

Workflow and Analysis Tools for the Characterization of Fractured Reservoirs*

Arnaud G. Lange¹, Andre Fournio¹, Matthieu Delorme¹, Nina Khvoenkova¹, and Catherine Ponsot-Jacquin¹

Search and Discovery Article #40424 (2009)

Posted June 10, 2009

*Adapted from oral presentation at AAPG International Conference and Exhibition, Cape Town, South Africa, October 26-29, 2008

¹Simulation of flows and transfers in porous media, IFP, Rueil-Malmaison, France (<mailto:arnaud.lange@ifp.fr>)

Abstract

The workflow developed at IFP for characterizing fractured reservoirs is based on: (i) the construction of geologically-realistic models of the fracture network; (ii) the characterization of fracture properties from available field data; (iii) the up-scaling of the fracture properties; (iv) the selection of a suitable up-scaled model usable for field-scale simulations of multi-phase production methods. This fractured reservoir workflow is reviewed, and a software platform is presented, on which methodologies and tools were developed in order to perform each step of the workflow.

A geologically-realistic model is presented on which constrained modeling of the geological fracture network based on the analysis of fracture information acquired in wells and derived from seismic data has been performed. Then optimization algorithms and a 3D discrete fracture network flow simulator are used in order to automatically characterize fracture properties that are consistent with transmissivities data, flowmeters and/or well tests data. The characterized fracture properties are the mean length, mean conductivity, orientation dispersion factors, and facies-dependent properties such as the average spacing and the bed-crossing probability. The effectiveness of the optimization algorithms to characterize physically meaningful and data-consistent fracture properties is discussed. Finally, full-field upscaling of the fracture properties has been performed such that a single or dual-porosity simulation model can be used at field scale, taking into account the multi-scale fracture properties.

This consistent workflow allows flow simulation models to remain interpretable in geological terms, therefore facilitating subsequent model updating. Moreover, specialists in geosciences and reservoir engineers can cooperate in a very effective way to improve the management of fractured reservoirs.

Workflow and Analysis Tools for the Characterization of Fractured Reservoirs

AAPG International
Conference & Exhibition
26-29th October 2008

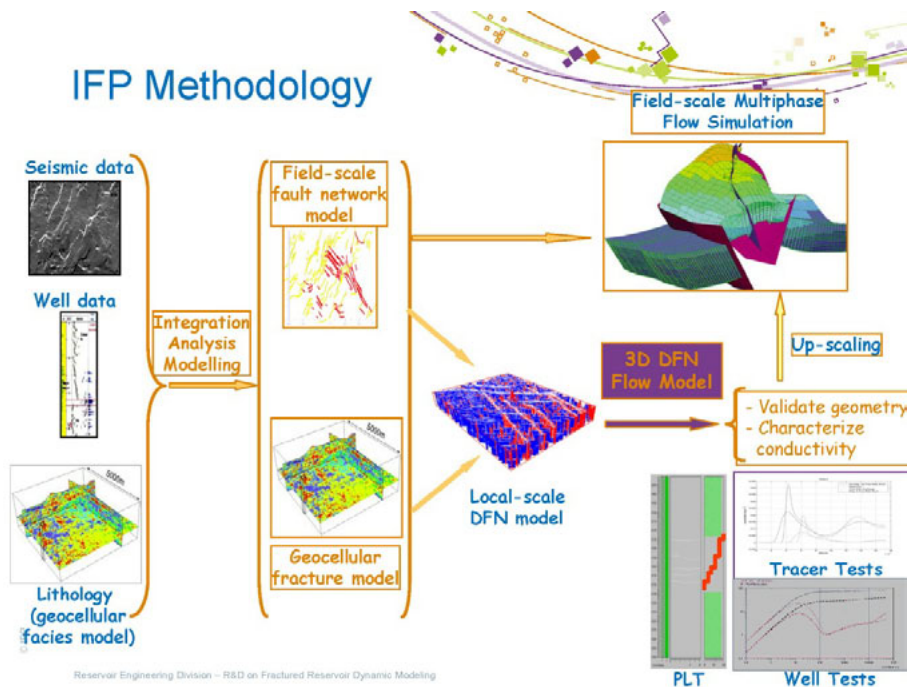
A.Lange, A.Fournio, M.Delorme,
N.Khvoenkova and C.Ponsot-Jacquin





Objectives

- To identify & characterize the main geological drivers on multi-scale natural fractures based on:
 - Geological data (BHI, cores, logs)
 - 3D seismic (seismic facies analysis)
 - Dynamic data
- To compute the equivalent fracture properties (fracture porosity, permeability and block sizes):
 - Hydraulic fracture characterization



Notes by Presenter: The methodology developed at IFP in the past years consists in:

- First, integrating all available data about fracture properties - from seismic measurements, well data ... the geocellular facies model,
- in order to build two models:
 - a **discrete model of large-scale** fractures and faults, mainly derived from the analysis of seismic attributes,
 - at a lower scale, a **geocellular model of fracture properties** that is consistent with the facies geomodel of the reservoir, giving the fracture density and orientation per fracture set per facies,

These models provide the necessary information for generating **local discrete fracture network models** anywhere in the reservoir. These local models are then used for assessing the flow properties of the fracture network via our 3D DFN flow model.

Interference, well tests and PLT can be simulated and calibrated with available dynamic field data in order to:

- validate the geological DFN model geometry.
- characterize the fracture conductivity for each set.

Then the flow properties may be upscaled to an appropriate field-scale flow simulation model to optimise reservoir production. Therefore this methodology allows the reservoir engineer to convert geological models into representative flow models.



IFP Methodology

■ Advantages

- Geologically-realistic models of fracture networks
- 3D DFN flow simulator
- Dual-medium approach, 1K and 2K
- Fast image processing algorithm for matrix discretization
- Reservoir model consistent with geological model

■ Drawbacks

- DFN (realizations of stochastic fracture model)
- Single-phase (oil or gas)
- Characterization not automatic → Automated calibration
- Computer-intensive for dense DFN → Simplified DFN (A.Fourno)

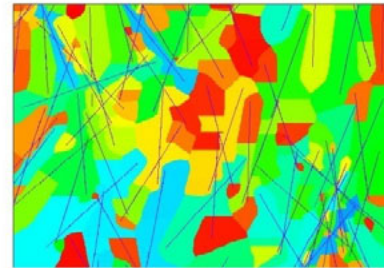
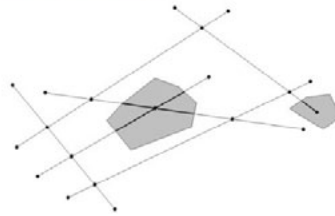
3D Dual-Porosity Flow Model

(SPE 88675, 94344)

 Barenblatt and Zheltov (1960) :

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Fracture medium:} & \quad \nabla \cdot (k_f \nabla P_f) + \alpha_{mf} (P_m - P_f) = c_f \cdot \mu_o \cdot \phi_f \cdot \frac{\partial P_f}{\partial t} , \\ \text{Matrix medium:} & \quad \nabla \cdot (k_m \nabla P_m) - \alpha_{mf} (P_m - P_f) = c_m \cdot \mu_o \cdot \phi_m \cdot \frac{\partial P_m}{\partial t} , \end{aligned}$$

- **Originality:** Finite Volume Solving on the discretized geological fracture model



Discretized middle plane of a stratum

© IFP

Reservoir Engineering Division – R&D on Fractured Reservoir Dynamic Modeling

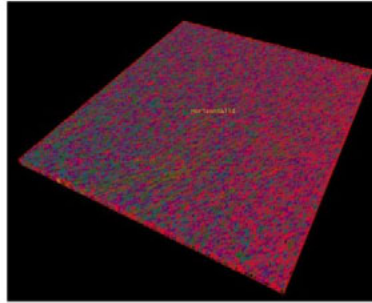
Notes by Presenter: It is generally agreed that a double-porosity, single-permeability model is suitable for a connected fracture network and a matrix medium that only acts as a source of fluids. Otherwise, as soon as the flow in the matrix has to be taken into account, the double-porosity, double-permeability model should be used. However, it may be difficult to estimate the connectivity property of a random fracture network, or whether the matrix/fracture permeability contrast does actually lead to non-negligible contributions from the matrix medium in terms of flow.

Moreover uncertainties in the geometrical properties of the fracture network, such as the fracture length distribution, may affect the connectivity of the network, particularly around the percolation threshold. As a result it is not always straightforward to identify which model should be used in practice.

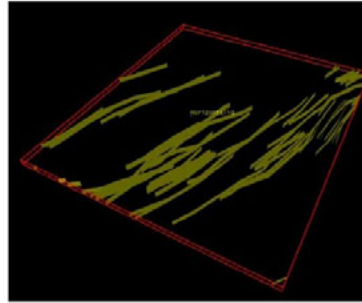
We illustrate this issue by performing a sensitivity analysis on a realistic case combining both small-scale fractures and major objects such as seismic and sub-seismic faults.

3D Dual-Porosity Flow Model

(SPE 88675, 94344)



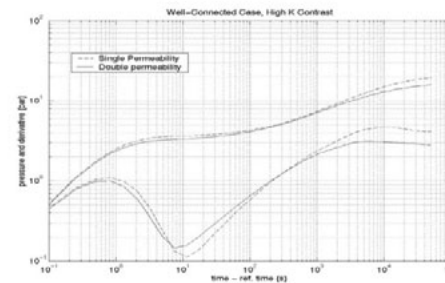
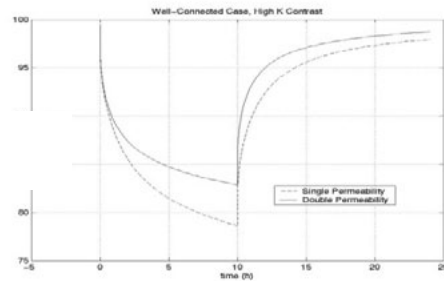
Full fracture network.



Fault network alone.

• Domain Properties:

- $L_x = 742$ m,
- $L_y = 877$ m,
- Thickness: 10 m.



Notes by Presenter: It is generally agreed that a double-porosity, single-permeability model is suitable for a connected fracture network and a matrix medium that only acts as a source of fluids. Otherwise, as soon as the flow in the matrix has to be taken into account, the double-porosity, double-permeability model should be used. However, it may be difficult to estimate the connectivity property of a random fracture network, or whether the matrix/fracture permeability contrast does actually lead to non-negligible contributions from the matrix medium in terms of flow.

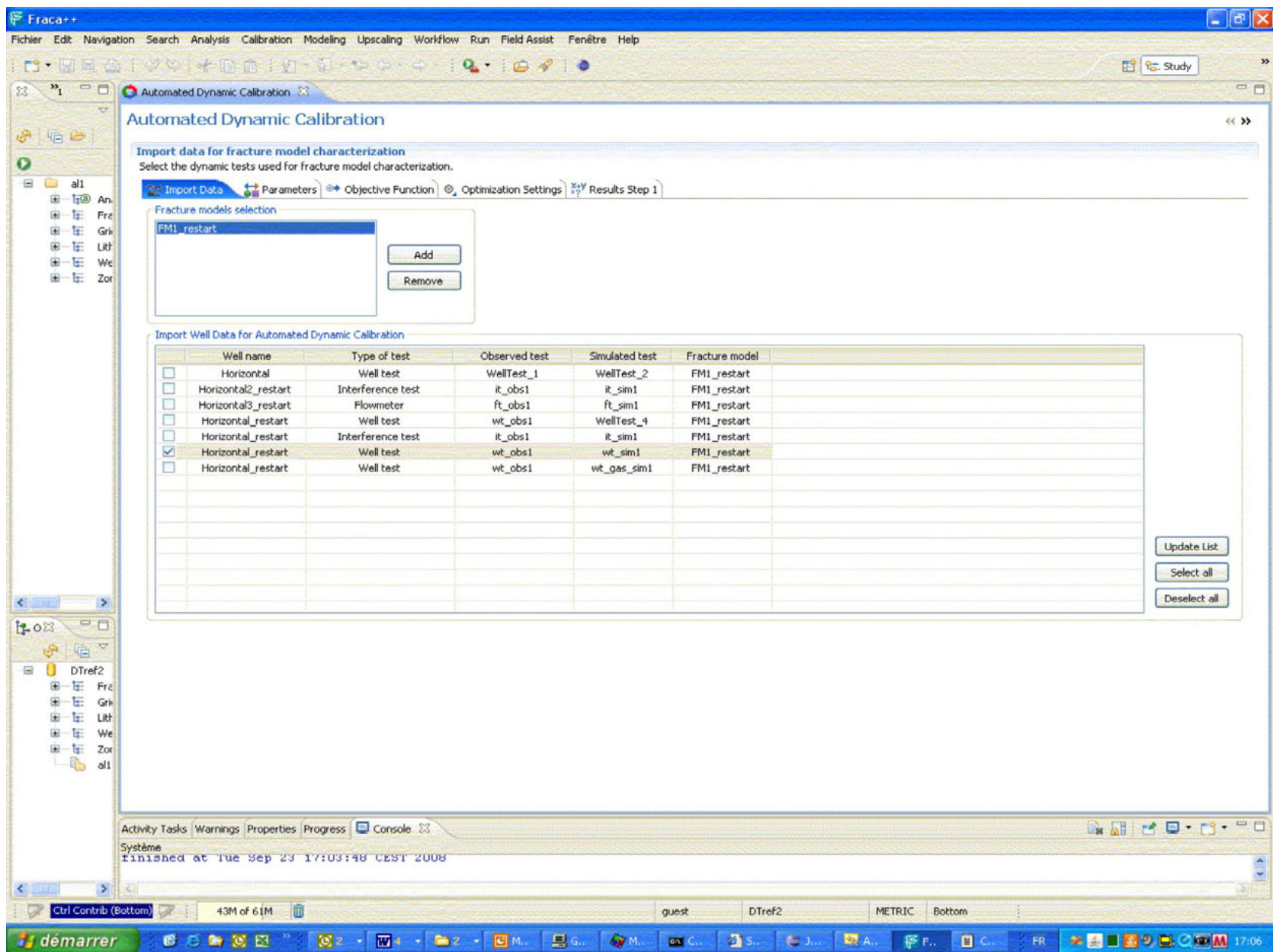
Moreover uncertainties in the geometrical properties of the fracture network, such as the fracture length distribution, may affect the connectivity of the network, particularly around the percolation threshold. As a result it is not always straightforward to identify which model should be used in practice.

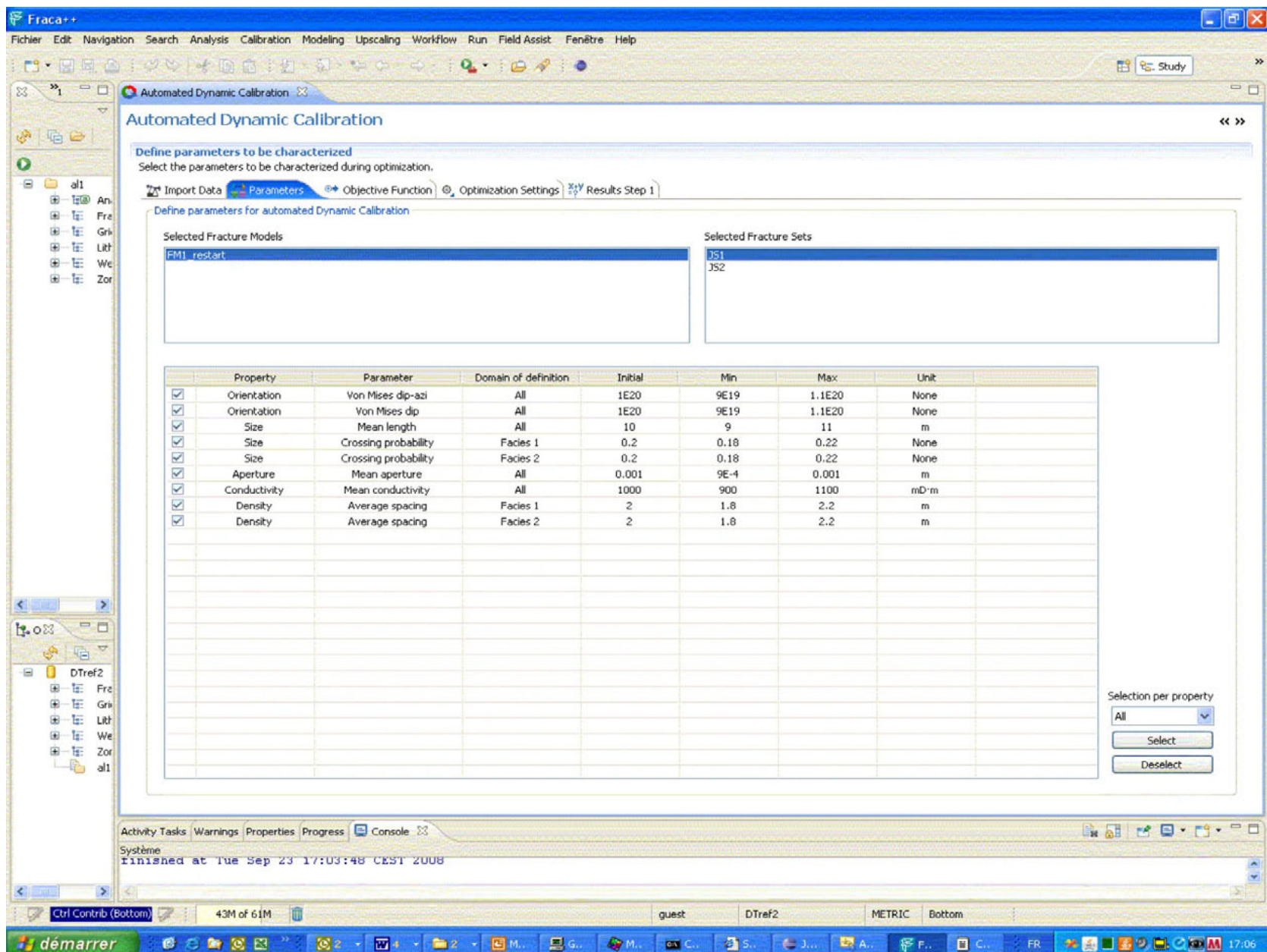
We illustrate this issue by performing a sensitivity analysis on a realistic case combining both small-scale fractures and major objects such as seismic and sub-seismic faults.

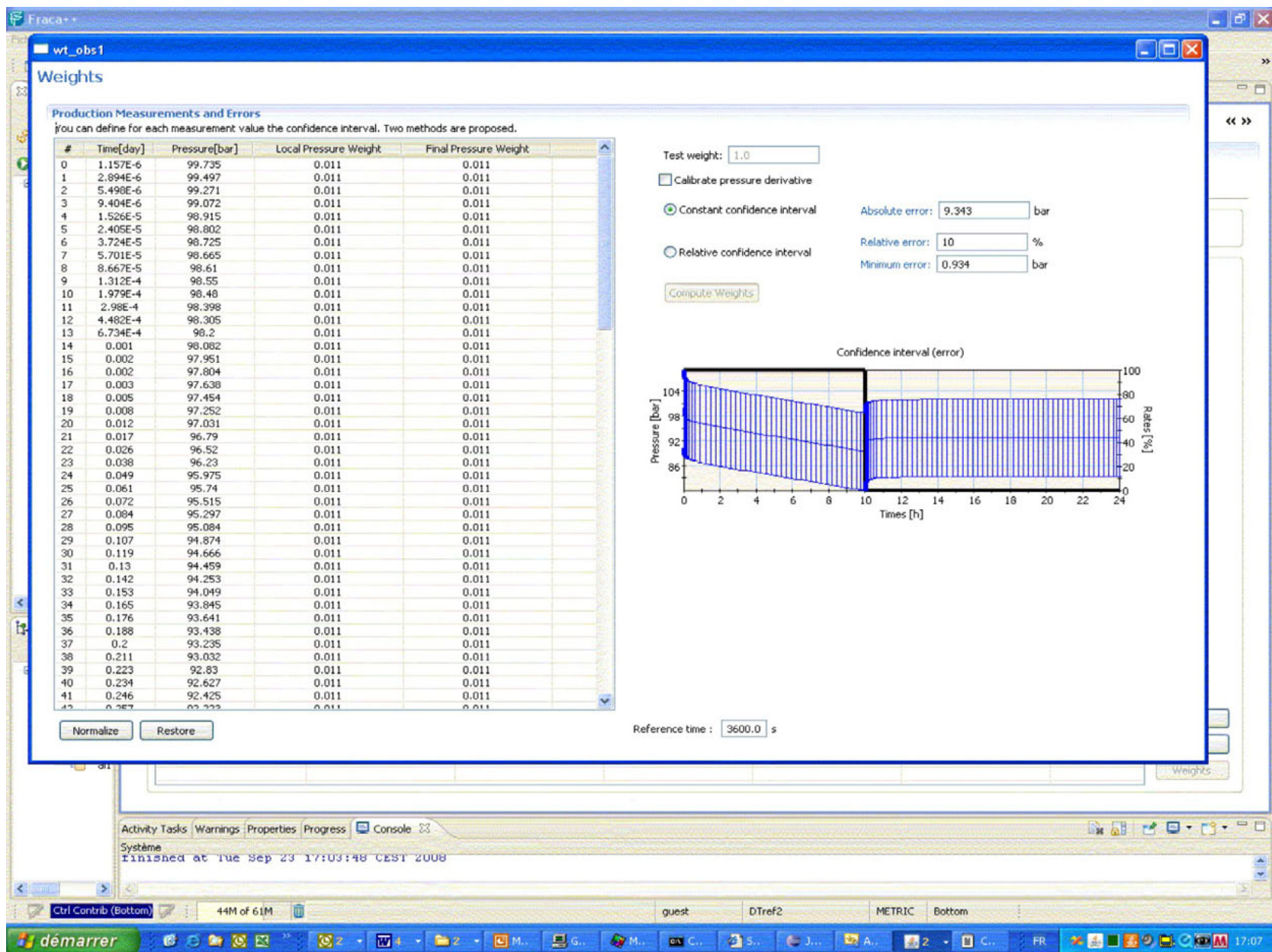


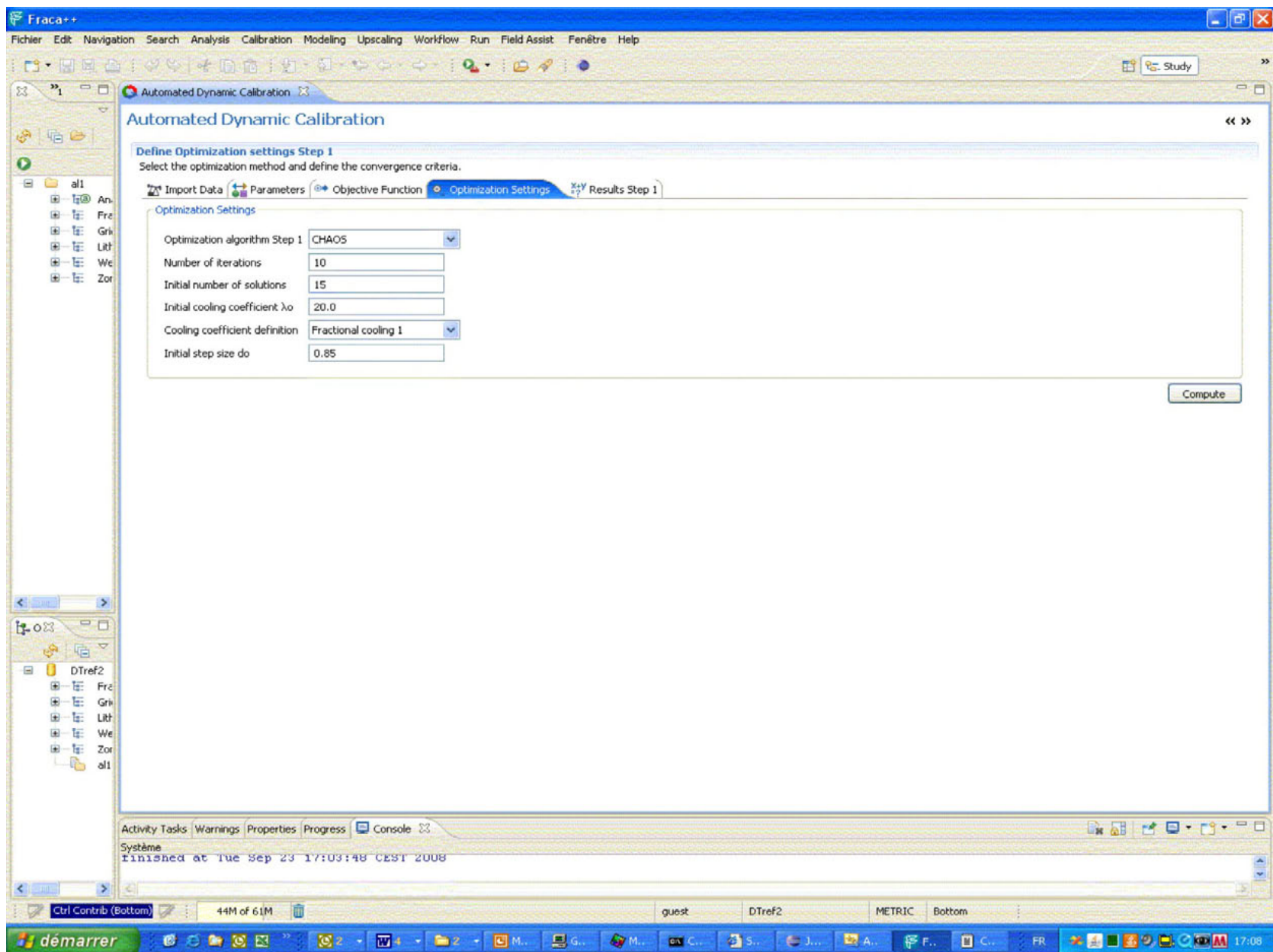
Automated Characterization of Fractured Reservoirs from Dynamic Data

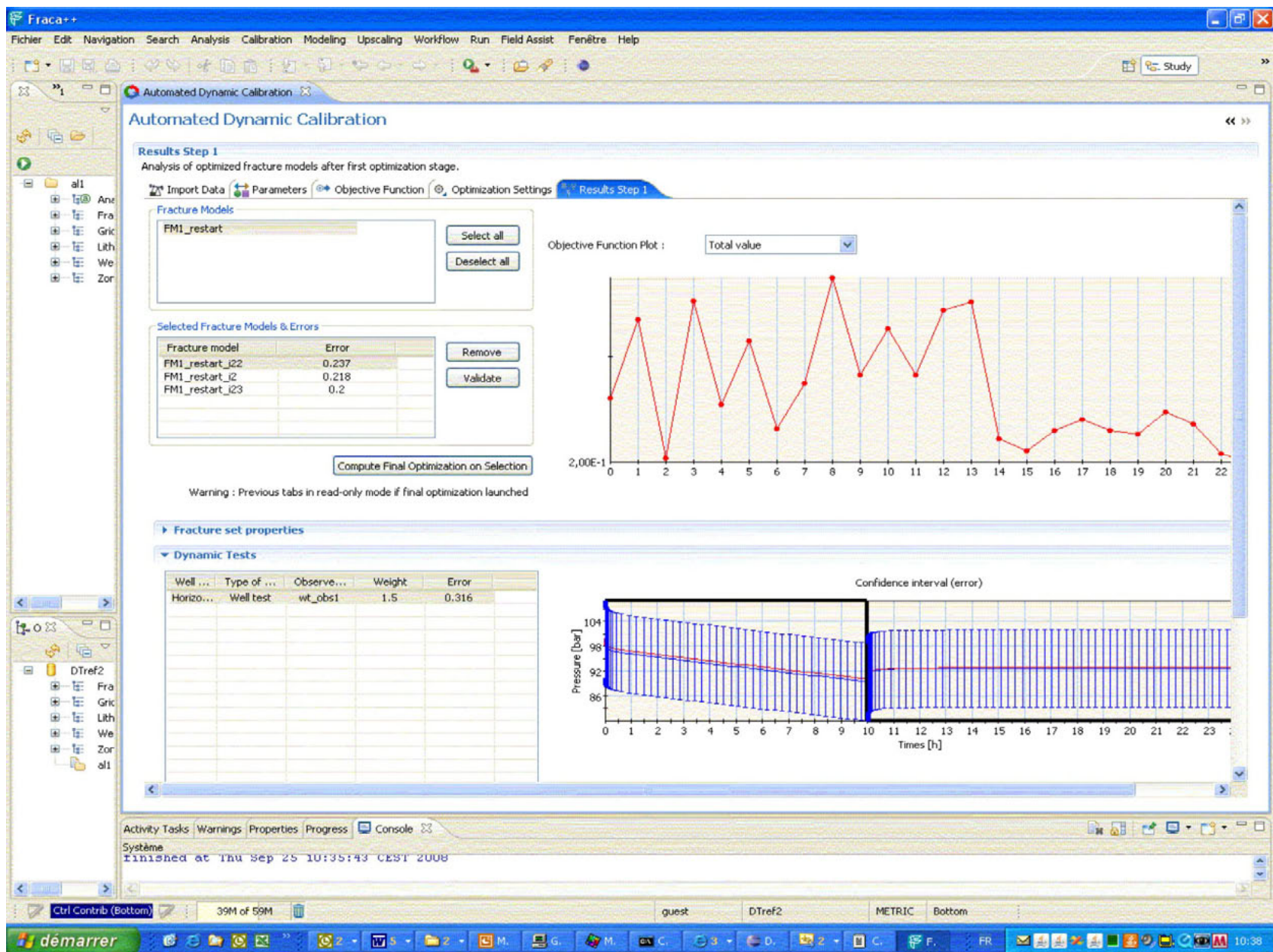
- ➔ Field data: flowmeters, well tests, interference tests...
- ➔ Knowledge model: 3D DFN flow simulator
- ➔ Fracture properties:
 - mean length
 - mean conductivity
 - orientation dispersion factors
 - density per facies
 - crossing probabilities per facies
- ➔ Inversion method: genetic algorithm...





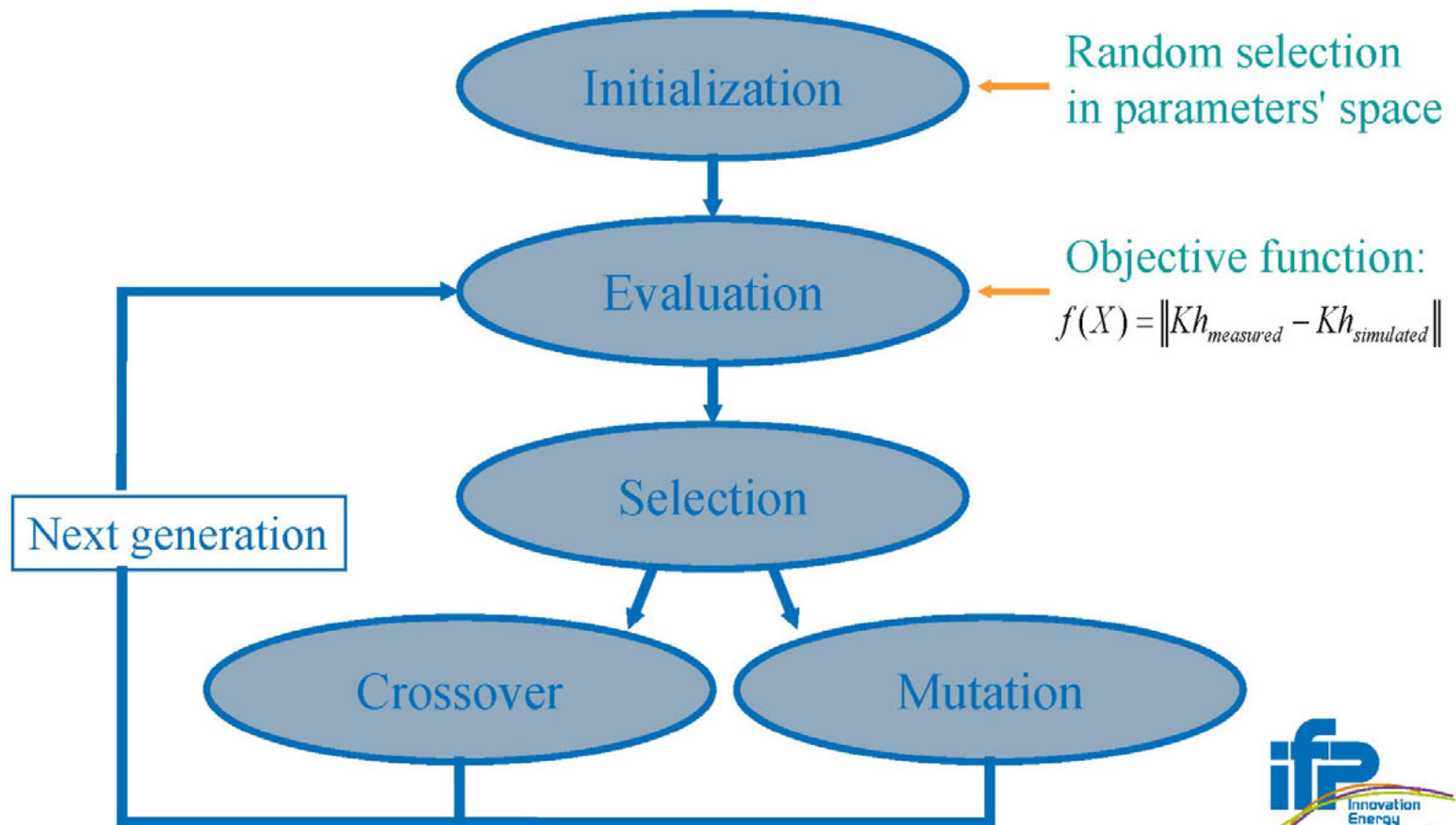








Genetic-based Characterization of Fractured Reservoirs from Interpreted Well Tests





Genetic-based characterization of fractured reservoirs from interpreted well tests

→ **Selection process:** selecting best solutions according to objective function value

$$f(X) = \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^{wells} w_i |Kh_{measured,i} - Kh_{simulated,i}|^2$$

Estimate the quality of a solution from a probability inversely proportional to the objective fct value *e.g.*

$$p(X_i) = \frac{\sum_{j \neq i} f(X_j)}{\sum_j f(X_j)}$$



Genetic-based characterization of fractured reservoirs from interpreted well tests

→ Crossover process:

- Select a proportion P_c of the population according to their probabilities $p(X)$.
- From two given parents, two offsprings are defined according to:

$$\begin{cases} (O_1)_i &= \alpha_i (P_1)_i + (1 - \alpha_i) (P_2)_i \\ (O_2)_i &= (1 - \alpha_i) (P_1)_i + \alpha_i (P_2)_i \end{cases}$$

where $(O_1)_i$ is the i -th property of the offspring 1, and α_i is a random number between 0 and 1.



Genetic-based characterization of fractured reservoirs from interpreted well tests

→ Mutation process:

- Select a proportion Pm of the population according to their probabilities $p(X)$.
- For each solution, a new solution is defined by modifying randomly a property as:

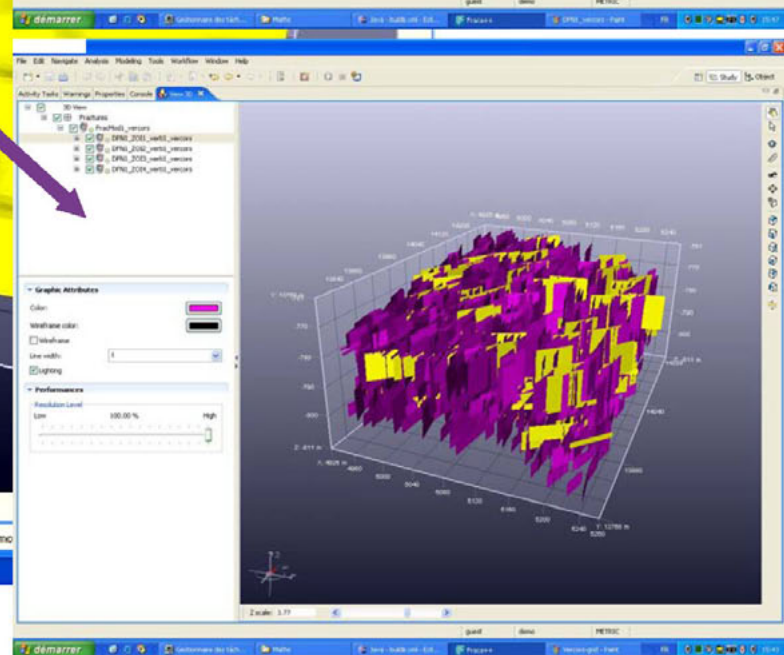
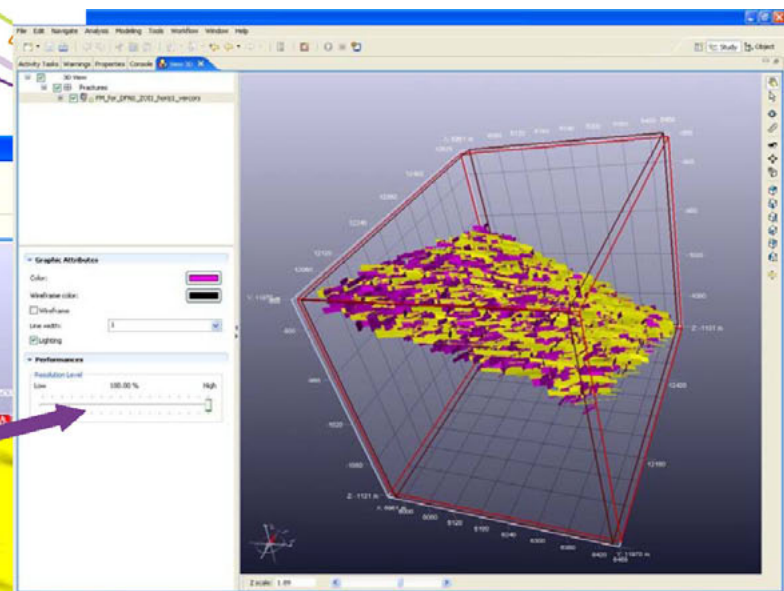
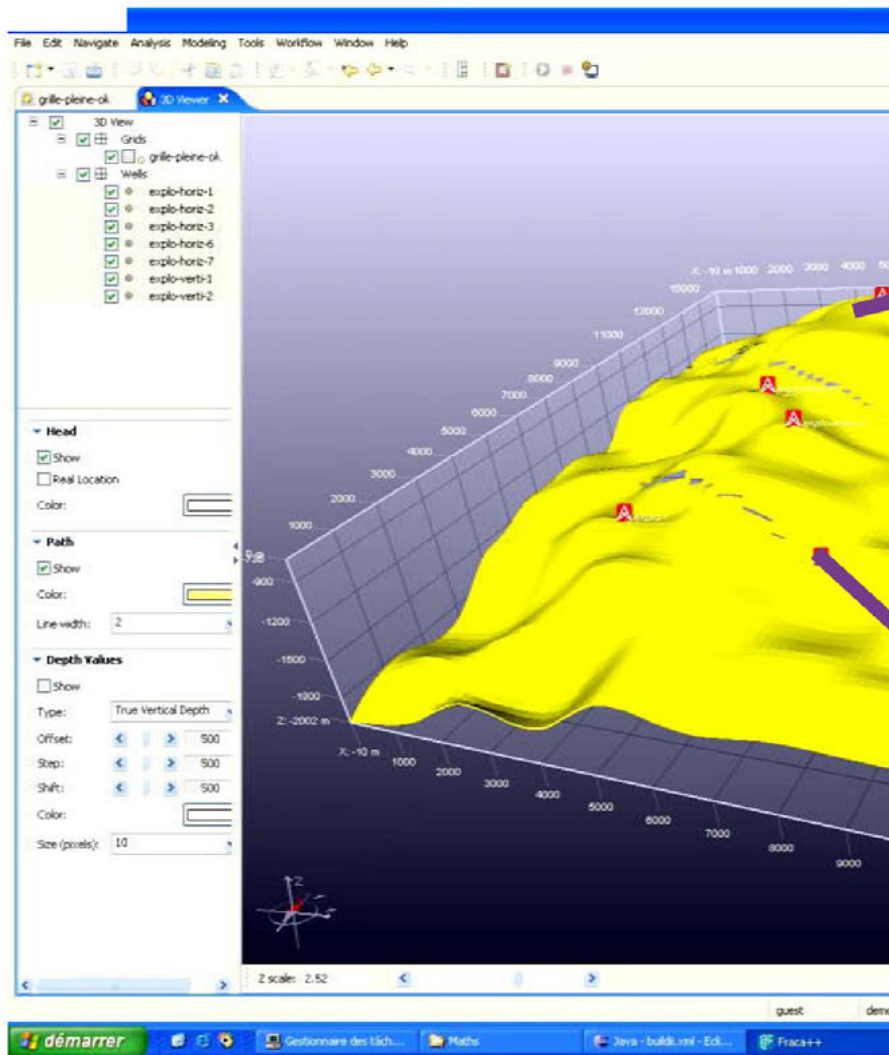
$$X'_i = X_{i,Min} + \alpha(X_{i,Max} - X_{i,Min})$$

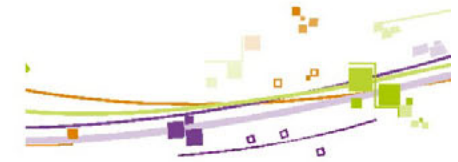
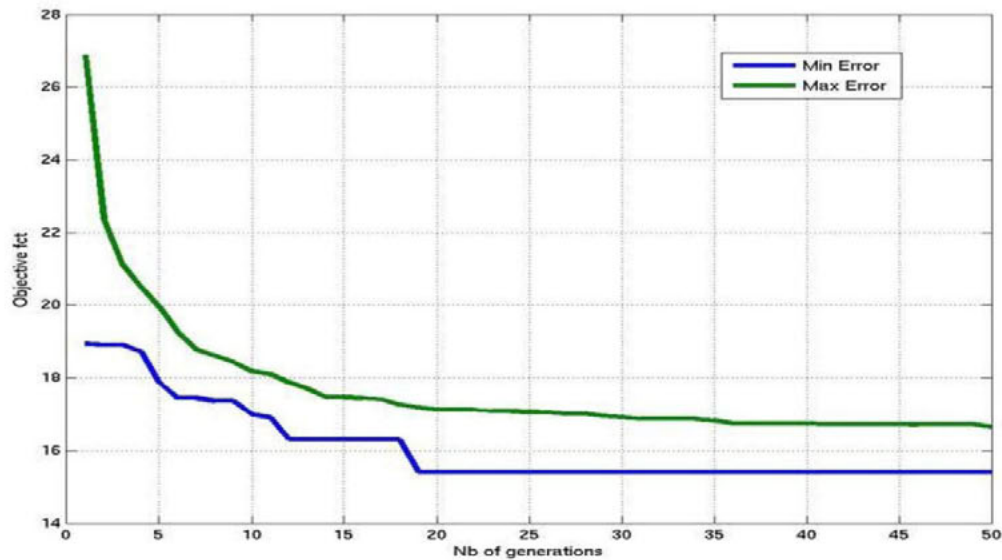
where $X_{i,Min}$ is the min. value of the i -th property of solution X , and α is a random number between 0 and 1.

→ Algorithm complexity: proportional to

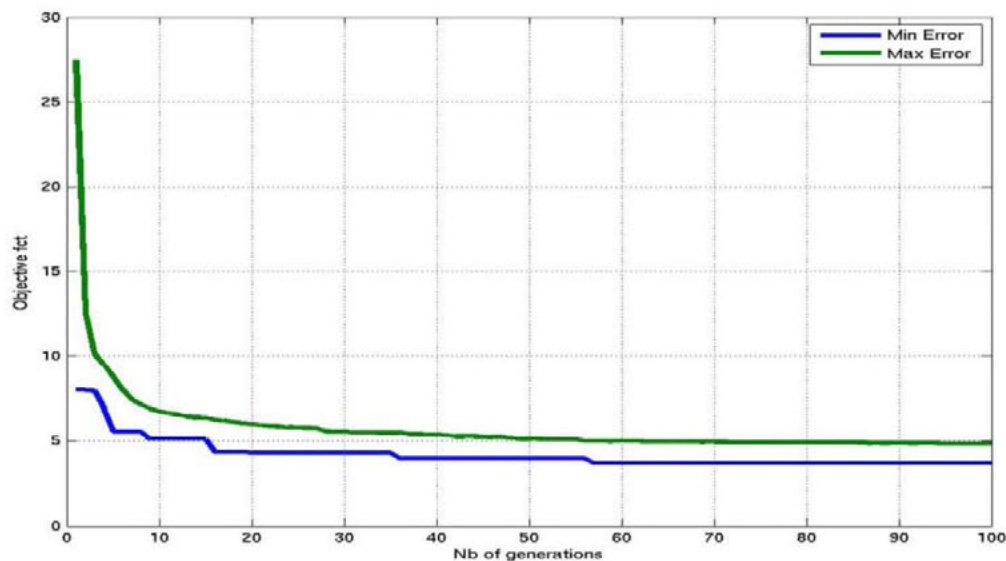
$$\Sigma wells_nb * (2 * Pc + Pm) * nb_sol(k) * C_{km}$$

where C_{km} is the complexity of the knowledge model, Σ is the sum over the generations.

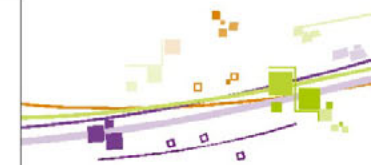
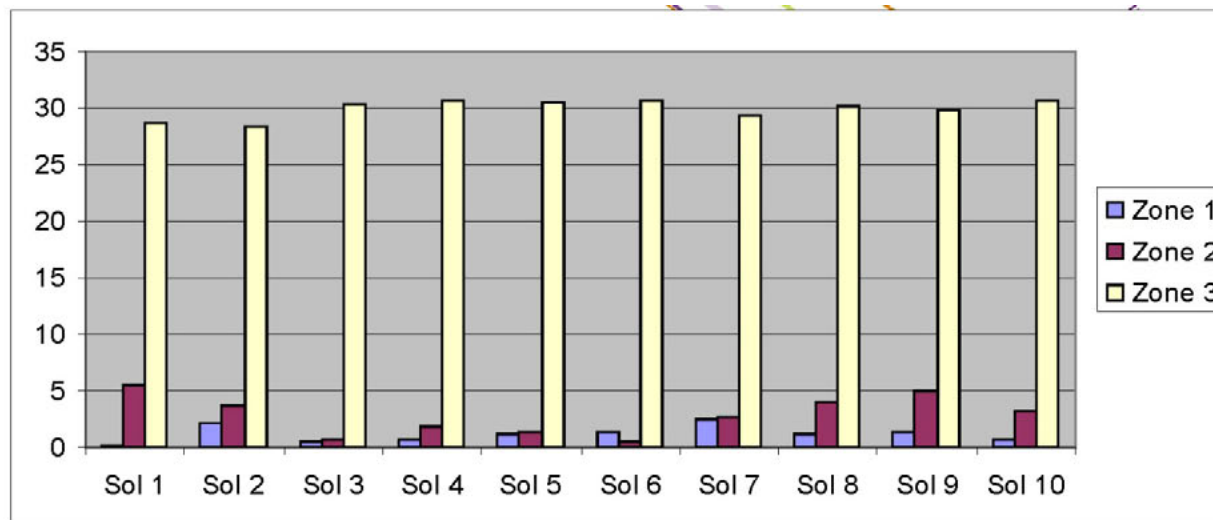




Pc=85%
 Nb_Gen=50
 Nb_init=10
 Nb_max=20

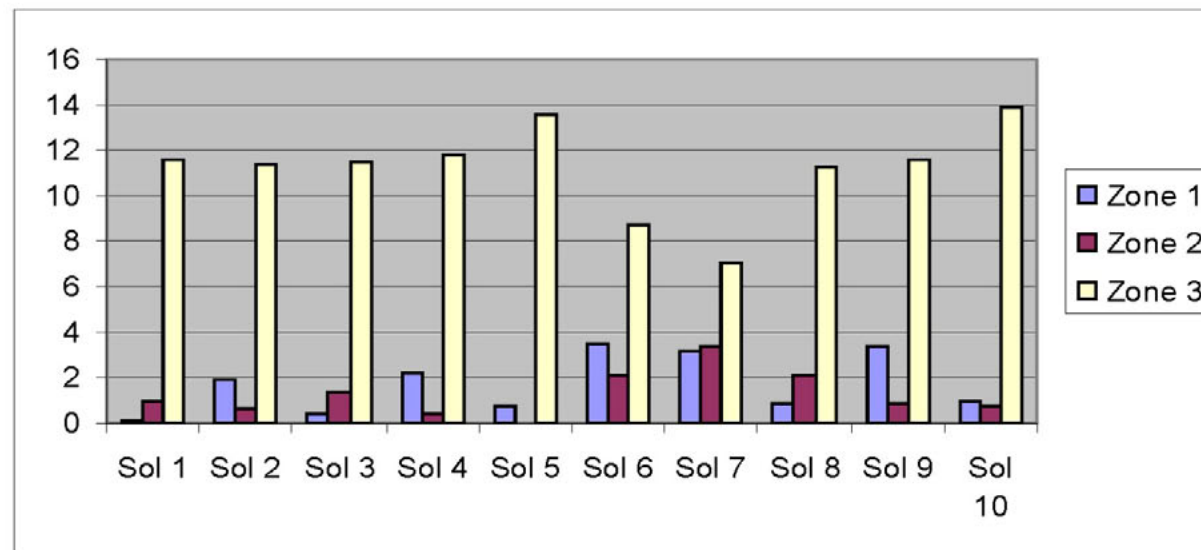


Pc=85%
 Nb_Gen=100
 Nb_init=10
 Nb_max=30



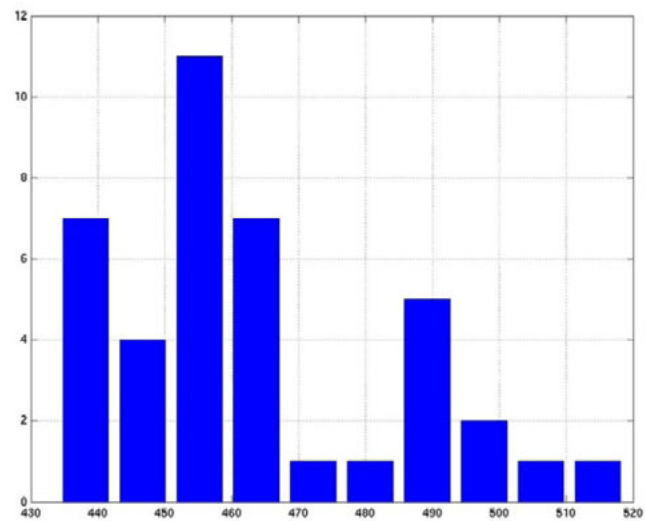
Measured data:
 $K1=1255 \text{ mD}$
 $K2=1775 \text{ mD}$
 $K3=425 \text{ mD}$

Relative error on Kh per zone for the 10 best solutions for Case 1

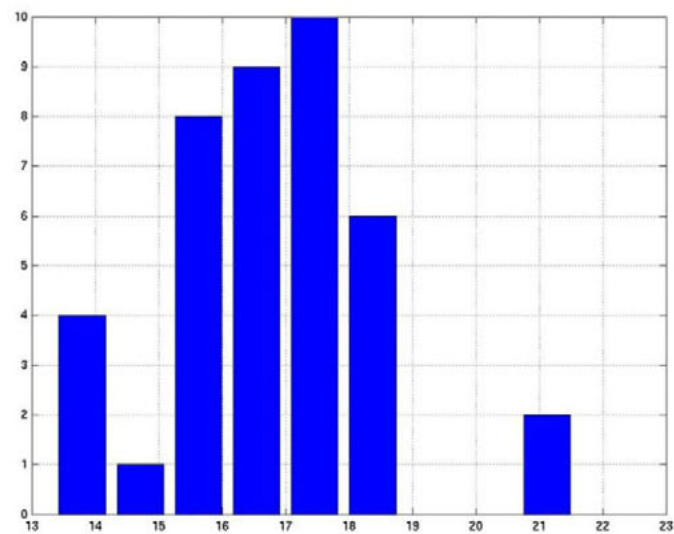


Relative error on Kh per zone for the 10 best solutions for Case 2

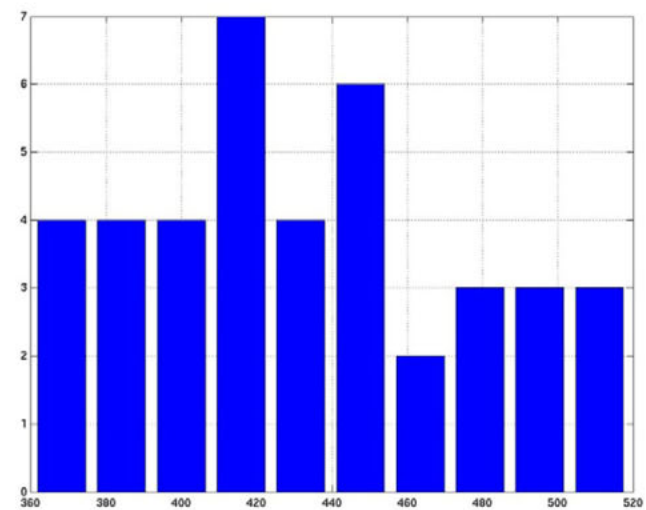
Reservoir Engineering Division – R&D on Fractured Reservoir Dynamic Modeling



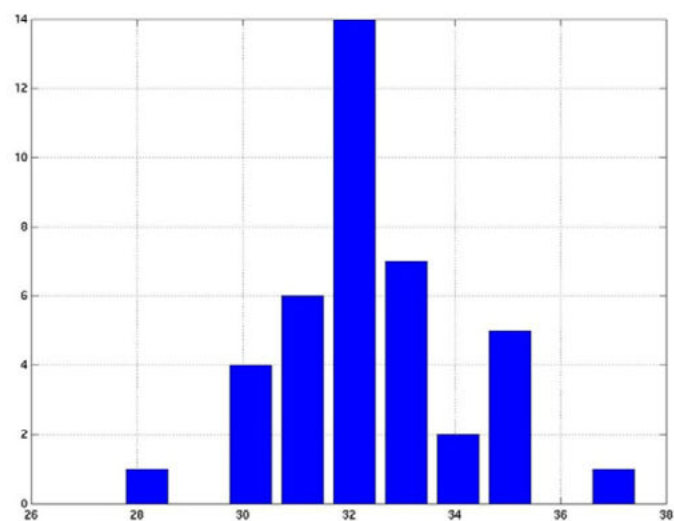
Conductivity 1



Length 1

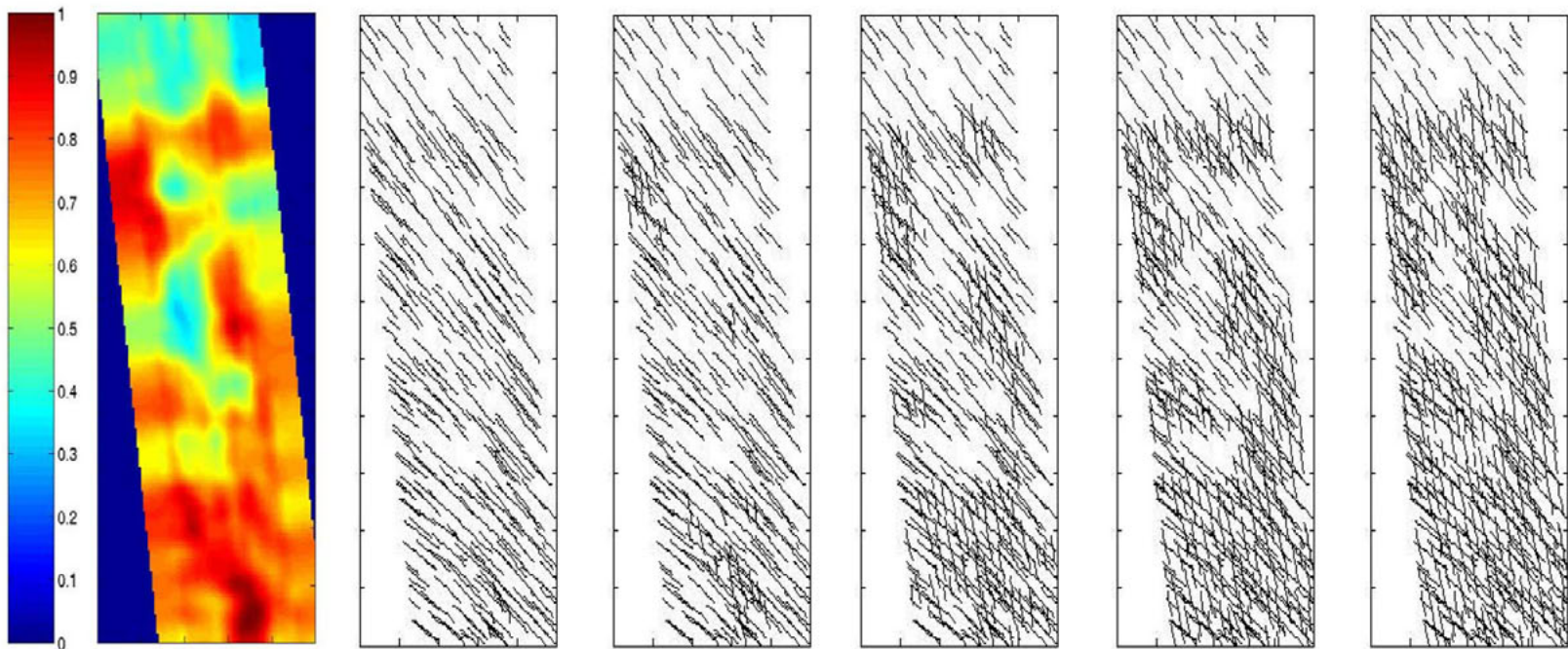


Density 1 Facies 2



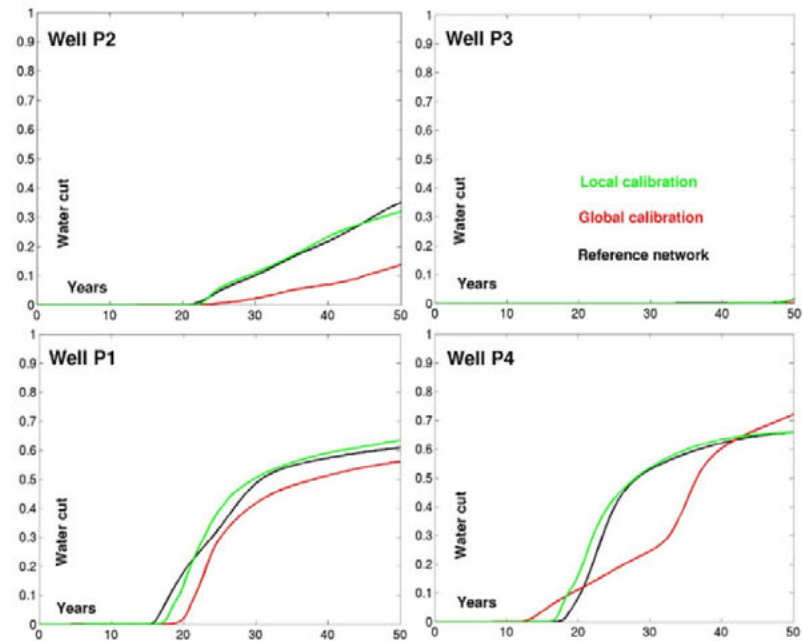
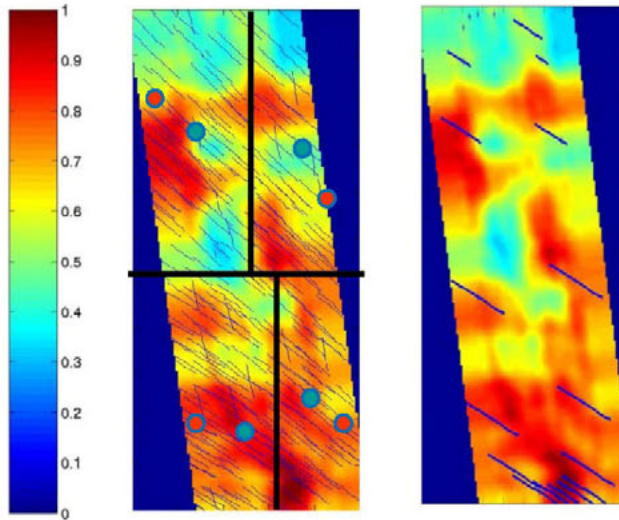
Density 1 Facies 3

Calfrac Project: History Matching of the Geometry of Fracture Networks

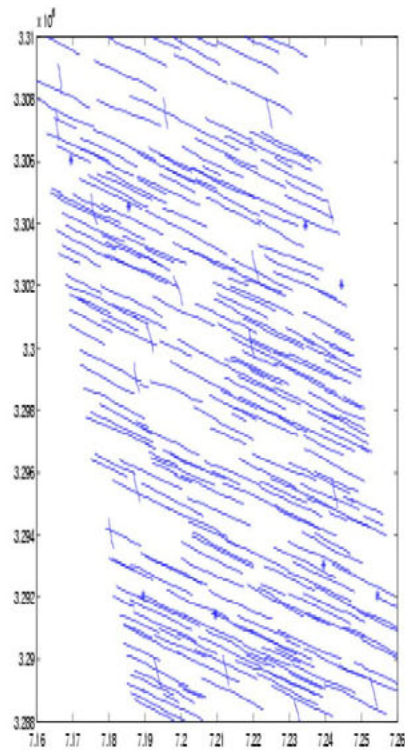


Geological Model of Large-Scale Fractures

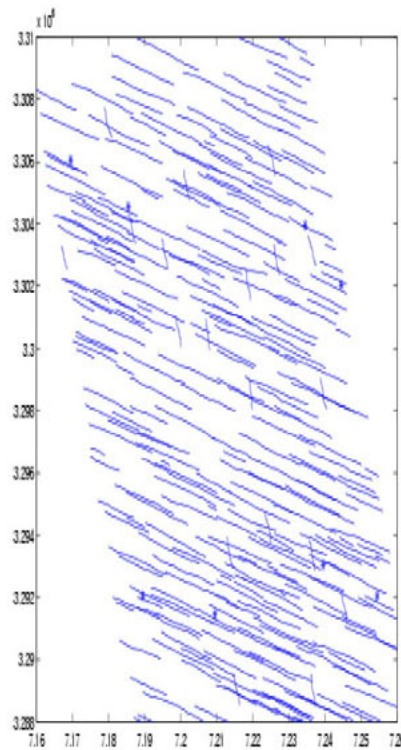
Calfrac Project: History Matching of the Geometry of Fracture Networks



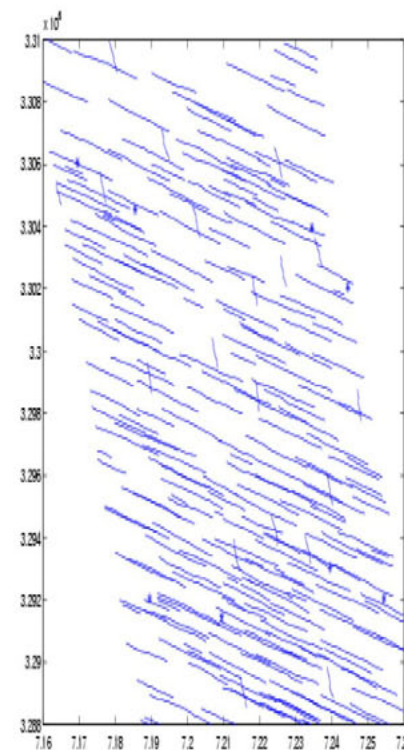
Calfrac Project: History Matching of the Geometry of Fracture Networks



Initial network



Global calibration



Local calibration

Comparison between stochastic fracture networks





Future perspectives

- Multiphase flow simulation on DFN at realistic scales: IOR/EOR on DFN, pseudo-kr/Pc, high P-T conditions
- Geomechanics
- Computational cost issue: adapted method for simplifying DFN ?
- Automated calibration of production data (parametrization, optimization techniques, classification...)
- Impact of uncertainties (from measurements, model...) on fracture properties estimates



Acknowledgements

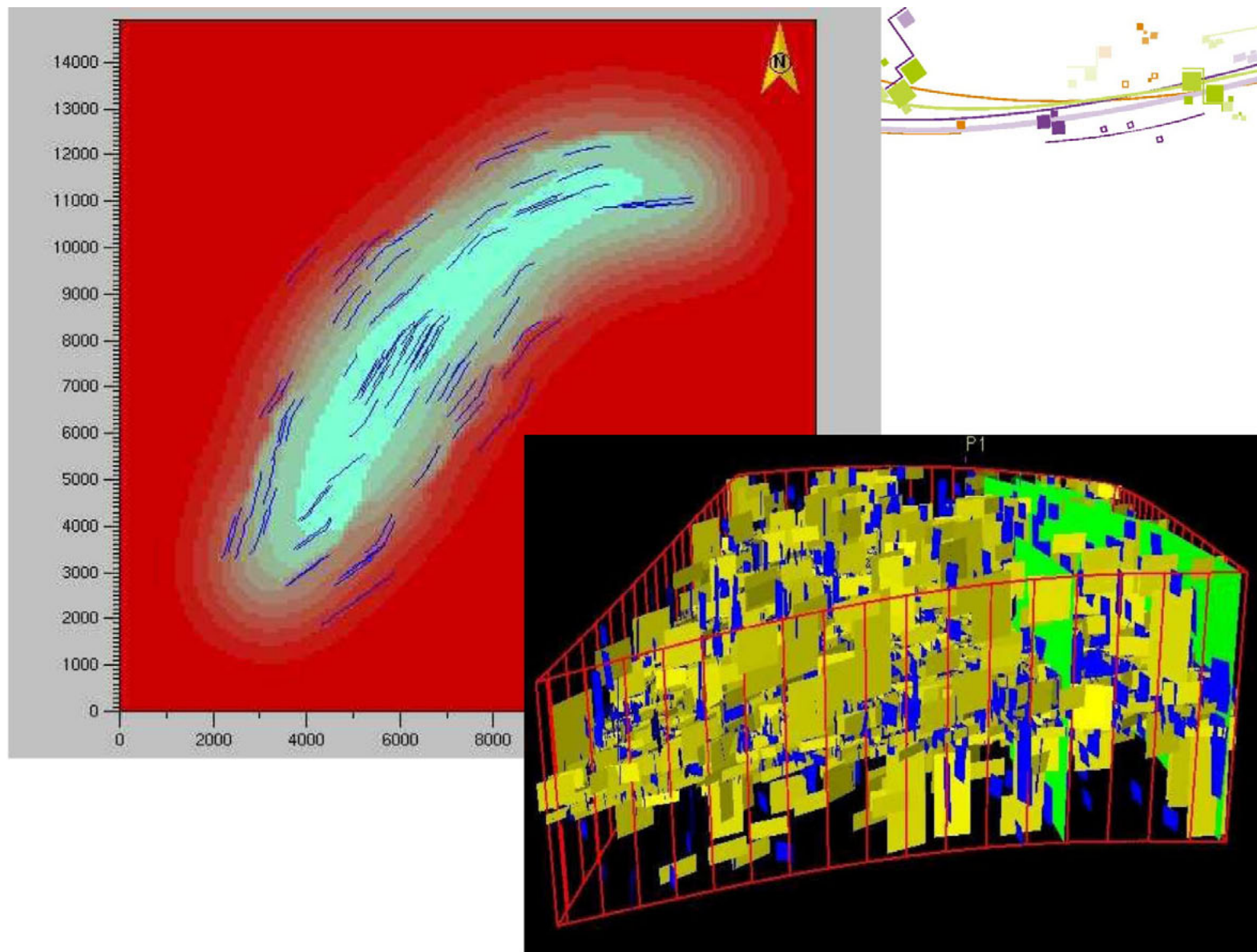
Industry sponsors:



Main contributors:

L.Y. Hu, A. Fournio, M. Delorme, N. Khvoenkova
and B. Bourbiaux







References on Transport Simulation

1. Berkowitz B. and Zhou J.: "Reactive solute transport in a single fracture", *Water Resour. Res.*, **32**(4), pp. 901-913 (1996).
2. Gerke H.H. and Van Genuchten M.T.: "Evaluation of a First Order Water Transfer Term for Variably Saturated Dual-Porosity Flow Models", *Water Resources Res.*, **29**, April 1993.
3. Bodin J., Delay F. and De Marsily G.: "Solute transport in fissured aquifers: 2.Mathematical formalism", *Hydrogeology J.*, **11**(4), pp. 434-454 (2003).
4. Viallon M.C.: "Etude des schémas double-amont et éléments finis discontinus P0P1 pour la résolution numérique des lois de conservation scalaires", Thèse Univ. St-Etienne, June 1989.
5. Goldberg D.E., "Genetic algorithms in search, optimization and machine learning", Reading (Pa.): Addison-Wesley Ed., 1989.



Publications

1. Lange A., Bouzian J. and Bourbiaux B.: "Tracer-Test Simulation on Discrete Fracture Network Models for the Characterization of Fractured Reservoirs", SPE 94344 (2005). EAGE/SPE Europec 2005.
2. Basquet R., Cohen C.E. and Bourbiaux B.: "Fracture Flow Property Identification: an Optimized Implementation of Discrete Fracture Network Models", SPE 93748 (2005). 14th SPE MEOS 2005.
3. Lange A., Basquet R. and Bourbiaux B.: "Hydraulic Characterization of Faults and Fractures Using a Dual Medium Discrete Fracture Network Simulator", SPE 88675 (2004). 11th ADIPEC 2004.
4. Basquet R., Jeannin L., Lange A., Bourbiaux B and Sarda S.: "Gas Flow Simulation in Discrete Fracture Network Models", *SPE Res. Eval. & Eng.*, pp.378-384, Oct. 2004.
5. Jenni S., Lin Y.H., Basquet R., De Marsily G. and Bourbiaux B.: "History matching of stochastic models of field-scale fractures: methodology and case study", SPE 90020 (2004). SPE ATCE 2004.



3D Dual-Porosity Flow Model on DFN

 Numerical scheme :

$$\begin{cases} \nabla \cdot (k_f \nabla P_f) + \alpha_{mf} (P_m - P_f) = c_f \cdot \mu_o \cdot \phi_f \cdot \frac{\partial P_f}{\partial t} , \\ \nabla \cdot (k_m \nabla P_m) - \alpha_{mf} (P_m - P_f) = c_m \cdot \mu_o \cdot \phi_m \cdot \frac{\partial P_m}{\partial t} , \end{cases}$$

$$\begin{cases} \left[\frac{c_f V_{f,i} \phi_{f,i}}{\Delta t} + \frac{T_{mf,i}}{\mu_o} + \sum_k \frac{T_{ff,ik}}{\mu_o} \right] P_{f,i}^{n+1} - \sum_k \frac{T_{ff,ik}}{\mu_o} P_{f,k}^{n+1} - \frac{T_{mf,i}}{\mu_o} P_{m,i}^{n+1} = Q_{f,i} + \frac{c_f V_{f,i} \phi_{f,i}}{\Delta t} P_{f,i}^n \\ \left[\frac{c_m V_{m,i} \phi_{m,i}}{\Delta t} + \frac{T_{mf,i}}{\mu_o} + \sum_k \frac{T_{mm,ik}}{\mu_o} \right] P_{m,i}^{n+1} - \sum_k \frac{T_{mm,ik}}{\mu_o} P_{m,k}^{n+1} - \frac{T_{mf,i}}{\mu_o} P_{f,i}^{n+1} = Q_{m,i} + \frac{c_m V_{m,i} \phi_{m,i}}{\Delta t} P_{m,i}^n \end{cases}$$

© IFP

Reservoir Engineering Division – R&D on Fractured Reservoir Dynamic Modeling

Notes by Presenter: A 2-pt scheme in space and the Euler scheme in time are applied to the system of diffusion equations. K and J are the neighbours indexes of the fracture cell I and its associated matrix block, respectively.



3D Dual-Porosity Flow Model on DFN

 Numerical scheme :

$$\begin{cases} \left[\frac{c_f V_{f,i} \phi_{f,i}}{\Delta t} + \frac{T_{mf,i}}{\mu_o} + \sum_k \frac{T_{ff,ik}}{\mu_o} \right] P_{f,i}^{n+1} - \sum_k \frac{T_{ff,ik}}{\mu_o} P_{f,k}^{n+1} - \frac{T_{mf,i}}{\mu_o} P_{m,i}^{n+1} = Q_{f,i} + \frac{c_f V_{f,i} \phi_{f,i}}{\Delta t} P_{f,i}^n \\ \left[\frac{c_m V_{m,i} \phi_{m,i}}{\Delta t} + \frac{T_{mf,i}}{\mu_o} + \sum_k \frac{T_{mm,ik}}{\mu_o} \right] P_{m,i}^{n+1} - \sum_k \frac{T_{mm,ik}}{\mu_o} P_{m,k}^{n+1} - \frac{T_{mf,i}}{\mu_o} P_{f,i}^{n+1} = Q_{m,i} + \frac{c_m V_{m,i} \phi_{m,i}}{\Delta t} P_{m,i}^n \end{cases}$$

- Fracture-to-fracture transmissivity: $T_{ff} = \sum_i \frac{C_i \cdot l_i}{L},$
- Matrix-to-fracture transmissivity:

$$T_{mf} = \frac{2 \cdot l_f \cdot H \cdot k_m}{D}, \quad D = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N d_i,$$



Notes by Presenter : The fracture-to-fracture transmissivity is simply computed from the fracture conductivity, the length of the borderline between the fracture cells, and the distance between the fracture nodes.

The matrix-to-fracture transmissivity is computed from the matrix permeability, the matrix-to-fracture exchange surface and the average distance between the fracture cell and its matrix block horizontal area.

Therefore the matrix-to-fracture transmissivity is dependent on the local network geometry, it is not homogenized.



3D Dual-Porosity Flow Model on DFN

Single-Permeability Model : $T_{mm} = 0$

$$\left[A_{f,i} + \frac{A_{m,i} \cdot U_{m,i}}{A_{m,i} + U_{m,i}} + \sum_k \frac{T_{ff,ik}}{\mu_o} \right] P_{f,i}^{n+1} - \sum_k \frac{T_{ff,ik}}{\mu_o} P_{f,k}^{n+1} = Q_{f,i} + A_{f,i} \cdot P_{f,i}^n + \frac{A_{m,i} \cdot U_{m,i}}{A_{m,i} + U_{m,i}} P_{m,i}^n$$

with: $A_{f,i} = \frac{c_f \cdot \phi_{f,i} \cdot V_{f,i}}{\Delta t}$, $A_{m,i} = \frac{c_m \cdot \phi_{m,i} \cdot V_{m,i}}{\Delta t}$, $U_{m,i} = \frac{T_{mf,i}}{\mu_o}$.

- Twice less unknowns to be computed
- For dense and well connected fracture networks
- Matrix medium acts as a source of fluids only

© IFP

Reservoir Engineering Division – R&D on Fractured Reservoir Dynamic Modeling



Notes by Presenter : Both single and dual permeability models were developed so that the single-phase flow response of any type of fractured reservoir, whatever the scale, density and connectivity of fractures can be computed.

In the single-permeability model, the matrix-to-matrix flow is neglected, leading to an explicit relation between matrix and fracture pressures.

Therefore only one equation needs to be solved for determining the full pressure field.

This model is usually valid for a dense and well connected fracture network only, where the matrix medium only acts as a source of fluids.



3D Dual-Porosity Flow Model on DFN

Double-Permeability Model : $T_{mm} \neq 0$

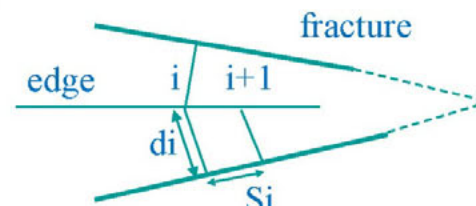
- **Horizontal transmissivities:**

Case 1 : edge not crossed by a fracture :

$$T_{mm} = K_m H \int_L dl / 2d(l)$$

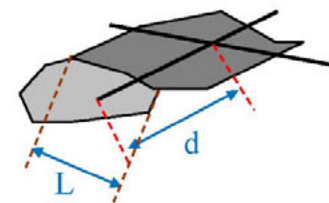
dl : elementary edge length,

$d(l)$: fracture-edge distance at l



Case 2 : edge crossed by a fracture :

$$T_{mm} = K_m H L / d$$



K_m : matrix permeability, H : stratum thickness,
 L : edge length, d : computational nodes interdistance.

© IFP

Reservoir Engineering Division – R&D on Fractured Reservoir Dynamic Modeling



Notes by Presenter: In the dual-permeability model, the matrix-to-matrix flow is considered. Thus matrix-to-matrix transmissivities have to be computed.

The horizontal transmissivities are computed according to the following formula (explain).

However a simplification occurs if the matrix edge is crossed by a fracture.

In this case, as the fracture-to-fracture transmissivity is usually much larger than the matrix-to-matrix one, the expression is simplified according to this formula, using the nodes interdistance.



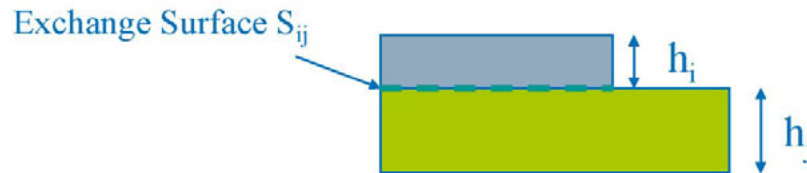
3D Dual-Porosity Flow Model on DFN

Double-Permeability Model : $T_{mm} \neq 0$

- **Vertical transmissivities:**

$$T_{ij}^V = \frac{2S_{ij}K_{V,i}K_{V,j}}{h_iK_{V,j} + h_jK_{V,i}}$$

K_v : vertical permeability, h : stratum thickness



© IFP

Reservoir Engineering Division – R&D on Fractured Reservoir Dynamic Modeling



Notes by Presenter: The vertical matrix-to-matrix transmissivity is computed according to a geometrical average of the vertical matrix permeabilities weighted by the layers thickness and the horizontal exchange surface.

The dual-permeability model is valid for any type of fractured reservoir, however its computational cost is at least twice larger than the single-permeability model. Indeed both pressures in the matrix and fracture network are unknowns, and the matrix-to-matrix transmissivities have to be computed on a large number of complex matrix blocks.



3D Dual-Porosity Flow Model: Validation

 Warren & Root Model :



100 m

- Spacing: 1m.
- Thickness: 10m.
- Matrix porosity: 20%.
- Matrix perm. $k_m = 1 \text{ mD}$.
- Rock comp. $c_m = 10^{-4} \text{ bar}^{-1}$.
- Fracture aperture: 1mm.
- Frac. cond. $C = 250 \text{ mD.m}$.
- Fracture compressibility:
 $c_f = 1.45 \cdot 10^{-4} \text{ bar}^{-1}$.

Notes by Presenter: A dense Warren & Root model is first considered for validating the dual-porosity, single-permeability model against existing analytical solutions, and verifying that the dual-permeability model does provide the same solutions.

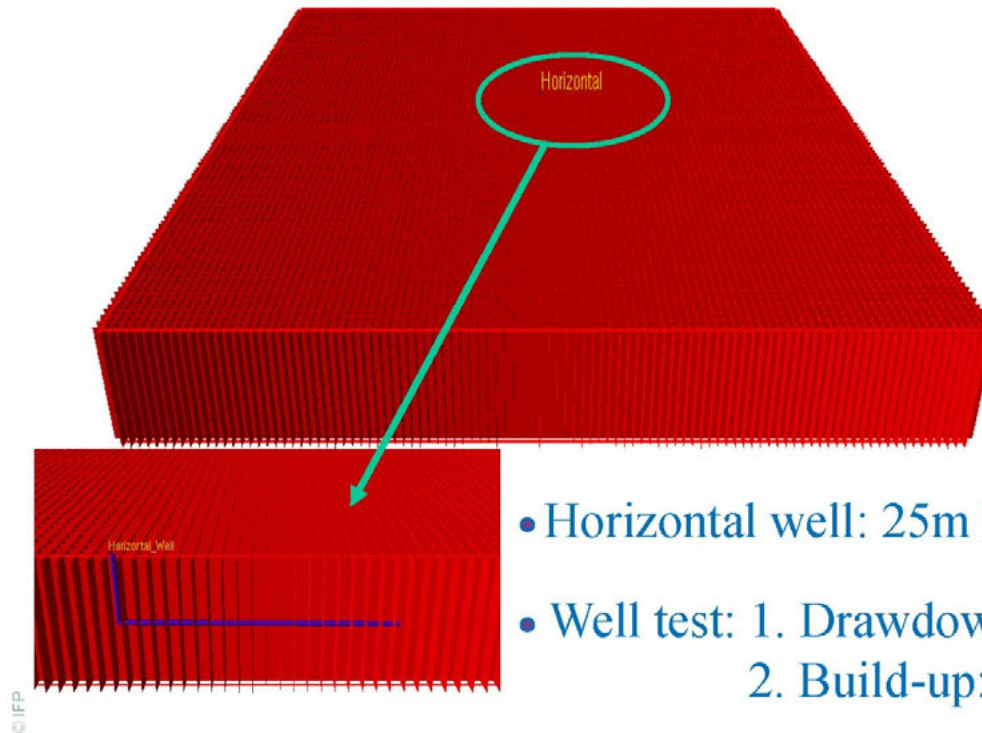
A regular Cartesian fracture network composed of 100 vertical fractures with a spacing of 1m in each horizontal direction is constructed. This 2D fractured medium has the following characteristics...



3D Dual-Porosity Flow Model: Validation



Warren & Root Model : Dense Fracture Network

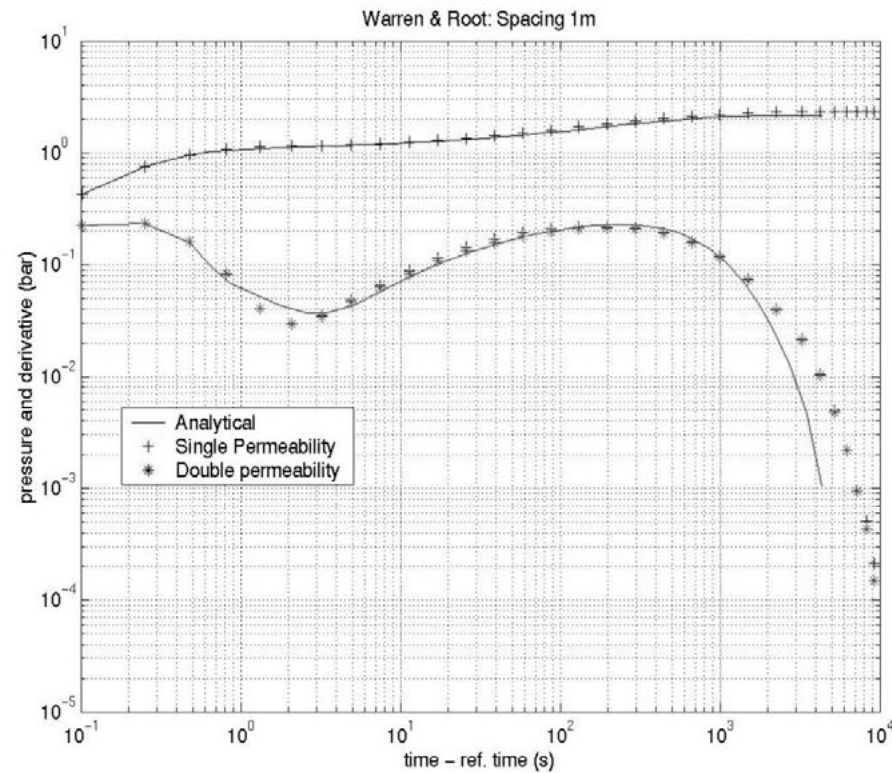


- Horizontal well: 25m long
- Well test: 1. Drawdown: 100m³/d during 10h.
2. Build-up: well closed during 14h.

© IFP

Reservoir Engineering Division – R&D on Fractured Reservoir Dynamic Modeling

Notes by Presenter: A 25m long horizontal well is defined at the centre of the fracture network. A well test is performed with the following flow rate history...



Validation of the single- and dual-permeability models via an analytical solution for a dense fracture network.

Reservoir Engineering Division – R&D on Fractured Reservoir Dynamic Modeling



Notes by Presenter: Pressure buildup and derivative curves are plotted, together with an analytical solution combining Gringarten's double porosity method and a horizontal well treatment.

The behaviour of the numerical and analytical solutions are very close, thus validating the single-permeability model, as well as the dual-permeability model in the case of a dense connected fracture network.



3D Dual-Porosity Flow Model: Application

- **Matrix Properties:**

- Porosity = 20%,
- Permeability $k_m = 1 \text{ mD}$,
- Rock compressibility $c_m = 10^{-4} \text{ bar}^{-1}$.

- Fracture compressibility: $c_f = 1.45 \cdot 10^{-4} \text{ bar}^{-1}$.

- **Systematic Joint Sets Properties:**

- **Faults Properties:**

- Mean length: 200m,
- Aperture: $5 \cdot 10^{-3} \text{ m}$,
- Fisher dip and strike: 50,
- Fractal dimension: 1.6,
- Mean conductivity: 10^4 mD.m .

	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4
Mean Length	25m	12m	16m	6m
Aperture	1e-3 m	1e-3 m	1e-3 m	1e-3 m
Fisher dip & strike	1e20	60 & 30	60 & 30	1e20
Average Spacing	10 m	5 m	7 m	4 m
Mean conductivity	1000 mD.m	1000 mD.m	1000 mD.m	1000 mD.m
Azimuth & dip	110° & 90°	110° & 90°	130° & 90°	180° & 90°

© IFP

Reservoir Engineering Division – R&D on Fractured Reservoir Dynamic Modeling

Notes by Presenter: The domain contains one set of faults and 4 sets of systematic joints with the following properties. All fracture lengths and conductivity distributions satisfy a log-normal law.