

On the local structure of generalized Kähler manifolds

by

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To Professor S. Ianuș on the occasion of his 70th Birthday

Abstract

Let (g, b, J_+, J_-) be the bihermitian structure corresponding to a generalized Kähler structure. We find natural integrability conditions, in terms of the eigendistributions of $J_+J_- + J_-J_+$, under which $db = 0$.

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Introduction

A *generalized almost complex structure* on a smooth (connected) manifold is given by a vector subbundle $L \subset (TM \oplus T^*M)^{\mathbb{C}}$ such that $L \cap \bar{L} = \{0\}$ and which is maximally isotropic with respect to the canonical inner product

$$\langle X + \alpha, Y + \beta \rangle = \frac{1}{2}(\alpha(Y) + \beta(X)) .$$

If $E = \pi_{TM}(L)$ is a bundle, where $\pi_{TM} : TM \oplus T^*M \rightarrow TM$ is the projection, then there exists a unique complex two-form $\varepsilon \in \Gamma(\Lambda^2 E^*)$ such that $L = L(E, \varepsilon)$, where

$$L(E, \varepsilon) = \{X + \alpha \mid X \in E, \alpha|_E = \varepsilon(X)\} .$$

Furthermore, by [4], to which we refer for all of the facts on generalized complex structures recalled here, the condition $L \cap \bar{L} = \{0\}$ is equivalent to $E + \bar{E} = T^{\mathbb{C}}M$ and $\text{Im}(\varepsilon|_{E \cap \bar{E}})$ is non-degenerate.

A generalized almost complex structure L is *integrable* if its space of sections is closed under the *Courant bracket*, defined by

$$[X + \alpha, Y + \beta] = [X, Y] + \mathcal{L}_X \beta - \mathcal{L}_Y \alpha - \frac{1}{2} d(\iota_X \beta - \iota_Y \alpha) ,$$

for any $X + \alpha, Y + \beta \in \Gamma(L)$.

A *generalized complex structure* is an integrable generalized almost complex structure. Obviously, any generalized complex structure corresponds to a linear complex structure on $TM \oplus T^*M$ whose eigenbundle, corresponding to i , is isotropic, with respect to the canonical inner product, and its space of sections is closed under the Courant bracket.

A generalized almost complex structure of the form $L = L(E, \varepsilon)$ is integrable if and only if the

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space of sections of E is closed under the (Lie) bracket and $d\varepsilon(X, Y, Z) = 0$, for any $X, Y, Z \in E$.

A particular feature of Generalized Complex Geometry is that imposing Hermitian compatibility to a generalized almost complex structure and a Riemannian metric on $TM \oplus T^*M$, compatible with the canonical inner product, forces the manifold to admit a second generalized almost complex structure, commuting with the first one. One arrives to the notion of *generalized Kähler structure*, as a couple of commuting generalized complex structures \mathcal{J}_1 and \mathcal{J}_2 such that $\mathcal{J}_1\mathcal{J}_2$ is negative definite; furthermore, in [4] it is explained the correspondence between generalized Kähler structures and a special type of bihermitian structures which appeared in Theoretical Physics, over twenty years ago [3].

More precisely, any generalized almost Kähler structure on M corresponds to a quadruple (g, b, J_+, J_-) , where g is a Riemannian metric, b is a two-form and J_\pm are almost Hermitian structures on (M, g) . Furthermore, the corresponding generalized almost Kähler structure is integrable if and only if J_\pm are integrable and parallel with respect to ∇^\pm , where $\nabla^\pm = \nabla \pm \frac{1}{2}g^{-1}h$, with ∇ the Levi-Civita connection of g and $h = db$ (equivalently, J_\pm are integrable and $d_\pm^c\omega_\pm = \mp h$, where ω_\pm are the Kähler forms of J_\pm).

Classification results for compact bihermitian manifolds were given, mainly in dimension 4, in several papers (see, for example, [1], [2]).

In higher dimensions, a natural case to consider is when J_+ and J_- are admissible for an almost quaternionic structure. This condition was, essentially, considered by physicists who have shown that it holds if and only if the bihermitian structure is part of a hyperkähler one [7, Theorem 1] (see Theorem 1.1, below).

By combining this fact with results of [9] and [8], we study the ‘eigendistributions’ of the operator $J_+J_- + J_-J_+$. Thus, we obtain natural integrability conditions under which $db = 0$ (Theorem 2.3, Corollary 2.4).

1 The almost quaternionic generalized Kähler manifolds are hyperkähler

A *bundle of associative algebras* is a vector bundle whose typical fibre is an associative algebra \mathcal{A} and whose structural group is the group of automorphisms of \mathcal{A} .

An *almost quaternionic structure* on M is a morphism of bundles of associative algebras $\sigma : A \rightarrow \text{End}(TM)$, where the typical fibre of A is \mathbb{H} . Then, $\sigma(\text{Im}A)$ is an oriented Riemannian vector bundle of rank 3 and the (local) sections of its sphere bundle are the *admissible almost complex structures* of σ (see [6]).

The following result reformulates [7, Theorem 1]. For the reader’s convenience, we supply a proof.

Theorem 1.1. *Let (M, L_1, L_2) be a generalized almost Kähler manifold of dimension at least eight and let (g, b, J_+, J_-) be the corresponding almost bihermitian structure. Suppose that J_+ and J_- are admissible almost complex structures of an almost quaternionic structure on M .*

Then the following assertions are equivalent:

- (i) (M, L_1, L_2) is generalized Kähler.
- (ii) (M, g, J_\pm) are Kähler manifolds.

Furthermore, if (i) or (ii) holds and $J_+ \neq \pm J_-$ then the almost quaternionic structure is hyperkähler, with respect to (M, g) .

Proof: As (ii) \implies (i) is trivial, it is sufficient to prove that (i) \implies (ii).

By hypothesis, there exists $a : M \rightarrow [-1, 1]$ such that $J_+J_- + J_-J_+ = -2a$ on M . If $J_+ = \pm J_-$ there is nothing to be proved. Hence, we may suppose that $a^{-1}((-1, 1)) \neq \emptyset$.

Moreover, as we have to prove that (M, g, J_\pm) are Kähler and, consequently, a is constant, we may assume $a(M) \subseteq (-1, 1)$.

Then $L_1 = L(T^{\mathbb{C}}M, \varepsilon_+)$ and $L_2 = L(T^{\mathbb{C}}M, \varepsilon_-)$, where ε_{\pm} are closed complex two-forms on M . From [4, (6.4) and (6.5)], it quickly follows that

$$\begin{aligned} (\operatorname{Im} \varepsilon_{\pm})(J_+ \mp J_-) &= 2g, \\ (\operatorname{Re} \varepsilon_{\pm})(J_+ \mp J_-) &= b(J_+ \mp J_-) + g(J_+ \pm J_-). \end{aligned} \tag{1.1}$$

On multiplying, to the right, both relations of (1.1) by $J_+ \mp J_-$ we obtain

$$\begin{aligned} (-2 \pm 2a)(\operatorname{Im} \varepsilon_{\pm}) &= 2g(J_+ \mp J_-), \\ (-2 \pm 2a)(\operatorname{Re} \varepsilon_{\pm}) &= (-2 \pm 2a)b \mp g(J_+J_- - J_-J_+) \end{aligned}$$

and, consequently, $(a - 1)\operatorname{Re} \varepsilon_+ - (a + 1)\operatorname{Re} \varepsilon_- = -2b$.

Therefore

$$d\left[\frac{1}{1 \pm a}g(J_+ \pm J_-)\right] = 0. \tag{1.2}$$

Also, as, up to a B -field transformation, we may suppose $\operatorname{Re} \varepsilon_- = 0$, we deduce that the two-form $\frac{1}{a-1}b$ is closed; equivalently,

$$db = \frac{1}{a-1} da \wedge b. \tag{1.3}$$

Note that, the condition $\nabla^{\pm}J_{\pm} = 0$ is equivalent to

$$g((\nabla_X J_{\pm})(Y), Z) = \mp \frac{1}{2}[(db)(X, J_{\pm}Y, Z) + (db)(X, Y, J_{\pm}Z)], \tag{1.4}$$

for any $X, Y, Z \in TM$.

From (1.3) and (1.4) we obtain

$$g((\nabla_X J_{\pm})(Y), Z) = \pm \frac{1}{2(1-a)}(da \wedge b)(X \wedge J_{\pm}Y \wedge Z + X \wedge Y \wedge J_{\pm}Z), \tag{1.5}$$

for any $X, Y, Z \in TM$.

Obviously,

$$K_{\pm} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2(1 \pm a)}}(J_+ \pm J_-).$$

are anti-commuting almost Hermitian structures on (M, g) . Furthermore, (1.5) gives

$$\begin{aligned} g((\nabla_X K_{\pm})(Y), Z) &= \mp \frac{1}{2(1 \pm a)} X(a) g(K_{\pm}Y, Z) \\ &+ \frac{1}{2(1-a)} \left(\frac{1-a}{1+a}\right)^{\pm \frac{1}{2}} (da \wedge b)(X \wedge K_{\mp}Y \wedge Z + X \wedge Y \wedge K_{\mp}Z), \end{aligned} \tag{1.6}$$

for any $X, Y, Z \in TM$.

On the other hand, by (1.2), the almost Hermitian manifolds $(M, e^{2f_{\pm}}g, K_{\pm})$ are $(1, 2)$ -symplectic, where $f_{\pm} = -\frac{1}{4} \log 2(1 \pm a)$. A straightforward calculation shows that this is equivalent to

$$\begin{aligned} g((\nabla_{K_{\pm}X} K_{\pm})(Y), Z) - g((\nabla_X K_{\pm})(Y), K_{\pm}Z) &= \\ \pm \frac{1}{2(1 \pm a)} [(K_{\pm}Y)(a) g(K_{\pm}X, Z) - (K_{\pm}Z)(a) g(K_{\pm}X, Y) & \\ + Y(a) g(X, Z) - Z(a) g(X, Y)] , & \end{aligned} \tag{1.7}$$

for any $X, Y, Z \in TM$.

Now, (1.6) and (1.7) imply

$$\begin{aligned} & (K_{\pm}X)(a)g(K_{\pm}Y, Z) + (K_{\pm}Y)(a)g(K_{\pm}X, Z) - (K_{\pm}Z)(a)g(K_{\pm}X, Y) \\ & - X(a)g(Y, Z) + Y(a)g(X, Z) - Z(a)g(X, Y) = \\ & \pm \left(\frac{1-a}{1+a}\right)^{-\frac{1}{2}} (da \wedge b)(K_{\pm}X \wedge K_{\mp}Y \wedge Z + K_{\pm}X \wedge Y \wedge K_{\mp}Z \\ & - X \wedge K_{\mp}Y \wedge K_{\pm}Z - X \wedge Y \wedge K_{\mp}K_{\pm}Z), \end{aligned} \tag{1.8}$$

for any $X, Y, Z \in TM$.

In (1.8), if from the first relation we subtract the second one, with the roles of X and Y interchanged, then we obtain

$$\begin{aligned} & (K_+X)(a)g(K_+Y, Z) + (K_+Y)(a)g(K_+X, Z) - (K_+Z)(a)g(K_+X, Y) \\ & + (K_-X)(a)g(K_-Y, Z) + (K_-Y)(a)g(K_-X, Z) + (K_-Z)(a)g(K_-X, Y) \\ & - 2Z(a)g(X, Y) = 2 \left(\frac{1-a}{1+a}\right)^{-\frac{1}{2}} (da \wedge b)(K_+X \wedge K_-Y \wedge Z), \end{aligned} \tag{1.9}$$

for any $X, Y, Z \in TM$.

From (1.9), with $Z = K_+X$, it quickly follows that $\text{grad}_g a$ is zero on the orthogonal complement of each quaternionic line. As $\dim M \geq 8$, we obtain that a is constant. Together with (1.6), this gives that K_{\pm} generate a hyperkähler structure on (M, g) , whilst, together with (1.3), this implies $db = 0$. The proof is complete. \square

Remark 1.2. In dimension four, the hypothesis of Theorem 1.1 is equivalent to the condition that J_+ and J_- induce the same orientation on M , whilst if J_+ and J_- induce different orientations on M then, up to a unique B -field transformation, M is locally given by a product of two Kähler manifolds (consequence of [8, Corollary 5.7]). Furthermore, there exist four-dimensional generalized Kähler manifolds with J_+ and J_- inducing the same orientation and which are not given by a hyperkähler structure (see [5]).

The next result follows quickly from (1.3) and (1.9).

Corollary 1.3. *Let (M, L_1, L_2) be a four-dimensional generalized Kähler manifold with J_+, J_- inducing the same orientation on M and linearly independent, at each point.*

Then, up to a unique B -field transformation, the following relations hold:

$$\begin{aligned} db &= -\frac{1}{1-a} da \wedge b. \\ *(da \wedge b) &= \frac{1}{2(1+a)} [J_+, J_-](da), \end{aligned} \tag{1.10}$$

where $*$ is the Hodge star operator of (M, g) and the function $a : M \rightarrow (-1, 1)$ is characterised by $J_+J_- + J_-J_+ = -2a$.

We end this section by showing how equations (1.10) can be slightly simplified.

Remark 1.4. Let (M, L_1, L_2) be a four-dimensional generalized Kähler manifold with J_+, J_- inducing the same orientation on M and linearly independent, at each point.

With the same notations as in Theorem 1.1, let $K = K_+K_-$, $k = \left(\frac{1+a}{1-a}\right)^{\frac{1}{2}} g$ and $u = \log(1-a)$.

Then (1.10) is equivalent to

$$db = du \wedge b = -*_k K du. \tag{1.11}$$

If du is nowhere zero, then the second equality of (1.11) is equivalent to

$$b = cv_{\mathcal{E}} + v_{\mathcal{F}} + du \wedge \alpha,$$

where c is a function, \mathcal{E} is generated by $\{\text{grad } u, K(\text{grad } u)\}$, $\mathcal{F} = \mathcal{E}^\perp$, α is a section of \mathcal{F}^* , and $v_{\mathcal{E}}, v_{\mathcal{F}}$ are the volume forms of \mathcal{E}, \mathcal{F} , respectively.

2 Factorisation results for generalized Kähler manifolds

Let (M, L_1, L_2) be a generalized Kähler manifold and let (g, b, J_+, J_-) be the corresponding bihermitian structure. For any $a \in [-1, 1]$, we (pointwisely) denote by \mathcal{H}^a the eigenspace of $J_+J_- + J_-J_+$ corresponding to $-2a$; also, we denote $\mathcal{H}^\pm = \mathcal{H}^{\pm 1}$ and $\mathcal{V} = (\mathcal{H}^+ \oplus \mathcal{H}^-)^\perp$. Then, at each point of M , we have that \mathcal{H}^a are preserved by J_\pm and there exist (finite) orthogonal decompositions $TM = \bigoplus_a \mathcal{H}^a$ and $\mathcal{V} = \bigoplus_{|a| < 1} \mathcal{H}^a$.

Corollary 2.1. *Let N be a complex submanifold of (M, J_\pm) , of complex dimension at least four, endowed with a function $a : N \rightarrow (-1, 1)$ such that $T_x N \subseteq \mathcal{H}_x^{a(x)}$, ($x \in N$).*

Then a is constant and N is endowed with a natural hyperkähler structure whose underlying Riemannian metric is $g|_N$ and for which $J_+|_N$ and $J_-|_N$ are admissible complex structures.

Proof: As, obviously, (g, b, J_+, J_-) induces a generalized Kähler structure on N , this follows quickly from Theorem 1.1. □

From [9, Lemma 2.3] it follows that in an open neighbourhood U of each point of a dense open subset of M there exist (smooth) functions $a_j : M \rightarrow [-1, 1]$, ($j = 1, \dots, r$), such that \mathcal{H}^{a_j} are distributions on U and $TM = \bigoplus_j \mathcal{H}^{a_j}$; we call the \mathcal{H}^{a_j} the (local) eigendistributions of $J_+J_- + J_-J_+$. Furthermore, if a is a function on U such that, at each point, $-2a$ is an eigenvalue of $J_+J_- + J_-J_+$ then there exists an open subset of U on which $a = a_j$, for some j ; thus, if we assume real-analyticity then $a = a_j$ on U .

We point out the following facts:

- The functions a_j are constant along the integrable manifolds, of dimensions at least eight, of \mathcal{H}^{a_j} , ($j = 1, \dots, r$); this is a consequence of Corollary 2.1.
- If $J_+ \pm J_-$ are invertible then the holomorphic diffeomorphisms of (M, L_1, L_2) preserve each \mathcal{H}^{a_j} , ($j = 1, \dots, r$); this is a consequence of [8, Corollary 6.7].

Remark 2.2. Let (M, L_1, L_2) be a generalized Kähler manifold with $db = 0$. Then (M, g, J_\pm) are Kähler and there exists a nonempty finite subset A of $[-1, 1]$ such that, for any $a \in A$, we have that \mathcal{H}^a is a parallel foliation which is holomorphic with respect to both J_+ and J_- . Therefore (g, J_\pm) induce Kähler structures on the leaves of \mathcal{H}^a and, if $a \neq \pm 1$, these are admissible with respect to natural hyperkähler structures. Furthermore, there exist orthogonal decompositions $TM = \bigoplus_{a \in A} \mathcal{H}^a$ and $\mathcal{V} = \bigoplus_{a \in A \setminus \{\pm 1\}} \mathcal{H}^a$.

If the cardinal of $A \setminus \{\pm 1\}$ is at least two then the leaves of $\bigoplus_{a \in A \setminus \{\pm 1\}} \mathcal{H}^a$ are naturally endowed with two distinct hyperkähler structures with respect to which J_+ and J_- define admissible complex structures, respectively.

Furthermore, if $J_+ + J_-$ (or $J_+ - J_-$) is invertible then as, locally, M is the product of a Kähler manifold and hyperkähler manifolds, its holomorphic Poisson structure is the pull-back of the product of the holomorphic symplectic structures of the hyperkähler factors.

Next, we prove the following.

Theorem 2.3. *Let (M, L_1, L_2) be a generalized Kähler manifold with $J_+ + J_-$ (or $J_+ - J_-$) invertible and for which the eigendistributions of $(J_+J_- + J_-J_+)|_{(\mathcal{H}^+ \oplus \mathcal{H}^-)^\perp}$ have dimensions at least eight.*

Then the following assertions are equivalent:

- (i) $db = 0$.
- (ii) *The eigendistributions of $J_+J_- + J_-J_+$ and their orthogonal complements are integrable.*

Proof: The implication (i) \implies (ii) is an immediate consequence of Remark 2.2.

Assume that (ii) holds. From [8, Corollary 6.3] it follows that we may suppose that, also, $J_+ - J_-$ is invertible.

Then, locally, outside a set with empty interior there exists a finite set A of functions $a : M \rightarrow (-1, 1)$ such that \mathcal{H}^a are distributions and $TM = \bigoplus_{a \in A} \mathcal{H}^a$.

Also, $L_1 = L(T^{\mathbb{C}}M, \varepsilon_+)$ and $L_2 = L(T^{\mathbb{C}}M, \varepsilon_-)$, where ε_{\pm} are closed complex two-forms on M .

By Theorem 1.1, we have that (i) holds if and only if $db(X, Y, Z) = 0$, for any $X \in \mathcal{H}^a$ and $Y, Z \in \bigoplus_{a' \in A \setminus \{a\}} \mathcal{H}^{a'}$, ($a \in A$).

As \mathcal{H}^a , ($a \in A$), are invariant under B -field transformations, we may assume $\text{Re } \varepsilon_- = 0$; equivalently, $b = -g(J_+ - J_-)(J_+ + J_-)^{-1}$. Together with the fact that \mathcal{H}^a , ($a \in A$), and their orthogonal complements are holomorphic foliations, with respect to J_+ and J_- , this gives that (i) holds if and only if \mathcal{H}^a are Riemannian foliations, ($a \in A$).

Now, note that we, also, have

$$\text{Re } \varepsilon_+ = b + g(J_+ + J_-)(J_+ - J_-)^{-1} = g[(J_+ + J_-)(J_+ - J_-)^{-1} - (J_+ - J_-)(J_+ + J_-)^{-1}].$$

As L_1 is integrable, $\text{Re } \varepsilon_+$ is closed and, consequently, \mathcal{H}^a are Riemannian foliations, ($a \in A$).

The proof is complete. □

We end with the following result.

Corollary 2.4. *Let (M, L_1, L_2) be a generalized Kähler manifold for which the eigendistributions of $(J_+J_- + J_-J_+)|_{(\mathcal{H}^+ \oplus \mathcal{H}^-)^\perp}$ have dimensions at least eight.*

Then the following assertions are equivalent:

- (i) $db = 0$.
- (ii) \mathcal{H}^\pm and the sum of any two eigendistributions of $J_+J_- + J_-J_+$ are integrable.

Proof: The implication (i) \implies (ii) is trivial.

If (ii) holds then $\mathcal{H}^+ \oplus \mathcal{H}^-$ is integrable. Hence, by [8, Theorem 6.10], we may assume $\mathcal{H}^+ = 0 = \mathcal{H}^-$. The proof follows from Theorem 2.3. □

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