

## Petrophysical Evaluation and Parameters Relations Investigation of Nubia Formation in October field, Gulf of Suez, Egypt.

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### Abstract

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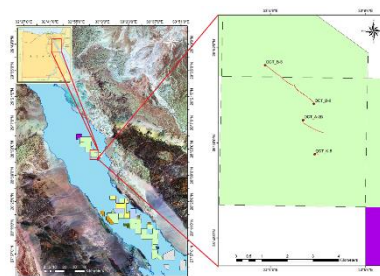
October Field is one of the most prolific and giant oil fields in Gulf of Suez. It has been decades producing since its exploration in the late seventies of the last century with hundreds of wells drilled.

Petrophysical parameters such as shale volume, porosity, permeability, net reservoir thickness, net pay thickness and the ratio between them are highly important in oil industry as it indicates the best intervals in the reservoir to perforate and produce. This study aims to reach a reasonable evaluation of these parameters by calculating them from conventional well logs (Gamma ray, density, neutron and sonic logs) as well as integration of core data obtained from routine core analysis of 4 wells: OCT-A2B, OCT-B8, OCT-B6, OCT-K5.

In light of the petrophysical characters for the Nubia reservoir, it shows good reservoir quality with porosity ranges from 13 to 16 percent and shale volume ranges from 18 to 20 percent. In addition, excellent pay thickness for the Nubia reservoir as it ranges from 74 to 96 percent and good oil saturation as it ranges from 36 to 47 percent. Empirical equations from plotting porosity versus permeability of routine core analysis is used to predict permeability in un-cored intervals, this method lead to low R2 correlation coefficient (0.03 in horizontal permeability and 0.21 in vertical permeability), this is due to different values of porosity from cores and logs due to different measurement conditions. In addition, information obtained of the possible direction trends of enhanced petrophysical parameters as loops with Northwest-Southeast of increasing porosity and decreasing shale volume were found. This indicates sweet spots for development opportunities for Nubia reservoir in October field.

### Introduction

October Field is located in the north-central part of the Gulf of Suez, Egypt (EGPC, 1996), with latitude from 28° 48' 00" N to 28° 53' 00" N and longitude from 33° 03' 00" E to 33° 08' 00" E. October field was discovered in 1977, the GS 195-1 well (later renamed October A-1) was drilled to test a large, NW-trending, fault- bounded structure that had been identified from a 1976 regional seismic survey in the October area. The well October A-1 was targeting Nukhul as primary target and Nubia as secondary target. The October field, positioned approximately 25 kilometers to the north of the vast Belayim field, exhibits a structural configuration characterized by elongated faulted blocks. These faulted blocks align in a northwest-southeast trend and have a northeast dip. These pre-Miocene faulted blocks extend along the strike of the field for approximately 20 kilometers (Zahran, 1986; EGPC, 1996; Kassem et al., 2021; Khattab et al., 2023). Figure 1 shows the location map of the wells involved in this study.



**Figure 1** Location map of the study area, Gulf of Suez, Egypt (EGPC, 1996)

Nubia Formation is considered as a major reservoir in Gulf of Suez especially in October field. It contains around 1163 MMBO reserves. In spite of that Nubia has an attractive hydrocarbon potential (EGPC, 1996).

The current study aiming to evaluate the Nubia Formation in October field, Gulf of Suez, Egypt



Nubia 'A', consists of both dolomites and sandstones. This group exhibits a mixture of carbonate and siliciclastic facies. The Lower Cretaceous Malha Formation represents the upper part of the Nubia 'A' and is primarily composed of coarse-grained sandstones. These sandstones within the Malha Formation exhibit a coarser grain size compared to the other units.

Overall, the Nubian Sandstone in the October field comprises different lithological units, including the sandstone-dominated Lower Palaeozoic Qebliat Group, the dolomites and sandstones of the Carboniferous Ataqa Group, and the coarse-grained sandstones of the Lower Cretaceous Malha Formation. These sandstone units form the dominant reservoir section underlying the October field (Hasouba et al., 1992; El-Ghamri et al., 2002).

**Materials and Methods**

The data set available for the current study includes the complete set of logging data for four wells (OCT-A2B, OCT-B8, OCT-B6 and OCT-K5). The logging data includes Gamma ray (GR), Caliper (CALI) Deep and medium resistivity (RD and RM), Neutron (NPHI), Density (RHOB) and Sonic (DT). As for the core data, routine core analysis (RCAL) is available for all three cored wells (OCT-A2B, OCT-B8 and OCT-B6), while special core analysis (SCAL) is available for only two wells (OCT-A2B and OCT-B6). For the un-cored well OCT-K5, same set of logs is available except for the sonic log is missing in its dataset but it has Nuclear Magnetic Resonance log (NMR) available. Table 1 shows the detailed database used in current study.

**Table 1** Detailed dataset

We ll/ Dat a Ty pe	G R	C A L I	P E F H O	D R H O B/ N P H I	D T	R D	R M	N M R	R C A L	S C A L
OC T- A2 B	√	√	x	√	√	√	√	x	√	√
OC T- B6	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	x	√	√
OC T- B8	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	x	√	x

OC T- K5	√	√	√	√	√	x	√	√	√	x	x
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**Formation evaluation for the studied wells**

Well log data was used to perform formation evaluation to obtain petrophysical parameters like shale volume (Vsh), porosity (∅), water saturation (Sw), reservoir, pay flags and the ratio between them. Shale volume is calculated by the linear formula (Eq.1) from gamma ray for a pessimistic estimation (Atlas, 1979) and from density-neutron log (Eq.2) (Schlumberger, 1972; Schlumberger, 2009). Porosity determination in the study is primarily obtained from density and neutron logs (Wyllie, 1963; (Asquith and Gibson, 1982; Schlumberger, 1972) (Eqs. 3 to 6). Water Saturation derived from Archie equation (Archie, 1942) (Eq.7) and from Indonesian equation (Poupon and Leveaux, 1971) (Eq.8). For reservoir and pay flags, standard cutoffs for shale volumes (50%), porosity (10%) and water saturation (50%) were applied in order and sequentially (Darling, 2005; Kassab et al., 2020; El-Din et al., 2013).

$$VSH = \frac{GR_{log} - GR_{sand}}{GR_{shale} - GR_{sand}} \text{ ----- (1)}$$

$$V_{sh} = \frac{X1 - X0}{X2 - X0} \text{ ----- (2)}$$

Where

$$X0 = NPHI_{ma}$$

$$X1 = NPHI + M1(RHOB_{ma} - RHOB)$$

$$X2 = NPHI_{sh} + M1(RHOB_{ma} - RHOB_{sh})$$

$$M1 = \frac{NPHI_{fl} - NPHI_{ma}}{RHOB_{fl} - RHOB_{ma}}$$

$$\emptyset = \frac{\rho_{ma} - \rho_{log}}{\rho_{ma} - \rho_{fluid}} \text{ ----- (3)}$$

Where:

∅ = formation porosity, fraction

ρ\_ma = Density of the rock matrix, g/cm<sup>3</sup>

ρ\_fluid = Density of saturation fluid, g/cm<sup>3</sup>

ρ\_log = Density log reading (bulk density), g/cm<sup>3</sup>

$$\emptyset = \sqrt{\frac{\emptyset_N^2 + \emptyset_D^2}{2}} \text{ ----- (4)}$$

$$\phi_e = \phi_t - \phi_{sh} V_{sh} \text{ ---- (5)}$$

$$\phi_{sh} = \frac{\rho_{ma} - \rho_{sh}}{\rho_{ma} - \rho_{fluid}} \text{ ---- (6)}$$

Where:

$\phi_e$  = effective porosity, fraction

$\phi_t$  = total porosity, fraction

$\phi_{sh}$  = porosity of shale derived, fraction

$V_{sh}$  = volume of shale at formation, fraction

$$S_W = \frac{n \sqrt{\frac{R_W}{\phi^m R_T}}}{\sqrt{\phi^m R_T}} \text{ ---- (7)}$$

Where:

$S_W$  = water saturation, fraction

$\phi$  = porosity, fraction

$R_W$  = resistivity of formation water, ohm.m

$R_T$  = resistivity of uninvasion formation, ohm.m

m = cementation exponent

n = saturation exponent

$$SW_{indo} = \left\{ \frac{\sqrt{\frac{1}{Rt}}}{\left( \frac{V_{sh}(1-0.5V_{sh})}{\sqrt{R_{sh}}} \right) + \sqrt{\frac{\phi^m}{a.R_W}}} \right\}^{(2/n)} \text{ ---- (8)}$$

Where:

$SW_{indo}$  = water saturation, fraction

$R_t$  = resistivity of uninvasion formation, ohm.m

$R_{sh}$  = resistivity of shale, ohm.m

$V_{sh}$  = volume of shale, fraction

$\phi$  = porosity, fraction

a = Archie constant

$R_w$  = resistivity of formation water,

ohm.m

m = cementation exponent

## Mapping of petrophysical parameters for lateral variation

After obtaining acceptable evaluation of petrophysical parameters on the level of wells. Mapping of these parameters is established for acquiring knowledge of lateral variation for these parameters especially the shale volume and porosity. The importance of this step is to identify any direction trends where the petrophysical parameters are enhanced for tracking development opportunities.

## Petrophysical parameters relations investigation

After the tests of routine core analysis (RCAL) the results of porosity and permeability measured from the core plugs are plotted to investigate relations between each other and between these parameters and depth.

## Results

### Formation evaluation results

According to Kassab et al., 2024, wells OCT-A2B and OCT-B6 have core electric parameters obtained from special core analysis (SCAL) such as cementation exponent (m), saturation exponent (n), Archie constant (a), and the formation water resistivity (Rw). Table 2 shows the results of the SCAL regarding the core electric parameters.

**Table 2** Core electric parameters resulted from SCAL

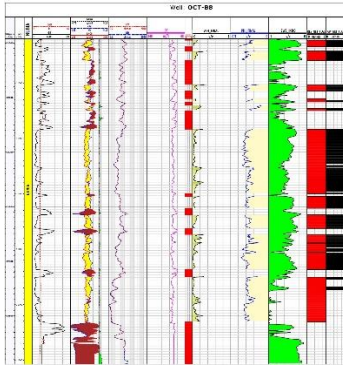
Well/Property	a	m	n	R <sub>w</sub>
OCT-A2B	1	1.69	1.97	0.088
OCT-B6	1	1.63	1.72	0.07

Formation evaluation is performed to estimate shale volume (Vsh), porosity ( $\phi$ ), water saturation (Sw), gross reservoir, net pay thicknesses, and net to gross ratio (N/G) for the Nubia Formation to all wells. Core electric parameters for the wells with those parameters were used. While assumed default values per the Gulf of Suez Petroleum Company (GUPCO) were used for the wells with no core electric properties measured (OCT-B8 and OCT-K5). The values used for cementation exponent (m), saturation exponent (n), Archie constant (a), and the formation water resistivity (Rw) are 1.95, 2, 1, and 0.016 respectively. Table 3 shows the results of the average formation evaluation parameters. Figure 3 shows the formation evaluation for well OCT-B8. Figure 4 has the same log and curves for well OCT-A2B. Figure 5 has

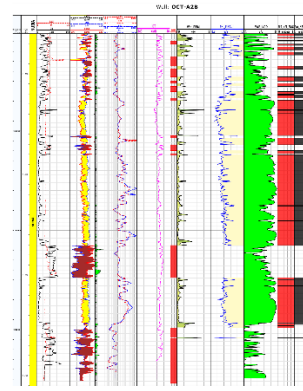
the same log and curves for well OCT-B6. Figure 6 has the same log and curves for well OCT-K5.

**Table 3** Average formation evaluation parameters

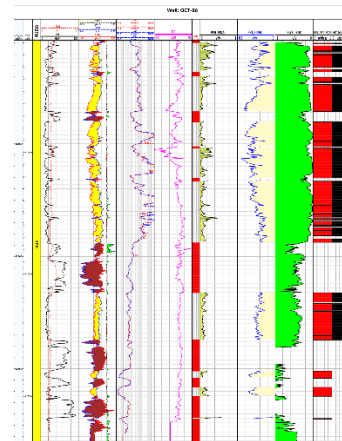
Well/ Prope rty	V <sub>sh</sub> (%)	Ø (%)	S <sub>w</sub> (%)	Gro ss (ft)	Ne t (ft)	N/ G (%) )
OCT- B8	0.19 6	0.13 4	0.364	495	45 7	0.9 2
OCT- K5	0.18 3	0.13	0.474	546	40 5	0.7 4
OCT- A2B	0.20 6	0.15 55	0.422	539	51 9	0.9 6
OCT- B6	0.19 3	0.13 4	0.454	532	46 9	0.8 8



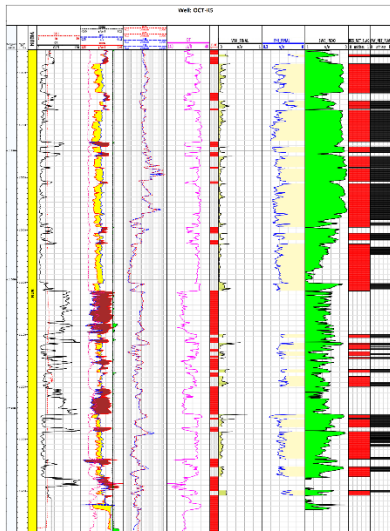
**Figure 3** OCT-B8 formation evaluation, the Caliper log (CALI), Gamma Ray log (GR) are in the first track. Bulk Density log (RHOB), Neutron Porosity Log (NPHI) and Bulk Density Correction Log (DRHO) in the second track. The Deep Resistivity log (RD) and Medium Resistivity log (RM) in the third track. Sonic Travel Time log (DT) in the fourth track. Bad Hole Flag (BHF) in the fifth track, Final Shale Volume (V<sub>sh</sub>) in the sixth track, Final Porosity (PHI\_FINAL) in the seventh track and Indonesian (final) Water Saturation (SWE\_INDO) in the eighth track. Finally, the Reservoir Net Flag (RES\_NET\_FLAG) exists in the ninth track and the Pay Net Flag (PAY\_NET\_FLAG) in the tenth track.



**Figure 4** OCT-A2B formation evaluation, the Caliper log (CALI), Gamma Ray log (GR) are in the first track. Bulk Density log (RHOB), Neutron Porosity Log (NPHI) and Bulk Density Correction Log (DRHO) in the second track. The Deep Resistivity log (RD), Deep Induction Resistivity log (ILD), Medium Resistivity log (RM) and Medium Induction Resistivity log (ILM) in the third track. Sonic Travel Time log (DT) in the fourth track. Bad Hole Flag (BHF) in the fifth track, Final Shale Volume (V<sub>sh</sub>) in the sixth track, Final Porosity (PHI\_FINAL) in the seventh track and Indonesian (final) Water Saturation (SWE\_INDO) in the eighth track. Finally, the Reservoir Net Flag (RES\_NET\_FLAG) exists in the ninth track and the Pay Net Flag (PAY\_NET\_FLAG) in the tenth track.



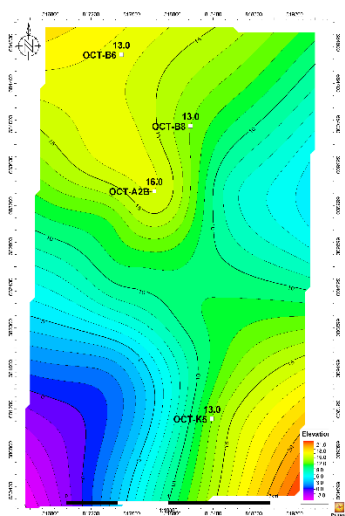
**Figure 5** OCT-B6 formation evaluation, the Caliper log (CALI), Gamma Ray log (GR) are in the first track. Bulk Density log (RHOB), Neutron Porosity Log (NPHI) and Bulk Density Correction Log (DRHO) in the second track. The Deep Resistivity log (RD), Medium Resistivity log (RM) in the third track. Sonic Travel Time log (DT) in the fourth track. Bad Hole Flag (BHF) in the fifth track, Final Shale Volume (V<sub>sh</sub>) in the sixth track, Final Porosity (PHI\_FINAL) in the seventh track and Indonesian (final) Water Saturation (SWE\_INDO) in the eighth track. Finally, the Reservoir Net Flag (RES\_NET\_FLAG) exists in the ninth track and the Pay Net Flag (PAY\_NET\_FLAG) in the tenth track.



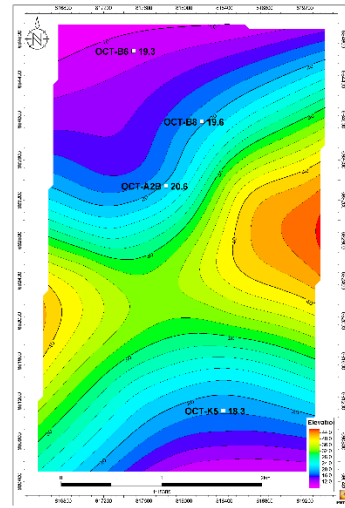
**Figure 6** OCT-K5 formation evaluation, the Caliper log (CALI), Gamma Ray log (GR) are in the first track. Bulk Density log (RHOB), Neutron Porosity Log (NPHI), Photo Electric Effect Log (PEF) and Bulk Density Correction Log (DRHO) in the second track. The Deep Resistivity log (RD) and Medium Resistivity log (RM) in the third track. Sonic Travel Time log (DT) in the fourth track. Bad Hole Flag (BHF) in the fifth track, Final Shale Volume ( $V_{sh}$ ) in the sixth track, Final Porosity (PHI\_FINAL) in the seventh track and Indonesian (final) Water Saturation (SWE\_INDO) in the eighth track. Finally, the Reservoir Net Flag (RES\_NET\_FLAG) exists in the ninth track and the Pay Net Flag (PAY\_NET\_FLAG) in the tenth track.

**Mapping of petrophysical parameters for lateral variation**

Mapping of petrophysical parameters shown a trend of loops with Northwest-Southeast direction where the enhanced petrophysical parameters are possibly located as the porosity increases and the shale volume decreases through this trend. Figure 7 shows the mapping of the average porosity of the area while Figure 8 shows the mapping of the average shale volume of the area.



**Figure 7** Average porosity mapping within the area

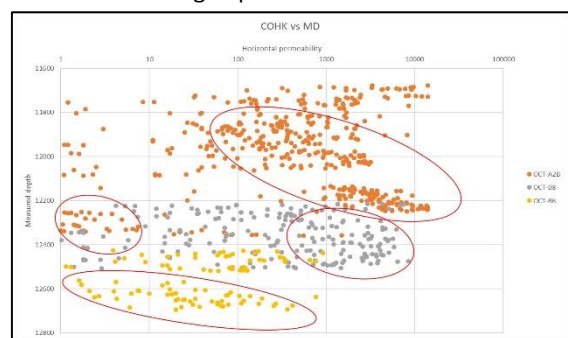


**Figure 8** Average shale volume mapping within the area

**Petrophysical parameters relations investigation**

After the routine core analysis tests were done and data of porosity (COPHI) in percentage (%), horizontal permeability (COHK) in milli Darcy (mD), vertical permeability (COVK) in milli Darcy (mD) and core grain density (COGRD) in gram per cubic centimeter (g/cc) were obtained, some observations were done. This step aimed to explore the data through plotting some RCAL results versus each other and versus measured depth (MD) to search for any relations of insights that might benefit the study. This lead to six figures: Figure 9, Figure 10, Figure 11, Figure 12, Figure 13 and Figure 14, they are as following:

- 1- Horizontal permeability versus depth: Contradicting to the common, the horizontal permeability in chunks of the data increased with increasing depth.



**Figure 9** Horizontal permeability versus depth

2- Vertical permeability versus depth: Similarly, The vertical permeability performs in the same manner and gives the same anomalous trends in almost the same intervals.

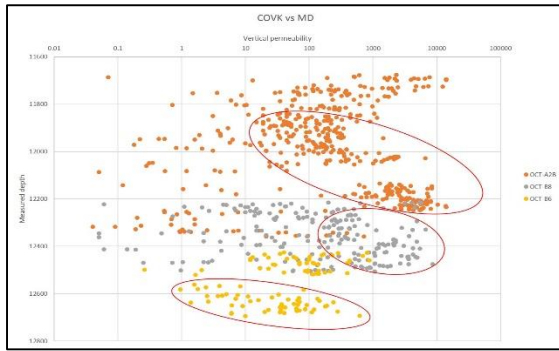


Figure 10 Vertical permeability versus depth

3- Core helium porosity versus depth: Similarly, the helium porosity performs in the same manner and gives the same anomalous trends in almost the same intervals.

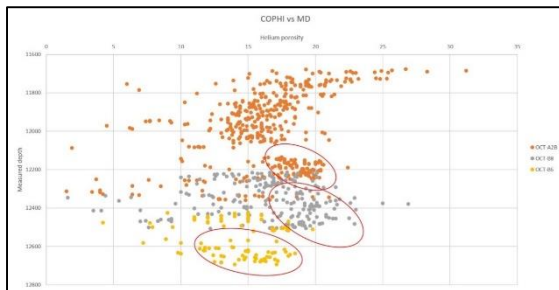


Figure 11 Helium porosity versus depth

4- Horizontal permeability versus vertical permeability: The horizontal and vertical permeability share an almost linear relation. This indicates the homogeneity of the Nubia Formation as permeability in all directions is similar.

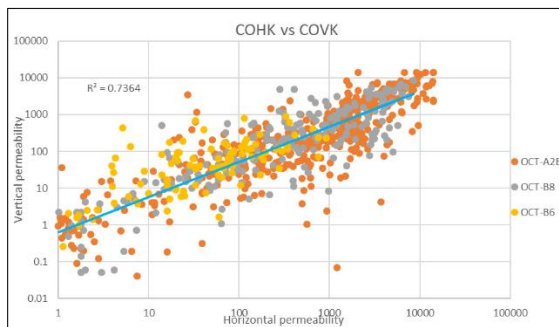


Figure 12 Horizontal permeability versus vertical permeability

5- Core helium porosity versus horizontal permeability: Similarly, the helium porosity is directly proportional with the horizontal permeability, it is also almost linear relation yet more scattered and less correlated. From the fitting line empirical equation ( $y = 0.279e^{0.4189x}$ ) where y is the horizontal permeability and x is the core helium porosity, the horizontal permeability could be estimated in un-cored intervals. The average horizontal permeability for the wells OCT-A2B, OCT-B8, OCT-B6 and OCT-K5 were 1326,930,451 and 610 milli Darcy respectively.

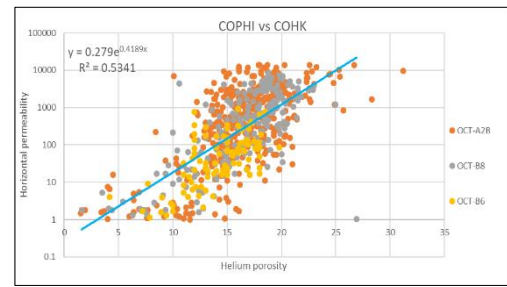
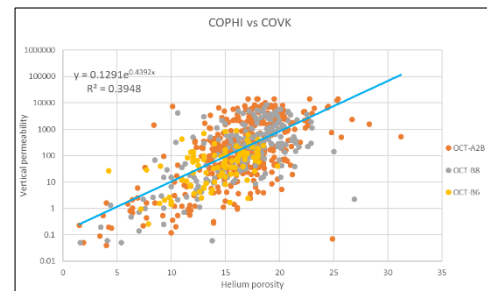


Figure 13 Helium porosity versus horizontal permeability

6- Core helium porosity versus vertical permeability: The helium porosity is directly proportional with the vertical permeability similar to that of helium porosity with horizontal permeability. From the fitting line empirical equation ( $y = 0.1291e^{0.4392x}$ ) where y is the vertical permeability and x is the core helium porosity, the vertical permeability could be estimated in un-cored intervals. The average vertical permeability for the wells OCT-



A2B, OCT-B8, OCT-B6 and OCT-K5 were 975,683,309 and 431 milli Darcy respectively.

Figure 14 Helium porosity versus vertical permeability

Figures 15, 16, 17 and 18 show the horizontal and vertical permeability curves obtained from the empirical equations for the wells OCT-B8, OCT-A2B, OCT-B6 and OCT-K5 respectively. The first track contains the porosity calculated from the logs, the second track contains the calculated horizontal permeability curve along with the measured horizontal core permeability while the third track contains the calculated vertical permeability curve along with the measured vertical core permeability except for well OCT-K5 as it has no core.

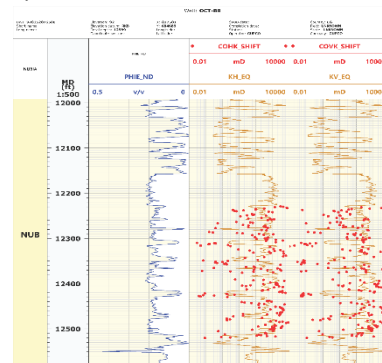
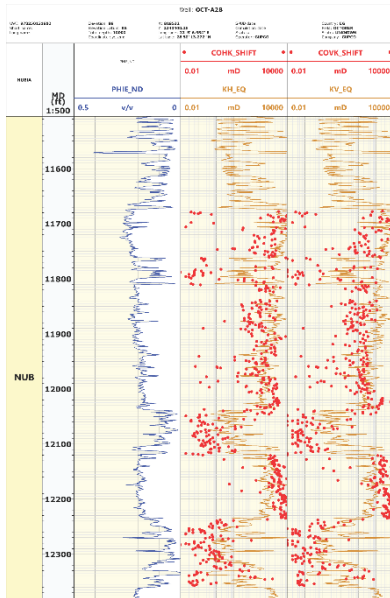
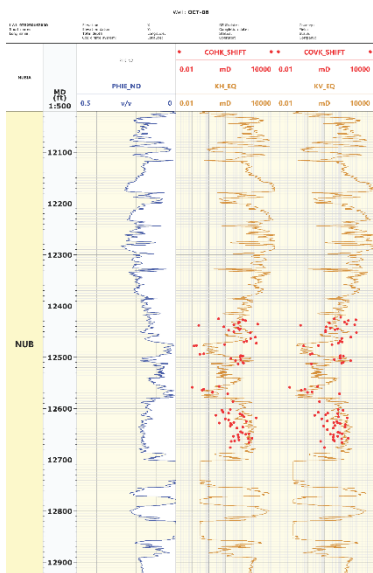


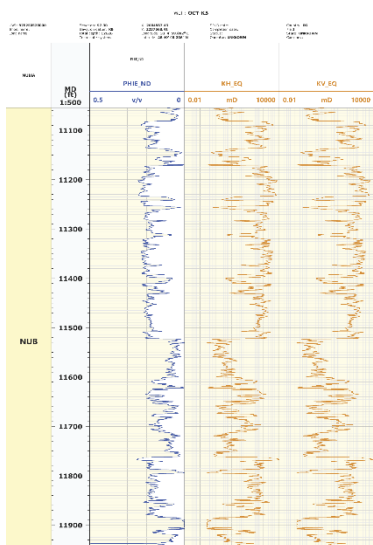
Figure 15 Calculated horizontal and vertical permeability curves from empirical equations for OCT-B8 well



**Figure 16** Calculated horizontal and vertical permeability curves from empirical equations for OCT-A2B well

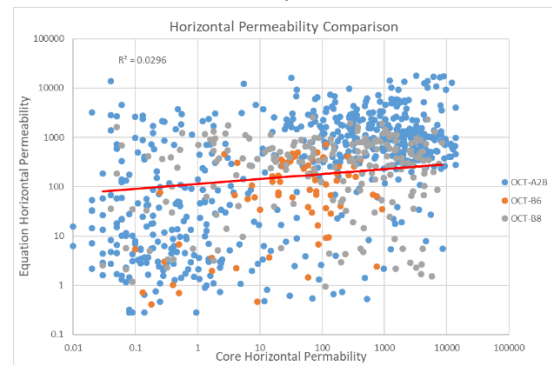


**Figure 17** Calculated horizontal and vertical permeability curves from empirical equations for OCT-B6 well

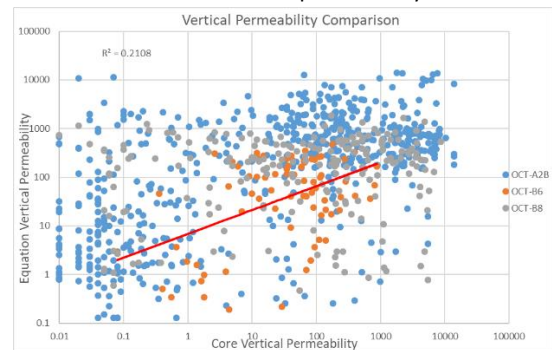


**Figure 18** Calculated horizontal and vertical permeability curves from empirical equations for OCT-K5 well

Figure 19 and figure 20 shows a comparison of the calculated horizontal and vertical permeability from empirical equations versus the measured core horizontal and vertical permeability from core for the studied wells. As it is noticed there is a very weak to no correlation between the calculated permeability from empirical equations and measured permeability from core as the R2 correlation coefficient is 0.0296 in case of horizontal permeability comparison and 0.2108 in case of vertical permeability comparison. This is due the difference in porosity measured from core and porosity calculated from logs due to different measurement conditions such as the formation temperature and pressure, the well-hole condition, the mud effects, overburden pressure etc.



**Figure 19** Comparison between calculated and measured horizontal permeability



**Figure 20** Comparison between calculated and measured vertical permeability

### Conclusions

Shale volume ranges between about 18 and 20 percent in Nubia Formation in October field. Porosity ranges between about 13 and 16 percent in Nubia Formation in October field. Water saturation ranges between about 36 and 47 percent in Nubia Formation in October field. Nubia Formation is a good reservoir and net pay thickness ranges between 74 and 96 percent of the gross thickness. The helium porosity measured from core samples contradicts the common relation with depth in some intervals of the formation as it increases with the increasing depth. Helium porosity, horizontal permeability and vertical permeability are highly correlated with each other in the Nubia Formation. Porosity and permeability values from routine core analysis are plotted where empirical equations are deducted then utilized to



predict permeability in un-cored intervals. The average horizontal permeability ranged from 451 to 1326 mD while the range for vertical permeability was from 309 to 975 mD. This method resulted in low to very low  $R^2$  correlation coefficient resulted as the comparison of actual and predicted horizontal permeability had an  $R^2$  of 0.03 while the  $R^2$  reached 0.21 in case of vertical permeability. Most important result is the knowledge acquired of the direction trend where enhanced petrophysical parameters are probably located, as loops with Northwest-Southeast direction were found with increased porosity and decreased shale volume. These results lead to reliable opportunities for delivering exploration and development wells to optimize the production of oil in the field as the results indicate massive hydrocarbon quantities.

## Nomenclature

Mathematical term	Definition	Unit
a	Archie Constant	Unit-less
GR <sub>log</sub>	Gamma ray log reading	API
GR <sub>sand</sub>	Gamma ray log reading for clean and sand matrix	API
GR <sub>shale</sub>	Gamma ray log reading for shale	API
k	Horizontal permeability	mD
NPHI <sub>ma</sub>	Neutron log reading for clean matrix	Ratio
NPHI	Neutron log reading	Ratio
NPHI <sub>sh</sub>	Neutron log reading for shale	Ratio
NPHI <sub>fl</sub>	Neutron log reading for drilling fluid	Ratio
m	Cementation exponent	Unit-less
n	Saturation exponent	Unit-less
RHOB <sub>ma</sub>	Density log reading for clean matrix	g/cc
RHOB	Density log reading	g/cc
RHOB <sub>sh</sub>	Density log reading for shale	g/cc
RHOB <sub>fl</sub>	Density log reading for drilling fluid	g/cc
R <sub>w</sub>	Resistivity of formation water	Ohm.m
R <sub>T</sub>	Resistivity of uninvaded formation	Ohm.m
S <sub>w</sub>	Water saturation	Ratio
SW <sub>indo</sub>	Indonesian water saturation	Ratio
∅	Formation porosity	Ratio
∅	Porosity measured from core	Ratio
∅ <sub>N</sub>	Porosity derived from neutron log	Ratio
∅ <sub>D</sub>	Porosity derived from density log	Ratio
∅ <sub>sh</sub>	Porosity of shale derived	Ratio
∅ <sub>e</sub>	Effective porosity	Ratio
∅ <sub>t</sub>	Total porosity	Ratio
∅	Density log reading	g/cc
ρ <sub>ma</sub>	Density of the rock matrix	g/cc
ρ <sub>fluid</sub>	Density of drilling fluid	g/cc

ρ<sub>log</sub>

Density log reading

g/cc

## Acronyms

Core Horizontal Permeability	COHK
Core Porosity	COPHI
Core Vertical Permeability	COVK
Barrel Oil Per Day	BOPD
Caliper Log	CALI
Deep Resistivity Log	RD
Density Log	RHOB
Gamma Ray	GR
Gulf Of Suez Petroleum Company	GUPCO
Medium Resistivity	RM
Million Barrel Oil	MMBO
Net To Gross Ratio	N/G
Neutron Log	NPHI
Oil Water Contact	OWC
Porosity	∅
Routine Core Analysis	RCAL
Shale Volume	V <sub>sh</sub>
Sonic Log	DT
Special Core Analysis	SCAL
True Vertical Depth Sub Sea	TVDSS
Water Saturation	S <sub>w</sub>

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## Conflicts of Interest

There are no conflicts to declare.

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