



Climate Update



March to May 2023 Rainfall outlook

Issued: 10 February 2023

La Niña continues to ease in the Pacific

La Niña typically increases the chance of above average rainfall for Tonga during the rainy season.

Recent

January 2023

Above average rainfall received across Tongatapu, 'Eua and Ha'apai while near average rainfall received in Vava'u and the Niua. (see graph & Table 2 below). The mean air temperature was 26.9°C which was 0.7°C above average. Highest maximum temperature was 34.0°C recorded on the 25th at Nomuka and the lowest minimum temperature was 17.3°C recorded in Lapaha on the 8th.

Rainfall for January 2023 Vs Average (1980-2010)

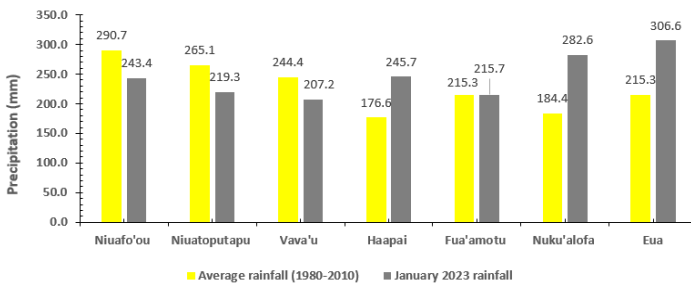


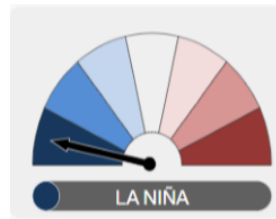
Table 2. Last 6 months rainfall

Rainfall totals for Aug 2022 – Jan 2023 (mm)						
	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
Niuafo'ou	93.0	43.3	88.0	85.5	71.2	243.4
Niuaotoputapu	104.0	178	224.0	205.4	128.5	219.3
Vava'u	105.9	57.5	164.3	194.2	389.2	207.2
Ha'apai	38.1	106.6	406.0	175.0	282.0	245.7
Fua'amotu	91.6	96.1	194.0	224.3	279.4	215.7
Nuku'alofa	37.9	50.5	281.8	135.5	386.5	282.6
'Eua	62.0	102.4	138.7	158.7	399.0	306.6

Traditional knowledge indicators for the summer season.

- If you see bees building their nests indoors and lower near the ground in shelters or empty containers and coconuts, then it is an indication that there will be a cyclone in the season.
- If you see fruit bearing trees are heavy fruiting, for example mangoes or breadfruit, then it is an indication that there will be a cyclone in the season.
- When you see flowers starting to bloom especially the traditional flowers and also bananas starting to bear fruits then you know summer is coming.
- If you see plenty cockroaches in the house than usual and that they also fly, it indicates that rain is near within a few hours.
- If rain has just started and you see roosters/hens not hiding or finding shelter and Rooster continue to crow then it is an indication that the rain will not last long.

ENSO situation summary



Model analysis indicates that La Niña conditions will most likely transition to ENSO-neutral during February-April, most likely by the end of March (80% chance). During May-July, ENSO-neutral is favoured at around a 50% chance.

Forecast

Table 1: Forecast for March up to August 2023

	March—May 2023 (% chance)	June—Aug 2023 (% chance)
Niuafo'ou	37	40
Niuaotoputapu	36	38
Vava'u	37	39
Ha'apai	40	37
'Eua	42	36
Tongatapu	42	36
Below average	Average (usual)	Above average

Rainfall Outlook for Mar—May:
Average to above average across Tonga.

June — August:
Mostly average to above average rainfall across Tonga.

Note:

La Niña continues to ease in the Pacific. La Niña possibly increases the chance of receiving above average rainfall during the wet season across Tonga.

According to the current status, previous 3 months rainfall and rainfall outlook (Refer Table 1 & 2), it is advised to collect water when it rains and use it wisely especially to people of Niuafo'ou as rainfall as rainfall has just been recovered. Public are advised to ensure that you stay alert at all times and get the latest weather forecast and warnings from the Met service. It is also advisable to seek advice from relevant authorities of sensitive sectors, e.g. Agriculture, Water, Health and the National Emergency Management Office (NEMO) on the best practices to save lives and property and minimize the effects of natural disaster.

The next Climate update will be issued second week of March 2023 or earlier

Disclaimer:

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