



## Warm start to summer followed by a cool finish

Temperature	Summer temperatures were well above average ( $>1.20^{\circ}\text{C}$ above average) for small areas of Gisborne and the Coromandel Peninsula, above average ( $0.51\text{-}1.20^{\circ}\text{C}$ above average) for Northland, Auckland, most of Waikato, Bay of Plenty, remainder of Gisborne, Hawke's Bay, parts of coastal Westland and western Tasman. Temperatures were below average ( $0.51^{\circ}\text{C}\text{-}1.20^{\circ}\text{C}$ below average) in the Southern Alps of south Canterbury and Otago. Temperatures were near average ( $\pm 0.50^{\circ}\text{C}$ of average) for the remainder of the country.
Rainfall	Rainfall was above normal (120-149% of normal) or well above normal ( $>149\%$ of normal) for coastal Otago, Canterbury, eastern Marlborough, Wellington, the Tararua District, Hawke's Bay, Gisborne, parts of Manawatū-Whanganui, most of Waikato, southern Taranaki, western Bay of Plenty, Auckland, and eastern Northland. Rainfall was below normal (50-79% of normal) or well below normal ( $<50\%$ of normal) for southern Westland, parts of interior Otago, and the north and west of Northland, with near normal rainfall (80-119% of normal) for the remainder of the country.
Soil Moisture	At the end of summer, soil moisture levels were below normal in the Far North, western Taranaki, Manawatū-Whanganui about Foxton, about Marlborough, Nelson, and parts of Tasman, a few spots in Otago and Westland, and Southland. Soil moisture levels were above normal across coastal Otago, Canterbury about Banks Peninsula, Christchurch, Ashburton, and the Kaikōura region, most of the Wellington region, Tararua District, about Tongariro, Bay of Plenty toward Rotorua, much of Hawke's Bay, Gisborne, and eastern Northland. Near normal soil moisture levels were typical for the remainder of the country.

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### Overview

Summer mean sea level air pressure was lower than normal over Aotearoa New Zealand. The dominant wind pattern over the season was cyclonic, with generally westerly or southwesterly winds across the North Island and southeasterly winds for the South Island. The lower pressure led to an extremely active pattern across the country, at least partially driven by a weak to moderate La Niña. Despite the overall lower pressure, there were extended periods of high pressure in between weather events that occurred in all three summer months. La Niña conditions were prevalent across New Zealand throughout the summer, with the La Niña transitioning to ENSO (El Niño Southern Oscillation) neutral conditions by the end of the summer. Sea surface temperatures (SSTs) around New Zealand were generally above average, however

previously existing Marine Heatwave (MHW) conditions<sup>1</sup> experienced early in the summer dissipated by February.

The nationwide average temperature for summer 2025-2026 was 16.9°C. This was 0.1°C above the 1991-2020 summer average, making it an average summer for New Zealand temperature-wise. Earth Sciences New Zealand's seven station temperature series began in 1909.

Summer temperatures were well above average (>1.20°C above average) for small areas of Gisborne and the Coromandel Peninsula. Temperatures were above average (0.51-1.20°C above average) for Northland, Auckland, most of Waikato, Bay of Plenty, remainder of Gisborne, Hawke's Bay, parts of coastal Westland, and western Tasman. Temperatures were below average (0.51°C-1.20°C below average) in the Southern Alps and foothills of south Canterbury and Otago. Temperatures were near average ( $\pm 0.50^\circ\text{C}$  of average) for the remainder of the country.

Summer rainfall was well above normal (>149% of normal) for eastern Northland, parts of Auckland, Gisborne, northern and central Hawke's Bay, most of the Wellington region, Marlborough about Seddon, most of the Canterbury Plains from Timaru northward including Banks Peninsula and the Kaikōura region. Rainfall was above normal (120-149% of normal) about the Otago Peninsula south to Balclutha, about Picton and Blenheim in Marlborough, South Taranaki, the Manawatū-Whanganui about Tongariro, the Waikato about Taupō to Te Awamutu, and remainder Auckland. Rainfall was below normal (50-79% of normal) about coastal Westland from Haast northward to Greymouth, inland Otago about Alexandra, and the north and west of Northland. The remainder of the country recorded near normal rainfall (80-119% of normal) for the summer.

Further Highlights:

- The highest temperature was 36.8°C, observed at Napier on 11 January.
- The lowest temperature was -0.7°C, observed at Waipara River North Branch on 28 February.
- The highest 1-day rainfall was 274 mm, recorded at Tauranga on 21 January.
- The highest wind gust was 241 km/h, observed at Cape Turnagain on 16 January.
- Of the six main centres in summer 2025-2026, Auckland was the warmest, Tauranga was the wettest and sunniest, Christchurch was the driest, and Dunedin was the least sunny and coolest.
- The sunniest four regions in 2026 so far are wider Nelson (555 hours), Taranaki (536 hours), Bay of Plenty (535 hours), and Tasman (529 hours).

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## Temperature: Warm summer in the north and east of the North Island

Summer 2025-26 started off warmer than average, with the December average at +0.6°C, followed by a cooler January and a below average February. As a result, no locations reported record warm mean air temperatures. One location, Winchmore, recorded its coolest summer on record, with a mean air temperature 14.1°C, which is 1.8°C below its summer average.

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<sup>1</sup> Defined as five or more consecutive days with SSTs above the 90th percentile for the time of year.

**Record<sup>2</sup> or near-record mean air temperatures for summer were recorded at:**

Location	Mean air temp. (°C)	Departure from normal (°C)	Year records began	Comments
High records or near-records				
Chatham Island	16.7	1.3	1878	3rd-highest
Motu	17.1	1.7	1990	4th-highest
Pukekohe	19.8	1.3	1969	4th-highest
Gisborne	20.4	0.8	1905	4th-highest
Low records or near-records				
Winchmore	14.1	-1.8	1949	Lowest
Waipounamu	13.8	-0.7	1980	2nd-lowest
Middlemarch	14.2	-0.9	2000	3rd-lowest
Diamond Harbour	16.4	0.0	2004	4th-lowest
Clyde	15.6	-1.3	1978	4th-lowest

**Record or near-record mean maximum air temperatures for summer were recorded at:**

Location	Mean maximum air temp. (°C)	Departure from normal (°C)	Year records began	Comments
High records or near-records				
Whakatu	25.4	2.4	1982	Highest
Motu	22.6	2.0	1990	3rd-highest
Tākaka	24.4	1.7	1978	3rd-highest
Chatham Island	20.3	1.5	1878	3rd-highest
Te Puke	24.6	1.1	1973	4th-highest
Low records or near-records				
Roxburgh	20.2	-1.0	1950	2nd-lowest
Winchmore	19.7	-2.0	1949	3rd-lowest
Middlemarch	20.4	-1.5	2000	3rd-lowest
Waipounamu	19.7	-0.5	1980	3rd-lowest

**Record or near-record mean minimum air temperatures for summer were recorded at:**

Location	Mean minimum air temp. (°C)	Departure from normal (°C)	Year records began	Comments
High records or near-records				
Pukekohe	15.2	1.2	1969	3rd-highest
Low records or near-records				
Waipounamu	7.8	-0.9	1980	2nd-lowest
Clyde	8.5	-0.9	1978	2nd-lowest
Winchmore	8.5	-1.5	1949	4th-lowest

<sup>2</sup> The rankings (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> etc.) in all Tables in this summary are relative to climate data from a group of nearby stations, some of which may no longer be operating. The current climate value is compared against all values from any member of the group, without any regard for homogeneity between one station's record, and another. This approach is used due to the practical limitations of performing homogeneity checks in real-time.

Diamond Harbour	12.1	0.1	2004	4th-lowest
Cromwell	9.1	-1.2	1949	4th-lowest

## Rainfall: Heavy rain events brought record rains to parts of both islands

Record or near-record summer rainfall was recorded in both islands after several heavy rain events occurred over the season. Akaroa totalled 563 mm of rain, which is 333% of its normal summer rainfall, driven mostly by the Valentine's Day storm that impacted the country in the middle of February. In fact, much of the near-record rainfall occurred with the aforementioned February storm or the January tropical low event that brought flooding rains to the Coromandel, the Bay of Plenty, and Gisborne.

### Record or near-record summer rainfall totals were recorded at:

Location	Rainfall total (mm)	Percentage of normal	Year records began	Comments
<b>High records or near-records</b>				
Akaroa	563	333	1977	Highest
Whitianga	654	196	1961	2nd-highest
Castlepoint	457	227	1902	2nd-highest
Gisborne	518	263	1905	2nd-highest
Cheviot	288	213	1982	3rd-highest
Christchurch (Riccarton)	241	189	2002	3rd-highest
Purerua	378	167	1983	4th-highest
Whakatu	286	199	1982	4th-highest
Waiouru	384	157	1950	4th-highest
Brothers Island	223	170	1983	4th-highest
<b>Low records or near-records</b>				
None observed				

## Summer climate in the six main centres

It was a wet summer overall for the six main centres, with well above normal rain recorded in Tauranga, Wellington, and Christchurch, and above normal rainfall in Auckland and Dunedin. Summer temperatures were near average for four of the six main centres, with only Auckland and Tauranga recording above average temperatures. Of the six main centres in summer 2025-26, Auckland was the warmest, Tauranga was the wettest and sunniest, Christchurch was the driest, and Dunedin was the least sunny and coolest.

### Summer 2025-26 main centre climate statistics:

Temperature			
Location	Mean temp. (°C)	Departure from normal (°C)	Comments
Auckland <sup>a</sup>	20.4	+0.7	Above average
Tauranga <sup>b</sup>	20.1	+0.7	Above average
Hamilton <sup>c</sup>	18.7 <sup>3</sup>	+0.5	Near average
Wellington <sup>d</sup>	16.5	-0.2	Near average
Christchurch <sup>e</sup>	16.2	-0.3	Near average
Dunedin <sup>f</sup>	14.8	+0.1	Near average
Rainfall			
Location	Rainfall (mm)	% of normal	Comments
Auckland <sup>a</sup>	270	147	Above normal
Tauranga <sup>b</sup>	517	197	Well above normal
Hamilton <sup>c</sup>	275 <sup>4</sup>	111	Near normal
Wellington <sup>d</sup>	354	157	Well above normal
Christchurch <sup>e</sup>	228	175	Well above normal
Dunedin <sup>f</sup>	256	121	Above normal
Sunshine			
Location	Sunshine (hours)		
Auckland <sup>a</sup>	745		
Tauranga <sup>b</sup>	751		
Hamilton <sup>g</sup>	597		
Wellington <sup>d</sup>	648		
Christchurch <sup>e</sup>	632		
Dunedin <sup>f</sup>	544		

<sup>a</sup> Māngere <sup>b</sup> Tauranga Airport <sup>c</sup> Hamilton Airport <sup>d</sup> Kelburn <sup>e</sup> Christchurch Airport <sup>f</sup> Musselburgh <sup>g</sup> Ruakura

<sup>3</sup> Hamilton Airport is missing 7 days of temperature data.

<sup>4</sup> Hamilton Airport is missing 7 days of rainfall data.

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## Highlights and extreme events

This section contains information pertaining to some of the more significant highlights and extreme events that occurred during summer 2025-26. Note that a more detailed list of significant weather events for summer 2025-26 can be found in the *Highlights and extreme events* section of ESNZ's Monthly Climate Summaries. These monthly summaries may be viewed [here](#).

### Temperatures

The highest summer temperature was 36.8°C, observed at Napier on 11 January.

The lowest temperature was -0.7°C, observed at Waipara River North Branch on 28 February.

The hottest weather of the summer occurred mainly on 11 January, when a hot air mass flowed across the country, along with gusty foehn winds in eastern portions of the North Island and upper South Island. Several locations recorded near-record summer daily maximum temperatures on the 11<sup>th</sup> of January, including Kaikōura equalling its hottest summer day on record at 34.3°C.

#### Record or near-record daily maximum air temperatures for summer were recorded at:

Location	Extreme maximum (°C)	Date of extreme temperature	Year records began	Comments
High records or near-records				
Kaikōura	34.3	Jan-11th	1963	Equal highest
Motu	29.8	Jan-10th	1990	2nd-highest
Whakatu	36.3	Jan-11th	1982	2nd-highest
Māhia	32.5	Jan-11th	1990	2nd-highest
Secretary Island	28.0	Dec-30th	1985	2nd-highest
Le Bons Bay	30.9	Jan-11th	1984	Equal 2nd-highest
Kerikeri	32.7	Jan-11th	1945	3rd-highest
Purerua	29.8	Jan-12th	1983	3rd-highest
Whitianga	32.2	Dec-07th	1962	3rd-highest
Kawerau	35.6	Dec-07th	1954	3rd-highest
Napier	36.8	Jan-11th	1868	3rd-highest
Whangaparāoa	30.0	Jan-11th	1982	4th-highest
Napier	36.3	Jan-11th	1868	4th-highest
Hastings	36.5	Jan-11th	1930	4th-highest
Kaitaia	30.5	Jan-10th	1948	Equal 4th-highest
Whakatāne	32.5	Dec-06th	1975	Equal 4th-highest
Low records or near-records				
Secretary Island	10.9	Dec-16th	1989	Equal lowest

#### Record or near-record daily minimum air temperatures for summer were recorded at:

Location	Extreme minimum (°C)	Date of extreme temperature	Year records began	Comments
Low records or near-records				
Mokohinau Island	8.0	Dec-04th	1994	Lowest
Waipounamu	0.0	Jan-30th	1980	Equal 2nd-lowest
High records or near-records				

Motu	18.8	Feb-03rd	1990	Equal 2nd-highest
Hastings	21.6	Jan-12th	1972	3rd-highest
Ōkārito	17.6	Feb-13th	1983	Equal 4th-highest

### Rain, flooding, and slips

The highest 1-day rainfall was 274 mm, recorded at Tauranga Airport on 21 January.

An area of low pressure, tropical in origin, moved across the North Island from 29-31 December, which led to a very wet end to the month for Gisborne and northern Hawke's Bay, which led to record-breaking or near record-breaking rainfall.

On 18 January, parts of Northland were hit by significant flooding overnight, with one resident saying it was the worst he's seen in 60 years. A sub-tropical low developed west of Northland, drawing in a strong easterly wind flow laden with tropical moisture. Ngunguru, Helena Bay, Ōakura, Punaruku and Whangaruru were cut off by flooding. The Ngaiotonga Bridge washed out and there were multiple slips between Whangaruru and Helena Bay. MetService reported up to 150-200mm of rain fell over the eastern hills north of Whangārei.

On 20-22 January, a tropical air mass poured across New Zealand, which led to record rain and flooding for large portions of the North Island and upper South Island. An area of low pressure that moved in from the Coral Sea impacted the north and east of the North Island and the upper South Island. This weather system brought strong winds and heavy rain, with the greatest impacts observed in Northland, Auckland, the Coromandel, the Bay of Plenty, and Gisborne. Impacts were widespread across the affected regions.

A person and their vehicle was reported missing after being washed out into a river in Warkworth the morning of 21 January. His body was found a few days later. An 11-day operation occurred at Mount Maunganui, as six people were killed when a landslide struck a holiday park on 22 January at the base of Mauao. Nine total people were killed or are presumed dead after the storm.

Northpower reported more than 1000 properties lost power across its network due to an unplanned outage, including in Ōakura, Whangaruru, Helena Bay and Whakapara. The Gisborne District Council said communities around Te Araroa, Onepoto, and Wharekahika/Hicks Bay were the worst hit, with the intense deluge that occurred on Wednesday (21 January) evening necessitating evacuations. Sections of State Highway 35 in Gisborne were closed and coastal communities between Pōtaka near Hick's Bay and Tikitiki were cut off where the road was damaged by widespread flooding and slips. Thames Coromandel Civil Defence said 115 properties were damaged, with several buildings damaged in the Bay of Plenty and the Whangārei District.

### Record or near-record summer extreme 1-day rainfall totals were recorded at:

Location	Extreme 1-day rainfall (mm)	Date of extreme rainfall	Year records began	Comments
Tauranga	274	Jan-21st	1910	Highest
Akaroa	243	Feb-16th	1977	Highest
Whangapoua	207	Jan-21st	1991	Highest
Purerua	196	Jan-21st	1983	Highest
Te Puke	193	Jan-21st	1973	Highest
Hicks Bay	189	Jan-21st	1916	Highest
Ngaio Downs	89	Jan-16th	1967	Highest

Manapouri (West Arm Jetty)	163	Jan-10th	1971	Equal 2nd-highest
Whitianga	248	Jan-21st	1961	2nd-highest
Rukuhanga Station	215	Jan-21st	1930	2nd-highest
Rings Beach	207	Jan-21st	1986	2nd-highest
Coromandel (Coroglen)	200	Jan-21st	1988	2nd-highest
Karangahake Gorge	165	Jan-21st	1981	2nd-highest
Waikeria	120	Feb-13th	1921	2nd-highest
Waiheke Island	115	Jan-21st	1980	2nd-highest
Mokohinau Island	109	Feb-13th	1994	2nd-highest
Quarry Hills	105	Jan-24th	1939	2nd-highest
Whakatu	102	Jan-21st	1982	2nd-highest
Le Bons Bay	80	Feb-16th	1984	2nd-highest
Glenledi Road	77	Jan-25th	1984	2nd-highest
Kerikeri	167	Jan-21st	1945	3rd-highest
Pikowai	165	Jan-21st	2000	3rd-highest
Kaeo	158	Jan-21st	1981	3rd-highest
Castlepoint	145	Feb-15th	1907	3rd-highest
Edgecumbe	129	Jan-21st	1990	3rd-highest
Awakeri	123	Jan-21st	1962	3rd-highest
Monowai	97	Dec-07th	1920	3rd-highest
Te Wharau, Glenburn	88	Dec-03rd	1923	3rd-highest
Māhia	85	Jan-21st	1990	3rd-highest
Te Aroha	79	Jan-03rd	1992	3rd-highest
Hapuku-Grange Hill	153	Jan-23rd	1915	4th-highest
Gisborne	129	Jan-03rd	1937	4th-highest
Wairoa	115	Jan-03rd	1929	4th-highest
Masterton	83	Feb-03rd	1926	4th-highest
Christchurch (Riccarton)	55	Feb-16th	2002	4th-highest

## Wind

The highest wind gust was 241 km/h, observed at Cape Turnagain on 16 February.

On 29 December, multiple orange wind and rain warnings were issued ahead of a weather system which brought trees down across Auckland, Waikato and the Coromandel Peninsula. The weather also closed all lanes on the Auckland Harbour Bridge for a short period on 29 December. Also on 29 December, thousands of homes and businesses lost power, and two Horowhenua townships were urged to conserve water after severe weather felled trees and downed powerlines across the lower North Island and upper South Island. Widespread power cuts impacted the Nelson-Tasman regions and the Horowhenua District.

From 14-16 February, the Valentine's Day storm brought strong winds to both islands as it moved southward across the country. Cape Turnagain reported the summer's strongest wind gust of 241 km/h on 16 February. Also on the 16<sup>th</sup>, record highest summer wind gusts were achieved at Castlepoint (176 km/h), Mana Island (143 km/h), and Takapau Plains (107 km/h). Additionally, also on 16 February, Wellington Airport recorded a gust of 128 km/h, the station's strongest gust since 1994. Along with heavy rain, the wind caused power cuts across portions of both islands. Rail services in Wellington were suspended after a Wairarapa passenger train struck a fallen tree, and all regional flights from Wellington Airport were cancelled. As the storm system moved into the South Island on 15-16 February, Banks Peninsula declared a local state of emergency amid reports of flooding, wind gusts exceeding 100 km/h, and the Heathcote River breaching its

banks. State Highway 75 between Christchurch and Akaroa was partially closed, and more than 8,000 households nationwide experienced power outages.

**Record or near-record summer extreme wind gusts were recorded at:**

Location	Extreme wind gust (km/h)	Date of extreme gust	Year records began	Comments
Castlepoint	176	Feb-16th	1972	Highest
Mana Island	143	Feb-16th	2005	Highest
Hokitika	119	Jan-11th	1972	Highest
Takapau Plains	107	Feb-16th	2005	Highest
Māhia	107	Dec-04th	1991	Highest
Whitianga	87	Jan-31st	1991	Highest
Mokohinau Island	135	Dec-29th	1994	Equal highest
Brothers Island	152	Feb-15th	1997	2nd-highest
Whanganui	111	Feb-16th	1977	2nd-highest
Taupō	107	Dec-29th	1982	2nd-highest
Upper Hutt	103	Feb-15th	1999	2nd-highest
Alexandra	96	Dec-05th	2001	2nd-highest
Mt Cook	154	Dec-08th	2000	3rd-highest
Secretary Island	144	Dec-15th	1994	3rd-highest
Paraparaumu	131	Jan-12th	1972	3rd-highest
Cape Campbell	130	Feb-15th	1963	3rd-highest
Cape Reinga	128	Dec-03rd	1974	3rd-highest
Nelson	96	Dec-29th	1972	3rd-highest
South West Cape	180	Jan-11th	1991	Equal 3rd-highest
Puysegur Point	158	Jan-11th	1986	4th-highest
Mt Ruapehu Chateau	113	Dec-29th	2000	4th-highest
Westport	108	Dec-30th	1973	4th-highest
Dannevirke	90	Jan-12th	1961	4th-highest
Bromley	87	Jan-11th	1972	4th-highest
Pukekohe	78	Dec-29th	1986	4th-highest

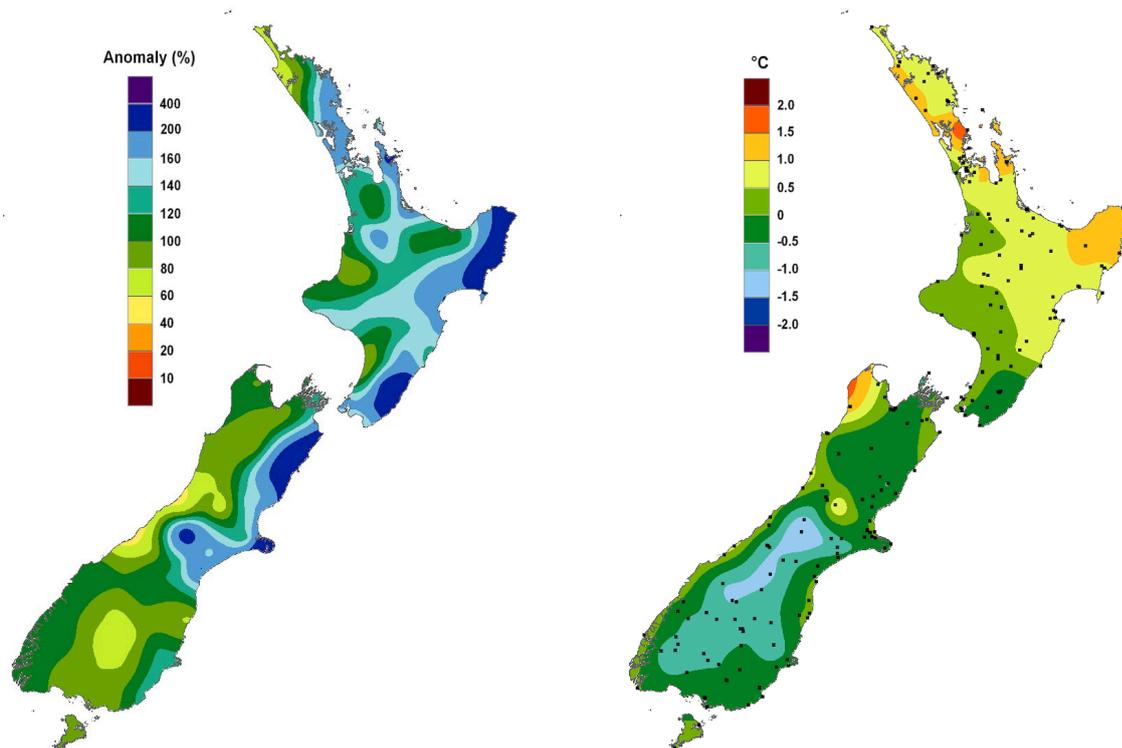
**Drought, dryness, and fire**

From 8-9 December, a fire in the Tongariro National Park area burned through approximately 322 hectares, with 60 firefighters, 16 fire trucks, and helicopters used to bring it under control. Earlier on 8 December, visitors were warned to leave the Whakapapa area and residents were told to prepare for potential evacuation. SH47 was closed through the area.

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### Summer rainfall

Expressed as a percentage of the 1991-2020 normal.

### Summer temperature

Expressed as a departure from the 1991-2020 average in degrees Celsius.

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