Met Office 3-month Outlook

Period: May – July 2017 Issue date: 27.04.17

The forecast presented here is for May and the average of the May-June-July period for the United Kingdom as a whole. The forecast for May will be superseded by the long-range information on the public weather forecast web page (www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/forecast/#?tab=regionalForecast), starting from 01 May 2017.

This forecast is based on information from observations, several numerical prediction systems and expert judgement.

SUMMARY – TEMPERATURE:

For May and May-June-July, above-average temperatures are more probable than below-average.

Overall, the probability that the UK-average temperature for May-June-July will fall into the coldest of our five categories is 10% and the probability that it will fall into the warmest of our five categories is 35% (the 1981-2010 probability for each of these categories is 20%).

CONTEXT:

In the tropical Pacific Ocean, the El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO) remains near neutral with slightly above-average sea surface temperatures (SSTs) across the equatorial Pacific. Moderate warming of ENSO is favoured into spring and summer 2017, but this is not expected to influence UK weather significantly through this period.

Sea surface temperatures in the North Atlantic Ocean continue to be mostly above average, with negative anomalies evident between Iceland and the east coast of Canada. This pattern may potentially be linked to a stronger jet stream across the Northern Atlantic at times. Sea surface temperatures around the UK are above normal, increasing the chances of higher-than-average UK temperatures through the period. The winter maximum Arctic sea ice extent this year was the lowest on record and ice was significantly thinner than normal. This has been linked to increased UK precipitation during the summer.

The Met Office Long-Range Prediction System, along with systems from other forecast centres, shows an increase in the chances of an anticyclonic influence across the UK in May. This circulation pattern gives an enhanced likelihood of more frequent sunny spells and winds from a continental flow. Higher-than-average UK temperatures are therefore more likely in May than below-average (see the left-hand graph of fig. T2). There is a lack of large-scale global drivers overall and relatively weak signals from long-range prediction systems beyond May. For the period May-June-July as a whole, warmer-than-average conditions are considered more probable than below-average (see the right-hand graph of fig. T2), consistent with the longer term trend.

Fig T1

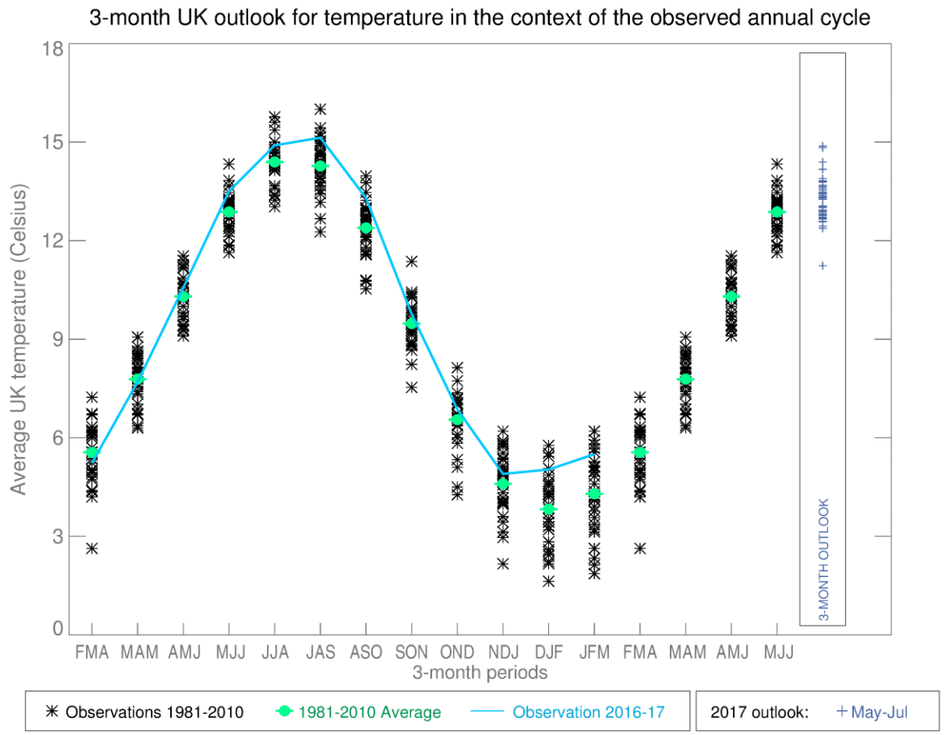


Fig T2

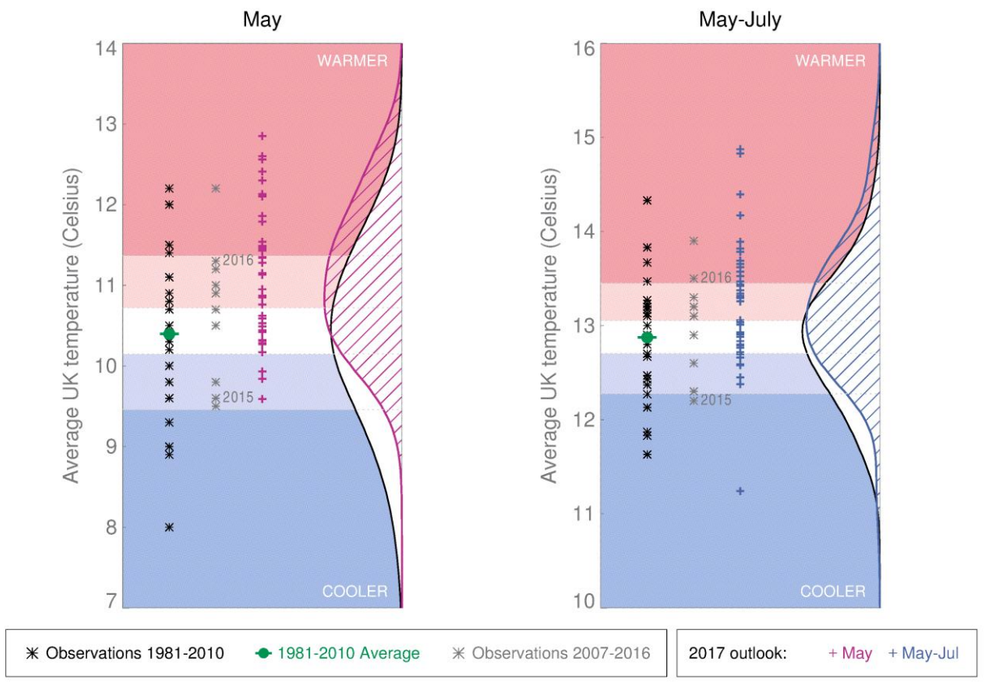
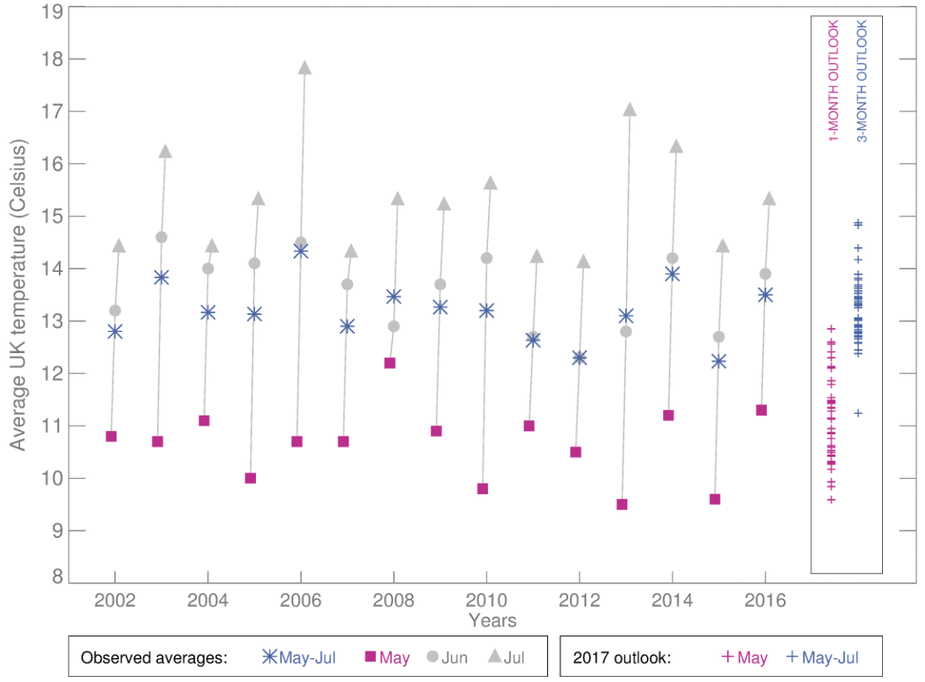


Fig T3



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.