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Please contact Sandy H.S. Herho (herho@umd.edu) regarding this manuscript's content.

1 LONG-TERM HYDROMETEOROLOGICAL TIME-SERIES ANALYSIS OVER
2 THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS OF WEST PAPUA

3 SANDY H. S. HERHO¹

4 ¹Department of Geology,
5 College of Computer, Mathematics and Natural Sciences,
6 University of Maryland,
7 College Park, MD, USA 20742
8 *E-mail:* herho@umd.edu

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10 *Abstract.* This article presents a novel data-driven approach for studying long-
11 term temporal rainfall pattern over the central highlands of West Papua, Indonesia.
12 Using wavelet transforms we found indications of negative temporal relationship of
13 El Niño - Southern Oscillation (ENSO) and 12-month Standardized Precipitation Index
14 (SPI-12). Based on this causal relationship, we perform dynamic causality modeling
15 using the Nonlinear Autoregressive with Exogenous input (NARX) model to predict
16 SPI-12 using the Multivariate ENSO Index (MEI) as an attribute variable. As a result,
17 this dynamic neural network model is able to capture common features in the SPI-12
18 time series. This study has a profound impact for the future development of data-
19 driven precipitation models for areas with complex topography in Indonesian Maritime
20 Continent (IMC).

21 *Key words:* ENSO, NARX, SPI, wavelet transform.

1. INTRODUCTION

22 The central highlands of West Papua is part of the province of Papua, which is
23 the easternmost province of Indonesia (Figure 1). This region has a complex land-
24 scape with rugged and hilly terrain. Some of the highest peaks in Indonesia, such
25 as Carstensz Pyramid (5030 m.a.s.l), Trikora Peak (4730 masl), Yamin Peak (4595
26 m.a.s.l), and Mandala Peak (4700 m.a.s.l) are also located in the central highlands
27 of West Papua. This complex geomorphological appearance is an expression of the
28 geological and tectonic conditions that have occurred in that place. According to [1]
29 the island of Papua was formed from a process of subduction between the Australian
30 Plate and the Pacific Plate. The convergent process and deformation of these two
31 plates began in the Eocene and continues to the present [2]. The Australian Plate,
32 which is under the Arafura Sea and extends to the north, is the base of the southern
33 part of the central highlands of West Papua, where the base layer is composed of
34 sedimentary rocks within the ages ranging from Paleozoic to Mid-Quaternary [3].

35 The central highlands of West Papua stretches from the equator to 12°S. This

36 area can be classified as a tropical region dominated seasonally by the monsoonal
37 asymmetric cycle, like most areas in the Indonesian Maritime Continent (IMC) [4, 5].
38 Apart from monsoonal influences, as in other areas in the IMC, central highlands of
39 West Papua there are also local influences, such as mountain deflection and local
40 warming which control rainfall circulation in this area [6]. In addition, El Niño -
41 Southern Oscillation (ENSO) also has an impact on seasonal rainfall conditions in
42 Papua, El Niño events can reduce rainfall in the area [7]. This region experiences
43 variations in precipitation between 2500 – 4500 mm/year with the number of rainy
44 days varying from 148 to 175 rainy days/year with average surface air temperatures
45 of 29°C to 31.8°C and relative humidity varying between 79% to 81%. Thus, the
46 central highlands of Papua is one of the wettest areas in the IMC [8].

47 Studies that discuss the characteristics of rainfall in the Papua region are still
48 difficult to find. This can be due to the complex regional topography in this area
49 which makes it difficult to study it using a numerical approaches [9]. Besides, this
50 can also be caused by aerial coverage of rain gauges and radar networks owned by the
51 Indonesian Agency for Meteorology Climatology and Geophysics (BMKG) [10]. To
52 solve this problem, we offer a solution by using a data-driven approach [11] by uti-
53 lizing ERA5 monthly averaged data on single levels [12] to reveal the characteristics
54 and predictability of long-term precipitation time series over the central highlands of
55 Papua.

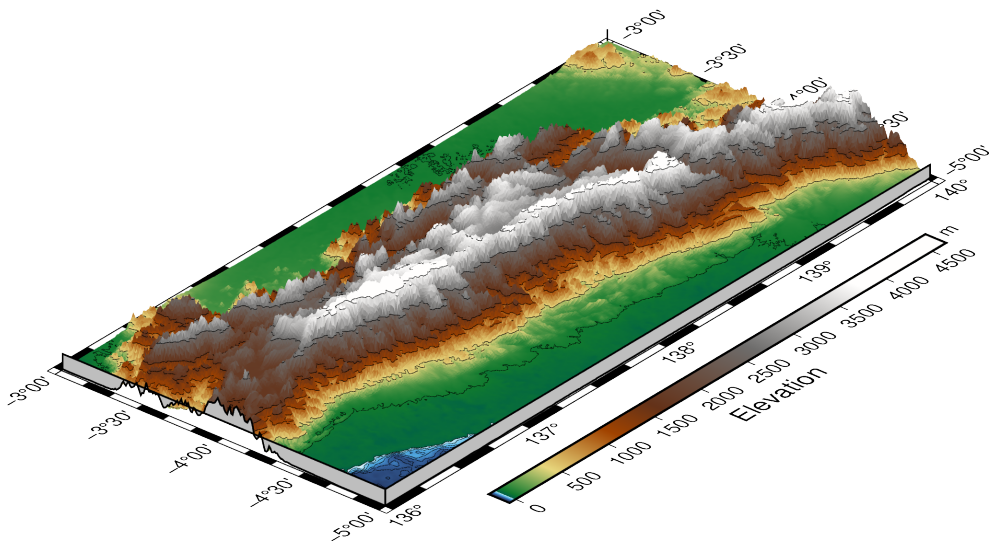


Fig. 1 – Digital Elevation Model (DEM) of the central highlands of West Papua (rendered using PyGMT [13]).

2. LONG-TERM DROUGHT / PLUVIAL TIME-SERIES RECONSTRUCTION

In this part, we reconstruct long-term meteorological drought/pluvial events over the central highlands of West Papua. We use SPI-12 [14, 15] as the standard for measuring long-term meteorological drought/pluvial events that successfully used to reconstruct drought throughout the past millennium period over the IMC [16].

The first step we take, is to calculate the spatial average of land precipitation over the central highlands of West Papua using the ERA5 monthly averaged data on single levels [12]. Spatial average of a precipitation field $\bar{p}(\phi, \theta, t)$ on a sphere [17] is mathematically defined in the equation (1),

$$\bar{p}(t) = \frac{1}{4\pi} \int \int p(\phi, \theta, t) \cos(\phi) d\phi d\theta \quad (1)$$

, where ϕ is latitude, θ is longitude, and t is time. To handle the gridded dataset, a discretized form of equation (1) is needed. The discrete form of equation (1) for a grid resolution $\Delta\phi \times \Delta\theta$ is defined in equation (2),

$$\bar{p}(t) = \sum_{i,j} p(i, j, t) \frac{\cos(\phi_{i,j}) \Delta\phi \Delta\theta}{4\pi} \quad (2)$$

, where (i, j) are coordinate indices for each the grid box of precipitation data over the central highlands of West Papua, and ϕ and θ are in radian. Since ERA5 precipitation data has a spatial resolution of $0.25^\circ \times 0.25^\circ$, then $\Delta\phi = \Delta\theta = (0.25/180)\pi = \pi/720$. By substituting this information into equation (2), the following equation is obtained,

$$\bar{p}(t) = \sum_{i,j} p(i, j, t) \frac{\cos(\phi_{i,j})(1/720)^2}{4} \quad (3)$$

We solve the calculation in the equation (3) using the built-in function in the **xarray** library [18] in the Python computational environment.

The calculation result of equation (3) is the spatial average of monthly precipitation time-series shown in Figure 2. Figure 2 shows that rainfall events occurred in each month in this period of study. To see the pattern of monthly rainfall, we average the data for each month, as shown in Figure 3. It can be seen in Figure 3 that the monthly rainfall pattern in the central highlands of West Papua has one peak and one trough, which corresponds to the rainfall pattern in Region A [19] with a shift in the onset of wet and dry seasons which is thought to be caused by other local factors. The seasonal rainfall patterns over the central highlands of West Papua (Figure 3) seem to follow an asymmetric pattern between boreal summer and winter and between boreal spring and fall.

The spatial average of monthly precipitation is then used as input for the calculation of SPI-12. SPI-12 itself is the comparison of rainfall for 12 consecutive

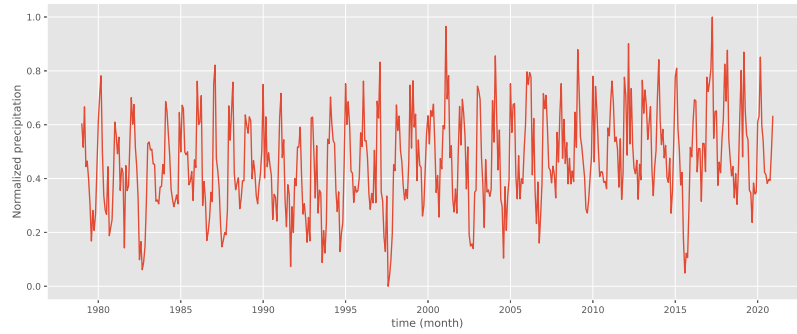


Fig. 2 – Variations in the normalized monthly precipitation data from ERA5 over the central highlands of West Papua from January 1979 to December 2020.

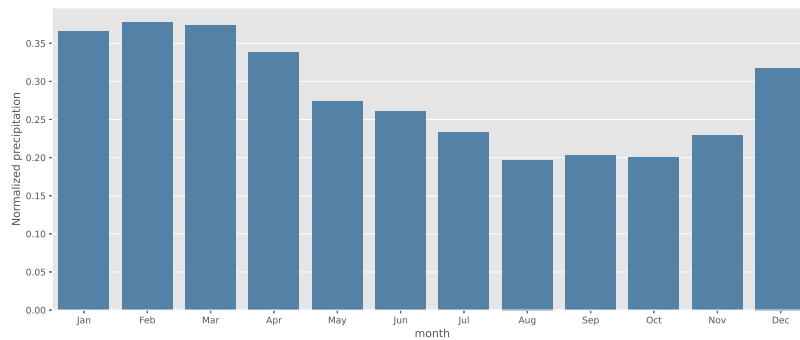


Fig. 3 – Normalized average monthly precipitation over the central highlands of Papua.

89 months with the same 12 consecutive months from previous years. The SPI on this
 90 time scale reflects long-term rainfall patterns [14, 15]. The time scale is the cumula-
 91 tive of previous periods that may be above or below normal. SPI on this scale can
 92 be related to streamflows, reservoir conditions, and even groundwater content. In
 93 several countries the SPI-12 is most closely related to the Palmer Drought Severity
 94 Index (PDSI) and it is also possible that both indices reflect the same conditions [20].

95 SPI is calculated using statistical methods as follows,

$$96 \quad G(x) = \int_0^x g(x, \hat{\alpha}, \hat{\beta}) dx = \frac{1}{\hat{\beta} \hat{\alpha} \Gamma(\hat{\alpha})} \int_0^x x^{\hat{\alpha}-1} e^{-x/\hat{\beta}} \quad (4)$$

97 , where α is a shape parameter, β is a scale parameter, $\Gamma(\alpha)$ is a gamma function,
 98 and x is precipitation values. Equation (4) applies if $x > 0$ (otherwise $g(x, \hat{\alpha}, \hat{\beta}) = 0$,

99 which in this case applies to precipitation data which are always within the range
 100 $(0, +\infty)$. In order to match the gamma distribution with precipitation data, it is
 101 necessary to estimate the α and β parameters using the maximum likelihood approx-
 102 imation which is defined as follows,

$$103 \hat{\alpha} = \frac{1}{4A} \left(1 + \sqrt{\frac{4A}{3}} \right) \quad (5)$$

$$104 \hat{\beta} = \frac{\bar{x}}{\hat{\alpha}} \quad (6)$$

106 , where A is defined by equation (7),

$$107 A = \ln(\bar{x}) - \frac{\sum \ln(x)}{n} \quad (7)$$

108 , where n is the number of observations. For $\hat{\alpha} > 0$, $\Gamma(\hat{\alpha})$ is defined by equation (8),

$$109 \Gamma(\hat{\alpha}) = \int_0^{+\infty} x^{(\hat{\alpha}-1)} e^{-x} dx \quad (8)$$

110 The gamma distribution is undefined for $x = 0$ and $q = P(x = 0) > 0$, where q is the
 111 probability of zero percipitation. Therefore the cumulative probability distribution is
 112 defined by equation (9),

$$113 H(x) = q + (1 - q)G(x) \quad (9)$$

114 The gamma distribution $G(x)$ is then converted to be a normal standard with
 115 zero mean and standard deviation of one, so that the SPI index Z is obtained using
 116 equation (10),

$$117 Z = \begin{cases} -t - \frac{c_0 + c_1 t + c_2 t^2}{1 + d_1 t + d_2 t^2 + d_3 t^3}, & \text{for } 0 < H(x) \leq 0.5 \\ t - \frac{c_0 + c_1 t + c_2 t^2}{1 + d_1 t + d_2 t^2 + d_3 t^3}, & \text{for } 0.5 < H(x) < 1 \end{cases} \quad (10)$$

118 , where t is defined by equation (11),

$$119 t = \begin{cases} \sqrt{\ln\left(\frac{1}{(H(x))^2}\right)}, & \text{for } 0 < H(x) \leq 0.5 \\ \sqrt{\ln\left(\frac{1}{(1-H(x))^2}\right)}, & \text{for } 0.5 < H(x) < 1 \end{cases} \quad (11)$$

120 , and the constants are defined as follows,

$$121 c_0 = 2.515517, c_1 = 0.802853, c_2 = 0.010328, d_1 = 1.432788, d_2 = 0.109269, d_3 = 0.001308 \quad (12)$$

122 In order to simplify the calculation process, we use the **SPEI** package [21] in
 123 the R computational environment. The result of the SPI-12 reconstruction for the
 124 period January 1980 to December 2020 is shown in Figure 4.

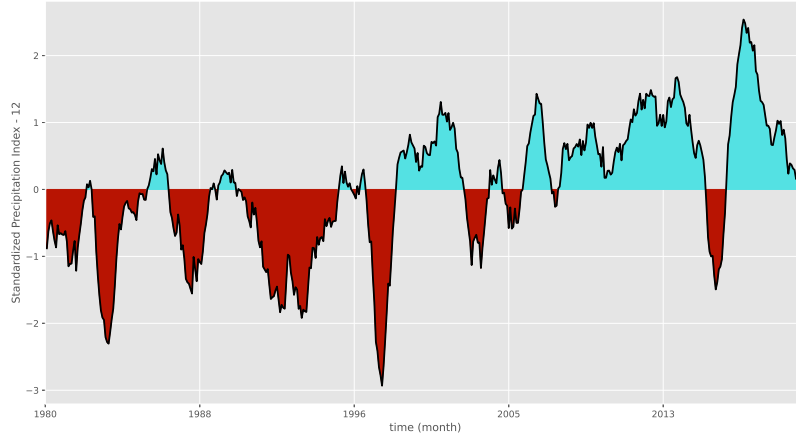


Fig. 4 – SPI values over the central highlands of West Papua from January 1980 to December 2020 with a 12-month time scale. Negative SPI-12 describes dry conditions (red), whereas positive SPI-12 describes wet conditions (blue).

3. IDENTIFYING ENSO-DRIVEN PATTERN IN SPI-12

125 The influence of the ENSO signal in the IMC [7, 10, 22] is a fact that should not
 126 be ignored in the analysis of drought/pluvial events in the central highlands of West
 127 Papua. In this section we discuss the temporal effect of ENSO, using Multivariate
 128 ENSO Index (MEI) [23], on SPI-12. To measure the temporal effect of ENSO on
 129 drought/pluvial events over the area of study, we use the popular algorithm for mea-
 130 suring geophysical signal patterns, i.e. wavelet transforms. The advantage of wavelet
 131 transforms compared to other power spectrum methods is that they can capture non-
 132 linear signals from time series because they use small wave packets (wavelets) as the
 133 base functions which intrinsically have smooth ends, instead of using sine and cosine
 134 wave functions [24].

135 In this study we use an extension of the Morlet wavelet (ψ) [25] to model
 136 ENSO and SPI-12 signals, which is defined by,

$$137 \quad \psi(t) = \pi^{-\frac{1}{4}} e^{-i\omega_0 t} e^{-\frac{1}{2}t^2}, t = 1, 2, 3, \dots \quad (13)$$

138 , where t is the position where the wavelet operates in a time series with a
 139 narrow range of observations.

140 In general, wavelets have two main components, namely time or position k and
 141 frequency f . The k parameter has an important role in detecting the exact location
 142 of a wavelet by relocating the wavelet over a period of time, while f is useful for
 143 monitoring the convex wavelet to localize different frequencies. By transforming ψ ,

144 we get the $\psi_{k,f}$ parameter as follows,

$$145 \quad \psi_{k,f}(t) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{h}} \psi\left(\frac{t-k}{f}\right), \quad k, f \in \mathbb{R}, f \neq 0 \quad (14)$$

146 Equation (15) describes the modeling of a time series $x(t)$ into a wavelet transform,

$$147 \quad W_x(k, f) = \int_{-\infty}^{+\infty} x(t) \frac{1}{\sqrt{f}} \psi\left(\frac{(t-k)}{f}\right) dt \quad (15)$$

148 The signal power in the time series $x(t)$ itself is measured using the wavelet power spectrum $WPS_x(k, f)$ which is defined as follows,

$$150 \quad WPS_x(k, f) = |W_x(k, f)|^2 \quad (16)$$

151 In order to simplify the process of calculating the continuous wavelet power spectrum
 152 on ENSO and SPI-12 data, we use the **PyCWT** library [26] in the Python computa-
 153 tional environment.

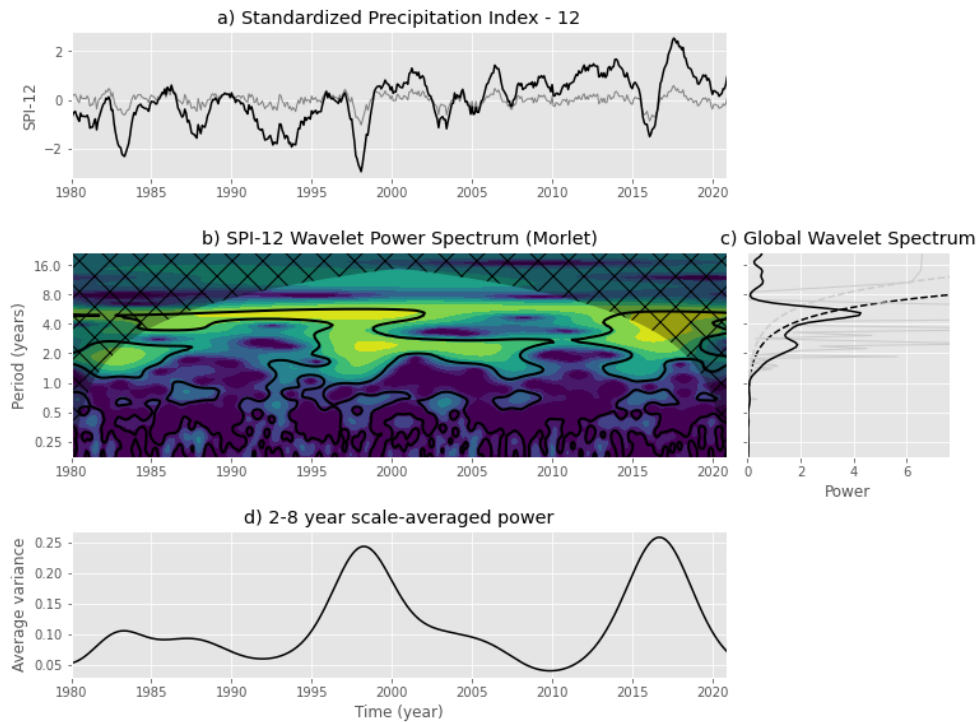


Fig. 5 – Continuous wavelet transform for the SPI-12. These plots clearly shows significant periodicity at 2 - 8 year cycle.

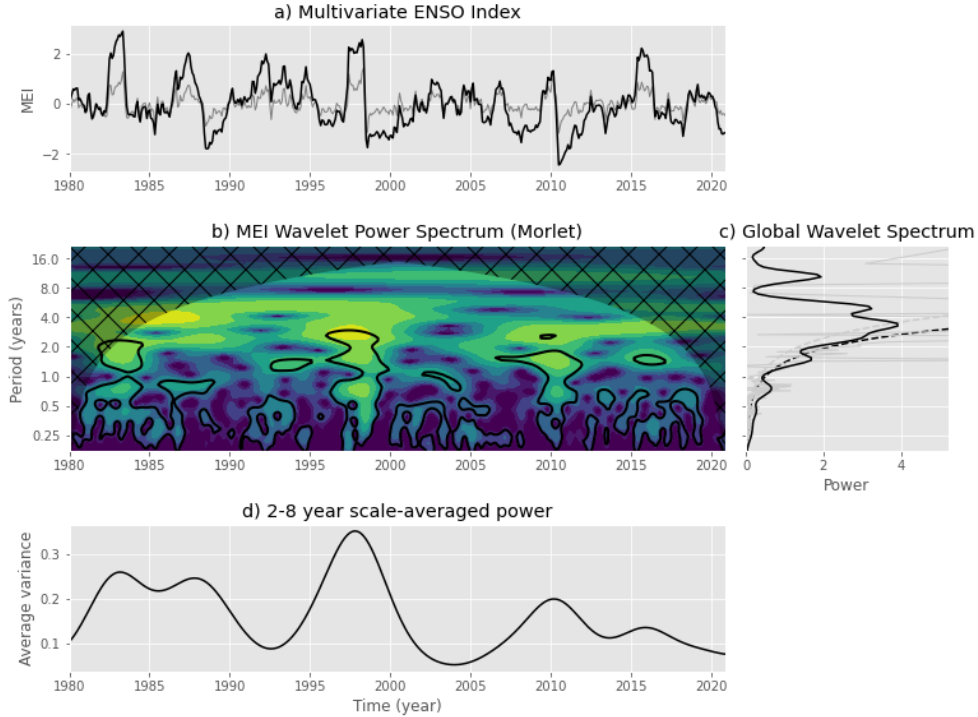


Fig. 6 – Continuous wavelet transform for the MEI. These plots clearly shows significant periodicity at 2 - 8 year cycle.

154 There are similarities of WPS between ENSO (Figure 6) and SPI-12 (Figure 5).
 155 However, to measure the relationship between the two quantitatively, I need another
 156 mathematical tool, namely the wavelet coherence (WTC). We use WTC to find time-
 157 frequency-based causality between two time-series data, in this context MEI. $x(t)$
 158 and SPI-12 $y(t)$. The first step we take is to find the cross wavelet transform (XWT)
 159 of the two time-series data (equation (17)),

$$160 \quad W_{xy}(k, f) = W_x(k, f) \overline{W_y(k, f)} \quad (17)$$

161 , where $W_{x,y}(k, f)$ is the XWT of the two time-series data. Then to find WTC
 162 value, the equation (18) is used as follows,

$$163 \quad R^2(k, f) = \frac{|C(f^{-1}W_{xy}(k, f))^2|}{C(f^{-1}|W_x(k, f)|^2)C(f^{-1}|W_y(k, f)|^2)} \quad (18)$$

164 , C parameter shows the time and smoothing process over the duration of time in
 165 within the range of $0 \leq R^2(k, f) \leq 1$. When $R^2(k, f)$ approaches one, a strong cor-
 166 relation can be expected between MEI and SPI-12 (indicated by light yellow color

167 surrounded by a black line in the figure 7). Conversely, if $R^2(k, f)$ is zero, then there
 168 is no correlation between the two variables. To find out the positive or negative cor-
 169 relation of the two time-series data, we use the phase difference equation (equation
 170 (19)) as follows,

$$171 \quad \phi_{xy}(k, f) = \arctan \left(\frac{\Im \{C(f^{-1}W_{xy}(k, f))\}}{\Re \{C(f^{-1}W_{xy}(k, f))\}} \right) \quad (19)$$

172 , where \Re shows the real part and \Im shows the imaginary part. To simplify the WTC
 173 calculation process, we use the open source MATLAB[®] Toolbox by (author?) [27].

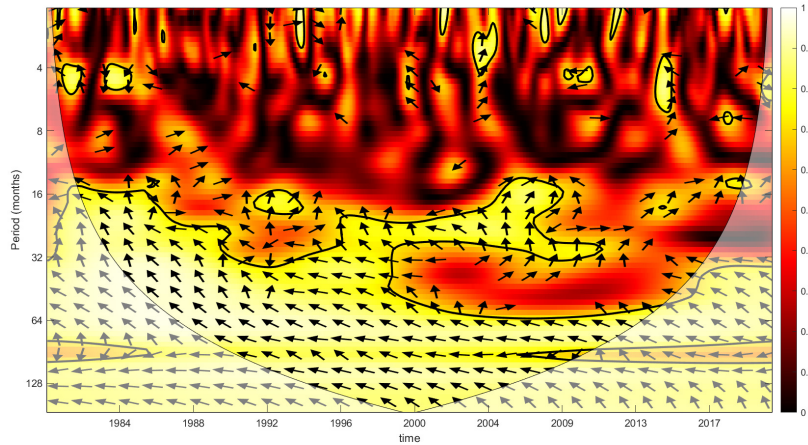


Fig. 7 – Wavelet coherence between MEI and SPI-12. The color scale on the right side of the figure represents the level of correlation between ENSO and long-term meteorological drought/pluvial events over the central highlands of West Papua. The light yellow color indicates high correlations among the variables, while the thick black contour designates the 5% significance level against red noise and the cone of influence (COI) where edge effects might distort the picture is shown as a lighter shade. The arrows show the phasing direction (**right**: in-phase, **left**: anti-phase, **down**: MEI leading SPI-12 by $\pi/2$, **up**: SPI-12 leading MEI by $\pi/2$).

174 As seen in Figure 7, WTC can capture the negative relationship between MEI
 175 and SPI-12 at 32 to 128 month periodicity. This causal effect reveals that precipita-
 176 tion over the central highlands of West Papua increases during La Niña and decreases
 177 during El Niño.

4. ENSO - SPI-12 DYNAMIC RELATIONSHIP AND PREDICTABILITY

178 In order to produce accurate SPI-12 predictions, we use Nonlinear Autoregres-
 179 sive with Exogenous input neural networks (NARX) model to capture the dynamic

180 relationship between ENSO and long-term drought/pluvial events over the central
 181 highlands of West Papua. NARX is a type of recurrent dynamic neural networks
 182 that is widely used to model nonlinear relationships from attributes in a time series
 183 [28–30]. A simple NARX diagram can be seen in Figure 8. Inputs are entered into
 184 delay units, which act as memory for the previous inputs. The outputs from NARX
 are also stored in delay units, which are then entered directly into hidden units.

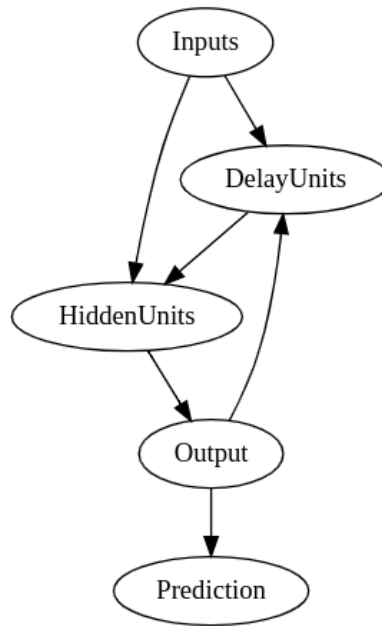


Fig. 8 – Simple schematic diagram of NARX model.

185 NARX model is defined as a nonlinear mapping function f [28] as follows,
 186

$$187 \quad y_t = f(y_{t-1}, y_{t-2}, \dots, y_{t-d_y}, x_{t-1}, x_{t-2}, \dots, x_{t-d_x}) \quad (20)$$

188 , where y is a target (SPI-12) and x are attributes (MEI); and $d_x \geq 1$, $d_y \geq 1$, $d_y \geq$
 189 d_x are delays. The nonlinear f function itself is generally unknown, and must be
 190 approximated using the existing data. There are various ways to approximate this
 191 function, in this study we use multilayer perceptrons provided by **PyNeurGen** library
 192 [31] in the Python computational environment. We use 1 time steps of delay for each
 193 of the input (x) and output (y) attributes. In addition, we also split incoming weights,
 194 60% for MEI and 30% for SPI-12. We make use of the following sigmoid function
 195 for activation of the perceptrons,

$$196 \quad S(x) = \frac{1}{1 + e^{-x}} \quad (21)$$

197 We divided SPI-12 into two parts, 85% for the training set and 15% (January 1980 -
 198 December 2014) for the testing set (January 2015 - December 2020). We use a moderate
 199 steps of learning rate of 35% for the optimization process using the Stochastic
 200 Gradient Descent (SGD) algorithm. Our NARX model is run for 10 epochs without
 201 activating the random testing parameter to maintain the order of time-series data. To
 202 evaluate the model performance, we use the Mean Squared Error (MSE) which is
 203 shown by equation (22) below,

$$204 \quad MSE = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n (\hat{y}_i - y_i)^2 \quad (22)$$

205 , which is the sum series of the squared differences of the observed target y_i and
 206 predicted values \hat{y}_i , which is then divided by the total number of test samples n . The
 207 MSE at each training epoch can be seen in Figure 9. It exhibits sharp decline at
 the first epoch and finally leveling out until the end of the last training epoch. The

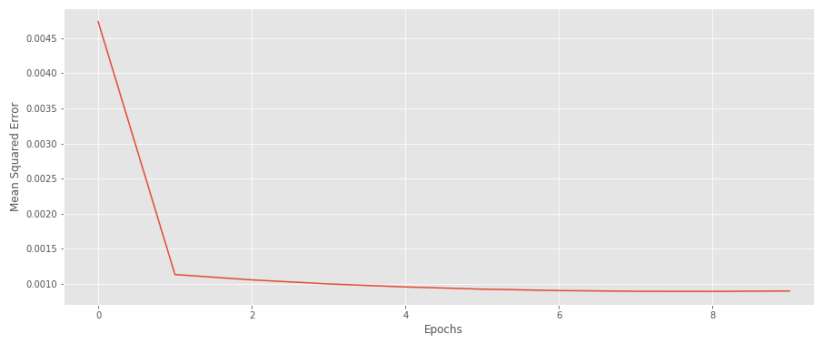


Fig. 9 – MSE by epoch for NARX model.

208 overall MSE evaluation result in the test set is 0.011341. The comparison between
 209 the NARX model prediction results and the actual SPI-12 is shown in Figure 10.
 210 Overall, the model tends to overestimate and underestimate certain extreme values,
 211 although it adequately captures the general pattern of SPI-12.
 212

5. CONCLUDING REMARKS AND FUTURE WORK SUGGESTIONS

213 We have performed time series analysis of the SPI-12 over the central highlands
 214 of West Papua. We found time series teleconnection pattern between ENSO and hy-
 215 drometeorological drought / pluvial events in this region through wavelet transforma-
 216 tions. Our result suggests that ENSO is negatively correlated to the long-term rainfall

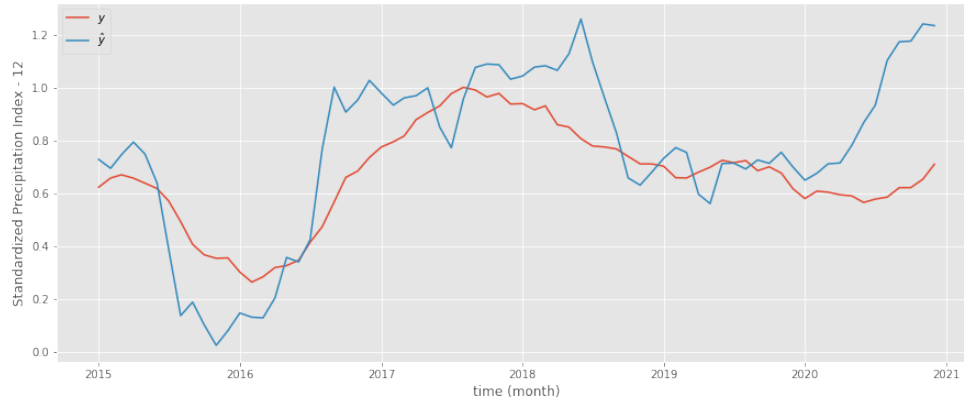


Fig. 10 – Actual y (red) and predicted \hat{y} (blue) SPI-12 values for NARX model.

217 pattern in this region. We use the patterns we obtained from the WTC to model the
 218 temporal dynamics between ENSO - long-term rainfall patterns using the NARX al-
 219 gorithm. The prediction results from the NARX model that we use can capture the
 220 general pattern of the underlying dynamics of SPI-12.

221 The study suggests possible extension of the work by using different fine-tuned
 222 optimization schemes on the NARX model [32] and using early-stopping algorithms
 223 [33] to avoid training overfitting. In addition, a comparison of more powerful seq2seq
 224 machine learning algorithms such as Long-Short Term Memory (LSTM) [34], Gated
 225 Recurrent Unit (GRU) [35], and DeepAR [36] is also needed to select the time-series
 226 model that best represents the data. Comparison and data assimilation with Global
 227 Climate Model (GCM) outputs is also needed to understand the physical process of
 228 the spatio-temporal dynamics between ENSO and long-term rainfall patterns over
 229 the central highlands of West Papua.

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 233 work is posted on GitHub at <https://github.com/sandyherho/tsHydrochWP>.

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