



Fiji Meteorological Service

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Climate Outlook for Hydro-electricity Generation from January to March 2024

Current Conditions

Fiji's Climate

The weather across the country during 1st to 27th December, was dominated by a series of trough of low pressure systems, and afternoon showers and thunderstorms. Showers, thunderstorms, and heavy rainfall were experienced over some parts of the country.

Overall, out of the 18 rainfall stations that reported in, in time for the compilation of this bulletin, 3 stations recorded *average*, 8 *below average*, and 7 recorded *well below average*.

At Monasavu, when comparing the total monthly rainfall against the 30-year average, *below average* rainfall was received at Monasavu during December 2023.

The total monthly rainfall for Monasavu (until 27th December) was 322.3 mm, which was 57% of the *normal*. During October to 27th December, Monasavu recorded 1084mm of rainfall, which was 84% of the *normal*, while in the past 6 months (July to 27th

December), 2498mm of rainfall was registered (124% of the *normal*) (Figure 1).

El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) Status

The Pacific Ocean is now into a moderate El Niño state. The sea surface temperatures (SSTs) are warmer than average across most of the tropical and are near average in the Western Pacific Ocean.

The Southern Oscillation Index (SOI) for November 2023 was -8.6, with the 5-month running mean of -9.2. The latest 30-day value to 24 November 2023 was -3.0.

Trade wind strength has been slightly weaker to weaker than average across the western equatorial Pacific. Equatorial cloudiness near the Date Line has been mostly above average since mid-September 2023.

Overall, the atmospheric and oceanic indicators are indicative of a moderate El Niño.

El Niño-Southern Oscillation and Monasavu Climate Predictions

El-Niño Southern Oscillation Prediction

Climate models on average show that the current El Niño has likely reached its peak, with the event likely to continue through the March to May 2024 period.

Minimum & Maximum Air Temperature Predictions - January & January to March 2024:

Both minimum and maximum temperatures are likely to be *above normal* across Viti Levu and Vanau Levu during January and January to March 2024 period (Figure 3).

Rainfall Predictions: Fortnightly: 31st December - 13th January & 7th - 20th January

Rainfall is expected to be *below normal* for most parts of the Viti Levu during the mentioned fortnights.

January 2024

There is 75% chance of receiving at least 260mm of rainfall at Nadarivatu station, 75% chance of at least 279mm of rainfall at Nadarivatu Dam and Monasavu,

and 75% chance of at least 289mm of rainfall at Wailoa. There is high confidence in this forecast (Table 1).

January to March 2024

For the January to March 2024 period, there is 75% chance of receiving at least 931mm of rainfall at Nadarivatu station and 75% chance of at least 985mm of rainfall at Nadarivatu Dam and Monasavu, and 75% chance of receiving at least 1007mm of rainfall at Wailoa. There is high skill on the generated outlook (Table 1).

Summary

Considering the ongoing El Niño event, Viti Levu is expected to experience drier conditions in January, as well as January to March 2024. However, given that we are currently in the tropical cyclone season and there is the potential for increased weather activity in our region, any developments near Fiji are likely to result in *normal* to *above average* rainfall.

Figure 1 Monthly Rainfall Distribution at Monasavu until 26th December 2023

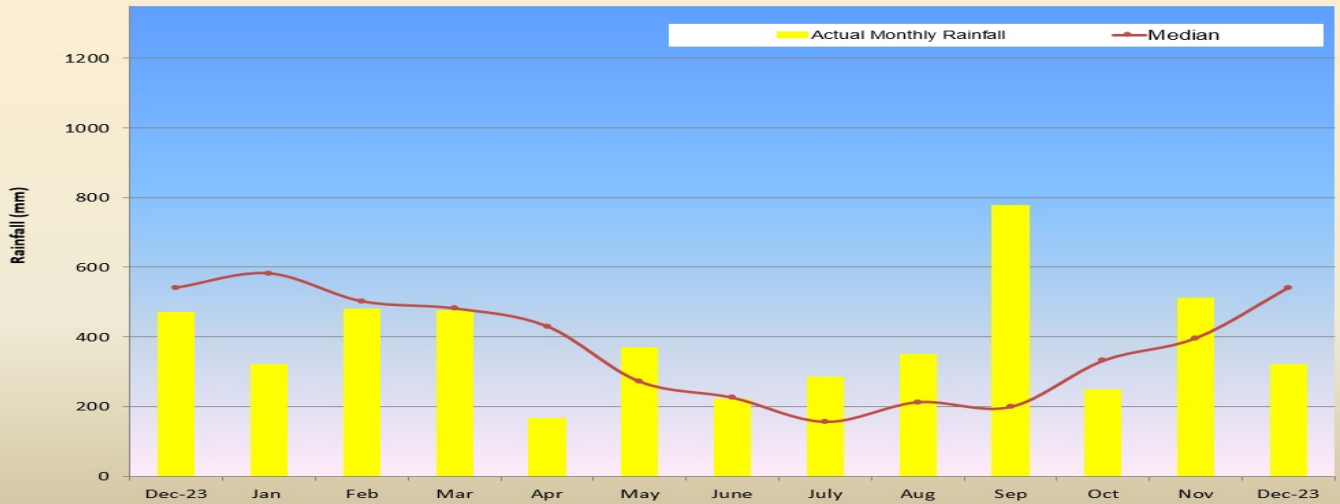
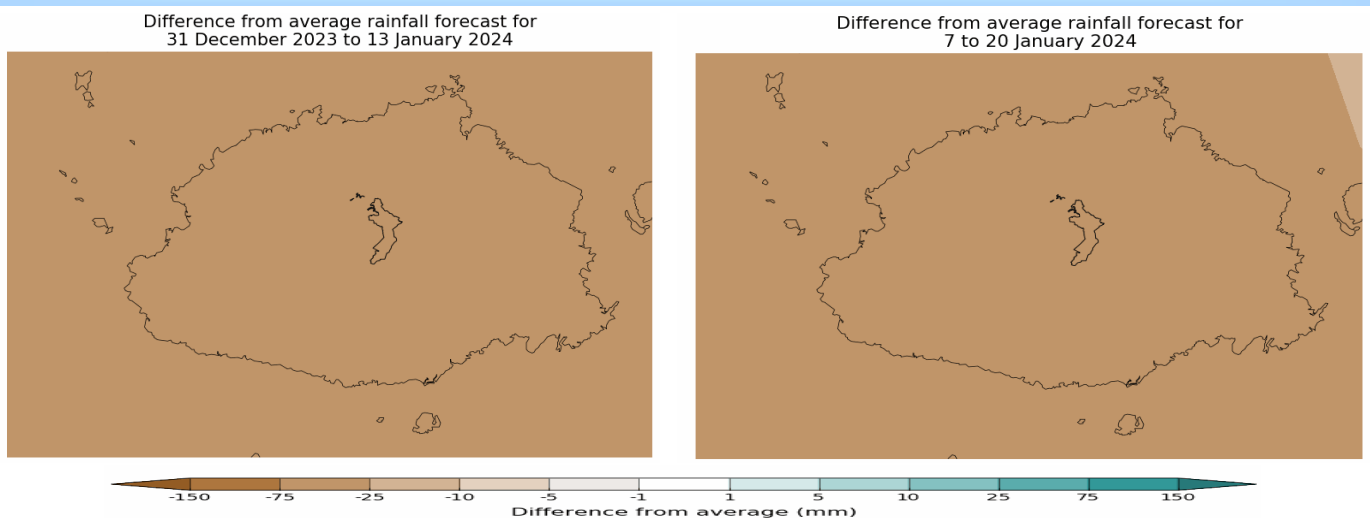


Table 1: Rainfall Outlook: January & January - March 2024

January Outlook				
	25% chance of at least (mm)	50% chance of at least (mm)	75% chance of at least (mm)	Forecast Confidence
Nadarivatu station	434	337	260	High
Nadarivatu Dam	444	353	279	High
Monasavu Dam	444	353	279	High
Wailoa	452	342	289	High
January to March				
	25% chance of at least (mm)	50% chance of at least (mm)	75% chance of at least (mm)	Forecast Confidence
Nadarivatu station	1393	1101	931	High
Nadarivatu Dam	1443	1141	985	High
Monasavu Dam	1443	1141	985	High
Wailoa	1442	1137	1007	High

The table above provides 25%, 50% and 75% chances of each station receiving the amount of rainfall mentioned above.

Figure 1: Rainfall Outlook: Fortnightly: 31th December - 13th January & 7th - 20th January



Data source: ACCESS-S2
 Issued: 26/12/2023
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 Base period: 1981-2018
 Run: 24/12/2023
 Shapefile data extracted from Flanders Marine Institute (2019), Maritime Boundaries Geodatabase: Maritime Boundaries and Exclusive Economic Zones (200NM), version 11.
 Available online at <http://www.maritimerelations.org/>

Figure 2: Rainfall Outlook: January & January to March 2024

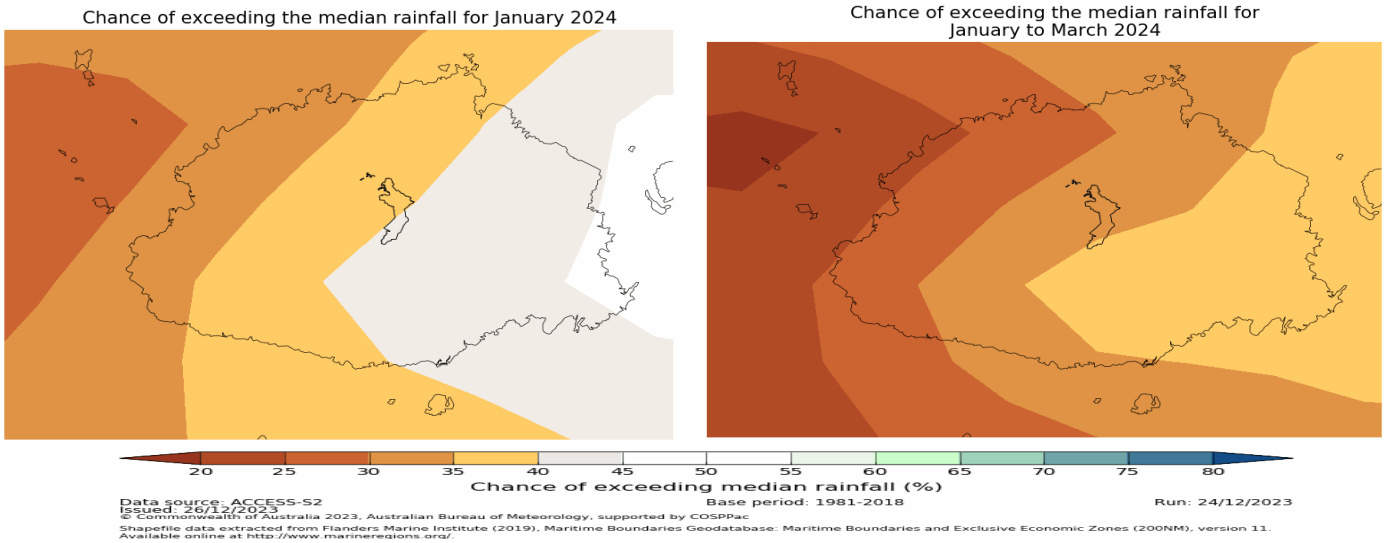
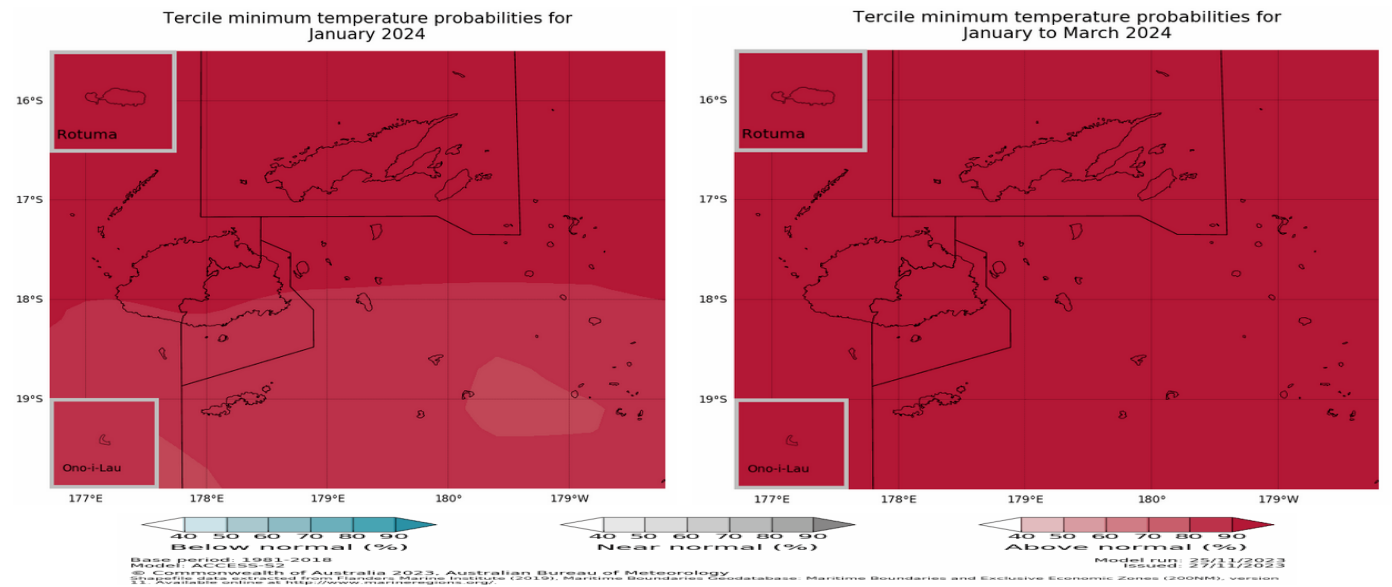
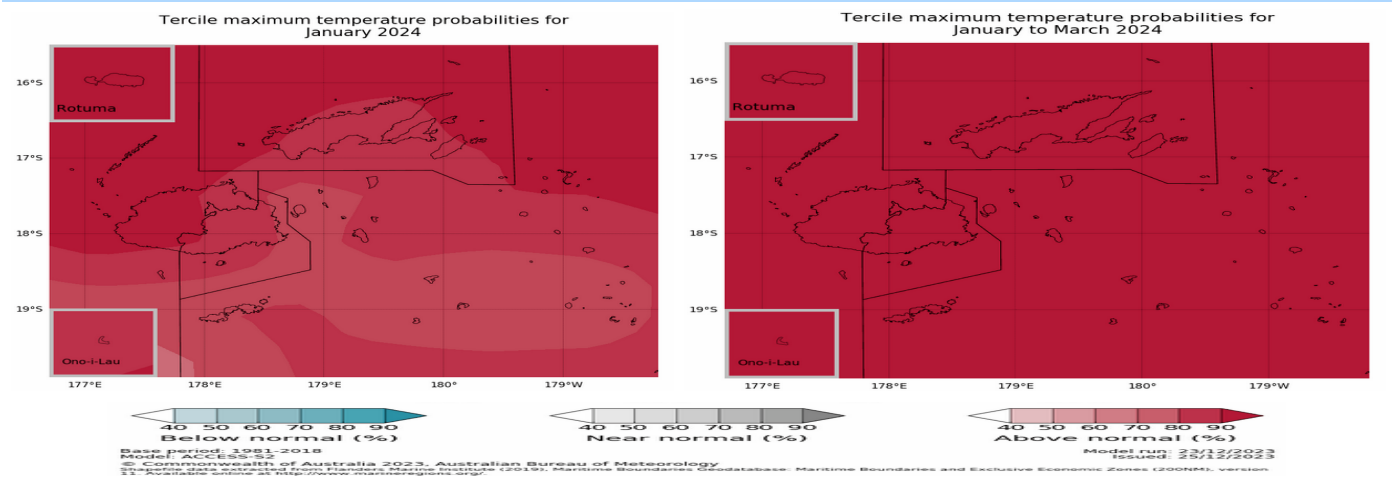


Figure 3: Minimum Air Temperature Predictions: January & January to March 2024



Minimum air temperatures are expected to be *below normal* to *above normal* across Viti Levu and Vanua Levu, during January and January to March 2024 period. *Source: ACCESS-S2 Model.*

Figure 3: Maximum Air Temperature Predictions: January & January to March 2024



Maximum air temperatures are likely to be *above normal* across Viti Levu and Vanua Levu, during January and January to March 2024 period. *Source: ACCESS-S2 Model.*

Explanatory Notes

Climate Outlook for Hydro-electricity Generation is produced to provide advisories to Energy Fiji Limited (EFL). It aims to provide advanced warning on climate abnormalities for planning on economic generation mix and hydro-storage optimization.

Climate (Rainfall/Air Temperature) Outlook

Above normal – indicates that the rainfall/temperature value lies in the highest third of observation recorded in the standard 30 year normal period.

Near normal – indicates that the rainfall/temperature value lies in the middle third of observation recorded in the standard 30 year normal period.

Below normal – indicates that the rainfall/temperature value lies in the lowest third of observation recorded in the standard 30 year normal period.

Climatology – means that there are equal chances of receiving below normal, normal and above normal rainfall.

Median – rainfall value which marks the level dividing the ranked data set in half, that is, the midpoint of the ordered (lowest to highest) monthly or yearly rainfall totals.

Above Median – rainfall value that lies above the median value.

Below Median – rainfall value that lies below the median value.

El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO)

ENSO is the principal driver of the year-to-year variability of Fiji's climate. There are three phases of this phenomenon, *El Niño*, *La Niña* and *Neutral* conditions. El Niño or La Niña events are a natural part of the global climate system and usually recur after every 2 to 7 years. It normally develops around April to June, attains peak intensity between December to February and usually starts to decay around April to June period the following year. While most events last for a year, some have persisted for up to 2 years. It should be also noted that no two El Niño or La Niña events are the same. Different events have different impacts, but most exhibit some common climate characteristics.

Usually there is a lag effect on Fiji's climate with ENSO events, that is, once an El Niño or La Niña event is established in the tropical Pacific, it may take 2-6 months before its impact is seen on Fiji. Similarly, once an event finishes, it can take 2-6 months for climate to normalise.

El Niño events are associated with warming of the central and eastern tropical Pacific. El Niño events usually result in reduction of Fiji's rainfall. Often the whole of Fiji is affected in varying degrees and it is quite unusual for one part of the country to experience a prolonged dry spell, while the other is in a wet spell. The relationship and level of rainfall suppression is greater in the Dry Zone than in the Wet Zone. It is the suppression of rainfall during the Cool/Dry Season (May to October) that is normally of most concern. A reduction in Cool/Dry Season rainfall in the Dry Zone results in little or no rainfall until the next Wet Season. While usually the strength of an ENSO event is proportional to its impact on Fiji, at times weak event can also have a significant impact.

La Niña events are associated with cooling of the central and eastern tropical Pacific. Usually La Niña results in wetter than normal conditions for Fiji, occasionally leading to flooding during the Warm/Wet Season (November to April).

During *Neutral* condition, neither El Niño nor La Niña is present, it has little effect on global climate, meaning other climate influences are more likely to dominate.

Lag effects – means that there is a delay in a change of some aspect of climate due to influence of other factors that is acting slowly.

Climate bulletins that can be viewed together with this bulletin include:

- 1) *Fiji Climate Summary* at <https://www.met.gov.fj/index.php?page=FijiClimateSummary> (issued monthly)
- 2) *Fiji Climate Outlook* at <https://www.met.gov.fj/index.php?page=ClimateOutlook> (issued monthly)

This information is prepared as soon as ENSO, climate and oceanographic data is received from recording stations around Fiji and Meteorological Agencies around the world. While every effort is made to verify observational data, Fiji Meteorological Service does not guarantee the accuracy and reliability of the analyses presented, and accepts no liability for any losses incurred through the use of this information and its contents. The information may be freely disseminated provided the source is acknowledged. For further clarification and expert advice, please contact the Fiji Meteorological Service HQ, Namaka, Nadi.

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