

## Oceanographic Conditions in Fall of 1999 along the Section between the South of Kyusyu and the Yap Islands

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### Abstract

Oceanographic observations using the CTD, XBT and ADCP systems were conducted along a section between the south of Kyushu to the Yap Islands in the Western North Pacific on October 13-18, 1999. The surface-mixed layer higher than 29 °C with a thickness of 47-84 m was observed from 13° N to 25° N. The Subtropical Mode Water occupied the subsurface layer between 200 m and 400 m in the region between 21° N and 28° N. In the region south of 15° N, the isotherm depths increased towards the south from 150 m to 400 m, indicating existence of the North Equatorial Current. The current velocity was measured to be ca. 20 cm/s, nearly equal to its annual mean value, indicating that the North Equatorial Current holds its normal state in fall of 1999. The saline water higher than 34.7 psu occupied the subsurface layer between 100 m and 300 m in almost whole sections. Below the subsurface saline water, there was a halocline between 34.4 psu and 34.7 psu in the entire sections. The intermediate water less than 34.2 psu occupied the layer between 600 m and 850 m in the region between 20° N and 29° N. At some latitudes in the westward zonal current region south of 20° N, some eastward return flows were detected, i.e., at 17° N, 18.5° N, and 19.5° N in the sea surface layer, at 18° N, 18.5° N and 19.5° N in the 50 m depth layer, and at 14.5° N ~15° N and 18° N in the 100 m depth layer.

The oceanic circulation in the western part of the Pacific including the North Equatorial Current, the North Equatorial Countercurrent, the Kuroshio and the Kuroshio Countercurrent are believed to play important roles in the global climate change through the meridional oceanic transports of heat and fresh-water. Some results of oceanographic surveys in this area have been published: those from 33° N to 3° N along 133° 40' E in July and January of 1993~1997 by Yoritaka *et al.*<sup>1)</sup>, from the south of Honshu to Pohnpei in 1994 by Higashi *et al.*<sup>2)</sup>, and from the south of Kyusyu to Palau in 1995 by Uchiyama *et al.*<sup>3)</sup>. As the oceanic currents have large variability accompanied with the meso-scale eddies and annual signal in the wind stress, it is desired to conduct oceanographic surveys as many times as possible for

monitoring the oceanic circulation in the western part of the Pacific.

From 13th October to 9th November in 1999, the Kagoshima University Research Center for the Pacific Islands, carried out interdisciplinary studies on the islands and islands zones in Oceania and its surroundings. In order to understand the basic natural environment in the islands zones in Oceania and its surroundings, it is necessary to examine the variability of oceanic conditions not only in the surrounding coastal waters but also in the wider region including the western part of the Pacific. Therefore, as a part of this research project, an oceanographic survey was conducted along the section from the south of Kyusyu to the Yap Islands on board of the T. S. Keiten Maru (G.T. 860 tons,

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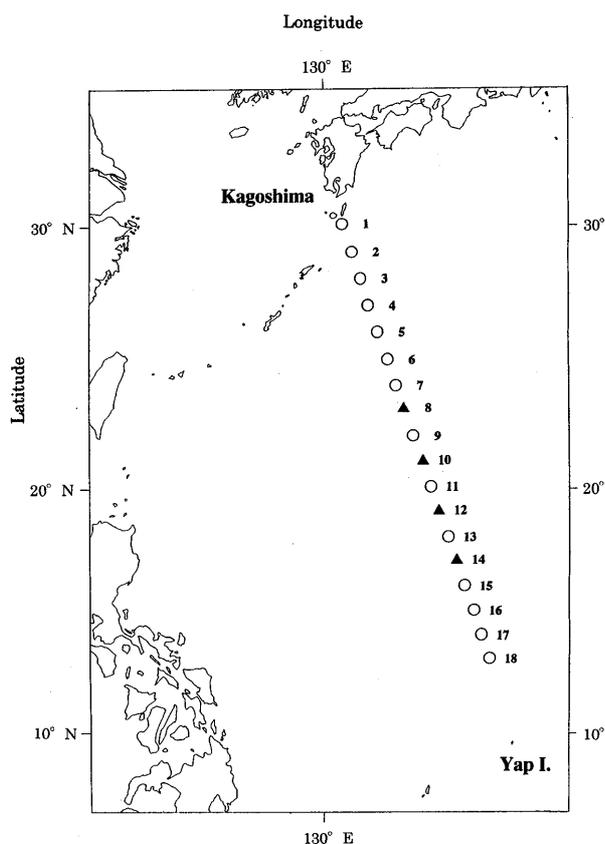


Fig. 1 Map showing the hydrographic stations.  
Dark triangles: XBT, Circles: CTD

fishing training ship of Kagoshima University).

This paper presents the oceanic conditions in the western part of the Pacific when the oceanographic surveys were conducted in fall of 1999. The comparison of the conditions in 1999 with previous results will also be made.

### Oceanographic Observation

Vertical profiles of temperature and salinity were measured by a conductivity, temperature, and depth recorder system (CTD system, Neil Brown Instrument Model Mark III with a terminal deck unit, DT 1050 WS), and those of temperature by expendable bathy-thermographs (XBT, Murayama Denki Ltd., Type Z-60-16III). The locations of CTD and XBT stations are shown in Fig. 1. The observations were conducted from 13th to 18th October, 1999. Along the section, CTD sensor was lowered to 1000 m depth at 14 stations, and the XBT probes were launched to 900 m depth at 4 stations. These stations were

selected to be every one degree latitude from 30° N, 130° - 56.1 E to 13° N, 137° - 10.0 E. The values of salinity measured by CTD were corrected by those of water samples determined by AUTOSAL 80B (IAPSO standard sea water, batch No.P555). The standard deviation of differences between corrected CTD salinity and AUTOSAL salinity was 0.003 psu for 16 pairs.

The current velocities at three layers of 5 m, 50 m and 100 m depths were measured by a ship-mounted acoustic doppler current profiler (ADCP, KAIJO DENKI, Type DCG-20B), and recorded every one minute automatically with GPS position, surface water temperature, ship's heading by Gyro compass, and ship's speed by electro-magnetic log. The 30-minute mean absolute surface current vectors were calculated subtracting the 30-minute mean ship's speed relative to water measured by ADCP from the ship's grand speed calculated from difference of ship's position during 30 minutes.

## Results and Discussion

### Vertical section of temperature

The vertical section of water temperature is shown in Fig. 2. The surface mixed water higher than 29°C occupied the region between Stn. 6 (25° N) and Stn. 18 (13° N), having a thickness of 47~84 m. The southward down-slope of isotherms from Stn. 1 (30° N) to Stn. 3 (28° N) corresponds to the Kuroshio. The southward up-slope of isotherms from the surface to 150 m depth showed the existence of a core of the subsurface velocity maximum. The weak southward up-slope of isotherms between Stn. 4 (27° N) to Stn. 5 (26° N) is associated with the Kuroshio Counter-current.

In the subsurface layer, the thickness of the layer between isotherms of 20 °C and 12 °C in the regions from Stn. 3 (28° N) to Stn. 10 (21° N) was larger than other regions, which indicated the existence of the Subtropical Mode Water. In the region south of Stn. 15 (16° N), the isotherm depths increased towards the south from 150 m to 400 m, indicating the existence of the North Equatorial Current.

### Vertical section of salinity

The salinity section is shown in Fig. 3. The less saline surface water lower than 34.2 psu occupied Stns. 1, 15, and 16. The lowest salinity value of the less saline surface water was 34.11 psu at Stn. 15. Below the surface water, the subsurface saline water higher than 34.7 psu occupied the layer between 100 m and 300 m at almost whole stations. Its highest salinity value was 35.001 psu at Stn.17. Below the subsurface saline water, the halocline between 34.7 psu and 34.4 psu was found in the entire sections. In the Kuroshio area (Stn. 1 in temperature section), a sharp down-slope of halocline was also found. The intermediate water characterized by the salinity

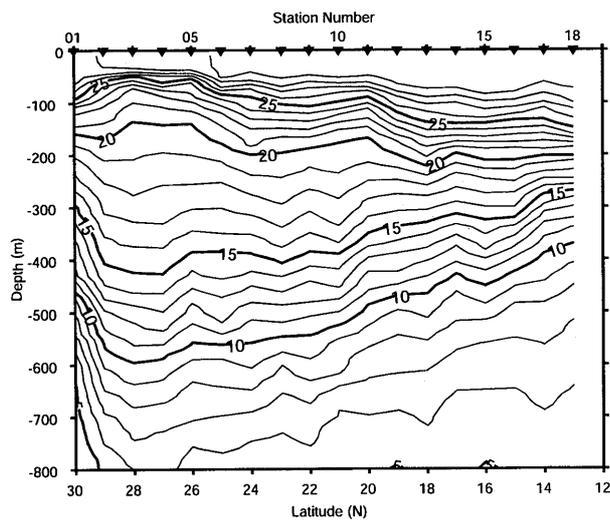


Fig. 2 Vertical section of water temperature ( $^{\circ}\text{C}$ ).

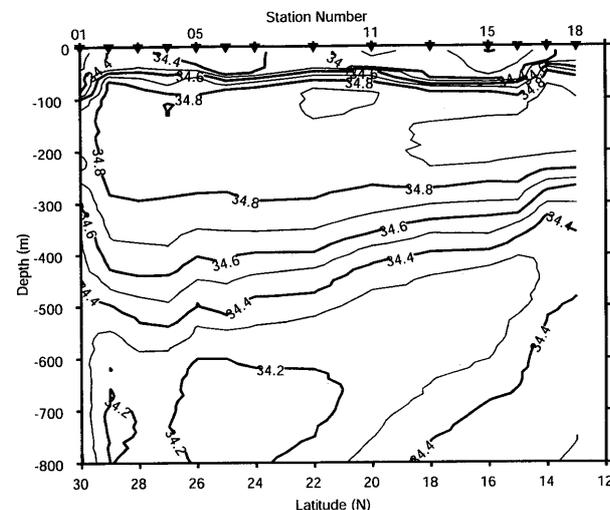


Fig. 3 Vertical section of salinity (psu).

minimum of 34.2 psu was present between Stns. 2, and 11, showing a tongue-like distribution in the layer between 600 m and 850 m with southward up-sloping. Below this intermediate water, the salinity increased downward or southward.

### Temperature-salinity relation

The temperature-salinity relations at standard depths of 5 stations are shown in Fig. 4. The water corresponding to the maximum salinity was considered to be the Subtropical Subsurface Water. The maximum salinity value was 34.978 psu at  $24.821^{\circ}\text{C}$  (Stn. 18) at 150 m depth. It increased southward with decreased depth. The curves gave inverted form of "S" character. The water corresponding to the minimum salinity is considered to be the North Pacific Intermediate Water. The minimum value was 34.146 psu at  $6.707^{\circ}\text{C}$  (Stn. 7) in a depth of 700 m and forms well-mixed uniform water masses.

### Distribution of current velocity

The surface currents measured by ship-mounted ADCP is shown in Fig. 5. As mentioned in the vertical sections of temperature and salinity, there exist some characteristic currents crossing the observation line. The maximum speed of current was 65 cm/s near Stn. 7 ( $24^{\circ}\text{N}$ ). The Kuroshio flows at Stn. 1 ( $30^{\circ}\text{N}$ ), and its maximum speed was 60 cm/s. The Kuroshio Countercurrent was present at ca.  $27^{\circ}\text{N}$  with the maximum speed of 30 cm/s. The North Equatorial Current appeared from  $20^{\circ}\text{N}$  to  $13^{\circ}\text{N}$ , with the maximum speed of 25 cm/s at  $13^{\circ}\text{N}$ .

Figures 6 (a), 6 (b), and 6 (c) show the eastward component of current at 5 m, 50 m, and 100 m depths, respectively. The weak westward currents in the region south of  $21^{\circ}\text{N}$ , show the North Equatorial Current. According to White *et al.*<sup>4)</sup>, the speed of long-term averaged annual mean of zonal current in the North Equatorial Current region had the maximum of 24 cm/s. According to Uchiyama *et al.*<sup>5)</sup>, the maximum current velocity was also equal to or more than 20 cm/s at  $11^{\circ}\text{N}$ . In the present observations, we obtained the maximum value of current velocity in the North Equatorial Current region to be ca. 20 cm/s, nearly equal to the annual mean. This result

indicates that the North Equatorial Current holds its normal state in fall of 1999.

In this region, some eastward current was detected at some latitude, i.e., at 17° N, 18.5° N, and 19.5° N in the sea surface layer, at 18° N, 18.5° N, and 19.5° N in

the 50 m depth layer, and at 14.5° N~15° N and 18° N in the 100 m depth layer. These eastward current might indicate the existence of return flow accompanied by meso-scale eddies.

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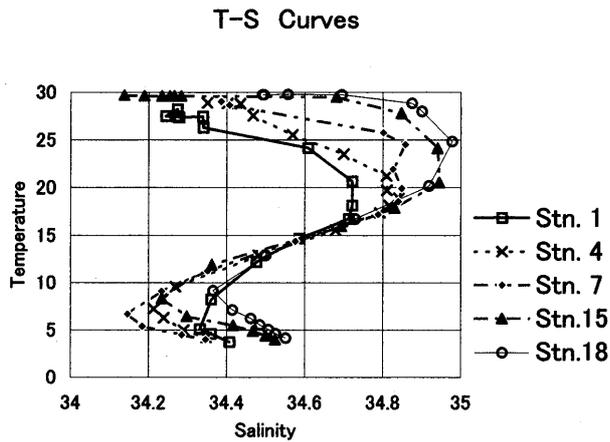


Fig. 4 Temperature-salinity relation at Stations. 1, 4, 7, 15, and 18.

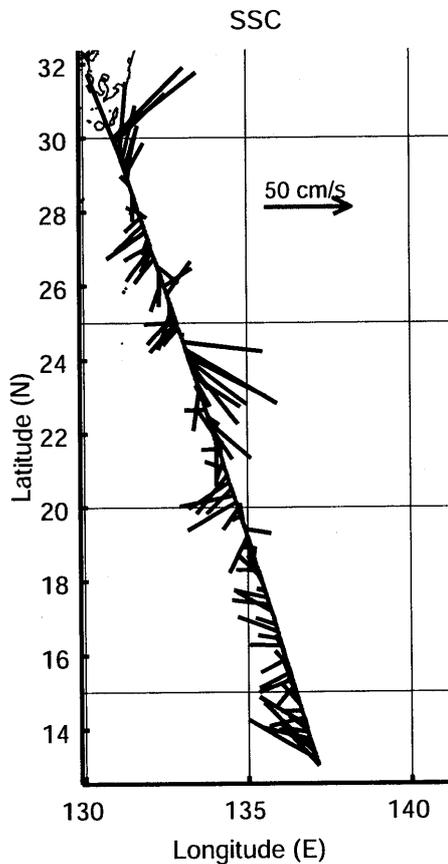
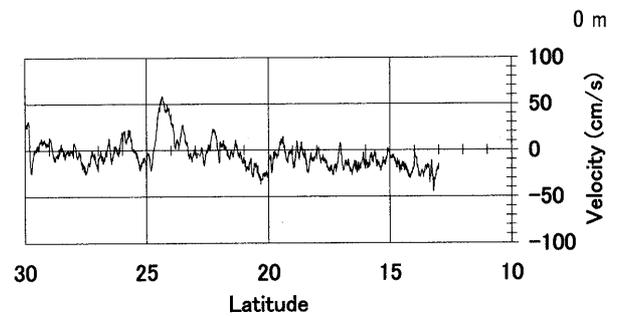
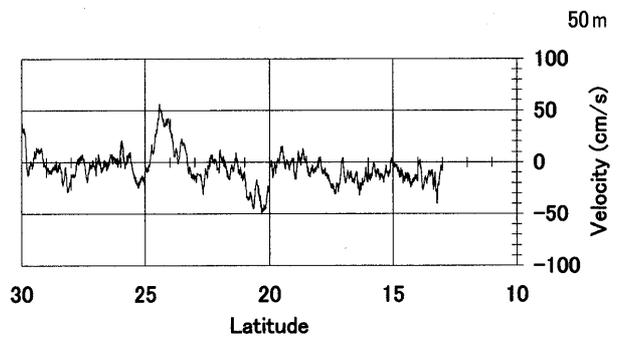


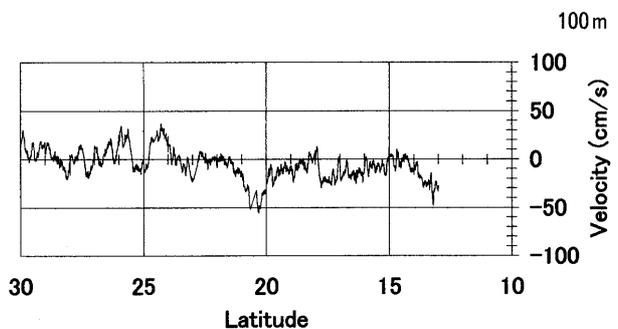
Fig. 5 Distribution of currents at sea surface(5 m depth).



(a) 5m depth



(b) 50m depth



(c) 100m depth

Fig. 6 The eastward component of current.

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### Appendix

Stn.	1 (CTD)		2 (CTD)		3 (CTD)		4 (CTD)		5 (CTD)	
Date	Oct. 13, 1999		Oct. 14, 1999							
Time	19:08		02:14		08:54		15:36		21:47	
Lat.	29° - 59' 9N		29° - 00' 1N		27° - 59' 9N		26° - 59' 8N		26° - 00' 0N	
Long.	130° - 56' 1E		131° - 19' 6E		131° - 42' 7E		132° - 05' 3E		132° - 29' 3E	
Depth	860 m		4100 m		2440 m		5398 m		3690 m	
Prs. (dbar)	Temp.(°C)	Sal.(‰)								
0	28.212	34.274	28.174	34.375	28.433	34.452	29.228	34.207	28.726	34.372
10	27.496	34.244	28.141	34.409	28.405	34.452	28.866	34.350	28.698	34.371
20	27.471	34.271	28.118	34.410	28.392	34.457	28.807	34.402	28.647	34.388
30	27.417	34.276	28.016	34.426	28.389	34.461	28.798	34.435	28.619	34.389
40	27.352	34.278	27.767	34.438	27.011	34.507	27.552	34.468	27.673	34.418
50	27.434	34.339	26.151	34.613	24.815	34.628	25.538	34.569	25.529	34.595
75	26.279	34.340	23.783	34.834	21.687	34.799	23.494	34.700	23.151	34.775
100	24.144	34.609	22.192	34.869	20.956	34.834	21.217	34.810	21.760	34.796
150	20.653	34.722	20.502	34.858	19.657	34.824	19.715	34.811	19.795	34.817
200	18.104	34.722	19.271	34.843	19.011	34.829	18.882	34.842	18.961	34.821
250	16.682	34.713	18.012	34.822	18.342	34.819	18.092	34.817	18.115	34.821
300	14.675	34.587	17.112	34.790	17.379	34.794	17.322	34.793	17.013	34.778
400	12.177	34.477	15.066	34.639	15.457	34.670	15.532	34.679	14.576	34.605
500	8.226	34.361	11.745	34.389	12.597	34.463	12.892	34.482	11.645	34.398
600	5.107	34.332	9.147	34.225	9.754	34.274	9.571	34.269	8.612	34.200
700	4.598	34.360	6.629	34.168	7.474	34.213	7.254	34.213	7.026	34.159
800	3.721	34.408	5.284	34.197	5.941	34.230	6.286	34.239	5.476	34.187
900			4.405	34.279	5.238	34.302	4.988	34.290	4.717	34.241
1000			3.860	34.385	4.166	34.363	4.224	34.348	4.112	34.306

Stn.	6 (CTD)		7 (CTD)		8 (XBT)		9 (CTD)		10 (XBT)	
Date	Oct. 15, 1999		Oct. 16, 1999							
Time	04:15		10:23		17:10		22:35		05:08	
Lat.	25°-00.' 0N		24°-00.' 0N		22°-56.' 9N		22°-00.' 1N		21°-00.' 0N	
Long.	132°-51.' 4E		133°-14.' 2E		133°-37.' 6E		133°-58.' 3E		134°-20.' 2E	
Depth	5170 m		4280 m		4610 m		5300 m		5830 m	
Prs. (dbar)	Temp.(°C)	Sal.(‰)								
0	29.196	34.342	29.101	34.385	29.00		29.383	34.461	29.20	
10	29.165	34.344	29.069	34.384	29.24		29.308	34.464	29.11	
20	29.163	34.344	29.031	34.386	29.22		29.308	34.465	29.10	
30	29.162	34.344	29.029	34.386	29.17		29.306	34.465	29.12	
40	29.162	34.344	29.022	34.386	29.18		29.299	34.467	29.12	
50	29.160	34.343	28.633	34.407	29.18		28.829	34.637	29.12	
75	25.993	34.730	25.763	34.802	27.39		26.792	34.874	26.66	
100	23.369	34.877	24.518	34.858	25.22		25.452	34.907	24.85	
150	20.763	34.870	21.949	34.827	21.96		22.019	34.888	21.10	
200	19.273	34.867	19.921	34.849	19.86		19.614	34.838	19.59	
250	17.995	34.820	18.537	34.840	18.91		18.450	34.827	18.78	
300	16.971	34.783	17.157	34.789	17.83		17.198	34.788	17.82	
400	14.730	34.613	14.372	34.576	15.22		14.435	34.581	14.60	
500	12.374	34.424	11.256	34.351	11.55		11.161	34.336	10.99	
600	8.664	34.200	9.105	34.233	8.00		8.608	34.200	8.22	
700	6.884	34.152	6.707	34.146	6.40		6.571	34.166	5.92	
800	5.590	34.181	5.408	34.184			5.514	34.245		
900	4.701	34.256	4.518	34.285			4.708	34.324		
1000	4.044	34.343	4.008	34.346			4.213	34.397		

Stn.	11 (CTD)		12 (XBT)		13 (CTD)		14 (XBT)		15 (CTD)	
Date	Oct. 16, 1999		Oct. 16, 1999		Oct. 16, 1999		Oct. 17, 1999		Oct. 17, 1999	
Time	10:37		17:02		22:30		04:52		10:23	
Lat.	20°-00.' 0N		19°-00.' 0N		18°-00.' 0N		17°-00.' 0N		16°-00.' 1N	
Long.	134°-42.' 4E		135°-04.' 2E		135°-25.' 9E		135°-47.' 5E		136°-08.' 0E	
Depth	5800 m		5670 m		5070 m		5130 m		5230 m	
Prs. (dbar)	Temp.(°C)	Sal.(‰)								
0	29.276	34.166	29.10		29.671	34.276	29.30		29.684	34.138
10	29.263	34.266	29.40		29.669	34.347	29.53		29.613	34.189
20	29.292	34.303	29.42		29.671	34.358	29.55		29.591	34.234
30	29.286	34.307	29.29		29.671	34.361	29.54		29.587	34.254
40	29.287	34.350	29.27		29.668	34.361	27.56		29.583	34.265
50	28.909	34.632	29.25		29.650	34.365	29.57		29.589	34.283
75	26.176	34.868	28.21		28.976	34.707	28.89		29.484	34.681
100	24.050	34.907	26.48		27.185	34.836	26.98		27.790	34.848
150	20.801	34.859	22.77		24.149	34.917	24.10		24.114	34.941
200	19.261	34.844	20.02		21.131	34.941	19.83		20.520	34.945
250	17.942	34.817	17.90		18.377	34.852	17.37		17.815	34.831
300	16.621	34.758	16.21		16.150	34.707	15.56		15.941	34.693
400	12.810	34.447	12.74		12.077	34.387	11.16		11.891	34.362
500	9.674	34.260	8.80		9.166	34.265	8.14		8.340	34.234
600	7.301	34.213	7.20		7.121	34.271	6.58		6.451	34.298
700	5.894	34.263	5.87		6.029	34.342	5.60		5.497	34.417
800	5.152	34.343			5.471	34.435			4.887	34.468
900	4.674	34.404			4.934	34.481			4.403	34.501
1000	4.084	34.468			4.300	34.514			3.979	34.525

Stn.	16 (CTD)		17 (CTD)		18 (CTD)	
Date	Oct. 17, 1999		Oct. 17, 1999		Oct. 18, 1999	
Time	16:50		23:38		06:02	
Lat.	14°-59' 9N		14°-00.' 0N		13°-00.' 0N	
Long.	136°-28.' 5E		136°-49.' 0E		137°-10.' 0E	
Depth	4980 m		4650 m		4910 m	
Prs. (dbar)	Temp.(°C)	Sal.(‰)	Temp.(°C)	Sal.(‰)	Temp.(°C)	Sal.(‰)
0	29.821	34.161	29.711	34.349	29.736	34.495
10	29.814	34.234	29.714	34.357	29.729	34.494
20	29.672	34.273	29.721	34.360	29.730	34.492
30	29.660	34.293	29.742	34.399	29.738	34.496
40	29.656	34.309	29.833	34.683	29.766	34.557
50	29.662	34.323	29.455	34.806	29.738	34.695
75	29.122	34.657	28.332	34.906	28.810	34.875
100	27.641	34.822	26.898	34.937	27.981	34.901
150	23.900	34.948	23.584	34.971	24.821	34.978
200	20.337	34.930	20.079	34.924	20.191	34.919
250	18.028	34.834	16.670	34.738	16.693	34.729
300	15.975	34.690	13.722	34.502	12.887	34.501
400	10.809	34.306	9.721	34.312	9.167	34.365
500	7.694	34.257	7.714	34.385	7.138	34.415
600	6.456	34.376	6.664	34.440	6.230	34.462
700	5.620	34.431	5.891	34.482	5.538	34.486
800	5.004	34.469	5.291	34.495	5.042	34.508
900	4.532	34.503	4.787	34.518	4.630	34.526
1000	4.155	34.529	4.392	34.535	4.159	34.551