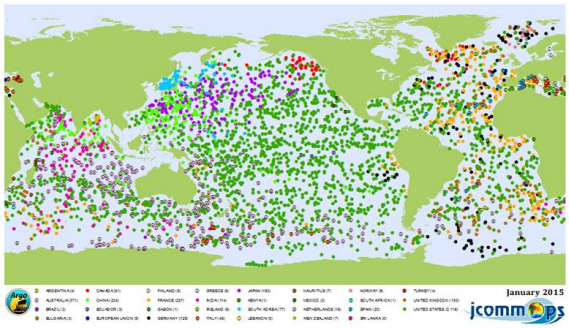
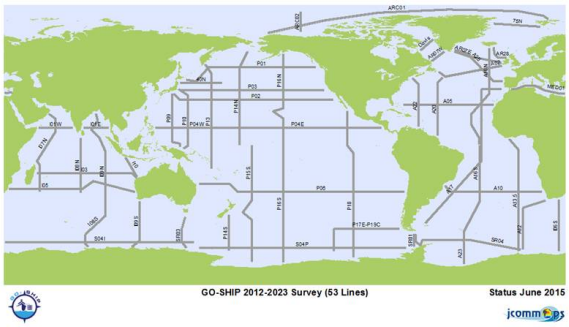
A World's First: Argo Floats in the Barcelona World Race

http://www.barcelonaworldrace.org/science

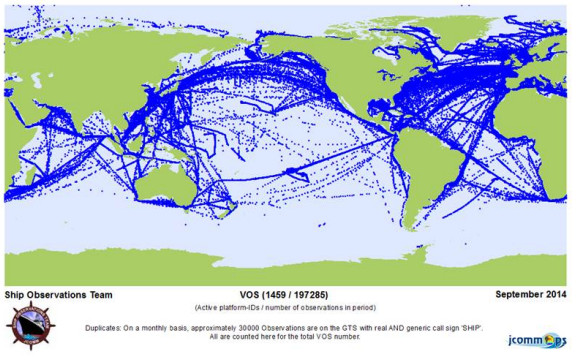
Argo floats are a crucial component of the Global Ocean and Climate Observing System. 3500 of these autonomous robots, from 30 participating countries, currently observe the 2000m upper layer of the ocean. The deployment of 1000 units per year, required to maintain the network, is an enormous challenge.





Floats are mostly deployed from research vessels, e.g. on reference lines of the Global Ocean Ship-based Hydrographic Investigations Program (GO-SHIP) or in other specific research areas. Such cruises are insufficient to maintain a uniform network distribution, in particular in the Southern Ocean.

Profiling floats allow as well for the deployment by other volunteers, such as container vessels. Whilst on a yearly basis more than 2000 of such ships are involved in other ocean observing networks, particularly in the VOS program for meteorological data, operations remain limited to commercial shipping lines, non-existent in the Southern Ocean.



After successful tests, the Barcelona World Race has now been the first Ocean Race with mandatory float deployments from all participating yachts. The instruments were provided by Coriolis (France) and have been released on 23 January ("Argo Day") in positions of high importance for the instrument array.

All floats are fully operational and keep submitting scientific data every 10 days. The IOC/UNESCO - WMO support centre JCOMMOPS, and FNOB (Fundació Navegació Oceànica Barcelona) initialized this innovative project, which hopefully marks the beginning of a new era of "Sailing and Science".

Argo
Coriolis Océanographie Opérationnelle Operational Oceanography Ifremer ARGO FRANCE - Brest, France
2014 2015 barcelona world race
FUNDACIÓ NAVEGACIÓ OCEÀNICA BARCELONA
World Meteorological Organization
jcommops
UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission