



TSR Predicts Very Active 2008 Atlantic Hurricane Season

Revised outlook raises forecasts for Atlantic basin and U.S. landfalling hurricane activity.

London, 6th August 2008 – Tropical Storm Risk (TSR), the award-winning* consortium of experts on insurance, risk management and seasonal climate forecasting led by UCL's Benfield Hazard Research Centre, today increased its outlook for Atlantic hurricane activity in 2008.

Based on current and projected climate signals TSR predicts Atlantic basin and U.S. landfalling hurricane activity in 2008 will both be 90% above the long-term (1950-2007) norm. This compares to 35% above-norm predictions issued on the 4th July 2008. The forecast has risen due to the establishment in July of tropospheric wind patterns which favour increased hurricane activity. Once formed these anomalous winds tend to persist through the main hurricane months of August and September.

TSR's updated hurricane prediction includes:

- A 97% probability of an above-normal Atlantic hurricane season, a 3% probability of a near-normal season and a negligible chance of a below-normal season.
- 18 tropical storms for the Atlantic basin as a whole, with nine of these being hurricanes and four or five of these hurricanes being intense in category. This compares to long-term norm values of ten, six and three respectively.
- A 91% probability of above-normal U.S. landfalling hurricane activity, an 8% likelihood of a near-normal season and only a 1% chance of a below-normal season.
- Five tropical storm strikes on the U.S., of which two will be hurricanes.
- One hurricane strike on the Caribbean Lesser Antilles.

If verified, the total of 18 tropical storms would be the equal third highest total recorded in a North Atlantic season since 1950.

Professor Mark Saunders, the TSR lead scientist and Head of Weather and Climate Extremes at the Benfield UCL Hazard Research Centre at University College London says there is now a high likelihood that 2008 will be a very active hurricane season. This belief is supported by the following:

- (1) The strong enhancing effect on activity from the trade winds which blow westward across the tropical

Atlantic and Caribbean Sea in August and September. These winds influence cyclonic vorticity and vertical wind shear over the main hurricane track region. In 2008 these winds are likely to be weaker than normal, thereby increasing cyclonic vorticity and helping more and stronger storms to spin up.

- (2) The expected weak enhancing effect on activity from the temperature of the sea waters between west Africa and the Caribbean where many hurricanes develop during August and September. In 2008 these waters are likely to be slightly warmer than normal thereby providing extra heat and moisture to help power the development of storms within the hurricane main development region.
- (3) The moderate enhancing effect for US hurricane landfalls from July tropospheric wind anomalies between heights of 925mb and 400mb over North America, the east Pacific and the North Atlantic. In 2008 these winds are favourable for steering evolving Atlantic hurricanes towards US shores during August and September.
- 4) Historical precedents for seasons with a very active June/July for hurricane activity. Through early August the 2008 season has seen the second highest hurricane activity of any year since 1950. All years since 1950 with a very active June/July for hurricane activity have subsequently been very active for seasonal hurricane activity.

TSR forecasts may be accessed through the website www.tropicalstormrisk.com

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About Tropical Storm Risk (TSR):

Founded in 2000, Tropical Storm Risk (TSR) offers a leading resource for forecasting the risk from tropical storms worldwide. The venture provides innovative forecast products to increase risk awareness and to help decision making within the (re)insurance industry, other business sectors, government and society. The TSR consortium is co-sponsored by Benfield, the world's leading independent reinsurance and risk intermediary, Royal & Sun Alliance, the global insurance group, and Crawford & Company, a global claims management solutions company.

* Tropical Storm Risk has won two major insurance industry awards during the past four years. In 2006 TSR was awarded the prestigious Risk Management Award at the British Insurance Awards, and in 2004 won the British Insurance Award for London Market Innovation of the Year.