

AGROMETEOROLOGICAL BULLETIN

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Approved by:



**REPORTING PERIOD:
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HIGHLIGHTS

- **Below average rainfall received...**
- **Slight improvement in vegetation**
- **Land preparation activities observed....**
- **Improved rainfall forecasted.....**
- **Cold to warm temperatures anticipated.....**
- **Improvement in soil moisture expected.....**

RAINFALL SYNOPSIS AND PROGNOSIS

➤ SYNOPSIS - PAST TEN DAYS

Improved rainfall received, but below average and previous season (2016/17) in the third dekadal of October in some parts of 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 mainly on high grounds between today and Wednesday. Then from Thursday to Saturday, an upper high will draw moisture from the tropics (Tropical air) into the country, resulting with rains especially on high grounds. On Sunday to Monday, there will be a dominance of an upper high resulting with subsidence that will result with partly cloudy conditions.

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RAINFALL AND TEMPERATURES

RAINFALL

Below average rainfall was observed in some parts of the country during the dekad (Figure 1). Only a few parts of the Highveld received rainfall of up to 40mm (Map 1).

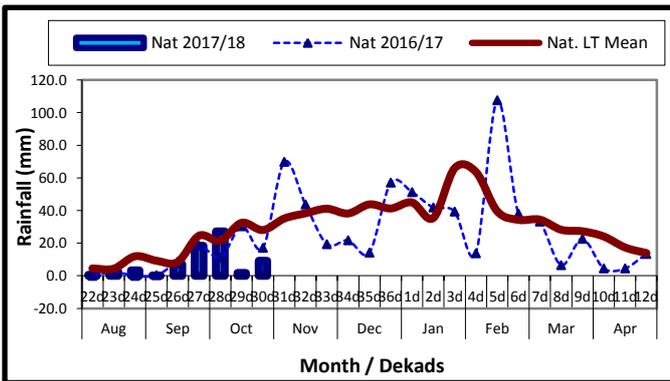
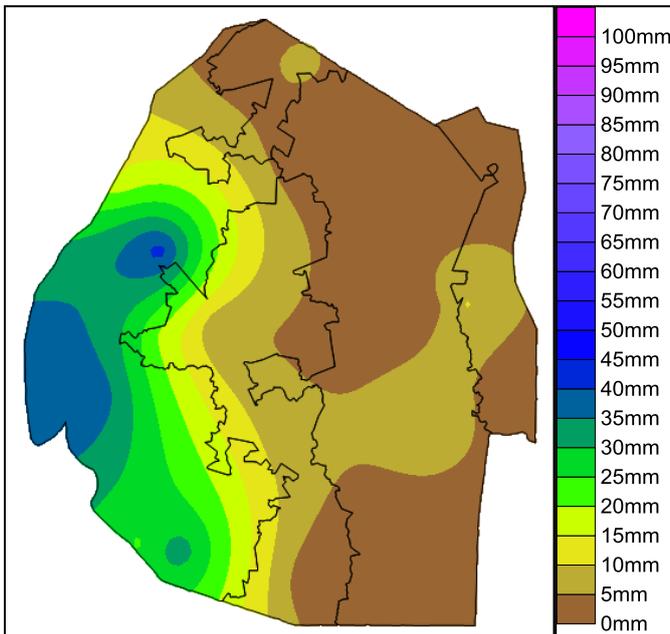


Figure 1: Rainfall distribution as third dekad of October 2017



Map 1: Spatial rainfall distribution for third dekad October 2017

Table 1: Rainfall (mm) for 3rd dekad October 2017

	HV	MV	LV	LP
2016/17	16	16	19	20
Average	38	30	20	35
2017/18	22	7	2	6
Anomaly	-16	-23	-18	-29

TEMPERATURES

About average maximum temperatures (Figure 2) and slightly below average minimum temperatures (Figure 3) were observed in the reporting period

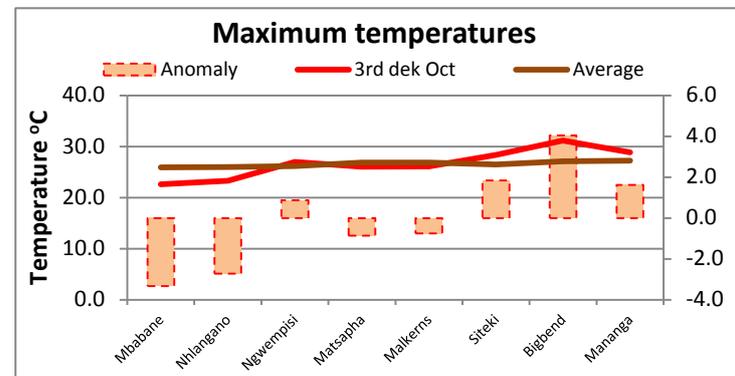


Figure 2: Minimum temperature as third dekad of October 2017

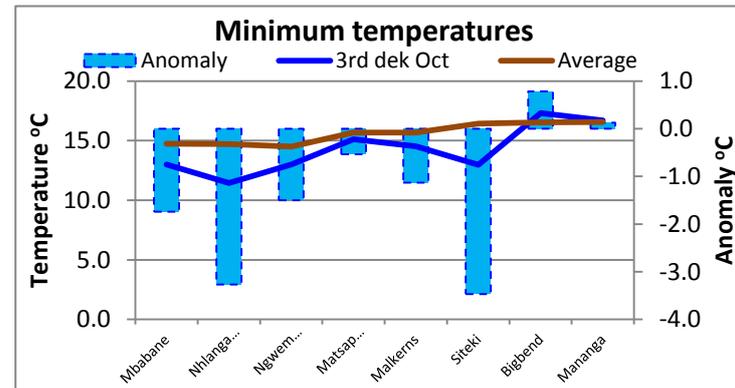


Figure 3: Maximum temperature as third dekad of October 2017

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MAIZE AND OTHER CROPS

MAIZE CROP STAGE AND CONDITION

Very few farmers have planted maize after the early rains in the Highveld and Middleveld, however very few have been observed to have germinated. Very few cases of germination failure due to insufficient moisture reported (**Picture 1**).



Picture 1: Maize failed to germinate in this field at Tikhuba

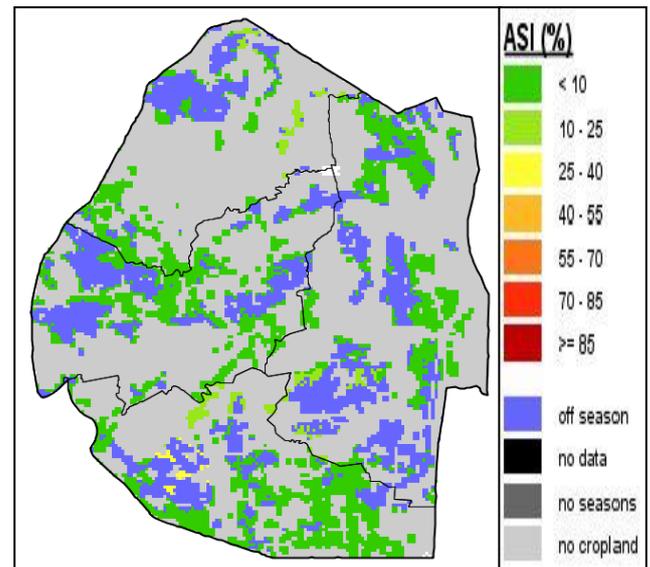
OTHER CROPS

No other crops observed to be planted.

CURRENT FARMING ACTIVITY

Ploughing is the prevailing farming activity carried out by farmers and a few planting maize.

Most of the cropping areas as obtained from FAO, show signs of a normal start as depicted in the Agricultural Stress Index (**Map 2**).



Map 2: Agricultural Stress Index (ASI) as of 31st October 2017

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES

Vegetation is slightly improving as depicted by the positive anomaly (**Image 2**). Livestock is reported to be in average condition in most parts (**Picture 2**).



Picture 2: Cattle grazing at Tikhuba

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WATER SITUATION

Water condition continues to be satisfactory in some parts with a few places experiencing shortages, especially for livestock.

MEDIUM-TERM OUTLOOK

RAINFALL

Occasional light rain with partly cloudy episodes expected in the outlook period.

TEMPERATURE

Temperatures will vary from cold to warm in most parts and hot in the Lowveld during the outlook period.

SOIL MOISTURE

An improvement in soil moisture is anticipated.

WIND SPEED

Light Northerly winds forecasted in the outlook period.

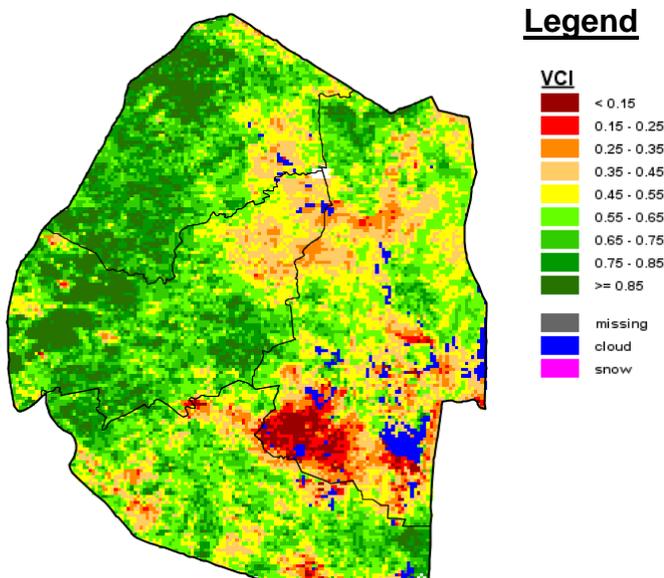


Image 1: Vegetation Condition Index image (3rd Dekad October 2017) Source: FAO-GIEWS

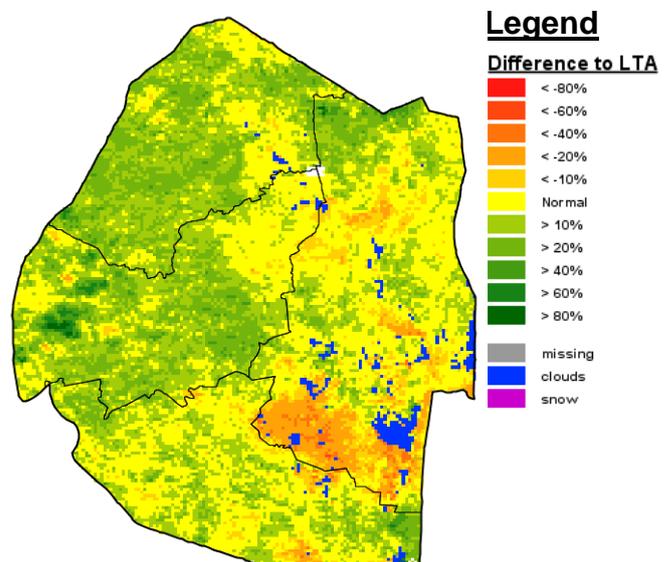


Image 2: Vegetation Anomaly image (3rd Dekad October 2017) Source: FAO-GIEWS