



On Hyperbolicity of Domains with Strictly Pseudoconvex Ends

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Abstract. This article establishes a sufficient condition for Kobayashi hyperbolicity of unbounded domains in terms of curvature. Specifically, when $\Omega \subset \mathbb{C}^n$ corresponds to a sub-level set of a smooth, real-valued function Ψ , such that the form $\omega = \mathbf{i}\partial\bar{\partial}\Psi$ is Kähler and has bounded curvature outside a bounded subset, then this domain admits a hermitian metric of strictly negative holomorphic sectional curvature.

1 Introduction

It is well known that any domain in \mathbb{C}^n biholomorphically equivalent to a bounded domain is Kobayashi-hyperbolic. The main result of this note, proven in Section 2, provides a sufficient condition for hyperbolicity of unbounded domains in terms of curvature. In general, a complex space is Kobayashi-hyperbolic if it can be shown to possess a hermitian metric, the holomorphic sectional curvature of which is bounded by a negative constant (*cf.* [3]). With this in mind, we assume that

$$\Omega = \{Z \in \mathbb{C}^n \mid \Psi(Z) < 1\}$$

for a smooth function $\Psi: \Omega' \rightarrow [0, +\infty)$ ($\bar{\Omega} \subset \Omega'$) that is strongly plurisubharmonic outside a bounded subset of Ω .

Theorem 1.1 *Suppose there exists a bounded subset of Ω outside which the real form $\omega := \mathbf{i}\partial\bar{\partial}\Psi$ has bounded curvature. Then Ω is Kobayashi-hyperbolic.*

The proof of this result is not significantly altered if the role of \mathbb{C}^n (*i.e.*, as the ambient space containing Ω) is taken by an arbitrary Stein manifold. Section 3 provides an example of a weakly pseudoconvex unbounded domain satisfying the above hypotheses, which we introduce as follows. Note first that the orthogonal group acts holomorphically on vectors $Z = X + \mathbf{i}Y \in \mathbb{C}^n$ according to the natural rule

$$\sigma(Z) = \sigma(X) + \mathbf{i}\sigma(Y) \text{ for all } \sigma \in \mathbb{O}(n).$$

Beginning with a projection map

$$\pi: \mathbb{C}^n \rightarrow [0, +\infty) \times [0, +\infty)$$

Received by the editors June 19, 2012.

Published electronically December 4, 2012.

AMS subject classification: 32Q45, 32Q35.

Keywords: Kobayashi hyperbolicity, Kähler metric, plurisubharmonic function.

such that $\pi(Z) = (|\Re(Z)|, |\Im(Z)|) = (|X|, |Y|)$, where $|\cdot|$ denotes the Euclidean norm in \mathbb{R}^n , we compose with any smooth function $\psi: [0, +\infty) \times [0, +\infty) \rightarrow [0, +\infty)$ to define domains of the form

$$\Omega = \{Z \in \mathbb{C}^n \mid \Psi(Z) < c\},$$

where $\Psi = \psi \circ \pi$, for some $c > 0$. These domains clearly possess orthogonal symmetry, though in general they are not symmetric with respect to the full unitary group. They are introduced in [2] as the building blocks of a theory of cellular decomposition of Stein manifolds, based on a famous theorem of Andreotti and Frankel [1]. Our calculation of holomorphic sectional curvature will be carried out specifically for $\psi(r, s) = r^2 s^2$ and when $n = 2$. In this case Ψ is seen to be strongly plurisubharmonic (hence ω is Kähler) outside a pair of transversely intersecting discs, which are extremally embedded with respect to the Kobayashi metric and are bounded by the unique $\mathbb{O}(2)$ -orbit of weakly pseudoconvex points on the boundary of Ω .

2 Hyperbolicity and Pseudoconvex Ends

Let $\Psi: \mathbb{C}^n \rightarrow [0, +\infty)$ be a smooth function and let $B \subset \mathbb{C}^n$ be a bounded subset. Consider a domain $\Omega \subseteq \mathbb{C}^n$ defined, without significant loss of generality, by the inequality $\Psi < 1$ and contained in a slightly larger domain Ω' corresponding to $\Psi < 1 + \varepsilon$ (in particular, $\bar{\Omega} \subset \Omega'$). If it is assumed that $\Psi|_{\Omega' \setminus B}$ is strongly plurisubharmonic, then the real closed form $\omega := i\partial\bar{\partial}\Psi$ is Kähler on $\Omega' \setminus B$, and we may denote by g the associated metric. As always, the curvature tensor of g is defined by the formula

$$R_{i,\bar{j},k,\bar{l}} = -\frac{\partial^2 g_{i,\bar{j}}}{\partial z_k \partial \bar{z}_l} + \sum_{\alpha,\beta} g^{\alpha,\bar{\beta}} \frac{\partial g_{i,\bar{\beta}}}{\partial z_k} \frac{\partial g_{\alpha,\bar{j}}}{\partial \bar{z}_l}$$

away from B . In the following theorem, all closures are taken with respect to Ω' .

Theorem 2.1 *Suppose $\omega|_{\bar{\Omega} \setminus B}$ has bounded curvature. Then Ω is Kobayashi-hyperbolic.*

Proof We begin by defining a metric h_K associated with the form $e^{K\Psi} \partial\bar{\partial}\Psi$ on $\Omega \setminus B$. Given a holomorphic map $f(\zeta)$ from the unit disc D into Ω , such that $f(0) = Z \in \Omega \setminus B$, we assume the presence of Kähler normal coordinates $W = (w_1, \dots, w_n)$ in a neighbourhood of Z ($W = 0$) in which

$$g_{i,\bar{j}}(0) = \delta_{i,j} \quad \text{and} \quad \frac{(\partial g_{i,\bar{j}})}{(\partial w_k)}(0) = 0, \quad 1 \leq k \leq n.$$

Now consider

$$f^* h_K = \left(e^{K\Psi \circ f} \sum_{i,j} \frac{\partial^2 \Psi}{\partial w_i \partial \bar{w}_j} f'_i \bar{f}'_j \right) d\zeta \wedge d\bar{\zeta} = \mu_f d\zeta \wedge d\bar{\zeta}$$

(for K an as yet unspecified constant) on $T_\zeta^{1,0}D \otimes T_\zeta^{0,1}D$. Now

$$\log(\mu_f) = K\Psi \circ f + \log\left(\sum_{i,j} g_{i,j} f'_i \bar{f}'_j\right)$$

implies

$$\frac{\partial \log(\mu_f)}{\partial \bar{\zeta}} = K \frac{\partial \Psi \circ f}{\partial \bar{\zeta}} + \frac{1}{\sum_{i,j} g_{i,j} f'_i \bar{f}'_j} \sum_{l=1}^n \left(\frac{\partial g_{i,j}}{\partial \bar{w}_l} \bar{f}'_l f'_i \bar{f}'_j + \delta_{j,l} g_{i,j} f'_i \bar{f}'_j \right),$$

and hence

$$\begin{aligned} & \frac{\partial^2 \log(\mu_f)}{\partial \zeta \partial \bar{\zeta}} \\ &= K \frac{\partial^2 \Psi \circ f}{\partial \zeta \partial \bar{\zeta}} \\ & \quad - \frac{1}{(\sum_{i,j} g_{i,j} f'_i \bar{f}'_j)^2} \sum_{k,l} \left(\frac{\partial g_{i,j}}{\partial w_k} f'_k f'_i \bar{f}'_j + \delta_{i,k} g_{i,j} f''_i \bar{f}'_j \right) \left(\frac{\partial g_{i,j}}{\partial \bar{w}_l} \bar{f}'_l f'_i \bar{f}'_j + \delta_{j,l} g_{i,j} f'_i \bar{f}''_j \right) \\ & \quad + \frac{1}{\sum_{i,j} g_{i,j} f'_i \bar{f}'_j} \sum_{i,j,k,l} \left(\frac{\partial^2 g_{i,j}}{\partial w_k \partial \bar{w}_l} f'_k \bar{f}'_l f'_i \bar{f}'_j + g_{i,j} \delta_{j,l} \delta_{i,k} f''_i \bar{f}''_j \right) \\ &= K|f'|^2 - \frac{1}{|f'|^4} \sum_{k,l} f''_k \bar{f}'_l f'_i \bar{f}''_j + \frac{1}{|f'|^2} \sum_{i,j,k,l} \left(\frac{\partial^2 g_{i,j}}{\partial w_k \partial \bar{w}_l} f'_k \bar{f}'_l f'_i \bar{f}'_j + |f''|^2 \right) \\ &= K|f'|^2 - \frac{|\langle f'', f' \rangle|^2}{|f'|^4} + \frac{|f''|^2}{|f'|^2} - \frac{1}{|f'|^2} \sum_{i,j,k,l} R_{i,j,k,l} f'_k \bar{f}'_l f'_i \bar{f}'_j \\ &\geq K|f'|^2 - \frac{1}{|f'|^2} \sum_{i,j,k,l} R_{i,j,k,l} f'_k \bar{f}'_l f'_i \bar{f}'_j, \end{aligned}$$

where $R_{i,j,k,l}$ as above denotes the curvature tensor of ω . Since $R_{i,j,k,l}$ is uniformly bounded on $\Omega \setminus B$, we may choose the constant $K \gg \sup_{\Omega \setminus B} \|R\|$. To complete the estimation of holomorphic sectional curvature at $Z \in \Omega \setminus B$, it remains to note $\mu_f = e^{K\Psi \circ f} |f'|^2$, and therefore

$$-\frac{1}{\mu_f} \frac{\partial^2 \log(\mu_f)}{\partial \zeta \partial \bar{\zeta}} \leq -(K - \sup_{\Omega \setminus B} \|R\|) e^{-K},$$

given $\Psi(Z) < 1$. Without loss of generality, let B correspond to

$$\bar{\Omega} \cap B_M(0) = \{Z \in \bar{\Omega} \mid |Z| < M\}.$$

Consider also the slightly larger ball $B_{M+\varepsilon}(0)$. We now introduce a C^∞ cut-off function χ , such that

$$\chi(|Z|) = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } Z \in \overline{B_M(0)}, \\ 0 & \text{if } Z \in \mathbb{C}^n \setminus B_{M+\varepsilon}(0). \end{cases}$$

Letting ω_0 again denote the standard Kähler metric form on \mathbb{C}^n , we then define a hermitian metric h on Ω associated with the form

$$e^{K'\Psi + \chi \cdot |Z|^2} ((1 - \chi)\omega + \chi \cdot \omega_0).$$

(In particular, the adjusted constant $K' \geq K$ will be defined below.) The upper bound on holomorphic sectional curvature remains essentially the same for $Z \in \Omega \setminus B_{M+\varepsilon}(0)$, where the metric is identified with $h_{K'}$ above. Two further regions of Ω must now be examined. First, note that if $Z \in \overline{B_M(0)} \cap \Omega$, we may consider h to be associated with the form $e^{K'\Psi + |Z|^2} \omega_0$. Hence to f^*h we associate the function

$$\log(\mu_f) = K'\Psi \circ f + |f|^2 + \log(|f'|^2)$$

and obtain

$$\begin{aligned} -\frac{1}{\mu_f} \frac{\partial^2 \log(\mu_f)}{\partial \zeta \partial \bar{\zeta}} &\leq -\frac{e^{-(K'\Psi \circ f + |f|^2)}}{|f'|^2} (K'g_{i,\bar{j}} + \delta_{i,j}) f'_i \bar{f}'_{\bar{j}} \\ &\leq -e^{-(K'+M^2)}, \end{aligned}$$

if we recall that $g_{i,\bar{j}} f'_i \bar{f}'_{\bar{j}} \geq 0$. It remains now to estimate the holomorphic sectional curvature in the region

$$A_\varepsilon = \{Z \in \Omega \mid M < |Z| < M + \varepsilon\}.$$

For $Z \in A_\varepsilon$ we will simply write

$$\mu_f = e^{K'\Psi \circ f} \Sigma_{i,j}(G \circ f)_{i,\bar{j}} f'_i \bar{f}'_{\bar{j}},$$

where $G_{i,\bar{j}} = ((1 - \chi)g_{i,\bar{j}} + \chi\delta_{i,j})$ is understood to be smooth, positive definite, and bounded, with bounded derivatives in the region A_ε , which is relatively compact in Ω' . The calculation of holomorphic sectional curvature is then formally carried out as in the case of h_K , producing a curvature tensor R' that is bounded on $\Omega \setminus B_M(0)$. The leading term of this calculation corresponds to

$$-\frac{K'}{\mu_f} \frac{\partial^2 \Psi}{\partial \bar{z}_j \partial z_i} f'_i \bar{f}'_{\bar{j}} = -K' e^{-(K'\Psi \circ f)} \frac{g_{i,\bar{j}} f'_i \bar{f}'_{\bar{j}}}{(G \circ f)_{i,\bar{j}} f'_i \bar{f}'_{\bar{j}}} \leq -K' e^{-K'} \inf_{A_\varepsilon} \frac{g_{i,\bar{j}} f'_i \bar{f}'_{\bar{j}}}{(G \circ f)_{i,\bar{j}} f'_i \bar{f}'_{\bar{j}}}.$$

To see that the infimum above is strictly positive, we write

$$\frac{g_{i,\bar{j}} f'_i \bar{f}'_{\bar{j}}}{(G \circ f)_{i,\bar{j}} f'_i \bar{f}'_{\bar{j}}} = \frac{e^{-\chi \cdot |Z|^2} g_{i,\bar{j}} f'_i \bar{f}'_{\bar{j}}}{((1 - \chi)g_{i,\bar{j}} + \chi\delta_{i,j}) f'_i \bar{f}'_{\bar{j}}} = \frac{e^{-\chi \cdot |Z|^2} g(\frac{f'}{|f'|}, \frac{f'}{|f'|})}{(1 - \chi)g(\frac{f'}{|f'|}, \frac{f'}{|f'|}) + \chi},$$

noting that $g(\mathbf{v}, \mathbf{v})$ is positive definite for all $Z \in \overline{A_\varepsilon}$, and all $\mathbf{v} \in S^{2n-1}$. It remains now to choose

$$K' \cdot \inf_{A_\varepsilon} \frac{g_{i,\bar{j}} f'_i \bar{f}'_{\bar{j}}}{(G \circ f)_{i,\bar{j}} f'_i \bar{f}'_{\bar{j}}} \gg \sup_{\Omega \setminus B_M(0)} \|R'\|,$$

as in the construction of h_K , so that the holomorphic sectional curvature of h is uniformly bounded above by a strictly negative constant on Ω . It follows at once that Ω is Kobayashi-hyperbolic. ■

3 An Example: $\Psi(Z) = |\Re(Z)|^2|\Im(Z)|^2$

Let $Z = (z_1, z_2, \dots, z_n)$ be coordinates in \mathbb{C}^n ($n \geq 2$), $z_j = x_j + iy_j$, and let $\Re(Z) = X = (x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n)$, $\Im(Z) = Y = (y_1, y_2, \dots, y_n)$. Then $\pi: \mathbb{C}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^2$ will denote the natural projection

$$\pi(Z) = (|X|, |Y|),$$

where $|\cdot|$ denotes the Euclidean norm. Given $\psi: [0, +\infty) \times [0, +\infty) \rightarrow [0, +\infty)$ smooth, we define special complex domains with $\mathbb{O}(n)$ -symmetry, of the form

$$\Omega = \{Z \in \mathbb{C}^n \mid \Psi(Z) < c\}; \quad \Psi = \psi \circ \pi.$$

A sufficient condition for local plurisubharmonicity of a general function $\Psi = \psi \circ \pi$ is examined in [2]. If it is assumed that the critical locus of ψ is contained in $\psi^{-1}(0)$, then $d\psi \neq 0$ at all points (r, s) outside that locus, and the level set $\psi(r, s) = c$ passing through a given regular point locally admits an implicit function $s = \phi(r)$. Let $r = |\Re(Z)|$, $s = |\Im(Z)|$, and $Z \in \Psi^{-1}(c)$, $0 < c \leq 1$. The following statement is given in [2, Lemma 3.3.1].

Lemma ([2, Lemma 3.3.1]) *If, in a neighbourhood of $(r_0, s_0) = (|\Re(Z)|, |\Im(Z)|)$, $Z \in \Psi^{-1}(c)$, we have*

- (a) $\phi'(r) > 0$, $\phi''(r) \leq 0$, $\phi'(r) > \frac{r}{\phi(r)}$, and

$$\phi''(r) + \frac{(\phi'(r))^3}{r} - \frac{1}{\phi(r)}(1 + (\phi'(r))^2) \geq 0,$$

then the hypersurface is pseudoconvex at Z , co-oriented from above;

- (b) $\phi'(r) \leq 0$, $\phi''(r) \geq 0$, and

$$\phi''(r) + \frac{(\phi'(r))^3}{r} - \frac{1}{\phi(r)} \leq 0,$$

then the hypersurface is pseudoconvex at Z , co-oriented from below.

In the following, we examine the case $\psi(r, s) = r^2s^2$, for which the pseudoconvexity condition above is easily checked to hold. More directly, we can perform some routine calculations based on the formula

$$\Psi(Z) = |\Re(Z)|^2|\Im(Z)|^2 = \frac{1}{16} \left(4|Z|^4 - \left[\sum_{k=1}^n z_k^2 + \bar{z}_k^2 \right]^2 \right).$$

In particular,

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial^2 \Psi}{\partial \bar{z}_j \partial z_i} &= \frac{1}{16} \frac{\partial}{\partial \bar{z}_j} \left(8|Z|^2 \cdot \bar{z}_i - 4 \sum_k (z_k^2 + \bar{z}_k^2) \cdot z_i \right) \\ &= \frac{1}{2} (|Z|^2 \delta_{i,j} + z_j \bar{z}_i - z_i \bar{z}_j). \end{aligned}$$

Given any tangent vector $\mathbf{v} \in T_Z\mathbb{C}^n$, note that

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial^2 \Psi}{\partial \bar{z}_j \partial z_i}(\mathbf{v}, \bar{\mathbf{v}}) &= \sum_{i,j} \frac{\partial^2 \Psi}{\partial \bar{z}_j \partial z_i} \bar{v}_j \cdot v_i = \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i,j} (|Z|^2 \delta_{i,j} + z_j \bar{z}_i - z_i \bar{z}_j) \bar{v}_j \cdot v_i \\ &= \frac{1}{2} (|Z|^2 |\mathbf{v}|^2 + |\langle Z, \mathbf{v} \rangle|^2 - |\langle \bar{Z}, \mathbf{v} \rangle|^2) \\ &\geq \frac{1}{2} |\langle Z, \mathbf{v} \rangle|^2 \geq 0, \end{aligned}$$

where $\langle \cdot, \cdot \rangle$ denotes the standard hermitian inner product on \mathbb{C}^n . Hence Ψ is pluri-subharmonic. Note also that

$$(\nabla^{1,0}\Psi)_i = (\overline{\nabla^{0,1}\Psi})_i = \frac{1}{2}|Z|^2 \cdot \bar{z}_i - \frac{1}{4} \sum_k (z_k^2 + \bar{z}_k^2) \cdot z_i = 0$$

if and only if $\Psi(Z) = 0, 1 \leq i \leq n$, hence the critical locus of this plurisubharmonic function coincides with $\mathbb{R}^n \cup i\mathbb{R}^n$. Let $\Gamma \subset \Omega$ denote the set of points at which the form $\omega = i\partial\bar{\partial}\Psi$ is degenerate (i.e., ω restricted to $\Omega \setminus \Gamma$ is Kähler). Then ω induces the Levi form on restriction to the complex tangent space of the Ψ -level set through any point $Z \in \Omega$, hence weak pseudoconvexity of the level set at Z implies $Z \in \Gamma$. Let $g_{i,\bar{j}}$ denote the i, j -component of the associated Kähler metric corresponding to

$$\frac{\partial^2 \Psi}{\partial z_i \partial \bar{z}_j} = \frac{1}{2} (|Z|^2 \delta_{i,j} + z_j \bar{z}_i - z_i \bar{z}_j).$$

In the remainder we will specialize to the case $n = 2$, where Γ is defined simply by the vanishing of

$$\det(g) = \frac{1}{4} (|Z|^4 - |z_1 \bar{z}_2 - \bar{z}_1 z_2|^2) = \frac{1}{4} |z_1^2 + z_2^2|^2,$$

hence $\det(g) = 0$ if and only if $z_1 = \pm iz_2$. Now $g_{i,\bar{j}} = \frac{1}{2} (|Z|^2 \delta_{i,j} + z_j \bar{z}_i - z_i \bar{z}_j)$, implies

$$\frac{\partial^2 g_{i,\bar{j}}}{\partial z_k \partial \bar{z}_l} = \frac{1}{2} (\delta_{k,l} \delta_{i,j} + \delta_{l,i} \delta_{k,j} - \delta_{k,i} \delta_{l,j}).$$

Moreover,

$$R_{i,\bar{j},k,\bar{l}} = -\frac{\partial^2 g_{i,\bar{j}}}{\partial z_k \partial \bar{z}_l} + \sum_{\alpha,\beta} g^{\alpha,\bar{\beta}} \frac{\partial g_{i,\bar{\beta}}}{\partial z_k} \frac{\partial g_{\alpha,\bar{j}}}{\partial \bar{z}_l}$$

is bounded on $\Omega \setminus \Gamma_\epsilon$, where $\Gamma_\epsilon = \{Z \mid |z_1^2 + z_2^2| < \epsilon\}$ for ϵ arbitrarily small and positive. A uniform bound can be determined reasonably explicitly in this case if we introduce a parameter $\xi = re^{i\theta}$ such that $z_1 = \xi z_2$, and hence

$$\det(g) = \frac{|z_2|^4}{4} ((r^2 + 1)^2 - 4r^2 \sin^2(\theta)) \geq \frac{|z_2|^4}{4} (r^2 - 1)^2.$$

Then

$$|g^{\alpha,\bar{\beta}}| = \frac{|z_2|^2}{2 \det(g)} \left((r^2 + 1)^2 \delta_{\alpha,\beta} + 4(1 - \delta_{\alpha,\beta})r^2 \sin^2(\theta) \right)^{\frac{1}{2}}$$

$$\leq \frac{2(r^2 + 1)}{|z_2|^2(r^2 - 1)^2}$$

(if we note that $(r^2 + 1)^2 \geq 4r^2$). Similarly,

$$\frac{\partial g_{i,\bar{\beta}}}{\partial z_k} = \frac{1}{2} (\bar{z}_k \delta_{i,\beta} + \bar{z}_i \delta_{k,\beta} - \bar{z}_\beta \delta_{i,k})$$

for which the substitution $z_k = z_2(\delta_{2,k} + (1 - \delta_{2,k})\xi)$, etc., and the inequality

$$|\delta_{2,k} + (1 - \delta_{2,k})\xi| \leq \max\{1, r\}$$

etc., yields

$$\left| \frac{\partial g_{i,\bar{\beta}}}{\partial z_k} \right|, \left| \frac{\partial g_{\alpha,\bar{j}}}{\partial \bar{z}_i} \right| \leq \frac{3}{2} \max\{1, r\} |z_2|.$$

Hence

$$\left| \sum_{\alpha,\beta} g^{\alpha,\beta} \frac{\partial g_{i,\bar{\beta}}}{\partial z_k} \frac{\partial g_{\alpha,\bar{j}}}{\partial \bar{z}_i} \right| \leq 18 \frac{r^2 + 1}{(r^2 - 1)^2} \max\{1, r\}^2.$$

From the continuity in r of this last expression for all $r \geq 1 + \varepsilon$, and the fact that its limit as $r \rightarrow \infty$ is finite, we conclude that $R_{i,\bar{j},k,\bar{l}}$ is uniformly bounded for $|1 - |\xi|| \geq \varepsilon$.

In the light of this example we make a final remark. Let Ψ be any plurisubharmonic function on \mathbb{C}^2 satisfying the following:

- $\det\left(\frac{\partial^2 \Psi}{\partial \bar{z}_i \partial z_i}\right) = |\langle Z, \bar{Z} \rangle|^s e^{f(Z, \bar{Z})}$, ($s \in \mathbb{R} \setminus \{0\}$, f smooth) on Ω ;
- outside the locus corresponding to $\{\langle Z, \bar{Z} \rangle = 0\}$, the form $\omega = i\partial\bar{\partial}\Psi$ has bounded curvature on the domain $\Omega = \{\Psi < 1\}$.

Then the pair of transversely intersecting discs corresponding to the locus above is extremally embedded in the sense that the Kobayashi distance between two points $(\pm i\zeta, \zeta)$ and $(\pm i\zeta', \zeta')$ in the same disc is equal to the Poincaré distance between ζ and ζ' . In other words, the $\mathbb{O}(2)$ -orbit of weakly pseudoconvex points on $\partial\Omega$ bounds a pair of extremally embedded discs. Moreover, the Ricci form $i\partial\bar{\partial} \log(\det(g))$ associated with the metric vanishes identically when f is constant.

Acknowledgments The authors would sincerely like to thank F. Larusson and J. Bland for their very helpful feedback, and to V. Ezhov and A. Isaev for their comments during the writing of this manuscript.

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