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Meet the 2023 Hurricane Season Cast: WMO Announces Names for Upcoming Storms

Hurricane Season / **Published On May 08, 2023 06:02 AM /**

Staff Consortium **May 08, 2023**

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The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) has announced the list of hurricane names for the 2023 season, continuing a tradition that began in 1953.

The list, which includes names such as Arlene, Bret, and Cindy, is maintained and updated through a strict procedure by an international committee of the WMO.

The six lists used for hurricane naming are rotated and recycled every six years, meaning the 2023 list will be used again in 2029. If a storm is particularly deadly or costly, its name may be retired to avoid insensitivity in future use. In such cases, the WMO committee selects a replacement during an annual meeting.

Off-season storms are named according to the calendar date, using names from either the previous or subsequent season's list, depending on the date. If more than twenty-one named tropical cyclones occur in the Atlantic basin, or more than twenty-four in the eastern North Pacific basin, additional storms are named from an alternate WMO-approved list.

Below, find the full list of 2023 hurricane names:

1. Arlene
2. Bret
3. Cindy
4. Don
5. Emily
6. Franklin
7. Gert
8. Harold
9. Idalia
10. Jose
11. Katia
12. Lee
13. Margot
14. Nigel
15. Ophelia
16. Philippe
17. Rina
18. Sean
19. Tammy
20. Vince
21. Whitney

The WMO's hurricane naming system is an essential aspect of storm tracking and public awareness, helping to ensure effective communication and preparedness during hurricane season.

Researchers at Colorado State University (CSU) in April predicted a slightly below-average Atlantic hurricane season in 2023 due to the likely development of El Niño. The team expects 13 named storms, with six becoming hurricanes and two reaching major hurricane strength (Saffir/Simpson category 3-4-5) with sustained winds of 111 mph or more.

El Niño, the primary factor for the below-average prediction, increases upper-level westerly winds across the Caribbean into the tropical Atlantic, resulting in vertical wind shear that can disrupt hurricane formation. However, there is considerable uncertainty about the strength of El Niño if it does develop.

The CSU team is basing its forecasts on a statistical model and four models that use a combination of statistical information and model output from various meteorological organizations. These models evaluate factors such as Atlantic sea surface temperatures, sea level pressures, vertical wind shear levels, and El Niño conditions.