



AGROMETEOROLOGICAL UPDATE

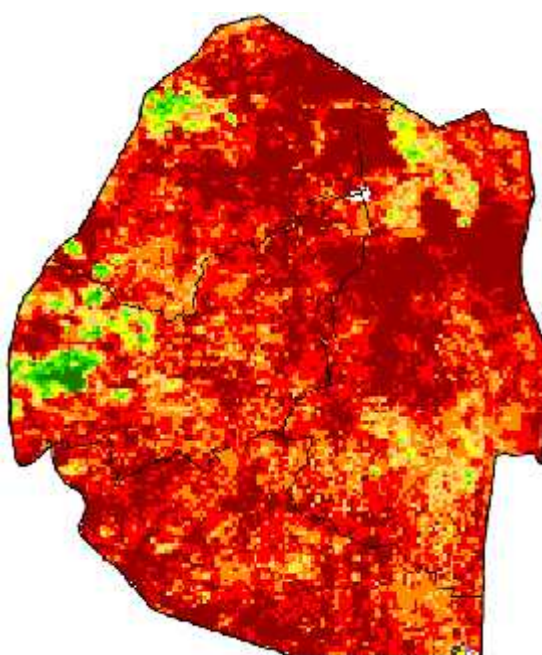


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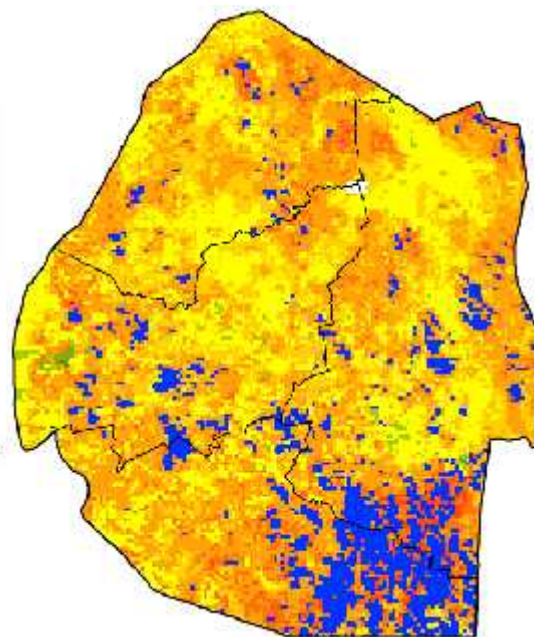
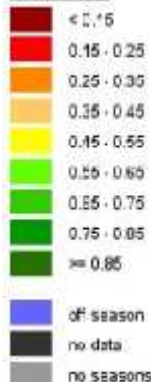
HIGHLIGHTS

- Much improved rains fell in some parts of the country ...
- Vegetation continues to decrease due to insufficient moisture....
- Some farmers busy with weeding activities....
- Insignificant possibility of rainfall in the next dekad...
- Above average temperatures forecasted in most parts.....
- Decrease in soil moisture expected.....



Legend

Mean VHI



Legend

Difference to LTA

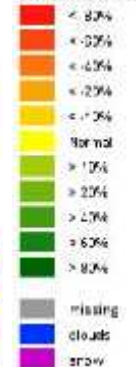


Image 1: Mean Vegetation Health Index image (3rd Dekad January 2016) Source: FAO-GIEWS

Image 2: Vegetation anomaly image (3rd Dekad January 2016) Source: FAO-GIEWS

MOISTURE AND HEAT STATUS

Rainfall

Much improved but still below average rainfall was received during the third dekad of January 2016 (**Map 1 and Figure 1 below**).

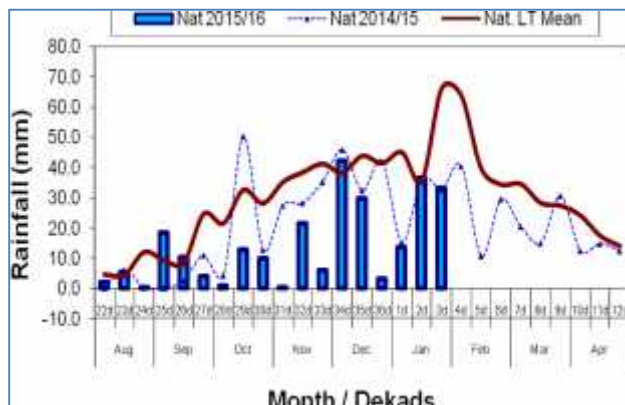
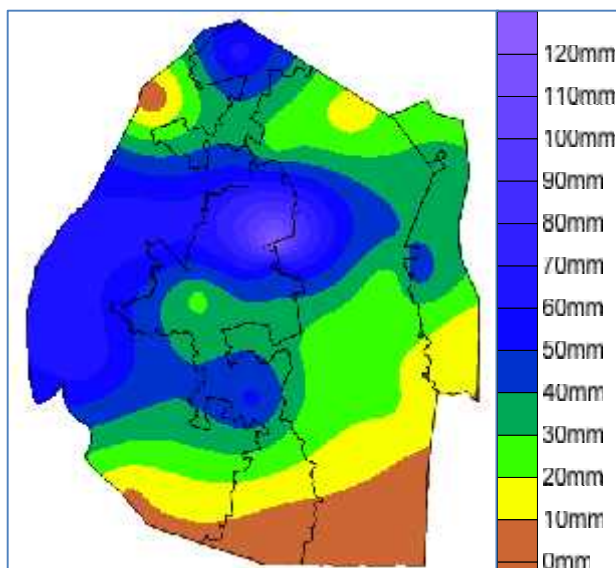


Figure 1: Observed rainfall distribution for 3rd Dekad January 2016



Map 1: Spatial rainfall distribution for 3rd Dekad January 2016

Table 1: Rainfall (mm) of 3rd dekad January 2016

	HV	MV	LV	LP
2014/15	39	60	20	12
Average	87	61	52	63
2015/16	39	44	19	29
Anomaly	-48	-17	-33	-34

All the regions received below average rainfall. The Highveld and Lowveld received almost the same amount of rainfall as the previous season of 2014/15 while the other regions received below that of last season.

Temperatures

Below average to above average temperatures were experienced in the country during the dekad (**Table 2 below**).

Table 2: Temperatures (°C) for 3rd Dekad January 2016

Station	Element	3 rd dek Jan	Mean	Depart
Mbabane	Max	NR	28.10	NR
	Min	17.2	17.70	-0.5
Piggs Peak	Max	26.4	28.53	-2.2
	Min	16.8	18.20	-1.4
Nhlangano	Max	27.2	28.67	-1.4
	Min	16.0	17.67	-1.7
Ngwempisi	Max	29.1	28.47	0.6
	Min	17.6	17.50	0.1
Matsapha	Max	29.6	29.67	-0.1
	Min	20.3	18.60	1.7
Malkerns	Max	29.0	29.67	-0.7
	Min	19.3	18.60	0.7
Siteki	Max	29.0	29.67	-0.7
	Min	19.7	19.53	0.1
Bigbend	Max	34.9	30.17	4.7
	Min	21.8	19.70	2.1
Mananga	Max	32.8	30.03	2.8
	Min	21.8	19.63	2.2

Lower temperatures were mostly experienced in the Highveld while hot temperatures were experienced in the upper and lower parts of the Lowveld.

CROP STATUS

Maize Crop Stage and Condition

Most maize that was planted mid-

December is in the early vegetative stage. The crops are in good condition in some parts of the Highveld and Middleveld (**Picture 1**), while some suffered due to lack of moisture in some parts of the dry Middleveld and most of the Lowveld (**Picture 2**).



Picture1: Maize growing at Mahlangatja



Picture2: Poor maize growth at Hluthi

Other Crops

Pumpkins were observed intercropped with maize and also beans in some parts.

Current Farming Activity

Few farmers were busy with weeding their fields. Some were replanting maize due to poor emergence while others were planting legumes.

VEGETATION AND LIVESTOCK.

Vegetation continues to decrease (**Image 1**) even though few rains were recently received. However, moderate vegetation growth is evident in the Highveld and parts of the Middleveld. The Lowveld continues to suffer from lack of rainfall, and rangelands are almost bare. As a result livestock continue to die and the remaining have poor body condition.

WATER SITUATION

Most rivers continue to dry up and water levels in major dams have severely decreased (**Picture 3**).



Picture 3: Water level severely decreased at Maguga Dam

Outlook for 5 – 15 January 2016

Rainfall

Slight chance of rainfall occurrence in the forecast period.

Temperature

Above average temperatures anticipated during the outlook period.

Soil Moisture

Decline in soil moisture forecasted for the outlook period.

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).