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The International Oceanographic Tables

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Tables I and II of the series International Oceanographic Tables have been in print for longer than a year. The oceanographic community is indebted to members of the Joint Panel on Oceanographic Tables and Standards (JPOTS), particularly to its chairman, Roland A. Cox¹, and to others, for the work represented by these tables.

For the benefit of anyone who is unfamiliar with Tables I and II, they consist of: (Table Ia) salinity as a function of the conductivity ratio for seawater at 15°C; (Table Ib) corrections for the conductivity ratio in Table Ia for measurements at temperatures other than 15°C; (Table IIa) salinity versus conductivity ratio for seawater at 20°C; and (Table IIb) corrections to the conductivity ratio in Table IIa for measurements at temperatures other than 20°C.

By decision of JPOTS, Table Ia and the polynomial expression from which tabulated values were computed now constitute the recommended definition of salinity in terms of the more precisely measured conductivity ratio. Therefore, these tables are a basic reference for every laboratory and ship. They are available at reasonable cost in the form of a loose-leaf notebook from distributors of Unesco publications.

JPOTS is supervising the preparation of further tables in this series. Tabulations of the refractive index versus salinity at a specified temperature should be available prior to the appearance of this note.

Physically, these tables are well laid out; they can be entered quickly, and the figures are easily readable. There is an error common to the introductions of Tables Ib and IIb. The correct salinity value corresponding to conductivity ratios of 0.86483 at 15°C or 0.86517 at 20°C is 29.763‰, not 29.774‰. We believe that the general introduction should contain more information regarding the seawater samples on which these tables have been based.

1. Deceased.