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**GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF CANADA
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Integrated analysis of vitrinite reflectance, Rock-Eval 6, gas chromatography, and gas chromatography-mass spectrometry data for the Reindeer D-27 and Tununuk K-10 wells, Beaufort-Mackenzie Basin, northern Canada

D.R. Issler, C. Jiang, J. Reyes and M. Obermajer

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ABSTRACT

Core and cuttings samples were selected from the Reindeer D-27 and Tununuk K-10 wells for detailed Rock-Eval/TOC, vitrinite reflectance, gas chromatography, and gas chromatography-mass spectrometry analysis as part of a regional thermal maturity study of the Beaufort-Mackenzie Basin in Arctic Canada. These deep and extensively cored wells, located at the southern end of Richards Island in the thrusted eastern margin of the Taglu Fault Zone (Tununuk High), provide a useful reference for interpreting new and legacy Rock-Eval data for cuttings samples that are known to be susceptible to contamination. Organic petrological observations and elevated Rock-Eval Tmax values indicate that recycled organic matter is common in the Iperk, Richards and Taglu sequences of the Reindeer D-27 well, and the Iperk, Aklak, Fish River and Arctic Red successions of the Tununuk K-10 well. Samples from both wells show evidence of contamination based on anomalous Rock-Eval pyrograms (*e.g.* multi-modal, asymmetric) and anomalous Rock-Eval parameters such Tmax, S1 and PI. For the Reindeer D-27 well, oil staining, hydrocarbon fluid inclusions, exudatinite (early and locally generated waxy oil from terrestrial organic matter) and bitumen have been observed in samples from the Taglu, Aklak and Arctic Red successions and these are associated with elevated PI and reduced Tmax values. Oil staining and bitumen have been observed in some samples from the Tununuk K-10 well also. Tmax values are low and decrease with increasing TOC content in the abundant, immature to marginally mature coal-rich samples of the Taglu Sequence in the Reindeer D-27 well. Some post-drilling contamination of samples is indicated by the presence of the plasticizer, dibutylphthalate (from plastic sample vials), in extracts of cuttings samples from the Reindeer D-27 well. Although such contamination can contribute to anomalous Rock-Eval parameters, the observed elevated S1 values and reduced Tmax values for cuttings samples relative to core samples for both wells suggests that drilling mud additives are the main source of contamination.

Measured mean random reflectance for indigenous vitrinite varies from 0.37 %Ro (Richards Sequence) to 0.79 %Ro (Arctic Red Formation) for the Reindeer D-27 well and 0.39 %Ro (Aklak Sequence) to 1.30 %Ro (Arctic Red Formation) for the Tununuk K-10 well. The unconformably overlying Iperk Sequence in both wells is thermally immature and dominated by recycled vitrinite. Rock-Eval, apatite fission track, and biomarker (sterane and terpane) isomer ratio data provide independent confirmation of organic maturity levels. In accordance with previous published studies, petrological, Rock-Eval and organic geochemical data indicate that the Cretaceous Smoking Hills/Boundary Creek and Arctic Red Formations are dominated by marine (Type II) organic matter whereas the overlying mainly Cenozoic, deltaic sediments contain abundant terrestrially-derived organic matter (Type III). Thermal modelling, constrained using maturity and biomarker data, suggests that marine Cretaceous rocks in both wells entered the oil window at 135°C and reached peak generation at approximately 145°C during late Eocene-Oligocene time. The distribution of n-alkanes and alkyl naphthalenes in extracts of Taglu cuttings samples suggests that oil migrated from the Arctic Red Formation into the overlying Taglu and probably Aklak sequences in the Reindeer D-27 well. Good results are achieved using the new basin%Ro kinetic model for vitrinite reflectance with constant geothermal gradients equal to present values of 25.2°C/km and 28.6°C/km, and with pre-Iperk eroded thicknesses of 2200 m and 2300 m, for the Reindeer D-27 and Tununuk K-10 wells, respectively. The popular EASY%Ro kinetic model gives poorer results that may indicate a systematic miscalibration of vitrinite reflectance with respect to temperature for this model.

INTRODUCTION

The Geological Survey of Canada (GSC) is involved in a multi-disciplinary study of petroleum systems of the Beaufort-Mackenzie Basin under phase 2 of the Earth Sciences Sector Geo-Mapping for Energy and Minerals (GEM) Program. As part of this research, new organic maturity and geochemical data are being acquired for selected petroleum exploration wells to help constrain quantitative models of thermal history and petroleum generation for this basin. Detailed studies of key wells are necessary to supplement and aid in the interpretation and synthesis of a large body of legacy organic maturity and related data that has accumulated for this basin over the last 40 years (Issler *et al.*, 2012b). Organic maturity measurements and interpretations can be affected significantly by geological factors (*e.g.* recycling of organic matter from eroded older successions and oil migration) and drilling-related contamination (*e.g.* organic additives in drilling mud and recirculation of well cuttings or caving that leads to mixing of samples from different stratigraphic intervals). Therefore, an integrated, multi-parameter approach is used to assess thermal maturity to ensure data quality.

Quality control measures include using independent optical (observed vitrinite reflectance), bulk analytical (Rock-Eval pyrolysis), and organic geochemical (gas chromatography-mass spectrometry) methods to assess thermal maturity and source rock properties. Bulk analysis methods such as Rock-Eval pyrolysis are more susceptible to sample contamination than microscope-based methods that can measure different organic components separately within a sample. Gas chromatography-mass spectrometry provides valuable data on the chemical composition of solvent-soluble organic matter in samples that can help identify sources of contamination as well as support and enhance interpretations based on organic petrology and pyrolysis techniques. The two study wells, Reindeer D-27 and Tununuk K-10, were chosen because they are deep wells with numerous cored intervals. The better quality core samples were used where possible because they avoid some of the drilling-related contamination associated with drill cuttings samples.

Apatite fission track (AFT) thermochronology is an inorganic method for paleotemperature reconstruction that avoids the problems associated with organic contamination. Apatite is a common heavy mineral component of sandstones and AFT data are available for the Reindeer D-27 well. Fission tracks are linear regions of crystal damage that form over geological time by the spontaneous fission decay of ^{238}U within apatite crystals (*e.g.* Wagner and Van den Haute, 1992; Gallagher *et al.*, 1998; Gleadow *et al.*, 2002). They form with an initial length of approximately 16 μm but with increasing burial temperature, thermal annealing reduces AFT lengths and ages in a systematic manner. The characteristic patterns of AFT age and length reduction observed for Beaufort-Mackenzie Basin well samples allow for an independent assessment of the quality of the thermal maturity data.

Stasiuk *et al.* (2005, 2009) and Issler *et al.* (2012a) have published three GSC open file reports on thermal maturity for selected Beaufort-Mackenzie wells. This publication is the fourth in a series of five planned GSC open file reports examining the thermal maturity of core and cuttings samples from wells in the Beaufort-Mackenzie Basin. The fifth publication in the series will present an integrated interpretation of a large suite of new and legacy vitrinite reflectance data

for the Beaufort-Mackenzie Basin. A preliminary analysis of some of this data is presented in Issler *et al.* (2012b).

WELL LOCATIONS AND STRATIGRAPHY

[Figure 1](#) shows the location of the Tununuk High (grey shading), a regional tectonic element characterised by folded and uplifted Tertiary strata. The Tununuk High occurs within the much larger SW-NE trending Kugmallit Trough, a syncline containing thick accumulations of Upper Jurassic to Lower Cretaceous syn-rift strata (Lane and Dietrich, 1995; Dixon, 1996). The Kugmallit Trough is bounded to the southeast by the Jurassic-Cretaceous syn-rift normal faults of the SW-NE trending Eskimo Lakes Fault Zone and to the northwest by the SW-NE trending Tertiary normal faults of the Taglu Fault Zone which also forms the northwest margin of the Tununuk High (Lane and Dietrich, 1995; Dixon, 1996). The Tununuk K-10 well is located on the Tununuk High whereas the Reindeer D-27 well is at its northeast margin immediately northeast of the Reindeer F-36 gas discovery well (National Energy Board, 1998; [Figure 1](#)). Both wells are part of the thrusted eastern margin of the Taglu Fault Zone. The Reindeer D-27 well was spudded in 1965 and was the third well to be drilled in the Beaufort-Mackenzie region. Two prior wells (Nicholson G-56 and N-45) were drilled in 1962 in the physiographic region known as the Anderson Plain southeast of Tuktoyaktuk Peninsula and they penetrated approximately 860 m of Cretaceous syn- and post-rift strata. The Tununuk K-10 well was the fourth well to be drilled in the area and it was spudded in 1968. Currently, there are approximately 280 wells in the onshore and offshore parts of the Beaufort-Mackenzie basin.

[Figure 2](#) shows the Mesozoic-Cenozoic stratigraphy for the Beaufort-Mackenzie Basin. The Reindeer D-27 well was the first deep well in the area (3850 m) and it encountered a thick succession of Cenozoic post-rift strata (3260 m) overlying syn-rift strata of the Albian Arctic Red Formation. There is a major unconformity within the Cenozoic succession of the Reindeer D-27 well where Pliocene-Pleistocene strata of the Iperk Sequence overlie Eocene and Paleocene strata of the Richards, Taglu and Aklak sequences (> 30 million year gap in time). To the southwest, the Tununuk K-10 well encountered a thinner (approximately 2600 m) and older Upper Cretaceous-Cenozoic post-rift succession before terminating in syn-rift sediments of the Arctic Red Formation at approximately 3750 m. Pliocene?-Quaternary strata overlie the Eocene Taglu Sequence at Tununuk K-10 and this represents > 40 million years of missing geological record. A large number of cores are available for the Taglu, Aklak and Arctic Red successions in the Reindeer D-27 well. The Tununuk K-10 well also has core which is mainly from the Arctic Red Formation.

METHODS

Vitrinite Reflectance

Vitrinite reflectance is a widely used thermal maturity parameter for evaluating the thermal history and petroleum potential of sedimentary basins (*e.g.* Mukhopadhyay and Dow, 1994; Taylor *et al.*, 1998). The method is based on measuring the percentage of incident light reflected from polished vitrinite macerals obtained from sedimentary rocks. It is well established that vitrinite reflectance increases with increasing burial temperature and this forms the basis for

temperature-dependent kinetic models that calculate vitrinite reflectance values as a function of basin thermal history (EASY%Ro (Sweeney and Burnham, 1990) and the recently recalibrated version, basin%Ro (Nielsen *et al.*, 2015)). Random per cent reflectance in oil (%Ro) was measured for various macerals in whole rock cuttings and conventional core samples that were prepared according to the standard procedures used by the organic petrology laboratory at the GSC Calgary office (*e.g.* Stasiuk *et al.*, 2009; Issler *et al.*, 2012a).

Rock-Eval Pyrolysis

Rock-Eval pyrolysis is a bulk analytical technique for characterizing the quality, quantity and thermal maturity of organic matter (OM) in sedimentary rocks ([Figure 3](#)). Lafargue *et al.* (1998) and Behar *et al.* (2001) provide details on the Rock-Eval pyrolysis method for the newest version of the instrument (Rock-Eval 6 apparatus) that is used at GSC Calgary. The method involves programmed heating of a sample in an inert atmosphere (nitrogen) to yield hydrocarbons (HCs; S1 and S2 curves) plus oxidized carbon from organic (S3; 300-400°C) and mineral sources (400-650°C) followed by sample heating in an oxidation oven to obtain total organic carbon (TOC) and mineral carbon (MINC) in weight % (wt %). [Figure 3](#) shows an example of pyrolysis curves for a sample standard and summarizes key Rock-Eval parameters and the type of information that can be obtained from Rock-Eval analysis. An initial isothermal heating phase (300°C) volatilizes existing free hydrocarbons within a sample (S1 curve) and subsequent ramped linear heating (300-650°C) generates new hydrocarbons by thermal cracking of sedimentary organic matter (S2 curve) ([Figure 3](#)).

Well whole rock core and washed cuttings samples were analysed at the Geological Survey of Canada using a Rock-Eval 6 instrument according to the procedures outlined in Issler *et al.* (2012a). Rock-Eval 6 pyrolysis yields a large number of parameters and results have been expressed using the older Rock-Eval 2 format for ease of interpretation. The temperature at peak generation on the S2 pyrolysis curve (Tpeak; [Figure 3](#)) is converted to the relative temperature, Tmax (in °C), which is an accepted thermal maturity parameter based on the older Rock-Eval 2 technology. The amount of pyrolysable organic carbon (PC in wt %) is determined by combining the S1, S2 and temperature-dependent CO₂ (S3) and CO pyrolysis contributions according to a specific formula (Behar *et al.*, 2001).

Peters (1986) discussed factors that can affect Rock-Eval parameters and presented guidelines for interpreting Rock-Eval 2 data. S1, S2 and Tmax values can be unreliable for TOC values < 0.5 wt % and Tmax values can be unreliable for S2 values <0.2-0.5 mg HC/g rock depending on the type of organic matter and rock matrix (Peters, 1986; Riediger *et al.*, 2004; Obermajer *et al.*, 2007). Multi-modal S2 peaks and PI values > 0.2 can indicate natural or drilling-related contamination for immature samples. Issler *et al.* (2012a) discuss how Rock-Eval parameters have been affected by geological and drilling-related contamination of samples from three Beaufort-Mackenzie wells.

Gas Chromatography and Gas Chromatography-Mass Spectrometry

Organic geochemistry analysis was undertaken to help constrain interpretations based on vitrinite reflectance and Rock-Eval analysis. The composition of sample solvent-soluble organic matter

can provide important information on source input, depositional environment, and thermal maturity that is relevant to assessing petroleum potential and sample contamination.

Residual cuttings samples from the Reindeer D-27 well were selected for solvent extraction based on their Rock-Eval results. After solvent removal by rotary evaporation of the extract mixtures to about 5mL each, gas chromatography (GC) analysis was carried out on the whole extracts using a Varian 3800 FID gas chromatograph to obtain a GC fingerprint of the total hydrocarbon components of each sample. Gas chromatography-mass spectrometry (GC-MS) analysis of the total hydrocarbon fraction of the extracted cuttings samples was done using a Varian 3800 GC coupled to a Varian 1200L Triple Quadrupole Mass Spectrometer. There was insufficient residual core material for further analysis so new core samples were collected from the Reindeer D-27 and Tununuk K-10 wells for Rock-Eval, GC and GC-MS analysis. After Rock-Eval analysis, the core samples were subjected to solvent extraction followed by open column chromatography separation of the extracts to obtain the saturated, aromatic, resin and asphaltenes (SARA) fractions, then GC and GC-MS analysis of the saturated and aromatic fractions. Issler *et al.* (2012a) provides more details on the sample preparation and analysis procedures used at GSC Calgary.

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Vitrinite Reflectance

[Tables 1](#) and [2](#) contain vitrinite reflectance results for the two study wells. Tabulated information includes the GSC sample curation and organic petrology lab pellet numbers, measured sample depth (in feet (original) and metres) with respect to Kelly Bushing elevation, true vertical depth (from well history borehole deviation survey) in metres with respect to Kelly Bushing and ground level elevations, stratigraphic unit, sample type (core or cuttings), comments on sample measurements, and mean random percent vitrinite reflectance in oil plus the standard deviation and number of measurements. Only measurements for interpreted primary (indigenous) vitrinite are shown in [Tables 1](#) and [2](#). Bitumen and caved or recycled vitrinite were also measured to aid interpretation but these results are not included here.

Reindeer D-27 organic maturity trend

Most of the %Ro measurements for the Reindeer D-27 well were done on core samples, especially through the Aklak and Arctic Red successions ([Table 1](#)). Cuttings samples were used to supplement core measurements in the Taglu Sequence and for the Iperk and Richards sequences where core is not available. Recycled vitrinite exists in both cuttings and core samples, and dominates the Iperk, Richards and upper part of the Taglu sequences ([Table 1](#)). Core samples were collected for AFT and %Ro analysis in 1992 and the %Ro measurements of Maria Tomica, formerly of the GSC organic petrology laboratory, are included in the last part of [Table 1](#) for comparison with the newer data. Oil staining is known to suppress vitrinite reflectance values and this has been observed in other wells in the Beaufort-Mackenzie region (e.g. Stasiuk *et al.*, 2009; Issler *et al.*, 2012a). Oil staining is common in samples from the Taglu Sequence and it occurs in Aklak and Arctic Red samples as well and it may be associated with

minor %Ro suppression ([Table 1](#)). Any %Ro suppression due to oil staining must be very minor because the oil-stained samples conform closely to the %Ro-depth trend ([Figure 4](#)).

The data in [Table 1](#) are plotted with respect to estimated true vertical depth in [Figure 4](#). Measured organic maturity increases from 0.37 %Ro at the top of the Richards Sequence to 0.79 %Ro in the Arctic Red Formation near the base of the well. Measured %Ro decreases from 0.33 at the top of the Iperk Sequence to 0.28 near its base. The inverse %Ro-depth trend reflects the dominance of recycled organic matter that is common for the Iperk Sequence across the study region. The %Ro values corresponding to the AFT core samples (blue solid squares; [Figure 4](#)) show good agreement with the newer %Ro data. %Ro-depth data for the Richards and older successions were fit using an exponential equation. Calculated vitrinite reflectance varies from 0.38 %Ro at the top of the Richards Sequence (317 mKB) to 0.81 %Ro in the Arctic Red Formation at the base of the well (3854 mKB; [Figure 4](#)).

Seismic, well log and thermal maturity data indicate that there has been substantial erosion prior to the deposition of the Iperk Sequence. Extrapolation of the exponential trend in [Figure 4](#) to an initial surface value of 0.2 %Ro gives an estimated erosion magnitude of approximately 2940 m (312 m thickness of the post-erosion Iperk sequence was added to obtain the estimate because post-erosion reburial reduces the calculated amount of eroded section). The extrapolation of shale compaction data as described by Issler (1992) yields 1270 m of pre-Iperk erosion for the Reindeer D-27 well. The %Ro-depth gradient converts to a paleogeothermal gradient of 18.3 °C/km based on Middleton's (1982) method. This is less than the present value of approximately 25 °C/km (Hu *et al.*, 2014) derived from well temperature data (Hu *et al.*, 2010). Although it is possible that the paleogeothermal gradient was lower than the present value, this difference may also be the result of an inaccurate calibration of %Ro with temperature for the Middleton (1982) model. For example, the Nielsen *et al.* (2015) basin%Ro model predicts a significantly different relationship between %Ro and temperature than the widely used EASY%Ro model of Sweeney and Burnham (1990).

Reindeer D-27 thermal/burial history model results

A first-order, steady-state thermal/burial history model (Feinstein *et al.*, 1996) is used to investigate the effect of geothermal gradient and maximum burial thickness on calculated %Ro values for the Reindeer D-27 well. A simple burial history model using a paleosurface temperature of 10°C (decreasing to -8.5°C at present to reflect present permafrost thickness), a constant geothermal gradient of 25.2°C/km (present value), an eroded thickness of 2200 m (maximum burial depth and temperature of 5737 m and 155°C, respectively, for the deepest layer), and the basin%Ro model (Nielsen *et al.*, 2015) yields a good fit to the Reindeer D-27 %Ro-depth data ([Figure 5](#)). Given the quality of the well temperature data, it is possible that the present geothermal gradient for the Reindeer D-27 well is underestimated. A slightly better fit to the %Ro data can be achieved using a geothermal gradient of 27°C/km and an eroded thickness of 1900 m (maximum burial depth and temperature of 5437 m and 157°C, respectively).

The Easy%Ro model (Sweeney and Burnham, 1990) can provide a good fit to the Reindeer D-27 %Ro data but a lower geothermal gradient (paleogeothermal gradient of 18°C/km) and a larger eroded thickness (2940 m) (maximum burial depth and temperature of 6480 m and 128°C,

respectively, for the deepest layer) are required. It is possible that rapid deltaic sedimentation suppressed the paleogeothermal gradient. However, compared with the basin%Ro results, the implied 30% reduction in paleogeothermal gradient (relative to the present value) and the significant increase in the amount of erosion (nearly 3 km) are better explained by systematic errors with the EASY%Ro model as suggested by Nielsen *et al.* (2015). Overall, the EASY%Ro model misfits the Reindeer D-27 %Ro data if the present geothermal gradient is used for thermal history reconstruction. For example, the EASY%Ro model provides a good fit to %Ro data in the Arctic Red Formation and the lower part of the Aklak Sequence but predicts lower than observed thermal maturity in the upper part of the section if the present geothermal gradient and an eroded thickness of 1270 m (shale compaction estimate) are used to model the Reindeer D-27 thermal history. Thermal maturity gradients are more variable than compaction gradients in the study region, implying more variable erosion than is inferred from shale compaction. This may be caused by thermal and depositional processes that are not included in a simple burial model that assumes constant temperature and maturity gradients.

Reindeer D-27 apatite fission track thermal annealing

AFT thermochronological data provide an independent check on the quality of the thermal maturity data. Unlike vitrinite reflectance which is a cumulative thermal history indicator in which %Ro values increase with increasing temperature, fission tracks undergo thermal annealing that reduces AFT ages and lengths with increasing temperature. At temperatures greater than the total AFT annealing temperature, all pre-existing tracks are erased and no new tracks accumulate until the apatite-bearing rock cools below the total annealing temperature.

[Figure 6](#) shows the variation in AFT ages and mean lengths with %Ro for two AFT populations from the Ellice O-14 well ([Figure 1](#)) that have different annealing kinetics related to mineral composition (blue curves). Kinetic population 1 is the least track retentive (most easily annealed) and has a fluorapatite composition. Kinetic population 2 is more track retentive (higher total annealing temperature) and has higher concentrations of Cl, Fe and other cations that increase the total AFT annealing temperature relative to fluorapatite (Carlson *et al.*, 1999; Ketcham *et al.*, 1999; Barbarand *et al.*, 2003). Kinetic population 1 shows a more consistent decrease in AFT age with increasing %Ro than kinetic population 2. Some variability in AFT age is expected because the apatite is detrital and carries an initial age older than the stratigraphic age of the unit from which it was obtained (reflecting the cooling history of the sediment source area). The Ellice O-14 AFT data are considered to be representative of AFT age and length trends for exhumed Tertiary strata on the southern basin margin. These data have been modelled successfully (Issler and Grist, 2008) and results will be published elsewhere.

AFT samples from the Reindeer D-27 well have two AFT kinetic populations of similar composition and annealing behaviour as those from the Ellice O-14 well. AFT ages and mean lengths for these two kinetic populations in core samples from the Reindeer D-27 well are plotted with respect to %Ro in [Figure 6](#) (red curves). The mean AFT lengths of the Reindeer samples are relatively long (12-13.2 μm ; [Figure 6b](#)) and this implies moderate amounts of AFT annealing. AFT age and length parameters for the Reindeer D-27 samples overlap with the upper range of values for the Ellice O-14 samples. Qualitatively, the observed modest amount of AFT annealing is consistent with the measured range in maturity (0.43-0.57 %Ro) for the Reindeer D-

27 well. Integrated thermal modelling of AFT and %Ro data for the Reindeer D-27 well and other Beaufort-Mackenzie wells is part of an ongoing study that will be published elsewhere.

Tununuk K-10 organic maturity trend

Most of the %Ro measurements (>70 %) for the Tununuk K-10 well were done on cuttings samples except for samples from the Arctic Red Formation which was cored extensively ([Table 2](#)). Similar to the Reindeer D-27 well, recycled vitrinite occurs throughout the well, particularly in the Iperk, Aklak and Arctic Red successions. In general, the Tununuk K-10 samples had less indigenous vitrinite than the Reindeer D-27 samples. Approximately 80 % (26) of the Tununuk K-10 %Ro samples had < 30 measurements per sample ([Table 2](#)) whereas 78 % (32) of the Reindeer D-27 %Ro samples had 30 or more measurements per sample ([Table 1](#)). Samples from the Smoking Hills/Boundary Creek succession and upper part of the Arctic Red Formation contain anomalously low %Ro values that may be associated with a change in organic facies from terrestrial (Type III) to marine (Type II) organic matter ([Table 2](#); [Figure 7](#); see below). Reduced %Ro values have been observed in the Upper Cretaceous bituminous shales (Smoking Hills and Boundary Creek formations) for other wells in the area (Stasiuk *et al.*, 2009; Issler *et al.*, 2012a). The reduction in %Ro values appears rather large when a single exponential function is used to fit the %Ro-depth data (solid black curve, [Figure 7](#)). However, if two functions are used (red dashed curves, [Figure 7](#)), then the reduction in %Ro values appears to be minor. This second interpretation appears to be a better approximation based on modelling results in the section below.

The Tununuk K-10 well is in the eastern margin of the Beaufort Foldbelt where seismic correlations are difficult due to structural complications. Significant tectonic wedging is evident with the potential for thrust faults and associated anomalous stratigraphy and maturity trends (J. Dietrich, personal communication, 2009). Carbonate-filled microfractures were noted in core samples from the Arctic Red Formation ([Table 2](#)). Cores collected between 3441-3543 mKB (11290-11625 ft) are highly fractured and brecciated with some calcite- and quartz-filled fractures that could indicate proximity to a fault (Dixon, 2002). However, existing biostratigraphic and log data are consistent with a continuous Arctic Red succession at the bottom of the well. [Figure 7](#) shows a plot of %Ro versus true vertical depth for the Tununuk K-10 well. Measured organic maturity increases from 0.39 %Ro in the Aklak Sequence to 1.30 %Ro in the Arctic Red Formation near the base of the well. Maturity varies between 0.27 to 0.35 %Ro in the Quaternary-Iperk succession and, like the Reindeer D-27 well, it shows the influence of organic matter recycling. The Quaternary-Iperk succession rests unconformably on a thin Eocene Taglu Sequence and extensive erosion has resulted in a maturity discontinuity across this unconformity.

An exponential fit to the %Ro_R-depth data for the Aklak to Arctic Red interval (excluding anomalously low %Ro values in blue; [Figure 7](#)) gives calculated vitrinite reflectance values of 0.44 %Ro at the top of the Taglu Sequence (243 mKB) and 1.21 %Ro in the Arctic Red Formation at the base of the well (3752 mKB). The %Ro-depth gradient in [Figure 7](#) gives a paleogeothermal gradient of 24.4 °C/km based on Middleton's (1982) method whereas the present geothermal gradient derived from well temperature data (Hu *et al.*, 2010) is approximately 28.6 °C/km (Hu *et al.*, 2014). Extrapolation of the exponential %Ro-depth trend to

an initial surface value of 0.2 %Ro gives an estimated pre-Iperk erosion magnitude of 2740 m (thickness of Quaternary-Iperk succession added to extrapolated value). These paleogeothermal gradient and erosion estimates could have significant error if the %Ro data are better described using two empirical functions ([Figure 7](#)). Shale compaction data give approximately 1180 m of pre-Iperk erosion for the Tununuk K-10 well which is less than the 1270 m estimate for the Reindeer D-27 well. The Tununuk K-10 compaction-based erosion estimate is poorly constrained because only a few data points are available. Stratigraphic and maturity data suggest that there should have been more pre-Iperk erosion at the Tununuk K-10 well than at the Reindeer D-27 well, especially because the K-10 well is situated on the Tununuk High and should have experienced more deformation-related uplift and erosion.

Tununuk K-10 thermal/burial history model results

A simple burial history model using a paleosurface temperature of 10°C (decreasing to -2.6°C at present to reflect present permafrost thickness), a constant geothermal gradient of 28.6°C/km (present value), an eroded thickness of 2300 m (maximum burial depth and temperature of 5810 m and 176°C, respectively, for the deepest sedimentary layer), and the basin%Ro model (Nielsen *et al.*, 2015) yields a reasonable fit to the Tununuk K-10 %Ro-depth data ([Figure 8](#)). The present geothermal gradient at Tununuk K-10 is based on “fair” quality well temperature data (Hu *et al.*, 2014) and is more likely to underestimate than overestimate geothermal gradient, given the typical problems with correcting log bottomhole temperature data (e.g. Hu *et al.*, 2010). The closest wells are Reindeer A-41 and Tununuk F-30 ([Figure 1](#)) with calculated geothermal gradients of 35°C/km and 25.1°C/km (Hu *et al.*, 2014), respectively. A slightly better fit to the %Ro data can be obtained with the basin%Ro model using a geothermal gradient of 25.1°C/km and an eroded thickness of 3100 m (maximum burial depth and temperature of 6610 m and 176°C, respectively, for the deepest layer). However, it is unclear that this is a better model, given all the sources of uncertainty in the analysis, and the fact that the high amount of recycled vitrinite may be affecting some %Ro measurements in the Aklak and Fish River sequences.

Even with significant changes to the geothermal gradient and erosion estimates, the EASY%Ro model provides a poorer fit to the Tununuk K-10 %Ro data than the basin%Ro model. A burial history model with a paleogeothermal gradient of 24.4°C/km and an eroded thickness of 2740 m (derived from an exponential fit to the %Ro data as described above) (maximum burial depth and temperature of 6250 m and 162°C, respectively, for the deepest layer) can adequately fit the %Ro data in the upper and lower parts of the well but it overestimates %Ro values by approximately 0.1 to 0.2 % for the Smoking Hills/Boundary Creek and upper Arctic Red samples (blue symbols in [Figures 7](#) and [8](#)). A worse fit to the data is obtained if the present geothermal gradient is used with the EASY%Ro model (1800 m of erosion is needed to match the %Ro values at the base of the well). %Ro values are underestimated by 0.1-0.3 %Ro for the entire well if the present geothermal gradient and compaction-derived eroded thickness of 1180 m are used (maximum burial depth and temperature of 4690 m and 145°C, respectively, for the deepest layer). This further confirms that the shale compaction erosion estimate for this well is poorly based.

Rock-Eval Pyrolysis

Rock-Eval pyrolysis was done first and results were used to screen samples for subsequent organic petrology based on TOC values. Rock-Eval 6 results for the Reindeer D-27 and Tununuk K-10 wells are shown in [Tables 3](#) and [4](#), respectively. Data are presented in Rock-Eval 2 format with additional columns for mineral carbon, organic matter type and calculated %Ro-equivalent values. Tmax values were converted to vitrinite reflectance equivalent values using polynomial equations fitted to tabulated data for Type II (marine-derived) and III (terrestrially-derived) organic matter (MATOIL™, 1990; see Issler *et al.* (2005) for Type III equation). Sample depths are given in both feet and metres in the data tables. Depth values highlighted in yellow correspond to samples with vitrinite reflectance data. Both wells contain samples with disturbed pyrograms that are most likely caused by contamination. Colour coding is used to distinguish between normal or minimally disturbed pyrograms (green) and anomalous (disturbed) pyrograms (purple) (*e.g.* multi-modal, asymmetric, etc.). Average Tmax values were calculated for each rock formation using all sample measurements and data from samples with the least disturbed pyrograms (green). PI values of 0.2 or greater and TOC values > 5 wt % are highlighted in orange and yellow, respectively ([Tables 3](#) and [4](#)).

Reindeer D-27 Rock-Eval log and drilling mud additives

Selected Rock-Eval parameters for the Reindeer D-27 well ([Table 3](#)) are plotted as a function of depth in [Figure 9](#). Although there is an overall increase in Tmax with increasing depth, it is apparent that there are problems with data quality, particularly at depths less than 6660 feet (2030 m) where there are large variations in Tmax, PI and TOC values ([Figure 9](#)). This is confirmed by the analysis of sample pyrograms that show anomalous features (abnormally low Tmax, multimodal S2 peaks, asymmetric S2 curves with left and right shoulders; see comments in [Table 3](#)) that commonly are associated with sample contamination from drilling mud additives and migrated oil or bitumen (Peters, 1986). Although the cuttings samples were washed, there is still potential for drilling contamination based on the type of organic mud additives described in the well history report. Additives that could affect Rock-Eval pyrograms include Carbonox (lignitic humic acid powder used as a mud thinner and dispersant), Q Broxin (ferrochrome lignosulphonate used as a mud thinner) and Cellex (Hi Viscosity and Regular) (sodium carboxymethyl cellulose used as a filtrate reducer). For example, lignosulphonates give low Tmax (330-380°C) and high TOC (16-30 wt %) values but usually they can be washed out of samples (Robertson Group, 1989). In general, organic mud additives tend to decrease Tmax and can increase S1, S2, HI, PI and TOC values, depending on their composition (Peters, 1986).

Rock-Eval characteristics of each stratigraphic unit in the Reindeer D-27 well

The upper part of the Iperk Sequence was air-drilled down to 665 feet (202.7 m) and then a dense mud was used below this depth to control sloughing of unconsolidated sands beneath the ice-bonded permafrost zone. There is no record of organic mud additives being used during drilling of the Iperk Sequence (mainly Aquagel (Na montmorillonite), Baroid (BaSO_4), caustic soda (NaOH), and unspecified weight material were used in the drilling mud below 665 feet). Nevertheless, samples from the Iperk Sequence have anomalously high PI values (0.2-0.5), some low Tmax values (< 420°C) and anomalous pyrograms (78 %) that are probably related to the

presence of thermally immature biological material that has not yet transformed into kerogen ([Figure 9](#); [Table 3](#)). Some samples have very low S2 (< 0.5 mg/g rock) and TOC (<0.5 wt %) values that make Rock-Eval parameters unreliable. The least disturbed pyrograms yield an average Tmax of $421.3 \pm 1.1^\circ\text{C}$ which is consistent with the expected low organic maturity of the Iperk Sequence ([Table 3](#)). Organic petrological observations indicate that recycled organic matter is abundant and this may be associated with higher Tmax values ($>423^\circ\text{C}$). Indigenous organic matter consists mainly of brown-fluorescing lignitic macerals with bright yellow-fluorescing liptinite inclusions.

Samples from the underlying Richards Sequence generally have very low TOC (mainly 0.2-0.5 wt %) and S2 values (mainly 0.1-0.5 mg/g rock) and high PI values (mainly 0.2-0.4) with $> 90\%$ anomalous pyrograms ([Figure 9](#); [Table 3](#)). There are also anomalously low ($< 420^\circ\text{C}$) and high ($>430^\circ\text{C}$) Tmax values that are probably associated with contamination and organic recycling. The average Tmax value for the two least disturbed pyrograms is $422.0 \pm 1.4^\circ\text{C}$ ([Table 3](#)) which gives a lower organic maturity (0.23 %Ro equivalent value) than measured optically (0.37-0.38 %Ro; [Table 1](#); [Figure 4](#)). Hi Viscosity Cellex was added to the mud system during drilling of the interval, 1184–1472 feet (360.9-448.7 m). Although this may have contributed to drilling-related sample contamination, most of the Rock-Eval parameters are unreliable due to the very low TOC and S2 values.

Samples from the Taglu Sequence are dominated by coal with exudatinitite (waxy oil derived from liptinite), hydrocarbon fluid inclusions, and lots of oil staining as observed petrographically and as noted in the cuttings samples descriptions of the well history report. TOC values can be very high with many samples in the range of 10-50 wt% and there are some high PI values (0.2-0.38) ([Table 3](#); [Figure 9](#)). Approximately 38 % of the pyrograms show obvious disturbance (asymmetric and multi-modal S2 curves) but even the least disturbed pyrograms show some irregularities ([Table 3](#)). Tmax is highly variable and generally suppressed through this immature to marginally mature (0.39-0.51 %Ro; [Table 1](#)) coal-rich succession ([Figure 9](#)). Although Carbonox was added to the mud system and may contribute to Tmax suppression, there is a significant amount of geological “contamination” related to the presence of oil and coal. The average Tmax value for the least disturbed pyrograms is $417.4 \pm 6.6^\circ\text{C}$ (75 samples) ([Table 3](#)). If samples with TOC values >5 wt % are excluded, the average Tmax increases to $422.1 \pm 5.3^\circ\text{C}$ (30 samples) ([Table 3](#)). In the lower part of the Taglu succession (>4823 feet or >1470 m), some pyrograms may be affected by caved coal based on cuttings descriptions in the well history report.

Tmax shows less variability and a general increase in depth through the Aklak Sequence ([Figure 9](#)). Samples from the upper part of the Aklak Sequence have high PI values, slightly elevated HI values and some low Tmax values that are probably related to oil staining based on cuttings and core descriptions in the well history report ([Figure 9](#); [Table 3](#)). After core #5 (5310-5370 feet or 1618.5-1636.8 m) was recovered, coarse sand lenses in the last 17.5 feet (5.3 m) exsolved gas, bled a light yellow brown oil film and showed fluorescence. Fluorescence and light spotty oil staining were reported for part of core #7 (6094-6116 feet or 1857.5-1864.2 m). There is another interval of high PI values below 8580 feet (2615.2 m) and trace hydrocarbon fluid inclusions are observed in samples from this interval ([Figure 9](#); [Table 3](#)). Approximately 29 % of the pyrograms show significant disturbance but all pyrograms show some degree of irregularity and

Tmax appears to be suppressed for most samples ([Table 3](#)). The average Tmax value for the least disturbed pyrograms is $428.5 \pm 2.9^\circ\text{C}$ ([Table 3](#)). This gives a %Ro equivalent value of 0.48 which is less than the measured range of 0.51-0.69 %Ro ([Table 1](#)). Carbonox was used in the mud system during drilling of the upper part of the Aklak Sequence (down to 5797 feet or 1767 m) and below a depth of 8200 feet (2499 m). Rock-Eval parameters could be affected by drilling-related contamination but geological contamination (oil staining, exudatinites, hydrocarbon inclusions) is also a significant factor.

Samples from the Arctic Red Formation have a relatively narrow range of Tmax values that show a general increase with depth ([Figure 9](#)). Almost all pyrograms are normal to minimally disturbed (small left shoulder on S2) and yield an average Tmax value of $436.8 \pm 2.0^\circ\text{C}$ (67 samples; [Table 3](#)). This gives %Ro equivalent values of 0.65 and 0.74 for Type II and Type III organic matter, respectively. The latter value is closer to the measured vitrinite reflectance range (0.69-0.79 %Ro; [Table 1](#)) but the dominance of alginite (*Leiosphaeridia* and *Prasinophyte*) with minor sporinite and cutinite suggests mainly Type II organic matter with some terrestrial input. Most of the minimally disturbed pyrograms are associated with a zone of high PI values (0.21-0.39) below 11530 feet (3514.3 m) ([Figure 9](#); [Table 3](#)). An oil-stained core sample at 12462 feet (3798.4 m) has an anomalous pyrogram (bimodal S2) with a suppressed Tmax (295°C), and high S1 (8.94 mg/g rock), PI (0.63) and HI (221) values ([Table 3](#); [Figure 9](#)). Solid bitumen was observed in all the Arctic Red core samples and the well history report includes descriptions of gas kicks and oil staining. Carbonox and some Cellex were added to the mud system during the drilling of this interval and therefore drilling-related sample contamination is possible.

Reindeer D-27 organic matter type, thermal maturity and well cuttings contamination

Plots of HI versus OI (Espitalié *et al.*, 1977) can provide information on sample organic matter type and thermal maturity but they must be interpreted with caution because both parameters are sensitive to contamination. HI versus Tmax plots (Espitalié *et al.*, 1984) can be used to examine organic maturation pathways when OI values are unreliable (*e.g.* anomalously high due to contributions from mineral carbon or other factors; Peters, 1986).

[Figure 10](#) shows plots of HI versus OI and HI versus Tmax for samples from the Reindeer D-27 well. The data are scattered with some elevated HI and OI values but most points plot in the field indicating immature to mature, Type III organic matter. Sample contamination has affected HI and OI values, mainly in the upper part of the well (Iperk, Richards and, to a lesser extent, Taglu sequences). There is a zone of elevated HI values in the Iperk Sequence (150-255; 34 % of samples) that coincides with high PI values ([Figure 9](#); [Table 3](#)) and > 60 % of the samples have anomalously high OI values (200-1772; [Table 3](#)). For the Richards Sequence, most samples have HI values < 100 but 65 % of the OI values are in the range, 200-525 ([Table 3](#)). For the Taglu Sequence, < 20% of the samples have high OI values (150-600) and HI values are < 165 with 58 % of the samples having HI values < 100. Some HI values > 115 are associated with oil staining ([Table 3](#)). Almost all of the Aklak samples have OI and HI values < 150. Samples from the Arctic Red Formation tend to have lower OI values (< 50; 78 % of samples) consistent with a mixture of Type II and III organic matter. HI values are < 144 except for an oil stained core sample (HI=221; [Table 3](#)) that plots along the Type II evolution curve in [Figure 10](#). The increase

in S2/S3 ratio in the Arctic Red Formation (effectively HI/OI) implies a change in organic matter type ([Figure 9](#)).

As discussed above, Tmax values are variable due to the presence of recycled organic matter and contamination that has distorted sample pyrograms, particularly in the upper part of the well. The lower half of the well shows a more consistent maturity trend with Tmax values up to 440°C near the base of the well ([Figure 9](#); [Table 3](#)). The highest Tmax value (445°C) in [Figure 10](#) is from a low TOC sample from the Richards Sequence.

Rock-Eval organic maturity determinations for the Reindeer D-27 well can be visually assessed with respect to optically measured maturity by plotting %Ro values ([Table 1](#); [Figure 4](#)) and Tmax values converted to %Ro-equivalent values ([Table 3](#)) versus depth ([Figure 11](#)). [Figure 11a](#) shows %Ro-equivalent data (blue x symbols for cuttings and solid green diamonds for cores) for all Tmax values yielding %Ro-equivalent values > 0.2% whereas [Figure 11b](#) shows only %Ro-equivalent data for samples with the least disturbed pyrograms in [Table 3](#). The wide variation in %Ro-equivalent values for the Iperk, Richards and upper part of the Taglu sequences ([Figure 11a](#)) is consistent with petrological observations of organic matter recycling ([Table 1](#)) and contamination that has distorted sample pyrograms ([Table 3](#)). It is interesting to note that %Ro-equivalent data for core samples (solid green diamonds) in the lower part of the well show good agreement with optically measured %Ro values whereas cutting samples yield much lower %Ro-equivalent values ([Figure 11b](#)). Although geological factors (coal, oil staining, recycling) have affected both core and cuttings data, the difference between core and cuttings Tmax values suggests that drilling contamination (Carbonox?) has suppressed Tmax values. %Ro-equivalent values for Arctic Red samples were calculated assuming Type II organic matter whereas organic petrologic observations indicate a mixture of Type II and III organic matter. If Type III organic matter is assumed for this formation, cuttings Tmax %Ro-equivalent data show closer agreement with %Ro measurements but core Tmax values overestimate organic maturity.

Tununuk K-10 Rock-Eval log and drilling mud additives

[Figure 12](#) shows a plot of selected Rock-Eval parameters ([Table 4](#)) versus depth for the Tununuk K-10 well. Sample contamination is apparent throughout the well, particularly in the Upper Cretaceous-Cenozoic deltaic successions (Fish River, Aklak, Taglu and Iperk sequences) which have variable Tmax, PI, TOC and HI values ([Figure 12](#)). Extensive sample contamination is confirmed by the large number of anomalous sample pyrograms (see comments in [Table 4](#)). In general, the Tununuk K-10 well has a higher percentage of anomalous pyrograms than the Reindeer D-27 well. More mud additives were used to drill the Tununuk K-10 well than the Reindeer D-27 well. The daily drilling reports in the well history file list a number of organic mud additives that could potentially affect Rock-Eval parameters. These include: Quick Vis (mud viscosifier made of hydroxyethyl cellulose), Peltex (ferrochrome lignosulphonate mud thinner and dispersant), Kelzan XC (xanthum gum mud viscosifier), CMC (carboxymethyl cellulose mud filtrate reducer), Dakolite (lignite emulsifier), Dowicide (sodium pentachlorophenate bactericide), Trimulso (blend of anionic surfactants used as an oil in water emulsifier), D Foam (petroleum hydrocarbons and polysiloxanes used as a defoamer), diesel (lubricant), and walnut shells and sawdust (lost circulation material).

In general, Dowicide and Kelzan XC were added to the mud system through most of the well. Peltex was introduced below approximately 2800 feet (> 850 m; lower part of Aklak Sequence) and then was added regularly to the mud system down to the base of the well. Quick Vis was used during drilling of the Aklak Sequence between 1647-2891 feet (502-881 m), and sawdust and Trimulso were added at 2891 feet (881 m). Most of the mud additives were used during drilling of the Arctic Red Formation. Dakolite was used over the interval, 10,692-10,951 (3259-3338 m). Quick Vis was used at the following depths: 8864 feet (2702 m), 9848 feet (3001.7 m), 10,221 feet (3115.4 m), 10,338 feet (3151 m), 10583 feet (3226 m) and 10,692 feet (3259 m). CMC was added to the mud system at 10,692 feet (3259 m), 11595 feet (3534 m), 11723-11791 (3573-3594 m) and 12037-12087 feet (3669-3684 m). Diesel was added at 8524 feet (2598 m), 11723 feet (3573 m), 12037 feet (3669 m) and 12118-12183 feet (3694-3713 m). Nutshells were added at 11,009 feet (3355.5 m). Very little D Foam was used in drilling the well.

Rock-Eval characteristics of each stratigraphic unit in the Tununuk K-10 well

More than 60 % of sample pyrograms in the Iperk Sequence are anomalous ([Table 4](#)). The upper part of the Iperk Sequence has high S1, TOC, PI and HI values and low Tmax values with asymmetric and bimodal S2 curves ([Figure 12](#); [Table 4](#)). The lower part of the sequence appears to be dominated by recycled organic matter with high Tmax values yielding %Ro-equivalent values of 0.5-0.66 ([Table 4](#)). The least disturbed pyrograms give an average Tmax of $432.3 \pm 1.6^\circ\text{C}$ ([Table 4](#)), reflecting the dominance of recycled organic matter in this thermally immature succession. The underlying Taglu Sequence has suppressed Tmax values and some high PI values ([Figure 12](#)), and 90 % of the sample pyrograms are anomalous ([Table 4](#)). A single normal pyrogram has a Tmax of 423°C . Many of the samples from the Aklak Sequence have anomalous pyrograms (> 70 %; [Table 4](#)) with high PI values and suppressed Tmax values as well high Tmax values associated with petrologically observed recycled organic matter ([Table 2](#)). The least affected sample pyrograms give an average Tmax of $427.4 \pm 10.2^\circ\text{C}$ ([Table 4](#)) (equivalent %Ro = 0.44) which is at the low end of the measured organic maturity range (0.39-0.59 %Ro; [Table 2](#)). This average Tmax is not very meaningful given the large standard deviation. The well history report describes some gas yield, oil staining and fluorescence within the Aklak interval. Oil staining is noted at 2120-2150 feet (646-655 m) but no cuttings samples are available between 2000-2650 feet (610-808 m) ([Figure 12](#); [Table 4](#)). Most of the sample pyrograms for the Fish River Sequence are anomalous (85 %; [Table 4](#)) with many suppressed Tmax values and high PI values; some higher Tmax values are associated with recycled organic matter ([Figure 12](#)). The average Tmax for the least disturbed pyrograms is $435.7 \pm 3.0^\circ\text{C}$ ([Table 4](#); %Ro equivalent = 0.71) which is slightly higher than the optically measured maturity range (0.59-0.67 %Ro; [Table 2](#)). Sporadic oil staining was mentioned in the well history report for this interval. It is likely that drilling related contamination is the main factor affecting Rock-Eval parameters for the Upper Cretaceous-Cenozoic deltaic sequences with some possible contribution from oil staining.

There is a shift to higher S2/S3 (HI/OI) ratios for the Smoking Hills/Boundary Creek and Arctic Red successions ([Figure 12](#)) coincident with an observed change in organic matter character. These units have framboidal pyrite and alginite (*Tasmanites*, *Leiosphaeridia*, and *Prasinophytes*) consistent with a marine depositional environment. Tmax is variable but shows a general increase with depth through these intervals ([Figure 12](#)). The Boundary Creek/Smoking Hills

interval has the lowest number of anomalous pyrograms (27 %) compared with other stratigraphic intervals in the well whereas 75 % of the Arctic Red pyrograms are anomalous ([Table 4](#)). Average Tmax values for the least disturbed pyrograms are $432.1 \pm 4.9^\circ\text{C}$ and $440.0 \pm 2.7^\circ\text{C}$ for the Smoking Hills/Boundary Creek and Arctic Red successions, respectively. Solid bitumen was observed for samples from these stratigraphic intervals and the well history report contains descriptions of oil staining, dead oil and fluorescence. Some of the low Tmax and high S1, S2, PI and HI values below 3500 m may be related to diesel contamination ([Figure 12](#)).

Tununuk K-10 organic matter type, thermal maturity and well cuttings contamination

[Figure 13](#) shows plots of HI versus OI and HI versus Tmax for the Tununuk K-10 well. From the above discussion, HI and OI values will be affected to some degree by sample contamination given the large number of anomalous pyrograms and the associated variable Tmax values. Most of the samples plot in the field for immature to mature, Type III organic matter ([Figure 13](#)). OI values show a narrower range of variation in comparison to samples from the Reindeer D-27 well ([Figure 10](#); [Table 3](#)). Fourteen samples (11 from the Aklak Sequence) have OI values in the range, 200-360, whereas all other OI values are less than 200 ([Figure 13](#), [Table 4](#)). Most samples with HI values > 200 and OI values > 100 are from a suspected drilling-contaminated interval in the Iperk Sequence. Samples with higher HI (> 150) and lower OI (< 60) values are mainly from the Arctic Red and Smoking Hills/Boundary Creek successions. The higher HI values in part may reflect an increase in Type II organic matter but they are also associated with diesel contamination near the base of the Arctic Red Formation ([Figure 12](#)). Contamination is also indicated by the high HI values associated with low Tmax values ($< 400^\circ\text{C}$; [Figure 13](#)).

[Figure 14](#) shows plots of measured %Ro values ([Table 2](#); [Figure 7](#)) and %Ro-equivalent values calculated from Tmax ([Table 4](#)) versus depth for the Tununuk K-10 well. All samples with %Ro-equivalent data > 0.2 are shown in [Figure 14a](#) (blue x symbols for cuttings and solid green diamonds for core) whereas [Figure 14b](#) shows only %Ro-equivalent data for samples with the least disturbed pyrograms. High %Ro-equivalent values from Tmax for the Iperk, Aklak, Fish River and Arctic Red successions are consistent with the amount of recycled organic matter determined by organic petrology ([Figure 14a](#)). Core and cuttings samples have anomalous pyrograms suggesting that geological (oil staining, bitumen) and drilling related contamination have affected Rock-Eval parameters. There is good agreement between %Ro-equivalent values and measured %Ro values for core and cuttings samples from the Smoking Hills/Boundary Creek and upper Arctic Red intervals ([Figure 14b](#)). Tmax and %Ro values appear to be suppressed within these intervals when the data are compared with a single exponential fit to the measured %Ro data (black curve, [Figure 14b](#)). A reduction in %Ro value may be associated with a change in organic matter type as observed petrographically and suggested by Rock-Eval data. However, the degree of suppression is much less than inferred from this figure and it is relatively minor (approximately 0.05 %Ro) based on the thermal modelling results above ([Figure 8](#)).

Organic Geochemistry of the Cuttings Samples from Reindeer D-27 Well

Seven cuttings samples from the Taglu and Aklak sequences and Arctic Red Formation of the Reindeer D-27 well were selected for solvent extraction and subsequent GC and GC-MS analysis ([Table 5](#)) on the basis of their Rock-Eval results. The choice of samples was limited by the

availability of sufficient residual sample material because many of the original samples that were collected for organic petrology and Rock-Eval pyrolysis were consumed for these analyses. Therefore, only a tiny amount of solvent extractable organic matter was obtained from each sample and this was deemed to be insufficient for traditional open column fractionation which yields saturated, aromatic, resin, and asphaltene fractions and related SARA data. As a result, fractionation of the extracts using C18-SPE columns was performed to remove polar fractions and generate a total hydrocarbon fraction for each sample for GC-MS analysis.

Rock-Eval pyrograms for seven Reindeer D-27 cuttings samples

[Figure 15](#) shows Rock-Eval pyrograms for the seven samples listed in [Table 5](#). Although some of the samples from the Taglu Sequence have irregular pyrograms ([Table 3](#)), and some oil staining has been observed for this stratigraphic interval ([Tables 1](#) and [3](#)), the three Taglu samples (X11364, X11365 and X11366) in [Figure 15](#) have normal pyrograms that are typical for coal-rich samples with broad, unimodal S2 peaks, high TOC values (17-35 wt%), and relatively low Tmax values (412-420°C) ([Tables 3](#) and [5](#)). The two Aklak samples are from the upper and lower parts of the Aklak Sequence where there are continuous zones with high PI values (>0.2), irregular pyrograms, and reported occurrences of hydrocarbons ([Table 3](#) and [Figure 9](#)). The shallower Aklak sample (X11367) shows a large S1 peak and a bimodal S2 curve with an anomalously low Tmax (304°C) ([Figure 15](#)). Similar pyrograms are observed in other Beaufort-Mackenzie wells that are known to contain migrated oil (e.g. Issler *et al.*, 2012a). The S1 curve has not returned to baseline and volatile hydrocarbons are contributing to the first peak on the S2 curve. The deeper Aklak sample (X11368) shows a less disturbed pyrogram with a large S1 peak and a left shoulder on the S2 curve. The two samples from the thermally mature Arctic Red Formation (X11369 and X11370) have normal pyrograms with a large S1 curve and unimodal S2 curves with small left shoulders.

Contamination from plastic containers

Up to this point, cuttings sample contamination has been discussed in terms of drilling mud additives or geological contamination by oil staining. In this section, evidence is presented for sample contamination resulting from sample processing and storage.

[Figure 16](#) shows the GC traces of the solvent extracts for the Reindeer D-27 cuttings samples. The two peaks labelled with * are likely impurities from the solvent used for soxhlet extraction, and they have been identified as cyclohexane and 3-methylhexane by their GC retention time. Other than these two peaks, the peak labelled with # and eluting around 53 minutes is the major component of the GC-amenable fraction of the solvent extracts. The mass spectrum of this compound obtained from full scan GC-MS analysis of the total hydrocarbon fraction indicates it to be the plasticizer, dibutylphthalate ([Figure 17](#)). As phthalate esters are used extensively in the manufacturing of a wide range of plastics and can be readily leached from plastic material by contact with solvents, plasticizers are a very common type of contaminant in geological samples, especially cuttings. The Reindeer D-27 cuttings samples are small in quantity (*i.e.* 1.5 to 3.8 g) and have been in constant contact with plastic materials (e.g. sample containers). This has inevitably resulted in their uptake of plastic material that may be partly responsible for the irregular Rock-Eval pyrograms (e.g. left shoulder on S2 peaks or broader S2 peaks) observed for

some samples. The amount of plastic material contamination in the powdered cuttings samples is likely to be very significant considering the dominance of plasticizer on the GC traces.

Hydrocarbon composition by GC analysis

Due to the limited amount of sample (1.5 to 3.8 g) available for solvent extraction, the GC traces of the total extracts are overwhelmed by contaminants (*e.g.* plasticizer and solvent impurities), and display poor distributions of petroleum hydrocarbons. The three samples (X11368 to X11370) from the deeper sections (2761.49 m, 3550.92 m and 3706.37 m) of the Reindeer D-27 well show hydrocarbon distributions that are similar to a normal crude oil and mature source rock, with normal alkanes being the dominant components over other aliphatic and aromatic hydrocarbons ([Figure 16](#)). Normal alkanes are barely recognizable for the cuttings samples from the top section of the well. Despite this, a calculation of pristine-to-phytane (Pr/Ph) ratio has been attempted and results are presented in [Table 5](#). The Pr/Ph ratio for all the samples is in the range of 1.0 to 2.3, suggesting a shaly source for the similar range of hydrocarbons in the samples.

Hydrocarbon composition by GC-MS analysis

Hydrocarbon components other than n-alkanes are very abundant in the top three samples (X11364 to X11366) from the Taglu Sequence that are either coal or a mix of coal and shale ([Figure 16](#)). Full scan GC-MS analysis of coal sample X11365 from 1133.86 m depth indicates that its major hydrocarbon components are the bicyclic and tricyclic diterpenoid compounds including isopimarane, 19-norisopimarane, cadalene, retene and simonellite ([Figures 17](#) and [18](#)). These diterpenoids are typical higher plant biomarkers derived from gymnosperms (conifers), some of which have been reported from crude oils and Tertiary Taglu source rocks from the Beaufort-Mackenzie basin (Peters *et al.*, 2005; Snowdon *et al.*, 2004).

To further investigate the hydrocarbon composition of the cuttings samples, GC-MS analysis in selected ion monitoring (SIM) mode was performed on the total hydrocarbon fractions obtained by C18-SPE column separation of solvent extracts from the cuttings samples. The m/z 85 mass chromatograms showing the distribution of acyclic alkanes for the cuttings samples are displayed in [Figure 19](#). It is obvious that normal alkanes (n-alkanes) are the dominant components. The coal or coal containing cuttings samples from the Taglu Sequence (X11364 to X11366) have a bimodal distribution with the front one being at nC₁₅ and the rear one around nC₂₃ to nC₂₅. In addition, all the Taglu samples display an apparent odd-to-even predominance (OEP) in the nC₂₃ to nC₃₅ range of n-alkanes. This is in agreement with their organic immaturity as indicated by their Rock-Eval Tmax values and vitrinite reflectance data ([Tables 1](#) and [3](#)). As with the diterpenoid compounds discussed above, the relatively higher abundance of C₂₃ to C₃₃ high molecular weight (MW) n-alkanes is also the result of abundant higher plant input to these Tertiary coal or coal containing samples.

The carbon number preference or OEP in the distribution of n-alkanes does not exist in the deeper samples from Aklak Sequence (X11367 and X11368 from 1722.12m and 2761.49m) and Arctic Red Formation (X11369 and X11370 from 3550.92m and 3706.37m) ([Figure 19](#)). This is primarily due to their increased maturity and partially due to decreased higher plant input to the

sediments in the deeper sections, especially the Arctic Red Formation. The unimodal and non-OEP n-alkane composition in the Arctic Red samples shows that source rocks in this interval have entered the oil window which is consistent with the Rock-Eval Tmax and vitrinite reflectance results ([Tables 1](#) and [3](#)).

Sample X11367 from 1722.12m of Aklak Sequence has a unimodal distribution of n-alkanes around C₂₂ which is different from the other samples. Rock-Eval analysis produced a bimodal S2 peak ([Figure 15](#)) and an abnormally low Tmax value (304°C) for this sample, suggesting possible heavy hydrocarbon impregnation. However this is not clear from its hydrocarbon composition ([Figure 19](#)). Lighter hydrocarbons are missing at the front end of the distribution (possibly due to evaporative loss?). According to the Reindeer D-27 well history report, oil has been observed in Aklak core (1631.4-1636.8 m and 1857.4-1861.9 m) and cuttings samples (1636.8-1642.9 m, 1661.2-1664.2 m and 1743.5-1746.5 m) at depths above and below sample X11367 and some of these intervals coincide with high Rock-Eval PI values ([Table 3](#) and [Figure 9](#)). Unfortunately, sterane and hopane biomarkers cannot be detected from GC-MS analysis of the total hydrocarbon fractions in the cuttings samples (except the coal or coaly samples) due to their low concentrations and the small amount of extracts available. In samples X11364 and X11365, the major biomarker compound is C₃₁ (R) hopane ([Figure 17](#)), consistent with the immaturity of these samples.

Oil migration/impregnation in the Taglu Sequence?

The Taglu samples have a bimodal distribution of n-alkanes around C₁₅ and C₂₃-C₂₅ at the present condition ([Figure 19](#)). Considering the evaporative loss of volatile components during drilling, transportation, storage and lab preparation, the Taglu Sequence seems to have a high abundance of the hydrocarbon fraction below C₂₀ that has a composition (e.g. Pr/Ph, Pr/nC₁₇ and Ph/nC₁₈) which is not compatible with the abundant higher plant input during deposition and the low maturation level experienced by the host (coaly source) rock. For immature coal and coaly samples, they mostly show a higher abundance of pristine and phytane over nC₁₇ and nC₁₈ alkanes respectively, and higher Pr/Ph than the 1.0 to 2.3 range shown by these Taglu samples. As diesel has not been used during drilling of the well, and the alkane distribution pattern in the C₁₅ to C₂₀ range for the Taglu cuttings samples does not display any feature of diesel, this suggests that the low MW hydrocarbons in the Taglu sequence are unlikely generated *in situ* but rather have likely been sourced from deeper formations/sequences in the oil generation window. This is consistent with numerous observations of oil staining in Taglu samples ([Tables 1](#) and [3](#)).

The distribution of alkyl naphthalenes, types of 2-ring aromatic hydrocarbons that are commonly present in crude oils and source rocks, lends another line of evidence to the above proposed impregnation of Taglu Sequence by crude oil generated in the deeper mature source rocks. The coaly cuttings samples from the Taglu Sequence have a distribution pattern of methyl-, dimethyl- and trimethyl-naphthalenes similar to that from the deeper Arctic Red Formation samples; the Aklak Sequence sample (X11368) shows an even closer match with the Arctic Red samples ([Figure 20](#)). The high abundance of 1,2,5-trimethylnaphthalene relative to other trimethyl naphthalenes (m/z 170) in coal sample X11365 compared with the coaly shales above and below also suggests that a large proportion of <C₂₀ hydrocarbons are sourced externally, probably from deeper and more mature source rocks. Due to the poor quality of the cuttings samples, the

proposed impregnation of the Taglu Sequence by migrated oil at the Reindeer D-27 well location needs to be verified by further investigation utilizing higher quality (preferably core) samples.

Organic Geochemistry of Core Samples from Reindeer D-27 and Tununuk K-10 Wells

To better characterize the thermal maturation, hydrocarbon generation potential, source input and depositional environment of the Tertiary and Cretaceous sections intersected at the Reindeer D-27 and Tununuk K-10 wells, an additional twelve core samples ([Table 6](#)) have been collected from shale or coal intervals in these two wells for Rock-Eval and organic geochemical analysis. New core samples were required because most of the original core samples were consumed during the initial phase of analysis. As discussed above, higher quality core samples avoid some of the drilling contamination and caving problems that can be associated with cuttings samples. The resultant better quality analytical data allows for an improved source rock evaluation.

Rock-Eval results for additional core samples

The additional core samples have been analyzed on Rock-Eval 6 instruments under the same conditions as the cuttings samples. The results are summarized in [Table 6](#) and Rock-Eval pyrograms for each of the twelve core samples are shown in [Figure 21](#). Except sample X11570 from the Taglu coal interval of Reindeer D-27, samples from the shale intervals cored at both wells generally display a TOC content less than 2.5% and HI values below 200, indicating poor hydrocarbon generating potential at the present. This is especially true for the Tertiary successions, considering they are immature to marginally mature. The pyrograms are typical for the Type III organic matter of the coal and shale successions of the Taglu and Aklak sequences, and the more marine sediments of the Arctic Red Formation. The more asymmetric shape of the S2 curves for the two deepest Arctic Red samples (X11512 and X11513) is most likely related to their high maturity ([Figure 21](#)). Compared with cuttings samples from similar depths, the core samples have slightly lower S1 values ([Figure 22](#)), probably due to contamination of cuttings by drilling mud additives. Nevertheless the TOC and S2 values for both cores and cuttings are in similar ranges ([Figure 23](#) and [24](#)).

It has been discussed above that the Tmax-converted %Ro-equivalent values from cuttings samples are generally lower than the petrographically measured percent vitrinite reflectance, especially for the contaminated samples. The Rock-Eval maturity parameter, Tmax, generated on the core samples has been plotted against depth for both wells in [Figure 25](#), together with data obtained on cuttings samples. It appears that the core samples generally have a higher Rock-Eval Tmax than the corresponding cuttings samples, suggesting that Tmax values from core samples may provide a better estimate of thermal maturity than the cuttings. [Figure 26](#) shows a strong positive correlation between the Rock-Eval Tmax from the core samples ([Table 6](#)) and the measured %Ro at similar depths in both wells ([Tables 1](#) and [2](#)).

Thermal maturation and petroleum generation

[Figures 27](#) and [28](#) present the mass chromatograms m/z 217 for the distributions of steranes and m/z 191 for the distributions of terpanes for selected core samples from the Reindeer D-27 and Tununuk K-10 wells, respectively. It is clear that the abundances of thermally more stable

isomers of steranes and terpanes relative to their less stable counterparts increase with increasing depth for both wells. For example, the thermally less stable 20R chiral isomers of C₂₇ to C₂₉ steranes and 22R chiral isomers of C₃₁ to C₃₅ homohopanes predominate over their thermally more stable 20S and 22S counterparts, respectively, in the top Aklak samples, whereas the S chiral isomers become relatively more abundant in the deeper samples regardless of their age. As a result, the 20S/(20S+20R) ratio of C₂₉ $\alpha\alpha\alpha$ steranes and 22S/(22S+22R) ratio of C₃₂ hopanes increase with burial in the top sections of both wells ([Table 7](#)). In addition, the thermally more stable diasteranes become more dominant on the m/z 217 mass chromatograms in the deeper samples than the shallower ones for both wells ([Figures 27](#) and [28](#)). The m/z 217 mass chromatograms of samples from the bottom sections of both wells are dominated by diasteranes, with the less stable regular steranes being minor, suggesting that organic matter in the bottom Arctic Red samples of both wells has experienced severe thermal cracking. The high maturation level is also evident from the dominance C₁₉ to C₂₁ short chain tricyclic terpanes over other tricyclic terpanes and hopanes on the m/z 191 mass chromatograms of samples deeper than 3600m at Reindeer D-27 and 3350m at Tununuk K-10.

Previous studies show that significant hydrocarbon generation starts when the 22R to 22S isomerisation of C₃₁ and C₃₂ hopanes just reach equilibria (approximately 0.57-0.62) and when the 20S/(20S+20R) of C₂₉ $\alpha\alpha\alpha$ steranes is around 0.25 (Peters *et al.*, 2005). Peak oil generation occurs approximately when the 20R to 20S isomerisation of C₂₉ steranes reaches equilibrium with the 20S/(20S+20R) value being around 0.55. Based on these two isomerisation ratios, rocks at a current depth of 3150 m (0.69 %Ro; [Table 1](#)) near the base of the Aklak Sequence reached the top of the oil generation window whereas rocks at 3600 m (0.77 %Ro; [Figure 4](#) and [Table 1](#)) in the Arctic Red Formation attained peak oil generation conditions in the Reindeer D-27 well ([Table 7](#)). These results and the results of thermal modelling constrained using %Ro data ([Figure 5](#)) suggest that source rocks at Reindeer D-27 entered the oil generation window at a paleodepth of approximately 5000 m (approximately 135°C) and reached peak oil generation at a paleodepth of 5400-5500 m (approximately 145-150°C). For Tununuk K-10 well, the analyzed Aklak core sample from 898.53 m is obviously immature; however, source rocks at this location seem to have already reached peak oil generation in the 2535 to 3708m Smoking Hills/Boundary Creek and Arctic Red sections where core samples were collected for this study ([Table 7](#)). Thermal modelling results ([Figure 8](#)) suggest that source rocks in the Tununuk K-10 well reached the oil generation window at a paleodepth of approximately 4400 m (135°C) and peak petroleum generation at approximately 4600 m (140-145°C). The hydrocarbon generation history derived from the biomarker maturity parameters seems to be in agreement with the maturation history based on Rock-Eval Tmax and measured vitrinite reflectance.

Either based on biomarkers, Rock-Eval Tmax or measured vitrinite reflectance, the thermal maturation level of source rocks at Tununuk K-10 is indicated to be higher than that of the source rocks of corresponding depth/age at Reindeer D-27 well. This likely suggests a higher paleothermal gradient at Tununuk K-10 than Reindeer D-27 which is supported by thermal modelling ([Figures 5](#) and [8](#)) and consistent with present thermal conditions (Hu *et al.*, 2014).

Source rock depositional environment and organic input

Cadalene, retene, simoneillite and tetramethyl tetrailins are types of aromatic compounds mainly formed from resinite diterpenoid structures in gymnosperm (*i.e.* conifers) higher plants during diagenesis (van Aarsen *et al.*, 2000; Peters *et al.*, 2005). These compounds are among the major aromatic components in some of the Tertiary Taglu and Aklak shales and coals, but are barely detectable in the Cretaceous Smoking Hills/Boundary Creek and Arctic Red shale core samples ([Figure 29](#)). The relative abundances of these compounds (compared with phenanthrene and naphthalenes) are much lower in the Cretaceous samples than in the Tertiary samples ([Table 7](#)). In addition, some of the Tertiary shale and coal samples also contain tricyclic diterpanes including isopimaranes, abietanes, and phyllocladanes. This is likely a result of the deltaic depositional environment for the Tertiary sediments where a significant portion of the organic input is from the terrestrial vegetation containing resinite precursors (Snowdon, 1980; Snowdon and Powell, 1982). On the other hand, the low abundance of the diterpenoid-related biomarkers in the Cretaceous shales seems to suggest that terrestrial input was insignificant during their deposition in an inferred marine depositional environment.

The Tertiary coal and shale samples also have a much higher relative abundance of perylene compared with the Cretaceous Smoking Hills/Boundary Creek and Arctic Red shale samples. Perylene is a major peak on the total ion chromatograms (TICs) of aromatic fractions and dominates over benzo(e)pyrene, a polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon (PAH) of same molecular weight as perylene but with a pyrogenic origin ([Figure 29](#)). Its concentration relative to other PAHs such phenanthrene, benzofluoranthenes and benzopyrenes are orders of magnitude higher in the Tertiary deltaic sediments than in the Cretaceous shale samples ([Table 7](#)). Despite being a PAH as well, perylene has been proposed to be of diagenetic origin, and is likely related to terrestrial input in a reducing environment including wood-degrading fungi, insects and plant pigments in which precursor structures of perylene have been detected (Aizenshtat, 1973; Silliman *et al.*, 2000; Jiang *et al.*, 2000; Grice *et al.*, 2009). Thus the abundant occurrence of perylene in the Taglu and Aklak core samples is a reflection of their deltaic depositional environments where organic inputs are dominated by higher plants bodies and the associated fungi, bacteria and insects that degrade them. As with the scarcity of diterpenoid compounds, the low concentration of perylene in the Cretaceous shale extracts also indicates a limited terrestrial influence on their deposition.

DISCUSSION

Anomalous Rock-Eval pyrograms (*e.g.* multi-modal S2 curves, asymmetric S2 curves with shoulders, etc.) and anomalous values for Rock-Eval parameters such as Tmax and PI ([Tables 3](#) and [4](#) and [Figures 9](#) and [12](#)) are common and observed for both cuttings and core samples from the Reindeer D-27 and Tununuk K-10 wells. However, the factors causing these anomalies (drilling or storage-related contamination of samples or geological factors) may be different for the two sample types. In general, core samples from both wells have lower S1 ([Figure 22](#)) and higher Tmax ([Figure 25](#)) values than cuttings samples whereas TOC ([Figure 23](#)) and S2 ([Figure 24](#)) values are similar for both types of sample. Furthermore, some of the core Tmax-derived organic maturity values are in close agreement with measured %Ro values for inferred indigenous vitrinite macerals whereas many of the cuttings Tmax-based estimates are

systematically too low, particularly for the Reindeer D-27 well ([Figures 11, 14](#) and [26](#)). This strongly suggests that cuttings samples are affected by drilling-related contamination through the addition of organic-based mud additives (recorded in the well history mud reports) that preferentially increase S1 (and derived PI) values and decrease Tmax values. This preferential suppression of cuttings Tmax values suggests that drilling contamination has had a larger effect on Reindeer D-27 Rock-Eval parameters than inferred from a simple analysis of the shape of pyrograms ([Figure 11](#)). GC and GC-MS analysis of extracts from seven Reindeer D-27 cuttings samples shows that the powdered samples are contaminated by the plasticizer, dibutylphthalate ([Figures 16](#) and [17](#)), derived from the plastic sample vials and this can affect Rock-Eval parameters in the same way as organic mud additives, depending on the size of the samples.

Geological factors such as the presence of oil and bitumen (observed petrographically and noted in well history sample descriptions; [Tables 1, 3](#) and [4](#)) have a similar effect on Rock-Eval parameters as organic mud additives (increased S1, reduced Tmax, distorted pyrograms, etc.) and affect both core and cuttings samples. Recycled organic matter is common in the Iperk, Richards and Taglu sequences of the Reindeer D-27 well ([Table 1](#)), and in the Iperk and Aklak sequences, and lower part of the Arctic Red Formation in the Tununuk K-10 well ([Table 2](#)), and is associated with anomalously high Tmax values in core and cuttings samples ([Figures 11](#) and [14](#)). Coal-rich samples are abundant in the Taglu Sequence of the Reindeer D-27 well and they have broad, unimodal S2 peaks ([Figure 15](#)) and are associated with high TOC (typically 5-50 wt %) and reduced Tmax (generally < 420°C) values ([Table 3](#); [Figure 9](#)). In general, Tmax decreases with increasing TOC for the coal samples.

Between 60-90 % of sample pyrograms for the Tununuk K-10 well are anomalous (excluding samples from the Smoking Hills/Boundary Creek succession where >70 % of pyrograms show minimal disturbance) ([Table 4](#)). Although oil staining and bitumen were observed in some samples, a significant number of organic mud additives were used for the Tununuk K-10 well, suggesting that drilling contamination may be the main factor affecting Rock-Eval parameters along with organic matter recycling. In general, samples from the Reindeer D-27 well contain more indigenous organic matter and have fewer anomalous pyrograms. The number of anomalous pyrograms appears to decrease with depth: Iperk and Richards sequences (80-90 %), Taglu Sequence (38 %), Aklak Sequence (29 %) and Arctic Red Formation (1 %) ([Table 3](#)). Oil staining, exudatinitite, hydrocarbon fluid inclusions and bitumen are observed in samples from the Taglu, Aklak and Arctic Red successions and these could distort sample pyrograms and contribute to higher PI values and reduced Tmax values (in addition to mud additives and coal). The distribution of low molecular weight n-alkanes ([Figure 19](#)) and alkyl naphthalenes ([Figure 20](#)) in extracts of Taglu cuttings samples from the Reindeer D-27 well suggest that petroleum has migrated from the Arctic Red Formation into the overlying Taglu (and probably Aklak) Sequence.

In spite of significant sample contamination, integrated analysis of multi-parameter petrological, geochemical and anhydrous pyrolysis data has yielded reliable and consistent new data on the thermal maturity and nature of organic matter in the Cenozoic and Cretaceous successions of the Reindeer D-27 and Tununuk K-10 wells. The most reliable estimates of organic maturity for these wells are from vitrinite reflectance measurements ([Figures 4](#) and [7](#)) because indigenous vitrinite macerals were analysed selectively, thus minimizing the perturbing effects of geological

(recycling, oil staining) and drilling contamination (caving and mixing of cuttings). The abundance of core samples greatly enhances the quality and reliability of the interpretations by providing key depth control points for interpreting cuttings samples that may contain mixed material from variable depth intervals. Rock-Eval Tmax data provide independent confirmation of organic maturity levels for samples with minimal contamination (especially core samples). There is good agreement between Tmax and %Ro values for core samples from the Aklak and Arctic Red successions in the Reindeer D-27 well ([Figure 11](#)), and for core and cuttings samples from the Smoking Hills/Boundary Creek and upper Arctic Red successions in the Tununuk K-10 well ([Figure 14](#)). Apatite fission track age and length parameters for core samples from the Reindeer D-27 well show variable partial annealing that is consistent with measured %Ro values for the organically immature Taglu and Aklak sequences ([Figure 6](#)). Biomarker ratios (sterane and terpane isomers) ([Figures 27](#) and [28](#); [Table 7](#)) for core extracts provide independent information for the top of the oil generation window and peak oil generation in the deeper, organically mature sections of both wells in accordance with %Ro and Tmax data. In addition, hydrocarbon compositions of extracts show qualitative agreement with the level of maturity based on %Ro and Tmax data. The overall agreement among the multiple paleotemperature indicators gives us a high degree of confidence in the thermal maturity results.

Simple thermal/burial models that use assumed pre-Iperk erosion magnitudes of 2200 m and 2300 m, and time invariant geothermal gradients equal to the present values of 25.2°C/km and 28.6°C/km for the Reindeer D-27 and Tununuk K-10 wells, respectively, provide good fits to the observed organic maturity data using the new basin%Ro kinetic model for vitrinite reflectance ([Figures 5](#) and [8](#)). The older vitrinite reflectance models of Middleton (1982) and Sweeney and Burnham (1990; EASY%Ro) require significantly lower geothermal gradients and larger erosion estimates to fit the Reindeer D-27 data. The higher maturity Tununuk K-10 data cannot be fit using the popular EASY%Ro model no matter how the geothermal gradient and erosion magnitude are adjusted. The simplest explanation is that the calibration between temperature and vitrinite reflectance is incorrect for these older models.

Consistent with previous work, petrographic observations, Rock-Eval data ([Figures 9, 10, 12 and 13](#)), and biomarker geochemistry ([Figures 17, 18 and 29](#); [Table 7](#)) show that organic matter in the Cenozoic Taglu and Aklak sequences is dominated by higher plant (gymnosperm) input in a deltaic depositional environment with generally poor source rock character. Conversely, the Cretaceous Smoking Hills/Boundary Creek and Arctic Red formations have low amounts of terrestrial organic matter in accordance with deposition under marine conditions that may be more conducive to source rock development. Thermal modelling (constrained using biomarker and %Ro data) suggests that source rocks would have started to generate oil at approximately 135°C at paleodepths of approximately 5000 m and 4400 m, and reached peak oil generation at approximately 145°C at paleodepths of 5400-5500 m and 4600 m, for the Reindeer D-27 and Tununuk K-10 wells, respectively, probably during late Eocene-Oligocene time. Oils generated in the marine Cretaceous rocks probably migrated through the overlying deltaic successions, consistent with petrographic, Rock-Eval and geochemical evidence for migrated oil. Due to extensive erosion and the unknown attributes of the source rocks, the timing of oil generation is uncertain but ongoing apatite fission track thermochronology studies will provide useful limits on the time of maximum temperature. Overall, maturity models suggest that the Reindeer D-27 and Tununuk K-10 successions reached similar maximum burial depths but maximum

paleotemperatures were higher at Tununuk K-10 (176°C) than at Reindeer D-27 (155°C) due to a higher geothermal gradient.

CONCLUSIONS

Vitrinite reflectance, Rock-Eval, and organic geochemical analyses for cuttings and core samples from the Reindeer D-27 and Tununuk K-10 wells contribute new data for regional thermal maturity and petroleum system studies and provide valuable reference data for interpreting new and legacy Rock-Eval data for exploration wells in the Beaufort-Mackenzie Basin. Cuttings and core samples from both wells have anomalous Rock-Eval pyrograms and parameters that can be attributed to sample contamination (organic drilling mud additives and plasticizer from sample vials) and geological factors (organic recycling, oil staining and coal). The most significant factor for both wells is drilling contamination that preferentially affects cuttings samples by increasing their S₁ values and reducing their T_{max} values relative to core samples. Coal samples, which occur in abundance in the Taglu Sequence of the Reindeer D-27 well, have anomalously low T_{max} values whereas organic recycling is common in both wells and associated with anomalously high T_{max} values. Oil staining occurs in zones with high Rock-Eval PI values within the Taglu and Aklak sequences of the Reindeer D-27 well and, based on geochemical analyses, this may represent oil that has migrated from mature, marine rocks of the underlying Arctic Red Formation. Integration of vitrinite reflectance, Rock-Eval, biomarker, and apatite fission track data yields consistent and reliable thermal maturity data for the Cretaceous and Cenozoic successions in the two study wells. Thermal modelling suggests that marine Cretaceous rocks in both wells entered the oil generation window at temperatures >135°C during late Eocene-Oligocene time. The new basin%Ro kinetic model for vitrinite reflectance gives good fits to the %Ro data for both wells using time-invariant geothermal gradients equal to the present values. The widely-used EASY%Ro model systematically misfits the data, suggesting a miscalibration between temperature and vitrinite reflectance for this model.

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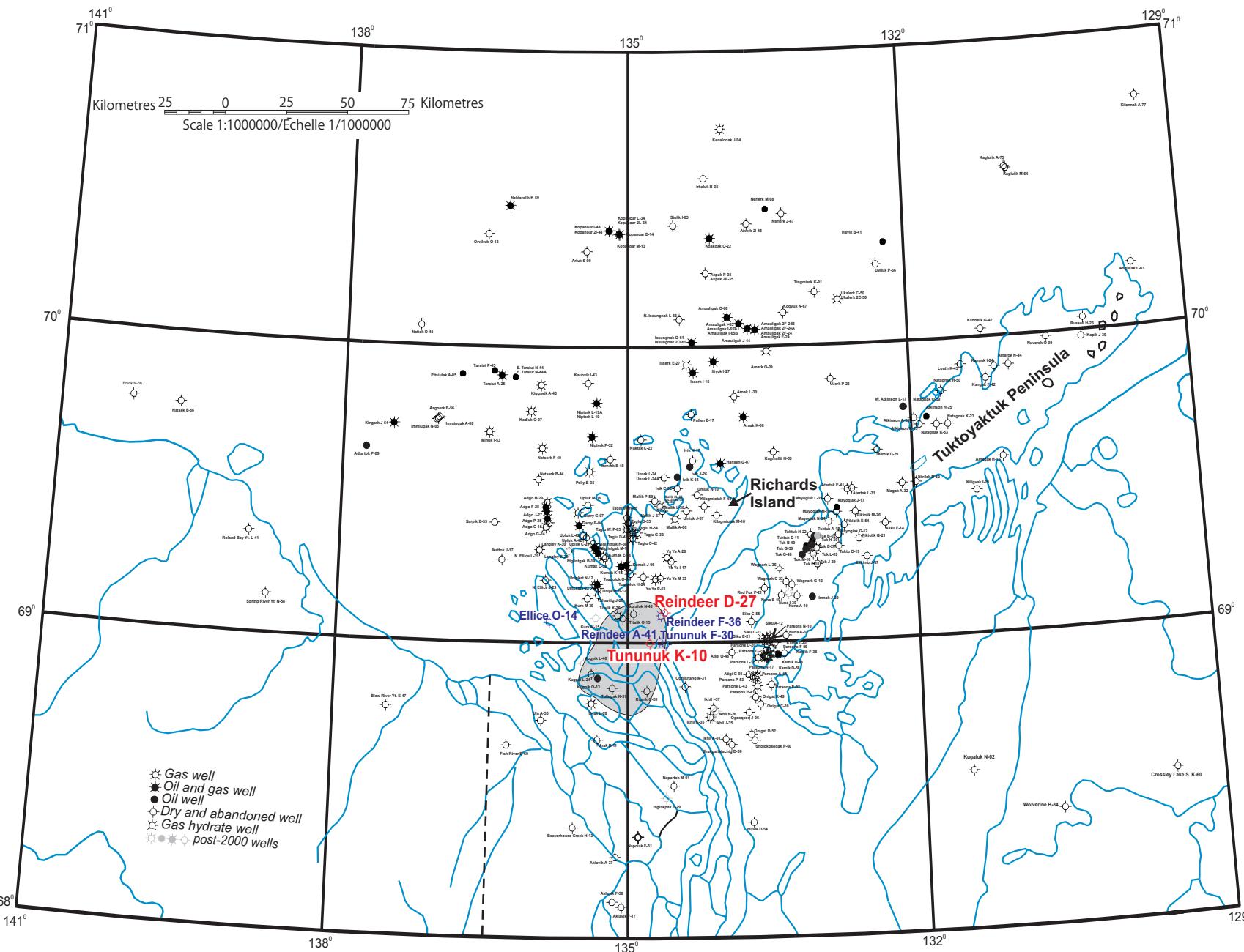


Figure 1. Location map for the two study wells (in red) with vitrinite reflectance, Rock-Eval, GC, and GC-MS data, Beaufort-Mackenzie Basin, NWT. Light grey shaded region outlines the Tununuk High, an area of folded Tertiary strata. Other wells mentioned in the text are shown in blue.

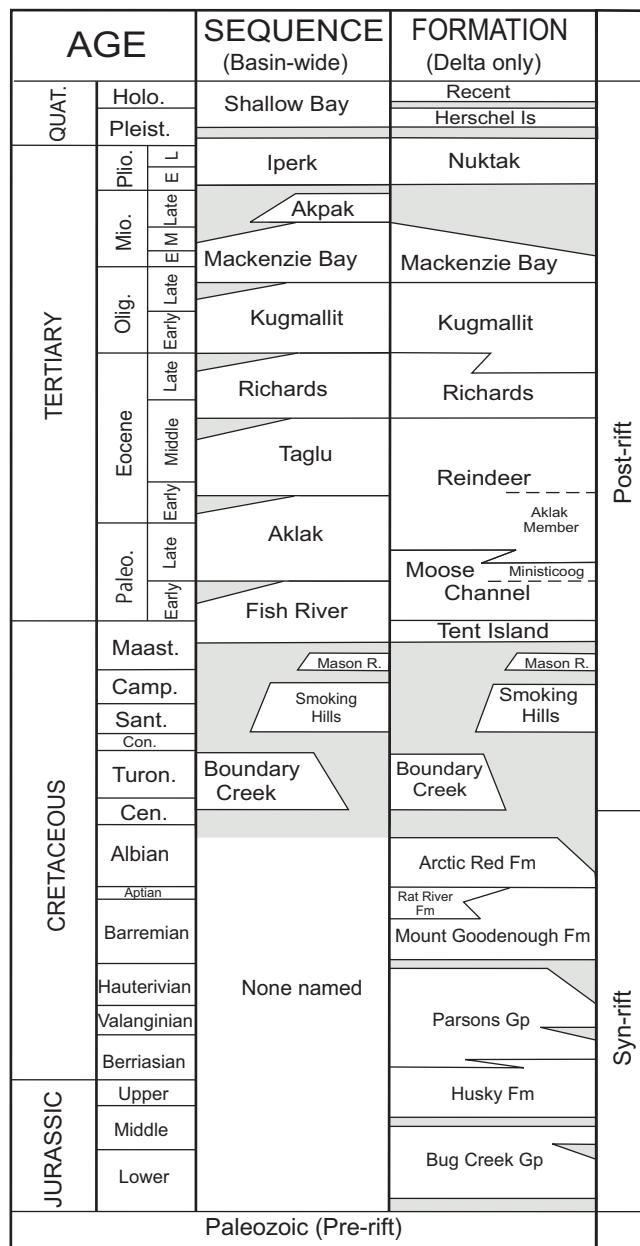


Figure 2. Stratigraphy of the Beaufort-Mackenzie region (modified after J. Dixon, personal communication, 2009).

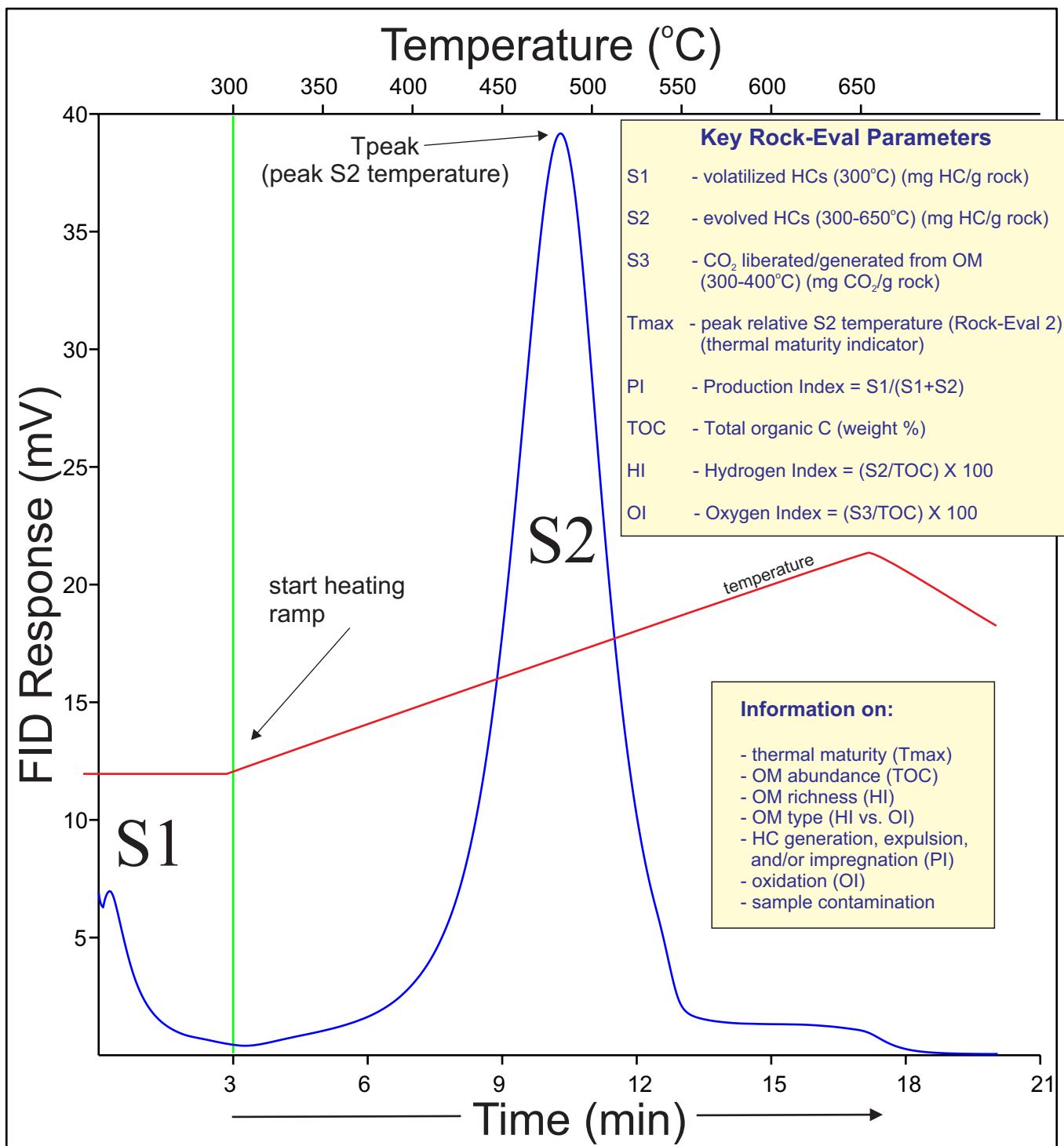


Figure 3. Rock-Eval 6 pyrogram showing the S1 and S2 curves for a sample standard (S3 not shown). Hydrocarbons are measured using a flame ionization detector (FID).

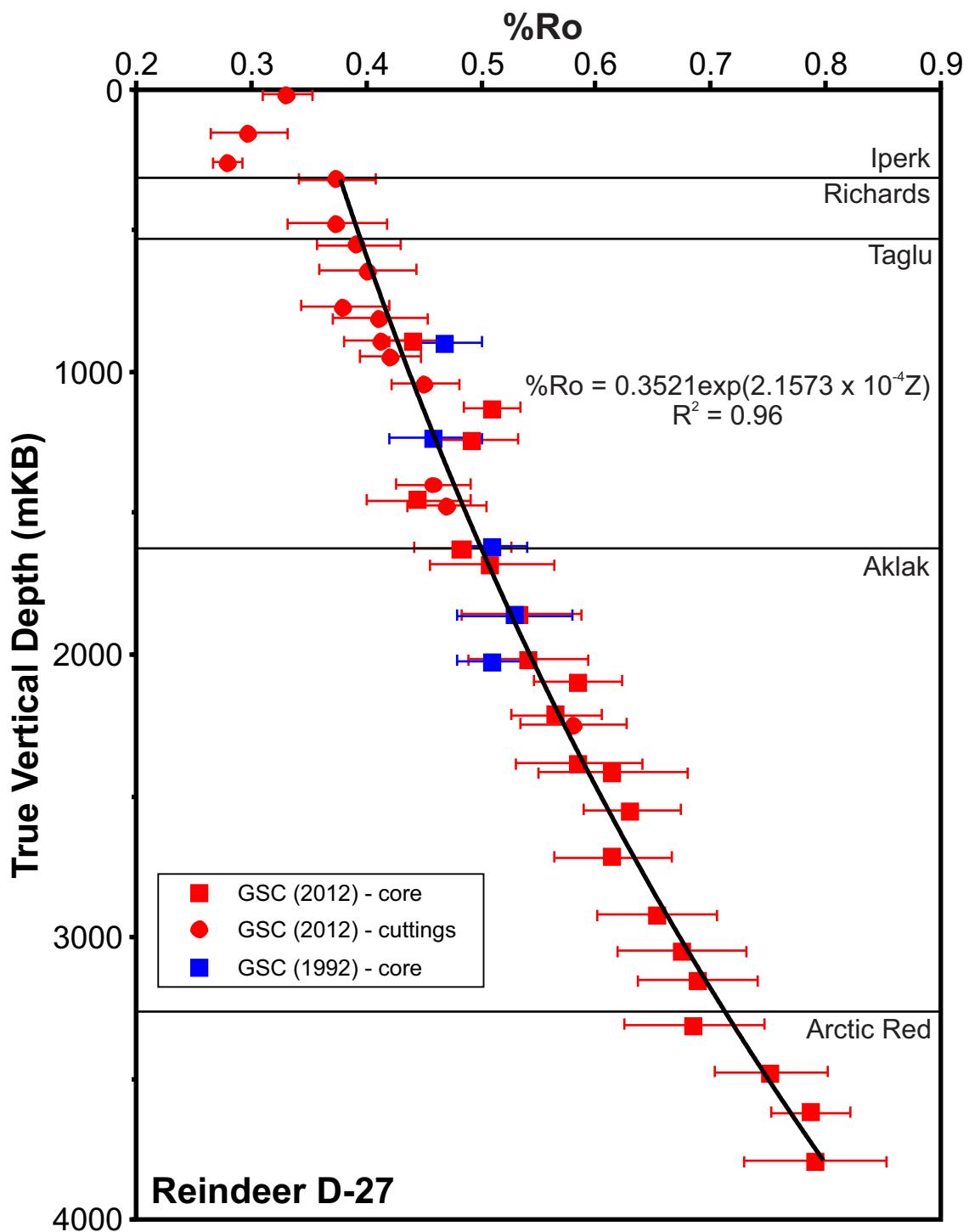


Figure 4. Random percent vitrinite reflectance in oil (%Ro) for samples from the Reindeer D-27 well. Measured depths were corrected to true vertical depth with respect to Kelly Bushing elevation using the borehole deviation survey in the well history report.

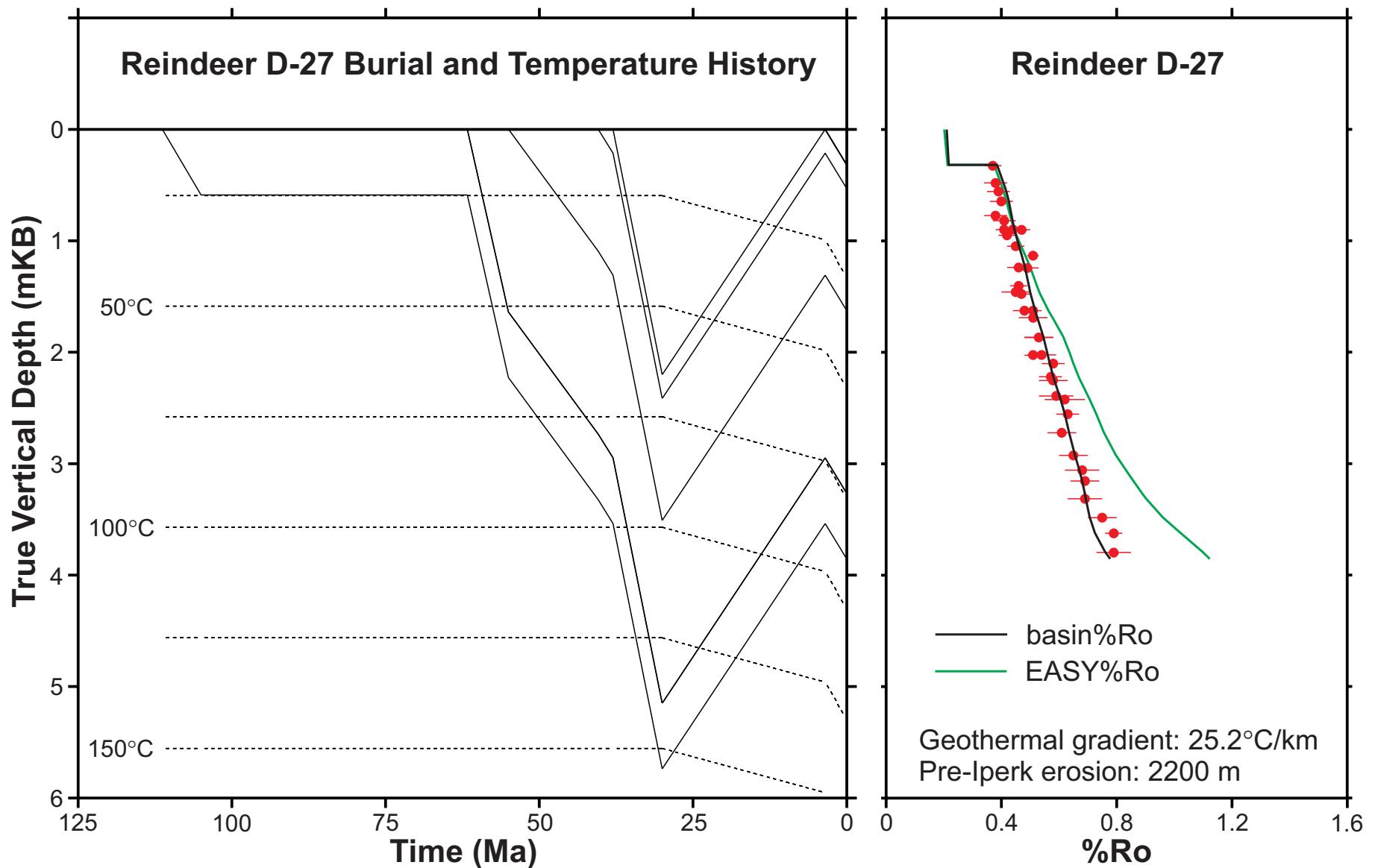


Figure 5. Left panel shows a simple thermal and burial history model for the Reindeer D-27 well assuming a constant geothermal gradient equal to the present value and 2200 m of pre-Iperk Sequence erosion. Right panel shows a comparison of observed and calculated %Ro values (using basin%Ro) derived from the thermal history reconstruction. EASY%Ro misfits the data if the present geothermal gradient is used.

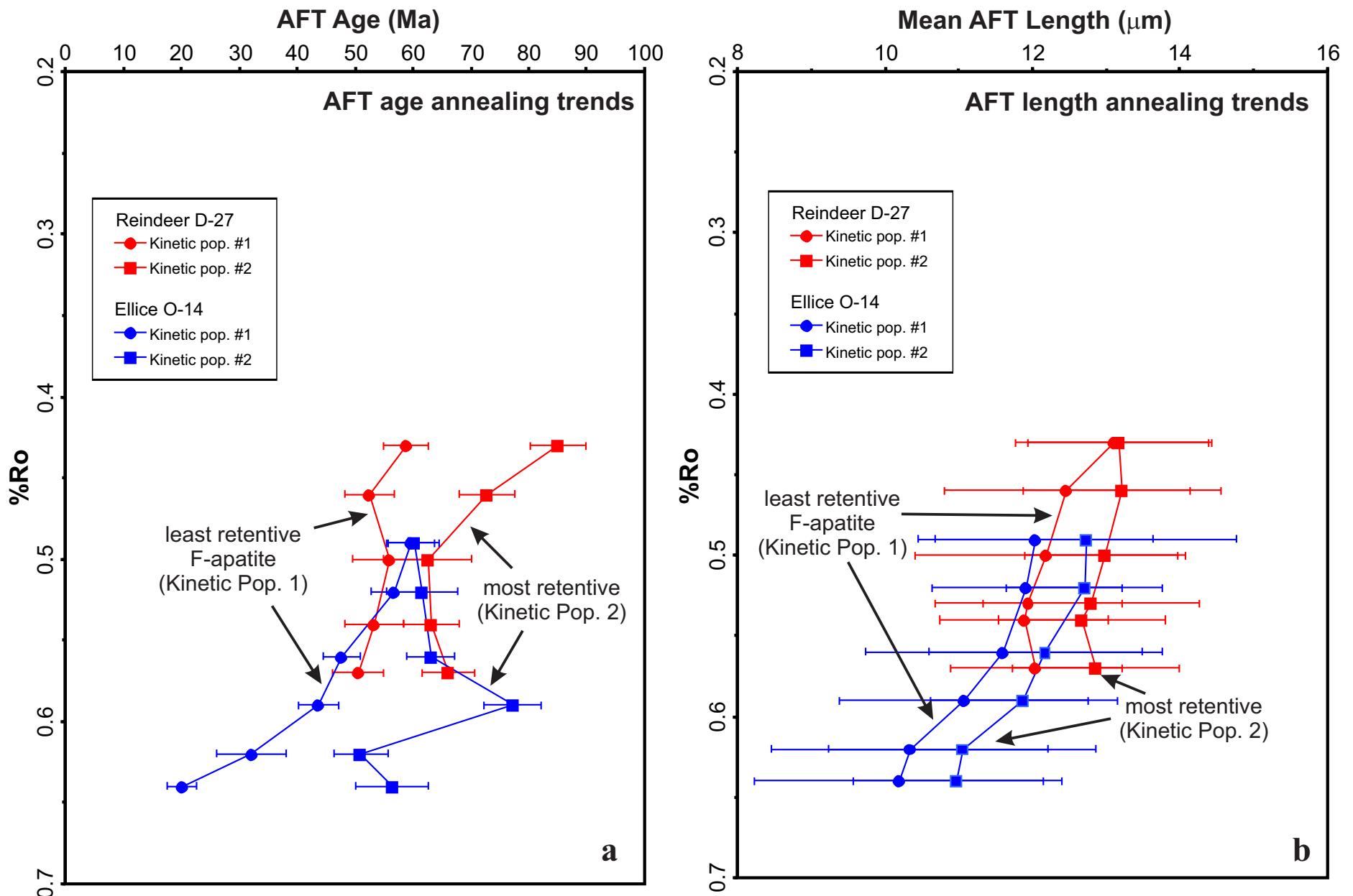


Figure 6. Comparison of apatite fission track (AFT) thermal annealing trends with vitrinite reflectance (%Ro). AFT age (a) and mean AFT length (b) versus %Ro for the Reindeer D-27 and Ellice O-14 wells. Both wells contain samples with two apatite populations with different annealing kinetics. See text for more details.

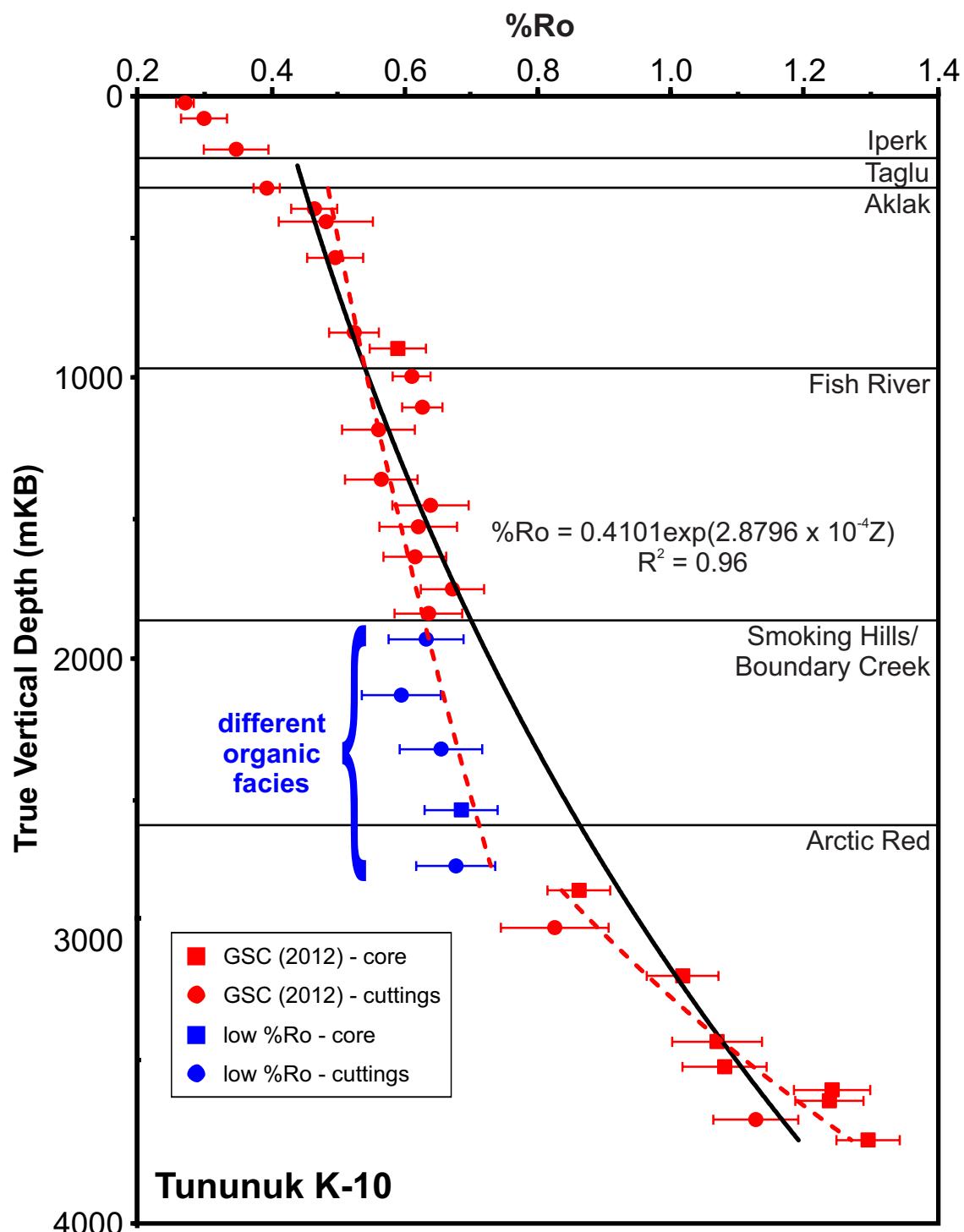


Figure 7. Random percent vitrinite reflectance in oil (%Ro) for samples from the Tununuk K-10 well. Measured depths were corrected to true vertical depth with respect to Kelly Bushing using borehole deviation survey in well history report.

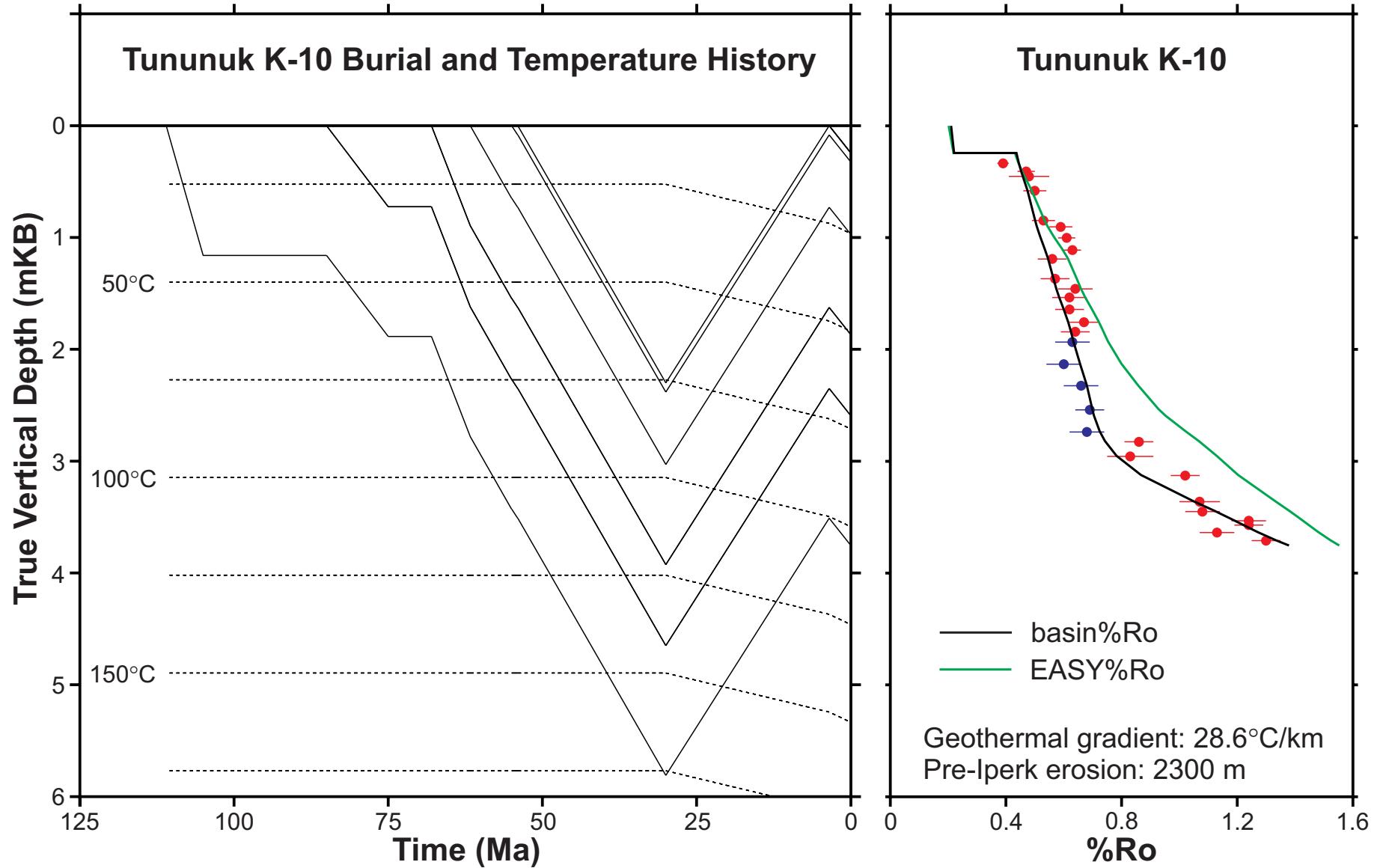


Figure 8. Left panel shows a simple thermal and burial history model for the Tununuk K-10 well assuming a constant geothermal gradient equal to the present value and 2300 m of pre-Iperk Sequence erosion. Right panel shows a comparison of observed and calculated %Ro values (using basin%Ro) derived from the thermal history reconstruction. EASY%Ro misfits the data if the present geothermal gradient is used.

Reindeer D-27

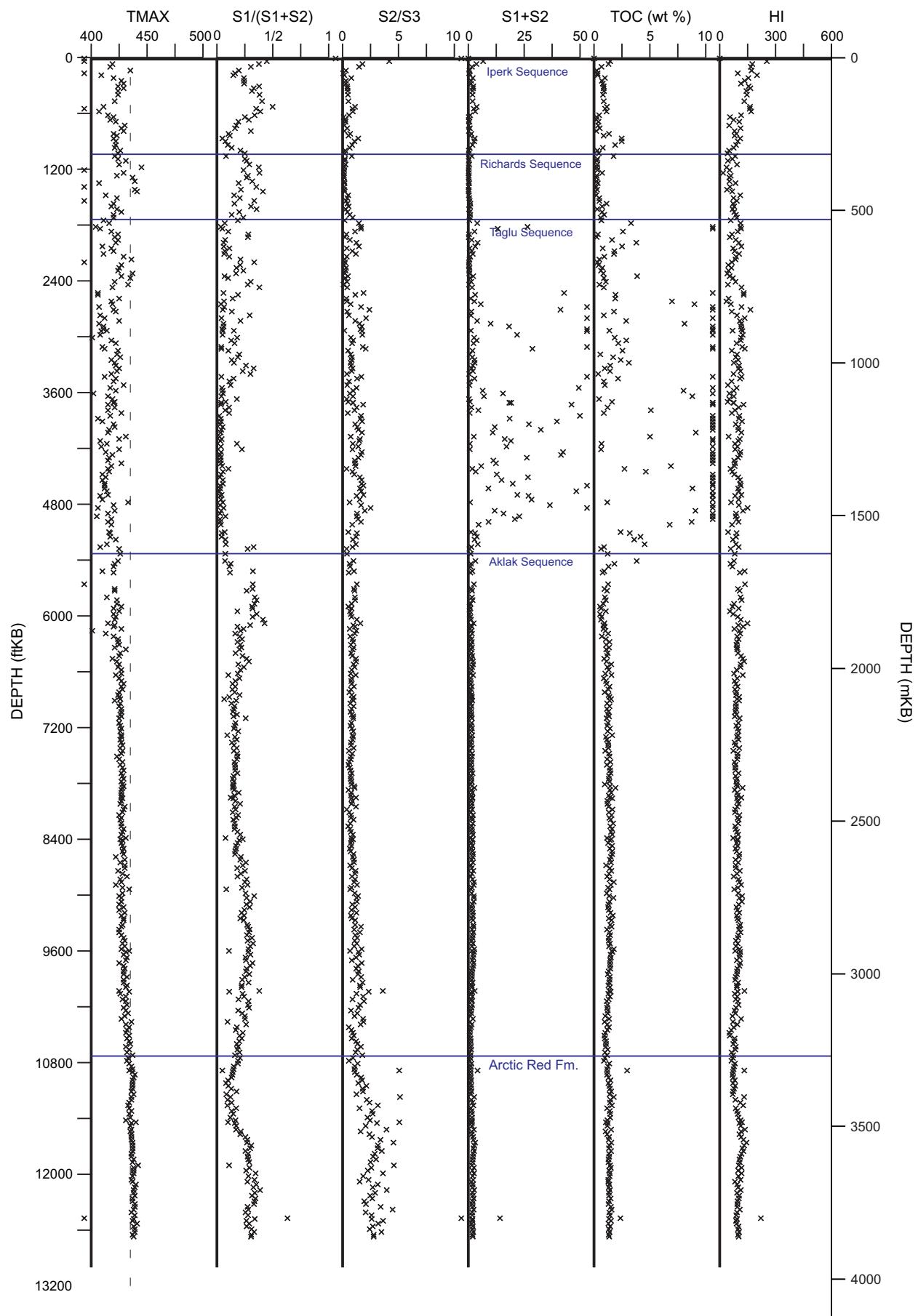


Figure 9. Selected Rock-Eval 6 parameters versus depth (displayed in Rock-Eval 2 format) for the Reindeer D-27 well.

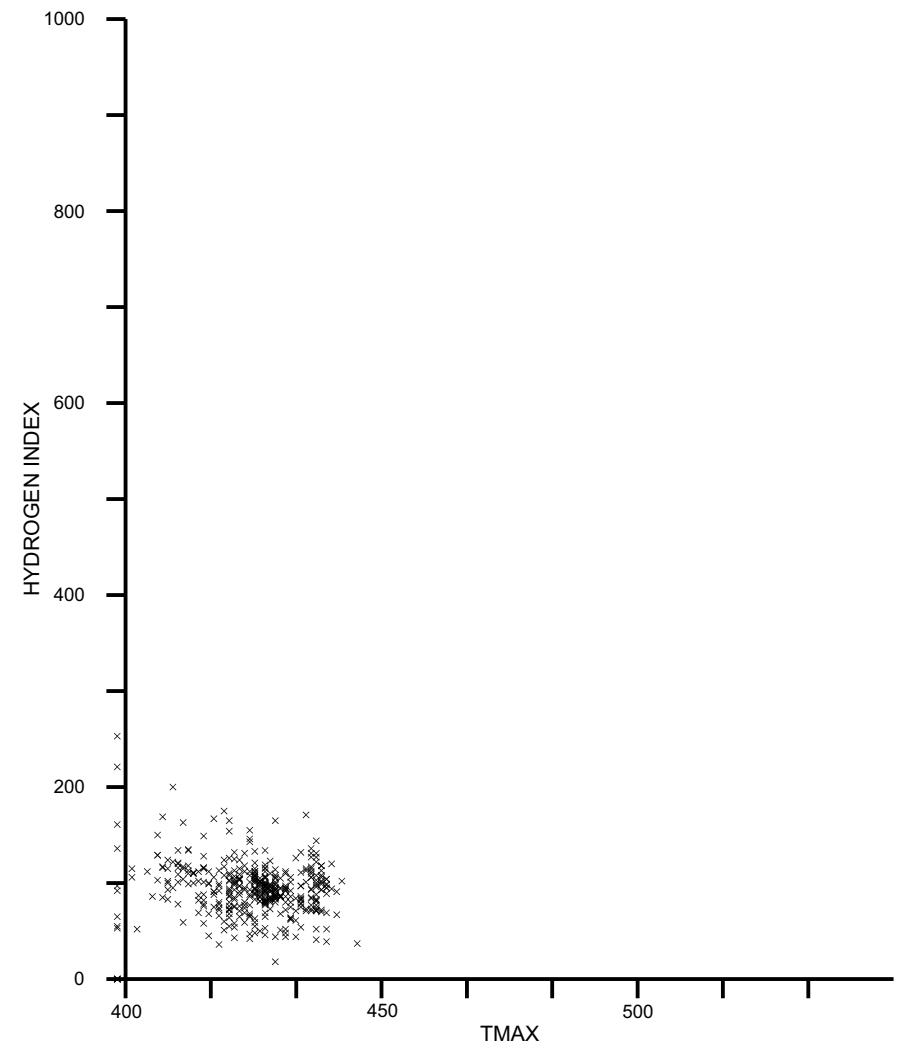
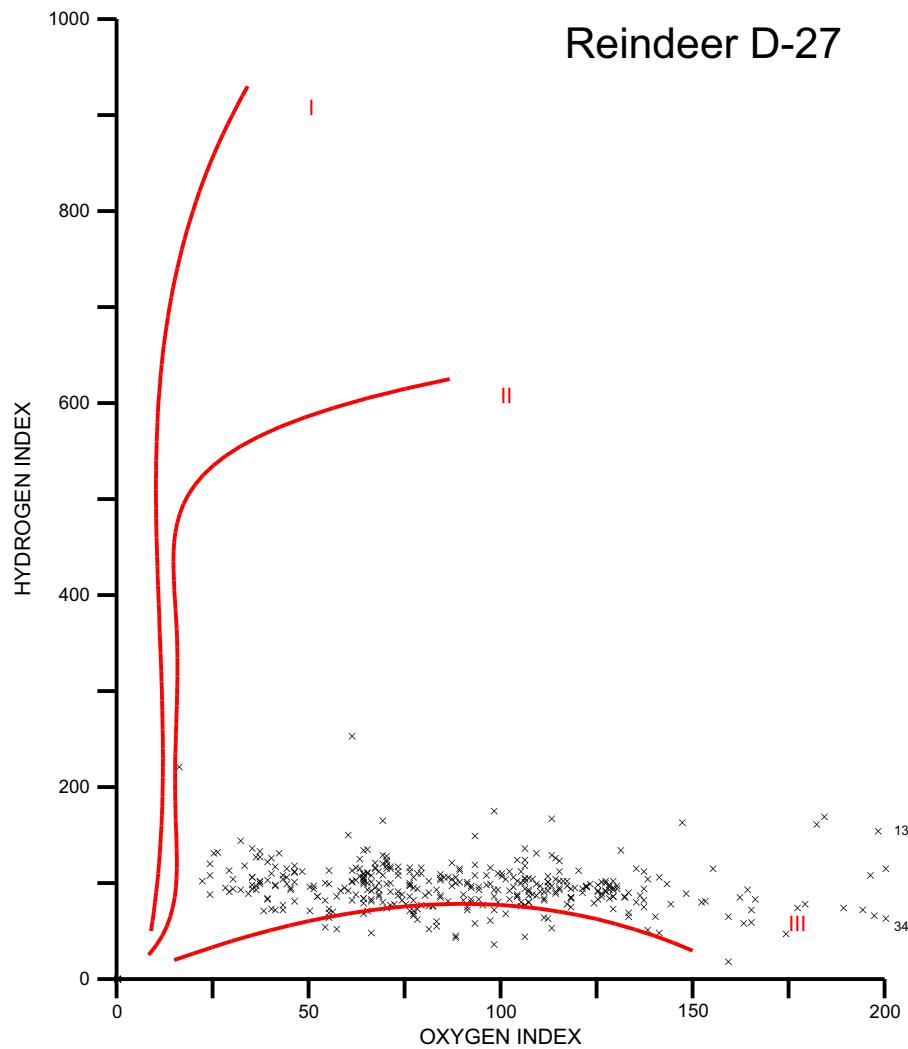


Figure 10. Whole rock HI versus OI (left) and HI versus Tmax (right) for the Reindeer D-27 well. Organic maturation pathways (red curves) are shown for different end member organic matter types - Type I (oil-prone, usually lacustrine), Type II (oil-prone, marine) and Type III (gas-prone, terrestrial).

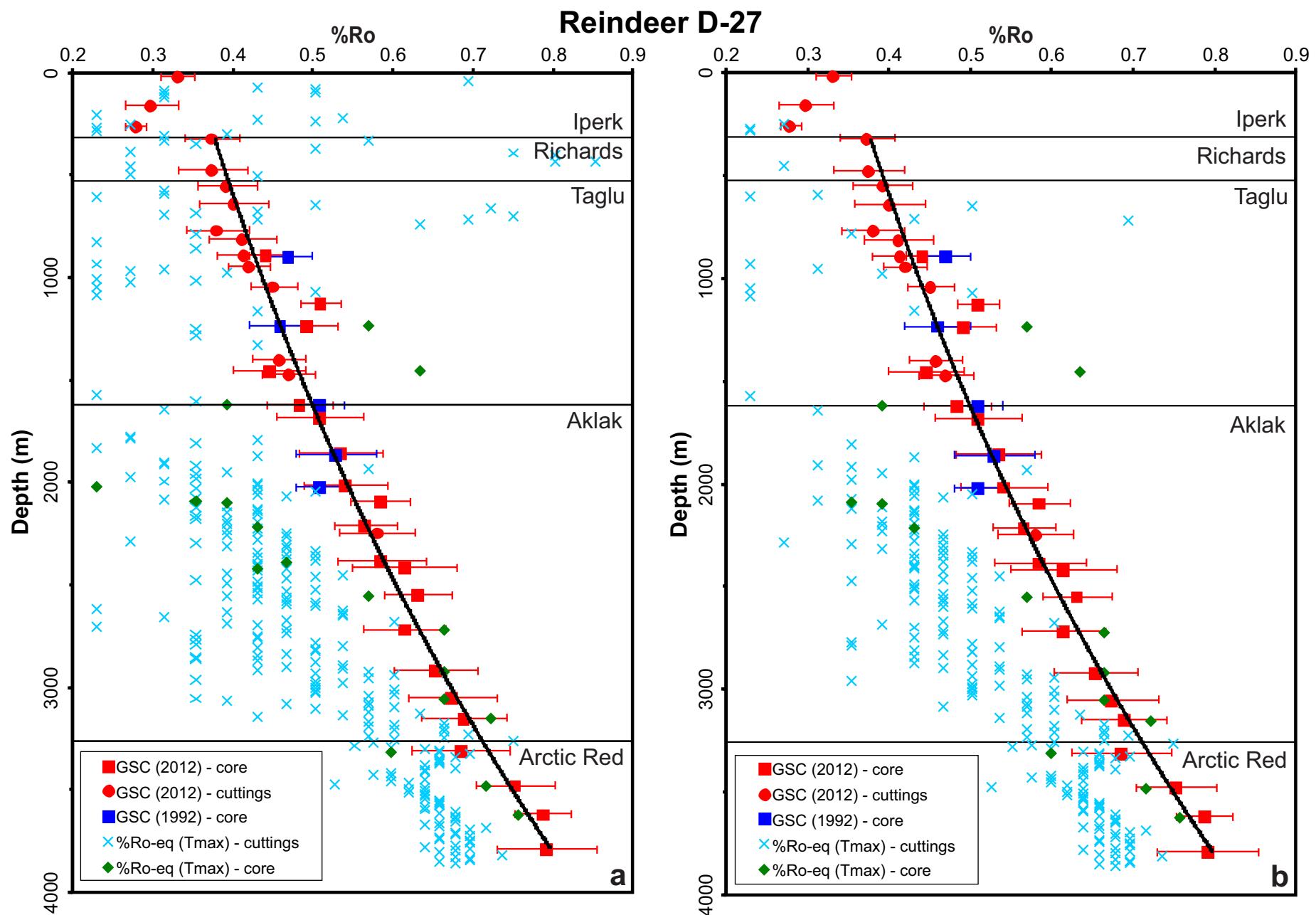


Figure 11. Comparison of measured %Ro with %Ro-equivalent values determined from Tmax for the Reindeer D-27 well. (a) All Tmax data and (b) Tmax values for least disturbed pyrograms.

Tununuk K-10

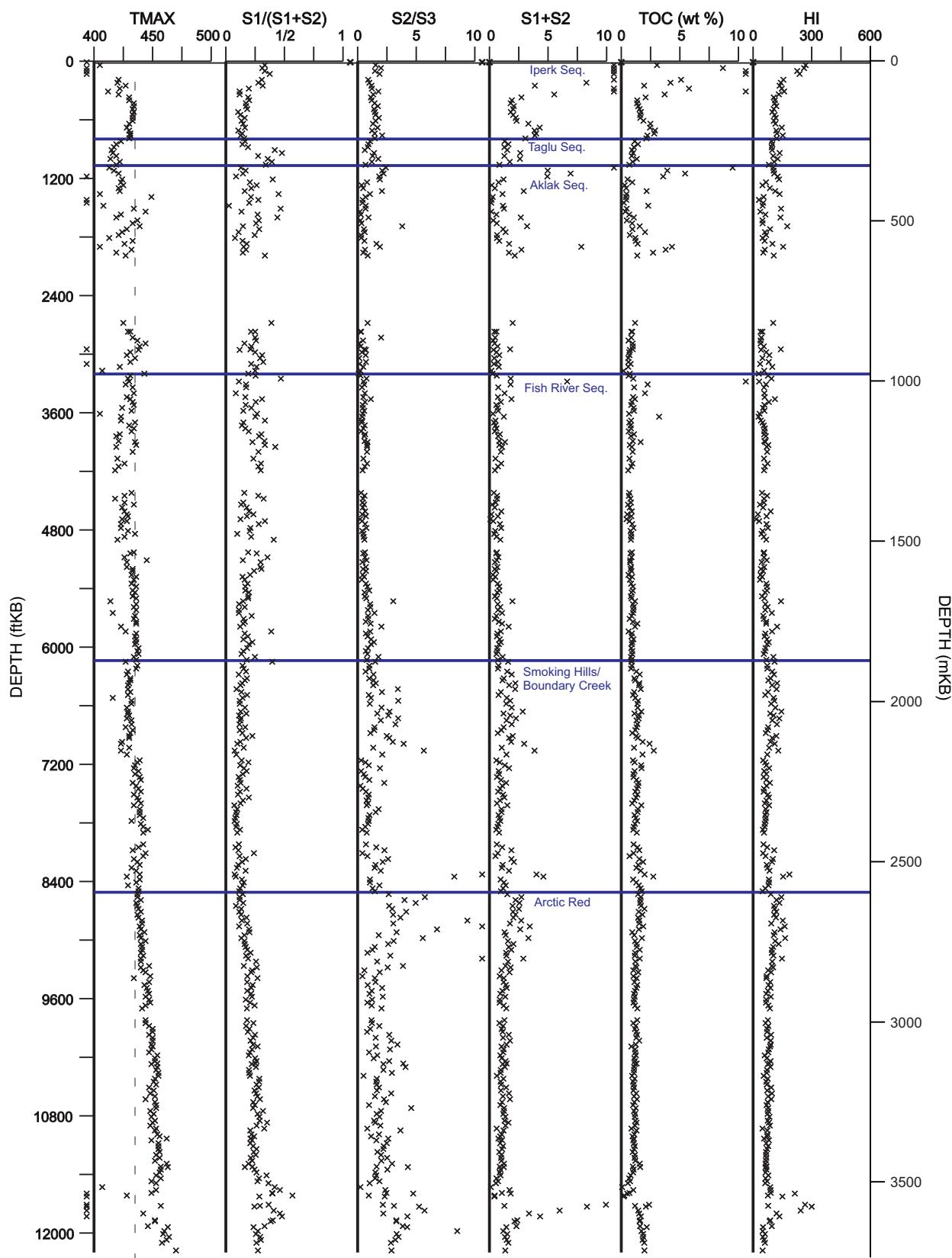


Figure 12. Selected Rock-Eval 6 parameters versus depth (displayed in Rock-Eval 2 format) for the Tununuk K-10 well.

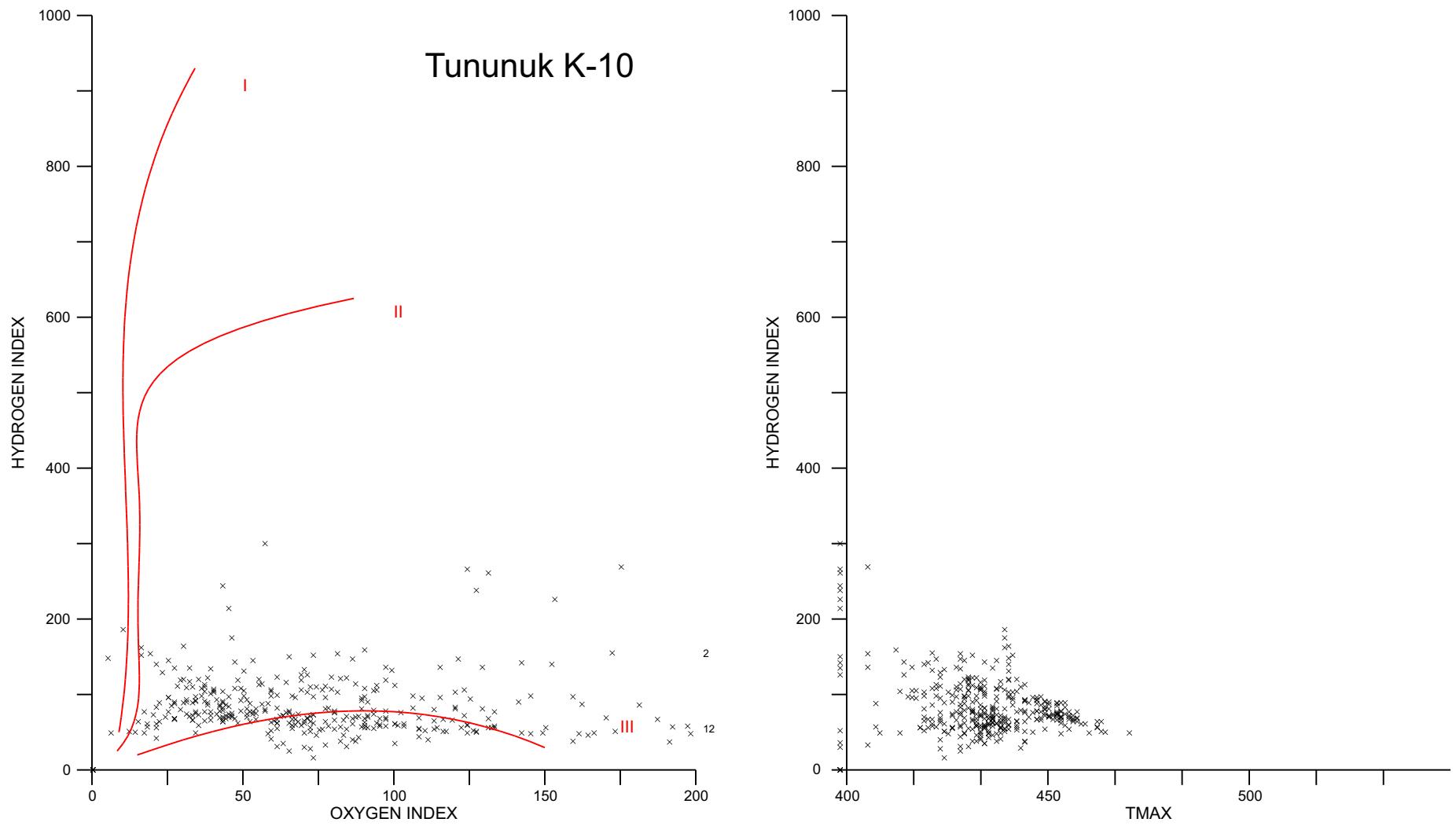


Figure 13. Whole rock HI versus OI (left) and HI versus Tmax (right) for the Tununuk K-10 well. Organic maturation pathways (red curves) are shown for different end member organic matter types - Type I (oil-prone, usually lacustrine), Type II (oil-prone, marine) and Type III (gas-prone, terrestrial).

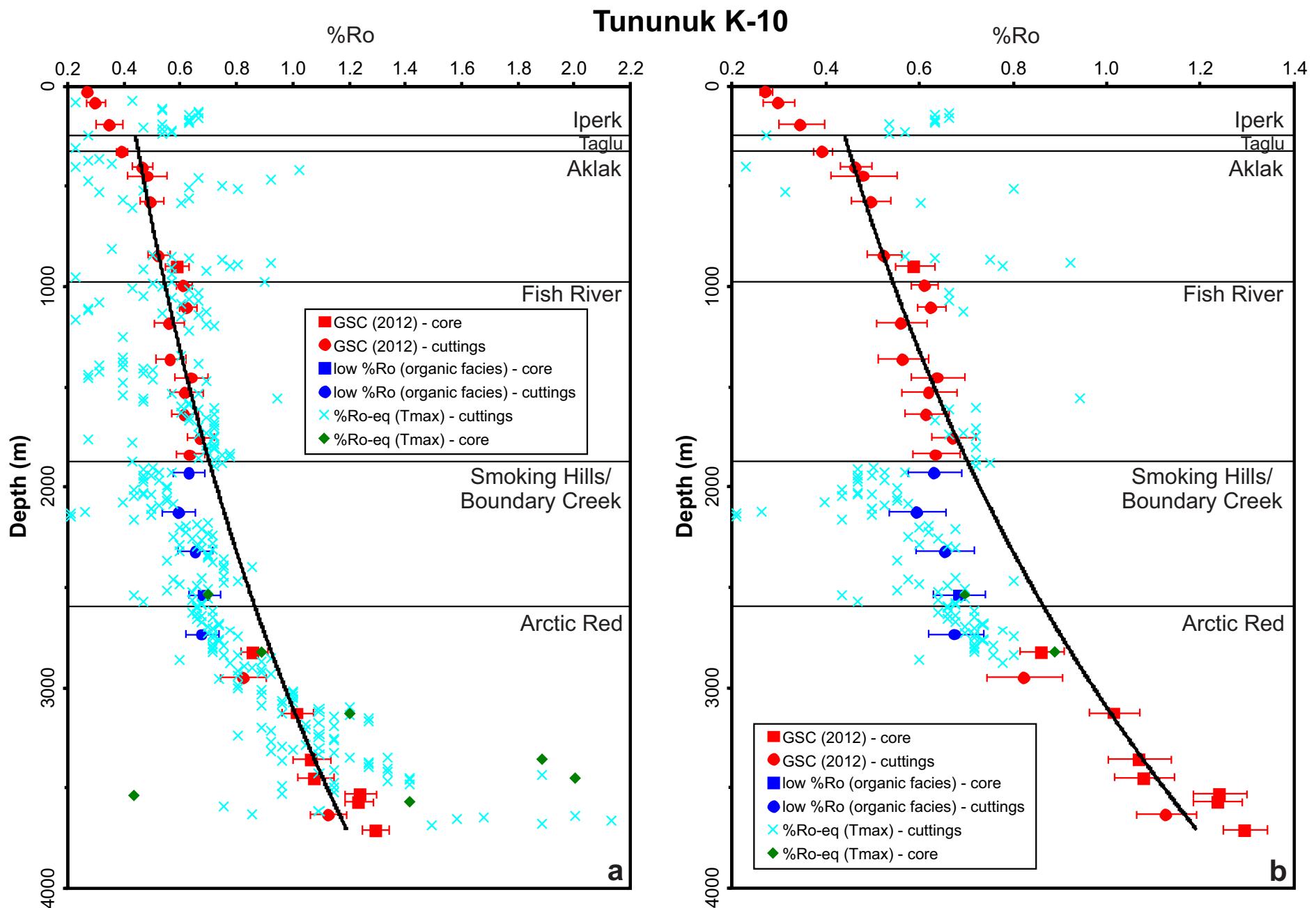


Figure 14. Comparison of measured %Ro with %Ro-equivalent values determined from Tmax for the Tununuk K-10 well. (a) All Tmax data and (b) Tmax values for least disturbed pyrograms.

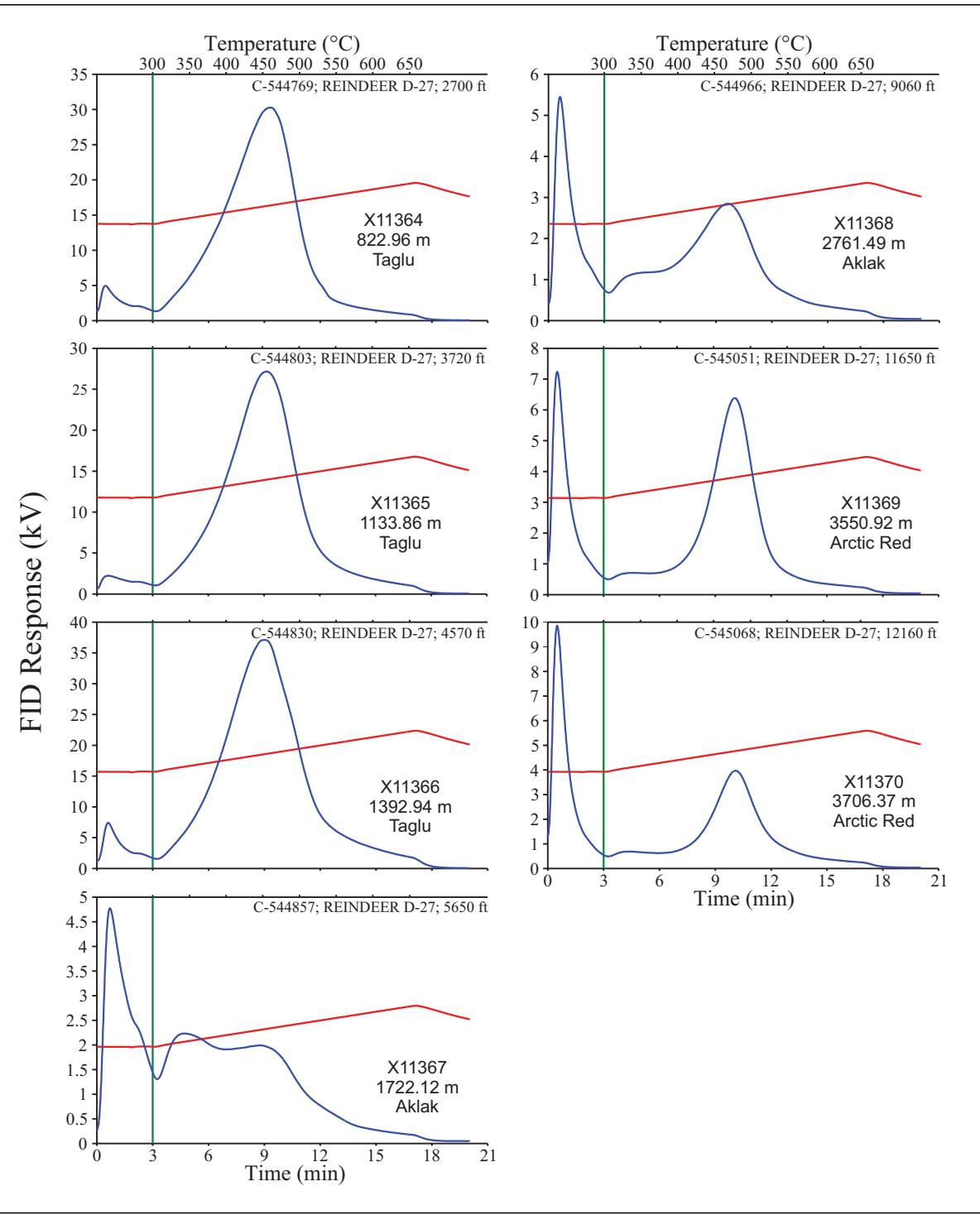


Figure 15. Rock-Eval pyrograms for cuttings samples from the Reindeer D-27 well that were selected for solvent extraction and GC and GC-MS analysis.

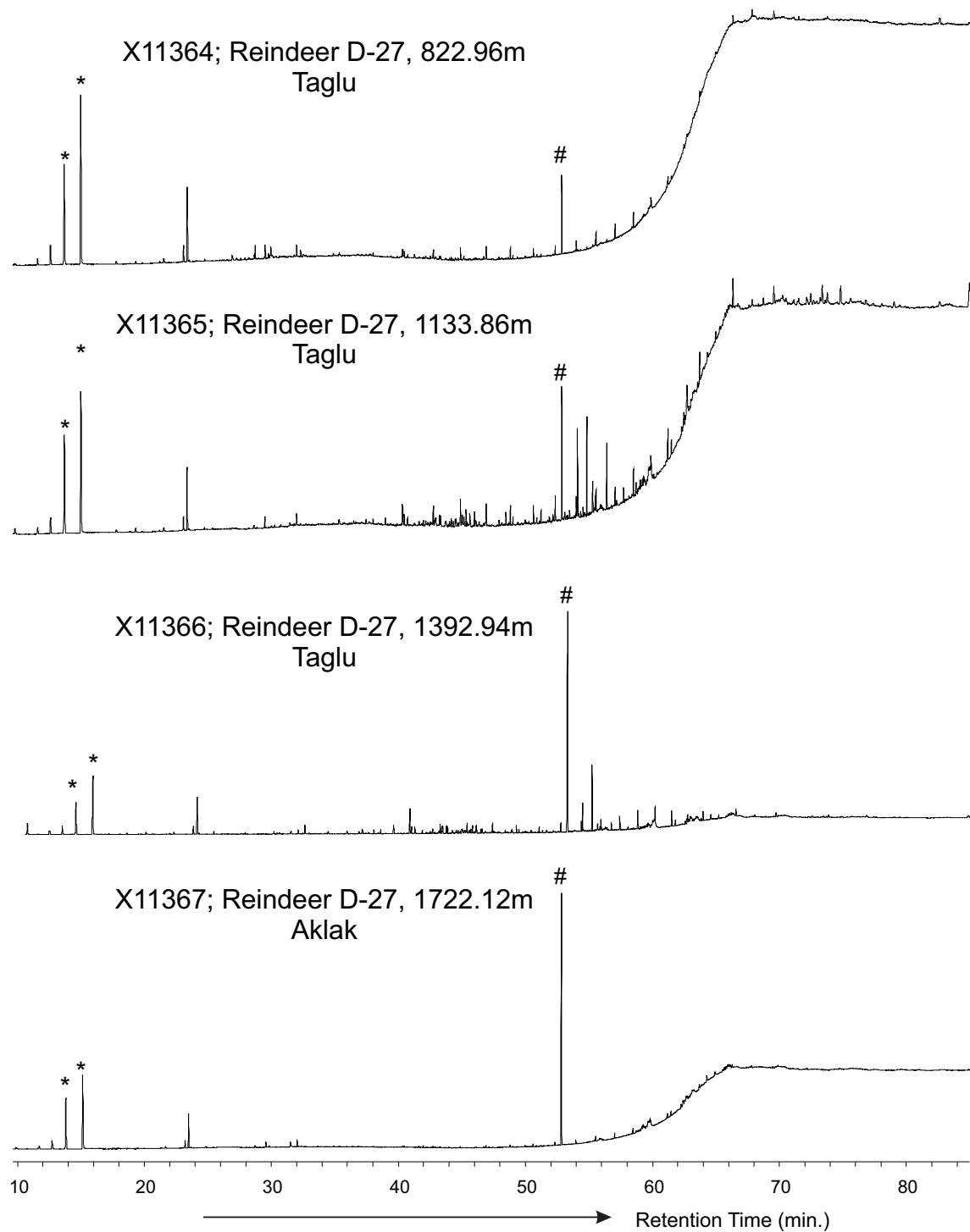


Figure 16. Traces from GC analysis of whole extracts for the cuttings samples from the Reindeer D-27 well. Peak # is plasticizer (see Figure 17); peaks * are impurity hydrocarbons (e.g. cyclohexane and methylhexanes) from solvent used for soxhlet extraction. Continued on next page.

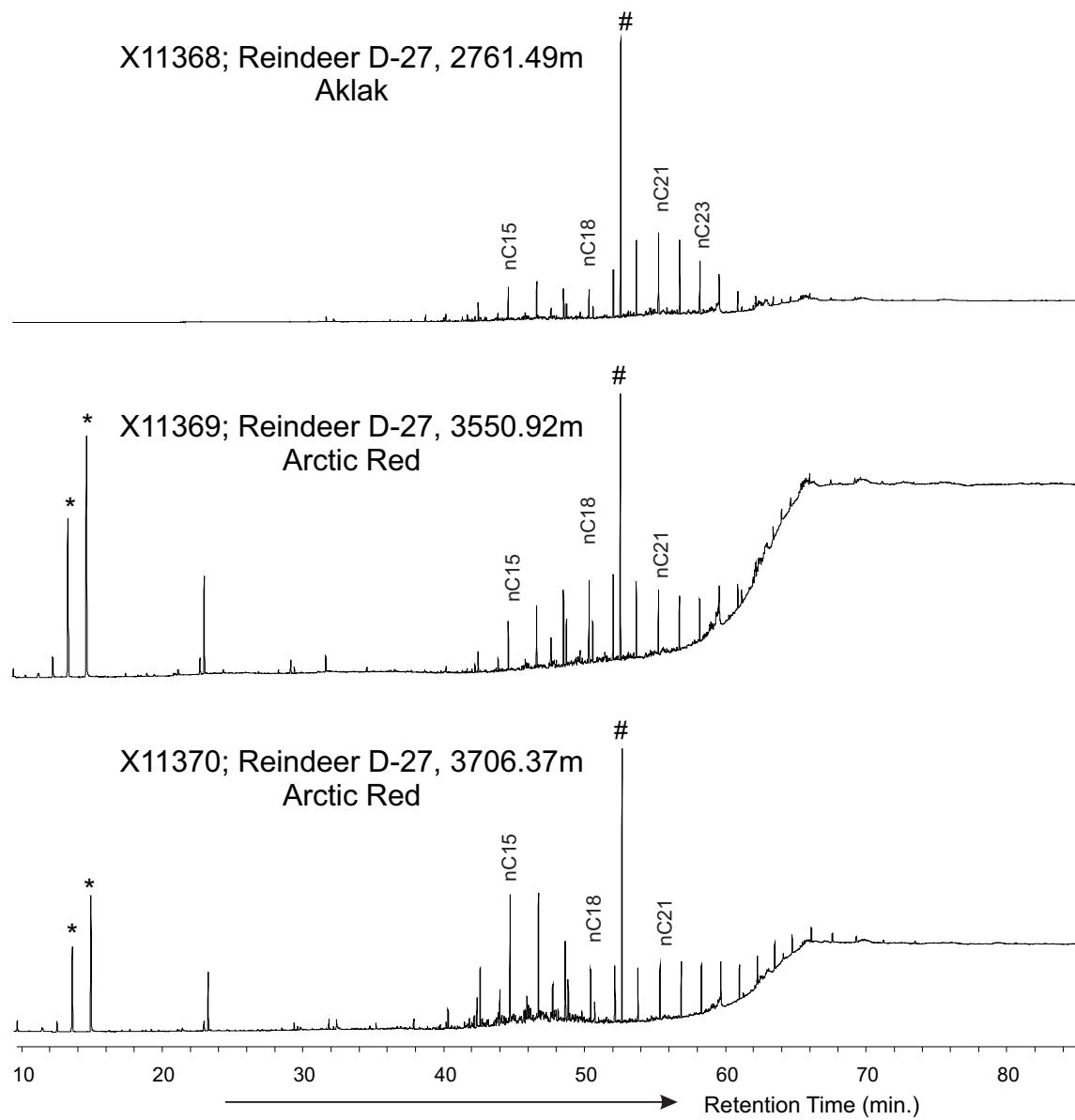


Figure 16. Continued.

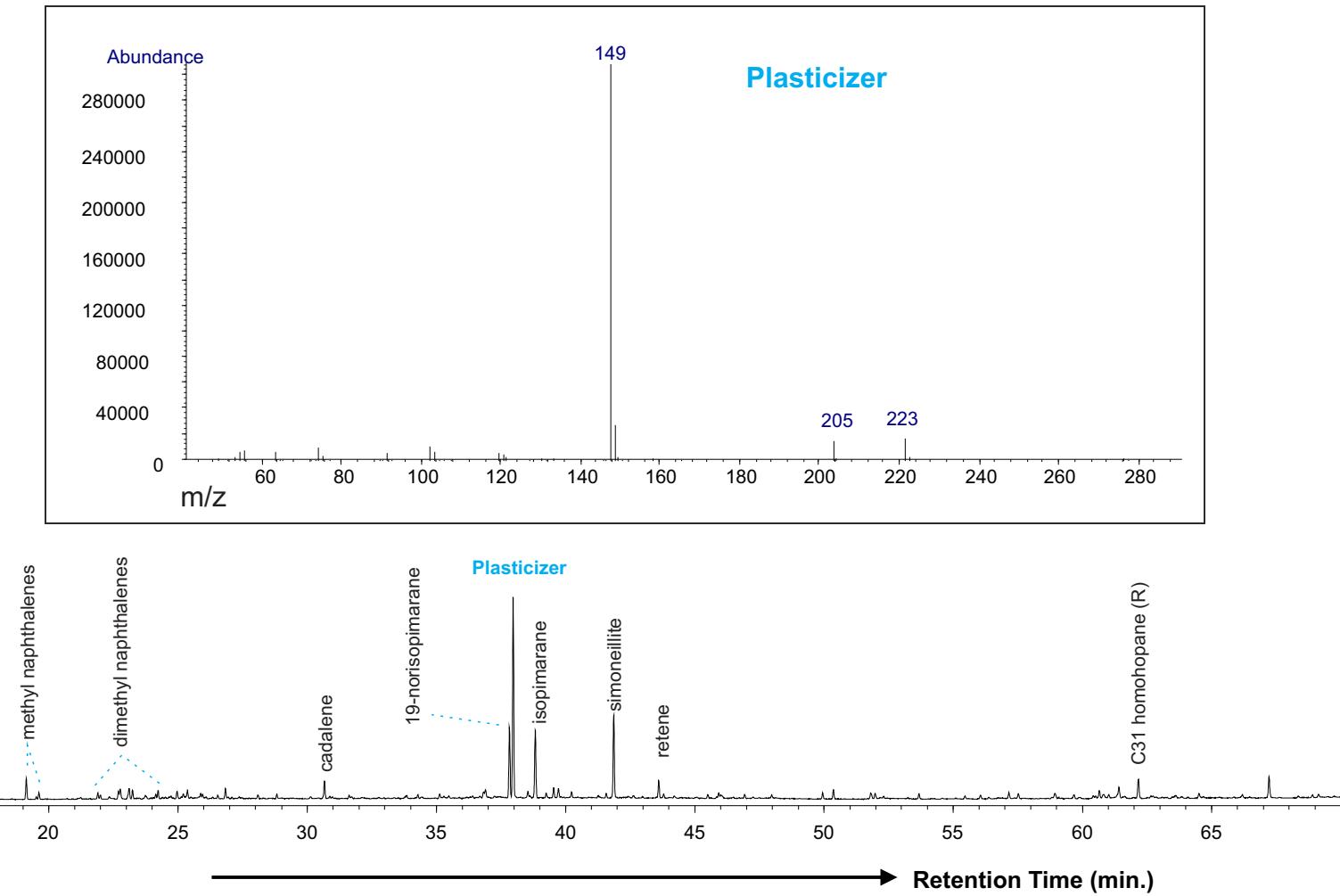


Figure 17. Plasticizer (peak # in Figure 16) is the major GC-amenable component as detected by GC-MS analysis of the total hydrocarbon fraction for sample X11365 from the Taglu Sequence.

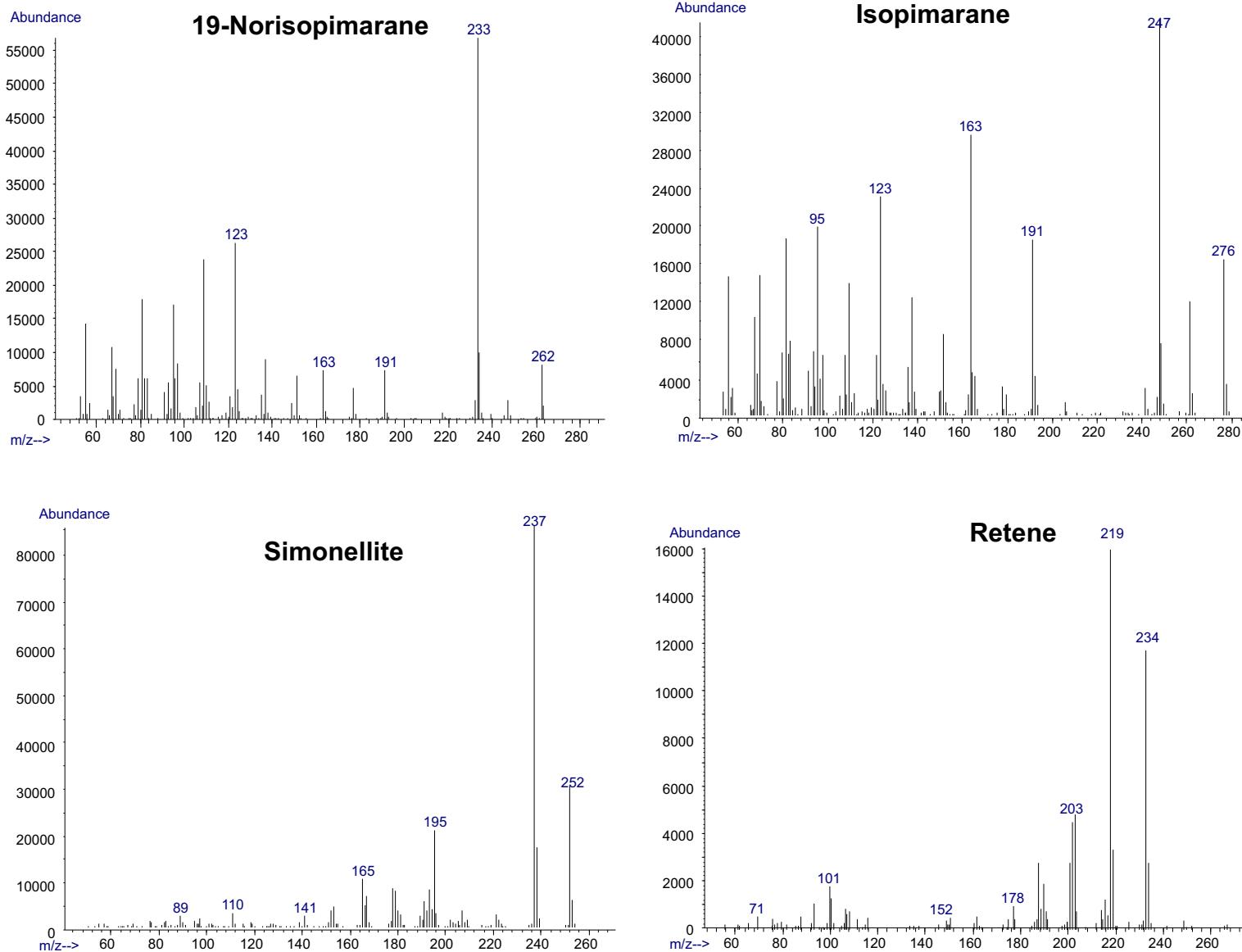


Figure 18. Mass spectra of the higher plant biomarkers present in the coaly cuttings sample X11365 from the Taglu Sequence in the Reindeer D-27 well. These are among the major hydrocarbon components as indicated in Figure 17.

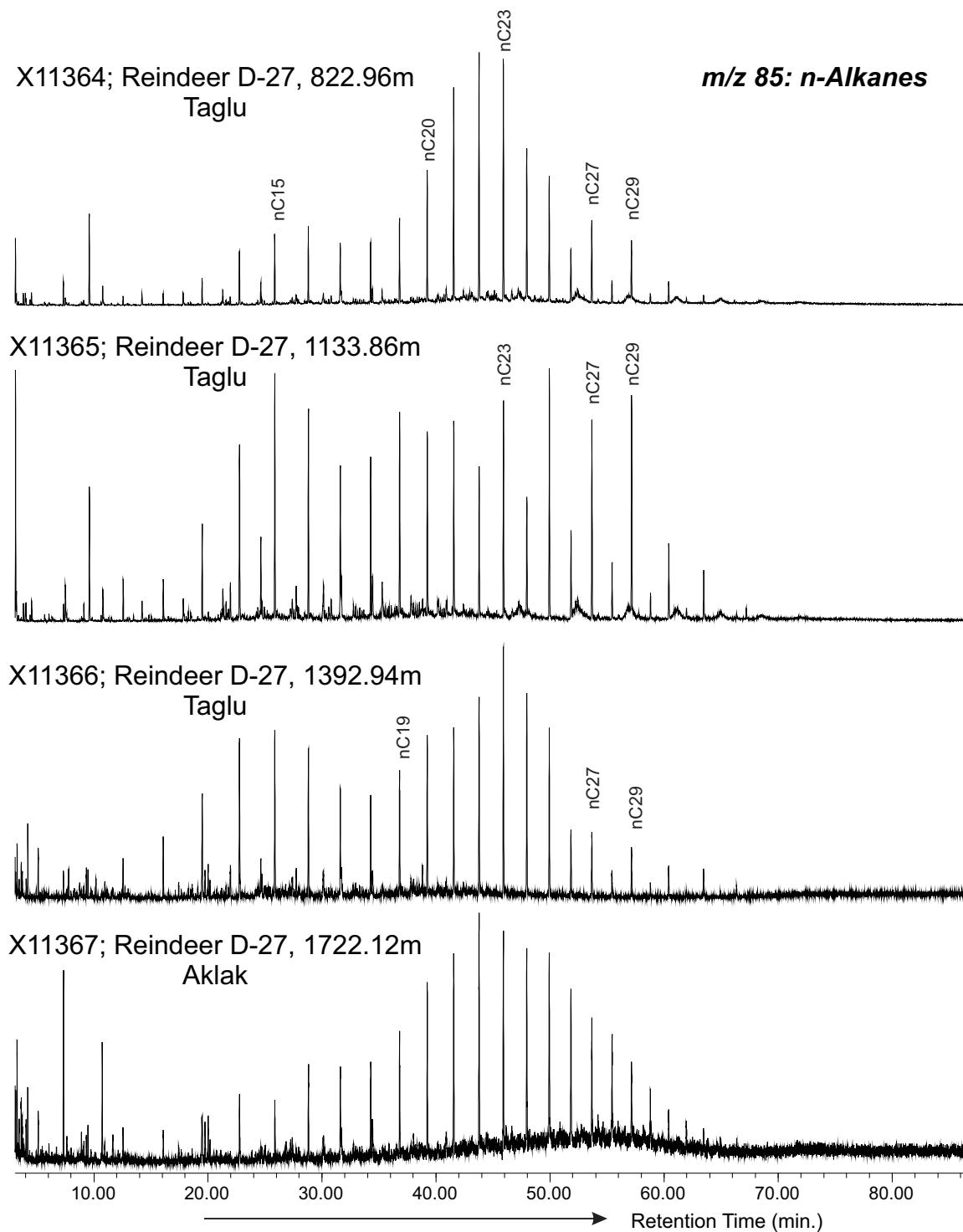


Figure 19. M/z 85 mass chromatograms showing the distribution of normal alkanes in cuttings samples from Reindeer D-27 well. Continued on next page.

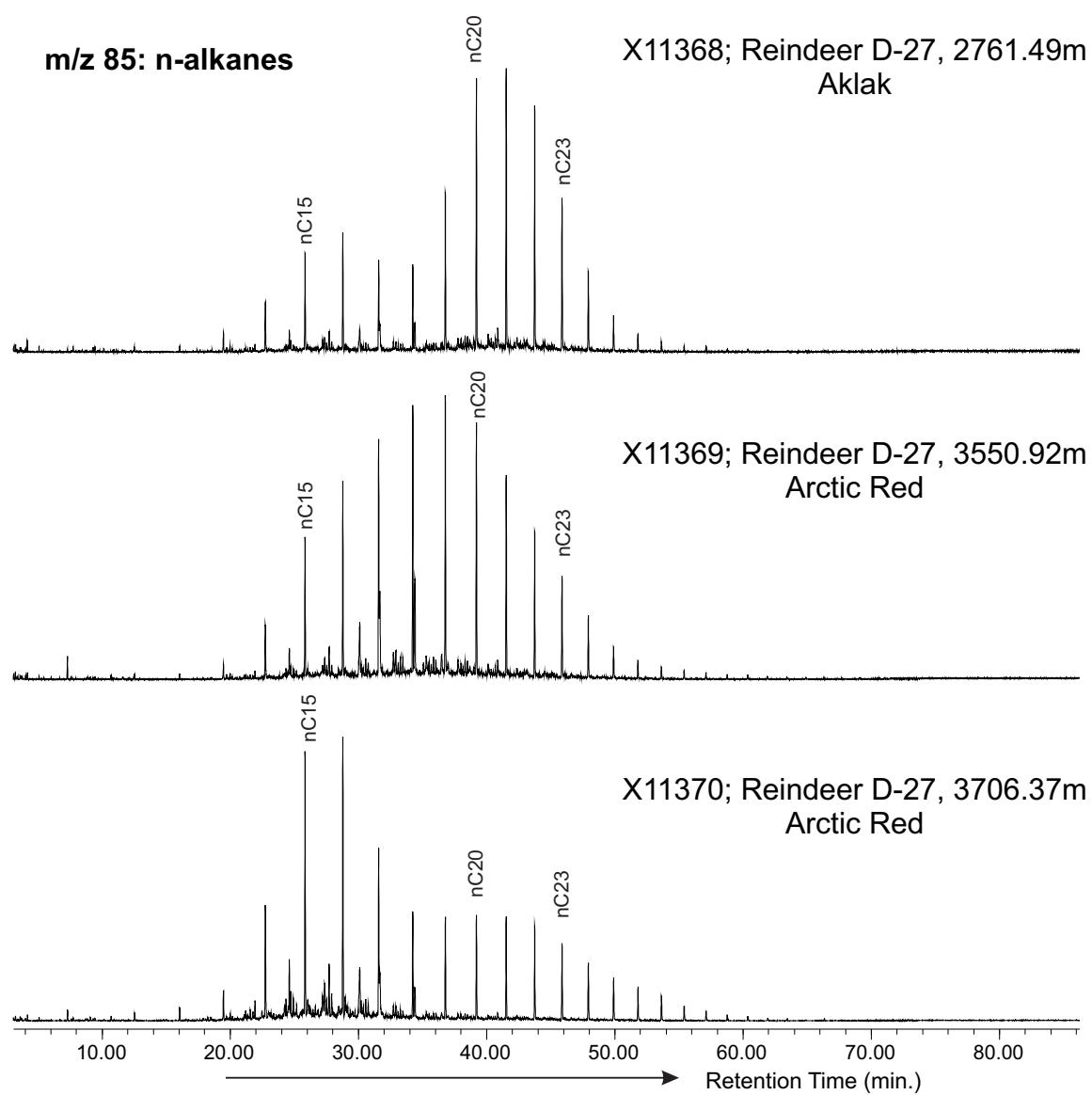


Figure 19. Continued.

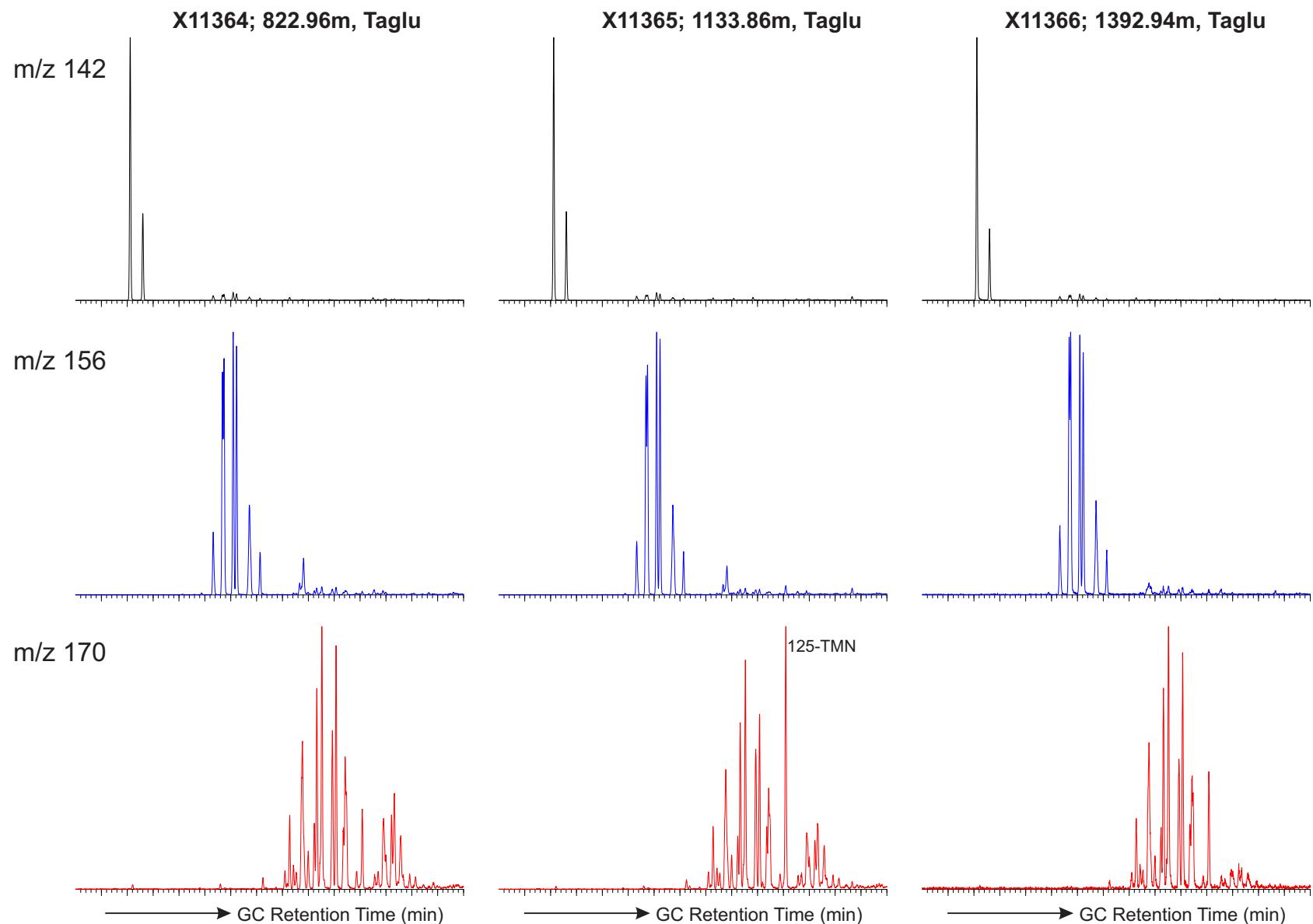


Figure 20. The distribution of methylnaphthalenes (m/z 142, black), dimethyl naphthalenes (m/z 156, blue) and trimethyl naphthalenes (m/z 170, red) for the cuttings samples from Reindeer D-27. 125-TMN: 1,2,5-trimethylnaphthalene. Continued on the next page.

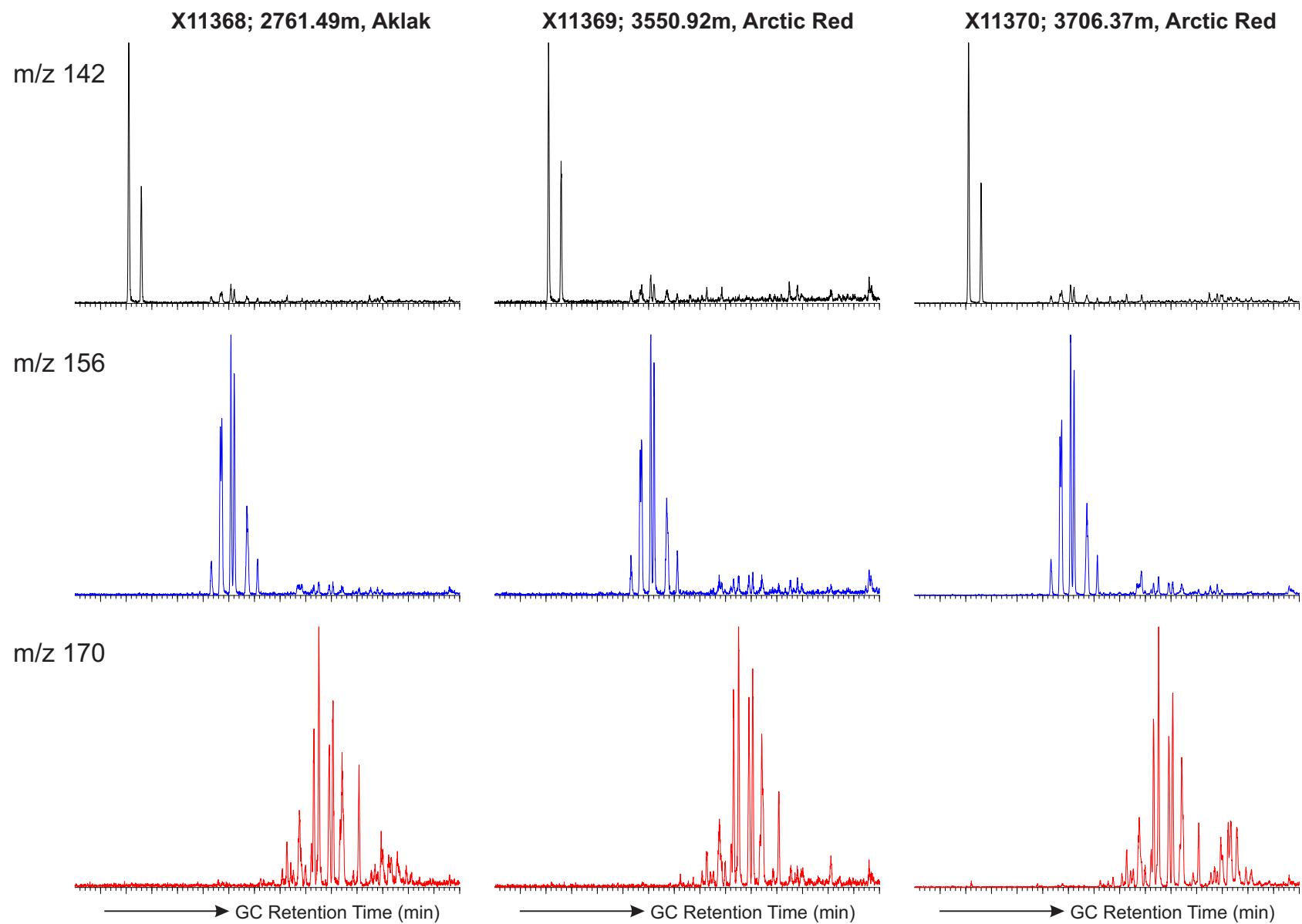


Figure 20. Continued.

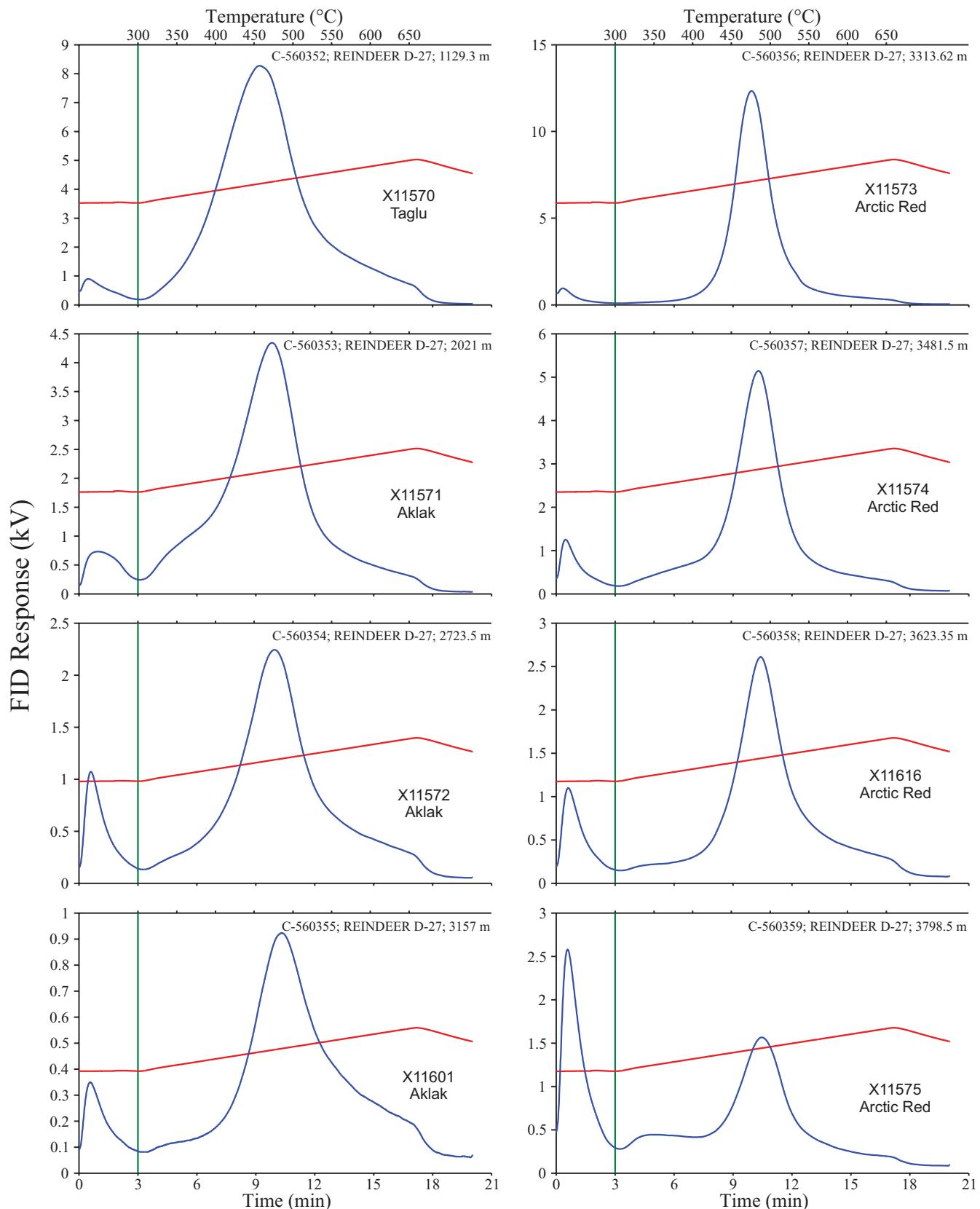


Figure 21. Rock-Eval pyrograms for core samples from the Reindeer D-27 and Tununuk K-10 wells that were selected for solvent extraction and GC and GC-MS analysis. Continued on next page.

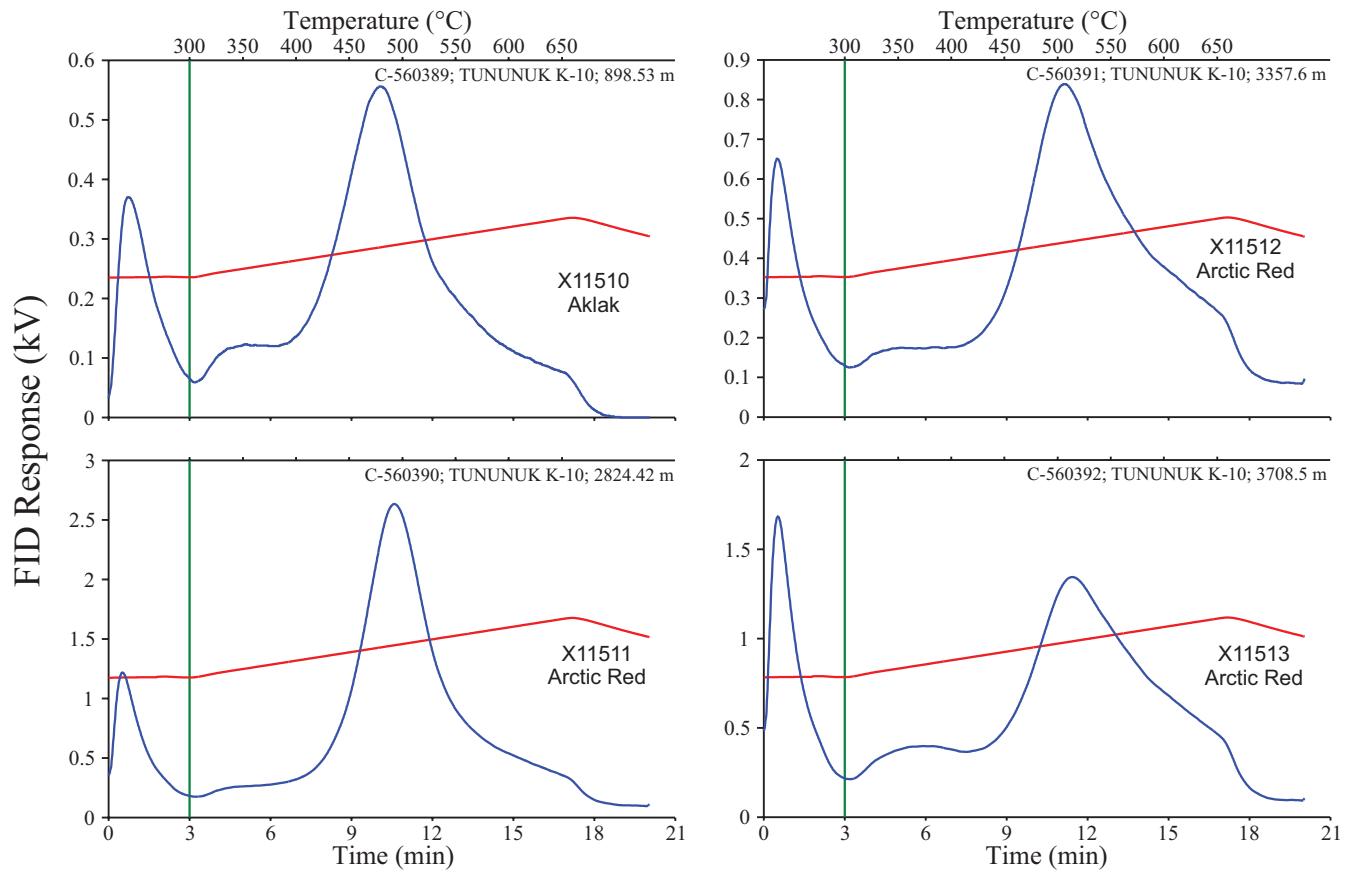


Figure 21. Continued.

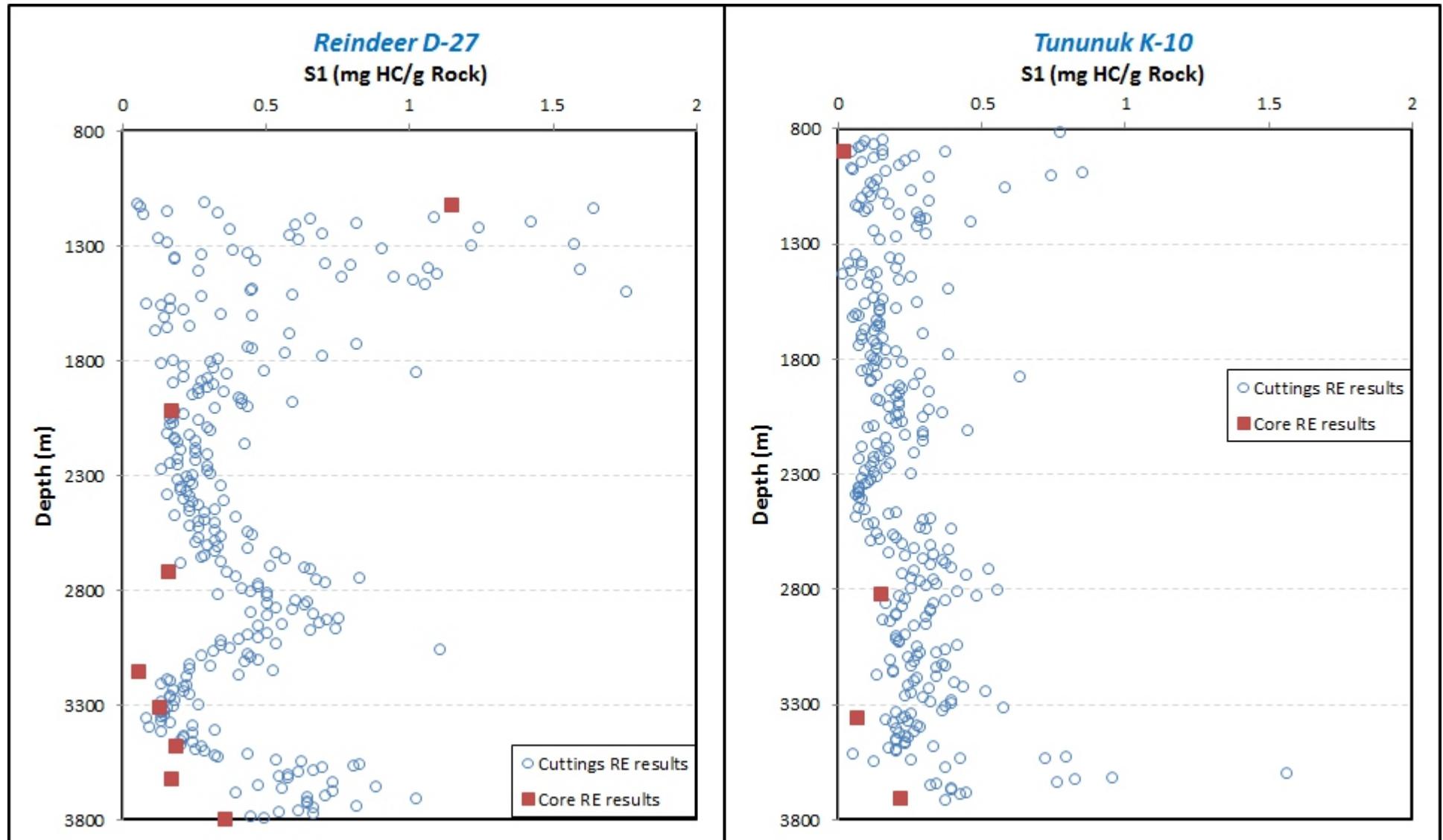


Figure 22. Depth profiles of Rock-Eval S1 values for core and cuttings samples from Reindeer D-27 and Tununuk K-10 wells. The cuttings samples seem to have generally higher S1 values than the core samples of corresponding depths, likely due to drilling mud contamination.

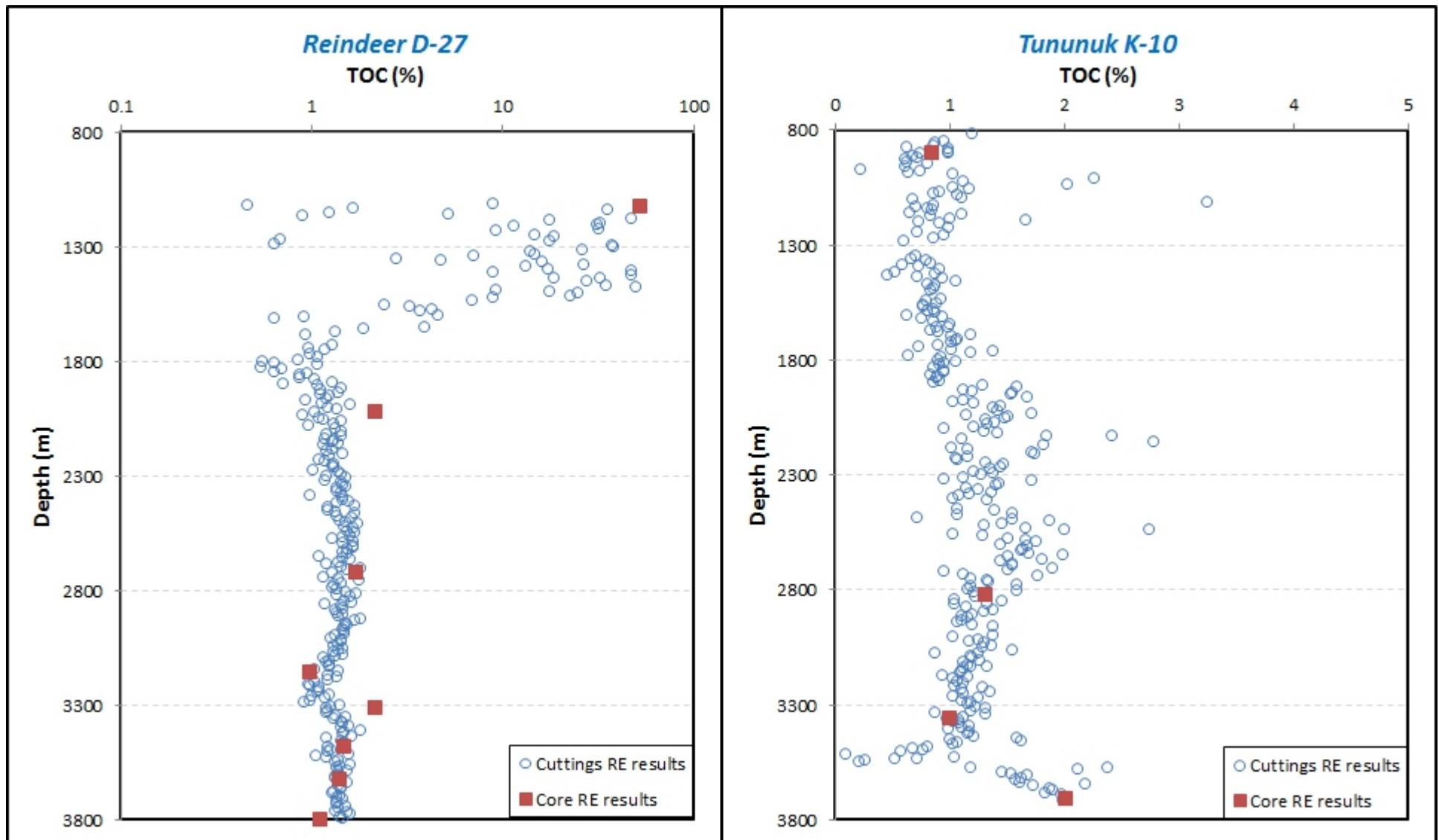


Figure 23. Depth profiles of Rock-Eval TOC content for core and cuttings samples from the Reindeer D-27 and Tununuk K-10 wells. TOC values are similar for both core and cuttings samples.

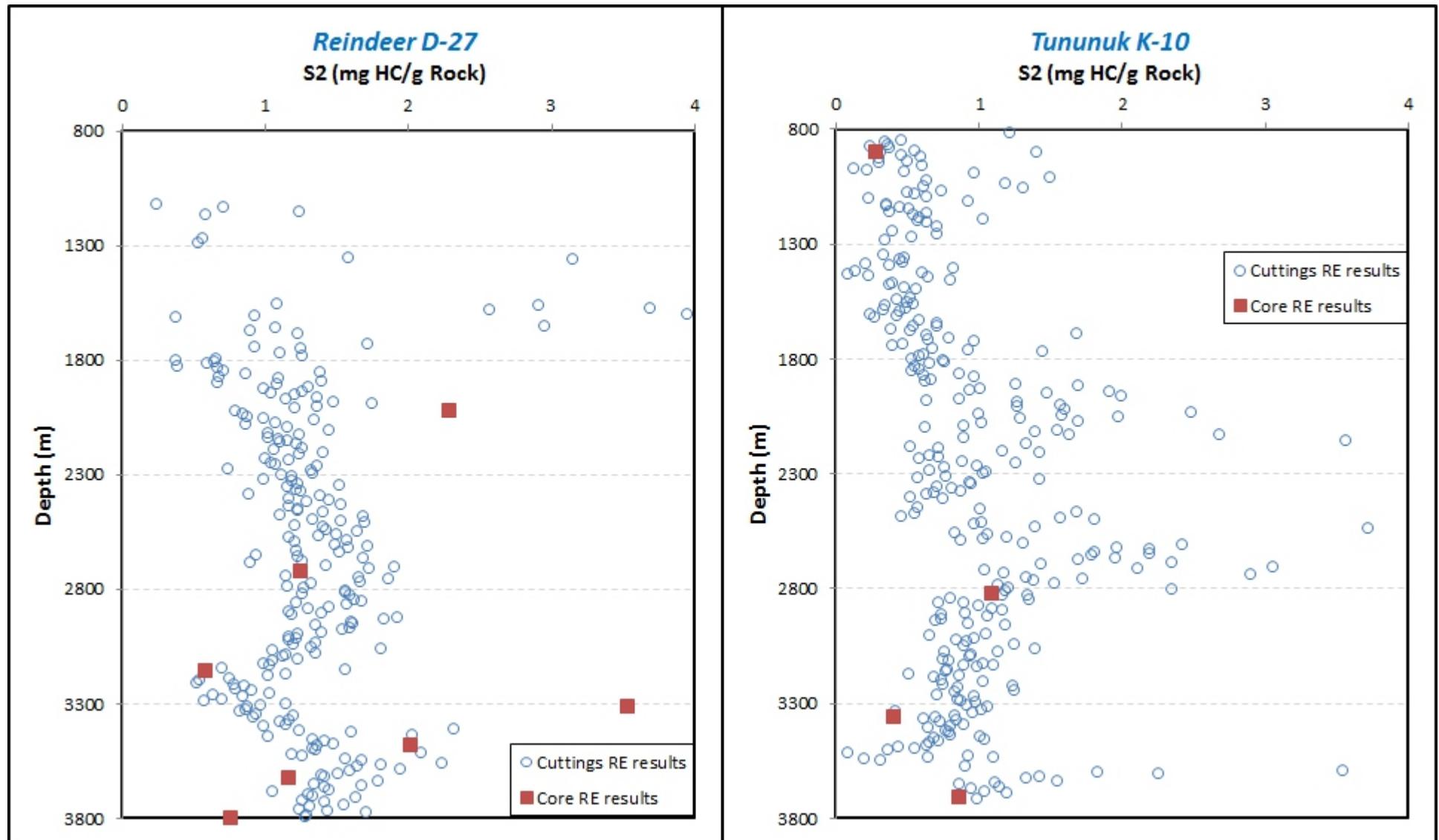


Figure 24. Depth profiles of Rock-Eval S2 values for core and cuttings samples from the Reindeer D-27 and Tununuk K-10 wells. S2 values are generally similar for both core and cuttings samples.

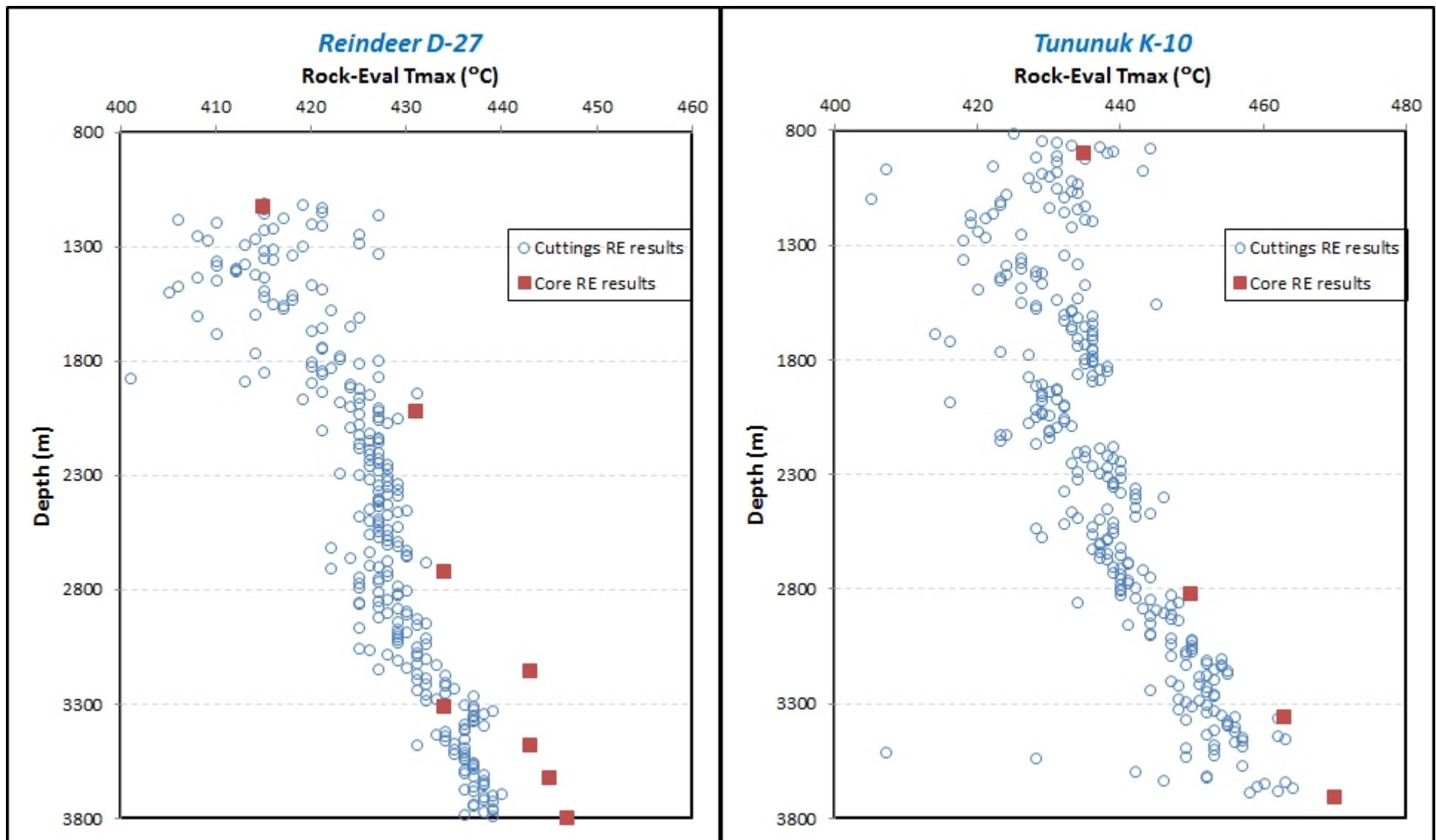


Figure 25. Depth profiles of Rock-Eval Tmax for Reindeer D-27 and Tununuk K-10 wells showing that Tmax values for cuttings samples are generally lower than those for core samples, probably due to drilling-related contamination of the cuttings samples.

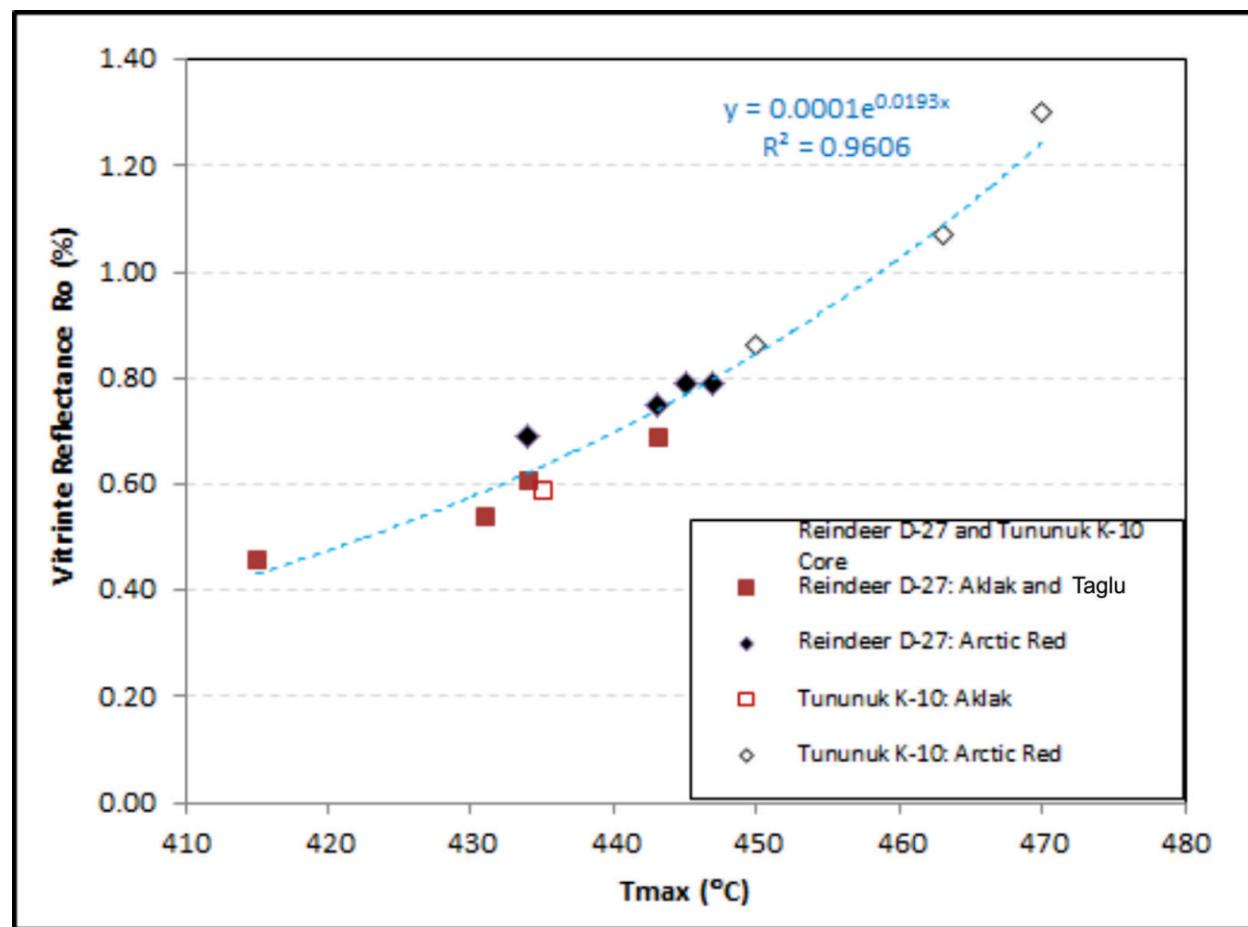


Figure 26. Relationship between Rock-Eval Tmax obtained on core samples and vitrinite reflectance measured on either core or cuttings samples of similar depth for the Reindeer D-27 and Tununuk K-10 wells.

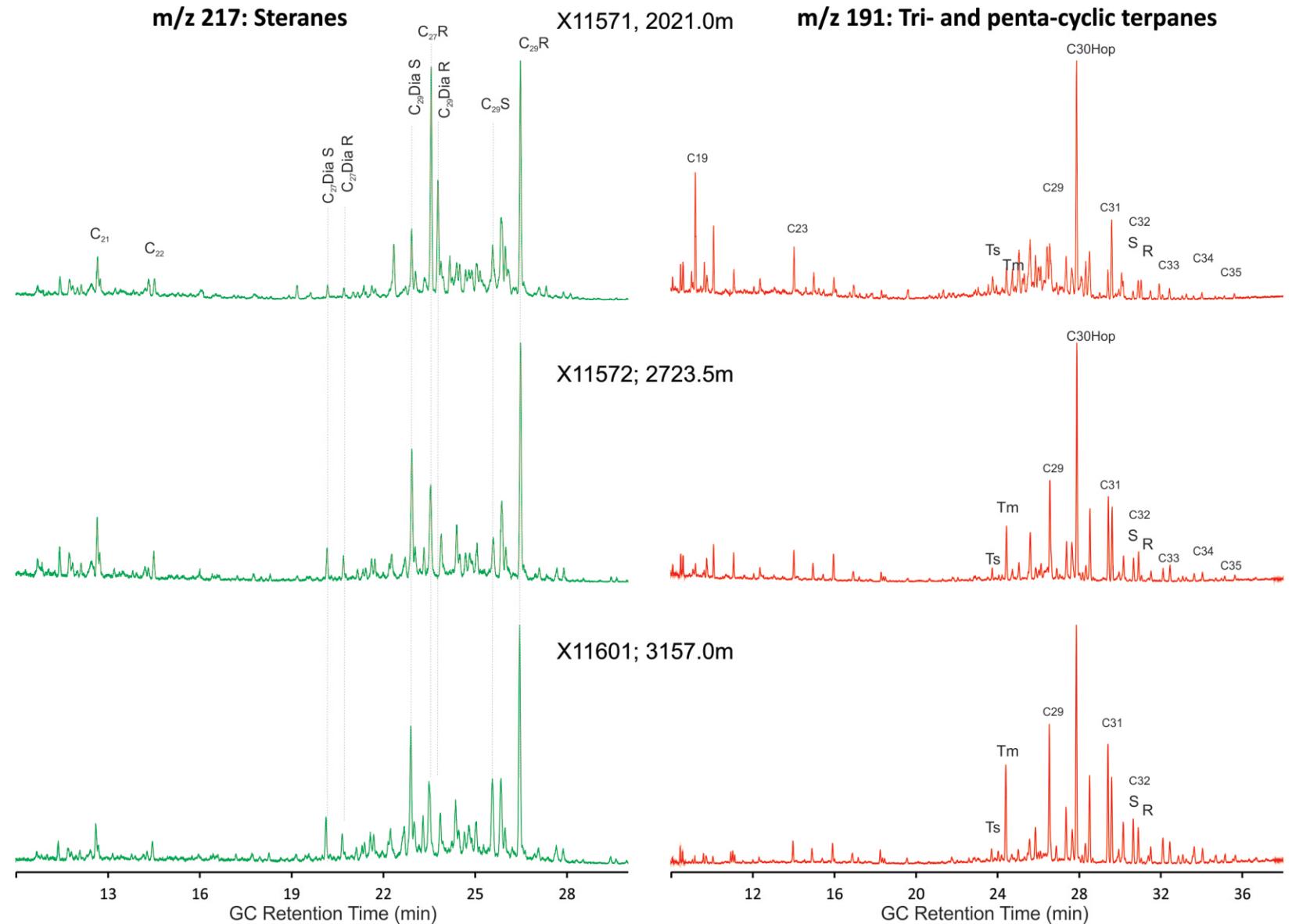


Figure 27. Mass chromatograms m/z 217 and 191 showing the distributions of steranes and terpanes for selected core samples from the Reindeer D-27 well. Continued on next page.

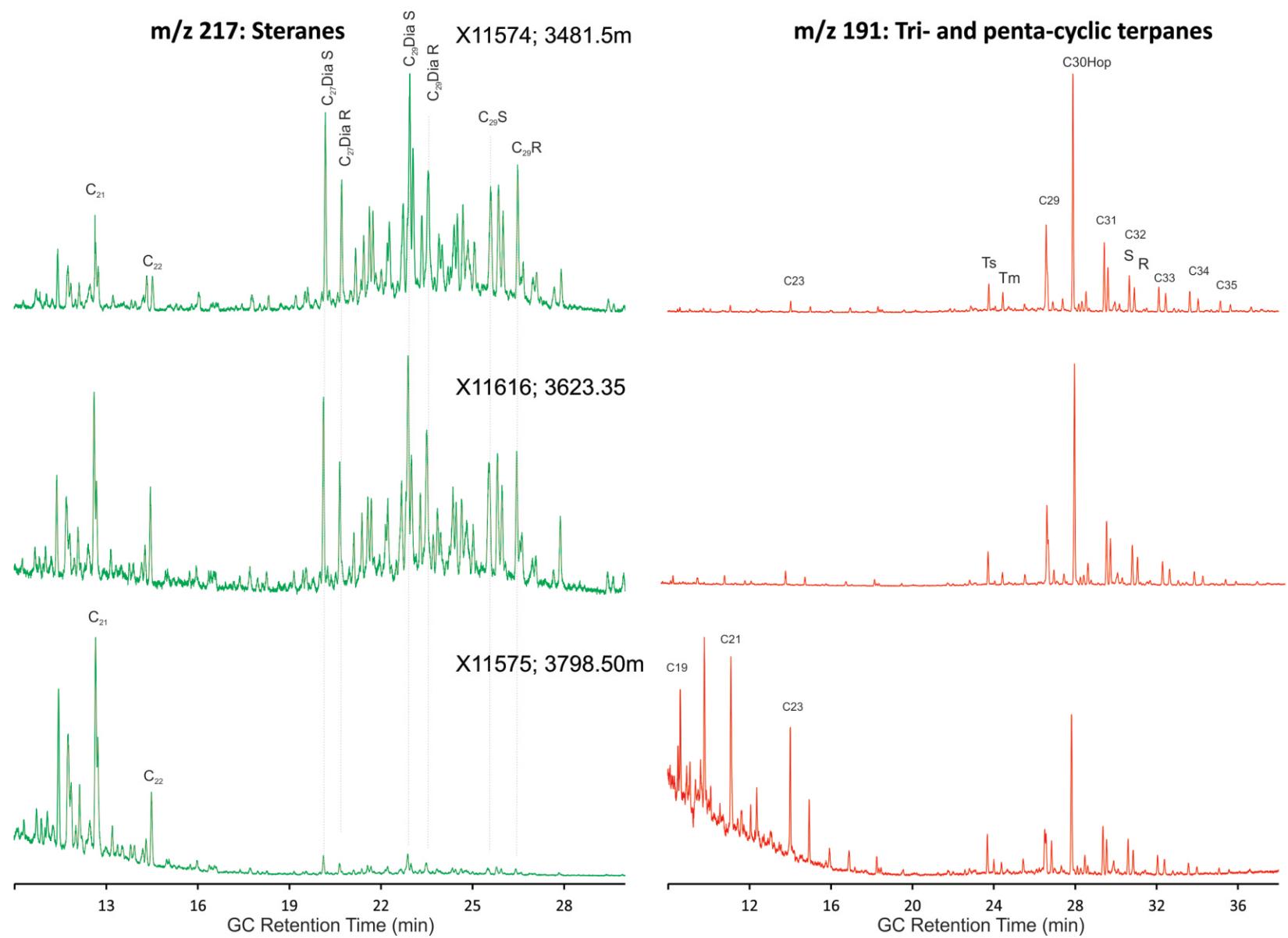


Figure 27. Continued.

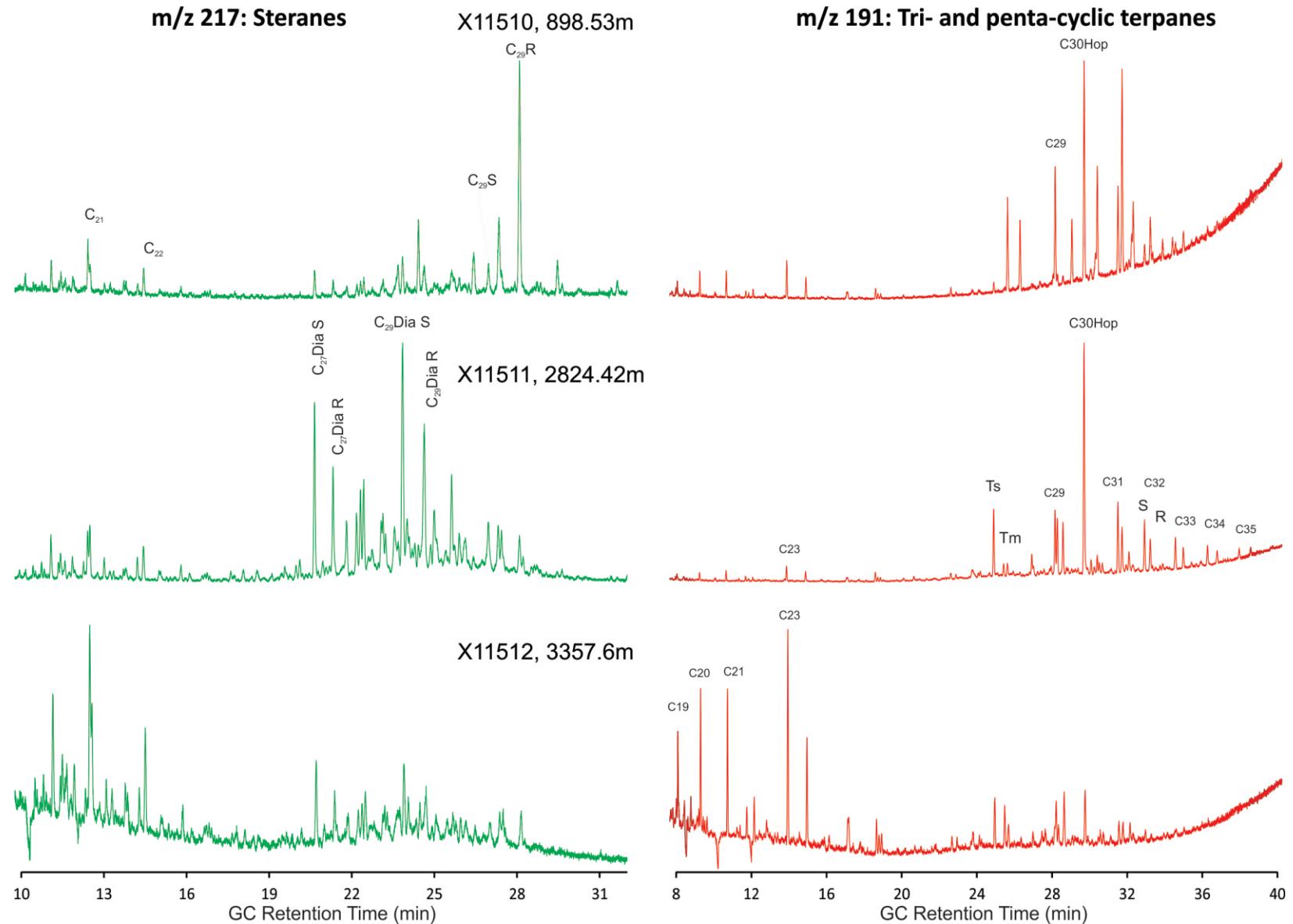


Figure 28. Mass chromatograms m/z 217 and 191 showing the distributions of steranes and terpanes for selected core samples from the Tununuk K-10 well.

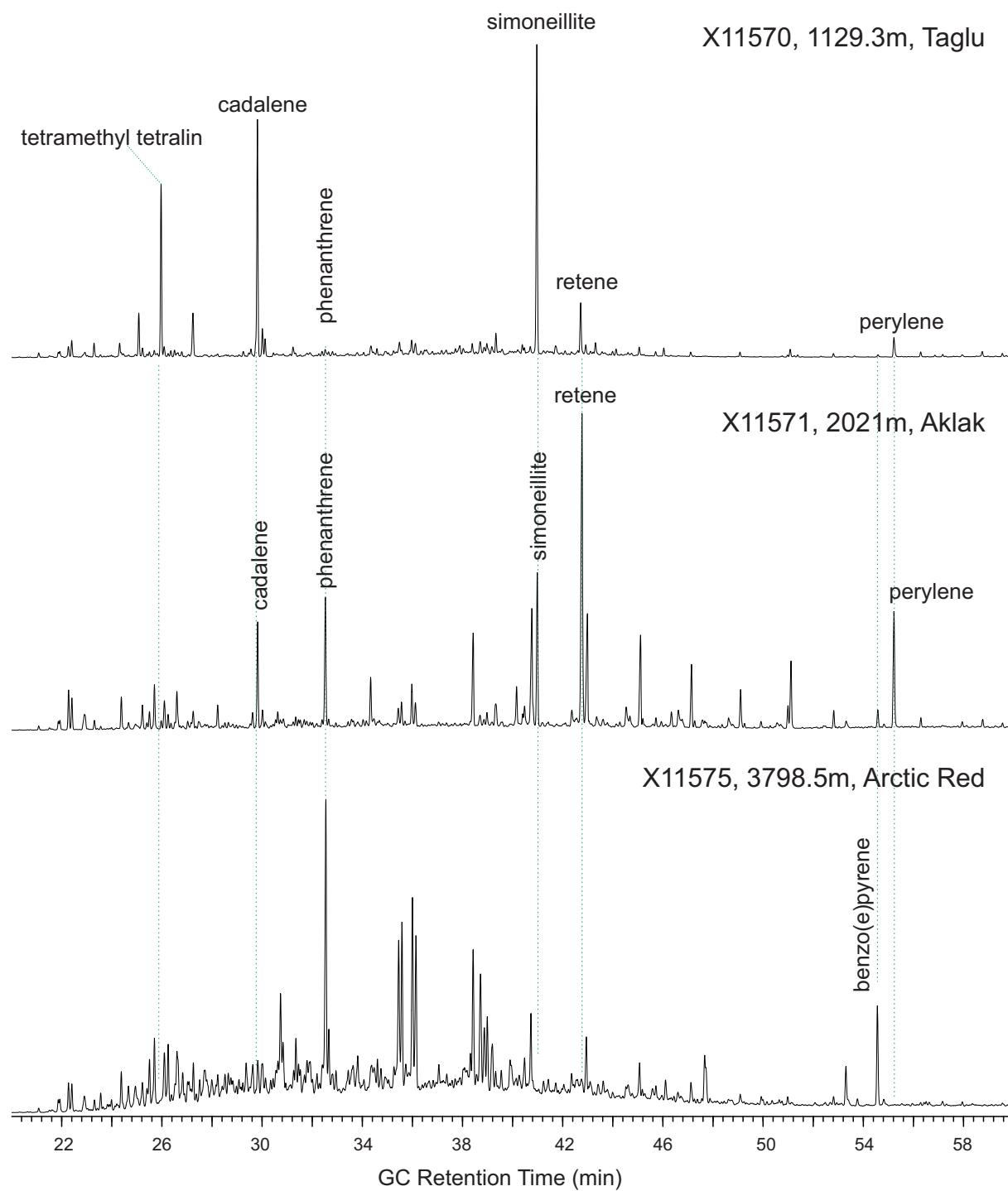


Figure 29. Partial total ion chromatograms (TIC) of aromatic fractions of selected core samples showing the distribution of higher plant derived biomarkers, tetramethyl tetralin, cadalene, simoneillite and retene.

Table 1. Mean random vitrinite reflectance (%Ro) data for various Reindeer D-27 samples. Lat: 69.1013 °N, Long: 134.6177 °W. Plotted %Ro values for primary vitrinite (Fig. 4) highlighted in yellow (cuttings) and green (core).

C #	Pellet #	Depth (ftKB)	Depth (mKB)	TVD (mKB)	TVD (mGL)	%Ro	S.D.	N	Stratigraphic Unit	Comments	Sample Type
GSC 2012 (J. Reyes)											
C-544684	247/11	60	18.3	18.3	13.4	0.33	0.02	6	Iperk	rare indigenous organic matter, mainly recycled	CTG
C-544697	248/11	520	158.5	158.5	153.6	0.30	0.03	20	Iperk	rare indigenous organic matter, mainly recycled	CTG
C-544709	249/11	860	262.1	262.1	257.2	0.28	0.01	6	Iperk	rare indigenous organic matter, mainly recycled	CTG
C-544715	250/11	1050	320.0	320.0	315.1	0.37	0.03	26	Richards	rare indigenous organic matter, mainly recycled	CTG
C-544732	251/11	1560	475.5	475.5	470.6	0.38	0.04	48	Richards	rare indigenous organic matter, mainly recycled	CTG
C-544740	252/11	1810	551.7	551.7	546.8	0.39	0.04	36	Taglu	rare indigenous organic matter, mainly recycled	CTG
C-544750	253/11	2100	640.1	640.1	635.2	0.40	0.04	25	Taglu	rare indigenous organic matter, mainly recycled	CTG
C-544763	254/11	2520	768.1	768.1	763.2	0.38	0.04	52	Taglu	greenish-yellow fluorescing HCs, minor %Ro suppression?	CTG
C-544768	255/11	2670	813.8	813.8	808.9	0.41	0.04	51	Taglu	greenish-yellow fluorescing HCs, minor %Ro suppression?	CTG
C-544661	226/11	2925	891.5	891.5	886.6	0.44	0.02	25	Taglu	minor orange fluorescing solid bitumen	CORE
C-544777	256/11	2930	893.1	893.1	888.2	0.41	0.03	51	Taglu	greenish-yellow fluorescing HCs, minor %Ro suppression?	CTG
C-544782	257/11	3100	944.9	944.9	940.0	0.42	0.03	50	Taglu	liptinite-rich coaly matrix, trace HC inclusions	CTG
C-544793	258/11	3420	1042.4	1042.4	1037.5	0.45	0.03	45	Taglu	greenish-yellow fluorescing HCs, minor %Ro suppression?	CTG
C-544662	227/11	3700	1127.8	1127.5	1122.6	0.51	0.02	60	Taglu	minor orange fluorescing solid bitumen	CORE
C-544663	228/11	4064	1238.7	1238.3	1233.4	0.49	0.04	59	Taglu	intergranular greenish yellow fluorescing oil	CORE
C-544831	259/11	4590	1399.0	1398.4	1393.5	0.46	0.03	51	Taglu	greenish-yellow fluorescing HCs, minor %Ro suppression?	CTG
C-544664	229/11	4770	1453.9	1453.2	1448.3	0.45	0.05	39	Taglu		CORE
C-544838	260/11	4830	1472.2	1471.5	1466.6	0.47	0.03	51	Taglu	greenish-yellow fluorescing HCs, minor %Ro suppression?	CTG
C-544665	230/11	5322.5	1622.3	1621.3	1616.4	0.48	0.04	31	Taglu		CORE
C-544666	231/11	5525	1684.0	1683.0	1678.1	0.51	0.05	40	Aklak		CORE
C-544667	232/11	6105	1860.8	1859.5	1854.6	0.53	0.05	42	Aklak		CORE
C-544668	233/11	6626	2019.6	2018.1	2013.2	0.54	0.05	46	Aklak		CORE
C-544670	234/11	6883.5	2098.1	2096.5	2091.6	0.58	0.04	48	Aklak		CORE
C-544671	235/11	7271.5	2216.4	2214.5	2209.6	0.57	0.04	42	Aklak		CORE
C-544911	261/11	7380	2249.4	2247.5	2242.6	0.58	0.05	43	Aklak	greenish-yellow fluorescing HCs, minor %Ro suppression?	CTG
C-544672	236/11	7837.5	2388.9	2386.5	2381.6	0.59	0.06	44	Aklak		CORE
C-544673	237/11	7942.5	2420.9	2418.3	2413.4	0.62	0.07	46	Aklak		CORE
C-544674	238/11	8376.5	2553.2	2550.0	2545.1	0.63	0.04	50	Aklak		CORE
C-544675	239/11	8928	2721.3	2717.6	2712.7	0.61	0.05	51	Aklak		CORE
C-544676	240/11	9590	2923.0	2918.9	2914.0	0.65	0.05	43	Aklak		CORE
C-544677	241/11	10028	3056.5	3052.2	3047.3	0.68	0.06	49	Aklak		CORE
C-544678	242/11	10351.5	3155.1	3150.5	3145.6	0.69	0.05	36	Aklak		CORE
C-544679	243/11	10875	3314.7	3309.2	3304.3	0.69	0.06	34	Arctic Red	orange to brown fluorescing bitumen, alginite	CORE

C #	Pellet #	Depth (ftKB)	Depth (mKB)	TVD (mKB)	TVD (mGL)	%Ro	S.D.	N	Stratigraphic Unit	Comments	Sample Type
C-544680	244/11	11431	3484.2	3477.7	3472.8	0.75	0.05	27	Arctic Red	orange to brown fluorescing bitumen, alginite	CORE
C-544681	245/11	11894	3625.3	3618.6	3613.7	0.79	0.03	6	Arctic Red	orange to brown fluorescing bitumen, alginite	CORE
C-544682	246/11	12462	3798.4	3791.2	3786.3	0.79	0.06	29	Arctic Red	orange to brown fluorescing bitumen, alginite, oil staining	CORE
GSC 1992 (<i>M. Tomica</i>)											
C-186738	87/92	2936	894.9	894.8	889.9	0.47	0.03	50	Taglu		CORE
C-186739	88/92	4047	1233.5	1233.1	1228.2	0.46	0.04	25	Taglu		CORE
C-186740	89/92	5320	1621.5	1620.6	1615.7	0.51	0.03	50	Taglu		CORE
C-186741	90/92	6112.5	1863.1	1861.8	1856.9	0.53	0.05	50	Aklak		CORE
C-186742	91/92	6637	2023.0	2021.5	2016.6	0.51	0.03	30	Aklak		CORE

Table 2. Mean random vitrinite reflectance (%Ro) data for various Tununuk K-10 samples. Lat: 68.9955 °N, Long: 134.7788 °W.
 Plotted %Ro values for primary vitrinite (Fig. 7) highlighted in yellow (cuttings) and green (core).

C #	Pellet #	Depth (ftKB)	Depth (mKB)	TVD (mKB)	TVD (mGL)	%Ro	S.D.	N	Stratigraphic Unit	Comments	Sample Type
GSC 2012 (J. Reyes)											
C-544008	194/11	90	27.4	27.4	22.0	0.27	0.01	11	Qy/Iperk		CTG
C-544014	195/11	270	82.3	82.3	76.9	0.30	0.03	25	Qy/Iperk		CTG
C-544026	196/11	630	192.0	192.0	186.6	0.35	0.05	16	Qy/Iperk		CTG
C-544041	197/11	1080	329.2	329.2	323.8	0.39	0.02	18	Aklak	coaly matrix; some recycled OM	CTG
C-544049	198/11	1320	402.3	402.3	396.9	0.47	0.03	16	Aklak	rare indigenous OM; mainly recycled	CTG
C-544054	199/11	1470	448.1	448.1	442.7	0.48	0.07	25	Aklak	rare indigenous OM; mainly recycled	CTG
C-544068	200/11	1890	576.1	576.1	570.7	0.50	0.04	26	Aklak	minor coaly lenses; mainly recycled	CTG
C-544073	201/11	2760	841.2	841.2	835.8	0.53	0.04	17	Aklak	organically lean siltstone; rare coal lenses	CTG
C-543995	202/11	2946	897.9	897.9	892.5	0.59	0.04	8	Aklak	organically lean siltstone; rare coal lenses	CORE
C-544090	203/11	3270	996.7	996.6	991.2	0.61	0.03	52	Fish River		CTG
C-544101	204/11	3630	1106.4	1106.3	1100.9	0.63	0.03	23	Fish River		CTG
C-544110	205/11	3890	1185.7	1185.6	1180.2	0.56	0.05	29	Fish River		CTG
C-544120	206/11	4470	1362.5	1362.3	1356.9	0.57	0.05	14	Fish River		CTG
C-544130	207/11	4770	1453.9	1453.7	1448.3	0.64	0.06	14	Fish River		CTG
C-544135	208/11	5020	1530.1	1529.8	1524.4	0.62	0.06	25	Fish River		CTG
C-544147	209/11	5370	1636.8	1636.3	1630.9	0.62	0.05	27	Fish River		CTG
C-544160	210/11	5750	1752.6	1751.0	1745.6	0.67	0.05	19	Fish River		CTG
C-544169	211/11	6030	1837.9	1837.3	1831.9	0.64	0.05	29	Fish River		CTG
C-544180	212/11	6360	1938.5	1928.7	1923.3	0.63	0.06	24	Smoking Hills	reduced %Ro; different OM type	CTG
C-544201	213/11	6980	2127.5	2126.8	2121.4	0.60	0.06	19	Smoking Hills	reduced %Ro; different OM type	CTG
C-544221	214/11	7610	2319.5	2318.6	2313.2	0.66	0.06	37	Smoking Hills	reduced %Ro; different OM type	CTG
C-543996	218/11	8318	2535.3	2534.2	2528.8	0.69	0.05	36	Smoking Hills	reduced %Ro; different OM type	CORE
C-544262	215/11	8970	2734.1	2732.5	2727.1	0.68	0.06	30	Arctic Red	reduced %Ro; different OM type	CTG
C-543997	219/11	9255	2820.9	2819.1	2813.7	0.86	0.05	32	Arctic Red		CORE
C-544285	216/11	9690	2953.5	2951.3	2945.9	0.83	0.08	18	Arctic Red		CTG
C-543998	220/11	10254	3125.4	3122.3	3116.9	1.02	0.05	29	Arctic Red		CORE
C-543999	221/11	11023	3359.8	3355.8	3350.4	1.07	0.07	13	Arctic Red		CORE
C-544000	222/11	11315	3448.8	3444.5	3439.1	1.08	0.06	44	Arctic Red	carbonate in microfractures	CORE
C-544001	223/11	11586	3531.4	3526.8	3521.4	1.24	0.06	10	Arctic Red	carbonate in microfractures	CORE
C-544004	224/11	11712	3569.8	3565.4	3560.0	1.24	0.05	24	Arctic Red	carbonate in microfractures	CORE
C-544357	217/11	11930	3636.3	3631.8	3626.4	1.13	0.06	15	Arctic Red		CTG
C-544005	225/11	12169	3709.1	3704.6	3699.2	1.30	0.05	17	Arctic Red	carbonate in microfractures	CORE

Depth (ftKB)	Depth (mKB)	Qty (mg)	Tmax	S1	S2	S3	PI	S2/S3	PC (%)	TOC (%)	HI	OI	MINC (%)	Organic	%Roeq	Comments
														Type		
12010	3660.65	70.0	437	0.55	1.40	0.76	0.28	1.84	0.21	1.40	100	54	1.0	II	0.66	small left shoulder on S2
12050	3672.84	70.5	436	0.73	1.44	0.62	0.34	2.32	0.23	1.28	112	48	1.6	II	0.64	small left shoulder on S2; slightly bituminous
12070	3678.94	70.8	437	0.39	1.04	0.68	0.27	1.53	0.16	1.27	82	54	0.9	II	0.66	small left shoulder on S2
12100	3688.08	70.2	440	0.70	1.29	0.41	0.35	3.15	0.19	1.37	94	30	0.8	II	0.72	small left shoulder on S2
12130	3697.22	70.2	439	0.64	1.32	0.49	0.33	2.69	0.20	1.33	99	37	0.9	II	0.70	small left shoulder on S2
12160	3706.37	70.2	438	1.02	1.62	0.41	0.39	3.95	0.25	1.43	113	29	0.8	II	0.68	small left shoulder on S2
12190	3715.51	70.6	438	0.64	1.25	0.43	0.34	2.91	0.19	1.34	93	32	1.0	II	0.68	small left shoulder on S2
12220	3724.66	70.3	439	0.64	1.40	0.57	0.31	2.46	0.20	1.34	104	43	0.7	II	0.70	small left shoulder on S2
12250	3733.80	70.9	437	0.81	1.54	0.58	0.34	2.66	0.24	1.49	103	39	1.1	II	0.66	small left shoulder on S2
12280	3742.94	70.3	437	0.66	1.30	0.67	0.34	1.94	0.21	1.35	96	50	1.3	II	0.66	small left shoulder on S2
12310	3752.09	70.5	439	0.61	1.23	0.59	0.33	2.08	0.19	1.30	95	45	1.1	II	0.70	small left shoulder on S2
12340	3761.23	70.8	439	0.54	1.43	0.42	0.27	3.40	0.20	1.51	95	28	0.8	II	0.70	small left shoulder on S2
12370	3770.38	71.0	438	0.66	1.70	0.38	0.28	4.47	0.22	1.57	108	24	0.8	II	0.68	small left shoulder on S2
12400	3779.52	70.6	436	0.44	1.28	0.62	0.26	2.06	0.19	1.37	93	45	1.0	II	0.64	small left shoulder on S2
12430	3788.66	70.4	439	0.49	1.27	0.49	0.28	2.59	0.18	1.43	89	34	0.9	II	0.70	small left shoulder on S2
12462	3798.42	70.6	295	8.94	5.22	0.38	0.63	13.74	1.20	2.36	221	16	0.2	II	very large S1, bimodal S2; core; oil stain	
12470	3800.86	70.4	438	0.64	1.25	0.48	0.34	2.60	0.19	1.34	93	36	1.1	II	0.68	bimodal S2
12490	3806.95	70.3	437	0.48	1.34	0.37	0.26	3.62	0.18	1.52	88	24	0.8	II	0.66	small left shoulder on S2
12520	3816.10	70.9	441	0.48	1.18	0.37	0.29	3.19	0.16	1.29	91	29	0.6	II	0.74	small left shoulder on S2
12550	3825.24	70.8	438	0.53	1.46	0.54	0.27	2.70	0.20	1.45	101	37	0.8	II	0.68	small left shoulder on S2
12580	3834.38	70.3	439	0.59	1.31	0.54	0.31	2.43	0.19	1.33	98	41	0.8	II	0.70	small left shoulder on S2
12610	3843.53	70.8	439	0.73	1.46	0.42	0.33	3.48	0.21	1.40	104	30	0.6	II	0.70	small left shoulder on S2
12640	3852.67	70.8	437	0.57	1.28	0.46	0.31	2.78	0.18	1.31	98	35	0.7	II	0.66	small left shoulder on S2
12660	3858.77	70.8	438	0.61	1.39	0.50	0.30	2.78	0.20	1.36	102	37	0.6	II	0.68	small left shoulder on S2
Ave			434.8													all values (68)
SD			17.3													
Ave			436.8													selected values (67)
SD			2.0													

Depth (ftKB)	Depth (mKB)	Qty (mg)	Tmax	S1	S2	S3	PI	S2/S3	PC (%)	TOC (%)	HI	OI	MINC (%)	Organic Type	%Roeq	Comments
11820	3602.74	70.1	320	2.07	2.25	0.53	0.48	4.25	0.39	1.67	135	32	0.3	II		irregular S2
11860	3614.93	70.9	452	0.95	1.42	0.43	0.40	3.30	0.22	1.61	88	27	0.4	II	1.09	bimodal S2
11870	3617.98	70.8	452	0.82	1.32	0.40	0.38	3.30	0.20	1.56	85	26	0.5	II	1.09	bimodal S2
11920	3633.22	69.8	446	0.76	1.54	0.40	0.33	3.85	0.21	1.60	96	25	0.5	II	0.86	S1 90% recovery, bimodal S2
11930	3636.26	69.9	463	0.34	1.10	0.26	0.24	4.23	0.14	2.17	51	12	0.4	II	2.01	left peak and a large right shoulder on S2; solid bitumen
11970	3648.46	70.5	460	0.32	0.85	0.10	0.27	8.50	0.10	1.72	49	6	0.4	II	1.68	left peak and right shoulder on S2
12000	3657.60	70.2	459	0.39	1.13	0.34	0.26	3.32	0.14	1.86	61	18	0.3	II	1.58	large left peak and a right shoulder on S2
12030	3666.74	70.7	464	0.39	0.94	0.27	0.29	3.48	0.12	1.88	50	14	0.4	II	2.13	left peak and right shoulder on S2
12060	3675.89	70.3	462	0.44	1.03	0.32	0.30	3.22	0.14	1.82	57	18	0.4	II	1.89	large left peak and a right shoulder on S2
12090	3685.03	70.1	458	0.42	1.19	0.42	0.26	2.83	0.16	1.96	61	21	0.3	II	1.49	large left peak and a right shoulder on S2
12169	3709.11	70.0	470	0.37	0.98	0.34	0.28	2.88	0.14	1.98	49	17	0.5	II	3.08	core , small left peak and a right shoulder on S2, solid bitumen
Ave				443.3												all values (122)
SD					24.5											
Ave						440.0										selected values (30)
SD						2.7										

Table 5. Cuttings samples from Reindeer D-27 for geochemical analysis

Sample ID	Depth (m)	Formation/ Sequence	Amount (g)	Rock-Eval TOC (%)	Pr/Ph ratio from GC extract analysis
X11364	822.96	Taglu	2.5	23.67	1.25
X11365	1133.86	Taglu	3.85	34.7	1.21
X11366	1392.94	Taglu	2.94	17.09	1.93
X11367	1722.12	Aklak	1.53	1.26	1.01
X11368	2761.49	Aklak	3.40	1.39	1.49
X11369	3550.92	Arctic Red	2.95	1.55	1.26
X11370	3706.37	Arctic Red	3.51	1.43	2.33

Table 6: Rock-Eval results for shale or coal samples from cored intervals from the Reindeer D-27 and Tununuk K-10 wells.

GSC Lab ID	GSC Sample ID	Well name	Depth (m)	Sequence/Formation	TOC (wt%)	Tmax (°C)	S1	S2	S3	PI	HI	OI	MINC (%)	PC (%TOC)	RC (%TOC)	%Ro*
X11570	C-560352	Reindeer D-27	1129.3	Taglu	52.59	415	1.15	32.26	67.24	0.03	61	128	1.76	5.93	46.66	0.46
X11571	C-560353		2021	Aklak	2.15	431	0.17	2.29	5.76	0.07	107	268	0.67	0.39	1.76	0.54
X11572	C-560354		2723.5	Aklak	1.71	434	0.16	1.25	4.11	0.11	73	240	0.49	0.25	1.46	0.61
X11601	C-560355		3157	Aklak	0.98	443	0.06	0.58	0.56	0.10	59	57	0.62	0.08	0.90	0.69
X11573	C-560356		3313.62	Arctic Red	2.14	434	0.13	3.53	0.50	0.03	165	23	0.40	0.34	1.80	0.69
X11574	C-560357		3481.5	Arctic Red	1.47	443	0.19	2.02	0.04	0.08	137	3	0.23	0.19	1.28	0.75
X11616	C-560358		3623.35	Arctic Red	1.41	445	0.17	1.17	0.04	0.13	83	3	0.27	0.12	1.29	0.79
X11575	C-560359		3798.5	Arctic Red	1.12	447	0.36	0.76	0.12	0.32	68	11	0.18	0.11	1.01	0.79
X11510	C-560389	Tununuk K-10	898.53	Aklak	0.84	435	0.02	0.28	0.18	0.07	33	21	0.04	0.04	0.80	0.59
X11511	C-560390		2824.42	Arctic Red	1.31	450	0.15	1.09	0.19	0.12	83	15	0.48	0.11	1.20	0.86
X11512	C-560391		3357.6	Arctic Red	1.00	463	0.07	0.41	0.00	0.16	41	0	0.29	0.04	0.96	1.07
X11513	C-560392		3708.5	Arctic Red	2.01	470	0.22	0.86	0.11	0.20	43	5	0.51	0.10	1.91	1.30

S1: mg HC/g Rock; S2: mg HC/g Rock; S3: mg CO₂/g Rock; PI: S1/(S1+S2); HI: mg HC/g TOC; OI: mg CO₂/g TOC; %Ro*: Vitrinite reflectance measured previously on a separate set of core and cuttings samples of similar depth.

Table 7. Selected depositional environment and maturation related biomarker parameters for the core samples from Reindeer D-27 and Tununuk K-10 wells.

GSC Lab ID	GSC Sample ID	Well	Depth (m)	Formation	Pr/Ph	DBT/Phen	Cadal/TeMN	Retene/Phen	Simoneil/Phen	Peryl/Phen	Peryl/BFIs	Sterane Distribution (%)			C ₂₉ St S/(S+R)	C ₃₂ Hop S/(S+R)
												C ₂₇	C ₂₈	C ₂₉		
X11570	C-560352	Reindeer D-27	1129.3	Taglu	0.51	0.31	3.88	3.70	21.61	2.32	7.54	<10	<10	>90	n.a.	n.a.
X11571	C-560353		2021	Aklak	1.45	0.03	1.88	1.48	0.61	0.71	3.41	10.6	27.0	62.4	0.17	0.29
X11572	C-560354		2723.5	Aklak	2.06	0.05	1.41	0.35	0.49	0.69	1.31	16.4	24.1	59.6	0.14	0.45
X11601	C-560355		3157	Aklak	2.94	0.04	0.60	0.09	0.04	0.90	1.33	17.4	22.6	59.9	0.28	0.57
X11573	C-560356		3313.62	Arctic Red	2.51	0.03	0.06	0.05	0.00	0.01	0.04	29.1	37.9	33.0	0.37	0.59
X11574	C-560357		3481.5	Arctic Red	1.43	0.03	0.03	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.01	33.2	27.8	39.0	0.51	0.59
X11616	C-560358		3623.35	Arctic Red	2.22	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	31.5	26.4	42.1	0.57	0.60
X11575	C-560359		3798.5	Arctic Red	2.05	0.06	0.21	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.01	34.2	24.3	41.5	0.61	0.59
X11510	C-560389	Tununuk K-10	898.53	Aklak	1.5	0.08	0.28	0.11	0.01	2.19	4.45	25.6	17.4	57.0	0.10	0.27
X05132	C-012560		2535.94	Smoking Hills/Boundary Creek	2.83	0.09	0.02	0.07	0.00	0.00	0.01	35.6	30.4	34.0	0.57	0.58
X05133	C-551828		2822.45	Arctic Red	2.57	0.08	0.03	0.03	0.00	0.00	0.01	30.7	26.7	42.6	0.66	0.57
X11511	C-560390		2824.42	Arctic Red	2.28	0.04	0.05	0.02	0.00	0.01	0.04	27.1	28.5	44.4	0.60	0.60
X05134	C-551829		3122.37	Arctic Red	2.18	0.10	0.03	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	31.5	27.6	40.9	0.56	0.65
X11512	C-560391		3357.60	Arctic Red	2.33	0.05	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	30.5	31.5	37.9	0.50	0.55
X05136	C-544003		3540.56	Arctic Red	1.47	0.08	0.03	0.07	0.01	0.01	0.00	38.4	30.7	30.8	0.56	0.56
X11513	C-560392		3708.50	Arctic Red	2.15	0.03	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	36.0	27.9	36.1	0.57	0.63

Pr/Ph: ratio of pristane over phytane; DBT/Phen: ratio of dibenzothiophene over phenanthrene; Cadal/TeMN: ratio of cadalene over the sum of tetramethyl naphthalenes; Retene/Phen: ratio of retene over phenanthrene; Simoneil/Phen: ratio of simoneillite over phenanthrene; Peryl/Phen: ratio of perylene over phenanthrene; Peryl/BFIs: ratio of perylene over benzofluoranthenes and benzopyrenes; C₂₉ St S/(S+R): C₂₉ $\alpha\alpha\alpha$ steranes 20S/(20S+20R); C₃₂ Hop S/(S+R): C₃₂ homohopanes 22S/(22S+22R).