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Abstract

In September 2021, a significant jump in seismic activity on the island of La Palma (Canary Islands, Spain) signaled the start of a volcanic crisis that still continues at the time of writing. Earthquake data is continually collected and published by the Instituto Geográphico Nacional (IGN). We have created an accessible dataset from this and completed preliminary data analysis which shows seismicity originating at two distinct depths, consistent with the model of a two reservoir system feeding the currently very active volcano.

1 Introduction

La Palma is one of the west most islands in the Volcanic Archipelago of the Canary Islands, a Spanish territory situated is the Atlantic Ocean where at their closest point are 100km from the African coast Figure 1. The island is one of the youngest, remains active and is still in the island forming stage.

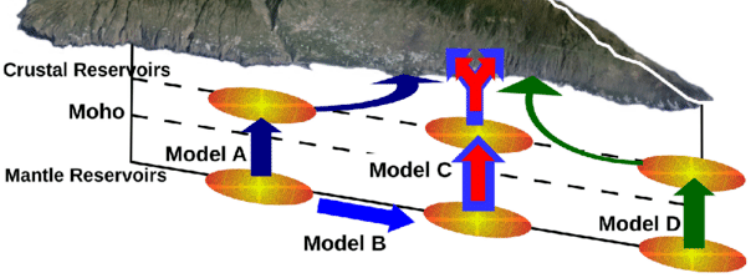


Figure 2: Proposed model from Marrero et al. (2019)

In this paper, we look at recent seismicity data to see if we can see evidence of such a system action, see Figure 2.

2 Dataset

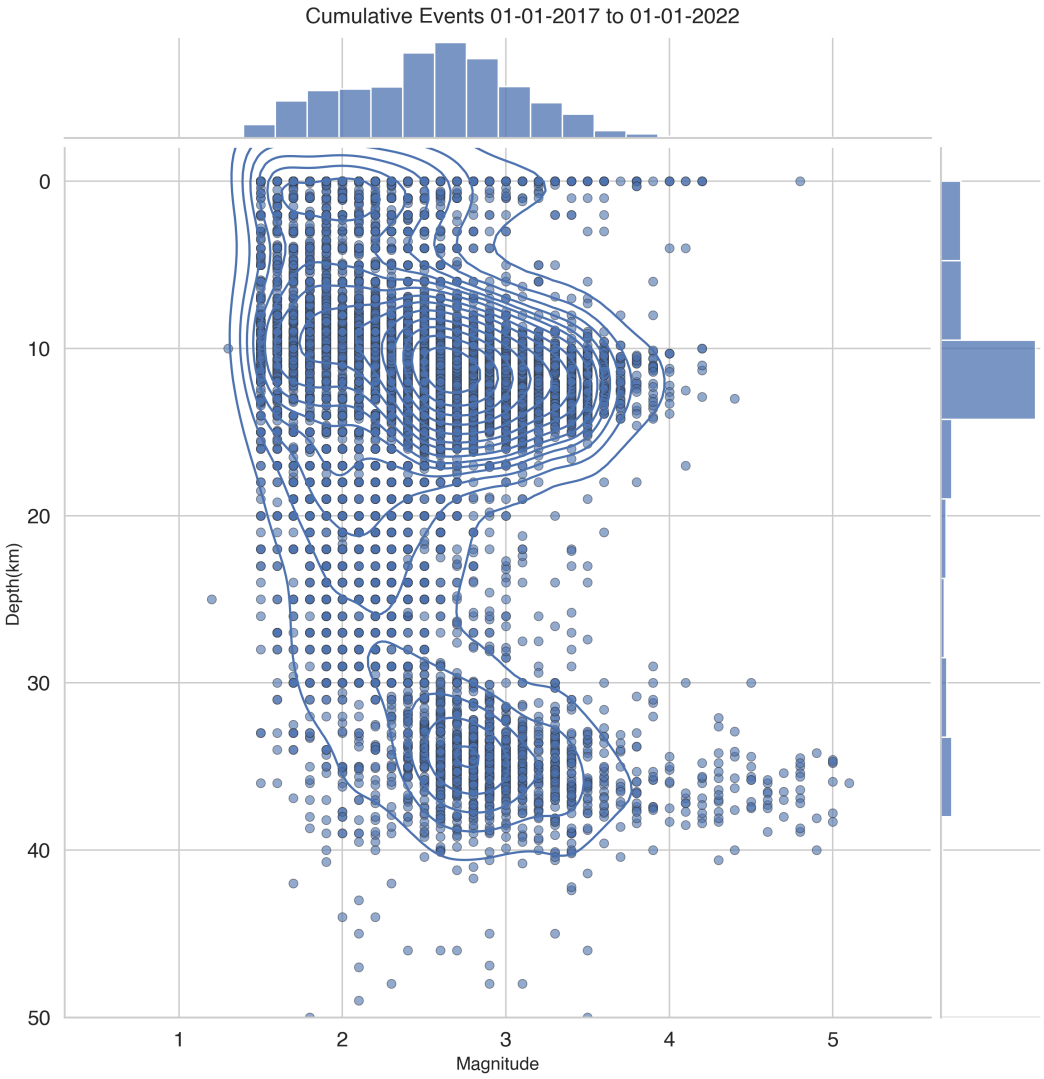
The earthquake dataset used in our analysis was generated from the IGN web portal this is public data released under a permissive license. Data recorded using the network of Seismic Monitoring Stations on the island. A web scraping script was developed to pull data into a machine-readable form for analysis. That code tool is available on GitHub along with a copy of recently updated data.

2.1 Main Timeline Figure

2.2 Visualising Long term earthquake data

Data taken directly from the IGN Catalog

2.3 Cumulative Distribution Plots



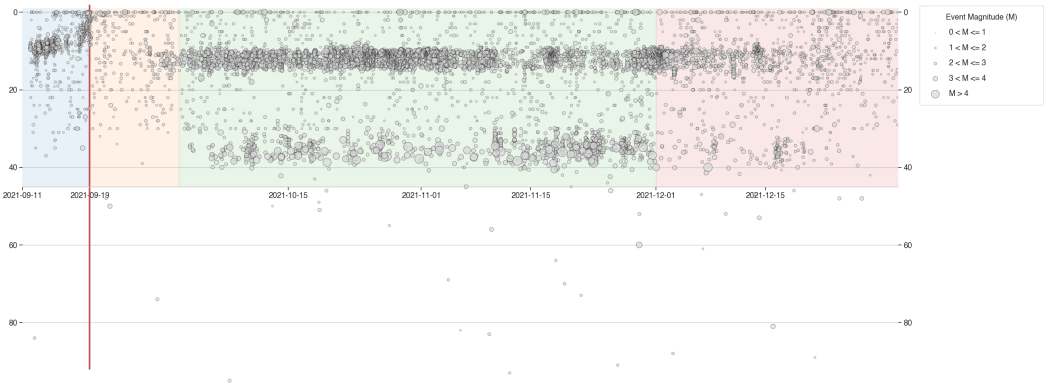


Figure 3: A timeline of volcanic activity through the years.

3 Results

The dataset was loaded into this Jupyter notebook and filtered down to La Palma events only. This results in 5465 data points which we then visualized to understand their distributions spatially, by depth, by magnitude and in time.

From our analysis above, we can see 3 different systems in play.

Firstly, the shallow earthquake swarm leading up to the eruption on 19th September, related to significant surface deformation and shallow magma intrusion.

After the eruption, continuous shallow seismicity started at 10-15km corresponding to magma movement in the crustal reservoir.

Subsequently, high magnitude events begin occurring at 30-40km depths corresponding to changes in the mantle reservoir. These are also continuous but occur with a lower frequency than in the crustal reservoir.

4 Conclusions

From the analysis of the earthquake data collected and published by IGN for the period of 11 September through to 9 November 2021. Visualization of the earthquake events at different depths appears to confirm the presence of both mantle and crustal reservoirs as proposed by {cite:t}`marrero2019`.

A web scraping script was developed to pull data into a machine-readable form for analysis. That code tool is available on GitHub along with a copy of recently updated data.

References

Marrero, J., García, A., Berrocoso, M., Llinares, Á., Rodríguez-Losada, A., & Ortiz, R. (2019). Strategies for the development of volcanic hazard maps in monogenetic volcanic fields: The example of La Palma (Canary Islands). *Journal of Applied Volcanology*, *8*. https://doi.org/10.1186/s13617-019-0085-5