

# **Food & Water Security in South Africa WEEKLY MONITOR**

**18 March - 24 March 2017**

## **Prepared by Augustus Consulting**

Augustus Consulting monitors reports of food and water security in South Africa, including media articles, blogs, opinion pieces and other announcements. Unless otherwise indicated (such as in articles written by Augustus Consulting), the language and views contained in the search results reflect those of the originating author and/or publication and do not necessarily represent the views of Augustus Consulting. Archived media reviews are available: <http://www.augustusconsulting.co.za>

### **1.0 Key Daily Trends, Themes and Issues**

- **EFF argues that human rights in South Africa will always be incomplete without land as the agrarian reform debates rages on**
- **AgriSA announces that the Agricultural Land Holdings Bill which could ban foreign nationals from buying agricultural land would be too expensive and difficult to implement if signed into law**
- **Chicken prices increase by 6% as the drought takes its toll in South Africa**
- **South Africa's President Jacob Zuma softens his tone on land reform as the land debate gains traction in the country**
- **South Africa's consumer inflation eases to 6.3% although concerns remain about the meat prices due to the impact of the drought**
- **South Africa bans import of meat from Brazil amid reports that Brazilian meat-packers have been selling rotten and substandard produce for several years, especially to export markets**
- **Meat prices expected to go up despite recent reports that food inflation declined from 11.8% to 10% on an annual rate and lower food inflation is expected for the rest of 2017**
- **Competition Commission conducts raids at fresh produce agents amid allegations of price fixing**
- **City of Tshwane starts anti-land grab unit to fight illegal land invasions as the city battles with a surge in the number of land grab incidents**
- **South Africa's Land Bank says that black farmers continue to face challenges in accessing markets, finance and technical support to link them with integrated value chains**

- Cape Town dam levels drop, with effectively 18.6% of usable drinking water left in the city's dams, amid reports that the city is mulling emergency water supply schemes
- South Africa to start recycling wastewater as drought bites
- UN World Water Day Summit kicks off in Durban amid growing global water scarcity concerns
- Water demand is expected to exceed supply in South Africa by 17% in 2030
- Water and Sanitation Minister Nomvula Mokonyane says waste water has the potential to save South Africa from drought
- World Water Council says 32% of people in sub-Saharan Africa do not have access to safe drinking water
- South African President Jacob Zuma opened the United Nations World Water Day commemoration in Durban with an impassioned plea to world leaders to increase their efforts to ensure that the billions of people around the world who do not have access to clean water supply are no longer denied this fundamental human right
- World Bank says that the world needs to change the way it uses water
- Western Cape dams critically low amid growing concerns about water quality
- Falling dam levels in the Western Cape have causes panic among farmers amid fear that a third of their harvest could be badly affected if it does not rain by the end of March

## 1.1 Food Security

### 1.1.1 EFF argues that human rights in South Africa will always be incomplete without land as the agrarian reform debates rages on

On 21 March, *News24* reported that human rights will always be incomplete without land, the Economic Freedom Fighters said on Tuesday.<sup>1</sup>

### 1.1.2 AgriSA announces that the Agricultural Land Holdings Bill which could ban foreign nationals from buying agricultural land would be too expensive and difficult to implement if signed into law

On 22 March, *Eyewitness News* reported that AgriSA says a bill which could ban foreign nationals from buying agricultural land would be too expensive and difficult to implement if signed into law.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Human rights incomplete without land – EFF, Thulani Gqirana, News24, 21 March 2017, <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/human-rights-incomplete-without-land-eff-20170321>

<sup>2</sup> AgriSA: Agricultural Land Holdings Bill won't have positive impact, Mia Lindeque, Eyewitness News, 22 March 2017, <http://ewn.co.za/2017/03/22/agrisa-disapproves-of-bill-banning-foreigners-from-buying-land>

### **1.1.3 Chicken prices increase by 6% as the drought takes its toll in South Africa**

On 22 March, *IOL Business* reported that the price of chicken rose 6 percent year-on-year in January as compared with the same period a year ago.<sup>3</sup>

### **1.1.4 South Africa's President Jacob Zuma softens his tone on land reform as the land debate gains traction in the country**

On 22 March, *Business Day* reported that President Jacob Zuma toned down his comments on land reform during his address at the official Human Rights Day commemoration in the Eastern Cape on Tuesday, saying the government would use "available instruments" to expedite land redistribution.<sup>4</sup>

### **1.1.5 South Africa's consumer inflation eases to 6.3% although concerns remain about the meat prices due to the impact of the drought**

On 22 March, *Fin24* reported that South Africa's annual consumer price inflation was 6.3% in February 2017, down from 6.6% in January 2017, Statistics South Africa announced on Wednesday.<sup>5</sup>

### **1.1.6 South Africa bans import of meat from Brazil amid reports that Brazilian meat-packers have been selling rotten and substandard produce for several years, especially to export markets**

On 22 March, *African News Agency* reported that the South African government on Wednesday suspended imports of meat from establishments suspected to be involved in the Brazil meat scandal.<sup>6</sup>

### **1.1.7 Meat prices expected to go up despite recent reports that food inflation declined from 11.8% to 10% on an annual rate and lower food inflation is expected for the rest of 2017**

On 23 March, *Fin24* reported that food inflation declined from 11.8% to 10% on an annual rate and lower food inflation is expected for the rest of 2017, but there is still pressure from rising meat prices, said an analyst.<sup>7</sup>

### **1.1.8 Competition Commission conducts raids at fresh produce agents amid allegations of price fixing**

On 23 March, *Eyewitness News* reported that the Competition Commission raided 11 fresh produce market agents in Johannesburg and Pretoria on Thursday afternoon.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Chicken prices increase by 6%, Sandile Mchunu, IOL business Report, 22 March 2017, <http://www.iol.co.za/business-report/economy/chicken-prices-increase-by-6-8290256>

<sup>4</sup> Jacob Zuma softens his tone on land reform, Genevieve Quintal, Business Day, 22 March 2017, <https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/politics/2017-03-22-jacob-zuma-softens-his-tone-on-land-reform/>

<sup>5</sup> Consumer inflation eases to 6.3%, Fin24, 22 March 2017, <http://www.fin24.com/Economy/consumer-inflation-eases-to-63-20170322>

<sup>6</sup> SA bans import of meat from Brazil, Siphелеle Dlodla, African News Agency, 22 March 2017, <http://www.iol.co.za/business-report/sa-bans-import-of-meat-from-brazil-8299702>

<sup>7</sup> Meat prices expected to go up – analyst, Lameez Omarjee, Fin24, 23 March 2017, <http://www.fin24.com/Economy/meat-prices-expected-to-go-up-analyst-20170323-2>

### **1.1.9 City of Tshwane starts anti-land grab unit to fight illegal land invasions as the city battles with a surge in the number of land grab incidents**

On 23, *The Citizen* reported that the metro joins Cape Town and eThekweni in founding anti-land grab units as it battles a spiral in land invasions.<sup>9</sup>

### **1.1.10 South Africa's Land Bank says that black farmers continue to face challenges in accessing markets, finance and technical support to link them with integrated value chains**

On 24 March, *Business Day* reported that black farmers continue to face challenges in accessing markets, finance and technical support to link them with integrated value chains, the Land Bank says.<sup>10</sup>

## **1.2 Water Security**

### **1.2.1 Cape Town dam levels drop, with effectively 18.6% of usable drinking water left in the city's dams, amid reports that the city is mulling emergency water supply schemes**

On 21 March, *Times Live* reported that Cape Town has roughly 103 days of usable water left in its dams.<sup>11</sup>

### **1.2.2 South Africa to start recycling wastewater as drought bites**

On 22, *eNCA* reported that South Africa will be putting more resources towards recycling wastewater.<sup>12</sup>

### **1.2.3 UN World Water Day Summit kicks off in Durban amid growing global water scarcity concerns**

On 22 March, *SABC News* reported that the World Water Day Summit and Expo kicks off in Durban on Wednesday where the United Nations (UN) and the Department of Water and Sanitation will host local and international dignitaries for a three day gathering.<sup>13</sup>

### **1.2.4 Water demand is expected to exceed supply in South Africa by 17% in 2030**

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<sup>8</sup> Competition Commission conducts raids at fresh produce agents, Kgomotso Modise, Eyewitness News, 23 March 2017, <http://ewn.co.za/2017/03/23/competition-commission-raids-fresh-produce-agents>

<sup>9</sup> Tshwane starts anti-land grab unit to fight illegal land invasions, Citizen Reporter, 23 March 2017, <http://citizen.co.za/news/news-national/1466107/tshwane-starts-anti-land-grab-unit-to-fight-illegal-land-invasions/>

<sup>10</sup> Black farmers still excluded from mainstream value chain, Bekezela Phakathi, Business Day, 24 March 2017, <https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/companies/land-and-agriculture/2017-03-24-black-farmers-still-excluded-from-mainstream-value-chain/>

<sup>11</sup> Cape dam levels drop, city mulls emergency water supply schemes, Petru Saal, Times Live, 21 March 2017, <http://www.timeslive.co.za/local/2017/03/21/Cape-dam-levels-drop-city-mulls-emergency-water-supply-schemes>

<sup>12</sup> SA to start recycling wastewater, eNCA, 22 March 2017, <http://www.enca.com/south-africa/sa-to-start-recycling-wastewater>

<sup>13</sup> UN World Water Day Summit kicks off in Durban, Matiba Sibanyoni, SABC News, 22 March 2017, <http://www.sabc.co.za/news/a/7cc43e00407f08e7bd34bd3dc627042a/UN-World-Water-Day-Summit-kicks-off-in-Durban-20172203>

On 22 March, *News24* reported that water demand is expected to exceed supply in South Africa by 17% in 2030, according to a report released on the eve of World Water Day by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), in partnership with the Boston Consulting Group (BCG).<sup>14</sup>

### **1.2.5 Water and Sanitation Minister Nomvula Mokonyane says waste water has the potential to save South Africa from drought**

On 22 March, *SABC News* reported that Water and Sanitation Minister Nomvula Mokonyane says waste water has the potential to save South Africa from drought.<sup>15</sup>

### **1.2.6 World Water Council says 32% of people in sub-Saharan Africa do not have access to safe drinking water**

On 22 March, *News24* reported that the World Water Council says 32% of people in sub-Saharan Africa do not have access to safe drinking water.<sup>16</sup>

### **1.2.7 South African President Jacob Zuma opened the United Nations World Water Day commemoration in Durban with an impassioned plea to world leaders to increase their efforts to ensure that the billions of people around the world who do not have access to clean water supply are no longer denied this fundamental human right**

On 22 March, *City Press* reported that President Jacob Zuma has opened the United Nations World Water Day commemoration in Durban with an impassioned plea to world leaders to increase their efforts to ensure that the billions of people around the world who do not have access to clean water supply are no longer denied this fundamental human right.<sup>17</sup>

### **1.2.8 World Bank says that the world needs to change the way it uses water**

On 22 March, *News24* reported that the world needs to transform the way it manages its water, Professor Patrick Verkooijen of the World Bank said on Wednesday.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Fighting for water security in a time of demand, Nation Nyoka, *News24*, 22 March 2017, <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/fighting-for-water-security-in-a-time-of-demand-20170322>

<sup>15</sup> Waste Water has potential to save SA from drought, Matiba Sibanyoni, *SABC News*, 22 March 2017, <http://www.sabc.co.za/news/a/8d955880407fc37d80e0b93dc627042a/Waste-Water-has-potential-to-save-SA-from-drought-20172203>

<sup>16</sup> African governments urged to spend more on water safety, *News24*, 22 March 2017, <http://www.news24.com/Africa/News/african-governments-urged-to-spend-more-on-water-safety-20170322>

<sup>17</sup> 'Bleak' water situation will get worse unless we join forces – Zuma, Paddy Harper, *City Press*, 22 March 2017, <http://city-press.news24.com/News/bleak-water-situation-will-get-worse-unless-we-join-forces-zuma-20170322>

<sup>18</sup> We need to change how we use water - World Bank, Mxolisi Mngadi, *News24*, 22 March 2017, <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/we-need-to-change-how-we-use-water-world-bank-20170322>

### 1.2.9 Western Cape dams critically low amid growing concerns about water quality

On 23 March, *eNCA* reported that dams in the Western Cape are now critically low at only 18.6 percent of their total capacity and creeping ever closer to having fewer than 100 days of water left.<sup>19</sup>

### 1.2.10 Falling dam levels in the Western Cape have causes panic among farmers amid fear that a third of their harvest could be badly affected if it does not rain by the end of March

On 24 March, *Business Day* reported that the falling dam levels in the Western Cape have caused panic among farmers in the Theewaterskloof Dam region. They fear that a third of their harvest could be badly affected if it does not rain by the end of March.<sup>20</sup>

## 2.0 Daily Infographics: Southern Africa is a water-stressed region

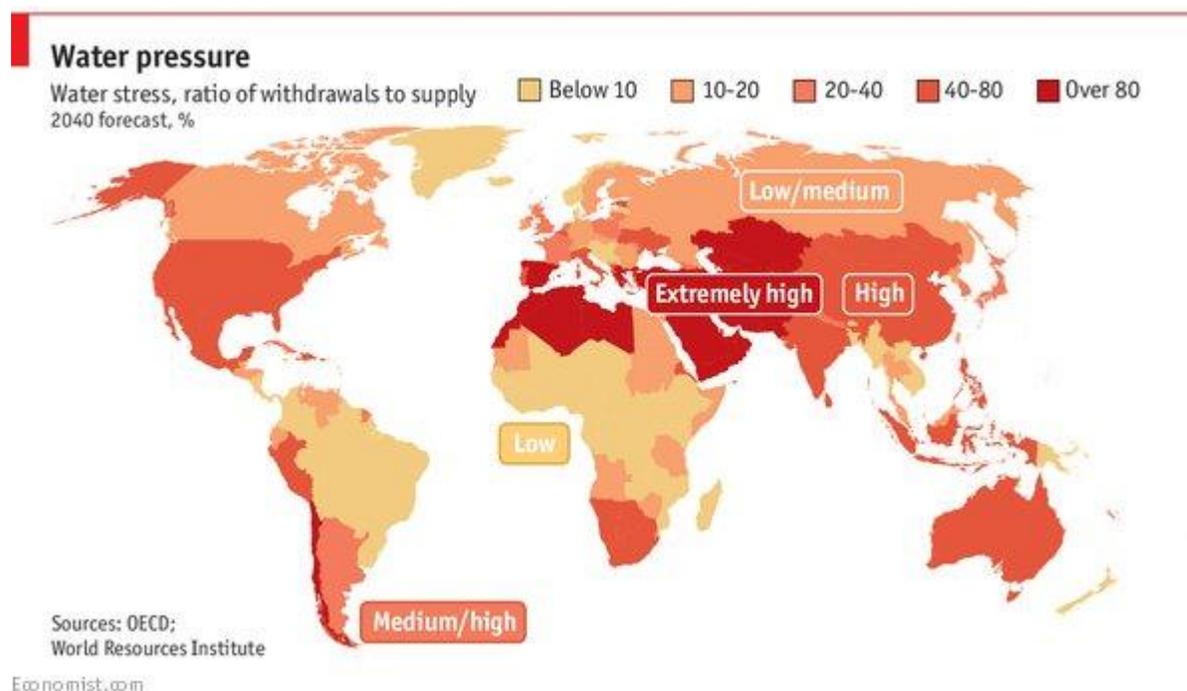


Figure 1. Southern Africa is a water-stressed region (Source: OECD; World Resource Institute)

## 3.0 Overall Assessment

- ❖ African governments are urged to spend more on water safety amid the growing impact of climate change on the continent

<sup>19</sup> Western Cape dams critically low, eNCA, 23 March 2017, <http://www.enca.com/south-africa/western-cape-dams-critically-low>

<sup>20</sup> Urban demand curbs farmers' water quotas, Bekezela Phakathi, Business Day, 24 March 2017, <https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/national/2017-03-24-urban-demand-curbs-farmers-water-quotas/>

- ❖ **The government of South Africa is urged to take a more decisive position on the increasingly confusing policy direction of the land reform process**
- ❖ **Low income households in South Africa are increasingly becoming more food insecure as food prices surge due to the impact of the drought**
- ❖ **Poor water quality in Cape Town might precipitate a major public health crisis as the drought crisis in the Western Province deepens**
- ❖ **South Africa is urged to develop a more comprehensive national water conservation plan amid increasing water stress levels in the Southern African region**