



THREE-MONTH SEASONAL CLIMATE OUTLOOK STATEMENT

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Rainfall probabilities for April to June 2003, issued 18th March 2003

Mixed rainfall outlook for NSW

The latest seasonal rainfall outlook from the Bureau's National Climate Centre shows a contrasting pattern of odds for the June quarter, particularly in the east and southeast of the country.

The chances of ABOVE median rainfall for the **April to June** period range from between 40 and 45% in the far southwest of New South Wales to between 70 and 75% in the northeast (*see map*). So with climate patterns like the current, about 4 seasons out of 10 are expected to be wetter than average in the southwest of the state, increasing to about 7 seasons out of 10 in the northeast.

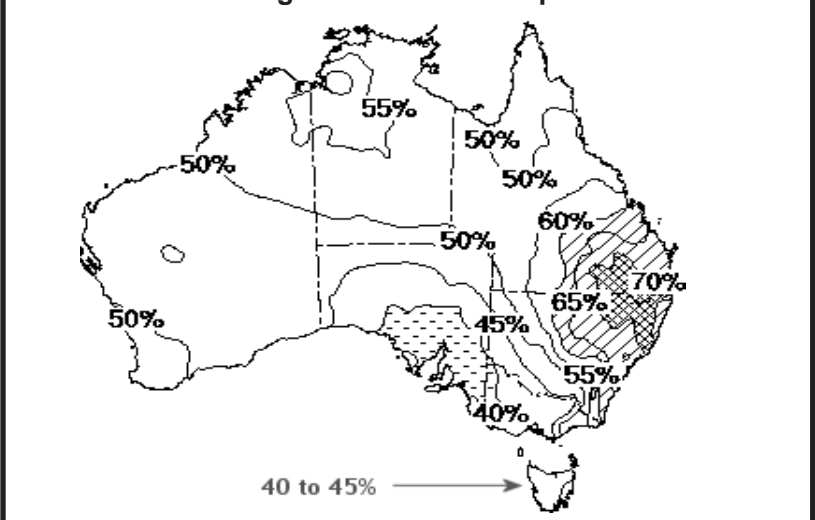
This means that the chances of BELOW average falls are between 55 and 60% in the far southwest, decreasing to between 25 and 30% in the northeast. The objective statistical outlook scheme has moderate reliability in the far southwest and northeast of NSW, but low reliability elsewhere in the state (*see background*).

The overall pattern of probabilities is almost entirely a result of warm and rising temperatures in the Indian Ocean. As far as the El Niño is concerned, most of the main indicators show the event is very close to being over. Whilst a regeneration of El Niño cannot be ruled out entirely, this is **much less likely** than either neutral or La Niña conditions. For more detail see www.bom.gov.au/climate/enso.

Background Information:

- The Outlook probabilities are based on recent Indian and Pacific Ocean temperatures. Both oceans were warmer than average in February.
- Model Reliability: Strong reliability means that tests of the model on historical data show a high correlation between the most likely outlook category (above/below median) and the verifying observation (above/below median). Low reliability means the historical relationship is weak.
- The Australian impacts of 23 El Niño events since 1900 are summarized on the Bureau's web site at http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/enso/australia_detail.shtml.
- February's value of the Southern Oscillation Index (SOI) was -7, a drop of 5 points from the -2 in January. The approximate SOI for the 30 days ending 15th March was -4.
- This outlook represents a summary. Answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) are shown on page 3.

Chance of exceeding median rainfall: April to June



*The national text and a colour map are on the WEB at http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/ahead/rain_ahead.shtml.
An online Seasonal Climate Outlook subscription service is available at <http://www.bom.gov.au/silo>.*

More information on this outlook is available from 9:00am to 5:00pm (EDT) Monday to Friday by contacting the Climate and Consultancy section in the Bureau's Sydney Office: (02) 9296 1522.