



Tonga Ocean Update

Issued: 14 May 2026

Recent observation

TONGA METEOROLOGICAL SERVICE

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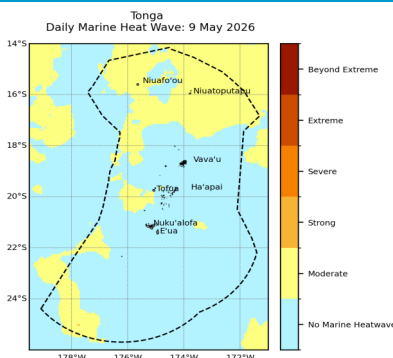
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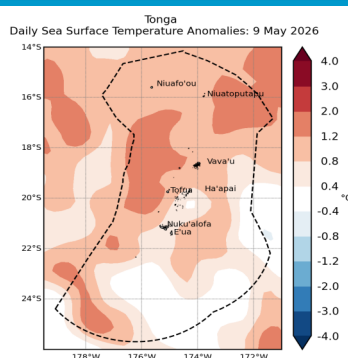
- ENSO neutral remains in the Pacific ocean.
- Moderate Marine Heat Wave remains over the north especially the Niuas and some parts of Ha'apai waters.
- Above average sea surface temperatures around Tonga over the past few weeks.
- Sea level height has been above average in April.
- Coral Bleaching has been at Alert Level 1 in the past few days in Niuatoptapu and Niuafou'u and at watch level for the rest of the group.

Marine Heat Wave



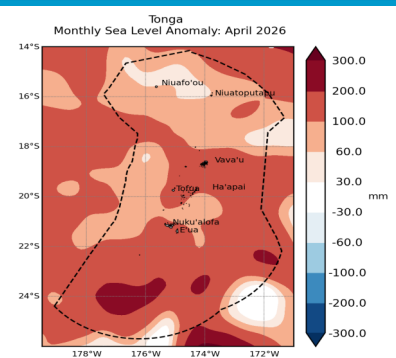
Daily monitoring shows that Tonga has been experiencing a moderate marine heat wave in the past few days to the north of the group. Marine heat wave combined with increasing temperature on land and sea are contributing to stress to marine ecosystems resulting in coral bleaching.

Sea Surface Temperature



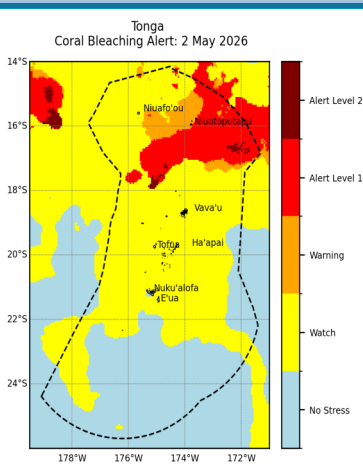
Significant increase in sea surface temperature has been observed across the country in the past few weeks with up to 0.8 to 2.0°C above average. Presence of warmer than average waters can affect marine environment and coastal waters which is indication of heat stress on the marine ecosystem.

Sea-level height



Sea level height during April shows above average (60-200mm) sea level height across Tonga waters. Stakeholders can use this forecast to make decisions about the protection of communities and infrastructure against coastal inundation, especially when there is extreme high tide.

Coral Bleaching



Coral bleaching remained in alert level 1 for the Niuas and in watch level from Vava'u waters down south to Ha'apai, Tongatapu and 'Eua waters. Meanwhile, there is no stress to the waters south of Tongatapu and 'Eua waters.

10 highest tides for 2026

Date	Time	Height (m)
26-Dec	9:21	1.89
27-Dec	10:17	1.88
05-Jan	9:08	1.87
25-Dec	8:25	1.87
04-Jan	8:12	1.86
06-Jan	10:02	1.85
28-Dec	11:14	1.85
03-Jan	7:14	1.84
03-Feb	8:53	1.84
27-Nov	9:38	1.84

10 lowest tides for 2026

Date	Time	Height (m)
18-Jun	4:16	0.21
17-Jun	3:22	0.21
16-Jul	3:06	0.21
17-Jul	3:59	0.21
19-Jun	5:11	0.24
15-Jul	2:13	0.24
16-Jun	2:29	0.24
20-May	4:33	0.25
18-Jul	4:49	0.25
19-May	3:39	0.25

Tidal predictions show the highest & lowest tides of the year for Nuku'alofa. The next highest tide is 18 May with the highest tide of 1.83m at 8.10 am and the next lowest tide was on the 19th May with the lowest tide at 0.25m at 3:33pm. This information is very useful to everyone who wants to know these events especially to those stakeholders and people who are interested in tide predictions for guidance. Monitoring of highest tides is important as it can have negative impacts if occurred at the same time with high sea swell and wind.



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Ocean Outlook for June to August 2026

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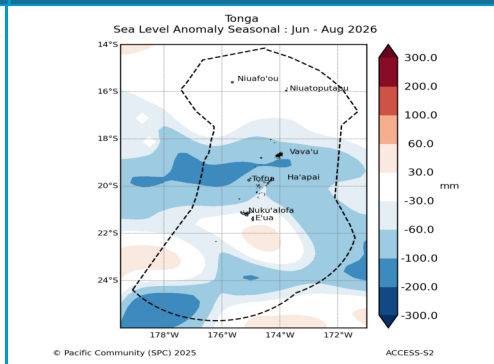
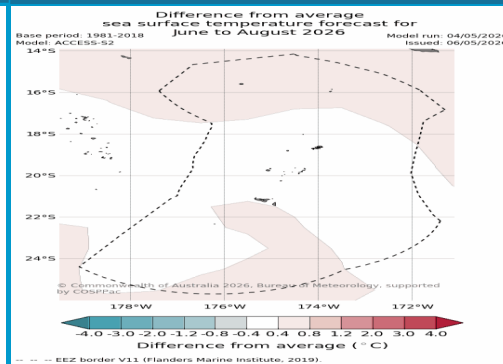
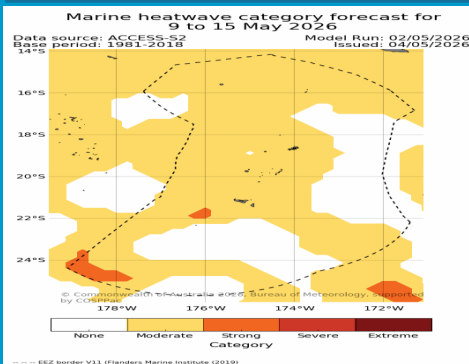
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- A highly likely chance of El Nino developing during the forecast period.
- Average to above average sea surface temperature anomalies is likely to continue in the coming months.
- Moderate Marine Heat Wave is likely to continue in the coming weeks.
- Sea level height is forecast to be average to below average for Tonga.
- Coral Bleaching is at no Stress Level for most of Tonga waters during the forecast period.

Marine Heat Wave Forecast

Sea Surface Temperature Forecast

Sea-level height



A moderate marine heat wave is forecast for the fortnight of 9 - 15 May across most of Tonga waters. Close monitoring is advised as weekly variations can lead to higher than expected impacts.

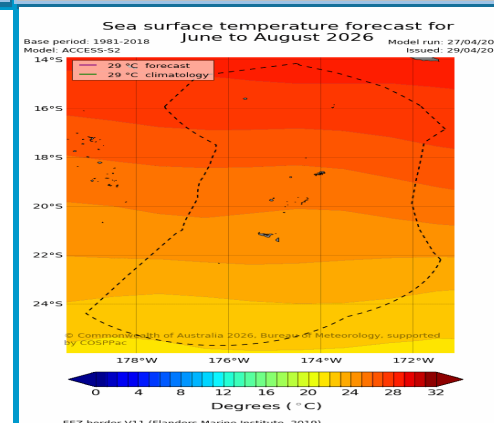
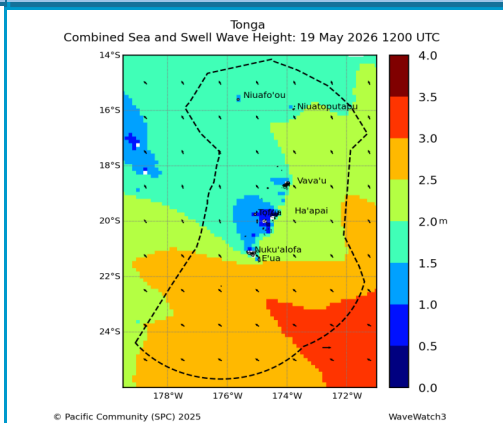
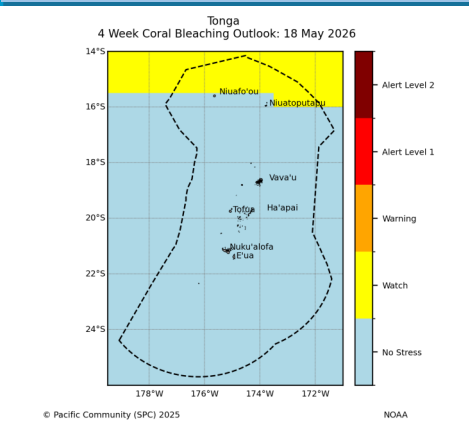
Mostly average to above average sea surface temperature anomalies is predicted for most of Tonga. Presence of warmer than average waters intensifies stress of marine ecosystems and risks to fish and coral reefs. This information is important for communities awareness and close monitoring is therefore advised as daily and weekly variations may occur.

Sea level height forecast shows mostly average to below average sea level height across most of Tonga in the next 3 months. Stakeholders can use this forecast to make decisions about the protection of communities and infrastructure against coastal inundation, especially when there is extreme high tide.

Coral Bleaching Outlook

Combined Sea and Swell Wave Height

Fisheries convergence zone



Coral bleaching forecast no stress for most of Tonga waters except north of the Niuaus where there is a still concern at a watch level. Coral bleaching is a common signal of stress in coral reefs and marine ecosystems caused by warmer sea temperatures. Close monitoring is advised especially to Fisheries and related stakeholders.

Tonga combined sea and swell wave height for May shows majority of the waves will come from the south-east. The average wave height in May will be 2.5 to 3.5m over southern Tonga and 1.5 to 2.5m to the central and northern Tonga coastal waters.

The boundary between warm and cold ocean water is rich in nutrients and attracts Tuna. This convergence zone is normally located to the far north of the Niuaus but during the June to August period, it is forecast to be displaced to the south but still far north of Tonga. This information can be used by stakeholders to know where tuna can be found during this time period.