



The Permian stratigraphic framework of the Salt Range Pakistan

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The Salt Range is the southern border of the adjoining hydrocarbon bearing Potwar Basin, northern Pakistan. The Salt Range is the classical locality for its geological activities because of the easy access, varying geology from the Precambrian to the Recent, excellent exposures through the gorges as well as the roadside geology. The Permian stratigraphy of the Salt Range is divisible into the Lower Permian Nilawahan Group and the Upper Permian Zaluch Group. The Permian sequence of the Salt Range is of unique character because of the fact that the Lower Permian Gondwana clastic sediments are overlain by the richly fossiliferous Upper Permian carbonate deposits of the Tethyan realm. The originally established stratigraphic framework of the Lower Permian classified into four units and also accepted in the present contribution is the Tobra Formation (Asselian), the Dandot Formation (Sakmarian), the Warchha Sandstone (Artinskian) and the Sardhai Formation (Kungurian), whereas their age assignment is in accordance with the Geological Time Scale. The Lower Permian stratigraphy of the Salt Range surprisingly is missing in the Geological Time Scale 2004 (GTS 2004, p 257). The present contribution emphatically proposes that it must form component of the future revised edition of the Geological Time Scale to highlight its significance in the global framework of the Permian period.