The Euro-Argo education web site: using Argo data to teach data analysis and marine science

Valborg Byfield (1), Carolyn Scheurle (2), John Gould (1), Emina Macama (3), and Brian King (1)

(1) National Oceanography Centre, Southampton, United Kingdom (val.byfield@noc.ac.uk), (2) Observatoire Océanologique de Villefranche sur Mer, France, (3) IFREMER, France

The Euro-Argo education website (www.euroargo-edu.org) aims to make Argo and its data accessible to a non-specialist audience. The site is centred on a selection of floats, which have been chosen because of the insight they provide into key oceanographic processes, the physical and biogeochemical characteristics of different ocean regions around the world, and the role of the ocean in the global climate system.

The float selection is a vehicle for teaching data analysis skills, linking these to current topics in the ocean and climate sciences. Each float in the selection has its own page, which provides access to the float data, data plots, background information on the ocean region in which the float can be found, and questions to guide data interpretation. Hidden 'model answers' allow users to check their understanding by comparing their own answers to those provided.

The interactive component of the site also includes a series of quizzes, designed to teach data interpretation skills. These start at a basic level and take the students step by step through the most common ways to plot oceanographic data in space and time.

More general background information covers the main aspects of the Argo programme, its history and applications, and basic technical information about the floats and sensors. 'World Tour' pages linked to the float selection provide information about the main ocean regions and link information from the Argo programme to oceanographic information from other sources such as satellite observations.

The site is primarily aimed at young people between 11 and 18 years of age. However experience from using selected material from the site during science open days shows that children as young as 8-9 and adults of all ages also enjoy the challenge of using and interpreting the Argo data in different contexts.