

OUTLOOK FOR TONGA FOR February - April 2010

The moderate established El Niño in the equatorial Pacific, which most leading international computer models surveyed predict will persist through the southern hemisphere summer, but decline thereafter

Ha'apai groups remains currently in drought. Drought warning remains in force for Vava'u and Tongatapu groups.

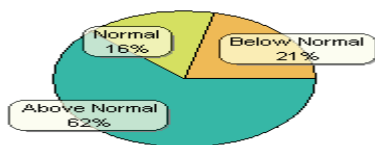
In December, drier than normal conditions were experienced in Ha'apai, also below normal rainfall in Vava'u. Rainfall recorded in Tongatapu was normal and this amount was only 5 days on the second week and dry conditions continued throughout the month. In contrast, Niuafu'ou recorded very much above normal rainfall. The outlook for the next three months continue to reflect El Niño type conditions with below normal rainfall.



Niuafu'ou

Above Normal >937mm
Normal 724mm– 937mm
Below Normal <724mm

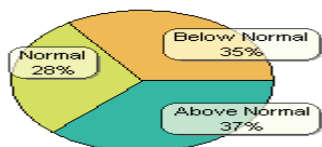
The model generated outlook shows a strong signal for rainfall to be **above normal**.



Niuaotupapu

Above Normal >845mm
Normal 691.0mm-845mm
Below Normal <691.0mm

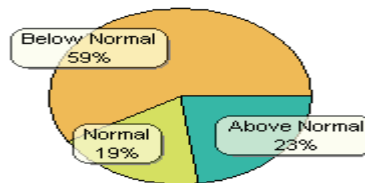
The model generated outlook shows an almost equal chance for rainfall to be below normal, normal or above normal. Please note that this outlook is based on past data as there are no equipments yet since the tsunami destroyed all Met. Equipments in this island.



Vava'u

Above Normal >928.0mm
Normal 746.0mm - 928.0mm
Below Normal <746.0mm

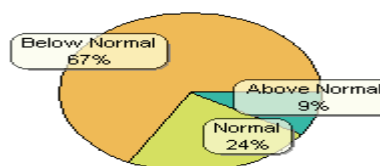
The model generated outlook shows a strong signal for **below normal** rainfall.



Ha'apai

Above Normal >721.0mm
Normal 527.0mm–721.0mm
Below Normal <527.0mm

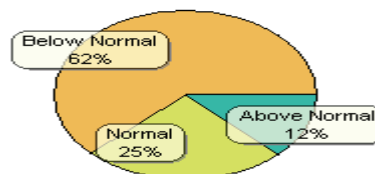
The model generated outlook shows a strong signal for **below normal** rainfall.



Tongatapu

Above Normal >611.3mm
Normal 445.7mm-611.3mm
Below Normal <445.7mm

The model generated outlook shows a strong signal for **below normal** rainfall.



Disclaimer:

This summary is prepared as soon as possible following the end of the month, once climate data is received from recording stations around Tonga. Delays in data collection, communication and processing occasionally arise. While every effort is made to verify observational data, the Tonga Meteorological Service does not guarantee the accuracy and reliability of the analysis and rainfall predictions presented, and accepts no liability for any losses incurred through the use of this summary and its contents. This information should be used as a guidance only. All requests for data and for further information about this forecast should be directed to the Director of the Tonga Meteorological Service, at P.O. Box 845, Nuku'alofa. Or email at fnt_met@met.gov.to Tel: (676) 35 123/35 355 or our website; <http://www.met.gov.to> for more information.