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METEOROLOGICAL
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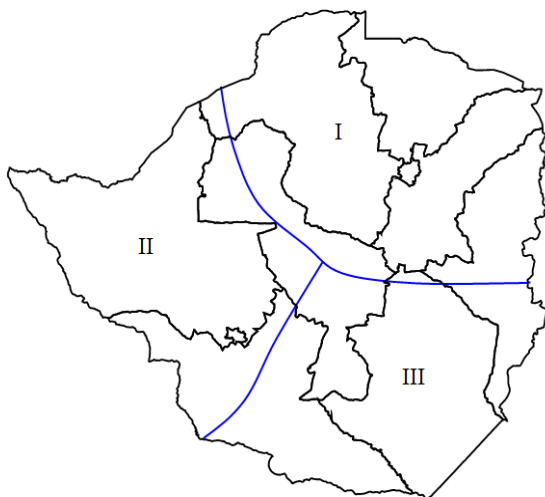
Minimizing Risks through Science

ZIMBABWE 2017-18 MID-TERM SEASONAL RAINFALL REVIEW & FORECAST UPDATE

20 December 2017

1.0 BACKGROUND (SEASONAL FORECAST ISSUED IN AUGUST 2017)

On 28 August 2017, the Meteorological Services Department (MSD) issued an outlook for the 2017/18 rainfall season. In this outlook, the country is demarcated into three (3) regions as illustrated in Fig. 1. These regions were determined using long term meteorological and physical data to delineate areas within Zimbabwe with similar characteristics (homogeneous rainfall regions).



Region I: Harare, much of Mashonaland East, Mashonaland West, Mashonaland Central, northeastern parts of Midlands, most of Manicaland.

Region II: The greater part of Matabeleland North, parts of Midlands and parts of Mashonaland West.

Region III: Masvingo, the bulk of Midlands, the extreme southern parts of Manicaland and the bulk of Matabeleland South.

Figure 1. Homogeneous rainfall regions for Zimbabwe.

In this August 2017 seasonal forecast, the three-month period October-November-December (OND), Region I was forecast to receive normal to above normal rainfall as depicted in Fig. 2(a) – below. For the same time period, Regions II and III were forecast to receive normal to below normal rainfall as depicted in the same figure.

For the period January-February-March (JFM) 2018, all regions countrywide, were forecast to receive normal to above normal rainfall as depicted in Fig. 2(b) – below.

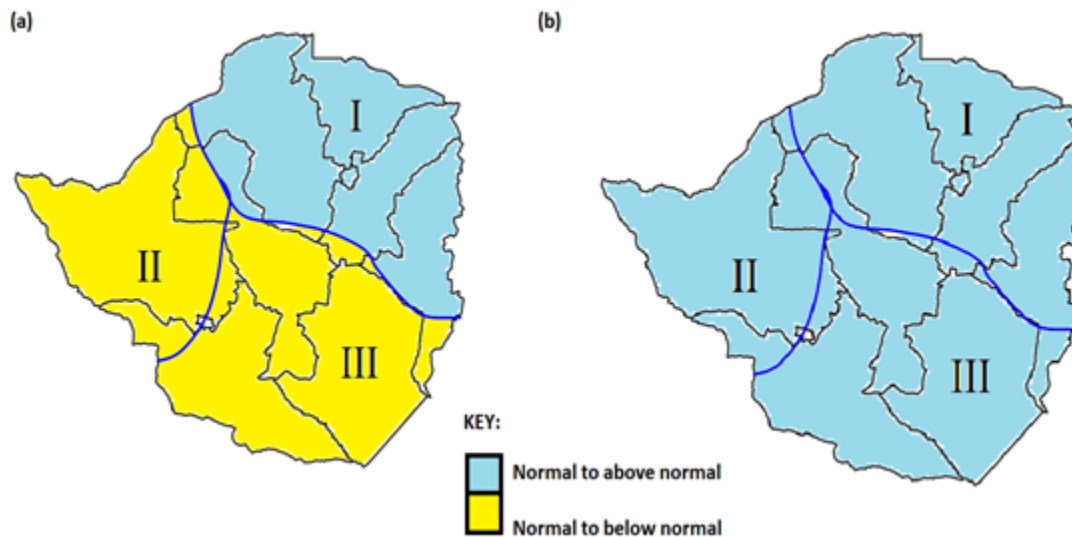


Figure 2 above depicts seasonal forecast issued in August 2017 (a) for October-November-December 2017 and (b) January-February-March 2018.

2.0 REVIEW OF THE CURRENT SEASON (1 Oct – 13 December 2017)

There were erratic rains in October in most parts of the country. An official meteorological start of the season was only after the 1st week of November in most places. It should be noted that in the Mashonaland and Harare provinces, the rainfall season has just started which is the norm. Accumulated precipitation totals for the period 1 October 2017 to 13 December 2017 are highest along the main watershed as shown in Fig. 3(a) below. The distribution across the country reveals that 71% of Meteorological stations dotted around the country have recorded 100mm or more accumulated rainfall since 1 October 2017 to 13 December 2017.

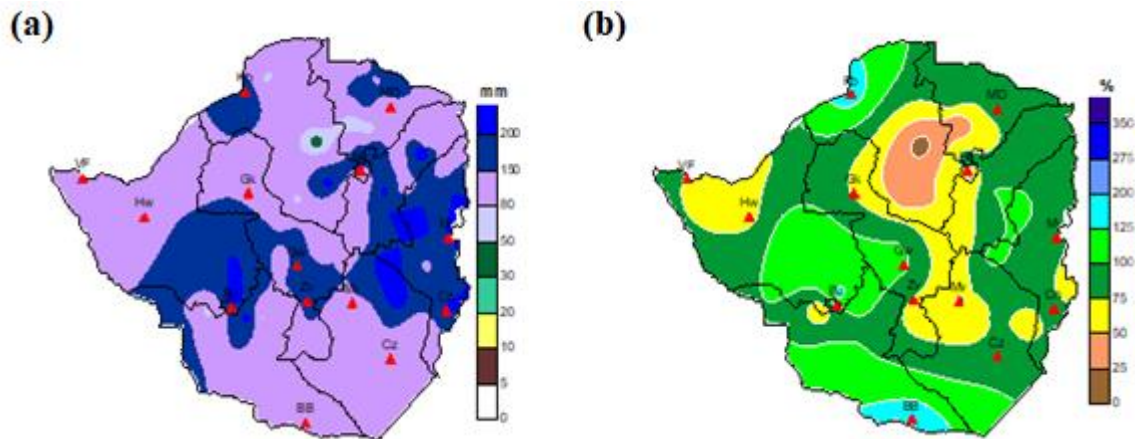


Figure 3. (a) accumulated rainfall (b) percentage of normal rainfall from 1 Oct 2017-13Dec 2017.

Fig. 3. above depicts that the bulk of the country is in the normal range, (75% - 125%) except for some places (Mashonaland West and Central provinces, pockets of the Midlands, Matabeleland North and Masvingo provinces) which are in the below normal range, (below 75%) as shown in Fig 3(b).

3.0 JANUARY-FEBRUARY-MARCH (JFM) 2018 UPDATE

Based on the current meteorological indicators, the whole country is expected to receive **NORMAL** accumulated rainfall totals during JFM 2018. The rainfall totals depicted in Fig. 4 for the different areas is what is likely to be obtained during the period JFM-2018. Please note that the normal rainfall pattern varies from place to place e.g. the JFM normal for Beitbridge is in the range 150-200mm whilst the JFM normal for Chimanimani varies between 750-800mm.

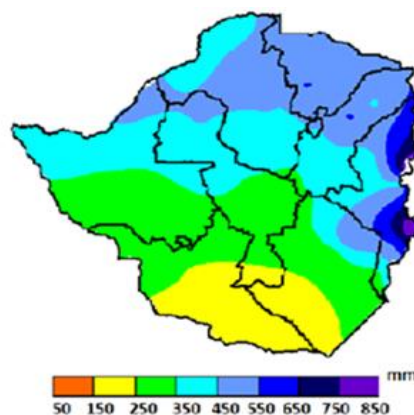


Figure 4 Long term mean rainfall for January-February-March for the period (1981-2010).

Please Note: The Meteorological Services Department will continue to issue daily weather forecasts and 10-day weather bulletins that will take into account any changes that might occur for the forecast period.