

THE SUMMER FORECAST FOR CENTRAL VICTORIA 2009/10



As predicted by Kevin Long ph. 03 5441 2394

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RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE GLOBAL CLIMATE DRIVERS

During the first 10 months of this year, the El Nino part of our climate cycle slowly developed again. This system has been showing signs of decline since early November. This gives us a good chance of having a partly developed La Nina cycle by the Winter of 2010.

For the third consecutive time the development of the El Nino cycle has been minimized by **The Chinese Effect** (i.e. the abnormally warm area of sea north of New Guinea, caused by Asian particle and aerosol pollution). See more details of The Chinese Effect at www.thelongview.com.au.

During 2009 the Chinese Effect reduced in intensity (in accordance with its normal fluctuating cycle), allowing above-average Winter rain totals to be delivered to Central Victoria for the first time since the Winter of 2003. In recent weeks a rapid increase in the strength of the Chinese Effect has been observed again. This will again delay and weaken the development of the northern Australian monsoon this season.

The warmer northern hemisphere sea temperatures have again dragged the **Indian Ocean Dipole** back into the neutral phase. This condition will be maintained during Summer and well into Autumn. (See the current "sea surface temperature map" to monitor any changes, via my website "Links" page.)

A REVIEW OF THE YEAR SO FAR

After a dry Summer/Autumn, the growing season started with a burst of wet weather (25th May to 15th July). That rain was stimulated by a medium-sized cell of above-average sea surface temperature just off the east coast of Queensland. In Central Victoria, small rain events tallied up to 140% of daily average rainfall for that six-week period. That area of above-average sea surface temperature cooled in early July and the rain became unreliable in northern Victoria.

The global-warming-driven hot dry period occurred again this year during mid-Spring, followed by above-average rains in late-November. In Bendigo, Winter rainfall totaled 181mm (104% of average). This Spring Bendigo received a total of 148 mm, which was 102% of average Spring rainfall. Bendigo's total for this year so far is 400 mm, which is 77% of average rain so far. Ironically, 2009 (an El Nino year) has delivered more rain than the failed 2008 La Nina year.

THE SUMMER FORECAST

Currently, small areas of warm sea anomalies to the north-west of Australia are encouraging. These, together with a warming trend in the seas from South Africa to Tasmania, are raising my expectations for average rains for most of Victoria this Summer.

However, there remains a very high probability that the Autumn 2010 rains will struggle to achieve 60% of average rainfall, due to the current increasing strength of the Chinese Effect yet again.

Therefore I forecast, the below-average rainfall trends of the last decade will continue on until next Winter. By which time the 18-year flood peak (due during 2010/11) should be forcing the rainfall totals up to above-average levels. This should finally result in a year with totals close to average; about 550mm for Bendigo.

In this time of changing climate we need several months of 150%+ rainfall to achieve reasonable runoff. Given this requirement, the Loddon, Coliban and Campaspe systems are likely to remain below 30% allocation. The Eildon and Murray irrigation systems should have their best year for many years, delivering allocation levels of approximately 75%.

WARNING : Cold water anomalies have been the dominant feature around New Zealand this year. A similar situation last Summer produced the blocking high-pressure systems in the Tasman Sea resulting in the extreme bushfire conditions. Such fire conditions have a high chance of recurring late in this fire season.

May the best of the rain fall on your land when you need it. Cheers for now, Kevin Long.

www.TheLongView.com.au