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Remarkable 2010 Hurricane and Typhoon Seasons

To mark the end of the 2010 Atlantic hurricane season, Tropical Storm Risk (TSR), which provides a leading resource for predicting and mapping tropical storm activity worldwide and is co-sponsored by Aon Benfield, today issues summaries for the 2010 Atlantic hurricane and the 2010 Northwest Pacific typhoon seasons. TSR announced that both seasons had been record (or near-record) breaking but in very different ways.

Speaking at the Aon Benfield Japan Seminar in Tokyo, Professor Mark Saunders of TSR highlighted the following features of these two remarkable seasons.

2010 Atlantic Hurricane Season:

- One of the most active on record with 19 tropical storms and 12 hurricanes. Only 2005 has seen more hurricanes (with 15), and only 2005 and 1933 have seen more tropical storms (with 28 and 21 respectively).
- No US landfalling hurricane. This is unprecedented for a season with at least 10 hurricanes.
- Fifth year in a row with no major hurricane strike on the US. The only previous time this has happened was in 1901-1905.
- Two hurricanes – Igor and Julia – occurred simultaneously at Cat 4 intensity. This last happened in 1926.

2010 Northwest Pacific Typhoon Season:

- Very likely to be the least active season since reliable records began in the mid 1960s.
- Currently just 14 tropical storms and 8 typhoons. The previous records for the least number of tropical storms and typhoons in a year were 17 and 9 respectively set in 1998.
- Experienced fewer tropical storms than the North Atlantic in 2010. Apart from in 2005 this has never happened before. A 'normal' typhoon season experiences nearly three times more storm activity than the North Atlantic.
- No Japanese-mainland landfalling typhoon. This is only the second such occurrence since 1988.

	N. Atlantic 2010 (1950-2009 average)	**NW Pacific 2010 (1965-2009 average)**
Number of tropical storms	19 (10.4)	14 (26.6)
Number of hurricanes/typhoons	12 (6.1)	8 (16.6)
Number of intense hurricanes/typhoons	5 (2.7)	4 (8.6)
ACE Index value	169 (103)	116 (299)

Professor Mark Saunders at Tropical Storm Risk, said: “The very active Atlantic hurricane season was caused primarily by record-breaking warm sea surface temperature anomalies in the tropical North Atlantic, combined with weaker than normal vertical wind shear caused by La Niña. These factors helped to energise and sustain storms. The exceptionally low Northwest Pacific typhoon season was caused by La Niña reducing cyclonic vorticity over the Northwest Pacific where typhoons form. This made it difficult for storms to spin-up.”

Saunders added that forecasts had predicted well the high North Atlantic hurricane activity from the previous December but had not anticipated the unprecedented lack of US landfalling hurricane activity. The low Northwest Pacific typhoon activity had been forecast well in updates after May 2010.

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About TSR
Tropical Storm Risk (TSR) offers a leading resource for predicting and mapping tropical storm activity worldwide. TSR provides a range of products and information through freely-available and subscription services. Led by Professor Mark Saunders, TSR is affiliated to University College London (UCL) and co-sponsored by Aon Benfield, RSA and Crawford & Company.

About Aon Benfield Research
The Aon Benfield Research team is responsible for monitoring and analyzing reinsurers and the reinsurance industry and providing insights that help our clients to make informed decisions for their businesses. Aon Benfield Research also brings together our academic relationships under one banner to deliver a wealth of relevant academic research material. We combine world class academic research with Aon Benfield’s industry-leading catastrophe modeling, actuarial analysis and broking expertise to create a more risk aware world.

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