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ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT

Exchange coupled L1<sub>0</sub> FeCuPt/Fe heterostructures: Magnetic

properties and reversal behavior at elevated temperatures

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Keywords: L10 FePt-X; Exchange-coupled composite; Heat-assisted magnetic recording; Magnetic

recording; Curie temperature; Scanning magnetoresistive microscopy.

Exchange-coupled heterostructures were prepared by combining hard magnetic L1<sub>0</sub>

FeCuPt alloy films with soft magnetic Fe thin films. For the FeCuPt thin film, the addition

of Cu allows adjusting magnetic properties such as perpendicular magnetic anisotropy,

coercivity, saturation magnetization, and Curie temperature. The coupling to thin Fe layers,

providing high saturation magnetization and high Curie temperature, leads to lowering of

the switching field of the hard magnetic FeCuPt layer and to a reduction of thermally

induced recording errors. We have investigated the influence of the Fe layer thickness on

the switching behavior of the hard layer, revealing a strong reduction for Fe layer

thicknesses larger than the exchange length of Fe of about 2 nm. Furthermore, superior

performance of bilayer structures in comparison to single FeCuPt layers has been

demonstrated by recording experiments at temperatures below 150 °C, employing a

scanning magnetoresistive microscope.

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