

# AGROMETEOROLOGICAL BULLETIN

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Approved by:

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## HIGHLIGHTS

- **Much reduced rainfall received...**
- **Insignificant improvement in vegetation**
- **Very few farming activity observed....**
- **Improved rainfall forecasted.....**
- **Cold to warm temperatures anticipated.....**
- **Slight improvement in soil moisture expected.....**

## RAINFALL SYNOPSIS AND PROGNOSIS

### ➤ **SYNOPSIS - PAST TEN DAYS**

Reduced rainfall received compared to previous season (2016/17) and general average for the second dekadal of October throughout the country with temperatures varying from colder to hotter than normal in most parts of the country.

### ➤ **PROGNOSIS - NEXT TEN DAYS**

The passage of a frontal system coupled with upper level trough will result in light rain in the next three days thereafter subsidence will prevail resulting in partly cloudy and warm conditions over the country.

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## RAINFALL AND TEMPERATURES

### RAINFALL

Much reduced rainfall was observed in some parts of the country during the second dekad of October 2017 (**Figure 1**). Only Mbabane and Hluthi recorded amounts of up to 10mm (**Map 1**)

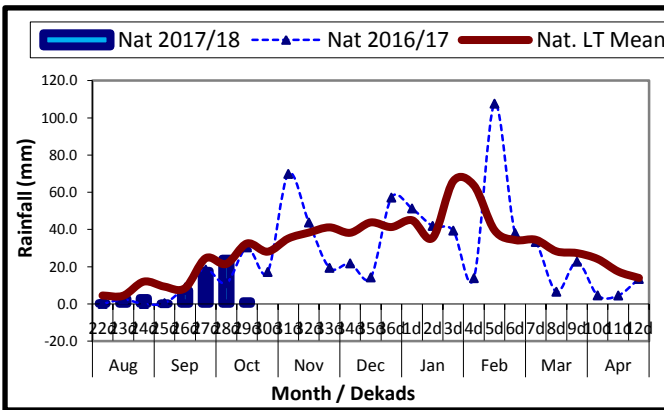
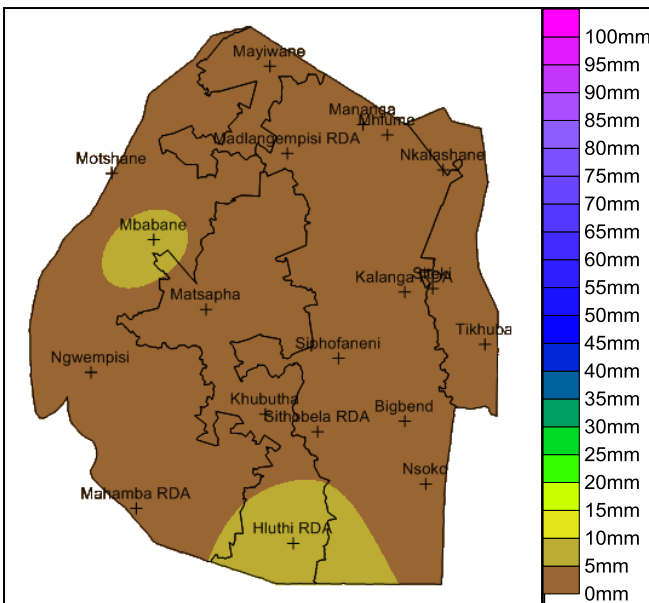


Figure 1: Rainfall distribution as second dekad of October 2017



Map 1: Spatial rainfall distribution for second dekad October 2017

All the Agro-ecological zones recorded insignificant amounts of rainfall (**Table 1**).

Table 1: Rainfall (mm) for 2<sup>nd</sup> dekad October 2017

	HV	MV	LV	LP
2016/17	40	43	19	19
<b>Average</b>	42	36	24	28
2017/18	2	2	1	1
<b>Anomaly</b>	<b>-40</b>	<b>-34</b>	<b>-23</b>	<b>-27</b>

### TEMPERATURES

Cold to hot temperatures observed throughout the country with Bigbend recording the highest maximum temperature (**Figure 2**) and Siteki recording the lowest minimum temperature (**Figure 3**).

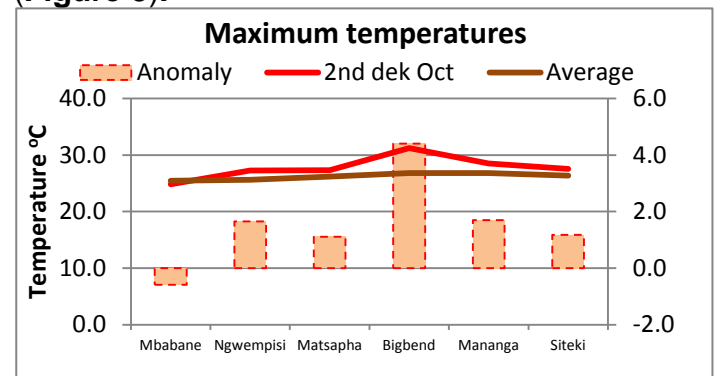


Figure 2: Minimum temperature as second dekad of October 2017

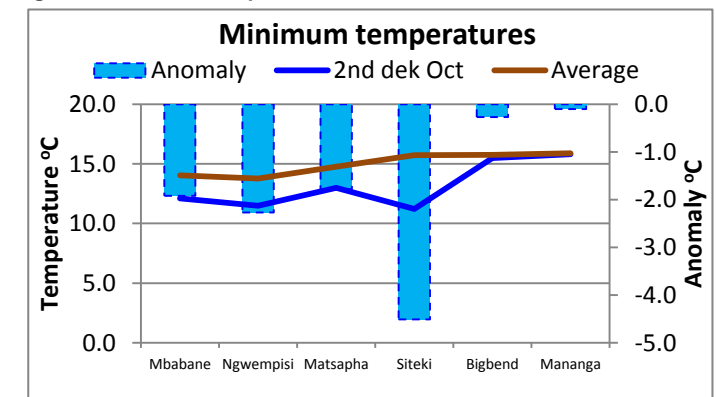


Figure 3: Maximum temperature as second dekad of October 2017

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### MAIZE AND OTHER CROPS

#### MAIZE CROP STAGE AND CONDITION

Maize is yet to be planted as farmers busy with attaining inputs.

#### OTHER CROPS

No other crops have been planted.

#### CURRENT FARMING ACTIVITY

Most farmers are currently attaining inputs, according to Ludzeludze Central RDA, more than 800 farmers have registered for tractor service. Lime application, ploughing and disking are the prevailing activities farmers are busy with (**Picture 1**). However, some areas have not received enough moisture to prompt land preparation activities.



Picture 1: Ploughed land at Ezulwini in the Hhohho region

Pastures are improving in some parts while in other parts the recent rains have not brought about an improvement, especially the southern part of the country (**Picture 3**) and (**Image 2**).



Picture 2: Cattle drinking muddy water at kaLanga



Picture 3: Cattle grazing at Sithobela

### LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES

Livestock is reported to be in good condition in most parts of the Highveld and poor to average condition in the Middleveld and Lowveld. The poor condition is accelerated by shortage of drinking water (**Picture 2**).

### WATER SITUATION

Some rivers are slightly improving from the recent rains, such as, the Mhlathuzane river which had dried up (**Picture 4**). Bulk water sources remain at adequate levels.



Picture 4: Mhlathuzane River in the Lubombo region

## MEDIUM-TERM OUTLOOK

### RAINFALL

Improved rainfall anticipated in the outlook period

### TEMPERATURE

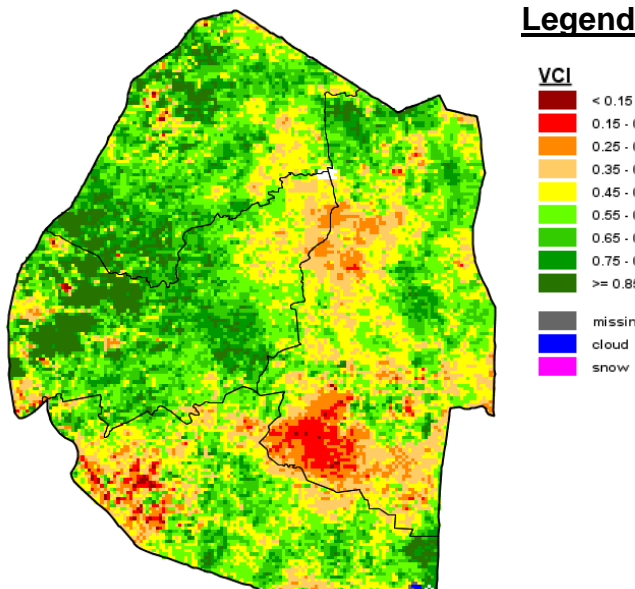
Cold to warm temperatures forecasted in the outlook period.

### SOIL MOISTURE

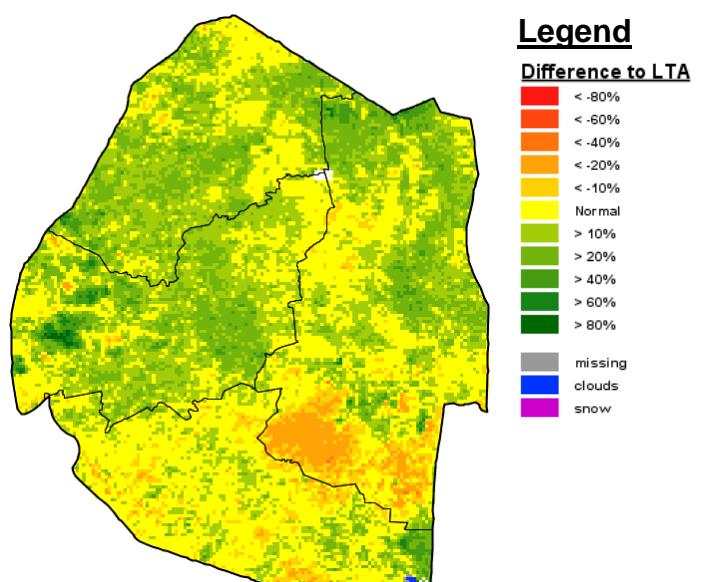
Slight improvement in soil moisture expected.

### WIND SPEED

Light breeze South-easterly wind ranging between 2-4m/s speed forecasted for the outlook period.



**Image 1:** Vegetation Condition Index image (2<sup>nd</sup> Dekad October 2017) Source: FAO-GIEWS



**Image 2:** Vegetation Anomaly image (2<sup>nd</sup> Dekad October 2017) Source: FAO-GIEWS