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Centroid Motion of the Western Pacific Warm Pool during Three Recent El Niño–Southern Oscillation Events

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ABSTRACT

The centroid motion of the Western Pacific warm pool for 1982–83, 1986–87 and 1991–93 El Niño–Southern Oscillation events was investigated by analyzing satellite multichannel sea surface temperature and satellite pathfinder sea surface temperature data in conjunction with wind data from The Florida State University. The authors found that the direction of motion of the warm pool's center changes shortly before the onset of a new El Niño event and that this change was quite different during the 1991–93 El Niño than during the 1982–83 and 1986–87 El Niño events. The possible cause of these changes and differences may be the El Niño–related wind pattern shifts in the western equatorial Pacific Ocean before and during the events, and the seasonal phase-lock of the El Niño events.

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