

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

ENSO UPDATE NUMBER 01

JANUARY 2007

EL NIÑO SHOWING SIGNS OF WEAKENING CURRENT STATUS & OUTLOOK (JANUARY-MARCH 2007)

Introduction

All the main El Niño indicators show that the current El Niño event is beginning to weaken. However, there is still a possibility for there to be renewed strengthening of the El Niño event for a month or two before it finally dissipates.

The general situation isn't expected to improve for at least the next 10 months till October 2007. This is due to the fact that much of the country experienced below average rainfall since October 2006 even though it was the monsoon season, as a consequence of the El Niño event.

Current Situation

Despite much of the country being in its monsoon season (wet season), rainfall in all parts of the country was generally normal to below normal during January.

Although there may be scattered falls, characteristic of the wet season, the net results are still expected to be generally normal throughout the country with the southern Papuan coasts expected to be the worst hit.

Climate Outlook (Jan-Mar 07)

The global consensus outlook for the next three months is focused towards peaking of the El Niño conditions during January/February period followed by a general sustenance to moderate El Niño conditions towards July 2007.

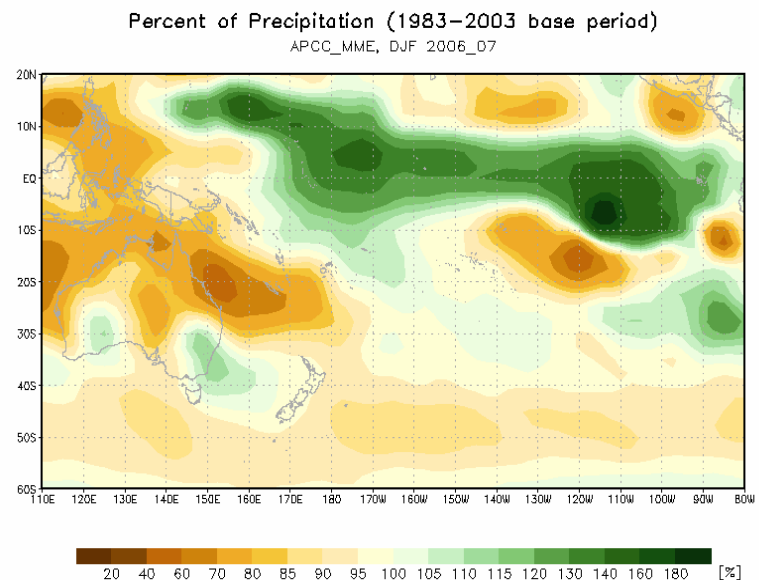


Figure 1: Rainfall Outlook for Dec-Feb 2007.
Courtesy of APEC Climate Centre.

Conditions over the period should in general be normal to above normal over Momase and New Guinea Islands.

Over the Highlands, conditions should be at most normal over the entire period.

The Papuan region will be drier than normal during January to March. The outlook is as summarized in Table 1 below.

REGION/PROVINCE	OUTLOOK
Momase & Manus	Normal or Above Normal (N/AN)
Highlands including parts of Morobe & Madang	Normal (N)
New Guinea Islands including Bougainville	Above Normal (AN)
Papua including parts of SHP	Below Normal (BN)

Table 1: Summary of rainfall outlook for Jan-Mar07.

Outlook for P. Moresby (Apr-Jun 07)

- Normal falls during April.
- Drier than normal after April.

Tropical Cyclone Outlook

PNG lies outside the main area of Tropical Cyclone activity, however, on average, 1 tropical cyclone is formed within its region each season, which runs from November to May. Even then most tropical cyclones simply form and track either eastward towards Vanuatu or southwest towards Australia. Regionally, however, there is a tendency for an array of tropical cyclones across the central pacific during developing stage of El Niño. The impact on PNG would therefore be in the form of frequent surging westerly winds.

Extended Outlook (Apr-Jun 07)

Extended outlook is for the prevailing moderate El Niño conditions to continue over the forecast period.

Papuan Region:	Well Below Normal (WBN)
Momase:	Below Normal (BN)
Highlands:	Below Normal (BN)
N. G. Islands:	Below Normal (BN)

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