

Climate-Watch, October 2000

National Climatic Data Center - (last update Nov 15, 2000)



Review

Hurricane Keith

The above figure shows Hurricane Keith at its strongest wobbling off the coast of Belize in Central America. The storm was a [Category 4](#) but weakened as it finally slowly move inland. The destruction in its aftermath is not over, but according to media reports, the Caribbean coast nation of Belize suffered the worst damage. Keith dumped a huge quantity of rain -- **up to 22 inches (56 cms) reported** -- on Belize since the storm hit Saturday (30th of September), but skies cleared for the first time in three days Tuesday (3rd). Nicaragua reported the highest death toll, as the government said between eight and ten people are believed to have died there since Thursday (28th of September), when the storm developed. While details of those deaths are sketchy, most of the victims appeared to have been swept to their deaths by swollen rivers; one man was electrocuted by a power cable downed by the storm. Rain-swollen rivers also killed a man in El Salvador, and one woman in Honduras drowned Monday (2nd) when a wall of water rushed into her home. Rain associated with the hurricane also caused flooding in Mexico's Gulf coast of Tabasco, where one person drowned.

Weather Log October 1-10th, 2000

Elsewhere around the globe, **flooding** is still causing widespread problems in Southeast Asia, especially in Cambodia, Thailand, Laos and parts of Vietnam. The flooding is the worst in decades

along the Mekong River in Cambodia and Vietnam. The International Red Cross said on Wednesday (4th) in Vietnam it plans to provide emergency rice supplies for hundreds of thousands of victims, while the Australian Air Force will airlift blankets. John Geoghegan, chief delegate of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, estimated four million people had been affected by the floods in eight Vietnamese Delta provinces. Flood deaths over the past month hit 258 on Wednesday, including 205 children, provincial officials said. While flood waters have receded steadily in the upstream Delta in the past week, it is likely to be late November before they subside fully, and concerns have risen about disease. Reuters reported as of October 8th, that according to officials of the southern region anti-flood 308 individuals had died and the flooding has spread to 8 provinces.

Devastating floods in Bangladesh that have killed more than 100 people and affected millions continued to surge on Wednesday (4th), but officials said about 150 fishermen missing in the Bay of Bengal were safe. Officials in the worst flood-hit areas in the country's southwest said that while the waters in some areas had begun to slowly subside, levels in other places had continued to rise. The 1998 and earlier floods did not swamp the southwestern districts, so the current deluge is new to most of the people there," said an official in Jessore, 300 km (188 miles) southwest of Dhaka. The torrents, caused by rain and an onrush of water from the flood-swept Indian state of West Bengal, have damaged or destroyed more than 100,000 hectares (250,000 acres) of crops and over 1,000 km (625 miles) of roads and 500 schools, according to preliminary estimates.

In the U.S., a tropical system dumped as much as **20 inches of rain** in the past two days (2nd-3rd) on South Florida. The storm left much of Miami-Dade County flooded Wednesday (4th), in some places up to four feet deep. According to the Miami Herald, with only half of its survey of Miami-Dade County complete, the American Red Cross has reported the following: 1,005 homes destroyed, 1,358 homes heavily damaged, 3,443 homes with minor damage. In addition, the Miami-Dade Farm Bureau estimated a loss to farmers of 219 million dollars.

Elsewhere in the U.S., the **heat** was evident in parts of the western high plains. Several stations in Kansas and Texas set daily and maximum October high temperature records on the 1st through the 3rd. The hottest reading was at Wichita Falls, TX with a temperature of 102 degrees F (38.8 C) on October 3rd. A complete listing of October U.S. records is available in the [Selected U.S. City and State Extremes](#) section of this report.

Weather Log October 11-20th, 2000

Various media sources reported that **southeast England** is suffering from its worst floods in years. Rains began on Wednesday (Oct 11th), flooding many homes and forcing people in Lewes and East Sussex to evacuate. Up to 20mm of rain reportedly fell overnight across Hampshire, Sussex and Kent, and the town of Wroxall was the worst hit receiving 56.6mm of rain.

In Mexico, various media sources as of the 11th have reported that, according to officials, days of torrential rains, brought on by **Hurricane Keith**, have left 23 individuals dead and forced more than 30,000 to flee their homes. Thirteen individuals reportedly died in the state of Veracruz, 4 in Puebla,

and 6 in Tamaulipas.

In Belize, as of the 16th of the month, according to the Ministry of Human Development, Hurricane Keith and the consequent **flooding** have directly affected an estimated 6600 households, totaling more than 26,000 individuals and more than 10% of the population. The National Emergency Management Organization has reportedly estimated the total damage to be more than 261.5 million dollars, and rising. The Western highway remains inundated in 1 section, while the Northern highway is flooded in several places. In addition, reports of waterborne and sanitation related diseases are reportedly increasing.

In India, the Express India News reported as of the 16th, that according to the Finance Minister the **death toll for the past three weeks** has climbed to 1358 individuals. A reported 115 of these deaths have occurred from disease and snakebites. In addition, 88,000 cattle have reportedly died.

Various media sources have reported that the area affected by days of **torrential rains in the southern Alps** stretches from the Rhone valley in France to the Po valley in northern Italy. Various media sources as of the 18th, reported that the death toll from the floods and landslides has reached 28, and that 19 individuals remain missing. Twenty-one deaths have reportedly been confirmed in Italy, and 7 have been confirmed in Switzerland. The Po River is reportedly at historic heights, and has burst its banks at various points. Some 15,000 individuals have been evacuated along the Po and Ticino Rivers, and another 500 have reportedly been evacuated in the countryside around Mantua. In the past few days, floodwaters have reached Turin and Milan, causing factories and schools to close and, electricity and telecommunications were knocked out. In addition, more than 170 roads are reportedly closed, dozens of bridges have been destroyed, and many rail services from Italy to France and Switzerland have been suspended.

Reuters reported as of the 18th, according to the Red Cross, 5 million individuals have been affected by flooding in the Mekong Delta since the worst floods began in late August. The **death toll in the Delta** has reportedly reached 374 individuals, while in the central and southern areas to the north 60 people have died, and in 2 northern provinces 51 individuals have died. In Cambodia, according to the Cambodian Daily, at least 20% of the country's schools have been severely damaged by floodwaters. Preliminary estimates by the Ministry of Education report that at least half a million primary and secondary school students have been affected.

Weather Log October 21-31st, 2000

Worsening Drought in Southeast US: In the U.S., drought conditions have worsened across the southeast, with many areas in moderate to extreme drought. Some locations, including the Greenville-Spartanburg airport in South Carolina, have recorded no rainfall for the entire month of October. The 2000 drought, affecting agricultural regions of the south and southeast since spring, has caused well over **\$2 billion in losses**. This includes significant losses to the corn, cotton, and soybean crops.

Storms and wild weather hit western Europe at the end of the month. At least eight people have died after powerful storms swept western Europe, battering transport systems and cutting power to more

than 100,000 homes. Seven people have reportedly died from incidents related to the storm, and 4 individuals were injured and hundreds of homes damaged when a tornado struck Bognor Regis on Saturday (28th) , and 2 other individuals were injured when a second tornado struck Selsey, West Sussex on Monday (30th) morning. More than 40 rivers are reportedly on flood alert in England and Wales, and hundreds of homes have been evacuated. See the [NOAA Satellite Image](#) from October 30th at 1503Z. A UK synoptic analysis at 0600Z on 10/30 shows the central lowest pressure at 958mb (28.29 in.). The storm also produced over 50mm of rain in some parts of southern Britain, boosting the total rainfall across England and Wales close to 150 mm (5.9 in). With two days rainfall to collect it is likely to be the wettest October generally since 1987 when 184 mm (7.24 in.) fell, and parts of south-east England will break October rainfall records. A spokesperson for the British Meteorological Office reported that this was the worst storm since October 1987.

Meanwhile, in Asia- [Typhoon Xangsane](#) which brought death and destruction to the Philippines whirled across the South China Sea close to southern Taiwan on Tuesday (31st) , prompting officials to set up disaster relief centers, cancel flights and call off classes. In the the Philippines the typhoon left 26 dead, 50 missing and property and crop damage worth \$17 million.

Reuters reported that according to officials at the interior ministry's disaster response center, typhoon Xangsane killed at least 32 individuals in Taiwan, including 21 people in the northern port city of Keelung that were caught in buildings that flooded rapidly. In addition, 2 individuals were reportedly injured and 10 are missing. According to officials, the storm triggered landslides near Taipei, and schools and government offices in several cities and counties reportedly closed because of the storm.

Other global highlights for the month can be found at [NOAA/OGP Special Global Summary for October 2000](#).

Note: Hazard event satellite images available courtesy of [NOAA OSEI Satellite Images](#).

Selected U.S. City and State Extremes

The [Selected U.S. City and State Extremes](#) provides a list of new records that were set across the U.S. during October 2000.

Additional Resources

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- [NNDC Climate Data Online \(for long-term climate data\)](#)
- [NCDC Climatic Extremes and Weather Events](#)
- [Additional NOAA OSEI Satellite Images](#)(Western Fires, Tropical Storms, etc)

- [NCDC Storm Event Database](#)

Citing the Article

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