



## Dust activity

There is not much dust to report across the DustWatch network in May 2012 with a few stations around the Mallee and Lower Murray Darling recording some low level dust on the 23 and 25 May 2012 (Figure 2). The low level of dust activity is predominantly related to the lack of strong winds in May. The Mildura Automatic Weather Station, for example, recorded only 42 hours of wind exceeding 30km/h in May 2012 as opposed to 102 hours in April 2012.

Cover values have remained almost unchanged from April to May 2012 but have decreased significantly from January to May 2012 in the cropping areas (orange and red in Figure 1). Most of the grazing areas have remained unchanged (yellow in Figure 1) with some areas (e.g. west of Hillston) slightly improving in cover (green in Figure 1).

June and July long term average low wind speeds are very similar to May and cover in the cropping areas will be increasing from now on. Dust emissions are therefore decreasing in likelihood in June / July 2012.

for May 2012 No: DW\_NSW201205

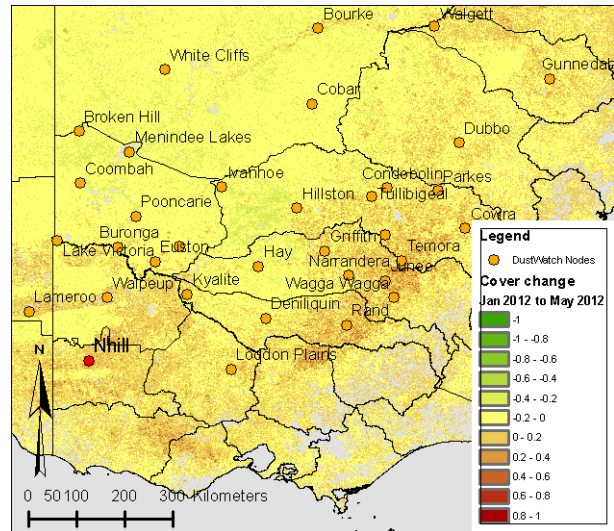
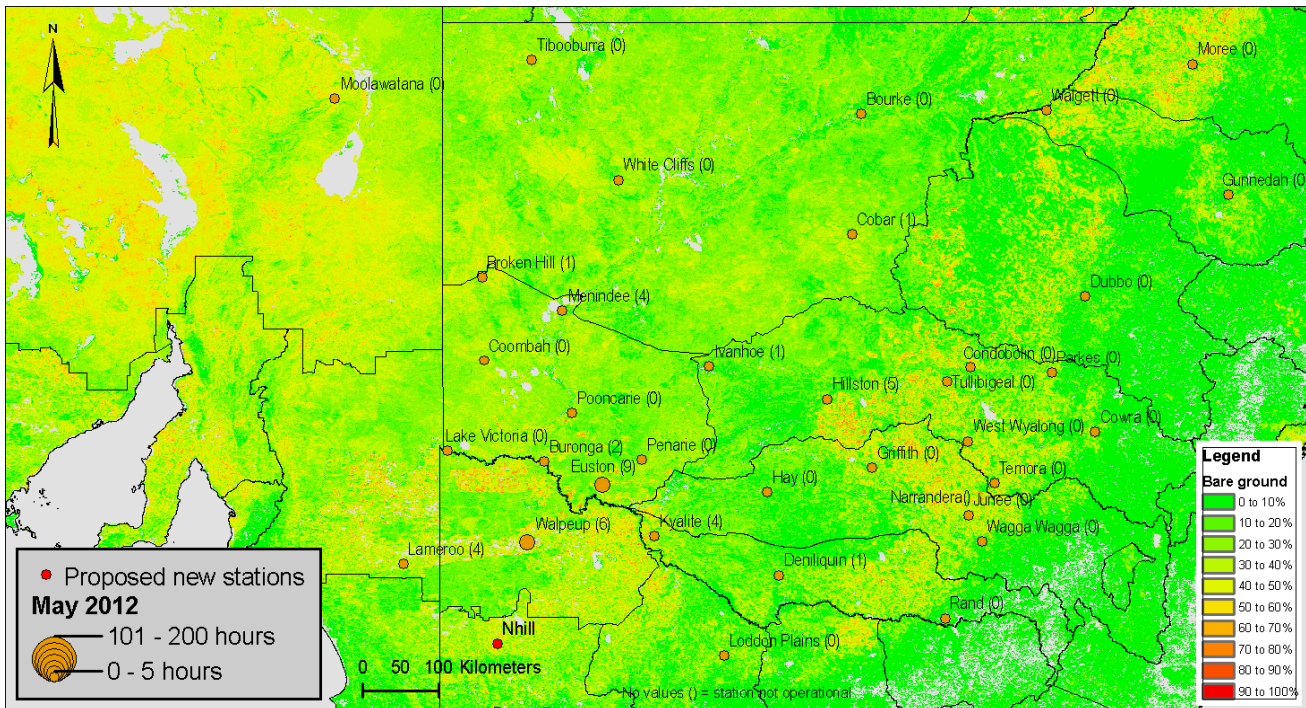


Figure 1. Change in cover between Jan 2012 and May 2012

Figure 2. Hours of dust recorded for May 2012 at each DustWatch Node and percentage bare ground for May 2012.



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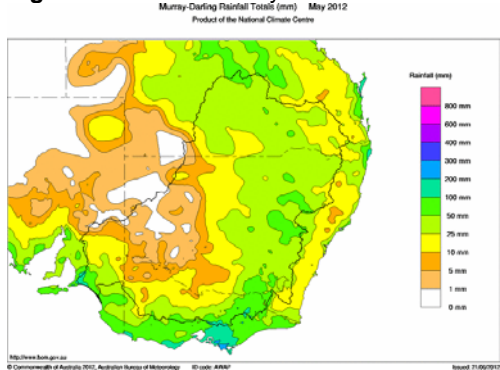
Contact us at [dustwatch@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:dustwatch@environment.nsw.gov.au)



## Rainfall and fires

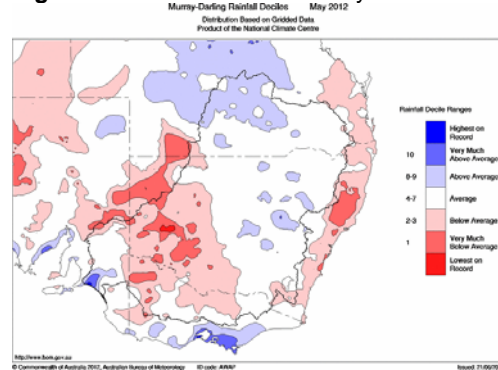
Very low rainfall continued in western NSW with most areas receiving less than 10mm of rain in May 2012. The eastern half of NSW received between 5 and 100mm (Figure 3).

**Figure 3.** Rainfall for May 2012



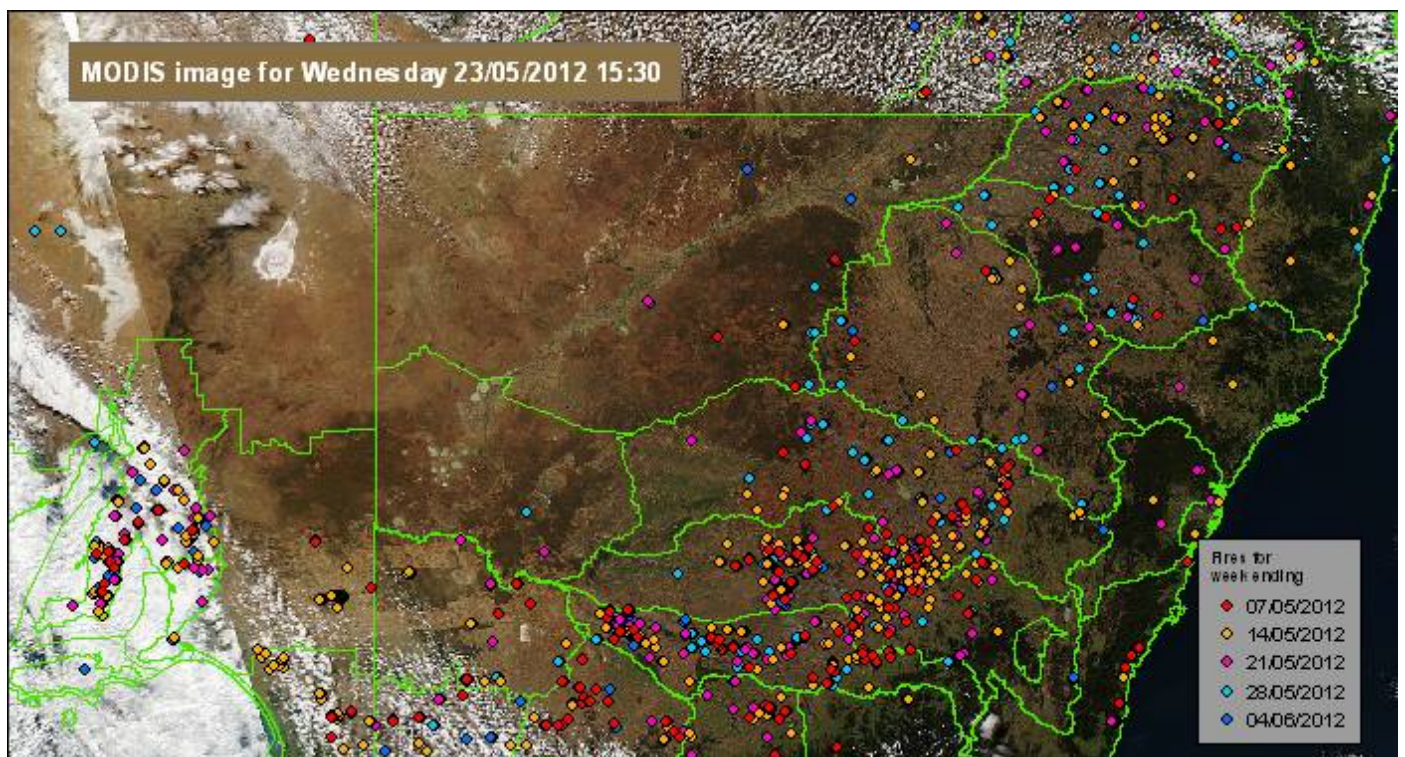
The continuing low rainfall in inland NSW is reflected in the BoM deciles map (Figure 4). Large areas are marked as below average (driest 30% of records) or very much below average (driest 10% of records)

**Figure 4.** Rainfall deciles for May 2012



## MODIS satellite image

Fire activity in the cropping areas decreased significantly from last month. The grazing areas were again almost fire free in May 2012 (Figure 5).



**Figure 5.** Fires detected by MODIS satellite during May 2012 with colour markers indicating the week of detection

## The DustWatch Team

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### Acknowledgements:

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