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Quantification of ikaite in Antarctic sea ice

M. Fischer^{1,6}, D. N. Thomas^{2,3}, A. Krell¹, G. Nehrke¹, J. Göttlicher⁴, L. Norman²,
C. Riaux-Gobin⁵, and G. S. Dieckmann¹

¹Alfred Wegener Institute for Polar and Marine Reserach, Bremerhaven, Germany

²Ocean Sciences, College of Natural Sciences, Bangor University, Menai Bridge, UK

³Marine Centre, Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE), Helsinki, Finland

⁴Institute of Synchrotron Radiation (ISS), Synchrotron Radiation Source ANKA,
Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, Eggenstein-Leopoldshafen, Germany

⁵USR3278, CRIOBE, CNRS-EPHE, Perpignan, France

⁶Faculty of Biology and Chemistry, University of Bremen, Bremen, Germany

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Correspondence to: M. Fischer (michael.fischer@awi.de)

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Abstract

Calcium carbonate precipitation in sea ice can increase $p\text{CO}_2$ during precipitation in winter and decrease $p\text{CO}_2$ during dissolution in spring. CaCO_3 precipitation in sea ice is thought to potentially drive significant CO_2 uptake by the ocean. However, little is known about the quantitative spatial and temporal distribution of CaCO_3 within sea ice. This is the first quantitative study of hydrous calcium carbonate, as ikaite, in sea ice and discusses its potential significance for the carbon cycle in polar oceans. Ice cores and brine samples were collected from pack and land fast sea ice between September and December 2007 during an expedition in the East Antarctic and another off Terre Adélie, Antarctica. Samples were analysed for CaCO_3 , Salinity, DOC, DON, Phosphate, and total alkalinity. A relationship between the measured parameters and CaCO_3 precipitation could not be observed. We found calcium carbonate, as ikaite, mostly in the top layer of sea ice with values up to 126 mg ikaite per liter melted sea ice. This potentially represents a contribution between 0.12 and 9 Tg C to the annual carbon flux in polar oceans. The horizontal distribution of ikaite in sea ice was heterogenous. We also found the precipitate in the snow on top of the sea ice.

1 Introduction

Sea ice covers up to 7% of the total surface area of the oceans at its maximum extent (Comiso, 2010). The physical barrier itself has a major impact on the gas exchange between atmosphere and ocean, and recently the discussion has extended to considering how physical and biogeochemical processes within the ice itself can affect diffusion and flux of gases to both atmosphere and ocean (Tison et al., 2002; Delille, 2006; Rysgaard et al., 2007, 2009, 2011; Miller et al., 2011; Loose et al., 2011). On the basis of thermodynamic equilibrium calculations, the precipitation of CaCO_3 was predicted to occur in natural sea ice formation (Gitterman, 1937; Jones and Coote, 1981; Anderson and Jones, 1985) and it was proposed to precipitate as calcite (Marion, 2001). However,

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actual evidence was, for a long time, only indirect (Killawee et al., 1998; Papadimitriou et al., 2004; Tison et al., 2002) until Dieckmann et al. (2008) found calcium carbonate as ikaite $\text{CaCO}_3 \cdot 6\text{H}_2\text{O}$ in Antarctic sea ice, and more recently in Arctic sea ice (Dieckmann et al., 2010). Rysgaard et al. (2007, 2009) showed that with brine, dissolved organic carbon (DIC) is rejected from growing sea ice to the underlying waters. They ascribe the high $p\text{CO}_2$ levels found below sea ice to calcium carbonate precipitation. Delille et al. (2007) also claim that CaCO_3 precipitation in sea ice could drive significant CO_2 uptake by the ocean and therefore contribute significantly to a polar carbon pump.

Besides its function as a component in the carbon cycle, the mineral is also thought to have a key role in tropospheric ozone depletion events (ODEs) at high latitudes (Sander et al., 2006; Sander and Morin, 2010). Simulations of the chemistry occurring in polar regions over recently formed sea ice relate the ODE to the transformation of inert sea-salt bromide to reactive bromine monoxide (BrO) when precipitation of calcium carbonate from freezing sea water is taken into account. The discovery of ikaite in firn ice of the Antarctic continent, which appears to be derived from sea ice 300 km away, may also have implications for its use as a sea ice proxy (Sala et al., 2008). However, to date most studies of calcium carbonate in sea ice have been mainly qualitative and little is known about the spatial and temporal distribution of CaCO_3 within sea ice. There is also a lack of knowledge on the exact conditions leading to ikaite precipitation as well as on the amount and fate of ikaite: e.g. one assumption is that phosphate and dissolved organic matter (DOM) may reduce the precipitation of calcium carbonate (Bischoff et al., 1993; Zullig and Morse, 1988).

The objective of this study therefore was to: (1) Provide the first systematic observation and quantification of CaCO_3 precipitation in Antarctic sea ice on a spatial and temporal scale and (2) to investigate relationships between calcium carbonate and alkalinity, phosphate, and dissolved organic matter.

2 Methods

Two campaigns were performed between September and December 2007. During the first campaign (Sea Ice Physics and Ecosystem eXperiment (SIPEX) onboard RSV Aurora Australis) fourteen ice cores (S1 to S14) were taken at different locations between 64° and 66° south and 116° and 128° east (Fig. 1). The cores were cut into 10 cm sections within a few minutes after sampling and stored in plastic containers. Ice cores from station S1 to S4 and S6 to S14 represent pack ice with different degrees of deformation (Table 1). The ice core from station S5 was taken from fast ice between grounded icebergs. Further details on ice types, see Table 1, van der Merwe et al. (2009) and Meiners et al. (2011). A general description of the ice conditions during the expedition can be found in Worby et al. (2011). Brine from sackholes from 10 out of 14 stations (see Table 2) was collected for nutrient and DOM analyses (see Norman et al., 2011).

On the second campaign (from November to December 2007) sea ice samples were collected close to the French base Dumont d'Urville, $66^\circ 39'13''$ S $140^\circ 00'5''$ E near station C described in Delille et al. (2007). Six complete ice cores (D1 to D6) were taken from young fast sea ice (age: ≈ 3 month, Anne Jacquet, personal communication) which had formed in August. This area was predominantly free of snow with only isolated patches of snow being present. The cores were also cut into 10 cm sections and stored as described above. In order to determine small-scale vertical distribution of ikaite, we also collected four surface cores (D7 to D10) between 10 and 15 cm length (Table 1). Cores D7 and D9 were taken from the main sampling site without any snow on top, while D8 was taken next to it and included snow. Ice sample D10 was taken from older fast ice approximately 200 m away from the main sampling site. This core was taken from sea ice which had formed in autumn and had remained intact since its formation, in contrast to cores D1–D9 which were from younger sea ice. These cores were cut into 2 cm sections. In addition, to determine horizontal spatial variability of calcium carbonate, we chose an area 50 m away from the first sampling site. On this

site the first top 10 cm of fast ice were sampled every 5 m (x and y direction) in a grid of 20 m by 20 m (D-SP1 to D-SP25, Table 1). The partial ice cores obtained were stored in clean plastic containers. At the main sampling site, sackholes (D-SH1 to D-SH7) of 30 cm were cored every two or three days for a temporal analysis of brine and ice from an area of 10 m \times 10 m to minimize bias from spatial heterogeneity. The partial ice core obtained from these sackholes was also stored in clean plastic containers. Brine was allowed to collect in the sackholes and sampled with a vacuum pump and transferred into different vials for total alkalinity (TA), dissolved organic carbon (DOC), dissolved organic nitrogen (DON), and phosphate analyses. Samples for DOM and nutrients were filtered through 0.2 μ m cellulose acetate filter and kept frozen until analyses within 6 months. The TA samples were measured directly in the base laboratory.

We also sampled glacial firn ice 6 km away from the ice shelf at Prud'homme to test if calcium carbonates are found on the ice shelf in this region. One surface core (1 m) was collected and cut into 3 equal sections. The sections were stored in plastic containers and brought to the base laboratory.

All sea ice samples were slowly melted in a climate controlled room where the temperatures never exceeded 4 $^{\circ}$ C to avoid decomposition of the mineral ikaite. Regular monitoring (several times a day) guaranteed a processing of the samples as soon as the cores, or sections were melted. This ensured that the temperature of the melt water never rose above 0 $^{\circ}$ C. The melt water was filtered through 0.2 μ m polycarbonate filters and the volume determined. The filters with crystals were then placed in a plastic vial containing 75 % ethanol and frozen at -18° C for later mineralogical phase identification and quantitative measurements. In several instances crystals were collected after swirling the melted samples and allowing crystals to settle in the resulting vortex. The crystals were transferred from the vortex to a petri dish using a glass pipette (see Dieckmann et al., 2008, for methods). These were briefly inspected under the binocular microscope and photographed to check the morphology and subsequently also filtered as described above.

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Mineral phase identification was conducted by micro X-ray diffraction (μ -XRD) under cryogenic conditions on selected samples at the Synchrotron Laboratory for Environmental Studies SUL-X at the synchrotron radiation source ANKA, Forschungszentrum Karlsruhe (now Karlsruhe Institute of Technology) as described by Dieckmann et al. (2008).

To quantify the amount of ikaite within the sample, the quantity of calcium ions were determined using Inductively-Coupled Plasma Optical Emission Spectrometry (ICP OES). The plastic caps containing the filter were rinsed with concentrated ethanol and the content was transferred to larger vials. The transferred samples were dried at 60 $^{\circ}$ C until all the ethanol had evaporated. Five ml concentrated HNO_3 was added to dissociate all molecules before the samples were analysed in the ICP OES. The amount of ikaite was calculated based on the measured calcium.

Brines from sackholes (D-SH1 to D-SH7 and from 10 stations during the SIPEX campaign) were analyzed for in situ concentrations of phosphate, dissolved organic nitrogen (DON), dissolved organic carbon (DOC) and alkalinity (Table 2). Analysis for the major dissolved inorganic nutrients, nitrate (NO_3^-), nitrite (NO_2^-) and of dissolved inorganic phosphorus (DIP) was done using standard colorimetric methodology (Hanson and Koroleff, 1983) as adapted for flow injection analysis (FIA) on a LACHAT Instruments Quick-Chem 8000 autoanalyzer (Hales et al., 2004). Dissolved organic carbon was analysed by high temperature combustion on an MQ1000 TOC analyzer according to Qian and Mopper (1996). Dissolved organic nitrogen was determined by subtraction of NO_3^- , and NH_4^+ from the total dissolved nitrogen (TDN) analyzed using on-line peroxodisulfate oxidation coupled with ultraviolet radiation at pH 9.0 and 100 $^{\circ}$ C (Kroon, 1993). Total alkalinity (D-SH1 to D-SH7) was measured at the station laboratory within one day after sampling as described by Nomura et al. (2010).

For the spatial analyses of the horizontal distribution of $\text{CaCO}_3 \cdot 6\text{H}_2\text{O}$ a conventional geostatistical spatial interpolation was applied by using the simple kriging method (Sarma, 2009).

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the relatively colder surface (Rankin and Wolff, 2002). The accumulated brine at the surface has a salinity of about 100 (Perovich and Richter-Menge, 1994) and favors the precipitation of salts. Under those conditions frost flowers may start to grow (Perovich and Richter-Menge, 1994; Rankin and Wolff, 2002; Obbard et al., 2009). However, conditions not necessarily leading to frost flower formation, may also lead to CaCO₃ precipitation if the temperature is low and salinity is high. It appears that hydrous calcium carbonate precipitation also takes place during subsequent sea ice growth as observed in older land fast ice (Fig. 6). The occurrence of calcium carbonate in the snow cover can also be explained by the thermomolecular pressure gradient and capillary transport, which is supported by the maximum occurrence of ikaite at the snow ice interface as described above (Fig. 7).

Higher values of calcium carbonate in some middle layers of sea ice were attributable to rafting of floes subsequent to sea ice formation. Floes which slide over each other where the surface layer of one of the floes is transformed into a middle layer of the resulting one. Although CaCO₃ concentrations were on the same order of magnitude in pack ice and land fast ice there appear to be differences in the amount of precipitated calcium carbonate. The highest values were recorded in approximately 1 yr old land fast sea ice, followed by high amounts in land fast ice and the lowest in pack ice.

It is not possible to determine the temporal development of CaCO₃ in the sea ice investigated. This is due to the extreme variability in CaCO₃ concentration even on small scales. The reason for this heterogeneity might be due to the inherent variability in many sea ice properties ranging from temperature, salinity, texture, chemistry and lastly bacterial activity. The spatial and temporal heterogeneity are already apparent on small scales as shown by the spatial and temporal studies. Analyses, however, show a similar range in the data for both campaigns. Thus, it is difficult to draw conclusions on the temporal evolution of the precipitation of ikaite.

The high concentrations of DOC and DON found in sea ice during the campaign off Terre Adélie were expected to inhibit CaCO₃ precipitation (Bischoff et al., 1993). Zullig and Morse (1988) and Berner et al. (1978) have shown that DOM influences the

precipitation of calcium carbonate. However, these studies refer only to the inhibition for anhydrous polymorphs of CaCO₃. Besides the repression by polyphosphate and magnesium ions on the precipitation of anhydrous calcium carbonate in favour of hydrated forms, Dickens and Brown (1970) postulate that hydrated salts may play an important part in biological mineralization. Taking this into account, additionally to the elevated Ω_{ikaite} , microbial biomass, such as cell surfaces and/or EPS, catalyze the precipitation of calcium carbonate (Kandianis et al., 2008). This also coincides with findings of elevated abundance of bacteria and exopolymers in frost flowers (Bowman and Deming, 2010) and the top layer of sea ice (Aslam et al., 2012) which supports the hypothesis of CaCO₃ precipitation during frost flowers and sea ice formation as discussed above.

Previous studies have pointed out the importance of sea ice for the carbon uptake in polar oceans due to i.e. CaCO₃ precipitation (Rysgaard et al., 2009, 2011; Delille, 2006; Tison et al., 2002; Nedashkovsky et al., 2009). Based on our observations we propose a first estimate of the possible contribution of calcium carbonate precipitation to the carbon cycle. For simplicity we take into account only the top 10 cm of sea ice, since the amount in the lower part was negligible. Absolute values of ikaite found in the top 10 cm of sea ice ranged between 0.1 and 6.5 g m⁻². Based on the total seasonal ice cover in the Antarctic (Comiso, 2010) we calculate that CaCO₃ formation in sea ice potentially could represent a contribution of between 0.1 and 6 TgC to the carbon flux in the Southern Ocean. Assuming the same distribution in Arctic sea ice together with the ice cover from Comiso and Nishio (2008) then the precipitation of CaCO₃ would be responsible for a flux between 0.04 and 3 TgC. For both the Arctic and Antarctic this would be between 0.1 % and 4.5 % of the air-sea CO₂ flux in open oceanic water at high latitudes (Takahashi et al., 2009; Rysgaard et al., 2011) or up to 13 % for the Southern Ocean south of 50° (Takahashi et al., 2009). Though there is a large amount of ikaite in the snow, the amount of CaCO₃ therein was not taken into account for the calculation, since the distribution of CaCO₃ crystals in the snow remains elusive. However, if widespread this would be a significant addition to the polar carbon flux. Considering polynyas with new sea ice forming during the winter and

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Table 1. Types and thickness of sea ice during SIPEX and DDU campaign.

Sample	Cruise	Sample type	Sample thickness in cm
S1	SIPEX	Pack ice	51
S2	SIPEX	Pack ice	98
S3	SIPEX	Pack ice, rafted sea ice	49
S4	SIPEX	Pack ice	55
S5	SIPEX	Fast ice between grounded icebergs	85
S6	SIPEX	Heavily rafted ice floes	81
S7	SIPEX	Pack ice	53
S8	SIPEX	Large level floe	37
S9	SIPEX	Heavily rafted and deformed ice	98
S10	SIPEX	Large level floe, coring site on an adjacent rafted area, probably an old chunk caught by new ice	133
S11	SIPEX	Rafted floe, ice surface very rough probably crushed together pancakes at an earlier stage	101
S12	SIPEX	Rafted ice floes	109
S13	SIPEX	Rafted floes, ice surface very rough probably consisting of thin rafted ice chunks	78
S14	SIPEX	Pack ice	64
D1	DDU	Young (approx. 3 month) fast ice, 10 cm sections	65
D2	DDU	Young (approx. 3 month) fast ice, 10 cm sections	65
D3	DDU	Young (approx. 3 month) fast ice, 10 cm sections	60
D4	DDU	Young (approx. 3 month) fast ice, 10 cm sections	60
D5	DDU	Young (approx. 3 month) fast ice, 10 cm sections	60
D6	DDU	Young (approx. 3 month) fast ice, 10 cm sections	60
D7	DDU	Young (approx. 3 month) fast ice, 2 cm sections	10
D8	DDU	Young (approx. 3 month) fast ice, 2 cm sections, snow on top	16
D9	DDU	Young (approx. 3 month) fast ice, 2 cm sections	14
D10	DDU	Fast ice (age = 1 yr), 2 cm sections	16
D-SH1 to D-SH6	DDU	Ice from sackholes in fast ice	30
D-SP1 to DSP25	DDU	Top 10 cm of fast ice	10

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Table 2. Nutrient data normalized to $S = 35$, values in μmol , ikaite in mg l^{-1} melted sea ice, D-SH1 to D-SH7 from land fast ice off Terre Adélie (DDU) in November 2007, S1 to S14 from sea ice in East Antarctic (see map) between September and October 2007.

Sample	$[\text{PO}_4^{2-}]_{35}$	$[\text{Si}]_{35}$	$[\text{NO}_2]_{35}$	$[\text{NO}_2] + [\text{NO}_3^-]_{35}$	$[\text{SNH}_4]_{35}$	DON_{35}	DOC_{35}	Ikaite	TA_{35}
D-SH 1	0.50	50.30	0.12	16.17	0.37	4.91	85.99	1.03	2573.79
D-SH 2	1.53	41.39	0.14	10.63	2.04	17.50	146.17	0.68	2236.36
D-SH 3	0.30	62.18	0.05	3.06	0.45	8.45	78.80	0.22	2370.92
D-SH 4	1.33	53.12	0.07	3.11	0.91	33.41	180.04	1.23	2311.20
D-SH 5	1.77	68.80	0.11	4.71	1.47	27.75	183.44	1.58	2171.08
D-SH 6	0.45	49.83	0.08	0.98	0.32	12.51	130.84	0.53	2394.29
D-SH 7	0.47	55.53	0.03	0.20	0.77	27.59	195.34	N/A	2215.04
S1	1.75	36.37	0.14	28.48	N/A	2.40	41.52	0.34	N/A
S2	0.92	52.21	0.36	32.07	N/A	2.35	68.24	9.69	N/A
S3	1.17	40.07	0.25	28.15	N/A	4.06	49.46	N/A	N/A
S4	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
S5	0.64	45.91	0.18	28.18	N/A	1.59	55.68	5.89	N/A
S6	1.57	45.52	0.25	28.64	N/A	0.98	67.31	1.47	N/A
S7	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.28	N/A
S8	1.93	52.25	0.13	29.93	N/A	3.55	61.38	0.49	N/A
S9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.87	N/A
S10	2.78	55.56	0.16	33.89	N/A	3.89	43.33	0.7	N/A
S11	0.07	54.95	0.04	3.15	N/A	4.90	73.15	N/A	N/A
S12	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
S13	1.44	42.63	0.10	23.78	N/A	4.94	73.14	N/A	N/A
S14	0.27	46.92	0.13	10.00	N/A	5.00	67.31	1.71	N/A

522

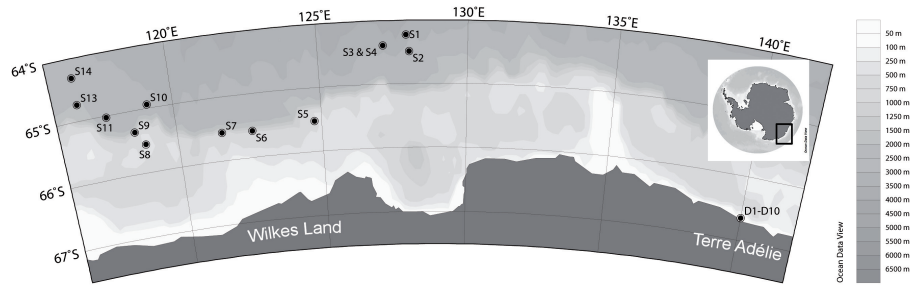


Fig. 1. Locations of ice stations sampled during SIPEX and DDU campaign.

523

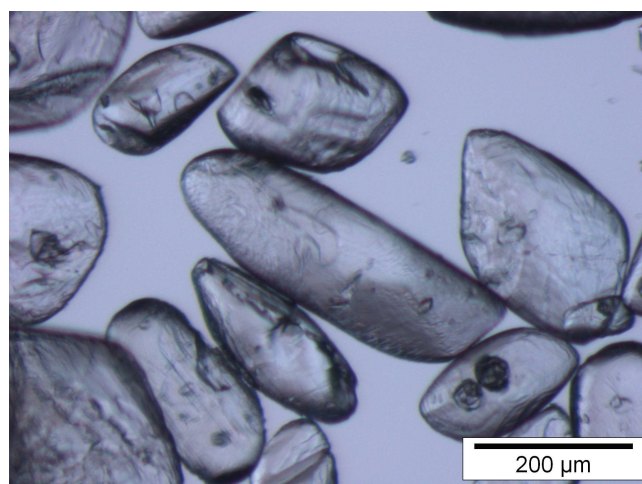


Fig. 2. Light microscopy image of ikaite crystals taken from a single bulk sea ice sample from land fast ice off Terre Adélie.

524

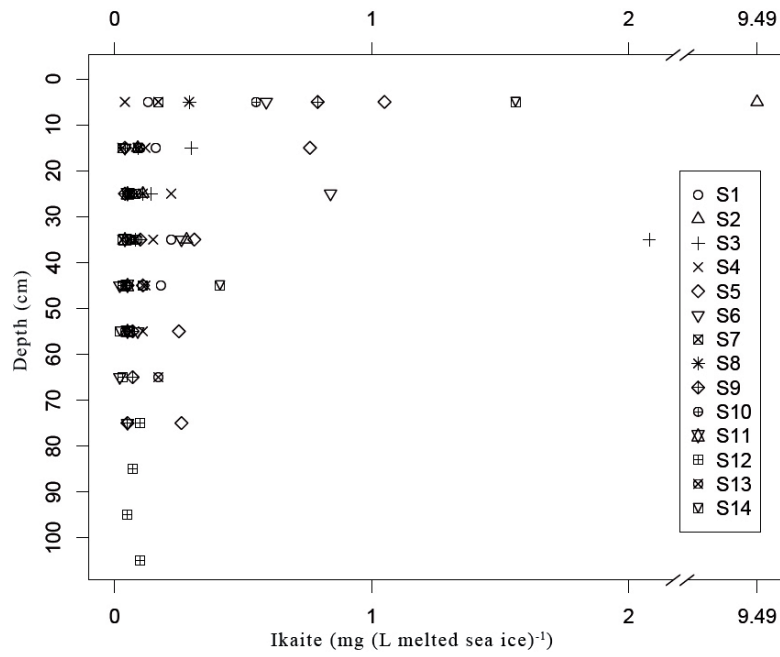


Fig. 3. Distribution of ikaite in sea ice during SIPEX cruise in different ice cores taken between September and October 2007 in East Antarctic.

525

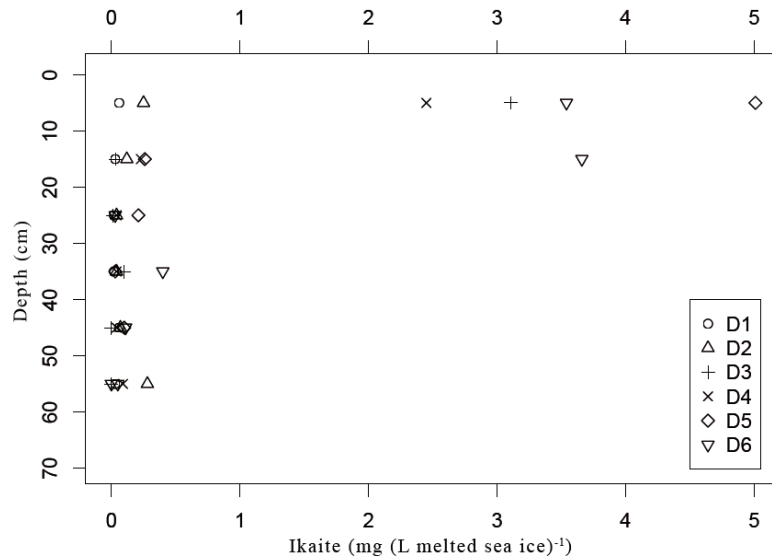


Fig. 4. Distribution of ikaite in sea ice during DDU campaign in land fast sea ice off Terre Adélie sampled in November 2007.

526

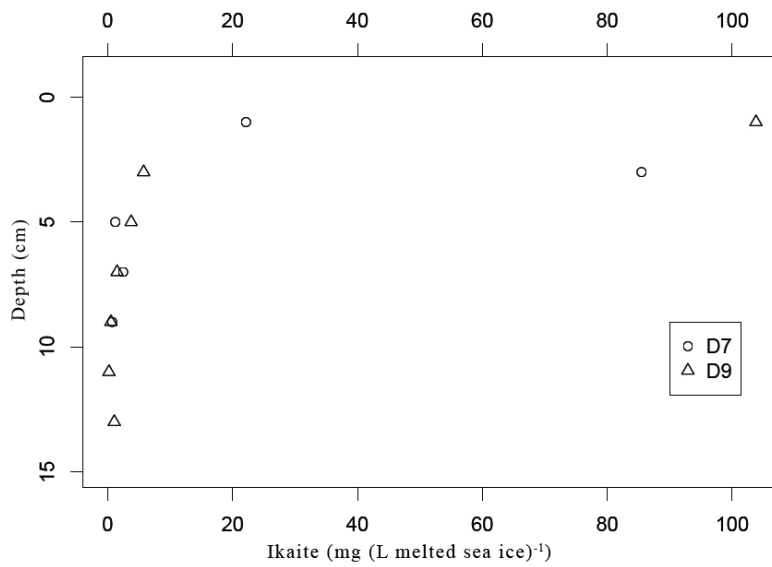


Fig. 5. Distribution of ikaite in the top layer of young (≈ 3 month) land fast sea ice off Terre Adélie (DDU).

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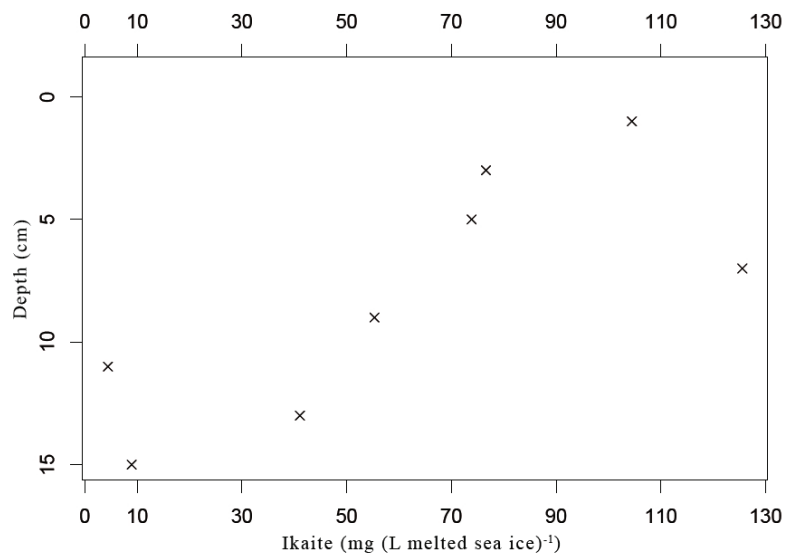


Fig. 6. Distribution of ikaite in the top layer of older (≈ 1 yr) land fast sea ice, off Terre Adélie (DDU) in November 2007 core D10.

528

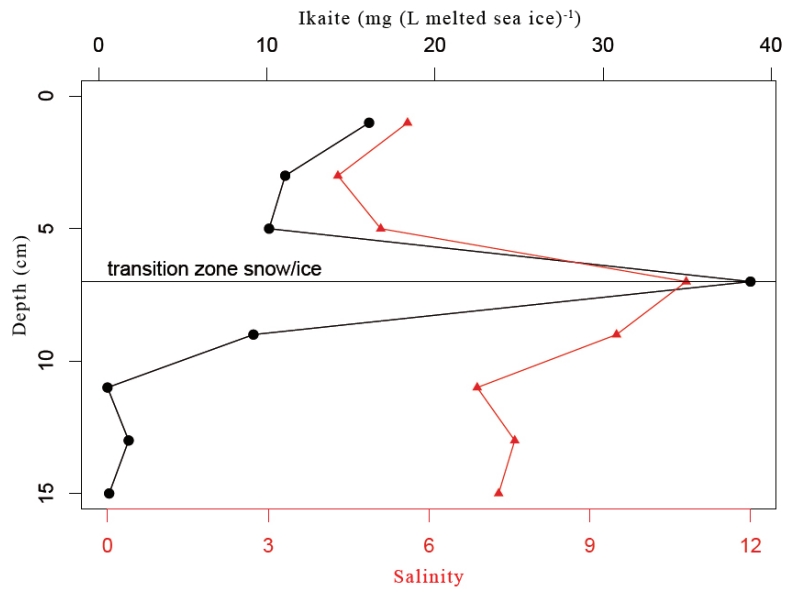


Fig. 7. Distribution of ikaite across the snow-ice interface from top layer of land fast sea ice off Terre Adélie (DDU) in November 2007, core D8, Black line = amount of ikaite, red line = bulk salinity.

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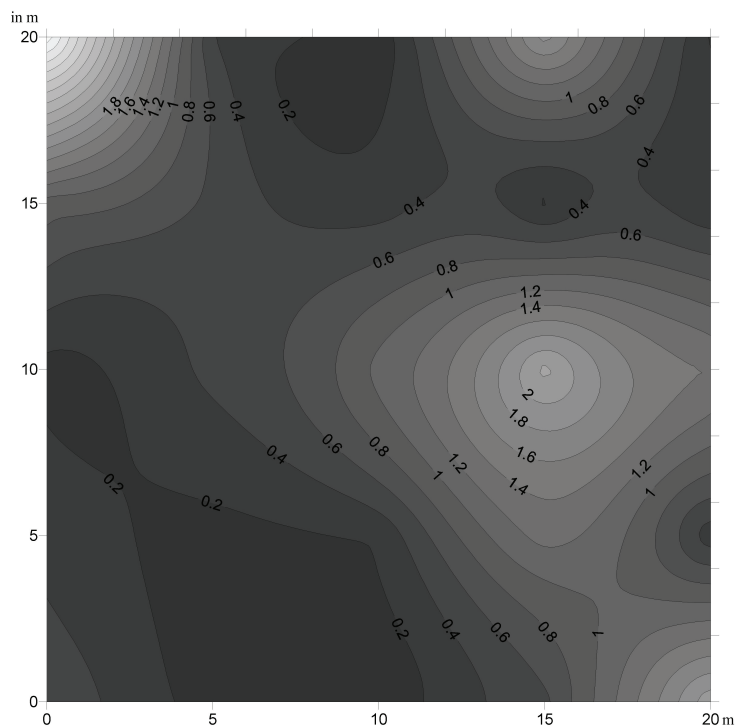


Fig. 8. Contour plot of the spatial distribution of ikaite in the first 10 cm of land fast sea ice off Terre Adélie (DDU) in November 2007 on a 20 m × 20 m grid with sample points every 5 m by 5 m. Values are in mg ikaite l⁻¹ melted sea ice.

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