



# AGROMETEOROLOGICAL UPDATE



REPORTING PERIOD:  
11 – 20 APRIL 2016

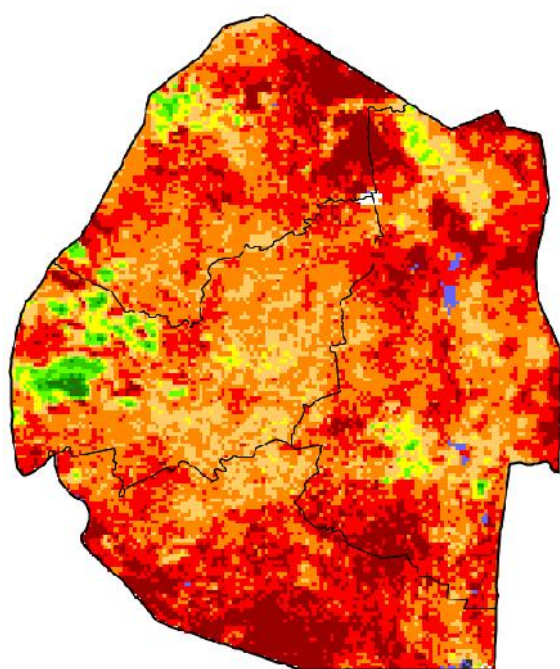
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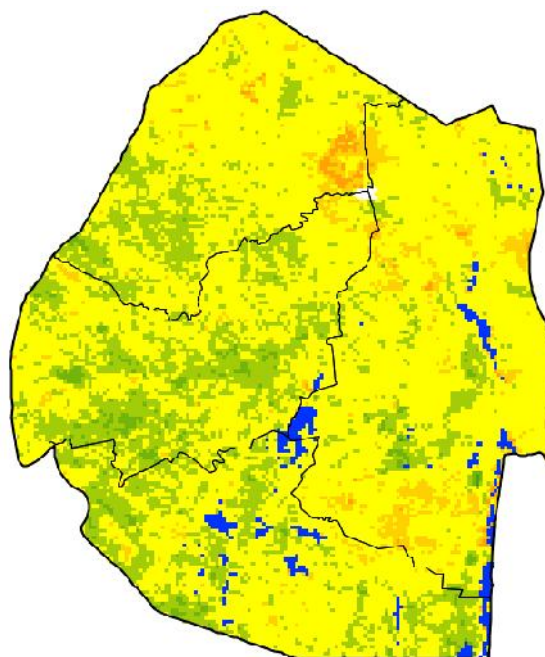
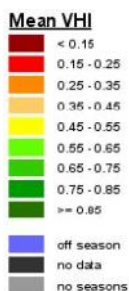
RELEASED: 25/04/2016

## HIGHLIGHTS

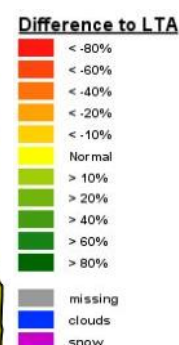
- Insignificant rainfall received in some parts during the dekad...
- Minimum improvement in vegetation....
- Some farmers engaged in farming activities....
- Below average rainfall expected in the next dekad...
- Average to slightly above average temperatures forecasted in most parts.....
- Slight decline in soil moisture expected.....



### Legend



### Legend



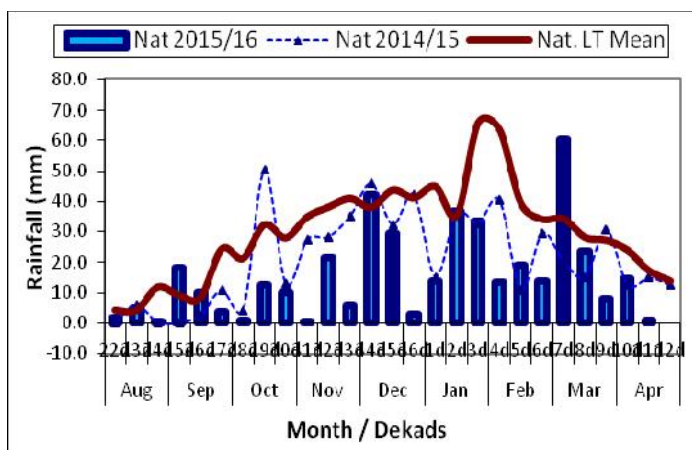
**Image 1:** Mean Vegetation Health Index image (2<sup>nd</sup> Dekad April 2016) Source: FAO-GIEWS

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

## MOISTURE AND HEAT STATUS

### Rainfall

Much reduced rainfall was observed during the reporting period in most parts of the country (**Figure 1**). These rains were below that of the long-term and last season.



**Figure 1: Rainfall distribution as of second dekad of April 2016**

All the agro-ecological zones received much below average rainfall of less than 2 mm (**Table 1**).

**Table 1: Rainfall (mm) for 2<sup>nd</sup> dekad April 2016**

	HV	MV	LV	LP
2014/15	12	15	22	10
<b>Average</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>
2015/16	1	1	1	0
<b>Anomaly</b>	<b>-25</b>	<b>-19</b>	<b>-11</b>	<b>-11</b>

### Temperatures

Warm to hot day temperatures were recorded over the country during the reporting period. All the weather stations recorded above average temperatures (**Table 2 below**).

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

Station	Element	2 <sup>nd</sup> dek Apr	Average	Depart
Mbabane	Max	NR	24.7	NR
	Min	14.4	12.2	2.2
Piggs Peak	Max	25.9	25.3	0.6
	Min	15.7	12.9	2.8
Nhlangano	Max	NR	26.1	NR
	Min	13.2	13.0	0.2
Matsapha	Max	29.1	25.9	3.2
	Min	17.2	13.3	3.9
Malkerns	Max	28.1	25.9	2.2
	Min	15.7	13.3	2.4
Siteki	Max	NR	26.3	NR
	Min	17.1	15.0	2.2
Mananga	Max	31.3	26.7	4.6
	Min	18.5	14.8	3.7

## CROP STATUS

### Maize Crop Stage and Condition

Maize is currently in the drying stage (**Picture 1**), while most is at maturity stage and ready for harvesting.



**Picture 1: Maize at drying stage**

### **Other Crops**

Other crops such as pumpkins are maturing and some legumes have reached maturity and currently being harvested.

### **Current Farming Activity**

Some farmers are busy harvesting maize and some legumes, such as, peanuts from their fields.

## **VEGETATION AND LIVESTOCK.**

Vegetation continues to slightly improve in most parts of the country, except for some parts in the northern Lowveld (**Image 1**). Grazing areas are also showing signs of improvement in some parts of the country. Livestock also continues to improve in the drought stricken areas.

## **WATER SITUATION**

Most water reservoirs and rivers have not significantly improved since the recent rainfall episodes that have also since diminished.

## **Outlook for 26 - 5 May 2016**

### **Rainfall**

Below average rainfall forecasted in the next dekad.

### **Temperature**

Average to slightly above average temperatures expected in the next dekad.

### **Soil Moisture**

Light decline in soil moisture anticipated in the next dekad.

## 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).