

# Record-breaking autumn temperatures points to a hotter future, environmentalists warn

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**Record-breaking hot weather across Australia in autumn could have long-ranging consequences, the Climate Council says, with warmer conditions set to continue.**

Key points:

- March temperatures in south-eastern Australia up by 12C, report says
- Perth recently had more 40-degree days than ever before
- Environmentalists say high temperatures point to human-driven climate change

In the first week of March, temperatures in parts of south-eastern Australia were 12 degrees Celsius warmer than average, the report titled *The Heat Marches On* said.

The Climate Council's Tim Flannery said El Nino weather patterns had caused Australia to heat up, and that hotter conditions were expected in future.

"As long as El Nino persists, we will see these very hot conditions," he said.

"Once El Nino fades, we will go back to less extreme conditions.

"But the next El Nino will bring a higher spike again, because the background level of greenhouse gases that is capturing ever more heat just continues to grow."

Mr Flannery said the heat was having consequences around the world.

"The fact that we have seen record high temperatures over the Arctic ocean through this winter ... means that we are looking towards a summer with potentially very low ice volumes," he said.

"That will have a global impact. These warm conditions throughout the earth now are really having an impact on humanity in so many ways.

"Droughts, enhanced fire conditions, changed rainfall patterns, shrinking glaciers. We are now living in a new climate."

The Climate Council report said Perth had suffered through more 40-degree days in 2015-2016 than ever before, and [Sydney recorded 39 consecutive days over 26C this year](#).

[The first nine days of March in Victoria](#) were about 10C above average, the report said, and Echuca sweated through eight days in a row above 38C.

Climate Council chief executive Amanda McKenzie said extreme heat had a big impact.

"As it gets hotter, fire risk is exacerbated. We saw that in Tasmania with [the extreme fire in the World Heritage Area](#)," she said.

The report said the unusually high temperatures pointed to human-driven climate change.

Ms McKenzie said extreme conditions would continue unless Australia moved away from fossil fuels and towards more renewable energy.

"We have moved from a period of climate change concern where scientists have been warning us about the consequences of climate change, to now an era of climate change consequences," Ms McKenzie said.

"We are seeing extreme heat, hot days; heatwaves are longer, they are hotter, they are happening more often. We will see that accelerate if we don't do anything more."