The Bureau of Meteorology

High Risk Weather Season Outlook

Denver Richter

Meteorologist

Bureau of Meteorology

School Leaders and Education Representatives

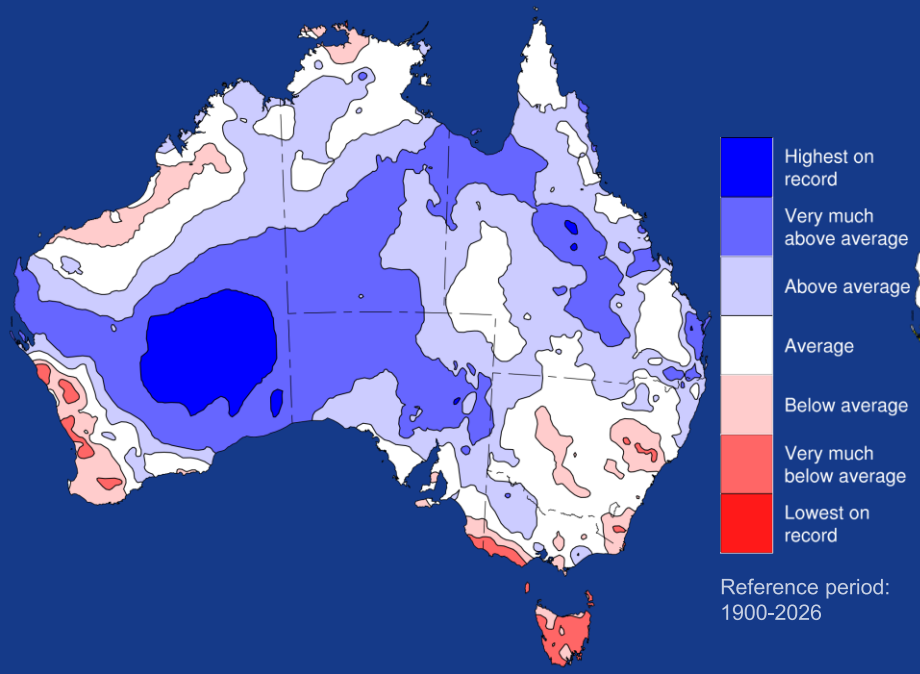
04 November 2026



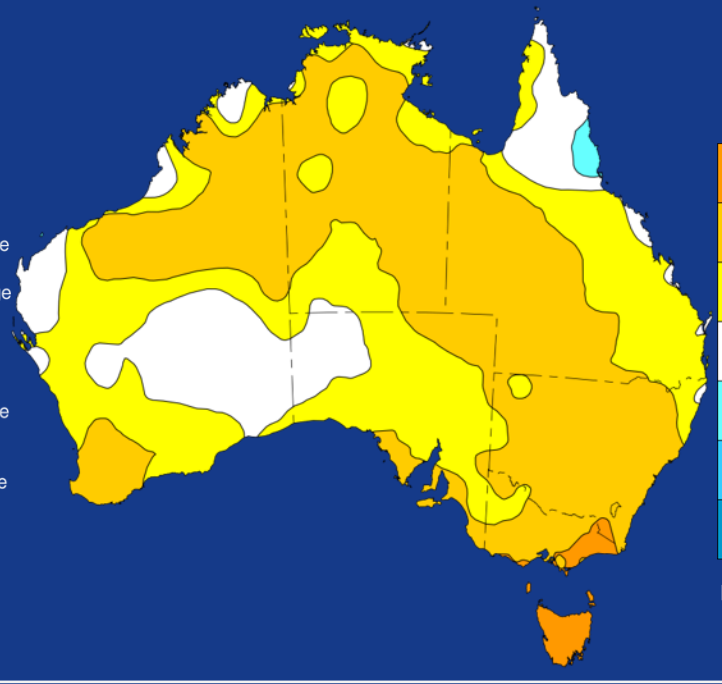
Rainfall and temperature

Latest 3 months to date (August– 31 October 2026)

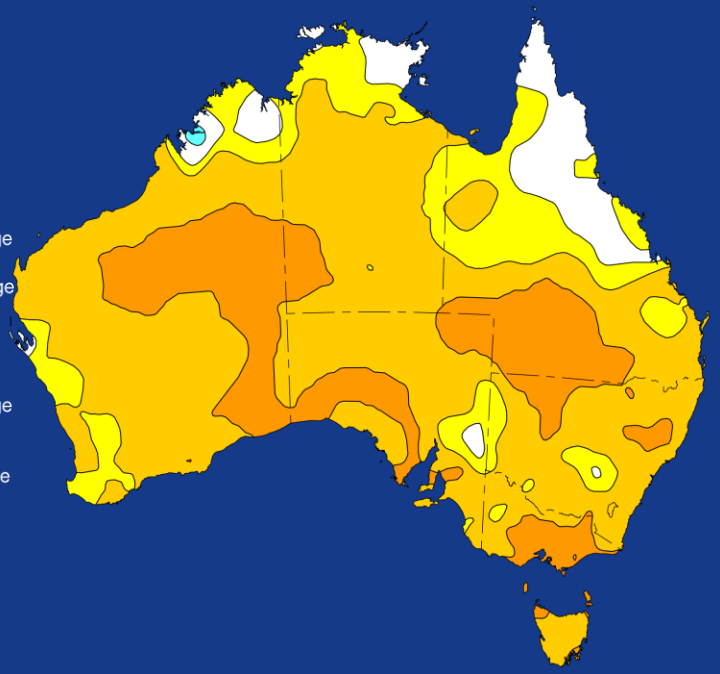
Rainfall



Maximum temperature



Minimum temperature

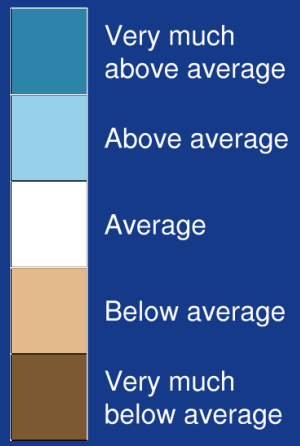


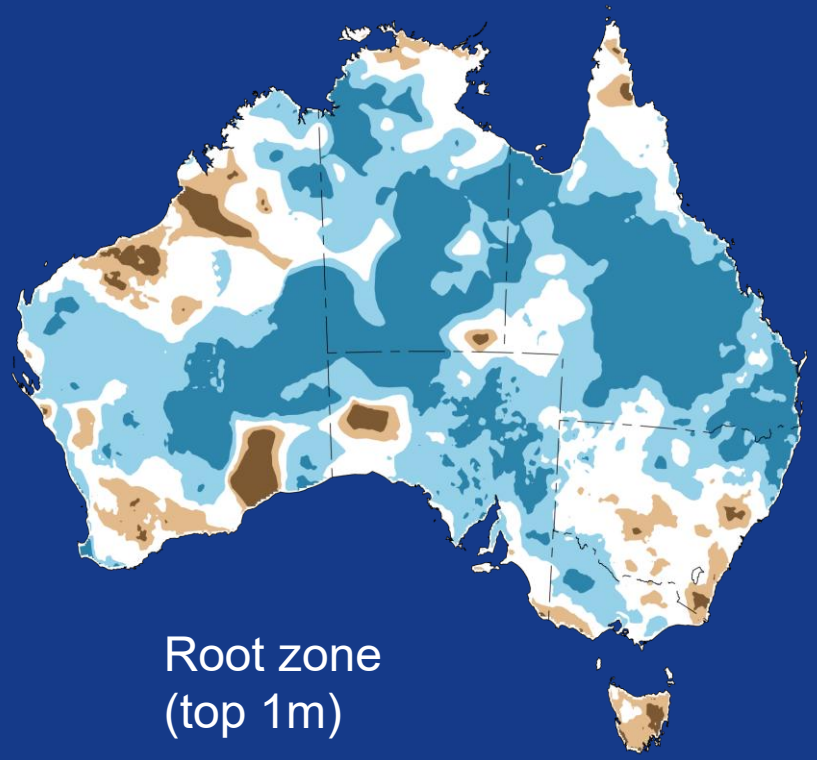
- Tasmania had its 3rd-driest August to October on record
- Above average August to October maximum and minimum temperatures across most of Australia

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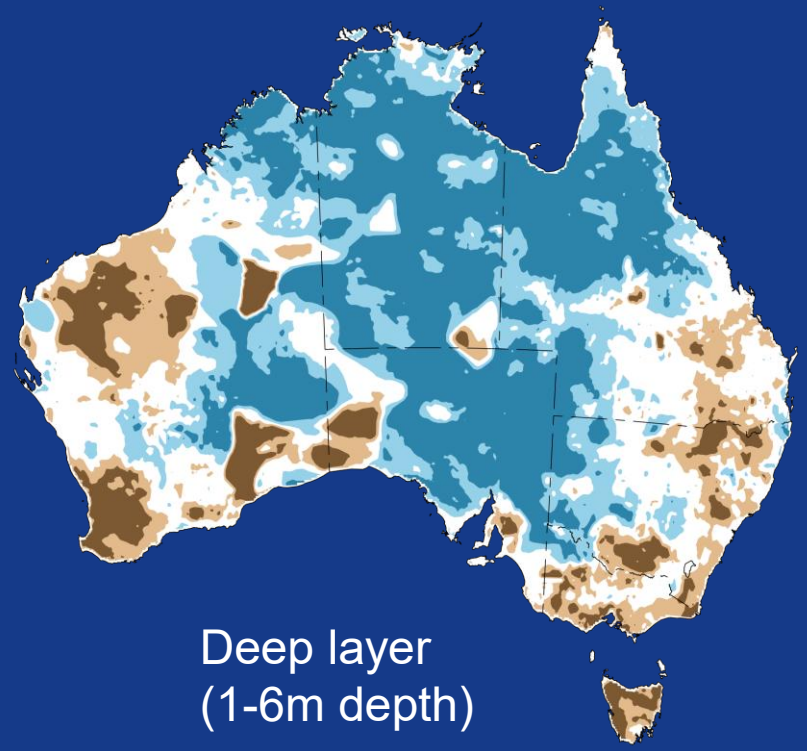
Soil moisture

01 November 2026





Root zone
(top 1m)



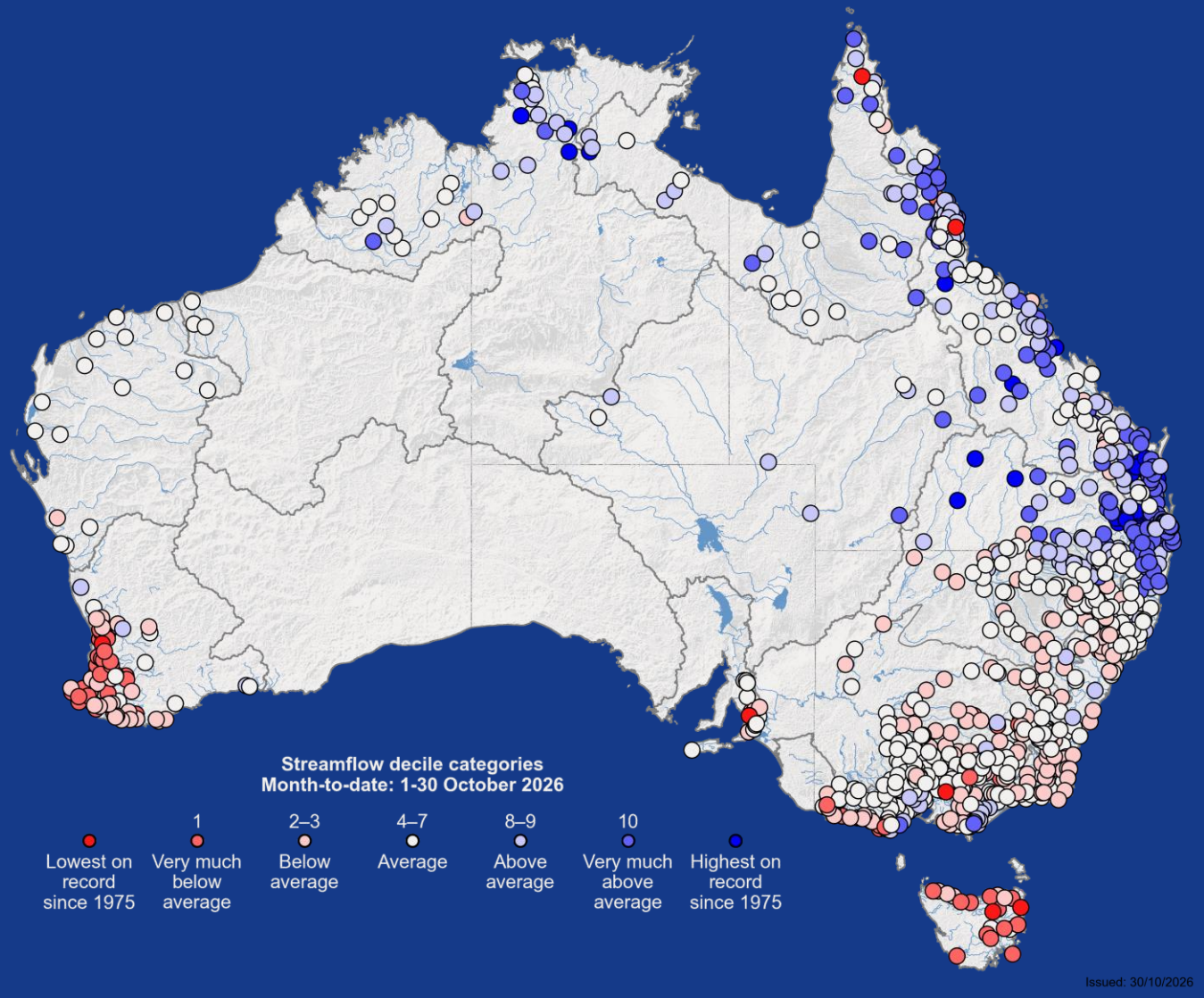
Deep layer
(1-6m depth)

- Root zone soil moisture is above average across much of Australia and below average in parts of the west and south-east, including Tasmania.
- Deep soils (>1m) remain wetter than average for large parts of the country but are drier than average across parts of western, southern and eastern Australia.

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Water security: streamflow

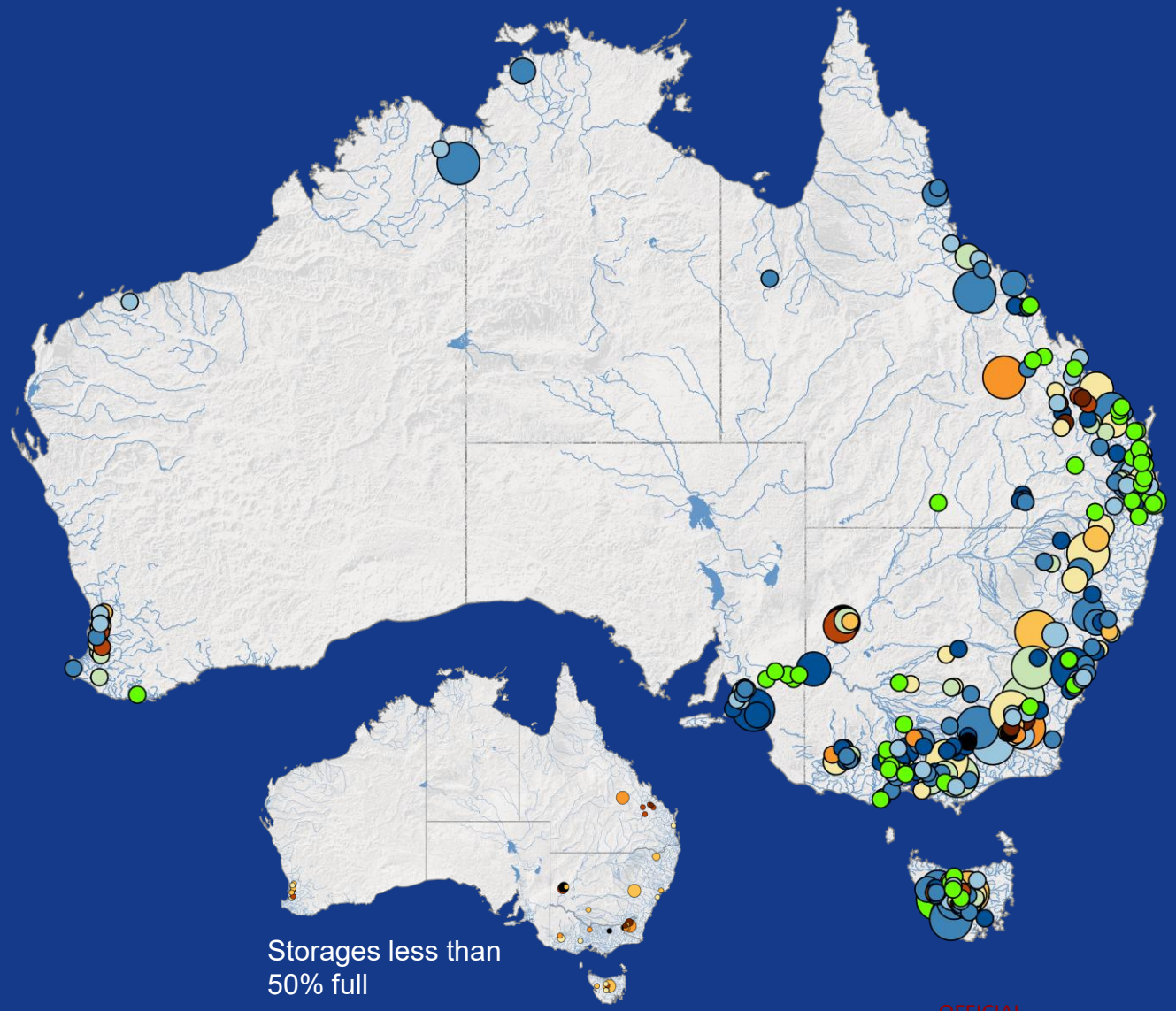
1–30 October 2026



- Below average streamflow has been observed across southwestern, and some southeastern and eastern areas.
- Above average flows across the north of the country, and parts of Victoria and eastern New South Wales.

Water security: storages

02 November 2026



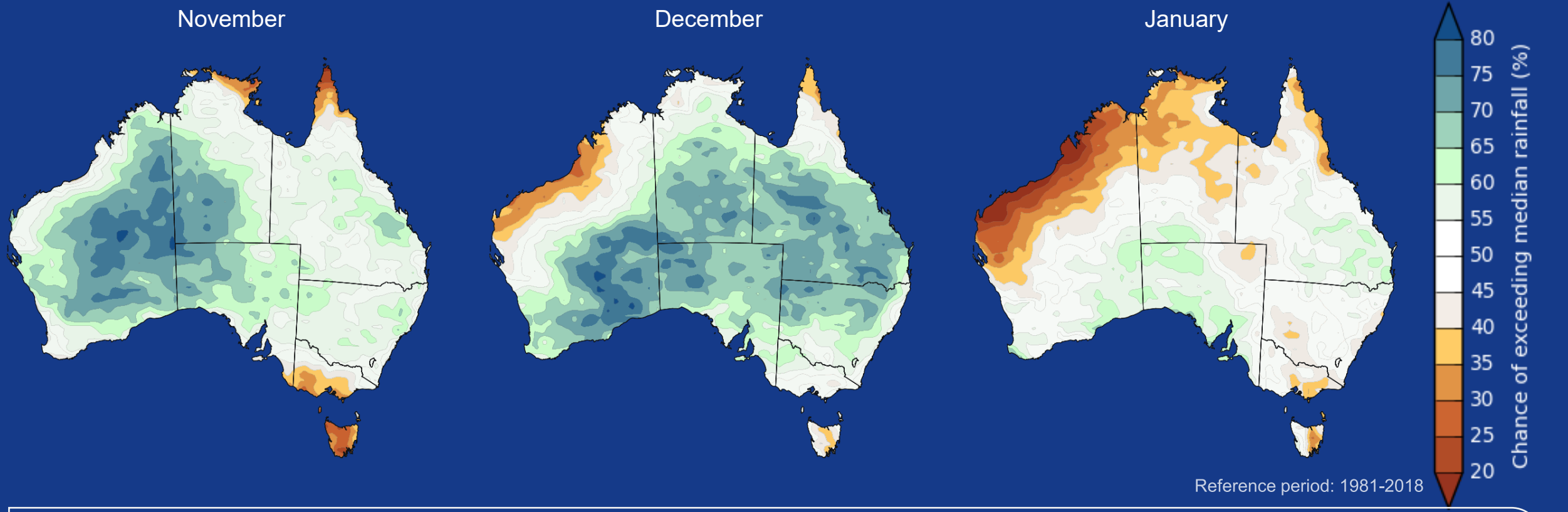
Percentage full:

- Australia: 71%
- Perth: 39%
- Adelaide: 81%
- Melbourne: 72%
- Brisbane: 83%
- Canberra: 93%
- Darwin: 80%
- Sydney: 95%
- Hobart: 98%

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Rainfall: Chance of above median

November 2026, December 2026, January 2027



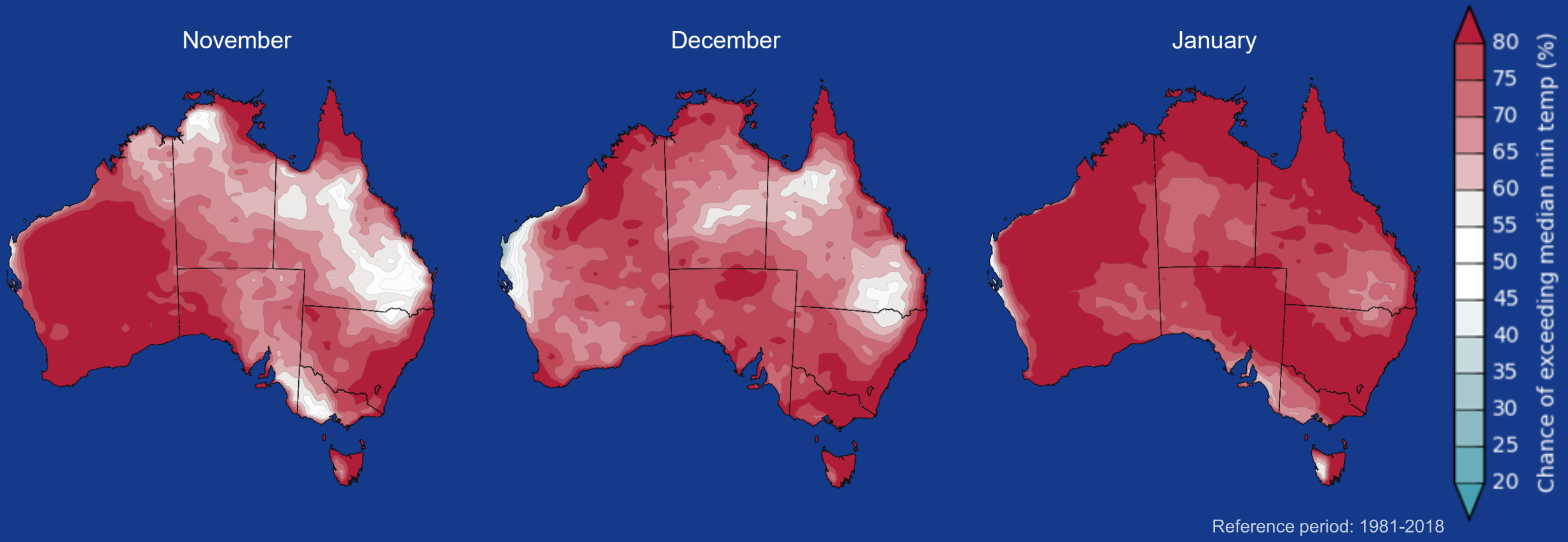
- For the 3 months to January 2027, rainfall is likely to be above average for large parts of Australia, below average in parts of the far north and south-east.
- The wet signal is more pronounced in the west in November, but strengthens in the east during December, before easing in January.

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Maximum temperature: Chance of above median

November 2026, December 2026, January 2027



Reference period: 1981-2018

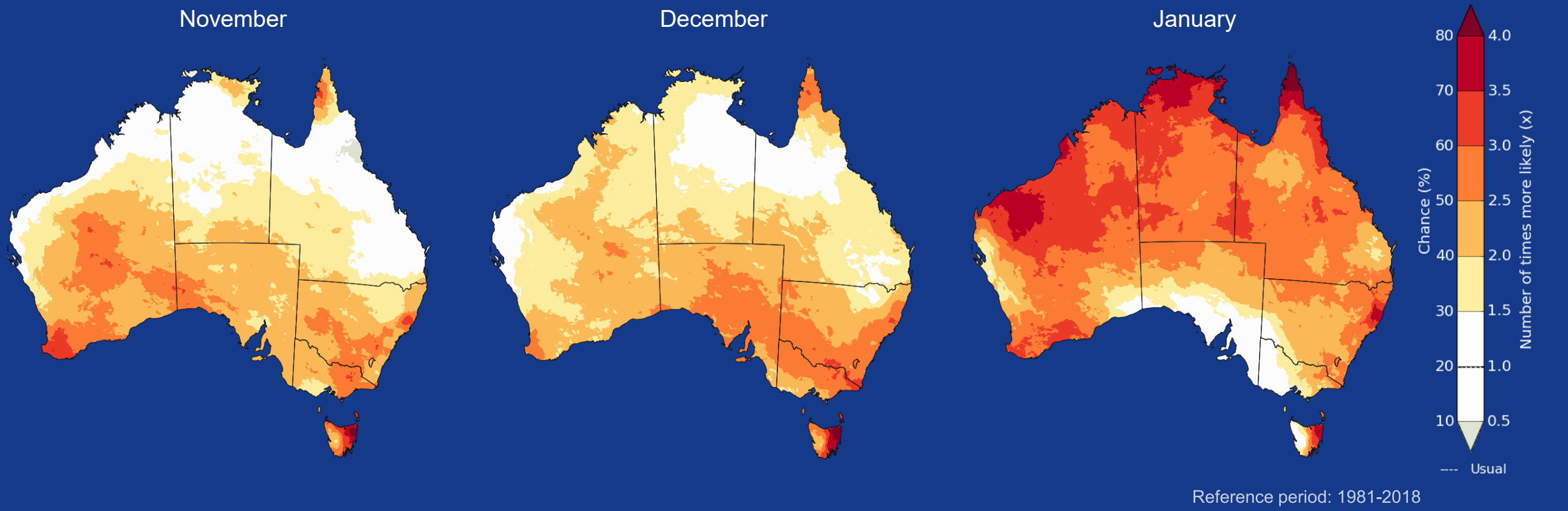
- For November to January, maximum temperatures are likely to be above average across most of Australia, except in parts of northern and western Australia during November and December.

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Maximum temperature: Chance of unusually warm

November 2026, December 2026, January 2027



Reference period: 1981-2018

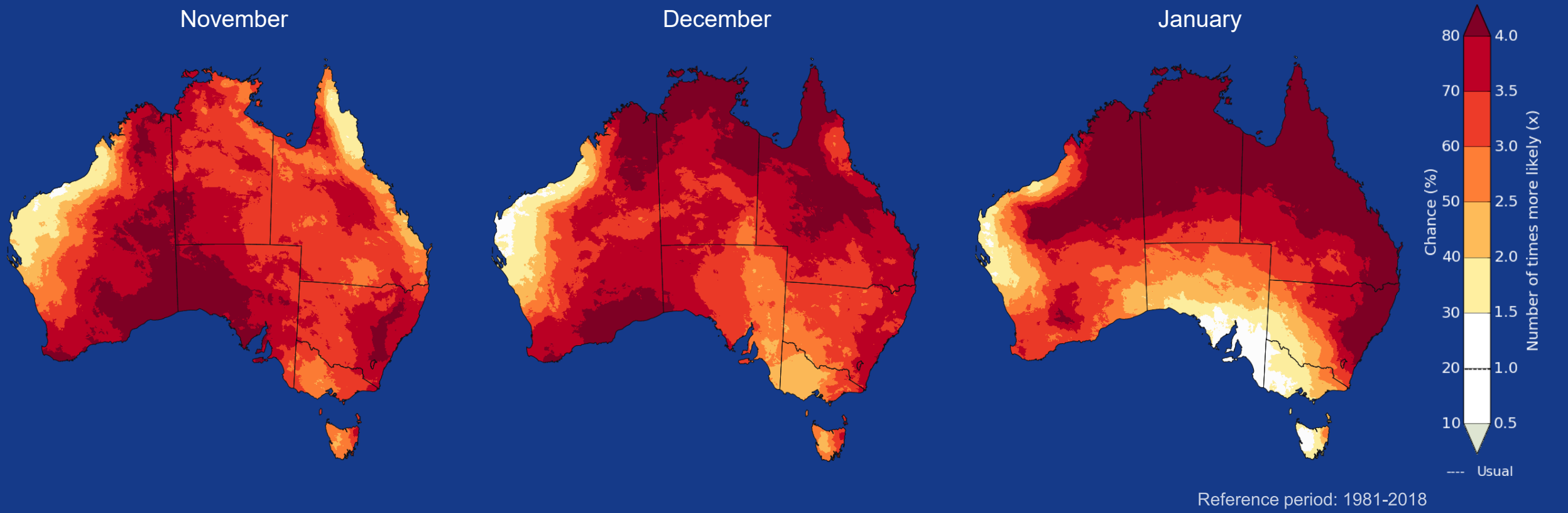
- Increased likelihood of unusually warm maximum temperatures (in the top 20% of the historical range) across the southern two-thirds of Australia for November and over much of Australia during December and January.

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Minimum temperature: Chance of unusually warm

November 2026, December 2026, January 2027



Reference period: 1981-2018

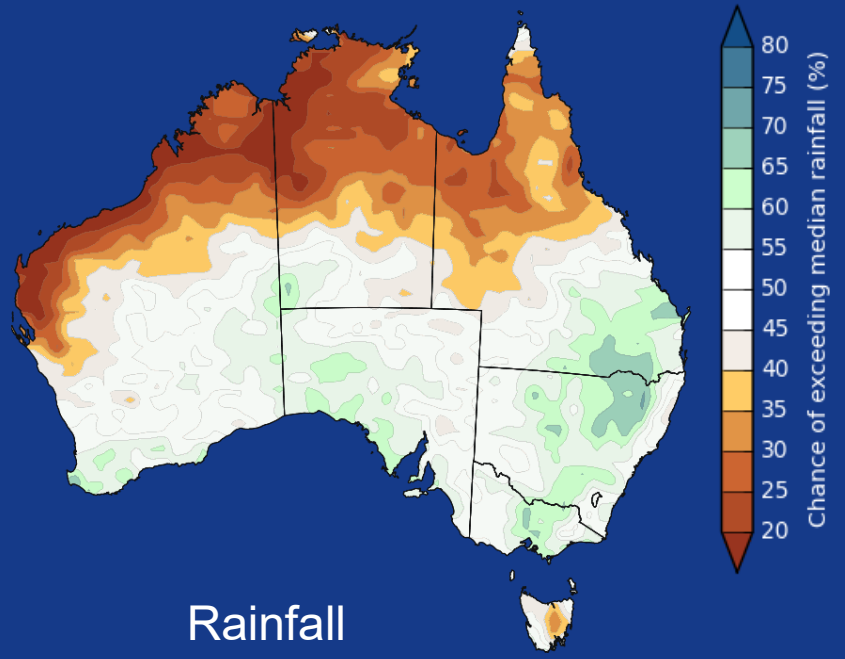
- Increased likelihood of unusually warm overnight temperatures (in the top 20% of the historical range) across most of the country, strengthening in the north in December and January.

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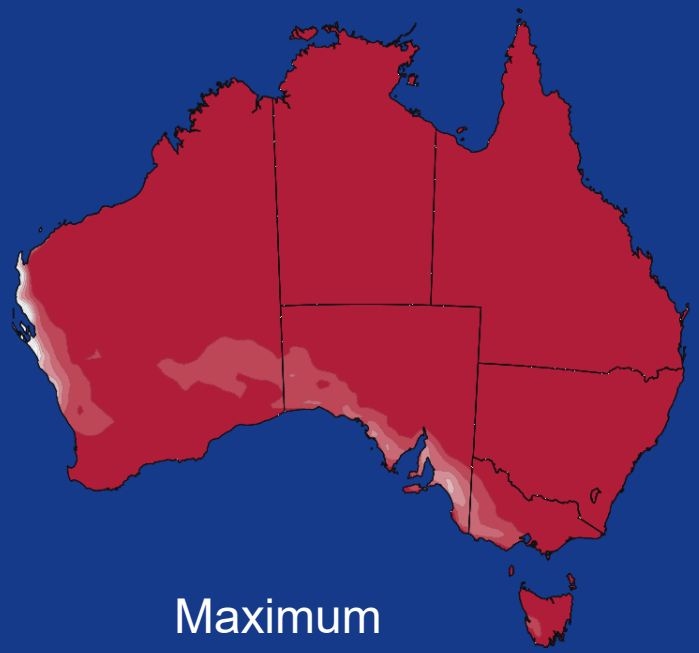
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Looking ahead to next season

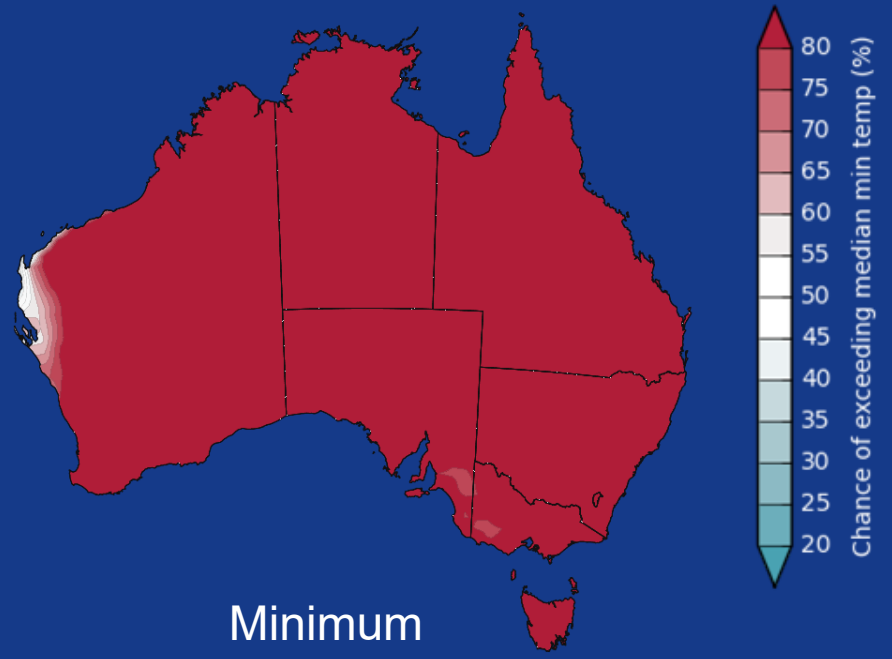
Chance of above median rainfall, maximum temperature and minimum temperature
January–March 2027



Rainfall



Maximum temperature



Minimum temperature

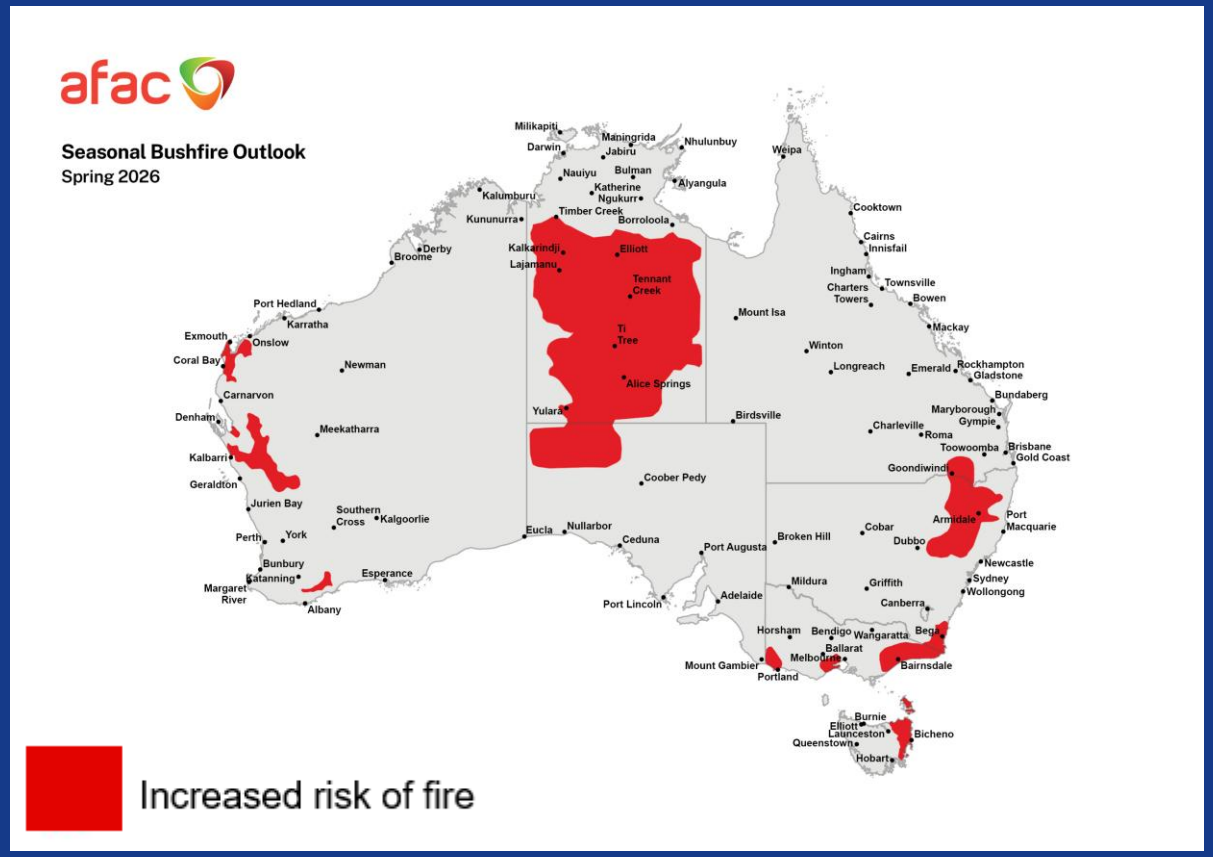
- For the 3 months to March 2027, below average rainfall is likely for large parts of the north and Tasmania. Above average rainfall is likely for parts of western, central and eastern Australia.
- Warmer than average days and nights are very likely across the country.
- *Note – skill at this lead time is typically lower than at shorter lead-times | Not available on public website*

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Bushfire outlook

Spring: September–November 2026

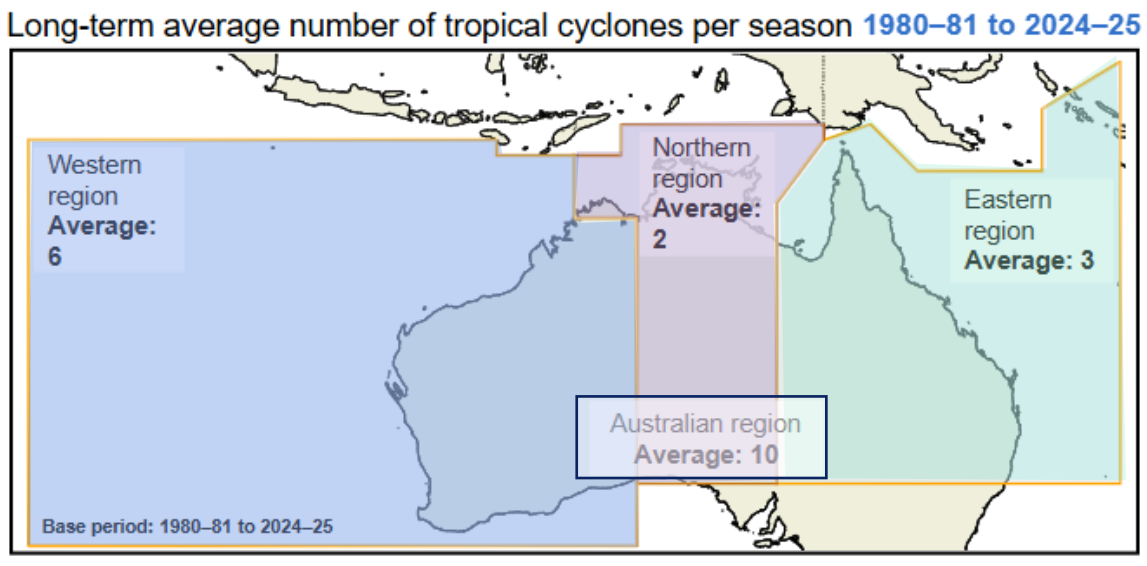


- There is a heightened risk of fire across northern and south-eastern NSW, south-eastern Queensland, north-eastern Tasmania, parts of WA, SA and Victoria, and large parts of the NT.
- This outlook reflects a combination of dry conditions in the east and parts of the west, and increased fuel loads through parts of central and northern Australia
- Seasonal fire risk is based on fuel levels, vegetation status, recent mitigation (hazard reduction), water availability, as well as the Bureau's long-range forecast.

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Tropical cyclone seasonal guidance





- Australia's tropical cyclone season runs from November to April.
- On average, there are 10 cyclones in the Australian region each season; 3-4 making landfall.
- Cooler than average sea surface temperatures to Australia's north during October may delay tropical activity, however there is still potential for severe tropical cyclones throughout the season.
- There has always been at least one tropical cyclone impact the Australian coast each season.
- Tropical cyclone formation is rarely evenly spread throughout the season; quiet periods are often followed by bursts of activity.
- Tropical lows can also cause damaging winds, widespread rainfall and dangerous flooding, and can impact inland areas.
- Coastal impacts can still occur from cyclones that don't make landfall.
- Rising sea levels are increasing the risk of coastal impacts from storm surge.
- Future cyclones may be fewer but stronger, bringing more intense rainfall, damaging winds and dangerous storm surge.

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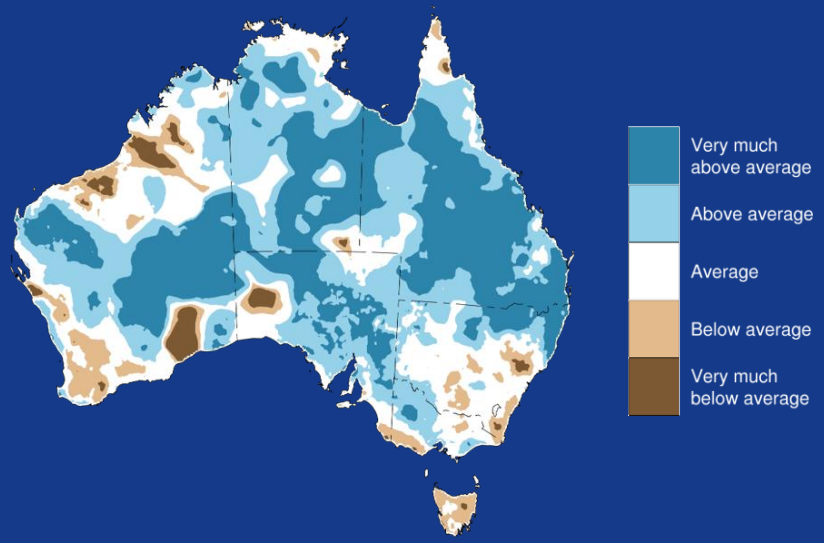
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Flood risk

November 2026–January 2027

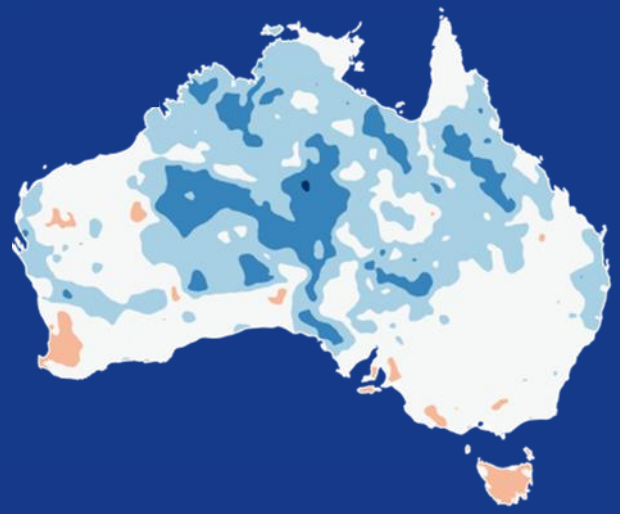
28 October 2026

Observed top metre soil moisture



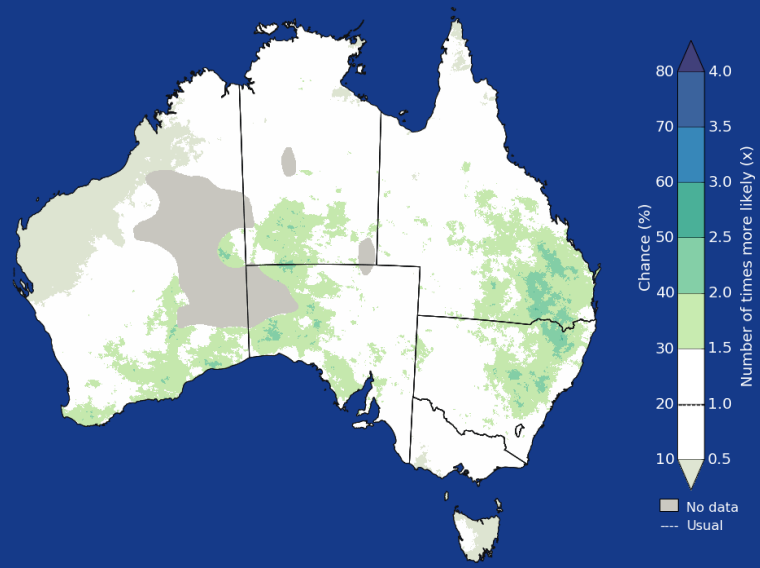
November 2026

Forecast runoff



November–January

Forecast chance of unusually high rainfall



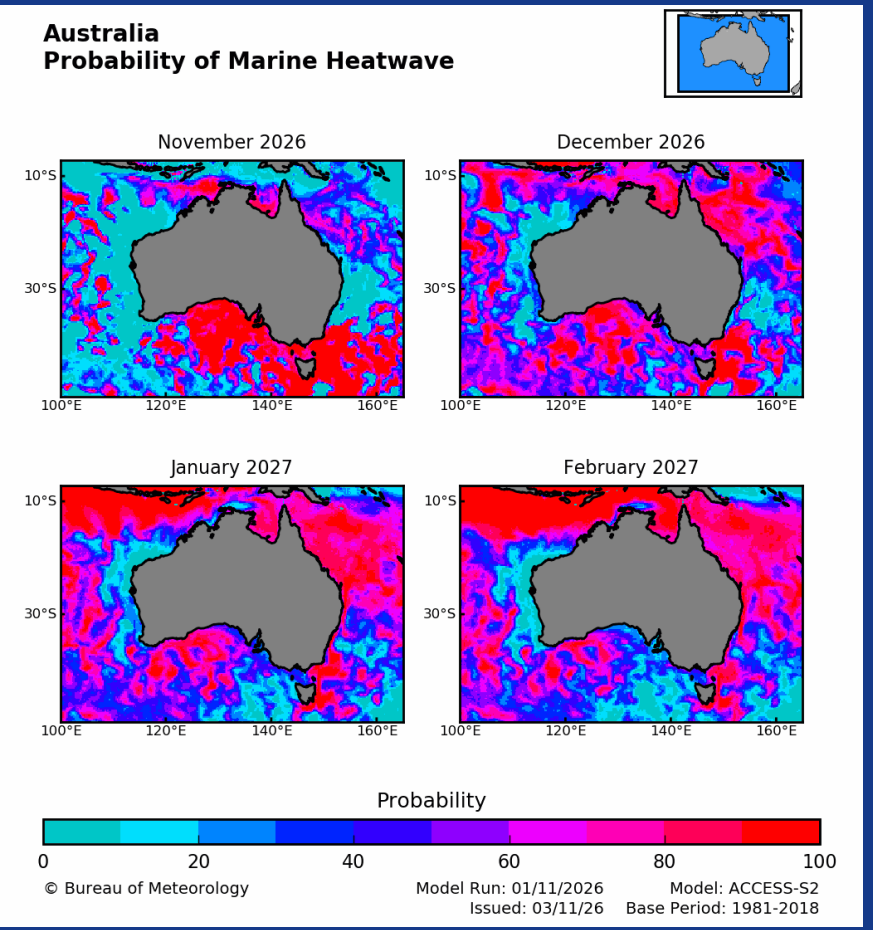
- Flood risk is often driven by major weather events that are difficult for long-range forecast models to predict, especially at longer lead times.
- Heavy rain on already wet soils can increase runoff and flood risk.

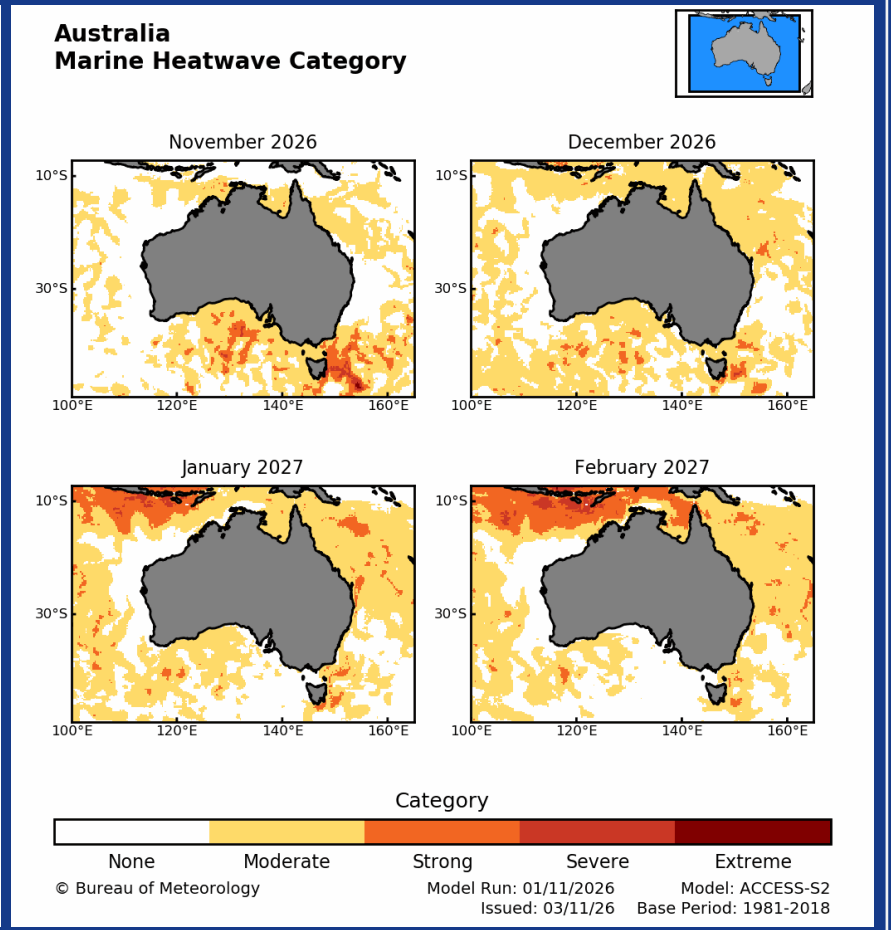
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Marine heatwave outlook

November 2026–February 2027





Increased likelihood of marine heatwaves over next four months:

- Tasmania & Victoria
- Great Barrier Reef
- Northern Australia
- Western Australia
- South Australia

Increased risk of **strong** to **severe** marine heatwave conditions near Tasmania and SA during spring and early summer.

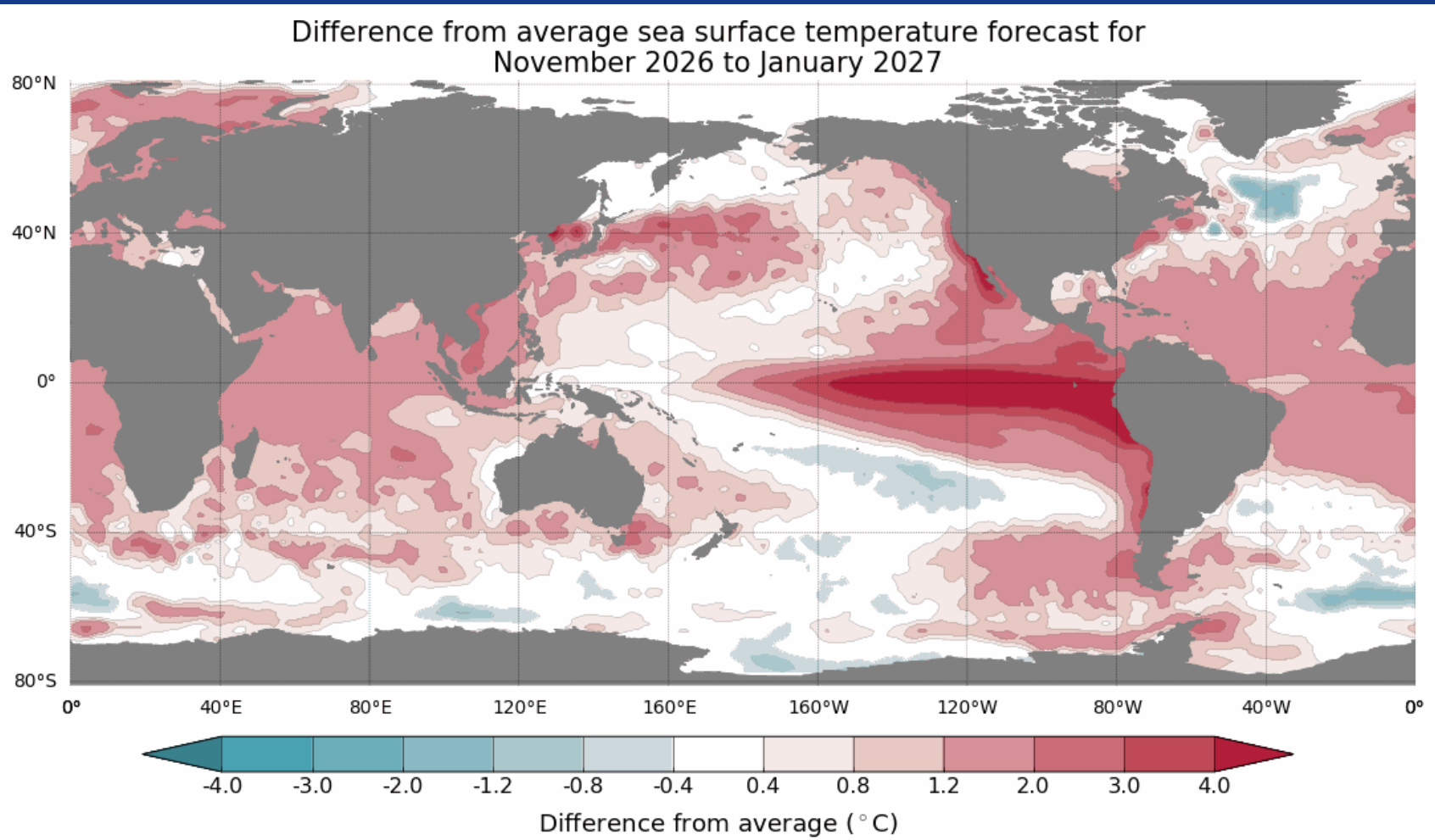
Coral bleaching risk increases during El Niño summers, a pattern reflected in forecasts for the Great Barrier Reef and northern Australia.

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Sea surface temperature forecast

November 2026–January 2027



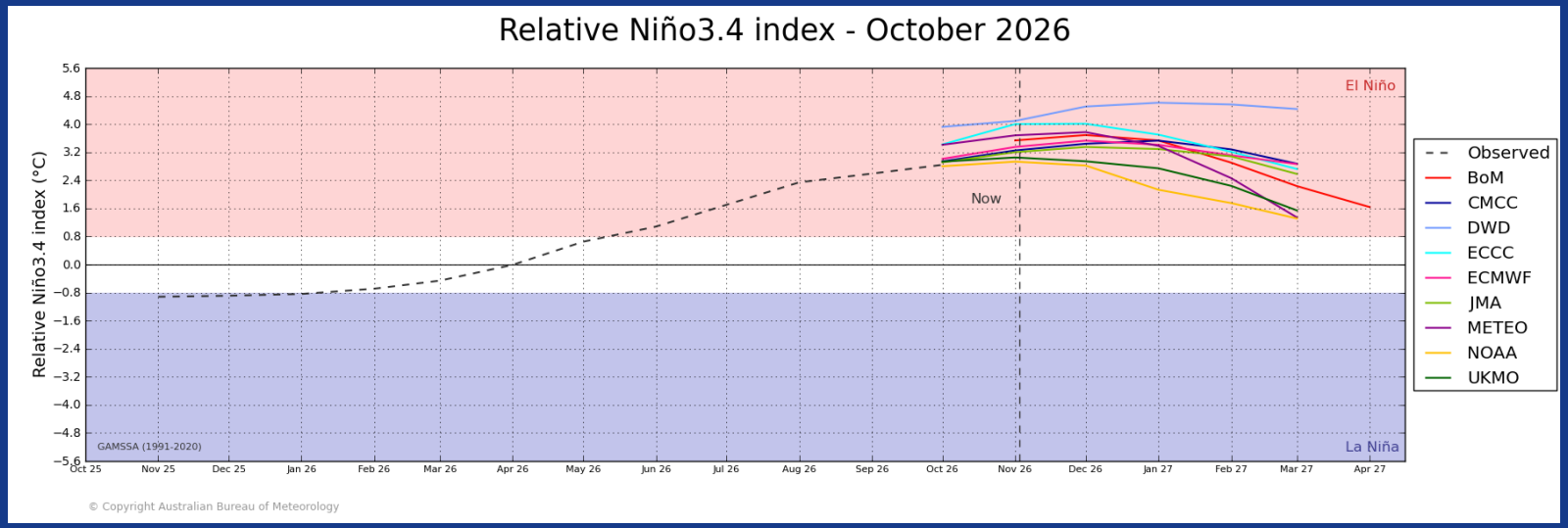
- Warmer than average ocean temperatures are forecast to persist both globally and across much of the Australian region, especially east of Tasmania and Victoria.
- Warm oceans can provide increased moisture and energy that can enhance the severity of storms and rain systems.
- Forecasts indicate a strong to very strong El Niño signal will continue through to at least autumn 2027.

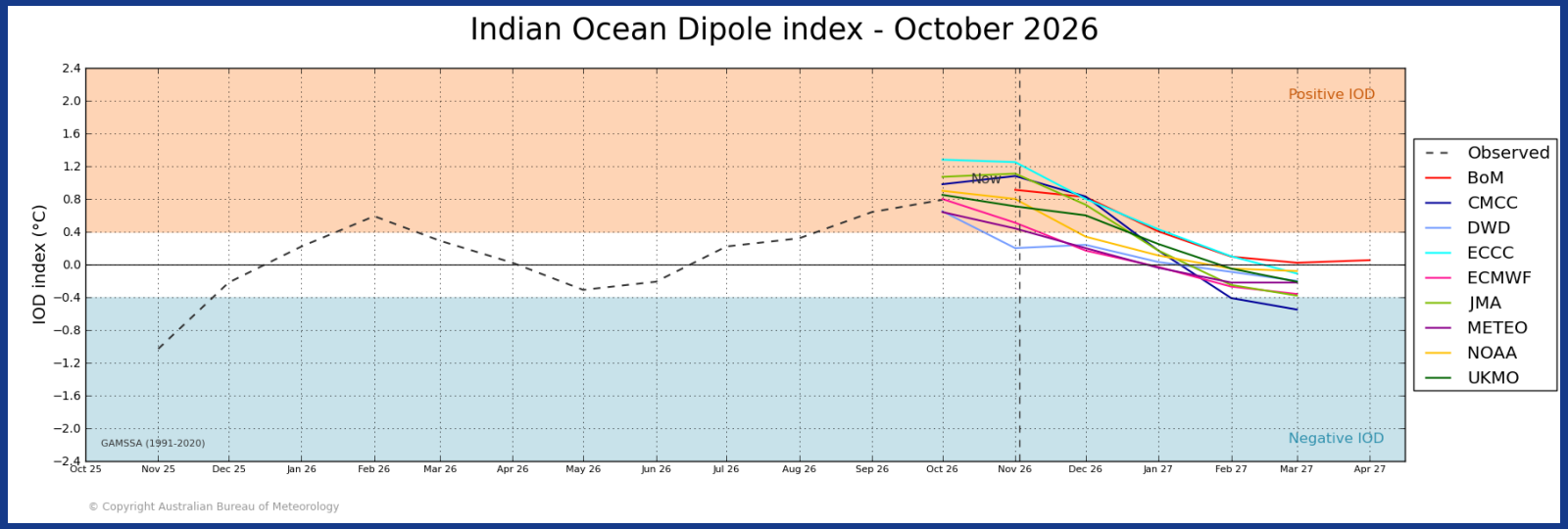
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ENSO / IOD forecasts

Key international models (Copernicus)



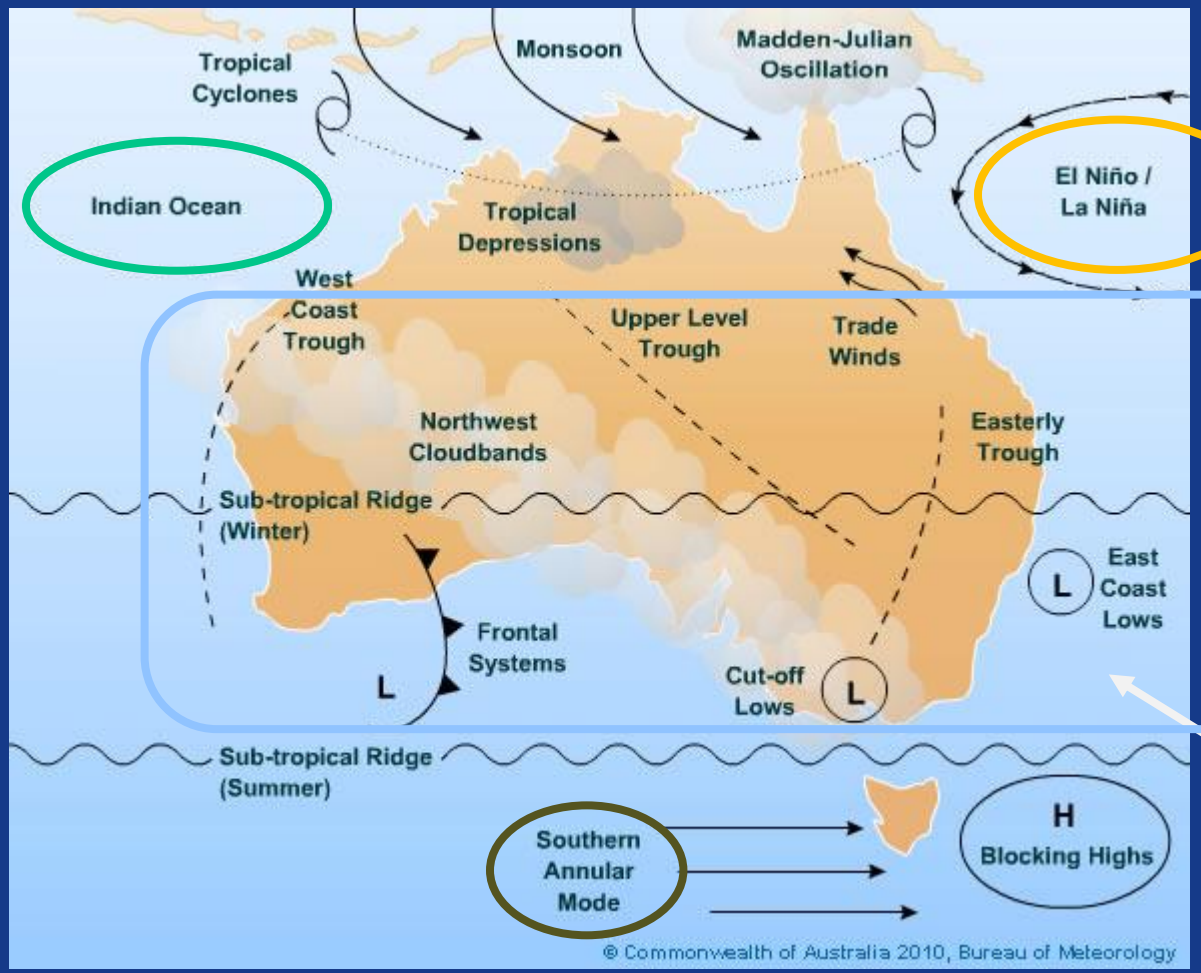


- El Niño is at near-record levels.
- Climate models indicate further strengthening; El Niño expected to peak in November or December.
- Models suggest this El Niño is likely to be very strong – potentially the strongest El Niño on record.
- The strength of an El Niño event doesn't always match its impact on seasonal rainfall patterns in Australia.
- While El Niño often brings drier conditions to central and eastern Australia in winter and spring, Australia's weather is also shaped by other climate factors, that can enhance or offset this influence.
- A positive Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) event is underway. The positive IOD is likely to continue during spring, with a return to neutral in early summer.

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Other influences on our climate

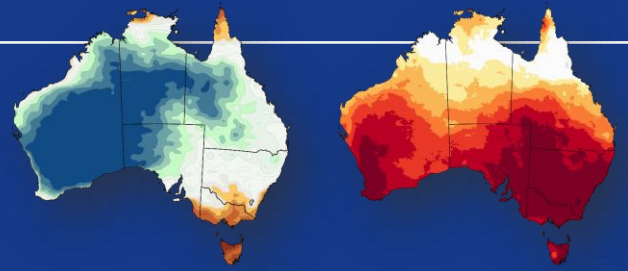


Long- term trends

Random weather chaos

Local sea surface temperatures

- There are many factors that contribute to Australian climate – as well as ENSO
- Some can enhance, others may off-set, El Niño influence
- Tropical influences such as the monsoon can play a dominant role during summer
- Our long-range forecast takes into account all these factors



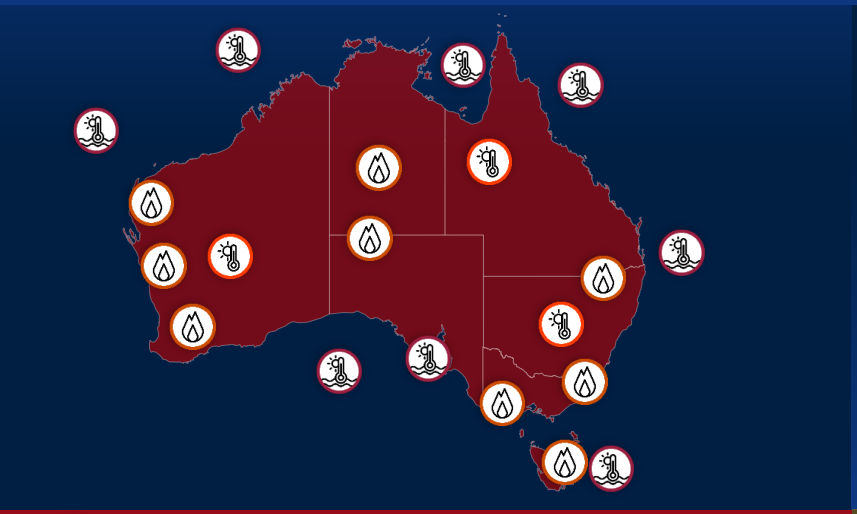
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Australian climate hazard risks, November 2026 to February 2027

Reviewed: 29 October 2026

- The qualitative assessment of the listed hazards is based on an understanding of climatology, antecedent conditions and relevant forecast guidance.
- The hazard level risk is relative to long-term climatology; it is unrelated to potential impacts resulting from hazardous weather.
- The position of the hazard icons displayed on the maps roughly correlates to locations assessed as having an increased risk for the particular hazard.
- Hazardous weather may also occur at locations where icons are not displayed.

Near-average risk
Above-average risk
Below-average risk



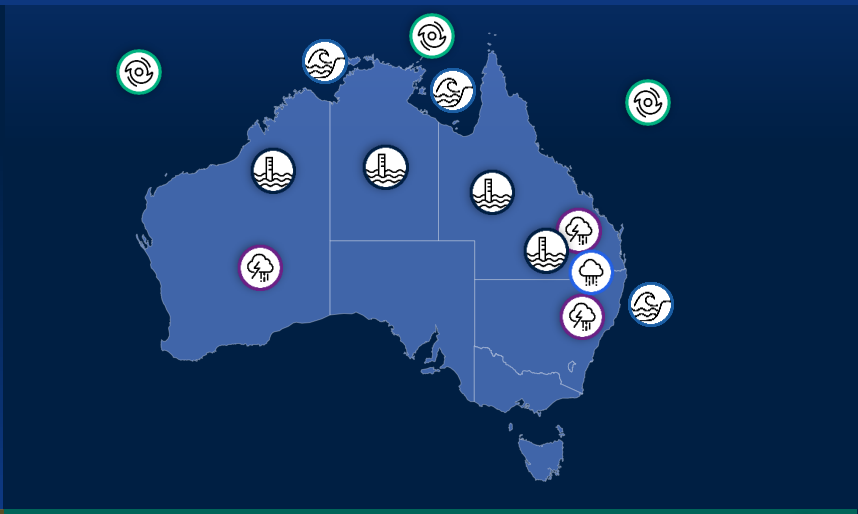
Fire danger

AFAC spring outlook 19 Aug: increased risk of fire in much of NT into northern SA, areas in the west of WA, parts of south-eastern and northern NSW, south-eastern Qld, southern Vic, north-eastern Tas. Forecast rainfall in parts of Aus may ease risk in those areas.



Rainfall deficiencies

Long-term deficiencies persist in areas of southern Aus. Short-term deficiencies in W and SW WA, NE NSW, Tas, S Vic. Deficits in deep soil moisture across parts of W, E and S Aus. Short-term deficiencies likely to ease in parts of the E, and SW WA.



Tropical cyclones / severe storms

TC season is Nov–Apr across the north. Peak period for severe storms in eastern Australia is Oct-Jan. Warmer than average waters along south-eastern coasts may increase both the frequency and intensity of storms or heavy rainfall near coastal zones.

Unusually warm temperatures

Unusually high maximum and minimum temperatures are likely across much of Australia, increasing risk of hotter weather and heatwave conditions and severe storm risk.

Dust

Below average dust risk likely in typically dry-soil areas, with increased vegetation cover following wetter than average season, and forecast above average rainfall in some inland regions.

Riverine flooding / flash flooding

From Nov, forecast above average rain for much of the country increases riverine flood risk, including the NW high runoff. Increased risk of flash flooding from severe storms during Oct-Jan in the east.

Marine heatwave

Moderate to strong heatwaves are likely in The Bight, SA gulfs and east of Tas to December, strengthening in the GBR and east coast from December. Moderate to extreme in northern waters from February.

Pollen, thunderstorm asthma

Thunderstorm asthma peaks in Oct-Nov. A wet winter in parts of Vic and NSW increased plant growth. AirHealth forecasts increased pollen risk when wet conditions are followed by dry and warm.

Coastal erosion, flooding, sea level

Average seasonal risk of coastal flooding for most of Australia. In SE Aus, increased risk: high coastal SSTs may increase storms, summer max. tides, forecast high sea levels. Low sea levels in northern Australia may impact coastal and reef ecosystems.

Future changes in weather and climate hazards

OCEAN WARMING
Oceans surrounding Australia are expected to become more acidic (*high confidence*) and warmer with more frequent and longer marine heatwaves (*high confidence*).

TROPICAL CYCLONES
The proportion of category 4 and 5 events may increase (*low/medium confidence*).

HEAT
Extreme temperatures are likely to increase nationwide (*very high confidence*).

BUSHFIRE
Higher temperatures and drier conditions will initially increase the risk of bushfires in most currently forested areas (*high confidence*).



STORMS
Extratropical storms (including east coast lows) may have greater impacts when they occur (*medium confidence*).
Storms producing large hail may increase in the east and occur further south (*low confidence*).

RIVERINE FLOODS
When floods do occur, they are likely to be higher due to more intense rainfall.

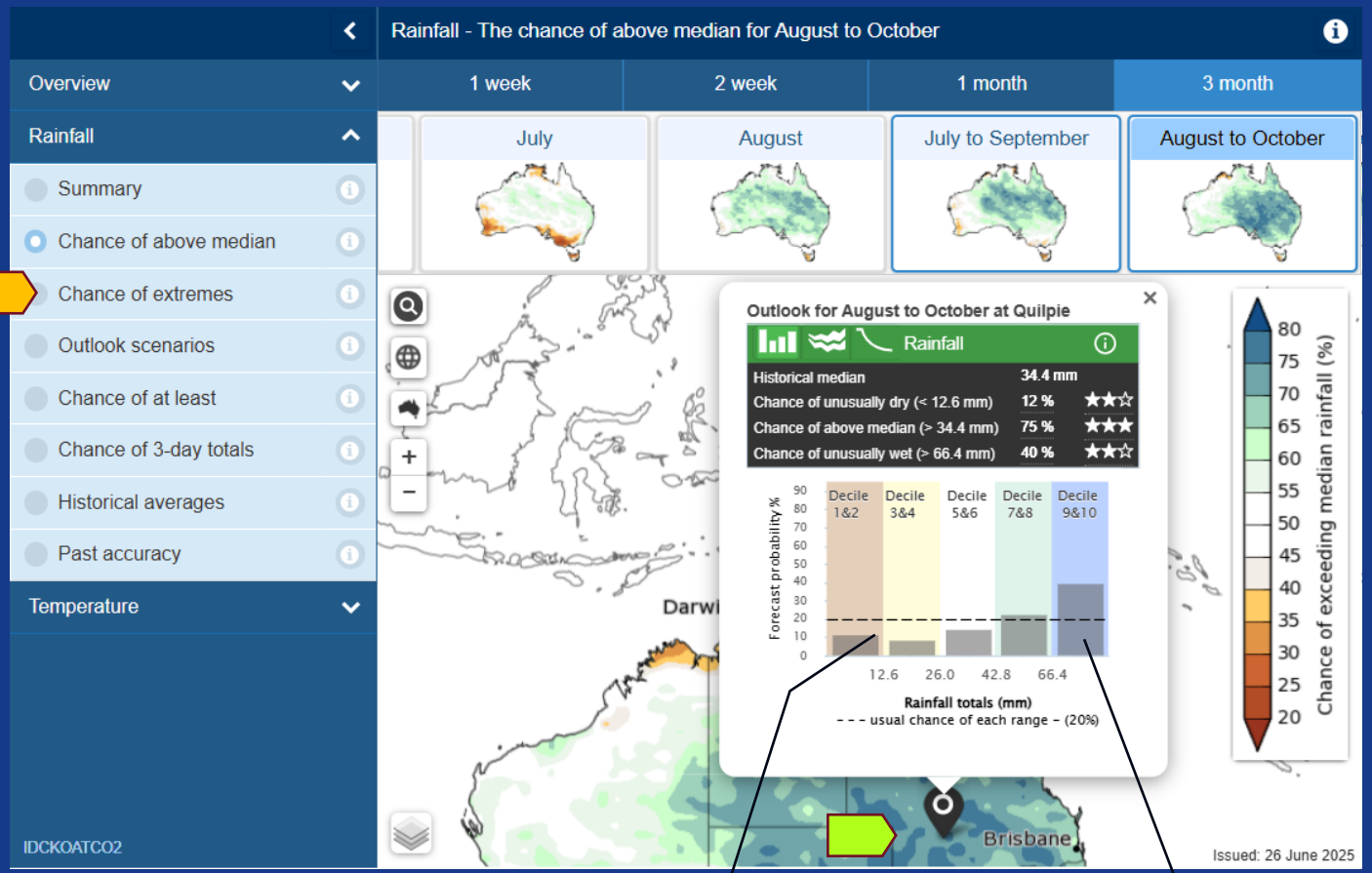
COASTAL HAZARDS
As sea levels rise, coastal flood events are projected to become more frequent, accompanied by greater levels of coastal erosion and shoreline change.

DROUGHT
Time spent in drought is likely to increase across most of the country (*low to medium confidence*).

https://www.acs.gov.au/pages/national-climate-risk-assessment

Explore our long-range forecasts

There's a range of maps to choose from, including location-specific information



- Click in the left menu to see additional forecast maps.
- Click on the map to get more information for your location, including:
  - the median rainfall for this time of year
  - the chance of rainfall being in the top or bottom 20% of the historical record
  - Whether the forecast is weighted towards being wetter or drier, or near average – or equal chances of each

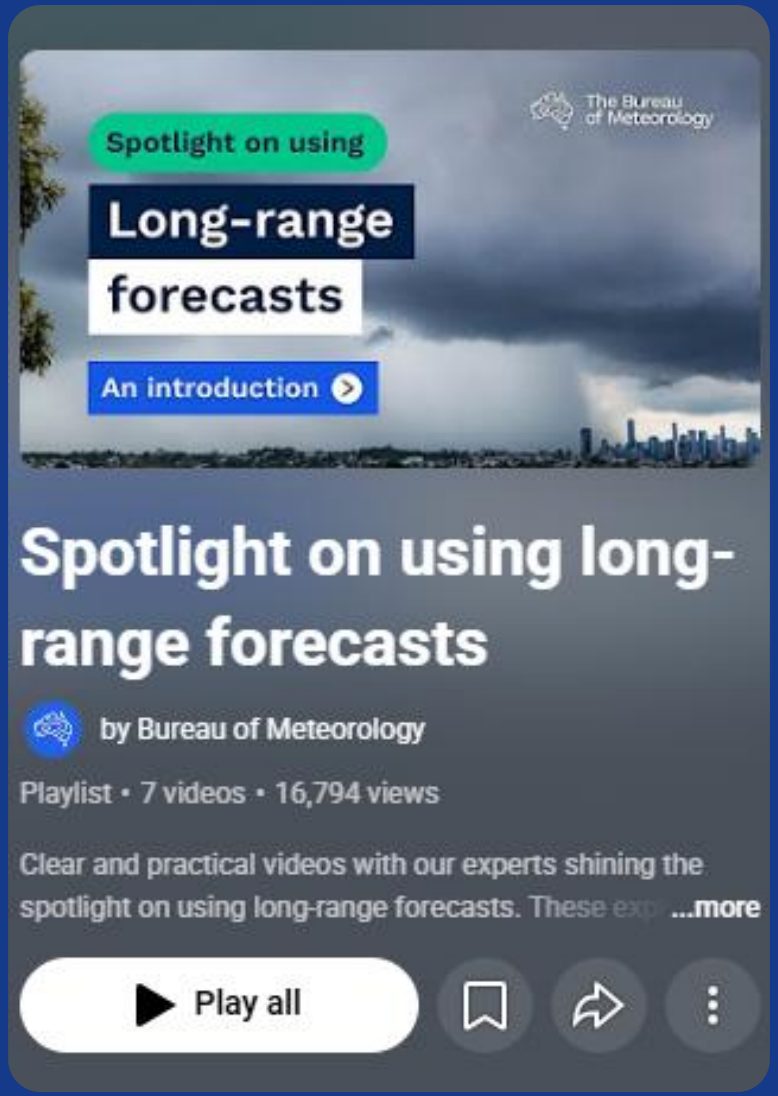
Our long-range forecasts update every week – check back in regularly

Horsham: August 2025
Chances are evenly spread across the above – near – below average rainfall buckets

Quilpie: Aug-Oct 2025
Increased chance of rainfall being in the highest 20% or the historical range

Understanding long-range forecasts

Find out more via the Bureau's webpage – and subscribe for latest updates





- Find out more about using the long-range forecast via our short explainer videos on Youtube
- Subscribe to our long-range forecasts to get the latest information

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