



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

**Update prepared by
Climate Prediction Center / NCEP
June 22, 2009**



Outline

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



Overview

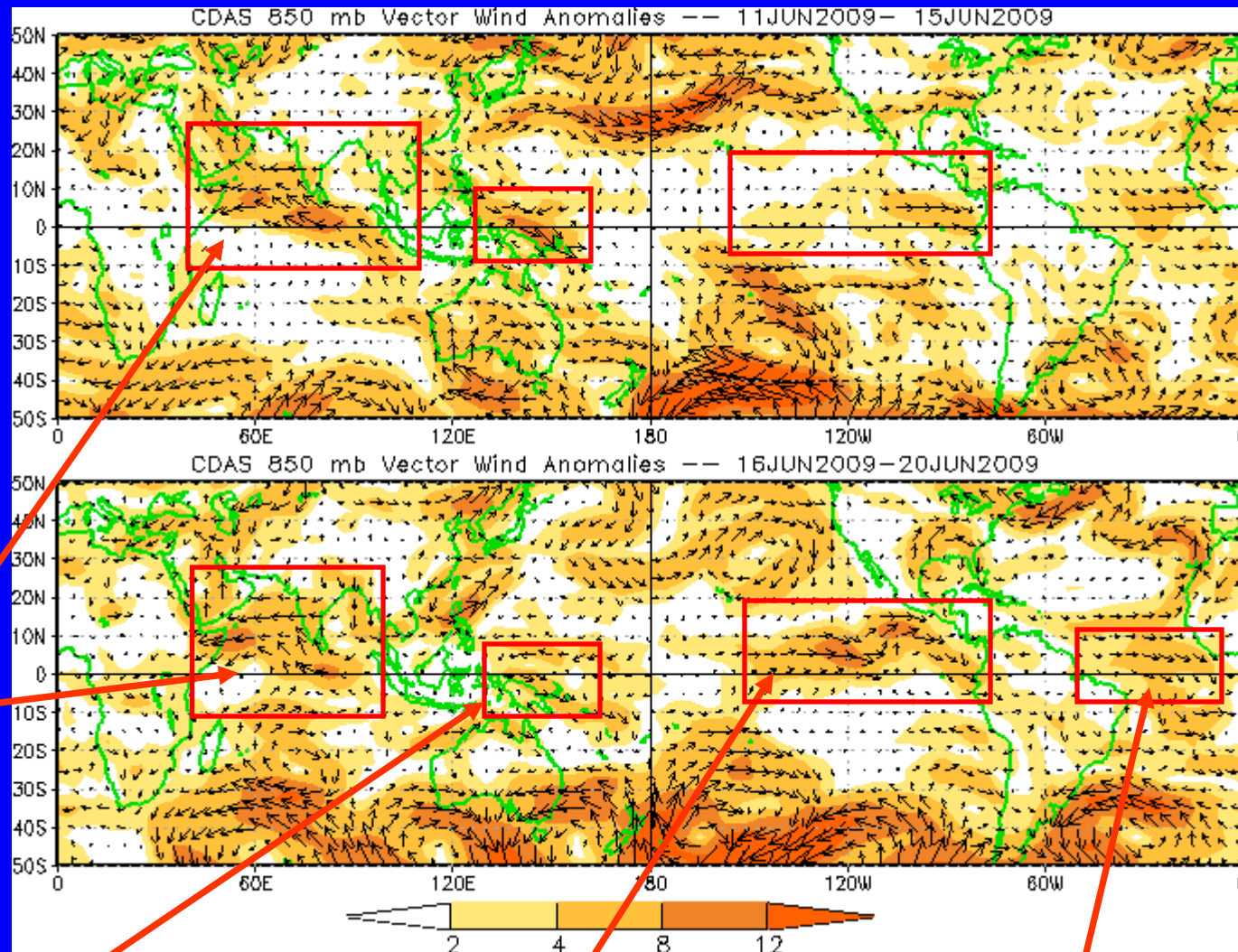
- **The MJO weakened during the past week with the enhanced convective phase remaining across the Western Hemisphere and Africa.**
- **Based on the latest observations and model forecasts, weak MJO activity is expected during the next 1-2 week period.**
- **The weakening MJO signal is still anticipated to partially contribute to increased rainfall over the Americas and west-central Africa, decreased rainfall for parts of south Asia and the Maritime continent, and elevate the risk of tropical cyclones across the eastern Pacific.**

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 (m s^{-1})

Note that shading denotes the magnitude of anomalous wind vectors



Anomalous easterly flow across the Indian Ocean and into the Horn of Africa has strengthened.

A westerly wind burst has weakened near Papua New Guinea.

Low-level westerly anomalies have strengthened across much of the eastern Pacific basin.

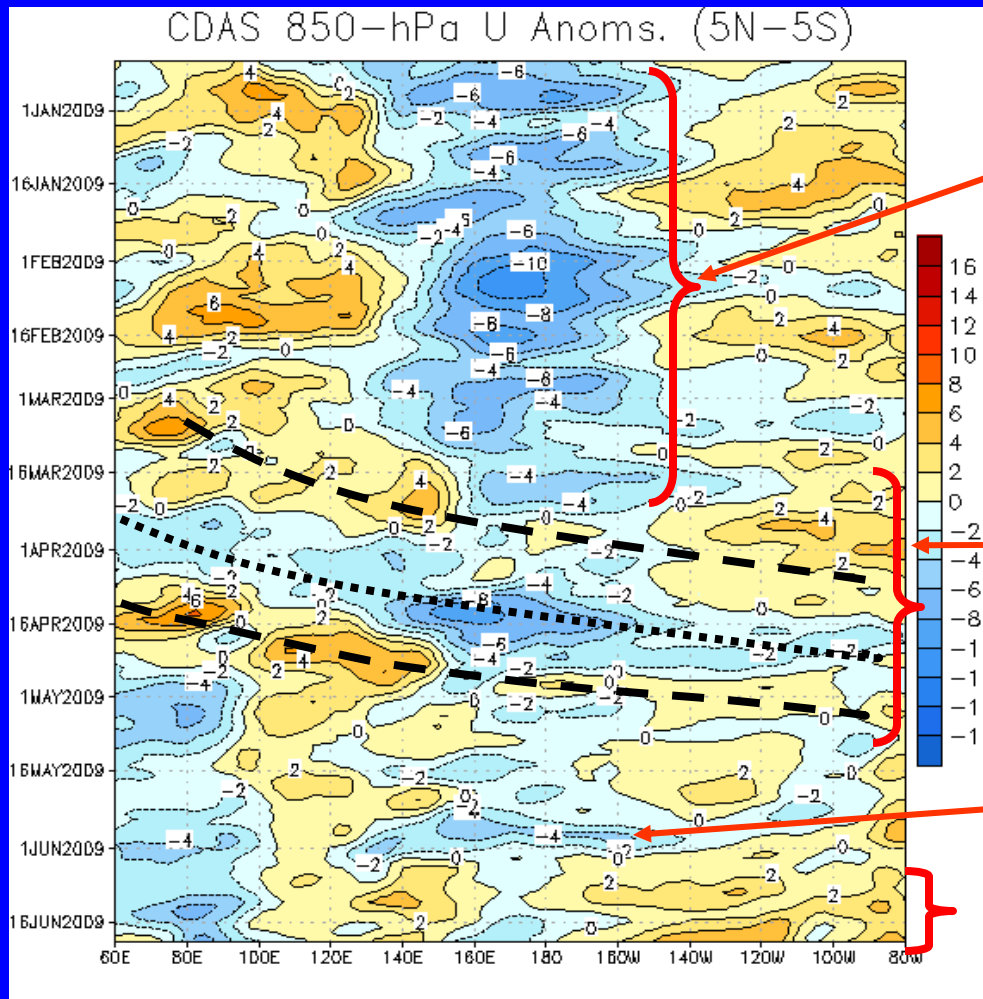
Westerly anomalies continue across the tropical Atlantic.



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

A persistent pattern of westerly (easterly) anomalies over the Indian Ocean (central Pacific Ocean) were in place from mid-December to mid-March.

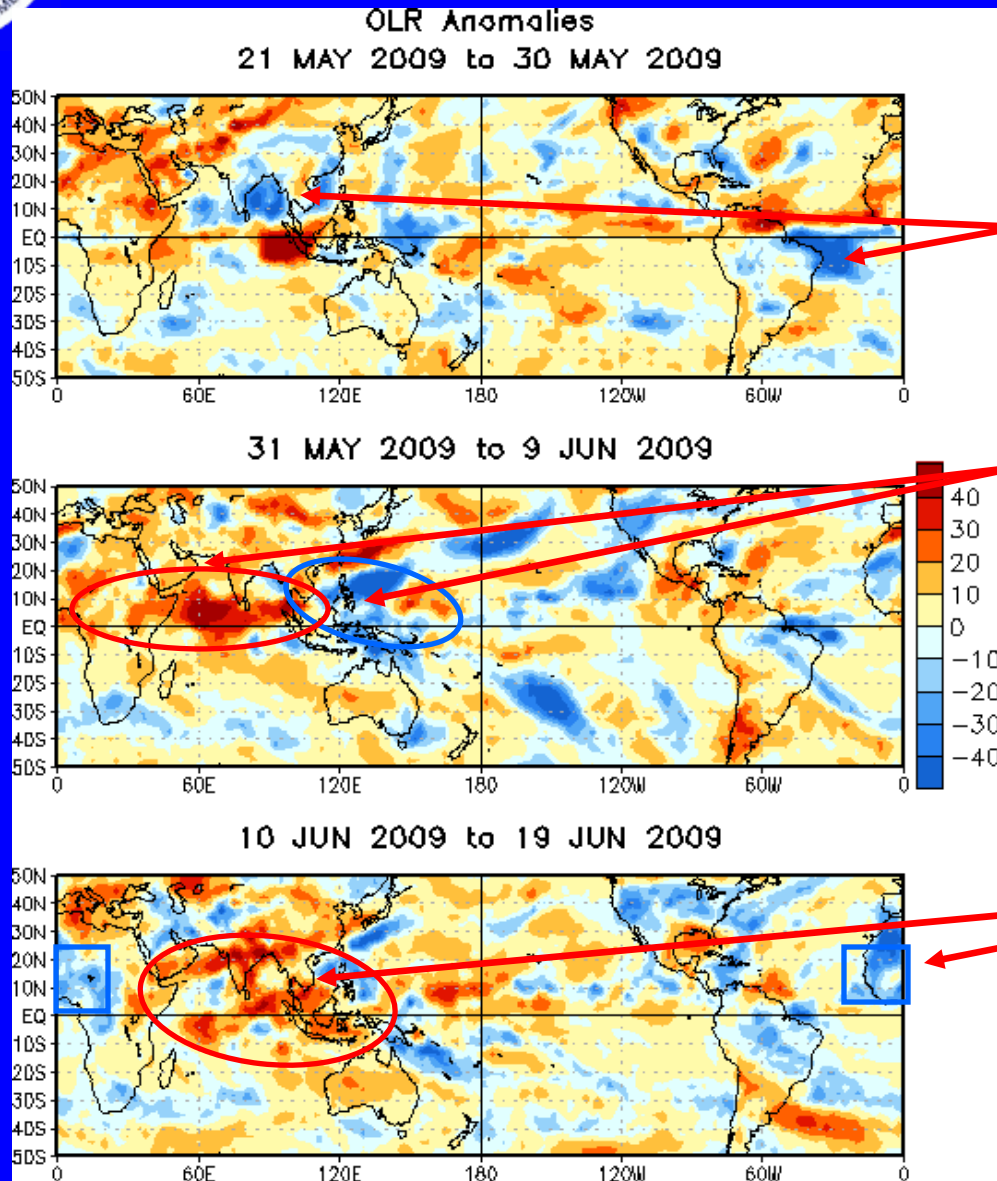
From mid-March to early May, a pattern of alternating low-level westerly, easterly and again westerly anomalies shifted eastward from the Indian Ocean through the equatorial Pacific associated with the MJO.

Easterly anomalies increased near and just west of the Date Line in late May but westerly wind anomalies are now evident across much of the Pacific basin.



OLR Anomalies: Last 30 days

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



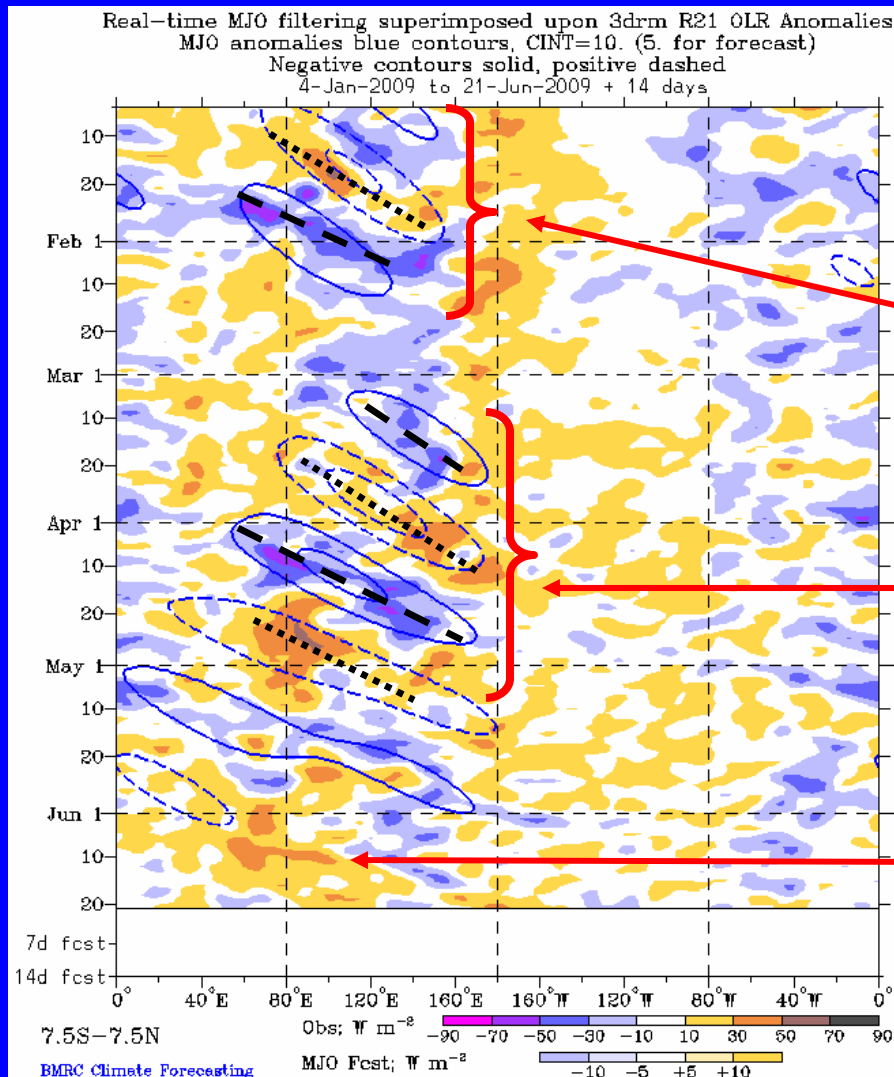
In mid-to-late May, convection was strongest across the Bay of Bengal, India and the Atlantic.

During late May and early June, enhanced convection was focused across the western Pacific with suppressed convection across the Indian Ocean and much of Africa.

General suppressed convection spread eastward over southern Asia and western Indonesia during mid-June. Also, the west African monsoon intensified, as strong enhanced convection developed across west Africa.



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 the Bureau of Meteorology - Australia)

From mid-January to mid-February, eastward movement of suppressed (enhanced) convection is observed from the Indian Ocean to the western Pacific.

From mid-March into early May, areas of suppressed and enhanced convection shifted eastward in association with the MJO.

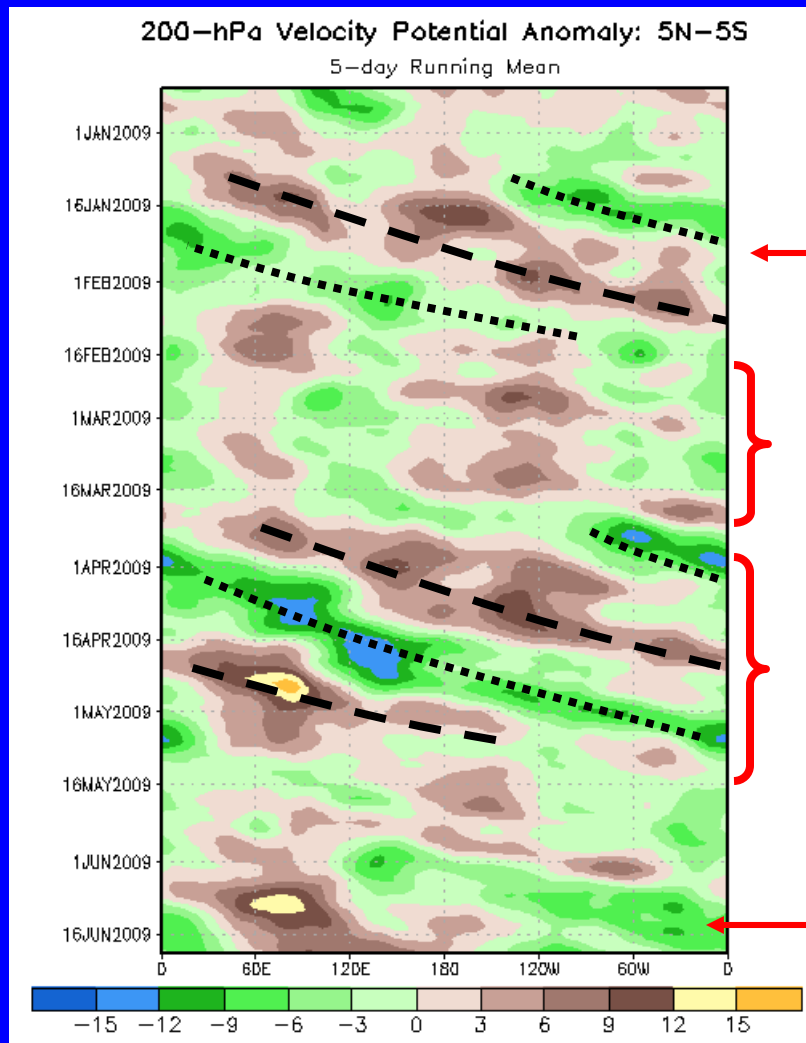
Beginning in June, an area of suppressed convection has been evident over much of the Indian Ocean and Maritime Continent.



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
↓



Velocity potential anomalies increased as the MJO strengthened and shifted eastward during January to mid-February.

No coherent pattern was exhibited in the weak velocity potential anomalies from mid-February through early March.

From mid-March to early May, eastward propagating velocity potential anomalies indicated moderate-to-strong MJO activity.

The MJO weakened in May.

Velocity potential anomalies increased during June as the MJO strengthened most recently eastward propagation has slowed.

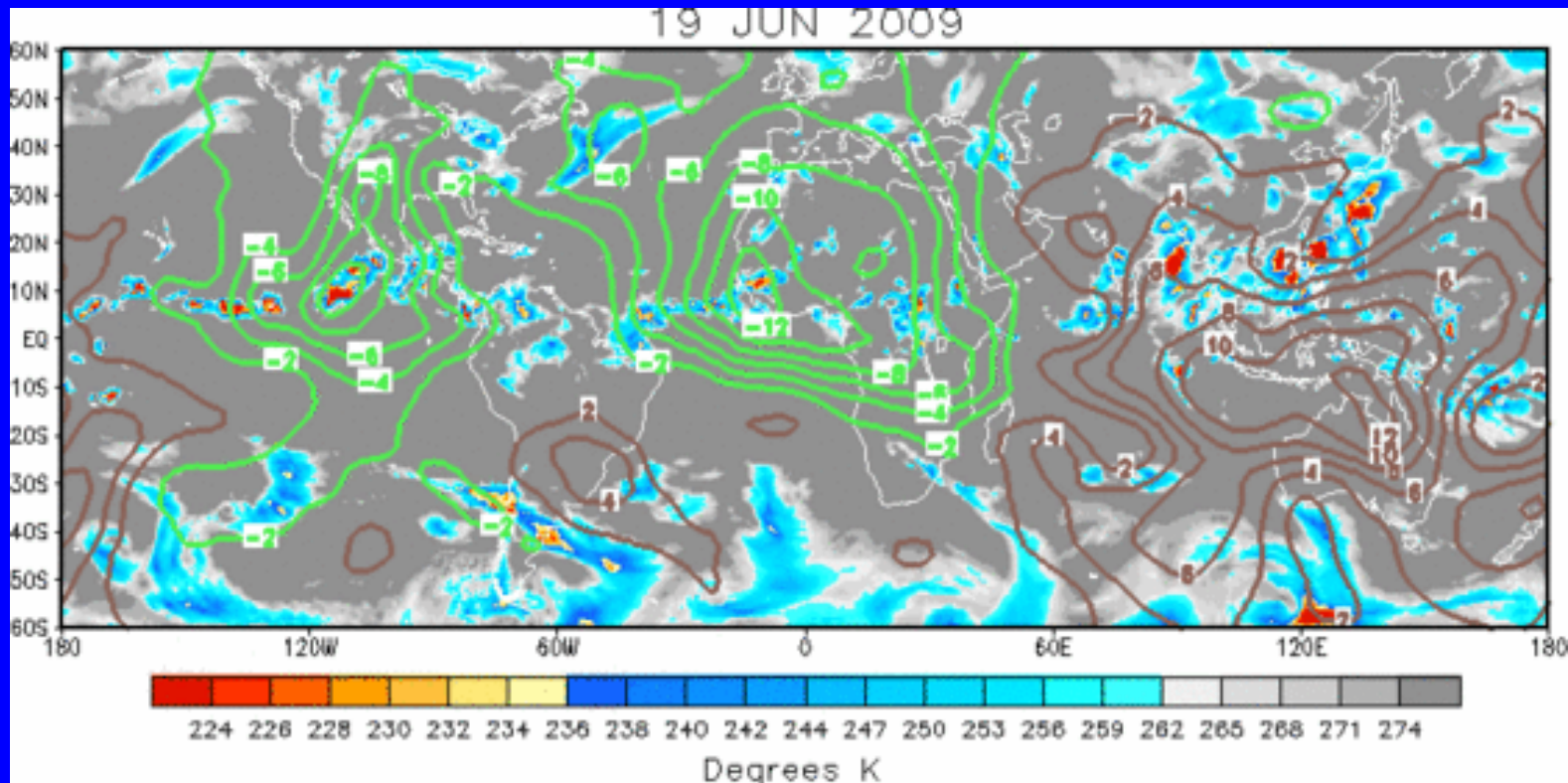
Longitude



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



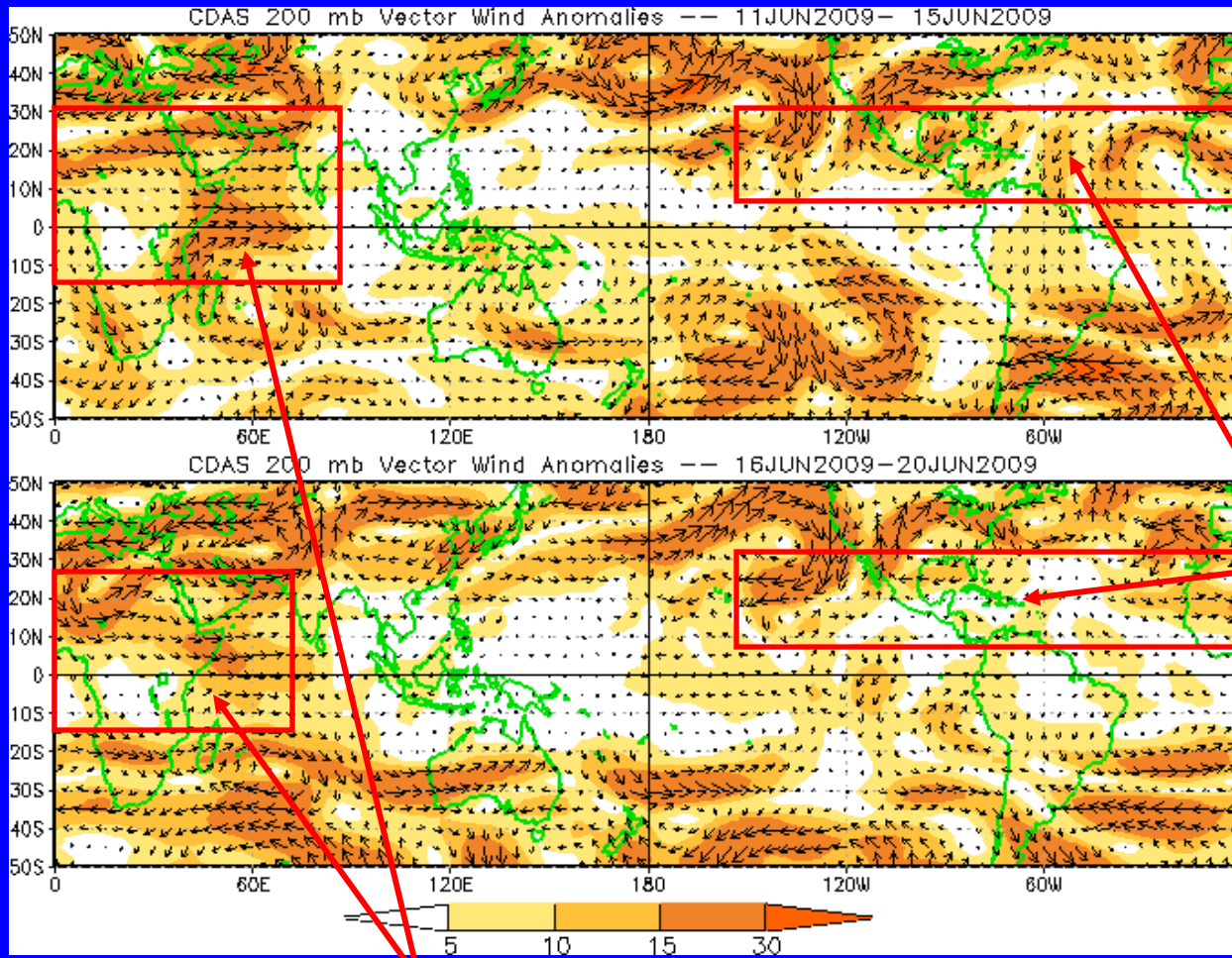
The latest velocity potential pattern has become slightly less organized and eastward propagation has considerably slowed.

Upper-level divergence continues across much of the Americas, the Atlantic Ocean and Africa while upper-level convergence is strongly indicated for the eastern Indian Ocean and western Pacific.



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

Note that shading denotes the magnitude of anomalous wind vectors



Extra-tropical interactions contributed to increased anomalies across the tropical Western Hemisphere.

Strong anomalous westerlies are evident across Africa and the western Indian Ocean during the last ten days.

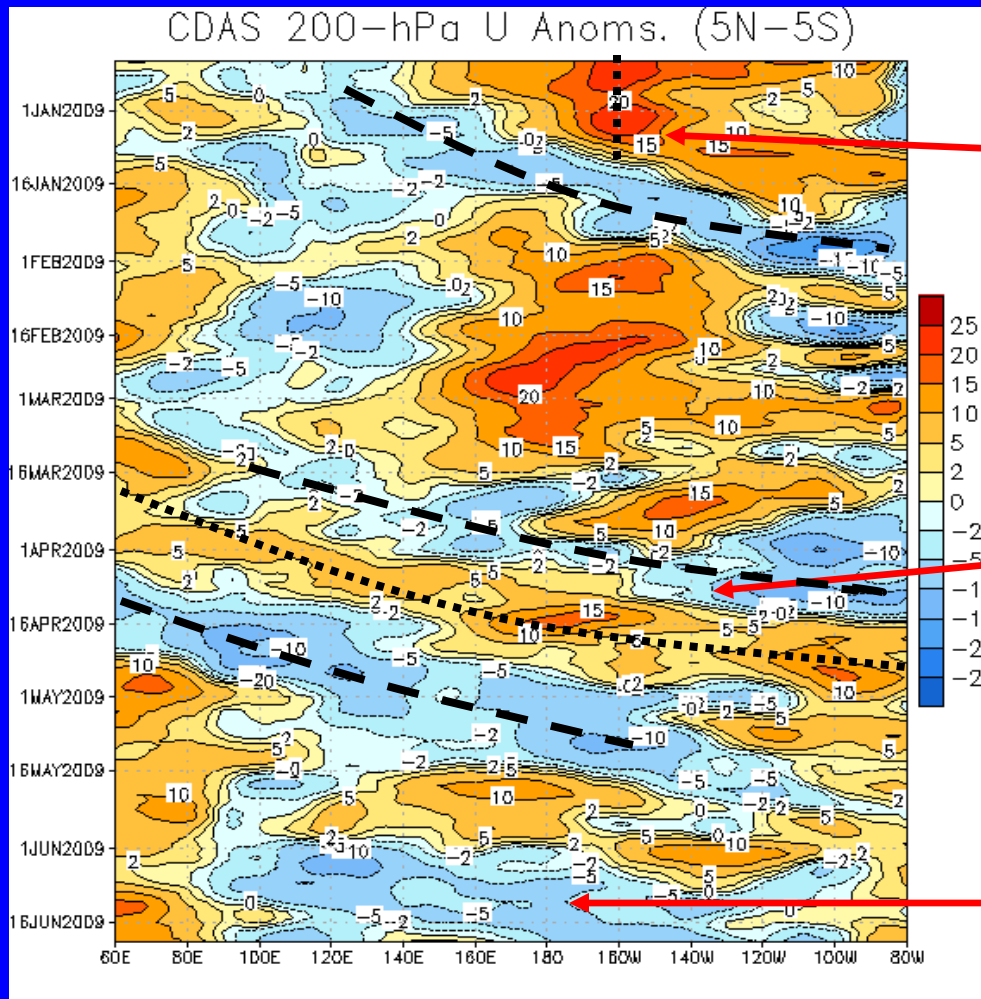


200-hPa Zonal Wind Anomalies (m s^{-1})

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

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

Time



Longitude

Westerly anomalies strengthened markedly in December near the Date Line and persisted into January. These anomalies are consistent with La Nina conditions.

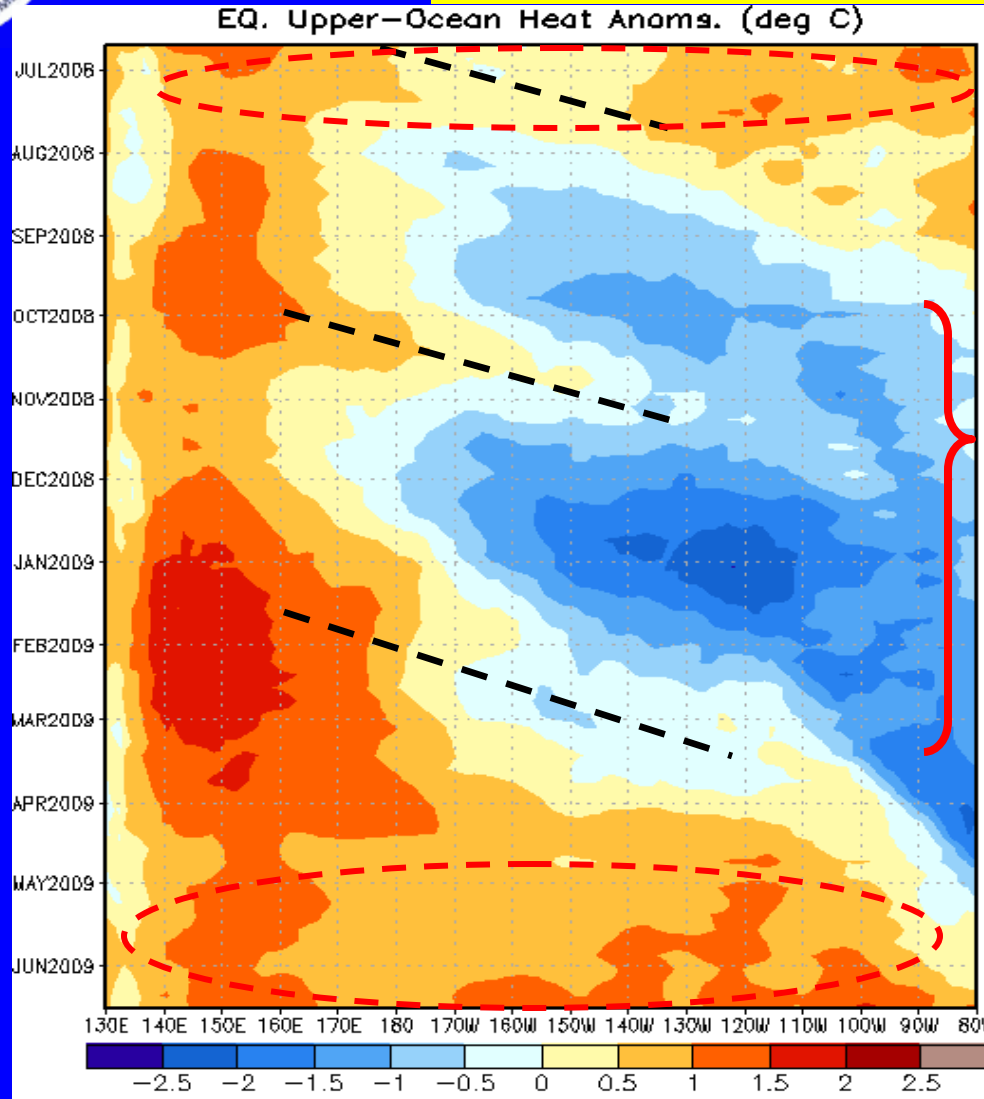
Easterly and westerly anomaly patterns consistent with MJO activity shifted eastward from mid-March to the beginning of May

Easterly anomalies have developed over much of the Pacific during the month of June.



Weekly Heat Content Evolution in the Equatorial Pacific

Time
↓



During June and July 2008, positive heat content anomalies encompassed much of the Pacific basin.

During August 2008, negative anomalies started to develop east of the Date Line and increased/expanded eastward through early 2009. There was a pause in this increase during October as a Kelvin wave shifted eastward.

An eastward propagating Kelvin wave during April and May resulted in increased heat content in the eastern half of the Pacific.

Positive anomalies in the Pacific have increased in strength and coverage during May and June 2009.



MJO Index -- Information

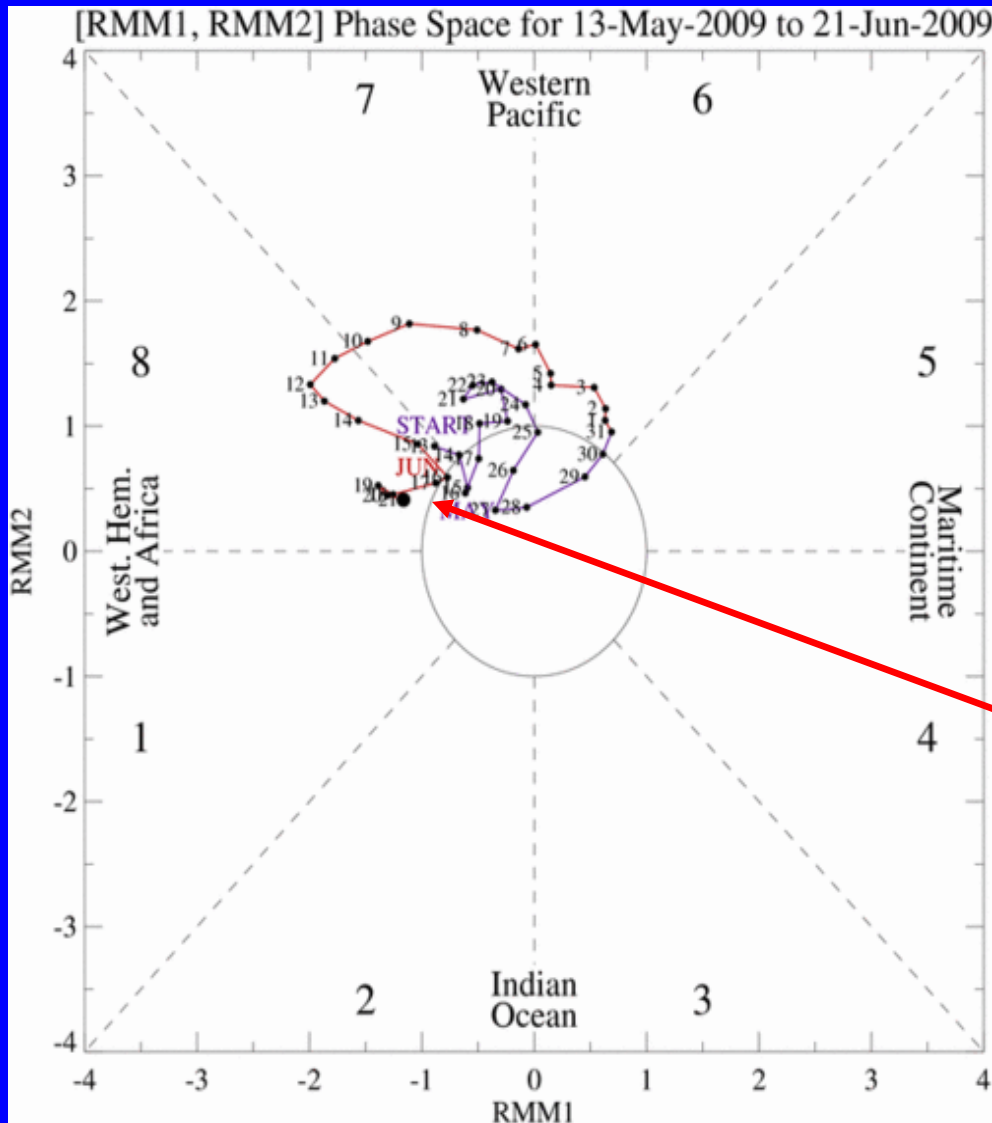
- The MJO index illustrated on the next several slides is the CPC version of the Wheeler and Hendon index (2004, hereafter WH2004).

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 nearly identical to that described in WH2004 but small deviations from the BMRC figure are possible at times due to differences in input data and methodology. These typically occur during weak MJO periods.
- 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

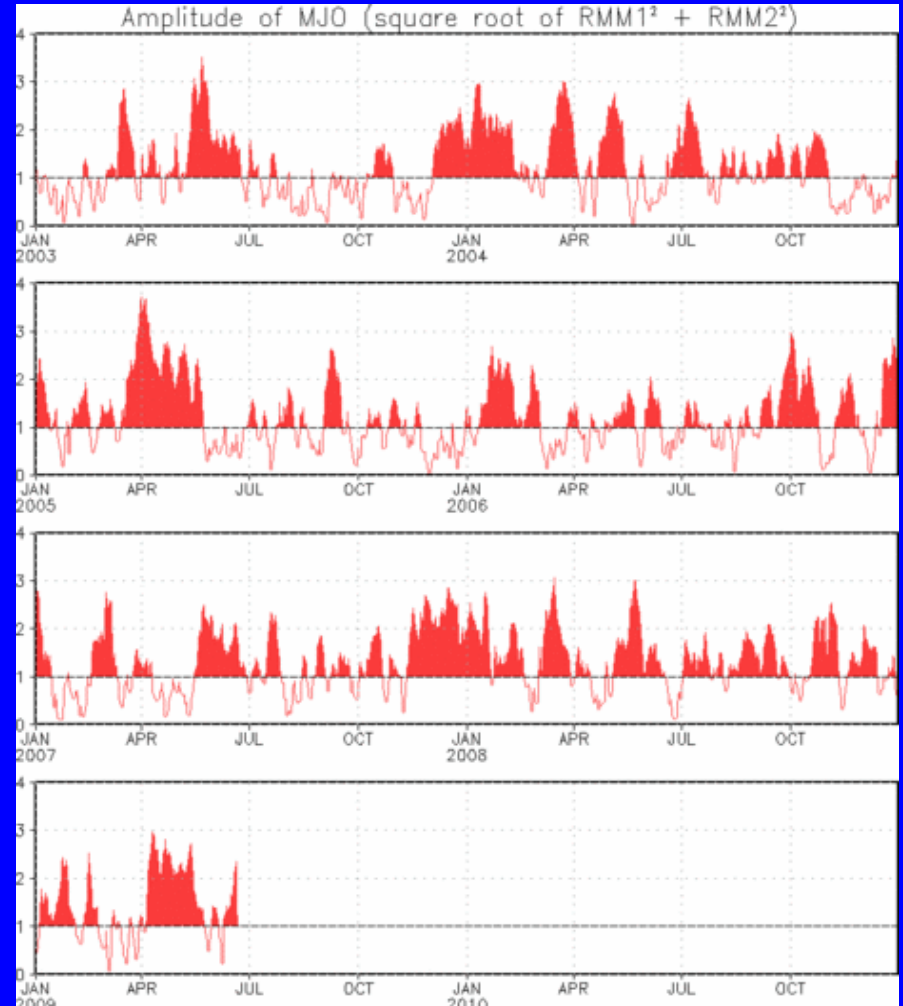
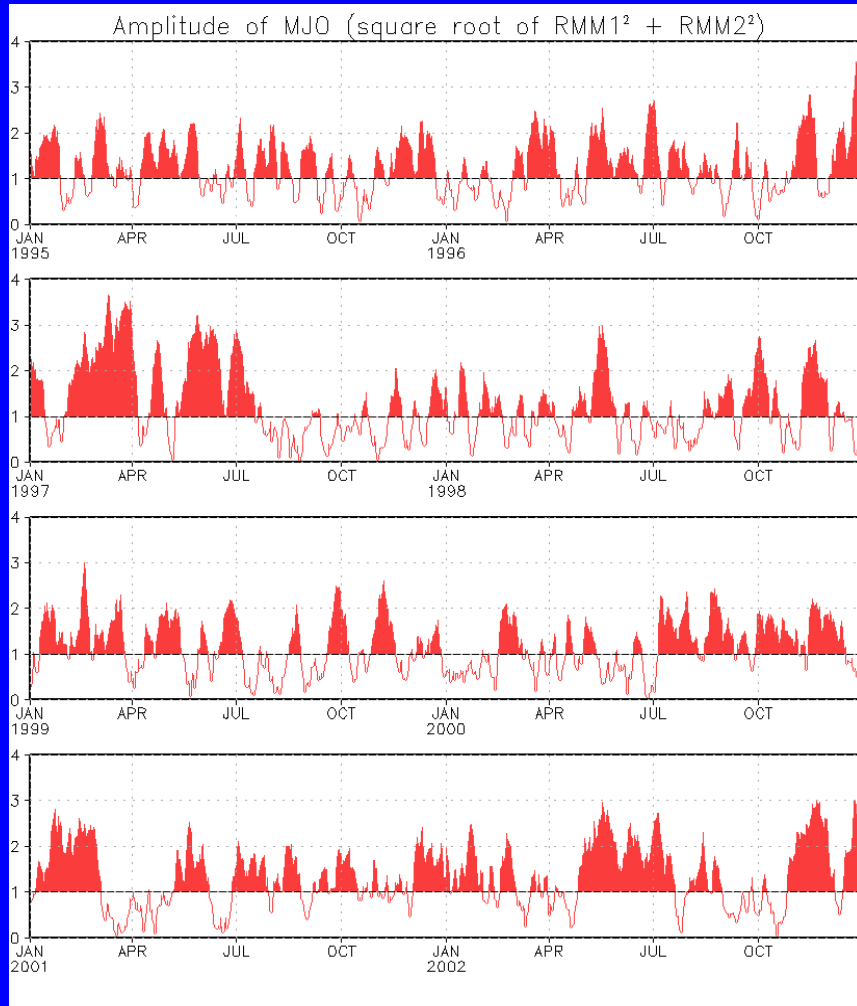


- The axes (RMM1 and RMM2) represent daily values of the principal components from the two leading modes
- The triangular areas indicate the location of the enhanced phase of the MJO
- Counter-clockwise motion is indicative of eastward propagation. Large dot most recent observation.
- Distance from the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

The MJO index decreased in amplitude during the past week with little 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

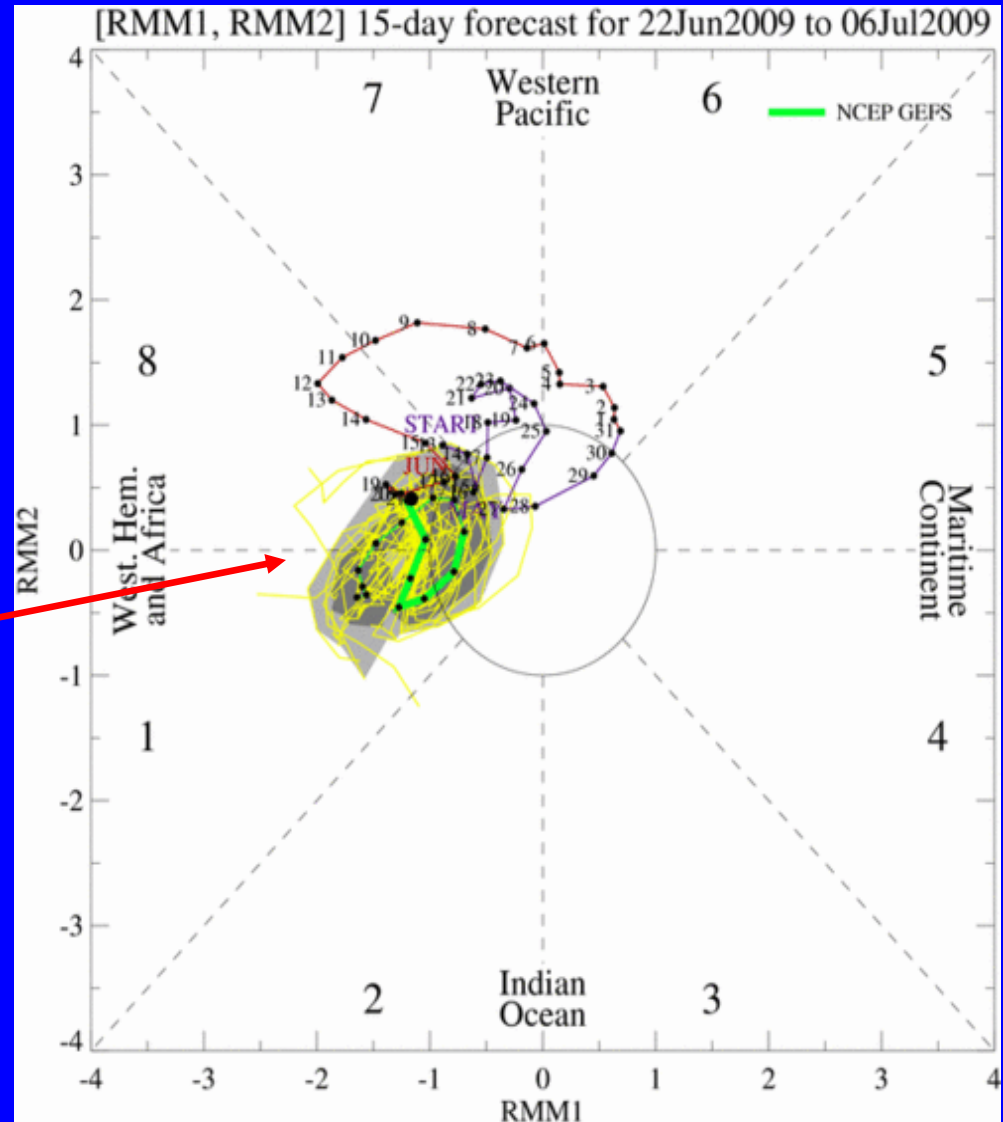
Yellow Lines – 20 Individual Members
Green Line – Ensemble Mean

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 GEFS forecasts indicate little coherent MJO signal during the next 1-2 weeks.

Little eastward propagation is indicated and the spread among the ensemble member solutions is large.

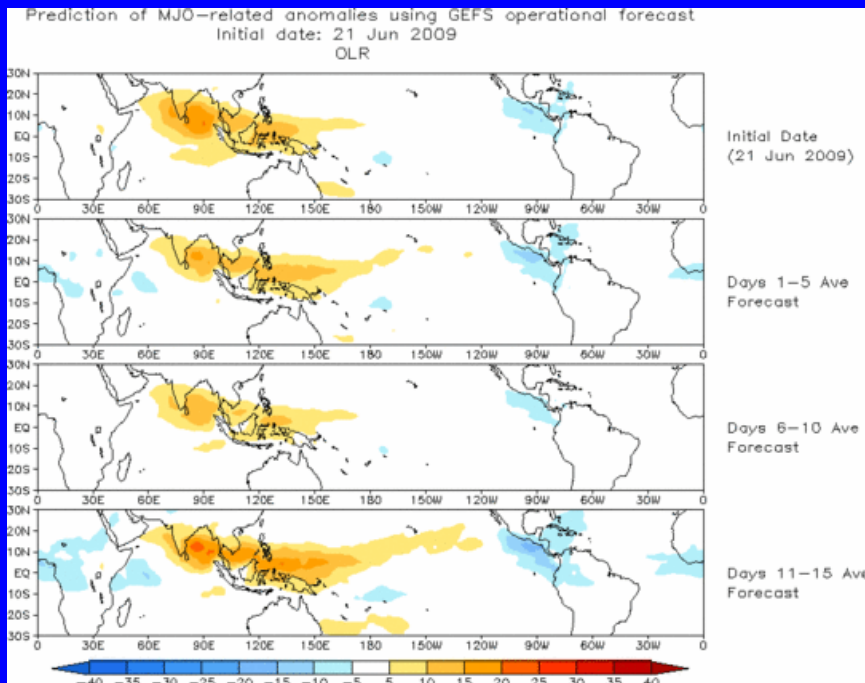




Ensemble Mean GFS MJO Forecast

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)

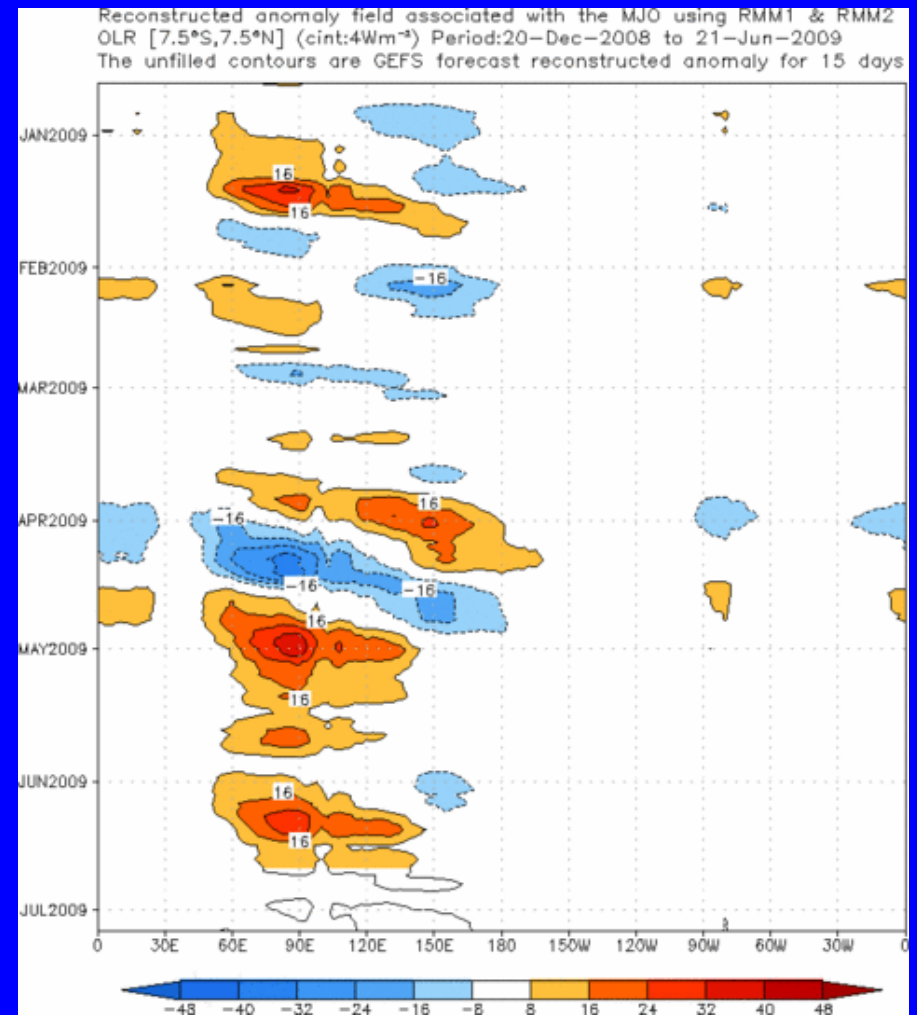
Spatial map of OLR anomalies for the next 15 days



Suppressed convection is forecast across the Indian Ocean, south Asia and the Maritime continent through the period.

Enhanced convection is forecast for Central America and equatorial Africa throughout 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





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)

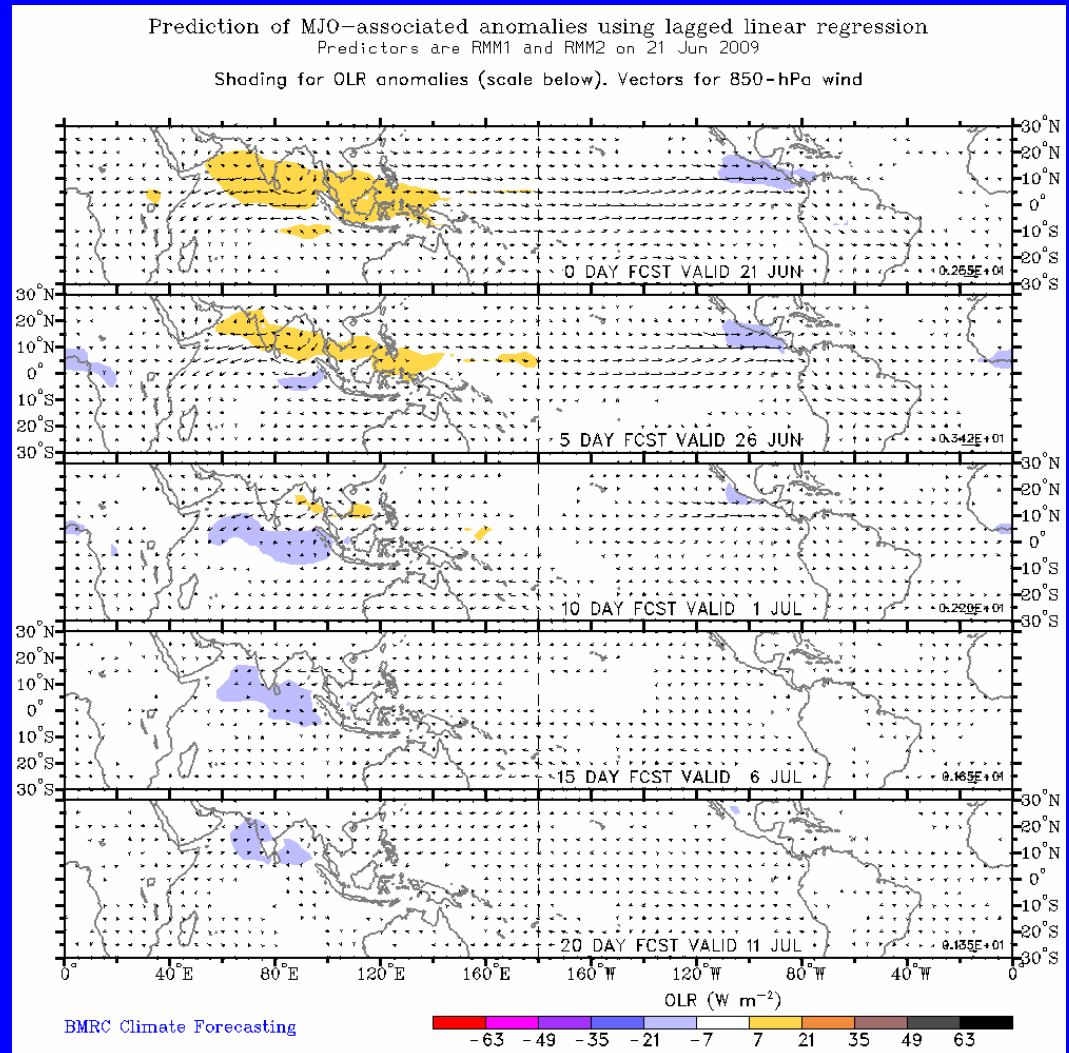
Spatial map of OLR anomalies and 850-hPa vectors for the next 20 days

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

A statistical forecast indicates weak MJO activity during the next 1-2 weeks.

Suppressed convection is forecast across parts of South Asia and the Maritime continent during Week-1 with enhanced convection developing in Week-2 across the Indian Ocean.

Enhanced convection is indicated across Central America.





MJO Composites – Global Tropics

Precipitation Anomalies (May-Sep)

850-hPa Wind Anomalies (May-Sep)

