

Abstract Submitted
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Resonant generation of internal waves on a model continental slope HEPENG ZHANG, BEN KING, HARRY L. SWINNEY, University of Texas at Austin — We study internal wave generation in a laboratory model of oscillating tidal flow on a continental margin. Waves are found to be generated only in a near-critical region where the slope of the bottom topography matches that of internal waves. Fluid motion with a velocity an order of magnitude larger than that of the forcing occurs within a thin boundary layer above the bottom surface. The resonant wave is unstable because of strong shear; Kelvin-Helmholtz billows precede wave breaking. We construct a model to extrapolate our results to oceanic conditions. This work [1] provides a new explanation for the intense boundary flows on continental slopes.

[1] H. P. Zhang, B. King and Harry L. Swinney, Phys. Rev. Lett. 100, 244504 (2008).

Hepeng Zhang
Univ. of Texas at Austin

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