



# AGROMETEOROLOGICAL UPDATE



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## HIGHLIGHTS

- **Reduced rainfall received in most parts...**
- **Improvement in vegetation....**
- **More farming activity observed....**
- **Reduced rainfall forecasted.....**
- **Warm to hot temperatures anticipated.....**
- **Decrease in soil moisture expected.....**

## RAINFALL SYNOPSIS AND PROGNOSIS

### ➤ SYNOPSIS - PAST TEN DAYS

Rainfall continued to be further reduced in this dekad due to the dominance of upper level convergence systems that persisted with its position over the region.

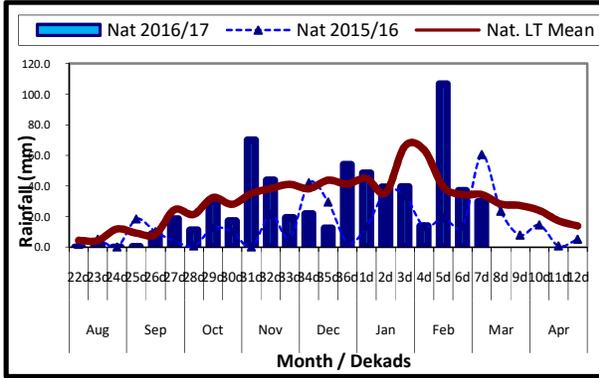
### ➤ PROGNOSIS - NEXT TEN DAYS

The upper level convergence will persist over our region during the next dekad promoting even less chances of rainfall coupled with low-level high-pressure systems.

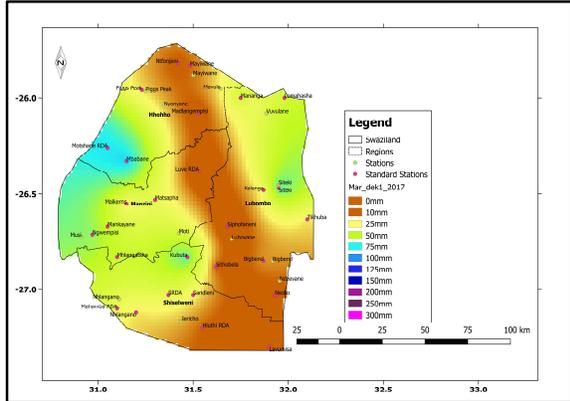
# RAINFALL AND TEMPERATURES

## RAINFALL

About average rainfall was observed during the first dekad of March 2017, which was below that of the previous season 2015/16 (**Figure 1**).



**Figure 1: Rainfall distribution as first dekad of March 2017**



**Map 2: Spatial rainfall distribution for first dekad March 2017**

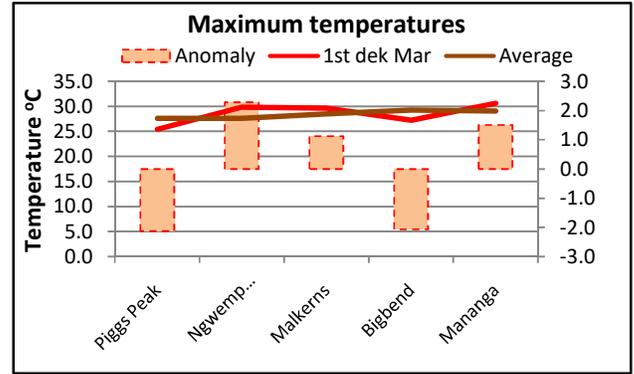
Most of the agro-ecological zones received below average rainfall apart from the Lubombo Plateau (**Table 1**).

**Table 1: Rainfall (mm) for 1<sup>st</sup> dekad March 2017**

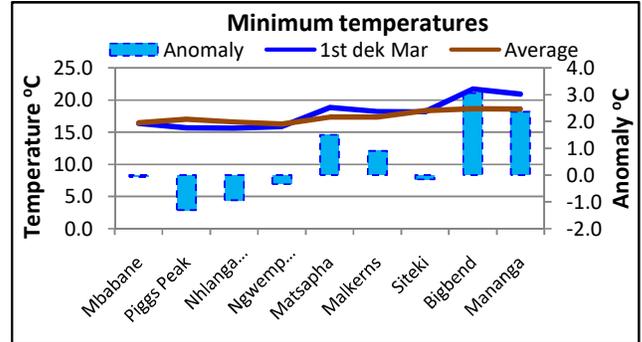
	HV	MV	LV	LP
2015/16	78	53	54	58
Average	54	33	27	23
2016/17	39	18	17	45
Anomaly	-15	-15	-10	22

## TEMPERATURES

Warm to hot temperatures were experienced throughout the country during the dekad as most stations recorded above average temperatures (**Figure 2 and 3**).



**Figure 2: Maximum temperature as first dekad of March 2017**



**Figure 3: Minimum temperature as first dekad of March 2017**

# MAIZE AND OTHER CROPS

## MAIZE CROP STAGE AND CONDITION

Most maize crops are at grain filling and maturity stage (**Picture 1**). The crop condition

is good in most places while some areas crops were affected by dry spell (**Picture 2**).



**Picture 1: Maize at grain filling stage at Tikhuba in the Lubombo region**



**Picture 2: Maize affected by dry spell at Hluthi in the Shiselweni region**

#### **OTHER CROPS**

Legume crops reported to be planted by farmers are in good condition and mostly at vegetative stage (**Picture 3**). Some sorghum crops observed to have suffered from dry spell (**Picture 4**)



**Picture 3: Beans in good condition growing at Mahlangatsha**



**Picture 4: Sorghum affected by dry spell at Hluthi in the Shiselweni region**

#### **CURRENT FARMING ACTIVITY**

Very few farmers weeding late planted maize. Most have started harvesting some of their crops.

### **LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES**

Vegetation strained by dry spell in the Northern and Western parts of the country (**Image 1**), however livestock is observed to be in good condition (**Picture 5**).



**Picture 5: Cattle and goats grazing at Mahamba in the Shiselweni region**

## MEDIUM-TERM OUTLOOK

### RAINFALL

Much reduced rainfall forecasted in the medium term outlook period.

### TEMPERATURE

Cool to warm temperatures expected in the medium term outlook period.

### SOIL MOISTURE

Insignificant improvement in soil moisture anticipated.

### WIND SPEED

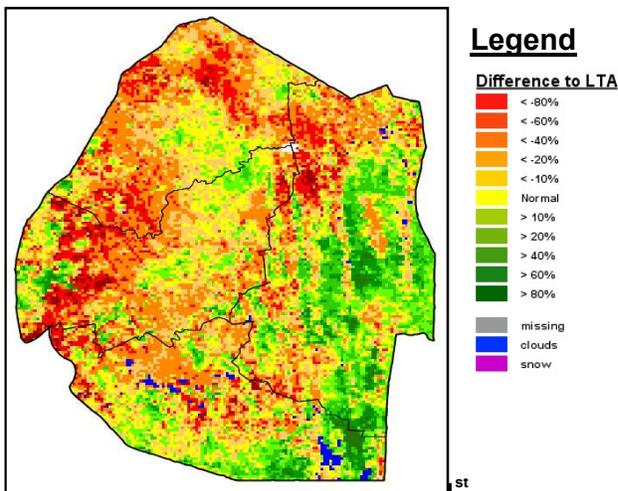
Moderate wind speed forecasted in the outlook period.

## WATER SITUATION

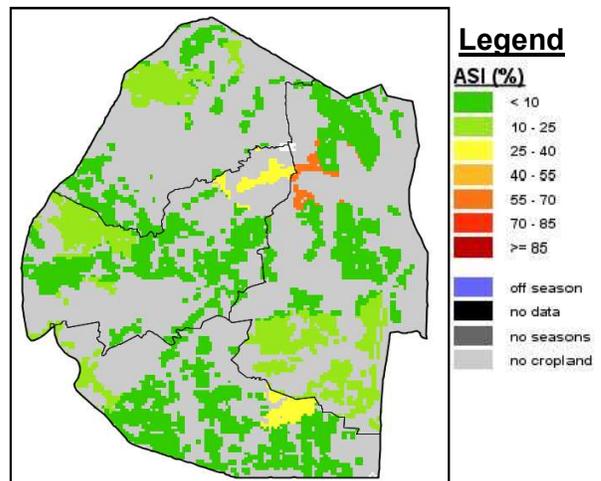
Water condition has improved in Dams and rivers (**Picture 6**), rivers continue to show good flows in the Highveld.



**Picture 6: Ngwempisi River water level flows**



**Dekad March 2017) Source: FAO-GIEWS**



**Image 2: Agriculture Stress Index image (1<sup>st</sup> Dekad March 2017) Source: FAO-GIEWS**