

SWAZILAND



AGROMETEOROLOGICAL UPDATE



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HIGHLIGHTS

- Improved rains fall in some parts of the country...
- An improvement on vegetation noted....
- A few farmers have commenced with planting...
- Maize crop germination witnessed in some parts...
- Slightly improved rains expected.....
- Warm temperatures anticipated.....
- An improvement in soil moisture expected....
- Land preparation and planting has commenced in some parts.....

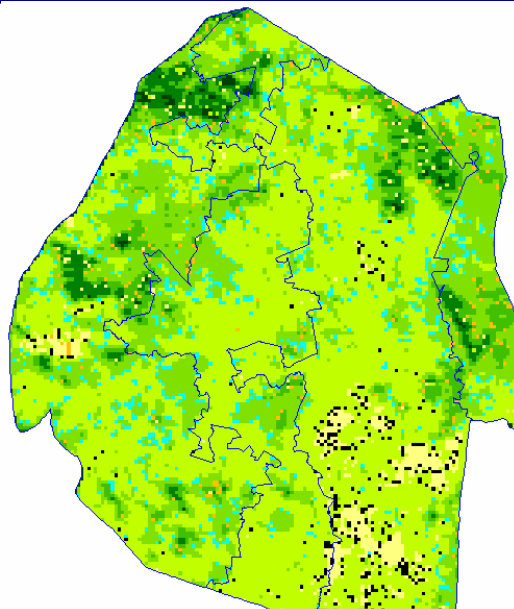


Image 1: Vegetation status as of 1st dekad October 2008

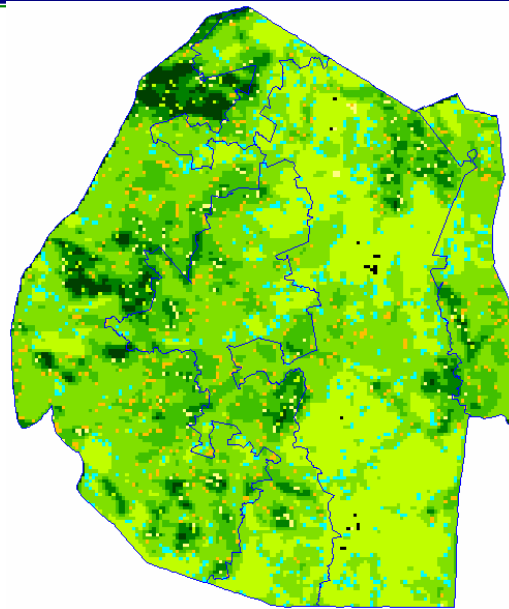


Image 2: Vegetation status as of 2nd dekad October 2008

Legend

- ☐ Clouds
- ☐ Water Bodies
- ☐ Bare Soil
- ☐ Almost Bare Soil
- ☐ Initial Vegetation
- ☐ Mode Vegetation
- ☐ Good Vegetation
- ☐ Healthy Vegetation
- ☐ Plantations

MOISTURE AND HEAT STATUS

Rainfall

Slightly improved rains were received in the Highveld, otherwise the other regions continued to experience drier conditions.

These rains are still below the longterm average but similar to those of last season (see figure 1 below).

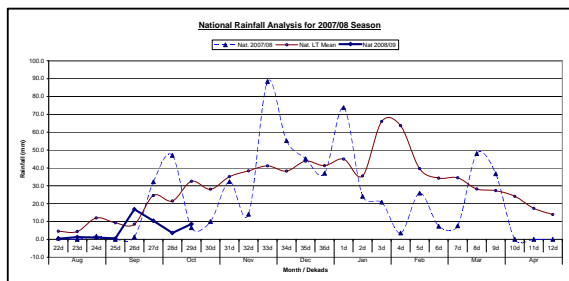


Figure 1: Seasonal rainfall distribution as of 2nd Dekad October 2008

Temperatures

Warmer than average temperatures were observed in most parts of the country with only below average minimum temperatures in Mbabane, Piggs Peak in the Highveld and Siteki in the Lubombo Plateau (**Table 2 below**).

Table 1: Temperatures (°C) for 2nd Dekad October 2008

Station	Element	2 nd dek October	Average	Depart
Mbabane	Max	27.8	25.4	2.4
	Min	13.6	14.0	-0.4
Piggs Peak	Max	27.5	25.7	1.8
	Min	11.7	14.6	-3.0
Nhlangano	Max	27.6	25.5	2.1
	Min	14.4	14.0	0.4
Siteki	Max	28.9	26.3	2.6
	Min	15.5	15.7	-0.3
Bigbend	Max	33.6	26.8	6.8
	Min	18.4	15.8	2.7

CROP STATUS

Maize Crop Stage and Condition

A few of the early dry planted crops have germinated and are in a good state in some parts of the Highveld.

Other Crops

No information as yet of other planted crops.

Current Farming Activity

Land preparation and planting is gaining some momentum when compared to last dekad.

VEGETATION AND LIVESTOCK

Remote sensing satellite images show signs of improvement in vegetation development when compared to the last ten-days (dekad). The areas which depicted almost bare soil to bare soil show an initiation of early vegetation like grasses.

Livestock were found to be improving in most parts of the country.

Outlook for 25 October – 10 November 2008

Rainfall

There are improved chances of significant rainfall over most parts of the country.

Temperature

Warm to mild temperatures can be expected over the forecast period.

Soil Moisture

A slight improvement in soil moisture is also expected.

CONTRIBUTORS, PARTNERS AND SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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

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