

Seasonal Outlooks

Review of process
2017

Review of Seasonal Outlook Process

- Original process proposed by Graham Mills (BoM) & Tim Brown (DRI) on behalf of the Bushfire CRC in 2003
- Process adoption, adaption and evolution not reviewed since
- Review undertaken as a survey of jurisdictional practice by Rochelle Richards (TFS)

Information Used

- Much overlap of major data variables, but there is a range of preferences for actual presentation of data (i.e. actuals v deciles, root zone moisture v KBDI).
- Rain, temp soil moisture and climate predictions common. Fuel load and fuel state somewhat variable but should be more uniform with increased fuel type mapping.
- Incorporation of local knowledge is a challenge
- Same audiences, similar timing/frequency (not often achieved), same map products and text outputs.

Process & Policy Used

- Jurisdictional meetings seem to be key for initial product (No more arriving at the workshop and having to work out a position!)
- Not strong enough commitment to updates (some get too busy others get so wet they don't care!)
- Regional descriptors vary: IBRA in WA, Fire Wx Districts in Tas & SA. (Does this matter in a grid environment?)
- What does Normal Fire Potential mean across all the fuels and fire climates?

North American experience The journey so far

- 2000 .. first Fire/climate workshop
- 2003 .. first National Seasonal assessment Workshop (NSAW)
- 2004- 2007 .. refined NSAW approach, broadened across northern America
- 2007-2014 .. Develop structured approach and monthly products
- 2011 .. 1st virtual workshop

Challenges

- Definition of significant wildfire potential
- Verification difficult
- Outlooks deterministic
- How to ID value of outputs and how they are used

National Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook

This product provides outlooks for the current month, the month following and a seasonal look at the two months beyond that.

- https://www.predictiveservices.nifc.gov/outlooks/monthly_seasonal_outlook.pdf

Workshop 14 June 2017

- Science and technology now allow a much deeper process than previously
- Recognise that current political audience needs to be serviced
- Agreed that process should be driven by BOM seasonal outlooks combined with fuel amount and condition provided by jurisdictions
- A variety of products are required (1-2 weeks, 1-2 months, 6 months)
- Agreed should be updated monthly

Workshop outcomes (cont.)

- Larger product set for internal use and some also sent externally (not all)
- Automated national product validated by each jurisdiction before release. Liaison across borders required
- Collate current products to assist in developing product suite
- Engage with users to identify requirements and provide feedback on potential products
- Different temporal scales required in different jurisdictions at different times

Where to from here?

- PSG Systems Working Group to develop concept further based on workshop outcomes.