



# NOAA NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

## NOAA Expects Busy Atlantic Hurricane Season

May 27, 2010

An "active to extremely active" hurricane season is expected for the Atlantic Basin this year according to the [seasonal outlook](#) issued today by [NOAA's Climate Prediction Center](#) – a division of the [National Weather Service](#). As with every hurricane season, this outlook underscores the importance of having a hurricane preparedness plan in place.

Across the entire Atlantic Basin for the six-month season, which begins June 1, NOAA is projecting a 70 percent probability of the following ranges:

- 14 to 23 Named Storms (top winds of 39 mph or higher), including:
- 8 to 14 Hurricanes (top winds of 74 mph or higher), of which:
- 3 to 7 could be Major Hurricanes (Category 3, 4 or 5; winds of at least 111 mph)



Hurricane Ike, 2008.

[High resolution](#) (Credit: NOAA)

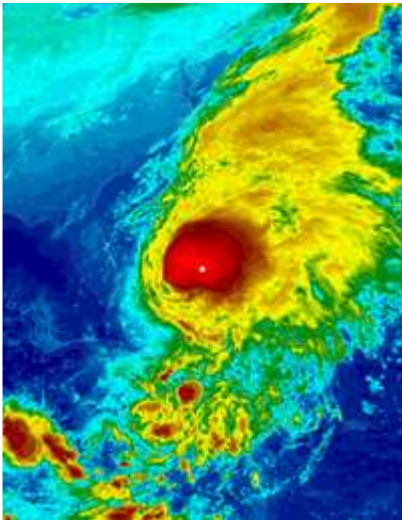
"If this outlook holds true, this season could be one of the more active on record," said [Jane Lubchenco](#), Ph.D., under secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator. "The greater likelihood of storms brings an increased risk of a landfall. In short, we urge everyone to be prepared."

The outlook ranges exceed the seasonal average of 11 named storms, six hurricanes and two major hurricanes. Expected factors supporting this outlook are:

- **Upper atmospheric winds conducive for storms.** Wind shear, which can tear apart storms, will be weaker since El Niño in the eastern Pacific has dissipated. Strong wind shear helped suppress storm development during the 2009 hurricane season.
- **Warm Atlantic Ocean water.** Sea surface temperatures are expected to remain above average where storms often develop and move across the Atlantic. Record warm temperatures – up to four degrees Fahrenheit above average – are now present in this region.
- **High activity era continues.** Since 1995, the tropical multi-decadal signal has brought favorable ocean and atmospheric conditions in sync, leading to more active hurricane seasons. Eight of the last 15 seasons rank in the top ten for the most named storms with 2005 in first place with 28 named storms.

"The main uncertainty in this outlook is how much above normal the season will be. Whether or not we approach the high end of the predicted ranges depends partly on whether or not La Niña develops this summer," said Gerry Bell, Ph.D., lead seasonal hurricane forecaster at NOAA's Climate Prediction Center. "At present we are in a neutral state, but conditions are becoming increasingly favorable for La Niña to develop."

"[FEMA](#) is working across the administration and with our state and local partners to ensure we're prepared for hurricane season," said [FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate](#). "But we can only be as prepared as the public, so it's important that families and businesses in coastal communities take steps now to be ready. These include developing a communications plan, putting together a kit, and staying informed of the latest forecasts and local emergency plans. You can't control when a hurricane or other emergency may happen, but you can make sure



Hurricane Noel, 2007.

[High resolution](#) (Credit: NOAA)

you're ready."

The president recently designated May 23-29, 2010, as [National Hurricane Preparedness Week](#). NOAA and FEMA encourage those living in hurricane-prone states to use this time to review their overall preparedness. More information on individual and family preparedness can be found at [www.Ready.gov](http://www.Ready.gov) and [www.hurricanes.gov/prepare](http://www.hurricanes.gov/prepare).

NOAA scientists will continue to monitor evolving conditions in the tropics and will issue an updated hurricane outlook in early August, just prior to what is historically the peak period for hurricane activity.

NOAA's mission is to understand and predict changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and to conserve and manage our coastal and marine resources. Visit us on [Facebook](#).