

# AGROMETEOROLOGICAL BULLETIN

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## HIGHLIGHTS

- **Slightly above average rainfall received...**
- **An improvement in vegetation...**
- **Planting and weeding activities observed....**
- **Below average rainfall forecasted.....**
- **Warm to hot temperatures anticipated.....**
- **Decrease in soil moisture expected.....**

## RAINFALL SYNOPSIS AND PROGNOSIS

### ➤ **SYNOPSIS - PAST TEN DAYS**

Slightly above average rainfall was recorded in most parts of the country as a result of influence from atmospheric disturbances and causing severe hailstorms and strong winds in some parts of the country.

### ➤ **PROGNOSIS - NEXT TEN DAYS**

The deepening of sub-tropical depressions over northern parts of the SADC region coupled with the upper atmospheric high's position will restrict significant moisture over the country, thus reduced rainfall activity.

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Swaziland Meteorological Service, Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs.

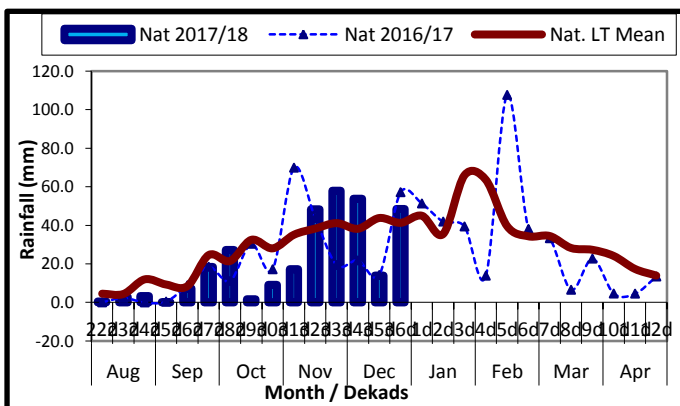
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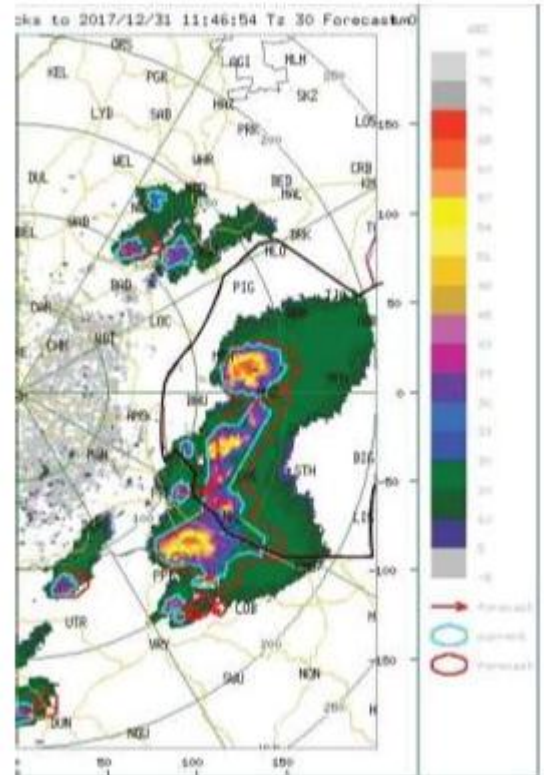
**RAINFALL AND TEMPERATURES**

**RAINFALL**

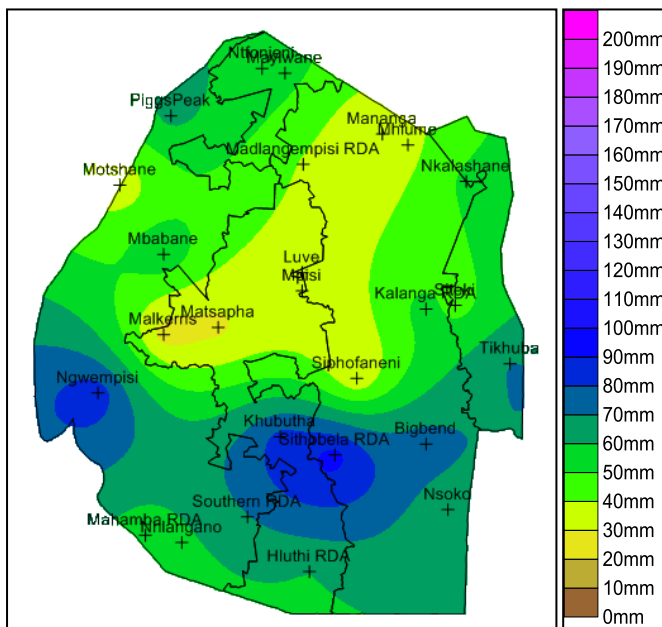
Slightly above average rainfall observed during the dekad (**Figure 1**) with severe storms on the 25th and 31st December 2017. This was accompanied by hail and strong winds which caused severe damage to buildings, infrastructure and field crops mainly in the Hhohho, Manzini and Lubombo regions.



**Figure 1: Rainfall distribution as 3<sup>rd</sup> dekad of December 2017**



**Map 2: Storm path over the country**



**Map 1: Spatial rainfall distribution for 3<sup>rd</sup> dekad December 2017**

Only the Highveld recorded below average rainfall during the reporting period, while the rest of the Agroecological zones observed above average rainfall (**Table 1**)

**Table 1: Rainfall (mm) for 3<sup>rd</sup> dekad December 2017**

	HV	MV	LV	LP
<b>2016/17</b>	66	50	46	67
<b>Average</b>	59	37	30	39
<b>2017/18</b>	42	42	52	58
<b>Anomaly</b>	<b>-17</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>19</b>

**TEMPERATURES**

Warm to hot temperatures were experienced during the reporting period (**Figure 2**) and (**Figure 3**).

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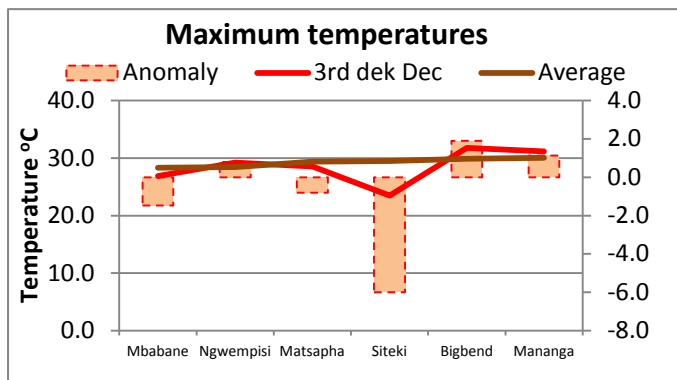


Figure 2: Minimum temperature as 3<sup>rd</sup> dekad of December 2017

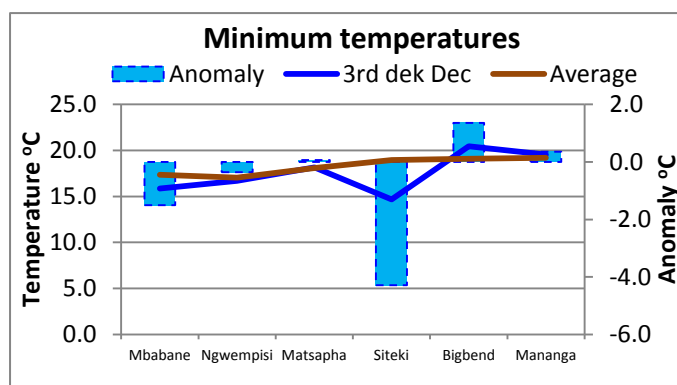


Figure 3: Maximum temperature as 3<sup>rd</sup> dekad of December 2017

## MAIZE AND OTHER CROPS

### MAIZE CROP STAGE AND CONDITION

Most of the maize crop is currently at early vegetative-to-late-vegetative stages. A few that was planted early is at tasseling stage.

The condition of the crop is good in most places, save for some that was affected by the storm (**Picture 1**). Most of the crop at early stages will recover. Vegetables were also not spared during the storm (**Picture 2**).

Table 2: Areas that were affected by the storm

REGION	AFFECTED INKHUNDLA
Hhohho	1. Lobamba
	2. Lobamba Lomdzala
	3. Hhukwini
	4. Nkhaba
	5. Maphalaleni
	6. Ntfojjeni
	7. Ndzingeni
Manzini	8. Manzini North
Lubombo	9. Dvokodvweni
	10. Lomahasha
	11. Matsanjeni North



Picture 1: Maize damaged by storm at Zombodze in the Manzini region



Picture 2: Cabbage and green pepper after the storm

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### OTHER CROPS

Some groundnuts and sweet potatoes observed to be growing well in some parts. Most legumes survived the storm damage.

### CURRENT FARMING ACTIVITY

Farmers continue to be busy with planting (**Picture 3**) and weeding in most parts of the country.



Picture 3: Planted fields at Ngwempisi



Picture 4: Cattle grazing at Mankayane

## WATER SITUATION

Most major rivers have since improved in the country and rivers have healthy flows.

## MEDIUM-TERM OUTLOOK

### RAINFALL

Below average rainfall forecasted for the outlook period.

### TEMPERATURE

Warm to hot temperatures expected in most parts during the outlook period.

### SOIL MOISTURE

Decrease in soil moisture expected in the outlook period.

### WIND SPEED

Winds will be light to moderate breeze speeds.

## LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES

A continued improvement in livestock conditions especially cattle was noticed in most parts (**Picture 4**) as a result of much improved vegetation (**Image 1 and 2**). A few cattle were struck by lightning during the recent storm.

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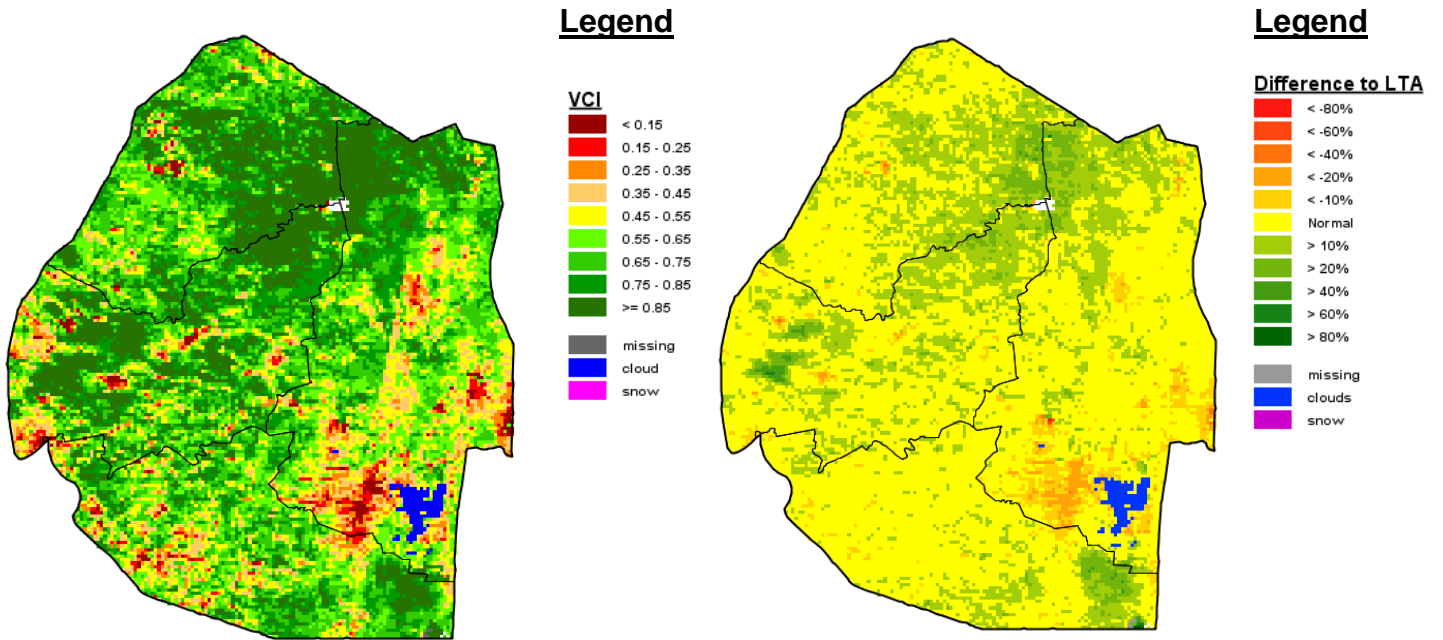
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**Image 1:** Vegetation Condition Index image (3<sup>rd</sup> Dekad December 2017) Source: FAO-GIEWS

**Image 2:** Vegetation Anomaly image (3<sup>rd</sup> Dekad December 2017) Source: FAO-GIEWS