



Early Action Rainfall (EAR) Watch

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The Early Action Rainfall Watch provides a summary of recent rainfall patterns, particularly the status of the rainfall and the outlook for the coming months. This product is issued on a monthly basis. For more details and climate information, contact the Vanuatu Meteorology and Geo-hazards Department.

Summary

ENSO Status: El Niño is currently underway in the Pacific. All surveyed models indicate SSTs will remain above El Niño thresholds until at least the end of the 2023–24 southern hemisphere summer (December to February).

Rainfall Status: The 12-month period has been *very* to *seriously wet* for most of the country. The wet period seemed to be easing during the 3 to 6-month period, and picked up again in August. From Lakatoro to the southern islands, conditions have been *seriously wet* in August.

Rainfall Outlook: With the rainfall outlook for October, there is a medium chance for Efate and the southern islands to experience very dry conditions. Elsewhere, chances remain low.

Rainfall Status

The table below provides information on rainfall status for Vanuatu. The status refers to rainfall received over the last 1, 3, 6 and 12 months, highlighting very dry or very wet periods relative to normal.

Period	Rainfall Status			
	1-month period	3-month period	6-month period	12-month period
Months	August 2023	June 2023 — August 2023	March 2023 — August 2023	September 2022 — August 2023
Torres				
Sola				
Luganville				
Saratamata				
Lakatoro				
Sherpherds				
Port Vila				
Lenakel				
Anelghaohat				

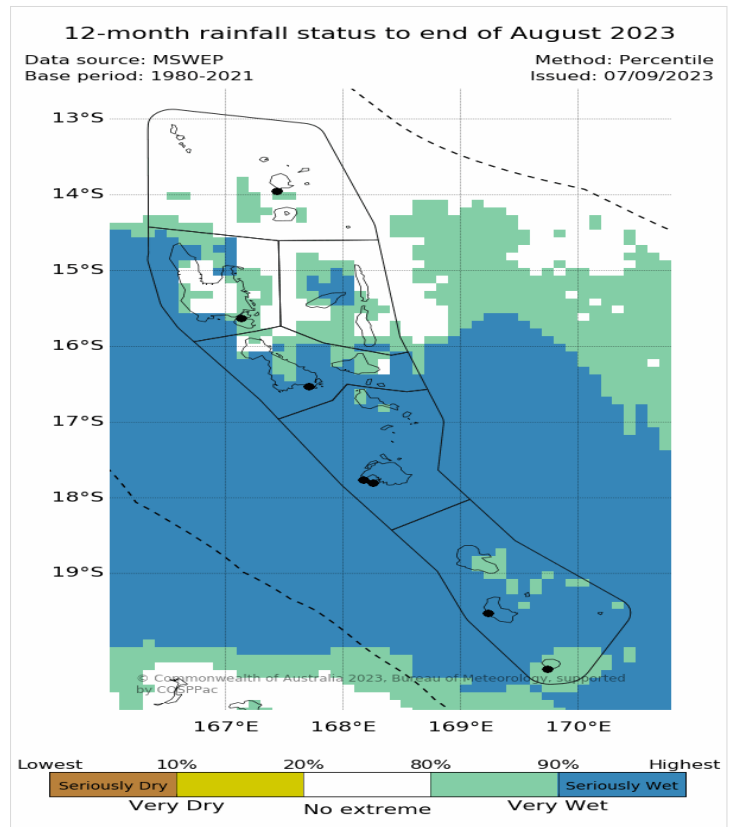
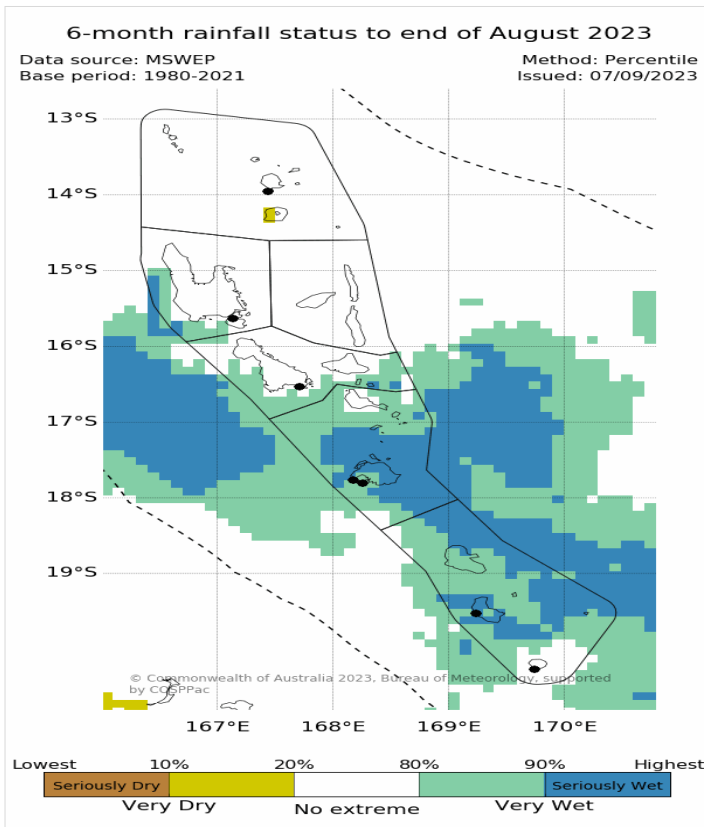
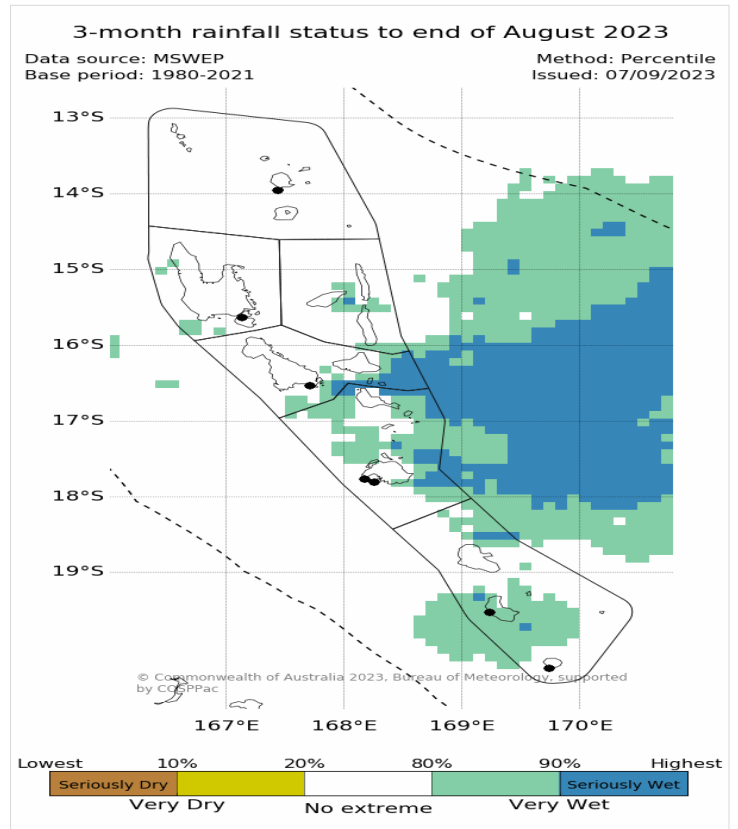
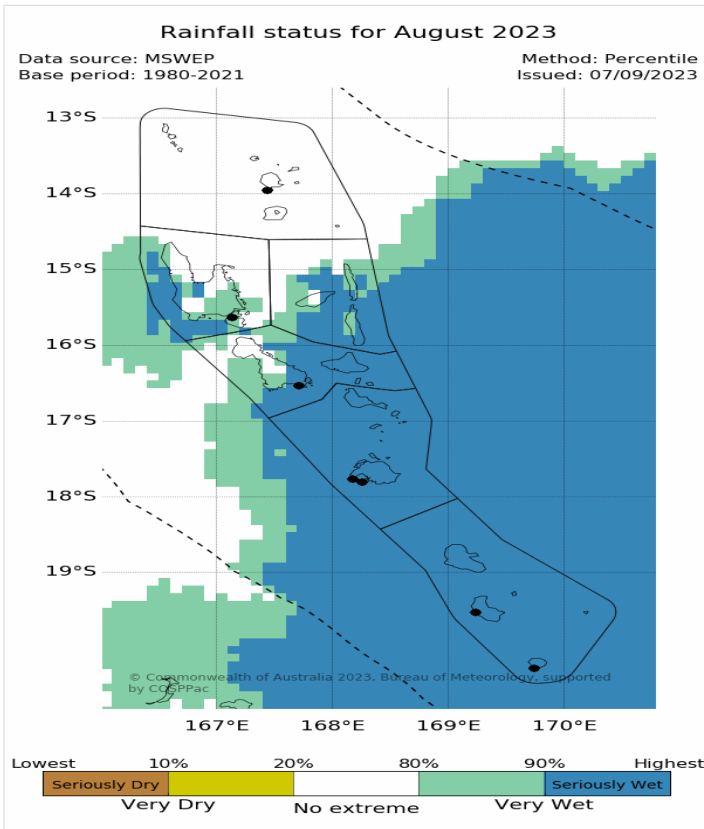
0% 10% 20% 80% 90% 100%

Seriously Dry Very Dry No Alert Very Wet Seriously Wet

Rainfall Monitoring Maps

Information on the Maps

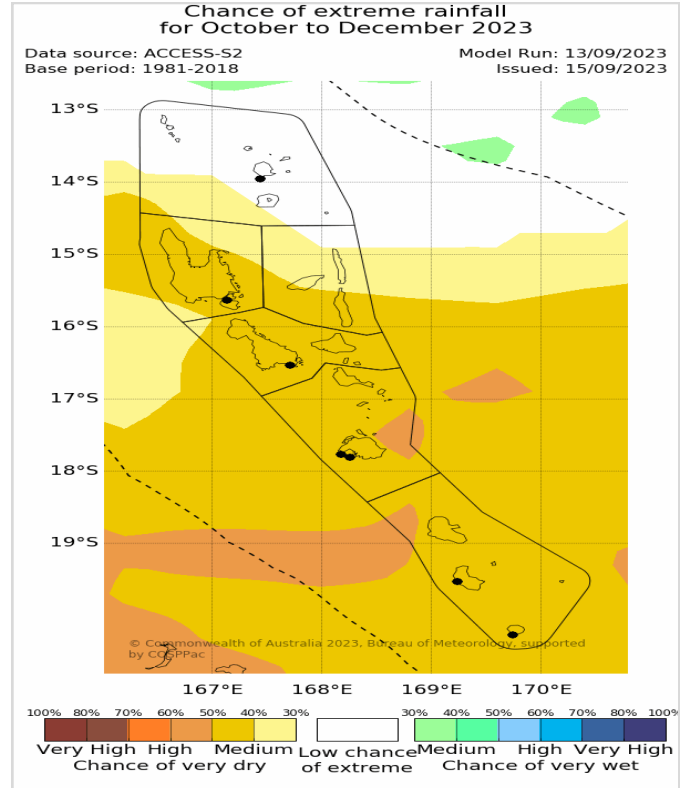
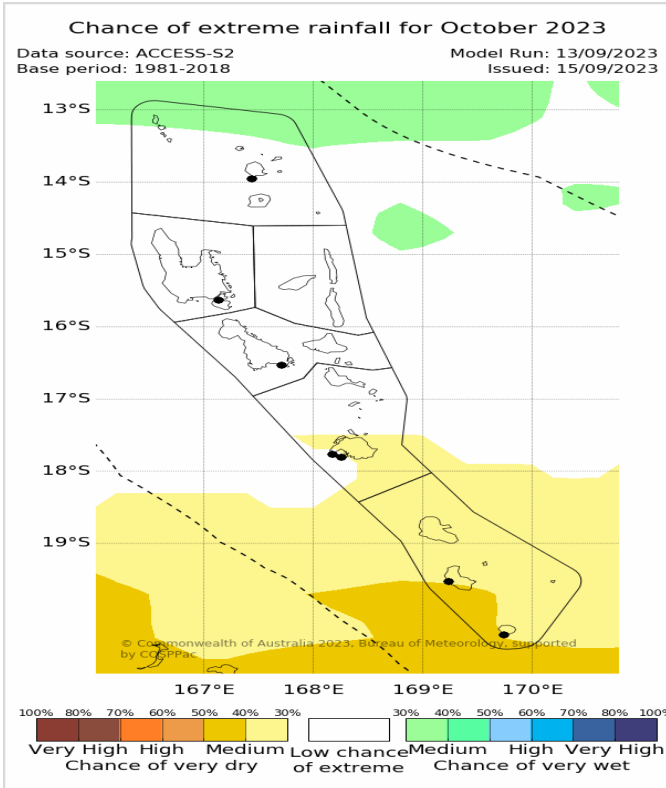
Vanuatu's rainfall status is assessed using the MSWEP dataset available via <http://www.gloh2o.org/mswep/>. MSWEP is a global precipitation dataset at 0.1° resolution, available from 1979 that combines data from rain gauges, satellite observations and re-analysis. The data is processed and presented in Percentile Index form by the Australian and New Zealand DFAT Climate and Ocean Support Program in the Pacific. 'No Alert' is assigned where rainfall was between the 20th and 80th percentile for the period in question.



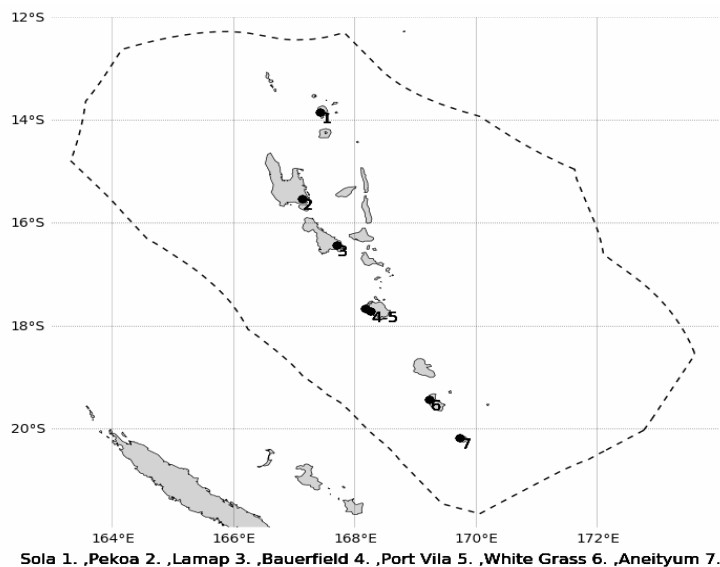
Rainfall Outlook Maps

Forecast for Extreme Rainfall maps

The chance of extremes outlook maps present the likelihood of very wet or very dry conditions. They display the chance that the outlook will result in rainfall in the top or bottom 20% of historical observations for the selected outlook period. Where there is white shading it is less likely there will be either very wet or very dry conditions, rainfall is likely to be close to normal in this case. A very high chance of very dry (very wet) conditions is associated with the highest likelihood of rainfall being in the lowest (highest) 20% on record. A medium chance of very dry (very wet) conditions is associated with a lower but reasonable chance of rainfall being in the lowest (highest) 20% on record.



Vanuatu Reference Map



Climate Change Drought Projections to 2090

For the whole of Vanuatu, the overall amount of time spent in drought is expected to stay the same or slightly decrease in the future. Droughts are expected to occur less often. Drought length is not expected to change. Overall, there is low confidence ('trust') in drought projections. However, droughts will continue to occur including serious droughts and people still need to prepare for these events.

Seriously Dry Condition Impacts

The following table provides examples of impacts that have been associated with drought at the 1, 3, 6 and 12 month periods. For further information and details refer to the ENSO handbook and contact the relevant government departments.

Sector/ Department	12-month period	6-month period	3-month period	1-month period
Water	Large water sources e.g. large rivers, lakes. Groundwater supply systems affected, water level drops, hand dug wells dry up and groundwater sources become saline.	Dams, bores, industrial tanks, wet lands, medium rivers. Rainwater catchments will be heavily affected including large rainwater tanks, surface water affected with reduced water level. Water quantity and water quality is further reduced.	Small to medium water tanks, small rivers. Rainwater catchments will be affected & water level reduced.	Water quality in wells and tanks reduced in small islands and west side of large islands.
Agriculture and freshwater fisheries	Large fruit trees, (e.g. coconuts, coffee, mango, guava, orange, mandarin), wild yam.	Rice, sugarcane, banana, wheat, root crops affected e.g., mature yam, Fiji taro, manioc.	Banana, cassava, new yam, water taro, English potato, kumala, vanilla, young kava, apple banana, aquaculture.	Small vegetables (e.g. tomato, lettuce, Chinese cabbage) and island cabbage on small islands and drier side of larger islands (W to N). Pasture will also be affected.
Livestock		Loss of large livestock (pigs, goats and cattle), farmed and wild freshwater fish and prawns.	Loss of small livestock (poultry).	
Forestry	Bushfire, insect pests and Diseases.	Loss large trees (due to increase spread and intensity of insect attacks) Loss of forest canopy affects quality and quantity of water, bushfire.	Loss of small trees (spread of insects and diseases attacks), sandalwood seedlings, bushfires.	
Environment	Loss of habitat, migration of endemics/species, degradation of landscape quality, loss of biodiversity/vegetation (extinction), introduction of alien/invasive species, secondary impacts, e.g., resettlements (2015)	Streams/lakes & any water bodies affected, introduction of alien/invasive species, landslides on new volcanic slopes.		Grassland
Health	Health - further deterioration in human health (e.g. cases of cholera appear, severe unbalance diet leading to death, cough & stunting, mental stress, diarrhoea, increased cases of skin diseases. Education - school close. Socio-economic - less income/ less production of local produces, bush fires destroying building, reduced river transport on large rivers, women migrating to get water. Increased chances of traditional houses burn down, reduced building materials.	Health - Increase in migration due to water and food shortages. Deterioration in adult human health (poor lactation, malnutrition, cases of typhoid, dengue, malaria, increase in skin, respiratory and eye diseases). Education - Affect education and children attendance, increase in social disruptions (e.g. reduced school hours) unbalance diet (relying on rice, tin fish & noodles), mental stress, diarrhoea, increased cases of skin diseases. Socio-economic - Increase in social disruptions (e.g. financial stress, assets being sold, crime). Social obligations being postponed. less income/less production of local produces, bush fires destroying building.	Health - Deterioration in young and old human health (malnutrition, poor lactation, dehydration, skin disease and diarrhoea cases). Education - affects schools for children due to reduced water supply e.g. schools close half day. Socio-economic - Unbalance diet/ less vegetables, additional labor on children & women, traveling distance to collect water, increase in psychological/mental stress, stealing. Food prices increase, reduced income. Some negative social disruption but also some positive impacts e.g. formation of women's networks.	Increase in gender based violence, increase non-communicable diseases. Disable persons due to higher water needs, increase discrimination.
Tourism Accommodation: Toilet/Shower, Swimming Pool, Restaurants, Flower/ garden, Water, Activities, Snorkeling, Kayaking, Water, Picnic, Waterfall	Airline & transport industry affected, agriculture and fishermen activities affected as well as duty free shops.	Drop in visitor numbers, reducing employment, reduce in income for business owners. Increase water temperature affecting snorkeling, reduce in the water level affect visitors to river activities, drier river level, reduced in income, reduced number of visitations.	Poor quantity and quality supply of water, inconsistency supply, affect availability of vegetables and others for hotels, flowers and plans drying up.	
Infrastructure	Road works thrive on drought as rainfall disturbs & damages roads & infrastructure (bridges & culverts)			
Energy	Infrastructure that depends on water in hydro-power, during drought, river/water level drops, affects generation of electricity. Sola energy companies thrive on droughts.			