

13 MAR 2015



OIA14-293

Morgan Varaine  
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Dear Morgan Varaine

### OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST

I refer to your official information request of 13 February 2015 about the number of official drought events per region since records have been kept.

Since 2006 the Ministry for Primary Industries have used a classification system to assess adverse events such as droughts. These are classified into three categories that determine the level of recovery assistance provided.

Like all adverse events, a drought is classified as either localised, medium-scale or large scale.

MPI assess each adverse event based on soil moisture and rainfall data, options available for farmers to prepare for the event, the likelihood and scale of the physical impact, and the ability of local community to cope socially and economically. Based on that information, MPI will advise the Minister for Primary Industries on the scale of an event. The Minister can then decide whether to classify an area affected by an adverse event and what support and recovery measures should be made available.

Since the classifying framework has been in place there has been various localised / small droughts, 6 medium-scale droughts and 1 large-scale drought.

#### Localised / small scale drought events:

Various in all regions
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#### Medium Scale drought events: 6

2006	2009	2010	2011	2013	2015
Canterbury	Canterbury	Northland	Northland	Whole of North Island	Marlborough
	Hawke's Bay	Taranaki	Auckland	West Coast - South Island	Canterbury
	Gisborne	Otago	Waikato		Otago
		Canterbury	Ruapehu		

#### Large scale drought events: 1

2008
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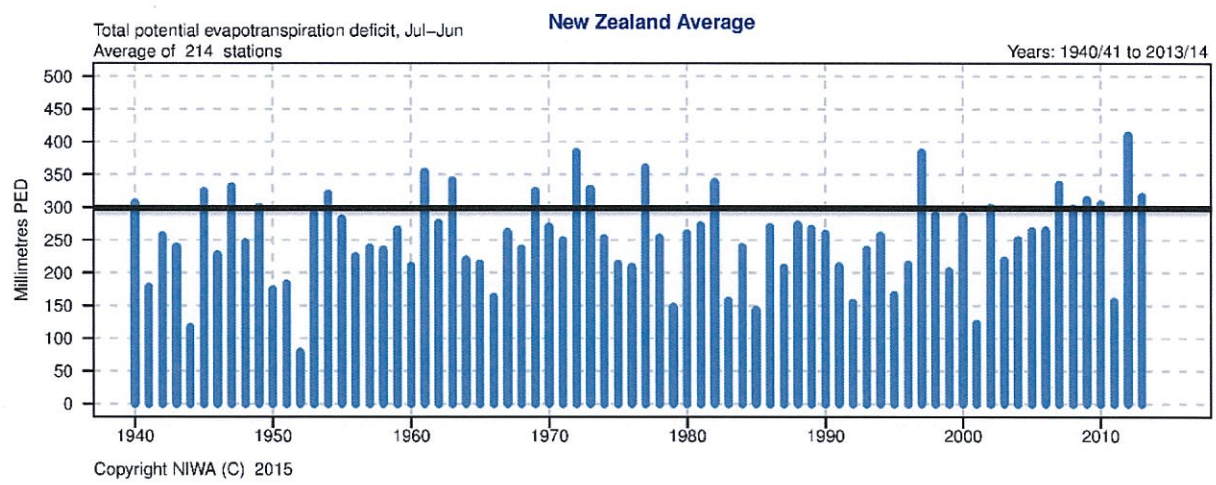
National
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You can get a comparison back before 2006 from a report that we commissioned after the 2012/13 drought: "The 2012/13 drought: An assessment and historical perspective" is linked here. <http://www.mpi.govt.nz/document-vault/135>.

I have also attached a graph produced last week by the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research showing the potential evaporation deficit from 1940 to 2013/14.

### NZ Drought Analysis

A comparison of the "NZ average" annual PED accumulation since 1940/41



2014/15 value so far = 296mm

I trust this information satisfies your request.

Yours sincerely

David Wansbrough  
Director Resource Policy