



# **Madden-Julian Oscillation: Recent Evolution, Current Status and Predictions**

**Update prepared by  
Climate Prediction Center / NCEP  
October 25, 2010**



# Outline

- **Overview**
- **Recent Evolution and Current Conditions**
- **MJO Index Information**
- **MJO Index Forecasts**
- **MJO Composites**



# Overview

- **The MJO weakened during the past week but a signal does remain. The signal continues to interact with the background La Nina conditions.**
- **All dynamical model MJO forecasts indicate a weak and inconsistent MJO signal over the next two weeks.**
- **Based on the latest observations, weak MJO activity is expected to continue and may aid the development of enhanced rainfall across the Indian Ocean over the next two weeks but uncertainty is high for continuation of this event.**

**Additional potential impacts across the global tropics are available at:**  
**<http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/precip/CWlink/ghazards/ghaz.shtml>**

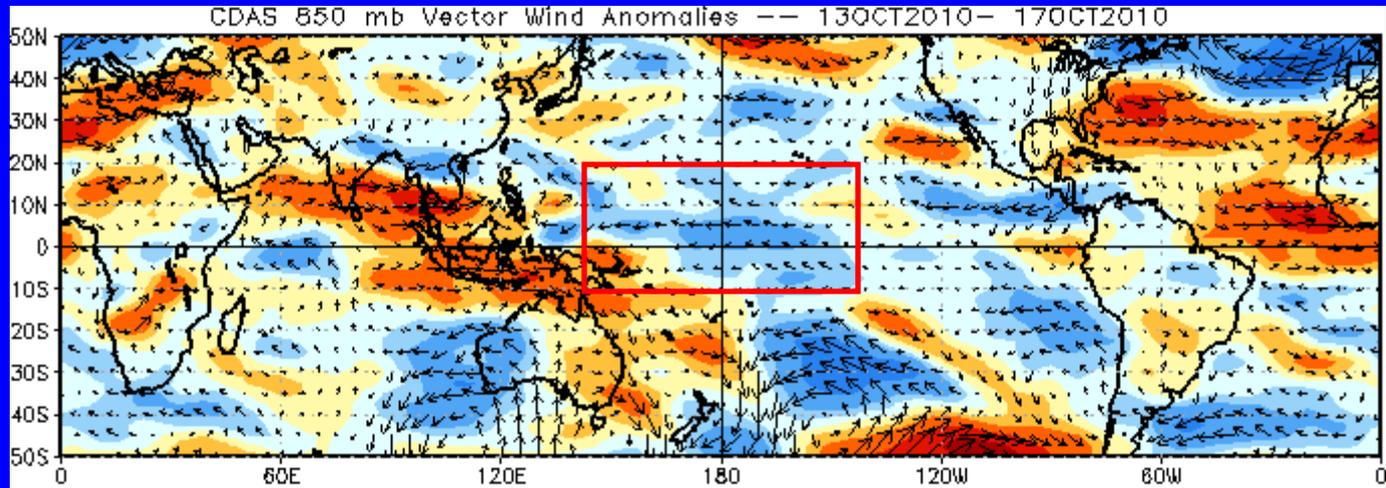


# 850-hPa Vector Wind Anomalies ( $\text{m s}^{-1}$ )

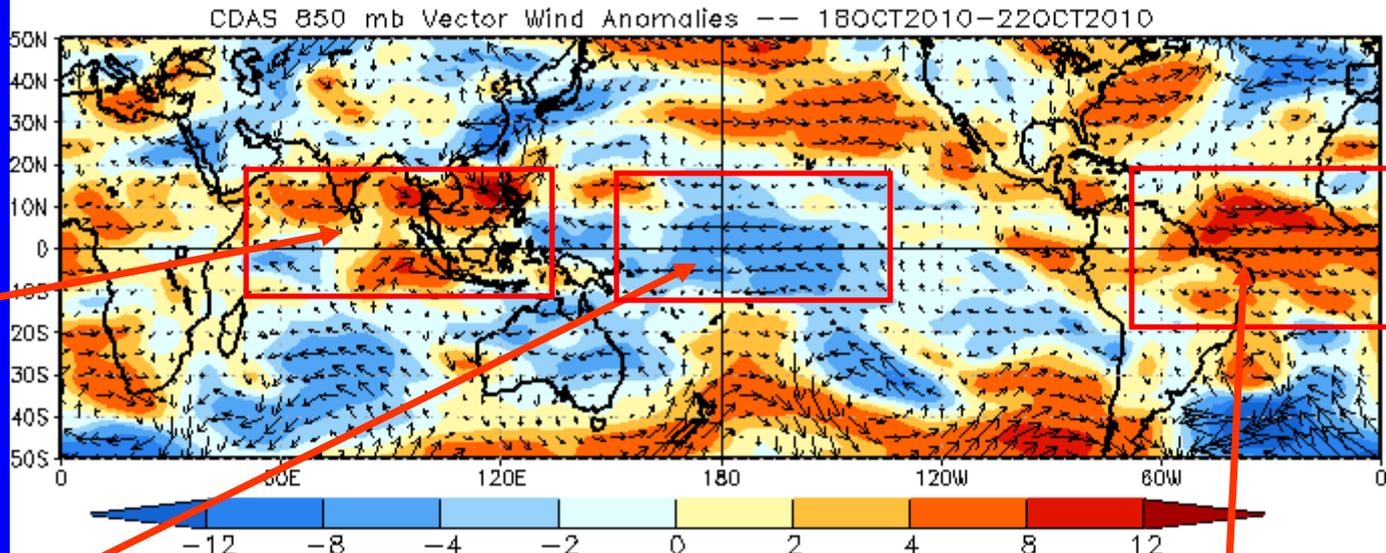
Note that shading denotes the zonal wind anomaly

Blue shades: Easterly anomalies

Red shades: Westerly anomalies



Westerly anomalies focused across southern Asia and the western Maritime continent during the last five days.



Easterly anomalies decreased in coverage and weakened (as compared to earlier in October) across the western Pacific during the last five to ten days.

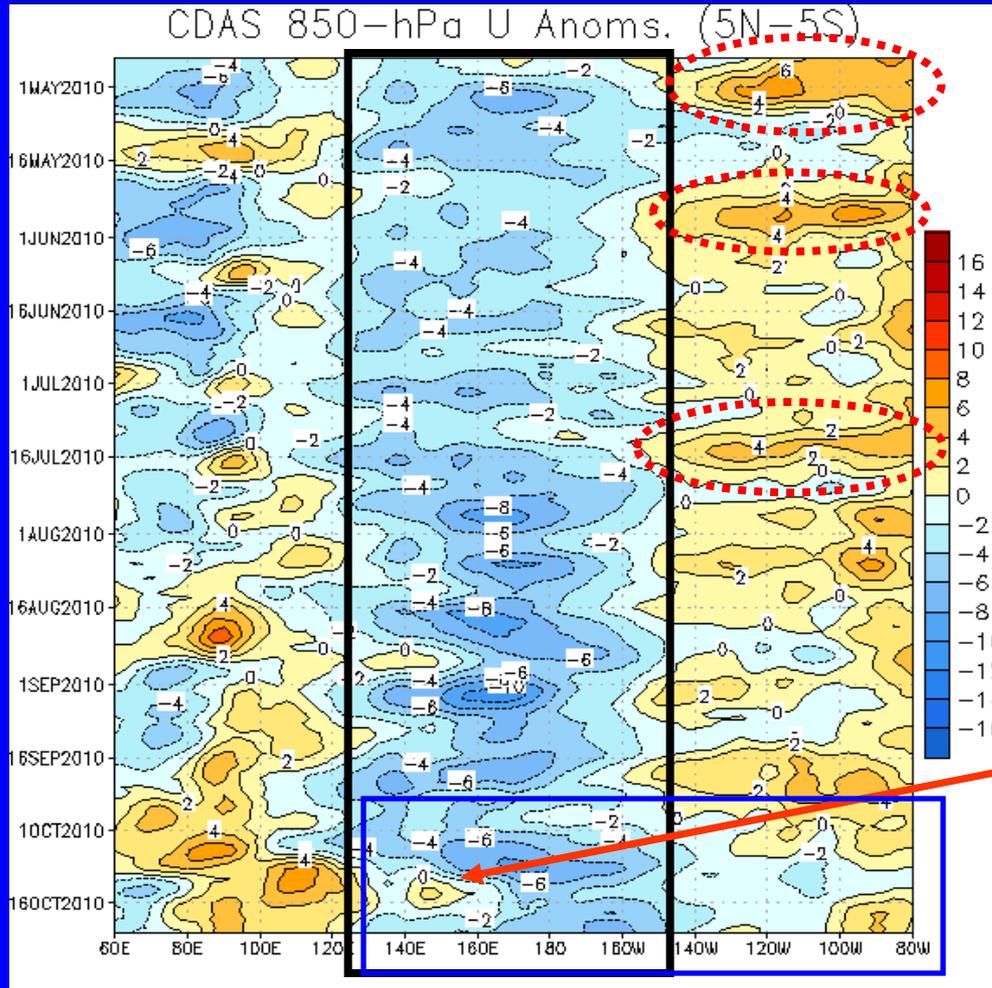
Westerly anomalies continued developed across the Atlantic during the last five days.



# 850-hPa Zonal Wind Anomalies ( $\text{m s}^{-1}$ )

Westerly anomalies (orange/red shading) represent anomalous west-to-east flow

Easterly anomalies (blue shading) represent anomalous east-to-west flow



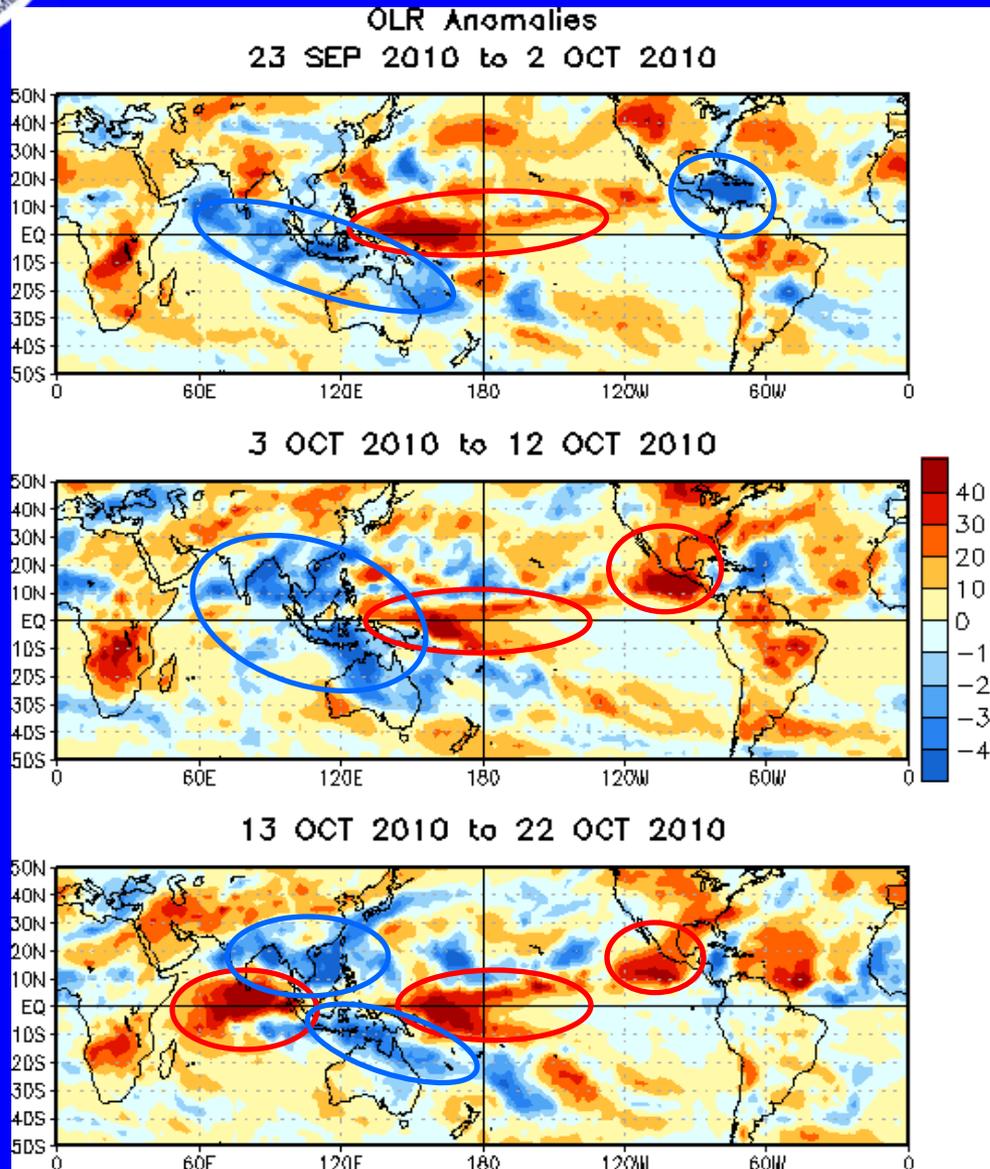
Easterly anomalies have persisted in the west-central Pacific since mid-March (black box) consistent with the development of La Nina conditions.

Enhanced westerly anomalies (red dotted ovals) occurred across the eastern Pacific on separate occasions during late April, late May and early-to-mid July and these were in part associated with MJO activity.

The MJO strengthened in October as evidenced by weak westerly anomalies and a weakening of the easterlies across the central Pacific during mid-October (blue box). Also, westerly anomalies weakened across the eastern Pacific at the same time (blue box).



# OLR Anomalies – Past 30 days



**Drier-than-normal conditions, positive OLR anomalies (yellow/red shading)**

**Wetter-than-normal conditions, negative OLR anomalies (blue shading)**

During late September, enhanced convection was evident from the Indian Ocean to northern Australia, along with Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean. Drier than average conditions were present across the western Pacific.

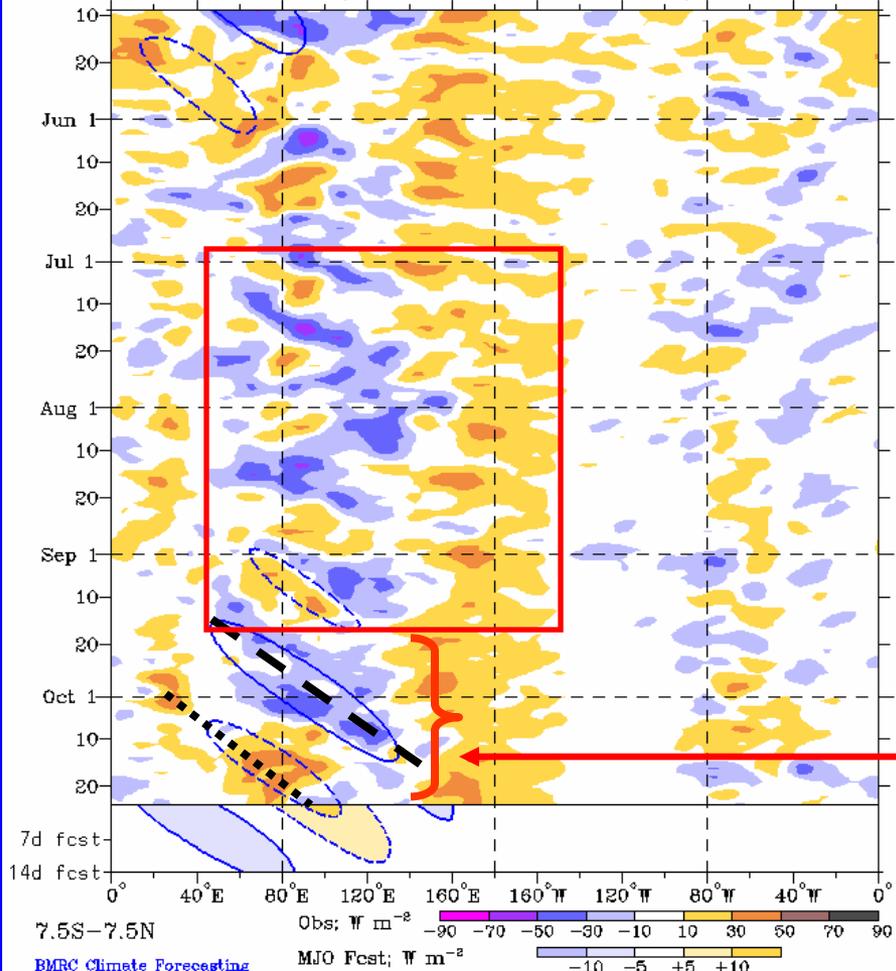
Drier-than-average conditions developed over Mexico and Central America in early-to-mid October while enhanced convection continued over the Indian Ocean and western Maritime continent.

In mid-October suppressed convection developed in the Indian Ocean and continued over Mexico and the western Pacific. Enhanced convection was evident over Southeast Asia and northern Australia.



# Outgoing Longwave Radiation (OLR) Anomalies (7.5°S-7.5°N)

Real-time MJO filtering superimposed upon 3drmm R21 OLR Anomalies  
MJO anomalies blue contours, CINT=10. (5. for forecast)  
Negative contours solid, positive dashed  
9-May-2010 to 24-Oct-2010 + 14 days



Time  
↓

Longitude

Drier-than-normal conditions, positive OLR anomalies (yellow/red shading)

Wetter-than-normal conditions, negative OLR anomalies (blue shading)

(Courtesy of the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) - Australia)

From mid-July into September, generally enhanced (suppressed) convection prevailed across the western Maritime continent (Date Line) (red box). Considerable intraseasonal variability is evident during the period as enhanced convection has shifted both eastward and westward in this area during the period but this has not been related to the MJO.

As the MJO strengthened in late September into October, stronger enhanced convection developed near 80E and shifted eastward followed by suppressed convection during late October.

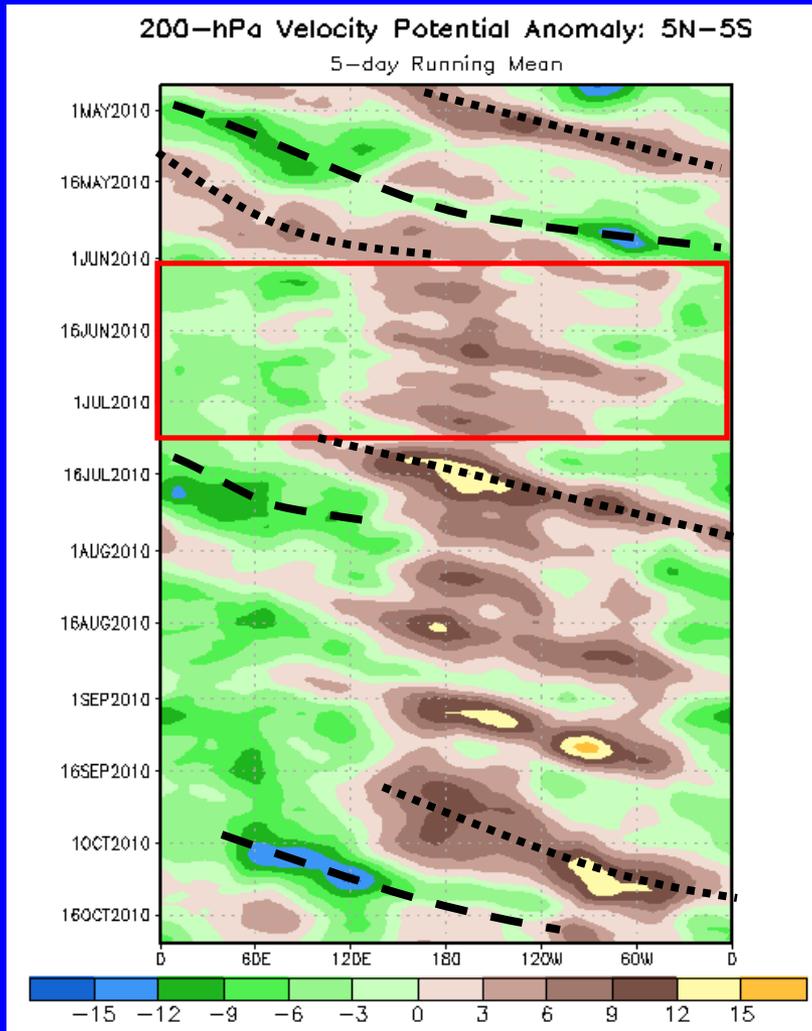


# 200-hPa Velocity Potential Anomalies (5°S-5°N)

Positive anomalies (brown shading) indicate unfavorable conditions for precipitation

Negative anomalies (green shading) indicate favorable conditions for precipitation

Time  
↓



Longitude

During late April into May, anomalies increased and eastward propagation was evident, coincident with the MJO.

From early June to early July, anomalies became more stationary in nature (red box) with upper-level convergence primarily located across the central Pacific and divergence stretching from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean.

Eastward propagation was evident during mid-July associated with the MJO. Eastward propagation in August and September was mainly associated with higher frequency coherent tropical variability rather than the MJO.

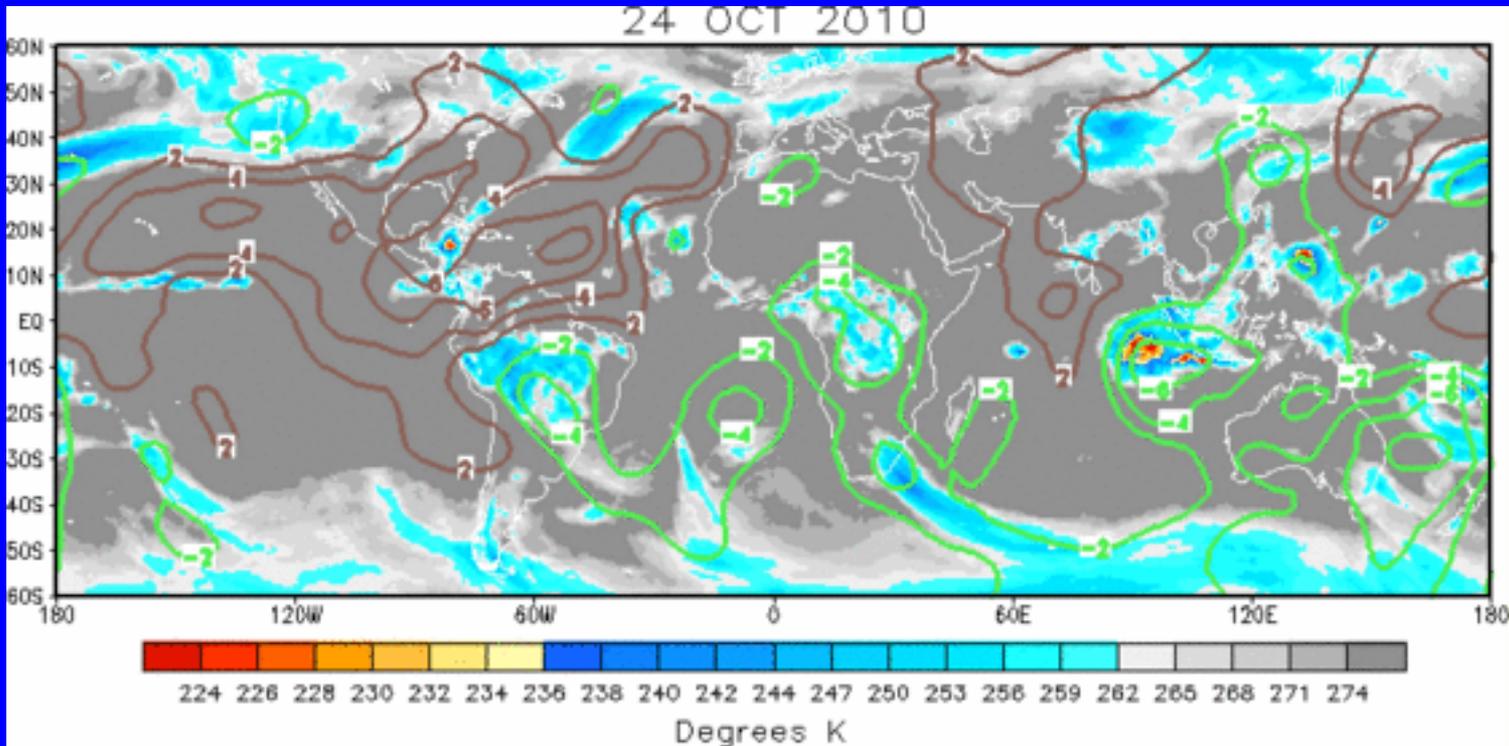
Anomalies increased during late September with eastward propagation associated with the MJO evident during October.



# IR Temperatures (K) / 200-hPa Velocity Potential Anomalies

Positive anomalies (brown contours) indicate unfavorable conditions for precipitation

Negative anomalies (green contours) indicate favorable conditions for precipitation



The large scale velocity potential pattern continued to become less coherent during the past week.

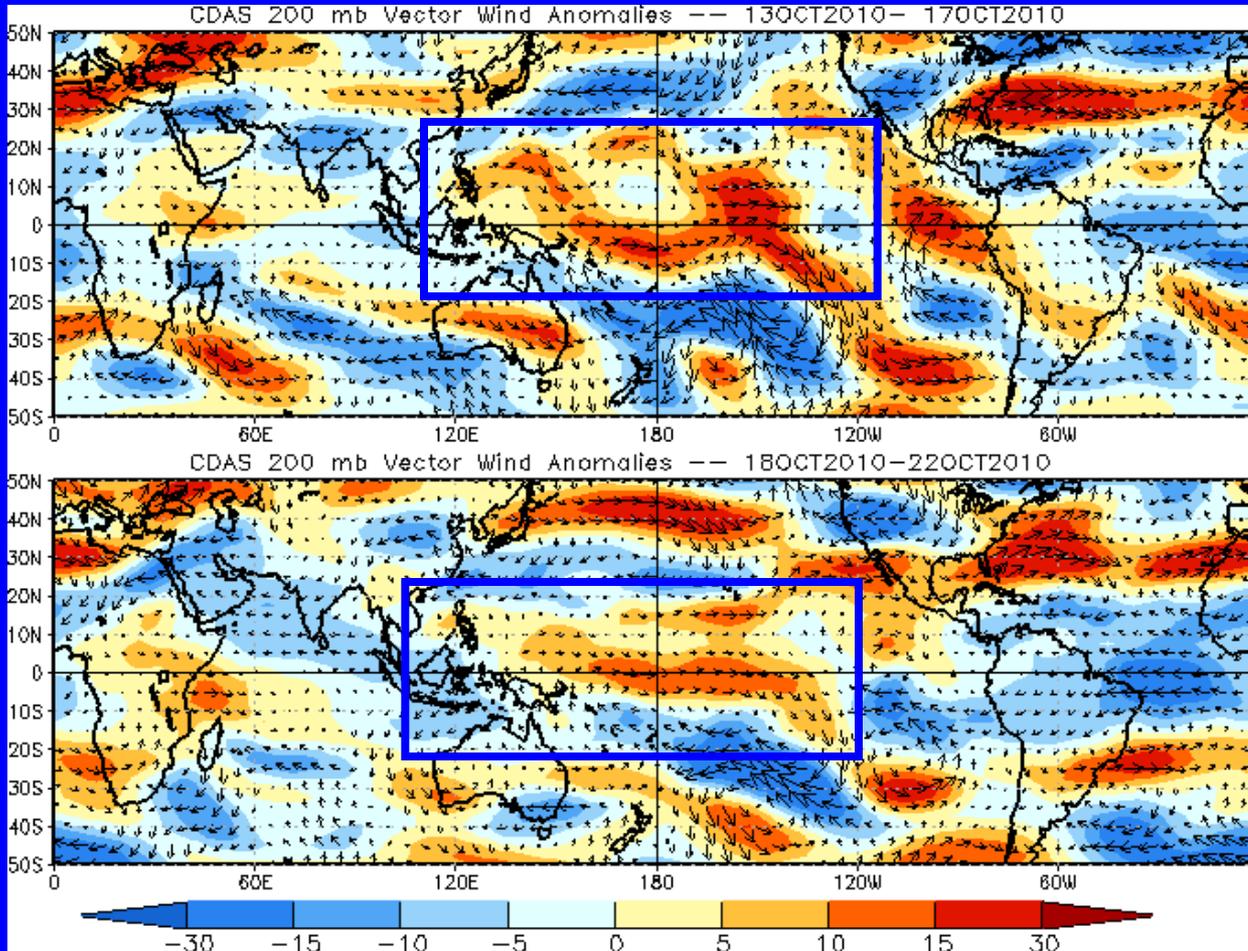


# 200-hPa Vector Wind Anomalies ( $\text{m s}^{-1}$ )

Note that shading denotes the zonal wind anomaly

Blue shades: Easterly anomalies

Red shades: Westerly anomalies



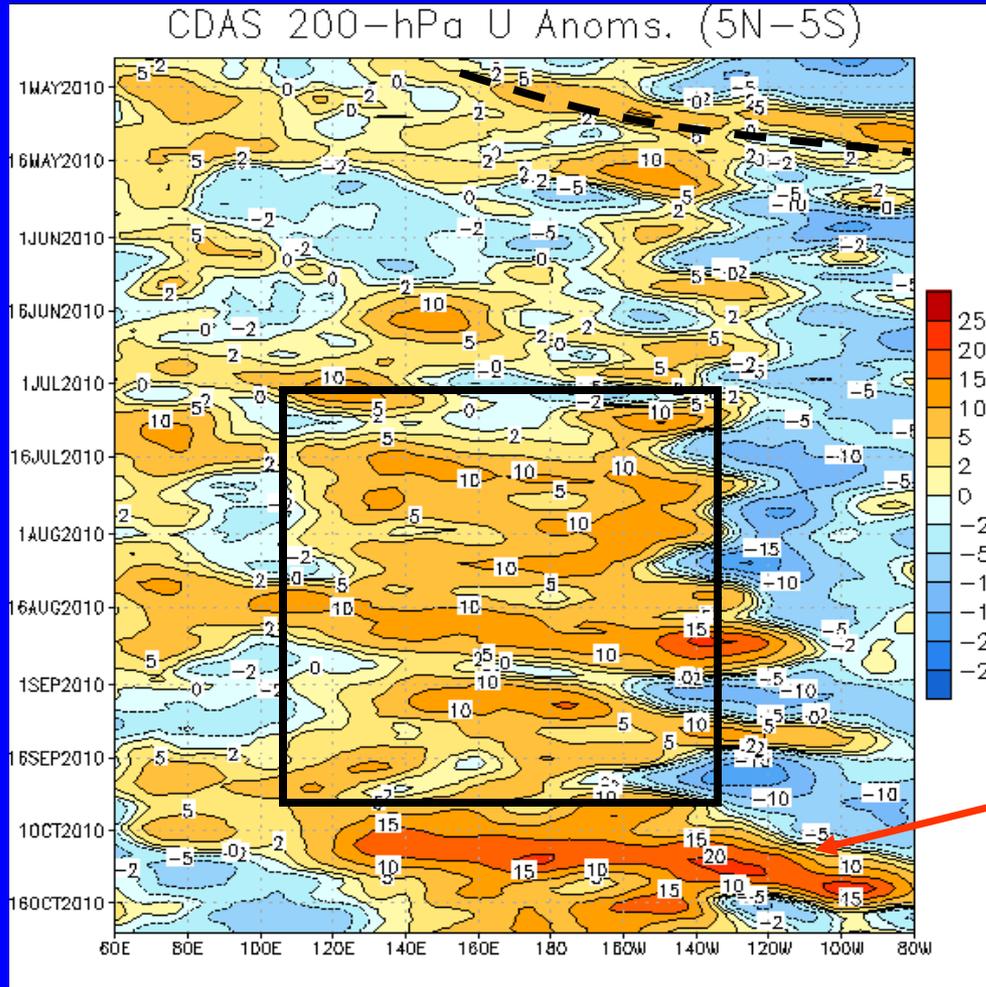
Westerly anomalies have weakened over the western and central Pacific (blue box) during the last five days.



# 200-hPa Zonal Wind Anomalies ( $\text{m s}^{-1}$ )

Westerly anomalies (orange/red shading) represent anomalous west-to-east flow

Easterly anomalies (blue shading) represent anomalous east-to-west flow



Time  
↓

Longitude

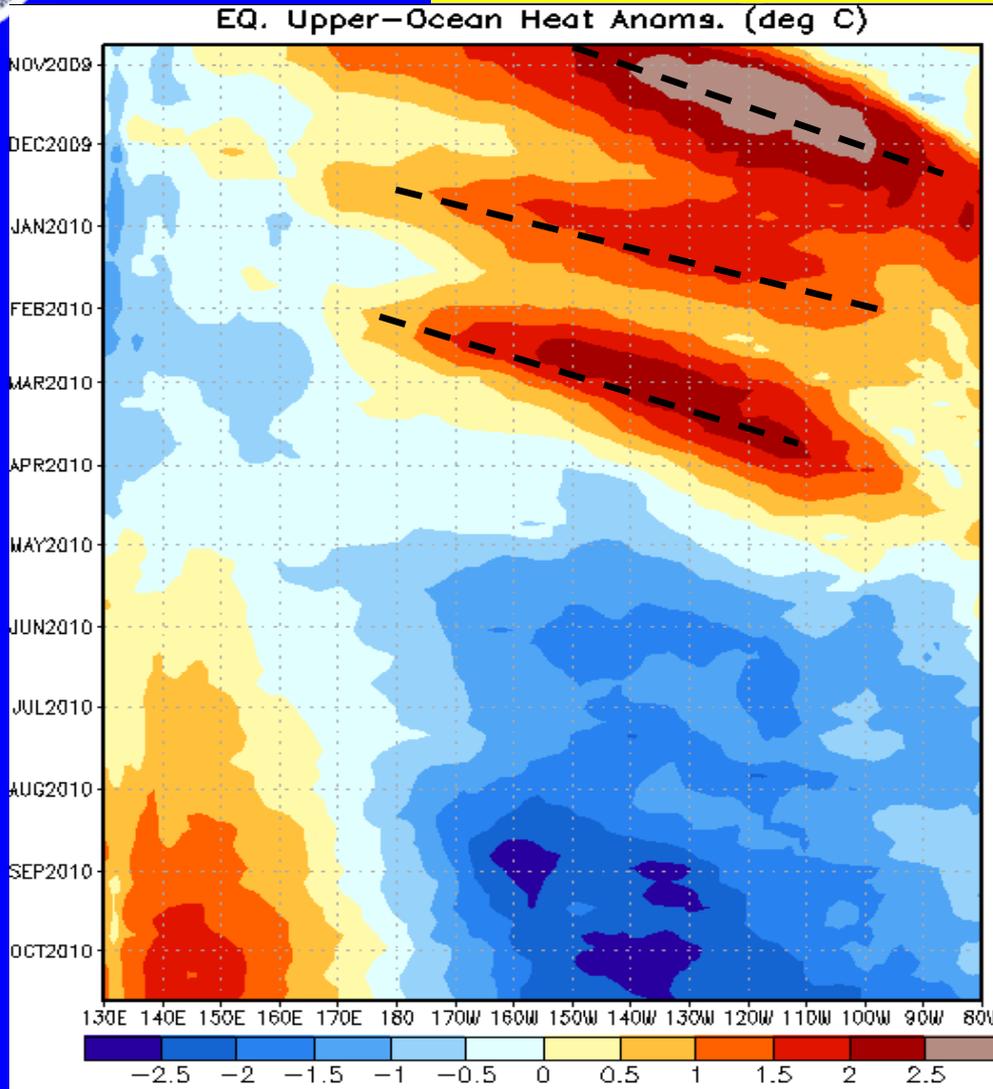
In early May, there was some eastward propagation of westerly anomalies across the Pacific in association with the MJO at that time (dashed black line).

Westerly anomalies have persisted across a large area from the Maritime Continent to the central Pacific (black solid box) since early July. Eastward propagation of westerly anomalies in August and September were not associated with the MJO.

In early October, westerly anomalies strengthened considerably and an eastward extension of these anomalies is evident to near 80W.



# Weekly Heat Content Evolution in the Equatorial Pacific



From Aug 2009 through March 2010, heat content anomalies remained above-average for much of the period.

From November 2009 – February 2010 three ocean Kelvin waves contributed to the change in heat content across the eastern Pacific (last three dashed black lines).

During April 2010 heat content anomalies decreased across the Pacific in association with the upwelling phase of a Kelvin wave and later during the early summer due to the development of La Nina.

Currently, negative heat content anomalies extend across the central and eastern Pacific with positive anomalies in the western Pacific.



# MJO Index -- Information

- The MJO index illustrated on the next several slides is the CPC version of the Wheeler and Hendon index (2004, hereafter WH2004).

**Wheeler M. and H. Hendon, 2004: An All-Season Real-Time Multivariate MJO Index: Development of an Index for Monitoring and Prediction, *Monthly Weather Review*, 132, 1917-1932.**

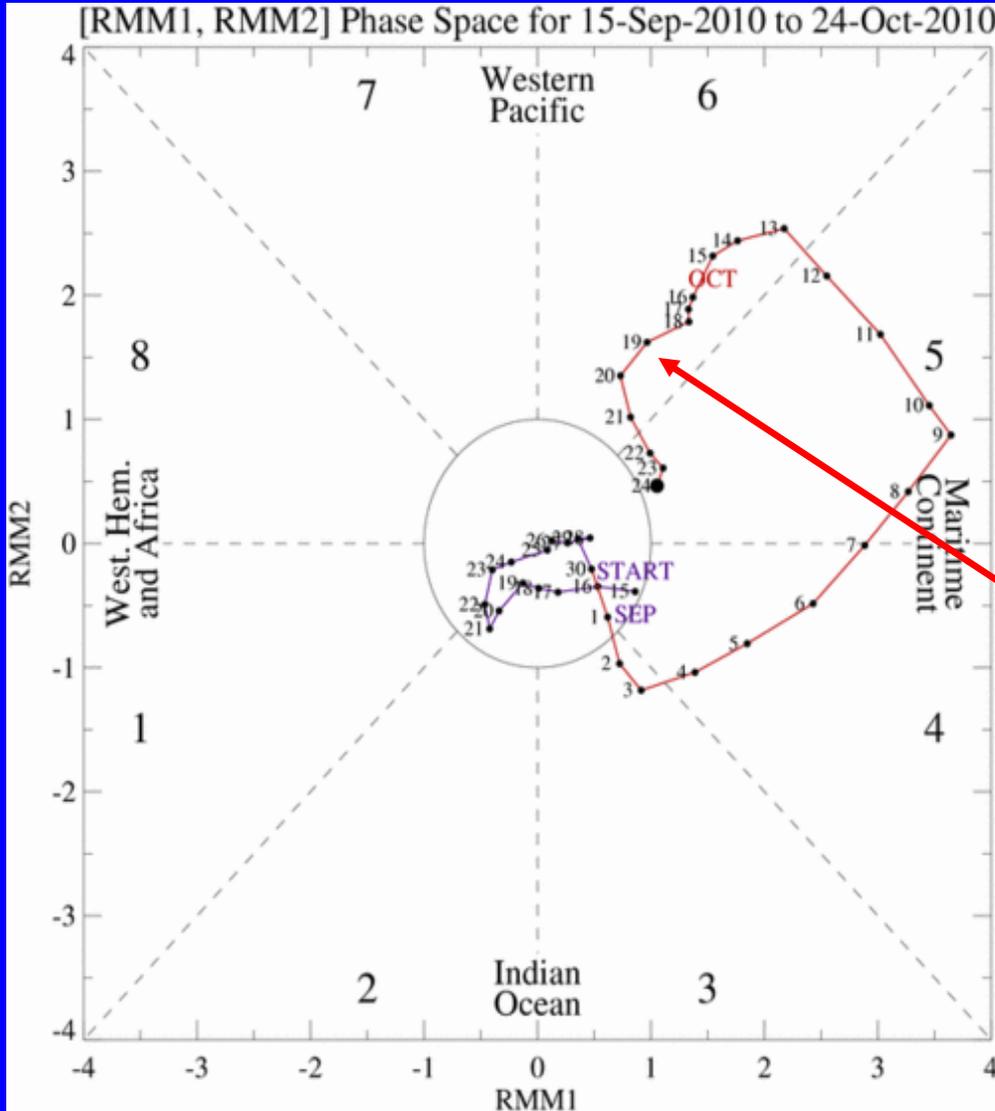
- The methodology is very similar to that described in WH2004 but does not include the linear removal of ENSO variability associated with a sea surface temperature index. The methodology is consistent with that outlined by the U.S. CLIVAR MJO Working Group.

**Gottschalck et al. 2010: A Framework for Assessing Operational Madden-Julian Oscillation Forecasts: A CLIVAR MJO Working Group Project, *Bull. Amer. Met. Soc.*, 91, 1247-1258.**

- The index is based on a combined Empirical Orthogonal Function (EOF) analysis using fields of near-equatorially-averaged 850-hPa and 200-hPa zonal wind and outgoing longwave radiation (OLR).



# MJO Index -- Recent Evolution

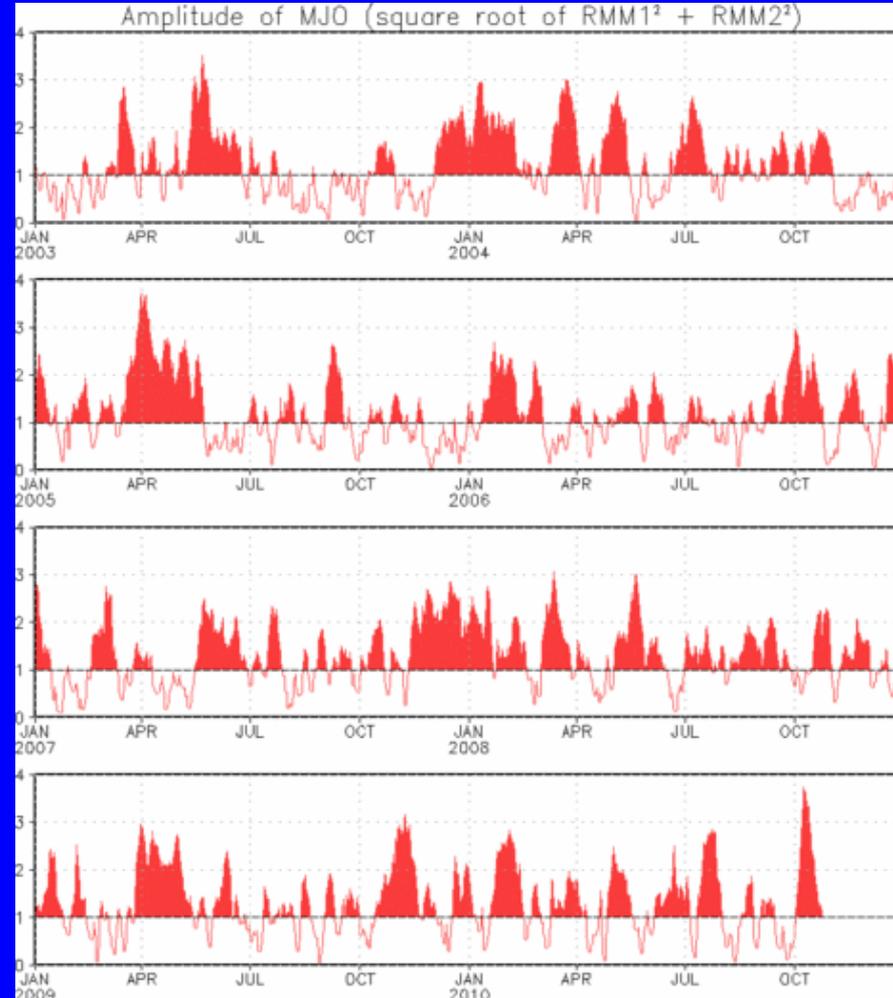
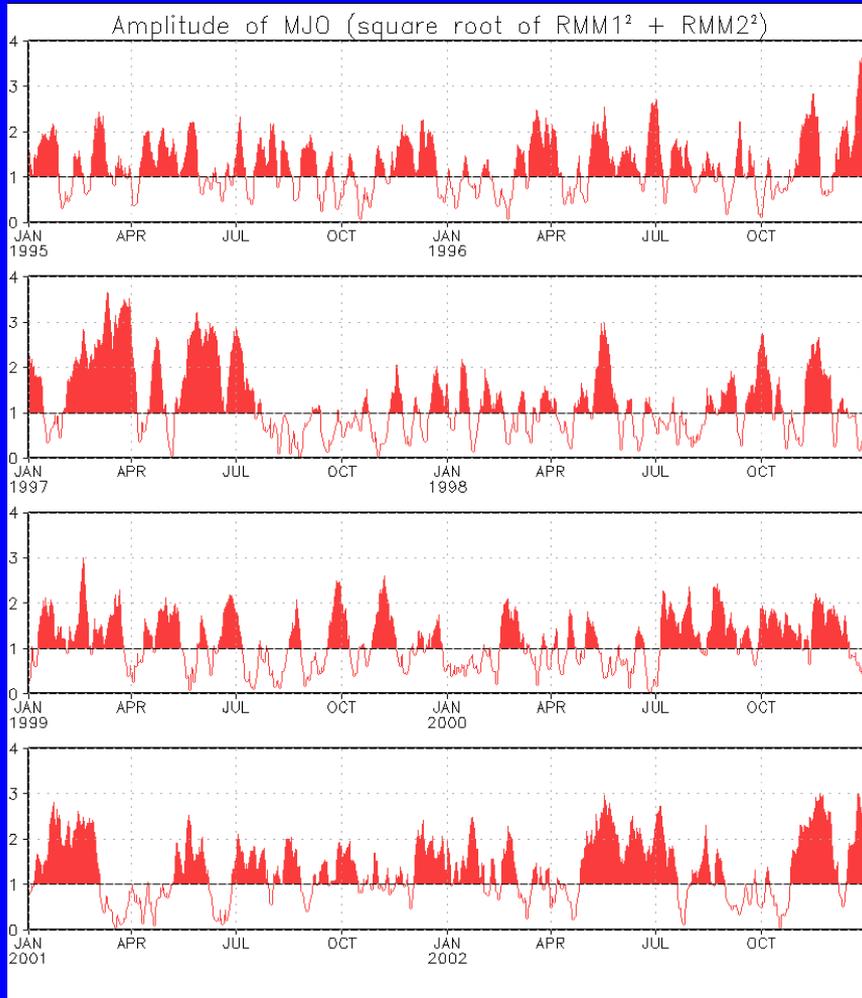


- The axes (RMM1 and RMM2) represent daily values of the principal components from the two leading modes
- The triangular areas indicate the location of the enhanced phase of the MJO
- Counter-clockwise motion is indicative of eastward propagation. Large dot most recent observation.
- Distance from the origin is proportional to MJO strength
- Line colors distinguish different months

The MJO index amplitude decreased over the past week with a stoppage of eastward propagation.



# MJO Index – Historical Daily Time Series



Time series of daily MJO index amplitude from 1995 to present.  
Plots put current MJO activity in historical context.



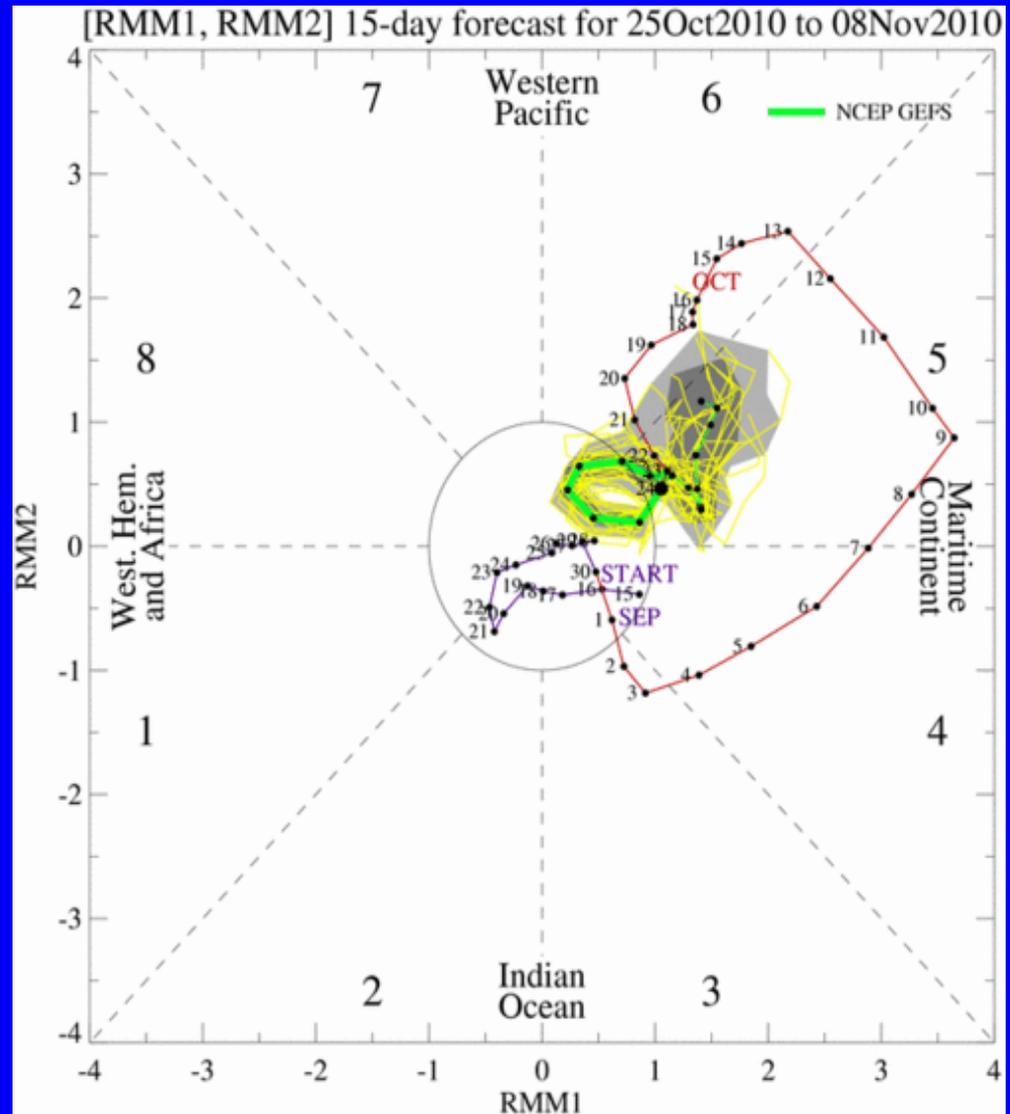
# Ensemble GFS (GEFS) MJO Forecast

Yellow Lines – 20 Individual Members  
Green Line – Ensemble Mean

RMM1 and RMM2 values for the most recent 40 days and forecasts from the ensemble Global Forecast System (GEFS) for the next 15 days

light gray shading: 90% of forecasts  
dark gray shading: 50% of forecasts

The GFS forecasts indicate a continued weakening and inconsistent MJO signal over the next two weeks.



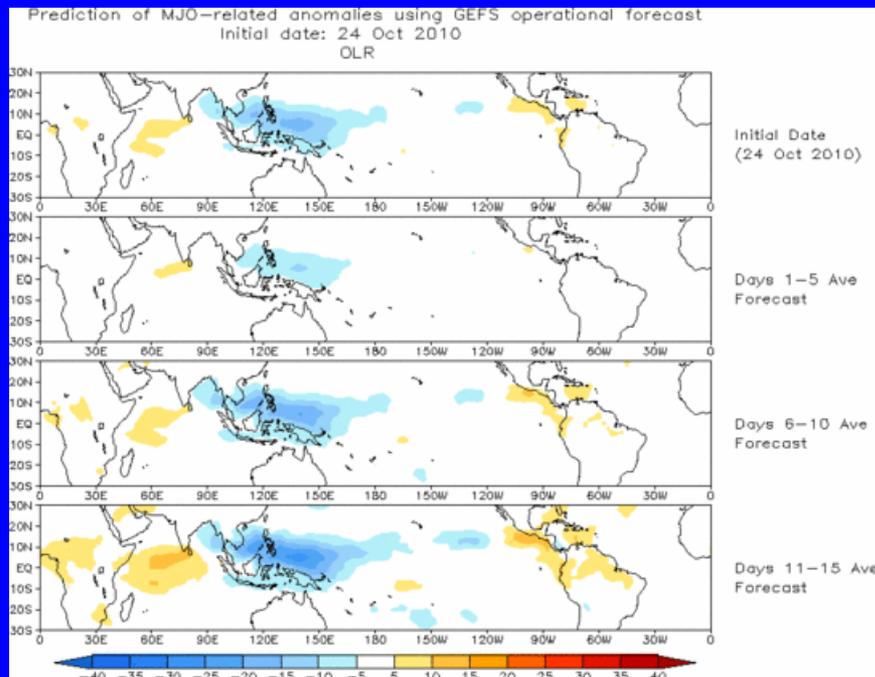


# Ensemble Mean GFS MJO Forecast

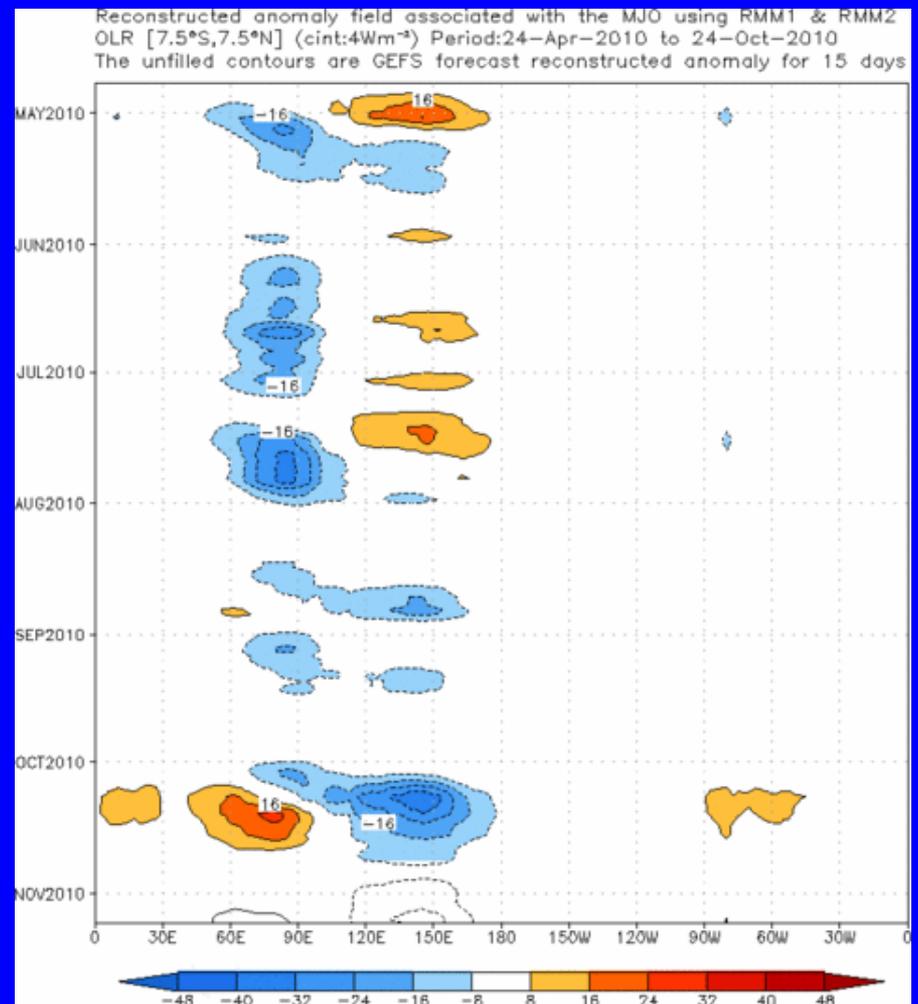
Figures below show MJO associated OLR anomalies only (reconstructed from RMM1 and RMM2) and do not include contributions from other modes (*i.e.*, ENSO, monsoons)

Spatial map of OLR anomalies for the next 15 days

Time-longitude section of (7.5 S-7.5 N) OLR anomalies for the last 180 days and for the next 15 days



The GEFS ensemble mean forecast indicates enhanced convection over the western Pacific during the next two weeks. Weak suppressed convection is forecast over Central America, Africa and the Indian Ocean.





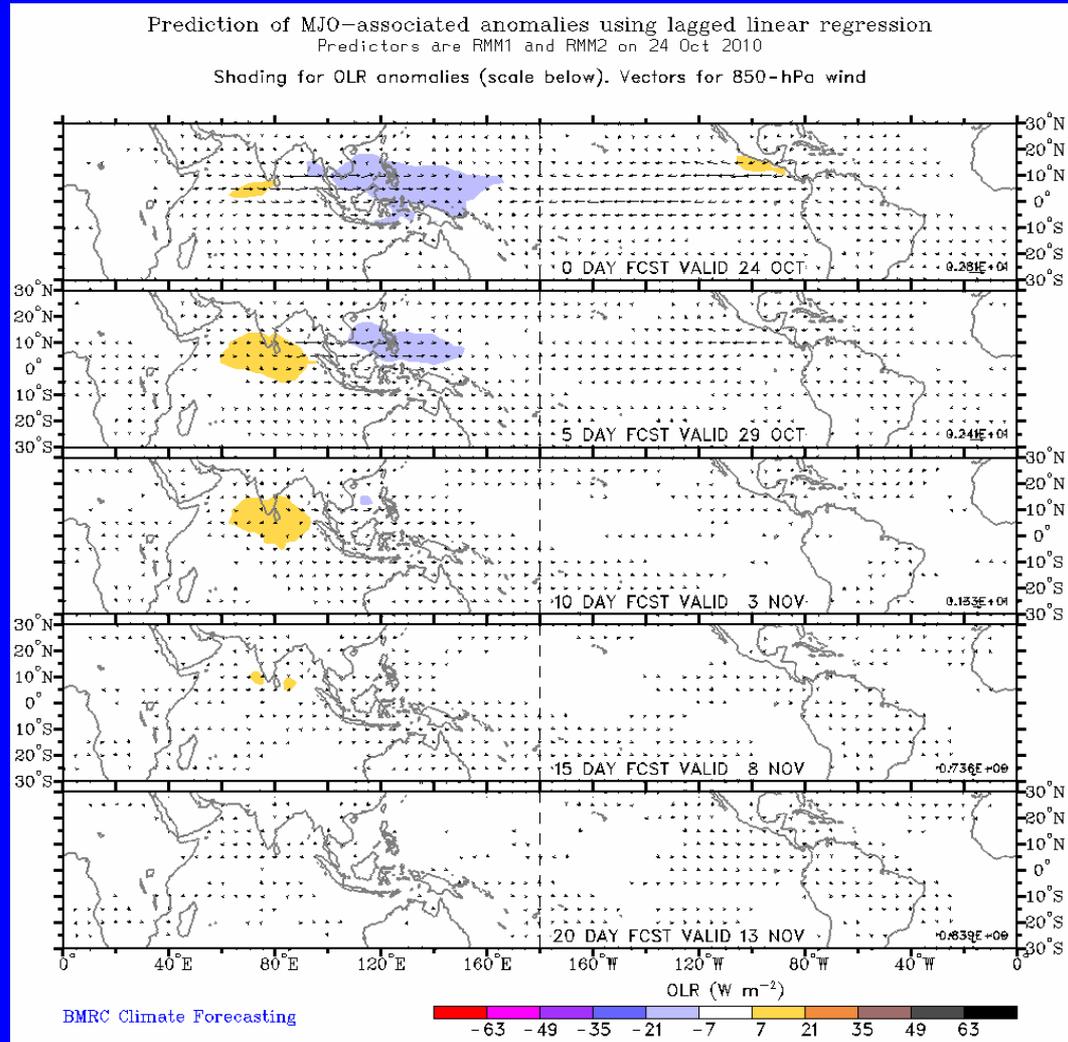
# Statistical MJO Forecast

Figure below shows MJO associated OLR anomalies only (reconstructed from RMM1 and RMM2) and do not include contributions from other modes (*i.e.*, ENSO, monsoons)

Spatial map of OLR anomalies and 850-hPa vectors for the next 20 days

(Courtesy of the Bureau of Meteorology Research Centre - Australia)

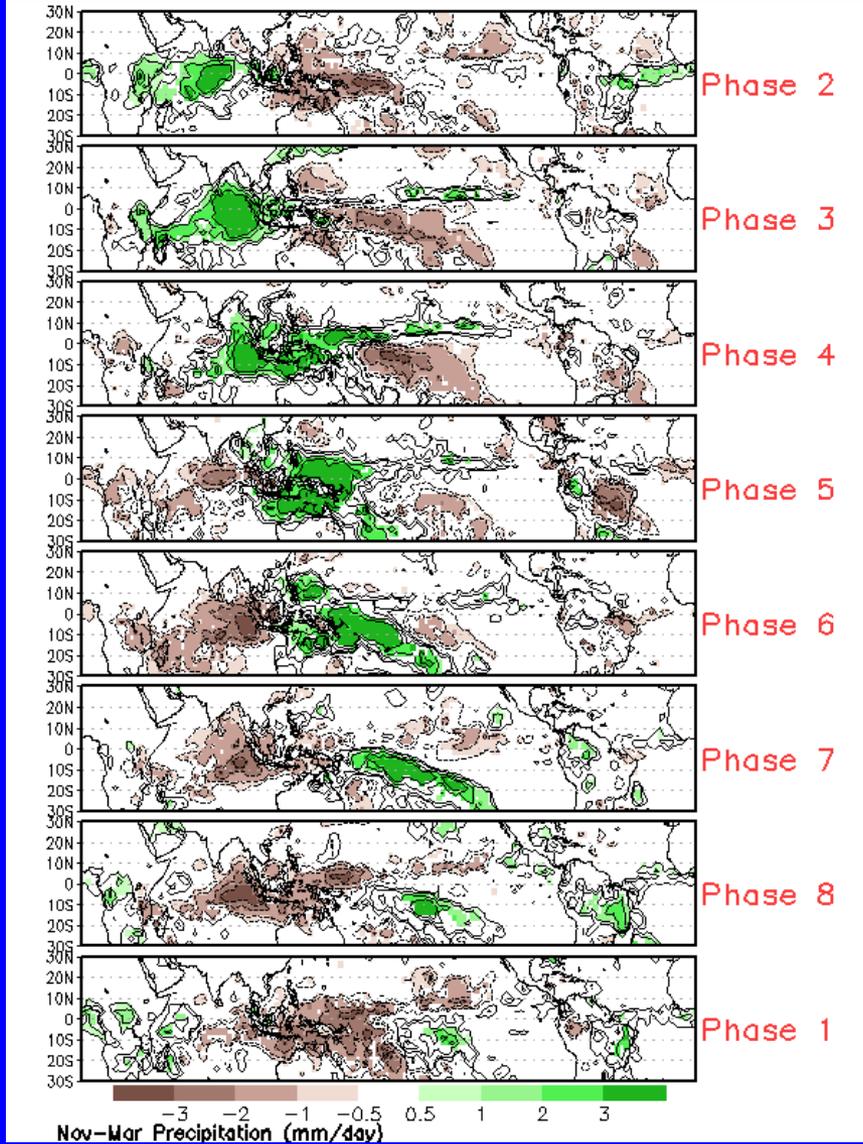
Weak MJO activity is forecast with enhanced convection over the western Pacific early in the period with suppressed convection over the period across the Indian Ocean and southern India.





# MJO Composites – Global Tropics

## Precipitation Anomalies (Nov-Mar)



## 850-hPa Wind Anomalies (Nov-Mar)

