



**FIJI METEOROLOGICAL SERVICE
GOVERNMENT OF REPUBLIC OF FIJI**

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ONE TO TWO TROPICAL CYCLONES EXPECTED TO AFFECT FIJI THIS SEASON

Highlights

- The Tropical Cyclone Seasonal Outlook issued by Fiji Meteorological Service predicts one to two tropical cyclones to affect Fiji this season, of which one may reach category 3 or stronger intensity.
- There is an elevated risk of tropical cyclones for the Northern and Eastern Divisions of Fiji in the 2018-19 tropical cyclone season.
- Seven to nine tropical cyclones are expected in the Pacific Island region, covering an area from Solomon Islands to French Polynesia.
- While the tropical cyclone season is normally from November to April, this season has already seen a tropical cyclone forming near Solomon Islands in September this year.
- All communities should remain alert and prepared throughout the 2018-19 tropical cyclone season and take heed of tropical cyclone alerts, warnings and advisories seriously whenever it is issued.

In the Southern Hemisphere, the official 2018-19 Tropical Cyclone (TC) season begins on 1st November 2018 and ends on 30th April 2019. However, the 2018-19 TC season has started earlier than anticipated with the first TC forming near Solomon Islands and named “Liua” on 27 September 2018. Tropical cyclones can form outside the TC season period and TC Liua is an attestation of this.

The Regional Specialized Meteorological Centre Nadi – Tropical Cyclone Centre (RSMC Nadi-TCC) is responsible for monitoring TC activity in a specific area of the Pacific, known as its Area of Responsibility or AoR. The area covers all the Pacific Island Countries from Solomon Islands to French Polynesia. Specifically, it is the area bounded from 160 degrees East to 120 degrees West Longitude and from Equator to 25 degrees South Latitude.

The TC activity in the 2018-19 TC season within the RSMC-Nadi Area of Responsibility (AoR) is predicted to be normal or above normal. Seven to nine TCs are expected to occur in the RSMC Nadi-TCC AoR during the 2018-19 season.

This outlook is based upon the status of the El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) over the preceding July to September period. During this period in 2018, neutral conditions were present

in the tropical Pacific, but Pacific Ocean was showing signs of warming towards weak El Niño. Weak to marginally moderate El Niño conditions is forecasted for most part of the 2018-19 TC season.

TC activity in Fiji, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Tonga, Pitcairn Islands and Tuamotu Archipelago/Gambier Islands is likely to be normal this season, while there is reduced risk for New Caledonia.

In contrast, increased risk of TC activity is anticipated for Tuvalu, Wallis & Futuna, Tokelau, Samoa, Niue, Cook Islands, Society Islands and Austral Islands. TC activity in the Kiribati and Marquesas area is unlikely.

There is normal risk of severe TCs for Fiji, Tuvalu, Tokelau, Samoa, Tonga, Niue, and Tuamotu Archipelago/Gambier Islands, while there is reduced risk of severe TCs for Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and New Caledonia. The risk of severe TC is increased for Wallis & Futuna, Cook Islands, Society Islands and Austral Islands. Severe TC is unlikely in the Marquesas, Pitcairn Islands and Kiribati regions.

For Fiji, one to two TCs could be expected this season, of which, one may reach or exceed category three status. For those TCs passing close to the country, associated active cloud and rain bands may occasionally affect Fiji with heavy rainfall and possible flooding, including sea flooding of low-lying coastal areas. There is an elevated risk of TCs for the Northern and Eastern Divisions of Fiji this season compared to last season.

Historical records show that TCs have occasionally formed outside the official TC Season. Because of this, it is critical that all communities remain alert and prepared throughout the 2018-19 TC season and beyond.

It is also important to note that non-TCs or Tropical Depressions have and can still cause loss of lives and severe damages to properties.

All communities should remain alert and prepared throughout the 2018-19 TC season and take heed of TC alerts, warnings and advisories seriously whenever it is issued to save lives and protect properties.

A detailed version of the 2018-19TC Seasonal Outlook issued by the Fiji Meteorological Service is available on www.met.gov.fj.

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