

Monitoring statistics of the ERS-2 scatterometer for ESA

cycle 116

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1 Introduction

The quality of the UWI product was monitored at ECMWF for cycle 116. Results were compared to those obtained from the previous cycle, as well for data received during the nominal period in 2000 (up to cycle 59). No corrections for duplicate observations were applied.

During cycle 116 data was received between 21:01 UTC 22 May and 20:56 UTC 26 June 2006. For all 6-hourly batches (centred around 00, 06, 12 and 18 UTC) data was received.

Data is being recorded whenever within the visibility range of a ground station. For cycle 116 data coverage was over the North-Atlantic, the Mediterranean, the Caribbean, the Gulf of Mexico, a small part of the Pacific west from the US, Canada and Central America, the Chinese and Japanese Sea, and the Southern Ocean around of Australia and New Zealand (see Figure 2).

During cycle 116, the asymmetry between the fore and aft incidence angles showed a calm behaviour. The Sun seems to have reached its point of minimal activity (source: www.spaceweather.com), and will therefore, not influence ERS-2 attitude control too much.

Compared to cycle 115, the UWI wind speed relative to ECMWF first-guess (FG) fields showed a similar standard deviation (from 1.40 to 1.39 m/s). Bias levels were more negative (from -0.80 m/s to -0.99 m/s), which reflects a seasonal trend also observed one year ago. However, this year the trend (see Figure 1) seems somewhat suppressed, which is probably due to compensating data on the Southern Hemisphere that were not observed one year ago.

During cycle 116, the performance of the UWI wind direction was nominal.

Ocean calibration shows that inter-node and inter-beam dependency of bias levels have slightly further increased. Average bias levels have become more negative as well (-0.81 dB was -0.69 dB; see Figure 4).

The ECMWF assimilation/forecast system was not changed during cycle 116.

The cycle-averaged evolution of performance relative to ECMWF first-guess (FG) winds is displayed in Figure 1. Figure 2 shows global maps of the over cycle 116 averaged UWI data coverage and wind climate, Figure 3 for performance relative to FG winds.

2 ERS-2 statistics from 22 May to 26 June 2006

2.1 Sigma0 bias levels

The average sigma0 bias levels (compared to simulated sigma0's based on ECMWF model FG winds) stratified with respect to antenna beam, ascending or descending track and as function of incidence angle (i.e. across-node number) is displayed in Figure 4.

Inter-node and inter-beam dependencies are similar to that of cycle 115. Although, the large asymmetry between the for-aft and mid ascending beams has been further increased. Average bias level is more negative compared to cycle 115 (-0.82 dB, was -0.69 dB), being about 0.35 dB more negative than for nominal data in 2000 (see Figure 1 of the reports for cycle 48 to 59). The situation is similar to that of one year ago (see cyclic report 105), and is likely induced by seasonal variations. Therefore, the method of ocean calibration will probably only provide accurate information on calibration levels for globally averaged data, for which seasonal effects are filtered out.

The data volume of descending tracks was lower (by 14%) than for ascending tracks.

2.2 Incidence angles

For ESACA, across-node binning is, like the old processor, retained on a 25km mesh. From simple geometrical arguments it follows that variations in yaw attitude will lead to asymmetries between the incidence angles of the fore and aft beam. Indeed, this has been observed. Figure 5 gives a time evolution of this asymmetry. In general fluctuations were found to be mild. Also in this Figure, the occasions for which the combined k_p -yaw quality flag was set are indicated by red stars. The relation with incidence-angle asymmetries is obvious.

The Sun currently resides near the minimal point of its (roughly 11-yearly) cycle. Some enhanced solar wind conditions occurred on 7-8 June (source: www.spaceweather.com), but it did not seem to harm ERS-2 attitude control.

2.3 Distance to cone history

The distance to the cone history is shown in Figure 6. Curves are based on data that passed all QC, including the test on the k_p -yaw flag, and subject to the land and sea-ice check at ECMWF (see cyclic report 88 for details).

Like for cycle 115, time series are (due to lack of statistics) very noisy, especially for the near-range nodes. Most spikes were found to be the result of low data volumes.

Compared to cycle 115, the average level was lower (1.18 versus 1.21), which is about 8% higher than for nominal data (see top panel Figure 1).

The fraction of data that did not pass QC is displayed in Figure 6 as well (dash curves). High rejection rates are often related to activity of the k_p -yaw flag.

2.4 UWI minus First-Guess wind history

In Figure 7, the UWI minus ECMWF first-guess wind-speed history is plotted.

The history plot shows some peaks, most of which are related to low data volumes. Similar results apply for the history of de-aliased CMOD4 winds versus FG (Figure 9).

Figure 11 displays the locations for which UWI winds were more than 8 m/s weaker (top panel) and more than 8 m/s stronger (lower panel) than FG winds. Like for cycle 115, such collocations are isolated, and often indicate meteorologically active regions, for which UWI data and ECMWF model field show reasonably small differences in phase and/or intensity. Now coverage of the Southern hemisphere has been further extended, large differences are increasingly found near ice edges. It indicates non-optimal flagging in the ECMWF quality control, rather than anomalous ERS-2 backscatter triplets.

Two cases where UWI and ECMWF wind speed differ significantly are presented in Figure 12. Top panel shows a low pressure system in the Labrador Sea (30 June 2006). Both wind sources look equally sensible. The lower panel displays an intense wind field on 10 June 2006 East of Australia. It is clear that the UWI product has some troublesome patches for this case.

Average bias levels and standard deviations of UWI winds relative to FG winds are displayed in Table 1. From this it follows that the bias of both the UWI and CMOD4 product has become more negative, now being more negative to that for nominal data in 2000 (UWI: -0.99 m/s now, was -0.79 m/s for cycle 59).

On a longer time scale seasonal bias trends are observed (see Figure 1). As was highlighted in previous cyclic reports, it is believed that this yearly trend is induced by changing local geophysical conditions. Strong indication for this is a similar trend observed for QuikSCAT data when restricted to an area well-covered by ERS-2 (20N-90N, 80W-20E). Figure 17 shows time series for that area for both ERS-2 (top panel) and QuikSCAT (lower panel) for the period between 1 January 2004 and 26 June 2006 (end of cycle 116). Results are displayed for at ECMWF actively assimilated data, i.e., CMOD5 winds for ERS-2 and 4%-reduced QuikSCAT winds on a 50km resolution.

	cycle 115		cycle 116	
	UWI	CMOD4	UWI	CMOD4
speed STDV	1.40	1.40	1.39	1.39
node 1-2	1.49	1.47	1.40	1.39
node 3-4	1.41	1.40	1.35	1.34
node 5-7	1.34	1.35	1.33	1.33
node 8-10	1.34	1.34	1.35	1.35
node 11-14	1.35	1.35	1.37	1.37
node 15-19	1.38	1.39	1.41	1.41
speed BIAS	-0.89	-0.90	-0.99	-0.99
node 1-2	-1.42	-1.40	-1.49	-1.47
node 3-4	-1.15	-1.12	-1.25	-1.22
node 5-7	-0.91	-0.89	-1.02	-1.00
node 8-10	-0.73	-0.73	-0.84	-0.84
node 11-14	-0.69	-0.71	-0.81	-0.83
node 15-19	-0.75	-0.78	-0.82	-0.86
direction STDV	25.7	18.6	25.4	18.7
direction BIAS	-2.1	-2.4	-1.6	-1.9

Table 1: Biases and standard deviation of ERS-2 versus ECMWF FG winds in m/s for speed and degrees for direction.

The standard deviation of UWI wind speed compared to cycle 115 was stable (1.39 m/s, was 1.40 m/s).

For cycle 116 the (UWI - FG) direction standard deviations were mostly ranging between 20 and 40 degrees (Figure 8), representing nominal variations. Averaged over the entire cyclic period, STDV for UWI wind direction was stable (25.4 degrees, was 25.7 degrees). Performance for at ECMWF de-aliased winds was 18.7 degrees, virtually equal to that for cycle 115 (STDV 18.6 degrees).

2.5 Scatterplots

Scatterplots of FG winds versus ERS-2 winds are displayed in Figures 13 to 16. Values of standard deviations and biases are slightly different from those displayed in Table 1. Reason for this is that, for plotting purposes, the in 0.5 m/s resolution ERS-2 winds have been slightly perturbed (increases scatter with 0.02 m/s), and that zero wind-speed ERS-2 winds have been excluded (decreases scatter by about 0.05 m/s).

The scatterplot of UWI wind speed versus FG (Figure 13) is very similar to that for (at ECMWF inverted) de-aliased CMOD4 winds (Figure 15). It confirms that the ESACA inversion scheme is working properly.

Winds derived on the basis of CMOD5 are displayed in Figure 16. The relative standard deviation is lower than for CMOD4 winds (1.39 m/s versus 1.42 m/s). Compared to ECMWF FG, CMOD5 winds are 0.52 m/s slower.

Figure Captions

Figure 1: Evolution of the performance of the ERS-2 scatterometer averaged over 5-weekly cycles from 12 December 2001 (cycle 69) to 26 June 2006 (end cycle 116) for the UWI product (solid, star) and de-aliased winds based on CMOD4 (dashed, diamond). Results are based on data that passed the UWI QC flags. For cycle 85 two values are plotted; the first value for a global set, the second one for a regional set (for details see the corresponding cyclic report). Dotted lines represent values for cycle 59 (5 December 2000 to 17 January 2001), i.e. the last stable cycle of the nominal period. From top to bottom panel are shown the normalized distance to the cone (CMOD4 only) the standard deviation of the wind speed compared to FG winds, the corresponding bias (for UWI winds the extremes in node-wise averages are shown as well), and the standard deviation of wind direction compared to FG.

Figure 2: Average number of observations per 12H and per 125km grid box (top panel) and wind climate (lower panel) for UWI winds that passed the UWI flags QC and a check on the collocated ECMWF land and sea-ice mask.

Figure 3: The same as Figure 2, but now for the relative bias (top panel) and standard deviation (lower panel) with ECMWF first-guess winds.

Figure 4: Ratio of $< \sigma_0^{0.625} > / < \text{CMOD4(FirstGuess)}^{0.625} >$ converted in dB for the fore beam (solid line), mid beam (dashed line) and aft beam (dotted line), as a function of incidence angle for descending and ascending tracks. The thin lines indicate the error bars on the estimated mean. First-guess winds are based on the in time closest (+3h, +6h, +9h, or +12h) T511 forecast field, and are bilinearly interpolated in space.

Figure 5: Time series of the difference in incidence angle between the fore and aft beam. Red stars indicate the occurrences for which the combined k_p -yaw flag was set.

Figure 6: Mean normalized distance to the cone computed every 6 hours for nodes 1-2, 3-4, 5-7, 8-10, 11-14 and 15-19). The dotted curve shows the number of incoming triplets in logarithmic scale (1 corresponds to 60,000 triplets) and the dashed one indicates the fraction of complete (based on the land and sea-ice mask at ECMWF) sea-located triplets rejected by ESA flags, or by the wind inversion algorithm (0: all data kept, 1: no data kept).

Figure 7: Mean (solid line) and standard deviation (dashed line) of the wind speed difference UWI - first guess for the data retained by the quality control.

Figure 8: Same as Fig. 7, but for the wind direction difference. Statistics are computed for winds stronger than 4 m/s.

Figures 9 and 10: Same as Fig. 7 and 8 respectively, but for the de-aliased CMOD4 data.

Figure 11: Locations of data during cycle 116 for which UWI winds are more than 8 m/s weaker (top panel) respectively stronger (lower panel) than FG, and on which QC on UWI flags and the ECMWF land/sea-ice mask was applied.

Figure 12: Comparison between UWI (red) and ECMWF FG (blue) winds for a case on 30 May 2006 in the Labrador Sea (top panel) and for a situation east of Australia on 10 June 2006 (lower panel).

Figure 13: Two-dimensional histogram of first guess and UWI wind speeds, for the data kept by the UWI flags, and QC based on the ECMWF land and sea-ice mask. Circles denote the mean values in the y-direction, and squares those in the x-direction.

Figure 14: Same as Fig. 13, but for wind direction. Only winds stronger than 4m/s are taken into account.

Figure 15: Same as Fig. 13, but for de-aliased CMOD4 winds.

Figure 16: Same as Fig. 13, but for de-aliased CMOD5 winds.

Figure 17: Wind-speed bias relative to FG winds for actively assimilated ERS-2 winds (based on CMOD5) for nodes 1-19 (top panel) respectively 50-km QuikSCAT (based on the QSCAT-1 model function and reduced by 4%) for nodes 5-34 (lower panel), averaged over the area (20N-90N, 80W-20E), and displayed for the period 01 January 2004 - 26 June 2006. Fat curves represent centred 15-day running means, thin curves values for 6-hourly periods. Vertical dashed blue lines mark ECMWF model changes.

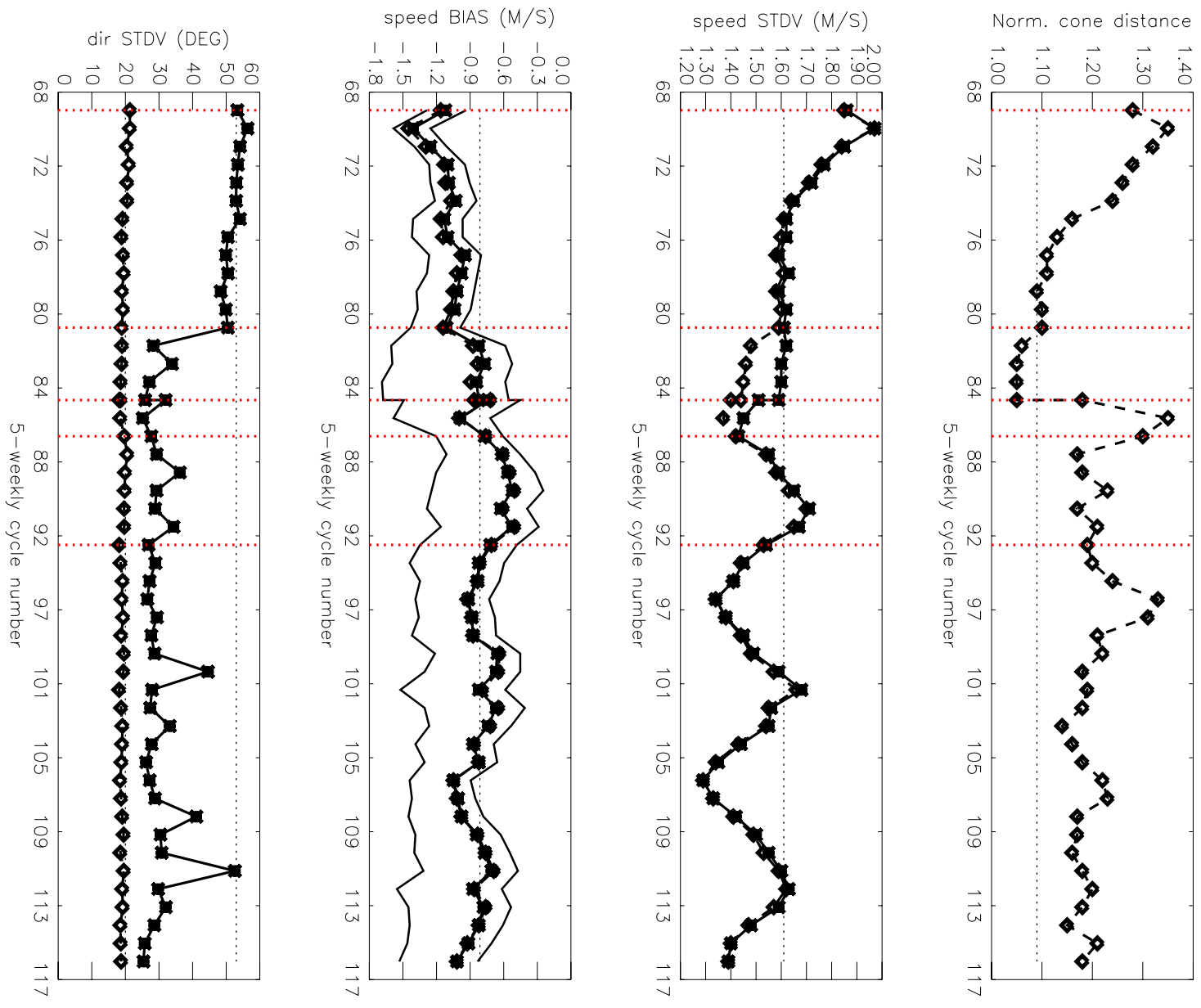
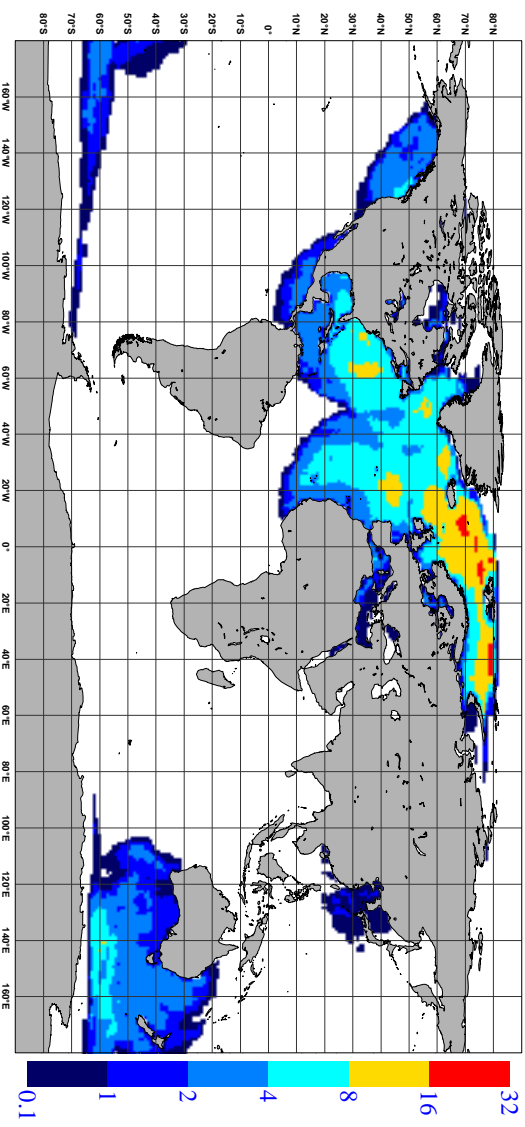


Figure 1

NOBS (ERS-2 UWI), per 12H, per 125km box
average from 2006052300 to 2006062618 GLOB:3.15



AVERAGE (ERS-2 UWI), in m/s.
average from 2006052300 to 2006062618 GLOB:6.3

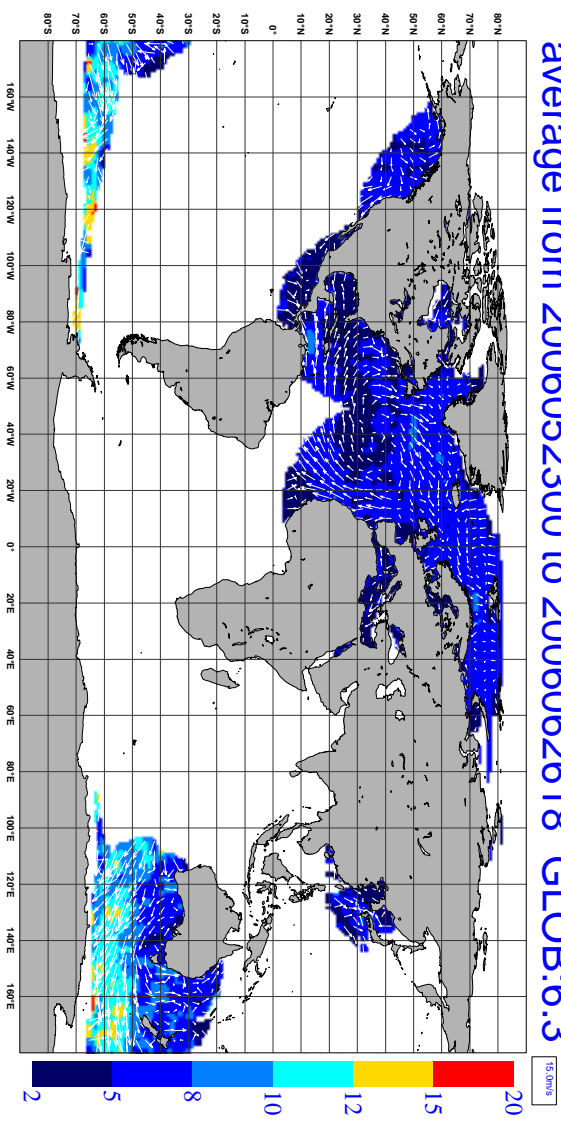
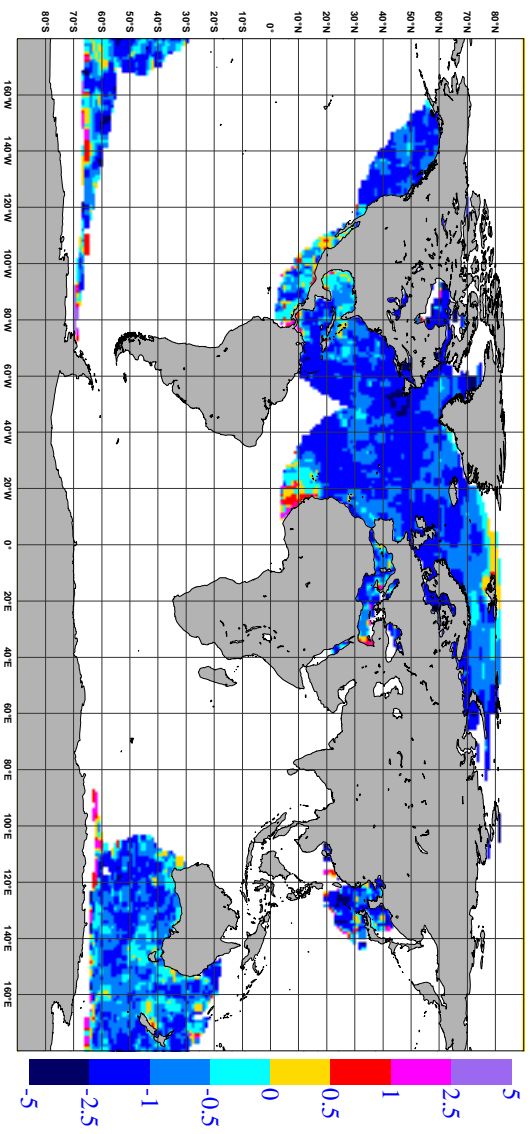


Figure 2

BIAS (ERS-2 UWI vs FIRST-GUESS), in m/s.
average from 2006052300 to 2006062618 GLOB:-0.93



STDV (ERS-2 UWI vs FIRST-GUESS), in m/s.
average from 2006052300 to 2006062618 GLOB:1.21

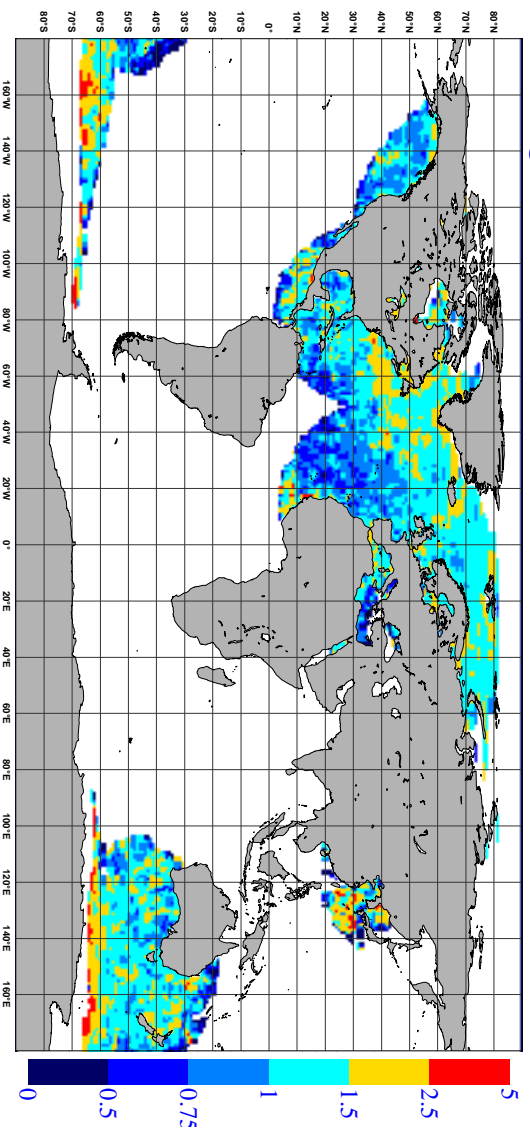


Figure 3

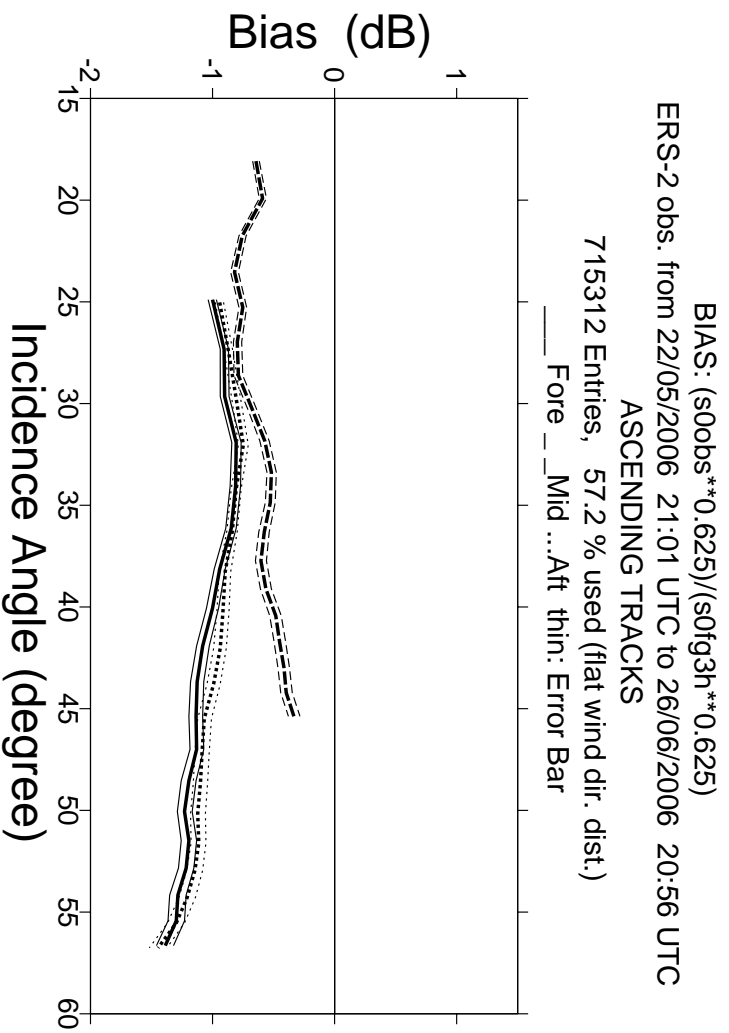
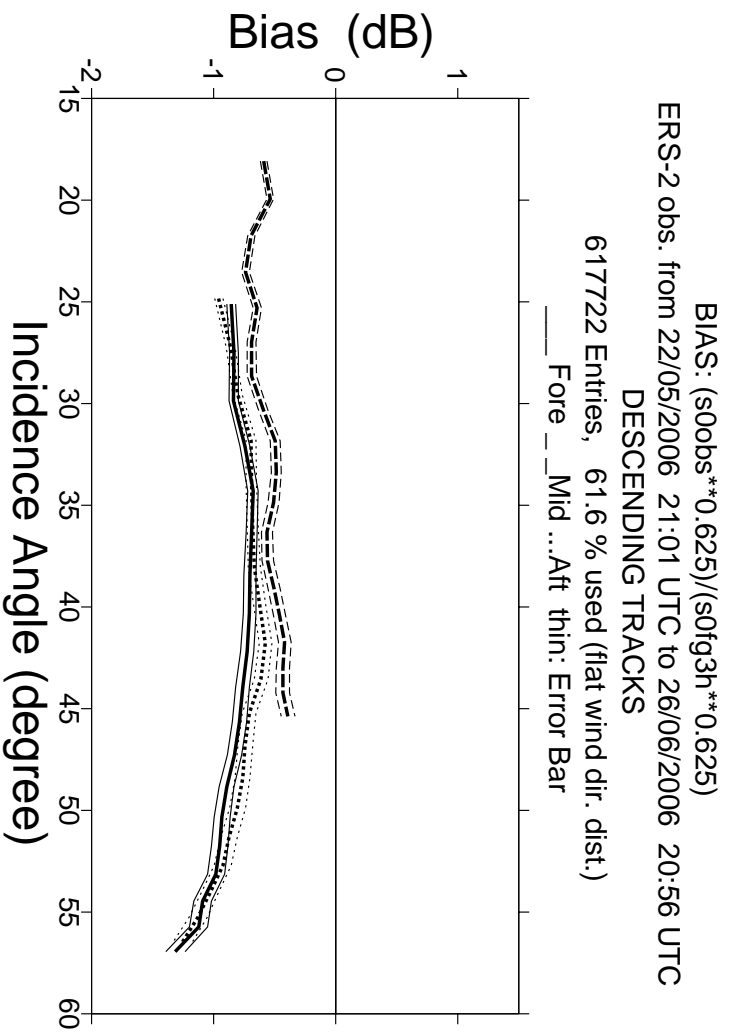


Figure 4

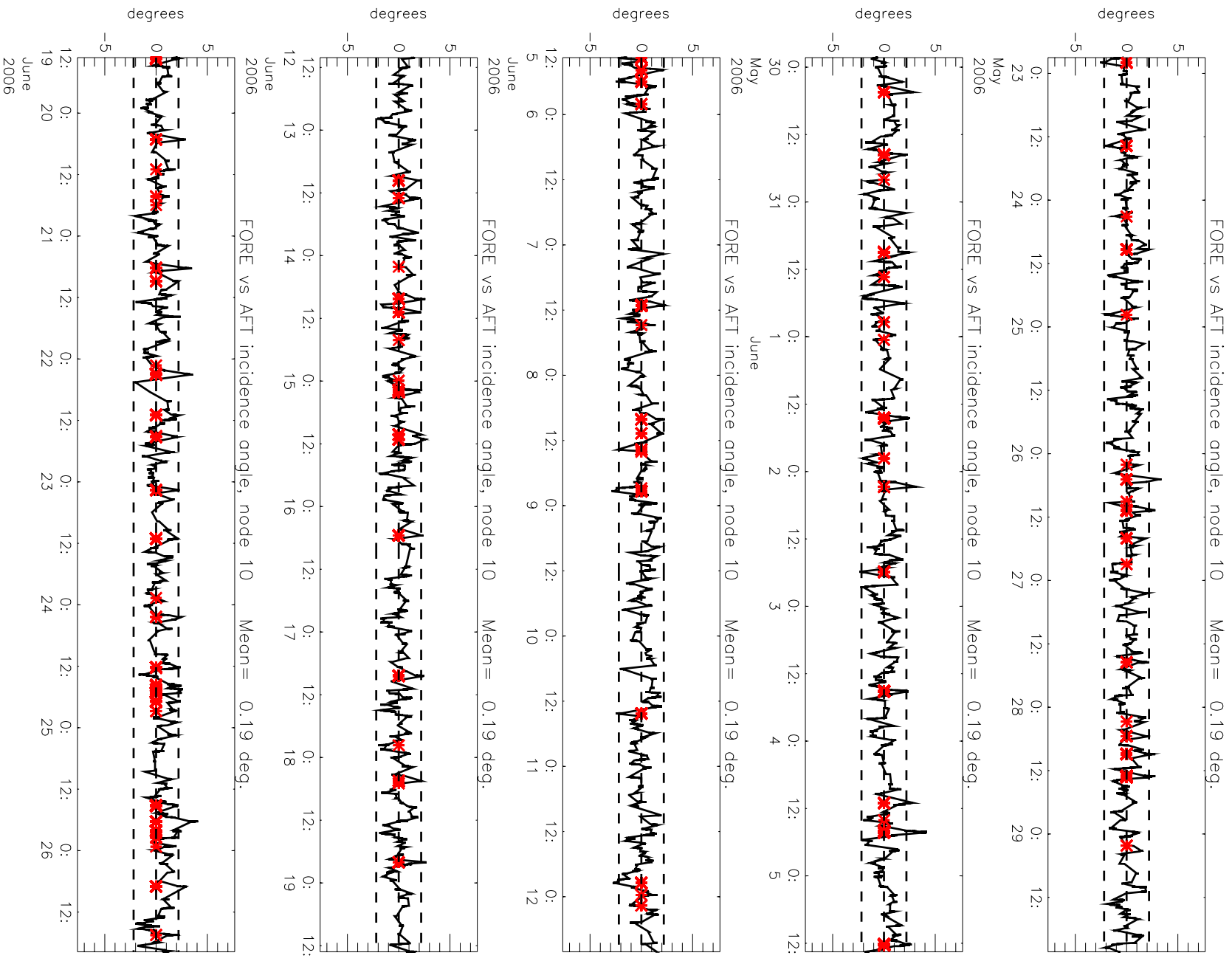


Figure 5

Monitoring of Sigma0 triplets versus CMOD4 for ERS-2

from 2006052300 to 2006062618

(solid) mean normalised distance to the cone over 6 h

(dashed) fraction of complete sea-point observations rejected by ESA flag or CMOD4 inversion

(dotted) total number of data in log. scale (1 for 60000)

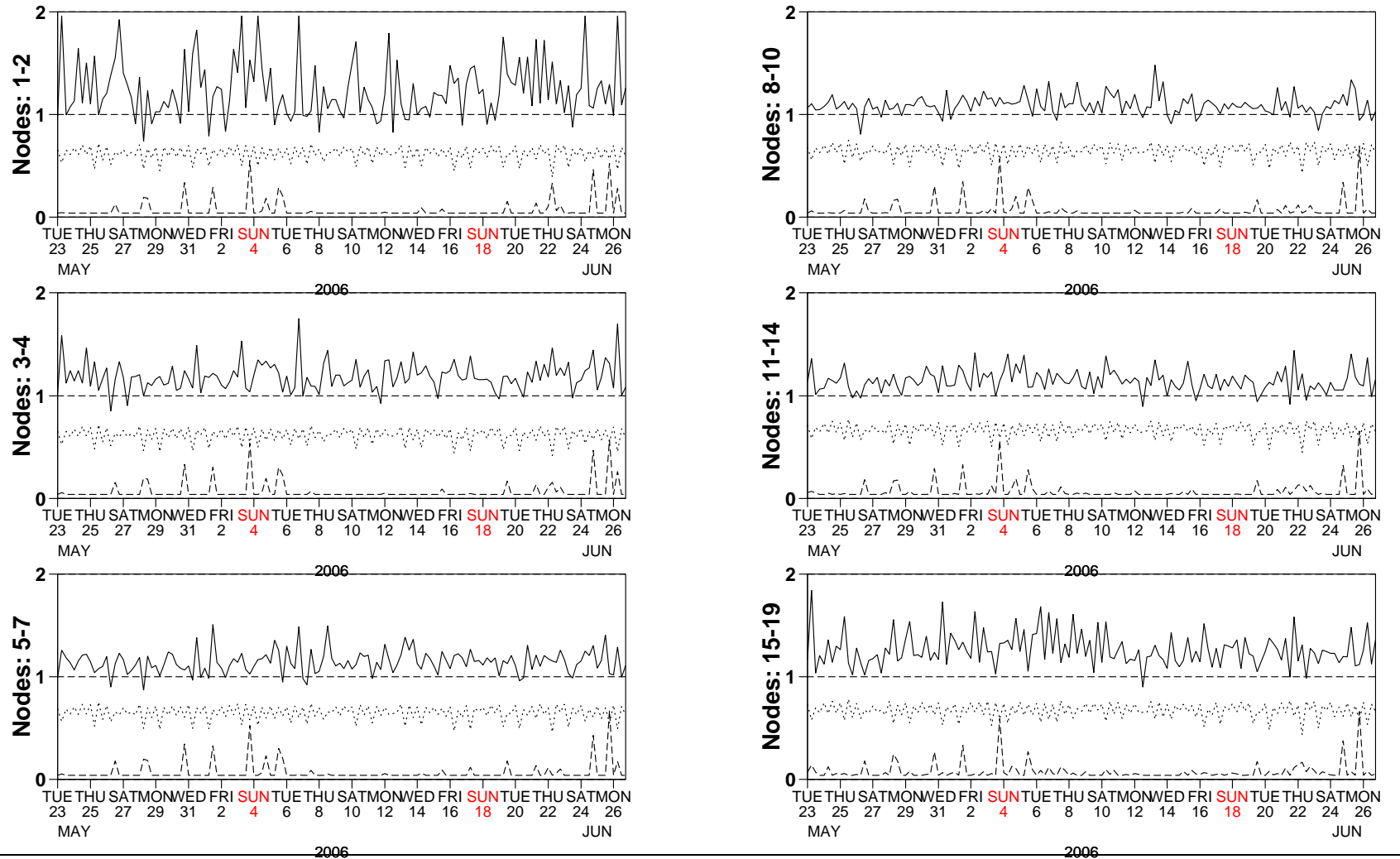


Figure 6

Monitoring of UWI winds versus First Guess for ERS-2

from 2006052300 to 2006062618

(solid) wind speed bias UWI - First Guess over 6h (deg.)

(dashed) wind speed standard deviation UWI - First Guess over 6h (deg.)

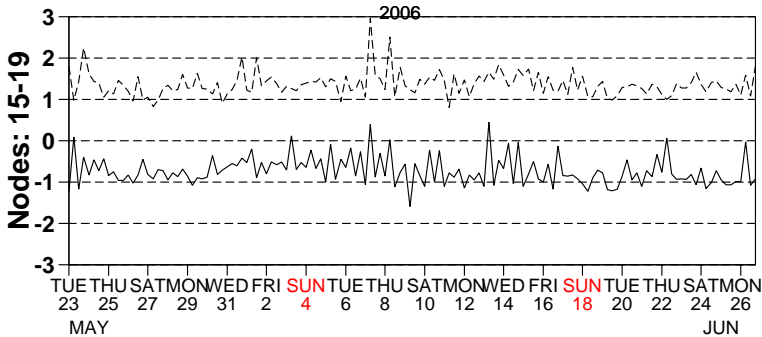
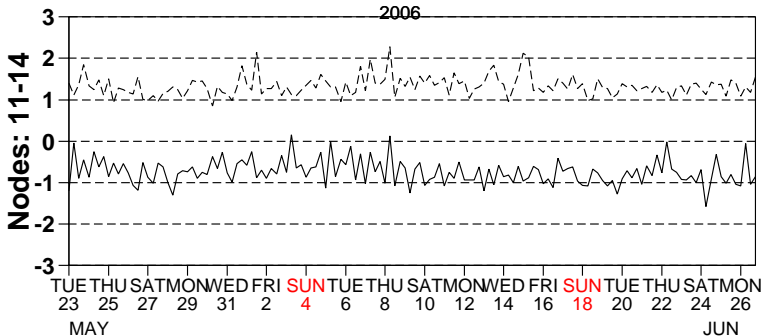
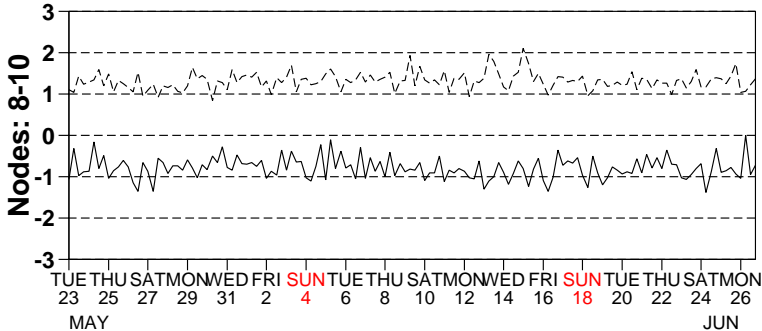
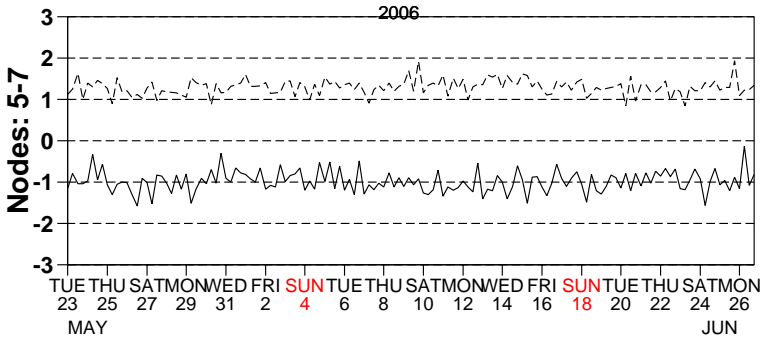
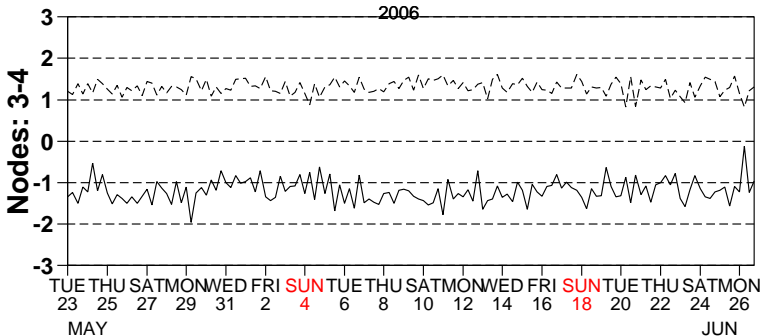
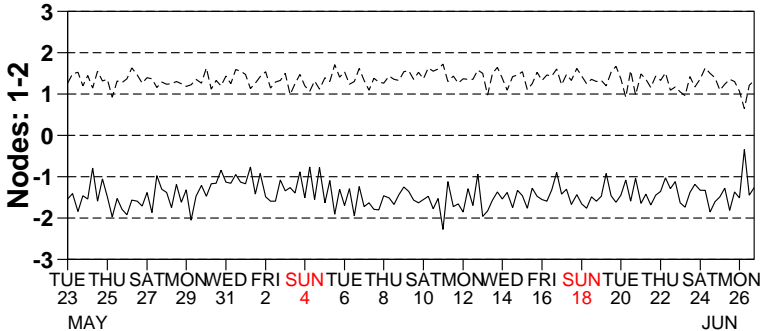


Figure 7

Monitoring of UWI winds versus First Guess for ERS-2

from 2006052300 to 2006062618

(solid) wind direction bias UWI - First Guess over 6h (deg.)

(dashed) wind direction standard deviation UWI - First Guess over 6h (deg.)

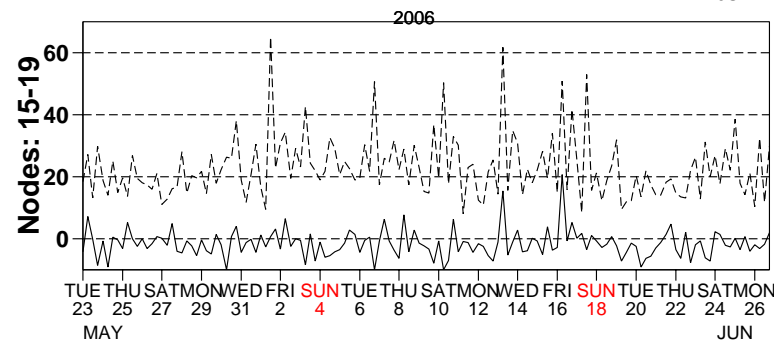
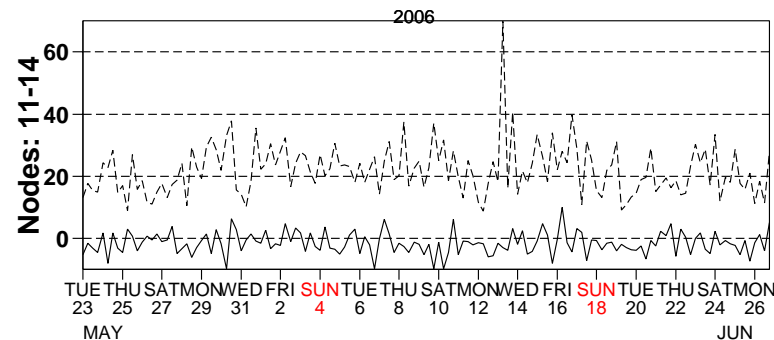
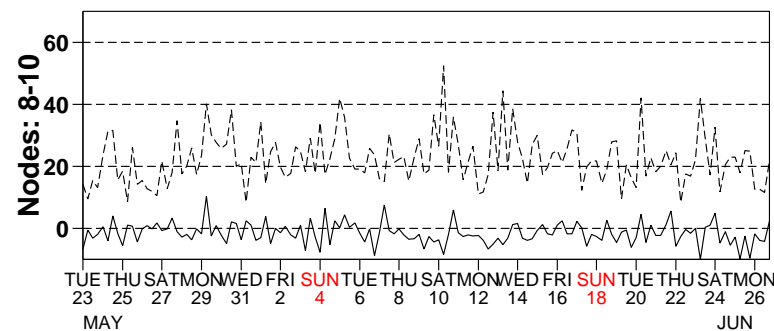
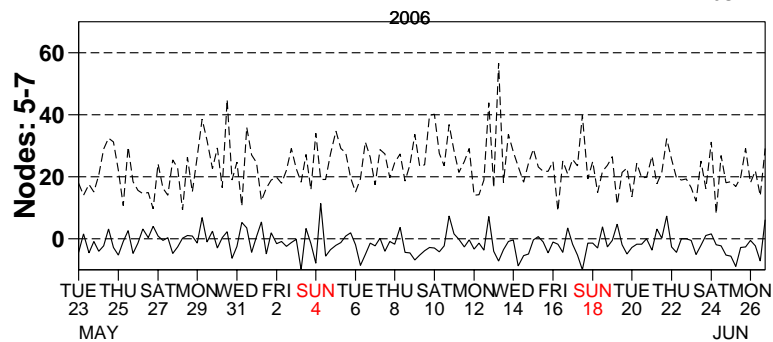
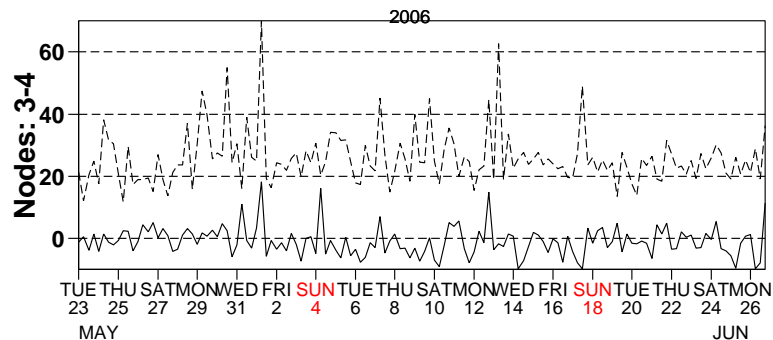
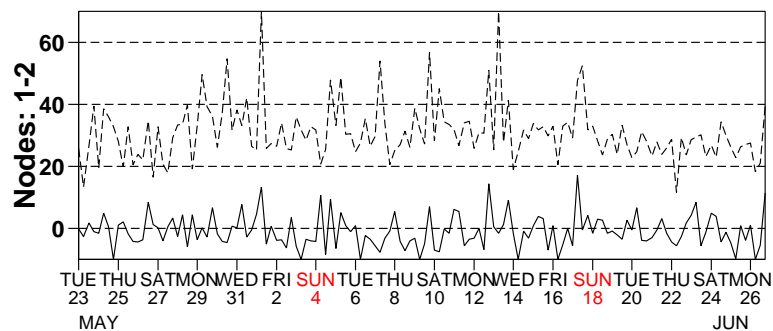


Figure 8

Monitoring of de-aliased CMOD4 winds versus First Guess for ERS-2

from 2006052300 to 2006062618

(solid) wind speed bias CMOD4 - First Guess over 6h (deg.)

(dashed) wind speed standard deviation CMOD4 - First Guess over 6h (deg.)

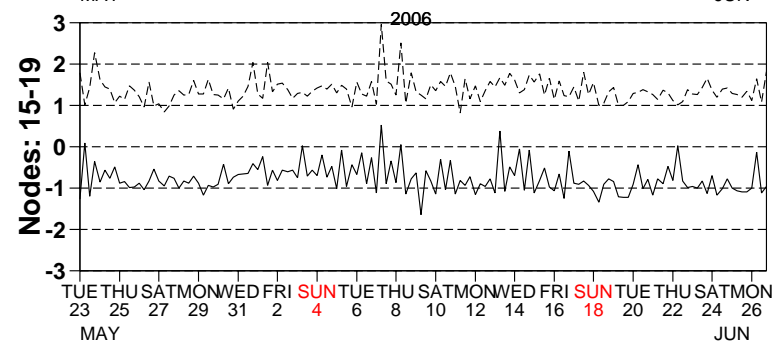
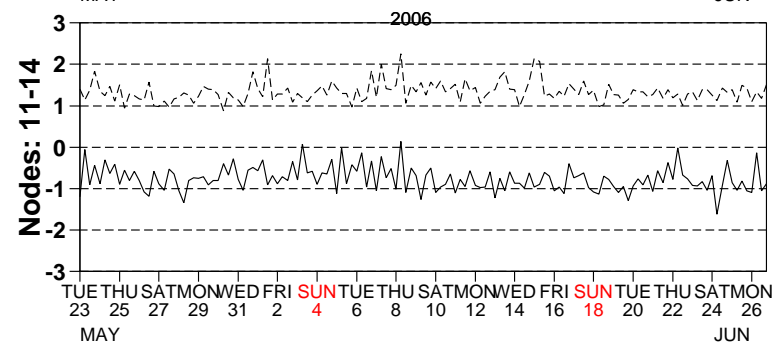
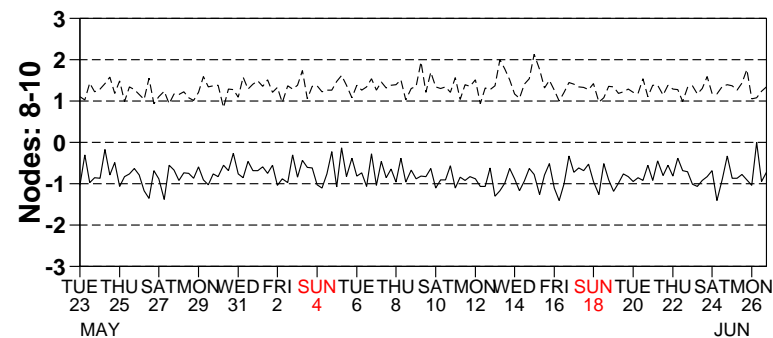
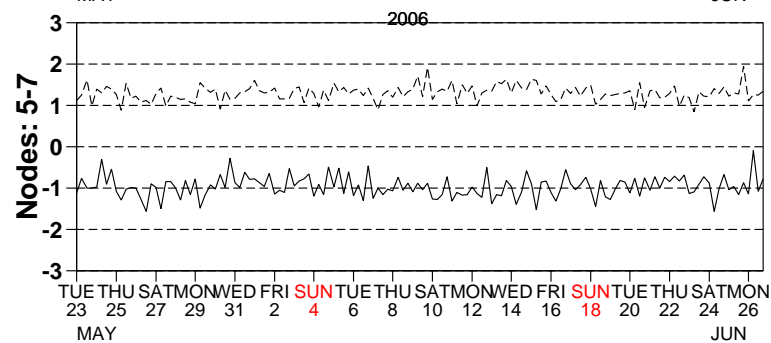
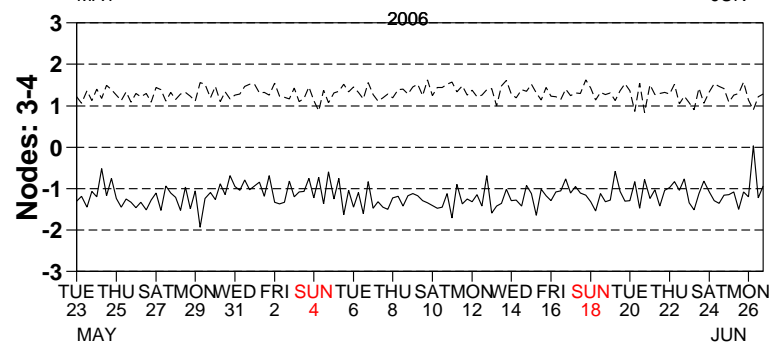
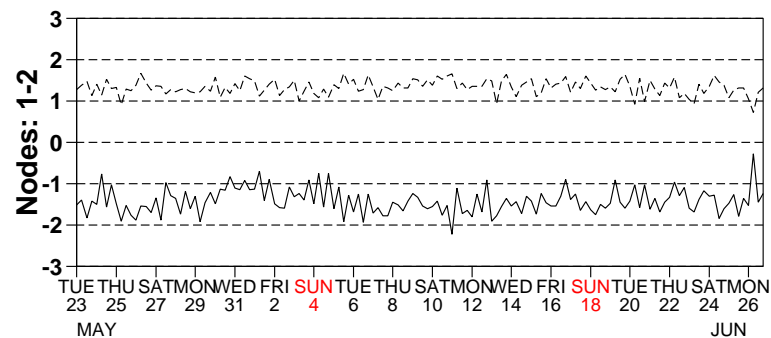


Figure 9

Monitoring of de-aliased CMOD4 winds versus First Guess for ERS-2

from 2006052300 to 2006062618

(solid) wind direction bias CMOD4 - First Guess over 6h (deg.)

(dashed) wind direction standard deviation CMOD4 - First Guess over 6h (deg.)

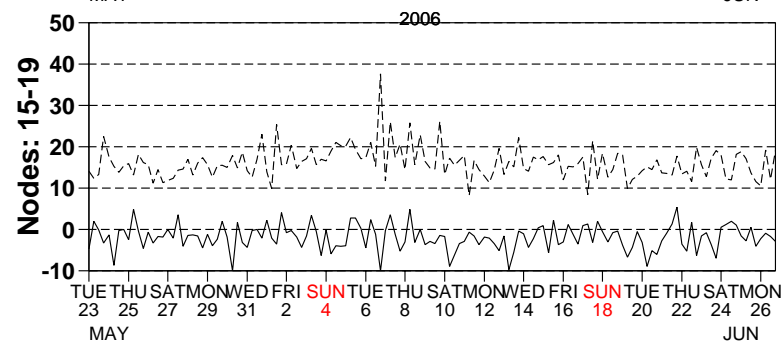
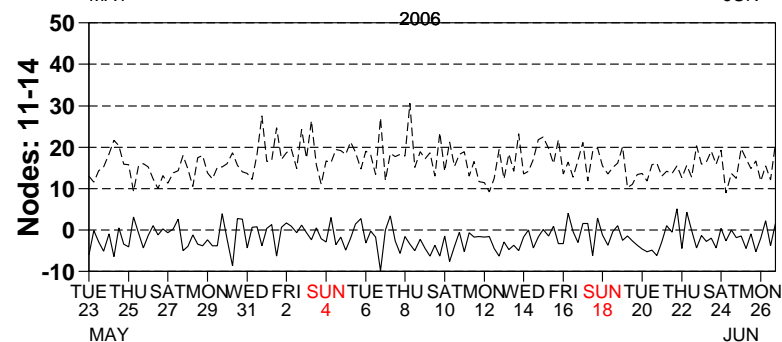
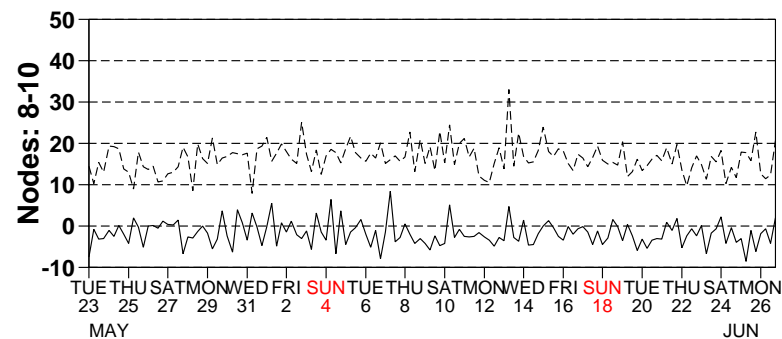
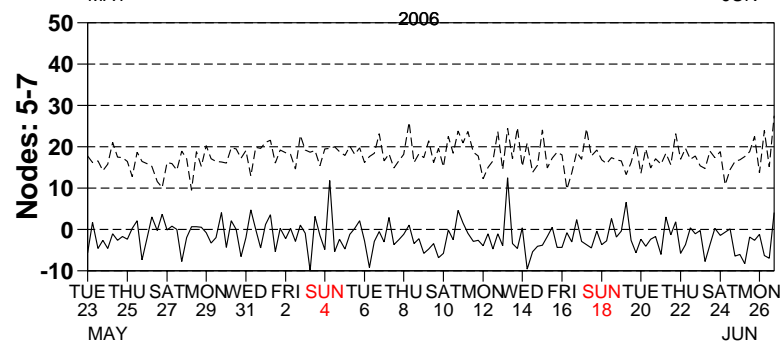
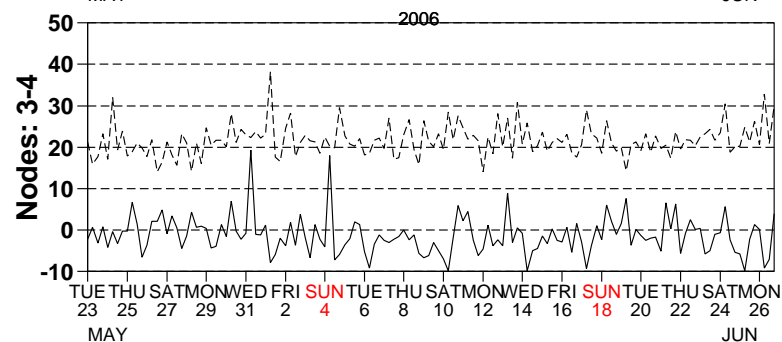
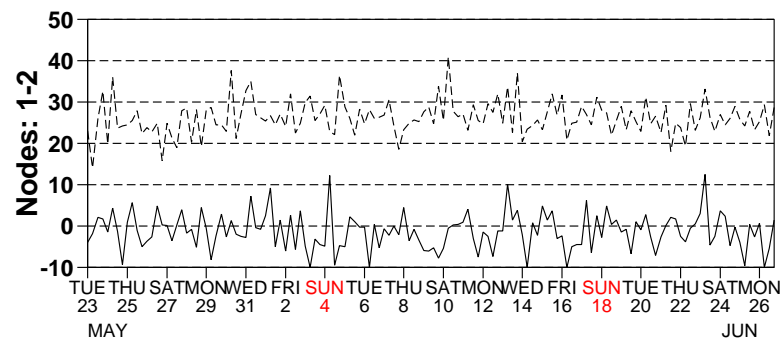
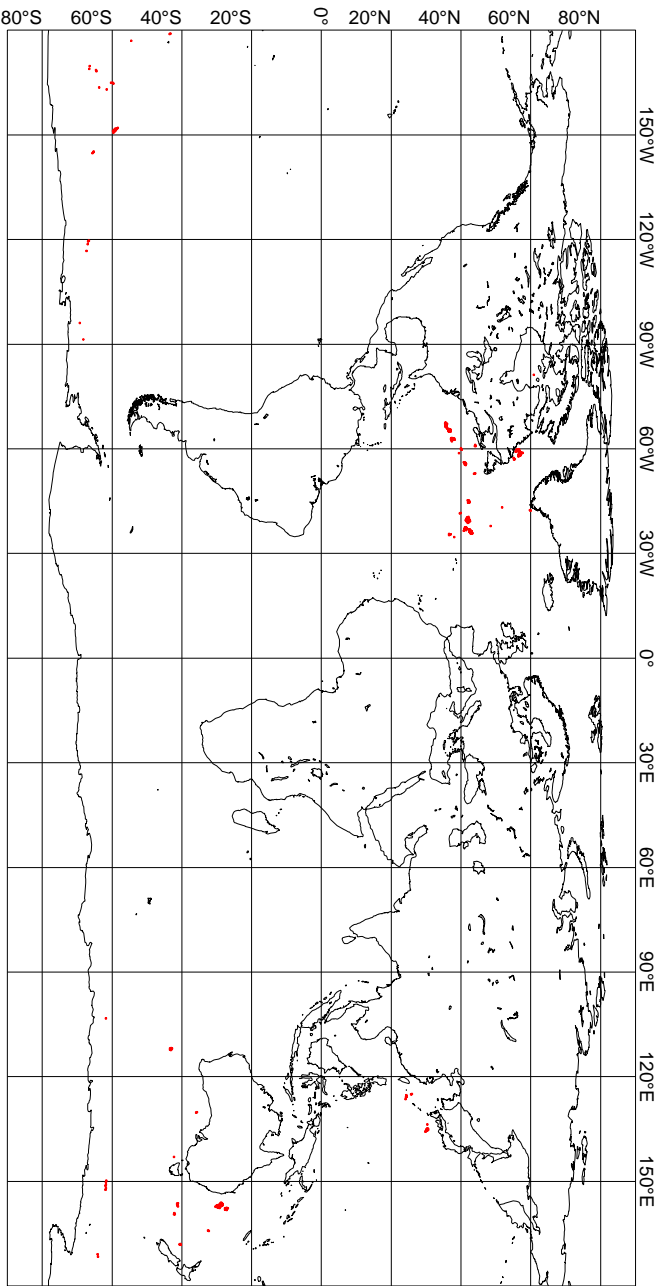


Figure 10

UWI winds more than 8 m/s weaker than ECMWF First Guess
CYCLE 116, 2006052300 to 2006062618, QC on ESA flags



UWI winds more than 8 m/s stronger than ECMWF First Guess
CYCLE 116, 2006052300 to 2006062618, QC on ESA flags

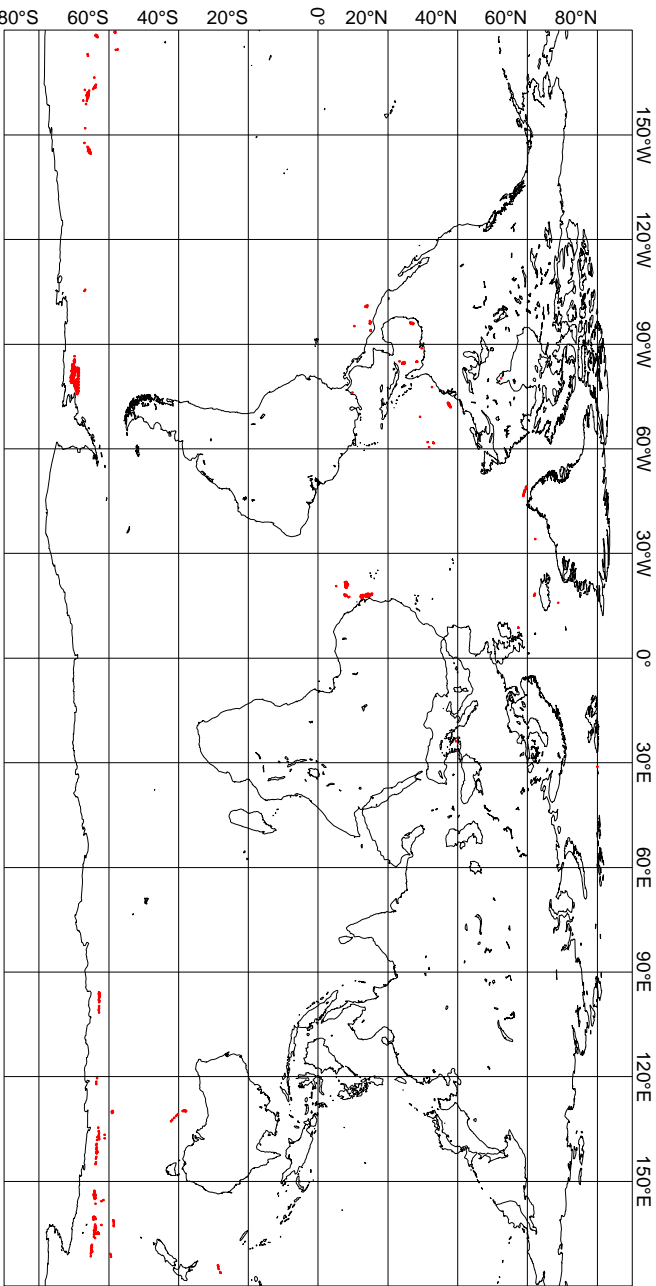


Figure 11

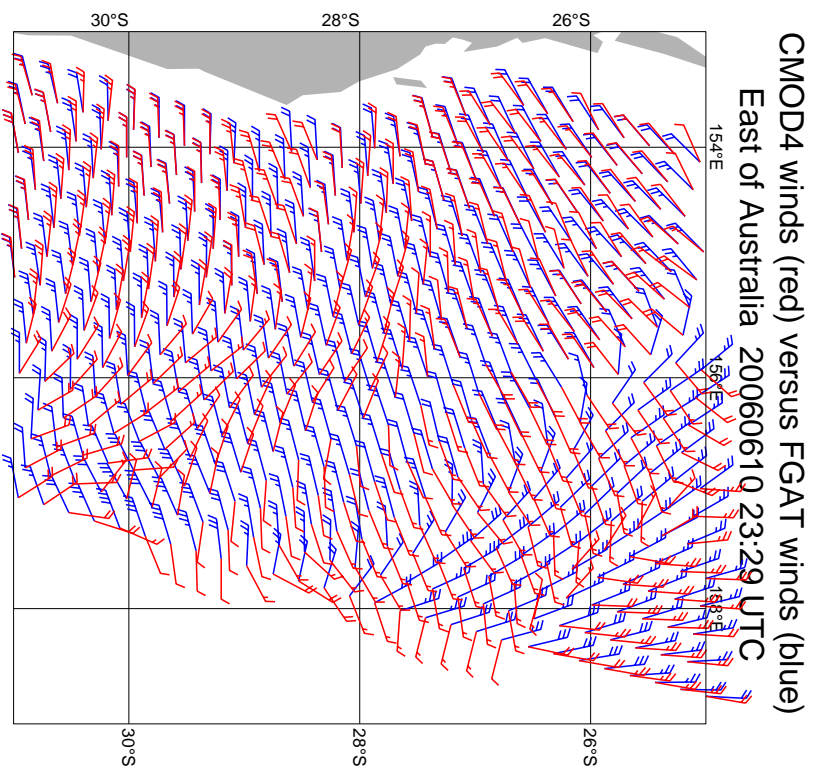
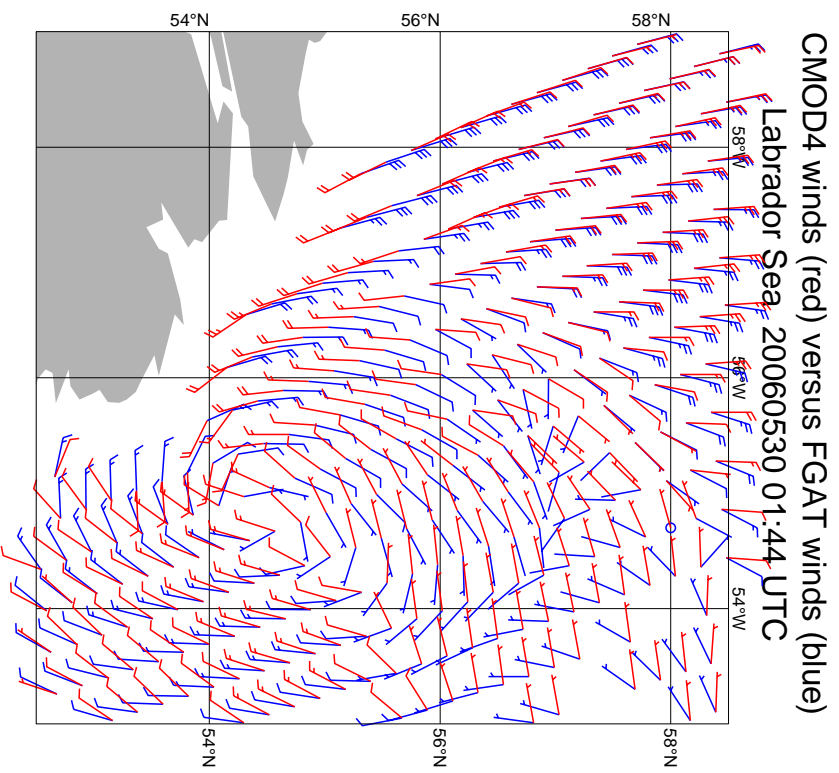


Figure 12

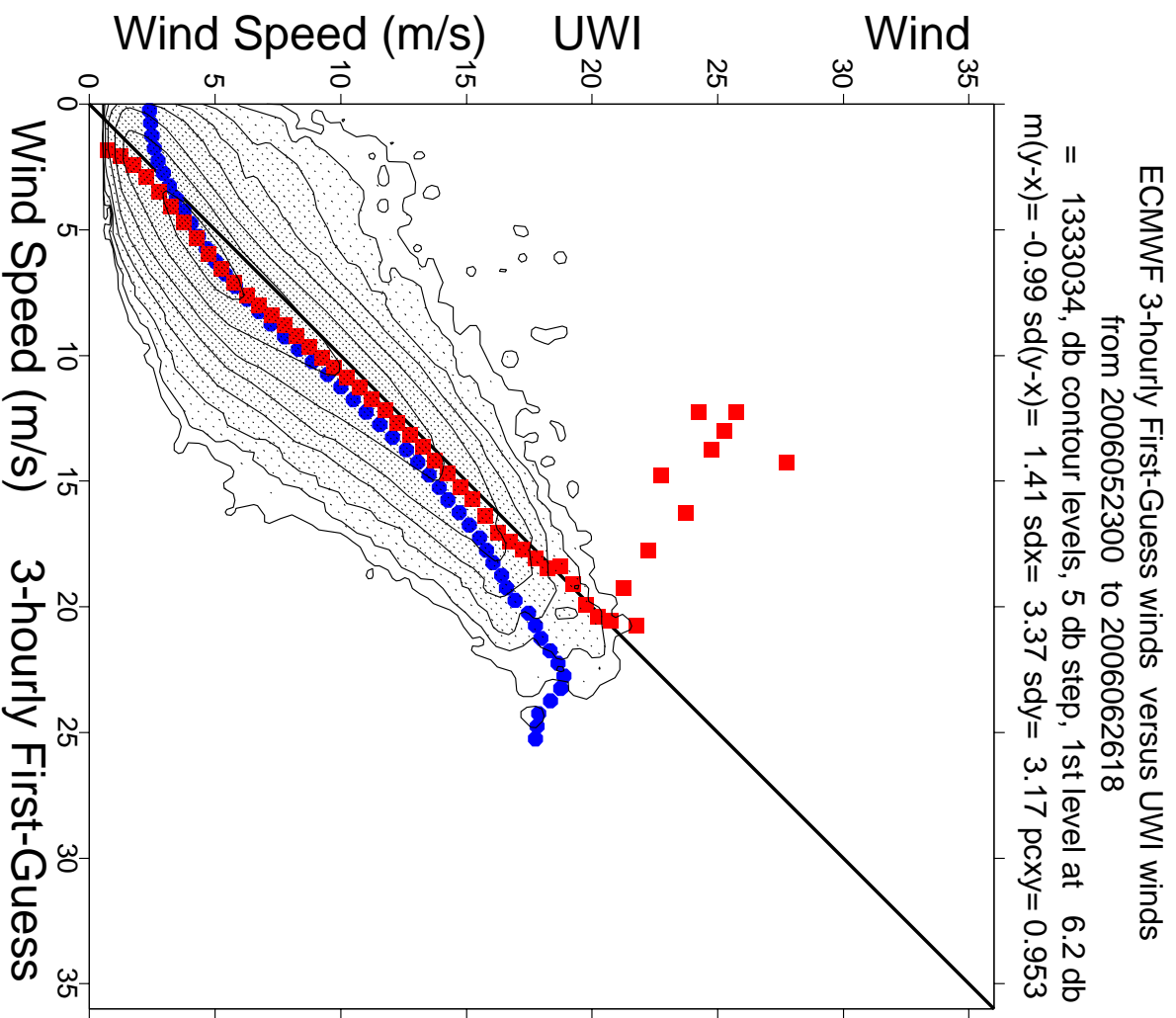


Figure 13

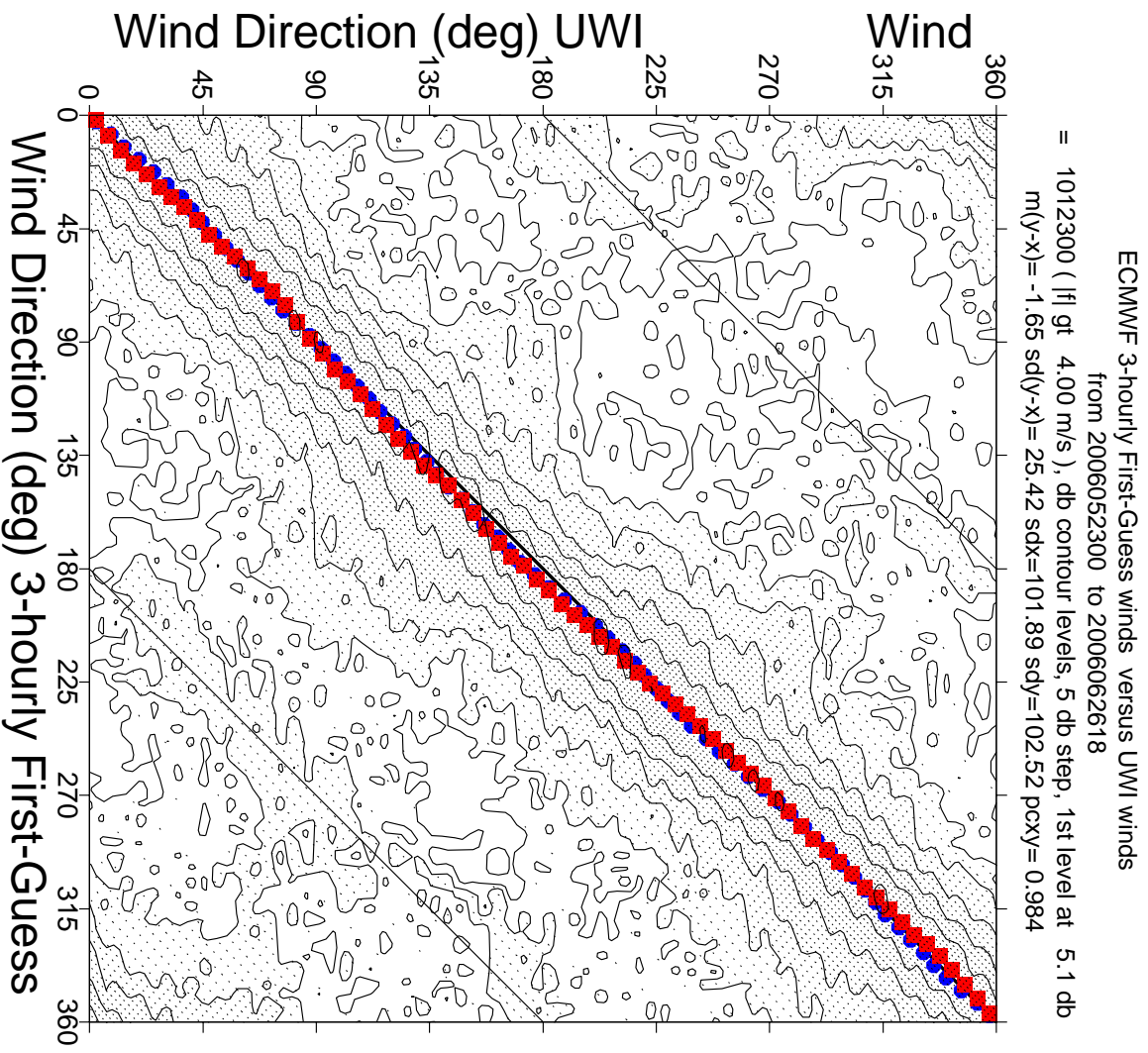


Figure 14

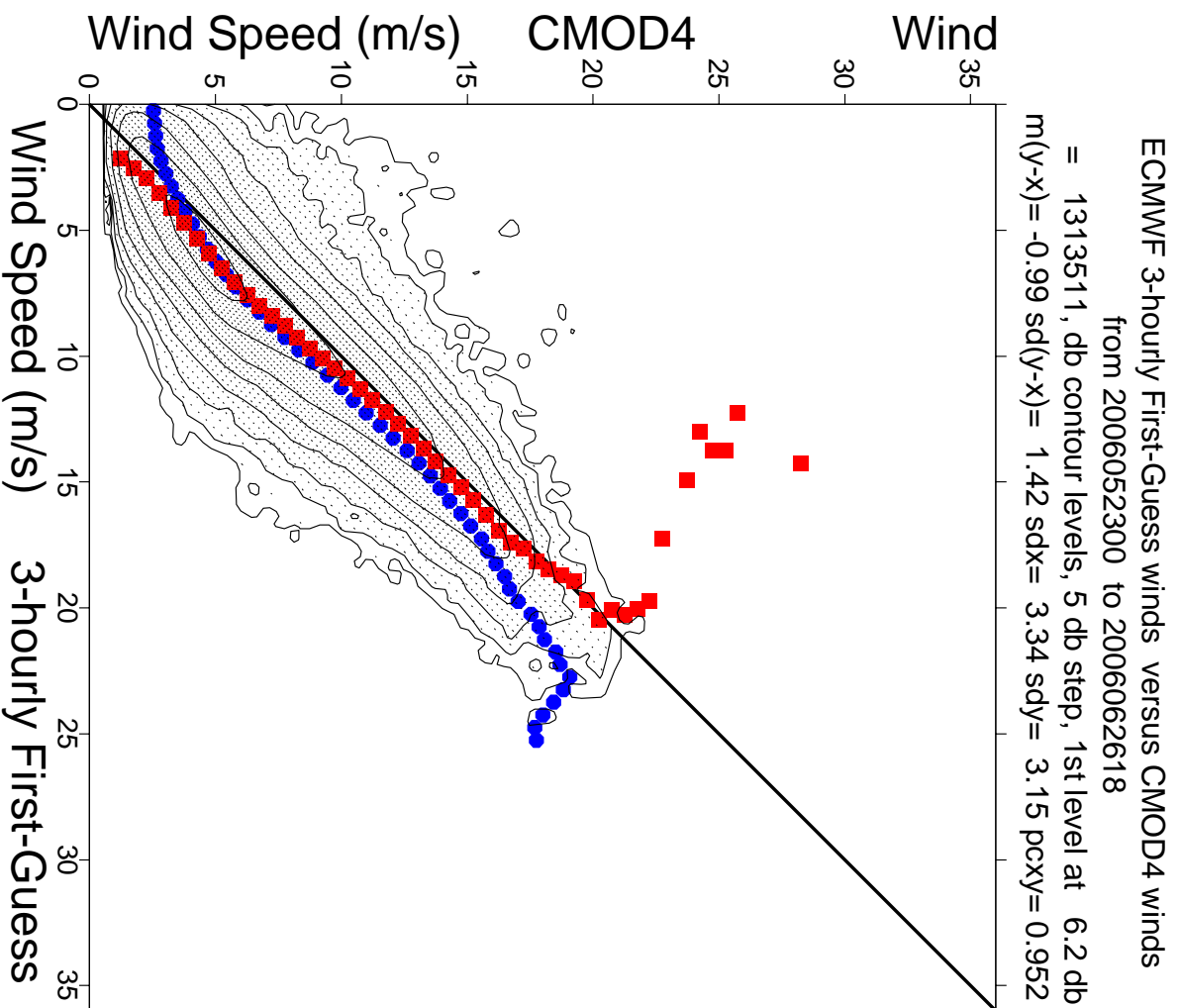


Figure 15

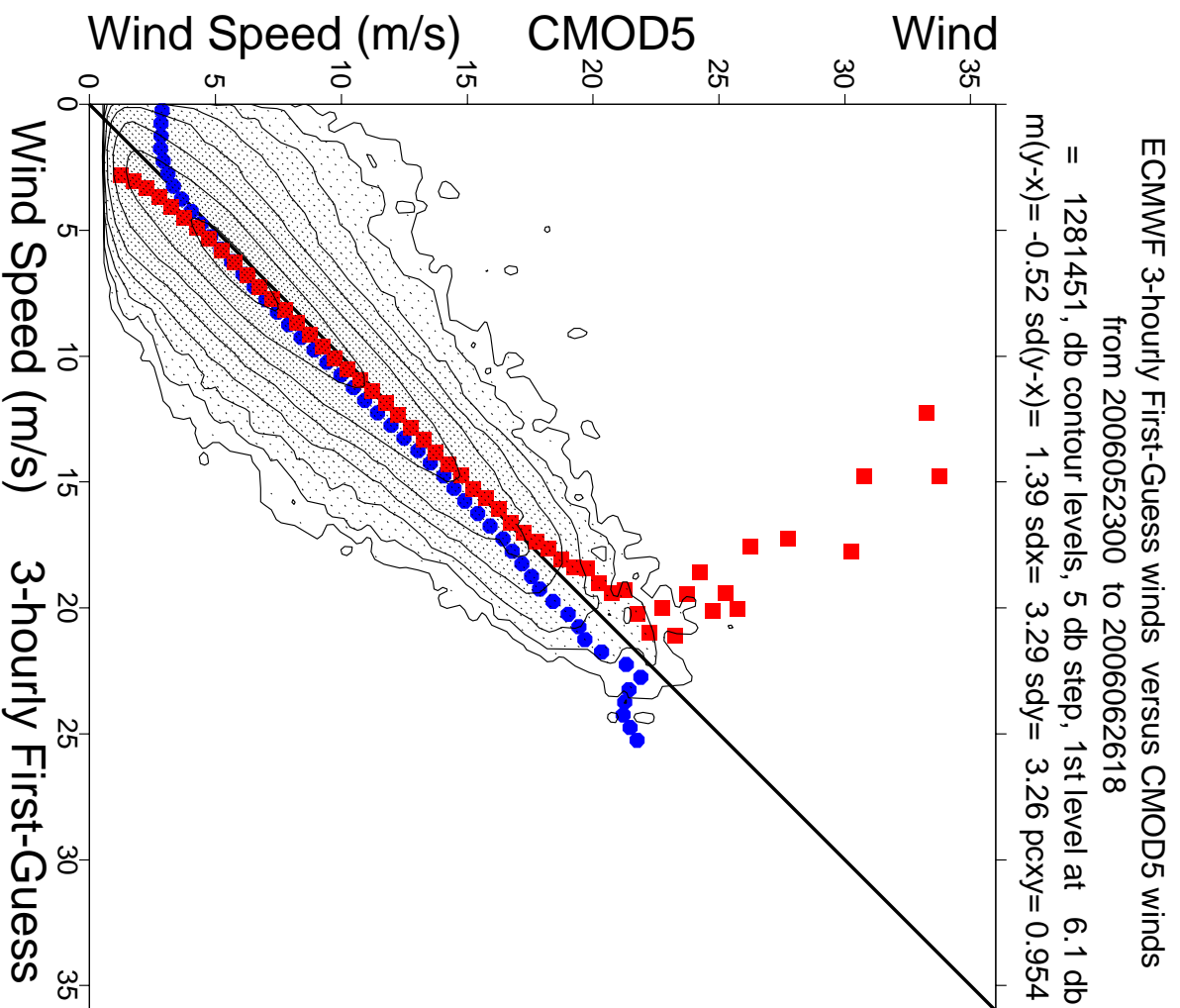


Figure 16

Figure 17

