



Met Office 3-month Outlook

Period: February – April 2020 Issue date: 24.01.20

The forecast presented here is for February and the average of the February-March-April period for the United Kingdom as a whole. The forecast for February will be superseded by the long-range information on the public weather forecast web page (www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/forecast/#?tab=regionalForecast), starting from 31st January 2020.

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

SUMMARY – PRECIPITATION:

For February, the likelihoods of above- and below-average precipitation are similar. For February-March-April as a whole, below-average precipitation is slightly more likely than above-average precipitation.

The probability that UK-average precipitation for February-March-April will fall into the driest of our five categories is around 25% and the probability that it will fall into the wettest of our five categories is between 15% and 20% (the 1981-2010 probability for each of these categories is 20%).

CONTEXT:

The influence of global drivers on UK weather patterns is strongest during winter. This corresponds to the period with the highest levels of predictability which then normally reduce during the spring. For the Outlook period, there is a greater-than-usual likelihood of a positive phase of the North Atlantic Oscillation (NAO) (see temperature Outlook). This implies an increased likelihood of moist westerly winds and wetter-than-usual conditions. Conversely, there is a greater-than-usual chance of high-pressure impinging on the UK from the south, which moderates the chances of above-average precipitation.

On balance, for both February and the February-March-April period as a whole, the chances of below-average precipitation and above-average precipitation are only slightly different to normal (see graphs of figure P2).. This reflects the uncertainty in the relative influence of the two competing features described above. Despite the balanced outlook for rainfall, the chances of impacts from high winds are increased compared to normal.

Fig P1

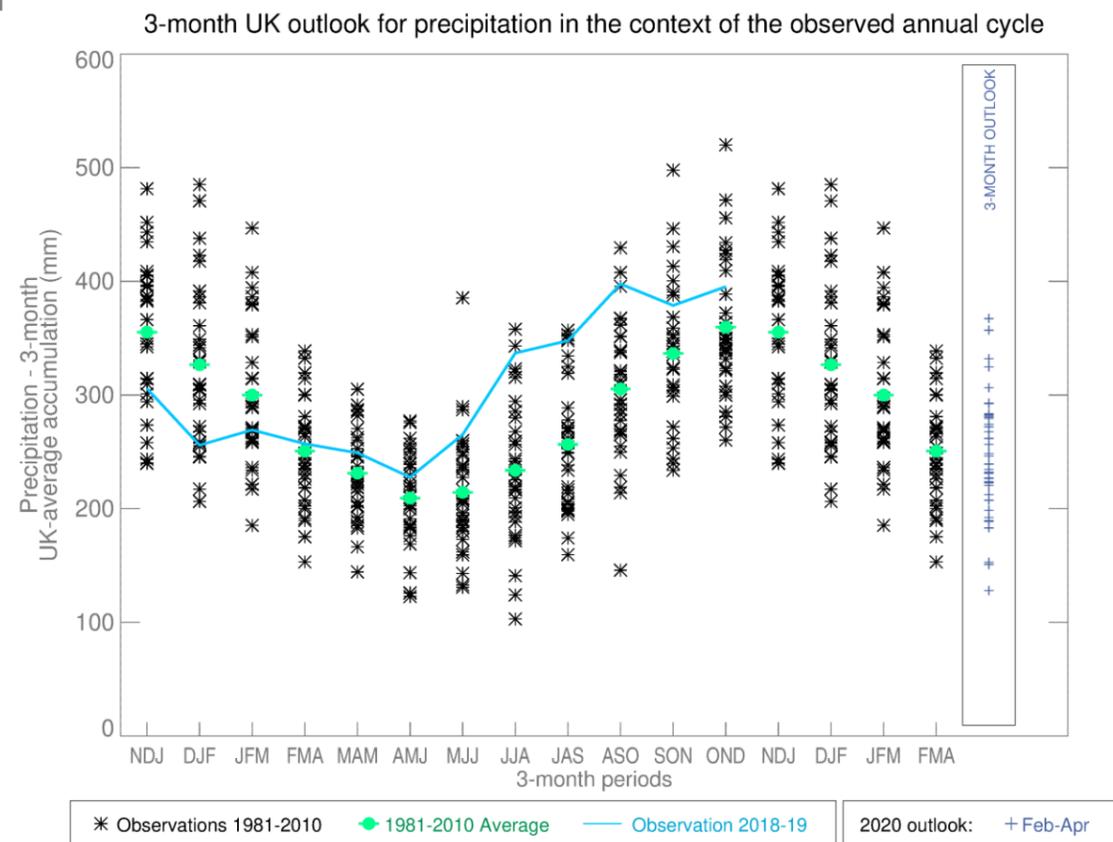


Fig P2

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

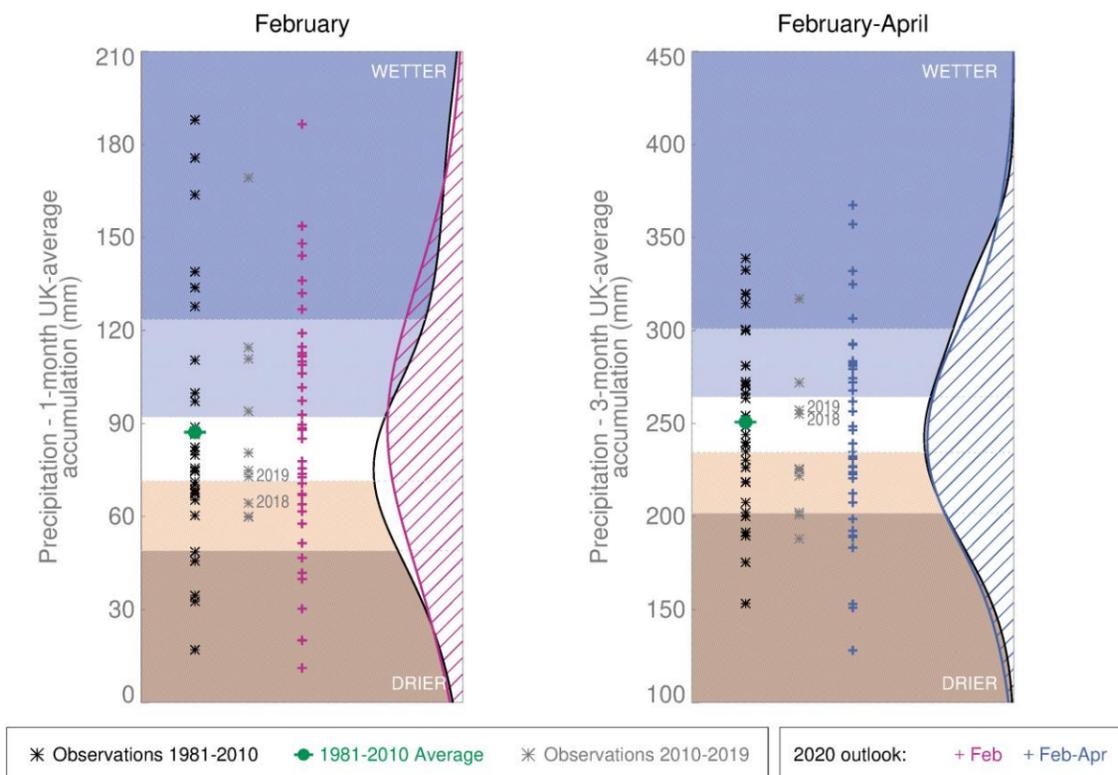
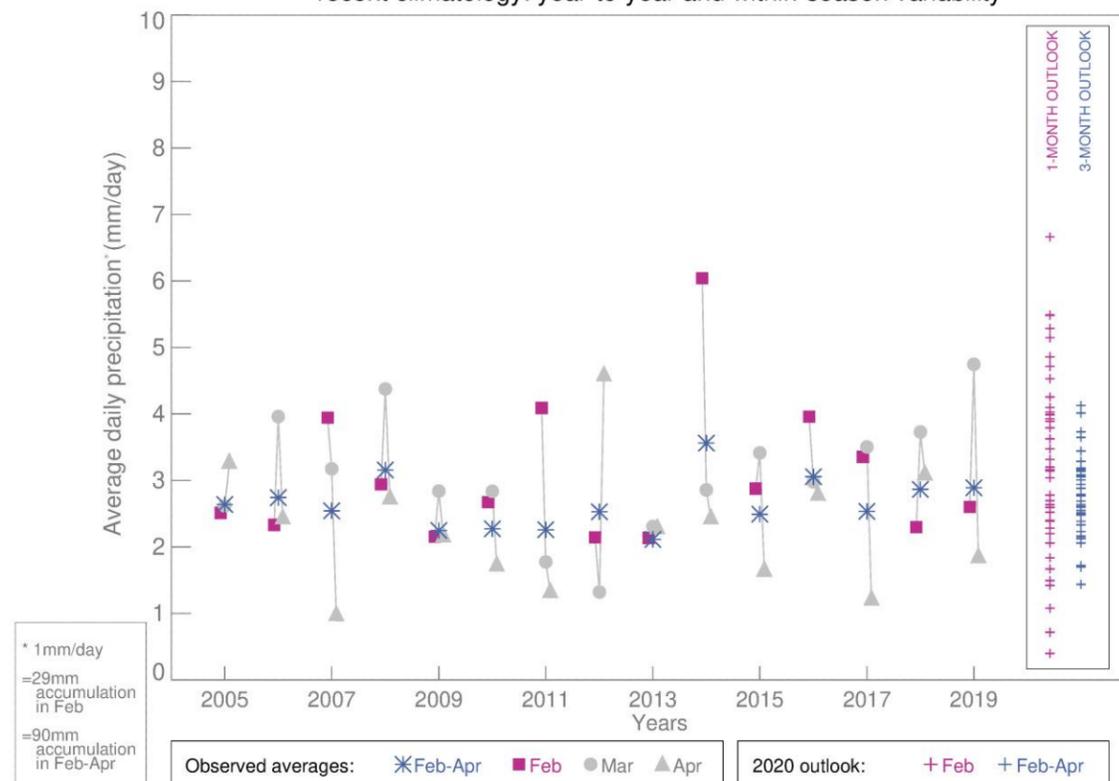


Fig P3

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-7-day) forecasts and warnings available to the contingency planning community from the Met Office.