Deadly weather – cyclones, severe storms, storm surges, tornadoes, floods and extreme temperatures – often strikes with little warning time. In Australia, severe storms occur more often than any other natural hazard.

INTRODUCTION

World faces growing wild weather threat

According to a new report, billions of people will be vulnerable to wild weather threats in the next 10 years unless the world can agree on how to cut carbon emissions.

Developing countries. The damage bill was $US9.5 billion, mostly floods and storms.

Some of the worst

CYCLONE MAUNA, MARCH 1998, NORTH QUEENSLAND

A powerful, record-breaking cyclone, it battered the north of Queensland with torrential rain, by far the worst in Australia in the worst year for tropical cyclones on record.

Flash flooding in Melbourne.

Tropical BORA, EXTREME TEMPERATURE WAS THE HIGHEST ON RECORD FOR THE SECOND WEEK OF JUNE

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How tropical cyclones build their fury

Cyclones form when warm ocean water and appropriate wind conditions combine. The warm water fuels the storm, and the wind provides the energy to drive it across ocean and land.

The United States sees a lab for hurricanes each year where they test the air pressure and wind of a hurricane. The lab has developed a system to rate the strength of hurricanes, and the lab uses it to rate the strength of hurricanes with a simple “C” rating. The lab rates hurricanes with a “C” rating of 1 to 5, where 1 is a weak hurricane and 5 is a very strong hurricane.

Measuring the force, from 1 to 5


Two case studies …

1. The second strongest hurricane on record, the storm hit Cuba on November 26, 1989, with winds of 165 mph. The storm caused $US9.5 billion in property damage and killed 1000 people. The storm damaged over 30% of the island’s residents.

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A deadly mix of factors

DARWIN, northwestern australia – a mix of strong winds, rain and flooding has devastated much of the city of Darwin, with winds reaching 185 km/h and a storm surge of 1.5 metres. The death toll from the storm is now 39, and the number of missing is now 39.

Fact file


Wreaking havoc

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