



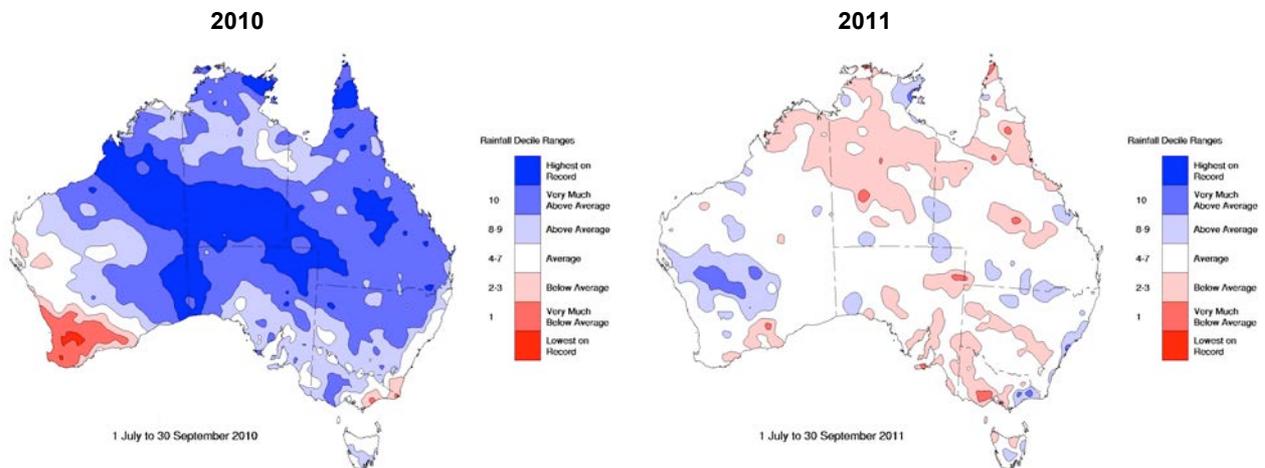
National Climate and Water Briefing Series

21 October 2011

Weak La Niña develops in the Tropical Pacific

The central Pacific is in the developing stages of a weak, late-forming La Niña. Current observations and model predictions suggest this is unlikely to reach the strength of the 2010-2011 La Niña event. As a result, whilst increased rainfall is likely in some areas of south eastern Australia, the impacts are not expected to be as significant this year.

In September 2010, sea surface temperatures off northern Australia were very warm, providing an extensive source of available moisture. Currently, these sea surface temperatures are relatively cool indicating a clear difference between current conditions and those observed at the same time last year.



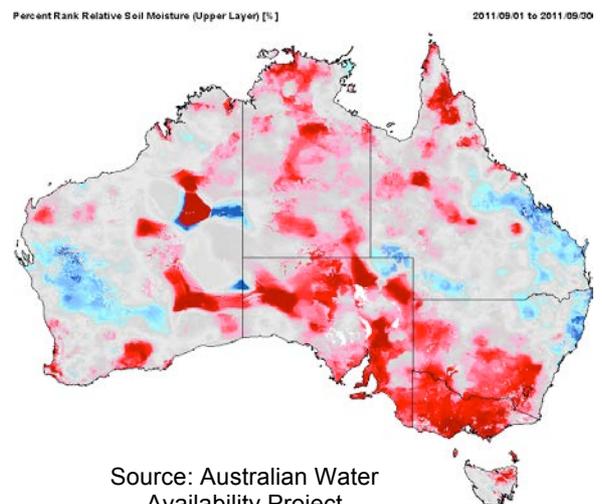
Rainfall for the period July-September 2010 was the highest on record across large areas of Australia. For the same period this year, most of Australia has received average to below average rainfall. The maps above illustrate the difference between the 2010 La Niña event and the current event, which is weaker and has developed much later.

Recent conditions

- Daytime temperatures for the period 1 July to 30 September 2011 were warmer than average across southern Australia and very much above average in Victoria, South Australia, most of New South Wales and parts of Western Australia. Temperatures in northern Australia and the eastern half of Queensland were closer to average.
- Rainfall this winter was well below average over Queensland, inland New South Wales and to a lesser degree in northern Victoria. Below average winter rainfall has led to upper level soil moisture is being generally drier than average in these regions.
- September rainfall was above average in northern New South Wales and southern Queensland.
- Streamflows in the south east Murray-Darling Basin for July to September were mostly near the median, with low flows in September observed for most sites.
- As the most significant rain occurred in the final week of September, this will be seen in the October streamflows

Current soil moisture levels

- The upper layer (surface to 0.2 m) has dried out as a result of below average winter rainfall (see below; red areas are dry, blue areas are wet)

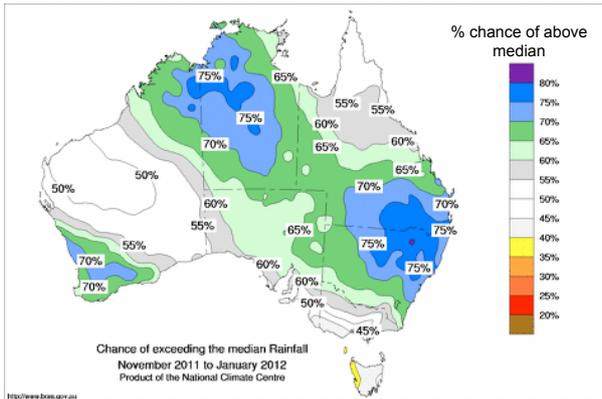


Source: Australian Water Availability Project

21 October 2011

Climate outlook – rainfall

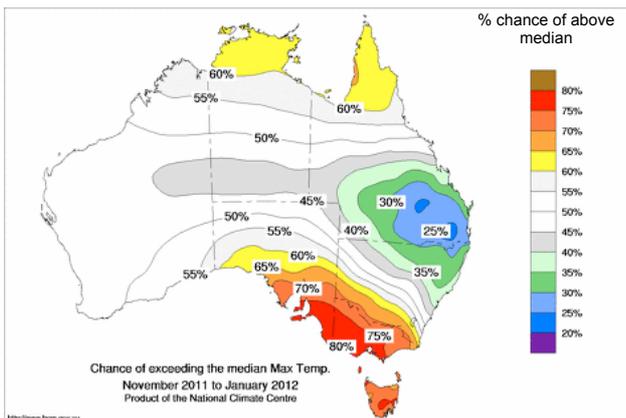
November to January rainfall outlook



- The Bureau's rainfall outlook for November to January shows moderate to high odds for more rainfall than usual over northern, eastern and southwest Australia

Climate outlook: temperature

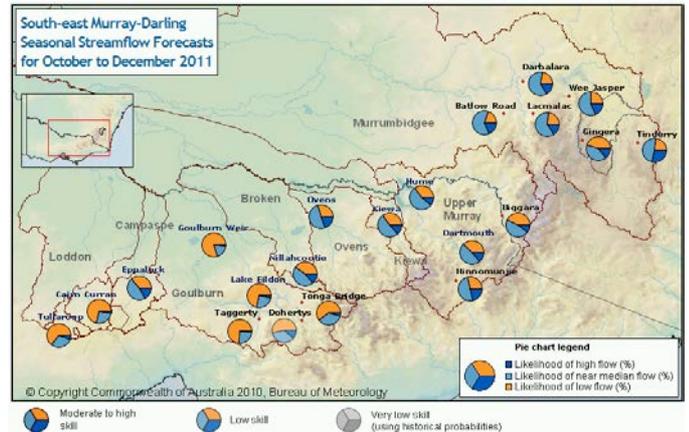
November to January maximum temperature outlook



- Warmer than normal days are likely for far northern Australia and the south east.
- Cooler days are likely for south east Queensland and north east New South Wales. The Indian Ocean is dominating this warm forecast.
- Outlook confidence is moderate to high over most of Australia.

Streamflow outlook – October to December

South east Murray-Darling Basin



- Low flows are more likely for the western catchments
- Near median flows are more likely in the eastern catchments

More information

Update on La Niña conditions – ENSO Wrap-up

www.bom.gov.au/climate/enso/

Rainfall and temperature outlook

www.bom.gov.au/climate/ahead

Seasonal streamflow forecasts

www.bom.gov.au/water/sf