

Monday, 19 July 2021

Yet another week of bitterly cold winter weather, with snowfall for some provinces

A week of very cold temperatures is expected across the majority of South Africa from Tuesday, 20 July 2021, lasting well into the coming weekend. The cold temperatures will be due to a succession of cold fronts that are expected to sweep across the southern half of the country. The first cold front will arrive over the south-western parts of the country on Monday afternoon, followed by another, more intense, cold front on Wednesday. The latter system will be supported by a well-defined upper-air trough, thus enhancing the overall intensity of the weather system.

A cold front will make landfall over the south-western parts of the country on Monday afternoon, 19 July 2021. Consequently, strong north-westerly winds can be expected over the southern interior as well as along the southern and south-eastern coastal regions. Isolated showers and rain will occur over the south-western parts of the Western Cape province on Monday afternoon, spreading to the southern parts in the evening. Rainfall intensity is expected to increase on Tuesday along the western part of the Cape south coast, including the Overberg District, with the distinct possibility of localised flooding in these areas.

Light snowfalls are expected over the south-western mountain peaks on Tuesday morning, whilst bitterly cold conditions are likely to set in over much of the interior of the Western Cape. Showers are expected to reach the western parts of the Eastern Cape later, spreading to the Sneeuberg and Winterberg. Light snowfall is expected in high-lying areas and mountain ranges of the western parts of the Eastern Cape, including the Tsitsikamma, Kouga, Sneeuberg and Winterberg mountains.

A second, more intense cold front supported by an upper-air trough will affect the Cape provinces on Wednesday through to Thursday, consolidating very cold, wet and windy conditions over the majority of the Western and Eastern Cape interior regions. Moreover, disruptive snowfalls can be expected in many of the higher mountain regions of the Cape provinces (refer Figure 2). An additional weather-related impact is that, following recent significant rainfall over the south-western part of Western Cape, the

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ground is still very close to saturation. Consequently, any additional rainfall over this region is likely to lead to incidents of localised flooding. This weather-related hazard is expected to particularly impact upon residents of informal settlements in parts of the Western Cape.

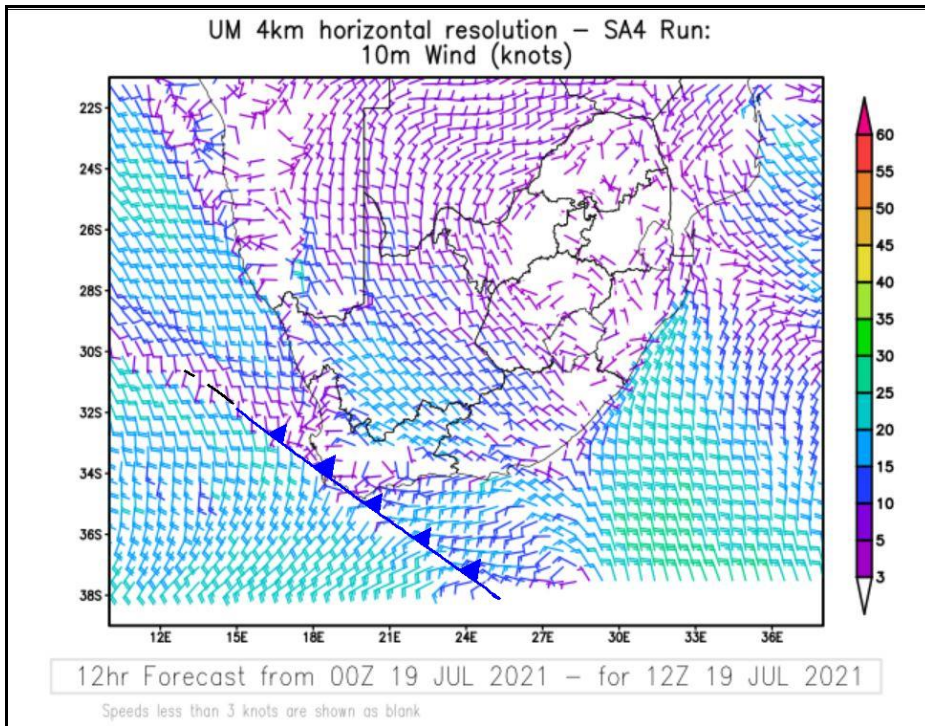


Figure 1: Predicted surface winds (knots) valid for midday, 19 July 2021, together with corresponding frontal positions. Source: SAWS (Unified Model)

The South African Weather Service has issued the following alerts (stratified per province):

Western Cape Impacts:

A. Yellow level 2 warning for RAIN resulting in localised flooding, is expected in the Overberg and the coastal areas of the Garden Route Districts (W. Cape) on Tuesday (20/07/2021).

B. Yellow level 2 warning for COASTAL WIND (west to south-westerly, 55-65 km/h) resulting in localised disruptions of small harbours and ports for a short period, is expected between Cape Point and Plettenberg Bay on Wednesday (21/07/2021).

C. Yellow level 2 warning for WAVES (6 to 8m wave heights) resulting in difficulty in navigation at sea, is expected between Saldanha Bay and Plettenberg from Wednesday into Thursday morning (21-22/07/2021)

D. Yellow level 3 warning for disruptive SNOW leading to possible loss of livestock/crops, is expected over the high lying areas of the Western Cape and southern interior of Namakwa (N. Cape) on Wednesday, persisting through to Thursday morning (21-22/07/2021).

E. Yellow level 4 warning for RAIN leading to flooding of roads and settlements (formal/informal) is expected over the City of Cape Town, Cape Winelands and Overberg Districts (W. Cape) on Wednesday (21/07/2021).

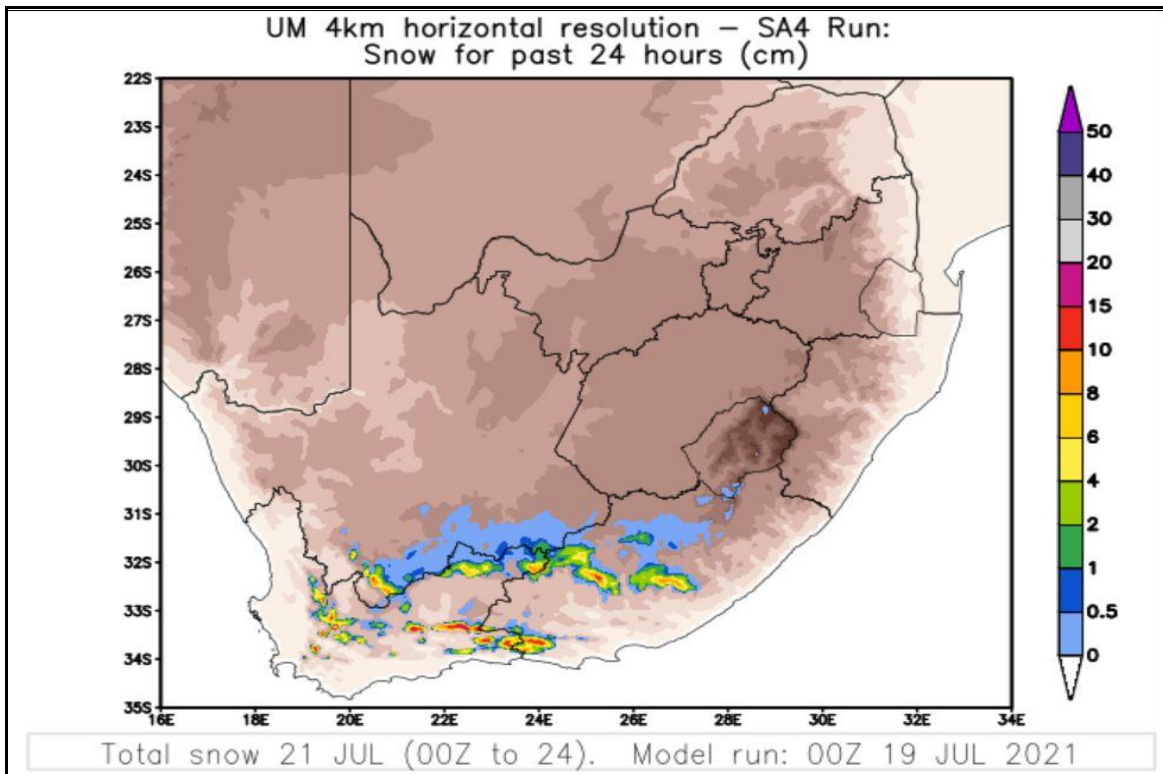


Figure 2: Predicted 24-hour accumulation of snowfall (in cm), valid for 21 July 2021. Some higher elevation regions of Western and Eastern Cape can expect 10-15cm of snowfall. Source: SAWS (Unified Model)

Eastern Cape impacts:

A. Yellow level 2 warning for Disruptive snowfall expected over Lootsberg, Wapadsberg, Penhoek, Outeniqua, Nico Malan, Winterberg on Wednesday (21/07/2021).

B. Yellow level 2 warning for COASTAL WIND (westerly to south-westerly, 55-65 km/h) resulting in localised disruptions of small harbours and ports for a short period, is expected between Plettenberg Bay and East London on Wednesday (21/07/2021).

C. Yellow level 2 warning for WAVES (6 to 8m wave heights) resulting in difficulty in navigation at sea, is expected from afternoon between Plettenberg Bay and Port Alfred from Wednesday into Thursday morning (21-22/07/2021), reaching East London in the evening.

D. Yellow level 4 warning for Disruptive snowfall expected over Lootsberg, Wapadsberg, Penhoek, Outeniqua, Nico Malan, Winterberg passes as well as gravel road passes in the Tsitsikamma, Outeniqua and Baviaanskloof mountains on Thursday (22/07/2021).

E. Yellow level 4 warning for RAIN leading to flooding of roads and settlements (formal/informal) is expected along the coast and adjacent interior between Plettenberg Bay and Fish River.

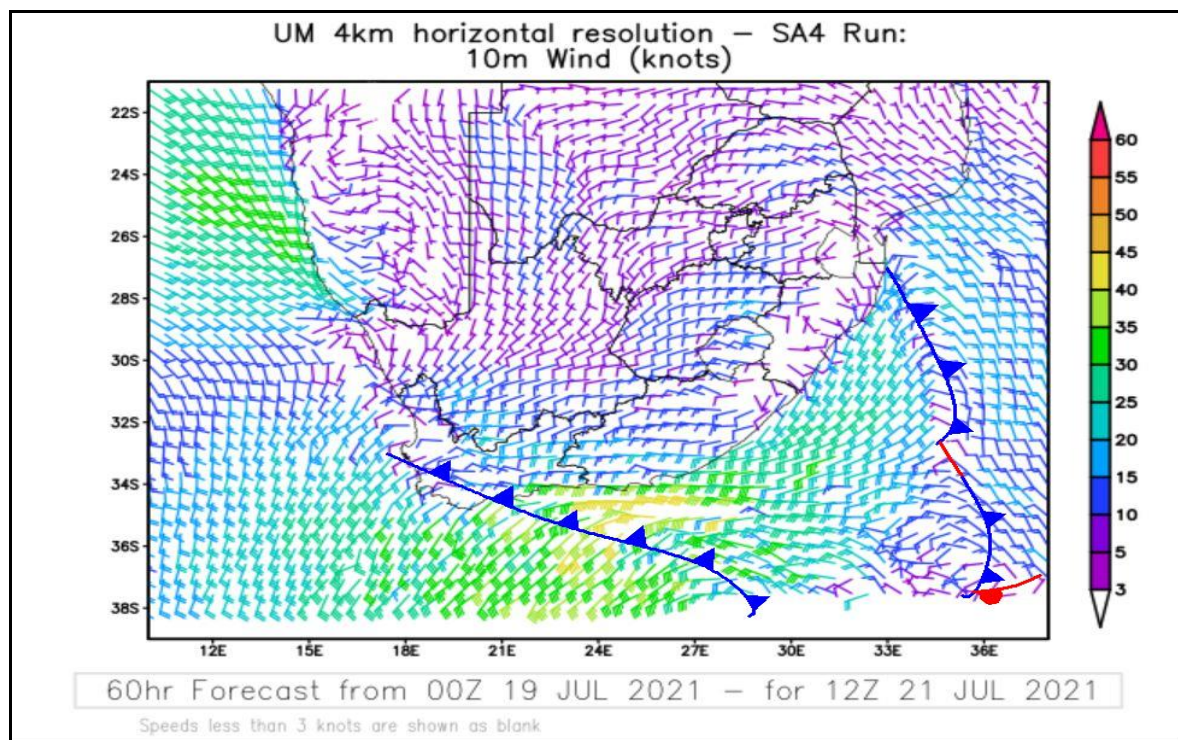


Figure 3: Predicted surface winds (knots) valid for midday, 21 July 2021, together with corresponding frontal positions. Gale force winds, more than 34 knots can be expected along the Cape south coast (indicated by lime green and yellow bars). Source SAWS (Unified model)

Free state impacts:

A. Yellow level 2 warning for SNOW leading difficult driving conditions over the southern parts of the Free State on Thursday morning (22/07/2021).

Small stock farmers and the public are therefore advised to take the necessary precautions ahead of the expected cold snap and to ensure that livestock and pets have sufficient shelter and water.

The South African Weather Service will continue to monitor any further developments relating to this weather system and will issue subsequent updates as required. Furthermore, the public are urged and encouraged to regularly follow weather forecasts on television and radio. Updated information in this regard will regularly be available at www.weathersa.co.za as well as via the SA Weather Service Twitter account @SAWeatherServic

Compiled by: L. PHEME, E. Reyneke, S. Nake, H. Grobler, D. Van der Mescht, N. Kleinbooi and K. Mahlangu.

Edited by: D.R. Tawana and K. Rae.

For technical and weather enquiries:

National Forecasting Centre: Tel: 012 367 6041

Media enquiries: Ms Hannelee Doubell: Manager, Communications; Tel: (012) 367 6104; Cell: 072 222 6305; E-mail: hannelee.doubell@weathersa.co.za

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