



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

**Update prepared by
Climate Prediction Center / NCEP
October 22, 2012**



Outline

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



Overview

- The latest observations indicate that the MJO has become better organized with the enhanced convective phase centered across Africa.
- The majority of dynamical model MJO index forecasts mainly show a weak signal with only minor eastward propagation during the next two weeks.
- It remains too early to say whether the current activity will develop into a more coherent long-lived MJO at this time, but it does appear that the MJO will remain active during the upcoming 1-2 week period.
- The MJO may contribute to enhanced rainfall across parts of Africa and the Indian Ocean with suppressed rainfall favored across the western Pacific.

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 (m s^{-1})

Note that shading denotes the zonal wind anomaly

Blue shades: Easterly anomalies

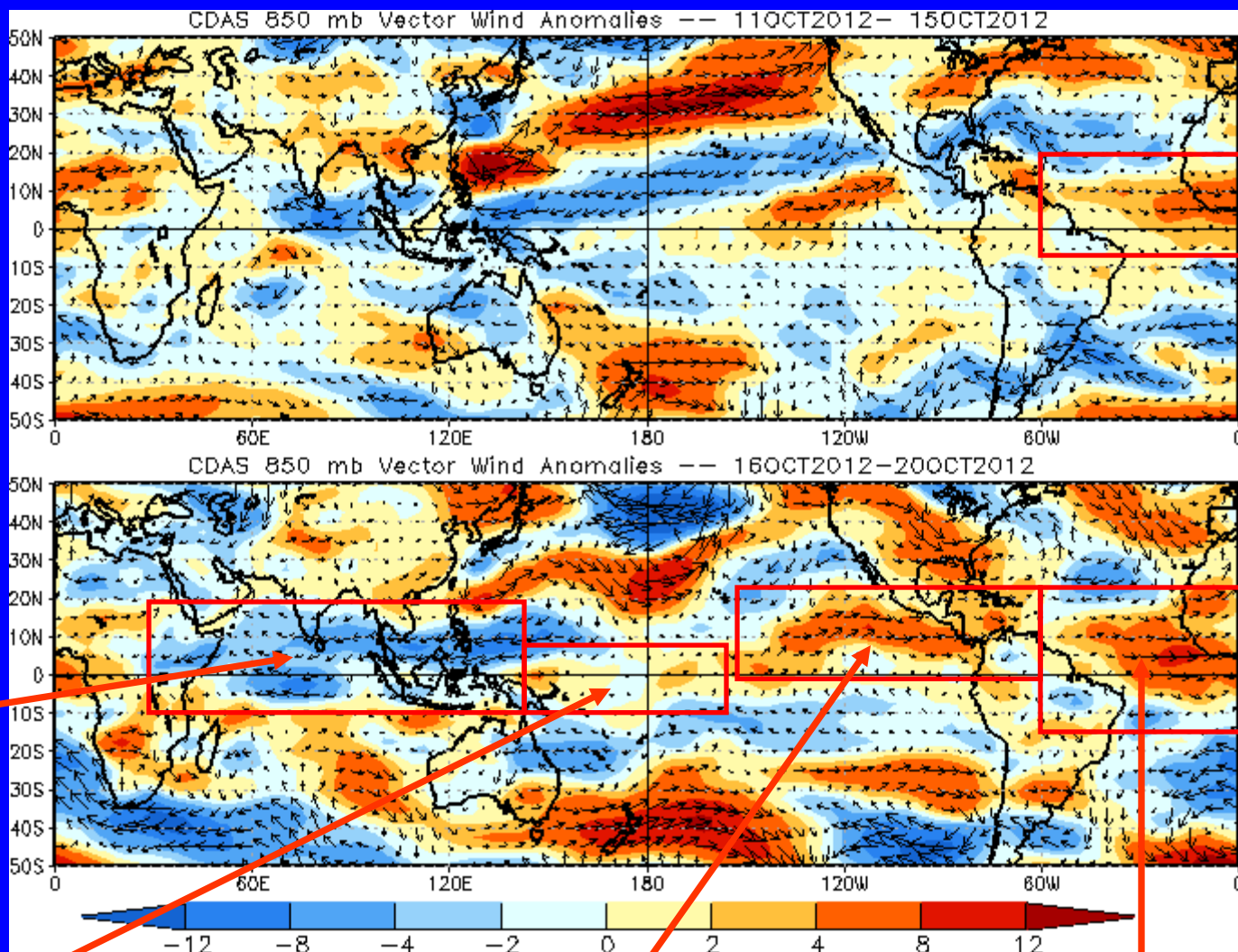
Red shades: Westerly anomalies

Easterly anomalies developed across the Indian Ocean and Maritime continent during the past five days. These stretched into the western Pacific as well.

Westerly anomalies are once again evident east of New Guinea during the past five days.

Westerly anomalies increased in strength across the eastern Pacific, Central America and the Caribbean during the past five days.

Westerly anomalies persisted over the tropical Atlantic and western Africa during the last five days.



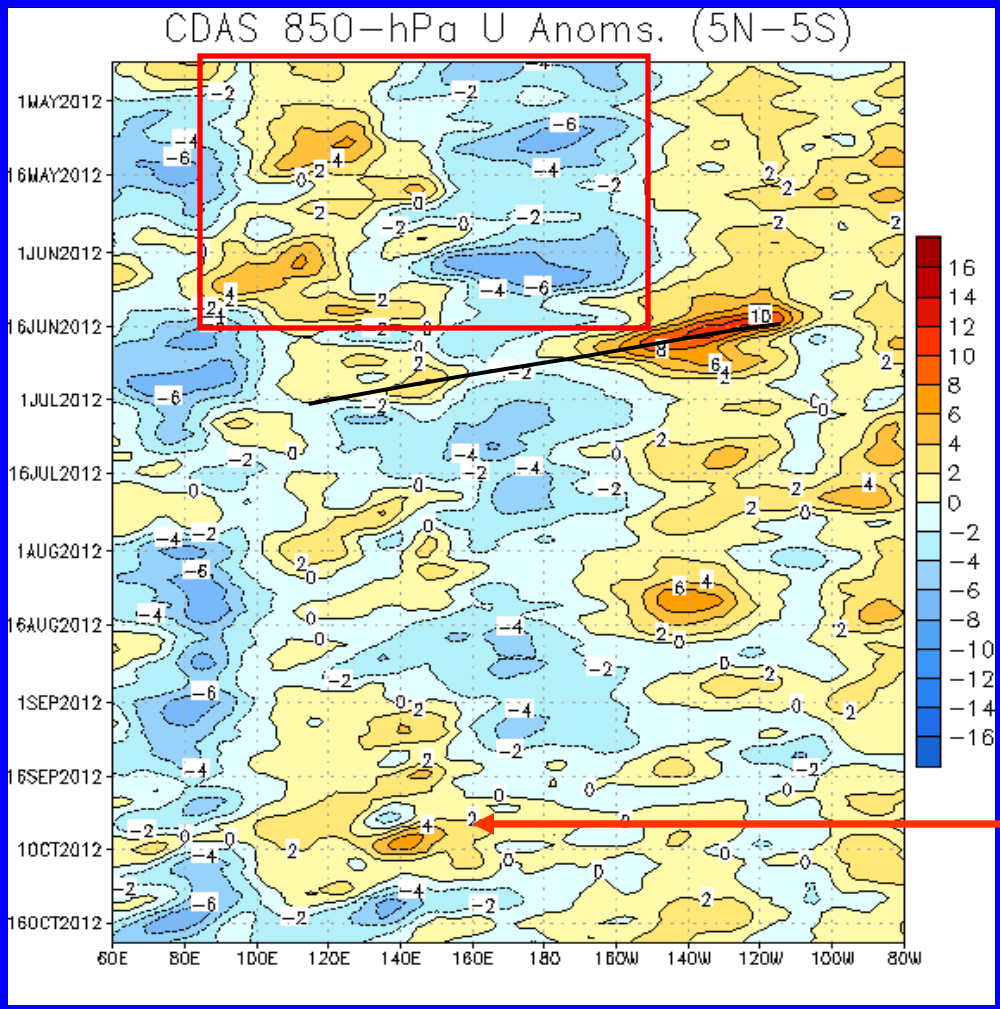


850-hPa Zonal Wind Anomalies (m s^{-1})

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

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

Time
↓



Longitude

Anomalies were generally persistent in most areas during the remainder of April, May and early June (red box).

Strong westerly anomalies developed across the eastern Pacific in mid-June and shifted westward (black solid line) and contributed to weakening the trade winds.

Easterly anomalies persisted near 80E for much of August and September.

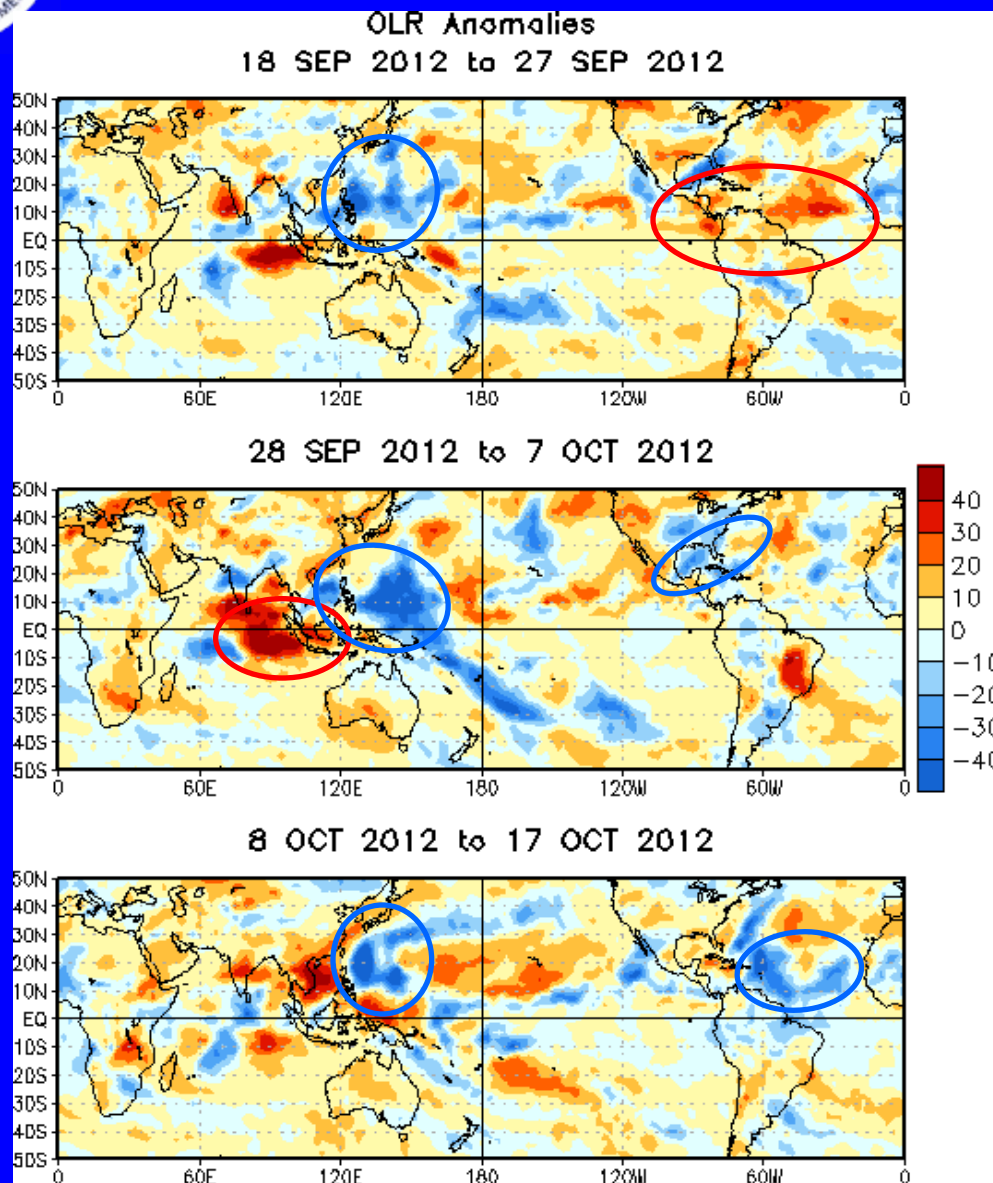
During September, westerly anomalies developed near 140E and persisted into October. In mid-October, easterly anomalies developed west of the Date Line.



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 mid-to-late September, enhanced convection continued for parts of the western Pacific while suppressed convection continued across the eastern equatorial Indian Ocean, the Americas and the Atlantic.

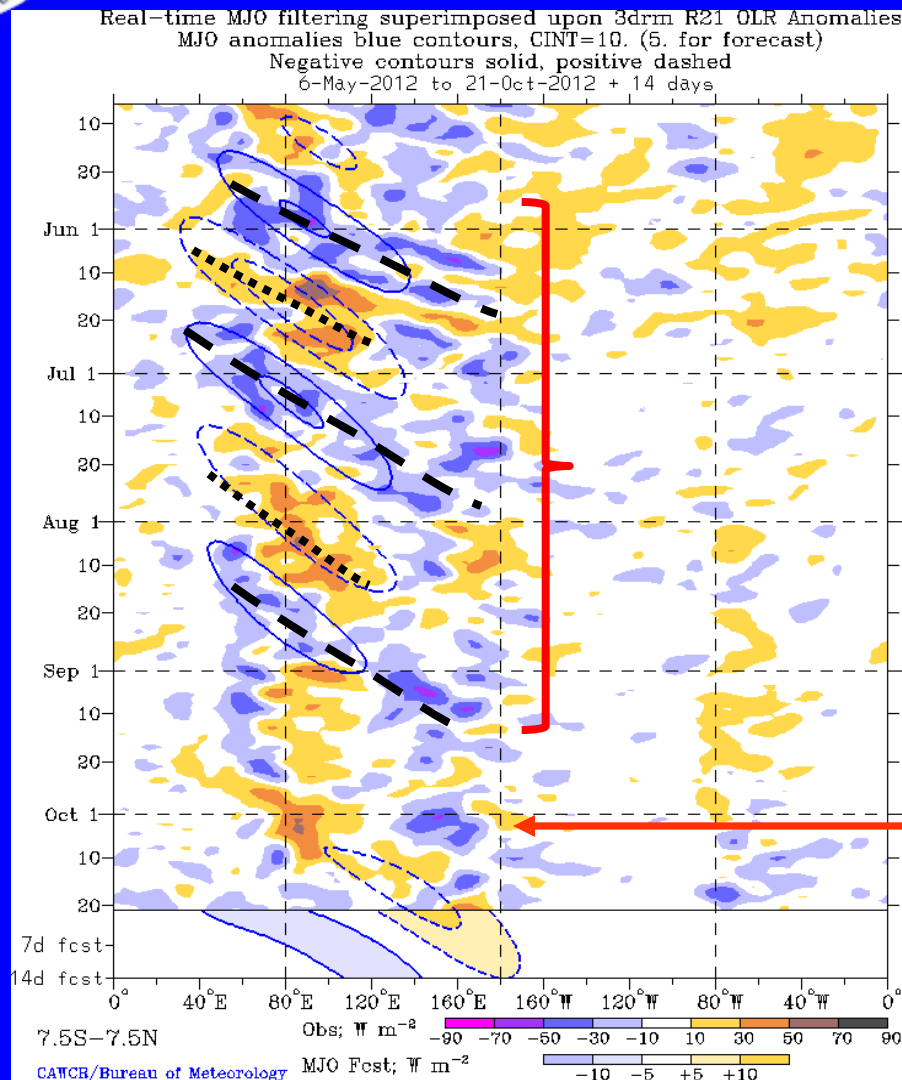
Enhanced convection continued across the western Pacific during late September and early October, mainly associated with tropical cyclone activity. Suppressed convection continued across the eastern equatorial Indian Ocean.

During early-to-mid October, wetter-than-average conditions were observed in the Atlantic and western Pacific while suppressed convection eased for the time being in the eastern Indian Ocean and developed across Southeast Asia.



Outgoing Longwave Radiation (OLR)

Anomalies (7.5°S-7.5°N)



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

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

(Courtesy of CAWCR Australia Bureau of Meteorology)

From late May into September, eastward propagation of both enhanced and suppressed convection is evident across the eastern hemisphere (alternating dashed and dotted lines).

Atmospheric Kelvin wave activity also played a large role in the pattern of anomalous convection across the Pacific and western Hemisphere during much of this period, especially June and July.

At the start of October, a couplet of suppressed (enhanced) convection was observed in the Indian Ocean (western Pacific). Most recently during mid October, enhanced convection has increased across the Americas.

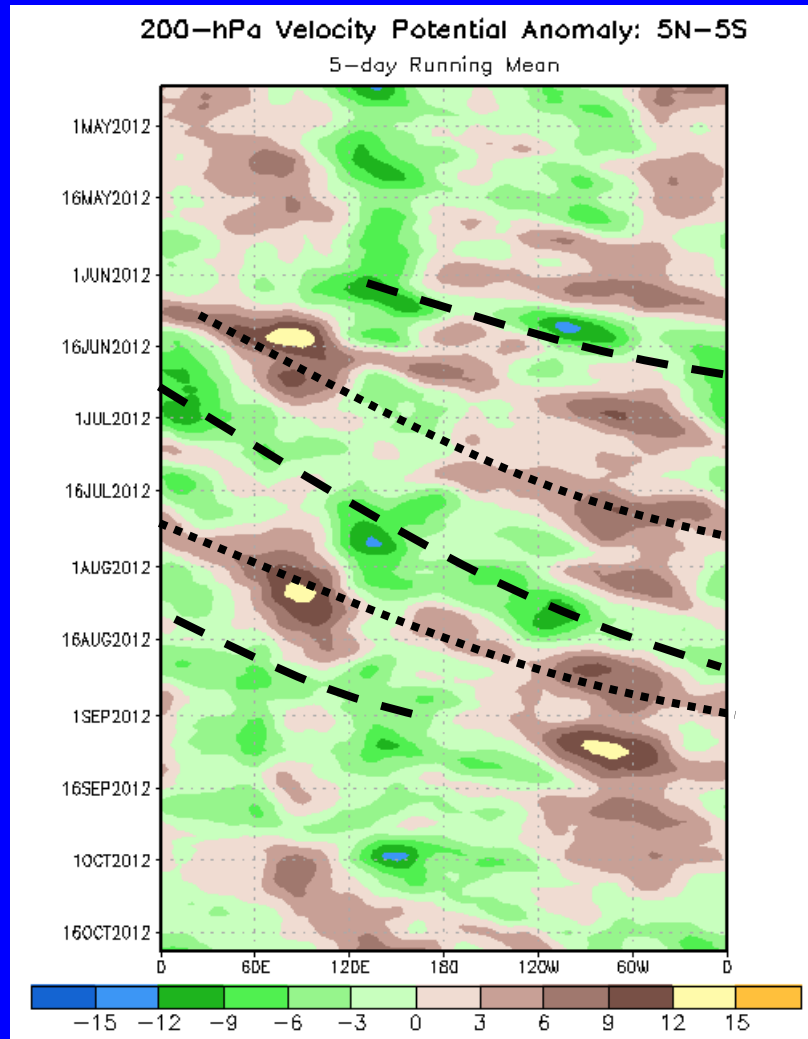


200-hPa Velocity Potential Anomalies (5°S-5°N)

Positive anomalies (brown shading) indicate unfavorable conditions for precipitation

Negative anomalies (green shading) indicate favorable conditions for precipitation

Time



Longitude

Beginning in late April, anomalies became weaker and less coherent than earlier in the year.

Eastward propagation was once again evident from late May into September associated with the MJO, as well as atmospheric Kelvin wave activity, which at times resulted in fast eastward propagation of observed anomalies.

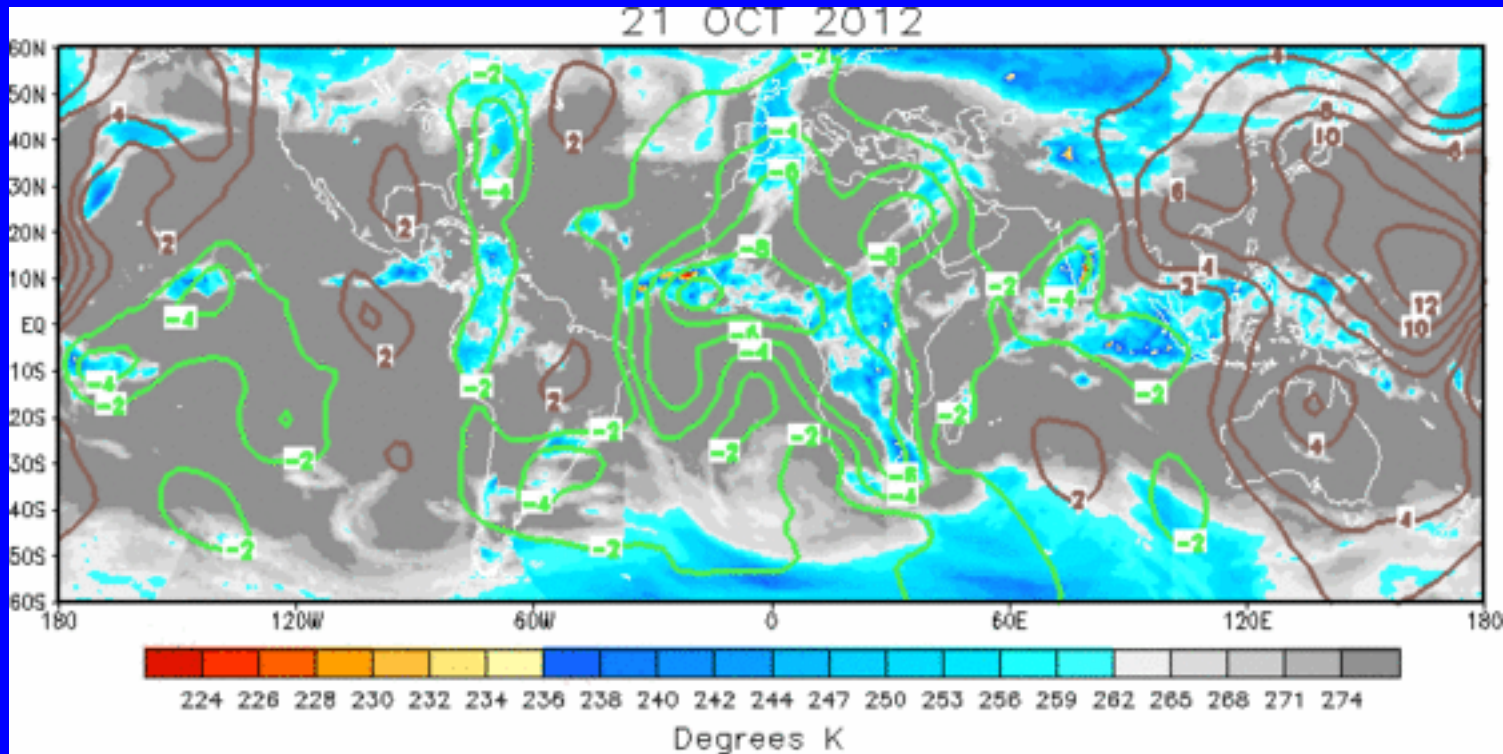
In mid-September, anomalies decreased and eastward propagation became less clear. Most recently, upper-level divergence increased over the western Pacific in early October and shifted east of the Date Line by mid-October.



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 remains reasonably coherent and shows anomalous upper-level divergence stretching from the Americas to the Indian Ocean. Strong anomalous upper-level convergence is evident across the Maritime Continent and western Pacific.

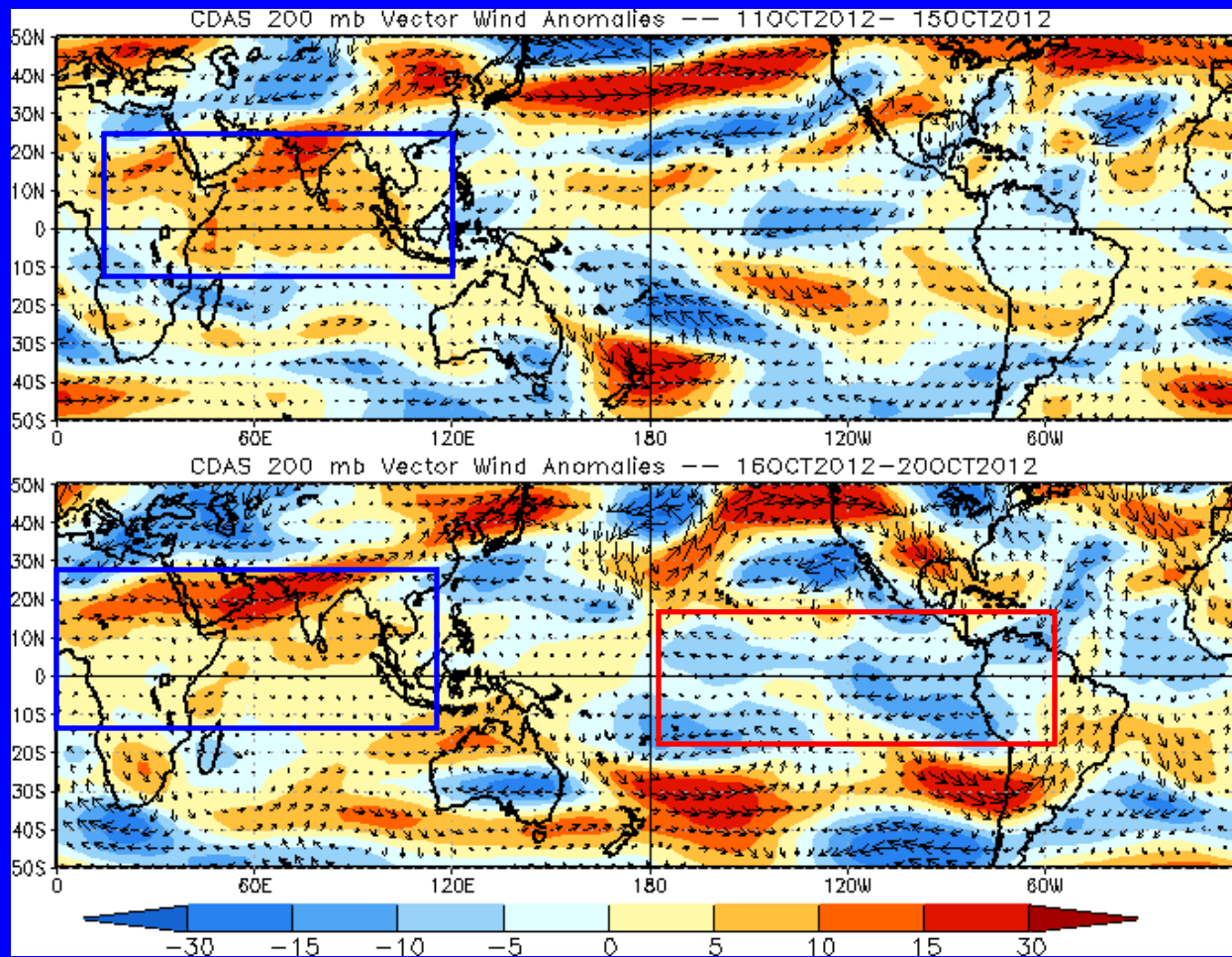


200-hPa Vector Wind Anomalies (m s^{-1})

Note that shading denotes the zonal wind anomaly

Blue shades: Easterly anomalies

Red shades: Westerly anomalies



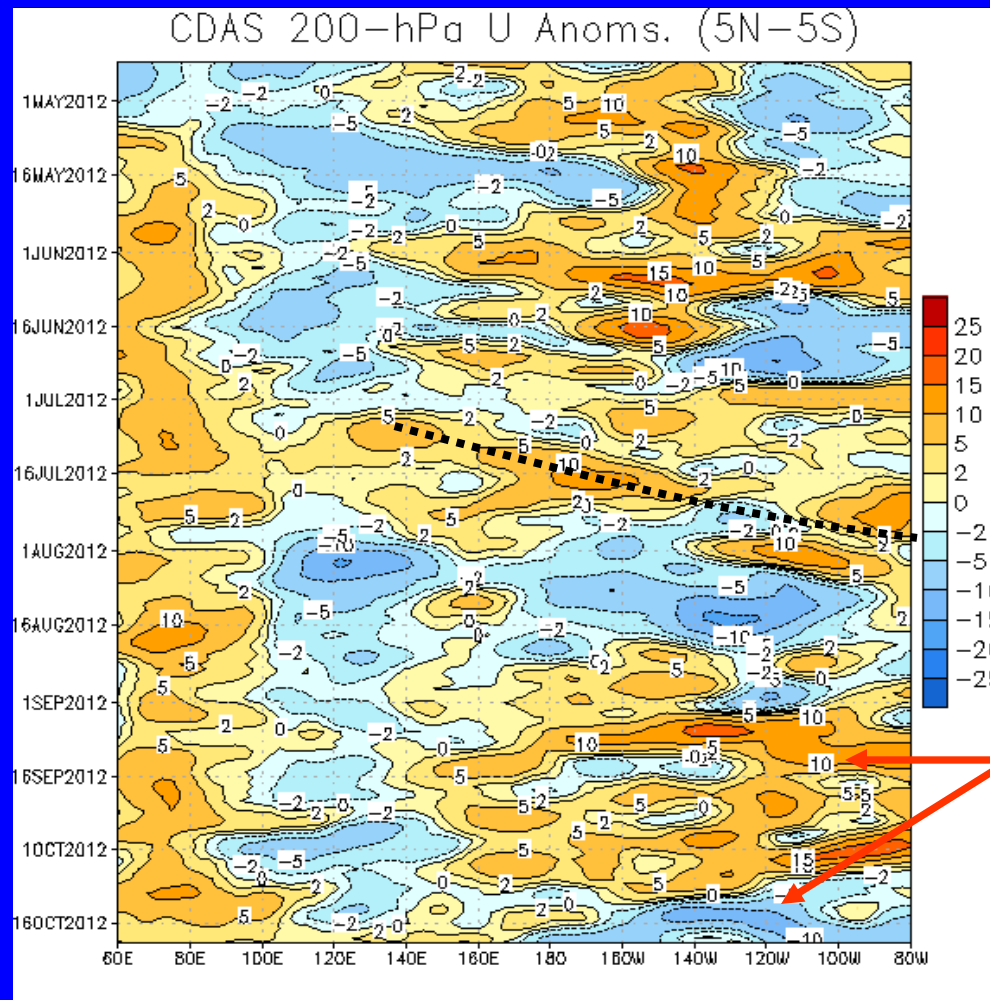
Westerly anomalies (blue boxes) have been strong over parts of the Indian Ocean and southern Asia during the past 5-10 days. Easterly anomalies strengthened across the eastern Pacific and northern South America (red box) during the last five days.



200-hPa Zonal Wind Anomalies (m s^{-1})

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

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



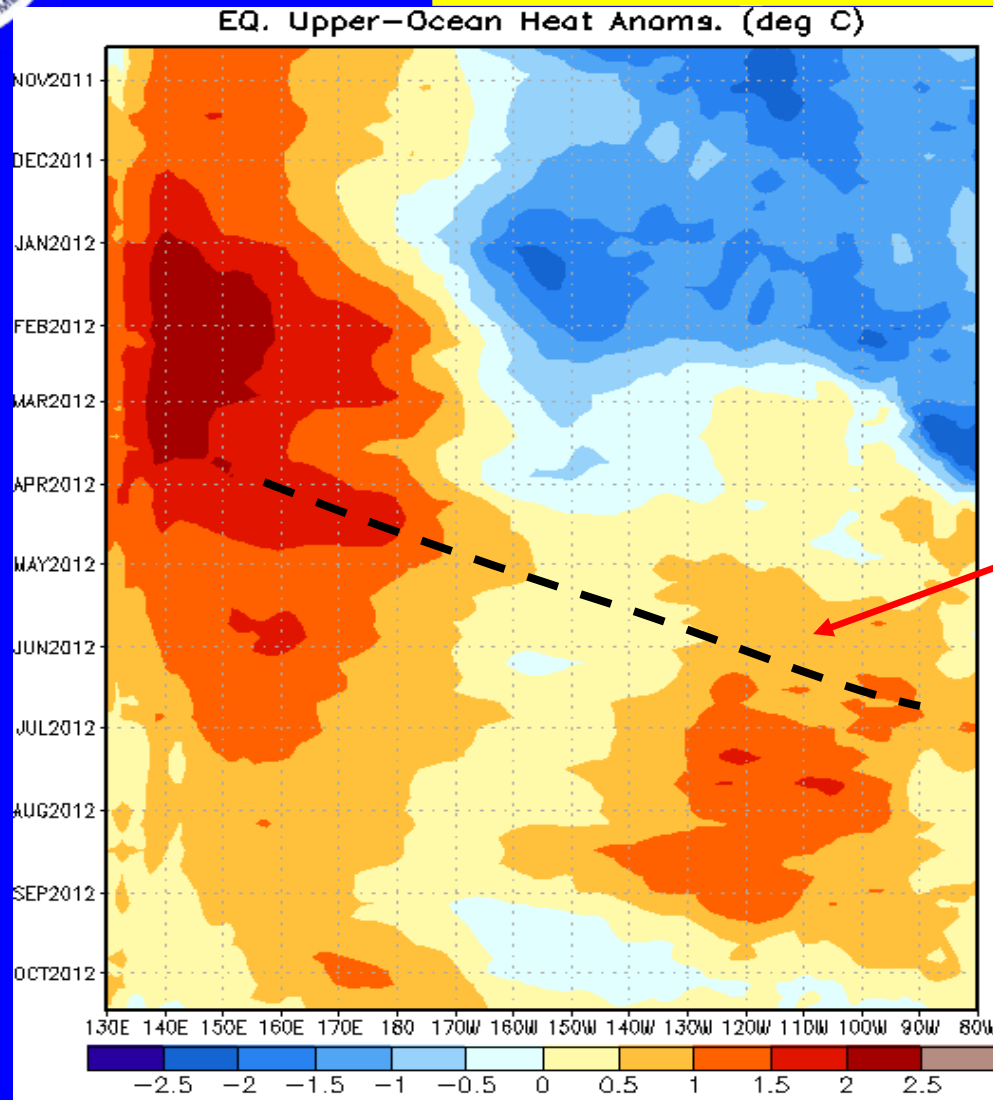
Anomalies were not very coherent during much of April, May and June.

Westerly anomalies shifted eastward across the Pacific during July and early August.

Westerly anomalies prevailed across the eastern Pacific and Americas for much of September and October but have since been replaced by easterly anomalies during mid-October.



Weekly Heat Content Evolution in the Equatorial Pacific



From July 2011 through February 2012, heat content was below average in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific.

From March into July 2012, heat content anomalies became positive and increased in magnitude across eastern equatorial Pacific, partly in association with a downwelling Kelvin wave.

Positive anomalies decreased across the eastern Pacific during late August and September.

An oceanic Kelvin wave was initiated at the end of September.



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.

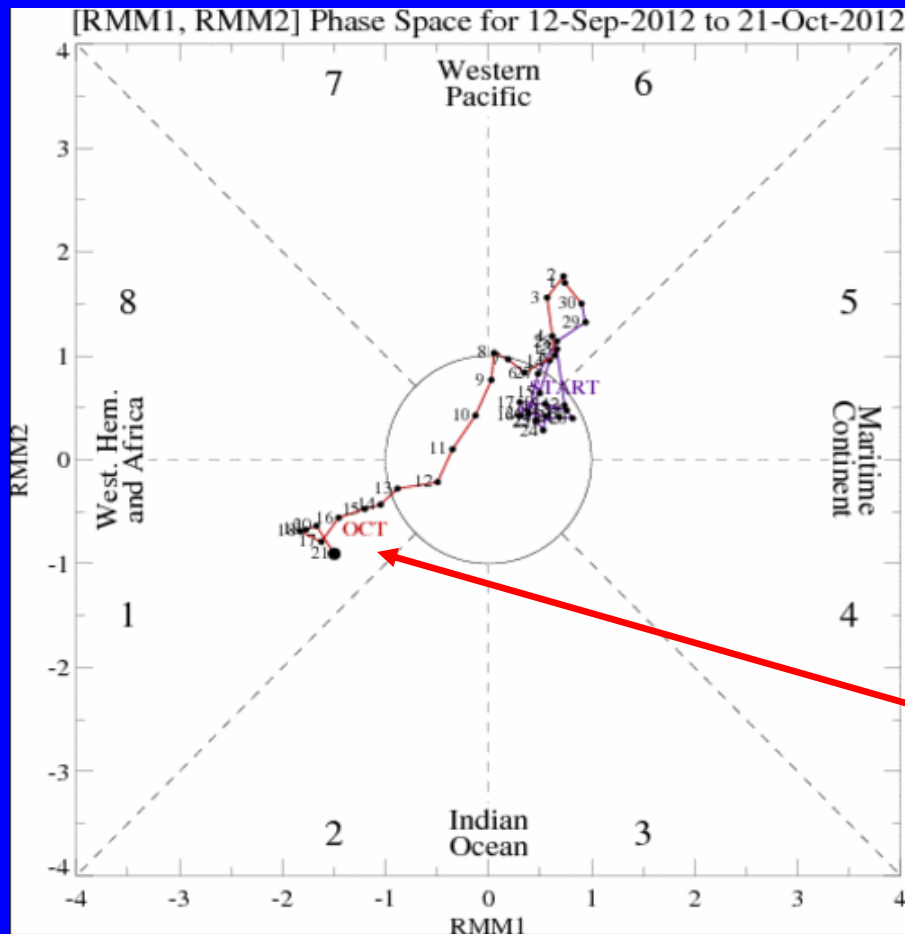
- The methodology is very similar to that described in WH2004 but does not include the linear removal of ENSO variability associated with a sea surface temperature index. The methodology is consistent with that outlined by the U.S. CLIVAR MJO Working Group.

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

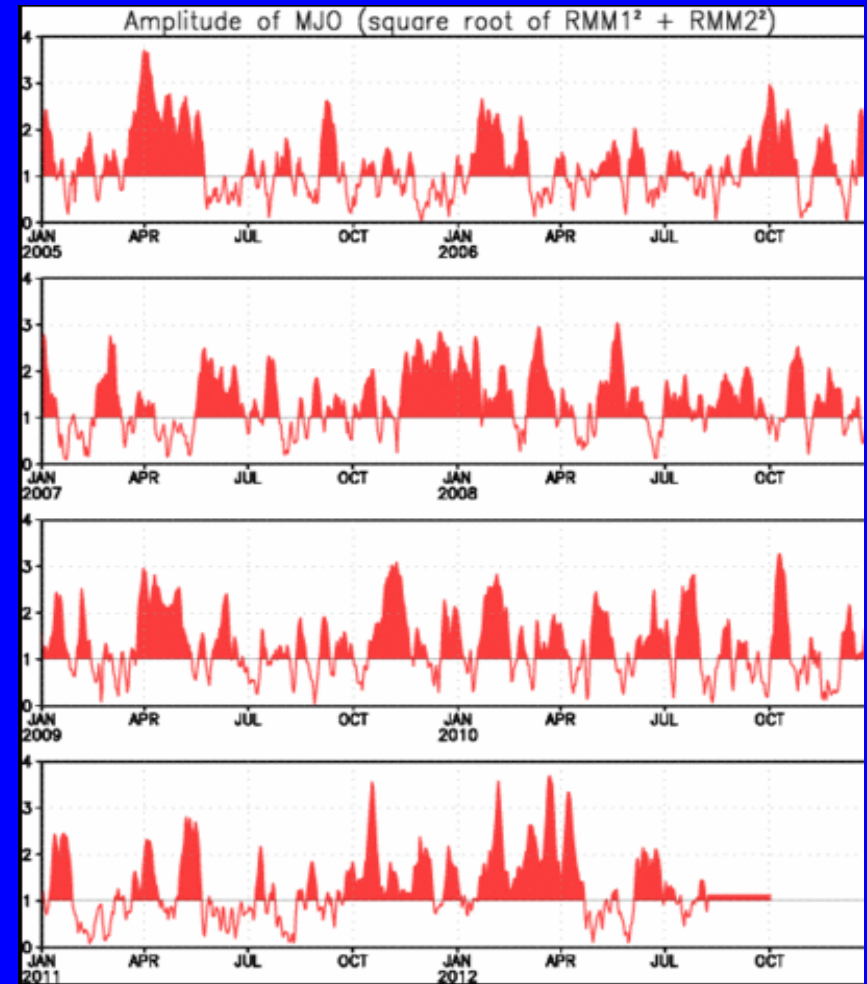
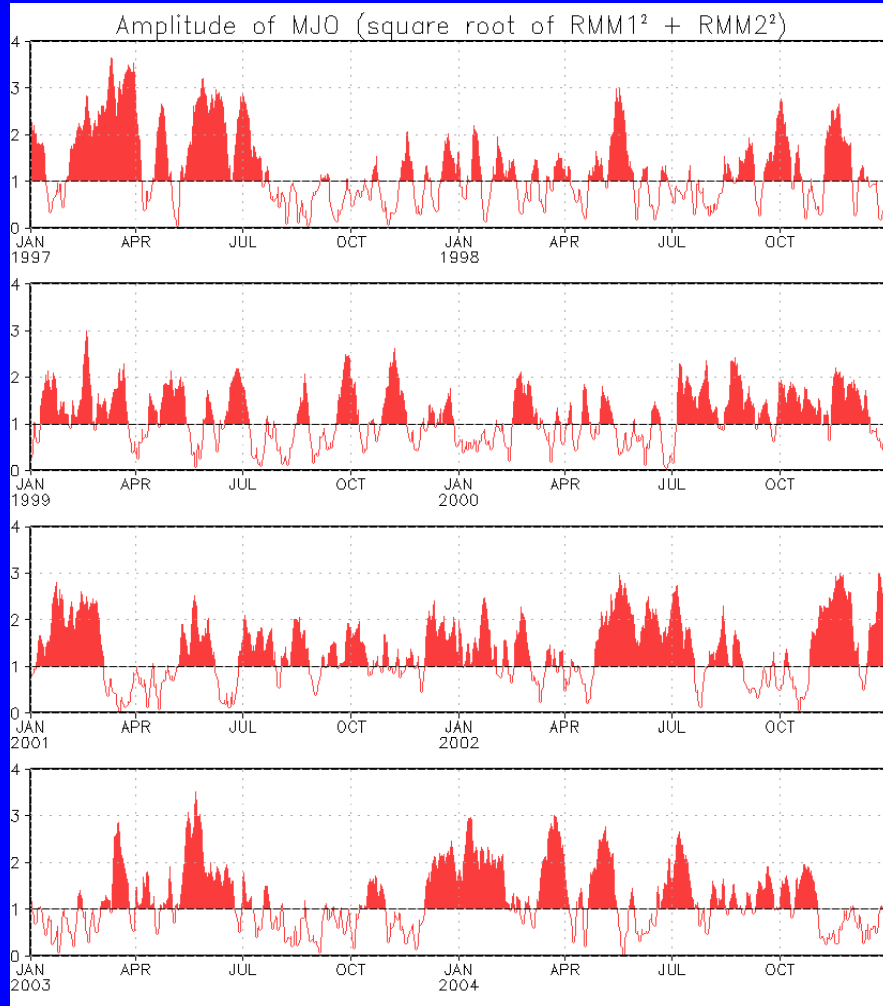


- The axes (RMM1 and RMM2) represent daily values of the principal components from the two leading modes
- The triangular areas indicate the location of the enhanced phase of the MJO
- Counter-clockwise motion is indicative of eastward propagation. Large dot most recent observation.
- Distance from the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

The MJO index increased in amplitude during the past week, but remains in Phase 1.



MJO Index – Historical Daily Time Series



Time series of daily MJO index amplitude from 1997 to present.
Plots put current MJO activity in historical context.



Ensemble GFS (GEFS) MJO Forecast

Yellow Lines – 20 Individual Members

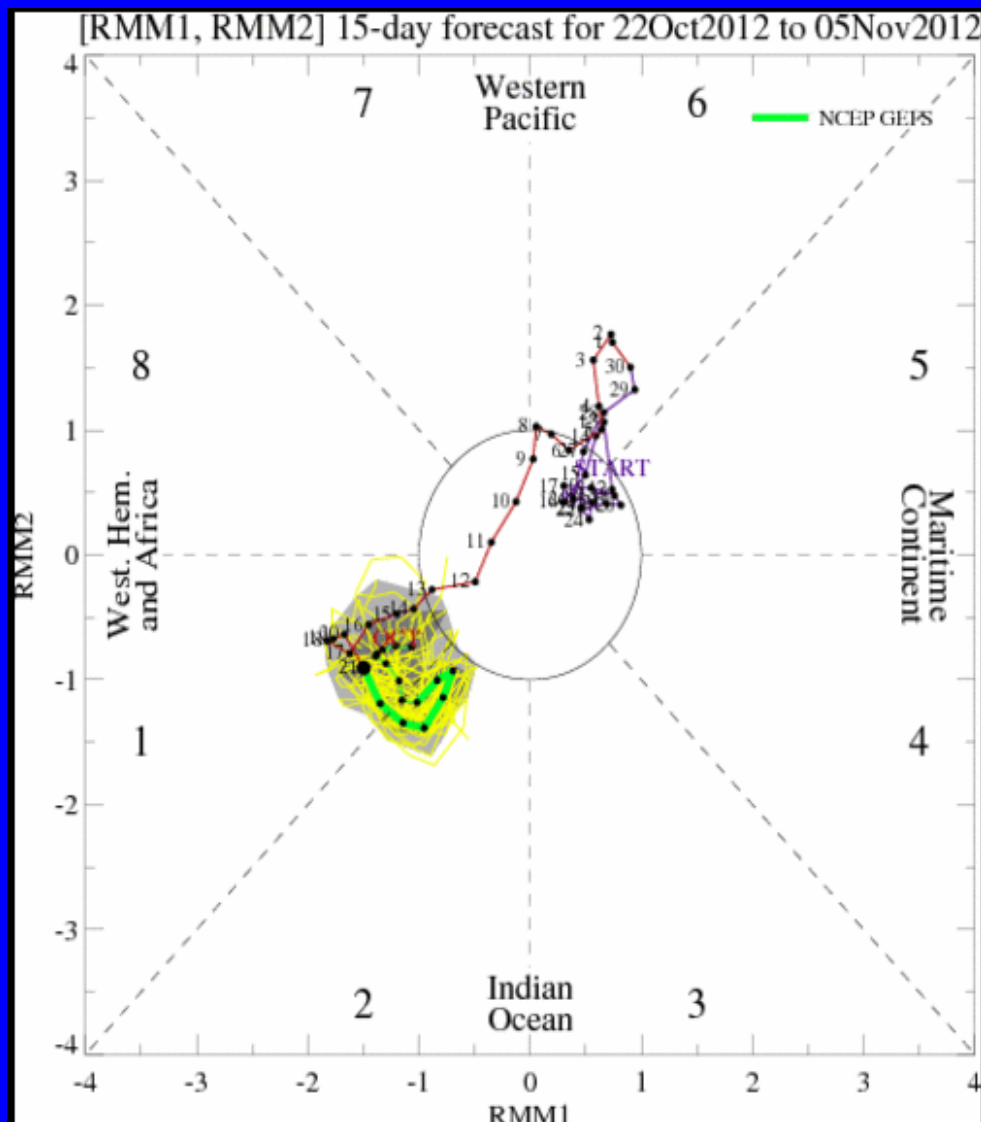
Green Line – Ensemble Mean

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 only minor eastward propagation during the next two weeks.

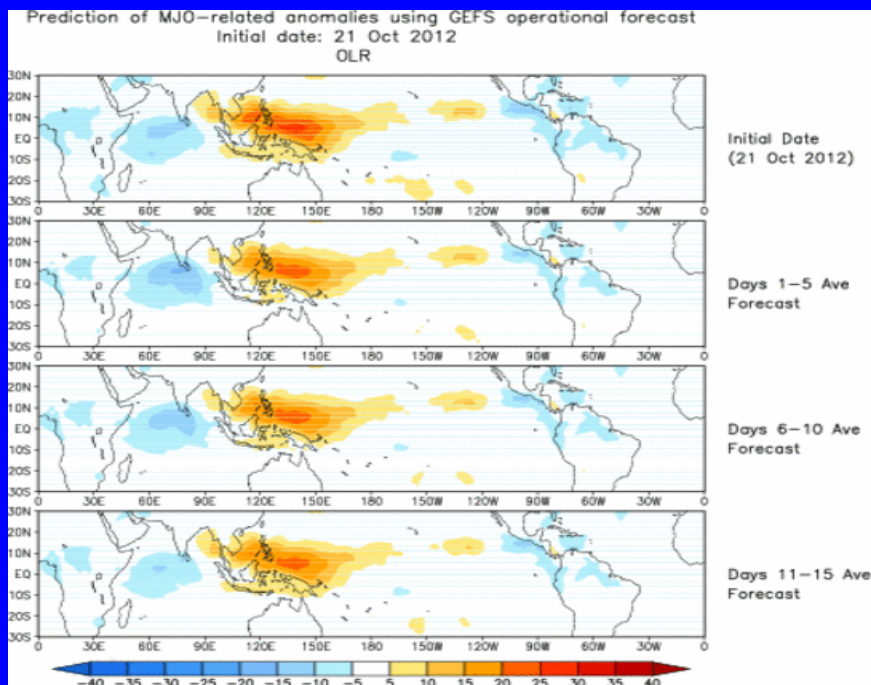




Ensemble Mean GFS MJO Forecast

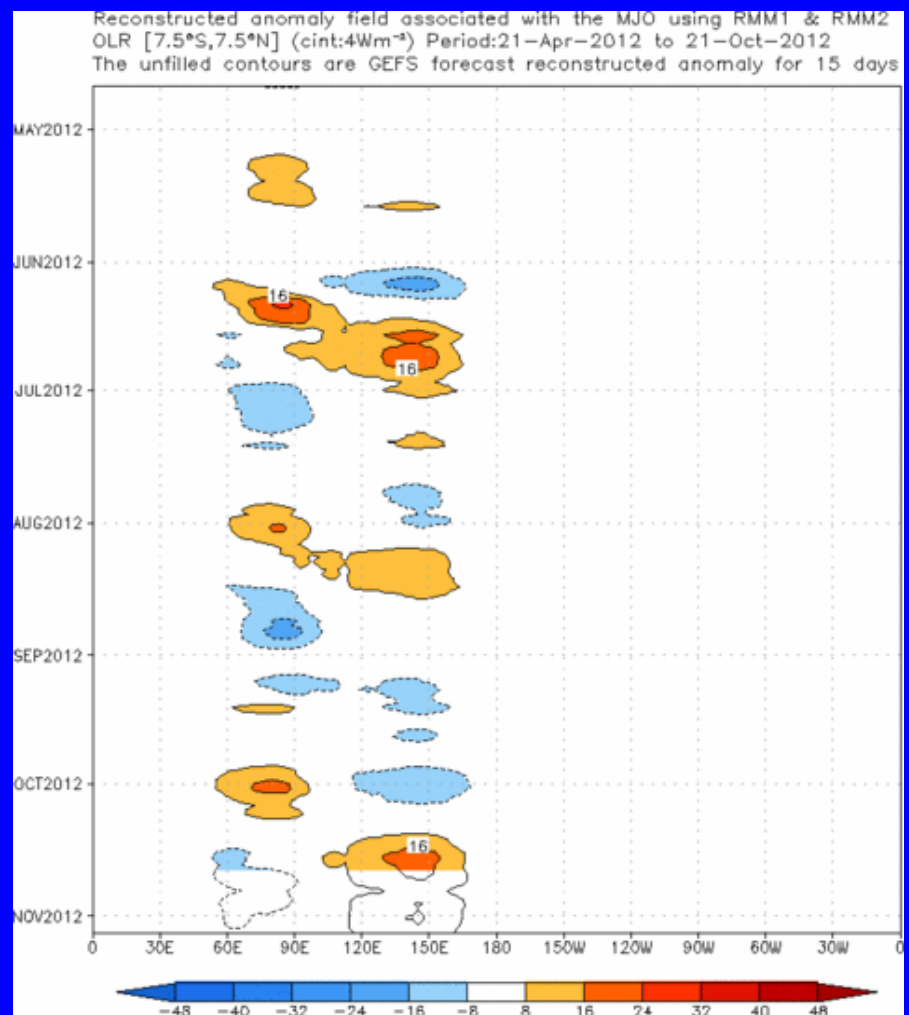
Figures below show MJO associated OLR anomalies only (reconstructed from RMM1 and RMM2) and do not include contributions from other modes (*i.e.*, ENSO, monsoons, etc.)

Spatial map of OLR anomalies for the next 15 days



The ensemble mean GFS forecast indicates enhanced convection persisting across the Americas, Africa and the Indian Ocean, while suppressed convection continues across the Maritime Continent and west Pacific.

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

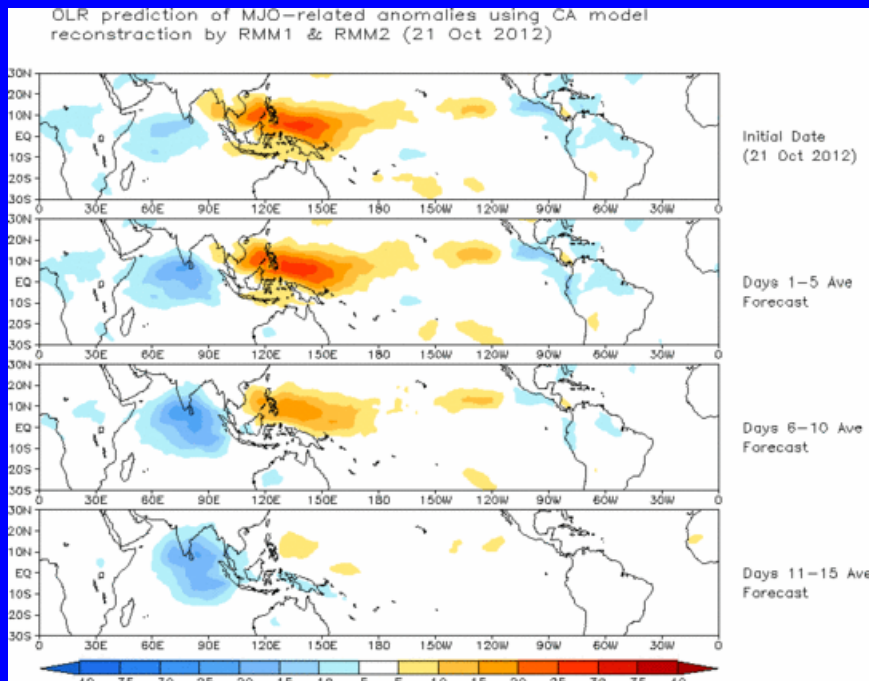




Constructed Analog (CA) MJO Forecast

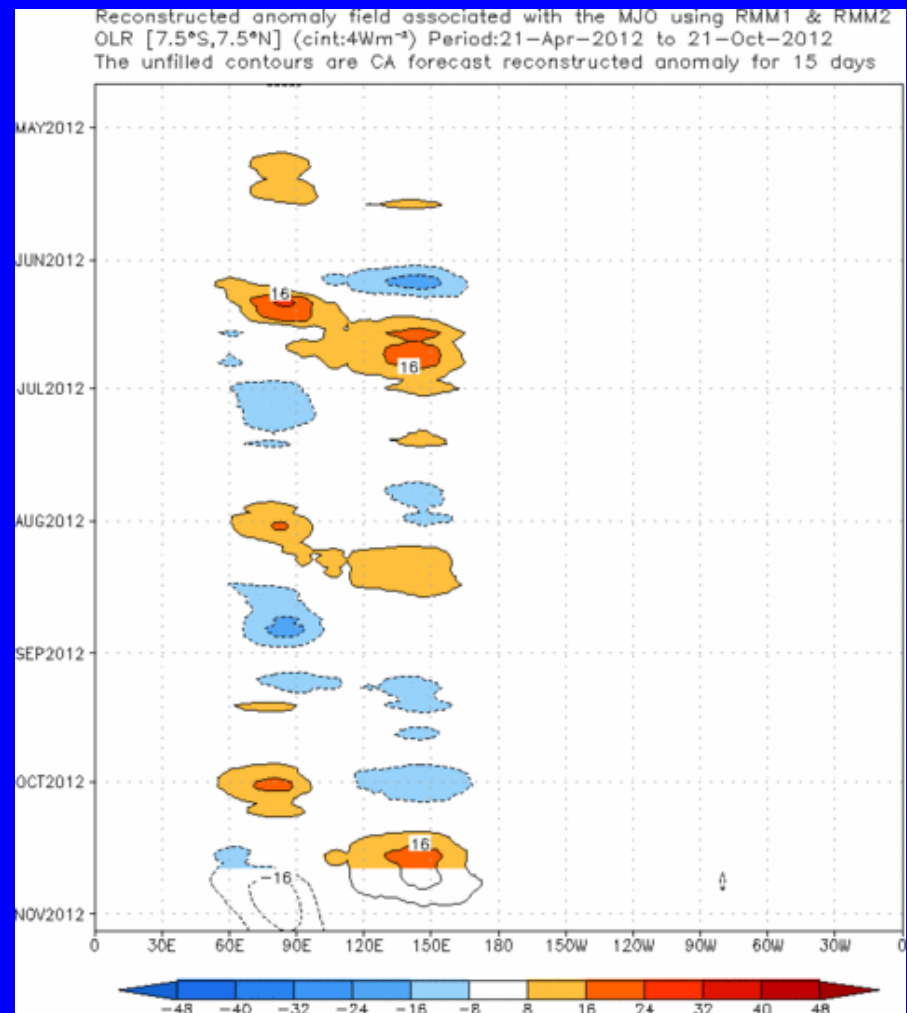
Figure below shows MJO associated OLR anomalies only (reconstructed from RMM1 and RMM2) and do not include contributions from other modes (*i.e.*, ENSO, monsoons, etc.)

Spatial map of OLR anomalies for the next 15 days



This forecast indicates slightly faster propagation with enhanced convection first centered across the Americas and Africa than shifting to the Indian Ocean. Suppressed convection evident during Week-1 across the western Pacific weakens by Week-2.

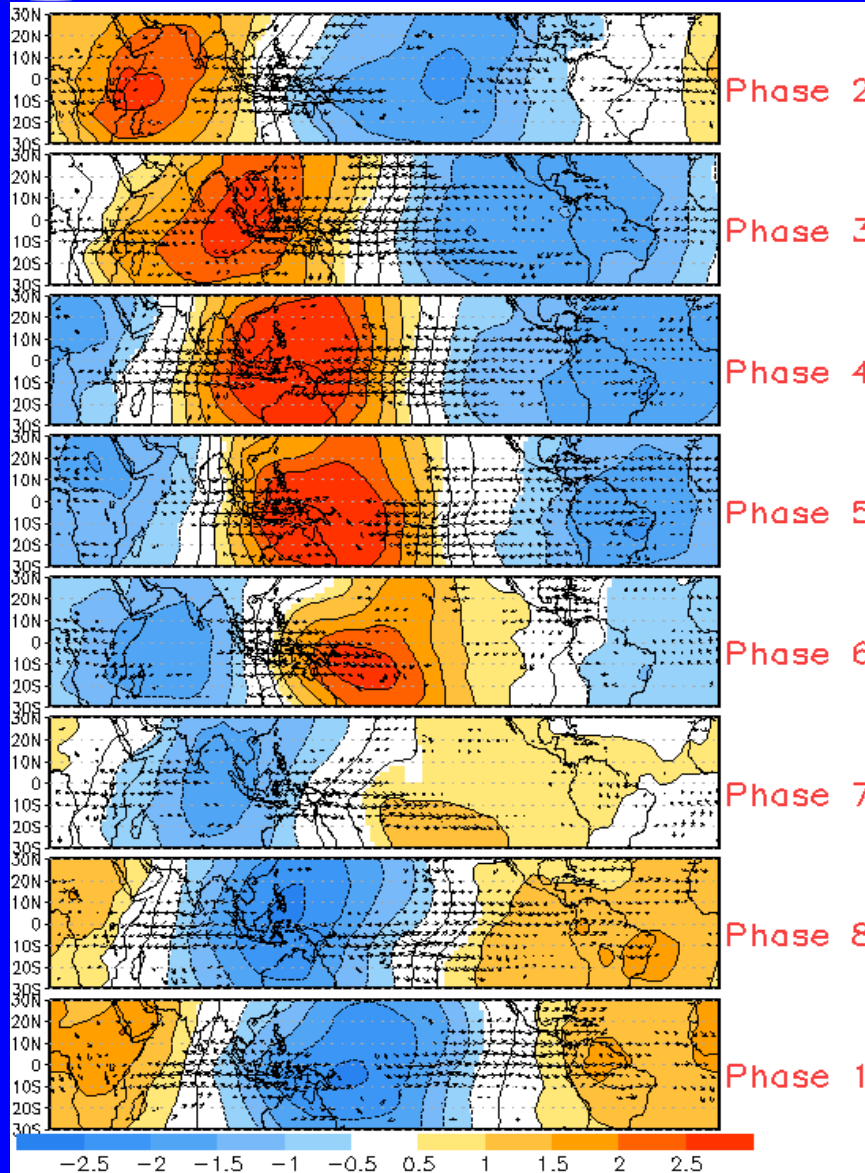
Time-longitude section of (7.5°S-7.5°N) OLR anomalies for the last 180 days and for the next 15 days



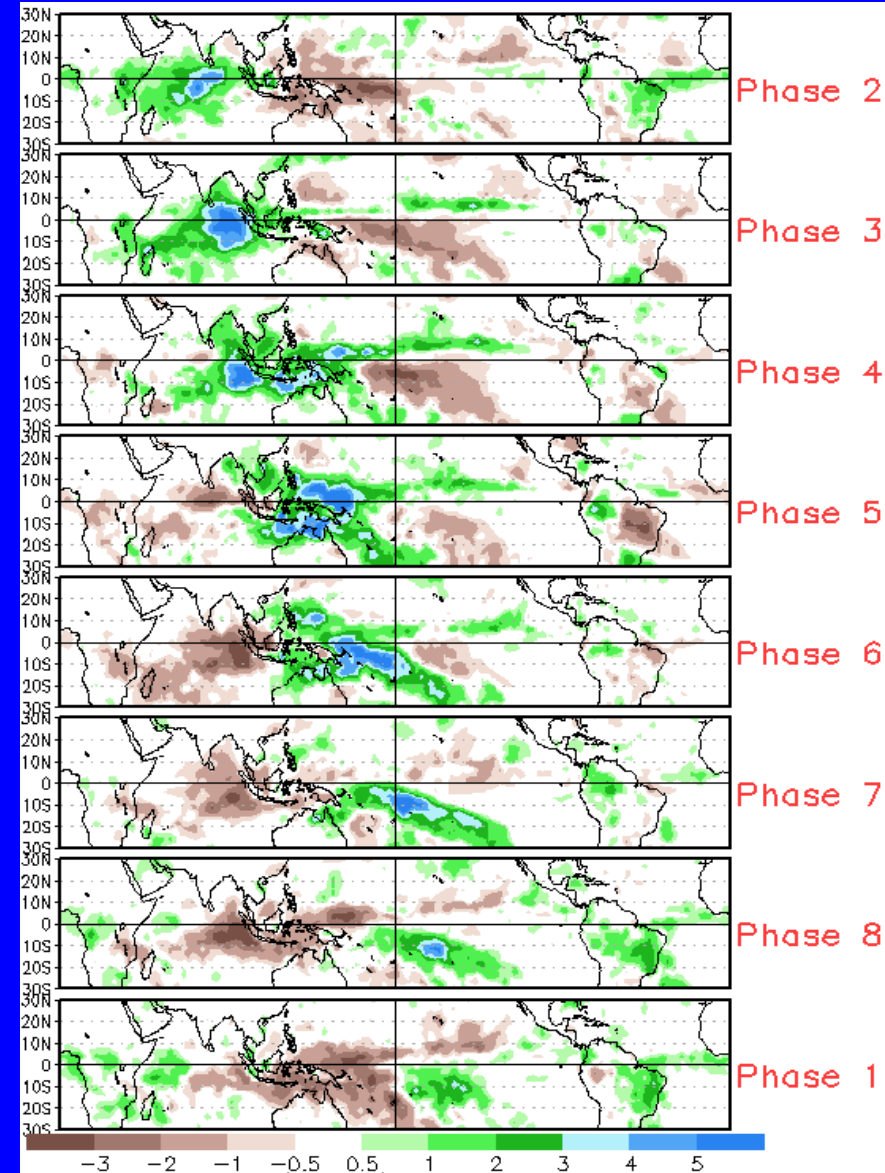


MJO Composites – Global Tropics

850-hPa Velocity Potential and
Wind Anomalies (May-Sep)



Precipitation Anomalies (May-Sep)

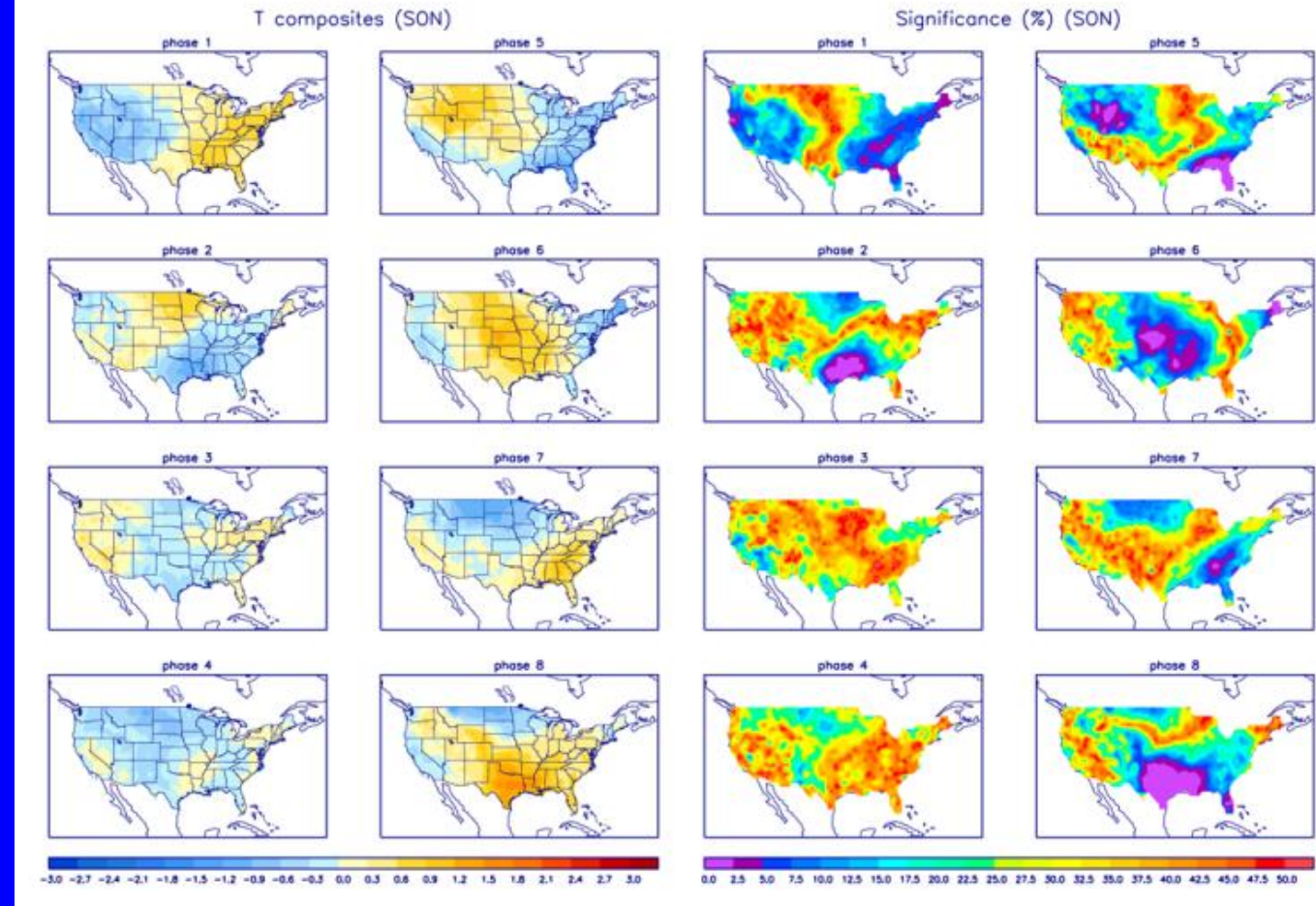




U.S. MJO Composites – Temperature

- 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. Purple shades indicate areas in which the anomalies are significant at the 95% or better confidence level.



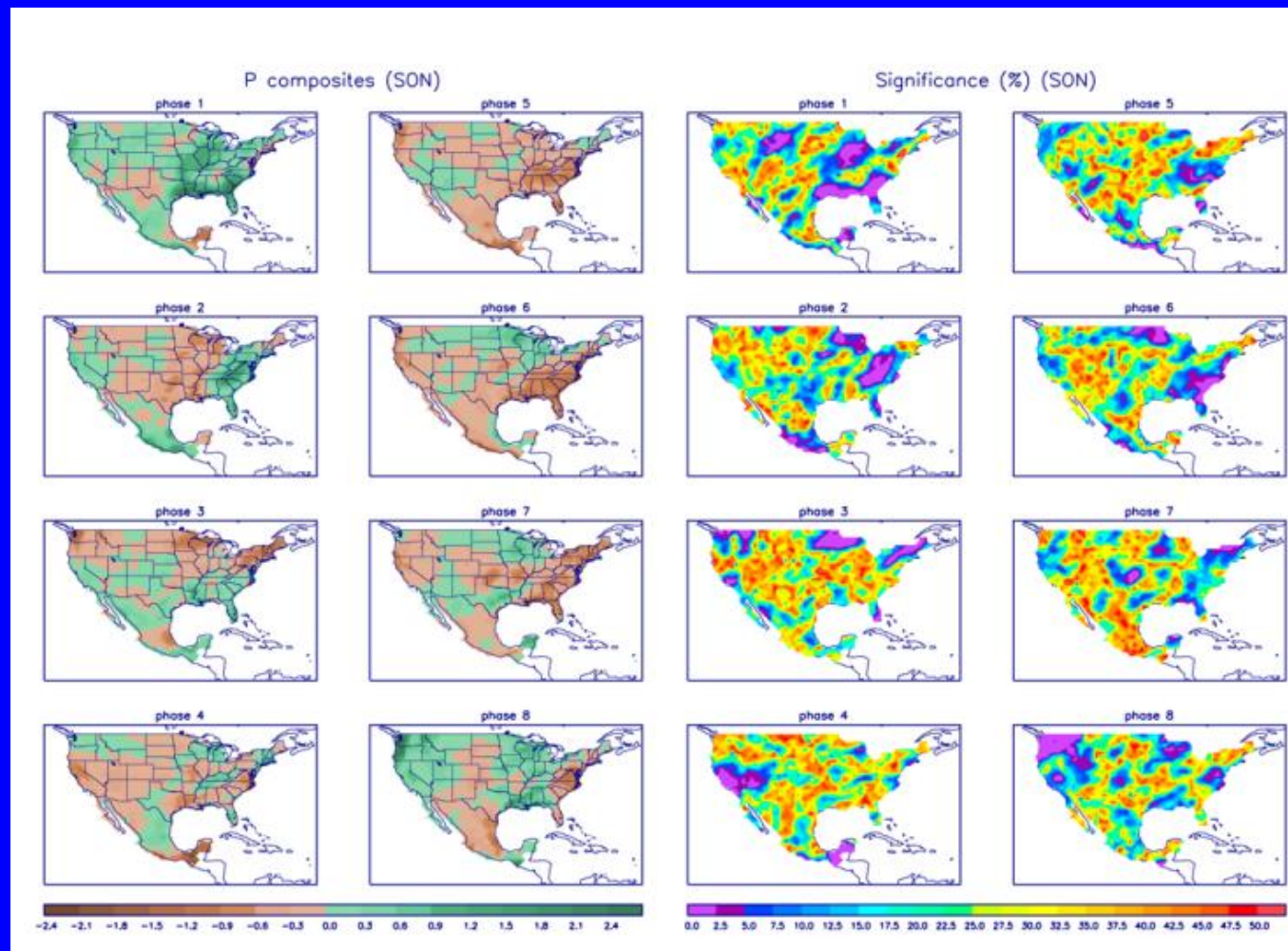
Zhou et al. (2011): A composite study of the MJO influence on the surface air temperature and precipitation over the Continental United States, *Climate Dynamics*, 1-13, doi: 10.1007/s00382-011-1001-9

<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. Purple shades indicate areas in which the anomalies are significant at the 95% or better confidence level.



Zhou et al. (2011): A composite study of the MJO influence on the surface air temperature and precipitation over the Continental United States, *Climate Dynamics*, 1-13, doi: 10.1007/s00382-011-1001-9

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