

6th Euro-Argo Users Meeting, Paris, 4 July 2017: Summary of the two roundtables

How can Argo contribute to an integrated observing system: European Ocean Observing System (EOOS)

The first roundtable was dedicated to discussions about Argo's contribution to EOOS (European Ocean Observing System), an integrated observing system. It was moderated by Glenn Nolan from EuroGOOS who introduced the discussion by presenting the main results of the recent EOOS consultancy.

It was mentioned that EOOS will focus more on observation acquisition than data integration already well covered by other initiatives such as JCOMM, GEOSS, EOSC or EMODNet. EOOS should address the European Contribution to both European seas and the Global Ocean. Even if presently the observing system of the global ocean is better coordinated through GOOS and JCOMM, it is essential to many applications and the sustainability of European contribution to the Global Ocean should be addressed in EOOS.

Presently Euro-Argo deploy floats mainly in Atlantic Ocean (from Arctic to Southern Ocean) and European Seas. It was highlighted that the global coverage of Argo is important and that Europe should contribute to the Indian and Pacific Oceans where gaps exist. The Argo extension towards shelves was brought up with a multi-platform approach that has to be strengthened and EOOS could help.

One specificity of the Argo observing system is that it serves both the fundamental research and the operational oceanography in a balanced proportion. Although Euro-Argo funding by the EU is mainly devoted to services, and in particular CMEMS/DG-GROW and EMODNet/DG-MARE, and not to basic research made by young scientists, we can't afford to maintain two observing systems and we have to find a solution to design and maintain an observing system that serves both science and research. As an important part of Argo data uptake is through products, a lack of feedback from users exists that avoids the possibility to improve the data according to user's needs.

Ocean Obs 19' should be the place where the scientific community communicate on the usefulness of Argo and the data availability, and give feedback on the operational services.

We need to move from gap analysis to defining a comprehensive set of requirements for different applications, including science. We also need a strategy for EU long term funding for observations and make the case for Argo. EOOS could help Euro-Argo to get EU funds.

How the Euro-Argo Office can better support the development of Argo in Europe

The main outcome of the second discussion is that Euro-Argo should find ways to attract new scientists and reach other communities. A way to do so could be for instance via floats donation; we could make a batch of floats available for young researcher through calls for tenders (the way the GMMC (Groupe Mission Mercator Coriolis) works in France).

Another useful task that would benefit the whole Euro-Argo community in addition to attracting new scientists would be to organize workshops or make webinars on Argo data use and access. Such training events could be organized as side events and thus benefit from the attractiveness of bigger events (e.g. EGU). The Euro-Argo office could also maintain a kind of Forum on the evolution of Argo parameters to enable the users to keep up to date.

Euro-Argo could also be a catalyst to help solving key issues, as for instance the under ice float topic.