The heat is on

The Pacific Ocean is primed to produce another El Niño year that could bring severe weather, UH scientists say.

By Jim Berg
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A warm-water mass churning across the tropical Pacific points to the development of an El Niño phenomenon, a weather pattern that typically brings destructive weather across the far reaches of the planet, two University of Hawaii scientists warn.

"I think the system is really primed for a big El Niño," says Leon Tirranna, a professor of oceanography at the International Pacific Research Center. "I would say there is an 80 percent chance that a big El Niño will develop by the end of the year."

Just how powerful the phenomenon will be is the subject of intense debate within scientific circles, Tirranna said in a telephone interview.

"The big discussion is if it will develop into a strong El Niño," he said. "We'll find members of the scientific community are more conservative in their estimates and less conservative in their predictions."

(Photo: See El Niño, A8)

Hurricanes in 1982 and 1998, which both devastated Kauai, occurred during El Niño years. Below, at the height of its power with maximum sustained winds of 145 mph, the Category 4 Hurricane Iki hits upper deck blues in Ellison near the Civic Center.

The tropical Pacific is primed for El Niño

A huge body of heated, nutrient-poor water is providing fuel to a tropical Pacific, as shown in the map above. The southwesterly tropical winds have pushed warm, shallow, eight-degree-deep water to the Equator, a phenomenon known as El Niño, as shown at left.

By Derrick DePledge
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In a rare public rebuke, state Senate Majority Leader Brickwood Ganter on Thursday harshly criticized a bill that would allow the state Office of Hawaiian Affairs to pursue residential development near the wastewater in Kakaako as dead before conference committee negotiations have started.

Ganter said he “was in-creased” by Sakil’s comments Thursday that there would likely be irreconcilable differences in conference committees that would prevent the bill from becoming law. Sakil was speaking to community activists who had staged a protest at the state Capitol against OHA’s plan for residential development in Kakaako near the wastewater.

The House approved the bill Tuesday, setting up a possible conference committee with the Senate.

“This bill is dead on arrival! We already have irreconcilable differences with the Senate! What would that be? They agreed to our bill,” Ganter (D, Kakaako-Makiki-Hawaii) said on the Senate floor. “So it is a tortuous conclusion that the House is going to kill something that they just agreed to! Is that how we do business here in this House? Is that how we do business here in the Legislature?”

Sakil (D, Downtown-Kakaako-Duncally) said House leaders have never said that the bill is “dead on arrival.”

“We expect that it will go to conference committee, and at that point the negotiators will have to weigh the pros and cons of the bill and make a decision,” he said.

Please see OHA, A8.

EL NINO: No way to know whether more storms in store

But it says it’s his opinion that the El Nino will miss the United States by 1997-98, the largest event of its kind in recorded history. What is scaring scientists is another wave of El Nino’s warmth, a phenomenon that has been shown to cause flooding and agricultural problems in the United States and in other countries.

The atmosphere and ocean current system, known as the El Nino, is accompanied by strong winds and storms. When the ocean warms up, the winds are weakened, which could lead to a later season and weaker storms.

The National Weather Service’s Climate Prediction Center, based in College Park, Md., in a report issued Thurs-

The subsurface heat content is very, very strong. Most people are still thinking, but we have a bunch of experts here on the campus who have been very watchful of this for over a month and we are thinking it could be a pretty serious one.

In Hawaii, the results could mean a dry winter and a slow start to the summer, forecasters say.

Not mean not that more tropical power is on the horizon. There is no way to know the intensity.

Hurricanes in 1992 and hit in 1992 occurred in El Niño years. And the 1993 Pacific hurricane season was one of the deadliest and most destructive, although Hawaii was spared.

Hurricane Katrina hit several hundred people and caused widespread damage in southeastern Mexico.

OHA: Opponents of agency's Kakaako plan are promoting 'false' claims, Galateria says

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recommendation,” he said. Said who posed for a photograph with the pro-

raters, the director of Hula is concerned about the number of times the word “spectacular” is used. “It’s not a word that should be heard in any situation.”

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs is expected to receive a $1.8 million settlement with the state in 2012 over former crown

But a state law passed in 1986 prohibits residential development in Kakaako. A coalition of community activists and members of the Hawaii Planning Board have expressed their support for a project that included high-rise condominiums.

Deans of Native Hawaiian

In an interview with the Honolulu Star-Advertiser, Galateria said the law was passed to prevent

Because of the current housing shortage, Galateria said the state’s approval of a $1.8 million settlement with the state in 2012 over former crown

While the state law prohibits residential development in Kakaako, the agency is considering

makes the interact between the two social and politically oc-

Galateria, in his Senate floor speech, said he was

He said some have complained about a lack of access to the waterfront for recreation and recreational activities and that the legislation has “not been fully explored.”

Galateria’s main message was for Galateria, his coun-

For any questions or concerns about the waterfront, please call 808-675-2375 or 2865 Kilahau St., Honolulu, HI 96819.