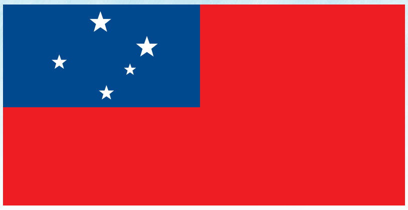

Chapter 12
Samoa

12.1 Climate Summary

12.1.1 Current Climate

- Mean air temperature trends show little change at Apia since 1957 and the annual number of Cool Days has decreased.
- Annual and May–October rainfall has increased at Apia since 1890. This is most likely due to a shift in the mean location of the South Pacific Convergence Zone (SPCZ) towards Samoa and/or there being a change in the intensity of rainfall associated with the SPCZ over the 122 year period. There has been little change in November–April rainfall since 1890 and extreme daily rainfall since 1961.
- Tropical cyclones affect Samoa mainly between the months of November and April. An average of six cyclones per decade developed within or crossed the Samoa Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) between the 1969/70 to 2010/11 seasons. Five of the 21 tropical cyclones (24%) between the 1981/82 and 2010/11 seasons were severe events (Category 3 or stronger) in the Samoa EEZ. Available data are not suitable for assessing long-term trends.
- Variability of wind-waves at Samoa is characterised by trade winds and location of the SPCZ seasonally, and the El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO) and the Southern Annular Mode (SAM) interannually with little variation in wave height throughout the year. Available data are not suitable for assessing long-term trends (see Section 1.3).

12.1.2 Climate Projections

For the period to 2100, the latest global climate model (GCM) projections and climate science findings indicate:

- El Niño and La Niña events will continue to occur in the future (*very high confidence*), but there is little consensus on whether these events will change in intensity or frequency;
- Annual mean temperatures and extremely high daily temperatures will continue to rise (*very high confidence*);
- The CMIP5 models project little change in mean annual rainfall (*low confidence*), with more extreme rain events *(high confidence*);
- Incidence of drought is projected to decline or stay approximately the same (*low confidence*);
- Ocean acidification is expected to continue *(very high confidence);*
- The risk of coral bleaching will increase in the future (*very high confidence);*
- Sea level will continue to rise *(very high confidence); and*
- A reduction of wave period in December–March is projected with no change in wave height *(low confidence)*. No change is projected in June–September *(low confidence)*.

12.2 Data Availability

There are eight operational meteorological stations in Samoa. The primary meteorological station is located in Apia where rainfall and air temperature data are available from 1890. Apia, Faleolo and Maota stations take multiple observations within a 24-hour period. The other stations (Afiamalu, Nafanua, Alafua, Togitogiga on Upolu and Asau on Savaii) record rainfall once a day only. The complete monthly rainfall record for Apia from 1890 and the daily record from 1961 have been used in this report.

The monthly temperature records from 1957 and daily temperature records from 1959 for Apia have also been used. Additional daily data exist but are yet to be recovered from colonial archives. The Apia records are homogeneous. Additional information on historical climate trends in the Samoa region can be found in the Pacific Climate Change Data Portal www.bom.gov.au/climate/pccsp/.

Wind-wave data from buoys are particularly sparse in the Pacific region, with very short records. Model and reanalysis data are therefore required to detail the wind-wave climate of the region. Reanalysis surface wind data have been used to drive a wave model over the period 1979–2009 to generate a hindcast of the historical wind-wave climate.

12.3 Seasonal Cycles

Information on temperature and rainfall seasonal cycles can be found in Australian Bureau of Meteorology and CSIRO (2011).

12.3.1 Wind-driven Waves

Surface wind-wave driven processes can impact on many aspects of Pacific Island coastal environments, including: coastal flooding during storm wave events; coastal erosion, both during episodic storm events and due to long-term changes in integrated wave climate; characterisation of reef morphology and marine habitat/species distribution; flushing and circulation of lagoons; and potential shipping and renewable wave energy solutions. The surface offshore wind-wave climate can be described by characteristic wave heights, lengths or periods, and directions.

The wind-wave climate of Samoa is strongly characterised by variation in the southern trade winds. Waves from southerly directions due to south-easterly trade winds or Southern Ocean storm swell are blocked on the north coast near Apia. Waves at this location are directed predominantly from the east to north-east during June–September with smaller heights (mean around 1.3 m) and shorter periods (mean around 7.1 s) than December–March (Table 12.1). During December–March, waves are directed mostly from the north-east and north, and have the longest mean periods (around 9.8 s) and greatest mean heights (around 1.5 m) in the year (Figure 12.1). Waves larger than 2.5 m (99th percentile) occur predominantly during the wet season generated by tropical cyclones and extra-tropical North Pacific storms, with directions from north-west to east, with some large waves in the dry season propagating from the east and north-west. The height of a 1-in-50 year wave event near Apia is calculated to be 11.3 m.

No suitable dataset is available to assess long-term historical trends in the Samoa wave climate. However, interannual variability may be assessed in the hindcast record. The wind-wave climate displays strong interannual variability near Apia, varying strongly with the El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO) and somewhat with the Southern Annualar Mode (SAM). During La Niña years, wave power is approximately 30% greater than during El Niño years in June–September, but around 25% less in December–March. Waves are stronger from the east in December–March due to increased trade winds in La Niña years. When the SAM index is negative, westerly winds blow further north in the higher latitudes, with some westerly swell reaching Samoa, causing a slight anticlockwise rotation in waves and reduction in easterly wave power.

Table 12.1: Mean wave height, period and direction from which the waves are travelling around Samoa in December–March and June–September. Observation (hindcast) and climate model simulation mean values are given with the 5–95th percentile range (in brackets). Historical model simulation values are given for comparison with projections (see Section 12.5.6 – Wind-driven waves, and Tables 12.7). A compass relating number of degrees to cardinal points (direction) is shown.

		Hindcast Reference Data (1979–2009)	Climate Model Simulations (1986–2005)
Wave Height (metres)	December–March	1.5 (1.0–2.2)	1.7 (1.4–2.0)
	June–September	1.3 (0.8–1.9)	1.9 (1.6–2.3)
Wave Period (seconds)	December–March	9.8 (7.5–12.8)	9.3 (8.3–10.8)
	June–September	7.1 (5.9–8.5)	8.3 (7.2–9.4)
Wave Direction (degrees clockwise from North)	December–March	20 (350–60)	60 (360–100)
	June–September	70 (50–90)	130 (120–150)

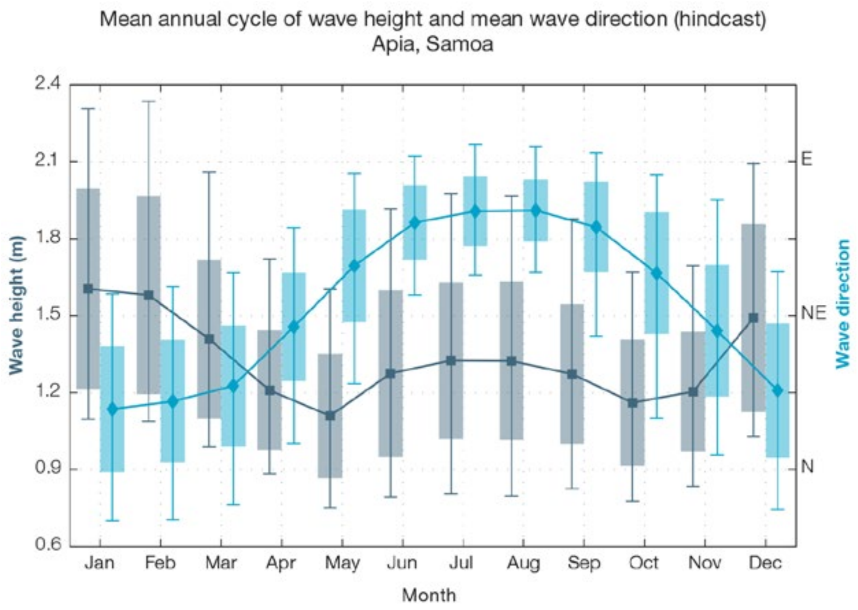

Figure 12.1: Mean annual cycle of wave height (grey) and mean wave direction (blue) near Apia in hindcast data (1979–2009). To give an indication of interannual variability of the monthly means of the hindcast data, shaded boxes show 1 standard deviation around the monthly means, and error bars show the 5–95% range. The direction from which the waves are travelling is shown (not the direction towards which they are travelling).

12.4 Observed Trends

12.4.1 Air Temperature

Annual and Half-year Mean Air Temperature

Mean air temperature trends for Apia from 1957 are only available for November–April with only minimum temperature trends available for May–October. None of the temperature trends presented are statistically significant at the 5% level (Figure 12.2 and Table 12.2) over the last 54 years. This may be related to missing data in the latter part of the record (Figure 12.2) or could be associated with surrounding water temperatures cooling from the 1950s to about 1980, followed by a period of warming to 2011 (See Section 12.6.4). Overall, the water temperature trend over the 1950–2011 period is marginally positive.

Extreme Daily Air Temperature

- While there are no significant mean warming trends in Apia (Table 12.3), the annual number of Cool Days has decreased significantly (Table 12.3 and Figure 12.3). Trends in Warm Days, Warm Nights and Cool Nights are not significant.

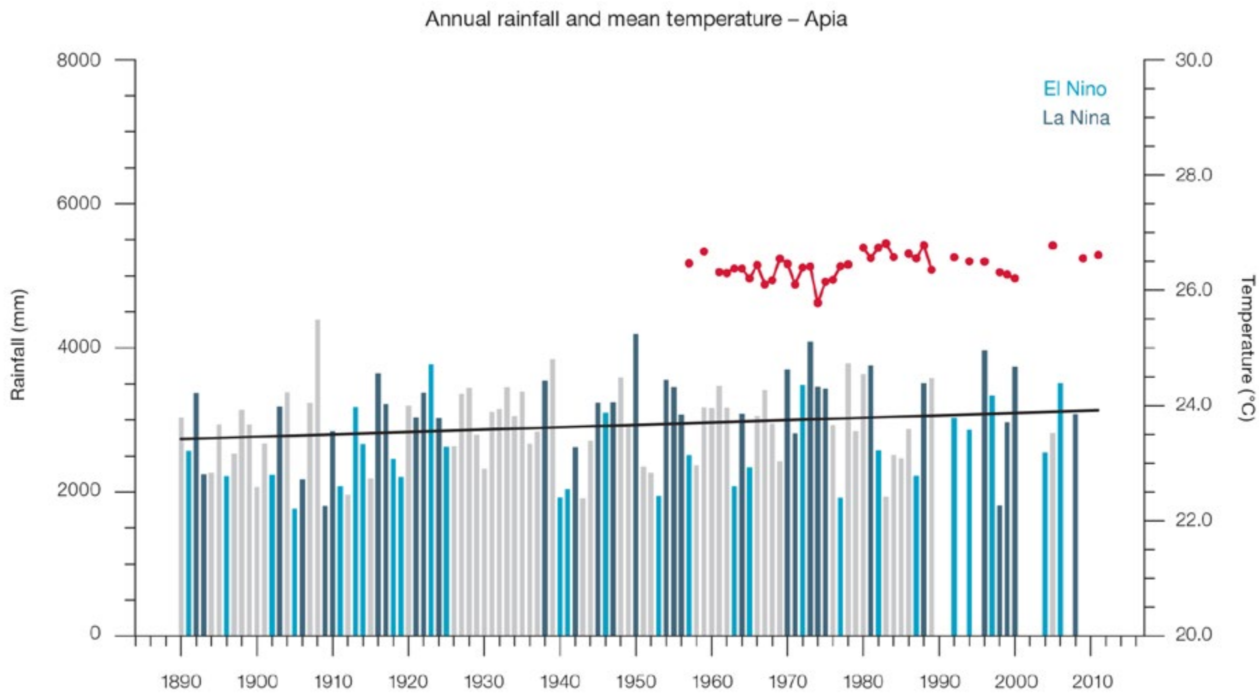

Figure 12.2: Observed time series of annual average values of mean air temperature (red line) and annual total rainfall (bars) at Apia. Light blue, dark blue and grey bars denote El Niño, La Niña and neutral years respectively. Solid trend lines indicate a least squares fit.

Table 12.2: Annual and half-year trends in air temperature (Tmax, Tmin, Tmean) and rainfall at Apia. The 95% confidence intervals are shown in brackets. Values for trends significant at the 5% level are shown in **boldface**.

Apia	Tmax (°C/10yrs) 1957–2011	Tmin (°C/10yrs)	Tmean (°C/10yrs)	Total Rain (mm/10yrs) 1890–2011
Annual	-	-	-	**+33.7** (+0.8, +67.3)
Nov–Apr	+0.08 (-0.01, +0.17)	+0.02 (-0.04, +0.08)	+0.04 (-0.03, +0.13)	+4.0 (-19.5, +26.8)
May–Oct	-	+0.02 (-0.03, +0.06)	-	**+29.2** (+12.2, +46.7)

Table 12.3: Annual trends in air temperature and rainfall extremes at Apia. The 95% confidence intervals are shown in brackets. Values for trends significant at the 5% level are shown in **boldface**.

	Apia
TEMPERATURE	**(1959–2011)**
Warm Days (days/decade)	+9.17 (-1.31, +20.37)
Warm Nights (days/decade)	+2.31 (-1.64, +6.11)
Cool Days (days/decade)	**-5.19** (-9.01, -1.08)
Cool Nights (days/decade)	-0.84 (-5.17, +2.58)
RAINFALL	**(1961–2011)**
Rain Days ≥ 1 mm (days/decade)	-2.67 (-7.33, +1.79)
Very Wet Day rainfall (mm/decade)	+46.40 (-22.43, +101.38)
Consecutive Dry Days (days/decade)	+0.32 (-0.67, +1.25)
Max 1-day rainfall (mm/decade)	+5.50 (-6.59, +17.97)

Warm Days: Number of days with maximum temperature greater than the 90th percentile for the base period 1971–2000
Warm Nights: Number of days with minimum temperature greater than the 90th percentile for the base period 1971–2000
Cool Days: Number of days with maximum temperature less than the 10th percentile for the base period 1971–2000
Cool Nights: Number of days with minimum temperature less than the 10th percentile for the base period 1971–2000
Rain Days ≥ 1 mm: Annual count of days where rainfall is greater or equal to 1 mm (0.039 inches)
Very Wet Day rainfall: Amount of rain in a year where daily rainfall is greater than the 95th percentile for the reference period 1971–2000
Consecutive Dry Days: Maximum number of consecutive days in a year with rainfall less than 1 mm (0.039 inches)
Max 1-day rainfall: Annual maximum 1-day rainfall

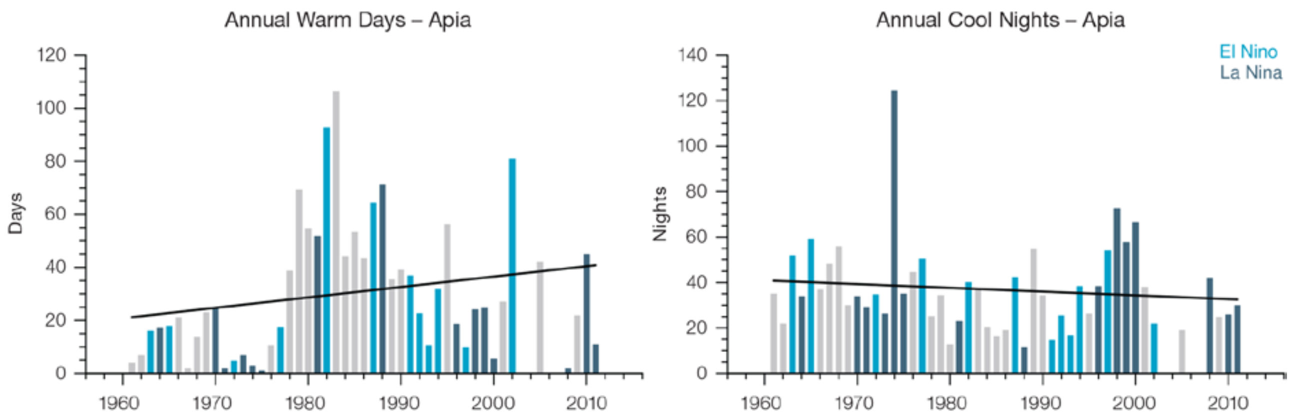

Figure 12.3: Observed time series of annual total number of Warm Days (left) and Annual Cool Nights (right) at Apia. Solid black trend lines indicate a least squares fit.

12.4.2 Rainfall

Annual and Half-year Total Rainfall

Notable interannual variability associated with the ENSO is evident in the observed rainfall record for Apia (Figure 12.2). The positive trends in Apia annual and May–October rainfall (Table 12.2) are statistically significant at the 5% level. This implies that either the mean location of the South Pacific Convergence Zone (SPCZ) has either shifted towards Samoa and/or there has been a change in the intensity of rainfall associated with the SPCZ. Samoa's rainfall is influenced by position and strength of the SPCZ which lies between Samoa and Fiji between November–April (wet season). From May–October the SPCZ is normally to the north-east of Samoa, often weak, inactive and sometimes non-existent. The November–April rainfall trend presented in Table 12.2 is not statistically significant. In other words, there has been little change in Apia wet season rainfall.

Daily Rainfall

Daily rainfall trends for Apia are presented in Table 12.3. Due to large year-to-year variability, there are no significant trends in the daily rainfall indices. Figure 12.4 shows insignificant trends in annual Very Wet Days and Rain Days ≥ 1 mm (days with rainfall).

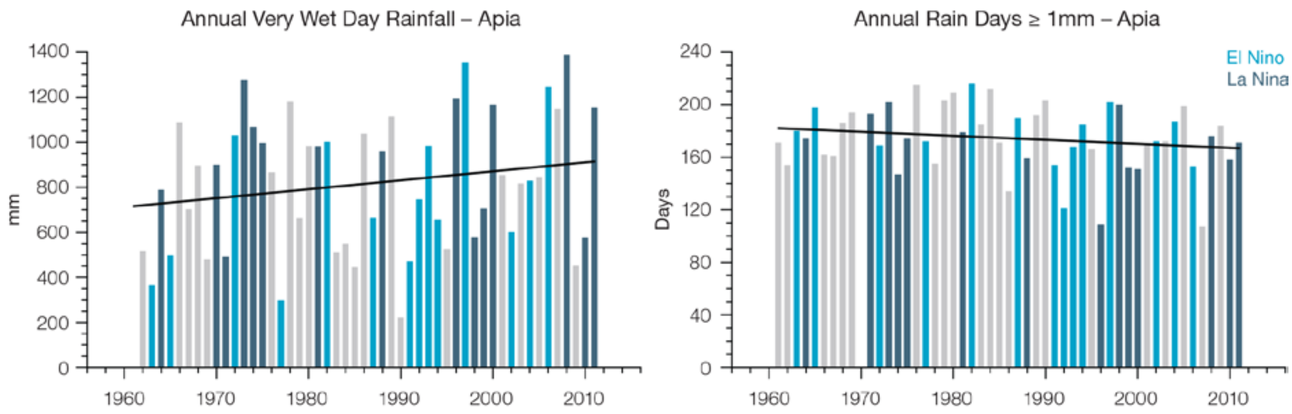

Figure 12.4: Observed time series of annual total values of Very Wet Days (left) and Rain Days ≥ 1 mm (right) at Apia. Solid black trend lines indicate a least squares fit.

12.4.3 Tropical Cyclones

When tropical cyclones affect Samoa they tend to do so between November and April. Between 1969/70 and 2009/10 only Cyclone Keli occurred outside these months in June 1997. The tropical cyclone archive for the Southern Hemisphere indicates that between the 1969/70 and 2010/11 seasons, 26 tropical cyclones developed within or crossed the Samoa EEZ (Figure 12.5). This represents an average of 6 cyclones per decade. Refer to Chapter 1, Section 1.4.2 (Tropical Cyclones) for an explanation of the difference in the number of tropical cyclones occurring in Samoa in this report (Australian Bureau of Meteorology and CSIRO, 2014) compared to Australian Bureau of Meteorology and CSIRO (2011). The differences between tropical cyclone average occurrence in El Niño, La Niña and neutral years are not statistically significant. Five of the 21 tropical cyclones (24%) between the 1981/82 and 2010/11 seasons were severe events (Category 3 or stronger) in the Samoa EEZ.

Long term trends in frequency and intensity have not been presented as country scale assessment is not recommended. Some tropical cyclone tracks analysed in this subsection include the tropical depression stage (sustained winds less than or equal to 34 knots) before and/or after tropical cyclone formation.

Additional information on historical tropical cyclones in the Samoa region can be found at www.bom.gov.au/cyclone/history/tracks/index.shtml

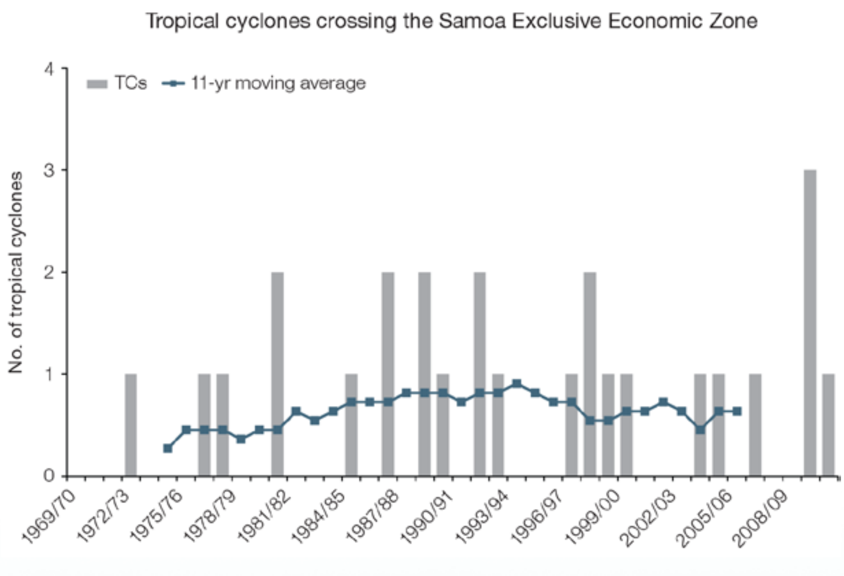

Figure 12.5: Time series of the observed number of tropical cyclones developing within and crossing the Samoa EEZ per season. The 11-year moving average is in blue.

12.5 Climate Projections

The performance of the available Coupled Model Intercomparison Project (Phase 5) (CMIP5) climate models over the Pacific has been rigorously assessed (Brown et al., 2013a, b; Grose et al., 2014; Widlansky et al., 2013). The simulation of the key processes and features for the Samoa region is similar to the previous generation of CMIP3 models, with all the same strengths and many of the same weaknesses. The best-performing CMIP5 models used here have lower biases (differences between the simulated and observed climate data) than the best CMIP3 models, and there are fewer poorly-performing models. For Samoa, the most important model bias is that the rainfall maximum of the SPCZ is too zonally (east-west) oriented. This lowers confidence in the model projections. Out of 27 models assessed, three models were rejected for use in these projections due to biases in the mean climate and in the simulation of the SPCZ. Climate projections have been derived from up to 24 new GCMs in the CMIP5 database (the exact number is different for each scenario, Appendix A), compared with up to 18 models in the CMIP3 database reported in Australian Bureau of Meteorology and CSIRO (2011).

It is important to realise that the models used give different projections under the same scenario. This means there is not a single projected future for Samoa, but rather a range of possible futures for each emission scenario. This range is described below.

12.5.1 Temperature

Further warming is expected over Samoa (Figure 12.6, Table 12.6). Under all RCPs, the warming is up to 1.1°C by 2030, relative to 1995, but after 2030 there is a growing difference in warming between each RCP. For example, in Samoa by 2090, a warming of 2.0–4.0°C is projected for RCP8.5 while a warming of 0.3–1.2°C is projected for RCP2.6. This range is broader than that presented in Australian Bureau of Meteorology and CSIRO (2011) because a wider range of emissions scenarios is considered. While relatively warm and cool years and decades will still occur due to natural variability, there is projected to be more warm years and decades on average in a warmer climate. Dynamical downscaling of climate models (Australian Bureau of Meteorology and CSIRO, 2011, Volume 1, Chapter 7) suggests that temperature rises may be about 0.2°C greater over land than over ocean in this area.

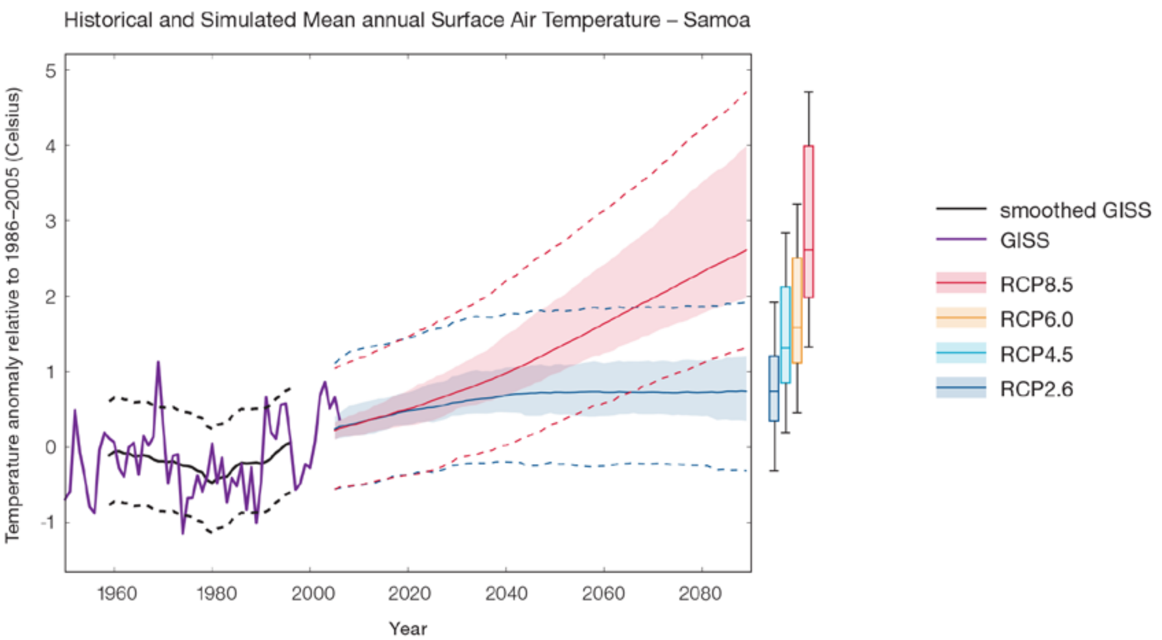

Figure 12.6: Historical and simulated surface air temperature time series for the region surrounding Samoa. The graph shows the anomaly (from the base period 1986–2005) in surface air temperature from observations (the GISS dataset, in purple), and for the CMIP5 models under the very high (RCP8.5, in red) and very low (RCP2.6, in blue) emissions scenarios. The solid red and blue lines show the smoothed (20-year running average) multi-model mean anomaly in surface air temperature, while shading represents the spread of model values (5–95th percentile). The dashed lines show the 5–95th percentile of the observed interannual variability for the observed period (in black) and added to the projections as a visual guide (in red and blue). This indicates that future surface air temperature could be above or below the projected long-term averages due to interannual variability. The ranges of projections for a 20-year period centred on 2090 are shown by the bars on the right for RCP8.5, 6.0, 4.5 and 2.6.

There is *very high confidence* that temperatures will rise because:

- It is known from theory and observations that an increase in greenhouse gases will lead to a warming of the atmosphere
- Climate models agree that the long-term average temperature will rise.

There is *medium confidence* in the model average temperature change shown in Table 12.6 because:

- The new models do not simulate the temperature change of the recent past in Samoa as well as in other places; and
- There are biases in the simulation of sea-surface temperatures in the region Samoa, and associated biases in the simulation of the SPCZ, which affect projections of both temperature and rainfall.

12.5.2 Rainfall

The CMIP5 models show a range of projected annual average rainfall change from an increase to a decrease, and the model average is near zero. The range is greater in the highest emissions scenarios

(Figure 12.7, Table 12.6). For both the November–April and May–October seasons there is a spread of results from a decrease to an increase, and the model average projects little change. These results are different from those found in Australian Bureau of Meteorology and CSIRO (2011), which reported a projected increase in rainfall in the wet season and anual rainfall and little change in dry season rainfall. The range of new model results and new research into the drivers of change suggest that there is less certainty in the direction of projected change than found previously.

Mean rainfall increased in Samoa between 1979 and 2006 (Figure 12.7), but the models do not project this will continue into the future. This indicates that the recent increase may be caused by natural variability and not caused by global warming. It is also possible that the models do not simulate a key process driving the recent change. However, the recent change is not particularly large (<10%) and the observed record shown is not particularly long (28 years), so it is difficult to determine the significance of this difference, and its cause. The year-to-year rainfall variability over Samoa is generally larger than the projected change, except for the models with the largest projected decrease in rainfall after 2030. The effect of climate change on average rainfall may not be obvious in the short or medium term due to natural variability. Dynamical downscaling of climate models (Australian Bureau of Meteorology and CSIRO, 2011, Volume 1, Chapter 7) suggests that for a set of models where rainfall is projected to increase, the rainfall increase may be enhanced over the west side of islands and less over the eastern side in the May–October season.

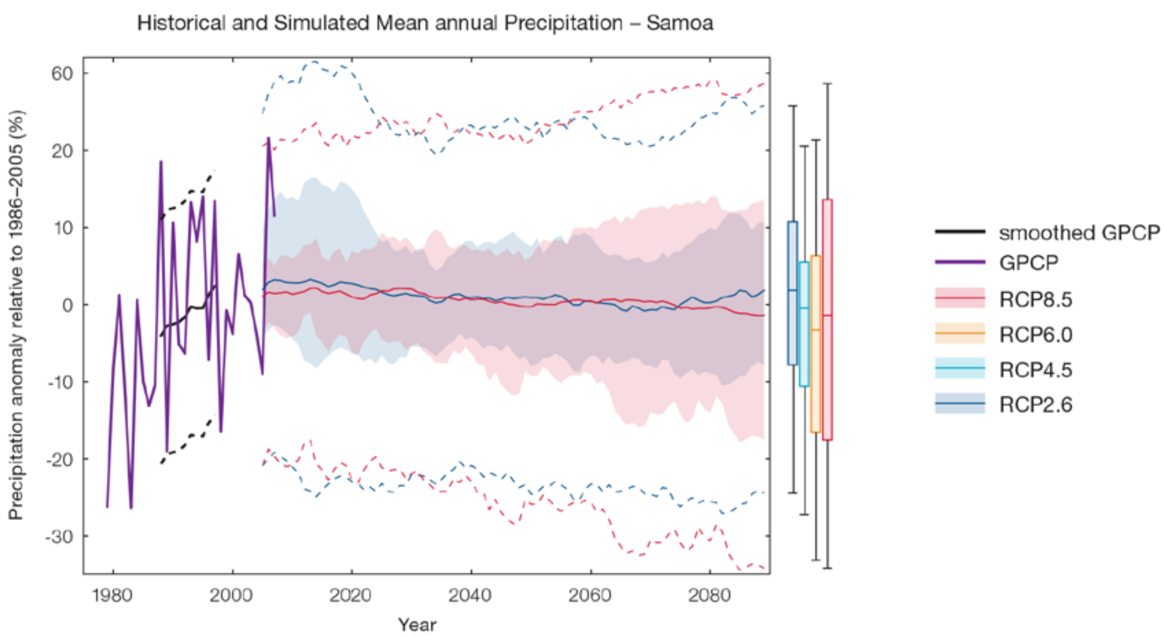

Figure 12.7: Historical and simulated annual average rainfall time series for the region surrounding Samoa. The graph shows the anomaly (from the base period 1986–2005) in rainfall from observations (the GPCP dataset, in purple), and for the CMIP5 models under the very high (RCP8.5, in red) and very low (RCP2.6, in blue) emissions scenarios. The solid red and blue lines show the smoothed (20-year running average) multi-model mean anomaly in rainfall, while shading represents the spread of model values (5–95th percentile). The dashed lines show the 5–95th percentile of the observed interannual variability for the observed period (in black) and added to the projections as a visual guide (in red and blue). This indicates that future rainfall could be above or below the projected long-term averages due to interannual variability. The ranges of projections for a 20-year period centred on 2090 are shown by the bars on the right for RCP8.5, 6.0, 4.5 and 2.6.

There is no agreement as to the direction of change in the models and many models project little change. This lowers the confidence that we can determine the most likely direction of change in annual rainfall, and makes the amount difficult to determine. The 5–95th percentile range of projected values from CMIP5 climate models is large, e.g. for RCP8.5 (very high emissions) the range is -6 to +9% by 2030 and -18 to +14% by 2090.

There is *low confidence* that rainfall will remain the same for Samoa because:

- This average finding of little change is the average of a model spread from a projected rainfall increase to a large decrease, and also many models project little change; and
- The future of the SPCZ is not clear due to model biases in the current climate, and likewise the future behaviour of the ENSO is unclear (see Box in Chapter 1).

There is *low confidence* in the model average rainfall change shown in Table 12.6 because:

- There is a spread in model rainfall projections, which range from a projected rainfall increase to a rainfall decrease;
- The complex set of processes involved in tropical rainfall is challenging to simulate in models. This means that the confidence in the projection of rainfall is generally lower than for other variables such as temperature;
- There is a different magnitude of change in the SPCZ rainfall projected by models that have reduced sea-surface temperature biases (Australian Bureau of Meteorology and CSIRO, 2011, Chapter 7 (downscaling); Widlanksy et al., 2012) compared to the CMIP5 models; and
- The future behaviour of the ENSO is unclear, and the ENSO strongly influences year-to-year rainfall variability.

12.5.3 Extremes

Extreme Temperature

The temperature on extremely hot days is projected to increase by about the same amount as average temperature. This conclusion is based on analysis of daily temperature data from a subset of CMIP5 models (Chapter 1). The frequency of extremely hot days is also expected to increase.

The temperature of the 1-in-20-year hot day is projected to increase by approximately 0.5°C by 2030 under the RCP2.6 scenario and by 0.7°C under the RCP8.5 scenario. By 2090 the projected increase is 0.7°C for RCP2.6 and 2.9°C for RCP8.5.

There is *very high confidence* that the temperature of extremely hot days and the temperature of extremely cool days will increase, because:

- A change in the range of temperatures, including the extremes, is physically consistent with rising greenhouse gas concentrations;
- This is consistent with observed changes in extreme temperatures around the world over recent decades (IPCC, 2012); and
- All the CMIP5 models agree on an increase in the frequency and intensity of extremely hot days and a decrease in the frequency and intensity of cool days.

There is *low confidence* in the magnitude of projected change in extreme temperature because models generally underestimate the current intensity and frequency of extreme events. Changes to the particular driver of extreme temperatures affect whether the change to extremes is more or less than the change in the average temperature, and the changes to the drivers of extreme temperatures in Samoa are currently unclear. Also, while all models project the same direction of change there is a wide range in the projected magnitude of change among the models.

Extreme Rainfall

The frequency and intensity of extreme rainfall events are projected to increase. This conclusion is based on analysis of daily rainfall data from a subset of CMIP5 models using a similar method to that in Australian Bureau of Meteorology and CSIRO (2011) with some improvements (Chapter 1), so the results are slightly different to those in Australian Bureau of Meteorology and CSIRO (2011). The current 1-in-20-year daily rainfall amount is projected to increase by approximately 10 mm by 2030 for RCP2.6 and by 8 mm by 2030 for RCP8.5. By 2090, it is projected to increase by approximately 11 mm for RCP2.6 and by 32 mm for RCP8.5.The majority of models project the current 1-in-20-year daily rainfall event will become, on average, a 1-in-9-year event for RCP2.6 and a 1-in-6-year event for RCP8.5 (very high emissions) by 2090. These results are different to those found in Australian Bureau of Meteorology and CSIRO (2011) because of different methods used (Chapter 1).

There is *high confidence* that the frequency and intensity of extreme rainfall events will increase because:

- A warmer atmosphere can hold more moisture, so there is greater potential for extreme rainfall (IPCC, 2012);
- Consistent with the mixed changes in mean and extreme rainfall indices, the pattern of change in the extreme rainfalls shows considerable variation from station to station. For the lower recurrence intervals (2 and 5 years) there is little systematic change in rainfall intensity. In some contrast the very most extreme rainfall being that occurring with an average recurrence interval of 20 years shows a mean increase of 3.5%, (significant at the 10% level);
- Increases in extreme rainfall in the Pacific are projected in all available climate models; and

- An increase in extreme rainfall events within the SPCZ region was found by an in-depth study of extreme rainfall events in the South Pacific Convergence Zone (Cai et al., 2012).

There is *low confidence* in the magnitude of projected change in extreme rainfall because:

- Models generally underestimate the current intensity of local extreme events, especially in this area due to the 'cold-tongue bias' (Chapter 1);
- Changes in extreme rainfall projected by models may be underestimated because models seem to underestimate the observed increase in heavy rainfall with warming (Min et al., 2011);
- GCMs have a coarse spatial resolution, so they do not adequately capture some of the processes involved in extreme rainfall events; and
- The Conformal Cubic Atmospheric Model (CCAM) downscaling model has finer spatial resolution and the CCAM results presented in Australian Bureau of Meteorology and CSIRO (2011) indicates a smaller increase in the number of extreme rainfall days, and there is no clear reason to accept one set of models over another.

Drought

Drought projections (defined in Chapter 1) are described in terms of changes in proportion of time in drought, frequency and duration by 2090 for very low and very high emissions (RCP2.6 and 8.5).

For Samoa the overall proportion of time spent in drought is expected to decrease slightly under RCP2.6 (very low emissions) and remain approximately the same under all other scenarios. Under RCP8.5 the frequency of mild, moderate and severe drought events is projected to decrease slightly while the frequency of extreme drought is projected to remain stable (Figure 12.8). The duration of drought events in all categories is projected to remain approximately the same under RCP8.5. Under RCP2.6 the frequency of mild and moderate drought is projected to decrease slightly, while the frequency of severe and extreme drought is projected to remain stable. The duration of drought events in all categories is projected to remain approximately the same under RCP2.6.

There is *low confidence* in this direction of change because:

- There is only *low confidence* in the direction of mean rainfall change;
- These drought projections are based upon a subset of models; and
- Like the CMIP3 models, the majority of the CMIP5 models agree on this direction of change.

There is *low confidence* in the projections of drought duration and frequency because there is *low confidence* in the magnitude of rainfall projections, and no consensus about projected changes in the ENSO, which directly influence the projection of drought.

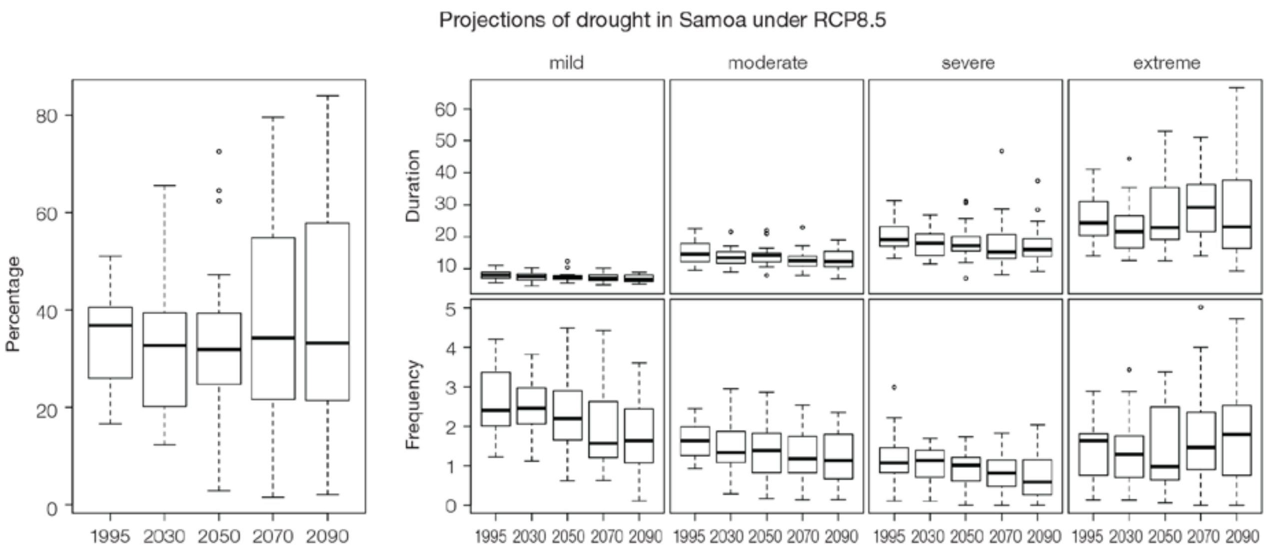

Figure 12.8: Box-plots showing percent of time in moderate, severe or extreme drought (left hand side), and average drought duration and frequency for the different categories of drought (mild, moderate, severe and extreme) for Samoa. These are shown for 20-year periods centred on 1995, 2030, 2050, 2070 and 2090 for the RCP8.5 (very high emissions) scenario. The thick dark lines show the median of all models, the box shows the interquartile (25–75%) range, the dashed lines show 1.5 times the interquartile range and circles show outlier results.

Tropical Cyclones

Global Picture

There is a growing level of consistency between models that on a global basis the frequency of tropical cyclones is likely to decrease by the end of the 21st century. The magnitude of the decrease varies from 6–35% depending on the modelling study. There is also a general agreement between models that there will be an increase in the mean maximum wind speed of cyclones by between 2% and 11% globally, and an increase in rainfall rates of the order of 20% within 100 km of the cyclone centre (Knutson et al., 2010). Thus, the scientific community has a medium level of confidence in these global projections.

Samoa

In Samoa, the projection is for a decrease in cyclone genesis (formation) frequency for the south-east basin (see Figure 12.9 and Table 12.4). The confidence level for this projection is high. The GCMs show consistent results across models for changes in cyclone frequency for the south-east basin, using the direct detection methodologies (OWZ or CDD) described in Chapter 1. Approximately 80% of the projected changes, based on these methods, vary between a 5% decrease to a 50% decrease in genesis frequency with half projecting a decrease between 20 and 40%. The empirical techniques assess changes in the main atmospheric ingredients known to be necessary for cyclone formation. Projections based upon these techniques suggest the conditions for cyclone formation will become less favourable in this region with about half of projected changes indicating decreases between 10 and 40% in genesis frequency. These projections are consistent with those of Australian Bureau of Meteorology and CSIRO (2011).

Table 12.4: Projected percentage change in cyclone frequency in the south-east basin (0–40°S; 170°E–130°W) for 22 CMIP5 climate models, based on five methods, for 2080–2099 relative to 1980–1999 for RCP8.5 (very high emissions). The 22 CMIP5 climate models were selected based upon the availability of data or on their ability to reproduce a current-climate tropical cyclone climatology (See Section 1.5.3 – Detailed Projection Methods, Tropical Cyclones). Blue numbers indicate projected decreases in tropical cyclone frequency, red numbers an increase. MMM is the multi-model mean change. N increase is the proportion of models (for the individual projection method) projecting an increase in cyclone formation.

Model	GPI change	GPI-M change	Tippett	CDD	OWZ
access10	5	-22	-54	-23	
access13	-26	-26	-36	-10	
bcccsm11	-3	-1	-28		-5
canesm2	-7	-13	-49	-6	
ccsm4				-78	-5
cnrm_cm5	-4	-5	-26	8	7
csiro_mk36	-16	-13	-33	-26	-27
fgoals_g2	6	-8	-40		
fgoals_s2	-15	-20	-48		
gfdl_esm2m				-48	-36
gfdl_cm3	-1	-5	-25		-11
gfdl_esm2g				-18	-36
gisse2r	17	16	-6		
hadgem2_es	-8	-11	-51		
inm	-3	-3	-30		
ipslcm5alr	-13	-19	-43		
ipslcm5blr				7	
miroc5				-43	-22
mirocesm	-40	-38	46		
mpim	-26	-19	-41		
mricgcm3	-8	-10	-28		
noresm1m	-36	-40	-59	-80	
MMM	-11	-14	-32	-29	-17
N increase	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.125

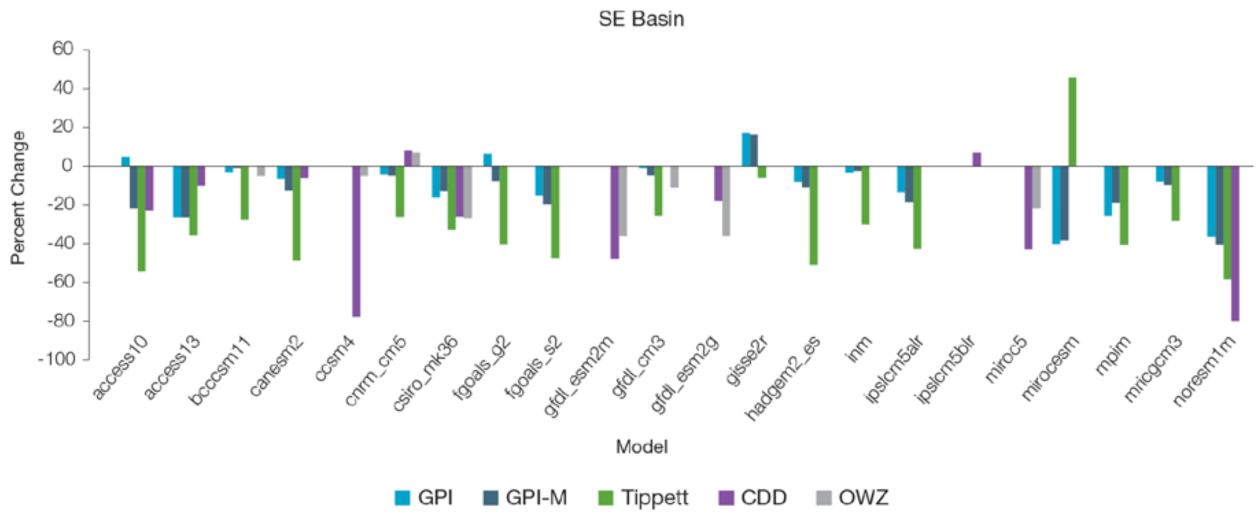

Figure 12.9: Projected percentage change in cyclone frequency in the south-east basin (data from Table 12.4).

12.5.4 Coral Reefs and Ocean Acidification

As atmospheric CO_2 concentrations continue to rise, oceans will warm and continue to acidify. These changes will impact the health and viability of marine ecosystems, including coral reefs that provide many key ecosystem services (*high confidence*). These impacts are also likely to be compounded by other stressors such as storm damage, fishing pressure and other human impacts.

The projections for future ocean acidification and coral bleaching use three RCPs (2.6, 4.5, and 8.5).

Ocean Acidification

Ocean acidification is expressed in terms of aragonite saturation state (Chapter 1). In Samoa the aragonite saturation state has declined from about 4.5 in the late 18th century to an observed value of about 4.1±0.1 by 2000 (Kuchinke et al., 2014). All models show that the aragonite saturation state, a proxy for coral reef growth rate, will continue to decrease as atmospheric CO_2 concentrations increase (*very high confidence*). Projections from CMIP5 models indicate that under RCPs 8.5 and 4.5 the median aragonite saturation state will transition to marginal conditions (3.5) around 2030. In RCP8.5 (very high emissions) the aragonite saturation state continues to strongly decline thereafter to values where coral reefs have not historically been found (< 3.0). Under RCP4.5 the aragonite saturation plateaus around 3.2 i.e. marginal conditions for healthy coral reefs. While under RCP2.6 the median aragonite saturation state never falls below 3.5, and increases slightly toward the end of the century (Figure 12.10) suggesting that the conditions remains adequate for healthy corals reefs. There is *medium confidence* in this range and distribution of possible futures because the projections are based on climate models that do not resolve the reef scale that can play a role in modulating large-scale changes. The impacts of ocean acidification are also likely to affect the entire marine ecosystem impacting the key ecosystem services provided by reefs.

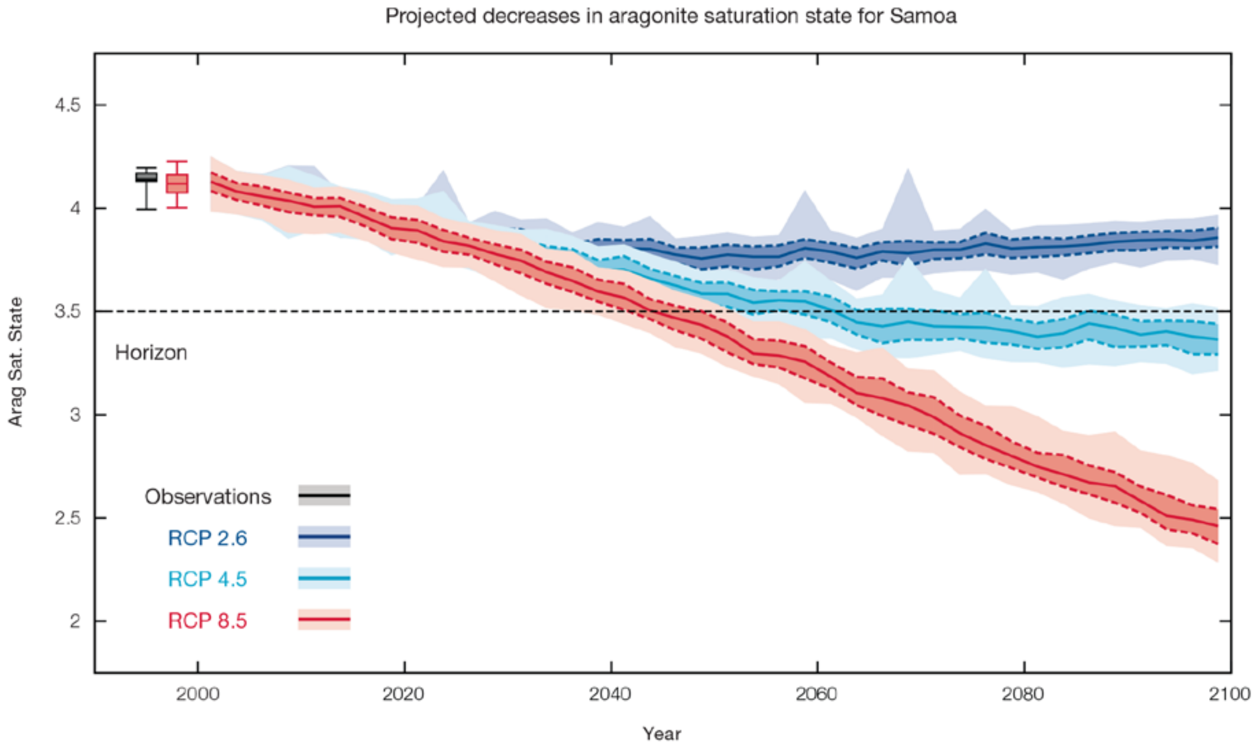

Figure 12.10: Projected decreases in aragonite saturation state in Samoa from CMIP5 models under RCP2.6, 4.5 and 8.5. Shown are the median values (solid lines), the interquartile range (dashed lines), and 5% and 95% percentiles (light shading). The horizontal line represents the transition to marginal conditions for coral reef health (from Guinotte et al., 2003).

Coral Bleaching Risk

As the ocean warms, the risk of coral bleaching increases (*very high confidence*). There is *medium confidence* in the projected rate of change for Samoa because there is *medium confidence* in the rate of change of SST, and the changes at the reef scale (which can play a role in modulating large-scale changes) are not adequately resolved. Importantly, the coral bleaching risk calculation does not account the impact of other potential stressors (Chapter 1).

The changes in the frequency (or recurrence) and duration of severe bleaching risk are quantified for different projected sea-surface temperature (SST) changes (Table 12.5). Overall there is a decrease in the time between two periods of elevated risk and an increase in the duration of the elevated risk. For example, under a long-term mean increase of 1°C (relative to 1982–1999 period), the average period of severe bleaching risk (referred to as a risk event will last 9.3 weeks (with a minimum duration of 1.5 weeks and a maximum duration of 3.8 months) and the average time between two risks will be 2.1 years (with the minimum recurrence of 4.1 months and a maximum recurrence of 7.4 years). If severe bleaching events occur more often than once every five years, the long-term viability of coral reef ecosystems becomes threatened.

12.5.5 Sea Level

Mean sea level is projected to continue to rise over the course of the 21st century. There is very *high confidence* in the direction of change. The CMIP5 models simulate a rise of between approximately 7–17 cm by 2030 (very similar values for different RCPs), with increases of 40–87 cm by 2090 under the RCP8.5 (Figure 12.11 and Table 12.6). There is *medium confidence* in the range mainly because there is still uncertainty associated with projections of the Antarctic ice sheet contribution. Interannual variability of sea level will lead to periods of lower and higher regional sea levels. In the past, this interannual variability has been about 20 cm (5–95% range, after removal of the seasonal signal, see dashed lines in Figure 12.11 (a) and it is likely that a similar range will continue through the 21st century.

Table 12.5: Projected changes in severe coral bleaching risk for the Samoa EEZ for increases in SST relative to 1982–1999.

Temperature change [1]	Recurrence interval [2]	Duration of the risk event [3]
Change in observed mean	0	0
+0.25°C	0	0
+0.5°C	26.1 years (24.0 years – 28.3 years)	2.6 weeks (2.5 weeks – 2.9 weeks)
+0.75°C	7.9 years (3.3 years – 13.1 years)	5.1 weeks (2.2 weeks – 2.1 months)
+1°C	2.1 years (4.1 months – 7.4 years)	9.3 weeks (1.5 weeks – 3.8 months)
+1.5°C	9.2 months (1.1 months – 2.7 years)	4.6 months (2.5 weeks – 7.1 months)
+2°C	4.4 months (0.9 months – 8.1 months)	7.0 months (5.1 weeks – 11.0 months)

[1] This refers to projected SST anomalies above the mean for 1982–1999.
[2] Recurrence is the mean time between severe coral bleaching risk events. Range (min – max) shown in brackets.
[3] Duration refers to the period of time where coral are exposed to the risk of severe bleaching. Range (min – max) shown in brackets.

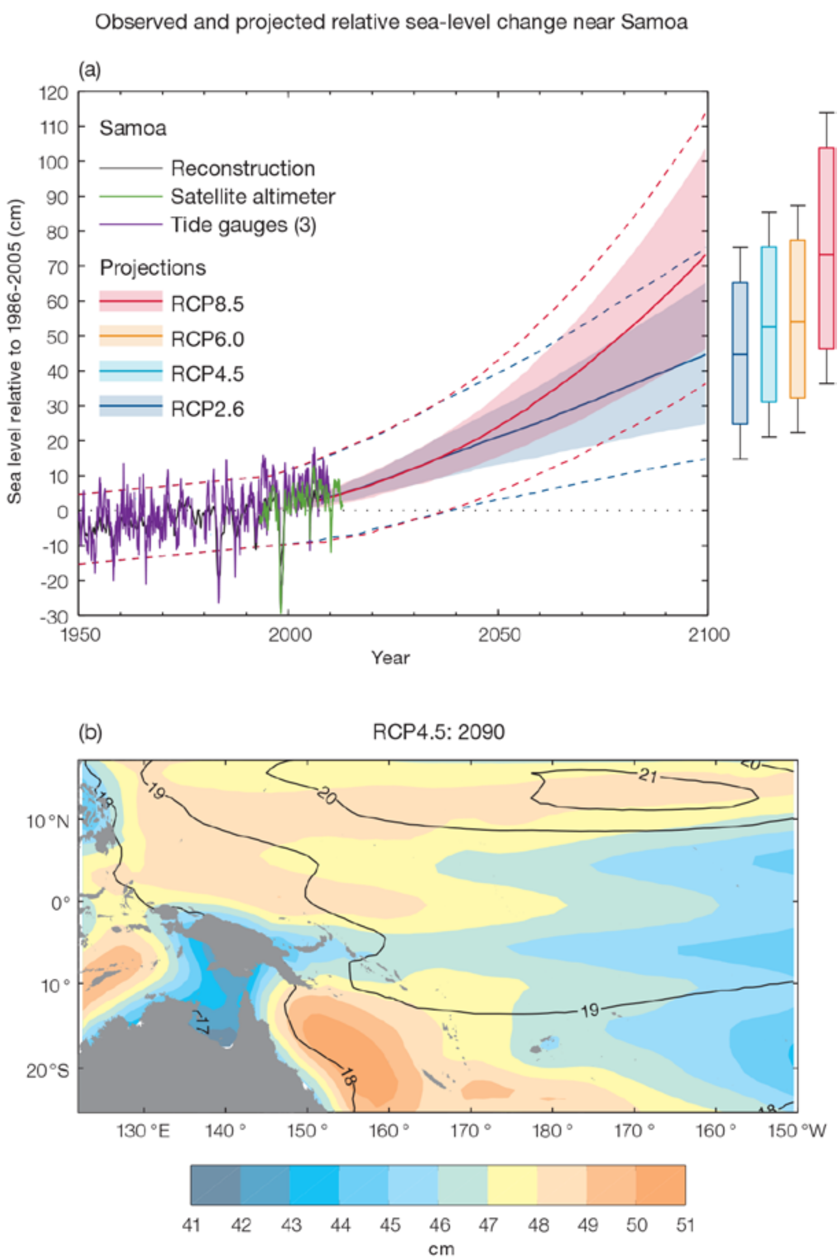

Figure 12.11: (a) The observed tide-gauge records of relative sea-level (since the late 1970s) are indicated in purple, and the satellite record (since 1993) in green. The gridded (reconstructed) sea level data at Samoa (since 1950) is shown in black. Multi-model mean projections from 1995–2100 are given for the RCP8.5 (red solid line) and RCP2.6 emissions scenarios (blue solid line), with the 5–95% uncertainty range shown by the red and blue shaded regions. The ranges of projections for four emission scenarios (RCPs 2.6, 4.5, 6.0 and 8.5) by 2100 are also shown by the bars on the right. The dashed lines are an estimate of interannual variability in sea level (5–95% uncertainty range about the projections) and indicate that individual monthly averages of sea level can be above or below longer-term averages.

(b) The regional distribution of projected sea level rise under the RCP4.5 emissions scenario for 2081–2100 relative to 1986–2005. Mean projected changes are indicated by the shading, and the estimated uncertainty in the projections is indicated by the contours (in cm).

12.5.6 Wind-driven Waves

During December–March, there is a projected decrease in wave period, significant in January-March in 2090 under RCP8.5, and also in March in 2090 under RCP4.5 and 2035 under RCP8.5 *(low confidence)* (Table 12.7). No statistically significant changes are projected in wave height (Figure 12.12) and no change is projected in wave direction, though direction is projected to be highly variable particularly in March, with a slight rotation of waves from northeast toward the east, but an increase in waves from the northwest and possibly other directions. This may be associated with cyclones or changes in the location of the SPCZ *(low confidence)*.

In June–September, no change is projected in wave period or direction (Table 12.7), though a small increase in wave height is suggested *(low confidence)*. No change is projected in the larger waves *(low confidence)*.

There is *low confidence* in projected changes in the Samoa wind-wave climate because:

- Projected changes in wave climate are dependent on confidence in projected changes in the ENSO, which is low; and
- The differences between simulated and observed (hindcast) wave data are larger than the projected wave changes, which further reduces our confidence in projections.

12.5.7 Projections Summary

There is *very high confidence* in the direction of long-term change in a number of key climate variables, namely an increase in mean and extremely high temperatures, sea level and ocean acidification. There is *high confidence* that the frequency and intensity of extreme rainfall will increase. However, it is unclear whether average annual rainfall and drought frequency will increase, decrease or stay similar to the current climate.

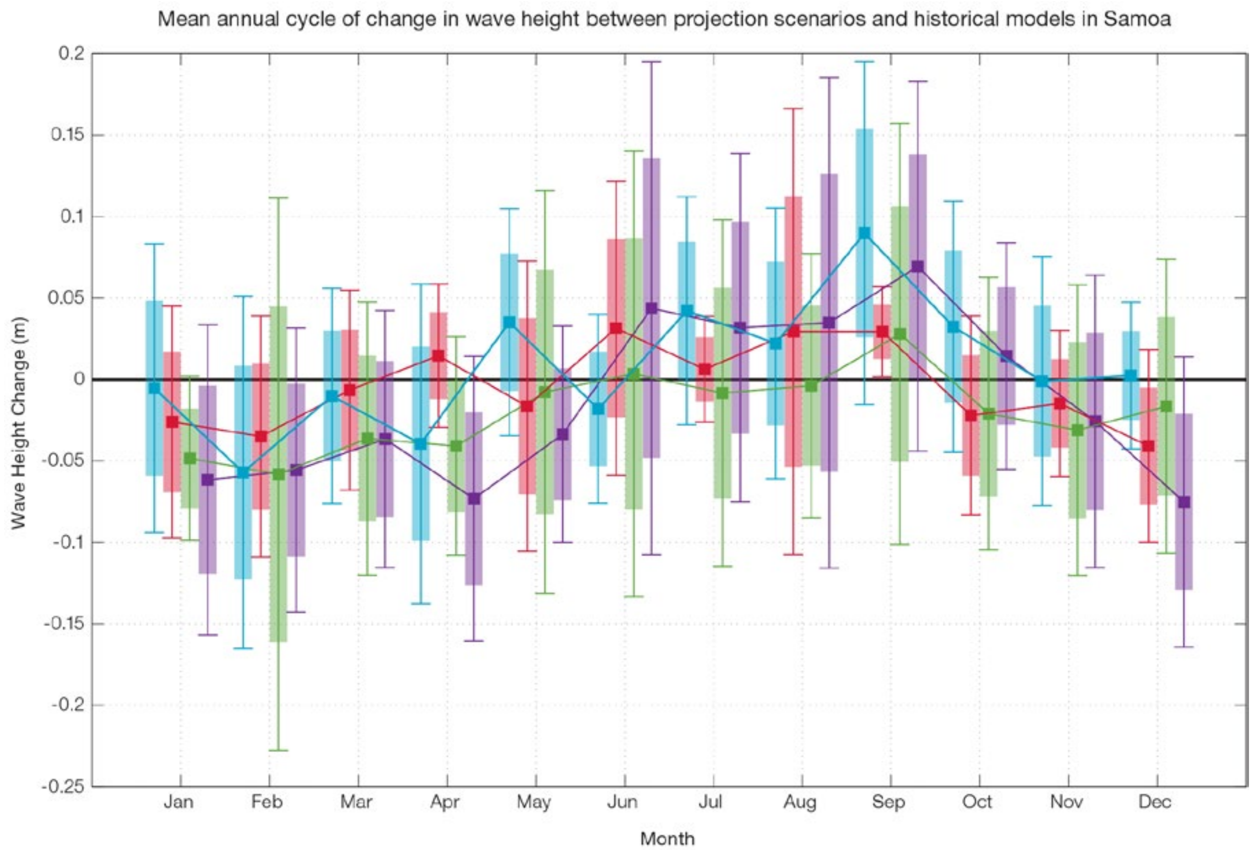

Figure 12.12: Mean annual cycle of change in wave height between projection scenarios and historical models in Samoa. This panel shows no projected change in wave height throughout the year. Shaded boxes show 1 standard deviation of models' means around the ensemble means, and error bars show the 5–95% range inferred from the standard deviation. Colours represent RCP scenarios and time periods: blue 2035 RCP4.5 (low emissions), red 2035 RCP8.5 (very high emissions), green 2090 RCP4.5 (low emissions), purple 2090 RCP8.5 (very high emissions).

Tables 12.6 and 12.7 quantify the mean changes and ranges of uncertainty for a number of variables, years and emissions scenarios. A number of factors are considered in assessing confidence, i.e. the type, amount, quality and consistency of evidence (e.g. mechanistic understanding, theory, data, models, expert judgment) and the degree of agreement, following the IPCC guidelines (Mastrandrea et al., 2010). Confidence ratings in the projected magnitude of mean change are generally lower than those for the direction of change (see paragraph above) because magnitude of change is more difficult to assess. For example, there is *very high confidence* that temperature will increase, but *medium confidence* in the magnitude of mean change.

Table 12.6: Projected changes in the annual and seasonal mean climate for Samoa under four emissions scenarios; RCP2.6 (very low emissions, in dark blue), RCP4.5 (low emissions, in light blue), RCP6 (medium emissions, in orange) and RCP8.5 (very high emissions, in red). Projected changes are given for four 20-year periods centred on 2030, 2050, 2070 and 2090, relative to a 20-year period centred on 1995. Values represent the multi-model mean change, with the 5–95% range of uncertainty in brackets. Confidence in the magnitude of change is expressed as *high*, *medium* or *low*. Surface air temperatures in the Pacific are closely related to sea-surface temperatures (SST), so the projected changes to air temperature given in this table can be used as a guide to the expected changes to SST. (See also Section 1.5.2). 'NA' indicates where data are not available.

Variable	Season	2030	2050	2070	2090	Confidence (magnitude of change)
Surface air temperature (°C)	Annual	0.6 (0.4–0.9)	0.7 (0.5–1.1)	0.7 (0.4–1.1)	0.7 (0.3–1.2)	*Medium*
		0.6 (0.4–1)	1 (0.7–1.4)	1.2 (0.9–1.8)	1.3 (0.9–2.1)	
		0.6 (0.4–0.9)	0.9 (0.6–1.4)	1.2 (0.9–1.9)	1.6 (1.1–2.5)	
		0.7 (0.5–1.1)	1.3 (1–1.9)	2 (1.5–2.9)	2.7 (2–4)	
Maximum temperature (°C)	1-in-20 year event	0.5 (0.2–0.6)	0.6 (0–0.9)	0.7 (0.2–1.1)	0.8 (0.3–1.1)	*Medium*
		0.6 (0.2–0.9)	0.9 (0.3–1.3)	1.1 (0.5–1.7)	1.3 (0.6–2)	
		NA (NA–NA)	NA (NA–NA)	NA (NA–NA)	NA (NA–NA)	
		0.7 (0.3–1.2)	1.4 (0.9–2.1)	2.2 (1.2–3)	2.9 (1.5–4.1)	
Minimum temperature (°C)	1-in-20 year event	0.6 (0.3–1)	0.6 (0–0.9)	0.7 (0.4–1)	0.7 (0.3–0.9)	*Medium*
		0.5 (0.2–0.8)	0.9 (0.5–1.3)	1.1 (0.6–1.6)	1.2 (0.7–2)	
		NA (NA–NA)	NA (NA–NA)	NA (NA–NA)	NA (NA–NA)	
		0.7 (0.3–1)	1.4 (0.8–2.1)	2.1 (1.5–2.9)	2.9 (2.1–4.2)	
Total rainfall (%)	Annual	1 (-7–8)	1 (-7–8)	-1 (-8–5)	2 (-8–11)	*Low*
		2 (-7–9)	1 (-9–7)	2 (-6–10)	0 (-11–5)	
		1 (-7–6)	0 (-7–7)	0 (-14–8)	-3 (-17–6)	
		2 (-6–9)	0 (-9–6)	0 (-16–12)	-1 (-18–14)	
Total rainfall (%)	Nov-Apr	2 (-4–6)	2 (-6–9)	1 (-9–9)	2 (-10–11)	*Low*
		3 (-3–10)	1 (-8–7)	3 (-7–15)	1 (-11–9)	
		1 (-6–6)	1 (-5–6)	1 (-15–11)	-1 (-17–12)	
		3 (-5–10)	2 (-11–9)	2 (-15–14)	2 (-18–20)	
Total rainfall (%)	May-Oct	1 (-11–14)	-1 (-11–10)	-3 (-13–9)	2 (-9–16)	*Low*
		0 (-11–11)	0 (-11–15)	0 (-11–10)	-2 (-15–9)	
		1 (-9–15)	0 (-13–13)	-1 (-13–11)	-6 (-16–8)	
		0 (-11–14)	-2 (-13–10)	-2 (-18–16)	-5 (-23–13)	
Aragonite saturation state (Ωar)	Annual	-0.3 (-0.7–0.0)	-0.4 (-0.8–-0.0)	-0.4 (-0.7–-0.0)	-0.3 (-0.7–0.0)	*Medium*
		-0.3 (-0.7–0.0)	-0.5 (-0.9–-0.2)	-0.7 (-1.0–-0.4)	-0.7 (-1.1–-0.4)	
		NA (NA–NA)	NA (NA–NA)	NA (NA–NA)	NA (NA–NA)	
		-0.4 (-0.7–-0.1)	-0.7 (-1.1–-0.4)	-1.1 (-1.5–-0.8)	-1.5 (-1.8–-1.2)	
Mean sea level (cm)	Annual	12 (8–17)	21 (13–30)	31 (18–44)	41 (23–59)	*Medium*
		12 (7–17)	22 (13–30)	34 (21–47)	46 (28–66)	
		12 (7–17)	21 (13–29)	33 (21–46)	48 (29–67)	
		12 (7–17)	24 (16–33)	41 (27–56)	62 (40–87)	

Waves Projections Summary

Table 12.7: Projected average changes in wave height, period and direction in Samoa for December–March and June–September for RCP4.5 (low emissions, in blue) and RCP8.5 (very high emissions, in red), for two 20-year periods (2026–2045 and 2081–2100), relative to a 1986–2005 historical period. The values in brackets represent the 5th to 95th percentile range of uncertainty.

Variable	Season	2035	2090	Confidence (range)
Wave height change (m)	December–March	-0.0 (-0.2–0.2) -0.0 (-0.2–0.1)	-0.0 (-0.2–0.1) -0.1 (-0.2–0.2)	*Low*
	June–September	+0.0 (-0.2–0.3) +0.0 (-0.2–0.2)	0.0 (-0.2–0.2) +0.0 (-0.2–0.3)	*Low*
Wave period change (s)	December–March	-0.1(-1.3–1.2) -0.1 (-1.2–1.2)	-0.1 (-1.3–1.5) -0.2 (-1.6–1.6)	*Low*
	June–September	0.0 (-0.9–1.0) +0.0 (-1.0–1.0)	+0.0 (-1.1–1.2) 0.0 (-1.3–1.3)	*Low*
Wave direction change (° clockwise)	December–March	0 (-40–40) 0 (-40–30)	0 (-40–40) 0 (-50–50)	*Low*
	June–September	0 (-10–10) 0 (-10–10)	0 (-10–10) 0 (-10–10)	*Low*

Wind-wave variables parameters are calculated for a 20-year period centred on 2035.