Revisiting observed jet stream trends and tropical warming



Tim Woollings, Marie Drouard, Christopher O'Reilly, David Sexton and Carol McSweeney (Oxford Physics, tim.woollings@physics.ox.ac.uk)

Met Office



Comparison of recent trends in zonal mean zonal wind and temperature between reanalyses and CMIP6 historical simulations.

Zonal means in ERA5 and CMIP6 (left).

Using zonal indices on U500 and T250 (below).



Conclusions:

- Poleward jet shifts are emerging on the global scale ulletover the last 40 years.
- The reanalysis trends are *not inconsistent* with the lacksquaremodel spread.
- But the jet trends appear relatively strong despite relatively weak temperature gradient trends.



Comparison of ERA5 and UKCP_PPE large ensemble.

Eddies found to be transporting heat out of tropics in ERA5, a process that is not seen in the model.

Seasonal / sub-seasonal timescales dominate the eddy fluxes, as opposed to the fast eddies.

Equator

Hypothesis

Observed trends could be more dynamical than models, with circulation shaping warming pattern as well as vice versa.



Models: strong tropical warming and weak jet shift

Jet

Small jet shift

Heat and momentum fluxes Jet Large jet shift

Pole

Observations: weak tropical warming and strong jet shift

Woollings et al (2023). Trends in the atmospheric jet streams are emerging in observations and could be linked to tropical warming. *Comm.Earth Env.*

Equator

Pole