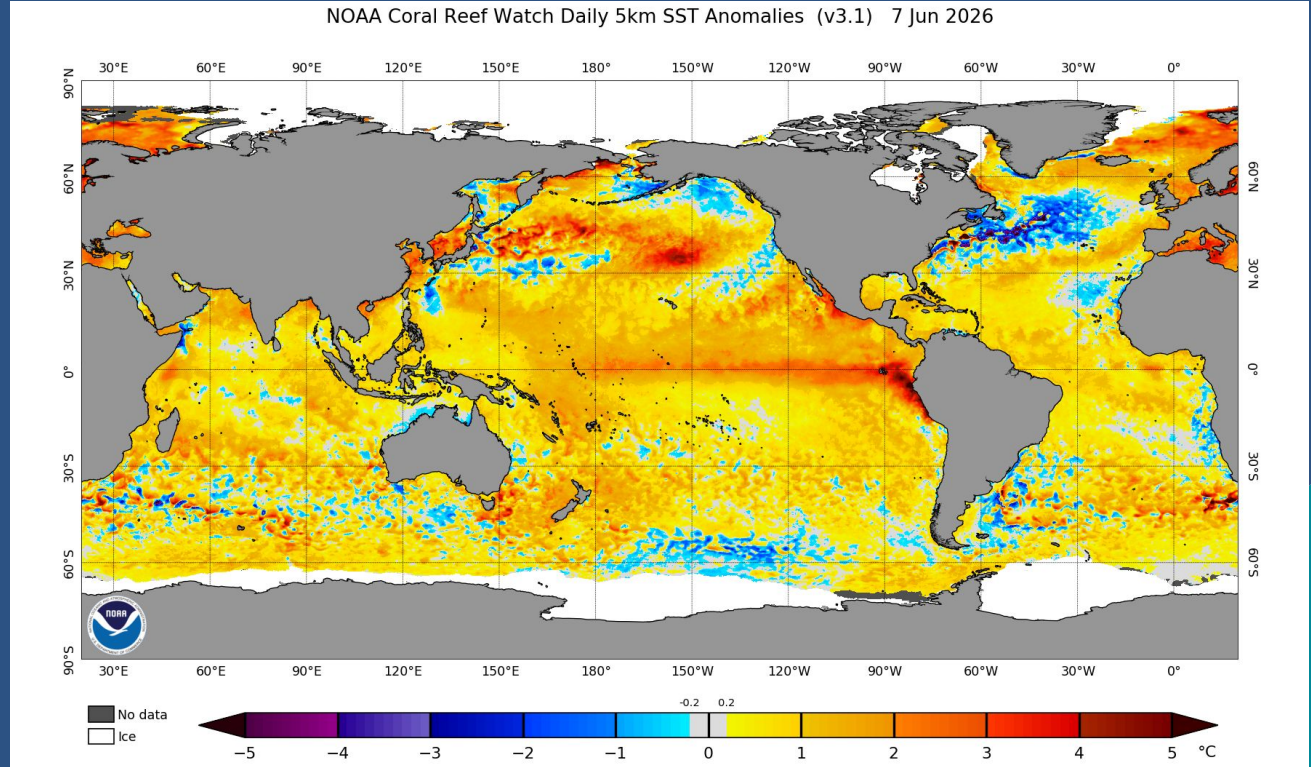


Agenda Item B.1.a
Supplemental Presentation 1
June 2026

Latest Oceanographic Conditions



**NOAA
FISHERIES**



NOAA-CCIEA Team (SWFSC & NWFSC): Leising, Hunsicker, Williams, Jacox 6/12/26

El Niño Forecast Probability (CPC)



NOAA
FISHERIES

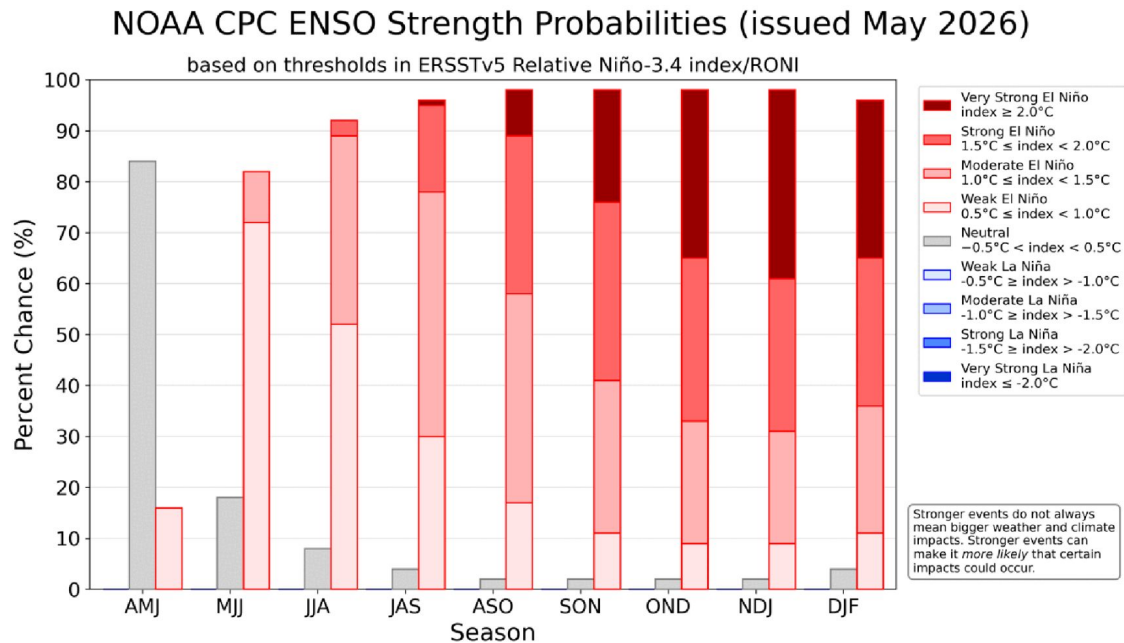


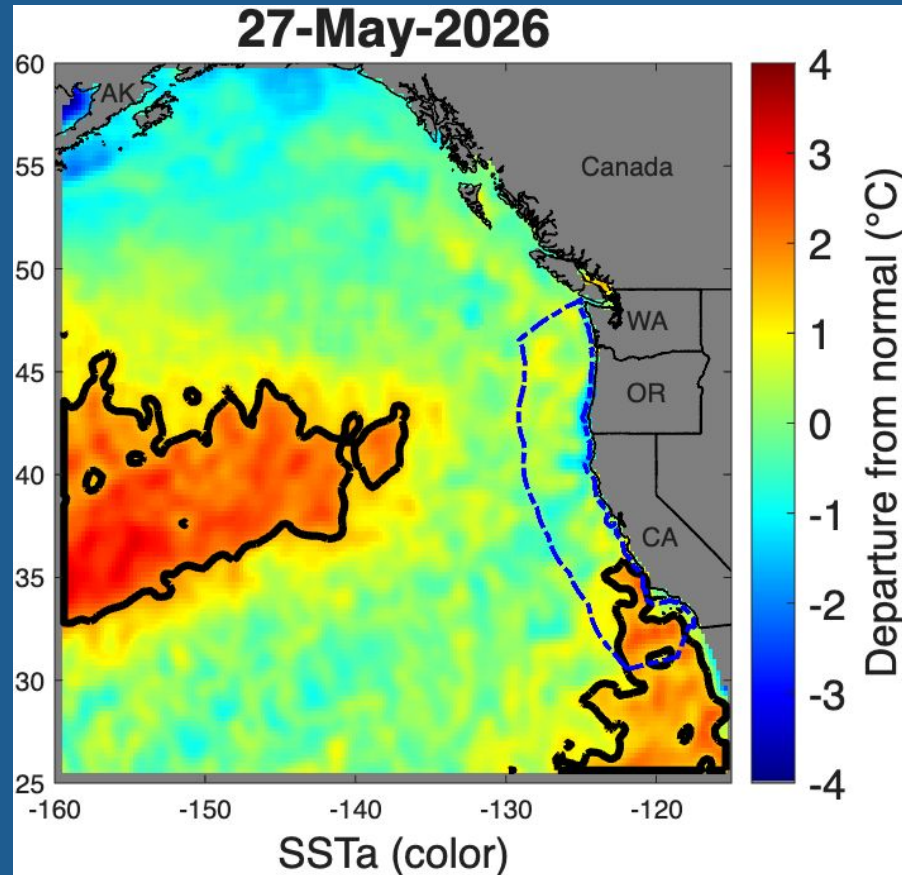
Figure 8. ENSO strength probabilities for the Niño 3.4 relative sea surface temperature index (5°N-5°S, 170°W-120°W) minus tropical mean (20°N-20°S). The relative index is re-scaled to match the variance of the traditional index. Figure updated 14 May 2026. Higher resolution image/table: https://cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/enso/roni/strengths.php

Sea Surface Temperature Anomaly Measured by Satellite

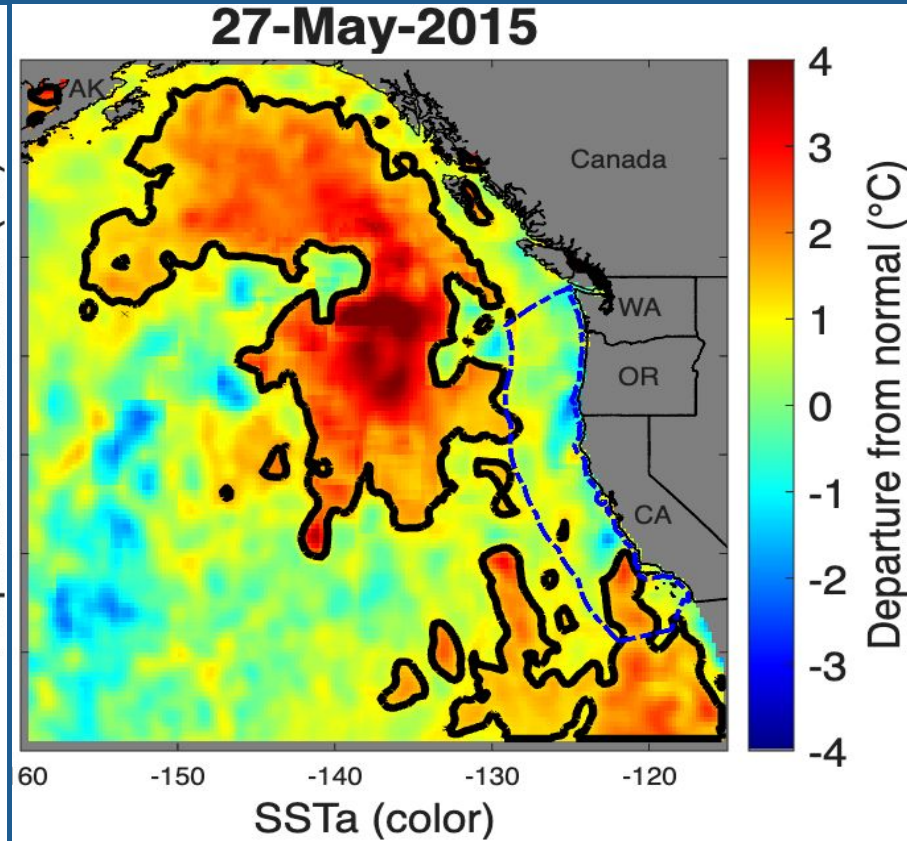
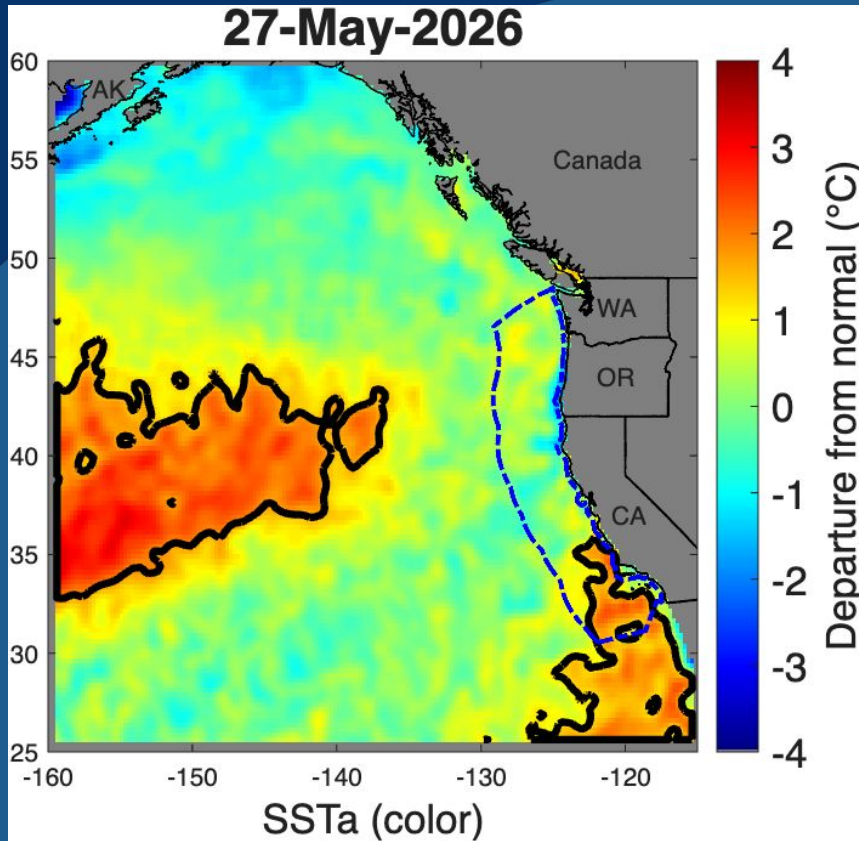
Two large marine heatwaves:

- Off southern CA since Dec.
- Far offshore, since early May
- NOT due to El Niño

For up-to-date MHW status, google:
“NOAA blobtracker”



Now vs “The Blob” (2014-2015)

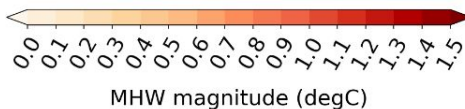
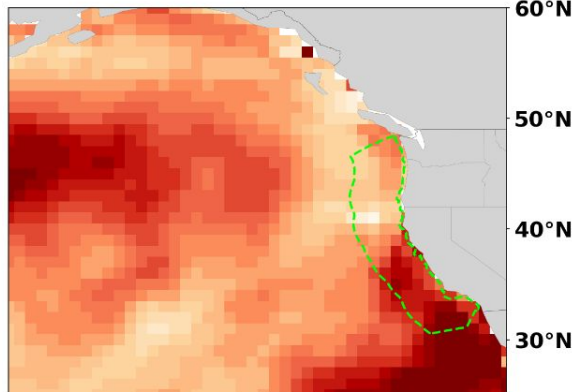
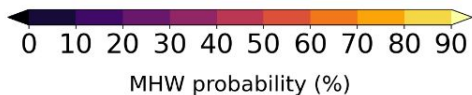
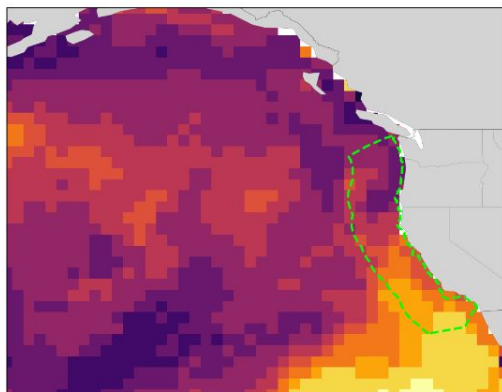


Computer model forecast (NOAA PSL)

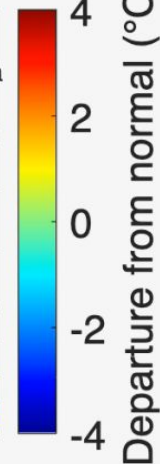
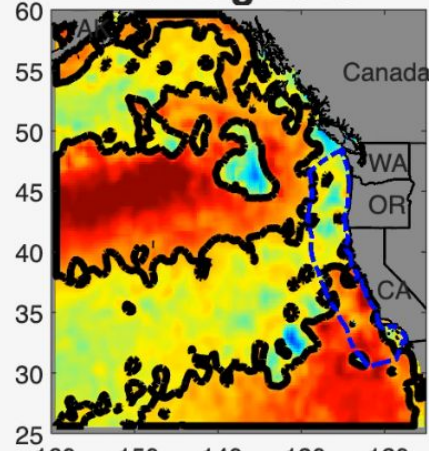
Probability

Magnitude

Aug 2026 Forecast



20-Aug-2015



SSTa (color)

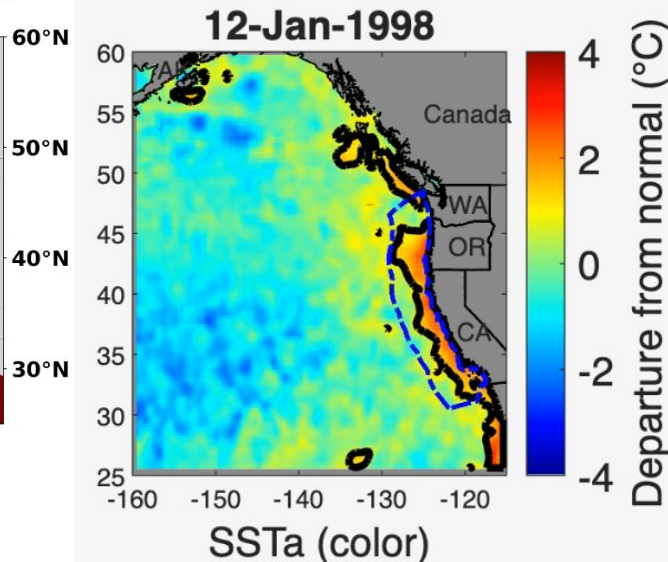
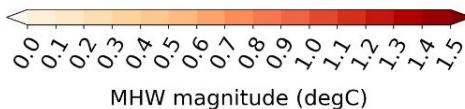
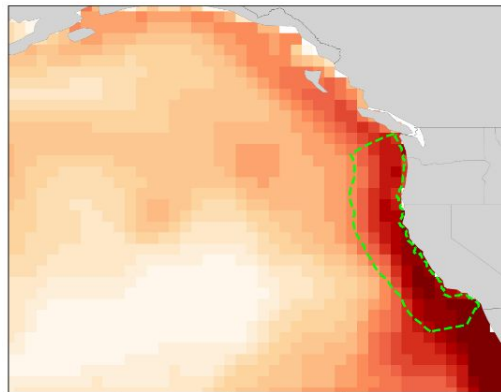
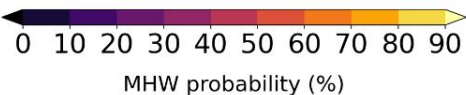
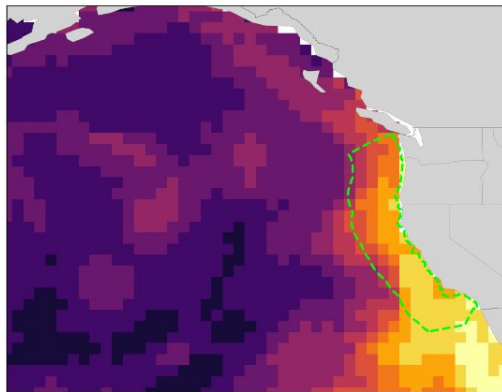
Forecast for August shows similar spatial converge and relative magnitude as same time of year in 2015, aka the “BLOB” year

Computer model forecast (NOAA PSL)

Probability

Magnitude

Feb 2027 Forecast



Forecast for this winter is more like the 97-98 El Niño in terms of spatial coverage and relative magnitude

For more forecasts, check out: <https://psl.noaa.gov/marine-heatwaves/>

Comparison To Similar Past Years

- The Marine Heatwave this year is smaller ($\frac{1}{3}$ size, mostly in SoCal) and has not been around as long (5 vs 18 mths)
- Transition to El Niño predicted for late summer
- Impacts are likely to be somewhere between past strong El Niño's and the "Blob"/El Niño we saw in 2015-16



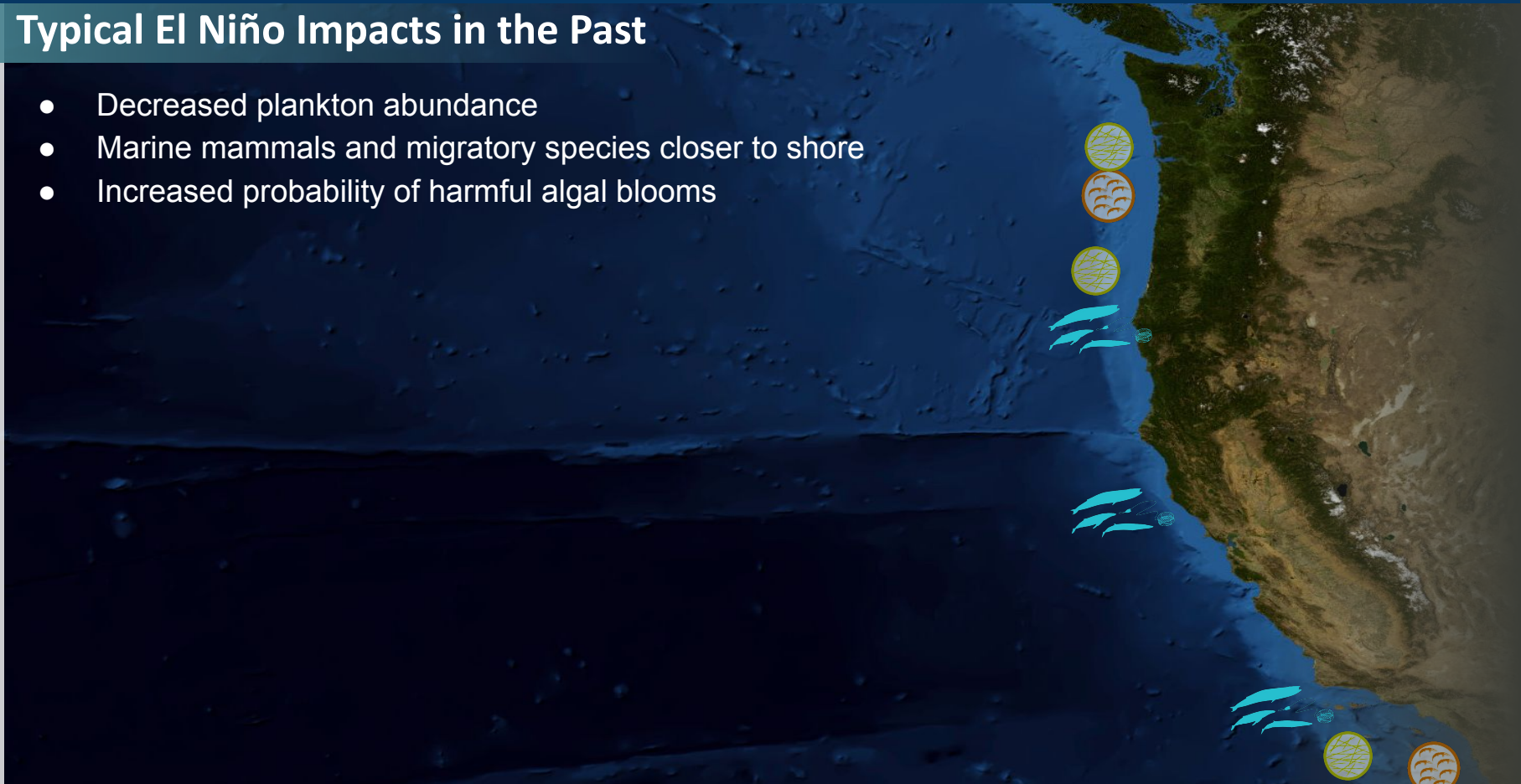
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- Impacts are likely to be somewhere between past strong El Niño's and the "Blob"/El Niño we saw in 2015-16
- *It's not necessarily how hot it is, but how long the ecosystem is exposed to the heat*

Potential Ecosystem Impacts

Typical El Niño Impacts in the Past

- Decreased plankton abundance
- Marine mammals and migratory species closer to shore
- Increased probability of harmful algal blooms



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Typical El Niño Impacts in the Past

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- Lower abundance and northward shift of market squid
- Higher rockfish larval abundance
- Larger sablefish found closer to shore
- Reduced pup weights and productivity of California sea lions



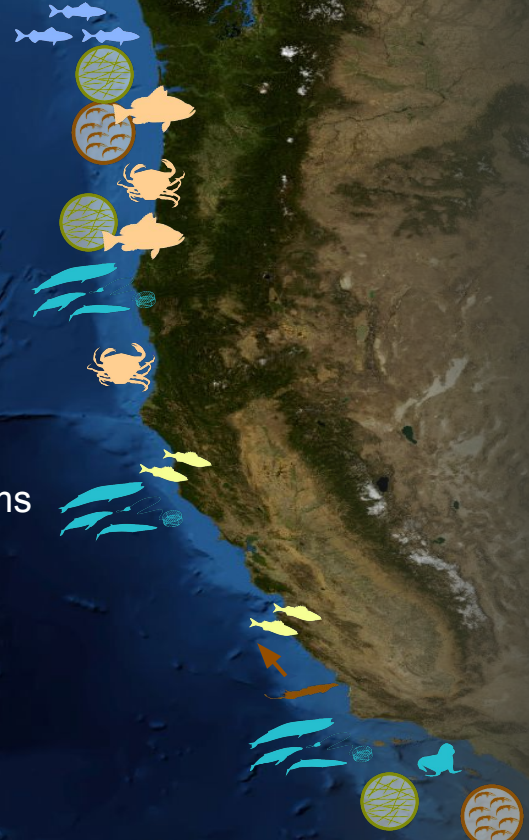
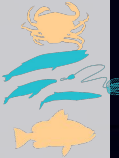
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“Blob” + El Niño Impacts

- Closures of crab and shellfish fisheries due to harmful algal blooms
- Increased whale entanglements in fishing gear
- Loss of groundfish habitat due to decreased oxygen levels



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“Blob” + El Niño Impacts

- Closures of crab and shellfish fisheries due to harmful algal blooms
- Increased whale entanglements in fishing gear
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- Die-offs of seals, sea lions, and marine birds due to lack of food
- Less food for baleen whales
- Increased jellyfish
- Increased tuna abundance along coast/increased fishing opportunities

Learn more at: <https://www.integratedecosystemassessment.noaa.gov/regions/california-current>

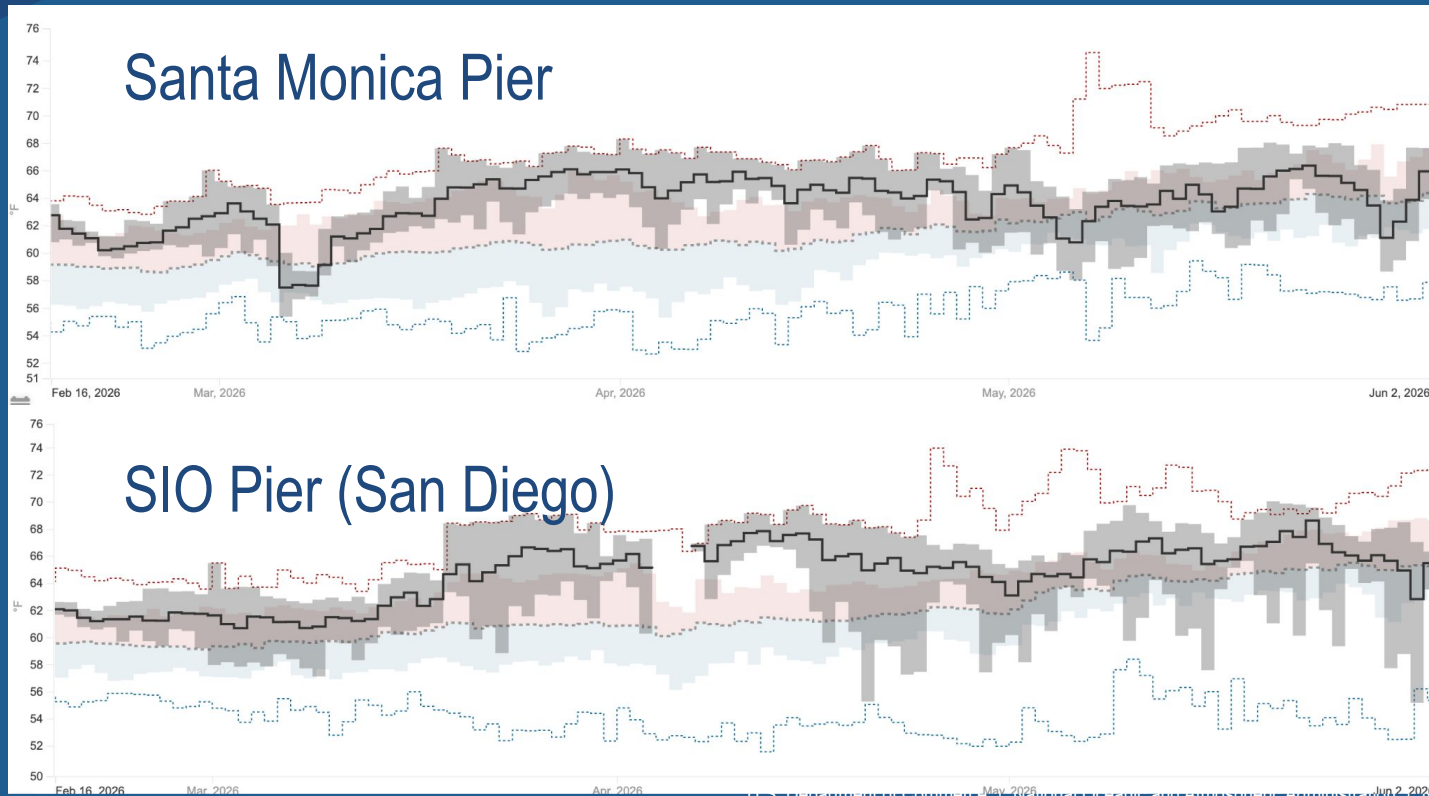
Map from USGS



Thank you!
...look for further updates at the Sept. meeting

Just how warm is it?

Water temperatures from SoCAL piers (Data courtesy of SCOOS)



Just how warm is it?

