Scatterometer estimates of time-averaged surface wind divergence and vorticity in rain-free and allweather conditions

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#### Overview:

- 1) Show how rain-flagging generates biases in scatterometer timeaveraged surface divergence and vorticity, and how these are affected by the order of differentiation and time-averaging
- 2) Explain why the order of differentiation and time-averaging matter
- 3) Surface convergence field near the Gulf Stream from allweather scatterometer wind fields

# What happens when we switch order of spatial derivative and time-averaging operations applied to rain-flagged QuikSCAT winds?

Spatial derivative applied to (u<sub>rf</sub>,v<sub>rf</sub>) first, then timeaverage

Time- average (u<sub>rf</sub>,v<sub>rf</sub>) first, then compute

spatial derivative



-1.2-0.8-0.4 0 0.4 0.8 1.2  $(\times 10^{-5} \text{ s}^{-1})$ 

All spatial derivatives in this analysis computed using centered first differences

Two very different time-averaged divergence and vorticity fields for the very same rain-free winds

#### Wind Stress Curl and Wind Stress Divergence Biases from Rain Effects on QSCAT Surface Wind Retrievals

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- Milliff et al. (2004) found that rain-flagging of QuikSCAT observations inherently produced divergent and anti-cyclonic sampling biases in the wind field since precipitation preferentially occurs in convergent, cyclonic conditions.
  - Scatterometers conditionally sample non-precipitating conditions, and thus conditionally sample predominantly divergent, anti-cyclonic winds



# Large-scale mean divergence and vorticity fields from NCEP



#### 3-yr average 1/2010-12/2012

# Comparison of NCEP all-weather and QuikSCAT rain-free time-averaged divergence/vorticity



These are the divergence and vorticty of the time-averaged rain-free QuikSCAT u,v winds!!!

Remarkably, the vector-averaged method applied to rain-free QuikSCAT winds accounts for the major large-scale features of the divergence and vorticity fields in the all-weather NCEP fields (which include rain).

# Difference between time-averaged instantaneous and vector-averaged divergence and curl



Difference between the two methods is the influence of *unpaired observations* in the vector-averaged method

Unpaired observations occur at the first non-rainflagged grid point bordering rain patches

The vector-averaged method thus contains more information than does the instantaneous averages

Wind observations paired in time

### Frequency of rain-flagged occurrences in the 10-yr QuikSCAT data record



- Large spatial variability of frequency of rain frequency
- Oft-quoted global over-ocean average is 7.3%
  - This global average does not fully characterize regional variability

## Questions raised by this analysis

- The time-averaged divergence and vorticity from the vector-averaged method applied to rain-free winds resembles the time-means from the allweather winds. Does this mean that...
  - ... the link between rain and convergence and cyclonic vorticity is not true, weak, or more complicated than previously supposed?
  - winds in rain are not necessary to get plausible estimates of the time-averaged allweather divergence and vorticity?

# Numerical simulation to evaluate vector-averaged method

- Diagnose why vector-averaged method applied to rain-free winds resembles time-averaged all-weather derivative wind fields.
- I year simulation using COAMPS mesoscale atmosphere model over the Northwest Atlantic
  - Realistic rain and wind variability/covariability
  - 9km grid resolution
  - Results here presented for 06Z and 18Z for year of 2009



# Comparison of COAMPS Rain Frequency for 2009 with satellite estimates



Spatial structure and magnitude of rain frequency well-represented in COAMPS, although it is a few percent higher compared to other satellite rain frequency estimates.

# I-yr average surface divergence from COAMPS simulation



## Analysis of divergence of vectoraveraged $u_{rf}$ , $v_{rf}$

$$D_{i,j}^{VA} = \frac{1}{2\Delta x} \left[ \frac{1}{N_{i+1,j}} \sum_{k=1}^{N_{i+1,j}} u_{i+1,j}(t_k) - \frac{1}{N_{i-1,j}} \sum_{l=1}^{N_{i-1,j}} u_{i-1,j}(t_l) \right] + \frac{1}{2\Delta y} \left[ \frac{1}{N_{i,j+1}} \sum_{m=1}^{N_{i,j+1}} v_{i,j+1}(t_m) - \frac{1}{N_{i,j-1}} \sum_{n=1}^{N_{i,j-1}} v_{i,j-1}(t_n) \right].$$

$$\frac{1}{N_{i+1,j}}\sum_{k=1}^{N_{i+1,j}}u_{i+1,j}(t_k) = \frac{1}{N_{i+1,j}}\left(N_{i,j}^p\hat{\mu}_{u_{i+1,j}}^p + N_{i+1,j}^{up}\hat{\mu}_{u_{i+1,j}}^{up}\right), \quad \blacktriangleleft$$

$$\begin{split} D_{i,j}^{VA} &= \boxed{N_{i,j}^p \left[ \frac{1}{2\Delta x} \left( \frac{\hat{\mu}_{u_{i+1,j}}^p}{N_{i+1,j}} - \frac{\hat{\mu}_{u_{i-1,j}}^p}{N_{i-1,j}} \right) + \frac{1}{2\Delta y} \left( \frac{\hat{\mu}_{v_{i,j+1}}^p}{N_{i,j+1}} - \frac{\hat{\mu}_{v_{i,j-1}}^p}{N_{i,j-1}} \right) \right] + \\ &\frac{1}{2\Delta x} \left[ \left( 1 - \frac{N_{i,j}^p}{N_{i+1,j}} \right) \hat{\mu}_{u_{i+1,j}}^{up} - \left( 1 - \frac{N_{i,j}^p}{N_{i-1,j}} \right) \hat{\mu}_{u_{i-1,j}}^{up} \right] + \\ &\frac{1}{2\Delta y} \left[ \left( 1 - \frac{N_{i,j}^p}{N_{i,j+1}} \right) \hat{\mu}_{v_{i,j-1}}^{up} - \left( 1 - \frac{N_{i,j}^p}{N_{i,j-1}} \right) \hat{\mu}_{v_{i,j-1}}^{up} \right] . \end{split}$$

Split all four means into contributions from paired and unpaired winds...

> Contribution from paired rain-free observations

Contribution from unpaired rain-free observations

# Contribution of unpaired winds to divergence of vector-averaged $u_{rf}$ , $v_{rf}$ in model simulation



Unpaired winds partially sample the convergence in mixed rain/rain-free grid points, although it produces far too much convergence.

The spatial gradient in the number of rain-free data points focuses this convergence onto raining convergence zones.

=> This is why the vector-averaged method produces convergence and cyclonic vorticity in about the right geographical locations

# Comparison of various time-averaged divergence estimates



## Rain-rate induced wind speed biases in JPL QuikSCAT winds



Figure 9, Fore et al. (2014)

Since there are strong rain-rate gradients in convergence zones, it is possible that all-weather scatterometer wind fields will contain rain-rate induced biases in divergence and vorticity

## Simulate rain-rate induced divergence bias in all-weather QuikSCAT winds with COAMPS model winds

Difference between "true" all-weather COAMPS divergence and allweather COAMPS divergence emulated to include QuikSCAT-like rainrate induced wind speed bias

Emulated JPL QuikSCAT v3 bias

I-yr average

Emulated JPL QuikSCAT v2 bias





This suggests rainrate induced biases in all-weather scatterometer winds are manageable in time-averages

## Summary

- Two methods of computing time-averaged divergence and vorticity
  - In-swath or Instantaneous
  - Vector-averaged
- When applied to rain-free winds, the vector-averaged method produces time-averaged div/crl fields that strikingly resemble the all-weather time-averaged div/crl
- Resemblance is due to:
  - Biased estimate of the time-mean mixed rain/rain-free div/crl introduced from wind observations unpaired in time, which occur on the borders of rain patches
  - Spatial gradients in the number of rain-free observations, which are strongest in raining convergence zones
- Vector-averaged method applied to rain-free winds should not be used.







### QuikSCAT winds without applying the rain flag

Divergence of time-averaged u,v that has been rain-flagged



#### **Equatorial Pacific**

DIVERGENCE (Averaged Between 135°W-130°W)

#### a) AW JPL QuikSCAT Instantaneous Divergence



2.4

1.2

-1.2

-2.4

0

 $(\times 10^{-5} \text{ s}^{-1})$ 

#### Equatorial Atlantic

#### DIVERGENCE (Averaged Between 35°W-30°W)

a) AW JPL QuikSCAT Instantaneous Divergence







23-May-2014

50°W

![](_page_23_Figure_0.jpeg)

Create a rain flag for NCEP from precipitation rate (PRATE). Results not sensitive to a range of PRATE thresholds.

NCEP l°xl°x6hr

### Divergence

#### QuikSCAT

analyses 2010-2012

NCEP sfc div with rain-flagging; computed from vector-averaged u,v

![](_page_24_Figure_5.jpeg)

NCEP sfc div with rain-flagging; computed instantaneously

![](_page_24_Figure_7.jpeg)

Difference 60°N 40°N  $20^{\circ}N$ 0° 20°S 40°S 60°S 180<sup>°</sup>W 135°W 45°E 90<sup>°</sup>E 135<sup>°</sup>E 90°W 45°W 0° -1.2 -0.8 -0.4 0 0.4 0.8 1.2 Divergence ( $\times 10^5 \text{ s}^{-1}$ ) jul13\_exp1.m --- Figure 3 08-Jul-2013

08/01/1999-07/31/2009

![](_page_24_Figure_10.jpeg)

jul13\_exp9.m -- Figure 10

NCEP l°xl°x6hr analyses

### Vorticity

#### QuikSCAT

08/01/1999-07/31/2009

![](_page_25_Figure_4.jpeg)

NCEP sfc vorticity with rain-flagging; computed from vector-averaged u,v

2010-2012

![](_page_25_Figure_6.jpeg)

NCEP sfc vorticity with rain-flagging; computed instantaneously

![](_page_25_Figure_8.jpeg)

Difference 60°N 40°N 20°N 0<sup>0</sup> 20°S 40°S 60°S 45°E 90<sup>°</sup>E 135°E 180°W 135°W -1.2 -0.8 -0.4 0 0.4 0.8 1.2

Vorticity ( $\times 10^5 \text{ s}^{-1}$ )

jul13\_exp1.m -- Figure 4

25-Jul-2013

### NCEP 10-m divergence and vorticity computed with and without rain-flagging (3-years 1/2010-12/2012)

01/01/2010-12/31/2012

![](_page_26_Figure_2.jpeg)

![](_page_26_Figure_3.jpeg)

![](_page_26_Figure_4.jpeg)

Difference

![](_page_26_Figure_6.jpeg)

01/01/2010-12/31/2012

![](_page_26_Figure_8.jpeg)

![](_page_26_Figure_9.jpeg)

![](_page_26_Figure_10.jpeg)

Difference

![](_page_26_Figure_12.jpeg)

### Blended QuikSCAT-NCEP dataset

08/01/1999-07/31/2009

![](_page_27_Figure_2.jpeg)

0 0.4 0.8 1.2

Derivative Field ( $\times 10^5 \text{ s}^{-1}$ )

-1.2 -0.8 -0.4

jul13 exp11.m -- Figure 1

- Milliff et al. (2004)
   blended NCEP wind
   into QuikSCAT rain
   gaps
  - Divergence and vorticity fields appear more realistic
    - Zero curl line is in a more realistic location
    - Divergence variability in the mid-ocean gyres is more realistic

RDA dataset ds744.4

23-Jul-2013

![](_page_28_Figure_0.jpeg)

## Summary

- Scatterometer wind fields contain divergent and anti-cyclonic biases due to conditional sampling of non-precipitating conditions, which typically occur in convergent and cyclonic conditions (e.g., Milliff et al. 2004)
- Computing the divergence and vorticity of the time-averaged u,v adds a second bias from incorrectly computing spatial derivatives from an average u,v field non-uniformly sampled in space and time
  - This bias acts against the divergent and anti-cyclonic biases inherent in rainflagged scatterometer wind measurements
  - Produces time-averaged divergence and vorticity fields that resemble those expected when precipitation is included
    - Bias is stronger during winter and is associated with the time-averaged meridional wind structure to the south and east of rain bands
  - We are currently working on quantifying the relationship between these fields and the "true" divergence and vorticity fields including precipitation
- There is no physical reason why this second numerical bias should make the scatterometer derivative wind fields, not containing rain, equal to those containing rain
  - Issue is that spatial wind variability is not fully sampled on their natural timescales – which in the case of rain, is synoptic

## Mitigation and future work

- Retrieving winds in rain has been an area of research for over 20 years, so the problem is to utilize the measured winds
- Estimate winds in rain-flagged regions
  - Milliff et al. (2004) filled rain holes with NCEP winds
  - Chelton et al. (2004) used smoothed wind estimates within 100 km of rain edges
  - Incorporate QuikSCAT winds in precipitating conditions into the derivative estimates
    - QuikSCAT wind retrievals in raining conditions have been done experimentally

### ° QUIKSCAT-NCEP BLENDED

#### 08/01/1999-07/31/2009

![](_page_32_Figure_1.jpeg)

![](_page_33_Picture_0.jpeg)

#### 08/01/1999-07/31/2009

![](_page_33_Figure_2.jpeg)

jul13\_exp11.m --- Figure 2

23-Jul-2013

![](_page_34_Figure_0.jpeg)

![](_page_35_Figure_0.jpeg)

![](_page_35_Figure_1.jpeg)

![](_page_36_Figure_0.jpeg)

1.2

s<sup>-1</sup>)

Divergence (×10<sup>-5</sup>

-0.4

-0.8

-1.2

42) Div of monthly-avgd u,v minus time-avg of in-swath div; RSS gridded

08/01/1999-07/31/2009

60°N 40°N 20°N

#### 08/01/2003-07/31/2009

![](_page_37_Figure_1.jpeg)

### Instantaneous QuikSCAT u,v fields over the North Atlantic

v–velocity (m s<sup>−1</sup>)

0

-7

-14

2

1 0

![](_page_38_Figure_1.jpeg)

![](_page_39_Figure_0.jpeg)

I) First, time-averaged
 u,v; then compute
 derivative

2) First take spatial derivative of u,v (which we call the "in-swath" or "instantaneous" derivative); then timeaverage

![](_page_39_Figure_3.jpeg)

#### 20000216

![](_page_39_Figure_5.jpeg)

![](_page_39_Figure_6.jpeg)

## I-day example illustrating calculation differences in the divergence and vorticity

![](_page_40_Figure_1.jpeg)

Calculating spatial derivatives before timeaveraging eliminates errors in derivative estimates from u,v measured at distinctly different times, such as along edges of overlapping swaths and rain bands.

![](_page_40_Figure_3.jpeg)

#### I-day average – 2/16/2000

![](_page_41_Figure_1.jpeg)

![](_page_42_Figure_0.jpeg)

Contours are of the percent frequency of rain-flagged observations (c.i.=5%)

#### 08/01/1999-07/31/2009

![](_page_43_Figure_1.jpeg)

![](_page_44_Figure_0.jpeg)

![](_page_44_Figure_1.jpeg)

Large difference between two methods of computing timeaveraged div/crl from rain-free winds is present in COAMPS simulations

![](_page_45_Figure_1.jpeg)

![](_page_46_Figure_0.jpeg)

 $0 \times 10^{-5} \, s^{-1}$ 

-0.25

may14\_exp26.m --- Figure 3

0.25

23-May-2014

![](_page_47_Figure_0.jpeg)

COAMPS DIVERGENCE 2009

may14\_exp27.m --- Figure 2

16-May-2014

## Two ways of computing the time-averaged divergence in the wild:

Vector-averaged method

$$\left( \frac{\partial \overline{u}}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial \overline{v}}{\partial y} \right) \Big|_{i,j} = \frac{1}{2\Delta x} \left( \frac{1}{N_{i+1,j}} \sum_{k=1}^{N_{i+1,j}} u_{i+1,j}(t_k) - \frac{1}{N_{i-1,j}} \sum_{l=1}^{N_{i-1,j}} u_{i-1,j}(t_l) \right) + \frac{1}{2\Delta y} \left( \frac{1}{N_{i,j+1}} \sum_{m=1}^{N_{i,j+1}} v_{i,j+1}(t_m) - \frac{1}{N_{i,j-1}} \sum_{n=1}^{N_{i,j-1}} v_{i,j-1}(t_n) \right),$$

Instantaneous method

$$\left(\frac{\overline{\partial u}}{\partial x} + \overline{\frac{\partial v}{\partial y}}\right)\Big|_{i,j} = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{k=1}^{N} \left[\frac{1}{2\Delta x} \left(u_{i+1,j}(t_k) - u_{i-1,j}(t_k)\right) + \frac{1}{2\Delta y} \left(v_{i,j+1}(t_k) - v_{i,j-1}(t_k)\right)\right],$$

### **COAMPS** atmospheric model simulation

![](_page_49_Figure_1.jpeg)

Results are shown here from 1-year long simulation from the COAMPS model

- Entire year of 2009 shown here
- Atmosphere only simulation with prescribed SSTs (NCODA analyses)
- 50 vertical levels, with 20 below 1000-m
- Lowest grid point at 10 meter height above surface analyzed
- Doubly nested domain; inner nest analyzed; grid spacing of 9-km
- Non-hydrostatic
- 24 hour forecasts initialized every 12 hours; analyze forecast hours 06Z and 18Z
- Lateral boundaries forced with operational NOGAPS global analyses

### Divergence and Vorticity variability in mid-latitudes

![](_page_50_Figure_1.jpeg)

This is for a region in the North Pacific centered on 50N, 160W

(5)

ous method

- ncluded (cf.
- tantaneous
- paired and
- nes  $t_k, k =$
- or example,
- (6) (i+1,j),
- ates of the
- are the

![](_page_51_Figure_10.jpeg)

vields

$$D_{i,j}^{VA} = \frac{1}{2\Delta x} \left[ \frac{1}{N_{i+1,j}} \sum_{k=1}^{N_{i+1,j}} u_{i+1,j}(t_k) - \frac{1}{N_{i-1,j}} \sum_{l=1}^{N_{i-1,j}} u_{i-1,j}(t_l) \right] + \frac{1}{2\Delta y} \left[ \frac{1}{N_{i,j+1}} \sum_{m=1}^{N_{i,j+1}} v_{i,j+1}(t_m) - \frac{1}{N_{i,j-1}} \sum_{n=1}^{N_{i,j-1}} v_{i,j-1}(t_n) \right].$$

$$\frac{1}{N_{i+1,j}}\sum_{k=1}^{N_{i+1,j}} u_{i+1,j}(t_k) = \frac{1}{N_{i+1,j}} \left( N_{i,j}^p \hat{\mu}_{u_{i+1,j}}^p + N_{i+1,j}^{up} \hat{\mu}_{u_{i+1,j}}^{up} \right),$$

$$D_{i,j}^{VA} = N_{i,j}^{p} \left[ \frac{1}{2\Delta x} \left( \frac{\hat{\mu}_{u_{i+1,j}}^{p}}{N_{i+1,j}} - \frac{\hat{\mu}_{u_{i-1,j}}^{p}}{N_{i-1,j}} \right) + \frac{1}{2\Delta y} \left( \frac{\hat{\mu}_{v_{i,j+1}}^{p}}{N_{i,j+1}} - \frac{\hat{\mu}_{v_{i,j-1}}^{p}}{N_{i,j-1}} \right) \right] + \frac{1}{2\Delta x} \left[ \left( 1 - \frac{N_{i,j}^{p}}{N_{i+1,j}} \right) \hat{\mu}_{u_{i+1,j}}^{up} - \left( 1 - \frac{N_{i,j}^{p}}{N_{i-1,j}} \right) \hat{\mu}_{u_{i-1,j}}^{up} \right] + \frac{1}{2\Delta y} \left[ \left( 1 - \frac{N_{i,j}^{p}}{N_{i,j+1}} \right) \hat{\mu}_{v_{i,j-1}}^{up} - \left( 1 - \frac{N_{i,j}^{p}}{N_{i,j-1}} \right) \hat{\mu}_{v_{i,j-1}}^{up} \right].$$

· ~

$$\overline{D_{i,j}^{AW}} = \frac{1}{N_{i,j}} \sum_{k=1}^{N_{i,j}} \left[ \frac{1}{2\Delta x} \left( u_{i+1,j}(t_k) - u_{i-1,j}(t_k) \right) + \frac{1}{2\Delta y} \left( v_{i,j+1}(t_k) - v_{i,j-1}(t_k) \right) \right].$$

$$\overline{D_{i,j}^{RF}} = \frac{1}{N_{i,j}^{RF}} \sum_{k=1}^{N_{i,j}^{RF}} \left[ \frac{1}{2\Delta x} \left( u_{i+1,j}(t_k^{RF}) - u_{i-1,j}(t_k^{RF}) \right) + \frac{1}{2\Delta y} \left( v_{i,j+1}(t_k^{RF}) - v_{i,j-1}(t_k^{RF}) \right) \right] \\
\overline{D_{i,j}^{R}} = \frac{1}{N_{i,j}^{R}} \sum_{l=1}^{N_{i,j}^{R}} \left[ \frac{1}{2\Delta x} \left( u_{i+1,j}(t_l^{R}) - u_{i-1,j}(t_l^{R}) \right) + \frac{1}{2\Delta y} \left( v_{i,j+1}(t_l^{R}) - v_{i,j-1}(t_l^{R}) \right) \right] \\
\overline{D_{i,j}^{M}} = \frac{1}{N_{i,j}^{M}} \sum_{m=1}^{N_{i,j}^{M}} \left[ \frac{1}{2\Delta x} \left( u_{i+1,j}(t_m^{M}) - u_{i-1,j}(t_m^{M}) \right) + \frac{1}{2\Delta y} \left( v_{i,j+1}(t_m^{M}) - v_{i,j-1}(t_m^{M}) \right) \right],$$

# Histograms of NCEP surface divergence and vorticity in rain-free and all-weather conditions

![](_page_53_Figure_1.jpeg)

Conditional sampling of rain-free winds leads to divergent and anti-cyclonic sampling biases

North Pacific Ocean