

2011年11月29日受付， 2011年12月28日採録

Abstract

A profiling float has been used widely for ocean observation recent years, especially since an international program, Argo, was launched to monitor the global ocean. More than 3000 floats are now operating in the global ocean and most of them are under the Argo; thus, a profiling float is very often called an "Argo float" confusedly. The profiling float is, in brief, a device to move sensors on it vertically from depths to sea surface and to transmit data to stations on land. The profiling float was assembled from different technologies and they have been improved continuously until now. The success of Argo clarified the usefulness of observing network by numerous floats. Thus, various types of profiling floats are now required for the observations in coastal/shallow regions, under sea ice, and in deep oceans. Recent developments of sensor technology also resulted (will result) in reducing sensor size and measuring new marine parameters. Some of them are already available for floats. The profiling floats will be used in wider scenes of ocean observations near future.