JAPAN P&I CLUB
日本船主責任相互保険組合

No.1372
29 May 2026

JAPAN P&I NEWS

To the Members

Ship Handling in Rough Seas－2026 Typhoon and Hurricane Outlook

The typhoon season has already begun in the Northwest Pacific, and the Atlantic hurricane season is fast approaching. We kindly ask that you stay updated on the latest weather reports and take all necessary precautions against adverse weather conditions while navigating. We have received information from the weather service provider StormGeo regarding the 2026 typhoon and hurricane seasons, which we have attached for your reference.

When sheltering at anchor, please take early measures such as preparing the engine, and exercise caution to prevent dragging anchor. Additionally, when anchoring or navigating in rough seas, please pay close attention to vessel handling in head and following sea conditions.

For more details on ship handling in rough seas, please refer to our VIDEOS below.

Related Videos
- Dragging Anchor Preventive Measures
- Weather and Sea Conditions
- Ship Handling in Head Seas
- Ship Handling in Following Seas

Yours faithfully,

The Japan Ship Owners' Mutual Protection & Indemnity Association

Attachment:
2026 Northwest Pacific Typhoon Season Outlook
2026 Atlantic Hurricane Season Outlook

StormGeo
Part of Alfa Laval

Outlook for the 2026 Northwest Pacific

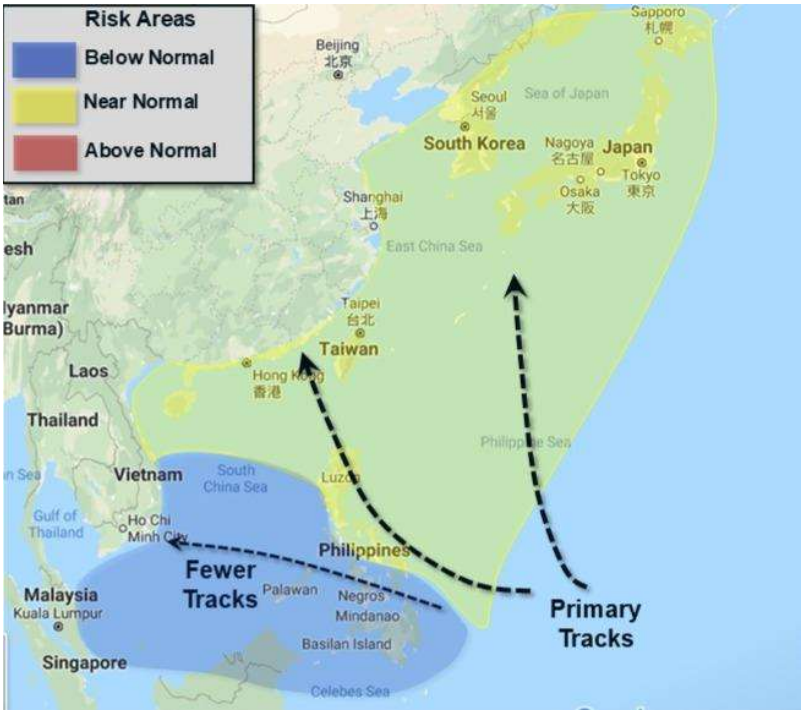
May 2026

Chris Hebert
Senior Meteorologist,
TropicsWatch Manager

2026 Pacific Typhoon Season Outlook: A Return of El Niño

2026 Season Forecast
28 Named Storms (+)
17 Typhoons (+)

30-yr Average
26 Named Storms
16 Typhoons



2026 Risk Areas

Season Outlook

The 2025 West Pacific typhoon season ended with a total of 27 named storms, of which 13 became typhoons. Of the 13 typhoons, 6 became intense typhoons with max sustained wind of 100 kts (115 mph) or higher. The strongest typhoon was Ragasa, which had maximum sustained winds of 145 kts (165 mph). Ragasa formed in the Philippine Sea on the 17th of September and tracked westward north of Luzon on the 22nd of September at its peak intensity. Ragasa made its final landfall in southern China on the 25th of September. The prime impact areas last season extended from central Luzon to Taiwan. No typhoons impacted Japan last season.

So far this season, there have been five named storms, including Super Typhoon Sinlaku, which struck Saipan and the Northern Mariana Islands in mid-April.

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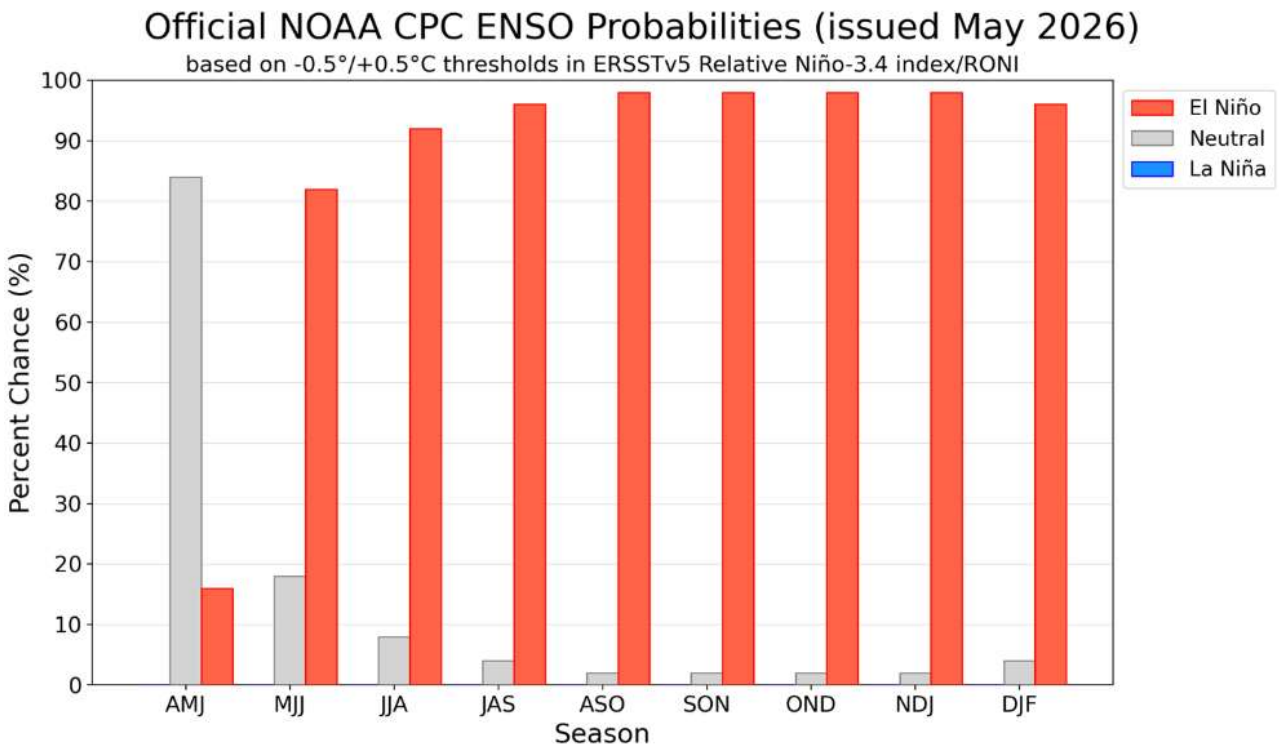
El Nino/La Nina

One primary driver of typhoon activity in the Northwest Pacific is the state of El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO). ENSO is represented by the Oceanic Niño Index (ONI), which is defined as the 3-month average surface temperature anomaly for the Niño 3.4 region in the Tropical Pacific. When the sea surface temperature anomaly is less than 0.5C below normal over a three-month period, it is identified as a La Niña. Conversely, when the average sea surface temperature anomaly is greater than 0.5C for a three-month period, it is identified as an El Niño.

Last season, water temperatures in the Tropical Pacific were neutral to a weak La Niña. For 2026, La Niña has faded away to a rapidly developing El Niño. Currently, all computer models are predicting a strong El Niño through the summer and autumn. The developing El Niño could be one of the strongest on record. This would result in sinking air over the South China Sea and Philippines, reducing activity there. More activity may be concentrated east of the Philippines and northward toward eastern China and Japan.



Source: https://iri.columbia.edu/our-expertise/climate/forecasts/enso/current/

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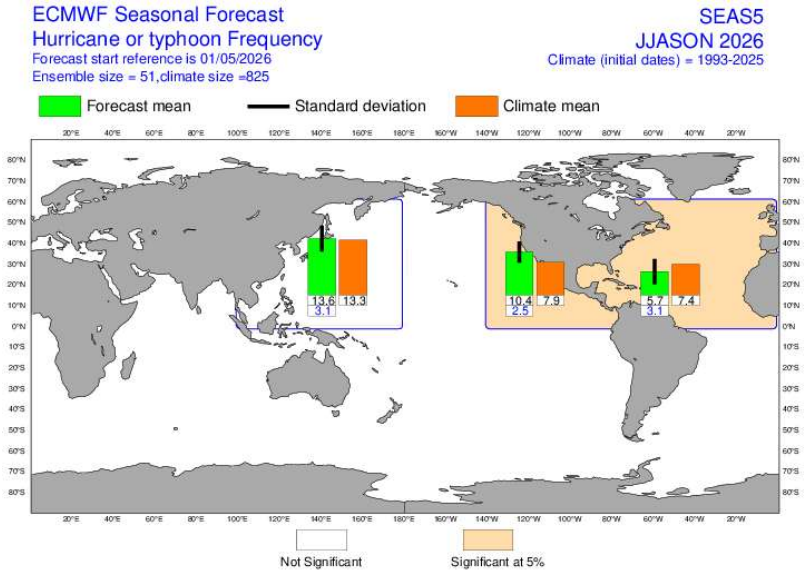
European Model Seasonal Forecast

Each year, the European model produces seasonal tropical cyclone forecasts around the world. For 2026, the European model is predicting a near normal 23 named storms from June through November, and 13-14 typhoons through during that same period. These numbers do not include the 5 named storms and one typhoon that have already occurred.

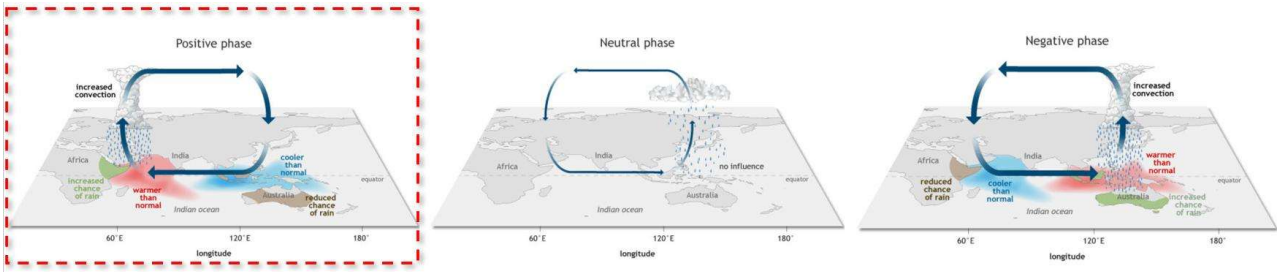


European Model Typhoon Frequency Forecast for 2026

Indian Dipole (IOD)

Another feature which can significantly influence Northwest Pacific typhoon activity is the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD). The IOD is defined by the difference in sea surface temperatures between the eastern and western tropical Indian Ocean.

The current forecast is for a positive IOD for the coming typhoon season. This would be an inhibiting factor as far as typhoon development this season across the South China Sea and Philippines.



Positive – Generally results in sinking air and cooler water across the West Pacific, resulting in decreased activity there.

Neutral – Neither enhances or inhibits tropical cyclone activity in the West Pacific Basin.

Negative – Generally results in rising air and warmer water across the West Pacific, resulting in increased activity there.

Source: http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/enso/#tabs=Indian-Ocean

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Water Temperature

Water temperatures in the northwest Pacific are generally not a major issue during typhoon season, as the water is always warm enough for typhoons to form. However, water temperatures so far this season are cooler than average across both the South China Sea and the Philippine Sea. While the water isn't cool enough to prevent typhoons from forming, the cooler water may limit the number of very strong typhoons in these two regions this season. Water temperatures from Taiwan through northern Japan are well above normal, which would provide a favorable environment for stronger typhoons.

Our May Forecast

The one thing that seasonal predictors agree on is that the central to southern South China Sea will have less activity than normal this season. So far this season, the five named storms all formed in the Philippine Sea or near the Marianas. We expect this pattern to continue in 2026. While the total number of named storms and typhoons may be a little higher than normal, much of the activity may be concentrated east of the Philippines. The region from Luzon through eastern China and Japan will be at normal risk levels this season.

We are predicting a total of 28 named storms this season, which is a little above the 30-year average of 26. As for typhoons, we are predicting a total of 17 this season, which is above the 30-year average of 16 typhoons.

Find our Severe Weather resources at
StormGeo.com/weather-intelligence

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2026 Atlantic Hurricane Season Outlook

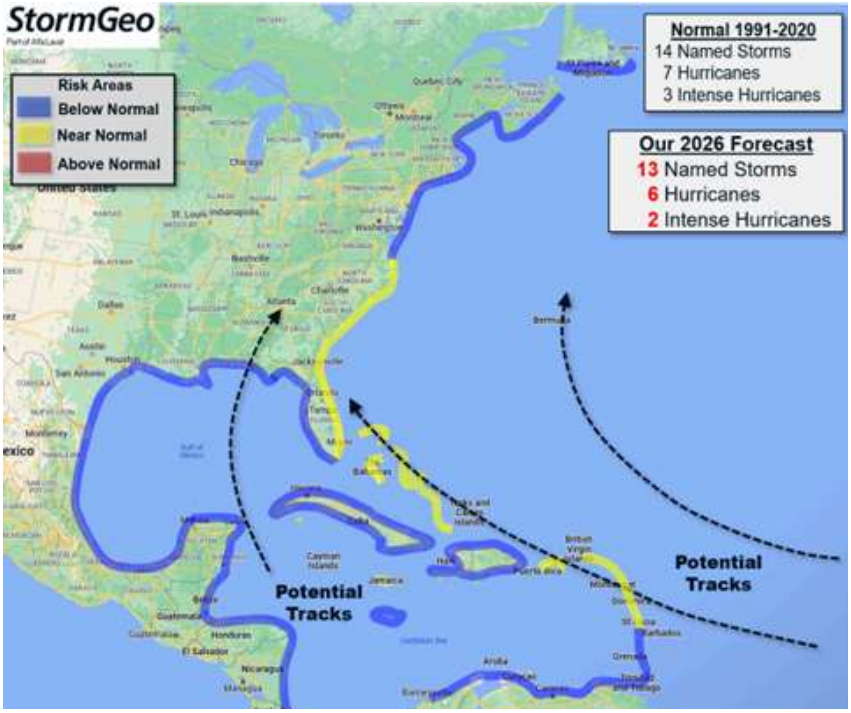
May 2026

Chris Hebert
Senior Meteorologist,
TropicsWatch Manager

2026 Atlantic Hurricane Season Outlook: A Return of El Niño

Key factors influencing the tropical Atlantic Basin:

- Return of El Niño
- Potentially high wind shear
- Primary analog seasons featuring hurricane development in the northwest Caribbean.



2026 Risk Areas

Season Outlook

The start of the 2026 hurricane season is fast-approaching. In this outlook, we will be looking at some of the indicators that can help identify what type of season to expect. There will be another update in mid-May.

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El Nino/La Nina

The La Niña event of 2025 has ended and is expected to transition to El Niño conditions by summer, with some models suggesting a potentially strong event. El Niño is defined by warmer-than-average sea surface temperatures in the eastern tropical Pacific, which typically enhances convection and storm activity in that region. This shift can increase hurricane formation in the Pacific basin due to greater instability and rising air. In contrast, the associated atmospheric pattern promotes sinking air over the Caribbean and tropical Atlantic, which can suppress storm development. The degree of this suppression will depend on how strong El Niño becomes during the peak months of August and September. If El Niño intensifies, it would likely lead to reduced hurricane activity in the Atlantic this season.

Atlantic Water Temperatures

Sea surface temperatures east of the Caribbean are slightly below average, largely due to stronger easterly trade winds during the winter months. In contrast, temperatures across the Caribbean are above normal, while the Gulf of Mexico and the subtropical Atlantic are experiencing well above-average warmth. This distribution of warmer and cooler waters can help indicate the types of atmospheric flow patterns that may develop during the upcoming hurricane season. Additionally, elevated water temperatures can provide increased heat energy, potentially supporting stronger hurricanes if atmospheric conditions are favorable for development. The current Atlantic temperature pattern is broadly consistent with past seasons that have exhibited below-average activity.

Wind Shear

The long-range European model indicates that wind shear may be unusually elevated across the Caribbean and tropical Atlantic during the upcoming season. This outlook is likely influenced, in part, by projections of a relatively strong El Niño developing during the peak months. Increased wind shear in the Caribbean and areas east of it would act to suppress hurricane development in those regions. However, if these stronger shear conditions do not extend northward into the Gulf of Mexico, the environment there could remain more favorable, potentially supporting nearshore tropical development during the season

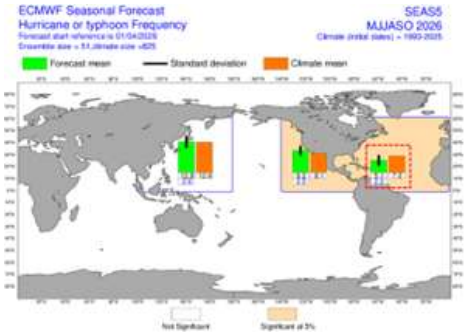
Analog Seasons

An analog season refers to a past year with ocean temperature patterns and atmospheric conditions similar to those currently observed. The premise is that when present-day tropical conditions closely resemble those of a historical season, overall activity may follow a comparable pattern in terms of storm frequency and track behavior. For the 2026 season, identified analog years are categorized as primary and secondary to guide expectations. The primary analogs suggest slightly below-normal activity, with approximately 12 named storms, 6–7 hurricanes, and 2 major hurricanes. Notably, these primary analog years also featured development in the northwestern Caribbean, indicating a potential for elevated hurricane risk in the Gulf of Mexico.

Year	Named Storms (normal = 14)	Hurricanes (normal = 7)	Intense Hurricanes (normal = 3)
1969	18	12	3
2006	10	5	2
2009	9	3	2
2015	11	4	2
2002	12	4	2
2012	19	10	2
2018	15	8	2
2019	18	6	3
Avg. (primary)	**12.1**	**6**	**2.25**
Primary + Secondary	**14**	**6.5**	**2.25**

European Model Forecast

The forecast extends through October and indicates below-normal hurricane activity across the Atlantic basin, with only five hurricanes projected during this period. In years influenced by a strong El Niño, the Atlantic hurricane season often tapers off earlier, sometimes concluding by November.
The European model's projection of elevated wind shear across the deep tropics is a key factor supporting the expectation of reduced hurricane activity this season, as stronger shear generally inhibits storm development and organization.



Our Early May Forecast

Signals for this year point to near-normal to slightly below-normal numbers of named storms, assuming a moderate to strong El Niño develops. With increased wind shear expected from the Caribbean to the eastern Atlantic, storm activity may shift farther north into the subtropical Atlantic, including areas from the Bahamas to the southeastern U.S. coast. At the same time, more favorable conditions in the Gulf of Mexico could support nearshore development. As a result, the likelihood of impacts in both regions may be slightly above average.

For 2026, the forecast calls for 13 named storms, including 6 hurricanes and 2 major hurricanes. This is below the 30-year climatological average of 14 named storms, 7 hurricanes, and 3 major hurricanes.

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