



Shark fins: overturned flame patterns due to waves at the shear horizon of a flow-bed boundary. Examples from the 2006 pyroclastic currents deposits at Tungurahua

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3 **Shark-fin structures: overturned convolute and flame patterns due to waves at the shear horizon**
4 **of a flow-bed boundary. Examples from the deposits of the 2006 pyroclastic currents at Tungu-**
5 **rahua volcano (Ecuador)**

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11 **Keywords:** 1. shark-fins, 2. convolute laminae, 3. flame structures, 4. overturned beds, 5. flow shear-
12 ing, 6. pyroclastic currents

13 **Running title:** Overturned "shark-fins" in deposits of pyroclastic currents

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17 **Abstract**

18 Enigmatic structures are documented in deposits of dilute pyroclastic currents and grouped under the
19 term "shark-fins". They consist of an overturning of a few laminae on a decimeter scale, forming
20 overbent "flames" or convolute laminae, which occur in successive, periodic patterns. More than 200
21 shark-fins were investigated and measured in the cross-laminated deposits from the 2006 pyroclastic
22 currents of Tungurahua volcano (Ecuador).

23 These shark-fins are interpreted in terms of syndepositional soft sediment deformation pattern where-
24 by waves form at the interface of a shear horizon at the flow-bed boundary and rework the bed. The
25 shark-fins are not related to Kelvin-Helmholtz instabilities. Instead, a theoretical framework based on
26 two layers separated by a shear horizon is developed. The calculated growth rate of the waves is com-
27 pared to sedimentation rates in order to infer aspects of the stability and preservation of such sheared
28 interfaces. The process-based interpretation is supported by the results from the physical model.

29 Various other incidental patterns are presented and discussed, which likely result from collisions of
30 flows with deposits, intraflow events and syn-flow slumping. We thus identify the necessary key ob-
31 servations for the interpretation of shark-fin structures for different types of triggers. Such observa-
32 tions on flow-bed interactions contribute to the understanding of a flow rheology, shear partitioning,
33 and the transmission of shear stress out of the flow and into the substrate.

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37 **1. Introduction**

38 **1.1. Pyroclastic currents**

39 Pyroclastic currents are flowing mixtures of gas and particles ejected during explosive volcanic erup-
40 tions (e.g. Branney and Kokelaar 2002, Dufek 2016, Palladino 2017). From the analysis of deposits, a
41 transitional span of flow transport processes has been postulated ranging between two end-member
42 behaviors: granular flow type and fully turbulent, gas-dominated current (e.g. Sparks 1976, Fisher
43 1979, Douillet et al. 2013a). The high particle-concentration end-member behavior (granular flow
44 type) is typically inferred from massive, unsorted, coarse-grained (m-size boulders) deposits, which
45 are attributed to pyroclastic currents, where sediment transport is accomplished through a dense gran-
46 ular flow dominated by particle interactions (e.g. Lube et al. 2007, Bernard et al. 2014). The low parti-
47 cle-concentration end-member (turbulent flow type) is inferred from sediments organized as cross-
48 laminated bedsets forming dune bedforms, generally finer and better sorted in terms of grain-size dis-
49 tribution (e.g. Walker 1984, Cole 1991, Douillet et al. 2013a, 2013b). The depositional areas are gen-
50 erally organized as marginal and localized patches on the outer overbanks of pathways of the main
51 pyroclastic current (e.g. Douillet et al. 2013a and references therein). For those, the transport mecha-
52 nisms are interpreted as related to fully "dilute" pyroclastic currents with a relatively low particle con-
53 centration where the dynamics are largely dominated by fluid turbulence (gas, e.g. Wohletz and Sheri-
54 dan 1979, Branney and Kokelaar 2002, Douillet et al. 2013b, Dellino et al. 2014).

55 A continuous spectrum of deposit types is observed so that the boundary between these two end-
56 members seems diffuse. Sedimentological analyses are further complicated by the fact that the depos-
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3 its mainly reflect the influence of variations at the flow-bed boundary layer (Branney and Kokelaar
4 2002, Douillet et al. this issue). These deposit-based models have been validated and refined through
5 theoretical, analogue and numerical models (Sulpizio et al. 2014, Dufek and Bergantz 2007, Esposti-
6 Ongaro et al. 2008, 2011), which highlight the interplay and coupling between dense underflows and
7 overriding turbulent currents (Burgisser and Bergantz 2002, Breard et al 2016, Breard and Lube 2017).
8 Where transport is supposed turbulent (dilute pyroclastic currents), such flows are thought to resemble
9 the characteristics of subaqueous turbidity currents. Indeed, in contrast with traditional aeolian and
10 river sediment transport, dilute pyroclastic currents likely behave as particulate density currents
11 (Kneller and Branney 2000). Particulate density currents receive their momentum through their larger
12 density compared to the ambient fluid. Their particularity is that the agent carrying this excess density
13 are the transported particles. The same particles that drive momentum during transport thus also con-
14 stitute the sedimenting load that deposits when momentum decreases. Finally, in a particulate density
15 current, the particles are distributed over the whole height of the current rather than being eroded and
16 transported near the bed only (e.g. Douillet et al. 2014). These subtleties make the dynamics of
17 transport and deposition of particulate density currents unique.

18 Here, intriguing structures grouped under the term "shark-fins" are documented. They consist of a few
19 overturned laminae over a decimeter scale extent, and occur as successive, periodic patterns on the lee
20 side of dune bedforms. These overbent "flames" and convolute laminae are observed in sediments
21 from the pyroclastic currents related to the 2006 eruption of Tungurahua volcano (Ecuador). The
22 shark-fins were discovered after impregnating the outcrops with epoxy resin thereby producing sedi-
23 ment plates (lacquer peels), which enabled to observe the lamination at a highly detailed resolution
24 (Douillet et al. submitted-a, in sub.-b). Although sparsely reported, such shark-fins have never been
25 systematically investigated. We believe that they are likely to be common in many more settings. Un-
26 der the assumption that a flow is a closed system that primarily interacts and exchanges energy be-
27 tween its basal part and the bed (and to some extent, at the upper free boundary with the ambient flu-
28 id), syndepositional overturned patterns can yield valuable information on the dynamics and rheology
29 of the parental currents.

31 **1.2. Soft sediment deformation at the flow substrate boundary**

32 Geological outcrops exhibiting convolutions or patterns associated with the deformation of sediment
33 stratae have been recognized for more than 150 years (Logan 1863, Allen 1982 pp. 343-393, Maltman
34 1994 and references therein). The processes of soft sediment deformation (SSD) are understood as the
35 deformation of sediment beds before their consolidation (see review by Shanmugan 2017). They are
36 generally interpreted to occur when a granular bed acquires a transient property of a liquid, either due
37 to shaking -i.e. liquefaction- or due to an upward movement of the interstitial fluid -i.e. fluidization-
38 (e.g. Lowe 1976, Nichols et al. 2010). The triggers that have been postulated for SSD include seismo-
39 genic shaking, post-depositional gravity transport (slumping), fluid escapes, loading (Owen et al.
40 2011), and tsunamis (e.g. Matsumoto et al. 2008). In pyroclastic deposits, other types of SSD struc-
41 tures and triggers have been invoked, such as ballistic impacts, deformation by pressure waves pro-
42 duced by eruptive explosions, post depositional deflation of a fluidized flow, or basal shear from a
43 granular-based flow (Douillet et al. 2015).

44 **1.2.1. Overturned beds**

45 *"Conventional overturned beds":*

46
47 "Conventional overturned beds" are defined here as patterns in sediment beds where (i) the stratal or-
48 ganization indicates that the top part of the bed was slightly translated with an orientation toward the
49 downstream direction, and where (ii) laterally coherent structures involve a large amount of laminae
50 over a length much greater than the thickness of the deformation and (iii) the boundaries of the bedsets
51 are planar and unaffected by the deformation. Whereas most authors agree that these features are
52 formed in relation to a current, various processes have been suggested for the specific mechanisms,
53 such as the pure shear of the flow, the scraping of logs and debris transported by a current, or a com-
54 bined effect of earthquake-induced liquefaction as a current shears the bed.(Allen and Banks 1972 and
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3 references therein). Recent results from analogue experiments have shown that the velocity profile of a
4 laminar flow doesn't vanish at the flow-bed boundary if monitored for long enough, but penetrates into
5 it on a short diffusion thickness (Houssais et al. 2015). This suggests the occurrence of a shear compo-
6 nent partitioned out of the flow.

7 "*Shark-fin structures*":

8 "Shark-fins" are defined here as a generic term to refer to a different type of overturned structures (Fig
9 1-4). These share many of the characteristics of conventional overturned beds (see above), but they
10 occur as laterally very confined and narrow structures, involving only a few laminae, and are often
11 found in trains of several structures. Further, the upper limit of these overturned beds is not planar, but
12 rather forms a positive topographic anomaly. Several types of structures fall in the group of shark-fin
13 patterns and have commonly been described as "flow oriented convolute beds", "flames" (Butler and
14 Tavarnelli 2006), "truncated flame structures" (Matsumoto et al. 2008), "imbricated flame structures
15 and pseudonodules" (Larsen 1989), "asymmetric flame structures" (Butler et al. 2015), "tightly folded
16 overturned anticlines and synclines" (Crowe and Fisher 1973). shark-fin patterns have been repro-
17 duced in particular in the grounding experiments by McKee et al. (1962a, 1962b) by "crinkling" lami-
18 nated beds through different techniques: slumping, vertical loading, but also dragging sand bags across
19 the surface or forcing very strong currents at the bed interface.

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21 Here, shark-fins are described based on natural deposits from the 2006 pyroclastic currents at Tungu-
22 rahua volcano (Ecuador). We discuss their origin in terms of physical processes, provide quantitative
23 measurements of > 220 of these structures, and develop a theoretical framework for their analysis.

24 25 26 **1.2.2 Wavy shear patterns at the flow-bed boundary of experimental sediment gravity flows**

27 The question of how granular flows interact with the erodible substrate upon which they flow has been
28 studied in various contexts. In addition to the theories on the formation of conventional overturned
29 beds, recent research has demonstrated that local wavy patterns and shear instabilities can develop at
30 the interface between a flow and its substrate. These phenomena can have crucial effects on the dy-
31 namics and rheological parameters of a flow.

32
33 In this context, a fundamental study on wave instabilities in a granular medium was carried out by
34 Goldfarb et al. (2002), who reported that "breaking waves" (i.e. vortical, repetitive in-train wave in-
35 stabilities) could form at the vertical interface between two streams of identical grains. They suggested
36 that the competing shear and extensional strains produced such instabilities. Rowley et al. (2011) pro-
37 duced vortical patterns preserved in deposits where a decelerating granular flow passes over a strati-
38 fied substrate of similar grains. These structures have been observed on vertical transects, and thus a
39 gravitational component in the force balance may be present whereby the vortical shapes may suggest
40 a rotational component linked to buoyancy. Further, the vortices occurred in trains of several repeti-
41 tions, suggesting their formation through an oscillatory (wave) mechanism. Although pointing out the
42 differences inherent in the physics of granular flows, the authors compared the vortical patterns with
43 Kelvin-Helmholtz instabilities occurring in pseudo-Newtonian fluids.

44
45 For the case of subaqueous environments, Verhagen et al. (2013) launched a series of studies on the
46 interaction of subaqueous sediment gravity flows with their substrate. They released clay-laden, bot-
47 tom-hugging density currents over a lowly packed, "fluidized" bed of clay, and showed that these
48 could interact and form "interfacial waves" at the flow-bed boundary, "leading waves" ahead of the
49 front of the current, or induce "chaotic mixing" with the substrate. They noted a dependency on the
50 stability field of each type of interaction with the dimensionless Richardson number, without explicitly
51 mentioning gravity waves or Kelvin-Helmholtz instabilities. In a similar setting focused on subaerial
52 lock-exchange granular flows, Roche et al. (2013) showed that "the sliding head of a granular flow
53 generates a dynamic upward pore-pressure gradient at the flow-substrate interface. The associated up-
54 ward air flux was enough to fluidize a substrate of fines, so that particles were not entrained individu-
55 ally but the substrate instead [was] subject[ed] to small shear instabilities". Using the same setup,
56 Farin et al. (2014) refined the observation, noting that granular flows formed "waves made of particles
57 excavated from the erodible bed at the flow head" and that their maximum amplitude increased with
58 the aspect ratio and volume of the released flow. They also compared these waves with Kelvin-

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3 Helmholtz instabilities. Most recently, Pollock et al. (2017) experimentally triggered the growth of in-
4 train, repetitive wave-like features along the interface between a high pore-pressure granular flow in a
5 frictional regime. These authors were able to vary the scale of these features as a function of the fluid-
6 ization state.

7 8 **1.2.3. Shear structures and overturned beds in natural turbidites**

9
10 A variety of shear structures have been attributed to flow shearing in deposits of turbidity currents (in
11 the broad sense of subaqueous particulate density currents). Early workers noted for deformed turbid-
12 ite beds that "convolutions are a fossil record of the forces which operated upon laminated bed during
13 its sedimentation" (Dzulynski Smith 1963). Larsen (1986) interpreted that "oblique flames and pseudo-
14 nodules" resulted from shearing of loosely packed deposits caused by the still moving turbidity
15 currents. Butler and Tavarnelli (2006) postulated a deformation during the emplacement phase from
16 the interpretation of a combination of flow-aligned mud injections, boudinage and sheared flames.
17 Postma et al (2009, 2014) identified flame structures elongated/overturned in the paleoflow direction
18 at the border of steeply truncated beds. They compared these structures to footages of a series of anal-
19 ogue experiments on hydraulic jumps within turbidity currents, where reworking of the bed was trig-
20 gered by variations in the intensity of the hydraulic jump in its "pool". "Substrate wings" from de-
21 tachment, convolute laminations, sills and dikes were documented at the base of turbidite beds and
22 linked with erosion steps from these flow (Eggenhuisen et al. 2011). Eye and sheat folds, occurring in
23 intervals of 2-10 cm thickness together with convolute laminations have tentatively been related to the
24 syndepositional shear strain from turbidity currents acting on an aggrading ripple bed substrate
25 (McClelland et al. 2011, Marques 2012). Several classification schemes and criteria have been pro-
26 posed to figure out the exact timing and processes of syndepositional shearing and also suggest a den-
27 sity-driven Kelvin-Helmholtz mechanism (Butler et al. 2015, Gladstone et al. 2017).

28 29 **1.2.4. Intraflow beds and bulldozer effects**

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31 Building on the analogue experiments of Verhagen et al. (2013), Baas et al. (2014, 2016) enlarged the
32 fields of flow-bed interactions and showed that "the lower part of turbidity currents has the ability to
33 enter fluid mud substrates". They conclude that such "intrabed currents are driven by bed shear stress
34 exceeding the bed cohesive strength, and by flow density exceeding bed density". The resulting depos-
35 its showed various soft sediment deformation patterns such as scour fills, load and fluid escape fea-
36 tures, flame structures and bed derived "plumes" in the overlying beds. Using polydisperse granular
37 mixtures in pyroclastic current analogue experiments, Sulpizio et al. (2017) showed the entrapment of
38 loose material from the substrate when the flow passed over the bed, with a rotational component at-
39 tributed to high shear stress at the flow-bed boundary. Their experiments seem to produce single struc-
40 tures at the onset of the affected deposits, without the occurrence of recurrent oscillations or wavy in-
41 train patterns. At a different time-scale of flow-bed interactions, Morgenthaler and Frehner (2017)
42 provided evidence that a bulge can form at the front of a creeping rock-glacier and interpreted it as due
43 to a "frontal bulldozer-like soil erosion" effect. Whereas the densities and the timescales of these peri-
44 glacial deposits are largely different to the frontal waves of turbidity currents (Verhagen et al., 2013)
45 or overturning due to dry granular flows (Sulpizio et al., 2017), the resulting structures share similari-
46 ties and the processes might be comparable.

47 48 **1.2.5 Existing field evidence in deposits of pyroclastic currents**

49
50 The influence of shearing of a pyroclastic current on its aggrading substrate was evidenced through
51 various sedimentary indicators. Crowe and Fisher (1973) were the first to note that "tightly folded
52 overturned anticlines and synclines" "showed the evidence of the influence of the currents on their
53 origin" at Ubehebe (California). Without explicitly mentioning overturned structures, Fisher (1990)
54 recognized at Mt St. Helens (Washington) that finger-like dikes of tephra intruded in the unconsolidat-
55 ed substrate. He suggested that the flow head plowed into the soil and mixed it, and further that the
56 structures may have been "caused by vortical motion, rotating material from within the head of the
57 blast surge to the ground surface during erosion of the furrow". Cole et al. (1993) proposed that grad-
58 ings of breccia/lithic concentrations at Roccamonfina (Italy) were related to "internal shear producing
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overriding or overlapping of the rear of the flow onto the slower-moving front part". Reverse faults (ca. 30-60 cm long) that offset the basal contact of an ignimbrite at Monte Cimino (Italy) were interpreted as syn-depositional substrate deformation due to the shear of the pyroclastic current (Laberge et al. 2006). Pajeras et al. (2010) documented outcrops from Villa Rica (Chile) described as "folded, sheared, and thrust-faulted along the contact" -see their Fig. 9- that definitely fall in the definition of shark-fins. They also noted that "subtle erosion and amalgamation surfaces [...] showed that the pulsatory flows were able to remobilize ignimbrite laid down earlier during the same eruptive phase". Meter-scale features from the Poris ignimbrite (Teneriffa) and some small-scale flame structures from the Tanjung formation (Indonesia) were related to syn-flow shear instabilities by Rowley (2010). Douillet et al. (2015) documented small-scale shark-fin patterns in relatively massive units from the Ubehebe crater (California) and additionally identified the signature of the migration of shark-fins in examples from the 2006 deposits of Tungurahua. Following Rowley et al (2011), they interpreted these as structures that would result from the freezing of granular Kelvin-Helmholtz instabilities. From a theoretical analysis, Douillet et al. (2015) suggested that such instabilities would develop for relatively slow-moving mixtures (generally below 0.5 m/s). Recently, Brand et al. (2017, figure 10) and Pollock et al. (2017) recognized large-scale patterns similar to shark-fins in the deposits of the 1980 pyroclastic currents of Mt. St. Helens (Washington). They seem to have occurred when the main flow interacted with localized lenses of material from a previous flow.

2. Data

2.1. A dataset based on the 2006 eruption of Tungurahua

The structures reported here are preserved in the deposits from the 17 August 2006 eruption of Tungurahua volcano (Ecuador). This eruption triggered the formation of pyroclastic currents that were funneled in ravines of the fluvial drainage network on the steep flanks of the volcano (e.g. Kelfoun et al. 2009, Douillet et al. 2013a, 2013b, Rader et al. 2014, Bernard et al. 2014, Benage et al. 2014, 2016). Cross-laminated sediments forming dune bedforms dominated by ash are preserved as marginal, isolated patches with an extent of several hundreds of meters on the overbanks of the ravines that directed the flows (Douillet et al. 2013a, 2013b). These dune bedforms have been grouped into four end-members according to their shapes: "elongate", "transverse", "lunate", and "2D". For each bedform type, a set of sediment plates (lacquer peels) has been produced in order to capture the highest level of details about the sedimentary structures (Douillet et al. in-sub-b).

All shark-fin structures documented here were evidenced in these cross-laminated dune bedforms and co-exist within bedsets including (Fig 5, Douillet et al. 2013b, this issue):

- (i) a general stoss-depositional tendency,
- (ii) sub-vertical to horizontal truncations of stoss-faces,
- (iii) planar laminasets evolving into stoss-aggrading ripples,
- (iv) partial to total absence of stratification (diffuse to massive aspect) in some beds, laterally evolving into diffusely laminated beds, and
- (v) a dominance of planar lamination on the lee of crests.

It is worth emphasizing at this stage that no water was involved in the flow of the pyroclastic currents.

A set of four sediment plates from four different bedforms and two sets of four parallel sediment plates from two other bedforms were screened (Fig 1-5). They represent the entire range of shape types identified in Douillet et al. (2013b). Each sediment plate has a length of 3 m aligned with the flow direction, and heights varying between 0.8 and 1.8 m, thus representing ca. 43 m² of outcrop. Deformation patterns were absent in two dominantly massive and coarse-grained bedforms (lapilli / gravel sizes dominated), but present in all fine-grained outcrops (ash / sand size range).

2.2. Description and classification:

The shark-fin patterns form an overturning of laminae and are, elongated toward the down-flow direction exclusively. They consist of a "tail" which is linked to the laterally adjacent planar laminae via

"roots" (Fig 1). Two hundred and twenty three structures were identified, described, measured, and classified. Three different end-members were recognized based on their architecture (Fig 2-4):

- "*convolute shark-fins*" (146 structures, Fig 3): the overturned tail can be followed laterally to non-deformed sets without a truncation of the lamination, so that two roots are present upflow and downflow from the tail. The laminae are fully preserved.
- "*truncated ripple shark-fins*" (64 structures, Fig 4A-D): the patterns are found at the interface of a ripple-sized heap delimited by a truncation of the laminae. Only one root and the overturned tail are present.
- "*flat truncation shark-fins*" (13 structures, Fig 4E): the overturned laminae are found underlying a flat and laterally continuous erosion plane.

The shark-fin patterns are wholly dissimilar to "conventional overturned beds", which include an entire stratal package on a much broader lateral extent (e.g. Allen and Banks 1972, see 1.2.1). A variety of overturned geometries is recognized, spanning the range between smoothly distributed overturning forming bulbous, rounded style tails with a "logarithmic shape" (e.g. Fig 3B) to highly angular tails bent only at localized knickpoints giving a "chevron-like shape" (e.g. Fig 3A, 3D). Note as well that almost no documented features have their tail dipping downward (aligned with the gravity force), and the patterns are only elongated in the downflow direction without vertical re-arrangement.

2.3. Occurrence and spatial recurrence:

Occurrence:

Most shark-fin structures occur on the lee side of bedforms, on a flat or gently dipping palaeo-surface (lamina or erosion) with slope between -5° and 25° (Fig 5, 6A). Shark-fin structures are most common in three types of settings:

- in relation with a low-angle erosion plane (Fig 7A),
- within a zone of disturbed beds (occurring as confined lens or laterally continuous layer) concordant with the dip angle of the lee side of a dune bedform (Fig 7B, 7C base),
- directly at a lamination crest-knickpoint or within a short distance downstream from a bedform's crest (Fig 7C top).

Spatial recurrence:

Within these settings, shark-fin structures are often organized as pairs, triplets or quadruplets and rarely more, independently of their type. The spacing between these groups is generally small (5-50 cm), and the patchy organization can be expressed in two ways:

- (i) either along a single horizon with downstream repetitions (i.e. "wavy in-train patterns" concurrent in the same temporal interval, Fig 7).
- (ii) Alternatively, several structures are close in locations but occur at different stratigraphic levels, yet generally within the same co-sets (i.e. "climbing in the stratigraphy - spatial stability in time, Fig 8).

Where they occur "in-train" on the same horizon, the length between successive "shark-fins" was systematically measured (Fig 9A). Whereas the inter-structure distances are a priori not correlated, they appear to be arranged as multiple of each others within a single train. Fairly constant patterns become evident upon dividing the separation length by 2 or 3 (which corresponds to plotting the harmonics in the case of a wave, Fig 9B). This suggests that an actual pseudo-wavelength is present, yet not always apparent as some of the shark-fin occurrences are not visible in the deposits. In some cases, those trains can be related to nearby surface irregularities a few tens of cm upstream, being either a scour/gulley at the considered horizon or an accidental small block lying on the bed surface.

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3 In some cases, those trains can be related to nearby surface irregularities, either negative ones as
4 scours or gulleys following local erosion, or positive ones as clasts that have been deposited.
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6 *Ploughed zones:*

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8 Many of the shark-fins are laterally accompanied by zones that seem substantially disturbed, where
9 lamination is only diffuse and lineations with an angle to the bedsets are visible (Fig 8B-8C). These
10 zones seem to have undergone consequent mixing, and their grain size distribution is less sorted than
11 that in non-disturbed beds. Here, the term "ploughed zones" is used in the description to refer to these
12 thin lenses accompanying shark-fin trains.
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14 **2.4. Dimensions**

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16 For each encountered shark-fin, a series of parameters were measured (Fig 1): length (the extent of the
17 deformed zone), thickness (from root to top of tail), elongation (the amount of overturning), number of
18 overturned laminae, grain-size and stratal organization of underlying and overlying beds, slope angle
19 of affected beds and affecting contact, lateral continuity (up- and down-stream), distance to the next
20 structure when part of a train, and position within the outcrop (Fig 5).
21

22 At Tungurahua, the dimensions of the shark-fins are relatively homogenous (Fig 6, Table Annex 1),
23 and vary by only one order of magnitude between extremes, both in terms of length, thickness, and
24 number of affected laminae (Mean/Max/Min values of 5.68 / 20 / 1.5 cm for lengths, 1.48 / 5 / 0.3 cm
25 for thicknesses and 9.19 / 24 / 3 for affected laminae). Although linear regressions were plotted to
26 highlight trends in the graphs, we do not conclude linear trends for these structures, and the data are
27 quite broadly distributed within the entire dimensional windows (Fig 6). Thicknesses of deformation
28 remain very superficial and never exceed 5 cm. The subgroups of convolute- / truncated-ripple- / flat-
29 truncation- shark-fins differ in trends mainly because convolute shark-fins tend to be thicker for simi-
30 lar lengths/number of involved laminae/elongation. This is expectable since a truncated structure is
31 likely to be less thick than a fully preserved one.
32

33 **2.5. Anecdotic patterns**

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35 Three zones had particular patterns that could not be included in the classification but are described
36 hereafter.
37

38 *Abnormal disturbed zones:*

39 Whereas most truncations are observed on stoss sides, one transect in the lunate bedform exhibits ex-
40 tremely curious unconformities and deformed patterns deviating from the usual trend (Fig 10). Several
41 zones have an abnormal aspect (pink zones in Fig 10A), consisting of patches with laterally in-train
42 shark-fins, intact planar lamination, massive zones, diffuse, possibly ploughed lenses, and vertically
43 spread shark-fins. The shark-fins have singular bulbous shapes, yet oriented toward the down-
44 ward/downflow direction (Fig 10C-E). Enigmatic step-like laminae are also present in the upper part
45 of the zones (Fig 10B). These abnormal zones are >15 cm thick, and can be followed on a length of
46 >2 m. They are initiated on lee sides, directly downstream paleo-crests' knickpoints, and are generally
47 highlighted by a scar forming a basal unconformity or zone with trains of shark-fins (Fig 10B) that
48 gradually becomes conformable with the underlying lamination. Three of these onset-scars are clearly
49 recognized, and their accompanying disturbed zones vanish or become mixed together farther down-
50 stream (Fig 10A).
51

52 The beds above these abnormal zones is diffusely stratified to massive, appears to be reworked in
53 places, or disturbed, and exhibit sets of "backset lineations" with very steep angles that are organized
54 in lenses ca.1 cm thick and 15 to 20 cm long (Fig 10D). The nature of these "lineations" is unclear,
55 and could either be attributed to constructive laminae, to the underlining of regressive truncations, or
56 they could represent a reworked facies.
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3 *"Crocodile mouth":*

4 A bedform of the "elongate type" (see Douillet et al. 2013b) exhibits a coarse-grained and massive
5 layer that has a "crocodile-mouth" configuration on the upper stoss face of the bedform the layer (ca.
6 9 cm thick) locally splits into an upper layer (ca. 6 cm thick) and a 15 cm long basal part (ca. 3. cm
7 thick), separated by a lamina set of fine-grained sediments in between (Fig 11). The sandwiched lami-
8 nasetes are deformed in a chevron-like pattern, whereas the basal layer shows a pickled basal surface
9 that intrudes into the underlying contact. Directly downstream from the crocodile mouth, and emanat-
10 ing from the base of the split layer, a slip surface is encountered that displays a short throw in the
11 downstream and upward direction with an angle of ca. 15°. Around 60 cm further downstream, a
12 coarse-grained lens resembling the basal layer appears in the section and may be a prolongation of this
13 basal bed.
14

15
16 *"Steep overturning truncations":*

17 Very steep truncations are visible on the stoss sides of bedforms, and can reach dip angles above 80°.
18 Some of these truncations are further underlined by a cm-thick zone where truncated laminae are co-
19 herently overturned over distances of up to tens of cms. These structures are referred to as "Steep
20 Overturning Truncations, SOT". The formation of SOT was reproduced in lab experiments where
21 short-lived air jets impacted on a stratified surface (Douillet et al. 2017). These structures are reported
22 in the location maps of the shark-fin structures, since shark-fin patterns may develop in-train with the
23 crests of SOT zones, but are the focus of a forthcoming manuscript.
24
25

26 **3. Interpretation**

27 The interpretation is based on the common shark-fin patterns observed in the deposits, and points to-
28 ward stable waves that develop at a shear horizon as the physical explanation for the formation of
29 shark-fins (this chapter). The inference of this process then enables to build a physical model in order
30 to further constrain the stability of the structures (chapter 4). The anecdotic patterns are treated sepa-
31 rately in the discussion, as the evidences point toward different triggers such as slumps, saltation im-
32 pacts, or intraflow/collisions (chapter 5). Such processes may form structures resembling shark-fins
33 but result from completely different dynamics.
34

35 **3.1. General flow conditions**

36 The fields of dune bedforms produced by the 2006 eruption of Tungurahua have been interpreted as
37 deposited from diluted pyroclastic currents (Douillet et al. 2013a, 2013b). The mm-thickness of lami-
38 nae most likely resulted from fluctuating and pulsating conditions in the current affecting sedimenta-
39 tion, and turbulence remains the best potential explanation for these laminations. This inferred occur-
40 rence of turbulence and the preserved laminations point toward a parent flow dominated by the dy-
41 namics of the fluid phase rather than by particle interactions. This further implies a rather low particle-
42 concentration, falling in the field of "traction-dominated flow boundary zone" of Branney and Koke-
43 laar (2002).
44

45 The shark-fin shapes are however unlikely to result from sedimentation from purely low concentration
46 flows in fallout or saltation, since such processes usually produce laminae that are locally sub-planar
47 on the faces of a bedform (even if only of ripple size). Given that many of the shark-fins are truncated,
48 and covered by planar laminae, it is very likely that the process of overturning occurs briefly after
49 deposition, and before or during sedimentation of the directly overlying beds. This points toward the
50 occurrence of a syn-flow, superficial shearing. As already pointed by Allen and Banks (1972) for con-
51 ventional overturned beds, the unidirectional alignment with the downflow/main-slope direction sug-
52 gests a mechanism driven by the transport of the flow. Our interpretation is that the basal shearing of
53 the flow is the cause.

54 In order to preserve the coherence of the lamination, the bed movement forming shark-fins must occur
55 as packages rather than repose on the moving of particles individually. Accordingly, saltation, where
56 particles are moved individually is not an adequate process (e.g. Douillet et al. 2014). On the contrary,
57 the maintenance of the bed coherence requires a flow, which was sufficiently concentrated and which
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3 yielded sufficient strengths to deform the underlying bed. We therefore suggest that thin granular
4 flows (possibly basal traction carpets, see Sohn 1997) triggered flow-bed interactions in the form of
5 superficial granular shear.

6 Given that trains of shark-fins can include indifferently the convolute and two truncated types, we in-
7 terpret that the three types result from a similar process. Furthermore, since truncated shark-fins fol-
8 low the same dimensional trends as convolute ones, but with a lesser thickness, one may postulate that
9 truncated ripple shark-fins are truncated versions of the convolute ones.

11 12 **3.2. A stable wave interface at a shear horizon**

13 The repetitive nature on the same horizon (in-train structures), together with the occurrence of a pseu-
14 do-wavelength (modulo harmonics) further suggest that the forming process behaves as a wave, i.e. an
15 oscillatory mechanism with a wavelength, periodicity, and frequency. It follows that the numerous
16 signs of disturbance directly upstream of shark-fins, or along a horizon containing shark-fins can be
17 interpreted as the mark of shark-fins migrating laterally. These signs would thus represent the lateral
18 displacement of the parent waves. At Villa Rica, Pajeras et al. (2010) already noted "subtle erosion
19 and amalgamation surfaces", possibly related to the same processes. This strengthens the reasoning of
20 Rowley (2010) on the seldom occurrence of shark-fins: "The structures [might] exist but migrate later-
21 ally through a steady current, leaving no recognizable feature other than a well mixed zone in their
22 wake".

23
24 Similarly, shark-fins can be found in clusters that project on close-by lateral positions in successive
25 laminae, so that a relative spatio-temporal stability during aggradation may also be inferred. Again, the
26 observation strengthens the hypothesis of Rowley (2010) on the infrequent occurrence of shark-fins:
27 "[Pyroclastic current] flow boundary zones [might] migrate vertically too rapidly for K-H-like [i.e.
28 shark-fins] instability growth to occur". The jump of a shark-fin over several laminae thus suggests
29 that the process(es) forming these waves has the same temporal scale as the aggradation rate, and that
30 the bed configuration at a particular place is prone to trigger the formation of wavy shear interfaces.
31 This latest suggestion is further supported by the fact that numbers of the waves are found in several
32 isochrones directly behind a crest or a local break in slope of the paleo-topography. Noteworthy,
33 Kuenen (1953) described folded beds associated with ripple beds (possibly due to pressure drops on
34 the lee of the bedforms) whereas in the context of sheath folds, Cobblod and Quinquis (1980) noted
35 that "passive folds can develop by kinematic amplification of deflections". All together, these infor-
36 mation point toward the occurrence of stable waves at the flow-bed interface that formed in response
37 to the bed configuration and other local conditions.

39 **3.3. Pure shear vs. granular Kelvin-Helmholtz instabilities**

40
41 Several studies have pointed out that wavy patterns can occur at the boundary between two granular
42 mediums (Goldfarb 2002, Verhagen et al. 2013, Farin et al. 2014). Some authors have related shark-
43 fin patterns to granular Kelvin-Helmholtz instabilities (Rowley et al. 2011, Farin et al. 2014, Douillet
44 et al. 2015, Gladstone et al 2017) or showed through relationships of the Richardson number (ratio of
45 buoyancy over shear forces) that density may have an influence (Verhagen et al. 2013). Kelvin-
46 Helmholtz instabilities are related to a density interface that is subjected to shear and forms waves (i.e,
47 the interface responds with a periodic oscillation), for which the restoring force is the density contrast
48 at the interface. The wavy interface then evolves in vortices' shapes, which produce the typical pat-
49 terns found in numerous analogue fluid experiments or atmospheric clouds.

50 In order to advance any interpretation in terms of Kelvin-Helmholtz instabilities, one would expect to
51 find evidence for a potential influence of the restoring gravity force acting on a density interface in the
52 deposits. In terms of sedimentological evidences, this might be expressed as the tail of the shark-fins
53 being bent downwards (due to their excess weight compared to the overlying shearing fluid). None of
54 the patterns observed in this study exhibit such a configuration, weakening the case for Kelvin-
55 Helmholtz structures. Further, the experiments of Goldfarb (2002) produced vortical, repetitive in-
56 train wave instabilities at a vertical interface, therefore not involving density but rather the competing
57 shear and extensional strains as destabilizing and restoring forces. The grain size distribution of both
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3 affected and overlying beds are variable, and no rules concerning a possible bed density inversion was
4 observed, in contrast to the suggestion in other deposits (Gladstone et al. 2017). We thus refrain here
5 from interpreting density as the main restoring force for shark-fin structures, and thus, to interpret
6 Kelvin-Helmholtz instability.
7

8 **4. Theoretical framework**

9 **4.1. Model**

10
11 A theoretical framework is developed below in order to translate the observation of the natural depos-
12 its (wavelength, thickness of deformation zone) to quantitative estimates of the parental flow values
13 (Annex 2). Given that an oscillatory wave signal is present and that the form of the shark-fins points
14 toward shearing, but that no insight enables to prove any influence of gravity as a restoring force, two
15 theoretical frameworks were developed. We refrain however from using the Kelvin-Helmholtz equa-
16 tions for this analysis for the reasons outlined above.
17

18 The problem (Fig 12, fully developed in Annex 2) is considered with initial conditions consisting of
19 two infinite and incompressible fluids with two different constant velocities in the horizontal direction.
20 A shear horizon of thickness " $2*d$ " separates the two fluids parallel to the flow direction. Within the
21 shear horizon, a linear (laminar) velocity gradient is considered, representing the effect of viscosity
22 (which is otherwise ignored in the standard Kelvin-Helmholtz instability problem, see e.g. Douillet et
23 al. 2015). The initially horizontal upper and lower interfaces of the shear horizon are perturbed with a
24 low amplitude wave (" η " with wavelength " λ "), and the analysis tackles the stability of these interfac-
25 es. The momentum and continuity equations are resolved for small perturbations.
26

27 The problem consists in quantifying the growth rate of the wave interface. The two frameworks differ
28 only in their initial configurations: the first one considers a constant density for the problem, whereas
29 the second considers a linear vertical density profile for the upper and lower mediums, but a constant
30 density within the shear layer (considering the assumption of incompressibility, density can be advected
31 but not diffused).
32

33 **4.2. Results**

34
35 The dispersion equations ruling the growth rate of the waves were resolved numerically (Fig 13).
36 Three variables intervene in the equation: (i) the wavelength " λ " as observed in the natural deposits,
37 (ii) the thickness of the shear horizon " $2*d$ ", which is approximated through the observed thickness of
38 deformation, and (iii) the flow velocity " U ". The output is a map of the growth rate of the waves, i.e.
39 the rate of increase in the waves' amplitude (Fig 13).
40

41 **4.2.1 Growth rate and sedimentation rate**

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43 The flow velocity is the only time-related quantity of the problem to which the growth rates of the
44 waves' amplitude may be related, but these flow velocities are fairly loosely constrained in the results
45 (Fig 13). Consequently, we approached the problem of discussing this growth rate through its compar-
46 ison with plausible sedimentation rates (deposition rates) for pyroclastic currents. Indeed, if the sedi-
47 mentation rate is much higher than the growth rate, then no structures would have time to form, but if
48 the growth rate is much larger than the sedimentation rate, the structures are likely to have completely
49 mixed the interface before they become frozen (buried). Further, since the natural shark-fins are
50 climbing up the lamination (Fig 8), growth rates and sedimentation rates must be of comparable or-
51 ders.
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53 Growth rates reaching meters per seconds seem absurd and not likely to enable the preservation of
54 shark-fins, at least for most progressive aggradation cases not invoking "*en masse*" processes. In their
55 large scale pyroclastic current experiments, Breard et al. (2016) reported aggradation rates of 3.5 mm/s
56 for crudely laminated layers but rates as fast as 450–550 mm/s for their main unit. Bracket values of
57 0.001 to 0.5 m/s are thus kept as the broad interval considered as realistic sedimentation rates and thus
58 growth rate intervals. We further postulate that on one side, lamination likely develops in the lower
59
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range of these values. On the other side, we consider that large structures may be formed at higher sedimentation rates than smaller ones. Indeed, a thick shear horizon to create thick shark-fins may be either established through a larger thickness of the dense basal portion of a flow, or through a partitioning of the shear deeper in the deposit, both mechanisms likely occurring at high sedimentation rates only.

4.2.1. Result interpretation

The ratio of λ/d is a notable dimensionless quantity that determines the stability of the wave interface (Fig 13): For a constant density profile, a ratio of ca. 9 marks the limit between stable and unstable conditions, irrespectively of a flow velocity (Fig 13A). For very low velocities, very flattened patterns (i.e. high λ/d) seem to be stable as well, possibly representing slump events. Including a density gradient (Fig 13B), the stability can be expressed as a function of the Richardson number (i.e. the ratio of restoring density force and perturbing shear force), and as such does not explicitly expose a flow velocity. The observed patterns are comparable with other analyses of stability (e.g. Sutherland 2005).

Here, three cases are exemplified ($d=3$ cm, 10 cm, 1 m) both with constant density (Fig 14) and density gradient models (Fig 15). Since the posing of the problem solely involves λ and d as length quantities, and that the dependency on flow velocity (U_0) is very low, the patterns on the graphs are solely influenced by the λ/d ratio. Nevertheless, the examples are useful for visualization purposes. A deformation thickness of $d=3$ cm is appropriate for the Tungurahua shark-fins varying from 0.3 to 5 cm thickness (Fig 14A, Fig 15A). Larger values are adequate for other case studies: e.g. $d=10$ cm (Fig 14B, 15B) for turbidite convolute laminae (Gladstone et al. 2017), or $d=1$ m (Fig 14C, 15C) for the large-scale shark-fin patterns observed at Mt. St. Helens (Brand et al 2017). Zones of small growth rates where shark-fins could potentially occur are highlighted in blue, while the zones we consider as optimal or limit growth rates are marked in green. Growth rates represented by warm colors are unlikely to preserve shark-fins because extremely high values likely destroy any sedimentological signature. The "constant density model" for a 3 cm shear horizon yields a strong cutoff for wavelengths around 30 cm (close to the natural observations), with growth rates abruptly increasing above this limit. Any wavelength below the cutoff is stable, which in turn explains the large span of thickness vs lengths within a narrow window of dimensions observed in nature (Fig 6). The "density gradient model" results in much more stable waves because of the restoring effects of density. The results of the theoretical framework thus suggest that the preservation of shark-fins is feasible for the whole range of tested values, and support the interpretation (Fig 15, 16).

5. Discussion and alternative interpretations

5.1. Questions surrounding the occurrence of shark-fins

Under the assumption that shark-fins are related to a combination of wave and shear mechanisms (Fig 16), three main questions arise. The first one is to understand which bed conditions promote shark-fin formation. Liquefaction or fluidization is often emphasized for SSD formation (e.g. Roche et al. 2013, Verhagen et al. 2013, Baas et al. 2014, 2016). Yet whether liquid-like state is a necessary condition is unclear and we see no evidence for a liquid-like granular state around shark-fins. Note however that numerous small-scale impact sags are present, suggesting that the bed was in a relatively uncompact, metastable state shortly after deposition. At more than 6 km distance from the crater, such impact sags are unlikely related to direct ballistic clasts, rather to anecdotic large particles landing from the pyroclastic currents.

A second question concerns the size that shark-fin structures can achieve under a wave-and-shear mechanism. The thickness of deformation shall be related to the cohesion strength of the bed, which shall be high enough to achieve a transfer down into the substrate. The strength necessary to produce a thick disturbance could be likely to destroy the upper part of the bed, so that shark-fins may be limited to a skin effect of a few centimeters. Most experimental work produced very small structures with a size comparable with our field examples (Rowley et al. 2011, Farin et al. 2014, Verhagen et al. 2013). Recently Pollock et al. (2017) were able to vary the size of vortices formed during pneumatic granular experiments, yet their setup as well was limited to structures no more than few centimeters in thick-

ness. Other alternative explanations may be more relevant for meter scale features producing overturning (see 5.2.3.)

Finally, a broader question fosters on the possible occurrence of shark-fin patterns in other types of environments. In the case of a basal shear instability, the preservation of shark-fin is limited to environments with a high sedimentation rate, in order to preserve such structures in the deposits. Further, if a traction carpet has to occur to trigger sufficient shear stress, a high bedload transport is needed. Such conditions are likely achieved only for oversaturated decelerating flows, as already previously suggested (Douillet et al. 2013b, 2015). Given that a shear is present, a lateral current is involved, yet if saltation was dominating, the individual transport of clasts would result in the removal of the shark-fins. We thus suggest that shark-fins are produced under conditions of high sedimentation rates and below the threshold for saltation of deposited material, which has been referred to as "differential draping" conditions (Douillet et al. 2013b). Such conditions are most likely occurring in turbidity currents, glacial outburst flows or tsunamis, but not in rivers and aeolian environments, and indeed, most documented outcrops come from turbidites (Dzulynski Smith 1963, Larsen 1986, Butler et al. 2015, Gladstone et al. 2017), tsunamis (Matsumoto et al. 2008), or pyroclastic currents (Crowe and Fisher 1973, Pajeras et al. 2010, Rowley 2010, Douillet et al. 2015).

5.2. Alternative interpretations based on the anecdotic patterns

Our preferred interpretation to explain the formation of shark-fins is based on the occurrence of syn-depositional waves occurring at the shear horizon of the flow-bed boundary (Fig 16). However, several alternative interpretations can be discussed and the anecdotic patterns documented here are strong arguments for the occurrence of other mechanisms, in at least some cases (Fig 17). Future studies will hopefully be able to address these alternatives to provide an even more solid interpretation.

5.2.1. Slumping:

The lunate bedform outcrop (Fig 10) provides strong arguments for slumping as a mechanism of deformation (Fig 17A). Indeed, the anecdotic zones are situated on steep lee sides ($>20^\circ$) prone to gravitational destabilization. Their lateral continuity over 2.5 m and consequent thickness (>15 cm) suggest a larger scale process as the waves envisaged before, and the unconformities forming the basal scars are hardly explained by an erosive event. Further, the disturbed zones are compound of a relatively massive mixture, as if the material were mixed by a mass movement. On top of that, the downstream ends of disturbed zones contain deformation structures linked with a shortening (Fig 10C, 9E), whereas the step-like "crinkled" forms at the onset seem to be related to extension (Fig 10B). This would suggest brief destabilizations of the steep lee side of the bedform, swaying under the combined action of the frontal (stoss) push of the pyroclastic currents, the rapid loading from the depositing mass, and oversteepening of the bedform (Fig 17A). It is unclear at which moment of the bedform formation such local slumps would occur, but the upper part of the bedform may have been affected, leading to the unexplained massive nature as well as the centimeter-scale sub-vertical lineations found on the upper part of the lee side.

Slumping, collapse or dynamic liquefaction has been involved in many previous interpretations for aeolian deposits -that share the property of having air as the interclast fluid with pyroclastic currents- (Allen and Banks 1972 and references therein, Chan et al. 2014, Ford et al. 2016). Although involving seismic liquefaction, Horowitz (1982) invokes "an unequally distributed surface load created by sand dune topography" to explain the deformed layers in aeolian dune foresets. Thus, slumping could be an alternative interpretation to the wave instabilities, yet over very short distances, in order to at least partially preserve the deformed structures.

5.2.2. Impact sag trains

The recurrence of shark-fins has been interpreted as indicating a trigger occurring as a periodic wave, but other types of processes can produce such cyclic overturned beds without being waves. Further, there is no satisfactory restoring force if a wavy phenomenon is involved: a granular medium is un-

likely to yield a sufficient surface tension, and the scale and geometry of the shark-fins makes it unlikely for buoyancy to be involved. The bouncing of a clast that would locally produce small impact sags and truncate beds could possibly explain the shark-fins (Fig 17B). Since a bouncing clast is expected to have a more or less recurrent jump length, this could well explain the regular distance between shark-fins. Numerous small-scale impact sags are present in the deposit, proving that the beds could be easily deformed. Further, examples documented from the Laacher See eruption revealed deformation structures from meter-scale impact sags producing patterns similar in many ways to the shark-fin geometry (e.g. Fig. 4 in Douillet et al. 2015). We have no argument to rule out bouncing clasts as a trigger for the formation of shark-fins for at least some of the structures documented here.

5.2.3. Collision and intraflows

The "crocodile mouth" found in the outcrop from the elongate bedform is singular (Fig 11). The configuration shows that the basal part of the flow locally penetrated at the base of the finer-grained sandwiched layer to form a small-scale injectite, whereas the top of the flow kept overriding the whole, but the causes are unclear (Fig 17C-D). Two mechanisms suggested in the literature could explain the resulting outcrop:

-The "bulldozer effect" evidenced and modeled for rock glaciers (Morgenthaler & Frehner 2017), where the slow and heavy mass of the flow folds and pushes the bed at the front. This would well explain the "chevron-like" deformed laminae in the sandwiched layer and the small thrust fault.

-The intraflow turbidity current experiments from Baas et al. (2014, 2016) may also explain the crocodile mouth, and share many features with our observations. In particular, these authors were able to experimentally produce a zone of mixing around the injectite, some nodules at the interface, and the sandwiching of the penetrated layer.

In our example, the accommodation of shortening in the sandwiched layer is testified through chevrons-like deformed laminae as well as the small thrust fault visible further downstream (Fig 17D). The sandwiched bed was thus squeezed. Without further evidence to distinguish between bulldozer- or intraflow-related shortening, we use the umbrella term "collision" to refer to a flow that pushed laterally the deposits underneath. A collision mechanism might be particularly relevant for larger scale features of overturning. For the case where one single overturned structure is present, collision may be a more suitable interpretation than a wavy shear interface to explain such structures.

Several questions cannot be answered here. It is unclear whether the sandwiched laminaset was part of a continuous layer that was otherwise eroded away, or was a local lens deposited in the "pool" formed by the stoss of the bedform. Although the disturbing bed is coarser-grained, it remains unproven that a density contrast with the fine-grained sandwiched material was present at time of (de)formation, nor can we speculate on the cohesive strength of the bed.

Conclusion

Shark-fin pattern has been defined here as an umbrella term for structures with a local overturned nature confined to a narrow lateral extent. Such structures have been variously reported in the literature on turbidites, sporadically from pyroclastic currents, and are ubiquitous in the deposits of the dilute pyroclastic currents from the 2006 eruption of Tungurahua. The rapid sedimentation of a highly poly-disperse mixture of clasts likely promoted the entrapment of consequent amounts of fluids, and so facilitated metastable conditions. On the steep sided flanks of pyroclastic bedforms, beds are further influenced by a destabilizing effect of gravity. This was probably an ideal ground for the onset of syn- and post-depositional soft sediment deformation and re-arrangements.

The overturning of shark-fins suggests a syn-depositional shear mechanism. The spatial organization of shark-fins as repetitive in-trains patterns along a single laminae points toward a conventional wave mechanism as trigger. Further observations also suggest the lateral migration and concurrent growth of structure during sedimentation.

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3 A physical model for the stability of waves at the interface of a shear horizon was developed with and
4 without influence of density stratification. The stability analysis of the model shows that wavy patterns
5 can develop, and that the wavelength of those structures is mainly depending on the thickness of the
6 shear horizon. The results deliver convincing growth rates for the wavy patterns in regards to other
7 documented sedimentation rates, flow velocities, and dimensions, and support this interpretation. No
8 evidence exists to support the interpretation of these features as frozen Kelvin-Helmholtz instabilities.

9 In the screening for shark-fin structures, other anecdotic types of deformation patterns have been evi-
10 denced and interpreted as resulting from different processes. Apart from waves at a shear horizon,
11 three other syn-flow mechanisms could be involved to produce soft sediment deformation with shark-
12 fin patterns: collisional flows on the previously deposited bed, syn-flow slumping, or impact sags. The
13 collision mechanism appears like a unique mechanism and not applicable to shark-fins where a rhyth-
14 micity is invoked. If slumping is a viable mechanism, then it resulted in a displacement of a few cen-
15 timeters only, and no evidence of displacement are present in the majority of the observations.

16 We foresee a risk of over-interpretation of shark-fin structures as related to granular Kelvin-Helmholtz
17 instabilities. Key observations would be needed for an explanation involving Kelvin-Helmholtz insta-
18 bilities: (i) a stable spatial recurrence on a single horizon, (ii) signs of migration, and (iii) insights of
19 the restoring influence of density. The later can be evidenced, for example, by tails that are recumbent
20 in the downward (vertical) direction. Without these observations, it cannot be avoided that overturned
21 structures result from the passive development of folds by kinematic amplification of deflections or a
22 collision mechanism forming a single shortening fold. For the case of Tungurahua, the stratal organi-
23 zation, morphometrics parameters, and physical model all converge toward an explanation as syn-
24 depositional waves at the interface of a shear horizon under very high sedimentation rates.
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Figure captions

Figure 1: Sketch of the general morphology of shark-fin patterns and the measurements carried.

Figure 2: Sketch representing the three types of shark-fin patterns recognized in the outcrops.

Figure 3: Convolute shark-fin structures. A. Train of 2 convolute shark-fins, the first one truncated by a major truncation and with an angular shape, the second composite with two nearby tails (Plate TrT1aP3, see Table in Annex 1). B. train of 2 convolute "bulbous" shark-fins downstream a crest. A fine-grained massive "ploughed" zone emanates directly above the shark-fins (Plate TrT2P5). C. Fine-grained and massive shark-fin in a disturbed zone (Plate LuTNP2). D. Anecdotic coarse-grained angular shark-fin (Plate TrT4P6).

Figure 4: Truncated shark-fin structures. A-D Truncated ripple shark-fins: A. Plate TrT1aP4, B. Plate TrT1aP4, C. Plate TrP1aP3, D. Plate TrT3P6, E. Flat truncation shark-fins, Plate TrT1aP5.

Figure 5: Position of shark-fin patterns within the sediment plate outcrops by types. Structures in-trains are linked by black lines. For large scale image and details on the outcrops, see Douillet et al. in-sub-b. The code for each plate gives the bedform type and transect number.

Figure 6: Dimensions of shark-fin structures by types. Left side graphs are plotted versus length, right side versus thickness. The linear regressions are fitted by minimizing the euclidian distance between data and model after reducing and centering the data in order to account for the different length scales of the axes, and are calculated based on principal component analysis using the svd function in Matlab.

Figure 7: In train shark-fin organization. A. shark-fin separated with regular occurrence (Plate LuT2P3-P4). B. shark-fin separated by increasing distance (Plate TrT2P3). C. shark-fin downstream crest knick-point on the top right, Steep overturning truncation on stoss face, train of shark-fin within disturbed zone in the middle right, impact sag on lower left part (Plate LuTNP2a).

Figure 8: Clusters of migrating shark-fin (migration followed with pink dotted lines). A. Overturned laminae can be followed climbing stratigraphy with an initially downstream migration followed by two step-backs (Plate TrT4P2). B. A cluster of shark-fins is preceded upstream by zones of ploughed laminae (see Douillet et al. 2015). C. Cluster climbing lamination in the downstream direction with succession of truncated-convolute-truncated shark-fins (Plate LuTNP5).

Figure 9: Distance separating shark-fins in single trains. A) Non corrected data B. Data with inter-distance halved or divided by three to account for missed harmonics. When divided, harmonics are represented by black crosses between full-occurrences.

Figure 10: Anecdotic deformation zone. A. General view of Plate LuT2 with deformed zones highlighted in pink. Location of figures B-E are highlighted by white boxes. B. Onset of deformation with scars underlined by overturned laminae, unconformable contact, and step-like lamination on the upper right in the deformed beds. C. Zone of compression with overturned beds. D. The top part of the bedform contains lineations that form steep backsets, c.a. 1 cm thick and with pattern followed over tens of centimeters laterally. E. Zone of compression with cluster of convolute laminae coexistent in disturbed to massive zones.

Figure 11: Crocodile mouth structure. A. General view of Plate "Elongate" with location of deformation zone in Figure B marked with a white box. B. View of the crocodile mouth structure. C. Zoom into the onset of deformation, chevron-like structures, and pickled basal surface

Figure 12: Geometry of the physical framework.

Figure 13: Results of the stability analysis from the physical frameworks with the constant density model (A), and linear density gradient (B), with zoom, showing the growth rate of the perturbation as a function of flow velocity (A) or Richardson number (B) and the ratio of wavelength over thickness of shear layer.

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2
3 Figure 14: Constant density model. Growth rate of the perturbation as a function of wavelength and
4 flow velocity for different thicknesses of shear layer. Case A is most relevant to the Tungurahua
5 shark-fins.

6 Figure 15: Gradient density model. Growth rate of the perturbation as a function of Richardson num-
7 ber and wavelength for different thicknesses of shear layer. Case A is most relevant to the Tungurahua
8 shark-fins.

9 Figure 16: Interpretative sketch representing the process of formation of shark-fins. (A) In a regular
10 setting, a fully turbulent boundary layer is developed down to the substrate. (B) If a basal granular
11 flow is present in the form of a thin traction carpet, a shear horizon occurs, which reworks the superfi-
12 cial bed and creates shark-fins when the interface becomes wavy.

13
14 Figure 17: Interpretative sketches for the alternative explanations. A) the slumping mechanism for the
15 lunate outcrop. B). In-train shark-fins might be related to the impact of saltating gravels. C) and D)
16 The mechanism of collision forming the crocodile mouth via the flow of a dense granular flow over a
17 fine-grained, metastable "pool".
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Annex:**A1. Table of the shark-fin characteristics****Table caption A1:**

Main characteristics of every encountered shark-fin structures.

plate code:

Lu (Lunate) or *Tr* (Transverse); *T* (Trench number); *P* (Plate number increasing from 1 to 6 in the downflow direction).

Affected zone & overlying beds:

-face- slope: *S* (Stoss), *L* (lee), *F* (Flat zone) *C* (Crest area). Slope is given in degree to the horizontal and positive when dipping against flow direction.

-Grain size (GS) attribute: (fin, mid, coa): fin: ~125 μm mid: 250 μm coa: 500 μm

-Stratification (strat) attribute: (CL / L / DL / M): crude and clear pronounced lamination (CL), normal well laminated (L), diffuse lamination only distinguishable with the impregnation method (DL) and massive (M).

-Additional lamination attribute: (DIST / W / BCKS / VERT / CHAOS): disturbed by deformation (DIST), Wavy laminasets (W), backset laminae (BCKS), vertical backset bedding (VERT), chaotic zone with hardly interpretable reason (CHAOS)

-Additional lamina(DIST / W / BCKS / VERT / CHAOS): disturbed by deformation (DIST), Wavy laminasets (W), backset laminae (BCKS), vertical backset bedding (VERT), chaotic zone with hardly interpretable reason (CHAOS)

Overtured structure:

L (Length of affected zone), *T* (Thickness of affected zone), *N lam* (Number of affected laminae), *E* (Elongation) *D-next* (Distance to next shark-fin, if in-train)

Upper contact:

Slope angle and Type: erosive (ER) or concordant (C)

Lateral continuity & Comments:

Same abbreviations as for the rest of table

Position:

Measured from upstream end of plate, vertical (vert) and horizontal (hor) position, as well as position within the 2006 sequence (seq): base (B), middle (M) or top (T).

A2. Physical framework

(separated document ANNEX2_Equations.docx)

Acknowledgements

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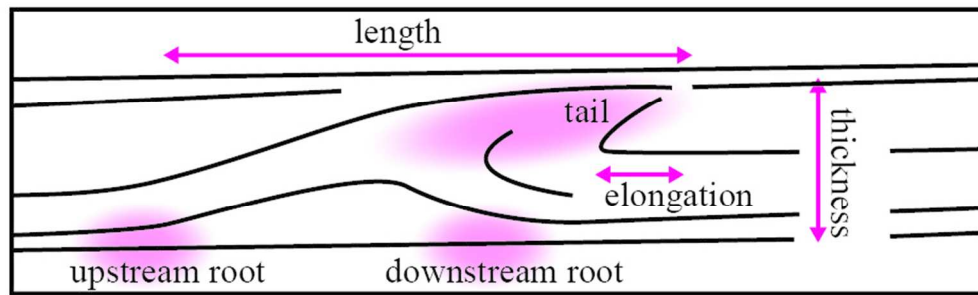


Figure 1: Sketch of the general morphology of shark-fin patterns and the measurements carried.

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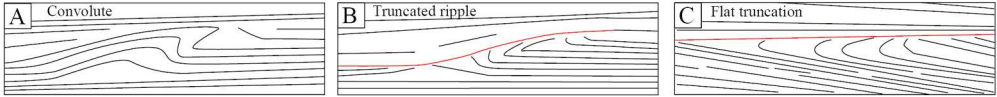


Figure 2: Sketch representing the three types of shark-fin patterns recognized in the outcrops.

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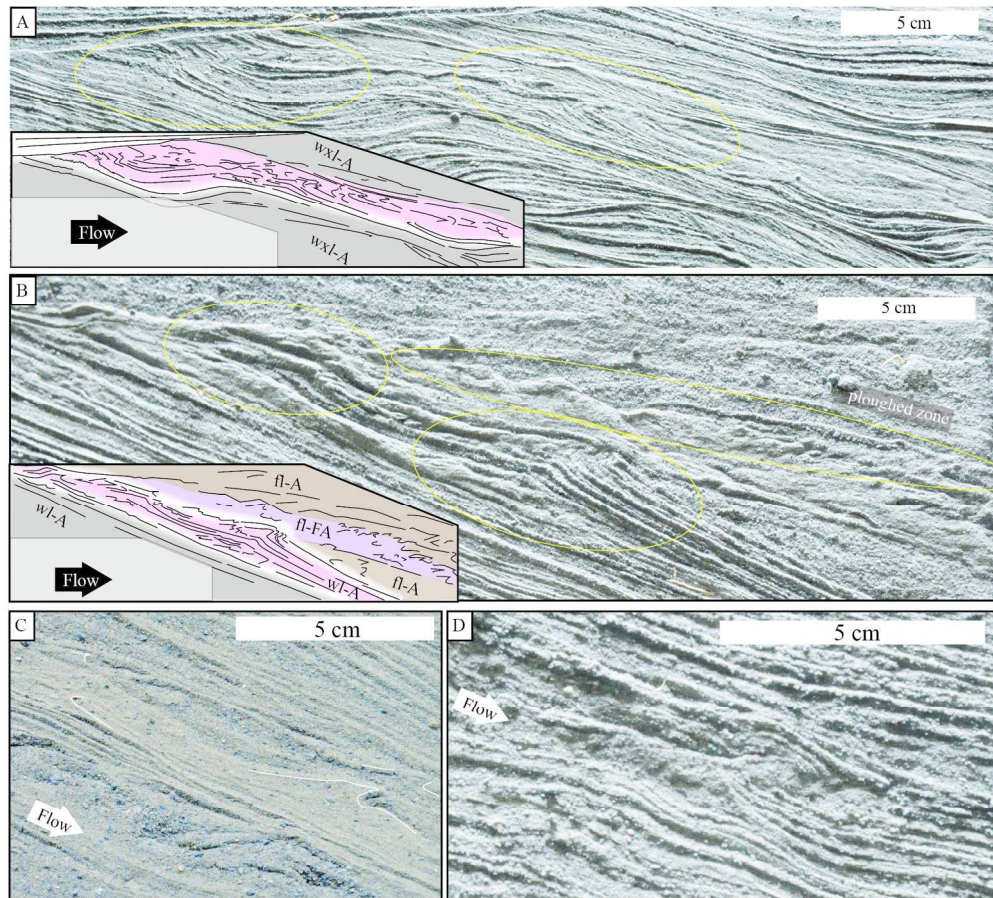


Figure 3: Convolute shark-fin structures. A. Train of 2 convolute shark-fins, the first one truncated by a major truncation and with an angular shape, the second composite with two nearby tails (Plate TrT1aP3, see Table in Annex 1). B. train of 2 convolute "bulbous" shark-fins downstream a crest. A fine-grained massive "ploughed" zone emanates directly above the shark-fins (Plate TrT2P5). C. Fine-grained and massive shark-fin in a disturbed zone (Plate LuTNP2). D. Anecdotic coarse-grained angular shark-fin (Plate TrT4P6).

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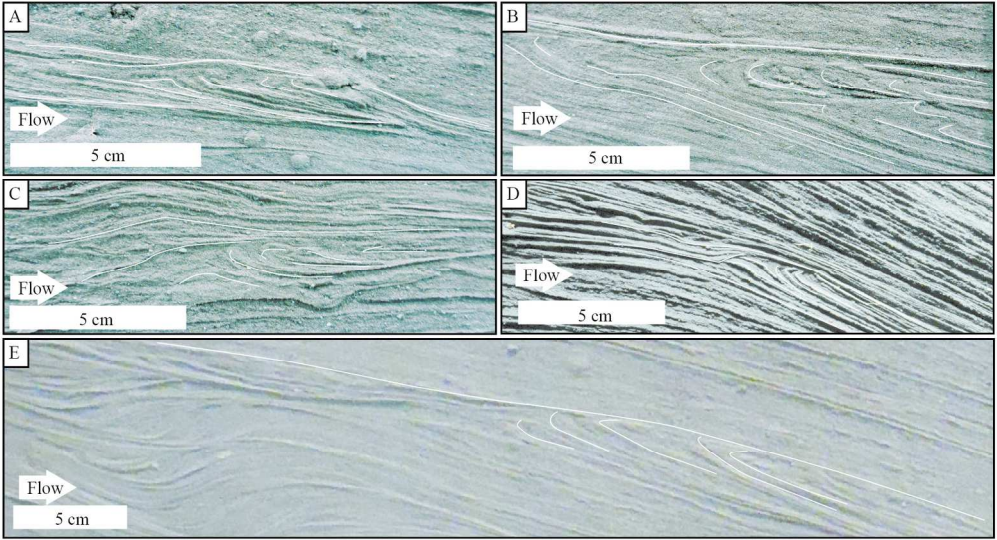


Figure 4: Truncated shark-fin structures. A-D Truncated ripple shark-fins: A. Plate TrT1aP4, B. Plate TrT1aP4, C. Plate TrP1aP3, D. Plate TrT3P6, E. Flat truncation shark-fins, Plate TrT1aP5.

180x97mm (300 x 300 DPI)

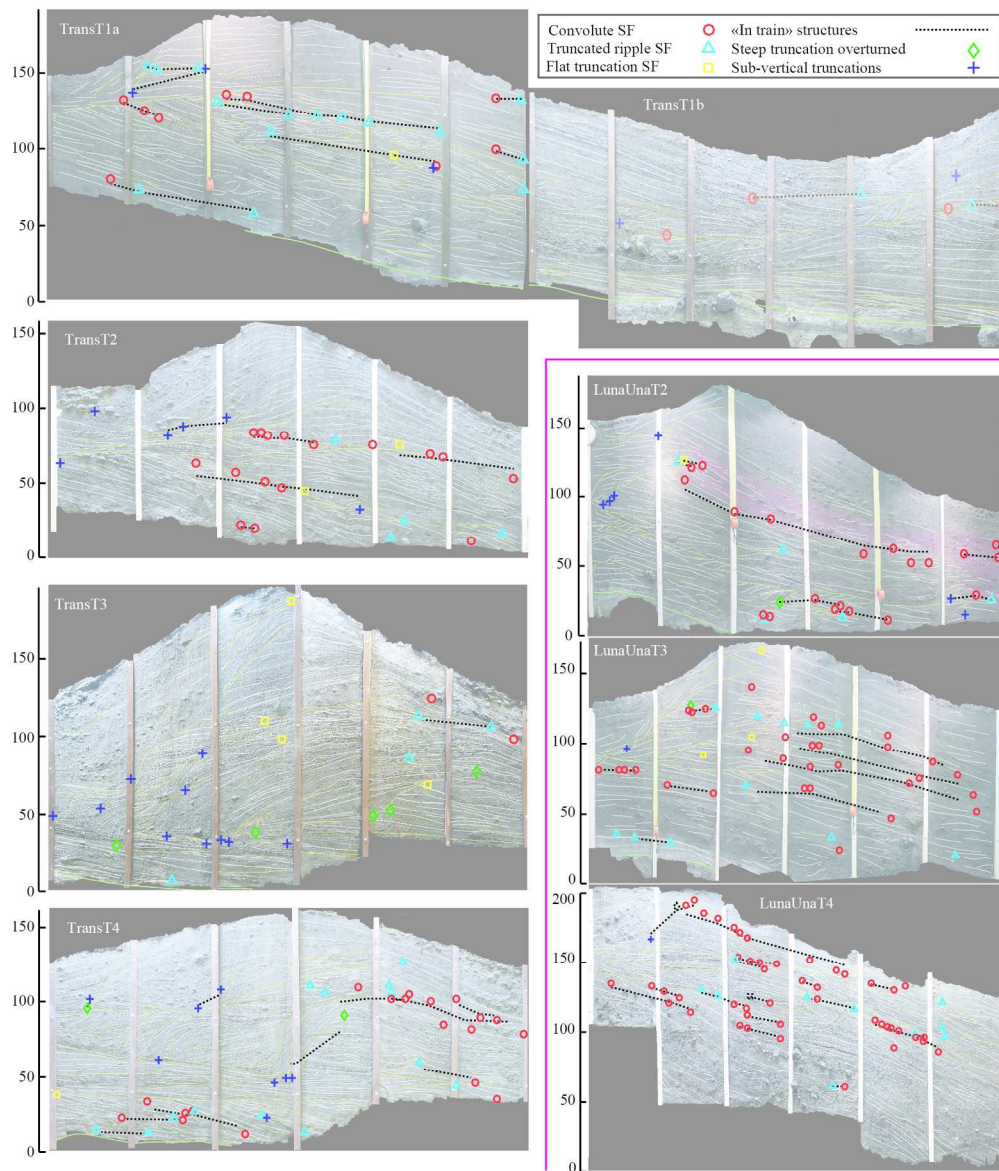


Figure 5: Position of shark-fin patterns within the sediment plate outcrops by types. Structures in-trains are linked by black lines. For large scale image and details on the outcrops, see Douillet et al. in-sub-b. The code for each plate gives the bedform type and transect number.

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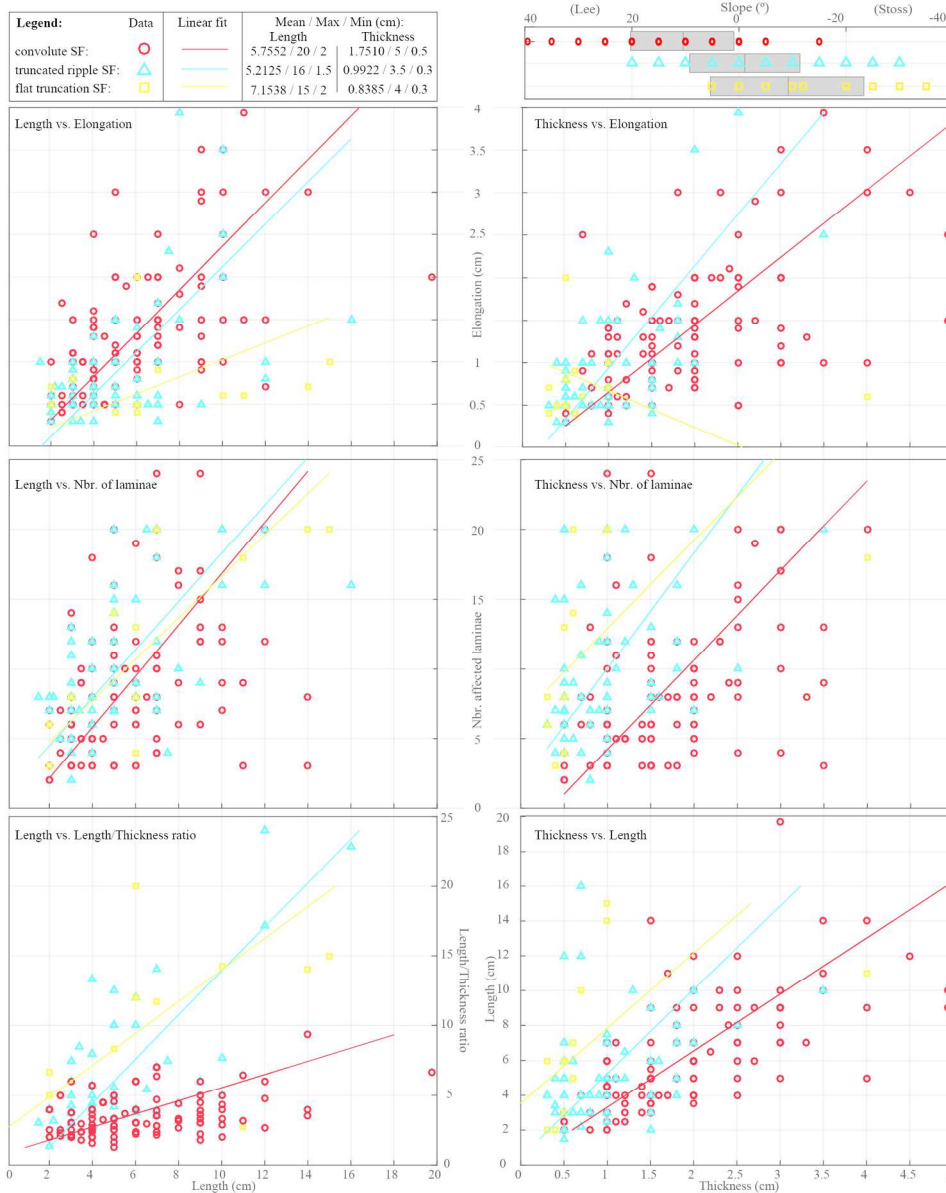


Figure 6: Dimensions of shark-fin structures by types. Left side graphs are plotted versus length, right side versus thickness. The linear regressions are fitted by minimizing the euclidian distance between data and model after reducing and centering the data in order to account for the different length scales of the axes, and are calculated based on principal component analysis using the svd function in Matlab.

180x224mm (300 x 300 DPI)

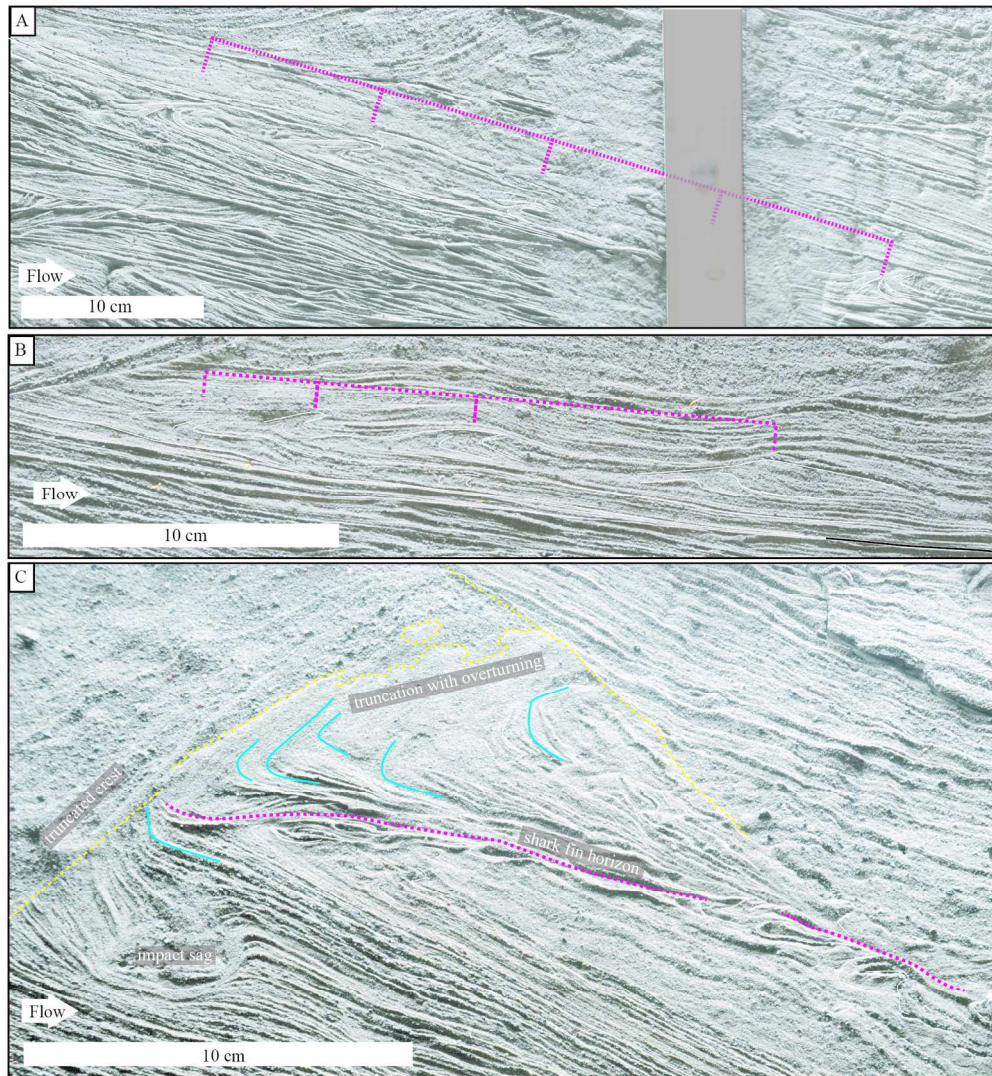


Figure 7: In train shark-fin organization. A. shark-fin separated with regular occurrence (Plate LuT2P3-P4). B. shark-fin separated by increasing distance (Plate TrT2P3). C. shark-fin downstream crest knick-point on the top right, Steep overturning truncation on stoss face, train of shark-fin within disturbed zone in the middle right, impact sag on lower left part (Plate LuTNP2a).

180x194mm (300 x 300 DPI)

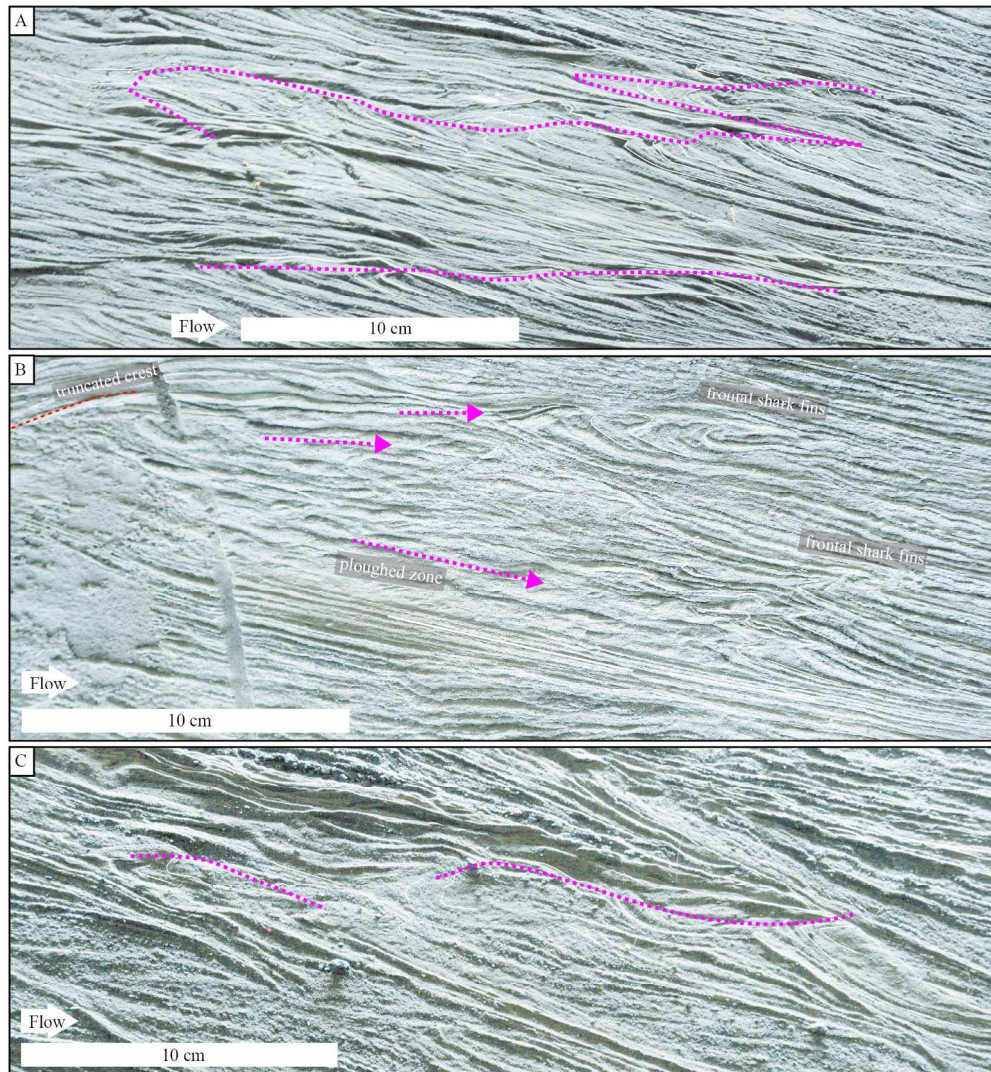


Figure 8: Clusters of migrating shark-fin (migration followed with pink dotted lines). A. Overturned laminae can be followed climbing stratigraphy with an initially downstream migration followed by two step-backs (Plate TrT4P2). B. A cluster of shark-fins is preceded upstream by zones of ploughed laminae (see Douillet et al. 2015). C. Cluster climbing lamination in the downstream direction with succession of truncated-convolute-truncated shark-fins (Plate LuTNP5).

180x193mm (300 x 300 DPI)

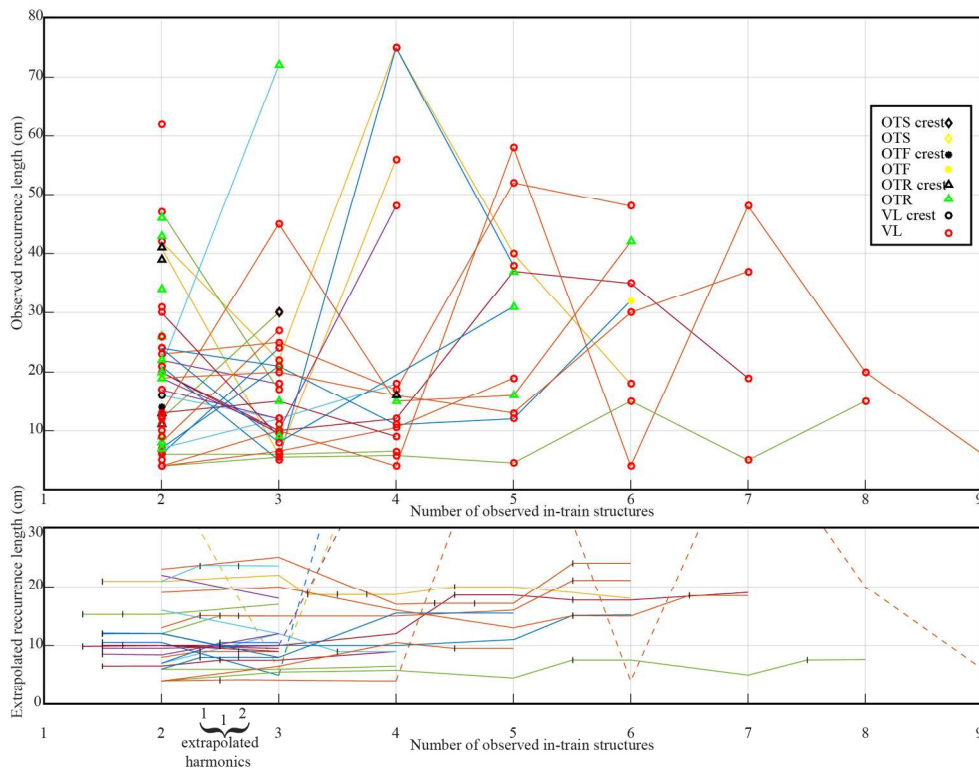


Figure 9: Distance separating shark-fins in single trains. A) Non corrected data B. Data with inter-distance halved or divided by three to account for missed harmonics. When divided, harmonics are represented by black crosses between full-occurrences.

180x140mm (300 x 300 DPI)

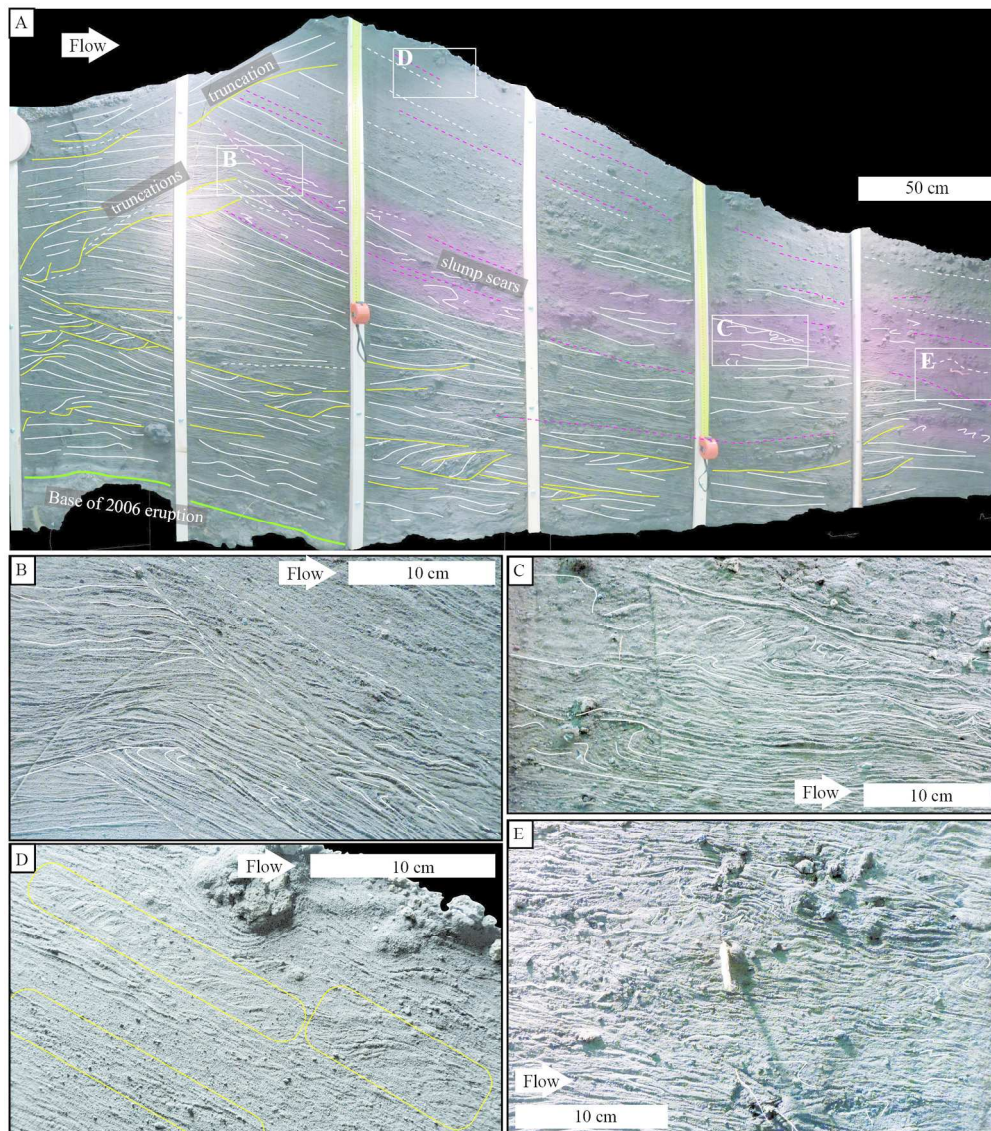


Figure 10: Anecdotic deformation zone. A. General view of Plate LuT2 with deformed zones highlighted in pink. Location of figures B-E are highlighted by white boxes. B. Onset of deformation with scars underlined by overturned laminae, unconformable contact, and step-like lamination on the upper right in the deformed beds. C. Zone of compression with overturned beds. D. The top part of the bedform contains lineations that form steep backsets, c.a. 1 cm thick and with pattern followed over tens of centimeters laterally. E. Zone of compression with cluster of convolute laminae coexistent in disturbed to massive zones.

180x204mm (300 x 300 DPI)

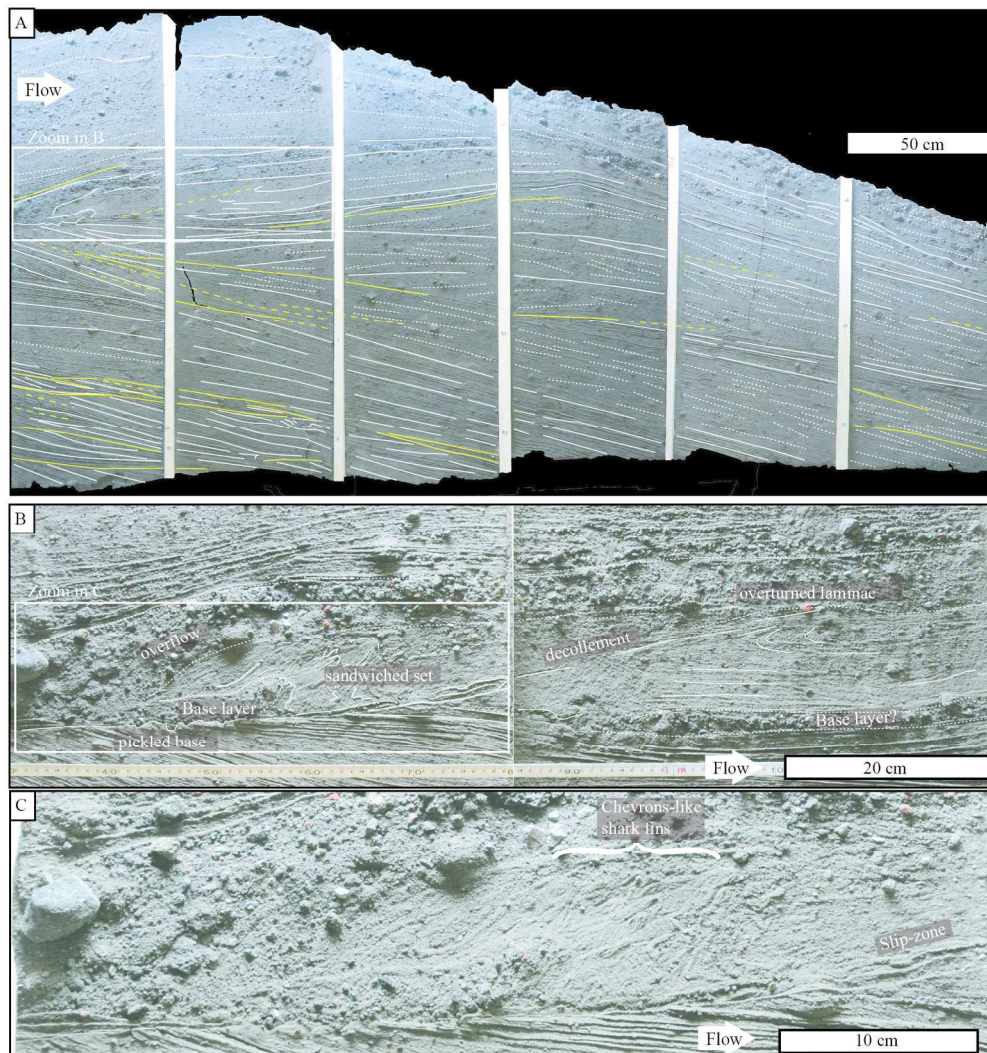


Figure 11: Crocodile mouth structure. A. General view of Plate "Elongate" with location of deformation zone in Figure B marked with a white box. B. View of the crocodile mouth structure. C. Zoom into the onset of deformation, chevron-like structures, and pickled basal surface.

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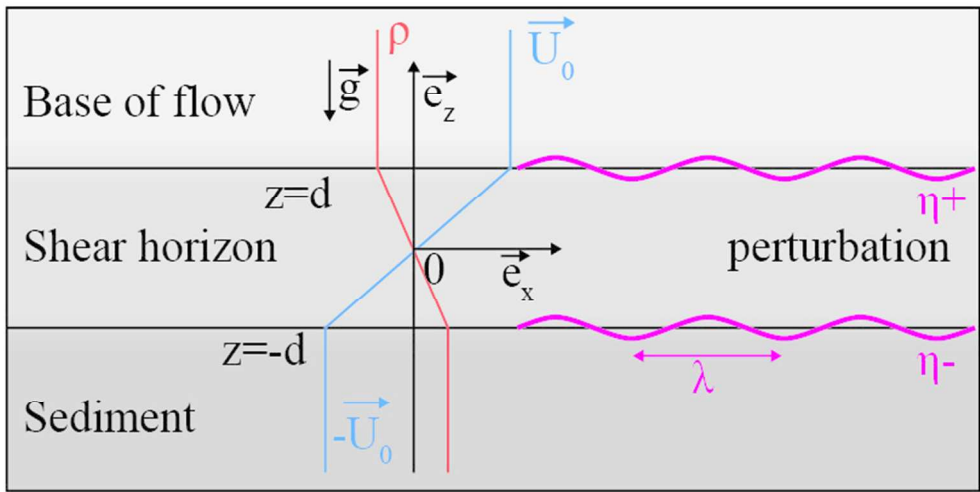


Figure 12: Geometry of the physical framework.

70x35mm (300 x 300 DPI)

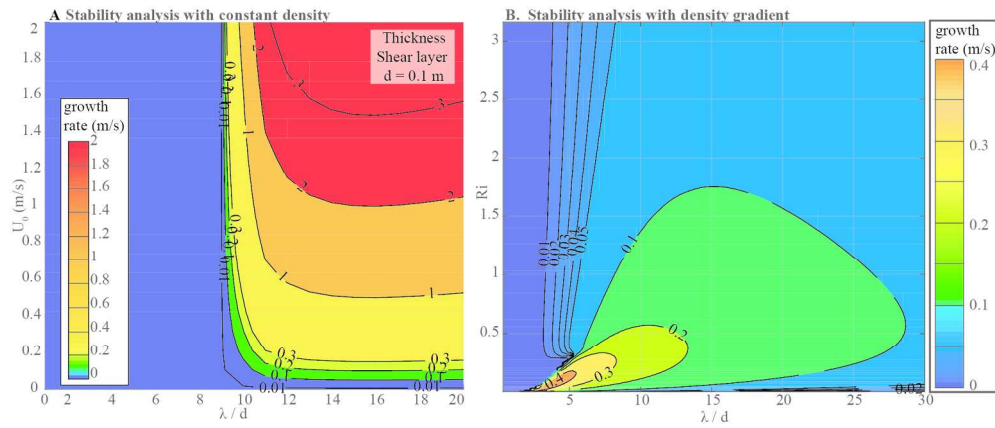


Figure 13: Results of the stability analysis from the physical frameworks with the constant density model (A), and linear density gradient (B), with zoom, showing the growth rate of the perturbation as a function of flow velocity (A) or Richardson number (B) and the ratio of wavelength over thickness of shear layer.

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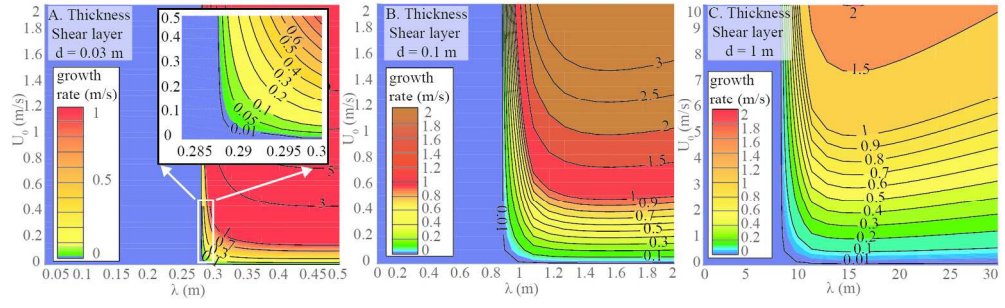


Figure 14: Constant density model. Growth rate of the perturbation as a function of wavelength and flow velocity for different thicknesses of shear layer. Case A is most relevant to the Tungurahua shark-fins.

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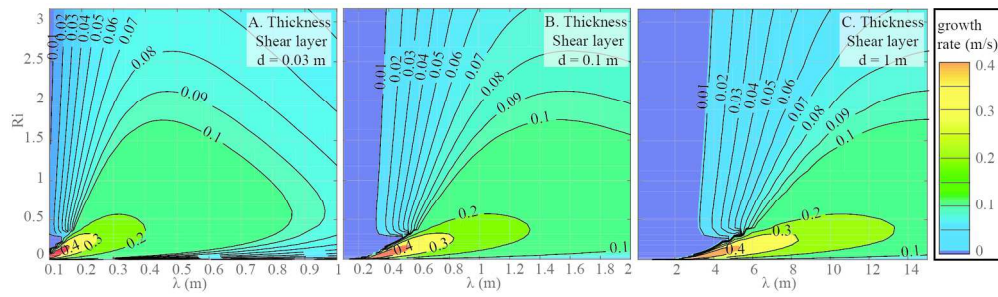


Figure 15: Gradient density model. Growth rate of the perturbation as a function of Richardson number and wavelength for different thicknesses of shear layer. Case A is most relevant to the Tungurahua shark-fins.

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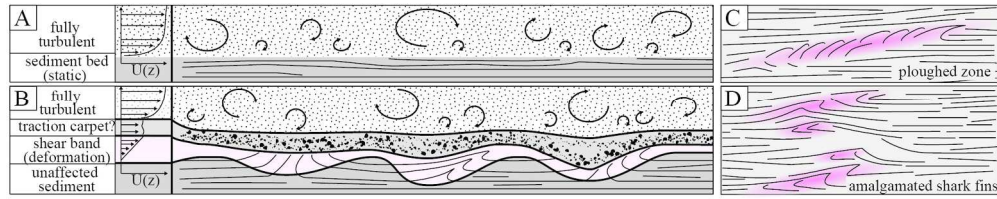


Figure 16: Interpretative sketch representing the process of formation of shark-fins. (A) In a regular setting, a fully turbulent boundary layer is developed down to the substrate. (B) If a basal granular flow is present in the form of a thin traction carpet, a shear horizon occurs, which reworks the superficial bed and creates shark-fins when the interface becomes wavy.

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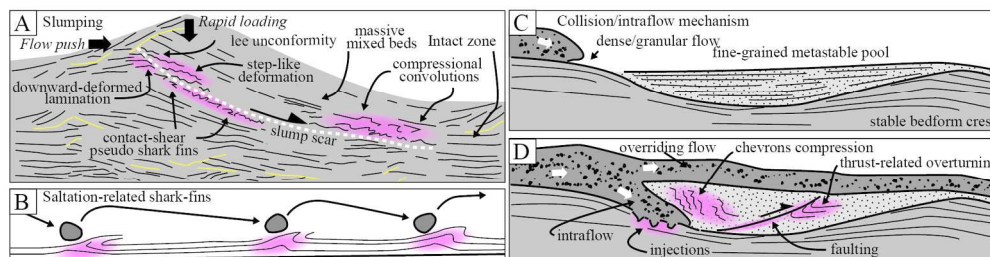


Figure 17: Interpretative sketches for the alternative explanations. A) the slumping mechanism for the lunate outcrop. B). In-train shark-fins might be related to the impact of saltating gravels. C) and D) The mechanism of collision forming the crocodile mouth via the flow of a dense granular flow over a fine-grained, metastable "pool".

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Annex 2

Stability of a wavy interface at a shear horizon

1. Setting

1.1. Initial configuration

The problem is considered in 2 dimensions (the vertical \mathbf{e}_z and the horizontal flow direction \mathbf{e}_x). Two semi-infinite, incompressible fluids of constant velocity \mathbf{U}_0 are linked by a shear horizon of thickness $2*d$ centered around $z=0$ with linear velocity profile such as (Fig 12):

$$\overline{\mathbf{U}_x(z)} = \begin{cases} U_0 & \text{if } z > d \\ -U_0 & \text{if } z < -d \\ \frac{z}{d} \cdot U_0 & \text{if } |z| < d \end{cases} \quad (1)$$

The mediums are considered incompressible and with density $\bar{\rho}(z)$, that is taken constant in one case (Chapter 2). In a second case, density is linearly decreasing with height and separated by a shear horizon with constant density (Chapter 3).

1.2 Perturbations

The interfaces of the shear horizon are subjected to a sinusoidal perturbation η around their initial position:

$$\begin{aligned} \eta^+(x, t) &= \widehat{\eta}^+ \cdot e^{i(kx - \omega t)} \text{ around } z = d \\ \eta^-(x, t) &= \widehat{\eta}^- \cdot e^{i(kx - \omega t)} \text{ around } z = -d \end{aligned} \quad (2)$$

With $\widehat{\eta}^+$ and $\widehat{\eta}^-$ the amplitudes of the perturbations.

It follows that the velocity \mathbf{U} , the fluid pressure P , and the fluid density ρ will deviate from their initial state, the resulting variables being written as the sum of the initial field ($\bar{\mathbf{U}}, \bar{\rho}, \bar{P}$) and perturbations (\mathbf{u}', ρ', p'):

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{U} &= \bar{\mathbf{U}} + \mathbf{u}' \\ \rho &= \bar{\rho} + \rho' \\ P &= \bar{P} + p' \end{aligned} \quad (3)$$

With $\mathbf{U}(x, z, t) = \begin{pmatrix} U_x(x, z, t) \\ U_z(x, z, t) \end{pmatrix}$, $\bar{\mathbf{U}} = \begin{pmatrix} \bar{U}_x(z) \\ 0 \end{pmatrix}$ and $\mathbf{u}' = \begin{pmatrix} u_{x'}(x, z, t) \\ u_{z'}(x, z, t) \end{pmatrix}$.

1.4 Constitutive equations

(1) The conservation of momentum for an inviscid fluid solely driven by gravity is:

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{d\rho\mathbf{U}}{dt} &= \rho \cdot \frac{d\mathbf{U}}{dt} + \mathbf{U} \cdot \frac{d\rho}{dt} \\ \frac{d\rho\mathbf{U}}{dt} &= \rho \cdot \vec{g} - \overrightarrow{\text{grad}}(P) \end{aligned} \quad (4)$$

with $\vec{g} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ -g \end{pmatrix}$ the gravity acceleration.

(2) The mass conservation yields to the continuity equation:

$$\frac{\partial \rho}{\partial t} + \text{div}(\rho \cdot \mathbf{U}) = 0 \quad (5)$$

(3) The assumption of incompressibility entrains that the total derivative of the density (the variations following a volume of fluid) has to be zero. This means that density changes can be advected but not diffused, i.e.:

$$\frac{D\rho}{Dt} = 0 \Leftrightarrow \frac{\partial \rho}{\partial t} + \mathbf{U} \cdot \overrightarrow{\text{grad}}(\rho) = 0 \quad (6)$$

Finally, combining the incompressibility (6) and continuity equations (5) for a non-zero density yields:

$$\text{Div}(\mathbf{U}) = 0 \Leftrightarrow \frac{\partial U_x}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial U_z}{\partial z} = 0 \quad (7)$$

This expressions shows that the velocity can be written as deriving from a potential, yet this implies an irrotational flow.

1.5. Boundary conditions

In order to resolve the problem, several boundary conditions are involved.

1.5.1. Finite perturbations

The perturbation of the interfaces is considered as having a finite influence, so that its effect far away from the interfaces is vanishing. Concretely, this means that any effect should vanish with $z \Rightarrow \pm\infty$.

1.5.2. Continuity of the vertical velocity at the interfaces

-The fluid particles at the interfaces of the shear horizon in $z = d + \eta^+$ and $z = -d + \eta^-$ must move with the interfaces, avoiding collocations of two fluids at the same time, as well as cavitation formed between the fluids. This condition is translated into the following equations:

at $z = d + \eta^+$

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{D\eta^+}{Dt} &= \frac{\partial\eta^+}{\partial t} + U_x(z = d + \eta^+) \cdot \frac{\partial\eta^+}{\partial x} = U_z(z = d + \eta^+) \\ \frac{D\eta^+}{Dt} &= \frac{\partial\eta^+}{\partial t} + U_x(z = d - \eta^+) \cdot \frac{\partial\eta^+}{\partial x} = U_z(z = d - \eta^+) \end{aligned} \quad (8)$$

at $z = -d + \eta^-$

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{D\eta^-}{Dt} &= \frac{\partial\eta^-}{\partial t} + U_x(z = -d + \eta^-) \cdot \frac{\partial\eta^-}{\partial x} = U_z(z = -d + \eta^-) \\ \frac{D\eta^-}{Dt} &= \frac{\partial\eta^-}{\partial t} + U_x(z = -d - \eta^-) \cdot \frac{\partial\eta^-}{\partial x} = U_z(z = -d - \eta^-) \end{aligned} \quad (9)$$

1.5.3. Continuity of the pressure at the interfaces

At an interface with negligible thickness, the continuity principle states that the fluid pressure at both sides of the interface should be equal. As the initial pressure field is continuous, the perturbed term p' is continuous too:

$$p'(z = d + \eta^+) = p'(z = d - \eta^+) \text{ and } p'(z = -d + \eta^-) = p'(z = -d - \eta^-) \quad (10)$$

With all these conditions, the problem is now fully posed in terms of physics, and can be resolved. In the following, we develop two examples of analytic mathematical resolutions. The first model considers two mediums of constant and similar density. The second one considers two flows with a linear density gradient decreasing with height. The shear horizon is considered as a mixing zone with an averaged and constant density.

1.6. Assumptions of small variations and small perturbations

Common assumptions are made on the quantities of the problem for linearization of constitutive equations:

(1). Oscillations of the interfaces only generate weak perturbations on the velocity field and its derivatives compared to the flow velocity, i.e.:

$$\frac{\partial \mathbf{u}'}{\partial x} \ll \mathbf{U} \text{ and } \frac{\partial \mathbf{u}'}{\partial z} \ll \mathbf{U} \text{ and } \frac{\partial \mathbf{u}'}{\partial t} \ll \mathbf{U}$$

(2). Pressure fluctuations are weak compared to the pressure field:

$$p' \ll \bar{P}$$

(3*) Further, the Boussinesq approximation will be used for the case of a non-constant density (see chapter 4).

2. Resolution for two flows with constant density

In our first case, the density is considered as a constant value ρ_0 for the whole system.

A set of three equations now controls the evolution of the perturbed flow:

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial U_x}{\partial t} + U_x \cdot \frac{\partial U_x}{\partial x} + U_z \cdot \frac{\partial U_x}{\partial z} &= -\frac{1}{\rho_0} \cdot \frac{\partial P}{\partial x} \\ \frac{\partial U_z}{\partial t} + U_x \cdot \frac{\partial U_z}{\partial x} + U_z \cdot \frac{\partial U_z}{\partial z} &= -g - \frac{1}{\rho_0} \cdot \frac{\partial P}{\partial z} \\ \frac{\partial U_x}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial U_z}{\partial z} &= 0 \end{aligned} \quad (11)$$

Since the initial flow should obey the constitutive equations, and given that the vertical velocity of the initial flow is null, \bar{U} is ruled by:

$$\frac{\partial \bar{U}_x}{\partial t} + \bar{U}_x \cdot \frac{\partial \bar{U}_x}{\partial x} + \bar{U}_z \cdot \frac{\partial \bar{U}_x}{\partial z} = -\frac{1}{\rho_0} \cdot \frac{\partial \bar{P}}{\partial x} \quad (12a)$$

$$g = -\frac{1}{\rho_0} \cdot \frac{\partial \bar{P}}{\partial z} \quad (12b)$$

$$\frac{\partial \bar{U}_x}{\partial x} = 0 \quad (12c)$$

Equation (12c) is also a natural consequence of the initial problem being posed without an horizontal length scale.

Substituting the expression of the perturbed values into (11) and considering the first-order approximations (7, 8, 9), as well as using the equations of the initial flow (12), it results a set of perturbation equations with the following form:

$$\frac{\partial u_x'}{\partial t} + \bar{U}_x \cdot \frac{\partial u_x'}{\partial x} + u_z' \cdot \frac{\partial \bar{U}_x}{\partial z} = -\frac{1}{\rho_0} \frac{\partial p'}{\partial x} \quad (13a)$$

$$\frac{\partial u_z'}{\partial t} + \bar{U}_x \cdot \frac{\partial u_z'}{\partial x} = -g - \frac{1}{\rho_0} \frac{\partial p'}{\partial z} \quad (13b)$$

$$\frac{\partial u_x'}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial u_z'}{\partial z} = 0 \quad (13c)$$

2.1. Establishing the Rayleigh equation

Differentiating (13a) with respect to z and (13b) with respect to x yields:

$$\frac{\partial^2 u_x'}{\partial t \partial z} + \frac{\partial \bar{U}_x}{\partial z} \cdot \frac{\partial u_x'}{\partial x} + \bar{U}_x \cdot \frac{\partial^2 u_x'}{\partial x \partial z} + \frac{\partial u_z'}{\partial z} \cdot \frac{\partial \bar{U}_x}{\partial z} + u_z' \cdot \frac{\partial^2 \bar{U}_x}{\partial z^2} = -\frac{1}{\rho_0} \frac{\partial^2 p'}{\partial x \partial z} \quad (14a)$$

$$\frac{\partial^2 u_z'}{\partial t \partial x} + \frac{\partial \bar{U}_x}{\partial x} \cdot \frac{\partial u_z'}{\partial x} + \bar{U}_x \cdot \frac{\partial^2 u_z'}{\partial x^2} = -\frac{1}{\rho_0} \frac{\partial^2 p'}{\partial z \partial x} \quad (14b)$$

Adding (14a) and (14b) eliminates the pressure terms in an expression rewritten as:

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial^2 u_x'}{\partial t \partial z} + \frac{\partial \bar{U}_x}{\partial z} \cdot \frac{\partial u_x'}{\partial x} + \bar{U}_x \cdot \frac{\partial^2 u_x'}{\partial x \partial z} + \frac{\partial u_z'}{\partial z} \cdot \frac{\partial \bar{U}_x}{\partial z} + u_z' \cdot \frac{\partial^2 \bar{U}_x}{\partial z^2} \\ = \frac{\partial^2 u_z'}{\partial t \partial x} + \frac{\partial \bar{U}_x}{\partial x} \cdot \frac{\partial u_z'}{\partial x} + \bar{U}_x \cdot \frac{\partial^2 u_z'}{\partial x^2} \end{aligned} \quad (15)$$

The perturbed velocity satisfies the incompressibility equation (13c) so that we can define a stream function such as:

$$\begin{aligned} u_x' &= \frac{\partial \varphi}{\partial z} \\ u_z' &= -\frac{\partial \varphi}{\partial x} \end{aligned} \quad (16)$$

with φ the perturbed potential associated with the velocity perturbation. Note that this implies that the flow is irrotational.

Introducing these expressions (16) into (15) yields:

$$\frac{\partial^3 \varphi}{\partial t \partial z^2} + \frac{\partial \bar{U}_x}{\partial z} \cdot \frac{\partial^2 \varphi}{\partial x \partial z} + \bar{U}_x \cdot \frac{\partial^3 \varphi}{\partial x \partial z^2} - \frac{\partial^2 \varphi}{\partial z \partial x} \cdot \frac{\partial \bar{U}_x}{\partial z} - \frac{\partial \varphi}{\partial x} \cdot \frac{\partial^2 \bar{U}_x}{\partial z^2} = \frac{\partial^3 \varphi}{\partial t \partial x^2} - \frac{\partial \bar{U}_x}{\partial x} \cdot \frac{\partial^2 \varphi}{\partial x^2} - \bar{U}_x \cdot \frac{\partial^3 \varphi}{\partial x^3} \quad (16)$$

This expression shows that φ and p' are solutions of coupled equations with coefficients only involving the z coordinate. Solutions for such equations are normal modes in the form:

$$\begin{aligned} \varphi &= \hat{\varphi} \cdot e^{i(kx - wt)} \\ p' &= \hat{p}' \cdot e^{i(kx - wt)} \end{aligned} \quad (17)$$

where $\hat{\varphi}$ and \hat{p}' are the z -dependent amplitudes of perturbations on the velocity potential and the fluid pressure, respectively.

The wave velocity is defined as:

$$c = \frac{w}{k} \quad (18)$$

Using (18) and substituting (17) into (16) yields, after division by $i \cdot k$:

$$k^2 \cdot c \cdot \hat{\varphi} - c \frac{\partial^2 \hat{\varphi}}{\partial z^2} - \bar{U}_x \cdot k^2 \cdot \hat{\varphi} + \bar{U}_x \cdot \frac{\partial^2 \hat{\varphi}}{\partial z^2} - \frac{\partial^2 \bar{U}_x}{\partial z^2} \cdot \hat{\varphi} = 0 \quad (19)$$

Rearranging the terms and dividing by $(\frac{1}{(\bar{U}_x - c)})$ yields the Rayleigh equation:

$$\frac{d^2 \hat{\varphi}}{dz^2} - \left[\frac{1}{(\bar{U}_x - c)} \cdot \frac{d^2 \bar{U}_x}{dz^2} + k^2 \right] \cdot \hat{\varphi} = 0 \quad (20)$$

2.2. Resolution of the Rayleigh equation for the perturbed flow

2.2.1. The specific case of piecewise linear profiles of fluid velocity

Usually, the resolution of the Rayleigh equation is complicated, but the geometry of the problem with piecewise linear profiles of velocity and density enables to find an analytical solution. The initial flow is linear apart at shear interfaces, i.e.:

$$\frac{d^2 \overline{U_x}}{dz^2} = 0 \text{ for } |z| < d \text{ and for } |z| > d$$

Within the three domains, the Taylor-Goldstein equation simplifies into an ordinary second-order differential equation:

$$\frac{d^2 \hat{\varphi}}{dz^2} - k^2 \cdot \hat{\varphi} = 0 \quad (21)$$

With a well-established solution given by:

$$\hat{\varphi} = \begin{cases} B_+ \cdot e^{-kz} & \text{for } z > d \\ A_- \cdot e^{kz} & \text{for } z < -d \\ A \cdot e^{kz} + B \cdot e^{-kz} & \text{for } |z| < d \end{cases} \quad (22)$$

Note that we omitted the increasing exponentials of the general solution because the perturbation should vanish away from the interfaces (boundary condition 1.5.1).

2.2.2. Continuity of the vertical velocity at the interfaces

In order to find the dispersion equation of the pulsation w as a function of k , the constants (B_+ , A , B , A_-) must be constrained. Recall the property of the continuity of the normal velocity at the interfaces $z = d + \eta^+$ and $z = -d + \eta^-$ (boundary condition 1.5.2).

By substituting the expressions of U_x , U_z , η^+ , η^- and u_z' and neglecting the second-order terms, a linearized system is obtained:

at $z = d + \eta^+$

$$\begin{aligned} -c \cdot \eta^+ + U_0 \cdot \eta^+ &= B^+ \cdot e^{-ad} \\ -c \cdot \eta^+ + U_0 \cdot \eta^+ &= A \cdot e^{kd} + B \cdot e^{-kd} \end{aligned} \quad (23a)$$

at $z = -d + \eta^-$

$$\begin{aligned} -c \cdot \eta^- + U_0 \cdot \eta^- &= A \cdot e^{-kd} + B \cdot e^{kd} \\ -c \cdot \eta^- + U_0 \cdot \eta^- &= A^- \cdot e^{-ad} \end{aligned} \quad (23b)$$

And by combining side by side equations (23a) and (23b), two relationships between the constants (B_+ , A , B , A_-) are obtained:

$$\begin{aligned} B^+ &= (A \cdot e^{kd} + B \cdot e^{-kd}) \cdot e^{ad} \\ A^- &= (A \cdot e^{-kd} + B \cdot e^{kd}) \cdot e^{-ad} \end{aligned} \quad (24)$$

So that (22) becomes:

$$\hat{\varphi} = \begin{cases} (A \cdot e^{kd} + B \cdot e^{-kd}) \cdot e^{ad} \cdot e^{-\alpha z} & \text{for } z > d \\ (A \cdot e^{-kd} + B \cdot e^{kd}) \cdot e^{-ad} \cdot e^{\alpha z} & \text{for } z < -d \\ A \cdot e^{kz} + B \cdot e^{-kz} & \text{for } |z| < d \end{cases} \quad (25)$$

2.2.3. Continuity of the pressure at the interfaces

A relationship between $\hat{\varphi}$ and \hat{p}' is established by introducing the expressions of p' , u_1' and u_2' into the Momentum equation (11):

$$(\overline{U_x} - c) \cdot \frac{\partial \hat{\varphi}}{\partial z} - \frac{\partial \overline{U_x}}{\partial z} \cdot \hat{\varphi} = \frac{1}{\rho_0} \cdot \hat{p}' \quad (26)$$

Given that pressure shall be continuous at the interface (boundary condition 1.5.3), it follows from

(26) that the quantity $(\overline{U_x} - c) \cdot \frac{\partial \hat{\varphi}}{\partial z} - \frac{\partial \overline{U_x}}{\partial z} \cdot \hat{\varphi}$ also varies continuously at the interfaces. By replacing $\overline{U_x}$ by its expression, the conditions at the interfaces appear as:

- at $z = d + \eta^+$:

$$(U_0 - c) \cdot \left. \frac{\partial \hat{\varphi}}{\partial z} \right|_{d+\eta^+} + 0 \cdot \hat{\varphi}|_{d+\eta^+} = (U_0 - c) \cdot \left. \frac{\partial \hat{\varphi}}{\partial z} \right|_{d-\eta^+} - \frac{U_0}{d} \cdot \hat{\varphi}|_{d-\eta^+} \quad (27a)$$

- at $z = -d + \eta^-$:

$$(-U_0 - c) \cdot \frac{\partial \hat{\phi}}{\partial z} \Big|_{-d^+ + \eta^-} - \frac{U_0}{d} \cdot \hat{\phi} \Big|_{-d^+ + \eta^-} = (-U_0 - c) \cdot \frac{\partial \hat{\phi}}{\partial z} \Big|_{-d^- + \eta^-} - 0 \cdot \hat{\phi} \Big|_{-d^- + \eta^-} \quad (27b)$$

Introducing the expression of $\hat{\phi}$ given by (25) into (27a) and (27b) gives a new relationship between the constants A and B:

- At $z = d + \eta^+$:

$$k \cdot (c - U_0) \cdot (A \cdot e^{kd} + B \cdot e^{-kd}) = k \cdot (U_0 - c) \cdot (A \cdot e^{kd} - B \cdot e^{-kd}) - \frac{U_0}{d} \cdot (A \cdot e^{kd} + B \cdot e^{-kd}) \quad (28a)$$

- At $z = -d + \eta^-$:

$$\begin{aligned} -k \cdot (U_0 + c) \cdot (A \cdot e^{-kd} - B \cdot e^{kd}) - \frac{U_0}{d} \cdot (A \cdot e^{-kd} + B \cdot e^{kd}) \\ = -k \cdot (U_0 + c) \cdot (A \cdot e^{-kd} + B \cdot e^{kd}) \end{aligned} \quad (28b)$$

Rearranging the terms of (28a) and (27a) yields the system:

$$\begin{aligned} \left[2k(c - U_0) + \frac{U_0}{d} \right] \cdot A + \left[\frac{U_0}{d} \cdot e^{-2kd} \right] \cdot B = 0 \\ \left[-\frac{U_0}{d} \cdot e^{-2kd} \right] \cdot A + \left[2k(U_0 + c) - \frac{U_0}{d} \right] \cdot B = 0 \end{aligned} \quad (29)$$

2.3. Finding the dispersion equation for the perturbation

The previous system has a non-trivial solution if the determinant of system (29) is 0, i.e.:

$$\left[2k(c - U_0) + \frac{U_0}{d} \right] \cdot \left[2k(U_0 + c) - \frac{U_0}{d} \right] - \left[\frac{U_0}{d} \cdot e^{-2kd} \right] \cdot \left[-\frac{U_0}{d} \cdot e^{-2kd} \right] = 0 \quad (30)$$

With some rearrangements, (30) is equivalent to:

$$4w^2 - 4k^2 U_0^2 + 4k \frac{U_0^2}{d} - \frac{U_0^2}{d^2} + \frac{U_0^2}{d^2} \cdot e^{-4kd} = 0 \quad (31)$$

It corresponds to the dispersion equation for the perturbation: if w is real then the perturbation is a periodic wave, otherwise the perturbation is unstable and its growth rate is given by the imaginary part of w . The roots of this complex equation are found numerically using the Matlab solver “solve” (Fig 13).

3. Case of flows with a linear density gradient

We now consider the case of two flows with a linear density gradient. The shear horizon is considered as a mixing zone with an averaged and constant. The resolution of the dispersed equation follows a similar structure and method as for the constant density.

The initial density profile is defined by:

$$\frac{d\rho(z)}{dz} = \begin{cases} s & \text{if } z > d \\ s & \text{if } z < -d \\ 0 & \text{if } |z| < d \end{cases} \quad (32)$$

And the perturbation of the interface entrains perturbation such as:

$$\rho(x, z, t) = \bar{\rho}(z) + \rho'(x, z, t) \quad (33)$$

3.1. Linearization

For the case of varying density, the often used Boussinesq approximation is introduced. This approximation considers that the density ρ is the sum of a mean density ρ_0 and a varying term ρ'' that is weak and weakly evolving compared to ρ_0 and the velocity fluctuations:

$$\begin{aligned} \rho(x, z, t) = \rho_0 + \rho''(x, z, t) \text{ with } \rho'' \ll \rho_0 \\ \frac{d\rho}{dt} = \frac{d\rho''}{dt} \ll \frac{dU}{dt} \end{aligned} \quad (34)$$

It results that we ignore the products of ρ'' with small quantities, as well as any derivative of ρ'' so that, (9a) simplifies into:

$$\frac{d\rho U}{dt} = (\rho_0 + \rho'') \cdot \frac{dU}{dt} + U \cdot \frac{d\rho''}{dt} \cong \rho_0 \cdot \frac{dU}{dt} \quad (35)$$

Thus, equalizing (10) and (9b) and developing $\frac{dU}{dt}$ yields:

$$\rho_0 \cdot \left[\frac{\partial U}{\partial t} + (U \cdot \text{grad}) \cdot U \right] = \rho \cdot \bar{g} - \overline{\text{grad}}(P) \quad (36)$$

so that density fluctuations in (36) are only accounted for in the buoyancy $\rho \cdot \vec{g}$, all other occurrences of ρ being approximated as ρ_0 .

Since the initial flow should obey this modified equation of momentum (36), \bar{U} in (1) and $\bar{\rho}$ in (32) shall satisfy on both space directions:

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial \bar{U}_x}{\partial t} + \bar{U}_x \cdot \frac{\partial \bar{U}_x}{\partial x} + \bar{U}_z \cdot \frac{\partial \bar{U}_x}{\partial z} &= -\frac{1}{\rho_0} \cdot \frac{\partial \bar{P}}{\partial x} \\ \frac{\partial \bar{U}_z}{\partial t} + \bar{U}_x \cdot \frac{\partial \bar{U}_z}{\partial x} + \bar{U}_z \cdot \frac{\partial \bar{U}_z}{\partial z} + \frac{\bar{\rho}}{\rho_0} \cdot g &= -\frac{1}{\rho_0} \cdot \frac{\partial \bar{P}}{\partial z} \end{aligned} \quad (37)$$

Similarly, the initial flow is incompressible (7) and the vertical velocity of the initial flow is null, so that:

$$\frac{\partial \bar{U}_x}{\partial x} = 0 \quad (38)$$

This latter equality is also a natural consequence of the initial problem being posed without horizontal length scale.

A set of four equations now controls the evolution of the perturbed flow:

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial U_x}{\partial t} + U_x \cdot \frac{\partial U_x}{\partial x} + U_z \cdot \frac{\partial U_x}{\partial z} &= -\frac{1}{\rho_0} \cdot \frac{\partial P}{\partial x} \\ \frac{\partial U_z}{\partial t} + U_x \cdot \frac{\partial U_z}{\partial x} + U_z \cdot \frac{\partial U_z}{\partial z} &= -\frac{\rho}{\rho_0} \cdot g - \frac{1}{\rho_0} \cdot \frac{\partial P}{\partial z} \\ \frac{\partial \rho}{\partial t} + \text{div}(\rho \cdot \mathbf{U}) &= 0 \\ \frac{\partial U_x}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial U_z}{\partial z} &= 0 \end{aligned} \quad (39)$$

Substituting the expressions of the perturbed state into (39), and simplifying with the first order approximations, removing terms that are zero by definition, and using the relations on the initial flow (37 and 38), the system translates as:

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial u_x'}{\partial t} + \bar{U}_x \cdot \frac{\partial u_x'}{\partial x} + u_z' \cdot \frac{\partial \bar{U}_x}{\partial z} &= -\frac{1}{\rho_0} \cdot \frac{\partial p'}{\partial x} \\ \frac{\partial u_z'}{\partial t} + \bar{U}_x \cdot \frac{\partial u_z'}{\partial x} &= -\frac{\rho'}{\rho_0} \cdot g - \frac{1}{\rho_0} \cdot \frac{\partial p'}{\partial z} \\ \frac{\partial \rho'}{\partial t} + \bar{\rho} \cdot \frac{\partial u_x'}{\partial t} + \bar{U}_x \cdot \frac{\partial \rho'}{\partial x} + u_z' \cdot \frac{\partial \bar{\rho}}{\partial z} + \bar{\rho} \cdot \frac{\partial u_z'}{\partial z} &= 0 \\ \frac{\partial u_x'}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial u_z'}{\partial z} &= 0 \end{aligned} \quad \begin{aligned} (40a) \\ (40b) \\ (40c) \\ (40d) \end{aligned}$$

3.2. Establishing the Taylor Goldstein equation

Differentiating (40a) with respect to z and (40b) with respect to x yields:

$$\frac{\partial^2 u_x'}{\partial t \partial z} + \frac{\partial \bar{U}_x}{\partial z} \cdot \frac{\partial u_x'}{\partial x} + \bar{U}_x \cdot \frac{\partial^2 u_x'}{\partial x \partial z} + \frac{\partial u_z'}{\partial z} \cdot \frac{\partial \bar{U}_x}{\partial z} + u_z' \cdot \frac{\partial^2 \bar{U}_x}{\partial z^2} = -\frac{1}{\rho_0} \frac{\partial^2 p'}{\partial x \partial z} \quad (41a)$$

$$\frac{\partial^2 u_z'}{\partial t \partial x} + \bar{U}_x \cdot \frac{\partial^2 u_z'}{\partial x^2} - \frac{g}{\rho_0} \cdot \frac{\partial \rho'}{\partial x} = -\frac{1}{\rho_0} \frac{\partial^2 p'}{\partial z \partial x} \quad (41b)$$

Adding (41a) and (41b) eliminates the pressure terms in an expression rewritten as:

$$\frac{\partial^2 u_x'}{\partial t \partial z} + \frac{\partial \bar{U}_x}{\partial z} \cdot \frac{\partial u_x'}{\partial x} + \bar{U}_x \cdot \frac{\partial^2 u_x'}{\partial x \partial z} + \frac{\partial u_z'}{\partial z} \cdot \frac{\partial \bar{U}_x}{\partial z} + u_z' \cdot \frac{\partial^2 \bar{U}_x}{\partial z^2} = \frac{\partial^2 u_z'}{\partial t \partial x} + \bar{U}_x \cdot \frac{\partial^2 u_z'}{\partial x^2} - \frac{g}{\rho_0} \cdot \frac{\partial \rho'}{\partial x} \quad (42)$$

A stream function is defined for the perturbation, which satisfies the incompressibility equation (40d):

$$\begin{aligned} u_x' &= \frac{\partial \varphi}{\partial z} \\ u_z' &= -\frac{\partial \varphi}{\partial x} \end{aligned} \quad (43)$$

with φ the perturbed potential associated to the velocity perturbation.

Introducing the stream function (43) into (42) yields:

$$\frac{\partial^3 \varphi}{\partial t \partial z^2} + \frac{\partial \bar{U}_x}{\partial z} \cdot \frac{\partial^2 \varphi}{\partial x \partial z} + \bar{U}_x \cdot \frac{\partial^3 \varphi}{\partial x \partial z^2} - \frac{\partial^2 \varphi}{\partial z \partial x} \cdot \frac{\partial \bar{U}_x}{\partial z} - \frac{\partial \varphi}{\partial x} \cdot \frac{\partial^2 \bar{U}_x}{\partial z^2} = -\frac{\partial^3 \varphi}{\partial t \partial x^2} - \bar{U}_x \cdot \frac{\partial^3 \varphi}{\partial x^3} - \frac{g}{\rho_0} \cdot \frac{\partial \rho'}{\partial x} \quad (44)$$

ρ' and p' are thus solutions of coupled equations with coefficients only involving the z coordinate.

Solutions of such systems are normal modes of the form:

$$\begin{aligned}\varphi &= \hat{\varphi}(z) \cdot e^{i(kx-wt)} \\ \rho' &= \hat{\rho}'(z) \cdot e^{i(kx-wt)} \\ p' &= \hat{p}'(z) \cdot e^{i(kx-wt)}\end{aligned}\quad (45)$$

where $\hat{\varphi}$, $\hat{\rho}'$, and \hat{p}' are the amplitudes of perturbations on the potential, fluid density, and fluid pressure, respectively.

The wave velocity is defined as:

$$c = \frac{w}{k} \quad (46)$$

Substituting (45) into (44) and using (46) yields:

$$k^2 \cdot c \cdot \hat{\varphi} - c \cdot \frac{\partial^2 \hat{\varphi}}{\partial z^2} - \overline{U}_x \cdot k^2 \cdot \hat{\varphi} + \overline{U}_x \cdot \frac{\partial^2 \hat{\varphi}}{\partial z^2} - \frac{\partial^2 \overline{U}_x}{\partial z^2} \cdot \hat{\varphi} = \frac{g}{\rho_0} \cdot \hat{\rho}' \quad (47)$$

Similarly, replacing the expressions of (45) in (40c) allow to identify $\hat{\rho}'$ as a function of $\hat{\varphi}$ and of the initial flow density profile $\frac{\partial \bar{\rho}}{\partial z}$:

$$(\overline{U}_x - c) \cdot \hat{\rho}' = -\hat{\varphi} \cdot \frac{\partial \bar{\rho}}{\partial z} \quad (48)$$

Combining (48) and (46) results in the Taylor-Goldstein equation:

$$\frac{\partial^2 \hat{\varphi}}{\partial z^2} + \left[\frac{N^2}{(\overline{U}_x - c)^2} - \frac{1}{\overline{U}_x - c} \cdot \frac{\partial^2 \overline{U}_x}{\partial z^2} - k^2 \right] \cdot \hat{\varphi} = 0 \quad (49a)$$

With N^2 the buoyancy frequency (or Brunt-Väisälä frequency) defined as:

$$N^2 = -\frac{g}{\rho_0} \cdot \frac{d\bar{\rho}}{dz} \quad (49b)$$

N^2 is a value describing the degree of stratification of the medium: fluids with strong vertical density gradient will be characterized by a high value of N^2 .

3.3. Resolution of the Taylor-Goldstein equation for the initial flow

3.3.1. Piecewise linear profiles of density and velocity

As for the Rayleigh equation, the resolution of the Taylor-Goldstein equation is usually complicated but tackled analytically here via the piecewise linear profiles of velocity and density. The medium is split again so that:

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{\partial^2 \overline{U}_x}{\partial z^2} &= 0 \\ N^2 &= 0\end{aligned}\quad \text{for } |z| < d \quad (50a)$$

and

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{\partial^2 \overline{U}_x}{\partial z^2} &= 0 \\ N^2 &= N_0 = \text{constant}\end{aligned}\quad \text{for } |z| > d \quad (50b)$$

Within both domains, the Taylor-Goldstein equation simplifies to the following ordinary second-order differential equation:

$$\frac{d^2 \hat{\varphi}}{dz^2} + \alpha^2 \cdot \hat{\varphi} = 0 \quad (51a)$$

with:

$$\alpha^2 = \begin{cases} -k^2 & \text{for } |z| < d \\ \frac{N_0^2}{(\overline{U}_x - c)^2} & \text{for } |z| > d \end{cases} \quad (51b)$$

The solution to such an ordinary differential equation (51a, 51b) is of the form:

$$\hat{\varphi} = \begin{cases} B_+ \cdot e^{-\alpha z} & \text{for } z > d \\ A_- \cdot e^{\alpha z} & \text{for } z < -d \\ A \cdot e^{kz} + B \cdot e^{-kz} & \text{for } |z| < d \end{cases} \quad (52)$$

Again, the constant involving the exponential increasing for $z \Rightarrow \pm\infty$ are omitted because the perturbation is finite (boundary condition 1.5.1.).

In order to find the dispersion equation of the wave number w as a function of k , the constants (B_+ , A , B , A_-) are again constrained through the boundary conditions of the normal velocity and pressure at the interfaces $z = d + \eta^+$ and $z = -d + \eta^-$.

3.3.2. Continuity of the vertical velocity at the interfaces

The fluid particles at the interfaces move with the interfaces (boundary condition 1.5.2.).

Introducing $U_x = \overline{U}_x + u_x'$ and $U_z = \overline{U}_z + u_z'$ for this condition, and neglecting the second-order terms, we obtain the following linearized system:

at $z = d + \eta^+$

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial \eta^+}{\partial t} + U_0 \cdot \frac{\partial \eta^+}{\partial x} &= u_z'(z = d^+ + \eta^+) \\ \frac{\partial \eta^+}{\partial t} + U_0 \cdot \frac{\partial \eta^+}{\partial x} &= u_z'(z = d^- + \eta^+) \end{aligned} \quad (53a)$$

at $z = -d + \eta^-$

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial \eta^-}{\partial t} - U_0 \cdot \frac{\partial \eta^-}{\partial x} &= u_z'(z = -d^+ + \eta^-) \\ \frac{\partial \eta^-}{\partial t} - U_0 \cdot \frac{\partial \eta^-}{\partial x} &= u_z'(z = -d^- + \eta^-) \end{aligned} \quad (53b)$$

Substituting the expressions of η^+ , η^- and u_z' in (53a) and (53b) yields:

at $z = d + \eta^+$

$$\begin{aligned} -c \cdot \eta^+ + U_0 \cdot \eta^+ &= B^+ \cdot e^{-ad} \\ -c \cdot \eta^+ + U_0 \cdot \eta^+ &= A \cdot e^{kd} + B \cdot e^{-kd} \end{aligned} \quad (54a)$$

• at $z = -d + \eta^-$

$$\begin{aligned} -c \cdot \eta^- + U_0 \cdot \eta^- &= A \cdot e^{-kd} + B \cdot e^{kd} \\ -c \cdot \eta^+ + U_0 \cdot \eta^+ &= A^- \cdot e^{-ad} \end{aligned} \quad (54b)$$

Therefore, adding side by side (54a) and (54b) gives two relationships between the constants:

$$\begin{aligned} B^+ &= (A \cdot e^{kd} + B \cdot e^{-kd}) \cdot e^{ad} \\ A^- &= (A \cdot e^{-kd} + B \cdot e^{kd}) \cdot e^{-ad} \end{aligned} \quad (55)$$

Thus (38) becomes:

$$\hat{\phi} = \begin{cases} (A \cdot e^{kd} + B \cdot e^{-kd}) \cdot e^{ad} \cdot e^{-az} & \text{for } z > d \\ (A \cdot e^{-kd} + B \cdot e^{kd}) \cdot e^{-ad} \cdot e^{az} & \text{for } z < -d \\ A \cdot e^{kz} + B \cdot e^{-kz} & \text{for } |z| < d \end{cases} \quad (56)$$

Comment [gad1]: check

3.3.3. Continuity of the pressure at the interfaces

The relationship between $\hat{\phi}$ and \hat{p} is established by introducing the expressions of p' , u_x' and u_z' into the momentum equation (24a) yields:

$$(\overline{U}_x - c) \cdot \frac{\partial \hat{\phi}}{\partial z} - \frac{\partial \overline{U}_x}{\partial z} \cdot \hat{\phi} = \frac{1}{\rho_0} \cdot \hat{p} \quad (57)$$

Using the continuity of pressure (boundary condition 1.5.3.), it comes that the quantity $(\overline{U}_x - c) \cdot \frac{\partial}{\partial z} - \frac{\partial \overline{U}_x}{\partial z} \cdot \hat{\phi}$ varies continuously at the interfaces $z = d + \eta^+$ and $z = -d + \eta^-$. Replacing \overline{U}_x by its expression transforms the conditions at the interfaces in:

at $z = d + \eta^+$:

$$(U_0 - c) \cdot \frac{\partial \hat{\phi}}{\partial z} \Big|_{d^+ + \eta^+} + 0 \cdot \hat{\phi} \Big|_{d^+ + \eta^+} = (U_0 - c) \cdot \frac{\partial \hat{\phi}}{\partial z} \Big|_{d^- + \eta^+} - \frac{U_0}{d} \cdot \hat{\phi} \Big|_{d^- + \eta^+} \quad (58a)$$

at $z = -d + \eta^-$:

$$(-U_0 - c) \cdot \frac{\partial \hat{\phi}}{\partial z} \Big|_{-d^+ + \eta^-} - \frac{U_0}{d} \cdot \hat{\phi} \Big|_{-d^+ + \eta^-} = (-U_0 - c) \cdot \frac{\partial \hat{\phi}}{\partial z} \Big|_{-d^- + \eta^-} - 0 \cdot \hat{\phi} \Big|_{-d^- + \eta^-} \quad (58b)$$

Introducing the expression of $\hat{\phi}$ given by (46) into (49) and (50) gives a new relationship between the constants A and B:

$$\begin{aligned} \alpha \cdot (c - U_0) \cdot (A \cdot e^{kd} + B \cdot e^{-kd}) &= k \cdot (U_0 - c) \cdot (A \cdot e^{kd} + B \cdot e^{-kd}) - \frac{U_0}{d} \cdot (A \cdot e^{kd} + B \cdot e^{-kd}) \\ -k \cdot (U_0 + c) \cdot (A \cdot e^{-kd} + B \cdot e^{kd}) - \frac{U_0}{d} \cdot (A \cdot e^{-kd} + B \cdot e^{kd}) &= \alpha \cdot (U_0 + c) \cdot (A \cdot e^{-kd} + B \cdot e^{kd}) \end{aligned} \quad (59)$$

3.3.4. Finding the dispersion equation for the perturbation

Comment [gad2]: check

System (59) has a non-trivial solution if the determinant of the system is 0, i.e.:

$$w^3 + \frac{w^2}{2} \cdot (1 + Ri \cdot e^{2kd}) + \frac{w}{2} \cdot Ri \cdot (e^{2kd} - 1) + \frac{Ri}{2} \cdot \sinh^2(k \cdot d) = 0 \quad (60)$$

with $Ri = \frac{N_0^2 \cdot d^2}{U_0^2}$ the bulk Richardson number

The bulk Richardson number Ri is a ratio of the buoyancy over the shear forces and it thus quantifies the degree of stratification whereas the non-dimensional ratio $k \cdot d$ quantifies the ratio between the wavelength of the perturbation and the thickness of the shear horizon.

System (60) corresponds to the dispersion equation for the perturbation: if w is real, the perturbation is a periodic wave, otherwise the perturbation is unstable and its growth rate is given by the imaginary part of w .