

The forecast presented here is for December and the average of the December-January-February period for the United Kingdom as a whole.

This forecast is based on information from observations, several numerical models and expert judgement.

SUMMARY - PRECIPITATION:

Predictions for UK-mean precipitation for December and December-January-February show a slight shift towards below-normal values – consistent with negative North Atlantic Oscillation conditions – although the spread of probabilities is large. Consequently, for the season as a whole the chance of above-average totals remains significant.

The probability that UK precipitation for December-January-February will fall into the driest of our five categories is between 20% and 25% and the probability that it will fall into the wettest category is around 15% (the climatological probability for each of these categories is 20%).

CONTEXT:

Predictability of UK precipitation on seasonal timescales is generally low. For the forecast period, models show some consistency in a signal for higher-than-average pressure over northwestern Europe, and therefore for below-average precipitation over the UK, especially in December. For the season as a whole the dry signal is weak. Compared to climatological levels, there is an increased chance of a very dry winter, but the risk remains very low.

The risk of snowfall over the UK is related to the occurrence of cold winter weather. As probabilities favour for this year a colder season than last year's, the risk of snowfall is enhanced.

Fig P1

3-month UK outlook for precipitation in the context of the observed annual cycle

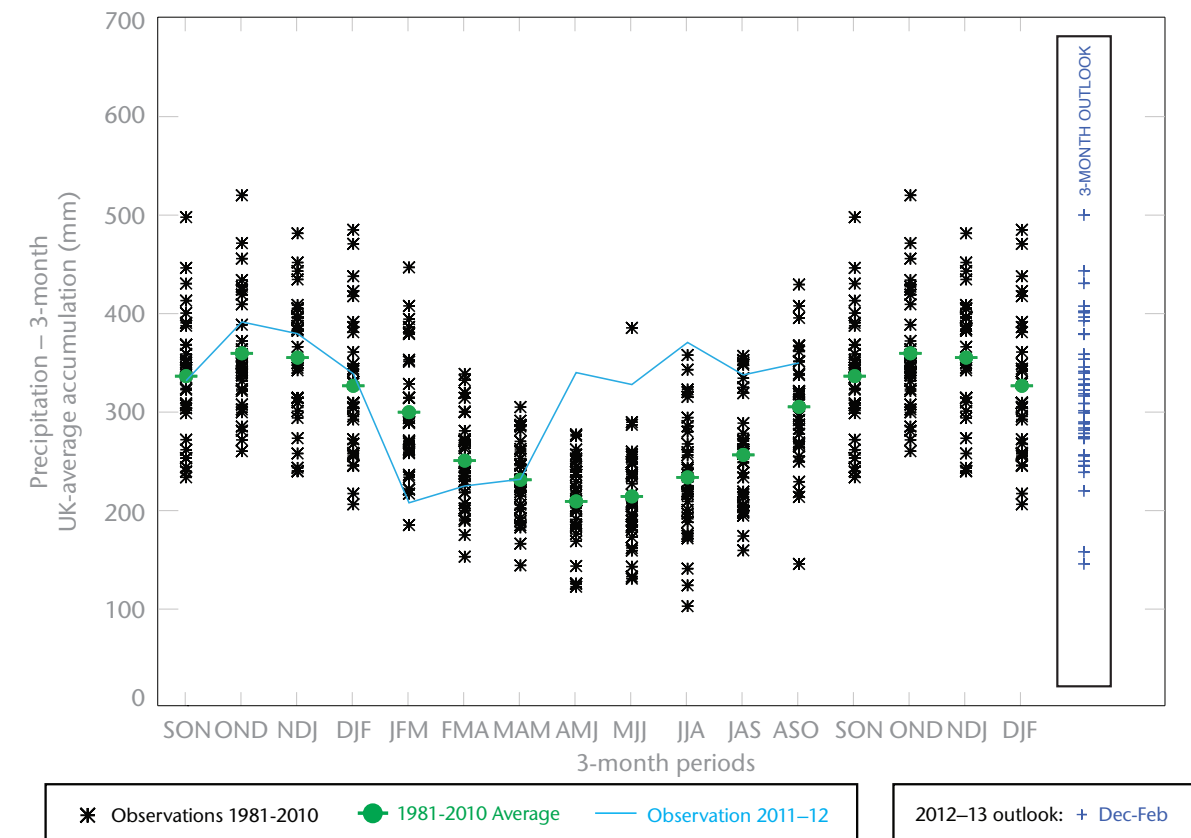


Fig P2

1-month and 3-month UK outlook for precipitation in the context of observed climatology

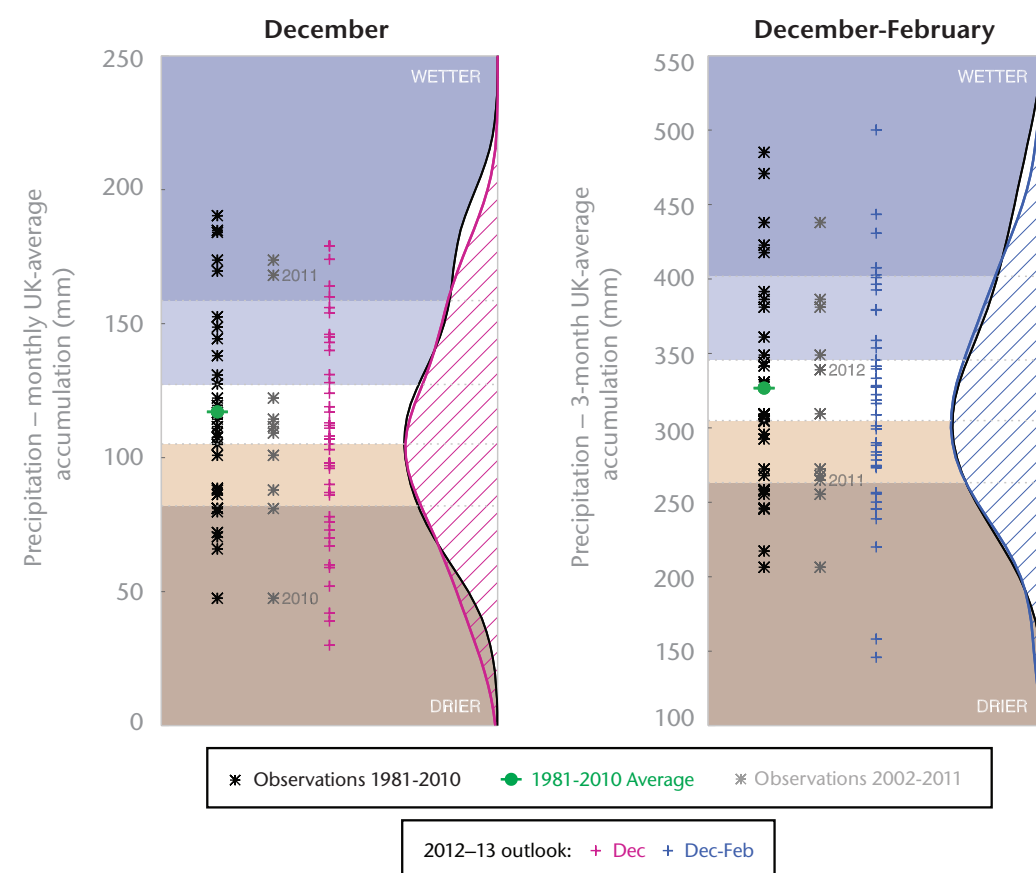
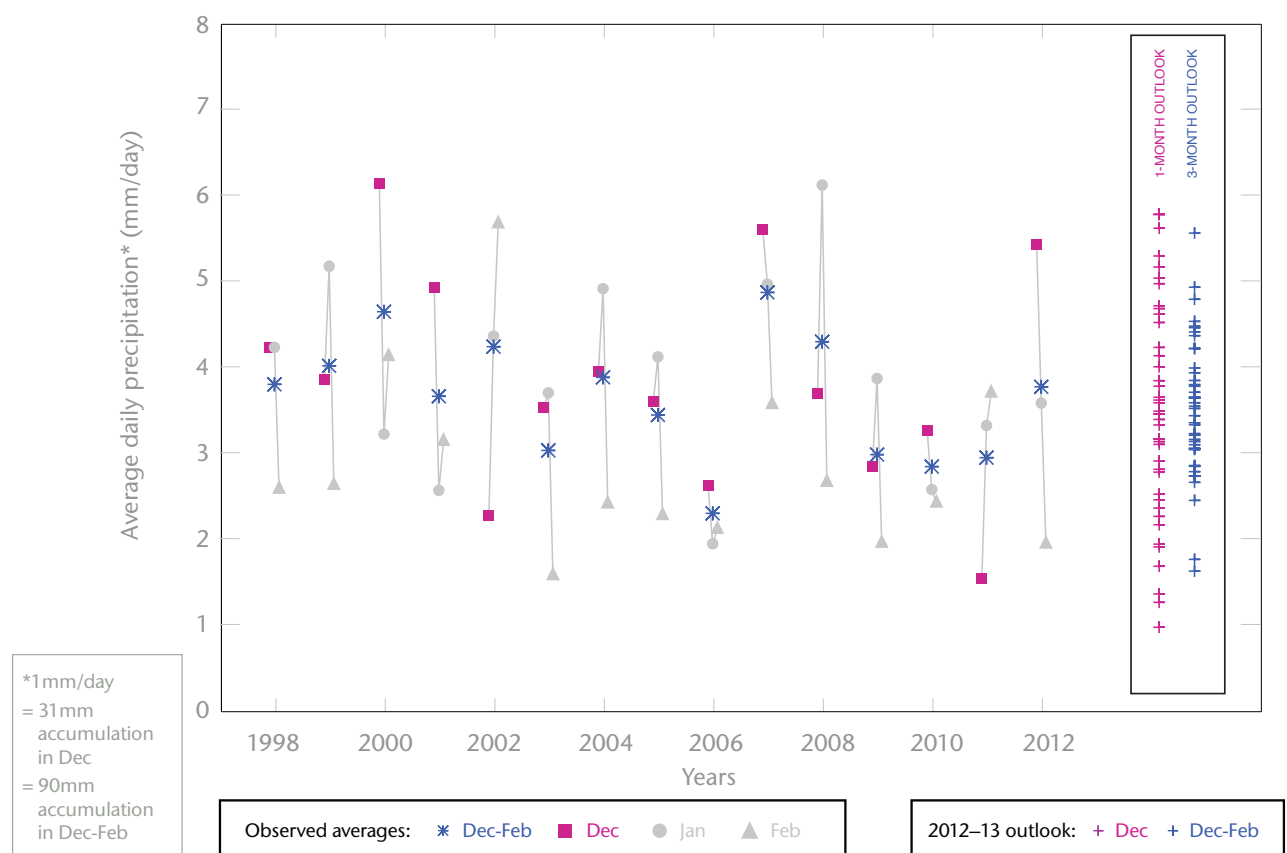


Fig P3

1-month and 3-month UK outlook for precipitation in the context of recent climatology: year-to-year and within-season variability



This Outlook provides an indication of possible temperature and rainfall conditions over the next 3 months. It is part of a suite of forecasts designed for contingency planners. The Outlook should not be used in isolation but should be used with shorter-range and more detailed (30-day, 15-day and 1-to-5-day) forecasts and warnings available to the contingency planning community from the Met Office.