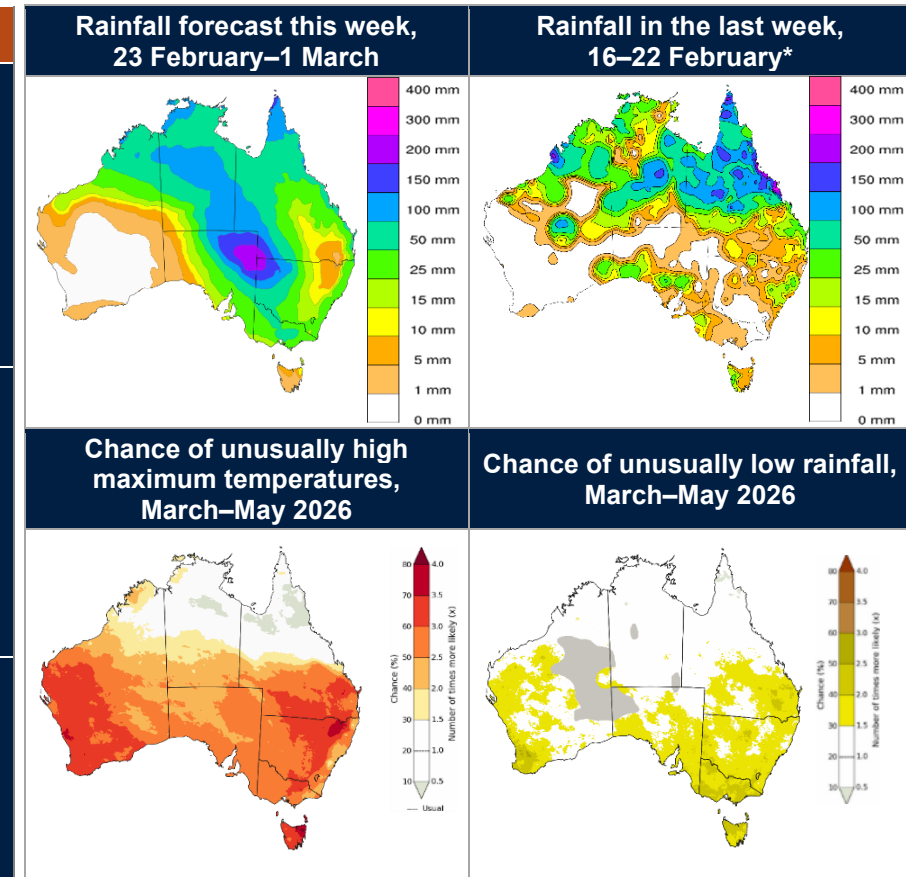
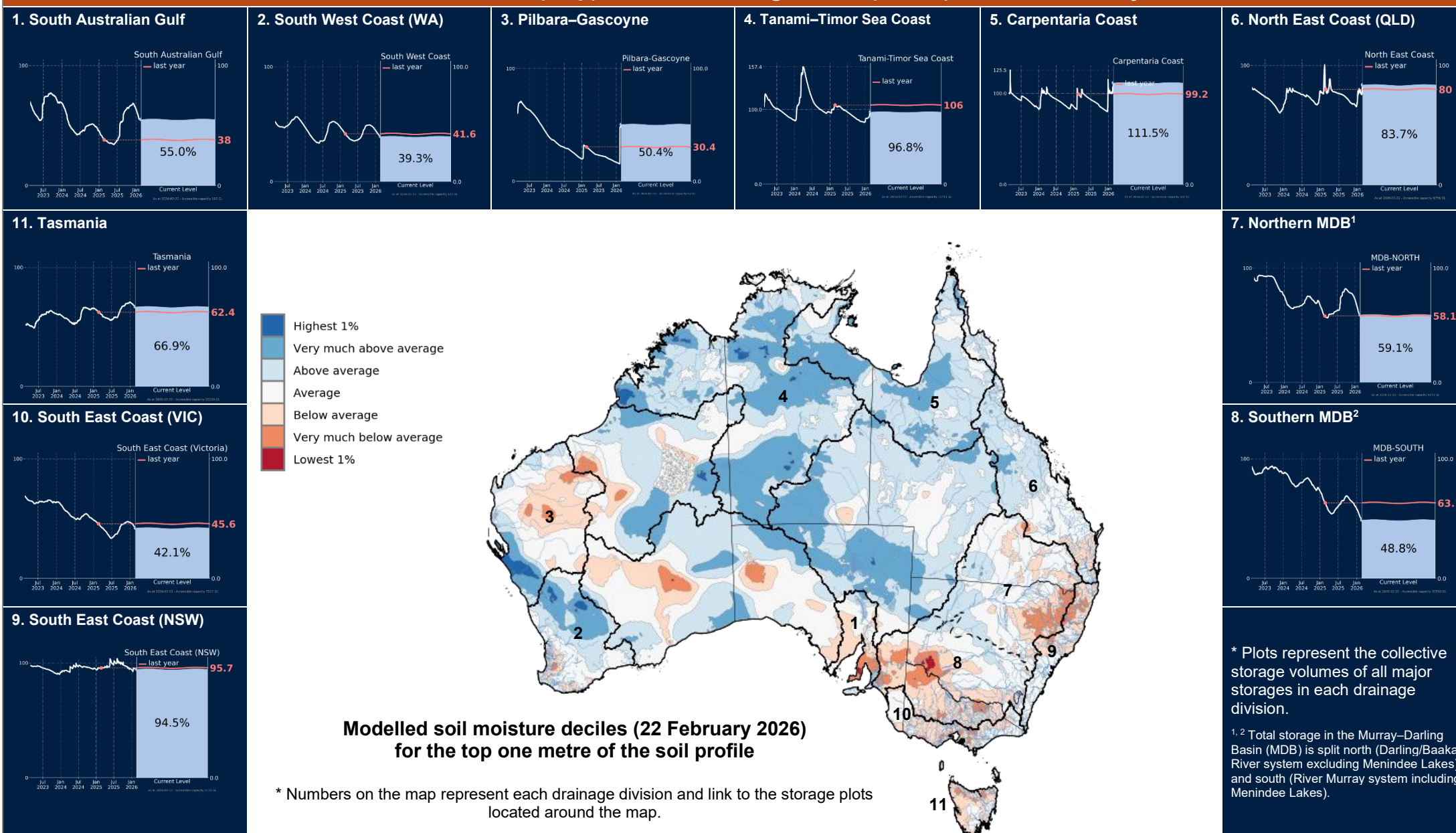




Weekly Agriculture, Climate and Water Update – Monday 23 February 2026

Root zone soil moisture (map) and water storage levels (charts) as of 22 February 2026

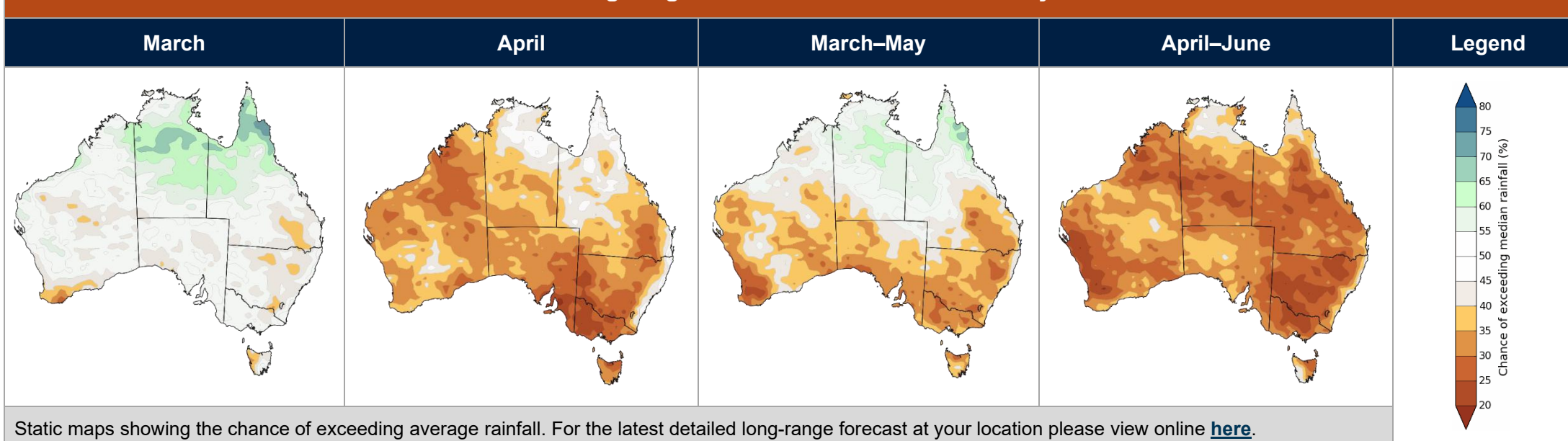


Key Points

- A number of **flood warnings** are current in Western Australia, the Northern Territory, South Australia, New South Wales and Queensland. In Queensland, a major flood warning is current for the **Flinders River**, with major flooding likely at Richmond Post Office from 22 February, and at Walkers Bend around 24 February.
- For the month of March, rainfall is likely to be above average (60 to 70% chance) for parts of Cape York Peninsula and the northern and central Northern Territory. Rainfall is likely to be below average (60 to 70% chance) across parts of eastern Australia and far south-western Western Australia. Elsewhere, the rainfall forecast does not strongly favour a particular outcome for March.
- For March to May, rainfall is likely to be below average (60 to 80% chance) for most of the southern half of Australia. The highest chances for below average rainfall are during April, when below average rainfall is likely across most of Australia.
- Also for March to May, much of the southern two-thirds of Australia has an increased chance of unusually high maximum temperatures (over 50% chance), with the strongest chances in north-eastern Tasmania and parts of north-eastern New South Wales and western parts of Western Australia (over 70% chance).
- There is an increased chance of unusually low rainfall (over 40% chance) for parts of eastern Victoria, New South Wales and southern Queensland, south-western Western Australia, and northern Tasmania for autumn.

Email water@bom.gov.au if you would like more information about this Weekly Update or have any other climate and water related questions. Email agriculture@bom.gov.au to request more information on agriculture impacts or provide feedback.

Rainfall long-range forecasts – Issued 19 February 2026



Static maps showing the chance of exceeding average rainfall. For the latest detailed long-range forecast at your location please view online [here](#).



Agriculture zone climate and conditions assessment as of 23 February 2026

Summary

- March to May rainfall is likely to be below average for most parts of southern and western Australia. The drier than average forecast signal strengthens across southern and inland regions as the season progresses, particularly across western Australia.
- Rainfall is likely to be above average for northern Queensland and most areas of the Northern Territory. March to May is a transitional season for northern Australia away from the wet season and into dry season conditions.
- Warmer than average sea surface temperatures are forecast for March to May. Warmer oceans can enhance the severity of storms, cyclones and rain systems.
- During Autumn, there is uncertainty and low predictability in the climate modelling, so it is important to be cautious with weather sensitive-planning and to continue regular monitoring of both long-range and short-range forecasts for your local area.

Key

	Favourable		Conditions improving
	Average		Conditions unchanged
	Unfavourable		Conditions degrading

Region / Zones	Previous conditions	Current conditions	Trend	Comments
Western Australia wheatbelt 	November to January rainfall across most of the region was average, with very much below average rainfall in the south, and south-east coastal regions. Above average rainfall was received in isolated parts of the south-west and central west.	Soil moisture has received a boost from recent rainfall and is now at very much above average for most of the region. Cropping country is fallowed at present and producers will be implementing moisture conservation strategies ahead of autumn sowing.	For most of the wheatbelt region, the March to May rainfall forecast suggests an increased likelihood of rainfall being below average and unusually dry for that outlook period. This is a concern for growers who will be looking for autumn rainfall to commence sowing.	Recent rainfall will promote weed germination, which will require herbicide application to assist in cleaning paddocks prior to autumn sowing. The wheat belt is likely to miss out on the rain forecast for most of Australia in coming days.
Eastern wheat-sheep 	November to January rainfall was below to very much below average across this area, with only some areas of the Mallee district in Victoria and patches of the Riverina of New South Wales receiving average rainfall. Record heat waves also affected many parts of this zone in January.	Soil moisture is mostly very much below average, with areas around the northern Yorke Peninsula and Murraylands having among the most severe deficits. Livestock water shortages and low-quality water are prompting herd reductions, agistment, and water transportation. Graziers rely on autumn rain to boost pastures in advance of winter.	For much of the zone there is a low to very low chance of exceeding average rainfall for the March to May period. Maximum and minimum temperatures are also forecast to be above average for this period. This is a critical period for sowing of cereal crops in the region so this forecast will be of concern to producers.	Although amounts are likely to be variable, rain forecast this week will be welcomed across the region ahead of the winter cropping season. This will generate weed germination, providing opportunity to clean up paddocks prior to sowing in autumn, and improve root zone soil moisture. This will also be beneficial for livestock producers with summer fodder such as lucerne. For livestock producers, good falls of rain may ease concerns around stock water shortages.
Southeastern coastal 	November to January rainfall was mostly below average along the New South Wales coast and northern Tasmania. Most of Victoria experienced average rainfall amounts for this period.	Soil moisture across the coastal area of the zone is generally average, while inland, and northern coastal areas of New South Wales are below average to very much below average. Tasmania's north and west areas have below average root zone soil moisture.	There is a low to very low chance of exceeding average rainfall between March to May over most of the zone. Maximum and minimum temperatures are also forecast to be above average for the period.	A continued forecast for below average rainfall over the March to May period, coupled with low soil moisture in northern and western Tasmania and the northern New South Wales coastal area, is a consideration for impacts around increased irrigation, temperature impacts, and reduced pasture growth for livestock producers.
Northern cropping 	November to January rainfall in south-west Queensland was below average, tending more average closer to the coast. For the northern areas of Queensland, tropical weather systems provided above average to very much above average rainfall.	Soil moisture is below average in the southern areas of this zone, New South Wales and southern Queensland, while above average in the northern inland Queensland areas.	For southern parts of the zone, there is a low chance of exceeding average rainfall for the March to May period, with April and May forecasted as least likely to exceed average rainfall. In the northern area of the zone, there is no clear signal for above or below median rainfall amounts for the period.	Cotton crops across the region are progressing through a range of growth stages across both dryland and irrigated operations. The majority are now at peak flowering and boll accumulation, with yield prospects looking favourable. The sorghum harvest continues to deliver strong yields.
Northeastern coastal 	November to January rainfall was mostly above average to very much above average with flooding experienced in the north of the zone.	Soil moisture is average to above average in the zone, with pasture growth for most of the zone expected to be in the top tercile for this period. There are currently flood watches and warnings in place for rivers in this zone, with plant production areas potentially impacted by inundated crops and pastures.	The northern areas of the zone show no clear rainfall signal for the March to May period meaning that there is an approximately equal chance of above or below average rainfall. In the southern coastal areas, there is a low probability of exceeding average rainfall for this period.	With saturated soils and continued above average rainfall forecast for northern and coastal parts of this area, the risk of flooding remains. Pasture growth outlooks suggest above average growth for February to April. Heavy rain in western areas of Queensland has seen the cancellation of livestock sales.
Extensive pastoral 	November to January rainfall was above or very much above average over most of the zone. Flooding has affected many communities in these areas.	Very much above average soil moisture reflects recent rainfall across the pastoral region. Flood watches and warnings are in place for much of the zone in Queensland. Some pastoral properties in the Gulf region are still affected by floodwaters and inundated pastures.	For most of the zone, the rainfall forecast does not strongly favour a particular outcome, meaning there are roughly equal chances that March to May rainfall will be above, below, or close to average.	Cotton planting is complete in the NT, with reports that above average rainfall and overcast conditions have reduced optimal growth. Planting of cotton is almost complete in the Ord Valley, after a record first harvest since the local processing facility was opened last year. Pasture growth for much of this area is forecast to be below average due to limited nitrogen.
Rangelands 	November to January rainfall was average to below average across most of the rangelands. Widespread rainfall deficiencies continued across most of South Australia and into north-western New South Wales and south-west Queensland.	Soil moisture is above average over most of the zone after above average rainfall in February in central Australia, much of western Queensland and north-west New South Wales. Most of the Western Australian rangelands and southern South Australia have been drier than average.	The long-range forecast for March is a neutral outlook for most of the rangelands, with an increased chance of above median rainfall in the north. The forecast for April is for a low chance of above average rainfall over almost all the rangelands, extending into May.	Significant rainfall is forecast over parts of the eastern rangelands in the week ahead, with some areas forecast for accumulated totals exceeding 100 mm. This will boost pastures in advance of the dry season but will cause flooding and limit road access, with flood watches and severe storm warnings currently issued.