

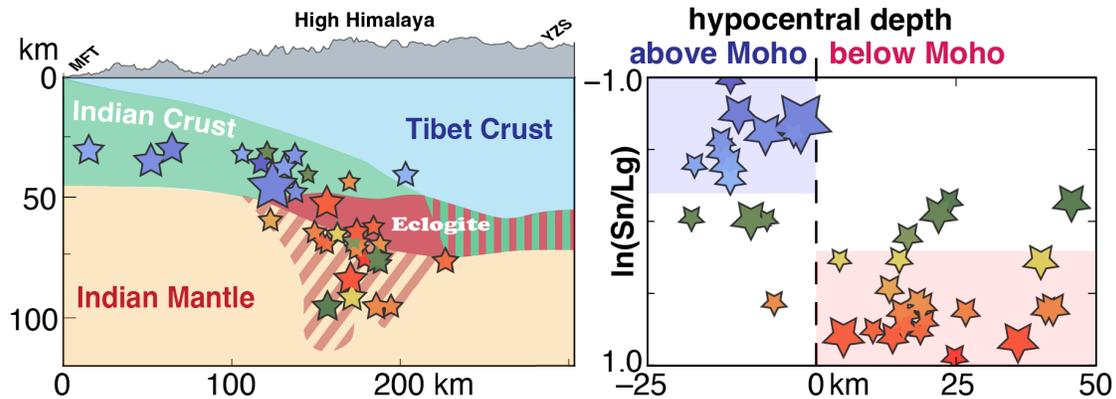
# Numerous Tibetan lower-crustal and upper-mantle earthquakes, detected by $S_n/L_g$ ratios, suggest crustal delamination or drip tectonics

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## Highlights:

- Our single-station  $S_n/L_g$  method distinguishes above-Moho from below-Moho earthquakes
- In 20 years, two areas in Tibet/Himalaya have  $>100 m_b \geq 3.2$  below-Moho earthquakes
- These two areas likely also have  $>100 m_b \geq 3.2$  earthquakes between 30 km and the Moho
- Both the above- and below-Moho earthquakes could all be in crustal rocks (eclogite)
- We infer drip tectonics beneath the Himalaya, & delamination tectonics below NW Tibet



# Numerous Tibetan lower-crustal and upper-mantle earthquakes, detected by $S_n/L_g$ ratios, suggest crustal delamination or drip tectonics

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## ABSTRACT

Whether intermediate-depth earthquakes beneath Tibet and the Himalaya are in the lower crust or upper mantle should provide insight into rheology, hence composition and temperature, of continental lower crust and upper mantle. Based on the waveguide theory that earthquakes respectively above or below the Moho will excite higher  $L_g$  or  $S_n$  energy, we develop an  $S_n/L_g$  amplitude-ratio analysis using a single permanent station to investigate earthquake depths with respect to the Moho. First, we use synthetics to show the ubiquitous sharp increase of the  $S_n/L_g$  ratio for hypocenters beneath the crust. A deep-crustal high- $v_s$  layer appropriate for eclogitized Indian lower crust causes a more gradual increase of  $S_n/L_g$  ratios for hypocenters within or below the eclogite layer. We measured  $S_n/L_g$  ratios of 595 Tibetan earthquakes from 1998 to 2022 with nominal (catalog) hypocentral depths  $>30$  km and magnitudes  $>3.2$  in five regions (west Tibet, southwest Tibet, south Tibet, southeast Tibet, and Qiangtang). As predicted by our normal-mode synthetics, earthquakes in west and south Tibet show  $S_n/L_g$  ratios that increase sharply as catalog depths approach the independently determined receiver-function Moho. Numerous earthquakes with high  $S_n/L_g$  ratios and nominal depths around the reported Moho are identified between the Karakoram fault and Altyn-Tagh fault (ATF) in west Tibet, which we attribute to an eclogitized Indian lower crust extending north to the ATF. Impingement of this underthrust Indian slab against the Tarim craton and consequent eclogite delamination or dripping may cause the observed below-Moho seismicity which occupies a region 100 km across and 200 km along orogenic strike and extends 30–50 km below published Moho depths. Similarly dense seismicity spans the Moho and occupies a similar volume below the Moho beneath the High Himalaya in south Tibet. The south Tibet  $S_n/L_g$  patterns may indicate an eclogitized Indian layer beginning to delaminate or drip south of the Yarlung-Zangpo suture. Our southeast Tibet and southwest Tibet  $S_n/L_g$  observations are less clear cut, perhaps due to less appropriate epicentral distances from the available observing stations. The Qiangtang region of Tibet likely has sparse mid-to-lower-crustal earthquakes, but no definitive below-Moho earthquakes. Our work expands the catalog of continental intraplate earthquakes below the Moho by  $>100$  events with  $m_b > 3.2$ , as well as identifying tens of  $m_b > 3.2$  lower-crustal events, so that Tibet fits neither an ideal *crème-brûlée* nor an ideal jelly-sandwich crustal-strength paradigm. Two clusters of earthquakes that each span the Moho may be best explained by the delamination or dripping of a strong eclogitized lower crust into the upper mantle.

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## 1. Introduction

The Tibetan plateau is the surface manifestation of the convergence between the Indian plate and the Eurasian plate, and ongoing complex deep-crustal and subcrustal tectonic processes (Klemperer et al., 2022; Tapponnier et al., 2001) may hold the key to Tibet’s elevation and evolution. A path to understanding these lower-lithosphere processes is opened up by numerous intermediate-depth earthquakes (Chen and Molnar, 1983; Chen and Yang, 2004; Liang et al., 2008; Monsalve et al., 2006; Zhu and Helmberger, 1996), as shown in Fig. 1, whose hypocentral location (whether mantle or lower crust) is still under debate. The widely used “jelly-sandwich” continental-lithosphere rheology (Bürgmann and Dresen, 2008) with a weak lower crust and a brittle

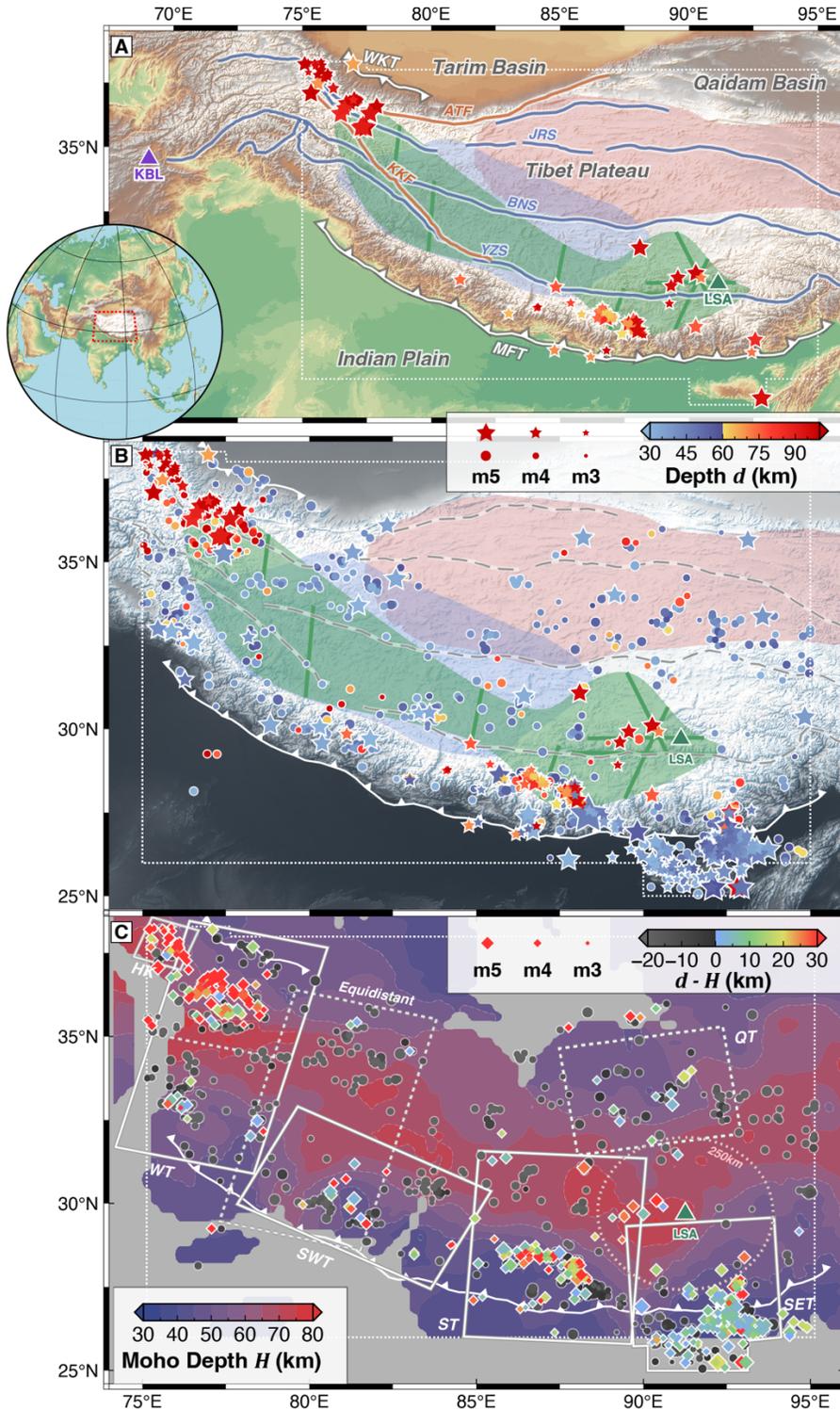
51 upper mantle was first envisioned in the belief that these intermediate-depth earthquakes occurred within the  
52 mantle lithosphere (Chen and Molnar, 1983; Chen and Yang, 2004); such a model is supported by the observation  
53 of south Tibet earthquakes as being in the upper crust and in the upper mantle (Liang et al., 2008; Monsalve et  
54 al., 2006). The opposed “crème brûlée” model (Bürgmann and Dresen, 2008) in which the lower crust is stronger  
55 than the upper mantle gains support from those who believe the Himalayan and Tibetan seismicity maybe  
56 exclusively lower-crustal (Jackson, 2002; Maggi et al., 2000). However, more and more Tibetan earthquakes  
57 have been discovered to have seismic phases clearly requiring sub-Moho sources (Jiang et al., 2009; Wang and  
58 Klemperer, 2021; Zhu and Helmberger, 1996). Different suggestions to explain Tibet’s intermediate-depth  
59 earthquakes (here defined as  $\geq 60$  km) include underthrusting of cold brittle Indian lower crust together with its  
60 mantle lithosphere (Craig et al., 2012, 2020; Priestley et al., 2008), flexural stresses (Monsalve et al., 2009),  
61 eclogitization (Alvizuri and Hetényi, 2019; Schulte-Pelkum et al., 2019; Shi et al., 2018, 2020), and the extension  
62 of crustal faults into the upper mantle (Diehl et al., 2017; Michailos et al., 2021).

63  
64 The debate on the cause of Tibetan intermediate-depth earthquakes is further complicated by the seismicity  
65 beneath Tibet’s south and northwest margins (Fig. 1A), a localization at odds with the believed regional extent  
66 of Indian underthrusting, flexural stress, eclogitization, and shallow faulting at specific places (Craig et al., 2012;  
67 Shi et al., 2020; Wittlinger et al., 2004b; Zhang et al., 2014). Previous assessments of the causes of Tibet’s near-  
68 Moho earthquakes have therefore either been restricted to the small areas in which such earthquakes have been  
69 found (Alvizuri and Hetényi, 2019; Monsalve et al., 2006; Schulte-Pelkum et al., 2005) or are ad hoc (e.g., that  
70 a locally anhydrous, hence strong Indian crust would explain the absence of intermediate-depth seismicity in  
71 central-west Tibet (Craig et al., 2012; Fig 1). These puzzles motivated us to create and interpret a more complete  
72 catalog of the intermediate-depth earthquakes across the entirety of Tibet.

73  
74 Attempts to compare source depth and Moho depth, the simplest method of detecting below-Moho  
75 earthquakes, have not clarified this debate, as double errors are introduced by the independent earthquake  
76 relocation and Moho determination (Priestley et al., 2008). Significant uncertainties exist in today’s Tibet Moho  
77 models (Xia et al., 2023; Zhao et al., 2020), and small earthquakes ( $m_b < 4.5$ ) typically lack the well-recorded  
78 “depth phases” ( $pP$ ,  $sP$ , etc.) at teleseismic distances that are often key to precise depth location (Craig et al.,  
79 2012). Direct comparison between S-minus-P travel times of P and Ps phases from larger teleseisms that have  
80 piercing points very close to locally-recorded small earthquakes and S-minus-P times of these same small  
81 earthquakes relies on unusually fortuitous recording geometries and has thus far only documented six below-  
82 Moho events,  $m_L < 2.9$ , in a single area of the central Himalaya (Schulte-Pelkum et al., 2019). Our new  
83 methodology aims to directly determine the layer in which an earthquake nucleates (above or below the Moho)  
84 based on waveform characteristics instead of on arrival times. We rely on the principle that earthquakes have  
85 their radiated energy mostly trapped by the waveguide in which their hypocenter is located (Fig. 2). The  $Lg$  and  
86  $Sn$  wavetrains dominantly propagate in the crustal and upper-mantle waveguides respectively (Knopoff et al.,  
87 1973; Mousavi et al., 2014; Stephens and Isacks, 1977) so that mantle earthquakes have higher  $Sn/Lg$  amplitude  
88 ratios than crustal earthquakes (Wang and Klemperer, 2021). Our use of  $Sn/Lg$  ratios offers a way to distinguish  
89 below-Moho from above-Moho earthquakes independent of uncertainty in Moho depth or lithospheric  
90 wavespeed.

91  
92 We use this  $Sn/Lg$  method to study 870 earthquakes from 1998 to 2021 across the entirety of Tibet (Fig.  
93 1B). The lack of permanent Tibet stations prevents us from using a multiple-station analysis (Wang and  
94 Klemperer, 2021), so we develop a new single-station  $Sn/Lg$  method, using the statistics of these 870  
95 earthquakes to overcome inherent uncertainties.

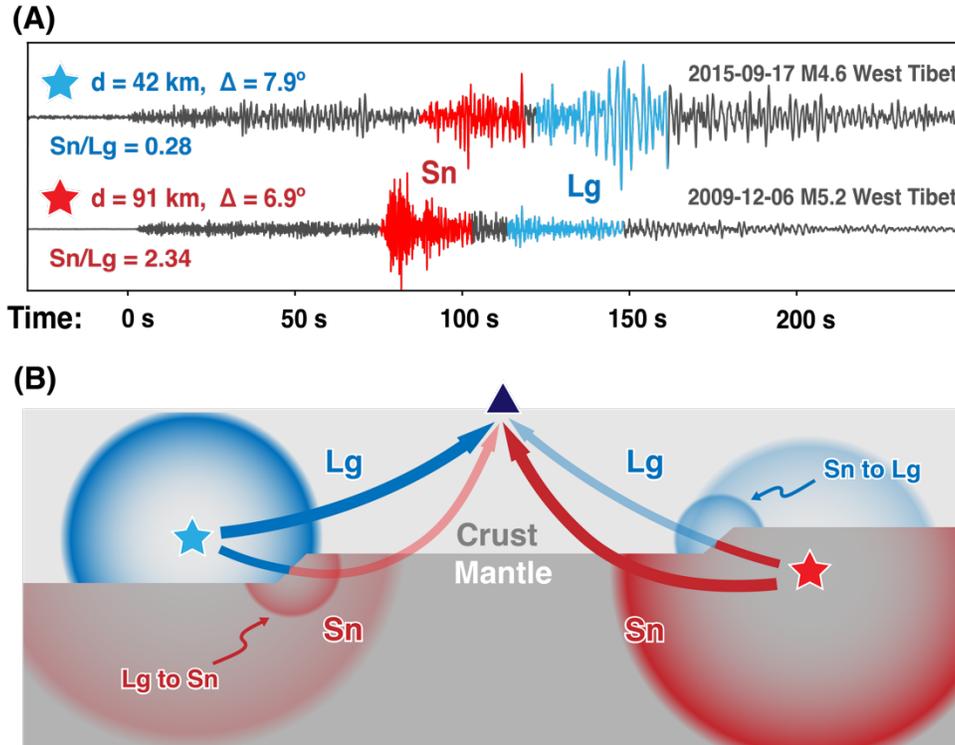
96  
97 We first establish the theoretical and numerical basis for our  $Sn/Lg$  analysis, then describe our data, and  
98 apply our single-station method to five separate regions of Tibet: west Tibet (WT), south Tibet (ST), southeast  
99 Tibet (SET), southwest Tibet (SWT), and Qiangtang (QT) (Fig. 1B). We present  $Sn/Lg$  results and analysis for  
100 WT in section 3, and along the Himalaya arc (ST, SET, SWT) in section 4. Analysis of the  $Sn/Lg$  results for  
101 QT is provided in Supplementary Material. Limitations caused by model heterogeneity, catalog uncertainty, and  
102 regional attenuation are discussed in section 5. Finally, we interpret Tibet’s rich near-Moho earthquake catalog  
103 as associated with the loss of lower-crustal mafic eclogites from the crust into the mantle.



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**Fig. 1. (A) Tibet topography and tectonic boundaries.** White dotted box corresponds to red dash box (global map). Stars are earthquakes between 1998–2022 below 60 km located by the Global CMT project, ISC-GEM project, or relocated by specific studies (see section 3.1), colored by hypocentral depth and sized by magnitude. Two triangles are the two permanent stations (IC.LSA and IU.KBL) used in this study. Pink transparent overlay is the high  $S_n$  attenuation zone in northern Tibet (McNamara et al., 1995). Blue transparent overlay is the Tibet deep aseismic zone (Craig et al., 2012). Green overlay encompasses seismic profiles (solid green lines) along which eclogite has been proposed (Shi et al., 2020; Wittlinger et al., 2004a, 2004b, 2009). Sutures, thrusts,

113 and faults from Taylor and Yin (2009): MFT: Main Frontal thrust; WKT: West Kunlun thrust; YZS: Yarlung-Zangpo, BNS:  
 114 Bangong-Nujiang, and JRS: Jinsha River sutures; KKF: Karakoram and ATF: Altyn-Tagh faults. **(B) Tibet earthquakes with**  
 115 **catalog depth > 30 km, 1998-2022.** Stars are from same catalog sources as in A; circles are from the USGS-PDE catalog. **(C)**  
 116 **Tibet Moho depths from receiver functions (Xia et al., 2023).** Grey regions were not mapped by Xia et al. (2023). Colored  
 117 diamonds and grey dots are earthquakes from part B with nominal depths below and above the receiver function Moho, respectively  
 118 (we use an interpolated Moho depth outside the mapped area). White lines bound the regions individually analyzed in this study,  
 119 solid lines WT and HK West Tibet and Hindu Kush, SWT Southwest Tibet, ST South Tibet and SET Southeast Tibet in the main  
 120 text, and dashed lines QT Qiangtang and Equidistant from IC.LSA and IU.KBL in Supplementary Materials. Circular dotted pink  
 121 line marks 250-km radius around IC.LSA, approximate minimum offset for reliable  $S_n/L_g$  measurements.  
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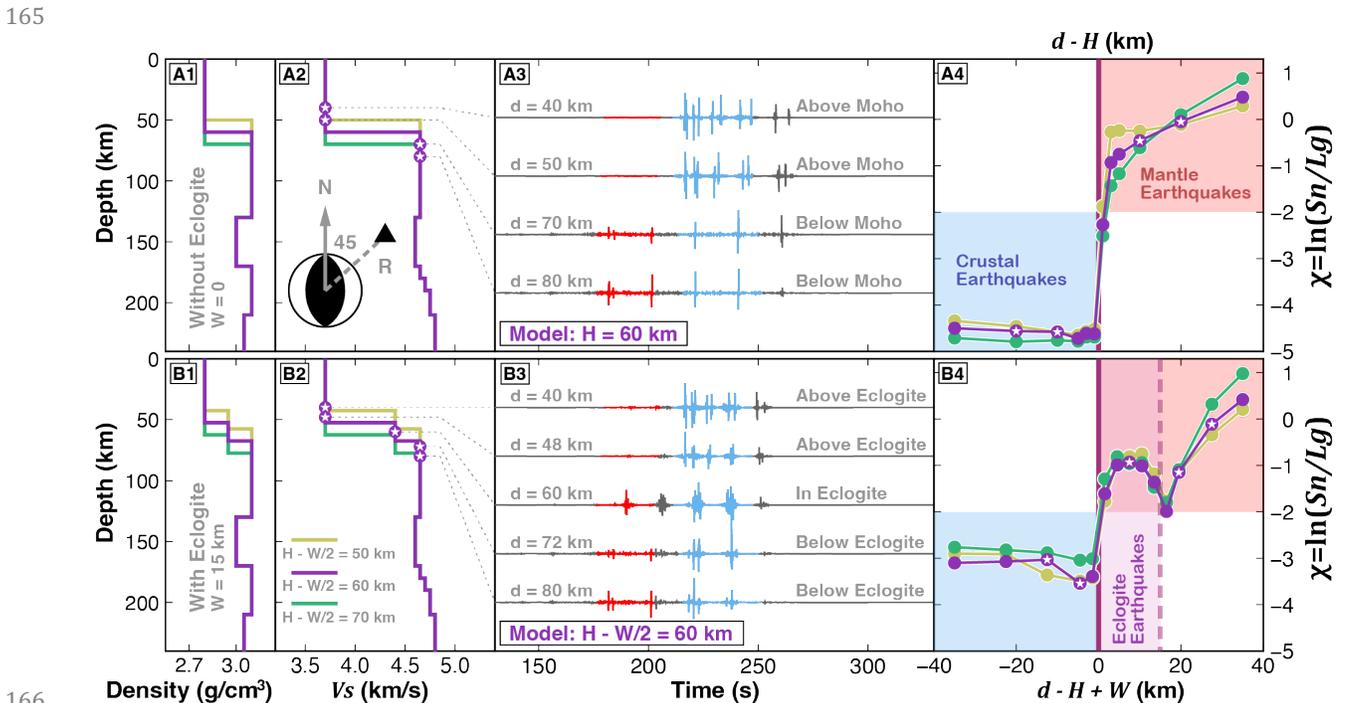
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 125 **Fig. 2. (A) Examples of  $S_n$  and  $L_g$  selection (tangential component of two closely spaced west-Tibet earthquakes recorded**  
 126 **at Kabul) and (B) schematic mechanisms of  $S_n$  and  $L_g$  amplitude differentiation.** A crustal earthquake (blue star) excites  
 127 stronger seismic waves in the crust ( $L_g$ ) and weaker waves in the upper mantle ( $S_n$ ) (left), and vice versa for an upper-mantle  
 128 earthquake (red star, right). Some  $S_n$  and  $L_g$  conversion occurs at Moho ramps:  $L_g$  may be blocked travelling from thicker to  
 129 thinner crust (left) and  $S_n$  when travelling from thinner to thicker crust (right) (Kennett, 1986).  
 130  
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132 **2. Theoretical and numerical basis for  $S_n/L_g$  ratio analysis**  
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134 Both the  $S_n$  and  $L_g$  phases, that are respectively confined largely to upper-mantle and crustal waveguides,  
 135 can be understood by mode theory (Knopoff et al., 1973; Wang and Klemperer, 2021) or multiply reflected ray  
 136 theory (Kennett, 1986; Press and Ewing, 1952). In this study, we restrict ourselves to the Love-mode  
 137 interpretation of the transverse component of seismograms. We follow Wang and Klemperer (2021) in applying  
 138 Generalized Eigenproblem Spectral Collocation (GESOC, Denolle et al., 2012) to calculate and sum Love-wave  
 139 eigenvectors to get the synthetic waveforms. The vertical variation of the eigenvectors shows that  $S_n$  and  $L_g$   
 140 concentrate their energy in the upper mantle and the crust, respectively, enabling Wang and Klemperer (2021)  
 141 to establish the theoretical basis for a practical  $S_n/L_g$  analysis by synthesizing seismograms for oceanic, cratonic,  
 142 and Tibetan wavespeed models, and for a variety of focal mechanisms and depths. Attenuation is not included  
 143 in this modelling.  
 144

145 Here we show synthetics for simplified Tibet models with a thick single-layer crust above an upper-mantle  
 146 lid and low-velocity zone (Fig. 3A, Zhao et al., 1991). We also calculate synthetics for doublet models with a  
 147 15-km-thick high-shear-velocity (“4.x” km/s) base-crustal layer (Fig. 3B) representative of a possible eclogitic  
 148 layer (Henry et al., 1997). In south Tibet, a lower-crustal doublet or pair of receiver-function converters at the  
 149 Moho and 10-20 km shallower (Kind et al., 2002) has been widely interpreted as eclogitized mafic Indian lower  
 150 crust (Fig. 1A). Our doublet models have a  $W = 15$  km thick lower-crustal layer (Fig. 3B1&2) with wavespeed  
 151 and densities appropriate for eclogite (Shi et al., 2020; Wittlinger et al., 2009). The Moho depth (the base of the  
 152 eclogite layer for the doublet models) is defined as  $H$  and varies from 50–70km for our single-Moho models and  
 153 62.5–82.5 km for our doublet models. We model a compressional double-couple source at different depths  $d$   
 154 ranging from 35 km above to 35 km below the Moho (Fig. 3A) or doublet top (Fig. 3B), as recorded at 800 km  
 155 in the direction  $45^\circ$  from the source’s strike.

157 We use a Gaussian source time function (standard deviation 2 Hz) and calculate 100 modes of the  
 158 eigenfunctions before bandpass filtering 0.5-4 Hz. The  $Sn$  and  $Lg$  windows are defined using a ray-theory  
 159 approximation, the known earthquake depth, and a uniform crust and mantle with Moho depth ( $H$ ) of 70 km to  
 160 mimic the real-world situation where we do not know the Moho depth (Supplementary Material S1). Hence our  
 161  $Sn$  window can include energy (e.g., trapped in the crustal eclogite layer) that is not  $Sn$  as defined as travelling  
 162 in the mantle. We measured amplitudes of the  $Sn$  and  $Lg$  phases as the root mean square of the signal within  
 163 their time windows (Mousavi et al., 2014). Full discussion of our window selection and its robustness to potential  
 164 uncertainties is in Supplementary Material S1.



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 168 **Fig. 3. Source and model parameters and resulting synthetics. (A1-2) Densities and s-wave velocities of the sharp-Moho**  
 169 **models after Earth-flattening transform (Supplementary Material S2).** Yellow, purple, and green lines represent Moho depths  
 170 of  $H = 50$  km, 60 km, and 70 km, respectively. The focal mechanism and the triangle in (A2) represent the source and receiver;  
 171 synthetics are for  $R = 800$  km. Purple dots with stars mark the depths of the sources whose seismograms for the purple model are  
 172 shown in (A3). (A3) **Synthetic waveforms for earthquakes at different depths in the model with a 60 km Moho depth.** Red  
 173 and blue trace segments are the  $Sn$  and  $Lg$  windows, calculated as in Supplementary Material S1. (A4)  **$\ln(Sn/Lg)$  vs  $(d - H)$**   
 174 **(source depth minus Moho depth) for sources from 35 km above to 35 km below the Moho in the sharp-Moho models. (B1-4) as**  
 175 **(A1-4) but for models with 15-km eclogitized lower crust.**

177 For the simple Moho models, increasing source depth leads to a step increase of  $Sn/Lg$  ratio at the Moho  
 178 depth  $H$ , followed by a gradual increase at larger depths (Fig. 3A). For the doublet models, a similar sharp

179 increase of  $Sn/Lg$  ratio at the top of the eclogite layer is followed by a decrease at the bottom of the layer and  
180 then a rebound. The high  $Sn/Lg$  ratios in the eclogite layer can be explained by the ray-theoretical effect of the  
181 mirror source formed by the reflective base of eclogite, that vanishes for sources below the eclogite layer. For  
182 all our models (which are noise-free and do not include attenuation), we can make a binary classification with  
183 earthquakes below the Moho or within the doublet having  $\chi = \ln(Sn/Lg) > -2$  and the crustal earthquakes  
184 above the doublet having  $\chi \leq -2$  (respectively pink and blue regions in Fig. 3 A4, B4).

185  
186 Previous studies have shown the relative lack of dependence of  $Sn/Lg$  on focal mechanism and receiver  
187 azimuth or distance (Wang and Klemperer, 2021). Our GESC synthetics do not model noise, geometric spreading,  
188 attenuation or scattering and in consequence synthetic  $Sn/Lg$  ratios are systematically smaller than observed in  
189 real data (see sections 3 and 4). This systematic difference does not impede our single-station  $Sn/Lg$  analysis,  
190 as a threshold  $\chi (= \ln(Sn/Lg))$  should also exist in the observations albeit larger than the threshold  $\chi = -2$   
191 seen in the synthetics.

### 192 193 194 **3. Data processing**

#### 195 196 *3.1 Data selection*

197  
198 We selected all earthquakes from  $26^{\circ}$ – $38^{\circ}$ N and  $75^{\circ}$ – $95^{\circ}$ E and depth range 30–150 km (20–150 km for  
199 southeast Tibet and northeast India) from 1998 to 2021 with  $m \geq 3.5$  in the USGS-PDE catalogue (PDE, 2022),  
200 and  $m \geq 3.2$  in the ISC-GEM (Global Instrumental Earthquake, Bondár et al., 2015) and Global CMT  
201 (Centroid-Moment-Tensor, Dziewonski et al., 1981) catalogues and in previous relocation studies (Alvizuri and  
202 Hetényi, 2019; Baur, 2007; Bloch et al., 2021; Craig et al., 2012; Diehl et al., 2017; Michailos et al., 2021;  
203 Monsalve et al., 2006; Parija et al., 2018). Earthquakes from sources other than the USGS-PDE are classified as  
204 “better-located” events in this study and are plotted as stars (Fig. 1A and B) in contrast to events only in the PDE  
205 catalog shown as circles (Fig. 1B). Our initial catalog contains 963 earthquakes across the Himalaya and Tibet  
206 (Fig. 1B; Supplementary Material S3).

207  
208 For each earthquake we know the catalog depth  $d$ , and we estimate Moho depth  $H$  beneath its epicenter  
209 from a recent compilation of receiver-function (RF) Moho depths (Xia et al., 2023). We plot  $(d - H)$  for every  
210 earthquake (Fig. 1C), highlighting those earthquakes nominally below local Moho. A first-order observation is  
211 that although earthquakes with catalog depths  $> 30$  km are scattered across the entire Tibet Plateau, most that  
212 are nominally below-Moho lie broadly parallel to the Himalaya arc, largely between the Main Frontal thrust and  
213 the Yarlung-Zangpo suture, but continuing north to the Altyn-Tagh fault in northwest Tibet, and continuing  
214 south of the Main Frontal thrust in northeastern India. Because our methodology relies on comparing  $Sn/Lg$   
215 ratios between earthquakes in similar locations, we group the data into smaller regions (white frames in Fig. 1B  
216 and C) that capture almost all these near-Moho earthquakes: west Tibet (WT), southwest Tibet (SWT), south  
217 Tibet (ST), southeast Tibet (SET), Qiangtang (QT), and Equidistant (between IU.KBL and IC.LSA). We study  
218 the earthquakes within these smaller regions, excluding those within 250 km of IC.LSA (dotted circle in Fig. 1C,  
219 the minimum distance beyond which  $Sn$  and  $Lg$  phases become well developed (Mousavi et al., 2014) and  
220 clearly differentiated in time (Fig. S1-2), using records from Lhasa (IC.LSA, 1998–present) or Kabul (IU.KBL,  
221 2007–present).

#### 222 223 *3.2 The practical single-station method*

224  
225 We calculate  $Sn$  and  $Lg$  windows as described for the synthetics (section 2.1), but with a fixed Moho depth  
226  $H = 70$  km as a crude average depth between source and receiver. We apply a 0.5–4 Hz bandpass for the  $Lg$   
227 window and a 1–4 Hz bandpass for the  $Sn$  window and calculate the signal-to-noise ratios ( $SNR$ ) of both phases  
228 (Supplementary Material S4). We discard earthquakes for which both  $SNR_{Lg}$  and  $SNR_{Sn} < 3$ , and for the  
229 remaining 595 events we calculate  $Sn/Lg$  ratios and uncertainties, using the measured  $SNR$  (Supplementary  
230 Material S4). Finally, we approximately correct the  $Sn/Lg$  ratios for geometric spreading effects (Fan and Lay,  
231 2003; Wang and Klemperer, 2021; Yang et al., 2007) (Supplementary Material S5).

232 We focus on the records from Kabul in WT and SWT and the records from Lhasa in ST, SET and QT.  
233 Records from Kabul and from Lhasa are available in SWT and the Equidistant region. We next plot  $S_n/L_g$   
234 amplitude ratios vs  $(d - H)$  for each region. Based on our synthetics (Section 2.1),  $S_n/L_g$  is dominantly  
235 controlled by hypocentral distance above or below the Moho, so using  $(d - H)$  instead of  $d$  largely removes the  
236 effect of Moho topography. Based on our entire dataset we choose a single threshold of  $\chi = \ln(S_n/L_g) = 0$  to  
237 separate below-Moho from above-Moho earthquakes. In Supplementary Material S6 we show that a step change  
238 in  $\chi$  at or close to  $\chi = 0$  is a better fit to the data distribution than a continuous gradation in  $\chi$  for WT, ST and  
239 likely also for SET. We project these earthquakes, with their  $S_n/L_g$  ratios, onto regional cross-strike lithospheric  
240 profiles to help understand the tectonic setting.  
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## 243 4. $S_n/L_g$ results for Tibet earthquakes

### 244 4.1 West Tibet (WT)

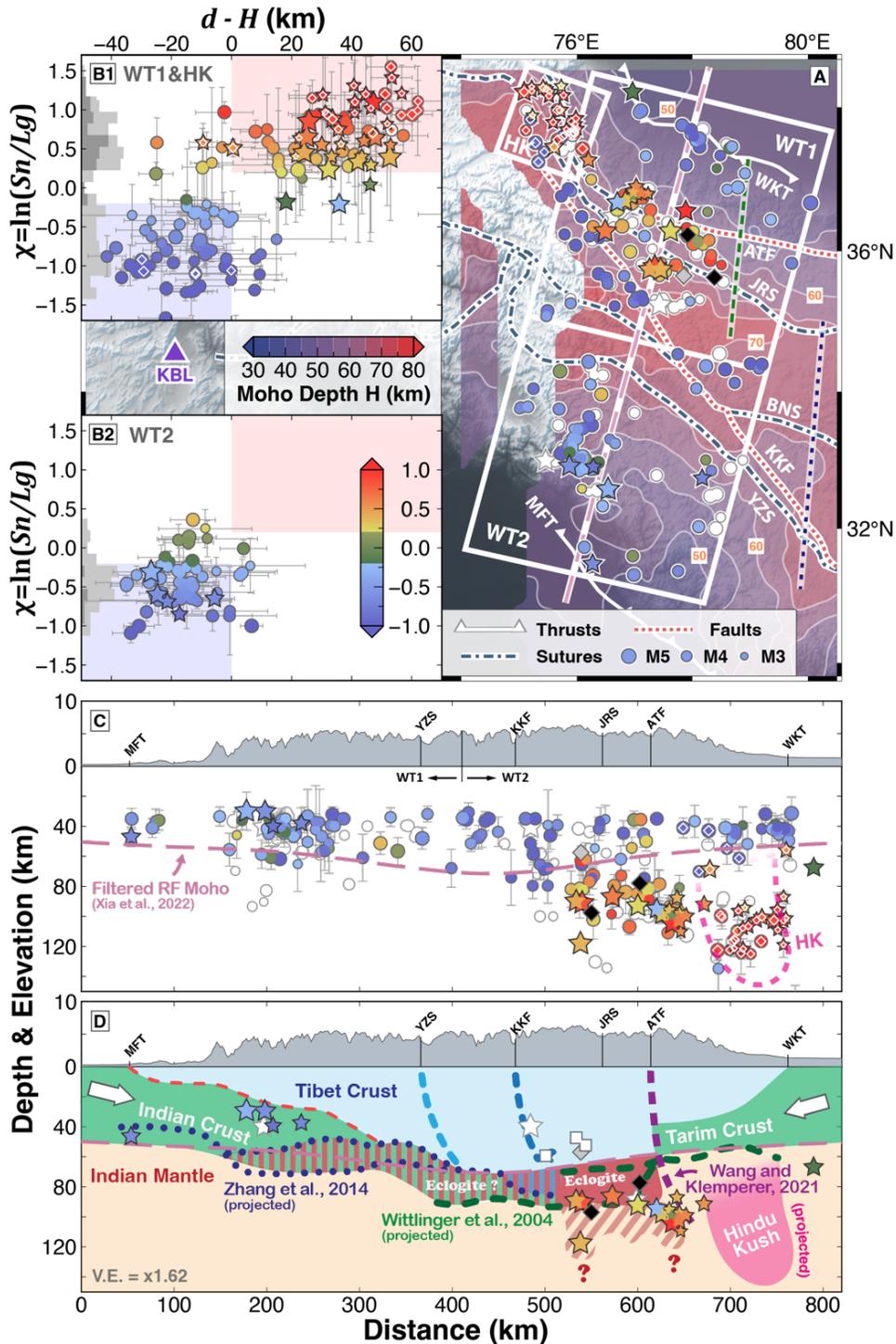
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248 Chen and Yang (2004) claimed that four earthquakes beneath the Jinsha-River suture in northwest Tibet  
249 originated in the mantle; but additional teleseismic analyses of these and six other events could not distinguish  
250 whether their hypocenters, at  $\sim 80$ – $100$  km depth, were above or below the Moho (Craig et al., 2012; Priestley et  
251 al., 2008). In this complex area, we follow previous work (Craig et al., 2012; Priestley et al., 2008) in separating  
252 the intermediate-depth earthquakes caused by the Hindu Kush subduction (Fig. 4, box HK) from the  
253 intermediate-depth earthquakes of interest in this paper that are associated with India-Asia convergence. Huang  
254 et al. (2011) showed with local recordings that at least some of the seismicity nucleated in the lower crust, and  
255 Wang and Klemperer (2021) used array  $S_n/L_g$  analysis of regional recordings to demonstrate that at least two,  
256 and very probably 12, hypocenters were sub-crustal, below-Moho. We measured  $S_n/L_g$  for 196 earthquakes in  
257 our west Tibet (WT) area from 2007 to 2021 from the IU.KBL station (Fig. 4). Starred earthquakes include  
258 better-located events from previous studies (Bloch et al., 2021; Craig et al., 2012; Parija et al., 2018) and ISC-  
259 GEM and GCMT catalogs (Bondár et al., 2015; Dziewonski et al., 1981). We describe the WT earthquakes in  
260 two subregions, WT1 and WT2 (Fig. 4A), and discuss their significance in section 5.1.  
261

262 For the WT1 region that has prolific intermediate-depth seismicity (roughly southern Tarim to Bangong-  
263 Nujiang suture), there is on average a tripling of  $S_n/L_g$  ratio between earthquakes below and above Xia et al.'s  
264 (2022) Moho, as predicted by our synthetics. An intermediate zone of  $\chi = \ln(S_n/L_g) \in (-0.2, 0.2)$  with  
265 almost no earthquakes separates the below-Moho from the above-Moho earthquakes (see color bar and red and  
266 blue boxes in Fig. 4B). It is this bimodality of reported hypocentral depths and corresponding bimodality of  
267 measured  $\chi$  values that supports a step change in  $\chi$  across the Moho. For tectonic interpretation we separate the  
268 region HK (Fig. 4, dots with diamonds embedded), an area identified as a continuation of the Hindu Kush  
269 subduction (Bloch et al., 2021; Priestley et al., 2008), from the main WT zone, even though these HK earthquakes  
270 all meet our expected  $(S_n/L_g)$  vs  $(d - H)$  relation. Excluding these HK earthquakes, we find no definitive  
271 mantle seismicity (i.e., with  $\chi > 0.2$  and with  $d > H$ ) north of the Altyn-Tagh fault.  
272

273 Earthquakes in the WT2 region (roughly Bangong-Nujiang suture to Main Frontal Thrust) are mostly located  
274 in the crust, with the few that are within uncertainty below the Moho all having 'crustal'  $S_n/L_g$  ratios (Fig. 4B2).  
275 All three better-located events are in the crust and have low  $S_n/L_g$  ratios. A few earthquakes apparently within  
276 the crust, that have intermediate or mantle  $S_n/L_g$  ratios, are in the region south of the Yarlung-Zangpo suture  
277 within the observed Moho doublet interpreted by Zhang et al. (2014) as an eclogitic lower-crustal layer.  
278

279 Using the Xia et al. (2023) receiver-function Moho, for the whole WT region (including HK), 168  
280 earthquakes (Supplementary Material S7) have  $S_n/L_g$  ratios matching their reported depths, and 19 match  
281 within error. Just 9 earthquakes have  $S_n/L_g$  ratios that fail to match their  $(d - H)$  values, but we do not know  
282 whether this failure represents a breakdown of our  $S_n/L_g$  method, or larger-than-quoted errors in earthquake  
283 and Moho depth measurements. Thus, our single-station estimation of whether an earthquake is above or below  
284 the Moho appears to be correct for 86% of all 196 events. Given that 12% of events with PDE depths  $> 60$  km

285 have 'better locations' that are at < 30 km depth (Fig. S3.2a) we suspect that the major source of error is the PDE  
 286 hypocentral depths, and that the true failure rate of our  $S_n/L_g$  method is only 5% (Tables S7-1, S7-2). We  
 287 conclude that although any individual earthquake might be mischaracterized,  $S_n/L_g$  ratios do statistically  
 288 separate above- and below-Moho earthquakes with high confidence despite several potentially confounding  
 289 issues (e.g., noise, variable attenuation and Moho topography between source and receiver (see Supplementary  
 290 Material S8); unknown focal mechanism; scattering of vertical and radial energy on to the transverse component).  
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**Fig. 4. (A)  $S_n/L_g$  amplitude ratios in west Tibet (WT) from recordings at Kabul (IU.KBL).** Rectangular white borders show the WT region, separated into subregions WT1, WT2, and area HK (Hindu Kush), superimposed on Moho depth (Xia et al., 2023). Colored dots show the  $S_n/L_g$  ratios for each earthquake. Colored stars are events with better defined depths (see section 3.1). Pink dashed line: line of section in (C) and (D). White circles and stars are earthquakes for which  $S_n/L_g$  ratios are not available because of low SNR or missing data. White diamonds mark earthquakes in the HK region of well-accepted continental subduction (Kufner et al., 2016). Two black and one grey diamonds mark the earthquakes previously demonstrated to be below-Moho (black) and above-Moho (gray) by Wang and Klemperer (2021). Blue dotted and green dashed lines are Moho interpreted by Zhang et al. (2014) and Wittlinger et al. (2004b). Faults labeled as in Fig. 1A. **(B1-2)  $\ln(S_n/L_g)$  vs  $(d - H)$  plots for the WT1 and WT2 regions.** Color bar is chosen based on natural breaks in the distribution of  $S_n/L_g$  values, as shown in grey histogram on left axis. Red, blue, and green segments of the color bar represent  $S_n/L_g$  of probable below-Moho earthquakes (pink box), probable above-Moho earthquakes (light blue box), and intermediate values. **(C) Cross-section of  $S_n/L_g$  ratios along profile A.** Pink dashed line is the filtered receiver-function Moho (Xia et al., 2023, Supplementary Material S9). **(D) Cartoon tectonic interpretation, showing only ‘better-located’ events (stars).** Blue dotted and green dashed lines mark the Moho and doublet layers from Zhang et al. (2014) and Wittlinger et al. (2004b) respectively. Boundary between green Indian crust and cyan Tibetan crust (Main Himalayan Thrust, red dashed line) from Gao et al. (2016). Purple dashed line: possible continuation of ATF below the Moho (Wang and Klemperer, 2021). White squares: projected WT lower-crustal earthquakes relocated by Huang et al. (2011).

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## 313 4.2 Himalaya Arc

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We apply the same analysis to our south, southeast, and southwest Tibet (ST, SET, SWT) regions in sequence from the region with the best constraints (ST) to the region with fewest data (SWT).

317

### 318 4.2.1 South Tibet (ST)

319

The Higher Himalayan and Tethyan Himalayan from  $\sim 86\text{--}89^\circ\text{E}$  are rich in near-Moho seismicity (e.g., Craig et al., 2012; Diehl et al., 2017; Liang et al., 2008; Michailos et al., 2021; Monsalve et al., 2006). The 1991–1992 Tibet PASSCAL experiment recorded three earthquakes identified from waveform analysis of local/regional recordings (Zhu and Helmberger, 1996) and corroborated using  $S_n/L_g$  analysis (Wang and Klemperer, 2021) as having occurred below the Moho. An additional group of six tiny earthquakes have been shown to be below-Moho by their  $S$ -minus- $P$  travel time compared to receiver functions recorded at the same temporary station (Schulte-Pelkum et al., 2019), but their magnitudes ( $<2.9$ ) are below our cut-off of  $m_b = 3.2$ . We measure  $S_n/L_g$  ratios of 113 earthquakes in our ST region recorded at Lhasa from 1998 to 2022 (Fig. 5).

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Recordings at IC.LSA from ST show an increase of  $S_n/L_g$  ratios with respect to depth, and a step change near Xia et al.’s (2023) receiver-function Moho (Figs. 5B, S6d), just as for Kabul recordings from WT (Fig. 4). Using identical criteria as for WT we see the same binary distribution with reference to the Moho, correctly categorizing almost all the events with more reliable depths (stars in Fig. 5). Most of the high  $S_n/L_g$  earthquakes are in a previously noted near-Moho seismogenic zone (Diehl et al., 2017; Liang et al., 2008; Monsalve et al., 2006), but whereas previous studies could not typically distinguish crustal from mantle earthquakes because of uncertainties in both earthquake depth and Moho depth, our  $S_n/L_g$  method shows this seismogenic zone crosses the Moho, nucleating earthquakes both in the crust and in the mantle (Fig. 5 B, C). A few nominally above-Moho earthquakes with large depth uncertainties show low  $S_n/L_g$  ratios (top left quadrant, Fig. 5B), and at  $\sim 20$  km below the Moho several well-located earthquakes show intermediate  $S_n/L_g$  ratios (bottom right quadrant, Fig. 5B), possibly corresponding to the lower  $S_n/L_g$  ratios observed in our synthetics for earthquakes at or just below the base of an eclogite layer. The most dramatic outlier, event Cr2 (Fig. 5b), is shown with its CMT depth, but while this paper was in review a new re-location (Craig et al., 2023) convincingly placed this event at just 5-km depth, agreeing with our  $S_n/L_g$  analysis (see Discussion below).

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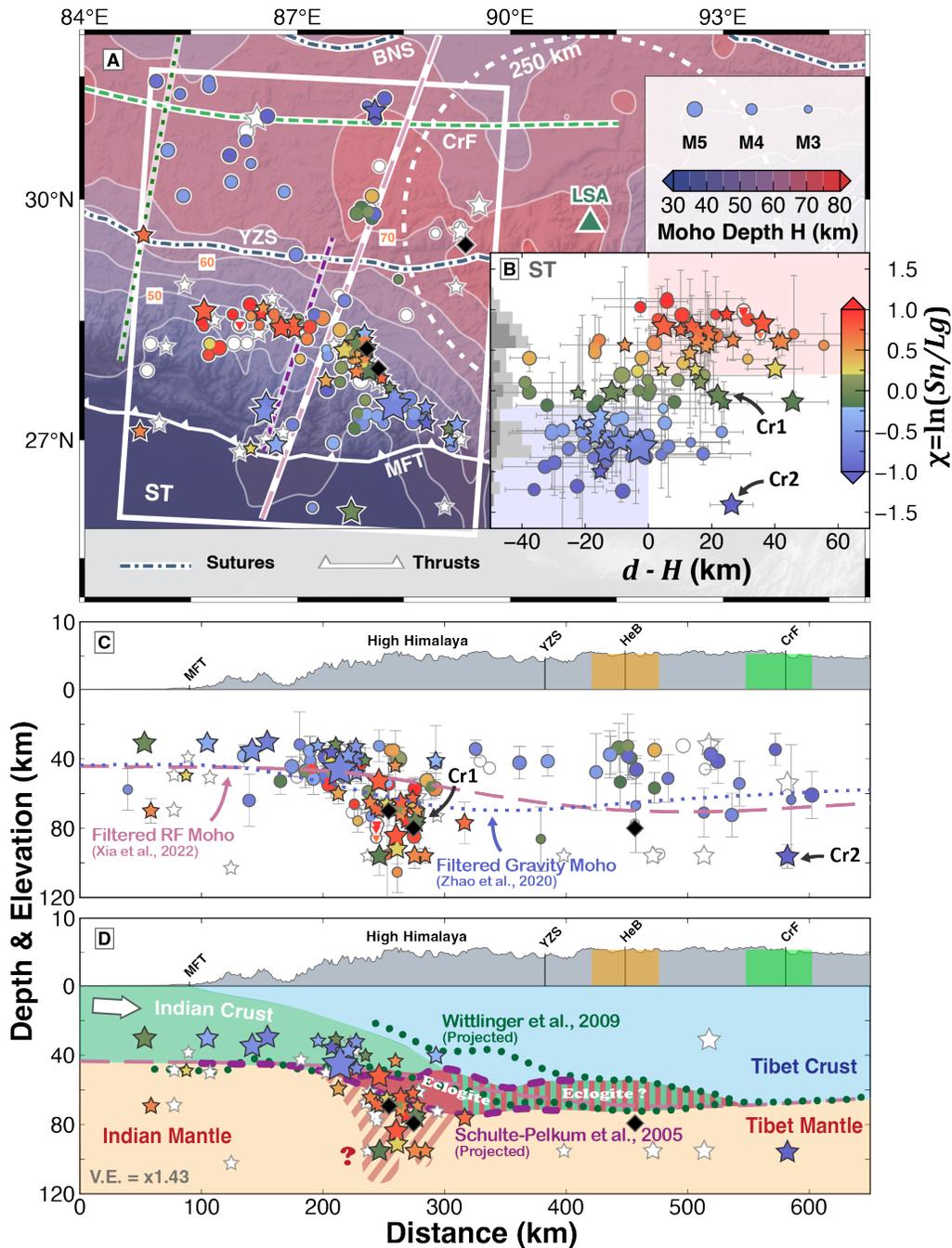
### 344 4.2.2 Southeast Tibet (SET)

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In contrast to WT and ST, possible mantle earthquakes in southeast Tibet (SET) are relatively rare north of the trace of the Main Frontal thrust, though we cannot use  $S_n/L_g$  ratios to properly examine a number of candidate  $\geq 30$ -km deep earthquakes within  $\sim 250$  km of Lhasa. Since the receiver-function Moho compilation of

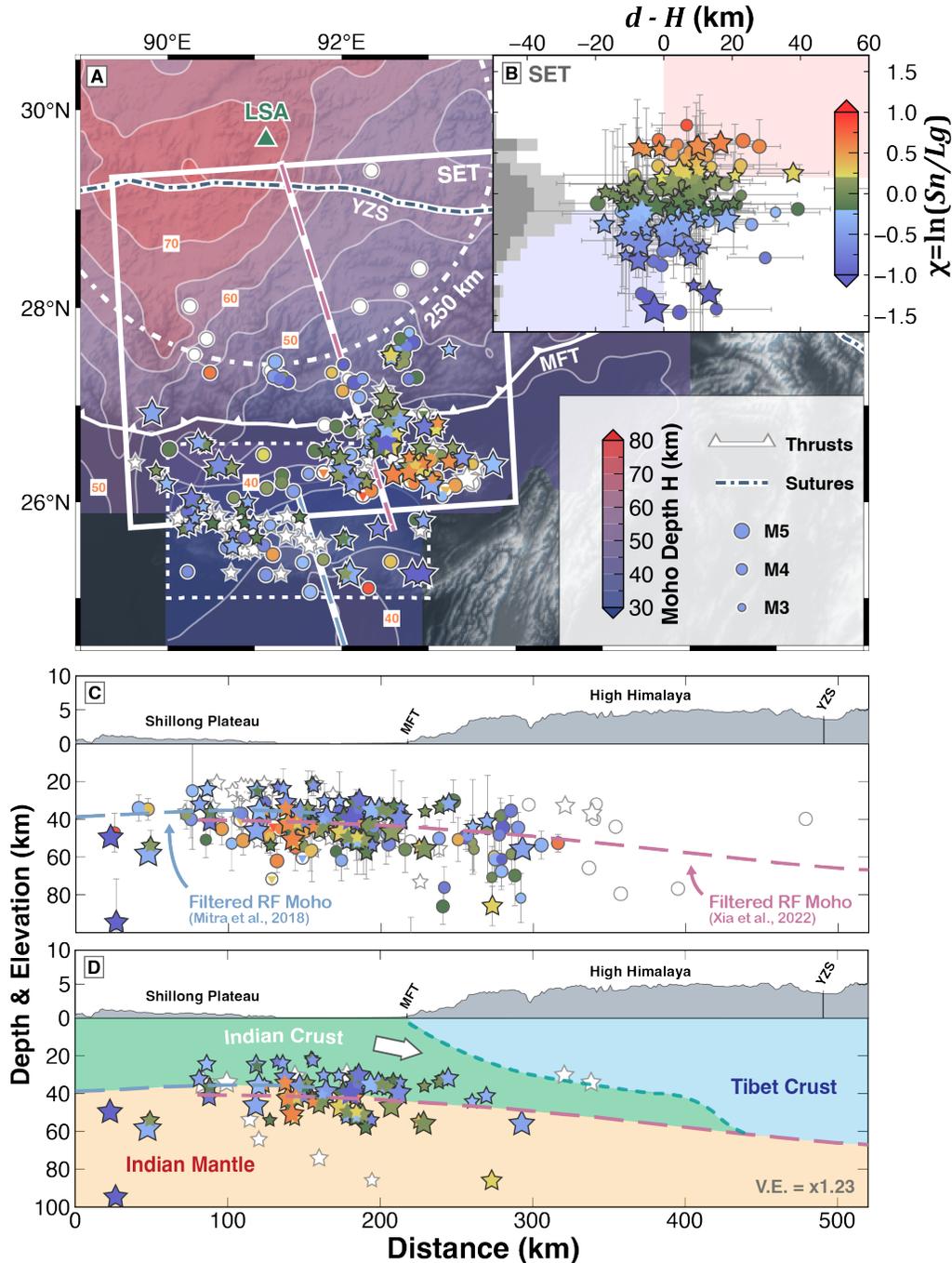
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349 Xia et al. (2023) does not include studies in NE India, south of 26.5°N we use data from Mitra et al. (2018), Fig.  
 350 6A). We measure  $Sn/Lg$  ratios at Lhasa for 172 earthquakes from SET, of which 79 are “well-located”, mostly  
 351 from the GANSSER catalog (Diehl et al., 2017). India south of the Main Frontal Thrust has crust only ~40 km  
 352 thick, so here our catalog includes all earthquakes with nominal depths >20 km.  
 353



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 356 **Fig. 5. (A) Spatial distribution of  $Sn/Lg$  ratios in south Tibet (ST) measured from recordings at IC.LSA (green triangle).**  
 357 Legend as in Fig. 4. White dots with colored triangles embedded are the earthquakes from the USGS-PDE catalog without depth  
 358 uncertainties (likely poor located). Black diamonds mark three earthquakes previously demonstrated to be in the mantle (Wang and  
 359 Klempner, 2021; Zhu and Helmlinger, 1996). White earthquake symbols are <250 km from Lhasa (shown by the white dot-dashed  
 360 circle), too close for reliable  $Sn/Lg$  measurements; or as in Fig. 4 represent low SNR events or missing data. Dashed green line is  
 361 the Indian crustal front (CrF, Nábělek et al., 2009). (B)  $\ln(Sn/Lg)$  vs  $d - H$  plots for the ST region. Cr1 and Cr2 are earthquakes

362 studied by Craig et al. (2023). (C) Cross-section of  $Sn/Lg$  ratios along the profile in (A). Dotted line: gravity Moho (Zhao et  
 363 al., 2020). HeB denotes the  $^3He/^4He$  boundary and possible mantle suture (Klemperer et al., 2022). CrF and HeB are oblique to the  
 364 cross-section so are shown as broad regions. (D) Cartoon tectonic interpretation, showing only 'better-located' events (stars).  
 365 Dotted green lines and dashed purple lines mark the Moho and receiver-function doublets (Schulte-Pelkum et al., 2005; Wittlinger  
 366 et al., 2009).  
 367



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 370 **Fig. 6. (A) Spatial distribution of  $Sn/Lg$  ratios in southeast Tibet (SET). Dashed box uses receiver-function Moho of Mitra et**  
 371 **al. (2018). (B)  $\ln(Sn/Lg)$  vs  $d - H$  plots for the SET region. Legends as in Fig. 5B. (C) Cross-sectional view of the  $Sn/Lg$**

372 **ratios along the offset profiles in (A).** Blue dashed line is the filtered receiver-function Moho from Mitra et al. (2018). Legends  
373 as in Fig. 4 and 5. **(D) Cartoon tectonic interpretation, showing only ‘better-located’ events (stars).** Boundary between green  
374 Indian crust and cyan Tibetan crust (Main Himalayan Thrust, mint dashed line) from Grujic et al. (2011).  
375

376 SE Tibet shows a gradation of  $S_n/L_g$  ratios from values that in west Tibet and south Tibet are clearly  
377 separate above-Moho from below-Moho hypocenters. In SET there is a maximum in the number of earthquakes  
378 very close to Moho depths (Fig. 6B), as opposed to the minima observed in the equivalent histograms for WT  
379 and ST (Figs. 4B, 5B). Although the receiver-function Moho map in SE Tibet may have larger errors than  
380 elsewhere in Tibet, uncertainties in  $d - H$  cannot explain the gradational  $S_n/L_g$  values nor the unusual spatial  
381 location of the near-Moho seismicity. However, unlike the cases in WT and ST, essentially all the near-Moho  
382 seismicity in SET is shallower than the 70 km Moho beneath the recording station Lhasa, leading to  $S_n$  blockage  
383 that will vary with the source depth to potentially smear out measured  $S_n/L_g$  ratios into a continuum (Fig. 2B).  
384 The “well-located” earthquakes from 50-90 km below the Shillong Plateau with unexpectedly low  $S_n/L_g$  may  
385 be good examples of  $S_n/L_g$  being reduced by the north-dipping Moho ramp beneath the High Himalaya.  
386

387 It should be noted that northeast India has long been recognized as an area with potentially problematic  
388 focal depths spanning near-surface to upper-mantle (Uma Devi et al., 2009) due in part to large lateral  
389 variation in wavespeed from the Himalaya to the Bengal Basin. Some earthquakes re-located by multiple  
390 authors using different methodologies (using manual P and S picks on temporary arrays (Diehl et al., 2017), or  
391 by using P and sPn phases (Rajkumar et al., 2022)) continue to be reported with depths spanning the Moho and  
392 differing by 15–50 km, perhaps due to unclear arrivals or to different 1D wavespeed models. Pending analysis  
393 from more than our single station (IC.LSA), our SET data are less reliable than our results from West Tibet  
394 and South Tibet.  
395

#### 396 4.2.3 Southwest Tibet

397

398 Our southwest Tibet region has much less intermediate-depth seismicity than further west (WT) or east (ST)  
399 and extends north into a region of “no deep seismicity” (Craig et al. 2012; blue region in Fig. 1B and C). Our  
400 SWT is approximately equidistant from Lhasa and Kabul, allowing us to compare recordings from the two  
401 stations.  
402

403 We obtained the  $S_n/L_g$  ratios of 47 earthquakes from 2000 to 2019 for IC.LSA and 30 earthquakes from  
404 2007–2022 for IU.KBL (Fig. 7), of which 19 were recorded at both stations (Supplementary Materials S10).  
405 Because of the long distance to both stations (~700–1300 km, Fig. S10-1), the  $S_n/L_g$  ratios tend to have much  
406 larger uncertainties than results for WT and ST. We cannot observe any explicit binary classification in either of  
407 the  $S_n/L_g$  vs  $d - H$  plots (Figs. 7A2, 7B2), as most of the recorded earthquakes locate in the crust. Our LSA  
408 and KBL analyses both successfully classify most of the crustal earthquakes as low  $S_n/L_g$  ( $< 1$ ) using the same  
409 criteria developed in WT and ST. The few earthquakes with low  $S_n/L_g$  and depths well below the Moho have  
410 large depth uncertainty. IU.KBL recorded no earthquakes with high  $S_n/L_g$ . IC.LSA recorded a few earthquakes  
411 with high  $S_n/L_g$  ratios but only one well-located event (W1) is also well-recorded at IU.KBL and there has  
412 much lower  $S_n/L_g$ . We suggest that differences in crustal attenuation between raypaths from the SWT region  
413 to IU.KBL (largely across Indian craton) and to IC.LSA (entirely across Himalaya and Tibet) likely cause the  
414 very different  $S_n/L_g$  measured at the two stations for W1 (Fig. S10). With  $< 50$  earthquakes in SWT (less than  
415 half the number in WT, ST, or SET), we cannot tell whether WT1 and the nearby cluster of earthquakes (at  
416 cross-section distance 80–200 km, Fig. 7A3) cross from the lower crust into the upper mantle, but it is intriguing  
417 that the dimensions of this cluster, and its location beneath the highest Himalayan topography, resemble the  
418 Moho-crossing cluster in ST (Fig. 5C).  
419

#### 420 4.2.4 Qiangtang Tibet

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422 We studied 56 earthquakes with nominal catalog depths from 30-80 km, but conclude from their  $S_n/L_g$   
423 ratios that none of these earthquakes originated in the mantle (Supplementary Material S11).  
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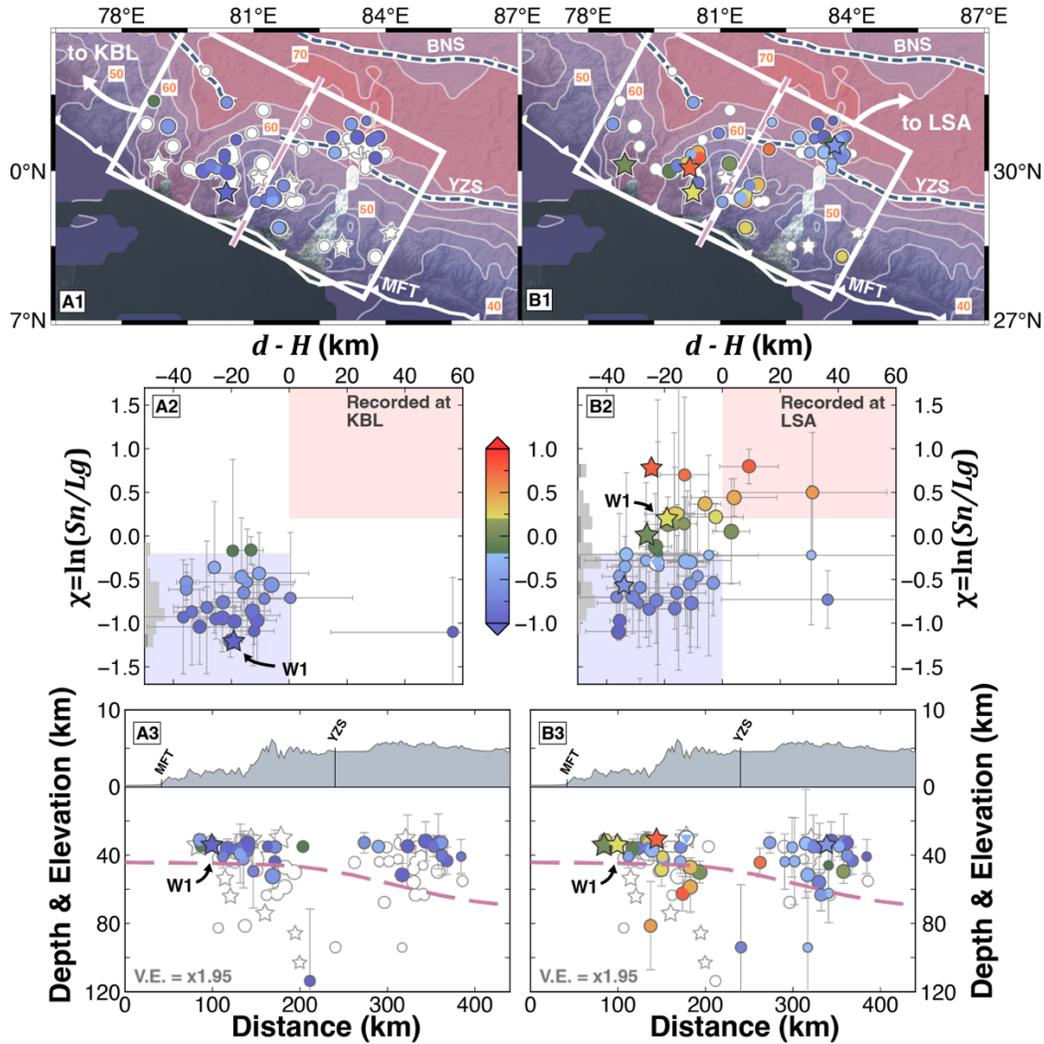


Fig. 7. (A1) Spatial distribution of  $S_n/L_g$  ratios in southwest Tibet as recorded at IU.KBL. (A2)  $\ln(S_n/L_g)$  vs  $d - H$  for SWT recorded at IU.KBL. (A3) Cross-section of  $S_n/L_g$  ratios along the profile in (A1). W1 is the only well-located earthquake recorded at both Kabul and Lhasa. (B1-3)  $S_n/L_g$  ratios recorded at IC.LSA. Legends as in Fig. 4, 5, and 6.

## 5. Discussion and Tectonic Implications

Our observations show that our single-station  $S_n/L_g$  method is able to statistically characterize earthquakes down to magnitude 3.2 as nucleating above or below the Moho. In west Tibet we find pronounced breaks in the distribution of  $S_n/L_g$  ratios that lets us confidently identify 50 earthquakes (and likely 72) as nucleating below the Moho, a huge increase over the 12 previously identified (Wang and Klemperer, 2021) (Table S7-2). In south Tibet we show at least 25 earthquakes (likely 40)  $m_b \geq 3.2$  nucleated below the Moho, compared to 3 previously known (Wang and Klemperer, 2021). However, our southeast and southwest Tibet observations have less clear  $S_n/L_g$  depth separations, likely because SET is too close to the observing station, causing overlap of  $S_n$  and  $L_g$  windows (Supplementary Material S1) in a region of large lateral wavespeed variability and uncertain Moho depth, and because SWT is too far from IU.KBL and IC.LSA, leading to low SNR.

Our systematic search for intermediate-depth earthquakes across the entire Tibet plateau confirms previous conjecture that there are just two isolated areas where below-Moho earthquakes are common today (Craig et al.,

446 2012; Priestley et al., 2008): beneath the Jinsha-River suture in northwest Tibet (Fig. 4) and beneath the southern  
447 Tangra-Yumco and Pumco-Xainza rifts in the southern Tethyan Himalaya (Fig. 5).

448  
449 It is well-known that global and regional catalogs contain some spurious identifications of intermediate-  
450 depth earthquakes. Within Tibet, Langin et al. (2003) used a temporary local array to show that a  $m_b = 4.1$   
451 event with a PDE depth of 71 km, immediately south of our Qiangtang study area (too close to IC.LSA for us to  
452 analyze, event La1 in Fig. S11a), was in fact at just 5 km depth. Langin et al. concluded that “depths reported  
453 for events located solely with teleseismic data are unreliable.” Similarly, Craig et al. (2023) discussed four  
454 specific Tibetan events,  $4.6 \leq m_b \leq 4.8$ , with PDE (and CMT) depths of 71 (70) km, 54 (96) km, 37 (18) km,  
455 and 33 (46) km, and show that the first (event Cr1 in Fig. 5) was well-located (re-locates to 77 km), but the  
456 second (Cr2 in Fig. 5), third and fourth all have correct depths  $< 5$  km. We find an intermediate  $S_n/L_g$  value for  
457 Cr1, and a definitively crustal  $S_n/L_g$  for Cr2 (Fig. 5). The third and fourth events are not included in our study  
458 because their better locations with the smallest depth uncertainties are both  $< 30$  km (respectively GCMT and  
459 ISC). Note that Cr2 is scored as a failure of our method, even though we found the correct result according to  
460 Craig et al. (2023). Craig et al. (2023) concluded that “Across the Tibetan Plateau itself [there are] no earthquakes  
461 between  $\sim 20$  and  $\sim 60$  km.” Although we do not question the re-assignment of the specific earthquakes re-  
462 located by Langin et al. (2003) and by Craig et al. (2023), we draw very different conclusions from our study of  
463 a much larger number of earthquakes.

464  
465 We argue that, notwithstanding a few very significant errors, catalog depth determinations are statistically  
466 reliable, with depth errors probably similar to the average absolute difference of 15 km between PDE depths and  
467 better-located depths (Fig. S3-2). We argue that the existence of re-located earthquakes with depths down to  
468 90–100 km (Baur, 2007; Craig et al., 2012; Diehl et al., 2017; Michailos et al., 2021) as well as PDE events at  
469 these depths is a strong argument that seismicity is not restricted to “a strong and seismogenic Indian lower crust”  
470 (Craig et al., 2023) but that the mantle is also seismogenic beneath northwest and south Tibet. We believe that  
471 the agreement between even relatively poor USGS-PDE hypocentral depths and our  $S_n/L_g$  characterization  
472 implies that at least some of the lower-crustal depth-estimates found in all areas of Tibet are likely also reliable  
473 (Fig. S3-2). Hence,  $m_b \geq 3.2$  earthquakes likely exist throughout the crust of Tibet, perhaps even including the  
474 Qiangtang (Fig. S11), albeit in much smaller numbers than in the shallow crust.

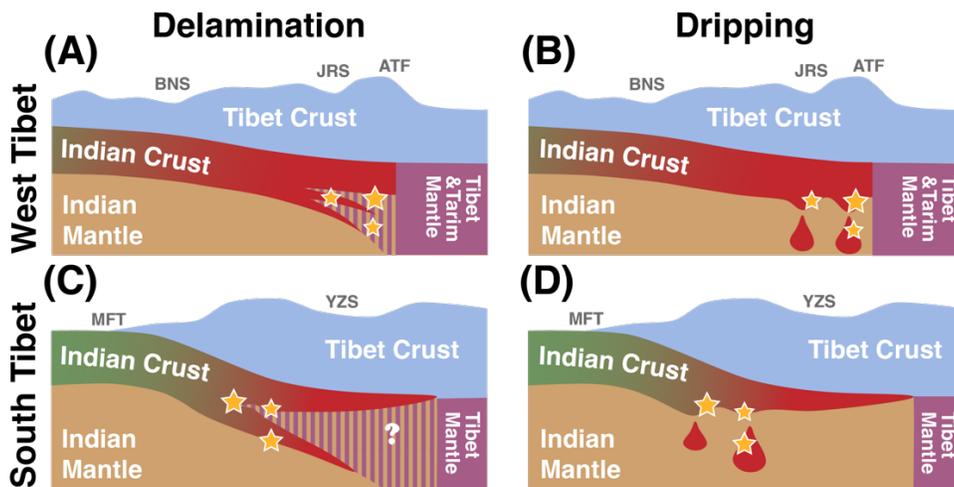
475  
476 In both regions of abundant below-Moho earthquakes our catalog suggests a rich sequence from  $\sim 20$  km  
477 above the Moho to  $> 30$  km below the Moho, dipping north across-strike for  $\sim 100$  km (Fig. 4, 5C&D). Both  
478 zones of Moho-spanning earthquakes are in locations where receiver-function analyses have been used to argue  
479 for eclogitized mafic Indian lower crust in a base-crustal layer (Schulte-Pelkum et al., 2005; Wittlinger et al.,  
480 2009, 2004b). Because partially eclogitized lower crust has density and wave-speed intermediate between mantle  
481 and granulitic lower-crust (Shi et al., 2020; Wittlinger et al., 2009), seismic models may pick either the top or  
482 bottom of eclogite layers as the Moho whereas gravity models may pick a Moho location within the layer. Lower-  
483 crustal eclogitization in south Tibet is consistent with the difference between Xia et al.’s (2023) receiver-function  
484 Moho and Zhao et al.’s (2020) gravity Moho, with the gravity Moho up to 15-km deeper (Fig. 5C) but close to  
485 Schulte-Pelkum’s (2005) receiver-function Moho (Fig. 5D).

486  
487 An association between eclogitization processes and intermediate-depth earthquakes has been proposed in  
488 Tibet (Austrheim and Boundy, 1994; Jamtveit et al., 2018; Michailos et al., 2021; Shi et al., 2020), but also  
489 elsewhere to explain delamination or dripping in Vrancea (Lorinczi and Houseman, 2009) and the Hindu Kush  
490 (Sippl et al., 2013). Our cross-sections suggest the seismicity continues  $> 30$  km beneath the receiver-function  
491 Moho that is interpreted as the base of a continuous Indian lower-crustal layer, into a depth range widely  
492 supposed to represent Indian ultramafic upper-mantle. The dipping zones of seismicity may represent material  
493 detaching from the crust and sinking within the mantle, either by delamination (laminar rollback) or dripping  
494 (Rayleigh-Taylor instability) (e.g., Beall et al., 2017).

495  
496 In west Tibet the intermediate-depth seismicity is likely at the northern limit of the underthrust Indian plate  
497 (Craig et al., 2012; Wang and Klempner, 2021), perhaps triggered by impingement of India against the Tarim  
498 craton across the Altyn-Tagh Fault (Figs. 4, 8). In this location at the north edge of the Indian plate, delamination

499 of a lower-crustal layer (or triggered dripping in the terminology of Beall et al., 2017) (Fig. 8A) is geometrically  
 500 plausible and potentially induced by the large Moho step across the Altyn-Tagh fault. In contrast, the  
 501 intermediate-depth seismicity in south Tibet is concentrated ~200 km south of the proposed mantle suture  
 502 (Klemperer et al., 2022) and ~300 km south of the Indian crustal front (Nábělek et al., 2009) (Fig. 5). In this  
 503 location it is hard to imagine lower-crust delamination as a sheet (Fig. 8C) being replaced by Indian or Tibet  
 504 mantle far south of the likely mantle suture, and beneath a remaining eclogite layer interpreted from the  
 505 continuous receiver-function doublet (Nábělek et al., 2009; Wittlinger et al., 2009). Instead, dripping seems more  
 506 plausible (Fig. 8D), given the limited cross-strike extent of below-Moho earthquakes (Fig. 5) as well as limited  
 507 along-strike Moho disruption inferred from seismic images of west-east variability in the receiver-function  
 508 doublet (Shi et al., 2020). We speculate that dripping at this latitude is triggered by bending of the Indian crust  
 509 as it underthrusts beneath the High Himalaya and is further localized at this longitude by the NNE-trending  
 510 Tangra-Yumco and Pumco-Xainza rifts (Shi et al., 2020). The lower crust here is estimated from gravity  
 511 modelling to be only ~30% eclogitized on average, with average density less than the upper mantle (Shi et al.,  
 512 2020). A Rayleigh-Taylor instability requires the lower-crustal density to exceed the upper-mantle density. This  
 513 density inversion may be achievable by geologically instantaneous self-sustaining eclogitization and densification  
 514 (Malvoisin et al., 2020) following fluid influx along earthquake-generated preferential fluid pathways (Jamtveit  
 515 et al., 2018) or from autologous fluids of dehydration metamorphism (Hetényi et al., 2007).

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520 **Fig. 8. Cartoons of deep-crustal and below-Moho earthquakes** beneath west Tibet (A)(B) and south Tibet (C)(D), drawn to  
 521 show Indian lower-crustal delamination (sheet-like rollback) (A, C) or dripping (circular in horizontal cross-section) (B, D).  
 522 Fault abbreviations as in Fig. 1.

523

524 These hypotheses of seismogenic dripping and/or delamination raise the question of whether below-Moho  
 525 earthquakes in WT and ST are occurring in ultramafic mantle or in eclogitic crust now below the Moho. Tibetan  
 526 near-Moho earthquakes were first thought to have nucleated in a cold, brittle upper-mantle, leading to the “jelly  
 527 sandwich” model of crustal rheology (Chen and Molnar, 1983), which was further supported by accumulating  
 528 discoveries of below-Moho earthquakes (Chen and Yang, 2004) and lower-crustal seismicity gaps (Liang et al.,  
 529 2008). However, reappraisal of these earthquakes’ depth uncertainties allowed the hypothesis that they were  
 530 located in the lower crust (Craig et al., 2012; Jackson, 2002; Priestley et al., 2008), leading to the “crème brûlée”  
 531 model of a strong lower crust above a weaker upper mantle. The recent demonstration by *Sn/Lg* methods of  
 532 below-Moho earthquakes existing in both south and northwest Tibet (Wang and Klemperer, 2021), as well as  
 533 lower-crustal earthquakes in northwest Tibet (Huang et al., 2011), supported a fully seismogenic lithosphere  
 534 with earthquakes at all depths. This fully seismogenic behavior may be restricted to the region of below-Moho  
 535 seismicity beneath the Jinsha-River suture and Altyn-Tagh fault, and to areas underlain by cratonic Indian lower  
 536 crust (green in Figs. 4D, 5D, 6D). Our areally complete *Sn/Lg* study across a 20-year time-scale shows that the  
 537 Tibetan lower crust (cyan in Figs. 4D, 5D, 6D) has almost no ‘better-located’ lower-crustal earthquakes except  
 538 in the two specific regions of Moho-crossing seismicity. These two regions beneath ST and WT are more

539 seismically active below the Moho than above (Table S7-1) and may correspond to detachment from weak  
540 Tibetan middle crust of strong eclogitized Indian lower crust that deforms while sinking into the upper-mantle.  
541 Thus the below-Moho earthquakes may only be present in crustal lithologies (Klemperer et al., 2013).

542  
543 In SE Tibet the geographic pattern of near-Moho earthquakes seems clearly different. These possible below-  
544 Moho events south of the Main Frontal Thrust might relate to Himalayan deformation stepping south to the  
545 Shillong Plateau, and to complex stresses near the syntaxis where Indian crust subducts both beneath the  
546 Himalaya and the Indo-Burman ranges. We defer further discussion of these events pending examination of their  
547 *Sn/Lg* ratios on Indian seismic stations south of the Himalaya.

## 548 549 550 **6. Conclusions**

551  
552 We have demonstrated a single-station *Sn/Lg* method to detect below-Moho earthquakes beneath the Tibet  
553 plateau, based on synthetics of high-frequency waveforms from the summation of Love modes. We recognize a  
554 *Sn/Lg* amplitude-ratio step increase across the Moho that is largely independent of epicentral distance, crustal  
555 thickness, and the existence of a receiver–function doublet. Given the previously demonstrated near-  
556 independence of *Sn/Lg* ratios from focal-mechanism type and receiver azimuth (Wang and Klemperer, 2021),  
557 we anticipate the possibility of observing separation of low and high *Sn/Lg* ratios, and hence distinction of  
558 crustal and sub-crustal earthquakes, in many parts of the globe.

559  
560 We apply our *Sn/Lg* method to 595 earthquakes with catalog depths >30 km in Tibet (>20 km in SET) and  
561 find with confidence 165 unique events nucleated above Moho and 101 events nucleated below Moho, even after  
562 taking the uncertainties into consideration (Table S7-2, ‘definitive’ results). Our *Sn/Lg* results identify  
563 concentrated zones of below-Moho earthquakes between the Jinsha-River suture and Altyn-Tagh fault in west  
564 Tibet and beneath the transition from the High Himalaya to the Tethyan Himalaya in south Tibet. The cross-  
565 sectional geometry of these earthquake clusters supports an eclogitized Indian lower crust currently delaminating  
566 or dripping into the upper mantle in response to local collision and/or bending stresses. The likely existence of  
567 these earthquakes in mafic eclogites may allow new constraints on temperatures and strain rates beneath Tibet  
568 (Molnar, 2020).

## 569 570 571 **Acknowledgements**

572  
573 We thank Shiqi (Axel) Wang for his many helpful suggestions and software assistance. All seismograms  
574 were downloaded from IRIS ([www.iris.edu](http://www.iris.edu)).

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763

1  
2 **Supplementary Materials for:**

3  
4 **Numerous Tibetan lower-crustal and upper-mantle earthquakes,**  
5 **detected by  $S_n/L_g$  ratios, suggest crustal delamination or drip**  
6 **tectonics**

7  
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14 **Sections**

15 **S1. Definition of  $S_n$  and  $L_g$  windows for synthetics & data**

16 **S2. Flattened velocity model**

17 **S3. Catalog selection and robustness**

18 **S4. Calculation of  $S_n/L_g$  and  $\ln(S_n/L_g)$  and their uncertainties**

19 **S5. Geometric spreading detrend**

20 **S6. Demonstration of step-change in  $\chi(d - H)$  and estimation of the separation threshold**

21 **S7. Earthquake classifications as definitive or likely below- and above-Moho**

22 **S8.  $S_n$  and  $L_g$  Blockage or Leakage**

23 **S9. Filter applied to the Moho map**

24 **S10. Comparison between LSA and KBL in west Tibet**

25 **S11.  $S_n/L_g$  results from the Qiangtang**

26  
27 **Tables Attached Separately**

28 **Table SA. Source parameters and waveforms of WT earthquakes, and their  $S_n/L_g$  ratios**

29 **Table SB. Source parameters and waveforms of ST earthquakes, and their  $S_n/L_g$  ratios**

30 **Table SC. Source parameters and waveforms of SET earthquakes, and their  $S_n/L_g$  ratios**

31  
32

## S1. Definition of *Sn* and *Lg* windows for synthetics & data

Our picking of *Sn* and *Lg* phases is based on ray tracing in a simple 1-D model with uniform crust and mantle and depends only on epicentral distance and source depth. We set the *Sn* onset time,  $T_{Sn}$ , to be the *S* head-wave arrival (*Sn*) for crustal earthquakes and the direct *S* arrival for mantle earthquakes. The *Lg* onset time,  $T_{Lg}$ , is set to be the direct *S* arrival (*Sg*) for crustal earthquakes, and for sub-Moho earthquakes is taken as direct *S* from the Moho vertically above the earthquake (Fig. S1-1).  $T_{Sn}$  and  $T_{Lg}$  can be calculated through the following equations in which  $R$  is the epicentral distance,  $d$  is the source depth,  $H$  is the Moho depth, and  $v_{sc}$  and  $v_{sm}$  are crustal and mantle shear wavespeeds:

$$T_{Lg} = \frac{\sqrt{R^2 + d^2}}{v_{sc}} \quad Lg \text{ arrival for crustal earthquakes (eqn. S1.1a)}$$

$$T_{Lg} = \frac{\sqrt{R^2 + H^2}}{v_{sc}} + \frac{d - H}{v_{sm}} \quad Lg \text{ arrival for mantle earthquakes (eqn. S1.1b)}$$

$$T_{Sn} = \frac{R}{v_{sm}} + (2H - d) * \frac{\sqrt{v_{sm}^2 - v_{sc}^2}}{v_{sm}v_{sc}} \quad Sn \text{ arrival for crustal earthquakes (eqn. S1.1c)}$$

$$T_{Sn} = \frac{\sqrt{x^2 + (d - H)^2}}{v_{sm}} + \frac{\sqrt{(R - x)^2 + H^2}}{v_{sc}} \quad Sn \text{ arrival for mantle earthquakes (eqn. S1.1d)}$$

where  $x$  is the solution of:

$$\frac{x}{v_{sm}\sqrt{x^2 + (d - H)^2}} = \frac{R - x}{v_{sc}\sqrt{(R - x)^2 + H^2}} \quad (\text{eqn. S1.2})$$

For our synthetics,  $d$ ,  $H$ , and  $R$  are fixed and known, as is the velocity structure ( $v_{sc}$ ,  $v_{sm}$ ). For the real data,  $d$  is set at the catalog depth;  $H$  is set at 70 km; and  $R$  is sufficiently well-known. Crustal and mantle wavespeed are defined as  $v_{sc} = 3.7$  km/s and  $v_{sm} = 4.7$  km/s.

The windows in which we pick the *Sn* and *Lg* amplitudes,  $L_{Sn}$  and  $L_{Lg}$ , have lengths set to be 4 and 5 times of the source-receiver distance in degrees, respectively. The *Sn* window begins at  $T_{Sn} - 0.2L_{Sn}$ , and the *Lg* window begins at  $T_{Lg} - 0.1L_{Lg}$ . When the two windows overlap at short offsets, the *Sn* window is truncated at  $T_{Lg} - 0.05L_{Lg}$  and the *Lg* window starts at this time. Our method differs slightly from some previous studies that use maximum and minimum mantle and crustal velocities (“velocity-range” method) to determine the start and end of the *Sn* and *Lg* windows (Mousavi et al., 2014; Wang and Klemperer, 2021). Our method (Fig. S1-2a) is almost equivalent to the velocity-range method if  $v_{sm}$  is in the range 4.2–4.9 km/s and  $v_{sc}$  3.2–3.8 km/s (Fig. S1-2b) and our windows are very comparable to those used by Wang and Klemperer (2021) who used  $v_{sm}$  from 4.3–4.8 km/s and  $v_{sc}$  from 3.1–3.6 km/s. We prefer our window-determination method because we include a few seconds of the waveform before the predicted earliest arrivals to more-certainly capture the phase onset, and because we only require two parameters, average  $v_{sm}$  and  $v_{sc}$ , instead of four (max and min  $v_{sc}$  and max and min  $v_{sm}$ ).

We select 250 km to be the minimum distance for our *Sn/Lg* analysis, beyond which a significant fraction of the *Sn* and *Lg* windows should not overlap, even though some overlap remains out to  $R \sim 400$ –500 km (Fig. S1-2). To test the sensitivity of measured *Sn/Lg* to uncertainties in  $H$ ,  $d$ ,  $v_{sc}$ ,  $v_{sm}$ , we use our synthetics for the 70-km single-layer crust (Fig. 3A) and re-calculate *Sn* and *Lg* windows and resultant *Sn/Lg* amplitude ratio for different values of earthquake depth  $d$ , Moho depth  $H$ , crustal wavespeed  $v_{sc}$  and mantle wavespeed  $v_{sm}$  (Fig. S1-3).

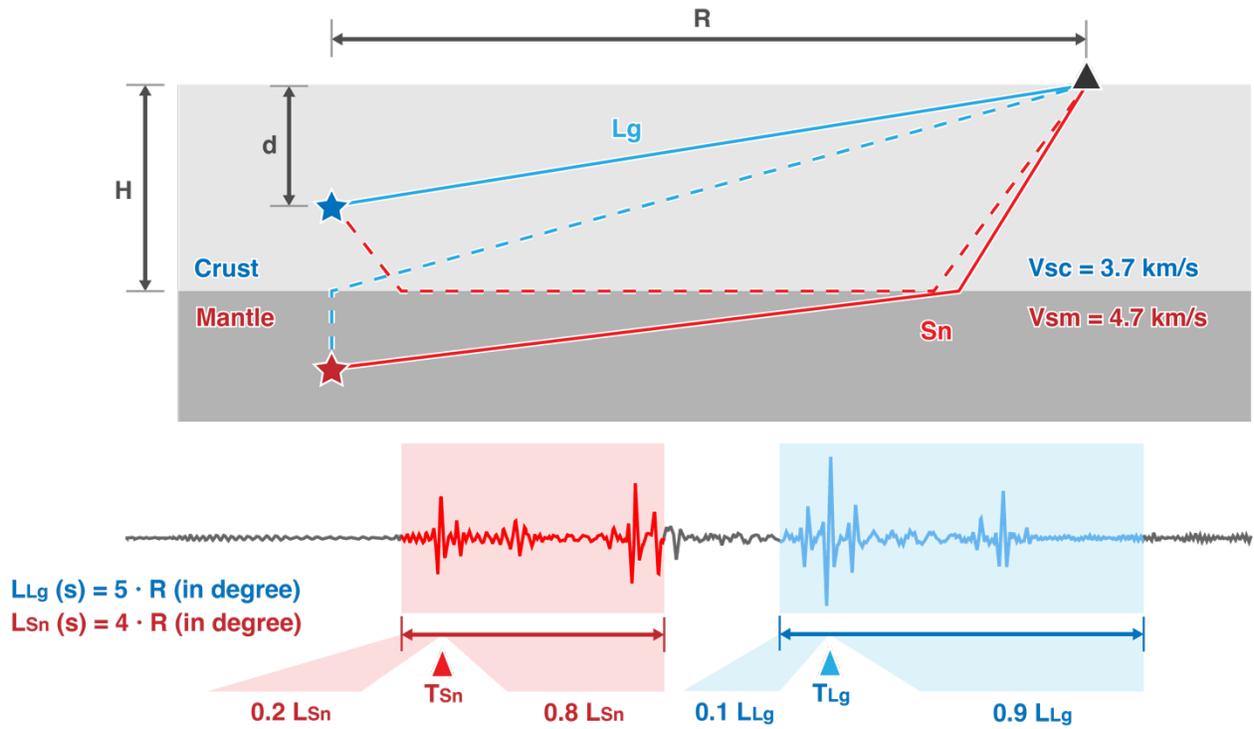


Fig. S1-1. Ray paths used to calculate the windows in which Sn and Lg phases arrive, and definitions of window lengths  $L_{Sn}$  and  $L_{Lg}$ .

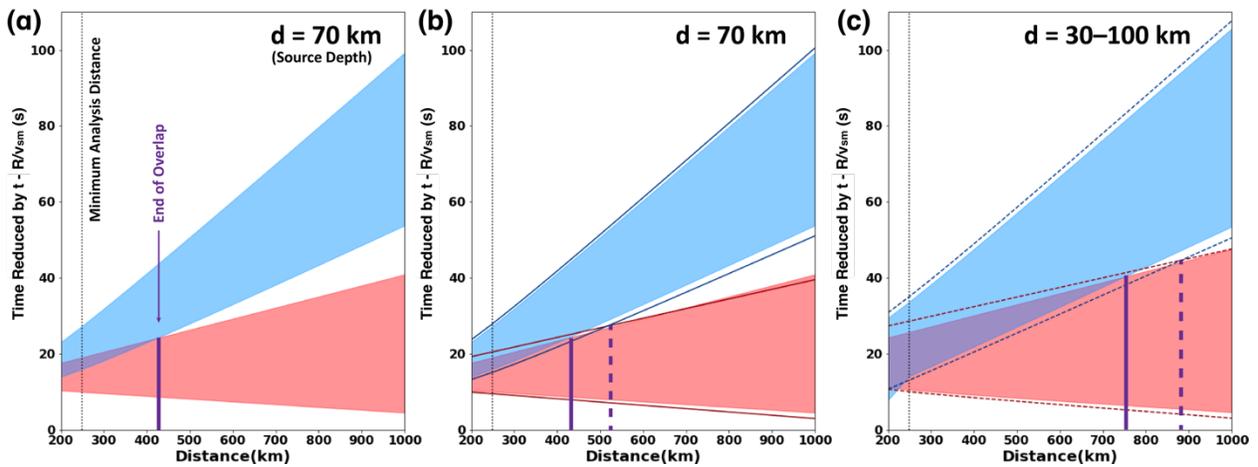


Fig. S1-2. Window ranges for Sn and Lg phases (reduced travel-time vs. offset). (a) Windows determined as in Fig. S1-1 with fixed source depth 70 km. Red: Sn window. Blue: Lg window. (b) as (a), with addition of lines representing windows determined by velocity-range methods ( $v_{sm}$ : 4.2–4.9 km/s;  $v_{sc}$ : 3.2–3.8 km/s) with fixed source depth 70 km. (c) Window ranges determined for source depths 30–100 km. Oblique solid and dashed lines: window ranges determined with our method and velocity-range method, respectively. In all three parts, vertical dotted line marks the 250-km cut-off distance below which we do not attempt to measure Sn/Lg ratios, and vertical solid and dashed lines mark the distance beyond which the Sn and Lg windows no longer overlap under different scenarios.

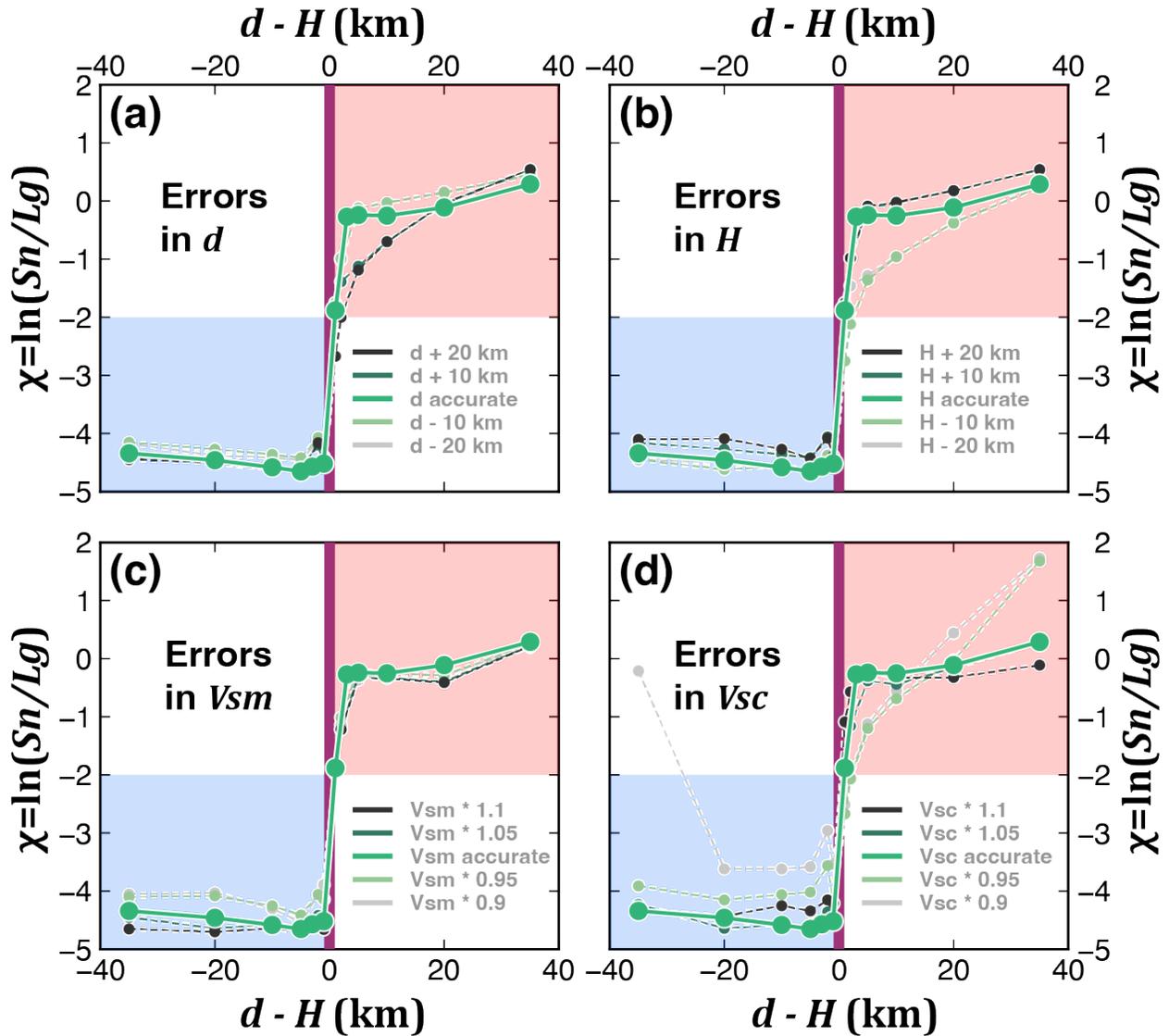


Fig. S1-3. Effect of uncertainties in  $d$ ,  $H$ ,  $v_{sm}$ , and  $v_{sc}$  on  $\ln(Sn/Lg)$ .

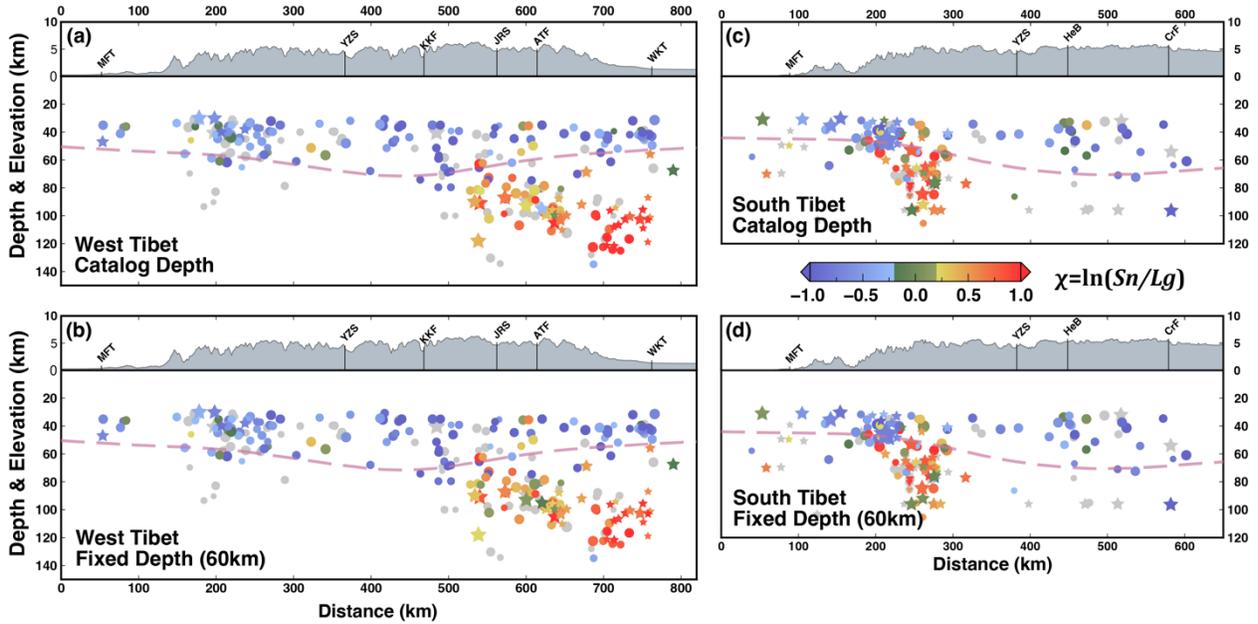
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A 20-km variation of  $H$  and  $d$  ( $> 25\%$ ) has limited influence on the  $Sn/Lg$  vs  $d - H$  plots, meaning that our  $Sn/Lg$  method is robust to uncertain Moho and source depths (Fig. S1-3 a, b). A 10% uncertainty in the mantle  $S$  wavespeed is similarly unimportant (Fig. S1-3 c). However, 10% uncertainty in average crustal shear wavespeed can potentially have a dramatic effect on  $Sn/Lg$  (Fig. S1-3 d) if a lower-than-expected  $v_{sc}$  delays  $Lg$  arrivals beyond the  $Lg$  window so artificially increases the measured  $Sn/Lg$ . Fortunately,  $Sn$  and  $Lg$  in Tibet are well characterized with onset velocities of 4.6 and 3.6 km/s at regional distances (McNamara et al., 1995a) and our  $Lg$  windows capture all arrivals down to  $v_{sc} = 3.2$  km/s.

We further demonstrate (Fig. S1-4) the robustness of our observations to incorrect source depths that produce inappropriate window lengths. We compare our preferred  $Sn/Lg$  measurements made using catalog hypocentral depths to  $Sn/Lg$  measurements made using a fixed hypocentral depth of 60 km for WT (Fig. S1-4a, b) and for ST (Fig. S1-4c, d). Almost no changes to the  $Sn/Lg$  ratios are visible.

For the phase picking model applied in our main study, we set the Moho depth  $H$  to be 70 km, the mantle  $S$ -wave velocity  $v_{sm} = 4.7$  km/s, and the crustal  $S$ -wave velocity  $v_{sc} = 3.7$  km/s. Even a 5% reduction in

106 regional wavespeeds ( $v_{sm} \leq 4.5$  km/s;  $v_{sc} \leq 3.5$  km/s) or 5% increase ( $v_{sm} \geq 4.9$  km/s;  $v_{sc} \geq 3.9$  km/s)  
 107 seems quite unlikely (McNamara et al., 1995a).  
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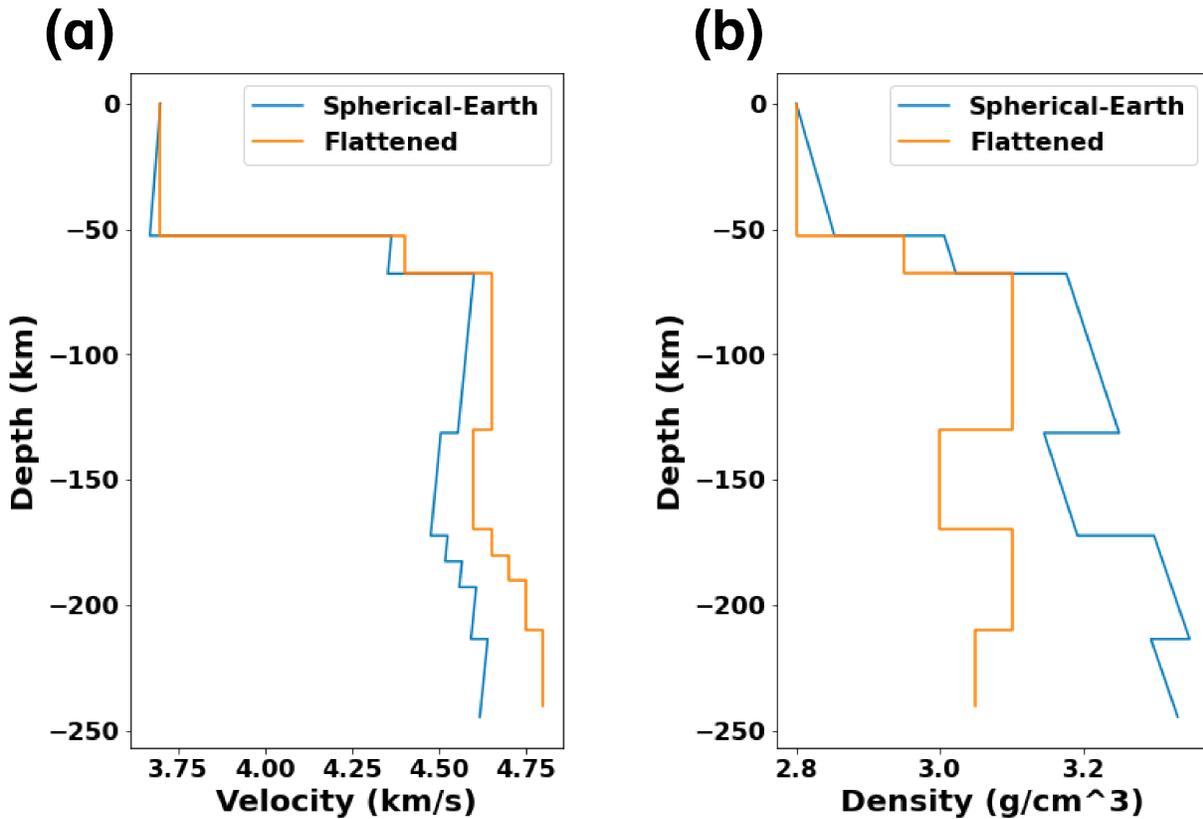


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 111 **Fig. S1-4. Cross-sections of  $Sn/Lg$  along profiles in Figs. 4 and 5, using the same legends and colorscale. (a) (c)**  
 112 **Cross-sections of west and south Tibet with  $Sn$  and  $Lg$  values and windows calculated using catalog depths for**  
 113 **every earthquake. (b) (d) Same profiles but with  $Sn$  and  $Lg$  values and windows calculated using a fixed source**  
 114 **depth (60 km).**  
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## S2. Flattened velocity model

The input model for our GESC synthetics is the simplified Tibetan velocity model of Zhao et al. (1991). GESC expects a flattened earth model, so here we show the implied spherical-Earth velocity & density model calculated from the flattened input model (Fig. S2). Velocity differences caused by the flattening transform are <6%, within the tolerance of our *Sn/Lg* method (Fig. S1-3).



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Fig. S2. Comparison between the flattened and spherical-Earth models. (a) velocity; (b) density.

166 **S3. Catalog selection and robustness**

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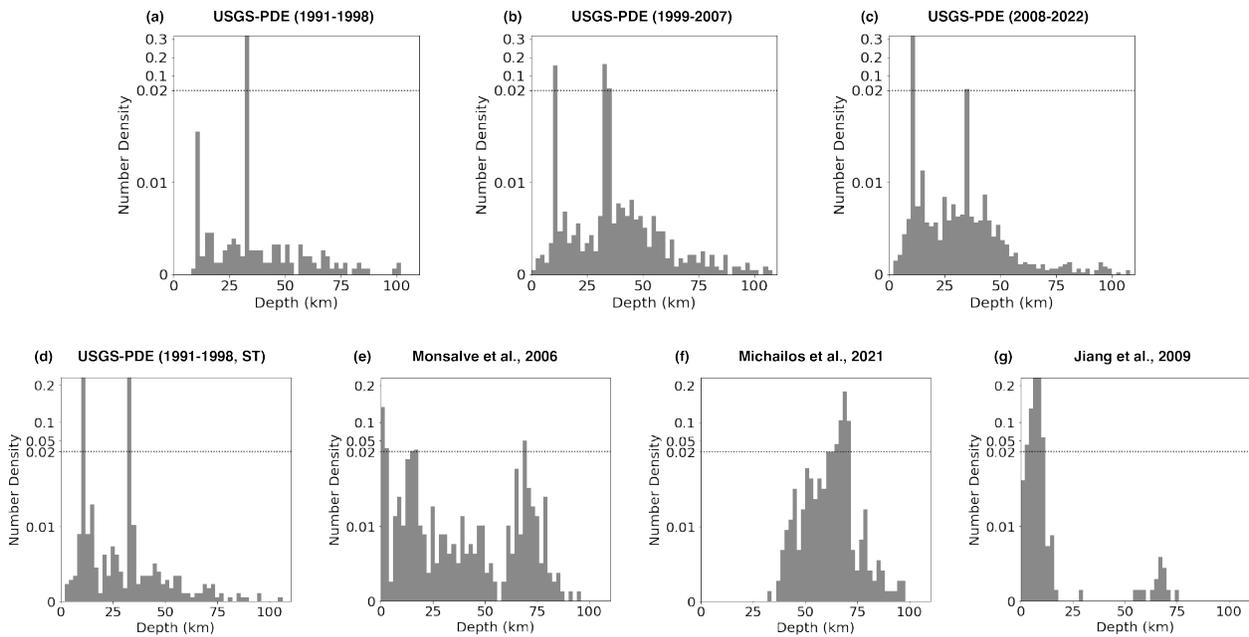
168 We use histograms of the depth distribution of earthquakes to check there is no temporal bias of the USGS-NEIC  
 169 PDE locations (Fig. S3-1). Aside from the peaks in the USGS-NEIC histograms representing earthquakes  
 170 arbitrarily assigned to 10 km, 33 km, or 35 km, the histogram for 1999-2007 (after IC.LSA data became available)  
 171 (Fig. S3-1b) and 2008-2021 (after IU.KBL provided data) (Fig. S3-1c) have similar features. Most earthquakes  
 172 locate above 60 km and only very few are deeper. In contrast, the histogram for 1991-1998 (which we did not  
 173 use as neither LSA nor KBL was operational) (Fig. S3-1a) has a more uniform distribution with depth, likely  
 174 indicative of larger depth errors because of the paucity of stations at that time.

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176 We also compare the USGS histograms in our south Tibet (ST) catalog with regional catalogs from previous  
 177 studies in this area (Jiang et al., 2009; Michailos et al., 2021; Monsalve et al., 2006). All four catalogs show an  
 178 earthquake cluster around 70 km depth. The minor variations between the three relocation catalogs that have  
 179 different but shorter timescales suggest differences between the USGS histogram and the other three are  
 180 unimportant.

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185 **Fig. S3-1. (a - c). Histograms of the earthquake depths in USGS-PDE catalogs for three different epochs.**  
 186 Number densities are calculated in 2 km bins. **(d - g). Histograms for earthquake depths for South Tibet only in**  
 187 **four different catalogs.** Note scale change in ordinate (number density) at 0.02. Note the catalog of Michailos et al.  
 188 (2021) only includes events with initial depth determinations > 40 km.

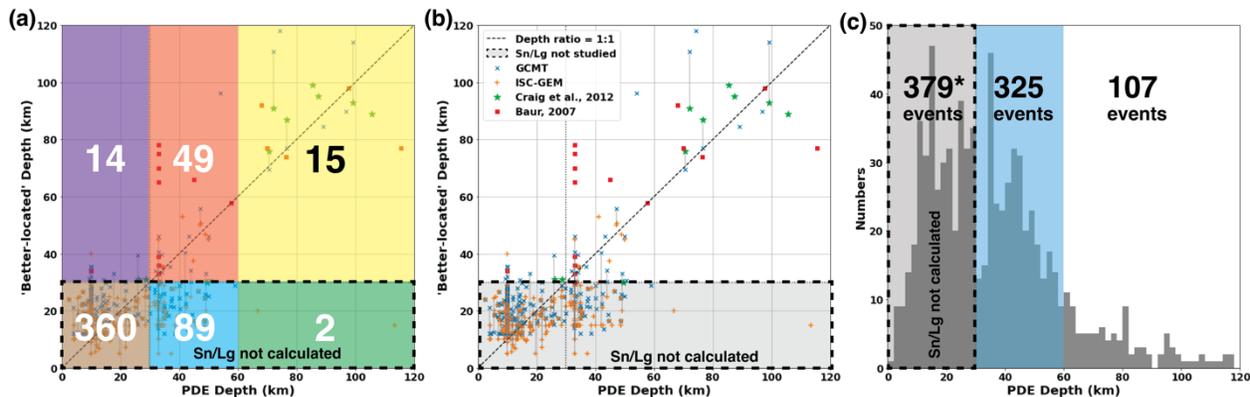
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190 We compared USGS-PDE catalog depths and the ISC-GEM, GCMT, Craig et al. (2012) and Baur (2007) catalog  
 191 depths across our entire Tibet study region to help evaluate depth uncertainty (Fig. S3-2). 155 events with PDE  
 192 depths  $\geq 30$  km (Fig. S3-2a, central and right columns with depth  $\geq 30$  km) also appear in one of these other  
 193 four catalogs (for simplicity here we ignore additional compilations (Alvizuri and Hetényi, 2019; Bloch et  
 194 al., 2021; Diehl et al., 2017; Michailos et al., 2021; Monsalve et al., 2006; Parija et al., 2018) that are limited  
 195 in time and space and have very few overlapping earthquakes). Of 374 events with PDE depths <30 km  
 196 (Fig. S3-2a, left column), only 14 (<5%) are likely deeper, but none have published locations >40 km. Of  
 197 138 events with PDE depths from 30 to 60 km (Fig. S3-2a, central column), only 49 (~one-third) are  
 198 confirmed as deep (>30 km) events by another catalog; but of the 17 events with PDE depths >60 km (Fig.  
 199 S3-2a, right column) the large majority (15, ~90%) also have hypocentral depths >60 km in at least one of the

200 four nominally more accurate catalogs (Fig. S3-2a, top right corner). Fig. S3-2b shows that the individual events  
 201 shown in Fig S3-2a can have very large discrepancies between catalogs. The three different PDE events with  
 202 depths from 55–60 km appear respectively 40-km deeper in the GCMT catalog, at the same depth in Baur (2007)  
 203 and 30-km shallower in GCMT. But our ‘better-located’ catalogs also have significant uncertainty: two events  
 204 with PDE depths ~70–80 km have GCMT depths ~10-km shallower than the Craig et al. (2012) re-location, and  
 205 a third has a GCMT depth ~25-km deeper than in Craig et al. (2012).

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 207 These results inform the likelihood that we have missed additional deep earthquakes, or calculated  $S_n/L_g$  ratios  
 208 for shallow events <30 km, when working with PDE events not reported elsewhere. We did not calculate  $S_n/L_g$   
 209 ratios for the 379 PDE events not sufficiently well-recorded to appear in other catalogs that have depths <30 km  
 210 (or for PDE events with depths fixed at 10.0 km which we expect to have the largest uncertainty) (Fig. S3-2c).  
 211 We may thereby have missed ~15 events with true depths >30 km, but likely no events below 60 km, based on  
 212 the 374 PDE earthquakes above 30 km for which we also have ‘better locations’ (Fig. S3-2a). 325 PDE events  
 213 in the range 30–60 km but not reported elsewhere passed our  $S_n/L_g$  SNR test, and are included in our catalog,  
 214 even though Fig. S3-2a suggests that ~200 of these have true depths <30 km. A handful of these 325 events  
 215 also likely have true depths >70 km (2 of 138 in this depth range were re-categorized to >70 km in Fig. S3-2a,  
 216 b), so potentially are mantle events that, if correctly determined as such by our  $S_n/L_g$  method, would be recorded  
 217 as failures of our method (Supplementary Material S7). Of 107 PDE events with depths >60 km, not reported  
 218 elsewhere but that passed our  $S_n/L_g$  SNR test, a dozen are statistically likely to be upper-crustal events, and  
 219 again if correctly determined as such by our  $S_n/L_g$  method would be recorded as failures of our method  
 220 (Supplementary Material S7).

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224 **Fig. S3-2. (a) Depth comparison between the USGS PDE catalog and the ISC-GEM, GCMT, Baur (2007) and**  
 225 **Craig et al. (2012) locations**, showing number of events in different parts of the plot. (b) Same plot with no overlay.  
 226 Vertical lines link same event in two different ‘better-located’ catalogs. Shaded region marks the events not included  
 227 in our  $S_n/L_g$  analysis. (c) Depths of PDE earthquakes that do not appear in any other catalog. Above 30 km this  
 228 excludes all events with depth fixed at 10.0 km; below 30 km we exclude earthquakes with assigned 33 km or 35 km  
 229 depths, and depths that lack uncertainties, and only include events which passed our  $S_n/L_g$  SNR threshold.

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231 Our primary catalog includes all  $m \geq 3.5$  earthquakes with  $d \geq 30$  km from 1998-2021 from the PDE catalog.  
 232 We first delete those earthquakes located at exactly 33 km or 35 km depth for which no uncertainties were given.  
 233 We also search all other catalogs which likely have better depth locations, including ISC-GEM, GCMT, and  
 234 previous relocation & focal-mechanism studies, selecting all  $m \geq 3.2$  earthquakes. Duplicate earthquakes are  
 235 removed, and a single catalog depth assigned to each event duplicated in multiple non-USGS catalogs,  
 236 prioritizing the relocation study with the smallest quoted uncertainty, then GCMT and ISC locations depending  
 237 on which catalog gives smaller depth uncertainty. All these better-located earthquakes are marked with stars  
 238 in figures in the main text.

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240 For the better-located events (stars in Fig. 1B), ‘better-located depth’ minus ‘PDE depth’ averages +9 km, has  
 241 an average absolute value of 15 km, and an RMS difference of 18 km.

#### S4. Calculation of $Sn/Lg$ and $\ln(Sn/Lg)$ and their uncertainties

We measure the root mean square (RMS) amplitudes,  $A_{Sn}$  and  $A_{Lg}$ , of the  $Sn$  and  $Lg$ -windows. We measure the noise amplitude  $A_{noise}$  in a window from 30–15 s before the calculated first  $P$  arrival. We measure the signal-to-noise ratio ( $SNR$ ) for both windows ( $SNR_{Lg} = A_{Lg}/A_{noise}$ ;  $SNR_{Sn} = A_{Sn}/A_{noise}$ ) and discard all earthquakes for which both  $SNR_{Lg} < 3$  and  $SNR_{Sn} < 3$ . For the remaining earthquakes we calculate the  $Sn/Lg$  ratio and the uncertainties of the  $Sn$  and  $Lg$  amplitudes,  $\sigma_{Sn}$  and  $\sigma_{Lg}$ . Finally, we calculate the uncertainties in  $Sn/Lg$  and  $\ln(Sn/Lg)$ :

$$Sn/Lg = \frac{A_{Sn}}{A_{Lg}} \quad (\text{eqn. S4.1})$$

$$\sigma_{Sn/Lg} = \sqrt{\frac{\sigma_{Sn}^2}{A_{Lg}^2} + \frac{A_{Sn}^2 \sigma_{Lg}^2}{(A_{Lg})^2}} \quad (\text{eqn. S4.2})$$

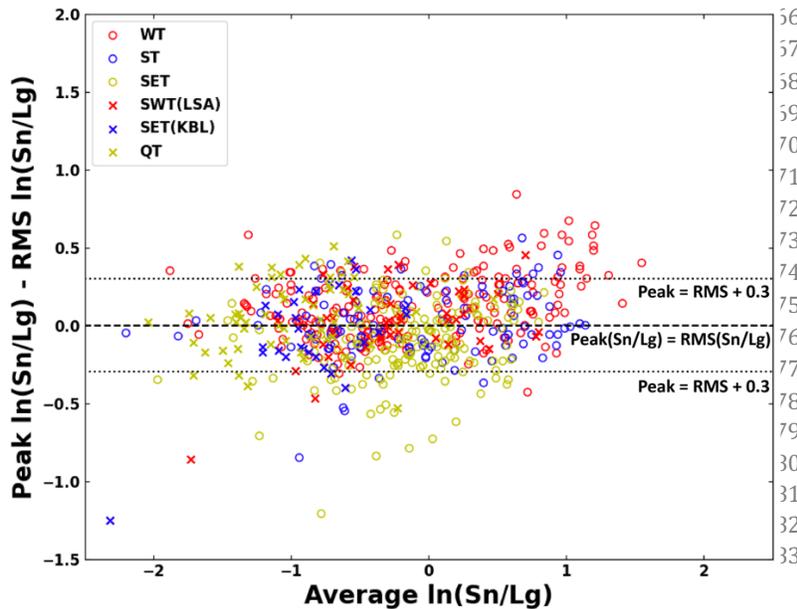
$$\sigma_{\ln(Sn/Lg)} = \frac{\sigma_{Sn/Lg}}{Sn/Lg} \quad (\text{eqn. S4.3})$$

An important note is that this uncertainty estimation only takes into consideration random noise. In real seismograms, both in this paper (Tables SA, SB, SC) and as shown by Wang and Klemperer (2021, their Fig. S10), the influence of  $SH$ -converted  $P$  wave can be non-negligible. We lack a simple method to account for this high-frequency Rayleigh-Love coupling.

In addition to calculating the  $Sn/Lg$  amplitude ratios using RMS amplitudes, we also test using peak amplitudes:

$$Sn/Lg = \frac{\max\{|Sn|\}}{\max\{|Lg|\}} \quad (\text{eqn. S4.4})$$

The difference between the  $Sn/Lg$  peak amplitude ratios (Eqn. S4.4) and the  $Sn/Lg$  RMS ratios (Eqn. S4.1) for the seismograms on which we measured  $Sn/Lg$  (Fig. S4) is typically  $< \pm 0.3$  (natural log value) (Fig. S4). Although there are some outliers, we find no important statistical differences in our  $Sn/Lg$  analysis between using these two  $Sn/Lg$  calculation methods. Accordingly, RMS amplitudes are used throughout this paper.



**Fig. S4. Difference between  $\ln(Sn/Lg)$  RMS ratios and  $\ln(Sn/Lg)$  Peak ratios for all events with acceptable  $SNR$ , plotted against mean  $\ln(Sn/Lg)$ .**

284 **S5. Geometric spreading detrend**

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The recorded amplitude is influenced by multiple effects (Hasegawa, 1985; Wang and Klemperer, 2021):

$$A(f, R) = S(f)G(R, f)\psi(R, f)I(f)P(f) \quad (\text{eqn. S5.1})$$

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where  $A$  is the recorded amplitude as a function of frequency  $f$  and epicentral distance  $R$ ,  $S$  is the source amplitude,  $G$  is the geometric spreading factor,  $\psi$  is the intrinsic attenuation,  $I$  is the instrument response, and  $P$  is the site response. For a single station,  $I$  and  $P$  can be neglected.  $\psi$  is discussed in the main paper (Section 5-Discussion). We use a theoretically derived  $G$  to detrend our data. Even though this is a second order correction to the  $Sn/Lg$  ratios, it is helpful in comparing the results from two regions with different receiver distances, albeit unnecessary for  $Sn/Lg$  analysis in a small region.

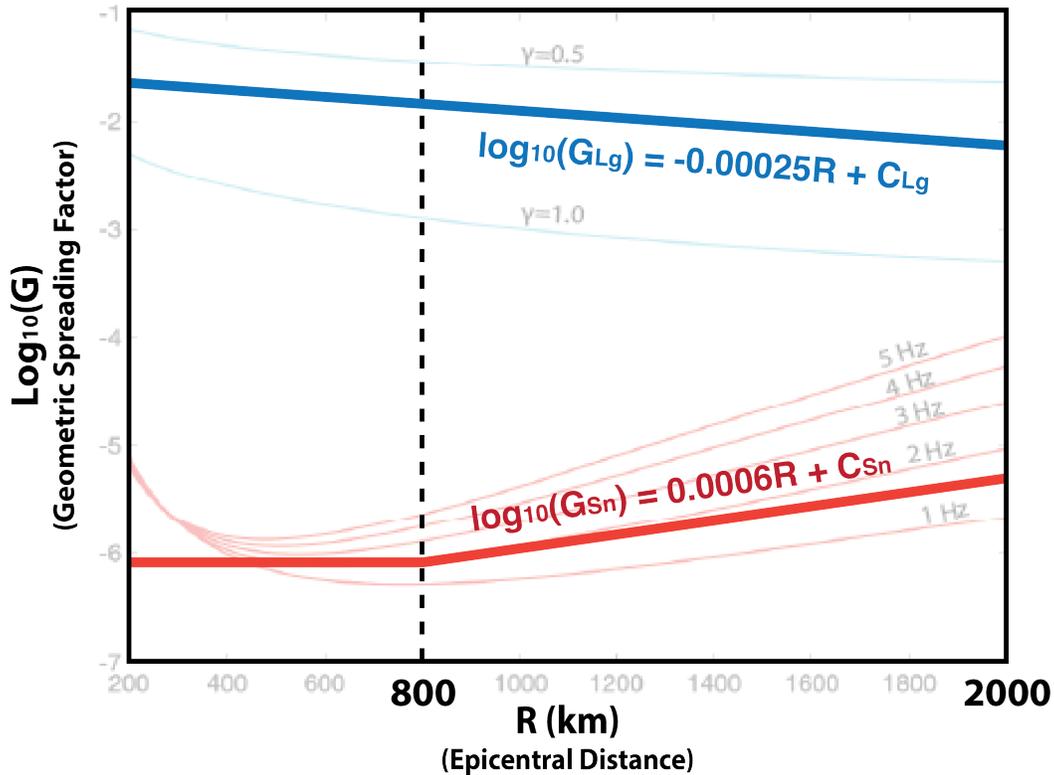
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We approximate  $G(R, f)$  for  $Sn$  and  $Lg$  (Fan and Lay, 2003; Wang and Klemperer, 2021; Yang, 2002; Fig. S5). We assume  $\log_{10}(G_{Sn})$  is flat out to 800 km distance then increases at 0.0006/km. We assume  $\log_{10}(G_{Lg})$  decreases at 0.00025/km. Using a reference distance of 500 km, we detrend our data by multiplying the amplitudes,  $A_{Sn}$  and  $A_{Lg}$ , with the coefficients:

$$K_{Sn} = -10^{[(0, R - 800 \text{ km})_{max} * 0.0006/\text{km}]} \quad (\text{eqn. S5.2a})$$

$$K_{Lg} = 10^{[(R - 500 \text{ km}) * 0.00025/\text{km}]} \quad (\text{eqn. S5.2b})$$

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**Fig. S5. Geometric spreading curves  $G(R, f)$  for  $Sn$  (red) and  $Lg$  (blue) from Wang and Klemperer (2021) for different frequency &  $\gamma$  ( $Lg$  spreading exponent). Thick lines represent the simplified function used for detrending in this research.  $C_{Sn}$  and  $C_{Lg}$  are arbitrary constants.**

## S6. Demonstration of step-change in $\chi(d - H)$ and estimation of the separation threshold

It is not immediately obvious whether our observed  $\chi = \ln(Sn/Lg)$  vs.  $d - H$  plots show a gradational increase in  $\chi$  with no change at the Moho, or a step-change in  $\chi$  across some threshold value that separates below-Moho from above-Moho earthquakes. We address this by finding the best linear fit to  $\chi(d - H)$ , then using this fit to de-trend  $\chi$  and checking the residual signal. If  $\chi$  has a linear relationship to  $(d - H)$  with a normally distributed uncertainty  $\sigma_\chi$  (eqn. S6.1; Fig. S6-1a), the detrended  $\chi$ , here written  $\tilde{\chi}$ , must follow the normal distribution  $\mathcal{N}(0, \sigma_\chi)$  which is independent of  $d - H$  (eqn. S6.2; Fig. S6-1b):

$$\chi(d - H) = a(d - H) + b + \mathcal{N}(0, \sigma_\chi) \quad \text{Linear trend (eqn. S6.1)}$$

$$\tilde{\chi}(d - H) = \chi - a(d - H) - b = \mathcal{N}(0, \sigma_\chi) \quad \text{(eqn. S6.2)}$$

i.e. the residual after de-trending  $\chi$  has no structure (Fig. S6-2b).

However, if the underlying data distribution has a step-change described e.g. by the following equations:

$$\chi(d - H) = \begin{cases} \mathcal{U}(0, \chi_{lim}), & (d - H > 0) \\ \mathcal{U}(-\chi_{lim}, 0), & (d - H < 0) \end{cases} \quad \text{Step change-U (eqn. S6.3)}$$

or

$$\chi(d - H) = \begin{cases} \mathcal{N}(\chi_{avg}, \sigma_\chi), & (d - H > 0) \\ \mathcal{N}(-\chi_{avg}, \sigma_\chi), & (d - H < 0) \end{cases} \quad \text{Step change-N (eqn. S6.4)}$$

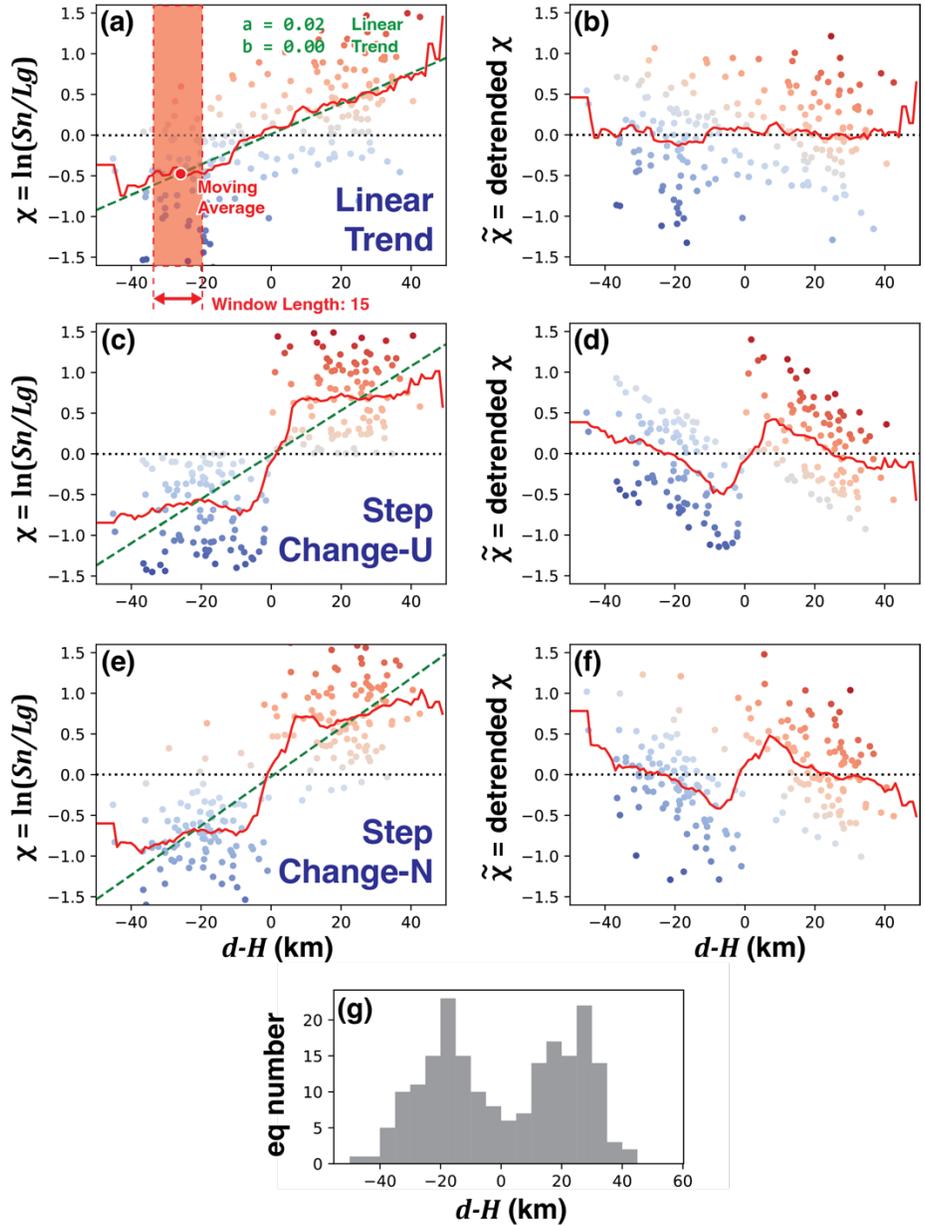
we can then observe a second-order structure in the detrended  $\chi$  scatter plots, in this case, a zigzag trend around  $\tilde{\chi} = 0$  (Fig. S6-1d, f).

We first conduct a test on synthetic  $\chi = \ln(Sn/Lg)$  scatter plots. We generate three 200-point scatter plots based on distributions given by eqn. S6.1, eqn. S6.3 and eqn. S6.4 (Figs. S6-1a,c,e). We chose  $\sigma_\chi = 0.5$  (the observed r.m.s. variation of  $\tilde{\chi}$  for WT),  $\chi_{lim} = 1.5$  (most of our observations lie within  $\chi \in (-1.5, 1.5)$  (Fig. 4B1), and  $\chi_{avg} = 0.75$  (half of  $\chi_{lim}$ ). We use a synthetic bimodal earthquake-depth distribution (Fig. S6-1g) as is observed for WT earthquakes (Fig. 4B1). We calculate the moving average of  $\tilde{\chi}$  across a 15-km depth window. For the linear relationship between  $\chi$  and  $(d - H)$  (eqn. S6.1) there is no second-order trend (Fig. S6-1b), but for the step-change relationships between  $\chi$  and  $(d - H)$  (eqns. S6.3, S6.4) the second-order trend zigzags across the zero line, including a zero-crossing at  $d - H = 0$  (Figs. S6-1d,f). Substituting the value of  $d - H$  at the central zero-crossing back into the best-fit line we obtain the best separation threshold for  $\chi$ , in this case  $\chi = 0$ .

We apply the same method to our actual observations (Fig. S6-2). Both WT and ST show a clear pattern in  $\tilde{\chi}$ , with negative values for  $(d - H) < \sim 0$  then positive values for  $(d - H) > \sim 0$  (Figs. S6-2b,d). For WT, the maximum value of the moving average  $\tilde{\chi} \approx 0.4$  (Fig. S6-2b), a value approaching our synthetic test results. The SET moving average  $\tilde{\chi}$  has a much weaker, but still visible, negative-then-positive zigzag (Fig. S6-2f).

We can show that  $\tilde{\chi}$  statistically supports a step-change by comparing the peak of the moving average of  $\tilde{\chi}$  with the expected variance of the moving average, and showing that the observed moving average deviates too far from zero for our data to represent a gradational variation of  $\chi$  with  $(d - H)$ . If we assume that the points  $\tilde{\chi}_i$  (the detrended individual observation of  $\chi$ , one for each earthquake) follow a normal distribution  $\mathcal{N}(0, \sigma_\chi)$  (eqn. S6.1), their average will have a probability distribution function of  $\mathcal{N}(0, \sigma_\chi/\sqrt{N})$  where  $N$  is the number of points. Taking the WT data for example,  $\sigma_\chi$  is estimated to be 0.5, and  $N$ , the number of  $\tilde{\chi}_i$  points within a

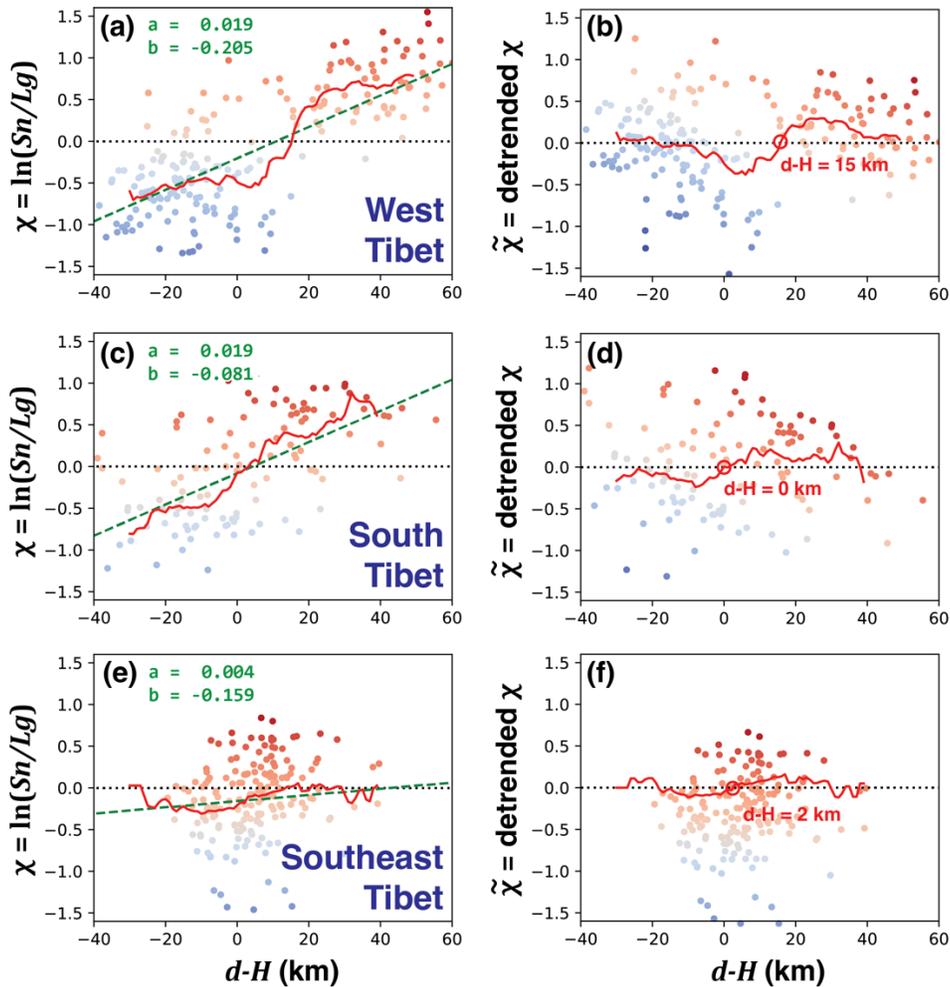
352 15-km window, ranges from 15 to 30 (for window centers less than 20 km from the zero-crossing point). The  
 353 standard deviation of the moving average for WT is therefore  $\sigma_{AVG\_WT} = \sigma_\chi / \sqrt{N} \approx 0.13$ . Similarly,  $\sigma_{AVG\_ST} \approx$   
 354  $0.13$  and  $\sigma_{AVG\_SET} \approx 0.10$ . In contrast, the peak absolute values of the moving averages of  $\tilde{\chi}$  are about 0.4 for  
 355 WT (three times  $\sigma_{AVG\_WT}$ ), 0.25 for ST (twice  $\sigma_{AVG\_ST}$ ), and 0.1 for SET ( $\approx \sigma_{AVG\_SET}$ ). Thus, the WT  $\chi$  values  
 356 show a strong step-change signal, ST  $\chi$  values show a moderate signal, and the SET  $\chi$  values show only a weak  
 357 step-change signal (Figs. S6-2b,d,f).  
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 361 **Fig. S6-1. Detrending test on synthetic  $\chi$  vs. (d-H) datasets. (a) and (b).  $\chi$  and  $\tilde{\chi}$  (detrended  $\chi$ ) for a synthetic**  
 362 **linear trend with normal distributed noise (eqn. S6-1). Green line is the best fit linear trend, defined by constants a and**  
 363 **b (eqn. S6-1). Red lines are the moving average for  $\chi$  and  $\tilde{\chi}$ . (c) and (d).  $\chi$  and  $\tilde{\chi}$  (detrended  $\chi$ ) for the step-change**  
 364 **uniform distribution (eqn. S6-3); lines plotted as in (a) and (c). (e) and (f).  $\chi$  and  $\tilde{\chi}$  for the step-change normal**  
 365 **distribution (eqn. S6-4); lines plotted as in (a) and (c). (g). Histogram of the synthetic depths.**  
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367 Both ST and SET have zero-crossing points near  $(d - H) = 0$ , whereas the zero-crossing point of WT data is at  
 368  $(d - H) = 15$  km, which means a systematically 15-km deeper Moho would provide a better fit to our WT  
 369 observations. This 15-km discrepancy is visually obvious in Figs. 4C,D, in that Xia et al.'s (2021) Moho is  
 370 always shallower than Zhang et al.'s (2014) Moho and Wittlinger et al.'s (2009) Moho, and that using the deeper  
 371 Mohos instead of Xia et al. (2021) would better fit the measured  $S_n/L_g$  (Fig. 4C).  
 372

373 In Figs. S6-2a,c,f we show the best-fit linear relationship between  $\chi$  and  $(d - H)$  and list the appropriate  
 374 constants  $a$  and  $b$  (in eqn. S6-1) for each area. Substituting the zero-crossing values of  $(d - H)$  (Figs. S6-2b,d,f)  
 375 into the best-fit lines for  $\chi$  (Figs. S6-2a,c,e), we find the best separation thresholds are  $\chi = 0.078$  (WT),  $\chi = -$   
 376  $0.081$  (ST) and  $\chi = -0.152$  (SET). It would be possible to use more complex schemes taking into account  
 377 earthquake magnitudes,  $S_n/L_g$  uncertainties, and/or depth uncertainties in doing the linear fitting, and thereby  
 378 get slightly different threshold values. Hence, for simplicity and consistency, we select  $\chi = 0$  to be the threshold  
 379 value everywhere, and in addition we use a 'buffer zone' of  $\ln(S_n/L_g) = \pm 0.2$  to ensure that we only  
 380 categorize earthquakes that are convincingly on one or other side of the step change in  $\chi$ . This separation at  $\chi =$   
 381  $0$  works well for our WT and ST observations (Figs. 4B1, 5B). In detail, the threshold  $\chi = 0$  is a little bit too  
 382 high for the SET observations (Fig. 6B), but we prefer to use a single threshold for all our data.  
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 386 **Fig. S6-2. (a) (c) and (e)  $\chi = \ln(S_n/L_g)$  observations for WT, ST, and SET.** As in Fig. S6-1 we show the best  
 387 linear fit (dashed green lines) and moving average (red lines). **(b) (d) and (f)  $\tilde{\chi}$  (detrended  $\chi$ ) corresponding to (a),**  
 388 **(b) and (c), with the central zero-crossing points of the moving averages marked by red circles.** Legends as Fig. S6-  
 389 1.

## S7. Earthquake classifications as definitive or likely below- and above-Moho

We classify the earthquakes we studied into the following categories: “definitive” represents the events that the  $S_n/L_g$  and depth agree even considering the worst situation that the uncertainty allows; “likely” represents the other events for which  $S_n/L_g$  and depth agree without considering uncertainties; and “possible” represents remaining events for which  $S_n/L_g$  and depth agrees within uncertainty (Fig. S7-1). The small number of events for which the  $S_n/L_g$  ratio predicts an incorrect location with respect to Moho, even after allowing for uncertainty, are considered as failures of our method. Note that depth errors are as specified by the source catalogs and the Moho determination is assigned zero error; if these errors are too small some ‘definitive’ events will be downgraded to ‘likely’, and some ‘failures’ could become ‘possible’ successes.

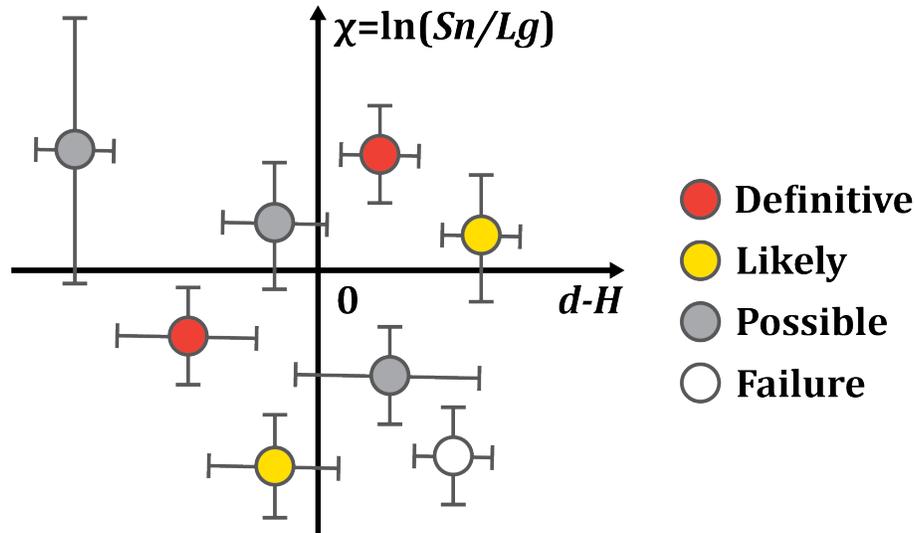


Fig. S7-1. Earthquake classification criteria.

Using only the ‘better-located’ earthquakes, we have a >70% success rate and <10% failure rate (Table S7-1), and indeed if we ignore SE Tibet where the Moho depth is less-well known our success rate increases to 90% and the failure rate drops to 5%. When we include the PDE-only events (Table S7-2), these percentages do not change drastically, but we see a very large proportional increase in the number of above-Moho events (for WT we show 34 below-Moho and 5 above-Moho ‘better-located’ events, but 38 below- and 91 above-Moho PDE-only events). We doubt these changed proportions represents bias in the GCMT and ISC-GEM catalogs even though these are only complete for  $m > 5$  earthquakes (Ammon et al., 2021; Storchak et al., 2013), because GCMT or ISC-GEM only contribute ~15% of ‘better-located’ events in WT and ~40% for our entire Tibet catalog. A modest effect could be the greater attention paid to deeper earthquakes, so increasing the probability that below-Moho events are over-represented in the ‘better-located’ category. However, we expect that the increased number of above-Moho events include a very substantial fraction of shallow seismicity mis-located in the PDE catalog: Fig. S3-2a suggests that >60% of the PDE-only events with catalog depths 30–60 km may in fact be upper-crustal earthquakes <30 km, corresponding to ~200 excess events on our cross-sections at 30–60 km. Additionally, as noted in Supplementary Material S3, we statistically expect that 10–20 events that are only in the PDE catalog are grossly mislocated, e.g., with true sub-Moho depths but located in the upper crust, or vice versa, so if correctly determined with respect to Moho by our  $S_n/L_g$  method would be recorded as failures of our method. These events could represent a substantial fraction of the ~50 total failures recorded in Table S7-2 compared to the 15 failures in Table S7-1.

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**Table S7-1. Classification of ‘better-located’ earthquakes (stars in Figs. 4–7) based on the catalog depths, RF Moho depths,  $Sn/Lg$  ratios, and their uncertainties.**

| Region       | Definitive                                 |  | Definitive & Likely       |                           | Possible   |   | Failure | Success Rate | Failure Rate |
|--------------|--|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|--|---|---------|--------------|--------------|
|              | Sub Moho                                   | Above Moho                                   | Sub Moho                  | Above Moho                | Sub Moho   | Above Moho  |         |              |              |
|              | $\chi > \sigma_\chi$<br>$d - H > \sigma_d$ | $\chi < -\sigma_\chi$<br>$d - H < -\sigma_d$ | $\chi > 0$<br>$d - H > 0$ | $\chi < 0$<br>$d - H < 0$ | $\chi > 0$<br>$-\sigma_d < d - H < 0$<br>Or<br>$-\sigma_\chi < \chi < 0$<br>$d - H > \sigma_d$ | $\chi < 0$<br>$0 < d - H < \sigma_d$<br>Or<br>$0 < \chi < \sigma_\chi$<br>$d - H < -\sigma_d$ |         |              |              |
| WT           | 21   | 4  | 34                        | 5                         | 1  | 0   | 2       | 93%          | 5%           |
| ST           | 13   | 6  | 20                        | 13                        | 2  | 0   | 2       | 89%          | 5%           |
| SET          | 8  | 11   | 21                        | 28                        | 9  | 13  | 9       | 61%          | 11%          |
| SWT<br>(KBL) | 0  | 1  | 0                         | 1                         | 0  | 0   | 0       | -            | -            |
| SWT<br>(LSA) | 0  | 2  | 0                         | 2                         | 0  | 1   | 2       | -            | -            |
| QT           | 0  | 1  | 0                         | 1                         | 0  | 0   | 0       | -            | -            |

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$$\chi = \ln(Sn/Lg)$$

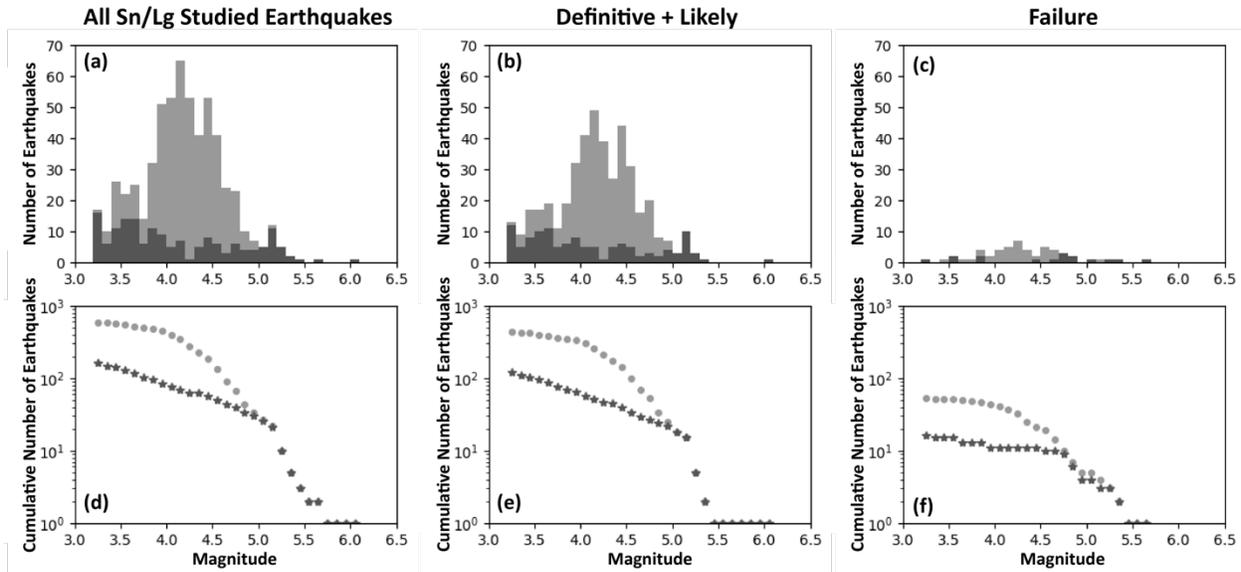
**Table S7-2. As Table S7-1, but for all earthquakes, including PDE-only events.**

| Region       | Definitive                                 |  | Likely & Definitive       |                           | Possible   |   | Failure | Success Rate | Failure Rate |
|--------------|--|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|--|---|---------|--------------|--------------|
|              | Sub Moho                                   | Above Moho                                   | Sub Moho                  | Above Moho                | Sub Moho   | Above Moho  |         |              |              |
|              | $\chi > \sigma_\chi$<br>$d - H > \sigma_d$ | $\chi < -\sigma_\chi$<br>$d - H < -\sigma_d$ | $\chi > 0$<br>$d - H > 0$ | $\chi < 0$<br>$d - H < 0$ | $\chi > 0$<br>$-\sigma_d < d - H < 0$<br>Or<br>$-\sigma_\chi < \chi < 0$<br>$d - H > \sigma_d$ | $\chi < 0$<br>$0 < d - H < \sigma_d$<br>Or<br>$0 < \chi < \sigma_\chi$<br>$d - H < -\sigma_d$ |         |              |              |
| WT           | 50   | 71   | 72                        | 96                        | 7  | 12  | 9       | 86%          | 5%           |
| ST           | 25   | 24   | 40                        | 50                        | 7  | 4   | 12      | 80%          | 11%          |
| SET          | 26   | 16   | 53                        | 42                        | 19   | 33  | 25      | 53%          | 15%          |
| SWT<br>(KBL) | 0  | 21   | 0                         | 28                        | 0  | 1   | 1       | 93%          | 3%           |
| SWT<br>(LSA) | 0  | 14   | 4                         | 29                        | 1  | 9   | 4       | 70%          | 9%           |
| QT           | 0  | 27   | 0                         | 44                        | 0  | 11  | 1       | 79%          | 2%           |

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$$\chi = \ln(Sn/Lg)$$

447 We plot the magnitude distributions for all earthquakes for which we calculated  $S_n/L_g$ , for the “definitive” &  
 448 “likely” earthquakes, and for the “failure” earthquakes (Fig. S7-2). There is no clear correlation between success  
 449 rate and event magnitude. However, there is a clear improvement in success rate (from 77% to 91%), and decline  
 450 in failure rate (from 9% to 5%) when using only ‘well-located’ earthquakes (Table S7-1) compared to ‘PDE-  
 451 only’ earthquakes (difference between Table S7-2 and S7-1, calculated for WT and ST). Most of our studied  
 452 earthquakes’ magnitudes are  $> 4.0$ . However, the well-located earthquakes include relocation studies from  
 453 temporary arrays so contain a higher portion of  $M < 4.0$  earthquakes than the PDE-only category, perhaps  
 454 helping explain the lack of correlation of success rate with magnitude.  
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 460 **Fig. S7-2. (a–c) Histograms of earthquake number vs. magnitude and (d–f) Gutenberg-Richter plots ( $\log_{10}$  cumulative**  
 461 **earthquake number vs. magnitude).** (a, d) all the studied earthquakes; (b, e) only ‘Definitive + Likely’ earthquakes; and (c, f)  
 462 only ‘Failure’ earthquakes. Dark gray columns and stars denote well-located earthquakes; light gray columns and dots denote PDE-  
 463 only events.  
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## S8. $S_n$ and $L_g$ Blockage or Leakage

The normal-mode synthetics for  $S_n/L_g$  (Fig. 3; Wang and Klemperer, 2021) are calculated for 1-D earth models, but it is well-known that structural boundaries (e.g., Moho ramps, Fig. 2B) can modify  $S_n$  &  $L_g$  amplitudes (Kennett, 1986). The obvious binary classification and clear separation of apparently above-Moho from below-Moho earthquakes in WT (Fig. 4) suggests  $S_n$  or  $L_g$  blockage can only be a secondary-order effect. Nonetheless, we plot ray paths from the WT earthquakes to KBL on a recent Moho map (Fig. S8) inferred from gravity measurements (Zhao et al., 2020) (the RF Moho map used in Fig. 4 ((Xia et al., 2023) does not extend west to IU.KBL). Raypaths from many earthquakes in WT1 (north half) are crudely parallel to the Moho contours, so should be little affected by  $S_n$  or  $L_g$  blockage. The northeasternmost band of earthquakes (C1 in Fig. S8a) above a 55 km Moho and beneath WKT (Fig. 4) are all above Moho based both on reported depths and their low  $S_n/L_g$ , consistent with crustal paths and hence no  $L_g$  blockage. Similarly the earthquakes labelled M (Fig. S8a) beneath the surface traces of the JRS & ATF (Fig. 4) are likely all south of the ATF at depth (Wang and Klemperer, 2021) so their below-Moho assignment based on hypocentral depth and high  $S_n/L_g$  is consistent with no  $S_n$  blockage as energy travels to the SE from thicker crust. The earthquakes C2 (Fig. S8) have ray paths from thick to thin crust, so would be expected to show  $L_g$  blockage (Fig. 2B, left) but nonetheless have low  $S_n/L_g$  consistent with their nominally crustal hypocenters. Perhaps any  $L_g$  blockage in transiting from thick Tibetan crust to thin Indian crust is balanced by  $S_n$  blockage when transiting from thin Indian crust to thick Hindu Kush crust. In summary however, we have no clear examples of  $S_n$  or  $L_g$  blockage being an important effect between WT and KBL.

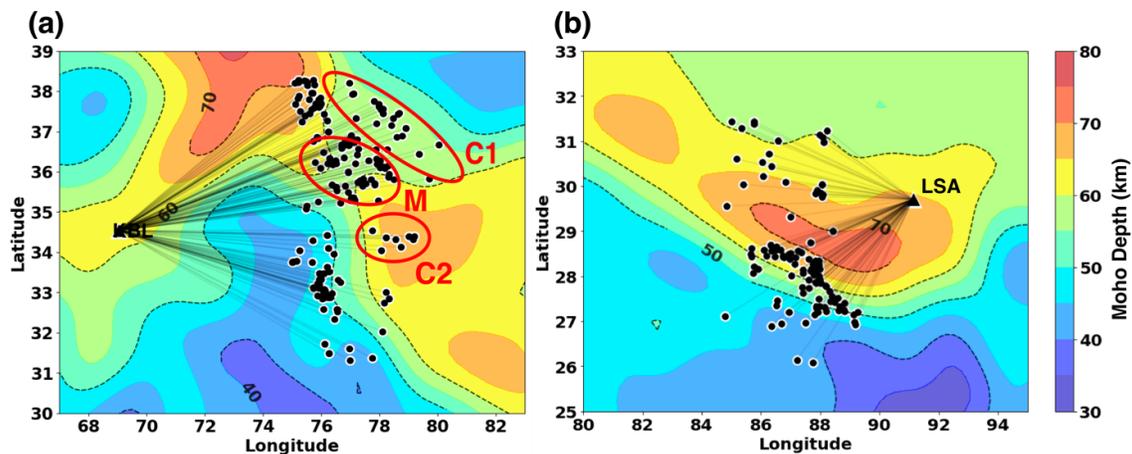


Fig. S8. Ray paths superimposed on the Moho map of Zhao et al. (2020). (a) WT earthquakes recorded at KBL. (b) ST earthquakes recorded at LSA.

Earthquakes from south Tibet recorded at LSA (Figs. 5, S8b) have a less-clear binary classification than the WT earthquakes recorded at KBL, but we have not found systematic changes in  $S_n/L_g$  ratios that we can associate with  $S_n$  or  $L_g$  blockage. The large discrepancy between receiver-function Moho (Xia et al., 2023) and gravity Moho (Zhao et al., 2020) (Fig. 5c) may as noted in the main text be indicative of partial eclogitization that can modify  $S_n/L_g$  ratios (Fig. 3b).

## S9. Filter applied to the Moho map

We apply an elliptical  $100 \times 200$  km Gaussian filter to the raw Moho data map of Xia et al. (2023) to get a representative Moho profile in our cross-sectional plots. This filter has its short axis across tectonic strike, along the profile. Standard deviations of the Gaussian filter are half of the respective axis lengths (50 km along the profile, 100 km across the profile).

508 **S10. Comparison between LSA and KBL in west Tibet**

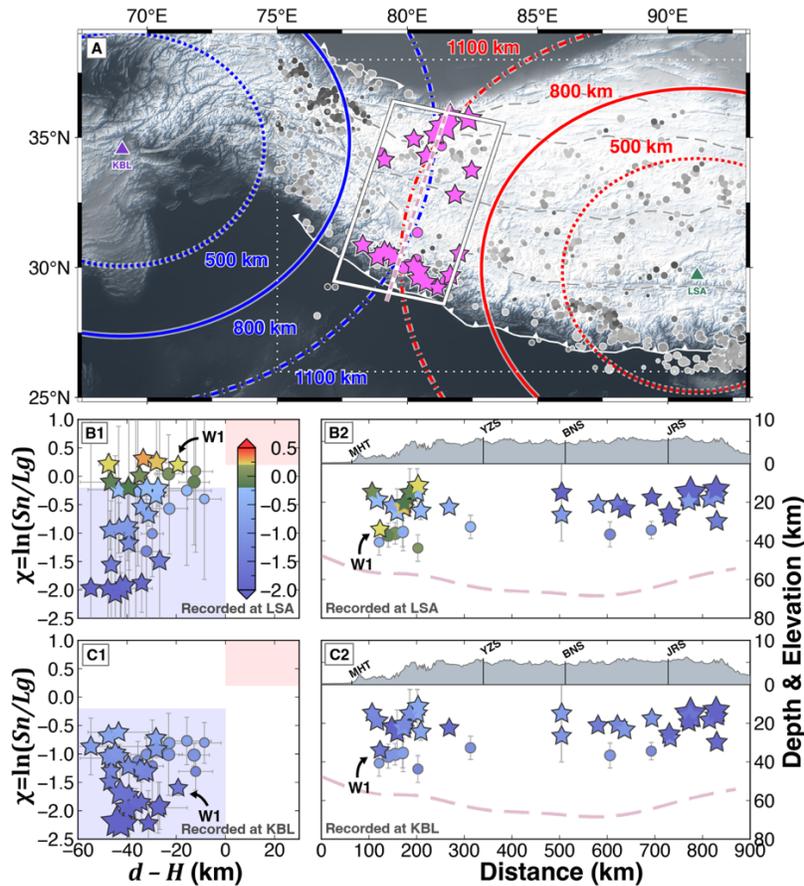
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510 We select the region in which earthquakes are roughly equidistant (~900-1300 km) from Kabul and Lhasa, for  
 511 comparison of  $S_n/L_g$  as recorded at each station (Fig. S10). 38 earthquakes below 30 km (magenta stars and  
 512 circles in Fig. S10), including 8 PDE events and 30 events from GCMT and ISC, passed our SNR criteria at both  
 513 stations. All these earthquakes are located in the crust.

514

515 Earthquakes in the north part of the selected region (Qiangtang) have similar low  $S_n/L_g$  ratios at both LSA and  
 516 KBL's records. However, earthquakes located south of the YZS on average have higher  $S_n/L_g$  ratios at LSA,  
 517 including several events with "intermediate" or weak "mantle"  $S_n/L_g$ , including W1 (Fig. S10-B1). These  
 518 differences are likely the result of lower  $L_g$  and higher crustal attenuation for Tibetan ray paths to LSA than for  
 519 Indian ray paths to KBL (Fig. S8) (Taylor et al., 2003), as is also suggested by the noisier records (having larger  
 520  $S_n/L_g$  uncertainties) at Lhasa than at Kabul. Analogous effects have been explicitly shown for single Tibetan  
 521 earthquakes recorded on 2D arrays that cross regions of different attenuation (Wang & Klemperer, 2021, their  
 522 Fig. 7).  $L_g$  blockage due to Moho topography is probably not the cause (Supplementary Material S8): these  
 523 eight earthquakes' ray paths to Lhasa travel through crust that is never thinner than at the hypocenter, so should  
 524 not experience any  $L_g$  blockage (Kennett, 1986).

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528 **Fig. S10. (A) Earthquakes recorded with acceptable SNR at both KBL and LSA (magenta circles and stars).**  
 529 Red and blue circles mark distances from IC.LSA and IU.KBL respectively. White frame marks the region in which  
 530 earthquakes have about the same distance to the two stations. Gray smaller dots are the other earthquakes in our  
 531 catalog. Dashed pink line is the line of cross-section in B2 & C2. **(B1 & C1)  $S_n/L_g$  vs  $(d - H)$  plots for the selected**  
 532 **earthquakes from IC.LSA and IU.KBL respectively.** Legends as in Fig. 5B, but  $S_n/L_g$  color bar is modified to  
 533 range from  $-2.0$  to  $0.5$ . **(B2 & C2): Cross-sectional view of the  $S_n/L_g$  ratios for the selected earthquakes from**  
 534 **IC.LSA and IU.KBL respectively.** Legends as in Fig. 5C.

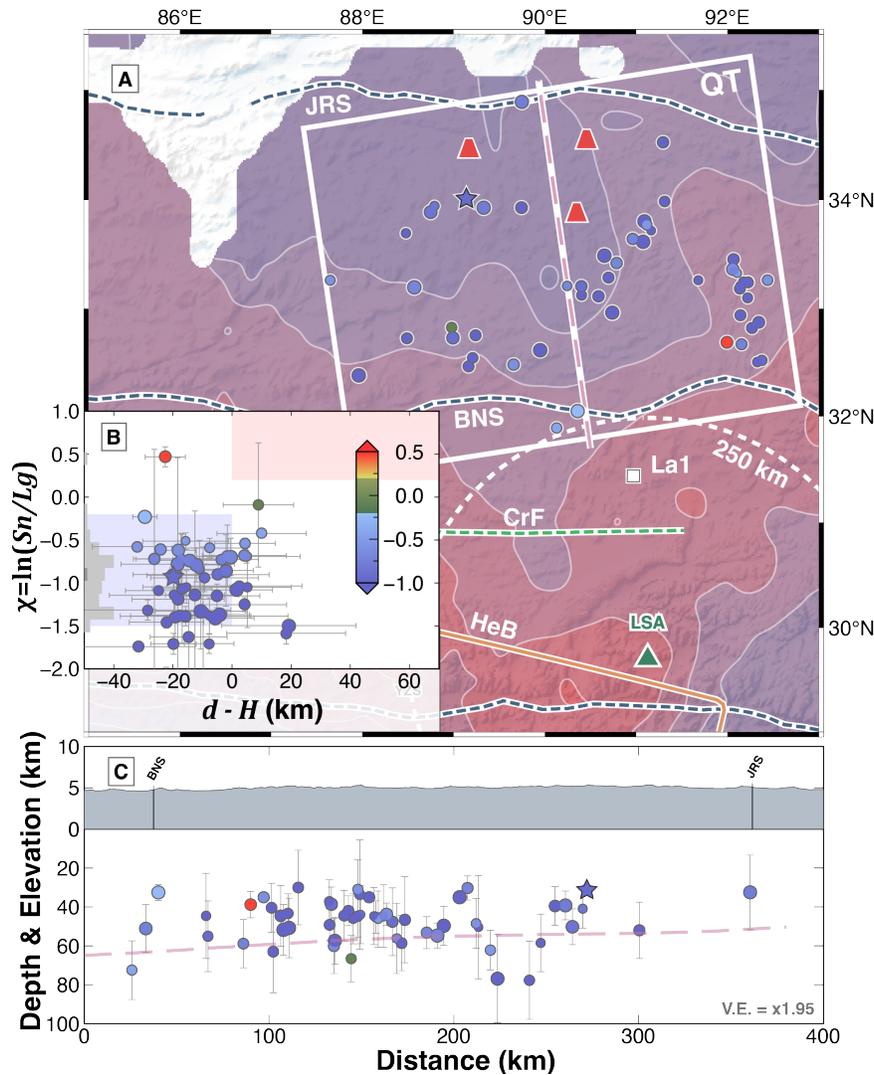
535 **S11. *Sn/Lg* results from the Qiangtang**

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537 We obtain the *Sn/Lg* ratios of 56 earthquakes in the eastern Qiangtang (QT), a region with high *Sn* attenuation  
 538 and likely high mantle temperature (McNamara et al., 1995b). Most earthquakes in this region are nominally  
 539 crustal, and all but one have low *Sn/Lg* ratios. All 10 earthquakes nominally below the Moho are within depth  
 540 uncertainty of the Moho, and nine have low *Sn/Lg* and one has intermediate *Sn/Lg* (with large uncertainty).  
 541 Considering the large depth uncertainties for these earthquakes and the lack of apparent depth-dependent *Sn/Lg*,  
 542 we conclude there is no evidence for mantle seismicity in the Qiangtang. The average *Sn/Lg* ratios in QT are  
 543 lower than those in ST, SET, and SWT, consistent with strong source-side *Sn* attenuation in the Qiangtang.

544

545 The apparent existence of ~50 earthquakes nominally in the lower-crust of the hottest part of Tibet is remarkable  
 546 given that the temperature likely exceeds 700°C at 25-km depth (Wang et al., 2016). Comparison of PDE depths  
 547 and ‘better-located’ depths (Fig. S3-2) suggests that one-third of these 50 earthquakes may have true hypocenters  
 548 at >30 km depth.  
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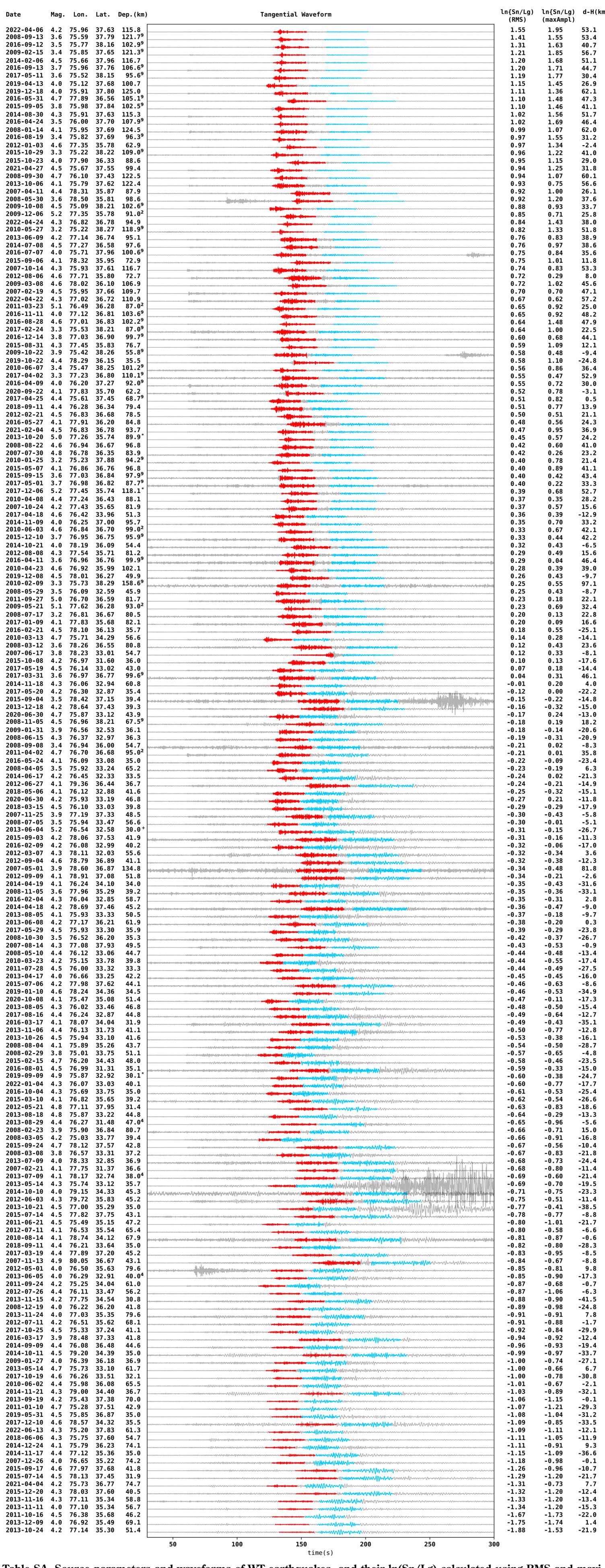
552 **Fig. S11. (A) *Sn/Lg* ratio spatial distribution in Qiangtang (QT).** Legends as in Fig. S4 (A). Red trapezoids:  
 553 Pliocene-Quaternary volcanic lavas (Wang et al., 2016). (B)  $\ln(Sn/Lg)$  vs  $d - H$  plots for QT. White square (La1):  
 554 earthquake (1998 Dec. 14,  $m_b$  4.1) studied by Langin et al. (2003). Legends the same with Fig. 5 (b). (C) Cross-  
 555 sectional view of the *Sn/Lg* ratios along the profile direction in (A). Legends as in Fig. 5C.

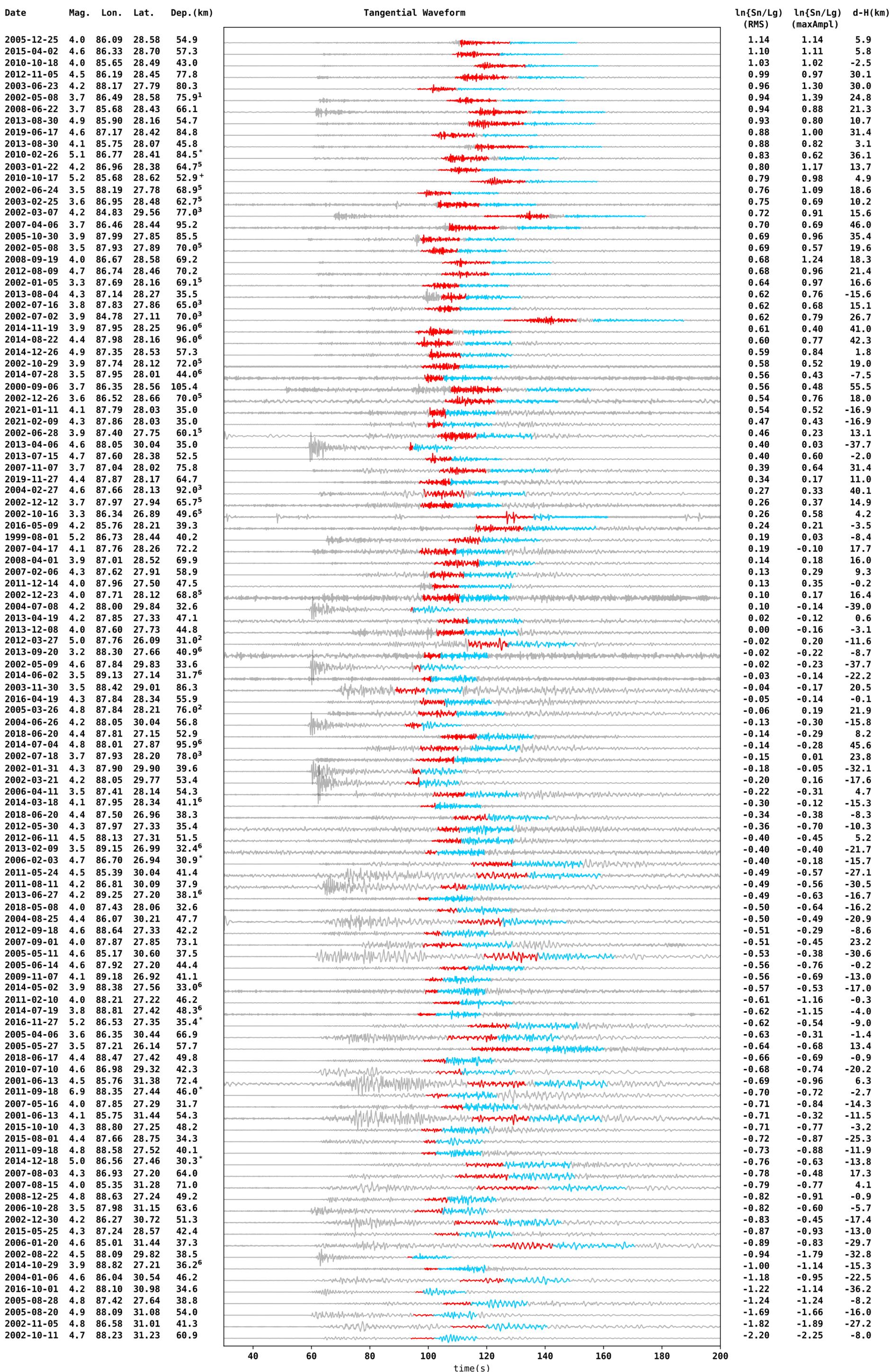
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**Table SB. Source parameters and waveforms of ST earthquakes, and their  $\ln(Sn/Lg)$  calculated using RMS and maximum amplitude ratios.** Waveforms aligned by P arrival (set to be 60 s here).

Depths listed are from the PDE catalog except where marked with a superscript: 1: Alvizuri and Hetényi, (2019); 2: Craig et al., (2012); 3: Baur, (2007); 4: Parija et al., (2018); 5: Michailos et al., (2021); 6: Diehl et al., (2017); 7: Monsalve et al., (2006); 8: Jiang et al., (2009); 9: Bloch et al., (2021); \*: GCMT; +: ISC-GEM.

