

**No5-2006 MONTHLY ENSO DISCUSSION FOR MICRONESIA
AND AMERICAN SAMOA**

May 2006

The Pacific ENSO Applications Center (PEAC) disseminated the second quarter 2006 newsletter (refer to <http://lumahai.soest.hawaii.edu/Enso/index.html>). Oceanic conditions in the region have changed from La Niña to ENSO-neutral. The Climate Prediction Center (CPC) stated the following in its May 11, 2006 *ENSO Diagnostic Discussion* (refer to <http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov>): “The patterns of anomalous ocean temperatures are consistent in indicating ENSO-neutral conditions in the tropical Pacific. During April, SSTs were close to average at most locations between Indonesia and 90°W, which is reflected in the near zero departures [anomalies] observed in all of the Niño regions, except for Niño 1+2 [near the coast of South America].” Some residual atmospheric characteristics of La Niña are still apparent in the western North Pacific, such as stronger than normal trade winds across the basin and tropical cyclone development constrained to the western side of the basin.

Most of the latest climate forecast models predict ENSO-neutral conditions in the tropical Pacific through the end of 2006. However, the spread in the climate model forecasts (weak La Niña to weak El Niño) indicates uncertainty in the forecasts during the last half of 2006. It should be noted that from now until the end of June, climate forecast models generally have diminished skill in their predictions.

For the next month or two, tropical cyclone development and movement patterns for Micronesia will likely be displaced toward the west due to lingering atmospheric effects of La Niña. They should return to normal by July or August. The tropical cyclone season should be over for American Samoa. Sea levels will be slightly higher than normal due to the above average trade winds. The trade wind trough has been re-established over southern Micronesia, and rainfall should return to normal for most areas south of 8°N by the end of April, for areas south of 10°N by the end of May, and for the Mariana Islands by the end of July. Rains are slowly returning to the northern Marshall Islands, but residents are encouraged to conserve water for the next month. Rainfall in American Samoa should remain near normal as the islands move into their dry season.

PREPARED BY NOAA'S NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

Coordinated with the Climate Prediction Center and the Pacific ENSO Applications Center.