

El Niño/La Niña Watch

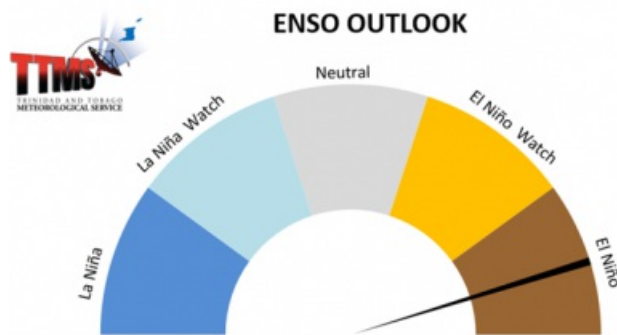


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ENSO Watch Update (based on the NIÑO 3.4 index (120-170W, 5S5N))

Issued at: Aug 3, 2026

Presently, El Niño exists and is expected to strengthen and persist through the rest of 2026. There is a 97% chance for it to persist through March to May 2027



El Niño is evident by the above-average sea surface temperatures across the central and east equatorial Pacific Ocean. The latest weekly indices are Niño 4 (+0.2 °C), Niño 3.4 (+1.5°C), Niño 3 index (+2.1 °C) and Niño-1+2 index was +3.2 °C respectively. The upper ocean heat anomalies were above average by 3.0 °C and persisted across most of the equatorial Pacific Ocean. Low-level westerly anomalies were observed from the western to east-central equatorial Pacific Ocean. The upper-level easterly anomalies were observed over the western to eastern central equatorial Pacific Ocean with max speeds observed at different locations.

Areas of suppressed convection were observed across Indonesia, while convection was enhanced in the central east-central equatorial Pacific Ocean. The ocean-atmosphere interaction indicates that El Niño is present and is expected to strengthen during the rest of 2026 and persist into March to May 2027.

What does this mean for Trinidad and Tobago?

During El Niño conditions, Trinidad and Tobago generally experiences near-normal to below-normal rainfall amounts and warmer days and nights. El Niño events negatively influence rain-bearing climatological features, often leading to reduced cloudiness and rainfall. Less cloudy periods during the day allow for more solar radiation to reach the Earth. To find out more about how the El Niño is expected to affect Trinidad and Tobago in the coming months. Please visit our website for the Rainfall and Temperature Outlook for August to October 2026 (<https://www.metoffice.gov.tt/our-services/rainfall-and-temperature-outlook-update>).

Guide: A La Niña (El Niño) is declared when the average SSTs in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean become at least -0.5°C cooler than average (0.5°C warmer than average) in the preceding month and the cooling (warming) is expected to persist for five consecutive overlapping three-month periods. This must occur together with a corresponding change in the overlying atmospheric circulation. The TTMS La Niña/El Niño Watch is activated when the ENSO Outlook indicates a probability of approximately 50% chance or greater for the development of La Niña or El Niño.