



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

**Update prepared by  
Climate Prediction Center / NCEP  
July 25, 2011**



# Outline

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



# Overview

- The MJO remained weak during the last seven days as eastward propagation of the MJO index during the past week is not on the MJO time scale (*i.e.*, too fast, propagation from phase 2 through phase 5).
- Most dynamical model MJO index forecasts indicate a continuation of a weak signal during the period.
- Based on the latest observations and model forecasts, the MJO is forecast to remain weak during the period.
- The MJO is not forecast to contribute substantially to the patterns of tropical rainfall during the forecast period.

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

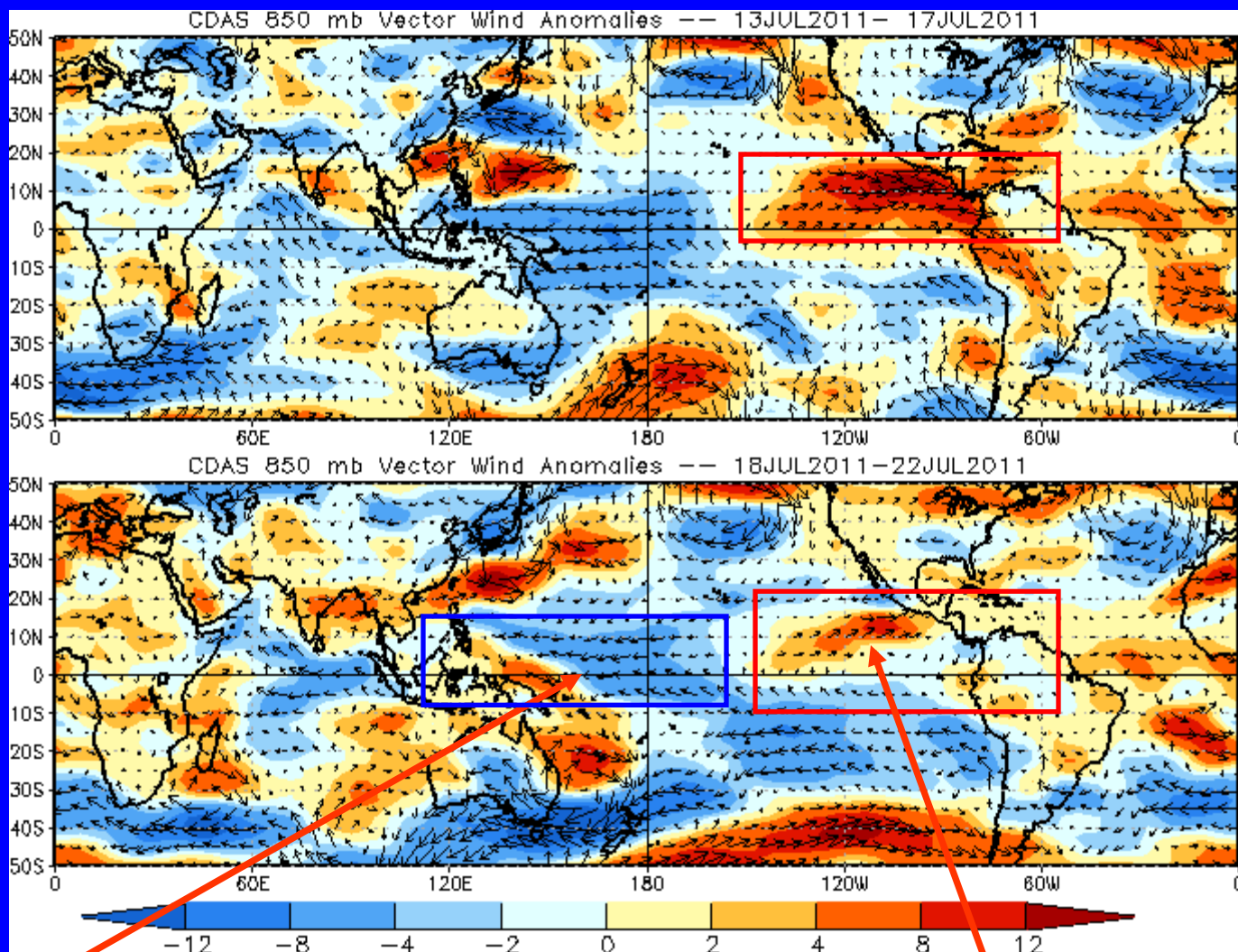


# 850-hPa Vector Wind Anomalies ( $\text{m s}^{-1}$ )

Note that shading denotes the zonal wind anomaly

Blue shades: Easterly anomalies

Red shades: Westerly anomalies



Easterly wind anomalies remain evident near the Date Line. An area of westerly wind anomalies has developed just northeast of Papua New Guinea.

Westerly anomalies weakened across the east Pacific and Caribbean Sea during the last five days.

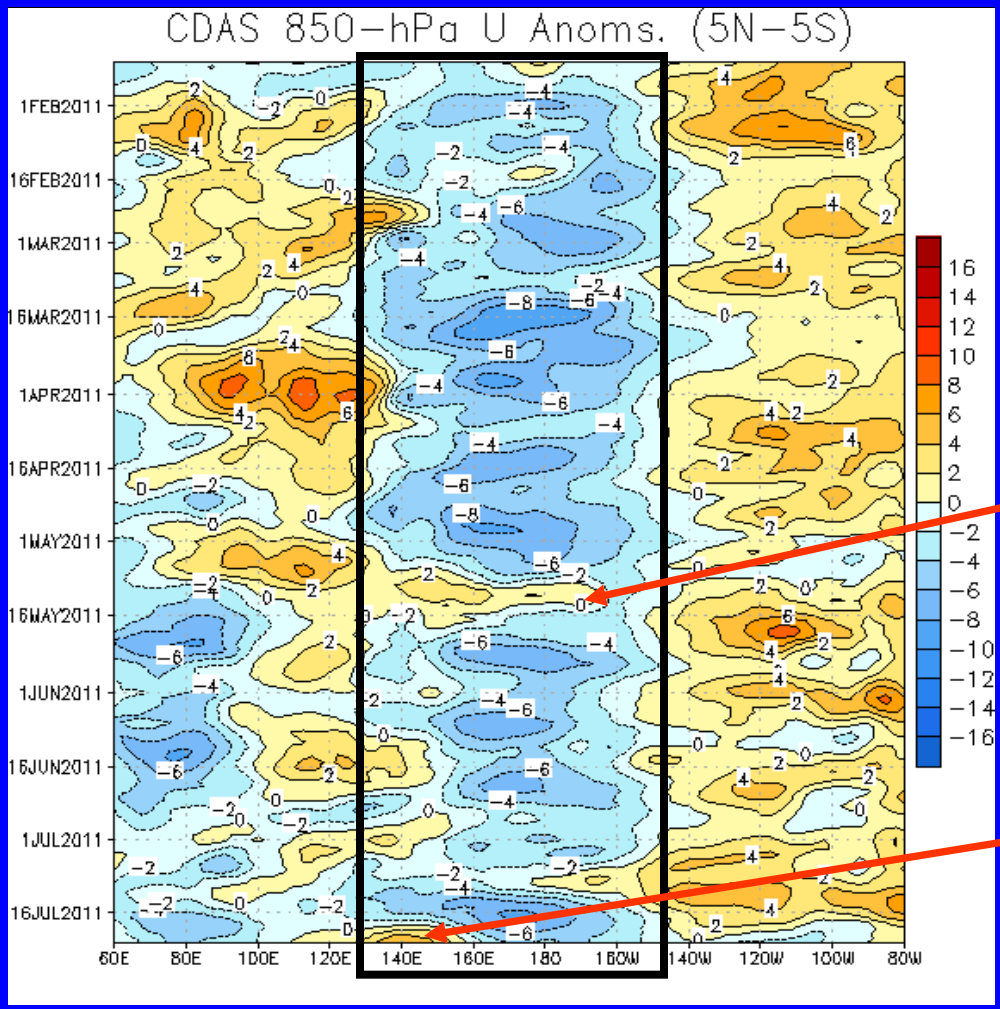


# 850-hPa Zonal Wind Anomalies ( $\text{m s}^{-1}$ )

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

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

Time  
↓



Easterly anomalies have persisted in the west-central Pacific since January (black box) consistent with La Nina conditions. The magnitude of these anomalies, however, has gradually weakened over the period.

A burst of westerly wind anomalies associated with the MJO moved across the Pacific in early-to-mid May.

Recently, westerly anomalies diminished across the eastern Pacific and Caribbean Sea. Westerly anomalies developed across the western Pacific centered at 140E.

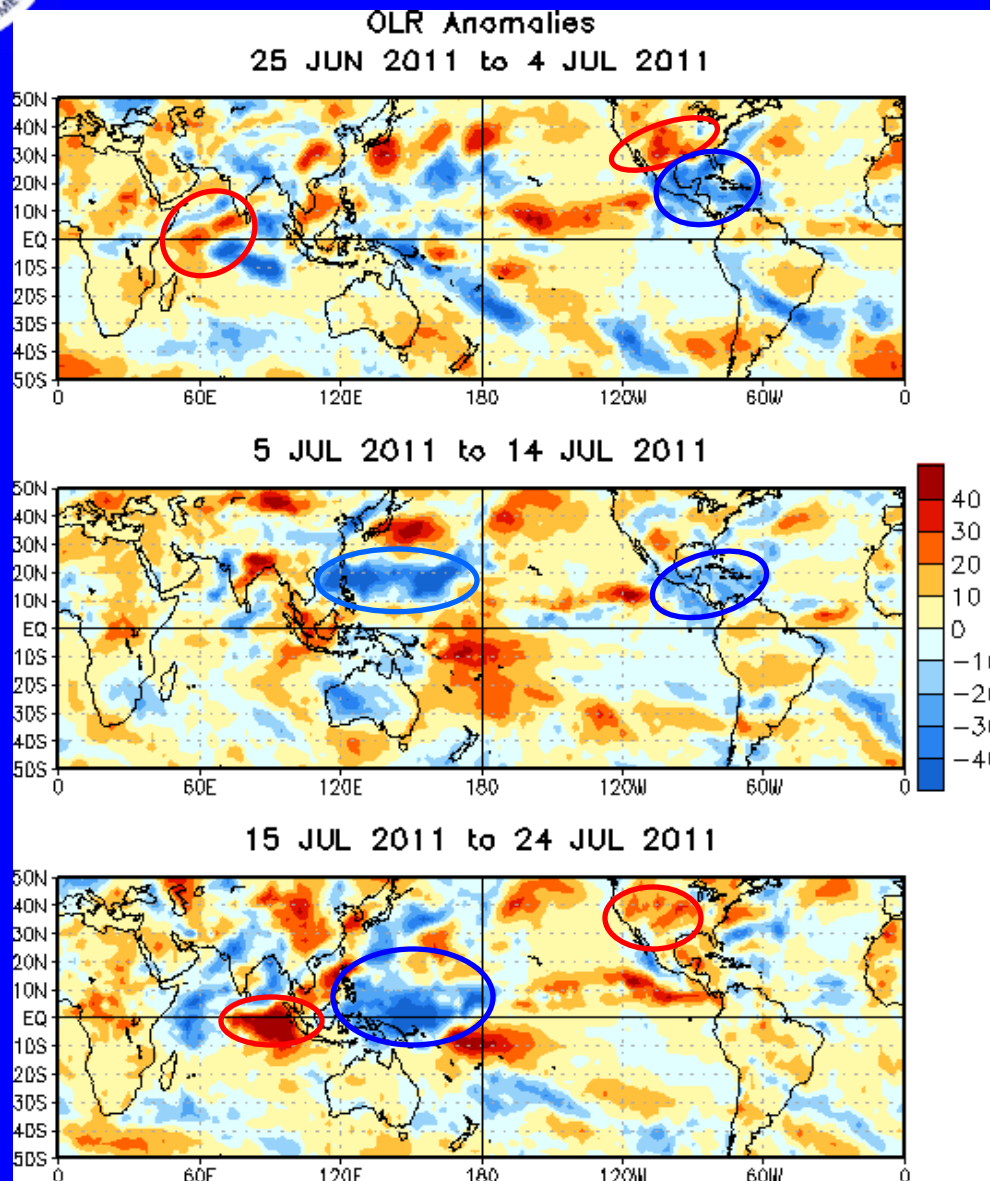
Longitude



# OLR Anomalies – Past 30 days

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

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



In late-June to early-July, enhanced convection (blue circle) developed across Mexico and Caribbean Sea, while suppressed convection (red circle) was present across the southern CONUS and parts of the Indian Ocean.

During early July, enhanced convection continued across southern Mexico and the Caribbean Sea with enhanced convection developing across the subtropical western Pacific.

During mid-to-late July enhanced convection persisted across the western Pacific. Drier-than-average conditions was evident over much of the CONUS and intensified across the eastern Indian Ocean.



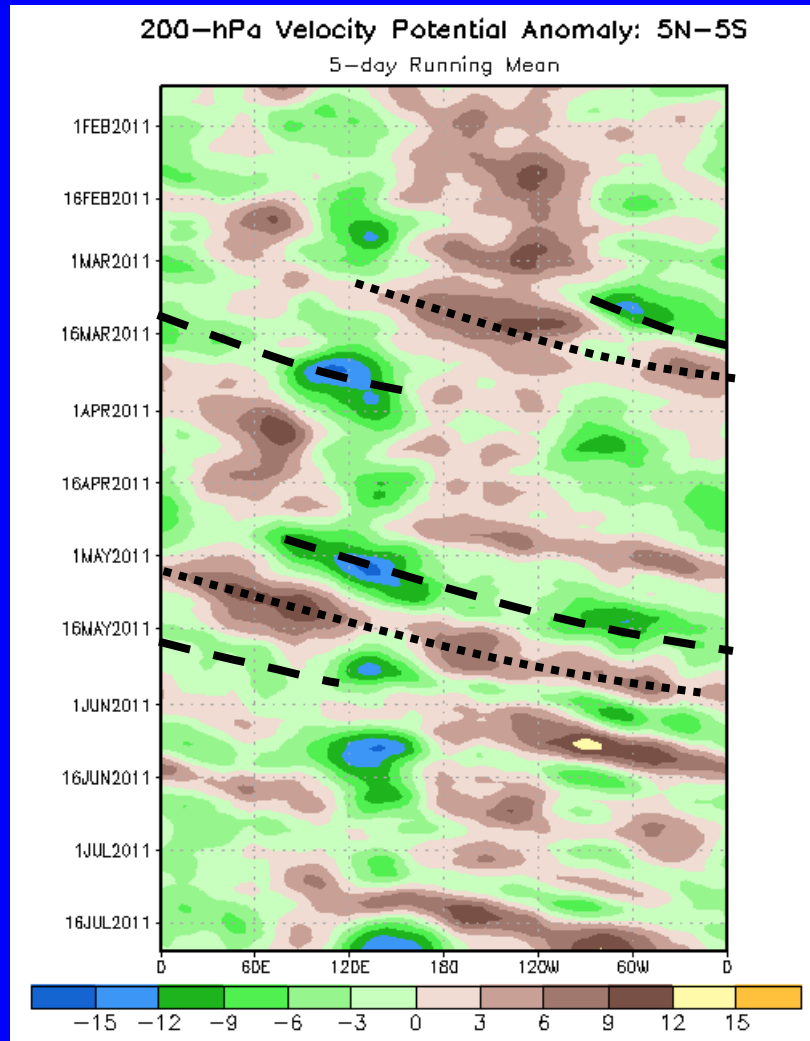


# 200-hPa Velocity Potential Anomalies (5°S-5°N)

Positive anomalies (brown shading) indicate unfavorable conditions for precipitation

Negative anomalies (green shading) indicate favorable conditions for precipitation

Time



Longitude

Eastward propagation of anomalies was observed during March associated with weak MJO activity.

Robust MJO activity was observed during late April into May as upper-level divergence (green shades) shifted eastward from the Indian Ocean beginning in early May followed by upper-level divergence (brown shades).

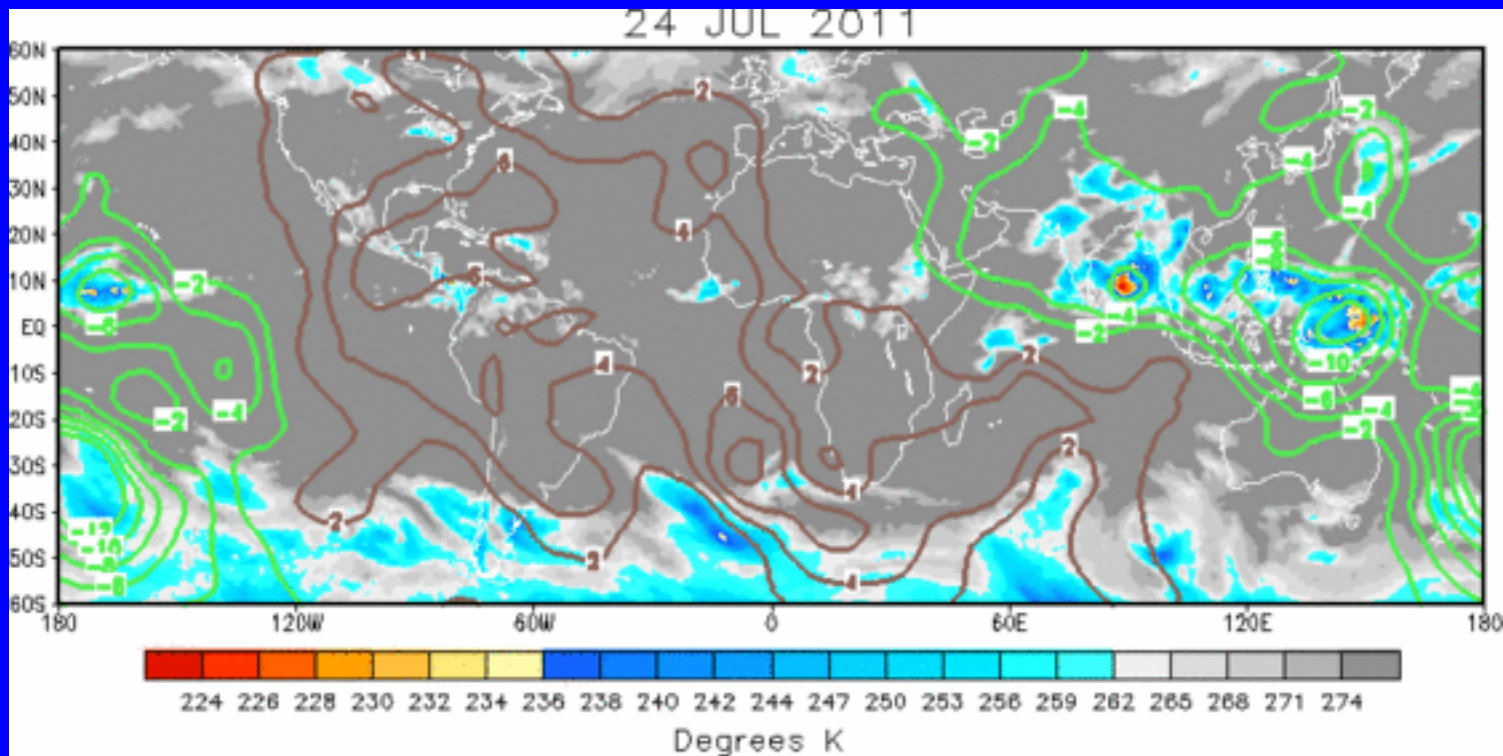
During parts of June and July, very fast eastward propagation was evident mainly associated with higher frequency sub-seasonal coherent tropical variability.



# 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 indicates strong anomalous upper-level divergence over the western Pacific Ocean while anomalous upper-level convergence is observed across the Americas, Atlantic Ocean, and Africa.



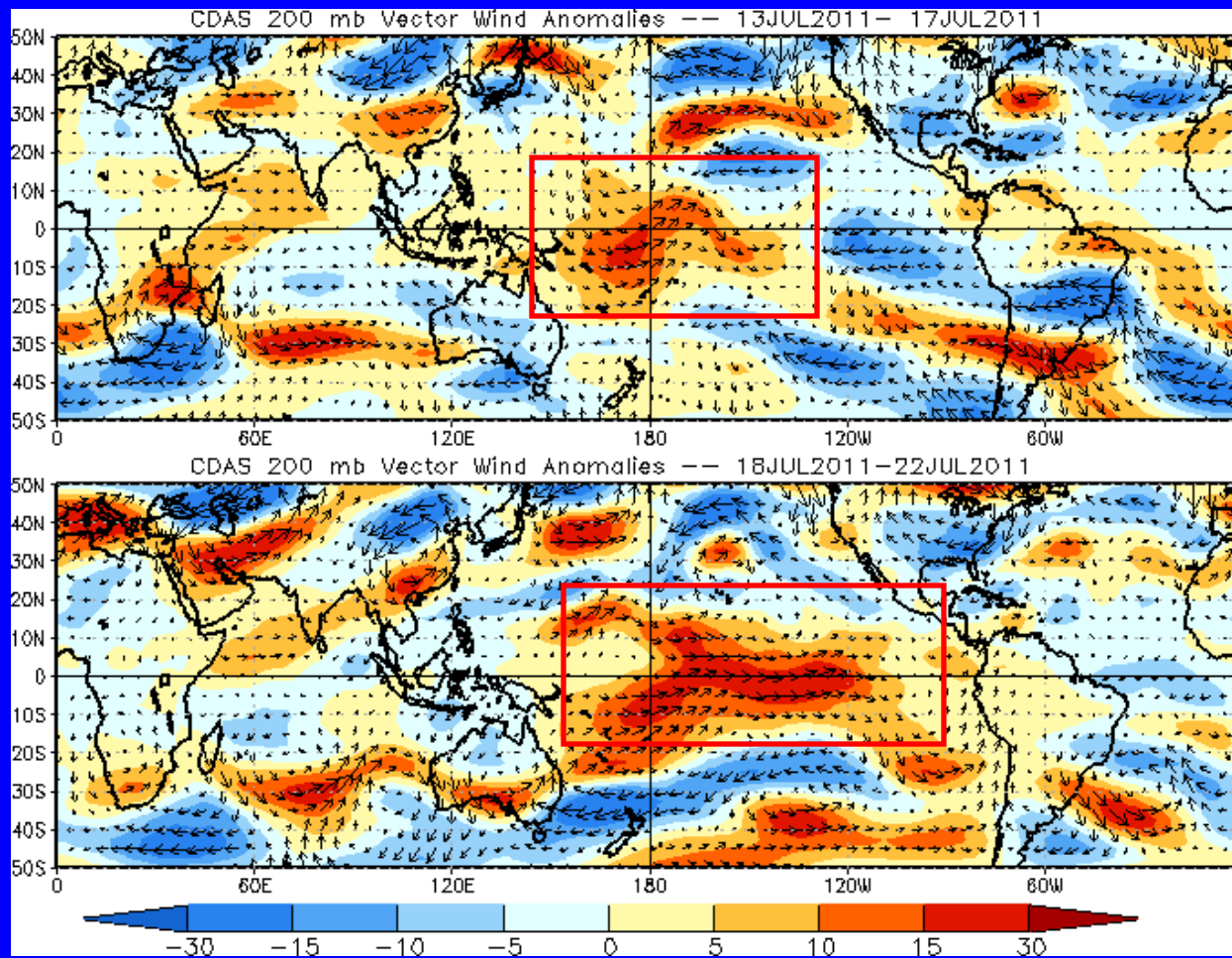


# 200-hPa Vector Wind Anomalies ( $\text{m s}^{-1}$ )

Note that shading denotes the zonal wind anomaly

Blue shades: Easterly anomalies

Red shades: Westerly anomalies



Westerly anomalies continue across the central Pacific Ocean (red boxes).

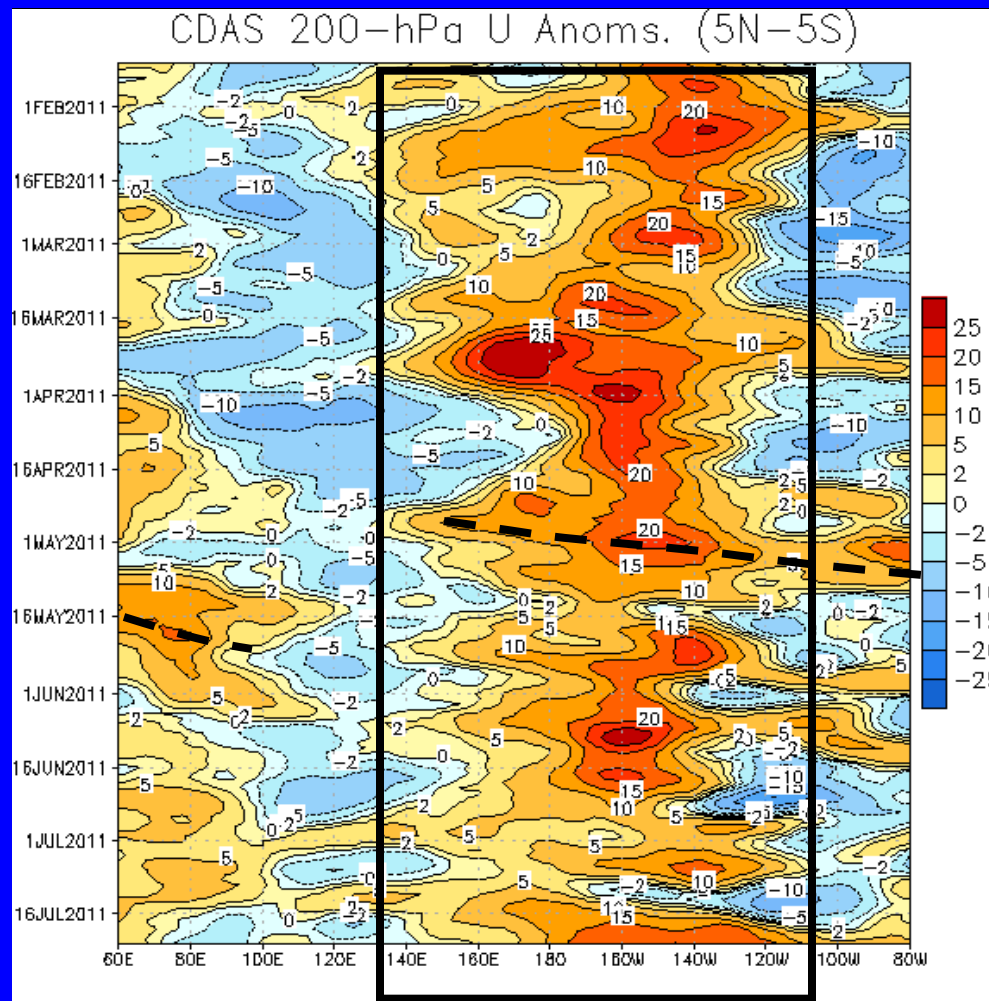
Also, westerly anomalies are evident across parts of South Asia indicating a reduced monsoon flow.



# 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

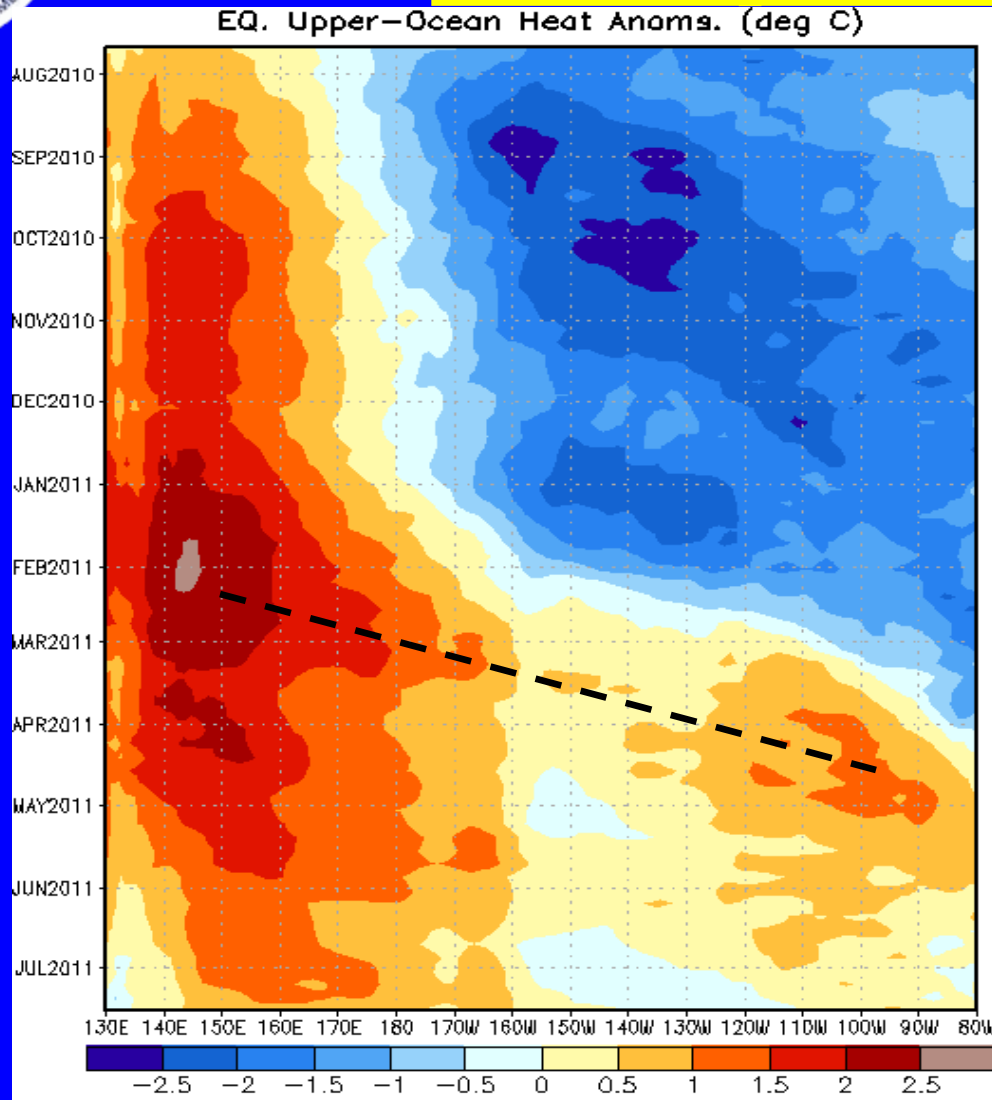


Westerly anomalies persisted across a large area from the Maritime Continent to the central Pacific (black solid box) since November.

Significant eastward propagation of westerly anomalies was evident in late April and May (dashed line) associated with the MJO.



# Weekly Heat Content Evolution in the Equatorial Pacific



Beginning in April 2010 positive 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.

Since the beginning of January 2011, positive heat content anomalies shifted eastward, while negative heat content anomalies weakened and then became positive across much of the Pacific basin.

An oceanic Kelvin wave (dashed line) shifted eastward during February and March 2011. Much of the Pacific basin now indicates above- or near-normal integrated heat content.



# **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.**

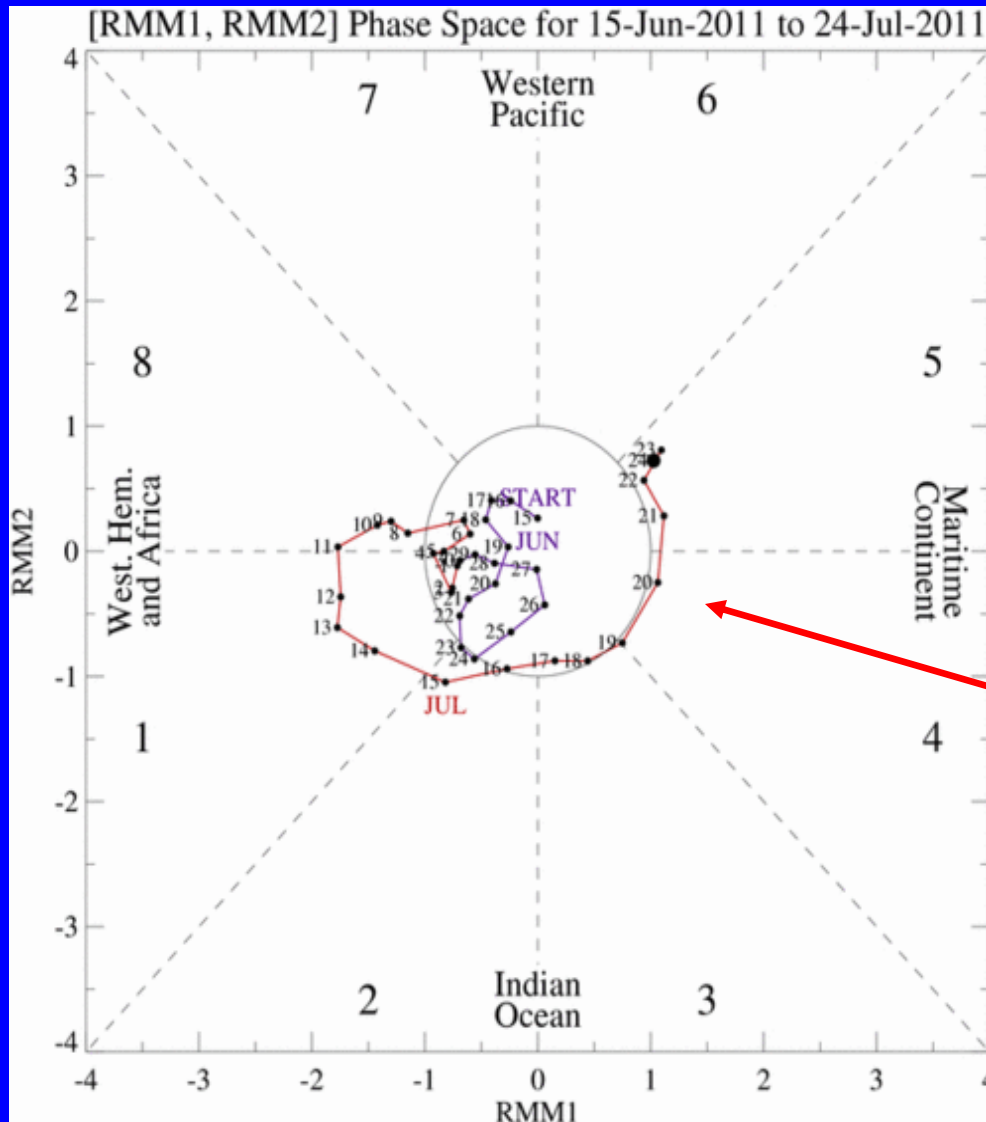
- The methodology is very similar to that described in WH2004 but does not include the linear removal of ENSO variability associated with a sea surface temperature index. The methodology is consistent with that outlined by the U.S. CLIVAR MJO Working Group.

**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



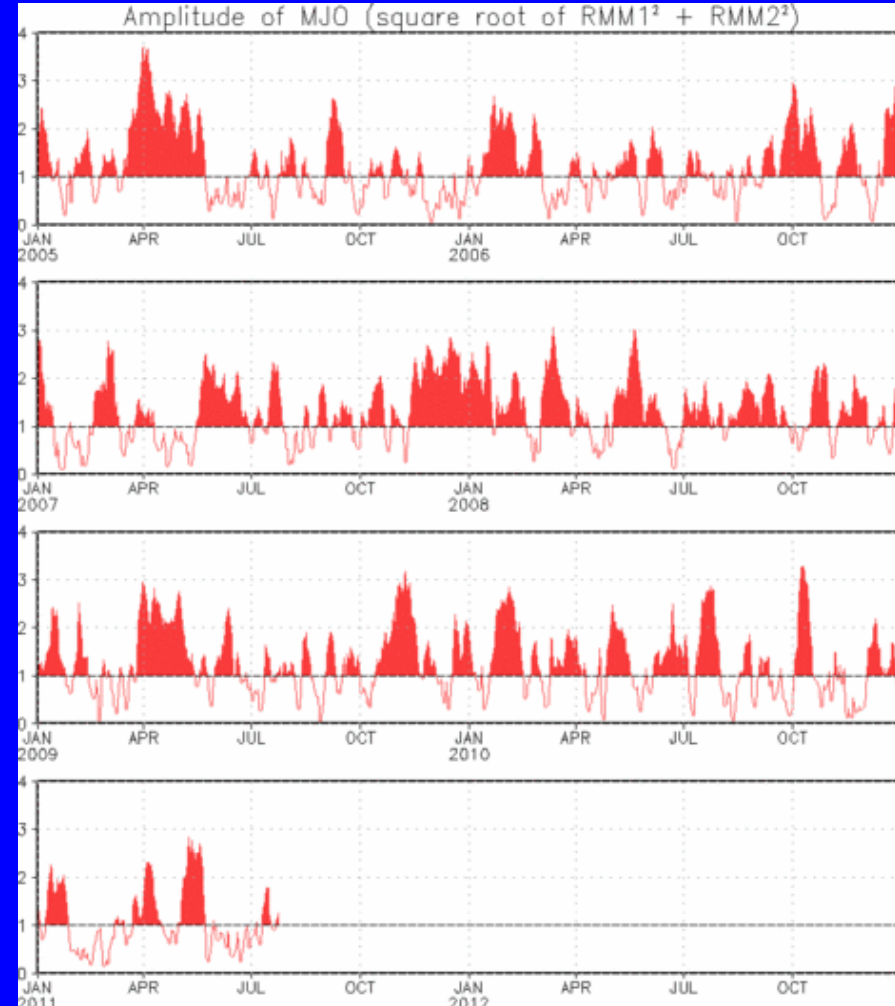
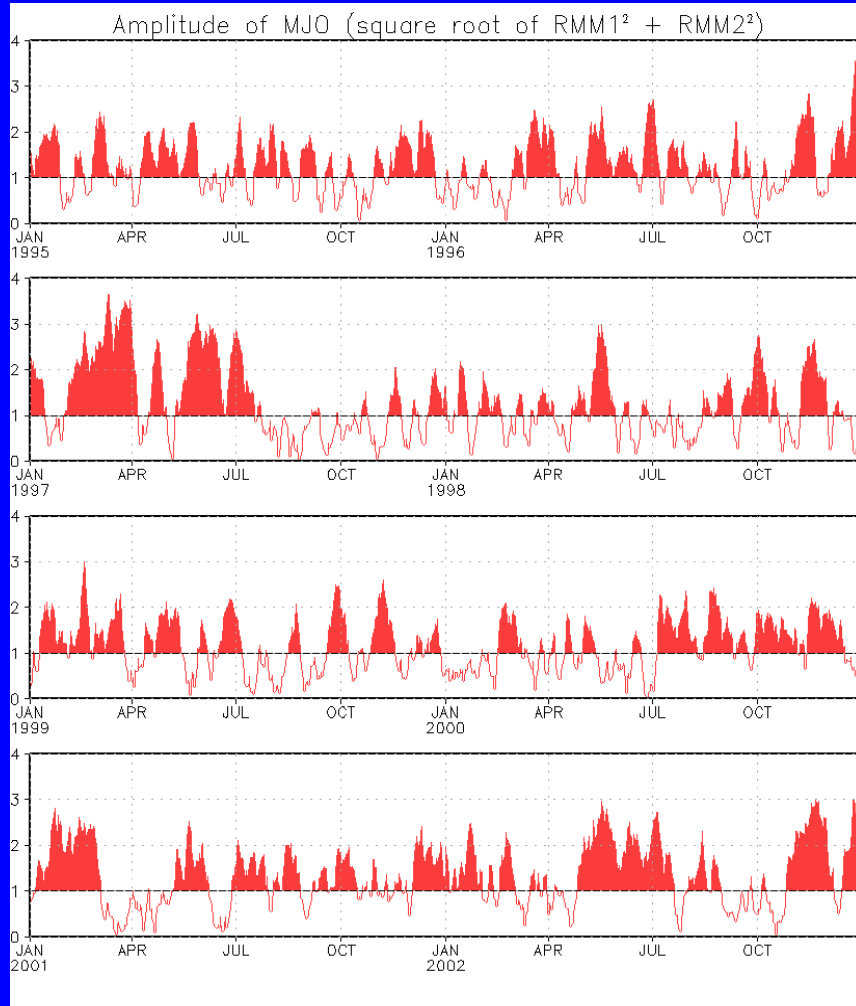
- The axes (RMM1 and RMM2) represent daily values of the principal components from the two leading modes
- The triangular areas indicate the location of the enhanced phase of the MJO
- Counter-clockwise motion is indicative of eastward propagation. Large dot most recent observation.
- Distance from the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

The MJO index indicates fast eastward propagation during the past week. The propagation speed is fast and associated with other subseasonal coherent tropical variability.





# 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.



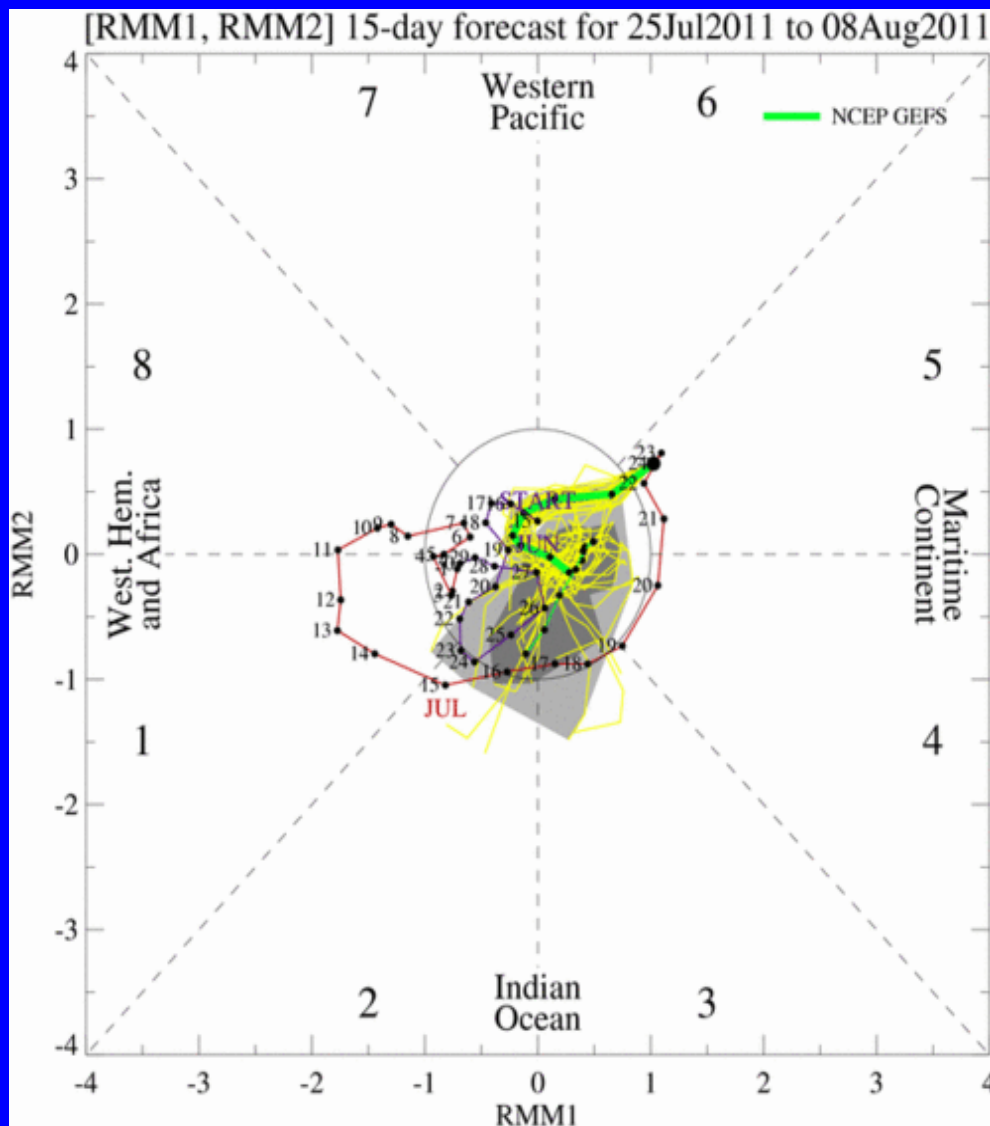
# Ensemble GFS (GEFS) MJO Forecast

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 ensemble GFS forecasts indicate a weakening signal during the period. There is low spread among the ensemble members during Week-1 but large spread during Week-2.

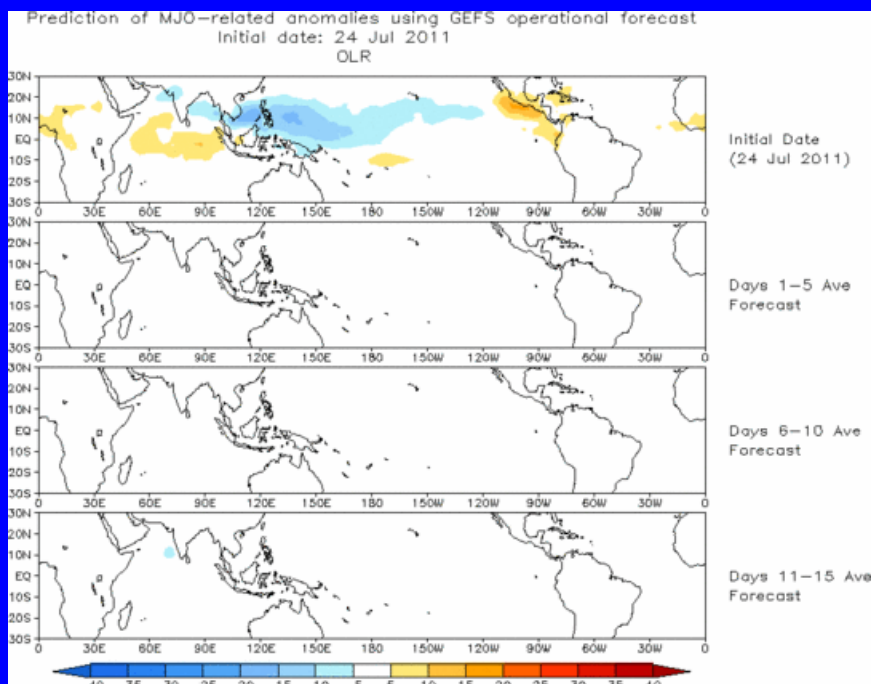




# Ensemble Mean GFS MJO Forecast

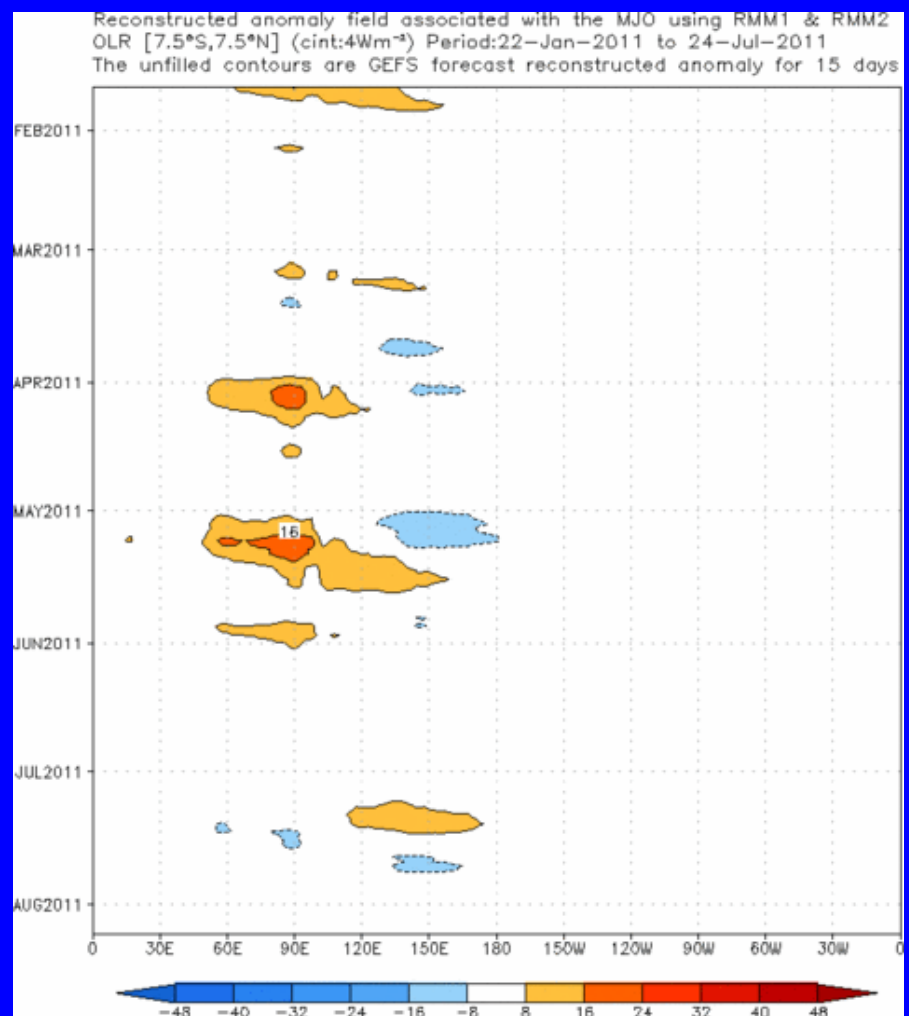
Figures below show MJO associated OLR anomalies only (reconstructed from RMM1 and RMM2) and do not include contributions from other modes (*i.e.*, ENSO, monsoons)

**Spatial map of OLR anomalies for the next 15 days**



The GEFS ensemble mean forecast indicates little anomalous convection during the period.

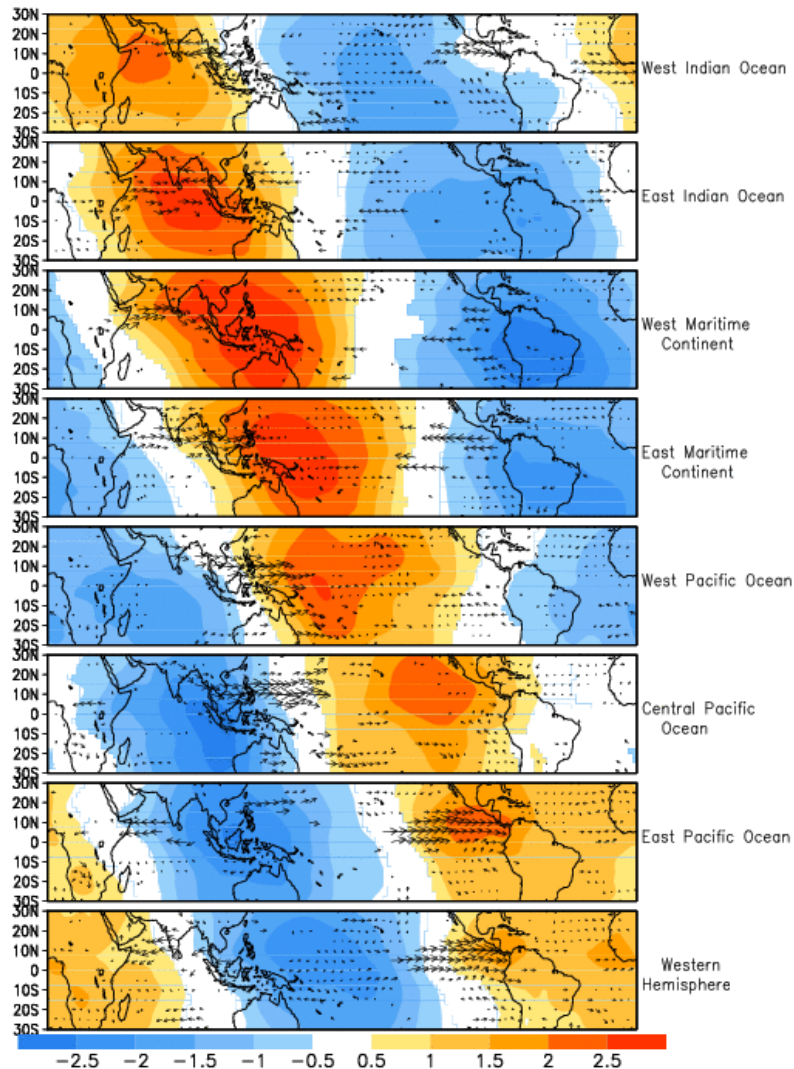
**Time-longitude section of (7.5°S-7.5°N) OLR anomalies for the last 180 days and for the next 15 days**



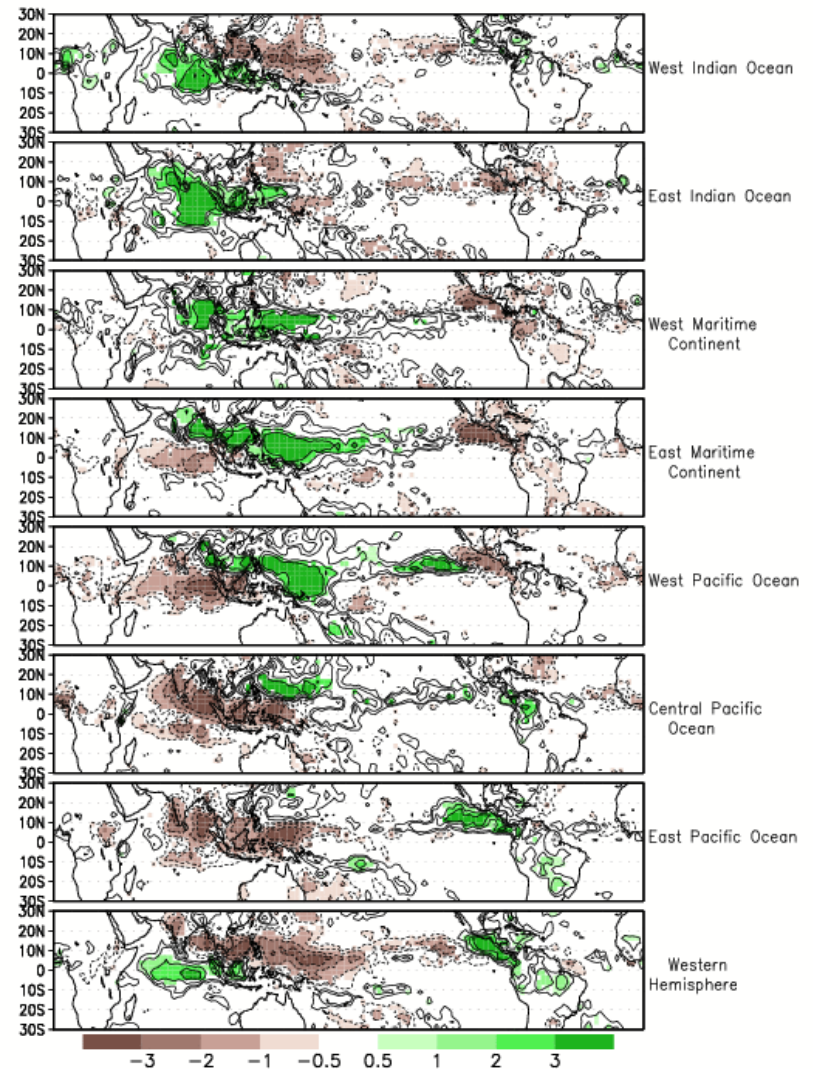


# MJO Composites – Global Tropics

## 850-hPa Wind Anomalies (May-Sep)



## Precipitation Anomalies (May-Sep)

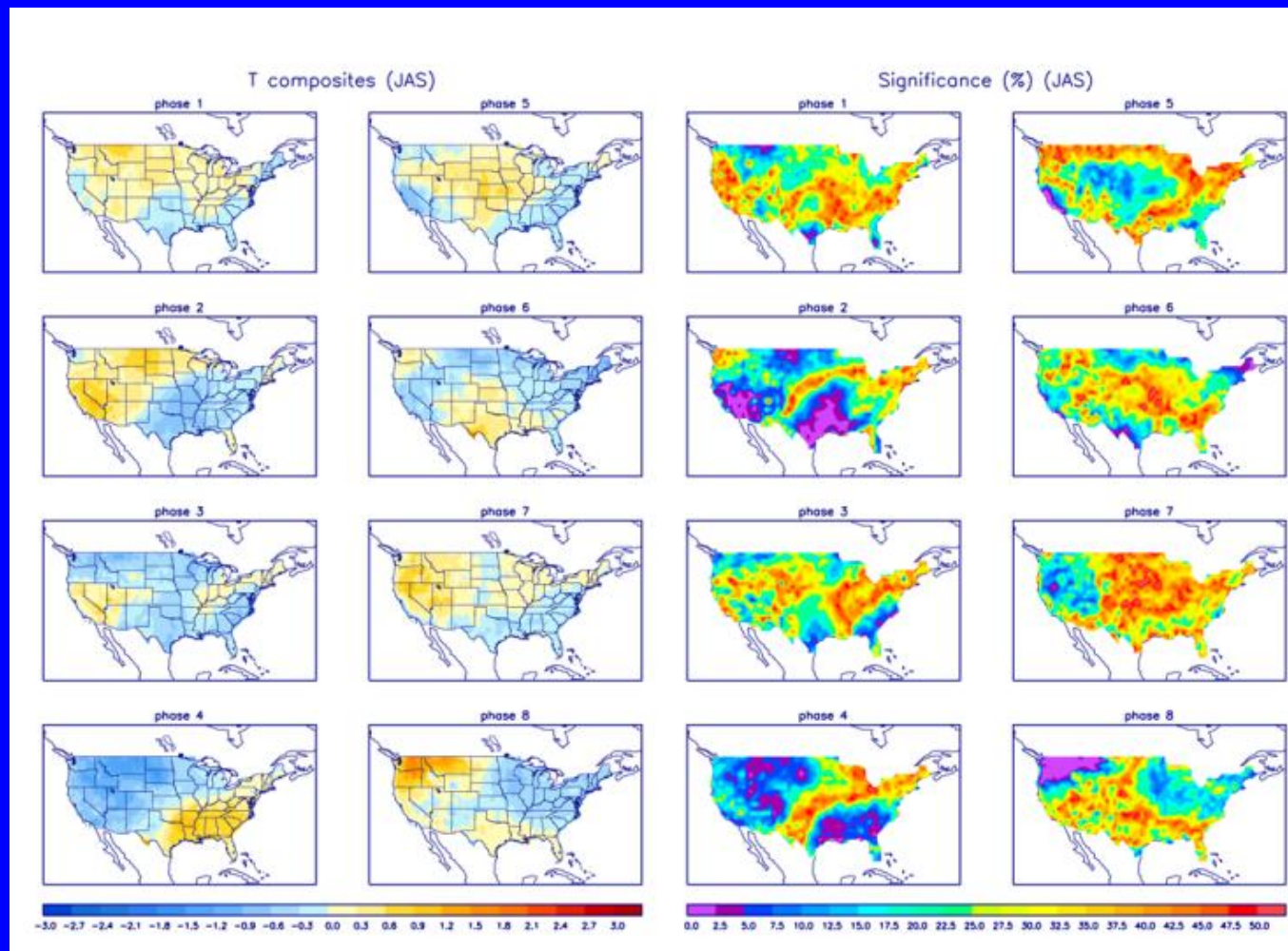






# U.S. MJO Composites – Temperature

- Left hand side plots show temperature anomalies by MJO phase for MJO events that have occurred over the three month period in the historical record. Blue (orange) shades show negative (positive) anomalies respectively.
- Right hand side plots show a measure of significance for the left hand side anomalies. Dark blue and purple shades indicate areas in which the anomalies are significant at the 95% or better confidence level.



Zhou et al. (2010): A composite study of the MJO influence on the surface air temperature and precipitation over the Continental United States, *Climate Dynamics*, Submitted.

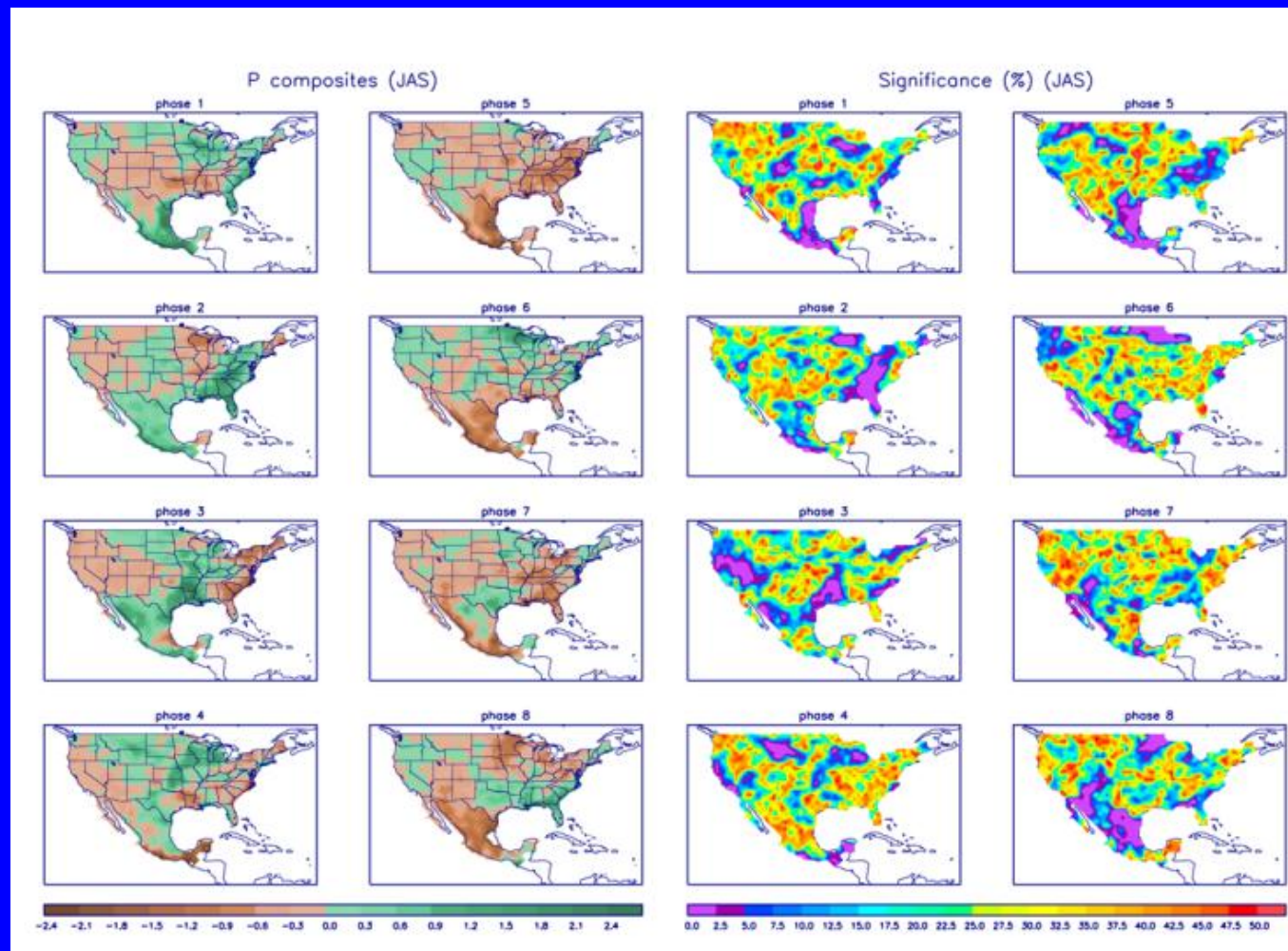
<http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/precip/CWlink/MJO/mjo.shtml>





# U.S. MJO Composites – Precipitation

- Left hand side plots show precipitation anomalies by MJO phase for MJO events that have occurred over the three month period in the historical record. Brown (green) shades show negative (positive) anomalies respectively.
- Right hand side plots show a measure of significance for the left hand side anomalies. Dark blue and purple shades indicate areas in which the anomalies are significant at the 95% or better confidence level.



Zhou et al. (2010): A composite study of the MJO influence on the surface air temperature and precipitation over the Continental United States, *Climate Dynamics*, Submitted.

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