
Preface

This book is directed to graduate students of physical oceanography and neighboring fields like meteorology, geophysics or general physics, and to anybody interested in a thorough discussion of ocean dynamics. Based on the well-known fundamentals of fluid mechanics, thermodynamics, and wave theory, the first three parts of the book provide a detailed derivation of the basic physical laws describing the motions in the ocean, common approximations which are made to simplify the discussion of e. g. the large-scale fluid dynamics of the ocean, and a comprehensive treatment of linear wave theory. The following part on the theory of turbulence in the ocean attempts to reach for newer results, in particular regarding the role of eddies for the large-scale dynamics. In the next part, classical concepts and models of ocean circulation are combined with newer material. Finally, an appendix reviews some of the needed mathematical tools and the models which are used in the book. While far from being complete, we have included as much as possible of what we think is important to understand the physics of the ocean, aiming for a high accuracy both in physical argumentation and mathematical derivation.

In the last decades, increasing interest in climate change has fostered research with respect to the role of the ocean in the climate system and has changed the field of physical oceanography from a small group of largely ignored academical experts, into a highly recognized arena of scientific discussion, which sometimes even takes place in the media. At the same time, the increasing performance of computers allowed more and better resolved integrations of numerical ocean models. In this book we have not addressed the field of numerical ocean modeling. However, we believe that for both, the scientific discussion and a thorough interpretation of numerical models, knowledge of the material presented in this book should be of value.

The book is based on material from a series of lectures to graduate oceanography students at the University Kiel and to graduate physics students at Bremen University which has evolved over the years. While the reader of this book does not need any prior knowledge about physical oceanography, we assume a sound physical and mathematical basis comparable to that of a Bachelor in physics. In the notation we mostly follow the conventions in the oceanographic literature. Relevant variables are generally introduced when they arise in the context of the discussion; a list of symbols and their meaning is given in Appendix .

We want to express our specific gratitude to our colleagues, Drs. Bach Lien Hua, Hans Burchard, Sergey Danilov, Sybren Drijfhout, Theo Gerkema, Stephen Griffies, Leo Maas, Trevor McDougall, Geoffrey Vallis, Christoph Völker, Jörg-Olaf Wolff, and Carl Wunsch, who commented on an earlier version of the manuscript and, most importantly, expressed highly welcome words of encouragement. Our thanks go to Andrea Bleier for proofreading and checking the text. We are indebted to Frauke Thiele-Wolf for many of the figures, also to Frauke Nevoigt for drawing some of the figures. Michael Brüdgam, Nils Brüggemann und Jan Viebahn read preliminary versions and provided some figures.

Over many years our work has been supported by three major German institutes doing ocean research: the Alfred Wegener Institute for Polar and Marine Research in Bremerhaven, the Leibniz Institute of Marine Sciences in Kiel, and the Institute of Oceanography in Hamburg. Financial support by the Alfred Wegener Institute, and the Clusters of Excellence “Future Ocean” and “CliSAP” is also greatly acknowledged.

July 2011

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<http://www.springer.com/978-3-642-23449-1>

Ocean Dynamics

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2012, XXIII, 704 p., Hardcover

ISBN: 978-3-642-23449-1