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Bridging the gap between lab experiments and mixed-dimensional modeling for flow and transport in fractured media

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The existence of fractures in porous media has a strong impact on the characteristics of the flow behavior. In geological rocks, fractures occur both naturally as well as intentionally induced as in geothermal applications. Thus, accurate modeling and simulation of flow and transport in fractured media is vital for many industrial applications.

Mixed-dimensional models have been widely used for modeling flow in fractured media. The high aspect ratio of the fracture width as compared to their remaining dimensions allows for representing them as lower-dimensional manifolds. By combining the fundamental principle of mass conservation and Darcy's law on each subdomain and mass transfer inbetween domains, underlying equidimensional models can be conveniently replaced. Yet, despite the large interest in mixed-dimensional models for flow and transport in fractured media, direct comparisons to high-quality lab experiments have been missing.

In this talk, we present such a comparison study based on PET experiments of tracer transport in fractured sandstone and corresponding numerical simulations of mixed-dimensional flow and transport (PorePy). In addition, we present tailored image analysis (DarSIA) used to transfer PET images to Darcy-scale images and to compare different Darcy scale images by suitable metrics.

Participation

In-Person

References

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