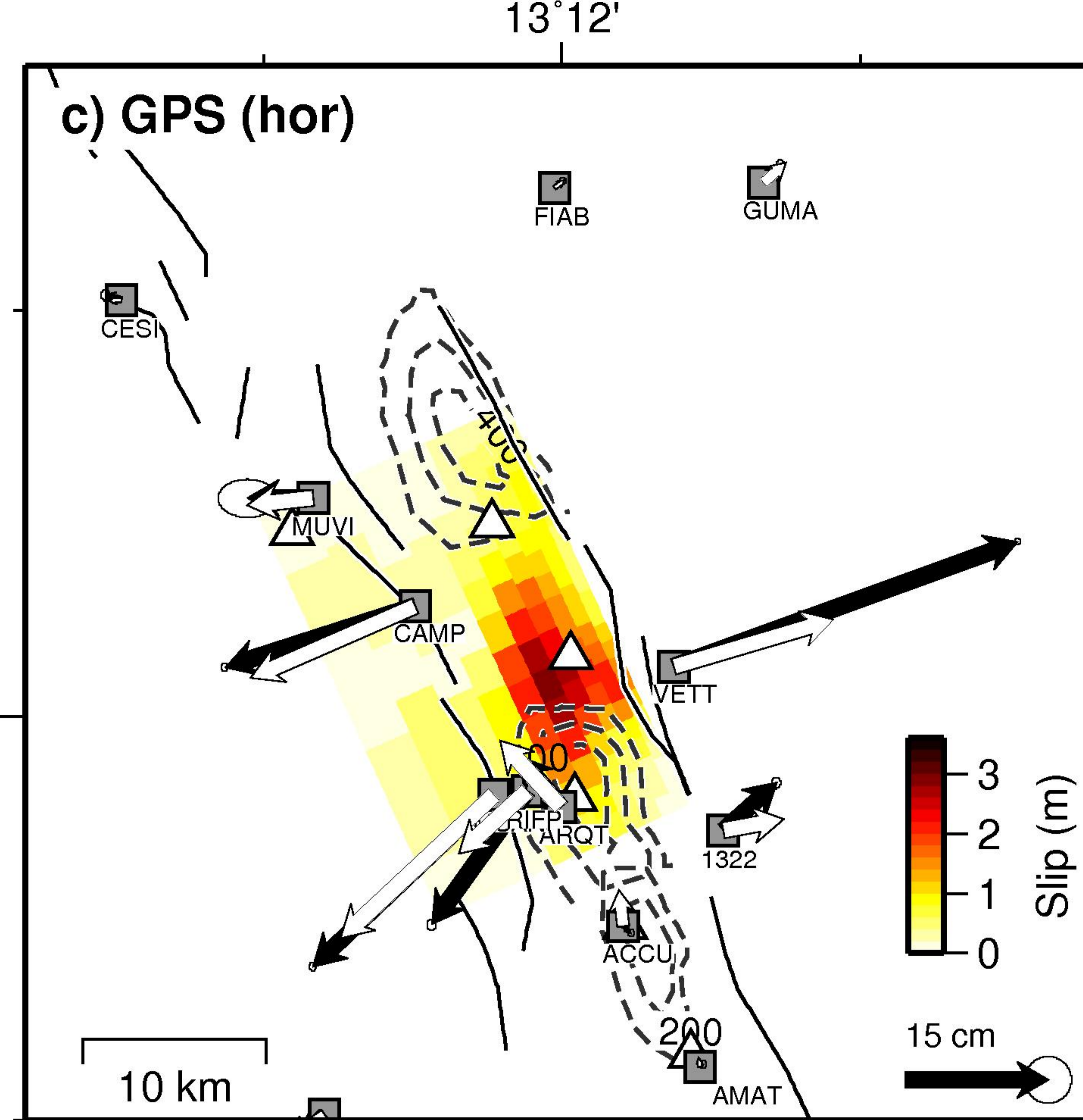
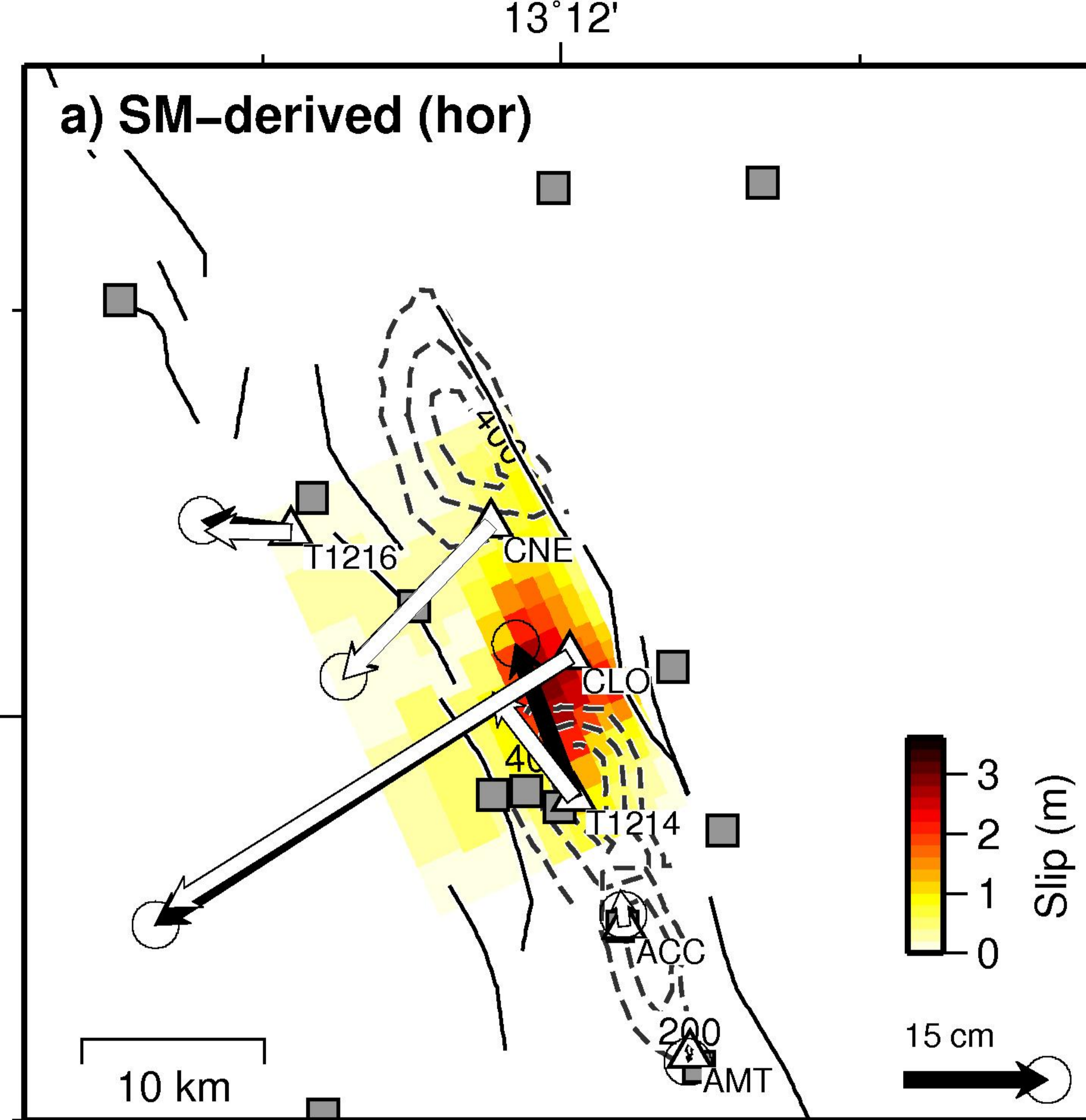


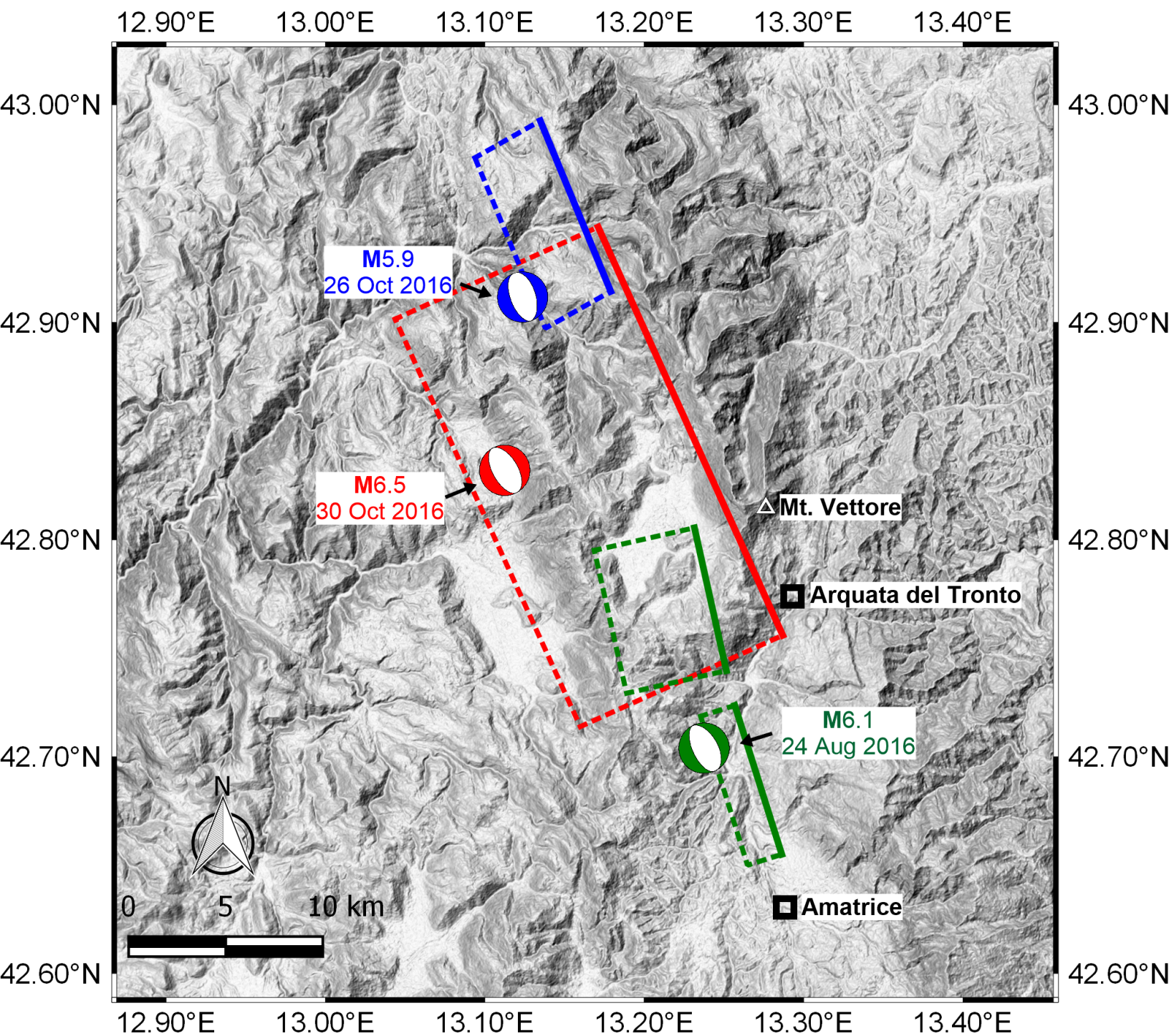
(c)



Magnitude (M)

- 3.0 - 3.5
- 3.5 - 4.0
- 4.0 - 4.5
- 4.5 - 5.0
- 5.0 - 5.5
- 5.5 - 6.0
- 6.0 - 6.5





Trimmed finite fault models

— M6.1 24 August — M5.9 26 October — M6.5 30 October