

In my major comment I recommended to either redo all the calculations starting from $\text{curl}(\tau)$ instead of τ_1 or, alternatively, to calculate the first PC of the vertical component of $\text{curl}(\tau)$, compare it with Fig. 2d and show that the two time series are, in their turn, fairly well synchronized. I am glad to see that the authors have followed the first, more demanding but more appropriate alternative. It is also interesting to see that similar results are obtained, as it could in fact be expected.

In consideration of both the authors' response and the revised manuscript, I can say that all the minor points I raised have been appropriately addressed. I would just like to point out that in my comment on the travel time of Rossby waves, which I indicated as being 2-3 years, I had in mind the central North Pacific (e.g., see the Hovmoller diagram in Fig. 8b of Qiu and Chen, 2005) rather than the eastern side of the ocean, for which 10 years is clearly the correct travel time estimate.

In conclusion, in my opinion the revised manuscript can be accepted for publication in its present form.