

Two referees have now sent their evaluations of the Letter, which are accessible on the NPG site. A third referee (hereafter referee 3) has also submitted a review, but not in a format that makes it directly accessible on the site. I have just submitted it in the format of an editor comment.

Apologies are due to the authors. They submitted their paper as an NPG Letter on June 20 last. NPG Letters are meant to report *particularly important results and major advances in a concise and engaging style*. Rules require them to be *handled with priority*. However, for various reasons, including withdrawal by a first editor, it is only now that two reviews have been submitted in the required format. It may also be that the somewhat specific nature of NPG Letters had not been mentioned clearly enough to the solicited referees.

Referees 1 and 2 are both specialists of tropical meteorology and predictability. They recommend acceptance of the paper, subject to revisions. Referee 3 is a specialist of dynamical systems, but not (at least from what I know) of atmospheric dynamics. Although he/she does not make explicit recommendations, his/her report amounts to at least major revisions.

All three referees ask for a more complete study, including additional computations or numerical results. Referees 2 and 3 acknowledge that it is in a sense a preliminary work. Actually, the authors explicitly state their intention to perform additional future work (which is normal if a Letter is meant to be a preliminary but important announcement of further studies). But the referees nevertheless consider the Letter cannot be published in its present form.

The Interactive Discussion of the paper, during which any member of the scientific community can submit comments, is open until 03 Oct. The authors will then be given a deadline to send their responses to the referees and possible other contributors. Given the above, I suggest, at their preference, two ways of action for the authors.

1. Either they resubmit their paper as an NPG Letter, possibly stressing more strongly that the letter is only submitted in anticipation of a more complete paper. The authors should take into account the comments and suggestions of all three referees, and give a point-by-point response to all of these comments and suggestions. In case they disagree with a particular comment or suggestion, or decide not to follow it, they should state precisely their reasons for that. Following the referees' suggestions may not be compatible with the format required for NPG Letters (such as for instance the requirement for fewer than 2,500 words in the main text). The authors will then have to choose and explain their choice.

This revised version will be sent for further review to referees 1 and 2.

I also mention that a paper submitted as an NPG Letter may be accepted, but only as an ordinary article, and not as a Letter..

2. Or the authors withdraw their present paper, and submit a new, more complete, article (not an NPG Letter). The reviewing process will then start from scratch. Such a more complete article should include in my opinion comparisons with observations and possibly results produced by more comprehensive numerical models.