

Food and Water Security in South Africa January 2015 MONITOR

Prepared by Augustus Consulting

1.0 Key Emerging Trends, Themes and Issues

- South Africa's water crisis deepens
- South African government to fast track land expropriation
- Increase in farm attacks
- Increase in land invasions
- Drought becoming a serious problem in KwaZulu-Natal

1.1 South Africa's water crisis deepens

On 5 January, *IOL News* reported that thirsty South Africa was on a brink of a water crisis-South Africans use 235 litres of water each a day compared to the international average of 173 litres - which is pushing the country into a water crisis that will, within a decade, rival the electricity catastrophe.¹

On 9 January, the *Cape Times* reported that farmers face crop disaster after water loss- around 300 farmers in the Olifants River Valley are facing losing their entire crops and millions of rand because a channel delivering water from the Clanwilliam Dam broke on Monday.²

On 13 January, *SABC News* reported that the small rural village of Paradys in Thaba Nchu outside Bloemfontein has been without water for three weeks.³

On 14 January, *SABC News* reported that a Free State township was without water and electricity- incensed Tshame residents near Harrismith have threatened tough action- they have been without electricity for over a month and now they have been dealt another blow following a two-week water cut.⁴

¹ Thirsty SA on brink of water crisis, Nokuthula Ntuli, *IOL News*, 5 January 2015

<http://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/kwazulu-natal/thirsty-sa-on-brink-of-water-crisis-1.1801309#.VLFbWNH9nIV>

² Farmers face crop disaster after water loss, Environment Writer, *Cape Times*, January 9 2015

<http://www.iol.co.za/capetimes/farmers-face-crop-disaster-after-water-loss-1.1802935#.VLFZsNH9nIV>

³ Thaba Nchu experiencing water crisis, Maryna van Wyk, *SABC News*, 13 January 2015

<http://www.sabc.co.za/news/a/b794548046ec5405adecad26c7405250/Thaba-Nchu-experiencing-water-crisis-20151301>

⁴ Free State township without water and electricity, 14 January 2015, Thabiso Radebe, *SABC News*

<http://www.sabc.co.za/news/a/e42da98046ef4b77aa55fa6c380aebd9/Free-State-township-without-water-and-electricity-20151401>

On 18 January, *SABC News* reported that Mpumalanga residents threatened to strike following water shortage. The residents say that they have been without water for the past twenty years, despite the completion of the multi-billion rand Inyaka Dam water scheme.⁵

On 21 January, the *Daily News*, reported residents in some Durban residential areas had threatened legal action threatened over water cuts- residents from Hilton, Winterskloof and Mount Michael are angry and frustrated after suffering through almost three weeks of continuous water cuts.⁶

On 21 January, *SAnews.gov.za* reported that comments were being sought on Draft Irrigation Water Regulations in South Africa- the public is invited to submit written comments on the draft regulations for irrigation water. The regulations require that the abstraction of water for irrigation of crops purposes be limited, monitored, measured and recorded.⁷

On 23 January, the *Mail & Guardian* reported that South Africa's great thirst has begun- for many South Africans, the water crisis is already here- for others, research and projections show, it is only a matter of time – and perhaps not a great deal of time.⁸

On 30 January, the *Mail & Guardian* reported that there was a mining company that was laying claim to Mpumalanga water catchment area- the fate of land vital to South Africa's water security now rests with the ministers of mining and environmental affairs- an Indian company this week declared its intention to mine in a critical water catchment area in Mpumalanga, just one year after the area was proclaimed a protected area.⁹

1.2 South African government to fast track land expropriation

On 10 January, *SAPA* reported that President Jacob Zuma on had committed the ANC government to land expropriation, but insisted it would be done within the confines of the Constitution.

On 14 January, *Pretoria News* reported that there was no money for President Zuma's land plans- President Jacob Zuma may have called for the expedition of the land reform programme in his January 8 statement, but the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform appears to not have the money to cover thousands of new land claims.¹⁰

⁵ Mpumalanga residents threaten strike following water shortage, Sipiwe Ngelo, *SABC News*, Sunday 18 January 2015 <http://www.sabc.co.za/news/a/5498640046fba53d88f4b8c6b9a5590a/Mpumalanga-residents-threaten-strike-following-water-shortage-20151801>

⁶ Legal action threatened over water cuts, Sherlissa Peters, *Daily News*, 21 January 2015 <http://www.iol.co.za/news/crime-courts/legal-action-threatened-over-water-cuts-1.1807357#.VL-2ldH9nIU>

⁷ Comments Sought On Draft Irrigation Water Regulations in South Africa, *SAnews.gov.za*, 21 January 2015 <http://allafrica.com/stories/201501211311.html>

⁸ South Africa's great thirst has begun, Siphos Kings, Sarah Wild, Rapula Moatshe, Phillip de Wet, *Mail & Guardian*, 23 January 2015

⁹ Mine lays claim to Mpumalanga water catchment area, Fiona Mcleod and Franz Fuls, *Mail & Guardian*, 30 January 2015 <http://mg.co.za/article/2015-01-29-mine-lays-claim-to-mpumalanga-water-catchment-area>

¹⁰ No money for Zuma's land plans, Siyabonga Mkhwanazi, *Pretoria News*, 14 January 2015 <http://www.iol.co.za/news/politics/no-money-for-zuma-s-land-plans-1.1804670#.VLY0itH9nIU>

On 15 January, *SAPA* reported that King Zwelithini was defending his KZN land claims- Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini defended his blanket land-claim of KwaZulu-Natal and the existence of traditional courts.¹¹

On 20 January, *The Mercury* reported that there were rival claims for some of the land in KZN- massive tracts of land in Camperdown, Richmond and Mid Illovo, already under claim by three communities, have had another 400 new claims lodged against them with the Land Claims Commission.¹²

On 28 January, *The Mercury* reported that KZN's productive land was lying idle- vast tracts of once productive land in KwaZulu-Natal were lying idle despite efforts to uplift emerging farmers.¹³

On 29 January, *Times Live* reported that the ANC government was now on a land offensive- land ownership by foreigners will be prohibited and South Africans will be entitled to own no more than two farms, or an equivalent of 12000ha.¹⁴

On 29 January, *AllAfrica.com* reported that the Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Small Business Development, Ms Ruth Bhengu, has voiced her concern about failed agricultural projects in a presidential nodal point, Ugu District Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal.

On 30 January, *Times Live* reported that Afribusiness argue that the African National Congress's proposed cap on land ownership is irrational and could lead to restrictions on other assets, Afribusiness said.¹⁵

1.3 Increase in farm attacks

On 5 January, *IOL News* reported that, according to the KZN Agricultural Union, there were 15 murders and 67 attacks on KwaZulu-Natal farms last year- this was up from 10 murders and 47 attacks on KZN farms in 2013.¹⁶

On 5 January, *SAPA* reported that KwaZulu-Natal community safety MEC Willies Mchunu had expressed shock at the murder of a 69-year-old Estcourt farmer in his home.¹⁷

¹¹ Zwelithini defends KZN land claims, *Sapa*, 15 January 2015

<http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/Zwelithini-defends-KZN-land-claims-20150115>

¹² Rival claims for KZN land, Kamini Padayachee, *The Mercury*, 20 January 2015

<http://www.iol.co.za/news/crime-courts/rival-claims-for-kzn-land-1.1806805#.VL5SstH9nIU>

¹³ KZN's productive land lying idle, Nokuthula Ntuli, *The Mercury*, 28 January 2015

<http://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/kwazulu-natal/kzn-s-productive-land-lying-idle-1.1810313#.VMjyH9H9nIU>

¹⁴ Land offensive, Kingdom Mabuza, TJ Strydom and Penwell Dlamini, *Times Live*, 29 January, 2015

<http://www.timeslive.co.za/thetimes/2015/01/29/land-offensive>

¹⁵ A ceiling on land ownership will not lift anyone out of poverty: Afribusiness, *Sapa*, 30 January 2015

<http://www.timeslive.co.za/politics/2015/01/30/a-ceiling-on-land-ownership-will-not-lift-anyone-out-of-poverty-afribusiness>

¹⁶ 15 died violently on KZN farms in 2014, Sherlissa Peters, *IOL News*, 5 January 2015

<http://www.iol.co.za/news/crime-courts/15-died-violently-on-kzn-farms-in-2014-1.1801463#.VLFabDH9nIV>

¹⁷ MEC shocked by farmer's murder, *Sapa*, 5 January 2015, <http://www.iol.co.za/news/crime-courts/mec-shocked-by-farmer-s-murder-1.1801530#.VLFbH9H9nIV>

On 8 January, *SAPA* reported that a 76-year old woman had been strangled on a farm in Lephalale, Limpopo.

On 10 January, *SAPA* reported that Gauteng police had said that no arrests have been made in relation to a farm attack on an elderly couple in Lindley, near Muldersdrift- Lt-Col Lungelo Dlamini said investigations into the murder and assault of an elderly man, the assault of his wife and robbery of their house continued.

On 15 January, *SAPA* reported that, according to AfriForum, farm murders were on the rise-a total of 67 people were murdered on farms across South Africa in 2014.¹⁸

On 18 January, *SAPA* reported that four people had been arrested following an attempted farm attack in De Tweedespruit, Cullinan, Gauteng.¹⁹

1.4 Increase in land invasions

On 12 January, *SABC News* reported that senior ANC Mpumalanga members in Nkomazi, Mpumalanga are being accused of land invasion by a farmer's association- they allegedly invaded land earmarked for development.²⁰

On 13 January, *Times Live* reported that EFF leader, Julius Malema, had declared that EFF members will occupy the land and President Zuma will pay-the private sector, particularly mining companies and banks must brace themselves for serious protests by the Economic Freedom Fighters as it rolls out its plan of taking over land and the financial services this year.²¹

On 18 January, *SAPA* reported that the EFF in Gauteng would launch a programme to occupy vacant land this year.²²

On 19 January, *The Star* reported that squatters had invade a 74-hectare agricultural land property on the outskirts of Diepsloot in Johannesburg.

On 21 January, *Pretoria News*, reported that bullets flew after Tshwane land invasion-more and more communities in the Tshwane region have heeded the Economic Freedom Fighters' calls to grab land.

On 21 January, *Pretoria News* reported that the Tshwane mayor Kgosientso Ramokgopa was blaming the EFF for Pretoria anarchy- the mayor declared that the rampant land grabs championed by the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) will be addressed by stricter law enforcement.²³

¹⁸ Farm murders on the rise: AfriForum, 67 killed on farms in 2014, Sapa, 15 January, 2015 <http://www.timeslive.co.za/local/2015/01/15/farm-murders-on-the-rise-afriforum-67-killed-on-farms-in-2014>

¹⁹ Four held after attempted farm attack, Sapa, 18 January 2015 <http://thenewage.co.za/149300-1009-53-Four-held-after-attempted-farm-attack>

²⁰ ANC Mpumalanga leaders accused of land invasion, Siphephile Kunene, *SABC News*, 12 January 2015 <http://www.sabc.co.za/news/a/57190c0046e8f5348d4fed9cbd593836/ANC-Mpumalanga-leaders-accused-of-land-invasion-20151201>

²¹ We will occupy the land and Zuma will pay: EFF, Penwel Dlamini, *Times Live*, 13 January, 2015 <http://www.timeslive.co.za/politics/2015/01/13/we-will-occupy-the-land-and-zuma-will-pay-eff>

²² EFF to launch land occupation programmes, Sapa, 18 January 2015 <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/EFF-to-launch-land-occupation-programmes-20150118>

On 23 January, *The Star* reported that EFF leader Godrich Gardee has urged his supporters to occupy privately-owned land in the Free State.

On 27 January, *Daily News* reported that despite an order stopping them from entering the property, land invaders at Harewood in Pietermaritzburg, KZN continue to flout the law and now face criminal action against them.

1.5 Drought becoming a serious problem in KwaZulu-Natal

On 9 January, the *Daily News* reported that dry conditions are putting the squeeze on water supply in areas to the north of Durban, with levels at Hazelmere Dam in particular continuing to plummet.²⁴

On 19 January, *The Mercury* reported that one of South Africa's biggest sugar producers, Illovo Sugar, will close its Umzimkulu mill for the year-long 2015 milling season starting in April because of the drought in KwaZulu Natal.²⁵

On 26 January, the *Daily News* reported that the government has pledged more than R350 million in emergency relief to KwaZulu-Natal as a devastating drought grips the province.²⁶

On 27 January, the *Daily News* reported that KZN farmers while the government has pledged 350 million to alleviate the worsening water crisis, some small farmers claim to have been left out in the cold.²⁷

1.6 Food Prices

On 14 January, *Business Day* Reported that, according to local food producers, food prices should drop in coming months after the sharp fall in oil and fuel prices, but declines will not be significant.²⁸

On 27 January, the *Daily News* reported that the predicted drop in petrol price could offset possible food price hikes brought on by the persistent dry conditions.²⁹

²³ Mayor blames EFF for Pretoria anarchy, Jonisayi Maromo, Pretoria News, 21 January 2015, <http://www.iol.co.za/news/politics/mayor-blames-eff-for-pretoria-anarchy-1.1807354>

²⁴ Water supply tight as dam level falls, Kamcilla Pillay, *Daily News*, 9 January 2015, <http://www.iol.co.za/dailynews/news/water-supply-tight-as-dam-level-falls-1.1803078#.VLFaMtH9nIU>

²⁵ Drought closes KZN sugar mill, Nokuthula Ntuli, *The Mercury*, 19 January 2015, <http://www.iol.co.za/business/companies/drought-closes-kzn-sugar-mill-1.1806304#.VL5ql9H9nIU>

²⁶ R350m to save dry KZN, Kamcilla Pillay, *Daily News*, 26 January 2015, <http://www.iol.co.za/dailynews/news/r350m-to-save-dry-kzn-1.1809010#.VMZAzNH9nIU>

²⁷ KZN farmers appeal for help, Kamcilla Pillay, *Daily News*, 27 January 2015, <http://www.iol.co.za/dailynews/news/kzn-farmers-appeal-for-help-1.1809491#.VMdHBdH9nIU>

²⁸ Food prices seen falling as fuel costs drop, Ntsakisi Maswanganyi, *Business Day Live*, 14 January 2015, <http://www.bdlive.co.za/economy/2015/01/14/food-prices-seen-falling-as-fuel-costs-drop>

²⁹ Food prices eyed as drought looms, Kamcilla Pillay, *Daily News*, 27 January 2015, <http://www.iol.co.za/dailynews/consumer/food-prices-eyed-as-drought-looms-1.1809528#.VMedu9H9nIU>

1.7 Salary Increase for Farmworkers

On 28 January, *SAnews.gov.za* reported that the Labour Minister Mildred Oliphant has announced an upward adjustment to the minimum wage of farmworkers with effect from 1 March 2015.³⁰

1.8 Foot-and-mouth eats up farming

On 14 January, *Times Live* reported that agriculture in South Africa faces economic obliteration by a bio-security threat if steps are not taken to eradicate a fast-spreading animal disease that has already cost the country R15-billion over the past three years.³¹

Overall Monthly Assessment

South Africa is in the middle of a serious water, electricity and land crisis. A food crisis is looming.

³⁰ Salary Increase for Farmworkers, *SAnews.gov.za*, 28 January 2015
<http://allafrica.com/stories/201501281459.html>

³¹ Foot-and-mouth eats up farming, Graeme Hosken, *Times Live*, 14 January, 2015
<http://www.timeslive.co.za/thetimes/2015/01/14/foot-and-mouth-eats-up-farming>