

Editorial

Recent data have indicated that, globally, the annual average surface temperature for both the calendar year 2014 and the first three months of 2015 were the highest on record (<https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/sotc/global/>). Locally, Australia recorded its warmest ever spring and, more recently in March 2015, large parts of northern and central Australia also experienced record-breaking temperatures (<http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/current/statements/scs51.pdf>).

Record warmth and events such as decreasing Arctic sea ice, melting glaciers, prolonged drought in California and elsewhere etc. appear to have contributed to a renewal of public attention on the issue of climate change. In 2014, the Lowy Institute published poll results which indicated that “45% of Australian adults now say that global warming is a serious and pressing problem.” The poll numbers also indicated that “concern is up 5 points since 2013 and 9 points since 2012” (<http://www.lowyinstitute.org/news-and-media/press-releases/australian-attitudes-heating-about-climate-change-2014-lowy-institute-poll-finds>). This renewed attention goes hand-in-hand with an increased demand by various decision makers and planners for locally relevant climate change information.

It is against this background that a National Resource Management (NRM) report was released (on 27 January 2015) documenting the latest information on climate change projections for Australia. This special issue of the Australian Meteorological and Oceanographic Journal provides an insight into some of the issues that Australian climate scientists have dealt with in preparing the information for the NRM report.

I would like to thank all the reviewers who assisted in the preparation of these papers.

Ian Smith

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