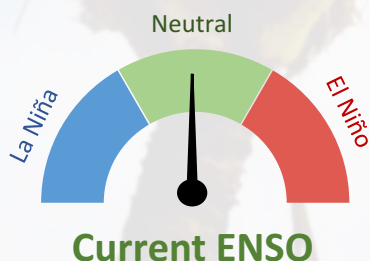


## Recent



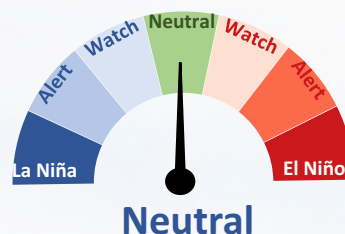
El Niño/Southern Oscillation (ENSO) conditions are currently near **neutral**.

Sea Surface Temperatures are close to or slightly below average across the central Equatorial Pacific.

The Southern Oscillation Index (SOI) is slightly positive (+0.2 for January 2016).

**90%** chance for ENSO neutral conditions to continue over February – April 2017.

Chance for El Niño conditions over the August to October 2017 season **36%**



## Forecast

### ENSO situation summary

The tropical Pacific is currently in an **ENSO** (El Niño – Southern Oscillation) **neutral state**. Sea surface temperatures (SSTs) in the central Equatorial Pacific Ocean remain marginally below average, with a value of  $-0.3^{\circ}\text{C}$  in the NINO3.4 region for the month of January 2017 (and so doesn't exceed the threshold used to define La Niña events).

**In the sub-surface ocean**, the pockets of cooler than average temperatures that remained in December 2016 have all but dissipated and slightly warmer than normal (reaching about  $+2^{\circ}\text{C}$  anomalies) ocean waters are now present in the western equatorial Pacific.

The **Southern Oscillation Index (SOI)** is close to zero with a value of  $+0.2$  for January 2017. Except for some aspects of rainfall and convection anomalies along the equatorial Pacific, **the weak La Niña-like signals that were present in previous months have now vanished**.

International guidance favours **ENSO-neutral conditions with high probability (90% chance) over the next three month period (February - April 2017)**. Later during the year, **the chances for a return to El Niño conditions increase substantially to reach 37% in August – October 2017**. Note however that ENSO forecasts going beyond the northern hemisphere spring are known to be less reliable than at other times of the year (the so-called "spring predictability barrier").

## Rainfall outlook for February – April 2017

**Below normal rainfall** for Tuvalu, all of Kiribati, and Nauru.

**Normal or below normal rainfall** for Tokelau.

**Normal or above normal rainfall** for the Austral Islands, Niue, Samoa, Tonga, Wallis & Futuna, the Marshall Islands, Guam, the northern Marianas, American Samoa, the southern Cook Islands, Fiji, the Marquesas and northern Vanuatu.

**Above normal rainfall** for the Federated States of Micronesia and Palau.

**No guidance** for Papua New Guinea, the Society Islands and the Solomon Islands.

ISLAND	PROBABILITY (%)			OUTLOOK	CONFIDENCE
	Below	Normal	Above		
FSM	20	30	50	ABOVE	High
Palau	20	35	45	ABOVE	Moderate
Austral Islands	25	35	40	AVG - ABOVE	High
Niue	25	35	40	AVG - ABOVE	Moderate-High
Samoa	25	35	40	AVG - ABOVE	High
Tonga	25	35	40	AVG - ABOVE	Moderate-High
Wallis & Futuna	25	35	40	AVG - ABOVE	Moderate-High
Marshall Islands	25	35	40	AVG - ABOVE	Moderate
Guam	25	35	40	AVG - ABOVE	Moderate
N. Marianas	25	35	40	AVG - ABOVE	Moderate
American Samoa	25	35	40	AVG - ABOVE	Moderate
Cook Islands (Southern)	25	40	35	AVG - ABOVE	High
Fiji	25	40	35	AVG - ABOVE	Moderate-High
Marquesas	25	40	35	AVG - ABOVE	High
Vanuatu (North)	25	40	35	AVG - ABOVE	
Papua New Guinea	30	35	35	CLIMATOLOGY	Moderate-High
Society Islands	30	35	35	CLIMATOLOGY	Moderate-High
Solomon Islands	30	35	35	CLIMATOLOGY	Moderate-High
Cook Islands (Northern)	30	40	30	NEAR NORMAL	Moderate-High
New Caledonia	30	40	30	NEAR NORMAL	Moderate-High
Pitcairn Island	30	40	30	NEAR NORMAL	Moderate
Tuamotu Islands	30	40	30	NEAR NORMAL	Moderate-High
Vanuatu (South)	30	40	30	NEAR NORMAL	Moderate-High
Tokelau	40	35	25	AVG - BELOW	High
Tuvalu	45	35	20	BELOW	Moderate-High
Kiribati (Eastern)	50	30	20	BELOW	High
Central Kiribati (Phoenix)	50	30	20	BELOW	Moderate-High
Nauru	50	30	20	BELOW	Moderate
Kiribati (Western)	55	30	15	BELOW	High

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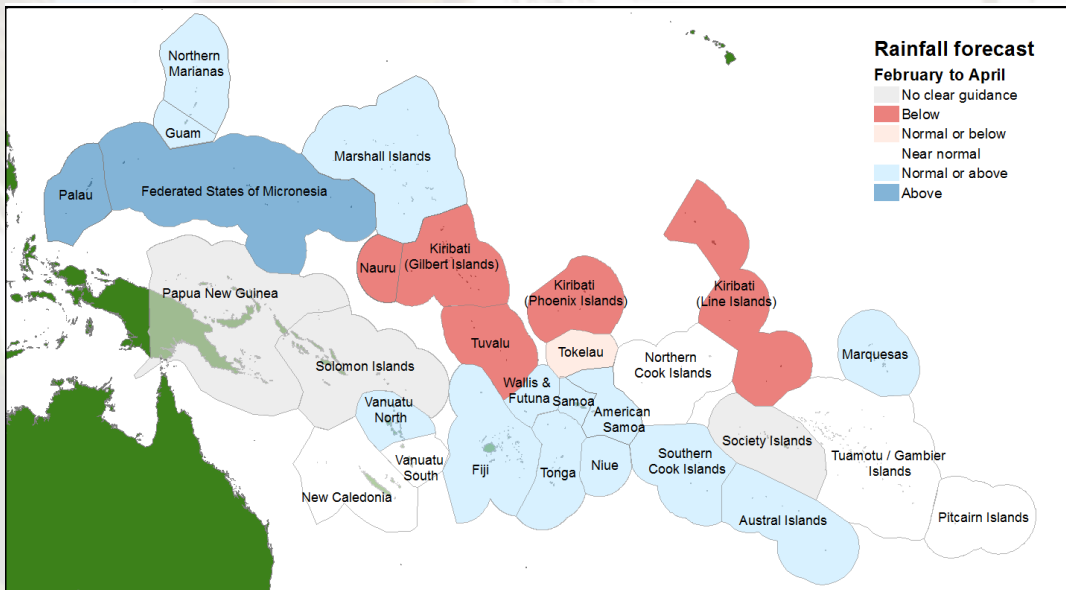
For more information see: <http://www.niwa.co.nz/climate/icu>



# The Island Climate Update

Drought Watch  
February 2017

## February to April 2017 rainfall forecast



## Regional drought potential advisory

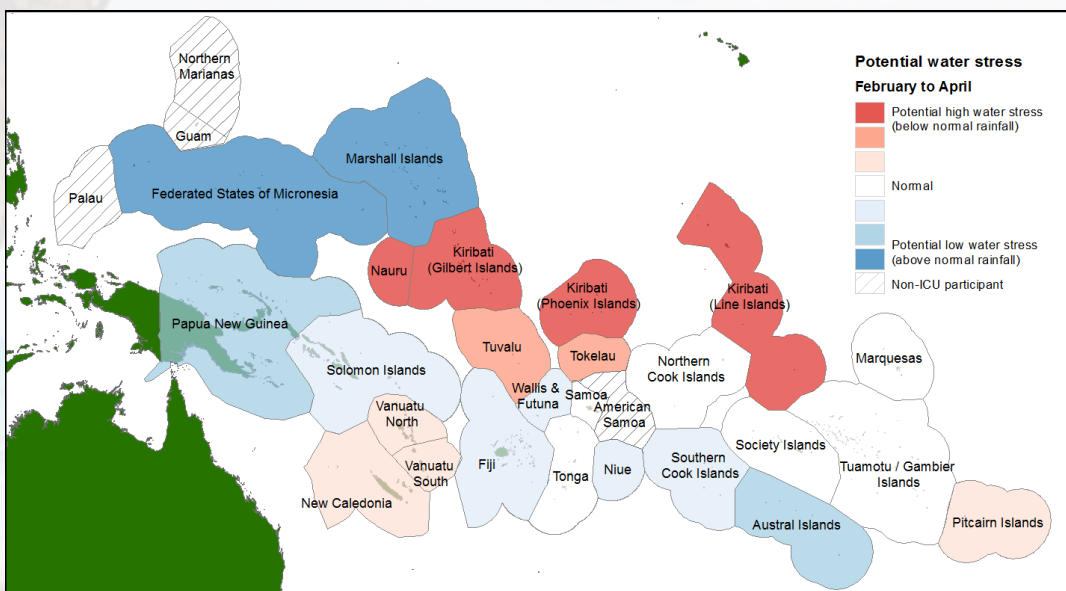
Based on rainfall anomaly classification over the past six months and forecast rainfall anomaly classification over the next 3 months

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

**Kiribati (Phoenix Island):** Below or well below normal rainfall experienced over 4 of the past 6 months. Below normal rainfall is forecast over the next 3 months.

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

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



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