



GRACE Mission: Status and Prospects

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The twin satellites of the US/German Gravity Recovery And Climate Experiment (GRACE) mission have been in orbit for nearly 11 years. In this time, the GRACE measurements of time-variable and long-term mean gravity field have provided unprecedented insights into the geophysical processes that influence the changes in global mass distribution, at both regional and global scales. This has helped characterize diverse processes such as the land water cycle variability; diverse oceanographic processes; mass exchange between the ocean and land; changes in the ice-sheets; etc. This characterization has been also helped by the improved Release-05 GRACE mission data products that have become recently available.

This paper will summarize the status of the GRACE mission flight segment and ground operations, with a particular emphasis on factors that have an influence on the prospects for continued measurements into the future. In addition, as relevant for scientific user applications, the status and characterization of the GRACE mission science data products will be presented.