

Introduction to ocean eddies

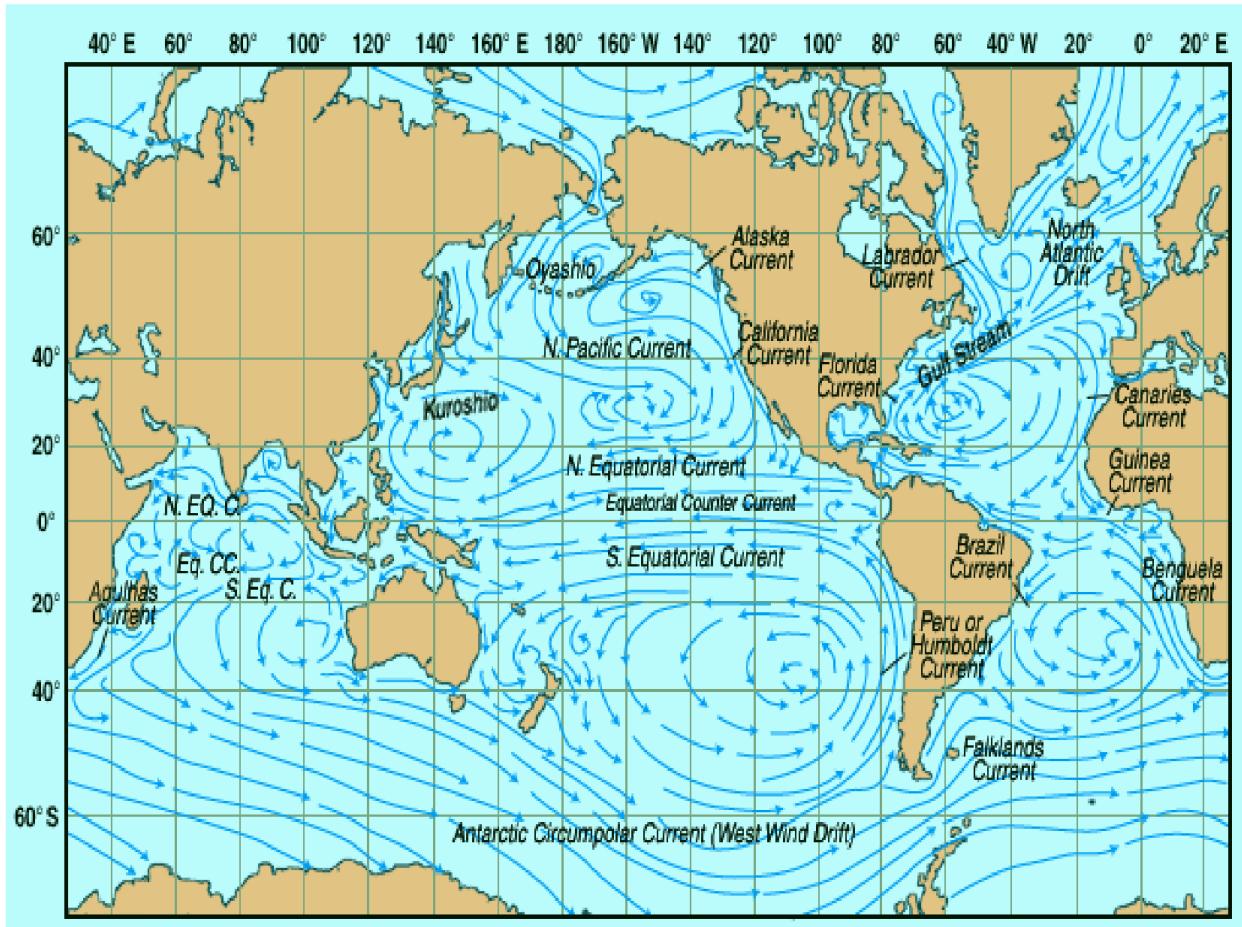


Figure 1: Global map of geostrophic currents. Note the Gulf Stream in the Atlantic Ocean east of the U.S. flowing northeastward

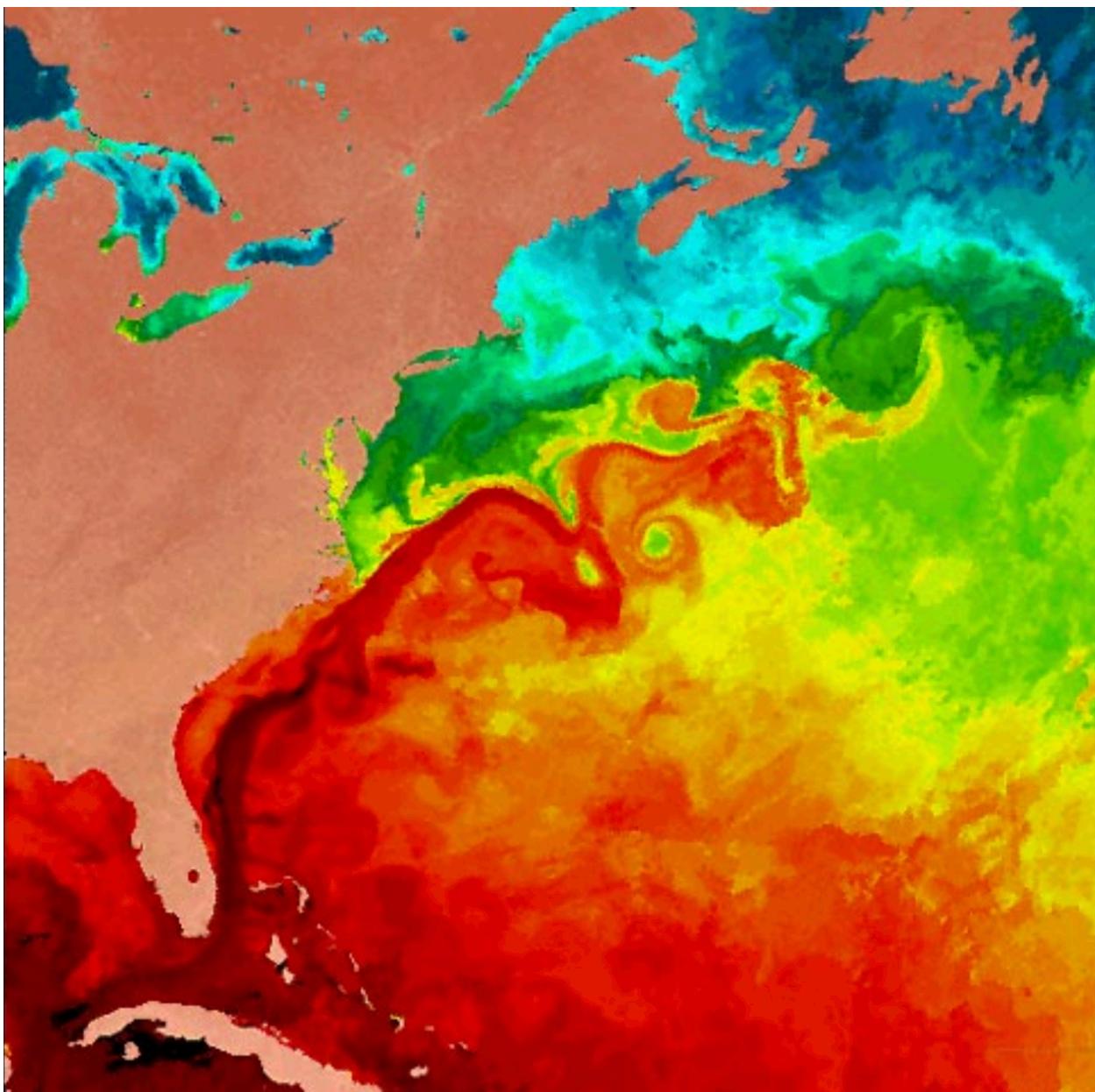


Figure 2: Thermal infrared image of the Gulf Stream. Colors are false colors representing various sea surface temperatures (Table 1).

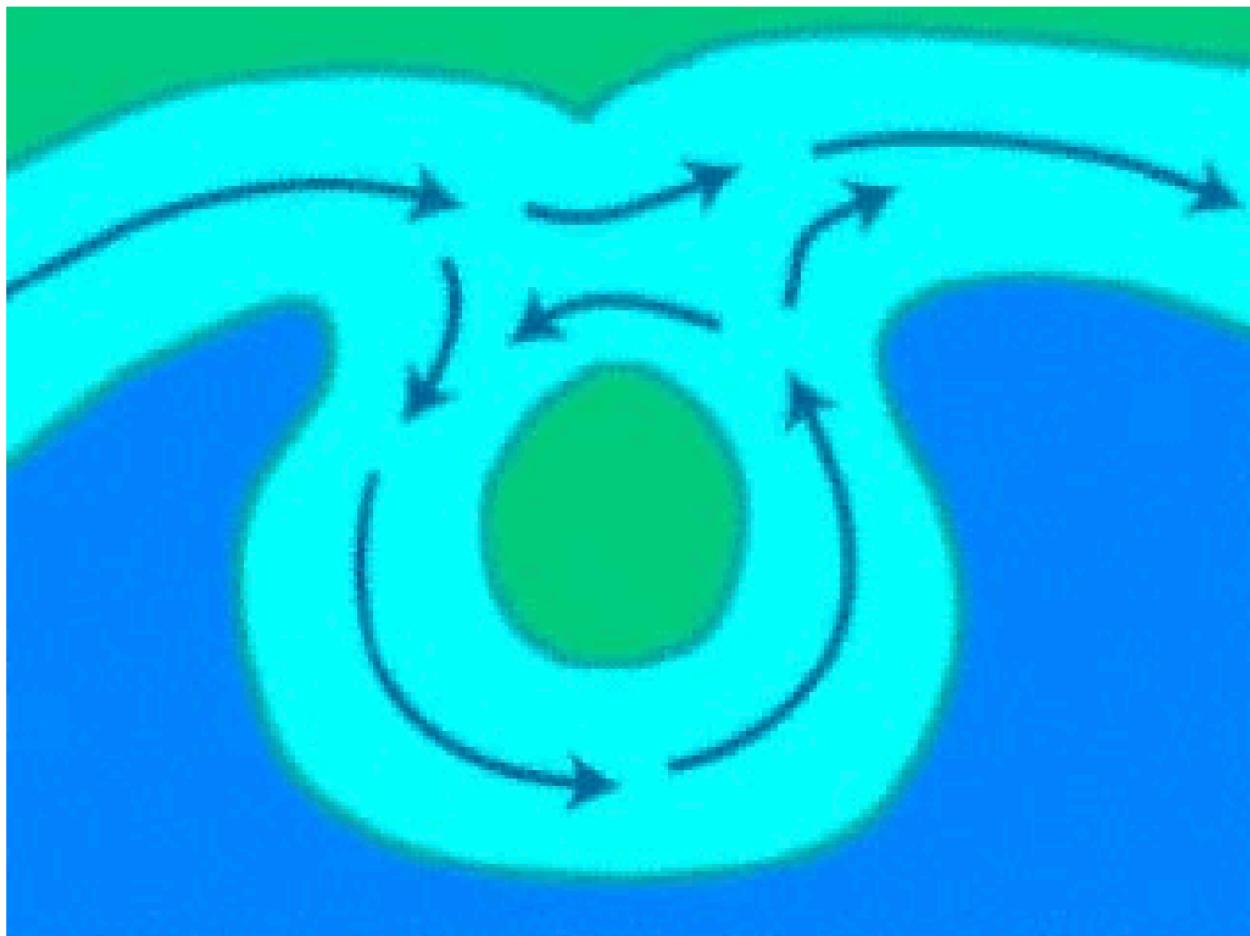


Figure 3. Spinning eddies. The equivalent of atmospheric storms, ocean eddies are spun off from currents. In this model, the Gulf Stream separates cooler water in the north from warmer water in the south. The Gulf Stream develops a loop that traps cold water in. This can completely separate to form a cold-core eddy.

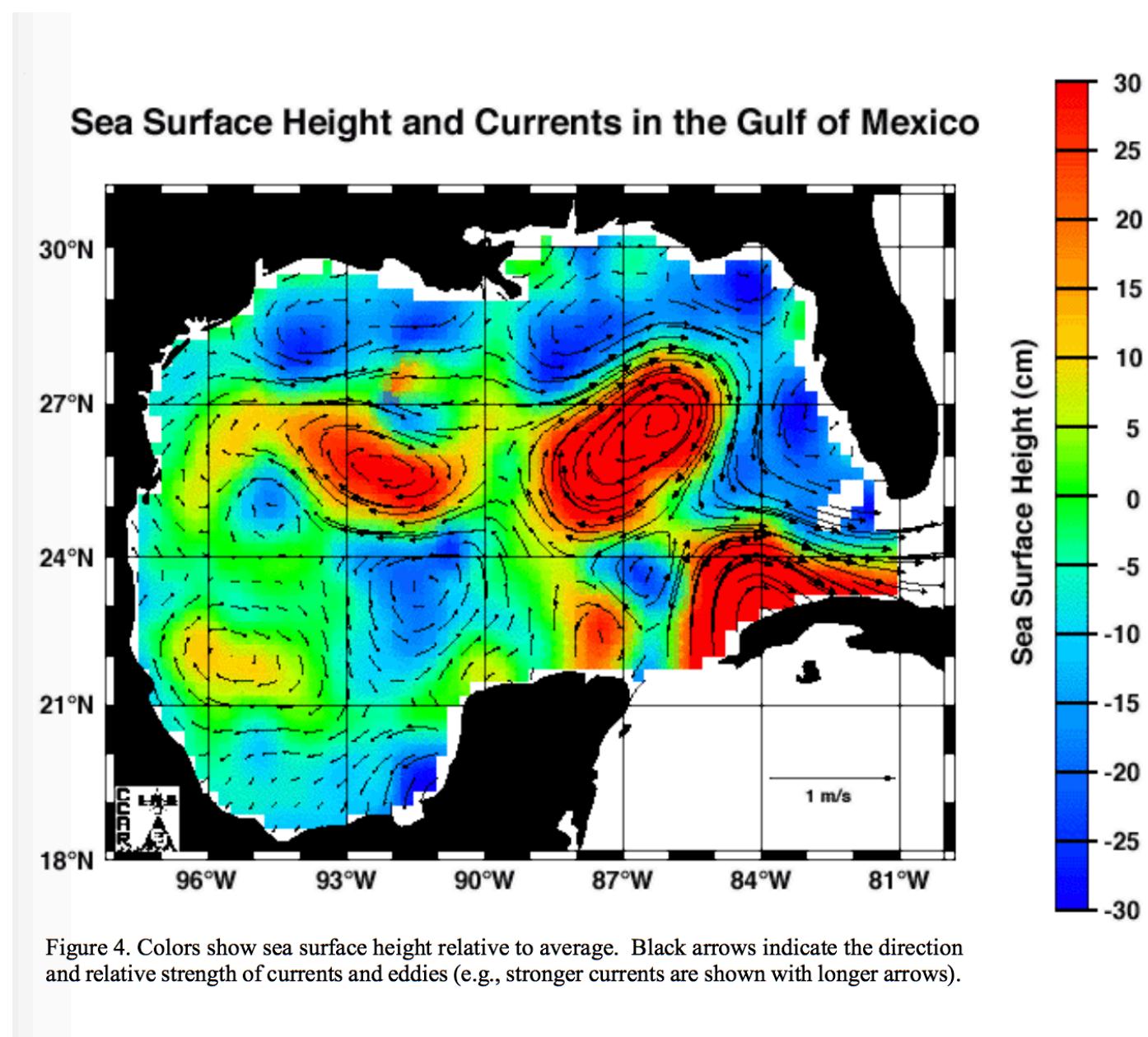


Figure 4. Colors show sea surface height relative to average. Black arrows indicate the direction and relative strength of currents and eddies (e.g., stronger currents are shown with longer arrows).