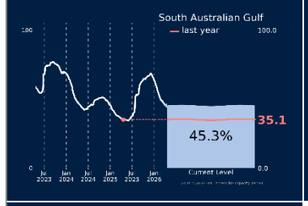
Australian Government
Bureau of Meteorology

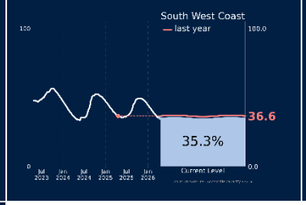
Weekly Agriculture, Climate and Water Update – Monday 20 April 2026

Root zone soil moisture (map) and water storage levels (charts) as of 19 April 2026

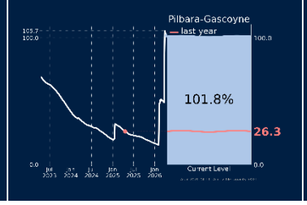
1. South Australian Gulf



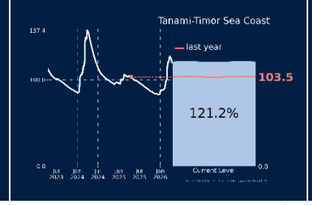
2. South West Coast (WA)



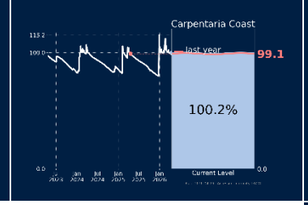
3. Pilbara–Gascoyne



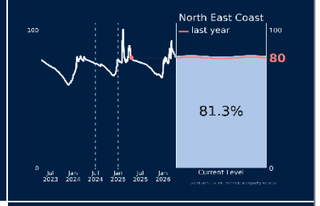
4. Tanami–Timor Sea Coast



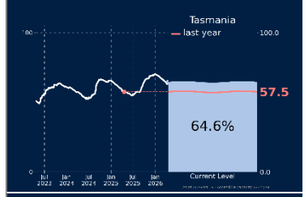
5. Carpentaria Coast



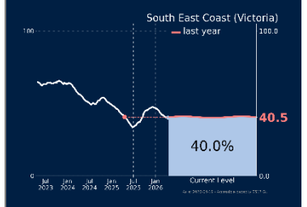
6. North East Coast (QLD)



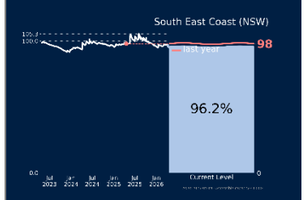
11. Tasmania



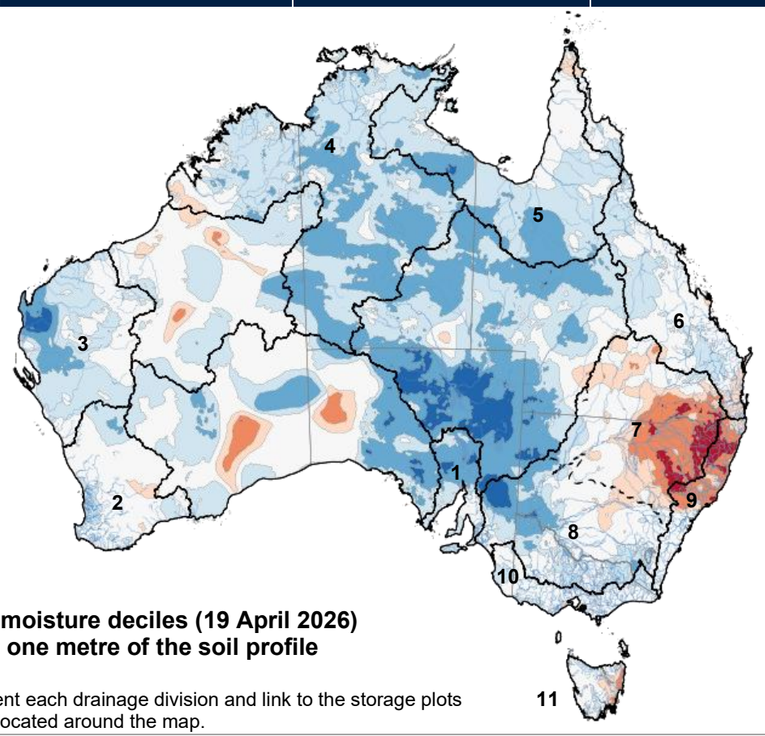
10. South East Coast (VIC)



9. South East Coast (NSW)



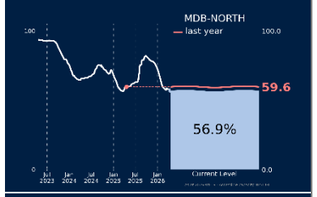
Highest 1%
Very much above average
Above average
Average
Below average
Very much below average
Lowest 1%



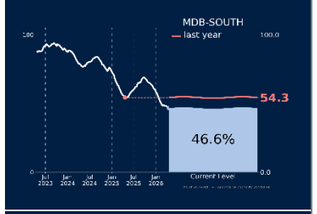
Modelled soil moisture deciles (19 April 2026) for the top one metre of the soil profile

* Numbers on the map represent each drainage division and link to the storage plots located around the map.

7. Northern MDB[1]



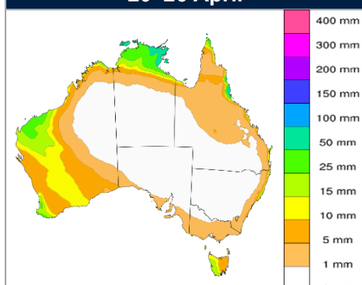
8. Southern MDB[2]



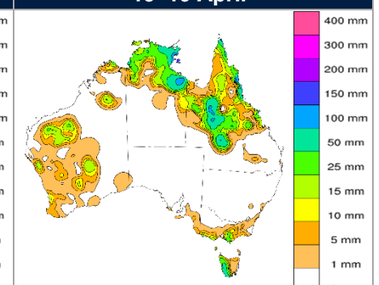
* Plots represent the collective storage volumes of all major storages in each drainage division.

[1, 2] Total storage in the Murray–Darling Basin (MDB) is split north (Darling/Baaka River system excluding Menindee Lakes) and south (River Murray system including Menindee Lakes).

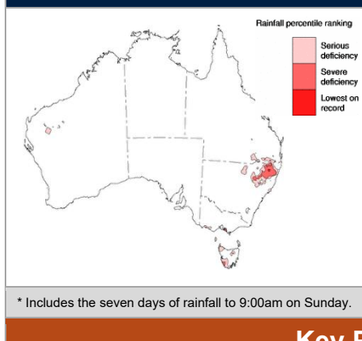
Rainfall forecast this week, 20–26 April



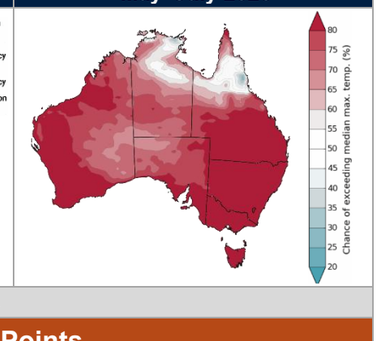
Rainfall in the last week, 13–19 April*



Short-term rainfall deficiencies January–March 2026

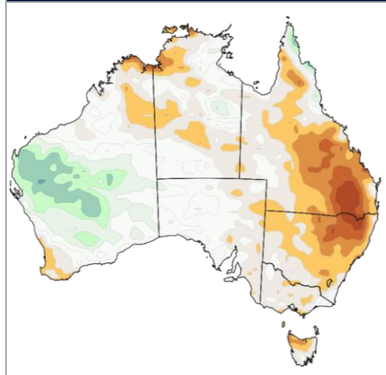
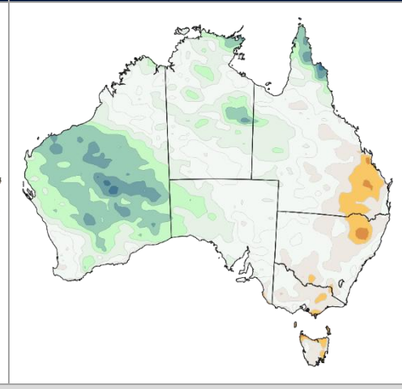
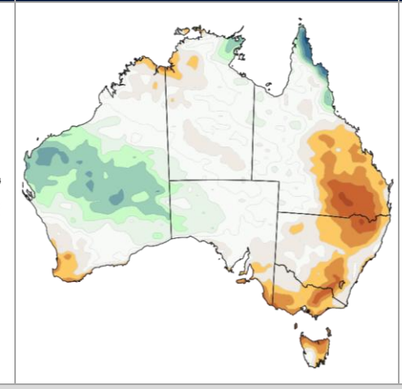
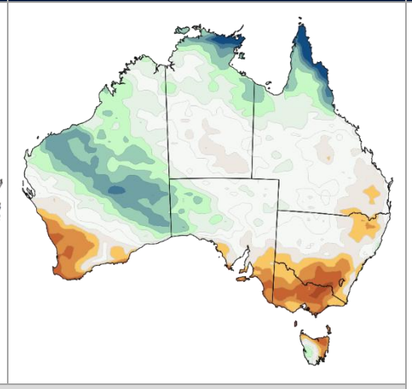
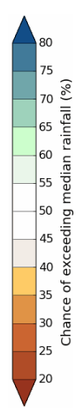


Chance of above median maximum temperature May–July 2026



* Includes the seven days of rainfall to 9:00am on Sunday.

Rainfall long-range forecasts – Issued 16 April 2026

May	June	May–July	June–August	Legend
				

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

Key Points

- Inland flooding continues to ease, however a moderate flood warning remains for Eyre Creek in Queensland.
- Rainfall from January to March 2026 was well below average across north-east New South Wales, a summer dominated rainfall region. This has resulted in the emergence of severe or serious short-term rainfall deficiencies for this area (rainfall totals in the lowest 5% or 10% of years, respectively, since 1900).
- Other areas experiencing serious short-term rainfall deficiencies include small parts of the Pilbara–Gascoyne in Western Australia, along west facing coasts in Victoria, and in areas in western and northern Tasmania.
- Root zone soil moisture has worsened in north-east New South Wales, with some areas now in the lowest 1% of all records. Elsewhere, soil moisture is generally above average, with parts of eastern South Australia recording highest on record soil moisture following significant rainfall during February and March.
- For May to July, below average rainfall is likely across large parts of eastern Australia and in the south-west. Above average rainfall is likely in western and central parts of Western Australia. Elsewhere, there are roughly equal chances of above or below average rainfall.
- Maximum temperatures for May to July are likely to be above average (60% to greater than 80% chance) across most of Australia. For parts of northern Australia, there is no clear signal for either warmer or cooler than average maximum temperatures.

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.

Australian Government
Bureau of Meteorology

Weekly Agriculture, Climate and Water Update – Monday 20 April 2026

Agriculture zone climate and conditions assessment as of 20 April 2026

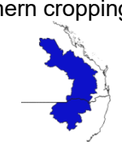
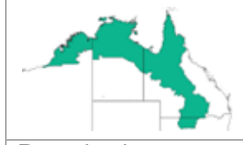
Summary

- From May to July, rainfall is likely to be below average across most of eastern Australia (see maps above).
- From May to July, maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to be above average.
- There is an increased chance of unusually low rainfall from May to July in key agricultural districts of north-eastern Tasmania, Victoria, New South Wales, south-east Queensland and south-west Western Australia.
- May marks the beginning of the northern Australian dry season, when most of the northern savannah regions typically receive very little rainfall.
- The Bureau's long-range forecast responds to all ongoing changes in our climate systems, and is updated regularly.

Key

Favourable
Average
Unfavourable

Conditions improving
Conditions unchanged
Conditions degrading

Region / Zones	Previous conditions	Current conditions	Trend	Comments
Western Australia wheatbelt 	January to March rainfall was mostly average across the zone, with most rainfall received from the paths of both ex-Tropical Cyclones Mitchell and Narelle in that period.	Root zone soil moisture is average across the zone.	The May to July forecast indicates a low chance of exceeding average rainfall for the period.	While the season is off to a promising start, there are increasing reports of mice reaching plague numbers in hotspot areas across the wheatbelt. These populations have the potential to significantly damage emerging crops, contaminate stored grain, and cause costly damage to agricultural machinery and infrastructure.
Eastern wheat-sheep 	January to March rainfall was above average for much of the zone due to a slow-moving trough associated with a tropical low that passed through central Australia in late February. Prior to this event, both rainfall and soil moisture were below to very much below average across the zone.	Root zone soil moisture is above average in the west of the zone, declining to average to below average in the east and northern parts of the zone.	The May to July rainfall forecast indicates a low chance of exceeding average rainfall for the period across the zone.	Sowing activity is underway and increasing across each state. There are reports of increasing mouse activity across key grain regions, including the Mid North, Yorke, and Eyre Peninsulas of South Australia, with concerns populations could pose a risk to emerging crops. Favourable conditions in Victoria and South Australia during autumn have boosted producer confidence in the sheep industry, driving demand and boosting prices.
Southeastern coastal 	January to March rainfall was below to very much below average for Tasmania, northern New South Wales, southern Queensland and Victoria regions of the zone. Above average rainfall was received across the south-eastern coast.	Root zone soil moisture is very much below average across the northern parts of the zone in Queensland, New South Wales, and eastern Tasmania. The remainder of the zone across Victoria has average levels of root zone soil moisture.	For much of the zone, the May to July forecast indicates a low chance of exceeding average rainfall.	Northern buyers that benefited from a good wet season are sourcing cattle from northern New South Wales and southern Queensland where producers are reducing stock due to dry conditions.
Northern cropping 	January to March rainfall across the northern area of this zone was average to above average, while the southern areas of Queensland and New South Wales received below average rainfall.	Root zone soil moisture is above average in the north and below, to very much below average in the south of the zone.	The May to July forecast indicates a low chance of exceeding average rainfall across most of the zone.	Conditions remain dry and, as a result, some producers are considering scaling back their winter cropping programs due to limited soil moisture and high input costs. In several areas, producers are seeking up to 100 mm of rainfall to provide confidence in establishment before committing to a full winter cropping program.
Northeastern coastal 	January to March rainfall was above average in the north with flooding experienced over several events in this zone.	Root zone soil moisture is average to above average across the zone.	The May to July forecast indicates a low chance of exceeding average rainfall across most of the zone, with the signal increasing further inland from the coast.	With above average wet season rainfall experienced in the north, fertilisers are in demand to replenish leached soils.
Extensive pastoral 	January to March rainfall was above or very much above average over most of the zone. Flooding affected many communities in these areas and recovery activities are continuing.	Root zone soil moisture remains above average across most of the zone, with areas in the northeast of the Northern Territory, central and far north Queensland at average levels.	The May to July forecast indicates an increased chance of above-average rainfall in Far North Queensland. The southern central parts of the zone indicate a low chance of exceeding average rainfall.	Recent rainfall across the north has delayed pastoral industry activities further with relatively wet conditions continuing. However, prior to the rain, live cattle exports resumed in the dry break with around 17000 head out of Darwin to Indonesia.
Rangelands 	January to March rainfall was very much above average across most central areas of the rangelands after the passage of a tropical low and trough. Rainfall deficiencies continue across the Gascoyne region.	Root zone soil moisture is very much above average across most of South Australia, and central Australia. It is mostly average across the eastern and western areas of the zone.	The May to July rainfall forecast indicates a low chance of exceeding average rainfall in the east of the zone, and an above average chance of exceeding the average rainfall in the west for that period.	Pasture growth forecasts indicate that rangelands pasture growth is likely to be well above average between April and June. A significant exception is the Pilbara and Gascoyne regions in Western Australia, which received below average rainfall over the 2025-2026 wet season.