

The forecast presented here is for March and the average of the March-April-May period for the United Kingdom as a whole. The forecast for March will be superseded by the long-range information on the public weather forecast web page (www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/forecast/#?tab=regionalForecast), starting from 26 February 2016.

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

SUMMARY - PRECIPITATION:

For March, there is an increase in the chance of above-average precipitation, and a decrease in the chance of below-average precipitation, compared to usual.

Predictions for UK-mean precipitation for the 3-month period (March-April-May) are that above-average precipitation is slightly more probable than below-average. Overall, the probability that the UK-average precipitation for March-April-May will fall into the driest of our five categories is 20% and the probability that it will fall into the wettest of our five categories is around 25% (the 1981-2010 probability for each of these categories is 20%).

CONTEXT:

In March, there is an increased likelihood of cyclonic weather patterns to the north-east impinging on the UK. This increases the risk of higher-than-normal rainfall, as can be seen in the left-hand graph of figure P2.

Predictions for the season as a whole (March-April-May) are uncertain. This is because precipitation across the UK is dependent on the evolution and position of the expected

developing ridge across the Mid-Atlantic, plus the likelihood of a sudden stratospheric warming (SSW) event. This will have an impact on the resulting weather patterns across the UK and translates into uncertainty in the rainfall. Overall, the probability of above-normal is considered slightly more likely than below-normal, as can be seen in the right-hand graph of figure P2.

Fig P1

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

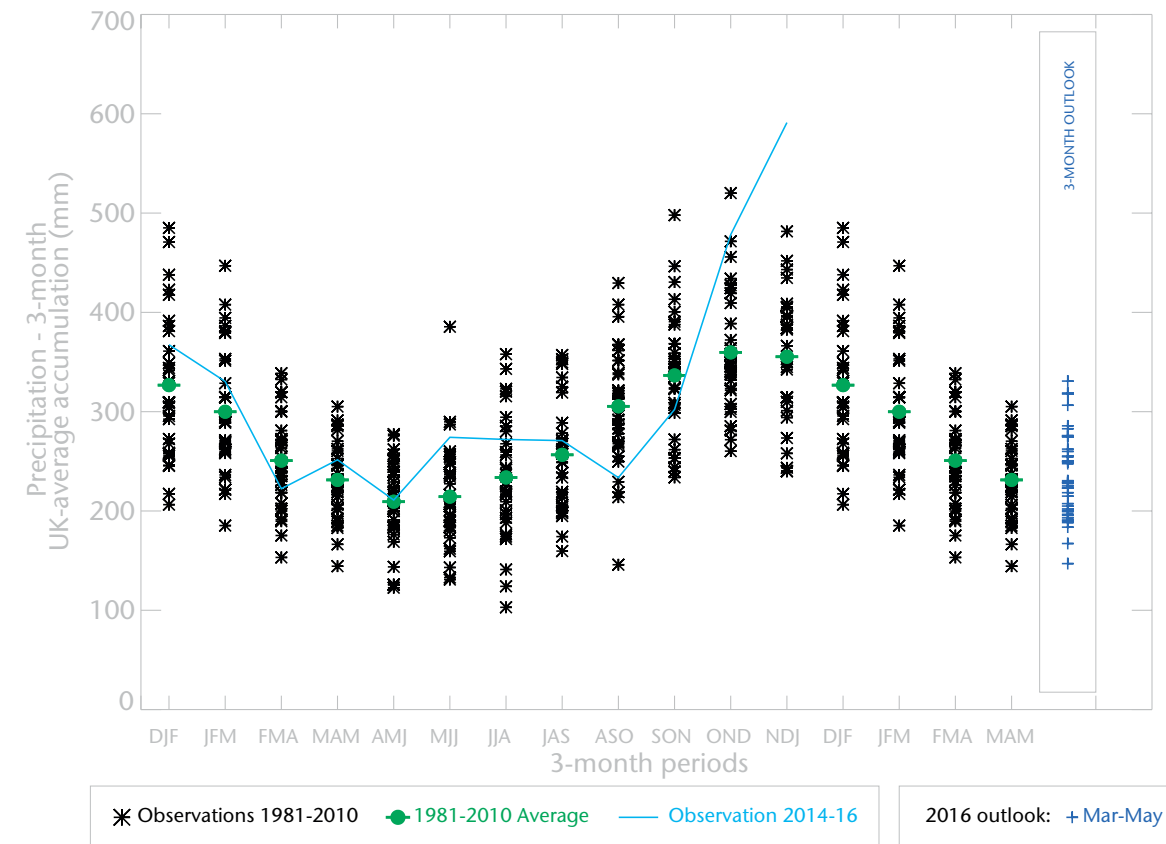


Fig P2

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

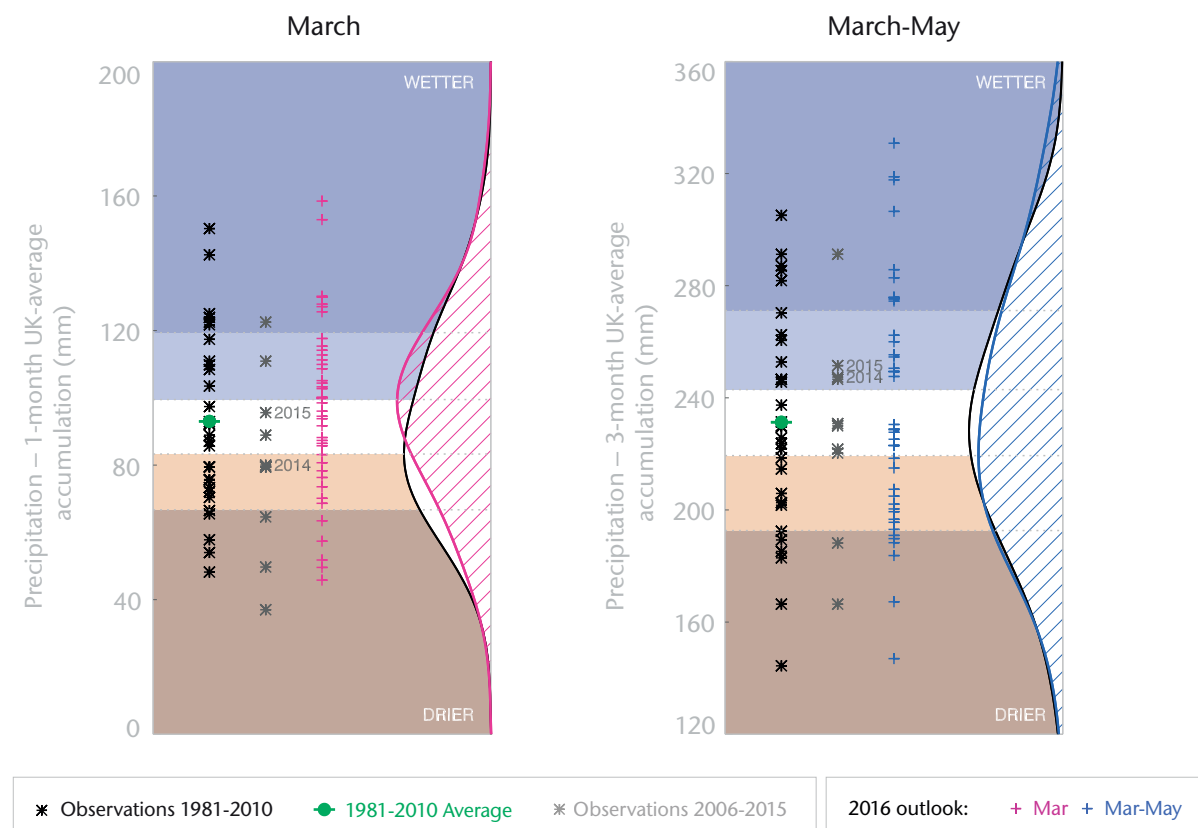
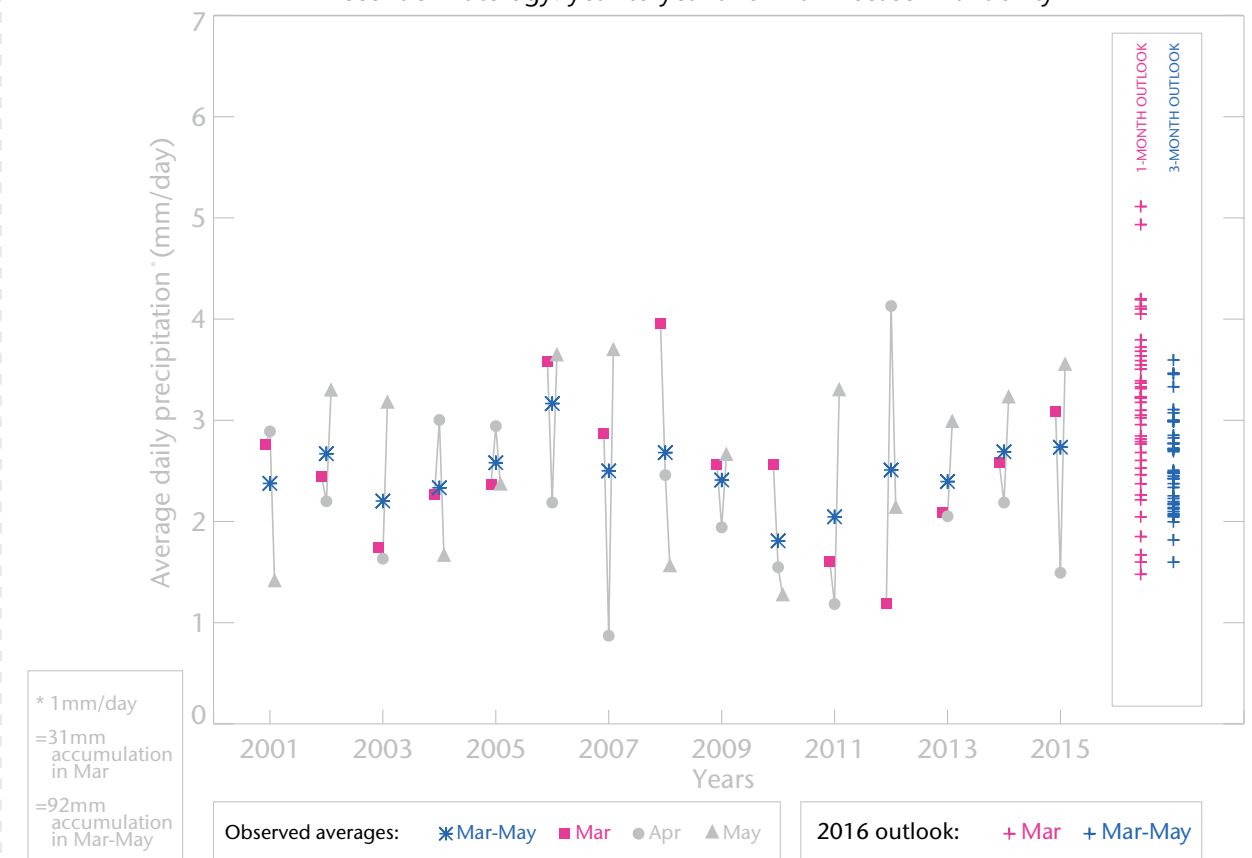


Fig P3

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.