

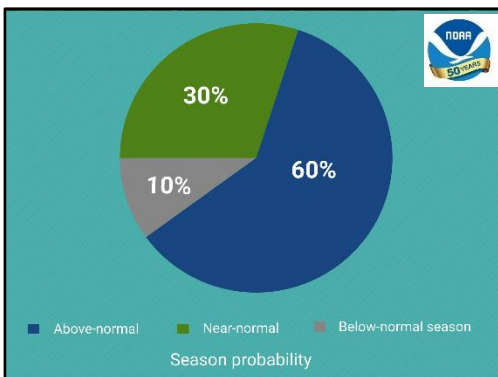


**METEOROLOGICAL SERVICE**  
*Branch of the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation*  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Friday, May 22, 2020**

## Official Pre-Season Outlook for Above-Normal Activity for 2020 Atlantic Hurricane Season

Ahead of the official start of the 2020 Atlantic Hurricane Season, Jamaica's Meteorological Service again endorses the prediction of the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), released yesterday. Through its Climate Prediction Centre, the outlook predicts a 60% chance that the hurricane season will be above-normal, while the likelihood of a near-normal season is put at 30% and only 10% probability that below-normal activity will occur.



During the Season, which runs from June 1 to November 30, the Outlook expresses a 70% confidence that the activity will include:

- **13-19 Named Storms**  
(winds reaching at least 63 km/h or 39 mph)
- **6-10 Hurricanes**  
(winds reaching at least 119 km/h or 74 mph)
- **3-6 Major Hurricanes**  
(Category 3, 4 or 5 with winds reaching at least 178 km/h or 111 mph)

The prediction for the Season is driven by a combination of climate factors in the region this year. Some of these drivers, including El Niño conditions, warmer-than-average sea surface temperatures in the tropical Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean Sea, and reduced vertical wind shear all increase the likelihood for an above-normal Atlantic hurricane season.

### ***Points to bear in mind***

1. This Outlook indicates, by way of probabilities, the likelihood of an above-normal, near-normal or below-normal season. A 'normal' season produces, on average, 12 named storms, six of which become hurricanes and three of which become major hurricanes. The number of named storms, hurricanes, and major hurricanes predicted are given as ranges, for which there is an indicated level of confidence.

2. The Outlook is produced from climate models that directly predict seasonal hurricane activity and from the predictions of how large-scale climate factors are expected to influence seasonal hurricane activity.
3. Since no climate model or prediction of climate factors is accurate 100% of the time, the purpose of the outlook is to provide a general guide to the expected overall activity during the upcoming hurricane season.
4. The outlook does not provide a prediction of the number of storms expected to make landfall over Jamaica nor any impact for any particular location on the island. Of note, the 2018 and 2019 Seasons, although being very active did not result in significant activity for Jamaica. Similarly, a Season with very little activity could prove disastrous for the country if a single hurricane moves into the vicinity.
5. This 2020 prediction follows the trend of Seasons of recent years reflecting a high-activity era that started in 1995.
6. The classification of tropical storms and hurricanes is based entirely on the strength of the sustained winds and does not consider the added and potentially more fatal threat of storm surge or inland flooding.

#### ***Remain watchful***

The Meteorological Service urges all residents to remain on alert for the entire period of the Hurricane Season as Jamaica remains in the region traditionally traversed by developing systems throughout the full six months.

Also, based on climate change concerns, Hurricane Seasons are expected to increasingly produce stronger hurricanes that last for longer periods. With that in mind, every effort should be made to bolster systems and structures to withstand the possible impacts of major hurricanes.

Residents may gain access to warning messages issued by the Meteorological Service through:

- **Severe Weather Hotline:** Dial 116
- **SmartAlert:** [alert.metservice.gov.jm](http://alert.metservice.gov.jm)
- **Website:** [www.metservice.gov.jm](http://www.metservice.gov.jm)
- **Twitter:** @MetServiceJA
- **Local Media:** Keep informed by listening to the Meteorological Service News Releases and Bulletins on local radio and television stations.

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