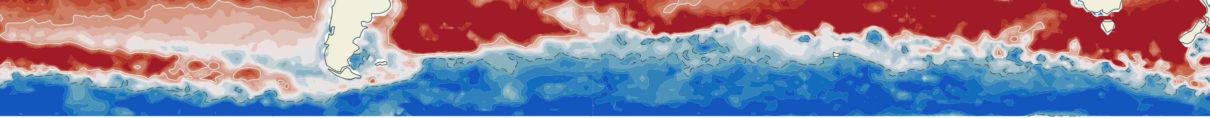

From alpha to beta ocean

Exploring the role of surface buoyancy fluxes and seawater thermal expansion in setting the upper ocean stratification

Romain Caneill

SASIP Seminar, November 26, 2024

https://romaincaneill.fr/2024/11/26/SASIP-seminar.html

2014 – 2017 Master in geophysics

2017 – 2018 Professional carpentry diploma

2018 – 2024 PhD, Göteborg with Fabien Roquet

2024 – 2027 Postdoc, Grenoble, SASIP project

I am an advocate of Open and Reproducible Science.

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romain.caneill@univ-grenoble-alpes.fr

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rcaneill

fediscience.org/web/@rcaneill

PGP fingerprint:

70D5 7116 37B2 9335 9088

F124 D0FE 114E BFFD ED7F

My SASIP Postdoc

I want to describe the distribution of energy in the sea ice, with a focus on the role of the rheology in constraining the energy cascade.

- IABP database: 40 years of drifters
- Single particle diagnostics to describe the fluctuating velocities
- Pair statistics to describe the energy
- Future: Compare the model outputs with different rheologies

Back to alpha and beta ocean!

The oceans store carbon and heat

The oceans have taken up about:

- 25 % of CO_2 produced by human activities;

The oceans store carbon and heat

The oceans have taken up about:

- 25 % of CO_2 produced by human activities;
- 90 % of excess heat.

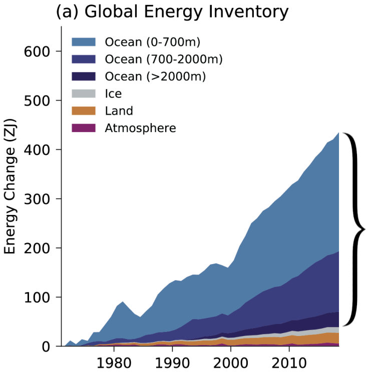


Figure adapted from the IPCC Sixth Report (Fox-Kemper et al., 2021)

The ocean absorbs anthropogenic CO_2

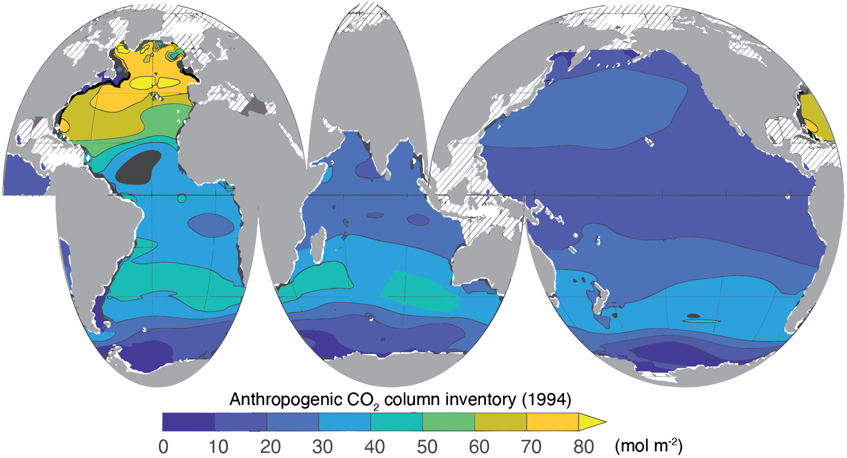


Figure adapted from Gruber et al. (2023)

Ocean and atmosphere exchanges properties through the mixed layer

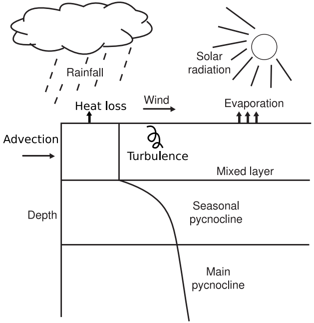


Figure adapted from Sprintall and Cronin (2009)

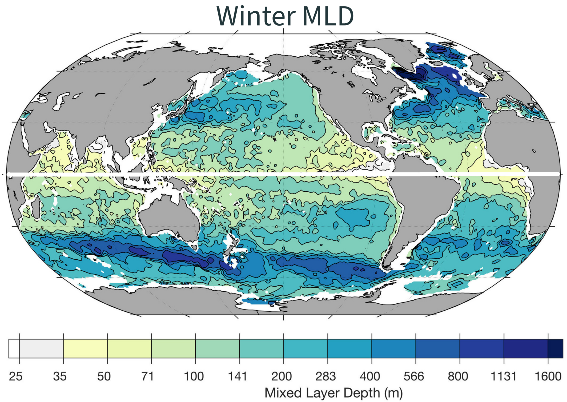


Figure adapted from Johnson and Lyman (2022)

The global circulation brings the water properties at depth

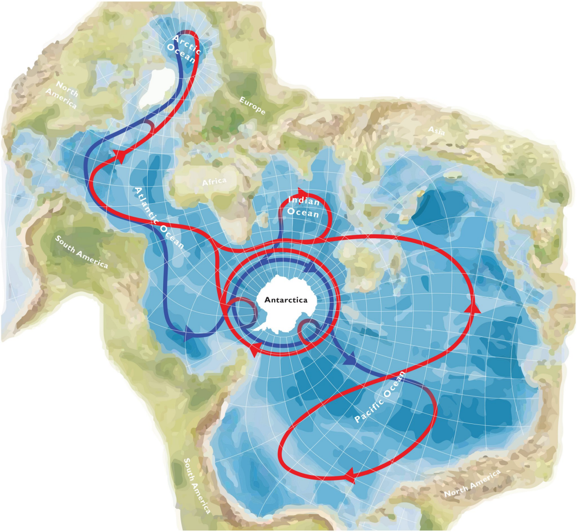
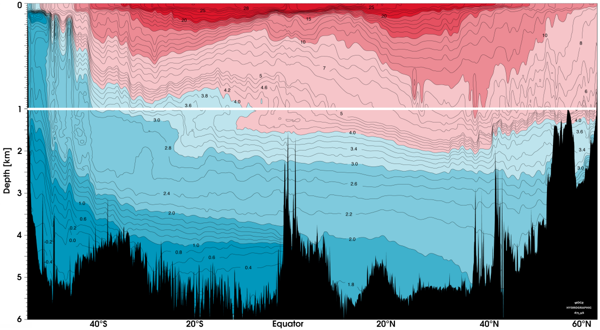
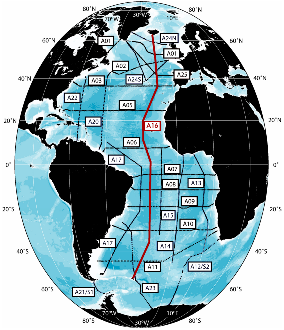


Figure adapted from Meredith (2019)

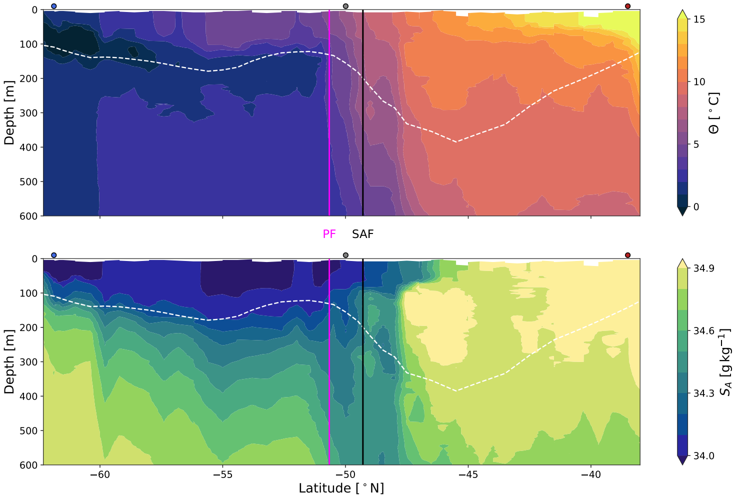
The large stratification inhibits vertical exchanges.

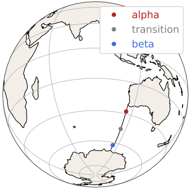




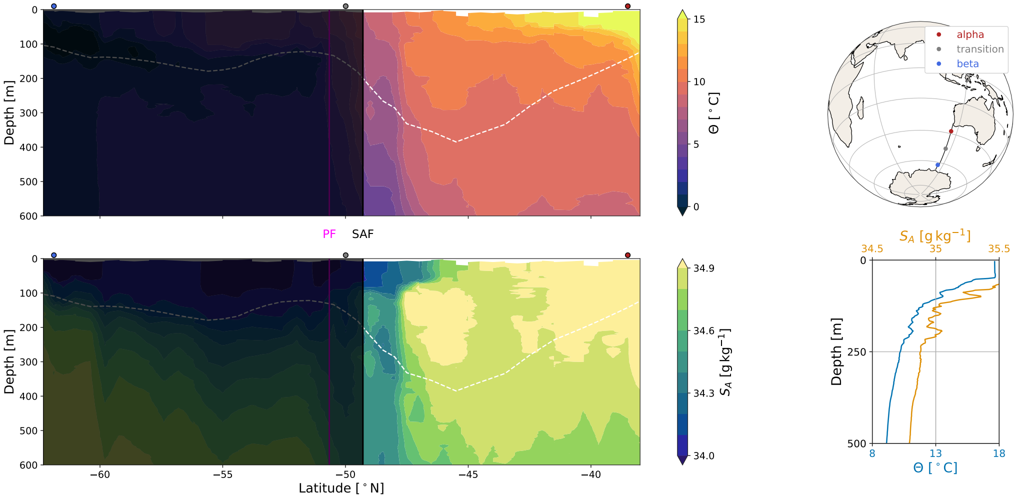
The ocean is mainly stratified because it is heated up at the surface.

Regimes of stratification

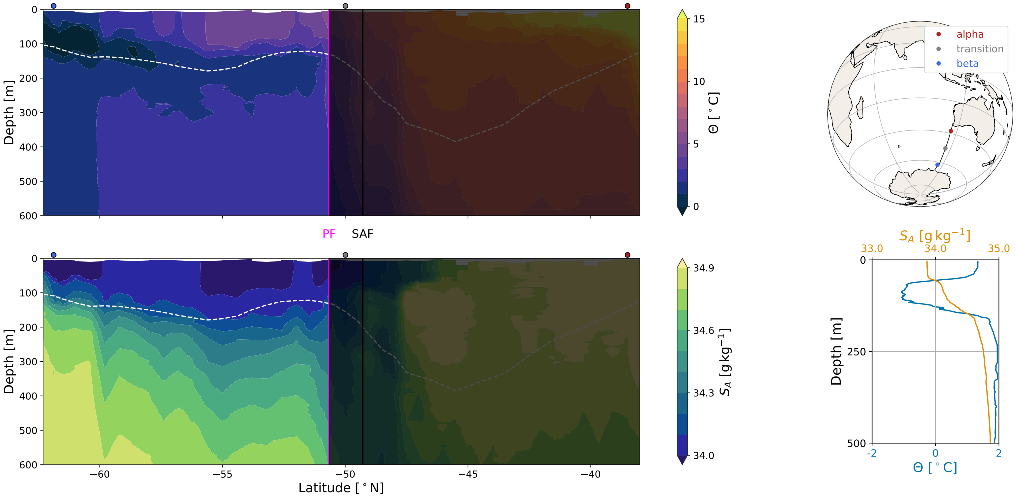




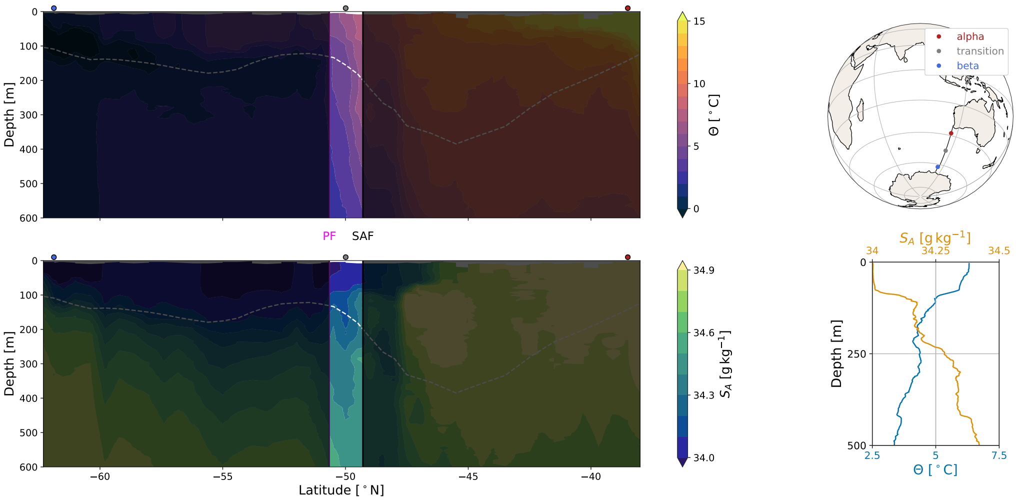
Regimes of stratification

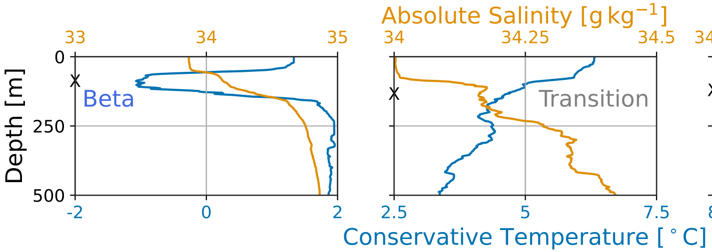


Regimes of stratification



Regimes of stratification

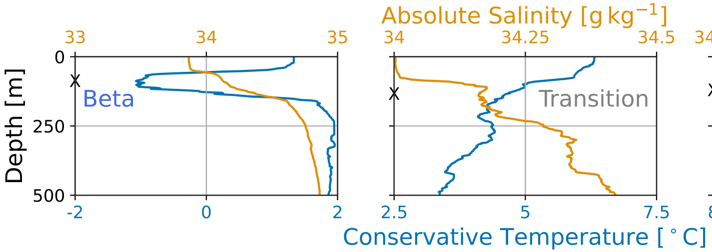




Temperature stratifies:
alpha ocean

(Carmack, 2007)

Beta, transition, and alpha

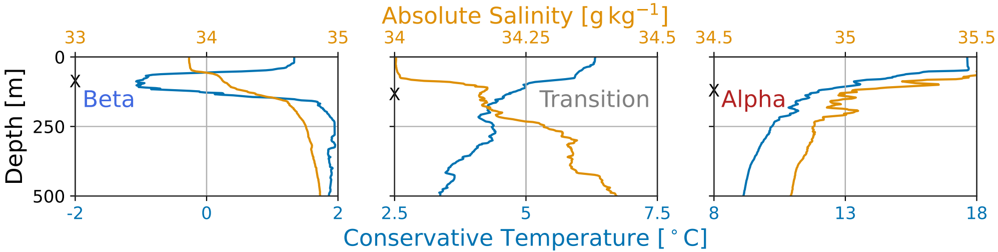


Salinity stratifies:
beta ocean

Temperature stratifies:
alpha ocean

(Carmack, 2007)

Beta, transition, and alpha

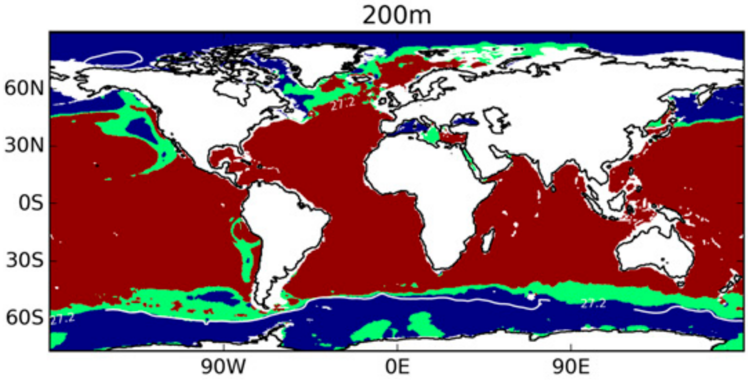


Salinity stratifies:
beta ocean

Both stratify:
transition zone

Temperature stratifies:
alpha ocean

(Carmack, 2007)

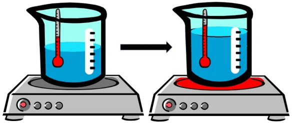


Called alpha – beta oceans in reference to α and β, thermodynamic properties of seawater.

Figure adapted from Stewart and Haine (2016)

The thermal expansion coefficient (TEC, α)

- Cold water is usually denser than warm water.



Public Domain

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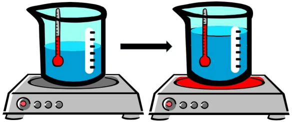
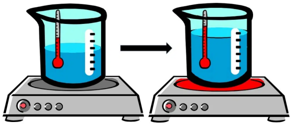


Public Domain

The thermal expansion coefficient (TEC, α)

- Cold water is usually denser than warm water.
- Ocean warms $\implies$ volume increases (1/2 of observed sea-level rise)
- The TEC quantifies the relative change of density with temperature:

$$\alpha = -\frac{1}{\rho}\frac{\partial \rho}{\partial \Theta}$$



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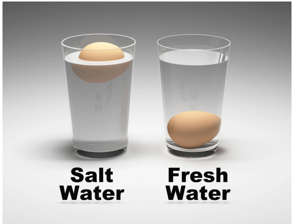
The haline contraction coefficient (HCC, β)

- Salty water is denser than freshwater



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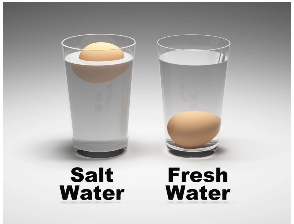
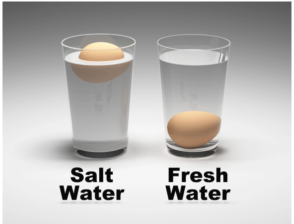


The haline contraction coefficient (HCC, β)

- Salty water is denser than freshwater
- The HCC quantifies the relative change of density with salinity:

$$\beta = \frac{1}{\rho}\frac{\partial \rho}{\partial S}$$



Properties of the TEC and HCC

- The TEC follows a (quasi) linear relation with temperature

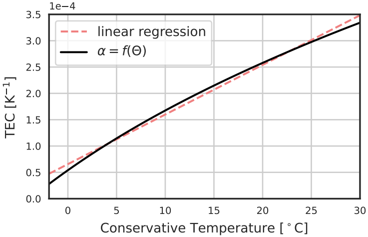
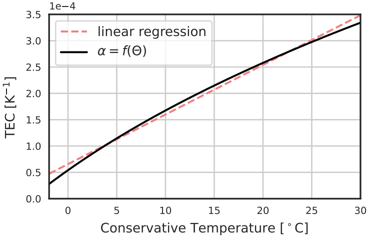


Figure adapted from Caneill et al. (2024)

Properties of the TEC and HCC

- The TEC follows a (quasi) linear relation with temperature
- The HCC variations in the ocean are negligible $\beta \simeq 7.5 \times 10^{-4}\,\mathrm{kg\,g^{-1}}$



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Properties of the TEC and HCC

- The TEC follows a (quasi) linear relation with temperature
- The HCC variations in the ocean are negligible $\beta \simeq 7.5 \times 10^{-4}\,\mathrm{kg\,g^{-1}}$
- It was assumed that the role of salinity is enhanced in polar regions due to low values of the TEC

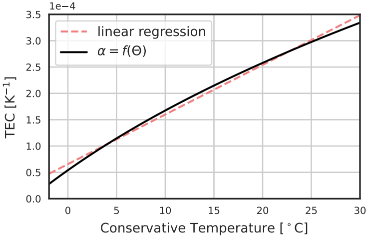

Figure adapted from Caneill et al. (2024)

What is the origin of alpha and beta oceans?

Objectives

From alpha to beta ocean: Exploring the role of surface buoyancy fluxes and seawater thermal expansion in setting the upper ocean stratification

Objective A	Objective B	Objective C
Describe alpha – beta oceans using observations	How do buoyancy fluxes shape the upper stratification?	Assess the role of the local value of the TEC.

TEC = Thermal expansion coefficient

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Caneill, R., & Roquet, F. (2024). Temperature versus salinity: Distribution of stratification control in the global ocean. *in preparation for Ocean Science*

Stratification Control Index (SCI)

$$SCI = \frac{\alpha \partial_z \Theta + \beta \partial_z S}{\alpha \partial_z \Theta - \beta \partial_z S} \quad (1)$$

The SCI quantifies the relative effect of temperature and salinity on stratification.

SCI > 1: alpha | -1 < SCI < 1: transition | SCI < -1: beta

Compute climatology of winter SCI

- Based on about 20 years of observation profiles (EN4 database, includes ARGO, ship-based CTD, MEOP, etc)
- Compute the SCI at the bottom of winter mixed layer
- Interpolation to produce climatology

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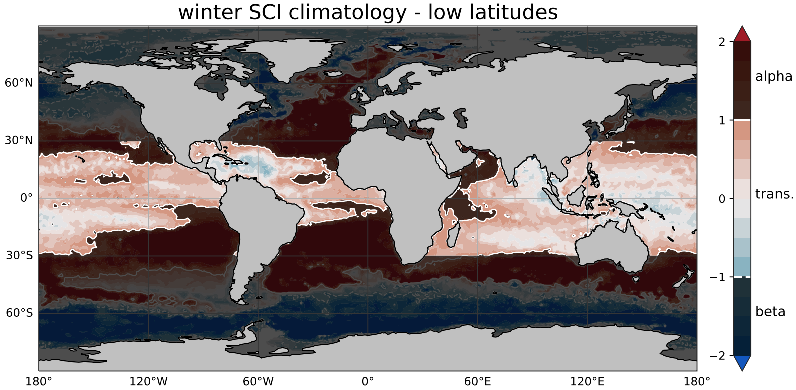
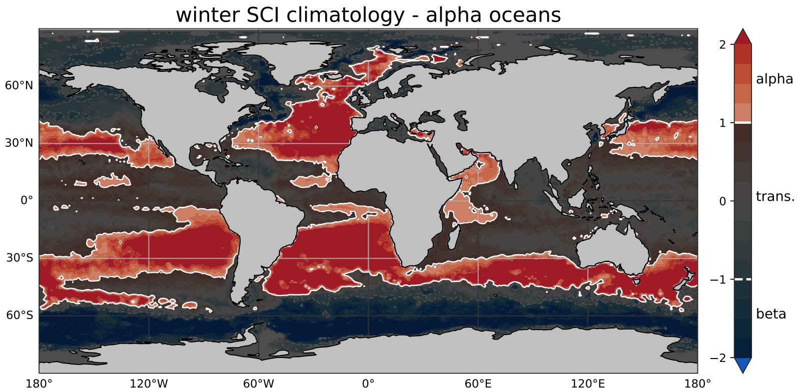


- Low-latitudes: transition zone
- Mid-latitudes: alpha ocean
- Between alpha and beta: PTZ
- High-latitudes: beta ocean

PTZ = polar transition zone



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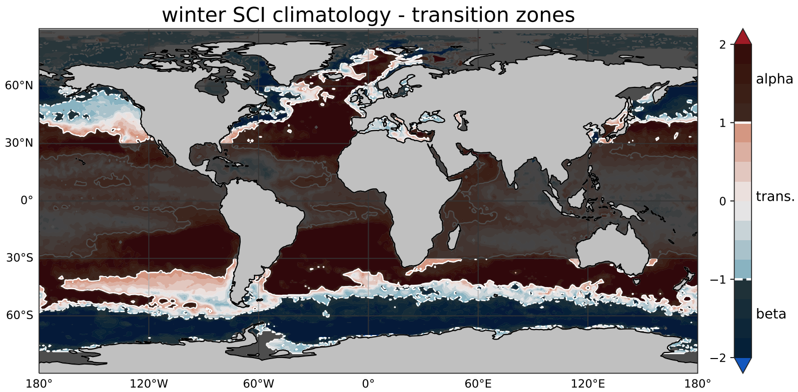

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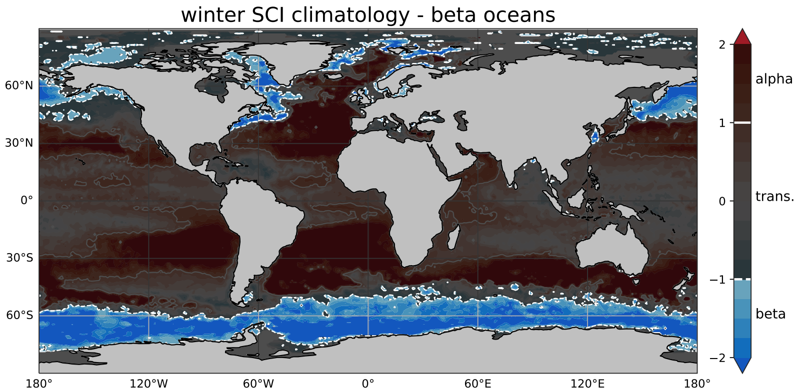

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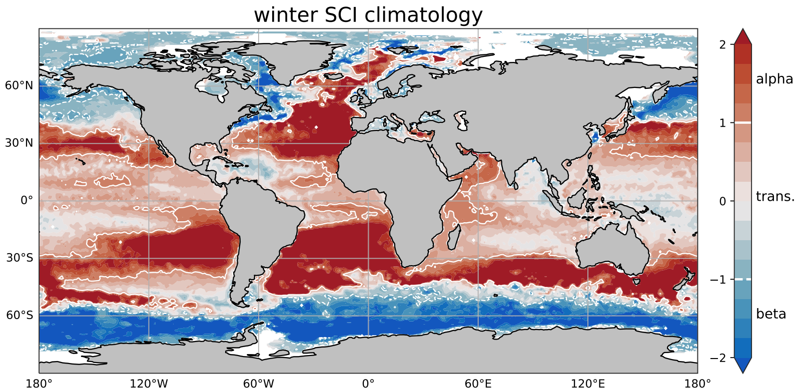
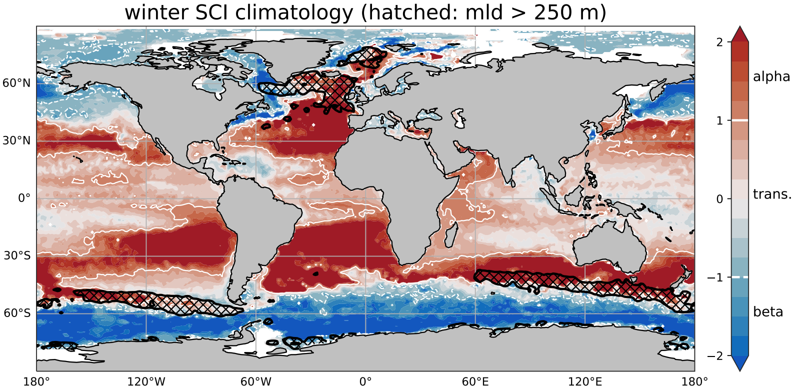


- Zonation with: transition zone $\rightarrow$ alpha $\rightarrow$ PTZ $\rightarrow$ beta
- Wide and zonal North Pacific PTZ
- Narrow and diagonal North Atlantic PTZ



Deep MLs located at the poleward flank of alpha oceans.

Relation with mixed layer depth

- Deep MLs mostly found in alpha oceans
- Bimodal distribution of the SCI, centred around ± 1.5

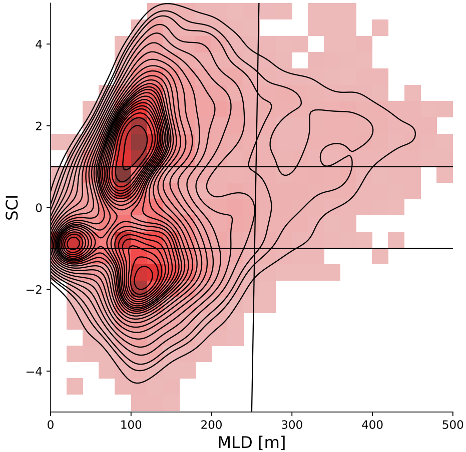


Figure for $|\varphi| \geq 30°$

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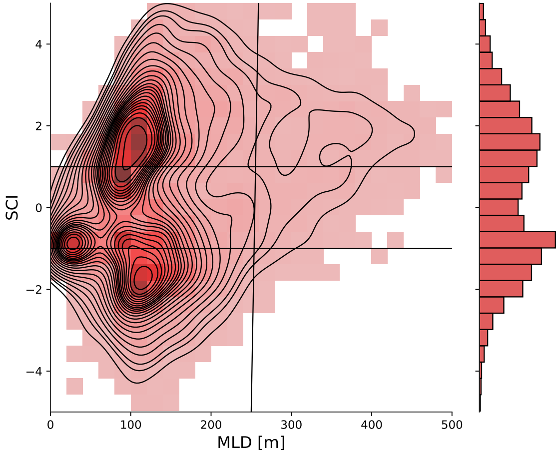

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Caneill, R., Roquet, F., Madec, G., & Nycander, J. (2022). The Polar Transition from Alpha to Beta Regions Set by a Surface Buoyancy Flux Inversion. *Journal of Physical Oceanography*

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Caneill et al., 2022

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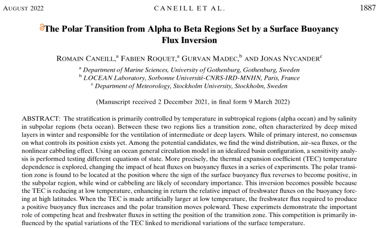


AUGUST 2022 CANEILL ET AL. 1887

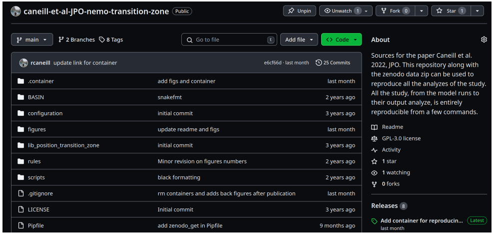
The Polar Transition from Alpha to Beta Regions Set by a Surface Buoyancy Flux Inversion

ROMAIN CANEILL,[a] FABIEN ROQUET,[a] GURVAN MADEC,[b] AND JONAS NYCANDER[c]

[a] *Department of Marine Sciences, University of Gothenburg, Gothenburg, Sweden*
[b] *LOCEAN Laboratory, Sorbonne Université-CNRS-IRD-MNHN, Paris, France*
[c] *Department of Meteorology, Stockholm University, Stockholm, Sweden*

(Manuscript received 2 December 2021, in final form 9 March 2022)

ABSTRACT: The stratification is primarily controlled by temperature in subtropical regions (alpha ocean) and by salinity in subpolar regions (beta ocean). Between these two regions lies a transition zone, often characterized by deep mixed layers in winter and responsible for the ventilation of intermediate or deep layers. While of primary interest, no consensus on what controls its position exists yet. Among the potential candidates, we find the wind distribution, air–sea fluxes, or the nonlinear cabbeling effect. Using an ocean general circulation model in an idealized basin configuration, a sensitivity analysis is performed testing different equations of state. More precisely, the thermal expansion coefficient (TEC) temperature dependence is explored, changing the impact of heat fluxes on buoyancy fluxes in a series of experiments. The polar transition zone is found to be located at the position where the sign of the surface buoyancy flux reverses to become positive, in the subpolar region, while wind or cabbeling are likely of secondary importance. This inversion becomes possible because the TEC is reducing at low temperature, enhancing in return the relative impact of freshwater fluxes on the buoyancy forcing at high latitudes. When the TEC is made artificially larger at low temperature, the freshwater flux required to produce a positive buoyancy flux increases and the polar transition moves poleward. These experimets demonstrate the important role of competing heat and freshwater fluxes in setting the position of the transition zone. This competition is primarily influenced by the spatial variations of the TEC linked to meridional variations of the surface temperature.



100 % reproducible with few commands

https://doi.org/10.1175/JPO-D-21-0295.1

https://github.com/rcaneill/caneill-et-al-JPO-nemo-transition-zone

Caneill, R., Roquet, F., & Nycander, J. (2024). Southern Ocean deep mixing band emerges from competition between winter buoyancy loss and stratification. *Ocean Science*

Ocean Sci., 20, 601–619, 2024
https://doi.org/10.5194/os-20-601-2024

Ocean Science
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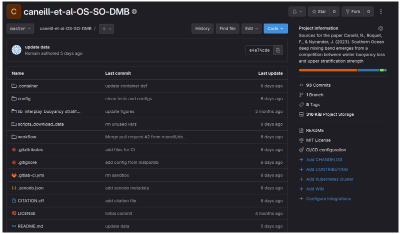
The Southern Ocean deep mixing band emerges from a competition between winter buoyancy loss and upper stratification strength

Romain Caneill[1], Fabien Roquet[1], and Jonas Nycander[2]

[1]Department of Marine Sciences, University of Gothenburg, Gothenburg, Sweden
[2]Department of Meteorology, Stockholm University, Stockholm, Sweden

Correspondence: Romain Caneill (romain.caneill@gu.se)

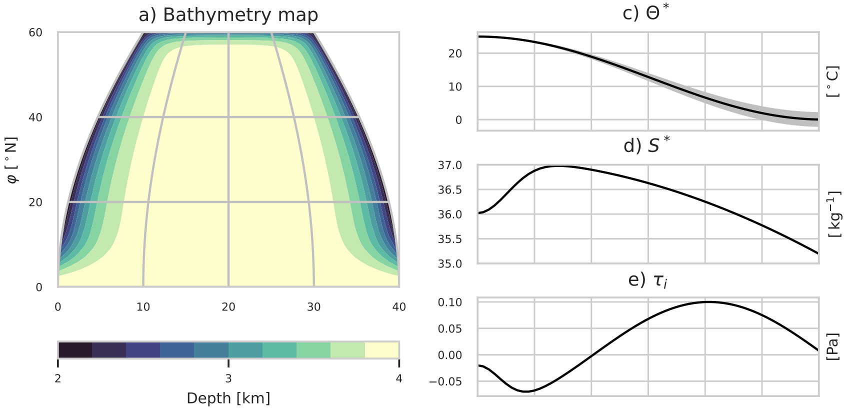
Received: 18 October 2023 – Discussion started: 19 October 2023
Revised: 16 February 2024 – Accepted: 21 February 2024 – Published: 19 April 2024



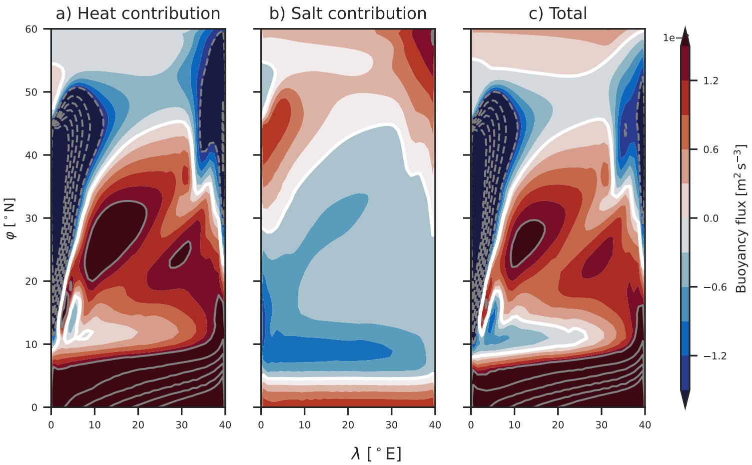
100 % reproducible with few commands

https://doi.org/10.5194/os-20-601-2024

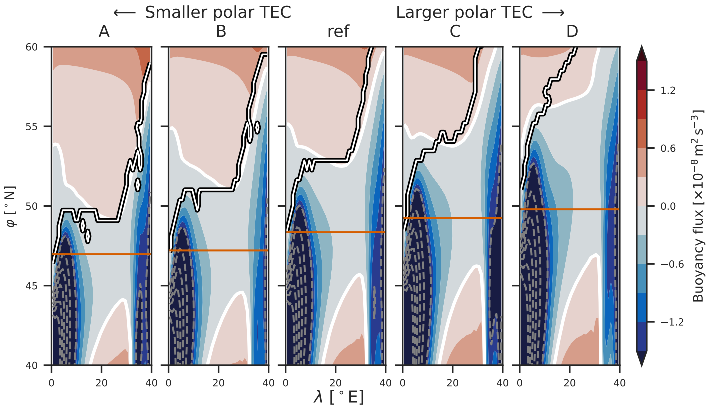
https://gitlab.com/rcaneill/caneill-et-al-OS-SO-DMB



Idealised configuration that allows to study the role of annual buoyancy fluxes, by modification of the equation of state (thus changing the TEC).

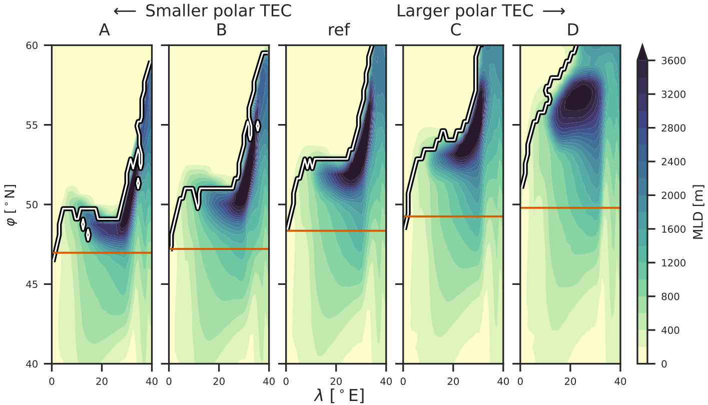


Reference run



Wind kept unchanged!

Poleward shift of the PTZ with increased TEC



Will fronts move poleward due to increased ocean temperature?

Poleward migration of transition zone due to global warming?

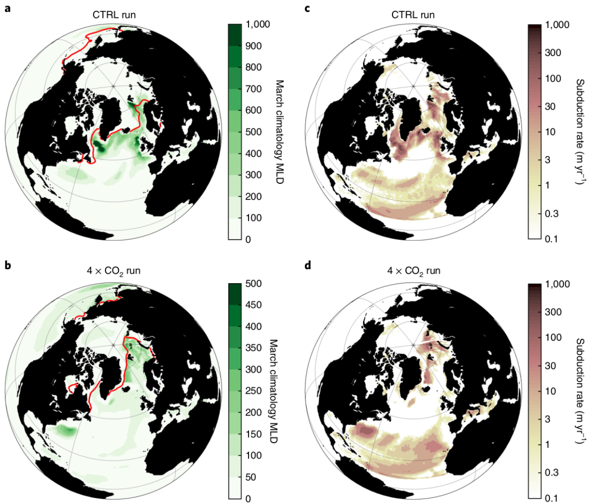
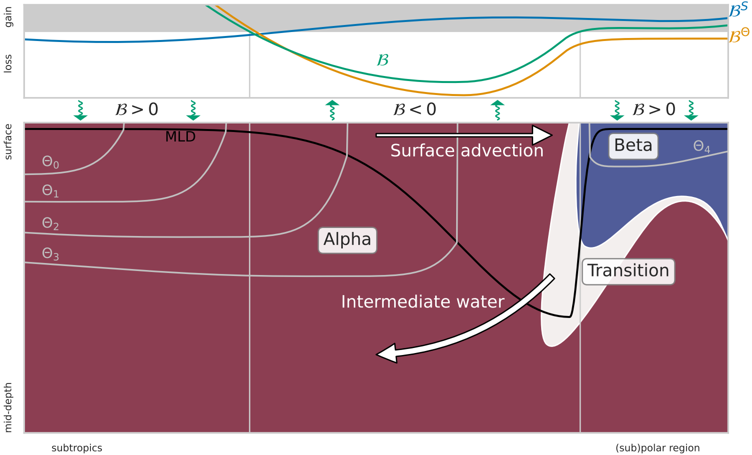
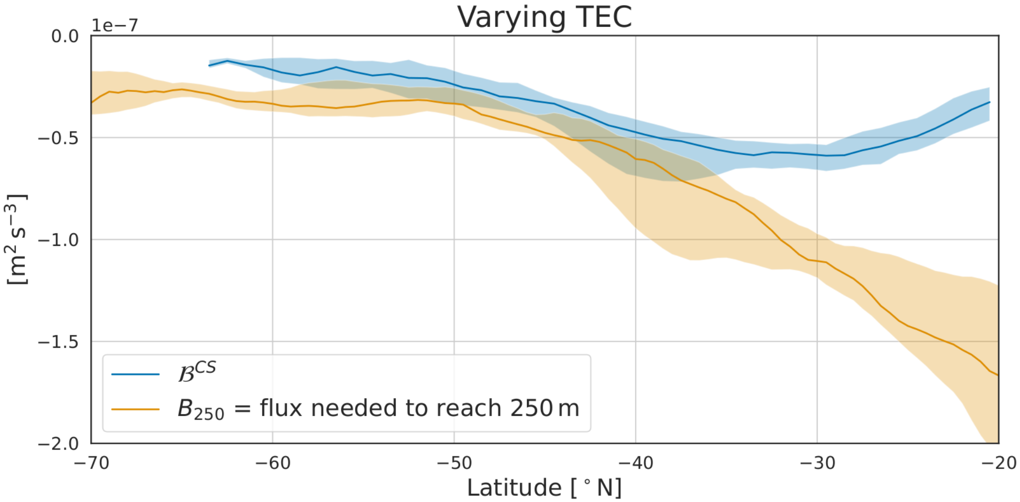


Figure from Lique and Thomas (2018)

Annual buoyancy fluxes set the transition



Winter buoyancy loss erodes stratification: zonal view



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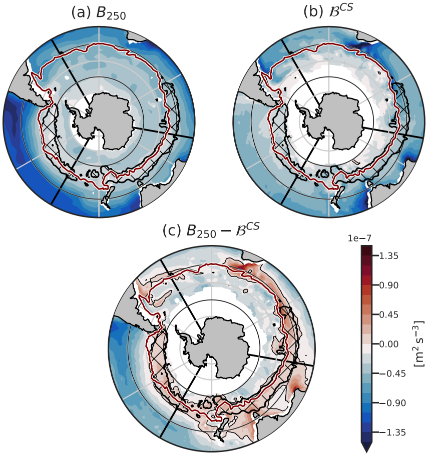
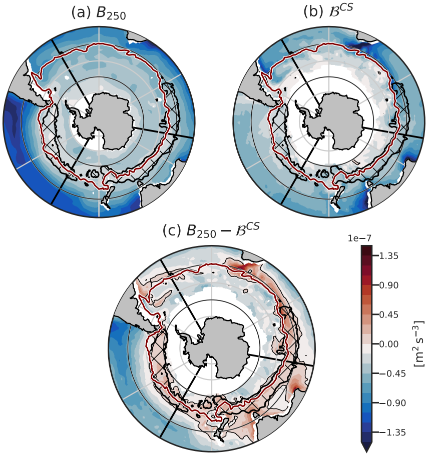


- B_{250}: measure of stratification
- $\mathcal{B}^{CS}$: buoyancy loss
- Hatched region: the DMB

- The position of the deep MLs is set by the balance between buoyancy loss and stratification
- Buoyancy fluxes control the stratification regimes

DMB = deep mixing band



- B_{250}: measure of stratification
- $\mathcal{B}^{CS}$: buoyancy loss
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Objective C

Objective A

Describe alpha – beta oceans using observations

Objective B

How do buoyancy fluxes shape the upper stratification?

Objective C

Assess the role of the local value of the TEC.

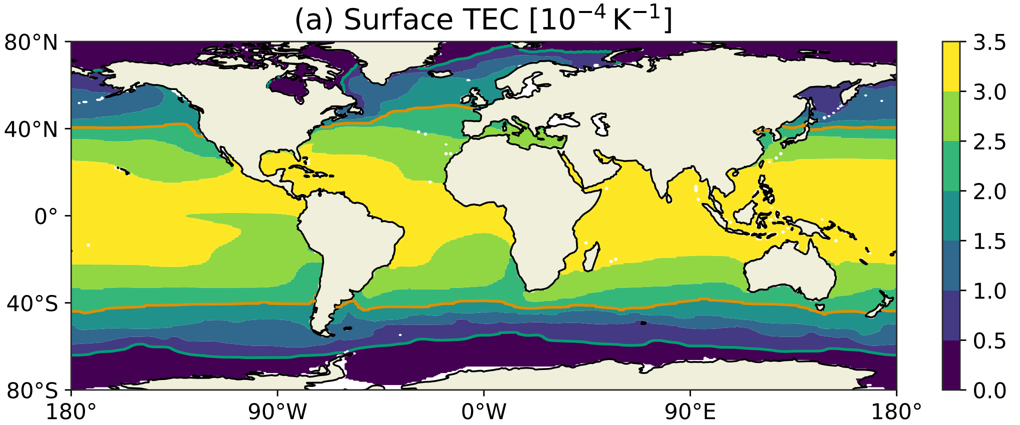
Caneill, R., Roquet, F., Madec, G., & Nycander, J. (2022). The Polar Transition from Alpha to Beta Regions Set by a Surface Buoyancy Flux Inversion. *Journal of Physical Oceanography*

Caneill, R., Roquet, F., & Nycander, J. (2024). Southern Ocean deep mixing band emerges from competition between winter buoyancy loss and stratification. *Ocean Science*

Roquet, F., Ferreira, D., Caneill, R., Schlesinger, D., & Madec, G. (2022). Unique thermal expansion properties of water key to the formation of sea ice on Earth. *Science Advances*

The TEC varies with temperature

- Follows a (quasi) linear relation with temperature
- Decreases the impact of temperature and heat in polar regions



Why does the TEC play a role?

The TEC scales the effect of

temperature on stratification

$$B_{250} = \underbrace{\frac{g}{\Delta t}\int_{-250}^{0} \boldsymbol{\alpha}(z)\frac{\partial \Theta}{\partial z} z \mathrm{d}z}_{B_{250}^{\Theta}} - \underbrace{\frac{g}{\Delta t}\int_{-250}^{0} \beta(z)\frac{\partial S}{\partial z} z \mathrm{d}z}_{B_{250}^{S}} \tag{2}$$

heat fluxes on buoyancy fluxes

$$\mathcal{B}^{surf} = \underbrace{\boldsymbol{\alpha}\frac{g}{\rho_0 C_p} Q_{tot}}_{\mathcal{B}_{\Theta}^{surf}} - \underbrace{\frac{g\beta S}{\rho_0}(E - P - R)}_{\mathcal{B}_{S}^{surf}} \tag{3}$$

$\boldsymbol{\alpha}$ is the TEC

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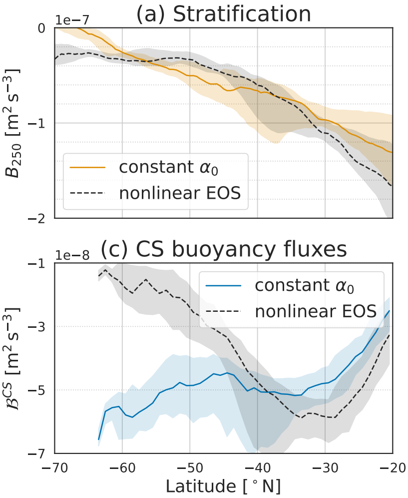
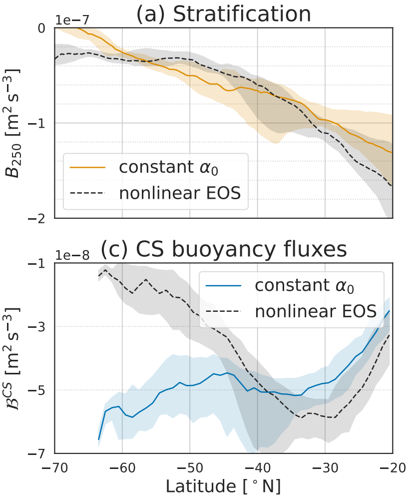


The decrease in the TEC:

- allows for stable beta ocean
- damps buoyancy loss in polar region

The impact of the variable TEC



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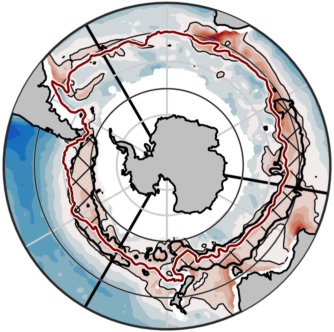
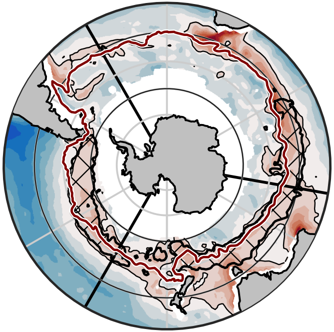


⟵ variable TEC

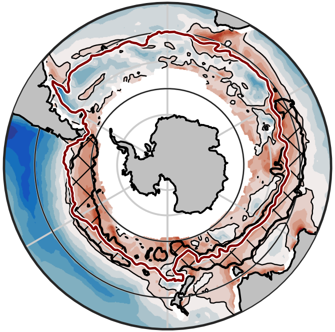
- The variable TEC controls the width of the DMB
- The decrease in the TEC limits the southward extent of the DMB
- Beta oceans exist because the TEC becomes small

The impact of the variable TEC



← variable TEC

constant TEC α_0 →



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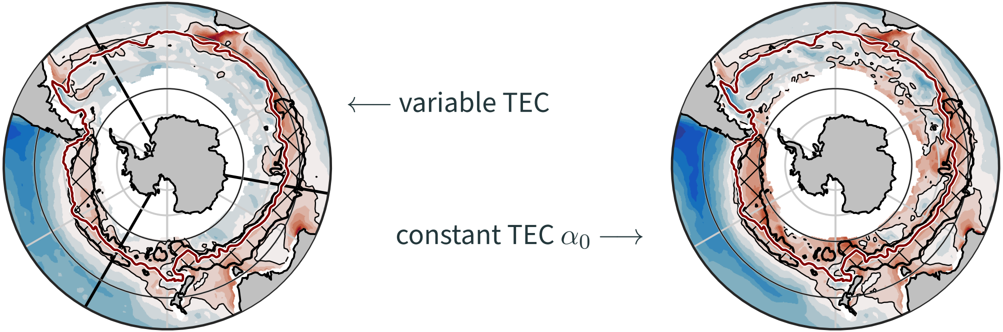

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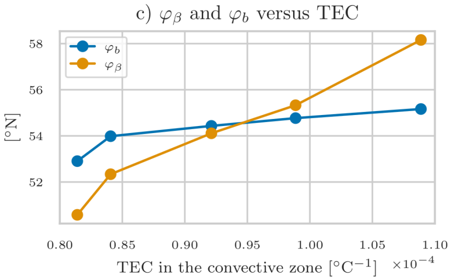
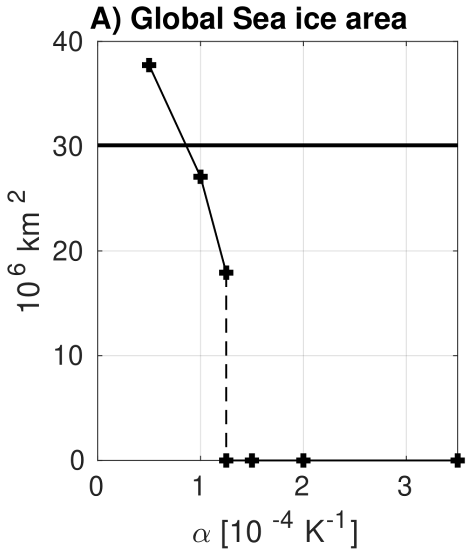
The polar value of the TEC as global controller





What if the TEC were larger?

What if. . . ?

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No sea-ice would be produced

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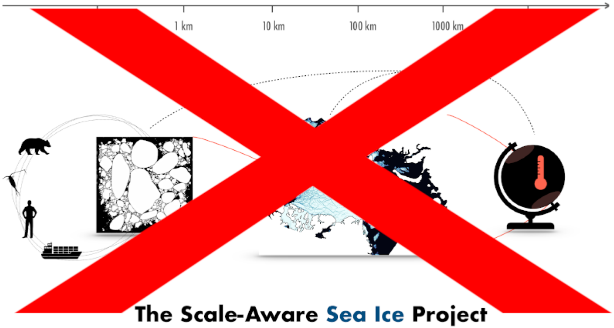

Conclusions

Describe alpha – beta oceans using observations. **Obj. A**

- Global zonation: alpha $\rightarrow$ transition zone $\rightarrow$ beta
- ML deeper in alpha- than beta-oceans

How do buoyancy fluxes shape the upper stratification? **Obj. B**

- The transition zone is located at the sign inversion of annual buoyancy fluxes
- Buoyancy loss erodes stratification and produces the DMB

Assess the role of the local value of the TEC. **Obj. C**

- The decrease in the TEC in polar regions decreases buoyancy loss
- The small polar value of the TEC permits beta ocean formation
- My thesis confirms that the origin of alpha – beta oceans lies in thermodynamic of seawater

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Perspectives

- The sea surface temperature exerts a strong control on the stratification by its link with TEC.
- Buoyancy fluxes are not simply the sum of heat and freshwater fluxes.
- Warming $\Longrightarrow$ larger values of the TEC. But also increases freshwater fluxes in the polar regions. Who will win?

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