

STATEMENT FROM THE NINTH SOUTHERN AFRICA REGIONAL CLIMATE OUTLOOK FORUM (SARCOF-9) HELD IN HARARE, ZIMBABWE FROM 7 – 8 SEPTEMBER 2005.

1.0 SUMMARY

During the period October to December 2005, northern DRC and most of southern parts of the SADC region (southwest Angola, most of Zambia, southeastern tip of DRC, southern half of Malawi, most of Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana, most of Namibia, Swaziland, Lesotho, and most of South Africa) have an increased chance of above normal rainfall. The northern parts of the SADC region (Southern DRC, most of Angola, western tip of Zambia, northern parts of Zambia, northern half of Malawi and Mozambique and northeast Namibia) are expected to receive normal to below normal rainfall. Southwest Namibia, west South Africa and Madagascar have a high probability of below normal rainfall. Mauritius is expected to receive normal to above normal rainfall.

From January to March 2006, northern DRC, extreme northwest Angola and southwest South Africa are expected to receive below-normal rainfall. Most of the SADC region (southern DRC, most of Angola, Zambia Southern Tanzania, Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia, Swaziland, Lesotho, most of South Africa and northern Madagascar) have an increased chance of normal to above-normal rainfall, while southern Madagascar and Mauritius are expected to receive normal to below-rainfall.

The current neutral condition of the El Nino-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) phenomenon, one of the factors associated with seasonal rainfall in SADC, is forecast to persist for the next six months. Other climate indicators were also considered in the generation of this outlook.

The Outlook is relevant only to seasonal time-scales and relatively large areas and may not fully account for all factors that influence regional and national climate variability, such as local and month-to-month variations (intra-seasonal). Users are strongly advised to contact their respective National Meteorological and Hydrological Services for interpretation of this Outlook, additional guidance and updates.

2.0 THE NINTH SOUTHERN AFRICA REGIONAL CLIMATE OUTLOOK FORUM

The ninth Southern Africa Regional Climate Outlook Forum (SARCOF-9) was held in Harare, Zimbabwe from 7 to 8 September 2005 to develop a consensus forecast for the 2005/2006 rainfall season for the SADC region. Climate scientists from the National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) within the SADC region have prepared this outlook. Additional contributions were from the SADC Drought

Monitoring Centre (DMC) and International Research Institute for Climate Prediction (IRI, USA). This outlook covers the major rainfall season (October 2005–March 2006). The Outlook is relevant only to seasonal time-scales and relatively large areas and may not fully account for all factors that influence regional and national climate variability, such as local and month-to-month variations (intra-seasonal).

Conditions of the sea surface temperatures (SSTs) in some areas over the global oceans are related to rainfall patterns over the SADC region. During the Climate Experts' meeting held from 29 August to 6 September 2005 the current state of the global climate system and its implication for the SADC region was reviewed. On the basis of the review, most of the SADC region is expected to receive largely normal rainfall in the coming season. However, the state of the oceans will be closely monitored through the rainfall season to assess their impacts on the rains in the region. Regular updates will be issued.

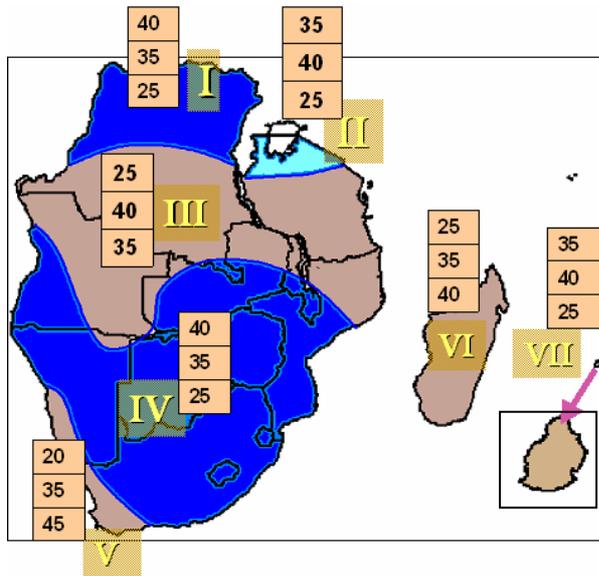
3.0 METHODOLOGY

The climate scientists determined likelihoods of above-normal, normal and below-normal rainfall for each zone (see Maps A & B). Seasonal rainfall is said to be above-normal if cumulative rain is within the wettest third of climatological record of rainfall amounts; below-normal if cumulative rain is within the driest third of climatological record of rainfall amounts and normal is the middle third, centered on the climatological median.

4.0 OUTLOOK

The main rainfall season over most of SADC region is from October to March. Owing to the differences in the rainfall-bearing systems, the rainy season has been divided into two periods (October–December and January–March). The current outlook covers the period October to December 2005 and January to March 2006.

Map A: October – December 2005



Zone I: Northern DRC.
There is a high probability of above-normal rainfall

Zone II: Northern Tanzania.
There is a high probability of normal to above-normal rainfall

Zone III: Southern DRC, southern Tanzania, most of Angola, extreme western and northern parts of Zambia, northern half of Malawi, northern Mozambique and northeastern flank of Namibia.
There is a high probability of normal to below-normal rainfall

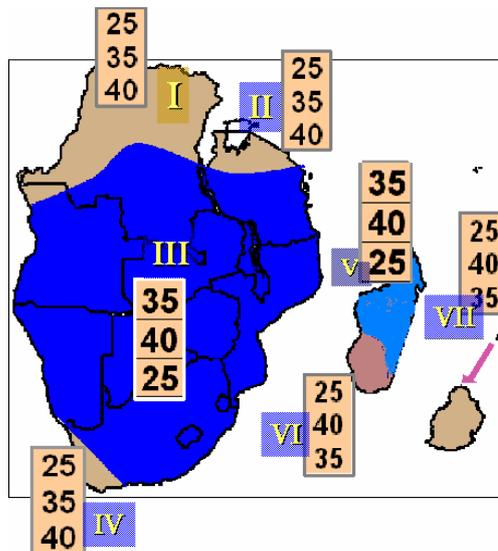
Zone IV: Southwest Angola, most of Zambia, southeastern tip of DRC, southern half of Malawi, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, most of Mozambique and Namibia, and the greater part of South Africa.
There is a high probability of above-normal rainfall.

Zone V: Southwest Namibia and southwest South Africa.
There is a high probability of below-normal rainfall

Zone VI: Madagascar
There is a high probability of below-normal rainfall

Zone VII: Mauritius
There is a high probability of normal to above-normal rainfall

Map B: January – March 2006



Zone I: Extreme northwestern of Angola and northern half of DRC.
There is a high probability of below-normal to normal rainfall

Zone II: Northern Tanzania.
There is a high probability of below-normal to normal rainfall

Zone III: Most of Angola, southern DRC, Zambia, southern Tanzania, Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia, Swaziland, Lesotho, and most of South Africa.

There is a high probability of normal to above-normal rainfall

Zone IV: Southwest South Africa.
There is a high probability of below-normal to normal rainfall

Zone V: Most of Madagascar
There is a high probability of normal to above-normal rainfall

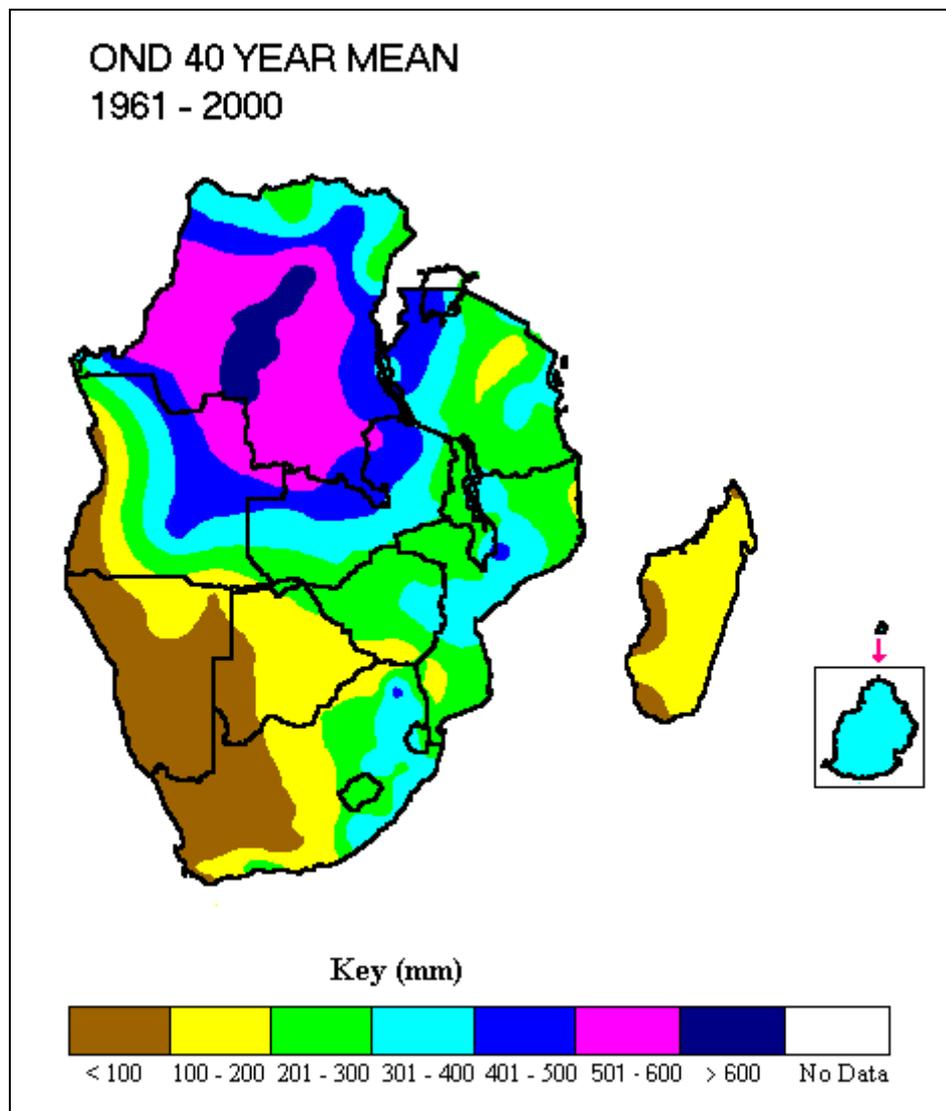
Zone VI: Southern Madagascar.
There is a high probability of normal to below-normal rainfall

Zone VII: Mauritius.
There is a high probability of normal to below-normal rainfall

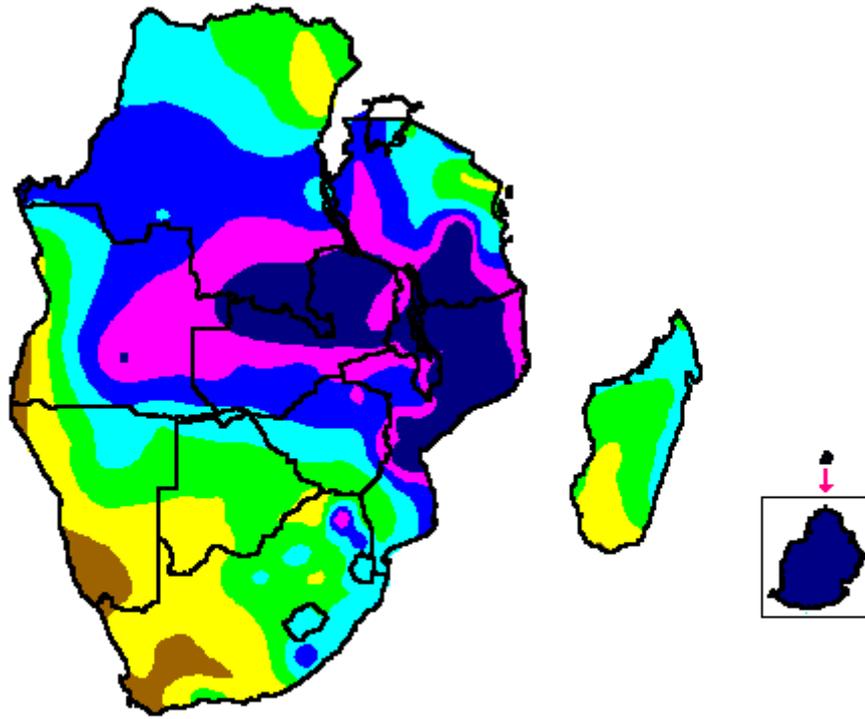
MAP CAPTION

It is emphasized that boundaries between zones should be considered as transition areas. Forecast information is provided only for countries that comprise the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) region. The numbers for each zone indicate the probabilities of rainfall in each of the three categories, below-normal, normal and above-normal. The top number indicates the probability of rainfall occurring in the above-normal category, the middle number is for normal and the bottom number is for below-normal. For example in the case Map A, for Zone II, there is a 35% probability of rainfall occurring in the above-normal category; a 40% probability in the normal category; and 25% probability in the below-normal category.

The additional maps below show 40 year rainfall means (October - December) and (January - March) respectively.



JFM 40 YEAR MEAN
1961 - 2000



Key (mm)

