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**ESWATINI**



**AGROMETEOROLOGICAL  
BULLETIN**

**QUARTERLY**

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Period:      July - September 2018  
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**Issue No. 2 of 2 / 2018** **Release date:03/10/2018**

**Highlights**

- Improved rainfall observed during the reporting period...
- Mostly vegetable production...
- Livestock reported in good condition...
- Above to below average season is predicted...

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# AGROMETEOROLOGICAL BULLETIN

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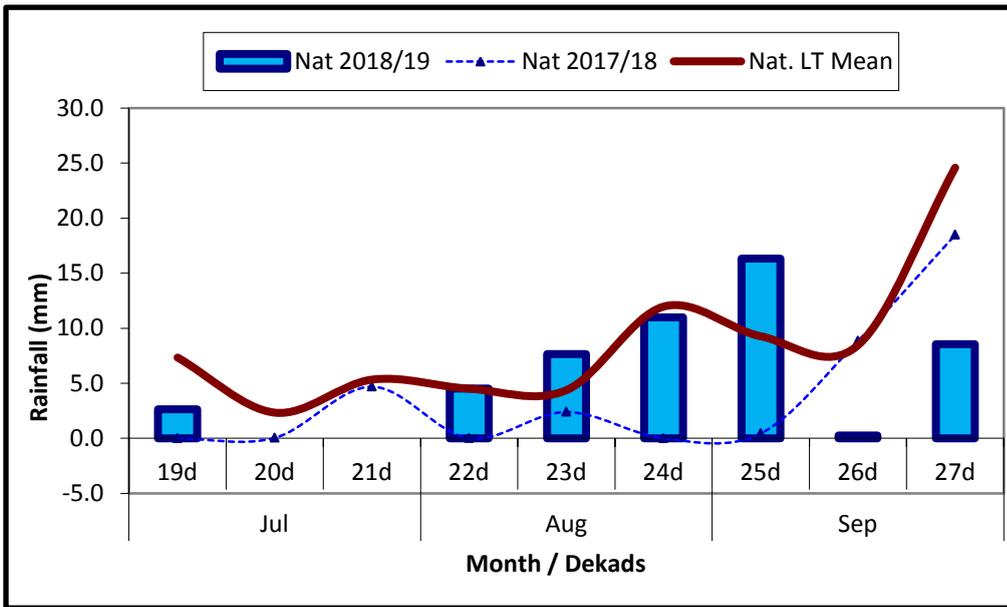
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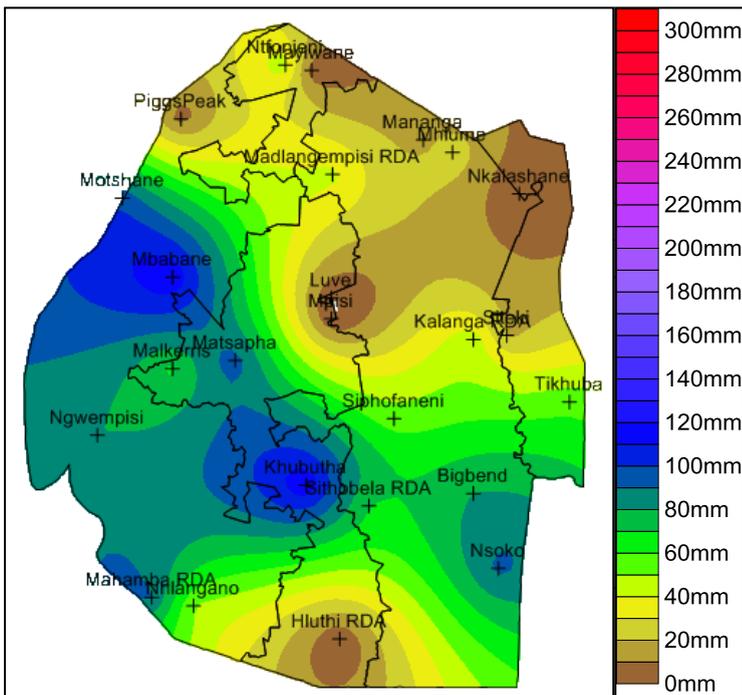
## AGRO-CLIMATE SITUATION

### Rainfall Summary

The month of July was relatively dry with rains picking up in August and September. Rainfall observed during the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter was mostly below the long term mean, but better than that of previous season (**Figure 1**).



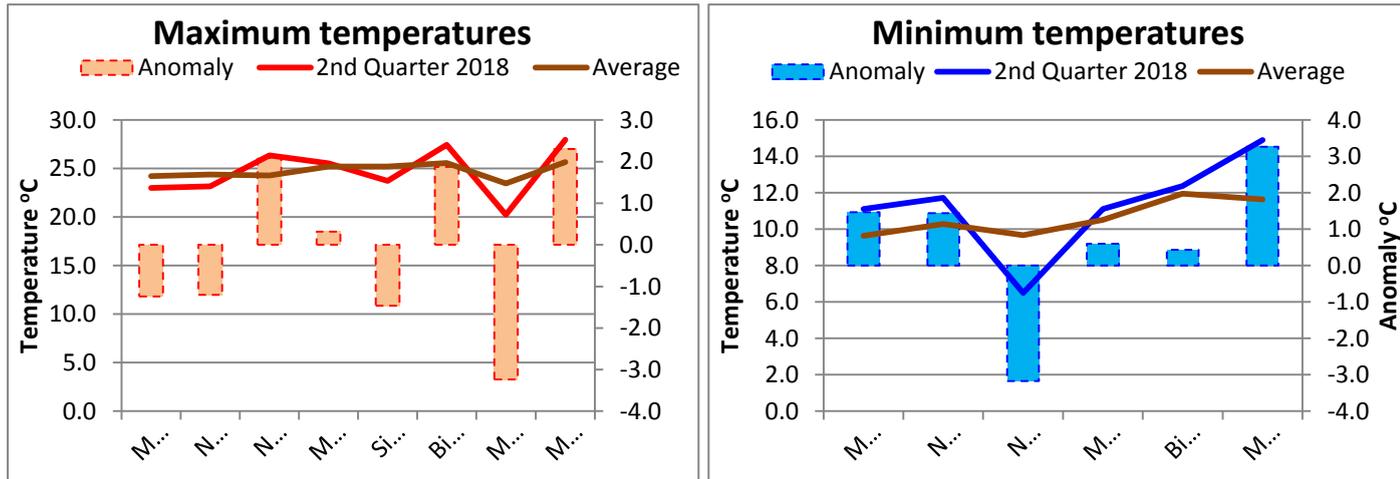
**Figure 1: Rainfall distribution for July-September 2018**



**Map 1: Rainfall distribution for July - September 2018**

**Temperature**

Temperatures were cold to warm during the quarter as most stations recorded below to above average maximum and minimum temperatures. The lowest temperature was slightly above 6°C while the lowest observed was 28°C.



**Figure 2 and 3: Maximum and Minimum temperature distribution during the 3 months**

**Wind**

Moderate wind speeds were observed during the months July and September ranging from 1-3m/s and escalating a bit in the month of July 2018.

**Soil Moisture**

Soil moisture continued to decline during the quarter and only started improving towards the end from the Spring rains.

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## **AGRICULTURE PERFORMANCE**

### **Crop performance**

Vegetable production was mostly prevalent in community gardens and farmer association groups during the reporting period and few maize crops under irrigation. Only a few homestead gardens were seen with different types of vegetables; ranging from cabbages, spinach, and lettuce. These crops were found to be doing well as they were mostly irrigated. Annual crops such as sugarcane were also found to be in fair condition countrywide.

### **Livestock status**

Cattle deaths have also been significantly low. Livestock deaths are back to pre-drought levels because of improved pastures and improved water availability. Cattle were found to be in a good state during the reporting period.

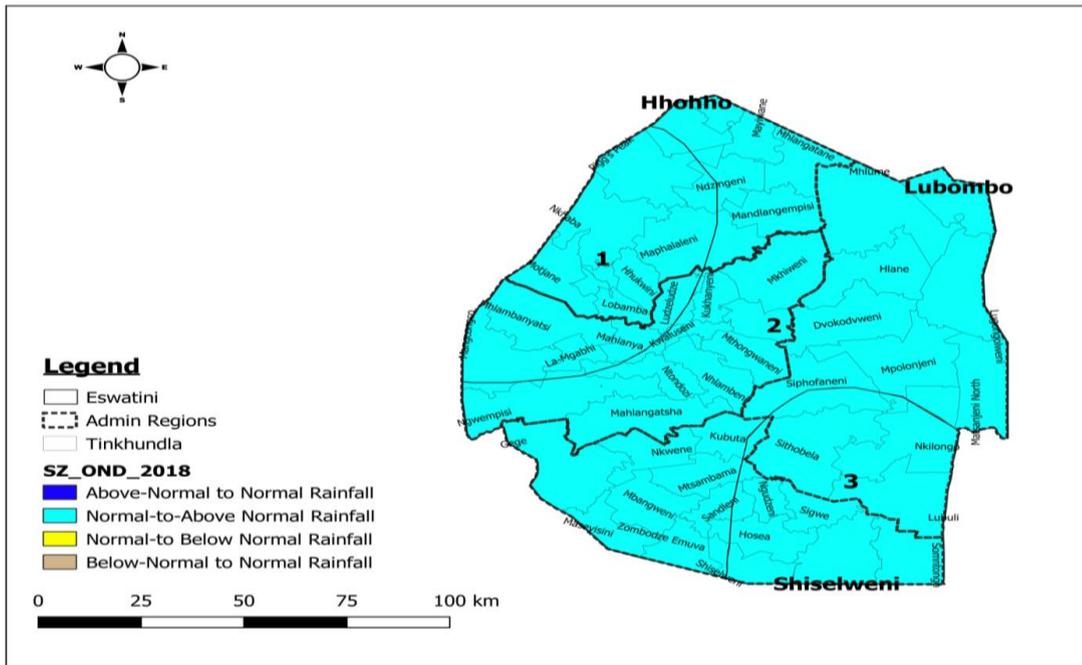
### **Hydrological situation**

Most parts of the country had normal to low water levels. Areas in the Highveld reported good water levels and have sustained cattle during the quarter. However, levels have been dropping due to low rainfall during the reporting period.

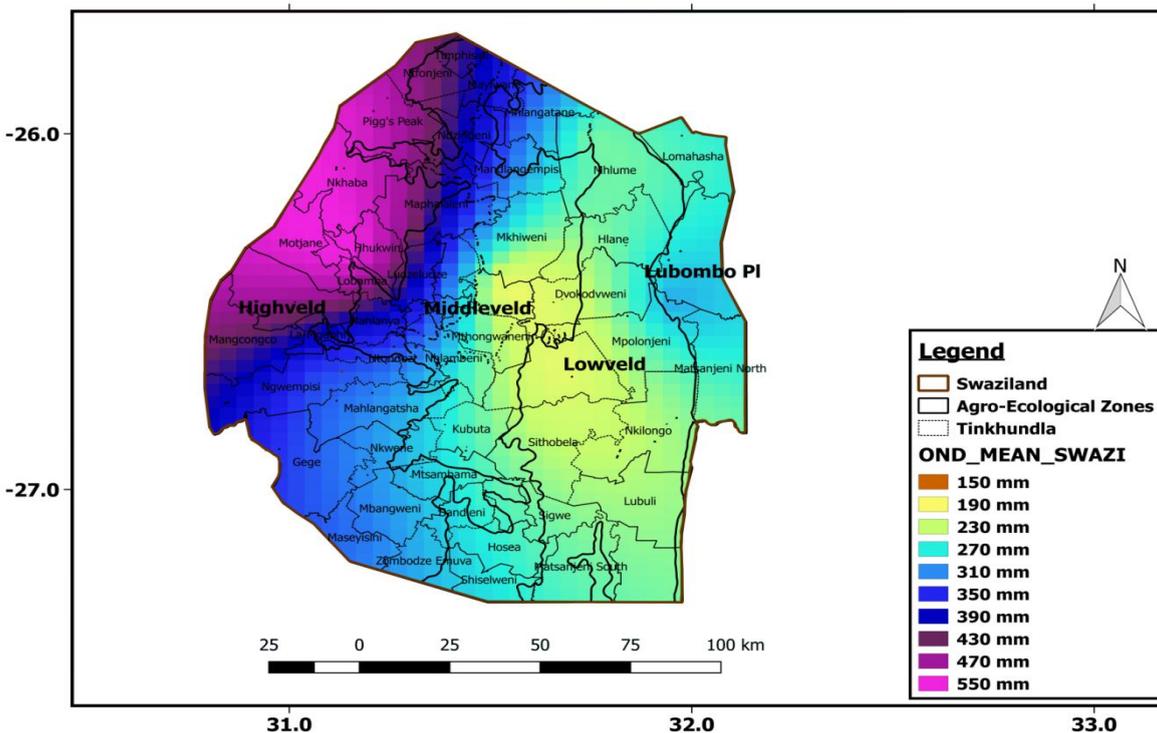
**CLIMATE OUTLOOK**

**October – November - December 2018 (OND) Rainfall**

During these months it is forecasted that rains will be average to above average. Meaning that the expectation is what is usually observed during this time and can be more (**Map 2**). Average rainfall that is normally received during these months ranges from 310-550mm in the Highveld, 230-350mm in the Middleveld, 190-270mm in the Lowveld and 270-310mm in the Lubombo Plateau (**Map 3**).



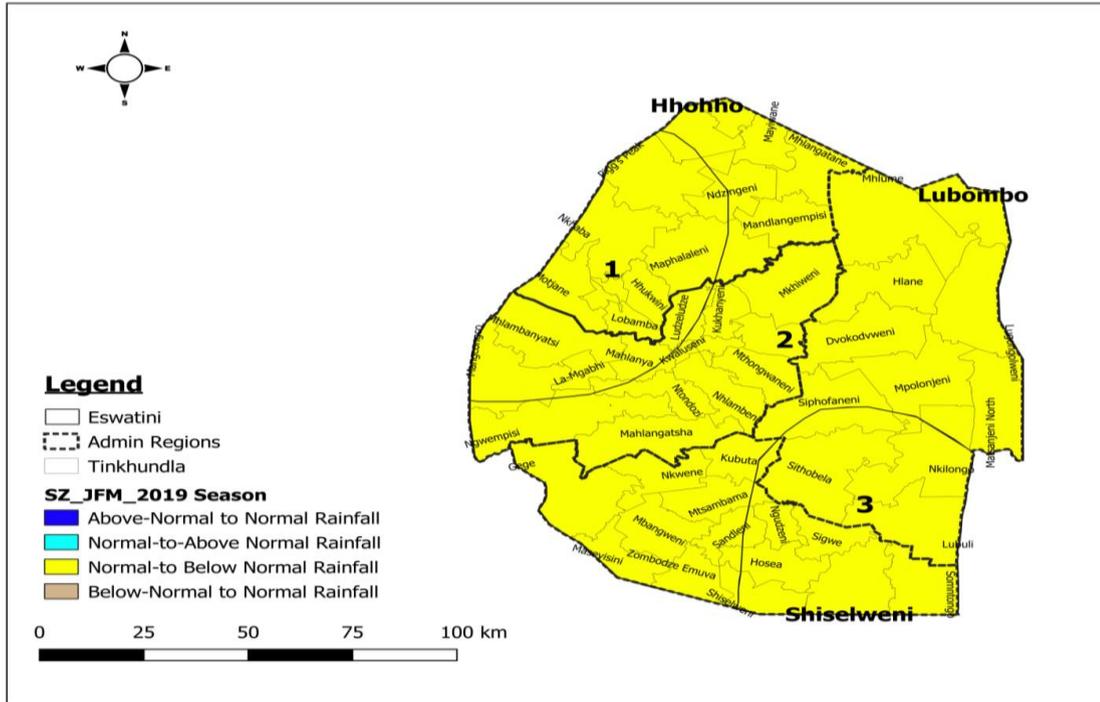
**Map 2: Rainfall forecast during October-November-December 2018**



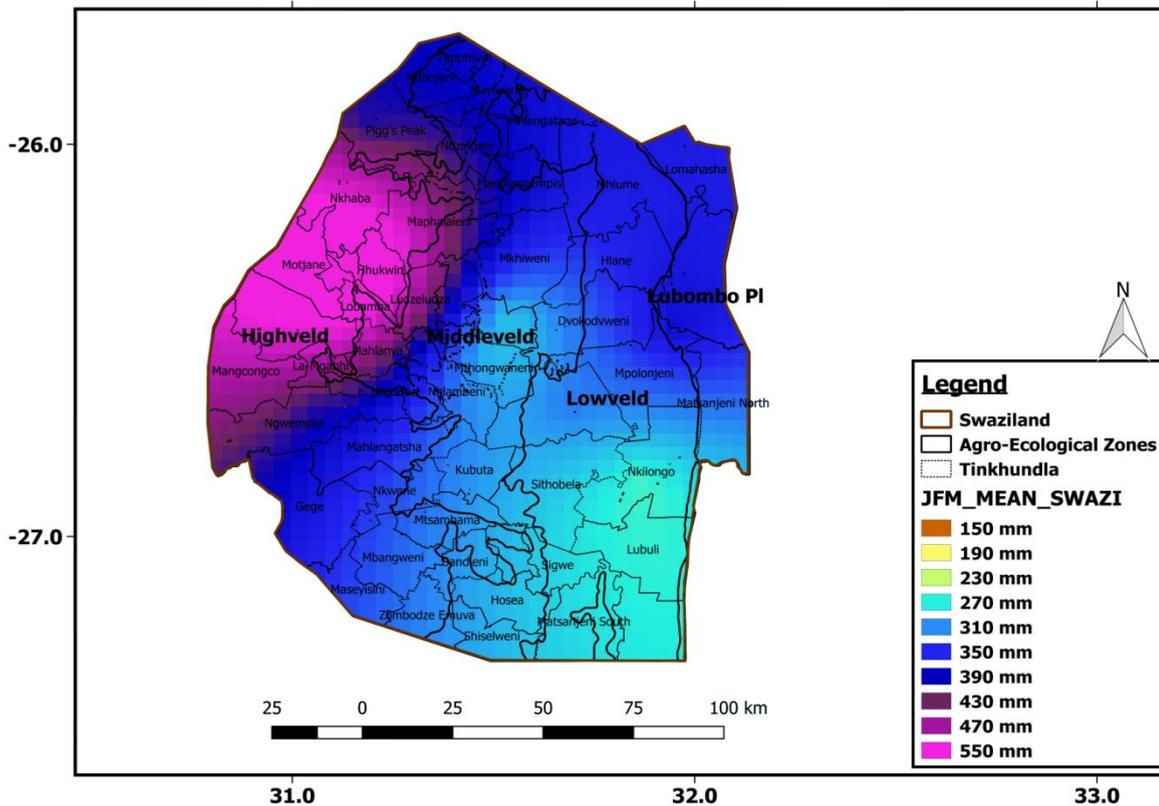
**Map 3: Average rainfall during October-November-December**

**January – February - March 2018 (JFM) Rainfall**

During these months it is forecasted that rains will be average to below average. Meaning that the expectation is what is usually observed during this time and may even be lower than the normal. Average rainfall that is normally received during these months is shown in **Map 4**, while **Map 5** shows forecast.



**Map 4: Rainfall forecast during January-February-March 2018**



**Map 5: Average rainfall during January-February-March 2018**

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**SEASONAL OUTLOOK ADVISORY**

Farmers are encouraged to plant early and use short maturing as well as drought tolerant varieties as rains are forecasted to decline in the second half of the season. This will help reduce crop damage due to prolonged dry spells that are often accompanied by high temperatures. They further urged to prepare alternative livestock feed to cater for livestock during the relative dry period.

Water users are encouraged to harvest and store water during the wet period while practicing water saving techniques.