



# SOI FAX HOTLINES

(Southern Oscillation Index)

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this page is updated each Wednesday, usually by 5pm

## SOI MESSAGE - 3 February 1999

### SOI (a) AVERAGES / PHASE

November 98	*	+13.3
December 98	*	+11.7
January 99	*	+14.7
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Last 30 days		+ 13.9
Last 90 days (b)		+ 12.8
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SOI trend (b) during December-January was Phase 2 (i.e. positive ▲).

**NOTE :** (a) SOI values calculated using mean barometric pressures from 1880 to 1992 - subject to revision by Bureau of Meteorology.  
\* Preliminary value \*\* Revised value  
(b) See AUSTRALIAN RAINMAN for effects of SOI on rainfall at your location.

### REVIEW OF CLIMATIC FORECASTS AND INFORMATION

The SOI Phase forecasting system indicates that rainfall prospects in most parts of the eastern States of Australia during the February to April period are about 'normal' for that time of year. However, the probabilities of exceeding median rainfall over those three months are 60-70% in many coastal districts of Queensland and NSW, southern Cape York Peninsula, parts of central-western and far central-western Queensland, and in areas of northern Tasmania.

A La Niña pattern is now firmly established in the Pacific Ocean. In general terms a La Niña pattern means reduced rainfall for our trade competitors in south-western USA, Argentina and central Asia.

There is a strong probability of high potential yields from raingrown and irrigated cotton this

year, providing effective insect and disease control is achieved.

Colder-than-normal, equatorial sea-surface temperatures are now present from around the International Dateline to the eastern Pacific Ocean. In addition, temperatures are warmer than normal in waters off northern Australia.

The probabilities of above-average pasture growth during the January-March period are high (60-90%) for much of Queensland; this may result in pasture quality being poorer than usual. However, the favourable outlook may provide opportunities for burning native pasture, and sowing improved pastures.

*The average SOI over the last 30 days was +13.9. The probabilities of exceeding median rainfall during the February to April period are 'normal' in most parts of the eastern States of Australia, and 60-70% in other areas.*

### THE BOTTOM LINE

The next passage of the 30- to 50-day Oscillation is due at the end of January/early February.

To obtain more detailed information for your location, we recommend combined use of the AUSTRALIAN RAINMAN package and the Bureau of Meteorology's Seasonal Climate Outlook. Also a lot of additional information is available on our SOI Fax Hotlines, our Internet World Wide Web service called 'The Long Paddock', and on BoM's fax and Internet information services.

**NEXT UPDATE of the SOI MESSAGE:**  
**10th February 1999**

### Climate Impacts and Grazing Systems - Department of Natural Resources

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If you would like any further information, please contact Col Paull on (07) 389 69587, or one of the climate extension officers at the DPI in Charters Towers, Emerald, Gympie, Kingaroy, Longreach, Mackay, Mareeba, Roma and Toowoomba.

Some information courtesy Bureau of Meteorology, CSIRO and National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, USA