



31 October 2018

Stormy weather as well as heavy rain expected for parts of South Africa,

31 October and 01 November 2018

The South African Weather Service (SAWS) hereby alerts the general public regarding extreme weather conditions likely to affect the central and eastern regions of the country between Wednesday, 31 October and Thursday, 01 November 2018. This extreme weather is expected to be predominantly in the form of severe thunderstorms and / or heavy rainfall which may lead to localised flooding.

Today Wednesday, cold frontal air in circulation over KwaZulu-Natal is in the process of encroaching into the provinces of the Free State, Gauteng, Mpumalanga and Limpopo. This is resulting in the development of isolated to scattered showers and thundershowers as the cooler, moist air in the east interacts with hotter air over the interior of the country. Moreover, the presence of a broad upper air trough is also expected to promote the development of longer-lived storms. In particular, widespread storms are expected over the northern highlands of KwaZulu-Natal as well as the escarpment region of Mpumalanga, where orographic uplift is likely to result in further instability promoting more vigorous, sustained thunderstorm development. This conflict of airmass (alluded to above) is expected to be most pronounced along the escarpment regions of Limpopo and Mpumalanga today, hence it is over these areas where some storms may become severe this afternoon and this evening. Such severe storms are likely to be associated with one or more of large damaging hail, strong wind damage or localised flooding. It can also be mentioned that there is currently an extremely dangerous risk of veld fires over central Limpopo province today, due to the persistently hot conditions over this region.

By tomorrow (Thursday), rainfall in the form of showers and thundershowers is likely to persist over a similar, but more extensive spatial area. As can be inferred in Figure 2, rainfall is expected to occur over North West as well as all of Limpopo. Conditions likely to support severe weather are also expected to affect a larger area (in comparison with Wednesday's conditions), with severe thunderstorms likely to be associated with one or more of large damaging hail, strong wind damage or localised flooding expected to affect Gauteng, north-east Free State, KwaZulu-Natal highlands, the highveld and escarpment of Mpumalanga as well as the southern extremities

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of Limpopo (Waterberg region). Concurrent to this, the South African Weather Service also anticipates a high likelihood of heavy rain (and an associated risk of localised flooding) over the northern half of KwaZulu-Natal, extreme north-eastern Free State, most of Mpumalanga as well as neighbouring Swaziland.

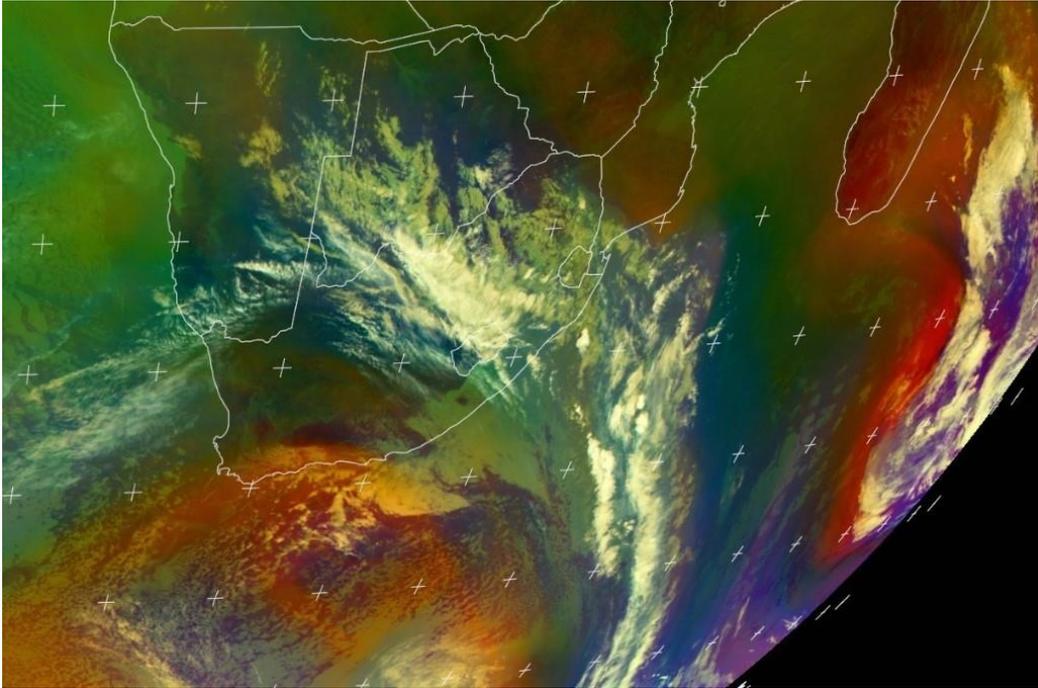


Figure 1. Meteosat “airmass” RGB false-colour satellite image valid for 09h00SAST (07h00UTC) today, Wednesday 31 October 2018. Source: EUMETSAT.

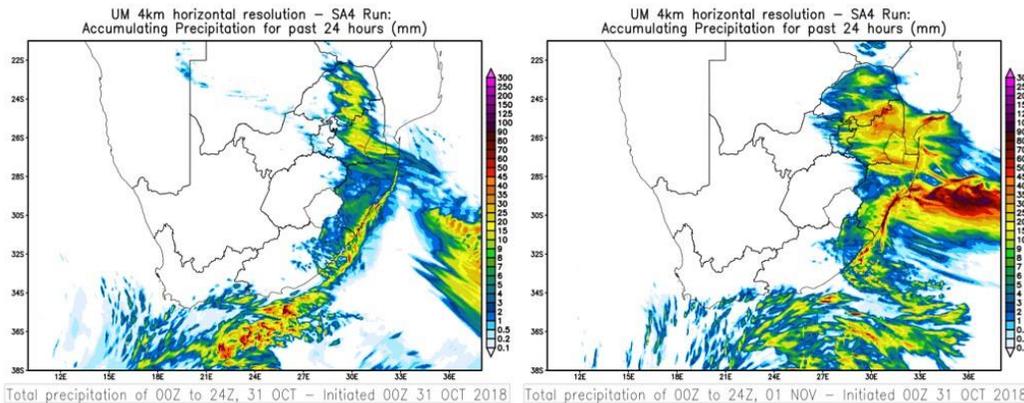


Figure 2. Predicted 24 hour accumulation of rainfall (at left) as generated by the 4km Unified Model (UM) for (a) Wednesday 31 October 2018 and (at right) for Thursday 01 November 2018. Note the orange and red shades (in the region of 30 to 50 mm) indicated along the eastern escarpment regions of Mpumalanga and Limpopo tomorrow. Source: SAWS.

The South African Weather Service advises the public to take heed of the following precautionary measures when encountering flooding:

- If possible stay indoors and off the roads, avoid crossing rivers and swollen streams where water is above one's ankles.
- If trapped in a flooding situation whilst in a vehicle, it is preferable to abandon it and climb to higher ground.
- In buildings, move valuables to a safe place above the expected flood level. Switch off electricity at the supply point to the building.
- In rural areas, the safety of livestock can be assured by relocating them to a safe place on higher ground, preferably before the onset of inclement weather.
- In the event of duly authorized officials issuing an order to evacuate; abandon the dwelling without undue delay, unless access is cut off by rising floodwaters.
- **NEVER drive on a road that is flooded or obscured by water.** One cannot be certain how deep the water is and/or if the road has been eroded or washed away. If the vehicle stalls, leave it immediately and seek higher ground.
- Be especially cautious at night when it is difficult to identify flood hazards. Listen attentively to the radio or watch TV weather bulletins for warnings and obey the instructions from Disaster Management officials.

The following WATCHES and WARNINGS have been issued by SAWS this morning, Wednesday 31 October 2018:

Valid for today, Wednesday 31 October 2018:

WARNINGS:

1. Extremely high fire danger conditions are expected in places over Limpopo province, expect in the eastern parts.

WATCHES:

1. Severe thunderstorms are expected in places over the north-western KwaZulu-Natal, the Highveld areas of Mpumalanga, as well as the south-central parts of Limpopo province.

Valid for tomorrow, Thursday 01 November 2018.

WARNINGS:

1. Extremely high fire danger conditions are expected in places over the north-western areas of Namakwa District of the Northern Cape as well as the northern and western interior of Limpopo province.

WATCHES:

1. Severe thunderstorms are expected over Gauteng, the Highveld areas of Mpumalanga as well as the extreme south-central parts of Limpopo province.
2. Heavy rain leading to flooding is expected south-eastern parts of Mpumalanga, and also along the coast and northern parts of Kwa-Zulu Natal.

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**

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