

Press release

Allianz: Trend of above-average hurricane seasons expected to continue this year

- Experts from Allianz Global Corporate & Specialty (AGCS) and Allianz Re share their outlook based on forecasts from international institutes
- 2021 hurricane season was the third most active on record
- No clear scientific consensus on whether manmade climate change is increasing hurricane frequency, but it is agreed storms will become wetter and more intense, causing more physical damage

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The hurricane season in the Atlantic basin officially starts on June 1. After several years of above-average seasons, what is the forecast for this year? Catastrophe risk experts from Allianz Global Corporate & Specialty (AGCS) and Allianz Re share their predictions based on their own projections and the early assessments of international hurricane forecasting institutes¹ in their [annual hurricane season outlook](#). The last six hurricane seasons have been characterized by above-average activity and this trend is expected to continue in the 2022 Atlantic hurricane season. To minimize losses in the event of a hurricane, businesses need to develop and implement a comprehensive crisis plan, including actions to take before, during, and after a storm.

According to the latest available forecasts, the 2022 hurricane season is expected to be above the 1991-2020 average, with 14-21 tropical storms and six to 10 hurricanes, including three to six major hurricanes (for comparison: an above-average season would be seven to nine storms reaching hurricane strength and two to four becoming major hurricanes, which is Category 3 or higher).

Looking back, the 2021 hurricane season was the third most active season on record, as well as the third costliest after 2017 and 2005. In late August, Hurricane Ida caused widespread damage in the Caribbean before devastating the coast of Louisiana, generating record rainfall in various locations, and flash flooding in the north-east US, resulting in insured losses of \$36bn.²

The 2021 Atlantic hurricane season saw a total of 21 named storms, of which seven were hurricanes (four reached a major hurricane status). The number of named storms well exceeded the average of 14 and the total number of major hurricanes is also slightly above the average of three. “The main factors contributing to an above-average hurricane season in 2021 included La Niña, above-normal sea surface temperatures (SSTs) early in the season, and above-average West African Monsoon rainfall,” explains AGCS Catastrophe Risk Research Analyst Mabé Villar Vega.

¹ AccuWeather, Colorado State University, North Carolina State University, Tropical Storm Risk, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Hurricane Center

² Munich Re: Hurricanes, Cold Waves, Tornadoes: Weather Disasters in USA Dominate Natural Disaster Losses in 2021

Recent Atlantic hurricane seasons have seen the first tropical storms form before the official start date of June 1. As a result, the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Hurricane Center has contemplated moving the start date to May 15. The extension of hurricane activity could in some respects be attributed to the development of advanced observational technologies, which can identify weaker storms that never come close to any landmass, adding to tropical storm counts.

Another contributory factor to the extension of seasonal storm activity is likely to be higher SSTs. Tropical storms can only form and sustain themselves for longer periods where ocean temperatures exceed 27°C. Manmade global warming has increased atmospheric temperature by 1.1°C since 1880, with most of the net excess heat stored in the world's oceans, including the North Atlantic. This has increased the duration of hurricane-supporting SSTs as well as the geographical spread of where they might occur.

The role of climate change

"There is no clear scientific consensus on whether climate change will result in a net increase in the frequency of tropical storms," explains Bastian Manz, Senior Climate Risk Analyst at Allianz Re. "However, there is more certainty that high-intensity storms will become more frequent, indicating the potential for greater wind and storm surge damage." Scientists also believe that climate change will make hurricanes wetter, increasing the risk of flooding. In addition, the strength of a storm becomes harder to predict, as storms intensify in a short space of time. The wind speeds of Hurricane Ida increased by 55mph in the 24 hours before landfall in Louisiana.

"Businesses need to prepare themselves for the prospect of another above-average hurricane season this year," says Thomas Varney, Head of Risk Consulting, North America at AGCS. "Obviously, windstorms cannot be prevented from occurring. However, loss can be greatly minimized by adequate preparation before a storm arrives. The development and implementation of a comprehensive windstorm emergency plan should be a number one priority for those companies who don't already have this in place."

Businesses in exposed areas are advised to regularly update their emergency plan, which should cover areas such as training, assembling emergency supplies, business continuity, buildings inspections, anchoring or relocating equipment and stock, and protecting windows.

Allianz Risk Consulting also publishes a series of risk bulletins and checklists to help you protect your people, property, and business, including: [Windstorm Checklist](#), [Flood Checklist](#), [Water Damage During Construction](#), and [Water Damage Prevention Solutions](#).

View the full AGCS and Allianz Re hurricane season outlook [here](#).

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Our customers are as diverse as business can be, ranging from Fortune Global 500 companies to small businesses. Among them are not only the world's largest consumer brands, tech companies and the global aviation and shipping industry, but also satellite operators or Hollywood film productions. They all look to AGCS for smart solutions and global programs to their largest and most complex risks in a dynamic, multinational business environment and trust us to deliver an outstanding claims experience.

Worldwide, AGCS operates with its own teams in more than 30 countries and through the Allianz Group network and partners in over 200 countries and territories, employing around 4,250 people. As one of the largest Property-Casualty units of Allianz Group, we are backed by strong and stable financial ratings. In 2021, AGCS generated a total of €9.5 billion gross premium globally.

For more information please visit <http://www.agcs.allianz.com/> or follow us on Twitter @AGCS_Insurance and LinkedIn.

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