

EL NIÑO/SOUTHERN OSCILLATION (ENSO) DIAGNOSTIC DISCUSSION

issued by

CLIMATE PREDICTION CENTER/NCEP/NWS

9 April 2026

ENSO Alert System Status: **Final La Niña Advisory** / **El Niño Watch**

Synopsis: ENSO-neutral conditions are present and are favored through April-June 2026 (80% chance). In May-July 2026, El Niño is likely to emerge (61% chance) and persist through at least the end of 2026.

During the last month, ENSO-neutral conditions emerged, as indicated by near-average sea surface temperatures (SSTs) in the central and east-central equatorial Pacific Ocean (Fig. 1). The latest weekly Niño-3.4 index value was -0.2°C , with the westernmost (Niño-4) and easternmost (Niño-1+2) indices at $+0.3^{\circ}\text{C}$ and $+0.6^{\circ}\text{C}$, respectively (Fig. 2). The equatorial subsurface temperature index (average from 180° - 100°W) increased for the fifth consecutive month (Fig. 3), with above-average subsurface temperatures extending across the Pacific (Fig. 4). Westerly wind anomalies were observed over the western equatorial Pacific at low levels, and were evident over the eastern Pacific at high levels. Convection was near average over the Date Line, with suppressed convection over western Indonesia (Fig. 5). Collectively, the coupled ocean-atmosphere system reflected ENSO-neutral conditions.

The North American Multi-Model Ensemble (NMME) average, including the NCEP CFSv2 (Fig. 6), favors ENSO-neutral through April-June 2026, with a transition to El Niño thereafter. El Niño is likely because of increasing subsurface temperature anomalies and recent westerly wind anomalies over the western Pacific Ocean. However, the possible outcomes range from ENSO-neutral to a very strong El Niño during the upcoming Northern Hemisphere winter (Figs. 7 & 8). The possibility of a very strong El Niño ([1 in 4 chance](#) of Niño-3.4 $\geq +2.0^{\circ}\text{C}$) largely depends on the continuation of westerly wind anomalies across the equatorial Pacific throughout the Northern Hemisphere summer months, which is not assured. In summary, ENSO-neutral conditions are present and are favored through April-June 2026 (80% chance). In May-July 2026, El Niño is likely to emerge (61% chance) and persist through at least the end of 2026.

This discussion is a consolidated effort of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), NOAA's National Weather Service, and their funded institutions. Oceanic and atmospheric conditions are updated weekly on the Climate Prediction Center website ([El Niño/La Niña Current Conditions and Expert Discussions](#)). A probabilistic strength forecast is [available here](#). The next ENSO Diagnostics Discussion is scheduled for 14 May 2026. To receive an e-mail notification when the monthly ENSO Diagnostic Discussions are released, please send an e-mail message to: ncep.list.enso-update@noaa.gov.

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Relative SST Anomalies (°C)

01 APR 2026

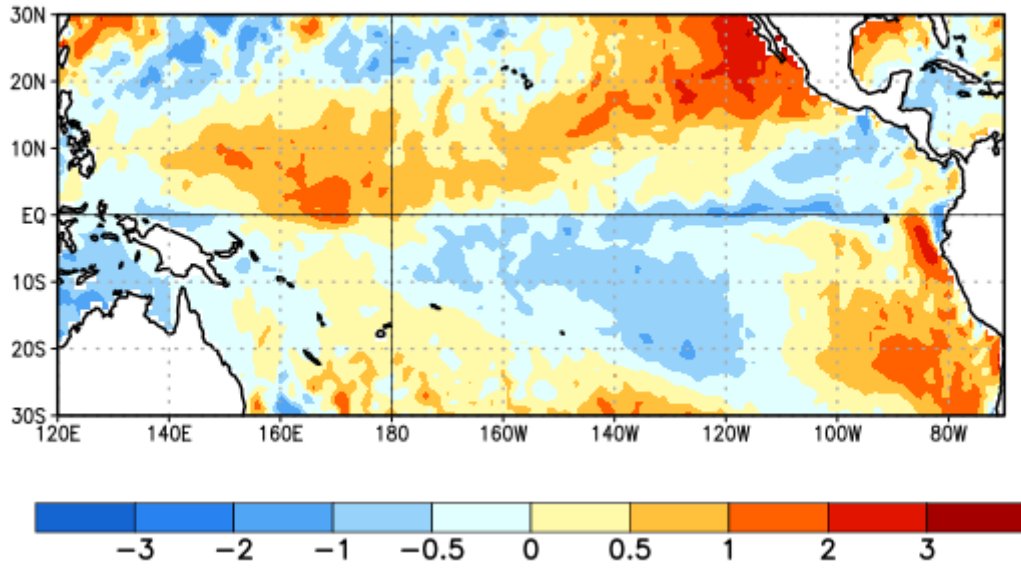


Figure 1. Average relative sea surface temperature (SST) anomalies (°C) for the week centered on 1 April 2026. Anomalies are computed with respect to the 1991-2020 base period weekly means.

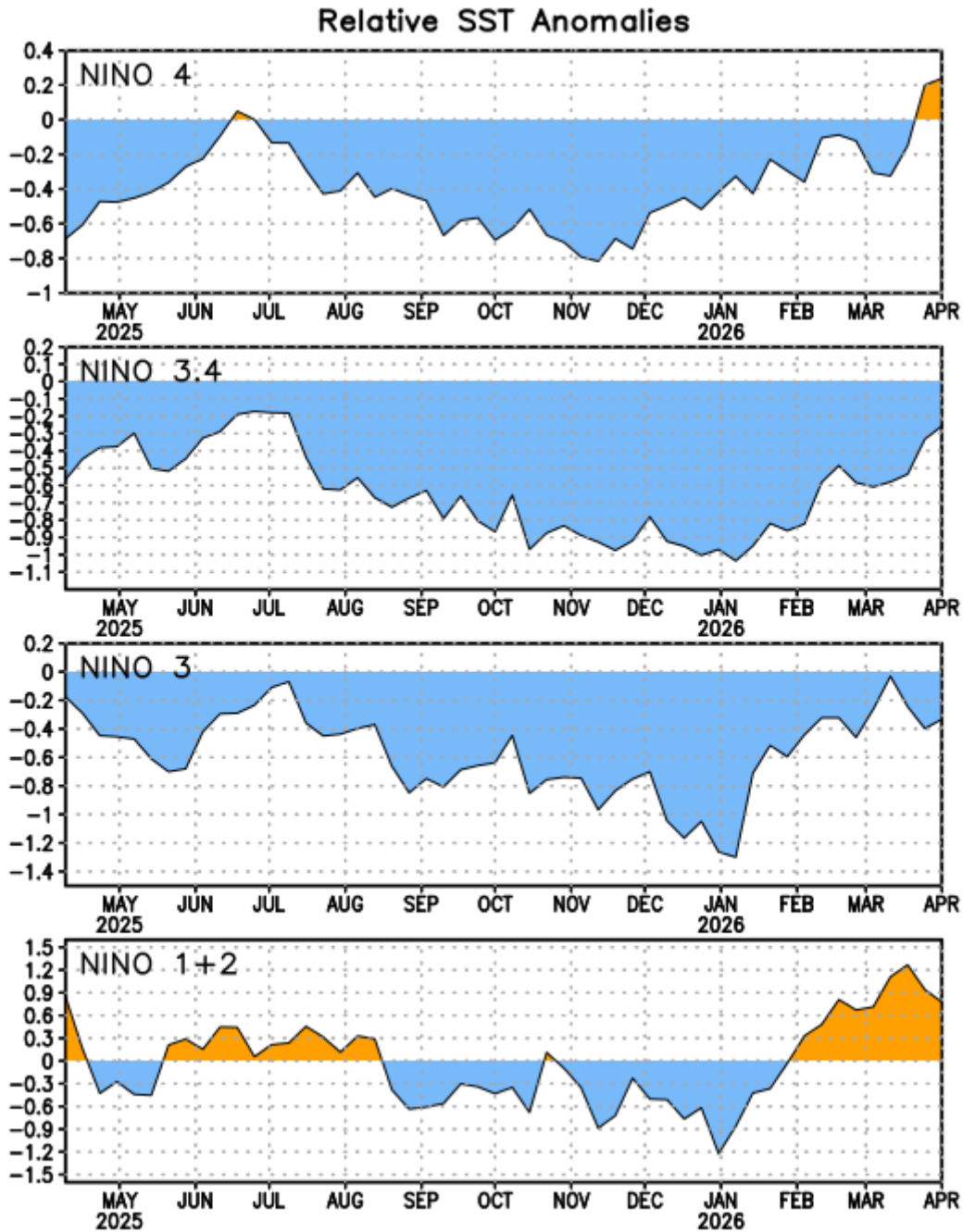


Figure 2. Time series of area-averaged relative sea surface temperature (SST) anomalies ($^{\circ}\text{C}$) in the Niño regions [Niño-4 (5°N - 5°S , 160°E - 150°W), Niño-3.4 (5°N - 5°S , 170°W - 120°W), Niño-3 (5°N - 5°S , 150°W - 90°W), Niño-1+2 (0° - 10°S , 90°W - 80°W) minus tropical mean (20°N - 20°S). The relative indices are re-scaled to match the variance of traditional indices. Anomalies are departures from the 1991-2020 base period weekly means.

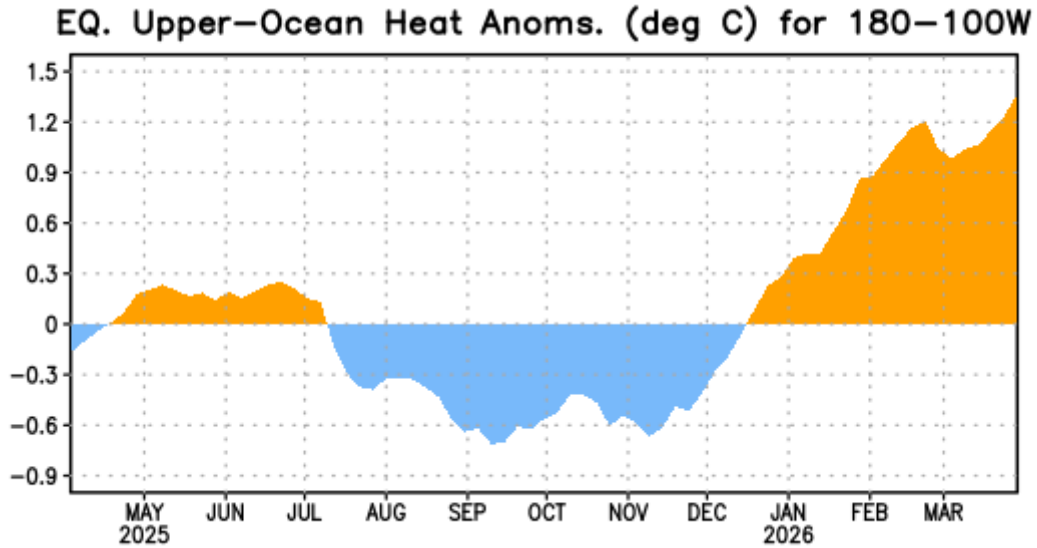


Figure 3. Area-averaged upper-ocean (0-300m) heat content anomaly ($^{\circ}\text{C}$) in the equatorial Pacific (5°N - 5°S , 180° - 100°W). The heat content anomaly is computed as the departure from the 1991-2020 base period pentad means.

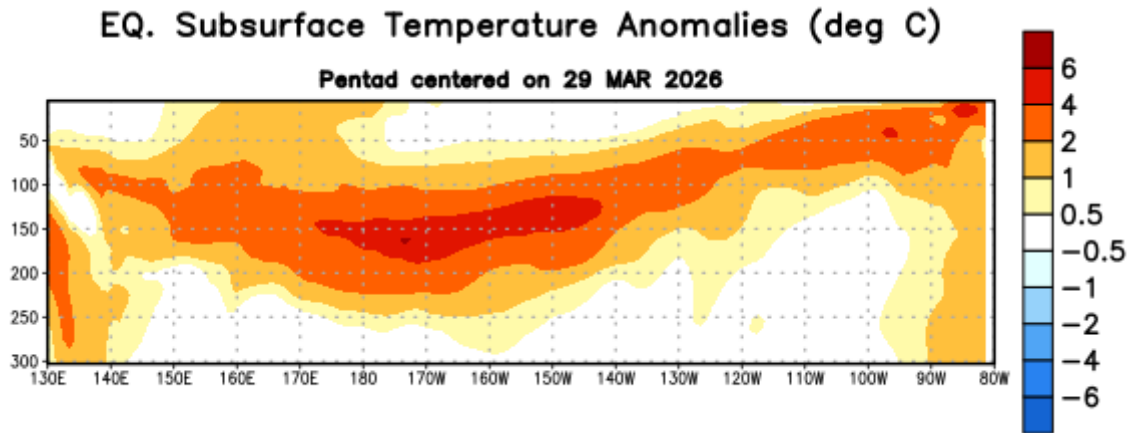


Figure 4. Depth-longitude section of equatorial Pacific upper-ocean (0-300m) temperature anomalies ($^{\circ}\text{C}$) centered on the pentad of 29 March 2026. Anomalies are departures from the 1991-2020 base period pentad means.

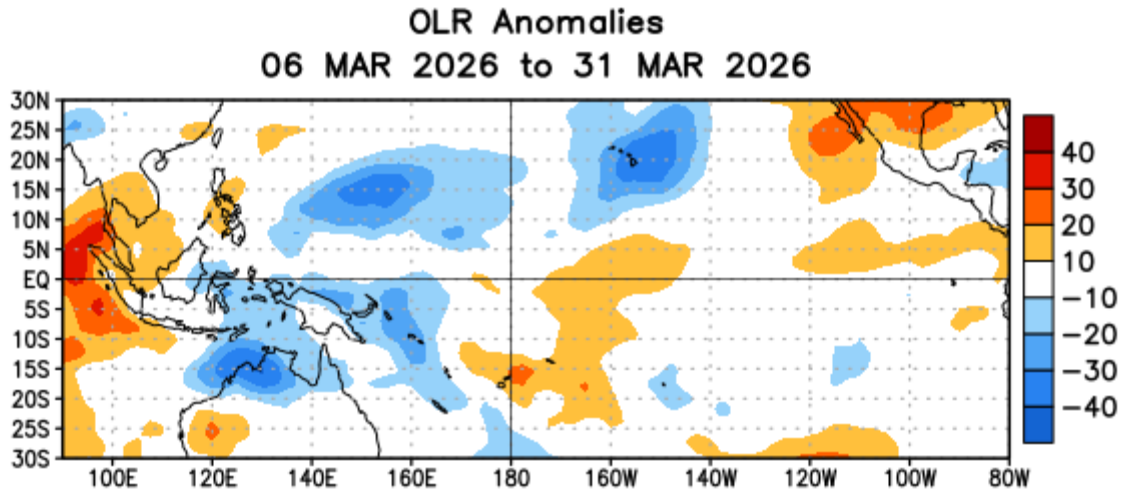


Figure 5. Average outgoing longwave radiation (OLR) anomalies (W/m^2) for the period 6 – 31 March 2026. OLR anomalies are computed as departures from the 1991-2020 base period pentad means.



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Last update: Mon Apr 6 2026
Initial conditions: 27Mar2026–5Apr2026

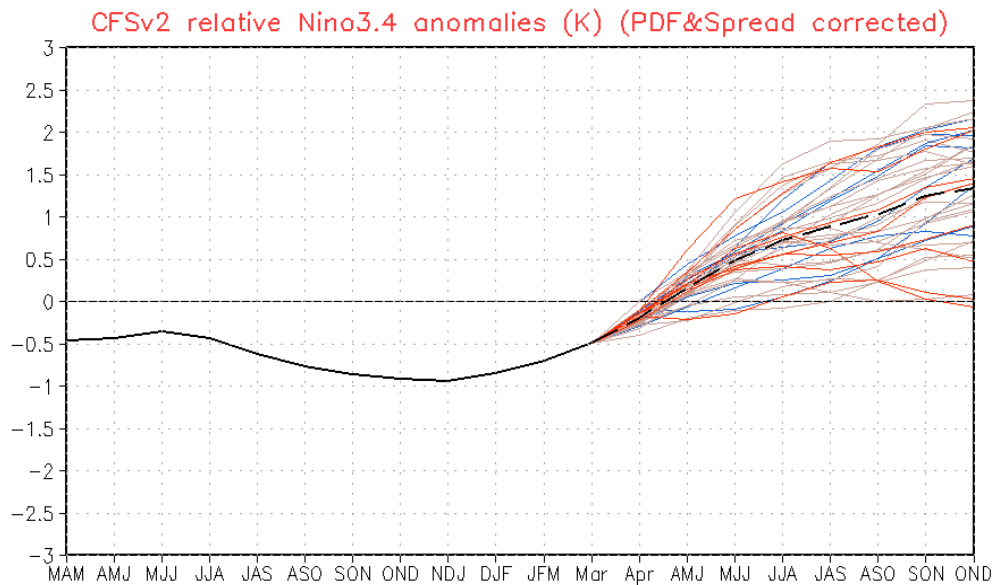


Figure 6. NCEP Climate Forecast System (CFSv2) prediction of relative sea surface temperature anomalies for the Niño 3.4 index ($5^{\circ}N-5^{\circ}S$, $170^{\circ}W-120^{\circ}W$) minus tropical mean ($20^{\circ}N-20^{\circ}S$). The relative index is re-scaled to match the variance of the traditional index. Figure updated 6 April 2026.

Official NOAA CPC ENSO Probabilities (issued April 2026)

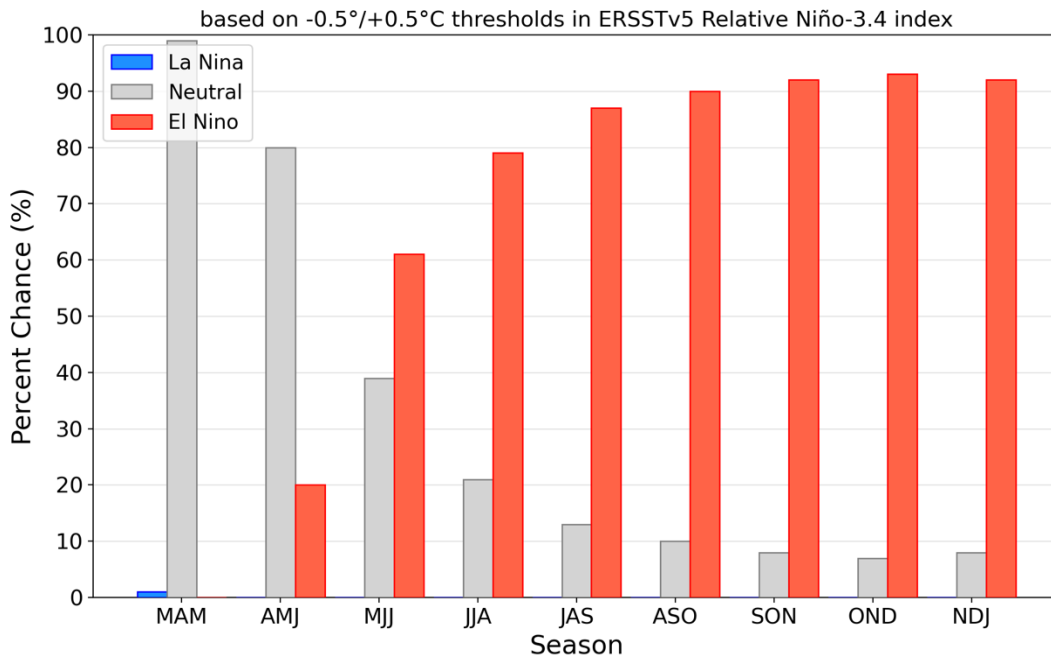


Figure 7. Official ENSO probabilities for the Niño 3.4 relative sea surface temperature index (5°N - 5°S , 170°W - 120°W) minus tropical mean (20°N - 20°S). The relative index is re-scaled to match the variance of the traditional index. Figure updated 9 April 2026. Higher resolution image/table: https://cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/enso/roni/probabilities.php

NOAA CPC ENSO Strength Probabilities (issued April 2026)

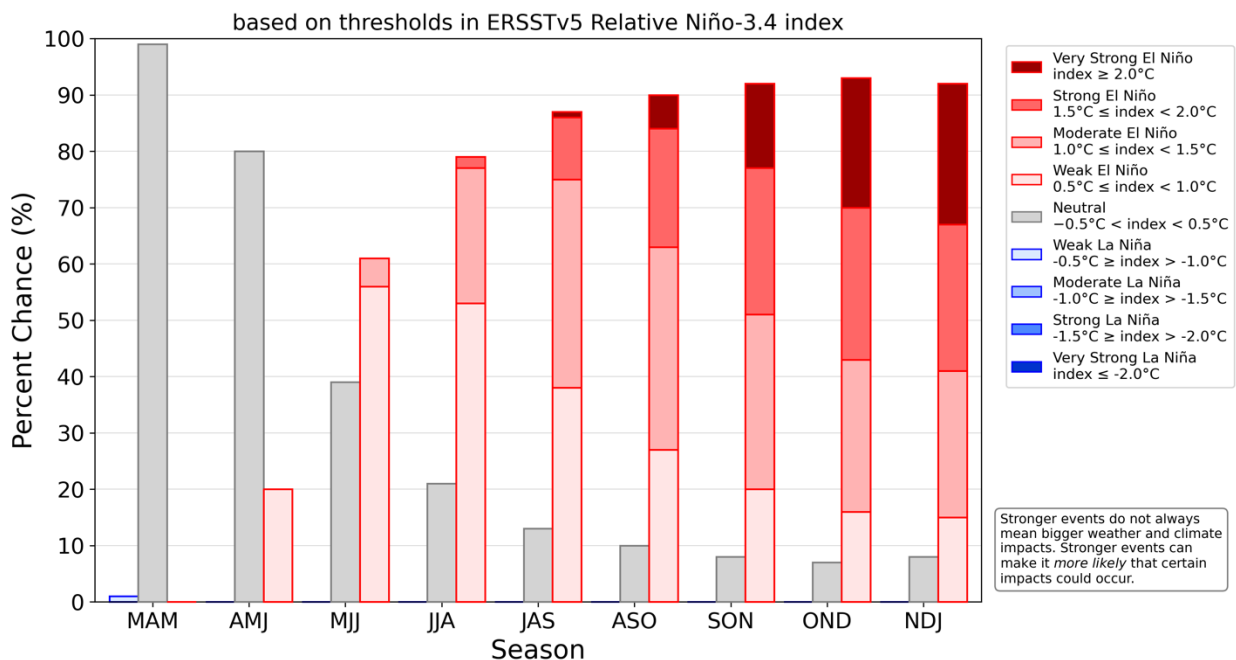


Figure 8. ENSO strength probabilities for the Niño 3.4 relative sea surface temperature index (5°N-5°S, 170°W-120°W) minus tropical mean (20°N-20°S). The relative index is re-scaled to match the variance of the traditional index. Figure updated 9 April 2026. Higher resolution image/table: https://cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/enso/roni/strengths.php