

Anisotropic forward modelling of fluid injection and
phase angles exceeding 90° in magnetotellurics

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ABSTRACT

Electrical anisotropy, defined as the directional dependence of electrical conductivity within a medium, causes changes in the electromagnetic signal measured by magnetotellurics (MT) and as such is an important property to consider when interpreting MT data. This study concentrates on replicating the MT response measured at two distinctively different geological settings using a series of 2-dimensional anisotropic forward models. Results presented in this study show that 2-dimensional anisotropic forward modelling is able to account for subtle differences in subsurface anisotropic resistivity structures. Specifically, 2-dimensional anisotropic forward modelling is able to reproduce the measured difference in MT response between pre- and post fluid injection conditions at the Paralana Geothermal System using an anisotropic fluid volume. A second application in constraining the source of the anomalous phase angles exceeding 90° observed in MT measurements of the Capricorn Orogen, shows that 2-dimensional anisotropic MT models are not able to produce phase angles exceeding 90° in the MT data which has its electric field orientated perpendicular to the geoelectric strike. These findings provide a case supporting the use of 2-dimensional anisotropic forward modelling as a means of modelling changes caused by the flow of a fluid through the crust. In addition, they also highlight issues associated with its application to complicated structures perpendicular to the strike of the profile.

KEYWORDS

Magnetotellurics, Anisotropy, Forward Modelling, Phase Angles, Fluid Migration, Paralana, Capricorn Orogen

Table of Contents

Introduction	7
Electrical Anisotropy in Magnetotellurics	8
Application to Field Data	13
Paralana Geothermal System	13
Capricorn Orogen	14
Method	16
Inversion Modelling	16
Forward Modelling	18
Two-Dimensional Modelling	19
Paralana Geothermal System	19
Capricorn Orogen	24
Discussion	29
Geophysical Ambiguity	29
Influence of anisotropic model parameters on magnetotelluric responses	30
Replicating fluid injection using anisotropy	31
Phase angles exceeding 90° within the Capricorn Orogen	32
Conclusions	32
Acknowledgments	33
References	33
Appendix A: Detailed Method	38
Inversion Modelling	38

Anisotropy, Fluid and the Capricorn Orogen	5
Forward Modelling	38
Modelling Codes	39
Global Modelling Parameters	46
Appendix B: A short guide to using the Input_2DMT code	47
Short Introduction	47
2DMT Forward Modelling Code	47
Input Values	48
Period	48
Mesh Nodes and Allocation	48
Resistivity map	49
Important Notes	49
Input Values	49
Resistivity Map	50
Unincluded Variables	50
Bathymetry index	50
Points of interest	51
Appendix C: Residual Phase Tensor Ellipse	51
Appendix D: Capricorn Orogen Station Locations	53

List of Figures

1.	Strike, Dip and Slant Rotations	11
2.	Paralana Location Map	15
3.	Capricorn Orogen Location Map	17
4.	Forward Model Resistivity Structure: Paralana	20
5.	Difference Due To Anisotropy Angles	21
6.	Difference Due To Anisotropic Resistivities	22
7.	Difference Due To Fluid Injection	23
8.	Inversion Model of the 10GA-CP1 line from the Capricorn Orogen	25
9.	Forward Model Resistivity Structure: Capricorn Orogen (Case 1)	26
10.	Forward Model Resistivity Structure: Capricorn Orogen (Case 2)	27
11.	Forward Model Resistivity Structure: Capricorn Orogen (Case 3)	28
12.	Measured versus. Modelled Magnetotelluric Data	29
13.	2DMT_Input.m code input window (Appendix A)	44