

technology ► environment

More than 50mm of rain needed to extinguish bushfires

Forecasters are saying there's "a lot of rain to go round in the next eight days", with parts of bushfire-ravaged areas to get some relief.

Natalie Brown

JANUARY 14, 2020 11:39AM

Video

Image

Tropical Cyclone Claudia has brought a deluge of rain to Australia's north and some of that wet weather is expected to bring relief to parts of the country's east this week.

The cyclone, which has now strengthened to a category three storm, is dumping huge amounts of moisture on the Northern Territory – on the weekend, a [record breaking 500mm of rain](#) fell in parts.

While potentially as much as 50-100 mm of rain could fall in some areas of Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria coasts during the next week, forecasters have warned that sustained rain – rather than a downpour – will be needed to extinguish the nation's bushfires.

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HOW MUCH RAIN IS NEEDED TO PUT OUT A BUSHFIRE

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Moderate rain, between 10 and 20mm, has the potential to slow down a fire, but won't extinguish it.

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NSW RFS
@NSWRFS

If this @BOM_NSW rainfall forecast comes to fruition then this will be all of our Christmas, birthday, engagement, anniversary, wedding and graduation presents rolled into one. Fingers crossed. #NSWRFS #nswfires

6,331 12:25 AM - Jan 13, 2020

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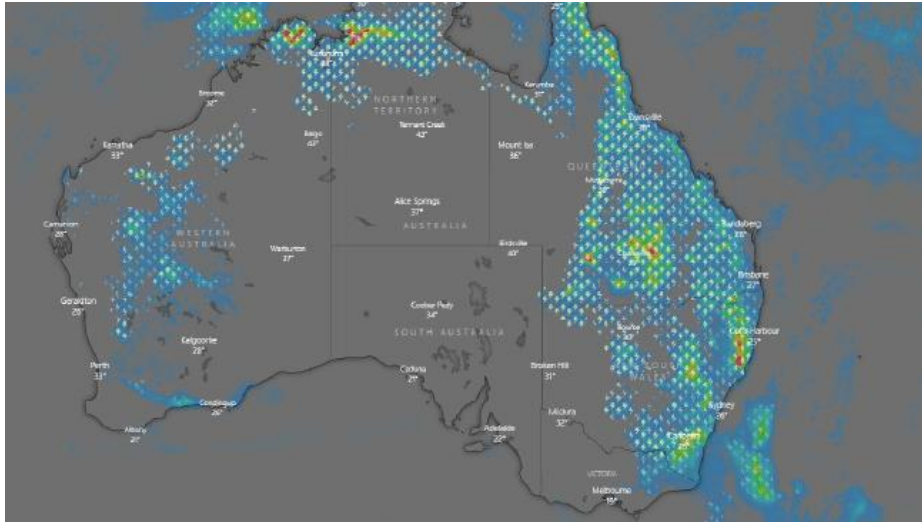
a large fire.

“If it’s from a thunderstorm, though, a lot of the rain will just run off if it falls quickly,” he said.

“It won’t soak into the vegetation. So 50mm of rain, if it falls in one or two hours, will not extinguish a bushfire.”

Ultimately, what the nation’s bushfire-ravaged east needs is steady rain falling over a couple of days.

“More than 50mm is generally required to slow down an exceptionally large fire, and to extinguish most bushfires you’d need well over 50mm,” Mr Saunders said.



Eastern Australia is expected to benefit from rainfall in the coming week. Picture: Windy Source:Supplied

RAIN FOR MOST CAPITALS

Thick bands of rain are creeping down both the west and east of the country, leaving only South Australia and the southern Northern Territory lacking in any noticeable moisture.

Brisbane will be soggy from Tuesday onwards with highs nudging 30C and some heavy showers. Cairns, in the tropics, is looking at about 50mm of rain this week.

The weather has settled in **Sydney** for the next few days with highs in the late 20Cs. But from Thursday onwards, storms might be seen above the Harbour City with 5-10mm falling each day.

Smoke haze in a warm **Canberra** on Tuesday where the mercury is forecast to reach 34C. Showers on Wednesday could clear the smoke with heavy downpours and a possible storm on Wednesday setting the tone for the rest of the week.

Drier in **Melbourne** with a sunny but smoky Tuesday with highs about 30C. Reaching 31C on a humid and possibly stormy Wednesday. Then the temperatures should fall into the low 20Cs, even the teens, as the week goes on with rain here and there.

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Hobart will be warm, in the mid to late 20Cs until Thursday when there could be a 10C temperature drop accompanied by splashes of rain.

Bone dry all week in **Adelaide**. Temperatures reaching 34C on Tuesday, then settling between 26-29C for the rest of a sunny week.

A hot week for **Perth**, the highs not dipping below 33C. While the monsoon could bring rain to the north of WA, with storms for Broome and Karratha, little of that

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