



National Climate and Water Briefing Series

26 September 2013

Warm conditions persisted throughout winter and are likely to continue for the remainder of the year. The rainfall outlook favours an average season through much of the country, but continued dry conditions in western Queensland. Near median or high streamflows are more likely for most of eastern Australia.

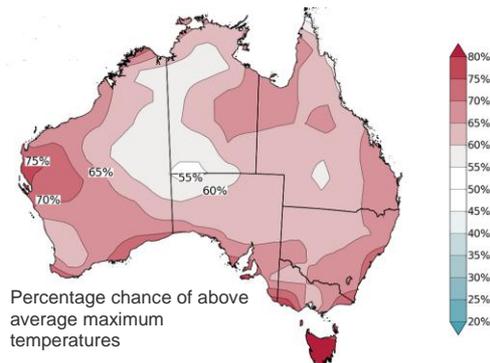
Recent conditions

- Very warm winter across the country
- Wet in south, dry elsewhere during July–August
- Hot and dry so far in September—temperature records likely

Climate outlook October–December

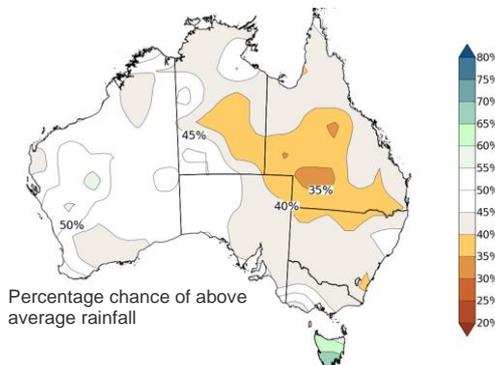
Temperature

- Warm conditions more likely for most of the country



Rainfall

- Dry conditions favoured in western Queensland
- Wet conditions more likely in Tasmania
- Neutral rainfall outlook for remainder of the country

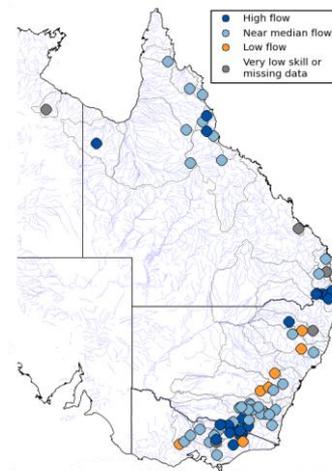


Catchment conditions and outlook

August streamflow

- Near median or high flows observed at most Queensland and Victorian locations; low or near median flows at most New South Wales locations
- Moderate flooding recently occurred in parts of Tasmania, Victoria and New South Wales

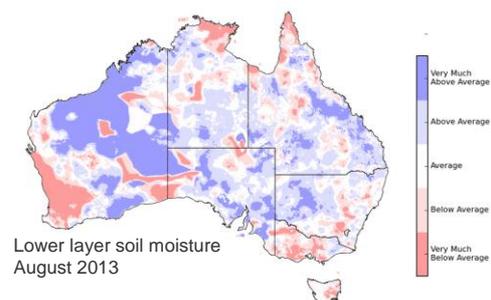
Streamflow outlook September–November



- Near median or high streamflows more likely at most Queensland and Victorian locations
- Near median flows more likely at majority of New South Wales locations

Soil moisture

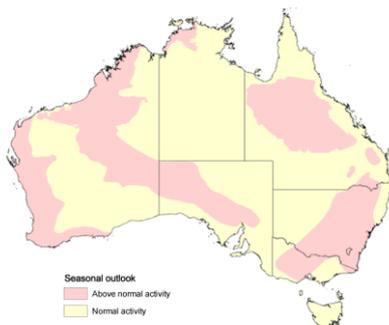
- Lower layer soil moisture varies around the country; significant decrease since last year across eastern Australia and the Northern Territory



Severe weather outlook

Seasonal bushfire assessment

- Increased fire risk in forested and grassland areas following an increase in fuel loads during 2010–2013
- Significant fires occurred in New South Wales during September



- Recent rainfall has reduced immediate fire indices over southeastern Australia; however grass growth will increase fire risk later in the season

Heatwaves

- Significant warm spells/heatwaves have already occurred four times in 2013, with the Australian average maximum temperature being in the top percentile on 22 days (long-term average 3.65 days)
- Outlook for warmer than average conditions across most of the country, coupled with drier soils and warm oceans, increases the likelihood of more significant heat events

Flood risk

- Heavy rainfall and floods occur in neutral climate conditions, but typically less widespread than during La Niña years
- Floods can occur regardless of catchment conditions, as it only takes one weather system to produce heavy rainfall leading to flooding

More information

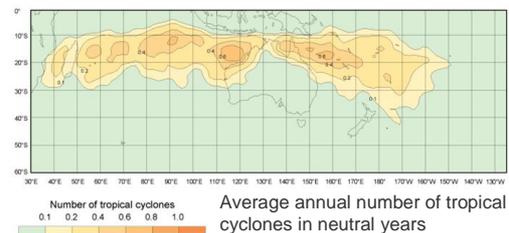
Rainfall and temperature outlook
www.bom.gov.au/climate/ahead

Seasonal streamflow forecasts and Water Storage
www.bom.gov.au/water

Severe weather warnings
www.bom.gov.au

Tropical cyclone outlook

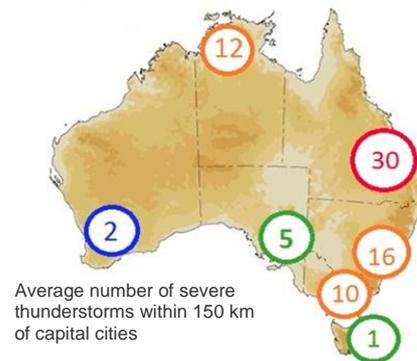
- Average number of tropical cyclones for Australian region is 11 per year; around 4 make landfall in any year
- Preliminary outlook shows 55 per cent chance of exceeding average



- In neutral years, the first tropical cyclone tends to cross the Australian coast in late December/early January (earlier in La Niña years, later in El Niño)
- Official tropical cyclone seasonal outlook due 14 October

Severe thunderstorms

- No strong push away from average numbers this storm season



- La Niña periods may bring more flash flooding, while El Niño periods can bring more damaging wind events and dry lightning strikes; neutral climate conditions suggest a return to more normal numbers of these storm impacts

Contact

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