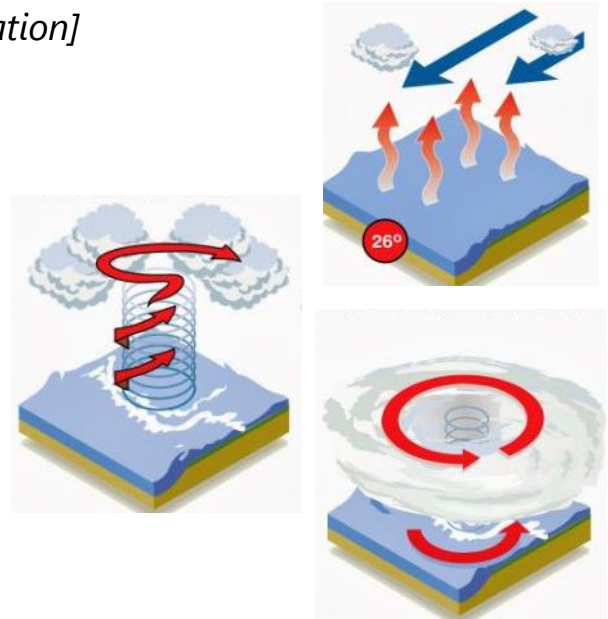


A-Level Geography Resource Package

[Physical >> Hazards >> Tropical Storms >> Formation]

Formation of a Tropical Storm

1. Tropical storms are formed when the seawater is at its hottest of **27°C or greater** (usually in **late summer and autumn**).
2. Air above the sea surface is heated which causes **warm, moist air to rise and condense** to form clouds.
3. The rising air creates an area of **very low pressure** and air rushes in to fill resultant gap creating strong winds. This **cyclic tropical depression** begins to grow, building in size and wind speed, encompassing smaller storms and more water vapour.
4. The storm grows and slowly moves across oceans towards land and because of the **Earth's rotation** or spin, the storm starts to spiral around a central calm point known as the **eye**, where rapidly descending cool air forms a powerful **'eye wall.'** This is where the storm can be felt strongest.
5. When the storm system passes over land it **loses its source of heat and moisture** and eventually it loses its energy and dissipates.

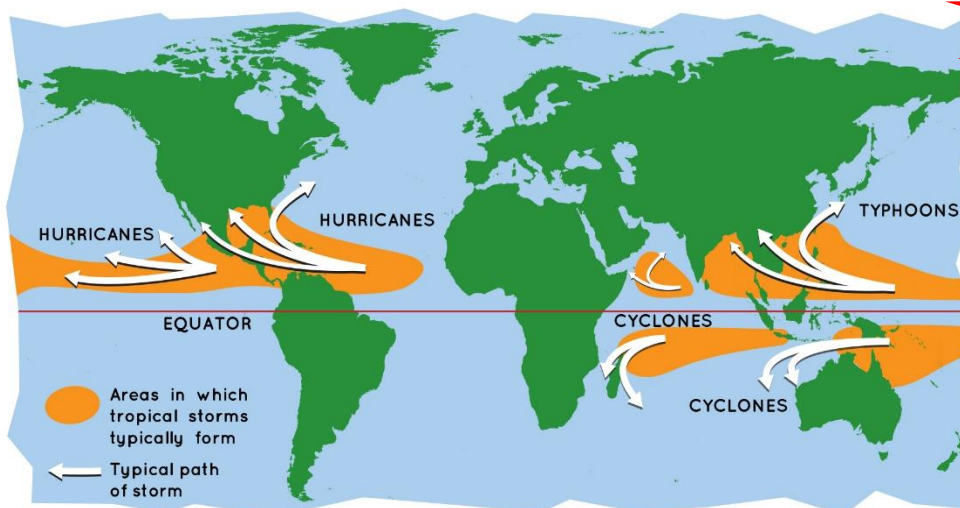


Challenge:

A frequent exam question which is often used goes along the lines of 'describe the patterns of global tropical storms.' [4 mks] Rehearse this one, and ensure you make some of the following points:

- Near tropics – BUT not on Equator [water temps]
- Over ocean
- Follow trade winds (normally westwards.)

Classification:



Key Concept:

One important thing to bear in mind is the different classification tropical storms receive based upon their location around the world. THEY ARE THE SAME THING!!