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## El Nino edges closer

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**Tropical Pacific Ocean indicators have remained close to El Niño thresholds over the past fortnight. While tropical Pacific sea surface temperatures and the Southern Oscillation Index (SOI), approached or exceeded El Niño values during the past fortnight, other indicators such as the trade winds and tropical cloud patterns have yet to show typical El Niño signatures.**

**Regardless of the ENSO state, the tropical Pacific remains warmer than average. This, combined with other influences on Australian climate such as cooler than normal waters to the north of the continent and the patterns of cloud and ocean temperatures in the Indian Ocean, tends to favour below-average rainfall over eastern Australia.**

**Climate models surveyed by the Bureau of Meteorology suggest sea surface temperatures in the tropical Pacific Ocean will maintain values close to, or greater than, typical El Niño thresholds before returning to neutral towards the end of 2012 or early 2013.**

**The Indian Ocean Dipole is presently neutral. Outlooks from the Bureau's climate model indicate a neutral to weakly positive Indian Ocean Dipole is likely through spring.**

<http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/enso/>