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SEASONAL OUTLOOK FOR THE EASTERN CAPE: September 2025 to January 2026

Overview

The El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) is firmly in a neutral state, however, predictions indicate that we may be moving towards a weak La Niña event during the coming summer season. It is still a bit too early to make any reliable conclusions on ENSO's effect during early summer, more reliable interpretations can only be made in the next couple of months as the prediction systems become more reliable.

Most of the areas that receive significant rainfall in the coming seasons of spring and early summer is situated in the North-East of the country. These areas are expected to receive in general above-normal rainfall during the forecast period up until early summer. There are still some uncertainties due to the ENSO predictions being somewhat unreliable during this period. However, if the trend towards La Niña continues and forecasts remain favourable for above-normal rainfall, it will give significant confidence in the outcome for the next summer season.

Minimum and maximum temperatures are largely expected to be above-normal for the most parts during the spring seasons.

LOCAL Overview

Dams in the Eastern Cape are relatively, and latest model runs are anticipating normal to above normal rainfall over most of the province for the period September 2025 to January 2026 except along the southern coastal areas where it will remain dry (Kouga, Kou Kama and Nelson Mandela Bay region).
The southern parts of Sarha Baartman district should get some rain early in spring then it will dry out towards December but then a wetter period is again expected towards January 2026.

Dam levels generally are quite full, and many smaller dams are overflowing. Some Provincial dam levels as at 25 August 2025. Gariep dam is at 98%

Dam	River	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
Belfort Dam	Mafube River	100.0	100.0	97.2
Bridle Drift Dam	Buffalo River	97.6	98.2	89.9
Darlington Dam	Sondags River	40.6	40.3	44.0
Elands Drift Dam	Great Fish River	54.9	95.5	66.1
Groendal Dam	Swartkops River	96.2	96.2	97.1
Impofu Dam	Krom River	49.6	49.9	40.3
Kromrivier Dam	Krom River	75.2	76.1	97.2
Katrivier Dam	Kat River	100.0	100.2	87.3
Kommandodrift Dam	Tarka River	83.8	84.5	92.9
Kouga Dam	Kouga River	74.8	75.6	99.5
Loerie Dam	Loeriespruit River	83.4	84.7	71.6
Lubisi Dam	Indwe River	44.8	45.6	42.9
Nahoon Dam	Nahoon River	93.2	94.2	87.2
Ncora Dam	Tsomo River	97.9	98.2	84.8
Mthatha Dam	Mtata River	99.3	100.0	95.9
Waterdown Dam	Klipplaat River	100.2	100.4	97.8
Wriggleswade Dam	Kubisi River	100.0	100.0	98.4
Xonxa Dam	White Kei River	98.1	98.4	97.0

WATER AND ENERGY (to be updated later)

Most of the north-central-east regions of the country are expected to receive above-normal rainfall during the forecasted period. Such anticipated conditions are likely to benefit water reservoirs, particularly in areas that receive most of the rainfall in September and onwards.

Drought information from the National Integrated Water Information System (NIWIS) (DWS) indicate that a number of settlements in the western parts of the Eastern Cape, eastern part of the Western Cape and Mpumalanga are still experiencing moderate drought conditions. In this regard, the expected above-normal minimum and maximum temperatures, coupled with other factors such as land use/cover, are likely to result in water loses through evapotranspiration processes. Furthermore, the minimum and maximum temperatures are expected to be mostly above normal across the country, except for the southern and eastern coastal areas, where below-normal maximum temperatures are anticipated during early spring. Increased demand for cooling is expected during the forecast period, except in the coastal areas during the September-October-November period. Relevant decision-makers are encouraged to note these possible outcomes and communicate with affected businesses and communities accordingly.

WINTERBERG and SURROUNDING AREAS

Models are now favouring normal to above normal rainfall for spring and summer.

GAMTOOS / Kouga Region / Nelson Mandela Bay Metro

A drier than normal period is anticipated from September through to January 2026 for this region but farmers may well benefit from above normal rainfall anticipated inland which could maintain a steady flow of water in rivers such as the Grootrivier, Kouga and Baviaans.

Gariep Dam (Nooitgedacht System)

Models indicate above normal rainfall for Spring and Summer . The dam is still at 98% and there is sufficient capacity for the Nooitgedacht Scheme.

Klein Karoo (Small Karoo- Steytlerville/Jansenville and surrounds)

Conditions are generally very dry over this region but models do now anticipate above normal rainfall at the beginning of spring and then again towards January 2026 with a dry period towards November / December 2025.

Health Sector

The predicted above-normal minimum and maximum temperatures across most parts of South Africa during the spring and early summer seasons may pose several health risks. Elevated temperatures can increase vulnerability to heat-related illnesses and heighten the risk of prolonged exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation, which may lead to sunburn, skin damage, and other UV-induced health conditions. Additionally, elevated temperatures may intensify pollen levels, increasing the likelihood of skin and eye allergies and accelerating the growth of foodborne pathogens, raising the risk of foodborne illnesses.

Moreover, above-normal rainfall is expected for most parts of the country during spring and early summer. This could heighten the likelihood of flooding, particularly in areas with inadequate drainage systems, posing immediate health risks such as drowning, injuries, and hypothermia. Communities are strongly encouraged to take appropriate precautions and follow the guidance of local authorities and health professionals to mitigate these health risks during the seasonal transition.

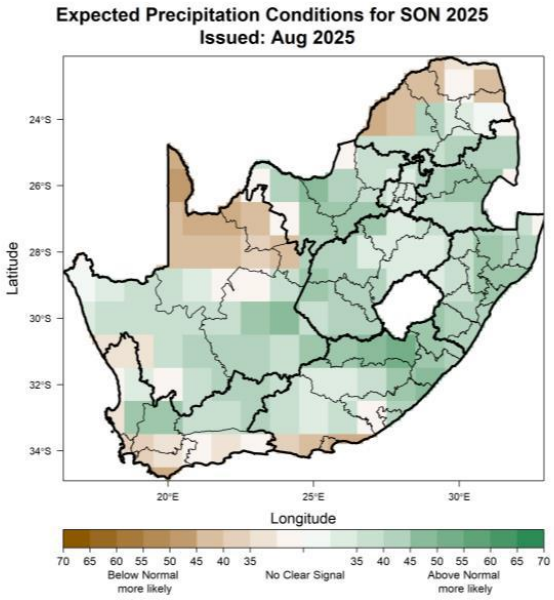
Agriculture Sector

Above-normal rainfall is expected in general for most parts of the country during the spring and early summer months. This above-normal rainfall forecast for the summer rainfall regions will likely have a positive impact on crop and livestock production. Therefore, the relevant decision-makers are encouraged to advise farmers to implement soil and water conservation measures, proper water harvesting and storage techniques, establish proper drainage systems, and other appropriate farming practices.

Eastern Cape Rainfall outlook

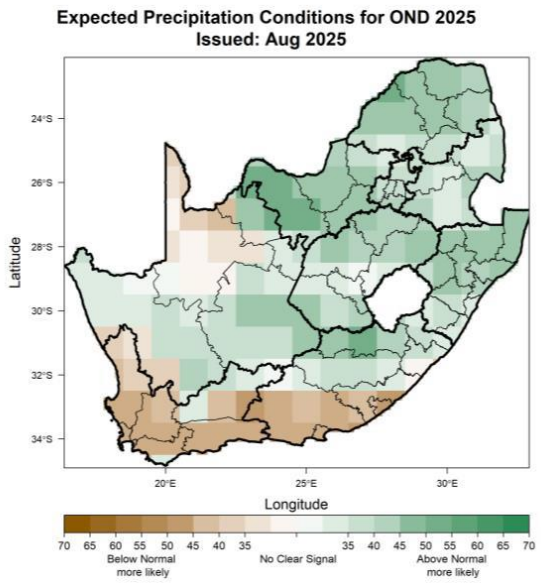
RAINFALL FORECAST MAPS

Figure 1: Rainfall (September 2025 to November 2025)



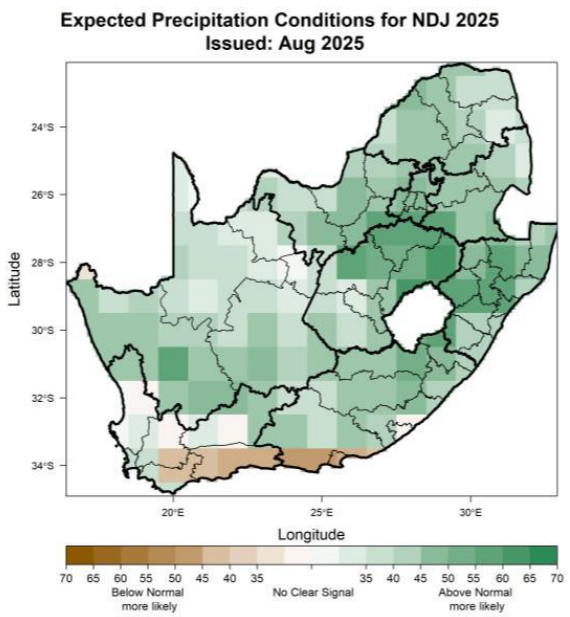
The latest forecast has changed from last month's predication and is now indicating below normal rainfall over the southern coastal areas but above normal rainfall over the interior especially over eastern parts of Joe Gqab and Alfred Nzo areas.

Figure 2: Rainfall (October to December 2025)



Drier than normal conditions are expected over the southern coastal areas and the adjacent interior especially towards late November and December 2025. Above normal rainfall is still expected over the interior and eastern parts

Figure 3: Rainfall (November 2025 to January 2026)



Drier than normal conditions are expected to persist over the southern coastal areas but above normal rainfall is again expected over the interior reaching down into the Karoo towards January 2026.

Day & Night Temperatures

Slightly cooler overnight temperatures are expected along the south coast (Kouga and Nelson Mandela Bay) regions in spring but this changes to above normal minimum temperatures towards summer. The remainder of the province will see normal to above normal overnight temperatures with substantially warmer conditions towards January 2026.

Maximum temperatures are expected to be cooler along the coast and adjacent interior in Spring with warmer conditions over the interior. As we move into summer day time temperatures will become progressively warmer expect over Nelson Mandela Bay where temperatures are expected to remain cooler than normal during the day.

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