Seasonal Climate Outlook

Date: January 2025

Contents

Summary

A survey of 19 national and international models indicates that the majority suggest January to March 2025 will experience above median rainfall for the South West Land. Warmer than normal temperatures are also expected.

Key points to consider:

- Temperature Outlook: The Bureau of Meteorology's Australian Community Climate Earth-System Simulator-Seasonal (ACCESS-S) forecasts a 50-80% chance of exceeding the median maximum for temperatures for January to March 2025, with the higher probabilities along the coast. The forecast skill ranges from 55-75%. For minimum temperatures, there is an 80% chance of exceeding the median, with a forecast skill of 55-100%.
- El Nino Southern Oscillation (ENSO): ENSO is currently neutral and is forecast to remain so until April 2025.
- Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD): IOD currently neutral and will remain inactive until May, during the Australian monsoon season.
- Southern Annular Mode (SAM): SAM is also neutral at present and has no impact on the SWLD during summer.
- Rainfall outlook skill: Rainfall outlooks have low skill during summer in the SWLD due to the influence of localised thunderstorms and tropical cyclones, which are difficult to capture in long term climate models.
- Seasonal Bushfire Outlook for Summer 2024/25: There is an increased risk of fire from Albany to Esperance and into the Great Southern region.

Rainfall Outlook for the South West Land Division

A summary of 19 national and international models show that 12 out of 19 models indicate above median rainfall for the SWLD for January to March 2025. Further ahead, the majority of models is indicating above median rainfall for February to April, and neutral chances for March to May and April to June rainfall.

However, it is important to note that model forecasts become less reliable the further out they extend. Additionally, due to the 'autumn predictability barrier', climate models forecasting beyond autumn (March to May), have the lowest skill and should be interpreted with caution.

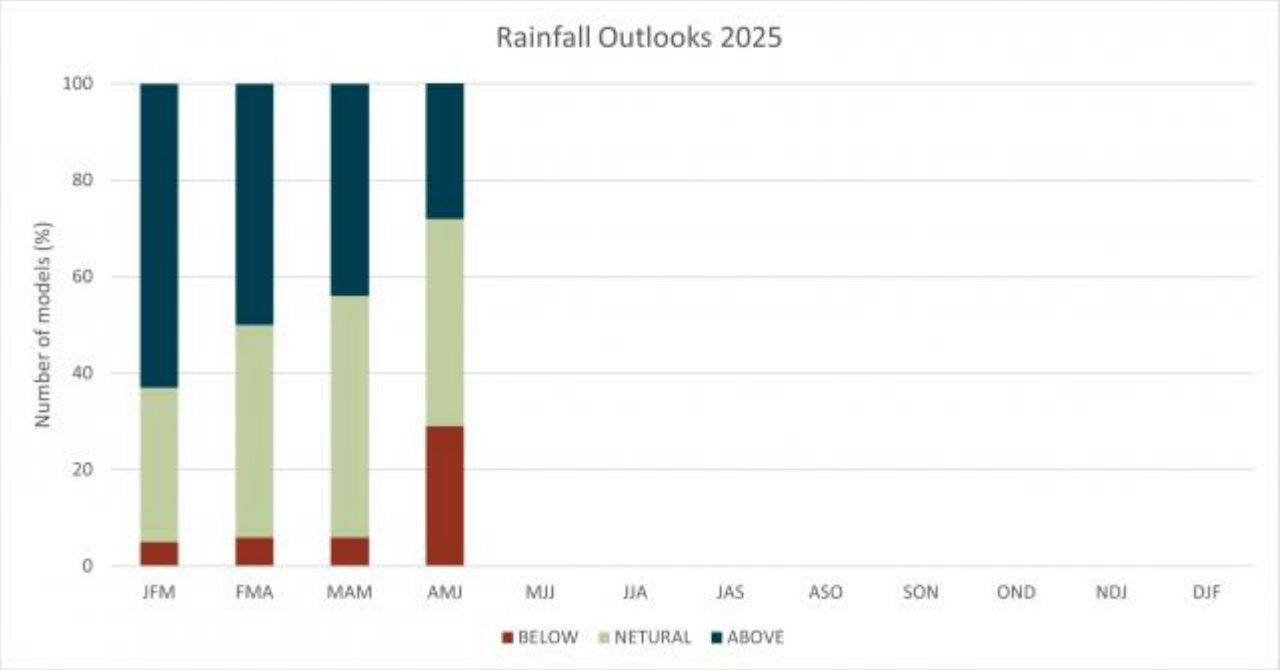

Figure 1 Model summary of rainfall outlook for the South West Land Division up to April to June 2025, with neutral chance of exceeding median rainfall.

Seasonal Bushfire Outlook Summer 2024/25

The Seasonal Bushfire Outlook for Summer 2025/25 from AFAC (Australian and New Zealand Council for fire and emergency services) highlights an increased risk of fire for large parts of Australia. In Western Australia, there is an elevated risk of bushfires from Albany to Esperance and including the Great Southern region. December 2024 saw large fires in shire of Irwin and Gingin.

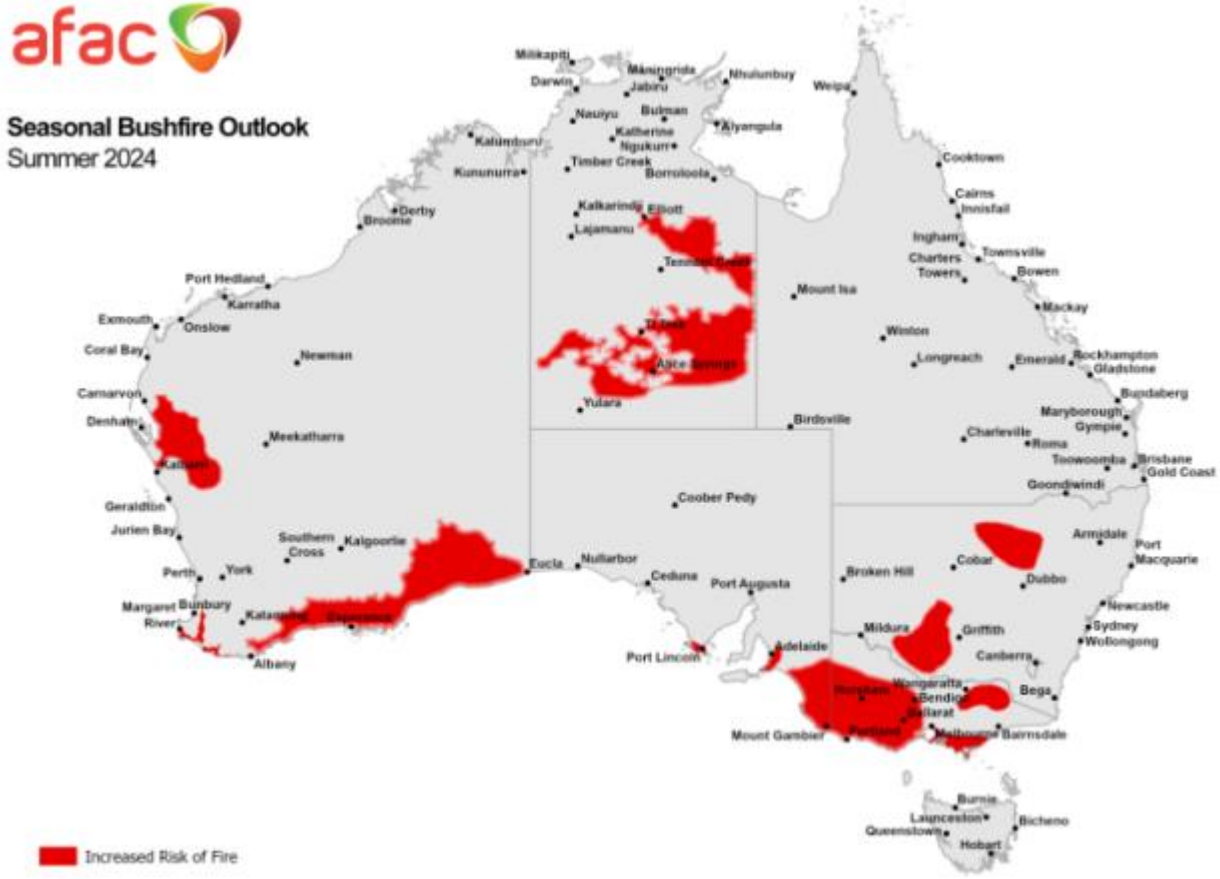

Figure 2 Australian and New Zealand Council for fire and emergency services seasonal bushfire outlook map for summer 2024. Indicating increased risk of fire from Albany through to Esperance and Eucla, including parts of the Great Southern.

Recent climate

Rainfall since November has been below average (decile 1-3) for the majority of the South West Land Division, and above average (decile 8-10) for nothern parts. Dardanup has had 112 mm, and Perenjori 107 mm.

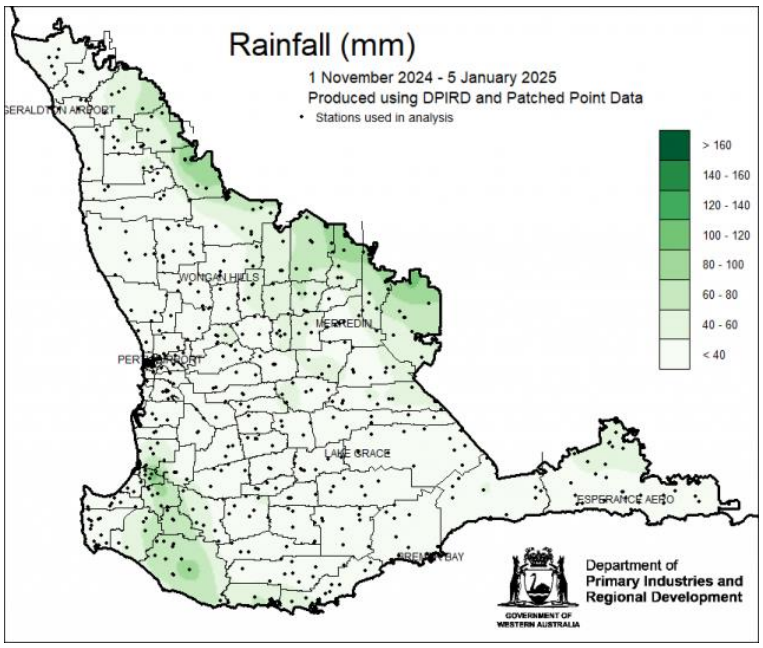

Figure 3 Rainfall map for 1 November 2024 to 5 January 2025 for the South West Land Division.

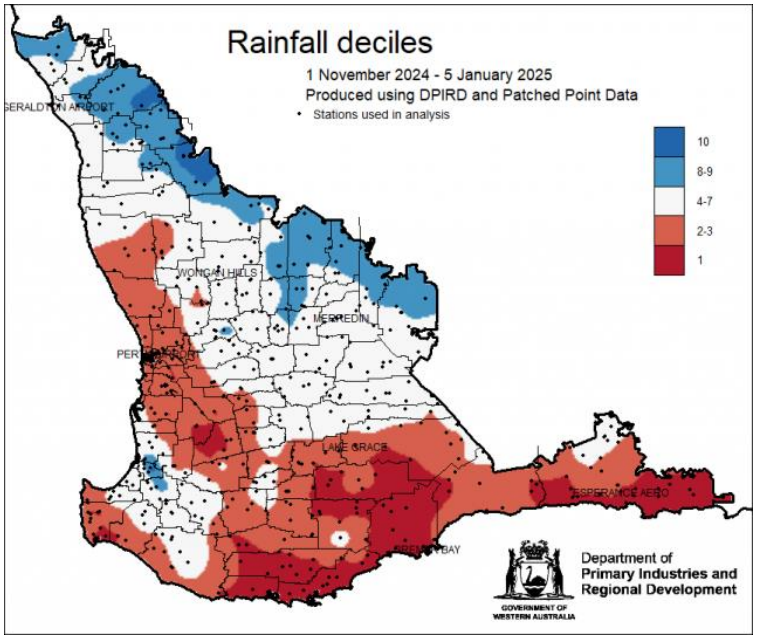

Figure 4 Rainfall decile map for 1 November 2024 to 5 January 2025 for the South West Land Division.

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