



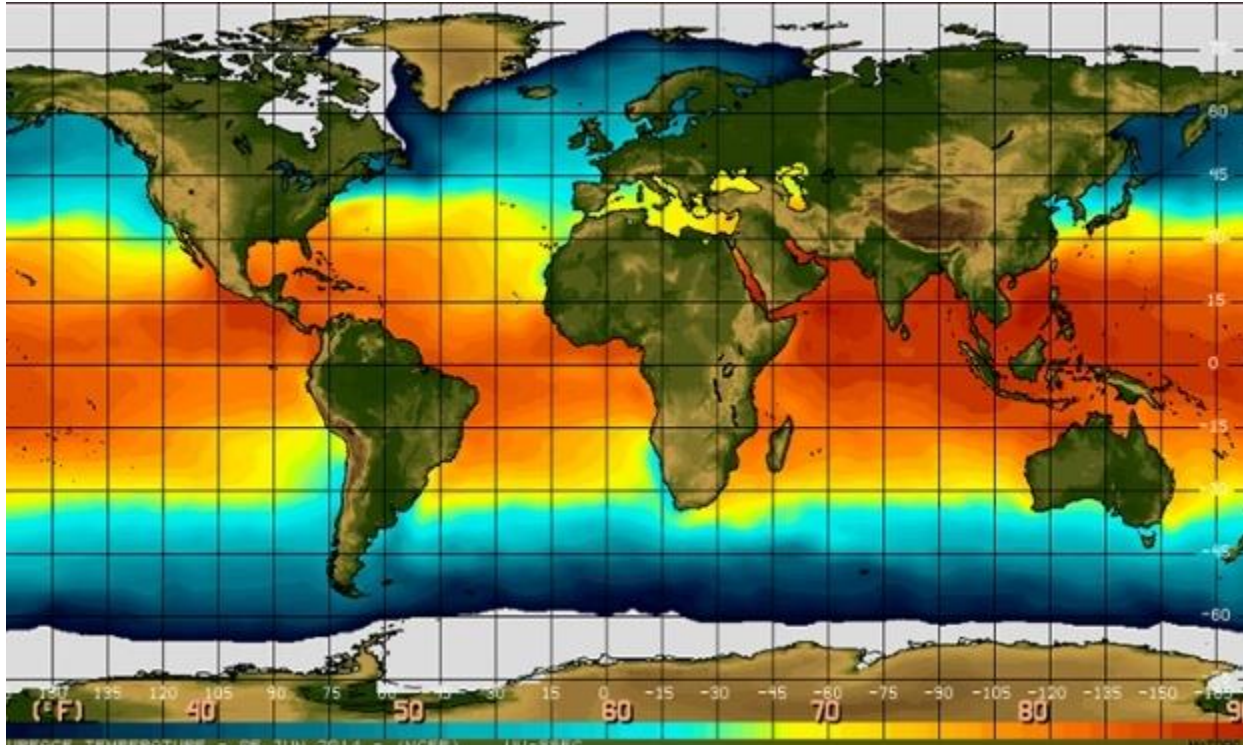
PSA-024-El Nino-World's Oceans

How do we save coral reefs?

Vic Ferguson

The World Federation for Coral Reef Conservation 281.971.7703 P.O. Box 311117 Houston Texas 77231

El Niño finally arrives but is weaker than expected, says US agency



Arrival of long-anticipated climate phenomenon will be too little, too late for drought-struck California, meteorologists say

Global temperatures sea surface levels on 5 June 2014. Forecasters have been predicting an El Niño since March 2014.

Photograph: NOAA

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A long-anticipated El Niño has finally arrived.

The US National Weather Service on Thursday [proclaimed the phenomenon is now in place](#). It involves a warming of a certain patch of the central Pacific that changes weather patterns worldwide, associated with flooding in some places, droughts elsewhere, a generally warmer globe, and fewer Atlantic hurricanes.



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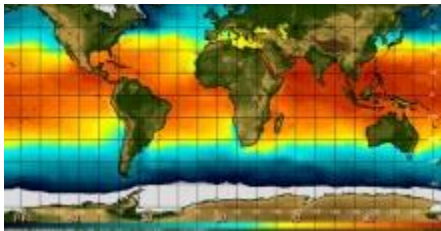
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El Niños are usually so important that economists even track them because of how they affect commodities.

But this is a weak, weird and late version of El Niño, so do not expect too many places to feel its effects, said Mike Halpert, deputy director of the weather service's Climate Prediction Center. He said there may be a slight decrease in the number of Atlantic hurricanes this summer, but he also points out that 1992's devastating Hurricane Andrew in Florida occurred during an El Niño summer, so coastal residents should not let their guard down.

This is the first El Niño since spring of 2010.



Ever since March 2014, [the weather service has been saying an El Nino was just around the corner](#). But it did not quite show up until now.

Meteorologists said the key patch of the Pacific was warming but they didn't see the second technical part of its definition — certain changes in the atmosphere.

Halpert said he did not know why this El Niño didn't form as forecast, saying "something just didn't click this year."

For [drought-struck California](#), it is too little, too late, meteorologists say.

Last year, some experts were hoping that El Niño would help the southwestern US droughts because moderate-to-strong events bring more winter rain and snow to California — even flooding and mudslides during 1998's strong El Niño. But this El Niño arrives at the end of California's rainy season and is quite weak, Halpert said.

Allan Clarke, a physical oceanography professor at Florida State University, said as far he is concerned, El Niño has been around a while and the weather service did not acknowledge it. But he agrees that this does not look like a strong one.

Vic Ferguson

The World Federation for Coral Reef Conservation

President/Founder

P.O. Box 311117

Houston, Texas 77231

vic.ferguson@wfcrc.org

www.wfcrc.org

281.971.7703 (office)

281-309-1201 (cell)

"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing".Edmund Burke