

Press Statement:

Quezon City, 01 May 2014

EL NIÑO WATCH

PAGASA has been closely monitoring the oceanic and atmospheric conditions in the tropical Pacific that could lead to possible development of an El Niño. A majority of climate models indicate that El Niño may develop this year. El Niño is characterized by unusually warm ocean surface temperatures in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific (CEEP).

The sea surface temperature anomaly (SSTA) over the tropical Pacific remained to be El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO)-neutral during the past several months. The established threshold of SSTA for an El Niño phenomenon is 0.5°C or higher during a three-month period.

PAGASA has already noted significant increase in the SSTA from 0.2 to 0.4 C from April 21 to April 28, 2014. Because of this development and as climate models predict that this condition may persist for the next nine months, PAGASA is foreseeing the onset of El Niño in June which may peak during the last quarter of 2014 and may last up to the first quarter of 2015.

El Niño could affect the normal rainfall pattern in the country generally resulting in reduced rainfall. Different parts of the country may experience varying rainfall impacts. PAGASA will be furnishing monthly rainfall outlook for six months for the different parts of the country.

The country could still experience normal number of tropical cyclone this year. However, El Niño causes the behavior of tropical cyclones to become erratic, affecting its tracks and intensity. The tropical cyclone tracks are expected to shift northward and its intensity could become stronger.

PAGASA will continue to closely monitor the tropical Pacific and updates/advisories shall be issued as appropriate. Concerned agencies are advised to take precautionary measures to mitigate the potential impacts of this phenomenon.



MARIO G. MONTEJO
Secretary, DOST