



AGROMETEOROLOGICAL UPDATE

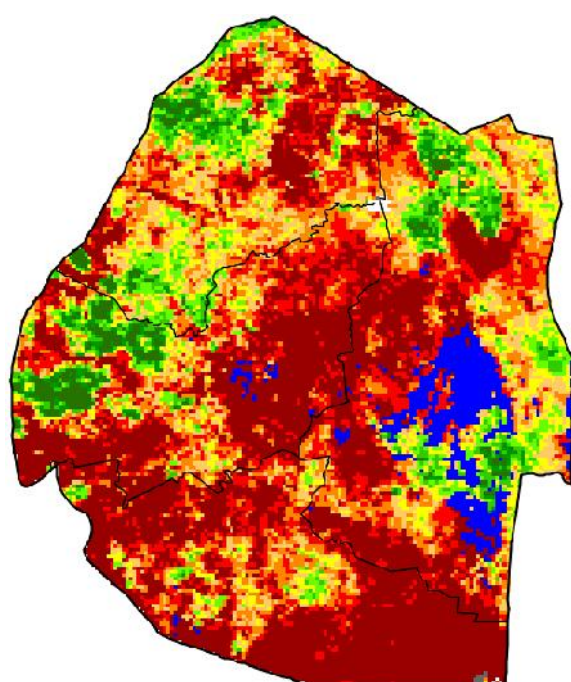


REPORTING PERIOD:
21 – 30 NOVEMBER 2015

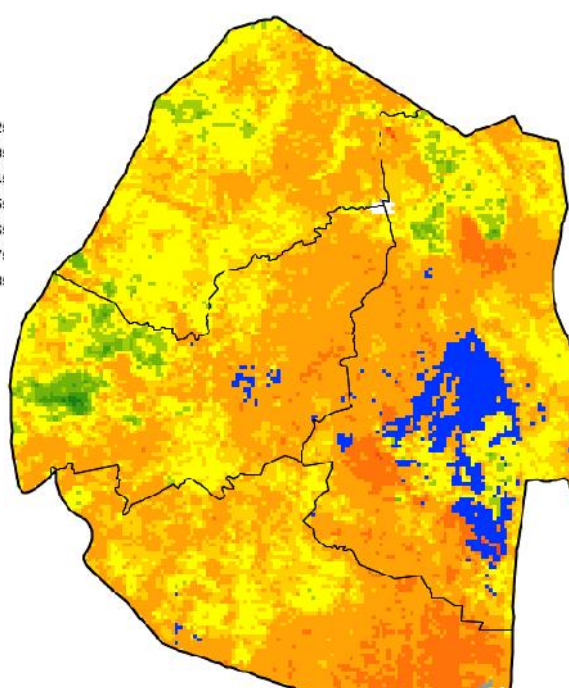
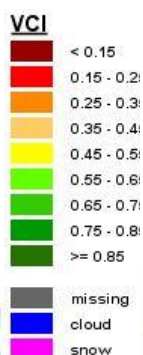
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HIGHLIGHTS

- Much reduced rains fell in some parts of the country...
- Warmer temperatures recorded in the Lowveld....
- Vegetation continues to decrease due to insufficient moisture....
- Some farmers have started land preparation....
- Average rainfall expected in the next dekad...
- Slightly warmer temperatures forecasted in most parts.....
- Slight decline in soil moisture expected.....



Legend



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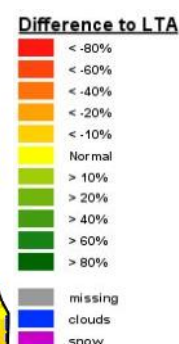


Image 1: Vegetation Condition Index image (3rd Dekad November 2015)

Image 2: Vegetation anomaly image (3rd Dekad November 2015)

MOISTURE AND HEAT STATUS

Rainfall

Much reduced rains were recorded in most stations in the country (Figure 1). These rains were much below both the long-term and the 2014/15 season.

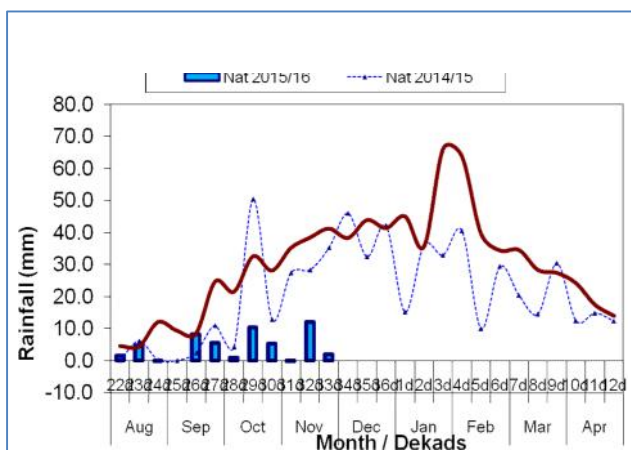
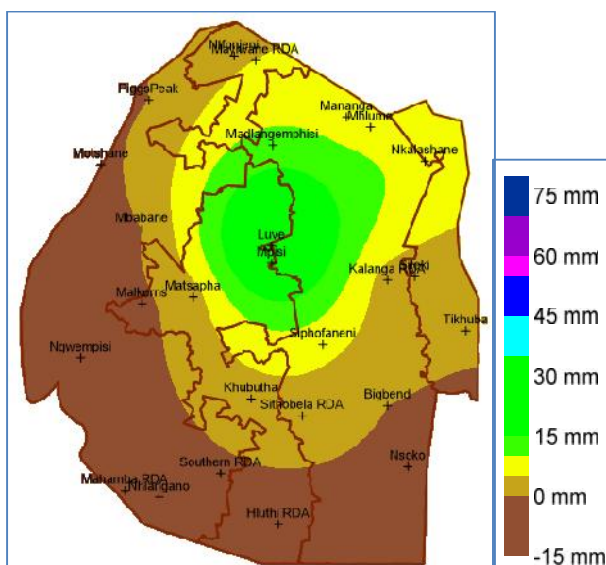


Figure 1: Rainfall temporal distribution as of 3rd Dekad November 2015



Map 1: Spatial rainfall distribution as of 3rd dekad November 2015

Most parts of the country received below 5 millimetres (mm) (Map 1) while a few parts recorded between 15 to 30 mm.

Table 1: Rainfall (mm) of 3rd dekad November 2015

	HV	MV	LV	LP
2014/15	53	46	22	20
Average	53	45	32	35
2015/16	2	6	8	1
Anomaly	-51	-38	-25	-34

Temperatures

Warm day temperatures were recorded in most stations in the Lowveld, Middleveld and the Plateau (**Table 2 below**). The Highveld recorded below average temperatures for both day and night temperatures.

Table 2: Temperatures (°C) for 3rd Dekad November 2015

Station	Element	3 rd dek November	Average	Depart
Mbabane	Max	NR	26.8	NR
	Min	15.5	16.3	-0.8
Piggs Peak	Max	25.1	27.3	-2.2
	Min	13.9	16.3	-2.5
Matsapha	Max	30.3	27.8	2.5
	Min	17.3	17.1	0.1
Malkerns	Max	29.4	27.1	2.4
	Min	15.9	16.1	-0.2
Siteki	Max	28.3	27.7	0.6
	Min	15.6	17.9	-2.3
Bigbend	Max	30.9	28.2	2.7
	Min	19.2	18.0	1.2
Mananga	Max	30.3	28.3	2.0
	Min	16.8	18.0	-1.2

CROP STATUS

Maize Crop Stage and Condition

Fields lie fallow (Picture 1) in most parts of the country including high producing areas such as the Highveld. Most cropland areas continue to be under severe stress (**Image 3**).



Picture 1: Fallow fields at Zombodze in the Highveld

Other Crops

Still no other crops have been planted yet.

Current Farming Activity

Some farmers have started land preparation activities

VEGETATION AND LIVESTOCK.

Vegetation condition has worsened due to shortage of moisture (**Image 1 above**). Livestock (cattle) continue to die while the remaining shows very poor body condition in the Lowveld, while in the Highveld they are excellent condition (Picture 2).



Picture 2: A bull grazing by the roadside at Nkhaba in the Highveld

WATER SITUATION

Most of the major Dams water levels have significantly declined (Picture 3) and some are on the verge of drying up completely.



Picture 3: Low levels at Maguga Dam in the Highveld

Outlook for 5 – 15 December 2015

Rainfall

Average rainfall is expected throughout the country in the outlook period.

Temperature

Slightly above average temperatures expected during the outlook period.

Soil Moisture

A slight decline in soil moisture is expected in most parts of the country.

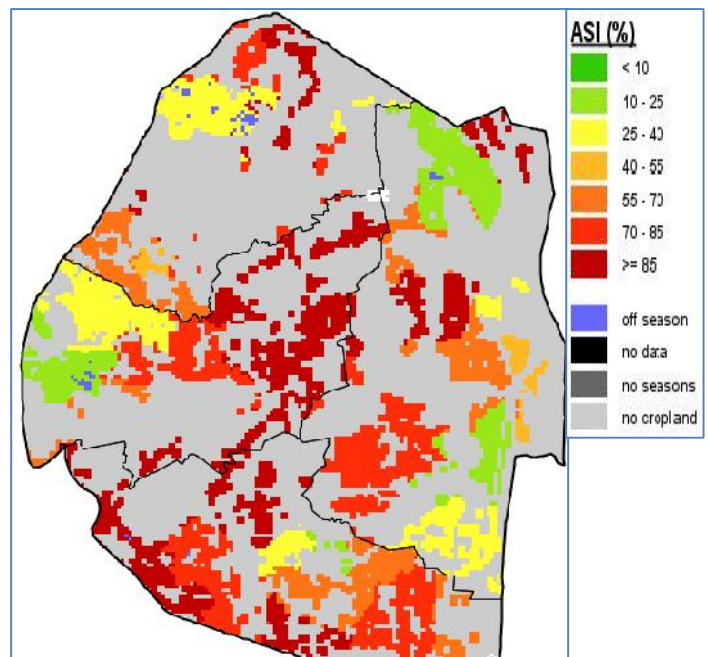


Image 3: Agricultural Stress Index for 3rd Dekad November 2015

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).