

Australia drought extends despite 'widespread, significant rain'

September 9 2018



Australia is currently experiencing a bitter drought that is hammering farmers

A devastating drought that has left Australian farmers struggling to stay afloat is set to persist despite widespread and significant rain last month, authorities have said.

Graziers in eastern Australia have been battling a long-period of severe conditions that have turned green pastures brown and forced some to sell down or shoot their stock.

There was some welcome relief last month when "widespread (and)... significant rainfall" was recorded in parts of New South Wales, the state government said in its seasonal update late Friday.

"While the rain has been welcomed and has provided a more positive outlook for field conditions in some regions, the drought is far from over," NSW Department of Primary Industries' agriculture climate specialist Anthony Clark said in a statement.

"We need more significant widespread rainfall in the coming weeks and months for agricultural recovery to commence and farmland to return to a productive state."

Clark warned that if dry conditions continued instead, "we would see an increased intensification of the drought".

Some 99.8 percent of the state remains in drought, officials added. In neighbouring Queensland, the government said last week that 57.4 percent of the state remains drought-affected.

The update came as Major General Stephen Day—appointed to the newly created role of national drought co-ordinator—said his focus was to improve fundraising efforts for farmers.

He told Sydney's Sydney Telegraph there was a "lack of co-ordination and coherence to all that's going on".

"That means there are some gaps, that means there are some overlaps, that means there are some inefficiencies," he said ahead of an planned

meeting with some of the major charities raising drought funds.

"I think if we can look at this as a team sport, we'll have a better effect."

While droughts are not uncommon in Australia, the length and severity of the dry [conditions](#) have placed enormous strain on farmers in the eastern [states](#).

© 2018 AFP

Citation: Australia drought extends despite 'widespread, significant rain' (2018, September 9) retrieved 27 April 2024 from

<https://phys.org/news/2018-09-australia-drought-widespread-significant.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.