



Interaction of dense shelf water cascading and open-sea convection in the Northwestern Mediterranean during winter 2012.

Xavier Durrieu de Madron (1), Loïc Houpert (1), Pere Puig (2), Anna Sanchez-Vidal (3), Pierre Testor (4), Anthony Bosse (4), Claude Estournel (5), Samuel Somot (6), François Bourrin (1), Marie-Noëlle Bouin (7), Anthony Calafat (3), Miquel Canals (3), Laurent Coppola (8), Fabrizio D'Ortenzio (8), Jordi Font (2), Serge Heussner (1), Jacobo Martin (2), Laurent Mortier (4), Albert Palanques (2), and Patrick Raimbault (9)

(1) CEFREM, CNRS-Université de Perpignan, 52 avenue Paul Alduy, 66860 Perpignan, France, (2) ICM-CSIC, Passeig Marítim de la Barceloneta, 37-49, 08003 Barcelona, Spain, (3) GRC-GM, Universitat de Barcelona, Martí i Franquès s/n, 08028 Barcelona, Spain, (4) LOCEAN/IPSL, CNRS-Université de Paris 6, 4 Place Jussieu, 75005 Paris, France, (5) LA, CNRS-Université de Toulouse, 14 avenue Edouard Belin, 31400 Toulouse, France, (6) CNRM-GAME, Météo France - CNRS, 42 avenue Coriolis, 31057 Toulouse, France, (7) CMM, Météo-France, 13 rue du Chatellier, 29604 Brest, France, (8) LOV, CNRS-Université de Paris 6, Observatoire océanographique, 06234 Villefranche/mer, France, (9) MIO, CNRS-Université de la Méditerranée, Campus de Luminy, 13288 Marseille, France

The winter of 2012 experienced peculiar atmospheric conditions that triggered a massive formation of dense water on the continental shelf and in the deep basin of the Gulf of Lions. Multi-platforms observations enabled, with an unprecedented resolution, a synoptic view of dense water formation and spreading at basin scale. Five months after its formation, the dense water of coastal origin created a distinct bottom layer up to few hundreds of meters thick over the central part of the NW Mediterranean basin, which was overlaid by a layer of newly formed deep water produced by open-sea convection. These observations highlight the role of intense episodes of both dense shelf water cascading and open-sea convection to the alteration of the characteristics of the NW Mediterranean deep waters.