

AGROMETEOROLOGICAL BULLETIN

Doc No: TEA 3/3/7/2 F-004

Revision No: 1

Effective Date: 01.07.2017

Page No: 1 of 5

Approved by:

**REPORTING PERIOD:
01 – 10 DECEMBER 2018**



ISSUE No.: 07

SEASON: 2018/19

RELEASED: 14/12/2018

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HIGHLIGHTS

- **Much improved rainfall received...**
- **Vegetation decreasing....**
- **Land preparation and planting activities observed....**
- **Reduced rainfall forecasted.....**
- **Warm to hot temperatures anticipated.....**
- **Slight improvement in soil moisture expected.....**

RAINFALL AND TEMPERATURES

RAINFALL

Much improved rainfall was observed in the country during the first dekad of December 2018 (**Figure 1**) and (**Map1**). Hailstorms were experienced in the lower part of the country bringing much damage to property (**Image 1**).

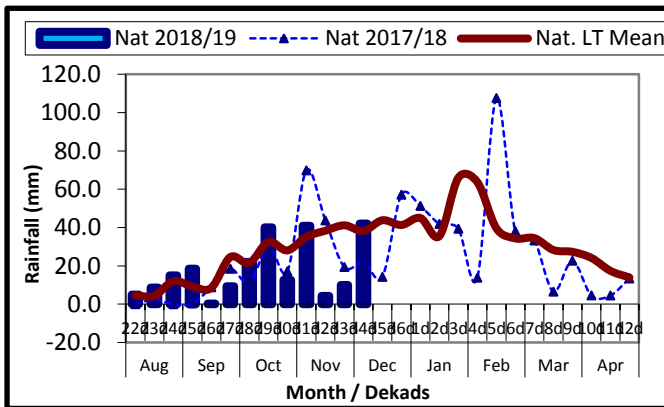
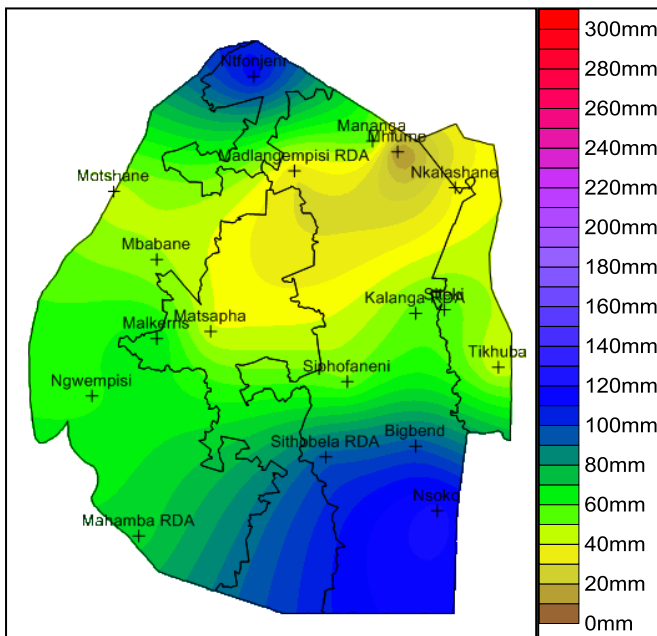


Figure 1: Rainfall distribution as first dekad of December 2018



Map 1: Spatial rainfall distribution for first dekad December 2018

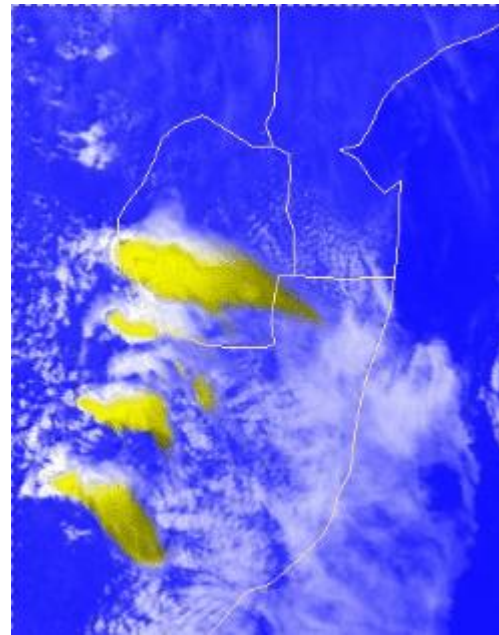


Image 2: Storm that occurred on the 4th of December 2018

The lower part of the Lowveld and Lubombo Plateau recorded the most amounts above that of their long-term mean, while the Highveld and Middleveld remained with below average observations (**Table 1**).

Table 1: Rainfall (mm) for 1st dekad December 2018

	HV	MV	LV	LP
2017/18	38	24	14	12
Average	54	39	30	30
2018/19	41	21	59	47
Anomaly	-13	-18	29	17

TEMPERATURES

Temperatures ranged between 13°C and 35°C during the reporting period (**Figure 2**) and (**Figure 3**).

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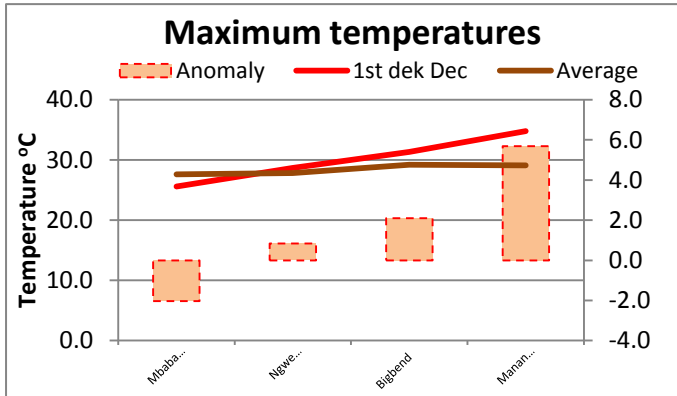


Figure 3: Maximum temperature as first dekad of December 2018

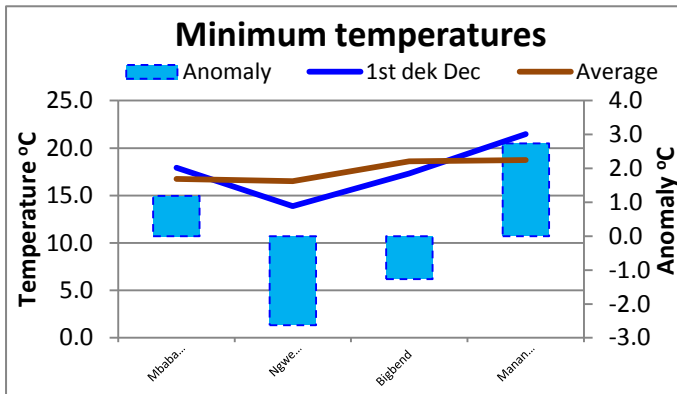


Figure 2: Minimum temperature as first dekad of December 2018



Picture 1: Maize at Ezulwini the Highveld

OTHER CROPS

About 1000ha of cotton reported to have been planted and at germination stage.

CURRENT FARMING ACTIVITY

The recent rains brought much relief to farmers as most have resumed land preparation and planting. According to the Ministry of Agriculture, short maturing varieties are recommended at this time of the season.

Legumes that may be planted include groundnuts and sugar beans, as well as beans in Highveld as crop failure occurs in high temperatures. Cowpeas may be planted between December and January.

Farmers are advised to scout for Fall Army Worm (FAW) for early detection and control.

MAIZE AND OTHER CROPS

MAIZE CROP STAGE AND CONDITION

Most maize crops are at emergence stage and fairly good condition. Most survived the hailstorm as they are still at early stages (Picture 1).

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LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES

Livestock continues to be doing well in most parts of the country even though vegetation shows a decrease as a result of the dry spells in the previous dekads (**Image 3**). No pests and diseases have been reported as yet.

WATER SITUATION

Water levels continue to be stable. The sugarcane season contributes to much usage of water in most Dams.

MEDIUM-TERM OUTLOOK

RAINFALL

Reduced rainfall is forecast for the outlook period, mostly in the South-Eastern part of the country.

TEMPERATURE

Warm to hot temperatures are expected in the outlook period.

SOIL MOISTURE

Slight improvement in soil moisture anticipated in the outlook period.

WIND SPEED

Wind will be light to moderate breeze speeds in the outlook period.

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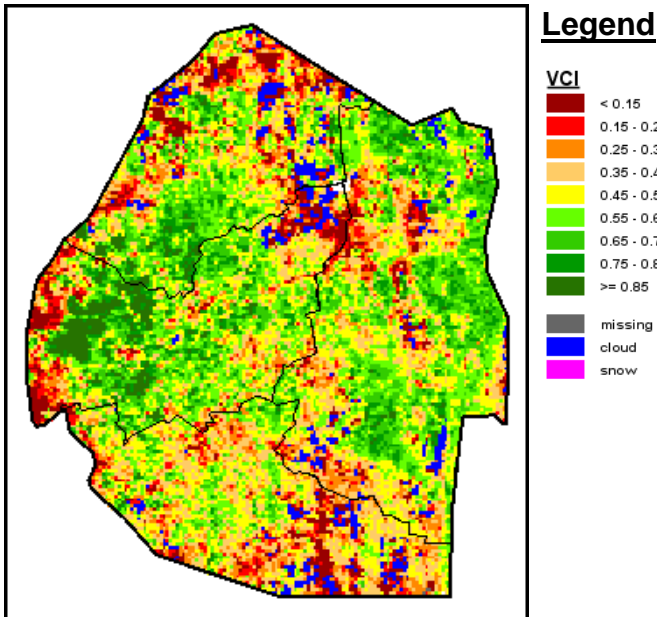


Image 2: Vegetation Condition Index image (1st Dekad December 2018) Source: FAO-GIEWS

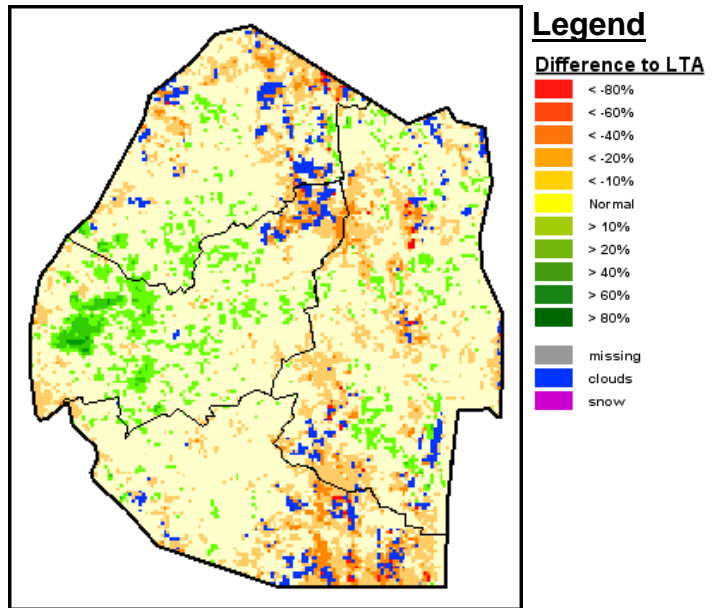


Image 3: Vegetation Anomaly image (1st Dekad December 2018) Source: FAO-GIEWS