



# AGROMETEOROLOGICAL UPDATE



REPORTING PERIOD:  
21 – 30 APRIL 2016

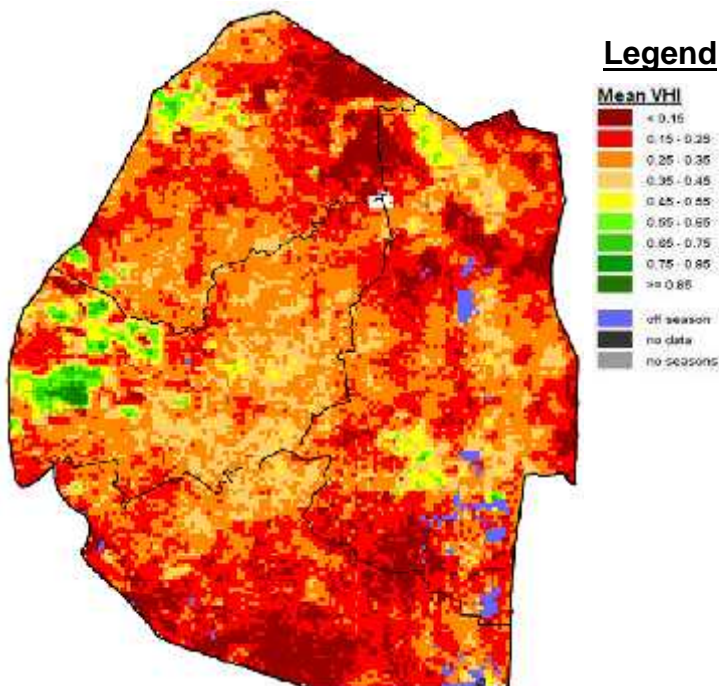
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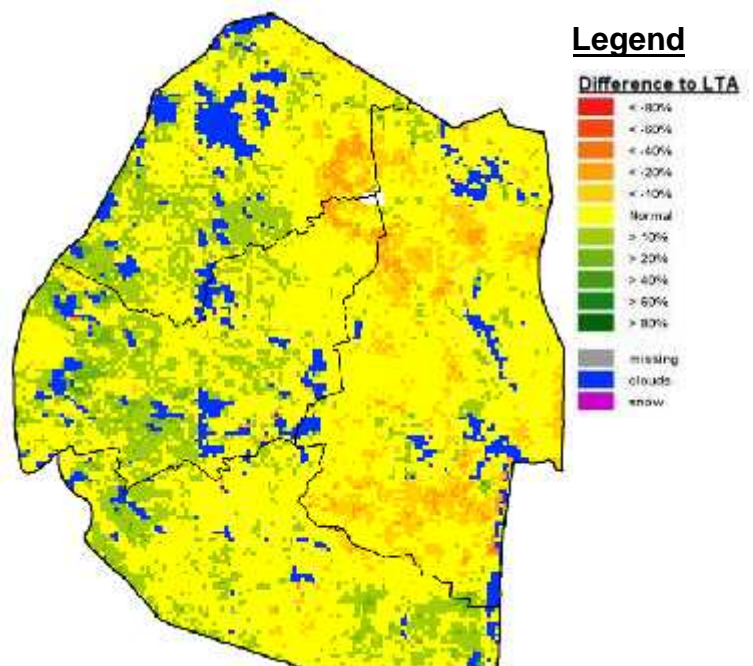
RELEASED: 05/05/2016

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Insignificant rainfall received in some parts during the dekad...
- Decrease in vegetation noticed....
- Most farmers engaged in farming activities....
- Below average rainfall expected in the next dekad...
- Average to slightly above average temperatures forecasted in most parts.....
- Decrease in soil moisture expected.....



**Image 1:** Mean Vegetation Health Index image (3<sup>rd</sup> Dekad April 2016) Source: FAO-GIEWS



**Image 2:** Vegetation anomaly image (3<sup>rd</sup> Dekad April 2016) Source: FAO-GIEWS

## MOISTURE AND HEAT STATUS

### Rainfall

Insignificant rains fell in some parts of the country during the reporting period (Figure 1).

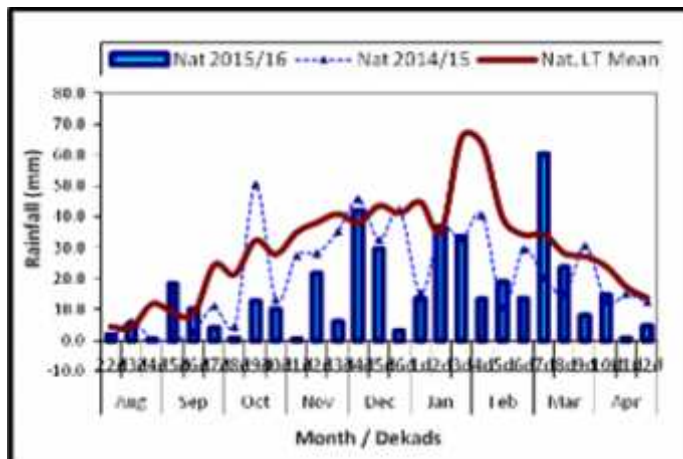


Figure 1: Rainfall distribution as third dekad of April 2016

Most areas received no rainfall as most rainfall stations recorded zero amounts of rainfall. All the agroecological zones received rainfall less than that of last season 2014/15 and long term average (Table 1).

Table 1: Rainfall (mm) for 3<sup>rd</sup> dekad April 2016

	HV	MV	LV	LP
2014/15	12	2	4	32
<b>Average</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>20</b>
2015/16	3	0	2	13
<b>Anomaly</b>	<b>-11</b>	<b>-11</b>	<b>-9</b>	<b>-7</b>

### Temperatures

Warm to hot temperatures were experienced throughout the country in the reporting period. Most weather stations recorded above average temperatures (Table 2 below).

Table 2: Temperatures (°C) for 3<sup>rd</sup> Dekad April 2016

Station	Element	3 <sup>rd</sup> dek Apr	Average	Depart
Mbabane	Max	NR	24.5	NR
	Min	14.5	11.3	3.2
Piggs Peak	Max	25.3	25.0	0.3
	Min	15.8	11.7	4.1
Nhlangano	Max	NR	24.7	NR
	Min	14.0	11.8	2.2
Ngwempisi	Max	28.5	24.6	3.8
	Min	10.1	11.2	-1.1
Matsapha	Max	29.4	25.6	3.8
	Min	16.6	12.3	4.2
Malkerns	Max	28.9	25.6	3.3
	Min	15.0	12.3	2.6
Siteki	Max	NR	25.9	NR
	Min	13.5	13.8	-0.3
Bigbend	Max	33.2	26.4	6.8
	Min	15.5	13.8	1.7
Mananga	Max	31.2	26.2	5.0
	Min	18.0	13.6	4.4

## CROP STATUS

### Maize Crop Stage and Condition

Most maize is drying up while some is ready for harvesting. Most of the maize is in good condition and a good yield may be expected, especially in the Highveld and moist Middleveld.

### Other Crops

Other crops include groundnuts and pumpkins which are currently being harvested.

### Current Farming Activity

Farmers are currently harvesting their maize crops (Picture 1) and some legumes, such as, groundnuts.

## Outlook for 05 - 15 May 2016

### Rainfall

Insignificant rainfall forecasted in the outlook period.

### Temperature

Slightly below average to average temperatures anticipated in most parts in the outlook period.

### Soil Moisture

A decrease in soil moisture expected in the outlook period.



Picture 1: A section of maize harvested

## VEGETATION AND LIVESTOCK.

There is no much improvement in vegetation (**Image 1**) due to insufficient moisture. Livestock on the other hand are observed to be have recuperated well and in good condition.

## WATER SITUATION

Water situation has not improved as main water sources levels remains low. Most rivers and boreholes dried up and water level in major dams is low (**Picture 2**).



Picture 2: Water level remains low at Hawane Dam

## 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).