

El Nino is back

By Ian Cox



Yup it seems it is official, the lack of rain the fly fishing social media is complaining about has a cause. Like Arnie, El Nino is back, and if early signs are anything to go by, it is back with a vengeance.

El Nino is a short period of intense climatic change generally taking the form of high or low rainfall and unusual temperature shifts. El Nino generally means drought for the most part of the country but can in fact increase rainfall in some areas generally in the north east of the country. According to Wikipedia it is caused by “prolonged warming in the Pacific Ocean sea surface temperatures when compared with the average value”.

It should come as no surprise therefore that we are experiencing a particularly dry spring as one of the main effects of El Nino is below average rainfall during this period and extending through the main summer crop growing months. Farmers who grow maize under irrigation are going to make a pile this year. Dry land farmers must we wondering if they should plant at all.

So the bad news is that trout fishing is going to be difficult this year. Summer scalie conditions, however should be awesome. At better still, this isn't climate change as we taught to worry about it. This is a natural cycle that happens every four to five years though some scientists are trying to prove that human impacts make it worse. It happened back in 2009/10 but the effects of that El Nino were fairly mild and were hardly noticed by the general public though the irrigation farmers did make a pile. The 1997/98 drought was the worst El Nino event in recorded history but most people have forgotten about that. Time will tell how bad this one is.

Severe El Nino effects are often followed by excess flooding and we are overdue a big flood so expect that as well in the not too distant future.