



FIGURE II Storm systems on May 27 2008 at 00:00 UT. White boxes depict possible locations where ash and aerosols from the Chaitén eruption may be transported into the northern hemisphere to affect precipitation through the provision of condensation nuclei. Courtesy of SSEC, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

- May 17-18 - Typhoon Halong (maximum wind speed 130km/hour); 25 deaths.
- May 20-25 - Tornadoes including a deadly EF-5 tornado in Parkersberg, USA, 7 deaths.
- May 21-26 - Torrential rainfall/flooding/landslides in south central Chile; 15,000 displaced.
- May 23-25 - Torrential rainfall/flooding in El Salvador; one death.
- May 24-25 - Torrential rainfall/flooding in northwestern Pakistan; 10 deaths.
- May 27-28 - Torrential rainfall/flooding/landslides in southern China; 0.5 million displaced, 28 deaths; torrential rainfall/flooding in Colombia; 100,000 displaced, nine deaths.
- May 27-29 - Typhoon Nakai (maximum wind speed 232km/hour).
- May 29 - Torrential rainfall/flooding in Germany, France, Italy and Belgium
- Month of June - Wettest month ever in Hong Kong (1364.1mm) including a rainstorm with a return period of 1,100 years and numerous landslides (figure III), Guangzhou (872.7mm); Macau (1200.8mm); anomalously wet June in South Africa and Australia with records broken at various localities
- June 1-7 - Torrential rainfall/flooding in northeastern and western India; 25 deaths, 200,000 displaced.
- June 1-14 - Torrential rainfall/flooding in Mid-west, 1100 precipitation records broken.
- June 4-13 - Torrential rainfall/flooding in southern and central Mexico.
- June 7-18 - Torrential rainfall/flooding in southern China; US\$4 billion loss, 57 deaths.
- June 13-16 - Torrential rainfall/flooding in Kenya.

June 19 - Torrential rainfall/flooding in Eastern Province, South Africa; four deaths.
 Volcanic eruptions are a natural phenomenon of random occurrence.



FIGURE III. Some of the 2400 landslides occurring on Lantau Island near Tai O, Hong Kong triggered by the severe June 7 2008 rainstorm. Total rainfall reached a maximum of 384mm over a 4-hour period. Courtesy of the Civil Engineering Development Department, Hong Kong SAR Government.

...AND MORE RECENT ACTIVITY...

SOUFRIÈRE HILLS, MONSERRAT ON FEBRUARY 11, at 1635 GMT, (latitude 16°43'N longitude 62°11'W), this volcano erupted, sending an ash plume into the stratosphere reaching an altitude of 15.2km. The plume tracked on Meteosat SEVIRI (available from www.sat.dundee.ac.uk) was caught up within the warm sector of a frontal system spreading in a northeasterly direction towards Europe.
On the morning of February 20, torrential downpours occurred in Madeira causing disastrous landslides and flooding with a death toll of at least 48. From February 26-28, violent storms, with winds reaching 175 km/hour, hit western Europe. France was the worst hit with a death toll of 51 out of a total of

at least 63. These disastrous east Atlantic storms were probably exacerbated by the eruption cloud interfering with the stratospheric circulation in addition to providing condensation nuclei to make the rainfall more torrential.
EYJAFJALLAJÖKULL, ICELAND IN THE eruption on April 14, the maximum plume height was only 11km and the amount of ash was below 250 million m³. Because it is much smaller than Pinatubo in 1991, climate impact is considered unlikely. Nevertheless, weather changes over much of Europe, including being cooler, more cloudy and rainy than normal, can be expected in the next one or two months.