

# SEASONAL UPDATE WEBINAR - RECAP

## June 2026

Seasonal snapshot by Marek Matuszek (Ag Logic), with a climate briefing from Emily Hinds and Jonathan Pollock (Bureau of Meteorology)

# 1. Current Conditions & Regional Snapshot

Recent rain has started to refill profiles across most of the state. How quickly a paddock wets up depends heavily on soil type, so the picture varies from one region and even one paddock to the next.

## North West

- Good rain in early and mid-May, plus more in the last week, has lifted soil moisture through circular head and across the NW coast.
- Heavier inland soils are close to full point and moving water nicely through the profile, though not yet saturated. Sassafras is tracking wetter than the same time last year.
- Profiles are reaching full point earlier than the past two years. If average winter rain follows, the region may sit wet into spring, so growth could start later and September may be wetter than the previous season.

- In dairy country, be strategic about which paddocks you graze. Keep stock off the wettest paddocks to allow them to drain and to protect soil structure.

## North East

- Recent rain events are filling profiles well. Coastal areas are approaching full point.
- Inland on the red ferrosols around Ringarooma there has been less rain, but the profile is steadily filling.
- More rain would help drive the winter recharge that was missed last winter. Matching the past two winters would set the region up for a good spring.



## Northern Midlands

- The Elizabeth Town and Parkham area had another good refill in the last week, similar to May.
- Meander has had less rain than usual, but pasture growth has been strong. On the cracking river flat soils, moisture is sitting mid-profile and more rain is needed to seal the cracks and begin the normal winter refill.
- Around Launceston, Bishopsbourne, Longford and Cressy, the top 40cm is getting close to full while the bottom 40cm still has a long way to go, leaving a two-tiered profile.
- Longford has sat on a rainfall divide this season. On the drier eastern side around Symmons Plains, long dry conditions and reduced ground cover slowed infiltration, but several days of steady rain are now starting to charge the profile.
- Overall, profiles are roughly half full on average and about level with last year. As pasture growth slows, more rain will go into winter refill rather than being lost.

## Southern Midlands, Coal Valley & Derwent Valley

- Soil moisture is generally below where it was last year. On the windblown sands through the Southern Midlands, water moves in slowly from the top down.
- On the duplex lime over clay soils around St Peters Pass and Woodbury, a south easterly event filled the profile from the bottom up through the cracks, while several days of rain also wet the top.
- Around Bothwell, Ouse and the wider Derwent Valley, the lighter soils need consistent rain over several days rather than short heavy bursts.
- A south easterly system brought welcome rain to the Coal Valley and out to Bruny Island, lifting moisture above last year in those spots.
- Overall, stored soil moisture is about the same as last year and more rain is needed to reach a full profile. Whether soils fill from the top or the bottom is very soil dependent, so follow up rain is the priority here.



## East Coast & Fingal Valley

- Around Swansea conditions are a little behind last year. A 40 mm event fell fast and ran off, but it wet the surface enough that later rain made more of a difference.
- Closer to Fingal, the sandy river soils responded well to a large event, although they missed out on the most recent rain.
- Further from Fingal, where dry conditions have been prolonged, heavy bursts do little. Steadier rain spread over several days is what allows the lime soils, which are prone to surface crusting, to take it in.
- Overall, soil moisture is above the past two years, which is positive, but follow up is still needed. It pays to dig a hole and check where moisture is sitting in your own profile.

## Flinders Island & King Island

- On Flinders, good rain has restarted the recharge and conditions are tracking close to last year. Further north the top 50cm is full, but the subsoil is only about halfway there.
- On King Island the top of the profile is filling beautifully, but more rain is needed for the subsoil. That subsoil moisture is what extends the spring and summer growing season.
- Inland King Island sites around Pegarah and Lymwood are sitting close to full.
- Overall, recent rain has lifted soil moisture, especially on lighter soils. King Island in particular needs a wet winter to reset, ideally exceeding winter and autumn averages so dams fill and the profile saturates.



## 2. Understanding Climate Drivers

A few large-scale ocean and atmosphere patterns shape the odds of a wet or dry season. They matter, but together they often explain less than half of the variability we see, so no single driver tells the whole story.

### El Niño and La Niña (ENSO)

- This is the Pacific Ocean pattern that swings between El Niño, neutral and La Niña. In an El Niño the trade winds weaken, warm sea surface temperatures and rainfall shift towards the central Pacific, and drier descending air over Australia lowers the chance of rain.
- For Tasmania, El Niño increases the chance of below average rainfall through winter and spring. La Niña does the opposite and increases the chance of wetter conditions.
- Importantly, the strength of an El Niño does not predict the strength of its impact, so dramatic media labels such as Super El Niño or Godzilla El Niño are misleading.
- These patterns build and peak through winter and spring, then tend to break down over summer. Every event is different.

### Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD)

- This driver sits in the Indian Ocean but still affects Tasmania. A negative phase increases the available moisture in ocean on the northwest coast, increasing the chance of northwest cloud band formation, and the chance of rain. The broad rain band in mid-May was one example.
- A positive phase does the reverse and reduces the chance of rain. The dipole is currently neutral and is likely to head towards positive, which would add a drying influence.

### Southern Annular Mode (SAM)

- This is the north and south movement of the westerly winds, the Roaring 40s. Its effect flips between summer and winter, and it shifts over a weekly to fortnightly timescale.
- Because it changes so quickly, the SAM is useful for explaining recent weather but far less reliable for monthly and seasonal planning.



Where it gets tricky is that these drivers can line up and all push the same way or pull in opposite directions. When El Niño, a positive Indian Ocean Dipole and a positive SAM combine, the drying influence can be broader and stronger.

Climate driver	Likely phase ahead	What it tends to mean for Tasmania
<b>El Niño Southern Oscillation</b>	El Niño likely to form during winter	Leans towards below average winter and spring rainfall. Strength of the event does not predict the strength of the impact.
<b>Indian Ocean Dipole</b>	Currently neutral, possibly turning positive during winter-spring.	A positive phase adds a further drying influence. Model forecasts show a large variation in both timing and strength of this potential event.
<b>Southern Annular Mode</b>	Hard to predict beyond about a fortnight	Can shift rainfall either way over short periods but is far less useful for monthly and seasonal planning.

## 3. The Climate Outlook for Tasmania

### How the season has been

- May brought above average rain to the east and below average rain to the west and southwest. It was Tasmania's warmest May on record for daytime temperatures and the seventh warmest for overnight temperatures.
- Autumn overall was drier than average across much of the west and north, and it was the second warmest autumn on record for daytime temperatures.
- Across January to May, most of the state was below average for rain, with the northeast and southwest very much below average and showing serious to severe rainfall deficiencies.
- Water storages tell a healthier story. Most large Tasmanian storages are near capacity, and Hobart sits around 96 percent full, similar to last year, in contrast to lower storages across the mainland southeast.

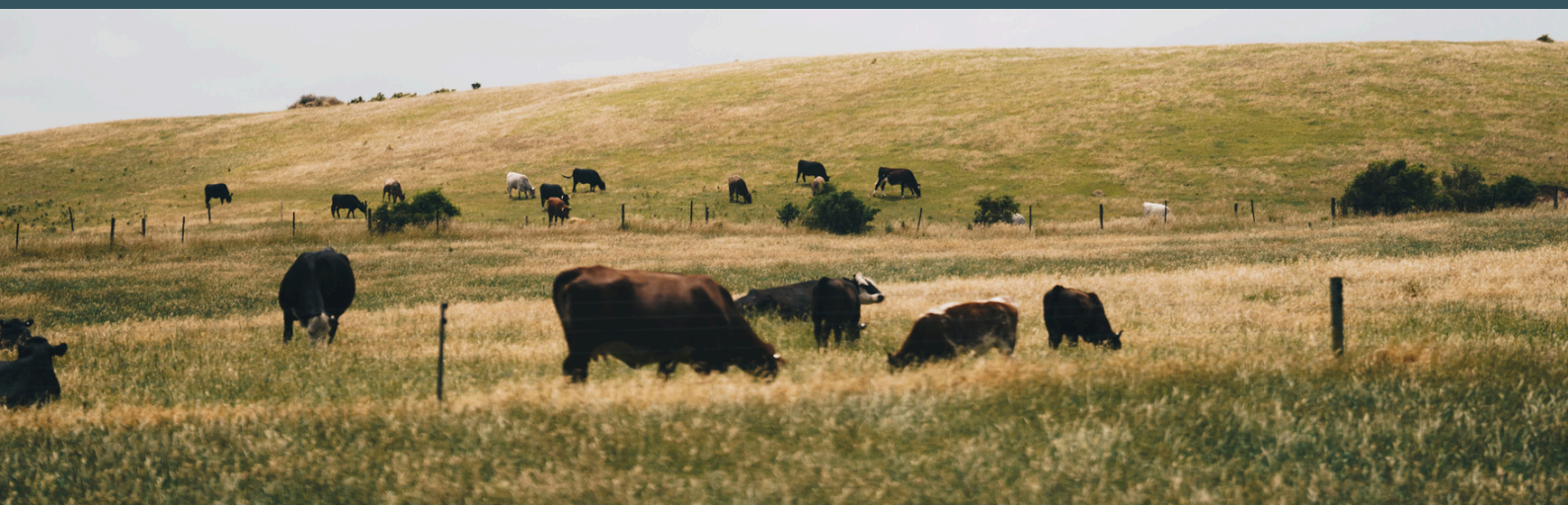


## What the forecast is showing

- For June there is a weak wet signal for parts of the west and south and a weak dry signal for parts of the east, but no strong push for most of the state.
- Through July and across winter overall, the east and northeast lean towards below average rainfall, while the rest of the state could go either way.
- Out to July to September, a dry signal remains for eastern and northeastern Tasmania, and the Bass Strait islands, with no strong push elsewhere.
- The temperature signal is much stronger and more confident. Warmer than average days and nights are likely right across Tasmania through winter.
- Both El Niño, which is likely to form during winter, and a possible positive Indian Ocean Dipole lean towards below average rainfall. A warming climate is also nudging the outlook warmer and, for parts of the north, drier.

## A note on accuracy

- Long range forecasts do not match the reliability of a seven-day weather forecast. Moderate accuracy sits around 55 to 65 percent and high accuracy above that, so there is still real room for a miss. Three-month outlooks generally hold up better than single month ones.





## 4. Key Messages & Actions

- **Read past the headlines:** El Niño is likely to form during winter, and a positive Indian Ocean Dipole is possible, but neither guarantees a dry season for Tasmania, and the strength of an El Niño does not set the size of its impact.
- **Plan for a range, not an average:** for much of the state the rainfall signal is weak. White areas on the forecast maps usually mean roughly equal chances of below, near or above average, so prepare for any of them.
- **Expect the warmth:** the temperature signal is strong. Warmer days and nights can lengthen the growing season but also lift evaporation and water use.
- **Take the win on soil moisture but stay alert:** profiles are filling across much of the state, yet many subsoils are not yet recharged. The Southern Midlands and parts of the east coast remain drier and need follow up rain.
- **Mind your soil structure:** where soils are near full point, graze strategically and keep stock off the wettest paddocks to avoid waterlogging and damage.
- **Build the spring plan now:** much is already locked in, such as joining, calving and cropping, so focus on the levers you can still pull as the season unfolds.

## 5. Things to think about or speak with your advisor about

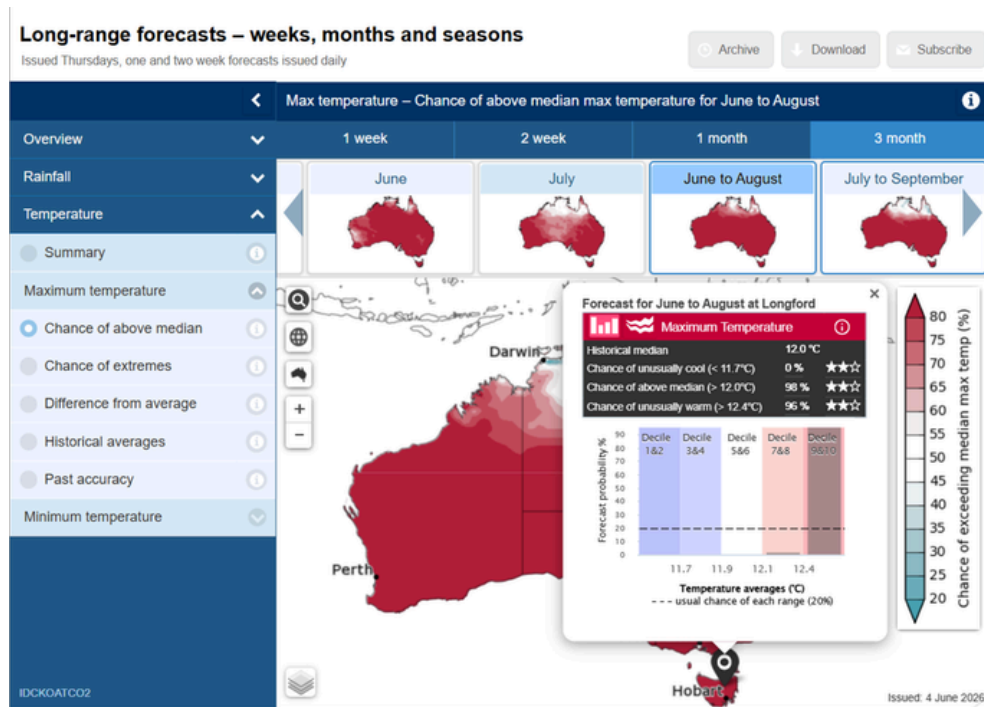
- Sit down with your agronomist and work through what the long-range forecast means for your spring plan and production system.
- Learn to read the Bureau Climate Outlooks for your own location rather than dismissing long range forecasts as never right.
- Revisit the forecast at least weekly, since it shifts as the drivers evolve.
- Dig a hole to see where moisture is sitting in your profile, especially on variable or cracking soils.
- Think through how a possible drier spring would affect feed, stock numbers and water before decisions are locked in.
- Treat the forecast as one tool among many, alongside cash flow, labour, ground conditions and pest and disease pressure.



# 6. Links & useful resources

## Bureau of Meteorology long range forecast

from the Bureau homepage search for long range weather. The headline map shows the chance of exceeding the median rainfall, expressed as a likelihood rather than a guarantee.



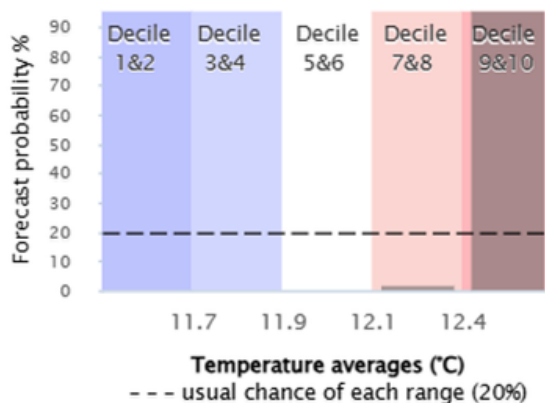
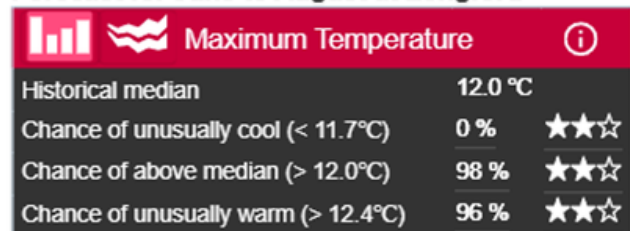
## Climate Outlooks for your location

click your area on the map for decile boxes that show the likely range of rainfall and temperature, plus star ratings that indicate how much confidence to place in the model for that time of year.

## Chance of extremes maps

use these for the chance of unusually high or low rainfall and temperatures over the months ahead.

## Forecast for June to August at Longford





### **How often to check**

the one month and three month outlooks update every Thursday, while the one and two week outlooks update daily. Use short range weather apps for day to day weather and the long range forecast for the bigger picture.

### **On farm soil moisture**

keep watching soil moisture probe data and dam levels through the state to track how the winter refill is progressing on your soil type. Ag Logic network signup [here](#)

### **Article: Debunking Australia's greatest weather myths and misconceptions**

### **BOM Contacts**

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