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Given a smooth compactification of a quotient of a bounded symmetric domain, we want to study the usual notions of positivity of its logarithmic and standard cotangent bundles. To this end, we prove a metric criterion of bigness of the cotangent bundle, relevant on any smooth log-pair. Then, we can show that the logarithmic cotangent bundle of the previous compactification is always big, which gives back a result of Y. Brunebarbe.

In the case of a ball quotient, we are interested in the ramified covers of the compactification, étale on the inside. Using recent results of Bakker and Tsimerman, our criterion can be applied to give effective ramification orders, beyond which all the subvarieties of such a cover, if they are not included in the boundary, will have nef, or big, cotangent bundle. (Received March 19, 2017)