

THE SUMMER FORECAST

FOR SOUTHERN MDB REGIONS 2016/17



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A BRIEF SUMMARY OF 2016 (SOME DEVELOPMENTS THE BUREAU DIDN'T EXPLAIN TO YOU)

2016 has been one of the best for many decades in most regions of the Murray-Darling Basin, as I forecast this time last year.

- After a dry Jan-April period, the Southern Air Tide delivered steady soaking rains enhanced by the building Mid-Australian Jet Stream (very similar to the previous Winter of 2015). Throughout Winter, high-altitude humidity rapidly increased, further enhancing the regular cold fronts and low pressure systems that periodically swept across Australia.
- During early Spring, high-altitude humidity reached peak levels not seen for 20 years. The super-charged jet stream filled the high pressure systems with copious amounts of moisture, resulting in heavy cloud for much of July-early Oct. The resulting rainfall steadily increased until mid-September, giving many regions over 300% of monthly averages.
- After mid-September, high-altitude humidity rapidly declined together with the breakdown of the stable jet stream system. The skies cleared and the rain abruptly reduced after the 6th October. The water-logged soils quickly dried out during October and the harvesting of hay was in full production by early November.
- In mid-Spring the heavy rain that I had forecast came early with the first surges of the Northeast Air Tides, (early Sept and early October). The two following lunar air tide cycles (early and late Nov) failed to produce the expected rain.

The drying effect of the Air Tide "Transition Phase" is now building, so I forecast little rain until mid-March.

RECORD SEA ICE FLUCTUATIONS ... THE PREDICTABLE EFFECTS OF THE LAST 'EL NINO'

My research reveals that one of the strongest drivers of the recent rain events was the record loss of Antarctic sea ice, which commenced some eight months earlier due to the warmth and moisture that the recent El Nino anomaly injected into the upper atmosphere. This heat surge has now moved into the Polar Regions causing the largest drop in sea-ice in the entire satellite era – plunging from the 2015 record high, down to 2 million sq km below average at present.

However, during the next "sea ice growth cycle" (March-Oct 2017), I forecast a new record will be set for the most ice grown in one season. This next growth cycle trend will most likely continue through until Spring 2019.

As per the standard sea ice cycles, a large drying force will be applied to our climate trends for the next 3 to 5 years.

VERY POOR MANAGEMENT OF WATER RESOURCES = GREATLY REDUCED WATER SECURITY!

The most irresponsible management of our water resources that I have ever observed has been applied to the Dartmouth and Eildon reservoirs during this last Winter-Spring period. Excessive and sustained use of the hydro power system during Winter-Spring (**when there was no secondary use for the released water**) has left these two largest reservoirs less than 80% full at the end of the wettest filling season and kept the Murray flowing at close to minor flood level since early Winter. **The untimely hydro power production has flooded the Hume and flushed the farmers' carryover water downstream.**

I ADVOCATE NEW POLICIES TO IMPROVE WATER SECURITY

- (1) To never allow "open slather" use of the hydro system, unless that reservoir is at 95% capacity, and ...
- (2) That all farmers carryover water is stored in any available reservoir space within the total system, in the same manner that one can trade water from one reservoir to another.

THE SUMMER FORECAST **Extremes of temperature, both warmer & cooler than usual. Early break!**

The strongest Northeast Air Tides are over until next Spring. Summer will be dominated by the dryer "transition phase". Below-average rain should be expected until mid-Autumn, bringing on **the most extreme fire risk period endured for many decades**. This fire risk should be foremost in every one's mind and actions.

The present weak La Nina will do little to enhance the Summer thunder storm season. Recent cool water developments along the Queensland coast have also reduced rainfall forecasts for the entire MDB this Summer.

I forecast a move back towards El Nino during next Winter. Below-average rainfall for all regions of Australia except the northern half of WA, where cyclones will impact. We will see another early Autumn Break with most crops up by mid-May.

>>>>> **More detail is available through my subscription service, as per my web page ... from \$200 a year.**

I wish you all the best for the New Year. (If there are topics you would like covered, let me know.) Kind regards, Kevin.

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