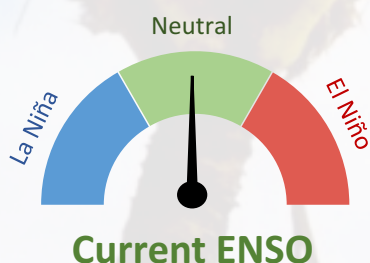


### Recent



El Niño/Southern Oscillation (ENSO) conditions are currently near **neutral**

Sea Surface Temperatures are close to or slightly below average across the central and western Equatorial Pacific, but well above average along the South American coast.

The Southern Oscillation Index (SOI) is slightly positive (+0.6 for March 2017).

**53%** chance for **ENSO neutral conditions** to continue over **April – June 2017**.

Chance for **El Niño conditions** developing over **April – June 2017** **47%**



### Forecast

## ENSO situation summary

The tropical Pacific is currently in an **ENSO (El Niño – Southern Oscillation) neutral state**, although some of the indices are indicative of **La Niña conditions**: sea surface temperatures (SSTs) in the western equatorial Pacific Ocean remained slightly below average (an anomaly of  $-0.1^{\circ}\text{C}$  in the NINO4 region) in March. **The SOI is positive for March 2017 (+0.6)**, although still in the **neutral range**.

The pattern of tropical convection is currently more indicative of La Niña conditions, with enhanced rainfall over the Maritime Continent (Indonesia region) with drier conditions near and east of the Dateline.

Conversely, near the Peruvian coast, SSTs are at record warm levels, and the event is being referred to as a 'coastal El Niño'. These very warm SSTs in the eastern Pacific overlie cooler than normal subsurface water below 100m depth. In the western Pacific, warmer than normal subsurface waters persist, but have yet to show any sign of moving into the central Pacific, as would be necessary for the initiation of a Pacific-wide El Niño event.

**International guidance is about equally split between continuing ENSO-neutral conditions (53% chance) and developing El Niño conditions (47%) during the next three months (April to June 2017).** However, **from late winter onwards, a transition to El Niño conditions is favoured: with a 68% chance between July to September 2017 and 62% chance between October to December 2017.**

## Rainfall outlook for April – June 2017

**Below normal rainfall** for Nauru and western Kiribati.

**Normal or below normal rainfall** for Vanuatu, Fiji, eastern Kiribati and central Kiribati.

**Normal or above normal rainfall** for the Austral Islands, the southern Cook Islands, the Marquesas, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, American Samoa, Tuvalu, Palau, Guam and the northern Marianas.

**Near normal rainfall** for the remaining Pacific Island countries.

## Rainfall outlook table for April – June 2017

ISLAND	PROBABILITY (%)			OUTLOOK	CONFIDENCE
	Below	Normal	Above		
Austral Islands	25	35	40	AVG - ABOVE	High
Cook Islands (Southern)	25	35	40	AVG - ABOVE	Moderate-High
Marquesas	25	35	40	AVG - ABOVE	Moderate-High
Papua New Guinea	25	35	40	AVG - ABOVE	Moderate
Solomon Islands	25	35	40	AVG - ABOVE	High
FSM	25	35	40	AVG - ABOVE	Moderate-High
Marshall Islands	25	35	40	AVG - ABOVE	Moderate
American Samoa	25	35	40	AVG - ABOVE	Moderate
Tuvalu	25	40	35	AVG - ABOVE	High
Palau	25	40	35	AVG - ABOVE	Moderate
Guam	25	40	35	AVG - ABOVE	Moderate
N. Marianas	25	40	35	AVG - ABOVE	Moderate
Cook Islands (Northern)	30	40	30	NEAR NORMAL	High
New Caledonia	30	40	30	NEAR NORMAL	High
Niue	30	40	30	NEAR NORMAL	Moderate
Pitcairn Island	30	40	30	NEAR NORMAL	Moderate
Samoa	30	40	30	NEAR NORMAL	Moderate
Society Islands	30	40	30	NEAR NORMAL	High
Tokelau	30	40	30	NEAR NORMAL	High
Tonga	30	40	30	NEAR NORMAL	High
Tuamotu Islands	30	40	30	NEAR NORMAL	High
Wallis & Futuna	30	40	30	NEAR NORMAL	High
Vanuatu (North)	35	40	25	AVG - BELOW	Moderate
Fiji	40	35	25	AVG - BELOW	Moderate
Kiribati (Eastern)	40	35	25	AVG - BELOW	Moderate-High
Vanuatu (South)	40	35	25	AVG - BELOW	Moderate
Central Kiribati (Phoenix)	40	35	25	AVG - BELOW	Moderate-High
Kiribati (Western)	45	35	20	BELOW	Moderate-High
Nauru	45	35	20	BELOW	Moderate

Note: Rainfall estimates for Pacific Islands for the next three months are given in terms of tercile probabilities (e.g. 20:30:50). These are derived from the averages of several global climate models. They correspond to the odds of the observed rainfall being in the lowest one third of the distribution, the middle one third, or the highest one third of the distribution. For the long term average, it is equally likely (33% chance) that conditions in any of the three terciles will occur. \*If conditions are climatology, we expect an equal chance of the rainfall being in any tercile.

The Island Climate Update bulletin is currently being produced by NIWA in association with the Pacific Island Meteorological Services and other supporting meteorological organisations.

The Island Climate Update is prepared as soon as possible following the end of the month, once the data and information are received from the Pacific Island meteorological services. Delays in data collection and communication occasionally arise. While every effort is made to verify observational data, NIWA does not guarantee the accuracy and reliability of the analysis and forecast information presented, and accepts no liability for any losses incurred through the use of this advisory and its contents.

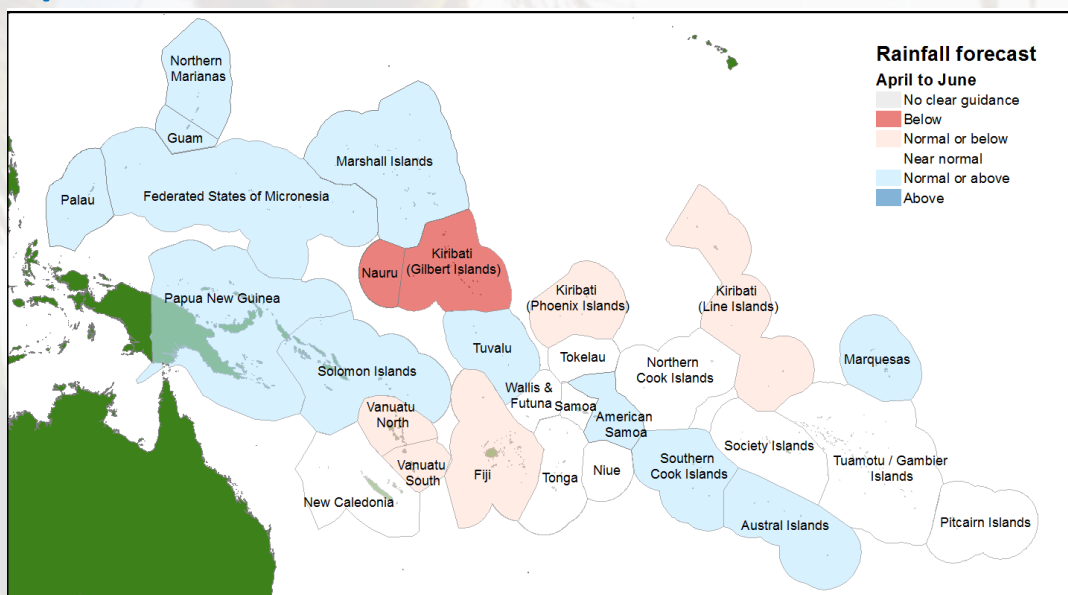
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For more information see: <http://www.niwa.co.nz/climate/icu>

# The Island Climate Update

Drought Watch  
April 2017

## April to June 2017 rainfall forecast



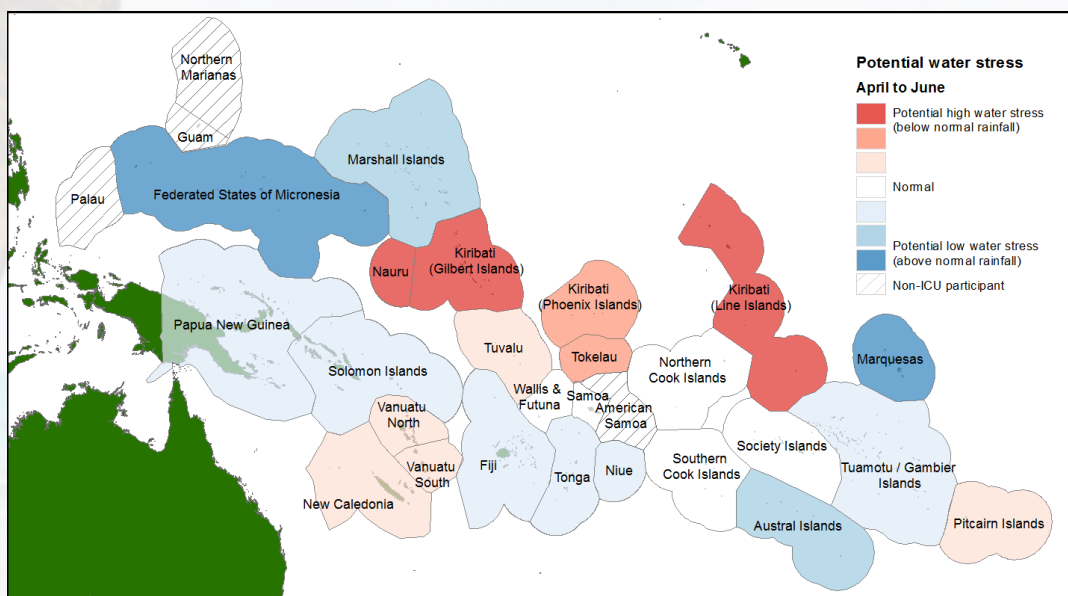
## Regional drought potential advisory

Based on rainfall anomaly classification over the past six months and forecast rainfall anomaly classification over the next 3 months

**Nauru, Kiribati (Gilbert Islands):** Well below normal rainfall experienced over the past 6 months. Below normal rainfall is forecast over the next 3 months.

**Kiribati (Phoenix and Line Islands):** Below or well below normal rainfall experienced over 4 of the past 6 months in the Phoenix islands and 5 of the past 6 months in the Line Islands. Normal or below normal rainfall is forecast over the next 3 months.

**Tokelau:** Below normal rainfall experienced over 4 of the past 6 months. Near normal rainfall is forecast over the next 3 months.



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