

Headline: Experts: No destructive El Niño to affect PH for the remainder of 2017

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Countries adversely affected by the El Niño phenomenon can write off the possibility of an occurrence for the rest of this year as climate indicators suggest this would not happen, according to experts in Australia.

Australia's Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) said in its latest forecast that all climate prediction models it surveyed indicated the tropical Pacific Ocean was likely to stay neutral for the remainder of 2017.

"Neutral" means the absence of both El Niño, which brings excessively dry conditions to the Philippines, and La Niña, which brings the opposite effect.

"Sea surface temperatures (SSTs) in the central tropical Pacific have been warmer than average, though still in the neutral range, since mid-April," the BOM said.

The agency added the overall SST pattern was inconsistent with a developing El Niño, meaning that further ocean warming and El Niño development remained unlikely.

The BOM also said other El Niño indicators such as cloudiness near the international date line as well as the behavior of trade winds also remained at neutral levels.

Meanwhile, the United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) said the chances of neutral conditions prevailing in the northern hemisphere during winter, or December to February, was 50-55 percent.

"More than half of the (climate) models favor neutral through the remainder of 2017," the NOAA said. "However, chances for El Niño remain elevated—35 percent to 45 percent—relative to the long-term average."

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