Met Office 3-month Outlook

Period: September – November 2013 Issue date: 30.08.13

The forecast presented here is for September and the average of the September-October-November period for the United Kingdom as a whole. The forecast for September will be superseded by the long-range information on the public weather forecast web page (www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/forecast/#?tab=regionalForecast), starting from 7 September 2013. This forecast is based on information from observations, several numerical models and expert judgement.

SUMMARY - TEMPERATURE:

Latest predictions for UK-mean temperature favour above-average temperatures for both September and September-October-November.

Overall, the probability that the UK-mean temperature for September-October-November will fall into the warmest of our five categories is 25% and the probability of falling into the coldest of our five categories is 15% (the 1981-2010 probability for each of these categories is 20%).

CONTEXT:

There is little change in the state of sea surface temperature anomalies in the tropical Pacific, with near-neutral conditions (neither El Niño nor La Niña) continuing; computer models indicate little change in the coming months. This phase has no known predictive value for northern Europe on seasonal timescales. Also, there are no other major large-scale drivers of seasonal predictability evident in, for example, the global ocean temperatures.

Consistent with this lack of large-scale forcing, computer models show considerable spread in atmospheric circulation types during September, limiting our confidence in the forecast. On balance, it is more probable for the North Atlantic / European sector to experience winds from the west more frequently than is typical. Given that sea surface temperatures are still above average near and to the west of the UK, UK temperatures are more likely to be above than below average.

For September-October-November as a whole, the forecasts favour slightly higher-than-average pressure over northern Europe, suggesting blocking patterns may be more prevalent. This period is a transitional time of year in which a given circulation pattern can result in very different temperature outcomes between the beginning and the end of the season. For example, a pattern with frequent spells of winds from continental Europe during September and early October often gives warm weather over the UK, whereas a similar pattern towards the end of October and throughout November leads to the converse. Therefore, although above-average temperatures are favoured for the season as a whole, this does not exclude spells of colder weather, especially later in the period.

Fig T1

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

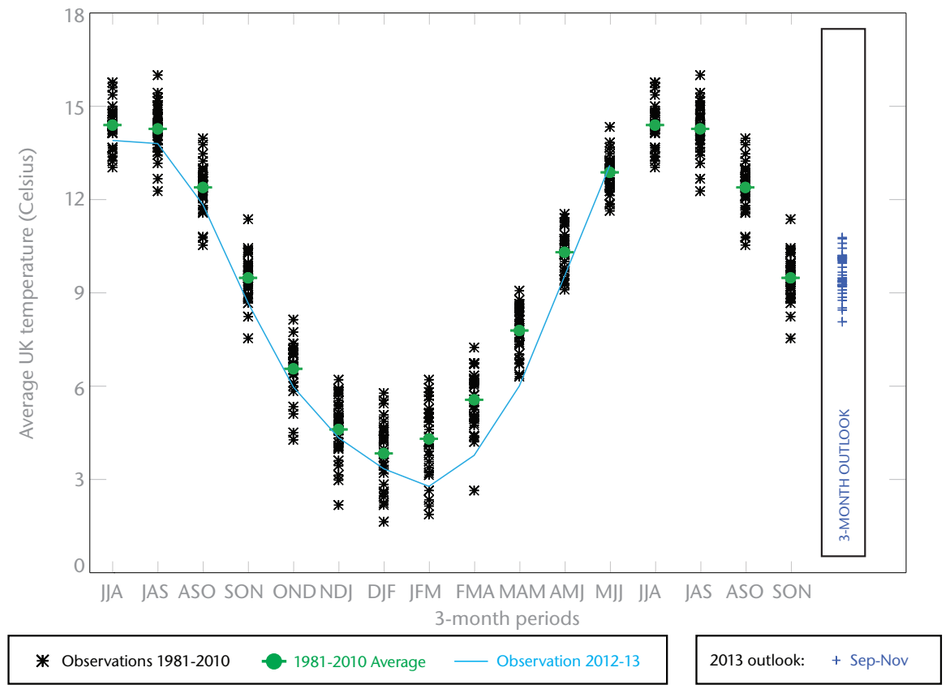


Fig T2

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

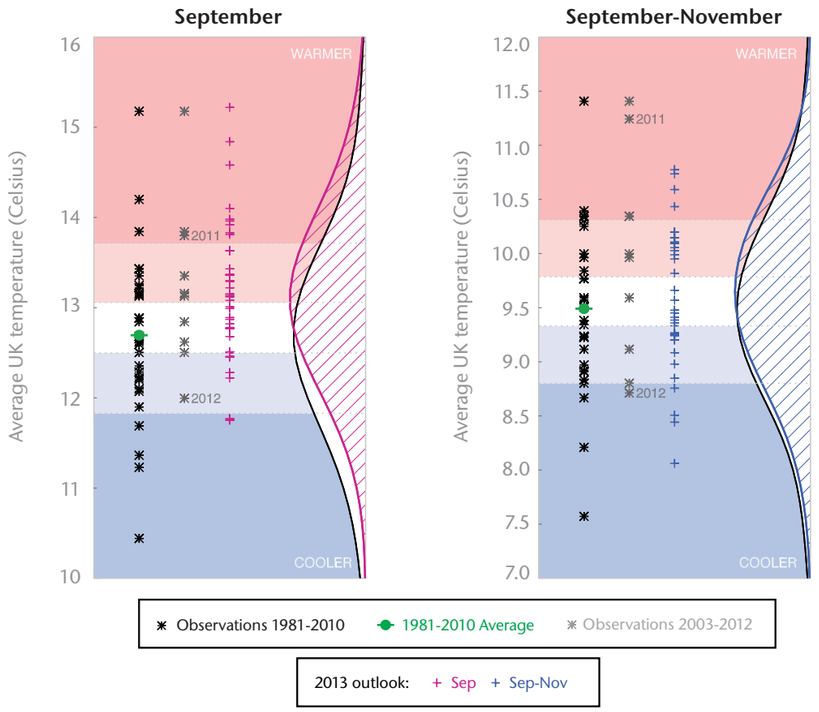
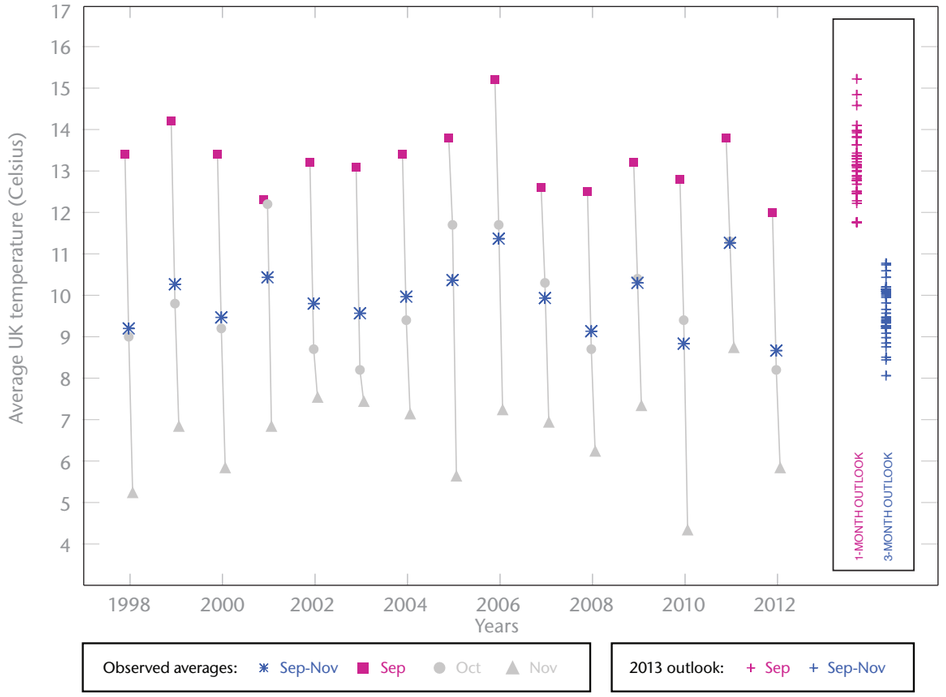


Fig T3

1-month and 3-month UK outlook for temperature 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.