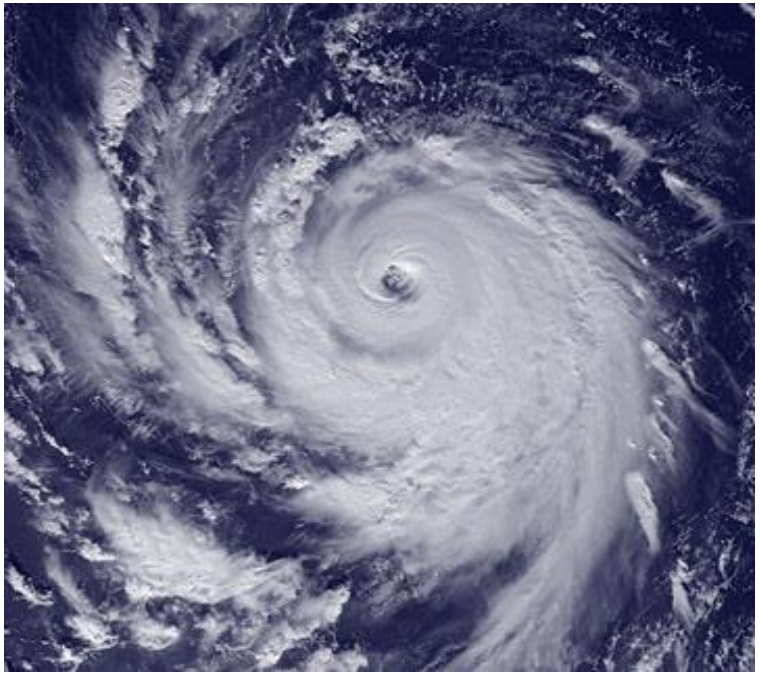
HURRICANES

Tropical Cyclone

A tropical cyclone is a rapidly rotating storm system characterized by a low-pressure center, strong winds, and a spiral arrangement of thunderstorms that produce heavy rain.

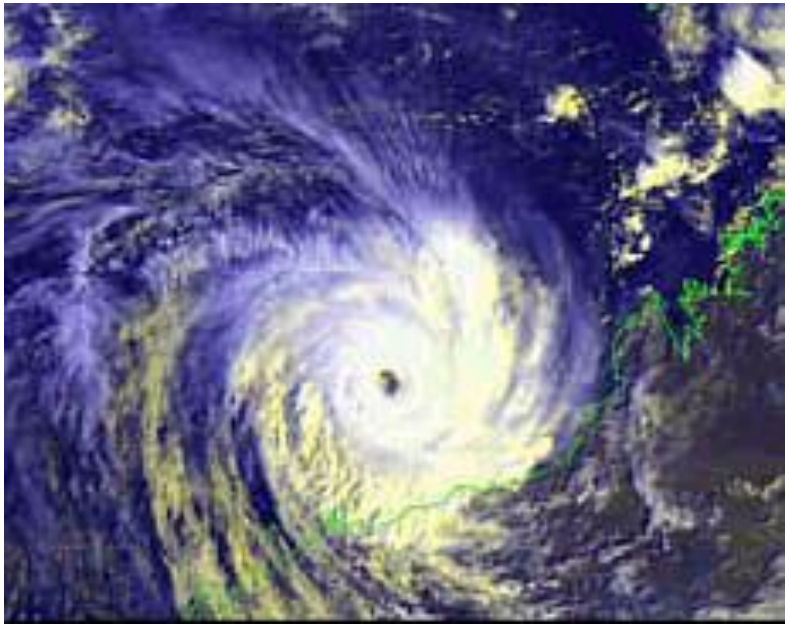
- **Formed from organized groups of thunderstorms.**
- **Classified depending on its location and strength:**
  - **Cyclonic storm (general term)**
  - **Tropical Depression**
  - **Tropical Storm**
  - **Tropical cyclone (Southern Hemisphere and Indian Ocean)**
  - **Typhoon (Northwestern Pacific)**
  - **Hurricane (Northeast Pacific or North Atlantic)**



Winds, Pressure, Rotation

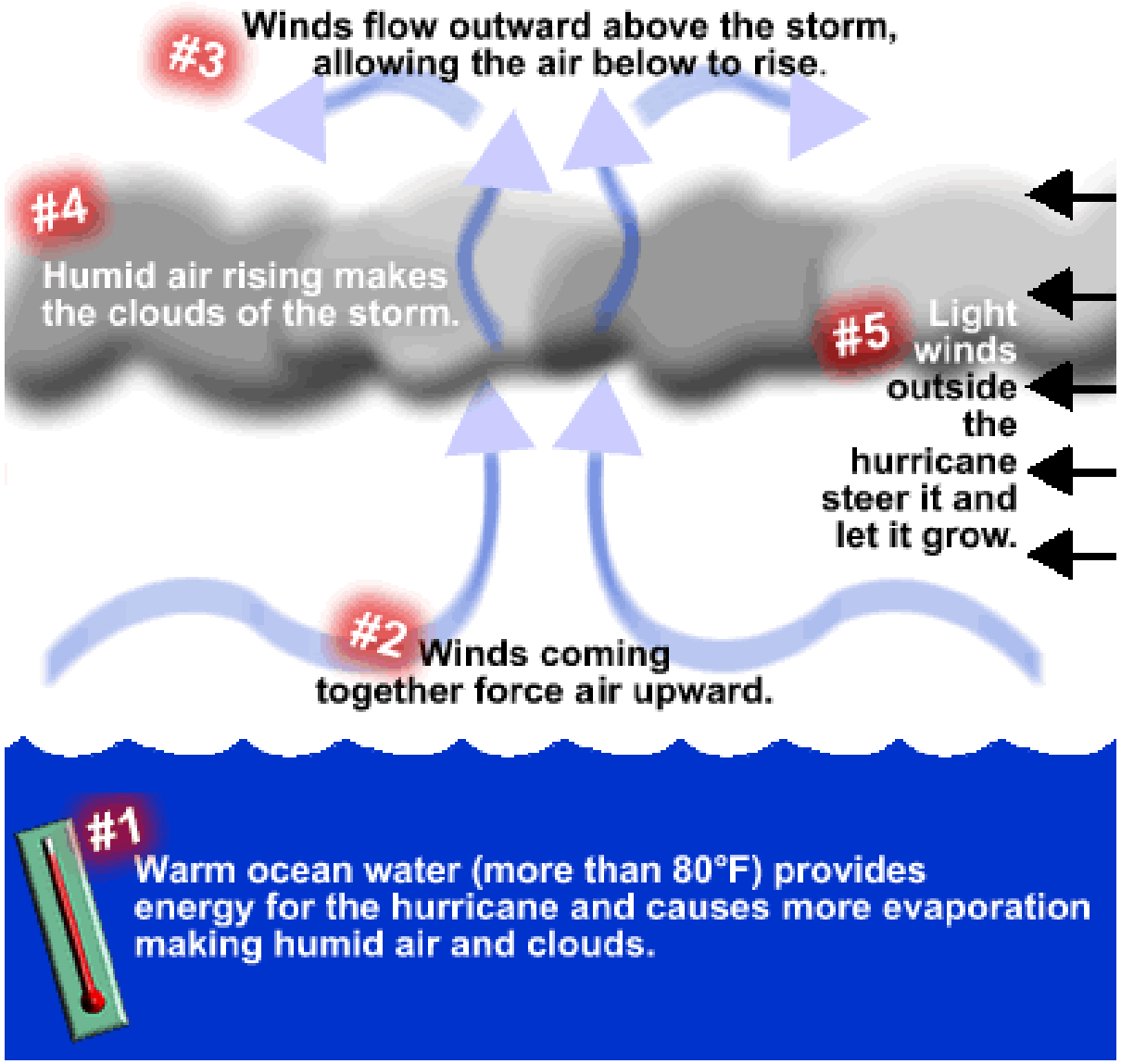
- **Hurricane strength wind speeds > 74 mph.**
- **Barometric pressure inside the hurricane is LOW.**
- **In which direction does a hurricane rotate?**

COUNTERCLOCKWISE
in Northern Hemisphere



CLOCKWISE
in Southern Hemisphere

Ingredients of a Hurricane



- **Warm water**

(at least 26.5°C/ 79.7°F are needed down to a depth of at least 50 m/ 160 ft)

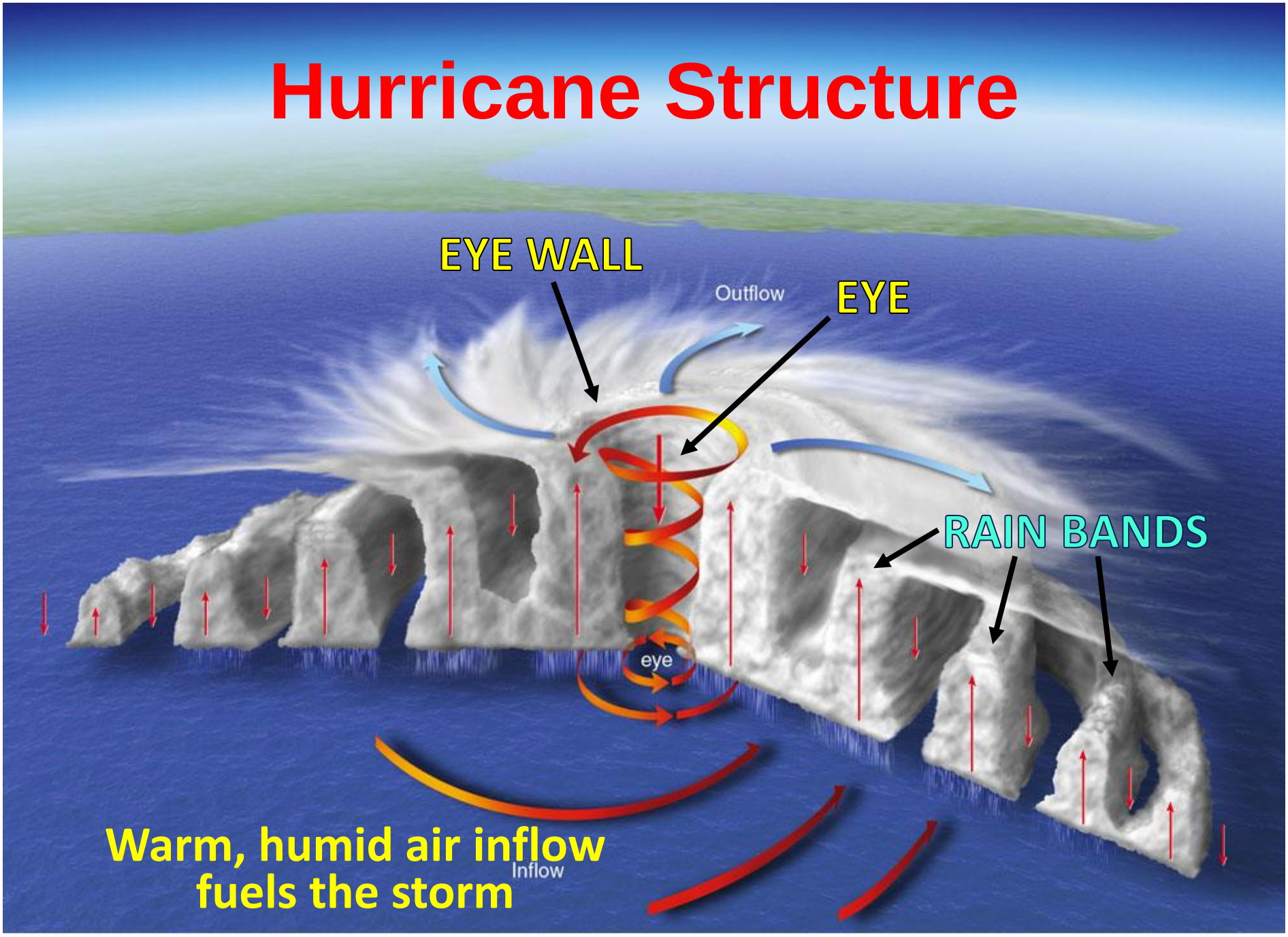
- **Time to grow**
- **Conditions to develop circulation**

(location off equator)

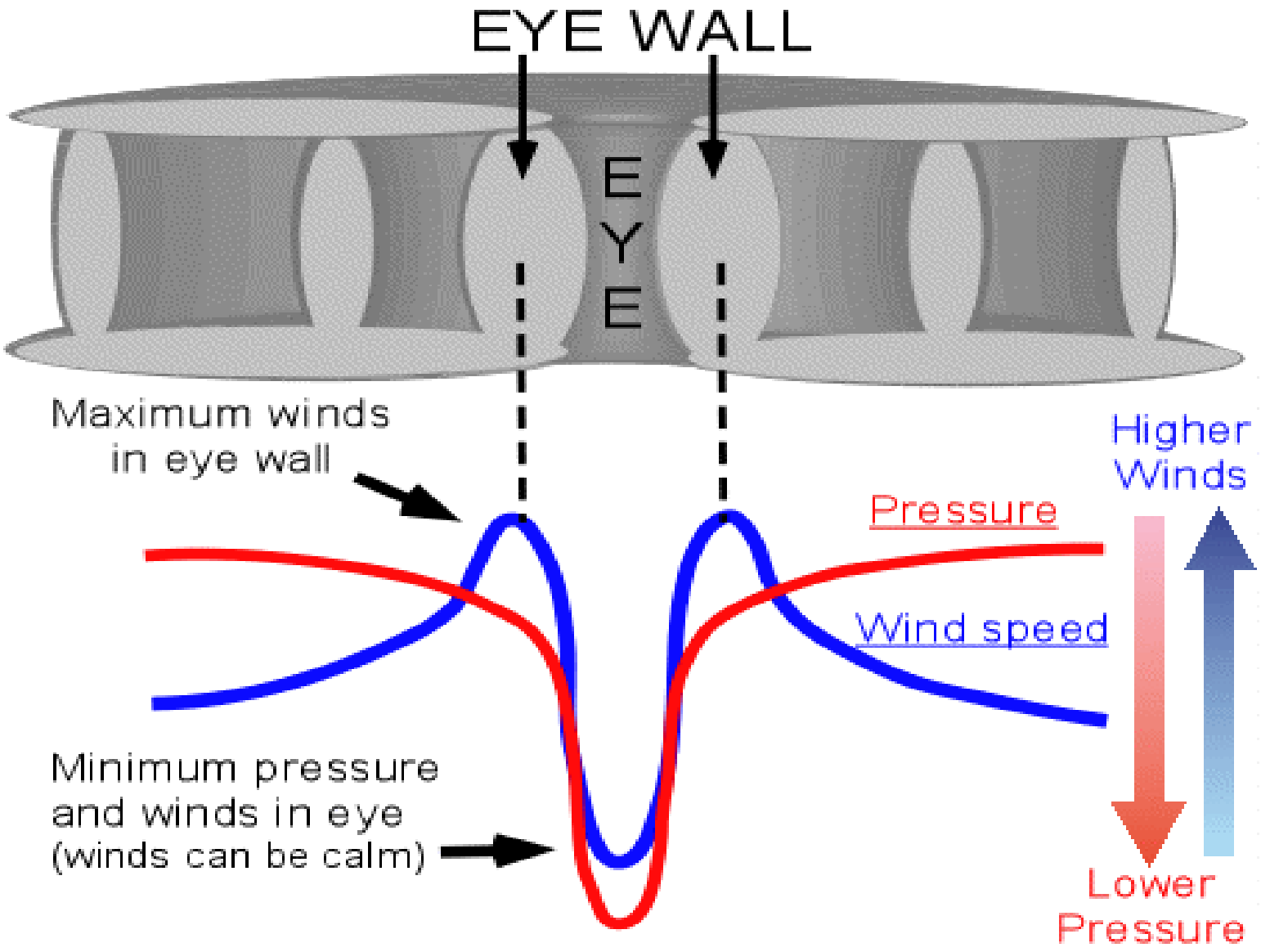
- **Light upper level winds**

(wind shear destroys thunderstorm organization)

Hurricane Structure



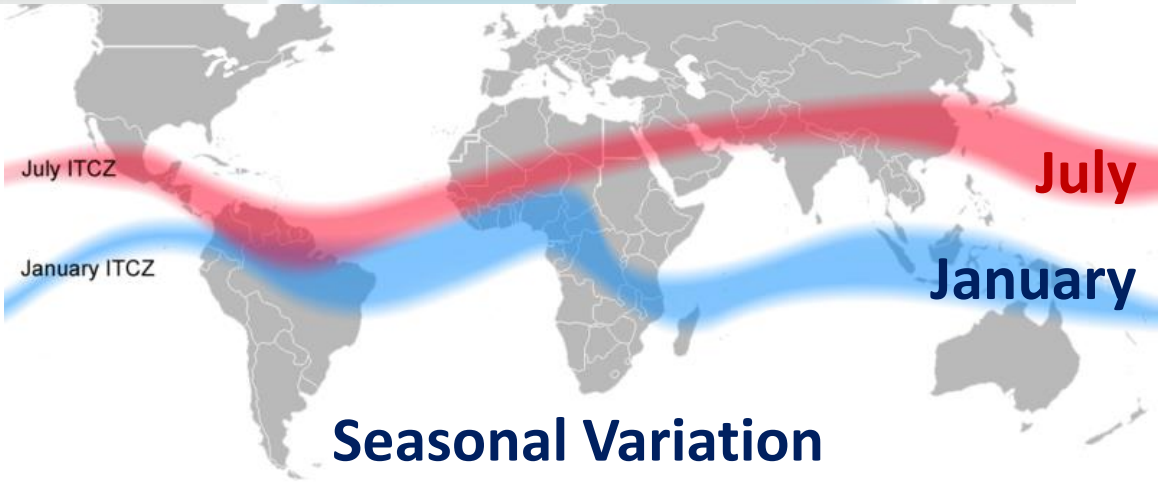
Pressure and Wind Speed Profile



Where are Hurricanes Forming?

InterTropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ)

Area of low pressure near the Equator, a worldwide band of thunderstorm activity.



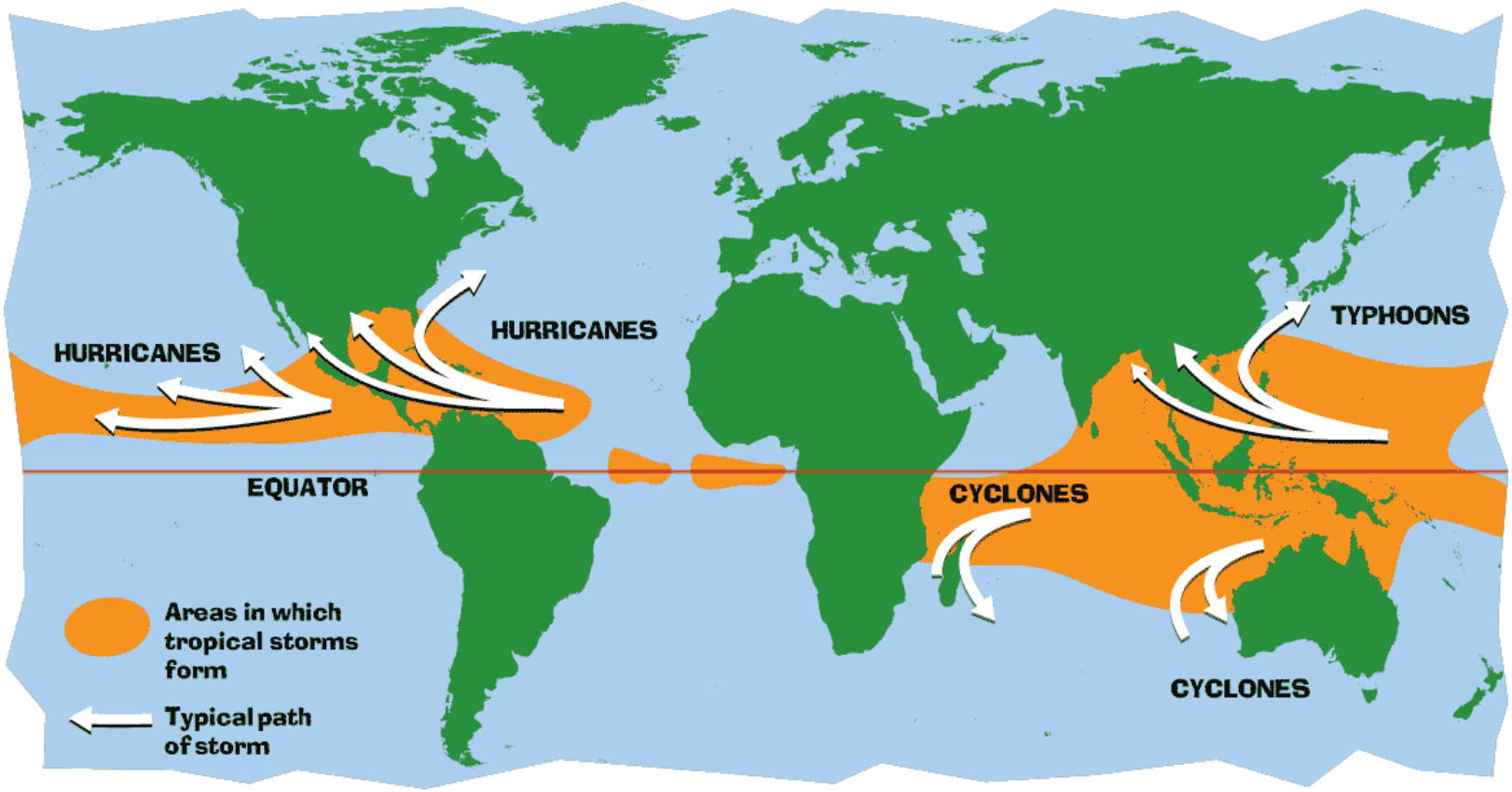
Seasonal Variation

When is Hurricane Season?

- **Northern Atlantic Ocean: a distinct cyclone season occurs from June 1 to November 30 (peaking from late August through September).**

- **Northeast Pacific Ocean: May 15 to November 30.**
- **Northwest Pacific: year-round (a minimum in February and March and a peak in early September).**
- **North Indian basin: April to December (has two peaks - May and November).**
- **Southern Hemisphere: year-round (peaking mid-February to early March).**

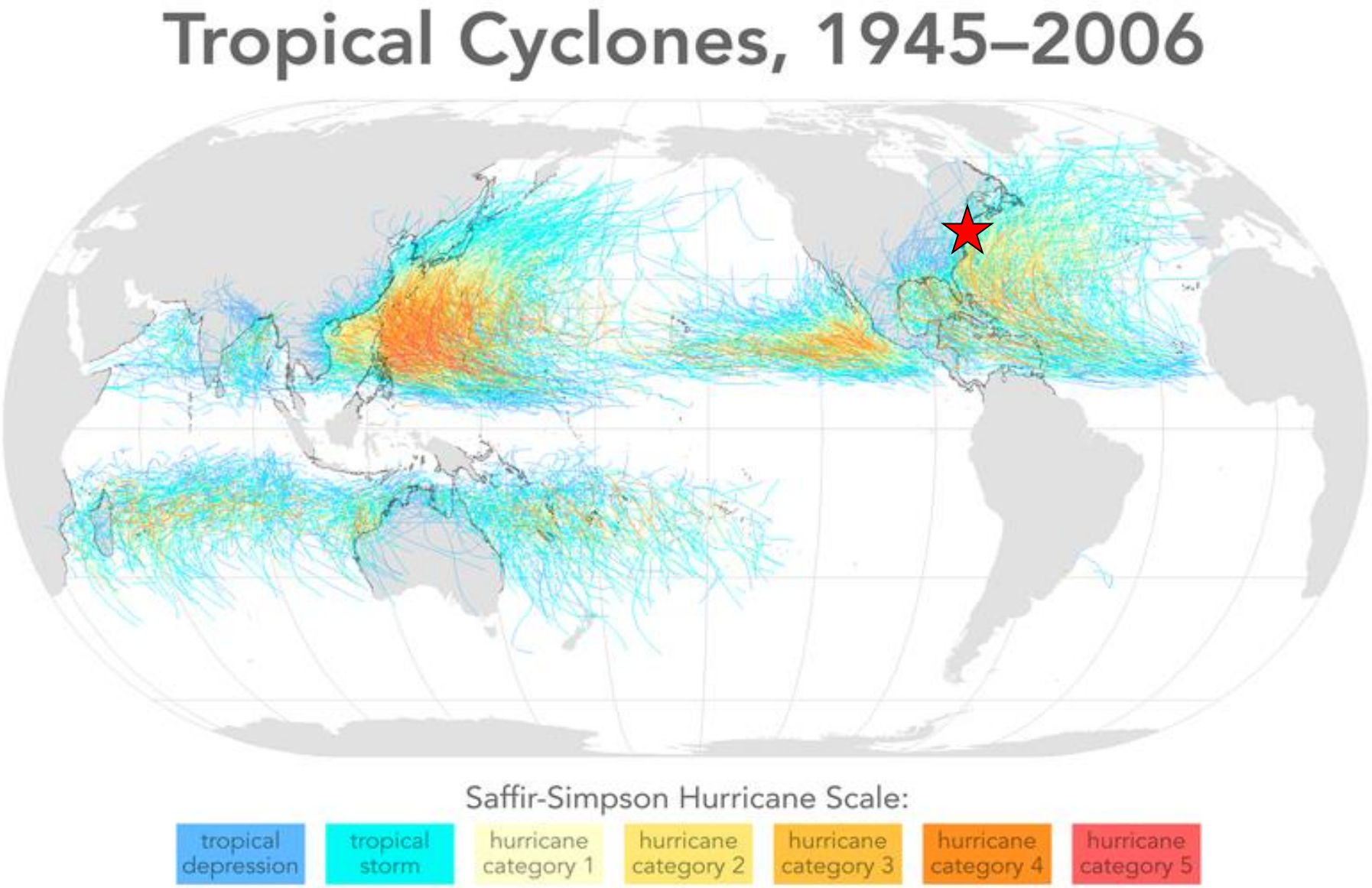
Formation and Typical Paths



The <u>majority</u> of tropical cyclones forms between 10 and 30 degrees of latitude away of the equator:

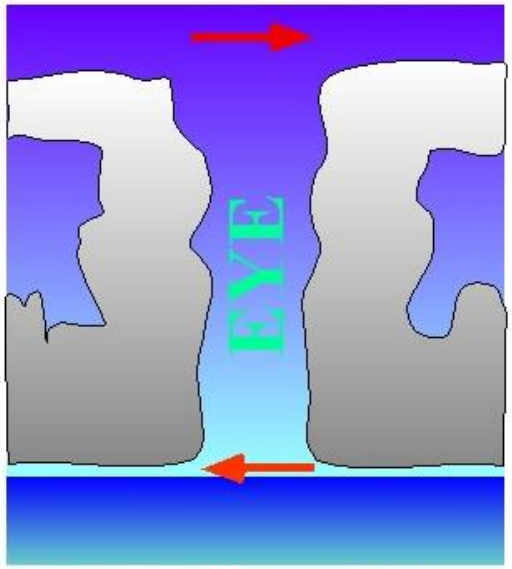
- 87% between 10-20 degrees north or south,
- rarely form or move within 5 degrees of the equator where Coriolis effect (responsible for storm rotation) is low.

Historical Data



What destroys a hurricane?

- **Strong vertical wind shear** causes convection and loss of vertical storm organization.
- **Cold water** (moving over waters significantly below 26.5 °C/79.7 °F).



- **Movement over land** - most strong storms lose their strength very rapidly after **landfall** and become disorganized areas of low pressure within a day or two as a result of **friction** and **lack of moisture**.

North Atlantic Hurricane Lifecycle