**ENSO QUICK LOOK January 21, 2016**

A monthly summary of the status of El Niño, La Niña and the Southern Oscillation, or “ENSO”, based on NINO3.4 index (120-170W, 5S-5N)

During mid-January 2015 the tropical Pacific SST was at a strong El Niño level, having peaked in November and December. All atmospheric variables strongly support the El Niño pattern, including weakened trade winds and excess rainfall in the east-central tropical Pacific. The consensus of ENSO prediction models indicate continuation of strong El Niño conditions during the January-March 2016 season in progress. The beginning of a gradual weakening of the SST anomaly is underway, with the event dissipating to neutral conditions by late spring or early summer 2016.

**Historically Speaking**

*El Niño and La Niña events tend to develop during the period Apr-Jun and they:*
- Tend to reach their maximum strength during Dec-Feb
- Typically persist for 9-12 months, though occasionally persisting for up to 2 years
- Typically recur every 2 to 7 years

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1 Based on a consensus of CPC and IRI forecasters, in association with the official CPC/IRI ENSO Diagnostic Discussion.

2 Purely objective, based on regression, using equally weighted model predictions from the plume.