



AGROMETEOROLOGICAL UPDATE



REPORTING PERIOD:
01 – 10 NOVEMBER 2015

ISSUE No.: 04 SEASON: 2015/16 RELEASED: 14/11/2015

HIGHLIGHTS

- No rains fell in the country during the dekad...
- Vegetation continues to deteriorate due to dry spells....
- Insignificant land preparation commenced....
- Slightly above average rainfall expected in the next dekad...
- Slightly warmer temperatures forecasted in most parts.....
- Slight improvement in soil moisture.....
- Cattle continue to die in numbers in the Lowveld.....

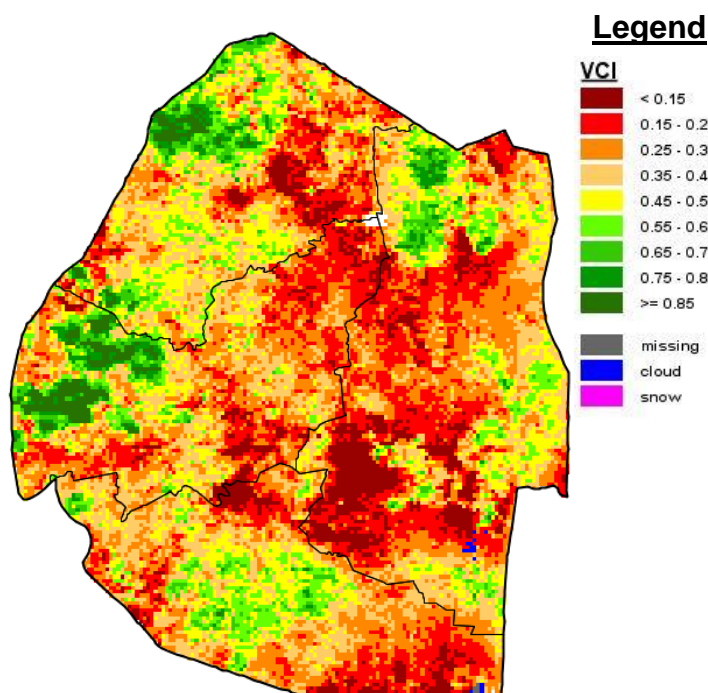


Image 1: Vegetation Condition Index image (1st Dekad November 2015)

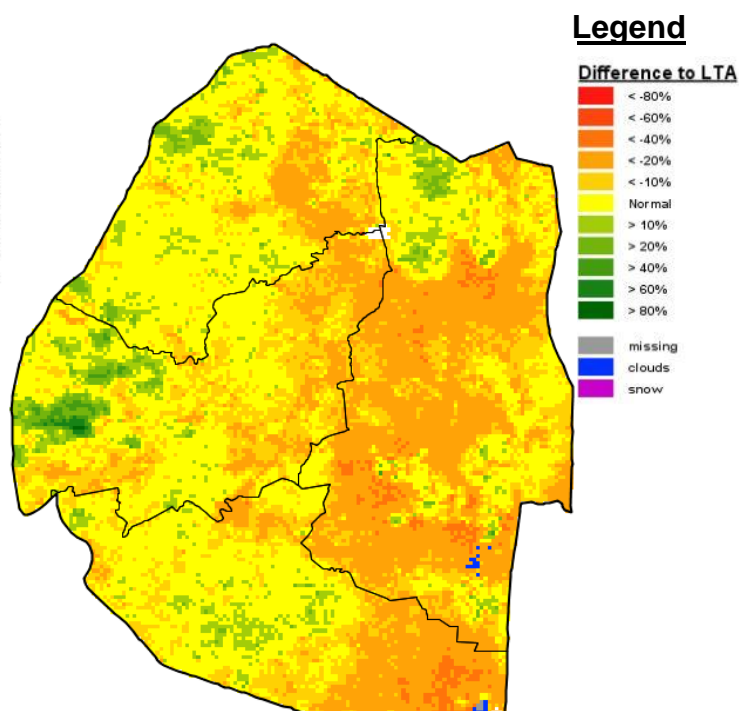


Image 2: Vegetation anomaly image for 1st dekad November 2015

MOISTURE AND HEAT STATUS

Rainfall

No rainfall was received during the first dekad of November in all stations in the country (see **figure 1 below**).

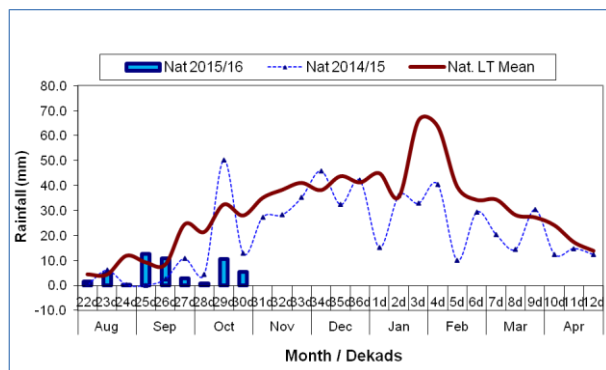


Figure 1: Seasonal rainfall distribution as of 1st Dekad November 2015

Cumulative rainfall as at the end of the 1st dekad of November 2015 shows that this season's rainfall so far is much below that of last season (2014/15) and the longterm average (**Figure 2**).

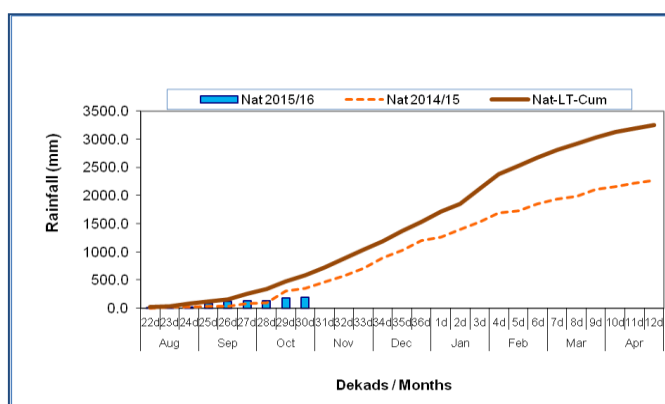


Figure 2: Cumulative seasonal rainfall as of 1st dekad November 2015

Most of the agro-ecological zones received no rainfall during the reporting period (**Table 1 below**).

Table 1: Rainfall (mm) of 1st dekad November

2015

	HV	MV	LV	LP
2014/15	40	31	30	9
Average	49	35	24	32
2015/16	0	0	0	0
Anomaly	-49	-35	-24	-32

Temperatures

Warmer than average temperatures were recorded in most parts of the country (**Table 2 below**). The Lowveld recorded the highest day temperatures

Table 2: Temperatures (°C) for 1st Dekad November 2015

Station	Element	1 st dek November	Mean	Depart
Mbabane	Max	No Record	26.3	NR
	Min	13.7	15.5	-1.8
Piggs Peak	Max	26.8	26.7	0.0
	Min	14.8	15.9	-1.1
Ngwempisi	Max	30.0	26.4	3.6
	Min	14.6	15.2	-0.6
Matsapha	Max	30.4	27.2	3.2
	Min	17.0	16.3	0.7
Malkerns	Max	31.1	26.4	4.7
	Min	16.1	15.2	0.9
Siteki	Max	30.6	27.2	3.4
	Min	15.5	16.9	-1.4
Bigbend	Max	34.1	27.4	6.7
	Min	17.9	17.1	0.8

CROP STATUS

Maize Crop Stage and Condition

There are still no reports of maize having been planted except for a few farmers that grow their crop under domestic small scale irrigation.

According to the agricultural stress index (ASI) the agricultural season has begun but almost all cropping areas are undergoing severe stress, thus no

cropping activity has taken place as yet.

Other Crops

No other crops have been planted.

Current Farming Activity

Some farmers have conducted land preparation for planting purposes, while others have not yet commenced any farming activities.

VEGETATION AND LIVESTOCK

Vegetation continues to deteriorate in most parts of the country (*Image 1*) but more so in the Lowveld.

The cattle death toll has been reported to be exceeding 12 400 (Times of Swaziland 11/11/2015) due to the ongoing drought which is accompanied by heat waves. Farmers are forced to sell their livestock from as little as E800 per beast.

WATER SITUATION

Water levels are reported to be declining in most major dams in the country. Most river flows are at minimum levels while others have dried up together with some earth dams.

Outlook for 15 – 25 November 2015

Rainfall

Slight increase in rainfall expected during the forecast period.

Temperature

Slightly warmer temperatures anticipated in the coming dekad.

Soil Moisture

A slight increase in soil moisture is expected.

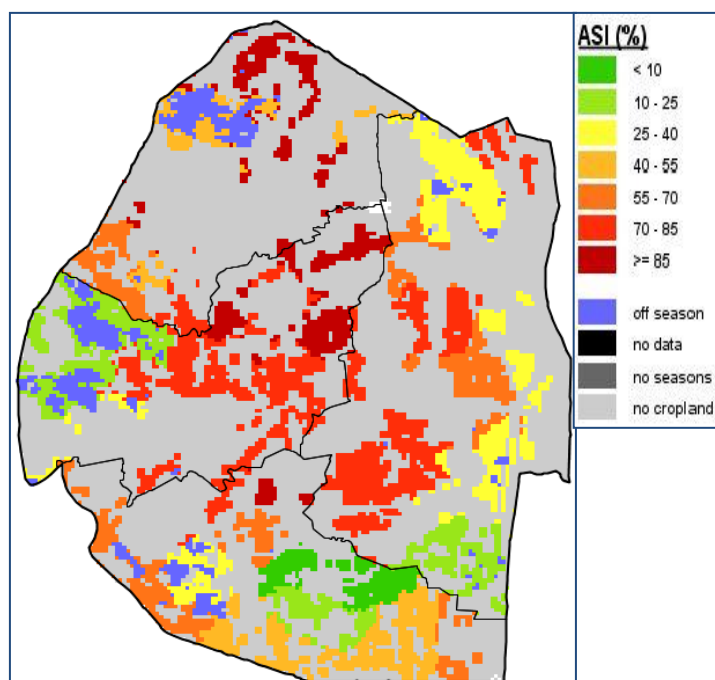


Image 3: Agricultural Stress Index for 1st Dekad November 2015

Table 3: Cattle deaths as of 31st October 2015

Sub-Region	Deaths
Malindza	1,952
Lavumisa	1,822
Hluti	1,811
Siphofaneni	1,070
Mliba	1,045
Lubuli	901
Sithobela	881
Lomahasha	533
Mayiwane	218
Total	10,233

CONTRIBUTORS, PARTNERS AND SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Please Note: *This bulletin is issued in support of the efforts by the National Early Warning Office (NEWU) for food Security in the Ministry of Agriculture to provide Swaziland's current agronomic and meteorological developments to users, stakeholders, government authorities and international organizations during the farming season.*

The NEWS is currently made-up of a core team of the National Early Warning Unit (NEWU) of Ministry of Agriculture, the Advisory Unit of the National Meteorology Department and the Agricultural Statistics Unit of Central Statistics Office (CSO).