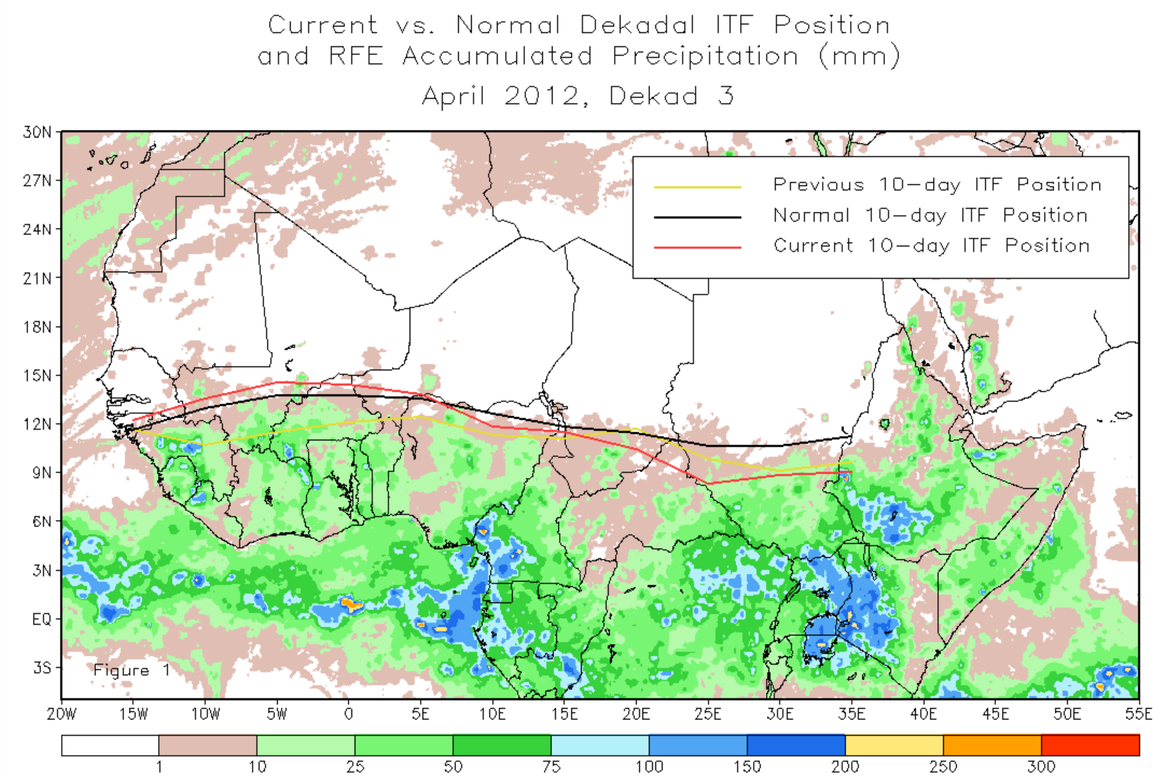
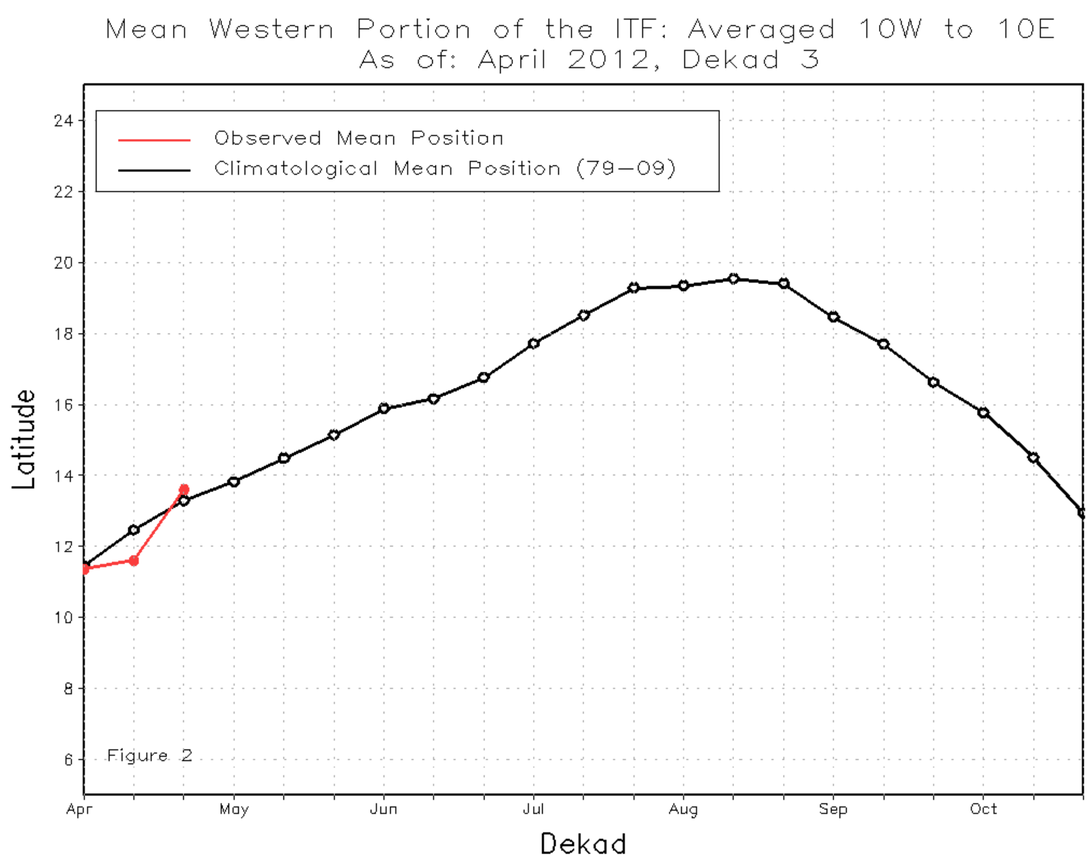
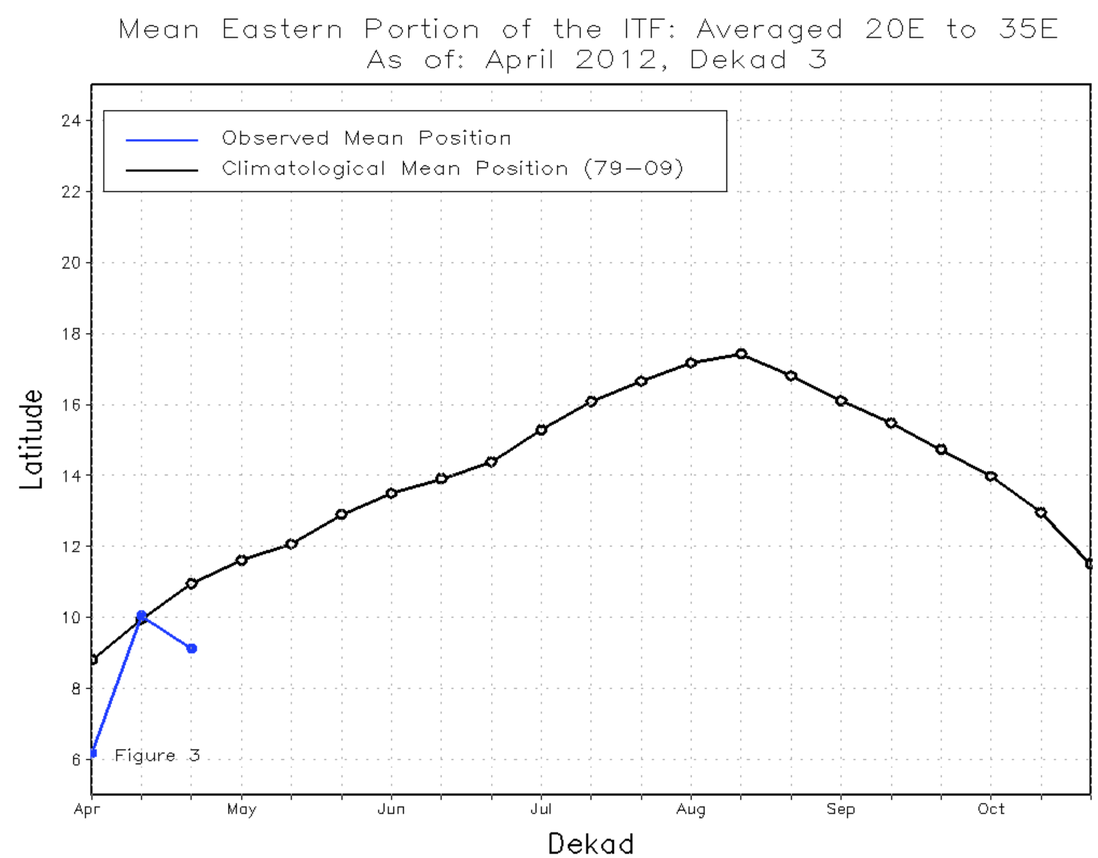
CPC Africa Desk
InterTropical (ITF) Front Analysis

April 2012, Dekad 3

Discussion:

From April 21-30, 2012, the ITF has continued to maintain its northward seasonal advancement throughout many portions of Africa. The mean western portion of the ITF was located 13.6 degrees during late April, and showed considerable movement compared to its position during previous dekad. The higher than average position in the west was associated with strong, southerly flow producing ample moisture and rainfall across portions of Cote DIvoire, Burkina Faso, and southern Mali in the last ten days. However, contrast to the west, the mean eastern portion of ITF was approximately located at 9.1 degrees, and showed a seasonal reversal in its movement (equatorward) in the last dekad. It
observed during mid-April, and nearly 2 degrees below its normal climatological position for late April. The eastern ITF anomaly was associated with robust northerly flow across eastern Sahara that helped to suppress any ITF movement over Sudan during the last week. Figure 1 shows the current ITF position relative to the climatological average position for the third dekad of April and its previous position during the first dekad of April. Figures 2 and 3 are time series, illustrating the latitudinal means of the western and eastern portions of the ITF, respectively, and their evolutions since the start of April.