

METEOROLOGY DIVISION

MINISTRY OF METEOROLOGY, ENERGY, INFORMATION, DISASTER MANAGEMENT, ENVIRONMENT,
CLIMATE CHANGE & COMMUNICATION.

RAINFALL OUTLOOK AND DROUGHT UPDATE FOR TONGA

March 2016 issue

Last month (February)

Rainfall was below normal in the Niuas and above normal in Vava'u, Ha'apai, Tongatapu and 'Eua. Highest rainfall was recorded in Vava'u.

Rainfall in the last 3 months (Dec 2015 - Feb 2016)

Below normal rainfall across the country except Vava'u and Nuku'alofa where normal rainfall was recorded.

Wet Season begins on 1st of November 2015 to the end of April 2016, It is also call the Cyclone Season.

ENSO status and rainfall outlook

The 2015–16 El Niño is now at moderate levels, and is likely to end in the second quarter of 2016. Although the 2015–16 El Niño is weakening, it will continue to influence global climate during the southern hemisphere autumn.

The rainfall outlook for the April to June period is for normal for the Niuas and below normal for the rest of Tonga.

Current drought situation

- The amount of rainfall that fell in February was mainly due to cyclone Winston which eased the drought conditions in Vava'u, Ha'apai and Tongatapu in February. Drought warning remains in force for most of the country.

Short-term

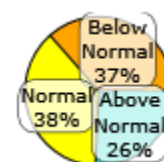
- The below normal condition is likely to continue for the next three months.

Longer-term:

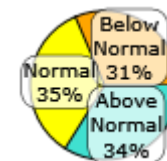
- El Niño is likely to continue to influence global climate through to autumn.

Use water wisely

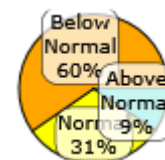
April-May-June (AMJ 2016) Rainfall Outlook



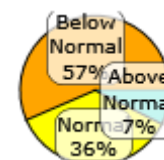
Niuafoou:
491mm – 638mm



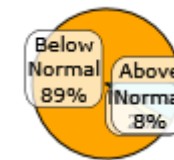
Niuatoputapu: 429-601mm



Vava'u:
389 - 523mm



Haapai:
285 - 417mm



Fuaamotu:
285 - 518mm

Below normal rainfall is forecast for Tonga in the next 3 months.

• Rainfall and tropical cyclone sensitive sectors such as Agriculture, Health, Water Resource Management should remain on alert and continue cyclone and drought operations planning and conserve rain water. The public are encouraged to continue to seek advice from the relevant authorities e.g. Ministry of Agriculture and the National Emergency Management Office (NEMO) on the best practices to minimise the effects of El Niño.