

RAFOS Float Trajectories
from the Labrador Sea Water Level
in the Iceland Basin 1997–2003

A Data Inventory Compiled by:

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Third Edition

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Preface to the Third Edition

This data inventory, *RAFOS Float Trajectories from the Labrador Sea Water Level in the Iceland Basin 1997–2003*, was initially presented as an internet publication on the pages of the *Institut für Meereskunde* (IfM) at the University of Kiel, Germany. By the time the second edition was published in July 2004, the institute had become the *Leibniz Institute for Marine Sciences* (IFM-GEOMAR), and it has since been restructured again and is now the *GEOMAR | Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel*. The original websites did not survive these transitions, nor were the underlying data available from a permanent archive. To correct this situation, the data were submitted to the PANGAEA data center¹ in 2017, and this report collects the material from the original internet publications for future reference and is meant to accompany the data. Scientific analyses and further descriptions of the data, including some of the material presented here, are already available in the literature [Lankhorst and Zenk, 2006, Kanzow and Zenk, 2014].

¹<https://www.pangaea.de>

1 Abstract

The overall objective of the subproject A3 of SFB 460 (1996–2003)² was to observe the water mass transformation in the eastern basin of the subpolar gyre with direct methods including RAFOS floats. Our floats populated the 1500 m depth range of the Iceland Basin occupied by low-salinity Labrador Sea Water and higher-salinity Overflow Water. The first water mass reaches the Basin through the Charlie-Gibbs Fracture Zone. Its source region is in the Labrador Sea where it is generated on a yearly basis by deep-reaching wintertime convection. The second intermediate water mass of the eastern basin enters the region as Iceland Scotland Overflow Water with its perpetual source in the Norwegian Seas. At the southeastern margin of our region of interest remainders of Mediterranean Water mix with the other two characteristic water masses. A smaller number of floats was deployed in the lower deep water of the Iceland Basin at nominally 2600 m depth.

Data for the presented gallery of intermediate float trajectories were collected between summer 1997 and summer 2003. We have tracked 57 RAFOS floats. These neutrally buoyant in-situ drifters were launched during six research cruises. Their average underwater missions exceeded one year. The Lagrangian experiment lasted until 2003 when all four sound sources were completely recovered. The data set comprises also trajectories from float parks. These ensembles of floats enable repeated Lagrangian time series with identical initial conditions allowing estimates of the representativeness of individual trajectories.

2 The SFB RAFOS Float Program in the Iceland Basin

In 1997 the Institut für Meereskunde (later IFM-GEOMAR) started its RAFOS float program in the northern North Atlantic. It covers the region north of 50° N and east of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge up to the southern approaches to Iceland (Fig. 2). In contrast to the open boundary to the south, the deep Iceland Basin is closed to the north. The Iceland Scotland Ridge acts as a natural barrier for water mass exchanges between the open North East Atlantic and the Norwegian Sea.

On its eastern margin the upper levels of the water column host warm and salty waters from the northernmost extension of the subtropical gyre. Separated by the irregularly meandering flow of the North Atlantic Current and its Subpolar Front, the western side of the Basin is dominated by the fresher subpolar regime [Rossby et al., 2000].

Not only does one find pronounced water mass exchanges across the Subpolar Front, but also between contributing water masses at intermediate levels (1000–1800 m). The primary water mass there originates from the Labrador Sea where it has been formed convectively during previous winters. The conventional spreading picture, confirmed by a snapshot of the total CFC inventory in the subpolar gyre in the year 1997 [Rhein et al., 2002], suggests this freshly ventilated

²SFB (Sonderforschungsbereich) stands for an accelerated research initiative comprising intensive observations and modelling efforts of fluctuations in the thermohaline circulation in the subpolar gyre of the North Atlantic.

low-salinity water to enter the eastern basins through the Charlie-Gibbs Fracture Zone (Fig. 3). The latter constitutes a natural gap in the Mid-Atlantic Ridge near 53° N. Supporting results from PALACE floats underlining the choke point character of the Fracture Zone are presented by Fischer and Schott [2002].

A second source of mid-depth waters emanates from the warm and salty Mediterranean outflow in the Gulf of Cadiz. How far northward this water mass can invade the Rockall Through and the Iceland Basin still remains an open question [Bower et al., 2000]. Finally, Iceland Scotland Overflow Water at its northern end adds salt to the Labrador Sea Water layer. Further mixing components at intermediate depths arise from adjacent strata, i. e. Subpolar Mode Water from above and Lower Deep Water from below. The resulting horizontal distribution of salinity and temperature at 1500 m depth is displayed in Figure 3. The plot was drawn from hydrographic surveys taken between 1997 and 1998.

The main goal of our effort comprises the circulation and its fluctuations of water masses at the intermediate levels of the Iceland Basin. For our studies in this melting pot of water masses we have chosen conventional isobaric RAFOS floats [Zenk et al., 2000].

Our Lagrangian observations started in the summer of 1997. Three RAFOS sources were

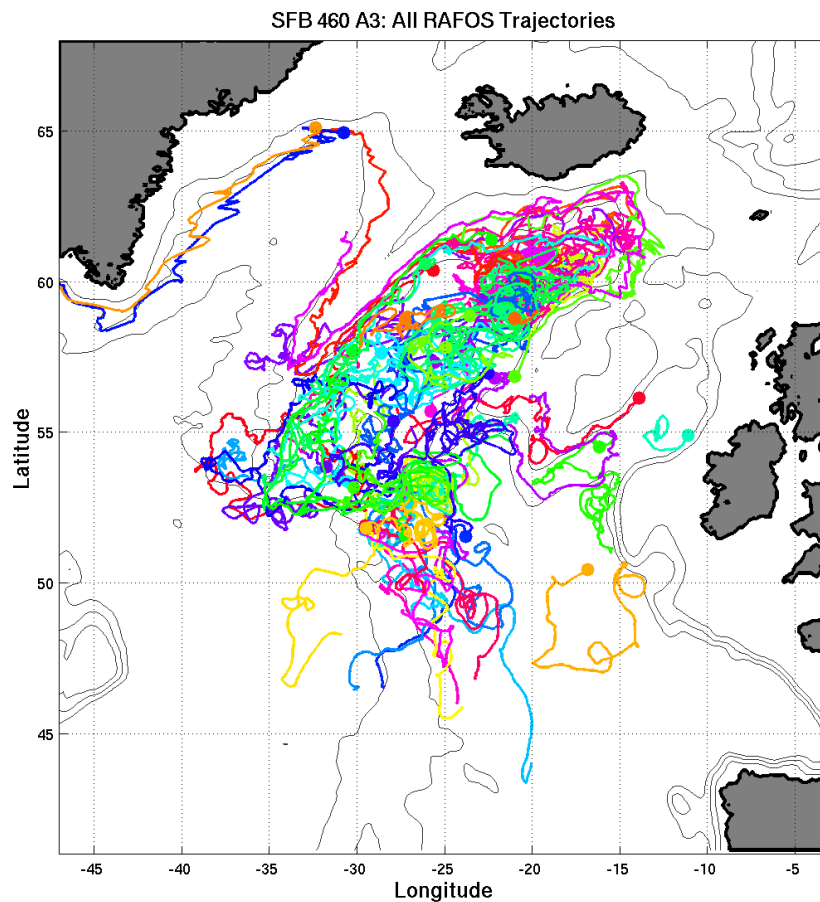


Figure 1: “Spaghetti plot” showing all trajectories superimposed.

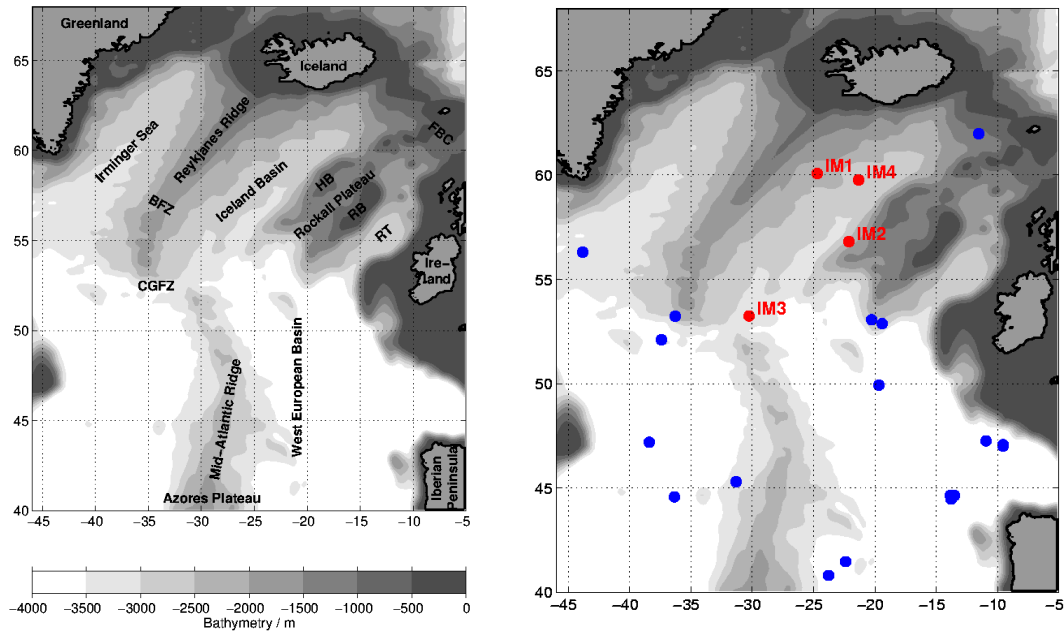


Figure 2: *Left*: Topographic chart of the Northeastern Atlantic. Abbreviations are: BFZ Bight Fracture Zone, CGFZ Charlie-Gibbs Fracture Zone, FBC Faeroe Bank Channel, HB Hatton Bank, RB Rockall Bank, RT Rockall Trough. *Right*: Positions of sound sources used for tracking the floats. Red symbols refer to sources operated by IfM Kiel as part of the SFB 460 A3. The other sources (blue, approximate positions only) belong to different institutes in France and the USA. Note that most of the sources were not in the water for the entire duration of the experiment, however, IM1-3 were.

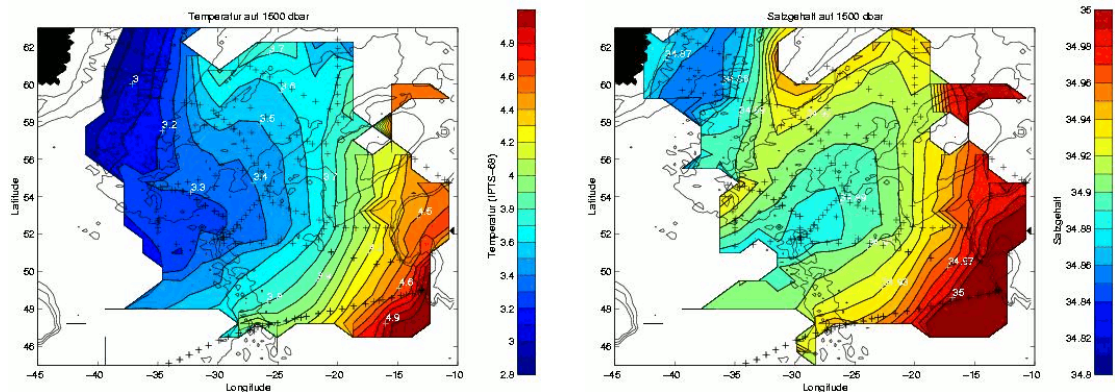


Figure 3: Horizontal temperature in $^{\circ}\text{C}$ (*left*) and salinity (*right*) distribution at the level of the Labrador Sea Water (1500 m) in the eastern basins of the North Atlantic. Note the pronounced penetration of this cold and low-salinity water mass across the Mid-Atlantic Ridge at 53°N (Charlie-Gibbs Fracture Zone). On the southeastern side the Labrador Sea Water tongue encounters warm and much more saline Mediterranean Water originating from the Gulf of Cadiz.

Table 1: Details on RAFOS sound sources supplied by IfM Kiel in the Iceland Basin.

Mooring		Signal Time	Launch Position		Launch Time	Maintenance	Recovery Time
Code	IfM No.	UTC	Latitude	Longitude	dd/mm/yyyy	dd/mm/yyyy	dd/mm/yyyy
IM1	V384	1:00	60.0733°N	24.7192°W	21.05.1997	29.06.1999	13.08.2003
IM2	V385	0:30	56.8117°N	22.1333°W	24.05.1997	none	12.08.2003
IM3	V388	1:30	53.2417°N	30.2667°W	29.05.1997	10.08.1998	09.08.2003
IM4	V432	2:00	59.7667°N	21.3067°W	11.08.2002	none	12.08.2003

Table 2: Inventory of cruises to the Iceland Basin in the frame of SFB460 of Kiel University.

Ship Cruise	Duration dd.mm. – dd.mm.yyyy	No. of floats launched	Comments
METEOR 39/2	14.05. – 08.06.1997	17	
POSEIDON 242	02.08. – 21.08.1998	20	
POSEIDON 244	14.09. – 04.10.1998	2	
METEOR 45/2	11.06. – 08.07.1999	8	
POSEIDON 261	27.06. – 17.07.2000	10	
METEOR 50/4	18.07. – 12.08.2001	8	
POSEIDON 293/1	07.07. – 14.07.2002	3	
METEOR 59/2	23.07. – 29.08.2003	0	sound source recoveries only
POSEIDON 301	09.08. – 21.08.2003	0	sound source recoveries only

moored in the central Iceland Basin (Tab. 1). The sources were part of the present internationally coordinated RAFOS array of the NE Atlantic. It dates back to 1990 when the Institut für Meereskunde in Kiel started its first RAFOS observations in the Iberian Basin [Käse and Zenk, 1996]. More information of the array’s evolution during the EUROFLOAT campaign and the other experiments like AMUSE, ARCANE etc. can be found on a web site maintained by Thierry Reynaud from Ifremer, Brest.

Jointly with similar instrumentation from the American Atlantic Circulation and Climate Experiment (ACCE), the French ARCANE project and the terminated EUROFLOAT initiative, these sound sources reflect the backbone for our eddy-resolving observations of circulation patterns at roughly 1500 m depth (Fig. 2).

At the main entrance for Labrador Sea Water east of Charlie-Gibbs Fracture Zone delayed releases by multiples of three months were arranged by the newly developed float park concept [Zenk et al., 2000]. A “park” consists of a number of dual release RAFOS floats. Their first release block keeps the instruments temporarily moored on the sea bed. The second block achieves the conventional release of a drop weight at the end of the mission.

Figs. 4 and 5 show logistical details and some integral results of our observations with floats in the Iceland Basin. Different launch events in Figs. 4 and 5 and according to Table 2 are denoted by different symbols. The shown displacement vectors connect launch and surface positions of individual floats. Note the general alignment of displacement vectors with the main axis of Maury Channel, i. e. the deep trough on the eastern side of the Iceland Basin. They seem

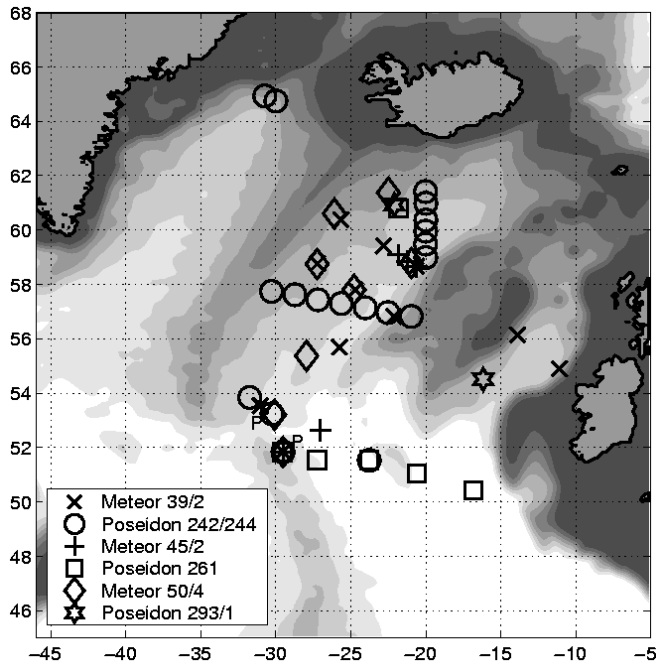


Figure 4: All launch sites of IfM RAFOS floats in the subpolar gyre of the North Atlantic. Different launch cruises are denoted by different symbols.

to be antiparallel with a preferred south-westerly direction on the eastern side of the Reykjanes Ridge. At the southern end of our area under investigation a southward export of water is suggested by the vectors. The region represents an extension of the EUROFLOAT launch sites. The study of this area was terminated in 1998. It focused on the frontal exchange at mid depth between the Mediterranean and Labrador Sea Waters in the eastern limb of the subtropical gyre [Speer et al., 1999]. The analyses of the successively available float data revealed the paramount role of the bottom topography. The Bright Fracture Zone was identified as a major export region for Overflow Water between the Iceland and Irminger Basins.

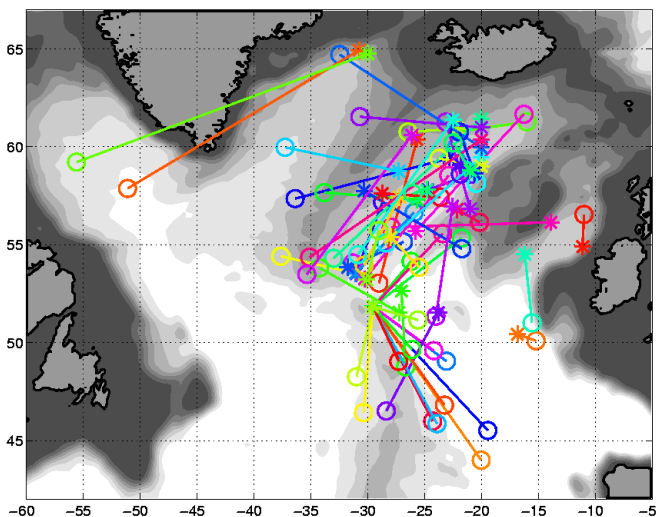


Figure 5: Displacement vectors of IfM RAFOS floats (final status: July 2004). Please note that the arrows represent drifts of different durations according to table 3 (launch-to-surface vectors).

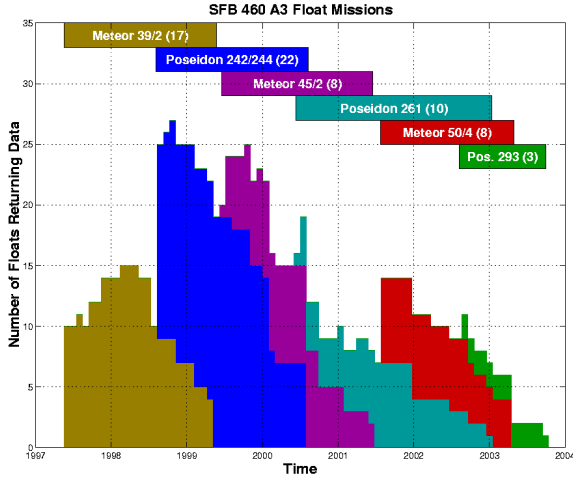


Figure 6: Step diagram of float missions color-coded by launch cruises. The numbers in the text explanations (top part) refer to the total numbers of floats launched, while the plot shows only instruments that returned trajectory data. Note how the latter increases due to parked floats after the ships’ visits, e.g. in the winter of 1997/98 for the M39/2 floats.

3 Instrumentation, Implementation, Performance

With the beginning of the SFB project the IfM float group changed its strategy. Until early 1997 we had built and ballasted all RAFOS floats ourselves. Originally the design had been imported from the University of Rhode Island [URI, Rossby et al., 1986]. Due to various reasons we switched to commercial float sources.

We bought floats from SeaScan, Inc., Falmouth, MA, USA. This manufacturer had built the official WOCE float, a derivative of the original design from URI. During our experiment SeaScan introduced a newly designed RAFOS circuit with a number of individual electronic modules. This design called DLD2 is supposed to be more flexible for adaptation to customers’ demands. During the SFB project we have closely cooperated with SeaScan resulting in the field-tested low-cost dual release float [Zenk et al., 2000]. For further information on the WOCE float type the reader is referred to the literature [Rossby et al., 1986, Boebel et al., 1999, Hunt et al., 1998]. Table 3 contains columns indicating the different float types that operated in the Iceland Basin project of SFB 460.

Table 3 contains summaries of launch and surface data. It also displays nominal depths. The vast majority of floats were ballasted for the level of the Labrador Sea Water (1500 m). Only a minority of floats were tuned for greater depths (2600 m) in order to take Lagrangian records of the Iceland Scotland Overflow Water in the Maury Channel.

In total, 68 floats were launched. 29 instruments surfaced on time, eight did not show up, one float as deaf. Although RAFOS floats are true expendable instruments, a few floats were recovered with a great deal of chance and luck. They are especially marked in Table 3. They partly were recycled, renumbered and were again on mission after July 2000. It was of greater interest to the manufacturer to inspect his instruments after year-long successful missions in the Iceland Basin. Technical improvements could be inferred from returned floats.

Temperature and pressure records are based exclusively on the manufacturer’s calibration data. In case of temperature we have to rely on standard curves supplied by Yellow Springs Instrument Company. We estimate their intrinsic accuracy to be of $O(\pm 0.1)^\circ\text{C}$. Pressure sensors

by Data Instruments as used in WOCE type floats are calibrated to $\pm 1\%$ at 2000 psi [Hunt et al., 1998]. The new DLD2 type applies pressure sensors by Druck Corporation with improved accuracies. In respect to tracking errors we refer to Richardson and Wooding [1999] who used comparable instruments. They estimate a random error of circa 8 km in radial directions which “is probably smaller than this”. A systematic distance error of $O(4 \pm 1.4)$ km was calculated as a more likely number.

Table 3: Mission parameters.

Float ID	Start Time	Start Position	End Time	End Position	Mission Length (d)	Mission Delay (d)	Target Pressure (dbar)	Comments
301	2000/07/11	60.785°N 21.822°W	2002/01/01	61.273°N 16.006°W	540		1500	Recycled, ex 404. T and p sensors uncalibrated.
302	2000/06/29	50.424°N 16.831°W	2001/12/16	50.091°N 15.196°W	536		1500	Recycled, ex 405. T and p sensors uncalibrated. Returned 4 days too early (low batt.).
303	2000/09/30	51.825°N 29.553°W	2002/03/23	45.511°N 19.434°W	540	90	1500	Recycled, ex 412. T and p sensors uncalibrated. No sound signals heard, no trajectory calculated.
304	2000/12/29	51.828°N 29.542°W	2002/06/21	43.994°N 20.010°W	540	180	1500	Recycled, ex 413. T and p sensors uncalibrated.
305	2001/03/28	51.830°N 29.529°W	2002/09/18	54.144°N 26.176°W	540	270	1500	Recycled, ex 414. T and p sensors uncalibrated.
306	2001/06/26	51.831°N 29.514°W	2002/12/17	45.993°N 24.275°W	540	360	1500	Recycled, ex 416. T and p sensors uncalibrated.
307	2002/08/09	54.504°N 16.178°W	2003/09/30	51.007°N 15.550°W	418		1500	Parts recycled from 477.
308	2002/08/12	60.928°N 22.098°W	2003/09/30	60.754°N 26.448°W	415		1500	Parts recycled from 480.
309	2002/08/13	61.608°N 22.805°W					1500	Parts recycled from 501 (Clivar/MOVE project). Instrument lost.
401	1997/05/25	53.531°N 31.027°W	1998/07/18	57.175°N 28.685°W	420		1500	
402	1997/05/25	51.846°N 29.534°W	1999/05/14	49.049°N 23.076°W	720		1500	
403	1997/05/18	54.898°N 11.097°W	1998/05/12	56.543°N 10.983°W	360		1500	Sound signals temporarily not heard (blocked by topography), gaps in trajectory.
404	1997/05/22	57.795°N 24.707°W	1998/05/16	58.606°N 20.871°W	360		1500	Recovered and recycled to 301.
405	1997/05/19	58.667°N 20.640°W	1998/08/11	60.017°N 22.134°W	450		1500	Recovered and recycled to 302.
406	1997/05/22	58.762°N 27.230°W					1500	Instrument lost.
407	1997/05/21	60.380°N 25.657°W	1998/11/11	53.033°N 29.003°W	540		1500	
408	1997/05/18	56.143°N 13.895°W	1998/11/08	55.890°N 27.922°W	540		1500	
409	1997/05/23	56.807°N 22.138°W	1999/02/11	56.141°N 20.155°W	630		1500	

Table 3: Mission parameters.

Float ID	Start Time	Start Position	End Time	End Position	Mission Length (d)	Mission Delay (d)	Target Pressure (dbar)	Comments
410	1997/05/23	55.692°N 25.763°W	1999/02/11	61.659°N 16.261°W	630		1500	
411	1997/05/20	59.410°N 22.822°W	1999/05/09	57.352°N 36.361°W	720		1500	
412	1997/07/27	53.539°N 31.043°W	1998/07/21	54.406°N 37.623°W	360	60	1500	Recovered and recycled to 303.
413	1997/09/25	53.532°N 31.036°W	1998/07/21	54.067°N 31.296°W	300	120	1500	Recovered and recycled to 304.
414	1997/11/24	53.532°N 31.036°W	1998/07/21	56.640°N 25.915°W	240	180	1500	Recovered and recycled to 305.
415	1997/09/01	51.835°N 29.523°W	1999/05/23	55.333°N 21.743°W	630	90	1500	
416	1997/11/29	51.836°N 29.523°W	1999/05/22	55.564°N 23.390°W	540	180	1500	Recovered and recycled to 306.
417	1998/02/20	51.838°N 29.527°W	1999/04/05	49.587°N 24.184°W	410	270	1500	Returned 40 days too early (low batt.).
462	1998/08/07	51.835°N 29.522°W					1500	Instrument lost.
463	1998/08/11	53.841°N 31.741°W	2000/02/01	55.142°N 26.844°W	540		1500	
464	1998/08/11	53.241°N 30.262°W	2000/02/01	58.530°N 22.872°W	540		1500	
465	1998/08/16	57.300°N 25.635°W	2000/02/06	57.654°N 33.819°W	540		1500	
466	1998/08/16	57.137°N 24.031°W					1500	Instrument lost.
467	1998/08/18	59.484°N 20.019°W	2000/02/08	58.143°N 20.436°W	540		1500	
468	1998/08/19	61.414°N 20.021°W	2000/02/09	54.307°N 32.988°W	540		1500	
469	1998/08/13	57.744°N 30.290°W	1999/11/05	54.791°N 21.718°W	450		1500	
472	1998/08/16	56.823°N 20.973°W	1999/11/08	61.263°N 23.112°W	450		1500	
473	1998/08/15	57.619°N 28.727°W	2000/08/03	57.417°N 23.593°W	720		1500	
474	1998/08/15	57.433°N 27.192°W	2000/08/03	53.951°N 30.292°W	720		1500	Argos ID temporarily deactivated, re-activated 7 days after returning time. No data lost.
475	1998/08/17	58.990°N 20.003°W	2000/08/05	59.403°N 23.718°W	720		1500	
476	1998/08/18	59.958°N 20.014°W	2000/08/06	64.705°N 32.443°W	720		1500	
477	1998/08/18	60.368°N 20.002°W	2000/08/06	54.356°N 35.099°W	720		1500	Status byte 'low batt.', no data missing. Recovered and recycled to 307.
478	1998/08/18	60.985°N 19.999°W	2000/08/06	61.535°N 30.680°W	720		1500	

Table 3: Mission parameters.

Float ID	Start Time	Start Position	End Time	End Position	Mission Length (d)	Mission Delay (d)	Target Pressure (dbar)	Comments
479	1998/08/20	64.934°N 30.741°W	2000/08/08	57.871°N 51.086°W	720		1500	Mission programming (start time) erroneous, Argos ID temporarily deactivated, re-activated 3 days after returning time. No data lost. Gaps in trajectory due to distance to sound sources.
480	1998/08/16	56.966°N 22.535°W	2000/02/06	51.344°N 23.994°W	540		1500	Recovered and recycled to 308.
481	1998/08/15	51.531°N 23.771°W	1999/10/28	46.504°N 28.358°W	440		1500	
482	1998/08/20	64.750°N 30.000°W	1999/08/14	59.219°N 55.574°W	360		1500	Mission programming (start time) erroneous, no data lost. Gaps in trajectory due to distance to sound sources.
483	1998/10/06	51.835°N 29.520°W	1999/12/29	46.424°N 30.357°W	450	60	1500	
484	1998/12/05	51.836°N 29.518°W	2000/02/27	48.253°N 30.975°W	450	120	1500	
485	1999/02/03	51.835°N 29.522°W				180	1500	Instrument lost.
486	1999/06/25	52.634°N 27.023°W	2000/09/16	48.761°N 26.658°W	450		2600	Pressure sensor erroneous.
487	1999/06/28	58.654°N 20.608°W	2001/06/16	60.753°N 21.927°W	720		2600	Minor gaps in trajectory (grounded, poor sound signals)
488	1999/06/28	58.857°N 21.222°W	2001/06/16	55.091°N 28.380°W	720		2600	Minor gaps in trajectory (grounded, poor sound signals)
489	1999/06/28	59.078°N 21.836°W	2000/10/01	58.609°N 21.855°W	462		2600	Returned 138 days early ('high pressure'). Pressure sensor error?
490	1999/06/20	51.834°N 29.517°W	2001/02/08	46.808°N 23.247°W	600		1500	Pressure sensor erroneous.
491	1999/08/19	51.834°N 29.518°W	2001/02/08	45.858°N 23.898°W	540	60	1500	Pressure sensor erroneous.
492	1999/10/18	51.835°N 29.518°W	2001/06/08	49.042°N 27.266°W	600	120	1500	Pressure sensor erroneous.
493	1999/12/17	51.835°N 29.519°W	2000/09/24	49.650°N 26.107°W	283	180	1500	Returned 257 days early ('high pressure'). Pressure sensor error?
513	2000/06/30	51.049°N 20.579°W					1500	Instrument lost. (Corrosion problem vacuum valve?)
514	2000/07/01	51.540°N 23.763°W					1500	Instrument lost. (Corrosion problem vacuum valve?)
515	2000/07/02	51.536°N 27.241°W	2003/01/15	53.814°N 34.220°W	928		1500	Returned 2 days early ('high pressure', corrosion problem vacuum valve?). 'Clock address failure'-bit set. Still: longest successful record!

Table 3: Mission parameters.

Float ID	Start Time	Start Position	End Time	End Position	Mission Length (d)	Mission Delay (d)	Target Pressure (dbar)	Comments
516	2000/07/03	51.825°N 29.553°W	2001/12/24	51.156°N 25.576°W	540		1500	'Clock address failure'-bit set, no data missing.
532	2001/07/15	58.783°N 20.967°W	2003/04/29	60.195°N 22.486°W	654		2600	Temporarily grounded, sound signals poorly received.
533	2001/07/15	57.800°N 24.793°W	2003/04/29	57.608°N 26.026°W	654		2600	Temporarily grounded, sound signals poorly received.
534	2001/07/15	61.371°N 22.493°W	2002/09/29	54.490°N 30.854°W	442		1500	
535	2001/07/15	55.372°N 27.951°W	2003/04/29	53.843°N 25.486°W	654		2600	
536	2001/07/23	60.601°N 26.102°W	2002/10/07	53.486°N 35.342°W	442		1500	
537	2001/07/23	58.748°N 27.250°W	2002/10/07	59.973°N 37.249°W	442		1500	Sound signals poorly received (blocked by topography).
538	2001/07/15	53.204°N 30.084°W	2003/04/29	55.722°N 29.013°W	654		2600	
539	2001/07/15	52.059°N 29.663°W					2600	Instrument lost.

4 Results

Fig. 7 displays all trajectories of the SFB program that we collected from its subprogram A3. One has to add a few PALACE trajectories [Fischer and Schott, 2002] to obtain the complete set from IfM Kiel. The colour spaghetti plot contains all float identification numbers according to Table 3. The subsequent float track gallery provides graphical information on displacements in two-daily resolution together with time series of the observed zonal (U) and meridional (V) current components and of pressure and temperature records.

Table 4: Basic statistics inferred from float trajectories.

Float ID	Pressure [dbar]			Temperature [°C]			Horizontal Velocity [cm/s]			Mission Length [d]	Displacement [km]	Displacement Velocity [cm/s]
	Mean	Min.	Max.	Mean	Min.	Max.	Mean	Min.	Max.			
301	1977.0	1739.1	2014.2	3.754	3.488	3.961	10.16	0.04	33.50	540	319.0	0.68
302	1502.0	1419.6	1563.6	4.572	4.124	5.682	4.66	0.09	12.53	536	122.3	0.26
303										540	1022.2	2.19
304	1628.3	1603.8	1784.0	3.596	3.380	3.974	4.20	0.28	9.83	540	1123.4	2.41
305	1528.3	1518.1	1539.3	3.858	3.668	4.025	5.92	0.12	19.21	540	342.0	0.73
306	1522.1	1508.6	1535.1	3.850	3.608	4.136	3.28	0.10	9.33	540	753.8	1.62
307	1605.6	1580.3	1622.3	3.879	3.443	4.186	7.21	0.30	22.57	418	391.4	1.08
308	1579.8	1481.9	1613.9	3.575	2.455	4.090	10.31	0.33	40.36	415	237.3	0.66
309												

Table 4: Basic statistics inferred from float trajectories.

Float ID	Pressure [dbar]			Temperature [°C]			Horizontal Velocity [cm/s]			Mission Length [d]	Displacement [km]	Displacement Velocity [cm/s]
	Mean	Min.	Max.	Mean	Min.	Max.	Mean	Min.	Max.			
401	1450.1	1429.6	1464.1	3.032	2.935	3.149	5.27	0.32	17.60	420	431.9	1.19
402	1461.0	1444.0	1473.8	3.879	3.441	4.362	3.55	0.08	13.48	720	553.9	0.89
403	1472.2	1444.4	1503.8	4.912	4.090	5.715	2.46	0.67	18.16	360	183.3	0.59
404	1483.5	1473.6	1496.9	3.783	3.595	4.159	9.89	0.29	49.46	360	242.9	0.78
405	1493.5	1483.7	1511.3	4.020	3.683	4.528	7.90	0.38	29.90	450	172.8	0.44
406												
407	1462.1	1449.8	1475.9	3.344	3.075	3.699	6.96	0.19	30.91	540	843.1	1.81
408	1374.0	1245.4	1454.3	4.283	3.395	5.657	5.37	0.08	21.08	540	873.8	1.87
409	1481.2	1466.0	1499.4	3.849	3.419	4.369	5.22	0.17	22.43	630	142.9	0.26
410	1455.5	1442.2	1484.1	3.894	3.503	5.018	9.14	0.23	45.56	630	861.8	1.58
411	1527.6	1371.8	1557.4	3.515	3.182	3.882	5.05	0.08	23.13	720	823.0	1.32
412	1507.2	1495.4	1518.9	3.246	3.122	3.361	4.88	0.17	18.10	360	442.2	1.42
413	1506.7	1496.6	1514.5	3.276	3.217	3.424	4.17	0.32	11.32	300	61.9	0.24
414	1551.4	1537.8	1567.6	3.484	3.369	3.746	5.93	0.17	24.92	240	475.8	2.29
415	1466.4	1442.0	1486.9	3.539	3.327	3.963	5.81	0.13	24.58	630	645.2	1.19
416	1527.2	1510.8	1537.3	3.524	3.290	3.691	5.33	0.35	19.33	540	579.4	1.24
417	1530.3	1510.4	1556.7	3.873	3.517	4.162	4.48	0.22	19.39	410	452.7	1.28
462												
463	1517.5	1412.0	1575.2	3.184	3.056	3.415	8.06	0.38	27.67	540	348.7	0.75
464	1530.6	1511.7	1555.1	3.244	3.073	3.770	6.42	0.07	26.49	540	747.9	1.60
465	1559.1	1392.9	1601.7	3.485	3.148	3.824	10.39	0.17	34.58	540	492.2	1.06
466												
467	1554.5	1539.0	1573.5	3.866	3.573	4.186	6.85	0.50	24.99	540	151.3	0.32
468	1467.8	1372.4	1537.1	3.800	2.994	4.394	9.34	0.08	62.07	540	1100.3	2.36
469	1490.8	1459.5	1528.0	3.406	3.258	3.697	7.85	0.39	27.56	450	624.0	1.61
472	1454.5	1291.0	1507.5	3.934	2.086	4.664	8.65	0.08	67.81	450	509.5	1.31
473	1560.5	1547.1	1583.9	3.584	3.385	3.899	7.21	0.18	24.64	720	308.4	0.50
474	1485.5	1457.7	1533.1	3.355	3.159	3.636	6.16	0.36	44.33	720	433.8	0.70
475	1467.7	1297.1	1586.7	3.929	3.393	4.538	9.12	0.45	28.44	720	217.2	0.35
476	1483.7	1361.5	1573.2	3.703	3.408	4.155	7.23	0.04	29.93	720	831.2	1.34
477	1507.4	1454.6	1561.5	3.576	3.326	3.962	6.86	0.15	24.21	720	1124.3	1.81
478	1451.7	1284.1	1543.2	3.666	2.472	4.479	8.00	0.08	44.96	720	575.8	0.93
479	1599.4	1384.1	1627.5	3.074	0.927	3.720	9.90	0.25	60.12	720	1332.2	2.14
480	1600.1	1583.1	1613.1	3.390	3.217	3.678	5.67	0.23	20.79	540	633.0	1.36
481	1672.0	1649.2	1706.8	3.444	3.310	3.700	2.57	0.11	7.30	440	651.7	1.71
482										360	1462.3	4.70
483	1528.1	1505.8	1542.1	3.510	3.205	3.736	4.03	0.10	12.71	450	604.9	1.56
484	1588.5	1575.1	1598.3	3.349	3.141	3.576	4.22	0.09	14.59	450	411.9	1.06

Table 4: Basic statistics inferred from float trajectories.

Float ID	Pressure [dbar] Mean Min. Max.	Temperature [°C] Mean Min. Max.	Horizontal Velocity [cm/s] Mean Min. Max.	Mission Length [d]	Displacement [km]	Displacement Velocity [cm/s]
485						
486	2590.0 2463.7 2866.9	3.100 3.003 3.190	3.95 0.21 36.63	450	431.6	1.11
487	2567.6 2299.4 2846.9	2.951 2.267 3.269	11.21 0.29 44.46	720	245.3	0.39
488	2546.8 2168.8 2746.2	2.876 2.398 3.207	6.98 0.05 29.41	720	603.9	0.97
489	2605.6 2496.2 2988.0	2.904 2.420 3.152	11.89 0.54 35.81	462	52.2	0.13
490	1518.3 1492.2 1560.6	3.672 3.238 4.367	4.39 0.19 10.23	600	720.8	1.39
491	1548.3 1501.8 1695.6	3.642 3.164 4.166	3.74 0.15 10.26	540	781.7	1.68
492	1692.1 1624.0 1859.1	3.433 3.187 3.727	3.71 0.10 11.75	600	349.4	0.67
493	1754.0 1637.9 1994.7	3.418 3.228 3.668	3.96 0.23 8.93	283	342.1	1.40
513						
514						
515	1697.7 1476.8 1969.8	3.210 3.109 3.484	4.44 0.04 18.24	928	535.5	0.67
516	1602.8 1582.0 1619.8	3.408 3.211 3.646	5.02 0.14 14.67	540	286.0	0.61
532	2590.0 2359.7 2769.2	2.575 2.294 2.883	0.67 0.00 9.35	654	179.3	0.32
533	2717.8 2438.2 2779.6	2.719 2.492 3.049	3.56 0.26 33.18	654	76.6	0.14
534	1599.5 1566.3 1621.5	3.321 3.120 3.646	6.84 0.61 24.34	442	911.0	2.39
535	2644.7 2593.0 2670.2	2.920 2.739 3.095	5.49 0.12 22.65	654	233.1	0.41
536	1578.2 1552.4 1595.2	3.408 3.187 3.648	6.03 0.45 22.13	442	968.8	2.54
537	1552.2 1537.5 1565.5	3.502 3.343 3.734	6.61 0.29 21.65	442	584.2	1.53
538	2728.7 2688.3 2746.0	2.933 2.785 3.056	5.17 0.11 33.26	654	288.7	0.51
539						

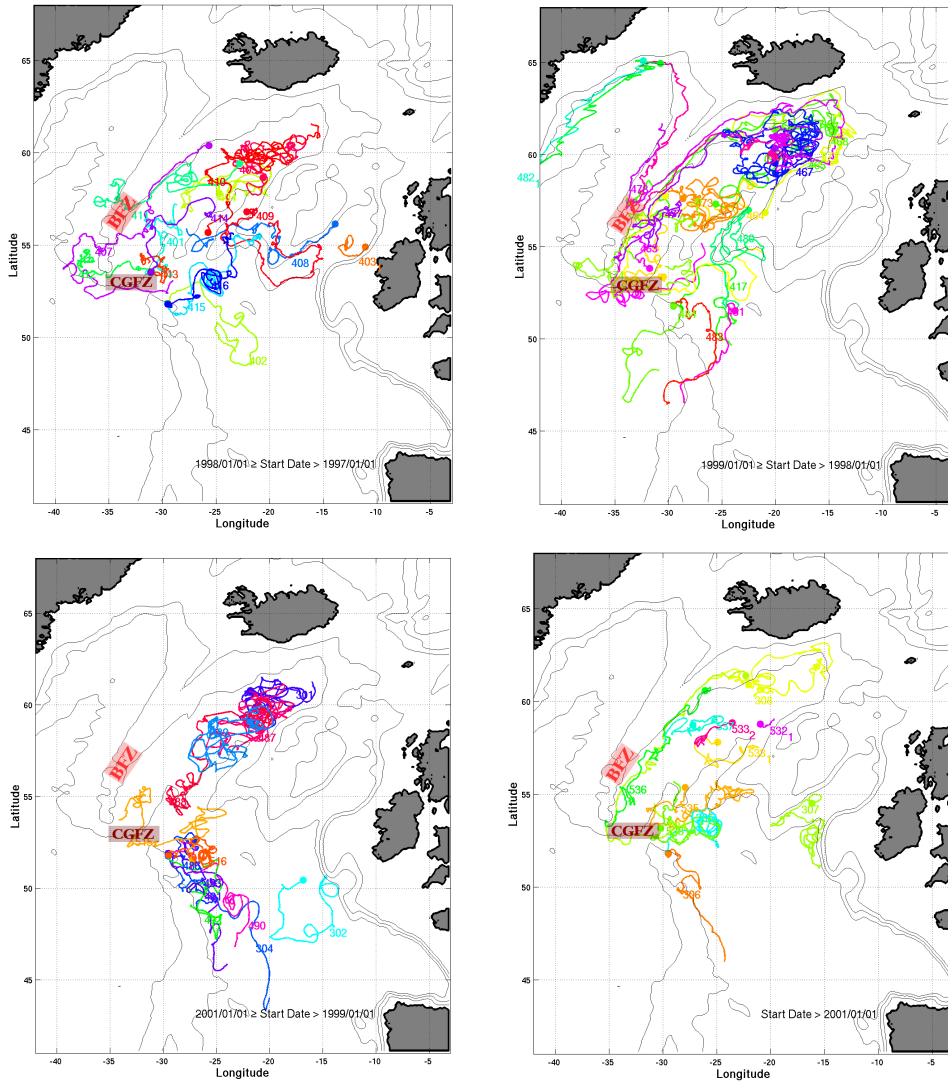
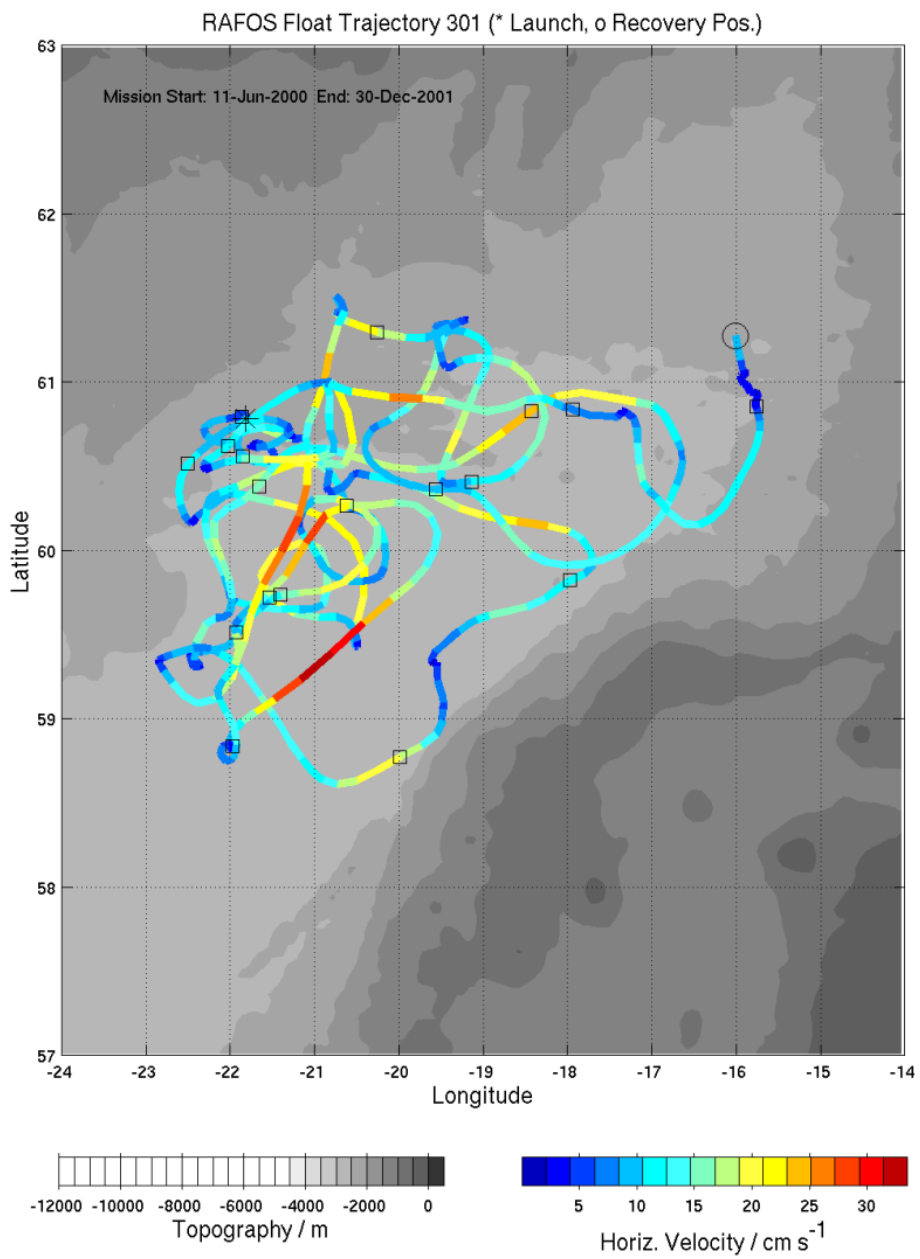
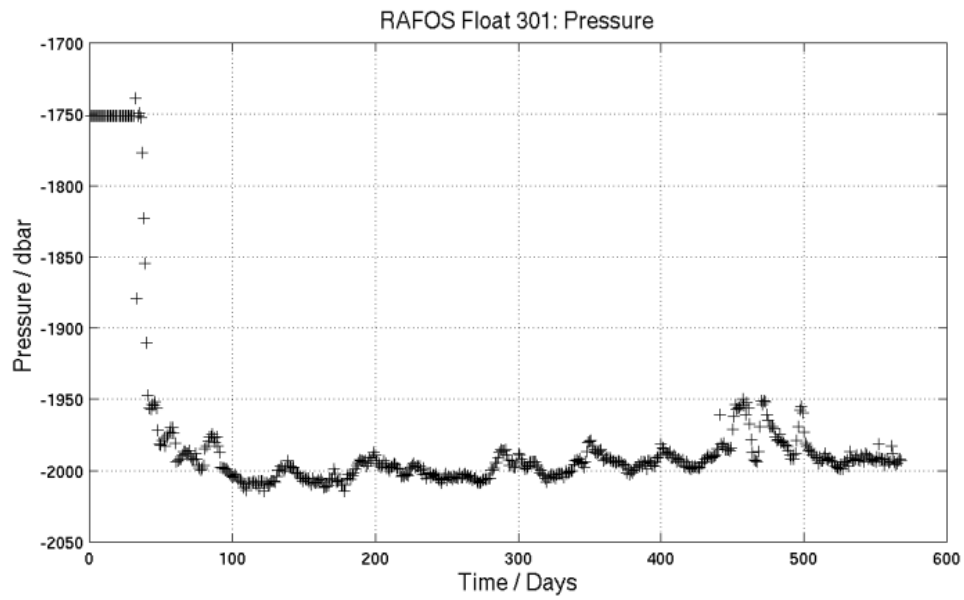
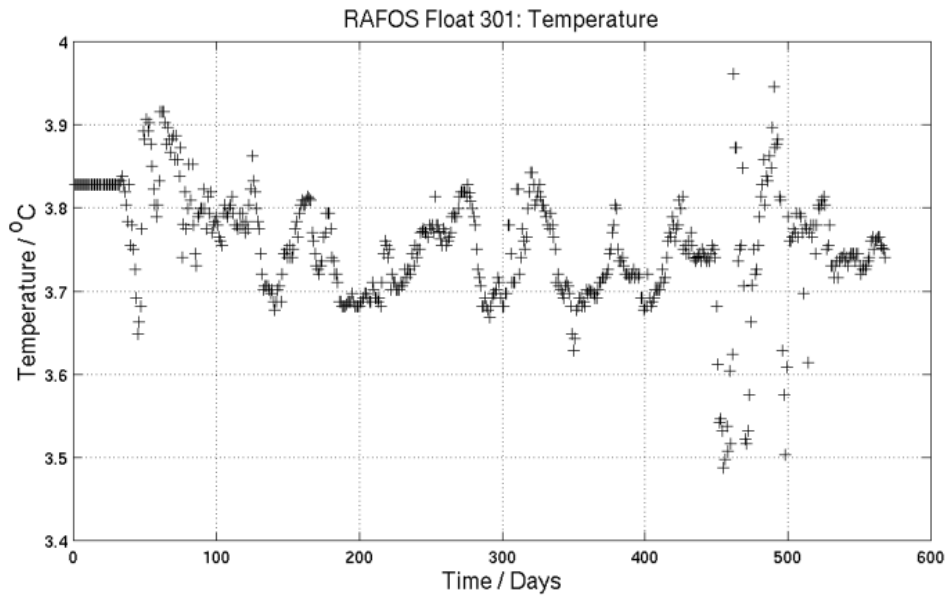
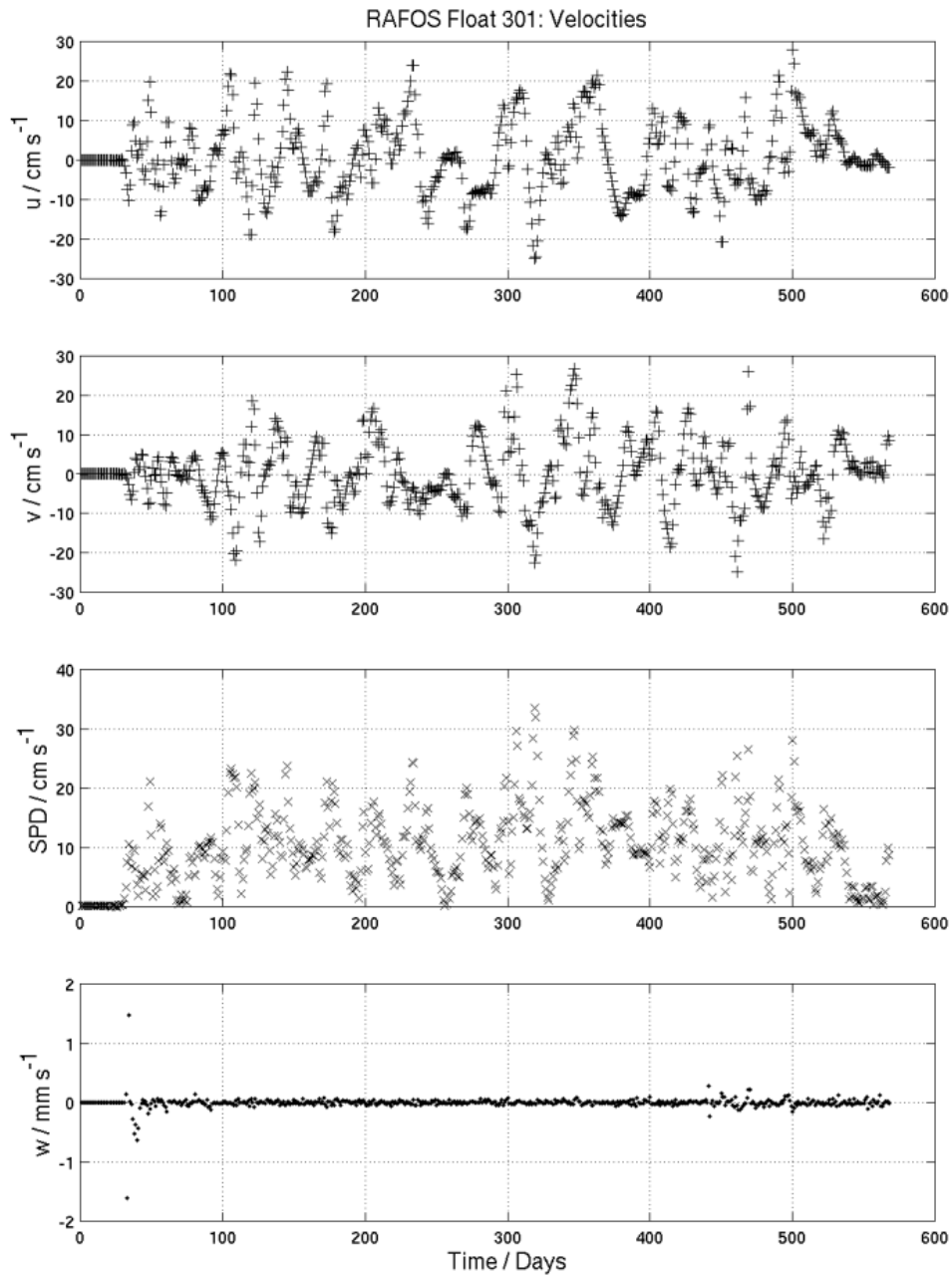


Figure 7: Trajectories from all RAFOS floats of SFB 460 A3. Float ID numbers are indicated in the plots. The original internet presentation allowed the user to click on the plots to view data from individual floats. This function is now provided inside the PANGAEA data portal. Launch positions are indicated by big dots, bathymetry by lines at depths of 1000, 2000, and 3000 m.

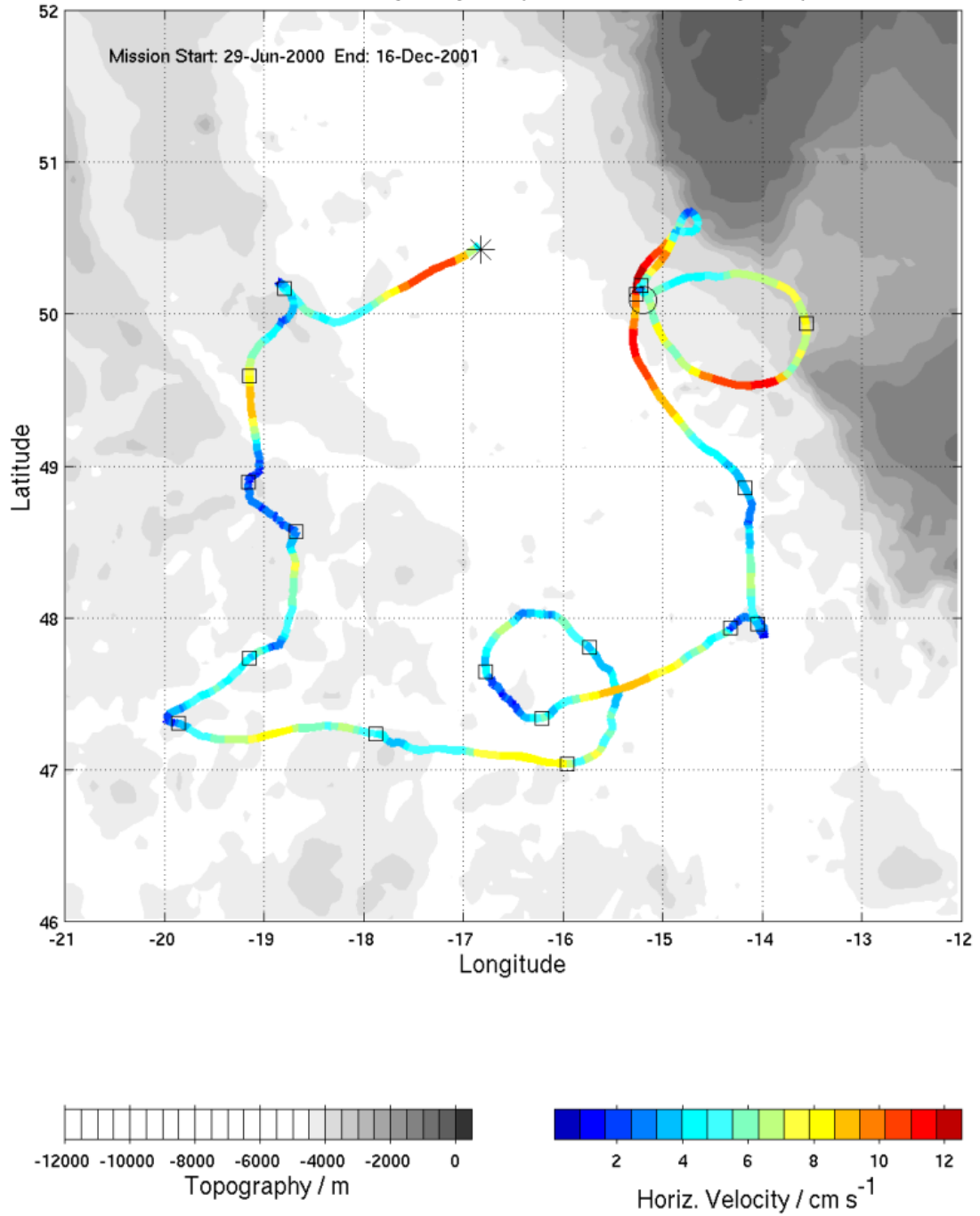
5 Data Plots from Individual Floats

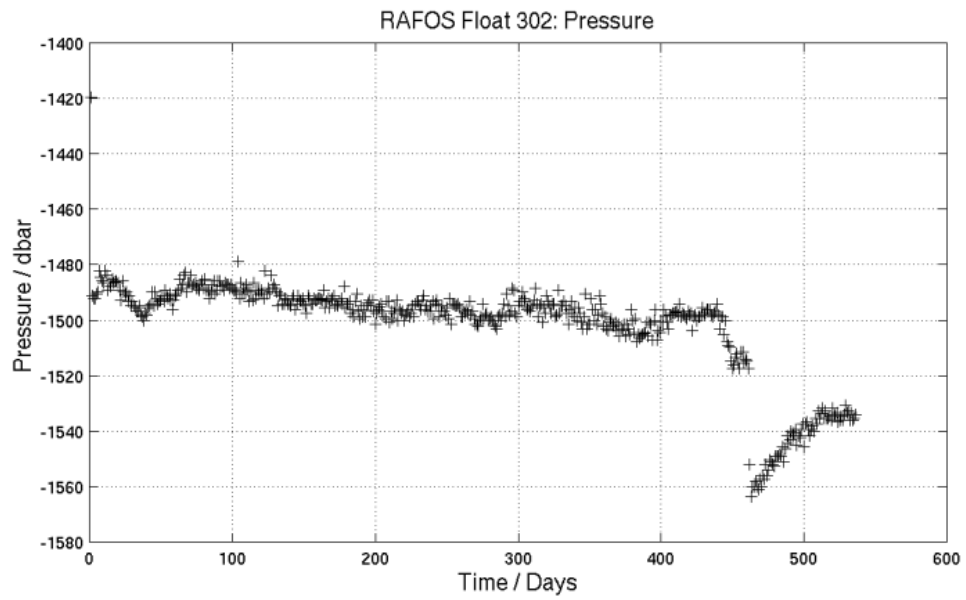
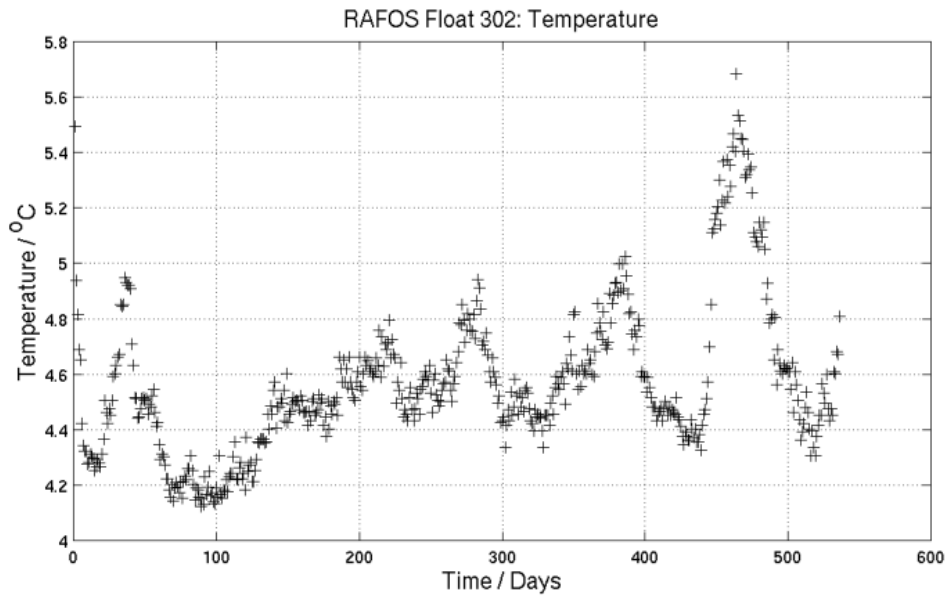


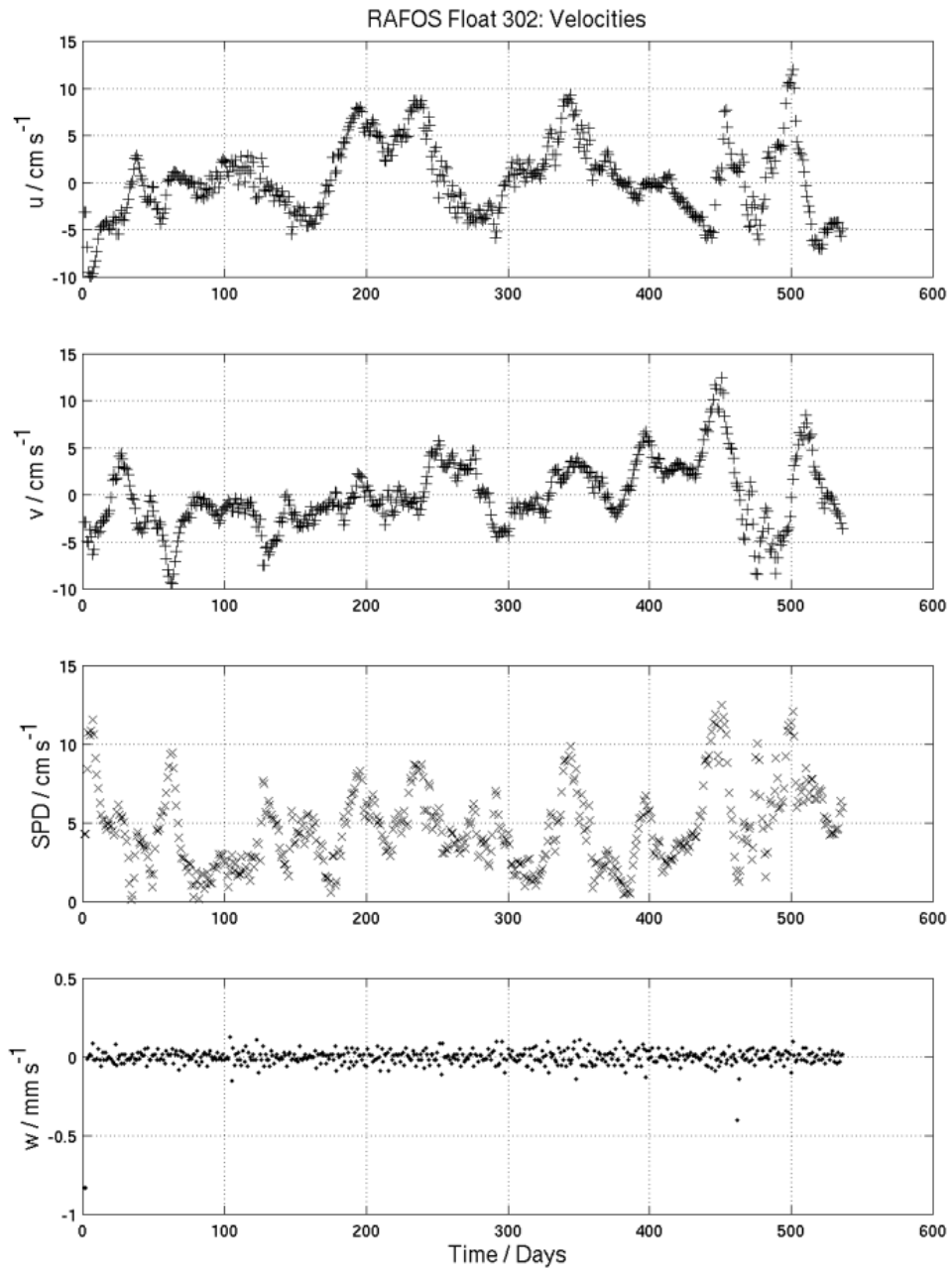




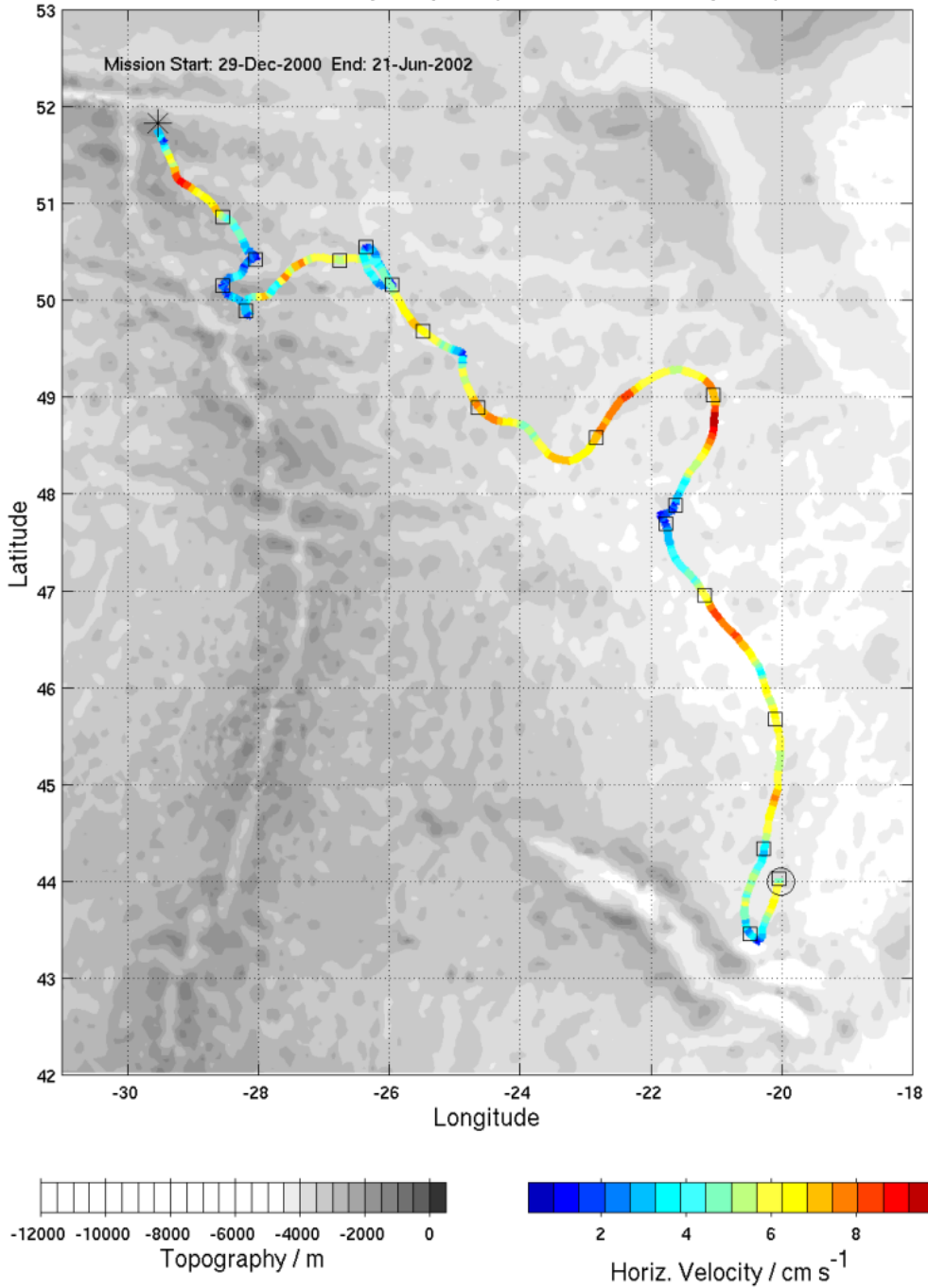
RAFOS Float Trajectory 302 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)

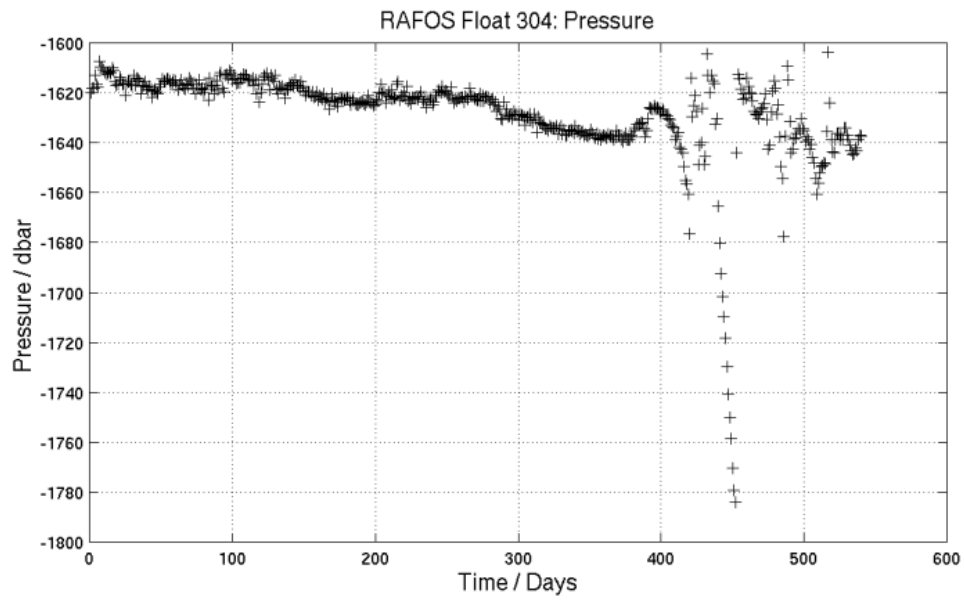
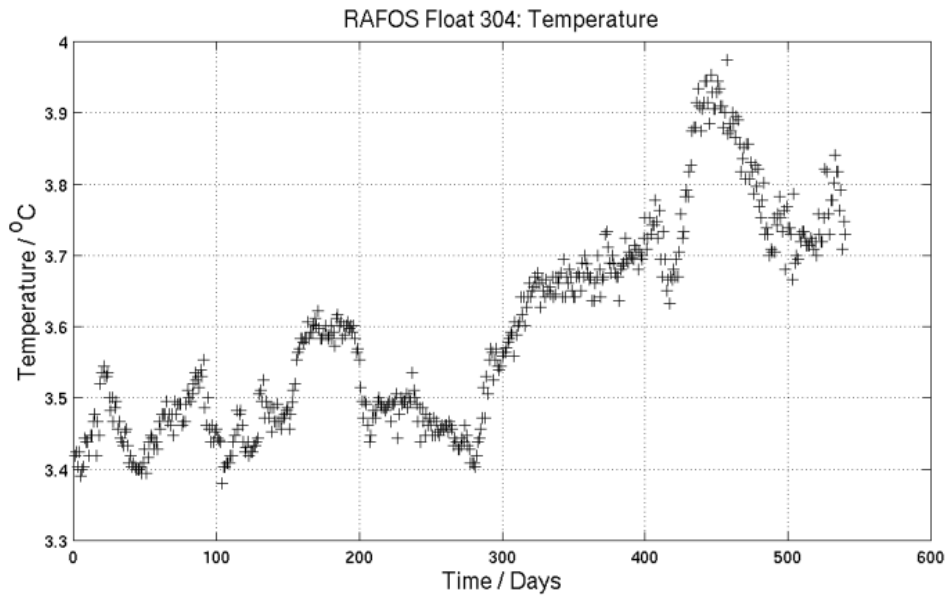




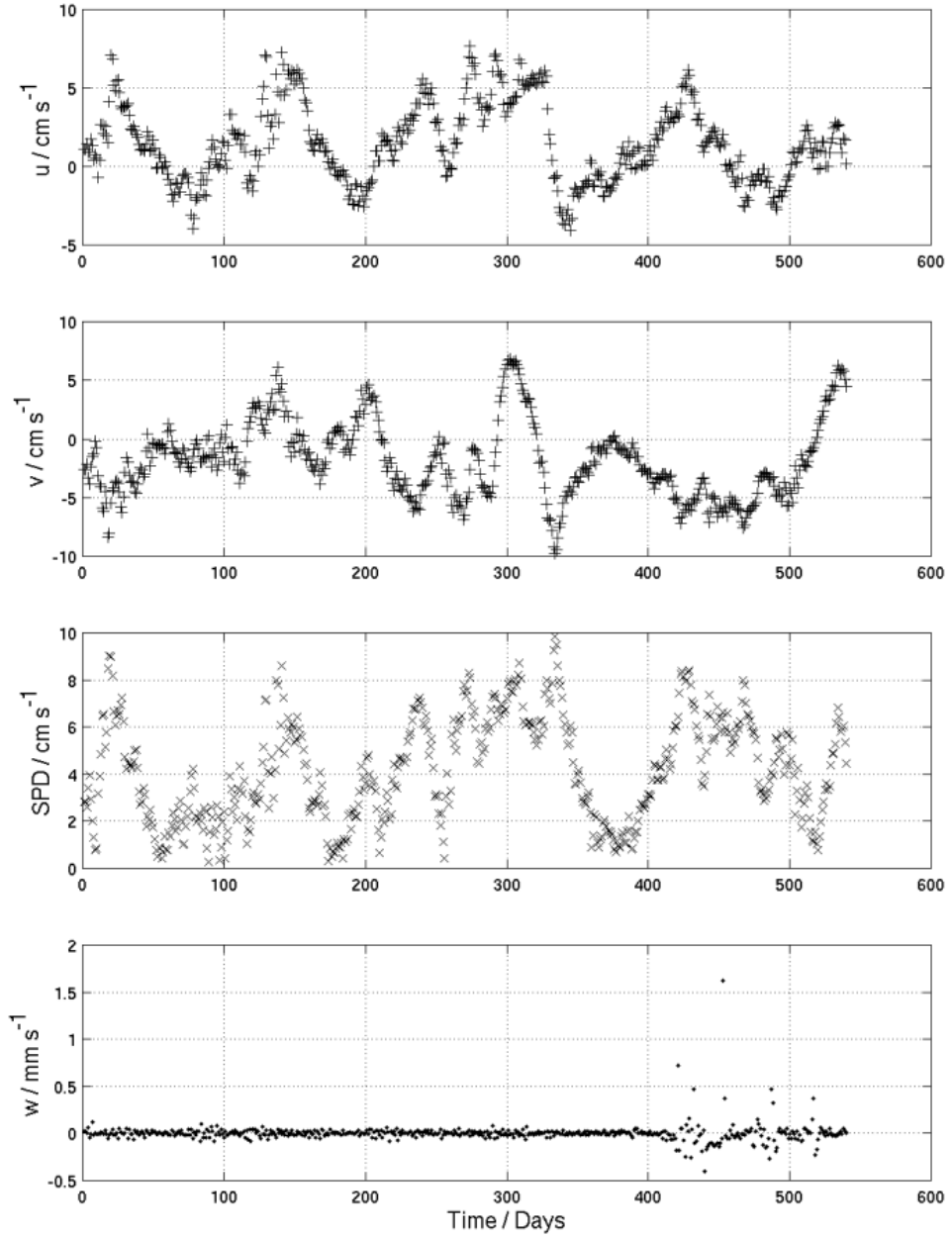


RAFOS Float Trajectory 304 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)

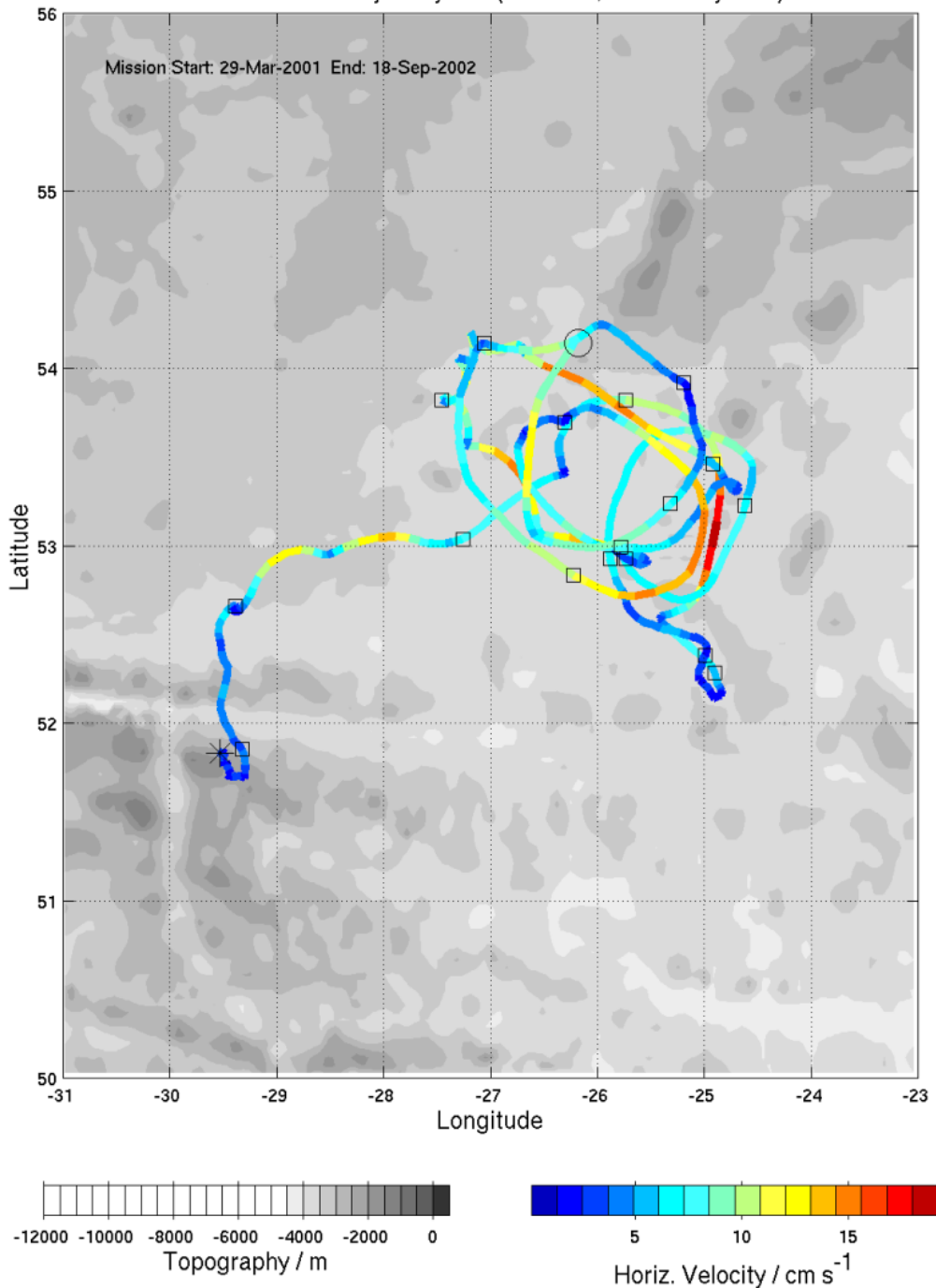


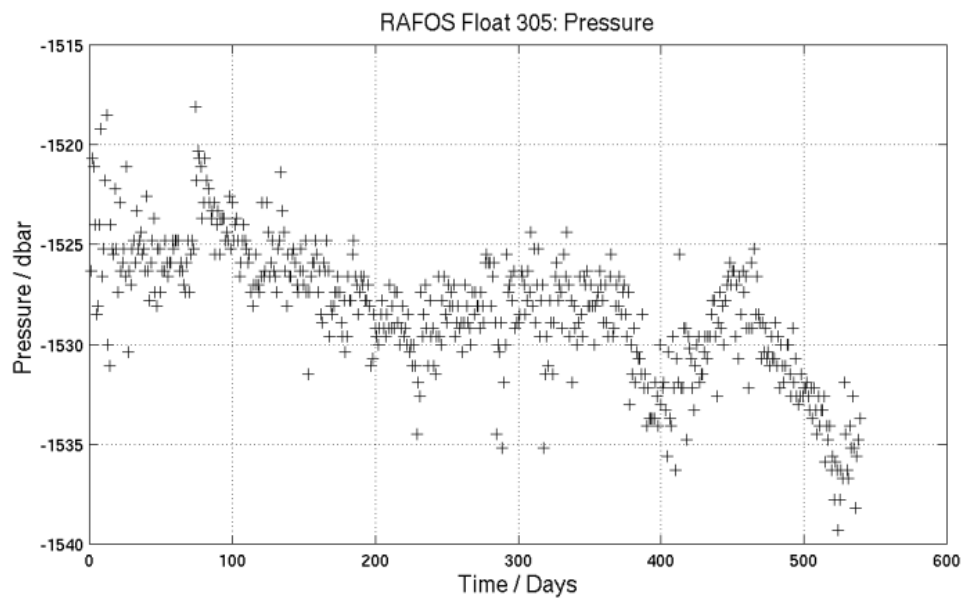
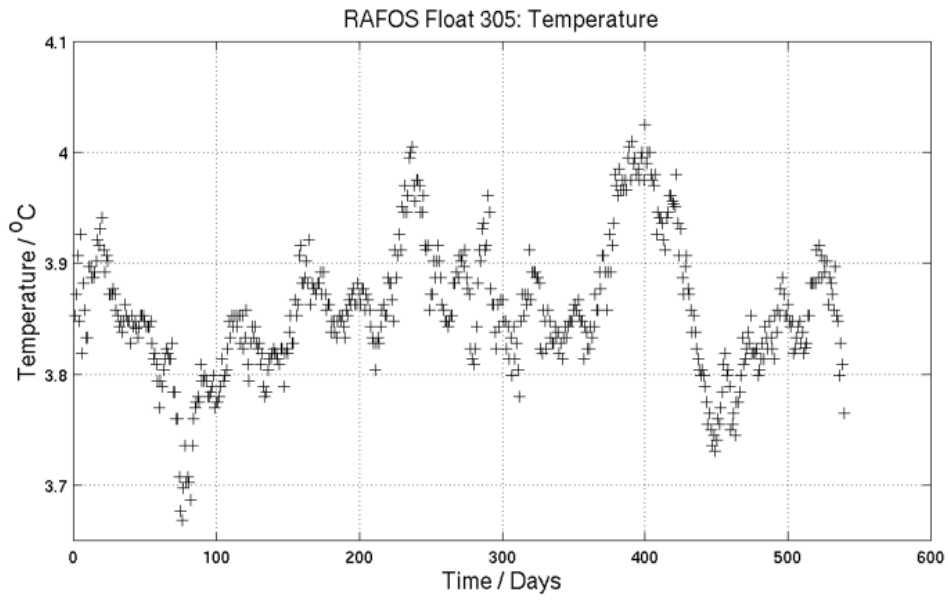


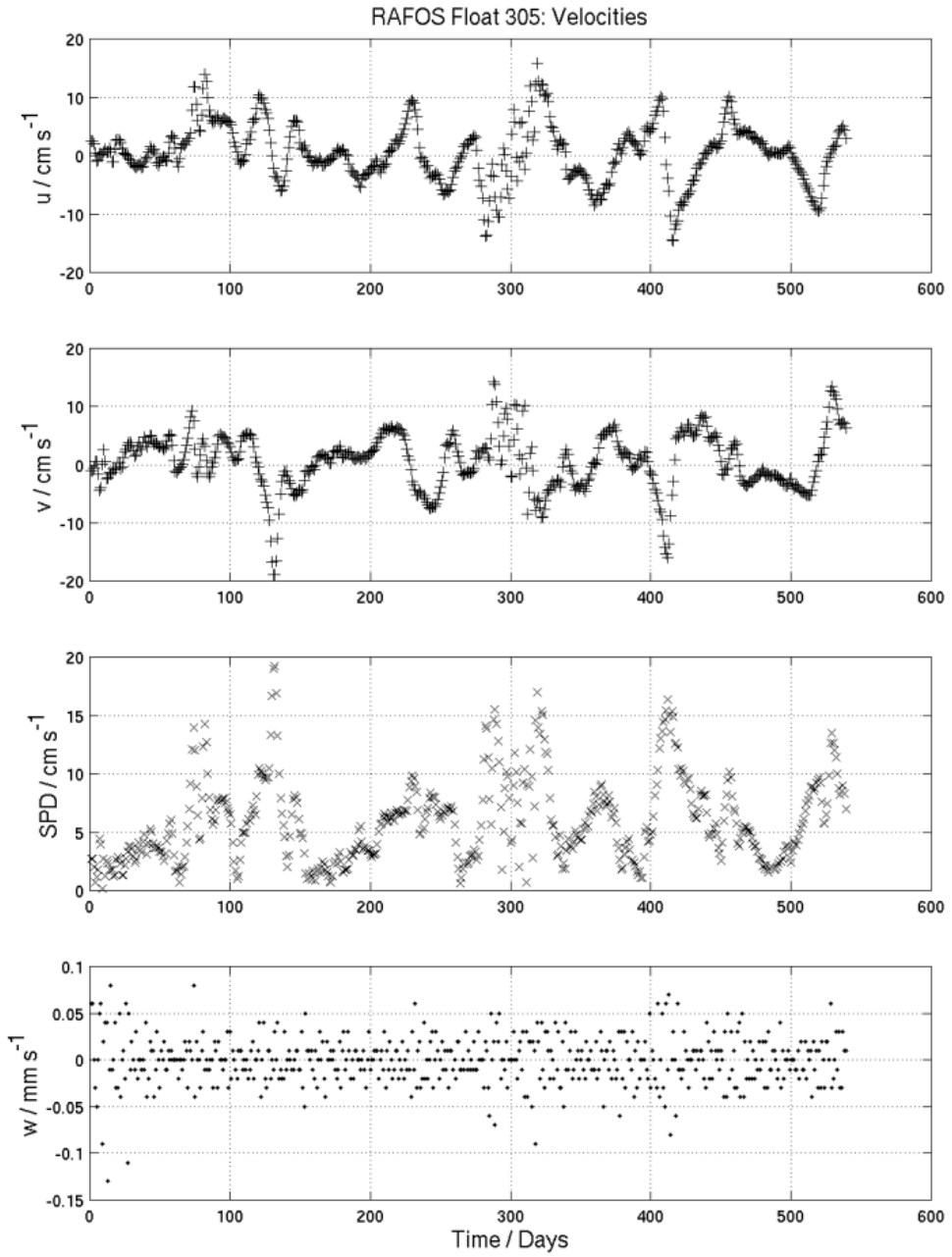
RAFOS Float 304: Velocities



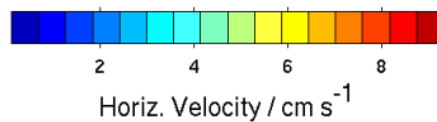
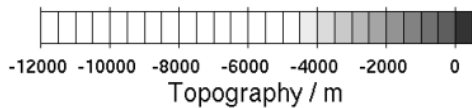
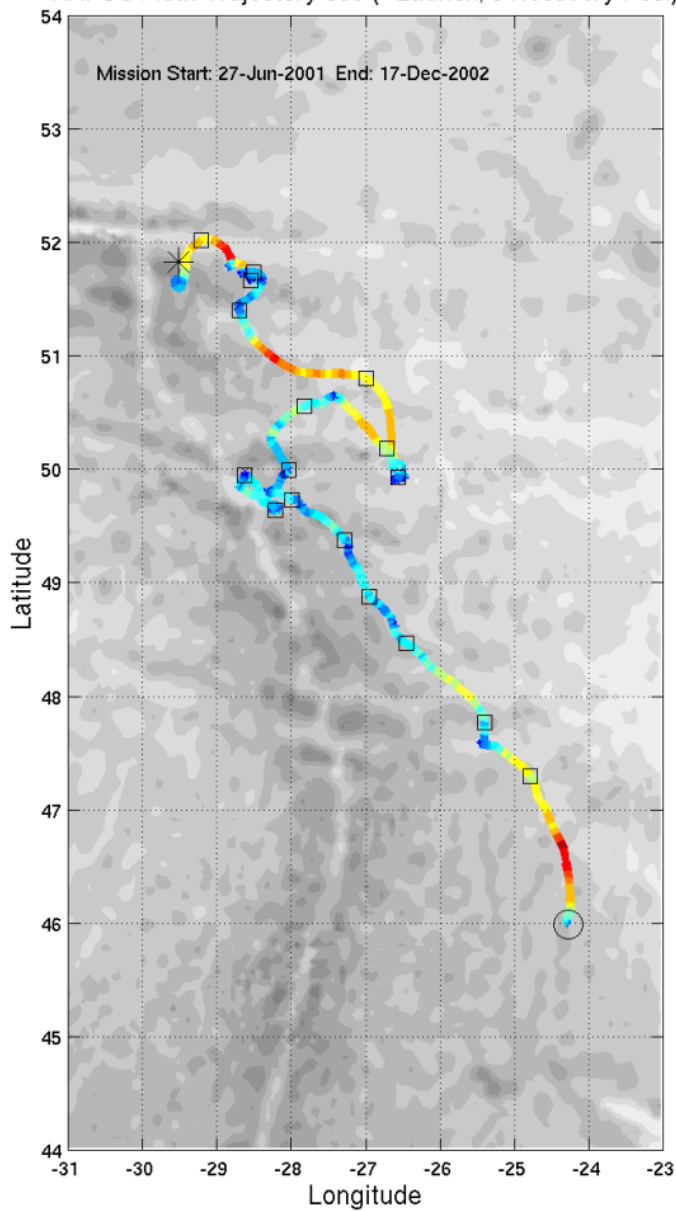
RAFOS Float Trajectory 305 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)

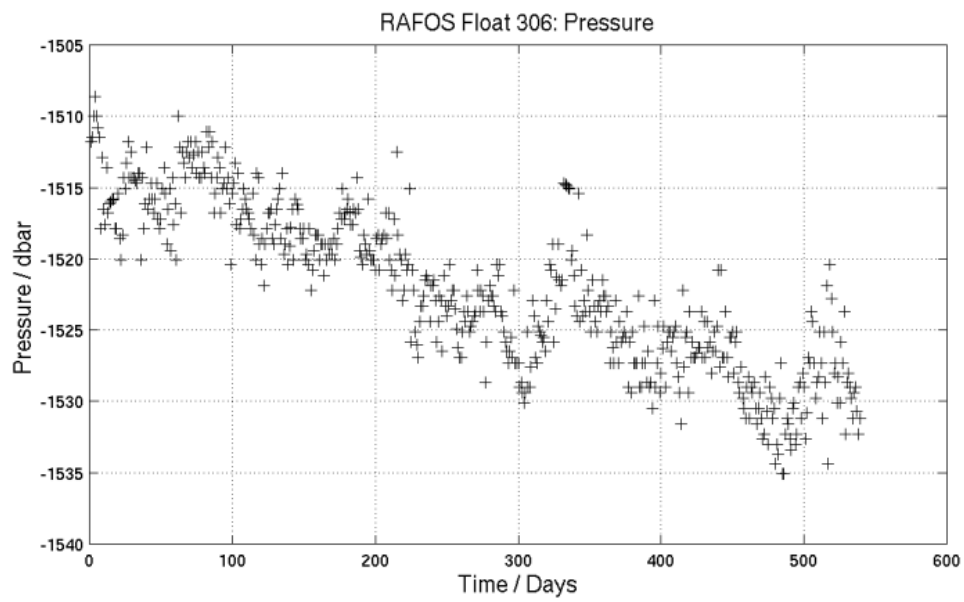
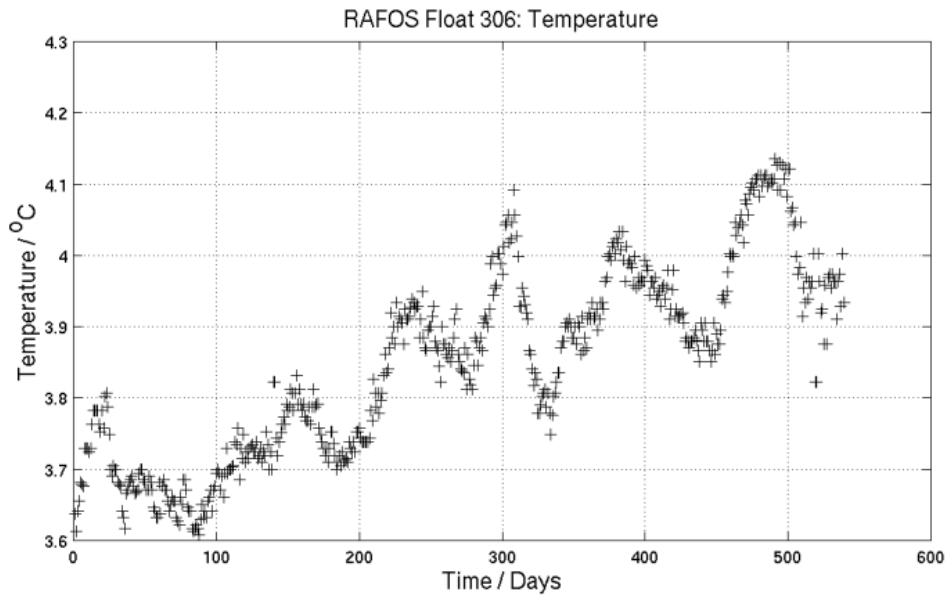




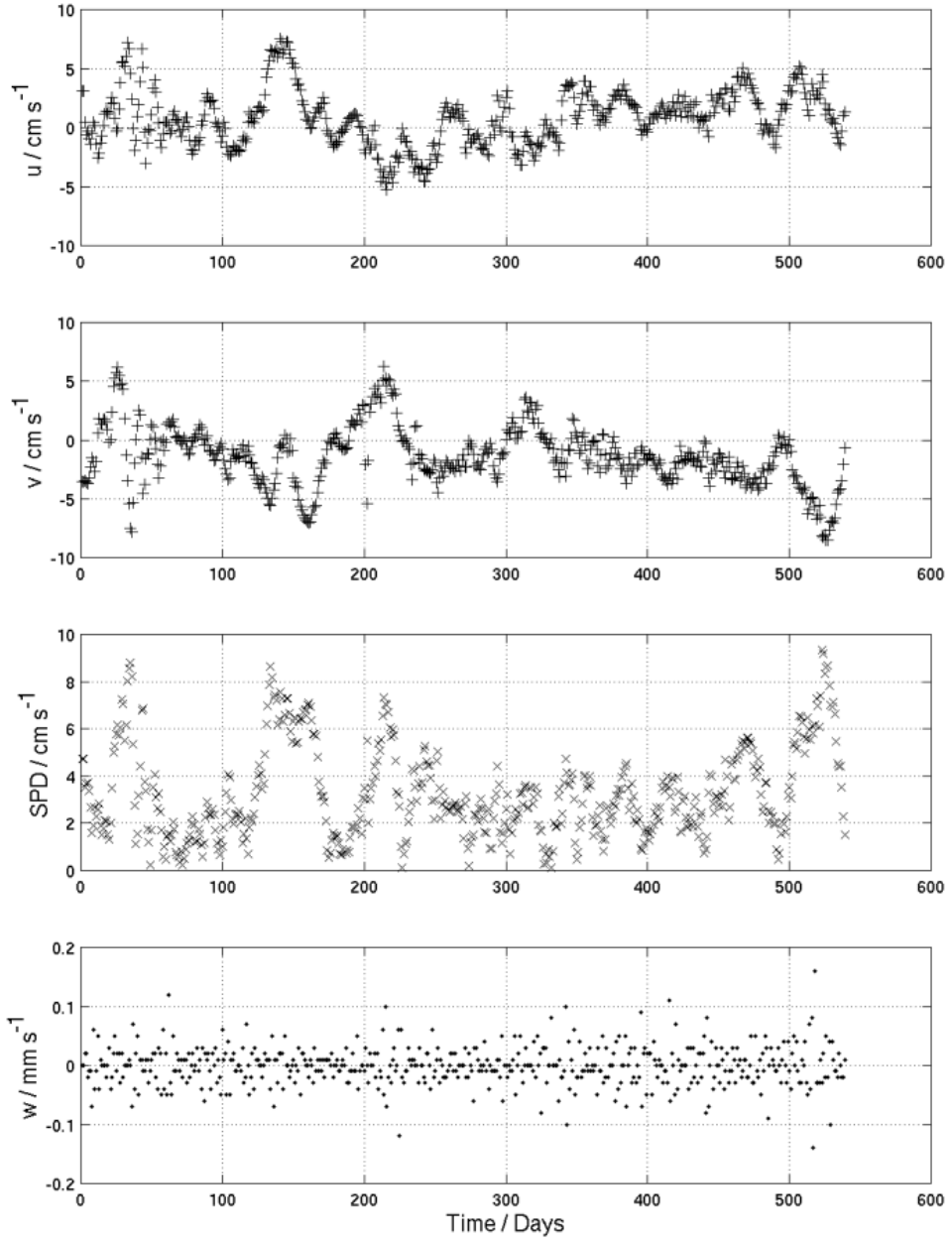


RAFOS Float Trajectory 306 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)

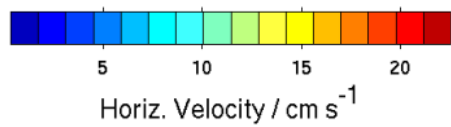
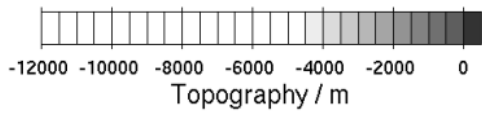
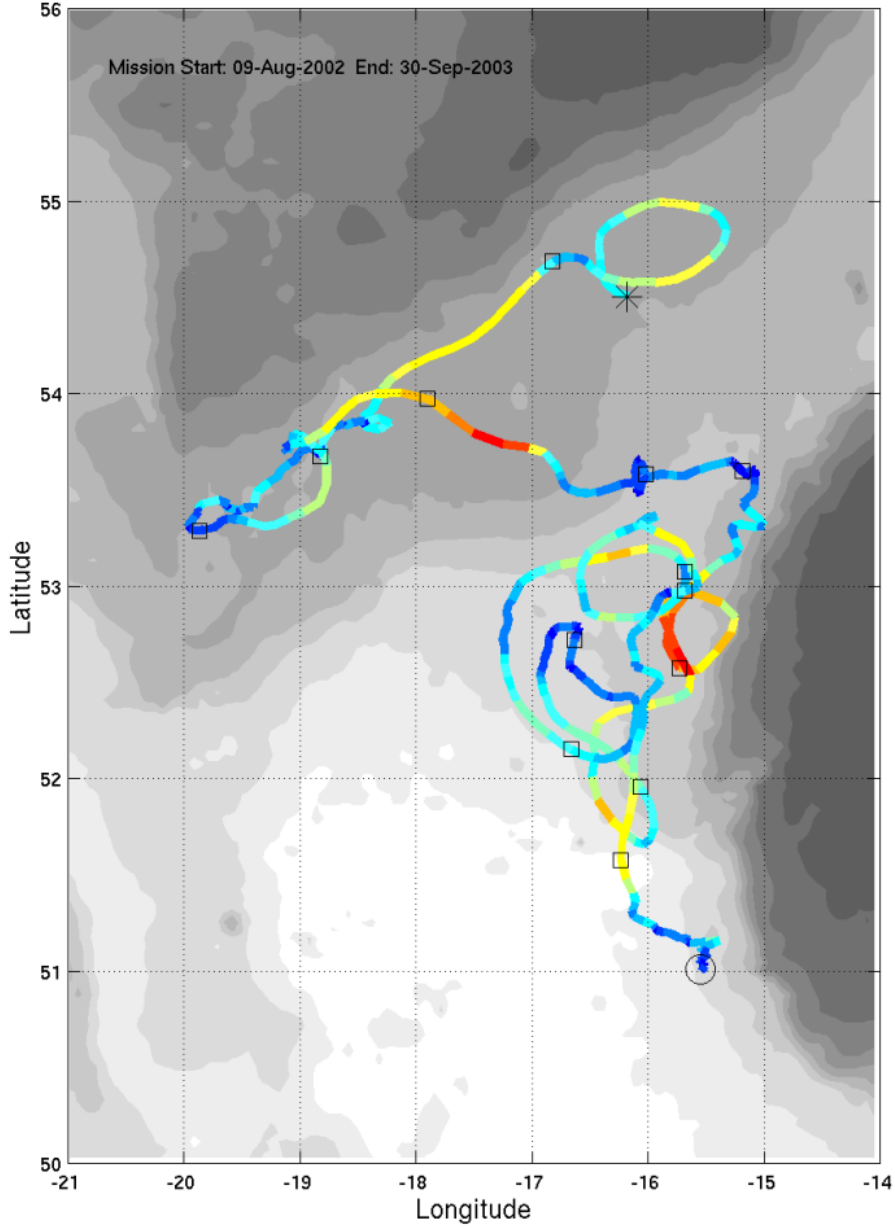




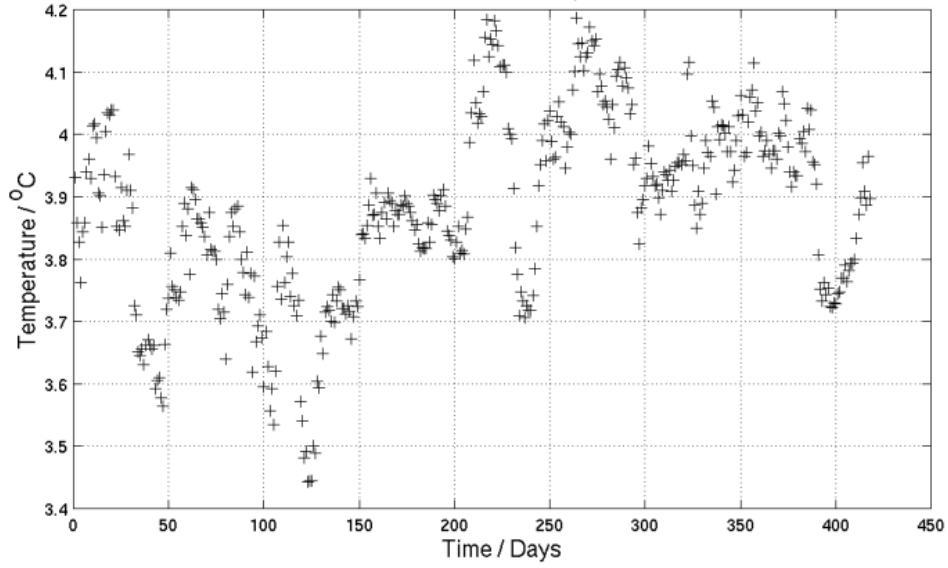
RAFOS Float 306: Velocities



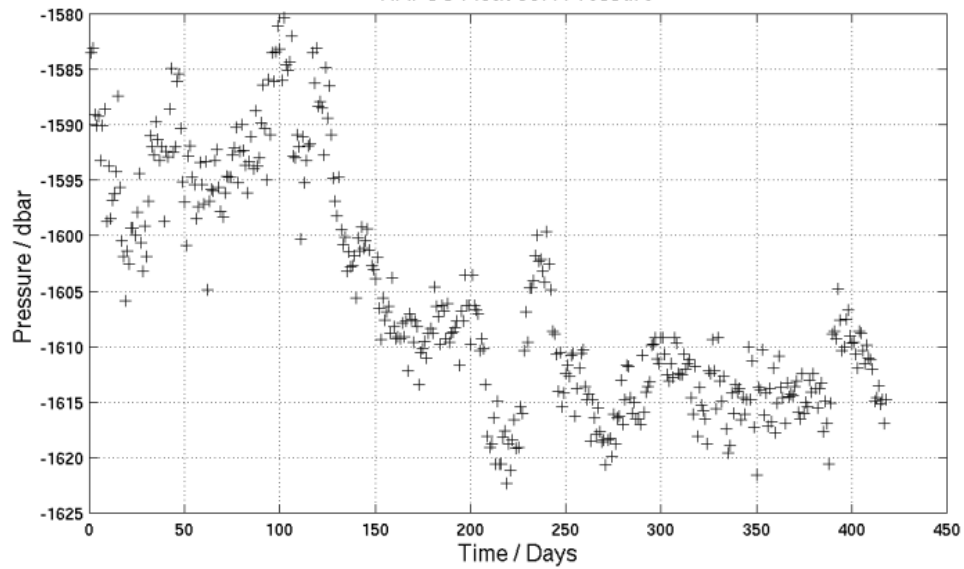
RAFOS Float Trajectory 307 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)



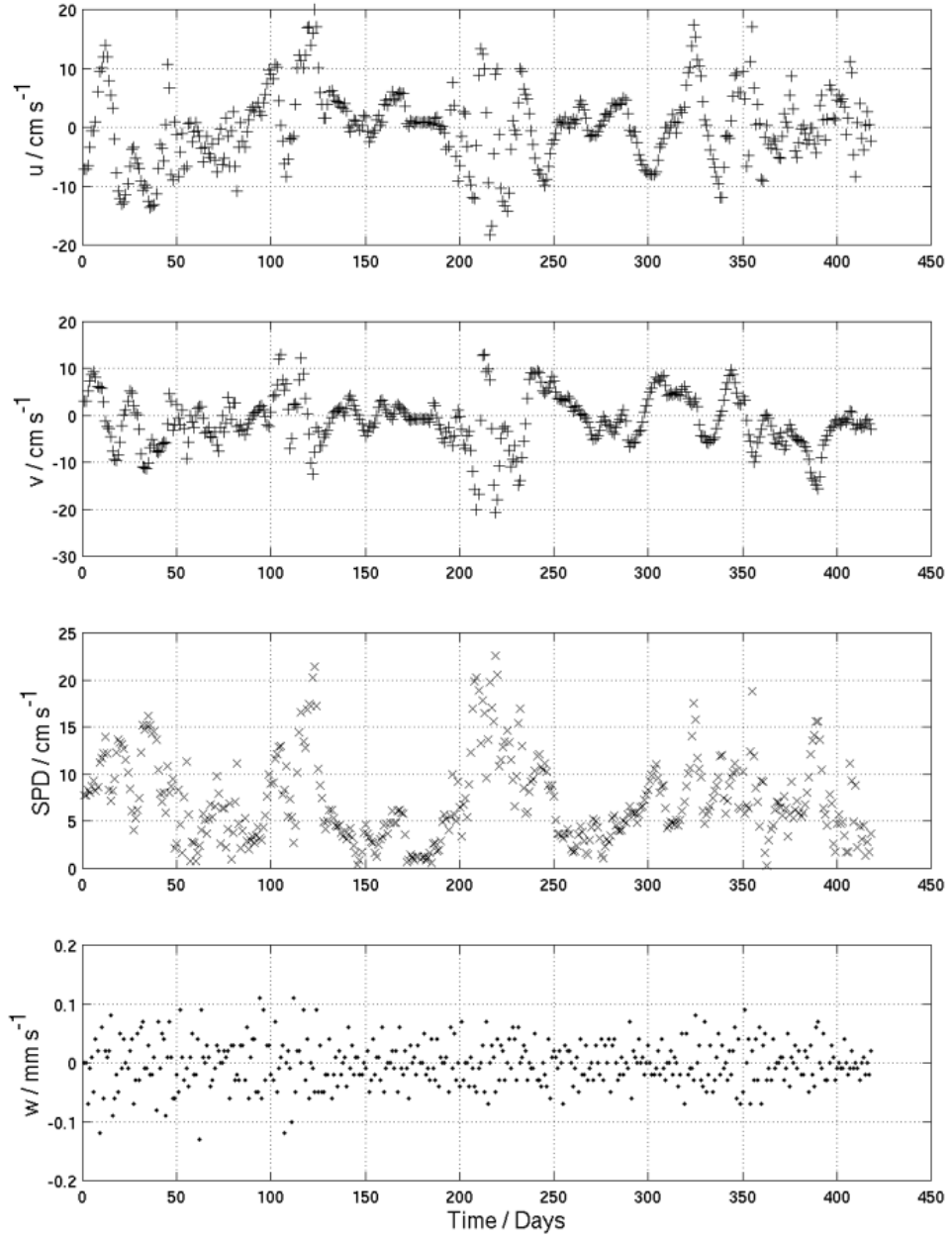
RAFOS Float 307: Temperature

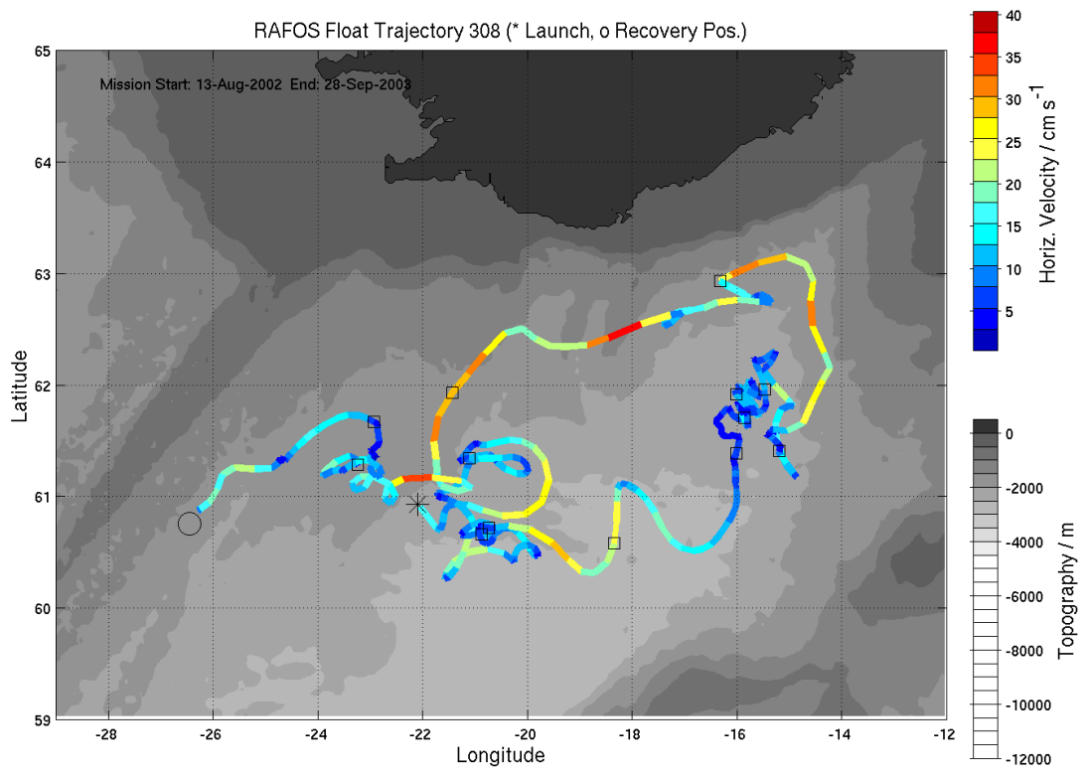


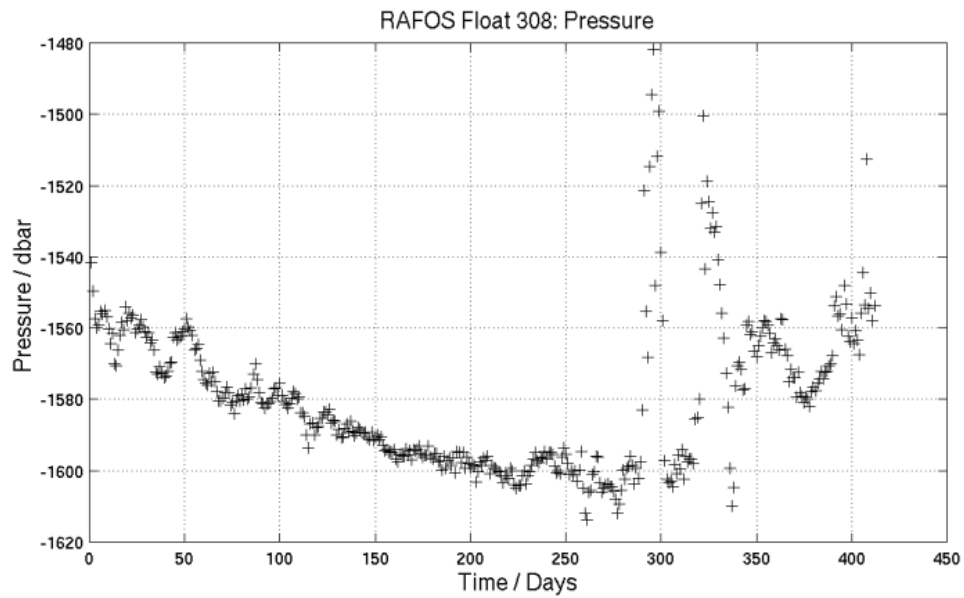
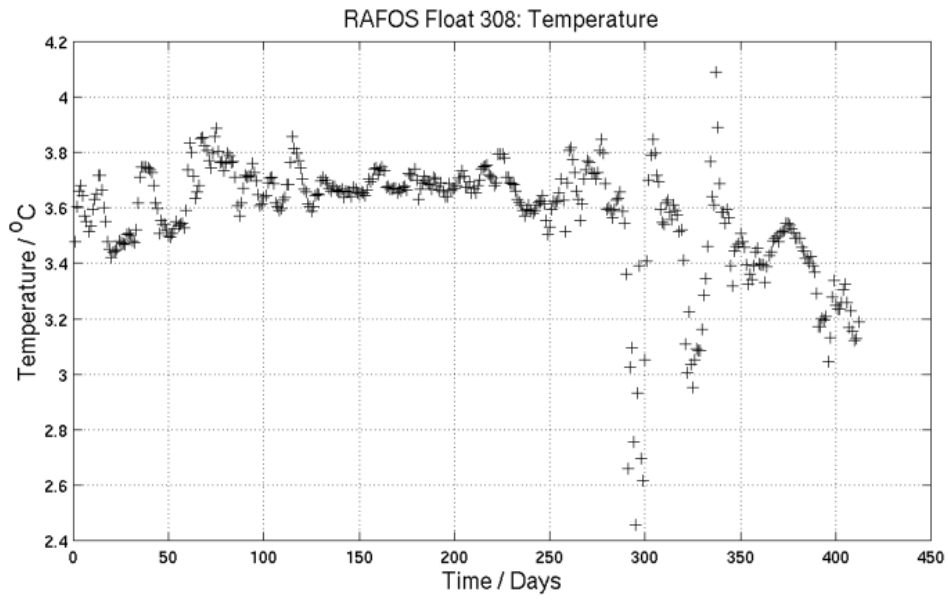
RAFOS Float 307: Pressure



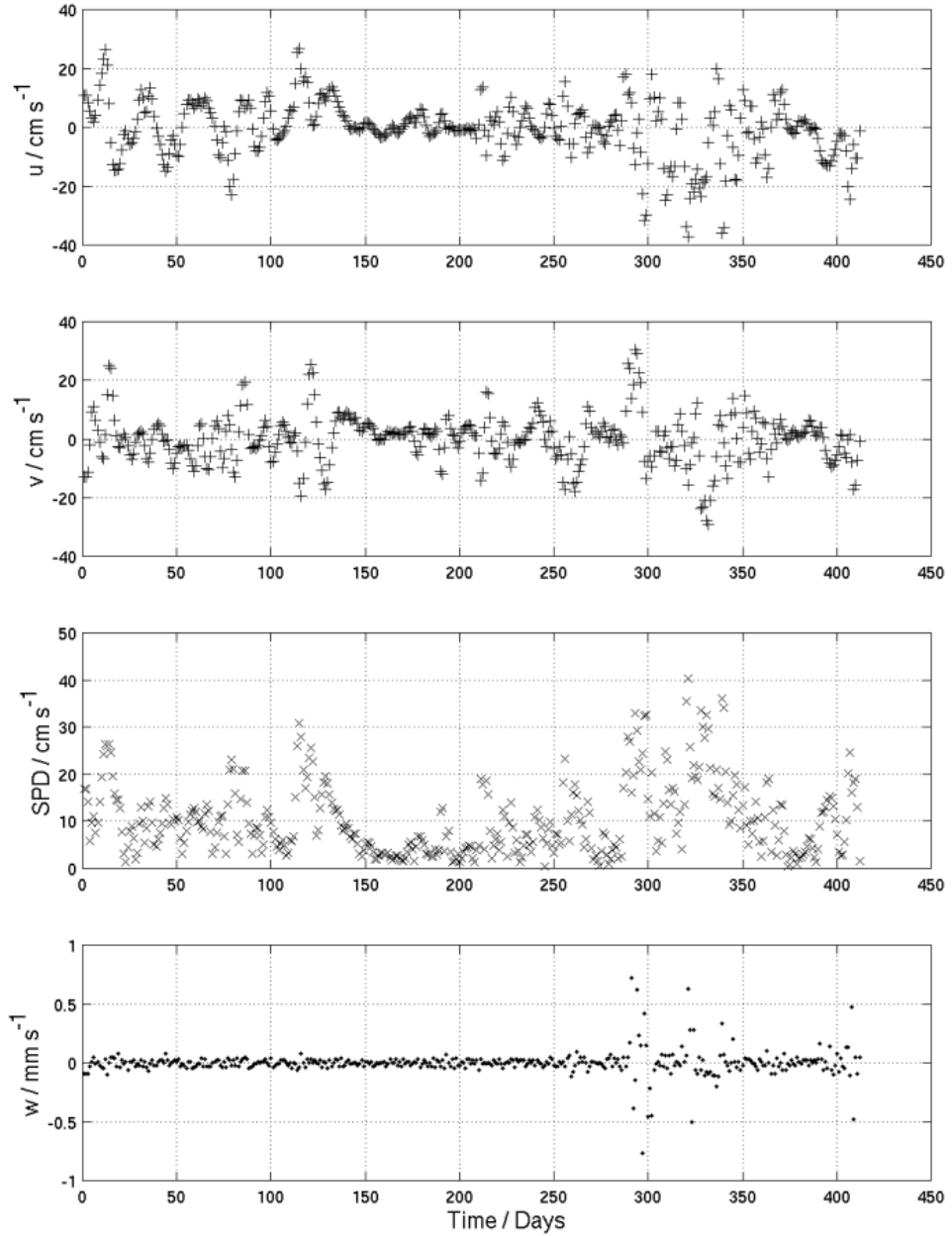
RAFOS Float 307: Velocities



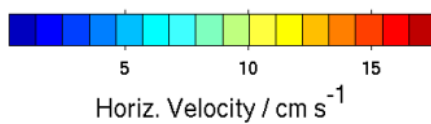
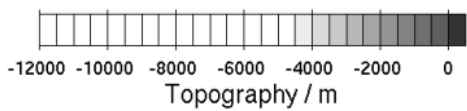
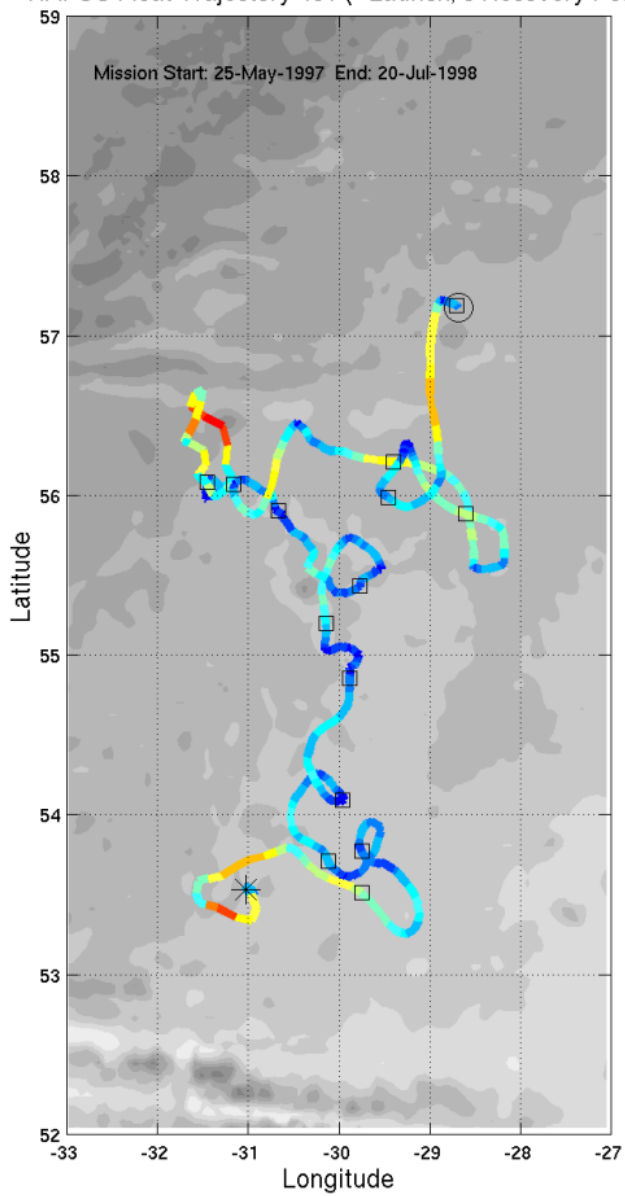


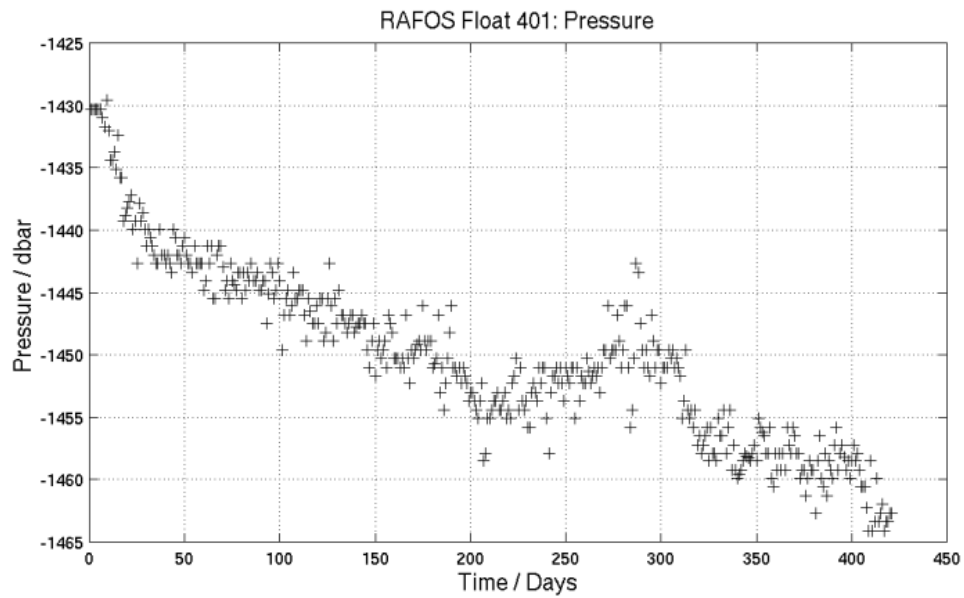
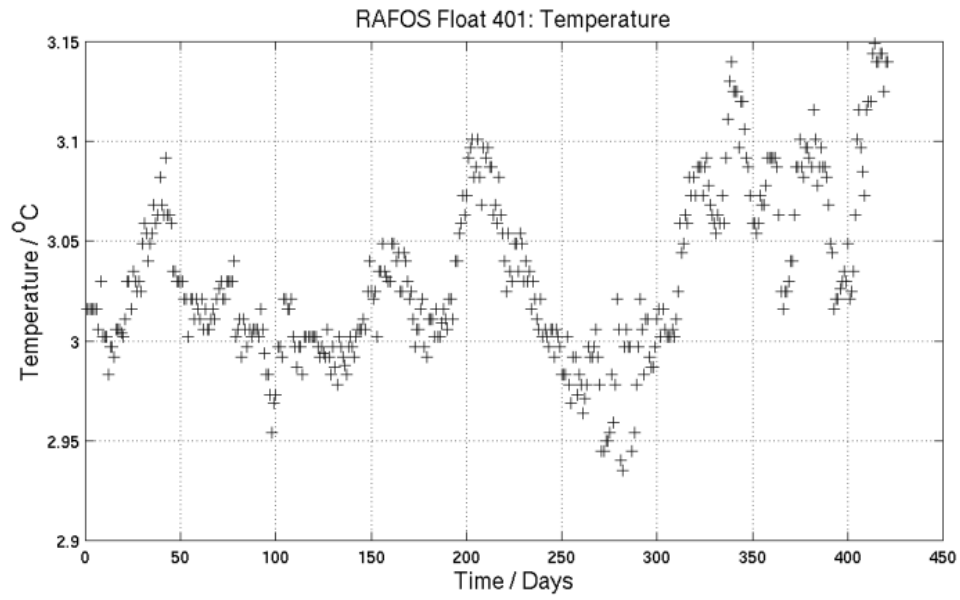


RAFOS Float 308: Velocities

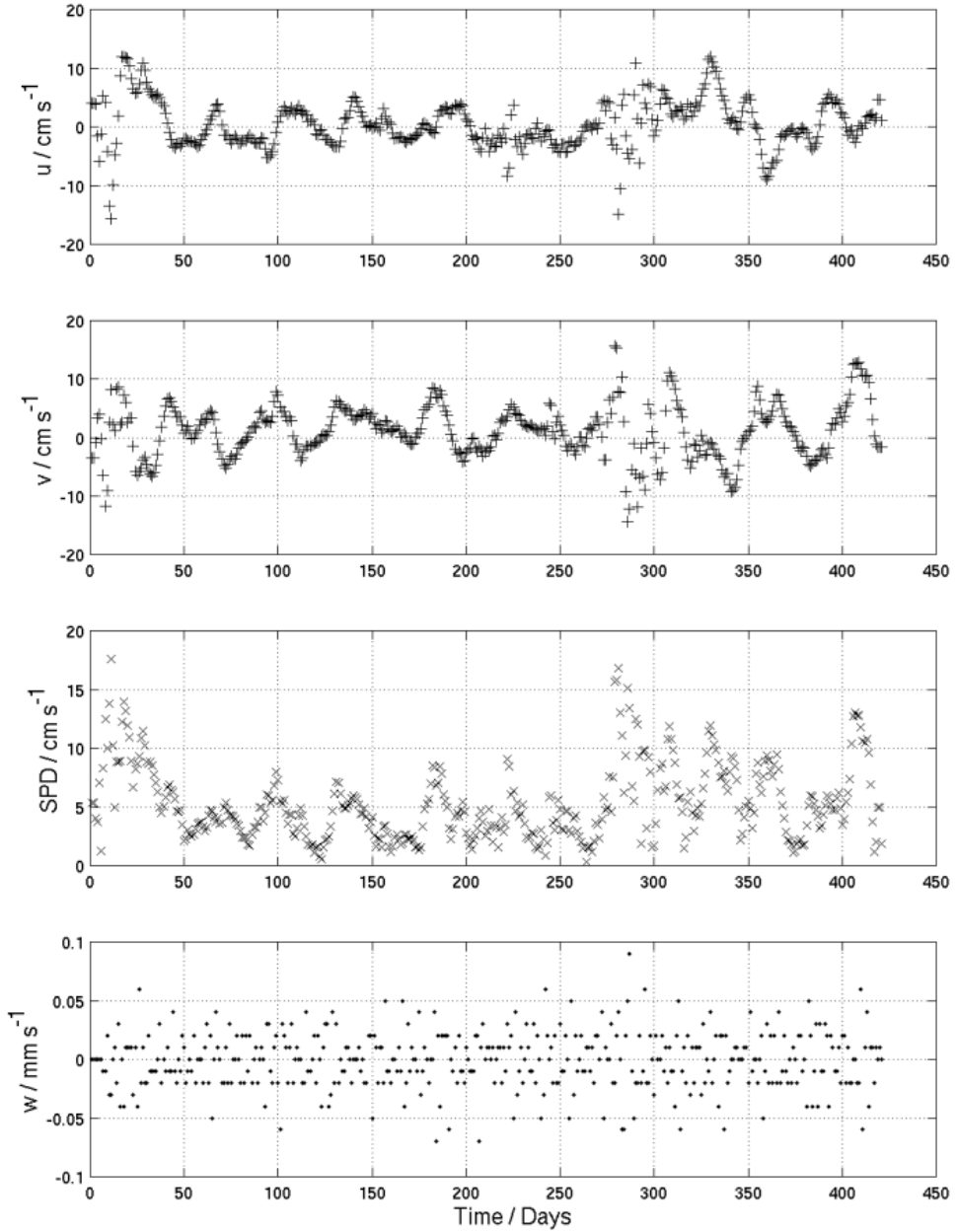


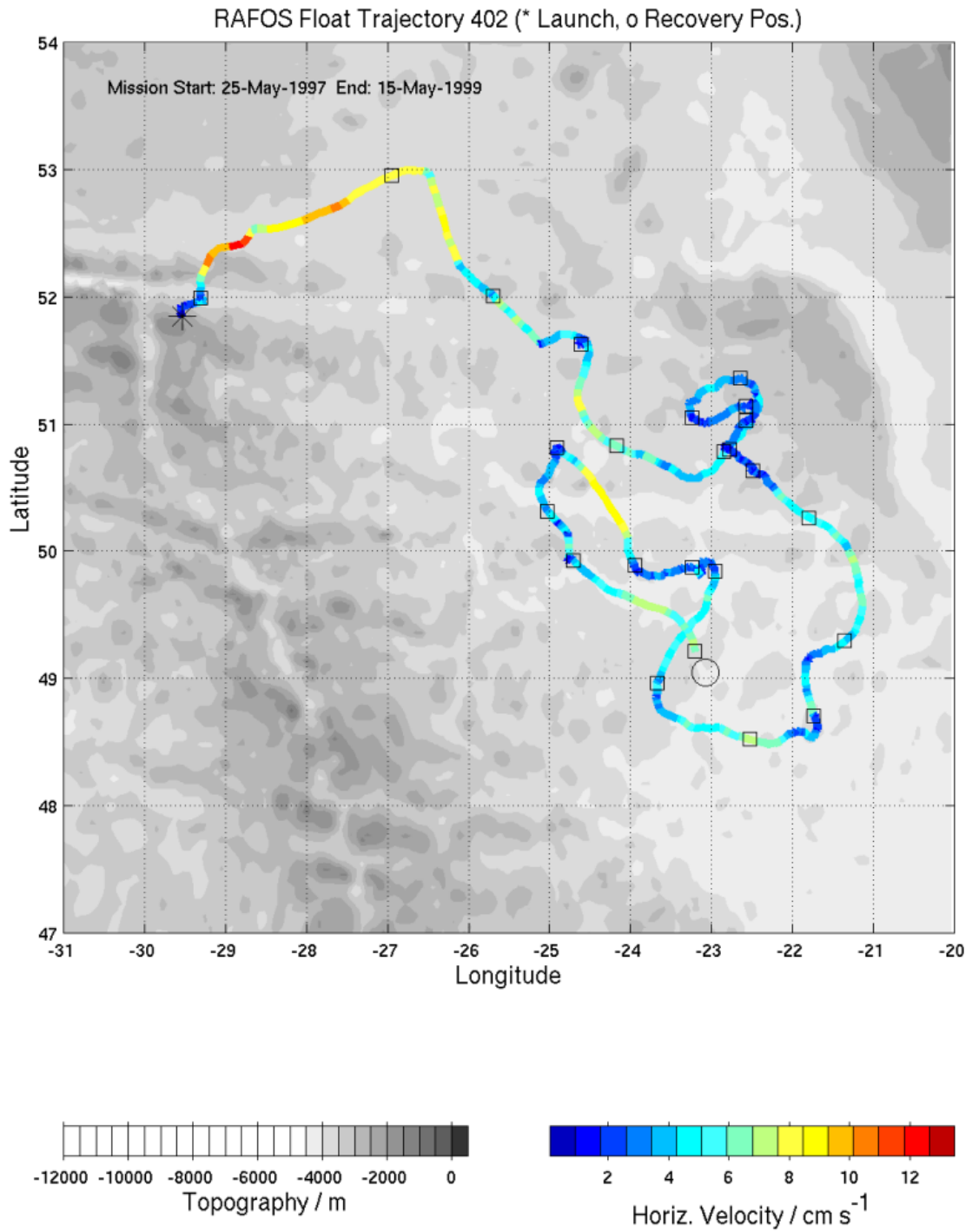
RAFOS Float Trajectory 401 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)

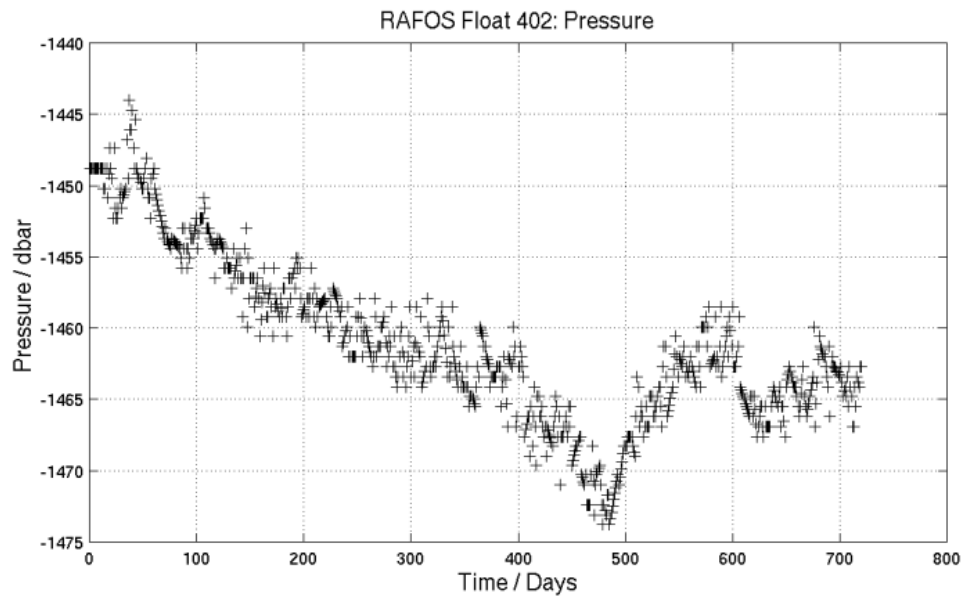
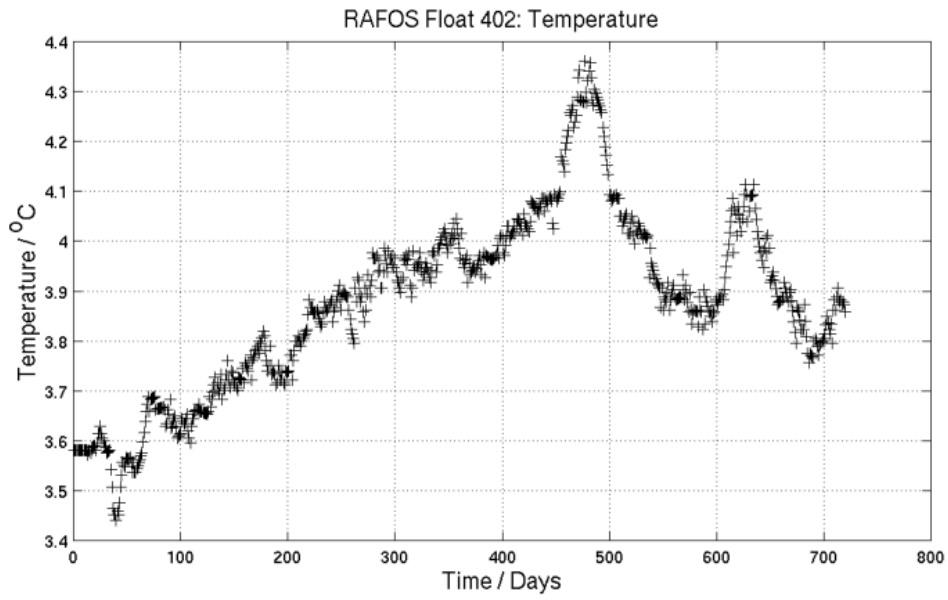




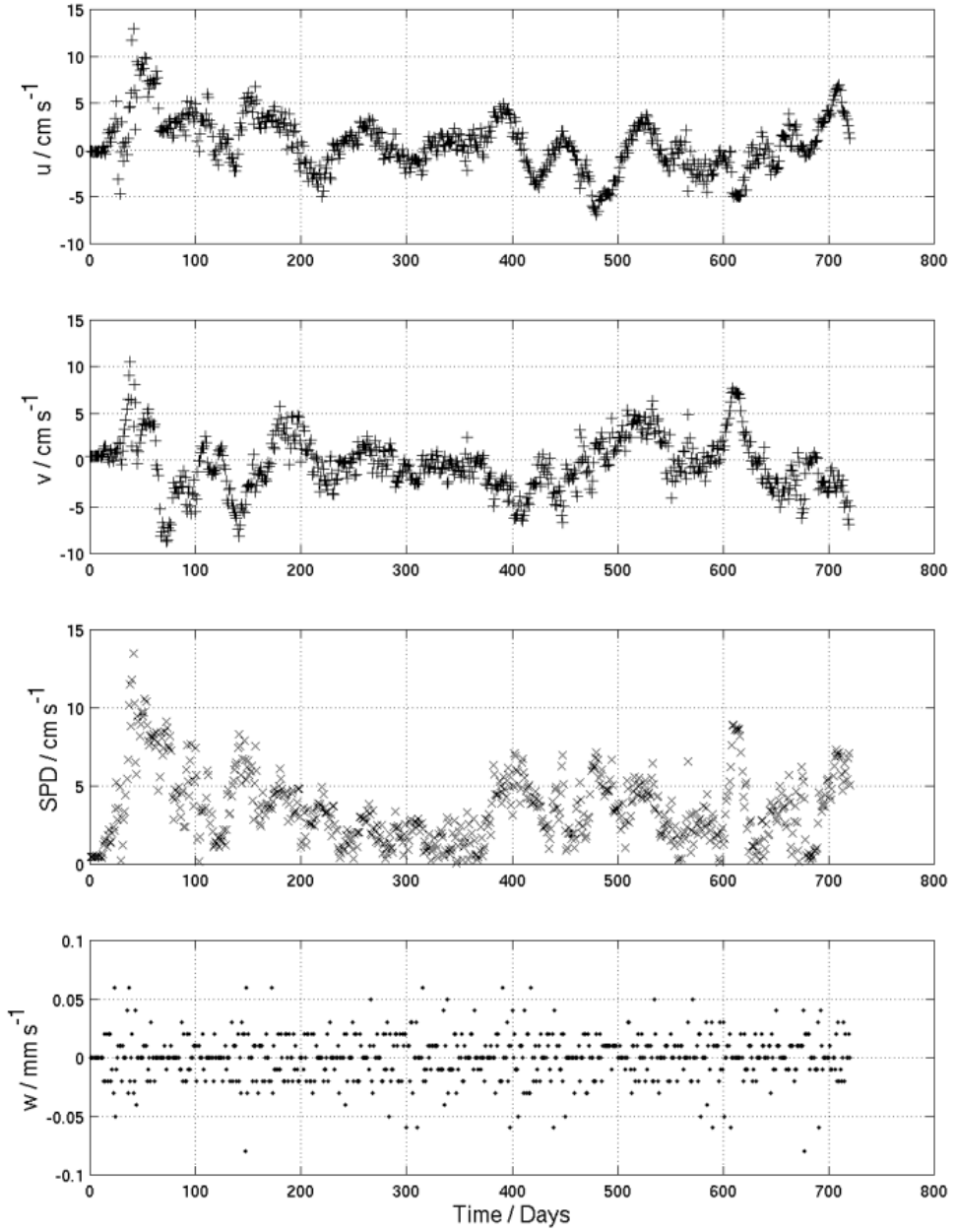
RAFOS Float 401: Velocities



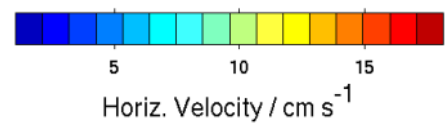
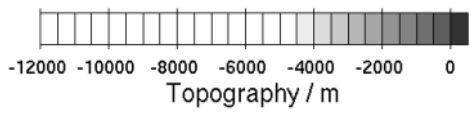
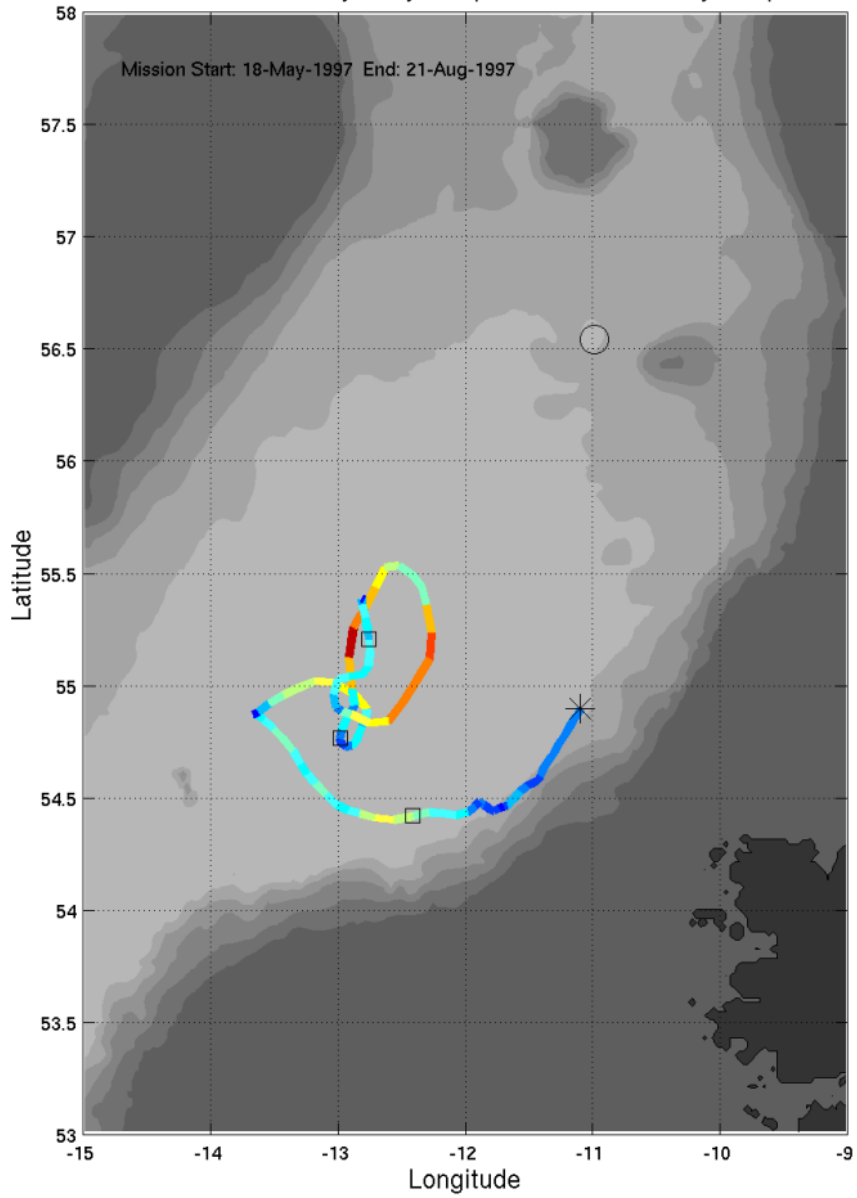


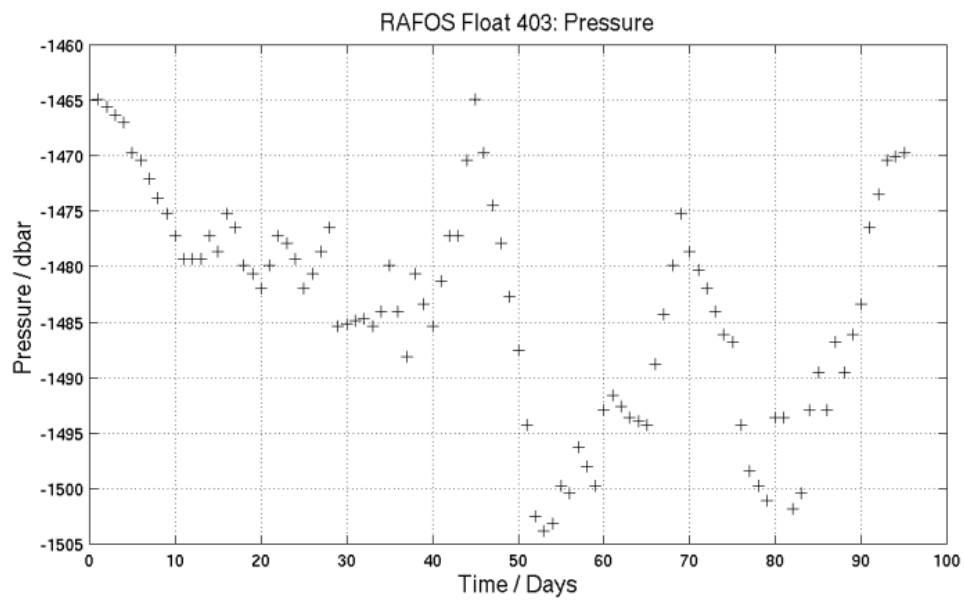
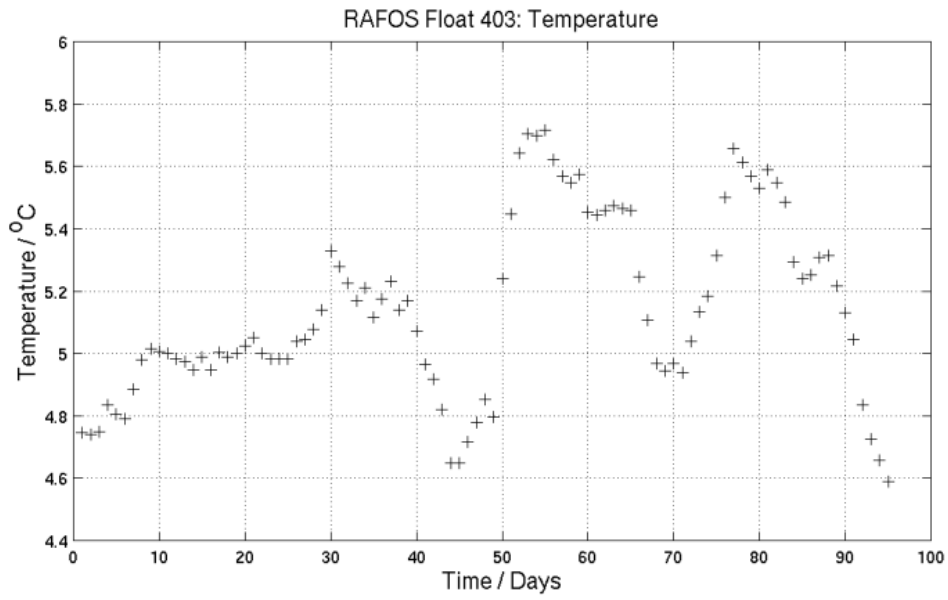


RAFOS Float 402: Velocities

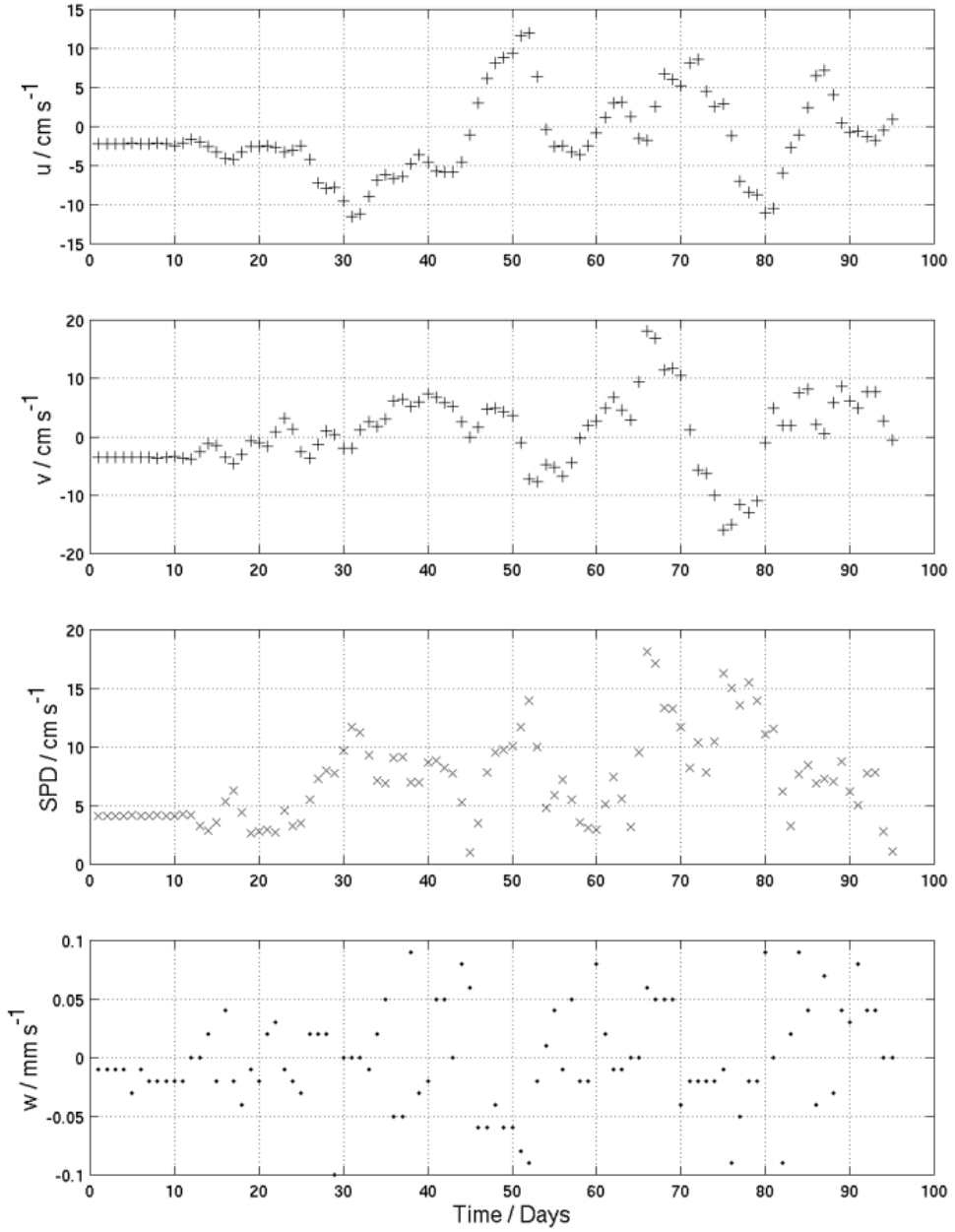


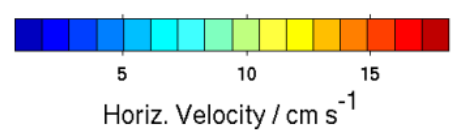
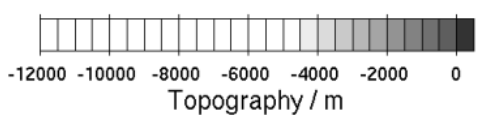
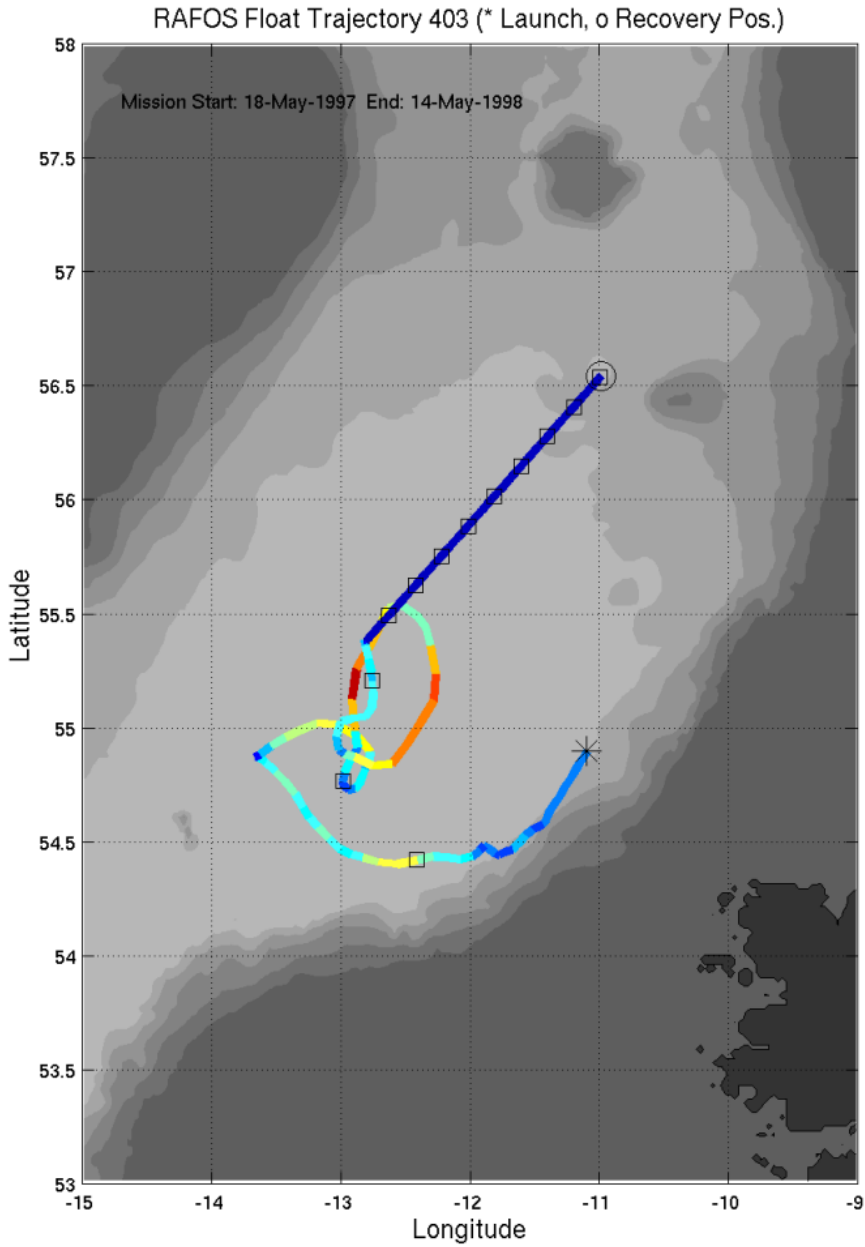
RAFOS Float Trajectory 403 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)



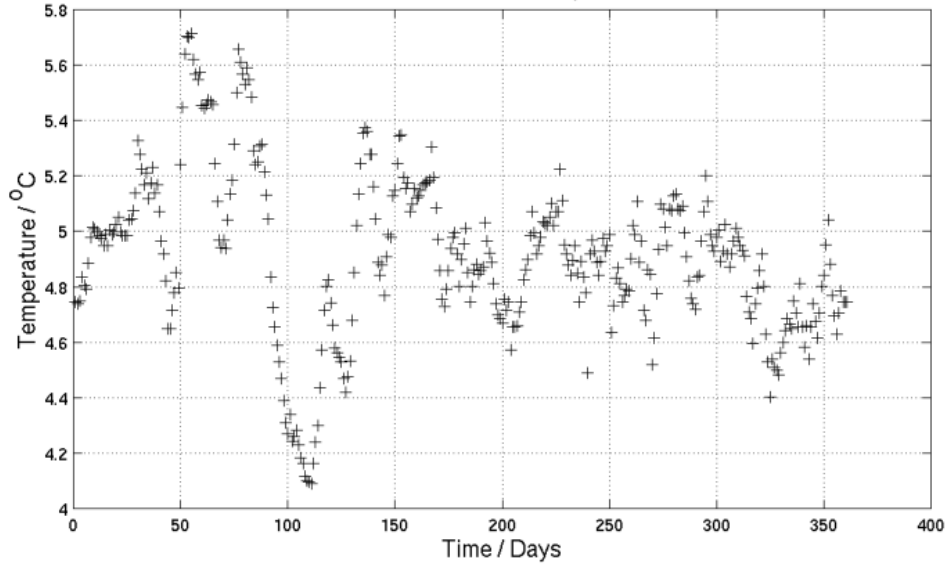


RAFOS Float 403: Velocities

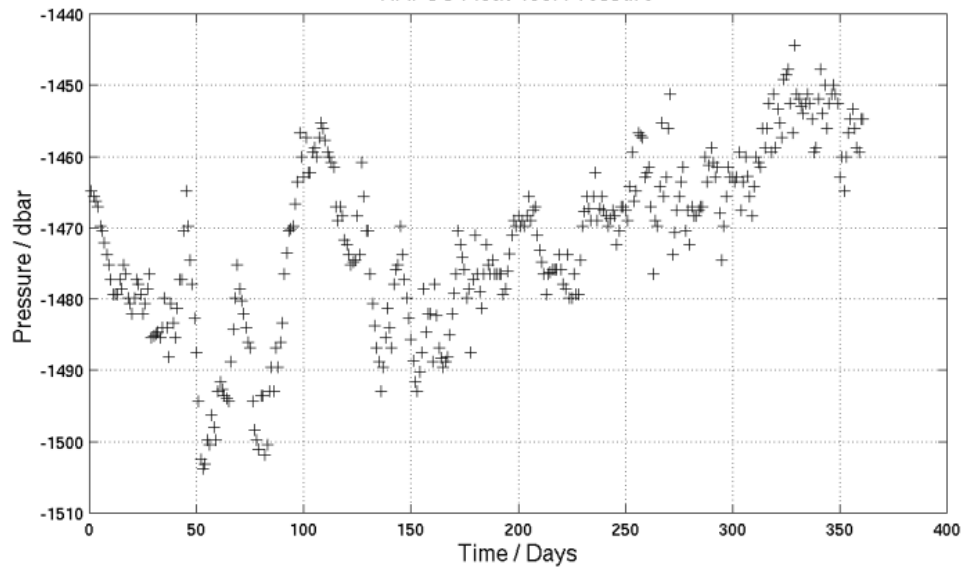




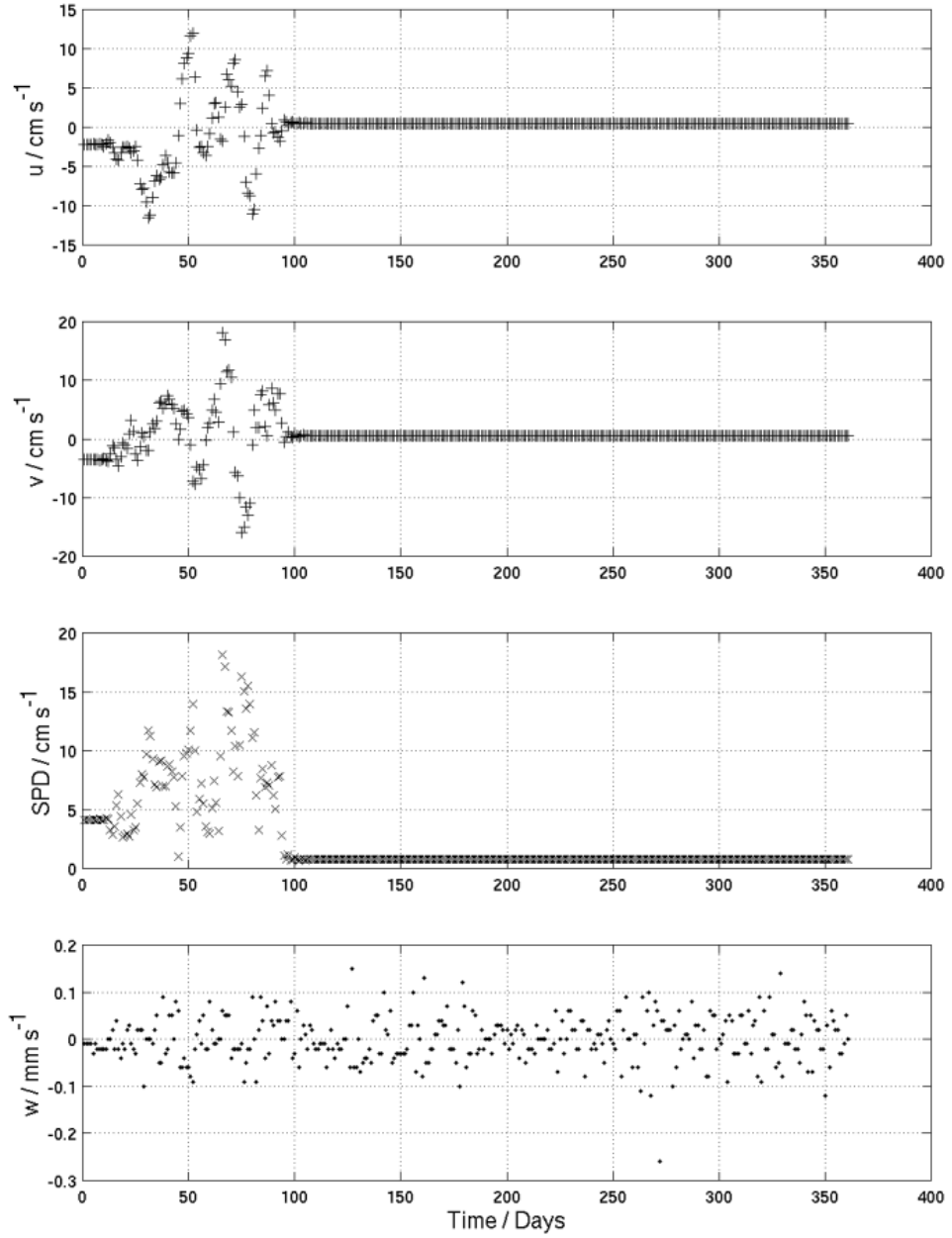
RAFOS Float 403: Temperature

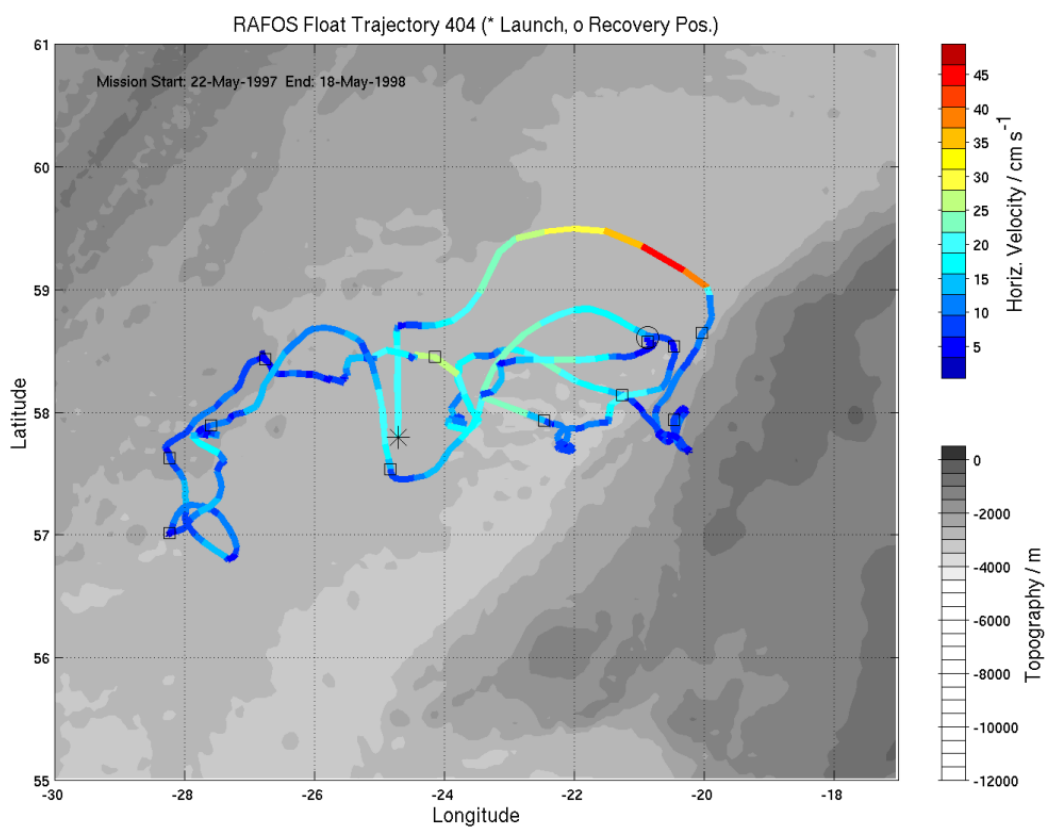


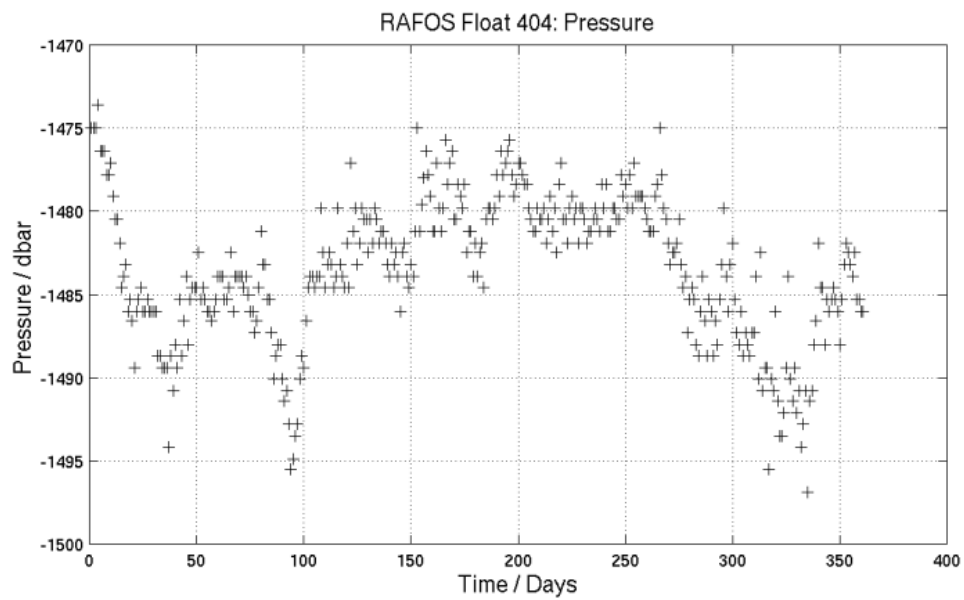
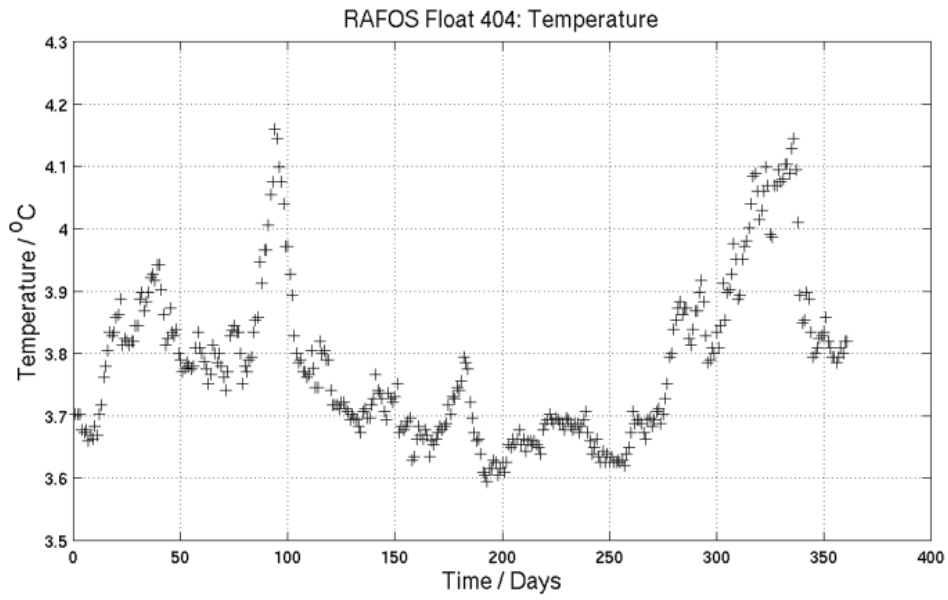
RAFOS Float 403: Pressure



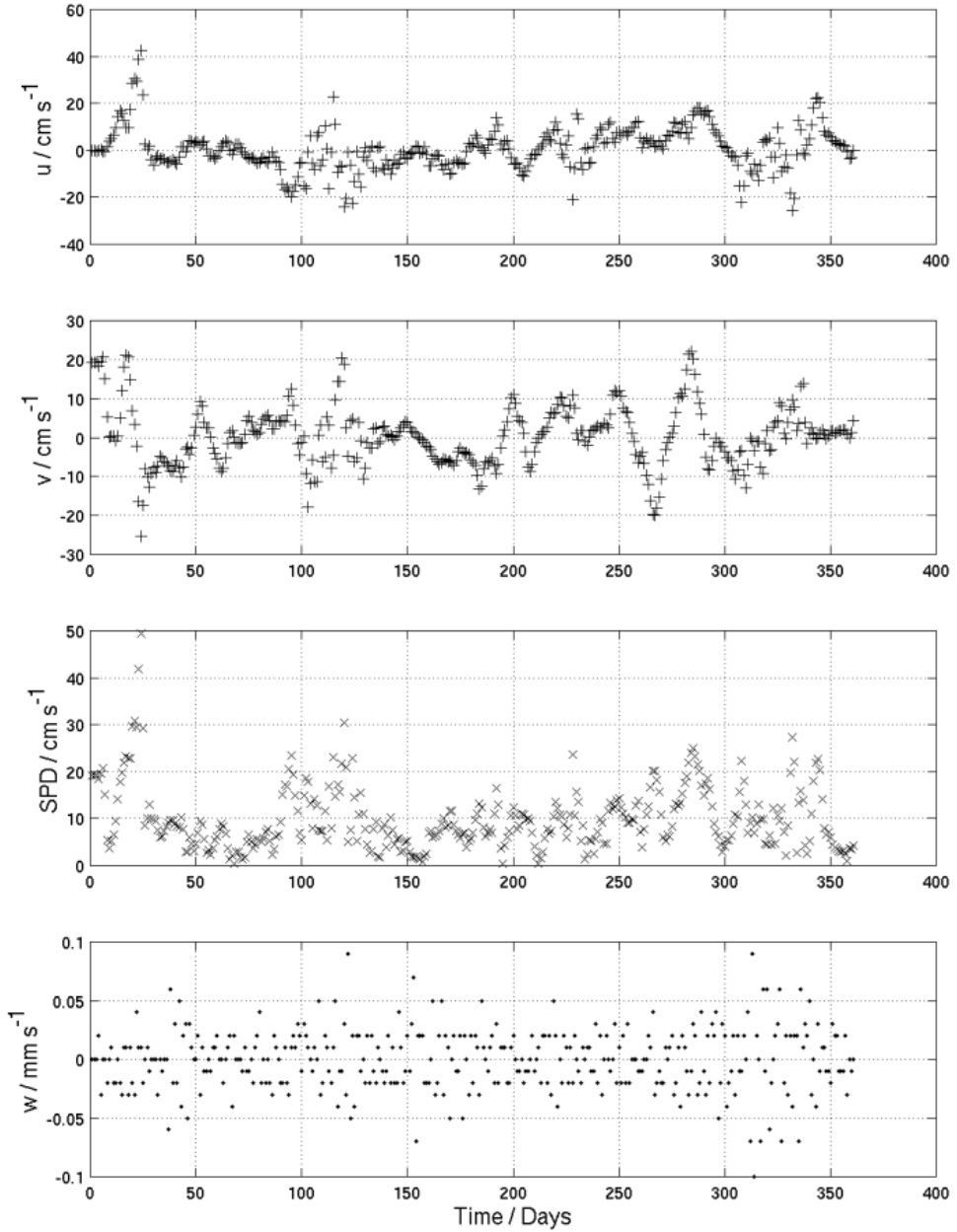
RAFOS Float 403: Velocities



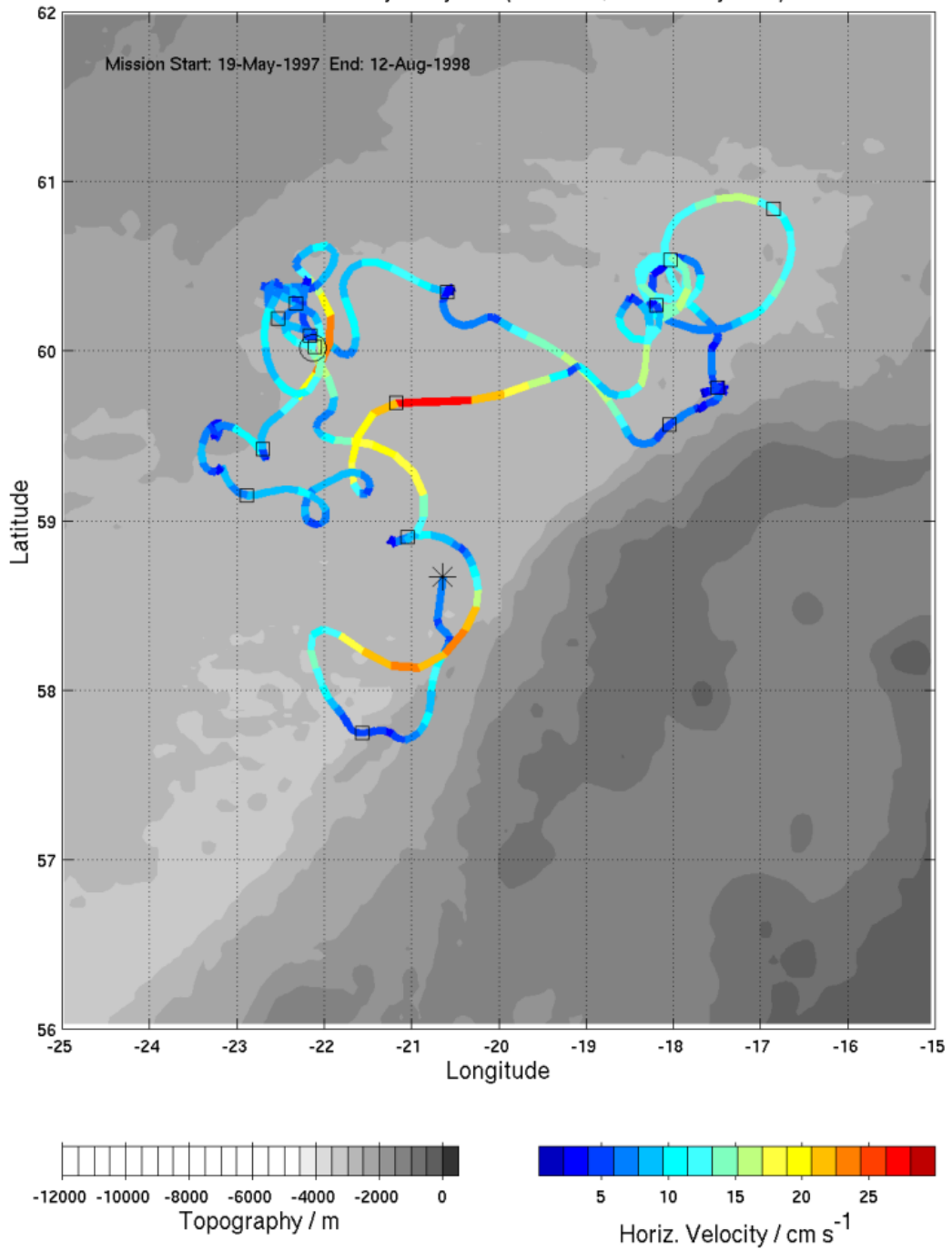


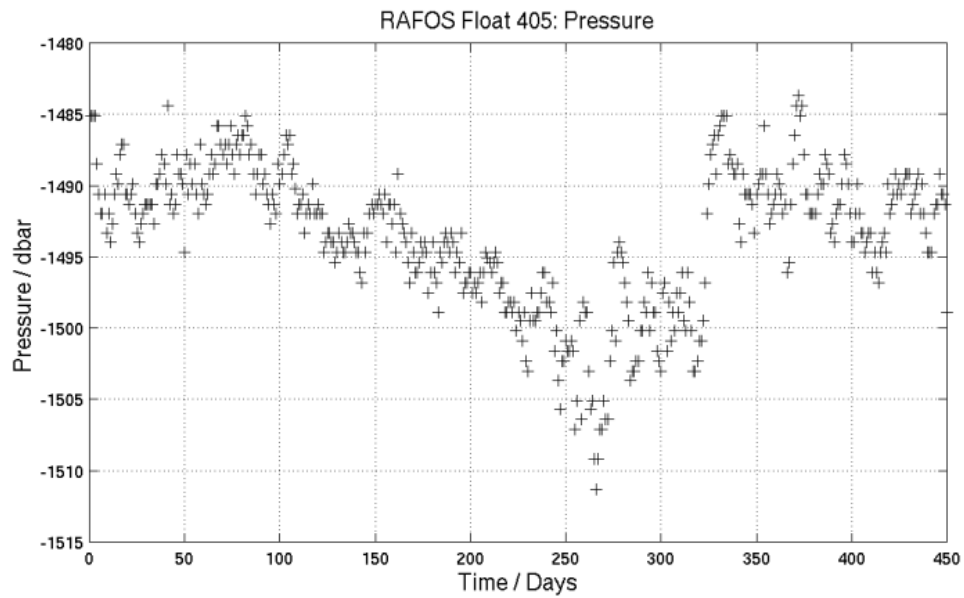
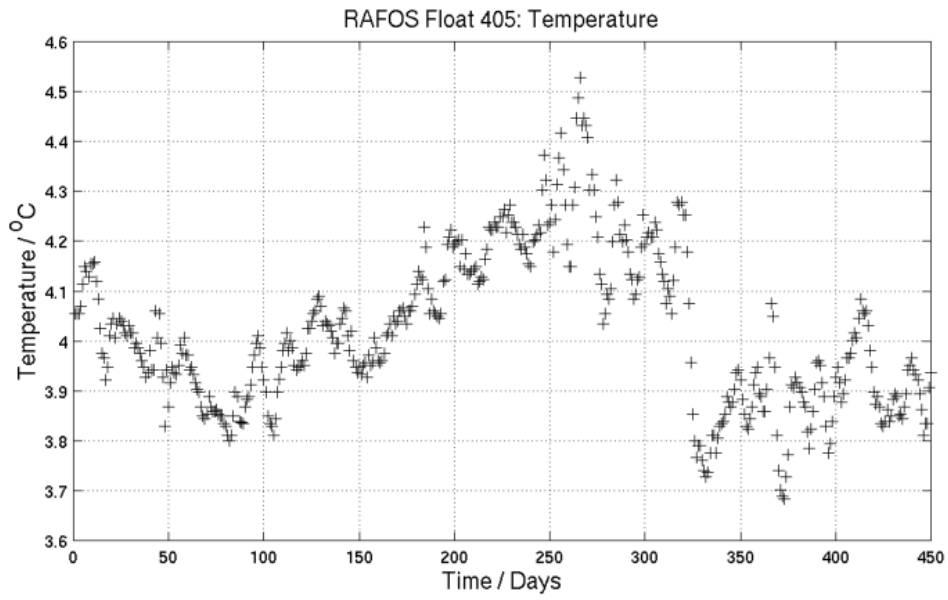


RAFOS Float 404: Velocities

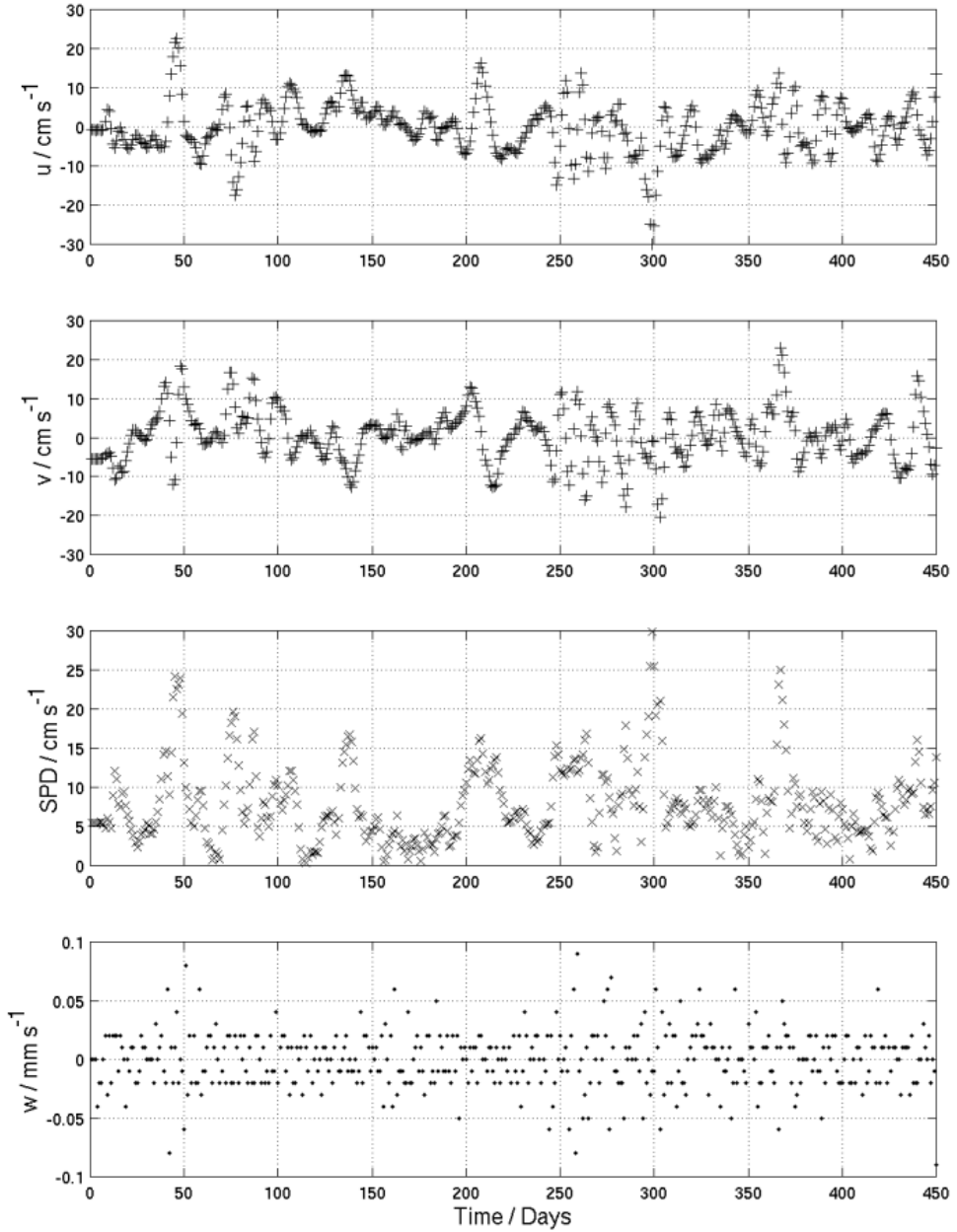


RAFOS Float Trajectory 405 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)

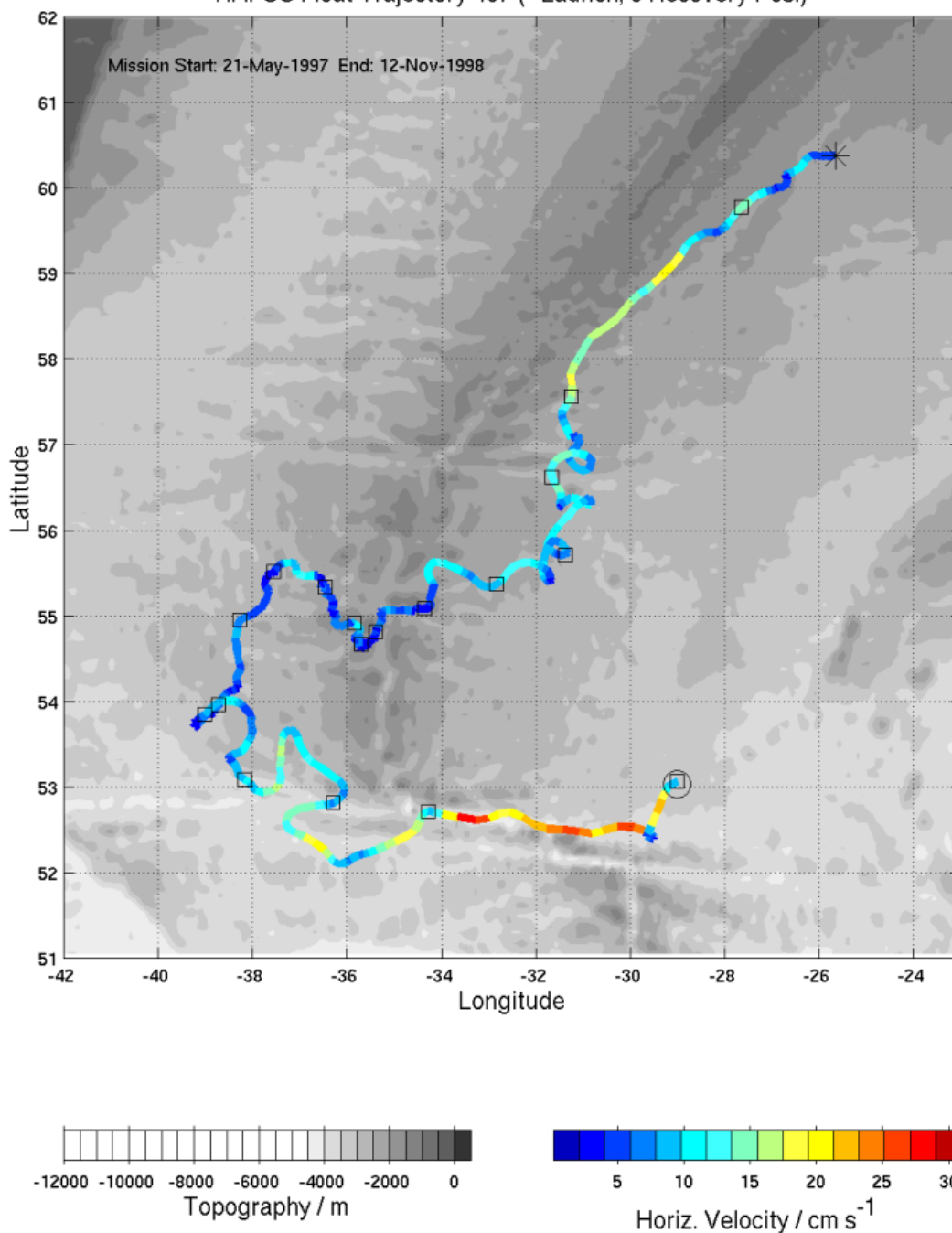




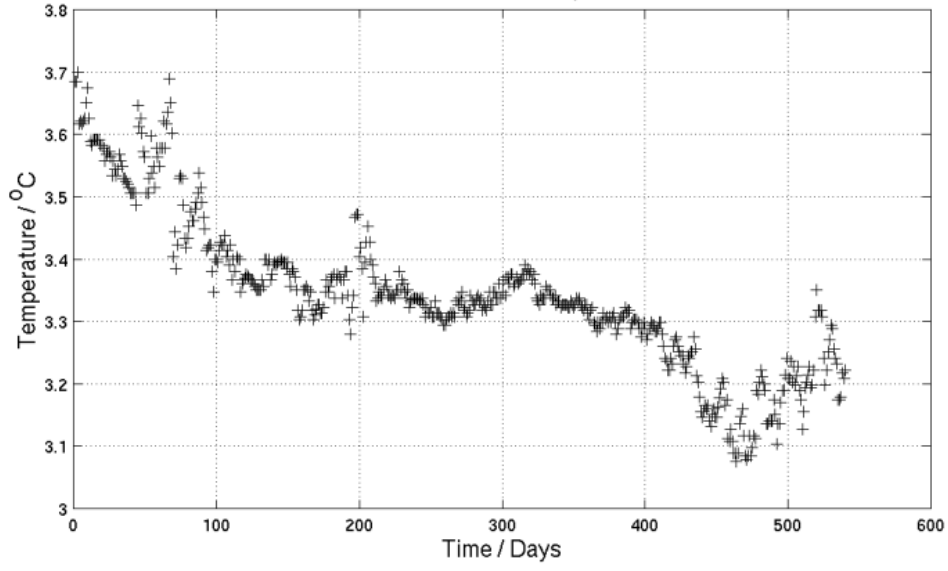
RAFOS Float 405: Velocities



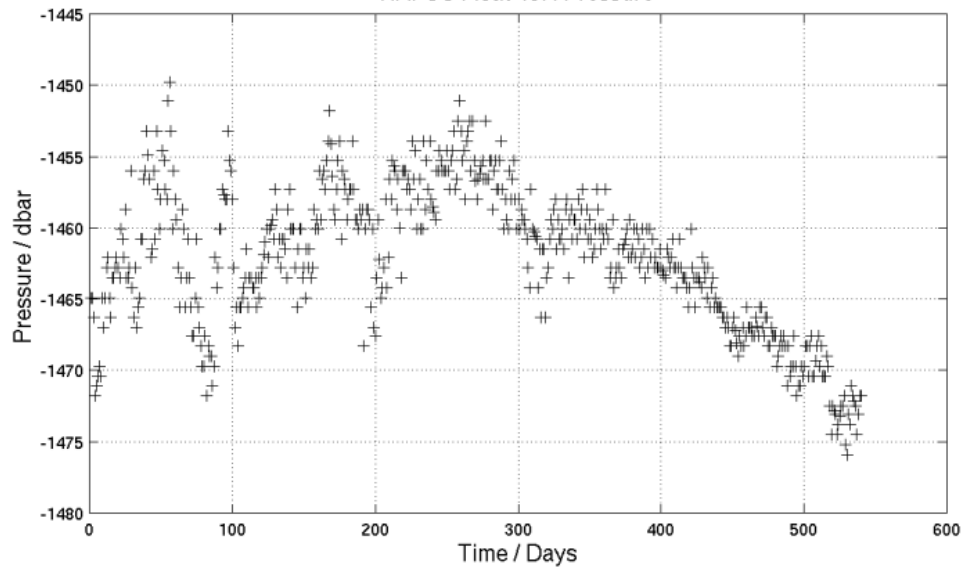
RAFOS Float Trajectory 407 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)



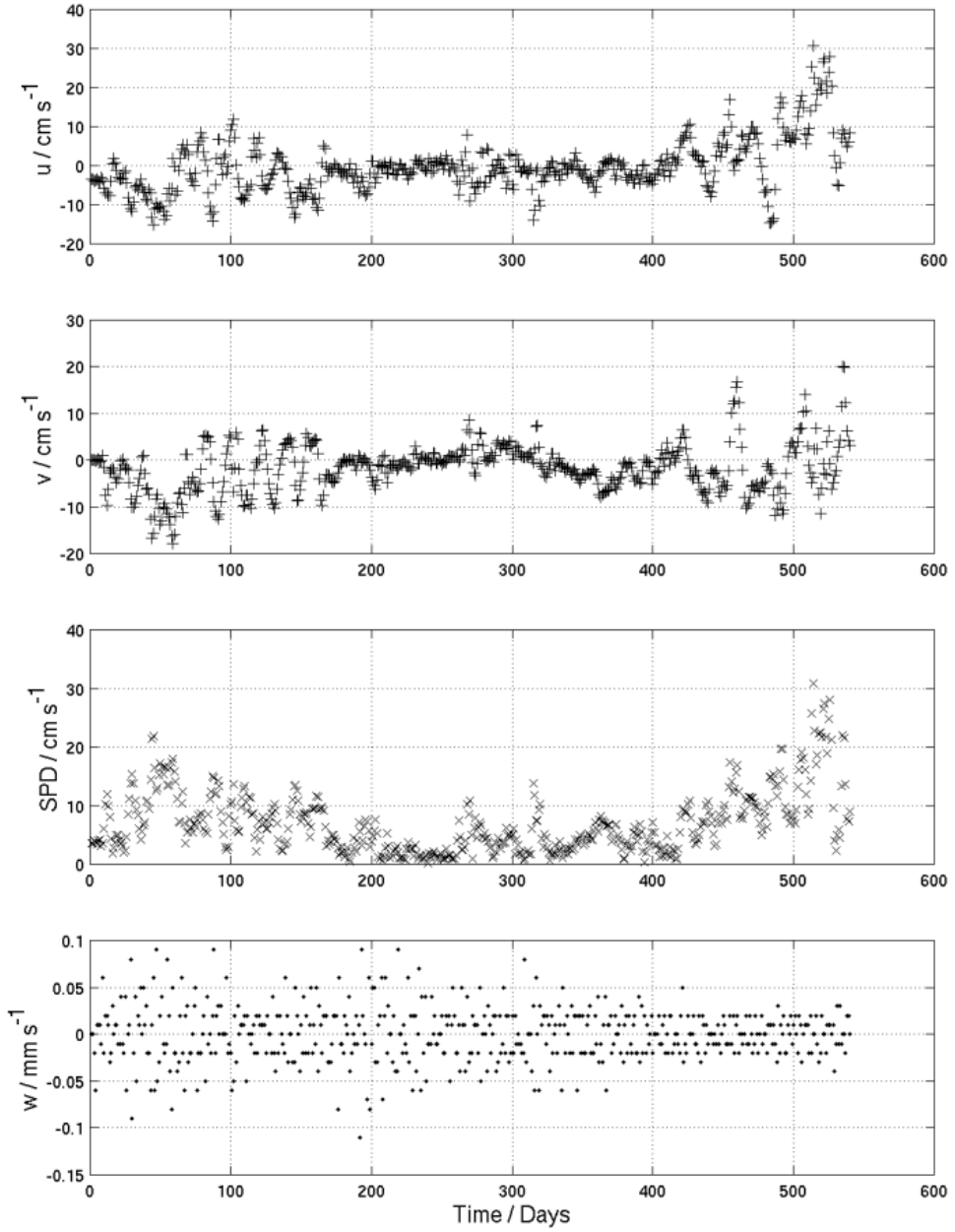
RAFOS Float 407: Temperature

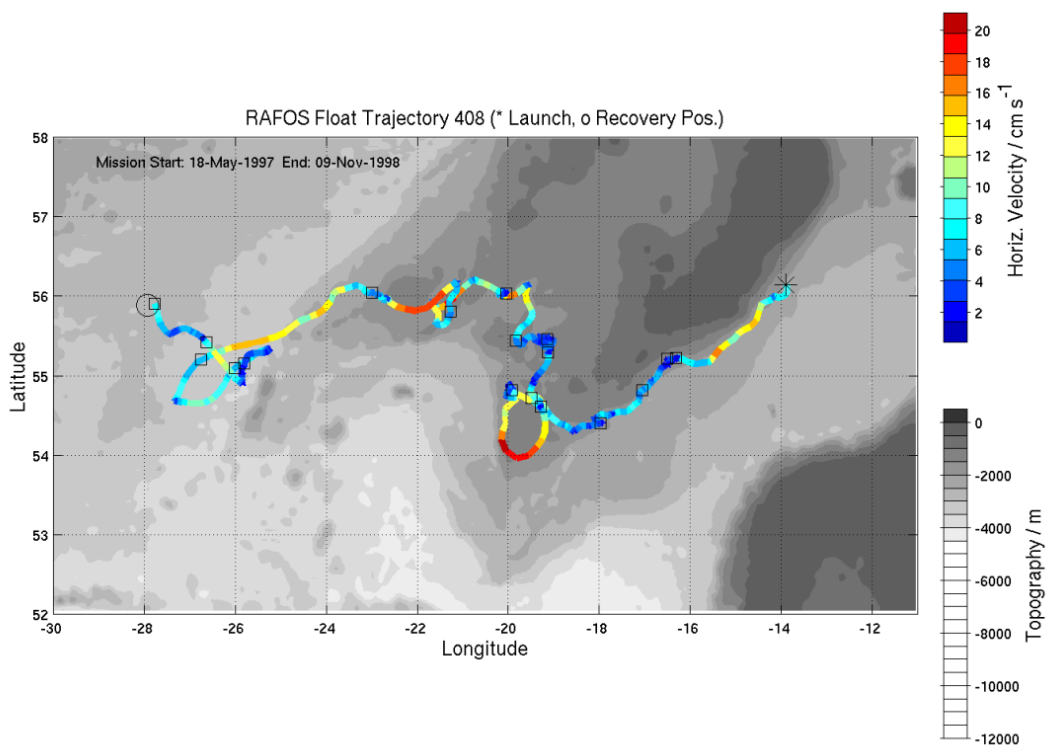


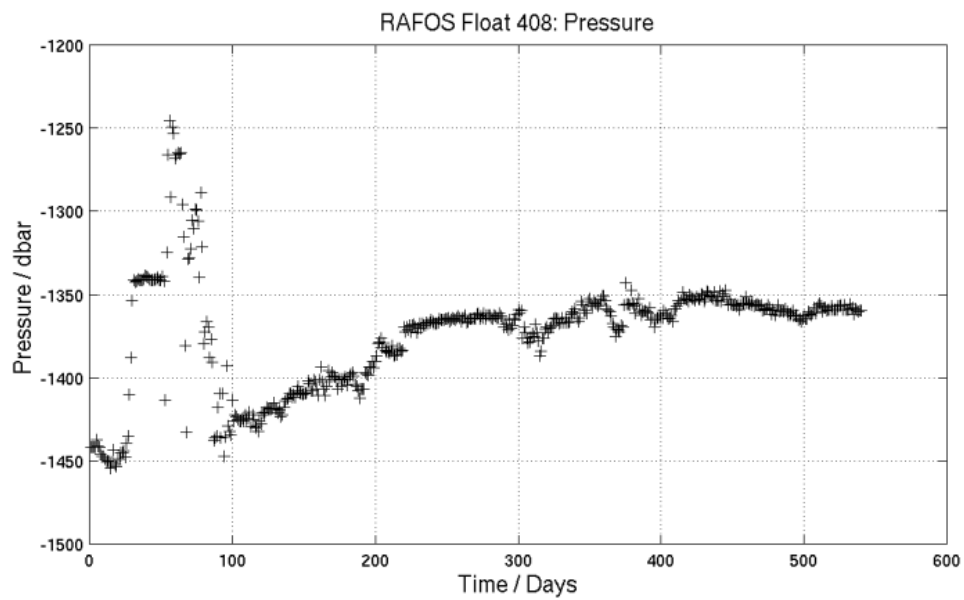
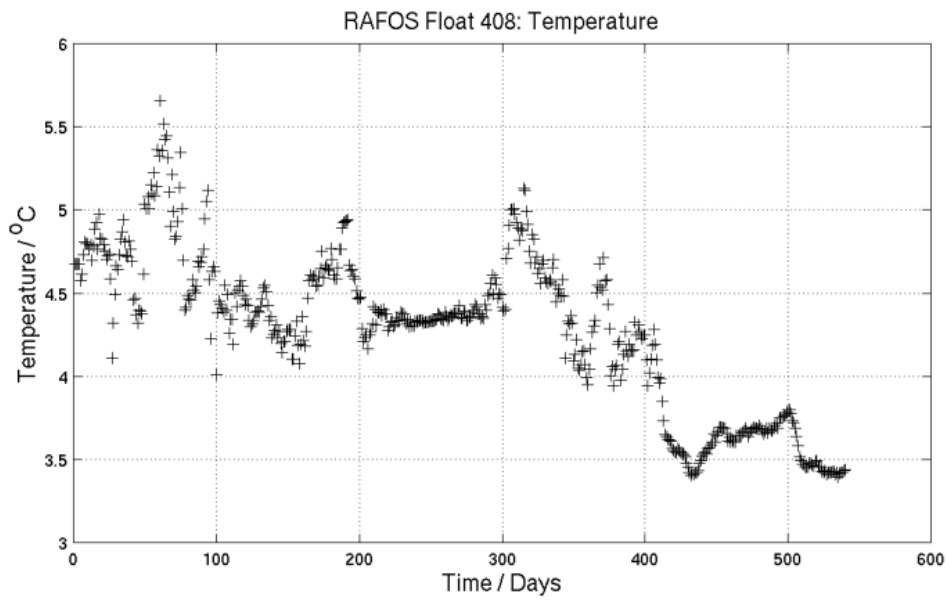
RAFOS Float 407: Pressure



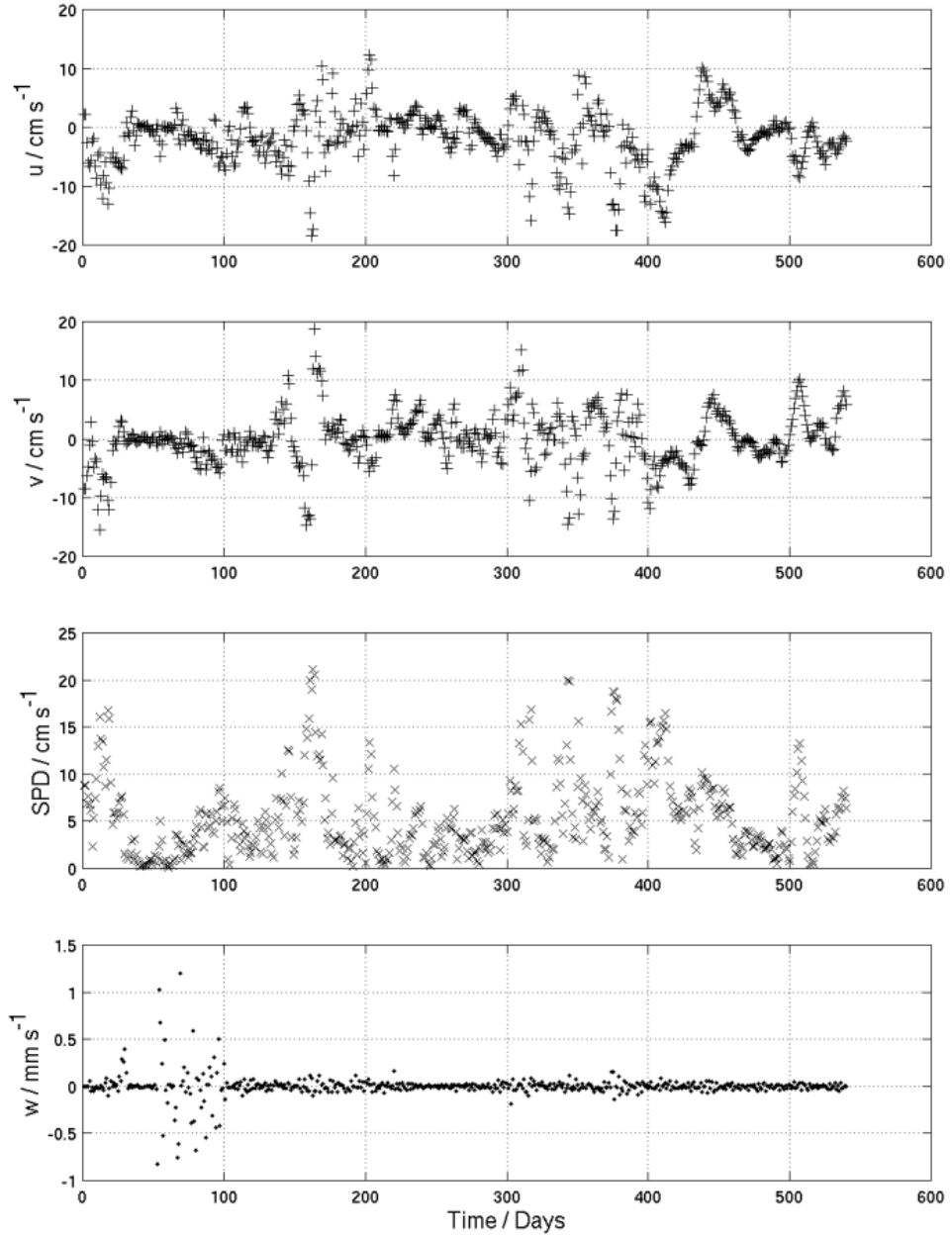
RAFOS Float 407: Velocities

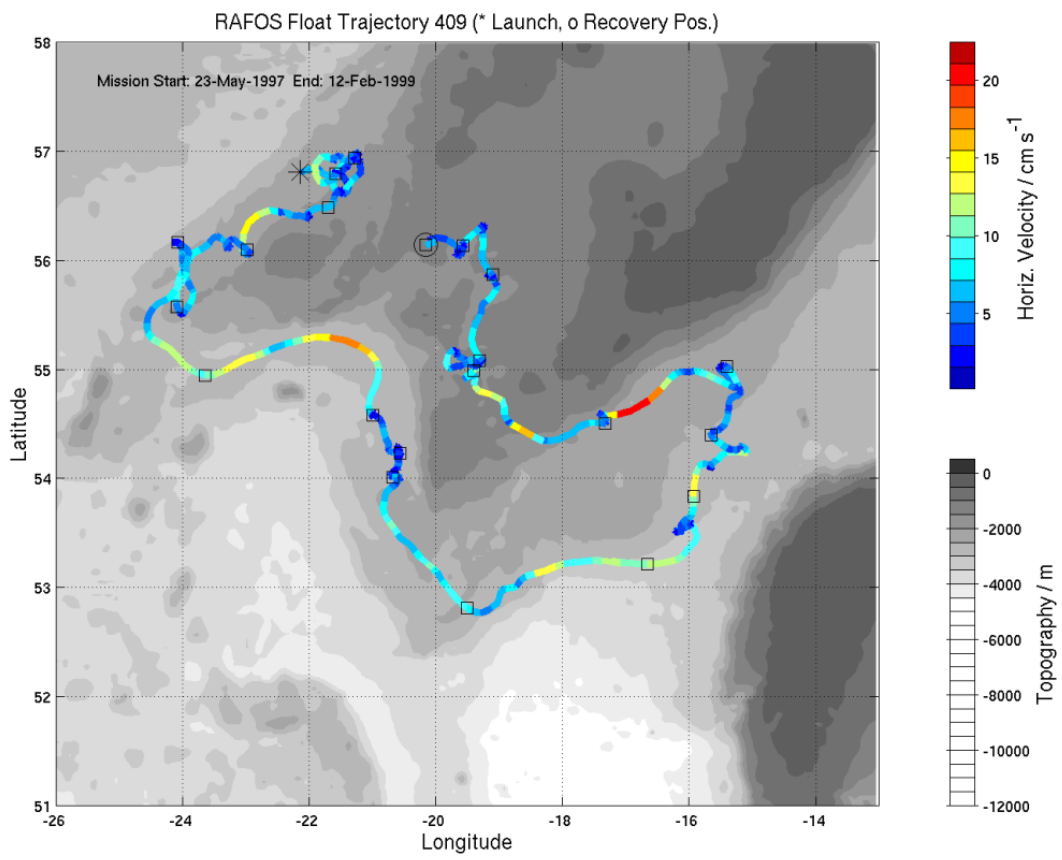




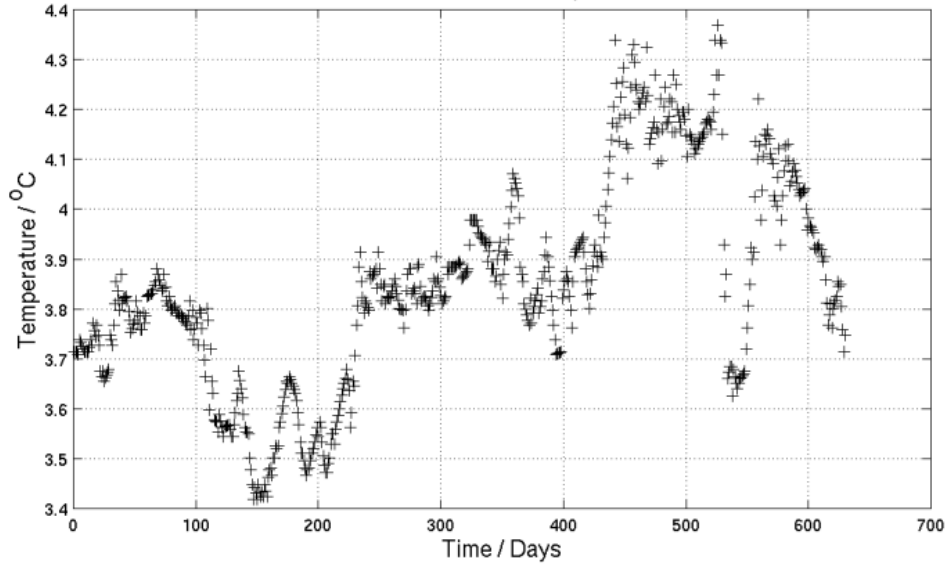


RAFOS Float 408: Velocities

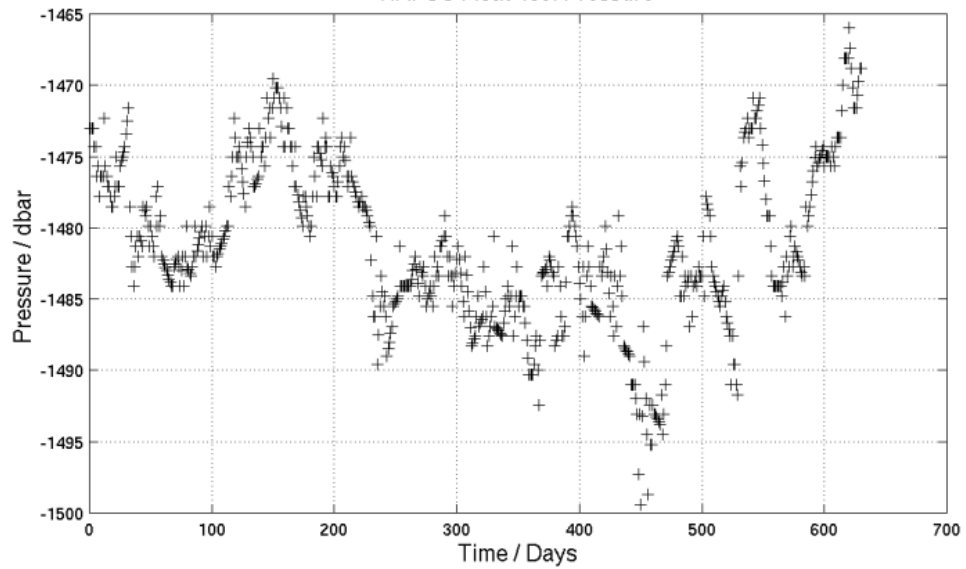




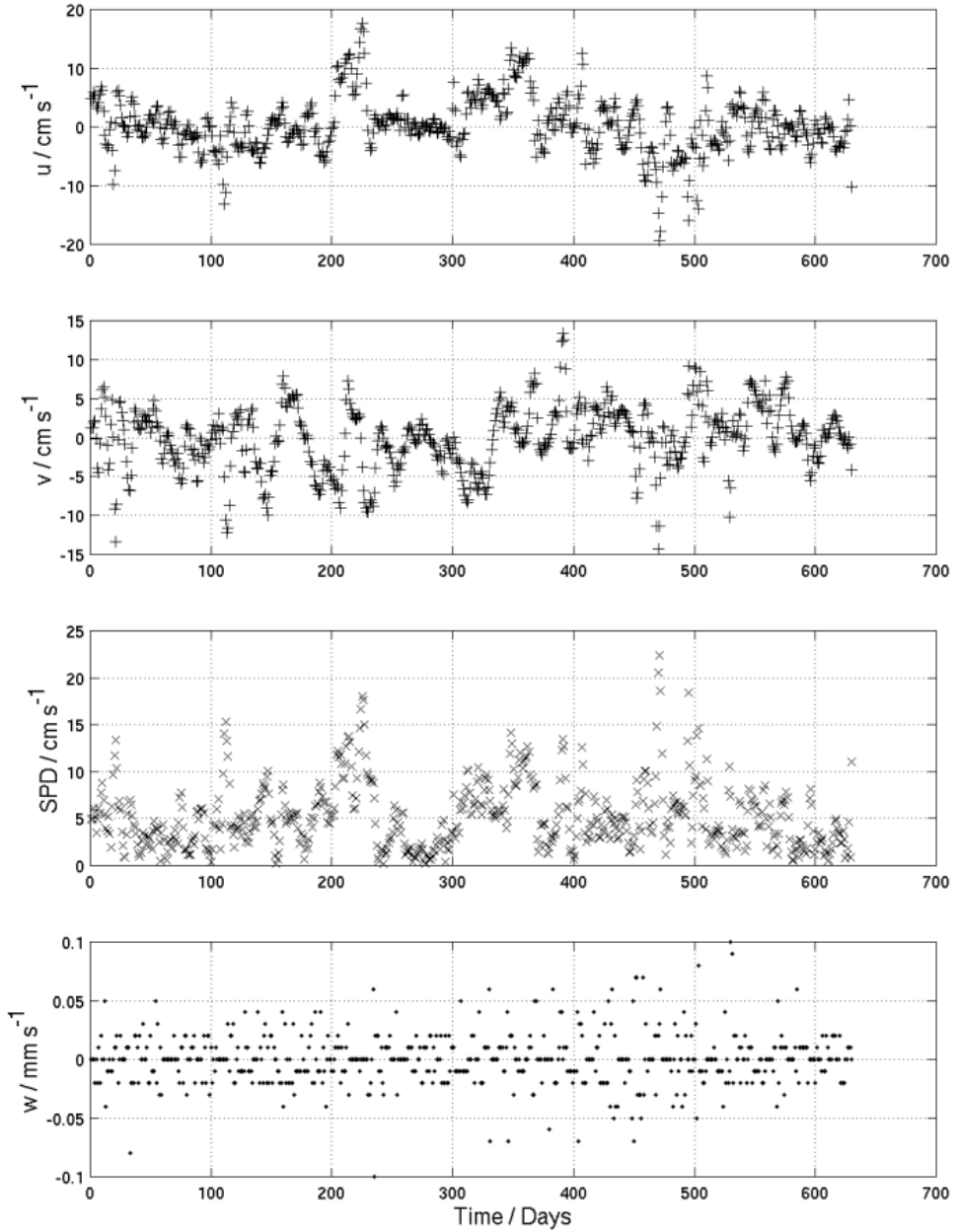
RAFOS Float 409: Temperature



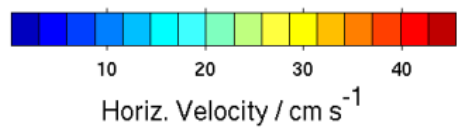
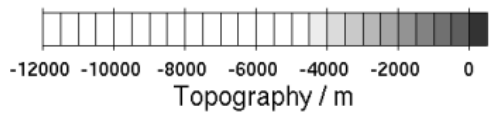
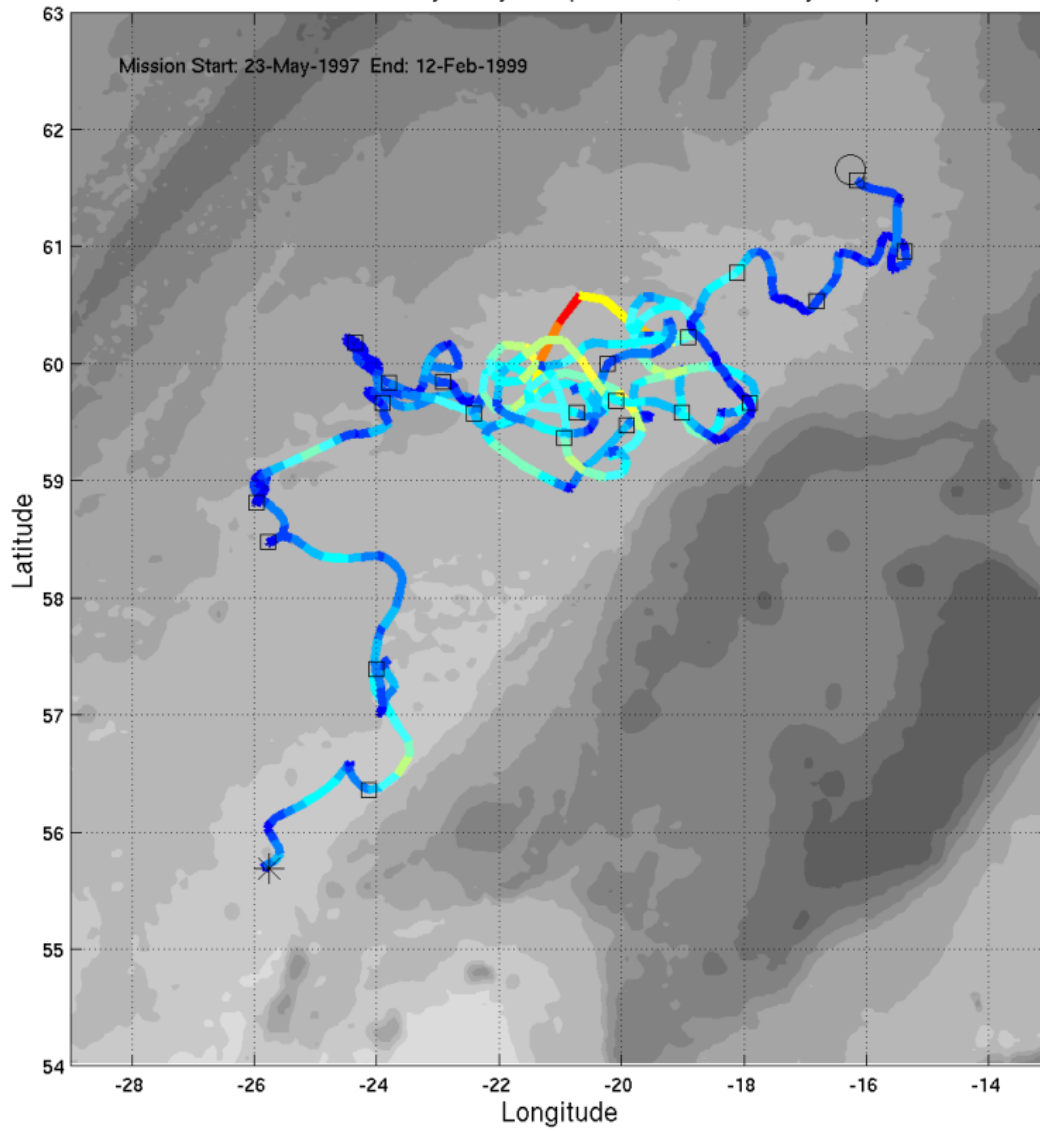
RAFOS Float 409: Pressure



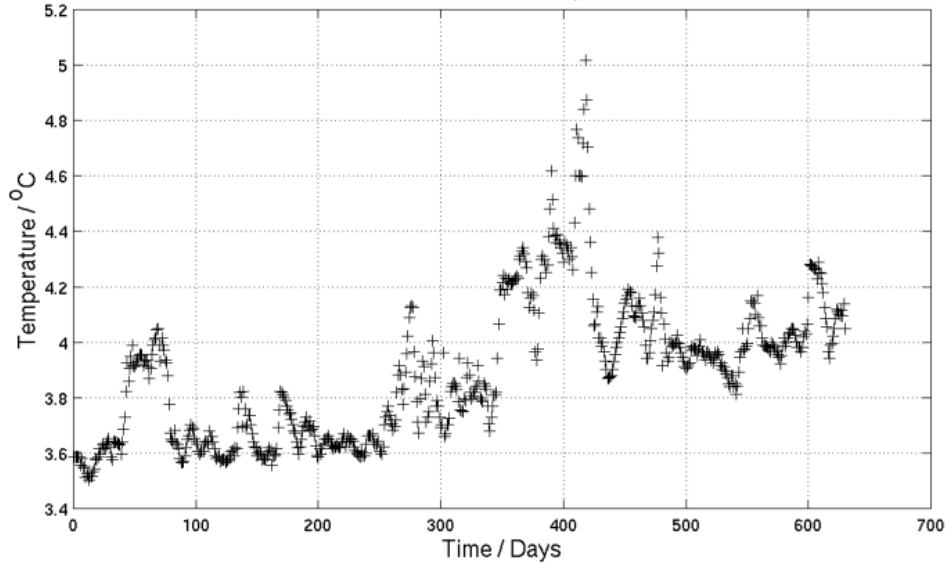
RAFOS Float 409: Velocities



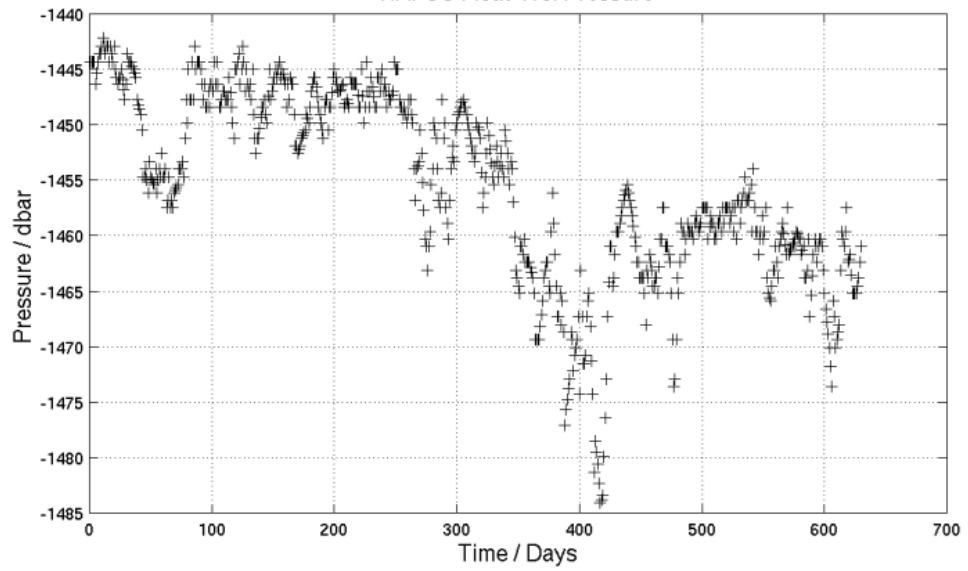
RAFOS Float Trajectory 410 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)



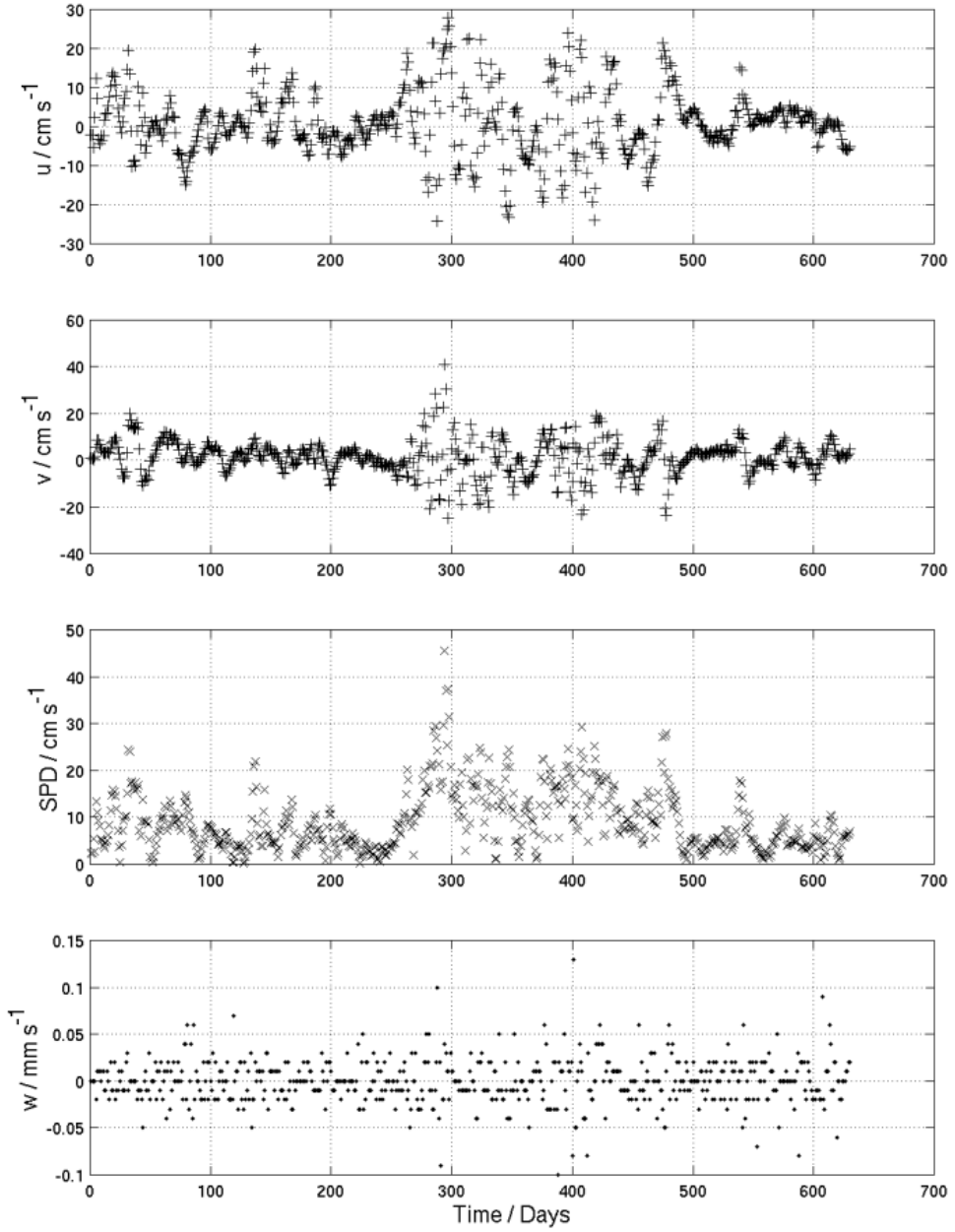
RAFOS Float 410: Temperature

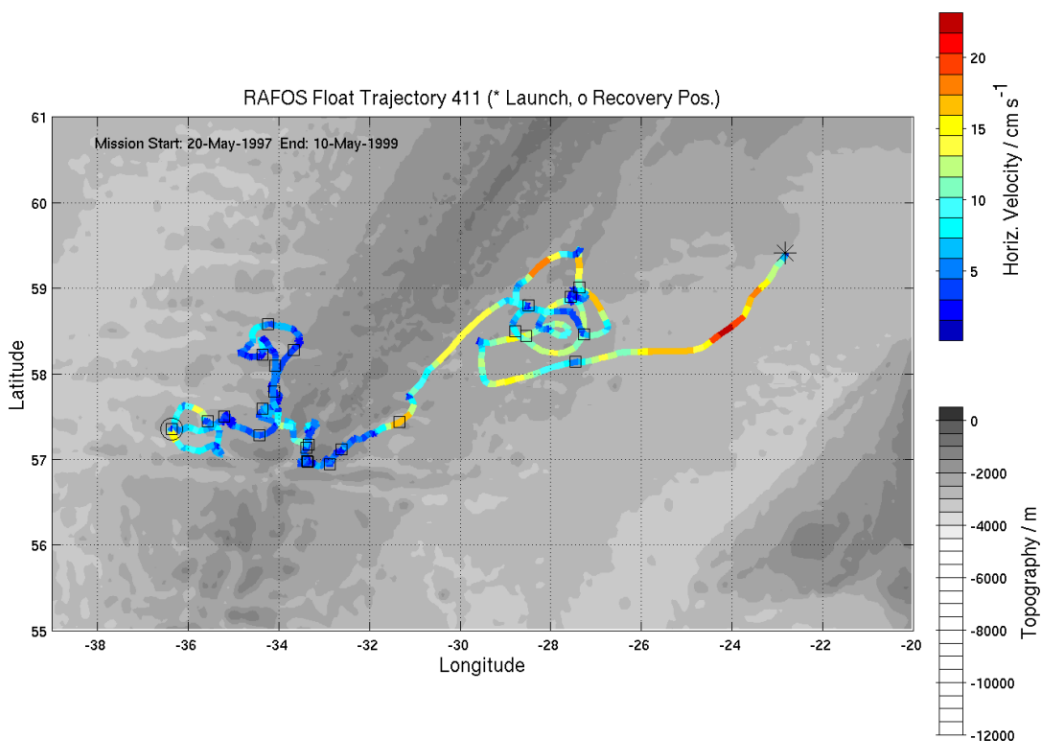


RAFOS Float 410: Pressure

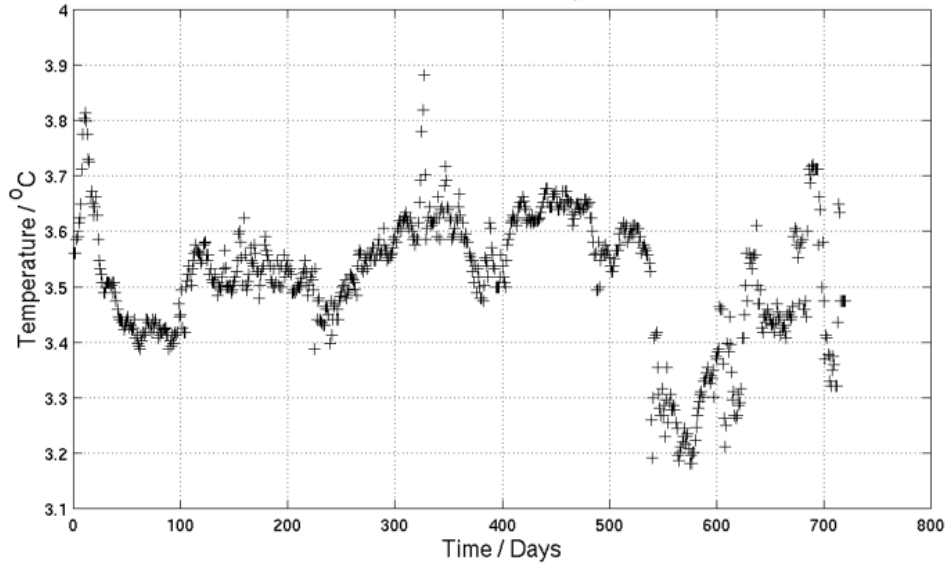


RAFOS Float 410: Velocities

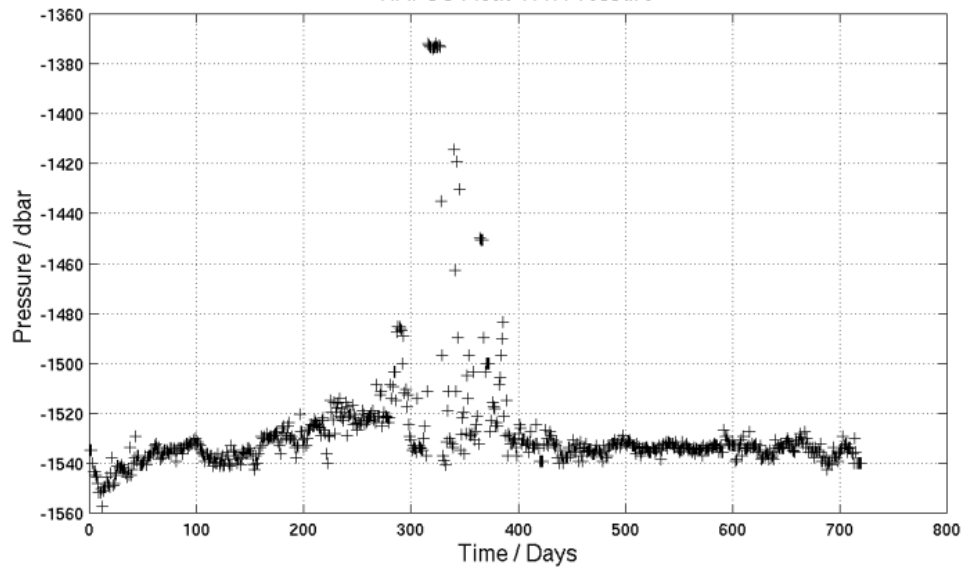




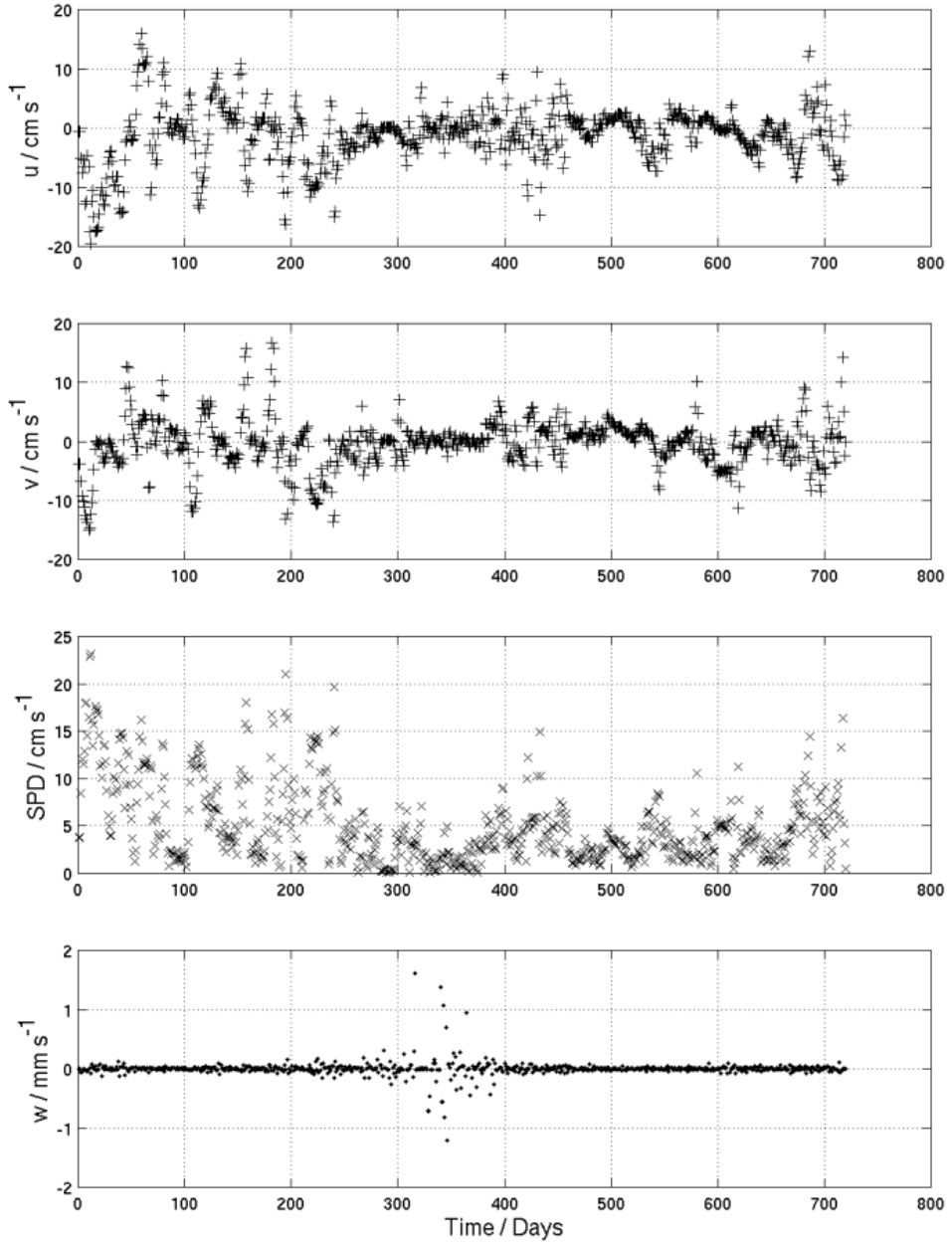
RAFOS Float 411: Temperature

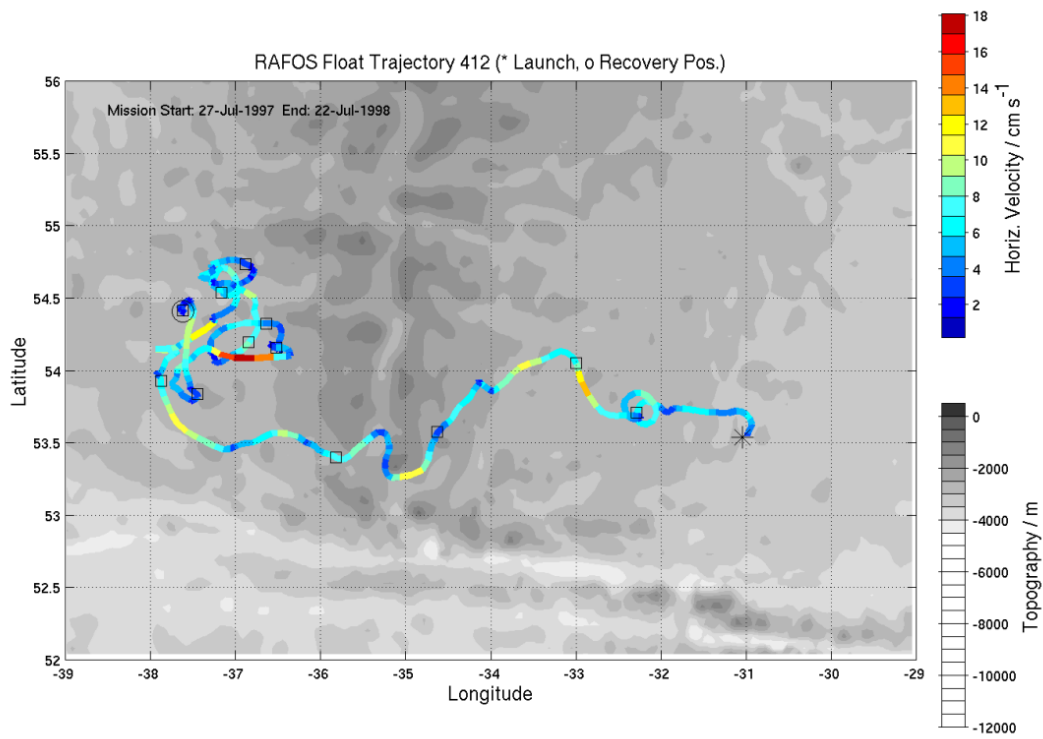


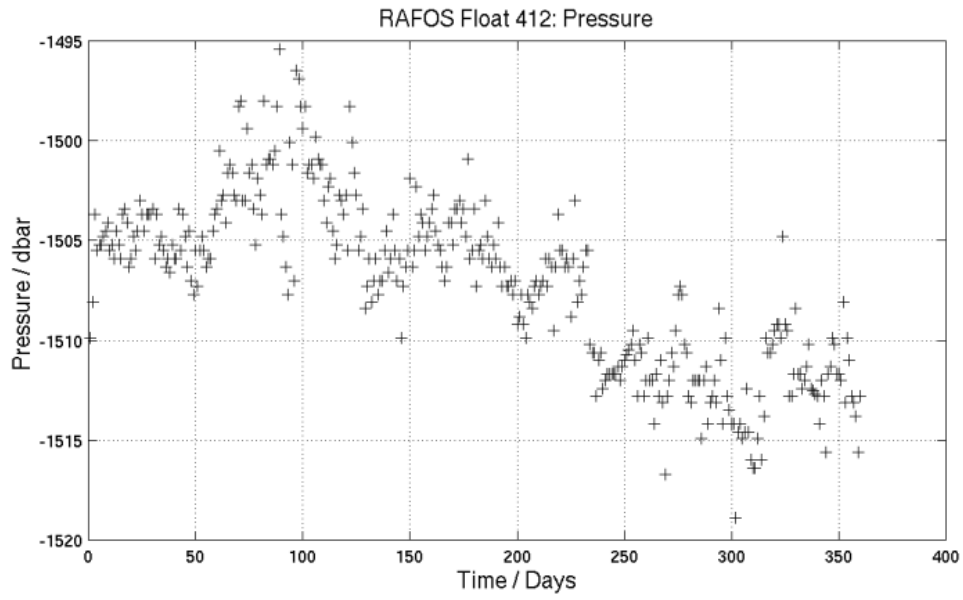
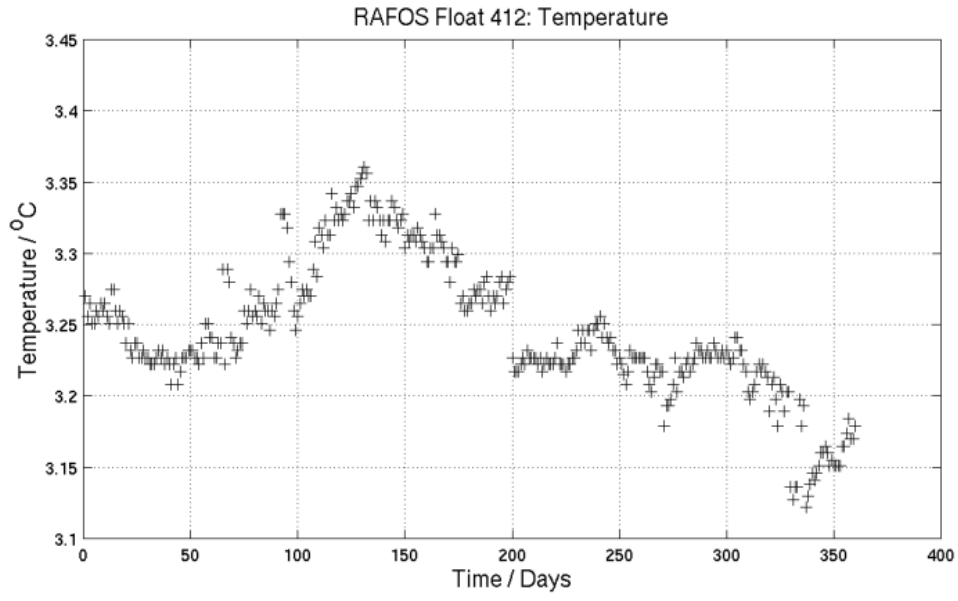
RAFOS Float 411: Pressure



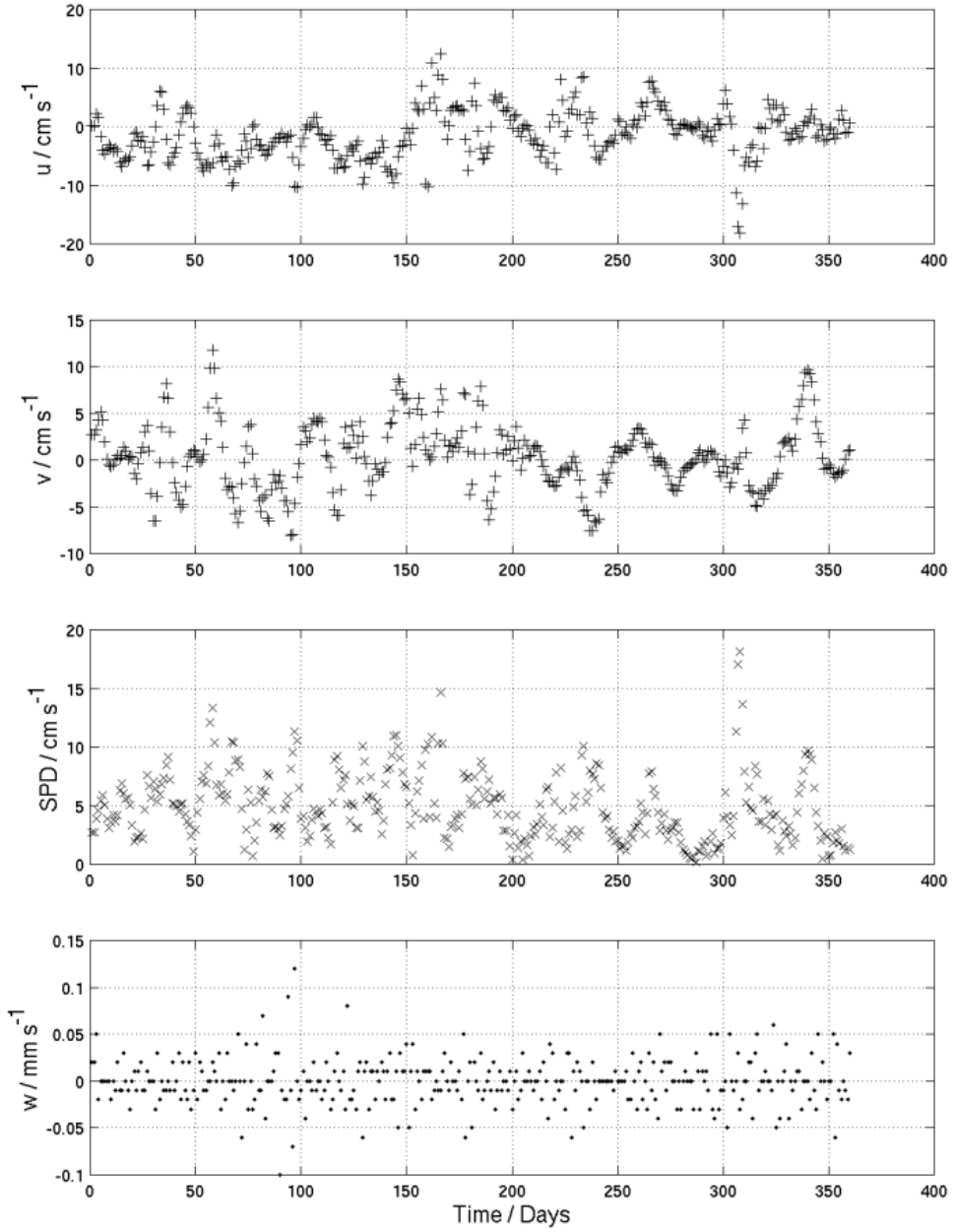
RAFOS Float 411: Velocities



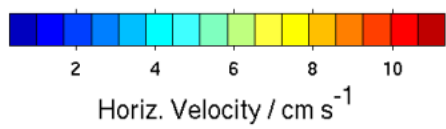
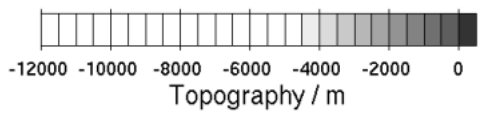
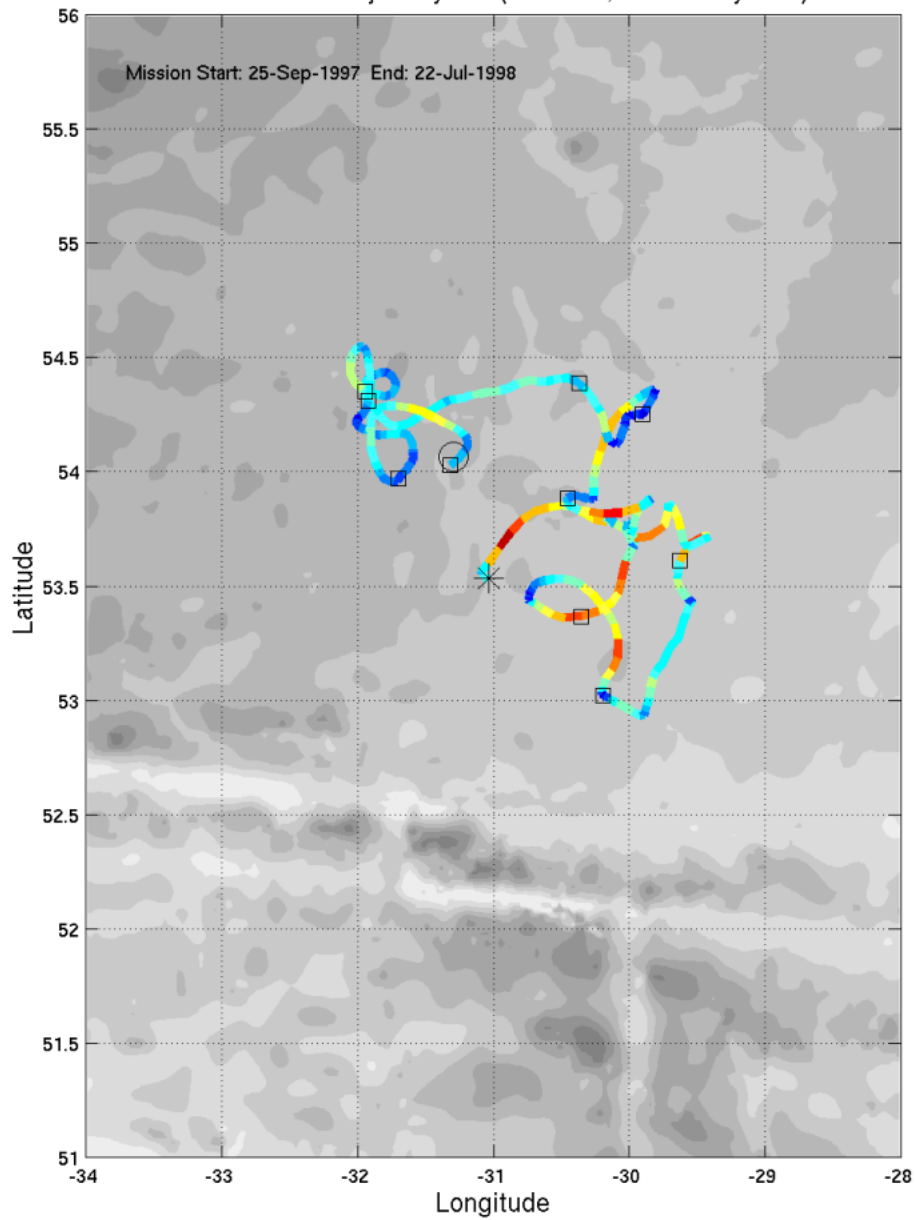


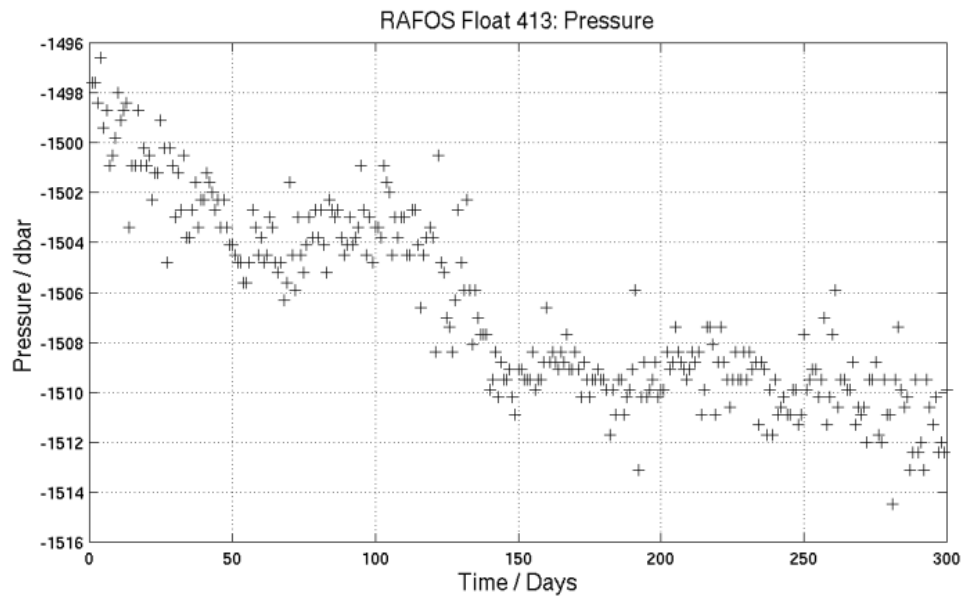
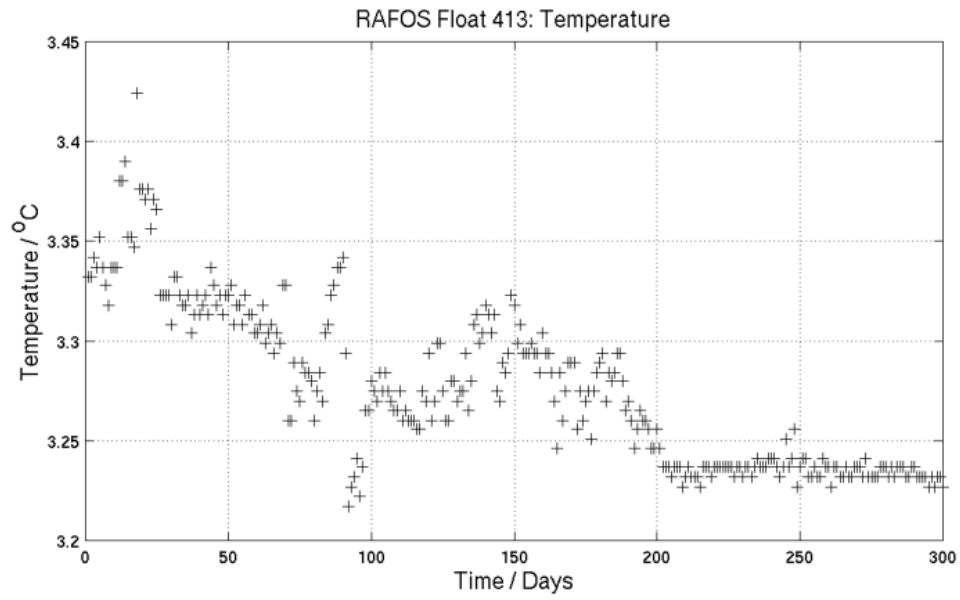


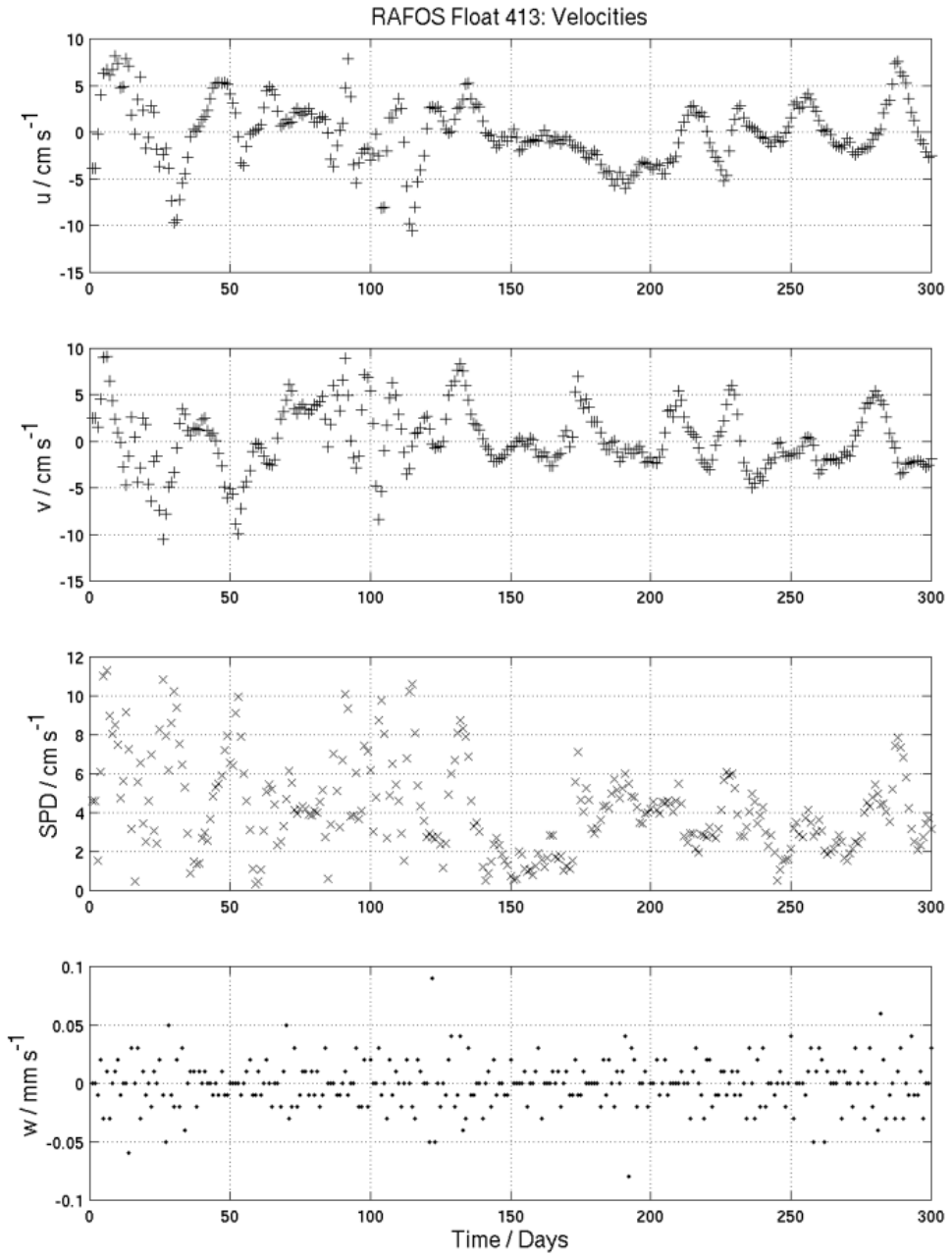
RAFOS Float 412: Velocities



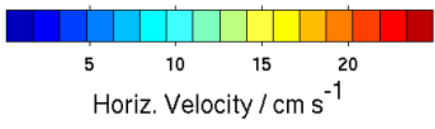
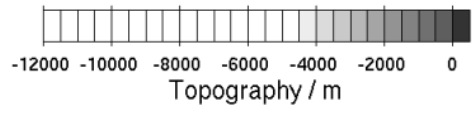
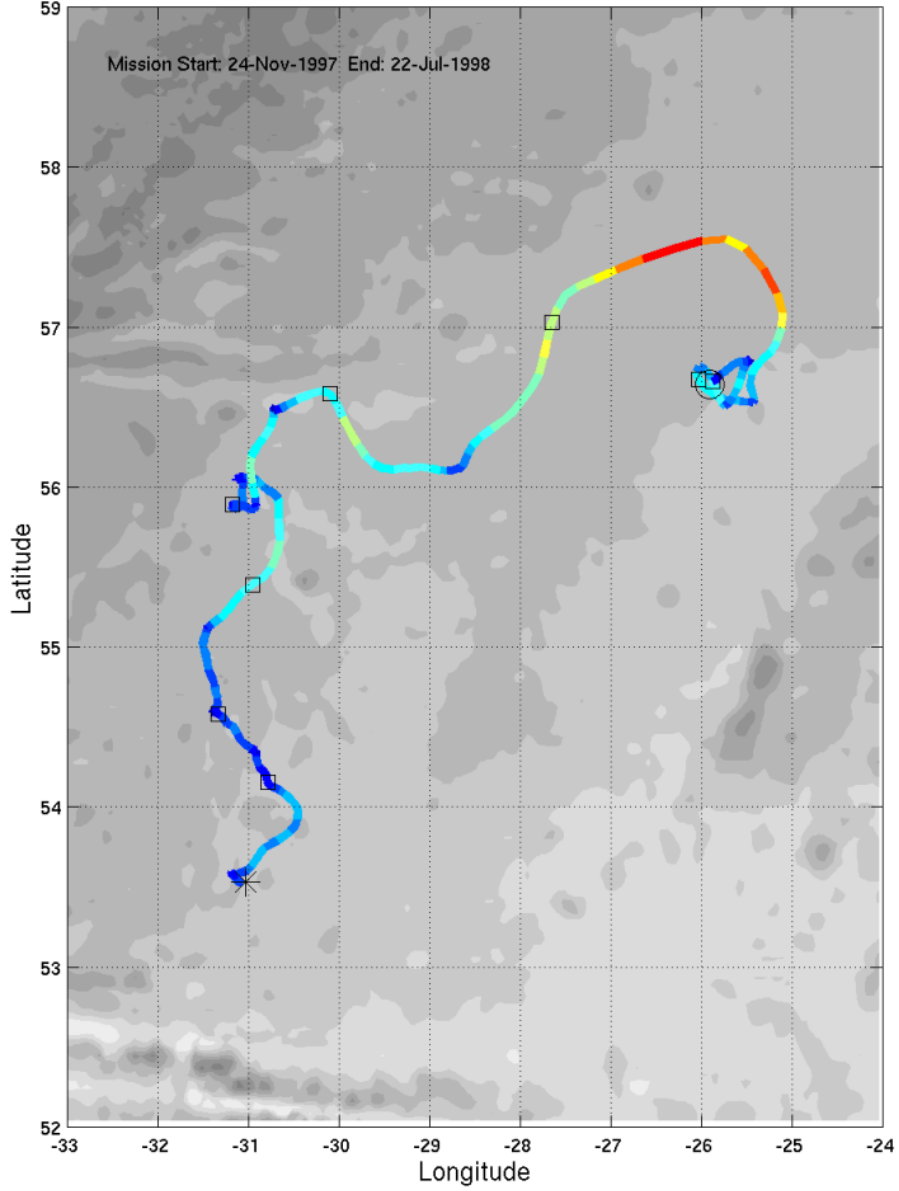
RAFOS Float Trajectory 413 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)

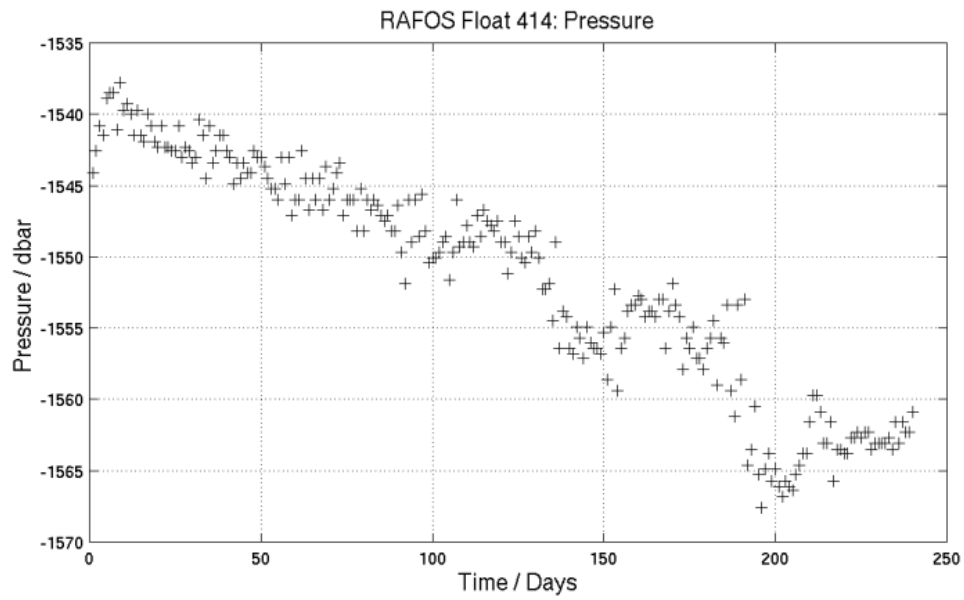
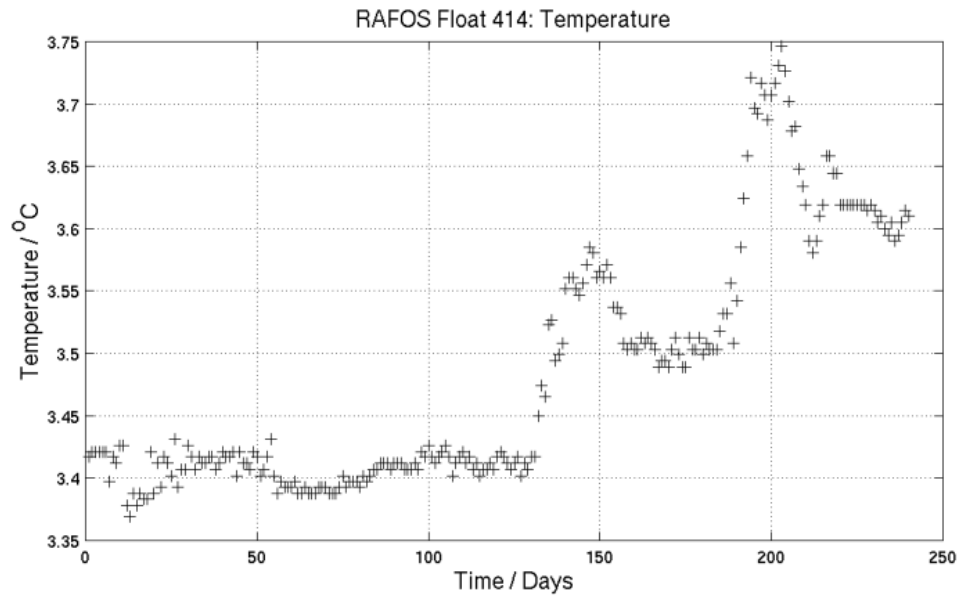




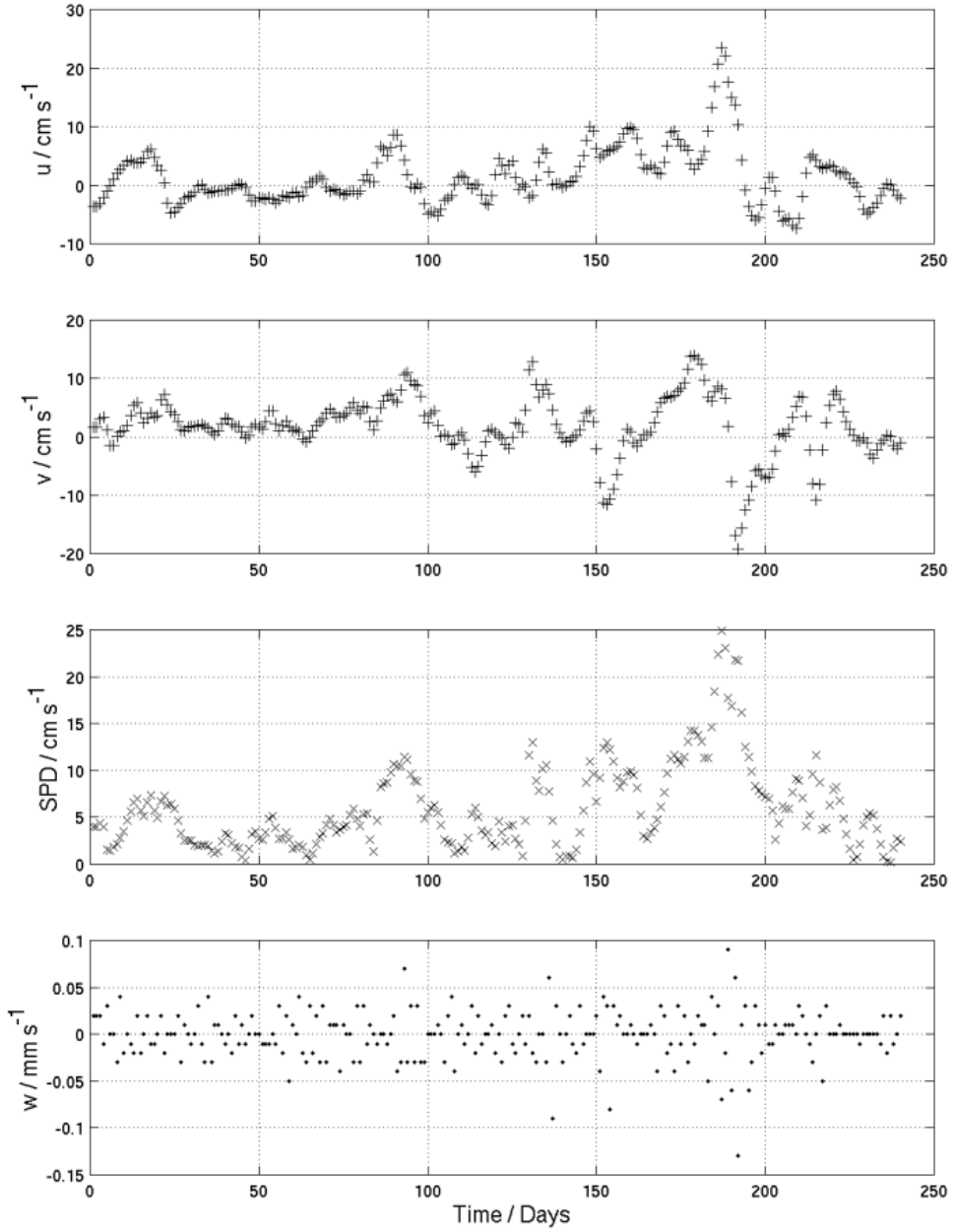


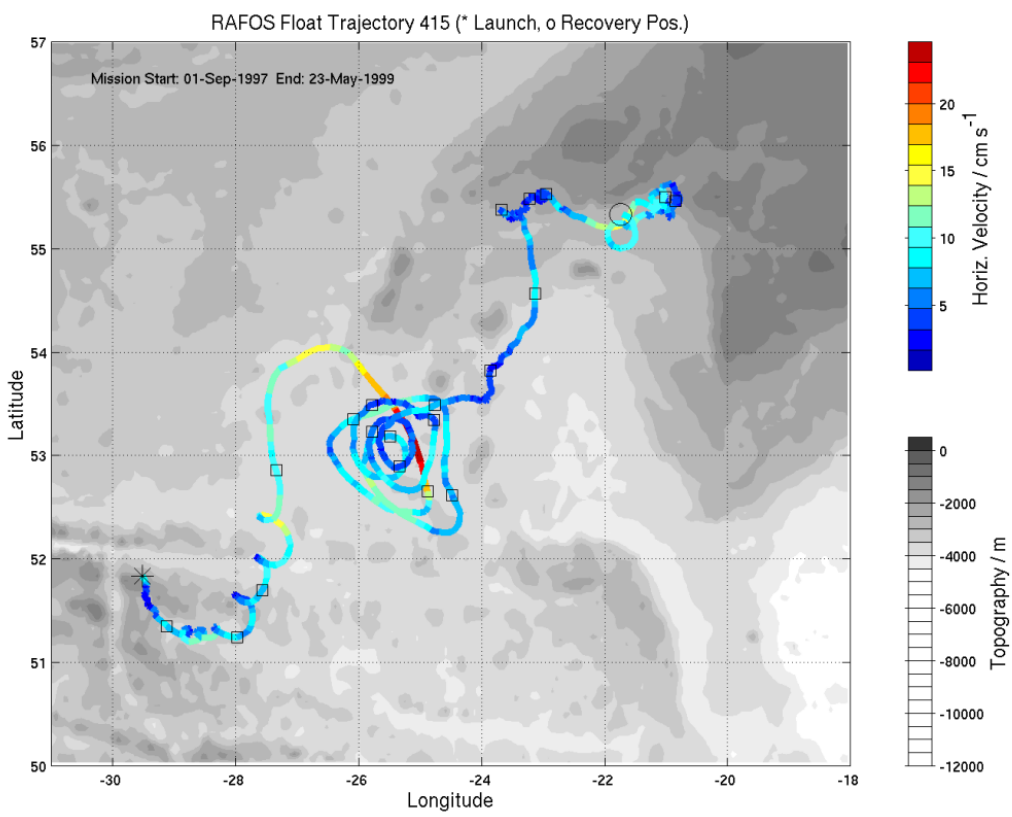
RAFOS Float Trajectory 414 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)

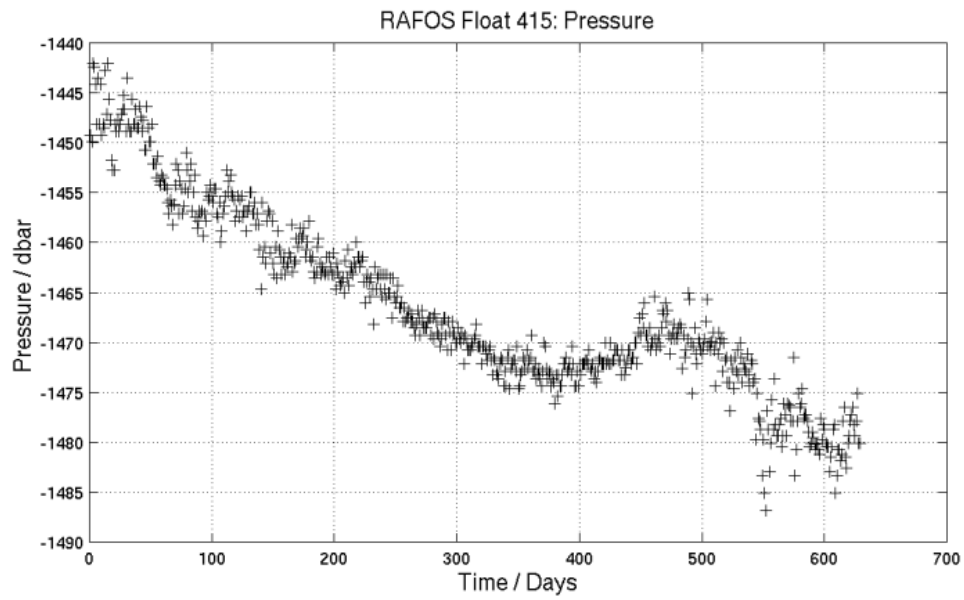
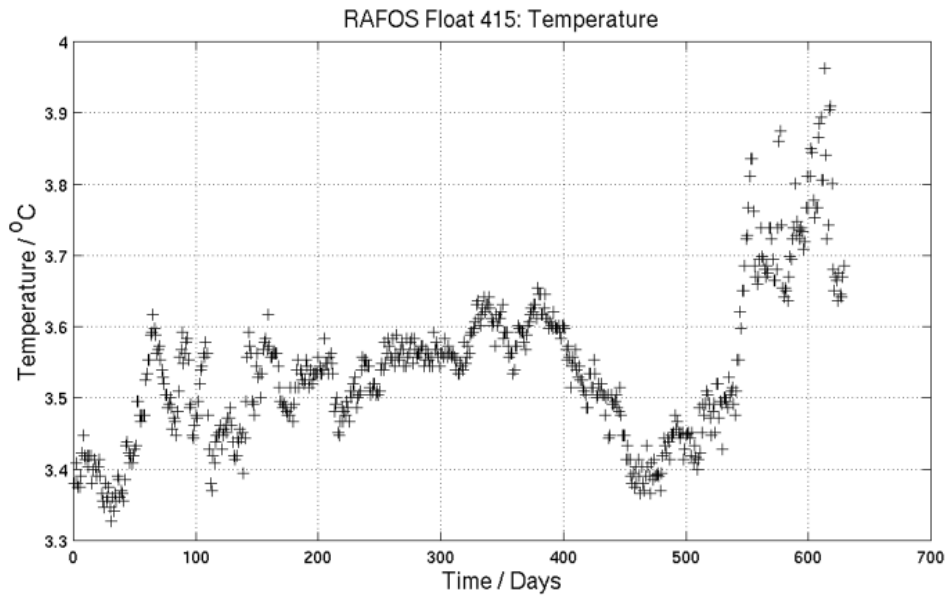




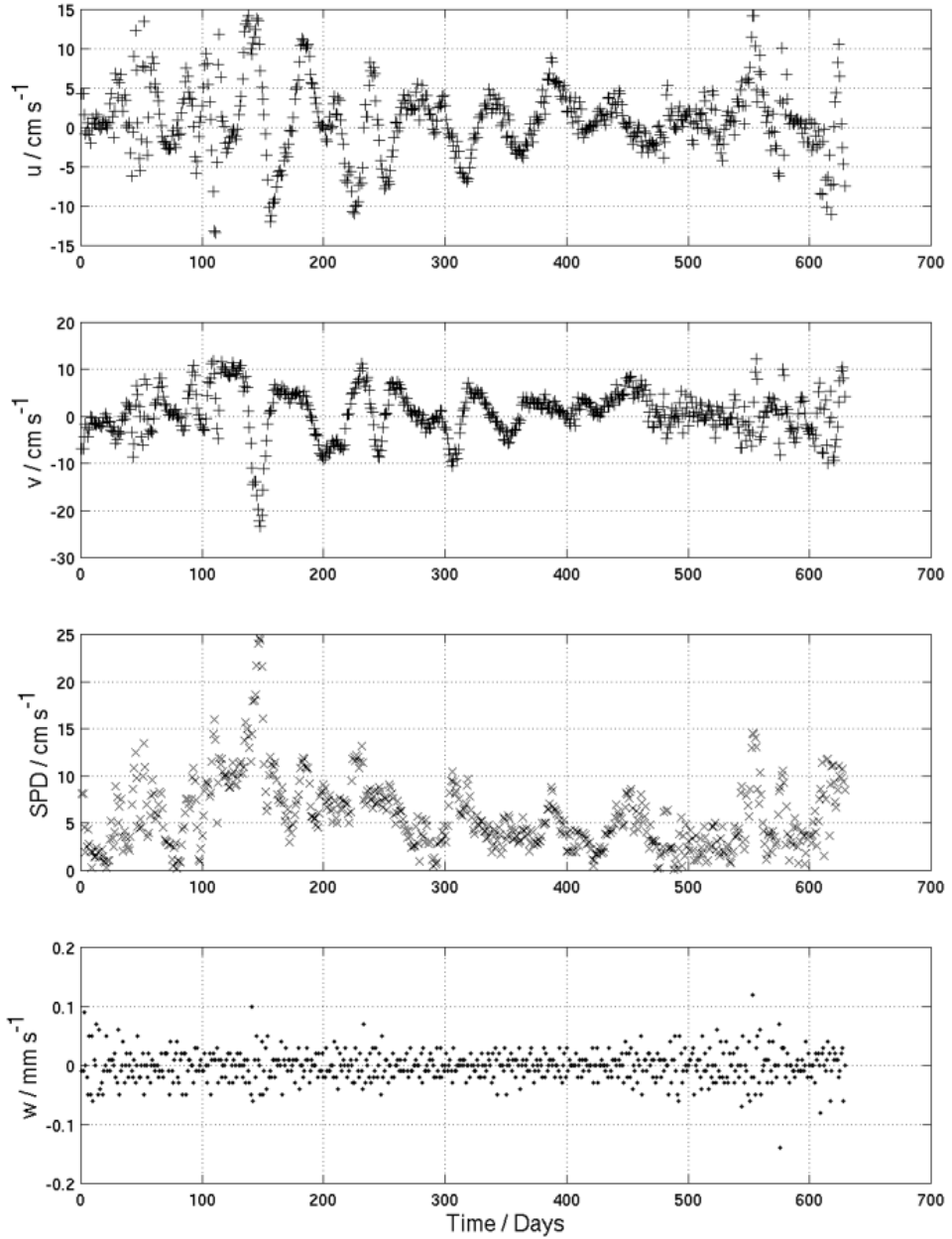
RAFOS Float 414: Velocities



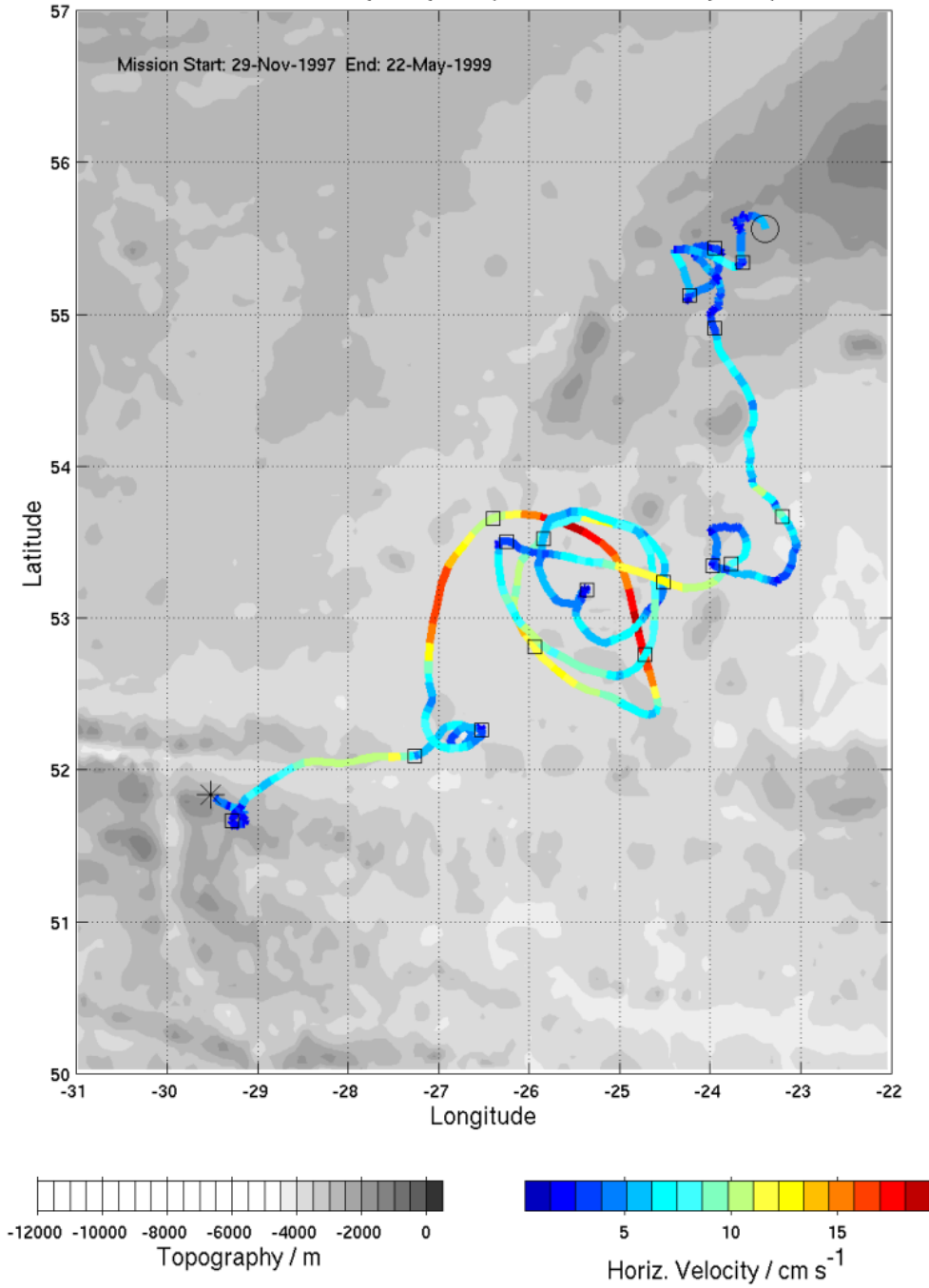


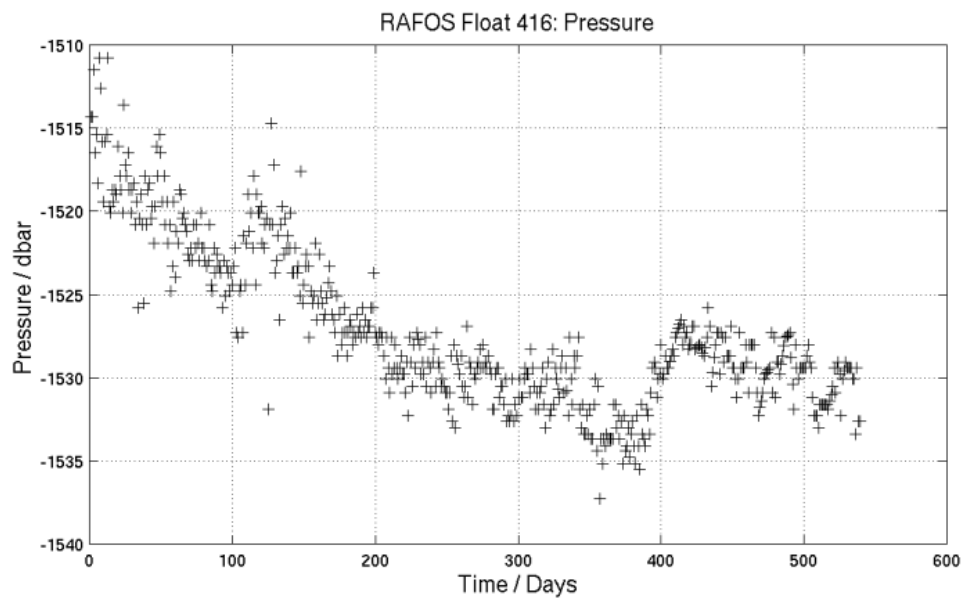
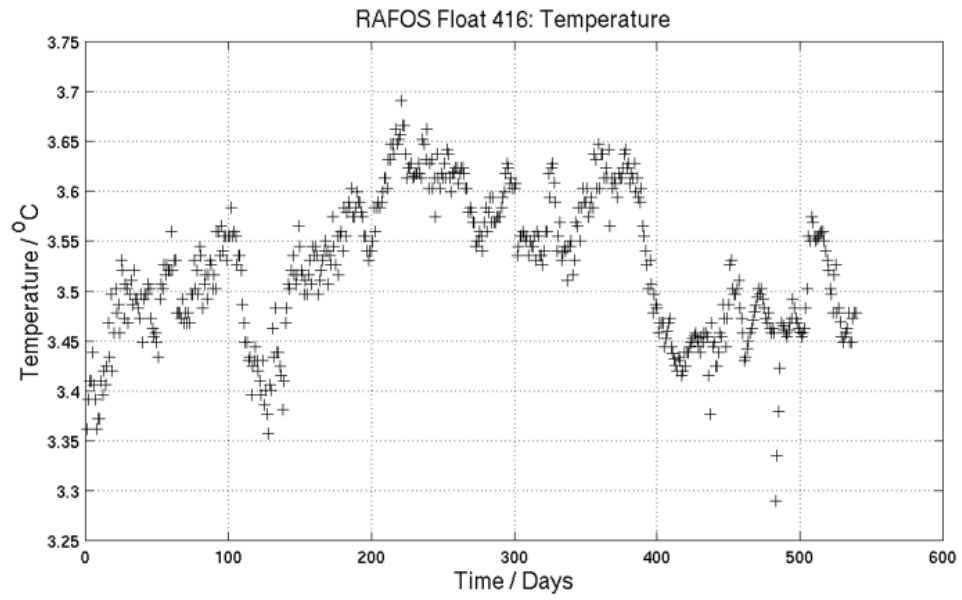


RAFOS Float 415: Velocities

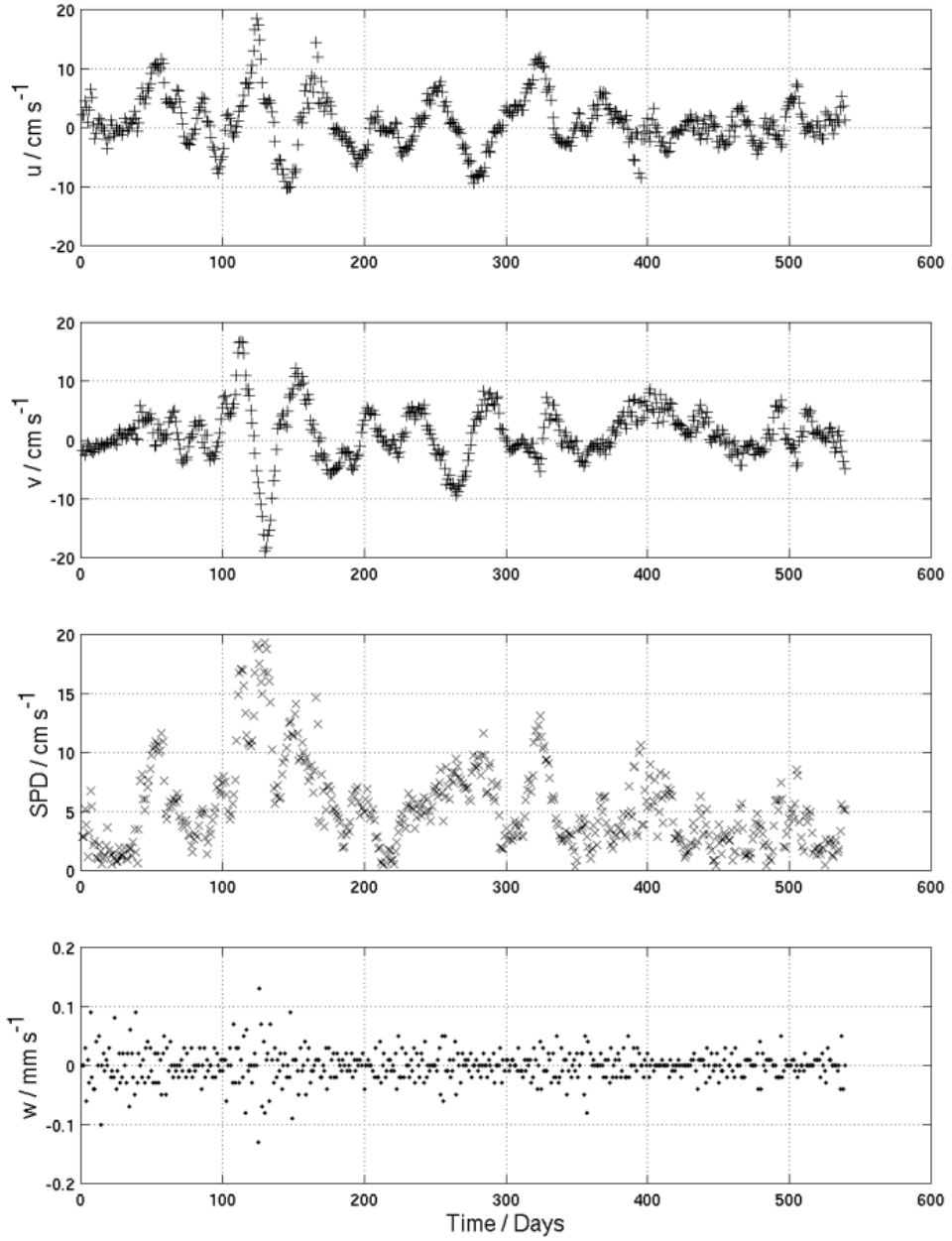


RAFOS Float Trajectory 416 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)

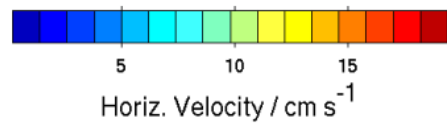
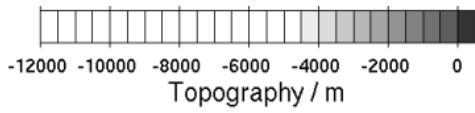
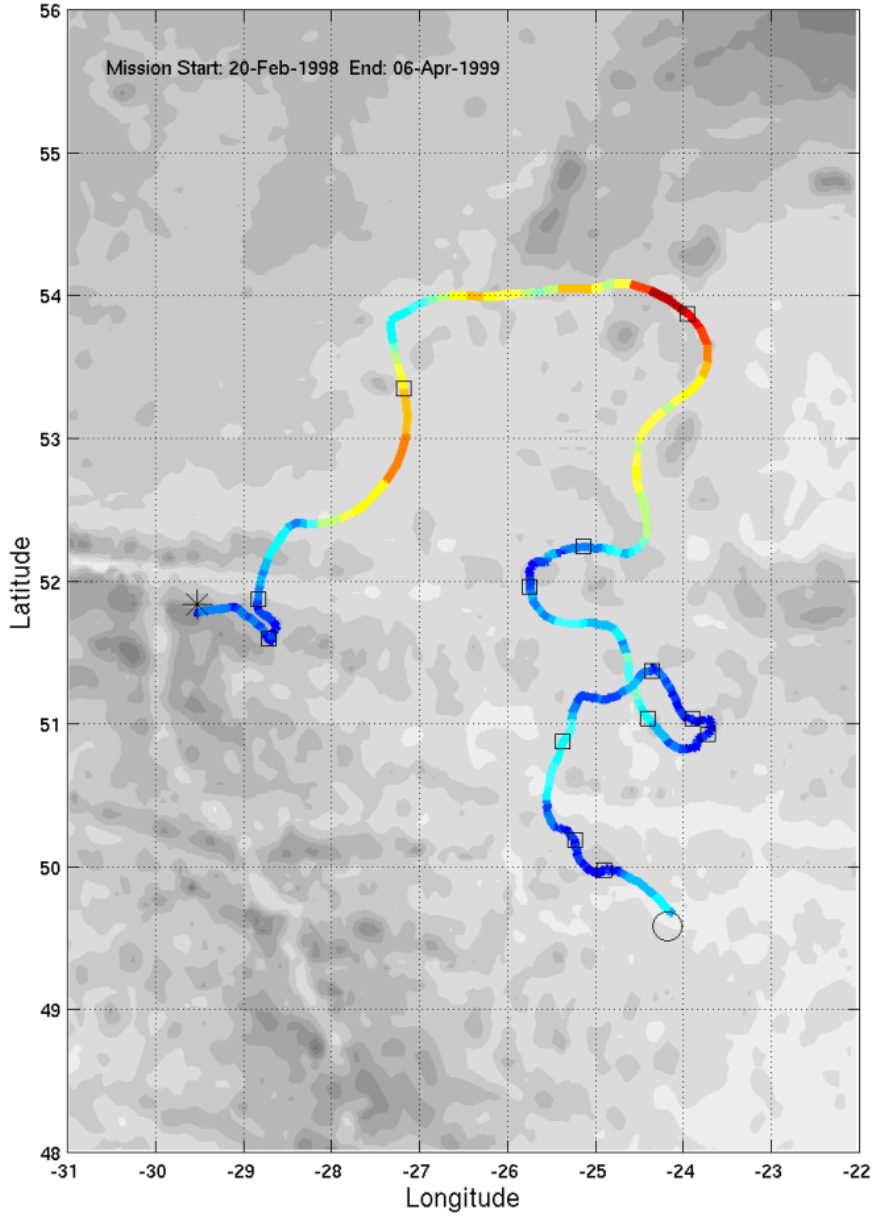




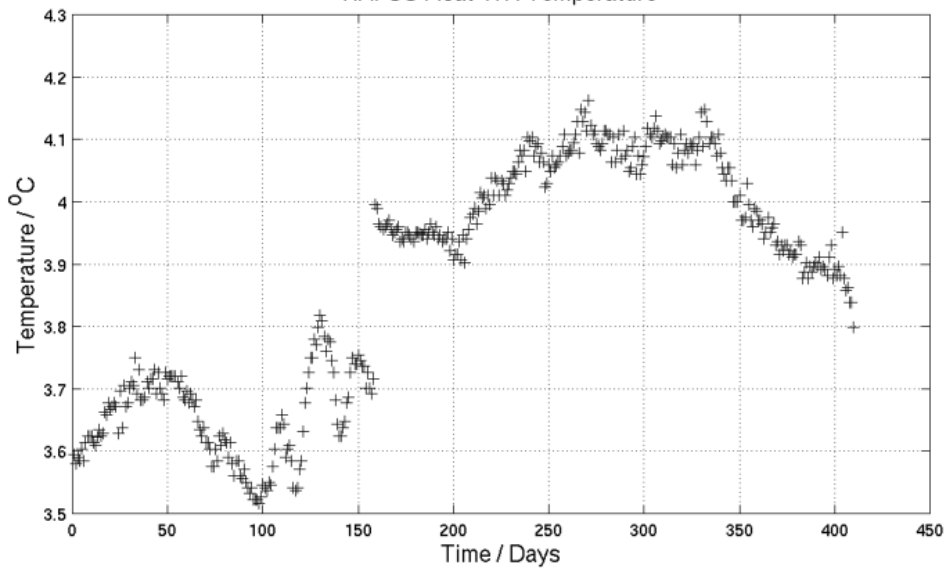
RAFOS Float 416: Velocities



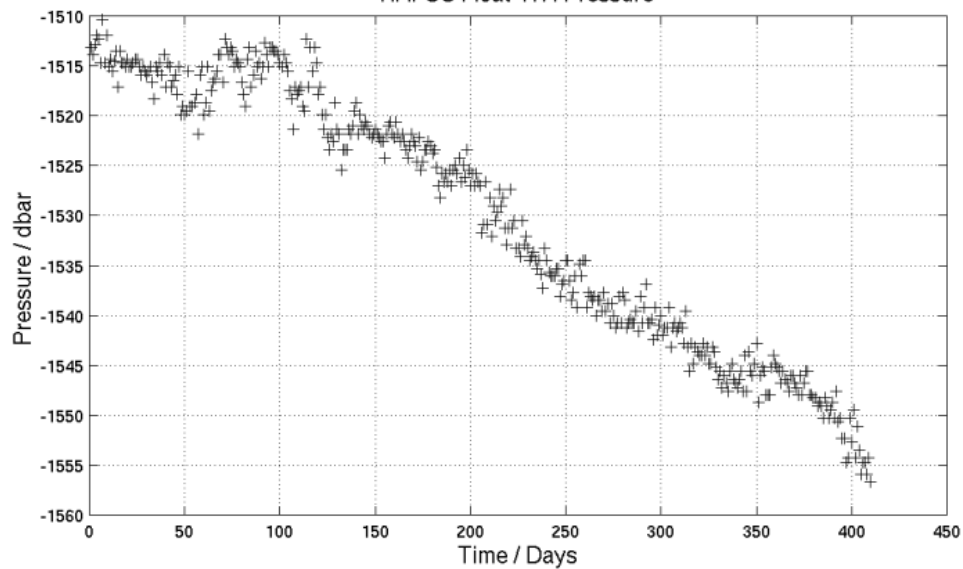
RAFOS Float Trajectory 417 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)



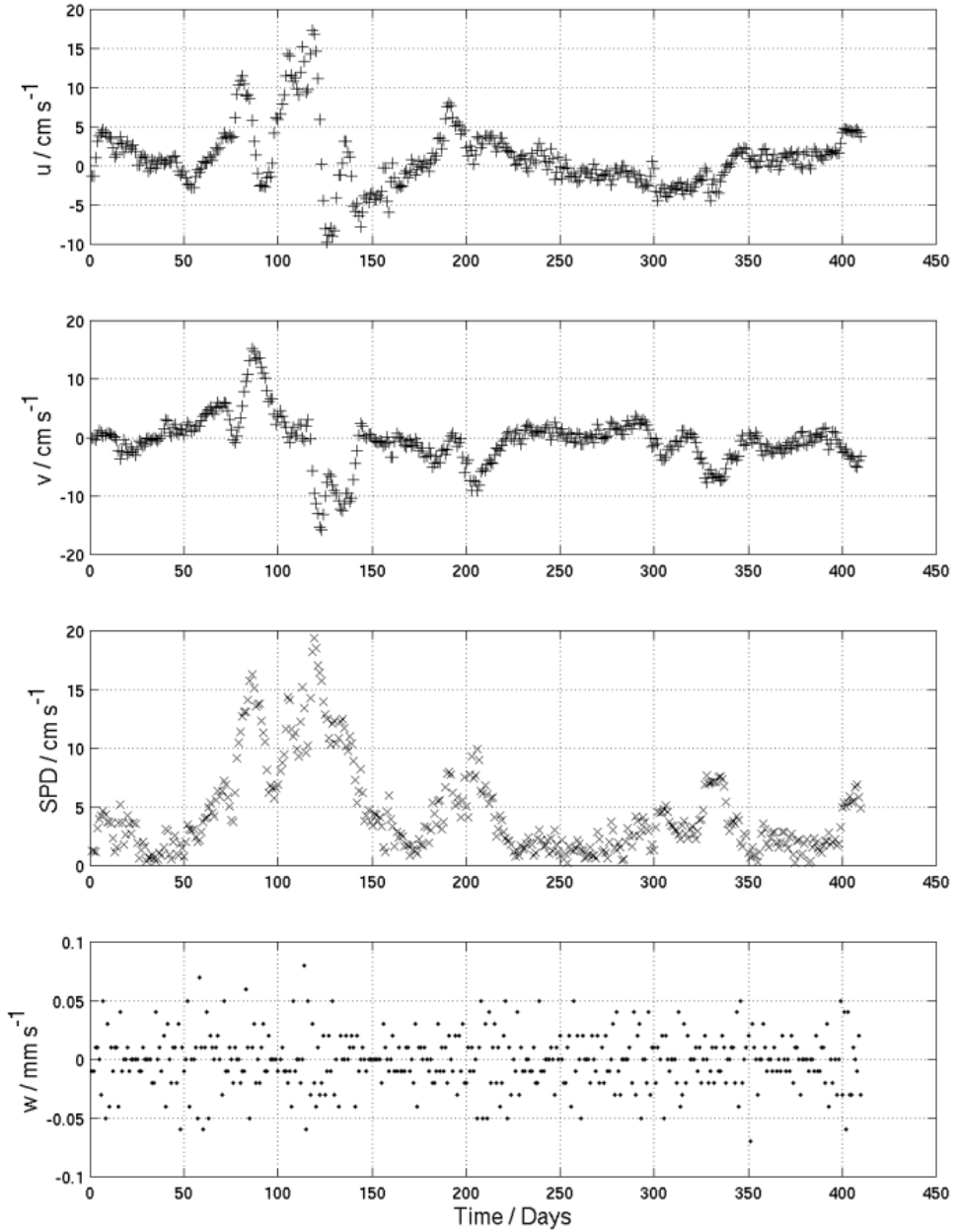
RAFOS Float 417: Temperature

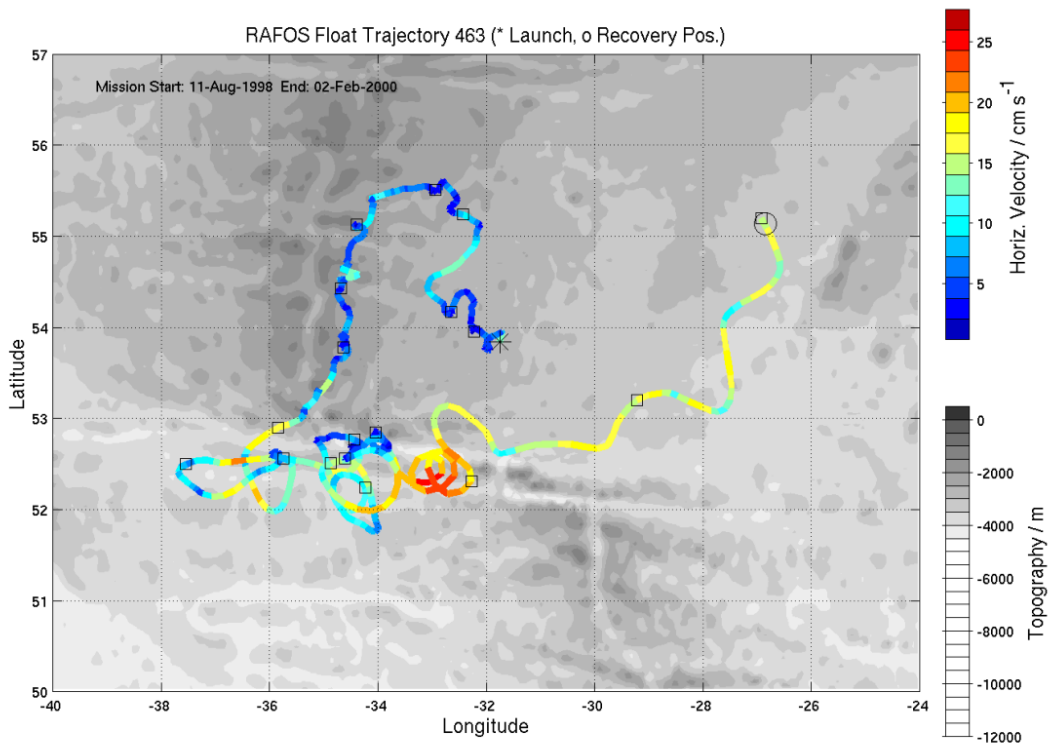


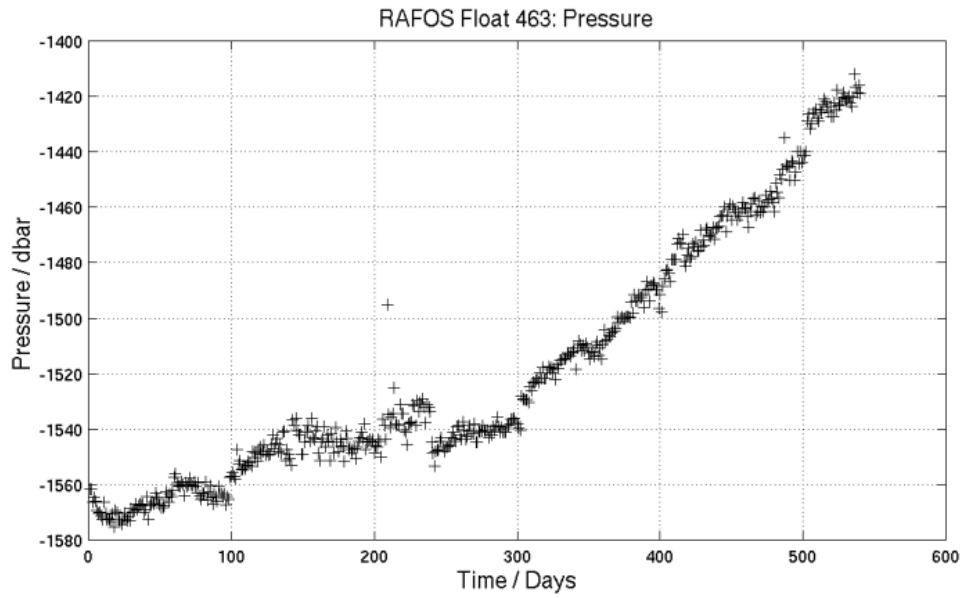
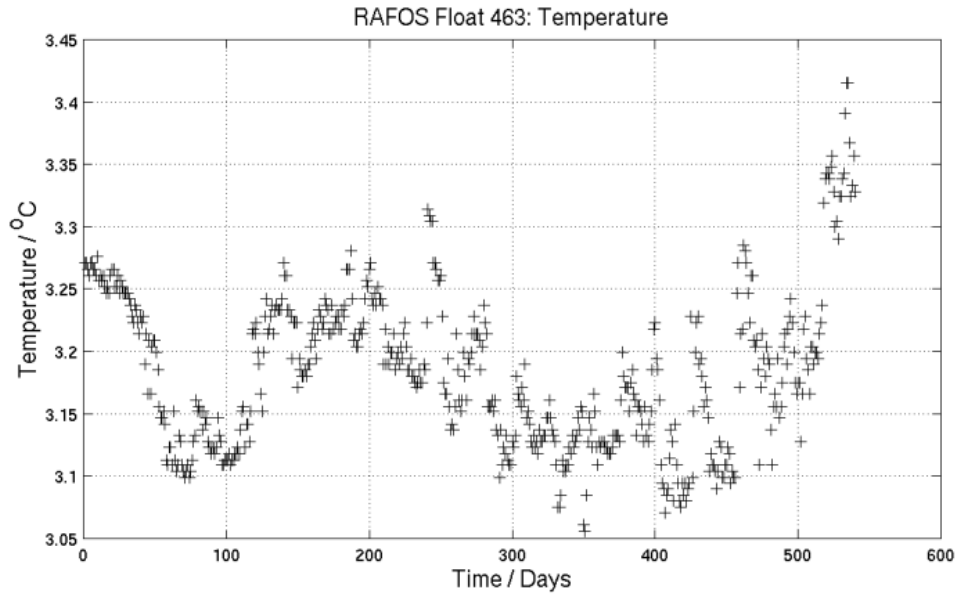
RAFOS Float 417: Pressure



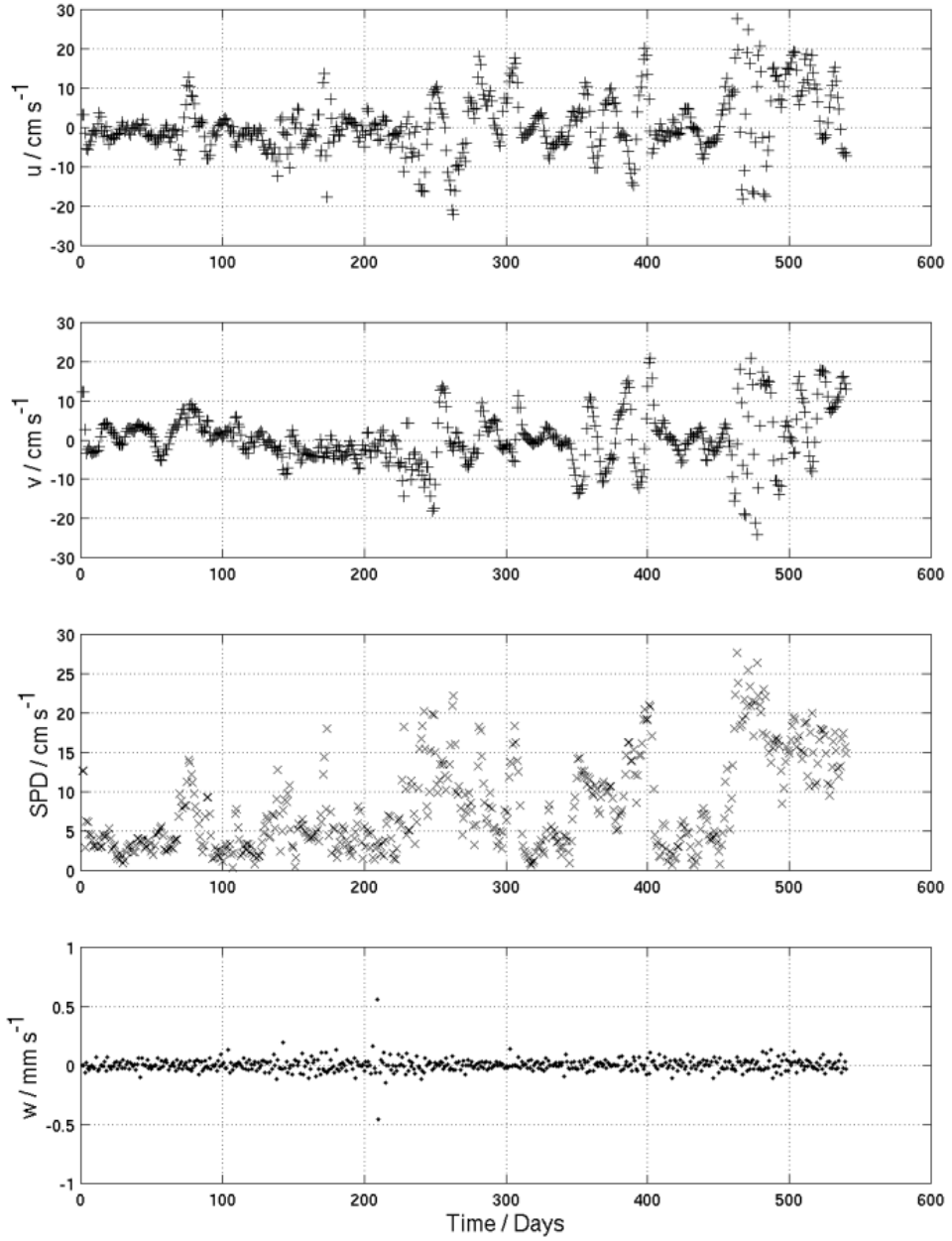
RAFOS Float 417: Velocities

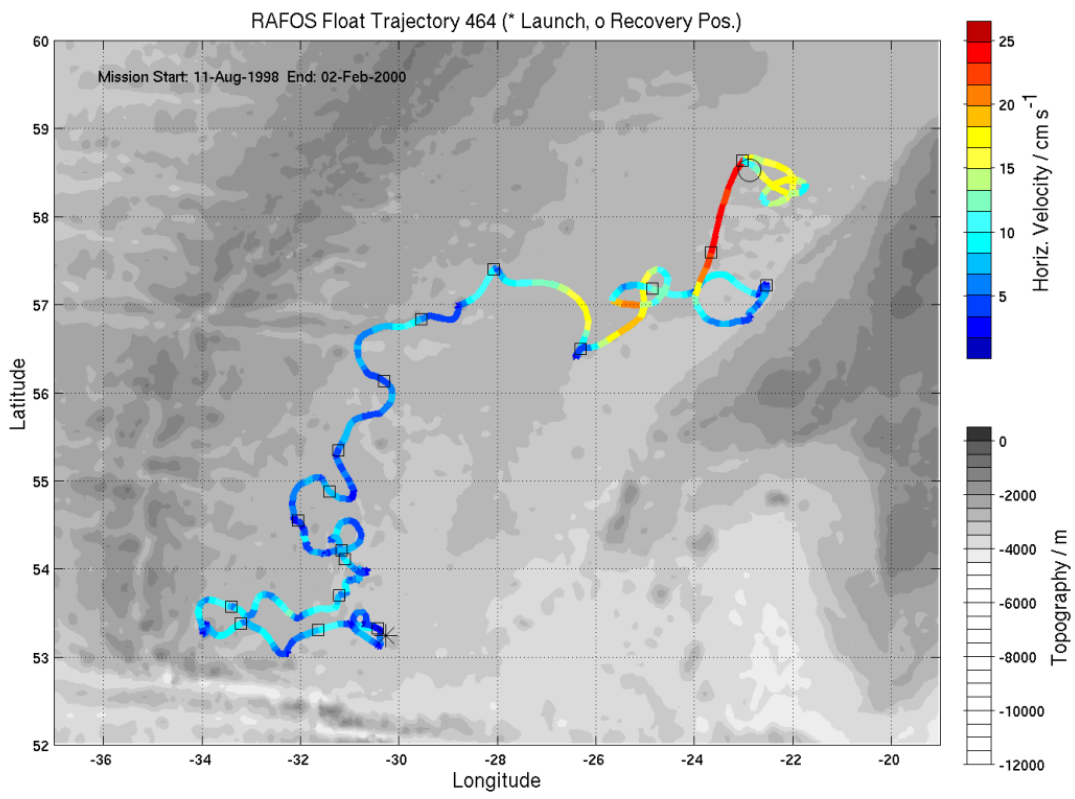


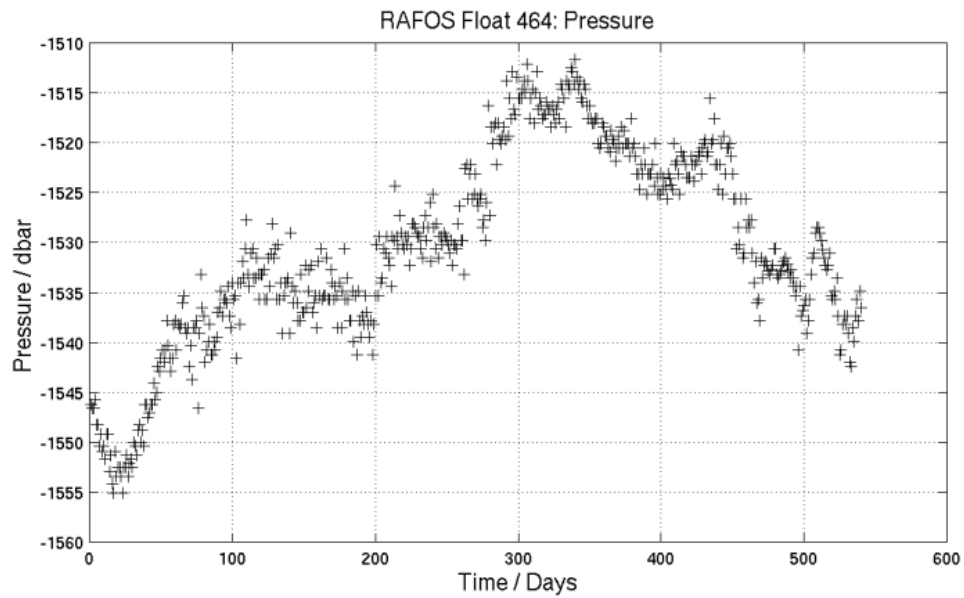
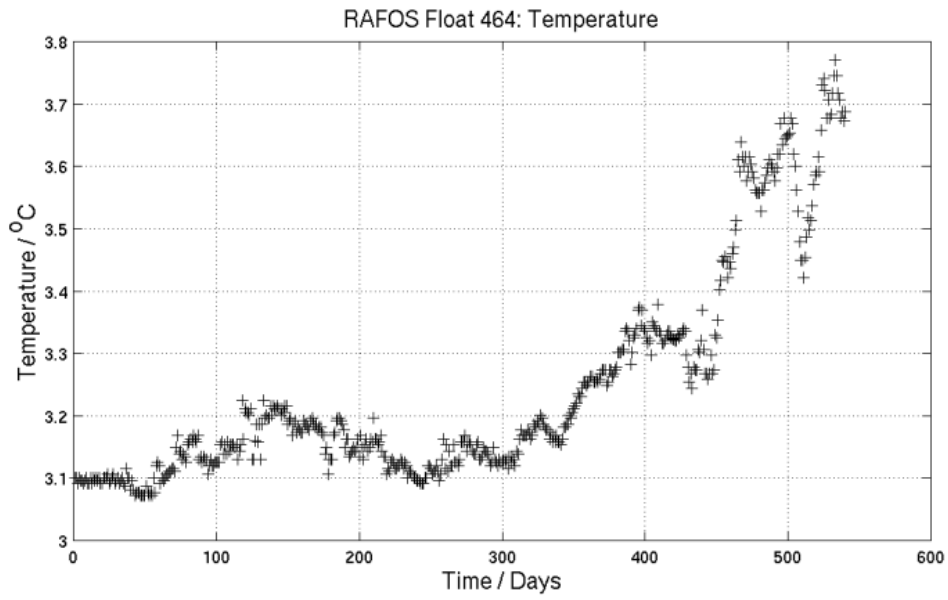




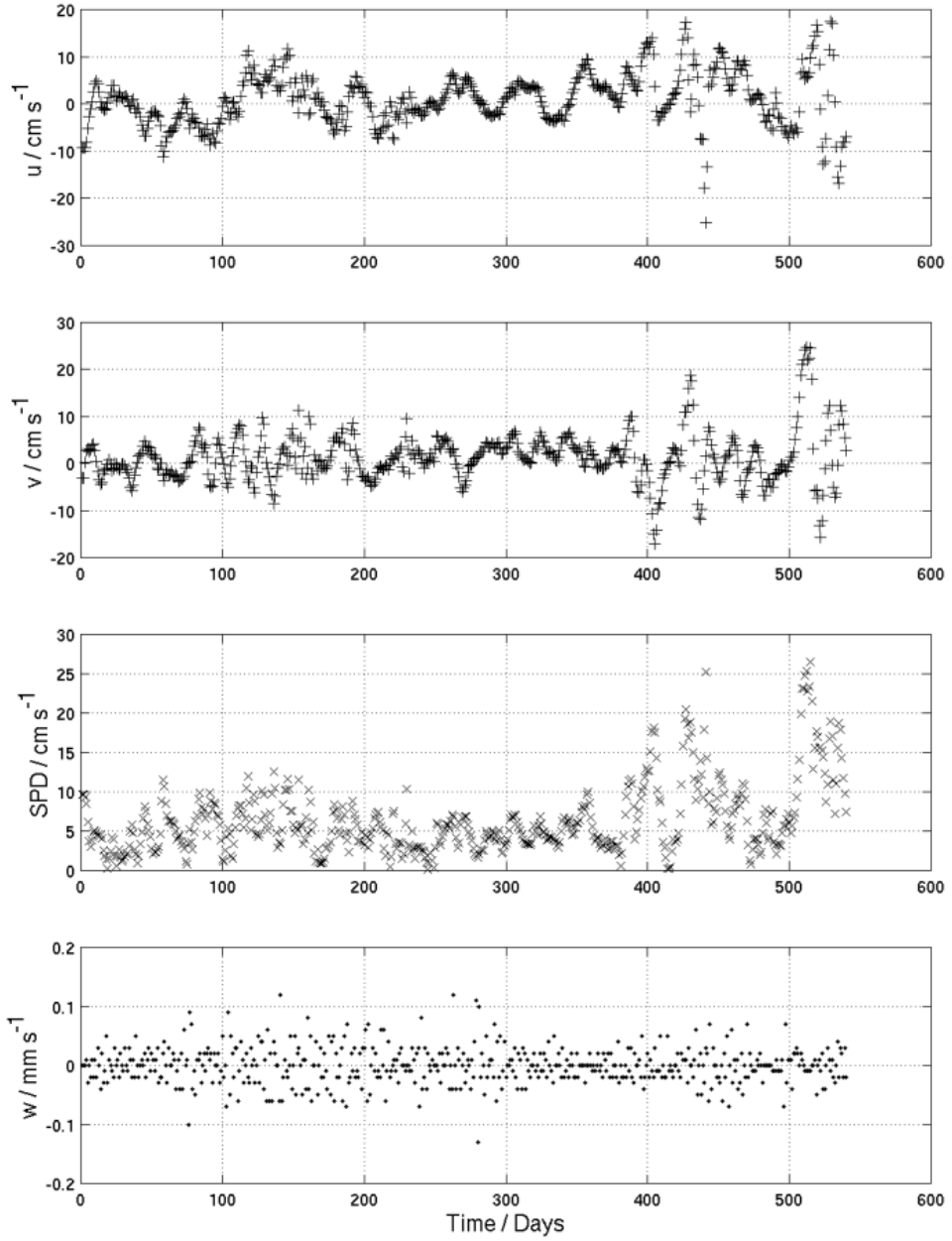
RAFOS Float 463: Velocities

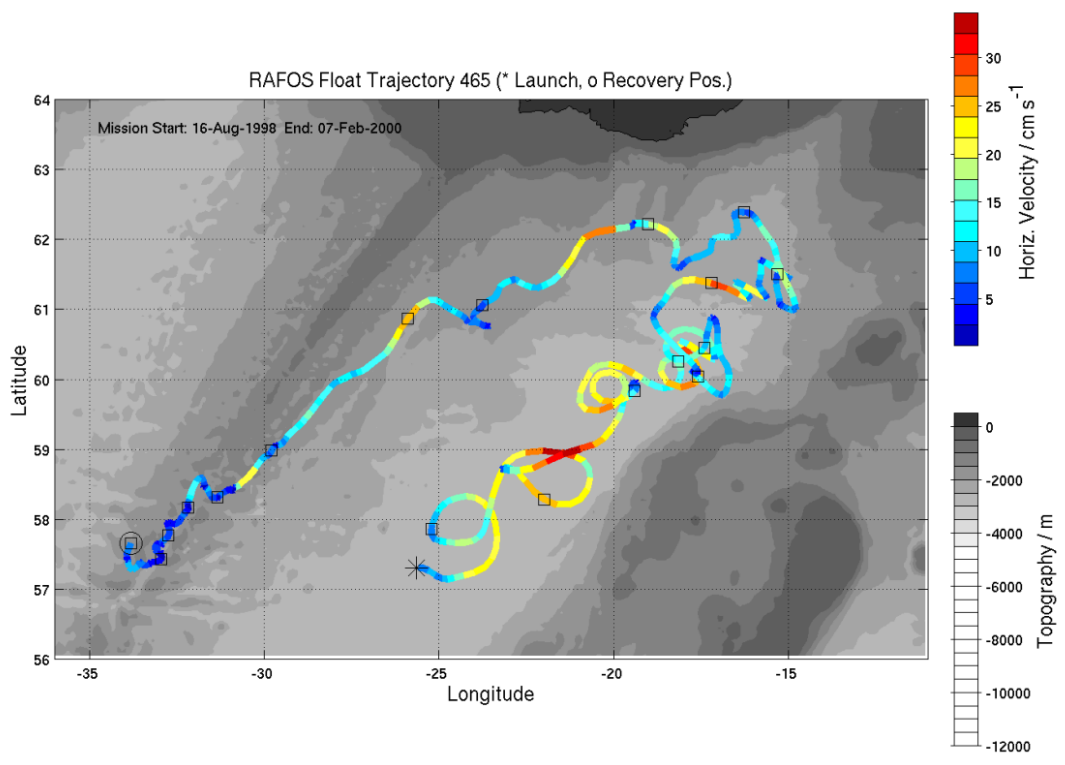


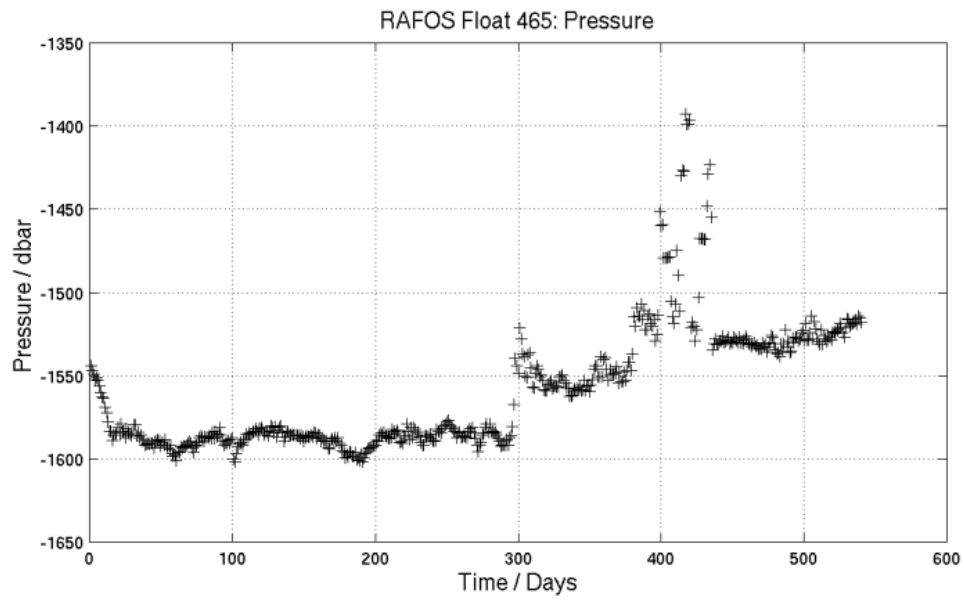
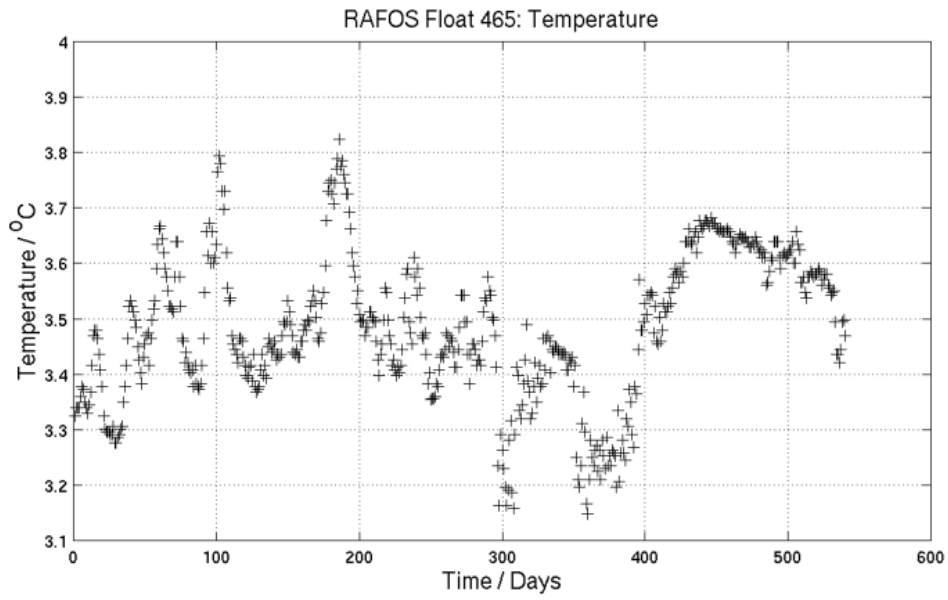




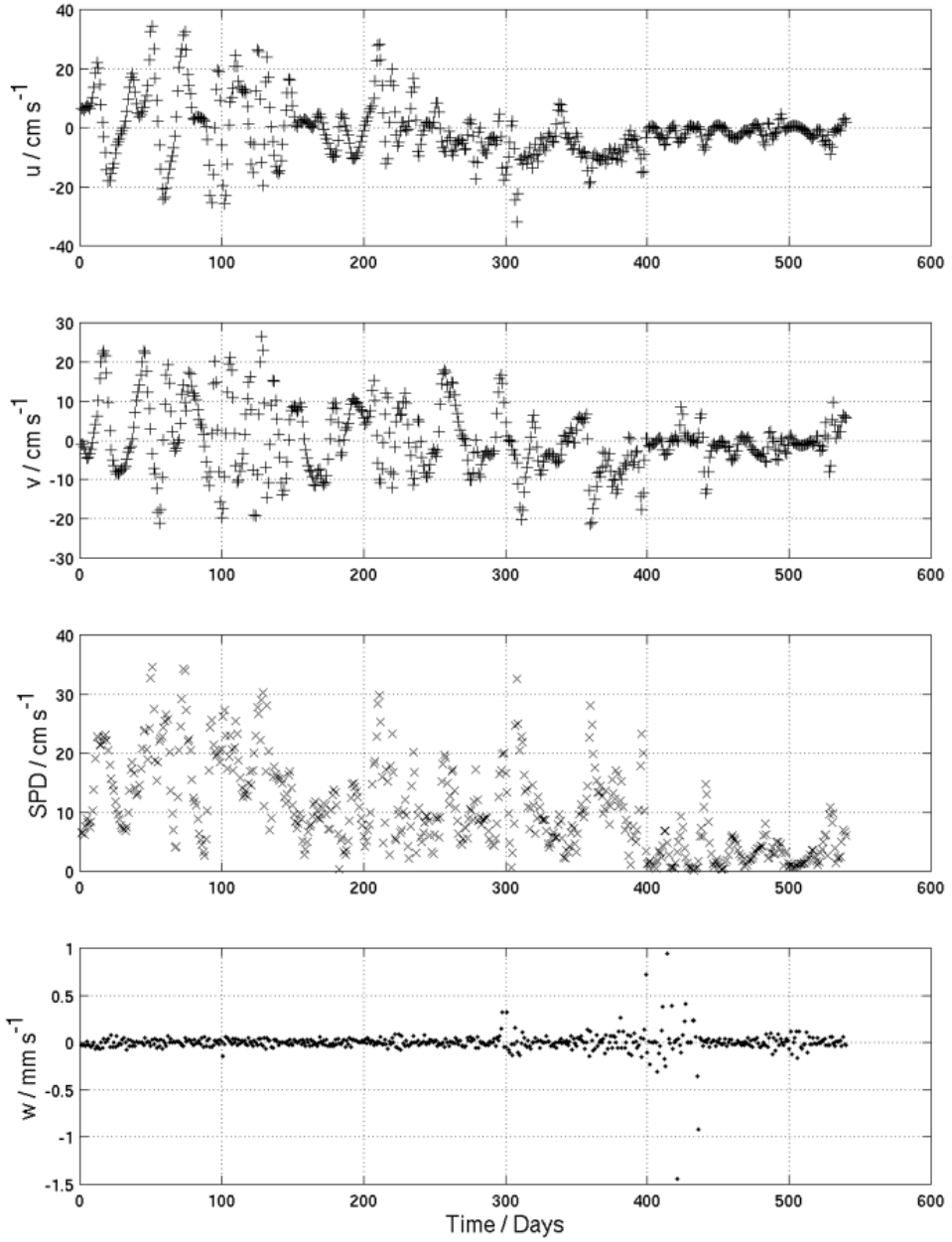
RAFOS Float 464: Velocities



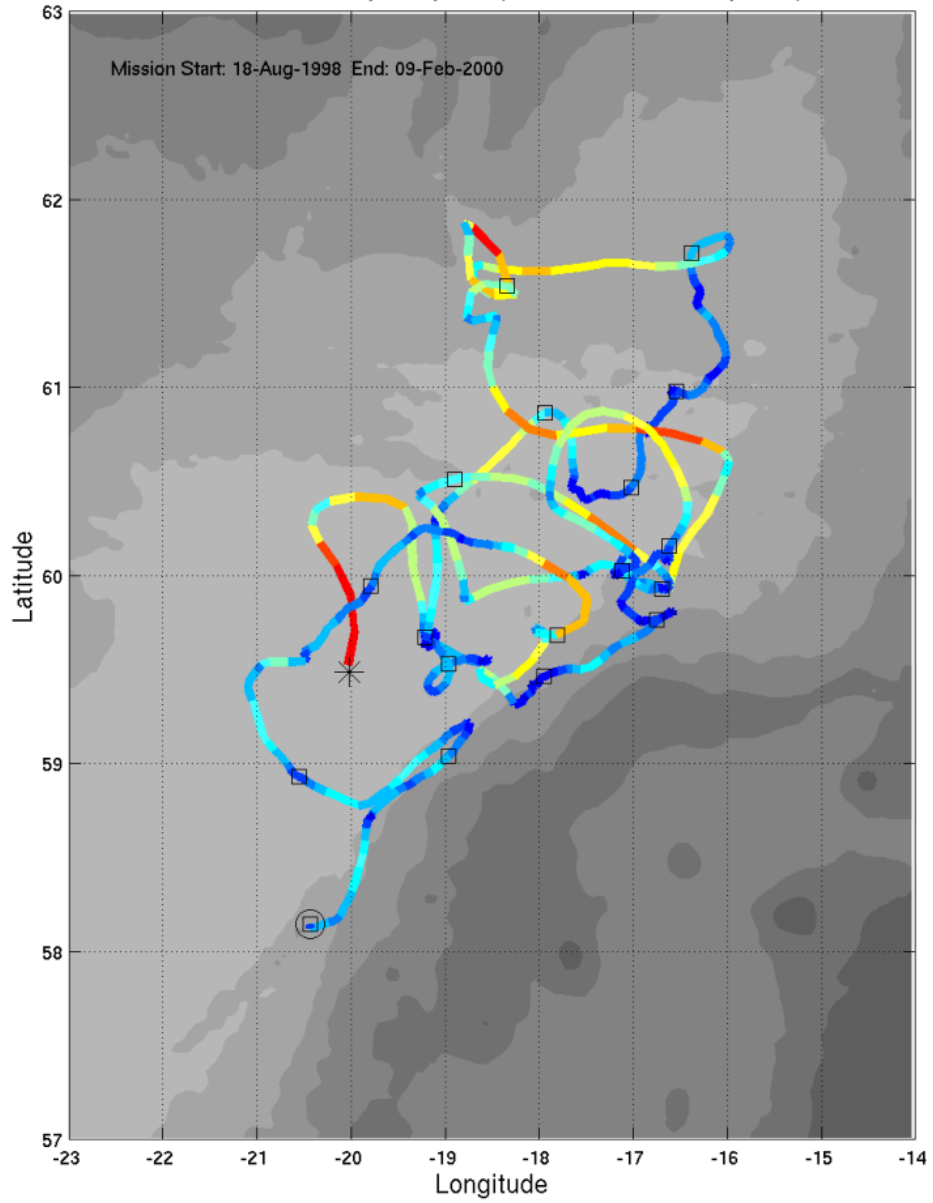




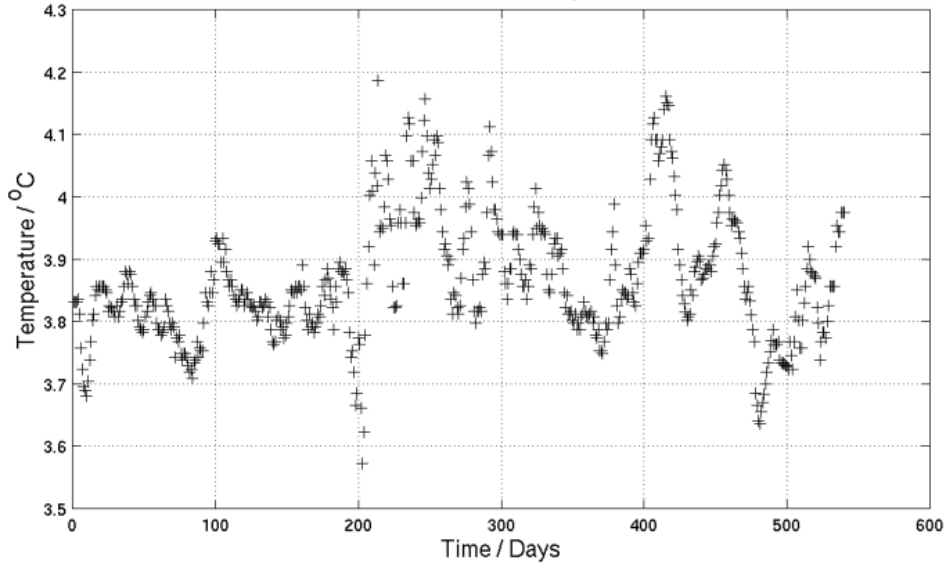
RAFOS Float 465: Velocities



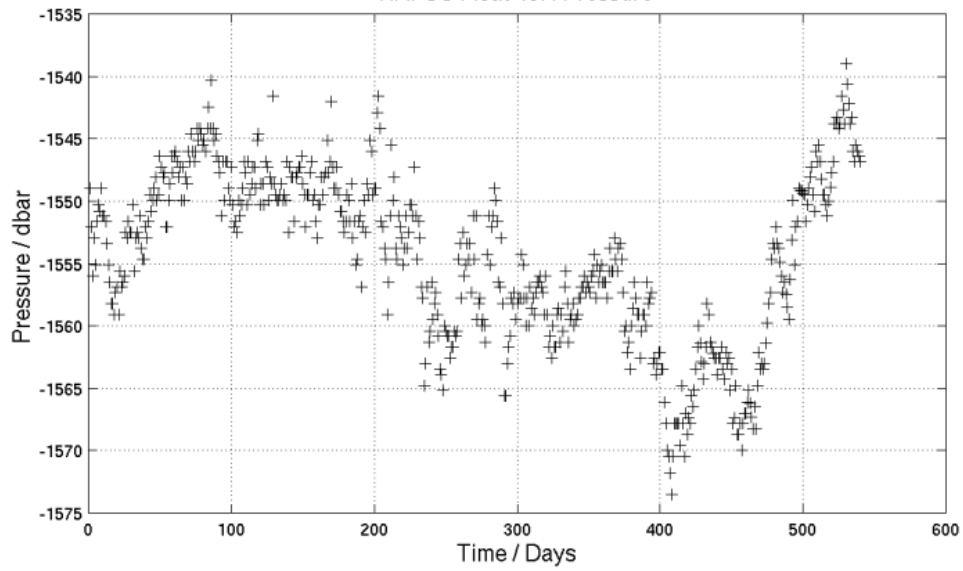
RAFOS Float Trajectory 467 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)



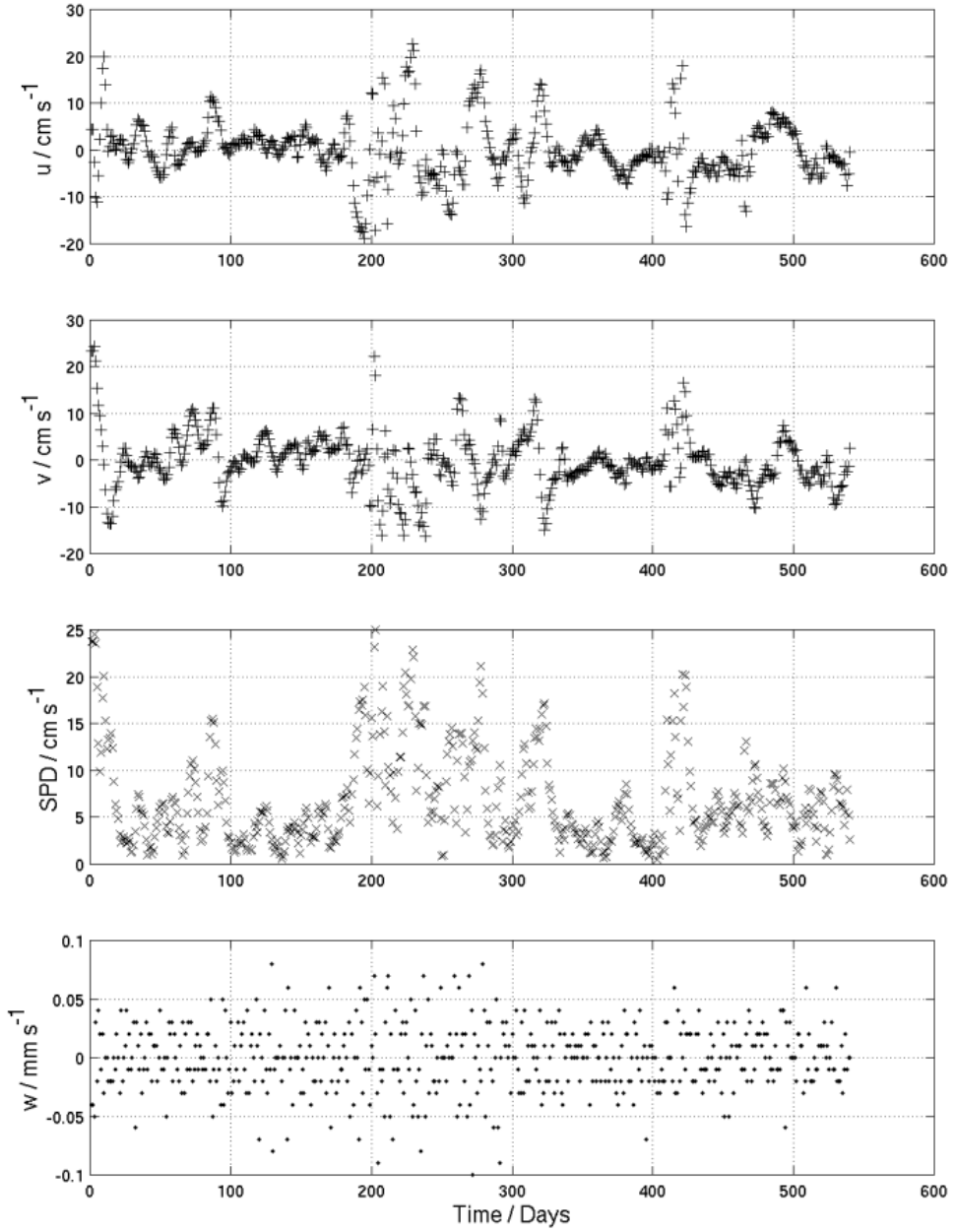
RAFOS Float 467: Temperature

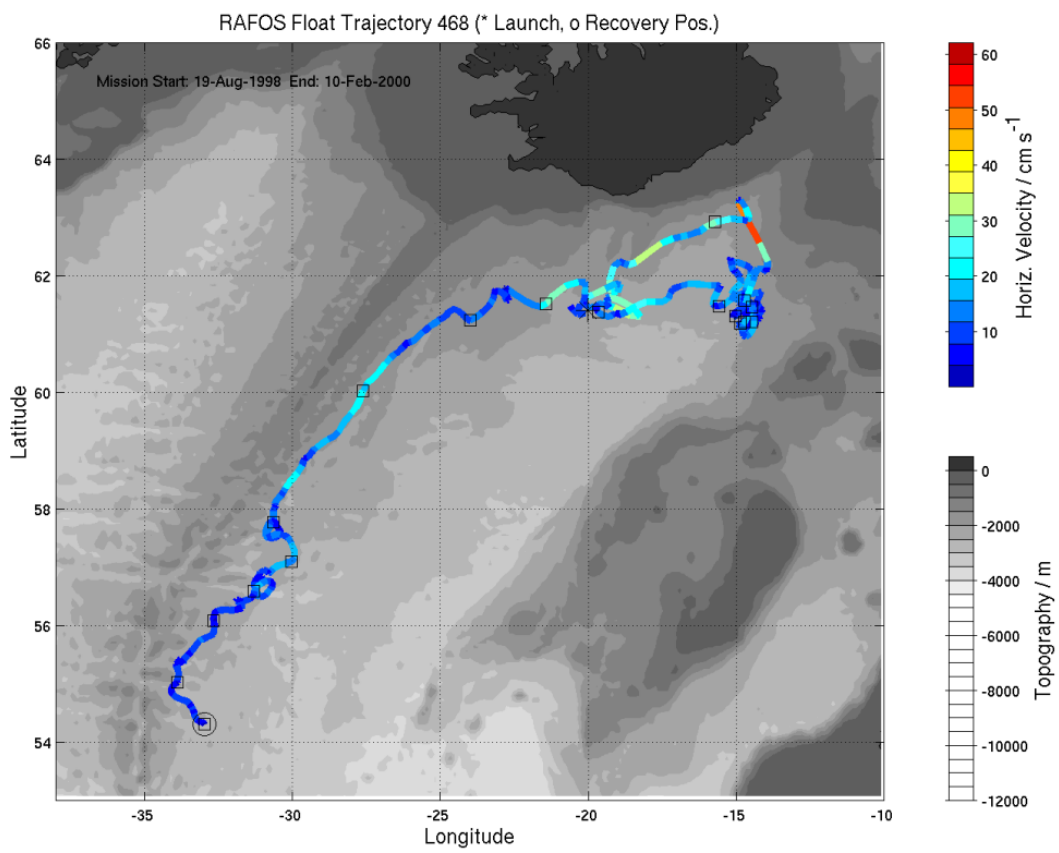


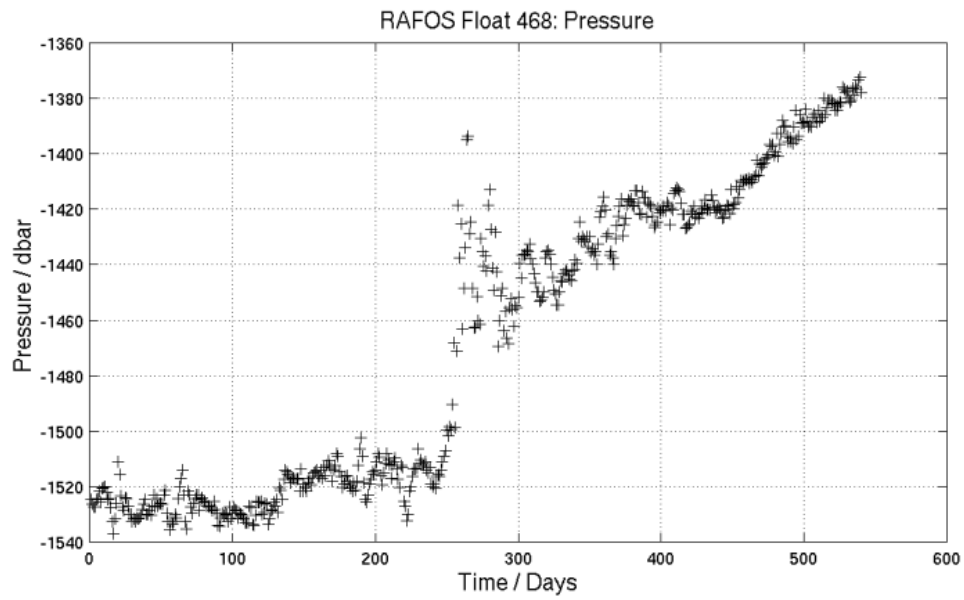
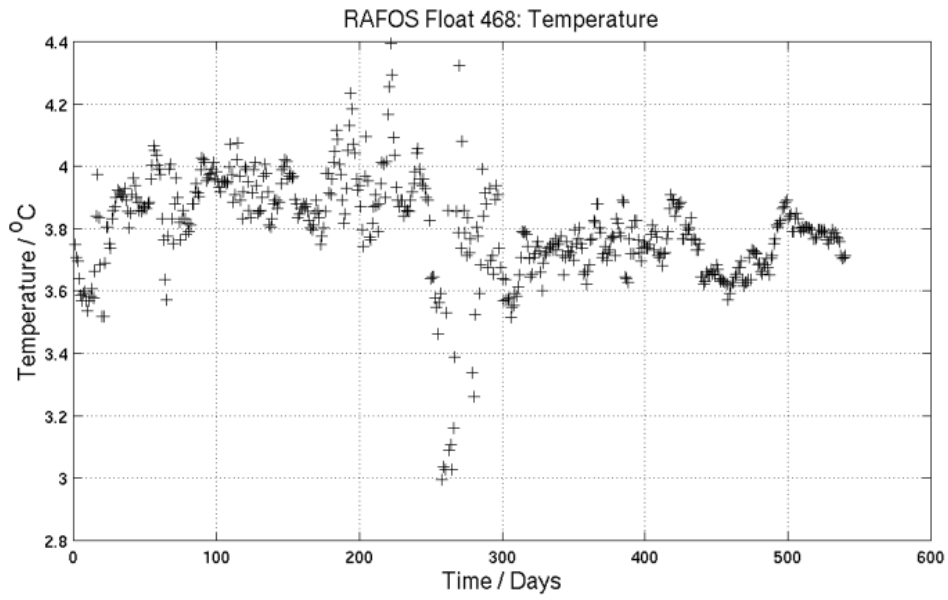
RAFOS Float 467: Pressure



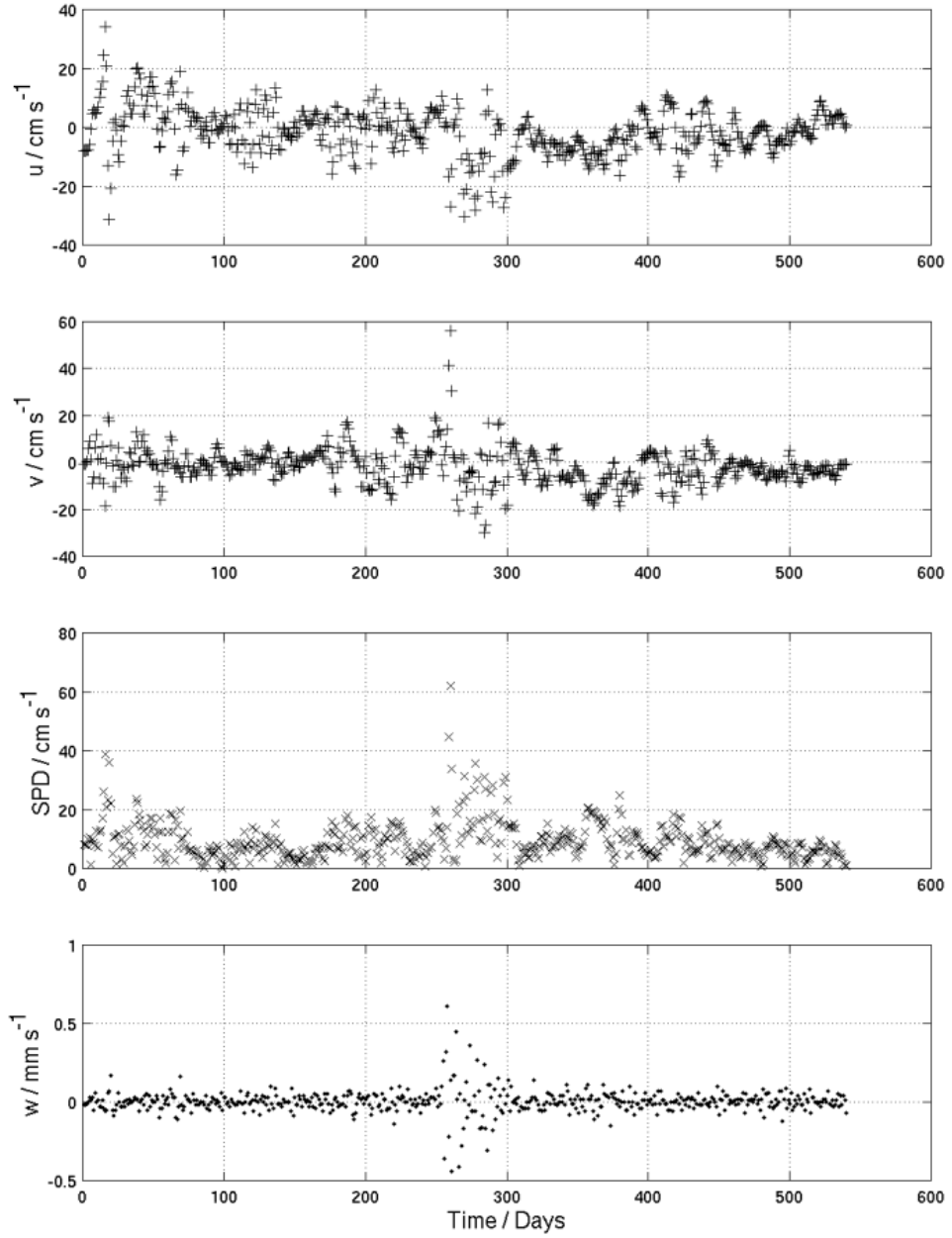
RAFOS Float 467: Velocities

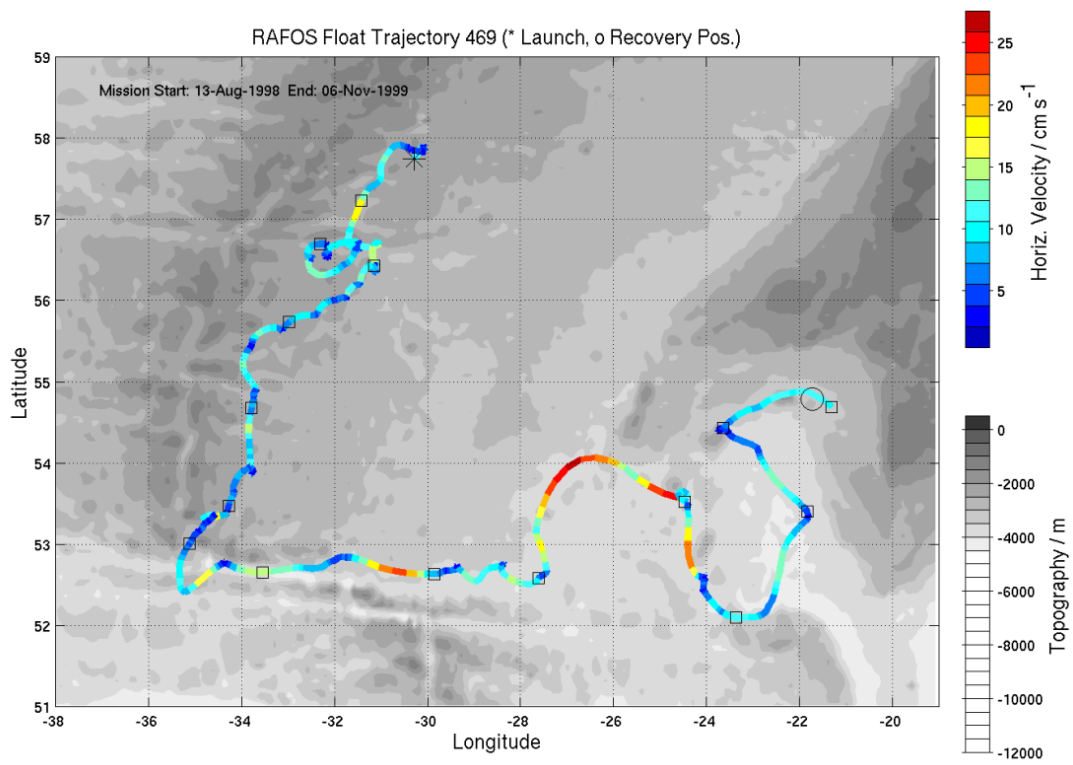


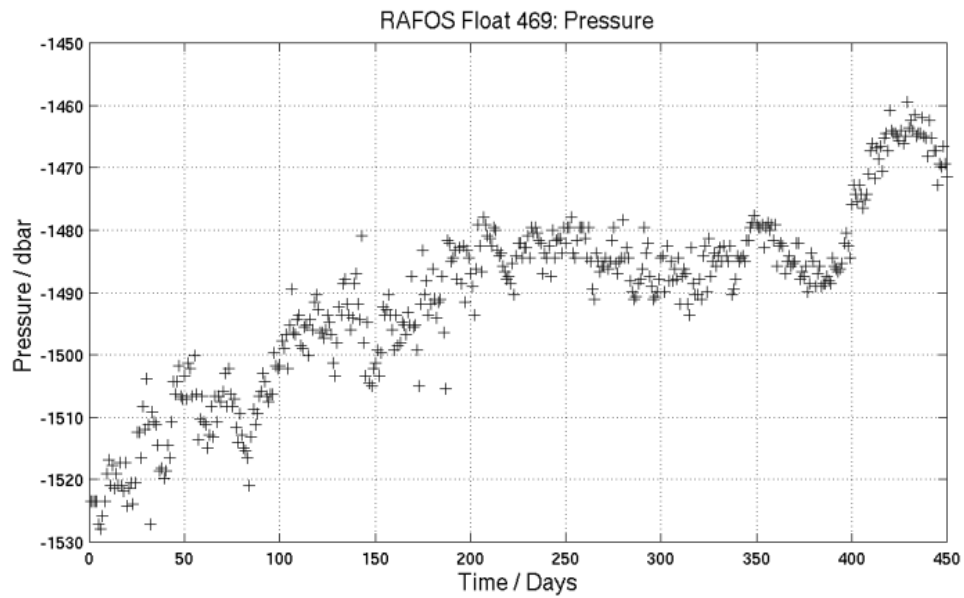
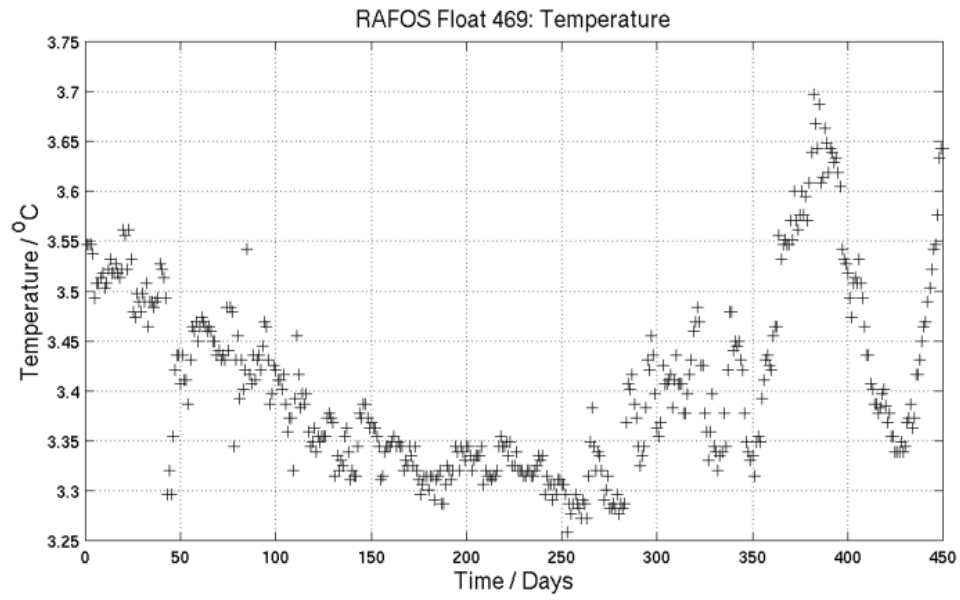




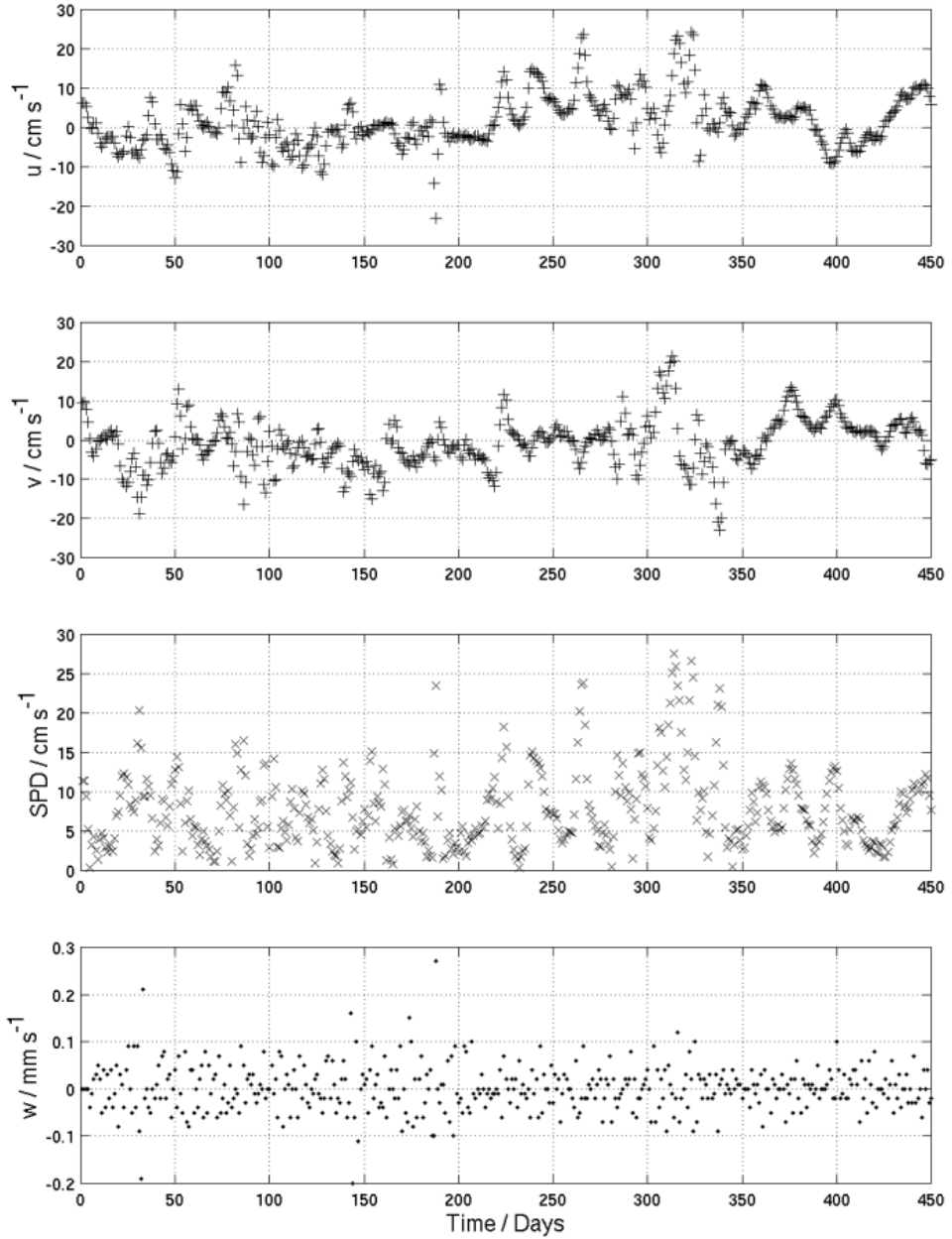
RAFOS Float 468: Velocities



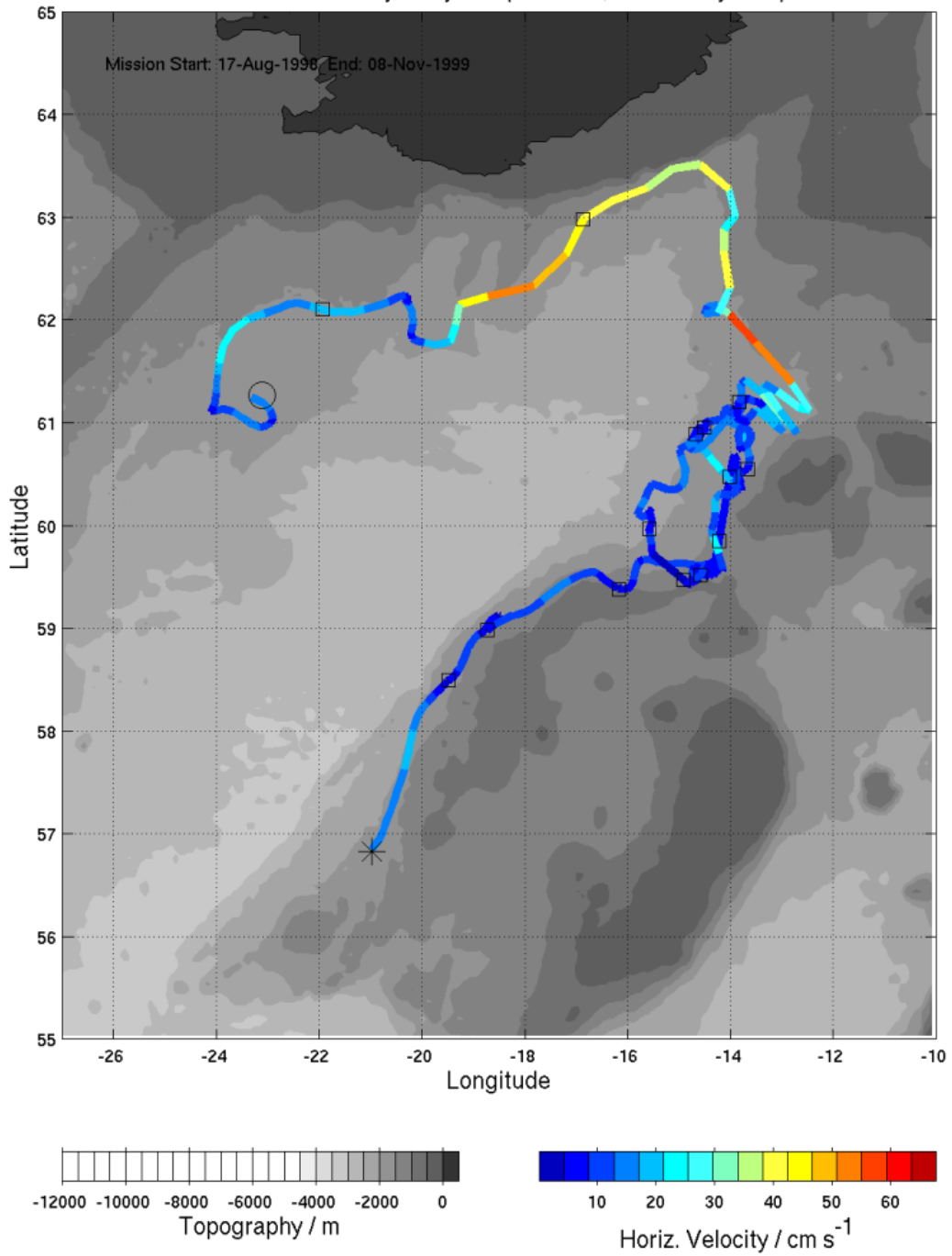


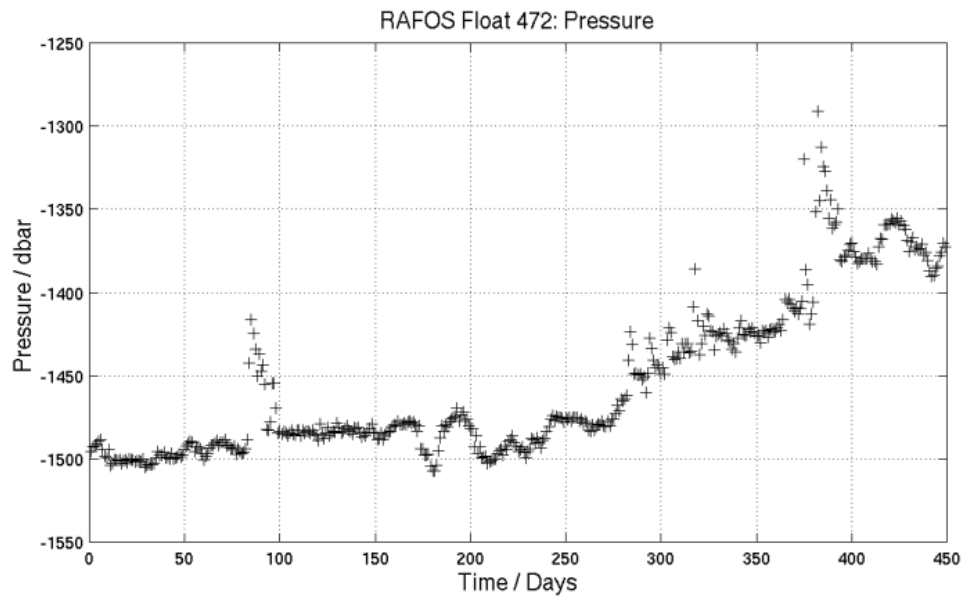
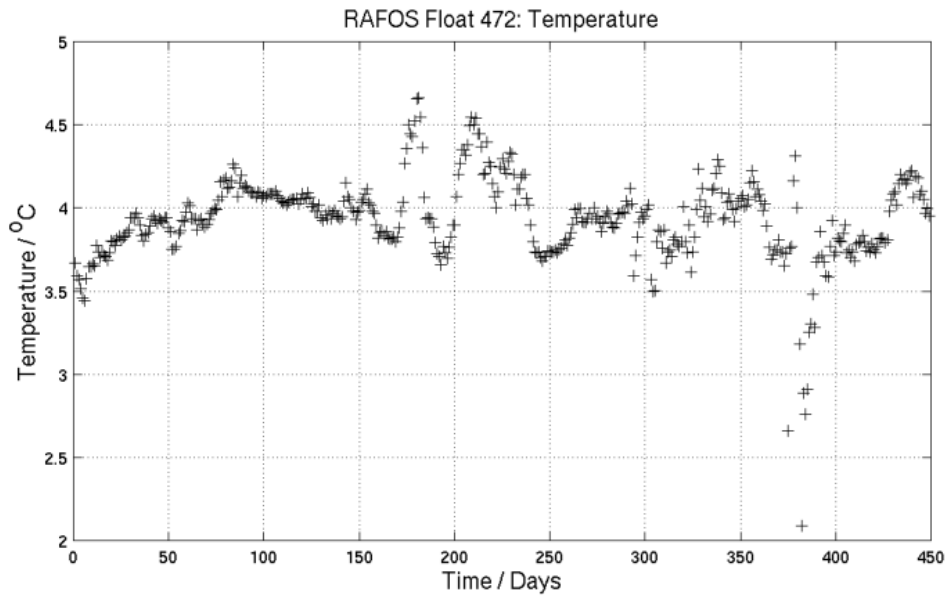


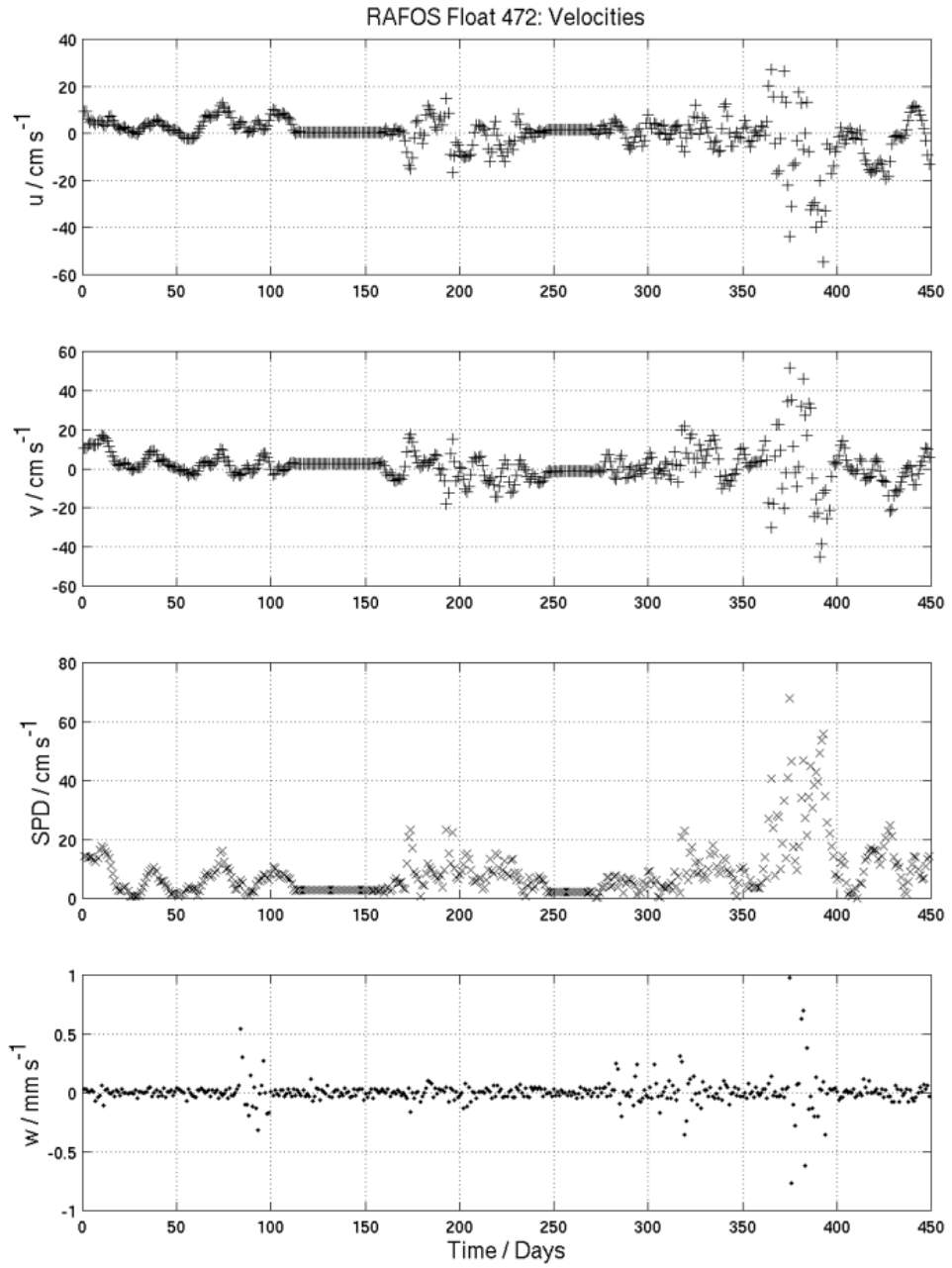
RAFOS Float 469: Velocities



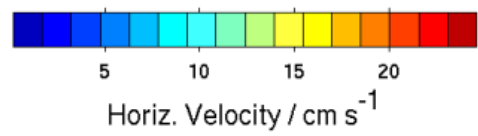
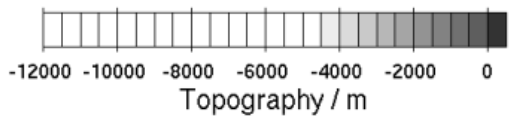
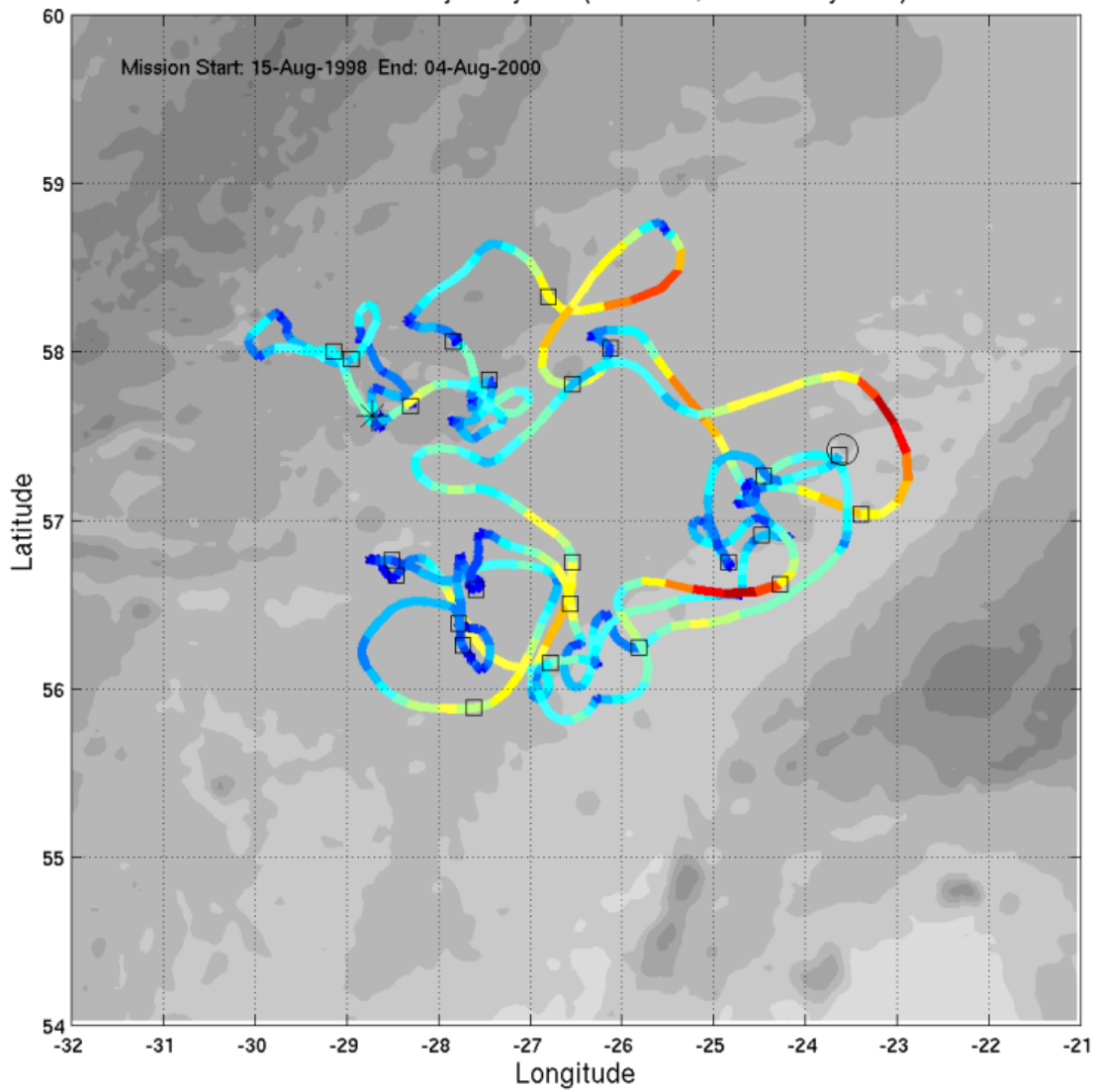
RAFOS Float Trajectory 472 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)

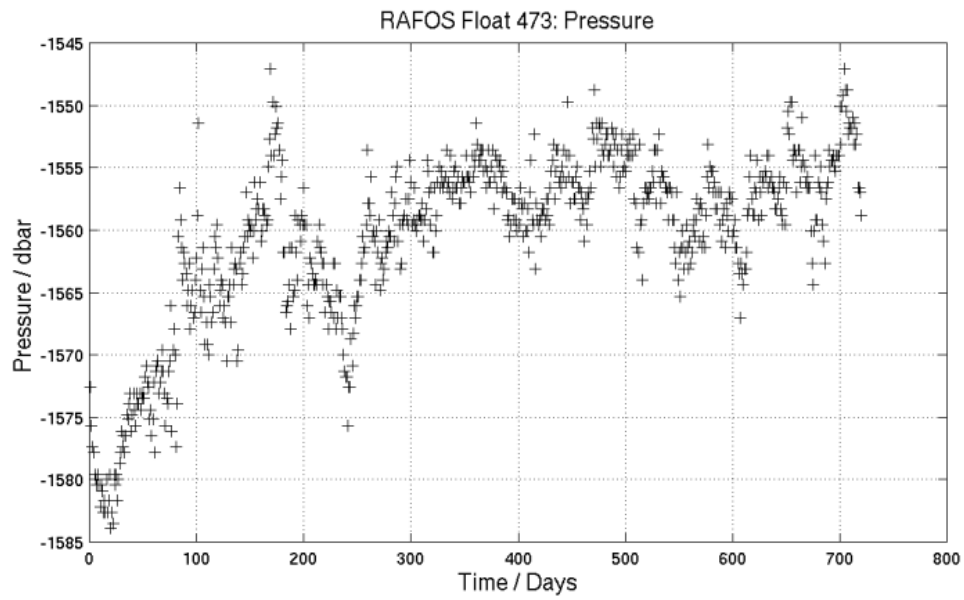
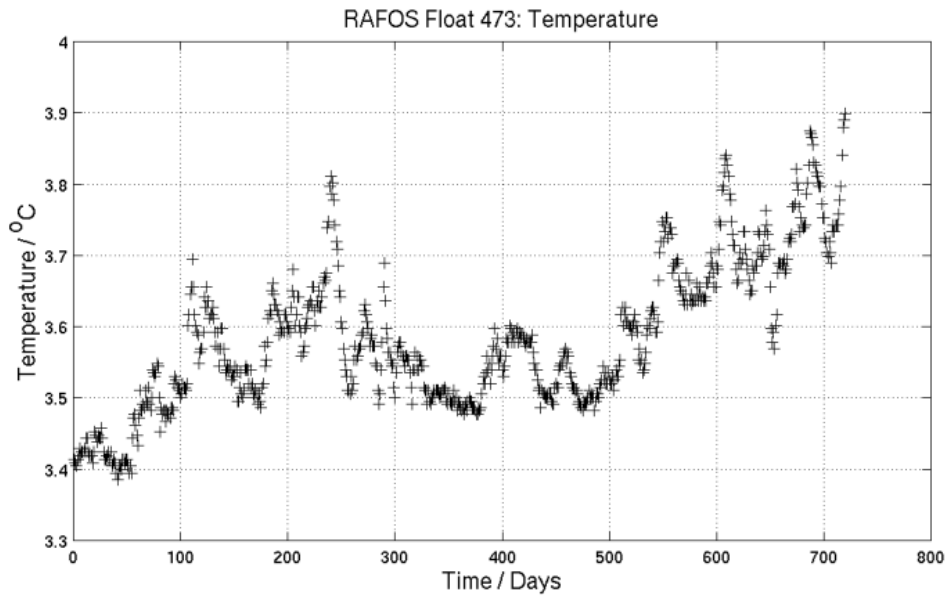




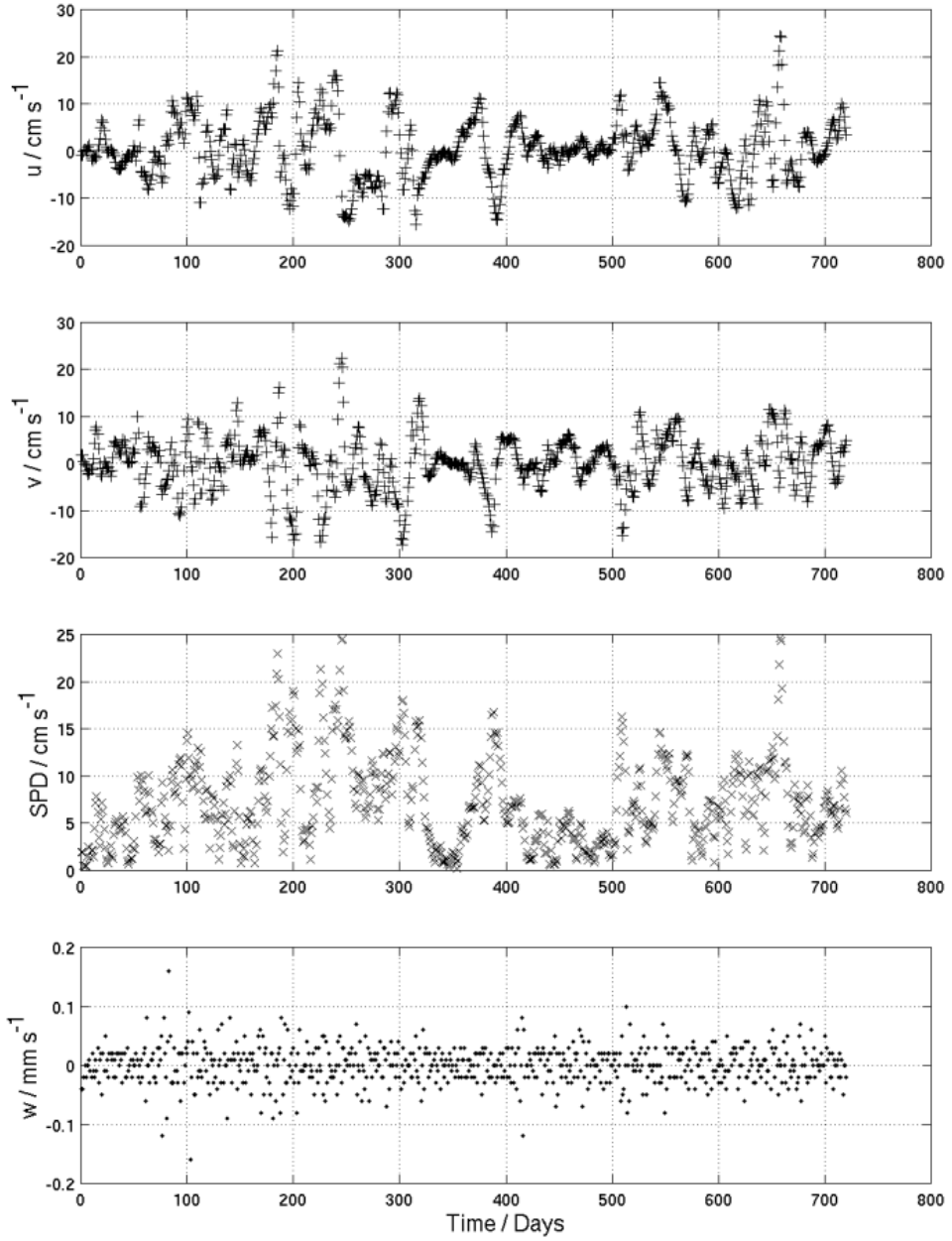


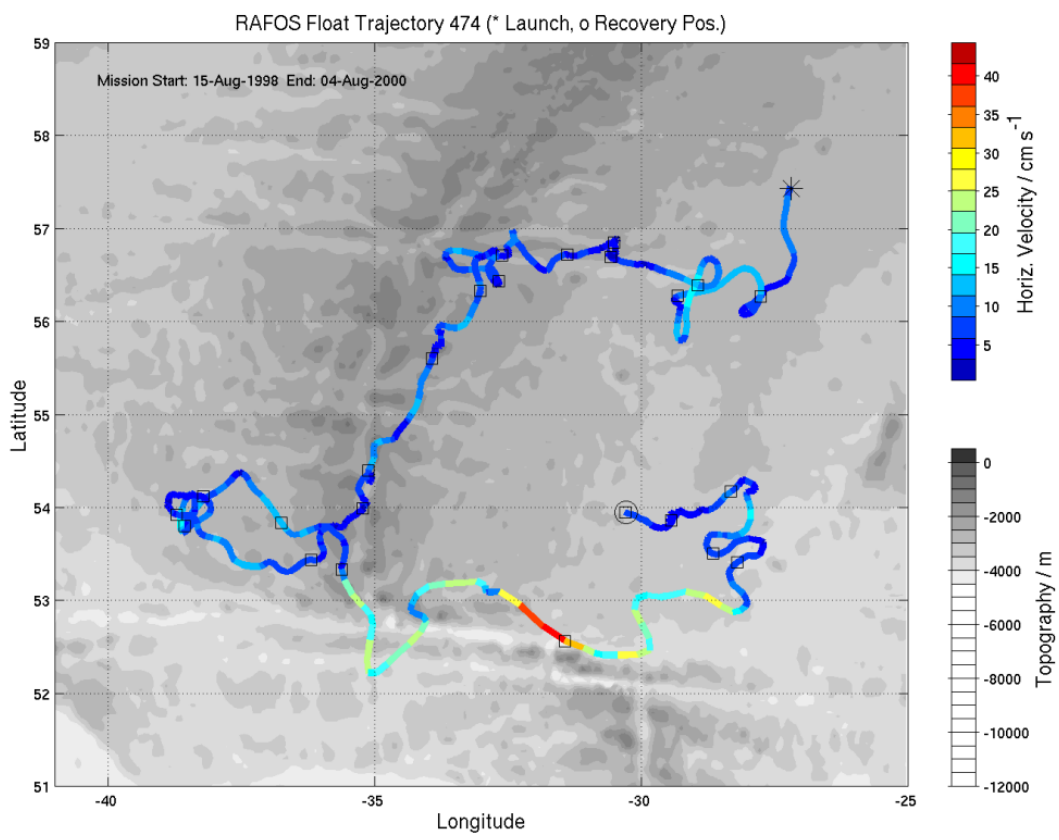
RAFOS Float Trajectory 473 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)

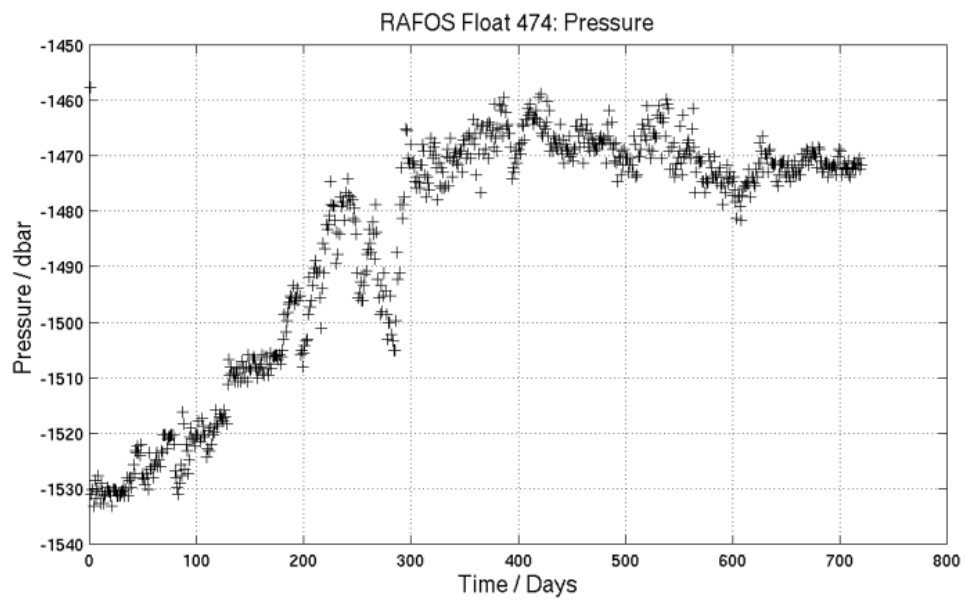
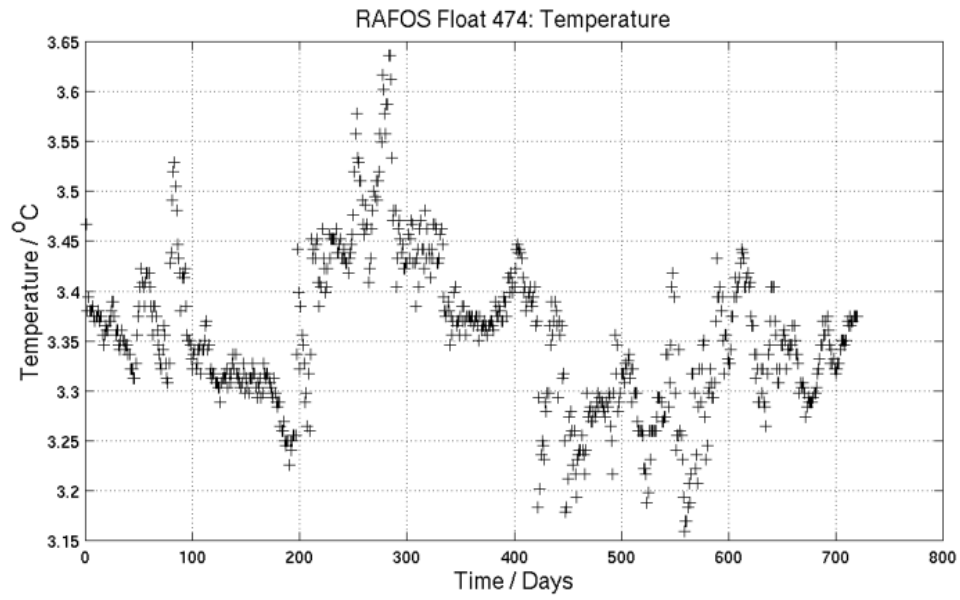




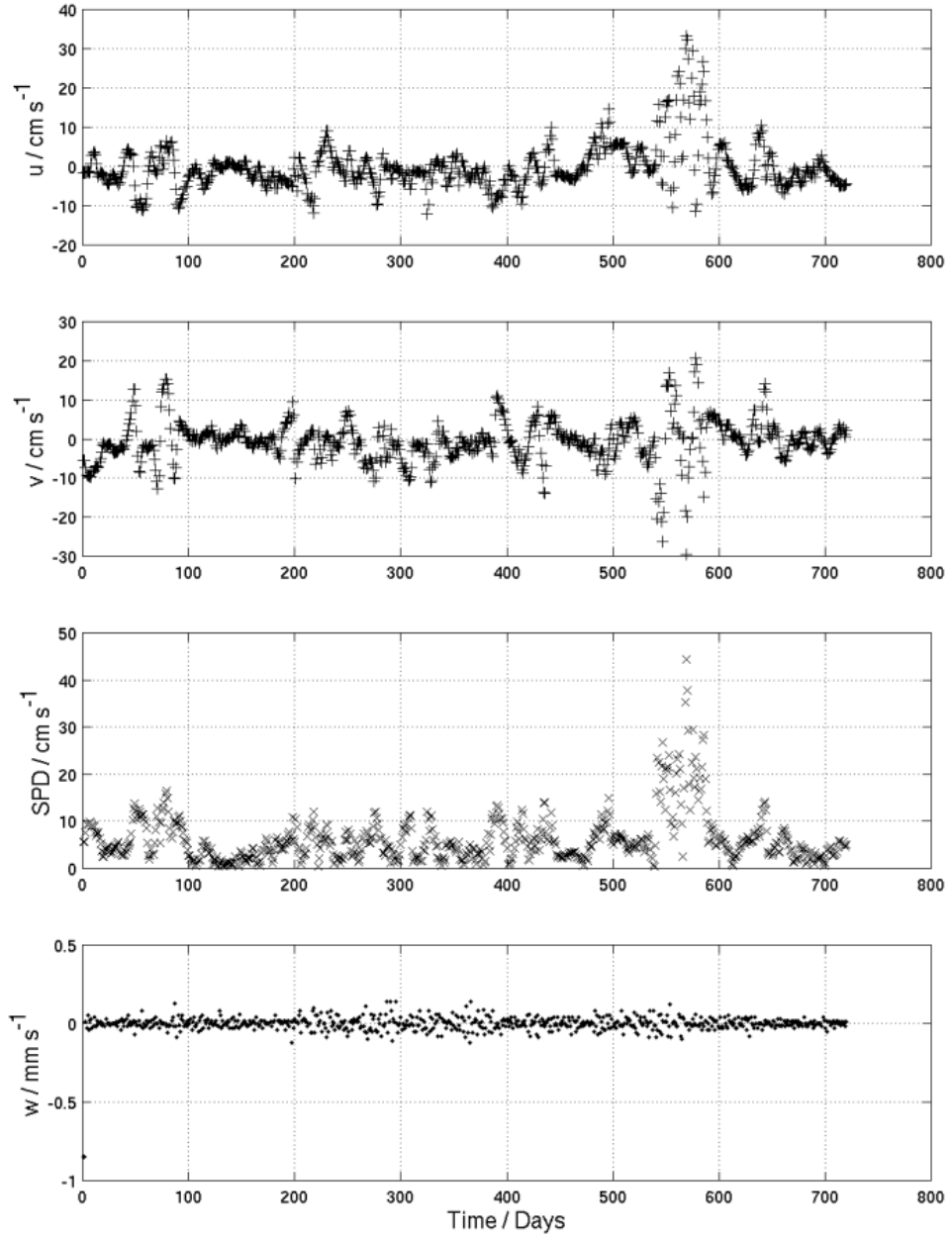
RAFOS Float 473: Velocities



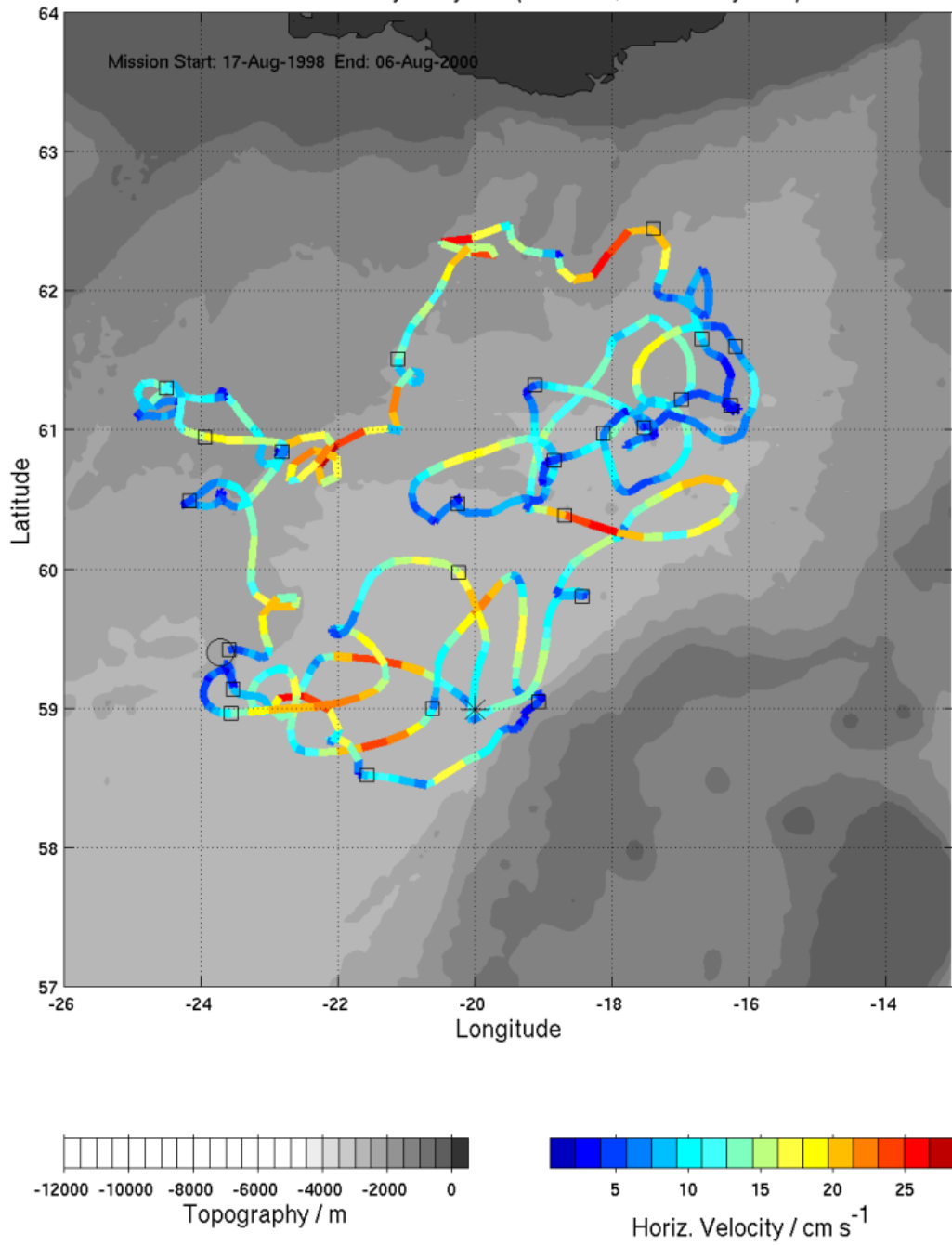


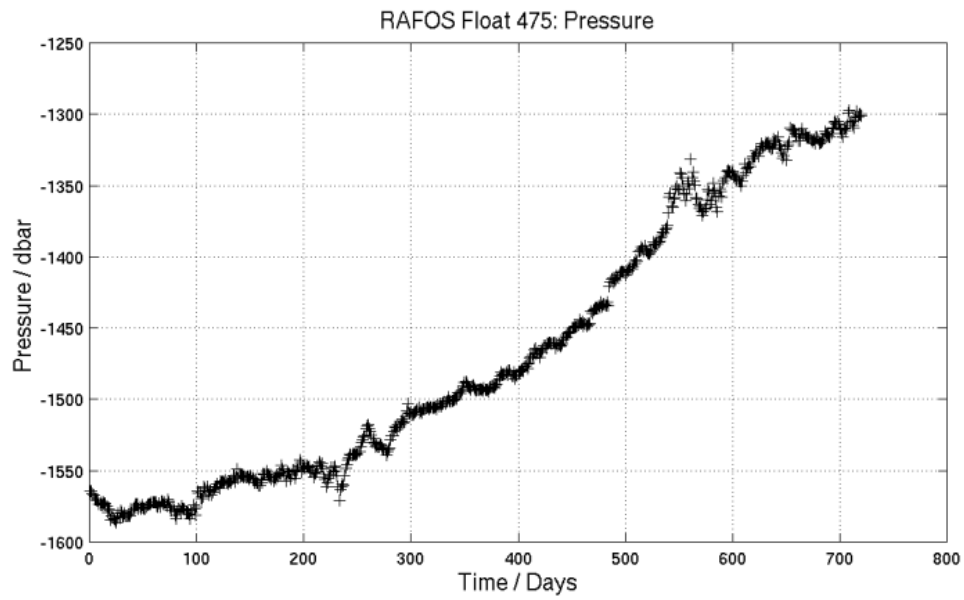
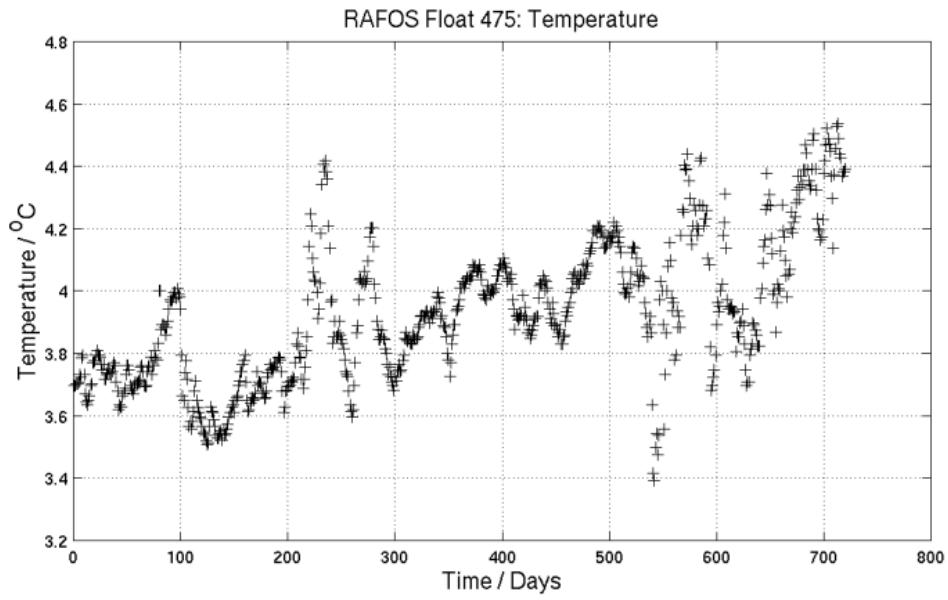


RAFOS Float 474: Velocities

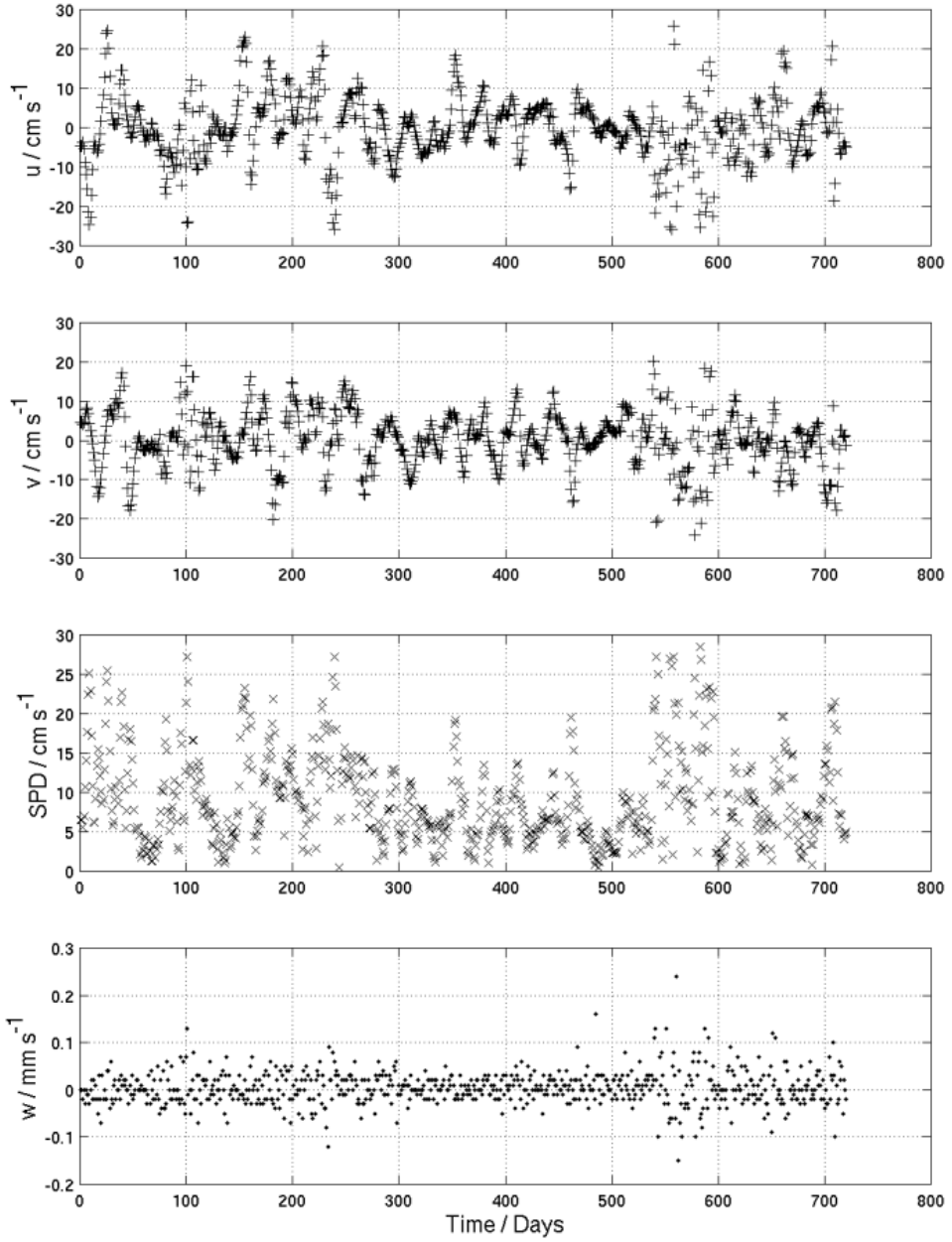


RAFOS Float Trajectory 475 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)

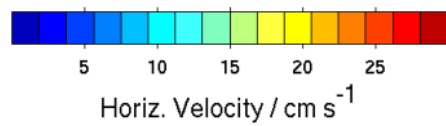
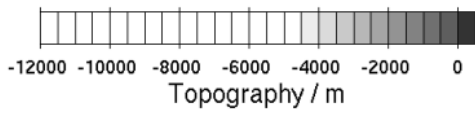
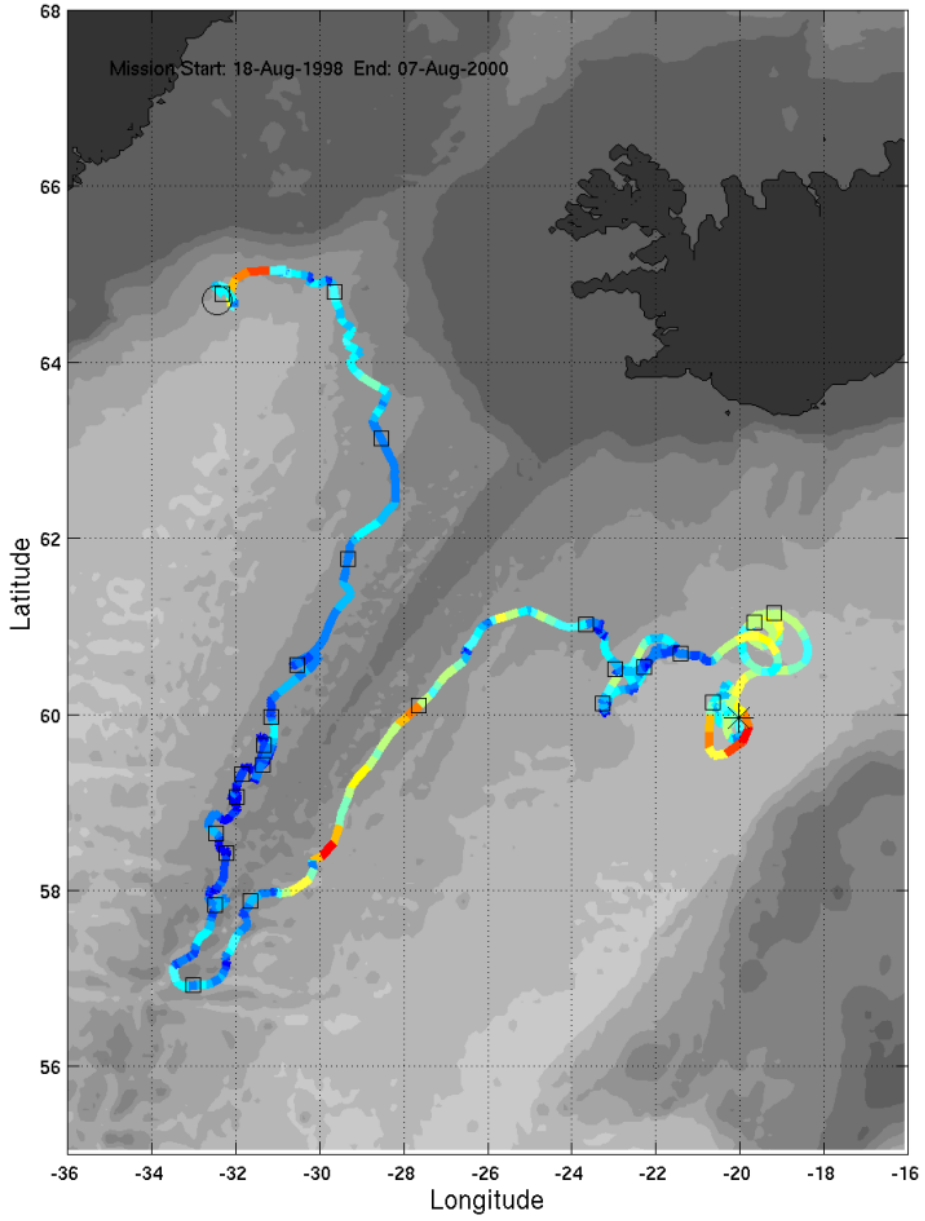


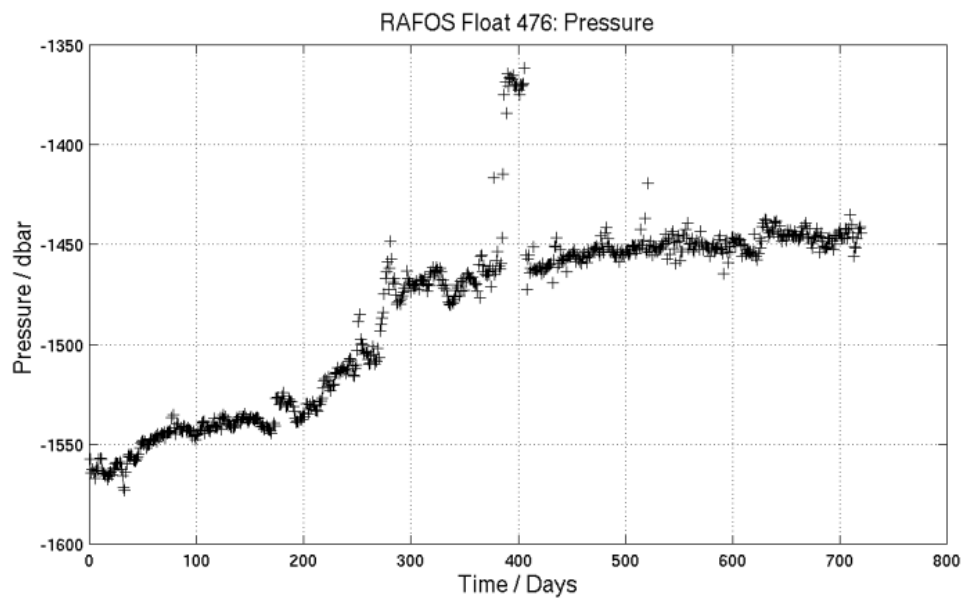
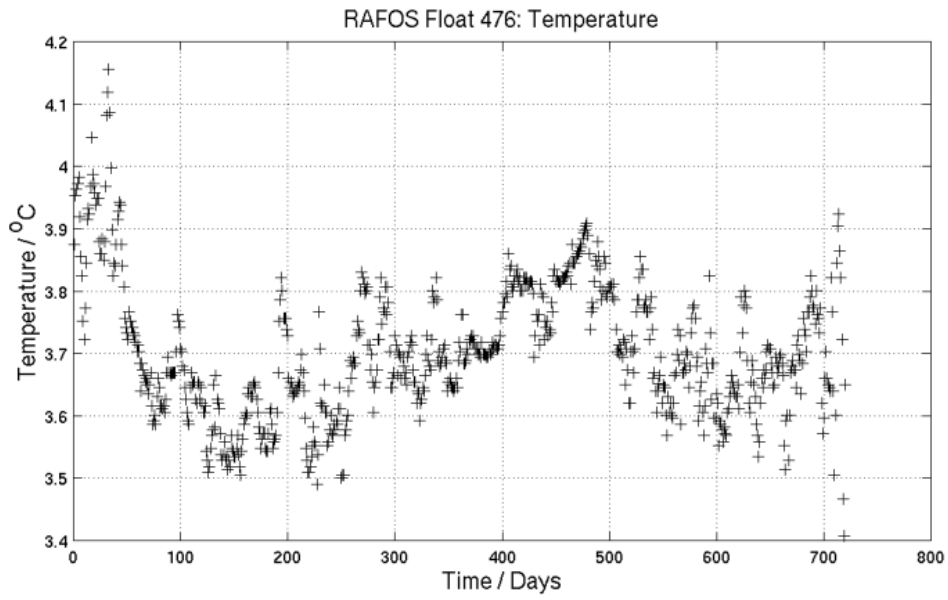


RAFOS Float 475: Velocities

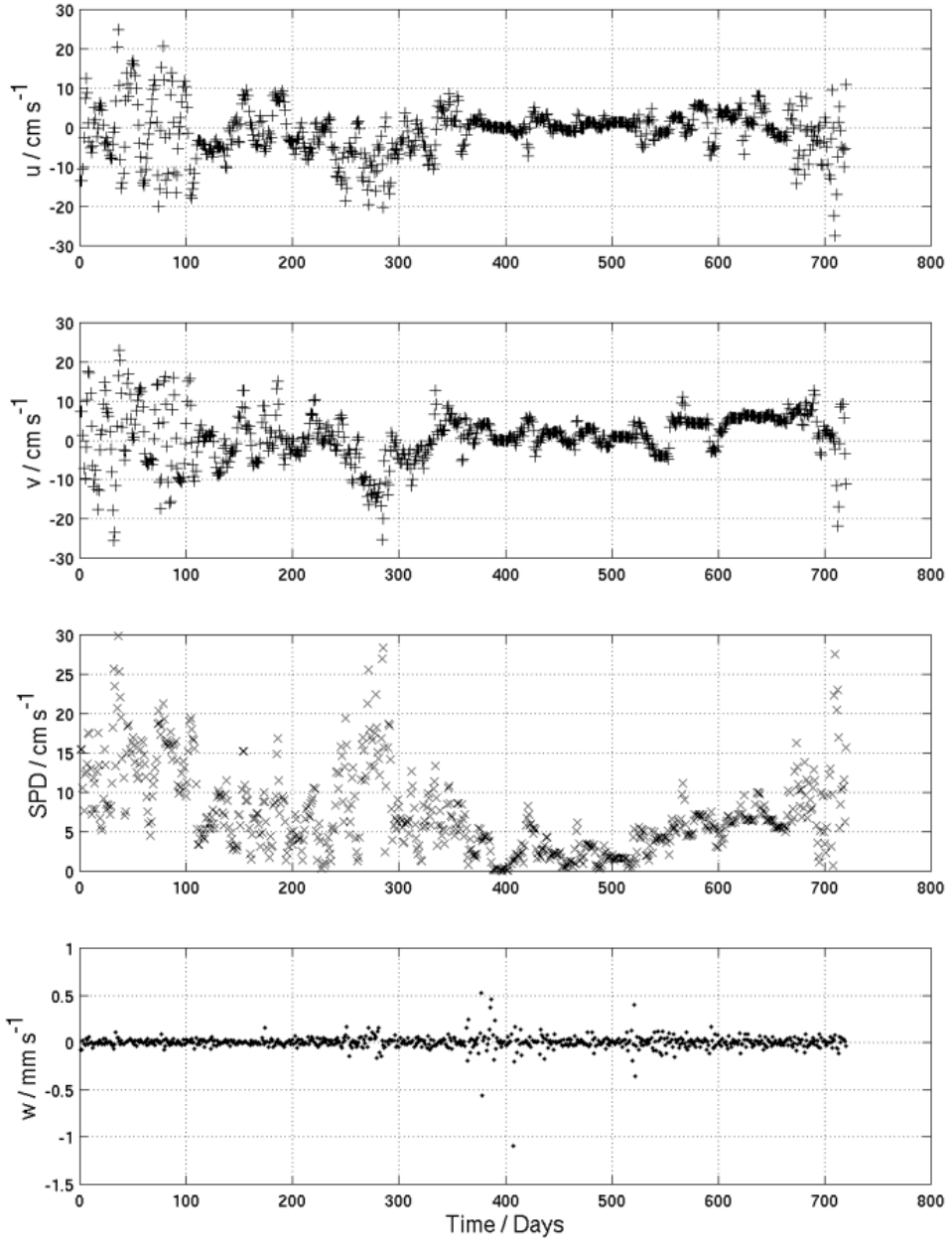


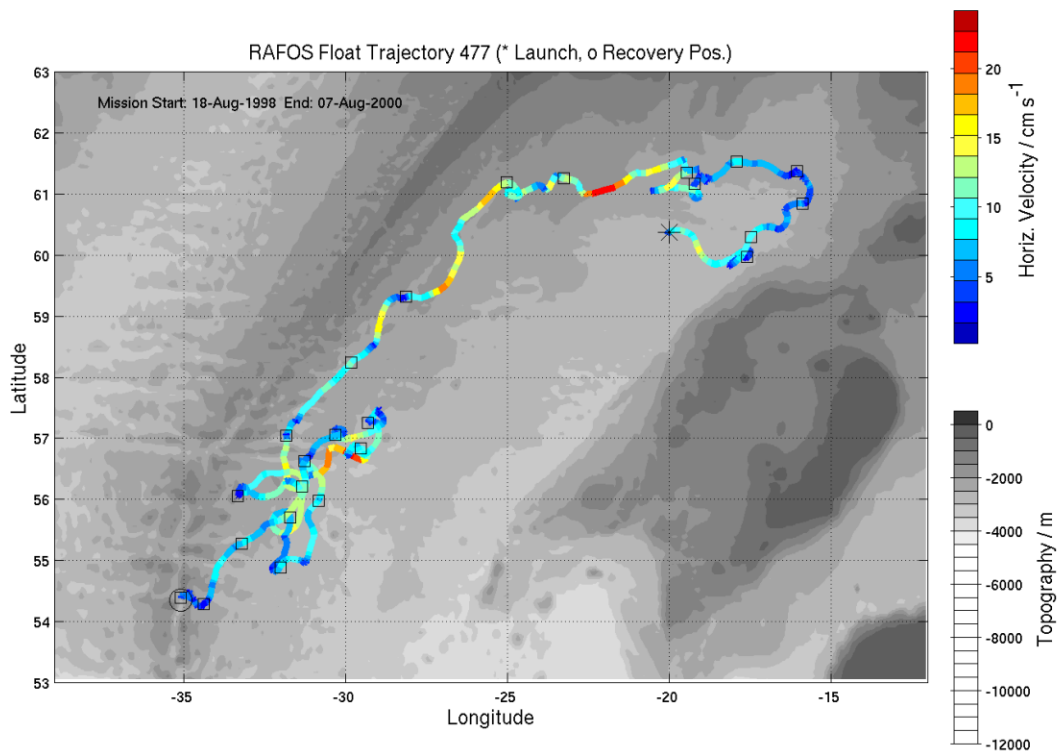
RAFOS Float Trajectory 476 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)



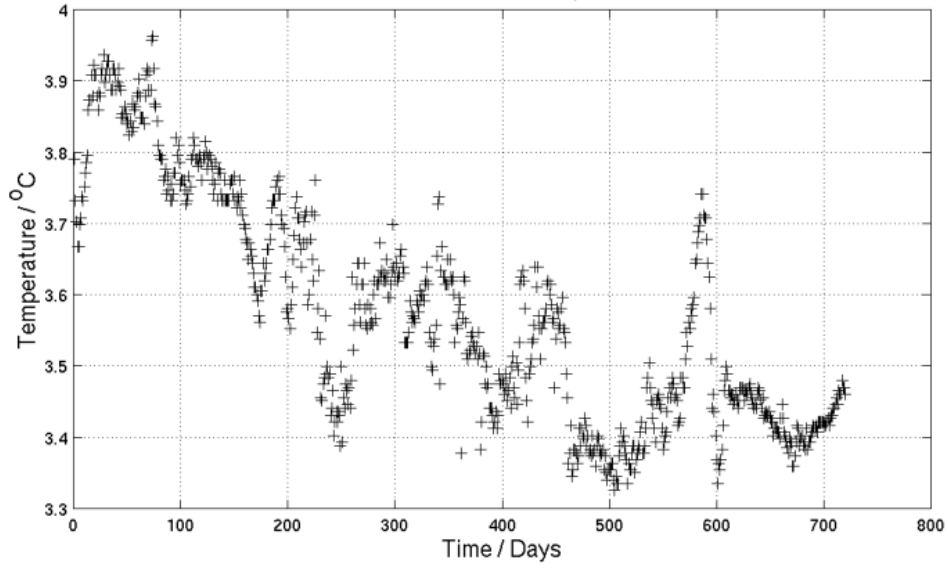


RAFOS Float 476: Velocities

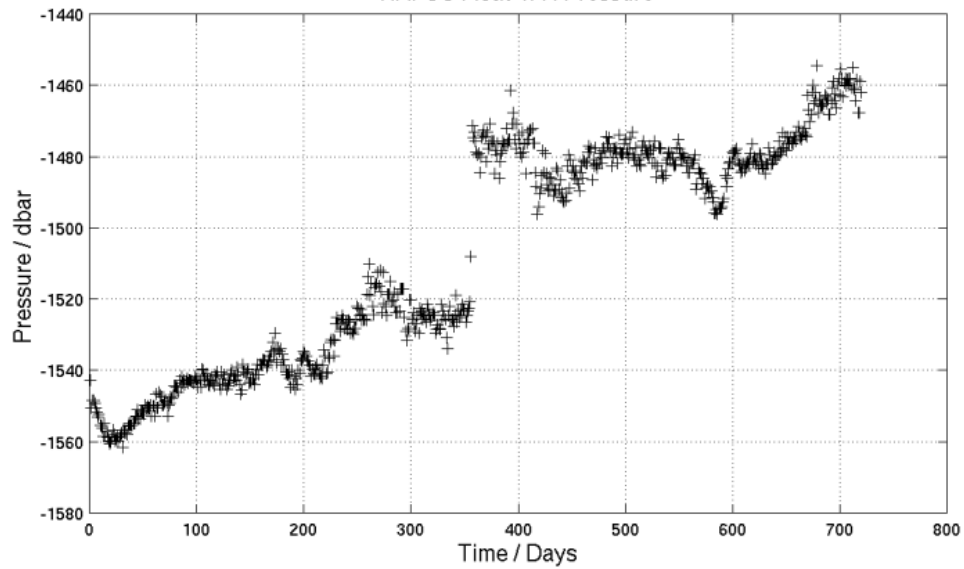




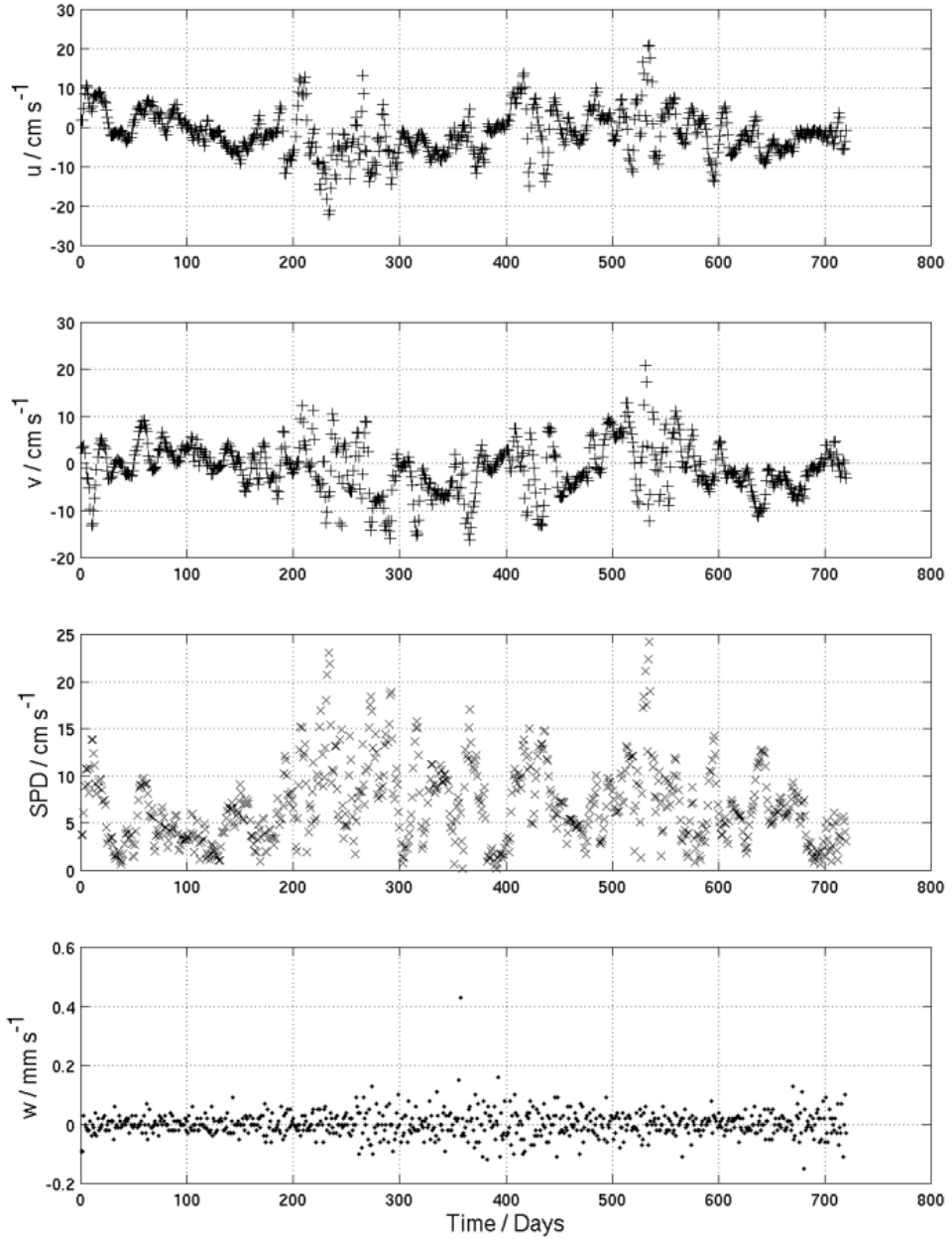
RAFOS Float 477: Temperature

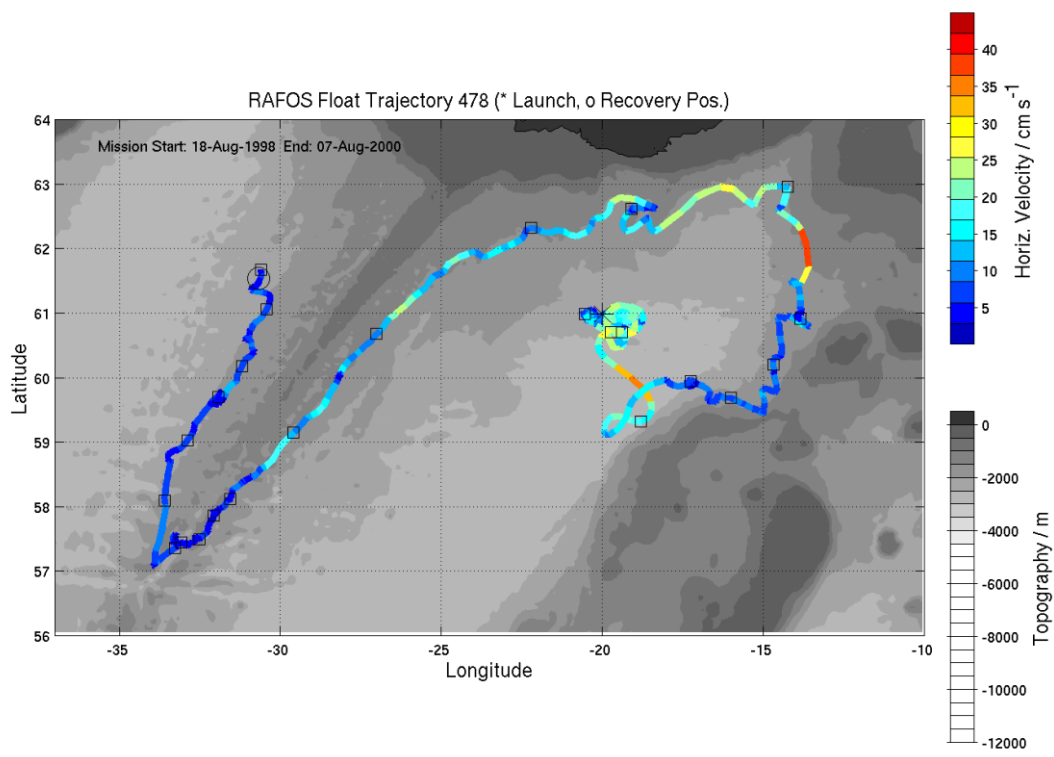


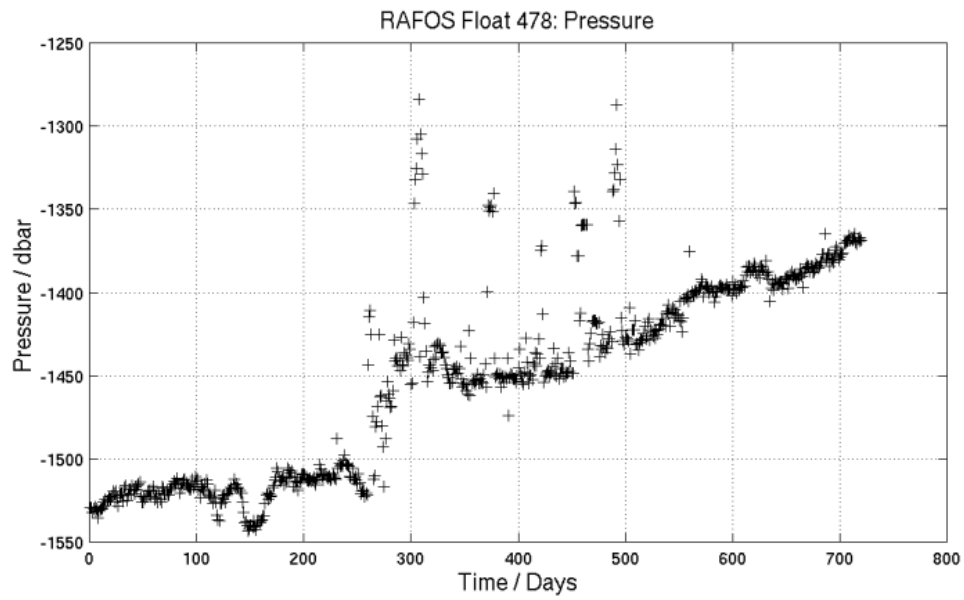
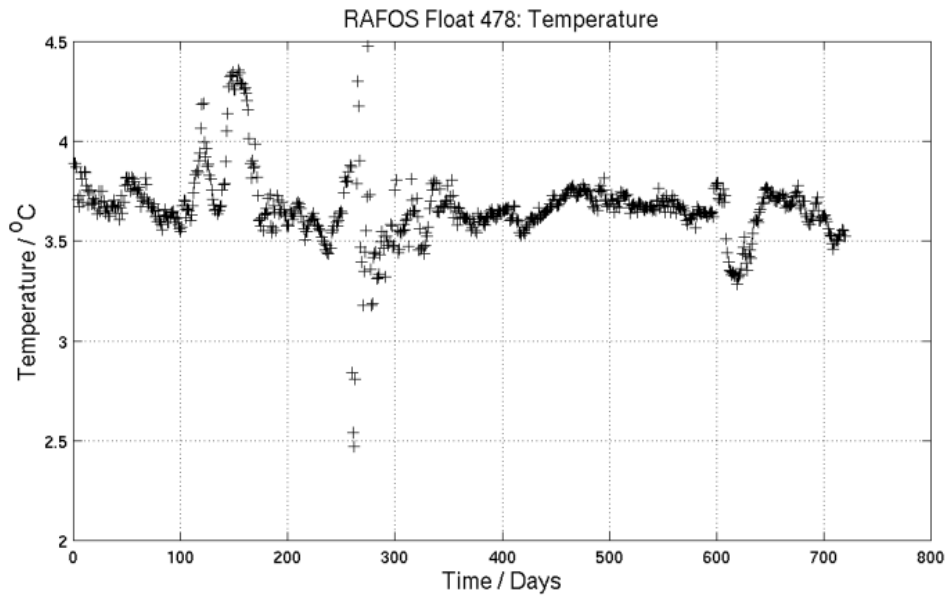
RAFOS Float 477: Pressure



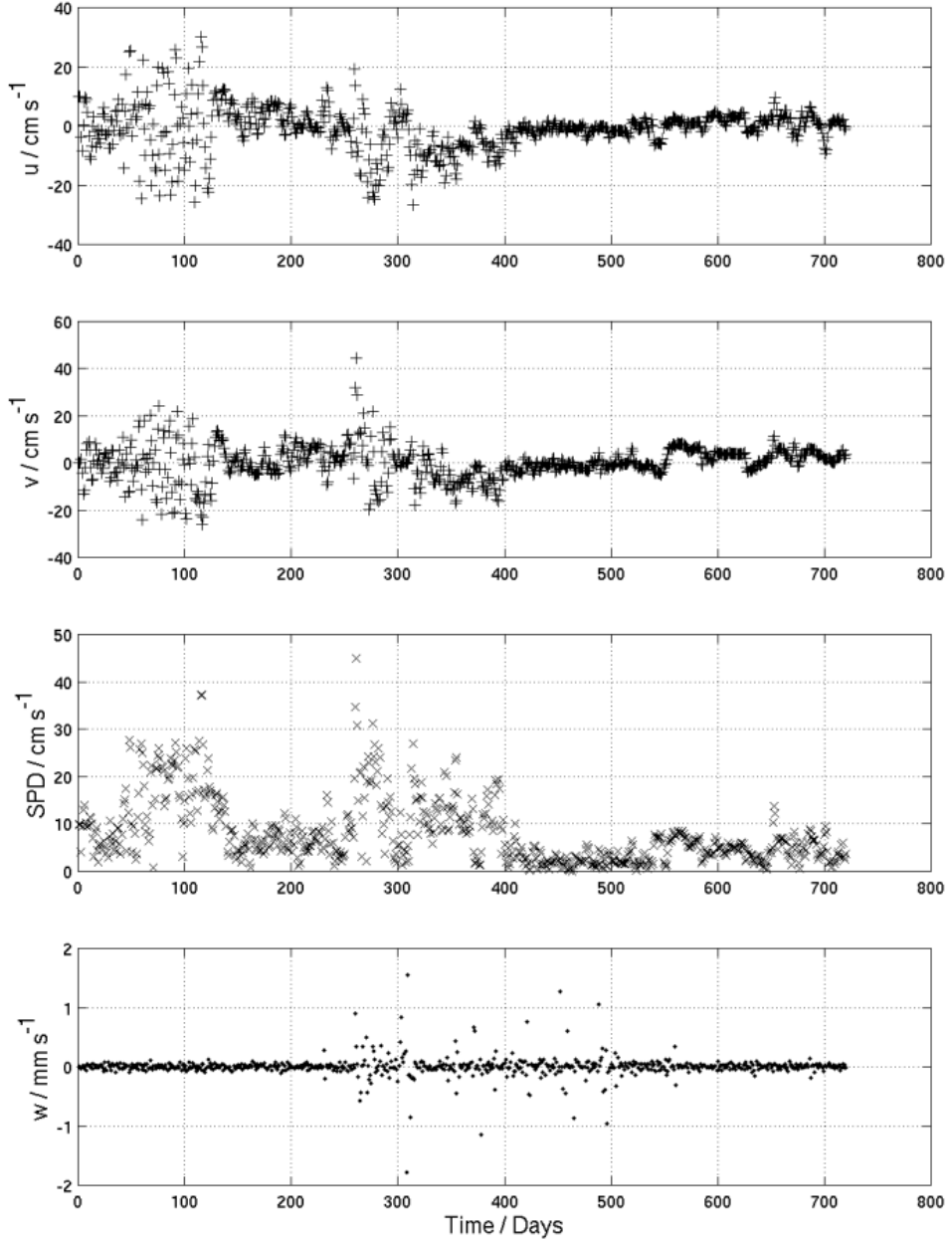
RAFOS Float 477: Velocities

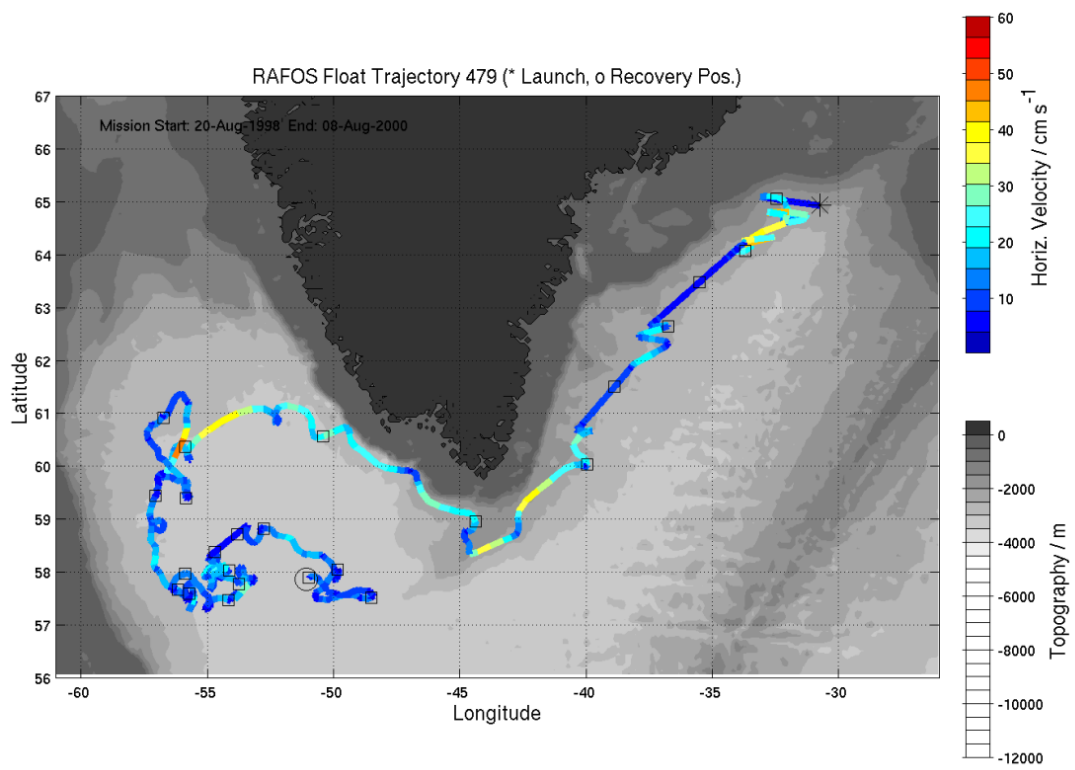


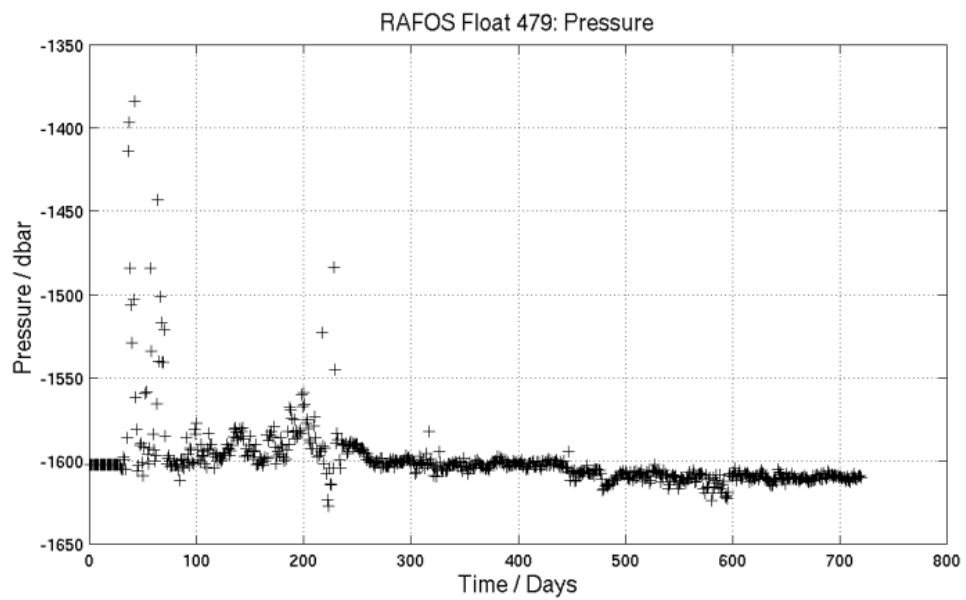
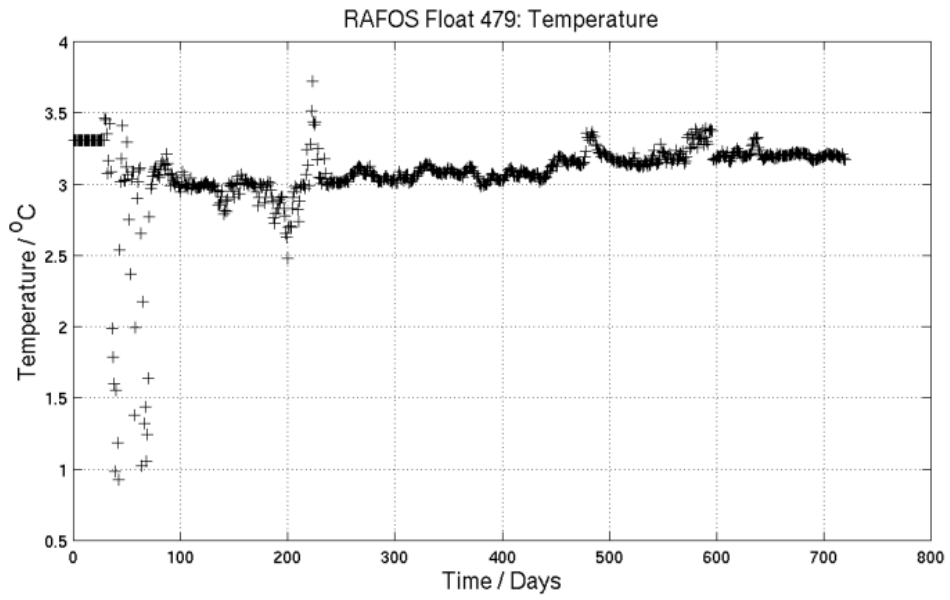




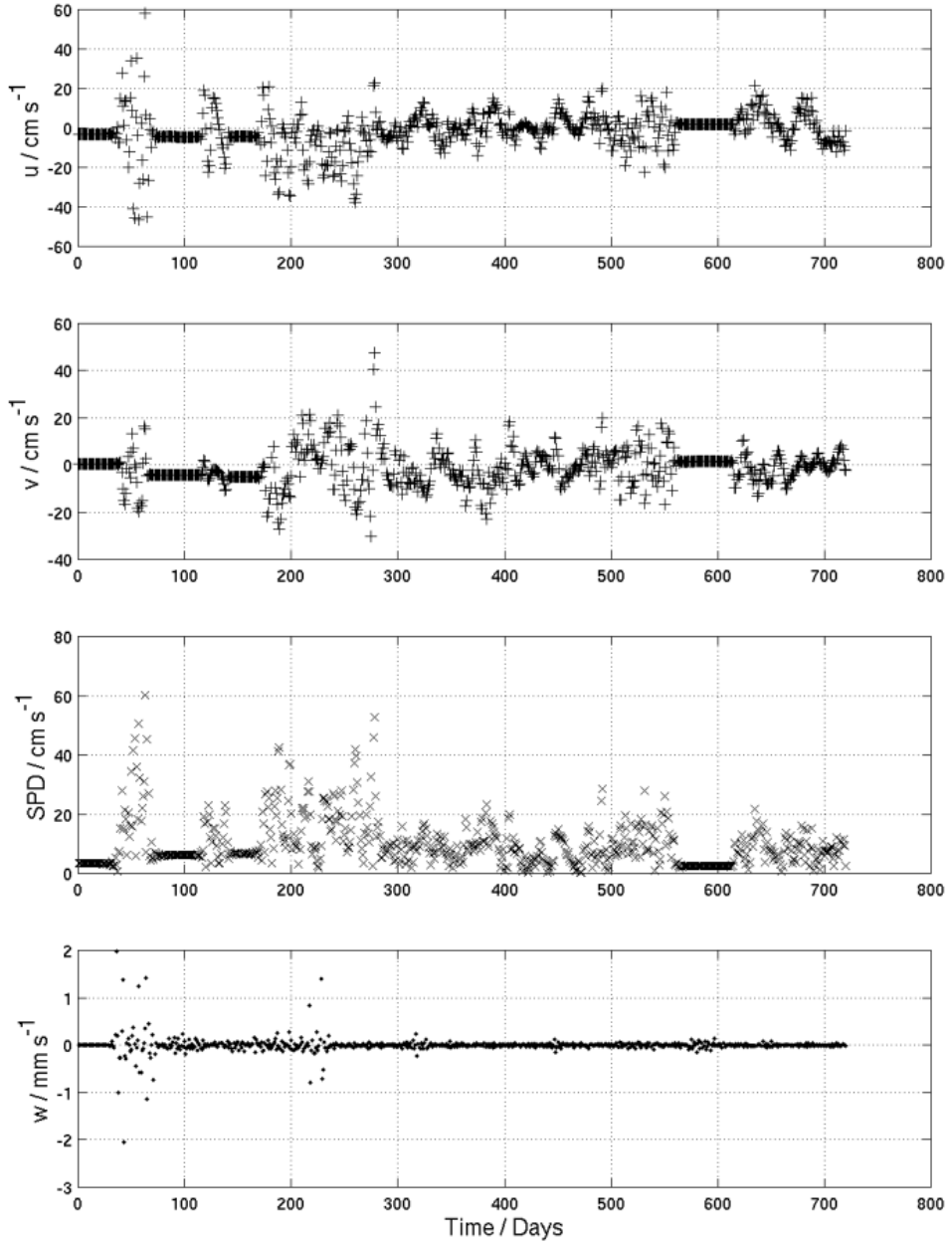
RAFOS Float 478: Velocities



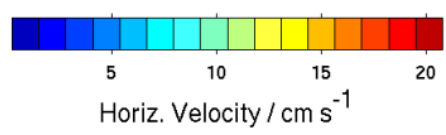
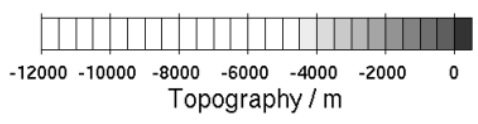
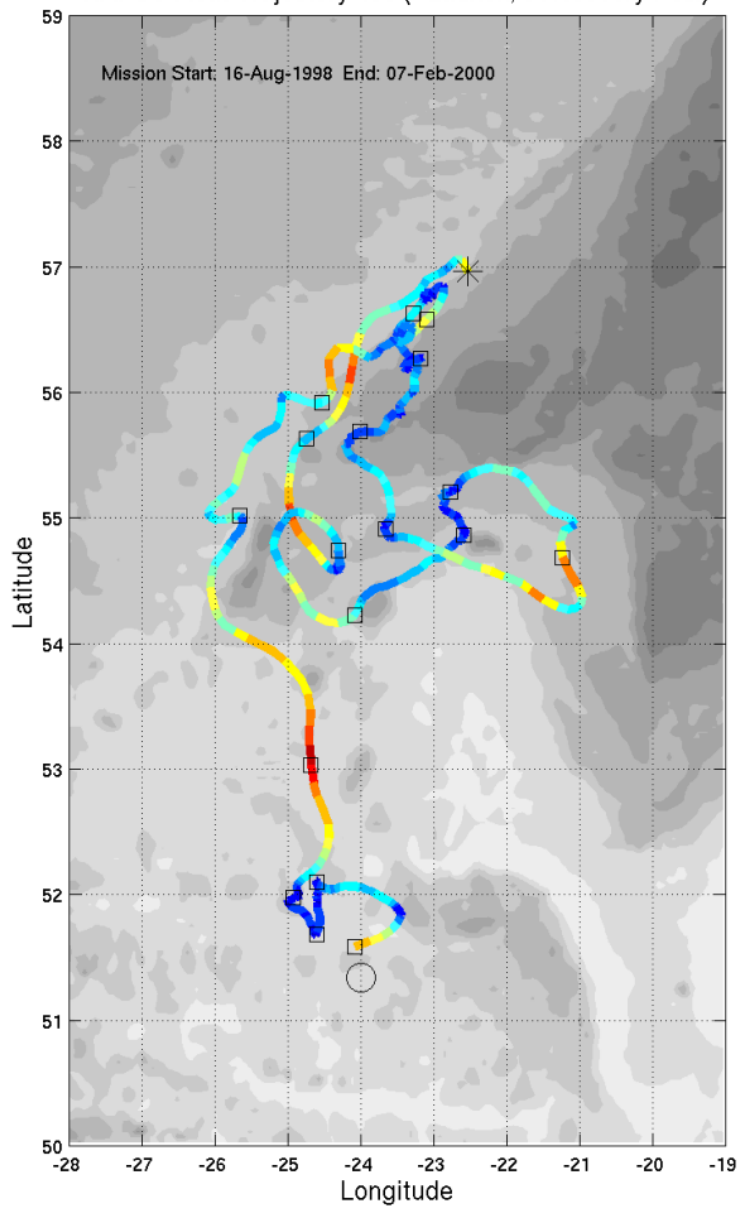


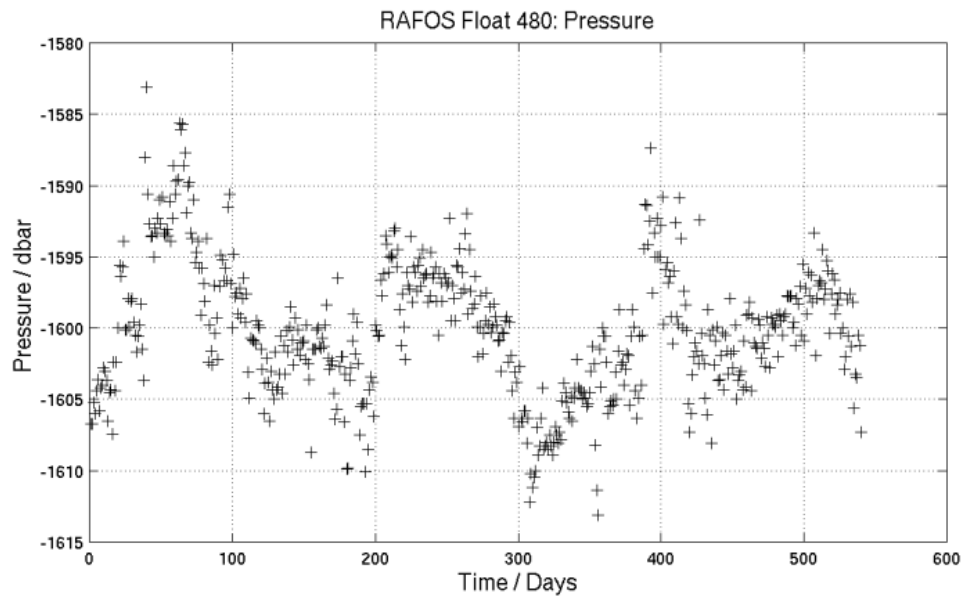
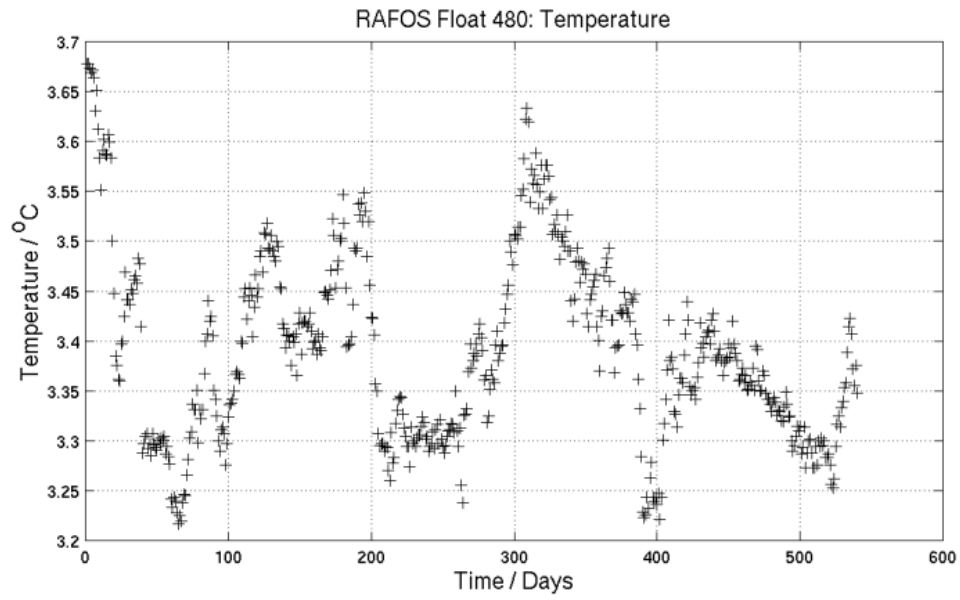


RAFOS Float 479: Velocities

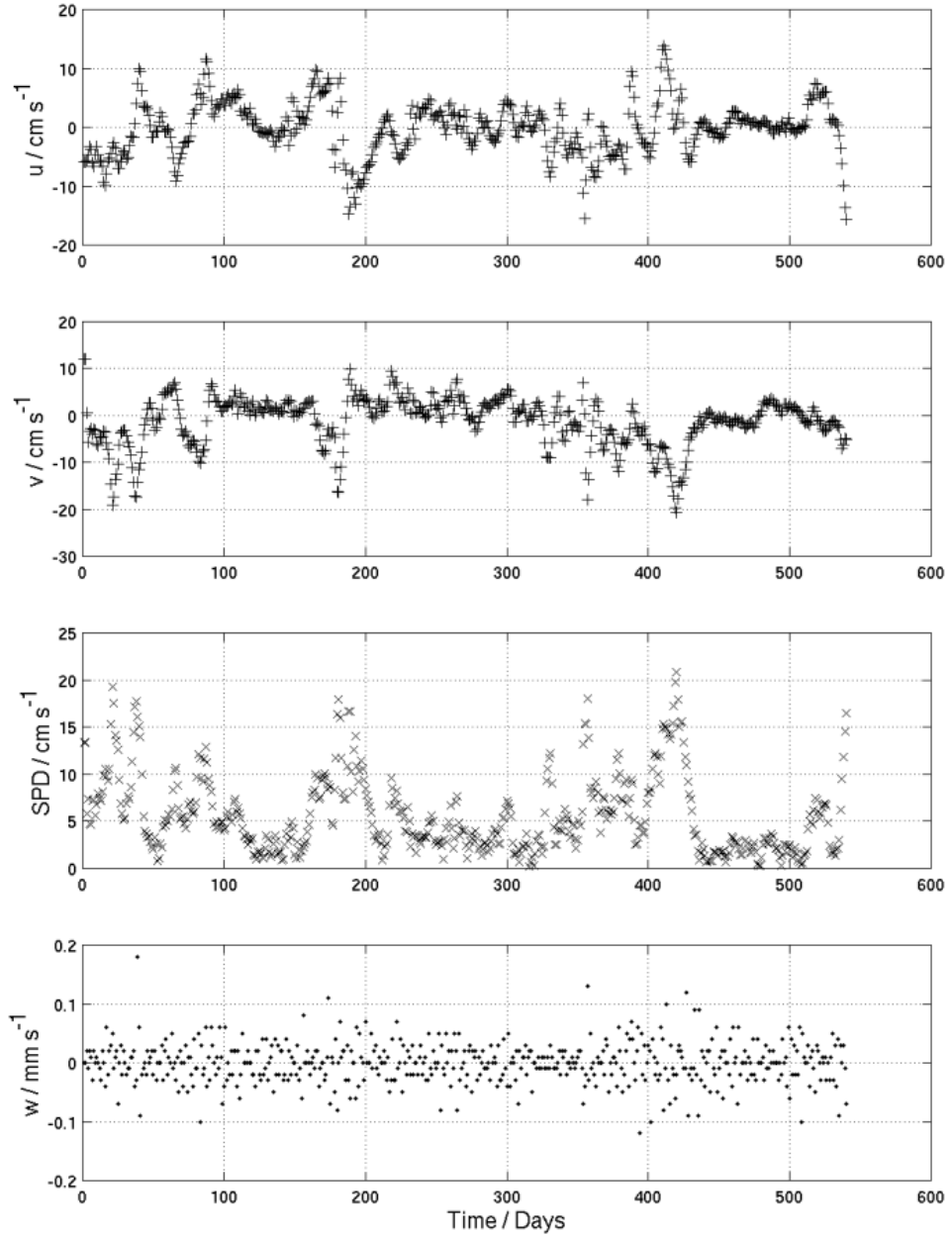


RAFOS Float Trajectory 480 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)

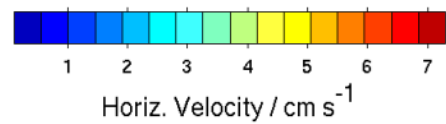
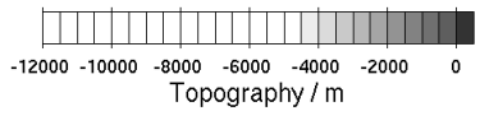
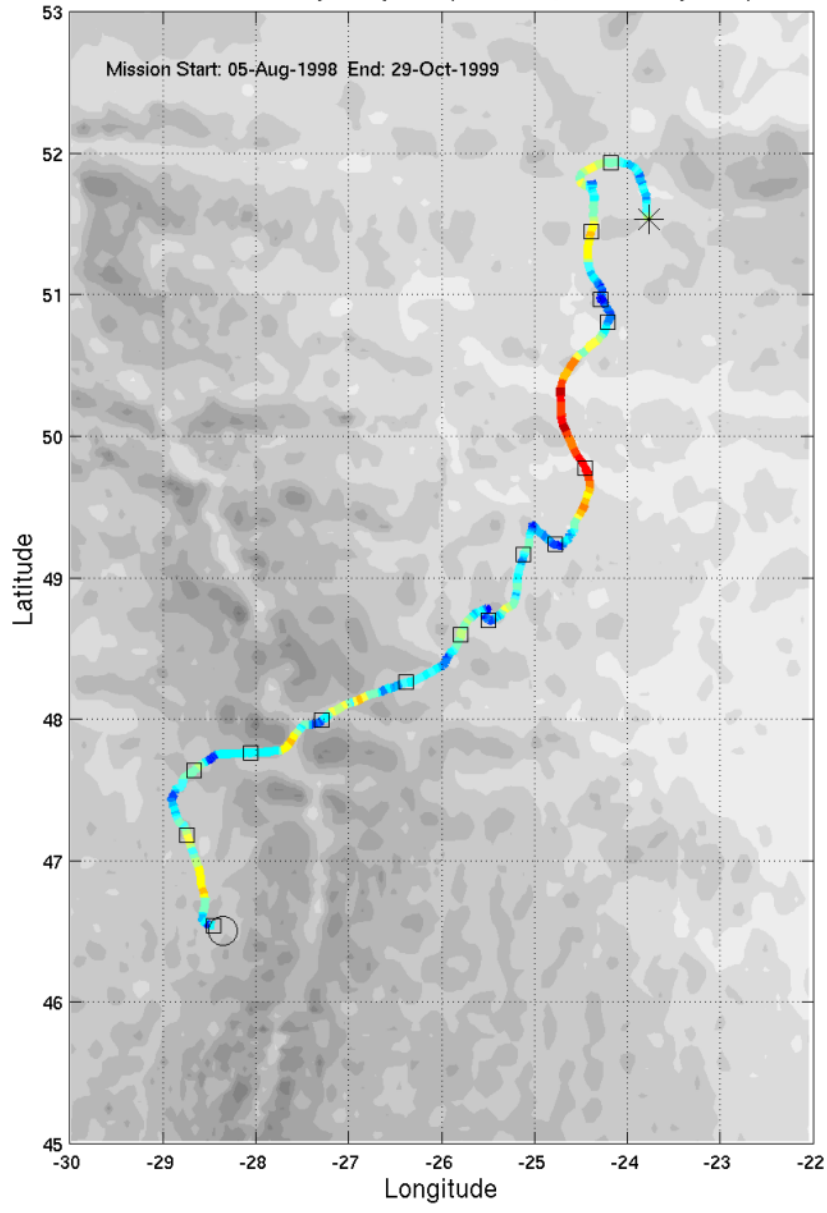


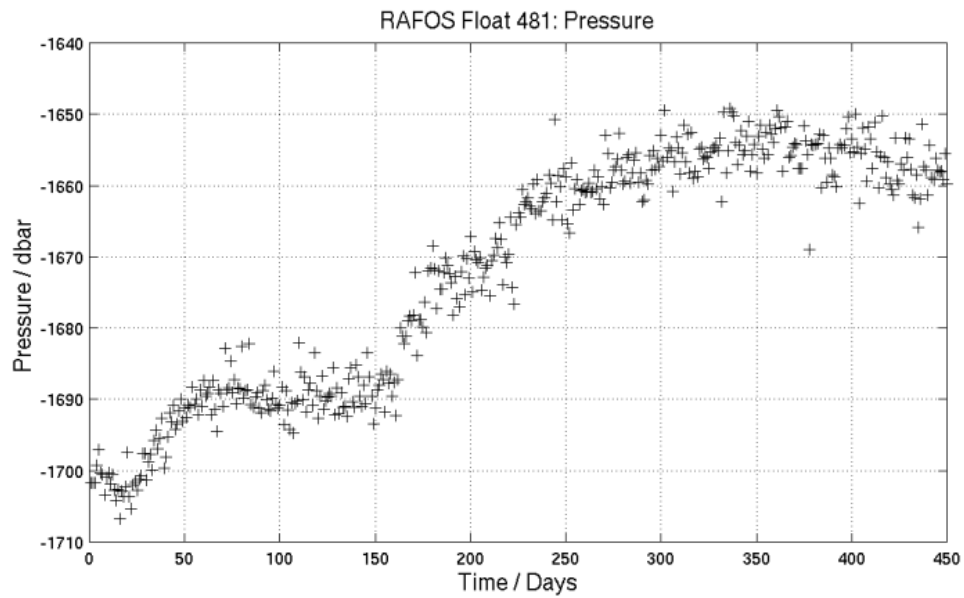
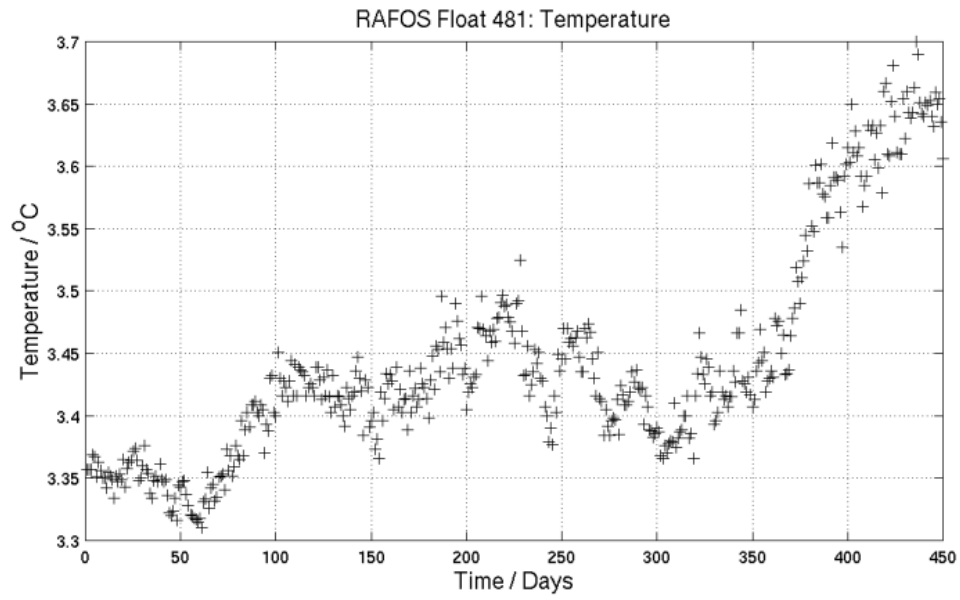


RAFOS Float 480: Velocities

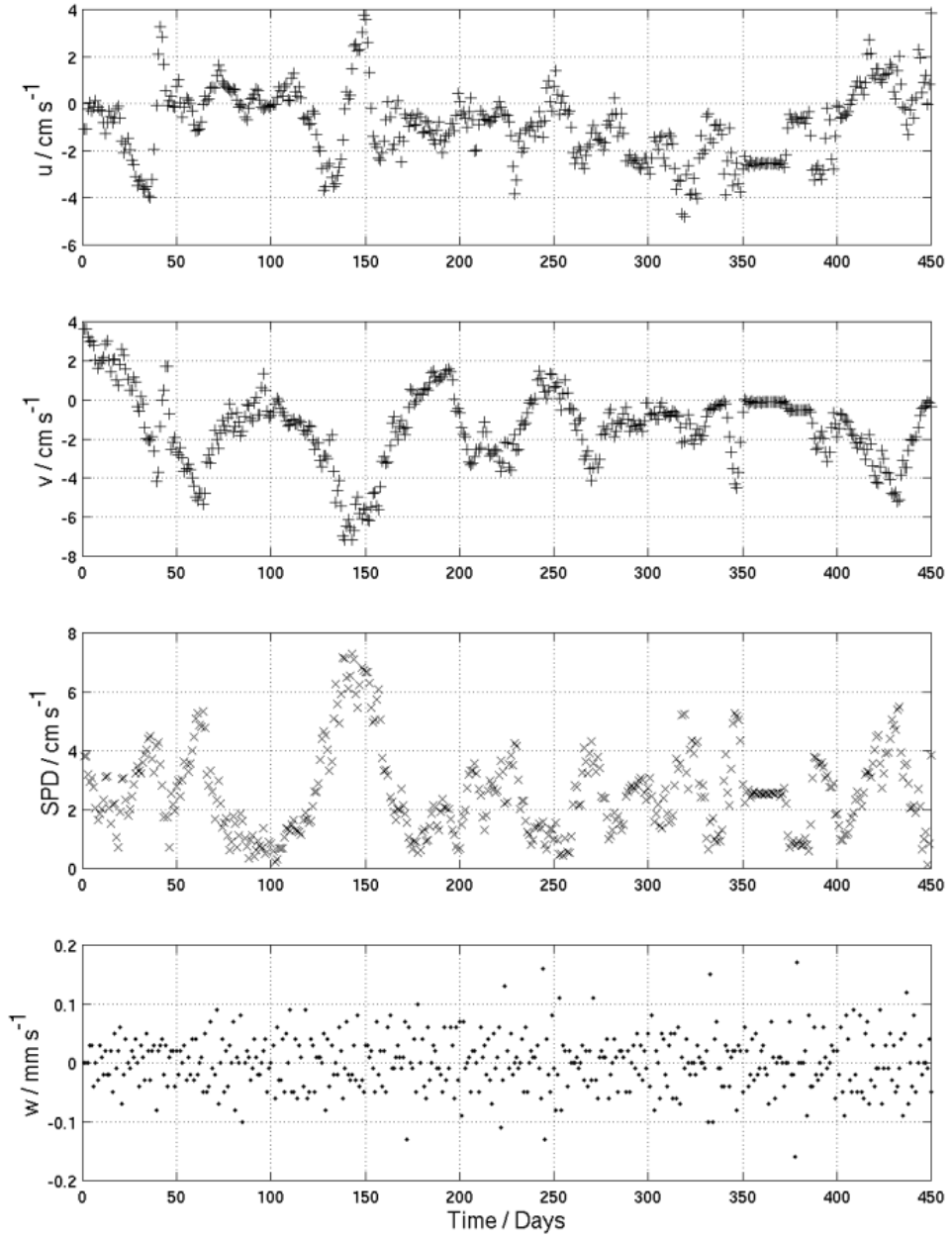


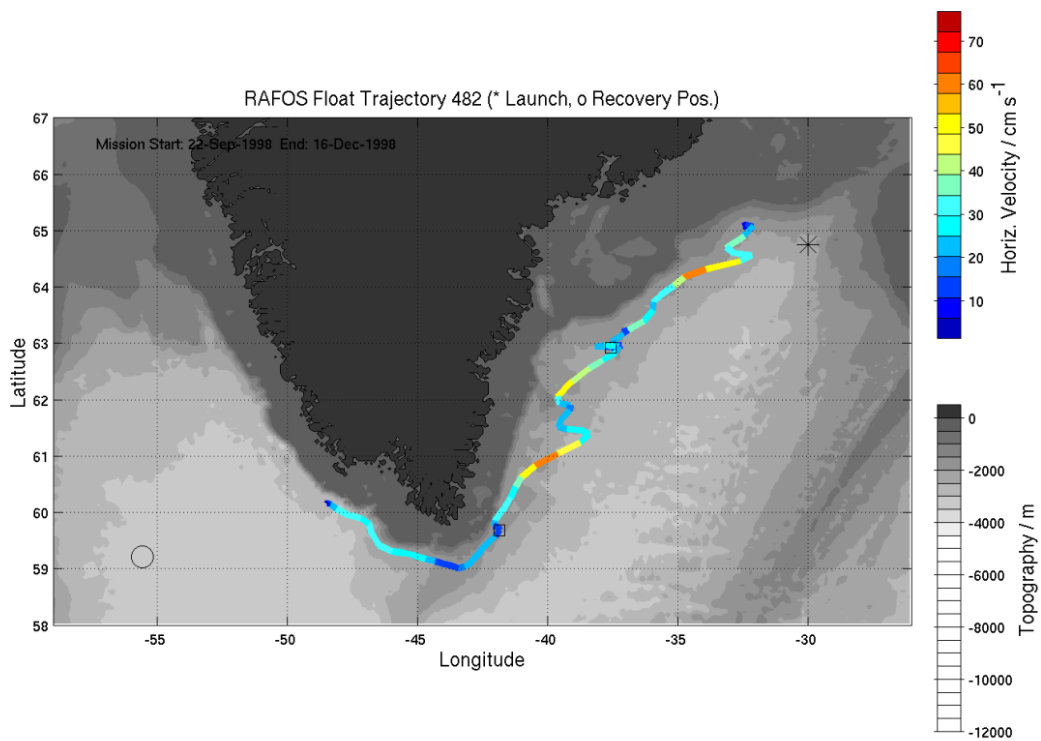
RAFOS Float Trajectory 481 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)

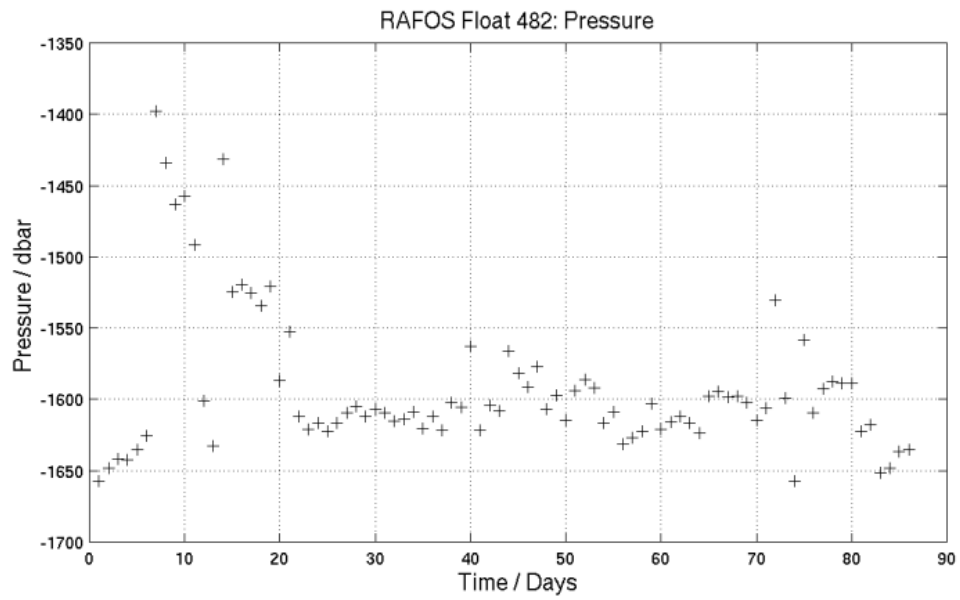
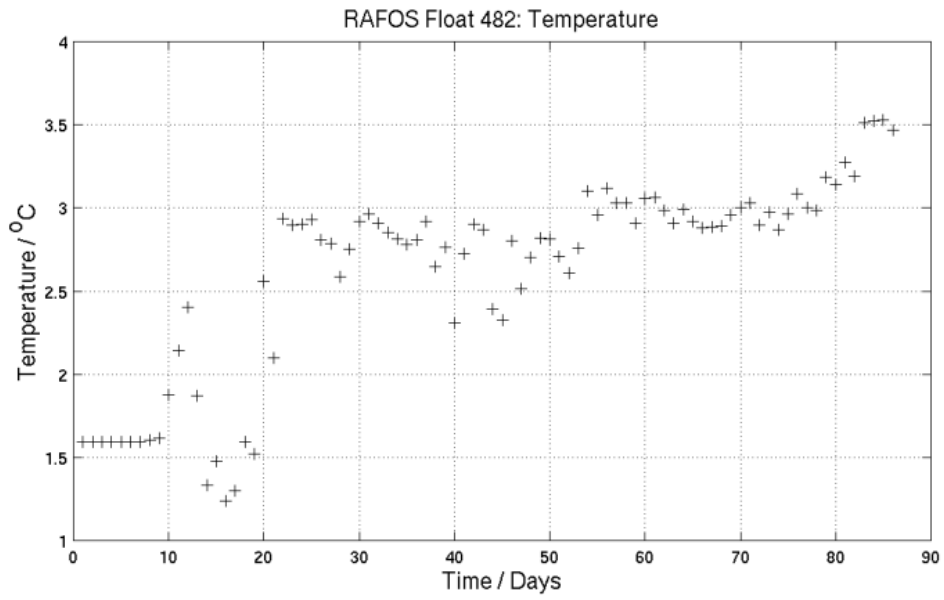


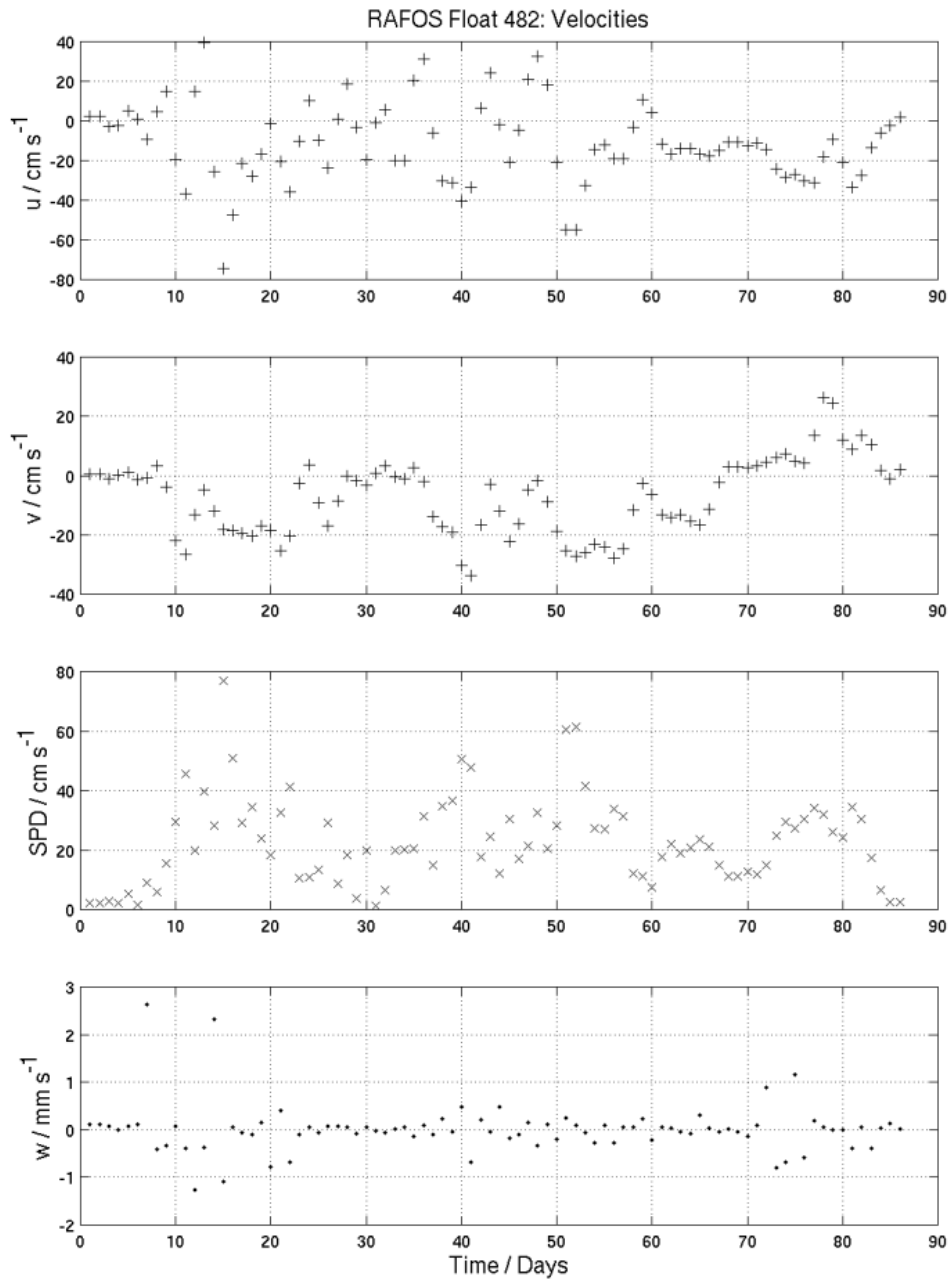


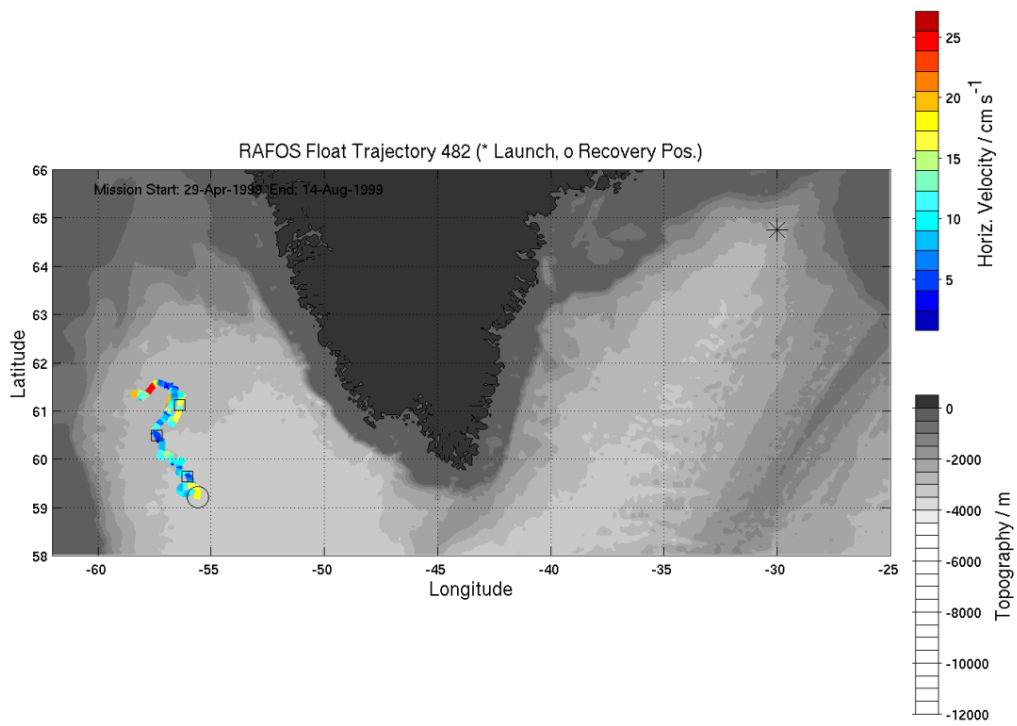
RAFOS Float 481: Velocities

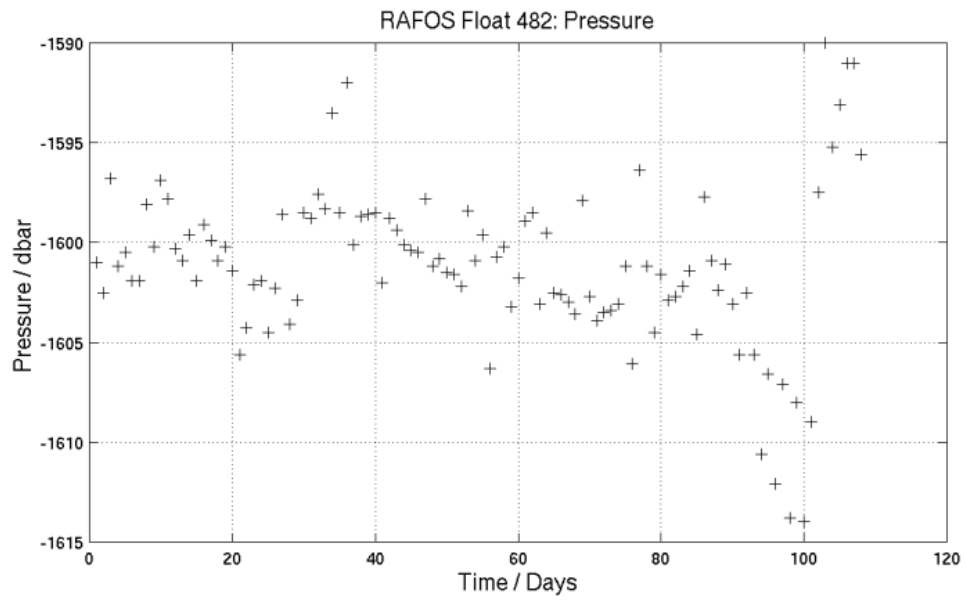
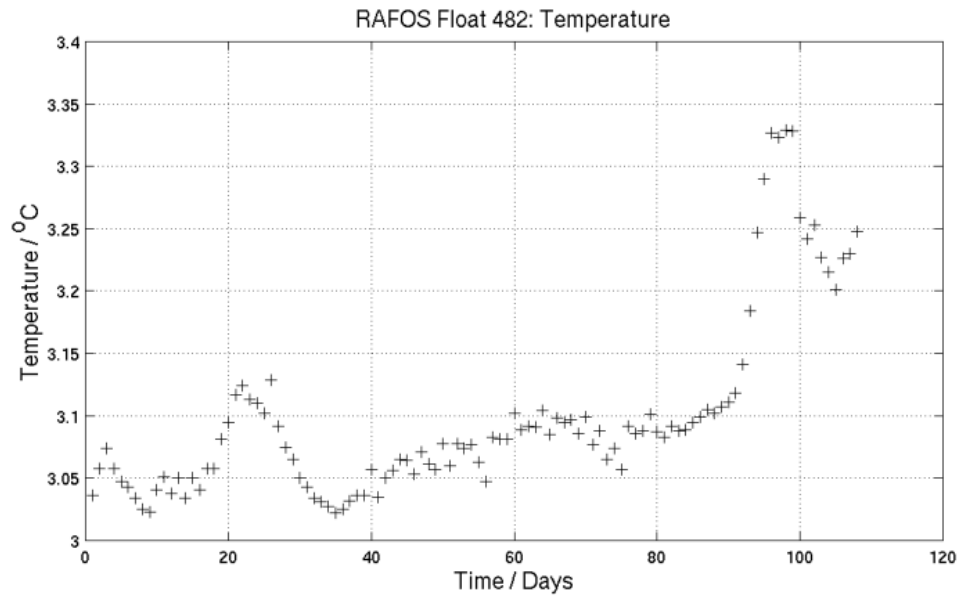




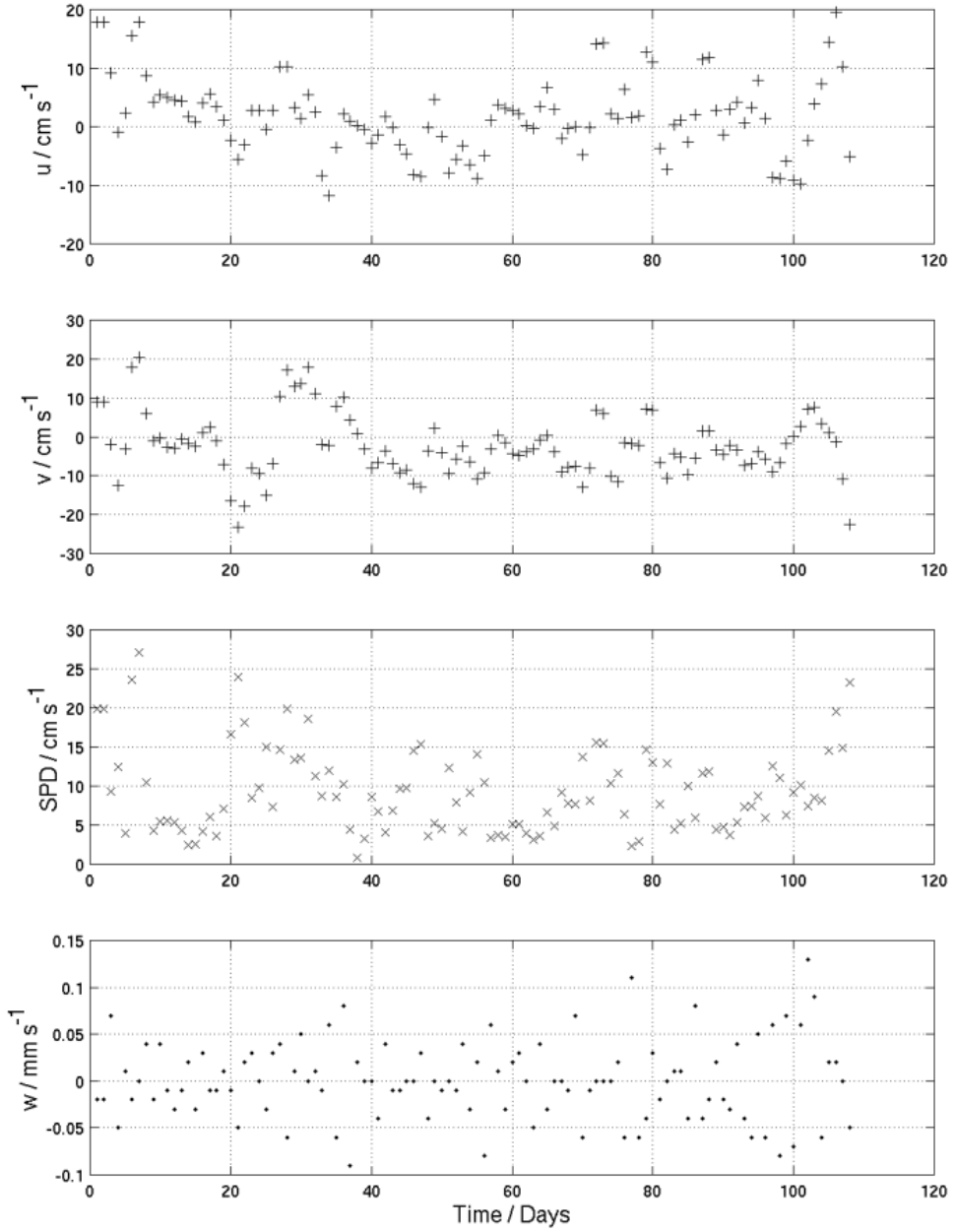




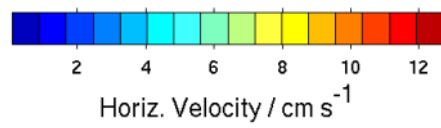
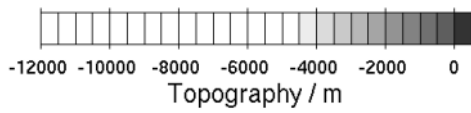
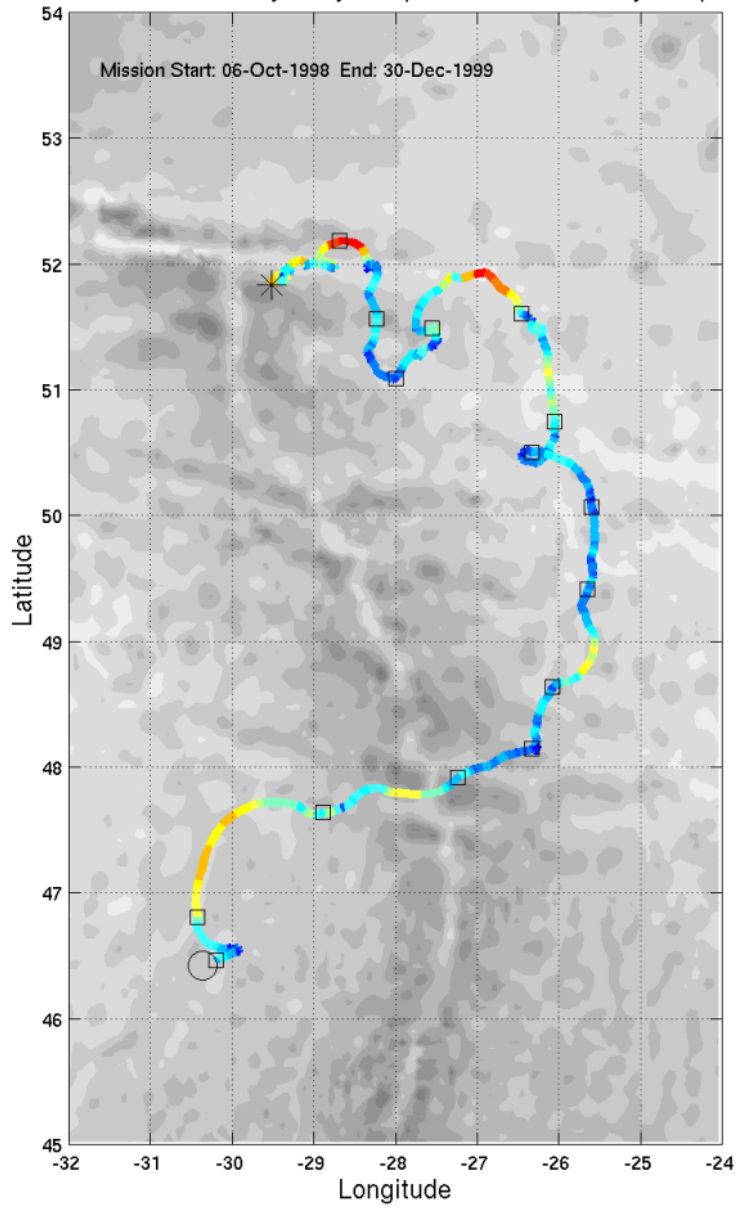




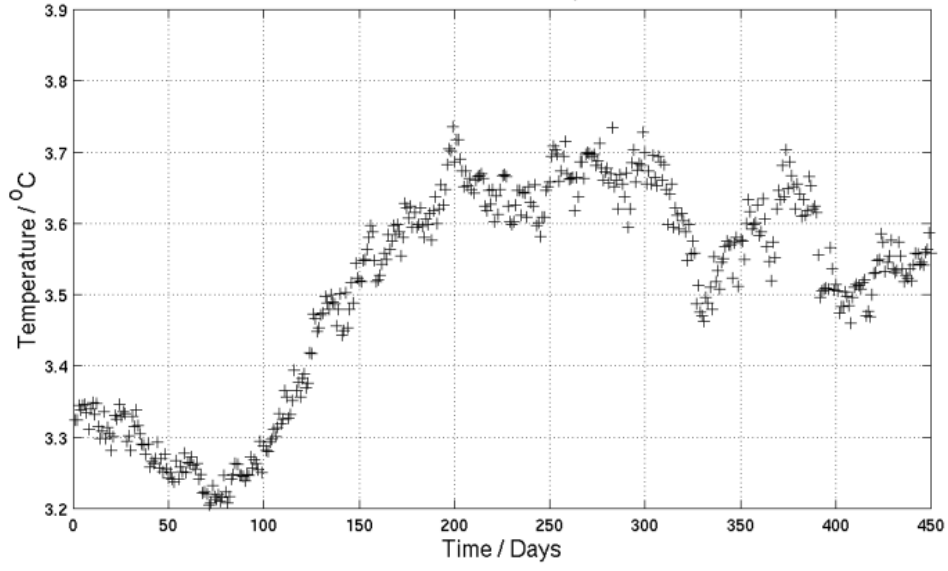
RAFOS Float 482: Velocities



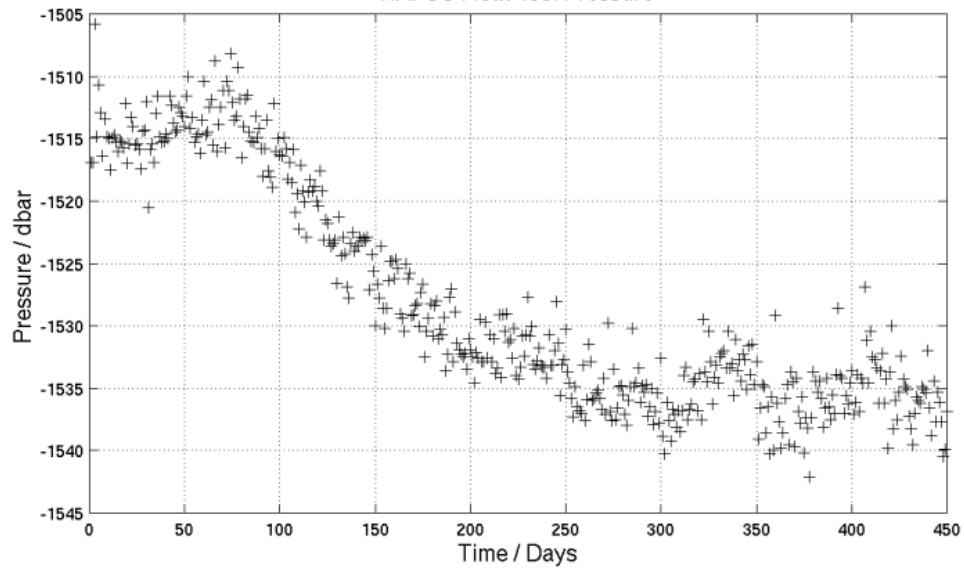
RAFOS Float Trajectory 483 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)



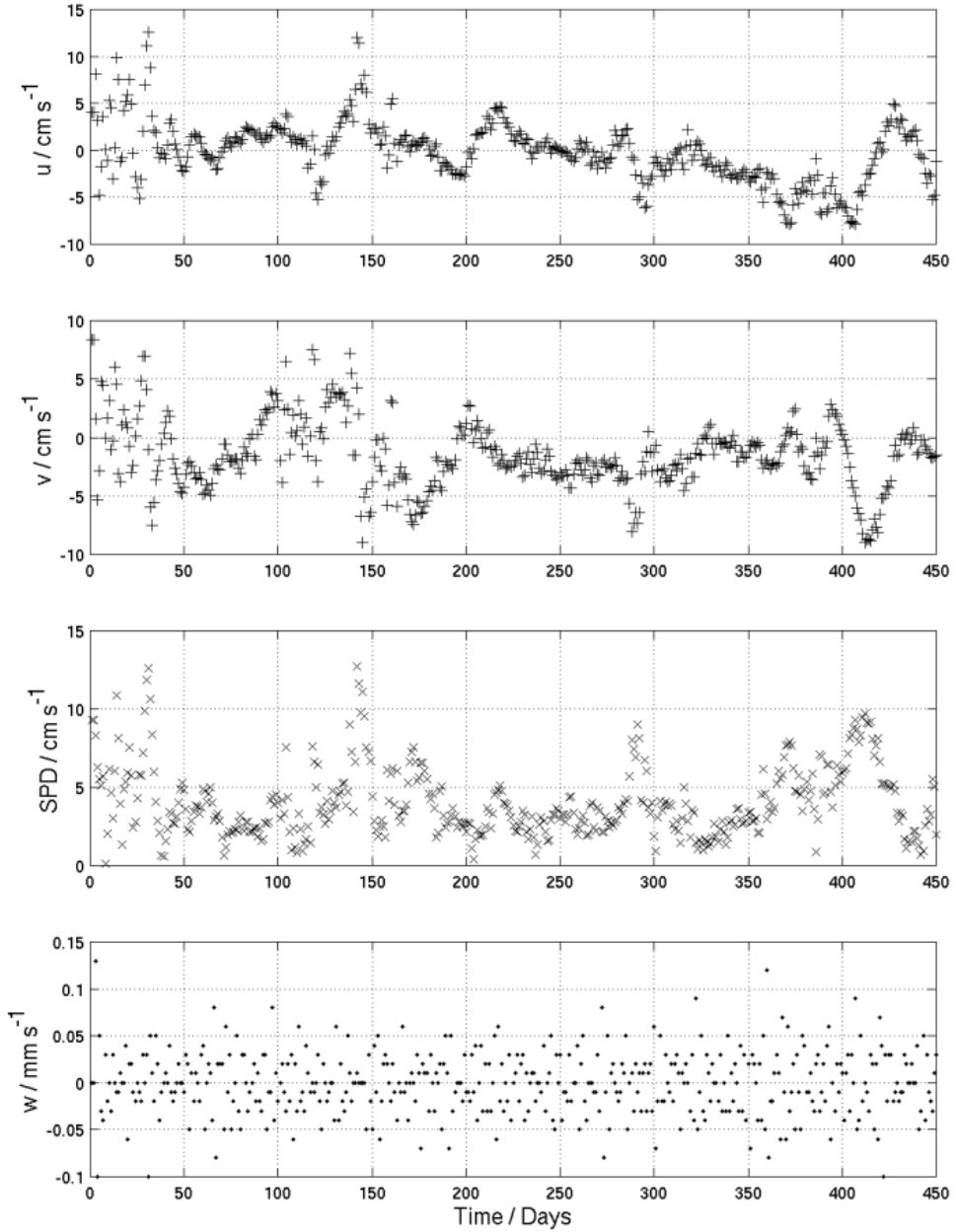
RAFOS Float 483: Temperature



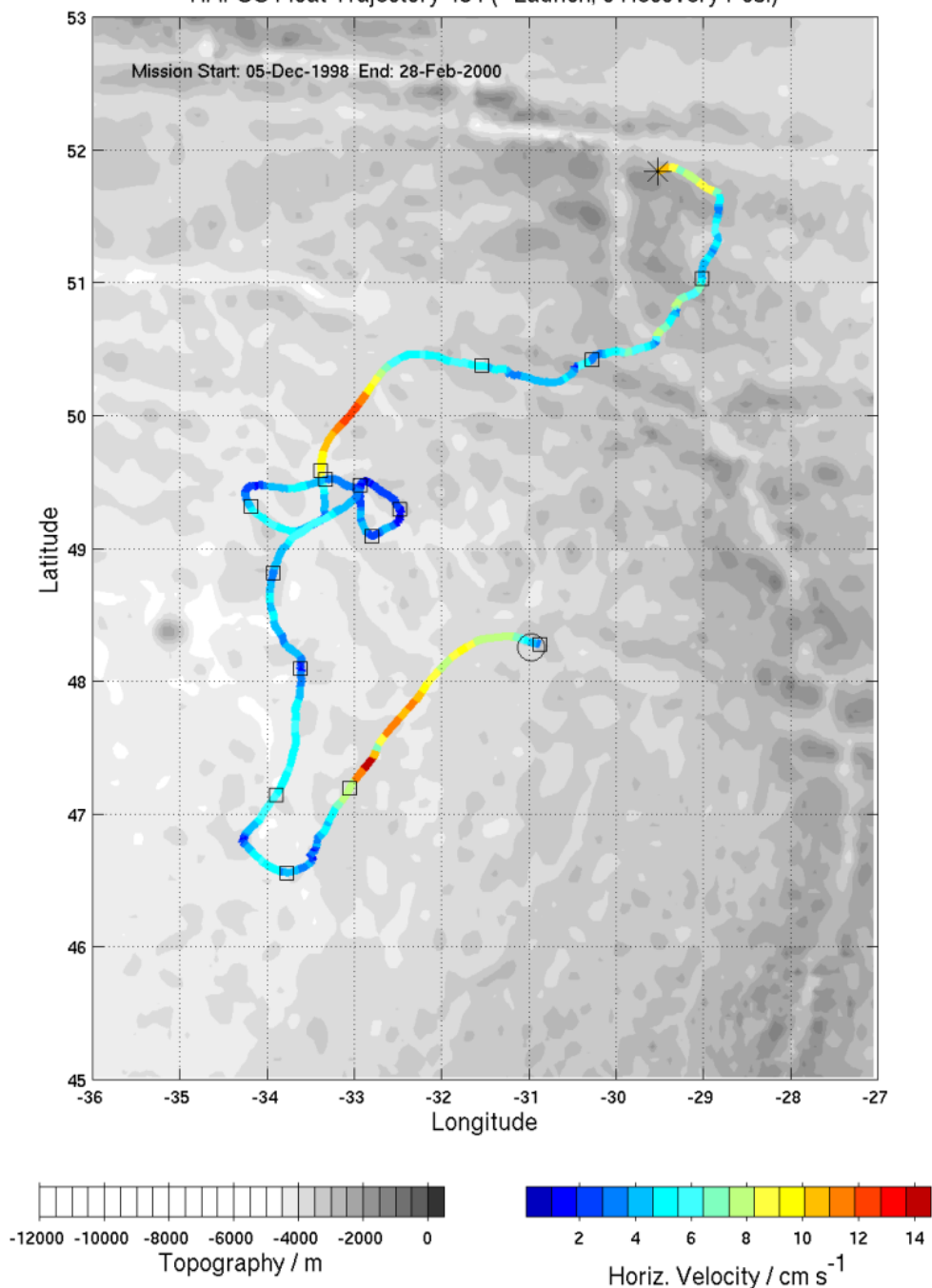
RAFOS Float 483: Pressure

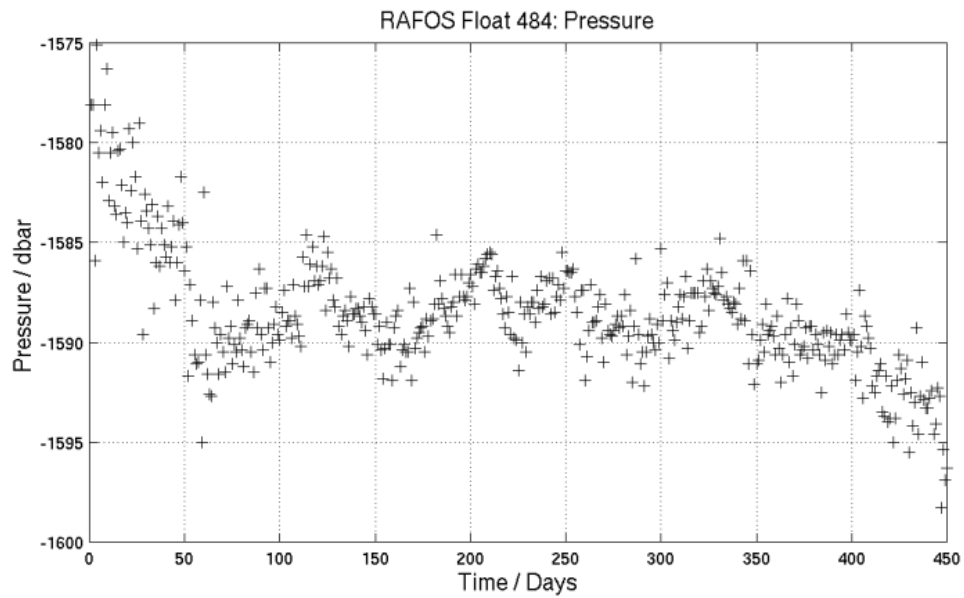
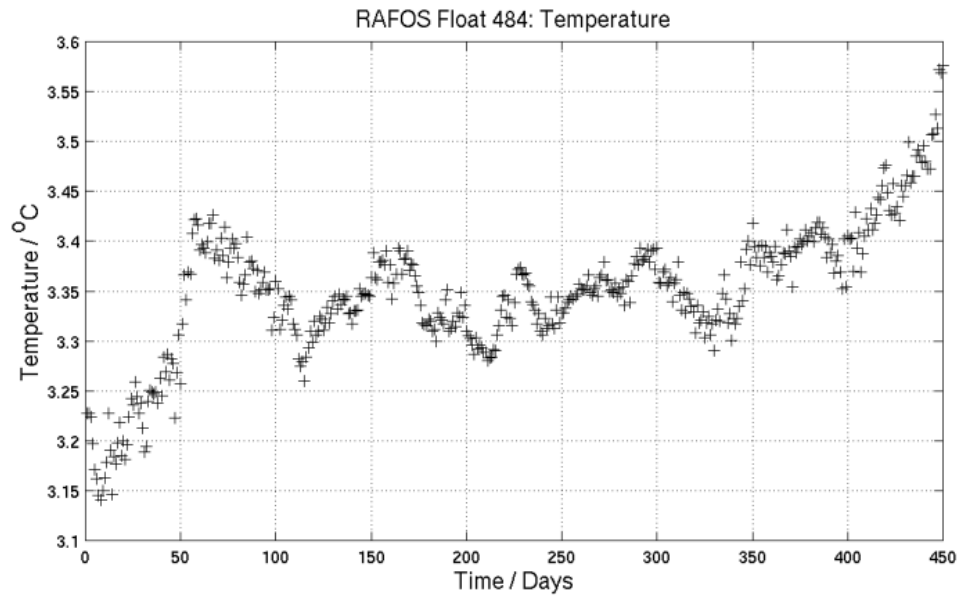


RAFOS Float 483: Velocities

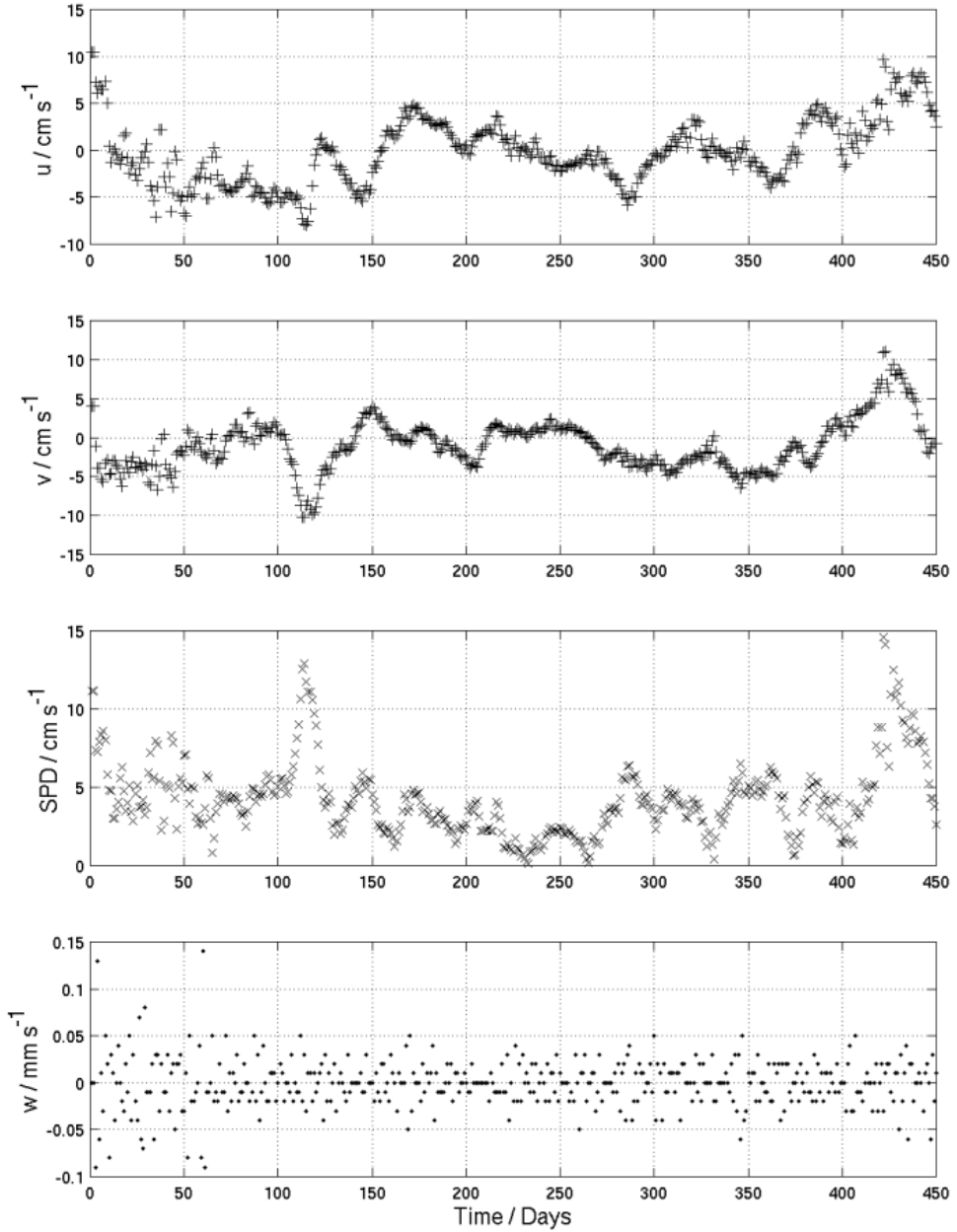


RAFOS Float Trajectory 484 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)

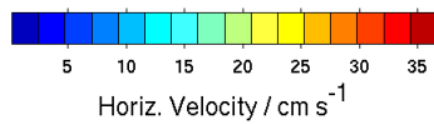
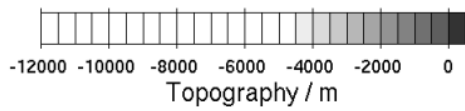
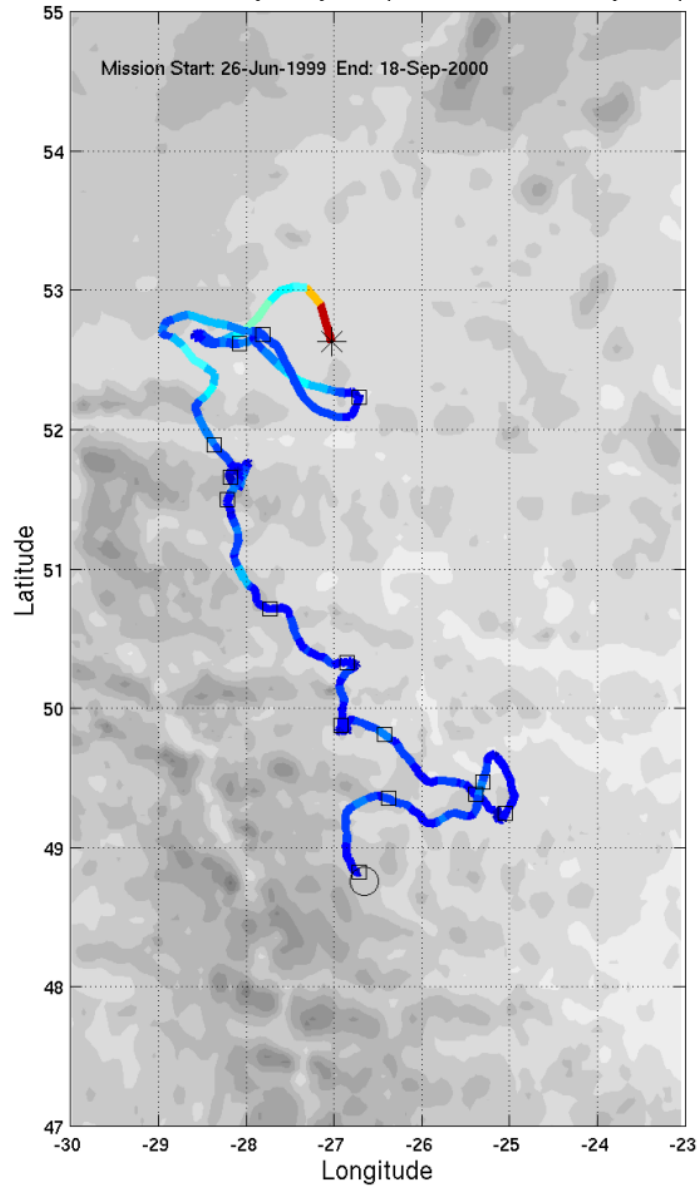


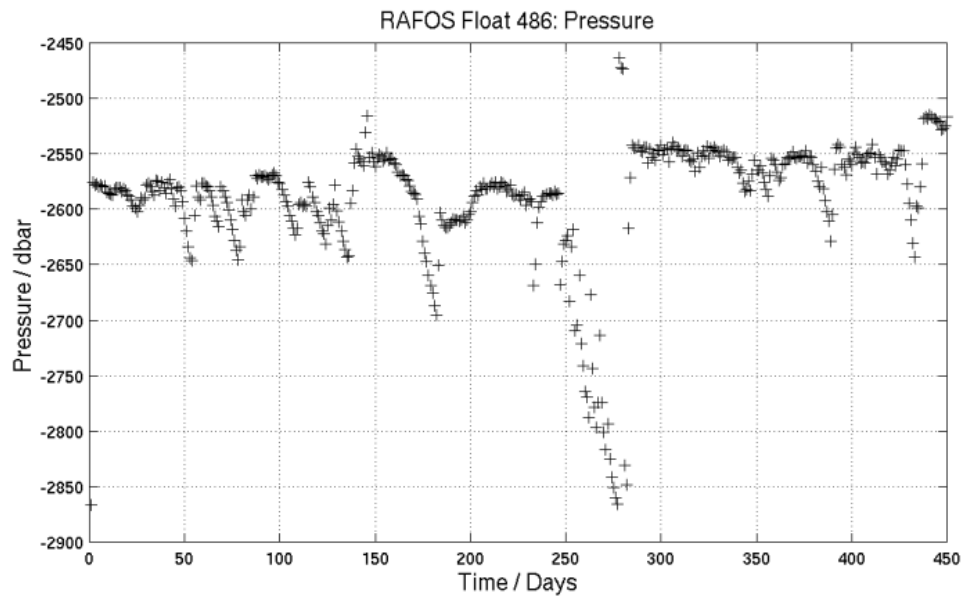
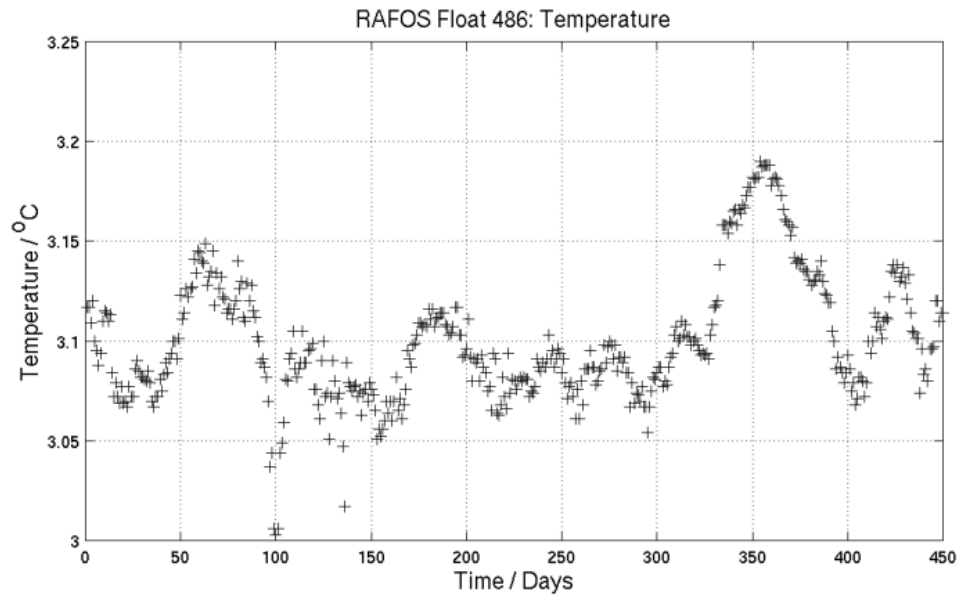


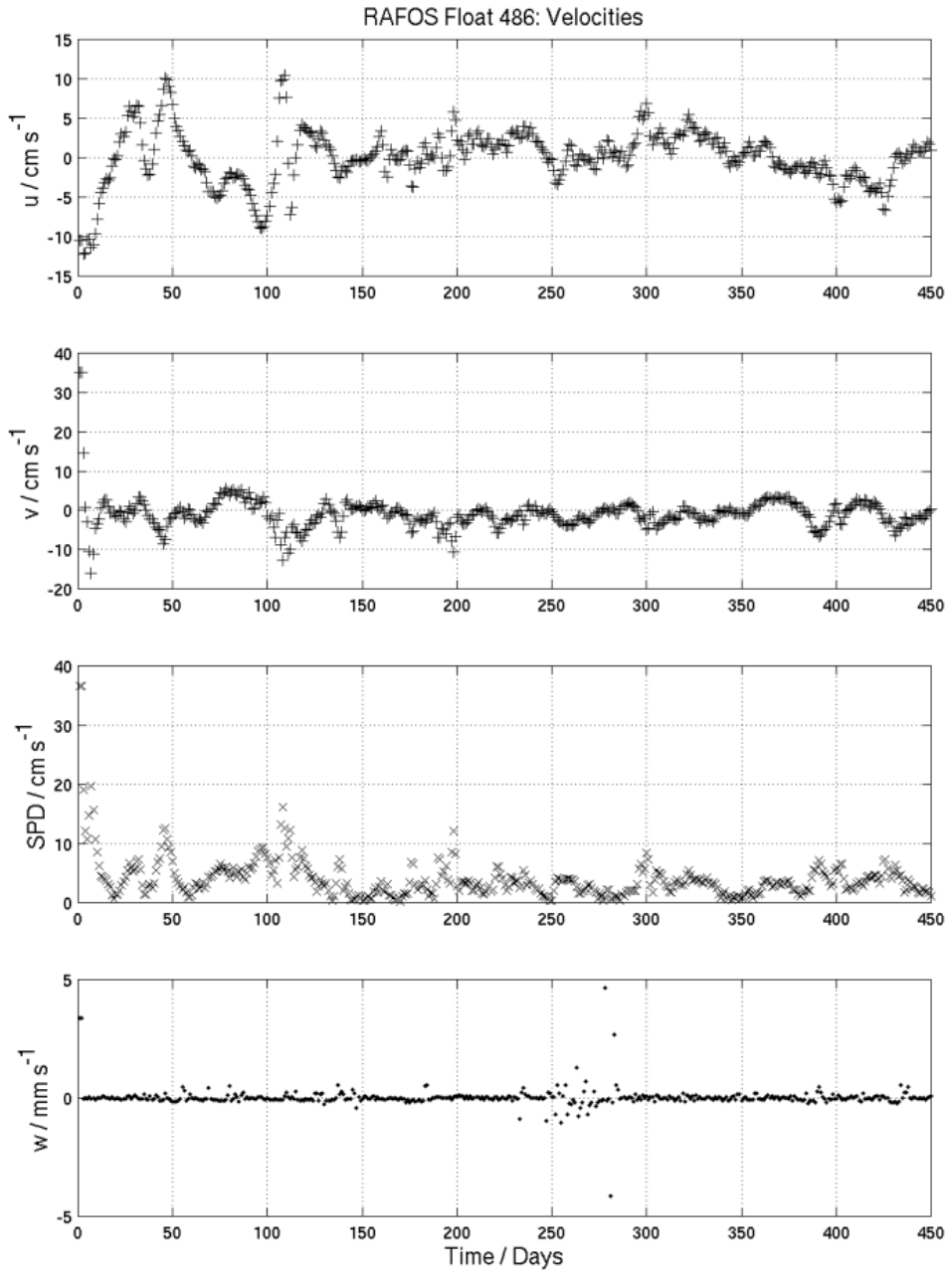
RAFOS Float 484: Velocities



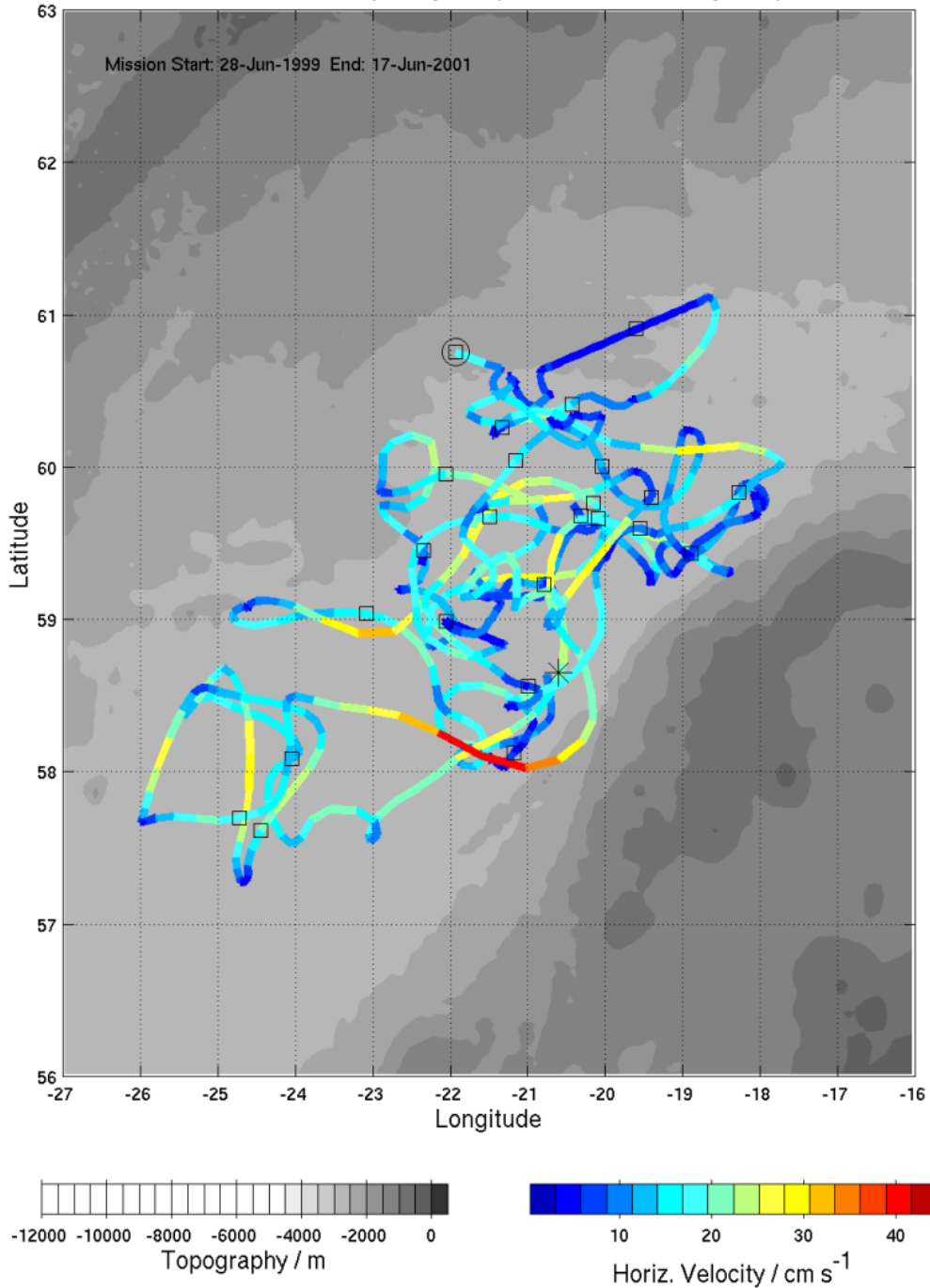
RAFOS Float Trajectory 486 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)

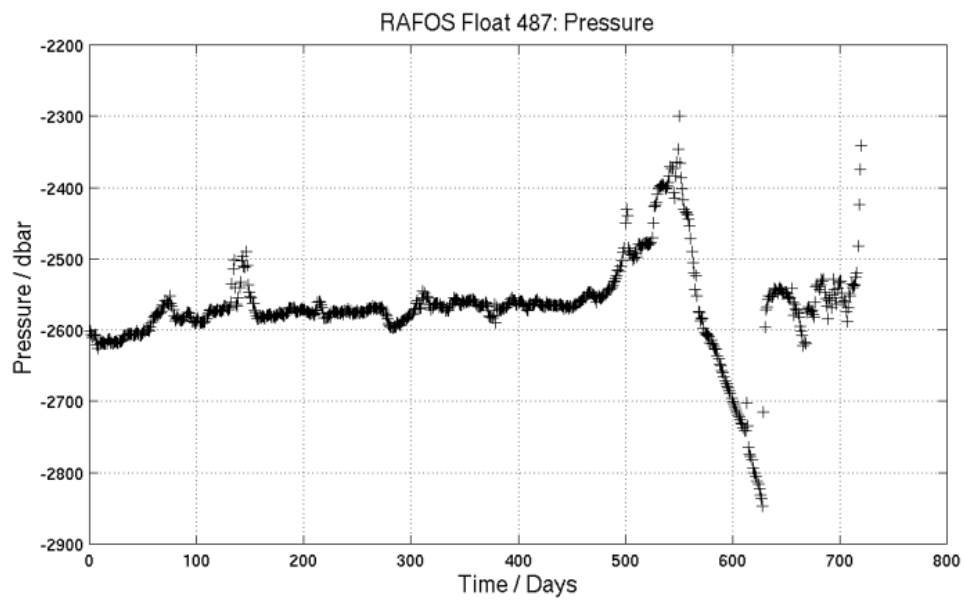
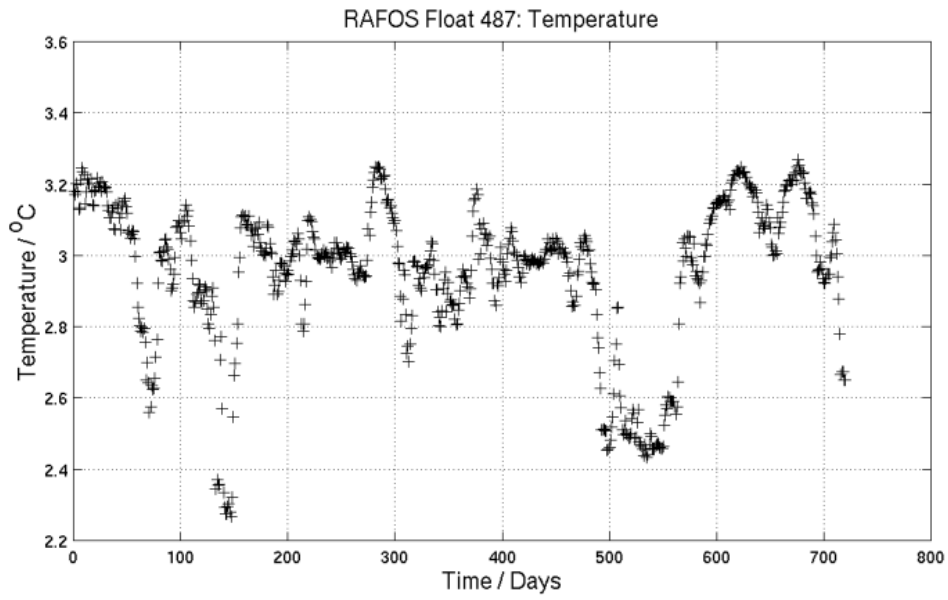




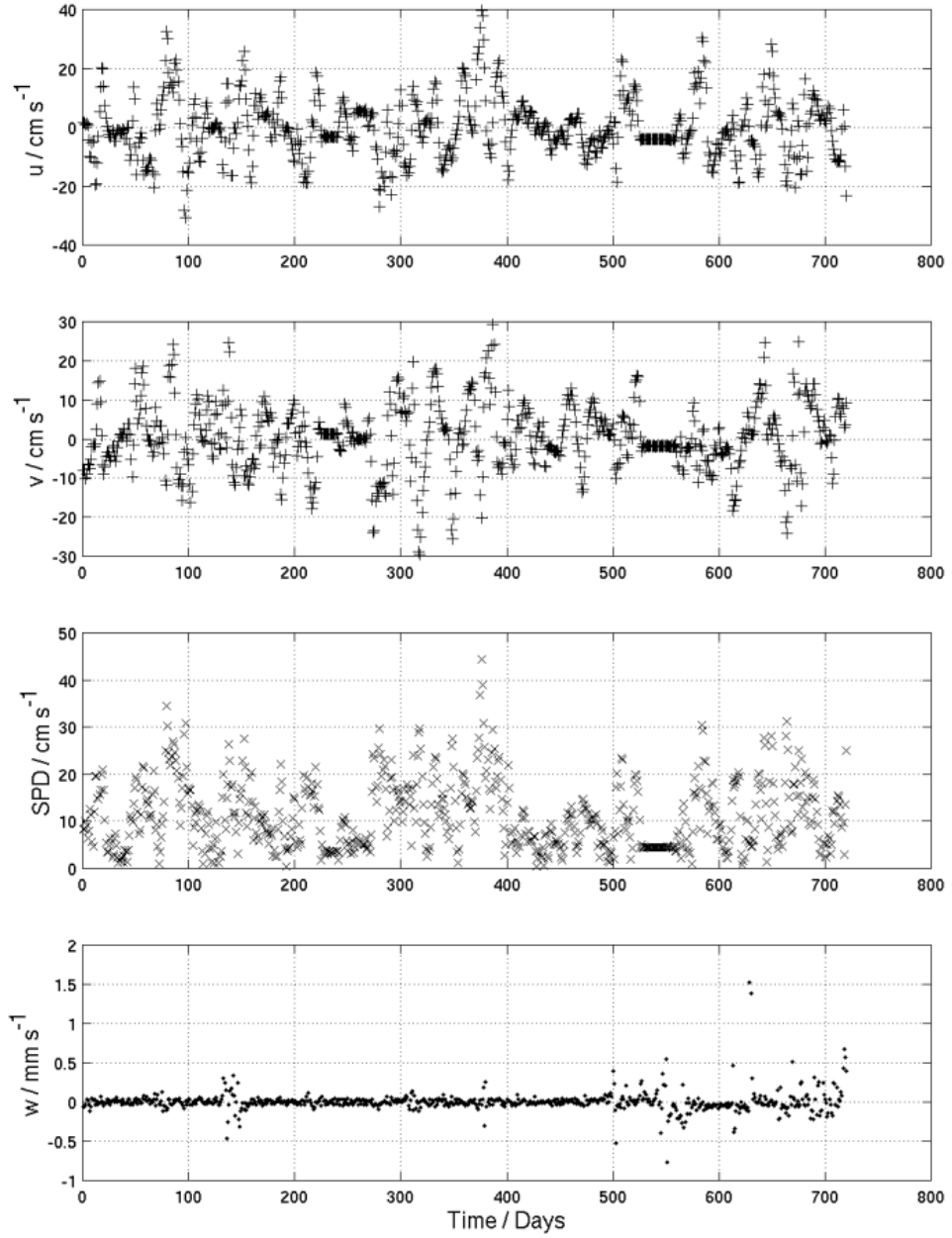


RAFOS Float Trajectory 487 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)

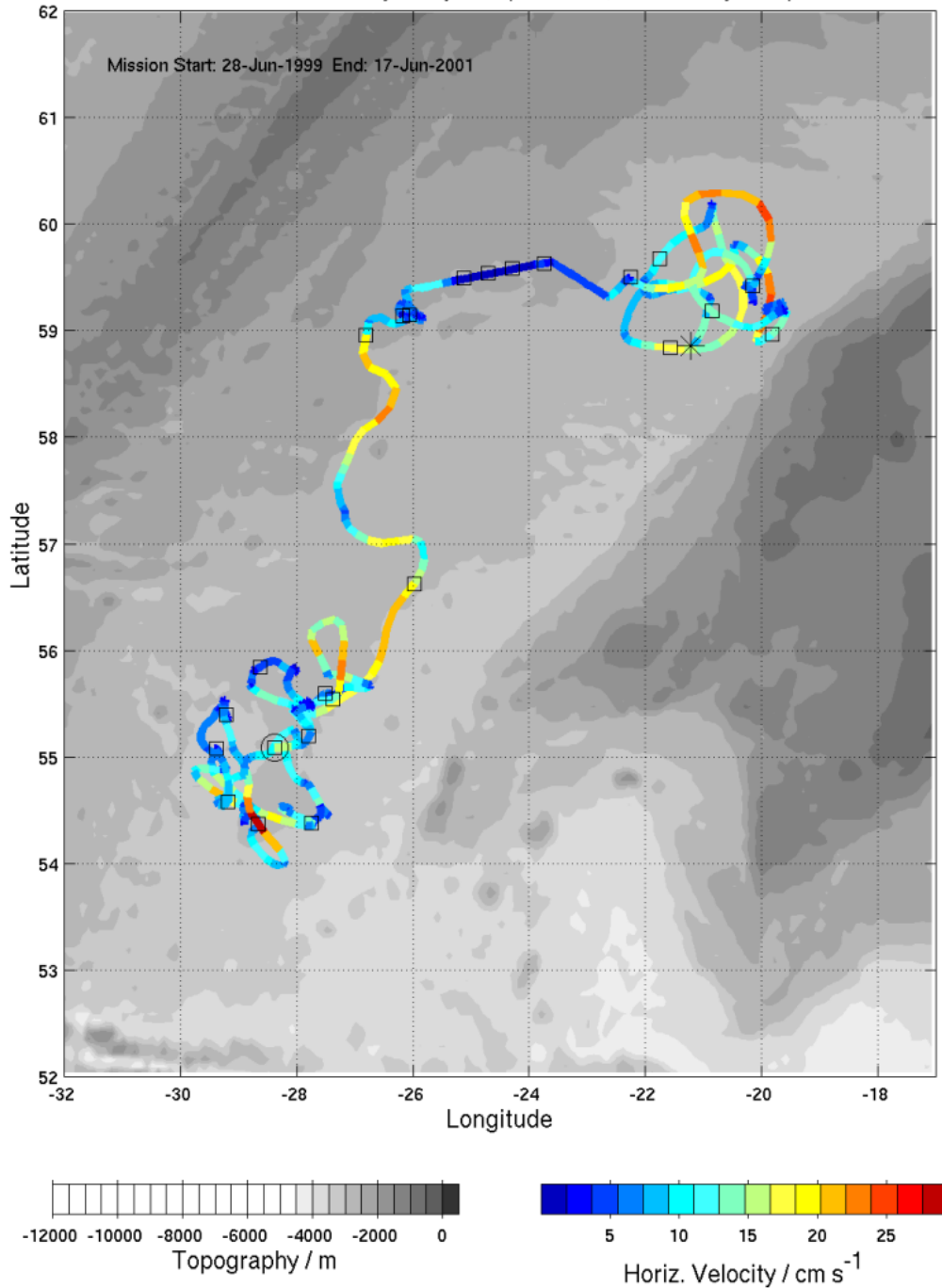




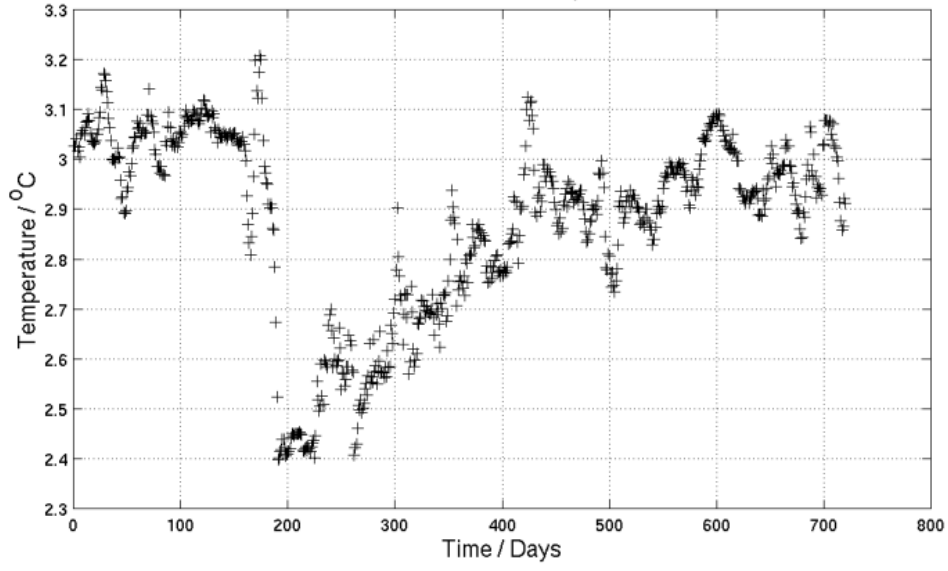
RAFOS Float 487: Velocities



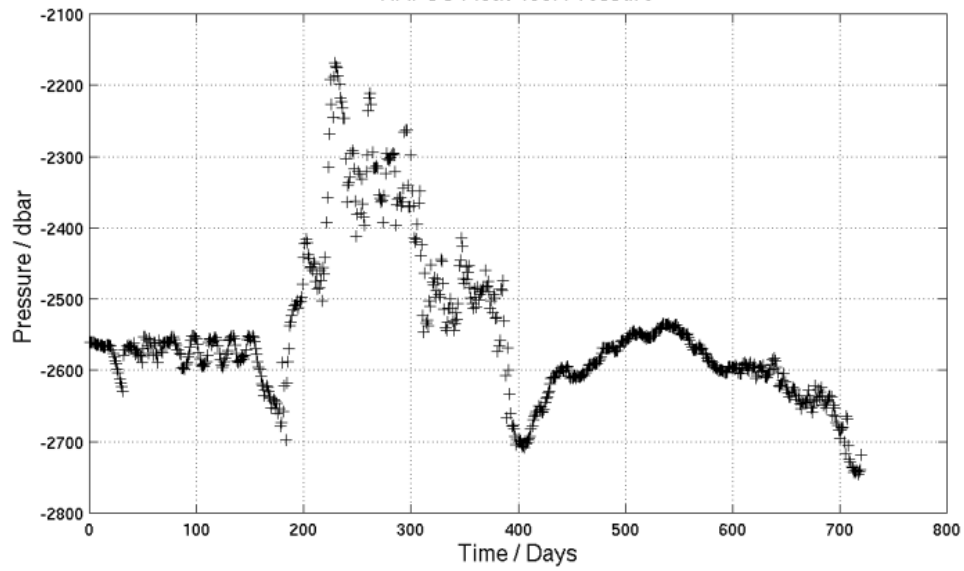
RAFOS Float Trajectory 488 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)



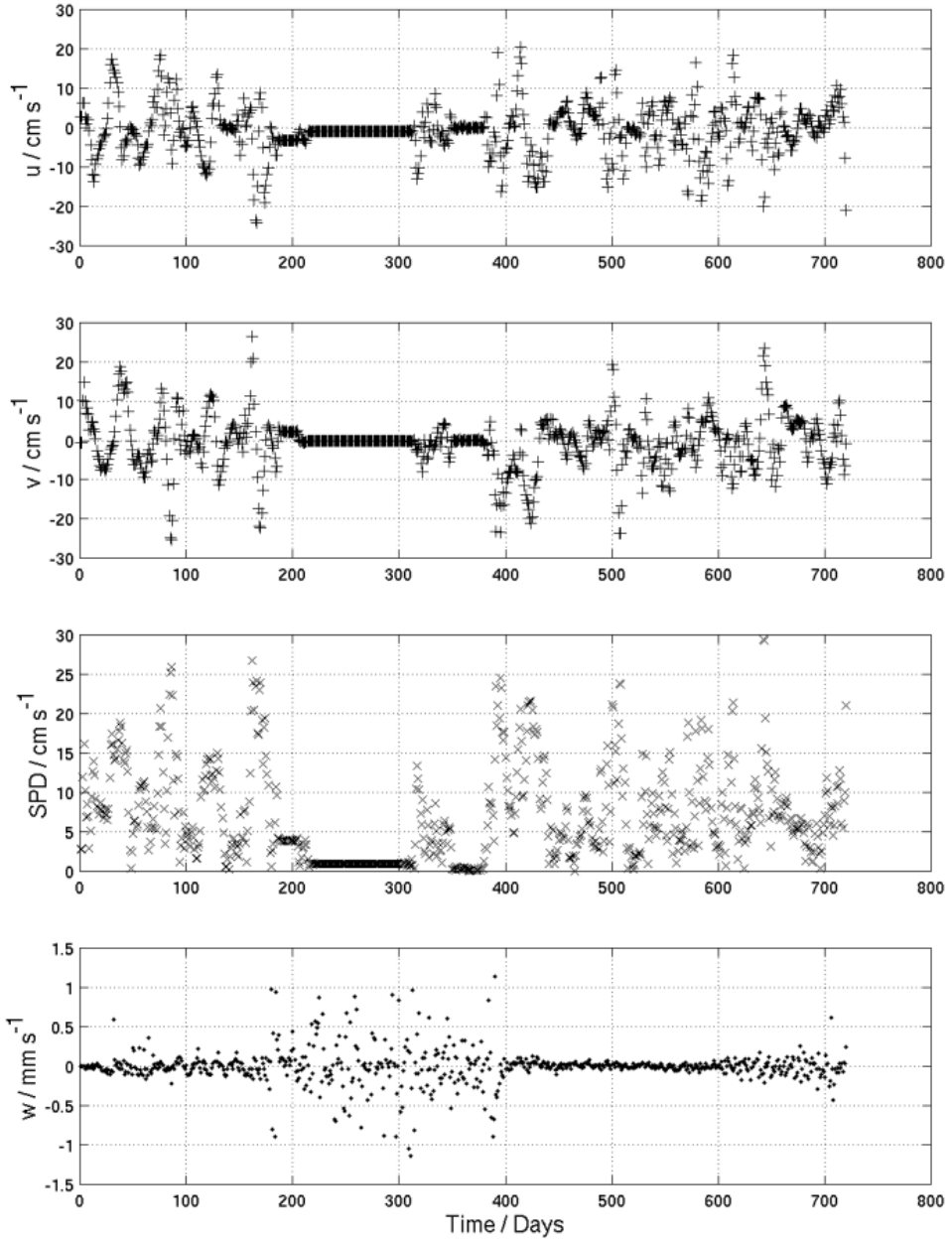
RAFOS Float 488: Temperature



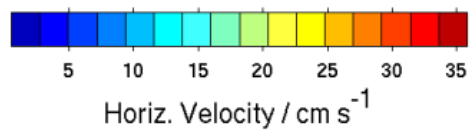
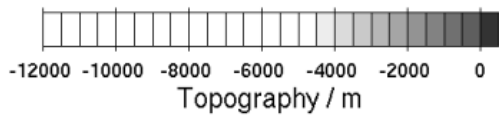
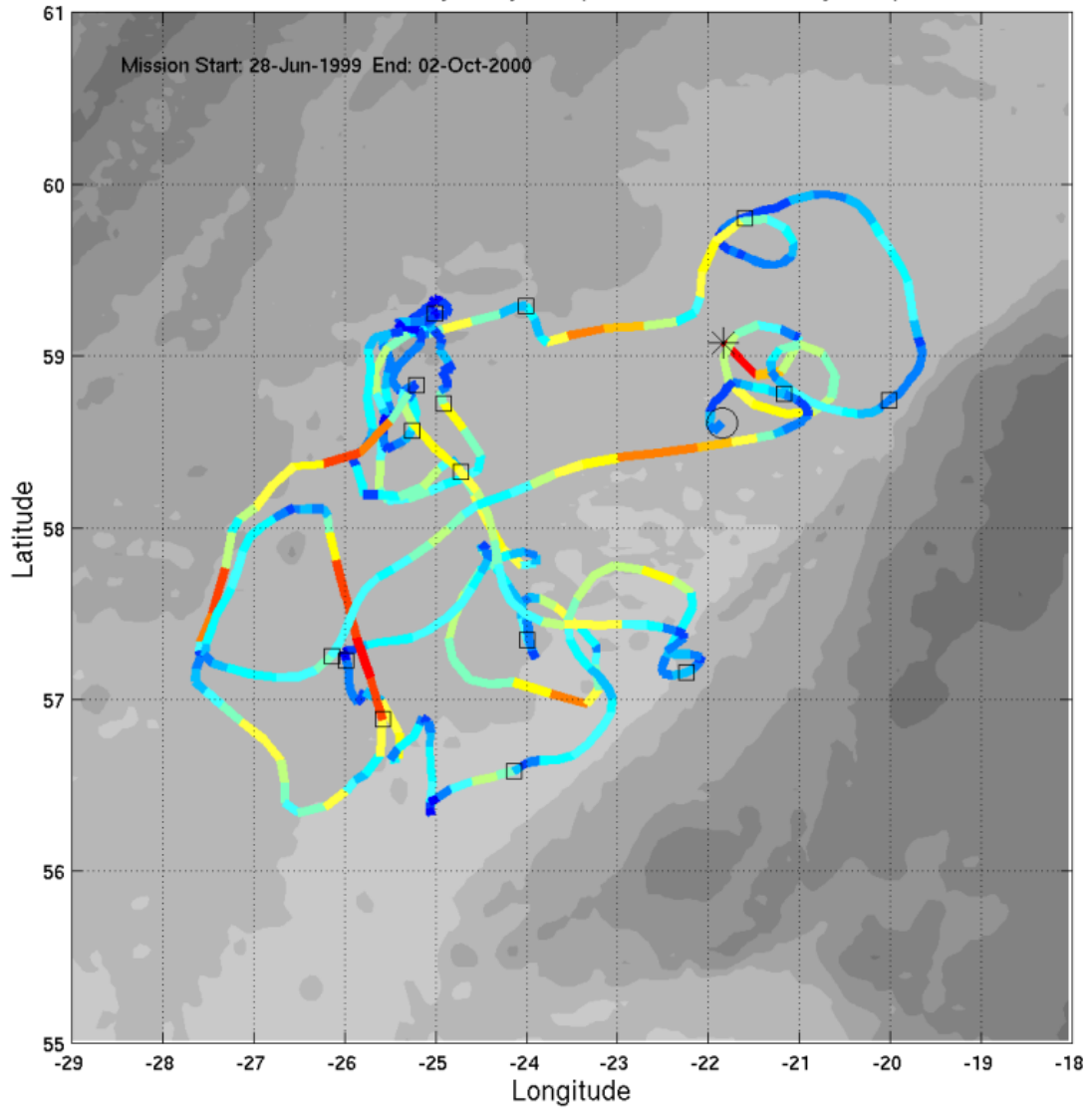
RAFOS Float 488: Pressure

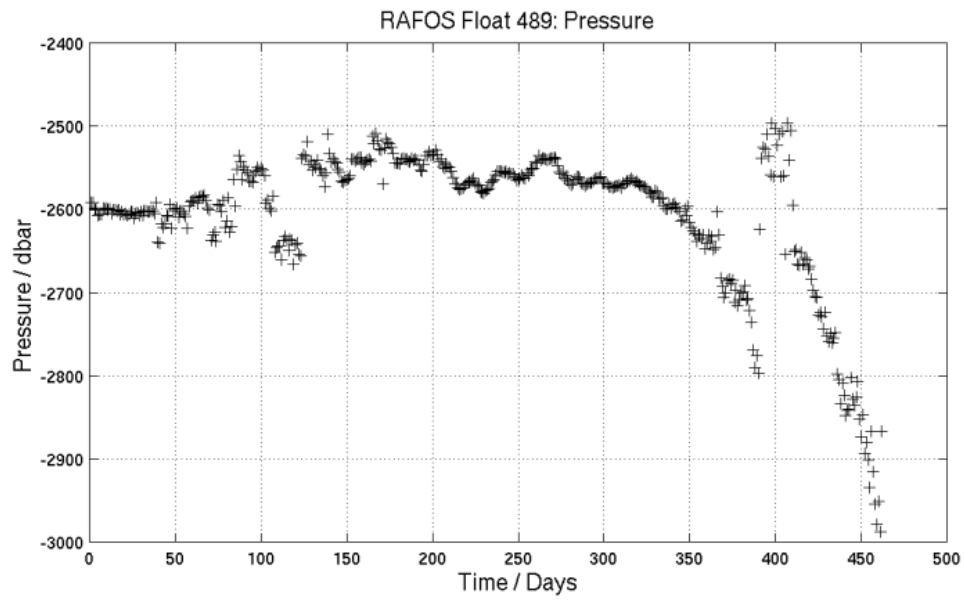
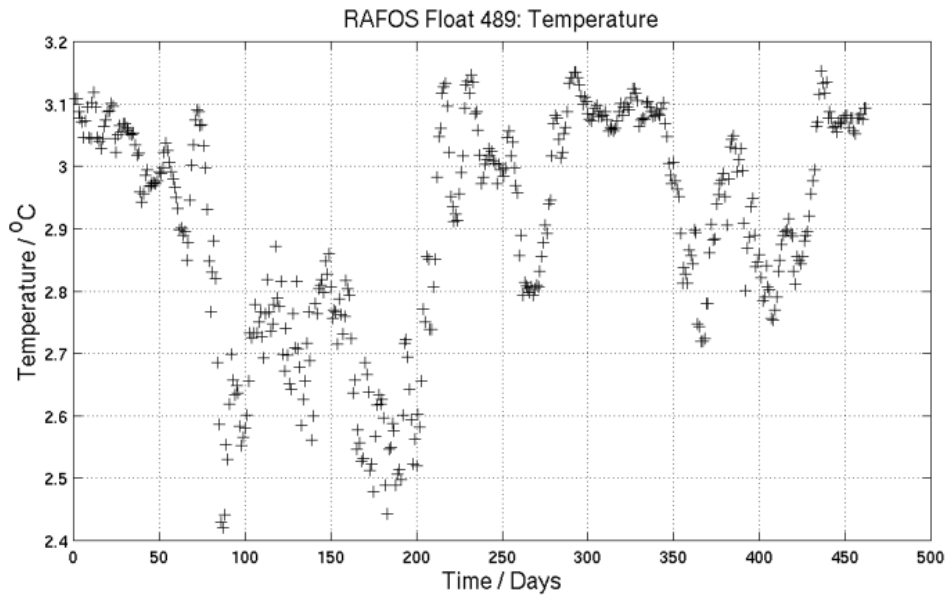


RAFOS Float 488: Velocities

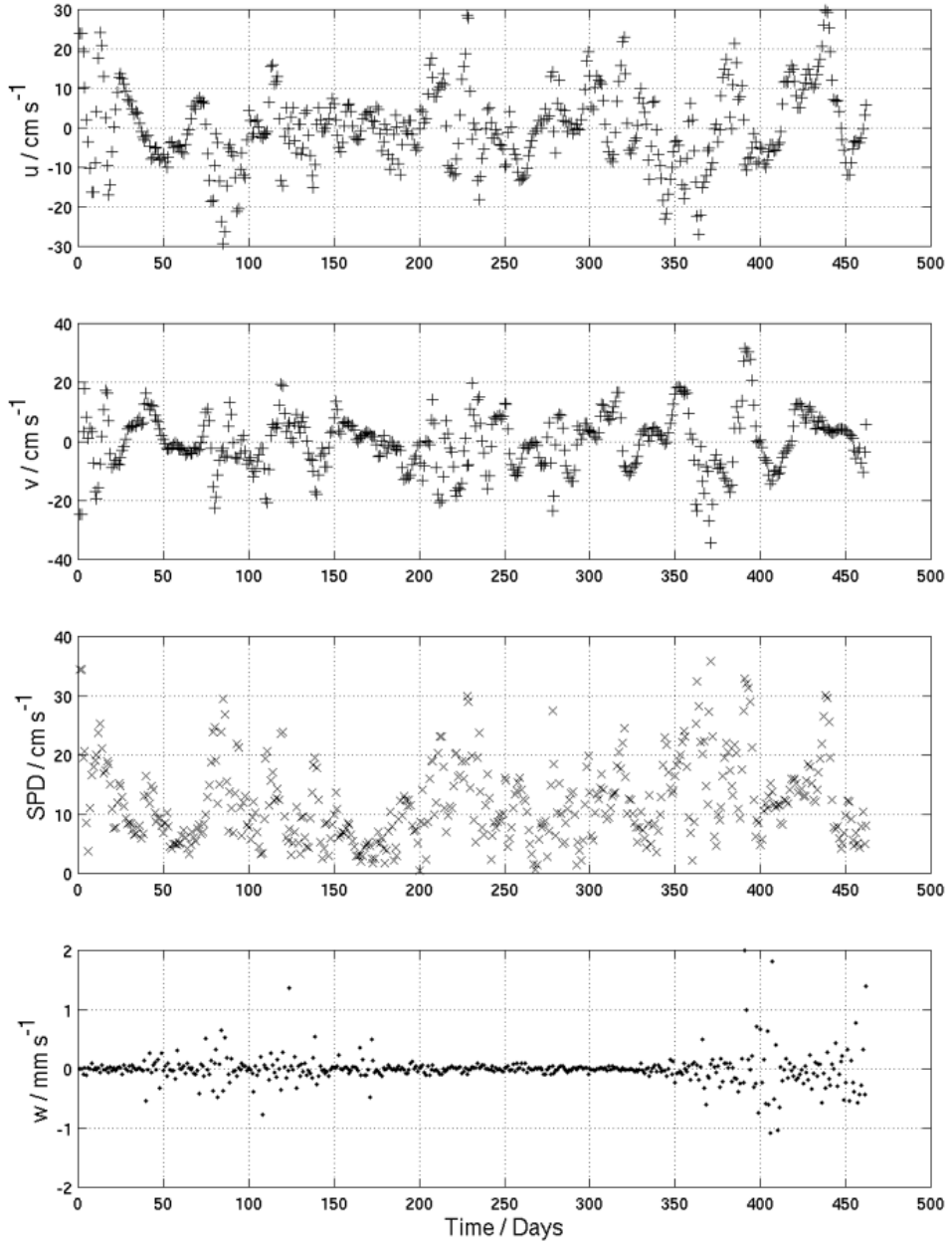


RAFOS Float Trajectory 489 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)

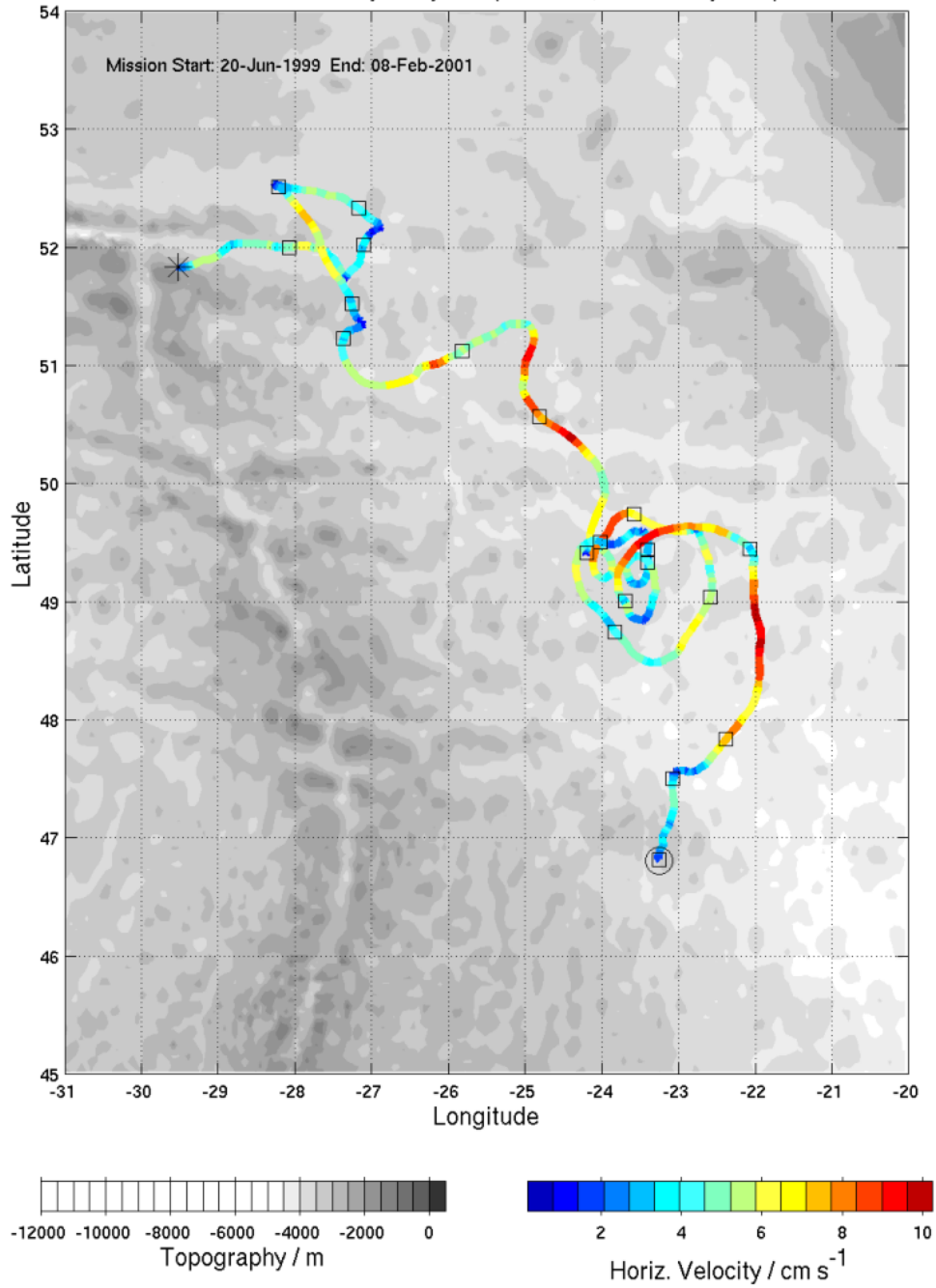




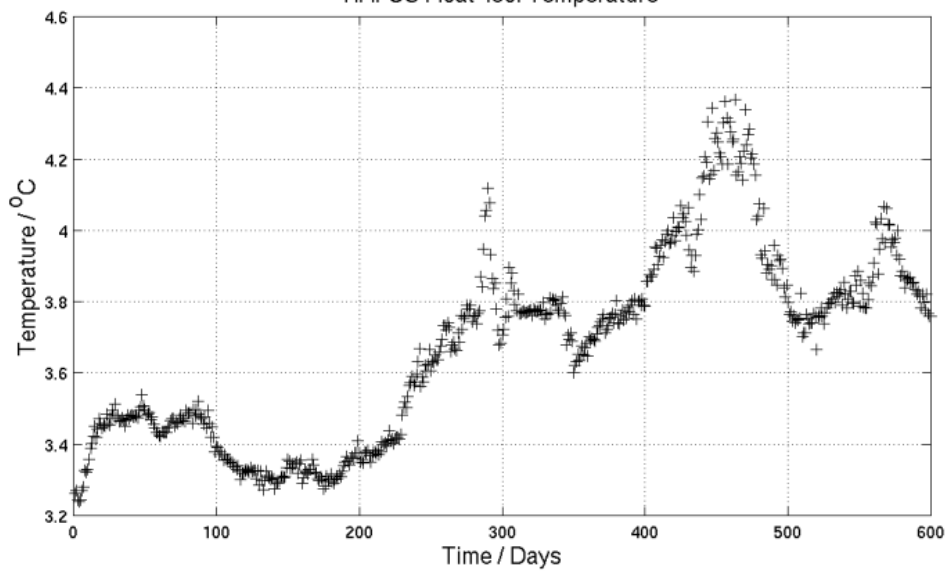
RAFOS Float 489: Velocities



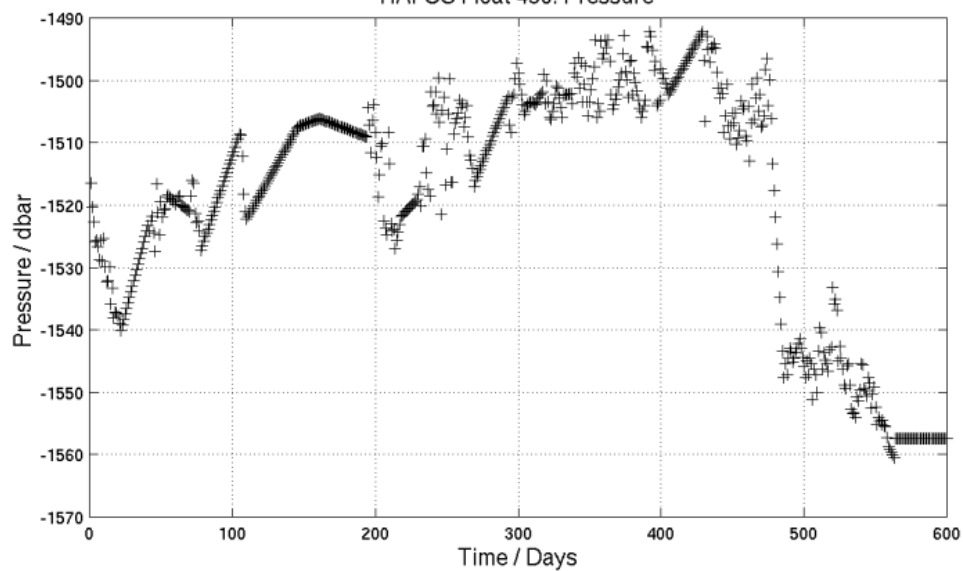
RAFOS Float Trajectory 490 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)

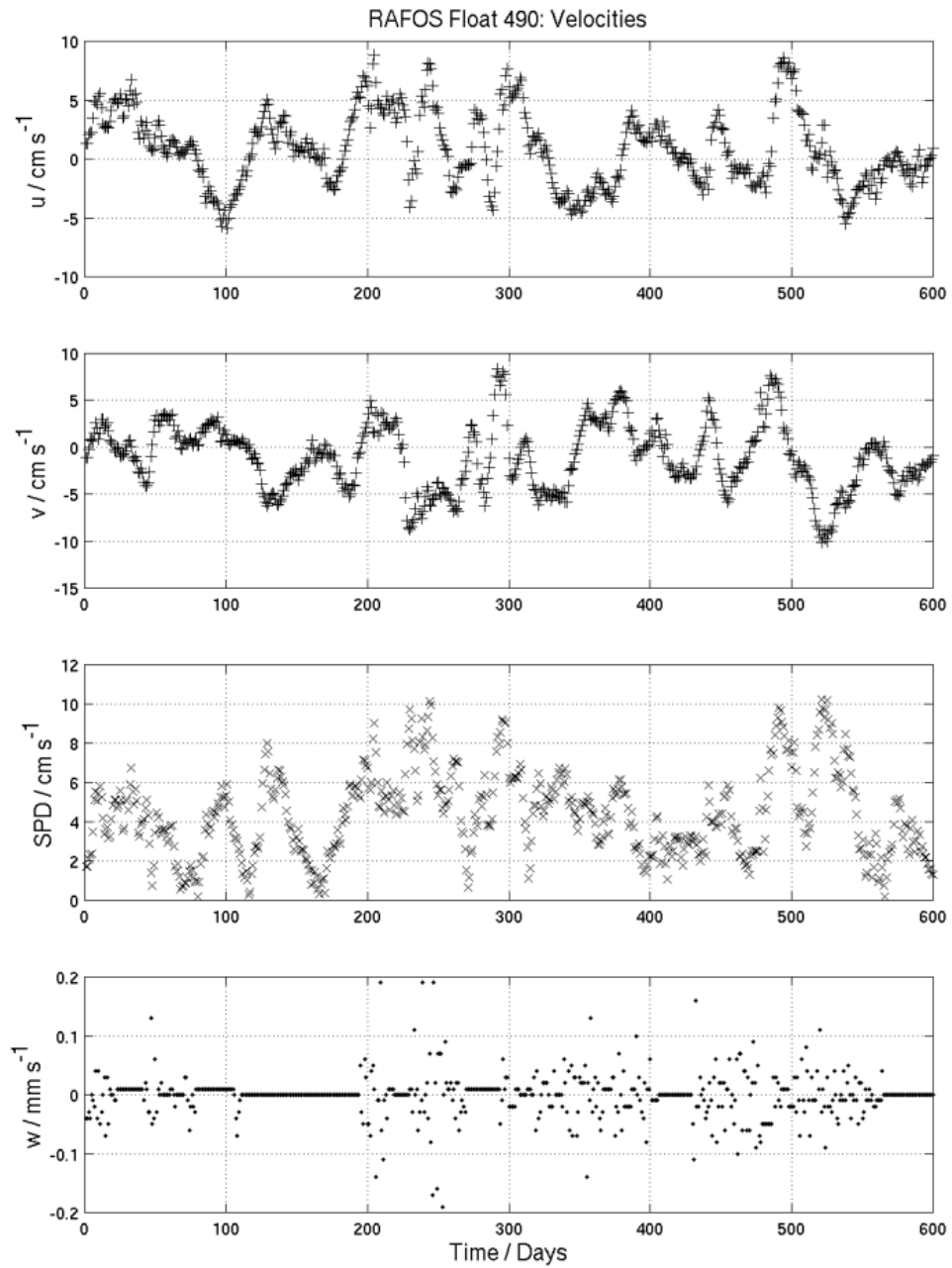


RAFOS Float 490: Temperature

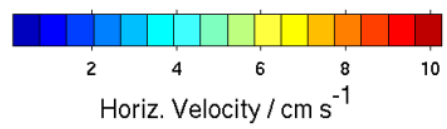
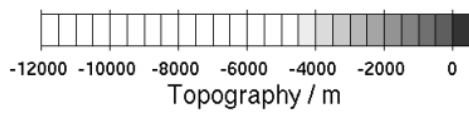
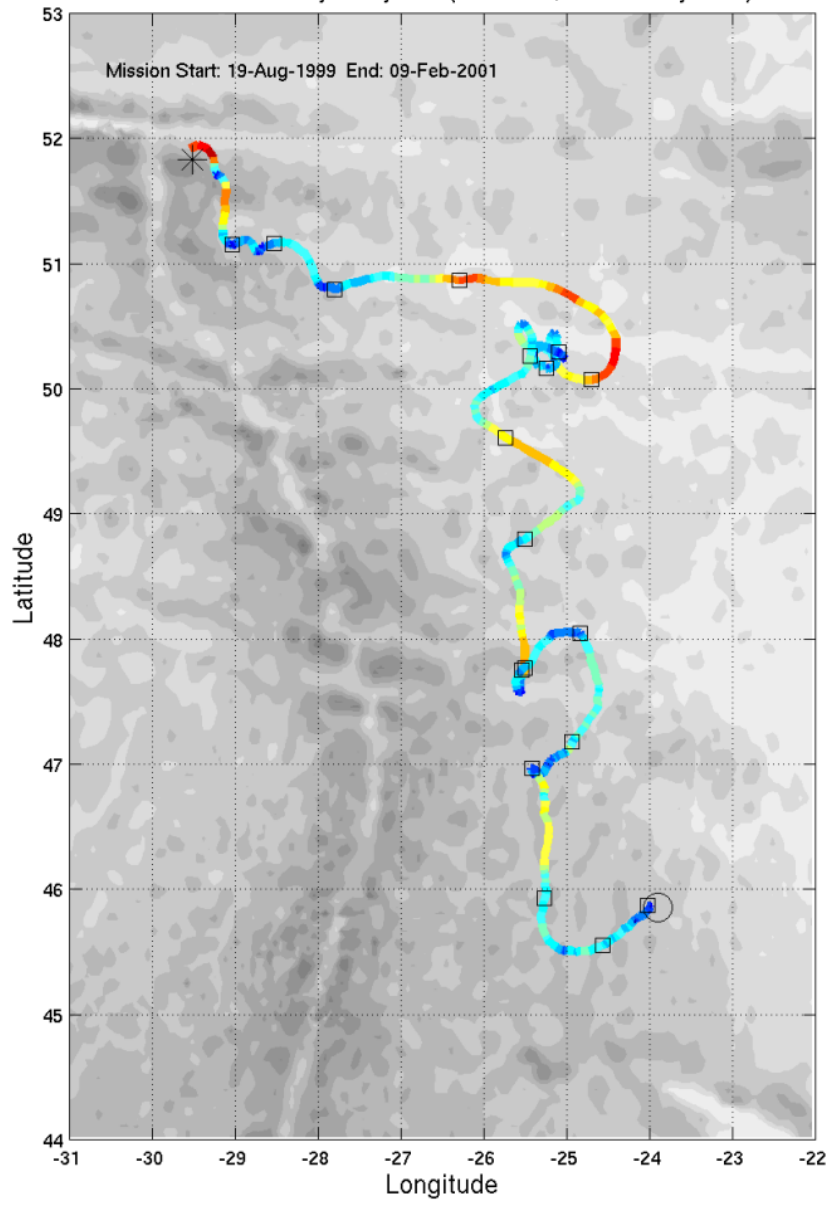


RAFOS Float 490: Pressure

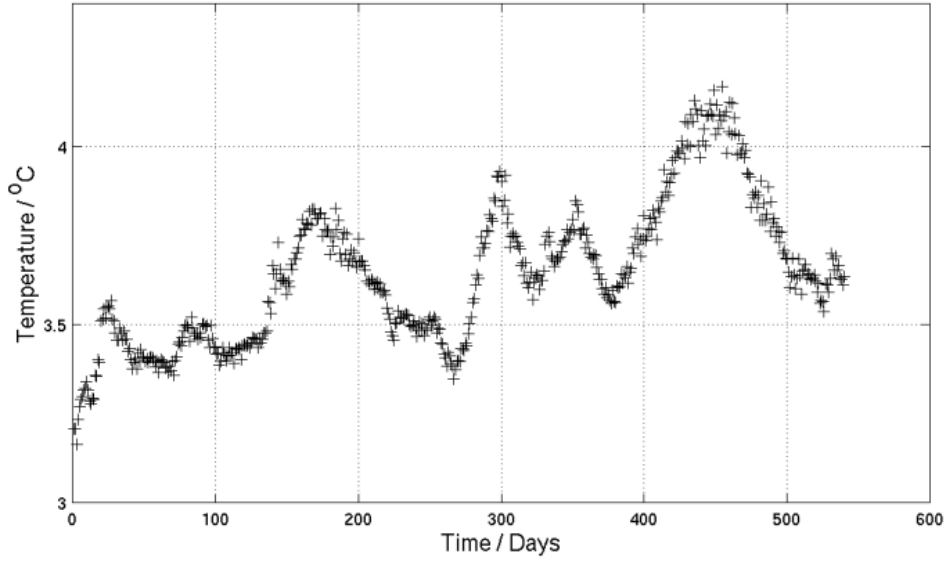




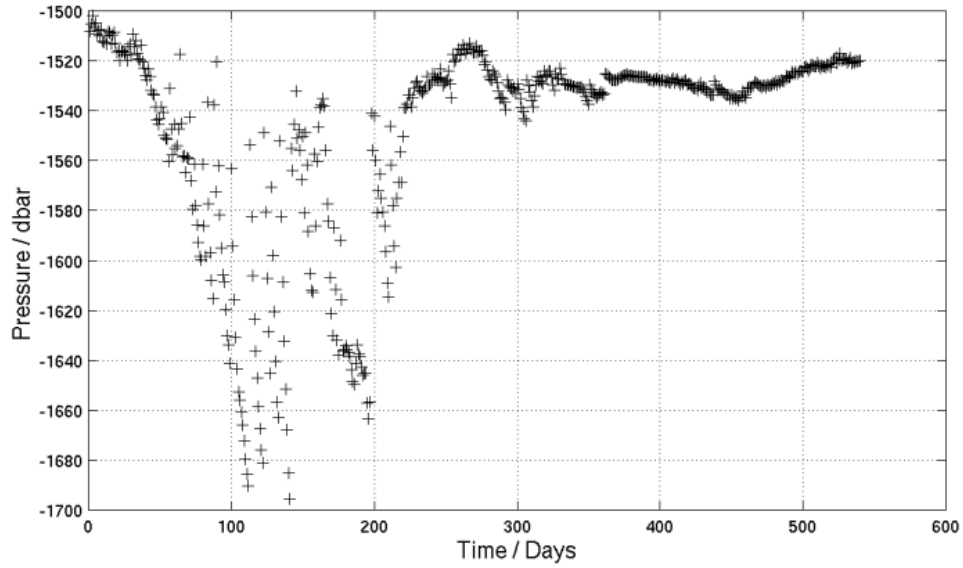
RAFOS Float Trajectory 491 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)



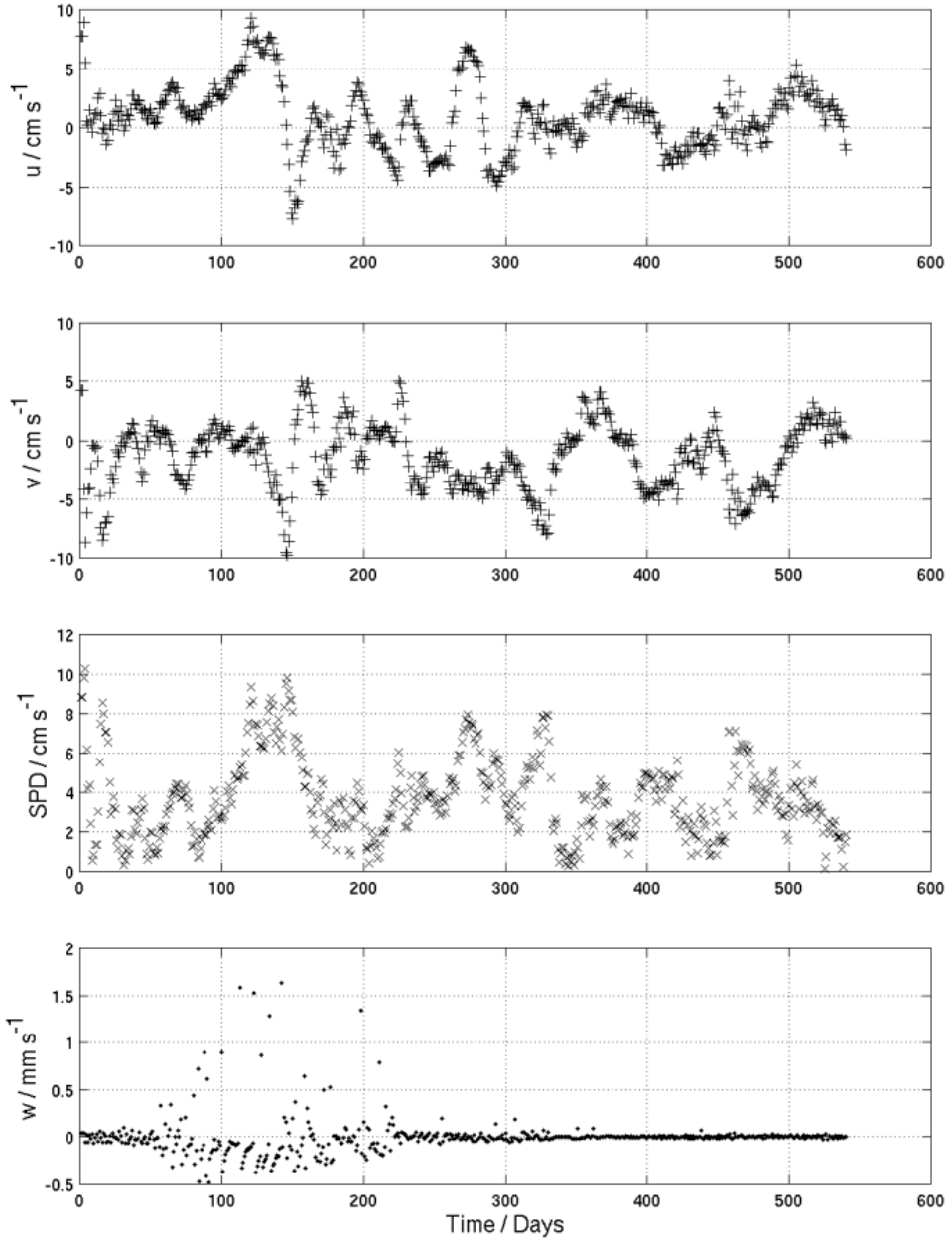
RAFOS Float 491: Temperature



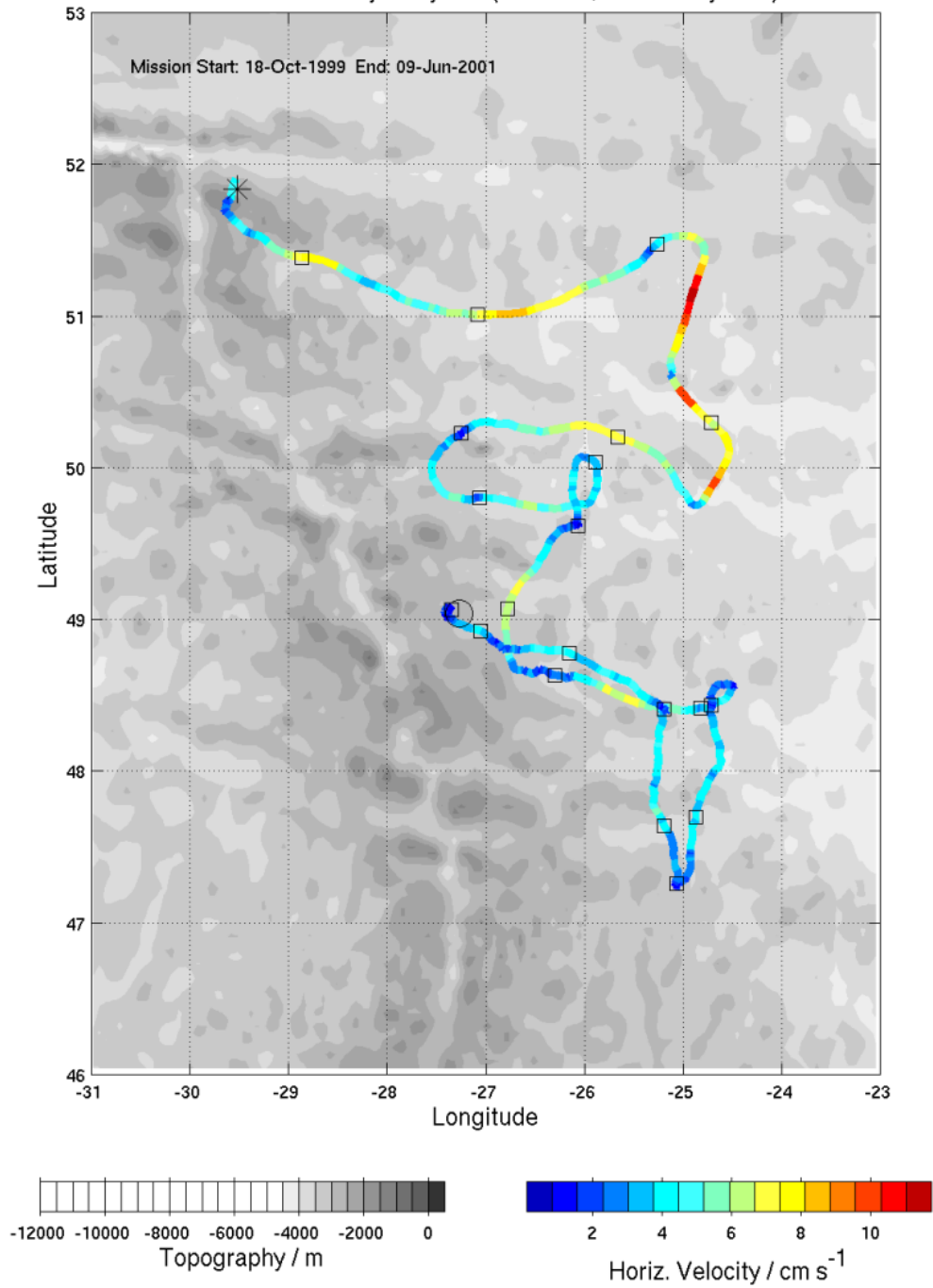
RAFOS Float 491: Pressure



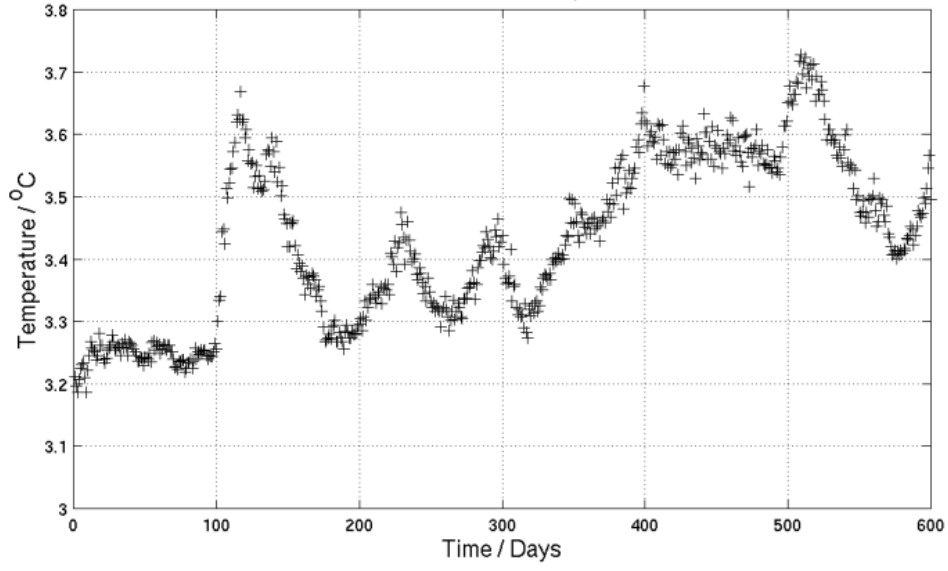
RAFOS Float 491: Velocities



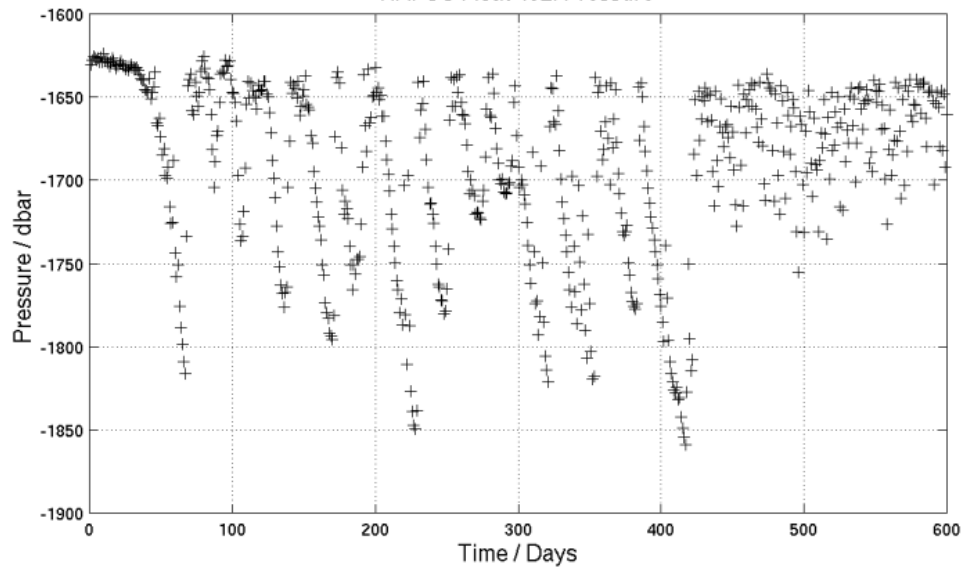
RAFOS Float Trajectory 492 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)

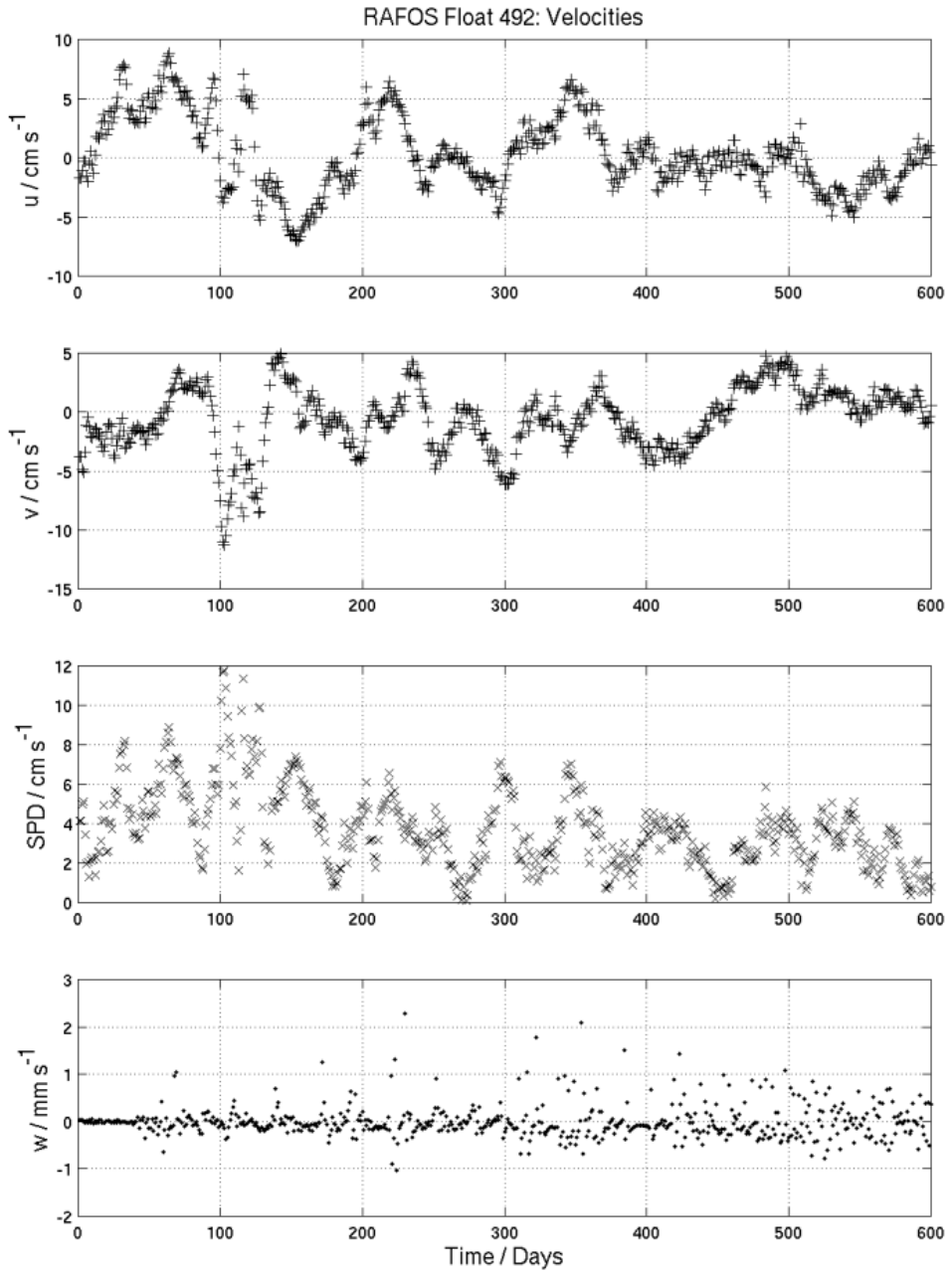


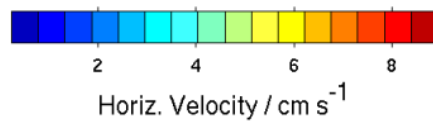
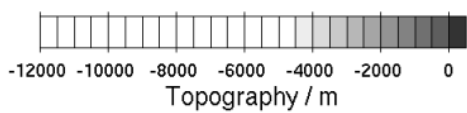
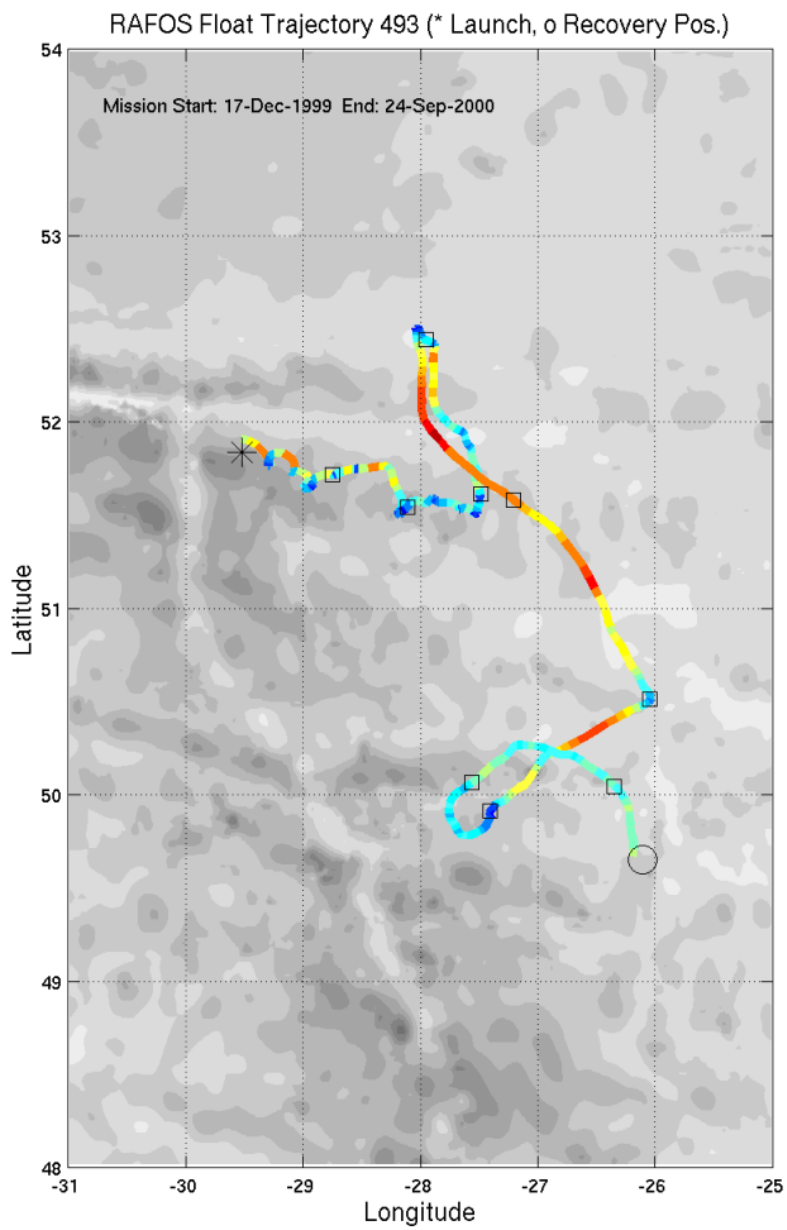
RAFOS Float 492: Temperature

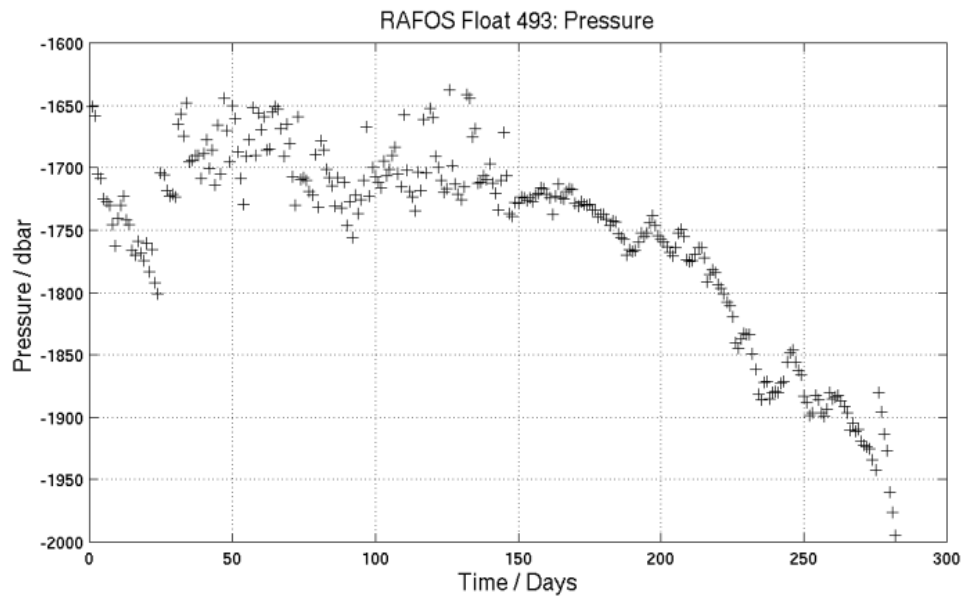
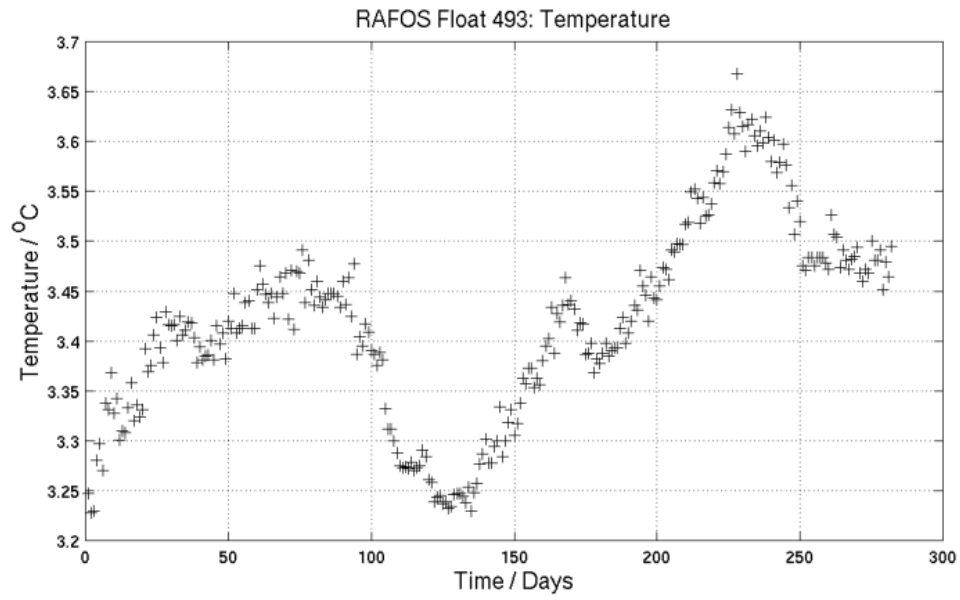


RAFOS Float 492: Pressure

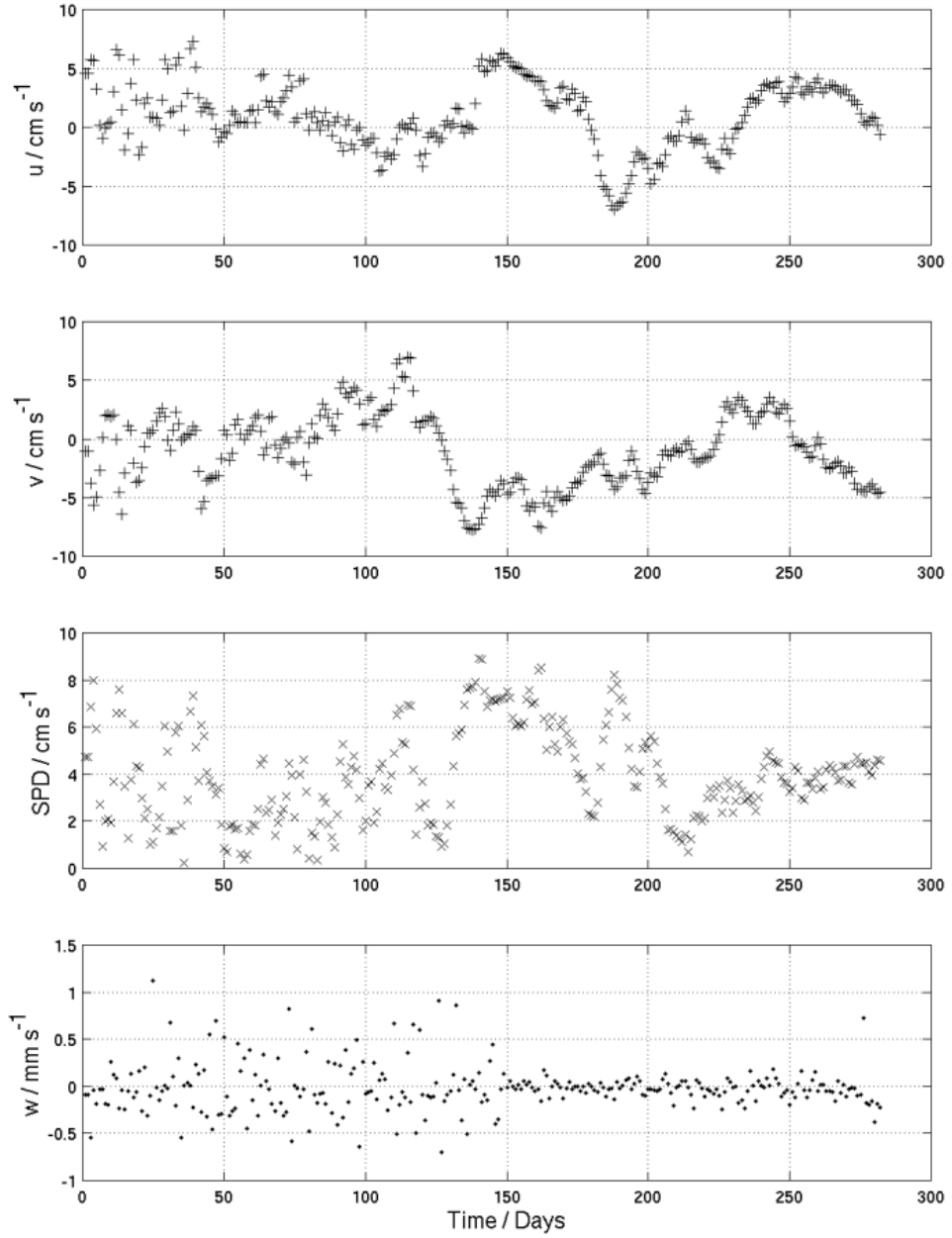


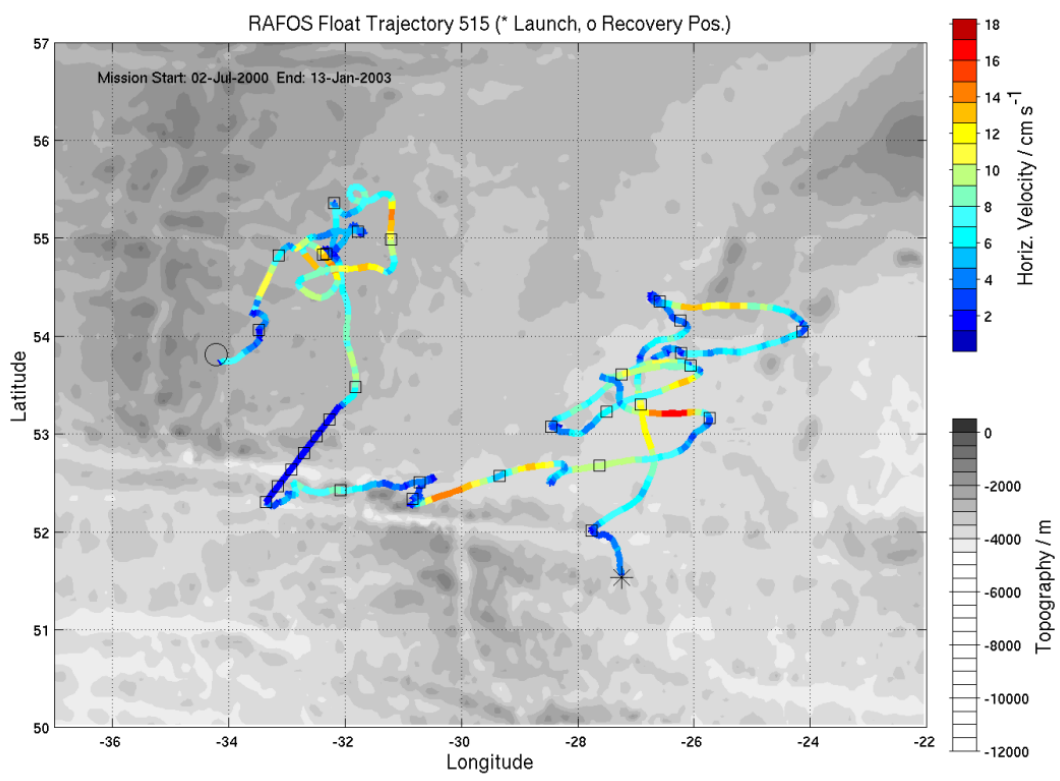


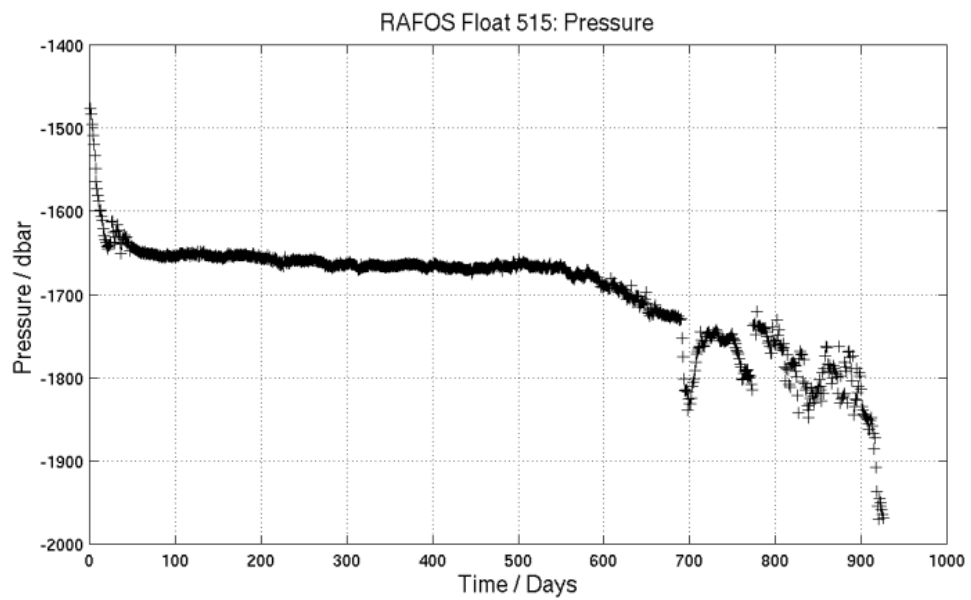
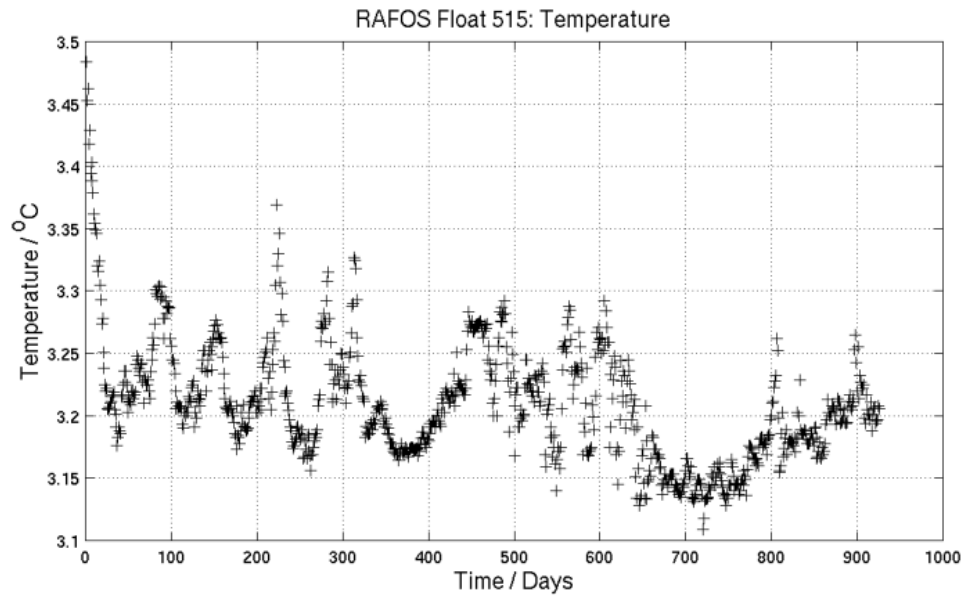


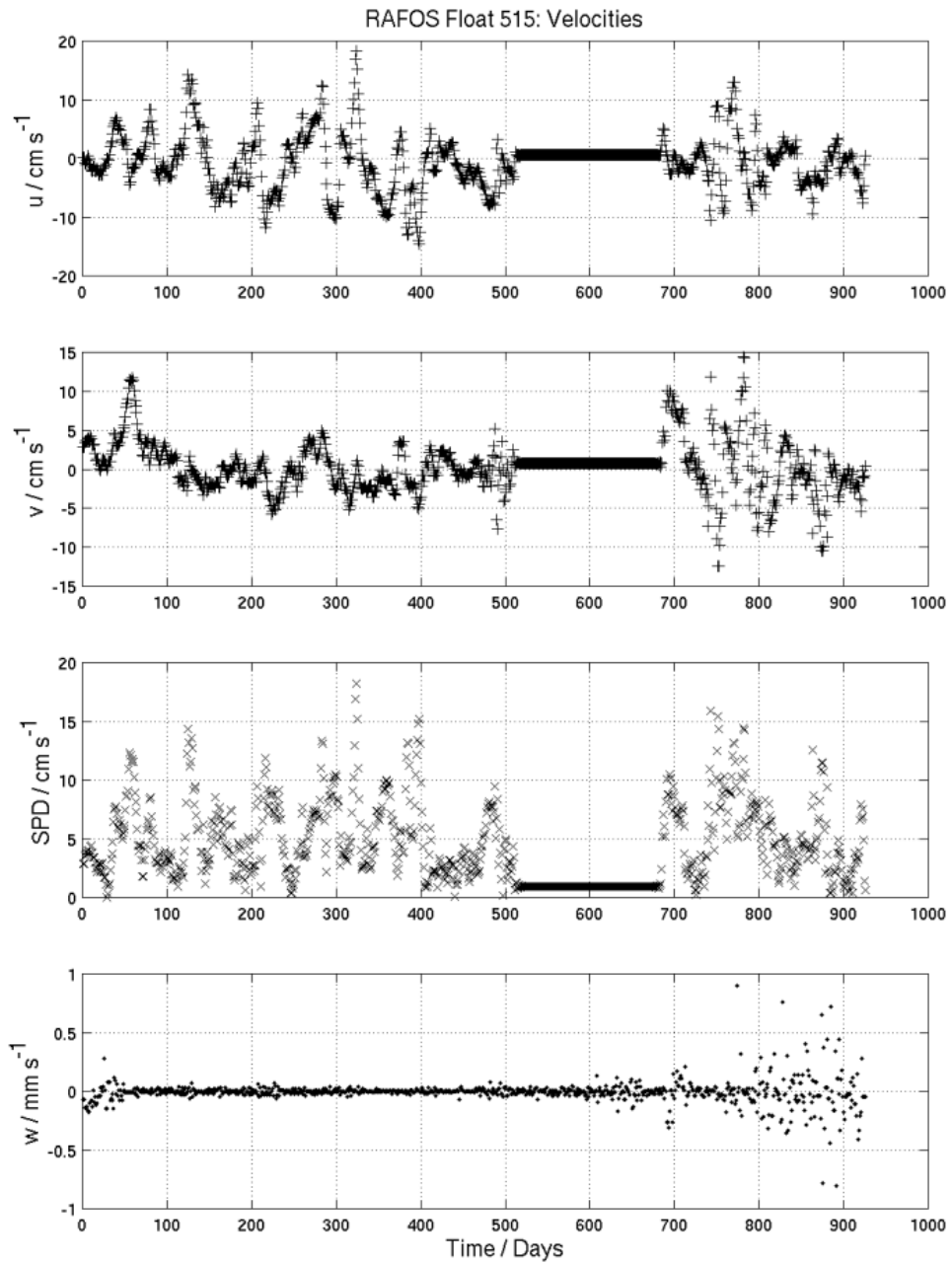


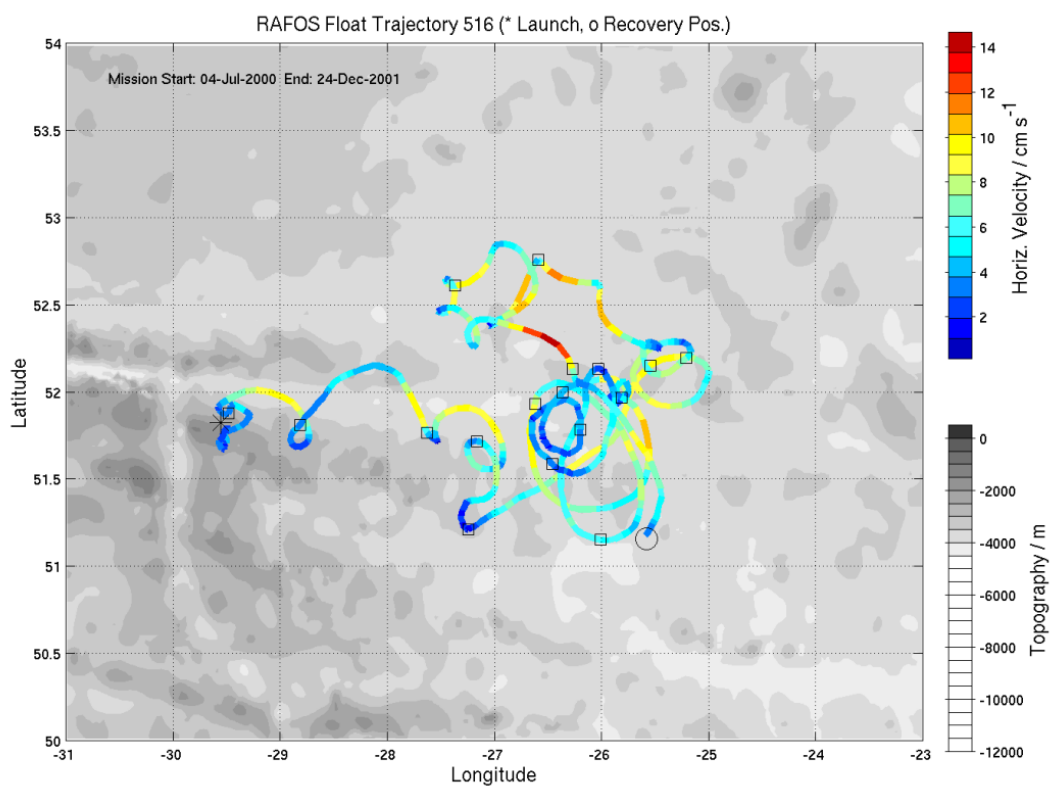
RAFOS Float 493: Velocities

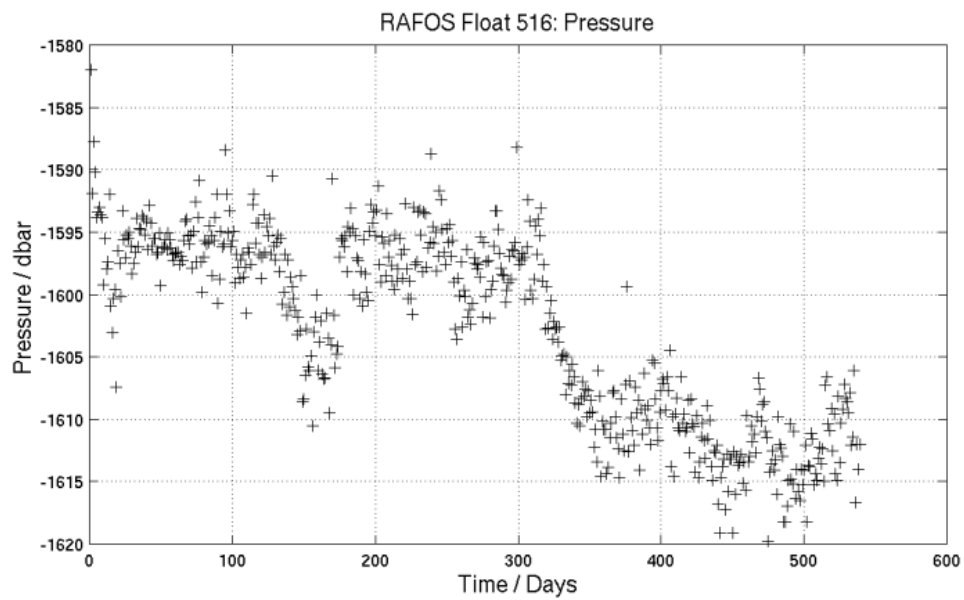
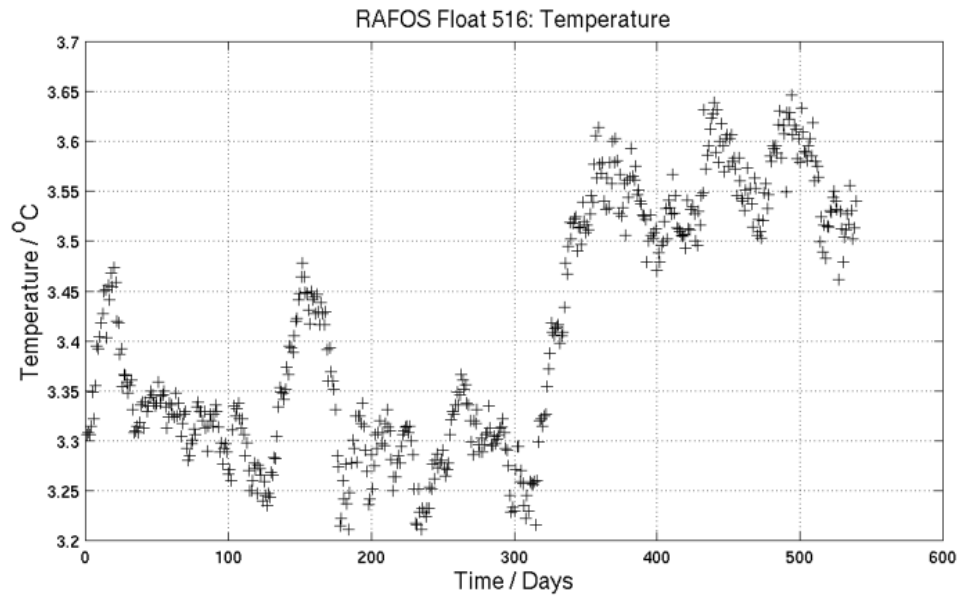




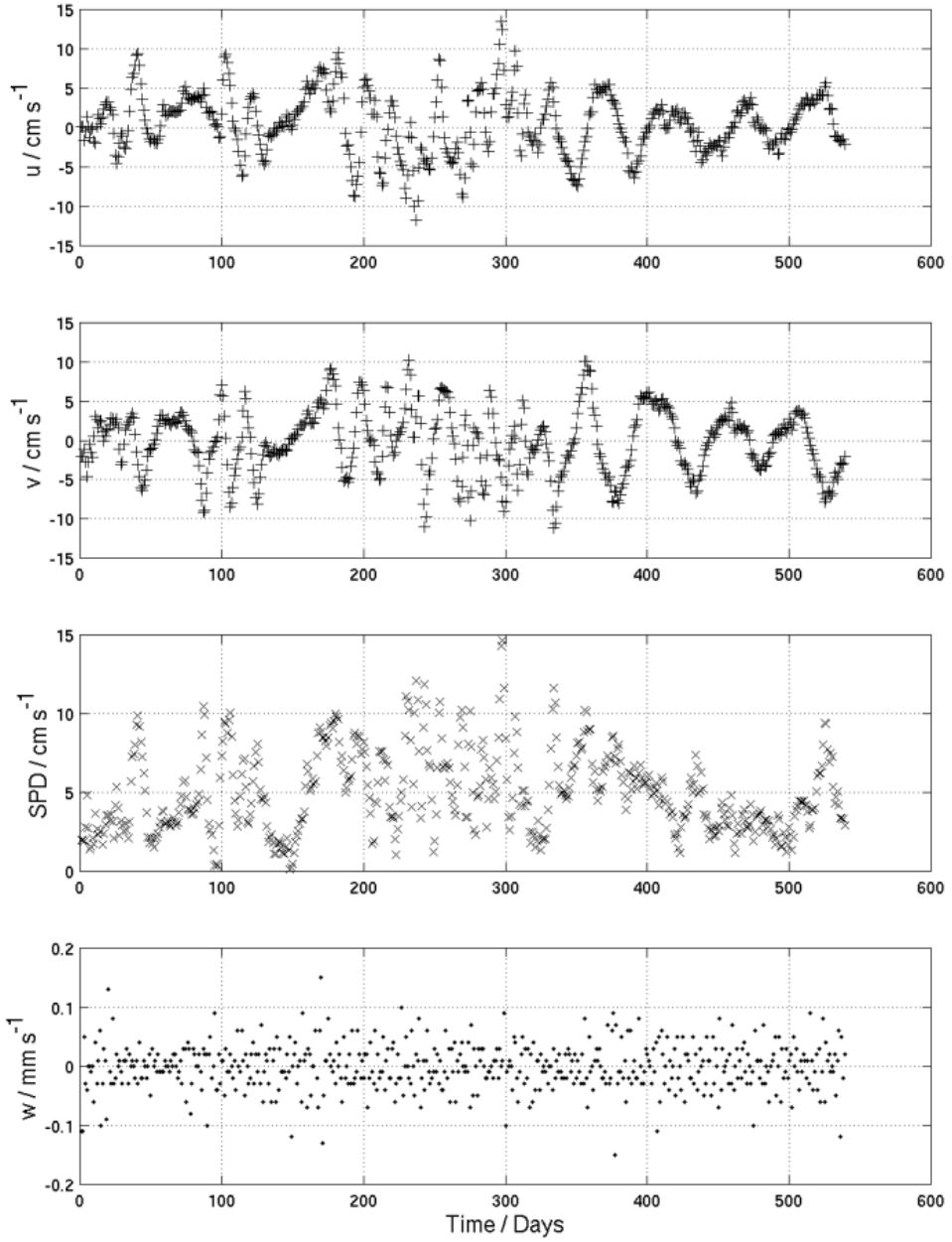




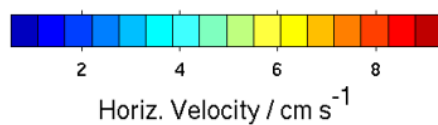
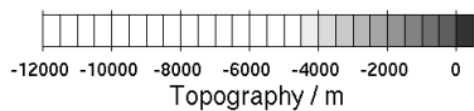
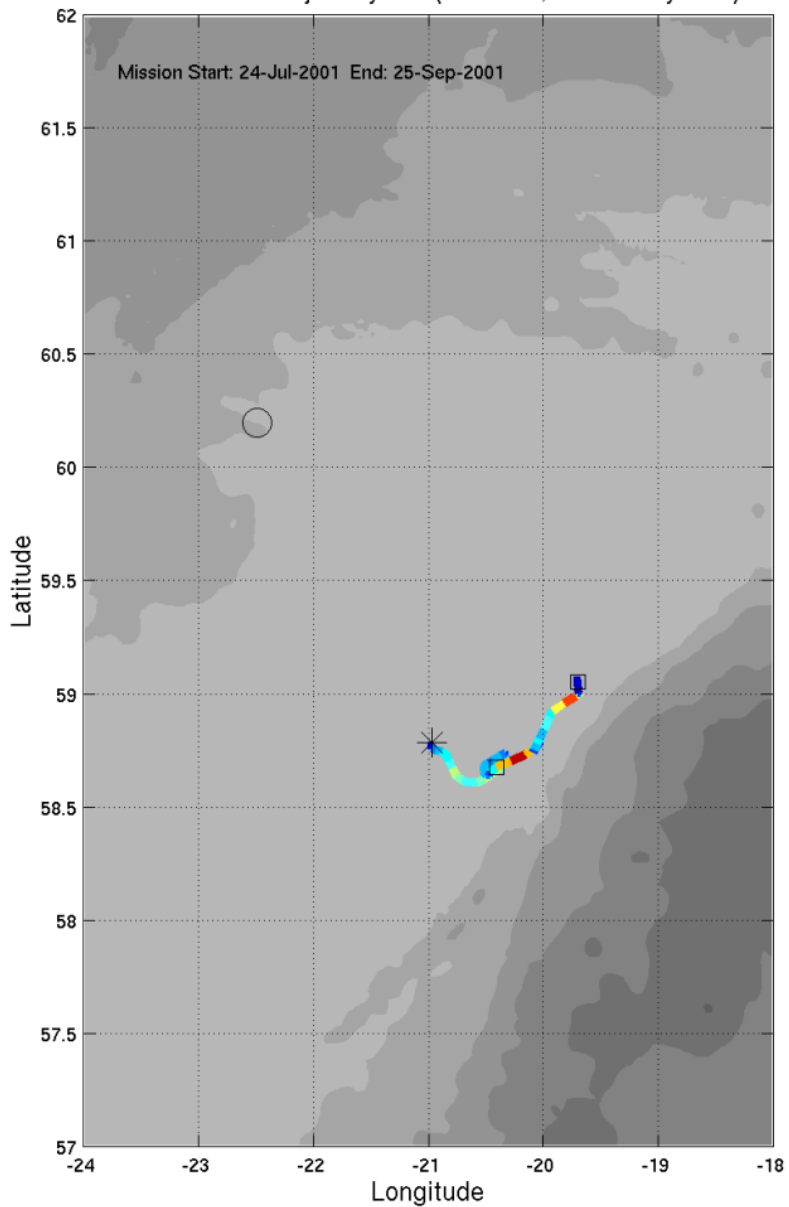


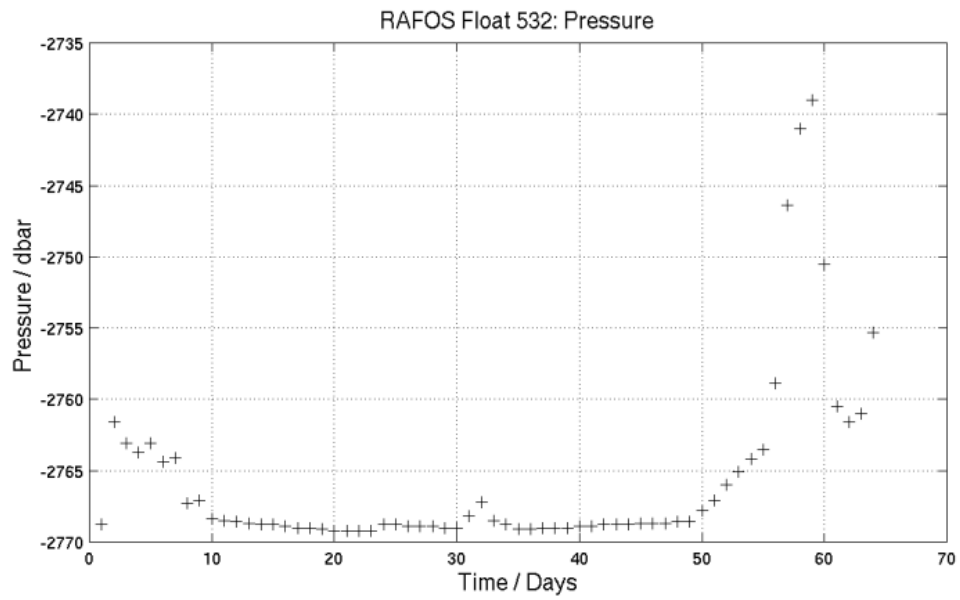
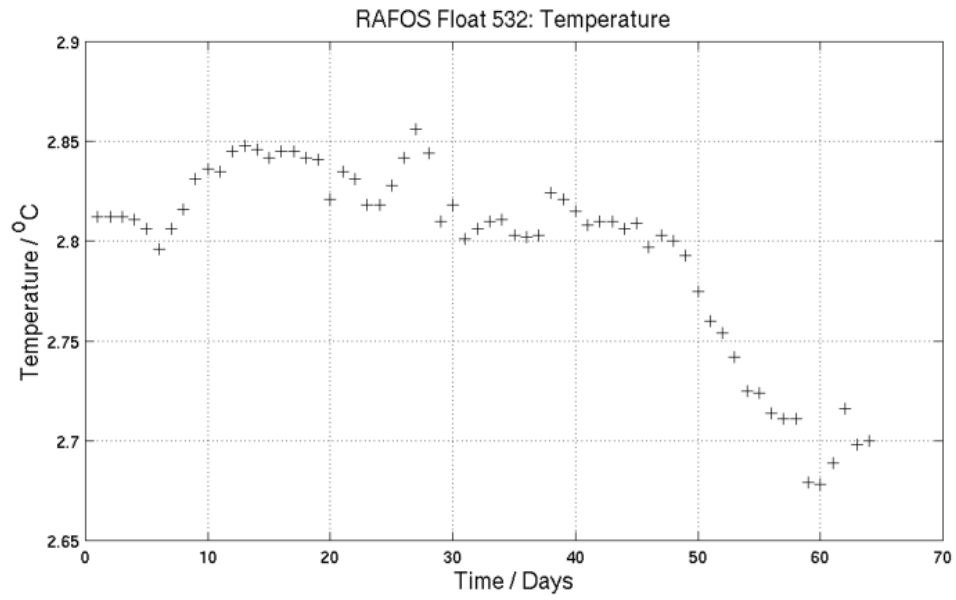


RAFOS Float 516: Velocities

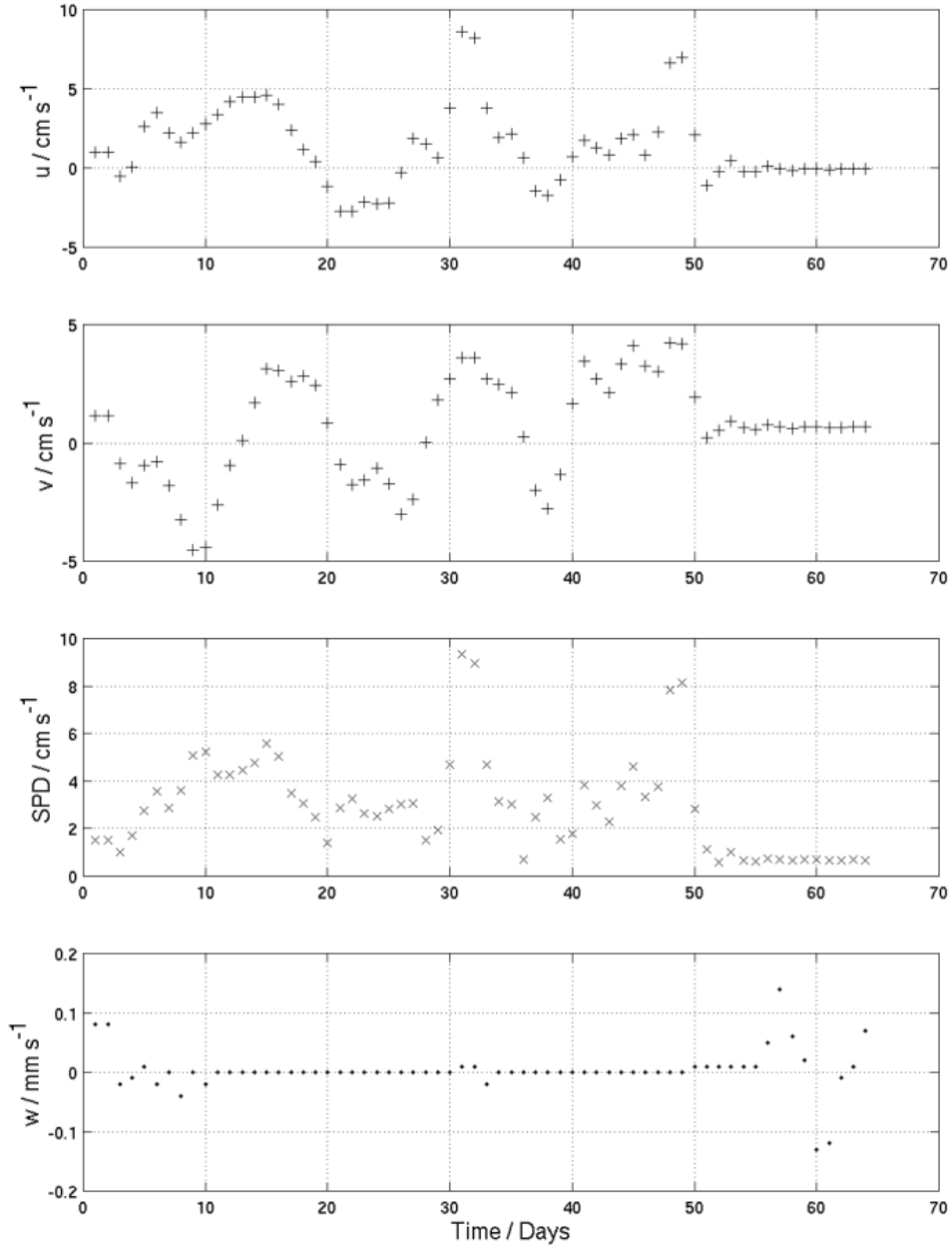


RAFOS Float Trajectory 532 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)

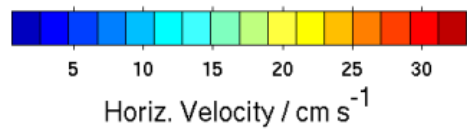
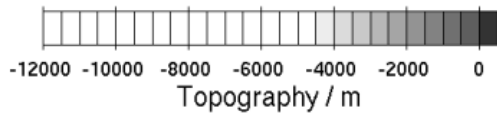
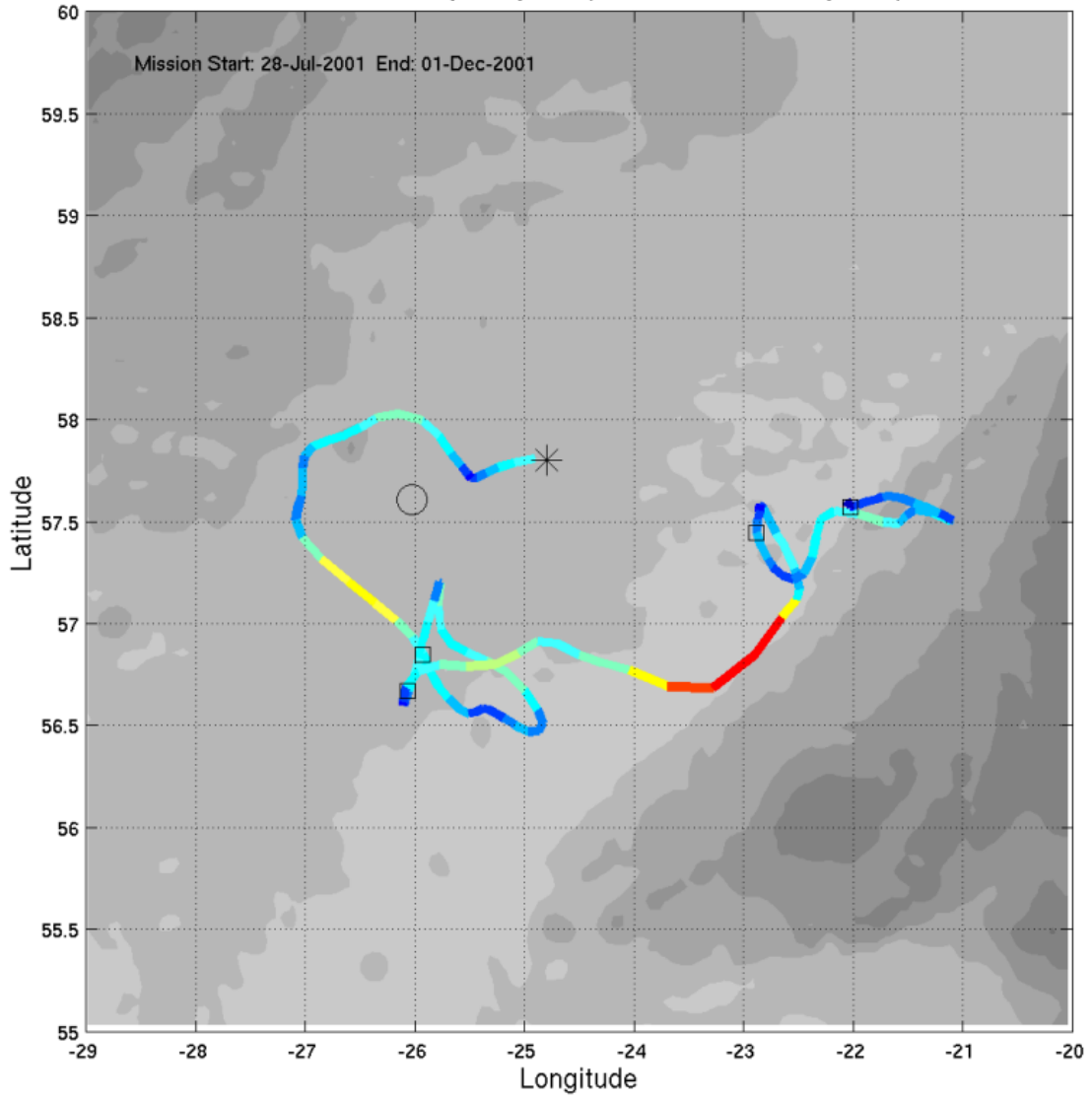


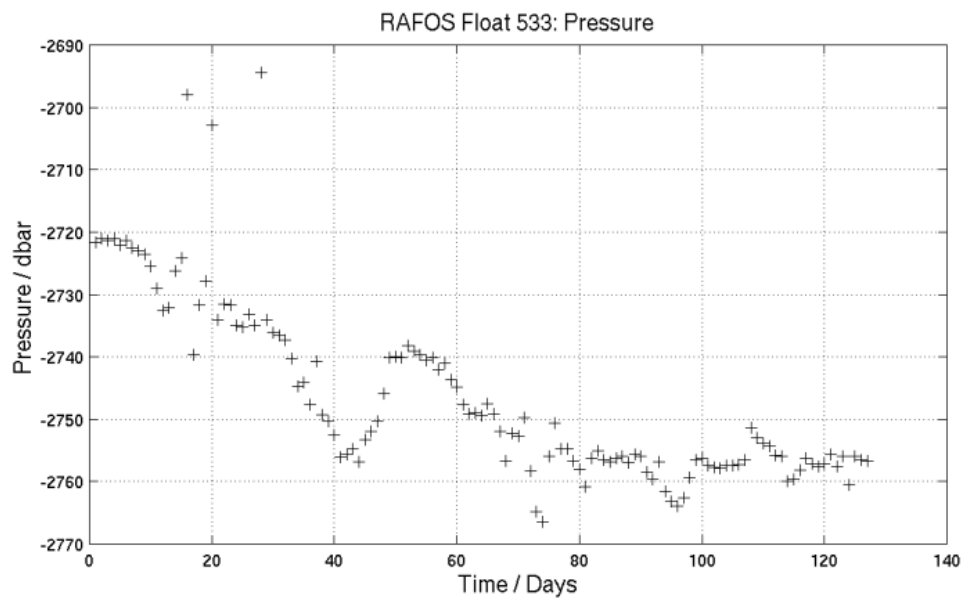
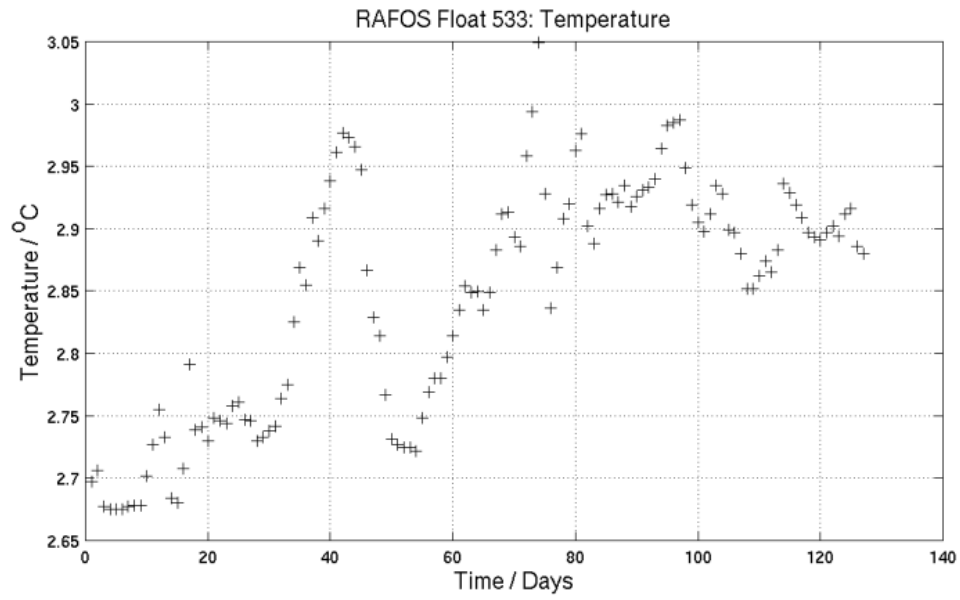


RAFOS Float 532: Velocities

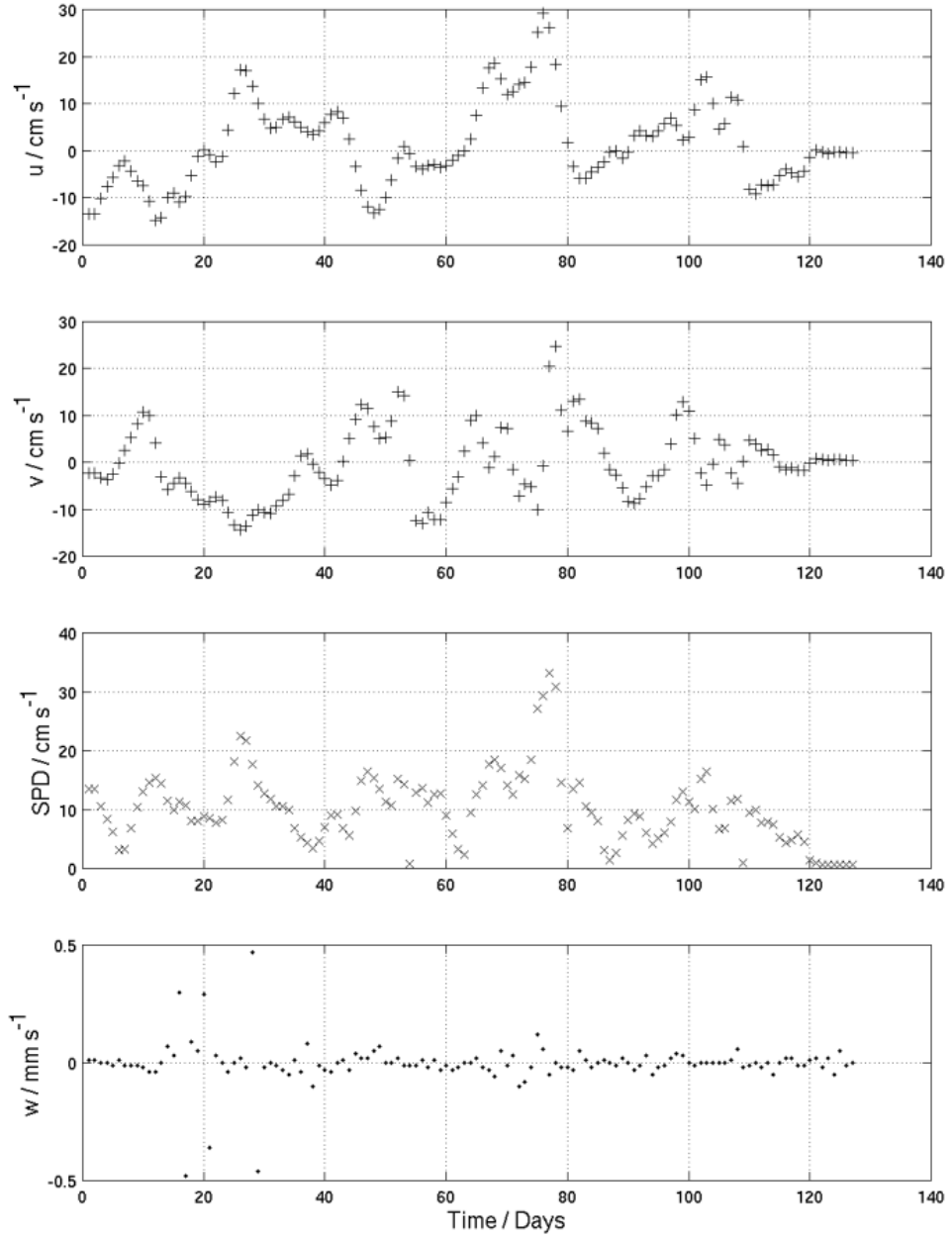


RAFOS Float Trajectory 533 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)

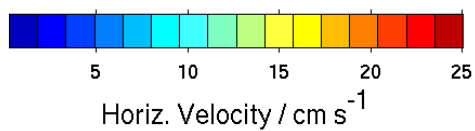
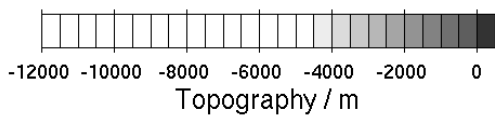
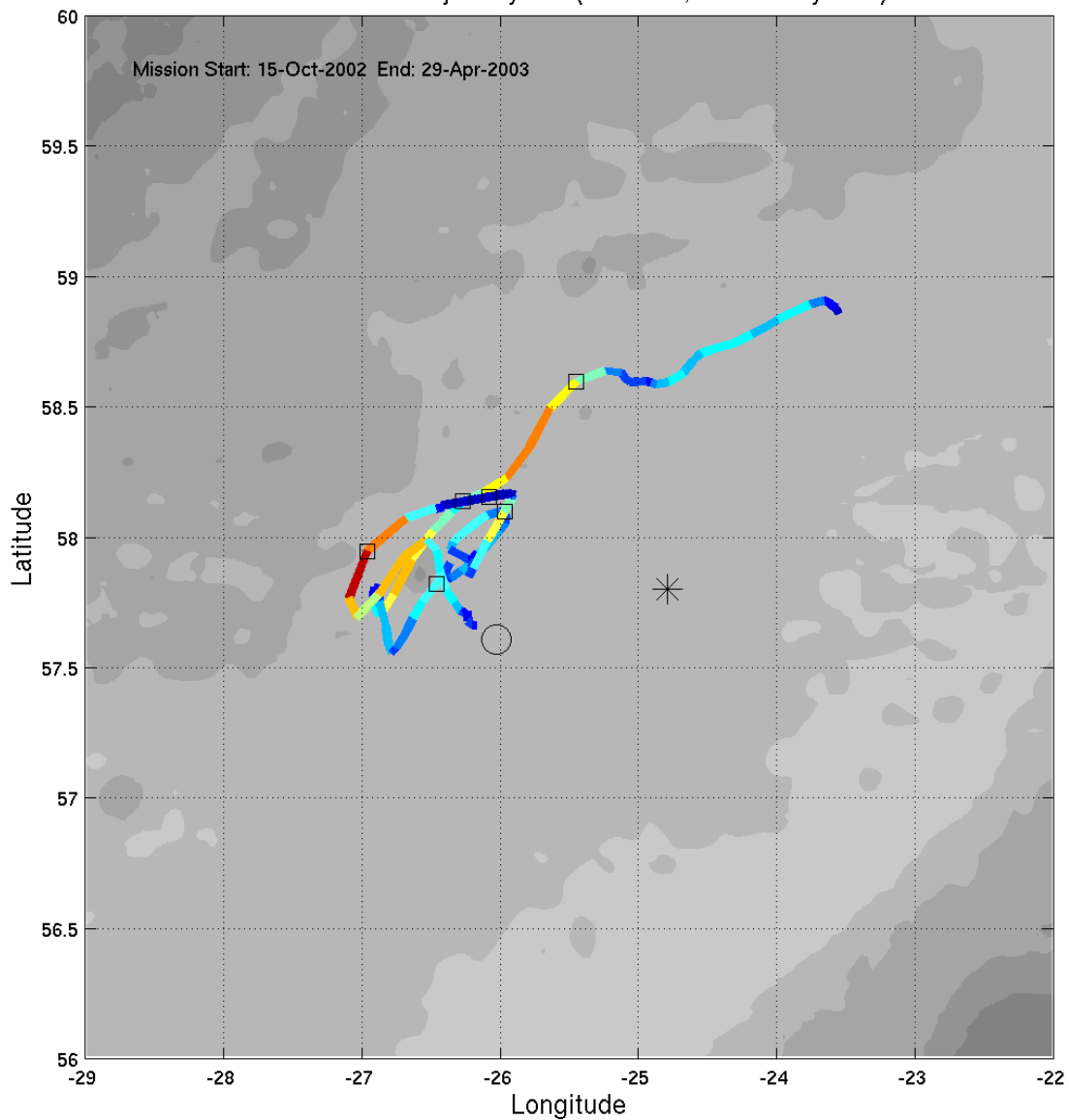


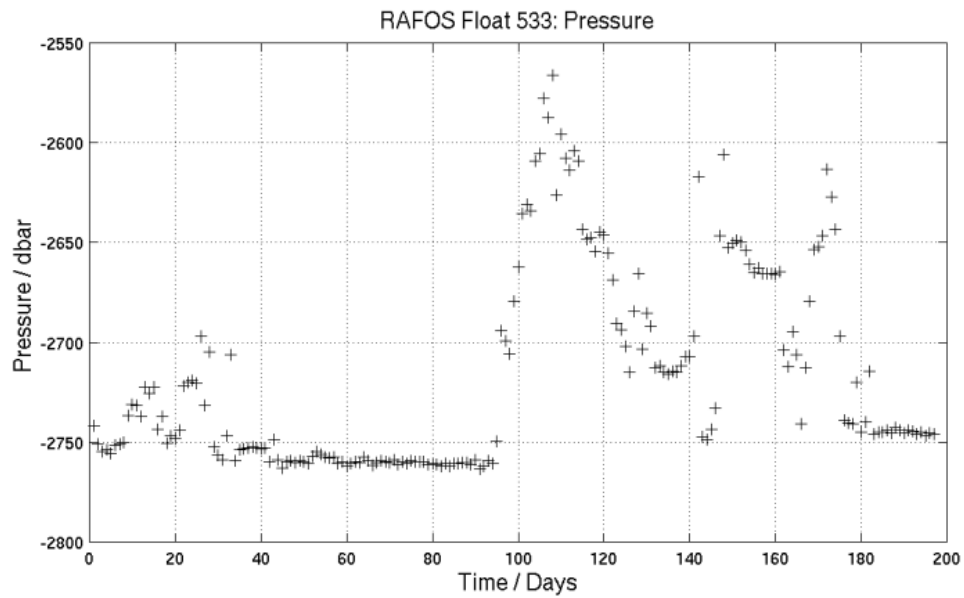
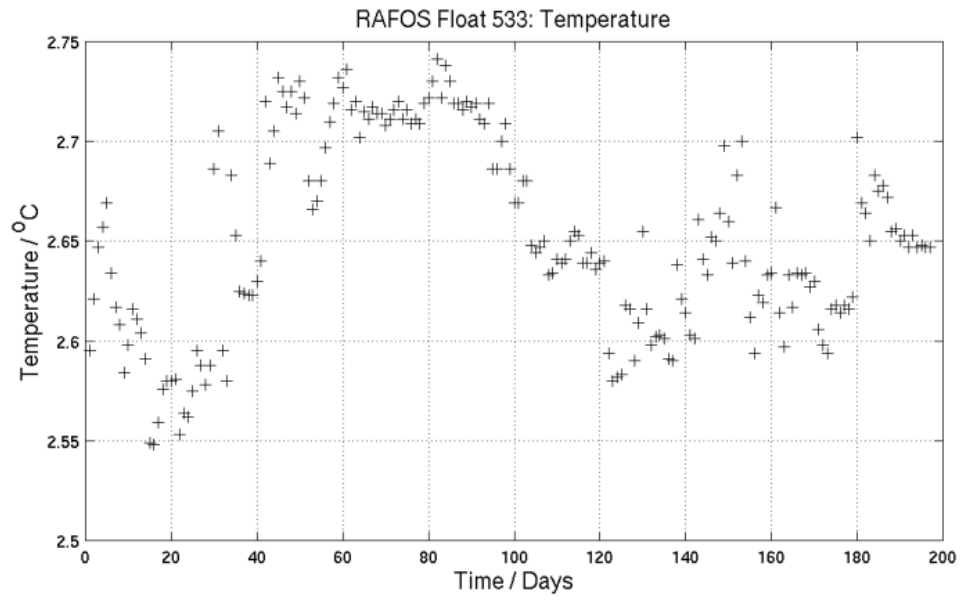


RAFOS Float 533: Velocities

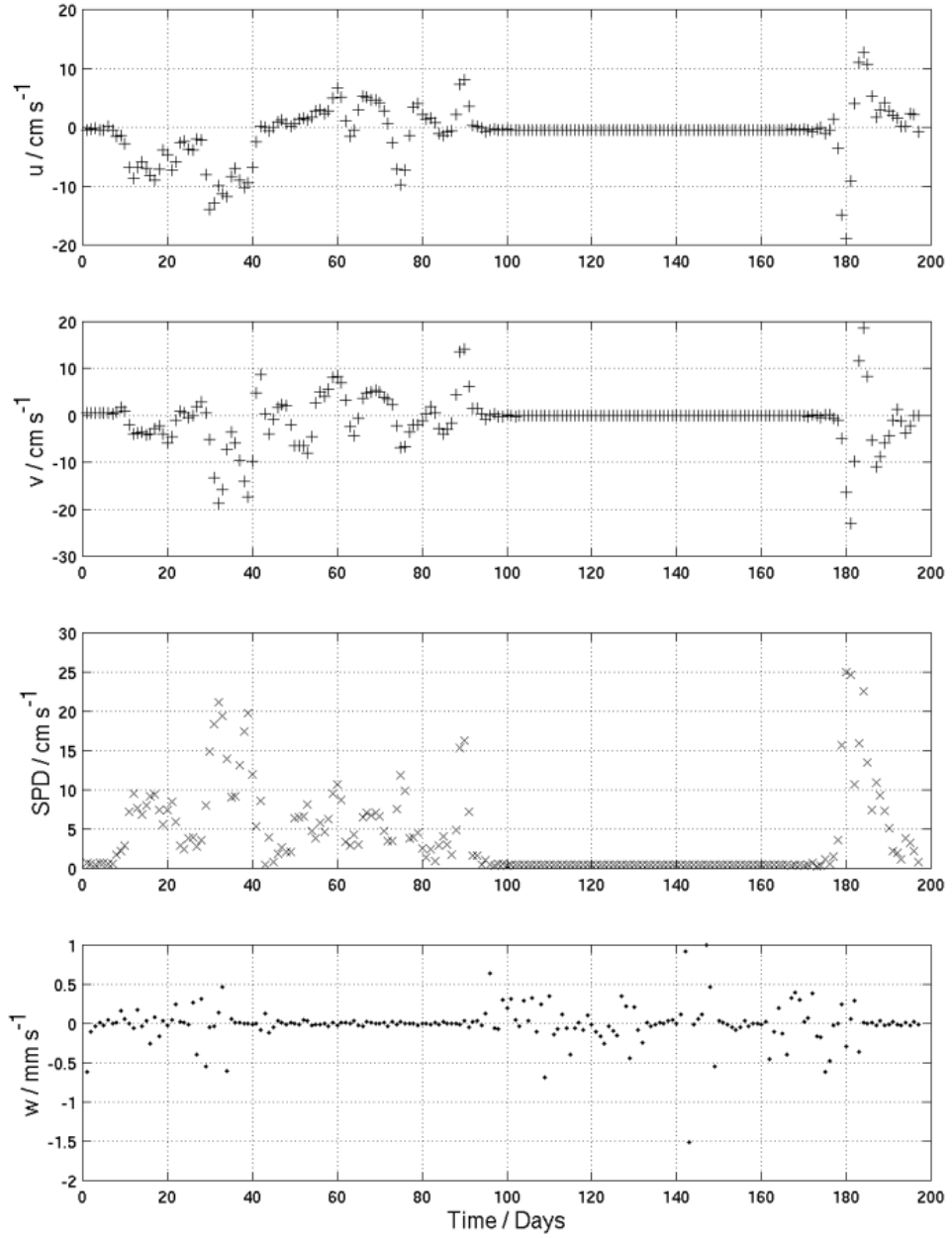


RAFOS Float Trajectory 533 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)

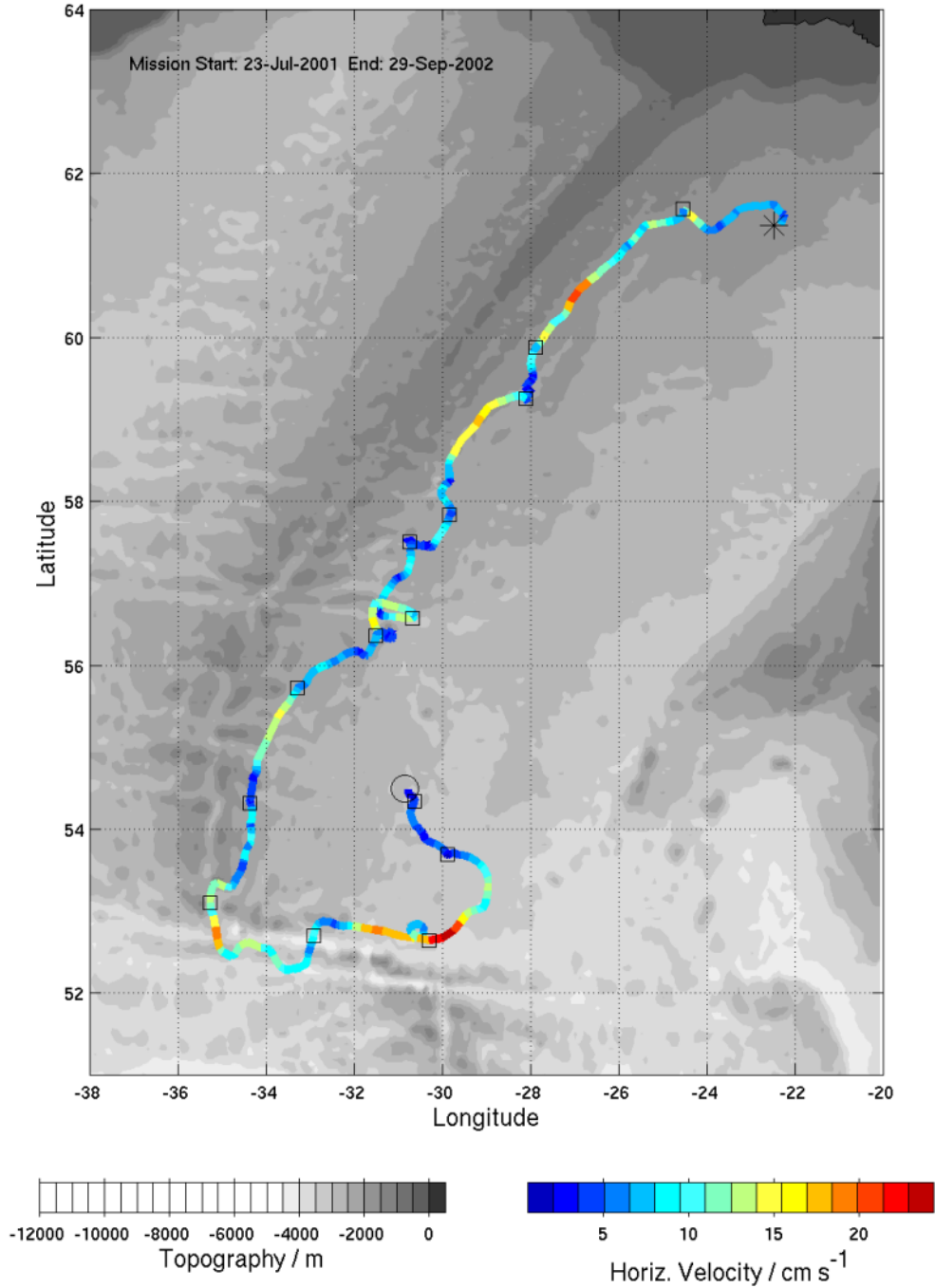


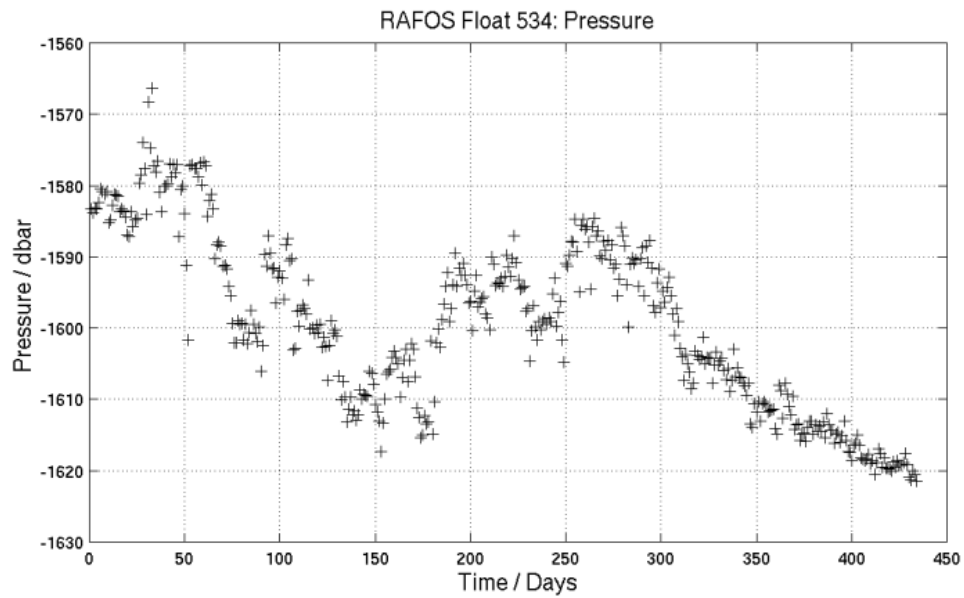
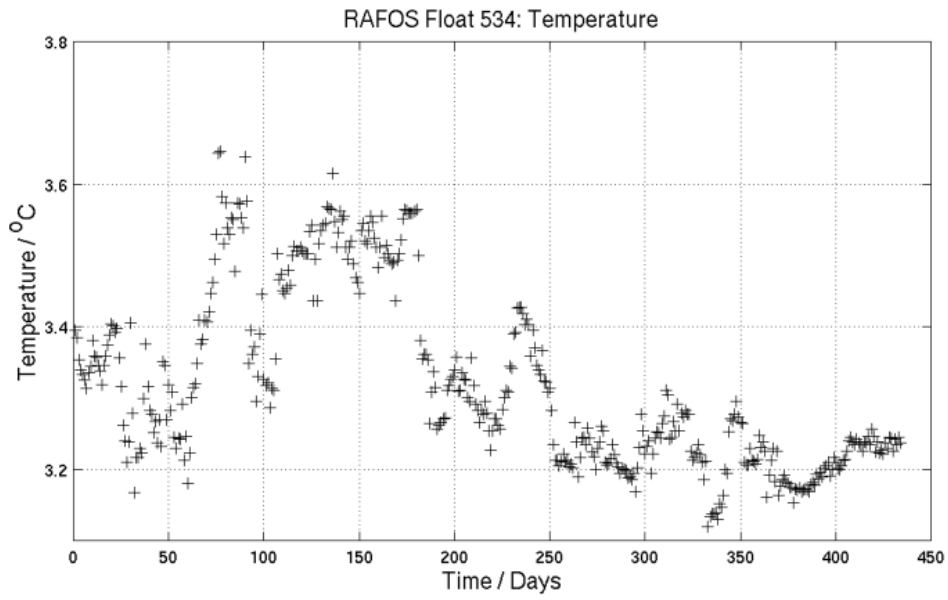


RAFOS Float 533: Velocities

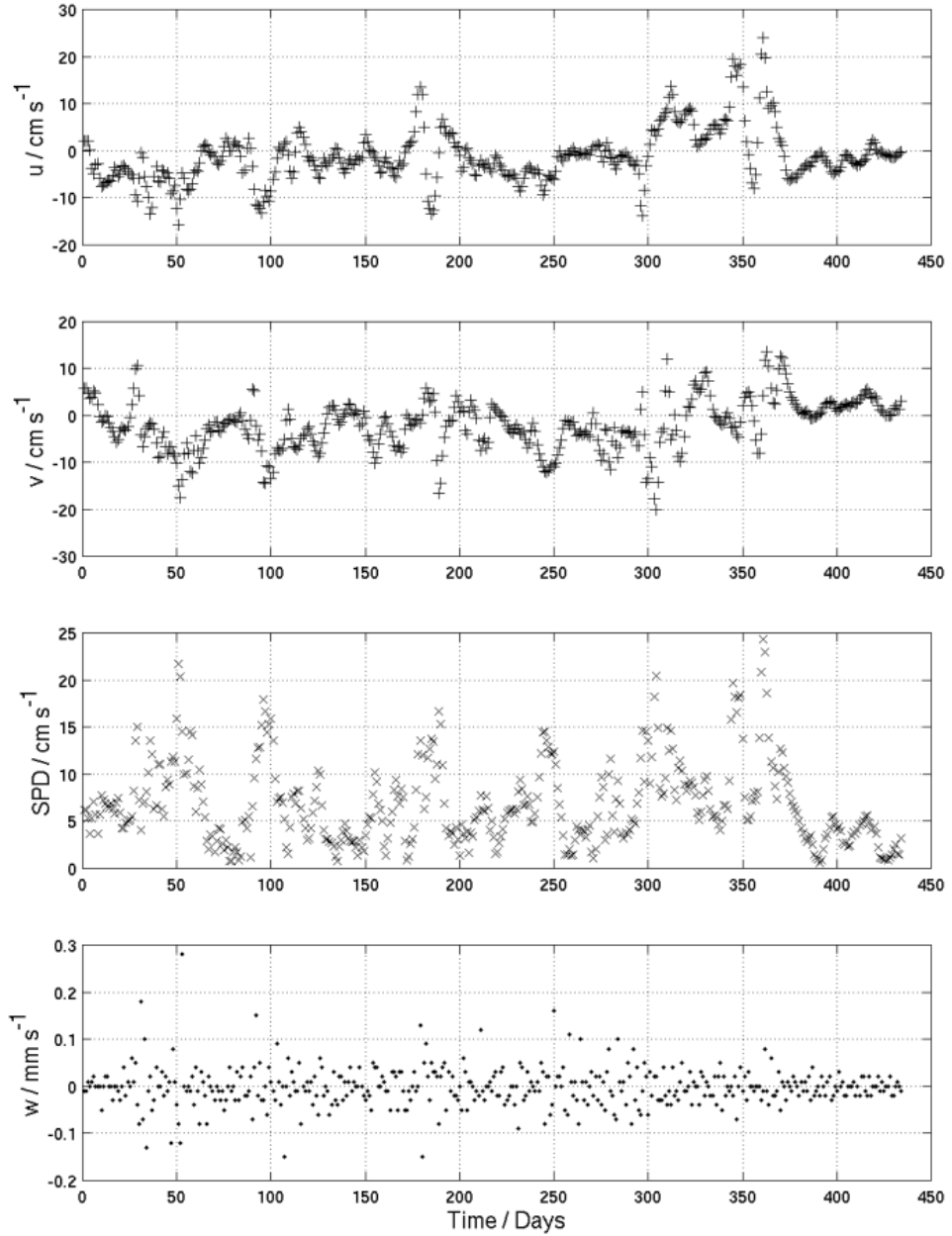


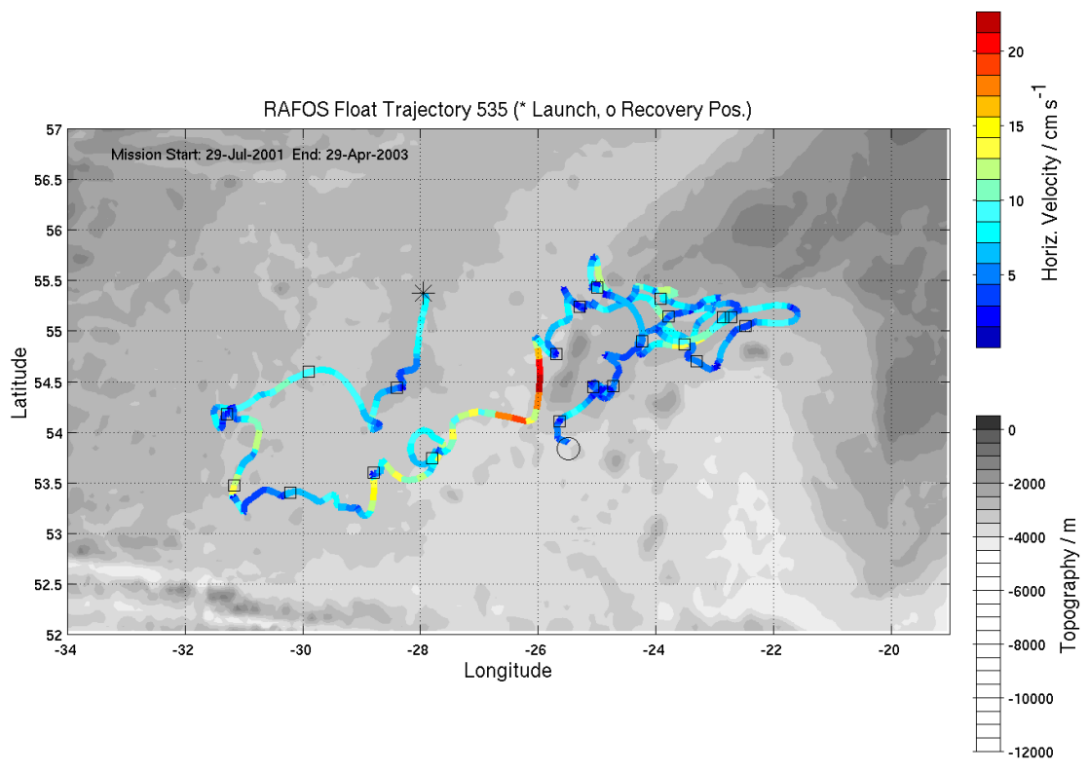
RAFOS Float Trajectory 534 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)

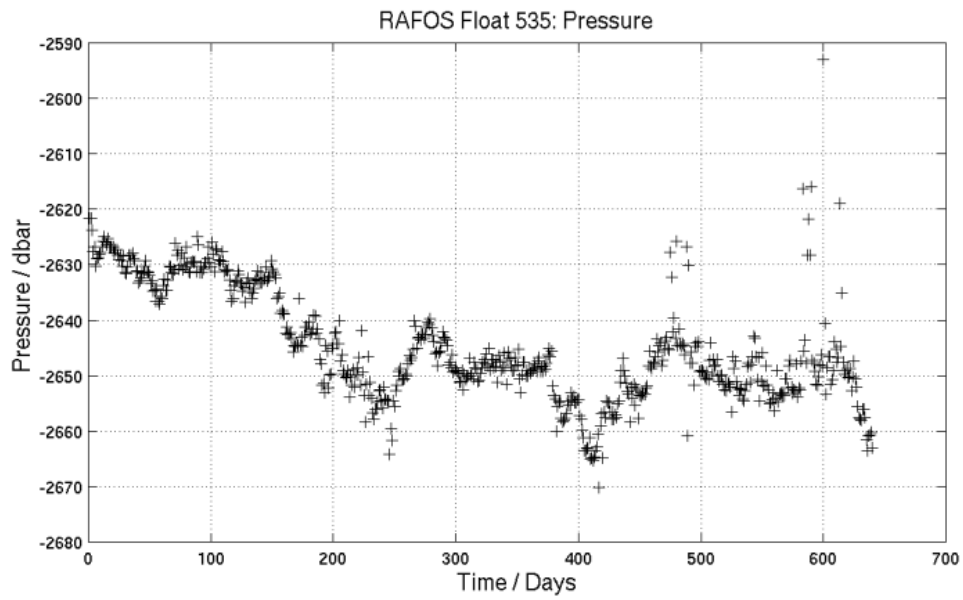
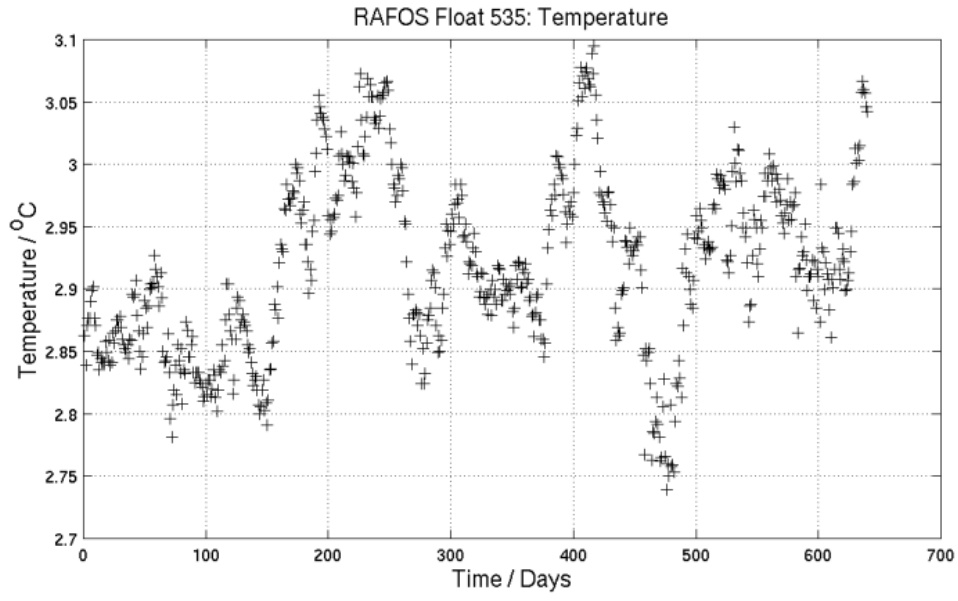




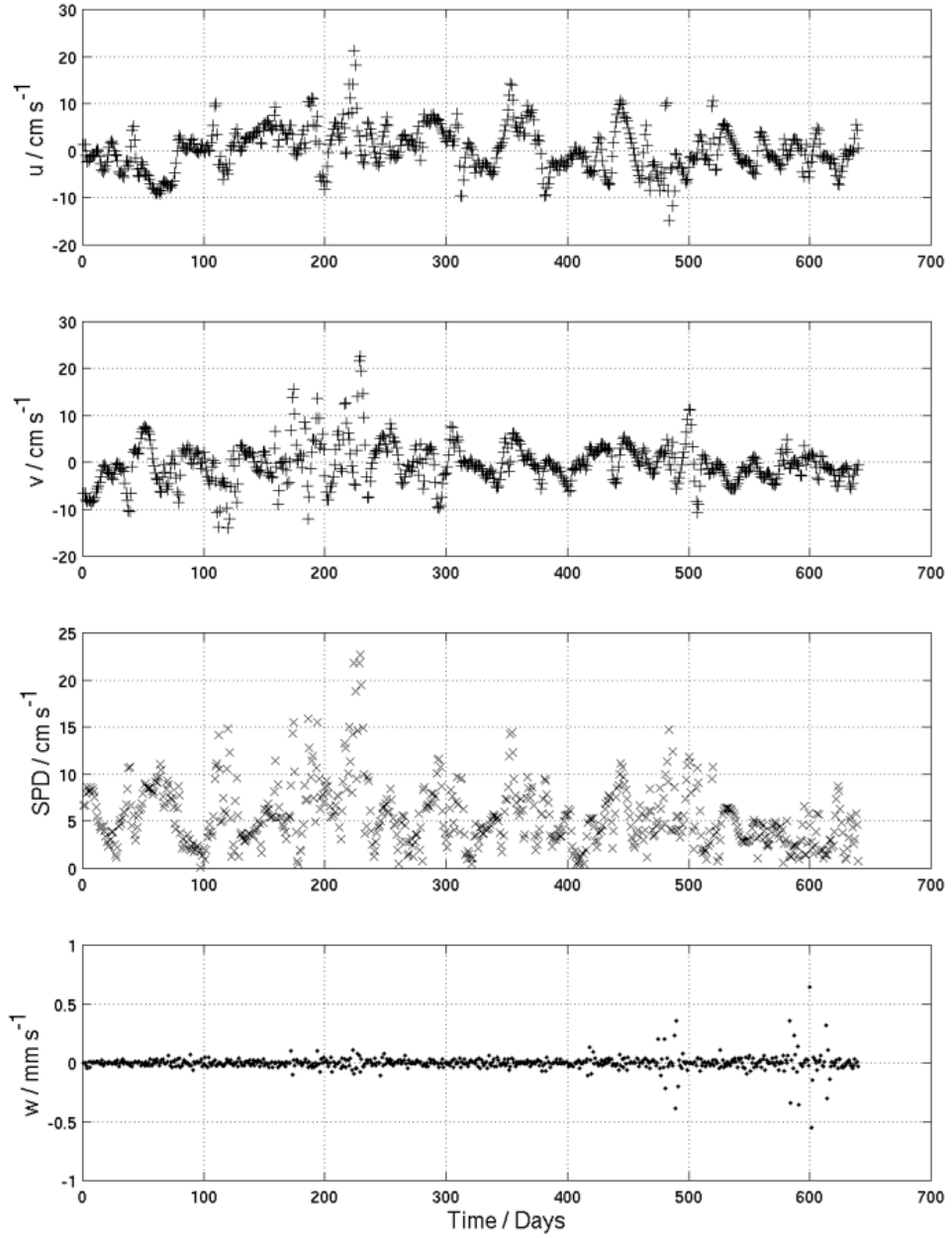
RAFOS Float 534: Velocities



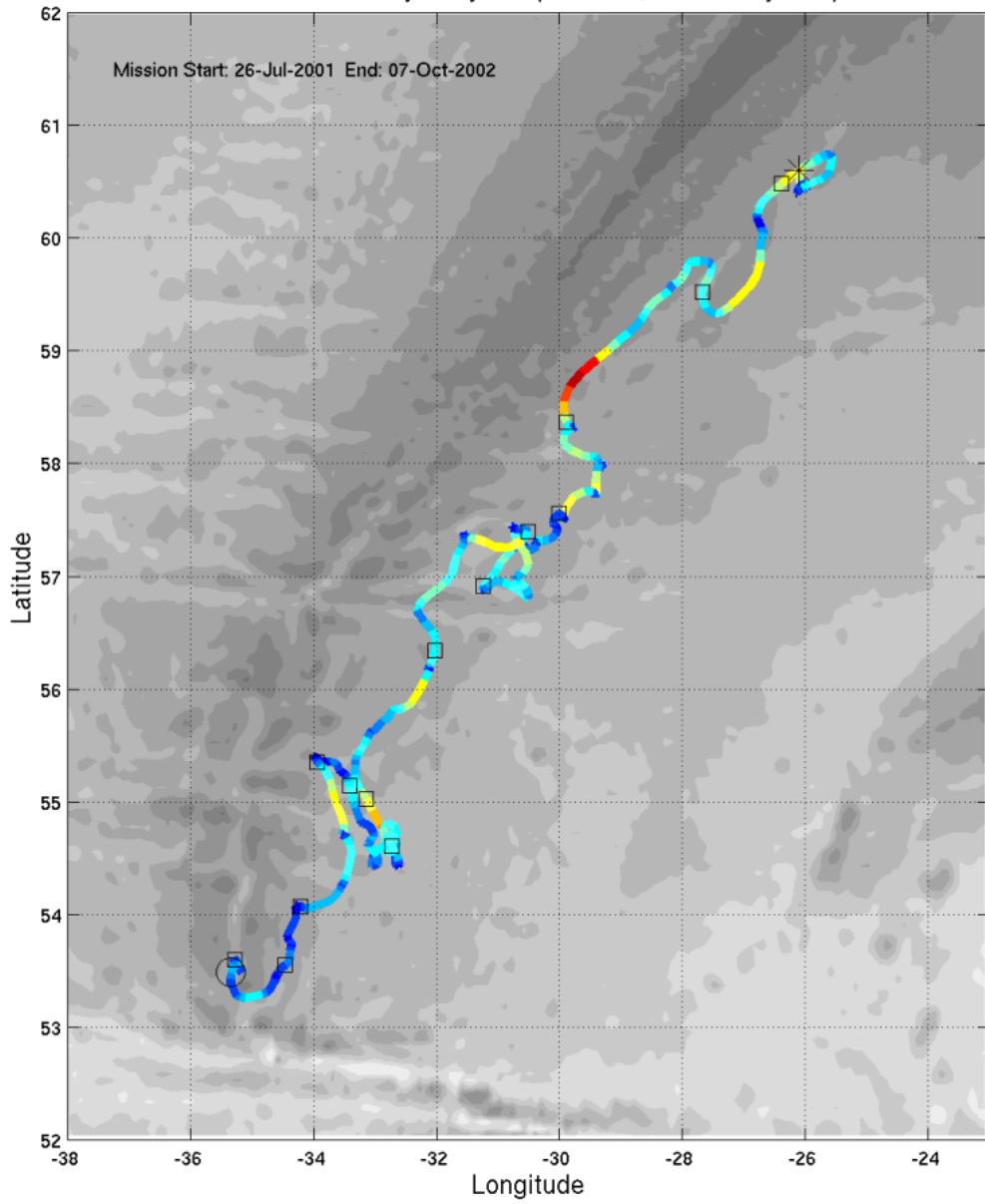


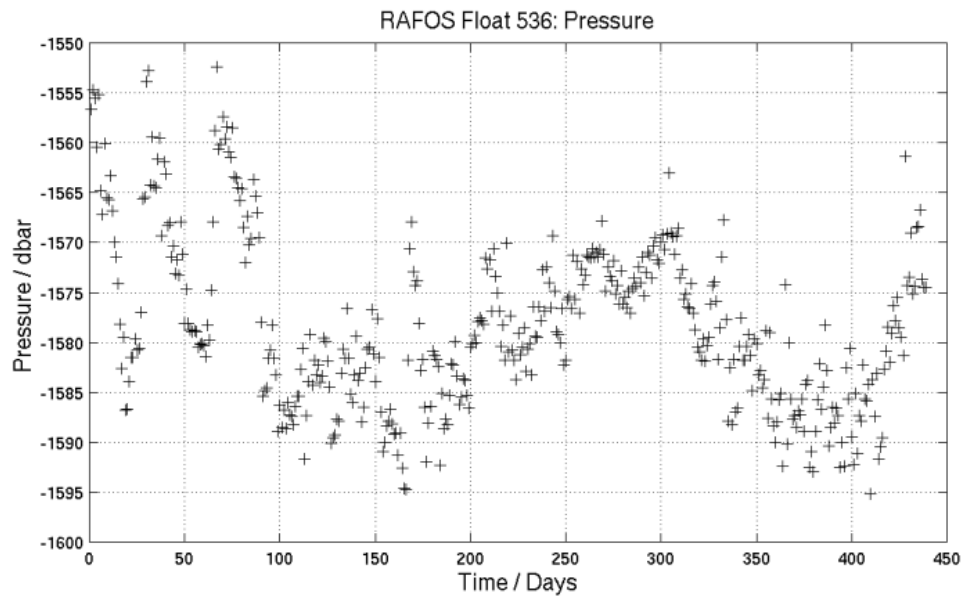
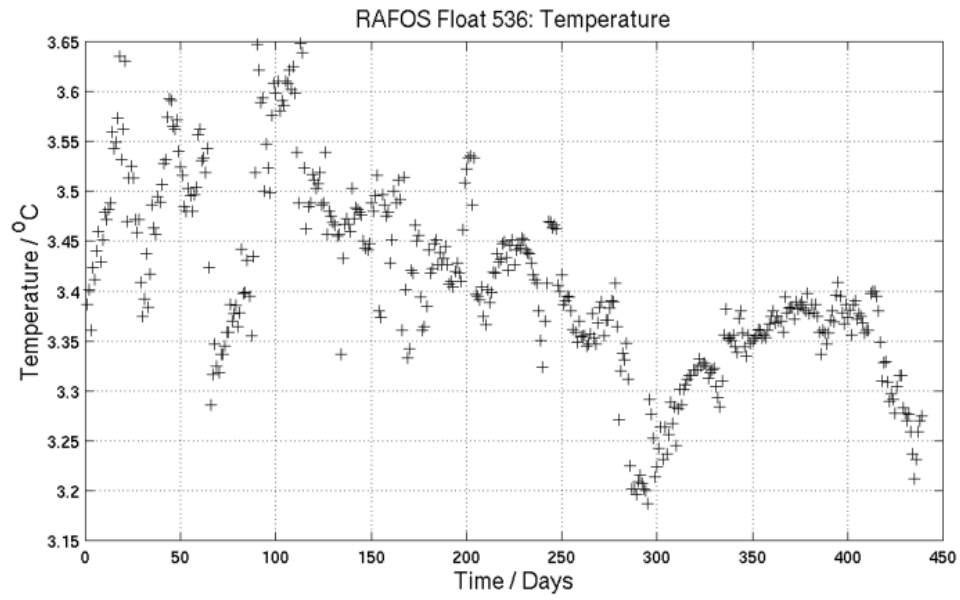


RAFOS Float 535: Velocities

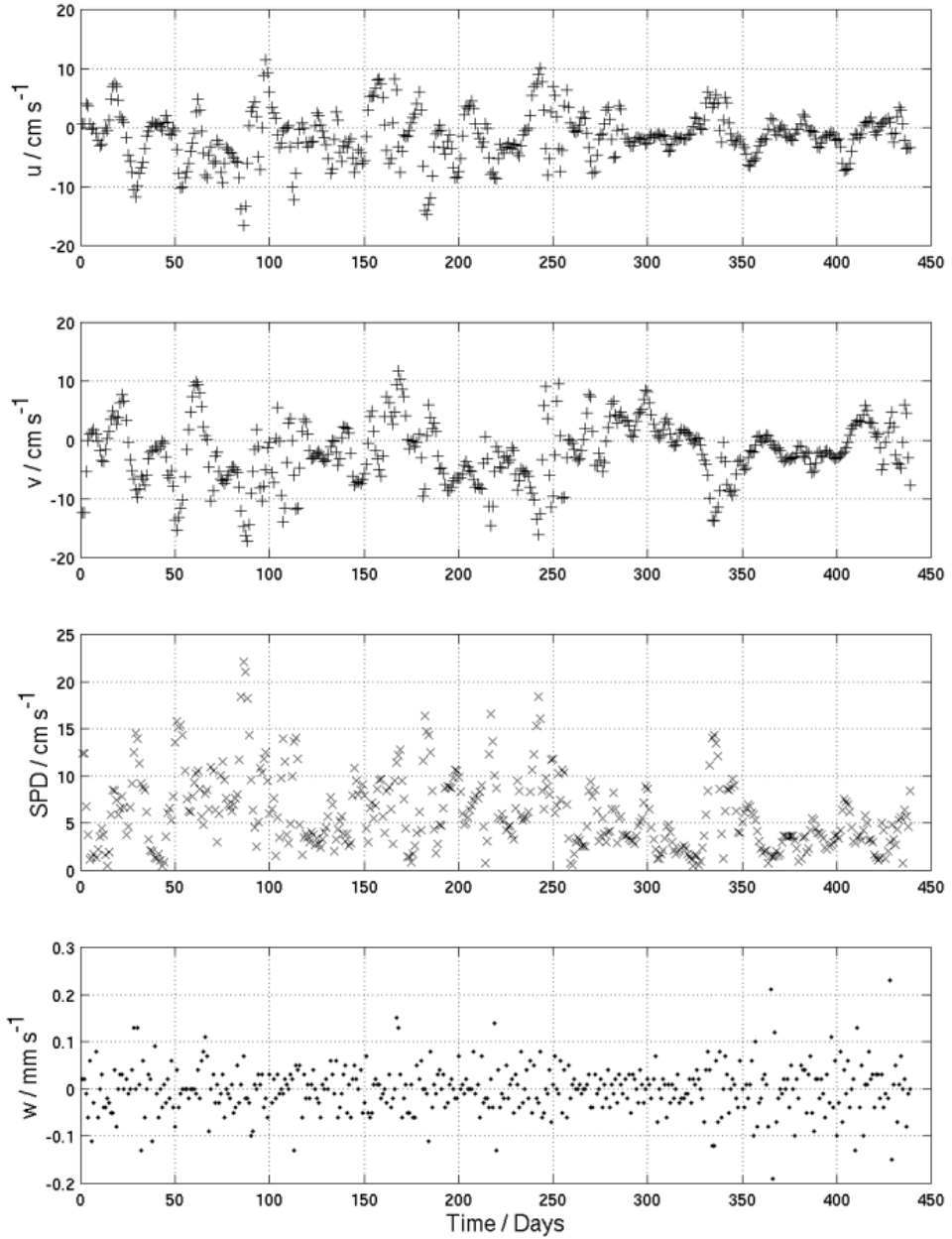


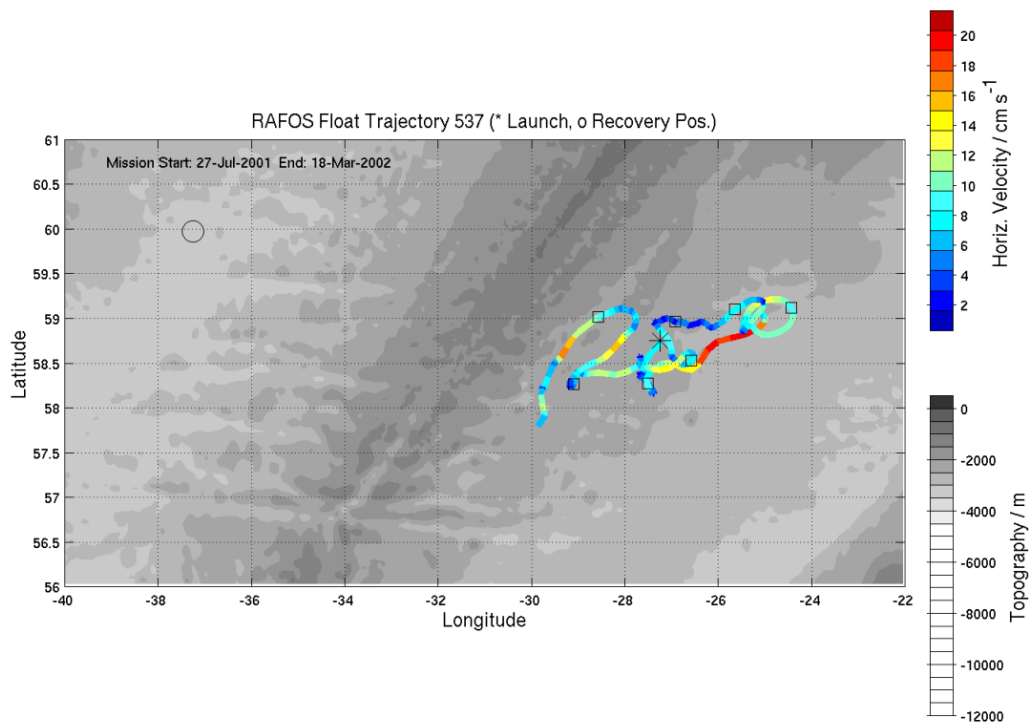
RAFOS Float Trajectory 536 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)

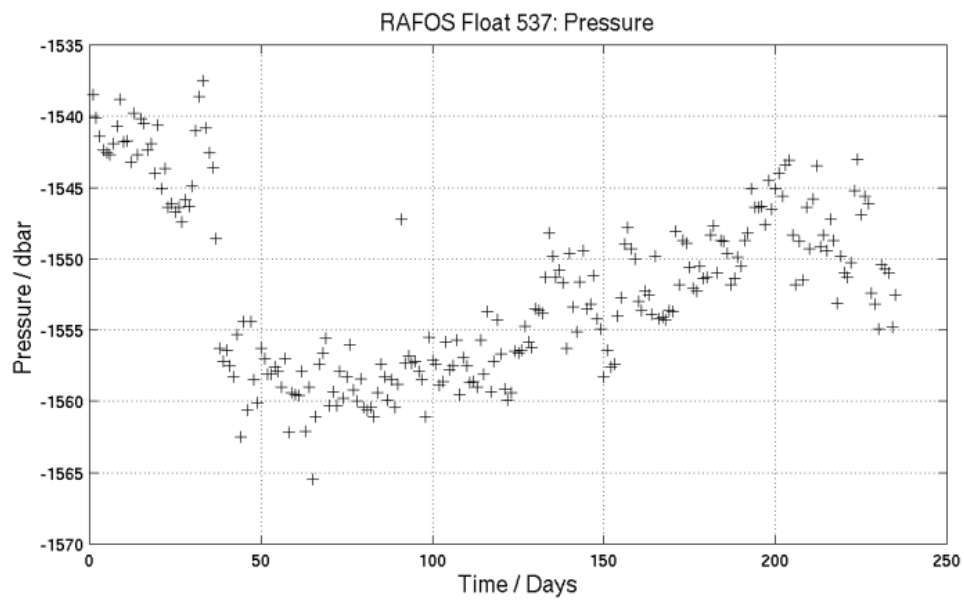
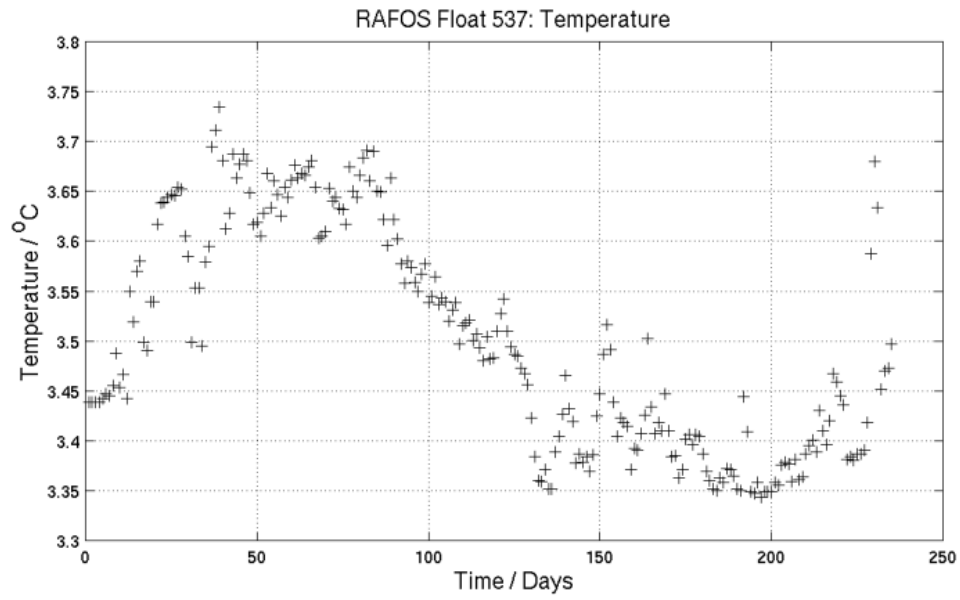




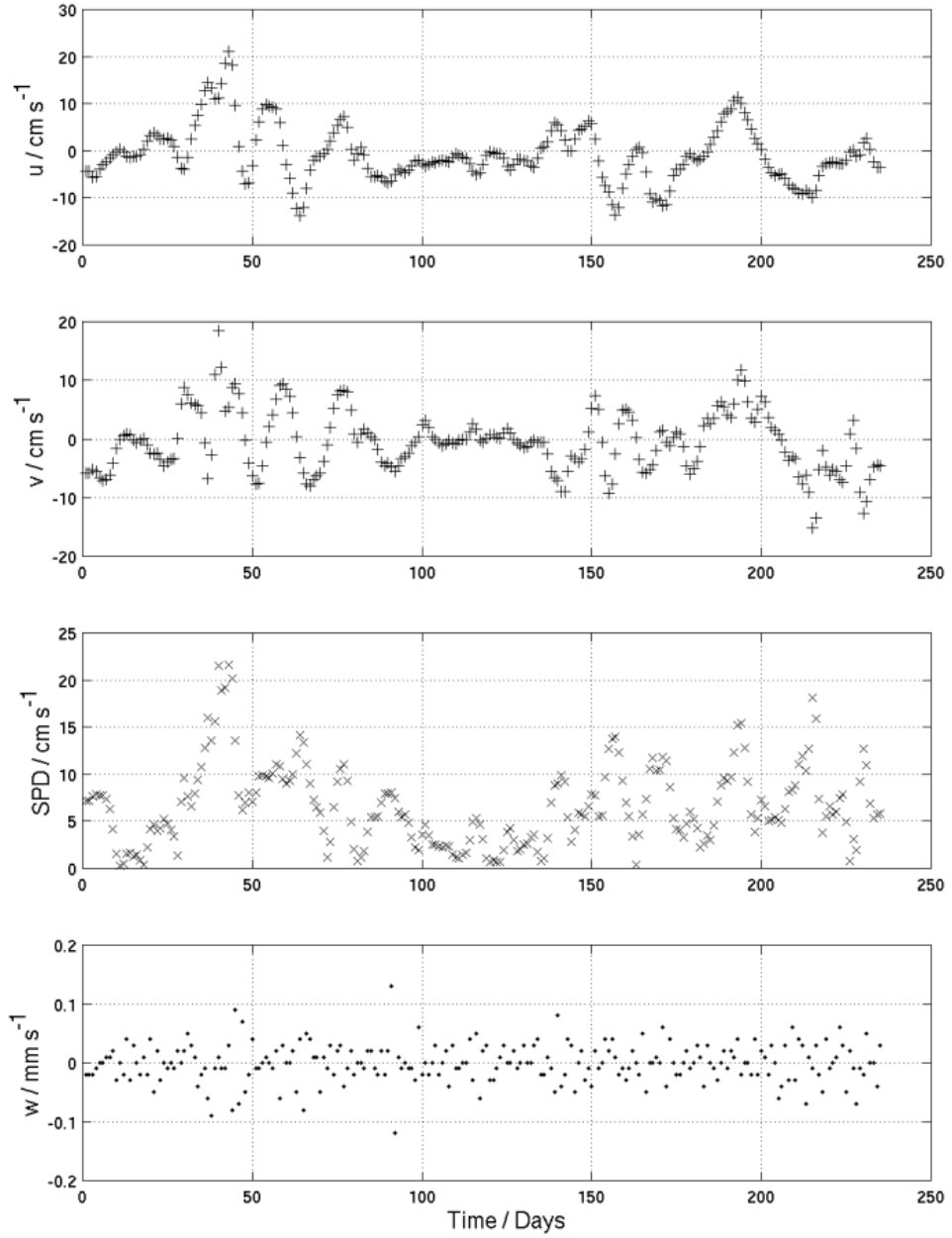
RAFOS Float 536: Velocities



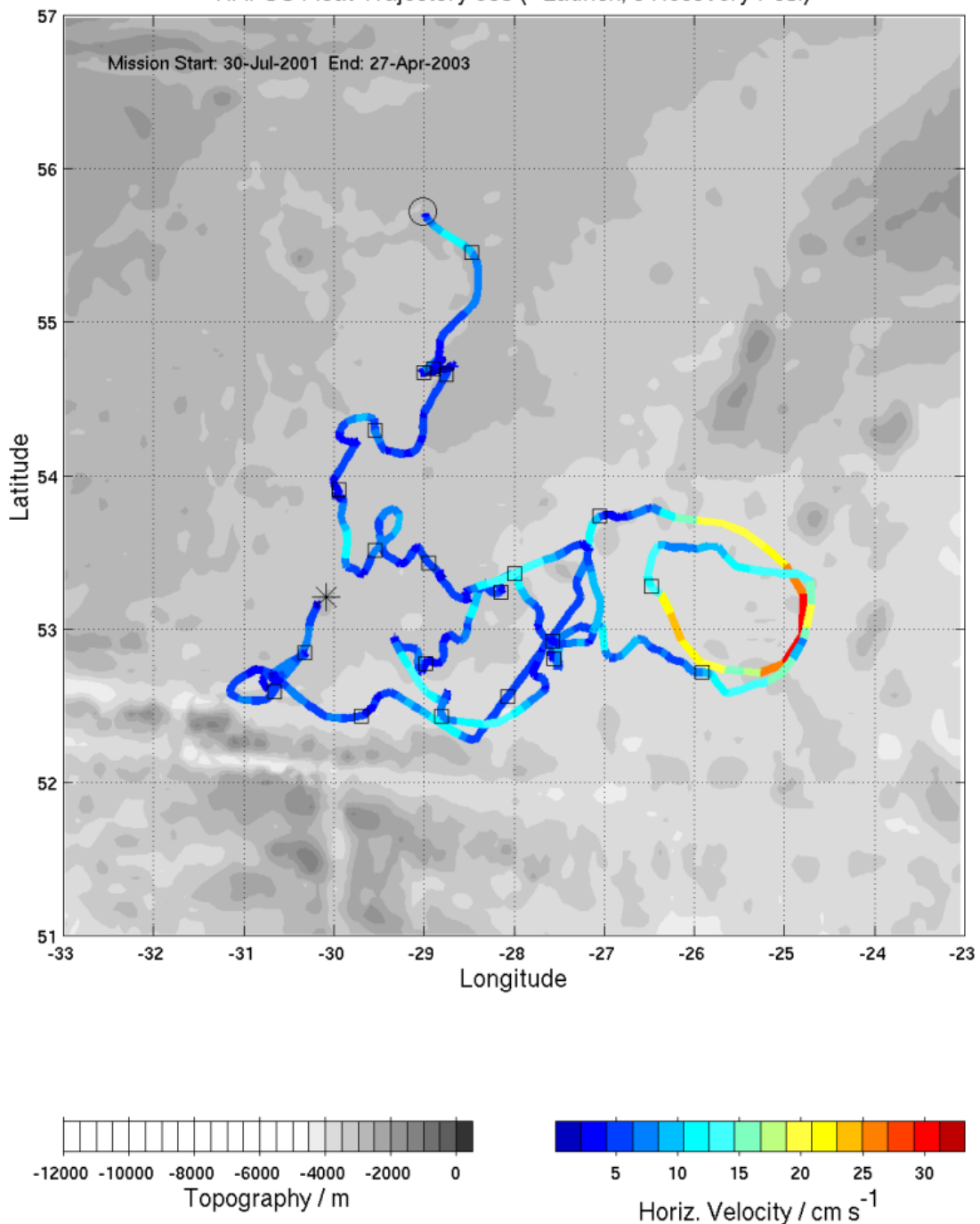


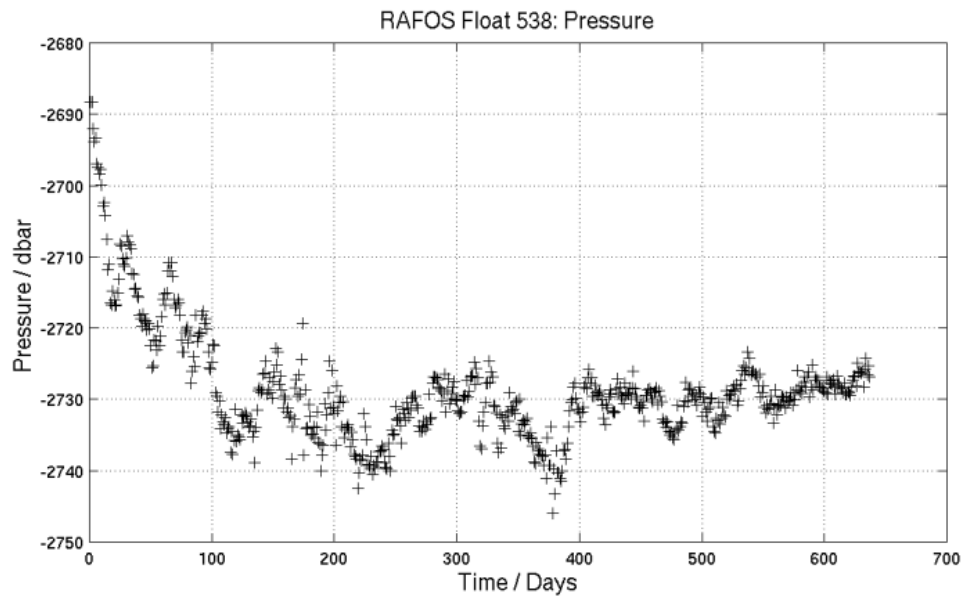
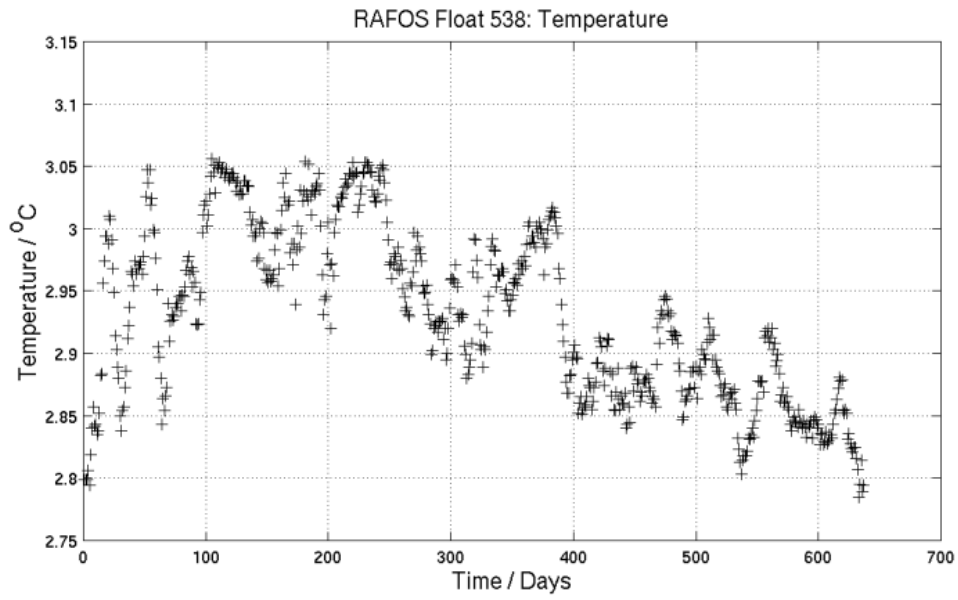


RAFOS Float 537: Velocities

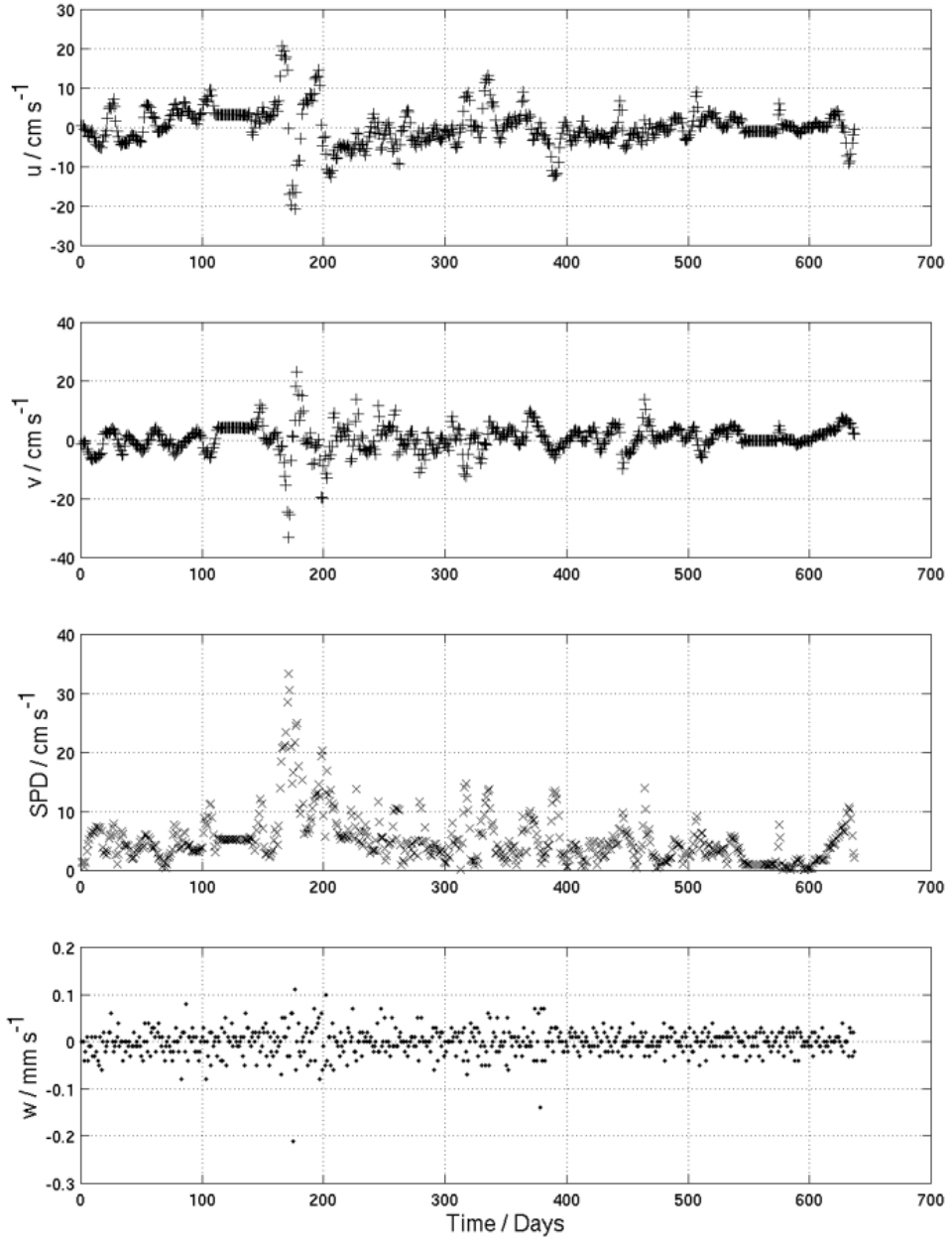


RAFOS Float Trajectory 538 (* Launch, o Recovery Pos.)





RAFOS Float 538: Velocities



6 Acknowledgements

We thank the nautical crews of the METEOR and the POSEIDON for their engaged work in the Iceland Basin. In the initial phase of our RAFOS activities in the subpolar gyre we benefited substantially from the help of Sylvia Becker and many other members of the former IfM Marine Physics department. Collaboration with Thomas Müller within this project is gratefully appreciated. Financial support was provided by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (SFB 460), Bonn.

ML processed the data, produced the graphics, and compiled this report. MN provided the layout of the original websites upon which this report is based. WZ wrote the text and was the principal investigator behind this float program.

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