



Director Holds Lunch Reception for Media

Editorial Board



Mr SHUN Chi-ming, Director of the Hong Kong Observatory, invited media representatives to a lunch reception on 30 November 2016, attended by over 30 journalists. He pointed out that as a result of global warming, Hong Kong's temperatures had registered record-breaking highs in recent years, with many records broken in 2016 (for details, please see below).

Also, a meeting of the Liaison Group for Broadcast Media was held on 15 November to exchange views with media representatives on how to further enhance public weather services.



Record Breaking

Weather of 2016

LI Kin-wai

In 2016, the weather was relatively warm and rainy in Hong Kong. Despite an intense cold surge that brought a few days of extremely low temperatures in late January, Hong Kong experienced the third hottest summer – from June to August – since records began in 1884. The annual mean temperature was 23.6°C, 0.3°C above normal, making 2016 the seventh warmest year since records began.

The annual total rainfall was 3026.8 millimetres, 26 percent above normal and ranking the ninth highest on record. The seasonal rainfall for autumn (September to November) totalled 1078.8 millimetres. Super typhoons Sarika and Haima affected Hong Kong in quick succession during mid-October. The heavy rain brought by Sarika set a new record high for hourly rainfall in October, while the No. 8 Gale or Storm Signal was raised for Haima. The monthly rainfall recorded in October was 624.4 millimetres – the second highest on record for October.

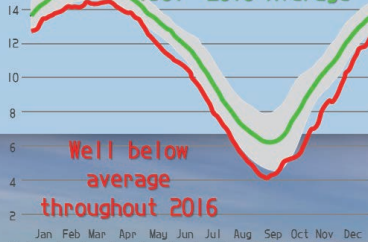
SUMMARY OF RECORD-BREAKING EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS IN 2016

Record-breaking Events (since records began in 1884)	New Record
1. Highest Pressure (24 January)	1037.7 hPa
2. Highest Monthly Total Rainfall for January	266.9 mm
3. Highest 1-Hour Total Rainfall for January	37.0 mm
4. Highest Monthly Mean Maximum Temperature for June	32.4 °C
5. The Longest Consecutive Days of Highest Daily Maximum Temperature above 35.0°C	4 consecutive days (24-27 June)
6. Highest Monthly Mean Temperature for July	29.8 °C
7. Highest Annual Number of Very Hot Days	38
8. Highest Monthly Mean Maximum Temperature for October	29.1 °C
9. Highest Monthly Mean Temperature for October	26.8 °C
10. Highest Monthly Mean Minimum Temperature for October	25.0 °C
11. Highest 1-Hour Total Rainfall for October	78.7 mm
12. Highest Total Rainfall for Autumn (September to November)	1078.8 mm

Arctic sea ice

Sea Ice Extent
(millions of square kilometers)

1981-2010 Average



Well below average throughout 2016

A New Era for Climate Records

SHAM Fu-cheung

The World Meteorological Organization published the Annual Greenhouse Gas Bulletin in October 2016. The report indicated that the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere reached 400 ppm in 2015, setting a new record high. It was predicted that the concentration of carbon dioxide would remain above this level for some time. A study also suggested that the current pace of carbon dioxide emissions due to human activities was unprecedented in the past 66 million years.

With greenhouse gas levels rising, the evidences and consequences of global warming have become increasingly clear. Global monthly average temperature records were broken for 16 consecutive months from May 2015 to August 2016. The World Meteorological Organization confirmed that 2016 was the hottest year since instrumental records began, making it the third consecutive year that the record for global annual average temperature was broken. In addition, the volume of Arctic sea ice was lower than normal throughout 2016, and for seven months during the year reported the lowest monthly levels since satellite records began.

Arctic sea ice volumes were below normal throughout 2016 (source of photo: NOAA; source of chart: National Snow and Ice Data Center)