Regional Climate Watch

To: NMHS in the western Pacific Islands region

The Regional Climate Watch is a guidance product designed for heightening National Meteorological and Hydrological Services awareness of an ongoing or high probability foreseen climate anomaly and its potential impacts on communities so that they can take appropriate action. This watch is disseminated to serve as a mechanism for initiating national preparedness activities and/or a series of events that affect decision-making.

After consultation between the Bureau of Meteorology and SPREP the Pacific RCC-Network Node on Climate Monitoring issues the following guidance information:

Product ID: 20260318-01

Issued: 18 March 2026
Valid from-to: 22 March – 04 April 2026
Next update: 25 March 2026

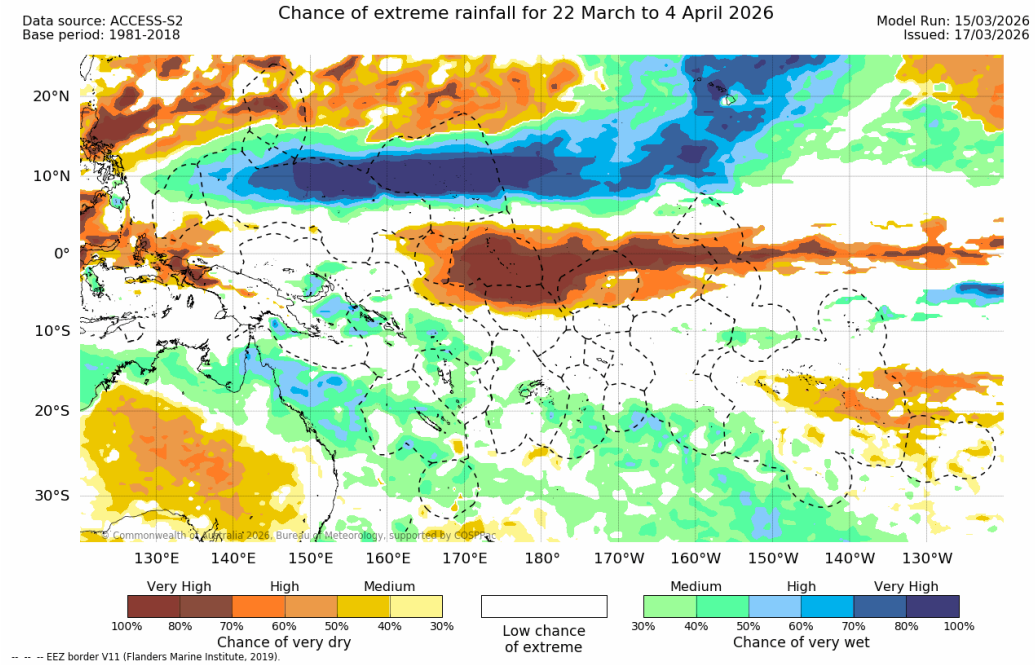
Areas concerned (highlighted in yellow):

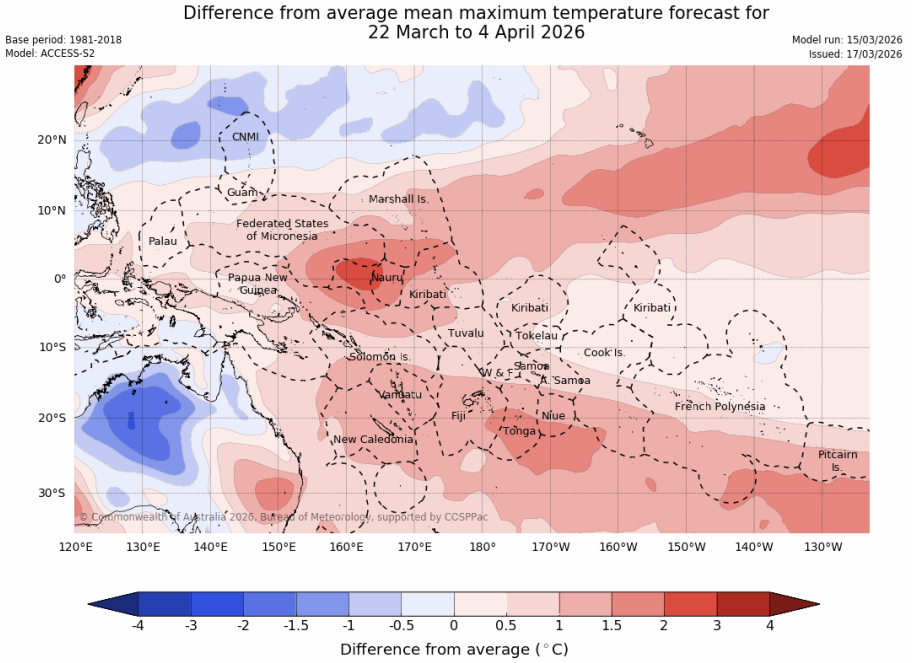
- *Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas*
- *Guam*
- *Palau*
- *Federated States of Micronesia*
- *Republic of the Marshall Islands*
- *Papua New Guinea*
- *Solomon Islands*
- *Vanuatu*
- *New Caledonia*
- *Fiji*
- *Wallis & Futuna*
- *Tonga*
- *Niue*
- *Samoa*
- *American Samoa*
- *Cook Islands*
- *French Polynesia*
- *Nauru*
- *Kiribati*
- *Tuvalu*
- *Tokelau*
- *Pitcairn Islands*

Extreme Rainfall and Extreme Temperature Advisory:

- There's a very high chance of Very Wet conditions for the fortnight of 22 March – 04 April 2026 for the following EEZs: northern FSM, and central RMI. Fortnightly anomalies are forecast to exceed +75 mm over central FSM, and central RMI. The advisory for northern Palau, Guam, and southern CNMI is now cancelled.

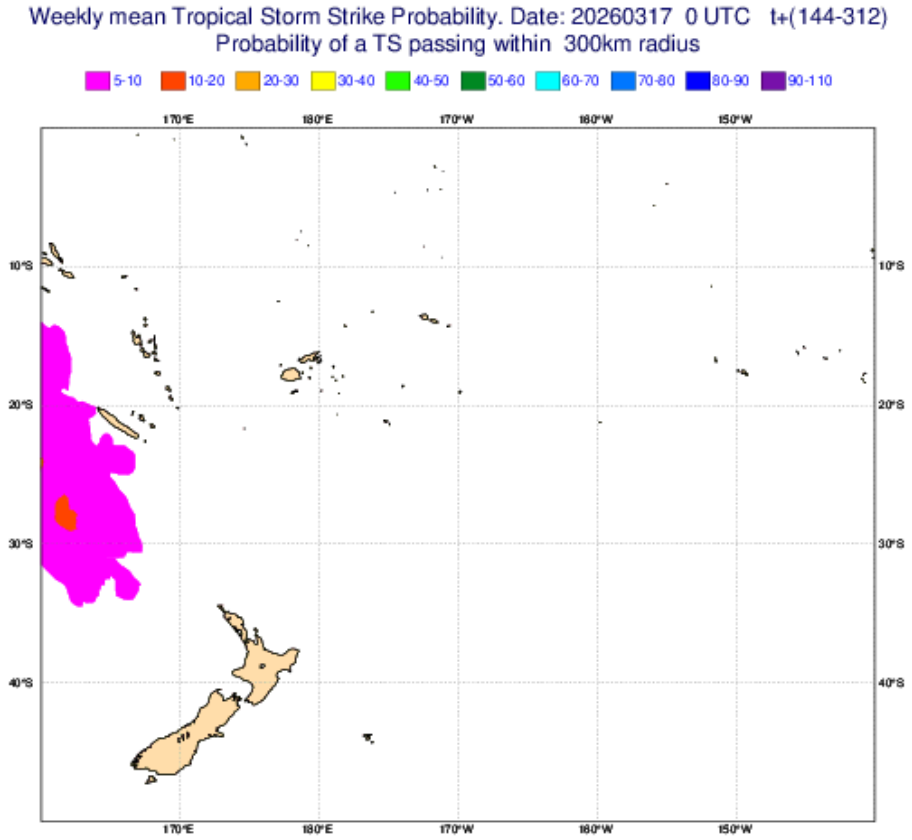
- There's a very high chance of Very Warm maximum and minimum air temperatures for the fortnight 22 March – 04 April 2026 across all EEZs, except CNMI, and northern French Polynesia. Positive anomalies are forecast to exceed 1.5 °C over far southern Pohnpei and Kosrae (FSM), southern RMI, Nauru, far southeastern Fiji, southern Tonga, far southern Niue, far southern Cook Islands, and southern French Polynesia.

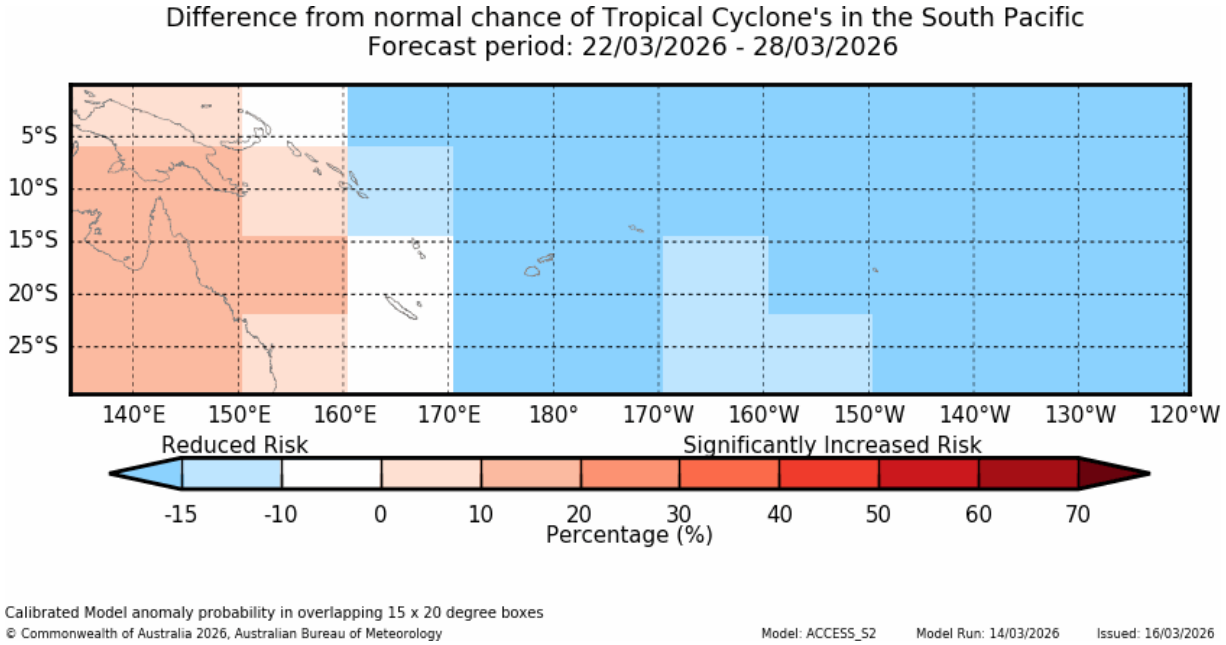




Tropical Cyclone Advisory:

- There is a slight increased risk of Tropical Cyclone (TC) occurrence in the Coral Sea for the week of 22 – 28 March 2026, according to the ACCESS-S and ECMWF model. The advisory for the Coral Sea region is still active.

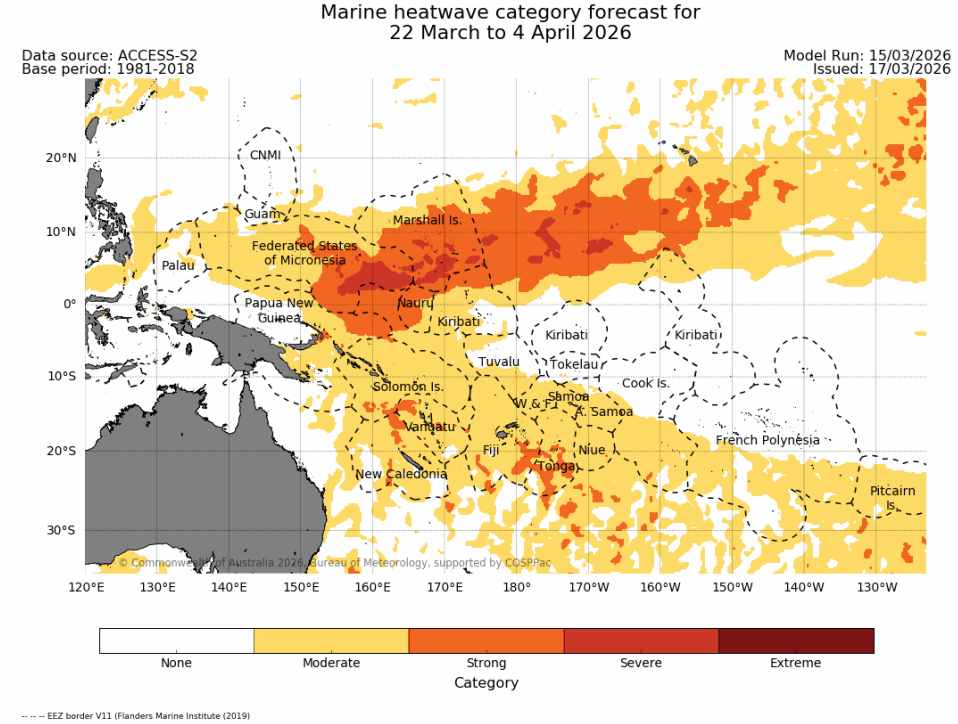


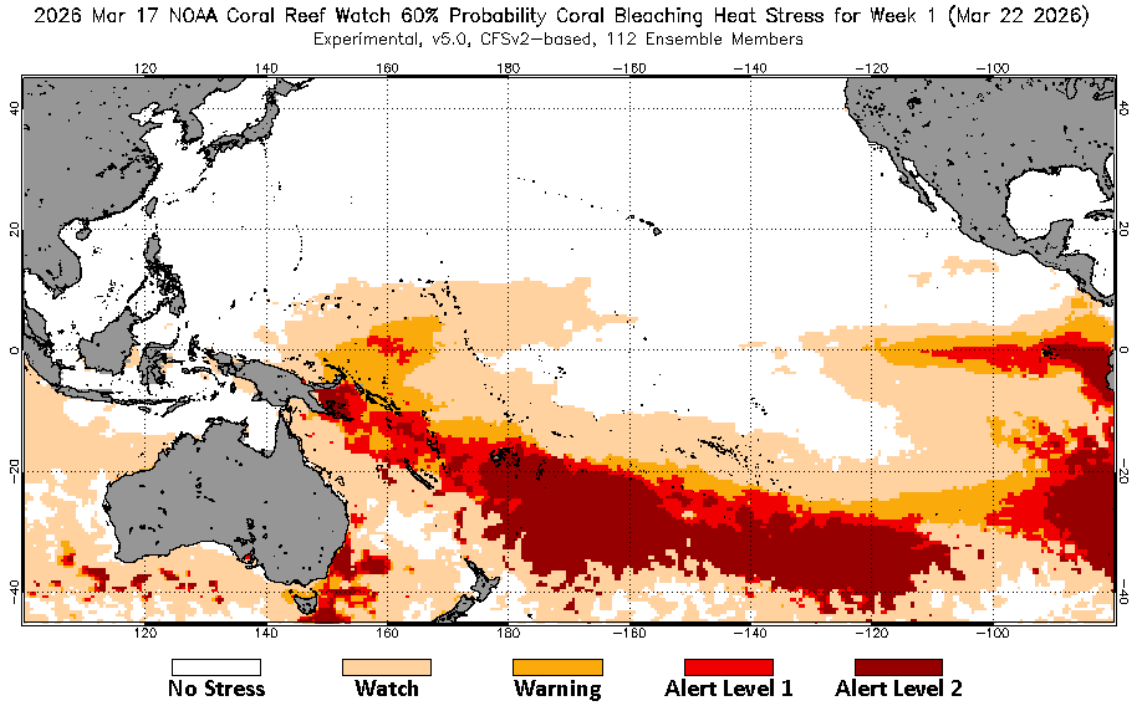


Marine Heatwave and Coral Bleaching Advisory:

- Marine heatwaves in the strong category are forecast to develop for parts of the following EEZ's: eastern FSM, most of RMI, most of Nauru, northeastern PNG, southern Solomon Islands, northern and southern New Caledonia, southern Fiji and southern Tonga for the fortnight 22 March – 04 April 2026. There may be impacts on ocean ecosystems, including stress on marine organisms, species migration, and algal blooms in locations with at least a strong category forecast. The advisory is now cancelled for eastern PNG.

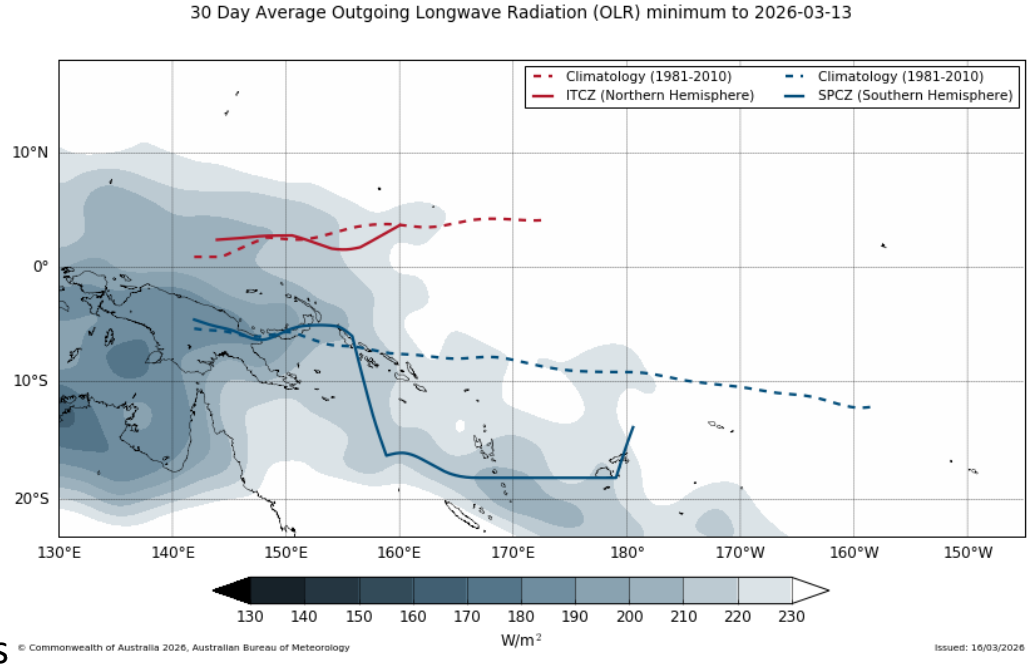
- There remains an alert for coral bleaching for the following EEZs: Southeastern FSM, PNG, Solomon Is, Vanuatu, New Caledonia, Fiji, Tonga, Niue, the far southern Cook Islands and far southern French Polynesia for the week 22 March -04 April 2026. The alert region is similar in strength when compared to the advisory last week.

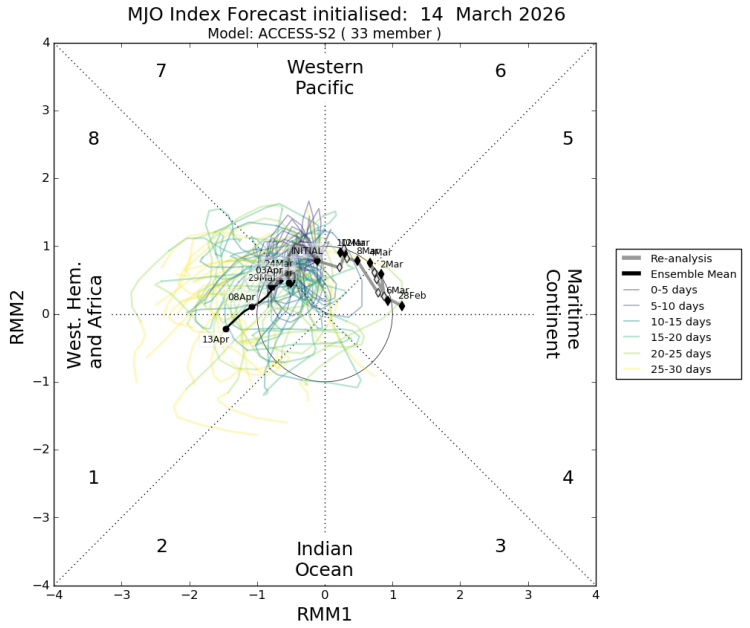




Climate Influences:

- **El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO)** indicates La Niña is close to its end.
- The **Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD)** while currently positive is unlikely to strongly influence western Pacific rainfall at this time of year.
- Additional information is available via the Southern Hemisphere Monitoring Update - http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/enso.
- Over the past 30 days, outgoing longwave radiation observations indicate that the **Intertropical Convergence Zone** is along its climatologically normal position over northern Pacific. The **South Pacific Convergence Zone** is located further south over Vanuatu and Fiji when compared to its usual location at this time of year.
- The **Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO** is currently moderate in the central Pacific, it is forecast to become weakly active over the Pacific in the coming weeks as it moves eastwards.





Outlooks: http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/pacific/outlooks/, http://oceanportal.spc.int/portal/ocean.html, ECMWF Tropical Cyclone Outlook NOAA Coral Reef Watch 60% Probability Coral Bleaching Heat Stress Weekly Outlooks (CFS based)

Influences: http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/enso/

About Regional Climate Watch guidance

- This information should be used as guidance for the National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHS) in a pre-operational mode. It is up to NMHSs in the specified regions to monitor the status and evolution of the current climate conditions closely and to consider issuing a national advisories.
- We will monitor the evolution of the anomaly, issue updates if significant change arise and close the advice when no clear signal can be detected in the forecasts.
- For more information and feedback please email pacificclimateservices@bom.gov.au. Also, any suggestions on further pieces of information needed by NMHSs is highly welcomed!
- Please note that further climate monitoring and prediction information can be obtained from Pacific RCC-N website (https://www.pacificmet.net/rcc)
- The Pacific RCC Network Node on Climate Monitoring is responsible for providing Regional Climate Watch guidance information for NMHSs' own consideration for issuing climate advisories for their territory. The regional watch is currently sponsored by the Australian and New Zealand funded Climate and Ocean Support Program in the Pacific (COSPPac) and delivered by Node on Climate Monitoring consortium members that are COSPPac implementation partners (Bureau of Meteorology and SPREP).