



# AGROMETEOROLOGICAL UPDATE



REPORTING PERIOD:  
1 – 10 APRIL 2016

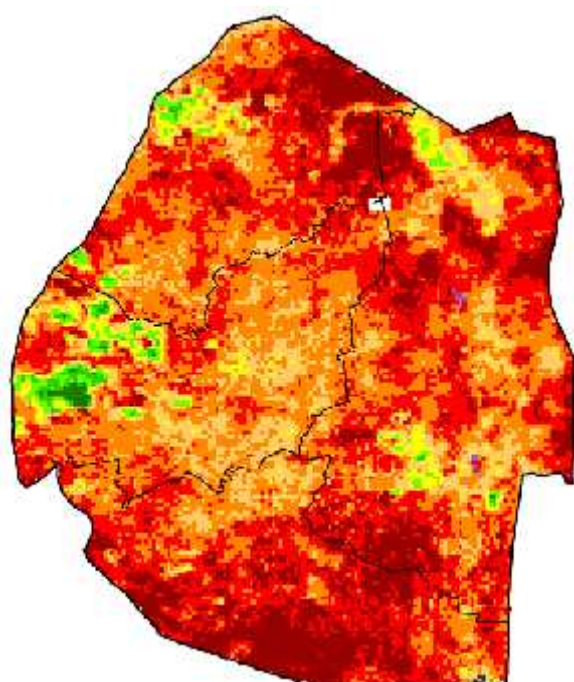
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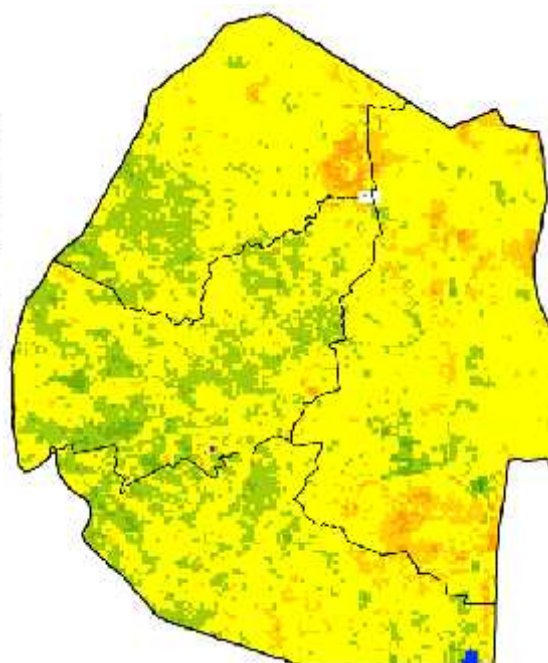
RELEASED: 15/04/2016

## HIGHLIGHTS

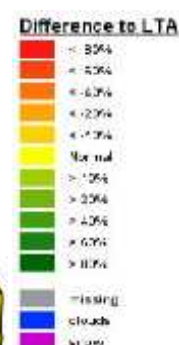
- Below average rainfall received in most past during the dekad...
- Vegetation is slightly improving....
- Few farmers harvesting....
- Below average rainfall expected in the next dekad...
- Above average temperatures forecasted in most parts.....
- Reduced soil moisture expected.....



### Legend



### Legend



**Image 1:** Mean Vegetation Health Index image (1<sup>st</sup> Dekad April 2016) Source: FAO-GIEWS

**Image 2:** Vegetation anomaly image (1<sup>st</sup> Dekad April 2016) Source: FAO-GIEWS

## MOISTURE AND HEAT STATUS

### Rainfall

Below average rainfall was received during the first dekad of April in most parts of the country (Figure 1 and Map 1 below).

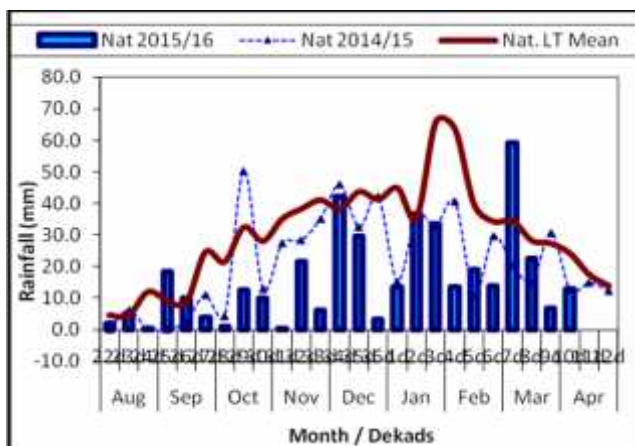
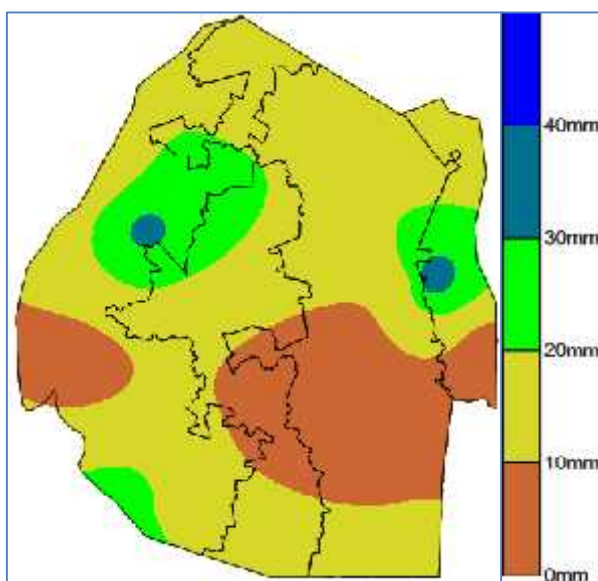


Figure 1: Rainfall distribution as first dekad of April 2016



Map 1: Spatial rainfall distribution for first dekad April 2016

The Highveld and Lubombo Plateau received an amount greater than that of the previous season 2014/15 but below that of long term. The Middleveld and Lowveld received amounts below that of

previous season and long term (Table 1).

Table 1: Rainfall (mm) for 1<sup>st</sup> dekad April 2016

	HV	MV	LV	LP
2014/15	14	12	17	7
<b>Average</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>29</b>
2015/16	16	7	6	22
<b>Anomaly</b>	<b>-9</b>	<b>-17</b>	<b>-12</b>	<b>-7</b>

### Temperatures

Cool to warm temperatures were experienced throughout the country in the reporting period as most weather stations recorded slightly below to slightly above average temperatures (Table 2 below).

Table 2: Temperatures (°C) for 1<sup>st</sup> Dekad April 2016

Station	Element	1 <sup>st</sup> dek Apr	Average	Depart
Mbabane	Max	NR	26.0	NR
	Min	13.9	14.0	-0.1
Piggs Peak	Max	22.1	26.3	-4.1
	Min	14.8	14.6	0.2
Nhlangano	Max	26.4	26.1	0.3
	Min	12.8	14.5	-1.6
Ngwempisi	Max	26.5	25.9	0.6
	Min	13.1	14.0	-0.9
Matsapha	Max	24.9	27.0	-2.1
	Min	16.5	15.0	1.5
Siteki	Max	NR	27.2	NR
	Min	15.8	16.3	-0.4
Mananga	Max	28.4	27.6	0.8
	Min	18.6	16.3	2.3

## CROP STATUS

### Maize Crop Stage and Condition

Most maize crops are in maturity to drying stages (Picture 1) and observed to be in moderate to good condition

In certain parts, the crop is ready for harvesting.

## Outlook for 15 - 25 April 2016



Picture 1: Maize crop in drying stage

### Rainfall

Below average rainfall is expected during the outlook period.

### Temperature

Above average temperatures are expected in next ten days.

### Soil Moisture

Decline in soil moisture anticipated due to reduced rainfall.

### Other Crops

Other crops ripening are sorghum and pumpkins amongst others.

### Current Farming Activity

A few farmers that planted have started harvesting.

## VEGETATION AND LIVESTOCK.

There is a slight improvement in vegetation (**Image 1**). Cattle mortality has stabilized a little but still highly likely to have high mortality rates especially in the Lowveld as the dry winter period commences.

## WATER SITUATION

The recent rains have slightly improved water levels in rivers and Dams. However, there are still water shortages in some parts, hence water rationing which was halted for about two weeks in Mbabane has since commenced again.

## 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).