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RAMA: Research Moored Array for African-Asian-Australian Monsoon Analysis and Prediction

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The Indian Ocean is unique among the three tropical ocean basins in that it is blocked at 25˚N by the Asian land mass. Seasonal heating over this land mass sets the stage for dramatic monsoon wind reversals and intense summer rains over the Indian subcontinent and adjoining areas of Southeast Asia. The societal and economic impacts of these climate variations affect the lives of over half the world's population. Despite the importance of the Indian Ocean for both the regional and global climate though, it is the most poorly observed and least well understood of the three tropical oceans.

This presentation describes the Research Moored Array for African-Asian-Australian Monsoon Analysis and Prediction (RAMA), which has been designed to provide sustained, basin scale time series data in the Indian Ocean for climate research and forecasting. RAMA is intended to complement other satellite and in situ components of the Indian Ocean Observing System and it is being implemented through a coordinated multi-national effort involving institutions in several countries. We will review the scientific rationale, design criteria, and implementation status of RAMA. We will

also illustrate some of the important intraseasonal to interannual time scale phenomena in the region observed with new RAMA time series data. Potential applications of the data for forecasting purposes will also be discussed.