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Weather Trends International 2010 Atlantic Hurricane Season Outlook



Weather Trends 2010 Atlantic Hurricane Season Forecast

	Totals	Major Hurricanes	Hurricanes	Tropical Storms	Extra Tropical Storms	# Hurricanes Hit U.S.
2010 Forecast	16	4	4	8	0	2
2009	9	2	1	6	0	0
2008	16	5	3	8	0	3
2007	15	0	6	8	1	1
2006	10	0	5	5	0	0
2005	28	7	8	12	1	5
Average Year	10	2	6	2	0	1

Figure 1: Weather Trends International's Atlantic Season Activity

Source: Weather Trends International

2010 FORECAST:

Following a lackluster Hurricane Season in 2009, the 2010 season looks to liven things up with a more active than normal season. Weather Trends International's proprietary hurricane forecasting model anticipates 16 named storms (4 Major Hurricanes, 4 Hurricanes and 8 Tropical Storms) this is much greater than last year's 9 named storms (see Figure 1). WTI identified 4 distinguishing tracking indices that will influence the outcome of this year's hurricane season:

1. Cool Gulf of Mexico water temperatures will suppress activity early in the season but waters warm in August increasing activity.
2. Upper level wind shear will suppress activity early in the season but this will abate by middle August allowing systems to develop more frequently.
3. El Nino (warm sub-tropical Pacific) will weaken allowing Atlantic activity to increase for the later half of the season (middle August – late October).
4. Much less Sahel dust from West Africa (a plus for mid season development).

WTI has identified 3 years with similar atmospheric and oceanic conditions to 2010 which were incorporated into the WTI model to forecast patterns and tendencies of tropical systems this year. These similar years were 1998 (best fit), 2003 and 2008. While the beginning of the season (starts June 1st) will be rather quiet, expectations are for the season to become more active in mid to late August. Once the storms start to develop there will be several key areas to watch for possible land falling hurricanes this year.

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WTI expects the parade of activity in the tropics to really accelerate in late August through early November. The possibility exists for 1 to 2 active storms per week during this period with a significant number of Cape Verde storms that form close to the Cape Verde Islands off the west coast of Africa and then become hurricanes before reaching the Caribbean. These Cape Verde storms will pose the biggest threat to coastal North Carolina which WTI has highlighted as a high risk area this hurricane season (see Figure 2).

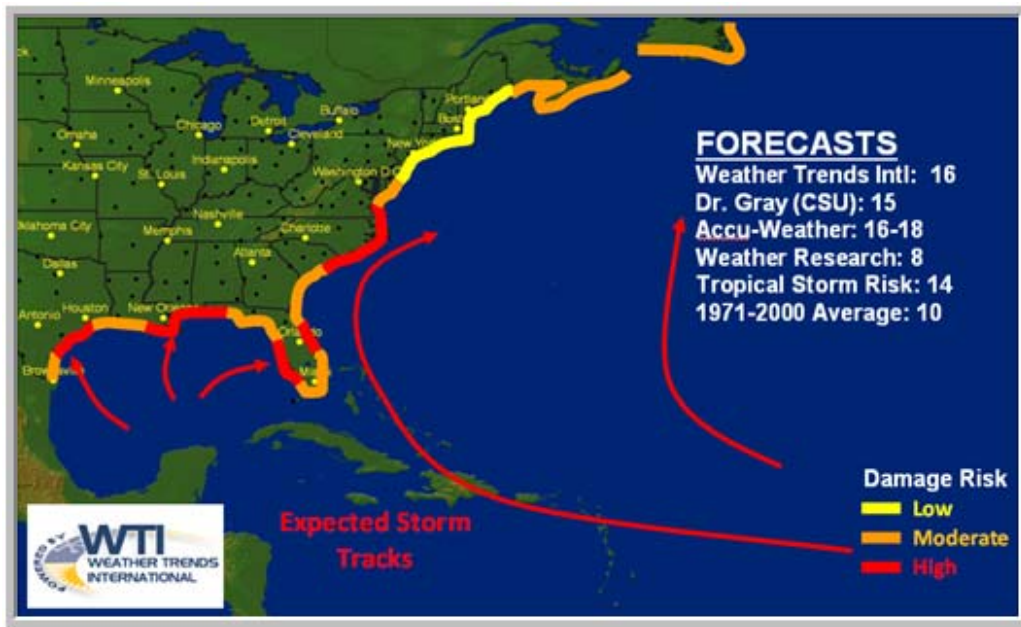


Figure 2: Weather Trends International’s Expected Storm Tracks

The Gulf of Mexico will be another area to watch for storm development later in the season with the highest probability of impact on the western coast of Florida, the Mississippi Delta or the central Texas coastline. The risk to oil drilling platforms in the North Central Gulf of Mexico and production facilities along the Gulf Coast is higher than average.

Currently, the coastal waters off of the eastern United States and the Gulf of Mexico are running several degrees Celsius below normal (see Figure 3). Although the coastal U.S. waters are cool, the temperatures across the tropical Atlantic from Africa to the Caribbean, are warmer than normal. These warmer waters will help to feed energy to any early season storms that may form, but these storms will struggle to maintain strength as they encounter shear and colder waters closer to the U.S. As El Niño erodes this summer so too will the shear in the Atlantic and cold waters will begin to warm. A neutral ENSO is expected to be in place by late August, which is why WTI anticipates the season to blossom in late summer.

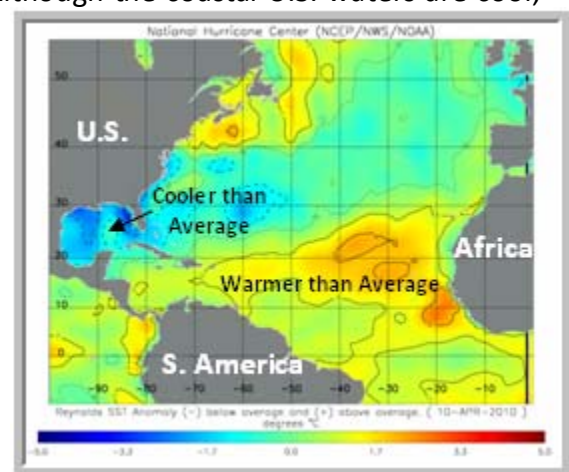
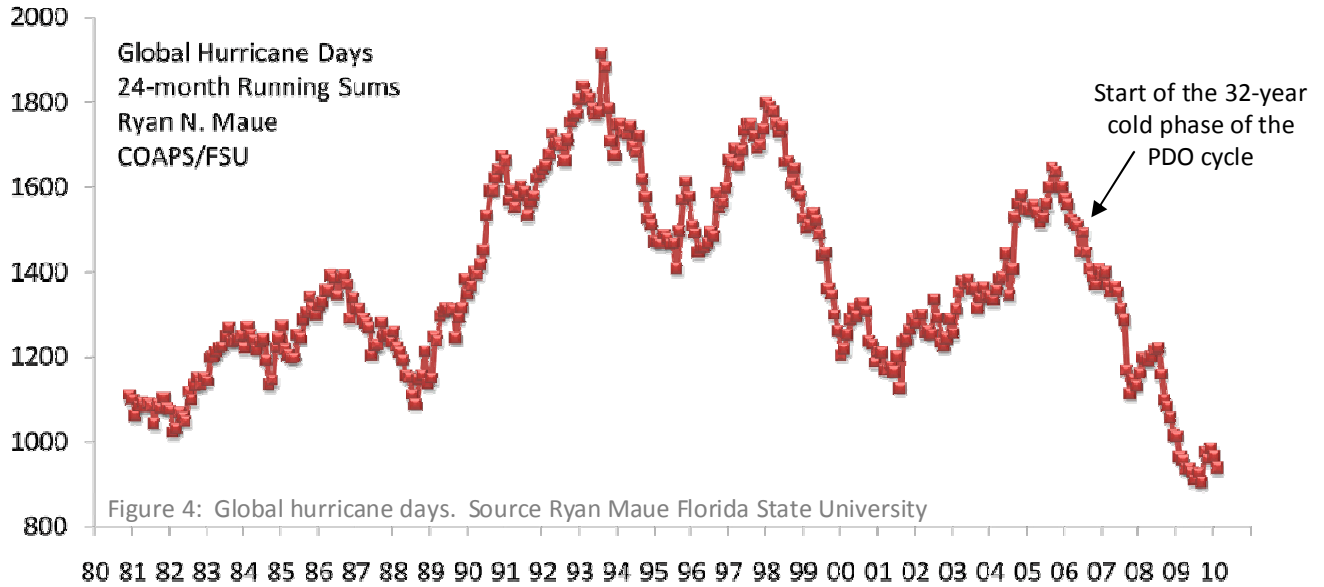


Figure 3: Water Temperatures as of 10 April 2010 (Source: CPC/NCEP/NOAA)

Global Hurricane Activity Near 30-year Low...BUT...



In 2006 a major pattern change in the Pacific Ocean very likely contributed to plummeting hurricane activity across the globe (see Figure 4). This 32-year Pacific Ocean cycle called the Pacific Decadal Oscillation (PDO) cycle is a long term ocean temperature shift from warmer ocean temperatures to colder. This current cold PDO phase is more similar to that of the middle 1940s to the middle 1970s. It's not a coincidence that when the Pacific was in the warm phase (1970s to 2006) so too was the planet and tropical activity. But now that we're in the start of the cold cycle its very evident that the Pacific is having an impact all across the globe with colder global temperatures the past few years, larger polar ice caps in years, less tropical activity across the globe. However, the Atlantic Basin is still in the middle of a warm ocean phase (AMO) so active seasons are still possible for the U.S. in the coming years. While a season like 2005 and the early 1990s is unlikely in 2010, there will be an uptick in activity as the weakening El Niño will allow more development than the past 5 years.

2009 SUMMARY:

Last year WTI had forecast a near average season in 2009 with the forecast of 10-13 mainly "fish storms" that would stay off the East Coast due in large part to a moderate to strong El Niño. The last hurricane of the 2009 season was Ida which occurred very late in the season (November 4th-10th) which demolished 80% of homes and schools in Nicaragua but no casualties reported. In El Salvador, at least 124 deaths were reported due to flooding rains and there was one death in the United States along the Mississippi River attributed to the storm. Ida made land fall as a weaker Tropical Storm near Mobile Alabama and was the first November hurricane in the Gulf of Mexico since 1985. Overall there were 9 systems – most very weak Tropical Storms.

Visit www.MYSkeye.com for in-season hurricane alerts and tracking information. Rich Woolley, VP Operations, Michael Ferrari, PhD and Bill Kirk, CEO contributed to this report.



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