

# COLOMBIA'S HYDROCLIMATOLOGY

Julián David Rojo Hernández  
C.E. MSc. Water Resources

National University of Colombia  
School of Geosciences and Environment-School of Mines

Medellín  
August 17 de 2012



UNIVERSIDAD  
**NACIONAL**  
DE COLOMBIA  
SEDE MEDELLÍN



  
POSGRADO EN APROVECHAMIENTO  
DE RECURSOS HIDRÁULICOS

# The general rule

“... Las estaciones se suceden de la misma manera que en la mayor parte de la zona tórrida; esto es, se conocen dos, verano é invierno: la última cuando llueve y la otra cuando deja de llover.

Los meses de lluvia en Antioquia principian a mediados de Marzo y terminan a mediados de Junio, para comenzar luego en Septiembre y acabar en los primeros días de Diciembre; pero esta regla está sujeta a numerosas variaciones, pues con frecuencia se invierten los tiempos, volviéndose lluviosos los días de verano y viceversa. A veces el año es húmedo en su mayor parte, y en ocasiones notable por su excesiva sequedad, muchos de los viejos habitantes del país creen haber observado, y aún lo afirman por la tradición de sus mayores, que los tiempos de lluvia abundante y de gran sequedad, están divididos por períodos casi fijos de siete a ocho años. Nos parece que tienen razón.”

Manuel Uribe Ángel (1881).



# COLOMBIA'S HYDROCLIMATOLOGY



CIENCIAS DE LA TIERRA

## LA HIDROCLIMATOLOGÍA DE COLOMBIA: UNA SÍNTESIS DESDE LA ESCALA INTER-DECADAL HASTA LA ESCALA DIURNA

por

Germán Poveda<sup>1</sup>

Resumen

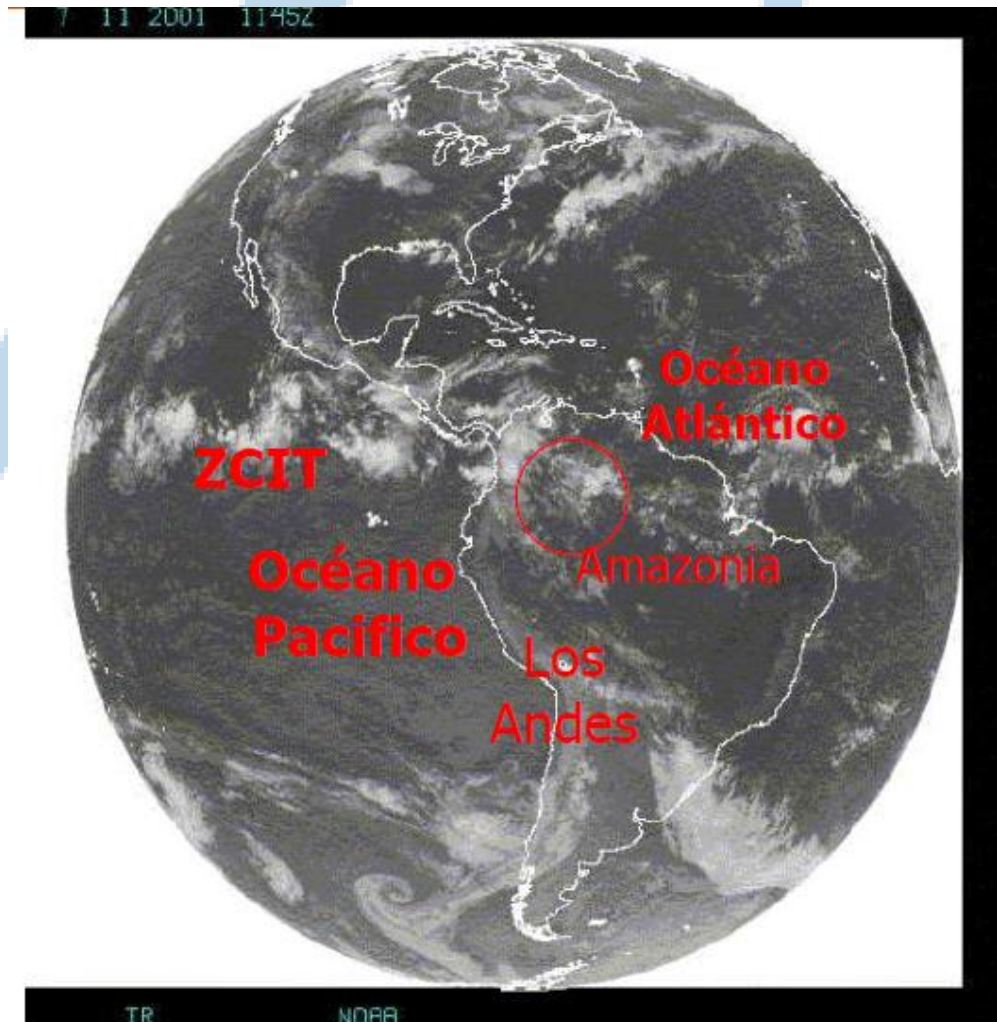
**Poveda, G.:** La hidroclimatología de Colombia: una síntesis desde la escala inter-decadal hasta la escala diurna. Rev. Acad. Colomb. Cienc. **28** (107): 201-222, 2004. ISSN: 0370-3908.

Se hace una revisión de la variabilidad de la hidro-climatología de Colombia, en escalas temporales que incluyen la escala interdecadal, principalmente afectada por la presencia de tendencias en las variables del clima del país, que evidencian el cambio climático. El análisis de la escala de tiempo interanual se centra en el estudio del fenómeno El Niño/Oscilación del Sur (ENSO) y la consistencia de sus efectos sobre las principales variables del ciclo hidrológico: precipitación, caudales medios y extremos de ríos, humedad de suelo y actividad vegetal. La escala de tiempo anual se centra en el análisis de la migración latitudinal de la Zona de Convergencia Intertropical, asociada con la actividad de los vientos alisios del este. Se precisa la influencia del chorro del Chocó sobre el ciclo anual de la hidroclimatología de Colombia, y se cuantifica el balance anual de largo plazo de la humedad atmosférica. La dinámica de los Sistemas Convectivos de Mesoescala se presenta en relación con el ciclo anual y con la actividad del chorro del Chocó. A la escala de tiempo intra-anual se presentan las evidencias de los efectos de la oscilación de 30-60 días y de las ondas tropicales del este sobre los registros de precipitación en Colombia. A la escala de variabilidad diurna se presentan las evidencias de la alta variabilidad de la precipitación sobre los Andes tropicales.

**Palabras clave:** Hidroclimatología, cambio global, El Niño/Oscilación del Sur (ENSO), Zona de Convergencia Intertropical, chorro del Chocó.

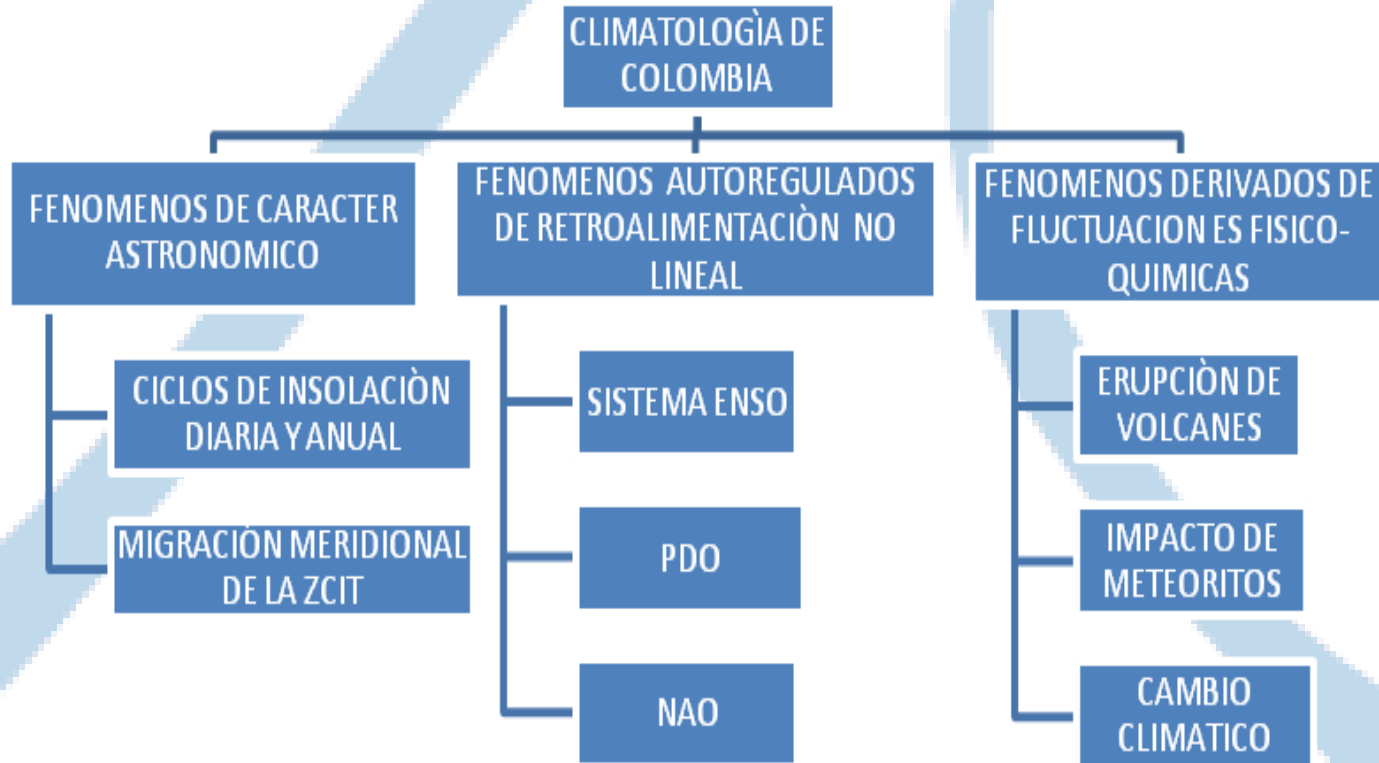


# COLOMBIA'S HYDROCLIMATOLOGY (I)



# COLOMBIA'S HYDROCLIMATOLOGY

## (II)

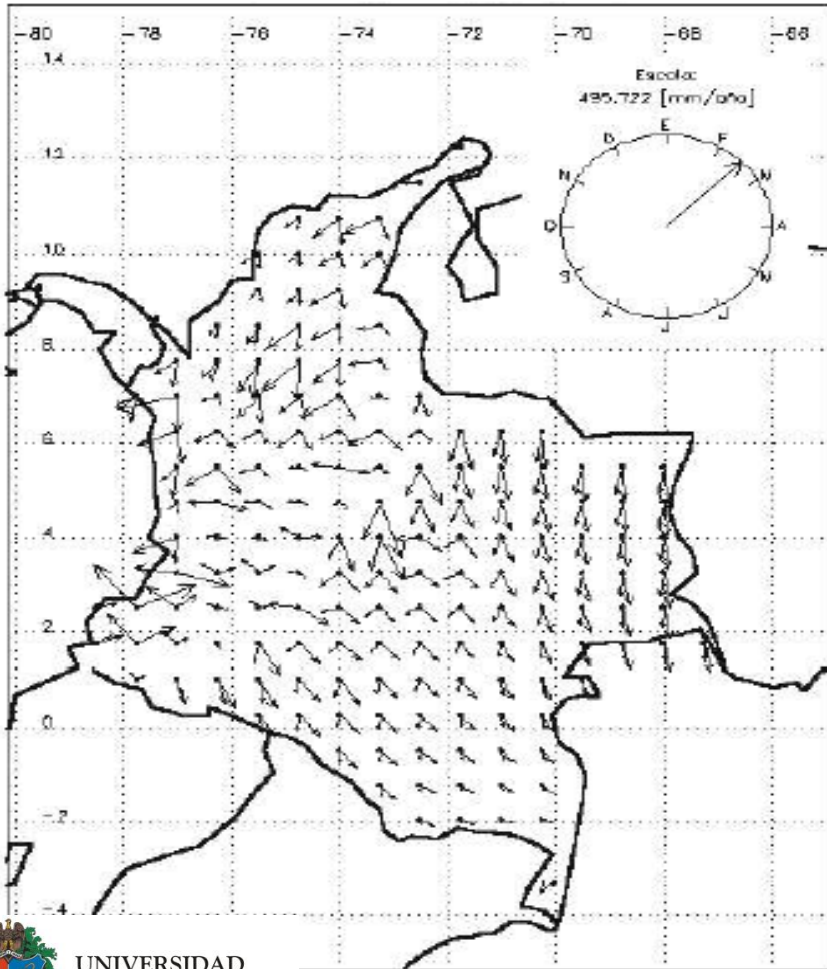


(Poveda, 2004)

# COLOMBIA'S HYDROCLIMATOLOGY (II)

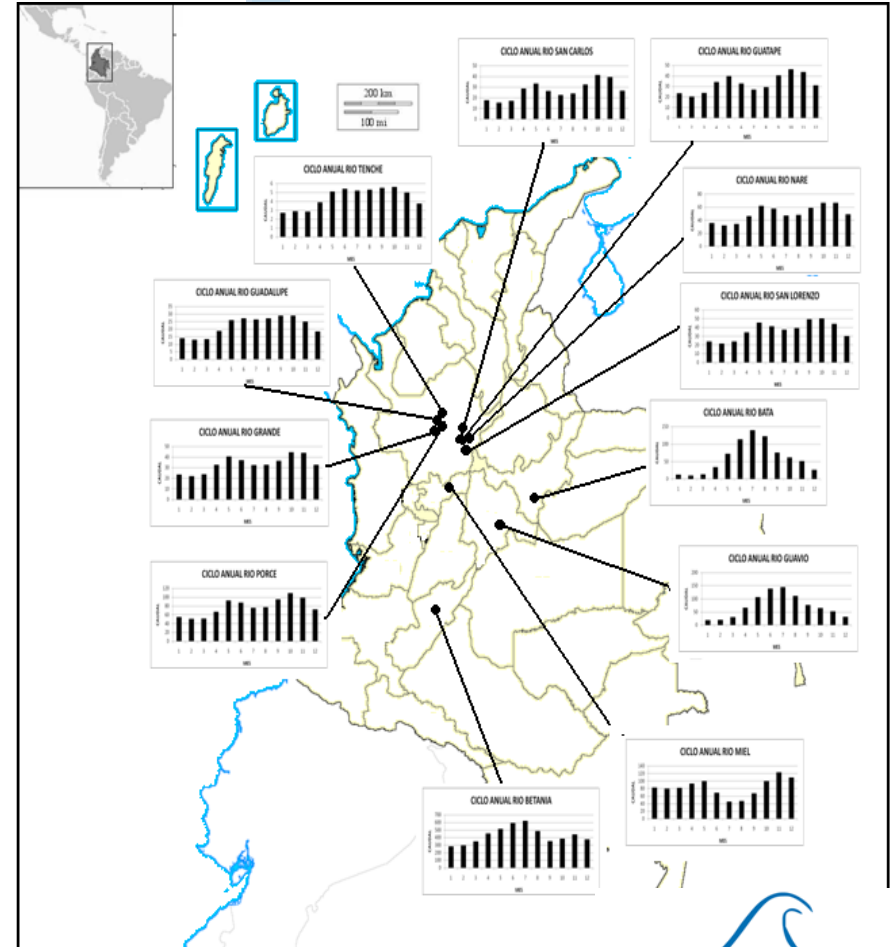
## ANNUAL CYCLE

### Precipitation



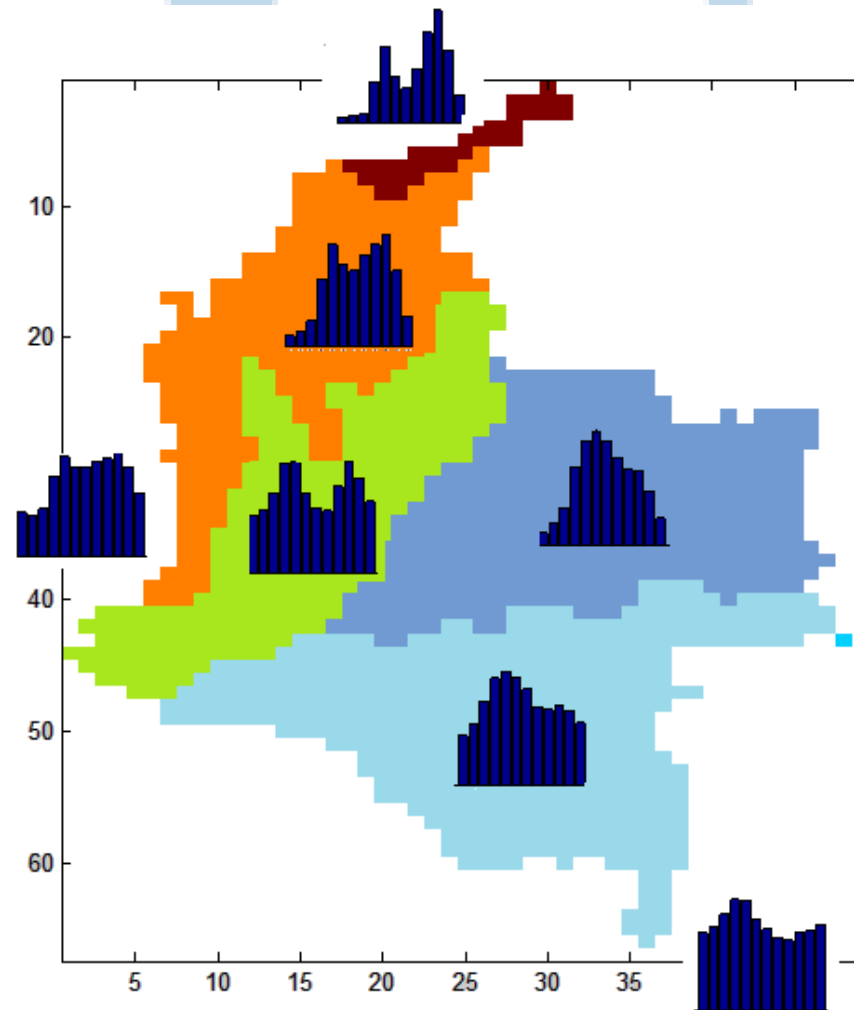
Mejía et al. (1999)

### River discharges



Rojo & Carvajal. (2010)

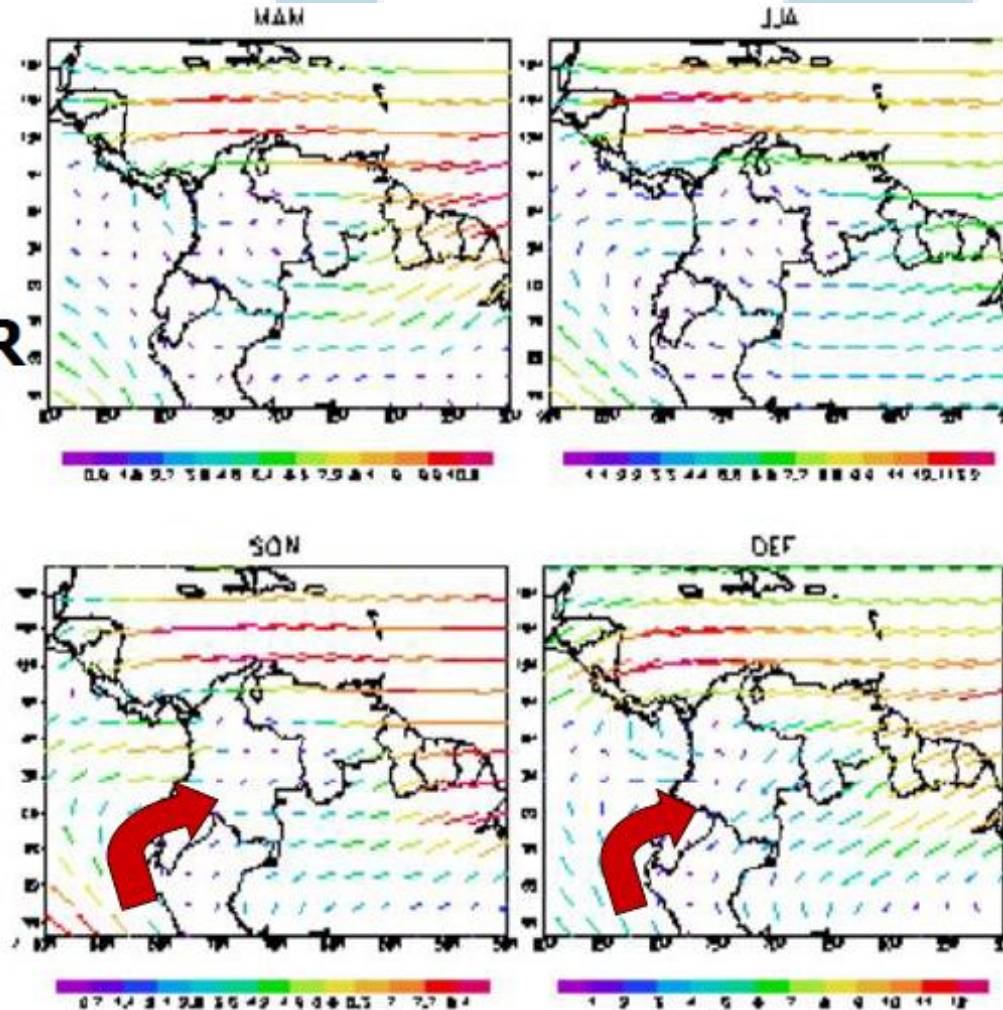
# COLOMBIA'S HYDROCLIMATOLOGY (IV) ANNUAL CYCLE



# COLOMBIA'S HYDROCLIMATOLOGY

## (IV)-CHOCO LOW-LEVEL JET

**Datos:**  
**Reanálisis**  
**NCEP/NCAR**  
**1950-1998**



Poveda (1998)







## On the Existence of Lloró (the Rainiest Locality on Earth): Enhanced Ocean-Land-Atmosphere Interaction by a Low-Level Jet

Germán Poveda and Oscar J. Mesa

Postgrado en Aprovechamiento de Recursos Hidráulicos, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Medellín, Colombia

**Abstract.** The department of Chocó, on the Colombian Pacific coast experiences 8,000 to 13,000 mm of average annual precipitation. Lloró (5°30'N, 76°32'W, 120m) has received above 12,700 mm (1952-1960). Using the NCEP/NCAR Reanalysis data, we show that the ocean-land-atmosphere interaction over the easternmost fringe of the tropical Pacific, enhanced by the dynamics of a low-level westerly jet ("CHOCO"), contributes to explain the existence of such record-breaking hydrological region. Deep convection develops from low-level moisture convergence by the CHOCO jet, combined with high-level easterly trade winds, orographic lifting on the western Andes, low surface pressures and warm air. Precipitation is organized in mesoscale convective complexes, in turn dynamically linked to the jet. The strength of the CHOCO jet (centered at 5°N) is associated with the gradient of surface air temperatures between western Colombia and the Niño 1+2 region, thereby exhibiting strong annual and interannual variability, which contributes to explaining Colombia's hydro-climatology and anomalies during ENSO.

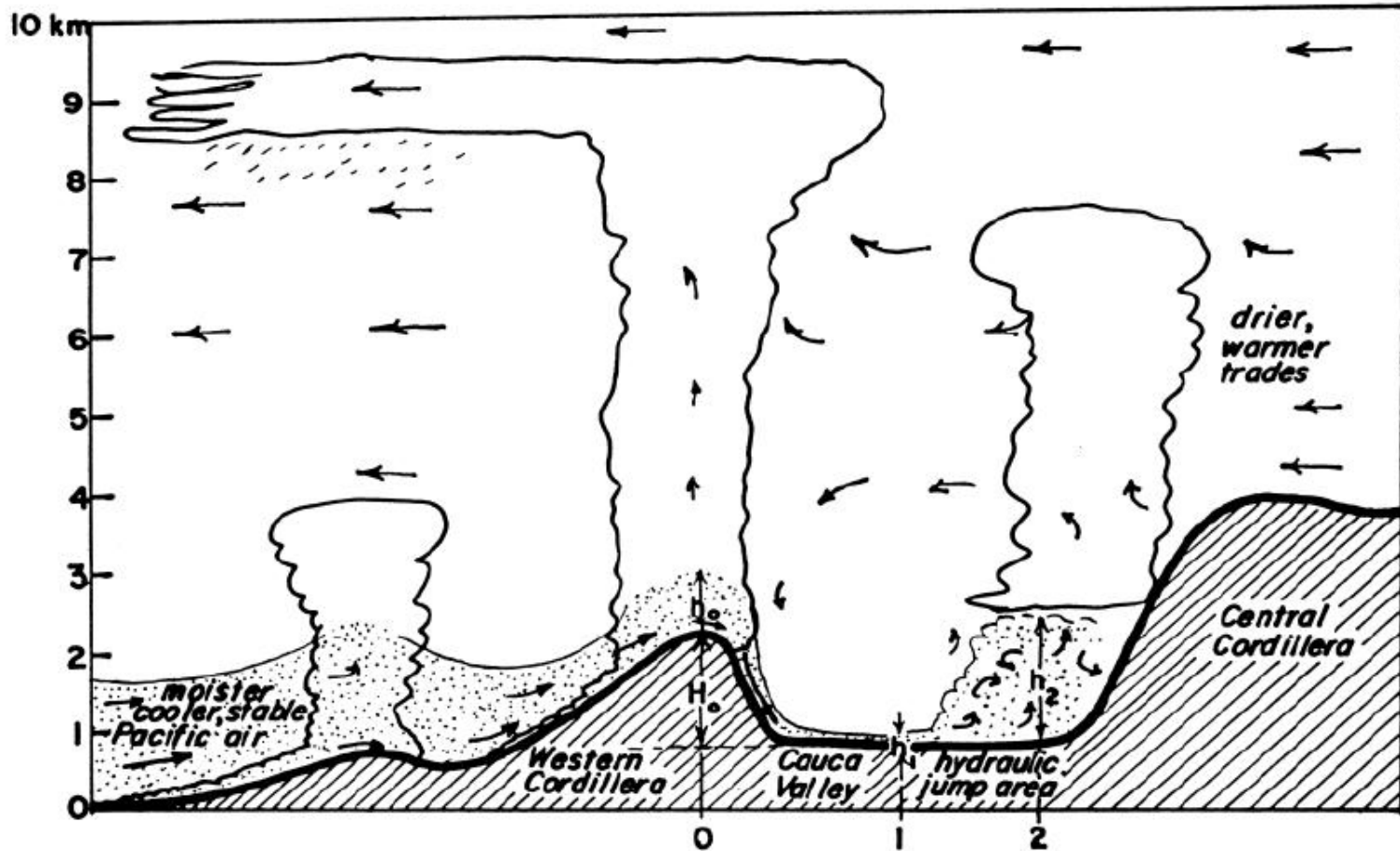
America, deserves documentation and understanding. We explore the main mechanisms of the ocean-land-atmosphere interaction that may contribute toward those ends. The presence of the Intertropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) is of course a major control, but finer analysis is in order.

### The low-level westerly "CHOCO" jet

The southerly trade winds over the Eastern Pacific cross the Equator due to the predominant position of the ITCZ north of the Equator [Philander *et al.*, 1996; Waliser and Somerville, 1994]. The corresponding change of the sign of the Coriolis acceleration, the predominant north-south coast orientation, the land-sea temperature, and friction gradients contribute to explain the westerly winds prevailing once they enter the northern hemisphere tropics [Schott, 1931; Hastenrath and Lamb, 1977; Hastenrath, 1991]. This explains the curvature of the trade winds coming from the Southern Hemisphere once they cross the Equator. How to explain the curvature of the trade wind jet over the Caribbean, across the Central American isthmus



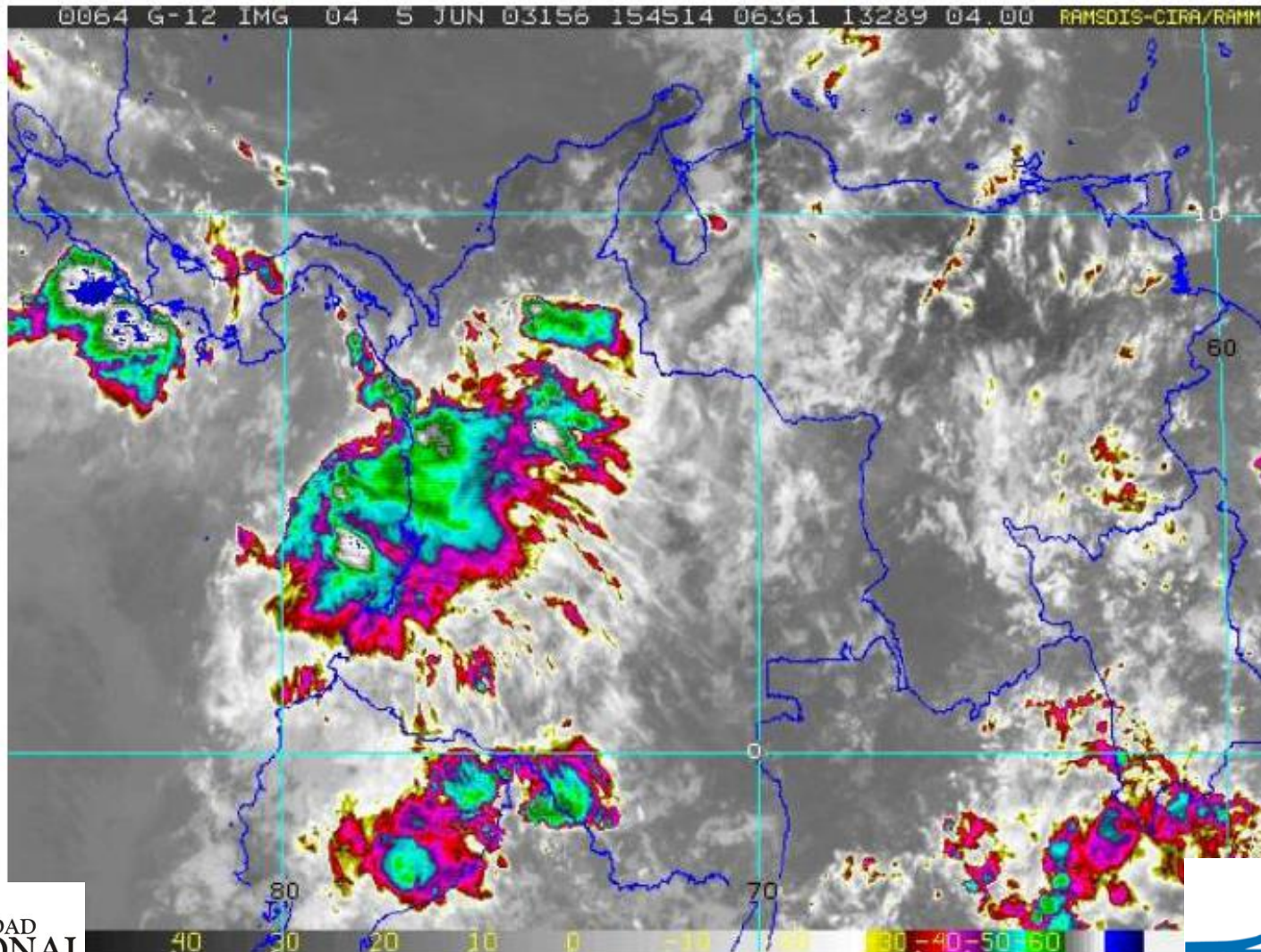
# CHOCO LOW-LEVEL JET & ANDES



(López & Howell, 1967)



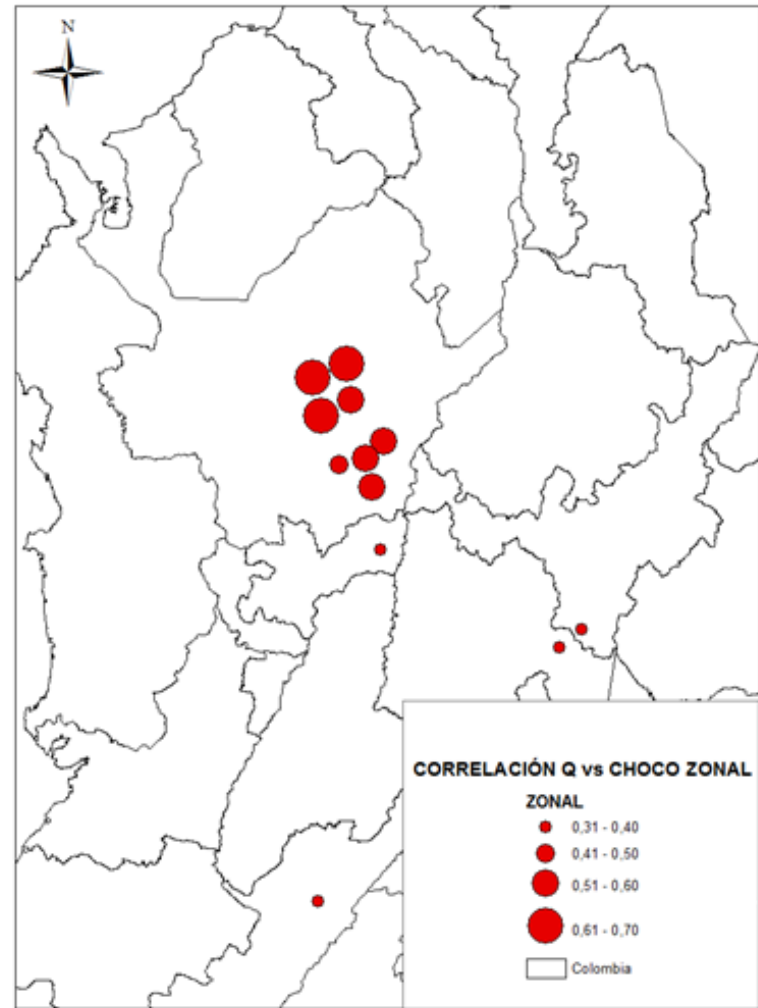
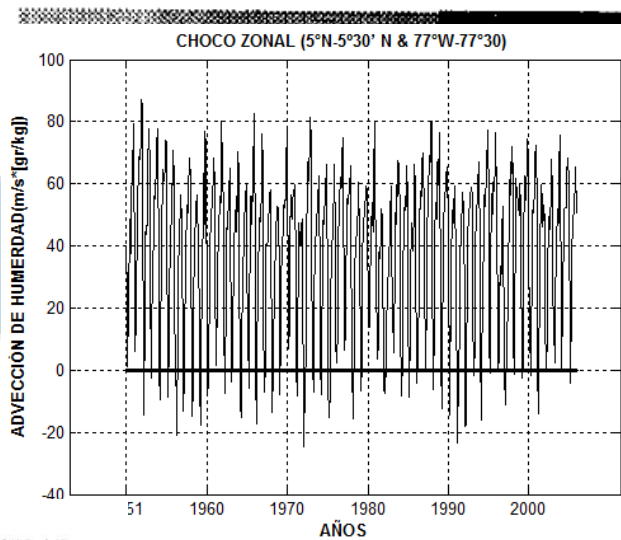
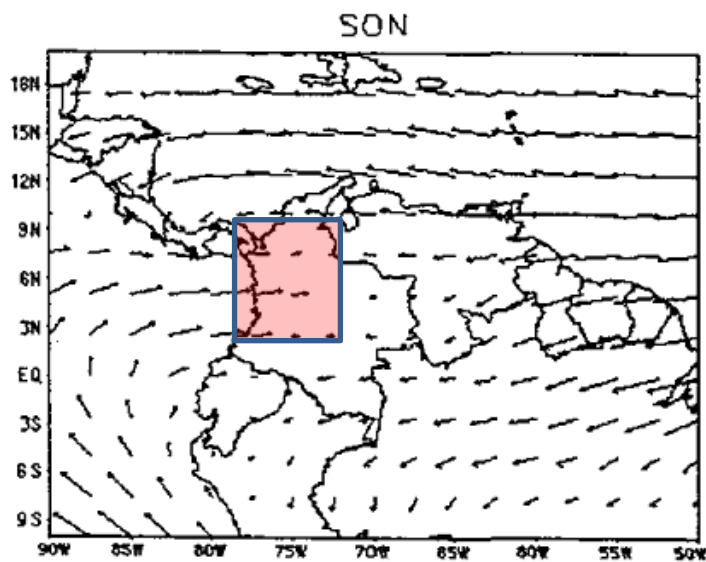
# CHOCO LOW-LEVEL JET & MESOSCALE CONVECTIVE SYSTEM



Poveda et al (2006)



# CHOCO LOW-LEVEL JET INDEX



(Rendón, 2001), Poveda et al (2006)





## Characteristics of Amazonian Climate: Main Features

Carlos A. Nobre, Guillermo O. Obregón, and José A. Marengo

*Centro de Ciências do Sistema Terrestre, Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas Espaciais, Cachoeira Paulista, Brasil*

Rong Fu

*Jackson School of Geosciences, University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas, USA*

Gérman Poveda

*Escuela de Geociencias y Medio Ambiente, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Medellín, Colombia*



This chapter summarizes our current knowledge on the mean climatological features of Amazonia. Significant uncertainties remain in our understanding of the complex dynamics of climate and climate variability in that region, which are due, in part, to the lack of observational data. The strong seasonality of the rainfall and the relatively rapid transition between the wet and dry season associated with onset of the rainy season is related to the establishment of the South America Monsoon System (SAMS). The SAMS is controlled by large-scale thermodynamic conditions influenced by the near-equatorial sea surface temperature (SST). It has been suggested that land-surface dryness in the dry season is the main cause of the delay in the onset of the subsequent wet season. The 30- to 60-day oscillation is the major mode of intraseasonal variability. Interannual variability of the hydroclimatic system is strongly related to El Niño–Southern Oscillation. More generally, tropical Pacific and Atlantic SSTs control rainfall variability in Amazonia, and SW Atlantic SST anomalies influence the variability of the South Atlantic Convergence Zone (SACZ). Land surface-atmosphere interactions have been proposed as a possible dynamical mechanism for the unexplained variance at the annual and interannual timescales. At decadal and interdecadal timescales, rainfall variability is related to the Pacific Decadal Oscillation mainly over the southern portions, and linked to the North Atlantic Oscillation. At paleoclimate timescales, there is large uncertainty on major aspects of rainfall variability over tropical South America. For instance, there remains uncertainty on the basic character of rainfall anomalies over Amazonia, whether drier or wetter, during the Last Glacial Maximum, and paleoclimate reconstructions still suffer from lack of data.

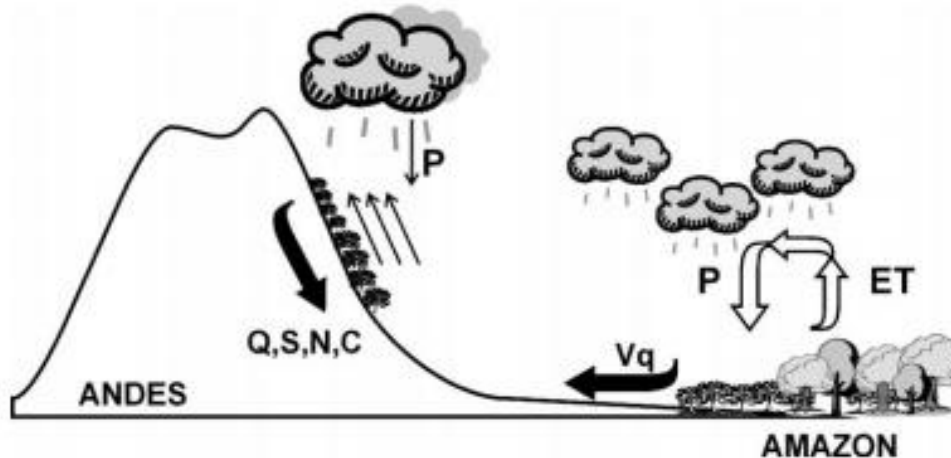
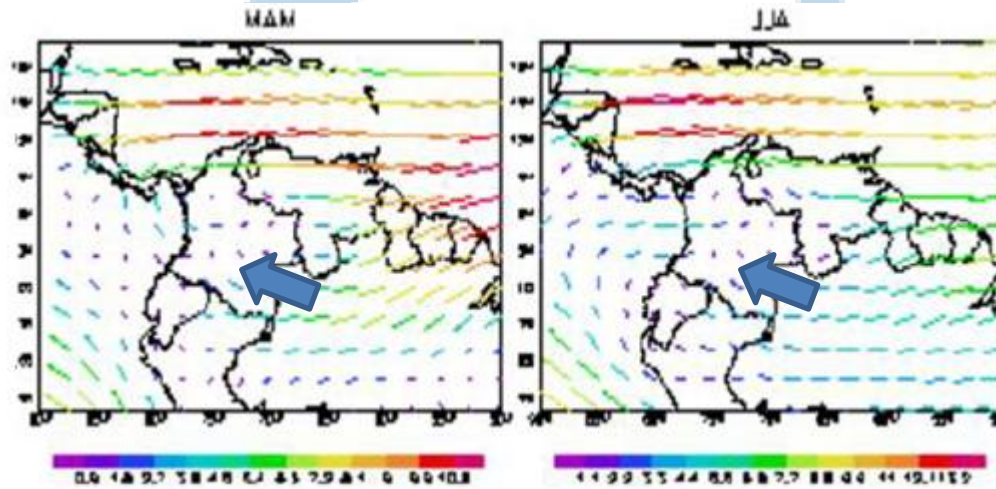


### 1. INTRODUCTION

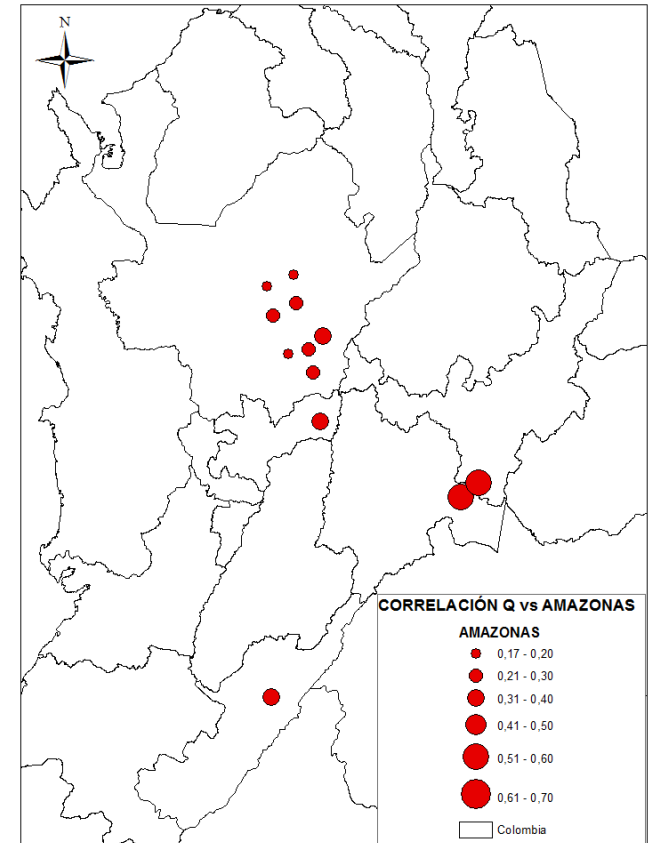
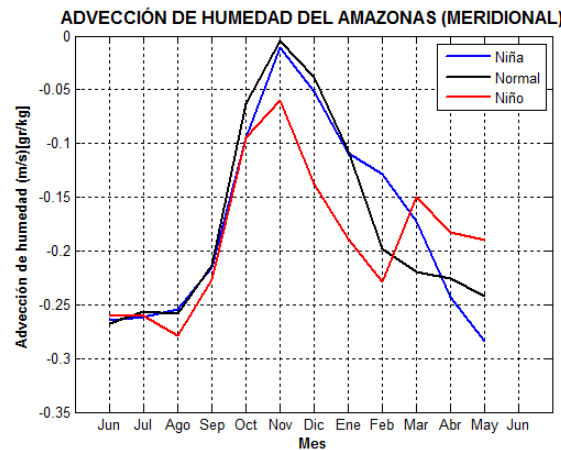
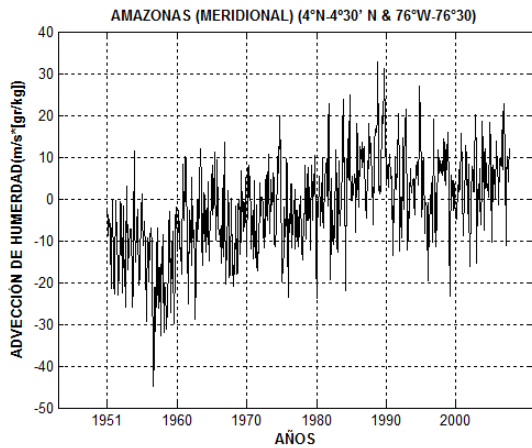
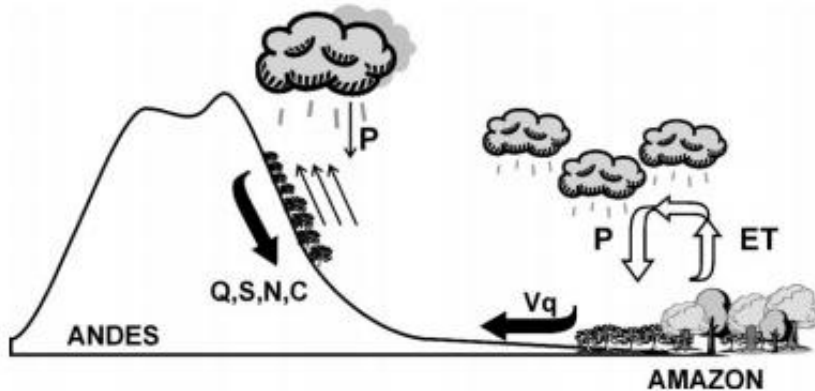
Amazonia and Global Change  
Geophysical Monograph Series 186  
Copyright 2009 by the American Geophysical Union.  
10.1029/2008GM000720

The Amazon basin is one of the three quasi-permanent centers of intense convection embedded in the equatorial trough zone. It plays a pivotal role in the functioning of the

# COLOMBIA'S HYDROCLIMATOLOGY (V) LAND SURFACE-ATMOSPHERE INTERACTIONS IN THE AMAZON REGION OF COLOMBIA



# AMAZON MOISTURE TRANSPORT BY THE TRADE WINDS IN COLOMBIA

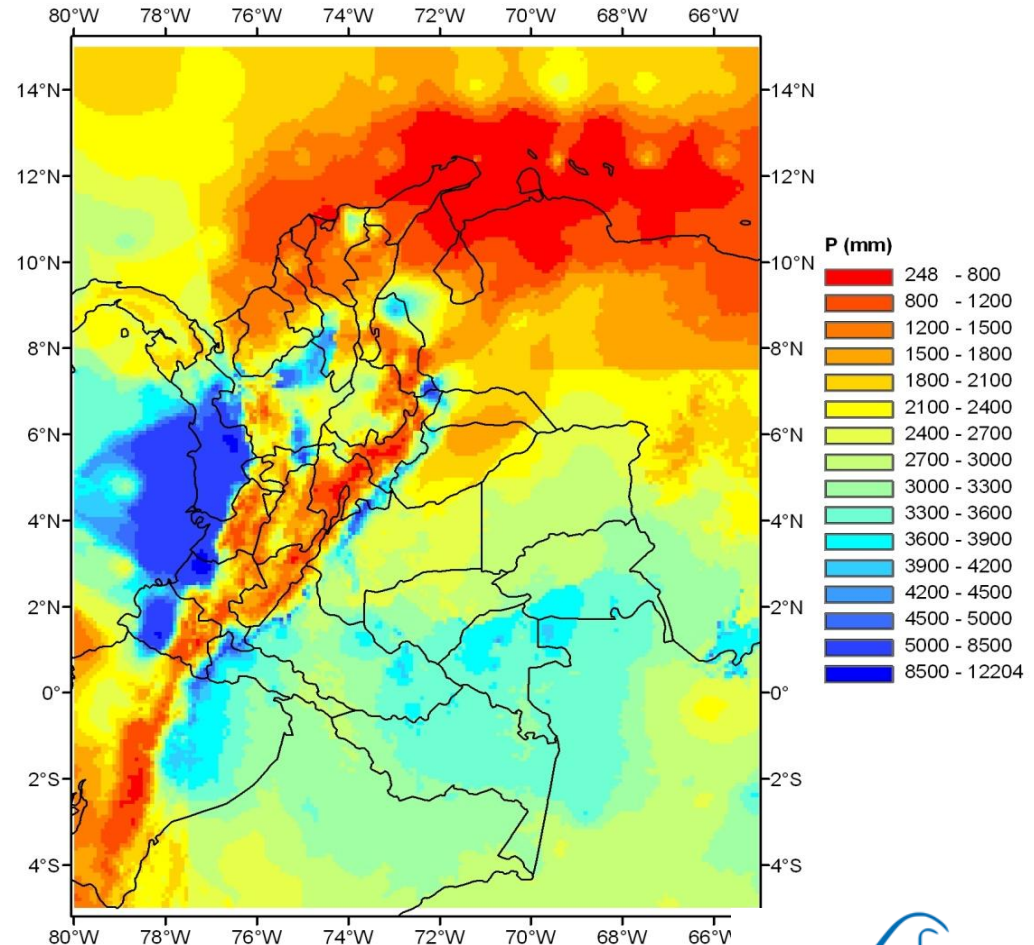
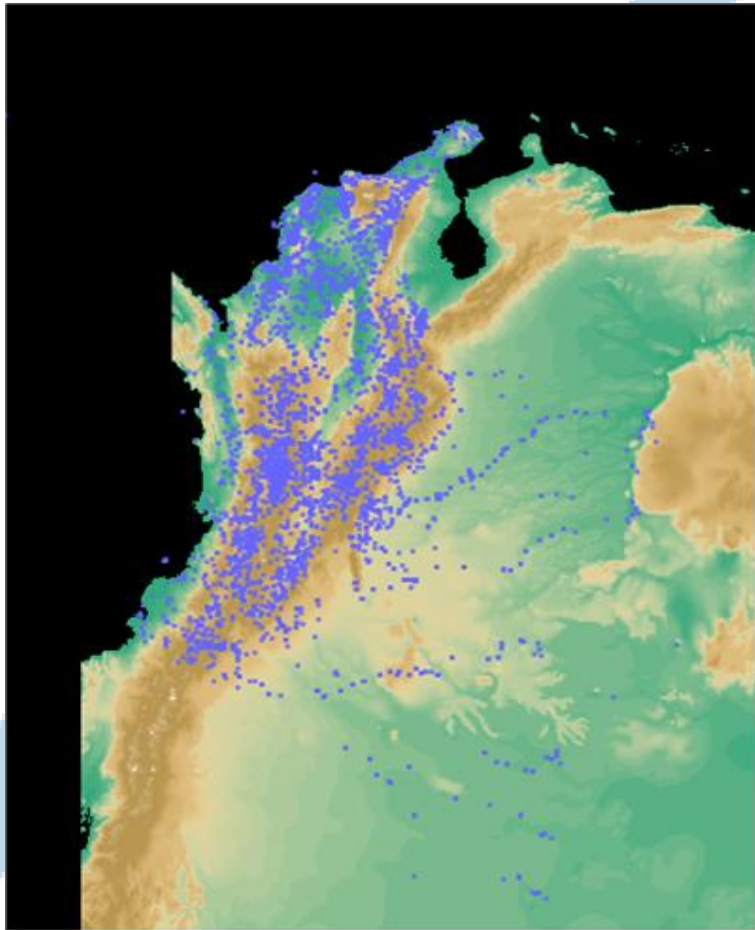


Poveda et al. (2006)



# COLOMBIA'S HYDROCLIMATOLOGY

## (IV)-DISTRIBUTION OF PRECIPITATION





## Seasonality in ENSO-related precipitation, river discharges, soil moisture, and vegetation index in Colombia

Germán Poveda

Posgrado en Aprovechamiento de Recursos Hidráulicos, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Medellín, Colombia

Alvaro Jaramillo

Centro Nacional de Investigaciones del Café, Cenicafe, Chinchiná, Colombia

Marta María Gil, Natalia Quiceno, and Ricardo I. Mantilla

Posgrado en Aprovechamiento de Recursos Hidráulicos, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Medellín, Colombia

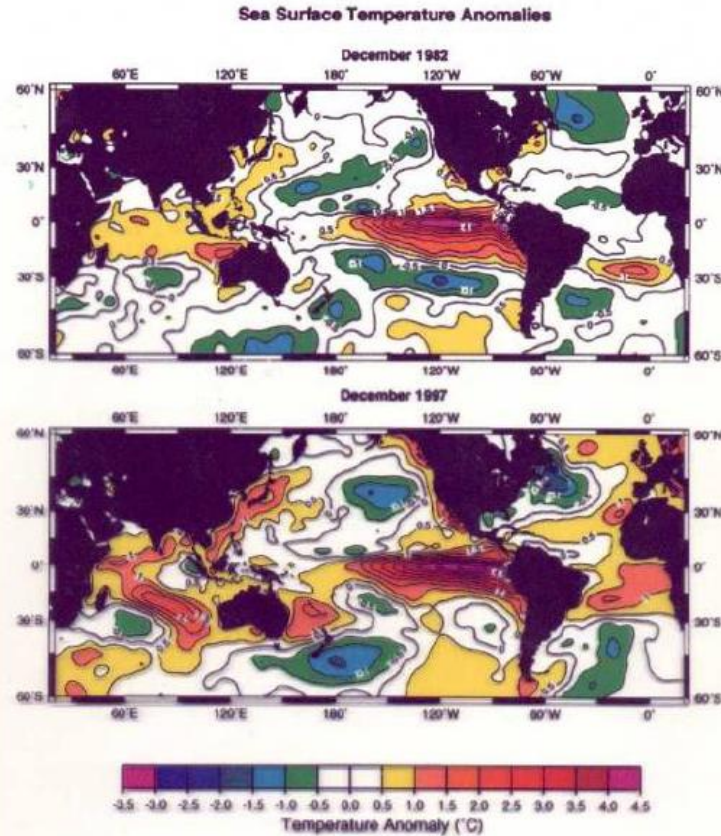


**Abstract.** An analysis of hydrologic variability in Colombia shows different seasonal effects associated with El Niño/Southern Oscillation (ENSO) phenomenon. Spectral and cross-correlation analyses are developed between climatic indices of the tropical Pacific Ocean and the annual cycle of Colombia's hydrology: precipitation, river flows, soil moisture, and the Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI). Our findings indicate stronger anomalies during December–February and weaker during March–May. The effects of ENSO are stronger for streamflow than for precipitation, owing to concomitant effects on soil moisture and evapotranspiration. We studied time variability of 10-day average volumetric soil moisture, collected at the tropical Andes of central Colombia at depths of 20 and 40 cm, in coffee growing areas characterized by shading vegetation (“shaded coffee”), forest, and sunlit coffee. The annual and interannual variability of soil moisture are highly intertwined for the period 1997–1999, during strong El Niño and La Niña events. Soil moisture exhibited greater negative anomalies during 1997–1998 El Niño, being strongest during the two dry seasons that normally occur in central Colombia. Soil moisture deficits were more drastic at zones covered by sunlit coffee than at those covered by forest and shaded coffee. Soil moisture responds to wetter than normal precipitation conditions during La Niña 1998–1999, reaching maximum levels throughout that period. The probability density function of soil moisture records is highly skewed and exhibits different kinds of multimodality depending upon land cover type. NDVI exhibits strong negative anomalies throughout the year during El Niños, in particular during September–November (year 0) and June–August (year 0). The strong negative relation between NDVI and El Niño has enormous implications for carbon, water, and energy budgets over the region, including the tropical Andes and Amazon River basin.

# El Fenómeno del el Niño (ENSO)

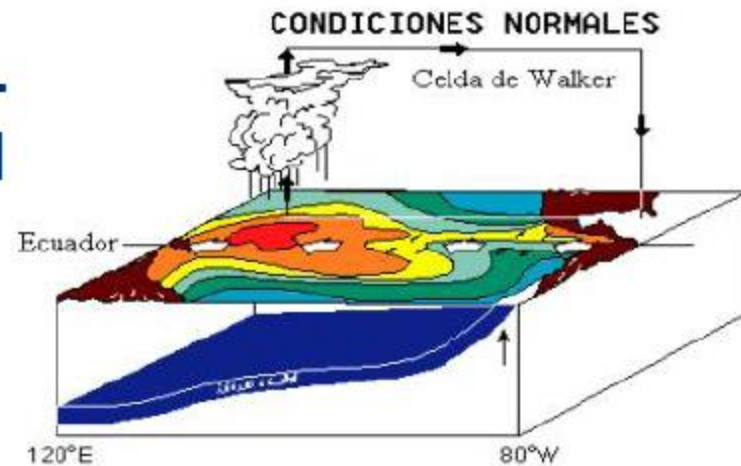
El Niño -  
Oscilación  
del Sur  
(ENSO)

- El Niño
- La Niña

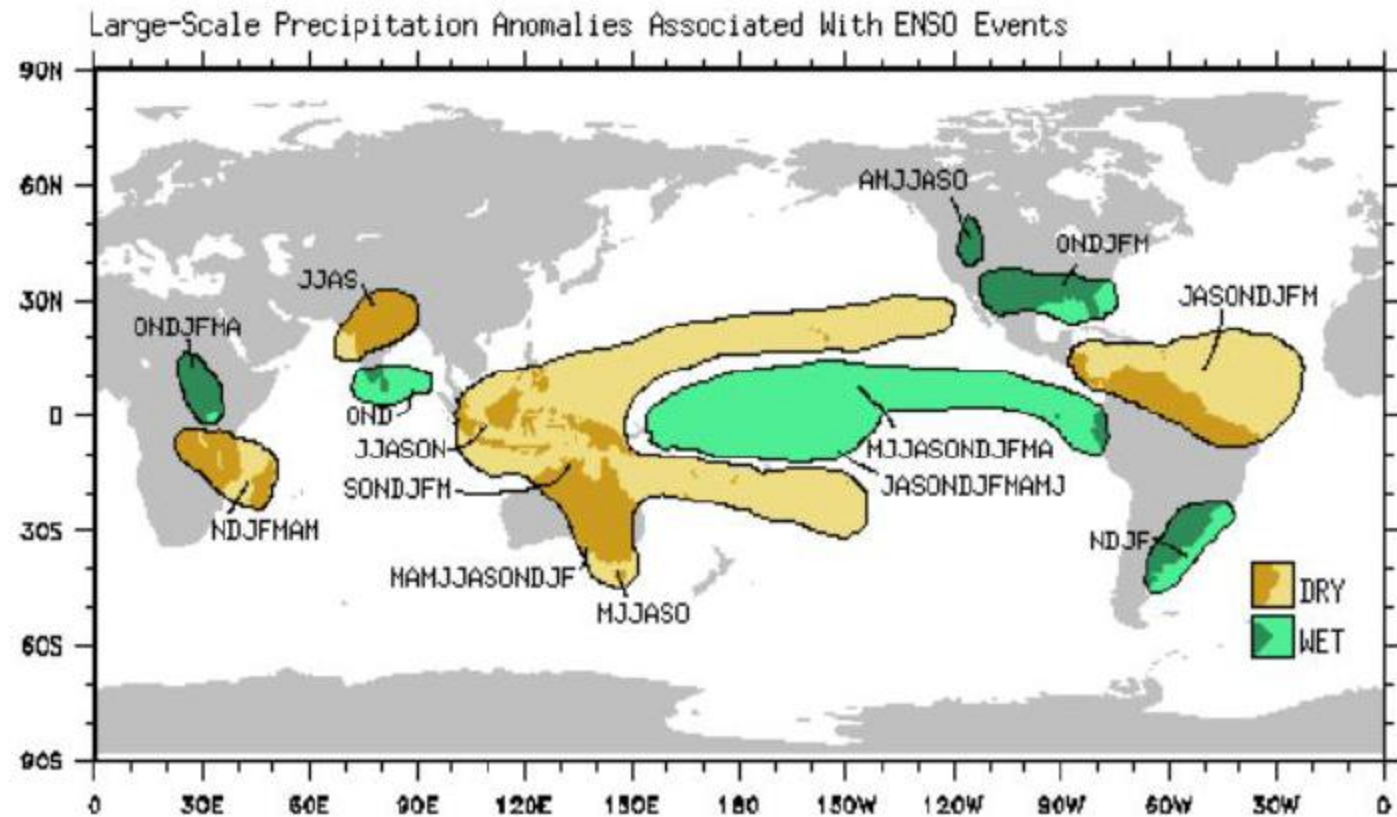


# El Niño/Oscilación del Sur (ENSO)

- Fenómeno natural océano-atmósfera Pacífico tropical
- Frecuencia 3-4 años
- El Niño: Calentamiento aguas del mar.
- La Niña: Enfriamiento
- Oscilación Sur: Presiones atmosféricas (SOI).
- Control interanual clima de la Tierra.



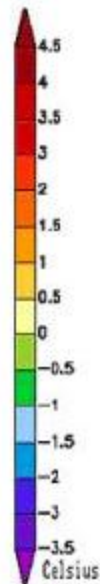
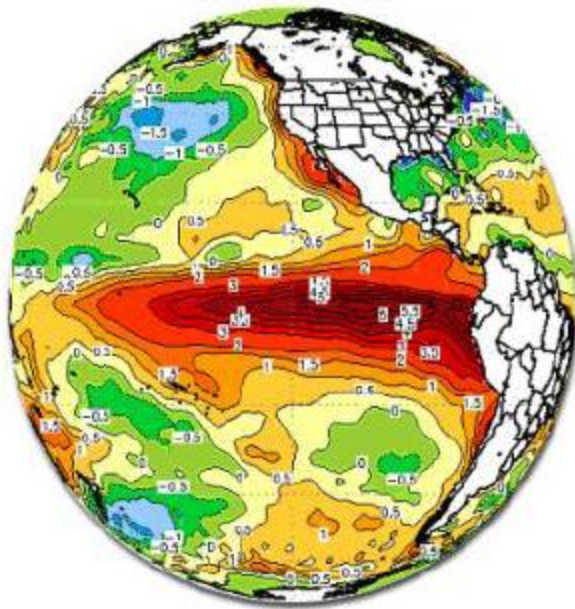
# Efectos de El Niño en la Precipitación Global



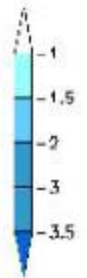
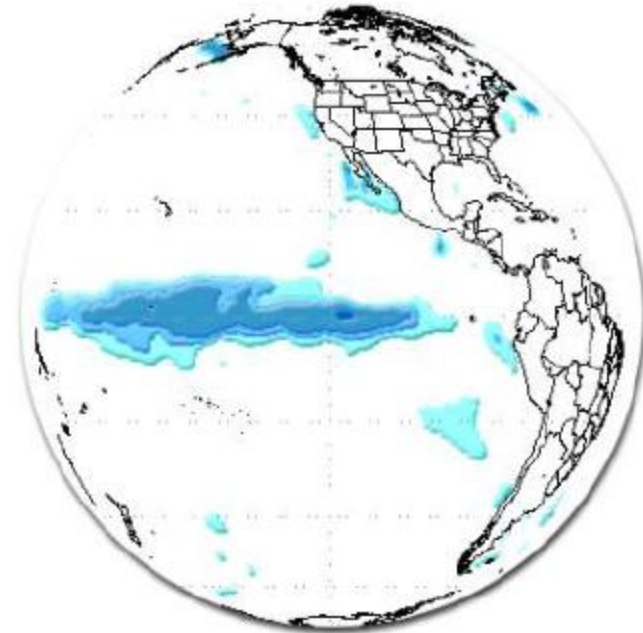
# El Niño y La Niña

## El Niño

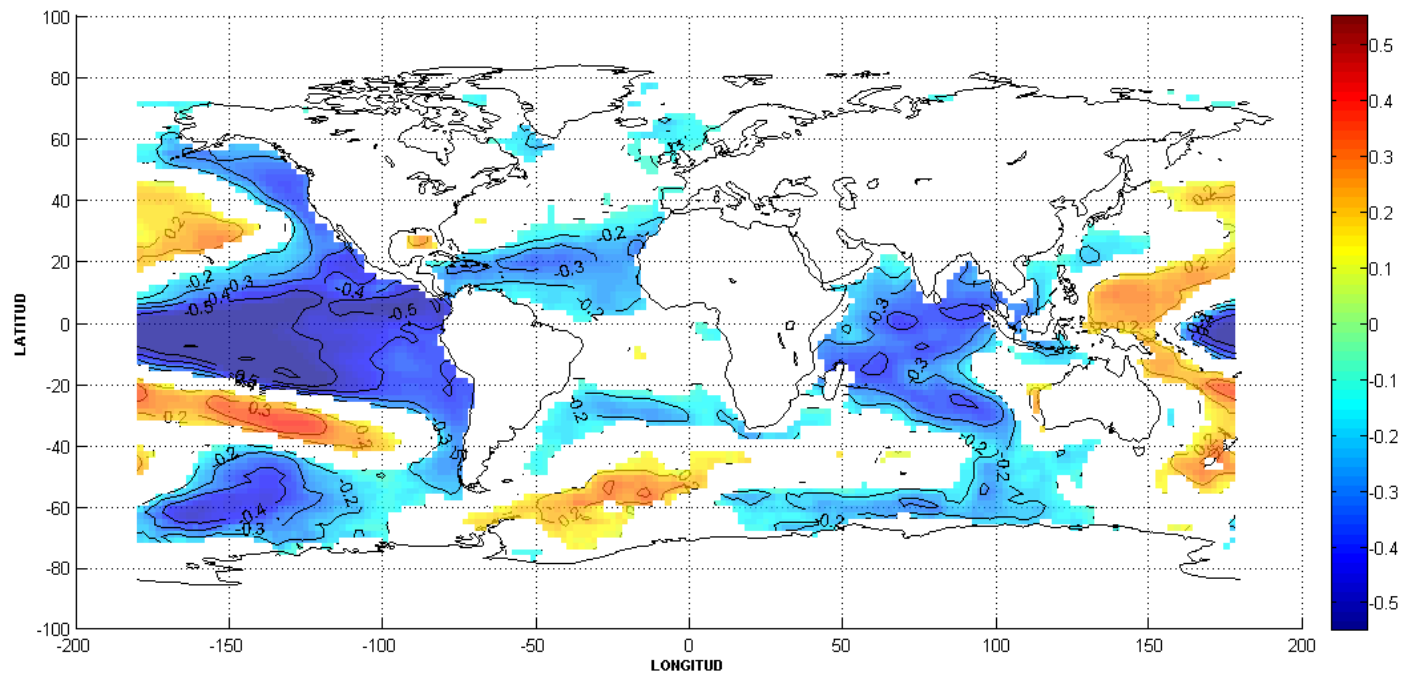
Anomalia de Temperatura da Superfície do Mar  
Dezembro de 1997



## La Niña



# Maps of seasonal cross-correlations between the anomalies of sea surface temperature (SST) and river discharge anomalies of Guadalupe river

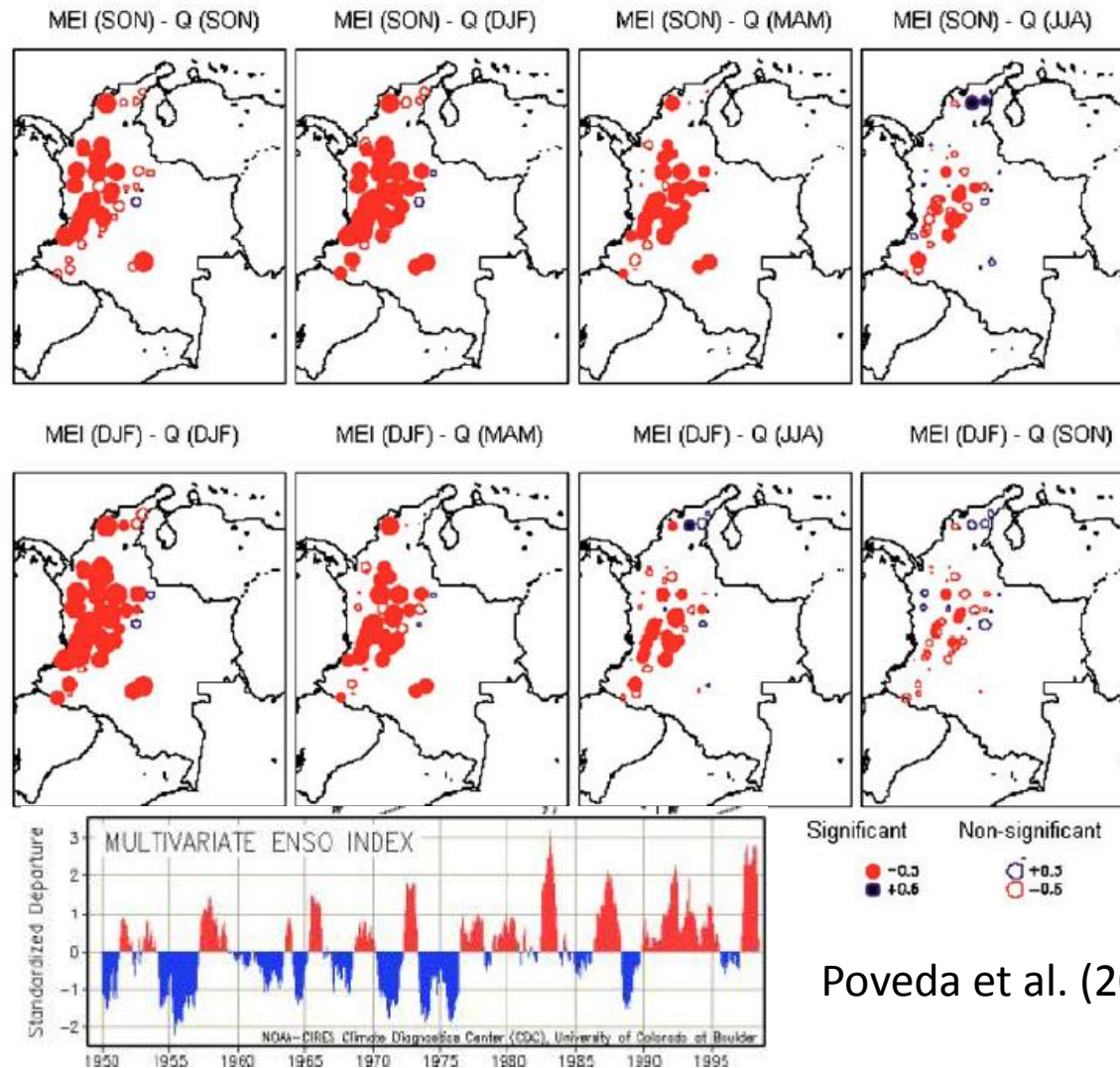


Rojo & Ferrerira. (2012)



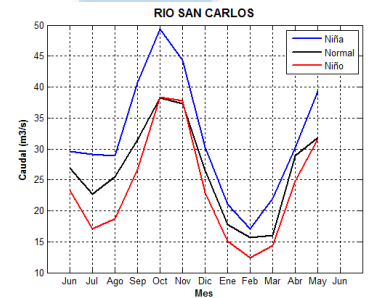
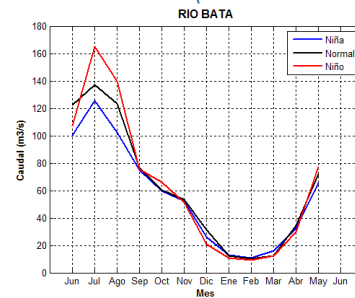
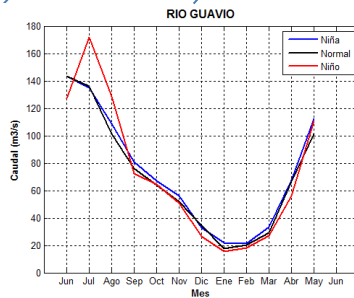
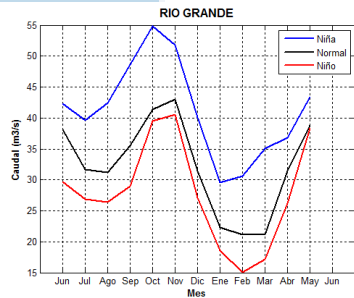
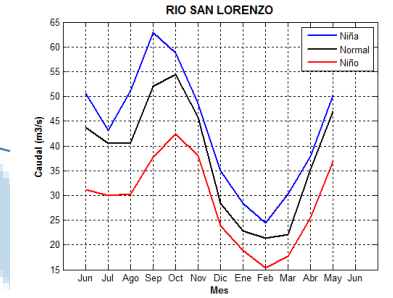
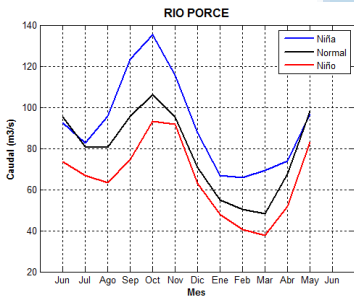
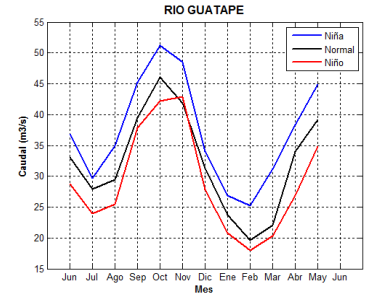
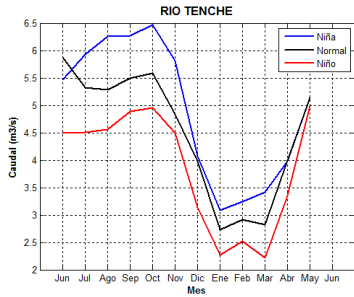
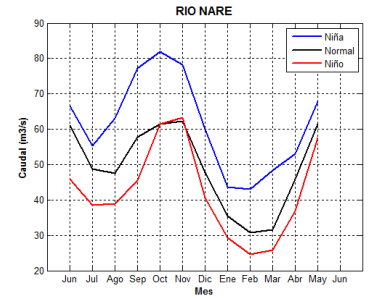
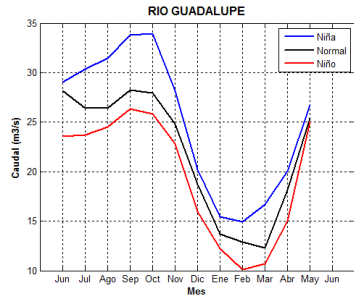
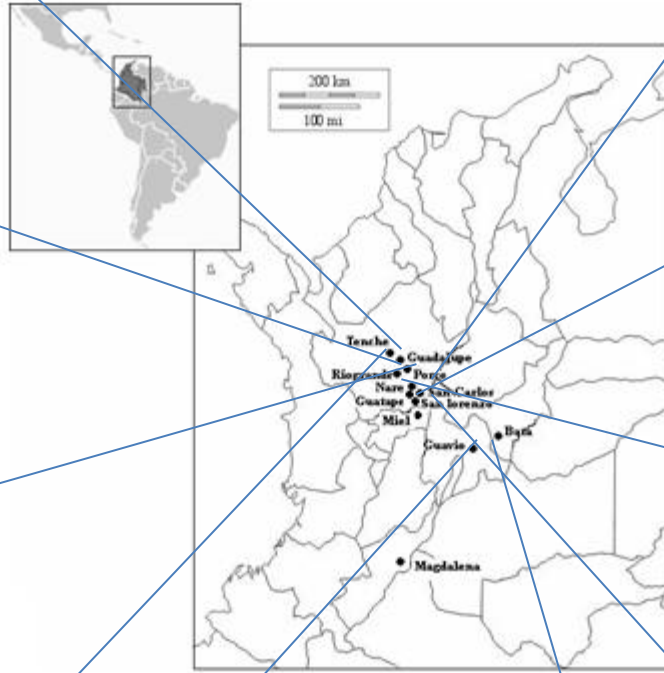
# COLOMBIA'S HYDROCLIMATOLOGY (V)

## HYDRO-CLIMATIC VARIABILITY OF COLOMBIA ASSOCIATED WITH ENSO

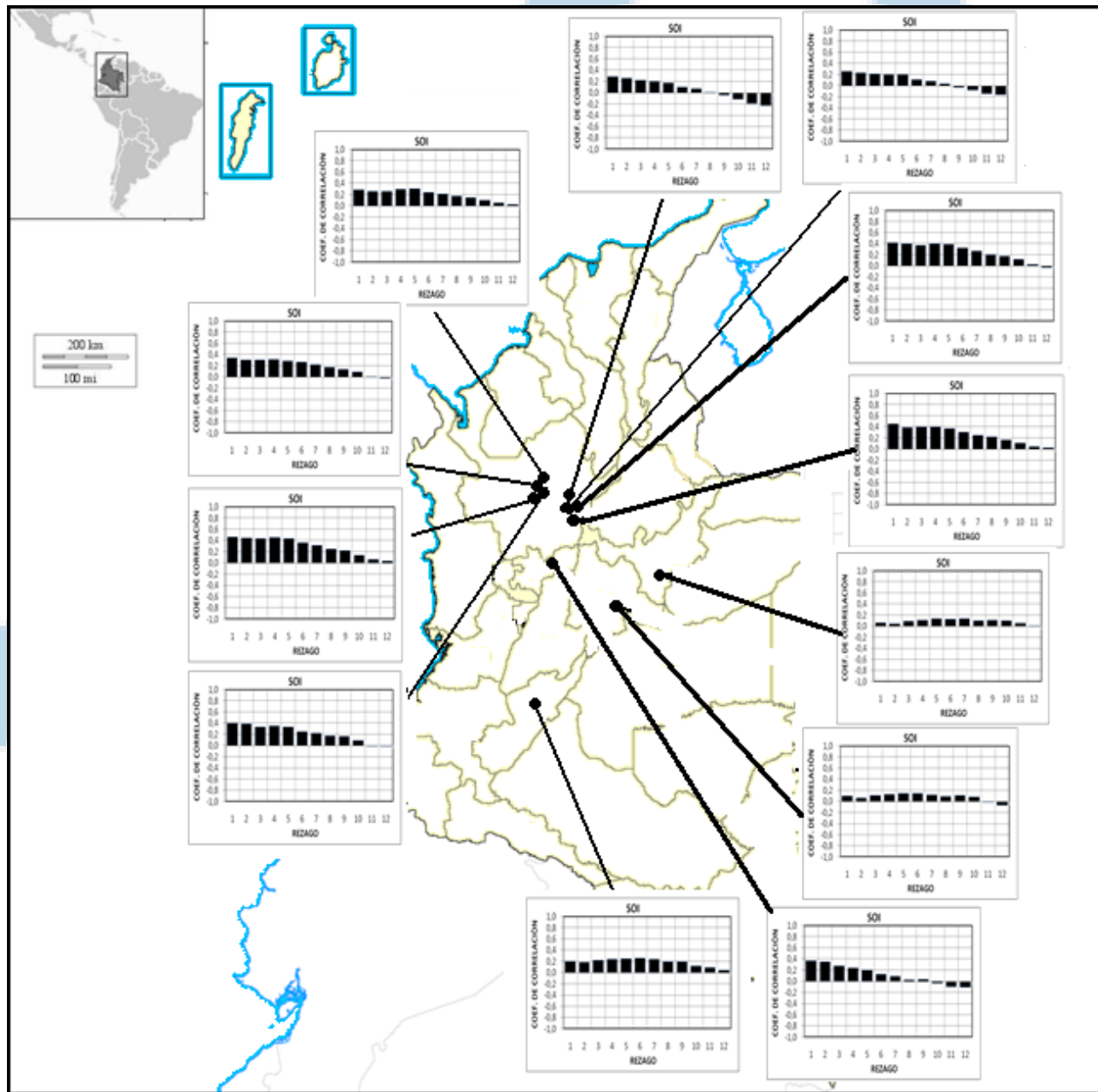


Poveda et al. (2001)

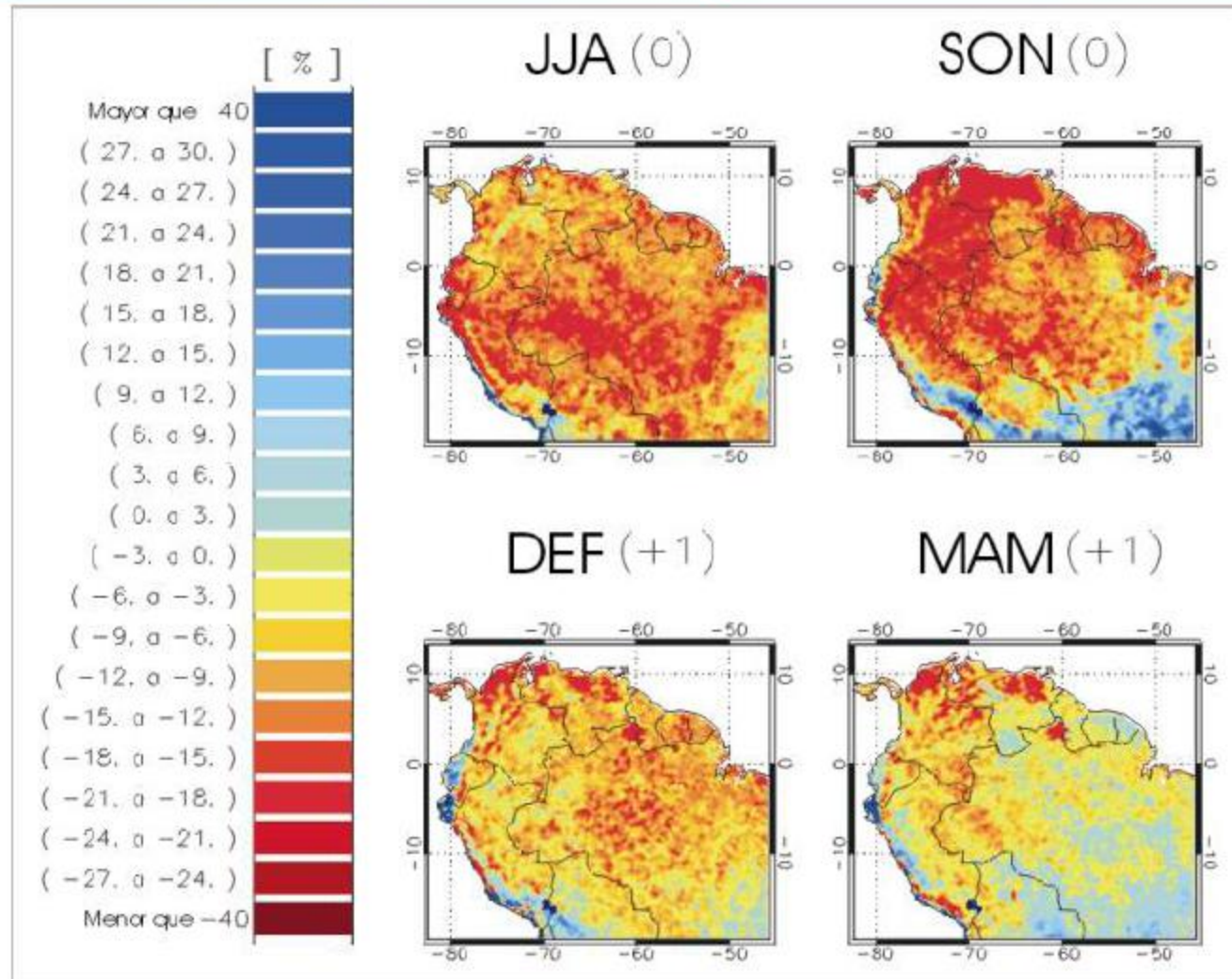
# Rojo & Carvajal. (2011)





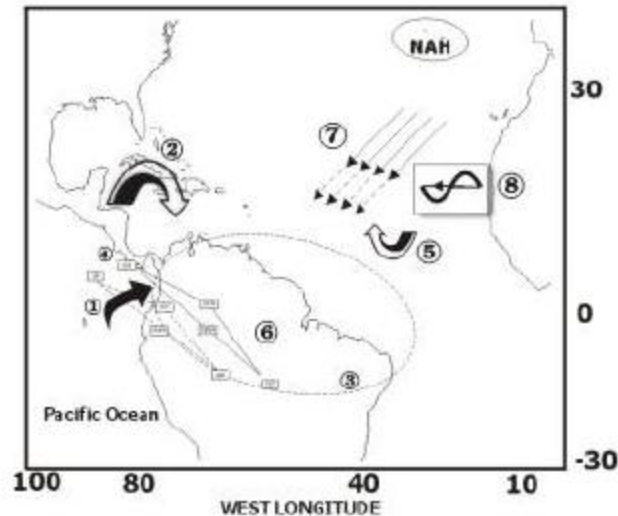


# Actividad de las plantas (NDVI) disminuye durante El Niño

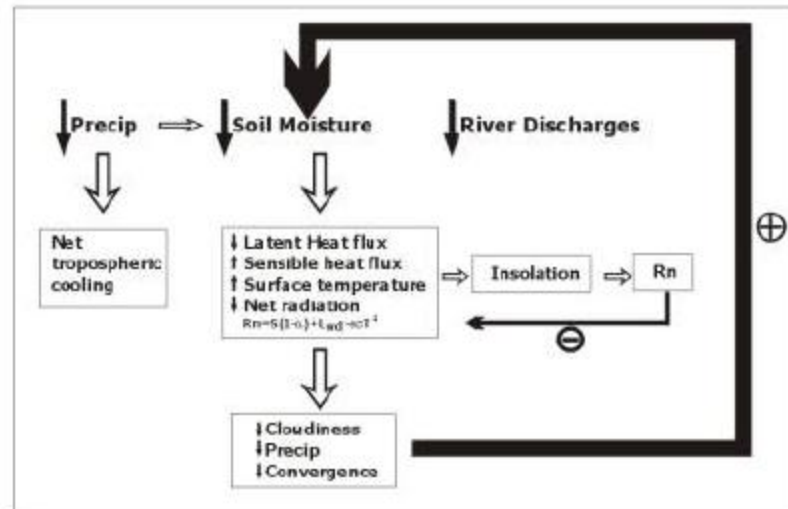


Poveda  
et al.,  
(2001)

# Por qué hay sequías en Colombia durante El Niño?



1. Choco Jet weakens - MCC's
2. Reversed Hadley cell - Upper convergence
3. High Surface Pressure (DJF(+1))
4. ITCZ shifted to S-W
5. Hadley cell  $\leftrightarrow$  Precipitation: Feedback
6. Land-Atmosphere Interaction
7. Low SLP at NAH & High T. South America  
 $\Rightarrow$  Weaker trades  $\Rightarrow$  Warming of tropical north Atlantic SST's
8. Diminished activity of easterly waves (JJASON (0))



# Impactos de El Niño en Colombia

- **Producción Agrícola (Café!) y Ganadera.**
- **Generación de Energía Eléctrica.**
- **Salud Humana: Malaria, Dengue, etc.**
- **Transporte Fluvial.**
- **Incendios Forestales (1997/98 !!).**
- **Pesca fluvial y oceánica.**
- **Construcción.**
- **Ecosistemas, Calidad de agua.**
- **La Niña: Desastres naturales - Vulnerabilidad**

# Índice de Transmisión de Malaria - Colombia

## Epidemias durante El Niño

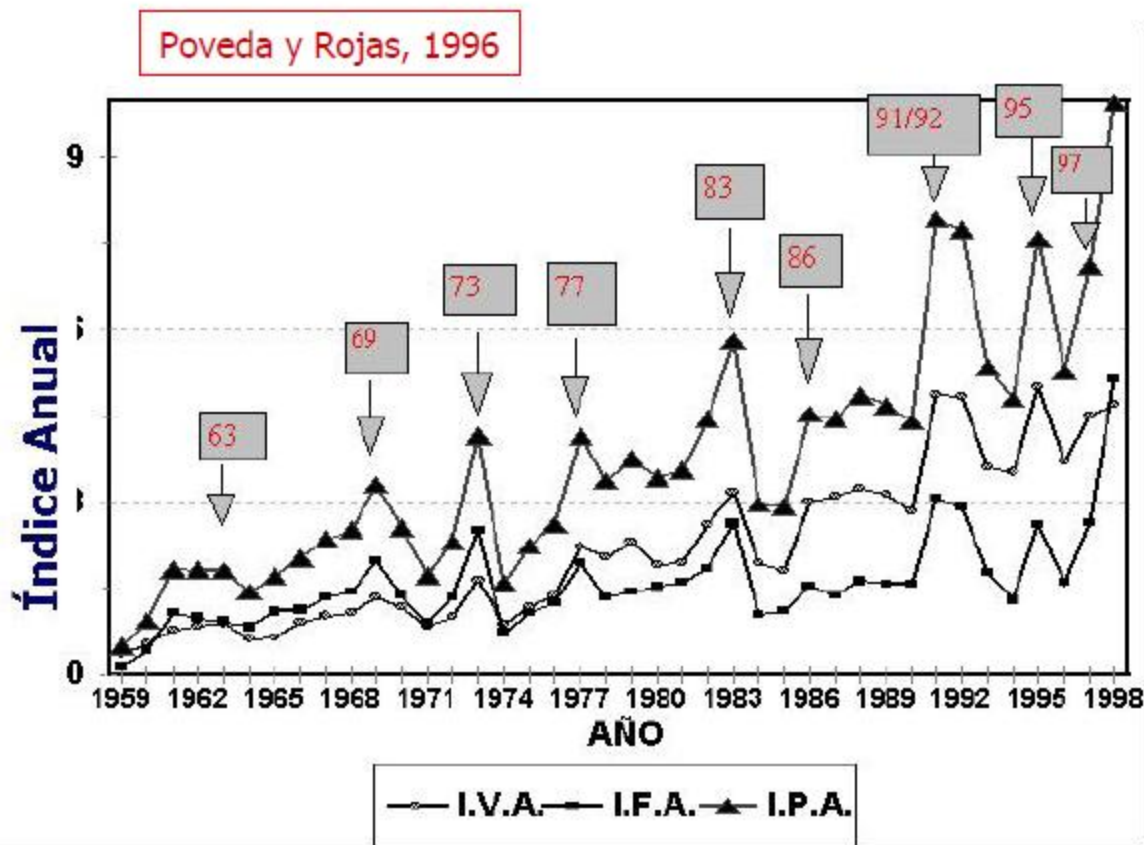
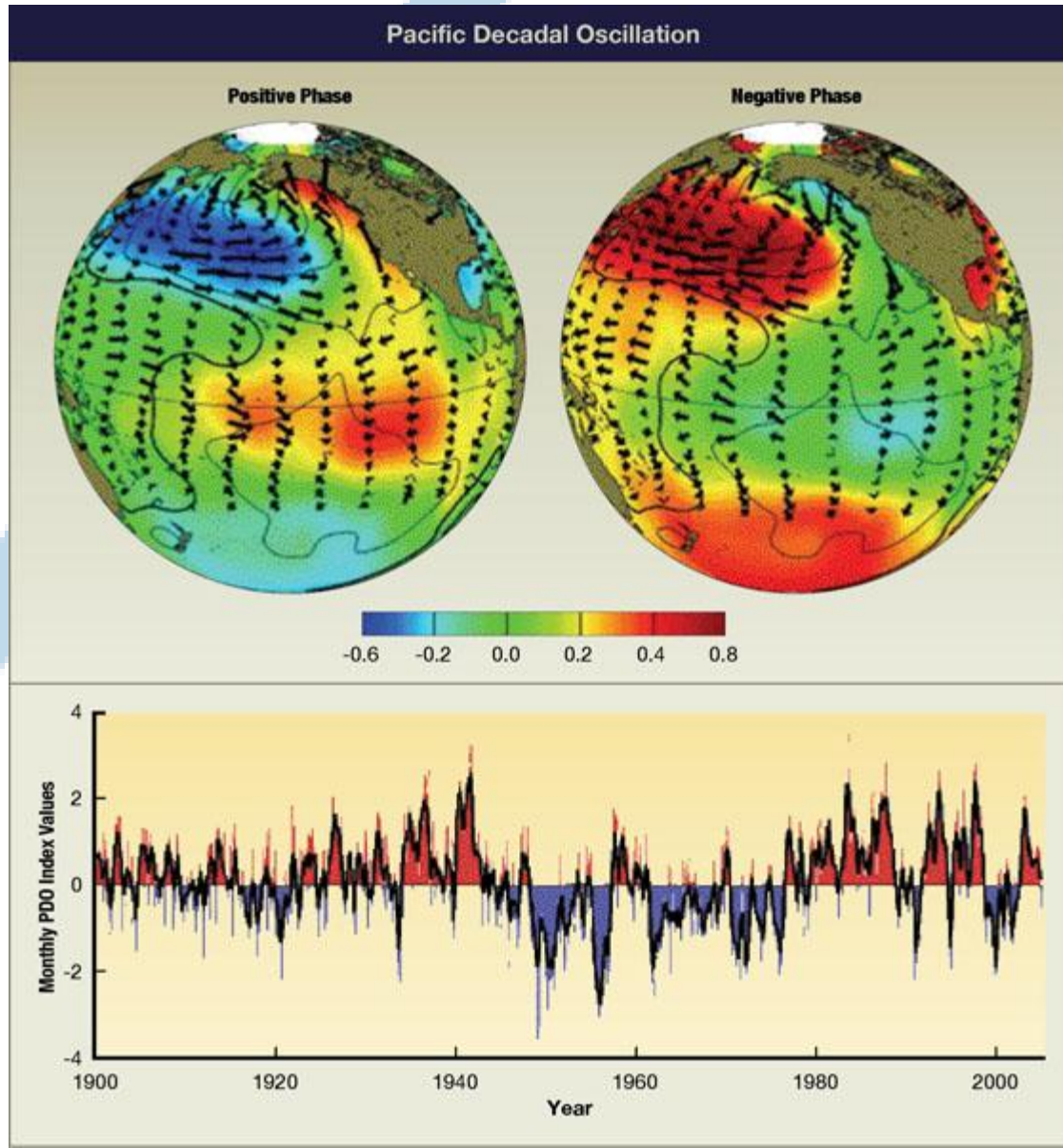


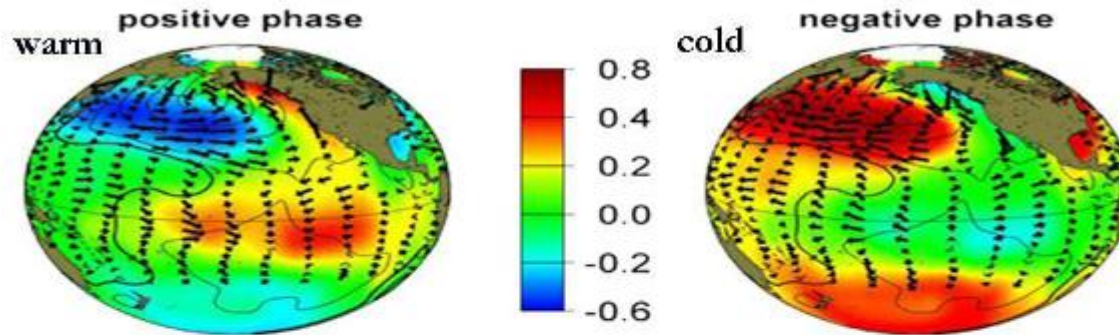
Foto del día Ciencias de la Tierra NASA, Mayo 23, 2003.

# The Pacific Decadal Oscillation

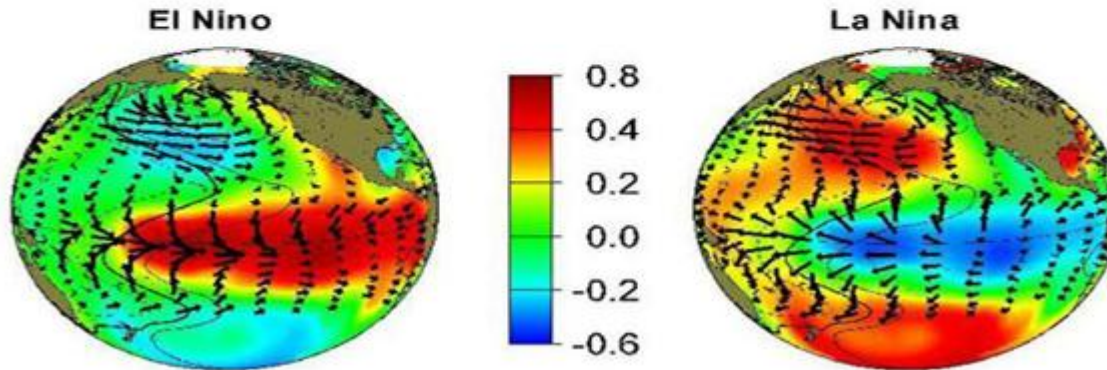


# PDO & ENSO

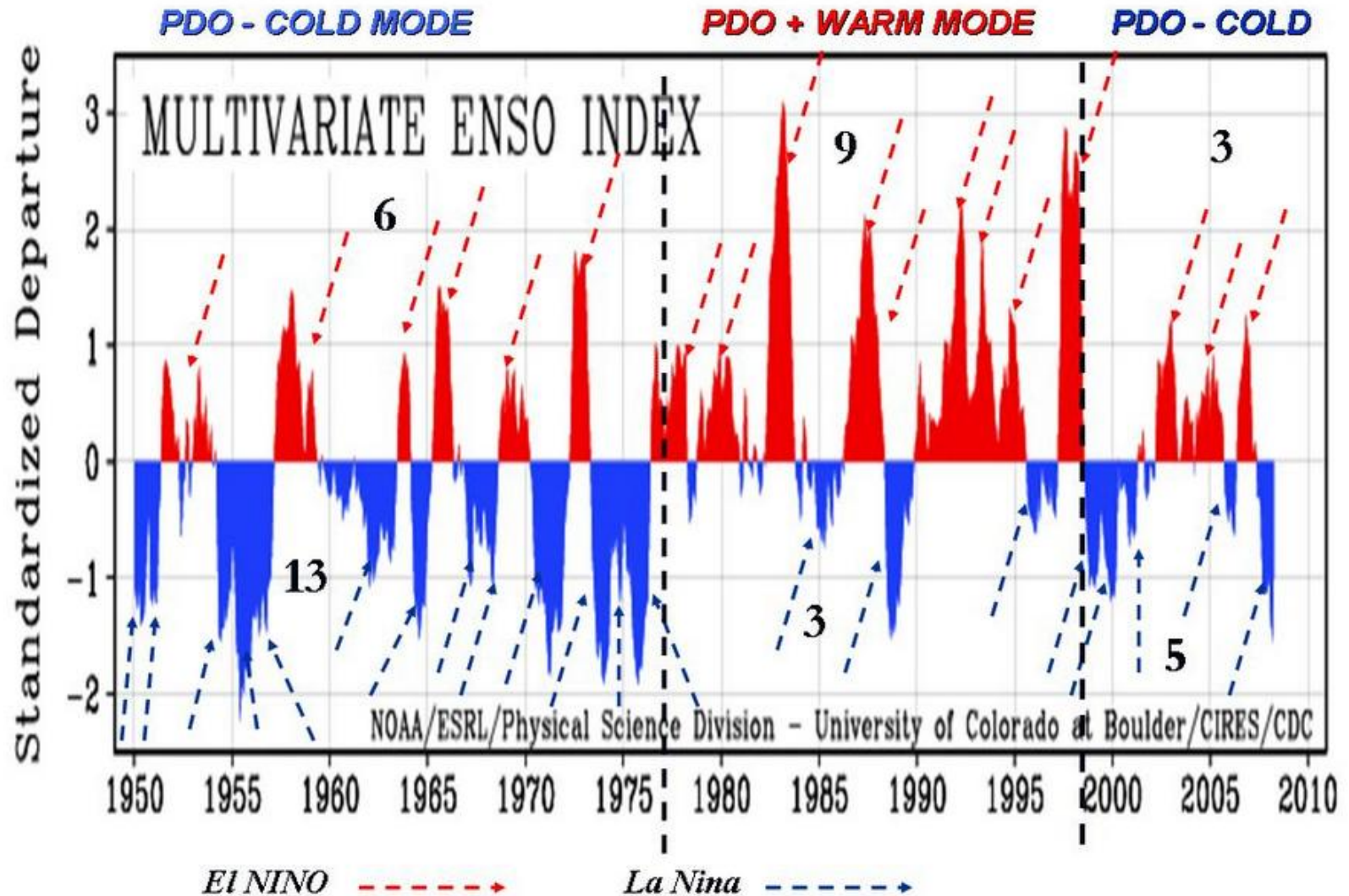
## Pacific Decadal Oscillation



## El Nino Southern Oscillation

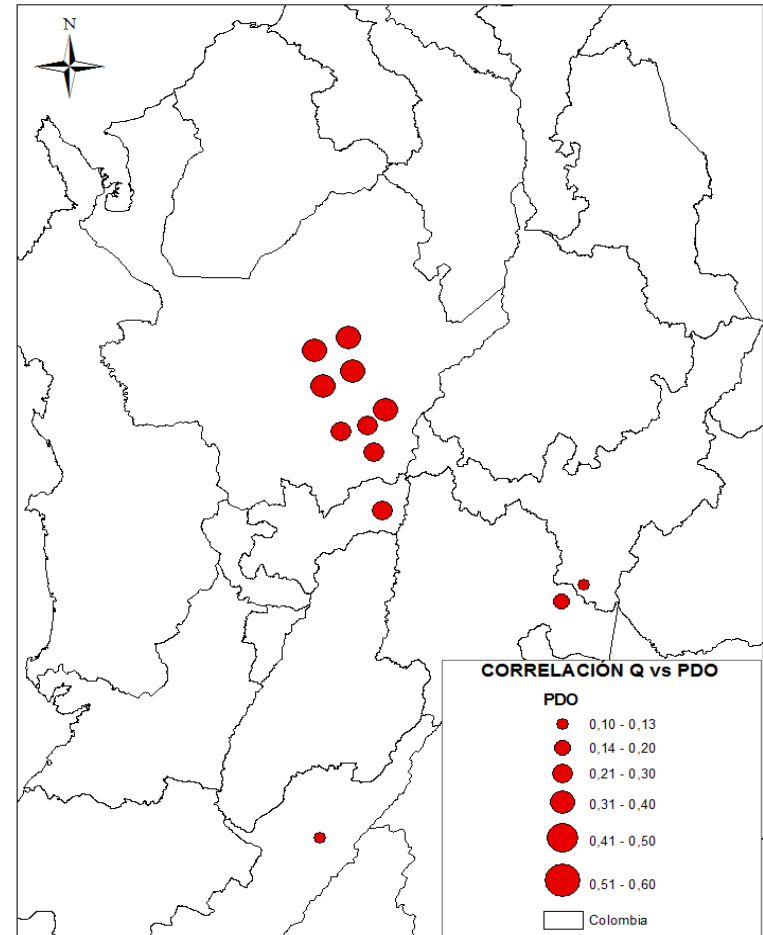
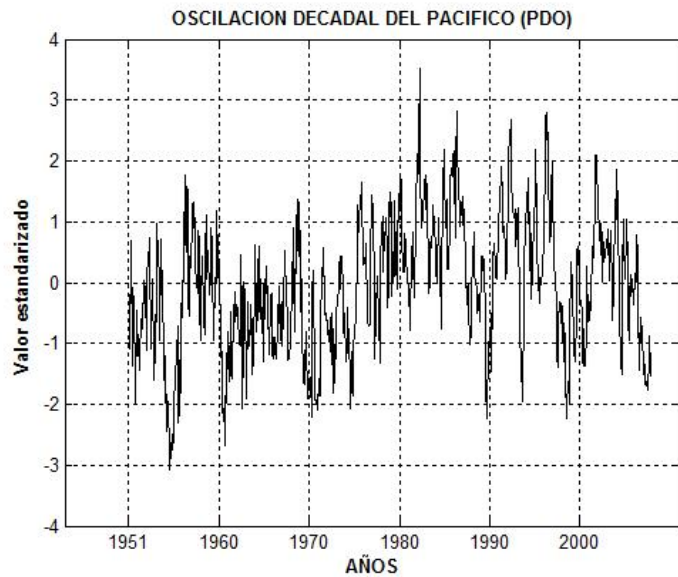
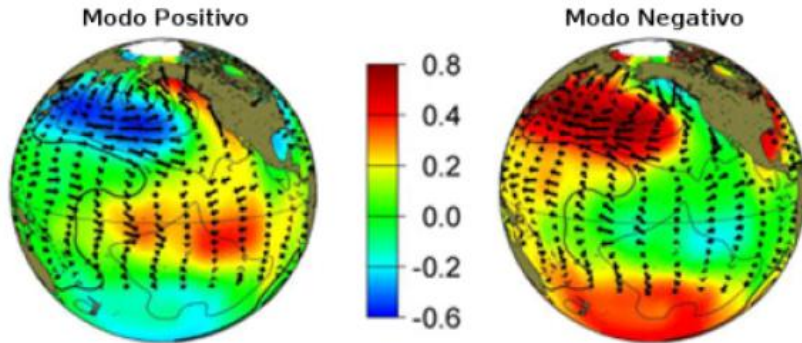


# PDO & ENSO

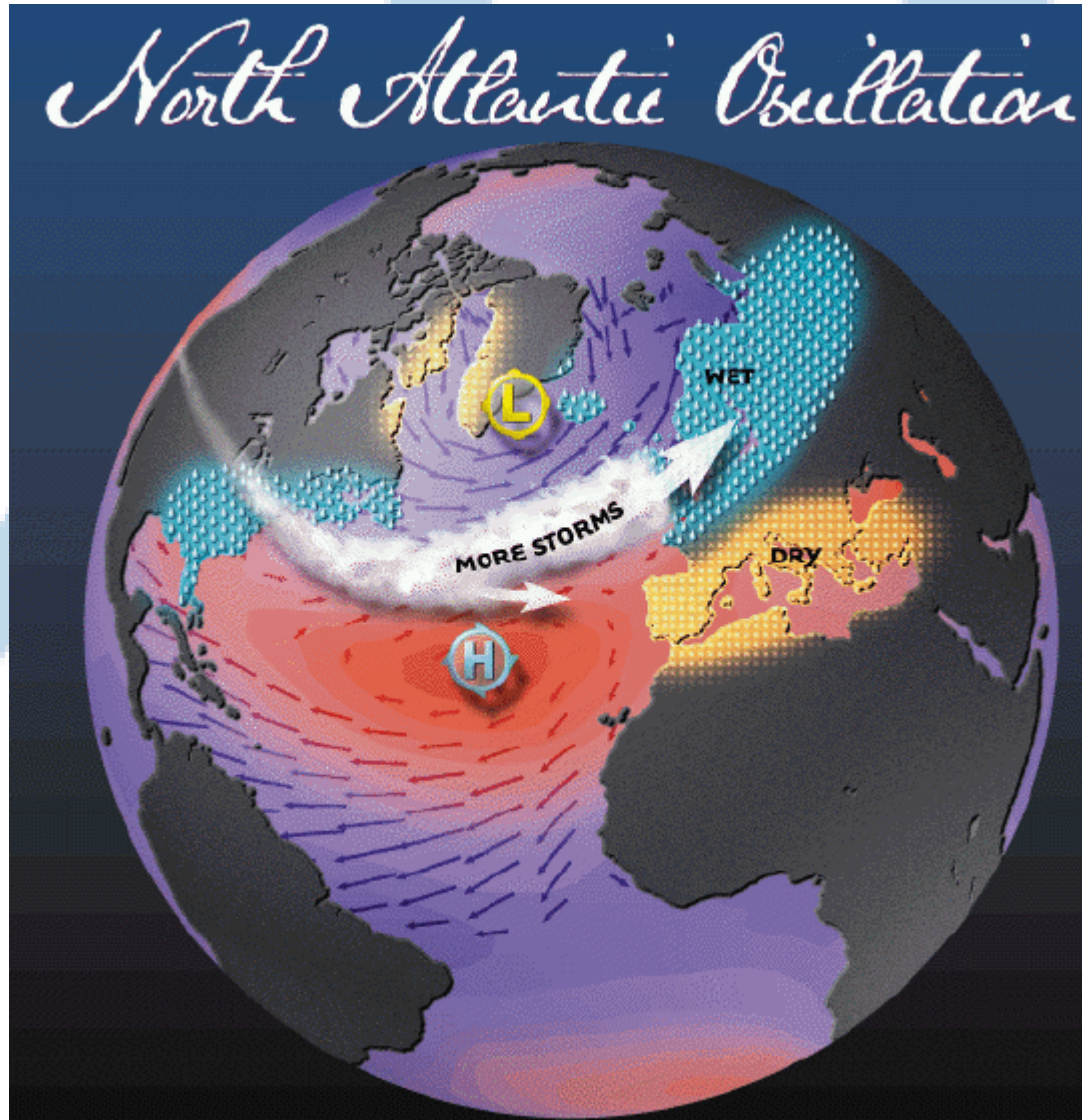




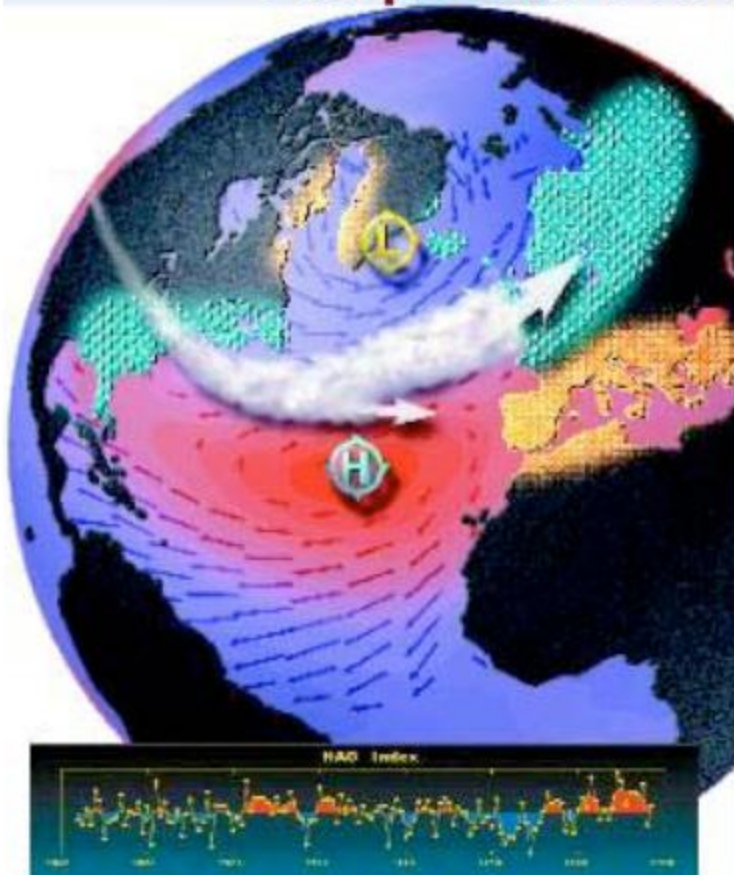
# PACIFIC DECADAL OSCILLATION (PDO)



# North Atlantic Oscillation (NAO)

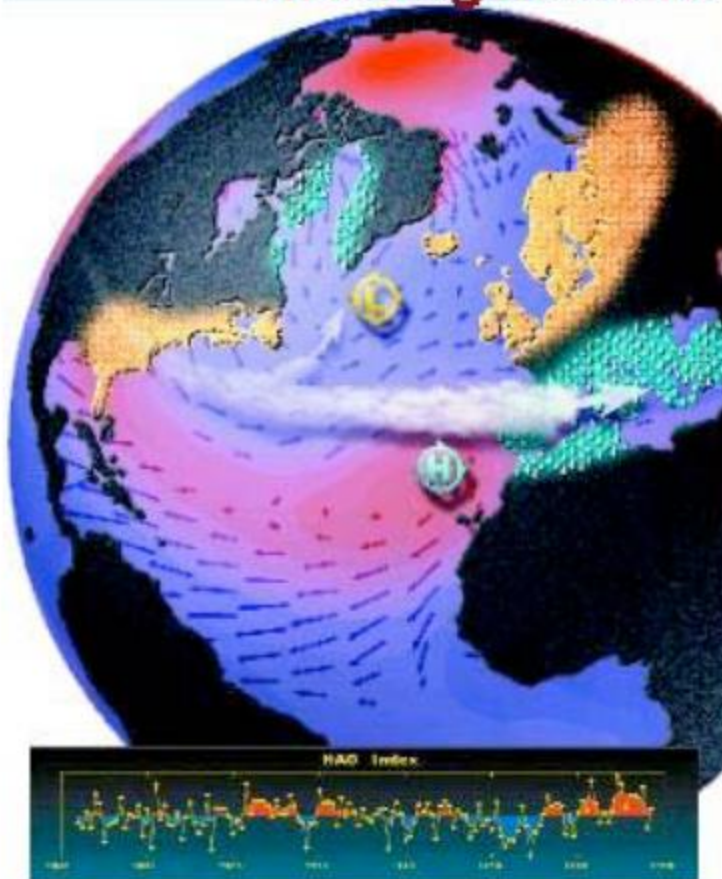


## The positive NAO index phase



- The positive NAO index phase shows a stronger than usual subtropical high pressure center and a deep than normal Icelandic low.
- The increased pressure difference results in more and stronger winter storms crossing the Atlantic Ocean on a more northerly track.
- This results in warm and wet winters in Europe and in cold and dry winters in northern Canada and Greenland.
- The eastern US experiences mild and wet winter conditions.

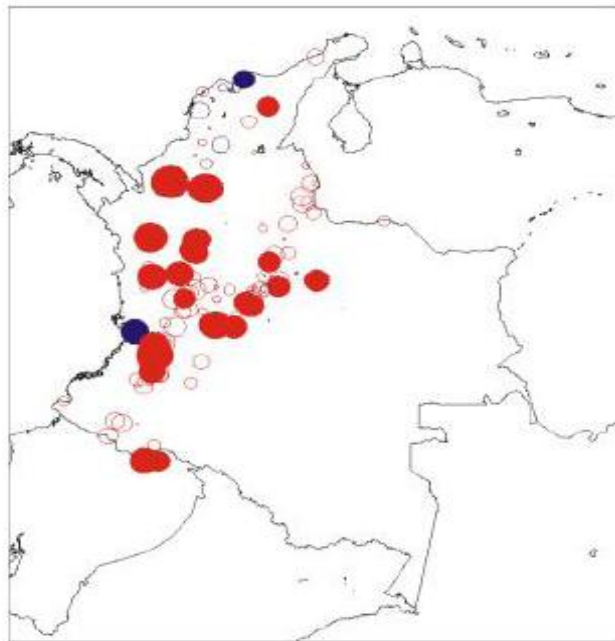
## The negative NAO index phase



- The negative NAO index phase shows a weak subtropical high and weak Icelandic low.
- The reduced pressure gradient results in fewer and weaker winter storms crossing on a more west-east pathway.
- They bring moist air into the Mediterranean and cold weather to northern Europe.
- The US east coast experiences more cold air outbreaks and hence snowy winter conditions.
- Greenland, however, will have milder winter temperatures.

# THE NORTH ATLANTIC OSCILLATION (NAO)

NAO\_NOAA (MAM) – Precipitación (DEF)

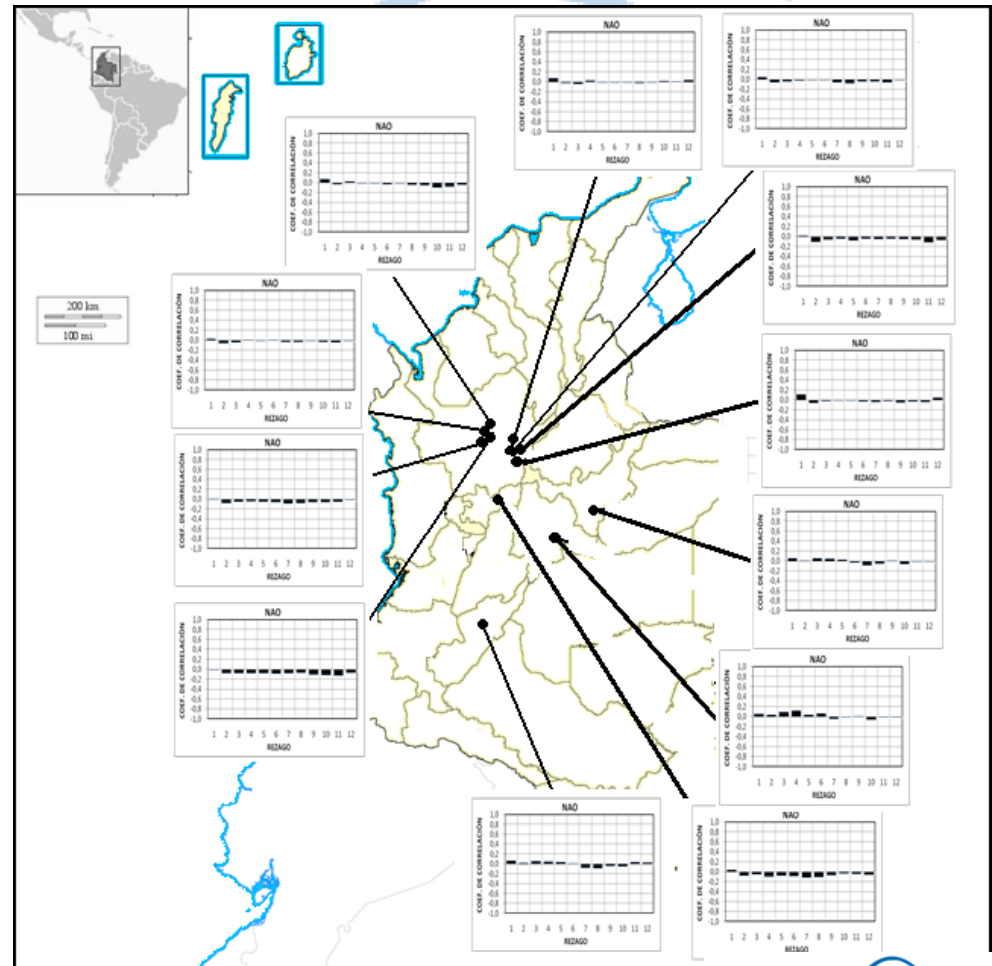


Estadísticamente significativa

No estadísticamente significativa

● -0.5  
● +0.5

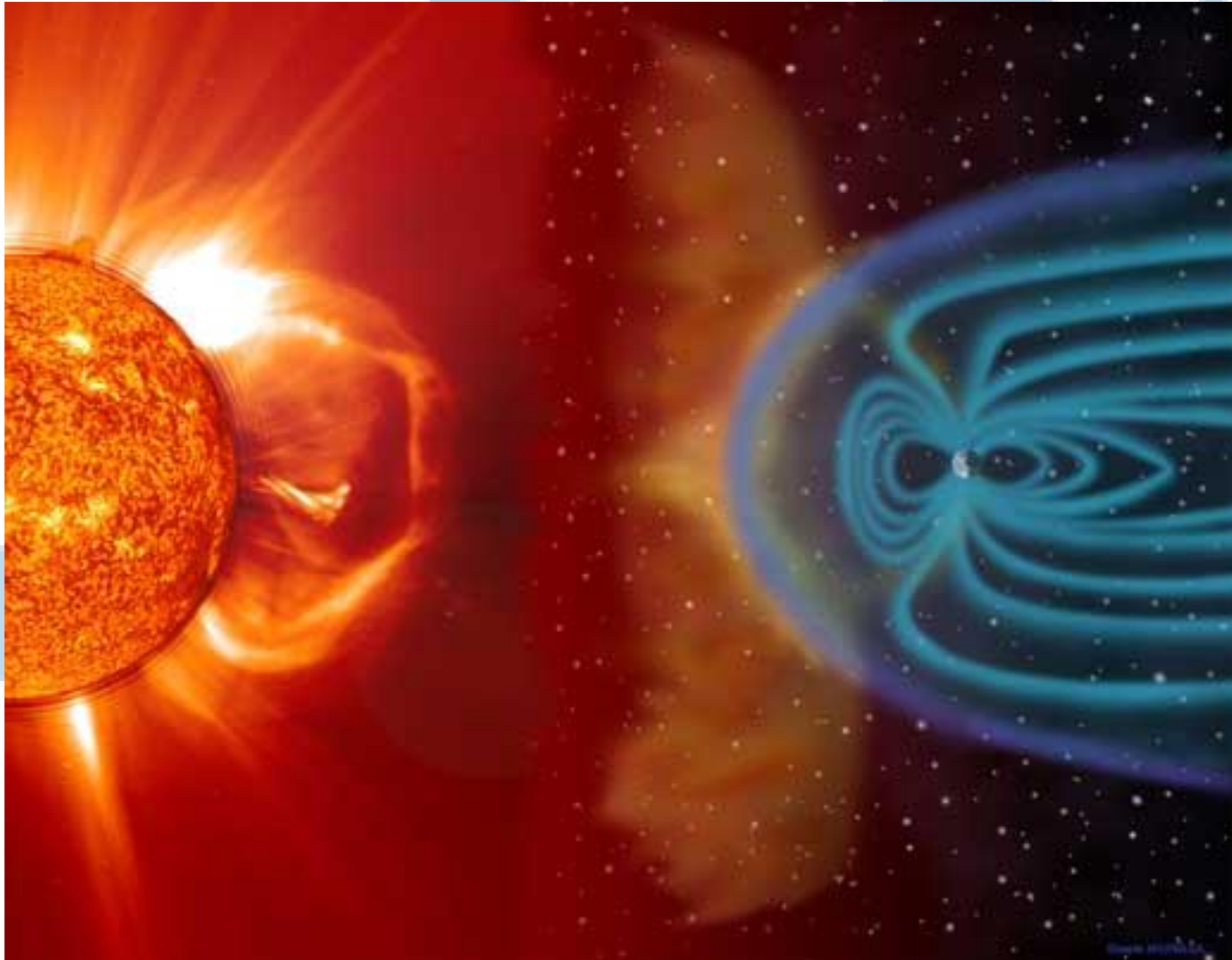
○ +0.5  
○ -0.5



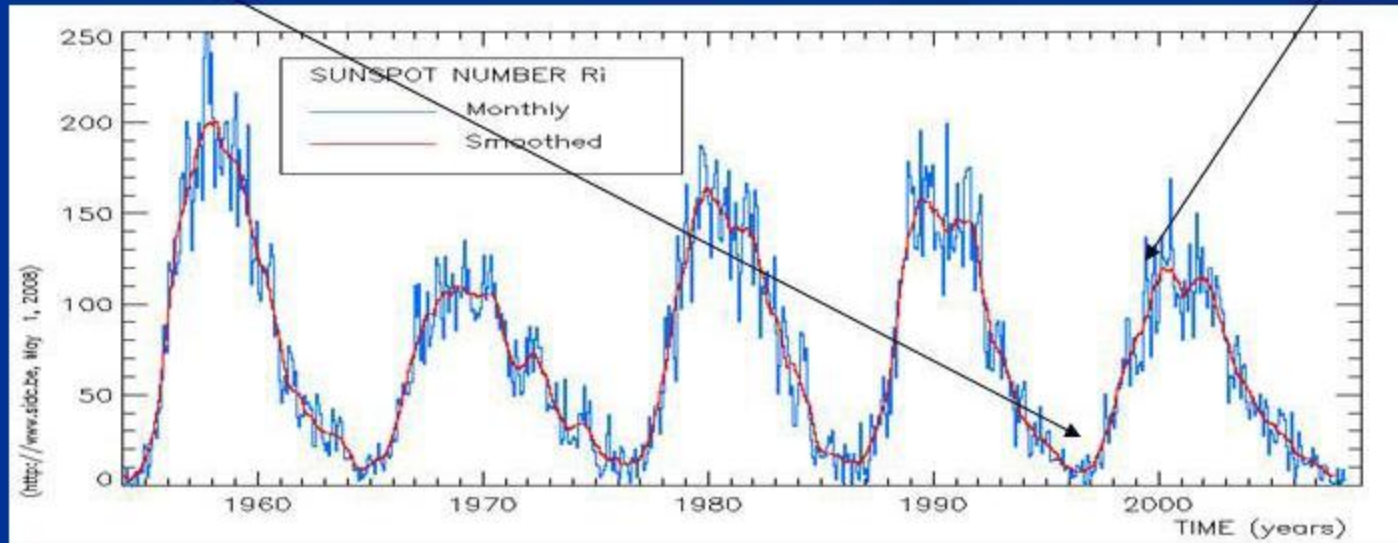
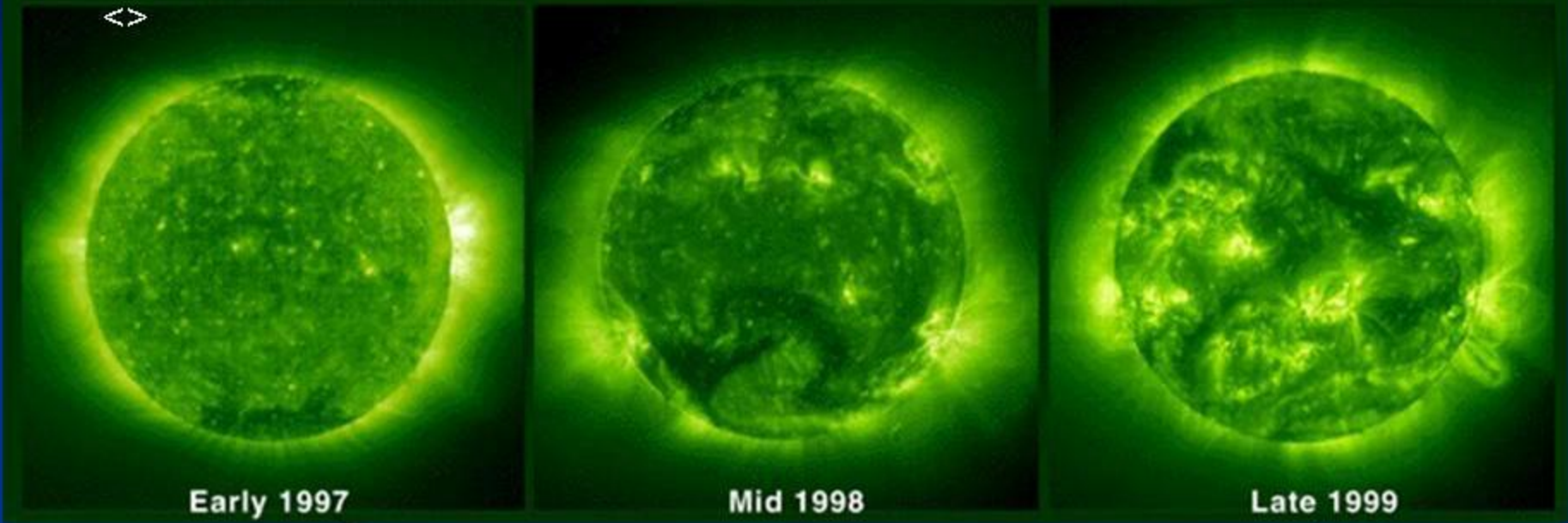
Poveda . (2004)

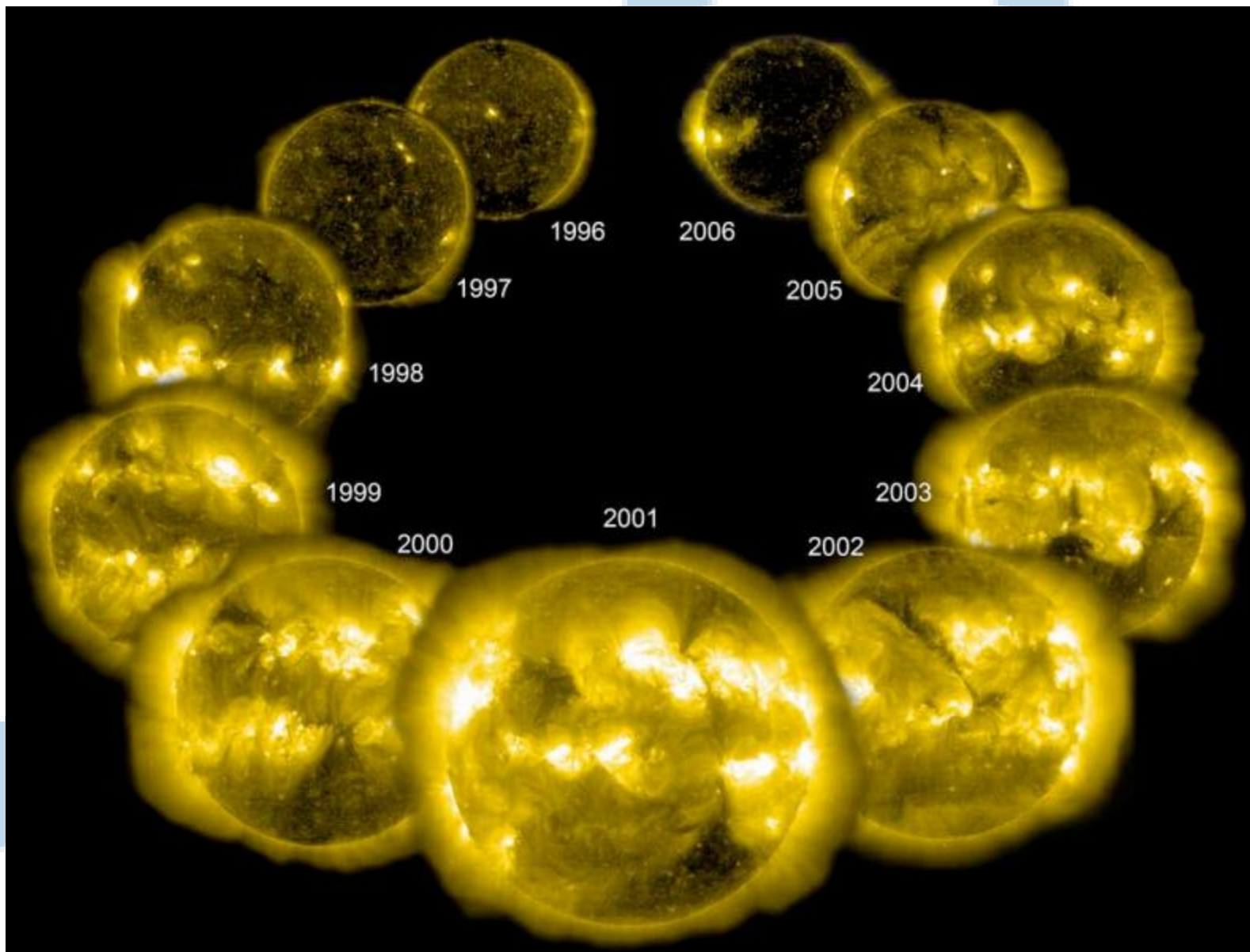


# THE SUN



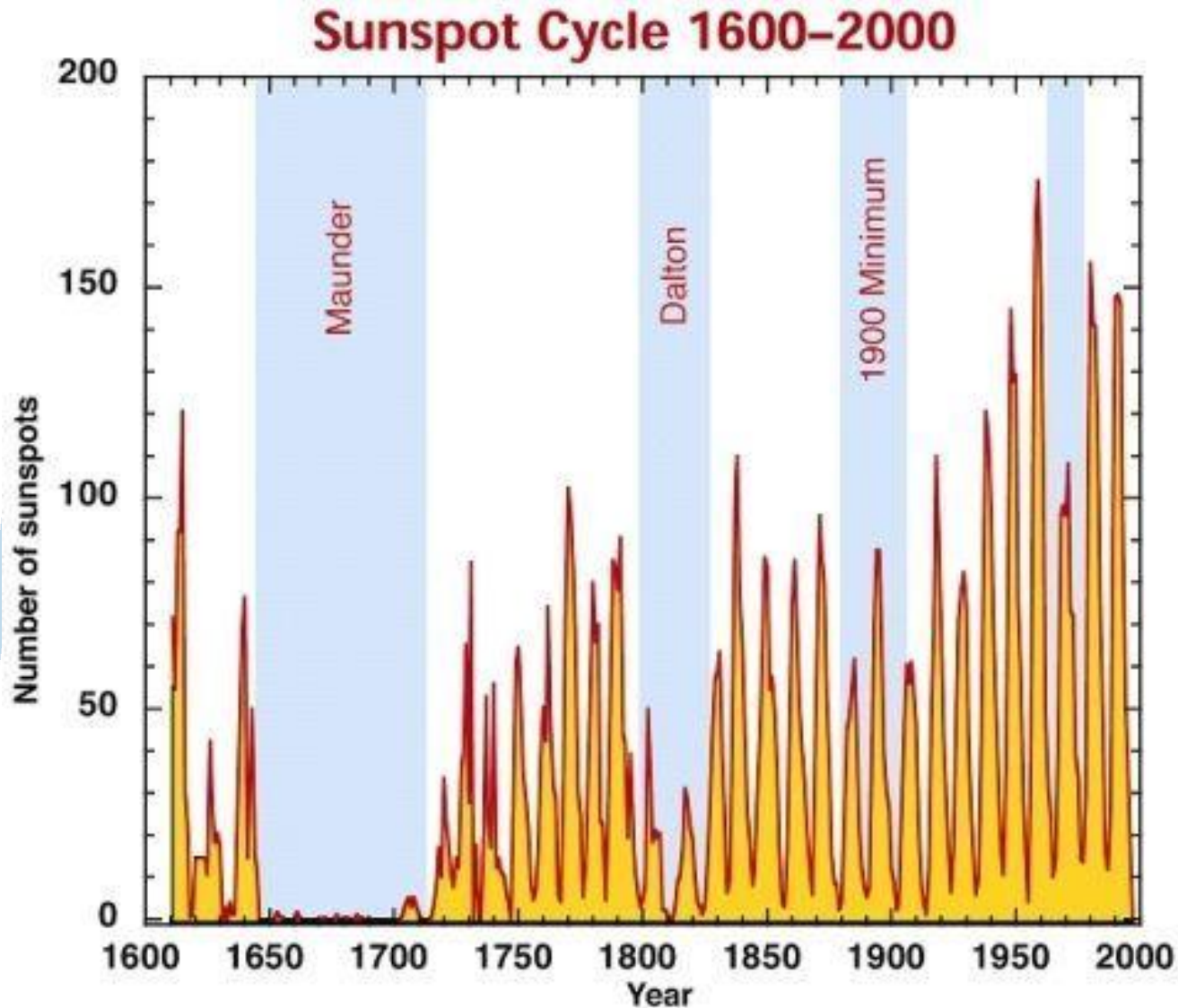
# 11 YEAR SOLAR SUNSPOT CYCLE



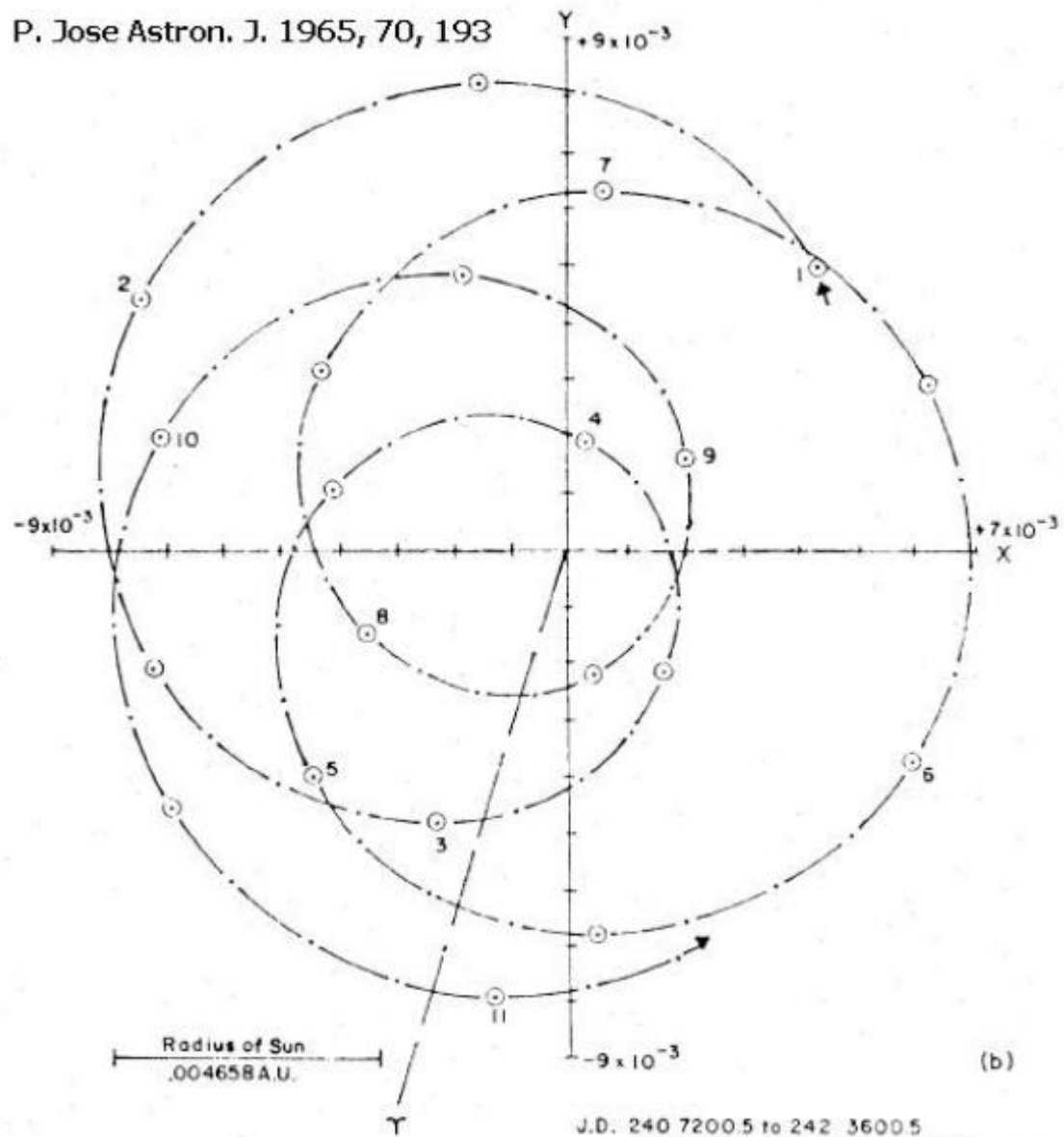




# Sunspot Cycle 1600-2000

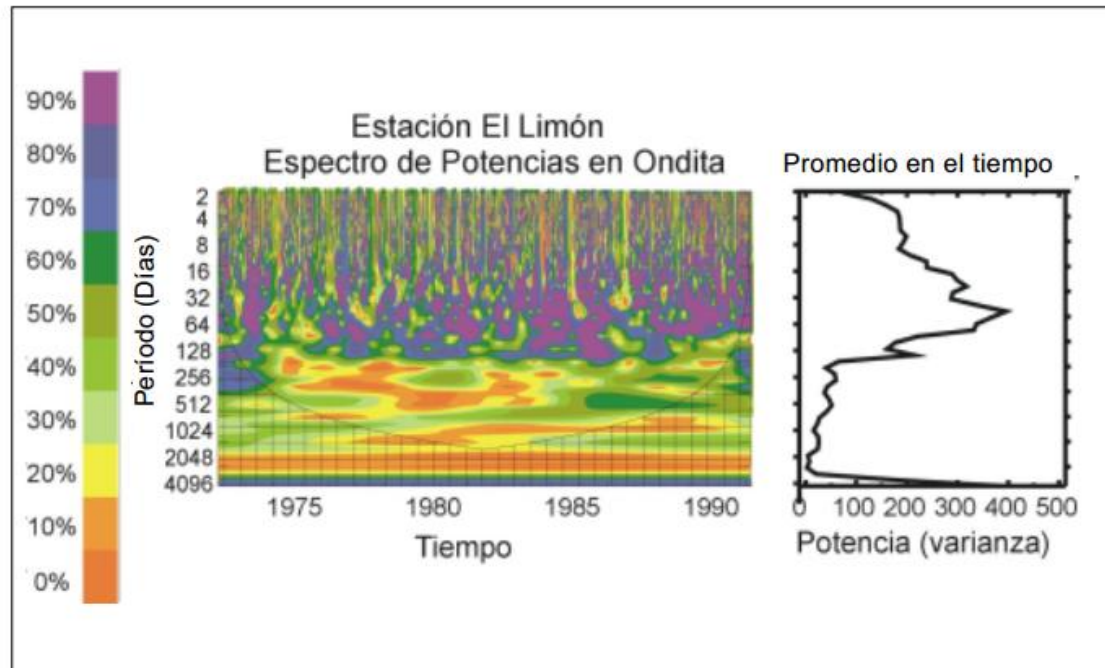


P. Jose Astron. J. 1965, 70, 193

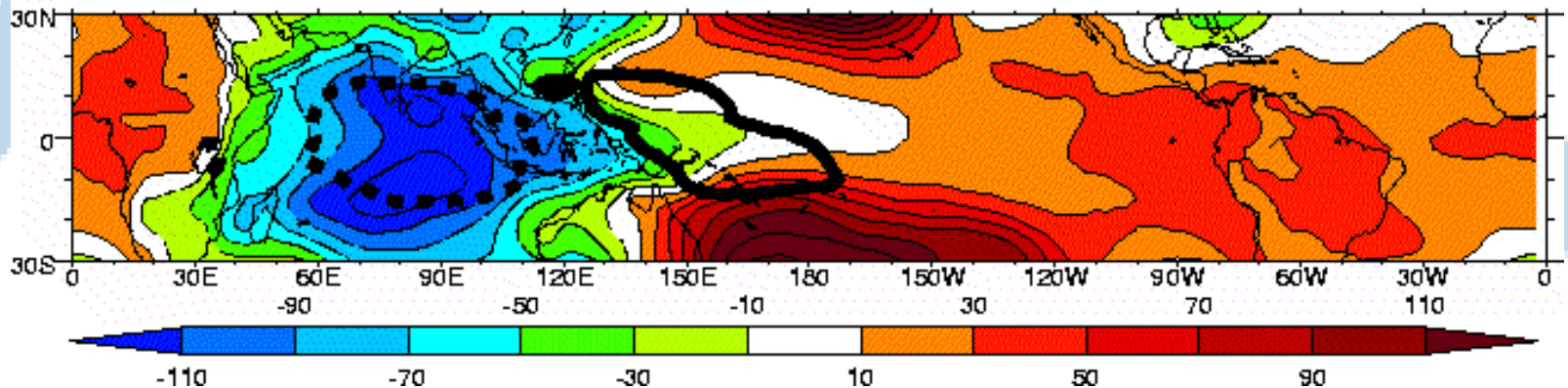


J.D. 240 7200.5 to 242 3600.5  
1878 Aug 3.5 to 1923 June 29.5

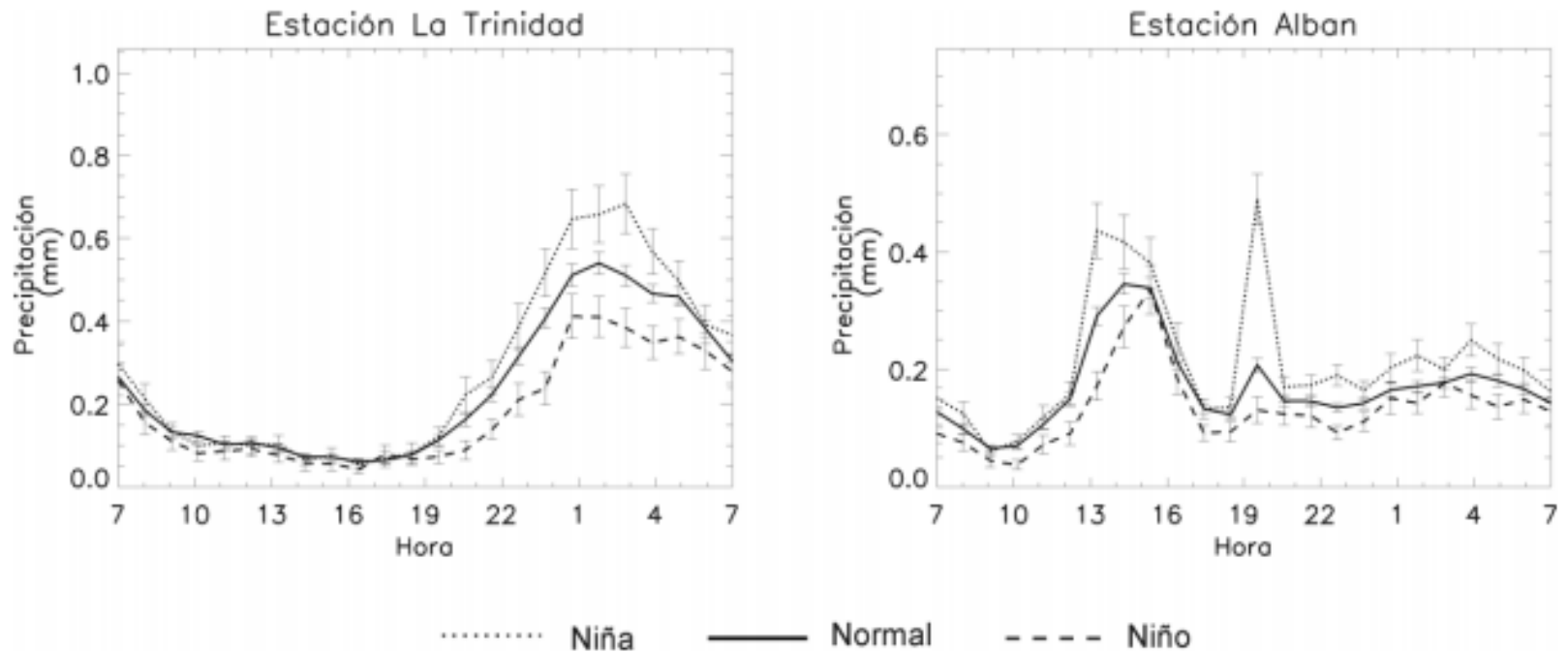
# Madden Julian Oscillation



**DAY 0**

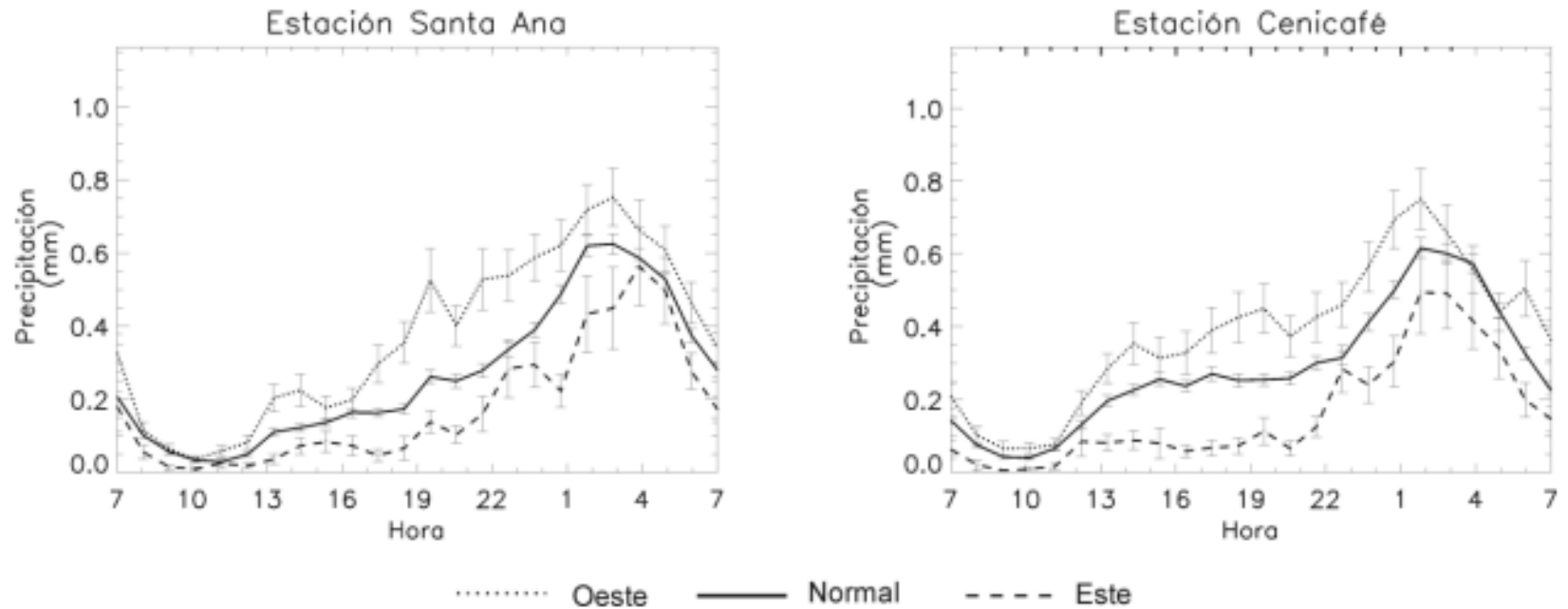


# Diurnal Cycle - ENSO



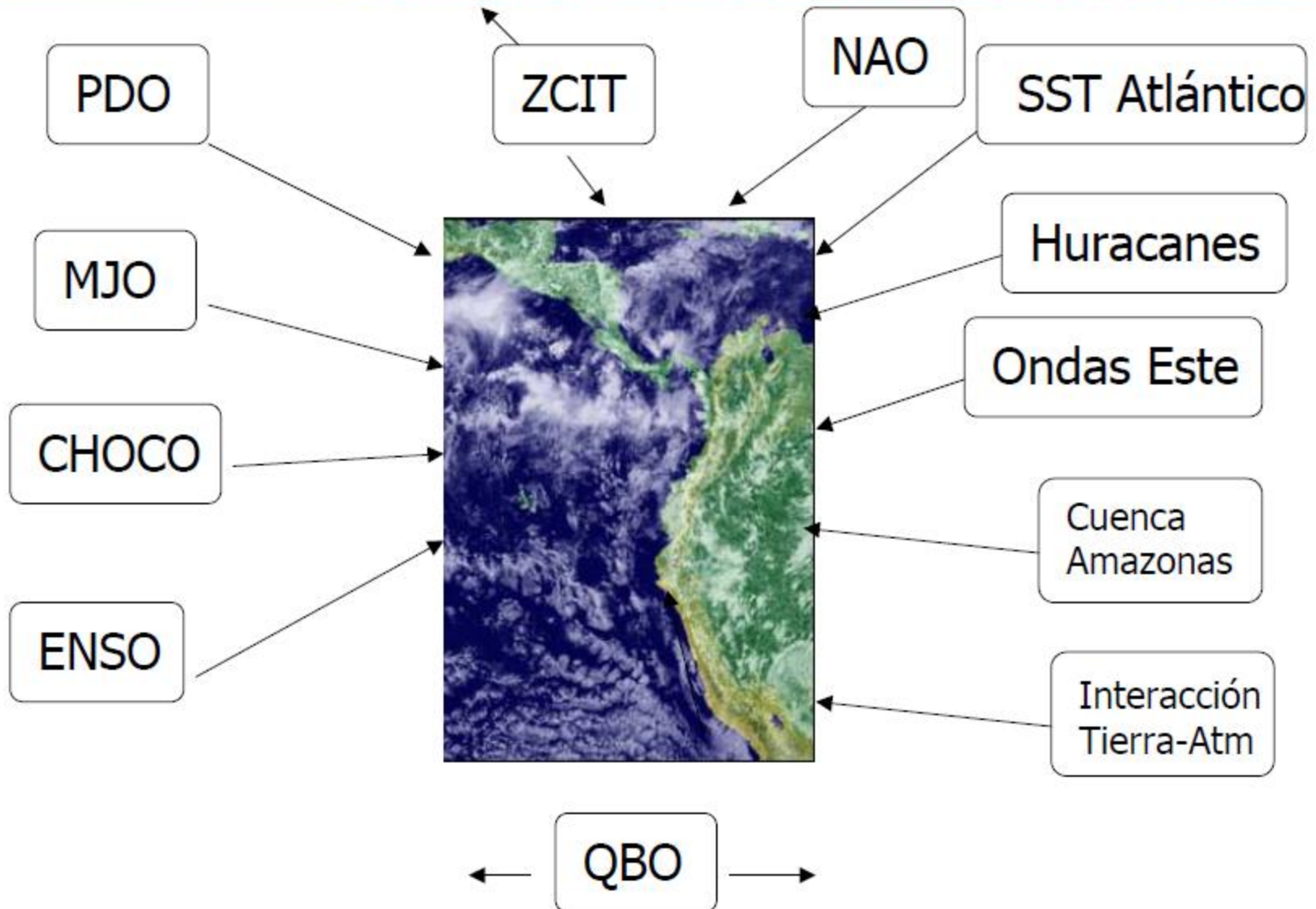
**Figura 1. Ciclo diurno multianual durante las fases del ENSO y en años normales para las estaciones La Trinidad y Alban**

# Diurnal Cycle - MJO



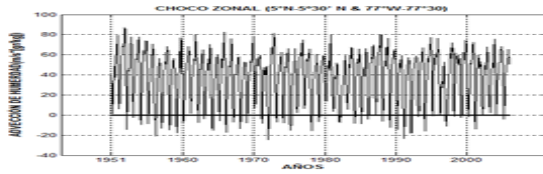
**Figura 2. Ciclo diurno multianual durante la fase este y la fase oeste de la MJO y en periodos normales, para las estaciones Santa Ana y Cenicafé**

# No solo es ENSO. Hay una combinación de fenómenos de distintas frecuencias

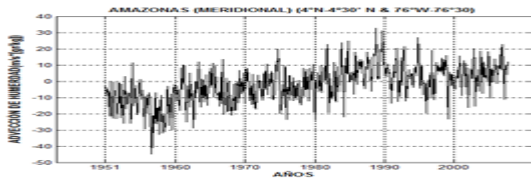


# THE LONGER LEAD HYDROLOGY

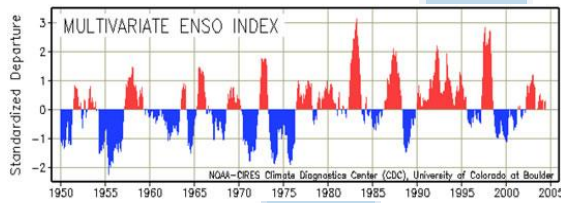
## CHOCO



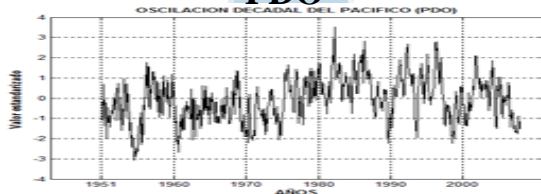
## AMAZONAS



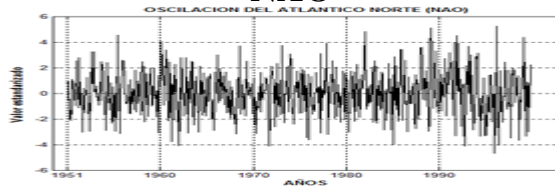
## MEI



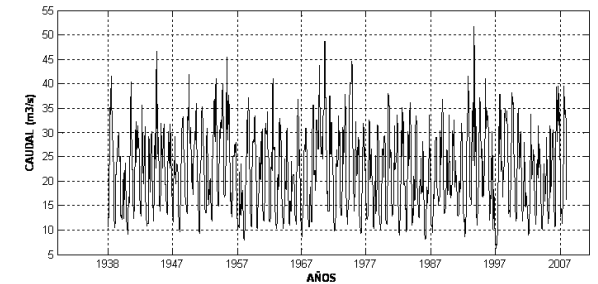
## PDO



## NAO



$$f(\dots) + \varepsilon =$$

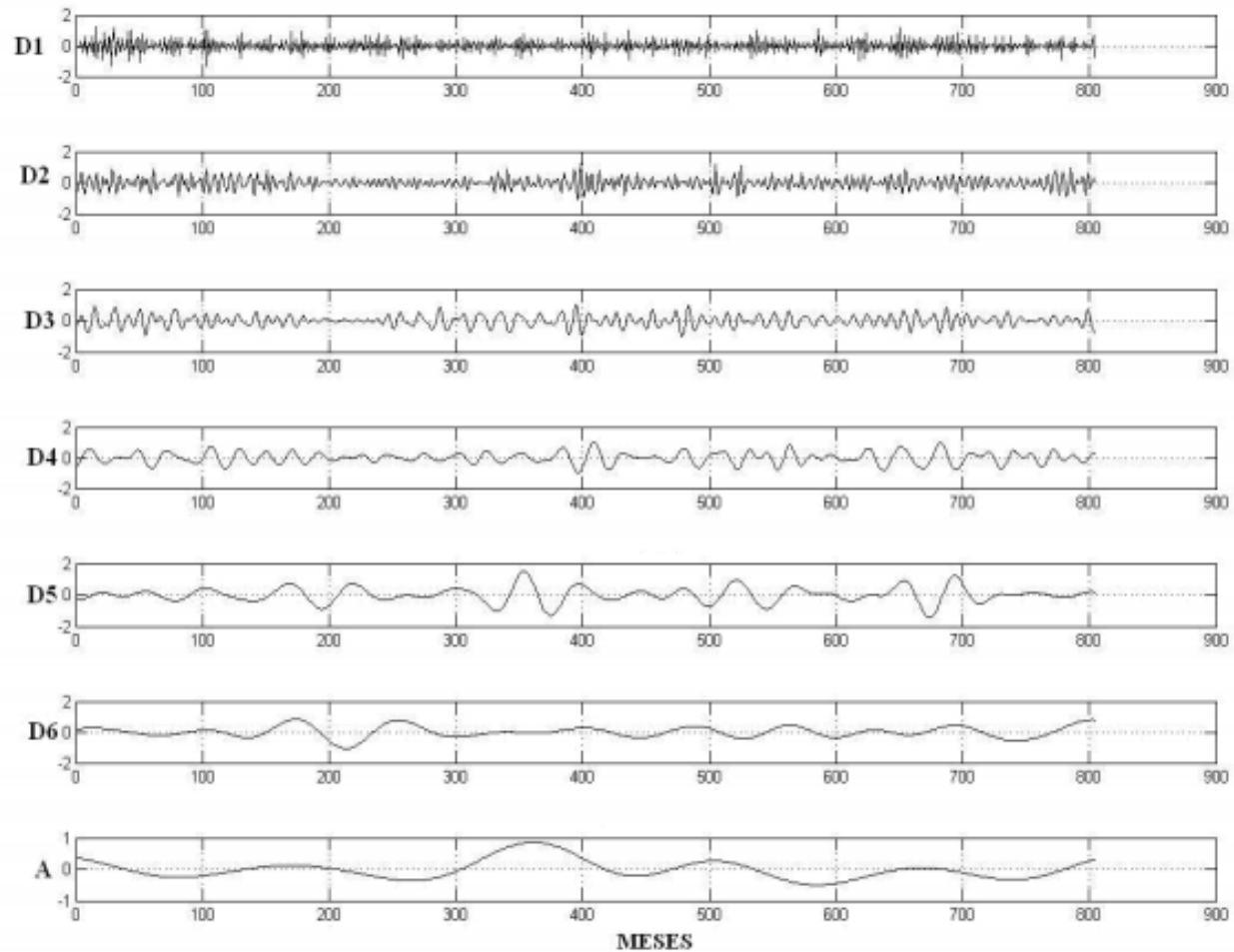


$$Caudales_t = f(Caudales_{t-j}, ENSO_{t-k}, CHOCO_{t-l}, \dots) + \varepsilon$$



## DESCOMPOSICIÓN EN ONDITAS PARA LA ESTACIÓN RG8

### ONDITA DISCRETA DE MEYER



**Figura 4.-** Descomposición en onditas de la serie RG8 (río Grande) usando la ondita discreta de Meyer



# AGRADECIMIENTOS



Departamento Administrativo de  
Ciencia, Tecnología e Innovación  
Colciencias  
República de Colombia



UNIVERSIDAD  
NACIONAL  
DE COLOMBIA  
SEDE MEDELLÍN

