



RISK MANAGEMENT 2025/26

CUMULUS

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Summary

Thundershowers over the central to eastern and northern parts

More thundershowers will occur over the interior during the next few days, including the summer grain-production region. While thundershowers will initially favour the central interior, most of the activity will shift to the eastern and northern parts during the weekend and early next week. Mild to cool conditions with extensive cloud cover are indicated for the northeastern parts from Sunday into early next week, while it will be warmer over the southern parts of the country. Thereafter, current forecasts suggest a shift of thundershowers back to the central parts by the middle of next week. A significant weather event may occur later next week when a strong high-pressure ridge influences the country. This may be associated with more widespread rainfall and an influx of cool to cold air over the eastern parts.

Recent wetter conditions over the summer rainfall region correspond to decreasing convection over the Indian Ocean, but circulation features over the Southern Hemisphere are still somewhat unfavourable, as seen by the regular influence of cold fronts extending from the western into the southern and central interior, resulting in drier and cooler conditions at times. The tendency for the anomalously northward extent of cold fronts and the resultant influx of cooler, dry air into the interior is expected to continue into November.

The expected late October and early November wetter period has commenced, with more rain expected over the next few days. Looking further ahead, current forecasts are less optimistic for wet conditions by the second week of the month. For now, the shift in convection away from the Indian Ocean bodes well for rainfall in South Africa. Some forecast models, however, indicate the potential shift of cloud bands towards the east of the subcontinent by the second week of November. Moreover, the regular influx of cool to cold air over the eastern parts, as observed in recent days, has in the past been associated with lower rainfall, especially over the eastern parts of the country. Forecast models indicate the possibility of one or more such events, where cooler to cold air may be pushed into the northeastern to eastern parts from the southeast (for example, possibly by next Thursday). The situation will be monitored.

Given the current expected development of a La Niña, seasonal forecasts still indicate a relatively wet summer over the interior. However, while still leaning towards normal or wetter-than-normal conditions, the latest forecasts issued in October are somewhat less indicative of wet conditions during the mid- to late-summer period than those issued in September.

The following is a summary of weather conditions during the next few days (until middle next week):

- On average, temperatures will be near- to below-normal, and it will be cooler than the previous week over most of the interior.
- A cold front will result in cooler conditions with showers over the winter rainfall region on Friday and Saturday.
- The cold front will also bring cooler, windy conditions over the southern and western interior later on Friday and Saturday.



- It will be hot at times over the central to southeastern parts (Friday), lower-lying northeastern areas (Saturday, Tuesday), and the far western to southeastern parts (Monday).
- Total rainfall will be above normal over the eastern interior on average but associated with thundershowers and therefore unevenly distributed. Rainfall will be normal to below normal over the rest of the country.
- Scattered thundershowers will occur over the central to southeastern parts on Friday, moving north-eastwards.
- Thundershowers will shift to the northern and eastern parts during the weekend.
- It will be cooler with extensive cloud cover over the northern and eastern parts by Sunday and early next week, with showers or thundershowers in places.
- Thundershowers may shift into the central interior and possibly further west by the middle of next week.
- Because rainfall events over the summer rainfall region are mostly thundershowers, the distribution of rainfall will be uneven.
- Cooler to cold conditions and/or more widespread rain may occur over the eastern parts by next Thursday, depending on the strength and position of a ridging high at that time. The ridging may also push rainfall further west over the interior.
- Thundershowers during this early part of the summer rainy season usually have an enhanced tendency to become severe. While certain areas may experience severe storms over the next few days, this will not be significantly different from what is typical for this time of year during thundershowers. On average, temperatures will be near- to below-normal, and it will be cooler than the previous week over most of the interior.
- **The summer-grain production region** will receive more rain during the next few days, mostly in the form of isolated to scattered thundershowers. The highest totals are expected over the northern to eastern parts of the region, possibly exceeding 40 mm in places. Temperatures are expected to be near normal to below normal on average.
- **The winter rainfall region** will receive more light showers accompanied by cool conditions as another cold front moves across the region by Friday with moderate to fresh westerly winds. The rest of the period will be more summer-like, with southeasterlies starting to intensify during next week in the southwest while it will become warm over the interior.

Overview of expected conditions over the main agricultural production areas

Ridging high-pressure systems will result in the influx of cooler, moist air from the east into the interior initially and again by Monday and by the middle of next week. With enhanced moisture into the interior and weak upper-air troughs over the interior at times, thundershowers and showers are expected over the central to eastern parts of the interior.



Maize production region:

Thundershowers are expected during this period, especially from Friday and during the weekend, gradually moving eastwards. More thundershowers and showers are expected next week, with cloudy, cool conditions with scattered showers or thundershowers indicated towards the northern areas (northern Free State and further north) while it may be warmer over the southern parts of the region with isolated thundershowers only. It will on average be cooler than the previous week.

- Maximum temperatures over the eastern grain-production areas will range between 23°C and 29°C. Minimum temperatures will range from 11°C to 16°C.
- Maximum temperatures over the western grain-production areas will range between 27°C and 32°C. Minimum temperatures will be in the order of 12°C to 18°C.
- **Thursday (30th):** Partly cloudy and warm with isolated thundershowers, becoming cloudy and cooler over the northern to eastern parts with scattered showers and thundershowers.
- **Friday (31st):** Partly cloudy and mild to warm with scattered thundershowers but isolated over the northern parts of the region. Fresh to strong north-westerly winds are possible over the western parts of the region.
- **Saturday (1st):** Partly cloudy and warm, but sunny in the west with fresh to strong south-westerly winds. Scattered thundershowers are expected over the northern and eastern parts of the region.
- **Sunday (2nd):** Sunny and warm over the western to central parts. It will be partly cloudy in the northeast, with scattered thundershowers, spreading towards the central parts of the region later when it will become cooler with fresh easterly to north-easterly winds which will spread over the entire region by the evening.
- **Monday to Tuesday (3rd – 4th):** Current forecasts indicate partly cloudy to cloudy and mild to cool conditions over the northern parts of the region with scattered showers and thundershowers while it will be sunny to partly cloudy and warmer towards the south with only isolated thundershowers.
- **Wednesday to Thursday (5th – 6th):** Current forecasts indicate a renewed influx of moisture from the east, or at least cooler air. Forecasts currently also indicate the possibility for the development of isolated to scattered thundershowers over the region, especially over the central to western parts by Thursday.

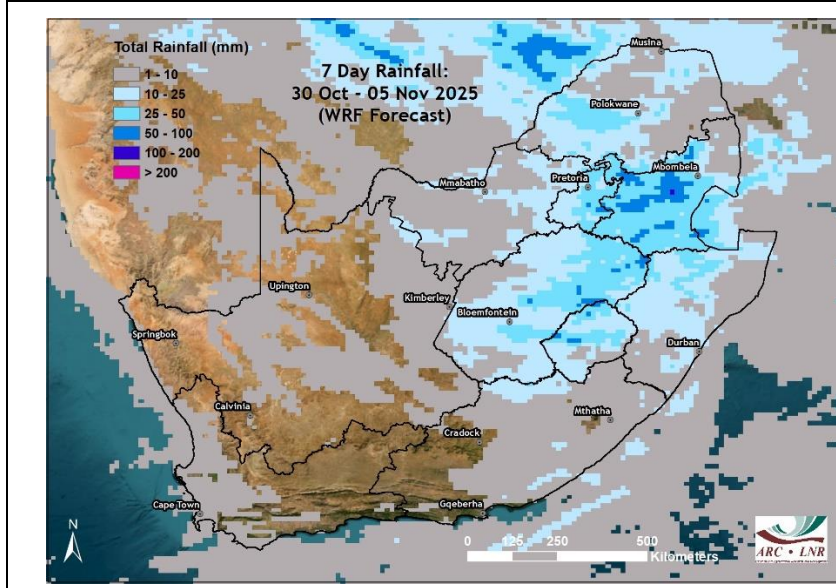
Cape Wine Lands and Rûens:

A cold front will bring windy and cool conditions with light showers on Friday. It will remain cool on Saturday. The wind will be moderate to fresh westerly, becoming south-westerly to southerly later Saturday. It will gradually become warmer, with warm conditions expected next week over the interior while the wind will become strong to gale-force south-easterly over the south-western parts by the middle of next week.



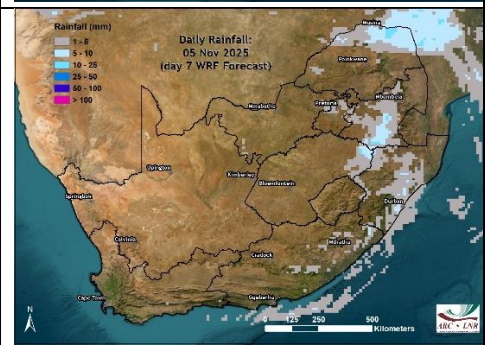
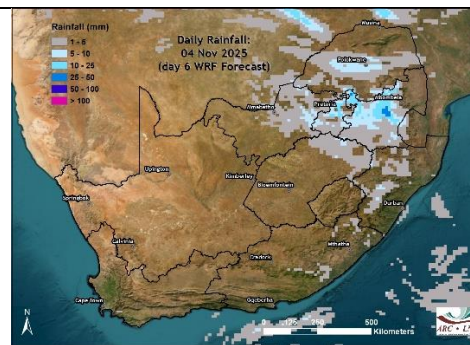
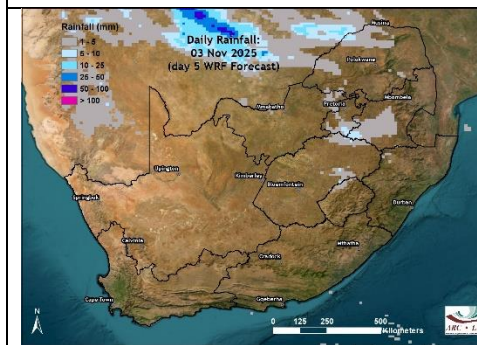
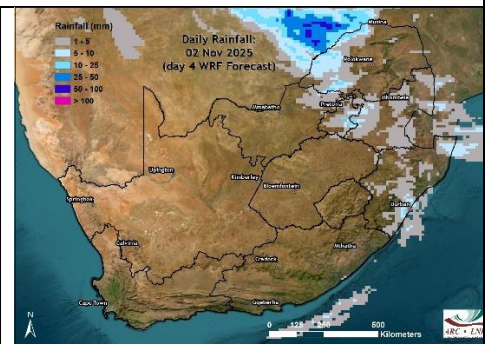
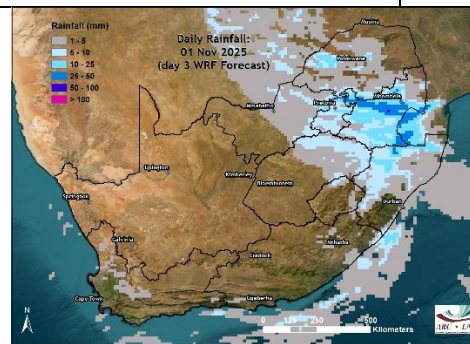
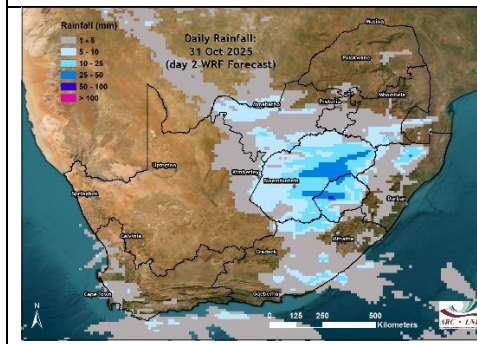
Daily summary of expected conditions (30 Oct – 5 Nov)

(GFS forecast downscaled using WRF)



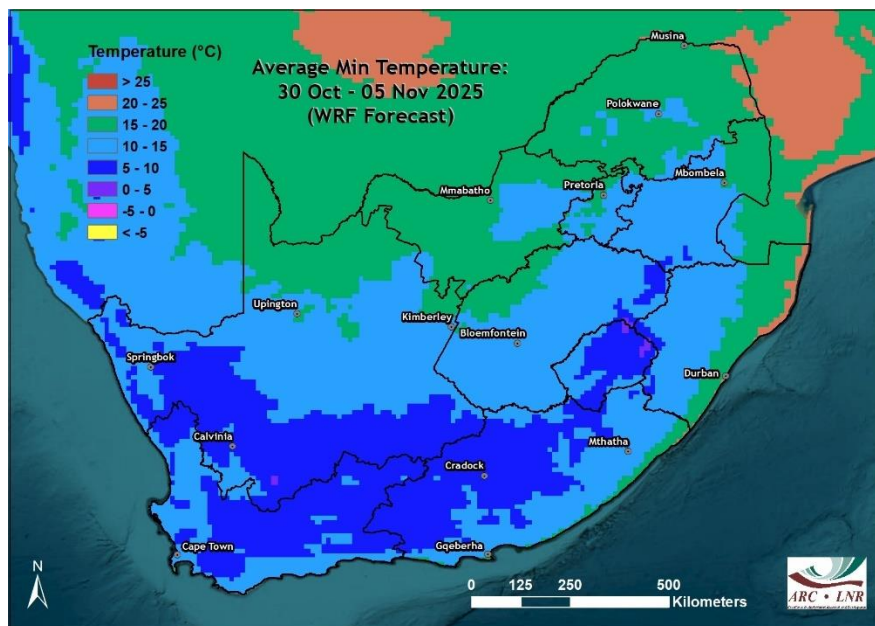
Rainfall

- Rainfall totals over the central to eastern and northern interior will range between 10 and 50 mm in total, with highest totals indicated over the Eastern Highveld.
- Little to no rain is expected over the western interior.
- Light falls, not exceeding 10 mm in total, are expected over the winter rainfall region and along the Garden Route.



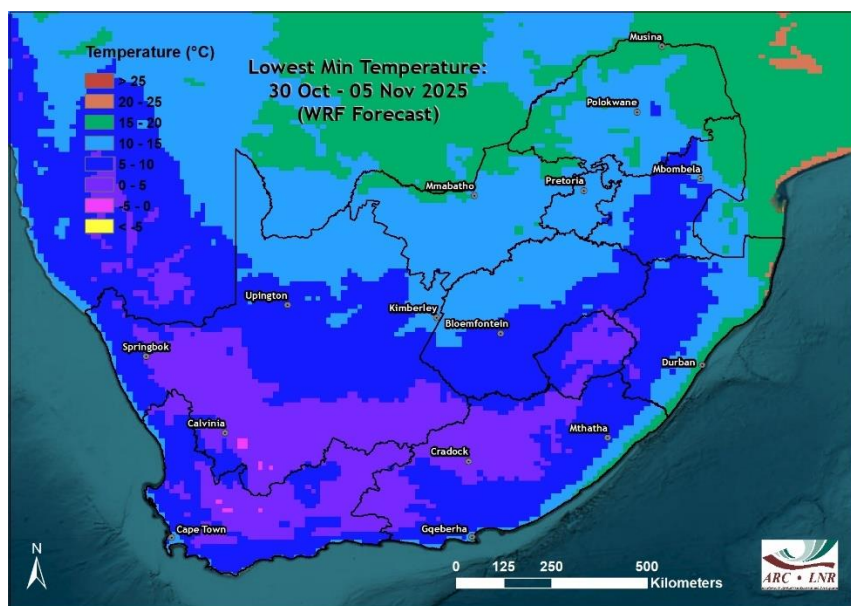
- Scattered thundershowers are expected over the central to south-easter parts on Friday
- Thundershowers will spread mostly to the northeastern parts during the weekend, remaining over the eastern to northern parts early next week where it will be cooler with extensive cloud cover.
- Light showers are expected over the winter rainfall region as a cold front moves through on Friday/Saturday.





Average minimum temperatures

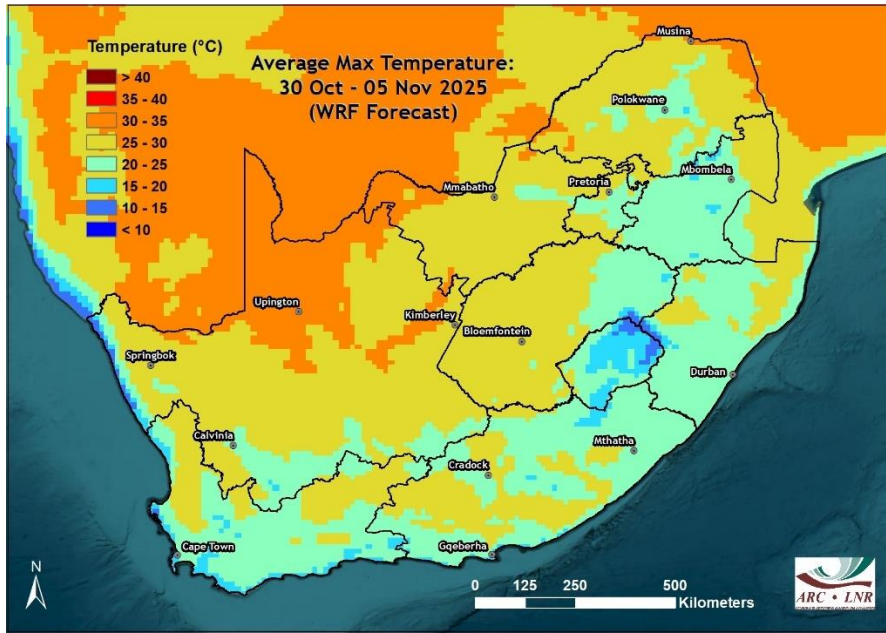
- Average minimum temperatures over the interior will be below 10°C over the cooler, high-lying areas such as the Drakensberg and surrounding areas as well as the southern to western interior.
- Average maximum temperatures will exceed 20°C over the low-lying areas in the far northeast such as the Lowveld and east coast.
- Average minimum temperatures will range between 10 and 15°C over the summer-grain production region.



Lowest minimum temperatures

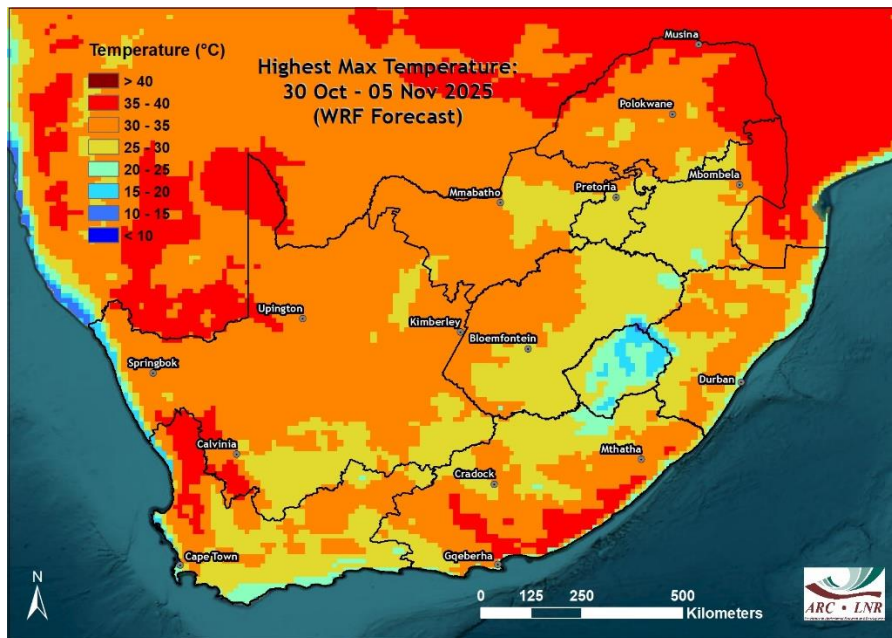
- Lowest minimum temperatures will remain above 5°C over most of the summer grain production region.
- Lowest temperatures will be below freezing over the high-lying parts of the south-western interior.





Average maximum temperatures

- Average maximum temperatures will be below 25°C over the southern to southeastern parts, Drakensberg, escarpment and Eastern Highveld.
- Average maximum temperatures will range between 20 and 30°C over most of the interior.



Highest maximum temperatures

- The lower-lying north-eastern to eastern parts, southern parts of the Eastern Cape as well as the far-western parts of the country, including the Lower Orange River, will be hot at times
- **Highest temperatures, exceeding 35°C, are expected:** over the low-lying north-eastern and eastern parts are expected on Saturday and possibly next Tuesday. Over the central to south-eastern parts on Friday and Monday. Over the far western parts by Monday.

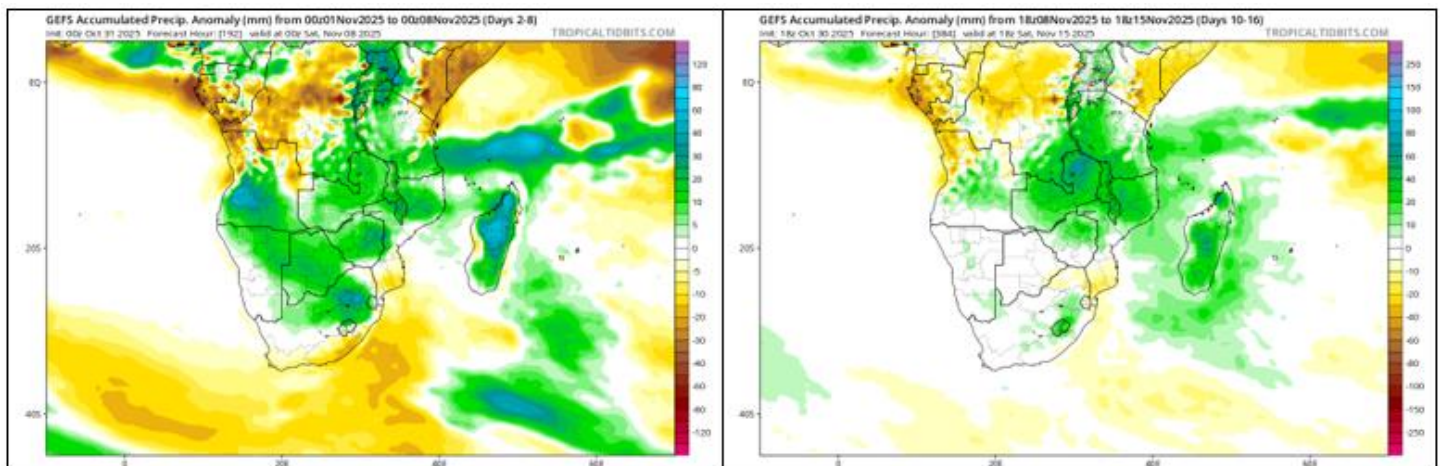
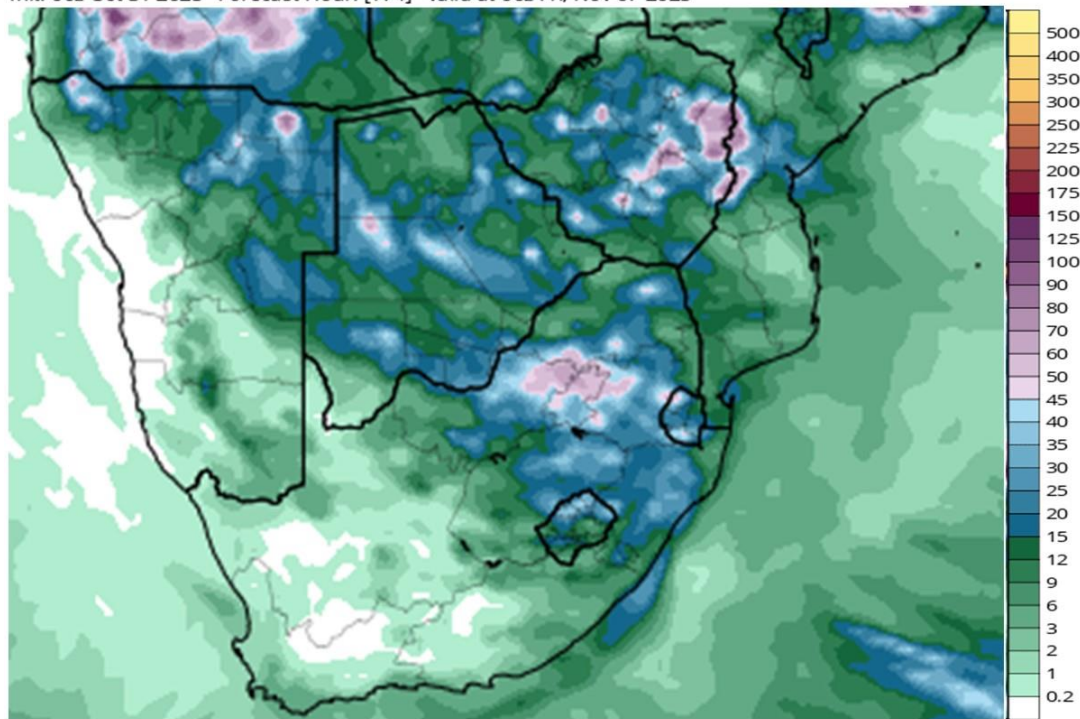


Medium term rainfall summary

GFS Total Accumulated Precipitation (mm) from 00z31Oct2025 to 06z07Nov2025

Init: 00z Oct 31 2025 Forecast Hour: [174] valid at 06z Fri, Nov 07 2025

TROPICALTIDBITS.COM



The GFS ensemble forecast (consisting of several forecasts with small initialization differences) favors above-average rainfall over the northern to eastern interior, including the summer grain-production region. This anomaly is associated with expected showers or thundershowers on Friday and during the weekend, as well as additional showers or thundershowers early next week. The anomalously wet signal is weaker during the second week of the month, according to the current forecasts, when increased convective activity is indicated over the Mozambique Channel.



Possible extreme conditions - relevant to agriculture

The South African Weather Service issues warnings for any severe weather that may develop, based on much more information (and in near-real time) than the output of only 2 weather models (GFS and the ECMWF model) considered here in the beginning of a week-long period (31 October – 5 November). It is therefore advised to keep track of warnings that may be issued by the SAWS (www.weathersa.co.za) as the week progresses.

According to current model projections (GFS / ECMWF models) of weather conditions during the coming week, the following may negatively affect agricultural activities and production:

Some thundershowers may become severe and produce strong wind gusts and hail:

- Free State and northern to eastern parts of the Eastern Cape, north-eastern Northern Cape: **Friday (31st)**.
- Eastern Free State, eastern North West, Gauteng, Mpumalanga, northern KZN, western to southern Limpopo: **Saturday (1st)**.
- Gauteng, northern Mpumalanga, western to southern Limpopo: **Sunday (2nd)**.

Cool, wet conditions may be conducive to fungal diseases:

- North-eastern parts of the country, including the northern half of the summer-grain production region: **Monday to Tuesday (3rd – 4th)**

It will be hot, with maximum temperatures exceeding 35°C:

- Central to northern part of the Northern Cape, southern to eastern parts of the Eastern Cape, eastern parts of KZN: **Friday (31st)**.
- Lowveld, Limpopo River Valley: **Saturday (1st)**.
- Northern Cape, interior of the Western and Eastern Cape: **Monday (3rd)**.

Dry, warm and windy conditions will increase the fire hazard where vegetation is dry:

- Central to southern parts of the Northern Cape, Western Cape interior, Eastern Cape interior: **Friday (31st)**.

Frost may occur:

- Western to southern escarpment, high-lying areas of the Western Cape interior: **Sunday morning (2nd)**.

Strong to gale-force south-easterly winds are possible:

- South-western parts of the Western Cape: **Wednesday (5th)**.

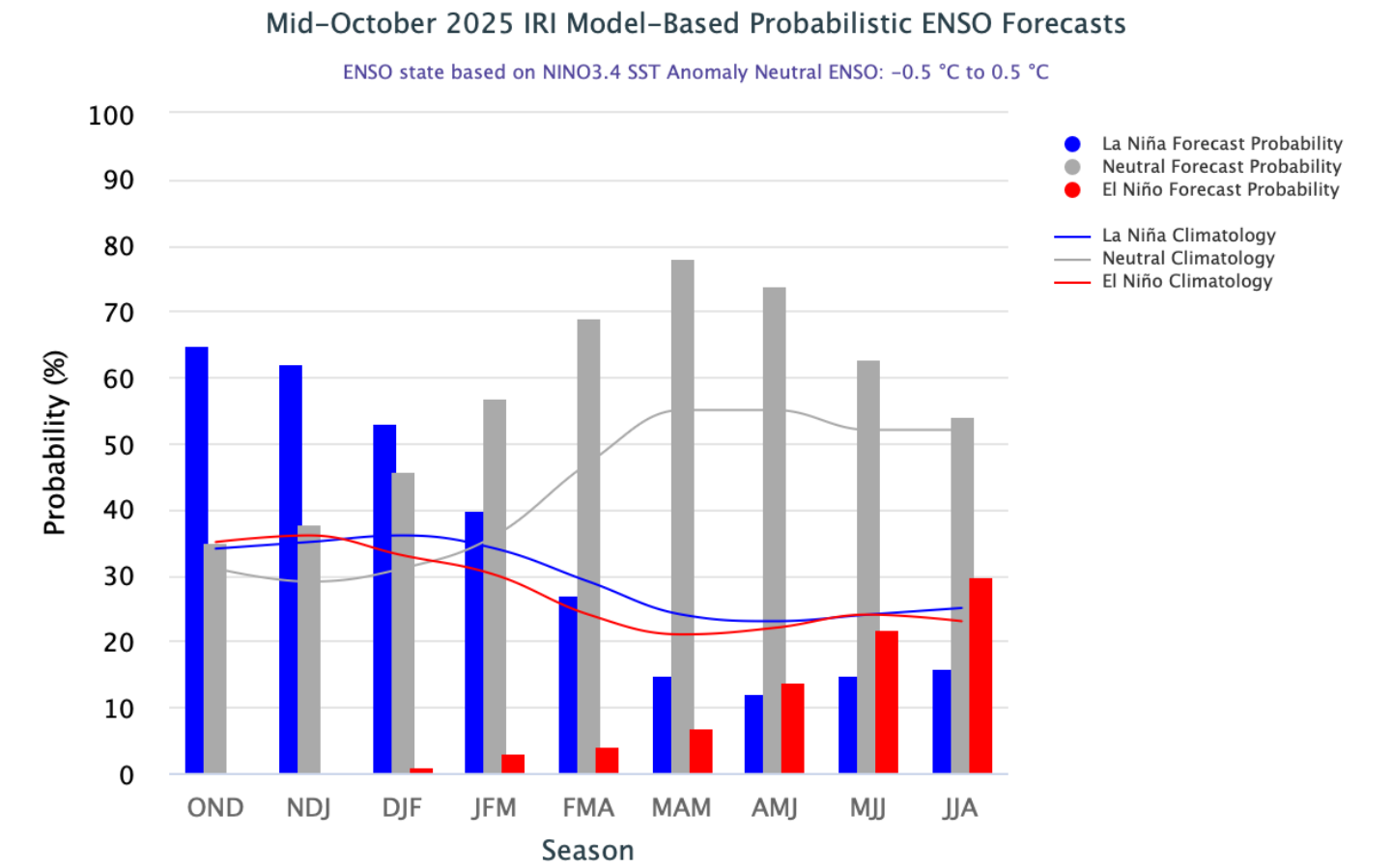


Seasonal forecast

Current ENSO conditions:

A weak La Niña is expected to develop by spring/early summer according to institutions such as the NOAA Climate Prediction Centre and the IR. Oceanic and atmospheric conditions currently support a trend towards the development of a La Niña.

The graph below shows the International Research Institute for Climate and Society (IRI) ENSO forecast.



International Research Institute for Climate and Society- <http://iri.columbia.edu/>

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In their most recent update (issued 20 October), the IRI states that “As of mid-October 2025, the equatorial Pacific remains in an ENSO-neutral state, with sea surface temperatures in the Niño 3.4 region close to average but exhibiting a gradual cooling trend. The IRI ENSO plume forecast indicates a moderate probability (65%) of La Niña conditions developing during October–December 2025. These La Niña conditions are expected to persist through the boreal winter of 2025/2026 (53%). However, beginning in January–March, ENSO-neutral conditions are forecasted to return with probabilities of 57%. The chances of El Niño development remain very low—below 10%—through March–May 2026, but increases to 14%, 22%, and 30% during April–June, May–July, and Jun-Aug 2026 respectively.”

In their most recent update (28 October), the **Australian Bureau of Meteorology** states that “The El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) in the tropical Pacific remains neutral:

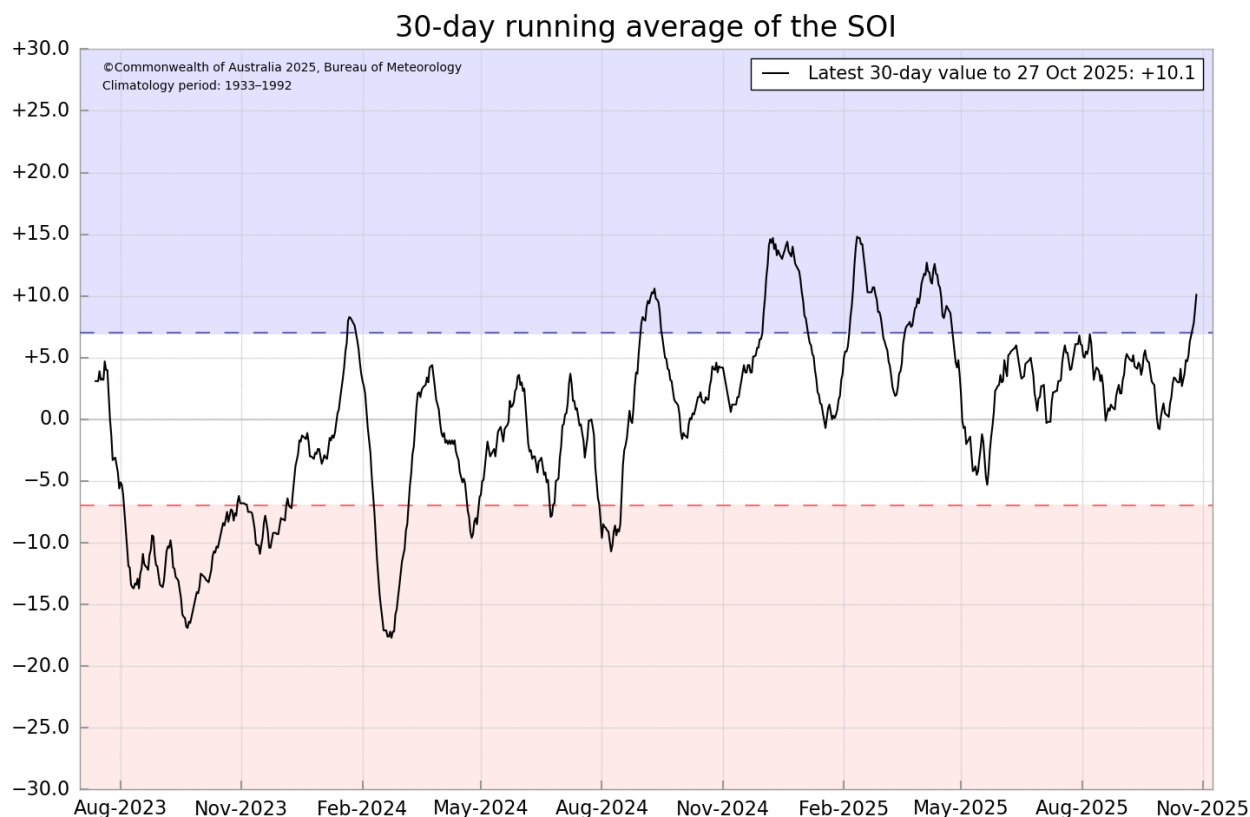
- The El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO) remains neutral. While there are signs of possible La Niña development in the tropical Pacific Ocean and atmosphere, these signals have not yet been sustained at a sufficient strength or duration to meet Bureau criteria for an active event.
- The latest relative Niño3.4 SST index value for the week ending 26 October 2025 is -0.86°C . The weekly values of the relative Niño3.4 index have been fluctuating around the La Niña threshold since mid-to-late September. Index values between -0.8°C and $+0.8^{\circ}\text{C}$ are considered ENSO-neutral while sustained values below -0.8°C (for at least 3 months) are considered indicative of La Niña.
- Some atmospheric indicators, such as trade winds, pressure and cloud patterns over the equatorial central Pacific, show some signs of La Niña development. The 30-day Southern Oscillation Index (SOI) has just recently exceeded +7, although the 90-day SOI remains neutral. The Madden–Julian Oscillation is currently, as at 26 October 2025, enhancing trade winds over the western Pacific, which may provide a short-term boost towards La Niña conditions.
- Under Bureau criteria, La Niña is considered established when sustained cool waters in the central tropical Pacific (relative Niño3.4 index values below -0.8°C for at least 3 months) are accompanied by a consistent atmospheric response.
- The Bureau's model currently predicts that tropical Pacific Ocean temperatures are likely to just meet La Niña levels during November and December, before returning to neutral. This timing aligns with most international models assessed, although they generally show slightly more cooling, compared to the Bureau's model.....

<http://www.bom.gov.au>

The Southern Annular Mode (SAM) is currently in neutral to negative territory and expected to remain negative into next week. The negative values currently experienced are associated with more frontal activity influencing South Africa and frequently with drier westerlies and less rain over the interior.



The 30-day Southern Oscillation Index (SOI) is currently +10.1 and therefore representing atmospheric pressure patterns in the Australia – Pacific region indicative of Neutral to La Niña conditions.

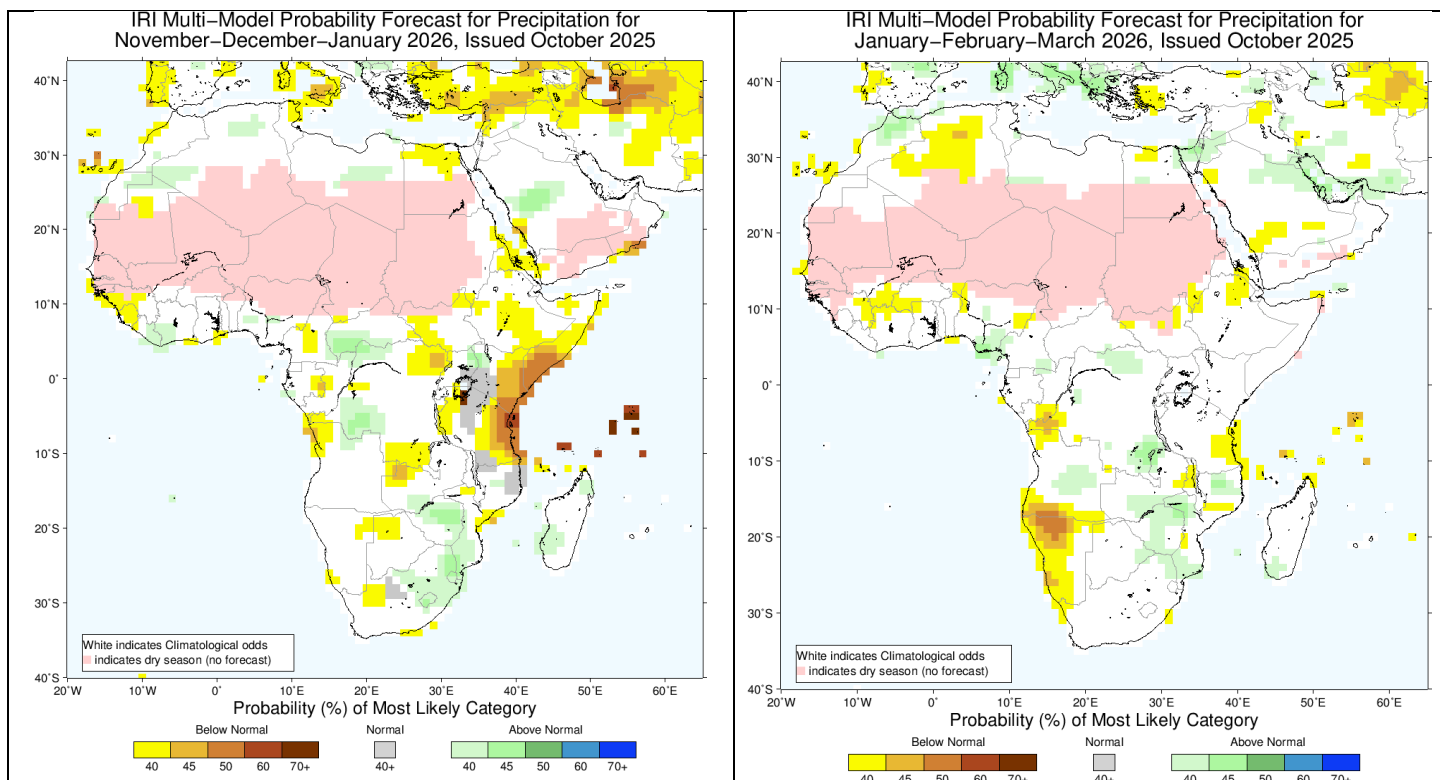


Australian Bureau of Meteorology - <http://www.bom.gov.au>

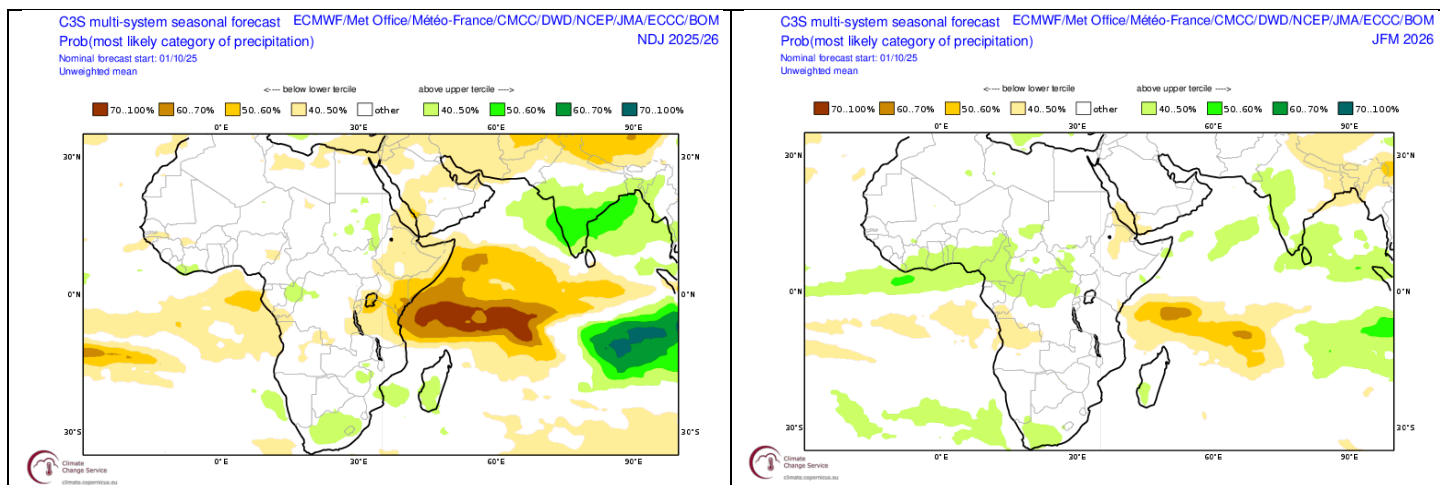
Seasonal forecasts issued by various international institutions

Seasonal forecasts (updated in October 2025) still favour normal to above-normal rainfall over the summer rainfall region, associated with an expectation of the intensification of the La Niña event in the Pacific Ocean. The wet signal for mid- and late-summer period has weakened between the September and October versions of forecasts.





Probabilistic forecasts by the International Research Institute for Climate and Society (IRI) for rainfall for early summer (November 2025 to January 2026, left – Forecast issued in 2025-10) and mid- to late summer (January to March 2026, right – Forecast issued in 2025-10).



Probabilistic multi-model forecasts by the multi-system COPERNICUS Programme for rainfall for early summer (November 2025 to January 2026, left – Forecast issued in 2025-10) and mid- to late summer (January to March 2026, right – Forecast issued in 2025-10).



CUMULUS Seasonal Outlook

This outlook is based on the typical observed rainfall patterns over the north-eastern half of the country (including most of the summer grain-production region), which are associated with the cyclic variability of the global climate system. Summers similar to 2025/26 usually experience near-normal rainfall totals over the north-eastern parts of the country. There is a tendency for above-normal rainfall during January, while relatively dry conditions are usually observed during February and early March.

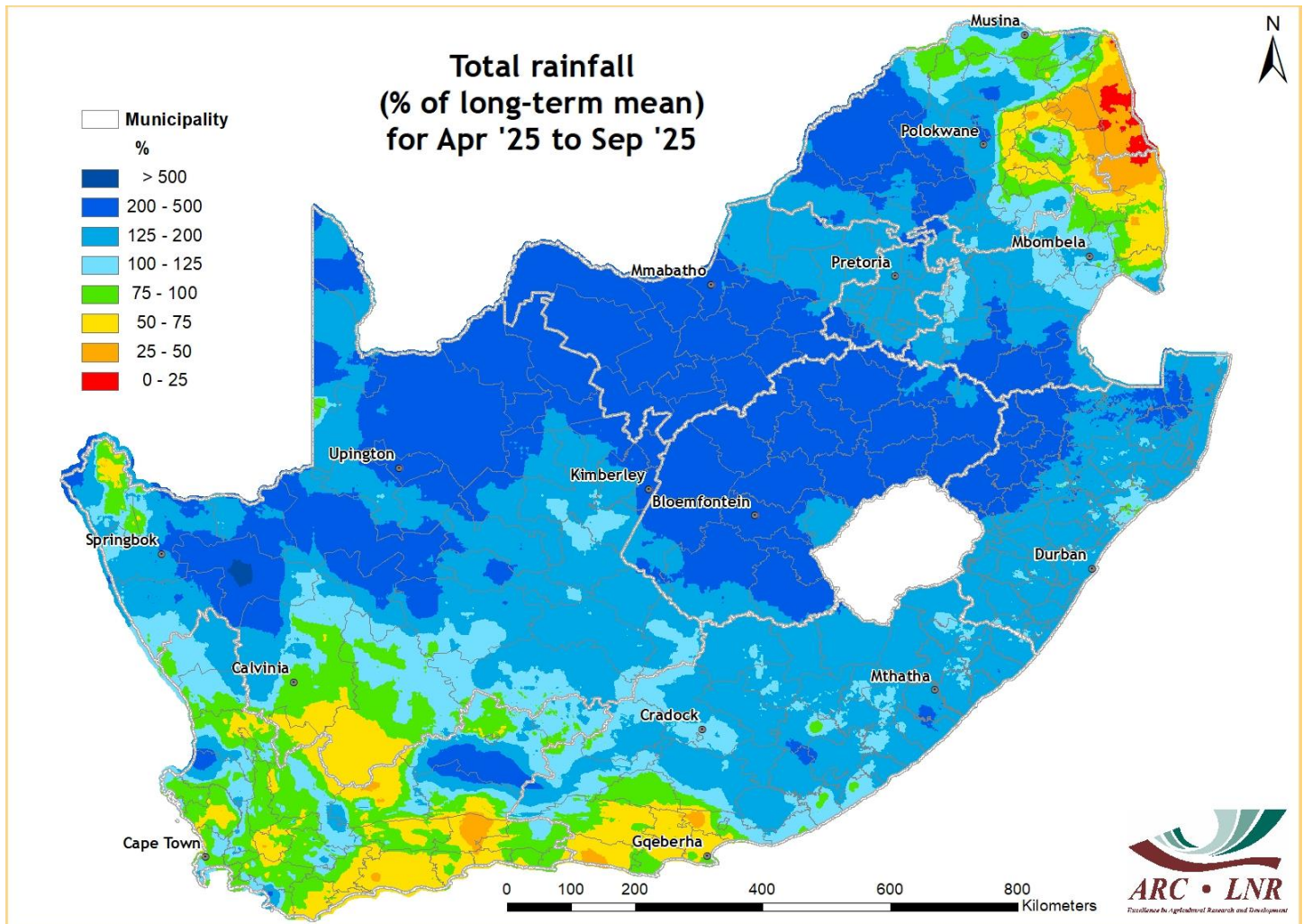
Typical patterns during similar summers, over the north-eastern half of the summer rainfall region, are:

- **October:** Near-normal to above-normal rainfall over the north-eastern half of the summer rainfall region
- **November:** Near-normal to below-normal rainfall over the north-eastern half of the summer rainfall region
- **December:** Somewhat wetter earlier in the month but usually trending drier into early January over the north-eastern half of the summer rainfall region
- **January:** Relatively dry early in the month, but above-normal rainfall is possible during the second half over the north-eastern half of the summer rainfall region
- **February-early March:** Near-normal to below-normal rainfall over the north-eastern half of the summer rainfall region
- **Mid- to late March:** Above-normal rainfall over the north-eastern half of the summer rainfall region



Observed conditions

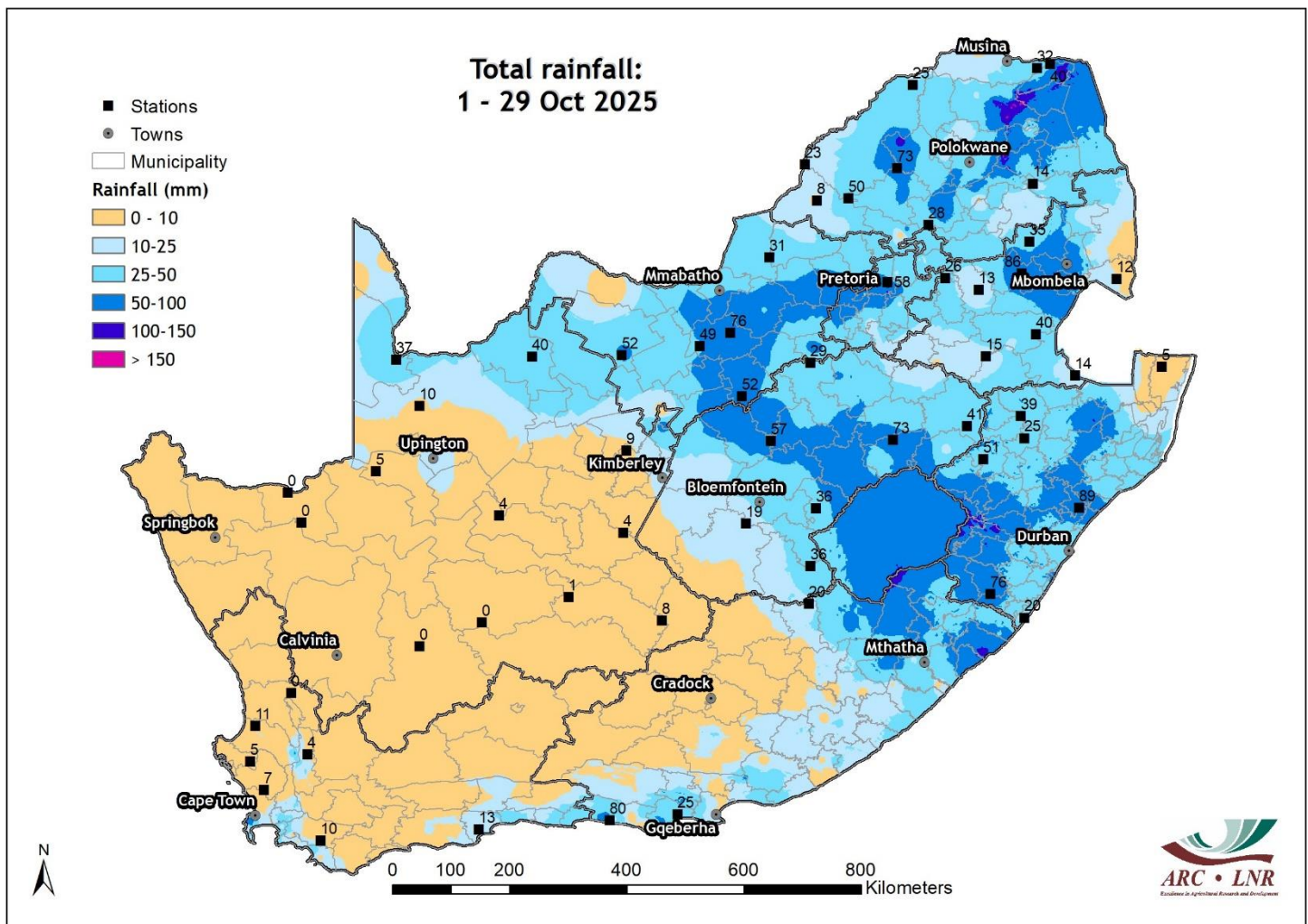
Rainfall (%): April to September 2025



Most of the summer-rainfall region received above-average during the autumn to winter period, except for the Lowveld where it was drier than average. Rainfall was near average to below average in total over the winter rainfall region and Karoo, where it was dry in August and thereafter.



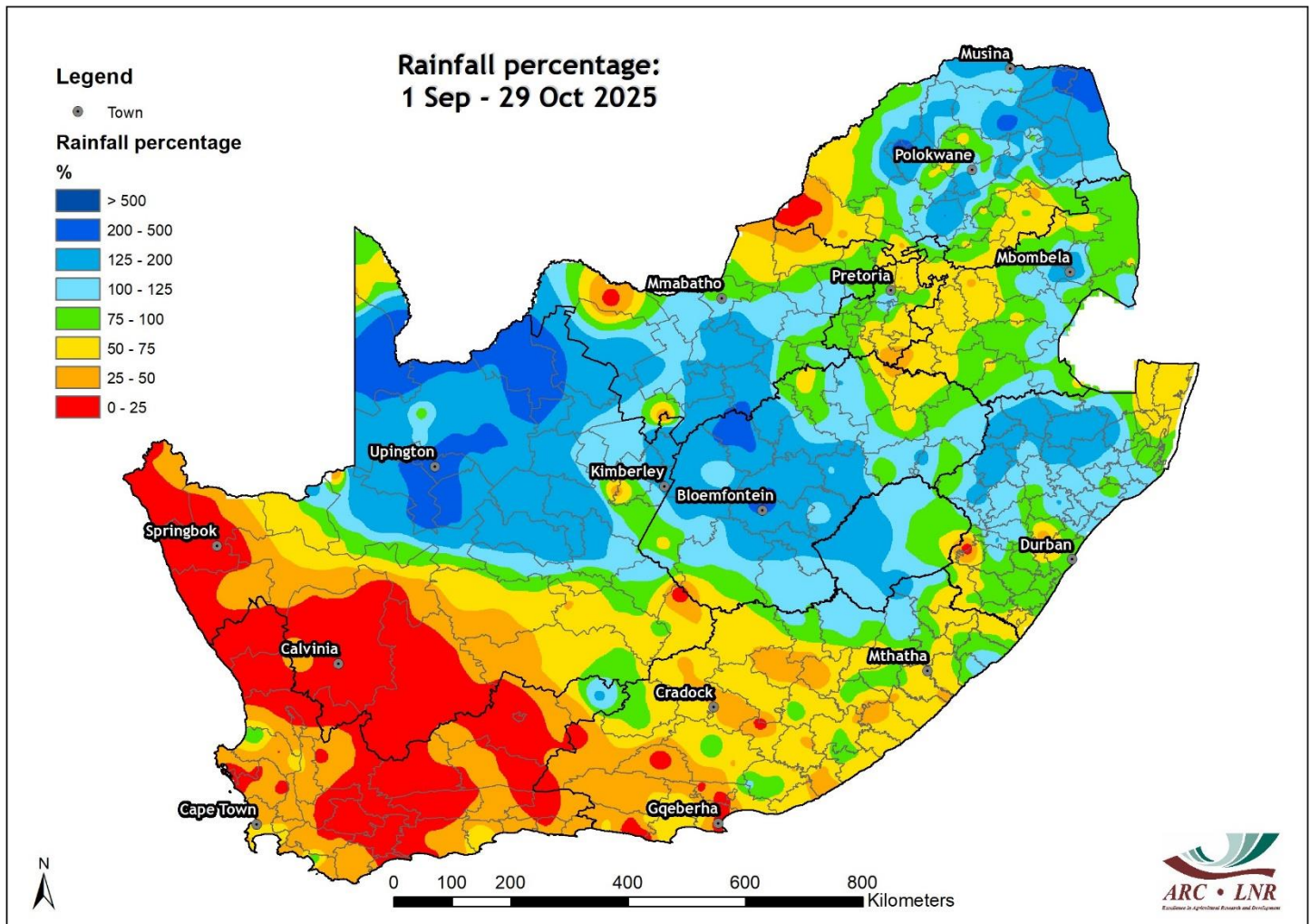
Rainfall (mm): 1 – 29 October 2025



Large areas in the east, including much of the Free State, have received more than 50 mm of rain so far in October. The western to southern parts of Mpumalanga and the northern parts of the Free State have been relatively dry, with less than 25 mm recorded in places. Little to no rain has occurred over most of the interior of the Cape provinces.



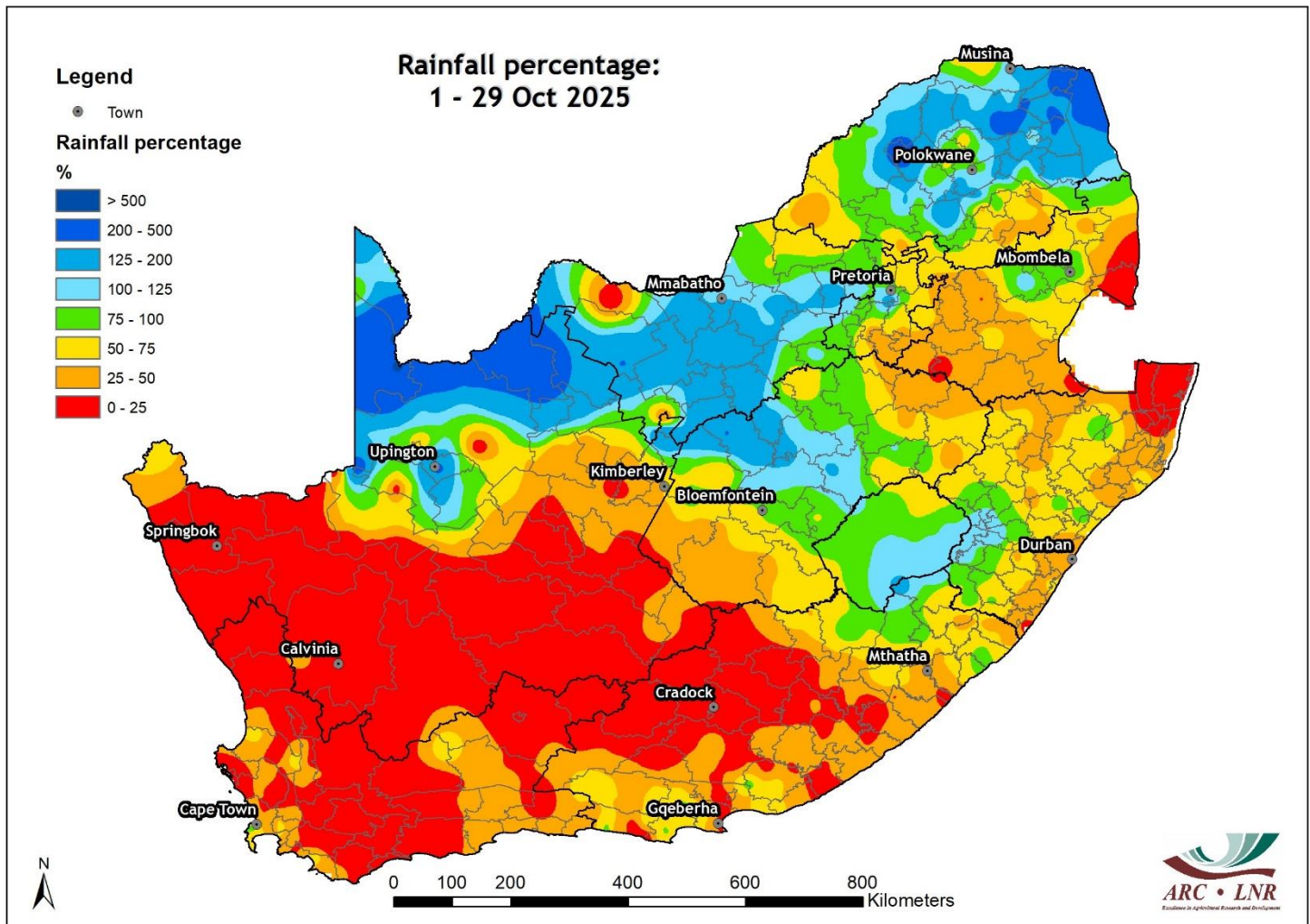
Rainfall (% of long-term mean): 1 September – 29 October 2025



Most of the central interior and areas eastwards towards the eastern parts received above-average rainfall during the September to late-October period. It was relatively dry over the southwestern parts, including the winter rainfall region. It was also relatively dry over the northern parts of the Free State and western to central Mpumalanga.



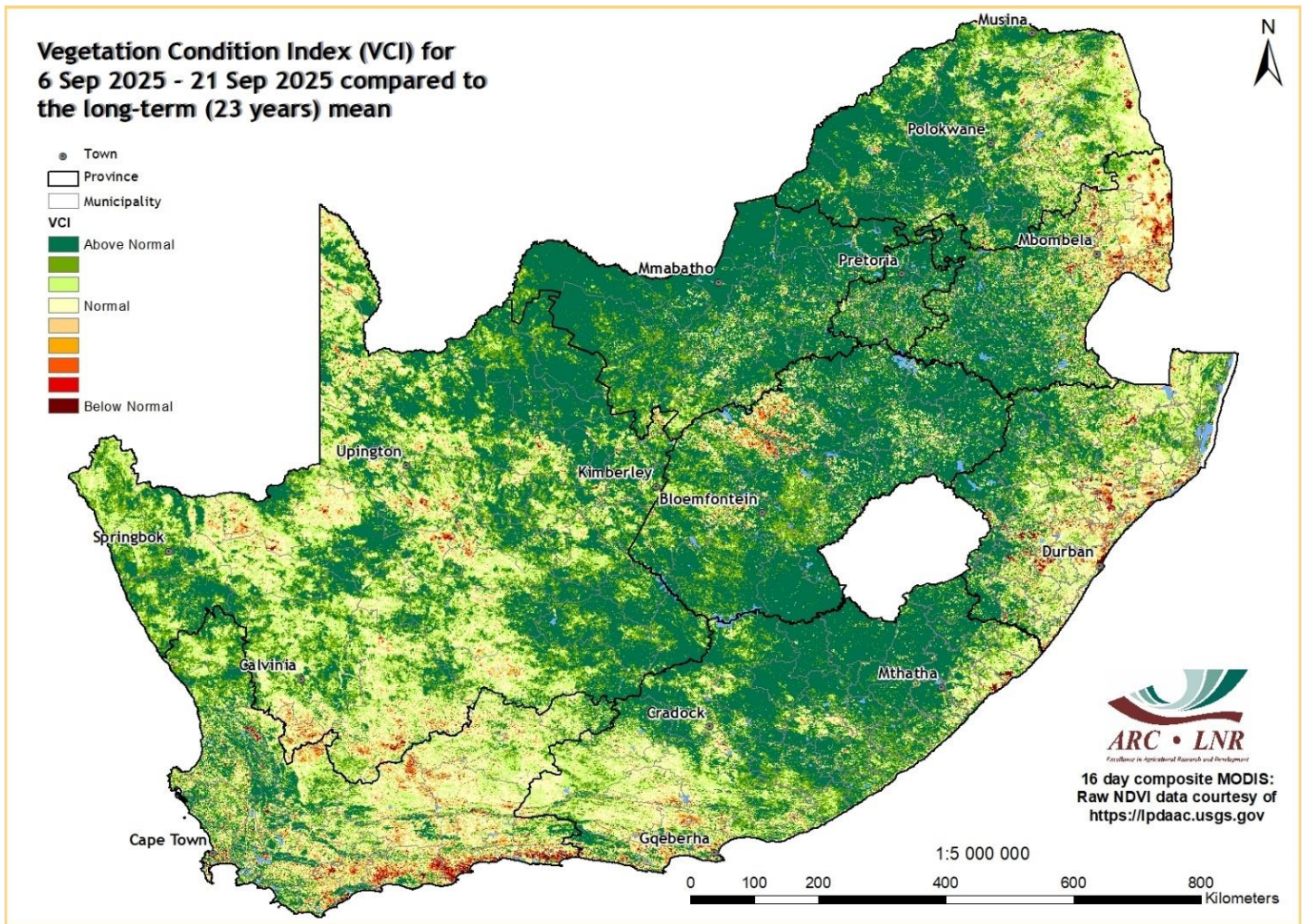
Rainfall (% of long-term mean): 1 –29 October 2025



Above-average rainfall has occurred over some of the northern parts of the country so far in October, but most of the southern and western parts, as well as large areas of the northern Free State, Mpumalanga, and KwaZulu-Natal, have experienced below-average rainfall.



Vegetation Condition Index: September 2025



Vegetation activity by September was above normal over most areas, following widespread rain above-normal rainfall until April and again by August-September over the interior. The Lowveld is an exception, where it has been relatively dry since February. Over the winter rainfall region, especially the eastern parts of the region, and further east along the Garden Route, below normal rainfall is having a negative impact on vegetation activity.



Sources of information

Seasonal forecasts: Published by the COPERNICUS Programme (<https://climate.copernicus.eu/seasonal-forecasts>)

Rainfall, temperature and wind maps over South Africa for the past week:

Agricultural Research Council - Institute for Soil, Climate and Water (ISCW) – Climate Data Bank. Data recorded by the automatic weather station network of the ARC-ISCW.

Vegetation condition maps: Copernicus Global Land service, distributed by VITO.

Information related to: ENSO, IOD and SOI:

Australian Bureau of Meteorology - <http://www.bom.gov.au>

Climate Prediction Center - <http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov>

International Research Institute for Climate and Society- <http://iri.columbia.edu/>

Information related to the SAM:

The Annular Mode Website - <http://www.atmos.colostate.edu/ao/index.html>

SST map:

NOAA Climate Prediction Center - <http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov>

Daily conditions over South Africa:

WRF model downscaling of GFS forecasts.

Fires:

MODIS data, distributed by the Land Processes Distributed Active Data Center (LP DAAC), located at the US Geological Survey's EROS Data Center

Soil moisture:

<https://nasagrace.unl.edu/>

Precipitation and temperature outlooks for the coming week:

Center for Ocean-Land-Atmosphere Studies (COLA) and Institute of Global Environment and Society (IGES) – <http://Wxmaps.org>

