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3D basin and petroleum system modelling in the North Sea Central Graben - a Dutch, German, Danish cross-border study

Rüdiger Lutz¹, Jashar Arfai¹, Susanne Nelskamp², Anders Mathiesen³, Niels Hemmingsen Schovsbo³, Stefan Ladage¹, Peter Britze³, and Margaret Stewart⁴

¹Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources (BGR), Hannover, Germany (r.lutz@bgr.de)

²Geological Survey of the Netherlands (TNO), Princetonlaan 6, 3584CB Utrecht, Netherlands

³Geological Survey of Denmark and Greenland (GEUS), Øster Voldgade 10, DK-1350 Copenhagen, Denmark

⁴British Geological Survey (BGS), The Lyell Centre, Edinburgh EH14 4AP, UK

A Geological Analysis and Resource Assessment of selected Hydrocarbon Systems (GARA) is carried out as part of the overarching GeoERA project. Here, we report first results of a 3D basin and petroleum system model developed in a cross-border area of the Dutch, Danish and German North Sea Central Graben area. This pilot study reconstructs the thermal history, maturity and petroleum generation of potential Lower, Middle and Upper Jurassic source rocks. The 3D pilot study incorporates new aggregated and combined layers from the three countries. Results of the study feed back into the 3DGEO-EU project of GeoERA.

Eight key horizons covering the whole German Central Graben and parts of the Dutch and Danish North Sea Central Graben were selected for building the stratigraphic and geological framework of the 3D basin and petroleum system model. The model includes depth and thickness maps of important stratigraphic units as well as the main salt structures. Petrophysical parameters, generalized facies information and organic geochemical data from well reports are assigned to the different key geological layers. The model is further calibrated with temperature and maturity data from wells of the three countries and from publications. The time span from the Late Permian to the Present is represented by the model including the most important erosional phases related to large-scale tectonic events during the Late Jurassic to Late Cretaceous. Additionally, salt movement through time expressed as diapirs and pillows is considered within the 3D basin and petroleum system model.

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