

THE SPRING FORECAST **FOR SOUTHERN MDB REGIONS 2016**

As predicted by Kevin Long (Bendigo VIC) 29 AUG 2016 ph (03) 5441 2394



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AS I FORECAST THE CURRENT LA NINA CYCLE HAS ONLY DEVELOPED INTO A VERY WEAK ANOMALY

The rapid SOI rise that is usually associated with the development of most La Nina anomalies has not occurred this Winter. It now appears this La Nina will be morphing back into El Nino by Winter 2017. I am calling this La Nina a "fizzer". I forecast the next El Nino anomaly will herald the start of **the driest 6- 10 years endured since the early 1800's**.

VERY STRONG JET STREAM FLOWS HAVE BOOSTED WINTER RAIN UP TO 150%

For the second year in a row, very strong and consistent Jet Stream flows have been the dominant force delivering massive amounts of extra moisture into the Australian Winter weather systems, resulting in exceptional amounts of unseasonal heavy rain across most tropical regions. This Indian Ocean moisture feed has also consistently enhanced the southern weather systems, resulting in about 150% of average Winter rainfall across most southern regions of Australia.

VERY POOR MANAGEMENT OF WATER RESOURCES IS BRINGING ON REDUCED WATER SECURITY

Finally after three months of consistently above-average Autumn and Winter rainfall (which traditionally only occurs once every 4 to 5 years) our southern rivers finally started to deliver some sustainable flows.

However, very disappointingly, much of this valuable water resource has been run straight through the Reservoirs via the Hydro power plants to make a quick buck, and also to supply the unsustainable environmental water dumps resulting in the Murray River running at close to flood level for much of the Winter period.

The sustained high deliveries of the Dartmouth hydro are a major risk factor - firstly for the farmers' very valuable carryover water held in the Hume, and secondly for a greatly increased risk of Spring floods downstream of the Hume.

Water dumping means most reservoirs have only had a "net rise" of about one third of the long-term yearly average (i.e. Cairn Curran, Eppalock, Eildon, and Dartmouth).

Due to the large increase in hydro power production, Dartmouth has only risen a small amount (and very slowly). However, the Hume has rocketed up to 90% capacity in recent weeks, filling at about twice the normal rate.

Dartmouth - which is meant to be our biggest and best reservoir - is therefore sitting at a little over 50% capacity.

After an unexpectedly wet and abundant Winter, we find that **water security has again been totally squandered**; placed in a disastrous third position behind hydro power production and environmental deliveries.

SPRING SEASON INFLUENCES IN BRIEF:

- Cooler than average sea surface temperatures in the Southern Ocean have been maintained during Autumn and Winter, which has been tempering the incoming southern rainfall systems and should continue to do so throughout Spring.
- The recent return to above-average Antarctic sea ice extent will help maintain the current cool sea regime.
- Jet Stream moisture flows are forecast to continue to enhance early Spring rain events across the lower MDB.
- Early planted frost-tender crops will most likely be protected by this Jet Stream moisture during early Spring.

THE SPRING FORECAST **IN BRIEF : Early Nov has the highest chance of the strongest thunder storms.**

The strongest Northeast Air Tides should help produce above-average rains during the first weeks of Oct, Nov, and Dec. The weak La Nina forces will enhance the late Spring and early Summer thunderstorm season. Continued Jet Stream moisture flows are forecast to reduce the risk of Spring frosts.

I forecast above-average crops will be grown over most MDB regions with the help of some continued Jet Stream moisture. This Spring will be your last chance to fill up the drought reserves before the Bicentennial Solar Minimum Cycle further diminishes our 30 years of declining average rainfall. (However, only a small further rise to most dams should be expected as I forecast this La Nina anomaly will remain weak.)

Close to average rain is forecast for the Spring period, resulting in about 90% yearly totals for most of the MDB by Christmas

I wish you all the best for what I believe will be a La Nina-assisted year, with improving rainfall again towards the end of the growing season.

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