



Solomon Islands Meteorological Service

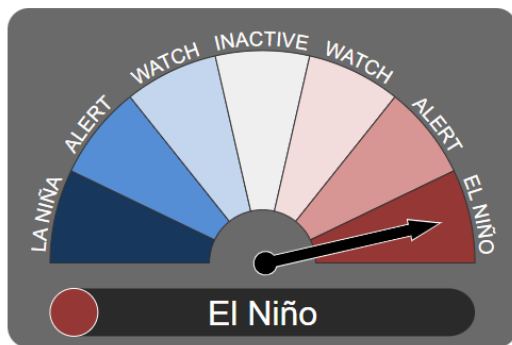
Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management & Meteorology



Media Release

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The El Niño Southern Oscillations (ENSO) status



An El Niño is declared by the Solomon Islands Meteorological Service (SIMS) and is currently underway for the Solomon Islands. This is based on ENSO indicators such as warmer sea surface temperatures (SST) dominating the central Pacific and the Southern Oscillations Index (SOI) have met the El Niño criteria. Additionally, several climate models predicted sustained SST warming in the central Pacific until the end of this year 2023.

The El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) is the key climate driver of year-to-year variations of weather patterns in the Solomon Islands. It has three phases namely; El Niño, Neutral, and La Niña. On average, these phases occur every 2 to 5 years.

What does it mean for the Solomon Islands community?

Historically, El Niño events were normally associated with ***drier than normal rainfall conditions for most locations in the Solomon Islands***. The longer this climate condition persists, the chances of having longer dry spells, drier months and even droughts are possible in worse situations.

Consequently, this may lead to a shortage of drinking water and implications on agricultural yields and health risks such as increase in malaria cases. An example is the drought associated with the 1997/1998 El Niño event that impacted a lot of our Islands, especially the Western and Rennell & Bellona Provinces.

Furthermore, past El Niño events were associated with more tropical cyclone (TC) occurrences than average in the Solomon Islands region. SIMS is thoroughly assessing the situation and will soon produce its TC outlook for the 2023/24 cyclone season by October 2023.

Concerned communities especially those who depend entirely on rainwater and event planners are hereby informed for their awareness and planning purposes. SIMS will continue to provide regular ENSO updates on the current climate in its future monthly climate bulletins.

For further information

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