



**33rd Session of
South Asian Climate Outlook Forum (SASCOF-33)
27th December 2025
(Online)**

**Consensus Statement on the Forecast for December 2025
to February 2026 (DJF 2025/26) Season Rainfall and
Temperatures over South Asia**

Summary

During the winter season from December 2025 to February 2026 (DJF 2025/26), many areas in the northern and northwestern regions of South Asia, along with the Himalayan foothills, northeastern parts of the region, and island nations in the southern sector, are likely to experience below-normal precipitation. In contrast, normal to above-normal precipitation is expected across much of southern South Asia, as well as in select northwestern and northeastern areas of the region.

During the season, most of South Asia is expected to experience above-normal minimum temperatures. However, the central parts of the region and a few isolated areas in the northwest are likely to see normal to below-normal minimum temperatures during the upcoming winter. Above-normal maximum temperatures are also anticipated across many parts of South Asia, especially in the northern, northwestern, and eastern regions. Meanwhile, normal maximum temperatures are likely in portions of central and southern South Asia, with below-normal maximum temperatures expected in a few isolated areas, mainly in central and southeastern parts of the region.

This consensus climate outlook for the December 2025 to February 2026 (DJF 2025/26) season over South Asia has been developed through an expert assessment of the prevailing global climate conditions influencing the South Asian climate and seasonal forecasts from different climate models around the world. At present, weak La Niña conditions are observed in the equatorial Pacific, while negative Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) conditions persist over the Indian Ocean—both of which play important roles in influencing climate variability across South Asia. There is a moderate to fairly high likelihood (around 62%) that La Niña will continue through the DJF 2025/26 season, followed by a likely transition to neutral ENSO conditions. Negative IOD conditions are also expected to gradually weaken, with an increasing probability of shifting to neutral conditions during and after the DJF season. In addition, other regional and global climate drivers, along with intraseasonal variability, have been carefully considered due to their potential impacts on rainfall and temperature patterns across the region.

For more information and further updates on the seasonal climate outlook on a national scale, the respective National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) may be consulted.

Introduction

During the winter season (December to January), northern parts of South Asia receive a good amount of precipitation in the form of both snow and rain. The southern part of the region consisting of the southeastern part of India, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives also receive a good amount of rainfall during the season. Most of the remaining areas of the region generally receive very little precipitation during the season. It is recognized that the seasonal predictability of the region during the season is limited to some extent by the strong day-to-day atmospheric variability. The day-to-day atmospheric variability over the northern (southern) part of the region is caused by the passage of disturbances in the mid-latitude westerlies (tropical easterlies). The seasonal predictability over the southern part of the region is also limited by the eastward-moving Madden Julian Oscillation (MJO), which represents the major global scale intra-seasonal variability pattern.

The climate outlook for December 2025 to February 2026 (DJF 2025/26) season was finalized during the 33rd session of the South Asian Climate Outlook Forum (SASCOF-33) held on 27th November 2025 via video conferencing. The session was attended by experts representing the National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) of all the nine South Asian countries as well as those representing several global and regional climate agencies including WMO Regional Climate Centre (RCC) Pune and Regional Integrated Multi-hazard Early-warning System (RIMES). The online forum deliberated on various observed and emerging climate forcing that are known to influence the climate variability of the region such as the El Niño/Southern Oscillation (ENSO) conditions over the equatorial Pacific, Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) conditions over the Indian Ocean, etc. The key features of these climate forcing are briefly discussed below.

ENSO conditions over the Pacific Ocean

The El Niño/Southern Oscillation (ENSO) is one of the global scale climate phenomena having a significant influence on the year-to-year variability of the winter precipitation as well as the surface temperatures over South Asia. Currently, weak La Niña conditions prevail over the equatorial Pacific region. The latest forecasts from global climate models indicates a moderate to fairly high likelihood (around 62%) of La Niña conditions persisting through the DJF 2025/26 season, with a probable transition to neutral ENSO conditions thereafter.

IOD Conditions over the Indian Ocean

In addition to ENSO conditions over the Pacific, other factors such as Indian Ocean sea surface temperatures have some influence on the climate variability of the region. Currently, negative Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) conditions are prevailing over the Indian Ocean. Forecasts from global climate models indicate that these negative IOD conditions are likely to weaken, with an increasing probability of a transition to neutral conditions during the DJF season and thereafter.

Consensus Outlook for December 2025 to February 2026 (DJF 2025/26) Season Rainfall and Temperature (Minimum & Maximum) over South Asia

A consensus outlook for December 2025 to February 2026 season rainfall over South Asia has been prepared based on the expert assessment of prevailing large-scale global climate indicators mentioned above and experimental as well as operational long-range forecasts based on statistical and dynamical models generated by various operational and research centers of the world.

During the season, the climate of the region is also generally get influenced by the strong day-to-day atmospheric variability. Therefore, it is recognized that there is large uncertainty in the prediction of winter precipitation over the region. It was also recognized that SSTs over the Pacific (such as ENSO) are not the only factor that decides the performance of the winter season climate over the region. Other relevant climate drivers such as the state of the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD), the Tropical Atlantic SST, etc. are also important. The relative impact of all these parameters needs to be considered to determine the expected state of the climate over the region during the season. There is unanimity among the experts that La Niña conditions are likely to persist through the DJF 2025/26 season, with a probable transition to neutral ENSO conditions thereafter. The negative IOD conditions are also likely to weaken, with an increasing likelihood of a transition to neutral IOD conditions during the DJF season and thereafter. However, the impact of La Niña on the winter season precipitation over northern parts of South Asia is not very clear particularly due to strong day-to-day atmospheric variability over the region.

The outlook for the 2025/26 winter season precipitation and Temperature (Minimum & Maximum) over South Asia is shown in **Fig.1a-c**. The figures illustrate the most likely tercile category¹ as well as its probability for each of the 1° latitude x 1° longitude spatial grid boxes over the region. The box-wise tercile probabilities were

derived using an objective approach from an initial set of gridded forecasts from multiple GCMs and consolidated through a consensus-building discussion among climate experts.

The outlook suggests that during the winter season from December 2025 to February 2026 (DJF 2025/26), many areas in the northern and northwestern regions of South Asia, along with the Himalayan foothills, northeastern parts of the region, and island nations in the southern sector, are likely to experience below-normal precipitation. In contrast, normal to above-normal precipitation is expected across much of southern South Asia, as well as in select northwestern and northeastern areas of the region (Fig. 1a).

The consensus outlook on minimum temperatures for the December 2025 to February 2026 season indicates that above normal minimum temperatures are likely over most areas of South Asia, except the central parts of South Asia and some isolated areas in the northwestern region, where normal to below normal minimum temperatures are likely during the upcoming winter season (Fig. 1b).

The consensus outlook on maximum temperatures for the December 2025 to February 2026 season indicates that above normal maximum temperatures are likely over many areas of South Asia, particularly over the northern, northwestern, and eastern parts of the region (Fig. 1c). Normal maximum temperatures are likely over some areas of central and southern parts of South Asia, while below normal maximum temperatures are expected over isolated areas, mainly in parts of central and southeastern South Asia.

As the rainfall and temperature during the winter season depict strong intra-seasonal variability, it is advised to watch the extended-range forecasts along with updated seasonal forecasts for better decision-making. The extended range forecasts for rainfall, temperature, cyclone genesis, MJO, etc. over the region can be obtained from RCC, Pune website (<http://rcc.imdpune.gov.in/exrange.html>). These forecasts are updated every week.

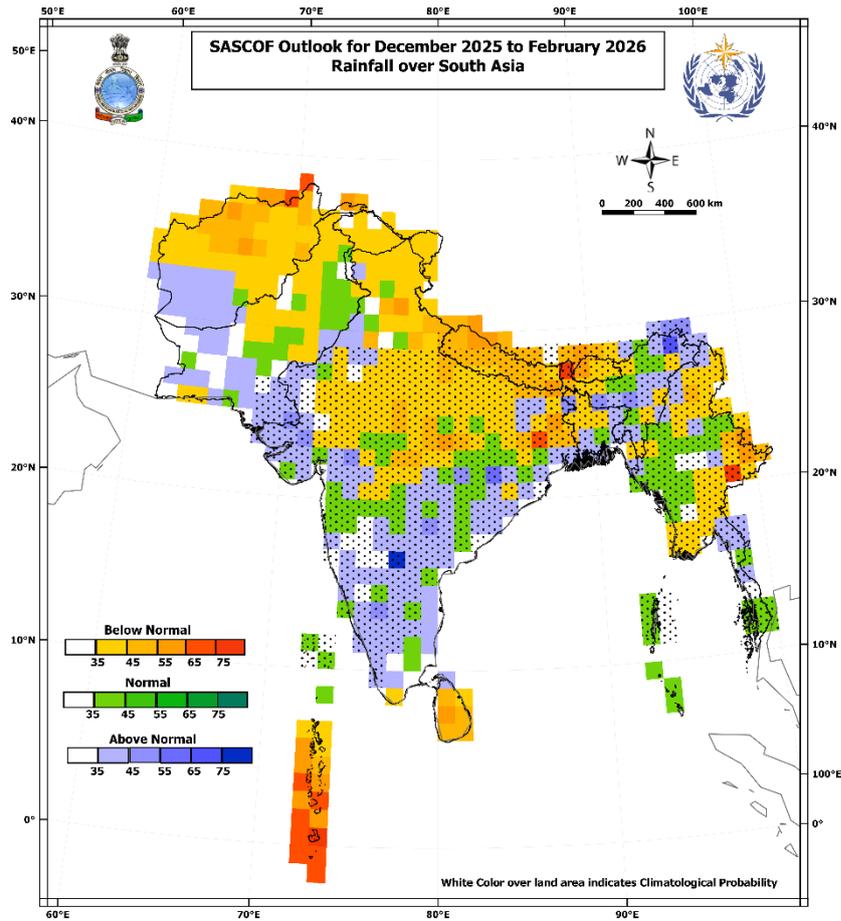


Fig.1a. Consensus outlook for the winter season (December 2025 to February 2026) precipitation over South Asia. The dotted area shown in the map climatologically receives very low rainfall and experiences dry weather during the DJF season.

¹Tercile categories have equal climatological probabilities, of 33.33% each

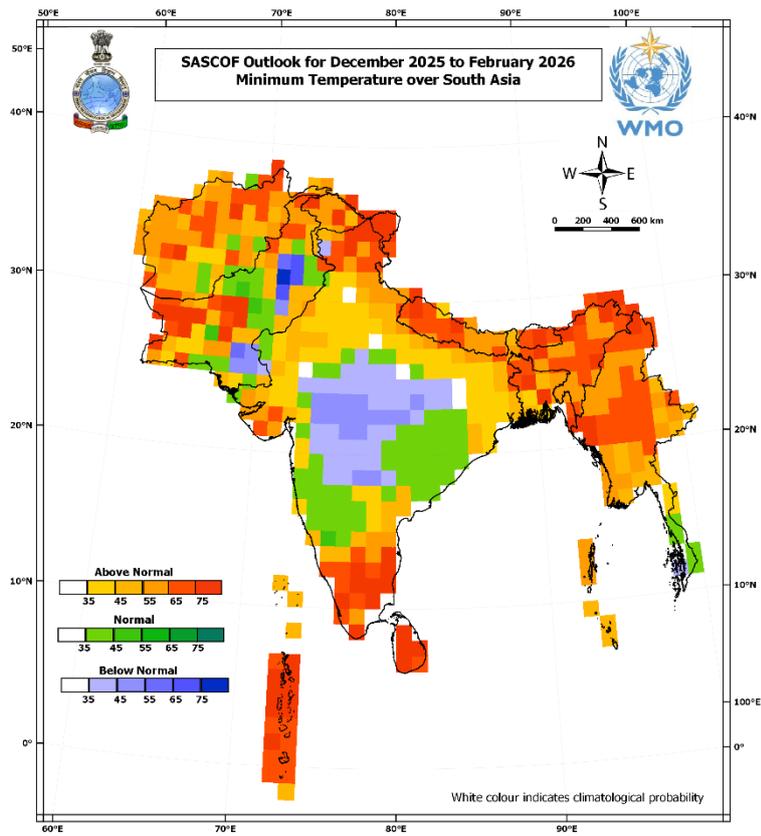


Fig.1b. Consensus outlook for the winter season (December 2025 to February 2026) Minimum Temperature over South Asia.

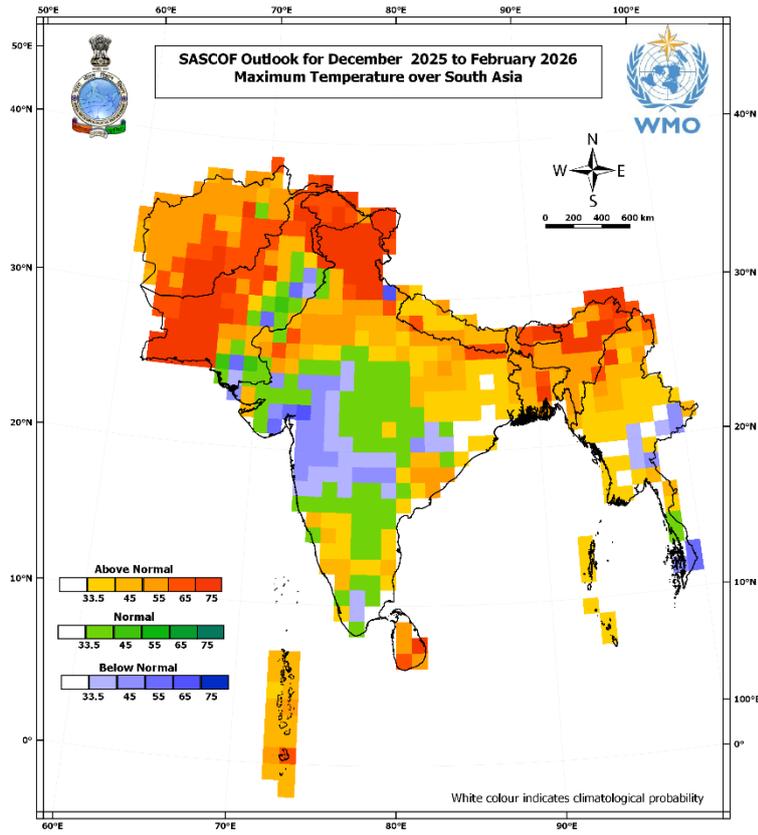
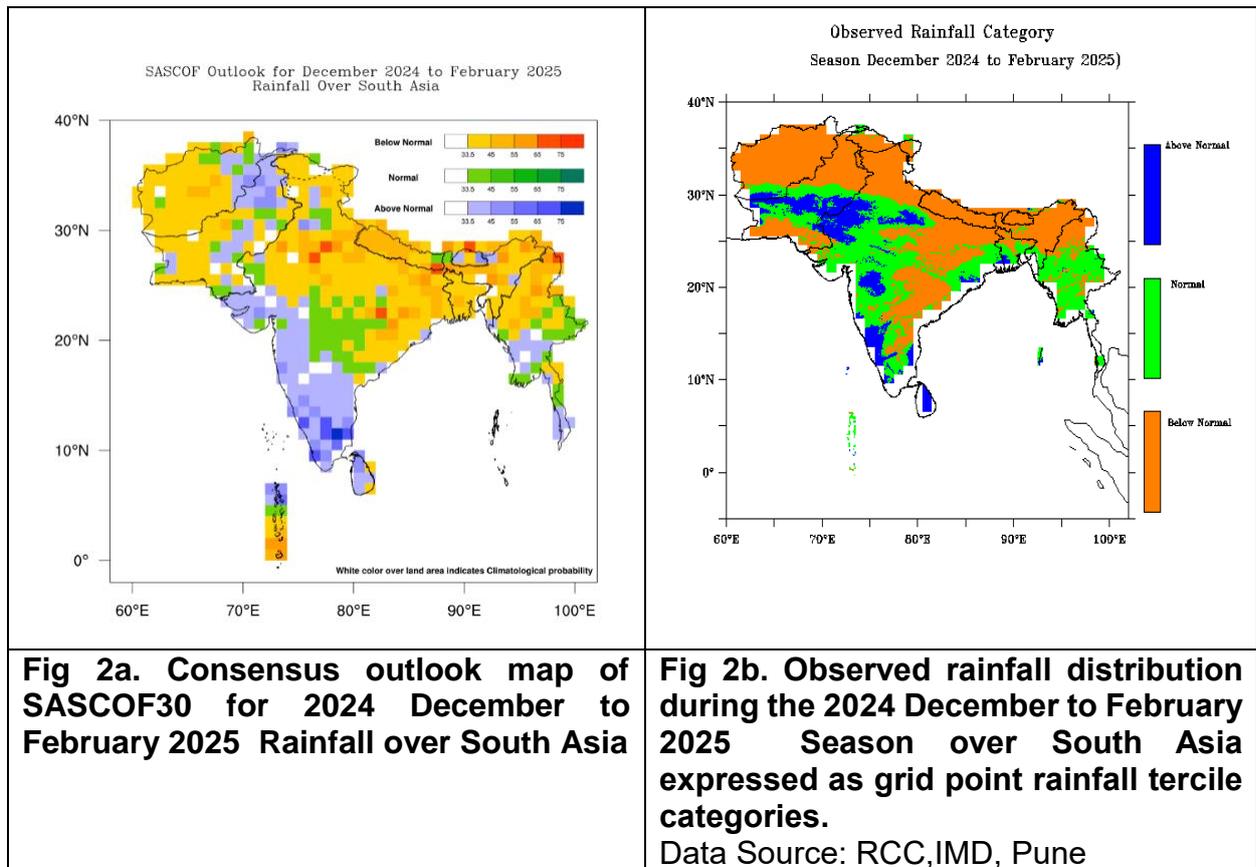


Fig.1c. Consensus outlook for the winter season (December 2025 to February 2026) Maximum Temperature over South Asia.

Verification of consensus outlook for December 2024 to February 2025 (DJF 2024/25) Season



The consensus forecast outlook map (Fig. 2a) for the December 2024 to February 2025 season suggested that below-normal precipitation is likely during the winter season (December 2024 to February 2025) over many regions of South Asia, especially over parts of the north, northwest, along the foothills of the Himalayas, and the eastern and northeastern parts of South Asia. Above-normal precipitation is likely over parts of the western region, some areas of the northwest, and some regions of the northeast and southern parts of South Asia. Fig. 2b shows the observed rainfall distribution during the 2024 December to February 2025 season Season expressed in terms of tercile categories. The observations show below-normal rainfall across much of the northern and northwestern regions and along significant stretches of the Himalayan foothills and some parts of central South Asia and eastern parts of the region. In contrast, some parts of the western, central, eastern, and southern regions including Sri Lanka, received normal to above-normal rainfall.

A comparison of Figures 2a and 2b indicates that the forecast successfully captured the broad areas of below-normal rainfall in the northern and northwestern parts of South Asia and along the Himalayan foothills. The regions showing normal to above-normal rainfall in the western and southern sector were also reasonably well reflected in the SASCOF outlook. Overall, the SASCOF forecast provided a reasonable indication of the general rainfall pattern over South Asia for the 2024–2025 winter season.

Climatological Information of Rainfall and Temperature (Maximum & Minimum) over South Asia during the December to February Season.

The long-term historical patterns of the rainfall over South Asia during the December to February Season (Fig.3 a & b), characterized by remarkable spatial variability, provide the general reference points at the respective locations for the rainfall anomalies indicated in the outlook. The long-term historical patterns of the Temperature (Minimum and Maximum) over South Asia during the December to February Season (Fig.4 a & b), characterized by large spatial variability, provide the general reference points at the respective locations for the temperature anomalies indicated in the outlook.

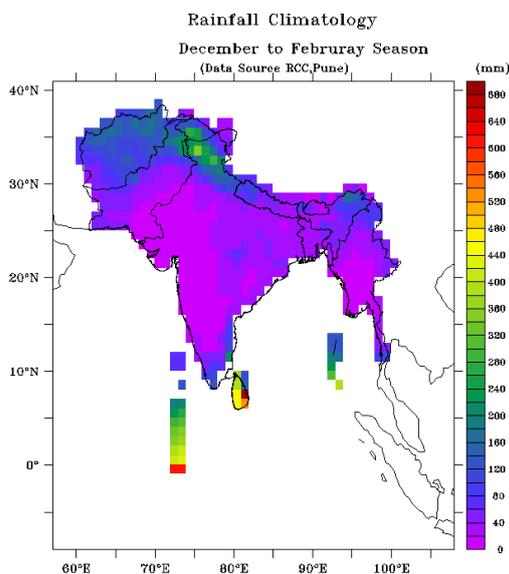


Fig.3 (a) Rainfall climatology for the period 1982-2019 for December to February Season over South Asia

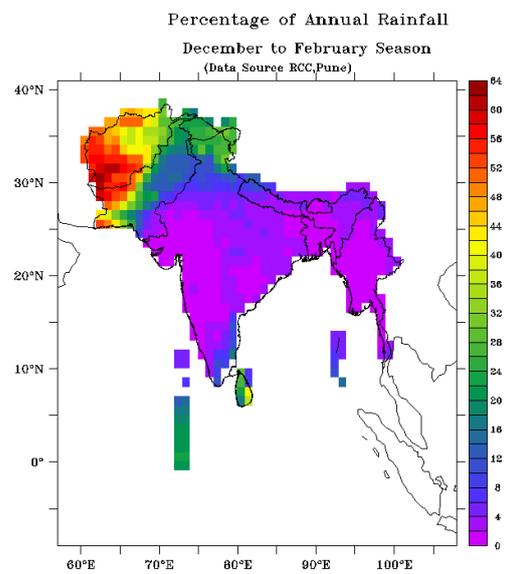


Fig.3 (b) Percentage of annual rainfall for December to February Season over South Asia.

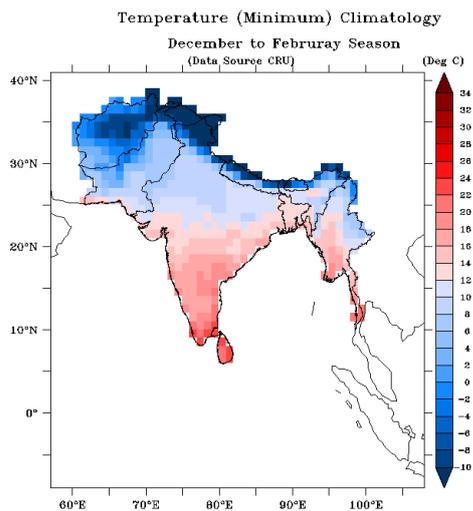


Fig.4 (a) Minimum Temperature climatology for the period 1982-2019 for December to February Season over South Asia

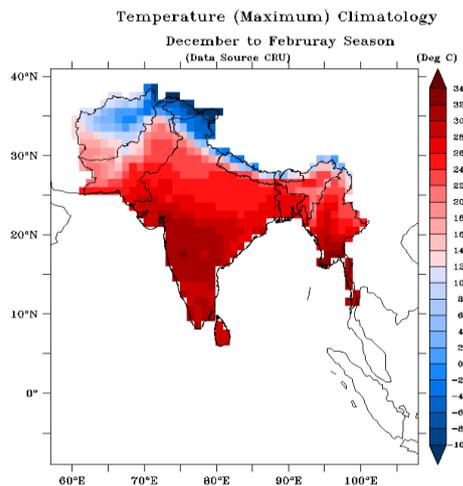


Fig.4 (b) Maximum Temperature climatology for the period 1982-2019 for December to February Season over South Asia