

# Impact of ENSO regimes on developing and decaying phase precipitation during rainy season in China

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**Abstract.** This study investigated the influence of five El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) types (*i.e.*, Central Pacific Warming (CPW), Eastern Pacific Cooling (EPC), Eastern Pacific Warming (EPW), conventional ENSO, and ENSO Modoki) on rainy-season precipitation in China. The multi-scale moving t-test was applied to determine the onset and withdrawal of rainy season. Results showed that the precipitation anomaly can reach up to 30% above average precipitation during decaying CPW and EPW phases. Developing EPW could cause decreasing precipitation over large areas in China with 10-30% lower than average precipitation in most areas. Results showed that there is a higher probability for flooding during decaying CPW and EPW phases in most parts of China with a largest precipitation anomaly reaching 30% above average precipitation. Developing EPW could trigger droughts over large areas in China with 10-30% lower than average precipitation in most areas. Conventional El Niño in the developing phase had the largest influence on ENSO-related precipitation among developing ENSO and ENSO Modoki regimes. Decaying ENSO also showed larger effect on precipitation anomalies, compared to decaying ENSO Modoki. Decaying ENSO also showed larger effect on the occurrence of drought and flood, compared to decaying ENSO Modoki. The difference between rainy-season precipitation under various ENSO regimes may be attributed to the combined influence of anti-cyclone in the western North Pacific and the Indian monsoon. Stronger monsoon and anti-cyclone are associated with enhanced rainy-season precipitation. The results suggest a certain predictability of rainy-season precipitation related to ENSO regimes.

## 1. Introduction

El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) is one of the most important factors affecting precipitation, which has been achieved urgent attention worldwide (Li et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2006; Preethi et al., 2015; Yuan et al., 2016a; Yuan et al., 2016b; Zaroug et al., 2014; Brigode et al., 2013). Many researchers have studied various aspects of ENSO-based precipitation, such as seasonal precipitation and extreme precipitation. Rainy season characteristics (e.g., onset, withdrawal and precipitation of rainy season),

29 ~~however, are less considered, which are of immense significance to rain-fed agriculture in many countries like China. Rainy season~~  
30 ~~characteristics, however, are less considered, which are of immense significance to rain-fed agriculture in many countries like China.~~  
31 Reliable prediction of onset and withdrawal of rainy season will assist on-time preparation of farmlands and is significant to  
32 ecosystem (Omotosho et al., 2000; Marteau et al., 2011). In addition, rainy season is a period when it is easier for flooding and rainy-  
33 season precipitation could provide certain predictability for flood occurrence. ~~China is an ENSO-sensitive country and prone to~~  
34 ~~flood and drought occurrence (Zhang et al., 2016a; Feng et al., 2011; Feng et al., 2010; Wang and Wang, 2013; Zhang et al.,~~  
35 ~~2014b; Feng and Li, 2011).~~ ~~China is an ENSO-sensitive country and prone to flood and drought occurrence.~~ Thus, it is significant  
36 to investigate ~~Chinese~~ rainy-season precipitation under ENSO regimes. Cai (2003) observed similar inter-decadal oscillation and  
37 abrupt variations between rainfall of rainy season in Fujian and ~~Niño Niño~~<sup>3</sup> SST. Lu (2005) pointed out that rainfall in the rainy  
38 season in North China is related to sea surface temperature anomalies (SSTA) in the equatorial eastern Pacific and negative (positive)  
39 SSTA could trigger heavier (lighter) rainy-season precipitation. However, such studies mainly concentrated on regional scales and  
40 single ENSO mode, rather than continental scale and various ENSO regimes, which is important for overall understanding of  
41 relationship between ENSO and Chinese rainy-season precipitation. In order to decipher this, it is necessary to explore the spatial  
42 pattern of precipitation during the rainy season under various ENSO regimes at the continental scale in China.

43 Different types of ENSO regimes have been demonstrated based on the Pacific spatial pattern SSTA (Kao and Yu, 2009; Larkin  
44 and Harrison, 2005; Ashok et al., 2007; Trenberth, 1997; Tedeschi et al., 2013; Kim et al., 2009). Conventional ENSO episodes,  
45 including El Niño (EN) and La Niña (LN), are defined based on SST anomalies in the ~~Niño Niño~~<sup>3.4</sup> region, and El Niño is mainly  
46 characterized by East Pacific warming in the cold tongue of the East Pacific ocean (Kim et al., 2009). Several researchers have  
47 identified different episodes of SST in the Pacific, such as the central Pacific warming and east Pacific cooling (Larkin and Harrison,  
48 2005; Weng et al., 2007; Kao and Yu, 2009). Kim et al. (2009) divided ENSO into three types, i.e., Central Pacific Warming (CPW),  
49 Eastern Pacific Cooling (EPC), and Eastern Pacific Warming (EPW). The division of ENSO is also based on SSTA in ~~Niño Niño~~<sup>3</sup>,  
50 ~~Niño Niño~~<sup>3.4</sup>, and ~~Niño Niño~~<sup>4</sup> regions. Ashok et al. (2007) introduced a new type of ENSO event, ENSO Modoki, which is  
51 different from conventional ENSO. ENSO Modoki is characterized by positive SSTA in the central Pacific, bounded by negative  
52 SSTA in the western and eastern Pacific.

53 ENSO and ENSO Modoki have different influence on precipitation (Ashok et al., 2007; Ashok et al., 2009; Weng et al.,  
54 2007; Taschetto and England, 2009). Zhang et al. (2016a) pointed out that CPW, EPC, and EPW regimes showed various  
55 performance on seasonal precipitation over the Huaihe River Basin. Precipitation below average usually occurs in southern China  
56 in ENSO Modoki years, whereas the conventional ENSO tends to imply precipitation above average (Zhang et al., 2014b). In  
57 contrast, enhanced precipitation over the Huaihe River Basin often occurs during decaying El Niño Modoki events in summer,  
58 whilst reduced precipitation signals are found in the corresponding season in the decaying year of El Niño (Feng et al., 2011). ~~It can~~  
59 ~~be seen that the influence of ENSO regimes on precipitation varies among locations in China. It can be seen that the influence of~~

~~ENSO regimes on precipitation varies in different parts of China.~~ The National Climate Center (NCC) succeeded in predicting the severe flood over the Yangtze River basin in the typical El Niño year of 1997-1998. Nonetheless, NCC failed to predict the enhanced precipitation in the Huaihe River basin in 2002-2003, since it was an El Niño Modoki year rather than a conventional El Niño. This highlights the significance of correct distinguishing between ENSO and ENSO Modoki.

Different performance of precipitation under various ENSO regimes is associated with atmospheric circulation and monsoon (Tedeschi et al., 2013;Feng et al., 2010;Cai et al., 2010;Black et al., 2003;Chang et al., 2001;Zhang et al., 2014a;Onyutha and Willems, 2015). Wu et al. (2003) explained the physical mechanism of links between precipitation and SSTs through features of atmospheric circulation. Wang et al. (2004) pointed out that the local onset of rainy season in the South China Sea is related to mean summer monsoon onset. Cai et al. (2010) argued that a rainfall reduction in southeast Queensland in Australia is related to an eastward shift in the Walker circulation. Feng et al. (2011) pointed out that China rainfall anomalies were mainly due to anomalous anti-cyclonic flow in the western North Pacific associated with El Niño Modoki and El Niño events. Gerlitz et al. (2016) argued that ENSO-induced precipitation variability in tropical regions is directly associated with the atmospheric circulation. The atmospheric circulation and monsoon have different influence on two types of ENSO (Feng and Li, 2013;Zhang et al., 2011;Zhou and Chan, 2007). As a consequence, the investigation of atmospheric circulation and monsoon is used to explain different performance of rainy-season precipitation anomalies under various ENSO regimes in this study.

850hpa wind variability is associated with SSTA in the equatorial Pacific and precipitation anomalies in China (Zhang et al., 1999;Zhou and Chan, 2007;Wang et al., 2004;Zhang et al., 2016b). Fan et al. (2013) pointed out that 850 hPa vector winds are related to the moisture transportation from western tropical Pacific to the subtropical region, which determines the precipitation over the Yangtze-Huai River Valley region. Huang et al. (2004) and Zhang et al. (2014a) presented the atmospheric circulation and monsoon variability by the composite distribution of wind anomalies at 850 hpa in different phases of El Niño and La Niña to explain precipitation variation in China. Feng et al. (2011) compared the difference of 850 hPa wind anomalies in decaying ENSO and ENSO Modoki phases to explain the physical mechanism of seasonal precipitation variation in China. Hence, 850 hpa vector winds reflecting atmospheric circulation and monsoon variability is used to explore the underlying causes of precipitation anomalies in this study.

The influence of ENSO and ENSO Modoki regimes on Chinese precipitation has been studied intensively. However, research has been limited to the comparison of impacts of developing (decaying) ENSO and ENSO Modoki on precipitation at the regional scale in China. Therefore, this study aims to improve our understanding of ENSO-induced precipitation during rainy season and to explore the effect of five important ENSO types (i.e., CPW, EPC, EPW, ENSO and ENSO Modoki) in the developing and decaying phase on the continental scale precipitation. The multi-scale moving t-test method was applied to determine the onset and withdrawal of the rainy season. The underlying causes of the spatial patterns of rainy-season precipitation were analyzed by the variability of atmospheric circulation in the western North Pacific (WNP) together with monsoon. ~~Consequently, the paper is organized as follows.~~

91 ~~Section 2 describes the study area and used data. Section 3 shows the methodology for determining the rainy season and the~~  
92 ~~definition of ENSO and ENSO Modoki. In Sect.4, we investigate and discuss the spatial distribution of rainy season precipitation~~  
93 ~~under different ENSO regimes in the developing and decaying phase and their underlying causes. The final section summaries the~~  
94 ~~main findings.~~

## 95 2. Study area and data

96 China, located in middle latitude in East Asia (18°N-54°N, 73°E- 135°E) , is the most populous country in the world (Fig. 1), with  
97 a population of over 1.381 billion and an area of approximately 9.6 million km<sup>2</sup>. ~~Climate of~~ China is mainly dominated by monsoon  
98 climate and mountain plateau climate, which lead to pronounced rainfall differences among different seasons and regions.

99 Daily precipitation data from 1960 to 2015 at 536 observation stations in China were selected for this study. The data were  
100 obtained from China Meteorological Data Sharing Service System, and the data quality has been regularly checked. The locations  
101 of the observation stations are shown in Fig.1. The stations are distributed unevenly, with fewer stations in the northwestern part of  
102 China. Hence, we applied Kriging interpolation to induce a resolution of  $0.2^{\circ} \times 0.2^{\circ}$ .

103 The dataset of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) extended reconstructed SST was used to identify  
104 different types of conventional ENSO. ENSO Modoki index (EMI) was obtained from the Japan Agency for Marine Science and  
105 Technology. In addition, the National Centres for Environmental Prediction (NCEP)/ National Centres for Atmospheric Research  
106 (NCAR) reanalysis data were used to investigate underlying causes of the spatial pattern of precipitation under different ENSO  
107 regimes (Kalnay et al., 1996).

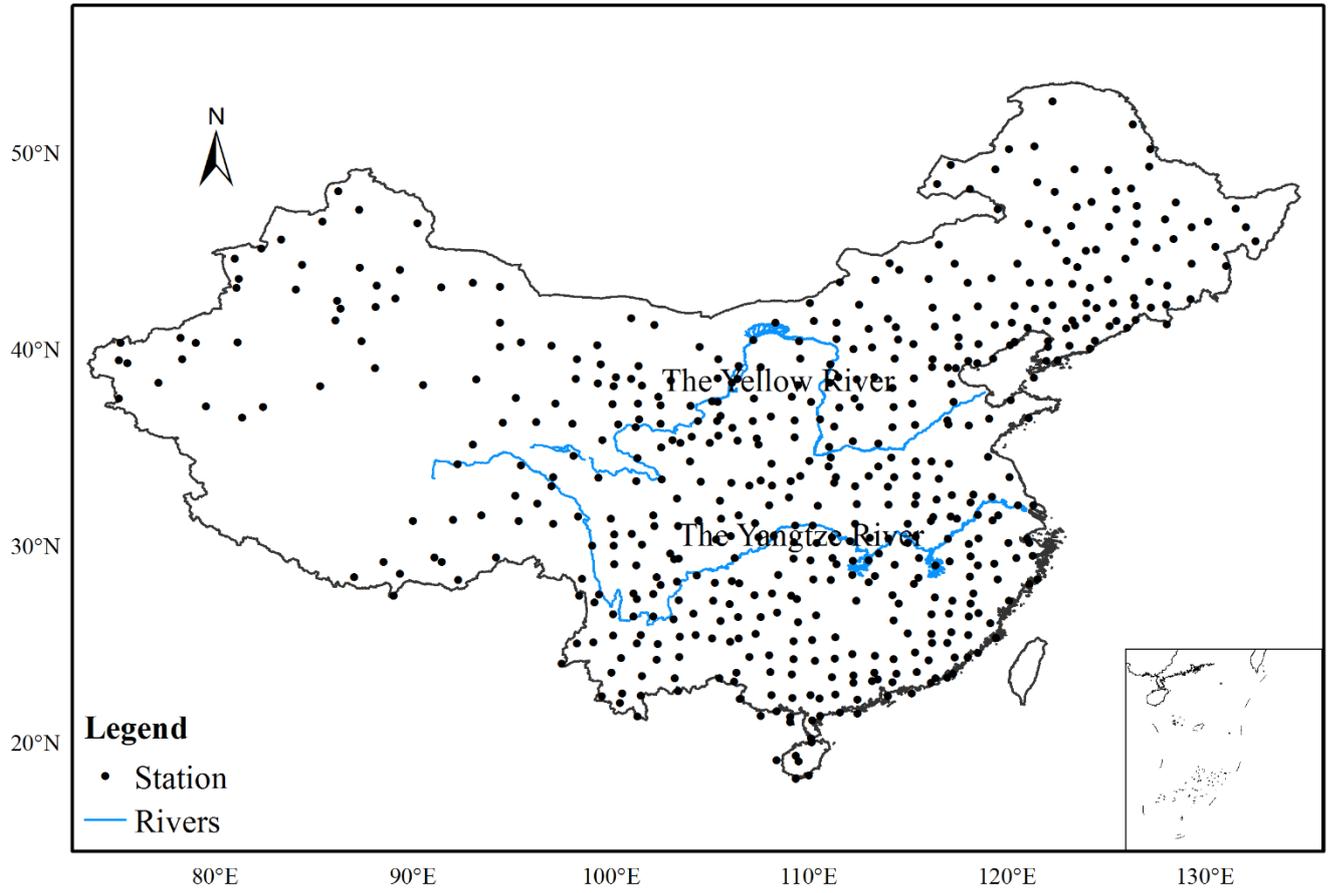


Figure 1: The spatial distribution of precipitation stations used in this study.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Determination of rainy season

The onset and withdrawal of rainy season was determined by the multi-scale moving t-test method. This method is characterized by the detection of mutation points between two subsamples with equal size  $n$ , where  $n$  is the length of the subsample, ( $n=30, 31, \dots, 182/183$ ;  $182/183$  corresponds to half the value of length of one year  $365/366$ ). Theoretically, the length of subsamples in this study ranged between 1 and  $182/183$ . However, as the onset or withdrawal of the rainy season, it will not be considered if the length of the subsample is one day or just several days when the abrupt point is prominent. As a result, the length of the subsample is limited between 30 and  $182/183$ . The determination of the mutation point can be described as (Fraedrich et al., 1997)

$$t(n, i) = (\bar{x}_{i2} - \bar{x}_{i1})n^{1/2}(s_{i2}^2 + s_{i1}^2)^{-1/2}, \quad (1)$$

where  $\bar{x}_{i1}$  and  $\bar{x}_{i2}$  defined as,

$$\bar{x}_{i1} = \sum_{j=i-n}^{i-1} \frac{x_j}{n}; s_{i1}^2 = \sum_{j=i-n}^{i-1} (x_j - \bar{x}_{i1})^2 / (n-1), \quad (2)$$

$$\bar{x}_{i2} = \sum_{j=i}^{i+n-1} \frac{x_j}{n}; s_{i2}^2 = \sum_{j=i}^{i+n-1} (x_j - \bar{x}_{i2})^2 / (n-1), \quad (3)$$

and  $x_i$  is daily precipitation for Julian day  $i$  within one year and for one station.  $\bar{x}_{i1}$  and  $\bar{x}_{i2}$  are the mean values of the subsamples before and after the Julian day  $i$ , respectively.

The t-value calculated above was normalized by the 0.01 test value showing in Eq. (4), which is equal to the result of Mann-Kendall test at 0.05 ~~significance~~~~confidence~~ level.

$$t_r(n, i) = t(n, i)/t_{0.01}(n), \quad (4)$$

where  $t_r(n, i)$  can be taken as the threshold to detect mutations.  $t_r(n, i) > 1.0$  represents an increasing trend while  $t_r(n, i) < 1.0$  is a decreasing trend. The onset of rainy season in this study was defined as the mutation point corresponding to a maximum  $t_r(n, i)$  value. For this case, precipitation changes from a smaller to a higher value. Likewise, the withdrawal is defined as the changing point corresponding to a minimum  $t_r(n, i)$  value.

### 3.2 Classification of ENSO and ENSO Modoki regimes

Three types of ENSO were classified based on the definition proposed by Kim et al. (2009). The years dominated by CPW, EPC, and EPW are listed in Table 1.

**Table 1. Years dominated by CPW, EPC, and EPW regimes during 1960-2015.**

EPW	EPC	CPW
1965,1972,1976,1982,1987,1997,2015	1964,1970,1973,1975,1988,1998,1999, 2007,2010,2011	1963,1969,1991,1994,2002,2004,2009

The definition of ENSO Modoki and conventional ENSO was demonstrated. Specifically, warm (cold) episodes of ENSO Modoki, abbreviated as MEN (MLN), was defined as EMI above (below) 0.7 SD (-0.7 SD), where SD is the standard deviation (Ashok et al., 2007).  $EMI = [SSTA]A - 0.5 \times [SSTA]B - 0.5 \times [SSTA]C$ , where [SSTA]A, [SSTA]B, [SSTA]C represents the SSTA in region A(10°S – 10°N, 165°E – 140°W), region B(15°S – 5°N, 110°W – 70°W) and region C(10°S – 20°N, 125°E – 145°E), respectively. Likewise, the conventional EN (LN), abbreviated as CEN (CLN), was defined as SSTA above (below) 0.7 SD (-0.7 SD) in the area of 5°N – 5°S, 90°W – 140°W (Tedeschi et al., 2013). This definition gives an opportunity to judge the ENSO type of the rainy season rather than the whole year, which is greater than definition proposed by Trenberth (1997).

### 3.3 Precipitation anomaly index during rainy season (PARS)

Precipitation anomaly can present the difference of precipitation between ENSO years and normal years and demonstrate the influence of ENSO regimes on precipitation more directly. Zhang et al. (2013a) used precipitation anomaly index to explore the effect of ENSO on precipitation in the East River Basin, South China. Zhang et al. (2016a) investigated the influence of ENSO and ENSO Modoki on seasonal precipitation over the Huaihe River Basin by using precipitation anomaly index.

Precipitation anomaly index ~~is was used to investigate the difference in precipitation between ENSO and normal years~~ defined as:

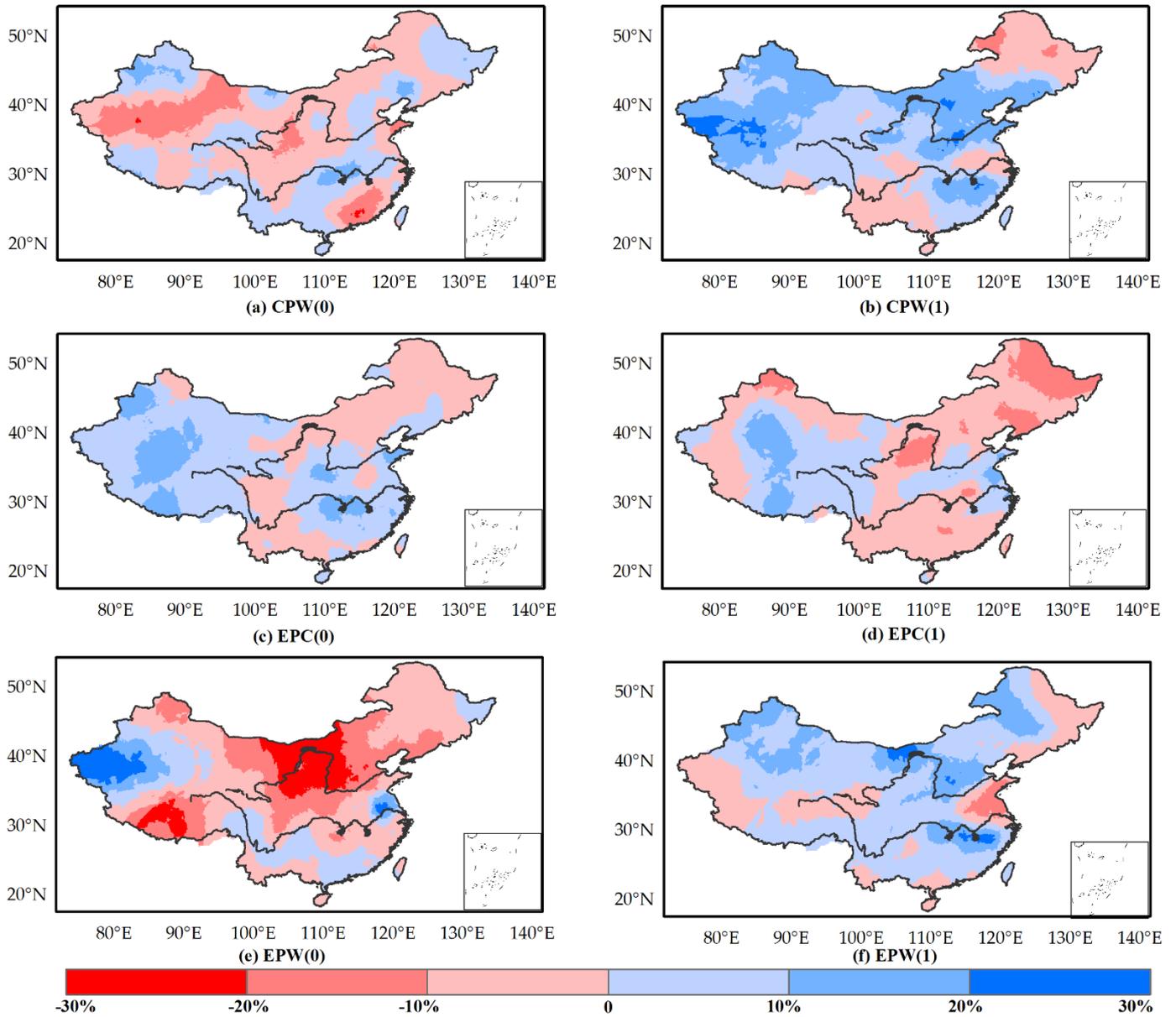
$$PARS_{ij} = \left( \frac{\overline{PRS_{ij}}}{\overline{PRSN_{ij}}} - 1 \right) \times 100\%, \quad (5)$$

where  $PARS_{ij}$  denotes precipitation anomaly during rainy season at  $i_{th}$  station in  $j_{th}$  year;  $\overline{PRS_{ij}}$  denotes mean daily precipitation during rainy season at  $i_{th}$  station in  $j_{th}$  year, and  $\overline{PRSN_{ij}}$  denotes mean daily precipitation during rainy season at  $i_{th}$  station in  $j_{th}$  normal year. The normal year refers to a year without ENSO event occurring.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1 Precipitation anomaly during rainy season (PARS) influenced by CPW, EPC, and EPW regimes

The spatial variability of PARS under CPW, EPC and EPW regimes in the phase of developing and decaying years is presented in Fig.2. ~~It is seen that~~ the distribution of precipitation anomaly is irregular over the whole area in the developing phase of CPW. The coastal regions in southeastern China that had the largest amount of rainy-season precipitation presented the largest decreasing trend, with the precipitation anomaly reaching 30% below average precipitation. The upper and middle reaches of the Yangtze River and the Yellow River showed decreasing precipitation, whereas the lower reaches had the opposite trend. The decaying CPW regime had relatively regular spatial pattern. More specifically, most parts of China presented increasing precipitation during rainy season, with the largest PARS being 20% above average precipitation. The distribution of PARS influenced by the decaying CPW is similar to that by the developing EPC, with shrinking extent of enhanced precipitation in central China for developing EPC. The distribution of PARS is similar as well in the two phases of EPC (Fig.2, second row), with precipitation above average in northwestern China and precipitation below average in northeastern China. The difference between the two phases lies in the increasing (decreasing) precipitation in southeastern China in the developing (decaying) phase. Nonetheless, developing and decaying EPW (Fig.2, third row) showed opposite spatial precipitation pattern. Most parts of China presented dry signals in the phase of developing EPW, which became stronger northwards, and more than 30% below average precipitation can be identified in north China. However, there is above average precipitation in most regions of China in the case of decaying EPW, with PARS values ranging between 0 and 30%. ~~In summary, the CPW decaying phase (EPC developing phase) deserves more attention than the developing (decaying) phase, since it show more prominent wet signals. In summary, the CPW decaying phase (EPC developing phase) deserves more attention than the developing (decaying) phase, since it has higher possibility to trigger flooding.~~ Both phases are significant for the EPW regimes, due to the obvious dry (wet) signals shown in the developing (decaying) phase.



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**Figure 2: Spatial pattern for rainy-season precipitation anomaly (PARS) during the CPW (first row), EPC (second row), and EPW (third row) episodes in the phase of ENSO developing year (0) and decaying year (1). The sign “0” in the parentheses denotes ENSO developing year and “1” denotes decaying year.**

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#### **4.2 Precipitation anomaly during rainy season (PARS) impacted by ENSO and ENSO Modoki regime**

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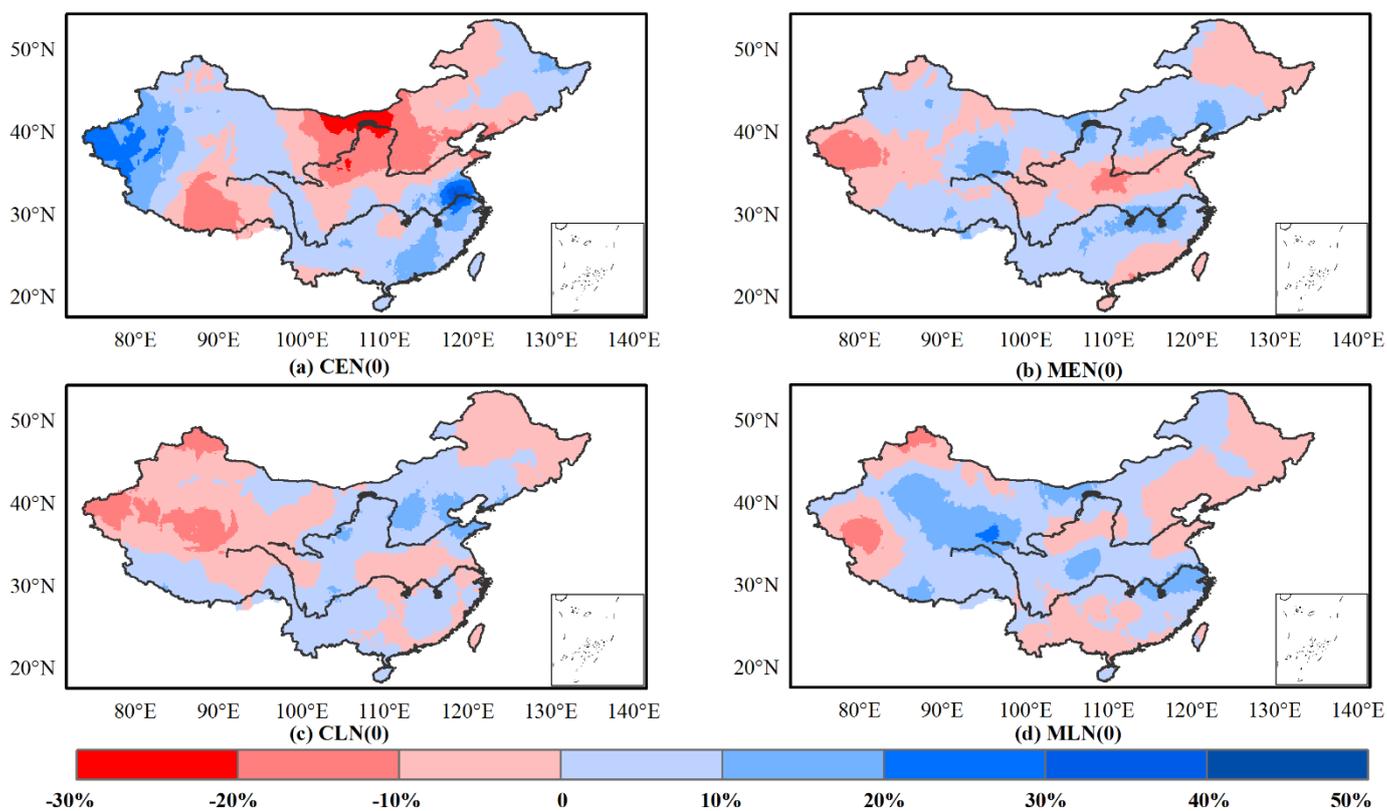
Figure 3 and 4 present precipitation anomalies during rainy season (PARS) for warm and cold episodes of conventional ENSO and ENSO Modoki in a developing phase, and a decaying phase, respectively. Precipitation increased in a band stretching from northwestern China to the coastal region in the southeast, with the largest precipitation anomaly (40%) occurring in southeast China under a developing CEN regime (Fig.3a). The dry condition is more severe northwards in central China, with PARS equal to about -30% in the northern parts of central China. Zhang et al. (2016b) concluded that strong El Niño events are associated with summer monsoon flooding over the Yangtze River, which is consistent with our results. The distribution of rainy-season precipitation for

179 developing El Niño is also in agreement with the research by Zhang et al. (2011). Northern China had opposite PARS pattern for  
180 developing El Niño Modoki, in comparison to developing CEN (Fig.3b). Nonetheless, the two phases showed similar precipitation  
181 distribution, with reduced precipitation in central China (approximately -10%) and enhanced precipitation in southern China.  
182 Typically, developing CEN demonstrated more obvious wet or dry signals compared to MEN. Moreover, the wet and dry condition  
183 for developing CEN is the most serious among all ENSO and ENSO Modoki regimes in both developing and decaying phases, with  
184 the largest precipitation anomaly reaching 50% above average precipitation amount and lowest 30% below. This means that  
185 developing CEN should be paid urgent attention for flooding and drought monitoring. The spatial pattern of PARS for developing  
186 CLN presented similar signals with developing MEN, with a shorter wet precipitation band in northern China for developing CLN  
187 (Fig.3c). The increased precipitation was shifted westwards for the developing MLN, compared to cold episodes of conventional  
188 ENSO (Fig.3d). ENSO and ENSO Modoki regimes in the developing phase presented various distribution of precipitation anomalies.  
189 Wet or dry signals are more easily shown for the warm episodes of conventional ENSO, in comparison to the other three regimes.  
190 Flooding or drought is more easily triggered for the warm episodes of conventional ENSO, in comparison to the other three regimes.  
191 Similar patterns of PARS for developing CLN and MEN is suggested to be further studied.

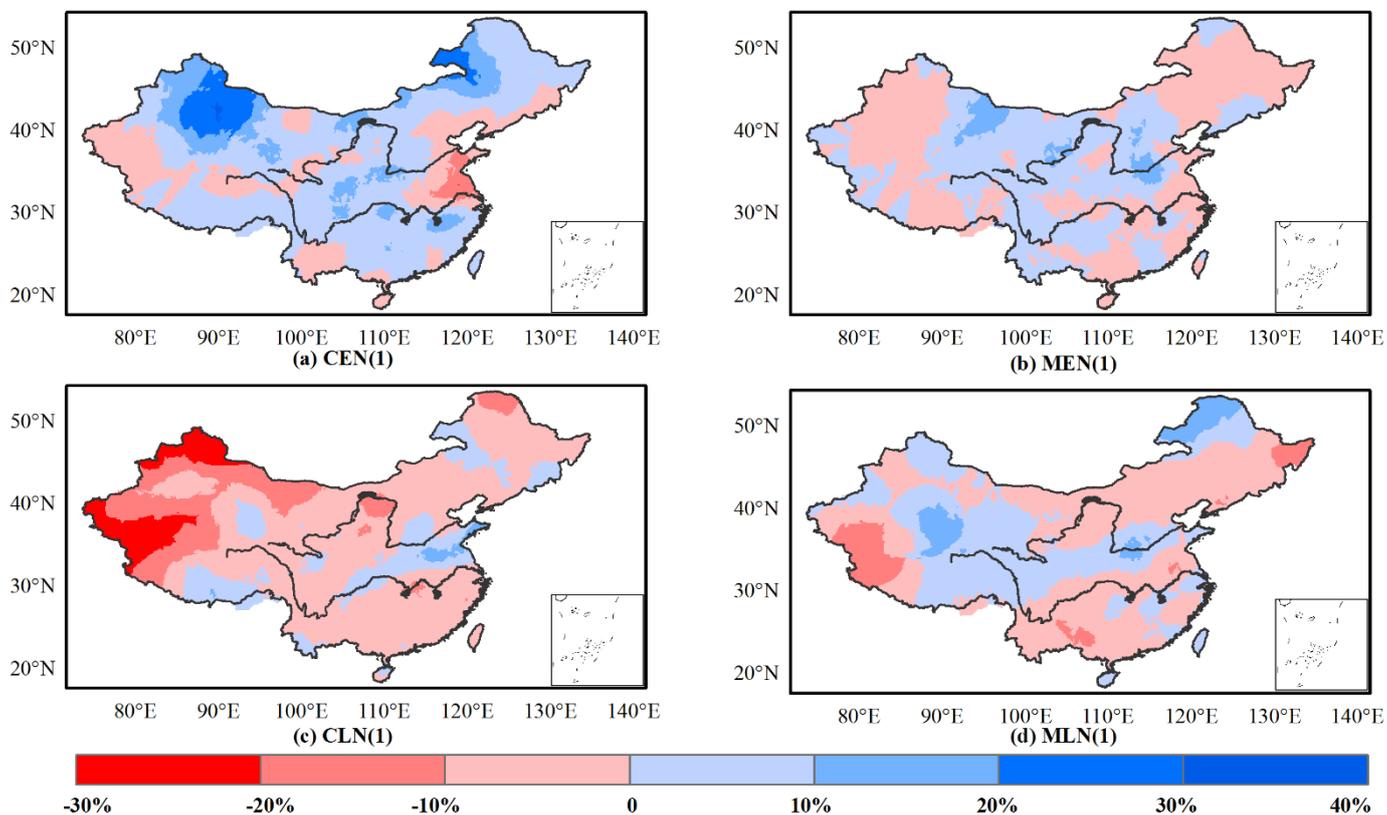
192 Decaying ENSO and ENSO Modoki years showed different features of PARS (Fig.4). Most parts of China presented increasing  
193 precipitation for decaying CEN, with more than 30% above average precipitation identified in north China ~~Most parts of China~~  
194 ~~presented increasing precipitation for decaying CEN, with more than 30% above average precipitation identified in north China,~~  
195 ~~which is more likely to trigger flooding~~ (Fig.4a). The decaying phase of MEN (Fig.4b) presented shrinking extent of enhanced  
196 precipitation, which was condensed in the central parts of China, ranging between 0 and 10%. The result is consistent with  
197 conclusions from Feng et al. (2011), who found obvious rainfall anomalies in southern China for decaying El Niño and no prominent  
198 rainfall variations in the corresponding phase of El Niño Modoki. In terms of the cold episodes of ENSO (Fig.4c), approximately  
199 95% of China showed dry signals, and the condition was more serious eastwards, being 30% below average precipitation amount.  
200 We can see that the spatial pattern of PARS for the decaying CLN is opposite to that of CEN. Decaying MLN (Fig.4d) showed  
201 larger extent of enhanced precipitation in a band stretching from western China to parts of the Yellow River Basin, in comparison  
202 to CLN. In conclusion, the decaying phases of conventional ENSO showed more obvious wet or dry signals compared to ENSO  
203 Modoki, with most parts of China displaying increasing (decreasing) precipitation for the CEN (CLN).

204 This study analyzed spatial patterns of precipitation under different ENSO regimes, since ENSO is the leading driver of  
205 precipitation anomaly in China (Xiao et al., 2015). Xu et al. (2016) revealed that increasing autumn precipitation in southern China  
206 is due to the combined ENSO and Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) events. Other researchers also concluded that IOD and ENSO have  
207 mutual impact on precipitation anomalies in China (Weng et al., 2011; Liu et al., 2009; Wu et al., 2012). Moreover, Pacific Decadal  
208 Oscillation, subtropical high, also influence the distribution of Chinese precipitation (Chan, 2005; Wang et al., 2008; Chang et al.,

209 2000;Niu and Li, 2008;Ouyang et al., 2014). As a result, the spatial patterns of PARS under ENSO regimes may not only be  
 210 determined by ENSO, but also by the combination of various drivers, which ought to be studied further.



**Figure 3: Spatial pattern of precipitation anomalies during rainy season (PARS) during developing (0) conventional ENSO and ENSO Modoki events.**



215 **Figure 4: Spatial pattern of precipitation anomalies during rainy season (PARS) for decaying (1) conventional ENSO and ENSO Modoki**  
216 **events.**

### 217 4.3 Composites of circulation

218 Figure 5 presents the composites of 850-mb vector wind for three types of ENSO. There is a strengthening of westerly and  
219 southwesterly wind in the decaying year of CPW (Fig.5b), which brings more moisture to China, compared to developing CPW  
220 (Fig.5a). This may explain the enhanced precipitation in decaying CPW (Fig.2b). The difference between developing and decaying  
221 EPC (Fig.5c-d) lies in the shift of anti-cyclonic flow in the western part of North Pacific (WNP). The eastward anti-cyclone for the  
222 decaying EPC weakened the transportation of moisture in eastern China and caused reduced precipitation (Fig.2d). The decaying  
223 EPW (Fig.5f) experienced stronger western and southwestern wind but weakened anti-cyclone compared to the developing phase  
224 (Fig.5e). The WNP anti-cyclone could bring plentiful moisture to China, so weakened anti-cyclonic flow will cause reduced  
225 precipitation (Feng et al., 2011). However, most parts of China presented wetter signals in the phase of decaying EPW in comparison  
226 to developing EPW. Therefore, it can be pointed out that the India monsoon plays a more significant role in the formation of rainy-  
227 season precipitation during EPW phases compared to the atmospheric circulation.

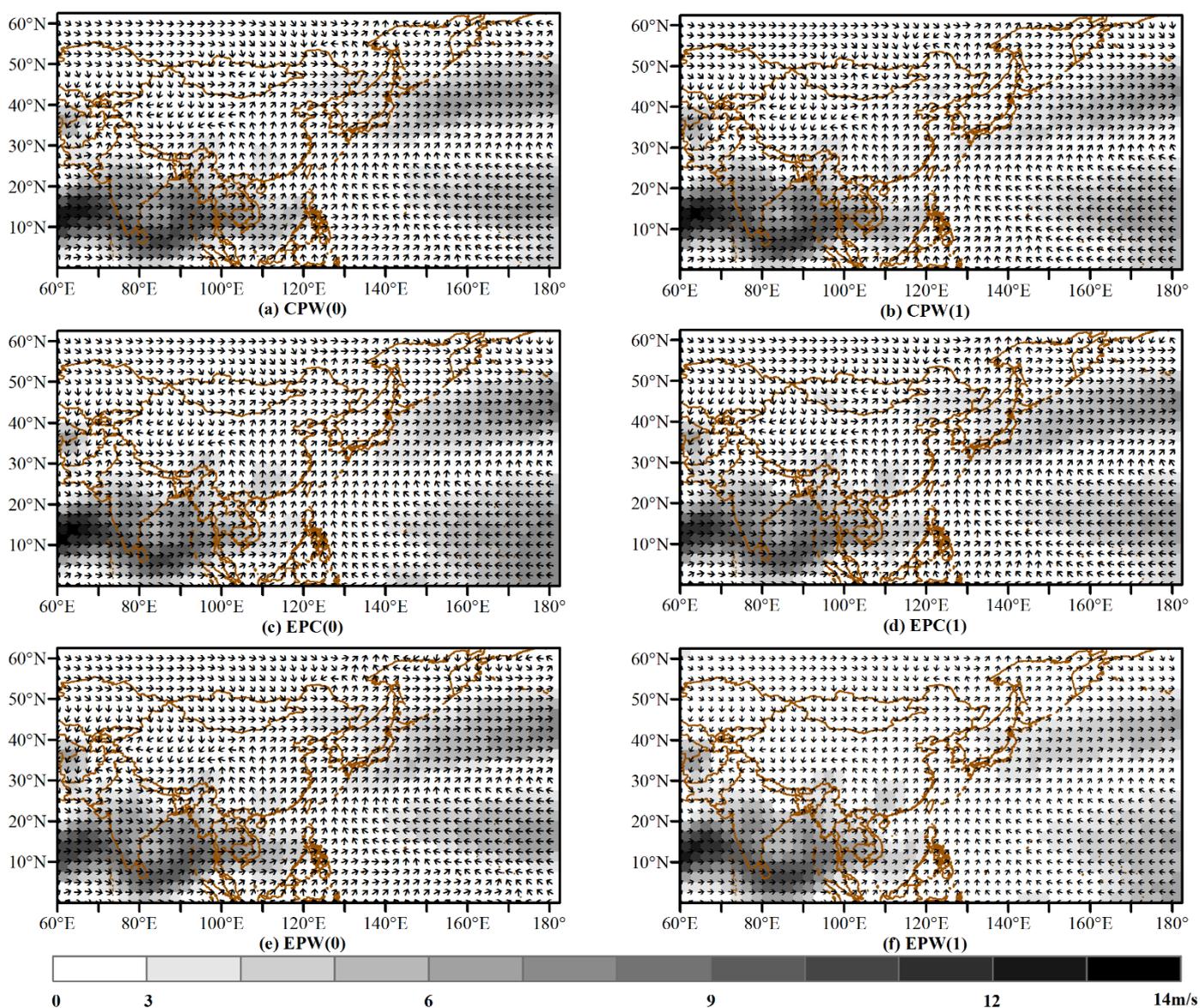
228 Figure 6 shows the underlying causes of different performance of conventional ENSO and ENSO Modoki in the developing  
229 phase by analysis of the 850-hp wind. Compared to developing CEN, developing MEN experienced reduced precipitation in western  
230 China and generally enhanced precipitation in eastern parts under the combined influence of stronger monsoon and weakened anti-  
231 cyclone (Fig.6a-b). Stronger anti-cyclonic flow in the phase of developing La Niña Modoki (Fig.6d) may cause the enhanced  
232 precipitation in western parts of China compared to conventional La Niña regime in developing years (Fig.6c).

233 The wind composites of warm and cold episodes of decaying ENSO and ENSO Modoki are presented in Fig.7. Compared to  
234 decaying CEN, the wet signal of precipitation is weaker in the decaying year of MEN, which may be attributed to the weakened  
235 anti-cyclonic flow in WNP and western winds for the decaying MEN. The difference of wind composites between decaying CLN  
236 and MLN indicates similar configuration, with stronger westerly wind and anti-cyclone causing enhanced precipitation for decaying  
237 MLN.

238 In summary, westerly winds seem to play more significant role in the phase of CPW and EPW, while developing La Niña and  
239 La Niña Modoki are dominated by the anti-cyclone. The spatial pattern of PARS is the reflection of combined influence of westerly  
240 winds and anti-cyclonic flow for the EPC and decaying ENSO and ENSO Modoki regimes.

241 It can be seen that the spatial pattern of precipitation during the rainy season in China is dominated by westerly winds from  
242 India and anti-cyclone in WNP, which is equivalent to the results by Dai and Wigley (2000), Feng and Li (2011), Wu et al. (2003).  
243 Generally, stronger western and southwestern winds are related to increasing precipitation. It is in agreement with the research of  
244 Zhang et al. (1996) and Wang et al. (2000), who pointed out that southeastern and southwestern winds could substantially enhance  
245 the moisture transportation to China. Wu et al. (2003) also found that East Asian monsoon is positively related to precipitation

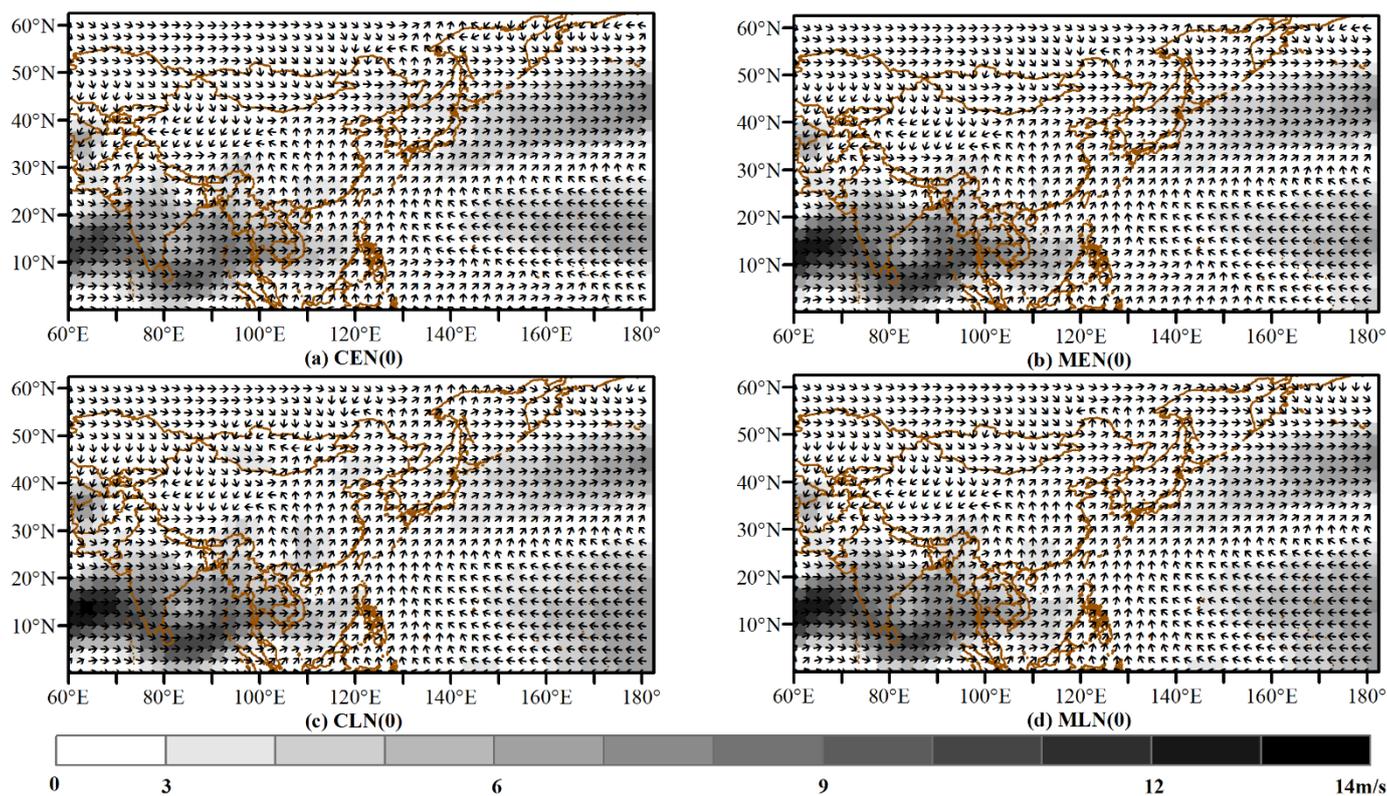
246 variations, which is consistent with our result. Likewise, the westward and stronger anti-cyclone is related to enhanced PARS. Wu  
 247 et al. (2003) reported that the anomalous low-level anti-cyclone is determined by large-scale equatorial heating anomalies and local  
 248 air-sea interactions. Westerlies and anti-cyclone are of dominant importance for the ENSO-induced precipitation during the rainy  
 249 season. However, cyclonic flow may have larger influence on Chinese precipitation under certain circumstances. For example, the  
 250 autumn drought in southwest China in 2009 was determined by a strong cyclone in WNP for ENSO Modoki (Zhang et al., 2013b).  
 251 Feng et al. (2011) also revealed that the WNP circulation is cyclonic in winter and then becomes weak in the following spring and  
 252 anti-cyclonic flow in summer for El Niño Modoki. As a consequence, WNP anti-cyclone has larger effect on East Asia precipitation  
 253 on the inter-annual or inter-decadal scale. As a consequence, WNP anti-cyclone seems to have larger effect on East Asia precipitation  
 254 on the inter-annual or inter-decadal scale, but anti-cyclone and cyclone are both crucial for the determination of precipitation on the  
 255 annual or smaller scale.



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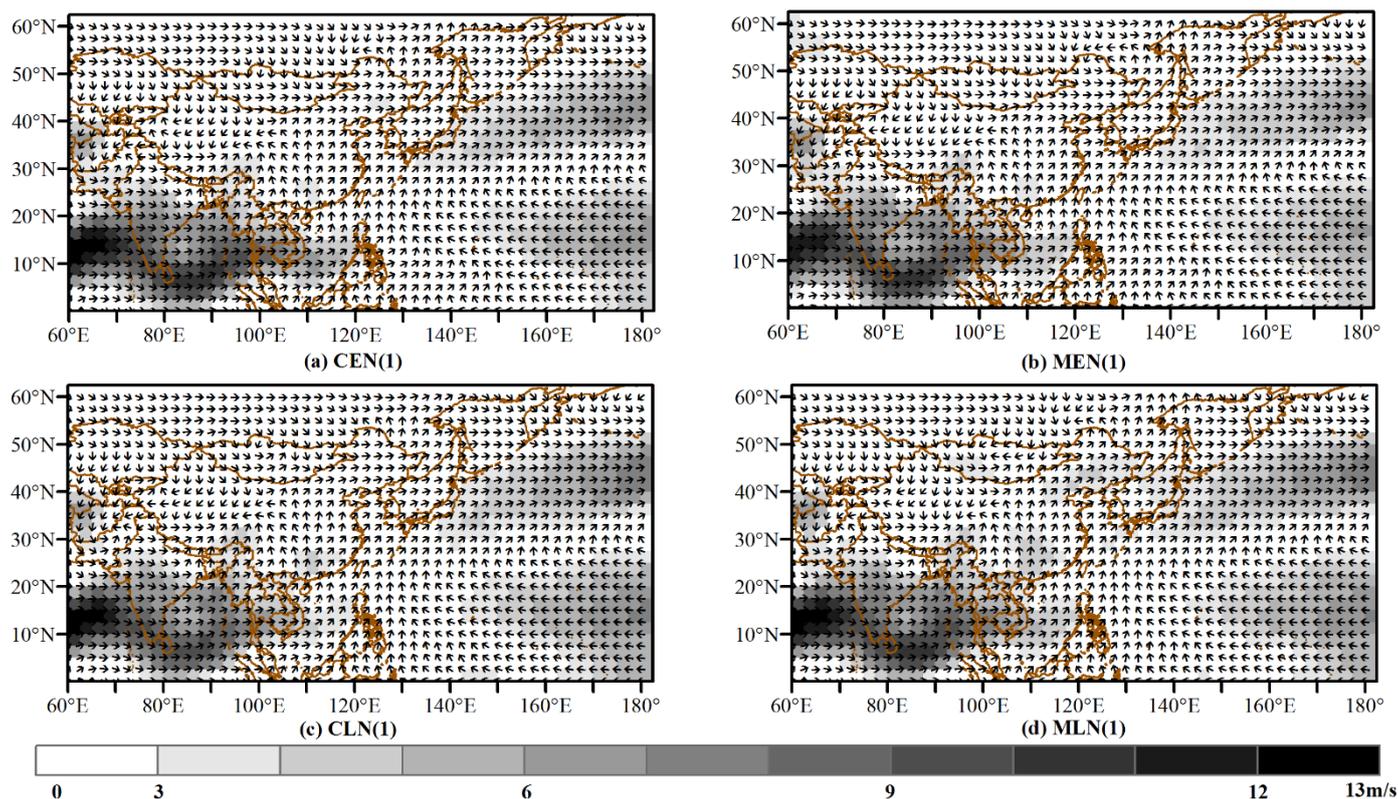
**Figure 5:** Composites of 850-mb vector wind for mainland China during CPW, EPC and EPW developing (0) and decaying (1) phases. Arrows show the direction of wind (m/s); **grey-blue** shaded areas denote wind speed above 3 m/s.



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**Figure 6:** Composites of 850-mb vector wind for mainland China during ENSO and ENSO Modoki developing (0) phases. Arrows show the direction of wind (m/s); **grey-blue** shaded areas denote wind speed above 3 m/s.



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264 **Figure 7: Composites of 850-mb vector wind for mainland China during ENSO and ENSO Modoki decaying (1) phases. Arrows show**  
 265 **the direction of wind (m/s); grey/blue shaded areas denote wind speed above 3 m/s.**

## 266 5. Conclusion

267 This study investigated the distribution of PARS under various ENSO types in developing and decaying phases and their underlying  
 268 causes. It was found that northwestern, central and southeastern China experience increasing precipitation for decaying CPW and  
 269 EPW~~It was found that most parts of China experience increasing precipitation for decaying CPW and EPW~~, and positive  
 270 precipitation anomaly ranges from 0 to 30% due to the stronger westerly and southwesterly winds. The developing phase of EPW  
 271 presents overall negative rainy-season precipitation anomalies in China with more than 30% below average precipitation identified  
 272 in many parts of the country, which is a result from weak westerly winds. The different spatial distribution of rainy-season  
 273 precipitation under developing and decaying ENSO and ENSO Modoki regimes was also examined. Conventional El Niño in  
 274 developing years showed larger influence on precipitation during rainy season in China as compared to developing CLN, MEN, and  
 275 MLN. Conventional ENSO in the decaying phase is more likely to show wet and dry signals in comparison to the corresponding  
 276 ENSO Modoki regimes. ~~Conventional ENSO in the decaying phase is more likely to cause flooding and drought in comparison to~~  
 277 ~~the corresponding ENSO Modoki regimes.~~ Different performance of conventional ENSO and ENSO Modoki is a reflection of  
 278 combined influence of the India monsoon and the WNP anti-cyclone. This study improved our understanding on the spatial

279 variability of ENSO-induced precipitation during rainy season in China and the underlying causes. These results suggest that  
280 improved predictability can be achieved for rainy-season precipitation related to ENSO regimes. We suggest that further work  
281 should focus on the influence of interactive ENSO and other drivers on precipitation to evaluate and improve the predictive ability.

## 282 **6. Data availability**

283 The daily precipitation, NOAA extended reconstructed SST, ENSO Modoki index (EMI) and the NCEP-NCAR reanalysis datasets  
284 used in this study are available for download under the following URLs:

- 285 – Daily precipitation: [http://data.cma.cn/data/detail/dataCode/SURF\\_CLI\\_CHN\\_MUL\\_DAY\\_V3.0.html](http://data.cma.cn/data/detail/dataCode/SURF_CLI_CHN_MUL_DAY_V3.0.html)
- 286 – NOAA extended reconstructed SST: <https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/data-access/marineocean-data/extended-reconstructed-sea-surface-temperature-ersst-v4>
- 288 – EMI: <http://www.jamstec.go.jp/frsgc/research/d1/iod/DATA/emi.monthly.txt>
- 289 – NCEP/NCAR reanalysis data: <https://www.esrl.noaa.gov/psd/data/gridded/data.ncep.reanalysis.html>

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292 *Author contributions.* Qing Cao, Zhenchun Hao and Feifei Yuan conceived the study. All authors contributed to writing the paper.

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295 *Competing interests.* The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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