

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

**15 April - 21 April 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 Weekly Trends, Themes and Issues**

- **Land invasions escalate in South Africa as eThekweni metro police intervenes to prevent residents from Chatsworth and surrounding areas from clashing with illegal land invaders**
- **A petrol price hike in May likely to push up food prices amid growing political and economic uncertainty in South Africa**
- **Small-scale farmers struggle as the fall armyworm ravishes South Africa**
- **IMF forecasts growth of less than 1% for South Africa in 2017 as the country's socio-political and economic woes mount**
- **Lack of transformation in South Africa's fishing industry exposed as the South African Deep-Sea Trawling Industry (SADSTIA) takes government to court**
- **South Africa's land crisis deepens as the City of Johannesburg seeks court order against illegal occupants of land in Alexandra**
- **Sugar, milk, meat price hikes could stay high as South Africa's drought takes its toll**
- **Western Cape water situation remain critical despite recent rains in the province as the drought crisis deepens**
- **Cape Town plans to start exploring the Table Mountain aquifers by June as the severe drought hits the Western Cape Province hard**
- **Dam levels in Limpopo Province reach satisfactory levels following recent rain**
- **Western Cape residents express concerns about the water quality due to dropping dam levels and high temperatures in the province as the severe drought takes its toll**

## **1.1 Food Security**

### **1.1.1 Land invasions escalate in South Africa as eThekweni metro police intervenes to prevent residents from Chatsworth and surrounding areas from clashing with illegal land invaders**

On 17 April, *Business Day* reported that the South African Police Service (SAPS) and eThekweni metro police have intervened to prevent residents from Chatsworth and surrounding areas from clashing with illegal land invaders.<sup>1</sup>

### **1.1.2 A petrol price hike in May likely to push up food prices amid growing political and economic uncertainty in South Africa**

On 18 April, *Fin24* reported that a fuel price hike in May would have an immediate impact on the prices of virtually all goods and services, said Neil Roets, CEO of debt counselling firm Debt Rescue.<sup>2</sup>

### **1.1.3 Small-scale farmers struggle as the fall armyworm ravishes South Africa**

On 18 April, *Business Day* reported that small-scale farmers are pinning their hopes on the dry winter season to exterminate the fall armyworm that has almost destroyed their entire crops, leaving behind only barren stalks.<sup>3</sup>

### **1.1.4 IMF forecasts growth of less than 1% for South Africa in 2017 as the country's socio-political and economic woes mount**

On 18 April, *AFP* reported that in the face of lower growth projected in sub-Saharan Africa, SA is set to grow its GDP moderately in 2017 despite the global economic recovery.<sup>4</sup>

### **1.1.5 Lack of transformation in South Africa's fishing industry exposed as the South African Deep-Sea Trawling Industry (SADSTIA) takes government to court**

On 18 April, *SABC News* reported that the South African Deep-Sea Trawling Industry (SADSTIA) says it's concerned that the fishing industry could collapse if government continues to issue permits to new entrants.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Police intervene in standoff between Chatsworth residents and land invaders, Nce Mkhize, Business Day, 17 April 2017, <https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/national/2017-04-17-police-intervene-in-standoff-between-chatsworth-residents-and-land-invaders/>

<sup>2</sup> Petrol price hike will bite consumers – economist, Liesl Peyper, Fin24, 18 April 2017, <http://www.fin24.com/Economy/petrol-price-hike-will-bite-consumers-economist-20170418>

<sup>3</sup> Small-scale farmers cling to hope that a dry winter will exterminate armyworm, Sipho Mabena, Business Day, 18 April 2017, <https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/national/science-and-environment/2017-04-18-small-scale-farmers-cling-to-hope-that-a-dry-winter-will-exterminate-armyworm/>

<sup>4</sup> IMF forecasts growth of less than 1% for SA in 2017, Sunita Menon and AFP, 18 April 2017, <https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/economy/2017-04-18-imf-forecasts-growth-of-less-than-1-for-sa-in-2017/>

### **1.1.6 South Africa's land crisis deepens as the City of Johannesburg seeks court order against illegal occupants of land in Alexandra**

On 19 April, *Eyewitness News* reported that the City of Johannesburg is now seeking a court order against residents in Granville in Alexandra who have illegally occupied land.<sup>6</sup>

### **1.1.7 Sugar, milk, meat price hikes could stay high as South Africa's drought takes its toll**

On 21 April, Fin24 reported that while the overall food inflation is likely to decelerate further over the coming months on the back of large supplies, sugar, milk and meat inflation could remain at relatively higher levels, according to Wandile Sihlobo, agricultural economist at the Agricultural Business Chamber (Agbiz).<sup>7</sup>

## **1.2 Water Security**

### **1.2.1 Western Cape water situation remain critical despite recent rains in the province as the drought crisis deepens**

On 17 April, *Eyewitness News* reported that the Western Cape Environmental Affairs Department says despite the recent rains in the province, the water situation remains critical. The latest data puts the province's dam levels at 20%.<sup>8</sup>

### **1.2.2 Cape Town plans to start exploring the Table Mountain aquifers by June as the severe drought hits the Western Cape Province hard**

On 19 April, *Eyewitness News* reported that the City of Cape Town hopes to start exploring for water from the Table Mountain aquifers by the end of June. It's accelerating its emergency supply schemes to deal with ever declining dam levels.<sup>9</sup>

### **1.2.3 Dam levels in Limpopo Province reach satisfactory levels following recent rain**

On 19 April, *News24* reported that dam levels in Limpopo have reached satisfactory levels following recent rain, the provincial water affairs department said on Wednesday.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Fishing industry could collapse if govt continues to issue permits, Mlamli Maneli, SABC News, 18 April 2017, <http://www.sabc.co.za/news/a/f4a0cf8040d352518e07cfa85d6182e4/Fishing-industry-could-collapse-if-govt-continues-to-issue-permits-20171804>

<sup>6</sup> City officials seek court order against illegal occupants of land in Alex, *Eyewitness News*, 19 April 2017, <http://ewn.co.za/2017/04/19/city-officials-seek-court-order-against-illegal-occupants-of-land-in-alex>

<sup>7</sup> Sugar, milk, meat price hikes could stay high, Carin Smith, Fin24, 21 April 2017, <http://www.fin24.com/Economy/sugar-milk-meat-price-hikes-could-stay-high-20170421>

<sup>8</sup> WC water situation remain critical despite rain, Ilze-Marie Le Roux, *Eyewitness News*, 17 April 2017, <http://ewn.co.za/2017/04/17/wc-water-situation-remain-critical-despite-rain>

<sup>9</sup> CT plans to start exploring Table Mountain aquifers by June, Lindsay Dentlinger, *Eyewitness News*, 19 April 2017, <http://ewn.co.za/2017/04/19/city-to-explore-table-mountain-aquifers-by-june>

### 1.2.4 Western Cape residents express concerns about the water quality due to dropping dam levels and high temperatures in the province as the severe drought takes its toll

On 21 April, *SABC News* reported that Western Cape residents have expressed concerns about the water quality due to dropping dam levels and high temperatures in the province.<sup>11</sup>

## 2.0 Daily Infographics: Global temperatures in March were highest on record

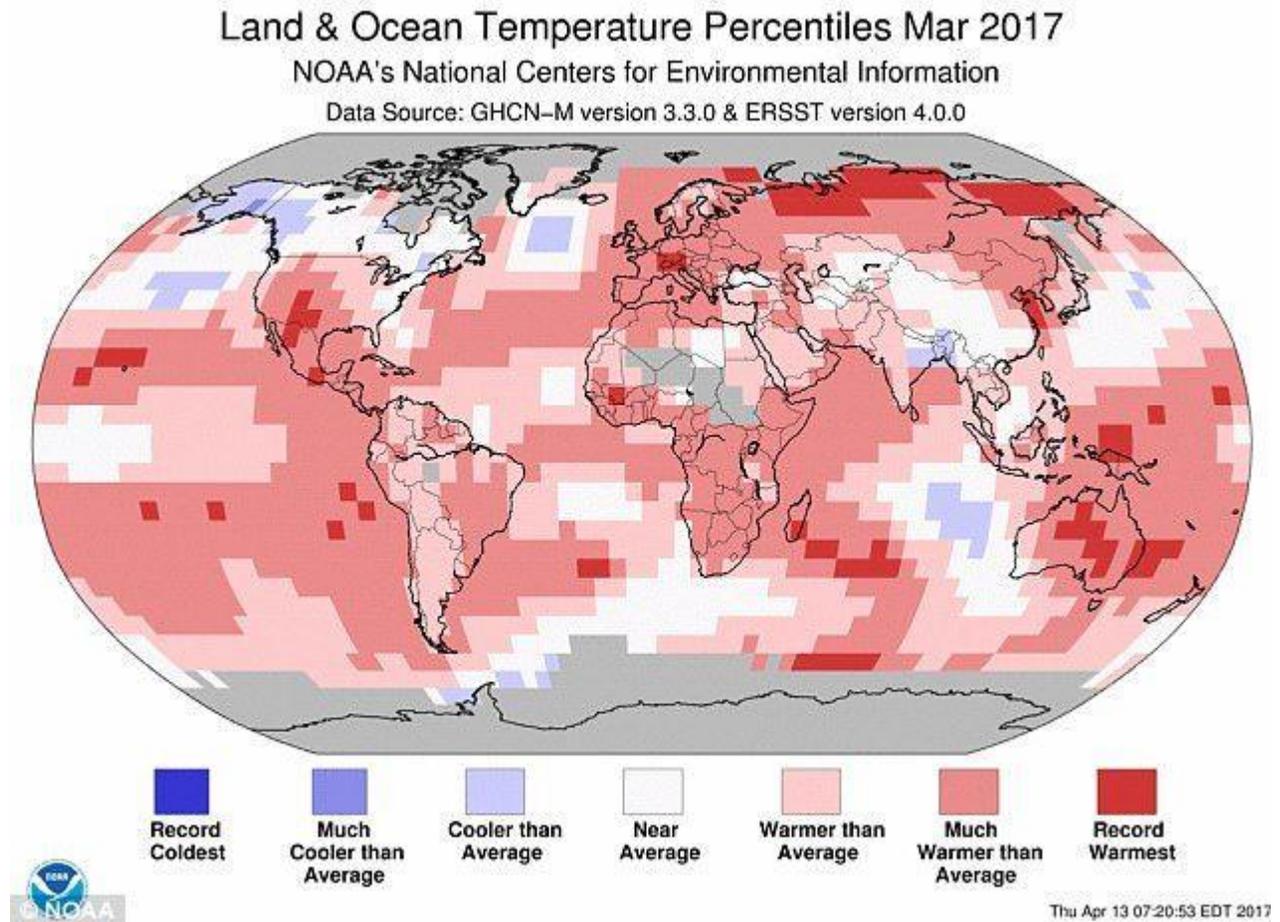


Figure 1. Global temperatures in March were highest on record (Source: NOAA)

<sup>10</sup> Limpopo's water situation improves, Chester Makana, News24 Correspondent, 19 April 2017, <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/limpopos-water-situation-improves-20170419>

<sup>11</sup> Western Cape drought crisis deepens, Mlamli Maneli, SABC News, 21 April 2017, <http://www.sabc.co.za/news/a/2172ef0040db4d06804ab5bf0236c0c1/Western-Cape-drought-crisis-deepens-20172104>

### **3.0 Overall Assessment**

- ❖ **The emerging trajectory is the land invasions in South Africa will intensify in urban areas before possibly spreading to the farming areas as the country's land crisis deepens**
- ❖ **Low income household's food insecurity is increasing in South Africa as their access to food is increasingly constrained by the impact of the drought and rising fuel prices**
- ❖ **The government of South Africa is urged to continue pushing robustly for transformation in the fishing industry as established big fishing companies use litigation as a strategy to stall the rate of transformation in the sector**
- ❖ **The government of South Africa is urged to set up a dedicated National Drought Management Authority to deal with the now persistent droughts in the country. Droughts can no longer be effectively dealt with on an ad hoc basis. A permanent structure is now required to effectively deal with what is increasingly becoming a permanent problem.**